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**DAYS AND NIGHTS : CLASS, GENDER AND SOCIETY
ON NOTRE-DAME STREET IN SAINT-HENRI, 1875-1905**

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**A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT

The everyday life of people on the street has not received the attention it deserves in the history of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec. This dissertation joins a small number of recent studies which redress this omission. It makes a significant contribution to existing examinations of North American cities and Canadian social history through the use of categories which are rarely employed and questions that are seldom posed in investigations of working-class history during the period of industrialization. A holistic treatment of Marxist philosophy provides the theoretical underpinnings for a sensitive engagement with daily street life in an urban milieu. As a site of intense sociability, Notre-Dame Street, the main street of the industrial suburb of Saint-Henri, offers a unique perspective on the intricate use of public space and its relations to social space. This thesis covers the period between the years of town incorporation in 1875 and annexation to the City of Montreal in 1905.

Notre-Dame Street underwent significant transformations in this period. A main street of a small town on the outskirts of Montreal became the principal commercial street of a bustling industrial city. The 1890s was a decade of particularly marked shifts, characterized by significant population growth and dramatic changes in physical form. Class and ethnic tensions intensified as a result. A 1891 labour dispute at Merchants Manufacturing, a textile factory, took to the streets, and the local elite contested George A. Drummond's refusal to pay municipal taxes in 1897. Resistance to monopoly control of utilities was evidenced by the use of petitions and *protêts* or notarized letters. Workers' parties, journalists, and municipal reform leagues increasingly challenged the hegemony of the local elite whose persistent practices of overspending resulted in a substantial debt and annexation.

The study of a local street in an industrializing community demonstrates the prevailing social and political distribution of wealth and power. It reveals significant differences between the various class ideologies which were played out in the management of the public space of the street. An economic liberal ideology was instrumental to the

development of the modern Western city through the creation of divisions between public and private spaces. Social usage, the visible presence of the working and marginal classes and women on city streets, suggests a different reality. A reconstruction of daily street life from a diversity of written and visual sources indicates that women, men, and children inhabited and frequented homes, shops, and offices, travelling to and from work, and various places of recreation. The rhythm of everyday street life was punctuated by unusual events of a celebratory, criminal, and tragic nature, which emphasize the connections between spatial structures and subjective experience.

The local management of public space thus involved class antagonisms, characterized by negotiation, transgression, and resistance. This dissertation argues that the politics of this public space benefited the class interests of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a local petite bourgeoisie, to the detriment of the working classes. These conflicting class interests were played out in a variety of different ways. The exclusion and appropriation of social and symbolic spaces were characterized by distinct property ownership and rental patterns. An anglophone grande bourgeoisie of Montreal owned vacant and subdivided lots. A francophone petite bourgeoisie dominated property ownership, and a majority of renters lived in flats on the main street and on adjoining streets. The shaping of the physical infrastructure was distinguished by the growth of monopolies and minimal local intervention. The civic manifestation of the ordered and ritualistic celebration of the parade emphasized a Catholic identity. Attempts to impose an appropriate and genteel code of behaviour on city streets led to the moral regulation and social control of criminal behaviour.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans l'histoire du Québec de la fin du XIX^e et du début du XX^e siècle, la vie quotidienne des personnes dans la rue n'a pas reçu l'attention à laquelle elle pouvait prétendre. Cette thèse rejoint un nombre limité d'études récentes qui tendent à redresser cette négligence. Elle marque une contribution significative aux examens existants des villes nord-américaines et l'histoire sociale du Canada grâce à l'usage de catégories peu employées et de questions rarement soulevées dans les recherches sur l'histoire de la classe ouvrière pendant la période d'industrialisation. Une approche holistique de la philosophie marxiste offre les fondements théoriques pour un engagement sensible face à la vie quotidienne de la rue en milieu urbain. A titre de lieu intense de sociabilité, la rue Notre-Dame, rue principale de la banlieue de Saint-Henri, livre une perspective unique de l'usage complexe de l'espace public et de ses liens avec l'espace social. Cette thèse couvre la période s'étalant des années de l'incorporation de la ville en 1875 à celle de son annexion à la ville de Montréal en 1905.

La rue Notre-Dame a subi des changements notables durant cette période. De rue principale d'une petite ville aux abords de Montréal, elle devient la principale artère commerciale d'une ville industrielle empressée. La décennie 1890 a été plus particulièrement marquée par des changements importants, caractérisés par une croissance significative de la population et des changements d'envergure dans la forme physique. En conséquence, des tensions entre classes et ethnies se sont intensifiées. En 1891, une dispute de travail à l'usine Merchants Manufacturing s'est propagée dans les rues et l'élite locale contestait le refus de George A. Drummond de payer des taxes municipales en 1897. L'usage de pétitions, de protêts ou de lettres notariés témoignait de la résistance face au monopole de contrôle des services. Les partis politiques des travailleurs et travailleuses, les journalistes, et les ligues de réforme municipale mettaient au défi l'élite locale dont les pratiques incessantes de dépassement budgétaire ont eu pour conséquence une dette substantielle et l'annexion.

L'étude d'une rue locale au sein d'une communauté industrialisée montre la distribution dominante, sociale et politique, des biens et du pouvoir. Cela met en lumière des différences significatives entre les idéologies de classe diversifiées qui se manifestaient dans la gestion de l'espace public de la rue. Une idéologie économique libérale contribuait au développement d'une ville moderne occidentale par la création de divisions entre espaces publics et privés. Toutefois, l'usage social, la présence visible des classes laborieuses et marginales et des femmes suggère une réalité différente. A partir d'une grande variété de sources écrites et visuelles, la reconstruction de la vie quotidienne dans la rue montre que les femmes, les hommes et les enfants vivaient et fréquentaient les maisons, les boutiques et les bureaux sur le chemin du travail et au retour, ainsi que plusieurs autres lieux de loisir. Le rythme de la vie quotidienne de la rue était ponctué par des événements inhabituels de nature commémorative, criminelle et tragique qui mettaient l'accent sur les liens entre structures spatiales et expérience subjective.

Ainsi, la gestion locale de l'espace public entraînait des antagonismes de classe, caractérisés par la négociation, la transgression et la résistance. Cette thèse postule que les politiques de cet espace public profitaient aux intérêts de classe d'une grande bourgeoisie de Montréal et d'une petite bourgeoisie locale, au détriment des classes ouvrières. Ces intérêts conflictuels de classe se manifestaient de plusieurs manières. L'exclusion et l'appropriation des espaces sociaux et symboliques s'exprimaient par des modèles distincts de propriété et de location. Une grande bourgeoisie anglophone possédait des lotissements vides et divisés. Une petite bourgeoisie francophone dominait la propriété foncière et une majorité de locataires vivaient dans les logements de la rue principale et dans les rues adjacentes de la ville. La forme de l'infrastructure physique était synonyme de croissance des monopoles et d'intervention locale minime. La manifestation civique de la célébration réglée et rituelle de la parade accentuait l'identité catholique. Les tentatives visant à imposer un code de comportement approprié et élégant dans les rues de la ville ont conduit à la régulation morale et au contrôle social du comportement criminel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Community and a sense of place are still relevant forces in the everyday lives of early twenty-first-century urban dwellers. As Montrealers, we constantly struggle to integrate our various communities in the broader context of a possibly sovereign Quebec and an increasingly global society. Our urban culture is in part defined by this discussion. In late nineteenth-century Montreal, the lives of many women, men, and children who came to the city from the rural regions of Quebec, New England, the British Isles, Europe, and other places were often shaped by experiences in communities such as Saint-Henri. The rhythm of their daily lives was often tied to the home and the workplace, but also took them to public spaces such as the street. The street provided a setting for social interactions, events, and rituals which display varied representations of public space and social space. Their experiences influence our perception of the nineteenth-century city and form an integral part of the urban landscape.

The process of writing this thesis has also been part of my journey in search of community and a sense of place and has been marked by events in my own life which were often trying, yet ultimately enriched my appreciation of the fragility and complexity of the human condition. Like many of the people in this study, I too came to Montreal from regional Quebec. I lived in Saint-Henri for the better part of six years, during which time I became interested in the history of the *quartier*. For ten years, I suspended research on this subject to pursue a career teaching history in James Bay and Montreal. The resumption of this project followed considerable hardships coming to terms with substantial transitions in my private and public life. The death of my father in the midst of my research and writing was particularly difficult. I am fundamentally thankful for the sacrifices he made for his children's education, his humorous anecdotes of the past which kindled my interest in Quebec history, and the strength and determination he instilled in me. Thank goodness these burdensome years passed, and I eventually had the time between teaching assignments for the peace, solitude, and reflection necessary to complete this work.

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*For my mom, whose love of life
is a constant inspiration to me*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Sources found in the BIBLIOGRAPHY are abbreviated as in the footnotes.

ANQM: Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal

AVM, FCSH: Archives de la Ville de Montréal
Fonds de la Cité de Saint-Henri

AVM, FV: Archives de la Ville de Montréal
Fonds Joseph-Émile Vanier

BNQM: Bibliothèque nationale du Québec à Montréal

CCA: Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture

CECM: Commission des Écoles Catholiques de Montréal

CHA: Canadian Historical Association

CHR: *Canadian Historical Review*

CN: Canadian National/Canadien National

DCB: *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*

IHAF: Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française

INRS: Institut national de la recherche scientifique

IQRC: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture

MSRC: Montreal Street Railway Company

RHAF: *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*

SHSH: Société historique de Saint-Henri

SSJB: Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste

STCUM: Société de Transport de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal

UHR/RHU: *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*

UQAM: Université du Québec à Montréal

Introduction

This dissertation is an endeavour to provide greater insight into the everyday lives of people inhabiting and frequenting Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri between the years of town incorporation in 1875 and annexation to the City of Montreal in 1905. As a slice of life, the main street offers a unique perspective on the historical use of public space and its relations to social space. The study of a local street in an industrializing community also reflects more generally on class and gender relations in the modern Western city. It is an occasion to raise several select questions in this regard: Who profited from rapid urban expansion? What do land and property transactions reveal about social class structure? How were women situated in public and social space? What sources disclose an indepth depiction of people's lives? How were differing class ideologies reflected in social practice and enacted through local regulation? What symbolic role did street celebrations play in community life? What do critical moments reveal about the rhythms of everyday street life? These categories are rarely employed and these questions are seldom posed in investigations of working-class history during the period of industrialization. This thesis builds on existing examinations of North American cities and Canadian social history in three principal ways: by offering a Marxian spatial and class analysis in a Quebec context; by emphasizing the connections between spatial structures and subjective experience; and by integrating a wide variety of written and visual sources.

Any discussion of public and social space must begin with precise definitions. First, public space must be distinguished from private space.¹ In *Histoire de la vie privée*, Philippe Ariès expresses a prevalent view that over the course of the nineteenth century, work, leisure and home life became more separate, compartmentalized activities. Women, men and children sought greater privacy and withdrew into the family as a refuge and focus of private life. Notwithstanding these considerations, various forms of collective and communal sociability persisted into the early twentieth century, particularly amongst the

¹Peter G. Goheen, "Creating Public Space in nineteenth-century Toronto," in *Espace et culture/Space and Culture*, eds. Serge Courville et Normand Séguin (Sainte-Foy: Université Laval, 1995), 245.

urban working classes and the peasantry in various settings: for men, the tavern; for women, the public washhouse; and for both, the street.²

The public space of the late nineteenth-century city can be strictly defined on the criterion of ownership, that which is not in private hands. In the case of Saint-Henri and other North American towns and cities, municipal governments exercised control over most public spaces, including parks, squares, and streets.³ The street is the property of the *polis*, and a space of circulation and social encounter.⁴ As a rule, in order to move from a family space to another domestic, industrial, commercial, institutional, recreational or other space, one must pass through public space. One usually walks on city streets or employs available and affordable means of transportation. Travel often entails social interaction. Public space thus also needs to be understood as a socially constructed category, a social space, "a space as it is used and perceived by those inhabiting it."⁵ It is a structure of social relations which may be matched or identified with a physical space. Through people's perceptions and experiences, symbolic meanings are attached to spaces and spatial arrangements.

The definition of the street as a public space (municipally owned and managed space) provides a basis for defining social classes. The street, as publicly owned space, was created, defined, structured, and used as a space of circulation. The notion of circulation is the foundation of capital,⁶ and therefore the foundation of capitalist society, and of a class analysis. Social relations depend upon the existence of the street; social relations involve passing through the street, and become "public" or observable events, available to the view of witnesses. They become accessible to the historian through

²Philippe Ariès, *Histoire de la vie privée*, tome 3 (Paris: Seuil, 1986), 8.

³Goheen, 245.

⁴"Espace public," *Dictionnaire de l'urbanisme et de l'aménagement* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1988), 273-275.

⁵"Social Space," *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (third edition; London: Blackwell, 1994), 568.

⁶Karl Marx, *Capital* (originally published in 1875; New York: International, 1967), Volume 2.

sources such as the municipal tax roll, photograph, city directory, census, notarized acts of sales of real estate, insurance maps, newspapers, sketches, and architectural drawings. The creation of these sources depends on observers situated in public space, or who traversed public space in order to inquire or frame testimony.

The municipal tax roll, the principal source I employ for information on the people of Notre-Dame Street, forms the structural basis for class analysis by categorizing land and property relations. From the tax roll, I can set thresholds for distinguishing owners of high-value property from owners of modest-value property, and owners from renters since the city taxed both owners and renters, in proportion to the valuation of the property and the rent (Appendix A).⁷ In 1891, for instance, Montreal lawyer Joseph Duhamel owned a sizeable property evaluated at \$13,480 on lots 1005 to 1008. Joseph Lanctôt, a Saint-Henri doctor, also had significant holdings worth \$11,830 on lots 1010 to 1013. Ranging in value from \$3660 to \$4780, the properties of Wilfrid Robidoux, Usmer Lanctôt, Auguste and Étienne Lacoste, were more modest. A majority of residents were renters who occupied commercial and residential space on these properties. Duhamel's tenants included Anathol Papineau and his family of three who operated an inn at 3531 Notre-Dame Street and paid an annual rent of \$300. Two merchants and a grocer also paid significant rents ranging from \$112 to \$240. Barber Cléophas Guimond and two carpenters ran small shops on his properties. Two females, widows Madame Lecours and Madame Fortin, and four males, a gatekeeper or caretaker, pedlar, blacksmith, and carpenter, headed households with annual rents of \$36 to \$90.

Since the acquisition or use of land and property depends largely on wages or capital accumulated through commercial and industrial exchange,⁸ the working-classes and the petite bourgeoisie can be further differentiated according to occupation, in the structural

⁷*La valeur locative*, a municipal appraisal used in Quebec, originally from France, appears to reflect market values. David Hanna and Sherry Olson, "Métiers, loyers et bout de rue: l'armature de la société montréalaise," *Cahiers de géographie du Québec* 27,71 (septembre 1983):255-275; Jason Gilliland and Sherry Olson, "Claims on Housing Space in nineteenth-century Montreal," *UHR/RHU* XXXVI, 2 (March 1998): 3-16.

⁸Marx, *Capital* (Vol. 1 originally published Hamburg: Meissner, 1867; Vol. 3, in 1894; New York: International, 1967), Volumes 1 & 3.

Marxist terms of relation to the mode of production. Michael Katz's occupational classification serves as a model for my analysis.⁹ The working classes consist of the skilled trades, semiskilled and unskilled labour. Examples of workers in this class would be a baker, barber, tailor, carpenter, carter, foreman, policeman, and day labourer. Male and female heads of household engaged in commercial and professional activities such as a merchant, innkeeper, physician, notary, teacher, clerk, grocer, and butcher are categorized as a petite bourgeoisie. I have identified a grande bourgeoisie as a pre-industrial class' possessed of landed capital, rather than manufacturing capital or other forms of wealth. My reasoning is based on their relationship to land holdings on the street. The grande bourgeoisie lived elsewhere, and this factor has important implications for social space. Joseph Duhamel, for example, owned a high-value property on Notre-Dame Street in 1891, and his relationship to the street was that of an absentee landlord. Although his ability to accumulate capital and buy subdivided lots on the main street of an expanding industrial suburb depend on his professional practice in Montreal, these economic activities are not instrumental to my analysis.

In his treatment of the English bourgeoisie in the industrial towns of Bolton, Preston and Blackburn, Brian Lewis argues that a clear distinction can be drawn between the petite bourgeoisie, the local elite, and the middle class. As in Lancashire, a petite bourgeoisie of Saint-Henri entrepreneurs, merchants, and professionals who owned modest-value properties on the main street, often played dominant leadership roles in the town, intersecting, "but not necessarily synonymous with the local political elite."¹⁰ The term petite bourgeoisie is employed as an expression of a fundamental economic relationship, a reflection of material change and social class formation. Middle class denotes a relative social position between that of a landed aristocracy and a common

⁹Michael B. Katz, *The People of Hamilton* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1975), 66, 72.

¹⁰Brian Lewis, "Bourgeois Ideology and Order," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], Harvard, 1994), 1.

people.¹¹ A small group of Saint-Henri contractors and manufacturers dominated local government and consisted of a bourgeoisie of a different scale, a second stratum to that of the grande bourgeoisie of Montreal.

Social historians have devoted considerable discussion in recent years to the significance of historical materialism and Marxist class analysis in historical inquiry.¹² Their concerns have been motivated by a "growing unease with the fragmentation of the historical record"¹³ on the part of social scientists since the early 1980s and a phenomenological school of thought. A growing disenchantment with the emphasis on a scientific interpretation of Marxist theory with a "quantitative" methodology in the social sciences of the 1970s has driven appeals for a more complete treatment of the self. Phenomenological scholars have "asserted the importance of identity, perception, intention and resistance, subjective responses to place, the distinctive experience of each individual life and each cohort in history."¹⁴ These tendencies have spawned a more diverse theoretical orientation and greater tolerance amongst various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Some consensus appears to have emerged that a Marxian class analysis can be rescued as a valid historical construction of late nineteenth-century urban society through an integral treatment of the "dialectic of mind and material reality"¹⁵ or the

¹¹*Ibid.*, 5-11; Goheen, "The Competition for the Streets in Late Victorian Toronto," CHA Conference, June 6, 1999; Roderick Macleod, "Salubrious Settings and Fortunate Families," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], McGill, 1997).

¹²Lewis, 3-17; Ann Curthoys, "Labour History and Cultural Studies," *Labour History*, 67 (November 1994): 14-15; Mariana Valverde, "Deconstructive Marxism," *Labour/Le Travail*, 36 (Fall 1995): 329-340; Ian McKay, "The Many Deaths of Mr. Marx," *Left History* 2,3 & 4,1 (Fall 1995-Spring 1996):9-84; Bryan Palmer, "Critical Theory, Historical Materialism, and the Ostensible End of Marxism," *The Post-Modern History Reader* ed. Keith Jenkins (London: Routledge, 1997), 103-114.

¹³Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 3.

¹⁴Sherry Olson, "The Tip of the Iceberg," *Shared Spaces/Partage de l'espace* 5 (June 1986): 2.

¹⁵Robert C.H. Sweeny, "Time and Human Agency," *Left History* 1,2 (Fall 1993): 71.

metaphor of base, structure, and superstructure.¹⁶ More specifically, Marxian class analysis can serve as a basis for a more subtle treatment of the interference of social practice, subjective experience, and ideology.

In effect, Marx was a deeply humanist materialist, and the historical interpretation of subjective experience is enhanced by the Marxian theory of alienation, where he argues that the material basis of class oppression leads to a degrading human experience.¹⁷ The young Marx perceived unbridled capitalism as reducing people's relations to material objects or things, resulting in the deterioration of emotional and spiritual fulfilment. The writings of the young and old Marx treat the whole person and "compel a collaboration of heart and mind".¹⁸ In a study of Marx's method of dialectical phenomenology, Roslyn Wallach Bologh has observed that "*The Grundrisse* is particularly important as it combines the humanistic, philosophical concerns found in Marx's early writings with the technical analysis found in *Capital*."¹⁹ A holistic treatment of Marxist philosophy hence provides the theoretical underpinnings for a more sensitive engagement with people's everyday lives in a late nineteenth-century street environment.²⁰

The writings of Henri Lefebvre, a French Marxist philosopher and sociologist, and Gaston Bachelard, a French philosopher, demonstrate the convergence of Marxist and phenomenological thought.²¹ Lefebvre nuances the intricate relations of public and social

¹⁶Henri Lefebvre, *La vie quotidienne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), 64; A.M. Givertz and Marcus Klee, "Historicizing Thompson," *Left History* 1,2 (Fall 1993):116.

¹⁷*Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor, 1967), 26-31; David McLellan, *Marx's Grundrisse* (London: Paladin, 1973), 143; Marx, *The Grundrisse* (originally published Moscow: Institute for Marxism-Leninism, 1939-41; New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 66.

¹⁸Olson, "The Tip of the Iceberg", 1.

¹⁹Roslyn Wallach Bologh, *Dialectical Phenomenology* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), xi.

²⁰Mary McLeod, "Henri Lefebvre's Critique of Everyday Life," in *Architecture of the Everyday* eds. Steven Harris and Deborah Burke (N.Y.: Princeton, 1997), 11.

²¹Olson, "The Tip of the Iceberg", 9.

space through an emphasis on the inherent connections between class, spatial structures, and subjective experience. For Lefebvre, the politics of public space are characterized by various forms of material exchange and class distinctions with numerous cultural implications. He argues that every society creates its own social space and that social practice derives from the demands of economic production and social reproduction. In his estimation, different classes have appropriated, managed, and exploited space to suit their own historical purposes.²² In *Éléments de rythmanalyse* and *La vie quotidienne*, Lefebvre enhances our analysis of everyday experience and the situation of critical moments of celebration and tragedy which punctuate the rhythms of daily street life.²³

Gaston Bachelard extrapolates on the metaphysics of the imagination and the variations of subjective responses to a sense of place. In *La poétique de l'espace*, Bachelard asks the reader "de ne pas prendre une image comme un objet, encore moins comme un substitut d'objet, mais d'en saisir la réalité spécifique."²⁴ He claims that objects "speak" to us, presenting problems which demand solutions and constant reflection. In the course of a walk on a street, for instance, one is confronted with a series of stimuli which elicit individual responses tied to our memories and our intimate self.²⁵

Despite the usefulness of a Marxian conceptual framework as a method for categorizing social and class relations and a more integral treatment of subjective experience in a spatial context, serious limitations exist with regard to the subject of gender. Because Marx gave little consideration to female class oppression,²⁶ the question of gender as a tool of historical analysis has been problematic for many contemporary Marxist feminist

²²Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1974), Chapters 1 & 2.

²³Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse* (Paris: Syllepse, 1992); Lefebvre, *La vie quotidienne dans le monde moderne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968).

²⁴Gaston Bachelard, *La poétique de l'espace* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981), 3.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 10-21.

²⁶*The Woman Question* (New York: International, 1951), 27-40.

historians.²⁷ In Joan Scott's words, "within Marxism, the concept of gender has long been treated as the by-product of changing economic structures; gender has no independent analytic status of its own."²⁸ Scott notes that Anglo-American feminist theorists have attempted to reconcile feminist critiques within a Marxian tradition.²⁹

Several American feminist Marxist historians of public space have attempted to link class ideology to gendered social practices. Mary Ryan, Christine Stansell, and Temma Kaplan, have scoured original and traditional sources, situating the female more accurately as an active participant in public space and in the political economy of the nineteenth-century city. Their interpretations challenge the liberal discourse of a capitalist political economy. Liberal politics is based on the spatial practices of inclusion and exclusion which are "tied to the way a society constructs and administers its locations and eligibilites to participate in them".³⁰ In effect, the politics of exclusion and inclusion creates divisions "between private and public space, industrial space and leisure space, educational space and family space (among others)".³¹ This body of feminist historical writing attempts to modify the perspective that a dichotomy divided the nineteenth-century world into female private spaces and male public spheres. Taken together with other forms of collective and communal sociability amongst the working and marginal classes, the realities of the female presence on the city streets defied the parameters of liberal discourse. This resistance reveals class antagonisms.

Mary Ryan, in particular, investigates the presence of women in the urban spaces of nineteenth-century American city streets as an expression of political culture. Her research

²⁷ Joan Walach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia, 1999), 33-37; Bettina Bradbury, "Women's History and Working-Class History," *Labour/Le Travail* 19 (Spring 1987): 23-43.

²⁸ Scott, 36-37.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 35-37.

³⁰ Michael J. Shapiro, *Reading "Adam Smith"* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1993), 54.

³¹ *Ibid.*

is driven by Jurgen Habermas' notion of the bourgeois public sphere and the theoretical formulations of John Dewey and Alexis de Tocqueville on participatory democracy.³² In Ryan's estimation, Habermas' location of public life outside of the state, in the press, cafés and clubs of eighteenth-century European capitals, "wherever public opinion could be formed, ... placed the humanistic political ideals on the grounds of social practice and in the reaches of many."³³ Together with other subordinated groups, women's appropriation of the public spaces of everyday life took place in a specific class and social context. It occurred outside of the contours of prescribed spaces as an essential precondition of their political empowerment.³⁴

Christine Stansell's writings demonstrate that an ideology of gender was firmly imbedded in an ideology of class.³⁵ In *City of Women*, Stansell argues that "both class struggle and conflicts between the sexes had created a different political economy of gender in New York, one in which laboring women turned certain conditions of their subordination into new kinds of initiatives".³⁶ The uses of the street by working-class women and children through peddling, scavenging, theft and prostitution, were dictated by the exigencies of difficult economic circumstances. Because household production was in decline, and seasonal and intermittent unemployment undercut gains in workers' salaries, working-class women were forced to accept work either in factories, at home, on the streets, or in domestic service. They thus staked out their presence in New York's economy, culture, and ideological conflicts.³⁷ Working-class men, middle-class men, and

³²Ryan, "Gender and Public Access," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1992), 259-88; Ryan, *Civic Wars*, 6-11.

³³Ryan, *Civic Wars*, 6.

³⁴Ryan, *Women in Public* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1990), 92-94.

³⁵Christine Stansell, "Women, Children, and the Uses of the Streets," *Feminist Studies* 8, 2 (1982): 309-335.

³⁶Stansell, *City of Women* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1987), 217.

³⁷*Ibid.*

middle-class women viewed the presence of working-class women in the public sphere, in the workplace, in the neighbourhoods, and on the Bowery, as a threat.³⁸

Space, class, and gender are paramount considerations in Temma Kaplan's exploration of the social and political resistance of Andalusian anarchists to the centralized government of Madrid in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In *Anarchists of Andalusia*, Kaplan demonstrates how gender relationships were used to articulate an attack on capitalism and the state from 1868 to 1903.³⁹ Kaplan's *Red City, Blue Period* reveals the participation of ordinary women in Barcelona's culture of resistance from 1888 to 1939. Given the intermittent resurgence of Catalan nationalism and anarchism, the struggle for control of the streets often took on more dramatic and tragic overtones than in the U.S. cities examined by Ryan and Stansell. Streets were visible sites of contestation, class conflict, and political struggle.⁴⁰

In spite of the limitations of existing sources, possibilities also exist for reconstruction of working-class and female experience on Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Michael Katz observes in his classic study of mid-nineteenth-century Hamilton, the historian of a working-class community has the authority to take back what is real, to render the invisible, visible.⁴¹ Because so many traditional sources were instruments of political and economic power, they often obscure the role of the working classes and women. The municipal tax roll exemplifies these limitations (Appendix A). The gathering of property and rental taxes generated revenue for the state and records of owners' names, property values, as well as those of tenants and rental values, number of occupants, and the number of horses, pigs, and cows kept by a household. Since the political system gave recognition to the male as

³⁸Stansell, *City of Women*.

³⁹Temma Kaplan, *Anarchists of Andalusia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Scott, 23.

⁴⁰Kaplan, *Red City, Blue Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁴¹Katz, 16.

'head of household', most wives and children are unnamed, appearing only in the number of occupants. *Lovell's City Directories* complement tax and evaluation rolls by providing addresses and more specific occupations, yet they too give preferential identification to male business owners and heads of households engaged in commercial exchange. The occupations and enterprises of women are rarely identified. Although manuscript censuses provide information on the religion, ethnicity, gender, and age of all members of a family, one must retrace the census taker's movements as no addresses are recorded.

Combining sources lends greater veracity and richness to an account of people's past lives. For it is not so much that history is a lie, but the sum total of partial truths, drawn from segmented sources. This dissertation thus employs a wide variety of written and visual sources to serve various purposes. As instruments of power, both visual and written sources depict social and symbolic spaces as political and strategic.⁴² Although street addresses varied, consistent lot numbers on municipal rolls and insurance maps facilitate the historical study of both people and land. The notarial records of Ferdinand Faure and A.C.A. Bissonette provide complementary information on property transactions. The *documents numérotés* and *non-numérotés* in the Saint-Henri *fonds* consist of council documents including *protêts* (notarized letters), petitions, and sanitation reports. The records and blue prints of an influential municipal engineer, the *Fonds Joseph-Émile Vanier*, provide invaluable documentation on the physical infrastructure. Newspaper accounts of *faits divers*, individual misfortunes, accidents, crime, disease, death, and murders, provide the social historian with insights into the critical moments of people's lives, and offer a wide array of speculations about their motives. The photos employed in this dissertation are drawn from the collection of the Société historique de Saint-Henri. Archival photos produced by state and business interests are enriched by the contributions of families. The existence of a photographer on Notre-Dame Street throughout this period

⁴²Kristin Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 9.

indicates usage by the larger population as well as the town's petite bourgeoisie.⁴³

Given the incidence of fires in the late nineteenth century, insurance maps provided companies with details upon which they fixed rates and premiums. As a historical tool, they provide information on land use and building construction. Reflecting the increasing sophistication of mapwork with the introduction of British cartography, H.W. Hopkins, Charles E. Goad, and A.R. Pinsonneault were engineers who fulfilled contracts for Montreal companies. Whereas Hopkins restricted his operations to the city, Pinsonneault designed maps for many Quebec communities, and Goad produced insurance maps for several Canadian cities. Coloured reproductions indicate wooden (yellow), brick and stone (pink) buildings, stables, and sheds. All of these maps drew from the military designs of the 1868-72 Royal Engineers' Fortifications Survey Map, the most detailed Montreal map up to this point.⁴⁴

The treatment of a document rarely matches its original purpose. The historian has to reestablish the context of an account or illustration, and we shall see in Chapter 1 examples of a Duncan 1839 watercolour and a Henderson 1870 photograph revealing the limitations of visual sources and the requisite subtlety of interpretation. As patrons of the arts, an established bourgeoisie of Montreal commissioned those two documents to promote their own business interests, and to reflect their financial success and social status.⁴⁵

The message conveyed depends on the medium. With the introduction of the first daguerreotype to Montreal in the 1840s, the photograph became a common form of visual

⁴³*Lovell's City Directory for 1875-76* (Montreal: Lovell, 1876), 703 (Hilaire Clément); 1876-77, 764; 1878-79, 684 (O. Desmarais); 1880-81, 687 (Joseph Bay); 1885-86, 672; 1892-93, 950; 1895-96, 272; 1900-01, 376; 1905-06, 428 (Madame Philias Dufresne).

⁴⁴Interview, Pierre Lépine, BNQM cartographer, spring 1997; Alain Rainville, "Fire Insurance Plans in Canada," *The Archivist/L'Archiviste* 111 (1996): 25-37; Richard Harris and Martin Luymes, "The Growth of Toronto, 1861-1941," *UHR/RHU* XVIII, 3 (February 1990):244-253; Diane Oswald, *Fire Insurance Maps* (Texas: Lacering, 1997).

⁴⁵Michel Lessard, *Montréal, métropole du Québec* (Montréal: Éditions de l'Homme, 1992), 15.

expression.⁴⁶ Subsequent to the first Montreal photograph taken in 1852, photographers such as William Notman and John Henderson increasingly turned to urban scenes with streets, floods, and family shots as their subjects.⁴⁷ The camera's lens offers a very different perspective.⁴⁸ Its apparent accuracy and precision of detail may provide illusion of another kind, as explained by Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Pierre Bourdieu, Susan Sontag, John Tagg, Liz Heron and Val Williams.⁴⁹

Historians are becoming increasingly sensitized to the integration and critical treatment of various sources. Attention is given to a visual source not merely as illustration, but as analysis. The contextual consideration of a map, photograph, sketch, or architectural drawing thus begs the question, "What does an illustration mean?". In Canadian history, Ian McKay's treatment of a postcard, "A Simple Life", provides an articulate, sensitive, and elaborate response to this question.⁵⁰

The question remains, "Do the working classes and women speak through these documents?". Their voices are indeed rare and precious. In a community steeped in oral tradition, nineteenth-century working-class and female voices are for the most part muted from written records, most sources generated by the state and business, municipal archival records, censuses, notarial documents, and newspapers. They do appear in certain

⁴⁶Lessard, 15-16.

⁴⁷See Figures 1.4 and 1.6.

⁴⁸John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Viking, 1972), 17-18; 24-29; Berger, "Uses of Photography," *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 48-63; Allan Sekula, "Photography between Labour and Capital," *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures, 1948-1968* (Halifax & Sydney: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, University College of Cape Breton, 1983), 193-202; Sekula, *Geography Lessons* (Vancouver and Cambridge, Mass.: Vancouver Art Gallery & MIT, 1997); Anne-Hélène Kerbirou, *Les Indiens de l'Ouest canadien vus par les Oblats, 1885-1930* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1996).

⁴⁹Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981); Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations* (London: Fontana, 1992); Pierre Bourdieu, *Un art moyen* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1965); Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1977); John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988); *Illuminations*, eds. Liz Heron and Val Williams (Durham, N.C.: Duke, 1996).

⁵⁰Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1994), xi-xvii.

municipal archival documents such as petitions which make personal pleas or in newspapers in letters to the editor. A social historian can reconstruct, can glean glimpses of daily reality from these written documents when combined with visual sources. As partial representations of reality, photographs in particular more accurately portray the Victorian working classes as real people conveying a sense of pride and respect to their audience. In the face of these limitations, this dissertation is an attempt to bring into view a rich lost community history, as we 'walk' on the main street.

My treatment of the material quality and class and gender analysis of the street environment of Saint-Henri draws from historical writing on the street, the community, and social space. My argument comprises two components. It considers the study of streets as a multidisciplinary topic and draws attention to the significance of space in the historiographic domain. The social, political, and physical nature of the street demands a multidisciplinary approach. This study is thus a means of erecting bridges between history and other disciplines, especially geography, architecture, urban planning, and literature. European and Anglo-American studies have had a considerable influence on the treatment of streets, community, and space in Canadian and Quebec urban historical writing, where the social space of the street is increasingly becoming the subject of in-depth examination.⁵¹

People from several academic disciplines and occupations have focused on the street as a scholarly and popular topic. Before the nineteenth century, streets were discussed by engineers, surveyors, police, governments, the military, journalists, poets, butchers, and coachmen. With the advent of the industrial city, the street was made the explicit object of study of new professions: architects, landscape architects, city planners, nineteenth-century movements for public health, housing reform, and urban

⁵¹Julie A. Podmore, "Saint-Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City': Place, Gender and Difference along Montreal's 'Main'" (Ph.D. thesis [Geography], McGill, 1999); Goheen, "An Emerging Urban System," *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Vol. II, ed. R.C. Harris (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1993), Plate 45; Olson and David Hanna, "Social Change in Montréal, 1842-1902," *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Vol. II, Plate 49; André G. Bourassa et Jean-Marc Larrue, *Les nuits de la 'Main'* (Montréal: VLB, 1993).

improvement.⁵² Streets were vital elements in the Chicago School's work of the 1920s, studies of Harlem in the 1930s and 1940s, and research conducted on the Haussmanization of Paris in the 1950s.⁵³

Streets have also been portrayed in English and French literature as representational images of the Industrial Revolution. Charles Dickens,⁵⁴ Sherlock Holmes,⁵⁵ Honoré de Balzac,⁵⁶ Gustave Flaubert,⁵⁷ and Victor Hugo⁵⁸ were all novelists of the street. Marshall Berman's and David Harvey's interpretations of modernity and post-modernity have drawn extensively from Baudelaire's poetic depictions of the street.⁵⁹ As Harold James Dyos has noted, "the effort of novelists to bring social realism into their work" led to an authentic

⁵²Robert Gutman, "The Street Generation," *On Streets*, ed. Stanford Anderson (Cambridge: MIT, 1991), 249; Charles Booth's *Descriptive Map of London Poverty*, 1889 (London: London Topographical Society, 1984); Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London* (London: Macmillan, 1892-97); Booth, *Charles Booth on the City, Physical Pattern and Social Structure* (Chicago, 1967); W.E.B. Dubois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (New York: Benjamin Blom, first issued 1899; reissued 1967).

⁵³Robert Ezra Park, *The City* (Chicago, 1925); James Welden Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (New York: Knopf, 1930); Roi Otley, 'New World a-coming' (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943); Robert Ezra Park, *Human Communities* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1952); R.E. Park, *Race and Culture* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1956); J.M. Chapman, *The Life and Times of Baron Haussman* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1957); Gerard Noel Lameyre, *Haussman* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958).

⁵⁴Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1900); *Bleak House* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1852-53); *Hard Times* (London: Chapman, 1854); *A Tale of Two Cities* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1894); *Great Expectations* (Philadelphia: Peterson, 1860).

⁵⁵Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (London: Penguin, 1981); *Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Bantam, 1986); *Mysterious Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (London: Puffin, 1995).

⁵⁶Honoré de Balzac, *Les Petits Bourgeois* (Paris: Garnier, 1960); *La maison du chat qui pelote* (Paris: Nelson, 1934).

⁵⁷Gustave Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (Paris: Gallimard, 1950); *La tentation de Saint Antoine* (Paris: Berger Cres; Londres: Dent, 1900).

⁵⁸Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (Paris: s.n., 1862).

⁵⁹Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* (New York: Penguin, 1988), Chapter 3; David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

literature of the working classes in the last few years of the nineteenth century.⁶⁰

There has been less literary treatment of streets as popular representations of daily life in late nineteenth-century industrializing Montreal. Literary critics suggest that the emergence of the Quebec urban novel generally took place after World War I.⁶¹ Bryan Demchinsky and Elaine Kalman Naves have recently demonstrated that Montreal streets have captured the literary imagination of many twentieth-century writers.⁶² The modern nineteenth-century walking city nonetheless elicited the attention of certain novelists, journalists, and poets.⁶³ Glimpses of Montreal street life appear in *Bataille d'âmes*, a serial novel published in the Montreal newspaper *La Patrie* in 1899 and 1900,⁶⁴ and in journalistic accounts such as *Les mystères de Montréal*⁶⁵ and Hector Fabre's 1862 depiction of downtown Notre-Dame Street.⁶⁶ In a secondhand account, *Victoria: Saint-Henri-des-Tanneries* (1890), Françoise Mainville-Desjardins has recreated the lives of her grandmother and mother through a combination of visual and written sources, personal

⁶⁰H. J. Dyos, "The Slums of Victorian London," in *Exploring the Urban Past*, eds. David Cannadine and David Reeder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 139-140.

⁶¹Isabelle Gélinas, "L'image de la ville dans la prose narrative québécoise, 1914-1936" (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], Université de Montréal, 1994); Antoine Sirois, *Montréal dans le roman canadien* (Ottawa: Didier, 1968).

⁶²Bryan Demchinsky and Elaine Kalman Naves, *Storied Streets* (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, 2000).

⁶³More useful to the historian is the 'boilerplate' reporting of the Recorder's Court and *faits divers* full of prejudice and humour.

⁶⁴Pamphile Le May, *Bataille d'âmes* (Sainte-Foy, Québec: Les Éditions de la Huit, 1996), viii; Maurice Pellerin, "Pamphile Le May," *DCB*, Vol. XIV, 644-646.

⁶⁵Auguste Fortier, *Les mystères de Montréal* (Montréal: Desaulniers, 1893); Gilles Marcotte, "Mystères de Montréal: la ville dans le roman populaire au XIX^e siècle," *Montréal imaginaire*, eds. Pierre Nepveu et Gilles Marcotte (Montréal: Fides, 1992), 97-148.

