

Credit Conservation Authority preserves remnants of once-thriving limestone industry

By Joan Rollings

History, which dates back to the early 1800's in the quiet village of Limehouse, may repeat itself if plans of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority are carried to completion in the next few years.

The Authority has acquired approximately 200 acres on the edge of the village containing the remains of the thriving limestone industry which originally created the area.

Limestone is still quarried near neighboring Acton but the quarries at Limehouse are long since quiet spots overgrown with sumac, weeds and cedar. Picturesque stone kilns are the monuments to past activity and the Black Creek chatters through an open cut where once a mill stood.

Until 1805 the land belonged to the Mississauga Indians, as much of the Credit River Watershed did at one time. As the press of settlers increased, the government of Upper Canada purchased what is now Esquesing Township from the Indians.

During the next 14 years George Black surveyed the township and after 1819 settlers pushed into the newly opened land. A wily Highlander, Mr. Black's efficiency was matched only by his fierce national pride and religious zeal. A story is told of Mr. Black who as a lay preacher of the local Presbyterians, led his flock in copious prayers ending each with the request that the local Irish remain "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for "Thy own appointed people", the Scottish Highlanders.

First settler in the Limehouse area was Adam Stull who obtained a Crown Deed to Lot 22, Concession 6 in 1920. The first registered private sale at Limehouse was from Mr. Stull in 1841 to Ninian Lindsay who started the lime industry there.

Settlers in the northern section of the township were generally sympathetic to the grievances of the rebels led by William Lyon Mackenzie in 1837 but were not prepared to join Mackenzie in his attempt to overthrow the government and secede from the Empire.

A farmer, Allan MacPherson, who lived south of Limehouse, was one of Mackenzie's lieutenants and, in his flight from the authorities, was hidden in the home of Joseph Standish where the first township council met in 1821.

During the day Mr. Standish searched for rebels and at night talked long hours with Mr. MacPherson about the political situation in Upper Canada. In succeeding years, when

asked why he had hidden the man, Mr. Standish exhibited the profound logic of our pioneering ancestors when he said, "MacPherson would have done the same for me."

For many years the people of this area continued to be moderately radical in their political views. After Halton County separated from Wentworth in 1853, John White, a Liberal, was M.P. almost continuously for 20 years. In 1873 however, the citizens of Limehouse, following the prevailing obsession, voted against Mr. White and elected an Independent Temperance candidate. Newspaper accounts of the following celebrations show that at least for one night the Temperance workers definitely forgot their principles.

Religion played an important part in the lives of the early settlers, as it did across the country. In Limehouse in 1832 John Meredith decided two acres for two pounds, ten shillings to the Calvinistic Presbyterian Church. This provided a site for a church and cemetery, for many of the early settlers were Scots.

A church was not erected there until 1861 and then as a result of a combined effort by the Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Episcopal Methodists. In the years before residents attended church at Boston or Acton, local Presbyterians note with pride that although the founding of Georgetown congregations predates that of Limehouse, the Limehouse Presbyterians sponsored the first similar congregation at Georgetown.

In 1876 a Mr. Gowdy Sr. decided the land for a local Methodist Church. George Grant built the church with the help of Charles and Sam Meredith. They built well for the building is still used as the Limehouse Memorial Hall. Rev. John Lynch was the first Methodist minister.

The Village of Limehouse grew slowly. Building lots were not surveyed until 1856-58 and by 1861 there were only 17 registered landowners in the village. Prior to 1840 the area went by lot and concession number; then it became the village of Fountain Green. This name remained until 1857 when the Post Office Department renamed it Limehouse and opened the first Post Office in the Village.

In 1856 the main line of the Grand Trunk Railway, now the CNR, pushed a line through a cut blasted in the limestone. During the construction a temporary settlement of 200 workers and their families lived at Limehouse. One of the local

legends tells of a construction worker, a little worse for an afternoon in the tavern, who sat on a keg of powder and lit the fuse, blowing himself to the top of the cut. He must have survived the accident for there is no report of a fatality.

In the late 1800's Limehouse was a booming community with at least three hotels, three stores, two quarries, several mills and a prospering lime industry. During the building of the railway a hotel was operated in the Mitchell residence on the fifth concession.

In 1871 Miles McDonnell operated the Limehouse Inn and a third hotel was built by Thomas Fraser. The village blacksmith, the first was Robert Ford, was an important individual in pioneering days.

Milling provided employment for many citizens. At least three mills were in existence on Black Creek between the old mill pond, which extended north-west of the fifth concession, and the railway. One mill produced water-lime for cement for all the railroad bridges. This mill later became a lumber and grist mill. There was also a woolen mill and a paint and lumber mill.

