Readers who joined us in exploring The South Cape Mystery in May and The Net Lake Enigma in August are in excellent shape to investigate with us a more advanced problem along the same lines: The Connor-Cottonwood Conundrum.

Here is the problem:

"The community of COTTONWOOD, in Salt Lake County, Utah, at a latitude of 40° 39’, is in an almost perfect east-west alignment with the community of CONNOR, in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, at a latitude of 40° 38’, since the latitude difference involved is only 1 minute. Prove conclusively that the east-west alignment of COTTONWOOD, Montana with CONNOR, Maine is even more perfect, by showing that the latitudes of the latter two communities are identical.”

Our first step is to find Cottonwood, Montana. An examination of the 1965 Edition of The Times Index-Gazetteer of the World gives us a list of ten Cottonwoods in the United States and Canada, no one of which happens to be in Montana, and we turn to our sizable collection of atlases for a more prolonged search. In due course, we make the interesting discovery that there are three different Cottonwoods in Montana:

(1) One Cottonwood turns up in Hill County, near the northern border of Montana, north of a town with the eyebrow-raising name of KREMLIN. We compute the latitude of this Cottonwood as 48° 46’.

(2) A second Cottonwood appears in Powell County, in the western part of the state. Accurate measurement determines its latitude as 47° 02’.

(3) A third Cottonwood is located in Fergus County, in the central part of the state. Careful measurement places its latitude at 46° 59’.

English words are notorious for being endowed with a multiplicity of meanings. Now we know that American place names have the same quality—the name COTTONWOOD, MONTANA, specific as its sounds, has three different meanings!

Our next step is to find Connor, Maine. Returning to the Times Gazetteer, we learn that it does list a Connor, Maine, assigning it a latitude of 46° 58’. This latitude goes well with that of the Cottonwood in Fergus County, Montana, the latitude difference involved being only 1 minute. This represents a superb
east-west alignment, but one that isn't good enough, for it merely equals the excellence of the Utah-Pennsylvania alignment which it is our task to surpass.

Since we have previously found errors in the Times Gazetteer, there is an outside chance that the latitude of Connor it gives is inaccurate, and we check the 1964 Edition of the Rand McNally Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide, to learn what we can about Connor, Maine. The results are disturbing:

(1) As measured on the atlas map, the latitude of Connor is 46° 57' instead of 46° 58', for a latitude difference of 2 minutes compared with Cottonwood, Montana.

(2) CONNOR is the name both of a township in Maine, and of a community within the borders of that township. A township is an area, and the area of Connor Township extends from latitude 46° 56' to latitude 47° 02', thus covering the latitudes of two of the three Cottonwoods in Montana.

(3) The index of the atlas gives the names of the township and of the community as CONNOR. The map, however, while spelling the township name CONNOR, spells the community name CONNER.

(4) Both the township and the community within it are in Aroostook County, in the northeastern part of Maine—by far the largest county in the state.

If we were permitted to use the township of Connor in our comparison with Cottonwood, Montana, we would have an ideal match, and our problem would be solved. However, since there is a community by the same name in the township, such a comparison would be an exercise in illogic, and we have to stick with the community. Its slippage south by one minute of latitude, and the change in the spelling of its name, are intolerable, of course. Could the Commercial Atlas be in error?

We examine the 1968 Edition, with the same findings. Other hard-cover Rand McNally atlases, such as the Cosmopolitan World Atlas (1951) and the New Cosmopolitan World Atlas (1965), give the spelling CONNER both in index and on map, with no mention of CONNOR at all. The maps and atlases published by Goushá and by Hammond, two of the other leading map publishers, show neither CONNOR nor CONNER.

Where do we go from here? Well, if there can be more than one Cottonwood in Montana, why not more than one Connor in Maine? The way to find out is to search our atlases again. If there were another Connor in Maine, it might be in perfect alignment with one of our Montana Cottonwoods, and we could forget about the mess of problems raised by our first Connor.

The index to the 1902 Edition of The Century Atlas of the World lists a Connor, Maine. Referring to the map, we discover that, while the Century's Connor is also in Aroostook County, it is in a very different portion of that large county, further west and at the Canadian border. We determine that the latitude of this Connor, as shown on the Century's map, is 47° 10'. The latitude does not match any of our Cottonwoods.