⁶⁶Marcotte, "Un flâneur, rue Notre-Dame," in *Ville, texte, pensée*, Gilles Marcott, éd. (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 1991), 27-36.

memories and testimonies.⁶⁷ Joseph Lenoir, a descendant of an established Saint-Henri family, conveyed the experiences of late nineteenth-century workers in some of his poems.⁶⁸

The historical imagination is never completely spaceless. The French *Annales* school incorporated elements of geography in the beginnings of the social history in the 1920s.⁶⁹ Exercised to different degrees, Fernand Braudel and Lucien Febvre considered space as an active agent of historical inquiry, along with the principal categories of time and people.⁷⁰ Fernand Braudel's interpretation of civilizations in *Méditerranée* was a conception of geography.⁷¹ Febvre advocated an interdisciplinary approach to the practice of history, 'a history impatient of frontiers and compartmentalization'.⁷² As Peter Burke has acknowledged, Febvre followed "his own advice to the extent of writing several books on geography."⁷³

Yi-Fu Tuan argues for a meaning of space and place derived from personal and collective experience.⁷⁴ 'Place' figures prominently in the British historiography of the Industrial Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s. E. P. Thompson's sweeping treatment of class consciousness in *The Making of the English Working Class* is steeped in cultural

⁶⁷Françoise Mainville-Desjardins, *Victoria* (Candiac, Québec: Éditions Balzac, 1992).

⁶⁸Joseph Lenoir, eds. John Hare et Jeanne d'Arc Lortie (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 1988), 190-91.

⁶⁹Sweeny, "Time and Human Agency", 81.

⁷⁰Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990); Sweeny, "Time and Human Agency".

⁷¹Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée* (Paris: Collin, 1966); Sweeny, 80.

⁷²*Economy and Society*, ed. Peter Burke (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1972), 2.

⁷³*Ibid.*

⁷⁴Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977).

traditions and attentive to variations of time and place.⁷⁵ As Bryan Palmer has noted, Thompson "is ever sensitive to regionalism, a factor of great importance in the history of the North American working class, touching on different class perspectives that flow out of particular experiences."⁷⁶ Dyos' pioneering study of the English suburb of Camberwell brought British urban history beyond the limits of the Great Victorian and European cities to the local community.⁷⁷ His attention to streets and the everyday is most apparent in his collection of essays, *The Victorian City*.⁷⁸ Ronald Blythe's study of the English village of Akenfield is perhaps the extreme example of microhistory as 'place'.⁷⁹

Drawing from early socialist thought and previous tendencies in French sociology,⁸⁰ Marxism in France developed a spatialist orientation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁸¹ The most consistent of spatializing voices came from the French Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre has emerged as the most theorizing and foremost historical and geographical materialist on the basis of his explicit material argument of the production of space. His critical theorization of the social production of space engendered a notion of *espace vécu* as both a concrete and abstract concept, an

⁷⁵E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Gollancz, 1963), 9, 352-366.

⁷⁶Bryan D. Palmer, *The Making of E. P. Thompson* (Toronto: New Hogtown, 1981), 73.

⁷⁷H. J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb* (Leicester: University Press, 1961).

⁷⁸*The Victorian City*, eds. H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan, 1973).

⁷⁹Ronald Blythe, *Akenfield* (London: Allen Lane, Penguin, 1969).

⁸⁰P. H. Chombart de Lauwe, *Paris et l'agglomération parisienne* (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1952).

⁸¹Chombart de Lauwe, *La culture et le pouvoir* (Paris: Éditions Stock, 1975); *La vie quotidienne des familles ouvrières* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1977).

actually lived and socially created spatiality.⁸² A contemporary of Lefebvre, David Harvey's writings on the circulation of capital and the cultural dimensions of urban spaces are strongly influenced by Lefebvre's material argument of the production of space.⁸³

Intent on incorporating geographical perspectives in their class analyses, other 1970s Marxist historians made advances, but continue to display a marked reluctance in this direction. In part, the introduction to Sarah Schmidt's masters dissertation on the moral regulation of sexual space in Mount Royal Park in nineteenth-century Montreal traces the position of space within the discipline of history:

Some New Left historians in the 1970s, who wrote histories of socio-political inequalities and charted how disparity manifested itself in space, were, in fact, informed by the work of Marxist geographers, who theorized about the link between the exercise of class hegemony and access to space...Identifying space as a 'social category, a changing set of lived societal relations -- a social construction -- whose understanding allows us to remap the mental and physical terrain of social struggle', these New Left historians were committed to charting historical accounts of class struggle over space.⁸⁴

Schmidt notes that the *Radical History Review* published a special edition entitled "The Spatial Dimension of History" in 1979, "in which the editors criticized historians for using time as their operative frame of reference while neglecting the category of space." As late as 1995, a *History Workshop Journal* article entitled "Spatial History: Rethinking the Idea of Place" decried the persistent hesitation of historians to blend spatial dimensions into their historical analysis.⁸⁵

Since the late 1970s, Marxist and non-Marxist feminist historians have made significant contributions to the relations of gender and public space in industrializing

⁸²Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies* (London, New York: Verso, 1989), 14, 18, 42, 48. For an elaborate and well constructed discussion of the shifting relationship between social history and human geography, see Soja, Chapters 1 & 2. The context, evolution and critical responses to Lefebvre's line of analysis are covered in Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

⁸³David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (London: Arnold, 1973); Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982).

⁸⁴Sarah Schmidt, "Domesticating Parks and Mastering Playgrounds: Sexuality, Power and Place in Montreal, 1870-1930" (M.A. Thesis [History], McGill, 1996), 5-6.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 6-7.

Western cities.⁸⁶ The findings of Mary Ryan, Christine Stansell, and Temma Kaplan require further elaboration due to their relevance to street historiography. Mary Ryan claims that men dominating the public spheres of local and municipal politics in New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco, employed three major abstract and concrete strategies to subordinate the female civic presence. In a first phase in the Republican era of the 1820s, the municipality carefully charted public spaces and holiday celebrations, assigning women a back seat, appropriatedly dressed as ladies at the rear of parades and processions.⁸⁷

Ryan's argues that "the public sphere of bourgeois America was moored in a private and gendered social geography, built, that is, on a fragile foundation."⁸⁸ Women's easy access to semipublic institutions, theaters, department stores, and other places of commercial amusement, defied the metaphor of female gentility. From 1830 to 1860, city fathers increasingly attempted to impose order on the chaos of nineteenth-century streets. They tried to restrict women to public parks and shopping districts through a segregation of spatial zones and urban frontiers. The presence of females in public spaces defied these efforts at segregation. From the time of the Civil War to the 1880s, women were occasionally architects of urban space. Although women's conduct on the streets and in restaurants, cafés, and coffeehouses was carefully monitored, the presence of female vagrants, prostitutes, hawkers and pedlars, presented a threat to the public order. The female working and marginal classes were particularly subject to social control and moral regulation.⁸⁹

Christine Stansell argues that class and gender-based perceptions of the subversience of working-class women in nineteenth-century New York City were explained by an adherence to Victorian mores and the middle-class cult of domesticity and

⁸⁶*Women, Work, and Place* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1994), xxvi-xxvix.

⁸⁷Ryan, "The American Parade" in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley, 1987), 131-153.

⁸⁸Ryan, "Gender and Public Access", 267.

⁸⁹Ryan, "Gender and Public Access"; Ryan, *Civic Wars*; Ryan, *Women in Public*.

female propriety. In Stansell's words, "mothering, as the middle class saw it, was an expression of female identity, rather than a construction derived from present and past social conditions."⁹⁰ The entrepreneurial, industrial merchant elite which practiced thrift, sobriety, and hard work considered the labouring poor and labouring women in particular, as atheistic and rough, and "most in need of moral correction."⁹¹ The "conflict over the streets resonated on many levels" of urban reform.⁹² Like Mary Ryan, Stansell argues that reformers tried to implement their domestic beliefs through a reorganization of social space and a creation of a new geography of the city.⁹³ In spite of these prescribed notions, there emerged a culture of gender, a culture of resistance, a "city of women", best personified by the image of the bold and defiant Bowery girl.

Following the epistemological orientation of Lefebvre and Bachelard, Kaplan views everyday street life in turn-of-the-century Barcelona as a way of knowing and being. Strong and reliant women took control of their lives, and played central roles in local and community action, and in nationalist struggles. Powerful women, working girls and women, factory workers, flower market and fruit stall vendors, prostitutes and nuns, joined with printers and metallurgists in anarchist committees of the CNT and in the 1902 General Strike. Various female representations appear in the paintings of Pablo Picasso and in other forms of artistic expressions, including folklore, puppet theaters, and miracle paintings. Street rituals, and religious parades and processions, were officially sanctioned sites of resistance. Female purity may have been idealized in Catholic religious representations, yet both male and female participants in street festivals were subject to state suppression. The bombing of the Virgin of Mary Festival in 1892 illustrates this

⁹⁰Stansell, "Women, Children, and the Uses of the Streets," 321.

⁹¹Christine Stansell, *City of Women*, xiii.

⁹²Stansell, "Women, Children, and the Uses of the Streets," 312.

⁹³*Ibid.*

phenomenon.⁹⁴

Streets sometimes appear as vital elements in historical monographs of the internal space of particular cities conducted in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. Sherry Olson employs streets as a measure of the urban growth of Baltimore from the eighteenth century to the present.⁹⁵ William Cronon mapped the social geography of capital from Chicago's streets and stockyards to the Western hinterland in *Nature's Metropolis*.⁹⁶ Elizabeth Blackmar's and David Scobey's treatments of Manhattan city streets and James Borchert's analysis of Washington alley life demonstrate that a detailed study of a street's land use reveals a complex social fabric.⁹⁷

Space also has a visible presence in a number of Canadian city monographs written since the 1970s. Strongly influenced by the *Annales* school, Louise Dechêne's investigation of seventeenth-century Montreal is spatial, as is Alan F. Artibise's history of Winnipeg, Brian Young's interpretation of the role of Sulpician capital in the nineteenth century, Lucie Morisset's work on Arvida, and Peter Gossage's analysis of families in Saint-Hyacinthe.⁹⁸ Little attention was given, however, to the social space of the street in

⁹⁴Kaplan, *Red City, Blue Period*.

⁹⁵Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1980; second edition, 1997).

⁹⁶William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis* (New York: Norton, 1991).

⁹⁷Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1989); David Moisseiff Scobey, "Empire City: Politics, Culture and Urbanism in Gilded-Age New York," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], Yale, 1989); James Borchert, *Alley Life in Washington* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1980).

⁹⁸Louise Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Plon, 1974; réimpression Montréal: Boréal, 1988); Alan F. Artibise, *Winnipeg* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1975); Brian Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1986); Lucie K. Morisset, *Arvida* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1998); Peter Gossage, *Families in Transition* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1999).

the Canadian and Quebec urban historical writing of the 1970s and 1980s.⁹⁹ This dissertation forms part of current historical interest in streets, people, and space in late nineteenth-century Montreal suburban communities.¹⁰⁰

In the pages that follow, Notre-Dame Street is recreated in its social, political, and physical dimensions. Because the street is viewed from the perspective of Saint-Henri, a majority francophone community, the names of streets and suburban Montreal communities appear in French. The title of this dissertation requires some explanation. It is inspired by the philosophies of Henri Lefebvre and Gaston Bachelard that purport everyday life to be a complex interplay of material and emotional constraints with feelings and ideas.¹⁰¹ In other words, class and gender analysis alone cannot epitomize the daily lives of women, men, and children. The specific qualities of a street environment reveal rich layers of meaning in people's lives, and rhythms attached to their movements.¹⁰² The thesis thus culminates in the final chapter, "A Day and Night", a synthesis of the daily activities of people on Notre-Dame Street drawn from newspaper coverage of a 'moment of truth'.

⁹⁹Political concerns with urban blight, renewal, street gangs, and "crime in the streets" in the 1960s and 1970s reinforced urban history's attention to streets in a proliferation of community studies. Written in response to widespread public concern with street crime, Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage, 1961) had a considerable effect. Often quantitative and demographic in orientation, with an emphasis on public and private ownership and the role of the local elite, North American urban history in this period laid a substantial structural basis for further modes of historical inquiry. Canadian examples include Katz, *The People of Hamilton: The Usable Urban Past*, eds. Alan F. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), and Paul-André Linteau, *Maisonnette* (Montréal: Boréal, 1981). The urban spaces of the working-class environment are rarely treated in historical monographs: Terry Copp, *The Anatomy of Poverty* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974); Bradbury, *Working Families* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993); Palmer, *Working Class Experience* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992).

¹⁰⁰Guy Mongrain, "Population et territoire dans un contexte de croissance urbaine: Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End, 1881-1901" (Thèse de maîtrise [Histoire], UQAM, 1998); Peggy Roquigny, "Sainte-Cunégonde: société et espace dans le contexte de l'industrialisation, 1876-1905," Communication présentée au Congrès annuel de l'IHAF, 22 octobre 1999; Gilles Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier ouvrier de la banlieue de Montréal: village Saint-Augustin (Municipalité de Saint-Henri), 1855-1881" (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], UQAM, 1986).

¹⁰¹ Lefebvre, *La vie quotidienne*; Bachelard, *La poétique de l'espace*.

¹⁰² Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*.

Daily interaction on neighbourhood streets is constantly negotiated and contested. As a publicly controlled space and a socially constructed category, the shared space of a main street involves the accommodation of the needs of different classes. The 'main street' of an industrial suburb therefore provides a fresh perspective on the class construction of public space and the political construction of everyday life. As a bond from centralizing city to hinterland, Notre-Dame Street functioned as a connection between two centres of power, Montreal and Saint-Henri. In Chapter 1, I establish the historical and geographic context prior to 1875, ending with the fusion of the three villages of Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle into the town of Saint-Henri in 1875, its main street then known as Saint-Joseph Street.

The onset of modern industrial capitalism and urban expansion was characterized by shifting spatial and class relations in the allocation of money and the assignment of power. In a treatment of the people and land use on Notre-Dame Street from 1875 to 1905, Chapter 2 analyzes the social and symbolic spaces of the Saint-Henri community from the perspective of varying class and gendered interests. I show that the relations of class and property were characterized by appropriation and exclusion. An important shift was initiated with an expropriation, extension of the street in 1890, and a concentration of public institutions.

In an analysis of the material environment in Chapters 3 and 4, I argue that the public space of the street was defined by the class interests of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a local francophone petite bourgeoisie, to the detriment of the working classes. I inquire into the profits of the grande and petite bourgeoisie from the installation of utilities and services, and the costs of usage by the working classes. Municipal financing, the state of current beliefs about medicine, and political ideology influenced public health issues, generating conflicts with monopolies controlling water and transportation. I employ *protêts* or notarized letters and non-payment of taxes to show popular resistance.

The symbolic representation of late nineteenth-century Saint-Jean-Baptiste parades is the subject of Chapter 5. Attempts to order the urban milieu reveal the social hierarchy

and the dominance of male participation in special religious events celebrating French-Canadian nationalism. Chapter 6 discloses the class antagonisms that characterized the social expression of modern urban public spaces. The political power of the petite bourgeoisie coexisted with the transgressions and resistance of the working classes and women. Readily accessible to the ordinary residents of the city, "the streets in particular played host to an immensely rich and often conflictual variety of activities that defied easy bureaucratic control."¹⁰³ I examine the regulatory role of the municipality in the shaping of public space, and the negotiation, transgression, and resistance displayed in street activities. Driven by an ideology of economic liberalism, the motives and actions of Saint-Henri businessmen and boosters were characteristic of those of the local elite of many North American industrial towns in this period. Land promotion, incentives to attract industry, street expropriations, and their own upward social mobility were their principal concerns. In an eminent interpretation of nineteenth-century modernity, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, Marshall Berman argues that "modern urban sensibility arises from the ubiquitous and uncontrolled encounters of people and groups in urban public space, especially the streets."¹⁰⁴ Varying interests vied for the power to decide what was acceptable and desirable behaviour. The volatility of the streets threatened bourgeois notions of propriety. As sources of these conflicting ideologies, I shall explore police arrests and the deliberations of the Recorder's Court (1895-1905).

Chapter 7 is a reconstruction of a day and night on Notre-Dame Street in the summer of 1895. A fatal moment of domestic violence on June 13, 1895 allowed me to recreate movements on the street on the previous day. Newspaper reports of courtroom testimony over a six-month period indicate a legal recourse to social justice, which established the female virtue of the victim, and disclosed elements of racism. I explore a gendered treatment of social space, contributing to a body of feminist literature which challenges the theory of gendered spheres of action.

¹⁰³Goheen, "Public Space and the Geography of the Modern City," *Progress in Human Geography* 22,4 (1998): 481.

¹⁰⁴Berman, 150.

The study of a local street in an industrializing community demonstrates the prevailing social and political distribution of wealth and power. An economic liberal ideology was instrumental to the development of the modern Western city through the creation of divisions between public and private spaces. The visible presence of the working and marginal classes and women on city streets suggests a different reality. Various class ideologies were played out in the management of the public space of the street.

Chapter 1

A Sense of Space, Place, and Time: Saint-Joseph Street to 1875

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler ..." ¹

The central question addressed in this chapter is: "How did Saint-Joseph Street develop as a space and place prior to 1875?". This investigation requires a clear definition of space and place. Integrating a scientific and phenomenological approach, I consider space in two dimensions: as a physical reality and a relative concept. Space can be viewed as both an absolute conception, "a distinct, physical and eminently real or empirical entity in itself" and "a relation between events or an aspect of events, and thus bound to time and process".² Over the course of time, a physical space is occupied by people and matter which involves a process of spatial organization and spatial structures. The two realities are thus inseparable. As people occupy absolute space, a relative perception of space develops.

When a portion of geographical space is occupied by people and objects, a specificity of place evolves. Place comprises three major elements: "locale, the settings in which social relations are constituted (these can be informal or institutional); location, the geographical area encompassing the settings for social interaction as defined by social and economic processes operating at a wider scale; and a sense of place, the local 'structure of feeling'".³ I therefore approach space and place "in a manner that captures its sense of totality and contextuality to occupy a position that is between the objective pole of scientific

¹Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken," *Robert Frost's Poems* (New York: Washington Press, 1969), 223.

²"Space," *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, eds. R.J. Johnston, Derek Gregory, and David Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 573.

³"Place," *Ibid.*, 442.

theorizing and the subjective pole of empathetic understanding.”⁴

The interpretation of space and place derives from lived experience.⁵ In short, space becomes place when ‘there’ becomes ‘here’. J. B. Jackson observes that “it is our sense of time, our sense of ritual, which in the long run creates our sense of place, and of community.”⁶ Ambiance derives from recurring events and cultural responses to landscape, either natural or built. Marked by continuous and discontinuous elements, various compositions of space and form emerge from differing historical contexts. Our associations with a country road thus differ from that of a town street. A road is a link between two outlying communities whereas a street is imbued with special meanings, particular feelings, and various recollections distinguished from its final destination. A street is more closely tied to a specific place. The place takes on a special significance in people’s minds and memories through social interactions, daily, and select events related to it. A sense of community develops from these perceptions and experiences.⁷

This chapter serves as a historical background, tracing the evolution of the street and its centrality to the community. Saint-Joseph Street began as a road between Montreal and Lachine in the late seventeenth century (Figure 1.1). With the construction of the Lower Lachine Road in 1740, it was referred to as the Upper Lachine Road, which in turn became the Lachine Turnpike Road in 1805. In the mid-nineteenth century, a section of the Lachine Turnpike Road was transformed to Saint-Joseph Street, and it was named Notre-Dame Street in 1890-91.

The evolution of the street and its centrality to the community took place within the context of general social and economic processes. New forms of transportation in the early nineteenth century facilitated the transition to industrial capitalism, altering spatial

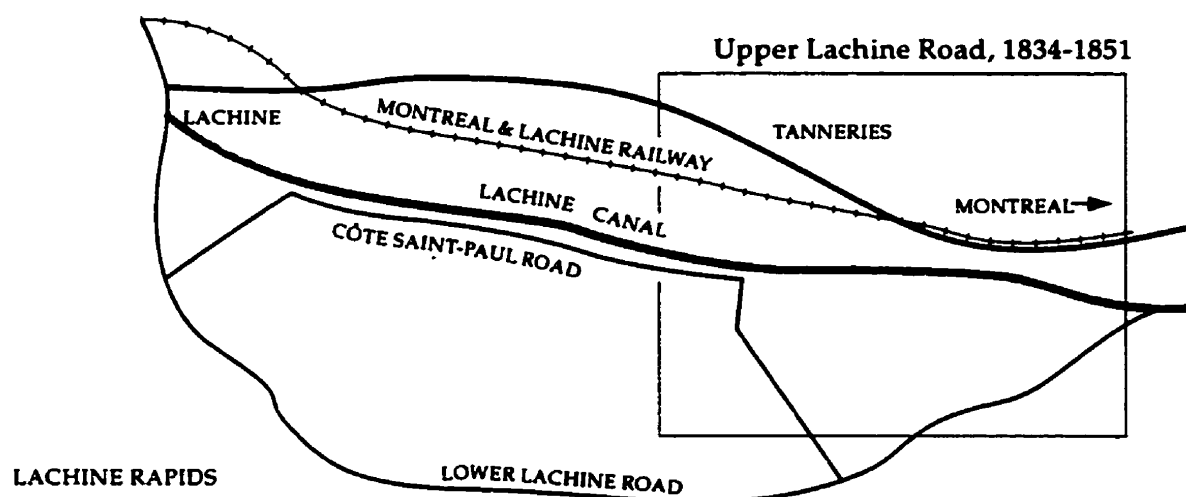
⁴*Ibid.*

⁵Tuan, *Space and Place*.

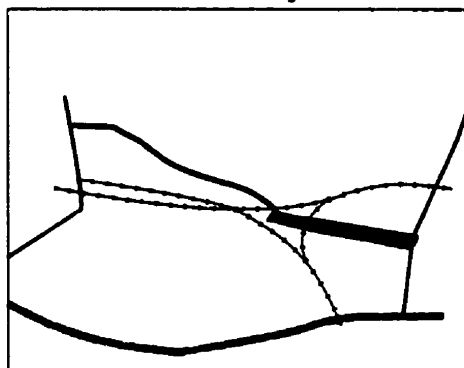
⁶John Brinkerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time* (New Haven: Yale, 1994), 160.

⁷*Ibid.*, 151-205.

Figure 1.1 Evolution of Notre-Dame Street, 1834-1907



Saint-Joseph Street, 1879



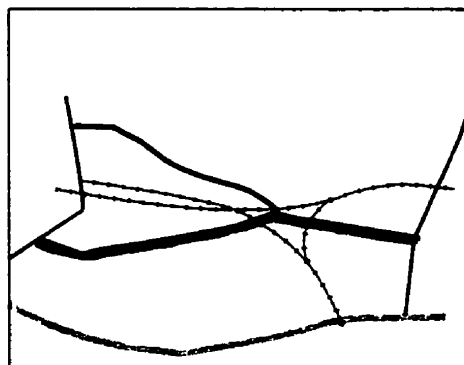
Sources:

Redrawn after the plans of A. Jobin, 1834, reproduced in Georges-E. Baillargeon, *La survivance du régime seigneurial à Montréal* (Ottawa: Le Cercle du Livre de France, 1968), 49; George Horatio Smith, *Montreal*, 1851, National Archives of Canada Map Collection, NMC 0020798;

H.W. Hopkins, *Atlas of the City and Island of Montreal, including the Counties of Jacques Cartier and Hochelaga: from Actual Surveys, based on the Cadastral Plan deposited in the Office of the Department of Crown Lands* (n.p.: Provincial Publishing And Surveying Company, 1879), Plates 78 & 79;

A.R. Pinsonneault, *Atlas of the Island and City of Montreal and Île Bizard* (Montreal: Atlas Publishing Company, 1907), Plates 29, 30, 34, 35, 36; Reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 12-13.

Notre-Dame Street, 1907



organization and spatial structures. I argue that the construction of Lachine Canal in 1825 signalled a significant change in the function of the Lachine Turnpike Road as the bulk of commercial traffic shifted from the road to the canal. Jacques Viger's 1825 census also attests to the beginnings of tanning activities in a farming community situated along the road. The construction of the Montreal-to-Lachine Railroad in 1847, the first railway on the island of Montreal, also marks an important shift in the road's development because it took away most of the remaining passengers. Local cart traffic remained.

An important portage route, the road between Montreal and Lachine in the late seventeenth century was primarily defined by activities and usage linking town and hinterland. As a bond from centralizing city to hinterland, the same commercial road, two centuries later, was a connection between two centres of power, Montreal and Saint-Henri. Saint-Joseph Street was the axis of a bustling industrial town, with functions which met the needs of an immediate community in Saint-Henri. This chapter examines the economies of movement associated with this transition. Principally conditioned by the physical obstruction of the Lachine Rapids, the path of the Upper Lachine Road traversed the terraces and waterways of Montreal.

The state employed three different strategies for the construction and maintenance of roads and streets: the *corvée* labour associated with the seigneurial system in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, turnpike trusts in the early and mid-nineteenth century, and municipal administration after the 1870s. In the first stage, from 1670 to 1805, the Montreal-to-Lachine Road depended on *corvée* labour. Resistance to it resulted in the creation of a monopoly, a turnpike trust which taxed users after 1805. With the emergence of economic liberalism, the mercantile state expanded the original system to include several Montreal roads in 1840. Although economic liberalism professed a competitive free market, in reality the state supported the intervention of merchants, businessmen, and industrialists. With the formation of the modern liberal capitalist order⁸

⁸McKay, *The Challenge of Modernity* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1992), xi-xvi.

street upkeep was consigned to municipalities.⁹

A transportation infrastructure of canals and railways abetted the industrializing economy and changed the region's spatial organization. With the imposition of rectangular street grids along the road's route by 1857, the built environment took on a linear form which contrasted with the natural landscape of New France's roads. Lot subdivision signified the advent of urban expansion and a modern capitalist order. Local modifications on mid to late nineteenth-century Saint-Joseph Street were marked by Saint-Henri's first phases of urbanization: an increase in population, eastward expansion of the original village of Saint-Henri-des-Tanneries, and the westward expansion of industrializing Montreal. Centrally situated slightly north of the triangular configuration of Grand Trunk rail lines, Place Saint-Henri, the site of the newly constructed parish church (1869), became the institutional and symbolic focal point of the community. Strategically located as a straight-line axis to the town centre, Saint-Joseph Street emerged as the main business street of Saint-Henri. With the fusion of the three villages of Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle into Saint-Henri in 1875, it served the townspeople's growing commercial needs.

Commercial Highway, 1670-1824

The involvement in road administration was governed by the interests of commerce. Water travel was "quicker, cheaper, and as a rule, more comfortable than any form of land transportation. Most important, it was the only feasible way of moving freight for any distance beyond a few miles."¹⁰ The economic, social and administrative development of the New France colony nevertheless prompted road construction. As winter ice obstructed

⁹G.P. de T. Glazebrook, *A History of Transportation in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1938), 101; *Atlas historique du Québec*, eds. Serge Courville, Jean-Claude Robert et Normand Séguin (Sainte-Foy: Université Laval, 1995), 29-39.

¹⁰Andrew F. Burghardt, "Some Economic Constraints on Land Transportation in Upper Canada/Canada West," *UHR/RHU* XVIII, 3 (February 1990): 232.

river transport, a road system linking *rangs* and parishes met the needs of local *habitants*.¹¹

The Lachine Rapids, an impediment to St. Lawrence-Great Lakes navigation, prompted seigneurial road construction between Montreal and Lachine in 1670 (Figure 1.1).¹² Sulpician efforts in 1679-80 focused on the building of a canal as a more direct, efficient, and less expensive means of transporting goods.¹³ These failed early attempts led to the Montreal-to-Lachine Road's maintenance as an ill-kept commercial highway for western fur trade exchange, and to a lesser extent, local and passenger traffic in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁴ Despite the objections of local residents, Intendant Gilles Hocquart commanded the construction of an additional regional road, the Lower Lachine Road, in 1740 rather than improving conditions on the original Montreal-to-Lachine Road.¹⁵ In 1792 and 1798, the *grand voyer* ordered the construction of the Côte Saint-Paul Road, a third road in this area.¹⁶ Shorter in distance, the poorly maintained

¹¹Léon Robichaud, "Le pouvoir, les paysans et la voirie au Bas-Canada à la fin du XVIII^e siècle" (Thèse de maîtrise [histoire], Université McGill, 1989), 12; Jean Hamelin et Yves Roby, *Histoire économique du Québec, 1851-1896* (Montréal: Fides, 1971), 142, 144.

¹²Raoul Blanchard, *Montréal* (Montréal: VLB, 1992), 49-52; *Oeuvres de Champlain*, éd. l'abbé C.-H. Laverdière (Québec: Desbarats, 1870), Tome I, 40; Dechêne, 128-130; Pierre-Georges Roy, *Inventaire des Procès-Verbaux des Grands Voyers*, Volume Premier (Beauceville: L'Éclaireur, 1923), 105; Roy, *Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants de la Nouvelle-France*, Volume Deuxième (Beauceville: L'Éclaireur, 1924), 260-261. The first cartographic record of this road appears on a 1685 map commissioned by Governor Jacques-René Brisay de Denonville. Marc Lafrance et André Charbonneau, "The Towns," *Historical Atlas of Canada*, ed. R.C. Harris (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987), Volume I, Plate 49.

¹³Dechêne, 129; Jacques Mathieu, "François Dollier de Casson," *DCB*, Vol. II, 195-196; Gerald J. J. Tulchinsky, "The Construction of the First Lachine Canal, 1815-1826," (M.A. Thesis [History], McGill, 1960), 3-5.

¹⁴Dechêne, 129, 131-32, 218-219; H. A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (New Haven: Yale, 1930), 207; Dechêne, *Le partage des subsistances au Canada sous le régime français* (Montréal: Boréal, 1994), 58, 229; Tulchinsky, 5-6; E. Z. Massicotte, "Les véhicules en la Nouvelle-France," *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, XXXII 6 (juin 1926): 360-361.

¹⁵Roy, *Inventaire*, Volume premier, 114; Volume sixième, 105; ANQM, TL4, S35, *Ordonnances des intendants*, Gilles Hocquart, volume 28, 22 juin 1743.

¹⁶Roy, *Inventaire*, Volume Troisième, 22, 52; Volume Sixième, 105.

Upper Lachine Road was more frequently used than the Lower Lachine and Côte Saint-Paul Roads in the nineteenth century (Figure 1.1).¹⁷

Subsequent to unsuccessful efforts by Montreal merchants and forwarders to obtain government funds for canal construction in 1796,¹⁸ road administration was transferred to private mercantile interests operating the Lachine Turnpike Trust in 1805. Widened and covered with stone and gravel, the Lachine Turnpike Road rendered smoother transportation between Montreal and Lachine. Transporting diverse commodities and passengers upriver under more favourable conditions, the Lachine Turnpike Road was soon overshadowed by canal and rail construction.¹⁹ The opening of the Lachine Canal in 1825-26 took away Great Lakes commerce, with remaining passenger service transferring to the Montreal-to-Lachine Railroad in 1847 and Grand Trunk rail lines in 1853-54. The number of stagecoaches carrying soldiers, immigrants, travellers, and mail to and from Upper Canadian and other destinations diminished. Carts transporting people and supplies locally from Montreal to Saint-Henri and Lachine remained active on this route.

The establishment of the Lachine Turnpike Trust in 1805 marked a significant transition in the road's development. The passage of the Lachine Turnpike Act in the Lower Canadian Assembly on March 25, 1805 signalled the creation of the first turnpike road in Canada.²⁰ Its purpose was two-fold: to expedite mercantile transport to Upper Canada and to defray road maintenance costs through a system of payments rather than *habitant* labour. An appointed commission of turnpike trustees, four local justices of the

¹⁷Joanne Burgess, "Work, Family and Community: Montreal Leather Craftsmen, 1790-1831," (Thèse de doctorat [histoire], UQAM, 1986), 354. Despite the appointment of Montreal *grand voyers* after 1765, there was little upkeep of these roads. Roy, "Les grands voyers de la Nouvelle-France et leurs successeurs," *Les Cahiers des Dix*, 8 (1943): 225-233.

¹⁸Tulchinsky, "The Construction of the First Lachine Canal", 7-8, 10; Tulchinsky, *The River Barons* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), 4.

¹⁹Hamelin et Roby, 142-146.

²⁰Jean-Claude Robert, "Réseau routier et développement urbain dans l'île de Montréal au XIX^e siècle," in *Barcelona-Montréal*, eds. Horacio Capel et Paul-André Linteau (Barcelona, 1998), 99-115; Hamelin et Roby, 154.

peace, John Richardson, Joseph Frobisher, Louis Guy, Jean-Marie Mondelet, and Deputy Commisary General Isaac Winslow Clarke, prominent representatives of Montreal's mercantile and professional elite, were authorized to borrow government funds of up to 500 pounds a year for road repairs.²¹

As surveyor Joseph Bouchette observes in his 1815 *Description topographique du Bas Canada*, the transfer of road administration to private interests was due to increased traffic to Upper Canada and insufficient funds for canal construction at that time. If a canal was not possible, a properly maintained road more efficiently expedited transportation to the northwest and growing western markets:

Depuis quelques années on a construit une bonne route garnie de barrières depuis Montréal, presque en droite ligne, jusqu'au village de La Chine, à la distance de sept milles, et par où la communication entre ces deux endroits est beaucoup plus facile qu'elle ne l'était auparavant; c'est par cette route qu'on transporte toutes les marchandises qu'on veut embarquer pour le Haut Canada. Cet espace présente une grande variété, et des points de vue très romantiques: à un mille ou deux de la ville, près des tanneries, la route monte sur une colline escarpée et se prolonge sur une chaîne élevée pendant plus de trois milles: de cette hauteur on a une vue superbe des champs cultivés qui sont au-dessous, du rapide de St. Louis, des îles du St. Laurent, et des différents bois qui sont sur la rive opposée: en descendant de cette hauteur, la route parcourt un pays plat jusqu'à ce qu'elle arrive à La Chine. Cette route était autrefois mauvaise, tortueuse, et coupée par de grandes masses de rocher, tellement qu'il fallait près d'une journée aux charrettes chargées pour aller d'une place à l'autre. Les provisions et autres articles destinés pour les magasins du roi, situés un peu au-delà du rapide, sont envoyés par une autre route, qui passe le long de la rivière.²²

²¹"An Act to Establish a Toll or Turnpike, for Improving and Repairing the Road, from the City of Montreal to LaChine, through the Wood," *Provincial Statutes of Lower Canada*, 45 Geo. III, chap.11, 25 March 1805, (Québec: Desbarats, 1805), 44-69; ANQM, CN 601, S185, Jonathan A. Gray, 1384, Contract for the Road from Montreal to Lachine through the Wood, 29 June 1805; Greenwood, "John Richardson," *DCB*, Vol. VII, 640-641; Fernand Ouellet, "Joseph Frobisher," *DCB*, Vol. V, 333; Elinor Kyte Senior, "Louis Guy," *DCB*, Vol. VII, 361; In collaboration with Elizabeth Abbott-Namphy and Margaret MacKinnon, "Jean-Marie Mondelet," *DCB*, Vol. VII, 622; F. Murray Greenwood, *Legacies of Fear* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1993), 107.

²²Joseph Bouchette, *Description topographique de la province du Bas Canada* (London: Faden, 1815), 137-138.

Turnpike roads existed in Europe since the late fifteenth century. The term turnpike derived from the medieval instruments, the turn and the pike, a turnpike becoming "a spiked barrier fixed in or across a road or passage", used for defence purposes.²³ Popular in eighteenth-century Britain, "in the generation before and during the Napoleonic wars small bodies of capitalists had sought from Parliament the right to develop certain sections of road and this private enterprise, based on system of tolls, had made with economy the best system of local communications in Europe."²⁴ Turnpike roads were first constructed in the United States between 1794 and 1825. The most extensive U.S. turnpike road was the Philadelphia-Lancaster road built at a cost of \$465,000 between 1792 and 1794.²⁵

Initially, the turnpike system appears to have had some positive effects on the road's condition. On June 29, 1805, the trustees contracted Gilbert L. Morin and Thomas Barlow to conduct major repairs. The road was widened to thirty feet, with slopes of nine feet on each side. Gutters, ruts, and the road surface were covered with stone, then gravel. A separate contract was signed with Samuel Tuesman for the use of his Coteau Saint-Pierre gravel pit to repair the road. Louis Guy and F.A. Quesnel contributed lands in Fief Saint-Joseph for the widening of the road.²⁶ Other than the largest bridge at the Tannery, which was not chargeable to road funds, bridges were improved.²⁷ Louis Charland, Montreal's road surveyor, put out a separate tender for work to be conducted on the Saint-

²³*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1971), 1986 ed., Vol. II, 3440, s.v. "Turnpike."

²⁴K. B. Smellie, *A History of Local Government* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1949), 78-79.

²⁵Hamelin et Roby, 154.

²⁶E.Z. Massicotte, "Quelques rues et faubourgs du vieux Montréal," *Les Cahiers des Dix*, 1936: 147.

²⁷ANQM, CN 601, S185, Jonathan A. Gray, 1384, Contract for the Road from Montreal to Lachine through the Wood, 29 June 1805; 1385, Agreement between a Committee of Trustees for the Road from Montreal to Lachine and Samuel Tuesman, 2 July 1805.

Pierre bridge near the town.²⁸ Most of the work was to be completed by August 1 of the following year, with continued upkeep after the winter carriage season.²⁹

From 1805 to the late 1820s, the Lachine Turnpike Road improved transportation between Montreal and Lachine. By 1825, Jacques Viger, Montreal's road inspector, commented that "avant peu d'années ... le chemin qui rend la communication plus facile entre la ville et le village susdit, deviendra une véritable rue."³⁰ After 1810, Saint-Henri residents often travelled by foot or on horseback along the road to the local chapel. In winter, the passage of a red sleigh on the road on Sundays and holidays signalled the arrival of the *cure* from Montreal.³¹ Incidences such as a 1815 riot at the tannery site and a 1823 murder may have occasioned visits by police constables from Montreal.³²

On July 15, 1805, a toll-gate, similar to the Quebec City example (Figure 1.2), was established at the house of William Brown, near the Tannery. The tollgate keeper charged eight pence to travellers in a wagon, cart, or sleigh, like the one on the Saint-Louis Road. Tanners returning from Montreal with their skins or bringing their finished products to Montreal paid this fee. Individuals riding horses, mares, or geldings, such as the second set of travellers in the Quebec City sketch, were charged four pence. One did not have to pay twice for travel conducted in the same day.³³

²⁸*The Montreal Gazette*, July 8, 1805, 2; July 15, 1805, 3.

²⁹ANQM, CN 601, S185, Jonathan A. Gray, 1384 & 1385.

