A Database for English Placenames

Carole Hough
University of Glasgow

A five-year project begun in 1992 at the Centre for English Name Studies, University of Nottingham, aims to create a computerized database for the study of English placenames, incorporating materials from the published volumes of the English Place-Name Survey as a research tool for scholars in a number of disciplines. The database can be searched in a variety of ways, lending flexibility and creativity to the investigation of English placenames per se and to other areas in which placenames may be informative.

Introduction

A survey of the origins and meaning of English placenames has been in progress since the founding of the English Place-Name Society (EPNS) in 1923. EPNS publishes a series of annual volumes, each dealing with the placenames of a county or part of a county.[1] Many English placenames date back to the Anglo-Saxon period, and derive either from Old English (OE), the language of the Anglo-Saxon settlers of the mid-fifth century onwards, or from Old Norse (ON), the language of the Scandinavian invaders of the late ninth century onwards. These placenames are bounded by some older, deriving from the Celtic language of the pre-Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of England, and some newer, especially those coined since the Norman Conquest of AD 1066, which derive variously from Old French (OFr), Middle English (ME), and successive stages in the history of the language up to Modern English. The placename corpus thus represents an important source of information on early vocabulary and the development of the English language. It also preserves evidence relating to a diverse range of subject areas, including archaeology, religion, political and social history, farming practices, industry, historical botany and zoology, and local history. The published volumes of the English Place-Name Society

Names 43.4 (December 1995):255-274
ISSN:0027-7738

constitute a major research resource for scholars in these and other disciplines.

As the English Place-Name Survey progresses, however, it is becoming increasingly unwieldy to use. Sixty-seven volumes have been published to date, each dealing systematically with the placenames of a single area. Geographic units correspond to the historic counties of England (preceding the local government reorganization of 1974), with the placenames of each county being surveyed either in one volume, as Reaney (1935), or in several, as Cameron (1959), Smith (1961-63). As there is no comprehensive indexing system to the survey as a whole, the sheer bulk of material makes it difficult to isolate information relevant to a specific search. In order to complete a recent analysis of placenames containing the Old English word *mægden* "a maiden," for instance (Hough 1993), it was necessary to trawl through every volume, checking more than twenty thousand pages. Other studies have been similarly labor-intensive. This type of approach is wholly inappropriate in a technological age.

A research project at the Centre for English Name Studies, University of Nottingham, aims to address this problem by creating a computerized database of placename material which will enable scholars to search the archive more efficiently. No attempt is being made to keyboard the EPNS volumes themselves, but rather to provide an indexing tool for use in conjunction with the published material. A primary aim is to allow the maximum flexibility in interactive searching. We want to make it possible to locate all occurrences of any particular word in placenames, or of any two words in combination with each other. This is essential for linguistic and semantic studies. We also want to be able to analyze the distribution of placenames derived from different languages, with all the associated implications for settlement patterns and political divisions at various periods. We also want to use the database to identify categories of material in placenames, such as feminine personal names, color adjectives, legal terms, animal names, occupation words, or words relating to religion, so as to facilitate research into different subject areas. The project is funded for five years by the Leverhulme Foundation, and is sponsored by the English Place-Name Society and the Department of English Studies, University of Nottingham. I was appointed as the first of two full-time research

associates at the beginning of the project in 1992, and initially spent many months planning and developing an appropriate database structure in collaboration with computing staff at the University of Nottingham Cripps Computing Centre.[2]

A commercial database software package known as INGRES® was selected for its flexibility in storing and manipulating information, and so far has proved fully satisfactory. The version of INGRES currently being used is 6.4. Rather than making the database available on CD-ROM, it was decided to hold it on the mainframe computers at the University of Nottingham so as to allow direct access by outside scholars over the JANET network[3] when suitable user interfaces are in place. The database uses two mainframe computers. The data are stored on the back-end computer, a triple node ICL 3980 running the VME operating system. Access is gained through the front-end computer, an ICL DRS 6000 running a version of the Unix operating system, System V. Outside access can be gained from any suitable computer able to access the DRS 6000 via JANET or the JIPS (JANET IP Service). In practice, this means that the database will be accessible from most academic institutions in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. The DRS 6000 is registered in the JANET Name Registration Scheme as UK.AC.NOTT.UNICORN for direct access via JANET using an X.29 PAD or the Rainbow software on a PC.[4] It is also registered in the Internet Domain Name Service as UNICORN.NOTT.AC.UK for access via the JIPS using a Telnet or Rlogin from a Unix system or workstation. VT100 emulation is necessary for proper interpretation of the INGRES screens.

