

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, AUG 18 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.

"Saturna"
Kauaimo Dist. *Pls*

Saturna Island — B.C.

Sept. 29^o 1905

This paper reached me among my other mail some little time ago, and I regret that pressure on my time has prevented me from returning it, with such scanty information as I have on the subject.

The majority of place-names in this Island district ~~are~~ is derived from the naval ships that were on this station at the time of the original marine survey or from officers on those ships. There was - for instance - an H.M.S. "Plumper" - also I think "Saturna", "Ganges" &c. and Pender - Mayne - Prevost were I have heard naval officers. Some names are of course an indication of local character as - Deep Bay - Long Harbour - Salt Spring Is. or Miner's Bay - Mayne Is. - a stopping place for miners in the old days en route from Victoria to the mainland. or (Indian) Village Bay. I know of ~~no~~ no local place-names taken from other provinces or countries, or persons, except of the navy. I should also add that many names of Islands &c in the Gulf were originally given by the Spaniards before British occupation, as San Juan de Fuca, Valdez, probably Sesada, Galasso.

But probably you have fuller information on all these points and I have no means of getting precise knowledge on them.

Ralph G. Gray

Saturnia - see Bliss's map
in Bancroft's B.C.