

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, SEP 21 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.

*Birch Groves
Cape Breton NS*

Birch Grove. Nov. 10 '05-

To James White
Geographer

Dear Sir: The name
"Birch Grove" was given to the post Office
here about eighteen years ago. The people of
the vicinity petitioned for a weekly mail
and the request was granted, the most central
farm house being selected for post Office.

On this farm and adjoining their Orchard
was a large grove composed exclusively of
^{white} Birch trees. The grove being placed conspicuously
placed on a hill, the farm had long been known
as "Birch Grove" so the name was applied to the
post Office and gradually people began to use
the name when referring to the settlement.

Previous to the time to which I refer the place
was known as Cow Bay Road because the people
settled on either side of that road connecting
Sydney and Cow Bay. Cow Bay was situated
about eighteen miles from Sydney. People took
up farms along the road between the two places
each building as near the road as possible.

Hence they were referred to as living on Cow
Bay road by the people of Sydney.

Since "Cow Bay" has been changed to
"Port Muriel" and the use of the p. O.
address of "Birch Grove" has come into use
the expression Cow Bay Road has died
out.

Yours very truly

Post Master