

ROSE VALLEY ONCE ROGUE'S VALLEY; NORWOOD WAS NOVEL

Two of Delaware County's most complimented names have interesting histories. The boroughs of Rose Valley and Norwood both have names that have caused travelers to comment on their quaintness and beauty.

In the case of Rose Valley's name, a blush of embarrassment might be appropriate. Norwood can take the compliment without flinching.

True enough, Rose Valley is a pleasant enough borough, just as the name implies. But the facts are that the original name implies just the opposite. It's a story of from rags to riches.

Before it was Rose Valley, it was Rogue's Valley. It would hardly be appropriate to say that today's name is a corruption of the former – as is the case of Marcus Hook corrupted from Marranties Hoeck. It is better to call Rose Valley a reformation of Rogue's valley. The change was made precisely and deliberately.

Rogue's Valley got its name through common usage years ago. The section was first occupied by snuff and wool millers. Oddly and coincidentally, however, most every mill set up there failed after a short time. For reason or other, so many miller who located there were financial failures.

Thus originated the name Rogue's Valley – indicative of the unsuccessful mill owners. Later on, Antrim Osborne came into possession of a large tract of land along the east bank of Ridley creek in what is now the northeastern corner of the borough. He operated the mill but soon converted most of his land to home sites.

He was particularly interested in attracting Philadelphia residents to this area. The name Rogue's Valley just wouldn't do for a residential area. So he started calling it Rose Valley. Luckily, for him, the name caught on and the older one died. However, even today, many an old timer from this area will tell you that he "knew Rose Valley when".

Norwood can also trace its "novel" name to one man. When John Cochran of Chester, laid out the town in 11872, he named it Norwood. The name was suggested by a novel of that name written by Henry Ward Beecher. The novel was very popular at that time.

Norwood was erected from part of Ridley Township. Lots were sold at public sale after June 1, 1873. Records show that this was one of the first instances where definite efforts were made to attract Philadelphians to Ridley Township.

Building continued in Norwood rapidly and by 1884 there were more than 45 houses in the town.