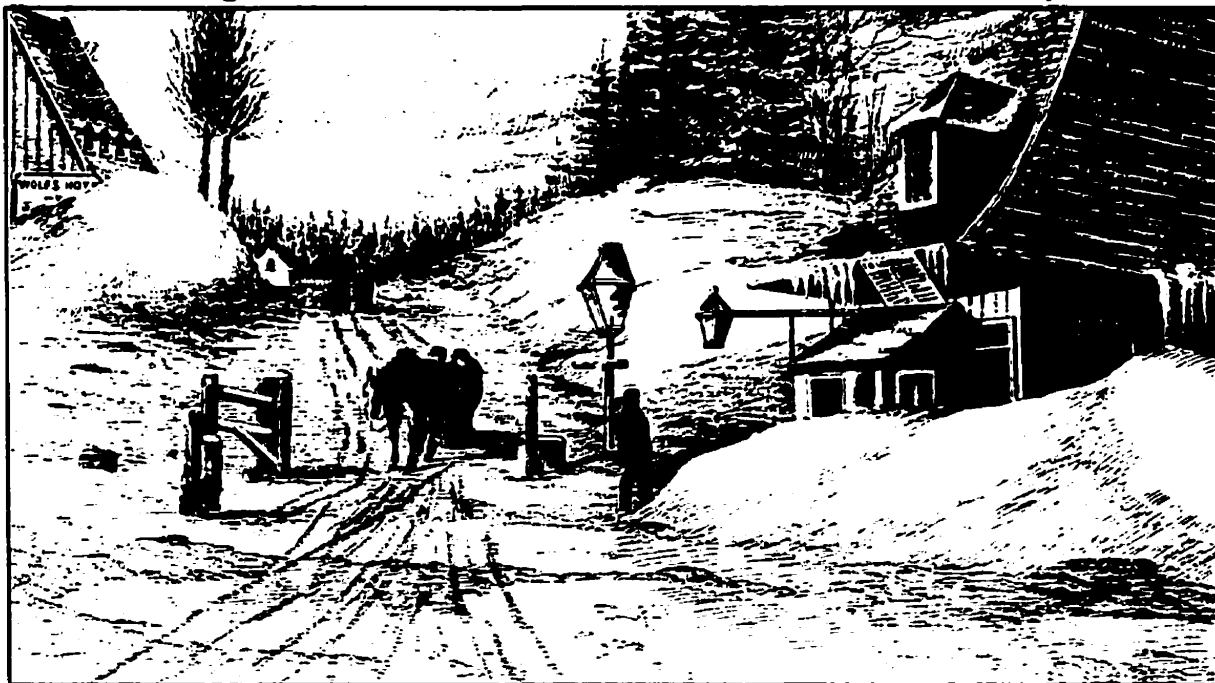
³⁰Massicotte, 147.

³¹*Ibid.*, 148.

³²ANQM, TL32 S1 SS1, [Montreal Quarter Sessions of the Peace], Jean-Marie Mondelet, 27 septembre 1815; *The Montreal Herald*, September 24, 1823; Donald Fyson, "Criminal Justice, Civil Society and the Local State: The Justices of the Peace in the District of Montreal, 1764-1830" (Thèse de doctorat [histoire], Université de Montréal, 1995), 209-260.

³³"An Act to Establish a Toll or Turnpike", 46-48.

Figure 1.2 Toll Gate, Saint-Louis Road, Quebec City, undated



Source: Jean Provencher, *Les quatre saisons dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent* (Montréal: Boréal, 1988), 398-399.

Stagecoaches carrying passengers to Lachine left John Patterson's and Thomas Fingland's tavern at the Montreal marketplace at nine on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings.³⁴ Coaches and carriages were normally charged twelve pence, unless they were transporting royal mail, in which case they were exempt from tolls. Also exempt from charges were local farmers transporting produce to Montreal markets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, soldiers, those conducting road repairs, unless under sub-contract, and those travelling for only one mile along the road. By 1825, eight innkeepers and one brewer serviced stagecoach traffic on the Lachine Turnpike Road within the village.³⁵

In the context of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Lower Canada, the Turnpike Act formed part of the piecemeal legislation leading to the beginnings of local state formation in the 1840s. Preceding 1870s municipal jurisdiction of road and street maintenance, the mercantile state created monopolies.³⁶ Rather than allocating significant funds for the running of an efficient road system, the creation of turnpike roads based on usage fees was an expedient measure. State involvement was limited and merchants' demands were met.³⁷

The 1805 Lachine Turnpike Trust was but one example of merchants' efforts to ensure that transportation interests were more central to the political agenda. John Richardson lamented in 1787 that "government obstructed the way of mercantile men at every turn when 'it ought to acknowledge commerce as its basis, and the accommodation of the Merchant as one principal means of promoting the national prosperity.'" ³⁸ From the state's perspective, the introduction of payments also sidestepped the contentious issue of

³⁴*The Montreal Gazette*, July 8, 1805, 2; July 15, 1805, 3; July 22, 1805, 3.

³⁵Claude Perrault, *Montréal en 1825* (Montréal: Groupe d'études gen-histo, 1977), 166.

³⁶Robichaud, "Le pouvoir, les paysans et la voirie", 37.

³⁷Hamelin et Roby, 154.

³⁸Greenwood, "John Richardson," 640.

statute labour which had come to a head in the 1796 Road Act Riots.³⁹ While the existing road system was becoming more subject to government scrutiny, the 1796 Road Act nonetheless maintained the *grand voyer* position, establishing *sous-voyers* or road inspectors for Quebec City and Montreal. Acting like municipal councillors, appointed local justices of the peace became the ultimate authorities for road administration in and near the towns. Montreal justices served as trustees on the Lachine Turnpike Road, and also played significant roles in shaping Montreal's urban fabric.⁴⁰

Nascent Community, 1663-1824

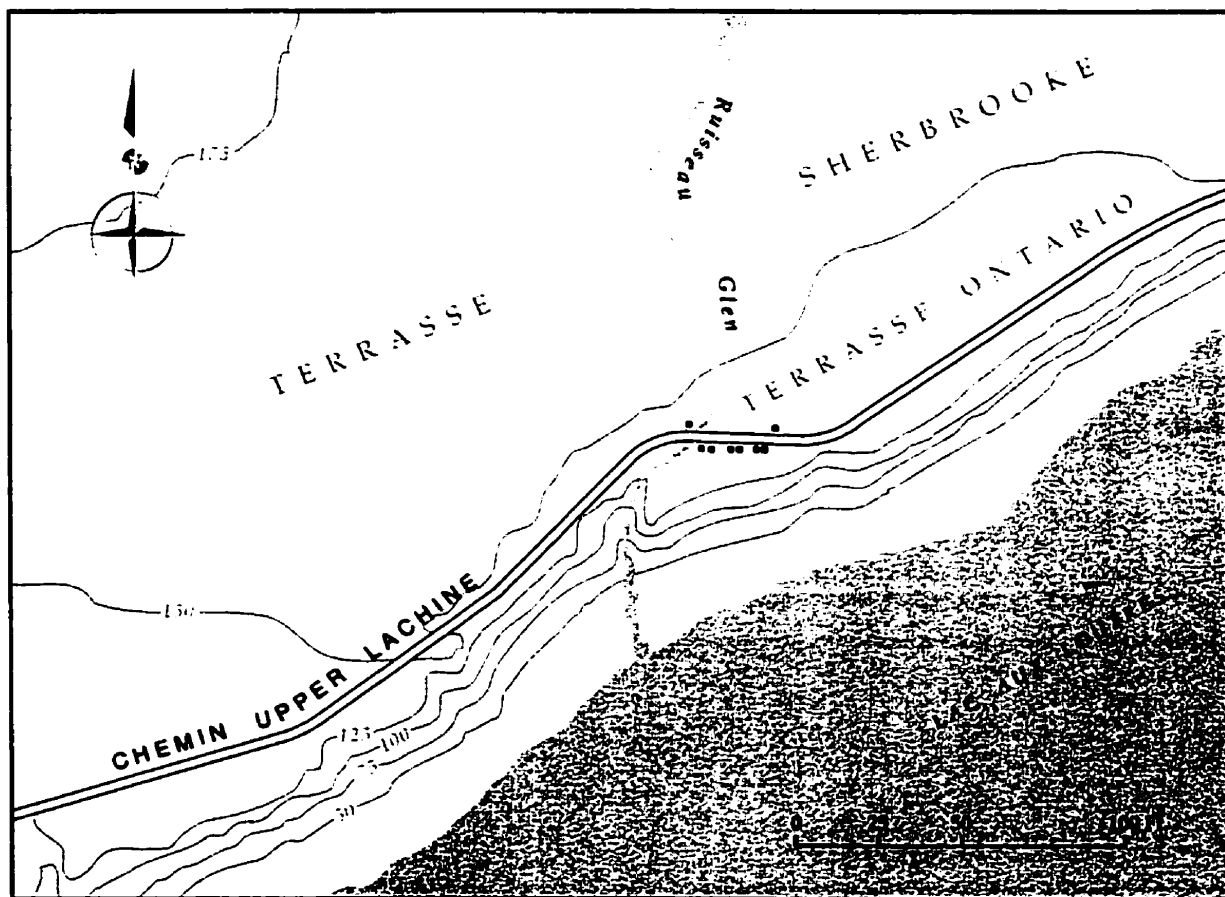
Agriculture grew alongside commerce in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Montreal. Attracted by the flat, arable terrain and the waters of the Glen stream, farming and tanning families established themselves in the area of Saint-Henri (Figure 1.3). The Sulpicians ceded fiefs and *arrière-fiefs* to two female religious orders, the Grey Nuns and the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu, to raise revenue for their respective institutions, the Hôpital-Général and the Hôtel-Dieu. Farmers and tanners purchased, leased, or rented this land. Along with the expansion of local activities, *journaliers*, *engagés*, innkeepers, and a brewer serviced cart and stagecoach traffic along the nineteenth-century Lachine Turnpike Road.

As a portion of Montreal's developing network of roads and *côtes* in this period, the physical path of the Lachine Turnpike Road was conditioned by the island's

³⁹Robichaud, "Le pouvoir, les paysans et la voirie", Chapter 3; Robichaud, "Les paysans et les premiers députés du Bas-Canada: Les réactions à la loi 'des chemins et des ponts' de 1796," Communication, Société historique du Canada, juin 1991; Greenwood, *Legacies of Fear*, 87, 89-92; Greenwood, "John Richardson," 640-641; Fyson, "Criminal Justice", 95.

⁴⁰Greenwood, "John Richardson," 645; Ouellet, 333; Namphy and MacKinnon, "Jean-Marie Mondelet," 622; Senior, 361.

Figure 1.3 Saint-Henri Tanneries, 1781



Sources: Redrawn after the plans of Joanne Burgess, "Work, Family and Community: Montreal Leather Craftsmen, 1790-1831" (Thèse de doctorat [Histoire], Université du Québec à Montréal, 1986), 362; 1868-72 Fortifications Survey Map, National Archives of Canada Map Collection, NMC 0044077-0044088.

topography, particularly its contours and waterways (Figure 1.3).⁴¹ The road may have originated as a native portage path,⁴² yet it was largely the creation of the impediment of the Lachine Rapids (Figure 1.1). At roughly eight miles (thirteen kilometers) in length, it was the most direct land route between the settlements of Montreal and Lachine. Extending westward beyond the fortified town, it skirted the forested and relatively flat terrain of the island's lower terraces. Crossing the Saint-Pierre River, the road bordered the southern portions of the two parallel *côtes* of Saint-Joseph and Saint-Pierre, swerving toward the interior, north of the elongated marsh known as Lac aux Loutres or Rivière Saint-Pierre.⁴³ After crossing the Glen stream, the road ascended Coteau Saint-Pierre, from the Ontario Terrace at a height of 125 feet (thirty-eight metres) to 150 feet (forty-six metres) on the Sherbrooke Terrace, and continued along this upper terrace until its descent to the port and *côte* at Lachine (Figure 1.3).⁴⁴

Local tanners who established themselves near the Glen stream in the early eighteenth century also accounted for some of the road's traffic (Figure 1.3). Their transactions indicate that untreated and tanned skins were likely transported in sleighs and carts over this period, mostly between Montreal and the tanneries, and to a lesser extent, on

⁴¹Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montréal en évolution* (Québec: Méridien, 1994), 34 (carte)-35, 51-55.

⁴²Glazebrook, 4; Jeannine Pozzo-Laurent, "Le réseau routier dans le gouvernement de Québec, 1706-1760," (*Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire]*, l'Université Laval, 1981), 20. Various hunting, fishing and gathering societies may have inhabited this area prior to European contact. The St. Lawrence Iroquois Cartier encountered in 1535 and 1541 were centred in Hochelaga and Tutonagury near Mount Royal, with fishing camps to the east and west. James A. Tuck, "Northern Iroquoian Prehistory," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, volume 15 (Washington: Smithsonian, 1978), 325. B.G. Trigger, "The St. Lawrence Valley, 16th Century," *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Volume I, Plate 33; Bruce G. Trigger and James F. Pendergast, "Saint Lawrence Iroquoians," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, volume 15, 357-361; Bruce Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1976). By the time of Champlain's arrival in 1603, the St. Lawrence Iroquoians had disappeared from the island of Montreal. Natives may have set up camp in this area for trade fairs conducted at Montreal in the 1670s. There may have been occasional native visitors from this point on, yet indigenous inhabitation appears doubtful. W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959), 86; Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands*, 31-32.

⁴³See the 1702 seigneurial map of Montreal *côtes* in Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands*, 2-3.

⁴⁴Marsan, 13-15.

the western portion of the road extending from the tanneries to Lachine. Gabriel Lenoir dit Rolland, the patriarch of the close-knit Lenoir-Rolland tanning family in Côte Saint-Pierre, did business with several Montreal merchants from 1721 to 1751. In his original five-year contract, Joseph Guyon dit Desprès, an important Montreal butcher and meat supplier for the King's army, furnished him with skins and Lenoir agreed to build a tannery.⁴⁵ Lenoir incurred debts for skins supplied by several Montreal merchants, including Jean-Baptiste-Léonard Hervieux, Jacques Gadois dit Maugé, as well as for the treatment of skins for Gabriel Roussel from Lachine and Joseph St-Germain in Pointe-Claire.⁴⁶ His post-mortem inventory included a sleigh, a cart, and two horses.⁴⁷ In 1737, Claude Rolland and his associate Pierre Haye also tanned skins provided by Guyon dit Desprès, and by the 1770s, a second generation of local tanners continued to do business with Montreal merchants.⁴⁸

By 1825, an isolated strip village in a parish division of eight hundred people, with a chapel and two schools, spread eastward toward Montreal. In *Entre ville et campagne*, Serge Courville analyzes the spatial expansion of regional villages in Lower Canada as fusions of town and hinterland. Villages developed as agglomerations of people, marketplaces, and institutions servicing the surrounding countryside.⁴⁹ To some extent,

⁴⁵ANQM, CN 601, S111, Jacques David, 364, convention entre Joseph Guyon dit Desprès, son épouse Madeleine Petit, et Gabriel Lenoir dit Rolland, 15 juin 1721.

⁴⁶ANQM, CN 601, S259, F. Lepailleur de LaFerté, obligation de Gabriel Lenoir dit Rolland à Antoine Poudrette, 9 décembre 1738; CN 601, S372, F. Simonnet, 246, obligations de Gabriel Lenoir dit Rolland à Jean-Baptiste Léonard Hervieux, 23 octobre 1740 et 23 octobre 1740; CN 601, S3, Jean-Baptiste Adhémar dit Saint-Martin, 10347, obligation de Gabriel Lenoir dit Rolland à Jacques Gadois dit Maugé, 3 novembre 1749.

⁴⁷ANQM, CN 601, S202, Gervais Hodiesne, 265, inventaire des biens de Marie-Joseph Delaunay, 4 mai 1752.

⁴⁸ANQM, CN 601, S339, J.-C. Rimbault de Piedmont, 1380, transaction entre Guyon dit Desprès et Claude Rolland dit Lenoir et Pierre Haye, 23 juin 1737; CN 601, S158, A. Foucher, 3103, inventaire des biens de Marie-Josèphe Lenoir dit Rolland, 23 juillet 1774.

⁴⁹Serge Courville, *Entre ville et campagne* (Québec: Université Laval, 1990).

his spatial analysis can be applied to the development of Saint-Henri. The road connected town and hinterland, yet Saint-Henri-des-Tanneries, achieving village status in 1846, retained its own sense of place.

Conditioned by the island's natural geography, *côtes* developed as initial forms of land division. The area which Saint-Henri encompassed in 1875 comprised a small portion of the westernmost section of Côte Saint-Joseph and all but the westernmost sections of Côte Saint-Pierre. According to Joanne Burgess, the land-granting strategies practiced by the Grey Nuns and Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu were quite similar. Both female religious orders sold roughly half of their properties to tanners and other settlers who established themselves along the Montreal-to-Lachine Road, and kept the balance for themselves. The Grey Nuns farmed their own land, while the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu leased large parcels of land to individuals for extended periods of time.⁵⁰

Over the course of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, farmers and tanners dominated settlement in Côte Saint-Pierre. Farms had developed on the relatively flat and fertile lands of Côte Saint-Joseph as early as 1654. Sixteen farms of seventy-six *arpents* each made up this interior *côte* by 1731. In its eastern section, the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu farmed a large parcel of land, twenty *arpents*, eight *perches* by twenty *arpents*, in Fief Saint-Augustin, an *arrière-fief*. By 1747, the Grey Nuns operated a smaller plot measuring five *arpents* by twenty in the western portion of this *côte*. Most of these concessions occupied the northeasternmost sections of the *côte* near the tanneries.⁵¹ The 1781 *aveu et dénombrement* indicates that the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu had two parcels of land in the western sections of this *côte*, one unoccupied lot ten by twenty *arpents*, and another nineteen and a half by twenty *arpent* lot with two houses, a barn, and an orchard in

⁵⁰Burgess, 360-361; Young, 7, 18-19; Claude Perrault, *Montréal en 1781* (Montréal: Payette, 1969), 243; Jennifer Waywell, "Farm Leases and Agriculture on the island of Montreal, 1780-1829," (M.A. thesis [History], McGill, 1989), 80; Michel Allard et al., *La Nouvelle-France* (Montréal: Guérin, 1985), Appendice III, 176.

⁵¹By 1697, a number of plots in Côte Saint-Joseph had been purchased, with a majority of residents living in the *côte* and a minority residing in town. Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands*, 249, 514.

Fief Saint-Joseph, another *arrière-fief*.⁵²

Beginning in the late seventeenth century, tanners were drawn to the site's abundant water resources and proximity to Montreal (Figure 1.3).⁵³ They cleansed their hides along the Glen Stream, which flowed from Mount Royal north of the Dorchester Terrace to Lac aux Loutres. With its twenty-five foot drop from the Sherbrooke to Ontario Terraces, the stream provided an excellent site for the cleansing of hides.

The establishment of the first tannery at this location is somewhat questionable. A Montreal tannery owned by Jacques Baillet was operating as early as 1685, yet is unclear whether it was built along the Montreal-to-Lachine Road in the Saint-Joseph suburb, near the Rivière Saint-Pierre, or at the foot of Coteau Saint-Pierre in Saint-Henri.⁵⁴ A 1695 government ordinance indicates that Jacques Baillet and Pierre du Roy were operating a tannery "sur le chemin public à un endroit entre l'Hôtel-Dieu et les Frères Hospitaliers, en allant vers Lachine",⁵⁵ and suggests that the possible construction of a new tannery in Saint-Henri over the next few years was part of a move to get tanneries and abattoirs even further out of town where the fumes produced by these industries disturbed fewer people.⁵⁶

Saint-Henri grew from a small hamlet (Figure 1.3) to a village comprising eighty-two lots and ninety-four households in 1831. In 1781, there were fifteen lots concentrated

⁵²Perrault, 230-231; Sylvie Dépatie, "Comme un bon et fidèle jardinier": l'horticulture à Montréal au XVIII^e siècle," Communication présentée à "Vingt ans après Habitants et marchands de Montréal: La recherche sur les XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles canadiens," Colloque au CCA, Montréal, mai 1994, Graphiques 1 et 2a.

⁵³Burgess, 356.

⁵⁴Although Joseph-Noel Fauteux suggests that both locations are possible, E.Z. Massicotte, cited in Élie-J. Auclair, fixes the first tannery's location in Saint-Henri. Joseph-Noel Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français* (Québec: Proulx, 1927), 410-412; Auclair, 2; E. Z. Massicotte, "Quelques rues et faubourgs du vieux Montréal," *Les Cahiers des Dix*, 1936, 145.

⁵⁵Fauteux, 411-412; Roy, *Ordonnances*, 245-247.

⁵⁶André Lachance, *La vie urbaine en Nouvelle-France* (Montréal: Boréal, 1987), 84-85; Burgess, 370-371.

in the hands of four owners at the Saint-Henri site. Two were in the hands of individual proprietors Charles Turcot and Louis Delaunay, with the Grey Nuns and the Sisters of the Hotel-Dieu owning the remaining two. Of a total of eight tanneries, Turcot and Delaunay owned two, and the extended Lenoir-Rolland family operated six in the western section owned by the Grey Nuns (Figure 1.3). The remaining lots in the Sisters of the Hotel-Dieu's eastern portion accounted for the balance of the properties sold up to this point, and five gardens and one orchard were spread amongst various properties in Côte Saint-Pierre.⁵⁷

Canal Road, 1825-1846

As merchants favoured canals, interest in improving the road's condition suffered a considerable decline with the opening of the first Lachine Canal in 1825-26, and to a lesser extent, the amalgamation of the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821. By 1826, the Turnpike Act had expired, and "by the late 1820s the turnpike syndicate was slipping out of existence."⁵⁸ Once again, conditions deteriorated as "the burden of repairing the road had fallen entirely on the shoulders of property owners living beside the road."⁵⁹ The appearance of John Molson, Thomas McCord, Louis Guy, and Joseph Perrault as witnesses to a government commission heightened pressure on the Lower Canadian Assembly for Lachine Canal construction in the early nineteenth century. John Richardson, who headed a Commission of Lachine Canal Proprietors, succeeded in raising sufficient capital to undertake the project in 1821. Merchant capital, Thomas Burnett's engineering, and strenuous manual work by Irishmen, French-Canadians, and

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 358-360, 372-373; Perrault, 228-234. Côte Saint-Pierre accounted for 0.7% of the total area of Montreal's orchards. Dépatie, Graphiques 1 et 2a.

⁵⁸"An Act to Establish a Toll or Turnpike", 68-69; John Willis, "On and Off the Island of Montréal, 1815-1867: The Transport Background of Town-Country Relations in the 'plat pays' of Montréal," *Espace et culture/Space and Culture*, 352.

⁵⁹Willis, 352.

Kanawake natives were instrumental to the completion of the canal.⁶⁰

In the interim period between the construction of the Lachine Canal (1825-26) and the Montreal to Lachine Railway (1847), commercial interest in the Lachine Turnpike Road declined, cart traffic diminished, and stagecoach passenger service persisted. Fearful of popular unrest following the 1837-38 Rebellions, the Special Council in Lower Canada handed over local control of regional roads to the Montreal Turnpike Trust in 1840. The road's diminishing importance as a means of communication between Montreal and Lachine was coupled with the growing significance of Saint-Joseph Street as a local business street.

The Lachine Canal facilitated the transportation of bulk commodities, cut cartage costs for Montreal merchants, and deprived Montreal carters of an important route.⁶¹ With the introduction of railways in this region two decades later, cart traffic diminished further. Stagecoaches carrying immigrants to Upper Canada, soldiers, and other travellers still employed this road.⁶² With an emphasis on stagecoach traffic, travel literature, a watercolour, and photos by Montreal residents convey a romantic vision of the road and village site (Figures 1.4 & 1.6).⁶³

One in a series of landscape watercolours commissioned by John Samuel McCord, Ulsterman James Duncan's 1839 watercolour portrays a pastoral view of the village site

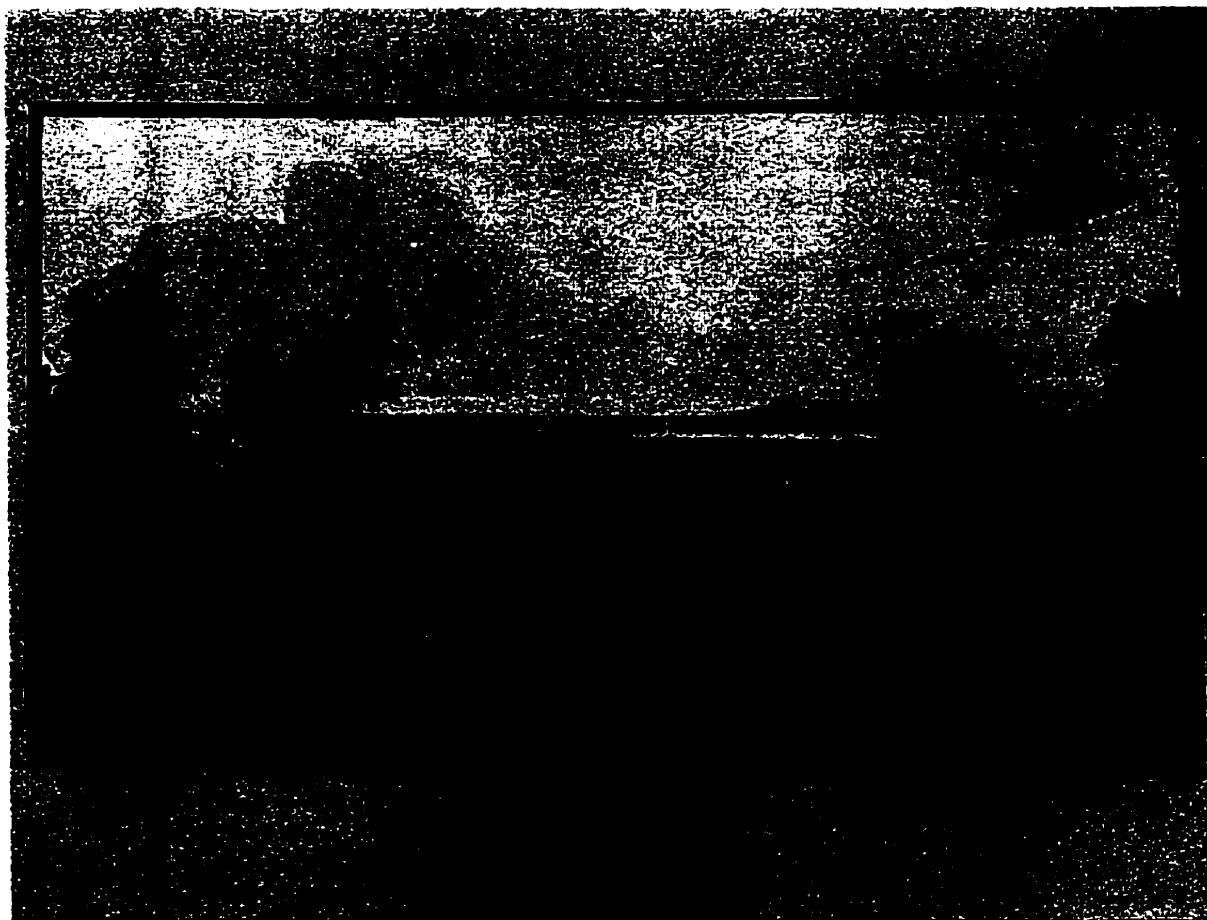
⁶⁰Tulchinsky, "The Construction of the First Lachine Canal", 34, 36, 53-72, 79, 96-98, 115.

⁶¹Tulchinsky, "The Construction of the First Lachine Canal", 109, Appendices 1 & 2; Margaret Heap, "La grève des charretiers à Montréal, 1864," *RHAF*, 31, 2 (décembre 1977): 373; John A. Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Quebec* (second edition, Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1993), 122.

⁶²*Saint-Henri des Tanneries* (Montréal: YMCA, 1981), 11.

⁶³See also Alexander Henderson, "Le village des Tanneries en été vers 1865", National Archives of Canada Photo Collection, PA 123822 and Alexander Henderson, "Le village des Tanneries en hiver, vers 1870," collection privée (different photo with same title as Figure 1.6). Both photographs are reproduced in Lessard, Plates 38 and 39. An illustrator for the *Canadian Illustrated News*, James Duncan (1806-1881) is "best known for watercolour views of Montreal area landscape, street scenes and figure groups." Mary Allodi, *Canadian Watercolours and Drawings* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1974), 673-736.

Figure 1.4 James Duncan, View of Rolland Tanneries, October 1839



Source: AVM, *L'album Viger* (Montréal: s. éd., s.d.), planche 258.

(Figure 1.4).⁶⁴ Although some of Duncan's other works include market sketches and urban street scenes,⁶⁵ the emphasis in the commissioned series is on the links between the metropolis and the hinterland, and not the city itself. Combining a realistic depiction with a rural idyllic image, Duncan's watercolour shows a stagecoach on the Côte des Tanneries des Rollands in the journey from Lachine to Montreal. Surrounded by farms on low-lying lands, abundant foliage, and wooden fencing, the Lachine Turnpike Road meandered toward the village chapel, rural housing and surrounding poplars near Saint-Henri. The Monteregian Hills dot the plain south of the St. Lawrence River. The rolling embankment Ontario Terrace appears in the foreground. To the right of the stagecoach, two young children are walking; nearing the site of the tanneries, is one horse-drawn cart with a single driver. Other pedestrians approaching the first houses are barely discernible.

Duncan's work was influenced by the eighteenth-century British romantic movement with its predilection towards pastoral watercolours as a response to the insufferable ills of urbanization and industrial capitalism.⁶⁶ One of a series of colourful depictions of Montreal's outskirts compiled in an album by Jacques Viger,⁶⁷ the 1839 watercolour reinforces an idyllic view of the surrounding countryside. The image contrasts with the harsh realities of labour conflicts and incidents of crime at the tanneries site disclosed in judicial sources. The watercolour also combines a fabrication of the artist's imagination with elements of historical accuracy. The light brush strokes of the poplars in the background and the windmill appear to be an afterthought. There is no evidence to

⁶⁴Allodi, 673-690; Fyson and Young, "Origins, Wealth, and Work", *La famille McCord/The McCord Family* (Montreal: McCord Museum, 1992), 27-53; McCord Family Papers, file no. 1810, March 18, 1866, "Letter from Anne Ross McCord to David Ross McCord"; file no. 5023, July 22, 1920, "Letter from David Ross McCord to Andrew A. Wilson"; McCord Museum of Canadian History, Public Information Report, November 26, 1999 (list of Duncan watercolours in the Museum's collection).

⁶⁵Allodi, 691-726.

⁶⁶Huguette Boivin-Piérard, "Souvenirs canadiens: album de Jacques Viger" (Mémoire de maîtrise [arts], UQAM, 1990), 31, 55-67; Martin Hardie, *Water Colours in Britain*, Volume II (London: Batsford, 1967).

⁶⁷Jacques Viger, comp., *Album Jacques Viger* (Montréal: s. éd., s.d.).

suggest that a mill actually existed.

John Fraser's reminiscences of stagecoaches leaving Montreal in the 1840s portrays an animated urban atmosphere which contrasts with Duncan's pastoral village landscape of Saint-Henri in the late 1830s (Figure 1.4). Deschamp's stage house at the Tanneries and numerous taverns or inns along the route provided passengers with a needed respite, water, beer, liquor, and food in the long, dusty, and uncomfortable journey to Lachine.

Very few of the present generation can recall the days of the old stage coaches, four in hand, between Montreal and Lachine, to catch the mail steamer leaving Lachine every day at noon. The completion of the Lachine railway, over forty years ago, put an end to stage coaching.

The stage office was on McGill street, near the old Ottawa Hotel, corner of St. Maurice St. This was then a busy spot between the hours of nine and eleven every morning. It required two coaches every day, some days, four, to carry all the passengers. There was something pleasing as well as exciting in the bustle of preparation to start, and to hear the last horn blow and the words -- All aboard; then the graceful sweep of the coachman's whip and the rattle of the wheels as they moved off and turned into St. Joseph street on their way to Lachine. Beside the mail coaches, it required from twenty to thirty "caleches" or cabs, some days, to carry all the passengers. Many an old Montrealer will recall those days of other years.

Let us follow those stage coaches, "caleches" and cabs on their way to Lachine. There were few houses then, not over half a dozen, between Cantin's shipyard and the Tanneries. The most noted building was the City Powder magazine, which still stands, but hidden from view by houses built in front of it. The coachman's horn announced their approach to each stopping place. The first halt was at Deschamp's, the stage house at the Tanneries, to water -- both horses and passengers seemed to be often drouthy. Such was the custom in those old days.

Then up the Tanneries Hill and along the high road of Cote St. Pierre; a charming drive of three miles; bordered with orchards and market gardens, as at the present day, overlooking what was then a lake -- the present lowland stretching over to Cote St. Paul. The next halting place was at the foot of the Coteau Hill, at the present crossing of the Grand Trunk Railway. There was then a considerable village at that place, having from thirty to forty houses, with some half a dozen taverns or inns.⁶⁸

In the 1840s, the turnpike system was expanded to include several Montreal roads. Given popular resistance displayed in the 1837-38 Rebellions, the government eliminated the *grand voyer* system and statute labour.⁶⁹ Although the Lachine Turnpike Road

⁶⁸John Fraser, *Canadian Pen and Ink Sketches* (Montreal: The Gazette, 1890), 195-197.

⁶⁹John Willis, *The Process of Hydraulic Industrialization on the Lachine Canal* (Environment Canada, 1987), Vol. I, 51.

declined in the late 1820s and 1830s, witnesses at the Durham inquiries deemed its operations a success.⁷⁰ Private interests operated turnpike roads financed by government subsidies and usage fees.⁷¹ The Montreal Turnpike Trust administered the Upper and Lower Lachine Roads, the road to Pointe-aux-Trembles, Côte-des-Neiges, Saint-Laurent, Victoria, Côte Saint-Antoine, and Côte Saint-Luc.⁷²

It is difficult to pinpoint with any accuracy the actual time spent in a journey from Montreal to Lachine. Joseph Bouchette points out that it was nearly a day's sojourn before 1805 Turnpike road improvements. John Fraser claims that 1840s stagecoaches left Montreal at nine in the morning. They reached Lachine by noon. With subsequent improvements in 1843, traffic flowed more quickly on the Lachine Canal. With the construction of the Montreal and Lachine Railroad in 1847, passenger and freight traffic transit times declined to twenty minutes instead of a few hours.⁷³ On November 19, 1847, the first steam train operating on the island of Montreal left the first Bonaventure Station on Chaboillez Square for the Lachine wharf, some 7.5 miles distant, with passenger stops at

⁷⁰*Lord Durham's Report* (New York: Kelley, 1970; reprint ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), Vol. II, Appendix C, 179, 192.

⁷¹For an animated analysis of popular resistance to sleigh ordinances on winter roads, see Stephen Kenny, 'Cahots' and Catcalls: An Episode of Popular Resistance in Lower Canada at the Outset of the Union," *CHR* LXV, 2 (1984):184-208.

⁷²"General Report of the Commissioner of Public Works for the Year ending 30th June, 1867," Government of Canada, *Sessional Papers* (No. 8) Vol. I, No.5 (Ottawa: Hunter, Rose, 1868), 441-442; Hamelin et Roby, 155.

⁷³Michael Leduc, *Montreal Island Railway Stations: CN and Constituent Companies* (Dorion, Quebec: Leduc, 1994), 10; David Fontaine, Pierre Malo, et Eric Paquet, "Place Saint-Henri: Étude du secteur: évolution et analyse," l'Université de Montréal, École d'Architecture de paysage, décembre 1987, 5; Claude Ouellet, "Les élites municipales et la municipalisation de Saint-Henri et Sainte-Cunégonde, 1875-1878," UQAM, 1982, 5. A 1851 guide "showed six trains daily regularly scheduled each way." Omer S. Lavallée, "Montreal & Lachine Railroad," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company* (n.p., 1961) SHSH, Fonds 243, Doc. 377.

Vinet's Hotel (1 mile) and Tanneries Junction (1.5 miles).⁷⁴ Public usage of the first railroad was so popular that the railway issued copper third-class tokens which could be used again and again in lieu of railways tickets.⁷⁵ By 1852, six trains operated daily at two hour intervals in the morning from eight o'clock until noon and between four in the afternoon and eight o'clock in the evening.⁷⁶

With a regional transportation infrastructure of canals and railways in place by mid-century, the Lachine Turnpike Road underwent a further developmental stage. Its commercial function had suffered a considerable demise. The Montreal Turnpike Trust oversaw the operation of the road, yet the transition to an urbanizing and industrializing economy was marked by increased traffic on streets increasingly subject to local control.

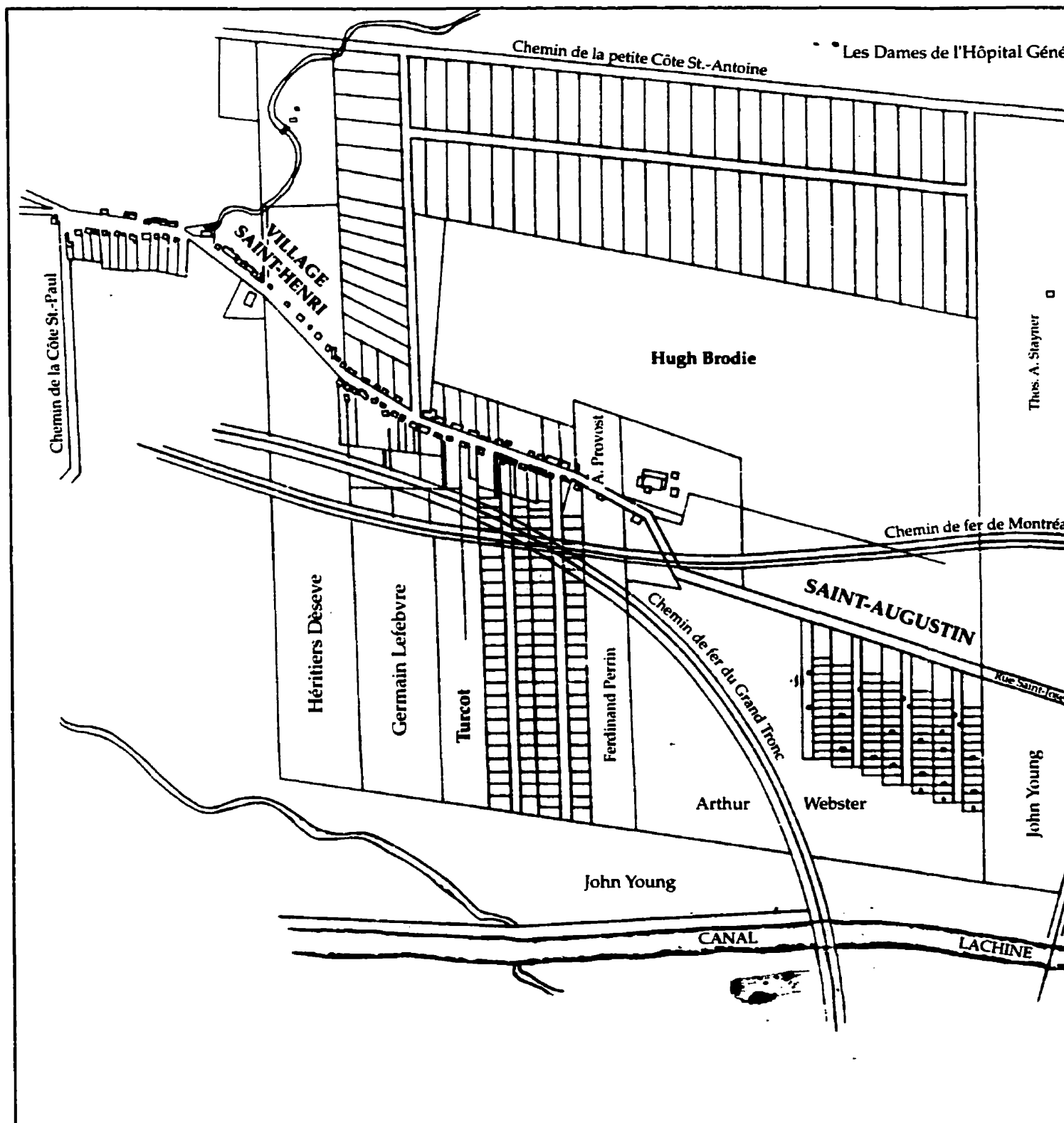
Tanning Village to Suburban Town, 1825-1875

Spatial forms reflected three transformations in the local urbanizing economy in this period: eastward expansion of the original village of Saint-Henri, the westward growth of Montreal, and the installation of the Grand Trunk Railroad. Agricultural land was opened up for urban development in four areas: on the Brodie properties to the north of the road, on Turcot land to the south, in Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle (Figure 1.5). The 1840 commutation law allowed individual proprietors to begin profitably parcelling out land in 3-

⁷⁴Plans to construct the Montreal and Lachine Railroad began as early as 1835. *Montreal Herald and Daily Commercial Gazette*, November 12, 1835, 1. David B. Hanna, "L'importance des infrastructures de transport," *Montréal Métropole, 1880-1930* (Montréal: Boréal, 1998), 51. Leduc, 10, 37, 90, 92-93; Lavallée, "Montreal & Lachine Railroad," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*. The Tanneries Junction railway stop appears clearly on H.W. Hopkins, *Atlas of the City and Island of Montreal* (n.p.: Provincial Publishing and Surveying Company, 1879), Plates 78 & 79. Bonaventure Station appears on Goad's 1890 map of Montreal and Suburbs (Figure 2.3).