Database Structure

The structure of the database was to a large extent determined by the nature of the material. English placenames are made up of individual components known as "elements," many of which occur again and again in different combinations. For instance, OE **ofer* 'promontory, ridge' is recorded in about 40 separate placenames, including *Over*, *Bicknor*, *Hunsingore* and *Southover*, OE *ford* 'ford' in at least 550, well-known examples being *Dartford*, *Hereford*, *Oxford* and *Stafford*, while OE *lēah* 'forest, clearing', as in *Barnsley*, *Bradley* and *Langley*, is more common than either (Gelling 1984, 174, 67, 198). All of these need to be identified as Old English nouns relating to topography, but we do not want to

have to repeat this information for every placename in which the terms occur. So too the fact that OE **ofer* is not attested outside placenames should be recorded once, not forty times, and it should be possible to differentiate once and for all between topographical terms relating to hills, water and woodland. For this reason, the database has been designed to contain two main types of computerized record: one relating to placename elements, and one relating to placenames themselves. The two are linked so that data are recorded only once for each placename element, and then automatically associated with each placename in which that element occurs.

The principal fields within each computerized element and placename record are as follows:

Element Record

Headword: The "headform" of a word is not always easy to determine with a language like Old English, which has no standardized spelling patterns and a wide range of dialectal and inflectional variants. The nominative singular, Anglian dialectal form is normally used as the headword, but a separate table within the database lists alternative spellings as a guide for users. There are also links between related headwords, such as cognate words in Old English and Old Norse, nouns and adjectives formed from the same stem, and personal names formed from words. Non-standard alphabetical characters and accents are represented by Standard Generalized Mark-Up Language (SGML), but the computer screen also displays a "normalized" spelling for the benefit of non-specialists. Hence OE *ēg* 'island' is represented in SGML as *ēg* but appears on the screen as *eg*. This is the Anglian spelling used for the headword: the West Saxon forms *īeg* (*īeg*) and *īg* (*īg*) are also entered as dialectal variants. Links are established with the corresponding entry for the cognate ON *ey* of similar meaning, as well as with those for the derivative OE *ēgeð* 'small island' and the related compounds OE *ēg-land* 'island' and OE **forð-ēg* 'island in marshland'. Users of the database will thus be able either to retrieve all placenames containing the element *ēg*, or to focus on those preserving particular dialectal forms. Alternatively, it will be possible to broaden the search strategy to include not only OE *ēg* itself but all related, compounded, or cognate elements.

Language: Like most other fields in both types of record, the language field is coded so as to take up the minimum space within the database. Old English is represented by O, Old Norse by N, Middle English by M, and so on. Also like most other fields, the structure is hierarchical to make it possible to select, e.g., all Old English elements (O), or to focus on those belonging to the Anglian dialect of Old English (OA), or more specifically still, the Mercian division of the Anglian dialect (OAM). These options will allow considerable flexibility in search specifications, so that the selection criteria may be progressively broadened or narrowed as required. In order to minimize error at the inputting stage, this and other fields within the database will accept only certain types of data. Here the Language codes only will be accepted: attempts to input other data, such as "A," "S," or "1" (not designated Language codes), will be met with error messages.

Source Language: Some placename elements represent loan-words from other languages, such as words borrowed from Old Norse into Old English during the late Anglo-Saxon period, or words which entered Middle English from Old French after the Norman Conquest. A non-mandatory one-character field identifies the source language in such instances.

Part of Speech: Again using one-character codes, this field identifies the type of word, thus facilitating research into, say, the use of nouns or adjectives or personal names in placenames. Information on grammatical gender is also included here for Old English and Old Norse headwords classified as masculine, feminine, or neuter.

