

Reviews

450 Ans de nom lieux français en Amérique du Nord. Allocutions et conférences prononcées lors du premier congrès international sur la toponymie français de l'Amérique du Nord, Québec, du 11 au 15 juillet 1984. La Commission de toponymie. Québec: les Publications du Québec, 1986. Pp. 555.

This work, a collection of addresses and papers delivered at the first international conference on French toponymy in North America, organized in honor of the 450th anniversary of Jacques Cartier's first voyage to the new world, offers the reader a unique opportunity to explore all aspects of the study of placenames. The text is nearly a transcript of the conference; it lacks only three of the papers given and includes three articles that did not appear on the program.

The first part of this work consists of addresses given at the opening of the conference. While interesting primarily for the diversity of speakers presented - among them Bernice McAdams, présidente de la Fédération des sociétés d'histoire du Québec; Francois Beaudin, président de la Commission de toponymie du Québec; Louis Dussault, directeur général du Secrétariat permanent des peuples francophones; Suzelle Blais, *Trésor de la langue française au Québec*, Laval University; André Escojido, secrétaire adjoint aux Affaires linguistiques du Ministère des relations internationales et du commerce extérieur; Max C. de Henseler, secrétaire du Groupe d'experts des Nations Unies sur la normalisation des noms géographiques; and Jean Ramondo, président de la Commission de toponymie de l'Institut géographique national (France) - it does include several short presentations that serve to suggest the diverse sources of French placenames.

In the second part of the text, subtitled "Les institutions impliquées dans le domaine de la toponymie," the reader is introduced to the study of French placenames in general. Other articles discuss Provincial activities and American research of French history and naming in the United States.

The multidisciplinary science of toponymy, drawing its data from a wide variety of sources, is the focus of the third part of the text, which is subtitled "La toponymie et les autres disciplines." The articles in this section, which explore such diverse topics as "toponymy and historical texts," "toponymy and literature," "toponymy and government," toponymy and "the law," and toponymy and tourism," will be of particular interest to those new to the study of placenames, for they illustrate the variety of sources for placename data, and suggest the importance of such data in other fields. For example, in an article entitled "Les relations entre la toponymie et les autres sciences humaines," Henri Dorion points out the relationship between toponymy and history and geography, and goes on to note that "Le nom de lieu est un signe linguistique et, à ce titre, intéresse la *sémiologie*: il est l'expression d'une perception d'un comportement que intéresse psychologie, notamment la psychologie sociale. Enfin, l'analyse morphologique ou sémantique du nom, à son origine comme dans son évolution postérieure, relève de la *linguistique* et de la *psycholinguistique*, alors qu l'examen synthétique ou mieux synoptique de grands ensembles de noms relève de la sociolinguistique et peut déboucher sur des études proprement *sociologiques*" (103).

Finally, in the fourth section, subtitled "La toponymie des régions de l'Amérique du Nord," the reader is presented with placename research. The papers in this section are grouped geographically, focusing first on the Atlantic provinces and subsequently on research of Quebec, Ontario, western Canada, and the United States. The final subsection is on comparative toponymy.

The scope of this work is ambitious. Furthermore, there appears to have been relatively little editing of the articles collected, and they reflect both the format and the time constraints of the conference. Thus, it is not surprising that there are problems with the text. There are several illegible tables (67-68, 71-73), and, although the bicentennial map shown on page 74 may be, as the author of the article claims, "très intéressant et informatif" (74), it is also impossible to read. In addition, the map of Wisconsin on page 90 illustrates none of the placenames mentioned in the article, and there is a pagination problem with a double set of pages 39-40. These problems are, however, minor.

A far more serious problem with this text is its superficiality. Despite the claims of Dorion and others that placename data have important implications for a variety of fields, the placename studies suggest generally that toponymy is little more than the ilation of lists of names. Little analysis is demonstrated. For example, in his article on French placenames

