

Book Reviews

J. S. Whiting and Richard J. Whiting, *Forts of the State of California*.
(Privately printed, 1960).

The generic term "Fort" has played an important role in the geographical nomenclature of the United States. Not only was the country covered with military camps and reservations called "Forts" but in the westward movement of the nation numerous forts were erected by private initiative, mainly as a protection against Indian attacks. Even today when the idea of a protective fortification is completely obsolete, we still have numerous names with the generic fort on our maps: military encampments and barracks still use it and many cities preserve it in their names because they were first settled around a fort.

Messrs. Whiting state in their Preface that not only military and semi-military establishments are treated but place names with the word "Fort" as a part of the name. Yet, the entire make-up of the book gives the impression that it is compiled not for the student of geographical names but for the student of military history. Moreover, it is "dedicated to the armed forces of the United States of America and especially to the United States Army." Such a book would present a logical entity if the authors had not included all place names in which the name "Fort" occurs. *Fort Ann*, *Fort John*, and *Fort Trojan* were gold digger camps, the name applied in fun; *Fort Oliver* was "founded about 1946 for amusement and publicity," so was *Fort Wilderness* in Disneyland; even a *Fort Mountain* in Shasta County is included, not a "military post" but the "name of a mountain" as we are informed. The *Fort Mountain* in Calaveras County escaped the eyes of the compilers. Furthermore, there are a number of names which did not exist at all. Since the authors give no information where and when they found the name we can only assume that they created the name by misinterpreting information: *Fort Bodega* because there were two Russian warehouses at Bodega Bay, *Drake's Fort* because Francis Drake repaired here his *Golden Hinde* in 1579, *Fort Right* because someone spelled Wright Right, *Fort New Helvitia*, *Fort Ruin*, *Fort Slawianski* and so on.

The book might be of interest to military history — there are excellent little maps of the military forts — there is nothing in it for the onomatologist.

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Where to Go and Place-Names of Centre County, Pa. By Paul M. Dubbs. Centre Daily Times, Offset Centre, and the Nittany Printing and Publishing Company, State College and Boalsburg, Pa., June, 1961. 155 pp., illus.; no price given.

The title and physical appearance of this volume would lead one to believe that it is just another guidebook for local tourists. The reader, however, will be pleasantly surprised to find a wealth of material pertaining to place names and history in a specific area, in this case Centre County, Pennsylvania. The handsomely illustrated volume is a compilation and condensation of 119 articles on Centre County place names published in *The Centre Daily News*. It is frankly directed to the residents of the area, both as a practical where-to-go book and as a valuable addition to Centre County history.

The volume is significant beyond its modestly stated purpose. The contents, a listing and discussion of more than 300 place names, almost perfectly illustrates the uninhibited, arbitrary, and personal naming habits of settlers — primitive, in-between, and modern — throughout the United States, and for that matter perhaps everywhere that new land is opened for settlement. The name of the original home of the settler is usually first applied, but then personal whim and aspiration play their lively roles.

Patterns are easily discerned. The most common method is the use of a surname with *-burg*, *-ville*, *-town*, *-by*, as the fancy struck. Occasionally a surname will take two common endings, as in Earleystown and Earleysburg. Armau Village obtained its name through the combination of the first letters of the names Arthur and Maude. Roland Curtin, a pioneer iron-maker, is remembered in both Curtin and Roland. Julian is a shortened name for what was

originally Julia Ann. First names occur often, examples being Martha, Clarence, and Hannah. Axemann takes its names from Thomas Mann, the founder of the Mann Axe Factory.

Descriptive names from topographical features frequently appear: Rock, Rock Springs, Biling Springs, The Forks, and Nigh Bank. Church names, such as Shiloh, Paradise, Zion, and Union, became town names as the need arose. The influence of real estate developers can be seen in Park Forest Village, Overlook Heights, Spring Lea Acres, Woodsdale, Oak Mont Park, and others.

A few singular items should be mentioned. Fishing Creek School is not near any stream. Booksburg was humorously applied to Pleasant Hill School; Booksburg survived and later, somehow, became Boogersburg. Spike Island perhaps took its name from an Irish prison. An example of folk etymology occurs with Ingleby, which "is said to have been named for an early settler named Ingle, who kept bees." Several names cannot be traced to their origins: Peru, Tangletown, Tadpole, Dunkirk, Ready Cash, Casanova, Poor-manside, Sunday Corners, Rabbit Hill, and Eggtown.