Subject: This three-character field relates to a subject thesaurus, again arranged hierarchically so as to identify broad categories such as topographical terms (T), habitative words (H), religion (R), and living creatures (L), as well as making it possible to focus on more specific topics such as water (TW), buildings (HB), Christianity (RC), paganism (RP), animals (LA), domestic animals (LAD) or wild animals (LAW). A separate field identifies transferred uses of words in placenames, as for instance OE *bolla* 'bowl' used topographically of a hollow in *Balcombe*, Kent, and *Bowling*, West Riding of Yorkshire, and OE *cnēo* 'knee' used of a bend in a river or road in *Knaith*, Lincolnshire, and

Kneeton, North Riding of Yorkshire (Smith 1956, I, 41, 102). An additional one-character field identifies biological gender, so that we shall be able to retrieve all placename references to men or women, or to male or female animals.

Attested: This one-character field signals words evidenced only in placenames, as OE **ofer*, or only evidenced in specialized categories of source material, such as legal documents, glosses, or poetry. It also signals words for which placenames reveal a range of meaning which is unattested in other sources. One of the exciting aspects of the project is that new instances are coming to light even as work on the database progresses, as OE *wearg* (Hough 1994-95).

Placename Record

Placename: The modern form of the placename is recorded in a free-text field. Since many English toponyms are duplicated in different parts of the country, as with the common placename *Barton*, of which some forty occurrences are discussed in Ekwall's seminal dictionary (1960, 28-29), each placename record is also allocated a consecutive number to act as a unique identifier.

Elements: The headform of each element within a placename is entered into a separate field, in such a way as to link up with the data already in the element record. Additional features recorded for each element are:

1. Level of certainty. Not all placenames can be interpreted securely, and it is sometimes uncertain which of several alternative etymologies is correct, or whether an element is a word or a personal name. The database therefore allows more than one possibility to be entered, with confidence levels ranging from certain (C), through probable (P), to maybe (M). This in itself will facilitate the reanalysis of difficult placenames at a later date. When a sufficient range of material has been entered, it may be possible through comparison of records designated "P" or "M" to identify patterns which will allow a more secure interpretation to be established.

2. Position. A numerical field identifies the position of the element as (usually) first or second in the placename. This will facilitate the

analysis of elements which characteristically occur as defining elements (first), or as placename generics (second). It will also allow us to differentiate between elements which occur in combination with each other (position 1 + position 2) and those which are entered into the database as alternative possibilities in cases of doubt (both occupying the same position).

3. Dialect. This applies mainly to Old English words, where, as mentioned above, the Anglian dialectal form is used for the main headword entry, but other dialects may be represented in individual placenames. As with the Language field of the Element record, a three-character code is used.

4. Grammatical case. It is often necessary to identify grammatical case in order to investigate the usage of a word within a placename. In the study of placenames containing OE *mægden*, already referred to, occurrences in the singular or genitive singular could often be understood as dedications to the Virgin Mary, an interpretation ruled out for placenames containing plural forms of the word. So too a genitive singular inflection sometimes helps to differentiate personal names in placenames from similar-looking words, while a plural form of a word which may function either as a personal name or as an animal name can only be understood as the latter.

Location: Location is represented in two ways. A grid reference of up to eight figures is included wherever possible to facilitate the eventual mapping of placenames according to specific criteria. In addition, three-figure codes are used to represent county, hundred, and parish, so as to make it possible to focus on a particular administrative area, of whatever size.

Type: A two-character field identifies the type of placename in order to allow users of the database to select settlement names, parish names, township names, river names, and so on, as required.

Date: Many English placenames were first coined centuries before their occurrence in extant written sources. Nonetheless, the date of the earliest documented record is essential as a means of establishing a *terminus a quo*. It is sometimes difficult to determine, as some placenames are first recorded in charters surviving only in later copies or in

documents whose precise date is unknown. For searching purposes, the database requires exact numbers rather than approximations, and we therefore give two alternative dates in this field. The first is the earliest *possible* date, representing the original date of a charter, or the first year to which a document may realistically be assigned. The second is the earliest *definite* date, representing the date of the charter copy, or the last year by which the document must have been written. These will enable users of the database to identify those placenames and placename elements which may have been recorded by a particular date, as well as those which certainly were.