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associated with French Newfoundlanders, Gerald Thomas proposes to examine," [les] questions concernant la stabilité et le changement socio-culturel ... dans l'espoire de contribuer à une meilleure compréhension de la mentalité humaine" (260); nevertheless, he makes no attempt to explain why various name changes did not catch on, or why, in the discussion of *Lourdes* (/lurdz/), the earlier English name was lost or why both French and English speakers "ignorent la prononciation français du nom" (261). Further on, he does not explain why the English name *Stephen* is used when the town of Stephenville in fact draws its name from one Étienne. Discussing French toponymy in Québec, Jean Poirier notes the more or less deliberate loss of Amerindian names for historical and geopolitical causes "qu'il serait trop long d'examiner" (293). Although he suggests that history, geography, and the presence of diverse ethnic groups are all factors that could explain the distribution of different types of toponyms, he does not discuss how they could do so; in fact, he attributes the varying proportion of Amerindian names solely to differences in the size of the Amerindian population from region to region. In a study of French place names in Illinois, Margaret K. Brown mentions *Meredosia* as "an interesting example of the change [sic] that have occurred," but she does not discuss what these changes might be. Similarly, in her article on French placenames in Indiana, Liliane Krasean lists individuals for whom towns were named but gives no indication of the importance of these individuals to the communities; she cites the generic *mont* and the adjective *bel/belle* as indicative of the widespread influence of the French, yet, since she does not discuss the role possibly played by borrowing or the shortening of terms, the argument is not convincing. Finally, Alan Rayburn's discussion of French toponymy in British Columbia offers many interesting anecdotes, but, if the study of placenames is to permit us, as one contributor suggests, "d'étudier les rapports et la perception de l'homme avec son milieu" (Daigle 279), then there must be some analysis of the importance of commemorative names for the region upon which they are imposed, of the retention of names, and of their translation. To say only as Daigle does, in his discussion of French toponymy in Acadia, that "les appellations religieuses, moins nombreuses qu'au Québec, furent attribuées surtout au début du XVII siècle pour désigner surtout les cours d'eau..." (279) reveals little about the early settlers of Québec, the seventeenth century, or the naming process. In short, what is important is not what names a region has, when they first appeared, or how their spelling has changed, but why.

This volume provides a valuable lesson for both the newcomer to the field and the experienced toponymist. It reveals both the promise of

toponymic research and the too-common shortcomings of such work.

Karen Johnson-Weiner

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Gale Research Publications

This survey of recent publications by Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226, serves as prominent notice of books of interest to readers of *Names*. Some titles have been noted before. Reviews follow the bibliographical information.

American Diaries. Edited by Laura Arksey, Nancy Pries, and Marcia Reed.

Vol. 1: *Diaries Written from 1492 to 1844*. 1983. Pp. xviii, 311. \$98.

Vol. 2: *Diaries Written from 1845 to 1980*. 1987. Pp. xviii, 501. \$98.

Passenger and Immigration Lists Index: 1987 Supplement. Edited by P. William Filby and Dorothy M. Lower. 1987. Pp. xxii, 645. \$140.

Biography and Genealogy Master Index 1987. Edited by Barbara McNeil. 1987. Pp. xxiv, 823. \$190.

Pseudonyms and Nicknames Dictionary. 3d ed. 2 vol. Edited by Jennifer Mossman. 1987. Pp. 2207. \$225/set.

Biography Almanac. 3 vols. Edited by Susan L. Stetler. 1987. \$88/set.

Vols. 1-2: Biographies. Pp. 1771. \$50

Vol. 3: Indexes: Chronological, Geographic, Occupation. Pp. 924. \$50.

The following group of books was edited by Julia E. Towell and Helen E. Sheppard.

Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations Dictionary. 12th ed. 1987. Pp. 3,050 in three parts. \$190/set.

New Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations. One softbound volume, inter-edition supplement. \$165.

Reverse Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations Dictionary. 12th ed. 1987. Pp. 3,050 in three parts. \$225/set.

International Acronyms, Initialisms & Abbreviations Dictionary. 2d ed. 1987. Pp. 911. \$160.

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Reverse International Acronyms, Initialisms & Abbreviations Dictionary.
2d ed. 1987. Pp. 898. \$175.

New International Acronyms, Initialisms & Abbreviations. Inter-edition
supplement. 1987. \$145.

American Diaries is an annotated bibliography that provides information on about 6,000 published diaries and journals written by Americans from 1492 to 1900. Although the bibliography includes only English-language materials, some of the ones noted are non-American but available in English, and are concerned with events occurring in America. Entries are arranged chronologically, based on the year the diary was begun. In addition, each entry features extensive annotations as well as full bibliographic data. Annotations indicate the diary's emphasis, and provide information about the diarist, historic events mentioned, modes of travel, religious affiliation, named individuals and locations, customs and social milieu, and broad categories covered in the diary. The material serves well as sources for information on placenames.