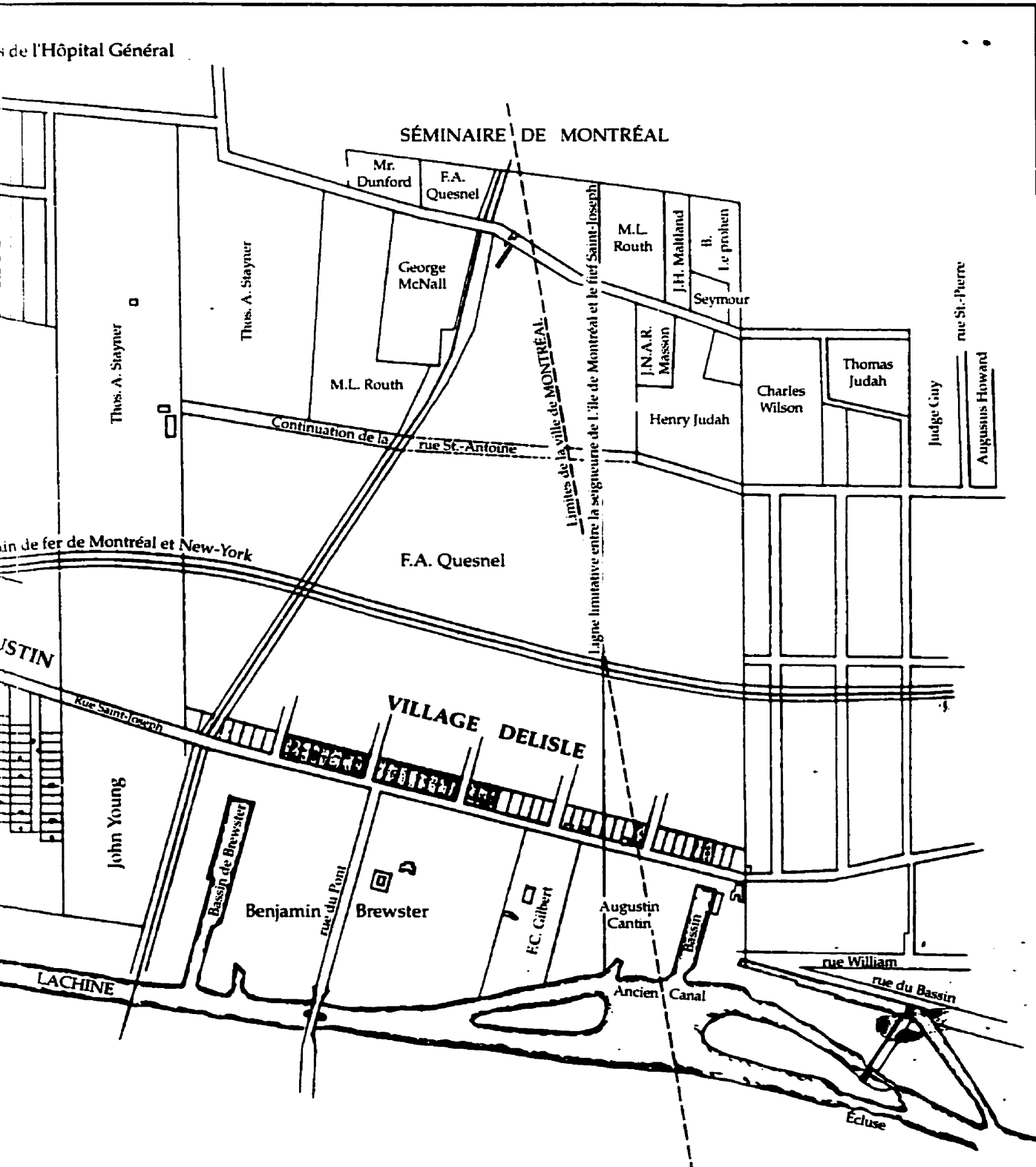
⁷⁵"The First Railway Train to come into Montreal, Montreal and Lachine Railroad, November 19, 1847," from an Engraving by J. Walker made at the time, Archives photographiques du CN, CN 45430; Lavallée, "Montreal & Lachine Railroad," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

⁷⁶Horaires du chemin de fer Montréal et Lachine, 1852, Archives photographiques du CN, CN X-25372.



Source: Gilles Lauzon, 1875, *Saint-Henri* (Montréal: SHSH, 1985), 8; Redrawn after the plans of H.M. Perreault, arpenteur provincial

Figure 1.5 Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin and Village Delisle, 1857



peinture provinciale. Montréal, déc. 1857.

Fief Saint-Augustin and Fief Saint-Joseph.⁷⁷ This grid development signified the beginnings of modern land capital accumulation in the area's first phases of urbanization and the advent of the urban expansion which came to fruition in the 1880s and 1890s. Rural migration led to significant population increase. Saint-Augustin's urbanization in this period were marked by in-migration from 1861 to 1871 and out-migration during the 1873-79 depression. The growth of Village Delisle occurred alongside the westward expansion of industries on the Lachine Canal. Taken together, these factors resulted in the further growth of the original Saint-Henri village, the construction of Saint-Augustin, and the industrial and urban development of Village Delisle. Saint-Henri was thus enacted as a town amalgamating these three burgeoning villages in 1875.⁷⁸

Extensive lot subdivision of an initial fifteen properties took place in both the western and eastern sections of the original village of Saint-Henri from 1781 to 1831.⁷⁹ Retaining their familial ties with the Saint-Henri community, a few tanning families moved to a site on the Saint-Pierre River in the western section of Saint-Joseph suburb.⁸⁰ Viger's 1825 census on resident occupation in both the village of Saint-Henri and the surrounding countryside indicates "that farming and farm-related occupations predominated, but that there was also a smattering of rural industry."⁸¹ Shoemakers, saddlers, tanners, and their apprentices made up the largest proportion of village occupants (102), together with twelve *journaliers* or day labourers, five of whom were females, and ten *engagés* or hired hands,

⁷⁷The 1840 commutation law authorized property owners to purchase their land by paying a fixed indemnity to defray seigneurial duties. Gilles Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier ouvrier de la banlieue de Montréal: village Saint-Augustin (Municipalité de Saint-Henri), 1855-1881," (*Mémoire de maîtrise* [histoire], UQAM, 1986), 21; Georges-E. Baillargeon, *La survivance du régime seigneurial à Montréal* (Ottawa: Le Cercle du Livre de France, 1968), 45, 213.

⁷⁸Government of Quebec, *Statutes of the Province of Quebec*, 1875, 38 Vict., Cap. 73, (Québec: Langlois, 1875), 234-235.

⁷⁹Burgess, 362-366.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 392-393.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 351.

two males and eight females. There was an assortment of craftsmen varying from bakers and their apprentices, blacksmiths, weavers, and wheelwrights, to masons and carpenters, in both the village and countryside.

The village population included two male teachers and one female teacher in 1825. Marie A. Delail, a widow, and George Walsh taught in French and English in the local school located in the village chapel basement since 1810. William Claig taught in an independent English school.⁸² An 1828 school census notes that the parish school later employed Mademoiselle Roland, a female teacher, for thirty students enrolled in the elementary school, and the independent English school run by Mr. Moriarty had twenty-five students.⁸³

Until the creation of municipalities, existing forms of local organization included a medley of fiefs, *arrière-fiefs*, parishes, and villages. Before 1865, the parish of Notre-Dame encompassed a large rural territory, that "exceeded the confines of Montreal and its suburbs".⁸⁴ Viger's 1825 census notes that Notre Dame parish had a total population of 3,614 inhabitants. Followed by Côte-des-Neiges which had a population of 658 persons, the Tanneries, with a total of 800 persons, was the most populous division in the western section of Notre-Dame parish by 1825.⁸⁵ One of nine rural parish divisions, the western Division des Tanneries comprised Les Coteaux Saint-Pierre with 296 people, the village of Saint-Henri or Les Tanneries des Rollands with a population of 466, and quartier Saint-Joseph, which had only 38 people, and was not to be confused with the Saint-Joseph suburb situated further to the east along the Lachine Turnpike Road.

By 1831, the village was spreading east toward Montreal along the Lachine Turnpike Road. A satellite community in the westernmost portions of Saint-Joseph suburb

⁸²Perrault, *Montréal en 1825*, 134-140, 166; Burgess, 350-353.

⁸³Massicotte, "Quelques rues et faubourgs du vieux Montréal," 146; Louis-Philippe Audet, *Le système scolaire de la Province de Québec*, Tome V (Québec: Les Éditions de l'Érable, 1955), 47.

⁸⁴Burgess, 347.

⁸⁵Perrault, *Montréal en 1825*, 134-140, 162; Burgess, 349-351.

resulted from the out-migration of some of its families. With lot subdivision on Grey Nuns and Sisters of the Hotel-Dieu land, endogenous growth, and continuous in-migration, Saint-Henri developed as an elongated strip village somewhat isolated from the surrounding farmlands of Coteau Saint-Pierre and Côte Saint-Antoine. This differed from the development of other rural suburbs such as Côte-des-Neiges where "farming and tanning existed cheek by jowl from 1781 to 1831".⁸⁶

The official boundary of the 1846 village consisted of the northern escarpment which divided it from the upper terraces of Côte Saint-Antoine. Côte Saint-Paul Road, the *chemin de traverse* begun in the 1790s, shaped its western limits. The Lachine Canal was its southern boundary, while its eastern borders were defined by the Saint-Joseph suburb and the limits of the City of Montreal (Figure 1.1).⁸⁷ Following a request by the Hochelaga municipal council to be divided into five municipalities, the enactment was part of the political reforms begun by the Sydenham government in the 1840s to hand powers over to villages, towns, and district councils for the administration of local affairs.⁸⁸

With the introduction of mechanized processes, the village of Saint-Henri experienced a decline in its original craft activities.⁸⁹ By 1871, leather tanning and saddlemaking had virtually disappeared, and only one shoemaking and two brickmaking operations existed. The Moseley tannery and the MacKinnon biscuit manufactory were the only factories reported along the portion of the canal passing through Saint-Henri and Saint-Augustin in 1871.⁹⁰ The parcelling of lots attached to the original village in the north

⁸⁶Burgess, 387-393, 402.

⁸⁷Parliament of the Canadas, *Provincial Statutes of Lower Canada*, cap. 78, 9 Vict., 1846, 1064; Burgess, 353-355.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*; Diane Saint-Pierre, *L'évolution municipale du Québec des régions* (Sainte-Foy: UMRCQ: Union des Municipalités Régionales de Comté et des municipalités locales du Québec, 1994), 44-47; R. Stanley Weir, "Municipal Institutions in the Province of Quebec," *Municipal Government in Canada*, Vol. II (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1907), 51-52.

⁸⁹Burgess, "L'industrie de la chaussure à Montréal, 1840-1870: le passage de l'artisan à la fabrique," *RHAF* 31,2 (septembre 1977): 187-210.

⁹⁰Willis, *The Process of Hydraulic Industrialization*, 313.

and south nonetheless accounted for a population increase of roughly 1,500 in 1861 to 2,500 or 2,815 in 1871.⁹¹

Gilles Lauzon explains that the first waves of urbanization in Saint-Augustin took place from 1855 to 1875. The village numbered only 300 people in 1861, yet its population had reached roughly 2,200 by 1871, largely due to rural migration. Situated on the Lachine Canal to the south of Saint-Augustin since 1859, Edward Moseley's tannery employed a small proportion of the working population. Most heads of households were employed as labourers, construction workers, shoemakers, and carters. Owing to the crippling circumstances of the 1873-79 depression, fifty-one per cent of inhabitants in the southern portion of the village left between 1871 and 1881, often in search of work in the United States.⁹²

Unlike Saint-Augustin, industrial growth in Village Delisle preceded urban development. This was largely due to the westward expansion of industrial establishments along the Lachine Canal which began in the 1840s, but did not effectively reach Saint-Henri until the 1880s and 1890s.⁹³ The introduction of steam and hydraulic power on the Lachine Canal in the late 1840s led to an implantation of a seed of industrial growth at every canal lock. This occurs with the 1846 enlargement, and the industrial clumps are reinforced at the time of the 1876 enlargement. Flour mills and iron forges dominated the Mill Street entrance in Saint Ann, with more industries established near the Saint-Gabriel and Côte Saint-Paul locks by the late 1850s. In the 1840s, Benjamin Brewster had a large basin dug and a sawmill installed on land he owned in Village Delisle (Figure 1.6).⁹⁴

⁹¹It is difficult to estimate Saint-Henri's population in this period. The 1861 census gives a population for the village of Saint-Henri, covering the territory which includes St-Augustin and Village Delisle. The 1871 census and 1901 retrospective census give differing figures. The 1901 census does not include Saint-Augustin. Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 20; Lauzon, *1875, Saint-Henri* (Montréal: SHSH, 1985), 11.

⁹²Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 32, 51, 62, 154; Lauzon, *1875, Saint-Henri*, 11.

⁹³Willis, *The Process of Hydraulic Industrialization*, 167-336; Ouellet, 5; Dickinson and Young, 127. Saint-Henri's second phases of urbanization and industrialization are traced in Chapter 2.

⁹⁴Lauzon, *1875, Saint-Henri*, 11.

Further east, Augustin Cantin opened naval construction yards near another basin in 1845.⁹⁵ The Brewster and Cantin operations eventually became the Montreal Rolling Mills, the largest employer in the area by 1871. A joint-stock company, it was owned in part by the Redpaths, Allans and Molsons.⁹⁶

While Saint-Henri was expanding eastward and Saint-Augustin was undergoing construction in the 1850s and 1860s, little land development was taking place in Village Delisle until 1864 (Figure 1.6). F.A. Quesnel, a prosperous businessman and politician, who had purchased property in Fief Saint-Joseph from the Hospitalières de Saint-Joseph in 1815, sold portions of his land in this area to William Workman and Alexandre Delisle in 1864. Workman and Delisle subsequently sold these lots where attached housing and mechanized workshops were later constructed north of the Lachine Turnpike Road.⁹⁷

The overlapping spatial forms of rectangular street grids and winding roads reflected the transformation of Saint-Henri from a village to an urbanizing and industrializing town.⁹⁸ Along with the eastward expansion of the original village and the westward expansion of Montreal, Grand Trunk rail lines contributed to the changing urban form in this period. By 1863, a succession of railway mergers resulted in the Grand Trunk operating four separate rail lines crossing Saint-Joseph Street and Place Saint-Henri: the first from Montreal westward to Lachine; a second connected Saint-Henri in a southward direction to Pointe Sainte Charles and the Victoria Bridge. A third line ran westward to Toronto with a southern connection to Chicago. A fourth much shorter line ran to Côte Saint-Paul after 1863.⁹⁹

⁹⁵Tulchinsky, "Augustin Cantin," *DCB*, Vol. 12, 158-159.

⁹⁶Willis, *The Process of Hydraulic Industrialization*, 398.

⁹⁷Lauzon, 1875, *Saint-Henri*, 11; Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 17-19.

⁹⁸Suren Lalvani, *Photography, Vision, and the Production of Modern Bodies* (Albany: State University of New York, 1996), 185; Marsan, 59-60; Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 18-19, 21-22, Plan 6.

⁹⁹Hanna, "L'importance des infrastructures de transport", 49-51; Leduc, 9-11, 20, 37-42.

Figure 1.6 Alexander Henderson, The Tannery Village in winter, 1870



Source: National Archives of Canada Photo Collection, PA 135035.

A threefold increase in the local populations of Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle from 1,943 in 1861 to 6,123 in 1871 led to the establishment of local religious institutions on Place Saint-Henri, the new town centre.¹⁰⁰ This community nexus was located slightly north of these Grand Trunk railway tracks (Figure 1.6). The most imposing and central of these buildings was the Église Saint-Henri, constructed at Place Saint-Henri in 1869-70, as part of Bishop Bourget's successful dismemberment of the Sulpicians' Montreal parish.¹⁰¹ In 1870, adjacent to the church site, the Sisters of Saint Ann founded a convent for girls, L'Académie Sainte-Mélanie, and in 1872, the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes established Collège Saint-Henri, for boys.¹⁰²

Similar to the 1846 request for village enactment, a 1871 petition to the Hochelaga county council and the provincial government's political intervention prompted Saint-Henri's town status by 1875. Amalgamating Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle, town limits were similar to those of the 1846 village. Côte Saint-Antoine and Côte Saint-Paul Road formed its northern and western borders; the Lachine Canal and the City of Montreal comprised its southern and western boundaries. Breaking off from Saint-Henri in 1876, Village Delisle became the suburb of Sainte-Cunégonde and Saint-Henri's western border.¹⁰³

Overlapping spatial forms and economies transformed the landscape of Saint-Henri from the mid to late nineteenth century. Gilles Lauzon's 1857 map denotes the fusion of pre-industrial, urbanizing, and industrializing forces in a prescribed social space (Figure 1.6). A contrasting painting and photograph taken by Montrealers convey romanticized

¹⁰⁰Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 20.

¹⁰¹In 1894, the site of the original village chapel became Sainte-Élisabeth, Saint-Henri's second parish. Auclair, 3, 15.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰³Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 38 Vict., Cap. 72, 1876 (Québec: Langlois, 1876), 234-235; *Statutes of Quebec*, 40 Vict., Cap. 49, 1877 (Québec: Langlois, 1877), 208-213; Yves Bellavance, Marie-France Leblanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 5.

visions of the community as a quaint site of repose. James Duncan's 1839 watercolour depicts a rustic environment, with a tiny village in the background (Figure 1.4). Alexander Henderson's 1870 photo portrays a non-industrial village with little traffic (Figure 1.6). Within the span of a few decades, the transition from rural village to suburban town was inherently linked to the conversion from country road to town street.

Commercial Road to Town Street, 1847-1875

The Lachine Turnpike Road became Saint-Joseph Street from the mid to late nineteenth century. Henderson's 1870 photo suggests a decline in the road's importance. It portrays a peaceful village with a cluster of intimate houses and a receptive inn for intermittent Montreal stagecoach traffic (Figure 1.6). This winter scene was chosen over two other photos taken by Henderson at the same site because at least there was some movement. No coaches at all appear in a summer and another winter scene.¹⁰⁴ This photograph emphasizes the role of Saint-Henri as a junction for Montrealers travelling to Lachine. One stagecoach travels over packed snow. A young boy stands waiting in front of a cart stationed before the central inn. It is difficult to determine whether he is a passenger or a curious Saint-Henri resident. The driver of the horse-drawn sled to the right may have slipped into the tavern for food, drink, or repairs before resuming the journey to Lachine.

Generally speaking, on most 1840s and 1850s maps, Saint-Joseph Street extended from McGill Street to the Montreal City limits, and was referred to as the Lachine Turnpike Road or Upper Lachine Road beyond that.¹⁰⁵ The maps of Charland (1801), Bouchette (1815), and Adams (1825) refer to the western portion of Notre-Dame Street as Saint-

¹⁰⁴Alexander Henderson, "Le village des Tanneries en été vers 1865", National Archives of Canada Photo Collection, PA 123822 and Alexander Henderson, "Le village des Tanneries en hiver, vers 1870," collection privée (different photo with same title as Figure 1.6). Both photographs are reproduced in Lessard, Plates 38 and 39.

¹⁰⁵Jean-Claude Robert, *Atlas historique de Montréal* (Montréal: Libre Expression, 1994), 90-91; "Plan of Building Lots belonging to Benjamin Brewster situated between the Lachine Canal and the Lachine Turnpike Road, 1847," "Montréal en 1853," AVM, Collection des cartes et plans, VM66.

Joseph Street, and not the Lachine Turnpike Road, Upper Road to Lachine, or Upper Lachine Road. In Charland's map, Saint-Joseph Street ran farther west, but for both Bouchette and Adams, it stretched over the eastern portion of the Saint-Joseph suburb from McGill Street to the Prud'homme Bridge.¹⁰⁶ With developments in Village Delisle and Saint-Augustin over the 1860s and 1870s, Saint-Joseph Street extended still further west, sometimes as far as Place Saint-Henri, and on a short section between Place Saint-Henri and Côte St. Paul Road.¹⁰⁷

Gilles Lauzon briefly examines the formative stages of Saint-Joseph Street from 1855 to 1875. In 1861, 126 out of 300 people, a substantial portion of the village's population lived on the main street, which he refers to as *la grand'rue* Saint-Augustin. The main street developed slowly in the 1870s. In 1871, Saint-Joseph Street constituted only 376 of Saint-Augustin's total population of 2,153, with 430 out of 2,973 in 1875, and 630 out of 3,108 by 1881.¹⁰⁸ Lauzon excluded Saint-Joseph Street from his analysis of Saint-Augustin because of its occupational and housing differences with the rest of the community.¹⁰⁹

Saint-Joseph Street emerged as the main commercial street of Saint-Henri by the 1870s. A straight-line axis to the central hub of community activities at Place Saint-Henri (Figure 1.6), its development was closely tied to adjacent construction in Saint-Augustin from 1855 to 1875. It was also centrally situated between the eastward expansion of Saint-Henri and the westward shift of industrializing Montreal. Population growth in all three sectors, Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle, led to the increased demand for

¹⁰⁶Robert, 76-77, 86-87, 88-89. Copies of these maps were consulted at the BNQM.

¹⁰⁷Gilles Lauzon's maps from 1861 and 1871 refer to the portion of the main street adjacent to Saint-Augustin as Saint-Joseph. Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 28, 29. Hopkins' 1879 insurance map refers to Saint-Joseph Street from McGill Street to Atwater. From Atwater to Place Saint-Henri, and the western section of the road at the site of the old village, he calls Upper Lachine Road. A small section of Saint-Joseph lies west of Place St-Henri, in the area developed south of the Grand Trunk rail lines after 1854. Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier," 34.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 26-27.

commercial and professional services on Saint Joseph Street.

The development of Saint-Joseph Street coincided with the continuance of the Lachine Turnpike Road. Although the road had suffered a significant decline in the 1820s, 1861 toll revenues indicate that the Upper Lachine Road was one of the most-travelled toll roads in Montreal.¹¹⁰ With vestiges of its operations extending beyond incorporation, the municipality of Saint-Henri was still bound by agreements with the Montreal Turnpike Trust.¹¹¹ As late as 1888, Saint-Henri was still making commutation payments to the Sulpicians to purchase portions of the turnpike road passing through the town.¹¹² Generally in good condition and dependent on government subsidies, turnpike roads never achieved their stated objective of defraying repair costs through toll revenues. Montreal Turnpike Trust accounts indicate that tolls collected from its various roads amounted to \$14,623.73 for the latter half of 1861, with total costs for road repairs and other expenses amounting to \$227,461.91. Well-travelled roads, such as the Upper Lachine Road, accounted for \$2,875.61 in toll revenues from July 1 to December 31, 1861. These profits covered repairs costs of \$1,989.44, but subsidized operations of less-travelled roads, like the Lower Lachine Road, which only raised \$432.05 in revenue but cost \$2,806.08 to maintain.¹¹³

Conclusion

This investigation of space and place demonstrates the influence of larger social and economic processes on the evolution of a main street. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the function of the road gradually became more central to an expanding local

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*; Government of Canada, *Sessional Papers*, "Accounts of the Montreal Turnpike Trust," Vol. 20 (Quebec: Hunter, Rose & Lemieux, 1862), Nos. 3 & 6.

¹¹¹Parliament of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1876, 211; Parliament of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 42-43 Vict., cap. 58, 1879 (Québec: Langlois, 1879), 153.

¹¹²AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E2, 50, 2970 (1887 commutations for Saint-Joseph Street), 3333 (1888 railway negotiations).

¹¹³Government of Canada, *Sessional Papers*, "Accounts of the Montreal Turnpike Trust".

community. As a result, a more specific sense of space and place developed over time. In 1825, two predominant factors, the construction of the Lachine Canal and a settlement of tanners, signalled an important shift in the function of the Lachine Turnpike Road, the highway between Montreal and Lachine from which the street originated. The Lachine Canal led to a reduction in commercial traffic along the road. The introduction of a railway between Montreal and Lachine in 1847 diminished passenger traffic. The use of the route by carters was more closely tied to the community.

Changing state strategies marked the development of the road. Seigniorial obligations forced *habitants* to maintain the road in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, yet Grand Voyer Boisclerc disregarded local objections to the construction of the Lower Lachine Road, a longer alternate route built in 1740. In 1805, mercantile interest in western markets and popular resistance to statute labour in recent Montreal and Quebec City Road Act Riots incited the creation of a toll road. In response to the 1837-38 Rebellions, state formation in the 1840s maintained usage based on a fee system rather than statute labour. By the late nineteenth century, the provincial government transferred street administration to municipalities.

The diminishing importance of the Lachine Turnpike Road was compensated by the growth of Saint-Joseph Street westward from Montreal and urban development in Saint-Henri, Saint-Augustin, and Village Delisle. This phenomenon was particularly marked in the 1850s and 1860s as urban expansion was reflected in changing spatial forms. It is left to the next chapter to examine how the direction of the street was affected by the creation of a separate community, and how land use was shaped by the different people and classes that inhabited this urban space.

Chapter 2

Property and Social Class, 1875-1905

“We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.”¹

Late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri was an avenue of sociability. A 1905 photograph taken at the corner of Saint-Philippe reflects social transactions occurring on many North American business streets of this period (Figure 2.1). Men converse beneath a store awning; young girls gather in the shadows of the southside. Along with a female companion, an elderly woman in an elaborate Victorian hat descends the steps of a general store. Two male workers pose in front of a Chinese laundry. Several people take in the bright sunlight of a Sunday stroll.

The photo, so evocative of an everyday ‘reality’, is nevertheless a contrived and interpretive rendering,² and the uses people were making of the space, their dress or pose, even their presence or absence, are features of a representation of social and symbolic spaces.³ I show in this chapter the importance of class in the appropriation or exclusion of street space, and argue that the public space of Notre-Dame Street was defined by the class interests of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a local petite bourgeoisie, to the detriment of the working classes. To explore these class interests, and the social exchange among them, there is no better vantage point than Place Saint-Henri, the institutional and symbolic centre of the community (Figure 4.6). The 1898 tramway picnic sketch depicts the different classes inhabiting the municipality: the masses of children, mothers, and sisters, representing the working classes; the cluster of city fathers lining the town hall steps, the petite bourgeoisie. Of the hidden grande bourgeoisie of Montreal, one sees only the results

¹Oscar Wilde, *Lady Windermere's Fan* [1892], act III, cited in John Bartlett, *Familiar Quotations*, sixteenth edition (Boston, Toronto, London: Little, Brown, 1992), 566.

²W.T. Mitchell, *Iconology* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986), 162.

³Pierre Bourdieu, “Espace social et espace symbolique,” in *Raisons pratiques sur la théorie de l'action* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 16; Lefebvre, *Le droit à la ville* (Paris: Anthropos, 1968), 118-119.

Figure



Source: Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montreal: Éditions du Boréal, 1985), p. 10.

Figure 2.1 Notre-Dame Street at the corner of Saint-Philippe, 1905



Henri, 1875-1905 (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 2-3.

of their capital at the centre of sketch: the line of open tramway cars and the organizational efforts of the MSRC conductors.

In a treatment of people and land use on Notre-Dame Street from 1875 to 1905, this chapter analyzes the social and symbolic spaces of the community from the perspective of these varying class interests. The study demonstrates the relations of class and property. Profiting from the exchange value of land, a grande and petite bourgeoisie busily acquired property, staking out their respective territories in an expanding suburb. The majority francophone renting classes paid dearly for the use value of their homes. Increasingly centred at Place Saint-Henri, institutions belonging to Church and State, to the dominant religion and ideology, coexisted with commercial and domestic spaces, displaying a remarkable continuity through changes in society.

As Henri Lefebvre observes, “les discontinués ne se situent pas seulement entre les formations urbaines, mais entre les rapports sociaux les plus généraux, entre les rapports immédiats des individus et des groupes (entre les codes et les sous-codes).”⁴ New class structures and relations emerged from the transition to modern industrial capitalism. His interpretation, at a very general level from British and European examples, applies also to Montreal. And in Saint-Henri, a little ‘piece’ of the metropolis, those separate levels of reality were disclosed in the daily community life and immediate relations of the main street.

The relations between the governors and governed of society were largely played out in their use of the streets. Readily accessible to all residents of the city, the streets “played host to an immensely rich and often conflictual variety of activities that defied easy bureaucratic control.”⁵ With the shared perceptions, experiences, and memories of a particular space, the working classes defined their own sense of place.⁶

⁴Lefebvre, *Le droit à la ville*, 61.

⁵Goheen, 481.

⁶Tuan, *Space and Place*.

This chapter traces the social evolution of the main street through two phases of development, 1875 to 1890 and 1891 to 1905. From a socio-economic profile of the 1881 inhabitants highlighting specific individuals and families from representative occupations, I show the dominance of a francophone petite bourgeoisie of resident property owners. Through control of private interests and public funds, the petite bourgeoisie, gradually, down to 1905, entrenched its ascendancy over Notre-Dame Street. We shall look at a particular conflict between local and outside owners.

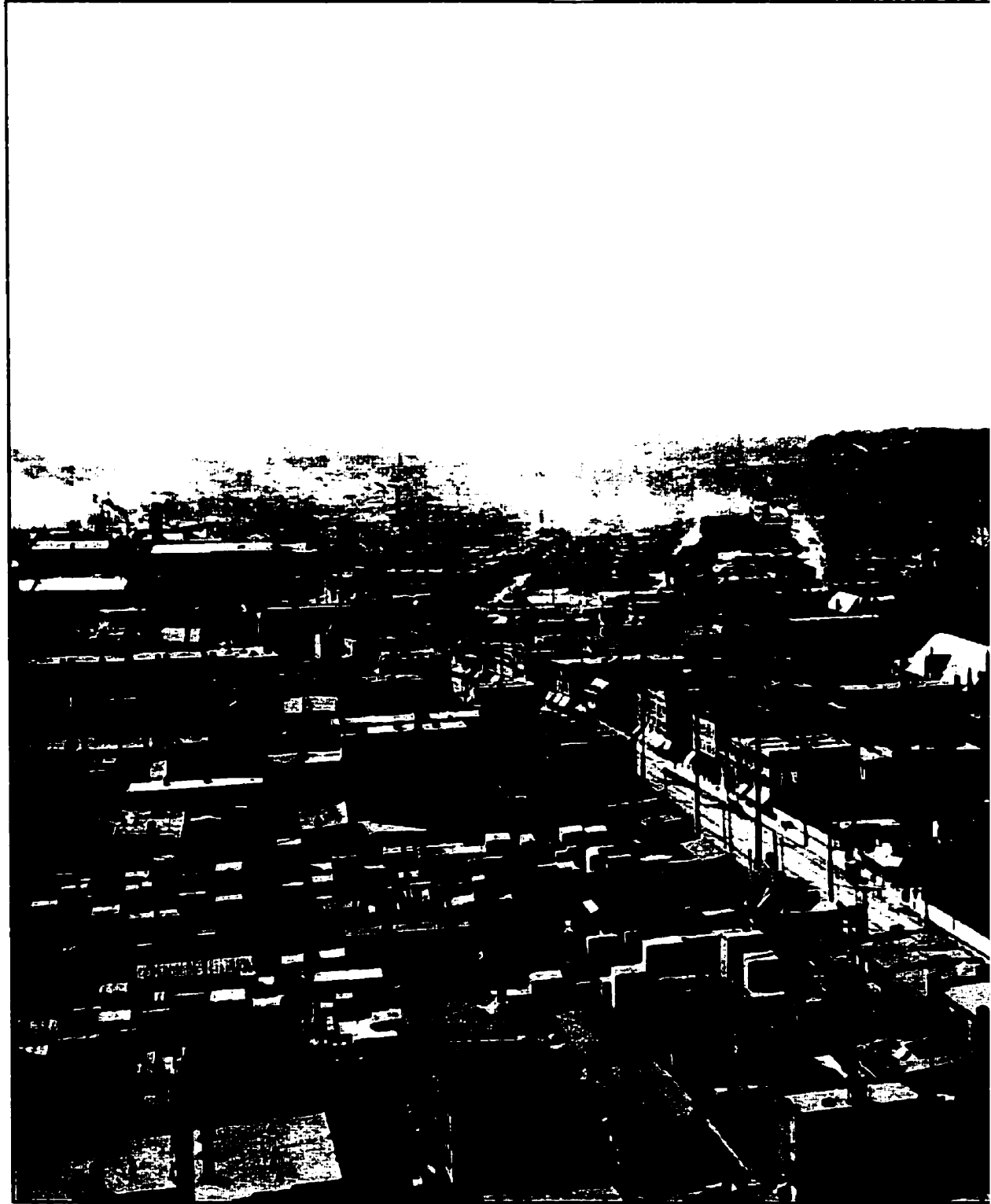
To grasp the symbolic meanings and the gendered nature of the spaces, I will turn to photographs. Victorian photos convey a gendered spatial distinction between business and domestic economies and a gendered appropriation of products. The early twentieth century was marked by the construction of the first department store on Notre-Dame Street in 1905, Louis Abinovitch's four-floor structure. Twentieth-century department stores altered the streetscape and nature of commercial transactions, creating competition for the more intimate commercial spaces of late nineteenth-century shops.

Urbanization and Industrialization

With a reported population of 17,770 in 1896,⁷ the fast growing suburb of Saint-Henri was still perceived as a community isolated from the urban core. William Notman's photograph is the westernmost of nine plates which comprise a panoramic view of late nineteenth-century Montreal (Figure 2.2). Taken in 1896 from atop the Montreal Street Railway Power House Chimney, the portion of Notre-Dame Street passing through Sainte-Cunégonde dominates in the foreground. Isolated in the distance, to the left of the photograph, one notes the section of the Lachine Canal bordering Saint-Henri, with factory chimneys emitting thick dark smoke. In the background to the right, the steeples of Église Saint-Henri are discernible beneath the flanks of Mount Royal's Westmount Summit. To the southwest, unblemished by a dense built environment, treed spaces shape the horizon.

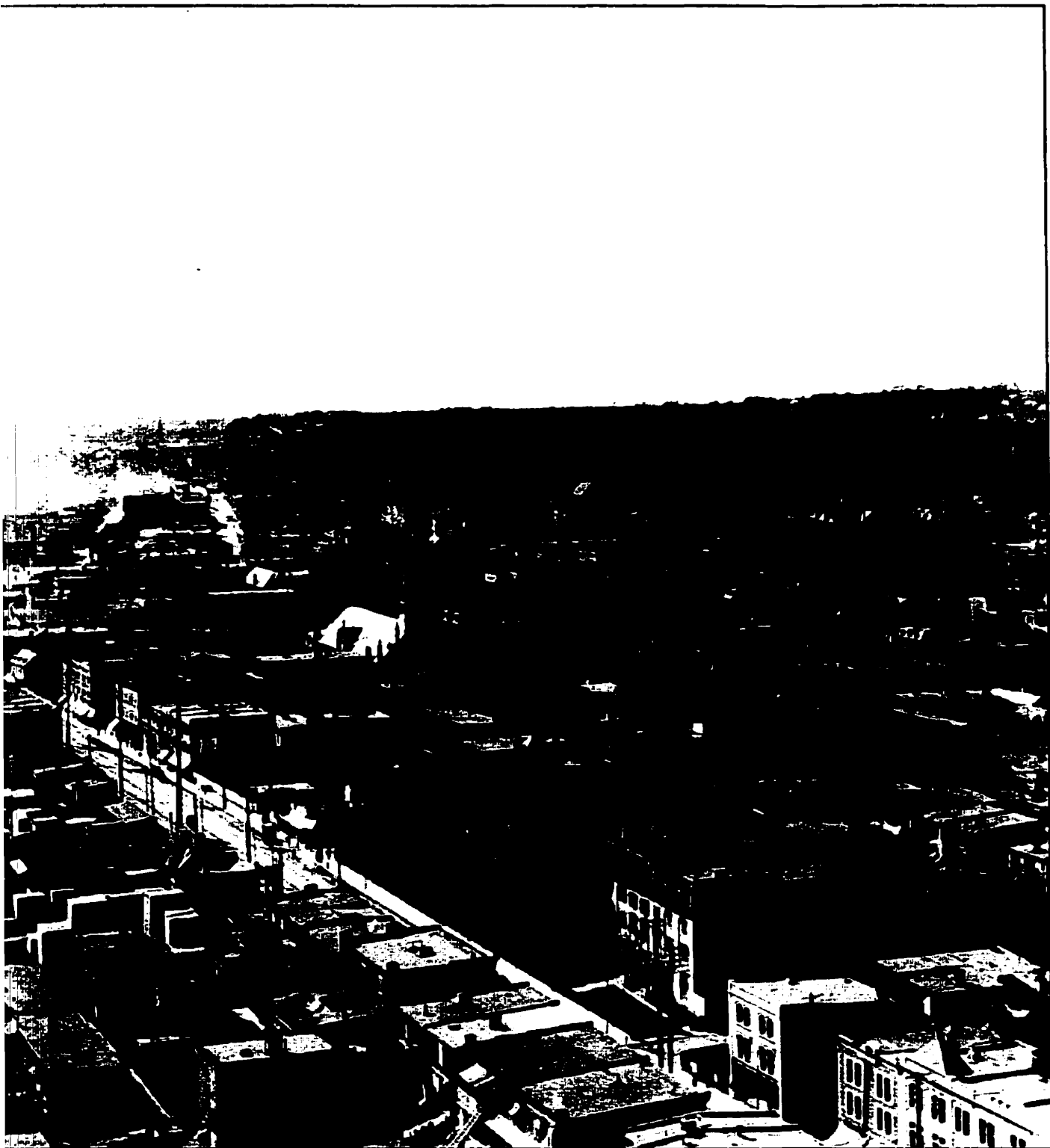
⁷*La Presse*, 19 novembre 1896, 1.

Figure 2.2 Notre-Dame Street in Sainte-Cunégon



Source: Montreal View from Street Railway Power House Chimney, McCord Museum Notman Collection, 2936

me Street in Sainte-Cunégonde, the Lachine Canal, and Saint-Henri, 1896



ney, McCord Museum Notman Collection, 2936.

