



Hérons and Cobblestones

**A History of Five Oaks and the Bethel Area
Of Brantford Township, County of Brant**

Written and Published by

Members of the Grand River Heritage Mines Society

In Celebration of Their Tenth Anniversary

*Donated to
Paris library
in Memory of
Ron Pile
by
Jean Farquharson*



*May 12,
2003*

Jean Farquharson, Editor and Compiler

Paris, Ontario

May, 2003

INTRODUCTION

In 1993, the Grand River Heritage Mines Society was formed to locate, record and preserve artifacts, history and heritage of the gypsum mining and milling industry in the Grand River Watershed. This includes the geology and natural history associated with the mine sites, and stories of the people involved.

The Society was founded by Ilse Kraemer and myself as the result of our investigations to document the Paris Plaster Mines at a hearing of the Ontario Municipal Board. The fascinating details tempted us to continue our research and form the Society. We were encouraged by the Resident Geologist from the London office of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Bern Feenstra. We created research and field trip committees to explore for the old mines. We held public meetings and produced displays for a variety of shows, and spoke to various organizations. We worked with other heritage organizations -- LACAC, the Paris Historical Society, York Grand River Historical Society, and Dunnville Historical Society- and networked with other organizations. We published a regular newsletter which has been produced ever since we organized.

In 1996, Ilse and I were invited to teach an Elderhostel at Five Oaks about the natural environment and history of the area. As a result, we began to collect information about the region south of Paris. We held field trips to study the natural history and geology, and to locate the abandoned gypsum mines and the mill ruins. We admired the large heronry. We decided to compose a booklet about the area, and have gathered information ever since. It came out this year, in time for Five Oaks Centre's celebration of its Fiftieth Anniversary and our Society's tenth year.

The most valuable source we used was the Whiteman's Creek Women's Institute Tweedsmuir History which Institute members have compiled over the years. This history is a model for Tweedsmuir Histories, an invaluable tool, containing a plethora of details about the area. Special praise and thanks go to Dorothy Cain for her hard work and assistance. The Moyle Women's Institute Tweedsmuir History has also proved useful as well.

Several members of the Grand River Heritage Mines Society have contributed to our book: Ilse Kraemer (field trips, research, maps, natural history, archaeology, articles), Cathy MacArthur (research and photos), Mary Cassar (natural history, articles and artwork), Allan Farquharson (computer assistance), Joe Clark (geology), Paul Boulaine (natural history), Gwen and Howard Parkhill (natural history, legal searches and interviews), Bud Parker (the archaeological study) and Diane Baltaz (editing and proof-reading.)

We are also grateful to non-members: Garth Pottruff for his contributions about the Pottruffs and Strathmore, and for leading us on a nature hike. Yvonne Stewart, Director of Five Oaks, has encouraged us and provided maps, pictures and resource people. We are thankful to many local people of the area who allowed us to explore their property and told us local stories of past events. Albert Weir volunteered his time and back hoe to dig in search of old mine tunnels on Ted Hammond's farm. Pat Fedak made some contacts with neighbours. Marg Deans, Roger Sharpe and Bob Hasler shared their wisdom.

Volunteers at the Brant County Museum, Paris Historical Society and the Ontario Genealogical Society, Brant Branch Library helped us locate old maps, pictures and information about various people. We have tried to acknowledge all our sources, and apologize for any omissions.

Most of the maps and photos have been acknowledged within the text and/or the bibliography. The Nimmo letter on page 41 is from the Paris Museum and Historical Society collection; the document recording statute labour on page 45 is from the Brant Museum and Archives collection; photos on pages 47, 48, 53, 60 and 75, and the plan of Strathmore on pages 51-2 are from the Pottruff family. Postcards of Camp Thayendanegea on pages 58-9 are from the collection of Cathy MacArthur.

We hope this book encourages other historians in the County to create badly needed local history. The Grand River Heritage Mines Society members intend to use the proceeds of this book to assist in funding the publication of a history of gypsum mining in Brant and Haldimand Counties.

The area covered in our study is bounded by Concession I to Concession IV, Lots 1 to 25 in what used to be Brantford Township, now the Municipality of the County of Brant. We have included some early history on the east side of the Grand River since this was part of the community. For most of the book, however, we concentrated on the early history of Five Oaks. We have not included the history of Five Oaks after it was purchased by the United Church of Canada because the Centre is publishing its own book this year to celebrate its Fiftieth Anniversary.

Jean Farquharson, Editor

April, 2003

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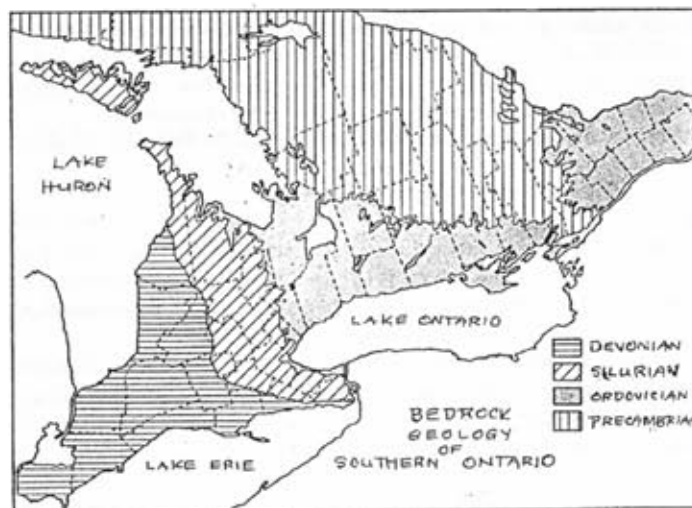
I WHAT LIES UNDER OUR FEET?

THE GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY OF FIVE OAKS AREA

When we take our field trips, members of the Grand River Heritage Mines Society attempt to understand various aspects of the world around them. One of our members, Joe Clark, has studied geology for over forty years. Excerpts of his article from one of our newsletters have been adapted into this chapter to help us understand from a geological point of view the environment in which we find the mines, gravel pits, rolling agricultural lands, plains, hills and valleys that make up Brant County.

What lies under our feet? To most of us, the surface is topsoil in which we grow things; to the contractor, under the topsoil can be construction materials - sand, gravel, rock, minerals; to the industrialist, it's valuable metals and minerals, petroleum, coal; and to the geologist, it's layers which have been deposited and eroded over eons of time.

Geological time is measured from the present backward as we go deeper into the ground; e.g., the Canadian Shield is measured backwards from 600 million to about 4 billion years. A geological map of Southern Ontario shows the following:



A line from Orillia to Kingston is the approximate boundary of the metamorphic and igneous rocks of the Pre-Cambrian Shield. The Shield, made up of metamorphic rocks, was produced by extreme heat and pressure many miles below the surface, and igneous rocks, which were once molten magma, formed deep in the earth, or lava. The over 600 million year old Canadian Shield underlies most

of the rocks in North America, and is found at the bottom of the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

The Paleozoic seas once covered all of the southern part of Ontario, lapping against the Shield in the north; the first being Cambrian - overlying the Pre-Cambrian (from which it was named) Shield. The Cambrian was followed by the more recent Ordovician(500,000,000 million years old), Silurian (452,000,000 years old) and Devonian; the latter, formed about 380 million years ago, is fossilized limestone. All of these Paleozoic rocks are sloping down to the southwest from the exposed Shield. The oldest and thinnest are at the surface next to the Shield, and the thickest, from the youngest to the oldest are at the surface south of Sarnia. These are sedimentary rocks, formed by deposits left by receding evaporating waters. Sedimentary rocks are composed of limestone, sandstone and shale, which contain inclusions of gypsum - used by farmers as a fertilizer and used in the building industry to make drywall and other products; chert - used by the Indians to make arrowheads; oil; natural gas; fossils; and salt.

This formation is topped by the Devonian Age rocks about 405,000,000 years old. The Bois Blanc formation belongs in the Devonian Age. This rock is a cherty limestone saturated with many interesting fossils. This indicates there were shallow salt water reefs. The formation is about 100 feet thick and outcrops in many places in our area.

Now visualize a period at the end of the Devonian 360 million years ago, in which no rock was deposited, until 1.8 million years ago, when glaciation began. In this 358 million years, the sedimentary rocks were exposed to constant erosion from the Shield to Lake Huron. One result of this is the hard, very resistant to erosion Lockport Dolostone which overlies the easily eroded Queenston Shale, resulting in the formation of the Niagara Escarpment, most dramatically seen at Niagara Falls. There is a much less dramatic escarpment running from Dunnville to west of Brantford and then north, of which the Hagersville quarries are a part. This is called the Onondaga Escarpment. Many valuable deposits of gypsum were and still are mined north and east of this escarpment and along the Grand River, in the **Salina Formation**.

The **Salina Formation** is part of the Onondaga formation. It forms a wide belt that runs parallel to the Onondaga Escarpment. Like all rocks in this area, it has a gentle south-westerly dip. The Salina formation consists of a shaly dolostone, containing lenses of gypsum, and has an average thickness of 200 feet.

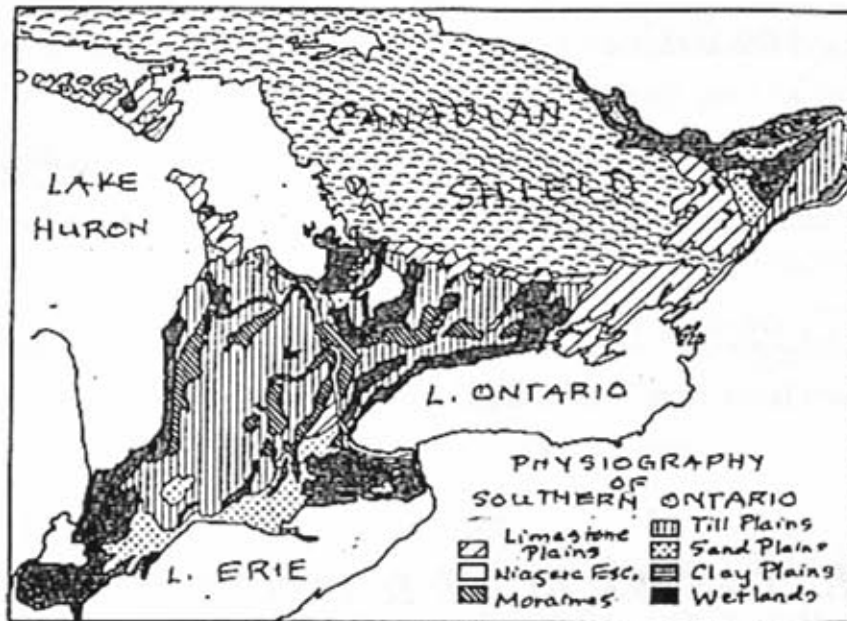
Gypsum is a hydrous calcium sulphate (hydrous means the crystals contain water) having the chemical formula $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$. Geologists entertain different theories how gypsum was formed. One theory is that it was formed when inland seas evaporated and precipitated concentrated minerals about 250,000,000 years ago. The pure form of gypsum is white, but owing to other mineral content, deposits are found which are pink, blue, yellow and brown. Alabaster is a much harder form of gypsum used for carvings. Selenite is a transparent or translucent gypsum. Satin spar is a fine, silky, fibrous variety of gypsum. Anhydrite is a form of gypsum without water of crystallization. Anhydrite, selenite and satin spar have no commercial value. To have commercial value, gypsum must be at least 70% pure. Commercial gypsum deposits are usually massive and composed of fine crystals. Outcrops can be seen all along the Grand River, north and south of Paris. These outcrops are 15 to 20 feet thick in some places, but more often 4 to 5 feet in thickness.

Between 7000 and 85,000 years ago, ice masses covered much of the continent. As the ice moved over the bedrock, between 75 and 100 feet of the bedrock was eroded especially along escarpments and along the lowland routes taken by the main streams of ice. The advancing continental glaciers accumulated, having a planing action on the bedrock. Soil and rock were carried forward, mixed together, and milled. The resulting rocky grist is a mixed mass of stones and pebbles in a sand, silt and clay base.

Not much bedrock is exposed here, but the surface of the till sheet in Southern Ontario has been moulded by the glacier movement. It is not regularly layered as are sediments deposited in running and standing water. Since it resembles tilled soil, it is called **glacial till**.

Most of Southern Ontario has a covering of **drift** on the bedrock. The recession of the glacier was halted periodically by readvances. In these cooler or moister, periods the ice lobes overrode the recently deposited drift, usually building a **moraine** at the end of each advance. Moraines are made either of **till** which has been pushed into place by the glacier or of coarsely stratified **gravel and sand** deposited at the ice front by drainage issuing from the melting ice. The glacial drift is an unsorted non-layered sediment varying from grain size to boulders.

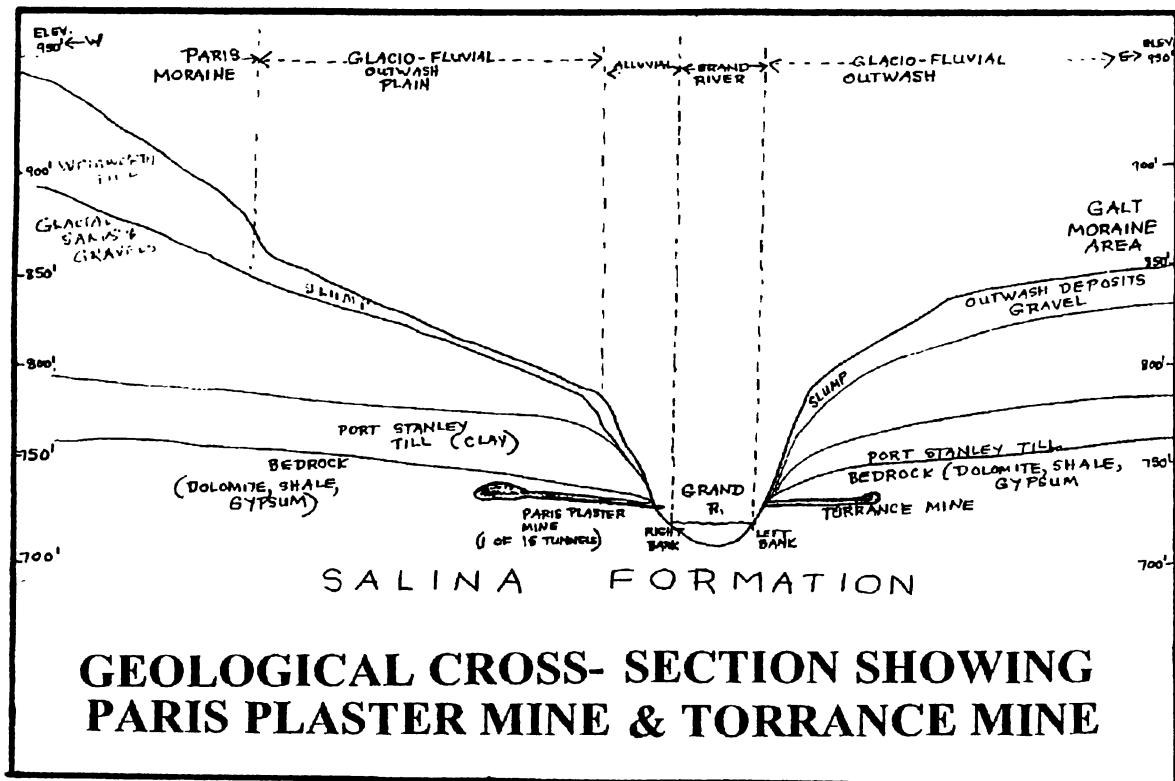
The terrain to the north and west of Five Oaks is a height of land at Rest Acres Road culminating in the highest point in the county. This is part of the **Paris Moraine**. With 75 to 100 feet of sand and gravel beneath the rich sand and loam soils, it provides excellent well-drained 'gravel bottom land' for farming corn and soybeans. The picturesque view from this height of land allows one to see beyond the Grand River southeast for miles to the centre of Brantford. To the north one can view the farms and forested areas leading into the pretty town of Paris.



Associated with the moraines are the abandoned **stream channels** formed by drainage from the glaciers. Nearly all of these channels are occupied by streams at present, but it is apparent that these are much too small to have carved the main valley or deposited the great gravel terraces. The Grand River and Whiteman's Creek follow some of these original stream channels. This explains why they are in such deep, broad valleys. The typical spillway is a broad trough, lined wholly or in part by gravel beds at one or more levels, often with a cedar swamp in the lowest part of the valley. You will find this formation of valleys around Five Oaks at the forks of Whiteman's Creek and the Grand River.

From Rest Acres Road, the land slopes down to the east and south to the Grand River and Whiteman's Creek. During and after the Ice Age, several shoreline levels were formed as the waters receded and the water levels changed. As a result terraces and steep slopes were formed which lead to the flat flood

plains. The upper levels are composed of flat fields, well-drained because of the deep deposits of sand and gravel left by the glaciers and melting streams. During the retreat of the last glacier, the Wisconsin, extensive lowland areas were submerged in glacial lakes. This is where the sand and clay plains of Brant County were formed.



The gypsum mines were located where the bedrock was exposed in the valleys of the rivers as shown in the diagram.

With this geological description, it is easier to grasp and hold a mental picture of what created the landforms and resources in this beautiful part of Brant County.

As the glaciers retreated, and the climate warmed, plants and animals appeared, moving up from the south. Everything flourished abundantly in the protected valleys. The native peoples moved in from the south, following the game, and as their cultures developed, they settled the area, and populations grew. European settlers moved in. This is described in another chapter.

Gypsum was exploited in our area by the early settlers. There were several

mines and mills located in the Paris area, as described later in this book. At first early settlers used picks and shovels to dig it out of the banks along the Grand and Nith Rivers. There in the valley where the bedrock was exposed, pioneers who settled along the river found deposits of the whitish rock.

They dug shallow canals beside the river, for water power, and built mills beside them to grind the grain they grew to make grist and flour, and land plaster. Other settlers opened their own mines or leased their mining rights to businessmen who had the land plaster hauled to the mills to be ground and sold to area farmers. Neighbouring settlers bought gypsum from them to use as a soil conditioner and fertilizer. They used gypsum to plaster their interior walls and to stucco their homes' exteriors. Other uses of gypsum were discovered later on.

Besides gypsum, the early pioneers cut down the trees to clear their land for farming. They used the wood to build their homes and fences, to make plank and corduroy roads, to burn limestone which they needed to make mortar, as fuel to keep their homes warm and do their cooking. They used the local fieldstone and cobblestone, limestone, sand and gravel to build their homes and roads. They took advantage of the resources available to improve their lives.

II PIONEER AND NATIVE HISTORY OF WHITEMAN'S CREEK AND BETHEL AREA

1 - SETTLEMENTS OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES

ARCHAEOLOGY

Five Oaks and surrounding area is a place where Indians lived from right after the Ice Age until the white man moved in. It was occupied by many pre-historic tribes from very early times until after the Europeans moved in. There is not much written about the pre-historic people in this area since very little study was done. But many collectors have found a lot of artifacts over the years.

PALEO INDIANS

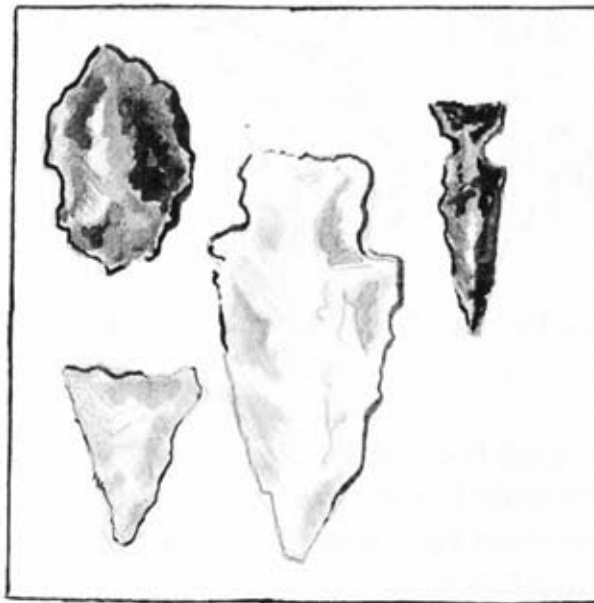
After the last glaciation, the Wisconsin, as soon as the meltwaters disappeared, early hunters, the Paleo people, settled here, moving up from the south as the climate warmed up. They came in small groups of a few related families, and followed the animals. They never stayed long in one place. Their encampments were small, and few artifacts are found to show where they stayed. The Paleo Indians fashioned the famous fluted points besides other tools.

ARCHAIC PEOPLES

From them the Archaic people evolved. When they lived in this area, they built small round houses on higher terraces, and hunted and gathered berries and other vegetation. On the fields surrounding Five Oaks, many of their tools can still be found. First they were nomadic hunters, but later in their development, they introduced corn, fabricated clay pots and had more permanent and larger villages.



Artifacts collected by Ilse Kraemer
as sketched by Mary Cassar



THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG AT FIVE OAKS

When one looks around the fields surrounding Five Oaks one will find masses of Indian tools and flint chips. The only way people can learn what life was like before recorded history is by careful examination of these sites by experts who dig, examine, sift, record, map and analyze their findings. In 1990, three small sites of prehistoric Indians were excavated by archaeologist Bud Parker of Archaeological Research Associates.

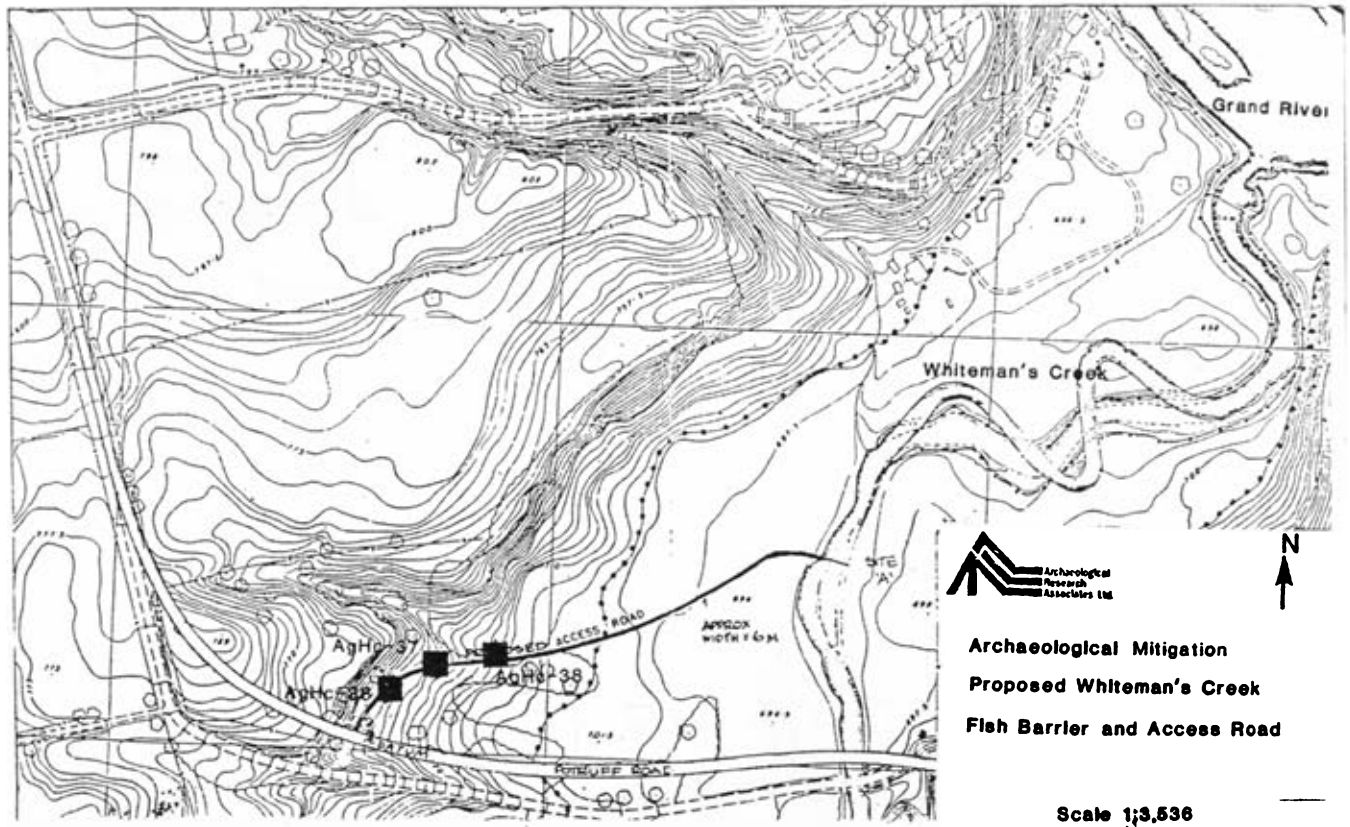


Figure 2

LOCATION

This dig was carried out because the Conservation Authority planned to build a roadway down to the Grand River. The proposed road allowance is situated on the west side of Whiteman's Creek valley from Pottruff Road to the western bank of Whiteman's Creek itself.

The sites are located in a flat sand and gravel terrace and swampy valley floor near Whiteman's Creek. The soils are part of an ancient spillway system, and have well-drained sands with stony levels arranged by erosion. The two sites

located on the terraces of the Whiteman's Creek Valley have deciduous trees, many of them Carolinian - black walnut, sumach, white ash and oak. The third site on an isolated, treed terrace, surrounded on three sides by springs or freshets, has mostly white cedar and black willow. All three sites have sandy soil beneath a humus layer, mixed with waterworn stones and gravel at varying depths.

