

Book Reviews

Indiana Place Names. By Ronald L. Baker and Marvin Carmony. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975. Pp. xxii, 196. Bibliography. \$7.95.)

Traveling over any one of the many highways that crisscross the state, the hurrying traveler has little awareness of the numerous communities and historic places that collectively reflect the historic growth of Indiana. He may note Nevada Mills next exit right, or Boonville ten miles south of exit 10, but this tells him little about the place, its age, the origin of the name, the folk legends and anecdotes associated with the place, to say nothing of the local pronunciation of the place name. Who but a native would realize he was passing [ne vā de 'milz]. Even the less hurried traveler who finds the older state and county roads a more pleasant way to travel will be no more aware of a place's characteristics unless he stops and inquires.

Ronald L. Baker's and Marvin Carmony's *Indiana Place Names* is more than a handy reference for travelers. Including as it does historic, linguistic, geographic, and folkloristic data, it will be welcomed by them and all who are interested in the historic development of Indiana. The dictionary contains 2,271 place names, arranged alphabetically, with cross references provided for current alternate names and local transfers, i.e., names borrowed from other places and transferred to Indiana. Each entry includes information concerning origin of the name, spelling, and pronunciation, and, whenever possible or relevant, folk legends and anecdotes associated with the place. Eight feature labels or types of places are used: state, county, county seat, city, town, village, stream, and lake. Other types of features have been excluded. Location is provided by county and by the locational symbols as found in the current "Official Highway Map" of Indiana.

Baker's and Carmony's dictionary of place names is not a complete survey of Indiana names. Such a survey, although now underway as part of the Place-Name Survey of the United States, will take many years, and the results will go far beyond the limited entries of this single volume. However, as a prologue to a more definitive study, the work has much to commend it as an informative and convenient reference. In categorizing as it does the numerous sources from which Indiana's pioneers drew their place names, this survey reveals that Hoosiers were a sober lot. Fanciful and humorous place names are not at all common in the state. Only Santa

Claus, a town in Spencer County, clearly reflects humorous motivations. Hoosiers may have been sober, but one explanation maintained by some for the state nickname suggests not all practiced sobriety. "[T]here was a lot of fighting in early Indiana taverns, and the frontiers-men scratched, gouged, and bit—often biting off noses and ears. Frequently following a fight a settler found an ear on the sawdust floor of a tavern and asked, 'Whose ear?'" (p. 72).

Recognizing the selective character of this survey, with its emphasis on current names, it is still surprising to find missing from the bibliography most of the extant early gazetteers. Chamberlain's 1849 gazetteer is referenced, but not John Scott's *The Indiana Gazetteer* (1826), Douglas' and Maguire's *The Indiana Gazetteer* (1833), or George W. Hawe's *Indiana State Gazetteer* (1860). Reference to these gazetteers would have made some of the entries more complete. The North Vernon entry, for example, carries no mention that an early name for the community was "Tripton," as reported in Hawe's 1860 gazetteer. Other names for entries in the survey that are reported in Hawe but not shown in the survey entries are "Groves" for Fairview in Fayette County, "Clifty" for Milford in Decatur County, "Otter Creek" for Nebraska in Jennings County, and "Noah" for Marion in Decatur County.

The complexities of working with over two thousand names in thirteen different categories, with seven variables of information, make such lapses understandable. More critical for the student of places than the layman, they do not detract from the general value of the study. Most important, a beginning has been made in the study of place names in Indiana.

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Hoosier Caravan: A Treasury of Indiana Life and Lore. Selected, with comment, by R. E. Banta. New and enlarged edition. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975. Pp. xx, 620. Regular edition, \$8.95; deluxe, \$10.95.)

Hoosiers and Texans are soulmates; they enjoy talking and writing about their states. Neither is overcome with modesty. The talkers and the writers can, by a minor miracle, turn the faults of the inhabitants of their states into virtues.