

Names of Counties and County Seats

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WHILE A STUDY OF THE DERIVATIONS of county names is itself an interesting subject, the relationships that exist between some of our counties and the seats thereof, provide another alluring pursuit. The designations of many of our county seats (to say nothing of the hundreds of lesser places christened by the same plan) were definitely bestowed with the name of the county in mind. These name combinations are deliberate, and a review of county-county seat titles will reveal some mixtures that are stimulating.

By "relationships" between county and county seat names, I do not here refer to the some 366 counties in the United States where the name of the county seat is exactly the same as the county. This method of duplicate naming is very common, and only the states of Delaware, Georgia, and Maine haven't used it. Texas has as many as 42 counties with seats of the same designations, while South Carolina leads percentagewise in this connection with 31 of its 46 counties having the twin titles.

Nor do I refer to the 121 counties where the county seat name is a derivation of the county name, although in this classification there are some combinations of more than casual interest. The usual procedure here is to name a county, and then bestow the same name on the county seat, adding such words as "City" or "Center." Other common forms are to add such syllables as "ton," "town," "boro," "ville," "berg," "burg," or even "opolis" to the name of the seat. Among the more unusual in this category are Floydada, the seat of Floyd County, Texas; Milaca, the seat of Mille Lacs County, Minnesota; and Linneus, the seat of Linn County, Missouri. In originally naming the seat of the last mentioned county, incidentally, the more prosaic pattern was followed and it was Linnville, but Senator Lewis F. Linn, for whom both county

and seat were named, preferred the more classical Linneus. The most popular of this sort of combination is in the counties of Carroll where Carrollton is the seat. This connection occurs five times, in the Carroll counties of Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio.

Shelbyville as the seat of Shelby counties is almost as common, there still being four such combinations in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri. The original seat of Shelby County, Texas, was Shelbyville but the name was changed when the seat was moved to its present location in the geographical center of the county. The present seat is Center.

The relationships I refer to are different from these identical or similar designations. One of the commonest forms of county-county seat combinations, and one where the consanguinity is decidedly more marked than in the illustrations to follow, is where a man's surname is given to a county, and one of his given or Christian names to the county seat. Thus we have

<i>County</i>	<i>County Seat</i>	<i>State</i>
Adams	Quincy	Illinois
Barbour	Philippi	West Virginia
Borden	Gail	Texas
Colfax	Schuyler	Nebraska
DeSoto	Hernando	Mississippi
Grant	Ulysses	Kansas
Jones	Anson	Texas
Leflore	Greenwood	Mississippi
Perry	Hazard	Kentucky
Pike	Zebulon	Georgia
Rains	Emory	Texas
Roane	Spencer	West Virginia
Whitley	Williamsburg	Kentucky
Winston	Louisville	Mississippi

In the cases shown above, the typical "burg" and "ville" endings were used in naming the places honoring William Whitley and Louis Winston, but the Mississippi County of Leflore was named for Greenwood Leflore, the "wood" not being a formative as might be suspected. In designating the seat of a county named for Philip Barbour, West Virginia apparently followed the pattern set by Philip of Macedon, when he conquered the Thracian city of Crenides, and changed its name to Philippi.

To reverse the usual order, three states have used a Christian name for the county, and the surname for the county seat, as in

<i>County</i>	<i>County Seat</i>	<i>State</i>
Collin	McKinney	Texas
DeWitt	Clinton	Illinois
Millard	Fillmore	Utah

Before leaving these first-last name combinations, it might be well to mention a couple of cases where the same connection might apparently apply, but where it does not. There is good reason to believe that Floyd County, Iowa, was named for Sergeant Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The seat of that county is Charles City, but it was named for Charles Kelly, son of Joseph Kelly, who was the first settler at the place. Another combination that might be confusing is the Scott County in Indiana, where Scottsburg is the county seat. The county was named for General Charles Scott, a governor of Kentucky, while the seat takes its name from Thomas Scott, president of the railroad upon which the new town was located.