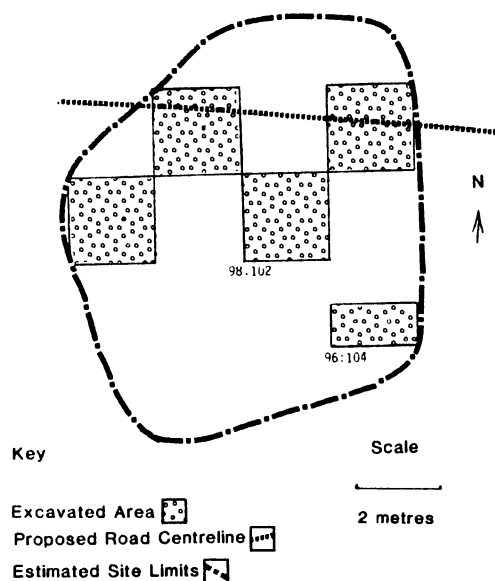
METHOD

The dig took 14 days. Three *findspots* had been marked in May 1990 by a preliminary assessment crew. From these findspots more test pits were made to find probable site limits.

Then the sites were surveyed using a transit, compass and stadia rod, and "tied" to one another. Next they were all located using a permanent *datum* (a surveyor's marker used to locate boundaries, etc.) at Pottruff Road. After that a grid was created at each site beginning at a square chosen at random. They removed the humus layer and root mass (5-8 cm. deep) using shovels. Then they screened the remaining topsoil through 6 mm mesh to the subsoil surface. Surface to subsoil depth ranged from 10 to 20 cm.

At the subsoil surface, the soil was trowelled smooth and "scanned" for subsurface *features* - fire pits, refuse pits, post moulds (discolorations showing where posts were left from structures). These were mapped in a plan, a cross-section, and drawn in profile, and excavated fully to find any evidence of settlement.

Figure 3
AgHc-36
SITE PLAN

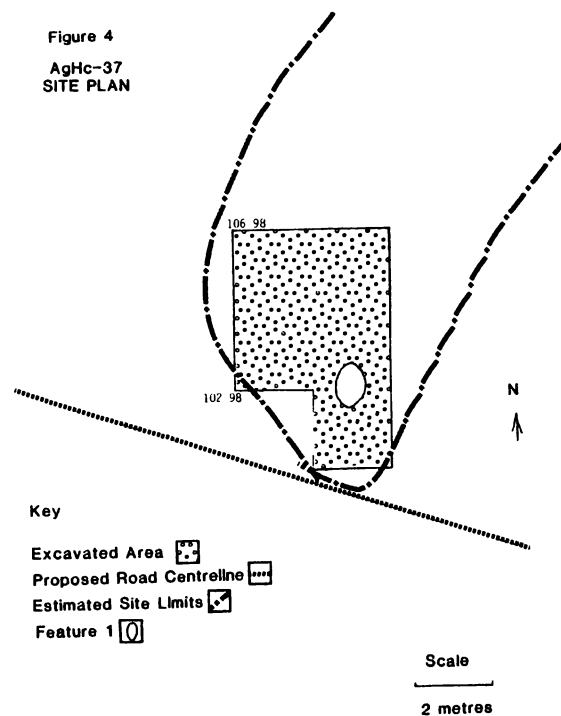


FINDINGS

A total of 65 square metres was excavated at the three sites - 18, 20 and 27. The 167 *artifacts* which were collected at the first site indicate that "this was a small lithic [rock] chipping station where cores and/or tool blanks of Onondaga chert were processed into useable tools between about 600 and 1100 A.D., the Middle-Late Woodland period." Onondaga chert was obtained elsewhere, possibly from a site along Lake Erie 60 kms. to the southeast. Parts of a damaged projectile point and a granite hammerstone and two small animal bones were retrieved, and many

chips and flakes left when the tools were being shaped. The lack of any subsoil *feature* indicates that the prehistoric occupation was for only a short time.

The second site yielding 1864 artifacts, mostly Onondaga chert waste flakes, and one *feature*, indicated a prehistoric lithic chipping station and related campsite. Parts of points and a drill, two end scrapers, one side scraper were all Onondaga chert, but four adze or celt fragments were made of locally available granite or basalt. There was also a hammerstone and some fire-cracked rocks and nine bone fragments.



An orange-stained feature containing 381 flakes, tools and the fire-cracked rocks indicates the feature may have been a hearth for cooking. Since the tools resemble Meadowood artifacts, the site could date in the period between 1000 B.C. and 0 B.C.

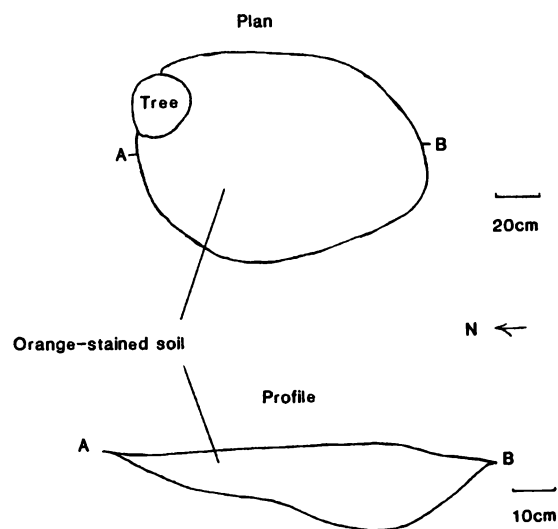
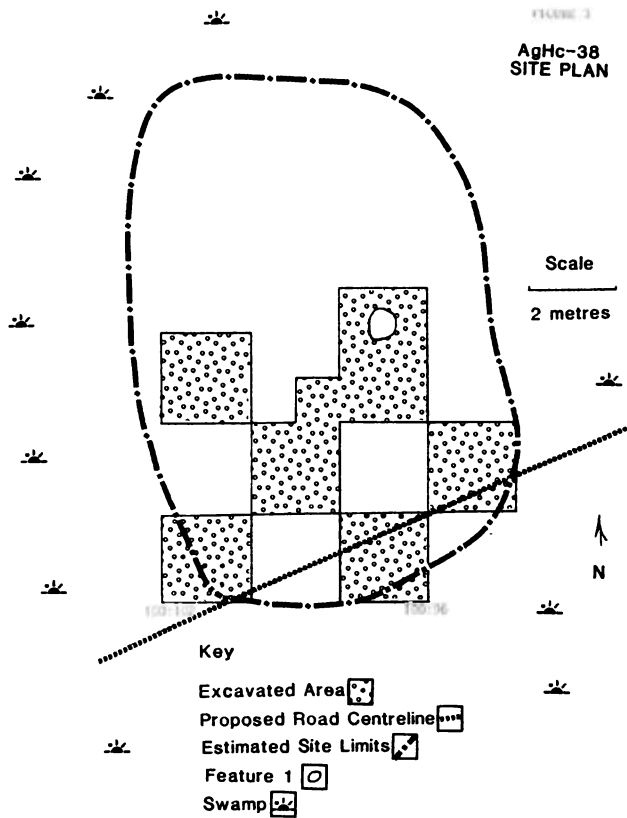


Figure 5
AgHc-37
FEATURE 1



The third and most interesting site was located in the area bounded by springs to the west, south and north. To the east, a hill rises, “making the site a virtual island.” From this site they recovered 40 pottery sherd (fragments) whose characteristics, upon analysis, are similar to pottery made in the Early Woodland period. Part of a fired clay pipestem indicate it was made in the Woodland period, circa 1000B.C. to 1650 A.D. Because the exterior is plain and unburnished, it may indicate the earlier part of this time period. The flakes, projectile points and fragments, end and side scrapers, spokeshaves, drills, core, adzes and hammerstone date the site to the Late Woodland period (circa 1250 -1500 A.D., suggesting it existed as a Middleport phase camp (1350-1450 A.D.). This site had a

feature, basin-shaped and dark brown, which was probably a refuse pit.

Bud Parker concluded that a much larger site may have existed nearby on higher ground - “a late Woodland village which could be related to all three sites.” It may be worth investigating, because this was an ideal area for living - hunting, fishing, growing corn, squash and beans.

Source:

A copy of Bud's report is on file in Five Oaks Centre administration office. A member of the Grand River Heritage Mines Society, he has given us permission to include information from his report.

EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD

Very little has been published locally of the history in this area, south of Paris, in what used to be part of Brantford Township, County of Brant.

During the historic period, the Attiwandarons or Neutrals moved in from the east, fleeing from the Senecas of the Five Nations in New York State. They found a refuge in the fertile valley of the Grand River which abounded in wildlife, and had rich soils where they could plant the seeds they brought with them.

The Jesuit priests and explorers arrived here about 1630, during their travels all over Ontario. The chief village was *Kandoucho* or *All Saints Village*, probably near Brantford. It was called *Notre Dame Des Anges (Our Lady of the Angels)*. In their earliest written reports, they also tell about visiting a large walled Indian settlement, named Andrachoch, near the mouth of the creek that became known later as Whiteman's Creek. Life in this village was peaceful, with plenty of wildlife to hunt and plenty of fish in river and stream. Fruit, nuts and berries and firewood were in abundance in the heavily wooded surroundings. The extremely fertile soil produced bountiful yields of corn and beans. Although little archaeological research has ever been done, there could be some evidence left. Collectors have found lots of artifacts in the area. A *Globe & Mail* article from 1948 reported that the Pottruffs found a stone moccasin last, arrowheads and flints, and 1837 coins. Since the land north of Five Oaks is owned by gravel pit owners, most are or will probably be destroyed.

The tranquil life of the Neutrals was shattered by the struggle between the French-allied Hurons and the Iroquois who supported the English for control of trade in the area. The Neutrals were driven out between 1649 and 1651. Later it became a hunting ground for the Mississaugas.

Eventually white settlers arrived in this area, bringing smallpox and other diseases with them. The Indians, lacking immunity to these diseases, fell sick in their villages. The occupants panicked, buried all their belongings in the woods and fled to the newly established reserve. Their burial ground near Five Oaks was an old one hidden away on a little knoll beneath the embankment.

Today little is left of the once vibrant village. Only deep in the woods, a hiker may encounter strange square stone-settings, close together. This is all that is left of the Indians' huts. The heavy stones were used as foundations around the

wooden houses. Their iron kettles and other belongings have never been recovered and are still buried somewhere in the deeply wooded area.

THE HALDIMAND PROCLAMATION OF 1784

The settlement of Whiteman's Creek area occurred more slowly than other parts of Brant County; the reason being that it was within the lands granted to the Six Nations Indians in 1784.

On October 25, 1784, Sir Frederick Haldimand, Governor of Quebec (Quebec then included what was to be Ontario and Quebec) granted the land six miles on both sides of the Grand River from its mouth to its source. This was called the Haldimand Proclamation. The Mohawks had lived in the Finger Lakes Country of New York State, and being allied with the British during the Revolutionary War, had lost their lands as had the Loyalists. The Haldimand Tract was their promised compensation from the British in lieu of their lost lands in the newly formed United States. They were joined by other members of the Six Nations loyal to the British - the Oneidas, Senecas, Onondagas, Tuscaroras, and Cayugas. They settled in their own villages along the Grand above and below Brant's Ford.

Joseph Brant, the leader of the Six Nations Confederacy, became the agent to sell some of the lands and invest the proceeds for the benefit of his people. Believing they would be a good influence on the Six Nations to settle the lands and become farmers, Brant gave or leased tracts of land to his friends, many of them white men who had helped him at one time or another. Many of the families settled around the Indian village that he established at Brant's Ford, which later became Brantford. Some of them had problems with the government in receiving legitimate claims to the land.

LAND CLAIM PROBLEMS IN BRANT COUNTY

Few white men settled in the Haldimand Tract for many years because they were unable to purchase lands from the Indians. The government would not give the Indians permission to grant deeds to the lands. They feared that ruthless and greedy speculators would try to obtain large tracts from the Indians. There are records that a few families came and settled on the lands in spite of this problem, some as squatters and some buying the lands from the Indians.

There is on record a petition of Wm. K. Smith, Enos Bunnell, Isaac Whiting, David Phelps, and Malci File, Jr., dated July 15, 1819. P.A.C., *Upper Canada Sundries, XLV, 1819*. They had settled on the Grand River Indian lands granted to them by Joseph Brant and thought themselves exempt from paying land assessments. A complaint was filed against them for not making a return to the District Assessor of the lands on the Grand River and they were fined 2 pounds each. In 1803, the settlers had been on the lands upwards of 20 years, and in 1803, they sent Colonel Clause, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, a copy of their leases. They had to appear before the magistrate to answer the complaint against them for not making a return. They had established themselves on lands they had purchased or leased from the Indians; the government took their time to award legal deeds to the lands they claimed, and many had to petition the Crown to acquire legally the property they had settled upon. Similar problems existed south of Paris.

AN EARLY TRANSPORTATION LINK

The junction of Whiteman's Creek and the Grand River was well-known as an important link in transportation from early Indian times. During the French regime, the first known white person to come into this area was the French priest Father Joseph de la Daillon in the year 1626. Trappers, fur traders and clergy were the earliest white people to travel through this area, taking the Indian trails.

This territory then had one of the most important Indian trails leading through Western Ontario, from the head of Lake Ontario to the Detroit River. There was also a connecting path that came along Whiteman's Creek for canoeists travelling the Grand River.

Upon establishing a fort at Detroit in 1701, the French organized a monthly mail courier service between Detroit and Montreal. The courier service travelled by water during the summer but in the winter it used this same Indian Trail. A courier and two Indian guides carried the mail.

When the English won the war against the French they continued the postal service over the trail, and when Governor Simcoe passed through the district on his historic journey to Detroit in February, 1793, the party met the courier just west of the present village of Burford. Major Littlehales, Simcoe's secretary, described the postal express as consisting of a Mr. Clark and an escort of a Wyandotte and a Chippewa Indian. On their return trip from Detroit the Simcoe party again met the

postal express in the cedar swamp west, of Burford. The two parties camped together and killed several porcupines. (From *The Simcoe Papers* --"Journal From Niagara to Detroit" by Major E.B. Littlehales -- 1793).

In 1793, Governor Simcoe had roads surveyed and laid out to enable the settlers to move in. The Governor's Road or Dundas Street was surveyed as a military road which later helped bring settlers into Paris. By 1806, the "Old Stage Road" or "Indian Trail" had become a leading road in Upper Canada.

In recent times, members of the Grand River Heritage Mines Society, while on their field trips, found remnants of an old corduroy road along the Grand south of Five Oaks. These roads were often built through swampy areas and bottom lands. In Lot 1 of Concessions I and II, Gypsy Lane, built through a swamp was used only in winter to haul wood and ice by sleigh. It was closed and fenced in by the 1970's.

2 -THE COMING OF THE EARLY SETTLERS

EARLY WHITE TRADERS AND TRAPPERS

In the diary of Major Littlehales, dated February 1793, there is mention of a trader's cabin on the west side of the Grand. When the Major travelled from the Indian village at Brant's Ford to London with Governor Simcoe, they stayed overnight in the trader's cabin before they went on to Burford area. Since trappers came before settlers, this trapper may have been one of the earliest white men in the area, but we do not know his name, nor exactly where in the area his cabin was located.

THE FIRST WHITE PERSON TO SETTLE ON WHITEMAN'S CREEK

There are several versions of the story telling how Whiteman's Creek received its name. This version is according to a Brant Historical Society publication of 1910:

In New York State about 1750, a white boy was taken prisoner by the Mohawks during a raid. He grew up as an Indian amongst them, an Indian in all but colour and the ability to make money. His Indian name was De-ha-na-ge-reh-gwenk. As he grew up, he shared friendship with Joseph Brant, and went with him

on his trips to Canada to search for land for his people. He did many special favours for Brant which Brant never forgot.

When the Six Nations moved to the Grand River Reserve, Captain Brant gave him a beautiful section of land along the banks of what became known as Whiteman's Creek, and he built a cabin not far from the mouth of the creek. He was always hospitable to the Indians and welcomed them into his home.

He used to gather herbs along the bank of the creek. One day when the creek and the Grand River were in flood, he slipped while pulling out a root, fell into the river and drowned. The creek became known as Whiteman's Creek because he was the first and only white man living in the Indian lands around the creek.

There was a white woman named Jamieson or Jemison (more details about her later) who was also a captive. She was adopted by the Six Nations and eventually married an Indian. As was the custom, their children retained their mother's name.

De-ha-na-ge-reh-gwenh married their daughter. The Jamiesons of the Six Nations are descendants of this white captive.

THE HILL FAMILY

Another family which lived in the Whiteman's Creek area was the Hill family. Warner and Beers *History of the County of Brant* (1883) records the following about the Hill family (p. 687). They also took claim to the name of Whiteman's Creek.

JOSIAH HILL, farmer, Ohsweken P.O. was born October 22, 1843; he is a son of Abraham and Mary (Longfish) Hill, natives of the State of New York, who were among the first settlers in Tuscarora Township. Abraham Hill's father, after whom Whiteman's Creek was named, took an active part in the Revolutionary War, and afterward located on Whiteman's Creek, in this county, where Abraham was born in 1805. Josiah and Richard Hill are the only survivors of their father's family of five children. Josiah is a chief of the Tuscarora Indians and in April, 1864, married Nancy, daughter of Jacob Hill.[etc.]

There must have been more than one Hill that settled near Whiteman's Creek. Ilse Kraemer gathered the following about Catherine Hill and Hot Springs Village:

CATHERINE HILL AND FIVE OAKS AREA

This is the story of Catherine Hill as told to me by my dear friend Andrew Jamieson a long time ago. Andrew was a relative of Catherine. He did not know much about his heritage but was very keen to learn more about it. He invited me to do the research

together, so we could write about it to preserve this information for generations to come. Andrew died shortly before we could start. To honour him and his friendship, I decided to add his story or as much as he told me to the story of Five Oaks. The following is a story as told to me by Andrew. It is a verbal story and re-told by people who came after Catherine; some details may have been left out, added to, or forgotten.

Years later, I met Mrs. Pearl Pottruff, who lived on Catherine's former land. She was well into her 90's, but she could add a bit more. She remembered the sacred Hill burial ground and the natives when they visited for their yearly ceremony of the dead.

Catherine Hill was the first child born in the early 1800's in this village near the mouth of Whiteman's Creek. Her father was Chief David Hill. She had a brother called Job who became a close friend of Joseph Brant in later years. Catherine's parents sent her to school in Pennsylvania, the Carlyle Institute. Being so far away, she didn't live much in her parents' village.

She came back when she was in her early 20's, but all her people had gone, the houses were empty. Most people had died of cholera, including her parents. The others had moved back to the Six Nations reserve. Only two older women lived in the huts. They were two white women who were widowed and had no other homes. Catherine gave these women permission to stay and live in these houses. She went back to the Six Nations in search of her people. There she met Alex Jamieson and married him. They had many children. Mary was her oldest daughter. Catherine lived to a ripe old age. She died on the Six Nations and was buried there. She never had a grave marker and the location of her grave is forgotten.

HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE

During the existence of the Five Oaks village a twin village was built on the east side of the Grand River, called Hot Springs. Here we find a very strong flowing spring with a temperature between +8 degrees and +12 degrees Celsius year round. It never freezes over. Three chiefs lived here and all three married white women. There are many remains of the two villages visible, all overgrown. A large burial ground was located near this village too. Hiking through this area, one can't imagine that it was home to many people. Only the old apple trees (European variety) are an indication of occupation long ago.

EARLY MAPS

The earliest maps of the area around Whiteman's Creek and the Grand show "Indian Lands" on both sides of the Grand. According to John Holden, Past President of the Brant Historical Society, a settlement was located on the east bank of the Grand River, near Whiteman's Creek, and there were burial grounds up the river on the same side. (Taken from Whiteman's Creek W.I. *Tweedsmuir History*.)

THE RELIGIOUS SECT THAT ALMOST SETTLED AT WHITEMAN'S CREEK

From 1776-1793, when Governor Simcoe came to power, incoming settlers who selected land were required to apply for a location ticket. There is a record of an application by Abraham Dayton and his wife Abigail, ex-Quakers who belonged to a sect of followers of Jemima Wilkinson, the Universal Friends, who were looking for a place to establish a settlement from Connecticut in 1793 or early 1794. The petition was "for a piece of land, situate on the Indian Path leading from the Mohawk village on the Grand River to the River Tranch [another name for the Grand] and on a creek that empties into the Grand River about 12 miles above the said village [Whiteman's Creek] which land has no appearance of ever having been located, he now, on behalf of his Friends, requests that Your Excellency would please to grant him a Township in the above described plan."

Dayton appeared before the Executive Council and obtained the grant of his appeal. Gov. Simcoe later rescinded the grant, however, because he discovered the group was not Quaker as he had earlier been led to believe. Their leader claimed to have psychic powers, and many of the followers had strayed from the Quaker fold.

Most of the group stayed with their leader in Connecticut, but the Daytons came back and settled in Burford Township which was outside the land Haldimand set aside for the Indians. His son-in-law Benajiah Mallory and Dayton claimed considerable land and founded their settlement along the Indian trail, where the village of Burford now stands.

DAVIS' HAMLET

One of the native settlers, and a cousin of Joseph Brant, was Mohawk war chief of the Wolf Clan, Thomas Davis. He had fought for the British during the Revolution and the War of 1812. He settled five miles north of the Mohawk village at Brantford on land granted to him by Joseph Brant. Physically he was described as an impressive-looking

man - "tall, well-formed, and as straight as one of his own forest pines." He was also a fine orator, a man with a natural dignity and presence, one who "prided himself on his stoical indifference in all minor matters, which moved the mass around him." As an older man, one subject alone preoccupied him – religion.

In the early 1820's, religious questions tormented him. He felt that alcohol was ruining his people. About 1820, he gave up drinking and began to hold prayer meetings at his farmhouse. Daily he blew his horn calling his neighbours, a number like him being nominal Anglicans, to prayer. He read to them portions of the Bible and the Church prayers in Mohawk. By the spring of 1823, the group had the Rev. Alvin Torry as their preacher.

A small but growing Methodist Indian community settled on Chief Davis' invitation, on and around his farm. Rev. Torry began regular monthly visits to the settlement, which became known as Davisville or Davis Hamlet. Peter Jones, son of Augustus Jones, a government surveyor who had settled east of Paris along the Governor's Road, and of a Mississauga Indian chief's daughter, was a convert who brought in many Mississaugas to the community. By the fall of 1823, Chief Davis gave up his whole house for religious meetings, and for the use of a Methodist day school, and retired to a log cabin in the woods. The schoolmaster was Seth Crawford, who led the weekly service when Torry was not there. In 1826, the Mississaugas left for their new mission station on the Credit River, and the movement here became completely Iroquois. Within 10 years, the number of Six Nations adherents had swelled to 150 out of a total population of 2,000 on the Reserve.



Credit River Methodist Mission
As drawn by Peter Jones's wife,
Eliza Field Jones. Typical log
buildings are similar to the log
homes of Europeans.

From *The Story of My Life*, by Egerton Ryerson.

Peter Jones, greatly influenced by Seth Crawford, after his conversion in 1825, became a preacher himself and made many conversions among the Mississaugas. He became the leader of the community at the Credit. Jones became an eminent Methodist missionary and a renowned preacher. He translated a number of hymns and the Gospels

into the Ojibwa language. He and his wife Eliza lived in *Echo Villa*, a beautiful home which still exists at Cainsville. The Methodist Indians moved to Salt Springs where Salt Springs Church was built for the native peoples.

THE STORY OF MARY JAMIESON AND THE INDIAN SETTLEMENT NEAR APPS MILL

Much of the following information was taken from a biography of Mary Jameson. When Mary was 80 years old, she told her story to her doctor, James Everett Seaver. He published the story in New York in 1824. There is also an oral record of the Jamieson family amongst the people of the Six Nations near Brantford where many of Mary Jamieson's descendants still live. Part of the story that takes place in Brant County was told by them.

