

# Community Names from Personal Names in Kansas: Post Offices

KARL M. D. ROSEN

AMONG THE MOST INTRIGUING PLACE-NAMES in the United States are those based on the names of persons associated with the early history of the localities so named. Where communities have continued – and perhaps even flourished – a few of these individuals have been immortalized, as it were. Most, however, have been forgotten as their once proud and hopeful community disappeared. Even those names still preserved are generally mere names unless the person honored was truly important in his day. As a consequence, a good deal of American place-name study consists in trying to find out who so-and-so was who is remembered in the name of a town.

It would be useful if there were available for study some large body of such community names with known honorees. I have compiled such a *corpus* for the state of Kansas on the basis of materials contained in Robert W. Baughman's *Kansas Post Offices, May 29, 1828 – August 3, 1961* (Topeka: Kansas Postal History Society, 1961). For this state we know the first postmasters and the dates of establishment of all post offices. With this information I have determined that 368 post offices of Kansas were named after their first postmaster. Where the names make use of given names or first and middle initials there is almost no room for doubt. Where surnames are involved, other historical evidence may show that a father, husband, or brother was more prominent at the time of founding of a town; but in the overwhelming number of cases it is only the postmaster who reached or assumed that degree of prominence necessary for a town or post office to be named after him.

It should be pointed out that, by the terminal date of the *corpus*, only 20 of these post offices were still in service. Originally not only towns and burgeoning cities had their post offices, but even the smallest rural hamlets. As population patterns changed and as the means of delivering mail were modernized the number of post offices required diminished sharply. Indeed, Baughman informs us (p. iii), of the 4,281 established during the period under study, only 777 were in service at the end. Almost ten years later there were still fewer post offices in service, including, we learn from the *National Zip Code Directory, 1969–70* (Washington: Post Office Dept., 1969), pp. 535–36, only 19 of the 20 just mentioned.

In what follows I shall discuss the manner of formation of the 368 names, the detailed history of several of them, and some favorite styles of name-giving that have come and gone over the years. I shall also mention a very few names that might well be added to those that I am sure of.

### *Names Formed from Given Names*

The earliest case of a post office taking the given name of its postmaster is Henryville (in 1857, after one Henry Condray). The latest is Bruce (1898, Bruce B. Brundage). In all there are 26 names so formed: 18 consisting of a given name only, three in *-town*, two in *-burg(h)*, and one apiece in *-dale*, *Ranch*, and *-ville*. The five postposed elements are found also in combination with surnames.

In the 18 unmodified given names I have included Roberts (1896, Robert P. Simpson); perhaps it should have been classified separately, but since there are in the *corpus* only two surnames with *'s/-s* appended, the point is trivial. On the other hand it is possible that the final *s* is the initial of Simpson, giving a partially acronymic formation. Bruce has just been cited as the latest unaltered given name; the earliest was Alexander (1874, Alexander Harvey – still in operation). Although I am not interested in the personal names as such, I shall mention the unusual Lomando (1895, Lomando P. Pierce); all the others are garden variety.

The names in *-town* are more interesting as a group. The earliest is Fredericktown (1866, Frederick Henley). The latest is Johnstown (1883, John Johnson), which I take as *John* + possessive *-s-* + *-town*, but which may well show a clipped surname, since surnames are occasionally found shortened before other suffixes in this *corpus*. Jintown (1875, James H. Murphy) is derived from a hypocoristic form.

Olesburgh was established in 1873 and named after Ole Trulson. It was officially respelled Olsburg in 1887, suggesting that its pronunciation changed when its namesake had faded into history; it continues in service today. Fredericksburg (1874, Wm. Fred. Herwick) is based on a middle name. Both these place-names make use of a possessive *-s-*.

The formations with only one representative apiece are Enosdale (1884, Enos W. Carson), Ben's Ranch (1875, Benjamin Sweet), and the aforementioned Henryville.