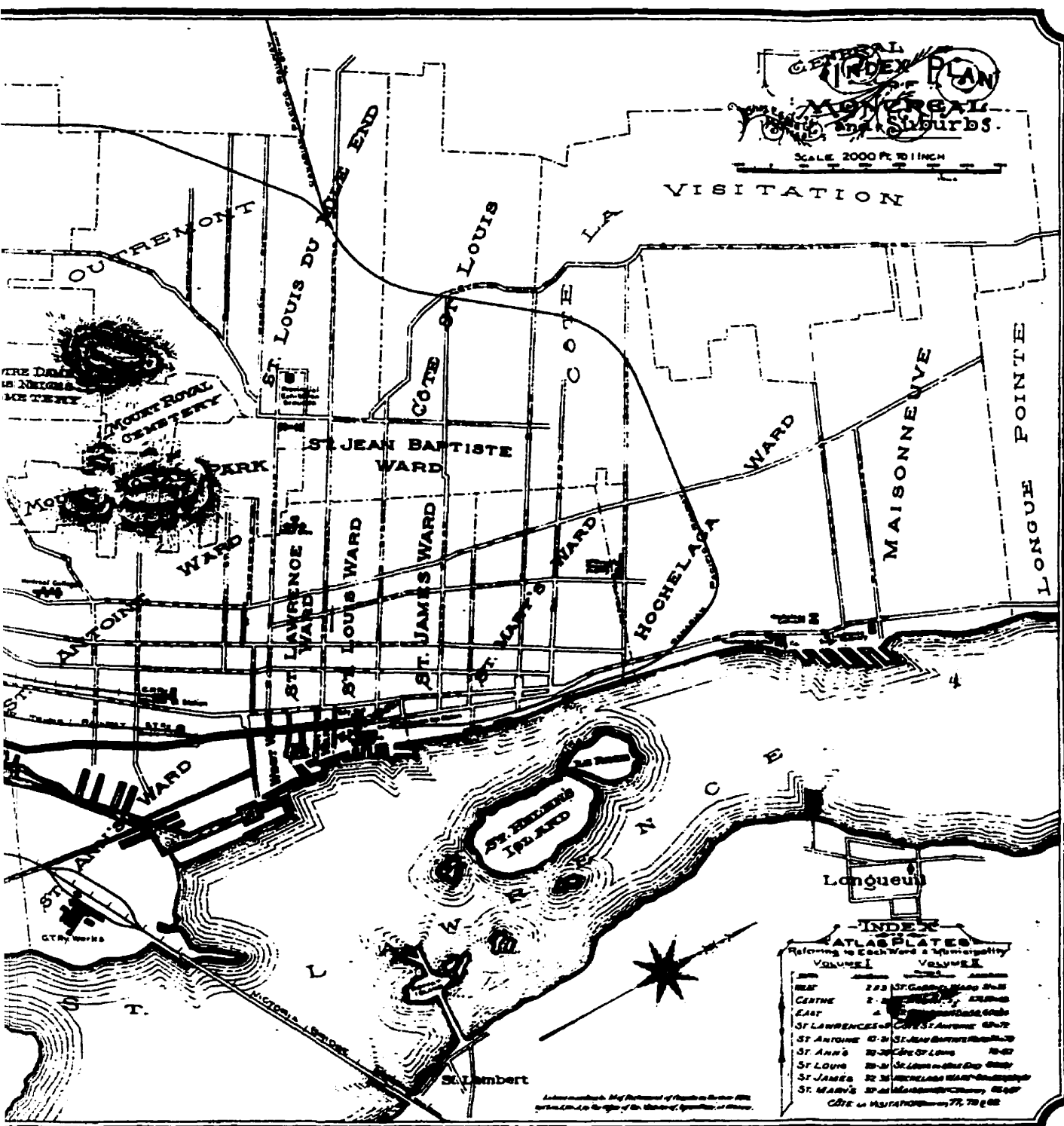
Industrialization had spread westward along the Lachine Canal to Saint-Henri by the 1890s. Introduction of steam and hydraulic power on the canal in the 1840s led to waves of industrial growth. Construction of the Saint-Henri basin in 1876-77 facilitated industrial expansion in the community.⁸ Lachine Canal construction and Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railway siding (Figure 2.3) enhanced the development of four industrial sectors within Saint-Henri: to the south on Saint-Ambroise Street along the canal; to the northeast along Saint-Jacques; to the northwest on Sainte-Élizabéth; and along the western portion of Notre-Dame Street (Figure 2.4). The largest industries in each sector were Merchants Cotton Manufacturing (1881-1905) and Moseley & Ricker tannery (1859-1887) along the Lachine Canal; C. W. Williams Manufacturing (1879-1946) on Saint-Jacques; Tooke Brothers (1894) on Sainte-Élizabéth; and Dominion Abattoirs (1882)⁹ on Notre-Dame Street (Figures 2.5, 2.6, & 2.7).¹⁰ Running the length of the community in an east-west direction, Notre-Dame Street was well situated in the midst of these four industrial zones. It was the axis to Place Saint-Henri, a central hub of religious and civic institutions which developed north of the triangle of Grand Trunk rail lines.

⁸Willis, *The Process of Hydraulic Industrialization*, Vol. I, 167-336; Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", 5; *L'Opinion Publique*, 6 décembre 1877 (sketch of Lachine Canal improvements).

⁹Montreal did not want tanneries and abattoirs near the city centre. Tanneries were instrumental to the creation of the original village in the late seventeenth century. Lachance, 84-85; Burgess, 370-371. The inaugural photo signalled the establishment of the West End (Dominion) Abattoirs in Saint-Henri in 1882 (Figure 2.7). It begot other similar operations, such as the Lecavalier and Riel Abattoirs located in Saint-Henri by 1890. SHSH, Fonds Riel, 71.PH.1.1. The unpleasant odours emanating from the abattoirs were a hindrance to public health. Council regulated industrial pollution and smells through by-laws 57 and 120 in 1891 and 1901 (Appendix B). In 1895, a petition of over one hundred names was presented to council, protesting the filthy conditions. In 1910, Sir George-Étienne Cartier Square was built on lands formerly occupied by the Dominion Abattoir & Stock Yard. Belisle, 3.

¹⁰Three Grand Trunk Railway lines crossed Saint-Henri by 1853-54 and by 1885, a Canadian Pacific Railway line spanned its northern boundary. Hanna, "L'importance des infrastructures de transport", 58; Harold A. Innis, *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1971), 134, 291; W. Kaye Lamb, *History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), 19, 90, 107, 170-171; "Saint-Henri Industriel" exhibit, SHSH, spring 1994; Ouellet, "Rapport de recherche sur les implantations industrielles", 17, 21; Lauzon, *1875, Saint-Henri*, 15; Bellavance et al., 14.

Figure 2.3 Montreal and Suburbs, 1890



By 1901, with a population of 21,192, Saint-Henri was Quebec's third largest city and the eleventh most populous in Canada.¹¹ Its growth surpassed that of any other which developed in the same period.¹² Francophones (93 per cent) and Roman Catholics (85.5 per cent) made up the vast majority of Saint-Henri's population from 1881 to 1901.¹³ An in-depth study of demographic patterns would reveal the extent of movement from Montreal and rural migration to Saint-Henri in this period.¹⁴ Conclusive results could link the influence of population growth with the attainment of town status in 1875 and city incorporation in 1894.¹⁵ In 1881, people from the British Isles, the United States, Ontario existing Montreal suburbs, including Saint-Louis-du-Mile End and Sainte-Cunégonde, and

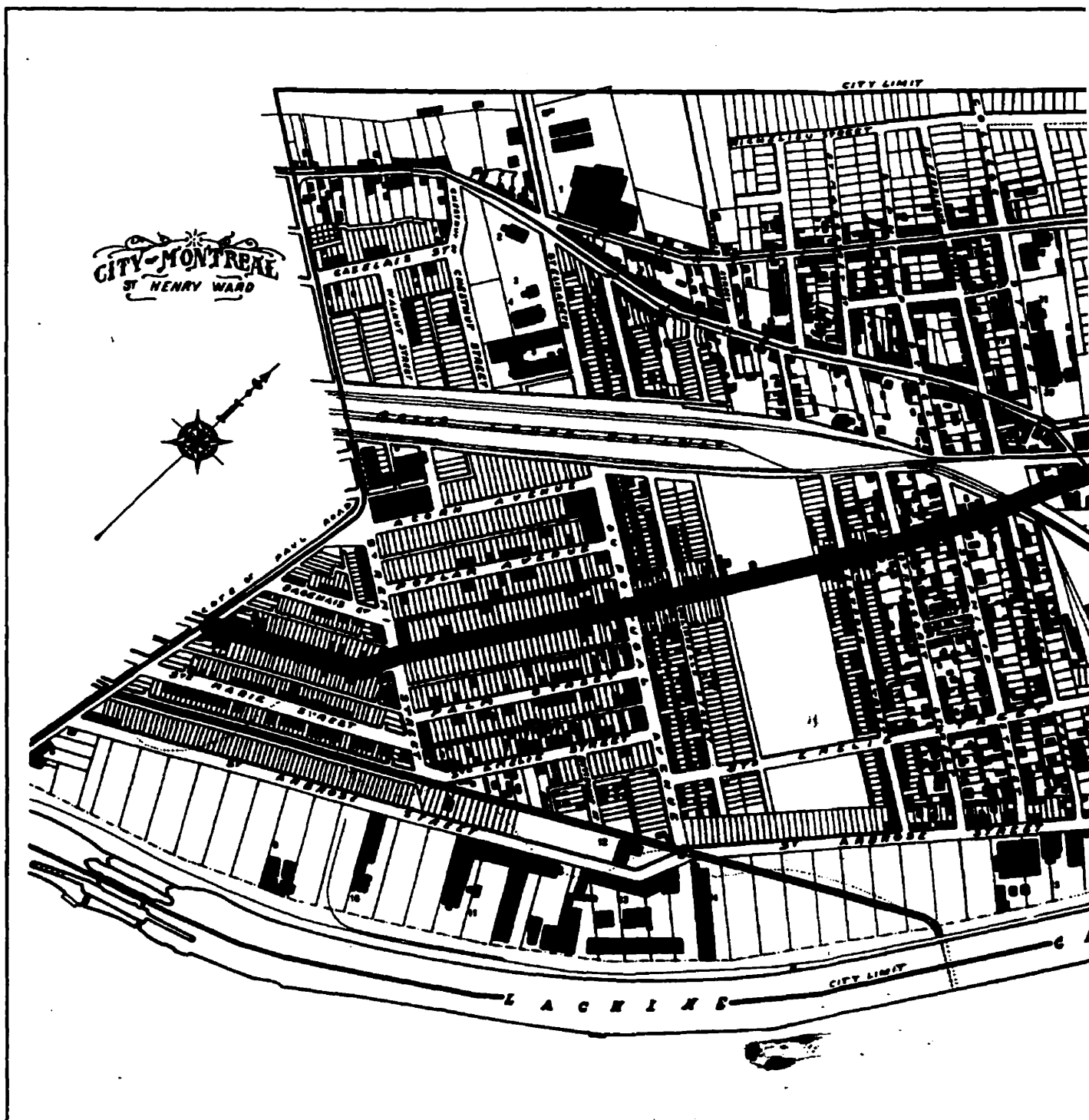
¹¹Government of Canada, *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Vol. 3 (Ottawa: Dawson, 1913), Table XIII, 365-369.

¹²*Ibid.*; Mongrain, 51; Claire Poitras, "Construire les infrastructures d'approvisionnement en eau en banlieue montréalaise au tournant du XXe siècle: le cas de Saint-Louis," *RHAF* 52,4 (printemps 1999): 513.

¹³David Fontaine, Pierre Malo, et Éric Paquet, "Place Saint-Henri: Étude du secteur: évolution et analyse," Université de Montréal, École d'Architecture de paysage, décembre 1987, 17; Government of Canada, *Census of Canada, 1880-81* Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger, 1882), Table I (Gender & Age), 52-53, Table II (Religion), 154-155, Table IV (Ethnicity), 354-355; *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Dawson, 1893), Table III (Gender & Age), 196-197, Table IV (Religion), 304-305; *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Dawson, 1902), Table VII (Gender & Age), 104-105, Table X (Religion), 240-241, Table XI (Ethnicity), 366-367.

¹⁴Studies of nineteenth-century Montreal attest to this general phenomenon. Olson, "Mobility and the Social Network in nineteenth-century Montreal," Colloque Barcelone-Montréal, May 5-7, 1997; Jean-Pierre Collin, *Histoire de l'urbanisation de la paroisse de Montréal, 1851-1941* (Montréal: INRS-Urbanisation, 1984), 76-77; Linteau, "Le personnel politique de Montréal, 1880-1914: évolution d'une élite municipale," *RHAF* 52, 2 (automne 1998): 199. In a recent study of population and spatial patterns in the majority francophone suburb of Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End from 1881 to 1901, Guy Mongrain discloses that the majority of Quebec-born residents migrated from Montreal and the surrounding countryside, mostly from regions to the immediate north. Mongrain, 54-65.

¹⁵Government of Quebec, *Statutes of the Province of Quebec*, 1875, 38 Vict., Cap. 73 (Québec: Langlois, 1875), 234-235; 1894, 57 Vict., Cap. 60, 193-198.



Source: A.R. Pinsonneault, *Atlas of the Island and City of Montreal and Ile Bizard* (Montreal: Atlas Publishing Company, 1907), Plates 1-10; Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 12-13.

Figure 2.5
Women and Children working in Dominion Textile factory, 1905



Source: SHSH, Fonds Laframboise, 41-PH-3; reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 18.

Figure 2.6
Men and Boys working in C.W. Williams Sewing Machine factory, 1890



Source: SHSH, Fonds Payette, 64-PH-3.

Figure 2.7 West End (Dominion) Abattoir, 1882



Source: SHSH, Fonds Décarie, 17-PH-2.

other Canadian provinces, European and other countries, formed a small minority. From 1881 to 1901, small groups of Irish Roman Catholics and English Protestants joined the community in greater numbers. The numbers of francophone Roman Catholics fell slightly from 93 per cent to 82.5 per cent and 93 per cent to 88.5 per cent.¹⁶ By 1901, as more immigrants settled here, English-speaking people comprised 17 per cent of the total population, about thirty-five hundred people from the British Isles. To a smaller degree, the population reflected the more diverse patterns of late nineteenth-century immigration to the Montreal area.¹⁷ Reflecting a trend in urban society at large, females slightly outnumbered males in Saint-Henri in this period. Females made up 51 per cent of Saint-Henri's population in 1881, 1891, and 1901. The percentages of married and widowed persons increased slightly from 1881 to 1901. Children increasingly made up more than half of the population. Slightly over one-third of adults were married couples, and three per cent were widows and widowers.¹⁸

¹⁶Fontaine et al., 17; *Census of Canada, 1881*, Vol. 1, Table I (Gender & Age), 52-53, Table II (Religion), 154-155, Table IV (Ethnicity), 354-355; *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, Vol. 1, Table III (Gender & Age), 196-197, Table IV (Religion), 304-305; *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1, Table VII (Gender & Age), 104-105, Table X (Religion), 240-241, Table XI (Ethnicity), 366-367.

¹⁷A steady influx of immigrants from the British Isles arrived in Montreal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a greater concentration of English over Irish in the early twentieth century. Eastern Europeans, Italians, and Jews also arrived in greater numbers. These general trends are reflected in Saint-Henri by 1901. 74 Germans, 16 Scandinavians, 4 Russians, 28 Italians, 15 Jews, and 14 Belgians settled in the community by 1901. *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1, Table XI, 366-367. Linteau, *Maisonnette*, 148, 150.

¹⁸Bradbury, 184-185. Over the two decades, widows far outnumbered widowers (1881: 67 per cent to 33 per cent; 1891: 73 per cent to 27 per cent; 1901: 74 per cent to 26 per cent). The numbers of children and single people also increased slightly (children: 58 per cent, 1881; 60 per cent, 1891). 36.5 per cent of the total population were married couples, and 3.5 per cent were widowers and widows in 1891. In 1901, 61 per cent of the population was single, 36 was married and 3 per cent was widowed. *Census of Canada, 1880-81*, Vol. 1, Table I, 52-53; *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, Vol. 1, Table III, 196-197 (age of children not specified); *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1, Table VII, 104-105.

People and Land Use, 1875-1890

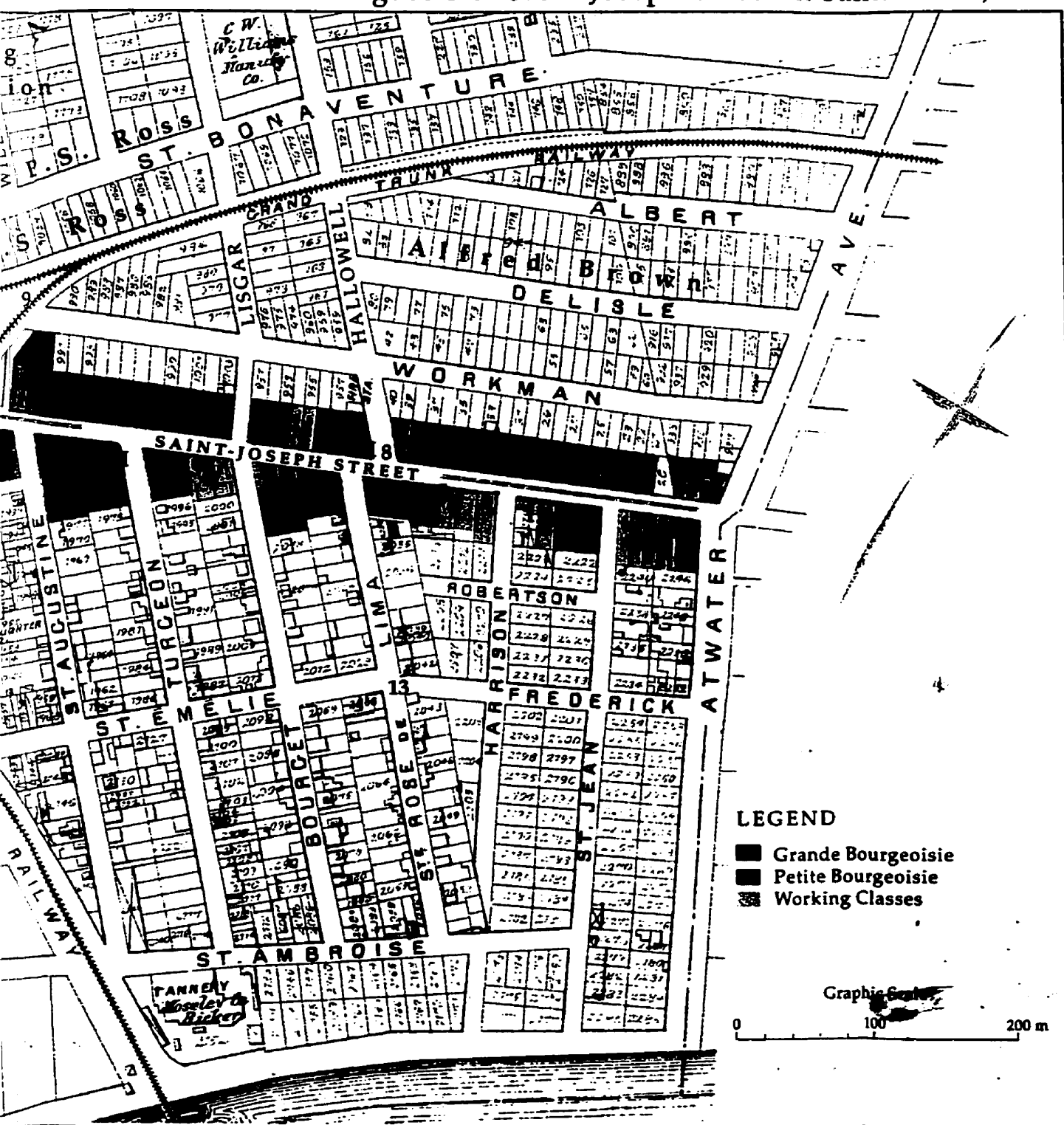
Spatial appropriation and exclusion were played out in the exchange and utilization of property (Figure 2.8).¹⁹ We shall see that from 1875 to 1890, the grande bourgeoisie profited from the exchange value of lots purchased and subdivided on the northern blocks of Saint-Joseph Street, bordering Atwater Avenue. The petite bourgeoisie of francophone resident owners was particularly concentrated on the southwestern blocks, some near the downtown core, some at the town centre, and in the expanding Saint-Augustin ward. The token presence of the federal and municipal state was represented in public institutions, a Post Office, and a Police and Fire Station.

Three main factors characterized the social fabric of Saint-Joseph Street from 1875 to 1890: significant population growth, mixed uses, and predominance of the francophone petite bourgeoisie. Extension of adjoining streets in the 1880s led to increased demand for commercial and professional services. Although corner groceries provided for immediate needs, Saint-Henri citizens increasingly ventured to Saint-Joseph Street to shop, attend school, obtain repairs, mail a letter, send a telegram, board a train, meet with a doctor or notary, or to drink. The existence of public buildings, commercial, and domestic spaces in close proximity provided numerous opportunities for social interaction by day and night. A 6:30 A.M. starting time and 6:30 P.M. closing time on weekdays and 3:00 P.M. on Saturday led to streams of women, children, and men heading to and from work in local factories.²⁰ With the remaining women and children and unemployed day labourers, the

¹⁹Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, Chapters 1, 2 and 3; Robert T. Ely and Edward W. Morehouse, *Elements of Land Economics* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), Chapters 6, 10-13; David Harvey, *Society, The City and the Space-Economy of Urbanism* (Washington: Association of American Geographers, 1972), 34-49.

²⁰In 1888 before the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital, R.W. Eaton, the manager at Merchants, testified to these working hours for about 420 female and male employees, about 10 of whom were under 14 years of age. A.B. McCullough, *The Primary Textile Industry in Canada* (Environment Canada, 1992), 165.

Figure 2.8 Saint-Joseph Street in Saint-Henri, 1879



Cartier and Hochelaga: from Actual Surveys, based on the Cadastral Plan deposited in the Office of the Department of Crown Lands

main street was open to considerable traffic.²¹ Shops often remained open past 10 P.M.,²² and the tavern, an exclusively male space and 'working-class salon', was particularly inhabited by night.²³

Streets below the Ontario Terrace fell into the lowest housing category in terms of the whole metropolitan area. All four of the streets I sampled fell below a \$61 median rental value (Table 2.1).²⁴ The development of Saint-Joseph Street as the main commercial street and its importance relative to other town streets is evident (Figure 2.8). A higher median rental value than the three other streets, and a larger proportion of property owners than two other sample streets, attest to its predominance within the community (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Saint-Henri Streets, 1881

	<u>Median Annual Rent</u>	<u>Percentages of Renters</u>
Saint-Joseph	\$52	73
Saint-Henri	\$38.50	79
Saint-Philippe	\$37.25	68
Rose de Lima	\$30	83

Source: AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1, 2.

Of particular relevance is the higher median rental value and the lower percentage of renting families relative to Saint-Henri Street, the next most important business street. Table 2.1 also demonstrates that fewer renting families inhabited Saint-Joseph Street than Rose de Lima Street in the Saint-Augustin ward (Figure 2.8). The proletarianization of Rose de Lima Street Gilles Lauzon traces to the early 1870s. His research indicates that the renting population in the village of Saint-Augustin had increased from 57 per cent in 1871 to 74

²¹Bradbury, *Working Families*, 37, 47; Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier", 35-53; Peter Baskerville and Eric W. Sager, *Unwilling Idlers* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1998).

²²*La Presse*, 26 juin 1896, 1.

²³Charron et Lewis, 108.

²⁴Olson and Hanna, *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Vol. II, Plate 49.

per cent in 1875 due to higher property values and a decline in mortgage credit.²⁵

Further research could be conducted to determine reasons for the increase in the renting population of Saint-Henri. Claude Ouellet has revealed that 68 per cent of the Saint-Henri population rented in 1875.²⁶ In 1881, three-quarters of resident families were renters. Reasons for higher property ownership on Saint-Philippe Street, located in the Saint-Henri ward, could also be explored (Figure 2.4). The higher concentration of owners may have been linked to earlier development on the former Turcot properties in the first phases of urbanization of the community in mid-century.

Saint-Joseph Street is a social, spatial, and gendered representation of class in the late nineteenth-century city (Figure 2.8). Ownership and rental patterns display a pattern of class interests which persisted over the next two decades. In 1881, a *grande bourgeoisie*, that is people who lived outside the community and owned property elsewhere in Montreal, accounted for 29 per cent of total property value fronting on the street and rented homes and stores to resident merchants, professionals, skilled tradesmen, unskilled labourers, and one widow. Representing 58 per cent of the property value, a resident francophone *petite bourgeoisie*, that is resident francophone property owners, dominated ownership of smaller properties. Merchants, businessmen, and professionals often rented to each other and to skilled tradesmen and unskilled labourers. Skilled tradesmen, concentrated on the northwestern and southeastern extremities, controlled 13 per cent of property values and rented to the *petite bourgeoisie* and other skilled and unskilled workers. Only five women, four widows and a single woman, were recorded as owners or renters of property on the street.²⁷ This figure is unusually low. Female household heads and a shop renter accounted for only 2.8 per cent of Saint-Joseph Street properties, although in 1881,

²⁵Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier", Chapter 5.

²⁶Ouellet, "Les élites municipales," 3.

²⁷Bradbury, "Wife to Widow: Class, Culture, Family and the Law in nineteenth-century Quebec" (Montréal: Les Grandes Conférences Desjardins, 1997); Catherine Renaud, "Une place à soi?: aspects du célibat féminin laïc à Montréal à la fin du 19^e siècle," (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], Université de Montréal, 1993).

females headed an estimated 8.7 per cent of households in Montreal.²⁸ Two widows, Elizabeth Lavery and Mary Vining, were listed as owner household heads. They represented less than five per cent of the street's total property value of \$206,510.²⁹ Well below the median for Montreal city streets, the lowest annual rents on the street were \$20 for a small shop or office, or the home of a family headed by a unskilled labourer. The average annual rent of a family headed by a skilled tradesmen (carter, carpenter, shoemaker) was \$48, at par with those of Montreal. Clerks often paid annual rent in the \$60 range, and professionals often paid over \$100. On average, Saint-Joseph Street's clerks and professionals paid lower rents than those in Montreal as a whole. Hotels, which included taverns or working-class commercial boarding-houses, rented from \$144 to \$180.³⁰

Property ownership is a mechanism or controlling influence on development and a tool of class analysis. The street reveals a specific relationship of land, space, and class in 1881. Two representatives of the anglophone grande bourgeoisie of Montreal, Alfred Brown and accountant P.S. Ross, were buying up properties and subdividing lots on the blocks bordering Atwater Avenue.³¹ The vacant lots on the northern portion of the street were available for large-scale speculation, given the promotional efforts of the Colonial Building and Trust Association in this part of the town. Capital invested by trust companies was substantial compared to that of individual speculators such as the town's

²⁸This figure includes widows and milliners, but excludes single women. It also covers sections outside the city jurisdiction, such as Saint-Henri and Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Olson, "Occupations and residential spaces in nineteenth-century Montreal," *Historical Methods* 22, 3 (1989):81-96.

²⁹Bradbury, *Working Families*, Chapter 6 ; Bradbury, "Surviving as a Widow in nineteenth-century Montreal," *UHR/RHU* XVII, 3 (February 1989):148-160.

³⁰AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; Hanna and Olson, "Métiers, loyers et bout de rue", 260.

³¹Represented by business agent C. Brewster, Esquire Alfred Brown owned lot 941, subdivisions 2-5, 7-14. Esquire P.S. Ross owned lots 948, 1014, 1015, 1017 to 1021, a part of 1022, and 1936. AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2, 28, 31, 34. P.S. Ross acted on his own behalf and as the attorney for James Ross. ANQM, CN 601, S153, Ferdinand Faure, 5597, quittance par P.S. & James Ross et la Corporation de la Ville de Saint-Henri, 21 mai 1883; 5787, vente par Philip S. & James Ross à Mr. Joseph Jacob, 21 février 1884; Collard, "Philip Simpson Ross," *DCB*, Vol. XIII, 904-906.

third Mayor (1880-1882), Alphonse Charlebois who had \$19,300 worth of properties and buildings, the highest assets among councillors in 1881.³² From 1875 to 1878, the holdings of Colonial Building and Trust were worth seven times that (\$146,000).³³

Paul-André Linteau, in his study of Maisonneuve, notes four phases of land development and speculation. Although he is describing a later cycle, the pattern is similar. In the first stage, farmers sold their land. In Saint-Henri too, agricultural land was being converted for urban usage, and the sale of land by the Brodie and Turcot families reveals this tendency. The speculator appeared in a second phase. His aim was to buy low, make no changes to the property, and sell at a considerable profit, consolidating parcels through purchase of adjacent lots. Alfred E. Brown and P.S. Ross fit this description. Their objective could be achieved only when the timing was right, loans were available, and demand for housing was high; or when the speculator could afford to wait or to seize on opportunity, or when the developer could achieve the collaboration of politicians, lenders, or builders. Still other land speculators, often trust companies, converted land, either to suit the moneyed buyer, by adding parks and wide avenues, subdividing lots and building houses for workers in close proximity to their places of work. The purchases of Alphonse Charlebois and the Colonial Building and Trust are indicative of this tendency. In a later phase beginning in the early twentieth century, trust companies built homes and buildings on the land to attract purchasers.³⁴

³²Bellavance et al., 5-7.

³³Vente, 13 septembre 1875, AVM, FCSH, *Index aux archives, contrats, protêts et autres divers*, P23/C1,1. Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", 2.

³⁴Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, 35-41.

An established petite bourgeoisie of resident owners inhabited the southwestern street blocks near Place Saint-Henri. The group included businessman William Brodie (1), a descendant of an established Saint-Henri landowning family (Figure 1.6), Robert Bickerdike (2), a pork butcher who rose to the local, then city and federal politics, and Mary Vining, the widow of William Moseley (3), the former owner of a tannery operating on the canal since 1859.³⁵ Vining's house and 17,000 square-foot lot at 1234 Saint-Joseph was assessed at \$8,000, the highest on the street.³⁶ Vining's widowhood can be compared with that of Appolline Hébert (4), the widow of Jean-Baptiste Belisle, who lived at 1216 Saint-Joseph along with a family of seven, and paid \$36 annual rent to the blacksmith Benjamin Gohier.³⁷

The landholding practices of women in Montreal and its adjacent suburbs are worthy of further investigation. Peter Baskerville treats this subject in a recent article, comparing patterns in late nineteenth-century Hamilton and Victoria. He suggests that women's practices did not differ substantially from those of men. Men accorded women landholding rights once these concerns became less central to their investment strategies. Hamilton women owned less property than women in Victoria.³⁸ It would be interesting to note similarities and differences with Montreal, given Quebec's distinct legal framework.³⁹

³⁵William Brodie owned lots 1004, 1019, 1922, two parts of 1927, and lived with his family on lot 1937. AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2, 27, 31, 34, 35; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folio 21; Henry James Morgan, *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time*, second edition, (Toronto: Briggs, 1913), 98; Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", A.3; Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier", 21, 26; Lauzon, *1875, Saint-Henri*, 15.

³⁶Its value surpassed that of Montreal owner Damase Pariseau (13,700 foot lot 2019, \$7,500), Saint-Henri grocer Charles Lebrun (8000 foot lot 2020, \$7500), and William Brodie's 29,000 foot lot 1922, which was valued at \$7,200. AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2, 27, 49.

³⁷AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2.

³⁸Peter Baskerville, "Women and Investment in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Canada: Victoria and Hamilton, 1880-1901," *CHR* 80, 2 (June 1999):191-218.

³⁹Bradbury, "Wife to Widow".

Skilled tradesmen dominated residence on both the northwestern and southeastern extremities of Saint-Joseph Street. A variety of skilled labourers and the street's only single female who was a resident household head, fifty-six year old hat and dressmaker Florence Dabin (5), lived on the northwestern block near Place Saint-Henri.⁴⁰ There is a discrepancy in the recording.⁴¹ Whereas the census lists her along with the Dabin family, the tax roll notes that she operated her own shop and lived upstairs in a flat rented from Saint-Henri businessman Moïse Henrichon for \$42 annually.⁴² Hat and dressmaking were common occupations for single women in nineteenth-century Montreal.⁴³ If Florence indeed operated her own shop, this would make her exceptional. Benjamin (6), Charles and Victor Déguise (7), a family of carpenters, lived on the southeastern blocks. In a more common pattern in working-class Montreal, Charles lived with his wife Zoë and their four children in the ground floor flat at 1118 Saint-Joseph and rented to his son Victor and his family of six upstairs for \$4 a month. Benjamin, Charles' younger son, lived up the street at 1146, with his wife Marie Louise and Blanche Yvonne, their one child.⁴⁴

Saint-Joseph was a mixed use street. Like other Montreal commercial streets such as Craig, Notre-Dame, Ontario, Sainte-Catherine, and Wellington, the combination of public and private buildings encompassed commercial and domestic spaces.⁴⁵ Certain civic institutions were situated here until the movement to Place Saint-Henri, which was

⁴⁰The families on this block were headed by a shoemaker, two carters, a carpenter, a foreman, a tinsmith, a blacksmith, a barber, a painter, and a saddler or harness-maker. AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2, 30; *Lovell's City Directory*, 1885-86, 671.

⁴¹AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folio 115.

⁴²AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2, 35; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folios 3, 119.

⁴³Bradbury, "Surviving as a Widow", 151; Renaud, 75.

⁴⁴AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folios 115, 117.

⁴⁵Hanna and Olson, "Métiers, loyers et bout de rue", 269.

considered part of Notre-Dame Street in 1890-91. From 1875 to 1885, Fire and Police Chief Zéphirin Benoît lived with his wife Rose de Lima and his growing family (8) in the first floor and attic of Jean-Baptiste Fortier's hotel (Lake Superior House), and until the Police Station on the ground floor moved to Saint-Henri Street in 1879, prisoners inhabited a cell in the basement. The Fire Station remained adjacent to the hotel on Hallowell Street until the move to the 1883 town hall on Place Saint-Henri.⁴⁶ Given unstable municipal leadership until the mayoralty of Ferdinand Dagenais in 1887,⁴⁷ Benoît assumed numerous responsibilities with regard to sanitation, road and sidewalk upkeep, as well as combatting local fires and street crime. He became Chief of the Montreal Fire Brigade in 1888.⁴⁸

As noted earlier, the Tannery West train station (9), under construction in 1879, was situated in the gulley off the street within the triangle of GTR tracks. Huguette Charron and Françoise Lewis claim that the train station was popular with Saint-Henri residents and beneficial to the local economy. Saint-Henri residents with sufficient means preferred the five-minute train ride for a \$10 seasonal pass to the slow and uncomfortable Montreal omnibuses. Local merchants and property owners profited from people who moved to Saint-Henri and worked in Montreal, and from people from neighbouring communities like Côte Saint-Antoine who came to Saint-Henri to board the train.⁴⁹ Evidence suggests that people arriving from the British Isles and continental Europe disembarked at the Tanneries Junction railway station, destined for the Immigrant Shed

⁴⁶Charron et Lewis, 31, 100-102; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folio 26.

⁴⁷Bellavance et al., 5.

⁴⁸Charron et Lewis.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 119.

(1871) and registration at the Dominion Government Immigration Office (1879) south of Saint-Joseph Street and the Grand Trunk Railway tracks (Figure 2.3).⁵⁰

Until the move to Place Saint-Henri in 1889-90, the Post Office and telegraph service at 1297 Saint-Joseph (10) was in the house of Ferdinand Faure, who had emigrated from France in 1857 and became the local notary, Town Secretary, and real estate agent.⁵¹ Prior to home delivery initiated in 1881, Saint-Henri residents had to present themselves at the Post Office to pick up their mail. In April 1876, contractor and councillor Alphonse Charlebois was slated to meet with the Postmaster-General in Ottawa to plead the community's case for better services, but he was too preoccupied with his own construction business. On two occasions, in 1877 and 1888, a theft and forgery of registered letters occurred. In the first instance, registered letters were stolen by a group of professional thieves referred to as *la Bande à Montgomery*, who specialized in breaking into safes. Witnessing strangers overlooking and inquiring about the building, hotelowner Monsieur Crevier and Doctor Lachapelle helped Chief Benoît solve the case.⁵² Prince Albert School (11), the Protestant public school, was located between lots 1922 and 1923 near Place Saint-Henri until demolition as part of the 1890-91 expropriation.

Stores and offices dominated the streetscape. Bakers, butchers, grocers, barbers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and doctors set up shop on the main street. Henri Lefebvre notes that "aucune caméra, aucune image ou suite d'images ne peut montrer ces rythmes."⁵³ Two Victorian photos convey the limitations of visual sources, an intimate

⁵⁰This subject warrants its own in-depth study. *L'Opinion Publique*, 1 avril 1875 (Interior sketch of Immigration Sheds); Interview, Guy Chiaisson, President SHSH, fall 1998; Gilles Lauzon et Lucie Ruelland, "Plan de 1871," 1875, *Saint-Henri*, 9 (Immigrant Sheds); Hopkins' 1879 map (Figure 3.1, Immigration Office).

⁵¹Massicotte, "Quelques Rues et Fabourgs," 147 (Railway depot, 1862). Massicotte is also cited in Auclair, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries de Montréal*, 15; Ouellet, "Les élites municipales," 6; Charron et Lewis, 144; SHSH, Photo de la plaque du cimetière de Ferdinand Faure, paroisse Saint-Élisabeth du Portugal, série pré-archivage.

⁵²Charron et Lewis, 144-146.

⁵³Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, 52.

relation between dwelling and street, and a gendered spatial division between the commercial and domestic economies (Figures 2.9 & 2.10). Adhering to a "separate sphere" ideology, a Saint-Joseph Street merchant and his son are positioned alongside the business on the ground floor, while women and children, who most likely also helped out in the store, pose on the home's balcony on the first floor. Similarly, the father and son of a Rose-de-Lima Street working-class family are seated on the cart, while the mother and children are positioned near the home.

Baker and grocer François Xavier St-Denis (12) typifies the 1881 Saint-Joseph Street merchant.⁵⁴ The descendant of an established Saint-Henri family,⁵⁵ St-Denis owned several town properties⁵⁶ and lived on a 4700 square-foot lot with his family of eight on the south. One pig contributed to sustenance and three horses facilitated transportation and delivery.⁵⁷ Because there was more space and animals remained legal, residents in suburbs such as Saint-Henri and Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End were more likely to keep pigs than Montrealers.⁵⁸ Their living situation contrasted with that of the family of five headed by day labourer Joseph Legault (13) at 68 Rose-de-Lima, who paid \$30 annual rent, the street's median rental value (Table 2.1). Only eight males, four percent of heads of households on Saint-Joseph Street, were listed as day labourers renting in 1881.⁵⁹

⁵⁴Lovell's *City Directory for 1885-86*, 681; AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, 27.

⁵⁵Burgess, "Work, Family, and Community", 376, 506, 560, 586, 623, 697-698.

⁵⁶ANQM, CN 601, S153, Ferdinand Faure, 4547, F.X. St. Denis par P.S. Ross et al., vente, 14 janvier 1879; 4614, F.X. St. Denis à Dame Veuve Legault et Deslauriers, quittance, 5 juin 1879; 4939, F.X. St. Denis à Napoléon Carly, bail, 17 février 1881; 4959, F.X. St. Denis à Victor Vermette, bail, 17 février 1881; 6195, F.X. St. Denis par la Corporation de la Ville de Saint-Henri, vente, 10 juillet 1884.

⁵⁷AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; 27.

⁵⁸Bradbury, *Working Families*, 166-167; Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier", 124; AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; 27.

⁵⁹AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; 50.

Figure 2.9 Saint-Joseph Street Merchant Family, 1870s



Source: SHSH, Fonds Cartier, 13-PH-1.

Figure 2.10 Working-class Family on Rose-de-Lima Street, 1890



Source: SHSH, Fonds Dupuis, 25-PH-1.

The five hotels (H) were the scene of much late night drinking.⁶⁰ For men, women, and youth, drinking was an habitual, almost ritualistic pastime, a relief from the strains of economic difficulties. In certain cases, it had the unfortunate effect of straining tight household finances, particularly acute during periods of economic depression.⁶¹ At worst, it led to alcoholism, spousal abuse, and violent crime.⁶² The ground floor consisted of a long and narrow tavern, saloon or *débit de boisson*. The hotelowner and his family lived above or operated a boarding-house.

The conviviality of the tavern was an essential facet of male working-class culture. Characteristic of many working-class communities, labourers often frequented taverns upon their return from work.⁶³ As Peter de Lottinville points out, the local tavern was a recreational space for working-class men, with a celebratory aspect, between social gatherings such as parades, wedding anniversaries, and bazaars.⁶⁴ At a Saint-Henri tavern at the corner of Saint-Jacques Street and Greene Avenue, men stood at the bar where a proliferation of liquor bottles and the photo of a Victorian "pin-up girl" lined the shelves along the mirrored wall (Figure 2.11).⁶⁵ The more spacious establishments had pool

⁶⁰The hotelowners on Saint-Joseph Street in 1885-86 were Walter Armstrong, Alfred Benoit, Jean-Baptiste Fortier, Normand Gédéon, and Joseph Gravel. *Lovell's City Directory for 1885-86*, 667, 668, 673, 674, 678.

