

ROOTDIGGER

3rd Quarter: July — September 2010

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Backstory: What's Minetto?*

By Judith S. Wright

The first rule of genealogy is, "Wait until everyone who could possibly help you is dead." No, wait. That's not a rule; that's just how it usually turns out. Rare are the genealogists who begin their family search early enough to take advantage of the first-hand knowledge of their parents and grandparents. Genealogy, like youth, is wasted on the young.

Before I began to trace my family's history, I knew only four things about my Grandmother Setley (Granny):

- Name: Harriet Perry
- Born: October 9, 1893, Oswego, New York
- Education: Oswego Normal School
- Profession: Teacher and practical nurse

I didn't know who her parents were, whether she had any siblings, or even what her middle name was. I had never even wondered before about any of those things. And no one who could help me was still alive. So it wasn't much of a start, but acting on the real first rule of genealogy, "Build on what you know," I started chipping away.

I started by requesting her birth certificate from the State of New York. Here I was lucky because many states don't have vital records from as far back as 1893, but New York does. The birth certificate told me that her parents were Walter Perry and Minnie Hill and that one other child had previously been born to them. So Granny had a sibling! Was it a brother or a sister? Were there others after her?

I was already learning the second rule of genealogy, "Every answer found raises additional questions."

My husband, Dave, and I were new to genealogy and really didn't know how to proceed. We knew we didn't have enough information to make a trip to Oswego worthwhile. So we invoked two more rules of genealogy, "Start with yourself and work backward," and "Talk to everyone in your family."

In the spring of 2001 we drove from our home in Florida to my home

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Street named after the town's first settler.

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Special points of interest:

- Peruse the various countries to find out how many common names evolved.

*This is a chapter of a book still in pre-publication stages, tentatively entitled *Seven Generations of Oswego County, New York* by Judith Setley Wright. The book traces the ancestry of her paternal grandmother, Harriet Perry Setley, and is part genealogy, part history and part case study.



Backstory: What's Minetto?

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town of Stamford, Connecticut. Four generations of my family were either born there, raised there, or lived their adult lives there. Two of my cousins, Sharon and Melissa, still live in Stamford. Their mother, my Aunt Mary Jane, was my father's sister, so we all have the same Granny. Mary Jane's husband, Ben, was living at that time with Melissa and her family in the house he and Mary Jane built in 1950.

I spent a lot of time there as a child, and there I was again, back in that house, talking about old, old times. Melissa brought up a big box from the basement, full of stuff that had belonged to Granny. There were photos, newspaper clippings, letters, my dad's high school graduation program – all kinds of things. We spread it out all over the dining room table and had a field day. We made scanned copies of relevant items.

Then, almost as an afterthought, Melissa said, "Well, I guess you'll be going to Minetto."

"What's Minetto"?

"How can you not know Minetto? That's where Granny was born."

"I thought she was born in Oswego."

"Not really. She always said that because it was the nearest town that anyone would have heard of, but her family was from Minetto. One of her ancestors was Schuyler Worden. He was the first settler of Minetto. Wait, I've got an old newspaper clipping about him. You don't know about Schuyler Worden"???

My cousins had an advantage that I didn't have. I saw my grandmother only rarely after we moved to Florida, and when she came to visit, we didn't talk about family history. Some of our history I could have learned from my dad, but for some reason he never talked about his family. They weren't estranged – just far away in time and distance, I guess. However, my cousins had not only remained in Stamford, but Granny had lived with them. They heard her family stories probably more often than they wanted to.

As it turned out, the "first" rule of genealogy didn't apply to us after all. The people who could help us were not all dead.

"Yes, I guess we're going to Minetto."

In Oswego we set out to build on what we had learned. We found a treasure trove at the Oswego County Historian's Office. Barbara Dix and Justin White had a wealth of knowledge and materials. They had census records, marriage and funeral indexes, city directories, cemetery transcriptions and family histories. From a census record we found Granny's older sister Mary. We also found a transcription of the Worden cemetery and a map to find it.

We were overwhelmed by the amount of information we found. We

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Street named after the town's first settler.

I saw my grandmother only rarely after we moved to Florida, and when she came to visit, we didn't talk about family history.



So.... Luke has a SISTER!