In the sequel it will appear that Saint Bernard preserves a family name and has no religious significance. At first glance, therefore, one might suspect that St. George (1860, Geo. W. Gillespie – still in service) and St. Peter (1899, Peter A. Knoll – discontinued in 1920) were also named after their founding postmasters. In the case of St. George, we learn from [William G. Cutler, ed.,] *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), pp. 975, 982–83, that George W. Gillespie was one of the founders of the town in 1857 and a leading citizen thereafter. Now, if

Gillespie had been a Mormon, there would be no doubt of the town being named after him, for, as George R. Stewart reports in *Names on the Land* (rev. ed. 1958; rpt. Boston: Sentry-Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 262, some communities have been named after individual Mormons with *Saint* prefixed. But the *Andreas History*, p. 983, tells us that Gillespie was a member of the Church of the Disciples. A pamphlet entitled *Early History of Pottawatomie County, Centennial Edition, 1854-1954* (n. p., August, 1954), p. 25, claims that among the earliest settlers (in 1855) were George W. Gillespie, J. George Gillespie, and George Chapman, and that the *George* honors all three. It further suggests that the *Saint* was inspired by St. Joseph, Missouri, a major starting-point for the trek west, whose importance the founders of the new town wished to emulate. This account I take to be apocryphal, especially since the *Andreas History* (*loc. cit.*) mentions in addition to George W. Gillespie only a James S. Gillespie and a J. A. J. Chapman as having important roles in the early days of the town and county. Wayne E. Corley, in *County and Community Names in Kansas* (Denver and Westminster, Colo.: privately printed, 1962), p. 64, surmises that the town honors the patron saint of England. This is not impossible, even if it additionally honors one founder (or three!). It is worth noting the presence nearby of the even earlier St. Marys, home of St. Mary's Mission.

Although St. George may honor a postmaster, St. Peter (in Graham County) does not. As the Rev. Francis S. Laing, O. M. Cap., relates in "German-Russian Settlements in Ellis County, Kansas," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* (hereinafter *KHC*), 11 (1909-10), 517, St. Peter was founded by Roman Catholic Germans who had earlier come to Kansas from Russia. I am sure that these people would not have profaned a saint's name by using it coincidentally with a postmaster's. When they made their settlement in 1894, Father Laing notes, it was called Hoganville and remained so until it became St. Peter in 1898. The Hoganville post office (1894) was not given the new name until 1899. I believe, therefore, that St. Peter honors the saint directly - unless it has some connection with the St. Peter family (of French-Canadian origin) in neighboring Rooks County discussed by Myrtle D. Fesler in *Pioneers of Western Kansas* (New York: Carlton Press, 1962), pp. 137-39.

#### *Names Formed from Surnames*

By far the largest number of post offices named for postmasters make use of surnames (337). The earliest date from 1855: Bryan(t) (Milton E. Bryan) and Whitehead (James R. Whitehead) in Doniphan County, Blanton (Napoleon P. Blanton) in Douglas, and St. Bernard (Joab M. Bernard) in Franklin; none survived. The latest existed for a few weeks in 1912: West Gill (George P. Gill). There are 199 names consisting of the

surname alone, 58 in *-ville*, 18 in *-ton*, 10 in *burg(h)*, and five or fewer apiece in 25 other formations.

Some of the 199 uncombined surnames might be of interest to students of Kansas history, e. g., Blanton, just cited. But in the present context I find it more appropriate to comment chiefly upon the form of the names. We have just seen that Bryan(t) had two spellings. Sallee (1883, John J. Sallee) was officially Salee for the first three weeks of its existence. A number of names were respelled (in the direction of simplification) from the start: Holman (1894, Abram H. Holeman), Flush (1899, Henry J. Floersch), Honek (1867, Ernst Hohneck). De Witt (1874, Himanus De Witt) became Dewitt in 1894. I wonder if Tilden (1872, Cyrus C. Tilton) shows the influence of the political leader of that name; it surely cannot show the obsolete suffix *-den*. Occasionally an early settler had the same name as a prominent individual elsewhere. So an Andrew V. Johnson gave his name to Johnson (1872–73).

