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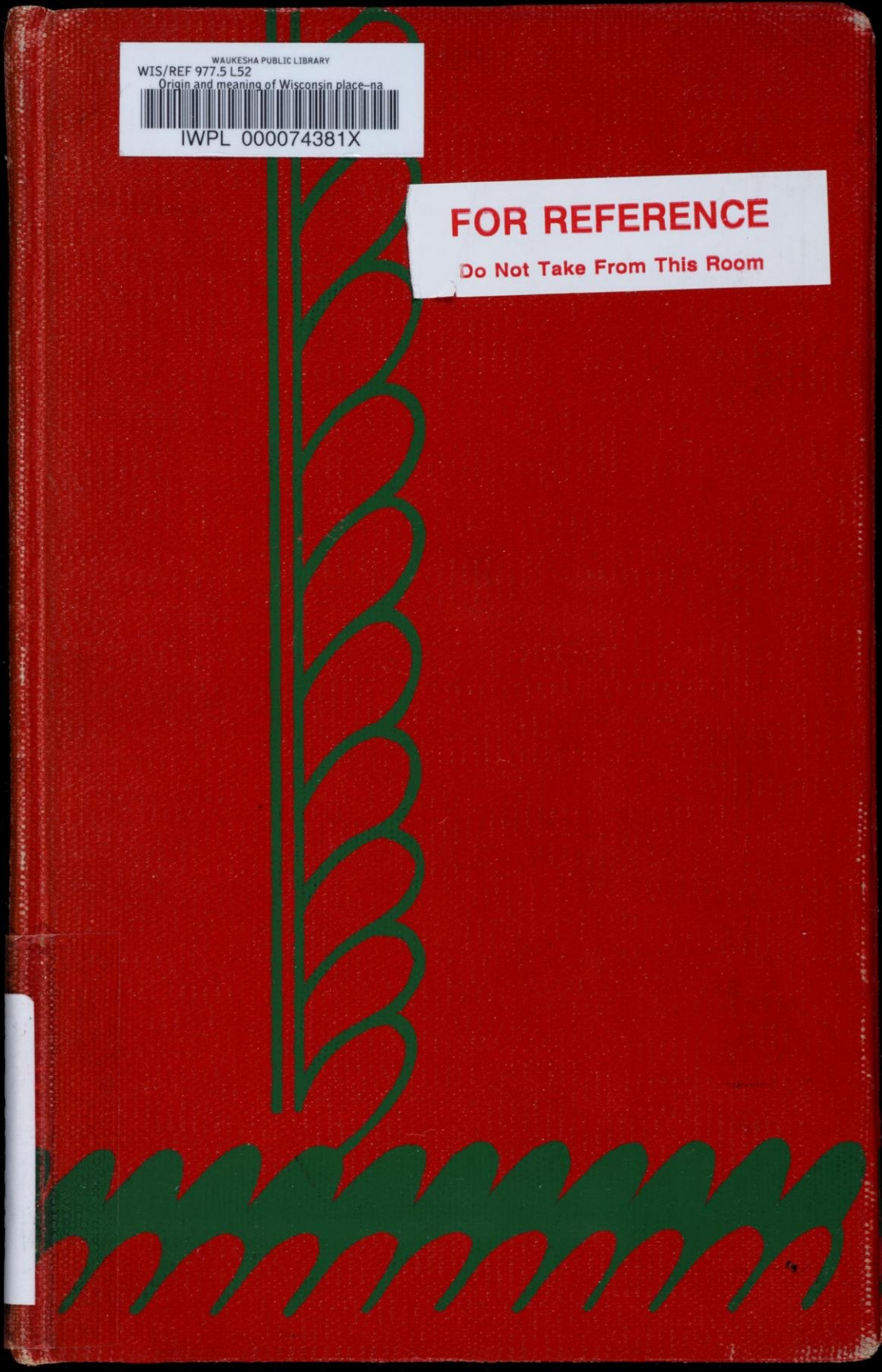

ORIGIN AND MEANING OF WISCONSIN PLACE-NAMES; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIAN NOMENCLATURE.

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ORIGIN AND MEANING OF WISCONSIN PLACE-NAMES; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIAN NOMENCLATURE.

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In the names of water-ways and other geographical features may be traced the history of colonization. Sometimes the study is hindered by reason of complex transformations from the primary simple form, rendering the origin and significance of terms doubtful; sometimes the meaning is so obscure as to lead to unsatisfactory controversy; but despite incongruities and etymological guesswork, the study of the geographical nomenclature of any country or political division is susceptible of valuable result to the student of philology and of history. This is especially true of the Western continent, where the local names preserve, though often hidden by successive corruption of the original terms, the migratory history and legendary lore of Indian tribes.[1]

The study of local names in America is attended, as in Europe, with the difficulties that naturally arise from dialectic changes. The Frenchmen, Dutch, Englishmen and Spaniards altered the forms to make the meanings applicable to themselves or to render the sound familiar to their own ears. The yellowed maps of the early cartographers become invaluable in this connection, as the names there recorded indicate in chronological sequence the displacement of the aborigines by races from the continent of Europe, who in turn gave way to each

