

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

SEP 15 1905

Ottawa,

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.

*Blackstone
Inverness Co. MS*

see over

To James White, Geographer.

Dear Sir, your circular received. I fear I cannot answer your questions properly, but will do the best I can.

(1) As to the name of this Office - viz Blackstone. It is simply the office name, given ^{or suggested} I think by Rev. J. H. Macdonald ~~in his~~ petition P. P. in the petition craving a post-office in the year 1896. The name of the section or district is Smithville. It is so named because for some miles it is settled by people of that name.

(2) I am a grandson of the first-settler. My father was the first white child born in the township of Mabou. The first settler's name was Lewis Lambert Smith, born in Massachusetts but came to Cape Breton about 1798 with his father Captain David Smith. All Captain Smith's family settled on a place called Port Hood Island. Two of his sons came with their wives in boats from Port Hood Island and settled on what is now known as the South East branch of Mabou River. But known in the first few years as Mankee River, so called by the Scotch people who settled here in the early part of the last century. These two brothers had large families who settled up, down and across the river and today their descendants are counted by hundreds. My father (Lambert L Smith) has frequently told me that he knew every person who grabbed a lot from Lake Ainslie up both branches of the Mabou River. He was born in 1802 and died in 1887. When the Nova Scotia School act was enforced in 1864 each district

was divided into school sections five or six miles long. Each section was named, and this section had nine Ratepayers named Smith whose farms are all joining so it goes by the name of Smithville.

(3) I fear that in answering questions one and two I have answered three and four, and may cause you some inconvenience.

As I suppose each post Office around us will give its own history I will just confine myself to the Smithville district. Which has Blackstone on its Post Office Stamps. ~~It was~~ The office was removed from the original Postmaster in A. D. 1900. I wished to have it changed to Smithville, but found that I would have to trouble the Post Office Department in Ottawa, would have to get a new stamp etc, and so it is Blackstone still.

If this explanation is too exhaustive or not as it should be I will if you point out what is amiss try to be more accurate and will rectify any mistake you find

respectfully yours

Lewis Lambert Smith
Postmaster Blackstone P. O.
Smithville Malton
L. B.

Dear Sir

Your memo is quite sufficient except as regards one point viz the origin of the name "Blackstone". Is it for a person of that name & if so, who was he? Or, is it for a place, if so, where situated

Yours truly
James White

It is not named for a person or place
It is merely D. Laney name, given to the
office. So far as I can learn the name
was decided on when the former ^{writer}
postmaster sent his petition to the
P. O. Department praying for a Post
office to be established at his place.

yours respectfully

(Later)

Lewis L Smith

P. S. The Priest who was in charge of the
parish suggested to the former Postmaster
to call it Blackstone in honour of the
famous Legal advocate

L. L. S.