

D'OU ETES-VOUS?

DON LAYCOCK

Canberra, Australia

There are only a few possibilities for naming the inhabitants of places in the United States: New Yorker, Chicagoan, Philadelphian, Bostonian, Scrantonite. There may be more exotic forms for those from towns with French or Spanish names, but the possibilities fall far short of even Britain, where Oxonians come from Oxford, Cantabrigians from Cambridge, Liverpooldians from Liverpool, and Mancunians from Manchester. In my home town of Newcastle in New South Wales, we used to pride ourselves on our knowledge of Latin, calling ourselves Novocastrians.

But this is nothing to the complexity of French inhabitant-naming. Every French town of any size or antiquity, and every identifiable region, has a particular form for designating someone who comes from there, and knowledge of such forms provides the basis for French cocktail-party conversation. I have discovered approximately 750 names for cities, towns, villages and regions in the Petit Larousse (Paris, 1960). Such a list makes for rather dull reading; instead, I present an analysis of the logical patterns of inhabitant-naming (provided by the editor of Word Ways), and a bestiary of strange specimens.

The French pride themselves on their fierce individuality. Inhabitant-naming is no exception; although general rules can be discerned, these are riddled with exceptions. In the following, the name of the resident is usually formed by adding an ending to the town name (for names ending in C,D,G,H,L,M,N,T,R,X,Z) or to a slightly curtailed version of the name (for names ending in E,S,Y).

If the town name ends in -AN or -ON, add (N)AIS; if the town name ends in -IN or -UN, add OIS. If the town name ends in -EN, however, there is no discernible rule: Sainte-Julien-En-Genevois to Julienois and Gien to Giennois, but Caen to Caennais and Rouen to Rouennais. Residents of Agen have it both ways, Agenâis or Agenois. Exceptions to the -IN rule are Haubourdin and Josselin, both of which add AIS; for -UN, Melun adds AIS and Dun-Sur-Meuse is inhabited by Duniens. Residents of Dinan are not only Dinannais but also Dinandois and Dinandiens; similarly, those living in Morvan term themselves Morvandais, Morvandeaux, Morvandiots and Morvandiaux.

Towns ending in -ONNE drop the E and add AIS, except for Auxonne to Auxonnois. Towns ending in -ENNE drop the E and add OIS, except for Mayenne to Mayennais and La Brenne to Brennous.

Towns ending in -FORT add AIS, except for Belfort to Belfortins and Belfortains, or Beaufort-En-Vallée to Beaufortains. Towns ending in -MONT add OIS, except for Remiremont to Romarimontins. Other towns ending in T spread their favors about equally among AIS, OIS and IENS, Occasionally, C or D is substituted for T before appending the suffix: Argentat to Argentacois, Sélestat to Sélestadiens, Le Dorat to Dorachons, La Ciotat to Ciotadens, Comtat Venaisin to Comtadins, Sarlat to Sarladais, Royat to Royadères.

Towns ending in -L usually add (L)LOIS, but occasionally IENS (Cantal to Cantaliens, Epinal to Spinaliens, Vesoul to Vésuliens). Sospel becomes Sospellitains, but the oddest -L towns are Argenteuil and Breteuil which cancel the last four letters and add OLIENS.

If the town name ends in -VILLE, drop the E and add AIS (Alfortville, Sotteville-Lès-Rouen), OIS (Belleville, Bonneville, Janville, Joinville, Trouville-Sur-Mer, Lunéville) or IENS (Decazeville).

Towns ending in -R are especially unruly, using AIS (Capcir, Forcalquier), OIS (Honfleur, Saumur), EENS (Lavaur to Vauréens), AINS (Saint-Flour, Montpellier) or IENS (Colmar, Lanmeur). Harfleur adds a T before the ending (Harfleurtais, Harfleurtois), and Bar-Le-Duc expands to Barisiens.