Origins and Meaning of Names

By Mayrand Family Association

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The Origins of Surnames Around the World *concluded*

English

By the end of the 13th century, Englishmen and English personal names were to be found not just in England but in many parts of Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well. These personal names were derived from a variety of sources. Some were biblical in origin, or were the names of saints and martyrs of the early Christian Church. Many were Norman, and a handful were Anglo-Saxon survivals or revivals. Also, saints who were popular in particular regions, such as Cuthbert in the north, might influence the choice of personal names in those regions. The following surnames are of English origin and their usage spread throughout Great Britain: Palmer (a palm-bearing pilgrim returned from the holy land), Weedman (one in charge of a heathen temple), Yale (a dweller at a corner, nook, or secret place) and Schoolcraft (a dweller in a hut in a small field or enclosure).

Edited by Lionel E. Mayrand from an original article contained in the Mayrand Archives.

French

Except for the difference in language, the French system of names closely resembles that of the English. French contact with the English during the period of development of English surnames is largely responsible for the similarities. Please find the following surnames of French origin: Chevrier (one who took care of goats), Legault (a dweller by the woods), Pegues (one who produced and sold pitch, or wax) and Rozier (dweller near a rose bush).

Quebec also called New France and Acadia before it was ceded to the British and later became Canada, presents a number of unique issues regarding names. Naming of children was based on unique customs until 1850. Old Quebec customs you would [not] see any more may help you interpret your family. Another major issue with French names in the old colony is the "dit" names. These also known as (aka) names are crossed referenced by Jette and Tanquay authorities on old names.

German

Most German surnames are derived from occupations, colors or locations. Some are from descriptive forms (characteristic) such as [Klein] (little) and Gross (big). The following surnames are of German origin: Kreuser (one who had curly hair), Schluter (one who worked as a doorkeeper of the prison), Tobler (a dweller in a forest, or ravine) and Shuck (one who made and sold shoes).

Greek

Most Greek names are patronymic in origin or derive from geographical place names. The most popular Greek name is Pappas, meaning descended from



Rest in Peace

A memory from all you sons (except Ricardo who did not pay any money)

Most German surnames are derived from occupations, colors or locations



Which one is the city boy?

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Origins and Meaning of Names

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a priest. The following Greek surnames are derived from a religious, or characteristic origin: Kraikos (one who follows God), Xenos (the stranger), Galanis (one with blue eyes) and Psiharis (one who contributes for the good of his soul).

Hebrew

Up until the early 19th century, most Jewish names were patronymic or locational. However, during the persecutions in Germany, they were forced by law to take permanent surnames. Many were able to pay officials to choose their own surnames, usually one describing beauty. Unfortunately, many were unable to pay and were assigned names that were purposely offensive. Since many European Jews were strictly limited in their choice of professions, only a limited number of surnames are occupational in origin. Below please find some surnames of Hebrew origin. As you will see, they are mostly descriptive in nature: Meier (the scholarly man), Ury (fire, fight), Joffe (the handsome or beautiful person) and Shiffin (descendant of Shifra; beautiful).

Irish

Hereditary surnames were first used in Ireland as early as the 10th century, but the custom did not become widespread until the 12th century. Because ownership of land was determined by family relationships, pedigrees were accurately maintained from early times. This interest in descent is also the reason most Irish names are patronymics, which are signified by either O or Mac. O stands for the old Gaelic word ua, meaning descended from, while Mac means son and is sometimes abbreviated to Mc or M'. Because of persecution, many people dropped the O and Mac from their names, but in modern times, the use of these prefixes has been resumed. Some interesting Irish surnames include the following: McClary ([the] son of the clerk), Rogan (one with red hair, or a ruddy complexion), Ryan (the grandson of Rian; little king) and Tamory (the son of the gympanist).

Italian

All Italian surnames end in a vowel and many of them have been derived from a descriptive nickname. Even after hereditary surnames had become the rule in Italy, descriptive nicknames were often passed from one generation to another and gradually replaced the hereditary surname. This practice has produced numerous animal, fish, bird and insect names. The following surnames are of Italian origin and all end in a vowel: Cannella (a dweller where bent grass grew), Medici (one who practiced medicine), Pelficanno (one thought to possess the characteristics of a pelican) and Rotolo (one who made or wrote on scrolls).

Japanese

Throughout most of the history of Japan, only the nobility had surnames. However, this changed in the late 1800s when the Emperor declared that everyone must have a last name. Whole villages then took the same name. For this reason, there are only about 10,000 surnames in use in Japan and most of

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Are you still looking for that lost branch in your tree?