Meaning: A brief outline of the original meaning of the placename is given in a free-text field, e.g., *Oxford* 'ford for oxen', *Bradley* 'broad clearing'.

EPNS ref: The database does not duplicate all the information contained in the English Place-Name Survey, but is intended to be used in conjunction with it. For ease of reference, each placename record includes a volume and page reference to the appropriate published volume of EPNS, as well as to any subsequent addenda. Many entries in the early county volumes have now been updated by addenda and corrigenda published in later volumes and in the *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*. A comprehensive list of addenda was drawn up at an early stage of the project to assist in the compilation of the database, and has already proved sufficiently useful to justify separate publication (Hough 1995).

Example

The following example shows the recorded data for the Essex placename *Tolleshunt*, with its associated elements **Toll*, a monothematic OE masculine personal name unattested outside place-names, and OE **funta* 'spring,' a loan-word from Latin also attested only in placenames. *Tolleshunt* is the subject of a two-page entry in the Essex volume of the English Place-Name Survey (Reaney 1935, 306-7), comprising almost an entire page of early spellings dating back to the eleventh century, followed by a lengthy discussion of the meaning of the name and of the development from *funta* to *hunt*, drawing attention to comparable instances in other placenames. Rather than keyboarding the

entire entry, we input coded information so that the record will be retrieved by any search for placenames containing Old English words, masculine or monothematic personal names, unattested words, topographical elements, references to water, genitive singular inflections, Latin loan-words, and so on. The data recorded are shown here in bold type, with codes expanded in square brackets:

Placename:		**Tolleshunt**	
	Element (a):	**Toll**	
	Level of certainty:	**C**	[Certain]
	Position:	**1**	[First]
	Dialect:	-	[Not Applicable]
	Grammatical case:	**SG**	[Singular/Genitive]
	Element (b):	**funta**	
	Level of certainty:	**C**	[Certain]
	Position:	**2**	[Second]
	Dialect:	-	[Not Applicable]
	Grammatical case:	**S**	[Singular]
Location:			
	Grif reference:	**TL9211**	
	County:	**ESX**	[Essex]
	Hundred:	**THU**	[Thurstable]
	Parish:	**TOL**	[Tolleshunt]
Type:		**SP**	[Settlement/Parish]
Date:			
	Earliest possible:	**996**	[an early spelling surviving only in a late copy]
	Earliest definite:	**1086**	[Domesday Book]
Meaning:		**Toll's spring**	
EPNS volume:		**12**	
EPNS page:		**306-7**	
Addenda:		-	[None]

Additional data are inherited from each of the element records:

Headword:	**Toll**	
Language:	**O**	[Old English]
Source language:	-	[Not Applicable]
Part of speech:	**NP**	[Noun/Proper Noun]
Subject:	**NPM**	[Name/Personal Name/ Monothematic]
Transferred use:	-	[Not Applicable]
Gender:	**M**	[Masculine]
Attested:	**N**	[Not attested outside placenames]
Headword:	**funta**	
Language:	**O**	[Old English]
Source language:	**L**	[Latin loan-word]
Part of speech:	**NU**	[Noun/grammatical gender unknown]
Subject:	**TW**	[Topography/Water]
Transferred use:	-	[Not Applicable]
Gender:	-	[Not Applicable]
Attested:	**N**	[Not attested outside placenames]

Searching the Database

The INGRES software package allows two ways of searching the database. The simpler is known as Query By Forms (QBF). This involves calling up a particular type of record onto the screen and specifying the requisite details for each field. To find all Old English words for hills recorded in placenames, for instance, we simply enter O in the Language field of the element record and TH in the Subject field, and then all records fulfilling these criteria are retrieved. To find all Nottinghamshire placenames recorded before AD 1100, we enter NTT in the Location field of the placename record and <1100 in the Date field. Again, all records which match these criteria are retrieved.

