

Mills and Factories

The earliest manufacturing industry of the Admaston settlement was Reid's Woollen Mill at Ferguslea on the Opeongo Road. Built in 1850 by Samuel Reid, who in 1840 came to Canada from Scotland. He lived at Carleton Place for some years, and there his son Ephriam operated a hand-weaving loom for weaving wool cloth. Samuel Reid had worked at hand loom weaving of fine cloth in Scotland. The name Ferguslea was the name of the Reid ancestral home in Scotland. At the foot of Miller Lake, which supplied water power for operating the machines, the mill was built. Twice while Reid's owned the mill it was burned to the ground but after each burning was re-built on a larger scale.

Much of the raw product, wool, was purchased locally but some wool was imported from Australia.

As many as twenty employees were on the pay-roll, many of them girls and half the employees would be from the neighbourhood. The girls did the worping and weaving, the men the heavier tasks, dyeing, fulling or shrinking, pressing and baling.

No shoddy was used in the excellent brand of men's suiting manufactured, until the regime of the grandson Sam Reid.

Custom work was done also or wool could be exchanged for yarn, cloth or blankets. Cloth could be bought in suit lengths or in larger amounts by stores (local). Jas. McArthur and Chris. Miller of Renfrew purchased the mill from Reids, but some years later it was destroyed by fire and never re-built.

Other local industries included cheese making as before mentioned, in the Livingstone - McCready Factory, first situated at Lynch's corner. Later Mr. McCready moved the plant to Admaston Station. The factory building and house still stand.

The Bonnechere Valley Cheese Factory was built on the proving line near the lower end of James Reid's farm. That was a joint stock company owned concern. It ceased operations about 1914. The building was purchased by Mr. R.A. Dalgleish, removed to a site near Admaston Station and converted into a double house occupied by Mr. R.W. Brown and Mr. D.F. Forrest and their families.

Mr. Arthur Tetlock who had learned the cheese making with Mr. McCready built and operated a cheese factory on the proving line north east of Admaston. After Mr. Tetlock ceased operating the factory the building was removed.

There have been local sawmills for sawing logs into lumber in this district for a number of years.

Mr. Wellington Hodgins owns and operates such a mill on his own farm doing custom work in sawing.

Another mill on the Opeongo Road on the farm of Frank Hanniman was built and operated by Mr. Hanniman for a number of years. In 1944 the mill was purchased by Donald and Jack Campbell who are presently operating the mill.