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# Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, SEP 27 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.

*Biscotasing  
Algoma, Dist. Oct*

*Ann's d*

Post Office, Biscotasing, Ont. Oct. 11th. 1905.

Dear Sir:-

I have made enquiry regarding the derivation of the name " Biscotasing " and as near as I can find out it is an Indian word meaning;- A place in the lake where the rocks have ears.

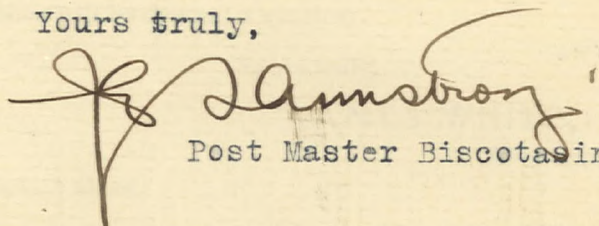
There is a place near here where there are a lot of dry lichens on the rocks, somewhat ear-shaped and it is supposed that that is where the name came from.

Another way that the Indians account for the name is as follows.

There is a sandy Island right at the village without a rock on it and it is said that this island used to be a great council place among the indians. The reason they used it was because " The rocks have ears " and might hear what went on at the council if they were close enough.

I might say that there does not seem to be any guarantee that either of the above explanations are really correct, but any Indian linguist that I can find here seems to think that the former is as near as they can get at it.

Yours truly,

  
Post Master Biscotasing.