

31 D/14

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, October 9th, 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.

✓ "Gravenhurst" Muskoka Dist.
 ✓ "Hawtrey" Oxford Co
 ✓ "Coplestone" Lambton "
 ✓ "Aurigny" & Gaspe "

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.

✓ Amberley Huron
 ✓ Ambleside Bruce
 Grassmere Muskoka
 ✓ Merivale Carleton

✓ Maberley Lanark
 ✓ Lammermoor Lanark

(Copy)

88 Maclaren St.
Ottawa, Oct. 9, 1905

Dear Mr. White,

In a letter dated 11th ultimo you spoke of sending me a few of your circulars and asking me to fill in particulars respecting the P. O. names for which I am personally responsible. The circulars never came to hand. In any case I cannot now recall what names I was personally responsible for. If a name were mentioned I could probably say whether I had suggested it or not.

As to Gravenhurst and Hawtrej, the paternity of which I acknowledged, the first is the title of a book by William Smith, better known as the author of "Thorndale"; while the latter was intended to perpetuate the name of Edward Craven Hawtrej, head master of Eton in the first half of the last century. I am in possession of a very fine edition of Euripides bearing the signature and coat of arms of Hawtrej.

A few other names that occur to me are Coplestone,^{P.O.} after an eminent Oxford scholar, professor of poetry at that University about 100 years ago; Aurigny in the Magdalen Islands,^{P.O. Harrow} this being the French form of Alderney (Channel Islands); Amberley,^(P.O. Brunel) after the eldest son of Earl Russell; Ambleside, the residence for a time (in Westmoreland) of Wordsworth and Coleridge; Grasmere-do; Merivale, after Charles Merivale, author of "Historyn of the Romans under the Empire"; Maberly, After Col. Maberly, Secretary of the G. P. O. London before Rowland Hill; Lammermoor etc after persons or places in Sir Walter Scott's novels: and so on.

Our object was to give more or less euphonious

names

names having associations with British history and literature.

The name Oswald, concerning which, in another memo, you enquire, was probably given in the same way; I have no special recollection of it. Belcourt was probably named after the M. P. though I cannot say positively. I return the papers in these cases

Yours very truly,

W. D. LeSeur *of P.O. Dept.*

P. S. I am excessively busy just now and could hardly take time to go much further into the matter.

William
Dawson
LeSueur
(1840-1917)
Sec. of PO Dept
1888-1902

5 Aug 1995