Rogan (one with red hair, or a ruddy complexion)



He was a good husband, a wonderful father, but a bad electrician

Origins and Meaning of Names

continued

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these are locational. The following are examples of Japanese surnames: Arakawa (rough, river), Yamada (mountain, rice fields), Hata (farm) and Shishido (flesh, door).

Polish

The most prominent characteristics of Polish surnames are the endings -ski and -orocki. These were originally used by the nobility as a way to distinguish themselves, but gradually the use spread to the peasants who used the suffixes to mean "son of." Many Poles had German names due to German influence. However, since World War II, many have changed their surnames to remove any reminder of the German occupation. The following surnames are of Polish origin: Drozd (a dweller at the sign of the thrush), Pajak (one with spider-like characteristics), Rudzinski (a dweller near a mine where ore was obtained) and Gorczyzka (one who raised and prepared mustard).

Portuguese

Portuguese nobles and wealthy landowners began using surnames in the Eleventh century, but these didn't become hereditary until the 16th century. Wealthy nobles often chose the name of their estates as a surname and this practice spread as commoners began using place names. An unusual type of surname is found in Portugal - it refers to religious devotion, such as "da Santa Maria." Surnames of Portuguese origin include the following: Henriques (the son of Henry; home rule), Marques (descendant of Marcus; belonging to Mars), Mello (one who came from Mello in Portugal) and Souza (one who came from a salty place).

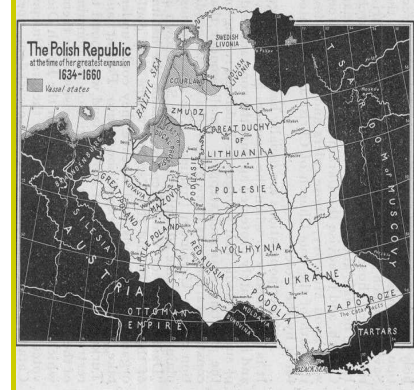
Russian

Each person in Russia received three names: a first name, a second name derived from the father's name and the surname. Most are locational in origin. After the Revolution of 1917, many religious names were changed so that they were more acceptable to the Communist Party. Peasants also changed their names at this time to shed the offensive names [given] to them as serfs. The following are examples of Russian surnames: Droski (one who drove a coach), Shiroff (the son of a big, or wide man), Kosloff (one with the characteristics of a billy goat) and Rosoff (the son of Roza; Rose).

Scottish

During the Middle Ages, the infant mortality rate in Scotland was high. For this reason, many Scottish families would use the same name over and over so that one family might have several children with the same name if more than one child survived. They also changed their surnames if they changed residence. Even through the 18th century, many Scottish women retained their own names when they married. This may be a carry over of an even older custom of the man taking the wife's name at the time of marriage. There are two groups of Scottish surnames: Highland and Lowland. The Highland surnames developed

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The Polish Republic 1634-1660

The most prominent characteristics of Polish surnames are the endings -ski and -orocki



Many immigrants had steamer chests that later was used to save a treasure chest of genealogy information.



Origins and Meaning of Names

continued



Lord, please welcome her with the same joy I send her to you

Few surnames originated in Switzerland. Most are of French, German, Italian or Romansch origin



Jeff Dillard, Benjamin Lowe and Charlie Sewell . Were they the "Night Riders"?

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slowly, and it was not until the 18th century that a man ceased to be designated by his father's name. The clan system was largely responsible for preserving the old ways of the Highlanders. A man would join a clan for protection and, to show his allegiance, he would then adopt a clan surname - usually Mac followed by the chiefs name. As chieftainship was hereditary, the names were mainly patronymic. In the Lowlands, the use of surnames developed much the same as English surnames, although at a somewhat slower pace. Many Lowland surnames are indistinguishable from English ones. Some examples of surnames of Scottish origin include the following: Mawhiney (son of Suibhne; well going), Peebles (a dweller in a tent, or assembly hall; one who came from Peebleshire), Scrimgeour (one who taught fencing, a fencing master), and Rutherford (one who came from a river passage used by cattle).

