

May 1967

Admaston Township

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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 I, 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 Blythfield, Bagot, Bromley, Horton, McNab, Pakenham, Pembroke, Ross and Stafford as comprising the County of Renfrew. It was incorporated under the Baldwin Act effective January 1st, 1850, and the District of Bathurst passed a by-law wherein Admaston, Bromley and Blythfield 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 Blythfield was presented to Lanark and Renfrew Counties United.

It dealt with the separation of the township of Blythfield 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 were two small rooms 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 maple leaves 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 they 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.

Thomas Whelan with W. Gibbons as reeve. George Brown was appointed as clerk at a salary of 18£ 6s. 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.

A ratepayer, William Harris, was granted eight pounds as expenses to go to Quebec to present a copy of the original memorial passed by Admaston township praying that reconsideration be given to appointing Pembroke village as the county town. John Lorne McDougall was named as alternate delegate.

There were public schools established at Hurd's Lake, No. 1, and the first school located at Spring Creek was No. 2 Lyons, half a mile west of where the next one was built and now the Women's Institute Hall on County Road 5. No. 3 was established in 1853 and closed when Separate School No. 3 known as Martin's School was opened. No. 4 at Shamrock was established in 1854; No. 5, Foy's and No. 6, Rosebank, 1862; No. 9, Mhusk's; No. 10, Galbraith's; No. 11, Ferguslea, established in 1892.

According to an Atlas published in 1881, the township of Admaston, although large in area had only about 560 inhabitants and excepting Mount St. Patrick on the western boundary, no settlement worthy of special mention.

The Methodists established the Rosebank Church in 1846 and at Hurd's Lake, which was part of Calabogie, Ashdad, Byer's Mission Field. First services were held in the German language by a minister who came from Portage du Fort on horse back. The Presbyterians were established in Admaston with their second church opened in 1881 by Rev. P. MacVicar, LL.D. of Montreal Presbyterian College. Services held at Northcote first were in the Temperance Hall until the church in Eganville was purchased and moved to Northcote. The Lutherans also had their church established in 1892.