Book Reviews

The Place Names of the White Mountains. By Robert and Mary Hixon. Camden, ME 04843: Down East Books, 1980. Pp. 186 + Index. Paper. Illus. No price listed.

Mountains and "mounts" often in the absence of imagination become white, a simple enough designation when an explorer, adventurer, lost struggler against the elements, or surveyor needs a quick name that requires nothing more than a cipher on a map or in the mind. Some mountains are white-topped with snow and obviously obtain the sobriquet easily enough, such as Dhaulagiri in the Himalayas, Mont Blanc in the Alps, and so on, as the Hixons note in their entry for *White Mountains*. The name here probably derives from an Indian reference, for in "1672 John Josselyn in his *New England Rarities Discovered* wrote of the Indians: 'Ask them whither they go when they die, they will tell you, pointing with their finger, to heaven beyond the White Mountains.' " Behind this may be a spiritual connotation of "white" as a final resting place.

The Hixons have defined the area as bounded on the west by the Connecticut River, on the east by the Maine border, and extending from the north of Lake Winnipesaukee over one hundred miles to the Canadian border. Out of the thousands of names existing in the region, they have selected about 650 for glossing and have attempted to include each peak over 3,500 feet high, along with the more important towns, villages, and settlements as well as a sprinkling of the names that arouse anyone's onomastic curiosity.

The naming pattern follows the haphazard method that typifies names in the United States and possibly just about everywhere. Although many pseudo-Indian names exist, they were named by whites long after the disappearance of the Indians and have more to do "with legend than with history." Some Indian place names survive as places of point or description such as good places for fishing (the Ammonoosuc Rivers and Androscoggin River), or for gathering blueberries (Attitash), or for the presence of caribou (Mt. Caribou), or Pemigewasset, "swift current."

The peaks of the White Mountains carry the weight of many commemoratives. The story of the naming of the peaks in what is now known as the Presidential Range is well worth the price of the book. Suffice here is to name the presidents commemorated in the range: Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. The naming party, which had fortified itself with plenty of "O-be-joyful" juice, ran out of presidents. This did not stop them, for Old Ben became Mt. Franklin for Benjamin. Without further ado, the party named the next mountain, no doubt in a most intoxicating pleasantness, Mt. Pleasant, later, much l ater, changed to Mt. Eisenhower. Once the custom of naming peaks for presidents had begun in such a bibulous fashion, other presidents were honored: Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, Grover Cleveland, and Calvin Coolidge. The omission of certain names of presidents probably reflects local political tastes.

Other commemoratives include Mt. Agassiz, Mt. Ames, Mt. Bartlett, "whose signature appears just beneath that of John Hancock on the Declaration of Independence," Mt. Cabot,

Mt. Clay, Mt. Webster, Mt. Lafayette, Mt. Langdon, "a president of Harvard College," Mt. Tecumseh, Mt. Osceola, Mt. Pickering, Mt. Randolph, Thoreau Falls, and other somewhat more obscure ones. Possessive names naturally occur often, some of them probably bordering on the commemorative. Since these are usually obvious, only a token mention need be made of them: Akers Pond, Bigelow Lawn, Blake's Pond, Pond Bragg, Bampus Basin, Burnhams Brook, Bean Brook, Burt Ravine, Church Falls, Dallof Pond, and Woodsville, among many others.

Every glossary has its curiosities, the results of over-heated imaginations, plain orneriness, spite, ecstasy, revelation, or coincidence. Some of the more prominent ones here correspond pretty much with the ones found elsewhere. Acteon Ridge takes its name from the name of the last sachem of the Pemigewasset Indians. Arethusa Falls came either from P. B. Shelley's poem, "Arethusa," or from that of a Greek mythological nymph. Artist Brook commemorates Benjamin Champney, a landscape painter. Every state seems to have a Bee Line Trail, often very crooked, but not this one in the Chocorua Region. Mt. Boy probably is a local pronunciation of Mt. Bois, from French, "wood." Bridal Veil Falls is romantically descriptive. Chickwolnepy Brook translates into "Frog Pond."