Although Mr. Dubbs does not resort to the scholarly apparatus that we have come to expect in a serious book on place names, he does date the name whenever oral or written records are available, and he lists the person who named the place. The research and presentation are thorough, effective, and readable. His volume will afford the onomatologist with many moments of reading enjoyment, plus several hours of reflection on the curious way in which humans label their environment.

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R. Berger, P. Bougard, R. Boyenval, *Répertoire des noms de famille du Pas-de-Calais*, Société de Dialectologie Picarde II, Archives du Pas-de-Calais, Arras, 1960.

Since the purpose of this book is to add another body of information to the *Inventaire général du "picard,"* in process of preparation and publication, a summary of its contents is appropriate.

The Introduction, written presumably by Berger and Bougard, Boyenval having died in 1958, states that anthroponymic research must be based on collections of material comparable to the topographical dictionaries which have served as a tool in toponymic research (p. 7). The most satisfactory source for such an alphabetical list would be the census (pp. 7–9). The Pas-de-Calais census of 1820 was chosen because it is the earliest which is complete and the latest which will give a good indication of the indigenous population, nineteenth century industrialization having brought many outsiders into the area (p. 9). The publication of this 1820 census list, A through J, is the first for any French department.

The Introduction concludes with a reprinting of the 1820 orders of the prefect of the Pas-de-Calais directing that the census be taken, a tabulation of the population of the principal subdivisions of the department in 1820 (pp. 26–28), an alphabetical list of the 921 communities with their populations and their reference symbols as used in the list of names (pp. 29–38), and a finding list of communities by key number (pp. 39–42).

The alphabetical *Répertoire des noms de famille du Pas-de-Calais en 1820, A–J*, (pp. 45–251) lists each name, occasionally followed in brackets by a variation in its spelling; the community or communities in which it was recorded, indicated by a reference symbol; a superscript number after this symbol to show the total of that name in each community if more than one; and for somewhat over 200 names, an asterisk referring to the appendix (pp. 253–257) where variations in the forms of the names are discussed. Inside the back cover is pasted a *carte systématique du Pas-de-Calais* showing by key number the location of each community.

The publication was subsidized by the National Center of Scientific Research and by the department. The *Société de dialectologie picarde* was under the “haut patronage de M. Mario Roques,” an honorary member of the MLA from 1926 until his death in 1961; and this study presumably is a part of the “Inventaire général de la langue française,” of which M. Roques had been in charge since 1936. The material appears to have been compiled with a scholarly care worthy of its distinguished sponsorship.

The note at the head of the appendix (p. 253) suggests how meticulously that material was examined:

Le présent volume contient 16,465 articles. Plus de 4,000 ont fait l'objet de recherches dans les registres d'état-civil ou de catholicité, les tables de l'enregistrement, etc. Ces recherches ont donné des résultats deux fois sur trois; on trouvera ci-après un choix, nécessairement arbitraire, des plus significatifs.

A sample entry from this appendix reads:

Houtsmet: l'état nominatif des habitants de Calais, n° 730, donne la forme *Gottemet*; *Houtsmet* figure dans un acte de mariage du 7-11-1809 et un acte de naissance Bogno du 31-1-1819 (l'acte de baptême correspondant porte: *Gouttesmet*).

These variant spellings suggest that here we have an attempt to render in French the Flemish word for *goldsmith*, Dutch *goudsmid*. Two of the spellings retain the original *g*, which would have been a velar spirant in Flemish [ɣ]; the other, which is the one entered in the census list, renders it as *h*. But *h* in French is always silent, even when "aspirated." So the spelling *Houtsmet* is a hybrid, the exact intention of which defies analysis.

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Hamill Kenny, *The Origin and Meaning of the Indian Place Names of Maryland*, (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1961), \$7.00.

Those who are familiar with Hamill Kenny's *West Virginia Place Names*¹ might expect a worthy successor in his *Indian Place Names of Maryland*. This is no hasty pot-boiler; doubtless it represents prodigious labor. Included are a 29-page introductory essay, a 113-page dictionary listing 315 names, a ten-page appendix of "extinct, misspelled, scantily documented names, apparently Indian," plus an extensive bibliography, an index, and map. Compared with most works in the field, it is an outstanding improvement, yet it leaves much to be desired.