[1] "Local names—whether they belong to provinces, cities and villages, or are the designations of rivers and mountains,—are never mere arbitrary sounds, devoid of meaning. They may always be regarded as records of the past, inviting and rewarding a careful historical interpretation." Rev. Isaac Taylor's *Words and Places*, London and Cambridge, 1865.

other. In this century, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Dutchmen and Norsemen, who three hundred years ago collectively claimed all of the North American continent except a few colonies struggling for a foothold in the thin tide-water strip between the Atlantic and the Alleghenies, are left without an acre of their vast domains; the story of their explorations, their forest fortresses, their attempts to establish feudal empires, remains recorded in the names that still dot the modern map from ocean to ocean.[2]

As a rule (which, however, has notable exceptions) it will be found that the streams and lakes and mountains preserve the names given them by the red men, or their equivalents in European tongues; the cities and villages bear the names transplanted from European soil. Thus may be found scattered over this continent, in juxtaposition to names of undoubted Indian origin, a nomenclature whereby the immigrant exiles sought to preserve in the wilderness the associations endeared to them in youth.

Some striking feature in the landscape suggested to the imaginative savage mind a term descriptive of it. The analogous mind of the trappers and pioneers who pushed the frontier ever westward applied names on the same principle. Big Bone Lick, Bad Axe, Hickory Flats, etc., may be cited in illustration. It is to be regretted that the apt Indian names were not permitted to remain in all cases, or that the builders of commonwealths and cities did not confine their selections for christening to such old-world names as would suggest historical significance. For instance, "the name of Louisiana reminds us that, in the days of the Grand Monarque, France was the rival of England in the colonization of the Western World; the names of Virginia, of the Carolinas and of Georgia give us the dates of the first foundation of England's colonial empire."

[2] "How rapidly such a stratification of names can be effected is shown in the case of North America, where we find a layer of Indian names, like Massachusetts, Niagara, Canada, Quebec, Erie, or Ontario, overlaid by Franco-Indian terms like Huron or Illinois, or pure French names such as Vermont, lake Superior or Montreal, by Dutch names like Brooklyn or Hoboken, with a Spanish stratum such as Florida, Colorado, Montana or Rio Grande, and the whole overlaid by such pure English names as Westpoint, Maryland, or Springfield—Taylor's *Names and Their Histories*, p. 3.

The liberal use of names derived from Greek and Roman mythology, or the history of countries which have not even a remote connection with the peopling of the New World, is certainly out of place. Such names, for example, as Palmyra in Wisconsin, Utica, Troy and Rome in New York, Athens in Georgia, Cairo in Illinois, Memphis in Tennessee, etc., are utterly inappropriate and have been deservedly criticised.[3] Even Thomas Jefferson, when he proposed to divide the Old Northwest Territory into states, suggested such utterly inappropriate names as Chersonesus, Assenisipia, Polypotamia and Metropotamia.[4]

Of the forty-five United States, none possesses a nomenclature more suggestive or historically significant than Wisconsin. The leading phases of its history are indexed by the names that appear on successive issues of its map: the French regime, the establishment of mining camps in the lead region of Southwestern Wisconsin, the planting of pioneer settlements by hardy frontiersmen from New York and New England, the subsequent waves of immigration comprising the nationalities that have made of Wisconsin a polyglot state. More than in most states, too, the Indian names have been retained, as is meet in a state where picturesque streams and lakes and rock formations abound in generous profusion.

The derivation of the names from so many different sources renders the study of their origin and significance especially difficult, despite the fact that the period of Wisconsin's settlement is so recent. Especially is this true of the Indian names, for Wisconsin was the meeting place of the two greatest ethnological divisions of red men located east of the Rocky Mountains—Dakotan or Siouan, and Algic or Algonquin. The tribal dialectic differences add to the difficulties that beset the student of Wisconsin's Indian nomenclature and in a measure excuse

[3] "The incongruity between the names and the appearance of these places is amusing. Thus Corinth consists of a wooden grogshop and three log shanties; the Acropolis is represented by a grocery store. All that can be seen of the city of Troy is a timber house, three log huts, a saw mill and twenty negroes."—Russell, *Diary North and South*, vol ii, pp. 45, 46.

[4] Doubtless these names were inspired by the desire for classic learning which obtained about this period. In speech, as in writing, allusion to mythology and classic literature was regarded as the stamp of learning.

the different conclusions reached in many instances by authorities of equal standing. Even the meaning of the name Wisconsin, which is an Englished version of the French rendering of an Indian word, is in doubt.

But scant information concerning the etymology of Indian place-names is to be gleaned from the printed narratives of early day travelers. The records left by these keen pioneers of forest commerce tell us much of the customs of the aborigines, of their manners, their implements, their social relations, their religions.[5] Such attention as was paid to their language was limited to the compilation of vocabularies that would serve the most practical purposes. Of these there are many, almost every tribal dialect employed in Wisconsin being represented. Some of the vocabularies are remarkably full and well attain to the dignity of dictionaries.[6] A study of these, however, gives few clues to the derivation of place-names. Fancied resemblances are more apt to mislead than to guide the searcher who wishes to trace the geographical nomenclature derived from Indian sources.