The devil gets his due: Devil's Den, Devil's Hopyard, and Devil's Slide. The latter may be a translation from an Indian name for "spirit." Diamond River (Ponds, Ridge) resulted from an incident in which Isaac Diamond shot and wounded a moose which charged him and nearly killed him before he managed to reload his rifle and dispose of the animal. Diana's Baths seem to have been named for the Roman goddess, but the place is also known as Lucy's Baths, reason unknown. Frankenstein Cliff was named by Dr. Samuel Bemis for Godfrey N. Frankenstein, a young artist. Mt. Goback is a place where hikers had to "go back."

Great Gulf was "originally called the Gulf of Mexico, for reasons unknown." *Gulf,* in colonial times, had a meaning of "a great chasm or basin," wet or dry. The name is descriptive of the "huge basin" separating Mt. Washington from other peaks in the Presidential Range. Mt. Imp supposedly resembles "a distorted human profile." Jobildunc Ravine may have an Indian derivation, but folk etymology has assigned the name to three hikers, Joe, Bill, and Duncan. Lost Nation may be the result of an incident during which a preacher called a community to worship and only one person appeared, hence, one of the "lost tribes of Israel." Another version is that a pack peddler found the traveling so difficult that he "dubbed the area 'Lost Nation.' " We do not know why Mad River is mad. A lost mitten apparently caused Mt. Mitten to be so named.

Almost everyone who has been to New Hampshire has visited The Old Man of the Mountain and probably has taken the cable car to the top of Cannon Mt. from Franconia Notch. The profile was the subject of a short story, "The Great Stone Face," by Nathaniel Hawthorne, himself commemorated in Hawthorne Brook and Falls. As the Hixons note, "The Old Man is both the official and unofficial symbol of New Hampshire."

The text is well researched and written in a style somewhat a notch above that usually found in glossaries. Although a more ample coverage could be wished, here is enough to inspire someone to continue further research into the names in the White Mountains. The bibliography is comprehensive. Even the index has a surprise. "Apple-ache-ia" does not appear in the glossary, but the curiosity seeker will check *Appalachia.* Yes, the area does have Six Husbands Trail, Quimby's Pillow, two Mts. Surprise, and Success.

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Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States, Fascicles 1 and 2. By Raven I. McDavid, Jr., and Raymond K. O'Cain. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980. Pp. x + 246; 2 maps, loose. $15.00 each fascicle. Paper.

Plagued by lack of funds, lack of administrative interest and support, and sometimes the lack of technical equipment (such as a phonetic element for a typewriter), the geographical dialect survey of the Eastern Seaboard of the United States and a little bit of Canada has been successfully completed and publication of the results begun. First, much credit must go to Raven I. McDavid, Jr., who through the years has worked under increasing difficulties to see in publication the material collected from the time Hans Kurath assumed editorship and directing of the project to the completion of field work in the early 1970s. Here is not the place to recount the history of what must have been some frustrating years for McDavid — and many of us are acquainted with the situation — since a skeleton of the story appears in the "Preface" to the two fascicles before us. McDavid credits all the major workers on the project, those persons constituting a "who's who" in English studies.

The first two fascicles list communities investigated and contains pronunciations of community names, county names, localities, post offices, townships, and geographical names. The latter include pronunciations of *New England, Eastern States, England, English, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Texas, California, Philadelphia, Baltimore,* and *Washington*. The pronunciations were taken from responses of 1,216 informants in Ontario (these made by McDavid for another atlas but incorporated here), Ohio (a few by McDavid), West Virginia, Kentucky, and all the Atlantic Seaboard states from New York to Florida, inclusive. Those in Florida were gathered from the northern part. All responses are keyed to state, community, date of field work, field worker, and type, sex, and age of the informant.

Each informant's pronunciation of the items italicized above is recorded. Since each is also given in a narrow and definitive transcription, I can only refer the reader of this review to p. 2 of fascicle 1 and then to the appropriate recording of the pronunciations of the item. The variation in phonetic detail, as can be imagined, is clearly noticable; but transferring the phonetic symbols into crude graphics (spelling) would do a disservice to the intent of the field workers and the editor of the atlas, although I have attempted such in another context. For instance, the pronunciation of *Tennessee* varies considerably from what is heard in Ontario and what is normally (?) heard in the speech of some informants in South Carolina. The same is true of the other places. It should be noted that the large majority of the field worksheets were the results of investigations of Guy S. Lowman, Jr., in the late 1930s, and McDavid during later years.

