Names in Brief

Egypt in Illinois.—Mrs. Grace P. Smith's recent article on the name "Egypt" for a section of Illinois recalls a series of articles that were published in Wilke's *Spirit of the Times,* beginning on December 7, 1861 and concluding in the issue for March 1, 1862. The seven articles were written by a Hazael Greene, Esq., a name which sounds suspiciously like a pseudonym. Many contributors to nineteenth-century periodicals used names other than their own. Greene's comments are based upon a tour through Egypt.

He defines the area as that portion of Illinois lying below the line of thirty-nine degrees north latitude and continues: "Why it was so called in the first place, cannot be told to any certainty now, owing to the fact that there are several stories about it, each differing widely from the others, and each equally plausible." Greene then continues: "The Northern men claim that it was named Egypt because of its political darkness, and urge that several countries, to this day, send up, at each Presidential election, a handsome majority for Andrew Jackson; the qualified voters never having heard of the old hero's death. The Southern men, or rather, the Egyptians themselves, say it received the name on account of its great productiveness."

The articles are of interest not only because they offer explanations for the name but also because they describe in detail the manners of the Egyptians, their local speech, their cabins and customs, their physicians and schoolmasters, and their games. One article is devoted to a shooting match, another to a backwoods poet, and another to that old frontier trick, the snipe hunt. All in all, Greene's observations seem to be the most complete description of Egypt put into print before the turn of the century.

PHILIP D. JORDAN

Given Names in France.—By a decree of the 11 Germinal, An XI, during the Revolution, the only names permitted to be recorded in the French civil register as Christian names were those of people known in ancient history. At the present time in France an official list is issued (revised from time to time) containing a selection of

forenames, and the name of a child will not be registered unless it occurs in this list. Parents have the right to call their son or daughter Bastille, Egalite, Salonika, or Verdun and must name and register the infant at the local city hall within 24 hours of birth. The French bureaucracy, while rejecting Stalinette, Henriette, Paulette, Violette, and Arlette (name of the mother of William the Conqueror) accepts Russia, Alsace-Lorraine, Nenette, and even Rin Tin Tin. Louis XIV and Armistice are taboo, but Pipe, Endives, Rusticule, Zonfonque, Zingue, and Philopator pass.

LLOYD B. JENSEN

Geschwister-Scholl-Platz.—The address of one of our new library members, the library of the University of München, is Geschwister-Scholl-Platz No. 1. The square in front of the main university building was so named in 1945 in honor of Hans and Sophie Scholl, who were executed in February, 1943, for their leadership in the students' revolt against the tyranny of the Nazis. *Geschwister* really means 'sisters' but in German linguistic usage designates 'brothers and sisters.' The term, for which we have no equivalent in English, goes back to the period of matriarchy, when family descent was traced through the female not the male line.

Broken Bow.—The early settlers of Broken Bow (Custer County) Nebraska, sent many names to Washington for their town but none was accepted. One morning a member of the Hewitt family found a broken bow in his field and he told his wife that he thought the name would be a good one for the town. The name was accepted in Washington, and a fragment of the original broken bow is still on display in the town. Later, a family from Broken Bow, Nebraska, moved to Oklahoma, and helped establish a new town, which was also named Broken Bow. These seem to be the only two towns named Broken Bow in the United States.

LOUISE M. ACKERMAN

Name Changes.—The interesting and informing article entitled *Names of Counties and County Seats,* published in *Names,* issue of March 1954, by Mr. William E. Ashton, has suggested to my mind the origin of the name given to the seat of Texas A. and M.

College. Four months after this first state college in Texas was formally opened October 4, 1876, the spot was named officially by the United States Post Office Department and designated College Station, February 7, 1877. Even the official catalogues twenty-five years later carried on the first pages the fact that this *College Station* had a railroad station and a money-order post office!

Sometimes a concerted movement on the part of unified endeavors will fail to change a name. Such efforts failed to change the name College Station. A set of seniors in this state school a few years ago, unmindful of the legal ramifications involved in such a renovation of *nomen,* made an attempt to change the name of their college town, but fortunately, opposed by the mayor of the little city and a few level-headed property owners, they failed in their sporadic attempts. These students, not knowing also the connotation of their own proposed name Aggieland for the town, and not appreciating the sources of names, were a little disappointed in their efforts to effect the change. However, those older and more experienced citizens of the place who had an interest in the historical background of the town, were happy over retaining its archival beginning of *Station,* and happy over the rejection of the superficial, pseudo-name of *Aggieland.* And College Station, Texas, is the name of the post office, of the town, and the seat of Texas A. and M. College today; not Aggieland!

But some of the standpatters for names, who usually from clear and sound thinking value historical origins, could not stem the tide of the inexperienced and impulsive proponents for a change in the name of their college annual. These innovators succeeded in changing the name of the annual published by the Senior Class from *Longhorn,* originally spelled as two words (*Long Horn*) in 1903, to *Aggieland,* even though there had been forty-five successive annuals from 1903 to 1948, named *Long Horn* or *Longhorn!* Also, this change in name meant the assumption of a very indefinite connotation of many Northgate (the commercial section of College Station) business enterprises, such as the Aggieland Pharmacy, the Aggieland Cleaners, the Aggieland Service Station, etc.! Besides all this, what name could be more appropriate to the general interest of Texans, to the students in an agricultural college in Texas, and to the seniors in the oldest state college in Texas, than *Longhorn?* On the other hand, *Aggieland,* a name doubtless coined from

the land of fields and farmers by the way of Latin derivation, originated possibly years ago in Michigan from its state college of agriculture and imported to Oklahoma and Texas years later, is but meaningless and colorless for a set of agricultural students in Texas, to say nothing of its ineptness to engineering students in Texas!

DAVID BROOKS COFER

California Notes.—In my article, "The Name California" in the June 1954 issue of *Names* the statement is made that the name "California" appears for the first time in 1542. That is not quite correct. While Ferrer's report of the expedition which discovered the coast to which was later appli ed the name "California" mentions the name as if it were known and established in 1542, we find it already mentioned by Francisco Preciado of the Ulloa expedition (1539–1540): "Quiui ci ritrouãmo cinquantaquattro leghe lontani dalla California . . ." (Gio. Battista Ramusio, *Delle Navigationi et Viaggi,* Venetia 1565, III, 343b).

An interesting article, "More on the Name 'California' " by George R. Stewart will be published in the December 1954 issue of *Names.* Since it was necessary to submit the manuscript of the present issue to the printer before the tenth of July in order to catch up finally with the publication date, this article could unfortunately not be printed in this issue.

ERWIN G. GUDDE

Ballast Point.—The item concerning Ballast Point on the Editor's Page (294) of *Names* states that it was so named "because the stones at the place were used by ships for ballast." This is now the tradition at San Diego; in fact, it is a common saying there that "the streets of Boston are paved with cobblestones from Ballast Point." However, is there any evidence that the point was a source of ballast before 1851, when it received its American name? *Guijarro* is good Spanish for *cobble* or *shingle,* but it also has a secondary meaning of *ballast for ships,* and this would occur first to seafaring men like the officers of the U. S. Coast Survey. What accounts I have read of trade to California in Spanish and Mexican times would indicate that the vessels carried away cargoes as heavy as those they brought, so that there was no occasion to provide ballast.

JOHN LYMAN