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Correspondence from Wingate F. Cram 1938-1939

Wingate F. Cram

Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Co.

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BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK RAILROAD COMPANY

WINGATE F. CRAM, PRESIDENT
BANGOR, MAINE

December 30, 1938.

Mrs. Fannie H. Eckstorm

173 Wilson Street

Brewer, Maine

Dear Mrs. Eckstorm:

I am very grateful for your information about Mattaseunk.

An official of the Great Northern Paper Company (who spells it Mattaceunk) wrote me that he couldn't find it in any list of Indian names he had and it isn't in the only "dictionary" the Library seems to have (Douglas-Lithgow).

Aren't some of these names onomatopoeic? "Seunk" sounds much like falling water and a little brook near Ashland is "Cap-suglet", a better description.

Also, "Matt" seems to mean either the junction of rivers or "bad", but what the relation is I can't imagine unless there was bad poling or something at the junction of rivers.

Again thank you.

Sincerely yours,

W. F. Cram

BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK RAILROAD COMPANY

WINGATE F. CRAM, PRESIDENT
BANGOR, MAINE

January 12, 1939.

Mrs. Fannie H. Eckstorm
173 Wilson Street
Brewer, Maine

Dear Mrs. Eckstorm:

We have no station near Mattaseunk. My advice was sought by officials of the Great Northern Paper Company whom I once accused of stealing a "t" from Millinocket. We had always spelled it with two "t's" until they got the town incorporated with only one.

As a boy I was much in the woods with Indian guides in Canada and had one highly intelligent man. I recall that he insisted that branch or streams were usually named for a place on the main river or for some character of the branch noted from the main river and not from any character of the branch itself, indicating that they came along the coast and ascended the rivers. The white men, in the maritime provinces, followed that practice. They do not have many east and west or north and south branches as we do. Above a major junction they have a "little main" river and a distinct name for the other branch: "Little Main Restigouche" and "Kedgwick", "Little Main Tobique" and "Serpentine".

"Capsuglet" is a small bubbling brook crossing the highway between Ashland and Portage, Maine, that I used to drive over before the railroad was extended thirty odd years ago. It was

Mrs. Eckstorm

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almost too small to have a name and I had supposed the name was lost until an old timer used it in my hearing recently. The spelling is mine; I can not find that it has got into any map.

The Great Northern wish me to thank you for your advice, which I hope they will follow.

Sincerely yours,

W. L. C. A.