In Memoriam

Stewart A. Kingsbury, 1923-1994

Stewart A. Kingsbury, a long-time active member of the American Name Society and the American Dialect Society, and contributor to the Place Name Survey of the United States, died on Sunday, October 24, 1994, at home, after a long battle with cancer. He was 71 years old.

Life

Stewart Kingsbury was born August 24, 1923, in Wayne, Michigan to Ralph S. Kingsbury and the former Marion L. David. After graduating from Ann Arbor High School, he attended the University of Michigan for two years, where he played the saxophone in the marching band, then under the direction of William Ravelle. In June 1943 he entered the U.S. Naval Academy and graduated in 1946. In 1953 Lt. Kingsbury received a citation for bravery for rescuing 35 sailors following a collision at sea between the USS Wasp and Heerman. After serving in the navy for twelve years, he resigned to return to the University of Michigan, where he received a master's degree in Russian Studies followed by a doctorate in linguistics.

Stewart taught English as a foreign language at the University of Michigan and later held teaching positions at Olivet College and Ball State. In 1969 Stewart came to Northern Michigan University as an associate professor in the Department of English. He was promoted to full professor in 1974. He taught in the Northern Michigan Department of English until his retirement in 1991. In April of that year he received a distinguished faculty award from the Michigan Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities.

After retiring from Northern Michigan, Stewart worked as a consultant for George Wahr Publishing Company in Ann Arbor. He was also an active member of St. Michael's and St. Peter's parishes of Marquette, where he sang in the choir. Parish prayers and commemoration services were held in Marquette on October 27, with Fr. George Maki officiating and the St. Peter's choir singing. The service was followed by a family celebration at the Kingsbury residence. Stewart was interred in the family plot in Ann Arbor.

He is survived by his wife, Mildred; two daughters, Susan Uballe of Austin, Texas, and Elizabeth Meegan of Minneapolis; a son, Stewart B. of Ann Arbor; two sisters, Elizabeth Davenport of Ann Arbor and Doris Hoffman of Alexandria, Virginia; and four grand-children.

Professional Achievements

Stewart was an active student of American placename research and an accomplished scholar in the field of dialect surveys and proverb studies. From 1971 to 1974, he was secretary of the American Dialect Society (Midwest Region). It was during this time that I had the privilege of collaborating with him in the computer-ized survey of the dialect of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (microfiche edition, 1978). In 1975, he received an NEH General Research Grant for the "Establishment of a Computerized Data Center for the U.S. Place Name Survey, Upper Peninsula of Michigan." In 1978, he was appointed member of the Place Name Survey of the United States. During this time he presented several papers at conferences, appeared on radio and television programs, and published several articles and a book, *Language and Culture*, in collaboration with Robert B. Glenn and myself (Northern Michigan University Press, 1976).

In 1979, the late Margaret M. Bryant, then Chair of the American Dialect Society's Committee on Proverbs, was so impressed by Stewart's interest and expertise in Americana that she entrusted him with her lifelong collection of American proverbs (more than 250,000 citation slips), which were to be deposited with Northern Michigan University. Thereafter proverbs were Stewart's primary research concern. He spent years in sorting through and

adding to this already extensive collection. In 1984, Oxford University Press designated Stewart co-editor of the proposed *Dictionary of American Proverbs*, along with Kelsie Harder and Wolfgang Mieder. Stewart worked relentlessly on proverbs. With the help of his colleague Donald H. Schlientz of Northern Michigan University's Computing Services, he devised six new computer programs, entered the proverbs into a data base, and selected 60,000 sentence-length proverbs for the proposed *Dictionary of Proverbs*. Published in 1991, *A Dictionary of American Proverbs* (Oxford UP) contains more than 15,000 sayings, adages, and maxims commonly used in popular speech in the United States and Canada. As the first major collection of proverbs based on oral sources, it includes thousands of proverbs unique to American speech.

This monumental work was followed in 1993 by the publication of *A Dictionary of Wellerisms* (Oxford UP) edited by Stewart and Wolfgang Mieder. *Wellerism*, so called after the malapropisms of the Dickens character Sam Weller, is considered a major subtype of the proverb. In this work the editors assembled and annotated a collection of wellerisms from more than 1500 texts of written and oral literatures.

To the very end of his life, even while battling cancer, Stewart kept himself active and busy as a scholar. He and Don Lance collaborated on the twelfth edition of J. S. Kenyon's *American Pronunciation*, recently published by George Wahr.

Above all, as colleague and friend, I remember Stewart as a gentleman and scholar with a heart of gold.

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Resource Announcement

The GEOname Digital Gazetteer, which contains more than four million worldwide geographical names, is available from GDE Systems. The Gazetteer is available on CD ROM and can be accessed by any personal computer (386 or higher) equipped with a CD drive.

The Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) has compiled and maintained a extensive database of geographic feature names since the 1940s. Until recently, the more than five million name cards were stored in gigantic floor-to-ceiling filing cabinets. The cards contained information which made it easy to determine the feature and the location of a particular site as long as the country and a recognized name or name variant was provided. Locating a feature name from coordinates alone was virtually impossible.

GDE Systems has brought the DMA collection into the digital age by developing a stand-alone CD-based database. Through this CD, users can now research the geographic names of more than 200 countries (excluding the United States).

The database can be queried in a variety of ways depending upon the particular questions which are being asked — by country, feature type, name, or area, for instance. A simple mouse drag across a map selects an area of interest. Users may select from lists of countries or feature types by clicking on the desired entry. A search name can be entered in a text window and wild cards can be used to search for such things as variant spellings or partial name matches.

Search results are displayed in the manner found in hardcopy DMA gazetteers. All names are presented in the Romanized form of the local national official languages, along with appropriate diacritics and special characters. Many features include their English exonyms. Variant forms are cross-referenced to the national names.

Data derived from searches can be exported to other databases or spreadsheets and can be sorted and otherwise manipulated by a spreadsheet program or text editor.

For further information on the Digital Gazetteer, contact

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