Of more interest, though, is the somewhat dubious immortalization of the otherwise unknown James W. Lansing, who gave his name to Lansing (1875 to date). This is the site of the State Penitentiary, which was located here in Leavenworth County in 1863. There is no evidence of the community around it having the name of Lansing at that time, although there must have been a community of Petersburg close by, for its post office (1865) was relocated as Lansing in 1875. The Lansing community, as we are informed by Frank W. Blackmar, ed., *Kansas, A Cyclopaedia* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912), II, 104, grew up around the prison. We learn from Simeon M. Fox, "The Story of the Seventh Kansas," *KHC*, 8 (1903–04), 18, that James W. Lansing had earlier been a hospital steward in the Seventh Kansas Cavalry when it was organized in 1861 at Fort Leavenworth. *The Roster of Kansas Volunteers in the Service of the United States*, appended to *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas for the Year 1864* (Leavenworth, 1865), p. 229, records that, a native of New York state, he had resided in Bellmont (*sic* – Bellemont was the usual spelling), Doniphan County, at the time of his enlistment. An updated *Roster of Kansas Officers and Enlisted Men of Kansas Volunteers*, appended to *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas*, Vol. I, 1861–1865, (Leavenworth, 1867), p. 528, gives the further information that when he was mustered out in 1865 his residence was Leavenworth. According to Frank M. Gable, "The Kansas Penitentiary," *KHC*, 14 (1915–18), 397, in 1874 Lansing was hospital steward at the State Penitentiary. The next year he had been replaced (*ibid.*, p. 406). Presumably he had left to become postmaster in the town which ever after was to bear his name. Although the name of Lansing matches that of the capital of Michigan, I think it is now clear that the older city has not given its name, as Wayne Corley suggests (*op. cit.*, p. 39), to the younger.

The 58 names in *-ville* were bestowed between 1856 (Kezerville, Daniel J. Kezer) and 1917 (Knipeville, John W. Knipe). Three of them had a linking *-s-* inserted: Parkersville (1870, Charles G. Parker), Bennettsville (1873, John W. Bennett), and Youngsville (1906, Emma C. Young); the first of these became Parkerville in 1892. Beelerville (1886, Elmer E. Beeler) became simply Beeler in 1888, keeping its postmaster. A number of names in *-ville* have the surname clipped: Pattenville (1880, Adam S. VanPatten), Atkinsville (1871, C. W. Atkinson), very likely Blanchville (1871, Horatio Blanchard) and Banville (1878, Wm. N. Bannister), and Birkville (1897, William A. Birkholz). This shortening must have been for reasons of euphony. I wonder if Normanville (1862) was influenced by the name of its first postmaster, William Normile.

Two *-ville* names can now be given better origins than have yet appeared in any work on Kansas place-names: Mullinville was established in 1884 by Alfred A. Mullin;<sup>1</sup> it is still in existence. Haysville (Sedgwick Co.), likewise still going strong, was established in 1877 and named for William Hays.<sup>2</sup>

Eighteen names are derived in *-ton*. They range, probably from the clipped Kenton (1856, John C. Kennett) or Walton (1858, Daniel Walter), surely from Lewiston (1869, Marcus W. Lewis) to Wilburton (1913, Mrs. N. D. Wilbur). Another clipped name is Dayton (1895, Harry W. Dayhoff). Two names apparently show slight respelling: Proston (1878, William L. Prose), discontinued in 1883, so that its pronunciation can only be guessed at, and Swifton (1896, William Swift), which certainly must have been spoken with only one *t* and is comparable with the first *-ton* coined in America, Trenton, New Jersey (Stewart, *Names on the Land*, p. 122). I have not included in this group Farlington (1870, Eugene D. Farley – still in existence) because I do not know if the *-ing-* comes from some other personal name or is part of a long-obsolete double suffix *-ing-ton*, of which the coiner of the name would have had little, if any, awareness. As a place-name in England, Farlington is easily derivable from the fore-runner of Farley plus *-ing-ton* (Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960, pp. 174, 264). But such a coinage in Kansas is more likely due to a happy accident of imitation than a deep understanding of the formation.