Tools for interpretation of the phonetic symbols are described in detail in the front matter. Anyone using the material will need to become familiar with the arrangement of the lists, the symbols for consonants and vowels, diacritics, and ways of recording stress, syllabification, and word division. Important to notice, too, are the labels used by field workers to "indicate the manner in which a response was secured, the informants' reactions to an item, and their opinions of its currency and status." A list of substitute symbols is given, since field workers sometimes had to make adjustments on the spot in their recordings. In sum, every possibility seems to have been covered in the "Introduction," except interpretation, which will be left to ones who use the raw data for further investigation.

The implications of such an enormous amount of detail are both obvious and far-ranging. One is the immediate recognition of variation in pronunciation in regions, communities, and individuals. Another is the recognition of a common core of sounds that allow a language to be defined as a certain type of language, English, in this case. Other implications will be concerns of a social, psychological, or usage nature. The fascicles yet to be published will furnish additional and perhaps more important material for interpretation of our speech habits and their influences. In this, McDavid and those who are aiding him in bringing the material to publication have performed a great service to all who study English and by extension of other languages.

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English, English, 2nd ed. By Norman W. Schur, ed. Essex, CT 06426: A Verbatim Book, 1980. Distributed by Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit 48226. Pp. xxiv + 332. $28.00.

The name, *English English,* developed recently as a kind of ironic, perhaps condescending, reference to what used to be called British English. With the collapsing of the British Empire into a little area comprising London and a few outlying districts, the name to apply to the language of the small country was obviously English English, distinguishing it from Scots English, Welsh English, Irish (English), American English, Canadian English, Australian English, etc. With the coming of tongue power of the other types, some kind of fealty needed to be paid patronizingly to the mother tongue; English English seemed appropriate enough, just right to put certain sounds in the right category without being a clawback. Norman Schur now has embedded the name securely in English. It fits there.

Hardly a book to be reviewed, it still has a wealth of terms that derive from "proper" names and such. It is good to know that the Civil War in English was not fought between the northern states and the southern ones, but between Charles I and Parliament. Our war is known as the War of Secession. To be on Civvy Street is to live the life of a civilian. Cinque Ports (pronounced Sink Ports) names in general five ports on the southeast coast of Britain that were granted special privileges. Naturally, there are seven of them, but counting in English English can be quaint. The City, comparable to our Wall Street, includes the financial section of London.

Many items have onomastic content in the sense of American Name Society usage. A few other curious ones, by my disposition, include:

stonk, "heavy shelling," from Standard Regimental Concentration;
'strewth, God's truth;
Strine, "Australian," slightly deformed pronunciation;
hoover, any vacuum cleaner;
John Thomas, or J. T., "low slang for the male member";
juggernaut, large truck, from *Jagannath,* Hindu idol;
K.O., kickoff;
Oxbridge, Oxford and Cambridge.

Of course, the same could be noted for terms found in any language. Because of the common core of language among all English-speaking countries, differences will always cause minor, we hope, traumas in ones not familiar with particular usages.

In an appendix, Schur lists a few of the more famous — or notorious — pronunciations of place names and family names. Most of these are familiar to members of ANS, but our spelling pronunciations still are violated by Belvoir (BEEVER), Magdalene (MAWDLIN), Thames (TEMS), or Culzean (K'LANE). The English have just as much trouble with the way we pronounce New York, Niagara, Worcester, Linden, Arkansas, etc. Another appendix outlines the differences in currency and measuring. Usages just seem to be more flexible in English English, but the people understand. The Americans may not. It is doubtful that the short glossary of automotive and cricket terms will help much.

The "second edition" is a bit misleading, for the book published in 1973 had a different title, *British Self-Taught: with Comments in American. English English* is different, actually another book altogether. Schur will probably continue to collect differences for future editions, and they will be welcome wherever English is spoken. What the glossary does not contain in information, it makes up for it in entertainment.

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REVISITS

Marckwardt, Albert H. *American English,* 2nd ed., revised by J. L. Dillard. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Pp. xi + 192. $5.95, paperbound.

Pollin, Burton R. *Poe, Creator of Words,* rev. and augmented ed. Bronxville, NY 10708: Nicolas T. Smith, Publisher, P. O. Box 66, 1980. Pp. 96. $11.00.

