

**Group of Experts on
Geographical names**

WORKING PAPER 35

Twelfth Session
Geneva, 29 September - 7 October 1986

29 September 1986

Agenda item 5

Paper by the United Kingdom

Presented by Mr. H.A.C. Lewis

Report by the United Kingdom

1. Now that the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names has been furnished with its own computer the process of familiarization has begun. There has been the inevitable minor mishap eg loss of data from the disc store in trying out soft-ware routines. A major task over the next few years will be the transfer of the great store of names data held in the archives of the Committee.

Primary attention will be given to the creation of names lists and the preparation of gazetteers. Specific attention will be given to development of techniques for sequencing and extraction of data by category.

2.a. In past sessions of UNGEGN reports have been given on the status of the gazetteers of Great Britain prepared by the Ordnance Survey. After lengthy discussion and much debate over the method of publication it was finally decided not to publish the gazetteers in the form of a bound volume but to supply it in microfiche form instead. Public demand, the cost of production, the problem of maintenance were all factors which affected the final decision.

b. One of the merits of the microfiche solution is the facility for up-date. An up-dated version is issued annually. This means that the names which are included in the 1/50 000 map series are available to the public through the microfiche gazetteer and that the names never more than a year out-of-date. The microfiche gazetteer does not contain latitude and longitude although considerable pressure was put on the Ordnance Survey to include latitude and longitude in the gazetteer. At the time the decision was taken the intention was to publish the gazetteer as a single volume. Adding latitude and longitude would have increased the bulk considerably. The question of bulk is not so critical in microfiche but line-length is a factor. It is hoped that the matter can be discussed again when more user experience has been gained.

The gazetteer contains 256,000 name entries. It is issued in 34 standard microfiche at 48 X reduction.

Features are classified as:-

- Antiquity (non-Roman)
- Forest or other wooded area
- Hills, mountains
- Antiquity (Roman)
- City, town, village
- Water features
- Other features.