A thorough research would undoubtedly show where more of these first-second name combinations were used in an earlier day. A few of them have come to our attention. The Clay County in West Virginia was named for Henry Clay, and while the present county seat is Clay, the place was formerly known as Henry. Iowa's Jackson County was named for Andrew Jackson, and the town of Andrew in that county was once the seat of county government. The outcome of a poker hand determined the name of the seat of Wayne County, Iowa, and had the cards come up differently, Corydon would now be known as Anthony. The county of Adams, also in Iowa, once had Quincy as its seat. This was to honor two presidents, however, and gave us a rare father-son combination.

There are some cases where a county name has recognized a man, and where the seat recalls his residence. The Clay County in Alabama was named for Henry Clay, and the seat is called Ashland in memory of Clay's home. The seat of Jefferson County, Florida, is not only Monticello but the court house at that place is even modeled on Thomas Jefferson's home, and while the present seat of Jefferson County in Missouri is Hillsboro, its original name was Monticello. The five Carroll-Carrollton relationships have already been mentioned.

Lafayette's home, La Grange, is remembered in four county seats of the country, and the one in Texas is the seat of Fayette County. The county of Hickory in Missouri takes its name from Andrew Jackson, and the county business is transacted in Hermitage. Clinton County, Missouri, named for DeWitt Clinton, has Plattsburg as its seat in memory of DeWitt's home town. Strangely enough Plattsburg, New York, is also the seat of a Clinton County, but that county was named in honor of DeWitt's uncle, George Clinton. In Indiana, the county of Kosciusko was named for Thaddeus Kosciusko, while the seat is Warsaw, the capital of the General's native land. When Missouri honored the country to the south by naming one of its counties Texas, nothing seemed more natural than to designate the seat as Houston, in recognition of the President of that Republic.

The county of Mecklenburg in North Carolina was named for Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg, and the seat is Charlotte. Virginia's Pittsylvania County is for William Pitt and the seat is Chatham, while in North Carolina the county of Chatham, named for William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, has Pittsboro for its seat. Also in North Carolina is the county of Rockingham, named for Charles Watson Wentworth, Marquis of Rockingham, and the seat is Wentworth.

Sergeants John Newton and William Jasper probably received more publicity than any other enlisted men in the American Revolutionary Army. As a result, counties in Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, and Texas were named for Newton, while Jasper was recognized in the same manner by Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, and Texas. The Jasper Counties in Illinois and Iowa have Newtons for seats, and while none of the Newton Counties mentioned have Jasper seats, there is a county in Arkansas that boasts one. It appears to be but a coincidence, however, as that county was named for a Thomas W. Newton. One of the Jasper seats in the country is in Marion County, Tennessee, and there is a definite connection here, as Sergeant Jasper was one of "Marion's men."

Bath County, Virginia, takes its name from the medical springs at Warm Springs, the county seat, while Hot Springs County, Wyoming, follows a similar pattern in taking its designation from the springs at the county seat, Thermopolis.

Husband-wife combinations in county–county seat namings seem to be quite rare, and the connections are not as apparent as in other cases. However, in Kansas we have Marshall County, named for Frank J. Marshall and the county seat is Marysville, honoring Mary Marshall, the wife of Frank.

President and Vice President combinations appear in a few instances. Tompkinsville, the seat of Monroe County, Kentucky, was named for Daniel D. Tompkins, who served under James Monroe. Schuyler Colfax was U. S. Grant's first-term Vice, and he gives his name to Colfax, the seat of Grant Parish, Louisiana. In Polk County, Oregon, the seat is Dallas, and West Virginia's Lincoln County has Hamlin as its seat. Texas once had this kind of combination when Breckenridge was designated as the seat of Buchanan County. Breckenridge is still the seat of the county, but the county has long since been changed to Stephens to honor Alexander H. Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy. This situation puts this Texas County in the unique position of having a vice-vice combination.

The State of Kansas went all out for Horace Greeley when it designated a county for him. The seat of the county is Tribune, named for the great editor's *New York Tribune*, and the only other post office in the county is Horace.

Rio Grande County, Colorado, was named for the river and its seat is Del Norte. The original Spanish name for the river was *Rio Grande del Norte*. Power County, Idaho, is the power produced by American Falls, and the town of American Falls is the seat.