More importantly, scrutiny of the map under a powerful magnifying glass reveals that the dot identifying this Connor is definitely north of the St. John River separating Maine from the Canadian Province of New Brunswick. Although it is clear that there is a Connor in Canada, most atlases spell it CONNOR. Reluctantly, we note that in the Century Edition of the World's Geography, Connor is listed as CONNOF.

An extension between 1882 and 1910 of the American government's boundary with Canada. Maine Governor BUREN, in the hope of settling the question with the Canadian government, now recognized the existence of two restrictions, with a new Connor in Maine. In hopes of solving the problem, we turn to the 1955 Edition of The Century Atlas of the World, which lists a Connor, Maine. Referring to the map, we discover that, while the Century's Connor is also in Aroostook County, it is in a very different portion of that large county, further west and at the Canadian border. We determine that the latitude of this Connor, as shown on the Century's map, is 47° 10'. The latitude does not match any of our Cottonwoods.

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though the index lists Connor as being in Maine, the map indicates that the community is really in Madawaska County, New Brunswick. As a curiosity, we note that in the exact location where we had previously found Connor-Conner, the Century's map shows a community named ACADIA.

We turn to other atlases and establish that the second Connor is, indeed, in Canada. More than that, CONNOR seems to be a misspelling, for all other atlases spell the name as CONNORS, and the Century's positioning of CONNORS is also inaccurate—the Times Gazetteer lists its latitude as 47° 12'. Reluctantly, we go back to the CONNOR-CONNER quandary.

An extended search through innumerable hard-cover atlases published between 1885 and 1968 establishes that CONNOR-CONNER appears only in Rand McNally atlases published after 1950. Most other atlases show the community of ACADIA in the location of CONNOR-CONNER. This suggests two possibilities: (1) ACADIA may have changed its name to CONNOR-CONNER around 1950; or (2) ACADIA passed out of existence, and a new community with a new name was subsequently founded where ACADIA had previously existed.

In hopes of extricating ourselves from the predicament, we consult the 1937 Edition of the Federal Writers' Project volume on Maine (one of the American Guide Series volumes covering the entire United States). We know that Connor-Conner is on U.S. Highway No. 1, between the towns of CARIBOU and VAN BUREN. However, neither the text of the book nor the map issued in connection with it mentions either Connor-Conner or Acadia.

Our next attempt is with Maine Place Names by Ava Harriet Chadbourne (1955). This standard reference work lists no ACADIA, but does list a CONNOR. It informs us that CONNOR was a town, named for former Maine Governor Selden CONNOR of Augusta. It also informs us that the town ceased to exist in 1945—it was "disorganized"! Encyclopedias confirm that the Governor's name was spelled CONNOR, not CONNER.

Something is very wrong here. During the time that atlases show an ACADIA as in existence, the Chadbourne book knows of no ACADIA, but describes CONNOR; at the approximate point in time where atlases replace ACADIA with CONNOR-CONNER, the Chadbourne book announces that CONNOR has gone out of existence!

Admittedly, the Chadbourne book refers to the town or township of Connor, not to the community within that township. However, the township of Connor is clearly shown in the 1968 Commercial Atlas. If the townstop was disorganized in 1945, and had not been reconstituted by 1955, when the Chadbourne book was published, one must theorize that the township was reorganized shortly after the book's publication. The whole story seems very unlikely.

Our next task is to examine road maps and road atlases, in search of CONNOR, and our efforts meet with a reasonable degree of success. We find CONNOR (not CONNER or ACADIA) in road atlases and other road maps prepared by Rand McNally, by the Diversified Map Corporation of St. Louis, by R. R. Donnelley & Sons, and by the State of Maine itself. Latitude measurements on various maps showing CONNOR produce figures ranging from 46° 56' on a Donnelley road map published in 1960 to slightly north of 47° 00' in the 1967

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Obviously, we can pick a map that shows CONNOR at latitude 46° 59' and announce that we have matched CONNOR to absolute perfection with the COTTONWOOD in Fergus County, Montana. However, anyone who so desires can dispute our finding by picking another map that shows CONNOR further north or further south.