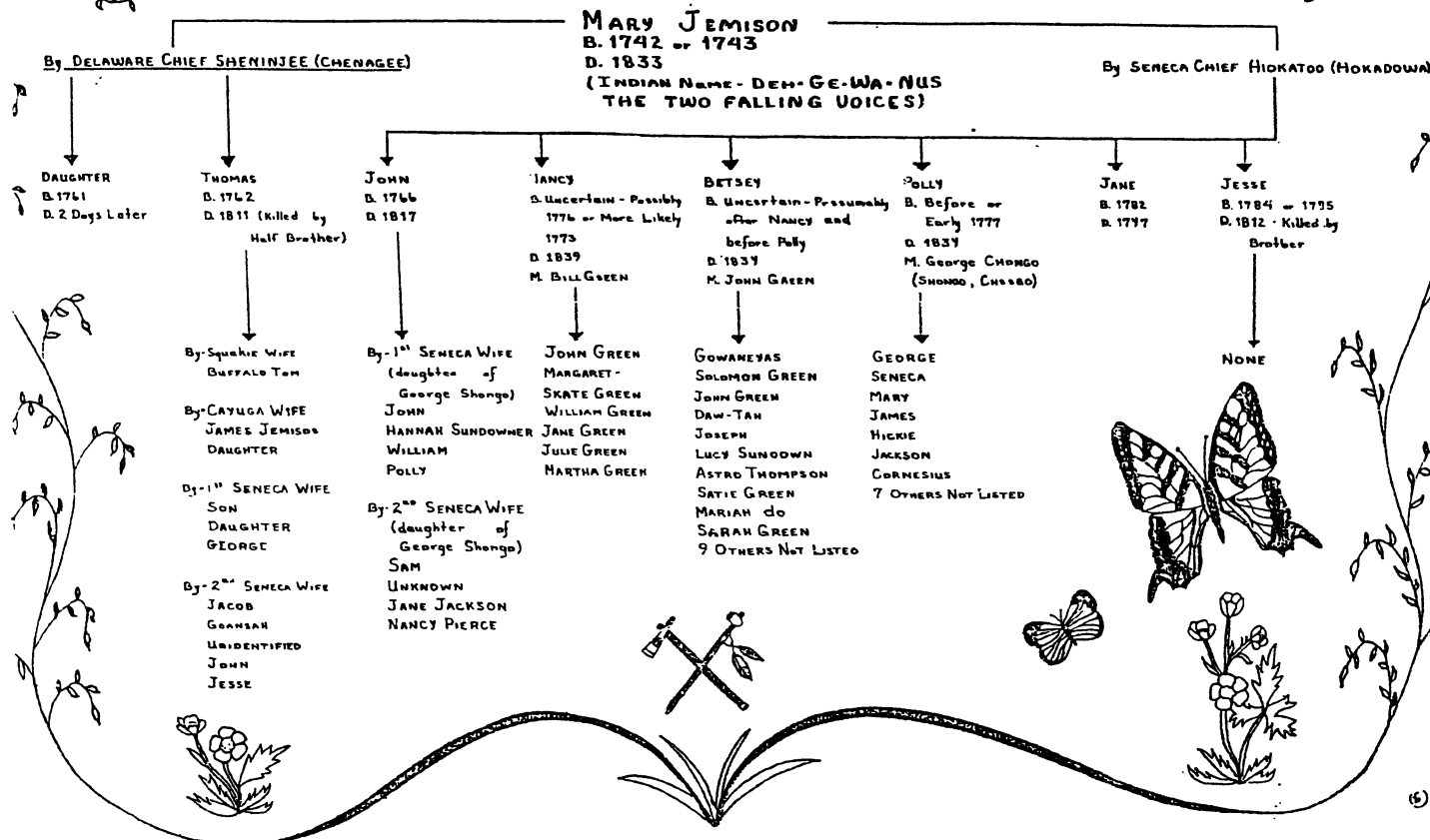
In 1730, a Scot named Thomas Jemison travelled to Ireland where he met and married Janet Erwin. They had a daughter Betsy and two sons, John and Thomas, when they decided to come to America to try their luck at homesteading. They set out by ship in 1743, and Mary was born before they landed at Philadelphia. They bought and cleared a large tract of land on Marsh Creek, Adams County, Pennsylvania. Two more sons, Matthew and Robert were born there.

They had lived on the farm for several years when tragedy struck. On April 5th, 1758, Indians raided the farm and killed all but two boys who had hidden in the woods and escaped, and Mary. The Indians captured her and took her back to their village. Mary was fifteen but very small for her age, with big blue eyes and hair the colour of cornsilk. The Indians were fascinated by her blond hair. She was adopted by a family whose daughter had died. The Indians, who belonged to the Cayugas, called her Dehge Wa Nus, the Two Falling Voices. When her father was still alive, he had called her Molly, and this name stayed with her as well. She became known as the white woman of the Genessee Valley.

During the French and English Wars, the Senecas left the Genessee Valley and travelled hundreds of miles on foot until they reached Upper Canada. They established a village on the south side of Whiteman's Creek, where Apps Mill is now located. Next to a very strong-flowing spring on a sandy knoll, they erected their homes. They planted apple trees from seed that they had brought from the valley, probably the same trees that the Jemisons had planted when they arrived from Ireland, for Mary kept her contacts with her old home. The spring and some old apple trees, hardy European types, are still there.

Mary was married to the Delaware Chief Sheninjee, and had two children. A daughter died two days after birth. After her husband was killed, Mary married again, this time to a

FAMILY TREE OF MARY JEMISON



Seneca chief, Hiokatoo. They had six children.

Her son Thomas from her first marriage became a warrior. On one of his visits to Pennsylvania, he befriended a German family named Kamp. They had a little blond blue-eyed baby. Thomas fell in love with this child. He waited until the boy was three years old when he kidnapped him and took him back home. In order to disguise the kidnapping, the boy's real name, Johann Kamp, was never used again. They called him James, with no last name. The Indians gave him the Seneca name Da Nah Guih. His parents, over the years, looked desperately for their son, but never found him. Later Thomas married and he and his wife had many children. One of the daughters was called Jemima. James married her and took her last name, Jemison.

After Jemima died, James married twice more. One winter, while looking for firewood, he pulled on a root and fell in the creek where he drowned. According to the Jamieson's story, this is the reason for naming it Whiteman's Creek.

Later on, while going through his possessions, the family found a Viking sword. How it came into his possession is not known. It was bought by a Mr. Harrington in 1907, and brought to a museum in New York. A picture was published in the magazine of the Museum of American Indians. This information was taken out of a book written by Werner Mueller, *America: the New or the Old World?* (1982).

Mary Jemison had many chances to go back to the white people, but refused. She was happy to stay with the Indians. In later years, she went back to Genessee Valley many times, especially to the south of Garden Falls, where she owned a farm just below the portage falls. Mary died in 1833, and was buried in a Seneca churchyard, South Buffalo, but later reburied at Letchworth Park in her beloved Genessee Valley. Letchworth Park has over 6000 acres. There has been erected a life-size bronze statue in her honour showing Mary as a young woman. A log cabin, which once belonged to Mary's daughter was moved nearby.

In 1839, cholera broke out at their home on Whiteman's Creek, killing many of Mary's descendants. The others fled in a panic to the reserve. The victims of the epidemic are buried somewhere near Apps Mill.

Many of Mary's Jemison's descendants are still living in Brant County or on the reserve. The name Jemison has been changed to Jamieson. Many of her descendants show characteristics of their blond, blue-eyed mother as well as their native blood. " Some of her descendants are: Andrew Jamieson, Elmer Jamieson, Dr. Thomas Jamieson, Chief 'Jack' Alex General, and Mrs. Elliott Moses." From *The Trail of the Iroquois Indians*, by G. Elmore Reaman.

Here is another version of the story about James Jamieson Sr. in an excerpt from a biographical note about James Jamieson Jr., taken from Warner & Beers, 1883:

" James Jamieson [Jr.], farmer, Onondaga, was born in Paris, Brant County, Ontario; his parents were James Jamieson, who was born at Whiteman's Creek, Brant County, and Jemima Jamieson, his wife, who was born at Cainsville, Brant County. They belong to the Cayuga tribe or band. Their family consisted of six boys and six girls. James Jamieson Sr. was an Indian letter-carrier during the

late war in which General Brock lost his life. He had no education, his children also being deprived of it, as there were no schools in those days. He used to carry the mail free between St. Catharines and Amherstburgh, usually on foot, horses being scarce at that time. The subject of this sketch married Julia Ann Jamieson, who was born in Onondaga Township, Brant County."

According to George Beaver, in *A View From An Indian Reserve* (1993), James and Jemima [Jiminia] had eleven children, who "started the family lines along the Grand River: William, David, Jacob, James, Betsy, Albert, Beatty, Nanticoke, Lydia, Esther, George and Jesse."

There is a Jamieson monument on Onondaga Road. A family tree of Mary Jemison from the Jamieson family is included in this history.

MILITARY SETTLERS

Before Brant County came into existence in 1852, land deeds were registered in Hamilton. Brantford Township was in the County of Wentworth, District of Gore.

One of the first surveys showing land claims in the area was made by **Lewis Burwell**, who resided in Brantford, and made a survey of that village in 1830. A map of the area surrounding Brantford by Burwell, dated 1839, shows only a few of several retired British army and naval officers who settled on their own estates in the vicinity of the village. However, later maps including Tremaine's map of 1858 show their names. The British government wanted to settle loyal British subjects in the area because they were concerned there were so many Americans who had migrated to these parts. Thus we find that many of the early settlers in this area and around Woodstock were former military and naval officers, many who had served in the War of 1812 and the Rebellion of 1837-8.

Major Winniett (a street is named after him in Brantford) was appointed Superintendent of Indians for the Six Nations Reserve in 1832. **Col. Dixon** lived nearby with his two nieces, Caroline and Elizabeth Perkins. **Philip D'Acres Hart**, was a retired official of the East India Company service. **Major Arnold Burrowes** had fought in the Peninsular War. They were all friends.

Philip D'Acres Hart retired and emigrated to Canada with a large family in 1830 (Reville, 1920, page 88). He bought land where the Brantford General Hospital stands, and erected a large home. "The home was called *Steep Hill* and was the rendezvous for the retired army officers who in those days resided in Brant County." (From *Diary of the Survey of the Indian Surrender*, Brant Historical Society, 1994.) The names of D.W. and D. & H. Hart are found on the Tremaine map of 1858 on the northern part of Lots 21, 22 and 23, in Concession III, Brantford Township. Frederick Luck and William D'Acres Hart signed a three year share lease agreement in May, 1858, where Luck agreed to "faithfully and diligently work, till, cultivate and manage the farm," with Hart to share in half the produce (Waldie, 1984, Vol.2, p. 19). This farm later became known as the Hardy farm, which gave the name to Hardy Road. Hart's friend, Burrowes, owned lands on both sides of the Grand. Some of the lands on the west side are now occupied by Five Oaks.

MAJOR ARNOLD ROBINSON BURROWES

The retired officer who lived at what became Five Oaks was Major Arnold Robinson Burrowes. An acquaintance of D'Acres Hart, Col. Thomas Burrowes had also served in the East India Company. His son, Major Arnold Robinson Burrowes, after a distinguished army career under the Duke of Wellington, decided to join some of his old friends and set up an estate in Canada. In 1835, he and his second son settled on a 200 acre farm property at Ancaster. The remainder of the family came the following year with their mother and three servants. In the year 1837, at the outbreak of the Rebellion, Burrowes joined Sir Allan MacNab's army of recruits, and for a time was on sentry duty at the Niagara Frontier opposite Navy Island. The second year after the Rebellion, he had military charge of the County of Wentworth (this included part of Brant County) with the Six Nation Indians under his supervision. According to his son, "He raised a regiment of recruits, supplying their clothing at his own expense, but was afterwards partially reimbursed by the Government."

The following records were found in the files of the Canadian Military Institute:

10th Gore Regiment. Limits, town and Township of Brantford. Colonel Arnold Burrowes, March 20th 1838. This section of the regiment was called the Brantford Light Infantry, according to an inscription on Burrowes' gravestone in the old Anglican cemetery in Paris.

He next acquired about 1060 acres, 400 on the east side of the Grand River (the south part of lots 15 and 16 in the second concession and the north part of lots 15, 16 and 17 in the third concession), and lived at (or beside) Hazel Bank farm, later purchased by the Harts and even later by Judge Hardy. Judge Hardy later became interested in Burrowes and recorded his memoirs.

The Colonel also purchased 660 acres on the west side of the Grand River (parts of lots 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 in Concession 3), in the area where Whiteman's Creek flows into the Grand, one of the most beautiful sections of the Grand River which later became Five Oaks. There he developed an extensive estate, and, in 1840, built a beautiful large home called Strathmore. His new home was situated on the north side of Whiteman's Creek, next to the large holdings of Henry de Blaquiére, of a prominent old Irish family who had purchased a large tract and on the east side of the Grand and later adjoining property on the south side of Whiteman's creek which had previously been registered to Burrowes. It is thought that these friends who came to Canada first, were instrumental in having

the Burrowes family come out and join them.

Other friends, who settled in the Eastwood area of Oxford County, were Admiral Vansittart and his family who were prominent in the upper class society of Woodstock. The Burrowes and Vansittarts visited back and forth frequently, and also gathered as well for visits at Hart's *Steep Hill* for ex-officer family get-togethers.

Besides building a huge house overlooking Whiteman's Creek and the Grand, the Burrowes family constructed extensive buildings, including those for horses, cattle and other farm stock. It is said that the home and outbuildings covered an acre of land. A covered passageway extending from the porte cochere, connected the house with these buildings.

Major Burrowes, true to his Irish ancestry, was a great lover of horses. He imported some very fine ones from England to pull the coach and four he used to



travel into town and visit his friends and business acquaintances. He also constructed a race track on his property. He imported from England the best bred Durham or Shorthorn Cattle, used as breeding stock in the area for many years.

Burrowes and his wife, Harriet, needed a large house; they had five sons and five daughters, and they also did a great deal of entertaining. It was not uncommon to have 30 people sit down to dinner in the large dining room.

Burrowes and his sons actively participated in the building of his home and estate. They must have lived a very active and hard life, but life was not without its compensations. *Fish and game in great abundance and variety, a responsive soil, the unlimited supply of wood and timber for all purposes of fuel and construction, and the freedom with which life could be lived here, were not to be lightly weighed against the trials and difficulties that went with the building of a new home in a strange land.* Judge Hardy recorded this in his memoirs of Burrowes.

Major Burrowes was not an old man, being but 63 at his death [in 1851]...but the work he had imposed upon himself in creating his new home coupled with the years of campaigning in Spain and his service during the Rebellion days in Canada, may have begun to take its toll. While on a visit to his old friend, Admiral Vansittart of Woodstock, he was seized with an acute attack of an intestinal character and died before he could be removed to his own home. That he was doubtless a man of strong constitution is revealed in the fact that upon the disinterring of his remains for removal to their present location [the old Anglican Cemetery in Paris] in 1882, the coffin was in such a state as to reveal a French musket ball to be still lodged in his hip bone.

His devoted wife, Harriet, who survived him for 30 years, took on a great responsibility to finish raising their eleven children and to manage their large estate. The children all became well-situated in various parts of the world.

According to Judge Hardy's account, Sarah married the Rt. Rev. Frederick Dawson Fauquier, Bishop of the Diocese of Algoma; Alice married Emilius Fauquier, brother of the bishop; Salina married Charles Robinson, county judge of Lambton; Emma married Piers F. Legh and left for England in 1869; Thomas (b. 1817) joined the Royal Engineers and was in the timber business; Richard joined the Royal Engineers and was in charge of construction on the Pennsylvania Railroad; Arnold had lumber interests, sold out and went to England in 1872; Gilbert and Albert went to the Australian goldfields, where they were successful, and then were in the lumber industry in British Columbia and New York; Decimus settled above Sarnia on Lake Huron; and Agatha, born at Strathmore in 1840, the only child in the family to be born in Canada, married Wentworth Buchanan, manager of the Bank of Montreal, and later General Manager of the institution.

Old directories give some insight into the businesses carried on by the family. Burrowes Bros. & Co., were listed as lumber merchants in Rowan Mills, Norfolk

County. Burrowes & Fauquier was a company listed as lumber merchants at Eastwood (east of Woodstock) in the *Directory of the Province of Ontario, 1857*. Vansittart's were also involved in the company. Frederick Dawson Fauquier, b. Malta, 1817, d 1881, was a Vancouver lumberman. His son Emilius was a lumberman in Eastwood with Burrowes. Emilius was married to Burrowes daughter, Alice.

FATAL ACCIDENT

In the 1850's **William Griffin** owned a carriage works and mill in Mt. Vernon. However, records showed that he owed many debts in various places and had lawsuits to worry about.

In 1857, **William and Nathaniel F. Griffin**, two brothers, and their wives acquired Strathmore Farm, Lots 13, 14 and 15 in Concessions II and II (as seen on the 1858 map), for 8000 pounds. They operated the mills on the property for only a short time. There is an obituary in the Christian Guardian reporting:

GRIFFIN, Nathaniel, proprietor of the plaster beds and flour mill at Strathmore, on the Grand River, died Sunday night from the effects of accidentally drinking some Bi Chloride of Mercury; survived by his wife. From Paris Star, May 18, 1859.

Soon after, the deed was transferred by Julia Griffin, Nathaniels's widow, to William. Because of financial problems, that same year a release of judgment was filed, and the property was seized from Thomas Perrin and William Griffin.

Warner and Beers reports in 1883 that **Peter J. Griffin**, a son of **Robert Griffin**, was owner of the mill standing on the site of the Old Perrin Mills in Mount Vernon. Mel Robertson's *History of the Burford Plain* mentions the Griffins moving to Mt. Vernon in 1858. The same family also had a furniture factory, and another mill in St. George.

According to Whiteman's Creek *Tweedsmuir History*, Harriet Burrowes sold the property off gradually, the last transaction being 237 acres to Robert Turnbull in 1875. This last transaction included the homestead, Strathmore. Harriet died in 1882.

HENRY DE BLAQUIERE

Another military name registered in a large area on both sides of the Grand was **Henry de Blaquiere**, part of Lots 14 to 18 in C. II and III, as shown on the 1858 Tremaine map. In 1856 Henry purchased a large block from Harriet Burrowes. According to Judge Hardy, the Burrowes and de Blaquieres were close friends and it is thought the de Blaquieres convinced the Burrowes to settle in

Canada. The de Blaquieres were of a prominent family who, like the Burrowes, owned estates in England and Ireland, and who were also friends of the Vansittarts in Woodstock. They were all members of the Family Compact.

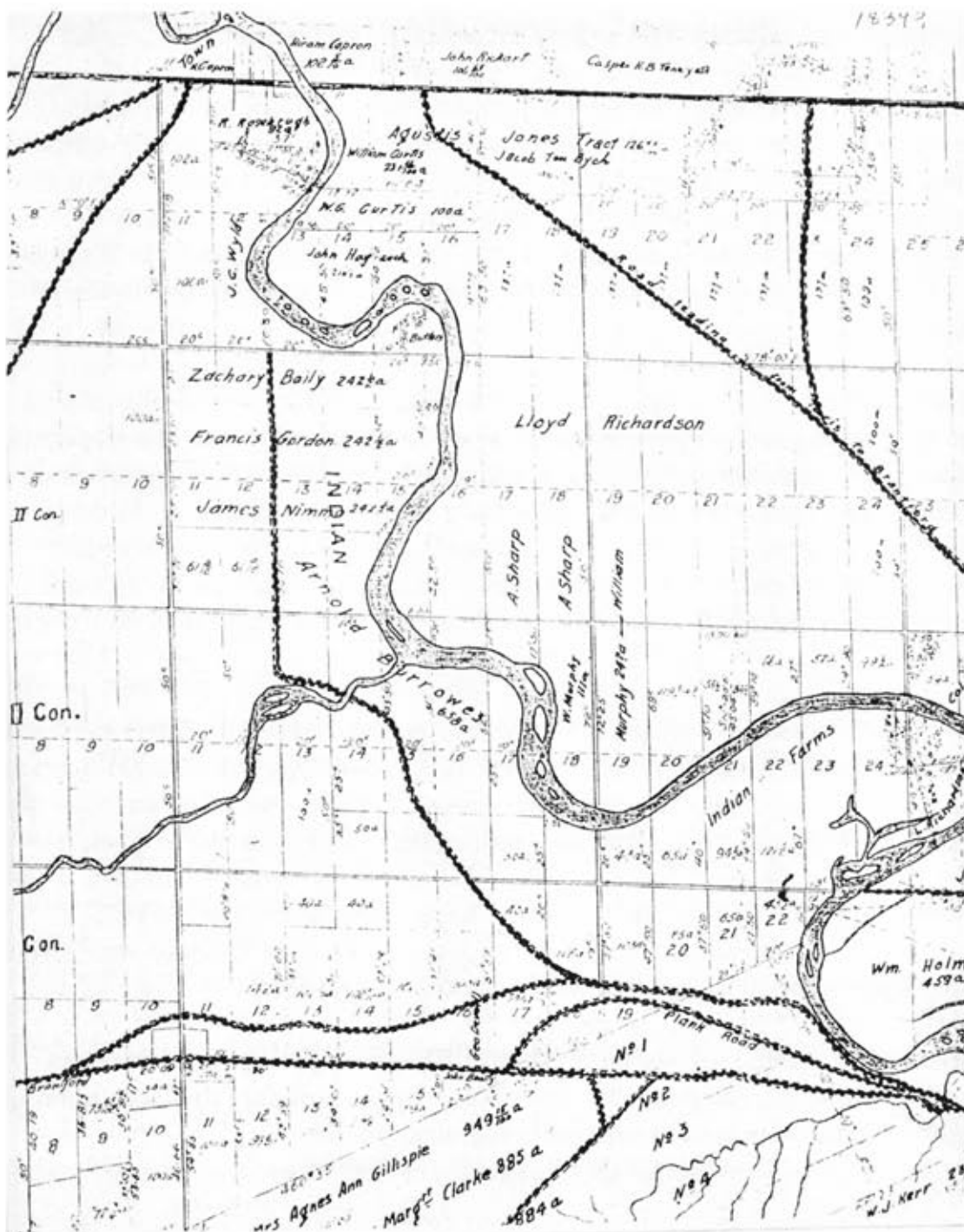
The Honourable Peter Boyle de Blaquiere, father of Henry, was a man of high social standing and political influence - a member of the old Legislative Council of Upper Canada and Crown Warden of the Brock District. He was a retired naval officer, and became the first Chancellor of the University of Toronto. He built a beautiful and elegant mansion called *Altadore* in Woodstock. One of his descendants became Lord de Blaquiere and returned to England to live on his estates.

Peter had two sons, Charles and Henry. Henry de Blaquiere is listed as a Lieutenant in the Second Regiment, Oxford Militia in 1838, and as a Captain in the Third Battalion, Oxford Militia in 1852. On Oct. 17, 1848, Henry married Lucretia Light, daughter of a retired military officer who settled in Woodstock. They lived in a cottage, *Eastdene*, Woodstock, erected in 1838 by Thomas Spencer Short, where Henry planted trees brought from his farm at Hickson. Pictures of "The Poplars" and Henry de Blaquiere are in the John Ross Robertson collection.

Henry, a successful entrepreneur, and his partner, Arthur Farmer, had timber concessions on sixty acres in the best pine lands of Walsingham and Houghton Townships, Norfolk County, and a large sawmill operation at Rowan Mills and Port Royal. They built a logging railway through Houghton and Walsingham to their mill on Big Creek at Rowan Mills. The rails were made of heavy ash beams, and they used horses and oxen to pull the loads over the rails to the mill. They were involved in chartering the Woodstock and Lake Erie Railway and Harbour Co., a project to connect Woodstock to a port on Lake Erie.

The *Canada Directory of 1851* lists De Blaquiere & Elwes as operators of steam saw mills in Sydenham (Burford Township). Probably the large holdings along the Grand were part of his timbering investments.

3 - SETTLEMENT SOUTH OF PARIS



Map ca1839 showing Early Settlers of the Area - Sharp
Rosebrugh, Gordon, Baily, Nimmo, Burrowes, Richardson.
Note Early Transportation Routes

Names listed south of Paris on the earliest maps were **J.C. Wyld, Zachary Baily, Francis Gordon, James Nimmo, Lloyd Richardson, John Haycock, John Sharpe, Daniel Spear, Thomas Davidson**. It is difficult to find much information about some of these early people. In most cases, lands belonging to native peoples were marked **Indian Farms** (see 1839 map) or left blank until assigned by the government to early white settlers or speculators. "By 1800, the bark long House was a thing of the past. Later, the Indians settled in scattered farm lands and lived in individual houses."(G.E. Reaman, *The Trail of the Iroquois Indians*, 1967.)

The following incident is recorded in the Rosebrugh family history:

In 1833, property owned by a family of Indians named **Two Fish** was sold to **James Charles Wyld**, and was supposed to consist of 208 acres. The land had been leased by them in November, 1831 for a term of 21 years, to Matthew Patrick, for an annual payment of 6 pounds, 5 shillings. The first payment was to be 3 pounds in cash, and the balance in goods, wares and merchandise. Subsequent payments were to be made in grain raised on the premises, at the Brantford market price. Lessee agreed to build a house and barn, set out fruit trees, and put 50 acres under good fences. The corners of the boundaries of this property were described as follows: 'The bank of the Grand River, a pile of stones, a large pine tree, and the foot of the hill.' Owing to these inexact boundary lines, a dispute arose between **Robert Rosebrugh** and J.C. Wyld as to the ownership of 16 ½ acres. Before Mr. Wyld purchased the property, the original lease had been bought by **John Smith** for 10 pounds in 1832. He in turn secured a quit claim deed from the Indians for 50 pounds. They gave him the right to buy the tract from the 'government, at such price as the Government, acting on the part of the Indians, should dictate. This was in 1833. In July of 1835 John Smith sold this land, being part of Lots 12 and 13 in the First Concession of Brantford Township, to J.C. Wyld for 250 pounds, with the provision that if John Showers should establish a claim to any part of the land, Smith was to refund 25shillings for each and every acre so claimed.

Robert Rosebrugh had bought lands adjacent to this property to the north in 1833, 108 ½ acres, at \$5 per acre, from an Indian named **Henry Johnson**. He disputed the boundary, and brought it to the attention of officials. The whole story is recorded in *The Rosebrugh Family Story*, by Harold Rosebrugh (1965.) After interviewing several people, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada ordered Lewis Burwell to make a new survey and made a decision in favour of Mr. Rosebrugh. This was disputed by Mr. Wyld, who refused to stay off the land, although ordered to do so. Both parties petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor. The

dispute continued with a good deal of trouble and hard feelings. In December of 1836, Mr. Hepburn, the Indian agent, advised the Lieutenant-Governor to favour Mr. Rosebrugh, and in April of 1838, Mr. Rosebrugh was awarded the property, but required to pay 25 shillings per acre for the 16 ½ acres. Twenty-five documents are filed in the Public Archives in Ottawa as a record of the dispute.

Mr. Wyld's name had disappeared from part of the map by 1839. His name does not appear at all on the 1858 map.

Mile Hill Road did not come into existence until the 1840's. A conveyance was filed in the Brant County Registry office, dated Sept. 15, 1847, between James Charles Wyld and John Mathews, covering 11 acres and 47 acres, and included the "right and liberty for a road and tail race." (Instrument 185)

John Smith, a plasterer from Paris, owned the lands along Mile Hill to what became Powerline, from Paris, except for one piece. (See 1858 map.) Because he needed transport for the gypsum he was mining, he arranged with his neighbour, **John Mathews**, for a right-of-way through his property into Paris. This private road eventually became Mile Hill Road.