Towns ending in -C are twice as likely to add OIS as AIS, but IENS (Languedoc, Loudéac) is also found. Occasionally, other letters substitute for the C, as in Lambesc to Lambesquais, Moissac to Moissagais, Souillac to Souillaguais, and Fronsac to Fronsadais. Beauce to Beaucerons and Bellac to Bellachons are laws unto themselves.

If a French town or region ends in -D, its inhabitants add OIS (Vermand, Montbard, Saint-Amand-Mont-Rond), IENS (Saint-Amand-Mont-Rond, Périgord), IENS (Sainte-Menehould) or even AIS (Montbeliard). -X is also an unruly ending, with Aix-Les-Bains to Aixois, Ax-Les-Thermes to Axéens, and Limoux to Limouxins. Carmaux, Morlaix and Roubaix substitute S for X before adding I(E)NS: Carmausins, Morlaisiens, Roubaisiens. Other substitutions include CQ as found in Dax to Dacquois.

In contrast, towns ending in -H (Auch), -K (Sarrebruck) and -M (Riom, Ham, Condom) all end in OIS. In fact, the association between -M and OIS is so pronounced that towns ending in -MES or -MS take this ending after dropping one or more letters: Baume-Les-Dames to Baumois, Domme to Dommois, Vendôme to Vendômois, Nîmes to Nîmois, Exmes to Exmois, Fismes to Fismois, Reims to Remois. -EZ or -UZ is likewise well-behaved, adding IENS with Saint-Tropez to Tropéziens, Senez to Senéziens, Morez to Moréziens, Lombes to Lombéziens, and Luz-Saint-Saveur to Luziens. Alas, Carluz becomes Carluciens; even worse, the inhabitants of Metz are Messins and those of Biarritz, Biarrots.

Towns ending in -G are exasperating. Bourg-En-Bresse, Cabourg, Cherbourg, Strasbourg and Phalsbourg all add EOIS, but Bourbourg contains Bourbouriens, Bourg is inhabited by Bourcais, and Bourg-Saint-Andéol boasts Bourguesans or Bourdesans. Towns and regions

ending in -GNE don't behave much better, dropping the final letter and adding AIS (Auvergne, Mortagne-Au-Perche), OIS (Compiègne, Digne), IENS (Aubagne to Aubaniens). Even worse, one finds Bretagne with Bretons, Champagne with Champenois, Bourgogne with Bourguignons, and Gascogne with Gascons.

As mentioned previously, towns ending in -E are very likely to drop this letter before taking an ending. But, as usual, there are exceptions: Vitré to Vitréais or Vitréens, Corse to Corses, Corte to Cortenais, Taulé to Taulésiens, Segré to Segréens, Neustrie to Neustriens, Mégare to Mégaréens, Saintonge to Saintongeais, Maubeuge to Maubeugeois, Collioure to Colliourenchs. Several varieties of towns ending with -E have already been discussed under -N, -L, -M and -G; beyond these, it is hard to discern underlying rules for deciding which ending to use.

Towns ending in -ES - and France has many - always drop both letters before adding a suitable ending. (Did I say always? The inevitable exceptions occur: Ardres to Ardrésiens, Alès to Alésiens, Arles to Arlésiens, and Fourmies to Fourmiesiens.) What ending to use is another matter. The odds are roughly three to two in favor of OIS over AIS, but there are four towns that use AINS (Thônes, Avranches, Chartres, Aigues-Mortes) and a host of other exceptions: Belvès to Belvézois, Istres to Istrens, Salies-De-Béarn to Salisiens, Sallanches to Sallanchards, Ardes to Ardoisiens (a double ending?), Sabres to Sabrins or Sabringots, Guîtres to Guîtresands, and Saulxures-Sur-Moselotte to Saulxurons.

Towns ending in -NS generally drop the last letter before adding an ending; exceptions to this rule are Lens to Lensois and Nyons to Nyonsais. The ending usually added is (N)AIS or expansions such as Sens to Senonais and Tonneins to Tonneinquais. OIS is instead used by Pons to Pontois, Salins-Les-Bains to Salinois, Moulins to Moulinois, and Saint-Gaudens to Saint-Gaudinois. Residents of Samoëns are different, calling themselves Samoentins.

