

Weather permitting, we hope that our field trip today is a success! We will look at the mine entrances that we can get access to. Unfortunately very recently there have been some landslides which make the open mine (Torrance) inaccessible. We will approach from Powerline Rd. to show you our other findings in this area. Then we will drive through Cavan's farm to what used to be Hymer's property to access what we can from that side.

At lunch time, you are invited back to Farquharson's home to eat and freshen up. If you wish we will take you to the bottom lands on our property to view the Torrance mine from the other side of the river.

In the afternoon, we will show you the location of the mines on Mile Hill (there were 15 tunnels altogether.) We will proceed by way of Race St. where the raceway was located. After the gypsum was hauled out of the mine by horses in small carts, the narrow gauge rails led to a raceway where the gypsum was transferred to barges and hauled to the mill on Willow St.

Then we will proceed to downtown Paris and park briefly at Canadian Tire. We will show you where the Holme's mine was located at the forks of the Nith and the Grand Rivers, and where some of the mills were located in Lower Town.

Our last stops will be along Willow St., where you will see where the raceway was located which powered a row of factories and mills, including the Thos. Coleman gypsum mill, which was later bought out by Gill, Brown and Allan, and later became the Alabastine Co. of Paris, etc. From that same location you will be able to see where the Capron beds were located. We will drive past the only building left of Gypsum, Lime and Alabastine Co. - its office. That will be the end of our tour.

Excerpts from some of the historical sources:

Geological Survey of Canada, Ann. Rept., 1863. "The gypsum (Conc. I, Lot 15, Brantford Twp.) has been mined by Mr. Tennant, and forms a bed of 3 ft., underlaid by and imbedded in green shale. Above this, on the river, gypsum is quarried in many places in the vicinity of Paris." It also locates Mr. Wright's plaster bed beside a section of very well-exposed bedrock which continues to the Great Western Railway viaduct."

Guillet. Gypsum in Ontario. The Torrance Mine was "first prospected in 1846..a mine was later opened by William Hynes and James Wright, but was only operated for a short period, for although some good gypsum was encountered in spots of the drift, the main bed was not located."

Smith, D.A. At the Forks of the Grand. Describing the Town of Paris in 1881 - "A little farther along the race, after we have passed the grist mill of Thos. O'Neill, we come to the gypsum mill of the Canada Land Plaster Co., owned and operated by Messrs. Gill Allan, & Co. It grinds about 25,00 tons of plaster a year, and sells it as fertilizer. Seven wagons draw the plaster from the mines which are in the east bank of the Grand below Green Lane, in the west bank of the Grand about a mile below Dundas Street, and in the two small beds on the side of the hill at the north-west edge of Riverview Park."

Ont. Bureau of Mines. Index to Annual Reports, 1891-1916. Under "Torrance, John", are listed 3 entries - to gold mining, to graphite mining in Renfrew, Ont., and to gypsum mining in Brantford Twp. [These sources have not yet been examined.] An entry under the Torrance Mine suggests it was absorbed by the Ont. Gypsum Co.

Conversation with Geo. Hymer, Brantford, Ont., by Gwen Parkhill. His grandfather worked in the mines on the rt. bank of the river [Mile Hill area.] He remembers 3 tunnels in operation. His son operated 2 carts with 2 teams of horses, and delivered gypsum from both sides to the G.L.A. Co. He rented half the Torrance farm, and with the proceeds of extracting gypsum along the surface of the e. river bank, he bought the farm. However, the grandfather died in 1911, and there was a terrific landslide. As a result, the family quit gypsum extraction and went back to farming.