According to Ellen McAllister, in her article "The Road", in Whiteman's Creek *Tweedsmuir History*, there was an Indian trail that led from west Brantford to Paris, following along the high bank of the Grand River, sometimes quite a distance from the river. **Pottruff Road** came into existence when R. and W. Gordon sold their property in 1872 in Concession II, arranging a right-of-way. Gordon's wide farm laneway was used as a road preferred over the **concession road** (Powerline) because the latter had some bad gullies and washouts. The road through Gordon's farm turned north, joining Powerline opposite Hammond's gate, then east, fording across a shallow stretch of the Grand, and up the steep bank on the east side. This was a favorite route between Burford and St. George. There is a tale about **Robert McCormick** and **James Miller**, early settlers along Powerline Road, who wanted to attend a funeral across the Grand and waded across the river at the ford east of their farms rather than walking extra miles to the nearest bridge.

Little is known of **Zachary Baily** who bought from the Crown 242 ½ acres south of Powerline Rd. from Rest Acres Road to the Grand - Lots 11 to 15, C. II. He probably built the house on Lot 15, a very early log building later covered with cedar shingles, which still exists. The west part of the farm was sold to **William Watson** and the east part to **John Little**. **Peter Wilson** took over the ownership of Watson's farm, and **Peter Martin** in 1873 bought John Little's farm of 133 acres, and then in 1885 added on the 65 acre farm directly north of Powerline Rd.

(now Hammond's), and then in 1886 23 3/4 acres from Peter Wilson so that his land bordered Pottruff Rd. Land plaster was being mined from this property with mining rights leased and then owned by Thomas Coleman.

Members of the **Miller** family farmed in this area from the 1840's till they died - John on a 65 acre farm on Lots 14 and 15, C.I - and later on Peter Wilson's farm. James lived on the N. ½ of Lot 12, C. III and S. ½ of Lots 11 and 12, C. II. The Millers are mentioned in the reports of the Ontario Bureau of Mines as owning property that was being mined for gypsum. They leased and then sold the mining rights to Thomas Coleman and later owners of the gypsum business in Paris.

The 65 acre property on the S. part of Lots 14 and 15 in Concession I called **Hickory Lodge** (Hammond farm) farmed by the Millers has an interesting log house. Some of the Martin family also lived in this house for a time. From information gathered by members of Whiteman's Creek W.I., we learn the farm was registered in 1830, but property registration often was delayed because it required a trip to Hamilton, and it may date back to as early as 1813. The house was built of white oak and pitch pine cut down from the surrounding land, with the logs hewn and mortised by hand. There were hand hewn doors in the forty by sixteen foot house. The walls were eighteen inches thick, windows small, and the beamed ceilings only seven feet high. There were six rooms on the main floor and two bedrooms upstairs. There was originally no foundation or cellar. This is one of the oldest houses in the area.

Robert McCormick came from Scotland in 1842 and worked for Robert and William Gordon at Gilston Park Farm as a sheep tender for \$128 per year. In 1849, he rented Hickory Lodge from a Mr. Battersby and lived there with his wife and family of two daughters and ten boys. Mrs. McCormick died when the youngest boy was four years old, and the girls looked after the family, weaving and sewing all the clothes for the men. The boys learned to knit their own socks and mitts. Robert and his sons cleared the trees on the farm to provide fuel for burning lime. Evidence of the lime kilns can still be seen on the farm. With the income, they moved to a larger farm in 1856, near Kitchen's School, off the Governor's Road. The story of Robert McCormick and his family was recorded in the Moyle Women's Institute *Tweedsmuir History* by his great grand-daughter, Dorothy McCormick.

Joseph Steele purchased the N. ½ of Lot 9 in Concession II in February, 1854, described as an Indian Land Sale. Squatters on the property could not or

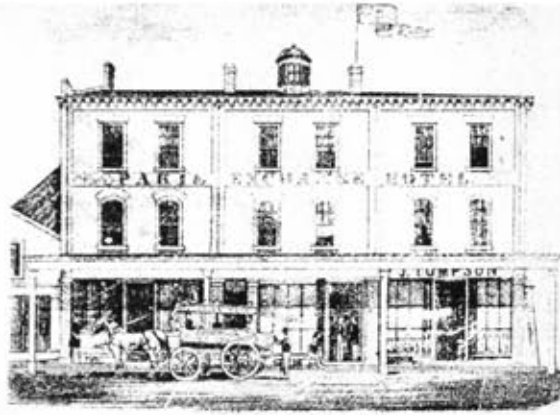
would not pay for the farm and burned the house. When Joseph Steele arrived, he crossed the river in a scow because there were no bridges between Brantford and Glen Morris.

Many of the homes in the area were situated on long lanes and overlooked the river. They had hydraulic rams which pumped water up to their homes and barns from springs down the steep banks. This was true for the Gordon farm.

The name **Robert Gordon** is marked on early maps in the S 1/4 of the north half of Concession II, Lots 11 to 15. It was owned by brothers Thomas and William Gordon, sons of Francis Gordon, who also owned *Gilston Farm*, located at the south end of Paris (now Gilston Survey). The house was named *Cottisbrook Cottage* (meaning cottage on a creek/brook.) At some time during the 34 years the brothers owned *Cottisbrook*, gypsum was mined from the ground. The house may have been built by them or by the Cox family, who bought the property from the Gordon's. Set back in at the bank above the river, the house had a living room with a large bay window that overlooked the river. It had a pink brick exterior, was high-ceilinged, with two storeys and eight rooms.

Capt. Peter Cox's father, Col. Samuel J. Cox, purchased the property but never lived on it. When he sent Peter, age 21, to come and live on the farm, he also sent with him a letter to Sir John A. MacDonald, asking him to look upon his son with favour. The family could trace their ancestry back to William the Conqueror, and Peter grew up in a Manor House in Dorset, England. Coming from a military family, Peter became a captain of the Paris detachment of the militia. In 1880, he held a big auction on his farm. He moved to Paris and in 1886 built a large house that became Kipp's Funeral Home on Grand River St. North. He became postmaster in 1892 and died in 1911 before his son John was born. The country property was bought by TCG in 1972 and the house demolished.

James Nimmo came to Paris in 1833. In 1836, James Nimmo acquired from the Crown Lots 11 to 16 inclusive in Concession II, 242 1/2 acres, extending from Rest Acres Road to the Grand River. In 1839, he sold Lots 11 and 12 to Ann Dickson, widow, consisting of 100 acres. He hired Levi Boughton to build a cobblestone house on the remaining property. The French windows in the large living room gave a beautiful view of the Grand River and the valley. It appeared to be "a home of gracious living and much entertaining" overlooking the Grand River on his property. According to the Whiteman's Creek *Tweedsmuir History*, the cellar was bricked and contained six rooms. One with a fireplace was probably the kitchen because it had irons in it and strong hooks in the ceiling.



Picture from Tremaine's
Map of
Brant County, 1858

In 1854, James Nimmo and wife sold to John Marshall Lots 11 to 16, which contained 142 acres. He was the first manager of the Gore Bank of Hamilton, which he established in Paris in 1848. The only information obtained about James Nimmo after 1854 is found in directories of the Town of Paris.

In the *Canada Business Directory* of 1857-58, Nimmo, James Jr. is listed as an insurance agent for the British American Assurance Co. In 1861-2 *Great Western Railway Gazetteer and Business Directory*, James Nimmo is listed as the agent for the Gore Bank, 2 Gore Block, Paris. He remains the same in a directory in 1867, but by 1869, he is only listed as living in Upper Town, Paris. This probably indicates that he had retired by this time. There is a Nimmo Street in the northeast part of Paris, east of Willow Street.

Copy of a Letter From
Charles Nimmo to Norman
Hamilton
For the Gore Bank

Gore Bank Agency
N. Hamilton Esq Paris 11th May 1854
Dear Sir
We had this day
presented your cheque for £171-15-2 which
was paid and leaves your account over-
-drawn £57-10-8 of which I suppose you
are not aware I am Sir
Yours Obedt
Charles B. Nimmo
Teller.

The historic cobblestone house had a variety of tenants and owners before it was sold to Telephone City Gravel in 1975, and, unfortunately, torn down . There is a photo of it in the Whiteman's Creek Tweedsmuir History.

The **Tew** and **Bass** families were early settlers in the first Concession, Lots 1, 2 and 3. Arthur Tew married Mary Bass, and they came from England, and settled here in 1851. John bought land from a black man named **Cyrus Morey** who had married one of Joseph Brant's daughters and received a land grant. Arthur and Mary Tew had three boys and a girl.

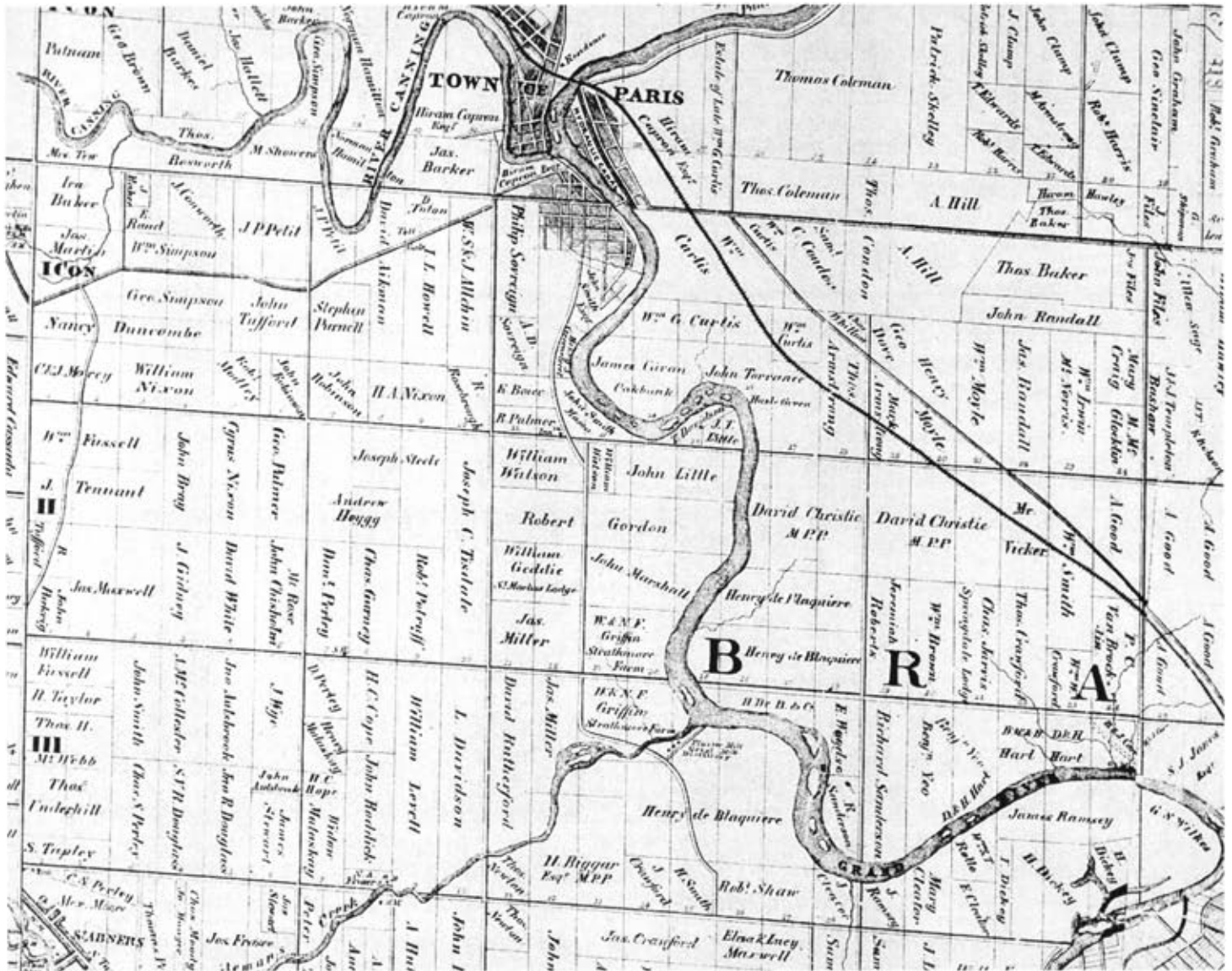
Their son John married his first cousin Ann Maria Bass, and they lived on his father's farm, replacing the log house with a more permanent one. The new residence was built using grout - a mixture of local materials - cement, plaster and stones. Their granddaughter, Kathleen, married Norman Marshall. She wrote many articles for the Paris Star and a book, *Sitting on the Curb*, still a favorite to Paris people, under the name, **Kay Tew Marshall**.



In 1851, **Richard Palmer** bought part of Lot 11, Concession I from **Thomas Coleman**. In 1852 he built a frame home which was used as *Palmer's Inn*, or *Tavern*. At the back of the house was a shop used by his son to repair and make shoes. The Tremaine map of 1858 shows the inn located at the north west corner of Powerline Road and Mile Hill Road.

According to Whiteman's Creek Tweedsmuir History (p. 68), part of the house was moved to Schuyler's when the red brick house was built in 1916. Delbert Schuyler reported that "It took 34 horses to move the house up the grade across the fields to Lot 10, Concession II. A Bell telephone man sat on the roof for the purpose of lifting the telephone wires, when the house crossed the road. However, the horses got going so fast, trying to complete the haul, that the frightened man hung on for dear life, just letting the wires break."

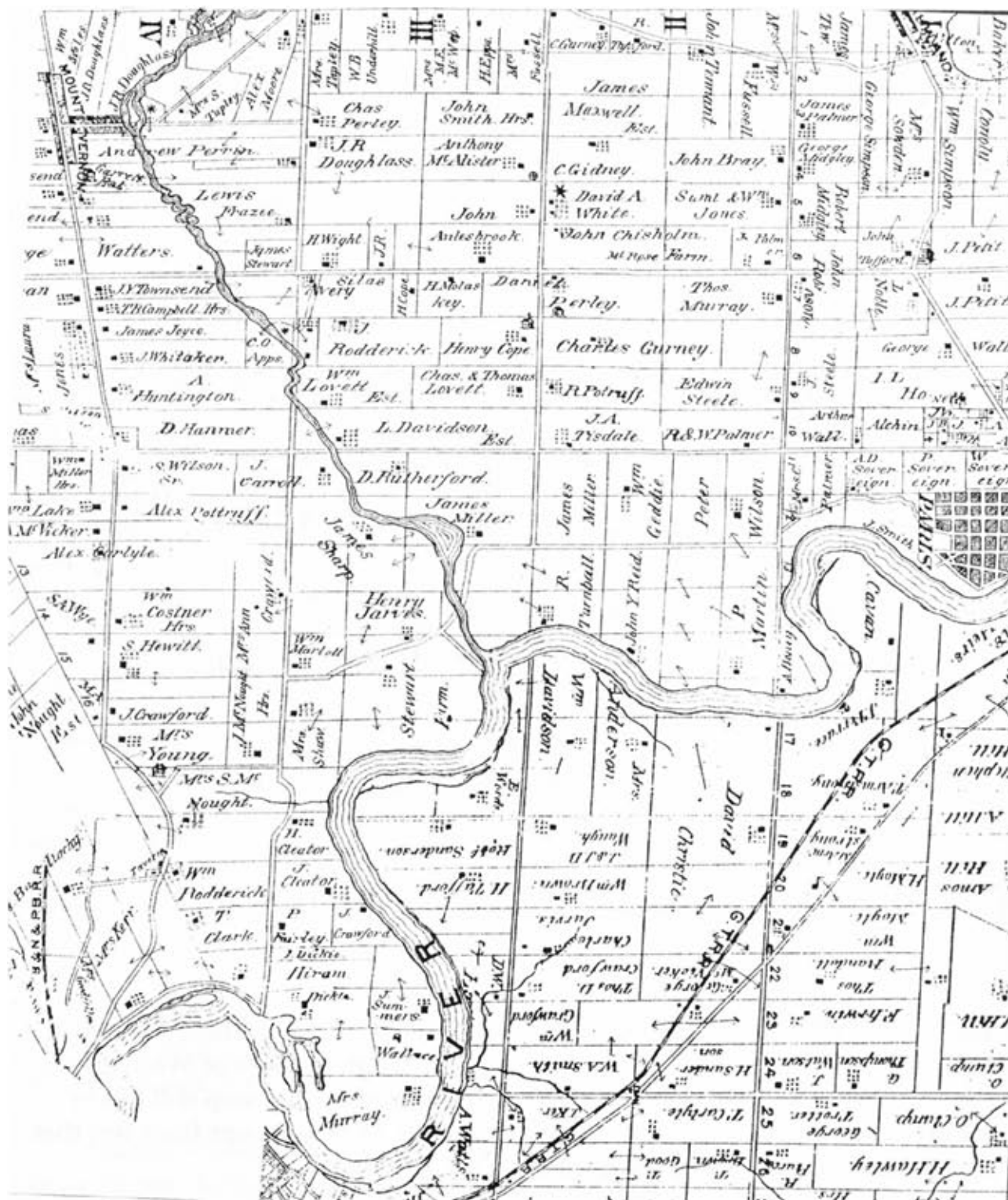
Thomas Coleman and **John Smith**, both involved in gypsum mining, owned property near Mile Hill, and are discussed in the section of this book entitled Gypsum Mines and Mills. Two families that settled early in the area south of Whiteman's Creek who were involved with mining and milling gypsum were the **Fairlies** and **Cleators**, who were intermarried. More is related about them in the chapter about gypsum mining.



Tremaine's 1858 Map of Brant County shows the Griffin brothers located at Strathmore. Also note the road, two mills and distillery south of Whiteman's Creek. Descendants of many of the families named on this map still live in the area. On comparing them with names on the 1839 map, one finds few that match, there are more matching those on the 1875 map.

Note the small community of St. Abners (lower left).

Davisville (Davis Hamlet) was located between the two streams on the Hart property (below Hardy Road.)



Map of Area Taken from *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Brant, 1875*
(North is on the right side of the map)

4 - SETTLEMENT IN WHITEMAN'S CREEK - BETHEL AREA

To receive a land grant of 100 acres, settlers paid 100 pounds. They were required to build a house 16 feet by 20 feet minimum, and to clear and fence 5 acres out of every hundred. They also had to clear the road adjoining their land. A local person was appointed by the government as roadmaster. Three days per year of statute labour was required of settlers to maintain and gravel the roads. When they filled the requirements, the settlers had to go to Hamilton to receive their deeds.

<p>statute labor 18 46 John cleator and henry one day with team and plow henry cleator 1 day with shovd philip fairly 1 day with a team on the scra per philip fairly 1 day with shovel</p>	<p>name muster davison and ralph with a team 1 day</p>
<p>hid son cleator one half day with his team one half day with shovel james cramford 1 day with team 1 half day with shovel james michel 2 half day with team 1 half day with shovel</p>	<p>jery and wiliam jollis 1 half day with shovels jery jollis one day with shovel</p>
<p>john kirby 1 half day with team wilford berkby 1 day with sh</p>	
<p>June 10 11 and 13 18 46</p>	

A Record Kept of "Statute Labor" includes names of people who lived south of Five Oaks - Cleator, Fairlie, Kirkby (Kirby)

Good use was made of the water power from Whiteman's Creek. Near the mouth of the creek, on the south side, in the 1840's, the **Burrowes** constructed a mill dam, a plaster mill, saw mill, stock pens, hop house, a distillery, a flour mill and other buildings, according to Judge Hardy. It is said that up to 18 families lived and worked in the little community. It is believed that some of the native peoples lived nearby. But there is little or no history written about this small community. We are not aware that it even had a name.

From early times, there was a ford across the Grand just below Whiteman's Creek, connecting the community with the families and farms across on the left bank of the Grand River. Mary Ellen Edgar recalls being told about her family, the **Greenwoods**, crossing at the ford near Whiteman's Creek by horse and buggy many years ago. The Greenwoods lived on the east side of the river.

In 1875, **Robert Turnbull**, who had acquired 273 acres at Five Oaks including the old homestead, Strathmore, transferred ownership to his sons - **Frank, James and Warren**, in 1892. Margaret Pottruff married **Frank Turnbull** in 1883. Frank (b.1854) was the eldest son of Robert and Olivia Turnbull. They had six children - Robert; Agnes King (Hickson, Ont. 6 children); Hazel Sutor (Guelph); Olivia Dymont (Woodstock); and Fern (b.1899) who married John Edgar. Frank died in 1931 and is buried in Paris Cemetery. **Frank Turnbull** and his wife, **Margaret Pottruff Turnbull**, sold the farm to **Wesley Pottruff**.

The **Pottruffs** were one of the families who lived at Five Oaks and whose members were scattered in the area. John and Christine Pottruff came from Pennsylvania soon after 1800 and settled in Saltfleet Township. Their youngest son, Simeon, remained in the Saltfleet area. Simeon's third son, Robert, married Nancy Jane Stewart, and they came to Bethel area after 1851.

Robert Pottruff lived at the south half of Lot 9, in the second Concession. This property remained in the family until 1923. He was a Justice of the Peace and very influential in building Bethel Stone Episcopal Church. Robert and Nancy's children were Catherine, Alexander, Lucy Ann (Annie), Caroline (Carrie), Sarah, Johnathan, Margaret, Alfred, Wesley, Helena and William.

According to W.I. records, in 1918, Ernest and Pearl Pottruff moved in to Strathmore, and they acquired the deed to the property in 1937. Gradually, over the years, part of this farm was transferred to other members of the family, a section sold to Telephone City Gravel [TCG], and eventually in 1962 the homestead and remaining acreage were sold to Five Oaks.

There are still many Pottruff descendants settled in the area.

Robert's son Johnathan (b.1856, d. 1964) married Helen Parnall (b. 1860, d. 1936)

Wesley married Hannah Peart, and their son Clarence married Daisy Folsetter.

Strathmore 1891



Alice McDonald, Maggie, Frank and Roy Turnbull

THE POTTRUFFS AT STRATHMORE

The son of Clifford Pottruff, Garth, contributed the following article:

In 1875 Harriet Burrowes sold 237 acres with the Burrowe's house to Robert Turnbull. In 1892 Frank Turnbull (39 years) and his wife Margaret Pottruff (34 years) purchased the property. They raised six children on this farm.

In 1895 tragedy struck two of their children, dying of sickness: Edna Helena, born Nov. 9, 1892 died April 13, 1895 and William Harold born February 24, 1895, died April 5, 1895.



In 1905 Frank sold the farm to Margaret's brother Wesley Pottruff. Wesley moved in married, with seven children. His oldest daughter Annie May born 1893 died March 27, 1905 of spinal meningitis. Wesley's ninth and last child Muriel Lillian was born November 1, 1908 on this farm. In the spring of 1909 Wesley moved to an adjacent farm.

It is most likely that between 1909 and 1917 the house sat empty. Muriel Pottruff thought that her oldest brother, Ernest, lived there after his father moved out. This seems unlikely since Ernest would be only 17 years old at the time. But it is also known that Ernest's mother required all the boys to do one year of housekeeping and cooking duties, so he might have been able to live alone.

Also another brother Wilfred told how he had to go over and do the chores at the farm daily. Wilfred kept his flock of barred rock layers there and described it

as a "dandy" flock, his pride and joy. He also talked about one day showing his flock to a shifty character in the area. The next morning when he arrived the entire flock was gone. The fact that the chickens were stolen during the night points out that the farm house must have been vacant for a while. This incident happened before 1914. Also Verna (Pottruff) Schuyler thought her father Ernest had said the house sat empty. In 1917, Ernest started repairs on the Burrowes house. The kitchen floor was all chopped up from splitting firewood inside. The stairway to the attic in the kitchen had already been closed off by Frank Turnbull, so the only set of stairs left was over the banquet room. The banquet room was used for storage and the bedroom above beside the secret room was the hired hand's. Ernest married Pearl Glover in 1918. They basically lived in the other half of the house with the lower kitchen and bedrooms.

MEMORIES OF THE BURROWES HOUSE

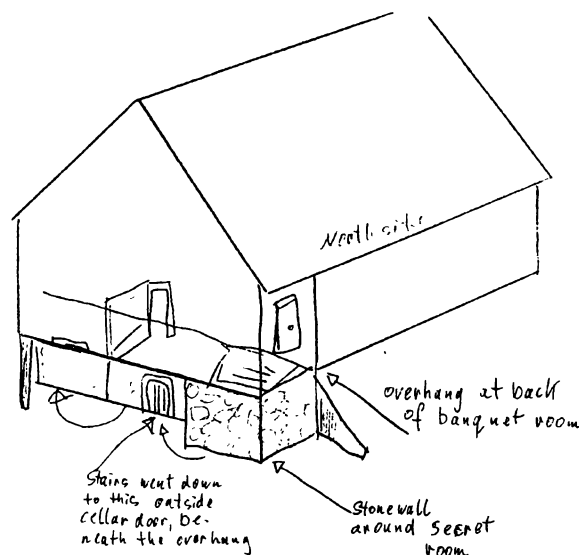
1. The kitchen had a set of French doors that opened up to look over the Whiteman Valley.
2. The long, narrow bedroom, about 10 feet wide, on the bottom floor had steps going from the hall and to the other middle bedroom.
3. It was a wonder the place never burned down because Ernest used to get red hot the stove pipes that ran through all the house.
4. The water for the house came by pail and bucket from a spring about 50 feet down the Grand River bank north-east of the house. There were also springs to the southwest of the house.
5. When you went up the stairs in the banquet room, at the top of the landing was a door that led to the outside, but no stairs or porch. It was about five feet off the ground. The Pottruff children used to jump out of it for fun.
6. The entrance to the secret room was also on the top of this landing. The floor lifted up and there was a room below about four feet by eight feet, surrounded completely with field stone and mortar. There was a small hole through the east side for ventilation. The whole second floor was an overhang beyond the foundations of the banquet room. This overhang was supported by a post at one end and the square foundation of the secret room at the other end.
7. To get to the basement, one went down a set of steps under the overhang, through a door and then down a few more steps. The basement was about six feet high. There was only a full basement under the banquet room.
8. The first bedroom on the attic floor above the banquet room was dark with no windows. The other large attic room above the banquet room had been finished for living in, but the attic above the kitchen area was never completed.
9. The Burrowes house had eight entrances to the outside.

