

n°17 The Saint-Paul slate mine

The village council meeting on 8 February 1838 voted in favour of the application by Jacques Joseph Arnould, Joseph Gillet and Joseph Bénoni Lambert to open a slate mine in the village-owned woodland, at the hamlet of **Fond de Morhon**, covering the Jets section.

5 hectares of subsurface and 0.24 hectares of surface area were granted to the applicants.

In November 1838, they sold the slate mining right to Jean-François Demaison-Debieuvre, a resident of Fumay.

On 20 September 1839, a private deed was signed with the village council of Haybes, setting out the terms and conditions for the operation of the future slate mine.

These operating conditions included the obligation to dig a ditch 1.80 metres wide and 1 metre deep around the entire perimeter of the 0.25 hectare slate mine. The main purpose of this ditch was to “isolate” the slate mine, which is located in the middle of the forest, preventing the spread of any fire from the mine site.

Another clause set the village council’s royalty for the site at every 35 thousandth slate produced.

It was not until the decree of 12 July 1840 signed by King Louis-Philippe, which validated Haybes village council’s authorisation to grant this concession to the operators, that miners got to work, although the clearing of the site had already begun.

On 21 January 1841, the Minister of the Interior issued an order specifying certain obligations to be met by slate mine operators.

On 1 April 1872, a company was formed with:

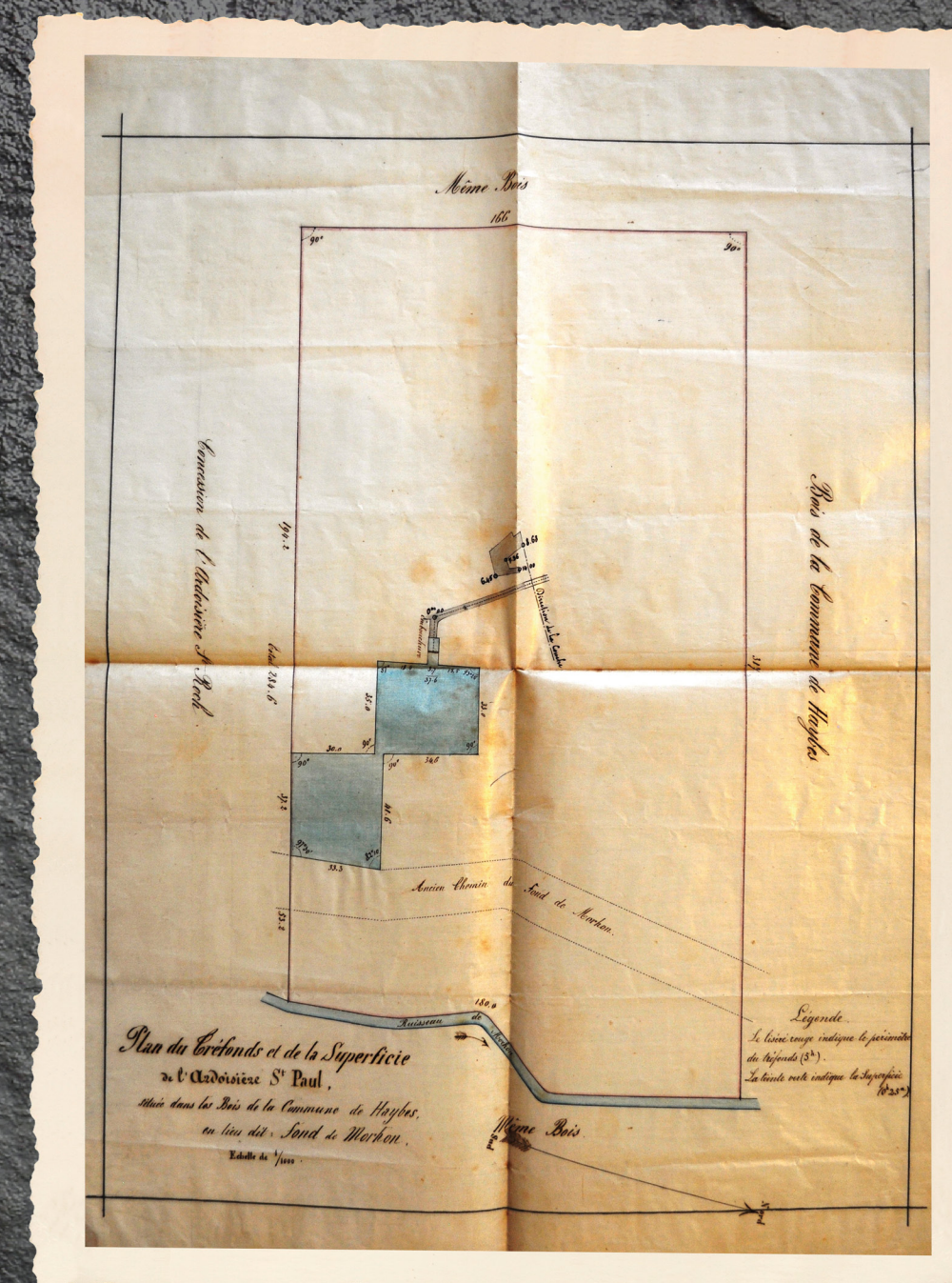
- Jean-Baptiste Poncelet, civil engineer, director of the Ardennes slate mining company, a resident of Haybes. Mr Poncelet also represented Baron Florent Coppens, a resident of Belgium, Théodule Poncelet, lawyer, a resident of Dinant, and Cyril Poncelet, non-professional, a resident of Graide,
- Emile Hamaide, merchant brewer, resident of Haybes and mayor of the village,
- Auguste Villeval, baker and publican, resident of Haybes,
- Jacques-Alexis Pécheux, merchant, resident of Haybes.

The company was named **Société de l’Ardoisière Saint-Paul**.

On 17 June 1872, the village council agreed that Emile Hamaide, then mayor of Haybes, would replace Jean-François Demaison to manage the slate mine as part of the **Saint-Paul** slate mining company set up on 1 April 1872.

On 11 August 1874, the **Saint-Paul** slate mining company signed a 3-year lease transferring the management of the mine to Luc Adolphe Alexandre Hocque, who was already the director of the **Saint-Pierre** and **Fond d’Oury** slate mines.

Given the absence of any accurate archives, it is believed that quarrying activities continued at the mine until the end of the 19th century or the very beginning of the 20th century.



Plan of the Saint-Paul slate mine
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The Saint-Paul slate mine, remains of the workshop or “Hayons”
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The Saint-Paul slate mine of the retaining walls
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