In 1862 John Newton built his woolen mill which was known eventually as the Empire Blanket Company. Raw materials from local sources were used and payment in many cases was made in blankets.

In 1872 a fire-proof paint industry began under the direction of Meikle, Newton and Company. James Newton, oldest son of the founder, became sole owner of the business. Blue and red clays were extracted from Lot 22, Concession 7, Esquesing Township, directly south-east of the Limehouse Union or Presbyterian Church. The six colors produced were exported to the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

According to an article in the Acton Free Press on May 29, 1930, Beardmore and Company wished to repaint their buildings one spring. Samples were obtained from several companies and the final decision was to order the paint from Philadelphia. When the order was filled from the United States it bore the inscription "Manufactured by J. Newton, Limehouse, Canada."

An English settler in Limehouse had the same experience when ordering paint from England.

In 1893 fire struck and destroyed both the woolen mill and the paint and lumber mill. For a time it was feared the village would burn but the rapid arrival of the horse-drawn fire engine from Georgetown saved it. Lack of sufficient insurance to rebuild the mills

marked the beginning of the end for the village.

On the property south of the tracks now owned by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, there remains seven set kilns and a draw kiln. Limestone was taken from the quarry west of these kilns and drawn from there to the kilns by horse and cart. Besides these kilns there is a limestone powder house and the foundation of the old water-lime mill which was torn down. At the height of production in the 1880's and 90's the kilns were operating 24 hours a day, employing 100 men and producing about 70,000 bushels of lump lime and 6,000 barrels of water lime per year.

Mention has been made of the kilns where limestone was "cooked" to produce lime. The set kilns were short, squat structures. Several cords of wood were placed from the top into the kiln's mouth. Then limestone would be placed on top of the wood, covered with blue clay, the fire lit and the limestone cooked for five or six days. When the process was finished the lime was taken out of the fire hole in the bottom.

A draw kiln was far more efficient. Wood was placed in this type through fire holes at either side to the level of a grate which separated the wood from the limestone. The stone was placed in from the top. The cooking took about three days and after that lump lime could be drawn away about every five or six hours. Local wood was used at first to fire these kilns but eventually had to be imported into the area.

The entire lime operation ceased at Limehouse about 1917, largely due to the danger of blasting in the confined area. One drill hole may still be seen on top of the quarry wall—With the ceasing of lime operations the last large industry ended in Limehouse. The village then receded to its present quiet, rural atmosphere.

G. S. Goodhew compiled a history of Limehouse several years ago and the author wishes to acknowledge the research done by Mr. Goodhew.

There are no immediate plans for re-activating the quarries but the Authority acquired the land as part of its conservation program.



ONE LARGE KILN remains intact on the Limehouse property recently acquired by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. Here the lime was processed, giving employment to many and a name to nearby Limehouse. (CVCA Photo by Joan Rollings)

Acton Cubs & Scouts
are having their annual
GOOD FRIDAY
Hot Cross Bun Sale

the boys will call Saturday morning March 18

Dividend

J. S. Beaty, general manager of Halton and Peel Trust and Savings Company reports a regular quarterly dividend of

Seek co-ordination

Old Kilns at Limehouse Arouse Interest in Lime-Making Method

An article of particular interest in this area was published in the January issue of the Toronto Bruce Trail Club's newsletter. Titled "Things to See On and Around the Trail", it was written by Jim and Olive Byers. The article follows:

Perhaps as you have been making your way towards a section of the trail in the Georgetown area, you have passed through the quiet little village of Limehouse, now a small rural community of about 250 people. You may have noticed the village store, the little church and the new school situated at the west end of the village.

But did you know that at one time this was a thriving community, providing work for hundreds of hard-working settlers? Around the middle of the last century, the Grand Trunk (CNR) Line was pushed through and within a

short time, the village had three hotels, three stores, two quarries, several big mills (woollen, paint, lime grinding etc.) plus the lime industry from which the settlement derives its name.

Homes Improved

The first use settlers had for lime was in the rough and quickly constructed chimneys in their wooden homes. As conditions improved, so did the homes. Mortar and plaster became valued commodities much in demand. The industry grew at a fast rate and two types of lime kilns were in use.

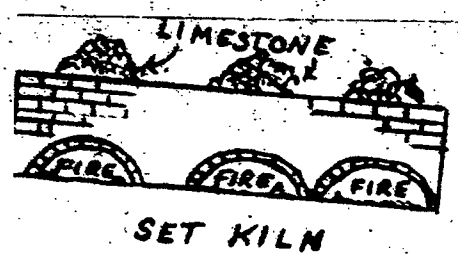
Good examples of both types can still be seen in the village today. The set kiln is the older type—a short, squat looking structure. Wood was placed in the kiln and limestone piled on top to a height of six feet. The "cooking" process took five to six days with

wood being continually fed through the fire hole. Finally, the fire was allowed to die out and after a cooling off period, the lime was removed.