Some courage is required to tackle this subject, for the aboriginal languages and dialects of the Maryland natives (principally Conoy and Nanticoke) are long extinct and the surviving vocabularies and

¹ Piedmont, W. Va., *Place Name Press*, 1945.

other linguistic sources of these tribes are scarce, scattered, and fragmentary. Kenny approaches his task by the comparative method, seeking similar stems in related languages of the same family in order to arrive at a probable translation. He also examines the opinions of previous writers wherever they exist, provides a critical commentary on them, and closes with his own conclusions.

Fannie Eckstorm has well admonished place-name investigators not to imagine that they can escape the necessity of demolishing erroneous opinions of previous "experts," for errors (often flowing from carelessness or folk etymology), once in print, have an astonishing viability and competitive power against the hard-sought fruits of more serious investigators.² Kenny is to be congratulated for breaking with the old custom of merely listing diverse opinions, and for furnishing his own evaluation and conclusions for most of the names considered. He further attempts, as J. H. Trumbull advised,³ to seek corroborative evidence in the natural environment for descriptive names, for Indian names must be appropriate.

While acknowledging that Kenny rises to his duty, and being mindful of his qualifications and the difficulty of his task, this reviewer is nevertheless compelled to register some dissatisfaction. Why, in his search for comparative stems, must he go to such distant languages as Fox and Cree, when the Maryland dialects are more closely related to the Delaware, a well-recorded language? He uses Delaware, to be sure, but not consistently. Why, moreover, did he not use any of the eleven sources of Nanticoke vocabulary which are listed in James C. Pilling's *Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages*?⁴ The single Nanticoke vocabulary which is listed in Kenny's bibliography⁵ has apparently not been used, for nowhere is it mentioned either in the text or the copious footnotes. Some other listed items have been used sparingly if at all. In other places Kenny attempts, from known languages, to reconstruct the Proto-Algon-

² *Indian Place Names of the Penobscot Valley and Maine Coast*, (Orono, Me., University Press, 1941), pp. xxix ff.

³ "Composition of Indian Geographical Names," *Collections, Connecticut Historical Society*, II (Hartford, 1870), pp. 4-5.

⁴ *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 13, (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1893), p. 371.

⁵ D. G. Brinton, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. XXXI, (Philadelphia, 1893), pp. 325-33.

quian (PA) term, but his method of determining this extinct aboriginal "Sanskrit" is not clear.

When confronted with some place-name puzzles, Kenny appears so determined to offer some explanation that he seems to resort to guesswork.

Thus, he concludes that 'big' or 'great' is signified by the syllable *ch* in such diverse names as *Choptank*, *Chesapeake*, *Chicamacomico*, and *Chicone*, but not in *Chincoteague*. He again believes that 'big' or 'great' was or might be the original signification of the ancestors of such diverse syllables as *Cut* (for *Kitt*) in *Cutmaptico*, *Geanqua* (for *Chingua*) in *Geanquakin*, the *Kitt* in *Kittamaquindi* (this last probably is correct), and *matta* perhaps in *Matapeake*⁶ but not in *Mattawoman*. His basis for much of this speculation is Fox *kehcti* or *ketchi*, and Natick *massa* (great). Not only is he overworking the word 'great'; he is seeking support for his translations of the stems at too great a linguistic distance, and is relying too heavily on mere syllabic similarity. (*Ch* is a very common sound in many Delaware words having nothing to do with great). If one followed this procedure in English, 'great' and 'grate' could be equated, or 'shoot' and 'chute'; or in Algonquian, *ke-won-nee* (Ottawa, 'prairie hen,' A. J. Blackbird) and *ke-waw-ne* (Miami, 'nose,' Schoolcraft), not to mention such other identical sounding terms as *mickwon* (Ojibway, 'spoon,' Carver) and *miqwan* (Ojibway, 'feather' or 'pen,' Baraga).

If one *must* use comparative linguistics as the sole method of analysis, the comparison should be with the most closely related language. (Admittedly, incomplete sources do not always make this possible). However, this reviewer is firmly convinced that this method is inadequate;⁷ one reason, among others, being that Indian names are seldom found in the original form. Kenny indeed seeks out earlier forms from old maps and records, but a further check on meanings should be sought in historical accounts wherever possible. The explanations of early travelers are not always dependable, but they sometimes offer the best answer to linguistic disputations.

The root word for Chicago for example (for which I have gathered thirty different spellings), considered alone or in various combinations, can mean 'skunk,' or 'wild onion,' or at least half a dozen other things. The question might hang in the air forever had not Henri Joutel written in 1687: "We arrived at a place called Chicagou, which . . . has taken this name from the quantity of garlic which grows in the district." Similarly, J. H. Trumbull has written:

⁶ For *Matapeake*, his final but uncertain conclusion, after suggesting the possibility of 'great,' is that it probably signifies 'joined.'