<sup>1</sup> So also a note in *The Kansas Historical Quarterly (KHQ)*, 25 (1959), 448; Corley's entry (*op. cit.*, p. 50) repeats an erroneous answer to a questionnaire he sent out. I am indebted to Wayne Corley for letting me look at the collected responses to his questionnaire. It is the source of countless name origins in his book and contains much hitherto unpublished information.

<sup>2</sup> Corley's entry (*op. cit.*, p. 32) has the right founder (W. W. Hays – *cf.* also the Andreas *History*, p. 1388 and especially p. 1411). But his date of 1891 for the town plat is misleading since the town had been there since 1874 (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Sedgwick County, Kan.*, Chicago: Chapman Bros., 1888, p. 745). The town was destroyed by fire in 1887 ("The Annals of Kansas: 1887," *KHQ*, 20 [1952–53], 287).

The first of the ten names in *-burgh* is Lawrenceburgh (1869, Frank Lawrence); the latest is Vansburgh (1880, John W. Vangilder). Six make use of a linking *-s-*; four do not. Both Lawrenceburgh and Pottersburgh (1870, Amos S. Potter) have official by-forms without the final *-h*. Vansburgh is based on a clipped form of the surname which is a common nickname. Hamburg (1879, William B. Hamm) shows respelling; if it was intended to allude also to the German city it should not have had the *-h*. Another name with an accidental or purposeful allusion is Gettysburgh (1878, Joseph Gettys). Still more fascinating is Pittsburgh, named for one William A. Pitt, in operation from 1872 to 1881 in Mitchell County. When this office was discontinued, the more prominent New Pittsburgh, in the mining country of southeastern Kansas and continuing the name of another city named for another William Pitt, dropped the New; in 1894 it dropped its *-h*.

I have separated five uncombined clipped surnames from the other 199 uncombined surnames already discussed. They are Keever (1876, James McKeever), Lund (1885, Hans Westlund), Von (1885, B. S. Von Schritztz), Candlish (1886, Charles A. McCandlish), and Stevens (1908, Bertie McStevens). Three of these drop *Mc-*. Von is comparable to Vansburgh in isolating the surname prefix. Lund is a properly isolable element in a Swedish surname. Stevens must have alluded also to its location in Stevens County. I wonder if the names of the first postmasters influenced Enne (1882, John Engstrom) and Howe (1882, Frank S. Hausneck).

There are five names in *-town*. The earliest is Mairestown (1857, Thomas W. Maires), the latest Walkertown (1883, John S. Walker). A third name that adds no *-s-* is Jonestown (1875, William Jones). Strongstown (1873, Charles H. Strong) does add the *-s-*. Steven(s)town (1868, Leonard G. Stevens) appears both ways, the form without *-s-* being clipped.

Four names in *Hill* occur. Barrett's (Barritt's) Hill (1867) bears the name of Richard Barrett. Rose Hill (1870, in Neosho County) apparently commemorates one Squire Rosa, but might conceivably be descriptive also, as the Rose Hill in Butler County discussed by Wayne Corley (*op. cit.*, p. 63). The year after its establishment this post office was moved to Galesburg, with Squire Rosa remaining in charge. Braman Hill (1878, Daniel Braman) is self-explanatory. Forest Hill (1878, Jehiel Forest) must also be a straightforward formation, for although a descriptive allusion cannot be ruled out, there are no forests in Russell County (central Kansas), but only groves of trees.

