HISTORICAL LORE IS WOVEN INTO COUNTY PLACE NAMES

Wonder where it got its name? Wonder why it was named this or that?

How many times have you heard that question asked about a city, a county, a township, a street, a village, a creek, a borough, a river? How many times have you asked it yourself? Names don't just happen. They start somewhere. Somebody thinks of them – and usually for a reason. Names are not just sounds without meaning. They are "records of the past, inviting and rewarding a careful historical interpretation" according to Issac Taylor in his book on names, "Words and Places".

Delaware County names are all of this and more. From a study of them you discover long forgotten historical facts – who the first settlers were in the different townships, who the leading citizens were in the boroughs. You find old legends and stories, old beliefs and superstitions, geographical features lost in modern development and old dialects and languages that left their mark in names and their spelling.

Many Delaware County names were bestowed only after long and ardent discussion by early settlers who considered the name of a place important enough to argue about.

And the origins of some local names are still mysteries. Their reason and background are lost in incomplete records.

Robert Louis Stevenson in his "Across the Plains" presents perhaps the most sympathetic reasons for studying place names. He writes the following:

"None can care for literature in itself who do not take a special pleasure in the sound of names and there is no part of the world where nomenclature is so rich, poetical, humorous and picturesque as the United States. All time, races and languages have brought their contributions. Pekin is in the same state with Euclid, with Bellfontaine and with Sandusky.

The names of states and territories themselves form a chorus of sweet and most romantic vocal sounds: Delaware, Iowa, Wyoming, Minnesota and the Carolinas. There are few poems with a nobler music for the ear; a songful, tuneful land; and if the new Homer shall arise from the western continent, his verse will be enriched, his paper sing spontaneously, with the names of states and cities that would strike the fancy "in a business circular".

Delaware County names, one finds, come from a variety of sources. Most originate from old world locations, mostly English. But many of those of early and prominent settlers here. Others are anglicized Indian names. Still others reflect an industry which was original cause for the settlement of a locality. But

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