

Notes and Queries

Place-name immigration has been considered by many American name-fanciers and collectors; recently, however, an Irishman, David Colahan of Cork, began a collection of Irish names in America which he eventually published in the Cork *Evening Echo*. Mr. Colahan was delighted to find that his article stirred the interest of numerous Irish Americans who read the old-country paper. Among these readers was an elderly lady from Berkeley, California, Mrs. Leonora Hoar.

Mrs. Hoar sat down with her atlas and without any spectacles – she still doesn't need them at 82 – and compiled a supplement to Mr. Colahan's original list, adding as well American place-names which appeared to come from Irish surnames. The *Evening Echo* printed her work late last spring, and Mr. Colahan, acting on the suggestion of Arthur McAnally, Director of Libraries at the University of Oklahoma, has sent it along to us. The list is considerable, and though we might quibble here and there as to whether some of the names, e.g., Avoca, Conway, and Fort Collins, are of demonstrable connection with Ireland, we're glad that Mrs. Hoar and Mr. Colahan and the readers of the Cork *Evening Echo* have been having such a grand time of it all.

Their list will now be augmented by the rush of name changes brought about by our own recent national tragedy. We had planned to comment here in a paragraph or two on the extensive naming and re-naming both here and abroad to honor the memory of President Kennedy, but even in early December, as this is being written, the complexities exceed the scope of a brief note, and we implore someone please to do a good article on the subject and send it along to *Names*. We might note in passing that one trend in the proposals is to re-name well-known places; Cape Canaveral is already Cape Kennedy, and changes have been suggested for Idlewild Airport and even the state of West Virginia. Another trend is to name new schools, bridges, cultural centers, and parks for Mr. Kennedy; and a third trend, as might be expected, is to resist and oppose all changes. We hope for a report on this in an early issue.

Getting back to transplanted names for a bit: the areas of Eastern United States first settled by English colonists abound in reminis-

cent names, many of which migrated west by way of Ohio when the Western Reserve opened, and then went on with the Homestead Act and mining strikes. These names, those of the colonists themselves, and others that reflect their reading or education, are plentiful. When the great immigration took place in the 19th Century, it brought many non-speakers of English to settle in places whose names must have seemed as strange as did their pronunciations of them. The immigrants generally kept the "Yankee" names, even for communities in which they outnumbered English-speaking residents by as much as ten to one.

Now the game Mrs. Hoar and Mr. Colahan played with their atlases is entertaining, but it should not be used as a basis for inferring immigrant strength. Anyone looking at a map of south central Wisconsin will find names such as Stoughton, McFarland, Utica, Cambridge, Albion, Edgerton, and Deerfield; he would be unlikely to guess from them that this is the heart of a large Norwegian settlement. He would have known, though, had he gone there 25 years ago and heard the names from the residents; he might, in fact, have thought from the intonation and the un-English vowels that these were Norwegian names. (Utica is a collector's item in this context, and we guess the late George Flom probably enjoyed it too when, in the early 1900s, he studied the Sogning dialect spoken there and published his findings in *Dialect Notes*.) Stoughton has a *Syttende Mai* parade every year; the Ladies' Aid of the McFarland Lutheran church originally marked its silver with a *K* for *Kvinneforening*, and the Cooksville church has always tried to have the first lutefisk supper of the season. As a matter of fact, some ardent cheerleaders came up with:

Lutefisk, lefse
Tak skal Du ha,
Stoughton High School
Rah! Rah! Rah!

and that wasn't very long ago at all – or so it seems.

But "natural" place-names are not missing from immigrant-settled areas. Not so long ago Rosiere, Misiere, and Brussels, Wisconsin, were places where one could still attend a kermis; there was "booyah" (i.e., bouillon) to be had on Saturday nights in Allouez and DePere; Dutch was a second language in Oostburg, and people

in Kiel and New Holstein talked of making out the light and going by Grandma. Our own *ANS* President Alfred Senn can vouch for yodeling and landjägers and the Wilhelm Tell play in New Glarus. Yet how, except by names on mail boxes and the presence of saunas and co-ops, is one to guess at the size of the Finnish settlements in Brantwood, Wis., or Gardner and Fitchburg, Mass. ? Who would be able to divine from a map the availability of Polish foods like pieroga, golompki, and kielbasa in New England towns called Hatfield, Hadley, and Northampton ? Or know indeed that Hanover Street in Boston is the best place to go for Italian food ?

There is just enough uncertainty to keep the game alive: Wales, Massachusetts, is an unlikely place to go if you want to hear – or sing in – a *qymanfa ganu*, but Cambria, Wisconsin, still holds them, and with *hwyl* to spare. We'd like very much to hear further from readers on the subject of transplanted names, and take our leave now with a note to Mrs. Hoar and Mr. Colahan that *Yankee* and the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, two New England institutions, are published in Dublin, New Hampshire. Erin go bragh!

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