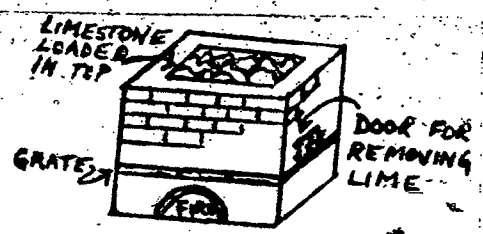
More Efficient

The draw kiln was a tall structure and much more efficient than the one we just described. The stacking of the wood and limestone was basically the same, but a grating was added between the wood and stone. "Cooking" took approximately three days and once this initial period had elapsed, lime could be drawn off every six hours.

Rock could be added continually at the top of the kiln, with wood being fed to the fire below the grate. The kiln could operate for long periods of time, shut down only being necessary for the job of relining with new fire brick.



SET KILN



DRAW KILN

HARLEY..

By DR.

Since the conclusion of Throne Speech Debate, the House of Commons has been considering the estimates of various government departments. To the Department of External Affairs has been concluded the Department of Transport just begun.

The debate on External Affairs

Miss Clark Hosts At W.M.S. Meeting

The Afternoon Auxiliary of Knox Church held a very enjoyable and enlightening meeting at the home of Miss I. Clark.

After the president opened meeting with prayer and the singing of a hymn the meeting turned over to Mrs. E. J. Sard for the worship service.

Mrs. William McLeod read beatitudes in the fifth chapter of Matthew. After this Miss I. Anderson commented on chapter and on Philipians the theme Salt and Light. She noted how often Christ referred to these and how He applied it to the Christian life. She pointed out what it means to be a Christian and our need to our help from God.

Following this Mrs. D. L. read a short poem "In the Presence of Prayer" which carried the theme of the devotions.

This devotional study brought up the question of Christian witness and what our church is doing in different countries. J. O. Moran spoke of India, Mrs. Kennedy of British Guiana, Taiwan and Miss Ruby Clark of Nigeria. They told how the church and also Canada are trying to bring experienced workers who are so anxious for education they undergo many hardships to attain it.

The president in the busy part of the meeting, after hearing reports and letters spoke of coming inaugural meeting of Brampton Presbyterian and of World's Day of Prayer when from the Auxiliary will take part in the service.

She thanked Mrs. Hassard her committee Mrs. W. McL. Mrs. D. Leslie and Miss Ar Stalker, and the hostess.

Four guests were present; all enjoyed an enjoyable hall hour of fellowship.

Memorial Organ In Br. Guiana

On Sunday night December a new Hammond electric organ was installed in Burns Memorial

LET'S PLAY BRIDGE

By Bill Coats

Three teams met in Acton last week for the first game of four challenge matches held in this area. Acton proved to be the perfect hosts for the occasion.

Erin was represented by Bob and Reina Dickson, Clay Barbour and George Ellenton. Milton's team was made up of Lou Bertasson, Bill Barbour, Bill Hamilton and Brian Hamilton. Acton's representatives were Bill and Gloria Coats, Mary Manning and Bob Remington. Unfortunately, due to the illness of a key member of their team, Georgetown was not represented.

Milton won the most boards (hands), due to an almost clean sweep against Acton, but the Erin team won their matches against both Acton and Milton. Acton, well, as I said earlier, Acton were the perfect hosts.

We are looking forward to repeating this event later in the spring and we hope at that time that Georgetown will enter a team as well.

Here is a hand from the Acton-Erin match in which both defenders slipped up.

to lead the suit, to cut off declarer's communication.

On the diamond lead, East should win and immediately lead a club. If declarer has two clubs, East can win the first round of trump and lead clubs again. This way, declarer is held to a maximum of three club tricks. If he led a fourth club, the defense still has trump and can ruff.

Try to cut communication between declarer and a long suit in dummy.

Last week's winners were: first, Bob Remington and Bill Coats; second, Miss Olive Logan and Mrs. Katherine Coats; third, Lou Bertasson and Bill Hamilton.

Auxiliary Plans Packing of Bale

The Women's Auxiliary of St. Alban's met at the Parish Hall on February 9 for their monthly meeting.

The Rev. R. MacMurray gave a discussion on the present state

Why Limestone is Burnt

Any of our readers having a scientific inclination might be interested in knowing just why limestone is "cooked" or "burnt", and what the chemical process is through which it passes in order to become the cohesive ingredient in mortar or plaster.