The Official Highway Map issued by the State of Maine ought to be authoritative, but tantalizes us. Along the edges of the map, there are lines locating the 45th parallel of latitude, but no other one. To compute the latitude of any point on the map, a minimum of two latitude determinations is required. One just won't do the job! Checking through successive annual editions of the map, we find one—just one—that identifies the northernmost point in Maine and gives its latitude very accurately, to one hundredth of one second of latitude. Since this latitude is north of Connor, and the 45th parallel is south of Connor, we are able to extend both latitude lines across the entire map of Maine, as well as a line passing through the dot locating Connor, and interpolate for the latitude of Connor. A rather involved calculation gives us a latitude figure for Connor of approximately 46° 59', the latitude desired. Unfortunately, the devious means we had to employ to arrive at that figure would not be very convincing in court, so to speak, particularly when it is very easy to produce alternative figures also touted as authoritative.

Highly regarded as evidence are the Topographical Quadrangle maps issued by the United States Geological Service, and we turn to these maps. We examine the 1953 Edition of the 1:24,000 New Sweden Quadrangle map, only to be frustrated—the map shows ACADIA where CONNOR ought to be, but not CONNOR. We also examine the 1962 Edition of the General Highway Map of Aroostook County prepared by the State Highway Commission Planning Division. Once again, we find ACADIA, not CONNOR.

Our elusive CONNOR is not incorporated, so that it has no Chamber of Commerce, and receives its mail through Caribou, so that it has no Post Office. We write to the Caribou Chamber of Commerce, and to the Postmaster of Caribou, asking for information about CONNOR. The Chamber of Commerce tells us that it knows of no community in the vicinity by the name of CONNOR, only of a place called CONNER, the name of which is occasionally misspelled CONNER. The Postmaster informs us that CONNOR is a village 6 miles north of Caribou, that there is no such place as CONNER, and that mail incorrectly addressed to CONNOR is frequently delivered to inhabitants of CONNOR by Rural Route No. 4 out of Caribou.

The preponderance of the evidence that we have now accumulated is to the effect that CONNER is merely a misspelling of CONNOR. However, a location 6 miles north of Caribou would place CONNOR at a latitude of approximately 46° 57' (unacceptable to us), and the specter of ACADIA remains unexplained.

We decide to approach the ultimate authority and the source of some of our grief—Rand McNally & Company itself. In due time, we receive a reply from Terry R. Barr, Manager of the Road Map Research Department, part of Rand McNally's Cartographic Division. Mr. Barr states that, as far as Rand McNally knows, then any maps still

The name CONNOR, as located in
between Caribou and
in Fergus County, Montana.

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knows, there has never been a community named CONNER in Maine, and that any maps showing such a place, including Rand McNally maps, are incorrect. The name of the community in question is spelled CONNOR, and CONNOR is located some 9 miles north of Caribou, at latitude 46° 59'. As for the conflict between CONNOR and the mysterious ACADIA, Rand McNally does not care to decide on the correct name, and suggests that we take the problem up with the Attorney General of the State of Maine.

It seems that we have now conclusively established CONNOR as the correct spelling, and 46° 59' as the correct latitude. To that extent, we have disposed successfully of the problem posed to us. However, the ghost of ACADIA continues to haunt the scene.

We have worked hard, and deserve a rest from our labors. Would any reader of WORD WAYS care to pursue the ACADIA puzzle further?

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OF ANAGRAMS

Darryl H. Francis, of Hounslow, Middlesex, England, sends us some anagrams meritorious enough to deserve publication:

TOWER OF LONDON . . . One old fort now.
THE U.S. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS . . . It's only for research bugs!
THE BEATLES . . . These bleat.
PRESIDENT CHARLES DE GAULLE . . . He's large and ill-persecuted.

Mr. Francis has also taken WEBSTER'S THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, UNABRIDGED, twisting it into this fitting comment: When it began, this edition created one hell of a stir, 'tis 'ain't' was ungrudgingly barred!

* * *

WEBSTERIAN ERRORS

At this writing, we have run across a total of five errors in Webster's Third Edition. If you own a copy of that work, make a note of them: (1) the entry BONIFICATION is misspelled BONIFICATION; (2) the entry ANNIVERSARY DAY is misspelled ANNIVERSAY DAY; (3) although COULDN'T and SHOULDN'T are dictionary entries, there is no entry for WOULDN'T, an obvious error of omission; (4) definition 5d of the second entry FEED is FEED MOTION, in capital letters, but there is no dictionary entry FEED MOTION to explain it, another error of omission; and (5) the definition of the entry ANSERINE SKIN is given in capital letters as GOOSE FLESH, which is a misspelling of the dictionary entry GOOSEFLESH.

Readers finding other Websterian errors are requested to let us know about them.