

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, AUG 24 1905

DEAR SIR,

I wish to obtain information respecting the derivation of the place-names of Canada—of the names of the villages, towns, cities and of the natural features, such as rivers, lakes, capes, bays, mountains, etc.—and shall be much obliged if you will give me any information that you may possess or can procure, respecting the below-mentioned name and also respecting the names of any other features in the vicinity of your residence concerning which you have knowledge.

In many localities, the older generation is passing, or has passed away, and unless steps are taken to collect this information, it will, in many instances, be too late. In most communities there are persons who take an interest in things of this nature or that have been connected with the early settlement of the locality. If there are any such in your neighbourhood, will you kindly submit this to them.

Below I have indicated the lines along which I desire information and also the commoner derivatives of place-names in Canada :—

(1.) Whether named after a village, town, or city, or natural feature in any other province or country ; if so, the name of province or country in which the original locality is situated.

(2.) Whether named after a person ; if so, the person's name, occupation, spelling of name as rendered by the person and any details of interest respecting him (or her) such as (a) Whether alive or, if dead, approximate year of death ; (b) Whether at any time a resident of the locality and, if so, whether still living there.

(3.) Whether named after a natural feature ; if so, any details respecting the origin of the name as applied to the feature and the geographical position of the latter.

(4.) Whether the town, village or city ever had any other name or names ; if so, at what dates, approximately, and the origin of these obsolete names.

Any information bearing on the above will be deemed a courtesy.

Yours truly,

JAMES WHITE,
Geographer.

Kindly write your reply on the attached sheet.

To ensure free transmission of your reply I enclose herewith an addressed envelope which will come free of postage.

"Red Deer"
Alta

'Red Deer' the name of the Town is derived from the name of the River on the banks of which it is built. Years before the building of the C.P.C. Ry or the birth of the Town the country for probably 20 miles on each side of the River and say about the same distance East & West of the old ford on the trail between Calgary and Edmonton was known as the Red Deer District or the Red Deer Country. Then in 1884 when the Postoffice was established at what is now known as the "Old Crossing" about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles up the River from the location of the Town it was named the Red Deer Postoffice. When the Town was started in 1890 and the P.O. moved from the old site to the new one it was natural that the Town should receive this name.

Before the Christening actually took place however the matter was considered at a Mass meeting (the mass was very small) held for the purpose and considerable opposition was offered to the naming of the ambitious little hamlet by so strange a name. On account however of the wide advertisement which the Dist. had had under this name it was finally decided to retain the old name which

had endeared itself to many of the old timers
on account of long association and all
they had enjoyed & suffered in it, and to
whom on account of familiarity it had
lost its inconspicuous sound. The writer
has vivid recollections of this fight for
the old name which was waged by the
"old timers" against the "tenderfoot" in which
he figured as one of the old timers.

The words Red Deer are derived from a
translation of the Indian word Was-ka-soo
which means the red deer or elk which at one
time were very abundant in the vicinity of
the River which from time beyond ken was
known amongst the Indian tribes as Was-ka-
soo-seepe, the latter Indian word meaning
river.

A. A. Laets P. M.

Red Deer

Aug 29/05