

## Notes and Queries

Virgil J. Vogel of Chicago recently sent a number of bibliographical items, which are being referred to the wondrously efficient Seely-Sealock team and will appear in *Names* as part of their next supplement. One item, which might be of sufficient interest to place-name collectors to justify mention here is the *County List of Post Offices*, available from the Government Printing Office for 50 cents, and providing a list of all post offices alphabetically by counties within states.

The names given to city streets are usually excluded from place-name studies that cover larger areas. This is understandable: some of these designations are mere numbers or letters of the alphabet; others are fairly routine—for example, the names of all the presidents and all the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Some are so routine as to be of little intrinsic interest to the serious student of names, who would prefer not to devote time and space to entries such as *Pine*: for the tree; *Oak*: for the tree; *Elm*: for the tree. During the past few months, a number of interesting papers of streets names have been read at *ANS* meetings or submitted to *Names* for publication. We hope to present some of these during the coming year and would, of course, welcome further contributions with new ideas.

*ANS* members Stowell Rounds, Arthur Minton, and William Feather — among others — have noted that real estate developers have been vigorous and sometimes quite methodical in selecting names for their new streets. Some have been, to put it as charitably as possible, highly original, often seeking to create glamour, rustic illusions, and immortality for their relatives. Thus we have the likes of *Mockingbird Lane*, though in cold reality it and a number of other bird-lanes divide the dismal rows in a trailer camp within nose-shot of a large meat-packing plant in a city which shall here be nameless. *Slumber Lane* must surely now and then cause its residents to wish they lived elsewhere; even so charmingly exotic a name as *Druid Circle* (which is, in point of fact, an oblong) could, if they were to think about it, discomfit some of its devout and conservative residents.

Another factor that has spurred street and road-naming is recent concern over fire protection and civil defense in rural areas. In Dane County, Wisconsin, for instance, it is now a legal obligation to name country roads. "The road by the old Aasen place" is no longer adequate; it is now *Pond Road* and there is a sign to say so. There is a tendency, too, to dedicate stretches of highway to the memory of recently deceased dignitaries, or historical figures, or noble causes; thus Massachusetts has *The Honorable George Stanton Highway*, *The Daniel Shays Highway*, and *Purple Heart Drive*.

Consistent moods and motifs in street-naming have often been observed. In Mount Auburn cemetery the streets are all named for green and growing things, with — Lane, — Path, or — Way following Honeysuckle, Acacia, Viburnum, Forsythia, and the like. (Incidentally, the arrow with the words "one way" on it which once pointed inward from the main gate now seems to have disappeared.)

Herb Jacobs, popular "Try and Stump Me" columnist for the Madison (Wisconsin) *Capital Times*, recently answered a query concerning the mis-spelling of the name of former University of Wisconsin president T. C. Chamberlin; the street sign in the University Heights section of Madison, where all the streets are named for former presidents, reads *Chamberlain*. Mr. Jacobs justly remarks that it seems a pity that a university town should be unable to get an educator's name right or at least correct it later. He also notes that the City Council once sought to change the names of some thirty streets to get rid of duplications and oddities, and "incautiously slated a public hearing" at which there was a solid wall of opposition from residents of the streets involved. Mr. Jacobs concludes, wryly, that people don't mind moving to a new address but that they are not inclined to throw away good stationery and stay in the same place. (One wonders, incidentally, how many New Yorkers have actually forsaken *Sixth Avenue* for the *Avenue of the Americas*.)

Quaint names, especially those that seem somehow to spring from the countryside or its people, have a charm unmatched by the developers' pale imitations. Every name-collector must surely have his own favorites; your N & Q editor is especially partial to *Tee-waddle Hill Road*, which runs into *Juggler Meadow Road*, both "up

country," i.e., north of Amherst, Massachusetts. Excellent places to get partridge berries and mosses, too.

Two other aspects of street names are of at least passing interest: the local pronunciation of street names is often a shibboleth: *Tremont* in Boston and *Burleigh* in Milwaukee are two examples. Nicknames for streets may stem from affection or be the application of the principle of least effort: *Bou Mische* and *Mass Ave*, for instance.

The famous streets of the world would also make a good collection. *Broadway* and *Beacon Street*, offered with no further context, instantly suggest and even represent certain aspects of New York and Boston respectively; though the names are used in other cities, these are the streets *par excellence* to which they belong. *Bond Street*, *Harley Street*, and *Fleet Street* are among the many that stand in the same sort of relationship to London.

Fictitious streets, in addition to the figurative *Easy Street* and *Queer Street*, could also be the subject of an enjoyable investigation. There are many more approaches to the study of street names than the collection of names and origins; hopefully some *Names* readers will give thought to some of them and carry on the discussions at greater length.

One final note: A literal-minded six-year-old who lived on a farm at the end of a country road was once demonstrating that he could write his name and was asked to further the feat by writing the name of the place where he lived. He took up the crayon again and began, laboriously, to print: DEAD EN — — — —.

Audrey R. Duckert

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#### VIIIth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences

The Eighth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences will be held in Amsterdam from the 27th to the 31st of August, 1963. The occasion will mark an eventful jubilee, taking place twenty-five years after the Congress of Paris. The proposed main theme of the meeting is "seas, lakes and rivers as elements of communication and separation as reflected in names." For further information write Dr. D. P. Blok, Naamkundebureau, Nieuwe Hoogstraat 17, Amsterdam-C, Holland.