The names of this state, of the great river that borders it on one side and the great fresh-water sea that adjoins it on the opposite side, of the largest stream that flows within and almost bisects it, of the largest lake wholly within its territory, of the principal range, and the chief of its bustling city communities, are all of undoubted Indian origin. It is interesting to compare the synonyms that appear on the early maps. In the collection of Parkman maps in the Massachusetts Historical Society is an undated manuscript map, which he says shows "the earliest representation of the upper Mississippi, based perhaps on the reports of the Indians," supposedly the work of the Jesuits. The following names appear thereon:

Baye des Puans.
Lac des Illinois.
Lac Tracy ou Supérieur.
Riviere Colbert.

[5] The *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 73 vols., edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites, are a veritable encyclopedia covering every phase of Indian life.

[6] Some of the most creditable work remains in manuscript in the Wisconsin Historical Society and in the Bureau of Ethnology.

Another map, supposed to be the work of the engineer Franquelin (1681) calls Wisconsin "Miskous." So does Joliet in his Carte Generale, where he defines the Riviere de Messissipi. Joliet's smaller map (in the Archives Marine, Paris) bears the same nomenclature. Another anonymous map in the Parkman collection designates Lake Mitchiganong ou des Illinois. Lake Winnebago is designated as Lake Kitchigamenqué, ou Lac St. Francois.

Joliet's map of 1673–74, which is the earliest that includes the Mississippi from actual knowledge, bears these terms: Lac Supérieur. Baye des Puans. Lac des Illinois ou Missihiganin. Riviere Miskonsing. Riviere de Buade. (Lake Winnebago is not designated.)

Marquette's map: R. de la Conception. Lac des Illinois. Lac Superieur ou DeTracy. (No name is given the Wisconsin and none Lake Winnebago.) There is a map given in Thevenot as Marquettes's, but it is spurious.

Franquelin's map, 1688: Fleuve Messisipi. R. Ouisconsing.

Coronelli map, 1688: Ouisconsing. Lac des Illinois, ou Michigami, ou Lac Dauphin.

Hennepin, 1683: Lac de Condé. Lac Dauphin, ou Illinois. R. le Outonagamis (Fox river). R. de Ouisconsins. R. Colbert.

Hennepin, 1697: Le Grand Fleuve Meschasipi. R. Ouisconsing. R. Verte (Fox river).

Hennepin, 1697 (engraved for the English editions of his book): Riviere Ouisconsing.

La Hontan, 1709: Lac des Ilinois. R. des Puants (Fox river). R. d. Ouriconsing. Grand Fleuve de Missisipi.

La Hontan, 1703 (English edition): Upper Lake. Illinese Lake. Ouisconsink.

The first time the name Mississippi appeared in print was in a Jesuit Relation. Claude Allouez had heard from Indians sojourning at his Chequamegon chapel of bark of a great stream which they termed Me-sipi. The Iroquois Indians, whose habitations were in what is now New York, called this river Gastacha. In Friar Hennepin's narrative, this river is called

Mechasipi. Joliet, when his canoe came from the Wisconsin river to the junction with the great river at the place where later rose the city of Prairie du Chien, christened the stream Buade river, in honor of the family name of Count Frontenac. His companion, Marquette, less worldly-minded, called the river Conception, because it was on the day known by that name in the calendar of his faith that he had received permission to accompany Joliet. Eleven years later the Sieur de La Salle gave to the noble river, which he descended to its mouth, the name Colbert, in honor of the great minister of France whose friendship he enjoyed. A century and a half before the Spaniard De Soto had given to the river the name Rio Grande del Espiritu Santo.

The name the Spaniard gave, the many names given by the Frenchmen, are to be found only on maps yellow with age; on the modern map there survives, as is meet, the name given by the aborigines. The orthography has been most varied, for geographers who sought to convey in modern spelling the pronunciation of the old Algonquin word rarely agreed. Thus the old maps, and the old chronicles of travelers, have included these forms of the word Mississippi: Mechisipi, Messasipi, Miscissipy, Misasipi, Mischasippi, Missessipie, Mississippy.

The definition usually given of the word Mississippi is, "father of waters." This is far from a literal translation of the word derived from the Algonquin language, one of the original tongues of the continent. The historian, Shea, who made a study of aboriginal philology, says that the word Mississippi is a compound of the word Missi, signifying "great," and Sepe, "a river." The former is variously pronounced Missil, or Michil, as in Michilimackinac; Michi, as in Michigan; Missu, as in Missouri, and Missi, as in Mississippi. The word Sipi may be considered as the English pronunciation of Sepe, derived through the medium of the French, and "affords an instance of an Indian term of much melody being corrupted by Europeans into one that has a harsh and hissing sound."

An interesting, but apparently unauthentic version of the meaning of the word Mississippi is given in *The Magazine of American History,* Vol. I. The writer quotes a tradition given

in Heckewelder's Indian Nations, according to which two large tribes emigrated several centuries ago from west of the Mississippi, giving to that stream the name of Nawoesi Sipu, or River of Fish, whence the present name is derived.

Lake Michigan was the last of the five great inland seas of the continent concerning which the early cartographers derived knowledge. The old maps call it Lake Illinois (Ilinovik, Ilinois etc.), after the tribe of Indians that dwelt on its southern border; and Lake Dauphin, after the heir to the throne of France. Lake Mitchiganons is the term used in the old Jesuit Relation (1670–71), and a Paris map of 1688 labels it Lake Michigami. Most of the early French maps give preference to the word Illinois and its variants.