The disadvantage of Query By Forms is that it allows us to deal with only one type of record at a time. A more sophisticated searching technique is known as Structured Query Language (SQL). This allows

us to combine data from different types of record within the database, so as to find, for example, all Old English words for hills recorded in Nottinghamshire placenames before AD 1100, all Old English personal names compounded with Old Norse topographical terms in Derbyshire, all placenames combining adjectives with West Saxon dialectal forms of OE *ēg* 'island' or related elements, all placenames containing the names of pagan gods, or any other type or combination of material. Structured Query Language is immensely flexible in the range of search strategies it allows. Its terminology is, however, less than transparent and one of our priorities before making the database available for general access will be to incorporate suitable user interfaces to assist non-specialists. Several detailed examples of querying the database through SQL are given in the appendix.

Some Uses of the Database

The Leverhulme-funded project at the Centre for English Name Studies has a range of further objectives in addition to the creation of a computerized database of English placename material (Hough 1993-94). These include the preparation of a new edition of a major reference book, A. H. Smith's *English Place-Name Elements* (1956). Here the database will play a crucial role. Smith's work represents an indispensable dictionary of placename terminology, giving information on the language, meaning, and provenance of words found in major placenames evidenced before the late fifteenth century. Each entry includes a selection of placenames in which the element occurs, with an analysis of usage discussing geographical distribution and the main types of words with which the element combines. Smith establishes, for instance, which placename generics commonly compound with personal names, which with descriptive terms, and which with words for topography, vegetation, or wild animals. Unfortunately, Smith's methods of analysis were unscientific and often faulty. Gelling (1981, 39) comments:

> Where he had an enormous quantity of material to digest, as in articles on *tūn*, *dūn*, *ford* e.g., Smith's approach was impressionistic. He made no attempt at statistical analysis, at detailed study of distribution and topography, or at a comprehensive classification of first elements.

These are precisely the areas where the database will be most useful. Computerized searching techniques will allow us not only to trace

quickly and easily all placenames in which each element occurs, but to provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the words with which it combines. It will also be possible to compare occurrences in place-names of different types. As Gelling goes on to say:

> If there is to be any attempt to quantify place-name elements, it is obviously necessary to ascertain the comparative frequency with which they occur in minor names and field-names, as well as their incidence in the major settlement names....(1981, 39)

Since minor names, settlement names and so on are categorized separately within the Type field of the placename record, comparative statistics will be readily available. The information presented in the new edition of *English Place-Name Elements* will be altogether more accurate and reliable.

One of the secondary aims of the Leverhulme project is to produce a handlist of Old English words unattested outside placenames. Again, the database will be of direct use. The handlist will be generated by retrieving all element records with N (No) in the Attested field and O (Old English) in the Language field. A handlist of Middle English words unattested outside placenames will be generated by a similar search strategy, replacing O with M (Middle English) in the Language field of the element record. Both handlists are intended to function as supplements to the existing dictionaries of Old and Middle English, which tend (regrettably) to rely exclusively on literary sources, ignoring placename evidence.

The Source Language field will also facilitate the study of word origins in Old English and later stages of the language. Latin loan-words in Old English placenames have already been the subject of a major article by Gelling (1977), but much work remains to be done on this and related topics. Using the database, it will be a simple matter to assemble a corpus of such words by selecting all element records with O in the Language field and L in the Source Language field. Similarly, Middle English words derived from Old French will be identified by a search for element records combining M in the Language field with F in the Source Language field. The next step would be to compile a list of all placenames containing such elements, again generated from the database.

The database is, indeed, already proving useful as a research tool. At this stage of the project, only a small proportion of placename records is in place, but the element records (comprising some 5,500 files) are virtually complete. A number of placename elements comprise Old English bird names, and since one aspect of my current research involves the preparation of a corpus of OE bird names in placenames, I have been able to save much time through the utilization of computerized searching techniques. The initial listing of bird names for the corpus was generated directly from the database, by selecting element records with O in the Language field and LB (Living creatures/Birds) in the Subject field. The whole process, from specifying the search criteria to printing out the resulting file, took a matter of minutes, whereas a manual search would have involved long hours of tedious labor.