Towns ending in -US, -IS or -AS never drop the S before adding (S)IENS. However, Privas is inhabited by Privadois, and Auxois, by Auxois (no change).

The only other letter preceding -S is R, and here there is a mixed bag: no cancellation of S in Thouars to Thouarsais, Cahors to Cahorsins or Cahorsains, and Cuers to Cuersois, but cancellation of S in Mamers to Mamertins, Lillers to Lillerois, Thiers to Thiernois, and Louviers to Lovériens.

It's very hard to generalize about towns ending in -Y, the third letter that is generally dropped before adding an ending. A type collection: Vailly-Sur-Aisne to Valliciens, Saint-Rémy-Sur-Durolle to Saint-Rémois, Recey-Sur-Ource to Récéens, Poissy to Poissiais, Orly to Olysiens, Nancy to Nancéiens, Montmorency to Montmorenciens, Vouvray to Vouvrillons, Savenay to Savenaisiens, Sully-Sur-Loire to Sullinois, Rumilly to Rumiliens, Saint-Péray to Saint-Pérolais, Commercy to Commercisois, Le Faucigny to Faucignerans, Fumay to Fumaciens, Juvigny-Le-Tertre to Juvignasiens, and Gavray to Gavrians. Note that many of these are amplifications of the ba-

sic AIS, OIS and IENS endings. And, as usual, there are those towns which do not cancel Y: Gray to Graylois, Bernay to Bernayens, Clamecy to Clamecyois, Toucy to Toucyquois, Vichy to Vichy-ssois, Vitry-Le-François to Vitryats, Sainte-Foy-La-Grande to Sainte-Foyens, and Ivry-La-Bataille to Ivryens.

Thus far, this article has discussed reasonably well-behaved names for persons residing in a given town or region. It is now time to look at extraordinary specimens of Gallic illogic. The first column gives the name of the town, the second a "logical" name for the inhabitant based on the rules discussed above, and the third the actual name of the inhabitant.

Aire-Sur-L'Adour	Airois	Aturins
Aix-En-Provence	Aixois	Aquisextains
Antibes	Antibois	Antipolitains
Besançon	Besançonnais	Bisontins
Charlesville	Charlesvillois	Carolopolitains
Charmes	Charmois	Carpiniens
Châteaulin	Châteaulinois	Castellinois
Longwy		Longoviciens
Lons-Le-Saulnier	Lonais	Lédoniens
Mézières	Méziérois	Macériens
Pézenas	Pézenasiens	Piscénois
Pont-A-Mousson	Pontois	Mussipontains
Pont-L'Evêque	Pontois	Pontépiscopiens
Rive-De-Gier	Gierais	Ripagériens
Rodez	Rodéziens	Ruthénois
Saint-Mihiel	Mihiellois	Sammiellois
Saint-Omer	Omerais	Audomarois
Saint-Rambert-Sur-Loire	Rambertois	Ragnabertois
Saint-Yrieix-La-Perche	Perchois	Arédiens
Void	Voidins	Vidusiens
Vouziers	Vouzierois	Vouzinois

Are residents of Songeons ('let us dream') Songeurs ('dreamers')? And, finally, whoever might come from Woëvre?

SPECIAL OFFER TO WORD WAYS READERS

Names and Games, a 280-page anthology of 99 *Word Ways* articles on onomastics from 1968 to 1985, is being published by University Press of America in both paperback (\$13.75) and hardcover (\$25.75). The book applies the concepts of recreational linguistics to the corpus of names: personal names, place names, and names of other things (commercial names, chemical element names, number names, calendar names, etc.). Topics range from anagrams on RONALD WILSON REAGAN to rhyming and punning names of beauty parlors to surnames consisting of a single letter. Most of the articles are expository; a few are cast in fictional or poetic form.

Word Ways has acquired a supply of paperbacks which it offers to readers for only \$12.95 including postage. Send now for your copy while the supply lasts!