This Indian word, which has outlived the European names, is variously interpreted to mean "fish weir," and "great lake." Some authorities maintain that the word is derived from Mitchaw, "great," and Sagiegan, "lake." This seems to be the most plausible explanation. The assumption that the meaning is weir, or fish-trap, is based on the shape of the lake.

As with other geographical names derived from Indian sources, the real meaning of the word Wisconsin (Chippewa origin) is so obscure as to be in dispute. The popular translation is "wild, rushing channel," a definition that accords well with the nature of the stream, but which nevertheless is of doubtful authenticity. Another rendering, "the gathering of the waters," is pronounced absurd by students of the Algonquin tongue. Mrs. Charlotte Ouisconsin Van Cleve, in her *Three Score Years and Ten* says that the Indians termed the stream Nee-na-hoo-na-ninka (beautiful little river).

It is claimed by Consul W. Butterfield that the name is derived from the physical features of its lower course, where are observable the high lands or river hills. "Some of these hills present high and precipitous faces towards the water. Others terminate in knobs The name is supposed to have been taken from this feature, the word being derived from Missi, 'great,' and Os-sin, 'a stone, or rock.' "

The word Wisconsin is the result of considerable change from the first rendering. On Marquette's genuine map, where the

stream is indicated for the first time, no name is put down. Joliet's map gives it as Miskonsing. Friar Hennepin wrote it Onisconsin and again Misconsin, and the French traveler Charlevoix, who visited this country early in the eighteenth century, gave his preference to this form: Ouisconsing. It was not long before the final letter was dropped, and this form was retained until the present English spelling superseded that of the French.

From its source in Lake Vieux Desert, on the northern boundary line, the stream flows through this state for four hundred and fifty miles. Its descent from the lake to where, at Prairie du Chien, it debouches into the Mississippi, is about a thousand feet. From the famous portage that has played such an important part in Western history, where the Wisconsin turns to the southwest, the current is exceedingly rapid, and the distance to the mouth a hundred and eighteen miles.

The Indian name for Lake Superior was Kitchi-Gami, or, as Longfellow has rendered it, Gitchee-Gumee. The name is derived from the Ojibwa tongue, its English equivalent being "big water." Lac de Tracy was a French appellation given in honor of Gen. Tracy, but it was not sufficiently popular to take firm root. On some of the old maps of the seventeenth century this great fresh-water sea is given the name of Grand Lac des Nadouessis. The latter word was the appellation by which the French usually designated the Sioux Indians. It was at the western end of the lake that the Sioux were wont to come in war parties for sudden raids on the villages of their old-time foes, the Ojibwas.

Lake Superior is the only one of the five great lakes that has retained the name Frenchmen gave it, Supérieur, or Upper Lake. This is the more remarkable in that legendary lore is associated with every island in this lake, and headland and bay on its shores. The Indian fairies known as pukwudjinees had their fabled home along the southern shore of Lake Superior, among the great sand dunes. This pigmy folk is happily described in Longfellow's "Hiawatha."

Early travelers on Lake Superior ascribe the origin of the

legend of the pukwudjinees to the mirage, a phenomenon that can be observed frequently on this lake on summer days.[7]

It seems singular that of all the great lakes, the one most closely identified with Indian tradition and legend alone bears a name of European origin.

The name Milwaukee is regarded as of Pottawatomie origin. As many meanings have been ascribed to the word as there are modes of spelling—and these have been many. Mr. Henry W. Bleyer has compiled the following list:

Melleoki—Father Hennepin, 1679.
Millioki—Father Zenobe Membre, 1679.
Meleki—Old French map of 1684.
Milwarik—John Buisson de St. Cosme, Oct. 7, 1699.
Milwacky—Lieut. James Gorrell, September, 1761.
Milwakie—Col. Arent S. DePeyster, July 4, 1779.
Millewackie—Samuel A. Storrow, September 29, 1817.
Milwahkie—Dr. Jedediah Morse, in summer of 1820.
Milwalky—Maj. Irwin to Col. McKenney, October 6, 1821.
Milwaukie—In headline of *The Sentinel* to Nov. 30, 1844.
Milwaukee—Nov. 30, 1844, to present time.

The most generally accepted version of the meaning of Milwaukee is, that the original Indian word signified council place, and that here was neutral ground. Old residents say that it is a fact that the Indians regarded the east side of the river as a sort of gathering place, the chosen spot for their councils being the hill that used to occupy the place where the St. Charles hotel now stands.

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[7] The German traveler Kohl saw a tall, bluish island, with which the mirage played in an infinity of ways. At times it "rose in the air to a spectral height, then sank and faded away; again, islands appeared hovering over one another in the air; islands appeared, turned upside down; and the white surf of the beach, translated aloft, seemed like the smoke of artillery blazing away from a fort."

Another traveler in *Western Woods and Waters* describes imagery so clearly defined as to be seeming reality. "It occurred just as the sun was setting. The sky was overcast with such a thick haze as precedes a storm; and the inverted images of twelve vessels—with the full outlines of the rigging, as well as the sails and other parts—were most distinctly visible on the darkened background." Again, "a blue coast stretched along the horizon in front of us. Surprised, I referred to Bayfield's accurate chart, and found, as I expected, no land so near in that direction. The pilot told me it was a mirage."

