

Mines

The first cash crop of the early settler was potash. The Loughborough area was heavily wooded with oak, beech, elm, maple and hickory, as well as with thick cedar swamps. Naturally the forest had to be cleared before houses were built or crops were grown. The trees were cut down and burned, and the ashes carefully saved. The ashes were either sold by the barrel or used to make potash. This was heavy, hot work - mostly done by the women. In Gordon Morrison's barnyard on County Road 5, is a large castiron pot that was used by the Buck family to make potash. Potash was valuable and found a ready market in Europe as fertilizer, or used in making soap, or in manufacturing gunpowder.

Phosphate

The mining of phosphate in the Sydenham area also became a source of income. James Foxtan had both phosphate and mica mines. Today you can still see a large piece of phosphate ore outside at the corner of the Bernard Foxtan home in the village. This crystal was exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, and won a first prize. Many Sydenham settlers were involved in the phosphate business, and the Township Council minutes record that a farmer was charged \$1.50 for each load of phosphate he dug out of the road allowance. The Foxtans also had a brickworks on the Millhaven Creek behind the present site of the Meadowbrook Seniors Residence. Many of the brick houses in the village are made of Foxtan brick.

Mica

Mica was discovered by David Ruttan on the shores of Eel Bay at the north end of Sydenham Lake. He did not have much luck selling the amber mica, so he sold the property to Isaiah Smith. The Smith, Armitage and Lacey Company was formed, and mica mining became a major industry here. At one time a steamboat plied Lake Sydenham towing a barge with mica from the mines. It was offloaded in Sydenham where the mica was cleaned and sorted before being shipped to the markets. The mine was eventually bought by the General Electric Co. During World War II the mine, (still locally called the Lacey Mine), was reopened and the mica was used in electrical conductors.

Lead

In 1870 lead was discovered by Christopher Roushorn near Wilmer, which started the Frontenac Lead Mine. Miners and their families poured in, - some from as far away as Cornwall in England. It is reported that this was the real beginning of Perth Road Village.

Early Settlement

The first settlers in this area were United Empire Loyalists. Michael Sloat was granted a large tract of land around the lake, and for some time the lake was known as Sloat's Lake. Peter Ruttan was granted land in 1805, and there were other grants given at Spafford's Corners.