

John Repp

Names

At 4 a.m., I lay contemplating “smithy,” so common a workplace “Smith” is the commonest surname, but could so many smiths have lived when guilds began curdling the barely medieval milk? Perhaps smiths merely bred better in the medieval murk the never-cold coals lit a little. Perhaps only the science of linguistics can bring noon to this. Despite Hammersmith, Goldschmidt, Cooper & the rest, Miller & Weaver—not to mention Taylor & Baker—prove it goes way beyond metal. I hypnagogically spoke to my students about such magic (as in you have to work it). No wands, kids, but after years of working the bellows, maybe a staff & leather kirtle. That really *was* a black cat’s nose I touched. Winter now, so night has a long way to go