Passenger and Immigration Lists Index contains more than 125,000 citations to names in over a hundred published passenger and naturalization lists. The work covers passengers who arrived in the United States, Canada, or the West Indies from the sixteenth century through the early twentieth century. The 1987 supplement is the sixth annual one, adding hundreds of thousands of names to the index, which now lists more than 1.4 million names, still just a fraction of the 20 million immigrants to North America from 1538 to 1900. Since this compilation has been noted in previous issues of *Names*, I will do no more here than point out the value of this information to many fields of interest other than the primary one of genealogy. Some are almost as obvious: history, incidence of names, origin of names, social aspects of the origin, and certainly the psychology of naming.

Now in its third edition, *Pseudonyms and Nicknames Dictionary* contains more than 55,000 original names and 80,000 assumed ones - a 32% increase over the previous edition published in 1982. A large part of the collection covers authors, entertainers, and athletes, all of whom seem to command nicknames from an adoring public. Among the others are politicians (a close second to the media personalities), criminals, military leaders, monarchs, popes, aristocrats, and business executives. Each entry contains six elements: original name, dates of birth and death (if it has occurred), up to eight source-identification codes, nationality, occupation, and assumed name by which the individual has become known. The cross-reference entry is based on the nickname or pseudonym and refers

back to the main entry.

The 1987 master index of biography and genealogy is a quick and easy way to locate biographical information from which searches are initiated. *BGMI 1987* enables the user to determine which edition of which publication to consult for additional material. It also provides an index to more than 120 volumes and editions of more than ninety-five biographical dictionaries. Sources cover both living and deceased persons from most of the fields of activity from all areas of the world. Among the sources are the general works, including *Contemporary Authors*, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, *Who's Whom in America*, *Halliwel's Filmgoer's Companion*, and dozens of others, many of them familiar to readers of *Names*.

The third edition of *Biography Almanac* covers over 24,000 names, more than 2,000 of which have become well-known in the three years since the publication of the second edition. The *Almanac* also covers historical figures and famous groups. Each entry includes the person or group's name as most commonly known, pseudonym, real name (or group affiliation), nickname, nationality, occupation, career (or best known activity), one-line description, dates and places of birth and death (where appropriate), and codes for biographical reference sources that provide further information. The first two volumes contain alphabetically arranged entries. The third volume (the index) contains an occupations index, a chronological index, and a geographic index.

The twelfth edition of *Acronyms* identifies some 425,000 acronyms, initialisms, and abbreviations. New and expanded coverage includes legal abbreviations, Canadian acronyms, military terms, and more new terms in telecommunications and data processing. Numerous terms of foreign origin are included, ones especially relevant to American concerns. *Reverse Acronyms* contains all the items found in the main dictionary but arranged by definition or long form. It enables users to determine the correct or most frequently used acronym or short form for a particular word or phrase. So far, no major studies have appeared that treat this phenomenon of abbreviating sounds and also written forms. Such studies are definitely needed.

International Acronyms, second edition, deciphers over 110,000 non-English abbreviations found in foreign periodicals, government publications, and scientific and technical literature, with no limit on the subject areas covered. The terms included are international in scope or are continental, regional, national, or local to a foreign area. The dictionary is focused on countries in which English is not the major language, and so

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normally does not duplicate the terms found in *Acronyms*. For each abbreviation, *International Acronyms* furnishes the long form in the original language and an English translation when available. It also has a companion volume: *Reverse International Acronyms*.

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Short Reviews and Publication Notes

James Kari, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and James A. Fall, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, have compiled and edited *Shem Pete's Alaska* (Fairbanks, AK 00775: Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, The CIRI Foundation, Box 111, 1987), pp. vii + 320, with 29 maps and 79 photos, \$15.00). The publication is based on the lifetime travels and knowledge of Shem Pete, one of Alaska's oldest Dena'ina (Tanaina) Athabaskans, and of thirty-three other Dena'ina elders. Over seven hundred Dena'ina placenames are annotated, taken from the western Cook Inlet region, the Susitna, Yetna, Skwentna, Chulima, Talkeetna, Little Susitna, and Matanuska Rivers, Alexander Creek, Fish Creek, Knik Arm, and Turnagain Arm.

