

NAMES ON THE BORDER

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In H. L. Mencken's The American Language (Knopf, 1977), a reissue of the 1936 fourth edition and the 1945 and 1948 supplements, there is a brief discussion of United States towns whose names reflect their location on state or national borders. These names are often compounded from the names of the two or three bordering states. This article is a new look at these old names, and a review of more recent atlases for newer ones.

As is well known, there is only one point in the United States where four states meet - Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah - and the Four Corners Highway leads to within a few hundred yards of it. A small access road takes one to the actual intersection, around which local Indian tribes sell their wares, but it is not an inhabited place.

Three states meet at a common border 59 times. This results in the name of the Delmarva Peninsula which contains parts of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, but only three town names:

AR LA TX Texarkana AR-TX KY OH WV North Kenova OH
KY OH WV Kenova WV

Two states meet at a common border 107 times, and many more border towns are to be found. These town names are divided into three lists: generic names, simply indicating a border; names making use of the bordering state name(s); towns on the border with Mexico or Canada. When there is a town on only one side of the border, the state is listed; when there is a town on both sides of the border, both states are listed; when there is no information, no state is listed.

Generic Names

AL MS State Line MS	IA MO South Lineville MO
AR LA State Line LA	KY TN State Line KY
AR MO Gateway AR	MD PA State Line PA
AR OK West Line AR	MD PA Lineboro PA
CA NV Stateline NV	MA NH State Line NH
CT MA State Line CT	MA NY State Line MA
ID WY Border ID	MN WI State Line WI
IL IN State Line IN	NY PA State Line NY-PA
IN OH Union City IN-OH	OR WA State Line OR
IA MO Lineville IA	

Specific Names

AL FL Florala AL	AL FL Florala AL
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AL GA Alaga*	IN MI Michigan Shores IN
AZ CA Calzona* CA	IN MI Michiana MI
AR LA Arkana AR-LA	KY TN Kensee KY
AR LA Arkla*	KY VA Kenvir KY
AR LA Laark LA	LA TX Latex LA
AR MO Moark AR	MD PA Maryland Line MD
AR OK Arkoma OK	MD PA Pen Mar*
CA NV Calada* CA	MD PA Sylmar MD
CA NV Calneva CA	MD VA Vi-Mar Beach VA
CA OR Calor* CA	MO TN Tennemo TN
CO KS Kanorado KS	NV UT Uvada NV
CO KS Weskan KS	NM OK Mexhoma OK
CO UT Ucolo UT	NM TX Texico NM
CO UT Urado*	NM TX Texline TX
CO WY Wycolo WY	NY PA Nypenn*
DE MD Delmar DE-MD	NC VA Virgilina VA
DE MD Mardela	OH PA Pennline PA
DE MD Marydel DE	OK TX Texhoma OK-TX
DE MD Marydel MD	SD WY Dakoming*
GA TN Tennga GA-TN	SD WY Wyodak WY
ID MT Monida MT	UT WY Wyuta WY
ID NV Idavada ID	MD PA Mason and Dixon*
ID UT Utida UT	NV UT Uvada UT
IL MO Illmo*	OK TX Texola OK

International Border Names

Canada AK Boundary AK	Canada ND Northgate ND
Canada ME Boundary ME	Canada ND Portal ND
Canada WA Boundary WA	Mexico CA Calexico CA

There are two different towns named State Line PA, as well as two Uvada NV. Wyodak is not actually on the SD-WY border; the name may be meant to indicate the Dakota Indians instead. Mardela appears only in Mencken's book. Towns marked with an asterisk appear only in the article by F. J. Kelly, "Towns on State Borders Go By Interesting Names," appearing in the Austin (Texas) Statesman of August 27, 1953. The remainder appear in Rand McNally Commerical Atlas and Marketing Guide (13th edition, 1982) or other contemporary atlases.