

Book Reviews

Indian Place Names in Illinois. By Virgil J. Vogel. Springfield, Ill.: The Illinois State Historical Society 1963. Pamphlet series No. 4, 176 pp. \$2.00.

Mr. Virgil J. Vogel's recent book, *Indian Place Names In Illinois*, is a carefully researched and well-documented study of the origin and meaning of Indian names origin given to places in the state of Illinois. Included by Mr. Vogel are names of towns, cities, villages, rivers, lakes, parks and forest preserves, and a few other topographic features. The entire study is extremely thorough and the 1168 footnotes are meticulously arranged. I do not believe the pamphlet can be criticized on any grounds related to the research performed in its production.

Furthermore, the author approaches this complex subject, very often made vague or difficult by time and the accumulation of corruptions of language, with great caution. He discusses "most likely" and "probable" meanings and origins of various Indian names. This I believe to be honest and forthright scholarship, leaving the reader not only with knowledge of this subject, but also with an understanding of its inherent, often exasperating complexities.

The author introduces his book with a very enlightening and valuable discussion of the methodological problems encountered in a piece of research of this nature. He also clearly enunciates his own procedures, techniques, and assumptions which underlie his work. This I believe to be very important for the requirements of sound scholarship, since too many of the present investigators or amateurs in this field accept rumor, custom, or tradition as fact. Often they do so even when a clear and definite answer is not possible, given the information at hand.

The main body of the book is concerned with the thorough and cautious explanation of the Indian place-names themselves, and a brief sketch of the historical background of each. This appears to be done by utilizing the fullest possible sources and information leading to a clearer understanding of the origin and meaning of some three hundred Indian place-names to be found in Illinois. The text

also contains an interesting sprinkling of paintings and photographs of places in, and the past Indians of, Illinois. More of these illustrations placed in the body of the work would have enlivened the pamphlet as well as given to the reader a sense of concreteness about many of the places discussed in the text.

My only other criticism of the pamphlet is really not a criticism at all, but a wish. Mr. Vogel introduces this book as a further chronicle and documented proof of a measure of Indian influence on American culture. I agree that the pamphlet does, indeed, demonstrate what it sets out to do. However, there is very slight discussion of the general context into which such Indian influence falls. How great was their over-all influence? How deep? The fact of this vast array of places with Indian names would, on the surface, indicate massive Indian influence. But a problem arises when one attempts to consider the proportions, type, and depth of this influence. I would like to see a truly erudite and balanced study of this problematic topic. Of course, to repeat, this is not a criticism, since the scope of Mr. Vogel's present book could not include this discussion. Such a study would, no doubt, generate a new book. I look forward to it.

J. Zevin

Joseph Nichols and the Nicholites. By Kenneth Lane Carroll. Easton, Maryland (The Easton Publishing Company), 1962. Pp. 116, 5 appendices of names, bibliography, index. \$3.75.

Although the text proper of this book is but 56 pages, it tells the fascinating story of an unusual religiously-centered group that lived in Delaware and easton-shore Maryland (later partly removed to North and South Carolina), during the last half of the 18th century. The founder of this group preached to them for less than ten years, but he established a cohesive group of religionists, known as the "New Quakers" or Nicholites, which lasted as a separate worshipping group for about half a century. Toward the turn of the 19th century they merged with the Religious Society of Friends, with whom they had shared similar basic beliefs and practices since their own independent origin in the early 1760's.

This diligently researched and well-written monograph, dealing with the religious history of a small segment of colonial America, is particularly interesting for its onomastic material. Many personal names of the adherents of this faith are liberally sprinkled throughout the text of the essay (especially on pp. 28, 34, 47, 49, 37-8, 62-3, and 66), appended to which there are 23 pages of names of the members of the sect, derived from birth records (400 names with birthdays are given, plus the names of both parents of each child); 61 marriages, with the names of the principals, as well as the dates of their marriages; the names of 340 individuals who "witnessed" the foregoing marriages ("witnessing" was necessary, inasmuch as the Nicholites disapproved of "hireling ministers"); three double-columned pages of the names of Nicholites who joined the Society of Friends from 1798 to 1806; and a list of 27 recorded wills of Nicholites, from which the author has excerpted the names of the married mates involved, as well as all their living children. That many of the names are keyed to dates offers a corpus of historically controlled material from which an onomatologist could analyze trends in the first-naming practices of late-18th century citizens of the Delmarvan peninsula. Moreover, the carefully prepared index gives the page reference for each personal name mentioned in the text, as well as listed in the several appendices of the book.

One seldom meets with a locally printed book, the content of which is so competently researched and meticulously, as well as interestingly, reported. The author has primarily relied on contemporary material, such as county birth and marriage records, deeds and wills, and the manuscript records of local Friends meetings. He is Professor of Religion at Southern Methodist University at Dallas, Texas, and is a native of eastern-shore Maryland, where the sect originated and the book is published.

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