

[Page 56 - Early History of the Coal Trade Part 2](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 36](#)

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Early History of the Coal Trade,' Part 2 When the island of Cape Breton was erected into a separate government in 1784, the first Governor, Lieut.-Col. Desbarres, who had been employed in making a marine survey of the island, and was well acquainted with its mineral resources, directed his earnest attention to the working of the coal mines, which, he felt assured, would prove "an inexhaustible source of revenue." Up to this time all the coal shipped at Spanish River (Governor Desbarres laid the foundation of a town at the head of Spanish River which he called "Sydney," after Lord Sydney, at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies, Spanish River, in consequence, took the name of Sydney Harbour, by which it is still known.) had been taken from the seams cropping out in Lloyd's Cove and Indian Cove; but Governor Desbarres very judiciously commenced mining operations in the "Six Feet" or "Sydney main coal," as it is generally called, on the north side of the harbour, where 400 acres of land were reserved for the special use of the works. The order forbidding the granting of land in Cape Breton, issued in 1763, was revoked when the government was separated from that of Nova Scotia; but it was decided, at a council held at St. James's on August 26, 1784, that "Whereas it has been represented to us that several parts of our island of Cape Breton have been found to abound in coals, it is our will and pleasure, that in all grants of land to be made by you, a clause be inserted, reserving to us, our heirs and successors, all coals, and also all mines of gold, silver, copper, and lead, which may be discovered in such lands." Under Desbarres' administration, from 1784 to 1787 inclusive, the mines were worked on Government account by means of a level driven into the seam from the foot of the cliff, where a wharf was constructed for the shipment of the coal. This wharf was repaired and extended from time to time, and continued to be used as the place of shipment until the year 1834. Traces of this wharf and the mouth of the level may still be seen. The selling price was eleven shillings and sixpence per ton; but this left such a small, if any profit to the Government, that Colonel Macormick, who succeeded Desbarres, strongly recommended that the mines should be leased. Accordingly, on January 1, 1788, they were leased to Thomas Moxley, who held them until his death in 1791. Coal was sold during Moxley's lease at eleven shillings and sixpence per ton. The royalty paid is not given in any of the accounts returned to the British Government. The revenue derived from the mines, at least the balance remaining, after the Governor had deducted three shillings and sixpence per ton for his own private use, was paid into the treasury of the colony. This perquisite of the Governor was abolished in 1792 by order of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, In the month of October 1792, the mines were leased to Messrs. Tremain and Stout for seven years, at a royalty of three shillings per ton, and at the expiration of the lease in 1799 they were allowed to Ingrahams United Ltd. 213 Commercial St., North Sydney, N. S. B2A 1B5 Telephone 794-4536 GENERAL DEALERS Clothing for the Whole Family INTERNAV A Complete Line of Loran Receivers for All Boatsmen] Sydport Industrial Park, Point Edward 564-2043 ?> Cape Breton Mental Health



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