10. When the building was torn down, artifacts were kept by Five Oaks in hope of erecting a cairn on the site. They were some big wooden frame hinge pegs, some big metal hinges and a large pine plank that whisky barrels were stored on. This information was contributed by Ken Oliver.
11. To go to Brantford, one could ford the river with horse and carriage just below the mouth of Whiteman's Creek.
12. Ernest talked about the other side of the Grand where at one time Burrowes had a race track and also trained Six Nation regiment recruits on horseback manoeuvres in the big field.
13. Lumber was taken off in the early 1900's and teamed to Paris where it went by rail to Woodstock to Bain Wagon Works. The valley was so heavily logged that from the kitchen you could see Greenwoods on the other side fording the Grand River with horse and carriage. You could also see the traffic coming down the old mill road to the mouth of Whiteman's.
14. There were also buildings north-west of the Burrowes house at one time. Ron Pottruff talks about finding plaster, glass and coins in that area. Also plastered inside, they used it as a garage. Had it been servant quarters?
15. There is a large painting of the mill ruins at Whiteman's owned by Marvin Green, R.R. # 4, Brantford.
16. There is also the pot of gold story. The Pottruff version is that a white man who live there before Burrowes had his wealth stored in a chest on site. This man showed the wealth to his daughter and her boyfriend. One day while working down at the creek his daughter and friend struck the man and pushed him in the creek, where he drowned.....thus Whiteman's Creek. The young couple went back to get the gold only to discover it had been moved .. And they never found it.
Verna (Pottruff) Schuyler tells of an event where some native women came to visit her father Ernest. They had tea together in the kitchen, then one old woman went out the back kitchen door to than old elm tree. She said that at midnight in a fall moon the shadow of the tree would lie over the buried pot of gold. She pointed to a depression nearby and said that was probably the spot. Ernest did not take her seriously because he had buried a horse there.
17. Verna also tells about coming home from the Paris Fair and finding the entire house ransacked, but nothing taken. The Pottruff family always wondered whether someone had been looking for the gold.
18. There is also the story of the Indian Burial Ground. Wilfred Pottruff said it was a burial ground, but Ernest and his family called in the Indian Field. The Indian Field had been cleared along the Grand River and used for pasture. In 1940, the Schuylers rented the field and planted it with ginseng, but the crop

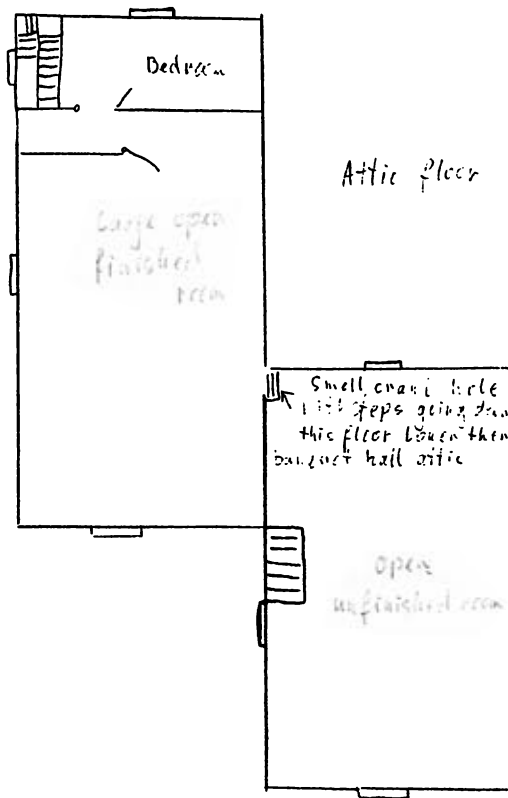
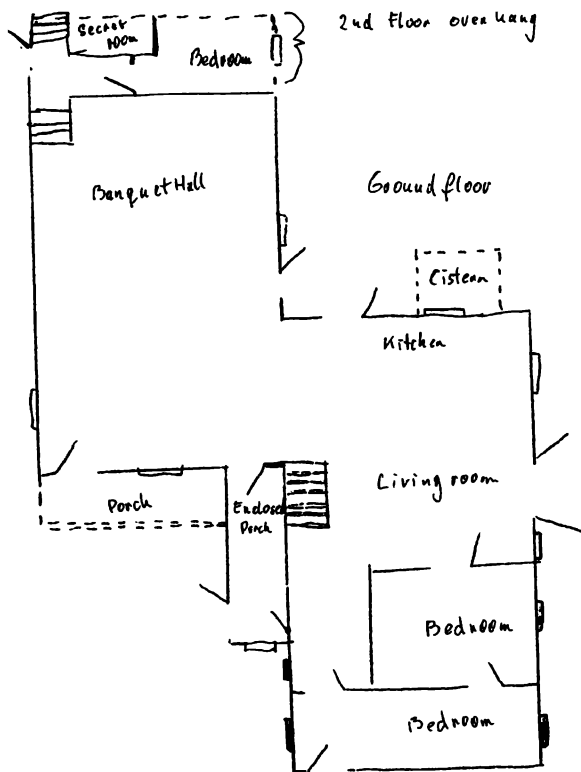
failed after three years. So the field was put into Christmas trees and then harvested off at a later date.

There is the story of the mass grave being discovered in the area. It is told that while pulling out a stuck combine with the aid of a backhoe, a mass grave was uncovered. It was kept a secret by the three men there. The problem is that the only place where a combine gets stuck is in the spring areas and it is highly unlikely that these water areas would be used as burial grounds. Part of this Indian Field is tiled in the large section where the combines sank.

19. Wilfred Pottruff remembers three big open brick kilns operating 100 yards north of the Whiteman's mouth along the Grand ca 1905 when he was a child. Wilfred also said there was a hop mill, but it never ran while the Pottruffs owned it. Shirley Davis' family does mention hauling mash out of this mill.
20. Signs of the old mill raceway can still be found at Whiteman's. There are bits of red brick in the bottom of the raceway.
21. There is the story that Burrowes built a house on the south side of Whiteman's but research shows this home to be built in 1860 or later, and likely built by someone else.

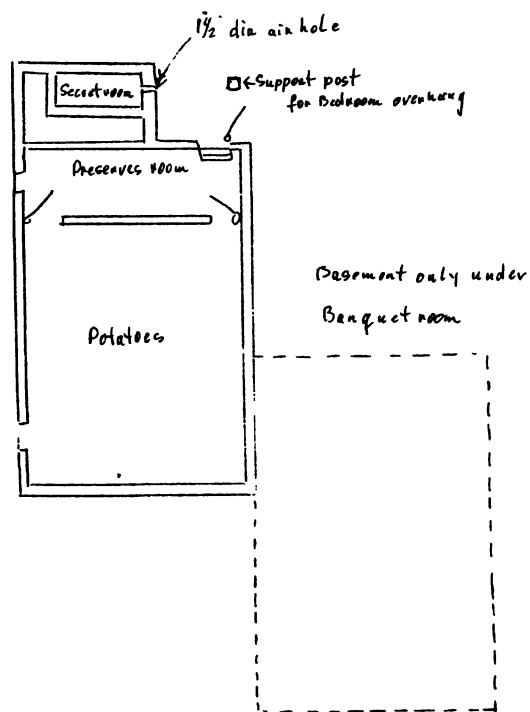


Plan of Strathmore



Plans of Strathmore

Note - Secret Room



MINING FAMILIES

Also south of Whiteman's Creek, lived the **Peart and Milburn families**. Titus Peart and his brother-in-law John Milburn emigrated to Canada around 1869 from Weardale, Durham County, in the north of England, when the lead mines ran out and there was no longer any work. They worked at the gypsum mines to save up a down payment on the land. "On April 30, 1876, John and Titus purchased 220 acres along the Grand River from Major Burrowes. There was a nearly completed red brick house on the property (built ca 1860) and later the two families drew lots to see who would remain in the house. As a result the Pearts became owners of the north 110 acres, and built a white brick home which can be seen from the Milburns' back door." He helped to build the Bethel Stone Church. John's son, John Shields Milburn, married Almira Helena Pottruff. They lived in the house with his parents, later adding on a kitchen, bedroom and woodshed. Their son, Robert, was born in 1906. He married Miriam Green, who lived close by, and his sister married Marvin Green.

Alberta Olmstead, granddaughter of Simeon and Elizabeth Pottruff, married Titus Peart in 1894. As in most other communities, one finds many of the old families are interconnected. The Pearts still live in the area, and the Milburns live on their original land.

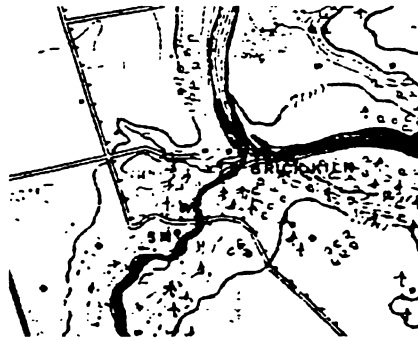
OTHER ENTERPRISES AT WHITEMAN'S CREEK AND BETHEL



One of the two mills marked on the 1858 map by Whiteman's Creek

At the mouth of Whiteman's Creek, there have been other enterprises since the days of Col. Burrowes. For a few years, the Bixel Brewery was situated there, established around 1908. William Brittain, from across the river, had a contract with the brewery to haul away the brewer's grain to be used as cattle feed. Delbert Schuyler's uncle, John Schuyler, hauled his loads of mash to an old cistern located at a farm where the Brantford Airport is today. The brewing operation was later moved to Brantford.

In 1906, a **sawmill**, owned by Nesbitt of Woodstock was situated nearby, run by Nesbitt & Close. The portable sawmill processed pine, cedar and oak purchased from Mr. Wesley Pottruff from **Dawn Valley Park** nearby. Wesley and Clarence Pottruff were hired to haul the timber to Paris. The sawdust from the mill was used for packing ice in, and as a mulch for ginseng beds.



Brick Kiln Shown on 1913 Map

According to Wilfred Pottruff, ca 1908, 2 or 3 long, narrow **brick ovens** were located at the foot of the hill that leads to the river flats. Clay was dug at the banks of the river to make bricks. The ovens had material banked upon them for insulation. The white bricks were used to build old Central School on Broadway St. East in Paris, between 1907 and 1909. Mr. Close and a partner Mr. Parker worked on this operation.

King's College is marked on the early maps of the area and elsewhere in Upper Canada. When the colonies were settled by the British, the Church of England was the established church. Marriages were not recognized unless they were Anglican. When lands were being settled, one seventh of all the Crown lands went to support the Anglican Church, including schools and universities, and were assigned to them on early maps. 500,000 acres of waste lands were set aside as clergy reserves and an endowment for the support of schools and "a college or university for the instruction of youth in the different branches of liberal

knowledge.” Thus we see “King’s College” marked on maps. Bishop John Strachan and the Family Compact supported the development of a university, and on March 15, 1827, an Act was passed to grant a charter to a university for the province, King’s College, to be built in York, and to allow the clergy reserves or endowment lands to be sold. These endowment lands were a detriment to the settlement of Ontario because they remained large wildernesses until after areas around them were settled. King’s College became the University of Toronto in 1849. The lands along the Grand marked King’s College came into the possession of Burrowes, Henry de Blaquiere and David Christie.

In 1933, **Rest Acres** was developed as a private park with a large swimming pool. It attracted crowds for many years. In 1972, it became **Apps Mill Conservation Area**, part of the holdings of the Grand River Conservation Authority. It consists of 266 acres: its Carolinian forest, mainly beech, maple and oak providing a habitat for a wide variety of mammals and birds; a pine plantation is home for meadow larks, mourning doves and red squirrels; along the creek live the great blue heron, mink, raccoons and kingfishers; a sugar maple bush, planted by the Apps family early in the 1900's, is also located on the property and sap is collected and boiled down each spring. Albert Apps house became an education centre. **Apps Flour and Grist Mill** was retained as an historical site.

Other small communities sprang up in our area. St. Abner’s Baptist Church, now the Brant Rod and Gun Club, was built in 1835, and also served a small community, including a general store, sawmill and grist mill.

The road between the second and third Concession became known as **Bethel Road**, named after **Bethel Stone Church** which has been the heart of the local "Bethel Community" for many years. It is located on the N. half of Lot 8, C. III, and was built as an Episcopal Methodist Church in 1864, using local stone and community labour. Church members built an arena on church property that served the community for many years.

In 1844, early pioneers had built a school near the lane of a farm owned by **Charles J. Gurney, Sr.**, on Lot 8, C. II. Gurney was the second teacher in this school. A tax was levied by property assessment plus one shilling three pence per pupil.

In 1875 the school was moved to Lot 7, S. half of C. II, on land was donated by the **Perley family** from a corner of their farm. Daniel Perley and his wife, Elizabeth Jane Nelles had bought their farm in 1843. The **Perley School** served the

community until 1966, when the new Bethel School was built on Lot 11, C. III. The Perley School became a community hall.

From the *Trustee Minute Books* of 1852, the following information was recorded. It gives us a snapshot of the neighbourhood.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Freeholders and Householdors of School Section No. 1 of the Township of Brantford, held in the School House on the

second Wednesday of January in 1852. Present: James Miller, Henry Cope,

William Geddie, Daniel Perley, John Chisholm, Wesley Howell, Charles Gurney.

A property tax was levied, based on assessment, and a further fee of one shilling three pence, to be taxed quarterly, for each pupil. The teacher, Mr. Robertson, was paid five pounds per month.

Collectors Roll For 1852

<u>Name</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Pounds</u>	<u>Shillings</u>	<u>Pence</u>
John Aulesbrook	440		18	4
Arnold Burrows	1500	3	2	6
J. & R. Burrows	900	1	17	6
John Smith	375	1	5	7
Henry Cope	288		12	
John Chisholm	440		18	4
Jas. Doyle & Wm. Horne	25		1	
Launcelot Davidson	1208	2	10	4
Wm. Geddie, R. Dickson	640	1	6	8
Wm. & R. Gordon	1256	2	12	2
Chas. Gurney	460		19	2
Jos. Gidney	317		13	2
Joshua Gidney	440		18	4
Wm. Johnston	144		6	
Jas. Miller	688	1	8	8
Henry Molaskey	140		5	10
Jas. Maxwell	760	1	11	8
Anthony McAllister	302		12	7
Jas. Nimmo	908.15	1	17	10
Thos. Newton	800	1	13	4
Daniel Perley	640	1	6	8
Greaves Robson	492.15	1	6	6
I.C. Tisdale	400		16	8
A. Taggart, John Wye	340		14	6
David White	440		18	4
Geo. Waters	450		18	9
Zachary Bailey	1152	2	8	9

List of Scholars on the Roll

Jas. Miller	David White
Margaret Miller	Victoria Johnston
Mary Ann Aulesbrook	William Perley
Catherine Aulesbrook	Wm. Johnston
Maria Gurney	Asa Sayles
Margaret Chisholm	Chas. Gidney
Ruth White	Elizabeth Pratt
Catherine Cope	Lavinia Cope
William Miller	Elizabeth Gurney
Horace Chisholm	Janet Miller
Judson White	Rachel Miller
Caroline White	Salina Gurney
Thomas Auslebrook	F.H. Bradford
Jas. Chisholm	

The people in this area were industrious and hard-working over the years. Prosperous grain and livestock farms exist in this area today, many with the same names as on the *1852 Assessment List*. Farmers have received many accolades and medals for their champion animals and crops. Settlers not only farmed, but began many businesses as well. A chronological list at the end of this chapter has names of many of the businesses carried on.

David Whyte came to Bethel area in 1841. He had 12 children. When he died in 1884, his son David took over. He had a shingle mill on the farm and drew cedar logs from Canning. In 1873 he sold 650 shingles to Block School for \$15.63.

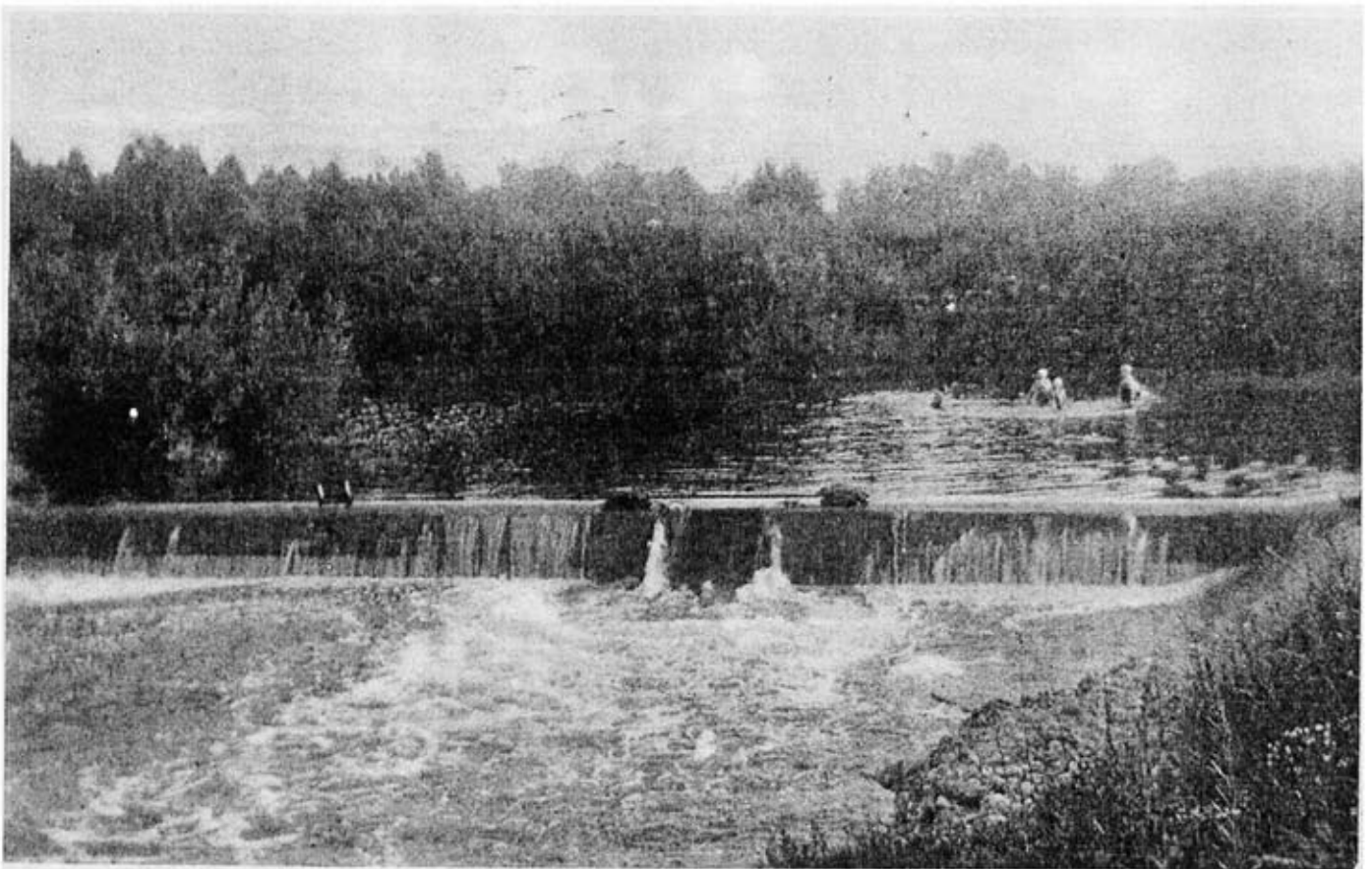
In 1840 **N.A. Fraser** built a flour and grist mill in the scenic Whiteman's Creek Valley west of Rest Acres Road, and on Robinson Road, Lot 8 north 1/2 of C. IV. In 1856, it was sold to **William and Charles Apps**. Valley Mill ground flour for many area farmers. In the early 1900's, "the mill was an important communication link for the area families, with three phone lines connected to Burford, Paris and Brantford." The hockey star Syl Apps is a descendant of this family.

Between 1910 and 1913, a post office called **Ameronto** was opened, located on the S. half of Lot 5, C. II, Whyte property. Its name meant midway between America and Toronto. It was operated by Alfred Pottruff, who rented the farm from Whytes. The mail came in by train twice a day and was delivered to the post office. People would come and pick up their mail. This was the beginning of rural delivery.

CAMP THAYENDENAGEA

In 1935, before it became a retreat for the United Church, part of the land was used as a camp, called **Camp Thayendenagea**, after Joseph Brant. A dam at Whiteman's Creek provided a swimming place. Cabins and a large dining and recreation building were located nearby.

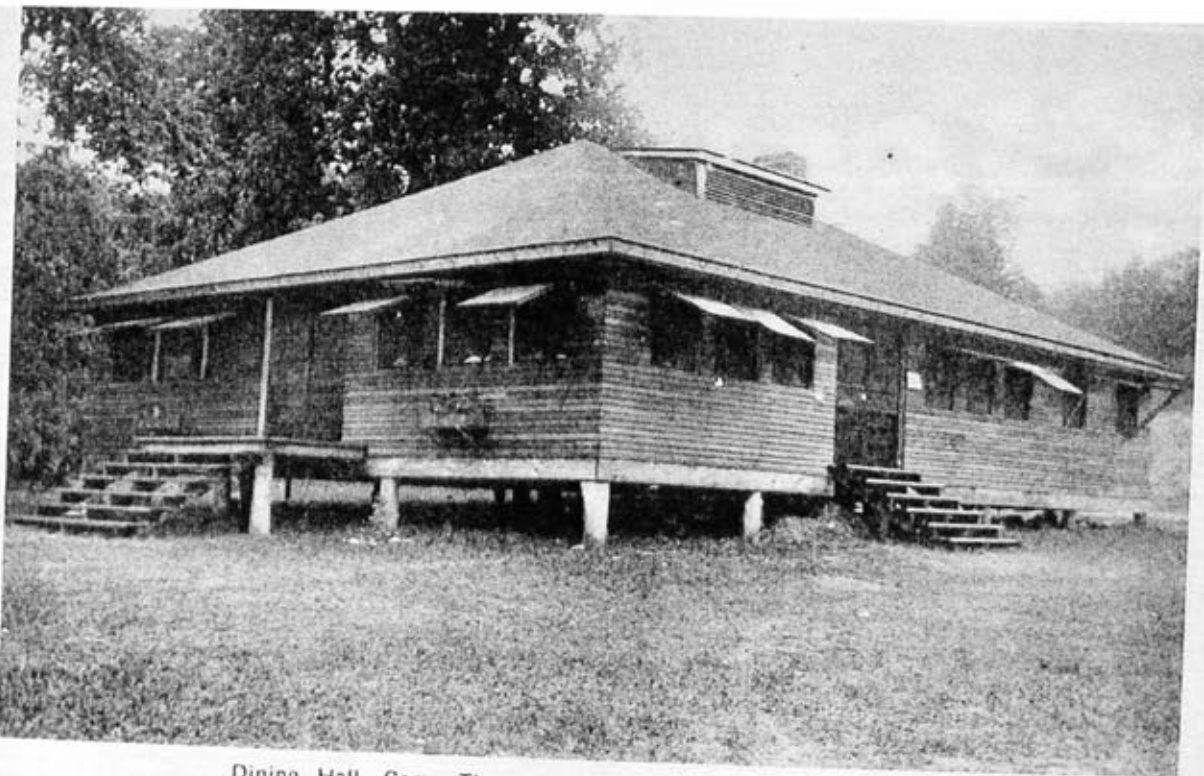
According to Burrage's *Pioneer History of South Brant and Adjacent Townships*, Angus Buchanan was appointed YMCA Secretary for Boys' Work in Brantford in 1922. He was a woodsman and took the boys on hikes on weekends. Peter Porter liked this idea and sent invitations to all local Sunday schools to a weekend camp at Campbell's flats in Mt. Vernon. Seventy-five boys showed up and Angus Buchanan rode his bicycle to the camp and helped organize the weekend for the boys. It was so successful it became the beginning of Camp Thayendenagea.



Dam and Swimming Pool, Camp Thayendanagea, Paris, Ontario, Canada.—7.



Camp Thayendanegea and Grand River from the Hill, Paris, Ontario, Canada.—6.



Dining Hall, Camp Thayendanegea, Paris, Ontario, Canada.—8.

THE FOUNDING OF FIVE OAKS



The camp was purchased in 1946 for \$2500 from Ernest Pottruff by the Ontario Religious Education Council of the United Church of Canada. Rev. Mr. Beverly Oaten established the **Five Oaks Church Camp** around 1952 or 1953.

INDUSTRIES AND SETTLERS IN THE BETHEL AREA

In the Tweedsmuir History, Whiteman's Creek Women's Institute members have recorded information from the earliest settlers to the present owners for each farm from the south half of Concession I to the north half of Concession IV, and from the Township Line to the Grand River. They have methodically searched the land deeds held in the Registry Office as well as gathering information locally. They are to be commended for their excellent work and their diligence. A microfilm copy of the Whiteman's Creek Tweedsmuir History is available in the local history room at the Paris Branch of the Brant County Public Library. We are thankful to Dorothy Cain who has been very helpful in providing information to us.

