

Department of the Interior,

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER,

Ottawa, FEB 22 1906

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 who 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.

*Spirit River
Alta.*

Spirit River, Apr. 24/1906

Sas. White Esq.
Government Geographer
Ottawa.

Dear Sir: In accordance with your request under date of Feb. 22nd, I have made inquiries regarding the origin of the name of this settlement. The settlement is named after the river of that name, which is a small stream flowing through about ten miles of prairie and emptying into, a somewhat larger stream called "Burnt" River which in turn empties into Peace River about 20 miles below Fort Demoyan. The old Cree settlers here tell me that long ago, when the Buffalo were plentiful here

And when the Beaver Indians inhabited
this part of the country, before being
driven back by the Crees, the Beavers
used to camp here and hunt Buffalo.
Once when they were in camp here, a very
large grizzly bear appeared on the
prairie, and the braves, getting large sticks
instead of their guns, got on their ponies
and started out to have some fun
by teasing and chasing the bear. It
chanced that one man being dis-
abled in some way - or his horse lame,
I could not tell which - was unable
to evade the bear successfully and
got caught. The bear dragged him
over the bank into the river bottom
near the edge of the water and
there killed him in sight of his com-
rades. The bear then became to them
a ghost or a devil instead of a
bear. Hence the name of the
river - which the Crees call
"Chépye Seepé" or Ghost or Spirit

River. Yours Respectfully H. E. Calkin
South Pass