Limestone, as it occurs naturally, consists essentially of calcium carbonate, CaCO₃. Calcium carbonate has no "setting" properties and has to be converted to calcium oxide or "quicklime" in order to set and bind the sand together into a mortar. This conversion is accomplished by driving the carbon dioxide from the limestone by heating it in a kiln of the type described.

In the preparation of a lime mortar, the quicklime is thoroughly mixed with sand and water and trowelled into place, forming the binder between the stones. The calcium oxide or quicklime is converted, immediately to calcium hydroxide or slaked lime by the water.

Soft Mortar

When the excess water evaporates from the slaked lime-sand mixture, a relatively soft mortar is formed. This mortar slowly hardens as the calcium hydroxide takes up carbon dioxide from the water and the air and is con-

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Dealer — West.
North - South vulnerable.

North			
S—O 6			
H—8 5			
D—8 6 4			
C—A K Q J 10 8			
West		East	
S—J 5 2	S—A 8 4		
H—Q 10 7 6	H—A 3 2		
D—J 10 7	D—A 9 5 2		
C—6 5 3	C—9 7 4		
South			
S—K 10 9 7 3			
H—K J 9 4			
D—K Q 3			
C—2			

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1S
Pass	2C	Pass	2S
Pass	3S	All Pass	

I was in the North position and found that I had a bidding problem over South's minimum rebid of two spades. Just how good is North's hand? Should North try some number of no trumps? It was a tough guess, so I ended up just raising partner's spades.

West led the diamond jack, which was won by East's ace. East returned a diamond. After clearing trump, declarer was able to run dummy's clubs. He lost two trump and two aces — just making three spades.

Against Acton, the Erin North-South pair reached a four spade contract. This was also made, thus giving Erin the best result on the hand.

Both defenses slipped. When dummy has a long solid side suit and no side entries, it is essential

Bob Remington and Bill Coats; second, Miss Olive Logan and Mrs. Katherine Coats; third, Lou Bertasson and Bill Hamilton.

Auxiliary Plans Packing of Bale

The Women's Auxiliary of St. Alban's met at the Parish Hall on February 9 for their monthly meeting.

The Rev. R. MacMurray gave a discussion on the proposed union of the Anglican and United Churches of Canada. Arrangements were made for the making of a quilt, mitts, etc. and the collection of good used clothing to be included in the annual bale, which will be sent in April to Hamilton where it will be sorted and redirected to needy people at home and abroad.

Mrs. W. Denny presented a doll that she had dressed beautifully, with extra outfits included. This will be on display in Hamilton at the annual meeting of the diocese, and later sent out with the bale.

Members will attend the World Day of Prayer service at Beth-El Christian Reformed Church on February 25. Mrs. Rol, president, closed the meeting with prayer.

Y.P. Speaker

Karl Ljungberg spoke to the United Church Young People Sunday evening on life in his native Sweden. He pointed out that Sweden and Canada have much in common as he spoke and showed pictures. Mr. and Mrs. Ljungberg came from Kitchener for the evening.

mortar, the quicklime is thoroughly mixed with sand and water and trowelled into place, forming the binder between the stones. The calcium oxide or quicklime is converted, immediately to calcium hydroxide or slaked lime by the water.

Soft Mortar

When the excess water evaporates from the slaked lime - sand mixture, a relatively soft mortar is formed. This mortar slowly hardens as the calcium hydroxide takes up carbon dioxide from the water and the air and is converted back to calcium carbonate or limestone. Complete conversion of the mortar in a joint may take many years.

Roman structures which have been standing as long as 2,000 years have been found to contain unconverted calcium hydroxide on the inside of a joint, protected by a thick layer of calcium carbonate from the moisture and air on the outside.

The waters off Canada's Atlantic coast comprise some of the most important fishing grounds of the globe, supplying fish to people all over the world.

She thanked Mrs. Hassard her committee Mrs. W. McL. Mrs. D. Leslie and Miss Ar Stalker, and the hostesses.

Four guests were present: all enjoyed an enjoyable half h of fellowship.

Memorial Organ In Br. Guiana

On Sunday night December a new Hammond electric organ was installed in Burns Memorial Church, Georgetown, British Guiana, and dedicated "to the gl of Almighty God", and named "Ellen Anderson Memorial Organ", in tribute to the memory of the late Miss Mary Ellen (Nel) Anderson, for many years organist and choir leader of the church.

Each year since the passing of Miss Anderson, the Adults' Bible Class of Burns Church, founded by Miss Anderson, has held, the third Sunday of June, an anniversary memorial service. It was attended, last June, by more than 30 organizations and by Bible Classes from other denominations.

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