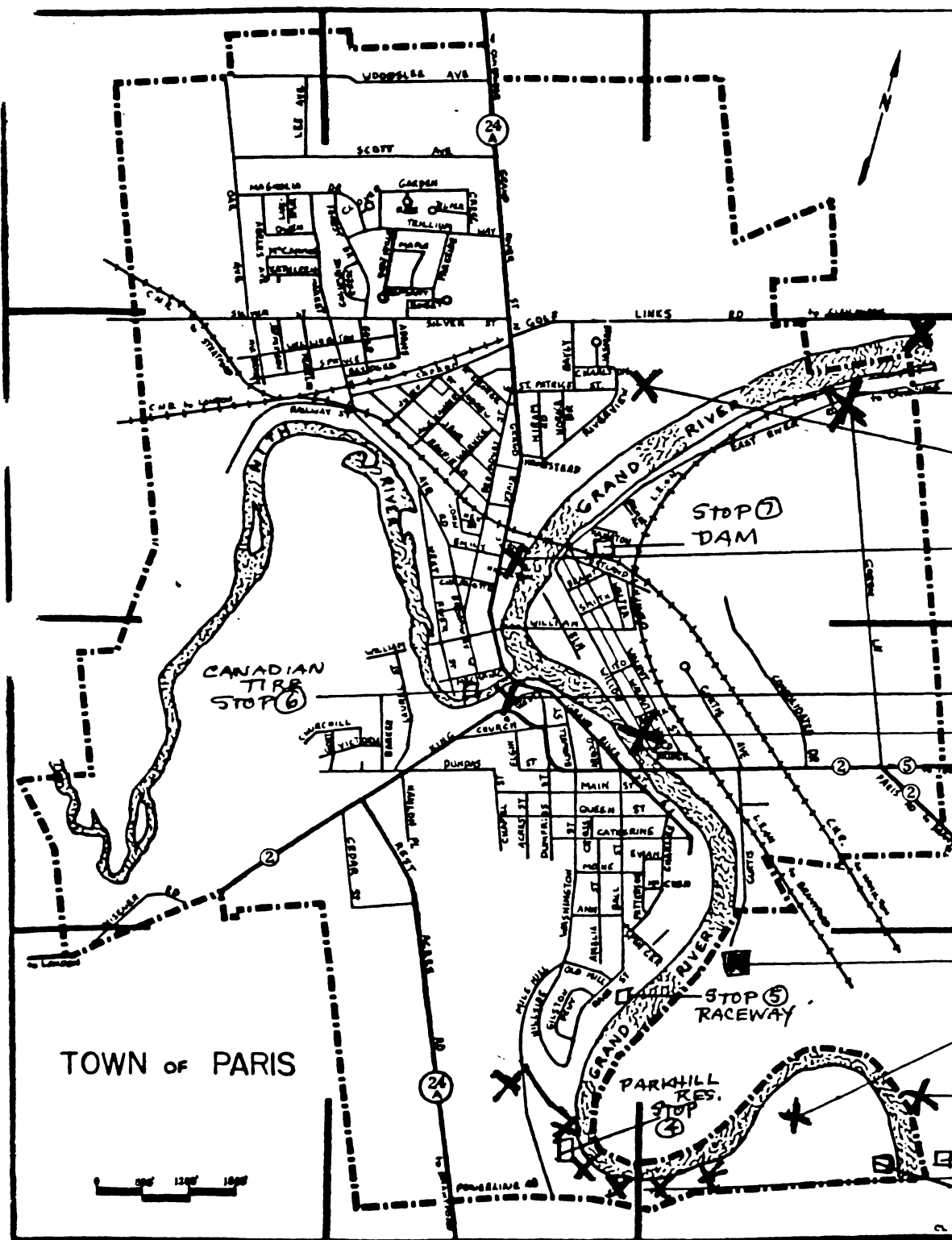
**COMING EVENTS:** Mary Nelles of the York Grand River Historical Society has invited us to attend a meeting in York in the parish hall, on Tues. Nov. 16 at 8 p.m. The topic will be "Early Gypsum Mining" and Mrs. Joan Cooper will talk about her memories of Lythmore gypsum mine and mill. If Mrs. Cooper is unable to attend, everyone will tell their own mining memories and stories.

Nov. 27 - Our last field trip this year, weather permitting! Meet at 10 a.m. at Tim Horton's, Junct. of Hwy 2 & 5 and Green Lane, Paris. Mystery trip - exploring the unknown! We will follow a groomed trail, with easier walking than usual. Join us for a bowl of soup at Tim Horton's at luncheon.

We will not meet in December, but plan to hold a meeting in Jan. with Bern Feenstra, Min. of N. Development and Mines as guest speaker. Time and place to be announced later.

**REMINDER:** Have you paid your dues? So far, expenses have been covered by a few members. If you wish to continue getting the newsletter, please contribute your dues. We cannot continue to send the newsletter to those who do not respond.

# GYPSUM MINES OF PARIS AREA 1822-1905(?)



Dickson mine & mill

Hamilton beds

Capron beds

Holmes mine, 1822

STOP ④ Raceway and Coleman mill; later Gill, Allen & Co.; then Alabastine Co. of Paris, Ltd.; Gypsum, Lime and Alabastine.

② STOP CAVAN'S FARM  
Tunnels on Hammond property

Torrance mine  
1846  
1896-7

① STOP  
START HERE

Paris plaster mine(s)  
STOP ③ FARQUHARSON'S (823 Powerline Rd.)