

31st/16

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, OCT 3 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.

*Playfair
Lanark Co. Club*

*Bathurst TB.
445-8-7625*

Now Playfairville

I

Play fair Oct 30th 1805

James. White Esq.

Your letter of the 3rd Oct. regarding information of the village of Play fair has been handed to me by the Postmaster. I take pleasure in informing you that it is a small village situated on the Mississippi River. Founded by & named after the late Col. A. W. Play fair in the year 1814. I might almost say he owned the village as he at one time had in operation, a saw-mill grist-mill & carding-mill. which did a thriving business for a number of years. For further information I will enclose you his obituary notice.

We regret to announce the decease of one of the most loyal subjects that ever served a Sovereign Colonel Play fair, of the village of Play fair, in the township of Bathurst, in this country. Eighty years have passed away since the date of his birth in Hampshire, England. A scion of a good old English family, he entered the military service of his country at an early age, & during the heat of the great wars which had arisen out of the French Revolution, & which were

shaking the political foundations of Europe.
 On referring to the Army List, we find the
 young soldiers commission in the 104th
 Regiment, as second Lieutenant, dated 26th
 April, 1810: First Lieutenant - 7th November 1811.
 Some time after the close of the American war.
 this Regiment - was reduced or disbanded, &
 Lieutenant Blayfair was placed on the Half-pay
 List - on the 25th July, 1817. upwards of half a
 century ago. - He was one of the earliest pioneers
 in this section of the country, & during a long life
 no gentleman in Canada ever worked as he worked
 for opening up the communication of the back
 settlements with the Great Lakes by means of
 Colonization roads. He was well known to the
 authorities at the War Office. He was the first
 military man that made known to the
 astonished Home officials the fact, that the
 Fortress of Quebec was not what it should be, or
 what it was at least supposed to be - the
 Gibraltar of British North America. It showed
 that its supposed impregnability was a myth,
 or was at least a thing of the past, unless the
 heights which form the Southern Bank of the
 river, immediately opposite the Citadel, were
 crowned with earthwork fortifications, heavily

Hoping this may prove satisfactory
I remain sincerely yours

Mrs Sophia Wolfe

armed, and unless the old iron & half rotten 32 pounders of the Fortress were replaced with modern artillery of the heaviest calibre & longest range. The result is known. The most competent officer ⁱⁿ of the Royal Corps of Engineers was immediately despatched from England to Quebec with instructions to inspect & report upon the condition of the Fortress: And Colonel D'Alay fair lived to know that his warnings had not been given in vain. He was far in advance of his age & times. Many projects, first urged by him, long years since, & then supposed to be visionary, are now admitted on all hands to be not merely necessary but absolutely necessary to the preservation & maintenance of British power on this continent & the development of its vast resources. — amongst others, that of uniting the Pacific & Western oceans, by means of rail & water communication through British territory. Some years since the Colonel represented this Riding in the Legislature of the two Canada's & did good service. Colonel D'Alay fair was a Christian gentleman in the fullest acceptation of the term of honor. pure & unsullied; & in Canada Her Majesty had not a more strictly loyal or a more devoted subject. Full of years, he has gone to his reward, & dear will be his memory to many an old settler. Take him all in all, this section of Canada will never have his equal. He lived to a good old age, as every man should die in full reliance upon the aid of his Divine Lord & Master, of whom he was an able & faithful follower.