

“Your Name”

CHILDERS

Childers is one of those perplexing names that seem to defy elucidation until some one comes along with a neat explanation and then it seems so simple. And no one yet (including Elsdon C. Smith) has been able to submit a complete and satisfying interpretation. The name probably has two origins. First, it may refer to the descendant of *Chilbert* ('cauldron', 'bright'); secondly, it may be a contraction of childer-house, thus designating one who operated or lived in or near such a house. *Childer* is an old plural of child. A *child* was an attendant, a young man or young knight, usually a well-bred youth of the upper classes. A childerhouse might thus be the place where more than one noble youth resided.

HAMMON

This is an English name more commonly found as Hammond, Hammonds or Hammons. The *d* is excrescent. It refers to the descendant of Hamo or Hamon, from Old German *Haimo*, 'house' or 'home'. As a given name it was introduced into England by the Normans and became quite popular, and has not entirely disappeared today. It is thus most common in the southeastern and eastern coast counties of England, although many are found in the vicinity of the Welsh border. Shakespeare named his only son Hamnet which is the same name with a diminutive ending. In some instances this name is a corruption of the Germanic *Heahmund*, meaning 'chief, protector'.

PEARCE

This name refers to the son of Peter (rock), coming directly from the Old French form *Piers*, which was introduced into England at the time of the Norman Conquest. Some variants of this name are Pierce, Peirce, Pearse and Pears. But to set out all the surnames derived from the Biblical Peter would take a great deal of space, since Peter, in its various national forms, was common in all countries where the Bible was revered. Although this name is found all over England, it is most frequent in Cornwall, Devon,

Somerset and Gloucestershire, in the Southwest of England, in Kent in the Southeast and in Yorkshire in the North.

RUDNYCKYJ

Rudnyčkyj (pronunciation: (roodnits'kiy) is a Ukrainian form of the Slavic surname which appears in Russian as *Rudnickiy*, in Polish as *Rudnicki*, in Czech as *Roudnický*. It is an adjectival derivation from the place names: *Rudnyk*, *Rudnyky*, *Rudnyča* etc., preserving an Indoeuropean root 'roudh- 'red, blond', cf., Latin *rūfus*, Lithuanian *raūdas*, German *rot*, English *red*, etc. The place names with this root are usually transferred from the names of rivers upon which the settlements were located ('Red River'). There are two possibilities for the explanation of *Rudnyčkyj*, *Rudnicki*, etc.: 'a man coming from *Rudnyk* (*Rudnyky*, *Rudnyča*)' (the most common cases) and 'a man to whom *Rudnyk* (*Rudnyky*, *Rudnyča*) belongs, a nobleman who is owner of *Rudnyk*'. In medieval Latin documents the Slavic forms were often described with the preposition *de*, viz. *de Rudnyk* (*Rudnyčkyj*). In America there are many deformations of the surname the most popular being *Rudnick*; other forms: *Rudneski*, *Rudnesk*, *Rudniki*, *Rudnisk*, *Rudnychyj*, etc. Some of them had been derived from other place names as named above, e. g. *Rudenškyj* from *Rudno*, *Rudnyanski* from *Rudnya*, *Rudecki* from *Rudki*, *Rucki* (*Rudski*) from *Ruda*, *Rudy*, *Rudavskyj* from *Rudava*, *Rudkowski* from *Rudkow*. An excellent manual for these place names is Fr. Miklosich's: *Die Bildung der Slavischen Personen- und Ortsnamen*, Heidelberg, 1927, C. Winter Universitätsverlag.

WOLFESCHLEGELSTEINHAUSENBERGERDORFF

In some languages, like German, Greek, Welsh, the habit still exists of compounding various elements into one single noun — a habit which no longer prevails in modern English. Such formidable looking nouns appear less frightening when one knows how to break them up into their original components. Hence the name of our new member simply means Mr. Woolfslayer who lives in the stone house in Bergerdorff.

WOODS

As England is dotted with small woods, forests or groves, it is to be expected that people who live near or by them would be so named. Also people who dwelt within a dense growth of trees would be so described. Indeed, it would be surprising if Woods were not a very popular English surname. The name is found both in the singular as Wood, the more common English form, and with an excrescent *s* as Woods, the latter being possibly easier to pronounce. Wood is most frequent in Yorkshire, Cheshire and the northern midland counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire, and is also scattered throughout Scotland.

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Alaska Names. — I have retained the native names of geographical points wherever I could learn them. In my opinion this should always be studied. The Indian names of mountains, lakes, and rivers are natural land-marks for the traveler, whoever he may be; to destroy these by substituting words of a foreign tongue is to destroy the natural guides. You ask for some point and mention its native name; your Indian guide will take you there. Ask for the same place in your substituted English word and you will not be understood. Traveling in Alaska has already sufficient difficulties, and they ought not to be increased by changing all the picturesque Indian names. Another very good reason why these native names should be preserved is that some tradition of tribal importance is always connected with them. These people have no written language, but the retention of their native names is an excellent medium through which to learn their history. (E. J. Glaves, "Our Alaska Expedition", in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, November 22, 1890.)