Much placename scholarship is directed towards the investigation of individual words and compounds in toponyms. Recent examples include Higham's study of OE *līn* 'flax' (1991-92), Cole's examination of the distribution and use of OE *mere* 'lake' (1992-93), and Torvell's article on OE *here-ford* 'army ford' (1991-92). A prerequisite in all such instances is the identification of a corpus of placenames containing the word(s) in question, and this has until now involved a time-consuming search through the county volumes of the English Place-Name Survey. Using the database, it will be possible to generate the same information much more easily and quickly, locating all occurrences of a particular element either on a country-wide scale or within a limited geographical area, such as was done in Svensson's study of the *worthy-* names of Devon (1991-92), or Atkin's study of *hollin-* names in northwest England (1988-89). This means that a greater amount of research time can now be devoted to scholarly endeavor rather than to the routine collation of material, with obvious advantages for the future of the discipline.

There are many other ways in which the potential offered by the database will revolutionize approaches to placename research. An important article is Cox (1975-76), which establishes a corpus of placenames recorded in Old English documents up to AD 731 and draws a number of conclusions relating to the chronology of English placenames. Cox demonstrates, for instance, that the largest group of early

names is topographical, and he discusses some of the implications of the occurrence and non-occurrence of individual elements within the corpus. As Gelling (1988, 253) points out, similar studies of placenames from later periods are desperately needed:

> In order to evaluate the significance of the statistics provided in Cox 1976 one needs other statistics to compare them with. It would be very useful to have a collection and analysis of names recorded in the next slice of time, say 731 to 850.

No scholar has yet risen to the challenge, which would until now have involved an inordinate amount of labor in identifying and collecting such names. With the aid of the database, however, it will soon be possible to undertake this type of study with ease, using the computer to select and retrieve placenames recorded during any required time span, whether of a few years or of several centuries.

The confidence levels associated with each placename record will also open up new ways of approaching problems. With regard to the corpus of placenames relating to Anglo-Saxon paganism, for instance, scholars have rightly become more and more circumspect in recent years. Fifty-seven such names were identified by Stenton in 1941, but their number has been reduced to some 43 following rigorous scrutiny by Gelling (1962; 1973) and others.[5] Gelling (1973) presents a canon of placenames for which a pagan interpretation has been established beyond reasonable doubt: those containing the name of a heathen god, for instance, as *Wensley*, Derbyshire 'Woden's sacred grove', and those referring to a center of pagan worship, as *Harrow*, Middlesex 'heathen temple'. The article provides an invaluable starting-point for further research. Nevertheless, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that for many other placenames, pagan associations are possible though unproven. These include some of the names put forward by Stenton, as well as others suggested in volumes of the English Place-Name Society and elsewhere (e.g., Vipond 1992-93). It would be useful to be able to assemble not only the established canon, but the corpus at its maximum extent. Once the database is fully operational, either type of approach will be equally feasible. By searching for placenames containing elements with the language code O (Old English), the subject code RP (Religion/Paganism), and confidence level C (Certain), we shall be able

to identify all definite references to Anglo-Saxon paganism in placenames. By extending the search to confidence level P (Probable), we shall be able to identify all placenames for which such an interpretation is likely although conclusive evidence is unavailable. Finally, the addition of confidence level M (Maybe) will enable us to examine and to compare all known possibilities, a process which in itself may lead to the revision of some aspects of the canon.