⁶¹Bradbury, *Working Families*, Chapter 6.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 51-52, 183, 191; Kathryn Harvey, "'To Love, Honour and Obey': Wife-Battering in Working-Class Montreal, 1869-1879," (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire] Université de Montréal, 1991; Harvey, "'To Love, Honour and Obey': Wife-Battering in Working-class Montreal, 1869-1879," *UHR/RHU*, XIX, 2 (October 1990): 128-140; Harvey, "Amazons and Victims: Resisting Wife-Abuse in Working-Class Montreal, 1869-1879," *Journal of the CHA*, 1991:131-148.

⁶³Robert Bruno, "Everyday Constructions of Culture and Class: The Case of Youngstown Steelworkers," *Labor History* 40.2 (1999):105; Thomas W. Dunk, *It's a Working Man's Town* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1991), 56, 69, 72, 77-79, 108; Peter DeLottinville, "Joe Beef of Montreal; Working-Class Culture and the Tavern, 1869-1889," *Labour/Le Travail* 8/9 (1981/82), 9-40; Bryan D. Palmer, *Working Class Experience* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 102-106, 164.

⁶⁴De Lottinville, 48-49.

⁶⁵It was later named the Westmount Tavern because of its location in the municipal jurisdiction of Westmount which extends into the physical area of Saint-Henri.

tables and other amusements.⁶⁶ In 1875, there were no regulated hours. In Saint-Henri, saloonkeepers opened and closed at their own discretion.⁶⁷ Further historical research could be conducted on drinking patterns and tavern hours in different sections of Montreal.

Women rarely ventured into these licensed establishments. They either drank at home, on the balconies on hot summer evenings while chatting and carousing with neighbours, or in unlicensed grocery stores. By 1877, there were thirteen licensed grocery stores in Saint-Henri selling beer and liquor by the bottle.⁶⁸ Shopping provided opportunities to socialize, catch up on neighbourhood gossip, exchange information, and have a drink. Female traders were frequently arrested in the 1870s for selling whisky, brandy, rye, and other drinks available by the glass in unlicensed grocery stores.⁶⁹

Society's response to public drinking was driven by attempts at social control and moral regulation.⁷⁰ The tavern in particular presented a dilemma for lawmakers. As a forum for public and collective discussion, the tavern represented a threat to the competitive, individualist values of the bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie.⁷¹ It also threatened the social order. Drunk and disorderly conduct, on the part of both men and women, accounted for most arrests in Saint-Henri throughout this period. From 1875 to 1888, Police Chief Benoît's work mostly consisted of picking up drunks loitering in the streets, crumpled in doorways, or passed out on sidewalks at all hours of the day or night. Drunks often hid in wooded spaces, such as the "Bois à Quesnel", behind the Williams

⁶⁶The popularity of pool halls is evidenced by a citizens' petition in 1905 for the legal incorporation of the *Cercle d'Amusements populaires Saint-Henri*, a recreational club for card games and pool on Notre-Dame Street. AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3,6.

⁶⁷Charron et Lewis, 97.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*

⁶⁹Bradbury, *Working Families*, 162, 198.

⁷⁰Robert A. Campbell, "Hotel Beer Parlours: Regulating Public Drinking and Decency in Vancouver, British Columbia, 1925-1954," Ph.D. Thesis (History), Simon Fraser, 1998; Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, *Drink in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1993).

⁷¹De Lottinville, 48-49.

Figure 2.11 Interior of Westmount Tavern, 1907



Source: SHSH, Fonds Chouinard, 45-PH-2.

Sewing Machine Manufacturing Company (Figure 3.6). They occasionally fell into the Lachine Canal. After several bottles of beer or a few shots of rye, barroom brawls occasionally broke out. Tavernowners alerted Chief Benoît through the use of a fire alarm which rang at his home at Fortier's hotel. Offenders were incarcerated in the prison cell in the police station basement and fed gruel until their appearance in Police Court.⁷²

From 1875 to 1890, the material relations of owners and renters reveal that various class and gender relations were played out in the limited space of the main street. A range of social relations took place in different spaces, with figurative connotations. The institutional spaces of post office, school, train and police station denoted political, administrative and regulatory mechanisms. The commercial spaces of stores encompassed business transactions, but also a spontaneous exchange of conversation, gossip, and information. For men, the recreational space of the tavern provided relief from the strains of daily life and the opportunity for drink, amusement, and the companionship of other men. Reflecting the complexity of human behaviour, these activities contributed to the spontaneity and rhythmic patterns of community life.

Development, 1891-1905

The second phase of development on Notre-Dame Street is marked by the politics of expropriation and the dominant ownership of George A. Drummond on the new portion. My point in this section is to show that the politics of expropriation played a central role in the creation of the commercial street. The redirection of Notre-Dame Street through municipal expropriation in 1890-91 was instigated by a local elite who owned properties and businesses on the street. It entrenched the function of Notre-Dame Street as the main artery and its ascendancy over Saint-Jacques and Saint-Antoine Streets. Merchants, managers, and contractors designed the main street to serve their political and economic interests and increase their property values, business profits, and votes.

⁷²Charron et Lewis, 98-104. The social control and moral regulation of criminal street activities is treated in Chapter 6.

We see that expropriations on Notre-Dame Street initially met with little resistance from property owners. As expropriation costs accumulated, with work on other city streets in the late 1890s, opposition increased. One-third of the debt was due to loans incurred for expropriation. In 1897, problems with the mounting municipal debt led to resentment on the part of taxpayers, three-quarters of whom were renters paying the rental tax (also known as the water tax). Taxpayers felt that a portion of the burden of expropriation costs should have been borne by the owners whose property values were increased by the improvements, and not by the municipality alone, that is not by taxpayers from the whole town. These protests contributed to a movement for annexation to the City of Montreal. The political clout of the local elite dominating council kept pro-annexation forces in check until 1905.

The deliberate attempts to design a commercial street were successful in terms of conversion of land to business uses. A significant increase in population and demand for services led to the entrenchment of business interests on the downtown section of the street. As development moved westward, the new section of Notre-Dame developed, with a streetscape comprised of stores (Figures 2.13- 2.18), homes, a fire station (Figure 3.4), and the Dominion Abattoir (Figure 2.7). Vacant properties beyond the Dominion Abattoir were still available for land speculation and concentration of ownership.

Class exploitation and ethnic friction intensified in this period. The local elite was adamant in obliging George A. Drummond, an anglophone Montreal bourgeois, to pay for the provision of public services on his properties. This local protest can be considered along with the resistance displayed against monopoly control of water, sewage, and transportation services in the following chapters. These incidents are symptomatic of class and ethnic conflicts which heightened in the 1890s and persisted in the community until 1905.

The local elite was intent on establishing a viable main street. Anxious to establish more efficient transportation links with Montreal, the commercial and professional elite realized that a wider and longer street would augment the flow of people and goods in and out of their stores and offices. The 1890-91 expropriation plan was the outcome of

business class interests dominating the street. The extension resulted from a 1887 petition signed by the management of the Dominion Abattoir and several local businessmen for the opening of Saint-Joseph Street from Gareau to Sainte-Marguerite (Figure 2.4).⁷³

Costs for the extension and widening totalled \$35,350.⁷⁴ Monetary compensations were settled through a series of lengthy town council meetings.⁷⁵ Mary Vining, the wealthy widow of manufacturer Edward Moseley, incurred arbitration costs of \$175 for a 1893 Superior Court case settling her expropriation.⁷⁶ The experience of Saint-Henri contrasts with expropriations and widenings on Notre-Dame Street within the jurisdiction of the City of Montreal which disrupted homes and businesses from Brock to Berri Streets from 1895 to 1902. These expropriations drove down property evaluations and met with considerable resistance.⁷⁷ The expropriation of this section of Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri is comparable to the widening of Saint-Laurent in the same period in that the main objective was to increase the commercial importance of properties and ensure the status of the main street within the community.⁷⁸

It was seven years later that the expropriations in Saint-Henri engendered protest. They became contentious local issues as municipal debt and annexation forces mounted from 1897 to 1905.⁷⁹ A *La Presse* municipal affairs journalist comments:

⁷³AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E,2,52, 3075.

⁷⁴AVM, Fonds Vanier, *Expropriations*, P49/B3; AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3,3, 26.

⁷⁵Le groupe d'animation urbaine, 21.

⁷⁶AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/C1,2, 92.

⁷⁷*La Presse*, 2 février 1895, 12; 9 novembre 1896, 8; 19 février 1900, 8; 22 février 1902, 5.

⁷⁸Podmore, 65-70.

⁷⁹*La Presse*, 22 février 1897, 1; 5 mars 1897, 1; 9 mars 1897, 8; 29 mars 1897, 1; 9 février 1898, 8; 11 mars 1897, 8; 5 avril 1898, 8; 15 avril 1899, 20; 22 janvier 1903, 12. Chapter 6 demonstrates that Saint-Henri's allotment of bonuses and other incentives to industry did not decline in this period.

Si la ville de Saint-Henri est quelque peu embarrassée avec la question des finances, c'est dû à l'expropriation des rues Saint-Jacques et Notre-Dame.

Au lieu de faire supporter une partie du coût de l'expropriation par les propriétaires des rues expropriées, on en a mis toute la charge sur les épaules de la municipalité.

De sorte que cette entreprise municipale, qui a coûté près d'un demi-million, a doublé la fortune d'un grand nombre de propriétaires en appauvrissant d'autant la corporation.

Il est donc étonnant de voir aujourd'hui ces mêmes personnes pour qui la ville s'est saignée, vouloir faire opposition à l'emprunt qui doit servir en grande partie, sinon en totalité, à payer les dettes contractées dans leur intérêt.

Il est aujourd'hui virtuellement décidé que d'ici à quelques mois tout au plus, Saint-Henri fera partie de la métropole du Canada. La grande majorité de la population des deux villes [Saint-Henri et Sainte-Cunégonde] désire l'accomplissement de ce projet formé depuis longtemps.

Le meilleur moyen de hâter le moment de cet événement, c'est d'éclaircir la situation en terminant les expropriations que la loi exige, et en rachetant les obligations de la ville qui portent un intérêt trop élevé.⁸⁰

In spite of these objections and calls for annexation, the municipality continued to exist as a separate entity for eight more years. Further street expropriations were undertaken, and by 1903, they amounted to almost one-third of the total debt of \$1,889,000.⁸¹ The five streets with the highest costs for the purchase of properties, opening, widening, and paving were Saint-Jacques (\$49,000), Sainte-Marguerite (\$38,925), Rose-de-Lima (\$38,850), Notre-Dame (\$35,350), and Saint-Ambroise (\$25,750).⁸²

Rapid expansion in this period led to substantial profits from land speculation. George A. Drummond's landholding practices on the new section of Notre-Dame are indicative of a tight web of business interests on the part of an anglophone grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a rising francophone petite bourgeoisie in this area. John Young, George A. Drummond's Liberal foe, bought land on the Lachine Canal bordering Saint-Henri in the 1850s (Figure 1.5).⁸³ In 1874, at the moment of the widening of the

⁸⁰*La Presse*, 29 mars 1897, 1.

⁸¹Van Nus, "The Role of Suburban Government," 96; Bellavance et al., 11; AVM, FCSH, "By-law to annex the City of St. Henry to the City of Montreal," *Règlements*, P23, B2.6.

⁸²AVM, Fonds Vanier, *Expropriations*, P49/B3. AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3,3,26. Chapter 6 elaborates on the municipal debt problem and annexation.

⁸³Tulchinsky and Young, "John Young." *DCB*, Volume X, 722-728; Morgan (1862), 528-533.

canal, Alphonse Charlebois, the third Mayor of Saint-Henri (1880-1882), joined fourteen merchants and lawyers from Montreal, Saint-Jean, and Sainte-Scholastique to form part of *la Compagnie des terres de Montréal*. They purchased \$120,000 worth of vacant lots bordering the canal from the Grand Trunk Railway bridge to Côte Saint-Paul Road.⁸⁴

The municipality was defined by successive waves of urban development and land ownership, reflected in a patchwork quilt of street patterns (Figures 2.12 & 2.13). The confluence of class and ethnicity was a dominant factor in land ownership. As a rule, anglophones owned large properties, and francophones were the exception. As noted earlier, P.S. Ross, Alfred Brown, and the Colonial Building and Trust Association dominated development north of Saint-Joseph Street in the 1880s. The Edward Mackay estate owned properties surrounding Saint-Jacques Street throughout the 1880s and 1890s. George A. Drummond dominated property ownership beyond the Dominion Abattoir on the new section of Notre-Dame and adjoining streets. C.H. Letourneux owned all of the properties from Saint-Rémi to the Côte Saint-Paul Road (Figures 2.4 and 2.12).⁸⁵

Through commutation payments to the Sulpicians in 1890, Drummond bought large tracts of land from the Grey Nuns in the western portion of Saint-Henri, which included Notre-Dame Street (Figure 2.12).⁸⁶ He operated landholdings in this section of the town like a quasi-municipality. He named streets on his property for trees in English such as Palm, Poplar, Acorn, Chestnut, and Walnut, and created large rectangular grids running on an east-west axis. These contrasted with smaller blocks stretching in a north-south direction in older parts of the community (Figure 2.4).⁸⁷

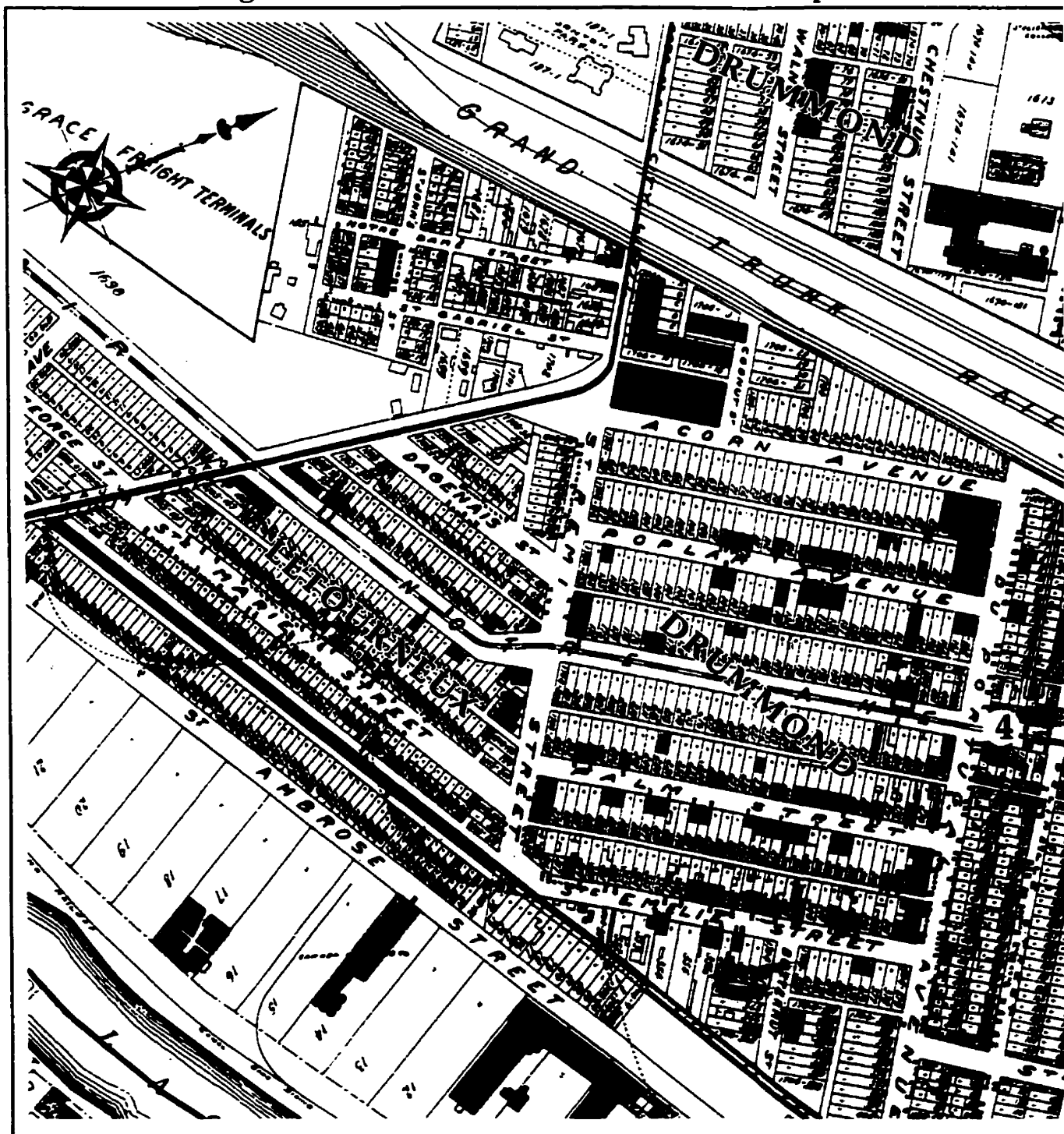
⁸⁴Bellavance et al., 7; George Maclean Rose, ed., *A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: Rose, 1888), 607-608.

⁸⁵AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23/D1,2; *Rôle d'évaluation 1891*, P23/D1,5, 6; *Rôle d'évaluation 1901*, P23/D1, 20.

⁸⁶AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1891*, P23/D1,6, 17-29.

⁸⁷Interview, Guy Chiaisson, SHSH President, August 25, 1999; *Rôle d'évaluation 1897*, P23/D1, 14; *Rôle d'évaluation 1897-99* P23/D1, 16; *Rôle d'évaluation 1900* P23/D1, 18 (St. Henry Land Company); *Rôle d'évaluation 1902* P23/D1, 21 (St. Henry Land Company).

Figure 2.12 Concentrated Land Ownership and Stores on N



Source: A.R. Pinsonneault, *Atlas of the Island and City of Montreal and Ile Bizard* (Montreal: Atlas Publishing Company, 1907), I

Ownership and Stores on Notre-Dame Street west of Place Saint-Henri, 1907

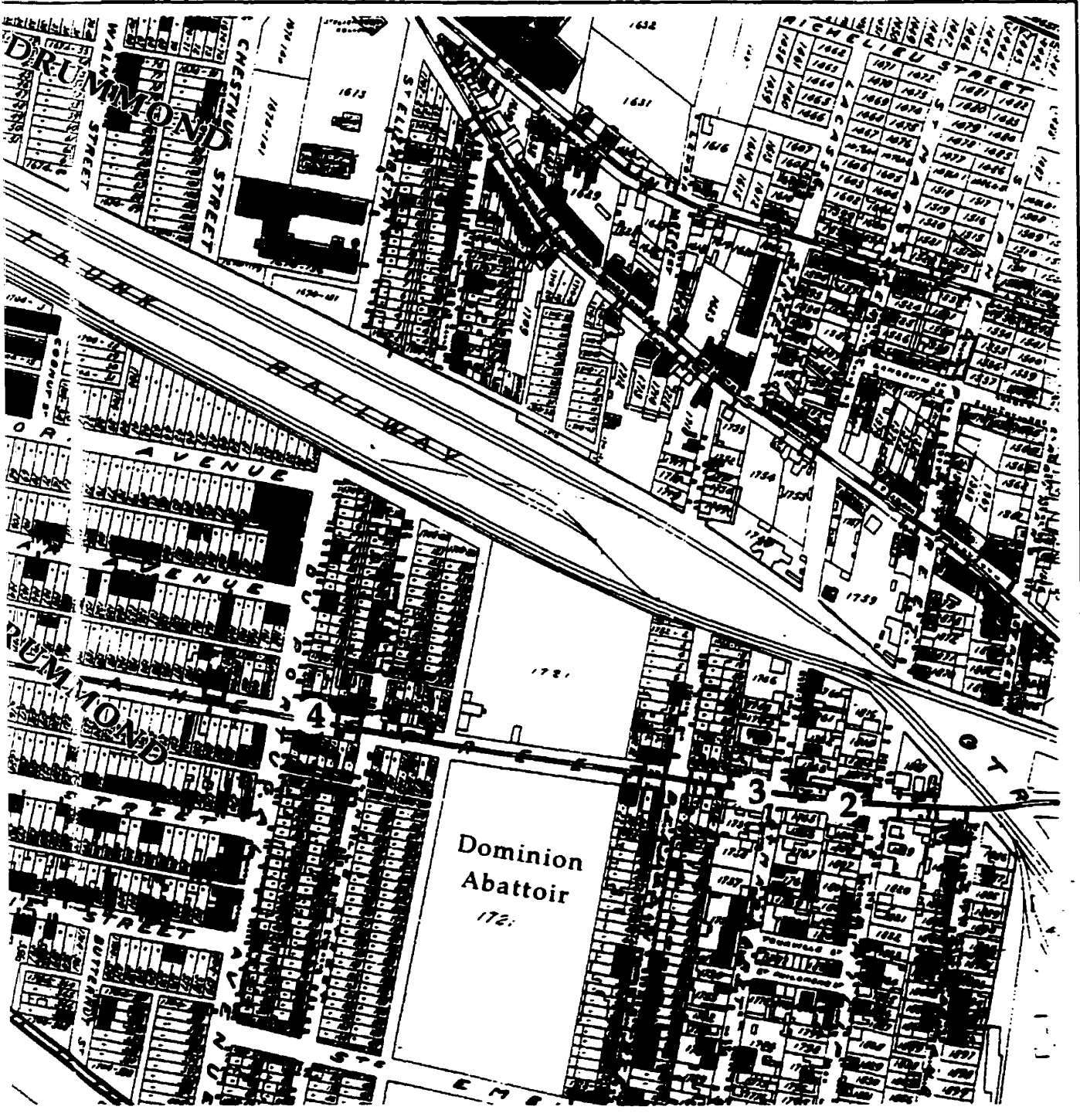
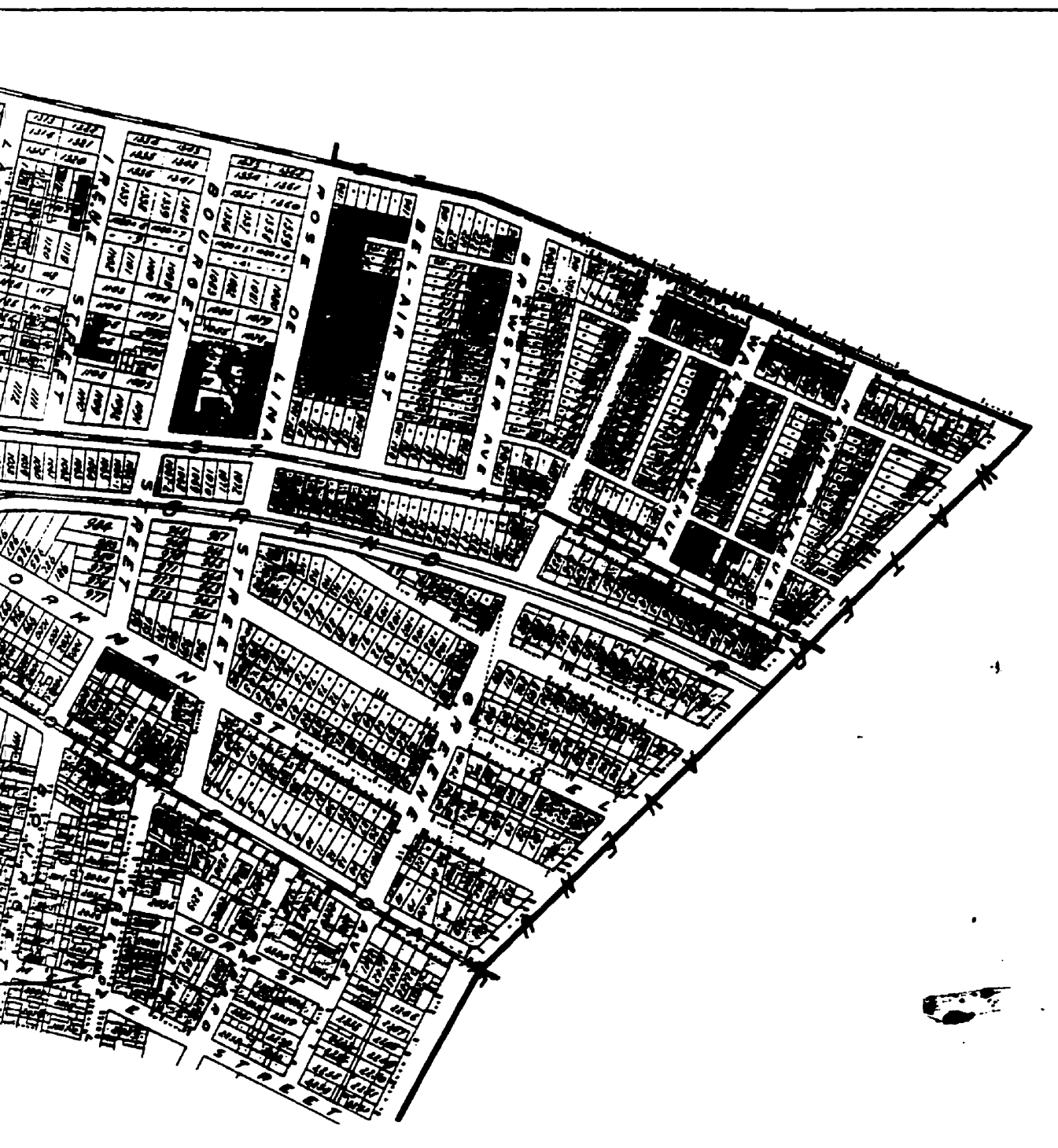


Figure 2.13 Store Location



Source: A.R. Pinsonneault, *Atlas of the Island and City of Montreal and Ile Bizard* (Montreal: Atlas Publishing Company, 1907), Pl

2.13 Store Location on Notre-Dame Street east of Place Saint-Henri, 1907



George A. Drummond is not to be confused with George E. Drummond who served as the MWPC President in the early twentieth century and influenced the politics of Saint-Henri's water and sewer provisions.⁸⁸ George A. Drummond was a prominent Sherbrooke Street resident, Conservative Senator, Vice-President of the Redpath Sugar Refinery, and Director of the Bank of Montreal, who emigrated from Scotland in 1854. He rose in the Redpath organization following his marriage to Helen, a daughter of the late John Redpath.⁸⁹ His business interests on the Lachine Canal led to the purchase of significant tracts of land in Saint-Henri.

Drummond's dominance of landed property in Saint-Henri led to local resentment, and the class and ethnic conflict climaxed in 1896-97 when he contested his municipal tax bill in Recorder's Court. In a dispute which lasted until 1905, Drummond asserted that the value of his Saint-Henri properties had fallen in 1894 to \$150,000 whereas council affirmed that the value of his properties amounted to \$243,220 in 1896,⁹⁰ as a result of installation of sewage services.⁹¹ In 1897, a *La Presse* columnist argued against Drummond's case from his fifteen years of experience as a city evaluator in Saint-Henri.⁹² Council denied Drummond more sewer lines on some of his properties on adjoining streets until annexation in 1905.⁹³

⁸⁸Robert Tremblay, "George Edward Drummond," *DCB*, Vol. XIV, 310-312; Morgan (1898), 287.

⁸⁹Michèle Brassard and Jean Hamelin, "Sir George Alexander Drummond," *DCB*, Vol. XIII, 283-284; Morgan (1898), 286-87; Morgan (1912), 345-346.

⁹⁰AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, C1,2, 206 (1896), 301 (1897), *Documents non numérotés*, P23, E3,3 (1898); P23, E3,6 (Protêt, Saint Henry Land Company, 1905).

⁹¹*La Presse*, 8 février 1897, 16.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 1 février 1897, 8; 29 janvier 1897, 8.

⁹³AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E3,6.

Shops and People, 1891-1905

Meanwhile, the concentration of people and homes on adjoining streets in the Saint-Augustin ward led to a demand for stores within walking distance, and the downtown stretch was most densely built up on the blocks near Place Saint-Henri. As we see on the Pinsonneault 1907 map (Figures 2.12 & 2.13), a 'downtown core' emerged, owned and operated by an established local petite bourgeoisie. This was the site of smaller shops (Figures 2.14-2.17) and the first department store in the community (1), Syndicat Saint-Henri, founded in 1905 by Louis Abinovitch, a local Jewish tailor and merchant (Figure 2.18). Smaller shops were clustered on the portion of the street west of Place Saint-Henri, as far as the Dominion Abattoir (Figure 2.7). They included the Magasin du Bon Marché (2), a dry goods store owned by Eugène Desjardins (Figures 2.16 & 2.17), the Ritchot general store (3) (Figure 2.14), and Élie Riendeau's butcher shop (4) (Figure 2.15). These stores served the consumer needs of people living nearby.

The main street was an intense site of sociability, and contemporary photographs and architectural drawings convey images of contrasting consumer experiences, from the most personal to the most formal. A resident entering Ritchot's grocery encountered an intimate environment, with the possibility of forming a personal relationship with the owner and store employees over the years. Particularly useful in periods of job loss or economic downturn, a line of credit could be established (Figure 2.14).⁹⁴ Social interactions could include conversation with a neighbour; gossip and information could be exchanged. A purchase of a cut of meat at the Riendeau butcher shop would likewise require some explanation and direct contact with a butcher and clerk (Figure 2.15). The selection of a hat or the cutting of cloth in Desjardins' dry goods store involved more extended contact (Figures 2.16 & 2.17). On the other hand, a person ascending the steps of the four-storey structure of Syndicat Saint-Henri would encounter a larger, more anonymous and modern environment (Figure 2.18).

⁹⁴Sylvie Taschereau, "Les petits commerçants de l'alimentation et les milieux populaires montréalais, 1920-1940," (Thèse de doctorat [histoire], UQAM, 1992), Chapter 7.

Figure 2.14 The Ritchot General Store, 1892



Source: SHSH, Fonds Payette, 64-PH-1.

Figure 2.15 Élie Riendeau's Butcher Shop. 1903



Source: SHSH, Fonds Bisanti, 7-PH-1.

These visual depictions are best viewed through the employment of Marx's dialectical concept of the *camera obscura*. Photographs of consumer transactions link levels of consciousness and ideology with material objects and social relations. The photographic image records material objects as tangible, permanent forms. Ideology is defined as "the mental activity that projects and imprints itself on the material world of commodities, and commodities are in turn the imprinted material objects that imprint themselves on consciousness".⁹⁵ Viewed from this perspective, photographs depicting the social intimacy of the late nineteenth-century neighbourhood store are juxtaposed with architectural drawings which emphasize the formality of the early twentieth-century structure.

Four photographs of Notre-Dame Street shops offer differing visual representations of people and sociability (Figures 2.14-2.17). Small stores were characterized by vernacular architecture at street level, with a space conducive to immediate contact, relaxation and intimacy. These shops facilitated social exchanges in the neighborhood and community. Further removed from the street, the architectural design of the department store emphasizes the building, not the people (Figure 2.18). The department store is characterized by distinct and specialized sections. It imposes its own logic and allows sophisticated marketing techniques to influence the customer.⁹⁶ Differing levels of consciousness are involved in making consumer decisions. To some extent, the introduction of the department store took away from the spontaneous nature of social exchanges associated with the nineteenth-century shop and working-class life. The advent of the early twentieth-century department store signalled the decline of the street as a site of working-class sociability.

⁹⁵Mitchell, 162.

⁹⁶Deborah Miller explores the transformation of Sainte-Catherine Street after the construction of Morgan's, Canada's first department store. Deborah Miller, "The Big Ladies Hotel": Gender, Resistance, and Middle-Class Montreal, A Contextual Analysis of the Royal Victoria College, 1899-1931," (M.A. Thesis [Architectre], McGill, 1998), 44-56.

Figure 2.16 Magasin du Bon Marché, exterior, 1900



Source: SHSH, Fonds Payette, 64-PH-5.

Figure 2.17 Magasin du Bon Marché, interior, 1900



Source: SHSH, Fonds Payette, 64-PH-2.

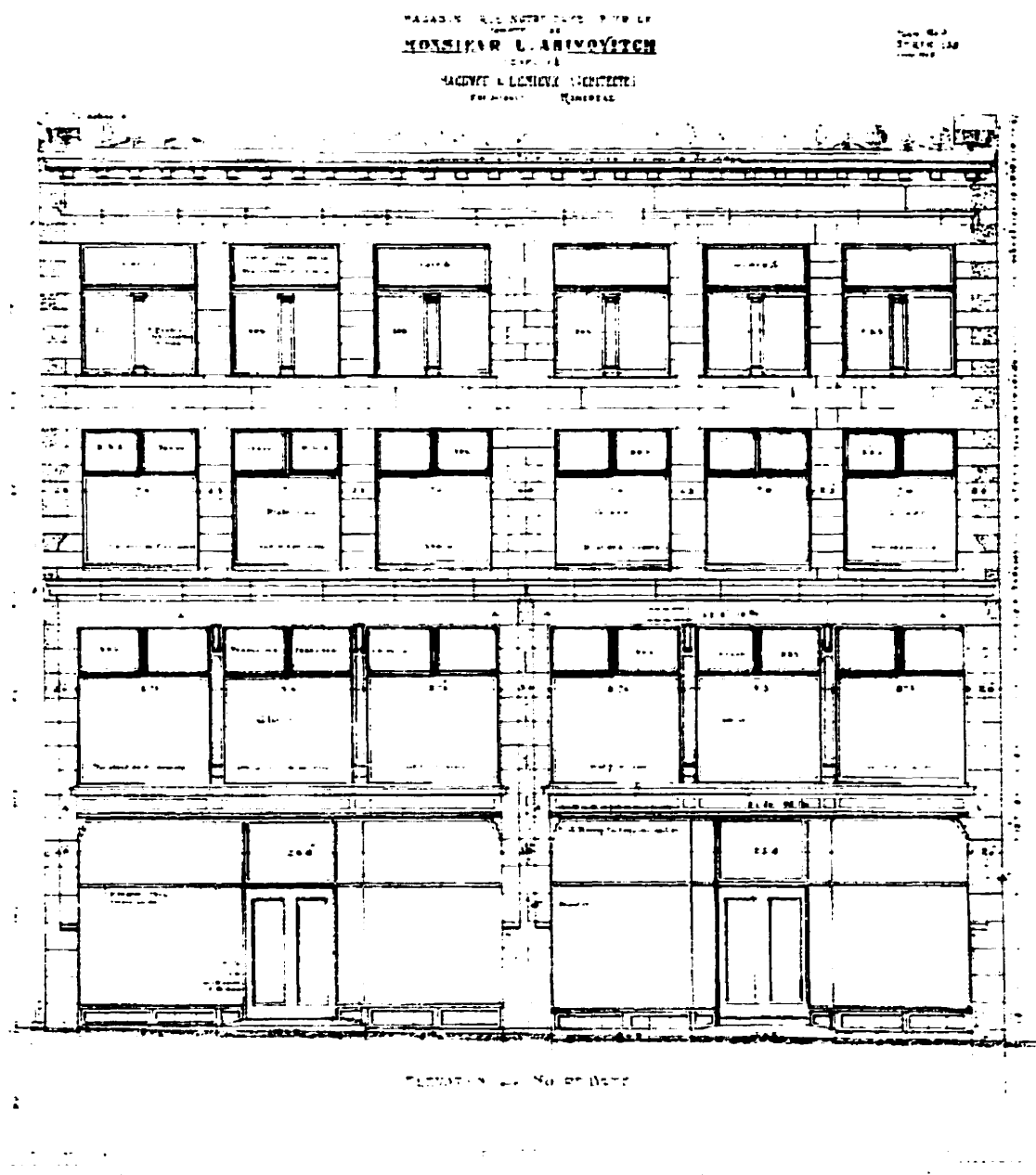
The interpretation of these differences is largely dependent on the nature of the source itself. Visual sources convey images evoking different levels of consciousness. Compared to a sketch (Figure 1.2), watercolour (Figure 1.4) or architectural drawing (Figure 2.18), a photograph conveys more accuracy of detail. An architectural drawing accentuates formal design and rational discourse. In Dorothy Ahlgren words, "architectural drawings are not only artistic works but vehicles of communication, characterized by both clarity of information and metaphoric representation of human activities."⁹⁷

For the documentation of moments in time, visual sources have their limitations, just as any piece of written evidence. The Victorian Age conveyed images of social conformity which were often at variance with everyday reality. The early Victorian techniques of photography required a pose, or preparedness, and an awareness of the 'moment' that are no longer necessary with today's fast lens, miniature camera body, and automatic adjustment. Holding a pose did not make it easy to capture either 'relaxation' or animated interaction; it had to be symbolized. The posing or placing of a group for a photograph implied a self-conscious or deliberate social construction of space. Victorians photos expressed contemporary assumptions about class, gender, ethnic, and racial differences.

The gendered arrangement in a 1900 interior scene of Eugène Desjardins' general store (Figure 2.17) provides three perspectives on commercial space: that of the photographer, the people in the photo, and the historian. We are obliged to ask why the photograph was taken. Did it form a part of the store's promotion? Or, as part of the Payette family collection contributed to the Société historique de Saint-Henri, was it a family memento? One also considers the photographer as observer and his or her corporal positioning with respect to the people and objects in the figure, and what does one say about it or infer from it? Secondly, one turns to the men and women who appear in the photograph. The file card provides no information on their names, occupations, or addresses, and we have no way of determining whether this was the usual arrangement.

⁹⁷Dorothy Ahlgren, "Architectural Drawings: Sources for Urban History," *UHR/RHU*, XI, 3 (February 1983): 67.

Figure 2.18 Syndicat Saint-Henri, exterior plan, 1905



Was the woman in the foreground handling a hat, normally positioned there? Are the women in the background usually serving female customers near the berets and hats hanging above and the clothes neatly arranged on the shelves? Are they exclusively clothes for women and children? Is the fabric handled by the man to the right for a male suit, a female dress, or children's apparel? In particular, the historian has no means of ascertaining how the women and men feel, positioned near products destined exclusively for their own sex. What are their perceptions of the boss? Is Eugène Desjardins present? Is one of the women his wife or daughter, or are all the people employees? How were the customers chosen? Finally, we have to consider my own use of the document, as a historian influenced by "the intellectual currents of the late twentieth century world"⁹⁸ and specific historical questioning, and having considered: What do I observe? Would the folks at Desjardins accept my use of the term intimacy?

In large part, the street environment was shaped by merchants and their stores. Small shops and Abinovitch's department store offer a different perspective. Given a greater distance from the street and a larger scale of the building, the building style of Abinovitch's four-storey structure contrasted with that of the corner grocery. This large commercial establishment encouraged consumerism through the use of large display windows beckoning potential buyers. Owner-built and brick-clad, the grocery harmonized with the existing landscape of duplexes and triplexes (Figure 2.1), while the department store asserted its importance of modernity. It was designed by architects Macduff and Lemieux who left their imprint on many buildings in the community: the Notre-Dame Street fire station (Figure 3.4), the town hall, and several industrial establishments, in addition to this imposing stone structure.⁹⁹

⁹⁸McKay, ed., *The Challenge of Modernity*, xxvi.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 67-72.

Conclusion

The urban space of Notre-Dame Street was shaped by the various people and classes who defined its usage and who used it. Over the course of three decades, the exclusion and appropriation of social and symbolic spaces were characterized by distinct property ownership and rental patterns. An anglophone grande bourgeoisie of Montreal dominated land speculation and ownership of vacant lots on the extremities of the street. An established resident francophone petite bourgeoisie owned a concentration of shops and offices near Place Saint-Henri. 'The majority renting classes' occupied upper flats on the main street and homes on adjoining streets.