In the reminiscences of Augustine Grignon, a grandson of Charles de Langlade, Wisconsin's first permanent settler, occurs the following explanation of the word Milwaukee: "I was once told by an old Indian that its name was derived from a valuable aromatic root used by the natives for medicinal purposes. The name of this root was 'manwau,' hence Mana-waukee, the land or place of the man-wau. The Indians represented that it grew nowhere else, to their knowledge, and it was regarded as very valuable among them. The Chippewas on Lake Superior would give a beaver skin for a piece as large as a man's finger. It was not used as a medicine, but was for its fine aroma put into all their medicine taken internally. I have also understood, though without placing so much confidence in it as in the other definition, that Milwaukee meant simply 'good land.' "[8]

Grignon's explanation would be a good one, but for the fact that the aromatic root concerning which he speaks in his memoirs seems to have existed largely in imagination. If it ever existed, it must have become extinct, for Dr. Lapham and others found no trace of it, and certainly none of it is to be found in this vicinity now.

Most of the Indian names that dot the map of Wisconsin are of Ojibwa or Winnebago origin, with scattering additions attributable to the Pottawatomies, Sauks and Menomonees. In the following list of Wisconsin place-names and their meanings, the initials in parentheses are given for convenience of reference to authorities cited in the bibliography which follows:

Ableman's—In honor of Col. S. V. R. Ableman, who settled there in 1851. (History of Sauk Co., p. 631.)

Ahnapee (Ah-nup-pee)—When or at what time. (W)

Altoona—Platted as East Eau Claire in 1881; changed to Altoona. (Chip. Valley, p. 184.)

Aniwa—Corruption of Aniwi, "those." (Hist. Colls., v. 12, p. 390.)

[8] Mr. Benjamin Sulte, of Ottawa, Can., writes me concerning a curious coincidence: "If I remember well what an Algonquin told me one day, the word Milwaukee means good land, bonneterre, or Terrebonne. Solomon Juneau was a native of Terrebonne seigneurie, in the province of Quebec."

Antigo—Evergreen.

Arcadia—Named by Mrs. David Bishop in 1856. The valley was an unbroken field of flowers when she first saw the place.

Ashland—Indian name, Zhamawamik, meaning long-stretched beaver.

Augusta—First called Bridge Creek; platted in '57. (Randall's Chippewa Valley.)

Aztalan—According to Humboldt this is the ancient name of the country from which the people of Mexico, called Aztecs, emigrated; and this is described as lying far to the north. Hence a little fancy only is necessary to locate this country in Wisconsin. (L)

Bangor—John Whelan gave the name on account of the Welsh settlers there. (History LaCrosse Co., p. 723.)

Barron—After Henry D. Barron, of St. Croix Falls, judge of the Eighth Judicial Circuit. (Chippewa Valley, p. 311.)

Bayfield—Named in honor of Captain Bayfield, of the British Royal Engineers.

Belmont—From three mounds called by early French Belle Monte. (History Lafayette Co., p. 612.)

Boscobel—Named in 1855 by Mrs. John Mortimore as the Spanish synonym for "beautiful grove."

Buttes des Morts—Hill of the Dead. (L) The story of this battlefield is given in Legler's "Leading Events of Wisconsin History."

Cassville—Named after Gov. Lewis Cass.

Chequamegon (Sha-gu-wa-mick-koong)—Place of shoal water. (W)

—— Shaguamikon means literally "something gnawed on all sides." (W W)

—— A long narrow strip of land running into a body of water. (V)

Chetek (Zha-da)—Pelican. (W)

Chilton—John Marygold wished the town called Chillington after his English home. The county clerk omitted the second syllable in recording it.

Chippewa (Ojibway)—To roast till puckered up. (W)

—— Indian name, Chenondac. (M)

Crocodile River—A stream flowing into Lake Winnebago from its southeastern side. So called by Capt. Jonathan Carver from a story that prevailed among the neighboring Indians, of their having destroyed an animal in its waters, which, from their description, he supposed to be a crocodile or alligator.

Darlington—Named after Joshua Darlington, of Warsaw, N. Y.

Delavan—In honor of E. C. Delavan, temperance advocate of Albany, N. Y. (Walworth Co. History, p. 657.)

De Pere—Called Rapids des Peres, "rapids of the Fathers." Claude Allouez established a mission here.

Dodgeville—In honor of Henry Dodge, first territorial governor.

Eau Claire (Wahyawconuttaguayaw)—Clear water, now known as Eau Claire.

Edgerton—Named after H. B. Edgerton of Milwaukee.

Fort Atkinson—In honor of Gen. Henry Atkinson. (Wis. Hist. Proc., '98.)

Fox Lake—Indians called it Hosh-a-rac-ah-tah, meaning fox. (Dodge Co. History, p. 465.)

Gogebic (Gu-gwa-gee-bing)—The place of diving; probably referred to the jumping out of water of schools of small fish. (W)

—— A body of water hanging on high.

Green Bay—Derives its name from a fancied deeper green colors of its waters than usual. (L)

—— Marquette called it Bay of the Fetid; Hennepin and Membre did the same. Marquette says the Indians called it Salt Bay; St. Cosme called it Bay of Puants; on de L'Isle's maps (1700, 1718) it appears Bay des Puans; sometimes it was called Le Grand Baie; Mr. Burnett, 1798, called it Le Bay. (Hurlbut's Chicago Antiquities, p. 441.)