We see a connection between Randolph County, Arkansas, and its county seat, Pocohontas. The county derived its name from John Randolph and the seat from the famous Indian "princess," and Randolph claimed to be her descendant. There is no readily apparent reason for suspecting a connection between Wayne County, Missouri, and its seat of Greenville, but there is. The county was named for "Mad Anthony" and the seat for Greenville, Ohio, where Wayne in 1795 concluded a treaty with various Indian tribes.

Bourbon County, Kentucky, is in compliment to the House of Bourbon of France, and the seat is Paris. Lorain County, Ohio, was named for Lorraine, France, and the seat Elyria for Heman Ely, a man who spent some time in the French Province and who was instrumental in the county naming. The very name of Elyria is

interesting in considering combinations, as the "ria" is from Ely's wife, *Maria*.

There are undoubtedly many cases on record of collusion in giving names to seats and counties. One that might fall in this category is the county of Nicholas, West Virginia. The county was named by the legislature for Wilson Cary Nicholas, Governor of Virginia (1814-16), while the seat of county government, Summersville, was named for Judge Lewis Summers, the gentleman who introduced the legislation for the creation of Nicholas County.

Some of the military connections give us county-county seat combinations. The seat of Montgomery County, Tennessee, is Clarksville. The two names have no obvious connection, perhaps, but Colonel John Montgomery served under General George Rogers Clark, and the relationship was recognized in the christenings. There must be some connections between Moultrie County, Illinois, named for General William Moultrie, and the county seat of Sullivan. The seat honors General John Sullivan, who built Fort Moultrie and successfully defended it. For the seat of Greene County, Alabama, the name of Eutaw was chosen, in commemoration of the Battle of Eutaw Springs, where General Nathaniel Greene was in charge of the American forces. While the best that Greene could do was to draw at Eutaw, the eventual results of that battle were important to the Americans, and rated the place name honor bestowed upon it.

Another combination that has been used in naming counties and county seats, is to honor a man and at the same time commemorate the battle in which he fell. In Missouri and West Virginia we have Mercer Counties, and in each instance the seat is Princeton. It was at the Battle of Princeton that General Hugh Mercer lost his life. Similarly the Crockett County in Tennessee honors David Crockett, and Alamo, the county seat, commemorates the place he died.

But not all of the battle combinations follow this same formula. Sometimes both the victor and the vanquished are remembered. For example, there is the case in Colorado where the county was named for Montezuma and the seat for Cortez. And in Nebraska we have a similar situation. It will be remembered that Tecumseh was killed at the Battle of the Thames, and that his reputed slayer was Richard M. Johnson, the Kentuckian who was to become vice-

president of the United States. Johnson County, Nebraska, was named for Richard M. Johnson, and the seat is Tecumseh, honoring the Great Shawnee.



Bad American Influence—In the United States we are steadily developing the habit of addressing our fellow human beings by the first name after only short acquaintances. With fellow students in colleges, fellow workers in the same office or institution, fellow members of the same organization it has become quite general custom. But also men and women who are not associated in some social or commercial body will almost invariably drop the *Mr.* or *Mrs.* or *Miss* after the second cocktail, or during the first game of bridge. There is nothing new in addressing people by the first name. It was only a few centuries ago that French influence forced upon us formalities in speech for the purpose of scoring class distinction. Objections to reviving the old custom have been raised on the basis that it tends to coarsen polite social intercourse. As long as you address a person as *Mr. Alexander* you will never be tempted to call him "you old son-of-a-gun." The process, however, will never be stopped and we should accept it as a part of our progressing democratization. It is not yet so in Europe. Not so very long ago the columns of the English *New Statesman and Nation* were enlivened by a controversy about the use of the first name among younger writers. "This usage," says a conservative author, "is presumably of American origin, and I can see no reason whatsoever for adopting it in this country."



We children had heard that the street in which our house stood was called *Hirschgraben*, "deer corral." Since we saw neither corral nor deer we wanted to have the name explained. We were told then that our house stood on a place which was formerly outside of the city, and there, where now the street runs, had formerly been a corral where a number of deer were kept. These animals were kept and fed here because the senators of the city had, according to an old tradition, eaten a deer roast publicly every year. For this festival one always had had deer at hand in this corral, and also for times when princes or knights had interfered with the hunting privileges of the city or if, worse than that, enemies had isolated and besieged the city.

—Goethe, *Truth and Poetry*.