The mixed use of the street was reflected in the combination of institutional, commercial, domestic, and recreational spaces examined from 1875 to 1890. As public institutions invested the symbolic centre, the downtown street environment comprised commercial, domestic, and recreational spaces. The new section fulfilled a mixed use function after the 1890-91 expropriation and design of the new street by the business elite. The intimate nature of the street environment, the proximity of dwelling and store, the range of commercial, domestic, recreational and other spaces, facilitated a vibrant street life.

Chapter 3

The Physical Fabric, 1875-1905

“Everything is measured at a cost.”¹

The provision of public works in the nineteenth-century city is fundamentally class based and politically motivated. What we think of today as ‘essential services’ were not seen as imperative in working-class suburbs of the late nineteenth century.² In certain cases, residential development preceded services; in some cases, they followed.³ I shall look here at three services: water supply, sewage disposal, fire-fighting and prevention, all of which involve security in the face of threats of life, especially of children. The availability of a pure water supply was of utmost importance. The supply of water and sewage services is an effective measure of a community’s prosperity. In *La Conquête de l’eau*, Jean-Pierre Goubert argues that piped water was restricted to the European upper classes until the advent of urbanization and industrialization.⁴ Whether the location was suburban or central, the upper classes of Europe “demanded waterworks to reaffirm their power and accentuate their social position.”⁵ The spread of disease and unsanitary conditions arising from population growth, congested dwellings, and poverty led to the claim for water by the working classes.⁶ Victor Hugo employs the metaphor of the sewer

¹ Abbey Lincoln, featuring Stan Getz, Hank Jones, Charlie Haden, Mark Johnson, and Maxine Roach, “Bird Alone,” *You Gotta Pay the Band* (Paris: Polygram, 1991), 1.

² Jason Andrew Gilliland, “The Servicing of Union Park, 1909-1930,” Research Paper, McMaster University, April 1991, 14; Herbert Brown Ames, *The City Below the Hill* (Montreal: n.p., 1897); Copp, *The Anatomy of Poverty*; Bradbury, *Working Families*.

³ Gilliland, “The Servicing of Union Park”, 7-15.

⁴ Jean-Pierre Goubert, *La Conquête de l’eau* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1986).

⁵ Goubert, “The Development of Water and Sewerage Systems in France, 1850 to 1950,” in *Technology and the Rise of the Networked City in Europe and America*, eds. Joel Tarr and Gabriel Dupuy (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1988), 117.

⁶ Goubert, *La Conquête*, Chapters 1, 2, & 3.

as an indicator of the progress of civilization and a reflection of material life in *Les*

Misérables:

L'égout, c'est la conscience de la ville. Tout y converge et s'y confronte. Dans ce lieu livide, il y a des ténèbres, mais il n'y a plus de secrets. Chaque chose a sa forme vraie, ou du moins sa forme définitive... Toutes les malpropretés de la civilisation, une fois hors de service, tombent dans cette fosse de vérité où aboutit l'immense glissement social. Elles s'y engloutissent, mais elles s'y étalent. Ce pêle-mêle est une confession. Là, plus de fausse apparence, aucun plâtrage possible, l'ordure ôte sa chemise, dénudation absolue, dérouté des illusions et des mirages, plus rien que ce qui est, faisant la sinistre figure de qui finit. Réalité et disparition.⁷

Stanley Schultz and Clay McShane perceive the environmental pollution of nineteenth-century city, unpaved streets, heaps of garbage, excrement from horses, and many other urban perils, as threatening the health of the nineteenth-century urban dweller. The introduction of services to alleviate these unsanitary conditions was dependent on the disposal of capital.⁸

Three to four miles from the urban core of Montreal, conditions in the industrial suburb of Saint-Henri can be compared to those of other predominantly working-class suburbs of industrial cities where residential development preceded services.⁹ As a politically constructed public space in an industrial suburb, Notre-Dame Street is the subject of specific class analysis. A 1905 photograph at the corner of Saint-Philippe mirrors the broad scope of physical transformations (Figure 2.1). Integral to the process of modern industrial capitalism and urban expansion, the interplay of class governed the allocation of money and the assignment of power. The city's emerging infrastructure, a haphazard

⁷Hugo, 110.

⁸Gilliland, "The Servicing of Union Park", 3.

⁹Despite differences in the timing of development, ethnicity, and the predominance of single family dwellings, in certain respects, the record in public works of Saint-Henri can be compared to that of the eastend Hamilton suburb of Union Park, Milwaukee's Ward 14, and Parsons Estate or North Earlscourt in Toronto. Gilliland, "The Servicing of Union Park", 16-18; Roger D. Simon, "Housing and Services in an Immigrant Neighbourhood: Milwaukee's Ward 14" *Journal of Urban History* 2,4 (1976): 435-458; Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs*, 1-3, 31, 39, 83, 110-113, 115, 122, 126, 127, 149-151, 173-178, 217-221, 230-232, 242, 269, 281, 286, 289; Harris, "'Livin' Quiet' in Little Britain: The Making of an Unplanned Working-Class Suburb of Toronto, 1909-1931," Manuscript, 1990a; Harris, "'Canada's All Right': The Lives and Loyalties of Immigrant Workers in a Toronto Suburb, 1900-1945," Manuscript, 1990b.

laying of streets, water, sewer, and gas pipes, lighting poles, train, tramway, telegraph, and telephone lines, signalled rapid technological advances. These forces of Victorian progress climaxed on Notre-Dame Street in the 1890s.

John Logan and Harvey Molotch perceive the construction of the built environment and physical infrastructure as functions of the urban growth machine.¹⁰ Focusing on locality, their analysis moves beyond the structural orientation of 1970s urban literature which established responses to the questions of *what* was occurring and *why*. They ask, for *whom*? Who benefited from the construction of streets, homes, and various services associated with nineteenth-century urban expansion? Employing conceptual and practical differences between exchange and use value as analytical tools, they distinguish between property owners who profit from the exchange value of a building and renters whose use of the dwelling is contingent on monthly payments.¹¹ Similarly, individuals, private companies, and monopolies owning and operating municipal services benefit from the exchange value of the utility. When affordable and accessible, consumers gain differing advantages through their usage.

The politics of this public space benefited the class interests of a local bourgeoisie, to the detriment of the working classes. As we see, the installation and operation of utilities on Notre-Dame Street between 1875 and 1905 reveal differing class and ideological interests, with serious implications for public health. Political interests governing public works operated on three levels of power: local (water input and sewage disposal, gas, electricity, and telephone utilities, and tram transportation), provincial (municipal financing) and federal (train transportation). Often allied with the petite bourgeoisie dominating council, local contractors drew considerable advantages from initial system installation, as did a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal. We see the impact on the people of Saint-Henri, a majority of whom were francophone working class.

¹⁰John R. Logan and Harvey Molotch, "The City as a Growth Machine," in *Readings in Urban Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 291-337.

¹¹Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes* (Berkeley, 1987), Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

The local elite, driven by an ideology of economic liberalism,¹² rarely intervened in relations between the monopolies and the people. The petite bourgeoisie of merchants, entrepreneurs, and professionals who dominated council had a significant impact on the daily lives of the majority of working-class renting families. This ideology is evident in broader studies of the roles of francophone entrepreneurs in the Montreal and Quebec economies, such as Fernande Roy's book, *Progrès, harmonie, liberté* and Ronald Rudin's study of Quebec banks.¹³ In *Maisonnette*, Paul-André Linteau demonstrates that through land promotion schemes and municipal contracts enhancing their profits, francophone businessmen were instrumental in the development of an industrial Montreal suburb.¹⁴

The ideology of economic liberalism predominated throughout this period. Municipal financing, the state of medical research, and political ideology influenced municipal decisionmaking. In the 1870s, the provincial government transferred power to Quebec municipalities with insufficient means to finance the high physical infrastructure costs associated with late nineteenth-century population growth and urban expansion. The problem was particularly acute in predominantly industrial suburbs such as Saint-Henri where renting and property values were lower than other more prosperous Montreal districts. The 7.5 per cent of annual rent tax levied on tenants, the property and special taxes, and license fees, all constituted an insufficient tax base. Saint-Henri's debt approached two million dollars by 1905. The 1893-94 depression and overexpansion explain constant preoccupations with budgetary concerns and a decline in street improvements in this period. From 1890 to 1905, as monopoly takeover increased, public protest intensified. It was marked by the rise of progressive liberalism, municipal reform parties, workers' parties, and journalists advocating municipal socialism.

¹²The ideology of economic liberalism is elaborated upon in Chapter 6.

¹³Fernande Roy, *Progrès, harmonie, liberté* (Montréal: Boréal, 1988); Ronald Rudin, *Banking en français* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1985).

¹⁴Linteau, *Maisonnette*.

Largely disenfranchised from the local political process and representation on council, tenants had few opportunities to voice opinions on local matters. Property ownership formed the basis of municipal voting in this period. Women were barred from voting in municipal elections until 1888, and only widows and single women owning property could vote after that date.¹⁵ On Notre-Dame Street, only five widows were entitled to vote in 1891.¹⁶ Adult men paying more than \$20 annual rent or owning property valued at over \$200 could also vote by 1897, but only male property owners could sit on council. Saint-Henri had the additional limitation that votes in council were calculated according to property ownership, meaning that the more one owned, the more votes one had.¹⁷ Letters, *protêts*, and petitions to council played an important role in popular protest regarding local transportation and industrial pollution. Legal restrictions limited the right of petition to municipal electors, male owners of property exceeding \$200 annual value or \$20 rental assessment.¹⁸

Function and Form

As urbanization and industrialization intensified in the 1890s, the emergence of Notre-Dame Street as the main commercial street of Saint-Henri was largely due to two major factors of urban development: population growth and territorial expansion. The extension of the principal business street of Montreal, central location, and local initiatives were related factors (Figure 2.4). From 1875 to 1890, Notre-Dame and other major Saint-Henri streets were beginning to take shape both as separate entities and extensions of

¹⁵Évelyne Tardy, Manon Tremblay, et Ginette Legault, *Maires et Mairessees* (Montréal: Liber, 1997), 27.

¹⁶AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation Saint-Henri, 1891*, P23, D1,5.

¹⁷Parliament of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 60 Vict., 1897 (Quebec: Brosseau and Pageau, 1897), cap. 62, 130. Sainte-Cunégonde's voting restrictions were \$300 property and \$30 annual rent values. Steven Watt, "The Annexation of St. Cunégonde: Life, Death and Afterlife," *Topics in Canadian Social History paper*, McGill, April 20, 1996, 30; Bellevance et al., 6.

¹⁸Parliament of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1897, cap. 62, 130, 147, 164, 175.

business streets in Montreal. These factors are reflected in the dimensions of the street relative to other city streets and cartographic representations.

A basic guiding principle of urban development is that of concentric circles of growth.¹⁹ The late nineteenth-century urban core of Montreal consisted of the beginnings of Notre-Dame Street within the old walled city, with residential and industrial suburbs surrounding it (Figure 2.3). Paul-André Linteau observes that, beginning in the 1870s, Montreal suburbs expanded in three directions: to the north along the eastern edge of the mountain; east along the river; and southwest along the Lachine Canal.²⁰ Table 3.1 indicates that the southwestern industrial suburbs of Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde were growing at a faster rate than Montreal in the 1880s and 1890s. The expansion of Saint-Henri persisted in the 1890s, while the population growth of Montreal and Sainte-Cunégonde declined.

Table 3.1

Populations of Saint-Henri, Sainte-Cunégonde, and Montreal, 1881-1901

	<u>Saint-Henri</u>	<u>difference</u>	<u>% difference</u>	<u>Sainte-Cunégonde</u>	<u>diff.</u>	<u>% diff.</u>
1881	6,415			4,849		
1891	13,413	6,998	109	9,291	4,442	92
1901	21,192	7,779	58	10,912	1,621	17
			<u>Montreal</u>	<u>diff.</u>	<u>% diff.</u>	
		1881	155,238			
		1891	219,616	64,378	41	
		1901	267,730	48,114	22	

Source: Government of Canada, *Fourth Census of Canada*, 1901, Vol. 3 (Ottawa: Dawson, 1905), Table XX, 329.

¹⁹Gilles Ritchot, "Premises d'une théorie de la forme urbaine," in *Forme urbaine et pratique sociale* (Montréal: Préambule, 1985).

²⁰Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal* (Montréal: Boréal, 1992), 84-85.

With a town centre, surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and four industrial districts, Saint-Henri exhibited patterns of urban development similar to those of Montreal (Figure 2.4). As Saint-Henri grew, Notre-Dame Street expanded. Its role as the main business street of both Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde was logical since it was also the principal commercial street of Montreal for most of the nineteenth century before the business and retail trade moved to Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Catherine.²¹ With westward urban expansion, Saint-Joseph Street and the Upper Lachine Road remained the primary thoroughfares until 1890. They vied for commercial importance from 1875 to 1890. By the late 1890s and early 1900s, Notre-Dame Street attracted most commercial enterprises in Saint-Henri.²² People rarely had to leave the community to shop and do business.²³ The expropriation of five blocks west of Place Saint-Henri for the 1890-91 widening and extension and land promotion schemes resulted in higher property values and rents on Notre-Dame than on adjoining secondary streets.²⁴

The length and width of a street has a direct relationship to its importance within a city.²⁵ Taken together with urban development in Saint-Henri, the westward expansion of Montreal, and local initiatives, the physical factors of length, width, and direction contributed to the function of Notre-Dame as the main commercial street of Saint-Henri.

²¹Marsan notes the changing morphology of the city in this period, from the early nineteenth-century designs of McGill, Richardson, and Mondelet to more functional commercial and administrative purposes. This is reflected in the shifting functions of its main streets. Marsan, 184-185, 290. Linteau states that Sainte-Catherine took over the function of Notre-Dame Street as the main commercial artery of Montreal by the early twentieth century. Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 30-34, 155.

²²Claude Ouellet, "Rapport des recherches sur les implantations industrielles et commerciales dans la ville de St-Henri, 1876-1905," UQAM, 1980, 22.

²³Ernest J. Chambers, *The Book of Canada Illustrating the Great Dominion* (Montreal: Book of Canada, 1905), 302.

²⁴"Lots à Vendre, Conditions Faciles," ANQM, Fonds Achille-Cléophile-Amédée Bissonnette, CN699, S1, P1. High property and rental values were common features of commercial streets. Gilliland, "Fire and Urban Morphogenesis: Destruction and Reconstruction in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," Department of Geography, McGill, 1998, 27.

²⁵Gilliland, "Redimensioning the Urban Vascular System", FK2.7-2.10.

Both Notre-Dame and Saint-Jacques, the main streets, were wider than Saint-Antoine and Saint-Ambroise. By 1903, the different sections of Saint-Jacques were as wide as Notre-Dame, whereas portions of Saint-Antoine were less wide and Saint-Ambroise was less wide overall. All sections of Notre-Dame and Saint-Jacques were 60 feet (18.3 m) wide; Saint-Antoine's width varied from 60 (18.3 m) to 45 (13.7 m) and 50 feet (15.2 m). Saint-Ambroise shifted from 45 feet (13.7 m) wide to 50 feet (15.2 m).²⁶

The town's initiative in joining the original section of Notre-Dame with the portion of Saint-Joseph west of Place Saint-Henri in 1890-91 was a physical shift which had marked implications for the significance of Notre-Dame as the main business street. In 1893, Saint-Jacques Street became the second longest and second most important business street in Saint-Henri.²⁷ The 1894 westward extension of Saint-Antoine and the subsequent eastward expansion of Saint-Ambroise were less significant in commercial terms.²⁸ Saint-Antoine was mostly residential and bordered the community's northern edges. Saint-Ambroise ran along the industrial corridor of the Lachine Canal.

Through the cartographer's symbols, insurance maps reflect the changing role of Notre-Dame Street as a means of access from city to hinterland, to a city artery for streetcars and trams. Cartographic representations also reveal the level in the hierarchy of streets. In his recent publication, *Maps and Politics*, Jeremy Black argues that, as discourses of power and selective representations of reality, maps should be returned to the social and political contexts in which they were created.²⁹ Hopkins' 1879 (Figure 3.1),

²⁶The city engineer does not specify whether the street width was measured from curb to curb or if it included sidewalk space. AVM, FCSH, "Bilan de la cite de St. Henri au 31 décembre 1903," *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3.4. By-law 8 stipulates that the width of sidewalks was supposed to be not less than forty-five inches. AVM, FCSH, "General By-law of the Town of St. Henry (Montréal: Le National, 1876), *Règlements*, P23/B2.3, p. 13.

²⁷Joseph-Émile Vanier, "Plan Index de la Ville de St. Henri, Comté d'Hochelaga, Montréal, 1er septembre 1893," AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3.3.

²⁸Reported measurements for Saint-Henri's major streets in feet (conversion to kilometers): Saint-Ambroise, 6285 (1.91); Saint-Jacques, 6145 (1.87); Notre-Dame, 5249 (1.6); Saint-Antoine, 5081 (1.55). AVM, FCSH, "Bilan de la cite de St. Henri au 31 décembre 1903," *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3.4.

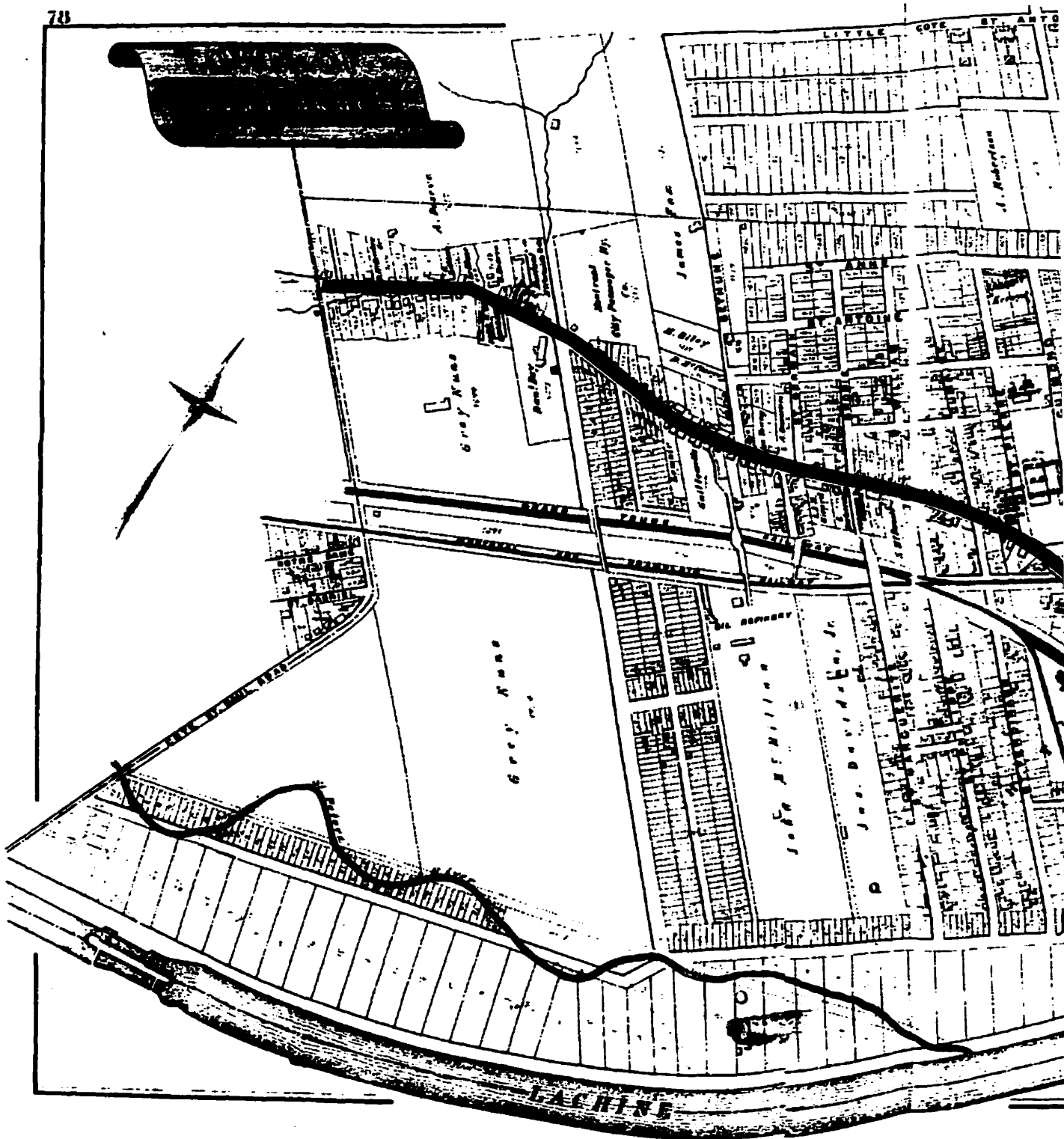
²⁹Jeremy Black, *Maps and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1997), 11, 13, 168.

Goad's 1890 (Figure 3.2), and Pinsonneault's 1907 (Figure 2.4) insurance maps, all drew upon the minute details and military designs of the 1868-72 Fortifications Survey map, which according to Pierre Lépine, was drafted by Royal Engineers stationed in Montreal shortly after Confederation.³⁰ Through the use of a broken line which represents a horsecar route, Hopkins highlights Upper Lachine Road over other Saint-Henri streets (Figure 3.1). In 1890, Charles Goad employs no visible means to convey more importance to Notre-Dame than to any other major or secondary Saint-Henri streets. The width of Notre-Dame is similar to that of other city streets and its name does not appear in larger print. One can infer that the east-west trajectory through the centre of the community draws from its former function as a commercial road linking Montreal and Lachine (Figure 3.2).³¹ By 1907, however, A. R. Pinsonneault not only displays the orthogonal grid patterns of city streets and the increasing density of the built environment, but points to the relative importance of major streets through the use of alternating dark and light double lines on Notre-Dame, Saint-Jacques, and Saint-Antoine. The sketches of Montreal Street Railway trams east of Atwater, on Notre-Dame and Saint-Jacques, denote the roles of these streets as connections to Montreal (Figure 2.4).

As the case with changes in physical form on Montreal commercial streets, the 1890-91 widening and extension of Notre-Dame was governed by the conjunction of political and business interests. In this respect, Saint-Henri officials, who were property owners on the street, took some initiative. The function of Notre-Dame as a main street increased their property values, business profits, and votes. Anxious to establish more efficient transportation links with Montreal, the *petite bourgeoisie* of merchants, professionals, and entrepreneurs realized that a wider and longer street would abet the flow of people and goods in and out of their stores and offices. The timing of municipal streetwork indicates their order of relative importance. Council gave highest priority to roadwork on Notre-Dame, followed by Saint-Jacques and Saint-Antoine, then Saint-

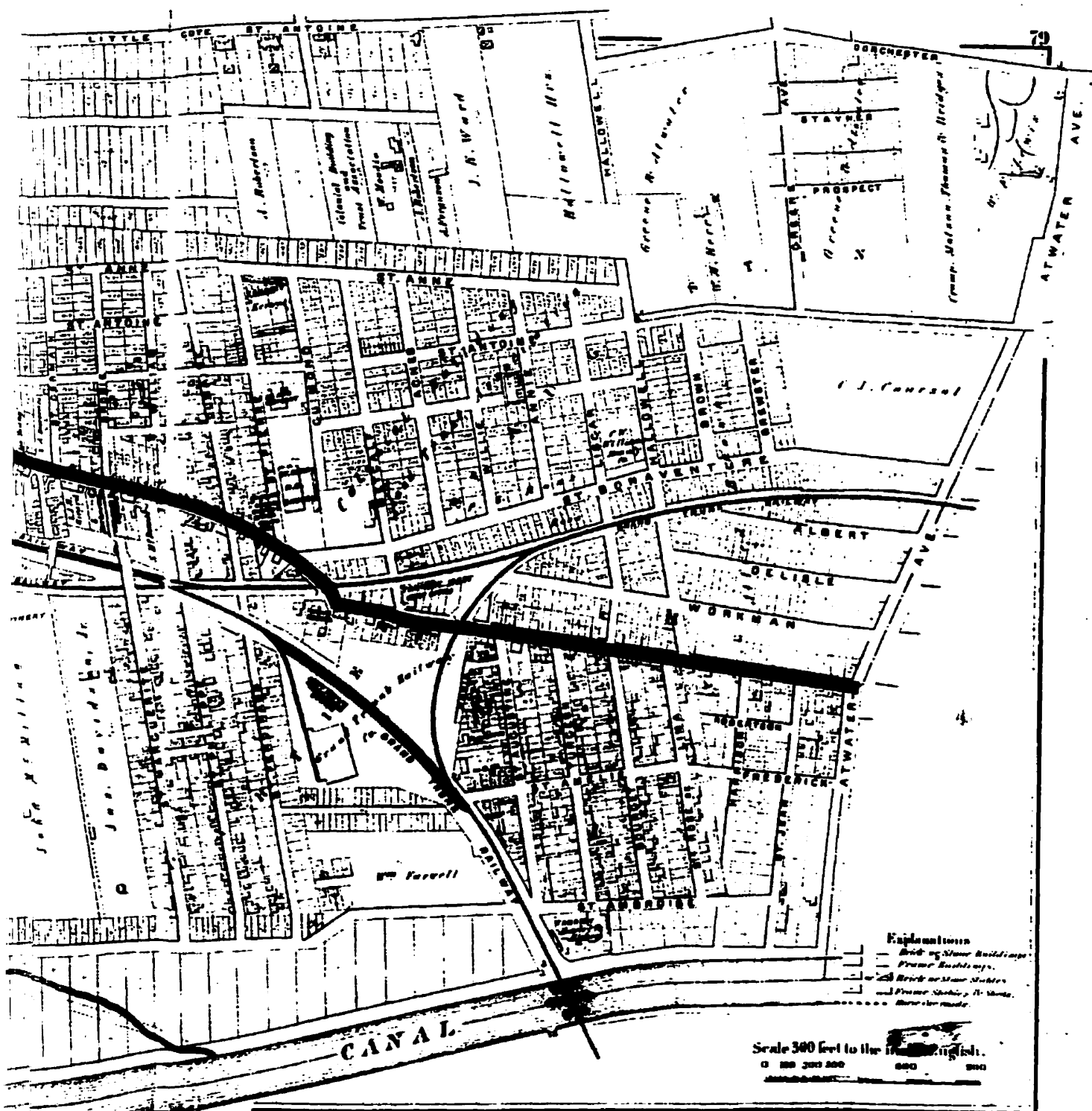
³⁰Interview, Pierre Lépine, BNQM cartographer, spring 1997.

³¹Rainville, "Fire Insurance Plans in Canada", 25-37; Harris and Luymes, "The Growth of Toronto", 244-253; Oswald, *Fire Insurance Maps*.



Source: H.W. Hopkins, *Atlas of the City and Island of Montreal, including the Counties of Jacques Cartier and Hochelaga: from Ac Lands* (n.p.: Provincial Publishing And Surveying Company, 1879), Plates 78 & 79.

Figure 3.1 Upper Lachine Road in Saint-Henri, 1879



Jacques Cartier and Hochelaga: from Actual Surveys, based on the Cadastral Plan deposited in the Office of the Department of Crown

Ambroise. By virtue of By-law 10, on November 6, 1876, council purchased land for \$500 from individual proprietors for the construction of Saint-Antoine Street.³² Street leveling in preparation for the installation of city sewers began on Notre-Dame in 1887. Saint-Jacques and Saint-Antoine were extended west beginning in 1894. Extensive improvements took place on Saint-Ambroise in the late 1890s and early 1900s, after major work on Notre-Dame, Saint-Jacques, and Saint-Antoine was largely complete.³³

A 1905 photo of Notre-Dame at the corner of Saint-Philippe (Figure 2.1) illustrates several features of the physical fabric, notably a dirt road surface, wooden sidewalks, electric lighting, two and three-storey commercial buildings, and single tram tracks.³⁴ This portion of the more recent stretch retained a frontier atmosphere, its brick and brick-clad buildings interspersed with flimsy wooden structures and dotted with empty lots. The portion of Notre-Dame Street from the Grand Trunk Railway bridge to Place Saint-Henri was also unpaved, but its buildings were more established. More elaborate stone and brick structures were built into a continuous terrace (Figure 3.3). Committed to an ideology of economic liberalism, municipal leaders in Saint-Henri often placed responsibilities for urban infrastructure and essential services in the hands of private parties, private companies, and monopolies.³⁵ This political ideology led to delays in providing adequate sewage facilities, poor water quality and supply, inconsistent road, sidewalk, and housing conditions, and dissatisfaction with utility and transportation services.

³²AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,3.

³³AVM, FV, *Registre des travaux*, P49,B1,2.

³⁴AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49, B6,1, 86; *Réclamations et litiges*, P49/B8; "Quantités de macadam, trottoirs et passerelles en madriers, etc.," AVM, FCSH, "Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri au 31 décembre 1903, Documents non numérotés, P23/E3,5, 47. British surveyor John McAdam devised macadamization, the process of compacting successive layers of crushed stone over roadbeds, in the early nineteenth century. John Loudon McAdam, *Remarks on the Present System of Road Making* (London: Longman, 1821), 41.

³⁵Bellavance et al., 8; Linteau, *Maisonnette*, 48.

Buildings

Along with other North American communities where residential development preceded services, the concept of urban planning was virtually nonexistent in Saint-Henri.³⁶ Council did not impose building codes. Benefiting land speculators and contractors, lax construction standards in Saint-Henri resulted in a mix of wooden, brick, and roughcut greystone structures. The vernacular architecture was often owner built. Allied with council, architects Macduff and Lemieux profited from the construction of several public, commercial, and industrial buildings which reflected the community's French-Canadian identity. Frequent fires led the town to forbid the construction of wooden buildings in 1890 and to build a second fire station on Notre-Dame Street in 1897. Saint-Henri outlawed wooden buildings thirty-eight years after Montreal.

Reminiscent of the old tanning village (Figure 1.6), rural-type housing with sloping roofs, dormer windows, and porches were common sights on streets like Saint-Philippe which had developed prior to the 1870s (Figure 2.1). The flat-roofed two-storey wooden buildings left standing on both the north and south sides of the new portion of Notre-Dame Street in 1905 were built before 1890 (Figure 3.2).³⁷ In 1891, half of the 2,538 houses in Saint-Henri were wooden. 1159 (46 per cent) were made of brick or wood cased with brick, and less than one per cent were built of stone.³⁸ Symptomatic of the wealth of Notre-Dame Street relative to other city streets, the elaborate three-storey greystone building on the downtown stretch was one of only twenty stone structures in the entire community (Figure 3.3).

After 1890, two and three-storey flat-roofed brick buildings with stone foundations became more popular on Notre-Dame, and throughout Saint-Henri and Montreal (Figure

³⁶Bellavance et al., 9.

³⁷The building inventory of the Saint-Henri Historical Society does not include records of these wooden structures which dominated the city's southern and western parts in the 1890s. *La Presse*, 10 octobre 1895, 1. Montreal had long regulated against frame construction, but many persisted, and enforcement was weak. Bellavance et al., 9; Gilliland, "Fire and Urban Morphogenesis", 18.

³⁸Government of Canada, *Census of Canada, 1890-91* Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Dawson, 1893), Table II, 88-89.

3.3).³⁹ The 1894 city charter of Saint-Henri stipulated that owners on Notre-Dame Street had to build houses of at least two and a half stories and that houses had to be built of stone, brick, or wood cased with brick.⁴⁰ Unlike row housing which appeared on Saint-Jacques and other Saint-Henri streets, these structures often retained an individual character. Unlike two and three storey brick and stone homes with straight staircases built on Parc Saint-Henri, they gave immediately onto the street.⁴¹

The intimate relation between dwelling and street, and the architectural details display the variety and vitality of this mixed-use street. For instance, the more modest wooden and brick buildings on both parts of Notre-Dame were sparingly adorned with simple cornices and occasional awnings (Figures 2.1 & 3.3). These contrasted sharply with the dominant grey limestone three-storey structure and the false mansard-roofed building on the street's more prosperous eastern stretch (Figure 3.3).⁴² These architectural traits were indicative of the different occupations of people living on Notre-Dame Street. A petite bourgeoisie of merchants, entrepreneurs, and professionals bought up properties on the downtown section in the first stage of development from 1875 to 1890. Largely built up after the 1890 extension, the western stretch was occupied by people with lower incomes.

³⁹Amongst other provisions, building by-laws 56 (Aug. 6, 1890), 84 (June 15, 1894), and 95 (24 mars 1897) stipulated that foundations had to be made of stone, and fire walls had to be built between structures. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23/B2.1, pp. 230-241; P23/B2.2; pp. 66-67. Bellavance et al., 9; Fontaine et al., 9.

⁴⁰The municipality also forbade the building of houses less than two stories anywhere in the city. Province of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1894, cap. 60, 197.

⁴¹Bellevance et al., 21 (photos of Saint-Henri rowhousing); Chambers, 300 (photo of Parc Saint-Henri). Doors fronting on sidewalks served a functional purpose for mixed use commercial and residential buildings.

⁴²François Remillard and Brian Merrett, *Montreal Architecture* (Montreal: Meridian, 1990), 152-153.

Figure 3.3 Notre-Dame Street east of Place Saint-Henri, undated



Source: BNQM, Fonds Félix Barrière, 2931.

Fires were a common occurrence on Notre-Dame and other Saint-Henri streets.⁴³ Along with delays in outlawing the construction of wooden buildings,⁴⁴ inconsistent enforcement of regular chimney cleaning and the requirement of stone foundations for homes, stables, and sheds further aggravated the problem.⁴⁵ Overall, however, the town was less neglectful of fire and police protection than of water and sewage. In the year following town incorporation, Saint-Henri devoted sixty-three percent of its budget to fire and police expenses.⁴⁶ The first Fire and Police Chief Zéphérin Benoît (1877-1890) devoted much of his time to improving fire protection, successfully reducing fire insurance rates to three percent, comparable to those in Montreal.⁴⁷

In 1897, responding to pressures from citizens on the western stretch of Notre-Dame Street and the threats of fire insurance companies to raise premiums, the municipality built another fire station on the new part of Notre-Dame (Figure 3.4).⁴⁸ The reasoning for

⁴³Between 1895 and 1905, *La Presse* contains reports of at least eleven fires on Notre-Dame Street alone: 25 mars 1896, 6; 15 mars 1897, 1; 30 mars 1897, 1.; 28 juin 1897, 1; 12 juillet 1897, 1; 2 novembre 1897, 8; 12 septembre 1898, 1; 17 août 1899, 10; 7 janvier 1901, 8; 22 janvier 1903, 12; 1 mai 1903, 10.

⁴⁴Montreal had passed a similar law in 1852 after a fire which destroyed an estimated one-fifth of the city's housing. Bellavance et al., 9; Collin, 23; Gilliland, "Fire and Urban Morphogenesis", 19.

⁴⁵By-law 8 (1876) stipulated that sweepers were supposed to clean chimneys three times a year, once between May first and November first, and twice between November and May. AVM, FCSH, "General By-law of the Town of St. Henry" (Montréal: Le National, 1876), *Règlements*, P23/B2.3, pp. 46- 47; *La Presse*, 17 août 1895, 12; 27 février 1896, 1; 30 juillet 1896, 1; 14 octobre 1897, 1.

⁴⁶Bellavance et al., 9.

⁴⁷Benoît's achievements earned him a promotion to Chief of the Montreal Fire Brigade in 1890. *La Voix populaire*, 8 juin 1950, 20; Charron et Lewis, 256.

⁴⁸*La Presse*, 8 juillet 1897, 1; Saint-Henri wanted the Underwriters Association to reduce its premiums in sections of the city with mostly wooden buildings. *La Presse*, 10 octobre 1895, 1; Underwriters agreed to reduce premiums in the southern and western parts of the city only if improvements to fire fighting facilities were made by May of the following year. *La Presse*, 4 novembre 1897, 1; Bellavance et al., 9; By-law 101 (13 décembre 1897) stated clearly that a special rate would be imposed on residents living south of the Grand Trunk tracks if a fire station was not built. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23/B2.2, p. 97; P23/B2.5.

the new fire station's location was that this one was being built south of the Grand Trunk Railway tracks whereas the existing one was located to the north. According to one newspaper report, rumour had it that Notre-Dame was being unfairly favoured:

Les contribuables, et cela se comprend aisément, n'aiment en aucune façon les manières étranges d'agir de certains conseillers qui ont la douce manie d'aimer à cultiver la fleur du favoritisme comme un horticulteur un plant rare et destiné à lui rapporter gros profit...⁴⁹

The lots, homes, stores, and businesses of prominent aldermen were situated on Notre-Dame, and although commercial buildings were particularly prone to fire, fires did not occur exclusively on the main street. Cut off from both fire stations by the railway tracks, some residents of Saint-Augustin ward felt particularly slighted.⁵⁰

Unlike many working-class homes which were constructed by individual builders, public buildings were designed by architects.⁵¹ Architects Macduff and Lemieux, who were commissioned to build this fire station as well as several other Saint-Henri buildings, had a "strong artistic presence" in this suburb.⁵² They also designed the Sisters of Saint Ann Ange-Gardien convent (1897-1898), industrial buildings such as Tooke Brothers (1900, 1911-1913) and Lang Biscuit Manufacturing Company (1901), and Louis

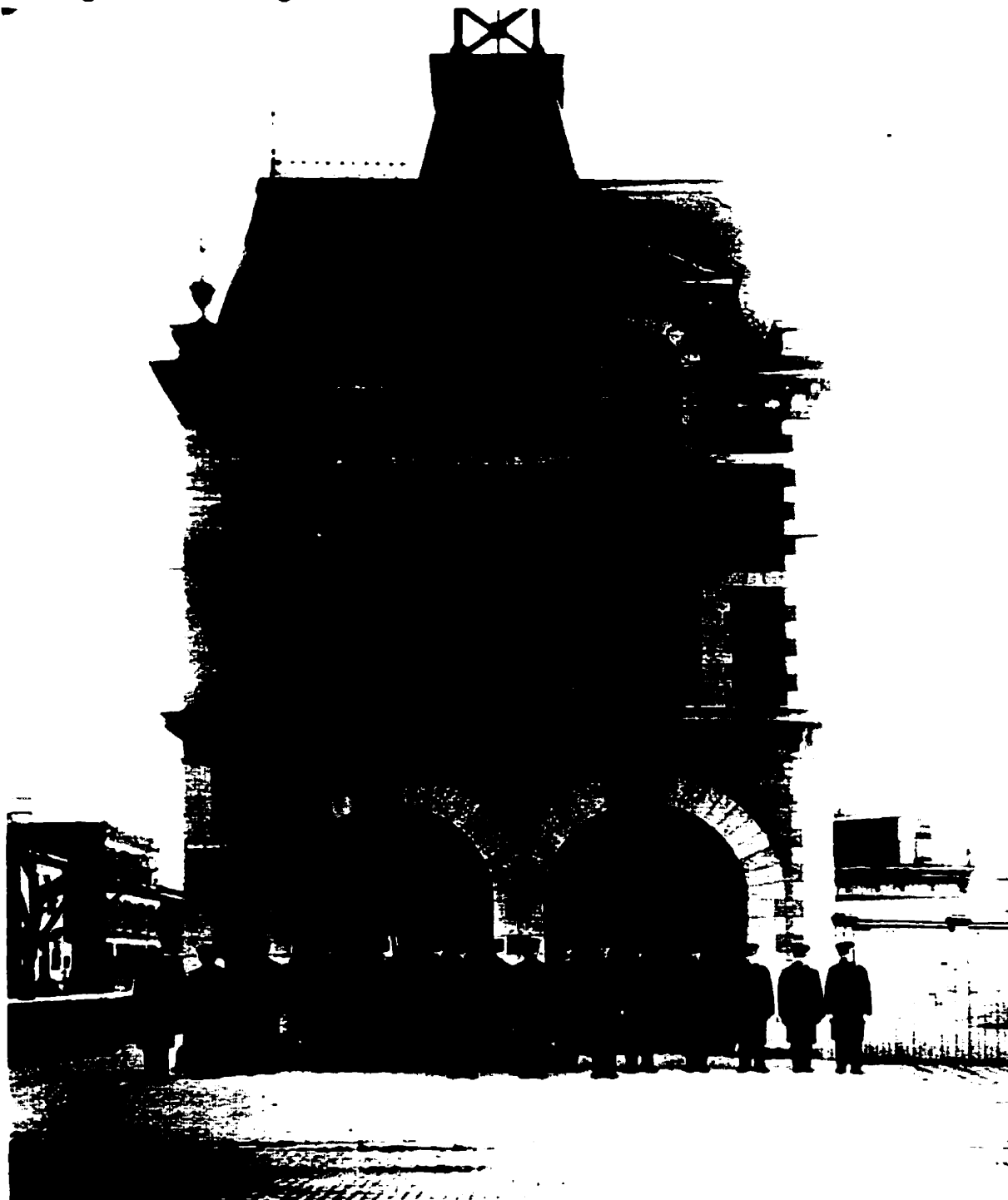
⁴⁹*La Presse*, 19 novembre 1897, 1.

