

Book Reviews

The Preparation of County Place-Name Surveys. By A[lbert] H[ugh] Smith. (London: English Place-Name Society, University College, 1954. Pp. 56)

This manual, as its title suggests, was prepared primarily as a guide to compilers of future volumes of the English Place-Name Society series, but it should also prove helpful to many others interested in the problems of onomastics. The author, Albert Hugh Smith, Quain Professor at the University of London, is the present general editor of the English Place-Name Society, whose competence in the field of place-names is well established by his *Place-Names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York* (EPNS, Vol. XIV). Professor Smith is also responsible for several useful contributions to our understanding of Old and Middle English literature.

The pamphlet falls into six chapters: "The Preparation of a County Gazeteer," "The Collection of Material," "The Collection of Field Names," "The Selection and Interpretation of the Material," "The Preparation of the Manuscript for Press," and "Conditions of Publication." Here, the prospective author is advised step by step as to the most efficient ways of collecting, recording, explaining, and presenting his name data. By "Collection of Material" is meant chiefly the accumulation of early spellings from the vast array of sources generally available to students of English place-names. As every student of names is aware, early spellings are of fundamental importance in the interpretation of names. Only by reference to spellings of the fifteenth century and before does one learn that *Maidensgrove* is a kind of folk etymology of a phrase meaning common grove, OE (*ge*)*mæne grafa*, and that *Wheatfield* is a similarly corrupted form of "White field," OE *hwit* (PN O, pp. 85 and 100), to cite only two simple examples. The section dealing with field-names advises that, although not usually recorded on the six-inch Ordnance Survey maps, such local names are hereafter to be included in the county surveys, as, indeed, they have been in the more recent publications of the Society, such as

P. H. Reaney's *Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely* (1943).

It is obvious that only the more general principles and procedures set forth here would be directly applicable to the study of place-names in countries other than England. But certainly the observation (pp. 19-20) to the effect that the collection of local names requires painstaking field work even to walking the boundaries would hold true in whatever country the researcher may be working. Again, many suggestions as to the recording and selection of name data could profitably be adapted to conditions prevailing elsewhere than in England. Finally, the short bibliography of general reference works which forms Appendix 3 of Professor Smith's pamphlet is a convenience to all students of names.

ROBERT W. ACKERMAN

Law of Names and How to Change Your Name. By Lawrence G. Greene. (New York: Oceana Publications. 1954. Pp. 96. Paper, \$1.00; Cloth, \$2.00)

This is the thirty-fourth number of the Legal Almanac Series, a series of pamphlets on various legal subjects in non-technical language designed to explain legal matters to the layman. As in most cases where legal language is simplified, it is at the expense of clarity and perfect accuracy.

Mr. Greene's booklet, however, does an excellent job in explaining how to change one's name through legal process in the various states in this country and discusses some of the differences in the applicable state laws. It correctly states the law by saying that a name can be changed without a court order in most states in this country, but that a court decree is often advisable.

Other subjects treated are the use of fictitious assumed names in business, the law concerning the form of personal names on legal documents, the change of names by married women, and the use of corporation and partnership names in business. The work concludes with a summary of state laws relating to change of name, New York state forms, a list of statutory references, and a brief bibliography.

All in all this is an easily read exposition of the law of personal

and business names, and could be studied with advantage by those careless writers who arbitrarily affirm in print that personal names cannot be changed in this country except by decree of court.

ELSDON C. SMITH

How to Coin Winning Names. By William Sunners. (New York: Arco Publishing Company, 1951. \$3.00)

"If it has no name, coin one."

William Sunners has presented us with a name-coining mint in his bright treasury, *How To Coin Winning Names*, a brilliant repository of name-nuggets gleaned from scientific sources, family trees and fanciful imagination-sprees.

Prospecting below the surface, we first encounter a chapter devoted to the "Historical Derivation of Names," a dissertation on genealogy, interesting to everyone who has a name and wonders whence it came.

If you've ever wondered, too, how the galactic winners in cake-naming, auto-naming and other big-name contests manage to outshine a galaxy of lesser stars, and galvanize the judges into awarding them gilt-edged security, you need speculate no more; every device for the pioneer in the contest-gold field is ready for him in Mr. Sunners' analytical book. The sparkling pages of chapters titled, "Judging Standards" and "Tested Formulas for Creating Original Names" can't fail to help Jane and John Doe to make NAMES for THEMSELVES. All they need do is study conscientiously, then stake their claim to fame and fortune.

There are many pages of alphabetized "First Names and Their Meanings," succeeded by "The Meanings of First Names?" which means, simply, that you may learn that HARRIET means RICH, by looking under "H", but if you wish to know first WHO is RICH, seek RICH, under "R" in the succeeding chapter, and you can be sure it'll still be HARRIET. This double-duty listing facilitates Name-Creating immeasurably.

There is a chapter for name contests, titled "Language of the Gems and Flowers," which should appeal to romantic-type people; also a chapter for the linguistic-minded, compiled of "English Words and Their Foreign Equivalents," which are also reversed

in a following list, and they assay rich in name-coining ore; there are "Geographical Terms and Their Meanings," and pages of "Gods and Goddesses" to inspire folks to create out-of-this-world eponyms.

The best is last, however, for there parade hundreds of "Names That Have Won Prizes," listed categorically, skillful examples of word-telescoping and phrase-combining.

Anyone familiar with William Sunners' breezy style and clear-cut composition, so evident in his *American Slogans* and *How to Win Prize Contests*, will know beforehand what to anticipate. For the uninitiate, let me assert that the tools to implement you in your quest for unique, original names are all assembled here in convenient form.

PATRICIA WORTHING



ANNUAL PLACE NAME BIBLIOGRAPHY

Your help is requested in building an annual list of material published on American place names, to appear in *Names*. The list will be edited by Miss Pauline A. Seely, Head of the Catalog Department, Public Library, Denver, Colorado. This annual series will serve as a supplement to Sealock and Seely, *Bibliography of Place Name Literature*, published by the American Library Association, 1948. This volume includes material on the United States, Canada and Alaska.

In order to secure a record of articles and books published, all interested individuals in each state and province are being asked to watch for these and submit them for inclusion. Many splendid items in this field are published in pamphlet form or in periodicals not indexed in national guides. The help of those interested can insure the listing of this valuable material.

Since the book mentioned above includes material through 1947, it is hoped that all material published since that date will be sent in. Also, because there has been some discussion of a possible new edition of the bibliography, it is hoped that earlier articles not recorded will be forwarded.

All suggestions and items are to be sent to the undersigned who is assisting, with others, in the collection of the data.

Richard B. Sealock, Librarian
Public Library
9th and Locust
Kansas City 6, Missouri