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Department of the Interior,

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER,

Ottawa, MAR 26 1906

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 who 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.

Vesta

Bruce Co. Ont.

James White Esq

Dear sir I see you want enlightenment regarding the origin and name of our P.O and as your document has been presented ^{to me} by our present P.M. Mr John Connolly to furnish you with such I herewith (though incompetent) commence the task, I came to this part of our Grand Dominion from Simcoe county June 10th A.D. 1854 our nearest mail accommodation at that time was Walkerton a distance of about 11 miles. The present site of Verta P.O. was ^{at that time} a dense wilderness owned by a man who signed his name J. B. Sandy, he is dead long since, I think about 2 years after Benjamin Cannon became the proprietor of the ^{lands} property and was also (if I recollect rightly) Verta's first P.M. he conducted a mercantile business in connection therewith, he is now retired makes Walkerton his home while his son Henry occupies ^{the 60 to 600 acres} the farm on which Verta P.O. stands being lot 15 con 15 T.P. Beant, let the above laconic account suffice for its origin. It has been managed during the last half century by various P.Ms whose names in a promiscuous way were B. Cannon J. Stephens J. B. Lakeway, R. Kidd, J. Ryan, J. Sheehan A. Campbell, J. Sullivan, J. Marshall, W. Shire, W. Mc Gill

and its present occupant John Connolly who conducts a
prosperous business as a general store keeper there. I think
the reason of so many changes in the P. M. may be attributed
to the fact that the building when first erected by Mr. Cannon
was fitted for store keeping and each P. M. during his term
of occupation tried his fortune in that line. I don't think
there is anything special in its location to signalize it from
its general environs. Some years ago it ^{was} a saw mill owned &
operated by John Fortune in which there was for a time
a thriving business done but as timber and water have
been on the wane lately the saw mill is now a thing of
past. Now for its name. It is called Vesta, the name of a heathen
Goddess who according to the mythology in conjunction with Min-
erva and Mars held the patronage, guidance and guardianship
of the world. I know very little about her and less about her antecedents
they are too antiquated and we don't call ourselves heathens here. I think
the name has been chosen and adopted by the P. O. department some three
score years ago when I was much younger than I am now there was an adage
used frequently in common conversation viz heathens are as rare as
red pigs but ~~that~~ ^{was} prior to the introduction of the Jamnorth it
was not believed at that time that there was such a thing as a red
pig in existence hence the invalidity of the adage now. Would it
be possible that with the influx of the red pig we had also
that of the heathen and that the latter became prominent in
the P. O. department and was practiced with power and authority
to confer names on newly established offices. If so we have reason
to be thankful that in the fullness of heathenish wisdom and
charity we were placed under ^{the} patronage of Vesta that we might

thereby be protected from the baneful demoralizing
and deluding influences of such mythical deities
as Bacchus. Venus. Pluto. Proserpine & & &

James White Esq
Ottawa

Canada

" "

Hoping this will find you
in the fullest enjoyment
of health & happiness

I am yours &c

Wm Jenson

P.S. Since writing the above I have
been reminded by an old friend (to whose
inspection I submitted it) that the
1st name of Vestas site was Spring Vale
but at that time it had no office

W. J.