

## Notes and Queries

We begin with a setting-straight from *ANS* Past President Kemp Malone, who writes this time from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale to take us – justifiably – to task for having missed, in our December talk about weapon-names, his final word on the subject, published in *Names* II, pp. 109ff. under the title “Epithet and Eponym.” We are glad to set the record straight and bring it up to date.

Along the same lines of thought, we noticed recently a display case in a jeweler’s stocked with some very handsome items of cutlery, each bearing a legendary sword-name. Other, seemingly more important and pressing errands, took us away before we could research the matter of appropriateness of names and the shapes and purposes of these modified weapons, which were sleek and modern stainless steel, and looked terrifyingly efficient. We do recall that *Balmung* and *Miming* were among them. And this reminds us, for hardly any reason at all, that somewhere along the tracks of the New Haven Railroad as it cuts through the industrial parts of southern Connecticut, is an establishment called the Fafnir Bearing Company. This pleases us immensely, and we hope no one spoils it by writing in to say it is the family name of the founder.

In the days of acronyms and mannered syntheses intended to connote the Space Age, we *do* delight in the names, if not perforce the products, of Hercules Powder, Medusa Cement, Argus Cameras, Hermes typewriters, and Atlas tires. Even Ajax-the-foaming-cleanser (complete with epithet, you notice) would be tolerable if it weren’t for the singing commercial of the same name. Departing strictly from mythology we can still find a cluster of comfortably old-fangled names in Magnavox, Zenith, Acme, Anaconda, and Talon that still have a discernible and imaginatively conceived connection with the companies. (We’re not really sure what Anaconda has to do with copper; still there’s a temptingly logical train of thought that takes us into a maze of coiled copper tubing . . .)

Frankly, we’re tired of gadgety trade-names that start off with *E-Z* something-or-other and always write *U* for *you*, i.e., *Challenge-U* to decipher their awkward acronyms and moron-level blends.

There are possible ways to resolve our impatience: we could start a campaign or perhaps even a boycott, or we could laugh the whole thing off and start collecting them to see how much worse they can get. No decision has been reached as yet, but if one of our readers has faced the same dilemma, we'd be glad to know of it.

Back in the days when Arch Ward was running his "Wake of the News" column in the *Chicago Tribune*, it customarily carried a squib which read:

The Wake depends  
Upon its friends.  
Help! Help!

N&Q is assuredly more diversified for the loyal readers who send notes and ideas and opinions on everything under the onomastic sun, and we are indeed grateful. From Arch Ward's old bailiwick, for instance, we have a letter – not from Jazbo of old Dubuque, but from Philip L. Forstall of Evanston, who sat down with Kutsch and Riemens' *Unvergängliche Stimmen*, which he describes as the most inclusive recent dictionary of twentieth-century singers, and worked out a perfectly fascinating and efficiently-presented set of motives and examples for name-changing among singers, a subject on which we touched briefly a while ago. We pass it on to you, substantially as he sent it:

#### I. Amelioration

##### 1. add *de*:

Victoria de los Angeles (V. Gomez Cima)  
Toti dal Monte (Antonietta Meneghelli)

##### 2. name with "tony" connotations:

Frances Saville (from Saville Row in London?)

##### 3. to avoid using a family name:

Lucrezia Bori (Borgia)  
Mario (Conte di Candia)

##### 4. to avoid minority names:

Leonard Warren (Warenov)  
Jan Peerce (Jacob Perelmuth)  
George London (Burnstein)  
Rosa Raisa (Burchstein) [Raisa is Rosa in Russian.]  
Alma Gluck (Reba Feiersohn)

5. to avoid mispronunciation:  
Keith Engen spells his name *Kieth* in Germany
6. simplification:  
Sena Jurinač (Srebrenka J.)  
Bidu Sayão (Balduina S.)  
Maria Jeritza (Jedlitzka)  
Maria Callas (Kallogeropolous)

II. Italianization (since many singers are Italian) or other Romance modification

1. geographical:  
Nellie Melba (from Melbourne, Australia)  
    (Mitchell Armstrong)  
Emma Nevada (Wixom)  
Rita Fornia (from California)  
Hina Spani (Higina Tuñon), born in Argentina
2. from personal or invented names  
Foli (James Foley); John McCormack also used this name  
    in his Italian debut.  
Albani (Emma Lajeunesse), from the noble family, not  
    Albany.  
Alda (Frances Jeanne Davies), invention  
Gina Cigna (Sens)  
Ada Adini (Adele Chapman)  
Lillian Nordica (Norton). She also used Giglia as a first name  
    for a time.
3. de-italianization:  
Rosa Ponselle (Ponzillo)

III. Name of teacher or patron

1. teacher: Emmy Destinn (Kittl) from her teacher Loewe-Destinn
2. alteration of teacher's name: Jennie Tourel, from Mme. El-Tour
3. baptizer: Lorenzo da Ponte, after bishop when he was converted
4. patron: Meyerbeer, who added Beer, the name of rich uncle.

IV. Other Miscellaneous changes

Titta Ruffo (Ruffo Titta)

Maria Ivogün (Ilse von Günther)

Inge Borkh (Ingeborg Welitsch)? perhaps to avoid confusion with Ljuba Welitsch

Zelia Trebetti (a partial anagram of Gilbert)

Marie Delna (anagram of Ledan)

"Etc., etc.," Mr. Forstall concludes.

Almost the exact opposite process, i.e., the dropping of a foreign name, was discussed in an article from the *Cleveland Press* which arrived in the very same mail as Mr. Forstall's list. We have William Feather to thank for passing on to us the remarks of Theodore Andrica on name-changes in savings and loan institutions in the Cleveland area. Originally, many of these institutions had names that gave an indication of the national origins of the founders or directors; in recent years, many have been re-named to sound more "American." Mr. Andrica cites a few:

Orol Savings and Loan Co., founded by Lakewood Slovaks,  
now the Home Federal Savings and Loan Co.

Romanian Savings and Loan Co., now Pioneer Savings and  
Loan

Lithuanian Savings and Loan Co., now Superior  
Warszawa Savings and Loan, now United

and so on. But best of all, when a group of Hungarian and Romanian investors organized a Cleveland savings institution three years ago, it was called from the start the Brooklyn Savings and Loan Co.

Come to think of it, we don't recall reading anything in *Names* about financial institutions. It would seem an interesting area to explore, what with Dagwood Sandwich names attempting to keep a fragment of identity for each partner to a merger, and names styled to give the impression of comfort and certainty (Security, Fidelity, Reliable). Loan offices with such felicitous titles as Friendly, Beneficial, and Family are surely felt by some to involve euphemisms that put the funeral industry to shame; and seemingly incongruous words in bank-names such as Seaman's, Chemical, and Corn may tell much of an interesting history. Have we somewhere an agent to report?

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