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Reviews

Place Names of Wisconsin. By EDWARD CALLARY. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016. Pp. xxv + 327. $21.95 (PB), ISBN 9780299309640

As state-wide place name books have seemed to go out of style, it is with some relief that Edward Callary has revived that tradition with this study of the place names of Wisconsin, following by just a few years his *Place Names of Illinois*, published by the University of Illinois Press in 2009. Dr Callary, Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, is a former editor of *Names: A Journal of Onomastics* and a former president of the American Name Society. When he retired he moved to Austin, Texas, and is now at work on the place names of that state.

I have a special fondness for Wisconsin; my wife is from there and I have visited there many times. I was also familiar with a previous book on Wisconsin place names, *The Romance of Wisconsin Place Names*, by Robert Gard and L. G. Sorden (1969). Callary acknowledges this book but, as the title indicates, it is more anecdotal than authoritative, "filled with the legends, folk tales, and stories" (xxiv) about Wisconsin names, but devoid of documentation. Despite my interest in the state, I had some hesitation when I was asked to review this book, since Ed Callary and I have been good friends for many years. In fact, he succeeded me as editor of this journal, *Names*. I wondered how I might respond if this turned out not to be up to his usual standards.

But I need not have worried. Callary's is an excellent book, worthy to be placed on the shelf with McArthur's (Oregon), Gudde's (California), Foscue's (Alabama), and Rennick's (Kentucky), to name some of the best. Like these, Callary arranges the entries in a single alphabetical list rather than by county or feature type, making it easy to locate a name without resorting to an index. An exception is that the introduction summarizes the efforts to explain the uncertain origin of the name of the river from which the state takes its name. It is first recorded in 1673 as *Miscousing* and passed through at least 17 different forms before settling on *Wisconsin* in the 1820s.

The primary focus of Callary's book is on the names, not on the sites, so each entry includes a discussion of the historical or linguistic origin of the name. He also includes a guide to pronunciation, using broad phonetic spellings except when, as with *Madison*, the pronunciation is obvious. A little less obvious is *Eau Claire*, rendered as [o KLEHR], and *Vilas* (County), as [VEYE luhs]. Not at all obvious is *Embarrass* [AM brah], a village in central Wisconsin. (The *A* in the first syllable is pronounced as a "short a," as in the verb *am*.) The village name, by the way, is from the Embarrass River, from French *embarras* 'hindrance,' 'obstruction,' specifically by trees or foliage. Callary's phonetic spellings help the average reader know how the name is pronounced locally.

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Wisely, Callary limits his study to populated places and civil divisions and includes natural features such as lakes and rivers only when they contribute to the naming of the former. The US Geographical Names Information System has collected some 40,000 names in Wisconsin, including natural features and even churches and other buildings. To include the many rivers and the several thousand named lakes would make this book too long. He started with the nearly 2400 names of inhabited places that appear in the DeLorme *Atlas and Gazetteer of Wisconsin* and added the 72 county names and 1200+ town names. Since many names are shared by two or more of these entities, he finds cogent information for the origins of about 2000 names. With an average of seven names per page he can devote at least five or six lines to each one.

Each entry word, in bold type, is followed by the pronunciation (unless obvious), then the name of the county. After that, for most entries, comes either "town," "village," or "city." These categories are not self-evident but are legal terms defined by the state. Generally, cities and villages are populated places, large and small, respectively. But the state does not specify how large or how small, and some villages are larger than cities. Bayfield is a "city," but its population is less than 500, and Menomonee Falls (a suburb of Milwaukee), with more than 35,000 people, is a "village."[1] The designation "town" may create confusion for anyone who does not read Callary's introduction or does not live in Wisconsin, where a "town" is not a small city. Unlike other Midwestern states (but similar to New England), Wisconsin uses the term "town" in the sense of civil township, sometimes coterminous with the boundaries of the 36-square mile survey townships, but more often not. Towns are civil divisions within counties, collecting property taxes and providing some services to residents who do not live in cities or villages. To avoid confusion in this review, I have written "town" as "town(ship)." Unincorporated communities go into a final category, only occasionally labeled in the entry as "ppl" (populated place). Callary says that if a place is not labeled as a city, village, or town then it is a ppl. The main part of each entry is the discussion of the name origin, but it also includes the date of incorporation for a place that is incorporated or the date of the establishment of a post office if appropriate. Most entries conclude with a source reference, citing a title or an author's or informant's name keyed to the 30-page bibliography.