It may also be possible to use the database to resolve some scholarly controversies. A problem area in English name studies concerns the difficulty of differentiating between personal names and words as the first element of placenames. Many Old English personal names are based on adjectives, bird names, or animal names, all of which are themselves common as placename elements. The most recent dictionary of English placenames gives alternative interpretations of *Barmer* in Norfolk as "'Pool frequented by bears,' or 'pool of a man called *Bera.'" It also defines *Ravensden* in Bedfordshire as "'Valley of the raven, or of a man called *Hræfn'," and explains the common placename *Whitton* as "usually 'white farmstead' or 'farmstead of a man called Hwīta'" (Mills 1993, 24, 269, 357). Some onomasts base their interpretation on the second element of the name, assuming that personal names are more likely to be compounded with habitation words, animal and bird names with topographical terms. Thus Gelling comments, "It seems satisfactory to interpret Barsham...as 'village of a man named Boar,' but to give 'hill of the boar' for Boars Hill...." (1988, 165). Not all placename scholars agree, however. Kitson (1993, 72) describes this approach as "absolutely unsatisfactory," arguing that animal names should be preferred in many instances. The database will make it possible for the first time to gather accurate statistical data for analysis, comparing the use and distribution of personal names in placenames with the use and distribution of various other types of elements. Examination will focus particularly on grammatical case, since Kitson identifies "a distinct correlation between genitive compounding and animacy" (1993, 72), and on the classification of second elements in such placenames. Whether or not this will settle the matter remains to be seen. It should at least make a significant contribution to the debate.

Appendix

Examples of Search Procedures and Records Returned

Example 1. Using SQL to query the database for placenames containing feminine personal names recorded before AD 1100.

```
1> select p.placename, county, etymology, epns, epnspage
2> from place p, elementv ev, elements es, meaning m
3> where (left(m1,2)='NP')
4> or left(m2,2)='NP')
5> and m.gender='F'
6> and definitedate<1150
7> and p.placeno=ev.placeno
8> and ev.headword=es.headword
9> and es.headword=m.headword
```

The following (partial) report is returned:

placename	county	etymology	epns	page
Ailwood	DOR	Æthelgifu's wood.	52	7
Alveley	SHR	Ælfgyth's clearing.	62/63	16-18
Afflington Farm	DOR	Ælfrun's farm.	52	6-7
Eddington	BRK	Eadgifu's farm.	50	303
Gunthorpe	NTT	Gunnhild's farmstead.	17	167
Kneeton	NTT	Cengifu's farm.	17	226-7

Example 2. Using SQL to query the database for placenames containing personal names in combination with topographical elements.

```
1> create table jan (placeno integer4, style integer1)
2> insert into jan
3> select placeno, style
4> from elementv ev
5> where etype='SP'
6> select p.placename, ev.headword, epns, epnspage, definitedate, etymology
7> from place p, elementv ev, jan j
8> where etype='GT'
9> and p.placeno=j.placeno
10> and ev.style=j.style
11> and ev.placeno=j.placeno
12> drop jan
```

The following (partial) report is returned:

placename	headword	epns	page	date	etymoloy
Ailwood	wudu	52	7	1086	Æthelgifu's wood.
Alveley	lēah	62/63	16-18	1086	Ælfgyth's clearing.
Baveney	ēg	62/63	32-33	1086	Babba's island.
Bednall	halh	55	26-7	1086	Beda's nook of land.
Brenscombe Farm	cumb	52	9	1086	Bryni's valley.

Example 3. Using SQL to query the database for Nottinghamshire placenames combining an Old Norse defining element with an Old English generic.

```
1> select distinct placename, county, epns, epnspage, etymology
2> from place p, elements es, elementv ev
3> where p.placeno in
4> (select p.placeno from place p, elements es, elementv ev
5> where left(ev.etype,1)='S'
6> and left(lang,1)='N'
7> and es.headword=ev.headword
8> and ev.hversion=es.hversion
9> and p.placeno=ev.placeno)
10> and p.placeno in
11> (select p.placeno from place p, elements es, elementv ev
12> where left(ev.etype,1)='G'
13> and left(lang,1)='O'
14> and es.headword=ev.headword
15> and ev.hversion=es.hversion
16> and p.placeno=ev.placeno)
17> and county='NTT'
18> and p.placeno=ev.placeno
19> and es.headword=ev.headword
```

The following (partial) report is returned:

placename	county	epns	page	etymology
Clipston	NTT	17	232	Klyppr's farm.
Gamston	NTT	17	231	Gamall's farm.
Rolleston	NTT	17	173-4	Hroaldr's farm.
Thoroton	NTT	17	229	Thurferth's farm.
Thurgarton	NTT	17	178	Thorgeirr's farm.
Toton	NTT	17	152	Tofi's farm.