The four names with *Station* postposed are clear in formation, less clear immediately in reference. Three have a possessive *-s*, two with an apostrophe. They all were certainly postal stations, but which were railroad or stage stations? Guittard Station (1861, Xavier Guittard) was originally a station on the stage line between St. Joseph and the west and

strictly speaking bears the surname of the family of George Guittard, Xavier's father, who had settled in the area in 1857 (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Marshall County, Kansas*, Chicago: Chapman Bros., 1889, p. 617); no railroad ever reached it. Copp's Station (1866, John Copp) was ahead of any railroad and lasted only three months. Matt Thomson's *Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas* (Alma, Kansas, 1901), p. 258, locates it near Eskridge on the Topeka-Council Grove mail route. Blairs Station (1871, Joel P. Blair) appears as a railroad station in Doniphan County on an 1871 map reprinted by Robert W. Baughman in his *Kansas in Maps* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1961), p. 78. The post office was discontinued in 1872 and reopened in 1908 as Blair. Wayne Corley has found that Joel Blair had given his name to the town of Blair as early as 1869 (*op. cit.*, p. 9). Hund's Station (1873, Wendelin Hund) likewise appears as a railroad station on the Leavenworth County map in the *Andreas History*, p. 417.

The three names in *-field* require no comment. They are Keimfield (1878, Edward Keim), Smithfield (1879, James W. Smith), and Kirkfield (1881, Robert G. Kirk). The three names with postposed *Grove* are likewise self-explanatory: Miller's Grove (1869, Abraham B. Miller), Coursen's Grove (1874, Christopher E. Coursen), and Brown's Grove (1877, Sarah J. Brown). Coursen's Grove was officially renamed Coursen in 1894, but no one paid attention to the change; the office was discontinued the next year (Baughman, *Post Offices*, p. 30). Whereas the names in *Grove* all have a possessive *'s*, none of the three names in *Spring/Springs* does. They are Hill Spring (1868, Lorenzo M. Hill), Jordan Springs (1875, Isaac B. Jordan), and Foster Springs (1878, Jesse Foster).

There are seven formations using postmasters' surnames that have two representatives apiece. In *-bro* are Idenbro (1887, Thomas T. Iden), which I find also as Idenboro, but only in Nelson Case, ed., *History of Labette County, Kansas, and Representative Citizens* (Chicago, Biographical Publ. Co., 1901), p. 121, where it may be an error; and Kenbro (1925, Howard Kennard), which probably shows clipping. Bull's City (1871, Hiram C. Bull) and Rockwell City (1884, William Rockwell) form another pair. Still another pair is James Crossing (1862, John James) and Hurst Crossing (1878, William D. Hurst). The Jackson County map in the *Andreas History*, p. 1335, places James Crossing on Soldier Creek; it was never on a railroad. James Crossing was already so named in 1861, according to George E. Root, "Ferries in Kansas," *KHQ*, 4 (1935), 10. Neither was Hurst Crossing on a railroad, but rather on the Chikaskia River in Sumner County (map in *Andreas History*, p. 1494). In 1881 this office was renamed Hurst in the process of a move which seems to have been to get it on a railroad built in 1879-80 (*ibid.*, p. 1495 with frontispiece state map). In 1884 the town was renamed Corbin. Linndale (1888, James

B. Linn) and Cleaverdale (1907, Wallace D. Cleaver) are an uncomplicated duo. So are Moore's Ranch (1860, Ira E. Moore) and Porter's Ranch (1871, William H. Porter). I have grouped together Tyler's (1864, John S. Tyler) and Turners (1872, Harry G. Turner); they could conceivably have been considered a subclass of the unchanged surnames. Finally there are two *Valleys*: Beach Valley (1859, Abijah J. Beach) and French Valley (1874, Isaac L. French).

