

Drinkwater. Most of the others have disappeared. However, studies of this kind are most valuable in the whole context of the study of names.

After a brief discussion the author classifies them as Nicknames Proper, Occupational Nicknames, and Local Nicknames.

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The Story Key to Geographic Names. By O. D. von Engeln and Jane McKelway Urquhart. Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, 1970. Reprint. Pp. xviii, 279. Price \$ 11.00.

This is a reprint of a book first published in 1924, a work, according to the preface, originally conceived and designed to promote effective teaching of elementary geography, but found to be an important geographic reader linking geography and history, history and language, language and people, for the benefit of young pupils. Four chapters are devoted to the names in parts of the United States and 20 to the names found in the rest of the world. The meanings and pronunciations of the important place-names are given in an easy readable style, calculated to arouse the interest of the students. This is a most valuable aid to the child learning about the world.

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Note

ONOMASTIC HUMOR IN SAKI'S

FILBOID STUDGE, THE STORY OF THE MOUSE THAT HELPED

The short stories of H. H. Munro, written under the pseudonym "Saki," are characterized by wit, satire, and surprise endings reminiscent of O. Henry. In *Filboid Studge* . . . , the surprise ending is enhanced by Saki's skillful handling of onomastic devices which highlight his satirical treatment of the theme of ingratitude.

Mark Spayley, a young artist of limited means, informs Duncan Dullamy of his desire to marry Leonore, the latter's daughter. Dullamy, a tycoon, has spent staggering sums of money to promote a breakfast cereal called "Pipenta" and presently finds himself on the brink of a financial crisis, because the cereal is not selling. This circumstance prompts Dullamy to consent to the marriage on the premise that a financial tragedy could prejudice his daughter's chances of marrying any wealthy man. Spayley expresses his gratitude and eagerness to help his future father in law, although he candidly admits that this would be comparable to a *mouse* helping a *lion*. Nevertheless, Spayley will make a fervent attempt to get the public to buy more Pipenta.

During the next three weeks Spayley works diligently and creates a dramatic poster depicting the damned in hell who are forever deprived of the joy of buying a marvelous new cereal called "Filboid Studge," actually the despised Pipenta with a new name. Spayley's poster takes the country by storm. Sales of Filboid Studge soar and, as unpalatable as it is, it soon becomes a household word. As Dullamy's financial situation improves from the sale of the Filboid Studge, he has second thoughts about Leonore's marriage to Spayley and finds a husband for her who is more suitable to him from a financial point of view. Saki concludes the story by noting that Spayley, the "brainmouse" who had helped Dullamy, the "financial lion," was left to rue the day he had created the dynamic poster.

Saki's comical indictment of false advertising and his derogatory portrait of the ungrateful business man are couched in satirical phraseology and onomastic word play. Dullamy's ingratitude is unpardonable, and Saki couples this act of treachery to the "financial lion's" lack of originality in promoting his own product. The surname Dullamy suggests "I am dull," while the letters "Dunc" of the first name seem to imply "dunce," permitting the entire name to be rendered "I am a dull dunce."

Both the old and new names of the horrible cereal product are cleverly constructed anagrams. Pipenta yields in anagram "Anti-pep," a most appropriate name for an uninspiring breakfast food. Saki is at his humorous best when he has Mark Spayley change the name Pipenta to Filboid Studge in order to deceive the public. At first glance, "Fil" suggests "Fill," and "Studge" may be phonetically associated with "sludge." The implication is that the gullible public will *fill* its collective stomach with *sludge*, a gooey, farinaceous mess. If the designation Filboid Studge conveys the physical appearance of the cereal, its essence is revealed in the anagram "boiled figdust." Webster defines fig-dust as "ground oatmeal used for feeding cage-birds." Saki's metaphorical insinuation is that all buyers of Filboid Studge are "prisoners" of advertising who devour the nauseating substance in their kitchens and dining rooms, i.e., their "domestic cages."

The name Mark Spayley acquires its full significance at the end of the story when Dullamy, the "financial lion," separates his daughter Leonore, "offspring of the lion," from Spayley, the "brainmouse," Mark is ironically punished because he "hit the mark" by producing the Filboid Studge poster for Dullamy who, in a surprise gesture of unexpected ingratitude, then "spays" Spayley's wedding plans. Significant too is the syllable "ley" of Spayley seen in conjunction with the "Le" of Leonore to connote the initial joining of the two lovers (*Spayley-Leonore*) and their later separation, a play on "Spay."

Saki's fondness for animals, a salient characteristic of many of his stories, plausibly leads to the assumption that Aesop's fable of the mouse and the lion was the probable source of inspiration for the Spayley-Dullamy relationship. For his own thematic purpose, however, Saki ingeniously adds a new twist by having the lion betray the mouse.

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