

Who Am I?

Answer: *Lillian Virginia Mountweazel*, a fake entry in the 3rd edition of the 1975 New Columbia Encyclopedia.

Born in a kingdom within an empire: Kingdom and empire are synonyms. If you replace kingdom with empire, you get *An Empire within an Empire*, which is the original motto for Ohio

I was destined to set the world on fire: She was born in Bangs OH, died while on assignment for Combustible Magazine

Unusual subjects I did seek/ Altaica found at the very peak: *Mustela altaica* is the Mountain Weasel = Mountweazel

Gathering photos for my success: She is known for photographing unusual subjects:

I travelled the roads of the rural US: She took photos of rural mailboxes.

A city's type of transportation: She also photographed New York City buses.

And to the dead of a foreign nation: And the cemeteries of Paris.

A Paree exhibit in '72: The entry continues that she had an exhibit in 1972 in Paris of her mailbox photos.

Put me on the list of Who's Who/ For my solo show attention swirled,

Raising flags around the world: The exhibit was called *Flags Up!*

A retrospective in '09: *The Life and Times of Lillian Virginia Mountweazel*, a real art show in 2009.

Works by six others - a tribute so fine: Six artists contributed to the art show about her 'life'.

At a gallery in The Big Smoke: 'Big Smoke' is a nickname for Dublin, Ireland.

Big trucks and art and uppity folk: .The art show was at the Monster Truck Art Gallery in Dublin, Ireland.

You can view that exhibit here: <http://daveymoor.com/the-life-times-of/>

Photos and sketches lined the walls: 6 artists contributed photos and artwork "by Lillian".

A model of my early work was installed: She started out designing fountains. One of the artists submitted drawings of a fountain as well as a model of the fountain, "made by Lillian as a tribute to the Statewide Floods of Ohio".

How I became famous is a mystery to me,

But there was my life, for all to see: The exhibit, *The Life and Times of Lillian Virginia Mountweazel*.

Alas, I was taken far too young/ Sadly, my career had just begun: Lillian Virginia Mountweazel died at the age 31 in 1973.

A tragedy that blew up in my face: she died in an explosion...

While on assignment in a peculiar place: while on assignment for Combustible Magazine.

I came from nothing, but my fate was sealed: she never existed, but has somehow become famous.

It was in Columbia that I was revealed: = She was a fake entry in the 1975 New Columbia Encyclopedia

Around the world I am now renowned,

And even my name has become a noun: = a mountweazel is now the name for any copyright trap.

Don't you believe all that you see: There are many forms of fake entries - in books, on maps etc.

Because 1850 was a birthplace for me: her entry is on page 1850 of the 1975 New Columbia Encyclopedia.

What's written here is just a start/ Discover my name for the other part!

1850-40, 3-16: 185040316 is her memorial # on Find A Grave. Even on Find A Grave, she is a mountweazel.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/201840316/lillian-virginia-mountweazel>

Hint: **My cousin in southern NY who runs a general store, a glowing example in my family of misfits:** 'My family' includes all types of copyright traps, including mountweazels, trap streets, phantom settlements and paper towns. A famous paper town is *Agloe, NY*. A sign has been erected welcoming people to the Agloe General Store. Neither Agloe nor the store exists.

You can read more about Lillian Virginia Mountweazel here, www.lvmrc.org/ where more details of her life have been added. Once you know her name, there are stories everywhere. She even has a facebook page.