There follow 11 formations with only a single representative. Lewis Centre (1886, Chester Lewis) is straightforward. Fishkill (1878, William H. Fish) shows the suffix *-kill*, quite unexpected in Kansas. How this name can have come here from the Hudson Valley I cannot say. Although the post office lasted only one year, there was still a railroad station at this Labette County location in 1883 (county map in *Andreas History*, p. 1453, text p. 1490). Sutphen's Mill (1879, William H. Sutphen) is clear. The mill was a water-powered flour mill (*Andreas History*, pp. 683, 687, 688, 695). In 1894 the community became simply Sutphen. Dolespark (1898, Benjamin F. Dole) is also clear, and surely more pretentious than any other name in the *corpus*. Lamb's Point (1863, William H. Lamb) is clear in formation, but I cannot determine if it referred to its location on the Smoky Hill River in Dickinson County or to its elevation; it lasted only two years. It is not clear to me whether the postmaster is the original William Lamb who settled at the spot in 1858 and is credited with 12 years of postmastership or his son William H. who later lived in Lincoln, Nebraska. Lamb's Point P. O. replaced an earlier (and relocated) Smoky Hill (1860-63) whose founding postmaster was Green Lamb (full name Green[e] R.), another son of William Lamb. Lamb's Point was discontinued in 1865. In 1866 the town of Detroit, in the same location as Lamb's Point, got its post office; one William R. Lamb was the postmaster. I cannot identify him at all and suspect an error in postal records or on the part of Baughman. He should be the William Lamb who was a postmaster for 12 years, since Lamb's Point was in service for only two.<sup>3</sup> Sawin's Store (1857, Marcellus L. Sawin) reminds us of a common location for a post office. Halls Summit (1878, Ezra E. Hall) has nothing special about it. Saint Bernard (1855, Joab M. Bernard), on the other hand, is extremely interesting. The postmaster and his brother William R. Bernard were among the co-founders of this Franklin County community, which was incorporated in 1857 ("Executive Minutes of Governor John W.

<sup>3</sup> For this discussion I have drawn on the *Andreas History*, pp. 684, 685, 687, 688, 693; David E. Ballard, "The First State Legislature," *KHC*, 10 (1907-08), 237 fn.; "Biographies of Members of the Legislature of 1861," *ibid.*, p. 274; "Extinct Geographical Locations," *KHC*, 12 (1911-12), 481. Cf. also Joseph W. Snell and Robert W. Richmond, "When the Union and Kansas Pacific Built through Kansas," *KHQ*, 32 (1966), 335, where it is claimed that Lamb's Point was named for Green Lamb!



Gearry," *KHC*, 4 [1886-90], 713; "Extinct Geographical Locations," *KHC*, 12 [1911-12], 487). In 1855 it was among the many losing candidates for state capital when Lecompton was chosen (Franklin G. Adams, "The Capitals of Kansas," *KHC*, 8 [1903-04], 338). Whereas brother William was content to join the pro-slavery settlement of Kansas by Missourians in the founding of only Saint Bernard, Joab went on to be a co-founder in 1857 of both Buchanan in Saline County and Missouri City in Johnson ("Extinct . . . Locations," *KHC*, 12 [1911-12], 474, 483; *cf.* also the *Andreas History*, pp. 602-603, 606, for more information on the whole subject). In 1858 the now defunct Saint Bernard gave up its post office to the community of Minneola which was in approximately the same location; several years later Minneola yielded to Centropolis, a competing settlement and post office. West Gill (1912, George P. Gill) was authorized for all of two weeks. Its namesake had earlier been first postmaster at Gill (in operation from 1900 to 1918). I gather that he wanted to start another post office a little ways from the community which bears his family name, but for whatever reason the plan failed. For Horanif (1888, Bernard Horan) I have as yet no explanation; it lasted only three years. Finally, Renrew (1904, G. R. Werner) reverses the surname.

#### *Names Formed from Given- and Surnames in Combination*

There are five names coined from parts of given- and surnames in combination. Four of these make use of the personal names only; the fifth adds a suffix. Oemoore (1885, Orren E. Moore) makes use of two initials and surname; such formations are found elsewhere in the United States, e. g. Tescott in Kansas. Ricka (1885, Frederick A. Etrick) apparently uses the nickname to the given name (or to the surname?) plus middle initial. Harma (1892, Mrs. Harriet Maple) uses the first syllables of each name. I include here Elivon (1873, Elias V. Benedict), which makes use of the first two syllables of the given name and a *Von* which I daresay lies behind the initial. The name with a suffix is Ematon (1905, Elihu M. Anderson), which uses all three initials.