In the introduction, Callary classifies the name origins into five categories: Native American, French, Transfer, Commemorative, and Other. Wisconsin has many Native American names, especially of natural features, but of many populated places too, and several languages are represented, including Menominee, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Oneida. Native American names were also applied by explorers and settlers, who either spelled them imaginatively or translated them. Ojibwa *kinoji* became Kenosha and Ho-Chunk *day-wau-sha-ra* 'lake of the fox' became Fox Lake. Canadian French traders, trappers, and explorers translated many names into their language. *Lac du Flambeau*, *Prairie du Chien*, and *Fond Du Lac* are examples. As settlers moved into Wisconsin in the nineteenth century they transferred many names from other parts of America or Europe, and as land was settled and villages and cities created, many were named to commemorate landowners, founders, and prominent local, national, and even international people. These are just some of the sources of names in Wisconsin.

Place Names of Wisconsin is an extremely rich book, and space permits no more than a brief demonstration of some of its richness. The capital city provides one example:

> **Madison**. Dane. Town (1846) and City (1856). The city of Madison was founded in 1836 by land speculator and politician James Duane Doty, who owned more than one thousand acres of land in the four lakes area. Doty successfully lobbied

> the legislature to choose his projected city as the capital of first the territory and subsequently the state of Wisconsin. Doty was an admirer of James Madison, fourth president of the United States, and named the city in his honor. See Doty. (163)

Madison is in Dane County, and the name refers to both the town(ship) and the city. The discussion of this entry is typical: informative and terse but relaxed in style, in complete sentences, without annoying abbreviations. The reference to Doty points to the town(ship) by that name in Oconto County and the ppl Dotyville in *Fond du Lac* County. This entry provides further biographical information about James Duane Doty (1799–1865), second governor of Wisconsin Territory, US Congressman, and toward the end of his life governor of Utah Territory.

When we look for *Fond du Lac* we find that it is pronounced [FAHN duh lac] and is a "County (1836), a Town (1838), and City (1852)." (96) The name is French for "foot of the lake," given by fur traders to the southernmost part of Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest inland body of water. There is no entry for the lake, but *Winnebago* is the name of a county that includes most of the western side of the lake, and that entry tells us that the name is either an Ojibwa or Potawatomi exonym given to the people who prefer to call themselves Ho-Chunk. Winnebago was first recorded as *Ouininpigou* 'dirty water.' The Ho-Chunk lived along the Fox River (which flows into and out of the lake), polluted every year with rotting fish. *Winne* is the general Algonquian word for water and *bago* may mean "strong smelling."

This example demonstrates how Callary connects features through their names so that each entry does not stand without context. He makes wider connections too. If a name is a transfer from somewhere else, he gives the reason and the events of the time that might have influenced the name. An interesting example is *Ladysmith*, a city in Rusk County. The name was given in 1900 to replace several competing names and recognizes that earlier that year, in South Africa, the Siege of Ladysmith had been lifted. In the Second Boer War, the Boer forces had surrounded the town of Ladysmith, trapping the British. When the siege ended after four months, the story was widely reported in newspapers in the US. The South African town was named in 1850 to honor the wife of Sir Henry Smith, governor of the Cape Colony. Callary's account, based on a 1985 centennial history, corrects earlier stories that *Ladysmith* honored the wife of the owner of a factory that local citizens hoped to lure to the city.