- 1830 Gypsum mining Lots II, 12, 13, 14 N. 1/4 C. II, S. part of S. half of Lots 12, 13, C.I
- 1835 St. Abner's Baptist Church Lot I, N 1/2, C. IV
- 1838-1889 Thos. Underhill Lots I & 2, S. 1/2, C. III
- 1840-1918 Chas. Perley Lot 7, C. II, S. 1/2
Donated land for Perley School, now Bethel Community Centre
- 1840 N.A Fraser built a flour and grist mill on Whiteman's Creek at lot 8, N. half of Cone. IV. It later became App's Mill.
- 1840's Inn on Town line Lot I, N.1/2 C. IV
- 1840's Major Arnold Burrowes' flour and grist mill, plaster mill and race track Lot 8, N. 1/2, C.III
- 1841 Gurney, Mary Ann (Chas. J., Sr.) Lot 8, C. II, S. 1/2
- 1841-1914 David Whyte Lot 5. Cone. II, S. 1/2. A post office was located on his property.
- 1844-1966 Perley School Lot I, S.1/2 of Conc. II (became Bethel Community Centre)
- 1844-1913 Joseph Tisdale Lot 10, c. II, s. 1/2
- 1844-1882 Stephen Douglas Lots 4 & 5, s. 1/2, C.III
- 1849 - now Anthony McAllister Lot 4, Con. III, n. 1/2
- 1850 No. 5 & 15 Block School, serving Burford & Brantford Twps Lot I, N. 1/2, C. IV
- 1851-1893 Thomas McWebb parts of lots I & 2, c. III, N. 1/2
- 1852 William Apps Family take over Fraser Mill
- 1852 R. Palmer, Tavern and Shoemaking Lot 12, S. 1/2 C. I
- 1852 Clarence Peart part Lot 9, C. II, S. 1/2 House & lot

- 1853-1910 Sam Tapley S. part, lots 1 & 2, C. III, S. 1/2
- 1853-1923 Robert Pottruff Lot 9, S. 1/2, C. II
- 1853-1867 Hugh Hunter Wagon Shop
- 1855-1902 Wm. Geddie lots 11, 12 of n. 1/2 of s. 1/2 of C. II
- 1858 Distillery lot 15, n. 1/2 c. III
- 1858 Sawmill lot 9, s. 1/2 c. III
- 1860's William Lovett, Carpenter, built frame houses Lot 9, n. 1/2, C. III
- 1864 Bethel Stone Episcopal Methodist Church Lot 8, n. 1/2, c. III
- 1868-1895 John McAllister Wagon Shop
- 1871 Thos. Kane Sawmill Lot 1, S. 1/2, C. III (Burford Twp)
- 1873 Maple trees along Bethel sideroad, Government paid people a few cents per tree for maple syrup
- 1875 David Whyte Shingle Mill, Lot 5, S. 1/2, C. II
- 1875 Robert Turnbull bought 273 acres at Five Oaks
- 1876 Titus Peart and John Milburn (Brothers-in-law) Part of Lots, 14, 15, 16, 17, N. 1/2 C. III, 220 acres. They later split the acreage, Pearts the north part, Milburns the south part. In 1967, Clinton Pottruff purchased the Peart property
- 1882 Benjamin Newstead Lot 5, S. 1/2 C. III
- 1885-1941 Elisha Stuart Lot 3, S. 1/2 C. III
- 1888 Thos. Halbert Blacksmith Lot 1, N. 1/2 C. I
- 1895 Peter Bowman, Blacksmith Lot 4, N. 1/2, C. III
- 1899-1952 Eliza Jane Franklin Lot 7, S. 1/2 C. III, 80, acres except one acre
- 1900 Geo. Smith, Blacksmith Lot 1, N. 1/2. c. IV
- 1905 Wesley Pottruff Lot 9, C. II, S. 1/2
- 1905-1963 Wesley Pottruff Part of Lot 13, C. III, N. 1/2 A piece of woods with a portable sawmill. This later became Dawn Valley Park - 1930's.
- 1906 Nesbitt & Close, Portable Sawmill Lot 14, N. 1/2, C. III
- 1908 Close & Parker, Brick Ovens Lot 14, N. 1/2, C. III
- 1908 Bixell's Brewery Lot 14, N. 1/2, C. III
- 1912-1959 John Davis Parts of lots 13, 14, 15, C. III, N. 1/2
- 1915-1971 Joseph Peart Lot 11, C. III, N. 1/2
- 1953 Five Oaks Christian Workers' Centre
- 1957-1967 Hidden Springs Rehabilitation Centre was a retreat owned by Ralph Howlett on the south side of Whiteman's Creek

III THE GYPSUM MINES AND MILLS IN THE PARIS AREA

In 1993, the Grand River Heritage Mines Society was formed with the primary intention to locate the old gypsum mines along the Grand River in Brant and Haldimand Counties, and to gather all the information available about the gypsum mines, mills, companies and people involved, and eventually to publish it in book form. The Society has been gathering information ever since, and has taken many field trips to piece together the information they have retrieved from various sources, including archives, libraries, local histories, maps, Tweedsmuir histories, local people and descendants, and from the companies still involved with the mining and manufacturing of gypsum products.

Local directories and censuses list many names of persons who owned mines or mills or worked as miners or hauled the gypsum from the mines to the mills. Some mines are recorded in leases and deeds registered in the Brant County Land Registry Office.

Reports on the mines are recorded in the annual Bureau of Mines Reports, when the inspector would describe the mine production and workings, sometimes ordering the mine closed until these improvements were made.

The following is a short summary of what we have found about gypsum in the area south of Paris along the Grand. *We plan to write a book in more detail about the mines and mills in Brant and Haldimand Counties.*

In 1792, John Graves Simcoe became Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. After an onerous tour of this vast wilderness occupied by only about 4000 persons, he decided to make its capital London, and build a military road for protection from U.S. In 1793, he assigned his deputy surveyor, Augustus Jones, to survey the Governor's Road from King's Landing on Lake Ontario to London. When he reached the banks of the Grand River, Jones made notes in his diary about the gypsum deposits he discovered exposed in the valley of the Grand River, and also of the potential water power available to incoming settlement at the Forks of the Nith and Grand. When he returned home to Stoney Creek, he must have told his Loyalist friends about it, one being Benjamin Canby. Canby, seeing an opportunity for speculation, leased from Joseph Brant, for a term of 999 years, 600 acres that included the Forks and its gypsum bed. In 1812, another speculator, George Hamilton, founder of the city of Hamilton, bought the lease from Canby.

Robert Gourlay reported in his *Statistical Report of Upper Canada*, regarding Haldimand Township, which later became Brantford Township, Brantford and Paris: "*On December 11, 1817, a meeting of settlers was called at the home of Frederick Yeoward, merchant of Mount Pleasant.....[It was reported] Plaster of Paris in abundance and of good quality - also salt springs equal to those of Onondaga - and which, if worked, would supply the upper part of the province at about 17/6 per barrel.*"

WILLIAM HOLME

In 1822, the first settler, William Holme, acquired land from his brother John and settled in Paris. In 1819, John had bought 1000 acres from William Dickson - Lots 29, 30, 31, 32 in Concession I of the Township of Dumfries. This property later became the village of Paris. Squire Holme, who was a wealthy Quaker gentleman, had his men clear the land and build a log cabin. After leasing the plaster rights from George Hamilton, he began to market the land plaster (gypsum) as a fertilizer or soil conditioner to incoming settlers. Commercial fertilizers were not manufactured until the 1880's. This is recognized as the first gypsum mine opened in Ontario. The mine was located on the south banks of the Nith River where it empties into the Grand, and it is believed it was an open-pit mine - not tunnelled. Holme's men had to break up the gypsum with sledgehammers. To make it easier to accomplish, in 1824, Holme's men dug a shallow millrace from the Nith to the Grand across a swampy area, and then build a small grinding mill - the first gypsum mill in Ontario!

John Howison reported in 1825 in *Sketches of Upper Canada*:

"The Grand River is navigable for schooners thirty miles above its mouth, and for large boats much farther. This is a circumstance of great importance, as its banks abound with beds of gypsum, or sulphate of lime, which has been found to form an excellent manure. These are not regularly worked by anyone at present, therefore the farmers who require the gypsum must quarry and convey it down the Grand River themselves; and this being always troublesome and often inconvenient, the mineral is much less employed in agriculture than it ought to be. The sulphate of lime forms a very powerful manure. Two bushels are sufficient for an acre when properly applied, and the effect produced by these continues at least a couple of years. It differs altogether in its action from common lime, being particularly suitable for light sandy soils that have been exhausted by a repetition of the same kind of crops.

*"Gypsum will soon be in great demand throughout the western parts of the Province; for many of the older farms are nearly worn out, in consequence of the injudicious system pursued by those who cultivate them. The farmers have little idea of the rotation of crops; neither do they endeavour to keep the soil rich and vigorous, by the timely application of manure. Corn succeeds corn, until the land is nearly exhausted, which generally happens in the course of eighteen or twenty years - a length of time which alike proves its natural excellence and shows that, under proper management, its fertility would for ages remain unimpaired. The finest and most extensive bed of gypsum that has yet been discovered lies in the township of Dumfries, which belongs to **William Dickson, Esq.** This gentleman liberally permits the farmer to quarry and carry away as much of the mineral as they please, free of expense."*

WILLIAM DICKSON

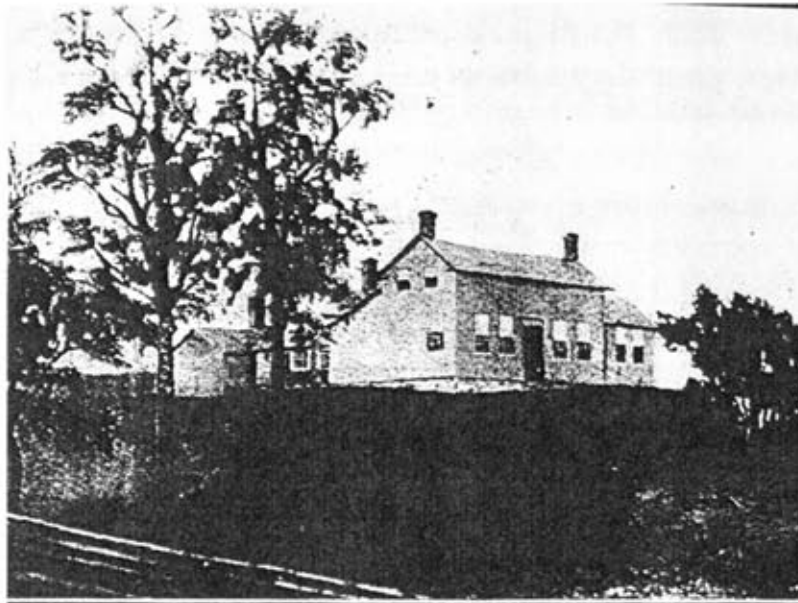
William Dickson was the lawyer who purchased Block One of the Haldimand Tract and named it Dumfries. He built roads and brought in settlers. Eventually it was split into North and South Dumfries Townships. Dickson developed a raceway and mill along the Grand east of Paris close to Green Lane and East River Road, and he also opened up gypsum mines there.

HIRAM CAPRON

In 1829, Hiram Capron , who had made his fortune selling ironware from an investment in the ironworks at Normandale, bought out Holmes, settled at his new home, and proceeded to clear the land to farm. Holmes moved to Brantford to the area called Holmedale. Capron continued to mine land plaster, and extended and deepened the millrace, increased the size of the mill, and brought in other settlers to develop the village which he named Paris after gypsum or plaster of Paris.

WILLIAM GRANVILLE CURTIS

Another wealthy Quaker, William Curtis, had arrived in 1822, and moved in with the Holme family until he acquired his own property, more than 500 acres on the east side of the Grand. Curtis built a home, Brumhill, south of the Governor's Road. He died in 1832. His son, William Granville Curtis, became the first magistrate in the area, and by 1842 was a partner with Hiram Capron and Thomas Coleman in the gypsum business.



“Broomhill,” an Historical Spot near Paris.

THOMAS COLEMAN

Thomas Coleman came to Paris in the early 1830's. A man of wealth, he acquired 700 acres east of Paris in the Jones Tract, and built a mansion. By 1842, he was a partner with Curtis and Capron, and they had an agreement not to sell any of their lands because gypsum was supposed to exist in paying quantities under all the lands owned by these gentlemen.

MARK ARMSTRONG

Also, in 1842, Mark Armstrong appeared upon the scene. "He became counsellor of Coleman, Curtis and Capron, owners of the plaster beds, as to the best method of procuring the material. They had previously been unearthing it, but his knowledge of mining enabled him to mine it out, which was very satisfactory to the proprietors" (*Warner and Beers*). The Armstrong family owned farms in Concession 1, Lots 18 and 19 on the east side of the Grand River.

GYPSUM MILLS IN PARIS

There were several mills in Paris that processed the gypsum. Capron's original mill had several owners. Norman Hamilton and James Whitlaw, both successful in various businesses, ground gypsum as well as grist and flour at their local mills in Lower Town.

Sometimes it was more economical for them to arrange with local business men to lease the mines or mills. In 1850, Alexander Spottiswood leased the plaster beds and mills from Coleman, Curtis and Capron and Hamilton and had the right to take out 1300 tons of gypsum annually for 300 pounds and 2/6 a ton for any gypsum over that amount. Gay and Rouse, who were in the gypsum business, as well as Mr. Wright, had their own mines and mills.

THOMAS W. COLEMAN,

MANUFACTURER OF

LAND PLASTER,

White or Grey, of the best quality at the lowest price.

PARIS, ONTARIO.

Miners would sign contracts to deliver gypsum to their mill from their own mines. This was more beneficial to the millers than to the miners. They would be paid up to \$1 per load, but had reductions taken off if there was too much waste rock mixed with the gypsum.

By 1871, Coleman owned a large brick gypsum mill on Willow Street, where he employed over 60 men. He produced 6000 tons of gypsum that year. Over the years, business flourished and languished, depending on the economy and trade tariffs arranged with the United States.

By 1868, Coleman's partners had either died or become too old to carry on the business, and Coleman continued by himself, until eventually, he sold out mines and mills to the Canada Land Plaster Company, owned by Alexander Gill, David Brown and John Allan. Coleman died in 1885 at the age of 81.

GYPSUM MINES IN THE PARIS AREA

The three partners themselves had owned several mines in the area - the original one at the Forks, another between Hamilton Place and the high level railway bridge, one at the north end of Paris, and eventually, they bought out Dickson on East River Road.

The last, and possibly the most productive one, was located about 1 ½ miles south of Paris near Mile Hill, in Concessions I and II, Lots 11-14.

JOHN SMITH'S MINE

John Smith preceded Thomas Coleman in opening a mine on Mile Hill. He was in the plaster business in Paris and lived on the west side of Burwell Street at the corner of Market Square with his wife, Isabella, and six children. His plastering business is listed in several directories in Paris over the years.

He bought 65 acres from J.C. Wyld in Lots 12 and 13, Concession I, south half, and opened his own mine in 1849. An exception and reservation is filed to allow John Mathews, whose lands abutted those conveyed to Alexander Gordon.

According to Gwen Parkhill's search of land registry documents, "The exception covered a proposed tail race 30 feet wide and provided ingress, egress, and regress for John Mathews, his heirs and assigns, his and their workmen, agent,

with teams, carts, carriages or otherwise, and referred to access to any mill or mills which might be erected or contemplated. It appears from this that there was a possibility that John Mathews might have been involved in the gypsum mining business."

In his will, dated 1863, Smith leaves his mine to his wife and children. In it, he stated that none of his children "shall sell their shares of the plaster mines or surface while the mines continue to yield and no one of them shall hinder or interrupt the working of the mines for the benefit of all."

After his death in 1870, his wife filed a lease agreeing to let Thomas Hill, a lumber dealer in Paris, work the mine. Isabella died in 1886, and her daughter, Isabella Brown, owned the mine until 1908.

9³⁴ 37⁵ 5318
 No 531A.

Office Copy for Registration:

I Certify that the within Instrument is duly entered and registered in the Registry Office for the County of Brant, in Book 1 for the Township of Dresden at 10 o'clock and 43 minutes of the 6th day of October A.D. 1871

J. J. Munster
 Registrar County of Brant.

Isabella Smith
 To
 Thomas Hill
 Leaves
 of Plaster Beds

Henry Hart
 Conveyancer

Winter 531A

THOMAS COLEMAN

A document is registered at the Brant Land Registry Office, dated December 17th, 1867, in which Thomas Coleman leases from Peter Wilson the right to mine gypsum or plaster of Paris from his farm, the North parts of Lots 11, 12, 13, Concession II, Township of Brantford. It specifies he has the right to sink shafts, bring in and use equipment on the land just south of the Concession Road [Powerline Rd.]. Coleman mentions plans to arrange access to his mine by way of Smith's mine. This would allow him access to his mine without having to dig down through the masses of gravel to reach the bedrock level. The lease was to be for four years, and Coleman had the right to purchase the mining rights.

On October 3, 1871, Coleman purchased the mining rights after successfully opening a productive mine.

Land Plaster!

Canada Land Plaster Co.,

GILL, ALLEN & CO., PROP'RS.

We were awarded the principal prizes at all the leading Exhibitions in Ontario in the fall of 1880, for Rock Gypsum and Land Plaster prepared for the Market, as follows:

Diploma at the Provincial Exhibition, Hamilton.
Diploma at the Southern Counties' Fair, St. Thomas.

Diploma at the Great Western Fair, London.
1st Prize at Guelph and Brantford, and 1st prize on Rock Gypsum at Toronto Exhibition.

We sell the well-known **Caledonia White** from Caledonia.

The **Excelsior White** from Cayuga.

And the celebrated **Paris Grey**, from Paris.
The secret of getting good results from Land Plaster is in its being ground fine and uniform. No patent process, other than we adopt, has been successful in destroying the crystals in white plaster, and we ask learners to compare our White Land Plaster with that of other Manufacturers.

Every farmer should send to his representative in the Ontario Legislature for a copy of the Model Farm Report for 1880, and a copy of the Report of the Agricultural Commission just issued.

We own the only mines of Grey Gypsum in Ontario, and it can only be procured from those who deal with us. It is the Grey article from our Paris mines and mills which is preferred at the Model Farm.

Prices as low as from any other Manufacturer.

Address, **Box 95, Paris, Ont.**

183-c

GILL, ALLAN AND BROWN

Coleman sold the plaster business, including the mines, to Alexander Gill, David Brown and John Allan. David Brown married Isabella Smith, daughter of mine owner and plasterer John Smith.

In 1883, John Allan withdrew from the business, and sold his interests to Gill and Brown. This included water rights along the millrace on Willow Street, shares in the land along the millrace, their property and the mill on Willow Street, 215 acres on Lots, 26 and 27 in Concession I of South Dumfries Township that had been sold to Thomas Coleman by Hiram Capron in 1855 containing a quarry, the mining rights in Lots, 11 and 12 and 13 of Concession II, Township of Brantford on the Wilson farm. They continued to mine gypsum from Mile Hill.

MELVIN B. CHURCH

In 1886, Gill and Brown became partners with Melvin B. Church, an inventor and investor, from Grand Rapids, Michigan, who had invented a powder paint, called Alabastine, which contained gypsum. They formed the Alabastine Company of Paris, and manufactured land plaster, calcined plaster and Alabastine, and later developed other products using gypsum. After a disagreement, Mr. Church bought out his partners in 1891.

Church's Alabastine

(MADE IN PARIS.)

is a perfect and everlasting WALL-COATING, made from a cement base. (Plaster of Paris) in twenty tints and white. One that HARDENS WITH AGE; is ready for use by mixing in COLD WATER, and may be re-coated whenever necessary to renew the wall surface.

ALABASTINE is a SANITARY WALL-COATING. It is porous, and permits the free passage of air. Kalsomine, under whatever name or claim, is only temporary—rubs off on everything that comes in contact with it. Wall-paper—with mouldy paste on the back, and arsenical poisoning matter in the finish and coloring on the face—is unsanitary. Besides, kalsomine, wall-paper and paint obstruct wall respiration. "Walls to be healthy must breathe." The walls of hospitals are never papered—the reason is obvious. Sanitarians endorse ALABASTINE. That fact alone is evidence of superiority.

ALABASTINE on the wall of any home will do more to enhance good looks in HOME SURROUNDINGS than anything else that can be used.

ALABASTINE is GOOD, looks nice, and is healthful. Wall-paper gives a room a stuffy smell and impregnates the air with disease germs.

Look for the little church on the label of every package. Alabastine is never sold in bulk. Hardware and Paint Dealers everywhere sell it.

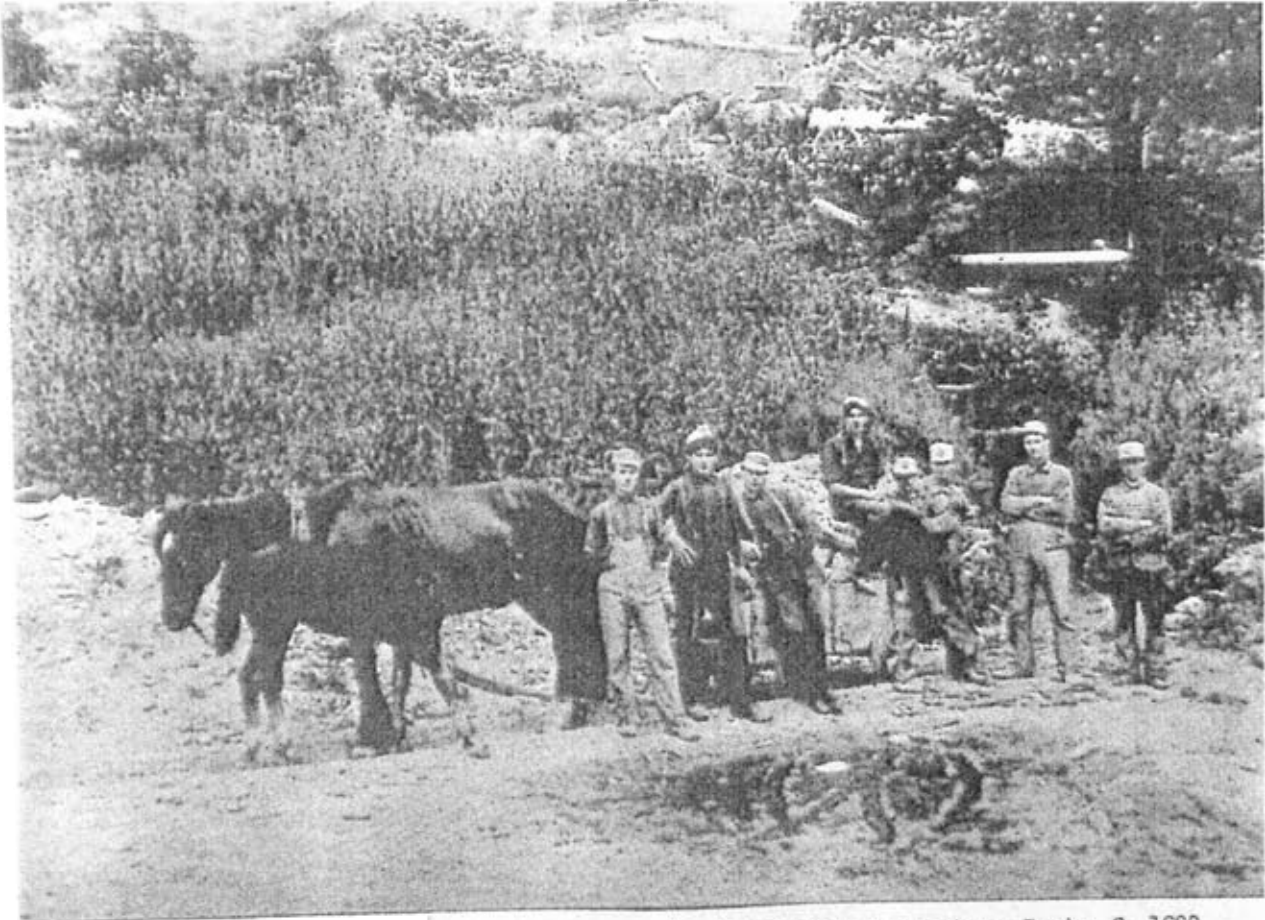
Everybody should be interested. Anybody writing us can have free our booklet on Alabastine. Address.

The Alabastine Co., Limited, Paris, Ont.

Government reports indicate the mines continued to operate at Mile Hill until 1904, when they were blasted shut as a safety precaution.

The Whiteman's Creek Women's Institute reported to the Paris Star on January 21, 1987: "From Paris by the Grand, we have been told, in the mid-1800's, shafts spread out far underground, like spokes of a wheel. One was tunnelled under LyVerne Hunt's farm and under Gertrude Hunt's farm. Underground plaster would be drawn to Paris Plaster Mills in winter by sleigh. There it was ground and pulverized for sale." In winter farmers came from miles around to trade for gypsum.

"Down on the river bank, behind Mrs. Jones house, you can tell where there was a large hole once upon a time. This may have been the entrance to the tunnels mentioned here."



Gypsum Miners on the bank of the Grand River, Paris, C. 1900
 Copy and enlargement by
 Wm. Brown.

Howard and Gwen Parkhill remember talking to Howard's father, John, who used to visit with his grandparents, the Steeles situated on Lots 9 and 10, C. II. John frequently talked about the Mile Hill area which was "honeycombed with mining tunnels, and that some of these tunnels extended for considerable distances. He also said that the mine opening which existed on the lands of Maude Jones (at the northeast corner of Mile Hill and Powerline Rd.) gave an entrance to the tunnel which led southward to the former Hunt farm house, under which there was reputed to be a natural cavern, and continued further south across the fields. "[He] also told me that he used to watch horse-drawn cart loaded with gypsum being drawn up wagon roads which led from the mines. The roads can still be seen quite clearly. The carts would then proceed westerly along Power Line Road, then northerly along Mile Hill to the plaster mills which were located in the Lower Town of Paris."