—— A corruption of La Grande Baie. (U)

Hazel Green—First called Hardscrabble. Renamed in '38 by Capt. Chas. McCoy. (Grant Co. History, p. 735.)

Horicon—Clear or pure water. So called from the original name, Lake George. (Dodge Co. History, p. 479.)

Hudson—Called Buena Vista, Willow River, and finally Hudson (Hall's Hudson.)

Janesville—In honor of Henry Janes, first postmaster. (Janesville Illustrated, p. 5.)

Kaukauna (Oh-ga-ka-ning)—The place of pike. (W)

—— At the place where pickerel are caught. (K)

—— Kawkawnin, literally "Can't get up," in Menominee tongue. Called Cocolo by Canadians voyageurs "who ruin every Indian word they meet with." (Featherstonhaugh, Vol. 1, p. 162.)

Kegonsa (Gee-go-sug)—Little fishes. (W)

Kenosha (Gin-no-zha)—Pickerel. (W)

—— Pickerel or pike. (V)

—— Keinauche. Algonquin name for the fish known as pike; applied to a clan of Ottawas having that fish as its totem. From this is derived the name of Kenosha. (J. R., v. 54.)

Kewaskum—(Gee-way-skum)—His tracks are homeward. (W)

—— Named after an old chief who died there. (History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, p. 436.)

—— The road is crooked. (V)

Kewaunee—Prairie hen (formerly known as Wood's River). (H)

—— I cross a point of land by boat. (V)

Kishwake—Cottonwood. (Long)

Koshkonong—The lake we live on. Black Hawk's lurking place in 1832. (H)

Lac Court Oreille—Short ears, from a band of Ottawas, who cut off the rims of their ears. (A B.)

La Crosse—Etymology doubtful. It is said that when the pioneer Nathan Myrick ran his flat-boat ashore at the point now known as the foot of Main street he found a cross fastened to a pine stump—doubtless an emblem planted there by some wandering Catholic priest. Thus the name Le Croix was given the spot, afterwards anglicized into La Crosse. The Winnebago Indians knew the city only as the "Woman's Bosom," because east of the city two cone-shaped points rear their heights from the bluffs, and can be seen many miles from several directions.

Lac Flambeau—Torch lake, a collection of five small lakes; they abound in fish which were formerly taken by torch light. (A B)

Lake Geneva—Named by John Brink, because the lake reminded him of Seneca Lake, near Geneva, N. Y. (Simmons, Annals, p. 11.)

Lake Vieu Desert—See Jesuit Relations, Vol. 16, note. Lapham's Wisconsin, p. 95.

—— Katakittekon (Lake)—Called by the French Lac Vieux Desert, from the fact that on an island in this lake there was an old deserted planting ground of the Indians. (L)

La Point—Monungwanacaning is the name applied to La Point on Lake Superior, and signifies yellow woodpecker. (C)

Manawa—Chippewa word, he has no tobacco. (Wis. Coll. 12, p. 392.)

Manitowoc—Spawn of spirits. Pagan Indians imagined that spirits spawn like fish. (V)

—— Devil's den, from a tradition. (H)

—— Manitouwauk—The home or place of the spirits. (Louis Moran.)

—— (Mun-nido-walk)—Spirit woods. (W)

—— Manitouwaukee, River of bad spirits. (Dr. Jed. Morse)

—— River of spirits. (L)

—— Manitowokie, from Manito, a spirit; auk, a standing or hollow tree that is under a mysterious influence. (S)

Marinette—From a Chippewa Indian, whose father was French. (Marinette Eagle, July 15, 1876.)

Mattawan—On the sand. (W)

Mazomanie—Moose berries. (V)

Medford—Named after Medford, Mass., by projectors of the Wisconsin Central who lived there.

Menomonee—(Oh-mun-no-min-eeg)—Rice people. (W)

Menong—Place of blue berries.

Mequon—A feather. (V)

Michigami (Mich-chi-gum-mih)—Great body of water or lake. (W)

Michigan—Mitchaw, great; sagiegan, lake. (Blois, Michigan, p. 177.)

—— Great lake or the weir, or fish-trap, from its shape. (B)

—— Probably a corrupt form of Michigami, meaning a large body of water or great lake. The Ottawas and Pottawattomies who lived along the shores of Lake M. may have given it that name instead of the Chippewa word Kitchigami (pronounced Kee-chee-gau-mee) whereby the latter designated Lake Superior or any other large body of water. (W)

Michipicoton—Big sandy bay. (S)

Milwaukee—A rich or beautiful land; pronounced by the Indians Me-ne-aw-kee. (Louis Moran.)

—— (Min-no-u-ki)—Good land. (W)

—— The name of Milwaukie exhibits an instance of which there are many others, in which the French have substituted the sound of the letter l in place of n, in Indian words. Min in the Algonquin languages signifies good. Waukie is a derivation from aukie, earth or land, the fertility of the soil along the banks of that stream being the characteristic trait which is described in the Indian compound. (S)

—— Mr. Gurnoe of Court des Oreilles derives the word from Minewaki (pronounced Mee-na-wau-kee), a high promontory such as may be found on both sides of the city now within the city limits. (W)

—— Minnoaki—Good land. (W) Min-no-a-ki. (See Introduction.)

