French *souvrain*, and which Milton spelled "sovran," they tortured into its present form,— much as the clerks of Massachusetts Colony tortured the name of William Hathorne. This, however, was spelled Hathorne oftener than in other ways, and it was so spelled in the two signatures above referred to, one of which was attached as witness to a deed for the settlement of the boundary between Lynn and Salem,* and the other to a report of the commissioners for the investigation of the French vessels coming to Salem and Boston in 1651, the two other commissioners being Samuel Bradstreet and David Denison.† The name was undoubtedly Hathorne, and so it continued with one or two slight variations during the eighteenth century down to the time of Nathaniel Hathorne, Jr., who entered and graduated at Bowdoin College under that name, but who soon afterward changed it to Hawthorne, for reasons that have never been explained.

All cognomens would seem to have been derived originally from some personal peculiarity, although it is no longer possible to trace this back to its source, which probably lies far away in the Dark Ages,—the formative period of languages and of families. Sometimes, however, we meet with individuals whose peculiarities suggest the origin of their names: a tall, slender, long-necked man named Crane; or a timid, retiring student named Leverett; or an

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* Towne Genealogy, i. 40.
† Massachusetts Archives, x. 171.