Notes

1. A list of publications of the English Place-Name Society is available from The Secretary, English Place-Name Society, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD England.

2. Much time and expertise has been contributed by Mr. Graham Watson and Dr. Richard Tyler-Jones of the Cripps Computing Centre, University of Nottingham, and I am extremely grateful to them for their indefatigable work in developing the database.

3. JANET (Joint Academic Network) is a computer network which links academic institutions throughout the world.

4. "Rainbow" is a software package developed by Edinburgh University and licensed for use in academic institutions.

5. Since Gelling's seminal article of 1973, a further placename has been deleted from the corpus (Bronnenkant 1982-83) and *Friden* in Derbyshire has been added, following the discovery of an early charter spelling (Brooks, et al. 1984).

References

Atkin, M. A. 1988-89. "*Hollin* names in North-West England." *Nomina* 12: 77-88.

Bronnenkant, L. J. 1982-83. "Thurstable revisited." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 15: 9-19.

Brooks, Nicholas, et al. 1984. "A new charter of King Edgar." *Anglo-Saxon England* 13: 137-55.

Cameron, Kenneth. 1959. *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*. (EPNS 27-29) Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Cole, Ann. 1992-93. "The distribution and use of *mere* as a generic in place-names." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 25: 38-50.

Cox, Barrie. 1975-76. "The place-names of the earliest English records." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 8: 12-66.

Ekwall, Eilert. 1960. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*. 4th ed. Oxford: Clarendon.

Gelling, Margaret. 1962. "Place-names and Ango-Saxon paganism." *University of Birmingham Historical Journal* 8: 7-25.

_____. 1973. "Further thoughts on pagan place-names." *Otium et Negotium: Studies in Onomatology and Library Science Presented to Olof von Feilitzen*. Folke Sandgren, ed. Stockholm: Norstedt & Söner, 109-28. Reprinted in: Cameron, Kenneth. 1975. *Place-Name Evidence for the Anglo-Saxon Invasion and Scandinavian Settlements*. Nottingham: English Place-Name Society, 99-114.

_____. 1977. "Latin loan-words in Old English place-names." *Anglo-Saxon England* 6: 1-13.

_____. 1981. "On looking into Smith's Elements." *Nomina* 5: 39-45.

_____. 1984. *Place-Names in the Landscape*. London: Dent.

_____. 1988. *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*. 2nd ed. Chichester: Phillimore.

Higham, Mary. 1991-92. "*Lin* in the landscape." *Nomina* 15: 61-68.

Hough, Carole. 1993. *Women and the Law in Early Anglo-Saxon England*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham. Appendix B: "OE *mægden*: the place-name evidence," 465-510.

_____. 1993-94. "English place-names: the Leverhulme project." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 26: 15-26.

_____. 1994-95. "OE *wearg* in Warnborough and Wreighburn." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 27: 14-20.

_____. 1995. *The English Place-Name Survey: a Finding-List to Addenda and Corrigenda*. Nottingham: Centre for English Name Studies.

Kitson, Peter. 1993. "Quantifying qualifiers in Anglo-Saxon charter boundaries." *Folia Linguistica Historica* 14: 29-82.

Mills, A. D. 1993. *A Dictionary of English Place-Names*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Reaney, P. H. 1935. *The Place-Names of Essex*. (EPNS 12) Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Smith, A. H. 1956. *English Place-Name Elements*. 2 vols. (EPNS 25-26) Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

_____. 1961-63. *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*. 8 vols. (EPNS 30-37) Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Stenton, Frank. 1941. "The historical bearing of place-name studies: Anglo-Saxon heathenism." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 4th series 23: 1-24. Reprinted in: Stenton, Doris Mary. 1970. *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England: Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton*. Oxford: Clarendon, 281-97.

Svensson, Örjan. 1991-92. "The *Worthy*-Names of Devon." *Nomina* 15: 53-9.

Torvell, David. 1991-92. "The significance of *Here-ford*." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 24: 42-48.

Vipond, Prudence. 1992-93. "*Harrow* fields in Heswall-cum-Oldfield." *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 25: 9-11.