Mineral Point—In the early days of lead mining, the plateaus that abound in this region were called "points."

Minocqua—Good woman.

Mississippi—The father of waters. (B)

—— (Mihchi-zee-bih)—Big river. (W)

—— The Indians never speak of the Mississippi as the Father of Waters—that is rather fanciful, but invariably refer to it as the Big River. The Winnebagoes called it Ne-koonts-Ha-ta-kah—Ne-koonts meaning "river," ha-ta-kah "large." The Sioux called it Wat-pa-ton-ga—watpa, "river," and tonga, "large." Sauks designated it as Mecha-Sapo; Menomonees,

Mecha-Sepua; Kickapoos, Meche-Sepe; Chippewas, Meze-Zebe; Ottawas, Mis-sis-se-pi, all variations of the same. (Traditions and Recollections of Prairie du Chien, by B. W. Brisbois, Wis. Hist. Coll., Vol. 9.)

—— The name of the Mississippi River is derived from the Algonquin language, through the medium of the French. The term appears first in the early missionary letters from the west end of Lake Superior, about 1660. Sippi, agreeably to the early French annotation of the word, signifies a river. The prefixed word Missi is an adjective denoting all, and, when applied to various waters, means the collected or assembled mass of them. The compound term is then, properly speaking, an adverb. Thus, Missi-gago means all things; Missi-gago-gig-jetod, He who has made all things—the Creator. It is a superlative expression, of which great river simply would be a most lean, impracticable and inadequate expression. It is only symbolically that it can be called the father of American waters, unless such sense occurs in the other Indian tongues. (Schoolcraft's Narrative, p. 140.)

Montello—Spanish for "the hill by the water." Named by a Mexican war veteran.

Mont Trempe-l'eau—The mountain that stands in the water. (AB)

Mosinee (Mo-zin-eeg)—As given. (W)

—— From Mosinig, Moose. (Hist. Coll., vol. 12, p. 394.)

Mukwonago—A ladle. (A)

—— (Mauk-wau-wau-nan- gong)—The place where the bear constellation is. (W)

Muscoda (Mush-koh-da)—Prairie. (W)

—— Prairie. (C)

Mushkoda—Prairie (rapids) now known as Jenny Bull. (C)

Muskego—Corrupt form of Mush-kee-gong, meaning at or from a swamp. (W)

—— Cranberry. (H)

Namekagon—Place of the sturgeons. (V)

Nashota (neesh-zho-da)—One of a pair; a twin. (W)

Necedah—Let there be three of us. (V) (Hist. Coll., Vol. 12, p. 394.)

—— Corruption of nissida, "let there be three of us."

—— Yellow. (Wis. Hist. Coll., Vol. 8, p. 396.)

Neenah—Water. (Cunningham's Necedah, p. 45.)

—— "Once Gov. Doty was walking with an Indian, and pointing to Fox River, asked its native name. Supposing the governor meant the element, and not its particular geographical name, the Indian responded 'Nee-nah,' water. Gov. Doty at once applied the name."

—— Col. Petterol, an engineer sent by the Secretary of War during Van Buren's administration, gave the name Neenah in his report. (Morgan L. Martin in a letter to Lyman C. Draper.)

Oconomowoc—Oh-kon-nim is a beaver dam. Oh-kun-nim-muh-gag is the region of the beaver dams. Oh-kun-nim-muh-walk, the beaver dam woods. (W)

—— Beaver Dam. (V)

Oconto—Black bass.

Odanah—Town. (W)

Onalaska—Bright water.

Oshkosh—A hoof. (Louis Moran.)

—— Named after Chief Oshkosh. The original word, which in the Menomonee signifies brave, was pronounced without the h in the first syllable, and was accented on the last: "Os-kosh." The naming of the place was done at a meeting for the purpose held at the house of George Wright in 1840. The names proposed were Athens, Fairview, Osceola, Stanford and Oshkosh. Robert Grignon and a number of half-breeds from up the river at Butte des Morts were the strong party and formed a majority in favor of the name Oshkosh.

Ottawa (O-daugh-waog)—The traders. (W)

Outagamie (A-dow-wi-ga-meeg)—Contracted to O-duh-ga-meeg, on either side of the river dwellers. (W)

Ozaukee (Uh-za-geeg)—People of the mouth of the river. (W)

Packwaukee—Forest opening. (V)

—— (Bug-wau-keeng)—Thin land, oak openings. (W)

Pahjetakakening—The water that falls over rocks, now known as Little Bull Falls. (C)

Penokee (O-pin-uh-keeng)—Land or country of potatoes. (W)

Pewaubic (Bee-wa-bick)—Iron. (W)

Pewaukee—The flinty place; pronounced by the Indians Pee-wau-naw-kee. (Louis Moran.)

—— (Pewaukee-wee-ning)—Lake of shells or snails. (L)

Pishtaka—Fox. (L)

Plover—Indian name is Aupuhkirakanewe, River of Flags. (C)

Plymouth—First called Springfield; renamed after Plymouth, Conn. (Plymouth Reporter, Dec. 10, 1872.)