⁷ Fannie Eckstorm properly scores "pundits" whose favored method is "to break up a place name into syllables, quite at random, and then to match the individual parts to anything above the earth they could find in print, regardless of dialect and grammatical structure." *Loc.cit.* (See note 2.)

No one could be sure that Powhatan meant 'falls in a river' (*pouat hanne*) if John Smith had omitted to tell us that "the great emperor" of Virginia was called by that name from his birthplace "above the falls, at the head of our river" (near Richmond) and that his proper right name was *Wahunsenacawh*.⁸

Admittedly such observations are not always available on obscure names, but efforts should be made to locate those which exist.

Another pitfall in place-name analysis is that of seeking origins in the wrong language.

Tohoga, for example, is assumed by Kenny to be of Algonquian origin, whereas it has the earmarks of Iroquoian, and may be related to *Tioga*, which is demonstrably of that family. *Oga* is an Iroquoian terminal suffix signifying 'place' (Schoolcraft) or territory (Morgan). Iroquois roaming placed some of their names far beyond their New York homeland, e.g., Shenandoah in Virginia.

In one item Kenny seems to contradict himself, while in several others he is either on dubious ground or clearly in error. He first opines that "Savannah, like Shawnee, appears to come from *shawun* 'south,'" (p. 6, note), but elsewhere says he "favors the topographical explanation, i.e., 'plains,'" (p. 125). He gives without comment an old and unlikely view that *Kentucky* is Iroquoian for 'a place where the grazing is good.'⁹ *Youghiogheny* he defines as 'four-lands (stream),' without indicating how 'four lands' can be stretched to mean 'stream.' His explanation for *Susquehanna* 'smooth stream' is an improvisation based on supposed cognates from non-Delaware languages, and the random extraction of the supposed syllable *aha*, said to mean 'lapping, alternate motion' (?). The more probable original constituents of this name are Delaware *Assisku-hanne* or *Assiskuju-hanne*, signifying 'muddy stream' (Brinton & Anthony, *Lenape Dictionary*, p. 23), the initial *a* having been lost, a very common happening. In *Anacostia*, Kenny presumes an initial *a* was added to what was once *Nacost*. The almost universal fate of Indian names in white usage, however, is not to acquire additional syllables, sounds, or letters, but to lose them.¹⁰

Much of the foregoing may be yet subject to debate, but the following is less so: *Tonoloway* does not mean wildcat; *apo* (p. 89) is not 'water' in any Algonquian language; *pin* is not equivalent to *min* (pp. 60-61) (*p* and *q* are not interchangeable, as *b* and *p* are) — *pin* refers to root plants, like the wild potato, from which comes the name of *Macoupin River* in Illinois and *Wapsipinicon River* in Iowa. *Min* refers to berries, grains, and some nuts; from it comes *Menominee* and perhaps *Minong*, Wisconsin. *Canoe* cannot be both Arawak and Carib; it is Carib only. Nothing in *Catoctin* can be related to any Algonquian word for mountain; *Sassafras* is of Romance origin, not Indian. Kenny's explanation of *Pocahontas* 'it [the sun] breaks through the fog with its rays and heat' appears purely fanciful. He believes *Boxiron*

⁸ *Op. cit.*, introduction.

⁹ This name smacks of Shawnee origin, the *-ucky* probably meaning 'land,' while the significance of *kent* is yet undiscovered.

¹⁰ *Osaukee* has become *Sauk*, *Osaunemin* has become *Saunemin*, *Assinisippi* has become *Sinissippi*.

Creek refers to "Indians who smelted iron" but there is no evidence that Indians ever smelted iron.¹¹ *Tuxedo Lake* is in New York, not New Jersey. Finally, his effort to find Indian origin for *Vienna* seems far-fetched, though many European-looking names are indeed corruptions of Indian names.¹²

There is also one minor defect in Kenny's otherwise superb arrangement. Such names as *Little Catoclin*, *North Branch* of the Patapsco, etc., are listed separately from their derivatives, in alphabetical order, causing unnecessary repetition.

In his introductory essay Kenny, in discussing cultural reasons for the preservation or extirpation of Indian names, remarks that while Virginia colonists rejected Indian names, "The Catholic faith in Maryland perhaps had the opposite effect of encouraging the Marylanders to accept and keep Indian names." Why should this be so? Catholic predominance in Maryland was brief; the French and Spanish of that faith, however, often tried to substitute European for aboriginal names in their territories, as did the Protestant English elsewhere. That many aboriginal names survived is a testimony not of tender regard for aboriginal culture by any denomination, but is rather a sign of the viability of established names, especially for natural features.