Rydjord, John. *Kansas Place-Names.* Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1972; paperbound, 1980. Pp. xii + 613. $29.50, hardcover; $12.50, paperbound.

The three texts exhibit onomastic material in different ways: Dillard's revision of Marckwardt's minor classic contains a sharply written chapter on personal and place names in the United States. Pollin has added to names and words that appeared in the original *Poe.* Rydjord's book is the same major work, only now available in a paperbound copy at an affordable price, and is worth it. In a time of attrition, poor-mouthing, and a concerted belief that books do not supply the supply side of economics, it is fortunate that these revisions and repeats came to us early and with some fattening.

Of Rydjord's *Kansas Place-Names,* Francis Lee Utley said that it and its companion, *Indian Place-Names,* are "the best pair of volumes (excluding dictionaries proper) on American place-names since Stewart's classic" [*Names,* 21.267]. After Utley's thorough and authoritative review, not much more need be said about *Kansas Place-Names,* other than that it is now available again and in a paperback that makes it available to a popular audience that can profit by its information and scholarship. Its worth extends beyond the bounds of Kansas; for the contents spiral out and encompass other names in other places, and the format lends to a

page-turning narrative. A good book, it deserves space for anyone interested in onomastics and in American history, not necessarily common disciplines.

Dillard has kept the skeleton of Marckwardt's *American English* but reincarnated the body. Some chapters have been changed beyond recognition, since Dillard is working in the post-structuralist era and incorporates the current linguistic mode while keeping Marckwardt's vision. The chapter we are faced with, "The Names Thereof," reflects the changes in ethnic thrust, if that is the word, in the United States from Marckwardt's time to the now. Dillard, who recognizes influences other than the traditional and continental, moves almost immediately to illustrative material from Africa and the Caribbean.

Concluding his survey of place and personal names in America, Marckwardt stated:

> Indeed, a competent study of personal naming in the United States would have as its first requisite a detailed understanding of the complex psychology, the ambitions, hopes, and aspirations as well as the taboos of each of the immigrant groups, ranging from William Bradford to the last Hungarian.

Dillard omitted "ranging from William Bradford to the last Hungarian" and substituted "arriving on our shores." He then added a final, revealing sentence:

> Such a study would have to look beneath the official veneer of conformity to the mainstream in order to search out the ways in which minority groups maintain an almost clandestine pattern of identity; one not often recognized or recognizable by any other group than themselves.

Dillard has detailed this point of view in several books* in recent years and seems to have exerted some influence on reinterpretation of the "origins" of American English, which, of course, includes names.

Professor Pollin continues to find new material on Poe, a subject that seemed to have been exhausted long ago. Besides revising literary interpretations, Pollin has also added to the details of Poe's life, as the 75 listed articles attest. Additional articles written and published recently were obviously not included in the bibliography. The additions and changes do not alter the earlier review [*Names*, 24.212], but some need to be noted again if only to point up the playful humor that often permeates Poe's prose and perhaps the poems as well when we consider the entertaining rhymes and rhythm that too often intrude on the sense of the lyrics. Since Pollin's introduction and the previous review survey the types of coinages in which Poe indulged himself, here is needed only to note some of the new ones discovered. Among those that can be considered names or name-derived are Alexander-the-Great-o-nopolis, Argelais (a concubine), Barrettian (from Elizabeth Barrett Browning), Cooperish (from J. F. Cooper), Dialism (from the *Dial*), Elline (a concubine), Fabian family (who live on beans — from Boston), Gutsmuth and Co., Hemanshood (from Felicia Hemans), Maturinism, Rattleborough (perhaps from Attleboro), Robinson-Crusoe-like, Shelleyan, Swedenborgianism, Turnapenny (perhaps from Scott's Turnpenny), Vondervotteimittiss (pun on wonder what time it is), and Yampoos (probably suggested by Yahoos). This revised and enlarged edition should be made available to all Poe scholars and also to those interested in the way in which mid-19th century writers coined words and names.

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**All-American English* (New York: Vantage Books, 1975), *Black English* (New York: Random House, 1972), *Black Names* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), *American Talk* (New York: Random House, 1976), and *Perspectives on American English* (The Hague: Mouton, 1980).