

NEHEMIAH AMES
P.O. Box 274
GIBRALTAR (EUROPE)

May 20, 1973

Ref.: 215-A

Gene Kridler, Manager, Fr. Fugate Shoals
Hawaiian Is. National Wildlife Refuge
U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Honolulu, Hawaii, U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Kridler,

Would you be willing to do me a big favor? It may sound silly, but would you be willing to take the enclosed envelope with you next time you visit WHALE ISLAND and autograph & date it to show that it has been there? I would be very highly grateful to you for such a favor.

You see, I am making a collection of envelopes which have come from islands all over the world which bear the names of wildlife and it won't be complete without the world's largest animal being represented!

Also, as you can see from the enclosed article, some of these envelopes provide the basis for a series of articles I am writing for Western Stamp Collectors. Islands described so far in this series have included, besides ELK and BEAVER, ELEPHANT, SABLE, HORSE, PUFFIN, KANGAROO & DOG Islands.

If you care to add any comments about whale island, they would be very appreciated. But even if your busy schedule doesn't permit much writing, I'll be delighted to receive back my envelope from whale is.!

Thanks ever so much!

Nehemiah Ames

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

RECEIVED
MAY 30 1973
HONOLULU, HAWAII



HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
22 573
FIRST CLASS

*Change forwarded to
Bureau of Game Inquiries
337, Ulenia Hawaii
Kailua, Oahu, 96731*

MR. GENE KRIDLER, MANAGER,
FRENCH FRIGATE SHOALS
HAWAIIAN IS. NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE,
U. S. Fish + WILDLIFE SERVICE
HONOLULU, HAWAII, U. S. A.

From: N. Amer. P.O. Box 274, Liberton

Enjoyable 'Zoo Islands'

By Nehemiah Ames

Elk Island is one of the 21 islands located in what Cree Indians named Astotin (the lake of many islands), situated in the Beaver Hills of Central Alberta, Canada.

Surrounding this small island is Elk Island National Park, 76 square miles of what is in essence an 'island' of nature surrounded by farmland today. Viewed from an airplane, the park even looks like an island of forested hills in the midst of the comparatively flat farmlands all around it.

Within its boundaries, the native elk of the Canadian prairies has been preserved along with bison, which once roamed in the millions. In all, some 30 species of mammals, just over 200 species of birds and 240 plant varieties have been recorded in the park.

The park contains some plants which are no longer locally common outside its borders, including the marsh marigold, wild sarsaparilla and some members of the orchid and lily families. White or paper birch trees from which the Indians made canoes, shelter, dishes and clothing are still common within the park.

The first white man to explore the area arrived in 1756 and found a band of Cree called the

September. Camping space is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis for a maximum stay of two weeks. Motorboats are allowed on Astotin Lake, while rowboats and canoes are permitted on most of the park's other lakes and ponds as well.

Canadian national parks are "areas of outstanding natural features . . . dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit and enjoyment . . . and made use of



Dept. of Indian Affairs
& Northern Development

NOV 29 1972

ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

Nehemiah Ames
P. O. Box 274
Gibraltar (Europe)

Beaver Hills People who established an extensive trade in beaver pelts with the early traders.

With the gradual disappearance of the animals upon which their livelihood depended, the Indians left the area until by 1870 only a few still lived in the Beaver Hills. Then in the 1890s homesteaders began to arrive, some of whom were Ukrainians. Today, a replica of a Ukrainian pioneer home is located in the park. Operated as a museum, it contains artifacts made by early settlers or brought over from the Ukraine.

Came the early 1900s and trapping, hunting and settlement seriously threatened many of Alberta's large game animals. For example, the only elk known to still exist outside the province's mountain regions were inhabiting the Beaver Hills. Concerned, five Albertans decided to preserve the last elk by establishing a 16-square-mile wildlife preserve. In 1918 Elk Island was established as a Dominion Park. Later, more land was added and in 1930 it became a National Park.

Situated some 28 miles east of Edmonton's city limits and easily reached by road, the park is open all year, but campgrounds and most tourist services are available only from mid-May to mid-

so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." For this reason, all wildlife, plants, trees, rocks and fossils in Elk Island National Park are to be left undisturbed; even the wildflowers are not to be picked, but left for others to enjoy.

Here, I'd like to gratefully acknowledge that the information from which this article has been written was provided by the superintendent of Elk Island National Park to share with WSC readers. If any prospective visitors would like further information, he will be pleased to hear from you. His address is Superintendent, Elk Island National Park, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, Canada T0B 1P0.

Enjoyable 'Zoo Islands'...

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Island. It is 14 miles long, seven miles wide and has six inland lakes. Hog Island lies to the north and the Fox Islands to the south.

The modern history of Beaver Island goes back over 170 years. Before 1800 traders of the Northwest Company made trips to the island and built the fur house which, the last I heard, still stands.

Members of the Mormon faith were among those who went to the island and settled under the leadership of James J. Strang,

whose claim to fame rests on his coronation in 1850 as the only king ever crowned in the US,

outside of Hawaii! From Beaver Island he proceeded to rule over much of Northern Michigan which had become a state of the union only a decade and a half previously.

Alarmed by Strang's growing power, President Millard Fillmore dispatched a government cutter to the island to depose the new monarch. In the meantime, however, Strang introduced polygamy on the island. This alarmed one man so much that, together with another islander, he shot King Strang, who died six days later.

The US Government proceeded to move out most of the Mormons and the Irish moved in. They adopted the island as home and prospered and multiplied. Of the population of some 400, nearly half are Indians and most of the rest are of Irish descent. Today, visitors to the island still experience the touch of Old Ireland in the fenced, front yard flower gardens.

Another interesting personality in Beaver Island's history was Dr. Feodora Protar, a Russian nobleman exiled by the czar for freeing his serfs. He came to Beaver Island, lived alone in a log house and was the only doctor on the island for 30 years. His grave site is marked by bronze tablets.

The island may be reached by airplane or boat from Charlevoix, 32 miles to the southeast. The harbor, said to be one of the best in the Great Lakes, is at the island's only town, St. James, which was named after James J. Strang.

In summer, Beaver Island's forest roads are long green tunnels. In October the island is a mass of flaming color with a background of dark evergreens. A growing herd of deer inhabits the island, fox and coyotes abound, fishing is fine, and fish nets on reels add a quaint flavor to the island. Lumber mills and logging, folks riding in horse-drawn sleighs in winter and Indian boys diving for coins when the boat docks also add local color to this "Zoo Island" with such a fascinating history.

Perhaps this summer some of you will have the opportunity to personally visit one of these interesting islands. If so, I'd appreciate a post card from it dropped

BEAVER ISLAND

Behind this not unusual postmark lies a strange story. It comes from what once formed part of the kingdom of the only king ever to be crowned in the continental United States!



Almost due west of the Straits of Mackinac that connect Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, but slightly to the south, are 12 islands known as the Beaver group, the largest called Beaver

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