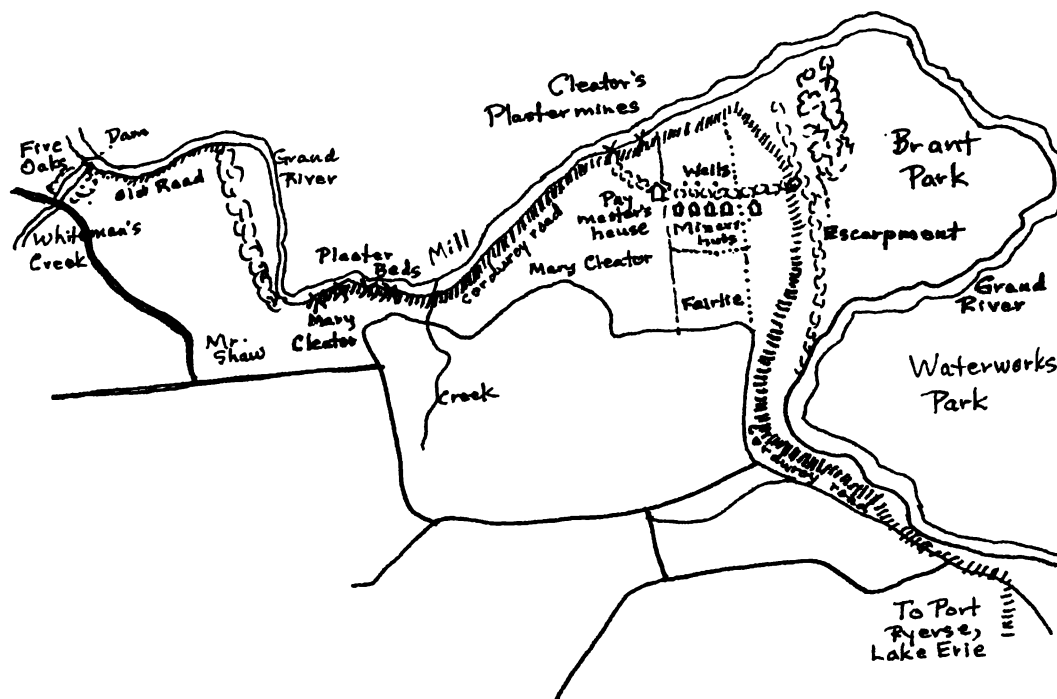
Howard Parkhill and the Grand River Heritage Mines Society have taken



Gypsum miners on the bank of the Grand River, Paris, c. 1900
Copy and enlargement by Mr. Brown.
Op

various field trips down the bank and discovered this hole and various sinkholes filled with water where the mine tunnels have collapsed.

JOHN CLEATOR



Map Showing Cleator Mines and Mill, and Corduroy Road found on Society Field Trip

Warner and Beers History (1883) relates that **John Cleator** was "prominently engaged in the business of distilling, and about 1833, he erected a grist and oatmeal mill, but subsequently constructed it into a plaster mill, and occupied himself largely in the manufacture of land plaster. He owned the plaster beds at the River Bend in the vicinity of Brantford, and was the first white man who owned the farm on which Mr. Fairlie now resides. He was a miller by trade, and died in 1849." His daughter Eliza Cleator married Philip Fairlie on Oct. 16, 1854. The 1858 Tremaine map of Brant County shows two properties in the name of John Cleator and Mary Cleator in 1858. The Cleator family still lives in Brant County. (See map.) The Grand River Heritage Mines Society found the abandoned Cleator mine on its field trips.

The **Milburn and Peart** families, mentioned elsewhere in this book, were involved with working in the mines. They arrived about 1869 from Weardale, Durham County, England when the lead mines were running out and work was no

longer available. Cousins of the Pearts came also and settled along the Grand River around York in Haldimand County. They too were involved with the early gypsum mines in their area. Titus Peart and John Milburn both worked south of Paris in the local gypsum mines to earn enough money to purchase their farms.

When visiting Bob Milburn a few years ago, Ilse Kraemer recorded Bob's story that, when he was a boy, Bob and his Peart cousin explored the Cleator Mine long after it had been closed. The mine extended for a long distance under the airport land. There had been cave-ins, and they could see daylight coming through some parts of the tunnel. Ilse reported after a field trip that she saw depressions where the main tunnel and side tunnels had existed.

MAJOR BURROWES

The story of the enterprising Major Burrowes is recorded in the chapter on early pioneers. Burrowes operated a gypsum mine and mill around Whiteman's Creek.

As reported in Whiteman's Creek Women's Institute *Tweedsmuir History* (page 184), Clarence Pottruff tells the following story: "*I remember, on the Peart side of Whiteman's Creek, seeing a hole in the bank about halfway up the hill. Plaster had been taken out of there earlier and processed at the plaster mill. I just remember looking in this hole.*"

The Grand River Heritage Mines Society took several field trips to locate what appeared to be collapsed tunnels on the property.



1858 Tremaine map shows the plaster mill at Whiteman's Creek

Perhaps the grist and plaster mills were one and the same. Often the miller would change stones, using one to grind flour, one to grind grist and one to grind plaster. According to Clarence Pottruff:, "The grist mill foundations of stone lay at the mouth of the creek on the south side. Flour had been made here too. The dam for the mill pond was just above the present Five Oaks swimming pool. A canal ran across from the creek to the mill to carry water for running the water wheel. This water then ran into the river." There was a footbridge near the dam.



Remains of old mill at Whiteman's Creek ca1918

TORRANCE

In the early 1850's, John Torrance and James Cavan, brothers-in-law, and their families came from Scotland and settled side by side at Hazel Green and Oak Bank farms, each with 125 acres on the east side of the Grand. John Torrance operated a mine on Lot 16, Concession I. Spring floods ended his enterprise. A news item in the *Paris Star*, March 24, 1852 reported that John Torrance, a farmer living in Brantford Township, drowned when a car that was being taken across the river by pulleys went into the water.

HYMERS AND WRIGHT

This same mine was later opened by William Hymers and James Wright.

According to Janice Cavan Labron, a descendant of the Torrances and Cavans, from old family records:

"Plaster mines were opened in 1903 along the river [east side]. The plaster was taken from the mines, put on scows and towed down to the mill at Whiteman's Creek. The mine tunnels were 4 to 5 feet high, and were driven 100 to 150 feet into the bank. The plaster was used to fertilize the land. A road was made down the side of the bank to the river's edge. This was a steep hill and local farmers drew plaster and collected forty cents a ton for hauling it into Paris. The Alabastine company was a distance of two and a half miles. Only half a load could be put on at a time as it was impossible to have horses draw more uphill. The road that became Curtis Ave in early days was the main road to Brantford. It followed the river bank to the Second Concession at Oak Park Farm. When the toll road was constructed, final arrangements were made with John Torrance to close the road so that the people would patronize the Toll Road."

In the *Bureau of Mines Report* of 1895 and 1896 is filed the inspector's report:

Torrance Mine

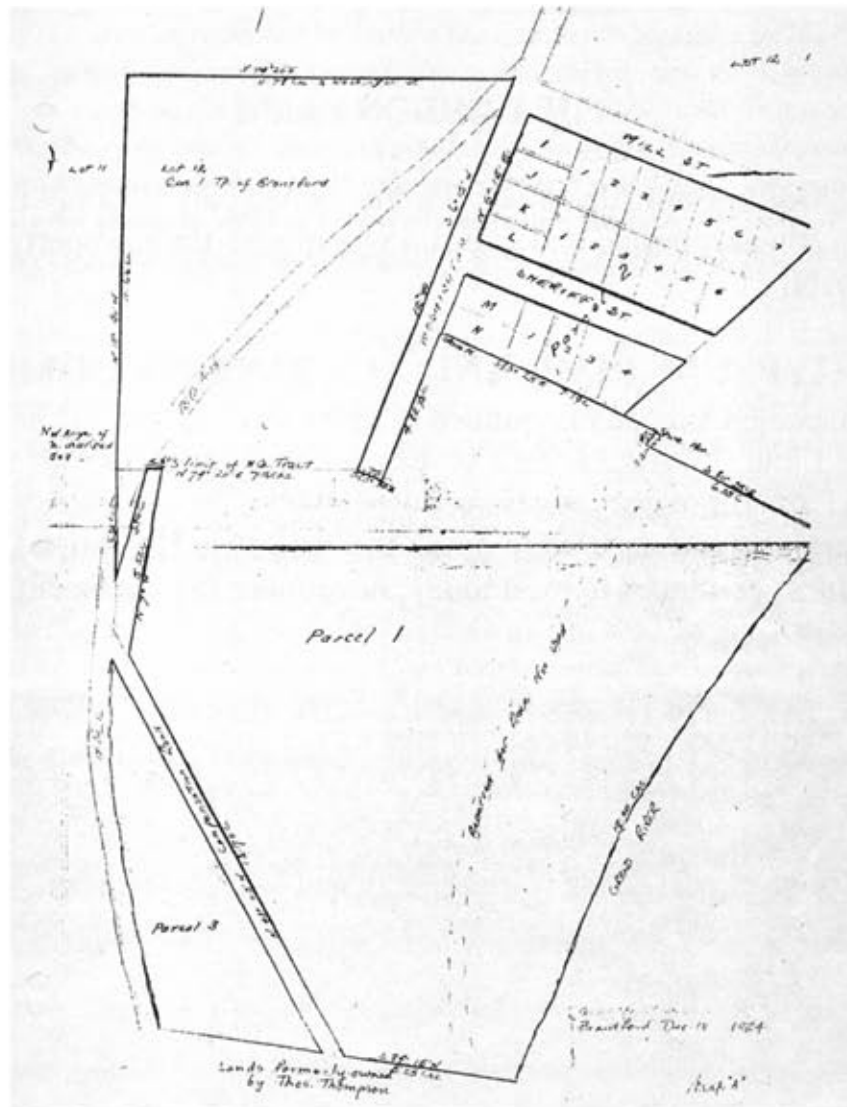
On Lot 16 in the first Concession of the Township of Brantford, one mile east of Paris on the north side of the Grand River, a new opening for plaster was being made. The property, comprising 133 acres, is owned by Mr. John Torrance of Paris, and occupied by Mr. William Hynes as tenant, who is an old miner, who in company with James Wright, another miner, had driven a shaft from the brink of the river north 45 feet at the date of my visit, November 27th. Limited prospecting had been done at the place of opening some 50 years ago, but the work was abandoned and nothing further done until the present year. Along the drift, some excellent specimens of plaster were obtained, intermingled with slate; the extremity of the drift was in clay. It was the intention, I was told, to advance the work much farther in the same line, with the expectation of intercepting the regular layer of plaster."

Note: The name Hynes in the above quotation is an error. William Hymers was the tenant on the Torrance mine. However, William Hynes owned a mine in North Cayuga, organized the Imperial Plaster Company, and in 1889, he purchased a stucco kettle in Paris.

William Hymers, a miner from Cumberland, England, came to Paris in 1869. He lived on Ball Street and worked in the mines on the west side of the river which were easily accessible from Washington Street. In 1885, he moved to Hazel Bank farm, and later bought it. He continued to mine gypsum from the small mine on his property. His son, William, had two teams of horses and two carts with which he hauled gypsum to the plaster mill on William Street. There was much less gypsum there than in the mines on the west side of the river. While the mines were being worked on the Hymers farm, there was a major landslide, and evidence of this can

still be seen. There was also a road along which the carts used to travel, and this can also be seen.

"William Hymers, Jr. told his son, George, that when William Sr. used to work in the mines on the west side of the Grand River, he used to walk the full length of some of the tunnels which extended for a distance of two miles." This information was obtained in an interview with George Hymers held by Gwen Parkhill. (Taken from her diary notes June 6, 1993.)



When she was working in the Brant County Registry Office, Gwen also found a map of Compensation Road, off Mile Hill Road, which led to the mines.

HAMMOND FARM

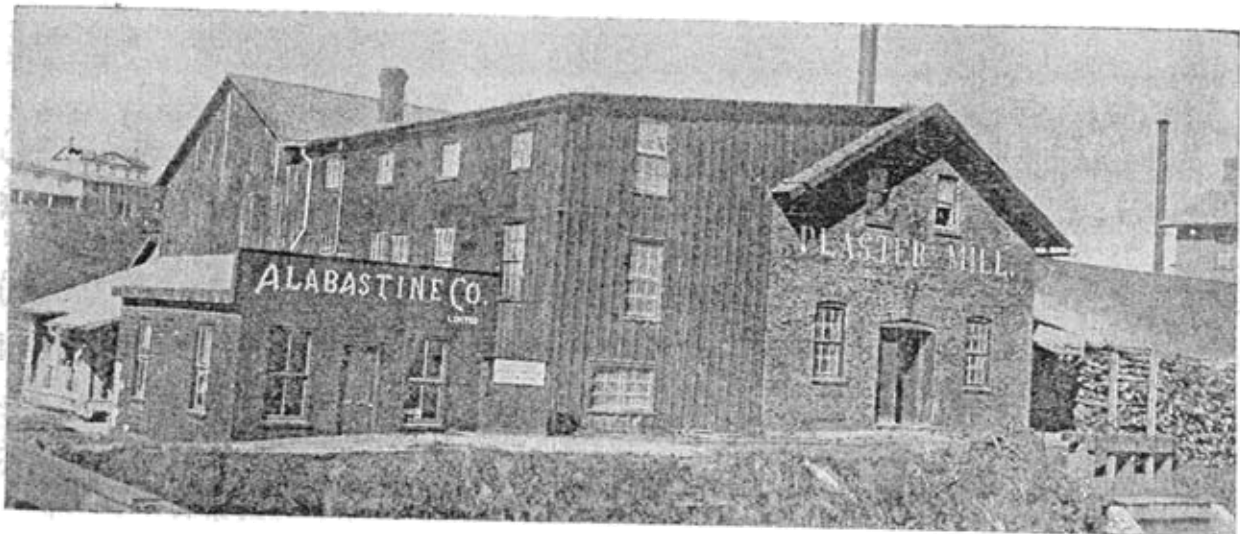
Clarence Peart, when interviewed by Ilse Kraemer on September 24, 1993, stated that Hammond's farm, S. half Lots 14, 15, 16, C. I, had two gypsum mine tunnels located on it. The Hammonds also claim that this was the case, and Homer used to fill in what he thought were mine tunnels to keep the cattle from climbing in and getting hurt. There is a large outcrop of limestone on the property, and signs are still there which indicate where the McCormick's burnt the limestone to make lime.

THE GORDON FARM

Robert C. Gordon and Alexander Gordon owned part of Lots 11 to 16 in Concession II. It was reported that gypsum was mined their property during their years of ownership.

THE GYPSUM, LIME AND ALABASTINE COMPANY

The Alabastine Company continued to grow and expand. It changed its name to the Gypsum Lime and Alabastine Company, and continued to have its plant and main office in Paris for many years - until 1959, when the company was sold to Domtar. New mines and mills were opened from 1904 in Haldimand County, where the business continues to exist today, now under the ownership of Georgia Pacific.



PREMISES OF THE ALABASTINE CO.

IV A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

This section is dedicated to the wild creatures living at Five Oaks. Delightful discoveries with nature were gleaned from six hikes taken by the Grand River Heritage Mines Society during the Spring and Autumn of 1995, and Spring of 1996. Mary Cassar took copious notes and wrote and illustrated this piece. Ilse Kraemer is responsible for the map.

It is interesting to compare the description of the natural surroundings in the 21st century with the description of the area as recorded by Father Daillon in his Memoirs in 1626. He said it was the most beautiful he had seen in all his wanderings, with magnificent trees, an abundance of game, including elk, caribou, deer, hares, wolves and black bears; wild fruit trees and grape vines in profusion; the river and streams and ponds alive with geese, cranes, ducks, bitterns, white pelicans and trumpeter swans; vast varieties of fish on which the cormorants and gulls feasted, as well as the Indians; birds of varied plumage and the woods filled with all kinds of partridge. Beavers were busy with their dams.

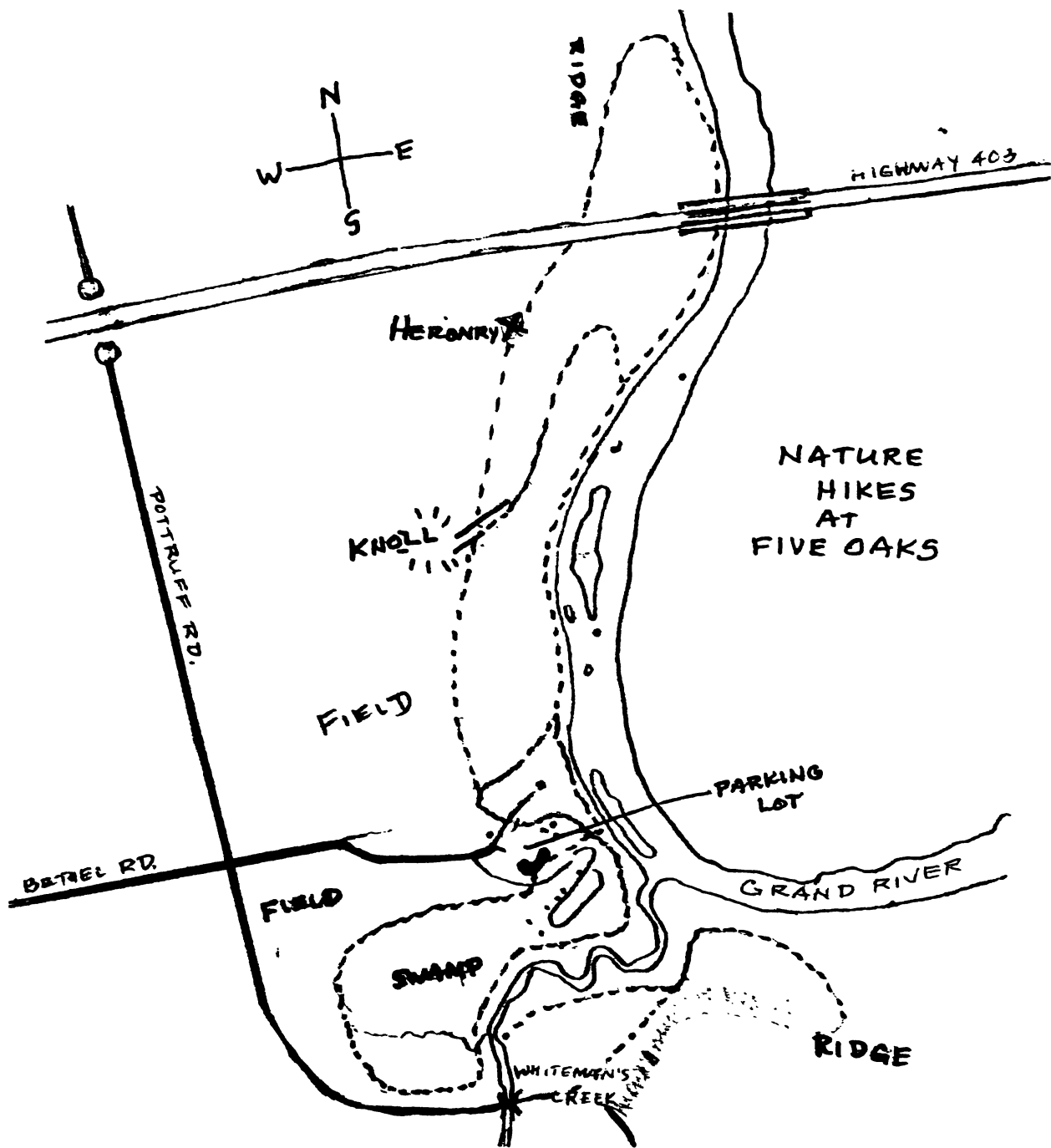
In 1837, on her travels across Upper Canada, Anna Brownell Jamieson describes in wonder her trip between Brantford and Paris thus:

"I observed some birds of a species new to me; there was the lovely bluebird, with its brilliant violet plumage; and a most gorgeous species of woodpecker, with a black head, white breast, and back and wings of the brightest scarlet; hence it is called by some the field officer, and more generally, the cock of the woods. I should have called it the coxcomb of the woods, for it came flitting across our road, clinging to the trees before us, and remaining pertinaciously in sight, as if conscious of its own splendid array.

"There was also the Canadian robin, a bird as large as a thrush, but in plumage and shape resembling the sweet bird at home 'that wears the scarlet stomacher.' There were great numbers of small birds of a bright yellow, like canaries, and I believe of the same genus. Sometimes, when I looked up from the depth of foliage to the blue firmament above, I saw an eagle sailing through the air on apparently motionless wings.

"Nor let me forget the splendour of the flowers which carpeted the woods on either side. There, those beautiful plants which we cultivate with such care in our gardens, azaleas, rhododendrons, all the gorgeous family of the lobelia, were flourishing in wild luxuriance. Festoons of creeping and parasitical plants hung from branch to branch. The purple and scarlet Iris, blue larkspur, and the elegant Canadian columbine with its bright pink flowers; the scarlet lychnis, a species of orchis of the most dazzling geranium colour, and the white and yellow and purple cypripedium [lady's slipper or Indian mocassin] bordered the path and a thousand others of the most resplendent hues, for which I knew no names.

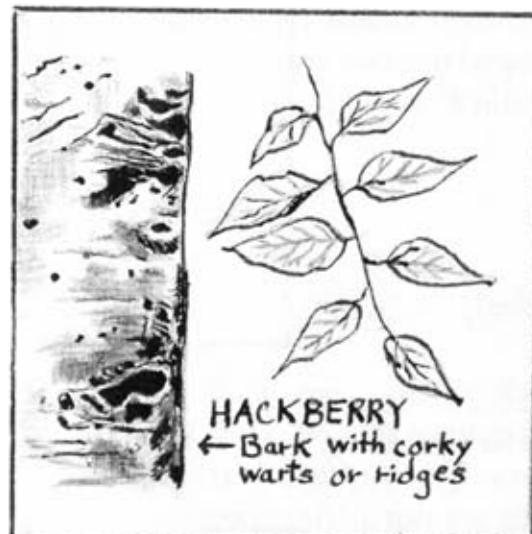
Members explored three areas of Five Oaks. In early April of both years, members hiked the western banks of the Grand River behind the Five Oaks conference grounds. We travelled northerly on a rough trail which served long ago as a road to transport clay being mined from the banks to the brick works.



We passed through lovely woods still asleep in dreamy shades of beige, soft browns, and greys. This area was once cattle pasture, so the black locusts, black maple and hackberry trees growing there today would be, at least, second generation growth. **Black locusts** were introduced into Canada from the United States because of their coveted honey. Some people claim, however, that bass tree honey is superior. Black locust flowers make delicious sugared fritters, and the seeds are relished by deer and squirrels but are poisonous to humans. This tree has small seed pods and a thorn as opposed to the honey locusts on Green Lane that have huge thorns.

Black maples can live for 200 years. They are closely related to the sugar maple, and they can also be tapped for sap. Black maple is distinguished from the sugar maple by its velvety leaves.

We encountered fairly solid **hackberry** stands on this trail, and Garth Pottruff, who accompanied us, claims that hackberries are spreading today. Hackberries are members of the elm family. Their fruit is edible, and the pioneers made potash from the roots and bark. The Indians removed the bark and used its fibres to make fabric.



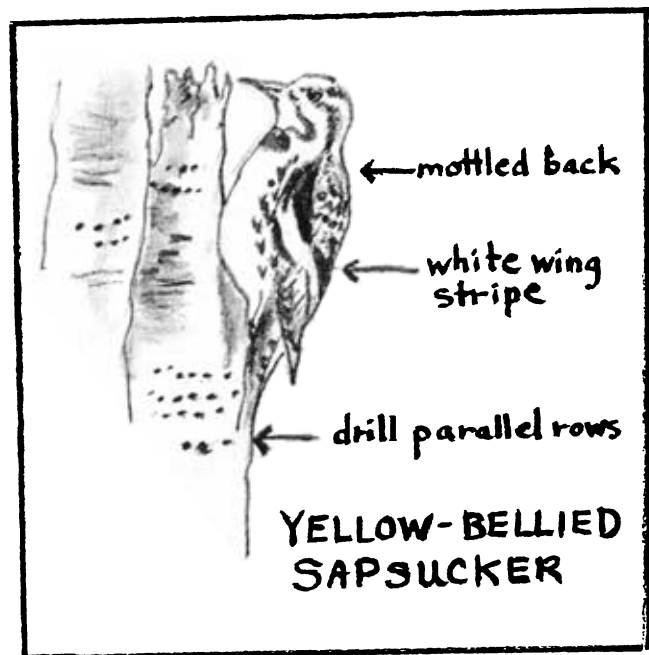
A species we found was the "sugarberry" (misnamed) or "nettletree". This is the common Northern Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis L.*) The fruit is orange-red to dark purple. "Witches Brooms" are produced by the mite, *Eriophyes*, and fungi.

To complicate matters, we encountered a relative to the above, a tree known

formally as the Sugarberry. It bears orange-red to purple fruit savored by songbirds but it is rare in these parts because it usually grows from Illinois and Virginia south to Texas and Florida. This lowland or dwarf hackberry (*Celtis tenuifolia nutt*) is identified by its small leaves.