Port Washington—First called Wisconsin City, then Washington City, in 1844 Port Washington.

Prairie du Chien—Dog's prairie, from the name of a Sauk chief. (A B)

—— Prairie des Chiens—Near the mouth of the Ouisconsin; signifies dog plains. (Jonathan Carver.)

Puckaway—Perhaps a contraction of Bo-kuhn-za-wa, an unclean disease. Indian names frequently betray shameless uncleanness. (W)

Racine—From the French equivalent for root. The river was called Root River.

—— St. Cosme called the Root River at Racine Kipikwi and Kipikuskwi; it has also been called Chippecotton or Schipicoten as Mrs. Storrow termed in it 1817, the signification of which we have heard was "maskalonge." We have seen it called in print "Masquedon." (Hurlbut's Chicago Antiquities, p. 441.)

Wisconsin—Gov. Doty, one of the territorial governors, used to insist on the name being written Wiskonsan, but the mode was unpopular, and the legislature irrevocably established the form of its orthography as Wisconsin. (Hurlbut's Chicago Antiquities, p. 441.) (See Introduction.)

Shawano—In the South. (V)

—— (Zha-wun-no)—The southerner. (W)

Sheboygan—Any perforated object, as a pipe stem. (V)

—— Expresses a tradition that a great noise, coming underground from the region of Lake Superior, was heard at this river. (H)

—— (Zhee-bo-i-gun)—That which one perforates or pierces through; hence zha-bun-ni-gun, a needle. Another meaning possible is Zee-bwa-gun, a cane, like corn-cane, etc. (W)

—— A hollow bone. (Louis Moran.)

Sheshgemaweschecan—Soft maple, now known as Eau Pleine, or Full Water. (C)

Shiocton—Force of wind. (V)

—— Doubtful derivation. A back tide or current induced by wind is spelled u-zha-ya-tun. (W)

—— It floats up stream.

Shullsburg—Named after John W. Shull.

Stevens Point—Kahkagewincheminitegong, Hemlock island, a name applied to Stevens Point, on account of an island in the Wisconsin River opposite, covered with hemlock, a rare growth in that region. (C)

Stoughton—Named by Luke Stoughton, who purchased the site from Daniel Webster in 1847.

Suamico—Yellow beaver. (V)

—— (O-sa-wa-mick-kong)—The yellow residence place. (W)

Tomah—Named in honor of a famous Menomonee chief.

Waubesa—Swan lake. (V)

—— (Wau-bih-sa)—A white bird flies along. (W)

Waukesha (Wau-gosh-i-kag)—The place of foxes; barely possible that as a totem designation it was shortened to Wau-gosh-shag; may be a corruption of the plural form of wau-gosh-shug, foxes. (W)

—— Joshua Hathaway inscribed the name upon an old tree. Waukesha had been known as Prairieville. "I was engaged in subdividing the townships now comprising Racine county, and from some Indian bovs lodged near my encampments I made additions to my Indian vocabulary. With the medium of my fox-skin collar I obtained this name, understand-

ing it to be Pottawattomie for fox, which is a favorite name with the natives for all crooked rivers whose course resembles the eccentric trail of that animal. By giving the middle syllable a thin, prolonged, decided accent, and leaving the last syllable but half aspirated, you have the original as given to me—Wau-kee-shaw." (H)

—— Foxes. (V)

—— The little fox; pronounced by the Indians Waw-goosh-sha. (Louis Moran.)

Waupaca (Wau-pug-ga)—White sand bottom. (W)

Waupaca— Tomorrow. Named in connection with Weyauwega, which means "here we rest." Ascending the slack waters of the Wolf and Waupaca rivers to the former place, the red men were wont to encamp there for the night and on the morrow would resume their journey. Hence the terms "resting-place" and "tomorrow" bestowed by them on these places.

—— (Wau-bun)—Dawn. (W)

—— East. (V)

Wausau (Wau-suh)—Far away. (W)

Wausaukee (au-wuss-sa-kih)—Beyond the hill. (W)

Wauwatosa (Wah-wah-ta-sih)—Lightning bug. Wah-wah-to-say, he shines as he walks. (W)

Weyauwega—Here we rest. (See Waupaca.)

—— He makes it his body; probably derived from a legend. (V)

Winnebago—Fetid water.

—— (Ween-nih-beeg-gog)—Dwellers by dirty water. (W)

—— The meaning is placid, or beautiful. (*Historical Magazine,* Vol. 1, p. 317.)

—— Dirty water. (V)

—— Original name was Winibi (dirty water). Winipeg is a Cree word of the same meaning.

Winneconne—Doubtful derivation Kan-ing, a place where something is obtained or produced; possibly derived from the ween, meaning marrow, and kan-ing The marrow of deer bones is a great delicacy with Indians, and above place may have been a feasting place. (W) Also "dirty place"

Winnibigoshish (wee-nih-beeg-gohn-shish)—The miserable little lake. (W)

Wisconsin—Muskrat house; no two Indians agree as to the meaning of the word. (V) (See Introduction.)

—— The Winnebagoes referred to the river as the Nee-koonts-Sa-ra or Gathering river; hence a river having many tributaries. (Wis. Hist. Colls., V. 9.)

Wonewoc (Wa-wo-nowug)—They howl, probably of Winnebago origin. (W)

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