The sixteen chapters cover the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina dialect area. Each place is listed according to its chapter and its place within the chapter. An effort was made to list all the placenames in the areas that the Dena'ina bands inhabited. No doubt, many of the names are not now recoverable, but the names collected here "convey important information about the traditional economy, population centers, transportation, and beliefs." Much of the folk material and translation of placenames comes from oral accounts by Shem Pete, who also is the source of legends, stories, and lore. Kari and Fall weave all the material into a text that makes a valuable contribution to the study of Alaskan placenames, particularly as it applies to the Dena'ina.

Another item suggested by Dr. Kari is *My Country: Big Salmon River*, by Bertie Tom, from Yukon Native Language Centre, Box 2703, E-2, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada Y1A 4B3. It will be reviewed by Dr. Kari in a later issue of *Names*.

Several books by René Coulet du Gard are available at reduced prices to ANS members: *Dictionary of Spanish Place Names in the USA*, 5 vols., \$50.00; *The Dictionary of French Place Names in the USA*, \$20.00; *The*

Handbook of American Counties, \$20.00; and *The Handbook of French Place Names in the USA*, \$8.00. Make checks payable to Editions des Deux Mondes, and mail to P.O. Box 56, Newark, DE 19711.

For the linguists and natives among us, I recommend *The Native Speaker is Dead!* by Thomas M. Paikeday, 1776 Chalkdene Grove, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L4W 2C3. Phone: (416) 624-6952. The text is worth the phone call and price, whatever that may be.

Recent publications by Gabriel Lasker, Editor-in-Chief, *Human Biology*, Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, Wayne State University, 540 East Canfield St., Detroit, MI 48201, include "Repeating Pairs of Surnames in Reading (England) and their Significance for Population Structure," *Human Biology* 58 (1986): 421-25, with C.G.N. Mascie-Taylor and D.A. Coleman; and "Repetition of the Same Surnames in Different Marriages as an Indication of the Structure of the Population of Sanday Island, Orkney Islands," *Human Biology* 59 (1987): 97-102, with C.G.N. Mascie-Taylor and A.J. Boyce. He also has in press a study of marriages of persons with a mutual surname. He writes, "The diversity of surnames of individuals marrying into such a 'lineage' provides an estimation of relationship, and the loss of diversity relative to the distribution of surnames in the population as a whole provides a measure of selective mating. For instance, in England and Wales in 1975, such repetitions average 9% above random expectation for common English surname 'lineage' and 24% for rare British surname 'lineage.'" (June 9, 1987).

Nomina, the outstanding publication of name studies relating to Great Britain and Ireland, is published by English Name Studies, with the support of the Council for Name Studies In Great Britain and Ireland. The Editor is Peter McClure, Department of English, University of Hull, England HU6 7RX. The price is 4.50 pounds,

Still available: G.P.V. Akrigg and Helen B. Akrigg, *British Columbia Place Names*, Sono Nis Press, 1745 Blanshard St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 2J8, pp. 376, \$16.50 paper. The Akriggs published *1001 British Columbia Place Names* in 1969. This volume contains over 2,300 entries, with special attention to Amerindian names. It is strongly recommended.

Recently reprinted: Joseph G. Fucilla, *Our Italian Surnames*, originally published in 1949 (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1001 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21202, 1987), pp. xi + 299, \$20.00 cloth. One of the better books ever to be published on personal names, it is also indispensable to anyone who studies Italian names.

Edwin D. Lawson, *Personal Names and Naming: An Annotated Bibliography* (Greenwood Press, Inc., 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881, 1987), pp. xiii + 185, \$35.00 cloth, is a major contribution to onomastics. Since a review will not appear for some issues, I am making special and particular notice here for this remarkable compilation. This item is a necessity to anyone who works in onomastics, whatever the area.

William E. Koch, *Folklore from Kansas: Customs, Beliefs, and Superstitions* (University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045, 1987), is now in its third edition. Koch has also published recently "Kansas Place-Name Scholarship," *Heritage of the Great Plains* XIX, No. 2 (Spring 1986), 23-27. This is a model overview of the work that has been accomplished in one state, and deserves distribution to placename surveyors in other states.

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