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STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
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NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

Developments in Canadian toponomy, 1977-1982**

Paper presented by Canada

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CANADIAN PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names was established in 1897 to standardize geographical names in Canada and to advise federal departments and agencies on geographical names and their spelling, use, origin and map application. The committee has also developed a number of policies, principles and procedures pertaining to the linguistic and cartographic treatment of names and generic terminology.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names now has a membership of 20. Each of the ten provinces has a member. Eight of the remaining members represent federal departments involved in surveying, mapping, translation and archives. The remaining two members are the chairpersons of two of the advisory committees reporting to the CPCGN.

MEETINGS

The CPCGN meets in plenary session once each year. Since 1977 its meetings have been held in Banff (Alberta), Ottawa, Victoria (British Columbia), St. John's (Newfoundland) and Thunder Bay (Ontario). The CPCGN has also organized national seminars on toponymy research, automation, language treatment of names and gazetteer production. Workshops have been held as well on urban community names and on native nomenclature.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The CPCGN has four advisory committees:

The *Advisory Committee on Undersea Feature Names*, under the direction of the Dominion Hydrographer, Stephen MacPhee, has continued to be active in the processing of new names for undersea features, in defining undersea feature terminology and in devising principles and procedures for the identification of phenomena on the ocean floor. The secretary of the committee, Mrs. Thérèse Jolicoeur, has compiled a provisional gazetteer of nearly 3500 names of features on the seabed in Canadian waters or on the ocean floor in areas of interest to Canada.

The *Advisory Committee on Glaciological and Alpine Nomenclature*, under the chairmanship of C.S.L. Ommanney, a glaciologist, has continued to address a number of problems relating to the naming and delineation of mountain and permanent ice features, and to the definition of terminology associated with such features.

The *Advisory Committee on Toponymy Research* was under the chairmanship of Henri Dorion (then President of the Commission de toponymie du Québec) until 1980, when he was appointed Delegate General for Quebec in Mexico. In the past two years the committee has been chaired by William B. Hamilton, Director of the Atlantic Institute of Education in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and author of *The Macmillan Book of Canadian Place Names* (1978). The committee has continued to encourage toponymic research as a facet of cultural heritage. It has promoted the compilation of an inventory of current research projects in Canadian toponymy and the collation of a bibliography of toponymic articles.

The *Advisory Committee on Names Outside Canada* was set up in 1980 to establish a policy on the treatment of names outside Canada for use on official federal maps. The committee has recommended the recognition of country names and names common to two or more sovereign states in their traditional English and French forms. On the other hand, it has proposed the use of donor country names for populated places (with traditional English and French forms in smaller type in brackets, as an option) and the acceptance of the forms of donor country names (specific plus generic) for physical and cultural features. A number of procedures have been established to collect the names in accordance with the proposed policy. In the future a selection of names for small scale mapping will be entered into the National Toponymic Data Base.

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POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Considerable time has been devoted by members of the CPCGN in the development of a practical policy for the language treatment of geographical names in Canada's two official languages, English and French. The use, on maps and in texts, of conventional language equivalents of names was traditionally acceptable. During the 1970s, several of the provincial names authorities and the federal mapping and charting agencies argued that the only names that should be used on maps and charts, should be those names (specifics plus generics) approved by the responsible naming authorities, which in Canada, are primarily the provinces. Such an approach is reflected in the *Canada Gazetteer Atlas* (1980), which has identical geographical nomenclature in both the English and French versions. Several persons have sought support for this approach by citing the United Nations resolution that each feature should have only a single name (Res. 4, Vol. 1, Report of the Conference, United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Geneva, 4-22 September 1967, United Nations, New York, 1968)^{1/} The same resolution, however, has the recommendation that forms of names in all official languages of a country should be recorded, with a clear indication to be given of equality or precedence of officially acknowledged names.

Authorities in Canada responsible for the promotion of the equality of English and French in federal communications have urged the retention of traditional variants of official names. A firm policy, therefore, remains, in 1982, unresolved.

PUBLICATIONS

With much of the financial resources and personnel involved in toponymy in the Surveys and Mapping Branch, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources being assigned to the computerization of the National Toponymic Data Base in the past five years, there has been a decrease in toponymic publishing activity at the federal level. No volumes of the toponymy study series have been published since the books on Prince Edward Island (1973) and New Brunswick (1975). However, new volumes of the *Gazetteer of Canada* series have been produced using the latest techniques in computerized photocomposition and laser printing. These volumes were for the Northwest Territories (1980), Yukon Territory (1981), and Manitoba (1981). As well as being published in hard copy format, these gazetteers have also been made available on microfiche.

CANOMA, an information bulletin on news and views of Canadian toponymy, is compiled by the CPCGN Secretariat, and is published twice a year for the CPCGN by the Surveys and Mapping Branch. Among papers in recent numbers have been one on a series of resolutions developed by the Commission de toponymie du Québec for the writing of Amerindian place names, an article on the legal implications of geographical naming, and an English version of the selection criteria for naming geographical features in Quebec. Sample copies may be obtained from the Secretariat.

^{1/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.68.I.9, p. 10

In 1978 the CPCGN published the papers it had presented at the Third UN Conference in Athens in 1977. Included with the papers were the resolutions passed by the conference.

DECISIONS

In the 1972-1975 period decisions on geographical names in Canada were being made at the rate of 25 000 new names and changes a year. This prompted the prediction that Canada would have approximately one million official names by the end of the century.¹ This projection would appear now to be over optimistic, with new decisions having dropped to an annual rate of approximately 15 000. This reduction is largely due to fewer new names being reported, as the provision of personnel and funds for toponymic field work has decreased, especially in the province of Ontario.

It is estimated that about 350 000 approved names are now in the national automated data base. At the present rate that new names are being reported or assigned to unnamed features that number should double by the end of the century.

The following is a brief list of the more significant decisions on names since 1977:

Mount Manzo Nagano in British Columbia, in honour of the first settler of Japanese extraction in Canada (1877).

Commonwealth Peak in Alberta to commemorate the XI Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, 1978.

Mount Michener in Alberta in honour of Roland Michener, Governor General of Canada, 1967-1974.

J.E.H. MacDonald Lake and *A.Y. Jackson Lake* in Ontario, for two illustrious painters associated with the Group of Seven, a group renowned in the first half of this century for its techniques and approach to painting vivid scenes of the cultural landscape and wilderness of Canada.

Mount Coady in Nova Scotia for Dr. Moses Coady, a distinguished promoter of cooperative projects and organizer of adult education programmes in the Maritime Provinces during and after the depression years of the 1930s.

Mount Terry Fox in British Columbia for the young one-legged runner who, through his Marathon of Hope in 1981, raised millions of dollars for cancer research, and who succumbed to cancer after a heroic battle.

1 CANOMA, Vol. 3, No. 1, July 1977, p. 2.

The restoration of the name *Castle Mountain* in Alberta and the assignment of *Eisenhower Peak* to its most prominent point. In 1946 the mountain had been officially named Mount Eisenhower, but considerable local and national pressure persuaded the authorities to restore the name given in 1858 by James Hector of the Palliser Expedition.