One final criticism concerns Kenny's treatment of authorities. He ought to caution his readers against certain substandard "authorities" such as Henry Gannett, whose work has been properly described by G. R. Stewart as unreliable. Not only does Kenny fail to do this; he also frequently quotes from the 1902 edition of Gannett's *Place Names*, which is more error-stacked than the 1905 edition. Gannett and Stephen G. Boyd, who were mere copyists, should hardly be placed in the same company with the learned Heckewelder, as is done on p. 94. N. Toomey, cited on p. 55, is a poor source for Muskhogean names. Cyrus Byington, H. S. Halbert, and William A. Read are preferable, but remain unmentioned.

The foregoing detailed criticisms in no way detract from the over-all judgement that much if not most of Kenny's work is useful and constitutes a formidable advance in aboriginal toponomy. It rests upon much painstaking investigation; it has earned a place on onomastic bookshelves. It is to be hoped that this work may encourage the publication of data on Indian place-names in other states.

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¹¹ F. W. Hodge, ed., *Handbook of American Indians*, (Washington, G.P.O., 1907-10), 1. 615, 648.

¹² E.g., *Seneca* (Falls) N.Y., *Mystic and Norwalk*, Conn.

Bershas, Henry N., *Puns on Proper Names in Spanish*. Wayne State University Press Studies, 1961. 138 pp. paper bound.

The earlier period of Spanish literature furnishes a never-ending source from which students of the language may dig out references to double meanings that easily escape the casual reader. Indeed, it sometimes seems that the literature was only a framework to cover the word-play that went on, particularly in popular speech. This use of puns runs throughout Spanish literature, but the great age for these references corresponds roughly to the flowering of the picaresque genre, which made a strong attempt to imitate the speech of the underworld, the beggar class, and the other uneducated strata. When more elevated personages appeared in this literature, they were mostly treated humorously; both their acts and speech aimed at bringing them down to the gutter level. Highly respected writers, in verse and drama, of course, used word-play, but they tempered the tone of the references to fit the character responsible for the utterance; and examples are especially frequent in the speech of servants, rarer in the speech of the hidalgo class.

Mr. Bershas has made an extensive collection of puns that involve reference to proper names. They are classified under 252 alphabetical headings, some of which have several subdivisions. The headings list the proper name to which reference is made in a covert way, e.g., *Adán, Alba, San Alexis, Amadis, Barajas, Blanca*, etc. There is no index to the contrasting meaning.

An example of this type of pun is the double or hidden meaning in the use of the term,

blanca: Blanca:: a coin of the Golden Age: *Blanca de Borbón*, the bride of Pedro the Cruel. Her tragic story was a part of universal Spanish tradition and culture. Others:

Solimán:solimán:: the Turkish ruler: a cosmetic

tomar:Tomar:: verb *to take*: a town near Lisbon

puerta cerrada:Puerta Cerrada:: closed door: place name in Madrid.

The pun was used also as a veiled reference to taboo words or for prudish treatment of innocent terms:

Mérida for *mierda*; *Alcalá, Huete* for *alcahuete*.

An author index makes it possible to locate all examples taken from a given writer. In keeping with the humorous nature of most of the examples, it should be noted that the bibliography (pp. 132 to 135) does not list as a source of examples any of the Books of Chivalry or the Pastoral novels, which were so popular in the period preceding the picaresque novels of Spain's Golden Age and on which the ingenious gentleman of La Mancha based his views of the world about him.

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R. B. Klymasz, *A Classified Dictionary of Slavic Surname Changes in Canada*. *Onomastica* No. 22. Winnipeg, 1961. Pp. 64. Price \$1.00.

Here is the 22nd issue of *Onomastica*, that brilliant series of booklets published by the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences under the able editorship of Professor J. B. Rudnyćkyj, a former president of the American Name Society.

This work is an excerpt from the author's unpublished Master's Thesis, *The Canadianization of Slavic Surnames*, presented to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research of the University of Manitoba, in 1960.

The first part lists, in alphabetical order under the old surname, a classification of the change under four heads: (1) orthographical, (2) phonological, (3) morphological, and (4) lexical. More than 2,000 names are set out. The second part is in the nature of an alphabetical index, listing the new surname first.

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