I could give many more examples of the richness of this book, such as the hundreds of local people who would be forgotten were their names not on the land and even then would not be remembered without the efforts of onomastic scholars such as Edward Callary, or the names immigrants mostly from northern Europe brought to plant in the new land so they would not forget where they came from.

The book is beautifully designed and produced and impeccably edited. Callary made a bold decision to include town(ships), whose name origins are especially difficult to learn. But they are important because more than any other name they are usually the result of local choice and indicative of the values and concerns of people at the time. There is only one map, showing the counties. Admittedly, as I said above, the focus is on the name and not on the site, but it would be helpful to see where the features are located. The entries always indicate what county the feature is in, but there is no easy way to locate where the county is in the state, and, more importantly, where the feature is located within the county.

This is a minor quibble, for *Place Names of Wisconsin* is a marvelous book, delightful to read or just to look for a favorite name, and a model for any toponymist to emulate. My friend Ed Callary has done a great service for Wisconsin and for place name study, and I look forward to his book on Texas place names.

Note

1. Wisconsin has three spellings of this name: *Menomonee* Falls (village in Waukesha County), *Menomonie* (city and town in Dunn County), and *Menominee* (county, town, and reservation). All are from Ojibwa *manomini* "wild rice people," an exonym for the Menominee people.

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Dictionary of Americanized French-Canadian Names: Onomastics and Genealogy. By MARC PICARD. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company for Clearfield Company. 2013. Pp. XVII-169. $21.95. ISBN: 978-0-8063-5645-7.

A significant facet of French-Canadian onomastics has come to light in dictionary form with this substantial contribution by Marc Picard. It is estimated that nearly one million Québécois left their homeland between the 1840s and the 1920s to seek work in the factories and mills of New England and elsewhere in the USA in what has become known as the Great Québec Exodus. As a result, thousands of French-Canadian family names became exposed to a powerful English adstratum and yielded an impressive set of variant forms. The names were changed by the settlers themselves or modified by civil and religious authorities, as was the case for many other immigrant families at the time. Adélard Lambert, a writer who lived part of his life in New England, was among the first to examine the issue in his brochure (Lambert 1933) and book (Lambert 1934) in which he laments the tendency of Québec families to americanize their name once settled in New England. A more serious study was published by Dr. Ulysse Forget (1949) in which he provides a list of some one thousand variants of Québecois family names based on a body of over 20,000 civil documents taken from archival material in New England. Our own study (Lapierre 1991) examined the various language processes that yielded this amazing number of variants. Marc Picard's dictionary sheds new light on the issue in a more organized and rigorous fashion, drawing on the nomenclature and methodology of his impressive dictionary on the family names of French Canada (Picard 2010).

In the introduction, the author provides a synoptic overview of French-Canadian anthroponomy, discussing the origin and development of French family names in America. The typology distinguishes between names attested in traditional French etymological dictionaries such Dauzat (1977) or Morlet (1997) that were transplanted into New France without any change such as *Benoît, Dupuis, Lacroix, Robert,* etc. and those that are not found in these dictionaries such as *Patenaude,* a name the author traces back to an alteration of *Pateno(s)tre,* a nickname given to a manufacturer of rosaries because of the two first words of the Lord's Prayer in Latin. The author then identifies names that have been modified, either before their transfer to New France (*Willencourt* > *Vaillancourt*) or after (*Prénouveau* > *Prénovost*). Finally, the typology identifies names borrowed from foreign languages, including English (*Farnworth* > *Phaneuf*), German (*Mayer* > *Maheu(x)*), Breton (*Kéréon* > *Quirion*) and Basque (*Aosteguia* > *Ostiguy*).

Anglicization or americanization of most Great Exodus family names involve some kind of alteration in the spelling. These changes can be minimal such as the elimination of diacritics (*Lévesque* > *Levesque*) or involve the creation of a script adapted to English

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