

# What's in a name? A laugh or two!

I might as well come right out and tell you I've become a little testy about my names, Steamer and Wheldon.

I like them both, but how would you feel if someone unable to think of Steamer or Wheldon called you Canoe, Barge, Boomer, Schooner, Squeak, Squawk, Rowboat, Stoneboat, Steamship, or Scow? Horrible I'll bet.

Why it's enough to make you seasick.

It's happened to me lots of times.

To make matters worse, my proper name is Wheldon and I've been called Waldo, Wendall, Wilkie, Welbourne, Wellington and even Willard. Imagine Willard.

My first day on the job at the courthouse in Milton, several years ago, the first fellow I was introduced to said I'm Meldon, the second chap said I'm Sheldon and by this time I thought good grief if I say I'm Wheldon they will swear to God I'm putting them on.

We often laughed later about the three of us meeting that first day. Their proper names were Mel Dunn and Sheldon Featherstone, but as a joke we would explain we were Meldon, Sheldon and Wheldon.

I know judges that give you 30 days for jokes like that.

So you see you have to be on your guard at all times when you are



*Have You Got A Minute?*

Stories by W. Steamer Emerson

tagged with a name just a wee bit different.

Did you notice the cartoon strip Ernie Alcott did on me last week. Wonderful, talented Ernie.

We have been friends for 60 years, but I am a little put out about his piece.

Let me explain. The Alcotts, Emmersons, Bessys, Walkers, Stockfords, James, Cofells and the Whitmees were all residents of Top Street. It's a nickname.

In municipal and registry documents the proper name of the street is George, but as kids will do we called it Top Street. It was the top street in that part of town west of Main Street.

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top street in that part of town west of Main Street, above and beyond was Harold Cleave's farm.

There isn't another street in old Georgetown that holds more memories or produced more lasting friendships than Top Street.

Those still living in town who were raised on my street are truly faithful Hazel Arnold (Hazel Walker) Floria Alcott (Floria does Albert and The Lion at the drop of a hat) Bud James, Hockey Heritage winner and Frank Whitmee. Of course Ernie, my brother Jim, Steve and sister.

Lois lives out of town as do Gordie James, Jimmy Cofell, and Ralph Whitmee and last but not least the Stockfords.

Right at the moment I am a little ticked off with Ernie and his cartoons.

Now I don't think its serious enough to start a family feud, but Ernie may have unintentionally made me look like a bit of a fraud about my nickname.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt it was Gordon Alcott and his brother Ernie that tagged me with Steamer and Steamboat that unforgettable sunny morning in their kitchen

It stuck like glue.

In his cartoon strip you can easily tell it's Gordon Alcott, Ernie Alcott and yours truly. I'm the one telling them it's Weldon with two s's.

For years and years Ernie and I have told the story over and over of how in your very kitchen when I was asked my name I replied, Steamboat and you spell it with two s's. Everybody laughed.

There isn't a week goes by that someone doesn't ask me how I got my nickname and then like a bolt out of the blue Ernie draws me in black and white and tells it like I'm saying it's Weldon with two s's.

The Alcott family and I will have to steam iron this mix up out somehow.

After all these years it could be he's right and I'm wrong but I doubt it, he left the "h" out of Wheldon.

## Cycling accident

No injuries were sustained after a Wednesday 3:25 accident at Mountainview Road South and Sinclair Avenue in which a 10-year-old Georgetown boy, riding a bicycle, collided with a Mazda, operated by a 40-year-old Acton woman. Police say the Mazda was northbound on Mountainview Road when the oncoming bicycle turned east into the car's path.

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## Back to school time presents budget woes

Getting students ready to hit the books when classes resume can hit the family budget hard, and parents are being urged to set strict spending limits.

"Back-to-school time can be almost as bad as Christmas for pushing families into serious financial debt," says Carolyn Lentz, education co-ordinator for the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations (MCCR).

Ontario's free credit-counselling services traditionally report a peak in requests for help at this time of year.

According to Lentz, three things can help keep spending in line - budgets, bargains and compromise.

"You have to know the limit of how much you can spend and promise yourself you won't go over it," she says. "Getting the kids involved at this point can help enormously. They'll be more likely to understand why they can't have a whole closet-load of new clothes if they've helped make choices."

Lentz suggests doing a rough breakdown of the back-to-school budget, allocating certain percentages for clothes, books, supplies,

club fees and any other necessities.

Hopefully, that won't be as hard if the child has been involved in the budget process.

It may be possible to save money on another budget item, to cover higher clothing expenses. Can used text books be purchased instead of new ones? Could any equipment or supplies from last year be recycled?

If the clothes in question are that important, perhaps the student could earn the money to help pay for them.

Nothing teaches kids the value of a dollar better than earning money on their own," says Lentz. "Children who had jobs or ran businesses this summer will probably be more understanding and willing to compromise when shopping for back-to-school items. They're also more likely to have money of their own to subsidize the budget."

If it seems impossible to find the money for school expenses and you need help dealing with a heavy debt load, Lentz suggests calling the nearest Credit Counselling Service now, "before the problem gets worse."

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