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The potential function of placename indices in the Intelligence Division.

At the present time I and L Branch maintains, in the Geographic unit of the Information section, extensive placename files. These files have been built up from working experience and a comprehensive record of names which have been noted in the course of work is available. In general only names on which questions have been asked or which have been processed from materials received in the Geographic unit are included. All such names are recorded, in 3" X 5" card file form, in a master file by standard spelling and in a file according to the spelling, e.g., Kana, in which they occurred. Various maps, gazetteers, Hydrographic Office Pilots and similar reference works are kept on hand.

The main demand on the Geographic unit at the present time takes the form of questions about a given spelling of a name found in traffic (a "speller") by the section working thereon. Such questions generally are "is this a good name" or "where is (what are the coordinates of) this place"? It is not proposed that any curtailment of these activities take place. Rather it is believed that based on these files and the experience gained in originating them considerable expansion is possible which will materially increase the usefulness of the unit to the rest of the Intelligence Division and provide additional services. The following files should be continued or set up:

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The Master File: This should give the prescribed standard spelling of all placenames which have been referred to the geographic unit from any source. (This and all of the following files are presumed to best be in card file form.) The standard spelling used should be that of the U.S. Board of Geographic Names with such modifications as may be arrived at by ASA, MIS, and NCA in the interests of established usage (e.g., Constantinople vs Istanbul; Hsinking vs Changshan; Santon vs Kuang Chou). At present the master file gives the standard spelling and the country. Reference to the country file will then give the coordinates.

The Country File: This file should give the standard spelling to be used in all publications of this agency and the state or province within which it is located plus the latitude and longitude coordinates. Inclusion of the following additional information is strongly recommended:

- a) The various spellings in which this name has appeared as, Kana, Chinese (if characters, the Heda, Chinese Telegraphic Code, or Matthews Dictionary number), French, Spanish, Italian, Russian etc.
- b) The date on which the speller was identified.
- c) Within each language, the system (trigraph if possible) in which it occurred if "internal", originator or destination if "external".
- d) The gazetteer from which the location was taken and the best map on which it may be seen.

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e) In those cases in which several places with identical name exist the limiting evidence for the choice adopted should be given. (The circuit over which a message passed, routings, associations and textual reference — e.g., evidence that a suburb of a large city rather than a rural locality was concerned—etc.)

f) Significance of the place as railway center, port, airfield, manufacturing, natural resources etc.

From g above appreciable correlation should be possible. A place first appearing in one system may have been currently prominent in an entirely different problem. Indication of such possible correlation of effort should assist both cryptanalysis and intelligence. Further discussion of this possibility will be made below.

Variant spelling file: A file of all spellings observed for a given place carrying reference to the standard master file spelling. This file should indicate the place and date of occurrence and the relative frequency of use of each variant.

Unidentified File: A file of all unidentified spellers or unlocated names reported. This file should include all pertinent information available— frequency from and to, system, message number, and time of origin and date. Related information as textual reference, routing habits, traffic associations etc, should be provided.

In order that these indices function adequately a standard form for submission of queries should be adopted by agreement of

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all concerned. This should include the speller, indication as to whether it was external or internal, circuit routing, message number (to avoid duplication), system, originator and/or recipient, and file date time as a minimum. Obviously several different phases of the Intelligence Division are concerned. The various cryptanalytic sections are interested in confirmation of spellings and identification of spellers as good locations. Traffic analysis is similarly interested and is a potential source for much of the relevant information needed in confirming a location. (In many instances Traffic Analysis and Cryptanalysis are able to make identifications themselves, however, all such identifications should be reported to a central file and the Geographic unit is recommended.) In addition the editors of the Bulletin section of I and L may be concerned. It is reemphasized that such a master file will be invaluable both to the cryptanalytic and Traffic analytic phases of a given problem. From such a master file it would be possible to tell a section reporting a placename new in their particular problem not only that it is a good location and where it is but it would also be possible to say that a place was currently prominent in an entirely different system. Thus it would be possible to suggest from knowledge of the latter system what specific subjects or names had appeared in association-- such specific items could be of considerable help in early stages of back breaking as clues. From the intelligence point of view interest in a given place as seen from the various systems in which it appears is at least noteworthy.

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If a record of the general importance (the proposed "Significance" file) of a place is kept any new interest can also be marked as a railroad town suddenly appearing with a discussion of airfields or merely air traffic or discussion of the construction of a hydroelectric plant would take additional significance if the nature of the adjacently available natural resources were known. An unusual concentration of persons with known similar interests in a given place would also be readily apparent. In these phases the editorial function of the Bulletin section may be found to be involved. Apart from possible contribution of such record to editorial evaluation (and all names appearing in the bulletin are easily checked when all sections of this division are responsible to one file) it may be found that the drawing of attention to such items is their prerogative and their access to all Bulletins may indicate that maintenance of the file should be in their hands.

However, cross index of this information should be based on the placenames involved as a ready form of reference and the Geographic unit is the logical selection for such responsibility. The basic file of the Geographic section proposed above would serve as a starting point for research in the informational files of the Topical Index. Since the Topical Index already possesses a comprehensive index the geographic file need not duplicate this material. This proposed Geographic index is a basic record, valuable in itself, and a guide to information not approachable from other sources. For it to function properly full cooperation and the greatest freedom in exchanging information is imperative for all concerned. The Geographic unit should receive all Bulletins, weekly intelligence summaries etc.

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Routine report of new spellers should be received from cryptanalysis and traffic analysis of each problem. A summary of total place activity from Traffic analysis, showing all placenames occurring in traffic for all systems and problems would be mutually helpful. Geographic unit could then indicate what was known to be happening in the more active or unique of these places and, too, could indicate areas of interest. Such information, it is felt, would be of interest to all. It is realized that such indices, to attain full development, require the closest cooperation of all members of the Intelligence Division family. The writer is interested in any attempt at its realization.

Thomas A. Miller
12.12.45

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