ADMASTON TOWNSHIP

MUNICIPAL HALL

Admaston township was established in 1843. In the origin of the name of this township the home associations of the Governor, Sir Charles Bagot, appear — Admaston was named after a little village lying near Eccleshall and Newport, in his native Staffordshire, England.

An old map of 1836 shows Admaston as Kanmore. In the formative days of Renfrew County, British-born surveyors were usually employed to chart the new municipalities. Frequently they were permitted or invited to name these local townships. Thus in Admaston the North and South McNaughton lines paralleling the Bonnechere River perpetuate the name of surveyor John McNaughton, who made the original survey of this and several other townships. The survey of Admaston township was commenced in 1838 and completed in 1842. The Land Office was located on the south east corner of Lot 1, Concession I.

A new survey was completed in 1847 of lots in Admaston and Bromley townships fronting on the Bonnechere River from the District Line to the head of the Fourth Chute. There is a photostatic copy of this survey on file in the Admaston municipal office. Long narrow lots were surveyed on both sides of the river and the road allowance of one chain (66') surveyed at the ends of the lots were named the North and South McNaughton Lines.
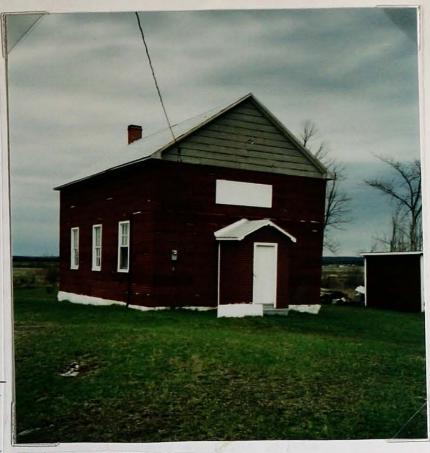
From the Department of Municipal Affairs, Admaston was first mentioned in Canada Statutes, 1845, Chapter 7, listed along with Blithfield, Bagot, Bromley, Horton, McNab, Pakenham, Pembroke, Ross and Stafford as comprising the County of Renfrew. It was incorporated under the Baldwin Act effective January 1, 1850 and the District of Bathurst passed a by-law wherein Admaston, Bromley and Blithfield were joined, and set the place for the first meeting for election of councillors to be "the place where the meeting of the township of Admaston was last held." Thus it was held where the present municipal building is located. In later years every second meeting of Admaston council was held in Shamrock School to give ratepayers in that part of the municipality an opportunity to attend.

In 1850 a memorial from the reeves of Admaston, Bromley and Blithfield was presented to Lanark and Renfrew Counties United.

It dealt with the separation of the township of Blithfield from such United townships. There was also a Memorial on the subject of separation and division of the township of Bromley into rural wards. County Council recommended that this not be effective until the Collector's Roll for the year was taken. Following the separation in 1851, Admaston was divided into five wards and the reeve was chosen from the elected councillors at the first meeting each year.

The Municipal Building was erected in the 1850's by a builder from Douglas. There was one small room on each side of the front door. One partition has been removed and the other is used to store records and it serves as a polling booth. A "Show Fair" was held in the early days in this building, with one room for baking exhibits, one for sewing and knitting and the main room for grain, fruits and vegetables. Cattle and horses were shown in a ring across the road. This was across County Road 5 from the present McDougall post office. Fair dates are unknown but R W Brown, born in 1873, had a faint recollection of attending the Fair as a small boy.

The first settlers arrived in the area designated now as Admaston township about 1830. They came up the Bonnechere River, climbed the Pinnacle at Renfrew and decided to settle along the Fourth and Fifth Concessions which were aflame with the autumn colors of the maple trees growing there. They realized that where hardwoods grew there was fertile soil. Land along the Bonnechere River had been burned over and there was nothing growing there but small poplars among the "Rampikes" left standing after the fire. This section of the township is still referred to as "The Brule". These settlers of Scotch descent came from

the Lanark and Perth districts where their relatives had settled. An Irish settlement was established in the south western part of the township with the hamlets being named with such Irish names as Mount St Patrick and Shamrock.

The Opeongo was opened as a Colonization Road in 1854. Many taverns and "stopping places" were operated along this historic line in Admaston township. Culhane's at Ferguslea was the last to close. A woollen mill was built at this place by Ephraim Reid who came from Scotland and named the place for his former home. Here woollen blankets and homespun materials were woven. The mill was burned three times and rebuilt.

The dam was built on the creek leading from Reid's Lake to the Bonnechere River. The last time it was rebuilt by Donald Campbell who operates a sawmill at Ferguslea.

The first settlers transported their supplies along the Opeongo Line which led through Shamrock (now on Highway 132) in the winter to the shanties while their wives and children remained on the farms to care for the livestock. There were real hardships suffered by these people in the "Winter of the Deep Snow". The South McNaughton Road is presumed to have been the first road cut through the woods in the township.

From excerpts of 1861 council minutes one learns that councillors elected were William Gibbons, Peter Campbell, George Brown, Thomas Gorman and Thomas Whelan with W Gibbons as reeve. George Brown was appointed as clerk at a salary of 18 £ 6 s. 1½d. Auditors William S Thompson and James Gorman received one pound each. Collector — John Gorman, 11 £, Assessor —David Graham, 9 £, tax rate was set at two and one half pence on the pound. Boundaries of public school sections 2, 3 and 4 were altered and the new section No. 7 was established.

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