#### *A Few More Names*

There are a number of names which I suspect are influenced by the name of the first postmaster but which, in addition to a few others I have already mentioned, I have not counted in with certain names. I shall discuss several interesting ones.

Ladysmith (1900, Ida F. Smith) appears to be based on the first incumbent's sex and surname, but the influence of the similarly-named city which figured prominently in the Boer War during 1899-1900 cannot be ruled out. The South African city had been named after a Lady Smith

(1851). Willydenis (1879, William Edwards) may make use of a nickname in its initial element. Stanwood (1870, Rufus B. Ellingwood) may have blended in the final of the surname. Carwood (1889, George W. Carr) may have added *-wood* to the surname.

Beloit (1870, Aaron A. Bell – still in existence) was undoubtedly named for Beloit, Wisconsin, an earlier home of T. F. Hersey, who promoted the town, as the Federal Writers Project, *Kansas: A Guide to the Sunflower State* (New York: Viking, 1939), p. 327, informs us. But since Bell had erected the first house on the townsite and was one of the town proprietors (Andreas *History*, p. 1023), it may be that the name honored him also. Willow Springs was the first name of this Mitchell County location.

Bazine (1874, Samuel P. Repine) seems to have the final syllable of its postmaster's name. According to Minnie Dubbs Millbrook, *Ness, Western County, Kansas* (Detroit: Millbrook Printing Co., 1955), pp. 270–71, Bazine has either replaced an earlier name Bazonie, drawn from a family named Bezonia or Bazona who had allegedly lived there earlier, or is the name of a General Bazaine of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, bestowed by John Farnsworth, a later postmaster and Repine's brother-in-law (*ibid.*, pp. 65, 71), with the Post Office Department blamed for the lost *-a*.<sup>4</sup> The first possibility is suspect; the second is impossible, since both the office and town were Bazine from the start.

On the surface the town of Opolis, in Crawford County in the southeast corner of the state, has a fairly obvious name. It appears to be abstracted from names like Centropolis (1858 in Franklin County, mentioned above as a successor to Saint Bernard), or even Kanopolis, as George R. Stewart suggests on page 345 of his *American Place-Names* (New York: Oxford, 1970), although, strictly speaking, Kanopolis (1886) is nine years younger than Opolis (1877). *Polis* is, of course, the Greek word for city; *-o-* is the commonest connecting vowel in Greek compound words. The town of Opolis was founded in 1877 by J. L. Davis and E. B. Hoyt when their earlier town of State Line (1868, no post office), located nearby, failed to prosper (Andreas *History*, p. 1131). Since the Opolis post office replaced the Stevenstown mentioned above with no change of location recorded, we can gather that Opolis is where Stevenstown used to be. The first postmaster at Opolis was one John H. Ozbun (also found as Osborn, Ozburn); he had been postmaster of Stevenstown for its last four years, and was in office at Opolis for its first two (*ibid.*, p. 1146). Now, if Leonard G. Stevens could have given his full name to Stevenstown, and if Elihu

<sup>4</sup> Wayne Corley (*op. cit.*, p. 8) was unable to obtain this information from Millbrook's book directly; it came to him in terribly garbled form from the respondent to his questionnaire. Repine, by the way, could also be spelled Rapine (so in Millbrook, pp. 65, 70), unless this is a typographical error.

M. Anderson was later to give his initials to Ematon, why could not Ozbun have supplied the initial letter of Opolis? Co-founder Hoyt, who had taken the classical course at Knox College in Illinois, graduating in 1866 (*ibid.*, p. 1131), was surely as capable of coining *O-polis* on the general pattern of Stevenstown as of abstracting *-opolis*. The full name Ozbun could not have been used without confusion, since there was an Osborne in the county of the same name, and there had earlier been an Osborn in Crawford County itself (1867–72, Chauncey B. Wheeler). To confound matters further, for one month in 1877, between the Stevenstown and Opolis stages, the post office was Olopolis. This looks like an erroneous dittography that was speedily corrected. Otherwise it is poor classical Greek for “big city” (ὅλος -η -ον meaning “whole, entire”), which I shrink from blaming on Hoyt.

