

News, Comments, Queries

Early Maps of the Americas.—In recent years the Service of Military Geography and History of the Spanish General Staff has published two sets of reproductions of early maps of the Americas existing in its archives, each with an accompanying volume supplementing these maps. The printed text, in addition to furnishing cartographic details about each map, lists all names by consecutive or political location and contains general historical information. The library of the Coast and Geodetic Survey was fortunate enough to receive these publications through normal exchange channels, and they constitute a very valuable source of information about the earliest use and degree of antiquity of many names. In no case do the records of the map making agencies of the Federal Government go back much more than 100 years, and it is always difficult to trace, from the available earlier sources, the history of names beyond the middle of the nineteenth century. In many instances the only reply that can be given to inquiries about the origin of names is to refer the interested parties to state or local historical societies.

Part I published in 1949 contains 88 maps and 491 pages of text. The period covered is from 1520 to 1838, with 10 maps of the 15th, 27 of the 17th, 46 of the 18th, and 5 of the nineteenth centuries. Almost all are small scale maps, with relatively few names in any country or political subdivision.

Part II was published in 1953, and is limited to maps of the United States, Canada, Alaska, and parts of Mexico and the West Indies. There are 138 maps and 582 pages of text. They are at a much larger scale and contain many names. Approximately half provide coverage for larger areas, but the remainder are listed under individual states. About 80 pages of the text contain historical information for the period from 1520 to 1817 about Spanish interests in Florida, Louisiana and Texas, as well as the early Anglo-Spanish conflict that eventually led to the establishment of a boundary between Georgia and Florida, and the final transfer of Florida to the United States.

Using the above maps as additional sources of information, it is planned to present a number of instances of names having an uncertain or disputed origin. In recent issues of *Names* there have been discussions about the origin of California and of Horekill in Delaware. In some cases there will be an attempt to pin down the precise origin of a name, while in others only partial information can be given, with an invitation to the readers of *Names* to contribute any additional details that may be known to them. There will also be some accounts of the many vicissitudes through which names have had to pass before reaching their present accepted forms.

Servicios Geografico e Historico del Ejercito
Estado Mayor Central

CARTOGRAFIA DE ULTRAMAR

Carpeta I

América en General

Toponimia de los mapas que la integran
Madrid

Imprenta del Servicio Geografico del Ejercito
1949

Carpeta II

Estados Unidos Y Canada

Toponimia de los mapas que la integran Relaciones de Ultramar
Madrid

1953

LEWIS HECK

Name Lore in California.—California writers, it seems, pay more attention to the geographical nomenclature of their state than do writers in any other region of the United States. In the September, 1954 issue of *Names*, Joseph N. Corcoran wrote a review of Thomas P. Brown's *Colorful California Names*. In the meantime two more regional studies have been published.

San Francisco Street Names by Henry C. Carlisle is another publication by the American Trust Company and, like Thomas Brown's little classic, is distributed free. The title is misleading. The author gives sketches of pioneers whose names are honored in San Francisco street names. It is questionable whether a whole page should be devoted to the old story of Sutter and the discovery of gold when so many interesting and colorful street names are simply disregarded. The Embarcadero and Dolores Street, Nob

Hill and Russian Hill, are not even mentioned. The public would doubtless be better served if the 50 odd pages of the splendidly printed booklet were given to succinct items of *all* the interesting and important names of San Francisco's streets and squares.

The second booklet, *Place Names in Yosemite Valley* by Richard J. Hartesveldt, likewise does not measure up to our standards of popular onomatology. The author is apparently unaware that all the names which he lists have been investigated and in most cases satisfactorily explained. If he had consulted the easily available literature, he could have written more interesting and more detailed items about such names as El Capitan, Merced, Wawona, Yosemite, etc.

ERWIN G. GUDDE

San Jose.—With reference to C. Grant Loomis' recent article "Names in American Limericks" I may say that the name, as far as I know, has never been pronounced "San Joe's," nor is the correct Spanish pronunciation normally used. It is occasionally called "San Josie" jokingly. The almost universal pronunciation by the inhabitants is "san-a-zay"—spoken as if it were one word, with a very slight accent on the last syllable. It has probably been thus ever since the careless-tongued Anglo-Saxon encountered the Spanish name.

WARREN H. BUELL

A Pronunciation Guide to Kansas Place Names.—This is a publication of the William Allen White School of Journalism of the University of Kansas. It is refreshing to observe that the editors try to give the pronunciations of the names just as the people pronounce them and not as they should be pronounced according to some linguistic authority. The names "have become thoroughly Americanized, yea, even Kansanized."