

Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF GEOGRAPHER

Ottawa, AUG 22 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.

Willow Beach

~~John~~ *Sark*

Willow Bush Sask -

Sept 4th 1908

En réponse a ce que vous
desirez savoir concernant le
nom de nos Places par ici
nous avons pas de Village
Nous sommes que des ranchers
Batis' du long de la Vallée de Willow Bush
qui est la continuation a l'Est de la
Big Muddy qui va rejoindre le Missouri
a 160 milles au Sud d'Est d'ici -

Il y a peu près 40 ans les premiers
Mets' Canadien qui s'avansait de plus en
plus a l'ouest pour y faire la Chasse
de Buffolo. Trouverent une Coulee ou
il y avait un peult de bois. Avec qui
il y avait des herbes Rouges - et de cette
Ecorce - qui melait avec du Tabac pour fumer
Tous s'en procuraient quant on n'en trouvait
Tous ont occasion de Connaître cette Vallée

de harre Rouge. et dela. est venu le nom. Car
les gens pourrait se dire l'un a l'autre j'ai passer
par la talle de harre Rouge. ou j'ai camper
pres dela Talle de harre Rouge. ou hiverner a
telle distance dela Talle de harre Rouge. Et quant
la Police monte sont venus ici en 1877. Ceux
qui ne parlait pas Francois - ete force de dire
Red Willow Bunch - se fini par etre Willow Bunch
ni plus ni moins. Il y a 35 ans que je suis par ici
je suis celui qui a rendu Sitting Bull et ses Braves
qui avait pris part au massacre du general Custer
en 1876 - au sud du Montana. j'etais ici 13 ans
avant que les Chars viennent au Pays en 1882 - j'ai
^{pu} parcourir toutes les prairies dans toutes les directions
et connaitre les places et les Evènement du premier
temps. que les gens se sont introduit dans cette
partie des grandes prairie de Wisconsin et les
montagne Rocheuses. (Wood Mountain) qui a ce nom
n'est pas Montagne de bois (ou boisé) C'est une elevation
Coteau a mieux dire. Sur qui on trouverait d'assez bonne
Cauler remplis de bois orme. Frêne et Tremble. nous
obligeait d'approcher cette place pour y passer
l'hiver Car 100 milles a l'entour on ne trouverai
pas de bois. nous obligeait de donner le nom a
cette place la Montagne de bois - qui aujour d'hui
est depourve de gros bois. que des Petit Tremble. Et

Sainte. Le feu a beaucoup contribué à la Ruine
de ces Coulees de bois qu'on occupait il y a 35 ans
Le Park d'original a 6 miles au Nord Est d'ici
est aussi en mémoire d'avoir put Capturer un
Original par lui avoir fait des embarras de tronche
en faisant de Cloture pour l'attrapper qui
ensuite était dit. On ils ont fait rentrer
l'original dans le Park. Le Lac de la Vieille est que
les Sauvages prétendent qu'il attendait Chasser une Ville
dans une Ile de ce Lac. Et nous fallait s'appeler le Lac
de la Vieille qu'on nomme le Lac Johnson d'après
la Butte du Cheral Caillé. à L. Ouest ici 75 à 80
Mille. Sur qui dans les premiers Temps. plusieurs
qui allaient vers cette butte voyait toujours un Cheral
Caillé qui était seul - avec la rareté des choses
dans la prairie il y a 35 à 40 ans. On avait grande
mémoire de tout ce que nous découvrions tant
que loin ou proche, était toujours excitation et crainte
d'être découvert par quelques parti de guerre
Indienne qui se faisait lois comme était en marche
de guerre de faire souffrir tout ceux qui pourrais
rencontrer en nombre inférieurs à eux. plus seraient
s'en parais de nos provisions. et couverture, et a nous
de s'y contenter s'il n'allait pas
plus loin.

Votre
Jean Louis Légaré P. Master

James White
Letters

ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Reply from Willow Bunch.

Willow Bunch, Sask

Sept 4, 1908

H → In reply to your question about our place names in this area, there is no town or village here. We are just a group of ranchers who have built along the valley of the Willow Bunch, the eastward continuation of the Big Muddy, which joins the Missouri 160 miles southeast of here.

About 40 years ago the first Canadian Métis, advancing farther and farther westward with the buffalo which they hunted, found a coulee with a small wooded area consisting partly of red willows*, the bark of which used to be blended with tobacco and smoked. They would all obtain some of this when it was available. This bunch of red willows became familiar to everyone, and this is where the name came from. People might say to one another, I passed by the bunch of red willows, or camped near them, or wintered a certain distance from them. And when the Mounted Police came here in 1877, those who did not speak French had to say Red Willow Bunch, which was eventually shortened to Willow Bunch. I have been around here for 35 years. I was the one who handed over Sitting Bull and his braves who had taken part in the massacre of General Custer in 1876 in southern Montana. I had been here for 13 years by the time the trains came in 1882. I have had occasion to travel through the prairies in every direction and I know the places and the things which the first settlers did on this part of the great prairies, around Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains. ^{has} Wood Mountain[?], which at this ^{name,} time is not a wooded mountain, but a rise, or better yet a coteau, where there once were some good coulees full of elms, ashes and aspens. We had to go near there to spend the winter, since it was the only place for 100 miles around where there was any wood. We called this place Wood Mountain, although today it is not heavily wooded - all it has are some small aspens. Fire played a big part in the ruin of those wooded coulees in which we used to live 35 years ago. I also remember capturing a moose at Le Parc d'Original, six miles northeast of here, by ^{making a} fencing him in with some branches. ^{The place was called "where they made the moose enter the enclosure (parc)".} This was reported and the moose was returned to the park. ^{sort of ring-fence} The Indians claim that at Lac de la Vieille you used to be able to hear an old woman singing on one of the islands. We called it Lac de la Vieille, and it is presently called Johnson Lake.

* *Harres rouge* - probably *hart rouge*, dogwood, or possibly kinnikinnick, red-osier dogwood or red osier. Cf *Flore du Canada*, Secretary of State Dept Bulletin de terminologie No 156, entry D71. I have used "red willow" because the place name indicates that this is what the trees were thought to be, at least by the English-speaking settlers. The appearance of the trees may be such that they could be taken to be either willows or dogwoods, since the red willow is also called silky dogwood (*Flore du Canada*, entry R100). (Tr)

La Butte du Cheval Caille is 75 or 80 miles west of here. In the early days, many who were travelling toward this butte saw ^{standing alone a} ~~what looked like a~~ plump ["caille"] ^{white horse with black spots.} ~~horse standing alone.~~ Not much happened on the prairies 35 or 40 years ago. Everything we saw, whether far-off or close, stayed in our memories. There was always a mixture of excitement and fear of being found by one of the Indian war parties. They were ^{among} a law unto themselves ^{and when} ~~and acted as though~~ they were on the warpath, molesting ^{ed there} all who were fewer in number than they and often ^{took their} ~~taking our~~ provisions and blankets. We considered ourselves fortunate if that ^{they did not} ~~was all they~~ ~~did.~~ ^{carry on any further.}

Yours truly,

Jean Louis Légaré
Postmaster