### *Naming Patterns through the Years*

On page 240 of his *Kansas Post Offices* Baughman gives a table of establishments (and discontinuances) of post offices year by year, 1828–1960. This will be the background for a discussion of the rise and fall, and perseverance, of styles of naming where personal names are involved. Only a handful of post offices were established through 1854, the year Kansas became a territory. In the decade and a half between 1855 and 1869 the number of post offices established annually ranged between 20 (1865) and 88 (1869), giving a total of 734 for the 15-year period and an annual average of 49. Kansas had become a state in 1861. The years between 1870 and 1889 saw a tremendous influx of settlers and consequent large number of new communities and post offices. In all but two years during this period there were more than 100 new offices established, and in five of them over 200. The peak year was 1879 with 254 established; the low years were 1876 (78) and the final year of the period, 1889 (75). A total of 3,297 offices were established during the 20-year period for an annual average of 165. The next 20-year period starts with a high of 76 in 1890 and with some fluctuation gradually works down to 20 in 1909; the low point was 19 in 1893. The total number of offices established was 735, for an annual average of 37. From 1910 the number of establishments has decreased to virtually zero, with a high of 16 in 1912. During the whole period covered post offices were being discontinued. At first the number of offices established each year was ordinarily greater than the number discontinued; but since the 1890's the number discontinued has regularly been higher. To sum up, there was moderate activity from 1855 to 1869, great activity from 1870 to 1889, moderate activity again between 1890 and 1909, and after that virtually none.

A type of naming found steadily throughout the whole period is the use of uncombined surnames. The first examples were Bryan, Whitehead,

and Blanton in 1855, mentioned above in another context; the latest was Schadel (Jacob Schadel) in 1914. Uncombined given names were used only between 1874 and 1898, mainly during the period of the most activity and naming.

From this point on I shall discuss all the two-element names together, whether the personal name involved is surname, given name, or a combination of the two. The 19 names in *-ton* span the whole period, being found from 1856 to 1913, ordinarily occurring only singly in a given year, but twice in two years (1871, 1884) of the 1870-89 period. Since five of these were bestowed after 1889, and into the present century at that, it is clear that *-ton* has remained a productive suffix.

The 59 names in *-ville* were given from 1856 to 1917, ten in the 1855-69 period, 45 between 1870 and 1889, and only four in all the years after that. We can conclude that names in *-ville* went out of style in Kansas during the 1880's.

Two fairly common suffixes were in more restricted use than might have been expected. The 12 names in *-burg(h)* afford the greatest surprise in this whole study, for they were bestowed only in the dozen years between 1869 and 1880. This suffix, common or typical enough to be isolated as a word colloquially, seems to have been stylish in Kansas for an extremely short time, and only at the peak of name-giving at that. Incidentally, the two names in *-bro*, appearing in 1887 and 1925, have nothing to do with the *-borough* that was once somewhat competitive with *-burgh* (cf. Stewart, *Names on the Land*, pp. 193 ff.), and appear quite affected in their near isolation. The eight names in *-town* were given between 1857 and 1883, suggesting that this suffix, too, has been going out of style.

The names with other combining elements are too few in number to allow any major generalizations. With few exceptions they occur during the years of greatest name-giving before 1890. From 1890 on there occur only Cleaverdale (1907) and Dolespark (1898) which to my ear sound modern (that is, the suffixes are still productive and modish), and the prosaic West Gill (1912).

The remaining formations are creations of a modern era. One is the reversed Renrew (1904). The other is the group of four unaffixed blended names, three of which, however, appear between 1870 and 1889. The earliest of these is Elivon in 1873, followed by Oemoore and Ricka in 1885 and by Harma in 1892. Perhaps there have been just too few communities founded in more recent years for the modernity of blends to be exemplified in this *corpus* of place-names. But the process is readily seen in other types of current namings in Kansas as well as the whole United States.