

"Shanties" were the primitive log dwellings having floor of earth or of rough hewn boards and without the luxury of windows, stoves, furniture, etc. A fire-place heated the tiny home and there the cooking was done. We can safely say the first beds were made of evergreen boughs.

Potash provided the first cash crop for the pioneers. As the hardwood trees were cut down, the wood was burned, the ashes collected into a "leach", a V shaped box-like container, with a trough underneath, into which seeped the lye, formed by the action of the water thrown on the ashes. The "leach" must be kept watered. This was one of the tasks usually falling to the young members of the family. When a large quantity of the lye had been collected in huge iron pots the pots were hung over fires that must be kept burning day and night until the contents, the resulting potash, had reached the finished stage. This potash was shipped away to the manufacturing firm making use of it.

The first grain grown would be wheat. The settlers carried the first "grists" to Perth to be ground into flour. One pioneer grandmother told of her walking beside the first horse they owned, from Perth. The horse carried a load of flour on its back. One descendent of a pioneer family remembers being told his ancestors took wheat to "Farquharsons" mill, on the "second line" of Horton.

From "The Story of Renfrew" we quote:- "For the first season or two the first settlers in the district around depended mostly on potatoes (totties) with an occasional deer or string of suckers or black bass from the river, and the wild berries that were found to be edible and palatable."

As tea and coffee were not available a tea was made by brewing "Labrador Fern", as it was known, in boiling water. Leaves of mint and summer savory also were brewed and the "tea" used as a beverage. Hemlock boughs were brewed and the brew used as a medicine.

Another medicated tea that also had considerable nourishment in it was made from the "crockles" of the maple. These crockles were a skin-like mossy substance exuded from maple trees.

The pioneers early contrived ways and means of "tapping" the maple trees and making maple syrup and maple sugar.

Wheat was of necessity the first grain to be grown in the patches of land cleared among the stumps of trees. Later oats and barley were grown and later on peas, which proved to be a very profitable crop on clay land. We might here relate the story of how "Scutch or quack" grass came to be introduced into the early settlement. The seed was purchased as seed oats and sown in all good faith on a couple of clearings proved to be not oats but what was soon to become an enemy in the field.

In 1838 the survey of the Township of Admaston was started. It was finished in 1842. The survey was conducted by one McNaughton, and the third concession of Admaston, or as it is commonly known, the "McNaughton line" was named for him.