

*Man.*

# Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, AUG 26 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.

"Bear Creek" (see over)

now *Berton* *Man.*

"Bear Creek" is a creek rising in the sandhills south east of Keopawa and flowing northeasterly into the White Mud river after a course of about 75 miles about thirty years ago when the first settlers came in they were much troubled by bears which were very numerous along this creek as its whole course was then through heavy timber and swamps.

John Leslie and G. Y. Slade, pioneer farmers are responsible for the name Bear Creek. They both live here yet and are well to do.

I quote you an authentic story - Mr John Leslie and a companion were sleeping in their shanty one night having the window open. A side of pork hung from the low rafters. A bear nosing about climbed in the window to sample the appetizing meat. Mr Leslie hearing the noise sprang up ~~and~~ to get his gun on which Mr Bear clambered back through the window and ~~dis~~appeared.

There are still a few bears around the headwaters of this creek. Tracks were seen along the creek not two miles from this village, this summer.

Bear Creek is a school district also

Bear Creek P.O. is closed.

Berton (Man)

Dear Sir

What is the derivation of Bertou? Is it  
an abbreviated form of Bear-town

Yours truly

James White

No. Bertou was first named McKewen by the Railroad  
Co. but as there was another McKewen about 5 miles out  
I prevailed on the Railroad Co to change the name  
McKewen to Bertou for local reasons. I being the  
first business man here coined the name Bertou  
using part of my christian name and the suffix -town -

Yours truly

J. Albert Christilaw