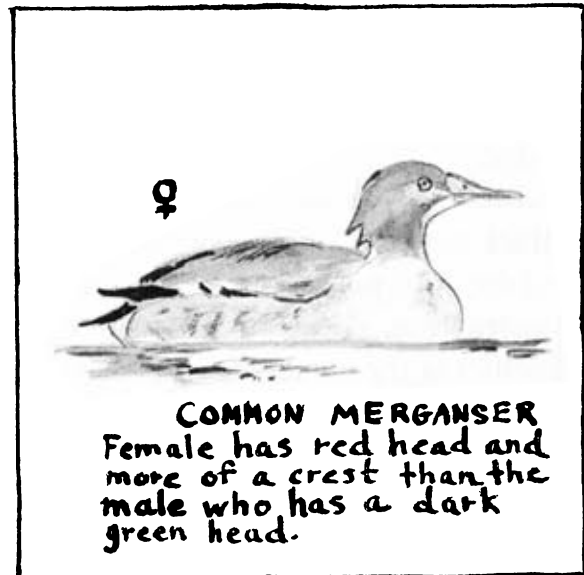
Garlic mustard, a delicious additive to salads, was sprouting forth in abundance. Huge boulders of conglomerate, heavily swaddled in moss, looked as if they would roll downhill into our path. By June, these woods would boast Solomon's Seal, wild phlox, kidney-leaf buttercup, Jack-in-the-pulpit, porcupine sedge, and goldenrod.

Yellow-bellied sapsuckers
tapped trees for sap and insects.



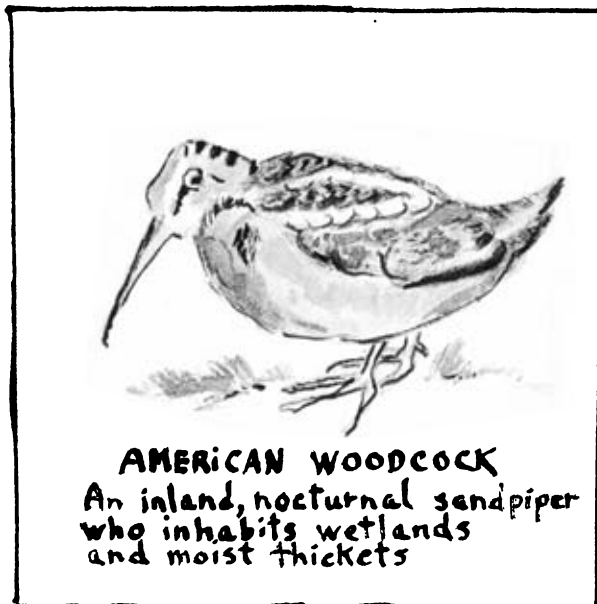
On higher ground, **Scotch pines** grew, relicts of an old Christmas tree orchard. Scotch pines originated from Scotland, first taking root in Ontario nearly 100 years ago at the forestry station at St. Williams. Scotch pines are not a "fire species," as are Jack pine that need fire to reseed. Scotch pine releases its seeds slowly during the winter and following spring. Their cones need extreme heat to open. Scotch pine cones point inwards. To the contrary, our native Jack pine's cones point outwards. We carried on, and found more Scotch pines crowning an Indian burial ground.

We next discovered a stand of **butternut** trees. These trees have a white stripe between their bark strips. They can also be identified by their yellow, velvety bud in the springtime. Butternuts are not all that common in the Five Oaks area. Only about 10% of this area supports this species of tree.



We passed through a disturbed area that was once an orchard. Today, the apple trees are overgrown with **hawthorns**. Black cherries and more butternuts, however, were also thriving here as they sprout in open areas. They do not thrive in shade. Manitoba maple lived happily alongside wild grapes and Virginia creeper.

Proceeding northwards, we saw **Merganser ducks** floating along on the Grand River. They are easily identified by their gray and red heads. Garth Pottruff told us that an albino **red-tailed hawk** has been making the Whiteman's Creek area its home for the last three years.



Five Oaks area as well is home to **night hawks** and **woodcocks**.

We encountered several mature forests north of Five Oaks. **Poplar** and **large-tooth aspen** were prevalent in one. After passing an open, rich area supporting **black walnut** trees, easily identified by their grey buds, and smooth-barked **poison sumac**, we found the second undisturbed forest just north of the #403 Highway bridge.

Black walnuts and **basswood** were spotted first. Basswood is used to make violins, and the soft, pliable wood was equally suitable to the Iroquois for their longhouse construction; if one basswood tree is broken off, other basswood sprouts will sprout together at the same site. A determined survivor!

And the walking got even better! The presence of shagbark hickory, white oak, white pine, serviceberry, hazelnut and mockernut hickory almost convinced me that a human being had never set foot here. Wishful thinking of course, but the presence of many ironwood trees told us that this area had not been pastured. Cattle do not fancy ironwood shoots. I learned to distinguish **mockernut hickory** from shagbark hickory. Mockernut hickory has a tighter wood consistency. Its bark is much darker than the shagbark and it has more of a curl.

Also seen in these woods was the common **alternate-leaf dogwood**. A fine example of another native was *Carpineas carolinea*, commonly known as the **musclewood** tree or **blue beech**. The sturdy wood was made into wheel spokes in horse and buggy days.

This lovely area belonged to the old Taylor farm. We found tell-tale dolostone fragments and cemented sandstone from when gypsum was mined nearby. This area supports the trees listed above as well as **buckthorn** trees with stripes in their bark, and mature stands of hickory, oak and white pine. We heard a red-tailed hawk, its owner hidden somewhere in the treed canopy.

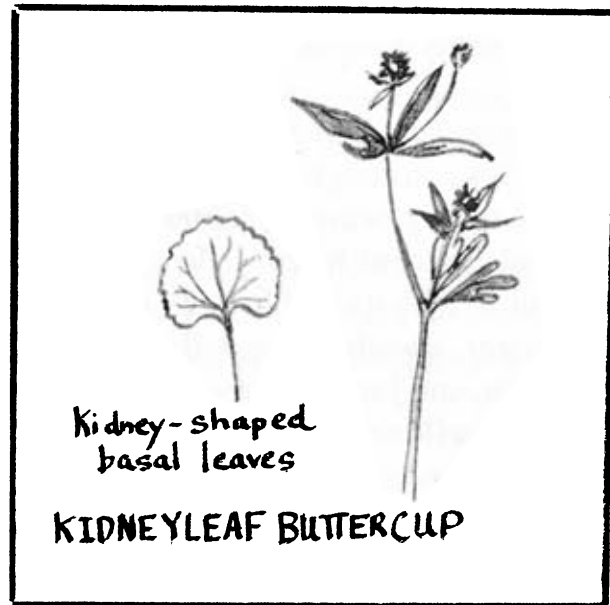
Returning south of the 403 bridge, we climbed the embankment to watch several dozen **Great Blue herons** celebrating the gift of flight, long necks tucked in and long, spindly legs stretched full length behind. Locals claim the heronry has



existed here for around 60 years.

The Grand River Heritage Mines Society took three hikes to the second area of Five Oaks, the Cedar Springs Trail and land north of the Pottruff Road Bridge. An old Carolinian **pignut hickory** with a circumference of 6 ft., 7 inches marked the beginning of our sojourn.

In late April we were greeted by the lovely but ill-scented **red or purple trillium**, also known as the **wakerobin** because it greets the robins who return in spring. A month later **false Solomon's-seal** and **kidney- leaf buttercup** would steal the show. This inconspicuous buttercup is so named because of its kidney-shaped basal leaves.



Minutes later, after passing **greenbrier** vines and basswood trees, we looked down to our left into wetlands. This territory is flanked by some of the oldest **white cedars** in the Paris area.

The wetlands were fringed with **red osier dogwood**, **ash** trees, and **marsh marigolds**. A native **hawthorn**, a refreshing change from the ubiquitous and introduced European variety, was noted.

In May, these wetlands would be crammed with **skunk cabbage**. A native plant, skunk cabbage is of the *arum Araceae* family, as is Jack-in-the-pulpit. Its pod attains the comfy temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit, attracting insects who crawl opportunistically inside.

We observed a couple embracing, but the couple was not human. A cedar and oak had grown together, side by side, with roots and trunks entwined. A centuries-old oak had one prominent branch that seemed to be giving us direction, as if to say, "That-a-way." This was an **Indian trail marker** tree. A number of these old giants still survive in the Paris area. A branch, while young, would be bound with rawhide

and trained to point in the required direction to a distant native village. A trail marker tree may have several of these specialized branches.

We measured the girths of numerous old trees during these hikes. An historic cedar yielded eight feet, 3 inches; one black cherry - five feet, six inches; a second black cherry read six feet, eight inches; a cedar was six feet, eleven inches; and a 400 year old (approximate age) white oak was a massive 10 feet, four inches. Our measurements were taken 3 1/2 feet above ground level.

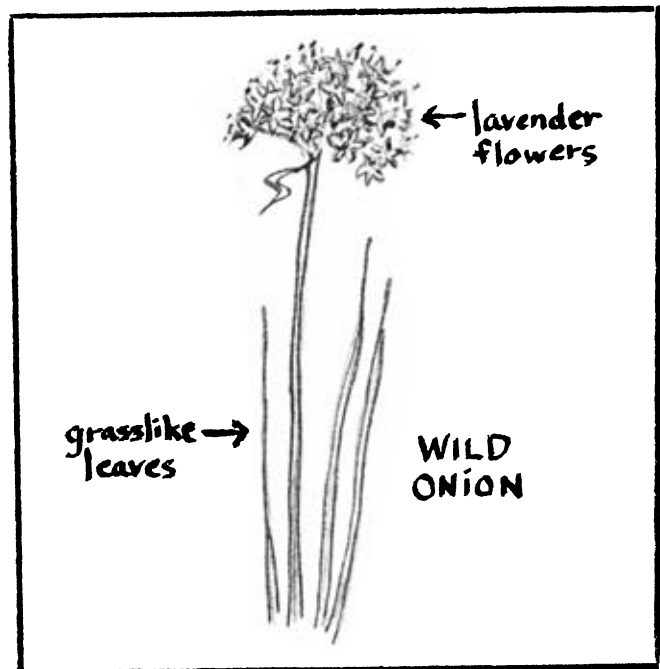
The descent to the wetlands was always a pretty one. By late Spring, we had to literally wade through waist-high garlic mustard. Early wild flowers such as **touch-me-not**, **spring beauties** (of the purslane family, whose bulbs the Indians relished,) **wild violets**, **trout lilies** (yellow and Carolinian white), **trillium**, **bloodroot** and **wild onion** with its edible bulb, would soon be overgrown by **blue cohosh**, **purple coneflower**, **meadow rue**, **wild geranium**, and **jack-in-the-pulpit**.

Purple coneflower has large magenta, daisy-like flowers. It grows wild only on prairies and dry southern woods in our area.

The alien but beautiful **dame's rocket** would also be in bloom in late spring. It is easy to differentiate between our native phlox and the dame's rocket. Phlox has five petals; dame's rocket four.

In the lower, moister immature **hanging fen** grew **sweetgrass** (also known as Indian grass). A **grouse** drummed a distant warning while we studied closely related liverworts and mosses which accompanied the pungent strands of skunk cabbage viewed from above.

Emerging from the moist woods into view of Pottruff Road, we encountered groves of **May apple**, also known as **wild mandrake** or **wild lemon**. Reputed to shrink tumours, this member of the barberry family also has edible fruit, a large, lemon-like berry that can be made into a heavenly jam. But beware! All other parts



of the plant are potentially poisonous. The seeds are very poisonous.

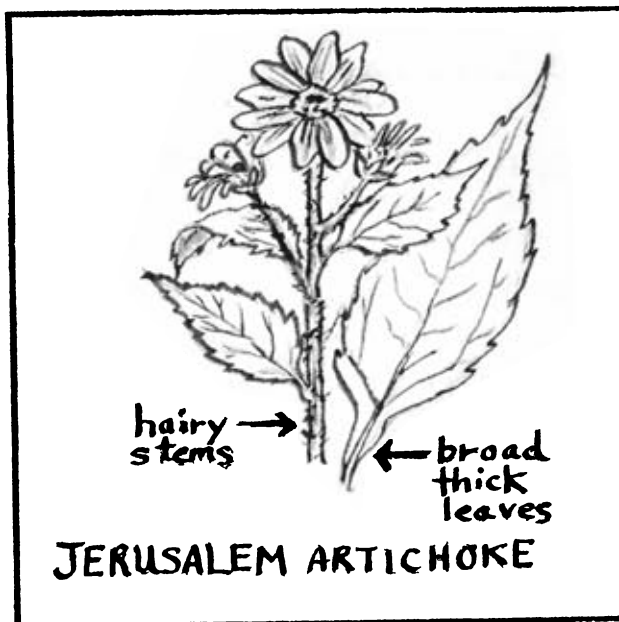
Nearby, upon a disturbed area, were stands of **scouring rush** or **horsetail**. Tree-sized in dinosaur days, its stature is now reduced to a mere foot. The name scouring rush came into usage when the pioneer ladies used the plant to clean their pots made from bog iron.

An eastern **hophornbeam** tree yielded a measurement of five feet, three inches in circumference. This tree is also called ironwood because of its extremely tough wood.

After crossing a tamarack swamp via a boardwalk we finally found some native **phlox**. We also learned to identify the true **Solomon's-seal** that have their yellow flowers in the leaf axis as opposed to False Solomon's-seal whose creamy-white flowers come in terminal clusters.

We saw the **flowering dogwoods** with dark, reddish-brown bark. Their early Spring, yellowish-green flowers would bear red fruit in the Autumn. In October this lovely little tree showed off their scarlet foliage. All of our dogwoods have opposite leaves except the aptly named alternate-leafed dogwood.

Over the months that we visited this area, we marvelled at the progress made by a **bank beaver** with his home. They are termed bank beavers because this is where they choose to live as opposed to their immediate relatives who build their lodges in the water.



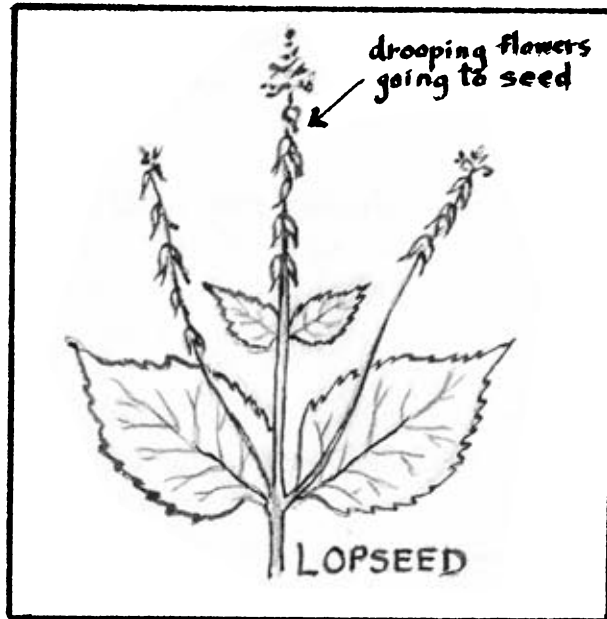
In May, **foamflowers** lived up to their name, beautifying this area. Members of the composite or daisy family were represented by the alien *elecampane* that added splashes of yellow to the shores of Whiteman's Creek during the summer and fall months, and the native **Jerusalem artichoke**.

Our October walk yielded special surprises such as **serviceberry**, also

known as Juneberry, and Saskatoon berry is a member of the rose (*Rosaceae*) Family.

I gathered some very large, broadly elliptical acorns from a **bur** or "**mossycup**" oak. We noted **Sycamore** trees; this is a flood plain tree liking moisture and having a peculiar peeling "skin" or bark.

In an open meadow near the end of the trail grew **heart-leafed asters**, a running **strawberry** bush related to the bittersweet, and **lopseeds** with flowers of lavender "spikes" that droop down against the stem when going to seed in October.

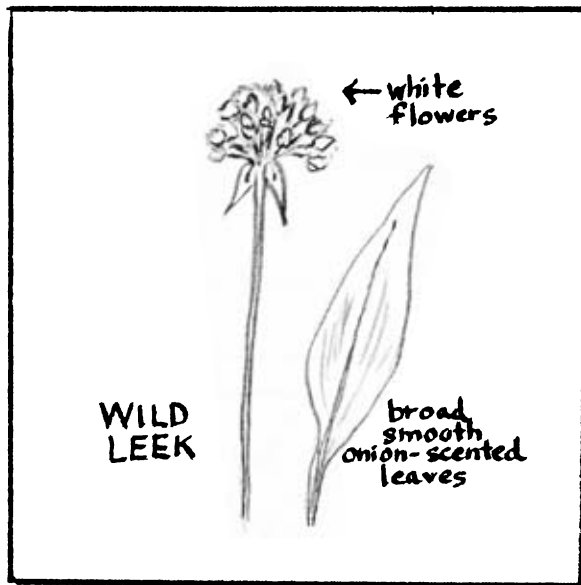


I discovered a **hazelnut** tree, and **wild lettuce** whose edible leaves resemble those of the dandelion.

When we reached the **cottonwood** trees beside the Grand River we knew that we had come full circle.

The third area of Five Oaks explored was the trail off Pottruff Road south of the bridge.

The trail was originally an old mill road for a tiny pioneer settlement. On May 14th, 1995, when we did this hike, the old mill road was fringed with **wild leeks**, **Carolinian white trout lilies**, and very old maples planted by man.

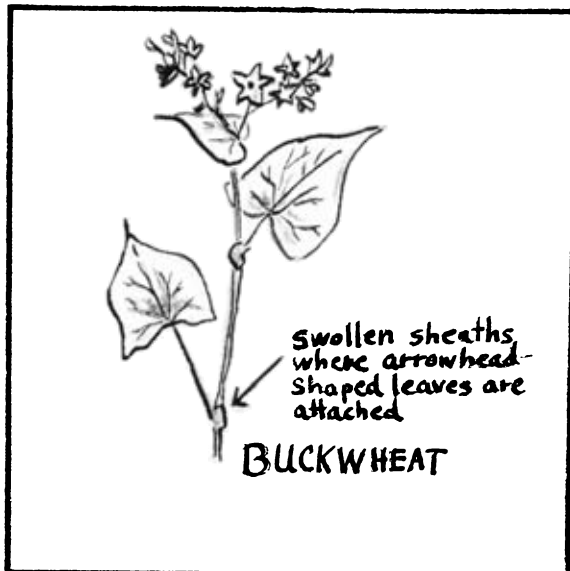


Wild leeks, like wild onions, are of the lily family. Both plants have onion-reeking bulbs but their leaves and flowers differ. Wild leeks have several broad, onion-scented leaves that wither before the white umbel of flowers bloom. Wild onions bloom with an umbel of six-pointed, lavender flowers and grass-like leaves.

Not far from the remains of the canal and water ram grew a huge **Carolinean black cherry** tree. As its name suggests, the fruit is a dark red cherry that turns blackish in late summer. It is a juicy and edible fruit but slightly bitter. Jelly and wine, however, can be derived from it.

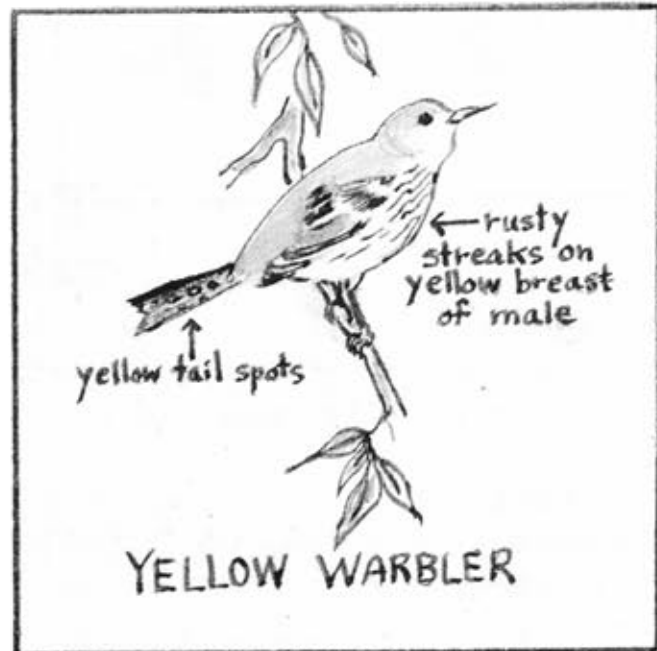
Black cherry trees were recorded by American colonists as early as 1629, and this tree was soon introduced to English gardens. The wood made furniture and toys; the bark gave a wild cherry cough syrup. Black cherry trees sometimes grow in pure stands.

Native **hawthorn** co-existed with the old settlement's arboreal introductions: apple trees and an immense European sweet cherry. Gnarled and shaggy, but in full bloom, this old tree was engulfed in wild grape vines which could eventually sap all her strength. European cherries are short-lived but Ilse estimated this one could be even 120 years old. An old white cedar sheltered some tufa, a sure sign of gypsum deposits. A waste heap, the legacy of an old collapsed gypsum mine, supported a garden of **blue violets**.



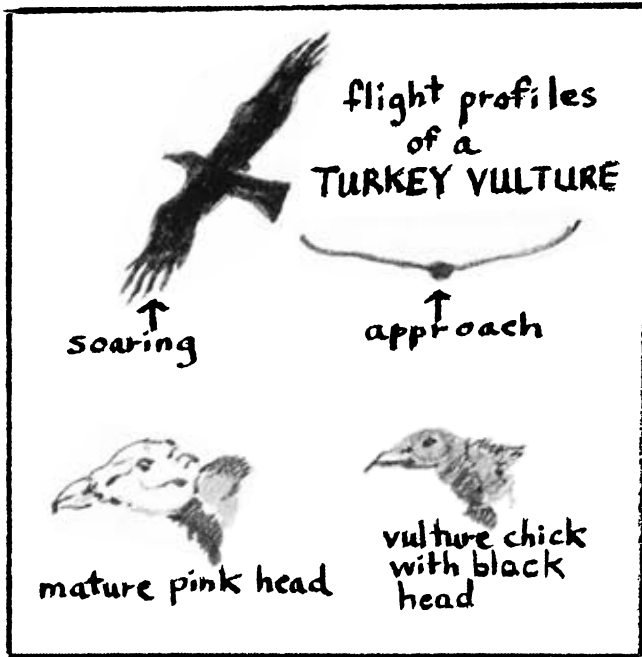
Ilse also introduced us to **wild buckwheat**. Pancakes can be made from this alien, widespread plant: the seeds can be ground into a gruel. The leaves are arrowhead-shaped, the stem often reddish.

Turning southward at the banks of the Grand River, we observed a **yellow warbler**. Presently, two more appeared and a quarrel erupted. This common warbler sings a beautiful song that has about seven sweet notes, the final note ascending. The male has rusty streaks on his yellow breast.



Looking upstream, a regimented row of old **cottonwoods**, evenly spaced, grew here, presumably a remainder of the old settlement.

The river bank supported stick houses and chambers constructed by more **bank beavers**. **Spring peepers** were heard near an old mill ditch. The size of a loonie, this little frog is sometimes seen on stone walls.



Turkey vultures wind surfed above the Grand. Hooked bills and curved talons have helped evolve these diurnal hunters into efficient carrion eaters.

We walked on, and found **shagbark hickory** and European **black alders**. The former tree lives up to its name, identified by its light gray, shabby strips of bark. The inner bark of this Carolinian tree gave the pioneers a yellow dye, and the American Indians concocted a sweet hickory milk from the boiled and pounded nuts used to prepare corn cakes and hominy. Lichen-encrusted trees, trilliums, Solomon's seal and red elderberry bedecked four large, collapsed gypsum mine tunnels. Walking became slippery over squared-off dolostone hidden by meadow rue.

Retracing our steps past an old well, we concluded our walk beside the Pottruff Road bridge -- our walk on the wild side!



LESS COMMON WILDFLOWERS

Wood Anemone	<i>Anemone quinque folia</i>
Plantain-leaved Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria plantaginifolia</i>
Bunchberry	<i>Cornus canadensis</i>
Blue Wild Lettuce	<i>Lactula serriola</i>
Wood Nettle	<i>Laportia canadensis</i>
Colts Foot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
Great Mullein	<i>Verbascum blattaria</i>
Garlic Mustard (alien)	<i>Alliaria officinalis</i>
False Solomon Seal	<i>Polygonatum biflorum</i>
Canada Mayflower	<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>
Wild Ginger	<i>Asarum canadense</i>
Trout Lily, Yellow	<i>Erythronium amaricanum</i>
Trout Lily, White	<i>Erythronium albidum</i>
Wild Onion	<i>Allium stellatum</i>
Wild Leek	<i>Allium tricoccum</i>
Sensitive Fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>
Foamflower	<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>
Elecampane (alien)	<i>Inula helenium</i>
Heart Leafed Aster	<i>Aster cordifolius</i>
Zigzag Goldenrod	<i>Solidago flexicaulis</i>
Wild Thyme (alien)	<i>Thymus pulegioides</i>
Indian Grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>
Sweet Grass	<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>

TREES

Pignut Hickory	<i>Carya glabra</i>
Mockernut Hickory	<i>Carya tomentosa</i> nutt
Shagbark Hickory	<i>Carya ovata</i>
Butternut	<i>Juglans cinerea</i> L.
Sycamore	<i>Plantanus occidentalis</i>
Swamp White Oak	<i>Quercus bicolar</i>
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacial</i>
Black Maple	<i>Acer nigrum</i> michx.f.
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
Sugarberry	<i>Celtis laevigata</i>
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>
Black Willow	<i>Salix nigra</i> marsh
Red Elder Berry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>
Mountain Maple	<i>Acer spicatum</i> ssp. Pubens
Eastern Flowering Dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>
Blue Beech	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i> walt. also Hop Hornbean
White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i> walt.
Yellow Birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i> britton

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