Spanish

According to legend, Spanish names actually began as cries between Christian families, warning each other of the approaching Moors. Most surnames in the Spanish world today are patronymic and locational in origin. Before surnames became hereditary, a father's name was generally used as a surname. These were distinguished by the endings -es and -ez which mean "son of" Some of these names gradually evolved into hereditary family names. Lords tended to use the name of their estates as surnames and sometimes the estate name was combined with a patronymic. A recent custom has been to use the father's surname in conjunction with the mother's. In these names, the father's surname comes first and is joined to the mother's by "y" (and) or occasionally by a hyphen. Other Spanish surnames include: Palo (a dweller near a tree), Tirado (the sharpshooter, or marksman), Labrador (one who cultivated the land; farmer) and Seda (one who dealt in silk).

Swedish and Norwegian

Since the early 10th century, Norwegians have traditionally taken a name associated with the family farm. Swedish surnames are of more recent origin and are generally patronymic. As a matter of interest, there were so many "sons" in Sweden that the government asked for new family names to be instituted. Accordingly, the National Family Name Committee approved fifty-six thousand new names, making record keeping a bit easier in Sweden. Some interesting surnames of Norwegian or Swedish origin include the following: Utter (otter), Raske (one who was daring; a soldier name), Seaberg (sea, mountain) and Hallberg (boulder, mountain).

Swiss

Few surnames originated in Switzerland. Most are of French, German, Italian or Romansch origin. Most of the common Swiss surnames are of German origin. Below please find the following eclectic surnames of Swiss origin: Pallin (a dweller near the marsh, or swamp), Gonda (dweller at the stony slope), Rush

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(an excitable person) and Pestalozzi (one who cuts bones, a bone cutter).

Welsh

Fixed family names are a recent introduction to Wales. Before they were imposed for legal purposes, fixed family names were neglected in favor of patronymic surnames. These were essentially a genealogical history of the family, where one generation was connected to another by ap, which means "son of." Names such as Llewelyn ap Dafydd ap Leuan ap Griffith ap Meredith were not uncommon. At the end of the 19th century, this practice ceased and ap was usually combined with one name to yield surnames such as Upjohn (from Apjohn) and Powell (from Aphowell). The following surnames are of Welsh origin: Heavens (descendant of Evan, the Welsh form of John), Mattock (son of Madog, or Madoc; fortunate), Parsons (the son of a parson, or son of Peter) and Ryder (the rider, or trooper; a mounted guardian of a forest).

American Names:

American Indian Names

Indian names reflect the culture of a particular tribe. Generally, most Indians have a birth name, such as "Sunrise Beauty;" a family name, "Smooth Water;" and an adult name, "White Mountain." These names are always symbolic, although each tribes has its own naming practices. Sometimes names are kept secret because of religious laws, in many tribes, a child will be given one name at birth, and other names during various stages of his or her life. As individuals take a new name, they discard the earlier one. For legal identification purposes, many Indians assumed "Americanized" names such as Frank Beaver, or Willard Rivers.

Emigrant Black Names

The majority of the names of black North Americans are similar to those of the white population. During the years of slavery, many were given names, some biblical, by the plantation owners. After slavery, many black Americans adopted the surnames of their former owners. But after the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, some blacks changed their names for religious reasons or to reflect their African heritage. Some blacks have converted to the Muslim religion and taken Muslim names. Others have given their children names from such African languages as Arabic, Ibo, Iikuyu, Swahili, or Yoruba. Some children have such names as Aba (born on Thursday), Dakarai (happiness), Aduke (much loved) and Marjani (Lord).

Ed note: This concludes the three part "Origins and Meaning of Names"

Given Names

If you are interested in the origin and meaning of given names go to <http://www.behindthename.com/>.



Early tin type of Joseph Heckman, son of James Blair Heckman and Barbara Ellen Schall

after the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, some blacks changed their names for religious reasons or to reflect their African heritage



Rest in peace, Now you are in Lord's arms. Lord, watch your wallet



**Marion County
Genealogical Society**

Mission Statement

The Marion County Genealogical Society is dedicated to creating and promoting an interest in genealogy, focusing on research in Marion County, Florida and in supporting members in their research.

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Street named after the town's first settler.

Backstory: What's Minetto?

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gathered names, dates and places, and even had time to find a few obituaries at the library. We visited the site of the Oswego Normal School, now part of the campus of SUNY-Oswego, where Granny got her teaching degree. And we drove around Minetto. We didn't know what to look for, but we took a photo of a street sign that said Schuyler Avenue and another that said Worden Road.

This trip was a fruitful first step in the development of this history. No wonder people get hooked on genealogy.

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