⁵⁰The level crossings of the Grand Trunk at Place Saint-Henri and Sainte-Élizabéth caused many obstructions. In emergency situations like fires, trains caused significant delays.

⁵¹David Hanna, "Montreal: A City Built by Small Builders, 1867-1880," (Ph.D. Thesis [Geography], McGill, 1987), Chapter 5.

⁵²CCA, Fonds Ludger Lemieux, *Quelques Travaux exécutés par Macduff & Lemieux, Architectes* (Montréal: n.p., 1916), chemise numéro 1, lists the fire station at Notre-Dame and De Courcelles (formerly Sainte-Élizabéth) as one of their projects (Figure 2.4). Diana Archibald and Julia Parker, *Guide de l'Exposition Trois Architectes* (Montréal: CCA, 1983).

Figure 3.4 Inauguration of the Notre-Dame Street Fire Station, 1901



Source: Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 9.

Abinovitch's store on Notre-Dame Street (1905).⁵³ As the son-in-law of contractor and Mayor Toussaint Aquin (1895-1896), Joseph-Honoré Macduff was well connected for the design of buildings for the tight business and professional elite in Saint-Henri.⁵⁴ Macduff and Lemieux designed the most elaborate home in the community, that of Mayor Eugène Guay (1897-1905).⁵⁵

Fire Station No. 2 was a mixed-use dwelling (Figure 3.4). Located at the southwest corner of Notre-Dame Street and Sainte-Élizabeth Avenue, it also had a residential component. Unlike many of Notre-Dame's buildings with combined commercial and residential functions, its stables were attached to the building.⁵⁶ Constructed of brick and stone walls, with a iron and gravel roof, this three-storied structure had a basement, adjoining stables for spare horses with an overhead hay loft, and a panel roof. The basement was used as a furnace and fuel room; the ground floor consisted of a fire hall and stables for four horses. The first floor, which was a sleeping room for nine firemen, also had a hay loft. The upper floor housed a fireman's recreation room. As the telephone rang or fire alarm shrilled, the firemen slid down a pole connecting these floors. Hoses were dried in the tower in the first fire station. Similar to Fire and Police Chief J.M. Massy's situation at Central Station No. 1 at the town hall, the

⁵³*Ibid.*; Macduff and Lemieux later designed many other buildings in Saint-Henri, including these churches: Saint-Zotique (1910-11), St. Elizabeth of Portugal (1911-1912) and St. Irénée (1912). After Macduff's death in 1918, Ludger Lemieux also designed the new Saint-Henri police and fire station (1930-31). Paul M. Lemieux later joined his father's firm and together they planned Atwater Market (1932-33). Archibald and Parker, *Exposition*, 5-8; CUM, *Architecture industrielle*, 190-191; *The Canadian Architect and Builder*, XIII, 9 (September 1900): 173; Bellavance et al., 15; Belisle, 4; Marcel Caya et Julia Parker, *Guide du Fonds Ludger et Paul M. Lemieux* (Montréal: CCA, 1983), 33.

⁵⁴Caya et Parker, 19. Four out of ten Saint-Henri mayors were contractors. Bellavance et al., 5 - 6. See the 1890 photo of the Aquin family (Figure 6.3) and SHSH, Fonds Dubuc, Photo 78-PH-1 for the September 10, 1895 wedding shot of Joseph-Honoré Macduff and Philomène Aquin.

⁵⁵CCA, Fonds Ludger Lemieux, *Quelques Travaux*.

⁵⁶A few wood or framed stables detached from Saint-Joseph buildings appear on Hopkins' 1879 fire insurance map. Hopkins, *Atlas of the City*, Plates 78 & 79. "Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association, Report on Municipal Fire Preventive Appliances in the City of St. Henry, P.Q., as on March 13, 1905," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E2, 252, 10602.

municipality housed and paid for the home of Fire and Police Subchief Charles Leparé. The building was an exclusively male space. Leparé lived alone in the rear quarters in 1900.⁵⁷

Walter Van Nus suggests in a recent article that suburban communities in Montreal developed distinct identities and civic patriotism which was reflected in the symbolic expression of their public architecture. The town hall (1922) and Victoria Hall (reconstructed in 1925) in Westmount were built in a Gothic Tudor style associated with the English Reform religious movement, while francophone suburbs like Sainte-Cunégonde and Saint-Louis-du-Mile End built town halls in the Second Empire and Château styles drawn from French influences.⁵⁸ Like the town halls of Sainte-Cunégonde (1904) and Saint-Henri (1883), this Notre-Dame Street fire station (1898), with its mansard roof, projecting tower, and segmented windows would be classified by architectural historians as influenced by a Second Empire style, or more precisely a North American version of the Second Empire style.⁵⁹ Annmarie Adams summarizes this tendency: "Such buildings, like the Legislative Assembly in Quebec City (1877-87) and the

⁵⁷*Ibid.*; *La Presse*, 15 juin 1899, 1; *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1904-05*, 429; AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation foncière*, P23, D1,18, 52; *La Caserne no. 24 avec les Traîneaux, 1900*, SHSH, Fonds Roy, 73-PH-7.

⁵⁸Walter Van Nus, "Une communauté de communautés," 74-75. Joseph-Émile Vanier, the City Engineer of Saint-Henri, Maisonneuve, Sainte-Cunégonde, Saint-Louis, and Côte Saint-Louis, and the Montreal Water and Power Company, designed a number of suburban and Montreal public buildings. These included the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Church (1898-1903), the town halls of Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End (1905) and Côte Saint-Paul (1910), and his *alma mater*, the École Polytechnique (1903-1904) on Saint-Denis. Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, 79, 199-200; Denise Bédard, *Fonds Joseph-Émile Vanier* (Montréal: Service du greffe, Division de la gestion de documents et des archives, Ville de Montréal, 1996), 5; Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Les Édifices publics*, 104-105, 122-123; France Vanlaethem, "Les architectes montréalais face à la commande," in *Montréal Métropole*, 98-99; *La Presse*, 17 février 1898, 3; 8 mai 1898, 2.

⁵⁹Unlike domestic vernacular architecture which was unique to Montreal, public buildings often blended imported and domestic styles. Vallée, 4; Remillard and Merrett, 74-75, 152-153. Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Les Édifices publics*, xi. An unnamed architect reportedly travelled to an American city for practical details regarding the fire station construction. *La Presse*, 19 novembre 1897, 1. Evidenced by the second Saint-Henri town hall (1930-31) and Atwater Market (1932-33) this predilection for towers or steeples on non-ecclesiastical structures becomes a distinctive feature of Lemieux architecture. Archibald and Parker, *Guide de l'Exposition Trois Architectes/Trois Quartiers*.

City Hall of Montreal (1874-78), made a conscious nod to Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann's radical restructuring of Paris and were extremely popular in late nineteenth-century Quebec as an overtly 'French' expression."⁶⁰ Thus the town hall (1883) and the Jacques Cartier fountain built in Parc Saint-Henri in 1893 stand as representative symbols of the civic and cultural identity of Saint-Henri.⁶¹

Water and Sewage

Graphically depicted in the novels of Hugo, Balzac, and Dickens, congestion, filth, impure water, garbage, and sewage were generalized problems in many nineteenth-century North American and European cities.⁶² In *Bataille d'âmes*, a Quebec novel published in serial form in *La Patrie* in 1899-1900, Pamphile Le May similarly depicts harsh conditions on the streets and lanes of Montreal.⁶³ Widespread disease led to increased concerns with sanitation measures which in turn prompted water and sewage installation. As we shall see, the introduction of gas, electricity, trains and trams were adopted because there was money to be made, and they were advantageous to influential entrepreneurs, whereas social overhead capital (like water and sewers) was paid for reluctantly, and only under extreme crisis-driven public agitation. Individual entrepreneurs, contractors and joint stock companies financed water and sewage utilities while property owners contributed to the

⁶⁰Annmarie Adams and Peter Gossage, "Chez Fadette: Girlhood, Family, and Private Space in Late Nineteenth-Century Saint-Hyacinthe," *UHR/RHU* XXVI, 2 (March 1998): 60. One might add that the reinstitution of the French monarchy and the rejection of revolutionary and republican fervour was encouraged by the Catholic hierarchy in Quebec. Trained at the Beaux-Arts School in Paris, a number of Quebec architects adapted this architectural style to Montreal's public buildings and street design. Line Ouellet, "Architecture Beaux-Arts: un Style, une Méthode," *Continuité* (printemps 1986):9-27; Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Les Edifices publics*, xii-xvii.

⁶¹Belisle, 4 (town hall photo), page 6 (photo of the Jacques Cartier monument). Remillard and Merrett, 82.

⁶²Hugo, *Les Misérables*; de Balzac, *Les Petits Bourgeois*; Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, *Bleak House*; *Hard Times*; *A Tale of Two Cities*; *Great Expectations*; Nelson Manfred Blake, *Water for the Cities* (Syracuse, 1956).

⁶³This novel, recently published by a local press, includes a rare depiction of Montreal urban street life. Le May, *Bataille d'âmes*.

improvement of sewers. Municipalities were generally reluctant to spend the necessary capital.⁶⁴

The actions of the local elite with regard to the material quality of the street environment accentuated the need for public health. They reveal the complexity of the politics of sanitation and contemporary beliefs about medicine. Towns need both a clean-water supply system and a dirty-water evacuation system. Contamination of the one by the other advances the spread of diseases, notably typhoid, cholera, and dysentery. Despite the repeated concerns of authorities like Police Chief Benoît, community decisions to delay underground water pipes and waste output installation until 1888 aggravated appalling conditions during a 1885-86 smallpox epidemic.⁶⁵ Vaccination, not quarantine, was effective against smallpox. The argument being made at the time was for greater cleanliness. The public record of Saint-Henri points to the implementation of vaccination by local Sanitation Officer Doctor Lanctôt and a reluctance to provide adequate hygiene. As filtration was not enough, typhoid was not conquered until chlorination. The unfiltered water supplied to Saint-Henri by the Montreal Water and Power Company influenced the spread of a local 1904 typhoid epidemic.

Infectious disease was not clearly linked to water quality until the early twentieth century. Nineteenth-century Toronto experienced typhoid epidemics comparable to those of Montreal. Toronto's sewage was dumped into the same harbour from which it derived its drinking water. Doctor William Canniff, the Medical Health Officer and City Engineer Charles Sproat unsuccessfully pressured council to move the intake pipe. Reform Mayor

⁶⁴D.C.M. Platt, "Financing the Expansion of Cities, 1860-1914," *UHR/RHU*, XI, 3 (February 1983):61-66.

⁶⁵Michael Bliss, *Plague* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1991), 275-277; Copp, 89.

Howland was unsuccessful in a bid to raise municipal sanitation improvement debentures in 1887.⁶⁶ Ottawa was also ravaged by several epidemics in this period.⁶⁷ Of the major Canadian cities, Vancouver's record was exceptional.⁶⁸ Unlike the British towns of Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow which exercised more stringent sanitation measures through "gas-and-water socialism" or municipal control of utilities, private ownership in late nineteenth-century Saint-Henri and Montreal resulted in negligent conditions comparable to those of London, Paris, and New York.⁶⁹

From the start, the entrepreneurial elite dominating the council seemed intent on profiting from rapid urbanization, but allotted insufficient funds for the necessary infrastructure. I will demonstrate that when compared with other Montreal suburbs that installed water and sewer pipes in the late 1870s and early 1880s, municipal financing, the state of medical research and political ideology influenced their decision. With expropriations on Saint-Jacques, Notre-Dame, and other city streets accounting for one-quarter of the two million-dollar loan debt incurred, street improvements declined sharply over this period.⁷⁰

Jean-Pierre Collin's study of municipal by-laws in the industrial suburbs of Saint-Henri and Maisonneuve and the bourgeois communities of Westmount and Outremont

⁶⁶Heather A. MacDougall, "Epidemics and the Environment: The Early Development of Public Health Activity in Toronto, 1832-1872," in *Critical Issues in the History of Canadian Science, Technology and Medicine* (Thornhill: HSTC, 1981), 135-151; MacDougall, "The Genesis of Public Health Reform in Toronto, 1869-1890," *UHR/RHU* X, 3 (February 1982): 1-9.

⁶⁷Sheila Lloyd, "The Ottawa Typhoid Epidemics of 1911 and 1912," *UHR/RHU*, I, 1(June, 1979): 66-89; Chris Warfe, "The Search for Pure Water in Ottawa, 1910-1915," *UHR/RHU*, I, 1(June, 1979): 90-112.

⁶⁸Margaret W. Andrews, "The Best Advertisement a City Can Have: Public Health Services in Vancouver, 1886-1888," *UHR/RHU*, XII, 3(February, 1984): 19-27.

⁶⁹Platt, 61-66; Rutherford, ed., *Saving the Canadian City*, xviii.

⁷⁰Chapter 6 treats the municipal debt problem.

indicates that of the four municipalities, Saint-Henri passed more by-laws on fiscal matters than did the others, and fewer relating to infrastructure and services.⁷¹ Neighbouring Sainte-Cunégonde appears to have shown a greater concern for public works. Not only were all its streets paved by 1896, but it built an aqueduct and provided running water for its citizens shortly after its incorporation in 1876.⁷² This occurred twelve years earlier than in Saint-Henri. It is not clear whether the faster pace was due to leaders motivated by civic pride, a smaller area which was more easily administered, or a more advantageous industrial tax base.

Claude Ouellet suggests that the disparities in conditions between the two towns and economic rivalry between their competing elites were at the heart of the separation into two communities in 1876. Both elites were intent on improving transportation with Montreal, increasing their respective property values and real estate holdings, and providing police and fire protection, but they differed on important public works issues such as the construction of a town hall and water supply. Ouellet provides little information on water quality and suggests that Saint-Henri delayed piping water because people could draw water from public wells and the Glen stream flowing from the mountain. Not blessed with these physical advantages, Sainte-Cunégonde prioritized the building of an aqueduct and hookup to neighbouring water systems.⁷³ In these and other matters, Sainte-Cunégonde deserves a full-length monograph.⁷⁴

⁷¹Collin, "La Cité sur mesure: Spécialisation sociale de l'espace et autonomie municipale dans la banlieue montréalaise, 1875-1920," *UHR/RHU* XIII,1 (June 1984):22-23.

⁷³Built in 1879, Sainte-Cunégonde's aqueduct connected with the Montreal water supply system and was extended to Saint-Henri in 1888. E.Z. Massicotte, *La Cité de Sainte-Cunégonde de Montréal* (Montréal: Houle, 1893), 22-25; Bellavance et al., 9.

⁷³Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", 7-13. Saint-Henri built a town hall in 1883; Sainte-Cunégonde did so only in 1904, the year before annexation. Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Architecture civile I* (Montréal: CUM, 1981), 124-125.

⁷⁴Peggy Roquigny, a UQAM doctoral student, has undertaken this study. Peggy Roquigny, "Sainte-Cunégonde: société et espace dans le contexte de l'industrialisation, 1876-1905," Communication présentée au Congrès annuel de l'IHAF, 22 octobre 1999.

In 1880, the year after Sainte-Cunégonde built its aqueduct, Saint-Henri sanctioned the laying of iron sewer pipes to connect with the Sainte-Cunégonde water system. The contract was accorded to A. Beique and C. Berger, the men who built the Sainte-Cunégonde aqueduct. The price of the work was set at \$80,198. Charles Berger's affluence and success in the contracting business contrast with the poverty of working families who were denied this service for twelve years. A prominent Montreal contractor, he directed restoration work on the Palais de Justice as well as aqueduct construction in Sainte-Cunégonde, Saint-Henri, and Saint-Gabriel. He lavishly entertained guests at his Boucherville manor and left behind a considerable fortune.⁷⁵

In 1885-86, as the smallpox epidemic was spreading across Montreal and its suburbs, open sewers still existed in the town. No underground sewer pipes had been laid.⁷⁶ A widespread problem, the epidemic is indicative of the general negligence and conflictual attitudes toward appropriate measures for ensuring public health. Although smallpox is not transmitted primarily through water supply or sewage contamination, the crisis nonetheless evoked comments and analyses of citywide problems of filth. Water purity only became a more important issue once the contagion theory challenged the miasmatic theory in the mid-nineteenth century. The contagion theory established bacteria as the cause of numerous diseases. Previously, the miasmatic theory of disease associated epidemics with miasma (bad air), the poisonous atmosphere arising from swamps, marshes, urban gutters, decaying vegetable wastes, or streets.⁷⁷ British advances linking cholera and sources of drinking water took place in the 1850s. Medical progress affected

⁷⁵*La Voix populaire*, 20 mai 1953, 34.

⁷⁶Massicotte, 21-24; Bellavance et al., 9; Alphonse M. Baudry, "Croquis de la Ville St. Henry (sic) indiquant les tuyaux de distribution service d'eau, Montréal, le 2 juin 1880," AVM, FCSH, *Plans*, P23,F1; See By-laws 19 and 20 (23 février 1880) AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2.1, pp. 48-63; P23,B2.4.

⁷⁷Goubert, *La Conquête*; MacDougall, "Public Health Reform", 2; George Rosen, *A History of Public Health* (New York, 1958), 277-278, 287-90; William Frazer, *A History of English Public Health, 1834-1939* (London; n.p., 1950), 69; Letty Anderson, "Water-Supply," in *Building Canada*, 197; Copp, 88-89; Keith Oatley, *A Natural History* (Toronto: Viking, 1998).

Quebec legislation only in the early twentieth century.⁷⁸

In a novelistic interpretation of the epidemic, Michael Bliss compiled from accounts in two English Montreal newspapers, *The Montreal Star* and *The Montreal Witness*. These articles described filthy conditions in Saint-Henri, and documented the council's incompetence and resistance to quarantine. In 1875, a night of rioting occurred in Montreal when council considered implementing a compulsory vaccination program.⁷⁹ In 1885 and 1886, the smallpox epidemic accounted for 3,164 deaths in Montreal, out of a total population of 168,000 people.⁸⁰ When rumours of smallpox spread to Saint-Henri in June 1885, rather than taking serious preventive measures, the council announced "a major clean-up, particularly to suppress bad odours."⁸¹ More rioting and further resistance to the placarding of contaminated homes, quarantine, and vaccination occurred in the East End in 1885.⁸² As the situation worsened in Saint-Henri, the police chief's intrusion into domestic space also incited violent reactions:

"The Health Department tried to fight the smallpox case by case, street by street, through the heat of summer... On the weekend of July 11-12 it was confirmed that the smallpox had metastasized right across the city into St-Henri... People tore up placards right before the eyes of the sanitary police. They refused admission to their dwellings. When Chief Benoît of St-Henri entered a house in which a boy had died from smallpox, one of the inmates threatened to shoot him if he attempted to disinfect it."⁸³

These protests led an observer in *The Montreal Star* to comment that "in St-Henri ... the

⁷⁸Anderson, 200.

⁷⁹Bliss, 81.

⁸⁰Michael Farley, Peter Keating et Othmar Keel, "La vaccination à Montréal dans la seconde moitié du 19^e siècle: pratiques, obstacles et résistances," in *Sciences et médecine au Québec* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: IQRC, 1987), 102.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 74.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 167-83; Farley, Keating and Keel, 102-112.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 88-90.

people pay no more heed to a case of smallpox than they do to a case of rheumatism..."⁸⁴ Especially startling is a Saint-Henri resident's graphic description of the epidemic at its peak, and an account of conditions on Notre-Dame Street in *The Montreal Witness* on September 21, 1885:

At the other end of the city in St-Henri the situation was 'ten times worse than they have ever admitted,' a resident wrote to the *Witness*. 'The authorities know very little about the epidemic as literally nothing is done to secure returns ... nothing is done to isolate the patients or to indicate the houses There have been scores — if not hundreds of cases, not a house has been marked.' When the first case broke out on a street nothing would be done. When there were ten or a dozen, someone would appear from the village, hose down the yards, and toss a packet of disinfectant on the doorstep.

St. Henri is in a sanitary state that would not be tolerated anywhere else in the world. On most of the streets there is no drainage, slops of all kinds being thrown out promiscuously. The only attempt at drainage is a narrow gutter covered with a board and most of these are choked up with filth. There is a sewer running from the Tanneries down the whole length of Metcalfe Avenue, open to the light of day and flowing two feet deep with black filth, poisoning the air for a long distance around.

... There are about one hundred English families in this neighbourhood, many of them living in infested localities, and they have not had a solitary case, while all around the French are dying like sheep ... A very large percentage of the people on the street are freshly pockmarked. I have been shaved by a barber and learned the next day that he had several cases of smallpox up stairs! I have been served in a dry goods store by a clerk apparently not long out of bed from small-pox! I have bought goods at a grocer's and had them brought home by a boy with the marks on his face! Only this afternoon I saw two girls carrying home a basket of washed linen, one girl covered with red scars.⁸⁵

Huguette Charron and Françoise Lewis contextualize the newspaper coverage of the crisis. As they point out, the epidemic was a subject of dispute between English and French newspapers. The crisis exacerbated class, ethnic, and religious tensions. The rich blamed the poor, the French blamed the English, and the Protestants blamed the Catholics. According to Charron and Lewis, accounts in the English papers, such as *The Montreal Star* and *The Montreal Witness* from which Bliss draws his principal information, were the most alarmist and blamed the spread of the disease on the town's French Catholic

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 103.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 153-154.

majority.⁸⁶ Saint-Henri was so perceived, especially in the English papers, because of its proximity to Côte Saint-Antoine and Saint-Gabriel.

Montreal had the highest infant mortality rate of North American cities throughout the nineteenth century.⁸⁷ Terry Copp observes that both the spread of smallpox and high infant mortality rates were largely due to poverty, particularly in francophone working-class districts.⁸⁸ In 1921, the infant mortality rate for Outremont and Westmount and the upper income wards in Montreal's west end were less than six per cent, while adjacent west end working-class wards had rates in excess of twenty per cent.⁸⁹ With figures ranging from 220 to 300 infant deaths per thousand, Montreal's infant mortality rates consistently exceeded those of Toronto (150 to 190) from 1897 to 1909.⁹⁰ Michael Bliss' figures indicate that francophone Catholics accounted for ninety-one percent of deaths reported in the 1885-1886 smallpox epidemic.⁹¹ Doctor Lanctôt's sanitation reports note that at 379 per thousand in 1894 and 366 per thousand in 1902, infant mortality rates in Saint-Henri exceeded those of both Montreal and Toronto.⁹² Copp claims that this

⁸⁶Huguette Charron et Françoise Lewis, *Les débuts d'un chef, Zéphirin Benoit* (Montréal: auteurs, 1999), 215-216.

⁸⁷Copp, 88-93; *La Presse*, 10 août 1900, 1; Bradbury, 58-59, 64, 79, 154.

⁸⁸Copp, 88.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 95.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 167.

⁹¹Out of an estimated total of 3157 deaths, 2884 were francophone Catholics. Bliss, 277.

⁹²Infants accounted for 297 (72 per cent) of 415 deaths in 1894. At 28 per thousand for 1893 and 1894, and 23 per thousand in 1895, mortality rates in Saint-Henri also surpassed those of Montreal and Toronto in following decades. "Rapport de la Commission locale d'hygiène de la Cité de Saint-Henri pour 1895, 5 février 1896" AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23 E3.3. Infants accounted for 312 (69 per cent) of 450 deaths in 1902. Doctor Lanctôt reports that only 677 people (24 adults and 653 children) had not been vaccinated for smallpox in 1902. "Rapport des opérations du bureau local d'hygiène de la Cité de Saint-Henri pour l'année finissant le 31 décembre 1902, 27 janvier 1903" AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23 E3.4.

phenomenon was explained by inadequate public health laws in Quebec, the lack of compulsory smallpox vaccination, and the absence of breast-feeding amongst francophone working-class mothers.⁹³ Michael Farley, Peter Keating and Othmar Keel interpret the discussion of smallpox as separate from that of infant mortality. They view vaccination as the major prevention of smallpox and the class, ethnic, and religious divisions as influencing the politics of sanitation in late nineteenth-century Montreal.⁹⁴

The experience with water and sewage problems in Saint-Henri does not end there. Only after local citizens and the provincial government applied considerable pressure did the council sign an agreement in 1887 connecting its water system with that of Sainte-Cunégonde. After Doctor Séverin Lachapelle, a local sanitation official and former Saint-Henri Mayor (1886), warned council that wooden sewers could lead to further epidemics, council passed by-law 48, section 7 in August 1888 requiring all principal sewers to be built of brick and/or stone, and in the next two years stone and brick sewers were laid on most streets.⁹⁵ In the interests of saving money, Saint-Henri had initially opted for wooden sewers, a practice which Montreal had already discarded in favour of iron pipes.⁹⁶ In a 1888 poll, property owners expressed overwhelming support for sewers. People supporting sewers represented \$1,027,398 of taxable property and those against, \$45,340.⁹⁷ Saint-Henri adopted the more efficient and expensive materials. A 1890 plan

⁹³Copp, 88-105.

⁹⁴Farley, Keating and Keel, 87-127.

⁹⁵Bellavance et al., 9; By-law 48 (6 août 1888) AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2, 1, pp.180-189; By-law 49 (15 août 1888) made provisions for borrowing \$110,000 to finance the sewers. In a 1895 lecture presided by H. B. Ames, John Kennedy presented a short history of the Montreal waterworks. *The Montreal Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1895, 2. In 1888, Dr. Séverin Lachapelle of the Montreal Hygiene Board provided documents for Saint-Henri. AVM, FV, *Égouts et aqueduc*, P49,B5,1, 6, 7,8; *Réclamations et litiges*, P49, B8, 31.

⁹⁶Robert Gagnon, "La mise en place d'un réseau intégré d'égouts à Montréal, 1840-1900," Communication présentée au Congrès annuel de l'IHAF, 23 octobre 1999.

⁹⁷AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 59, 3433.

of Saint-Henri's water distribution network indicates that the main sewer line ran the length of Notre-Dame and Saint-Joseph between Saint-Philippe and the Dominion Abattoirs (Figure 3.4).⁹⁸ A cross-section of a sewer on the new section of Notre-Dame in 1893 indicates that waste moved through an oval-shaped aperture measuring two feet by three feet. Brick and stone sewers rested on wooden beams beneath the roadbed (Figure 3.5). Property owners on other streets had to pay a special tax for hook up to the main system.⁹⁹ Council could have eliminated special sewer taxes accounting for \$136,022.52 in revenue¹⁰⁰ by decreasing bonusing expenses of \$584,000, roughly one-third of borrowing from 1883 to 1903.¹⁰¹

Municipal financing alone does not explain the actions of municipal leaders. Although political instability and parsimony may have been contributing causes, these factors do not justify the lack of political will in fulfilling this basic human need. Hired in 1887, Municipal Engineer Joseph-Émile Vanier played a largely consultative role.¹⁰² In Notre-Dame-de-Grâces, the sewer system was financed through a special tax levied on Village Turcot residents only. Council negotiated a contract stipulating that taxpayers above the hill would pay nothing. Judging from this evidence, the refusals of Saint-Henri and N.D.G.-Ouest to provide adequate services were based on the attitude that working-class portions of the town could not pay their way.¹⁰³

⁹⁸Sewers were still being installed on the second part of Notre-Dame between Sainte-Élizabeth and Côte Saint-Paul Road in the spring of 1895. *La Presse*, 2 mars 1895, 10; 5 septembre 1895, 1.

⁹⁹Bellavance et al., 9.

¹⁰⁰Special sewer taxes were administered from 1889 to 1903. "Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri, Relevé des taxes d'égout perçues au 31 décembre 1903," AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23.E3.5.

¹⁰¹"Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri, Tableau des Emprunts de la Cité de Saint-Henri au 31 décembre 1905" AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23.E3.5.

¹⁰²Denise Bédard, Hélène Charbonneau, et Denys Choinard, *Fonds Joseph-Émile Vanier: Répertoire numérique*, Service du greffe, Division de la gestion de documents et des archives, Ville de Montréal, juillet 1996, 12.

¹⁰³Van Nus, "Suburban Government", 93.

NOTE: Water Division was able to get a release of water
without any downstream exposure. with
little delay

NOTRE DAME - GRACE.

TURBOT VILLAGE.

VILLAGE of COTE ST. PAUL.

REFERENCE:

Hydrocarbons -
Hydrocarbons -
Hydrocarbons -

Smith 105a.

COTE ST. ANTOINE

VERDUN.

Figure 3.5 Water Distribution Plan of Saint-Henri, 1890

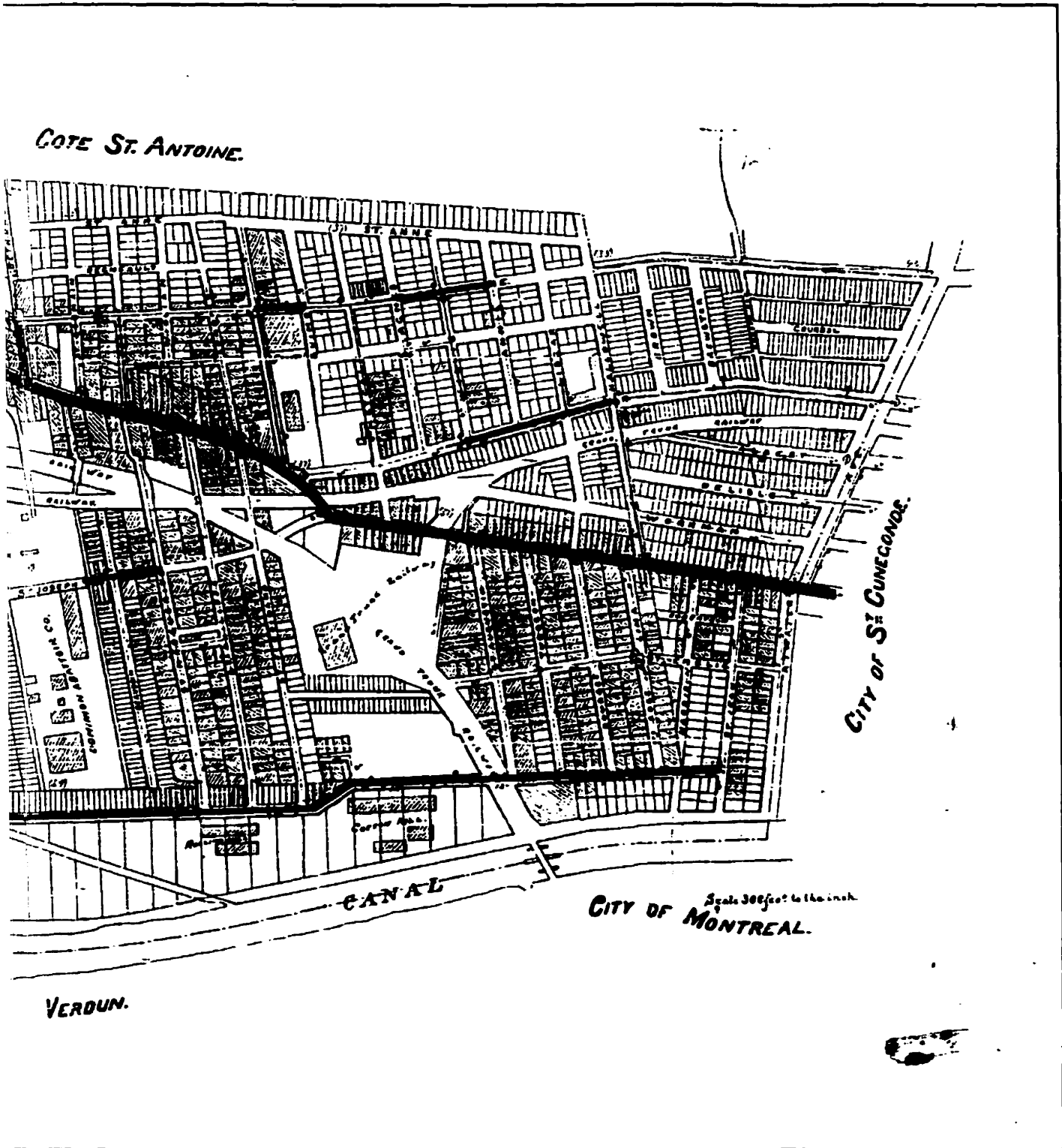
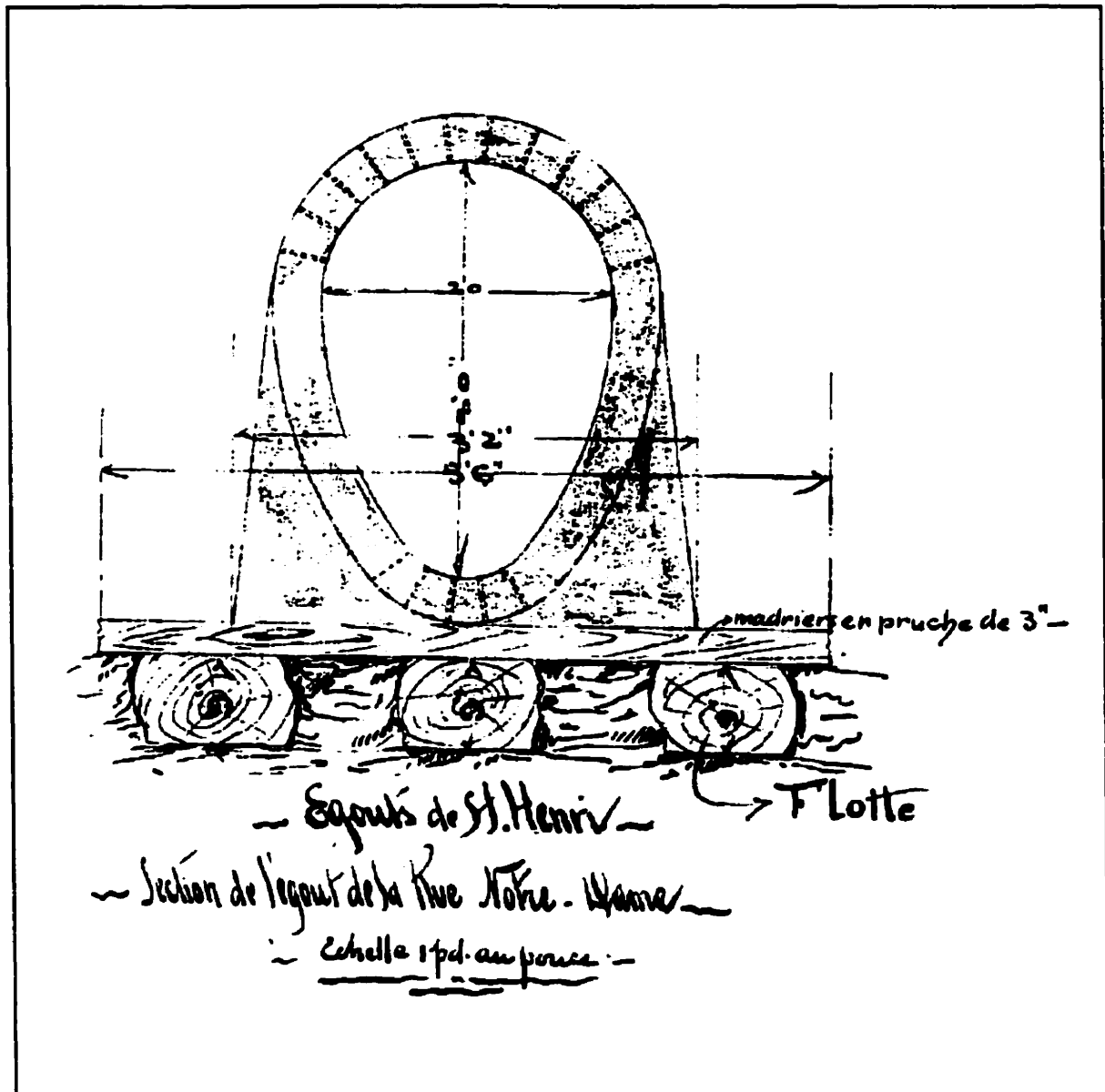


Figure 3.6 Cross-section of Notre-Dame Street Sewer, 1893



Source: AVM, FV, Égouts et aqueduc, P49/B5,6,106.

Resistance to the infrequency of water and sewage taxes in Saint-Henri took two forms: a *protêt* or notarized letter and non-payment of sewage taxes. On July 16, 1888, Père Décarie, the local *curé*, protested to council against Berger and Beique's shutting off the water to the church, presybtery, and hospice.¹⁰⁴ City records for 1880, 1890, and 1903 contain copious lists of people who had not paid their property and water taxes, as well as business fees and other licenses.¹⁰⁵ 1889 documents also include several requests by individual citizens for five-year extensions on their sewage tax.¹⁰⁶

Sainte-Cunégonde purchased an aqueduct from Berger and Beique in 1889. On January 30, 1891, Saint-Henri bought the portions of the plant and material which supplied water to Saint-Henri and N.D.G. Ouest (Village Turcot) for \$200,000. Through bylaw 58 passed on the same date, Saint-Henri in turn sold the aqueduct to the Montreal Island Water and Electric Company for the same amount, with rights of usage extending for twenty-five years. On August 5, 1891, Saint-Henri, along with Montreal and several other suburbs, transferred water services to the Montreal Water and Power Company, the successor of the Montreal Island Water and Electric, for a period of fifty years.¹⁰⁷ The MWPC caused widespread and serious problems for people living in Saint-Henri and Montreal, particularly for the vast majority of renting poor.¹⁰⁸ By 1891, it was recognized that urban water supply was inevitably a 'monopoly'. As observed by University of Toronto political

¹⁰⁴Bédard et al., 12; Brace, 33; AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 59, 3409.

¹⁰⁵AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23, E3,1; P23, E3, 4; *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2,74, 4091, 4092.

¹⁰⁶AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2,69, 3797, 3807- 3810, 3823.

¹⁰⁷"Municipalité de St-Henri, Aqueduc - Règlements" et "Vente de d'Aqueduc par la Ville de Saint-Henri à the Montreal Island Water & Electric Company," AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,4; By-laws 58 (30 janvier 1891) & 62 (5 août 1891), P23,B2,1, pp. 247-263, 277-282. Suburban municipalities all had contracts with the Montreal Water and Power Company. Collin, 29; *The Montreal Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1895, 2; Poitras, 507-508,519 (Table 2 lists MWPC rates per capita for suburban municipalities).

¹⁰⁸Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1986), 100, 104, 142, 144, 147, 153, 159, 204-206, 227, 297-300.

economist A.H. Sinclair,

The monopolistic features of waterworks are so apparent ... The necessity of water supply is so evident; the cost of providing it is so great; the public annoyance from the breaking up of streets in the laying of mains, etc., so considerable; the immediate attention necessary in case of a break so unavoidable for the safety of the surroundings; in short, the whole industry is so intimately connected with civic interests, that very few American cities have attempted to create more than one system -- far fewer than have duplicate systems, in gas, or electric lighting, or street car service.¹⁰⁹

In a series of essays published in 1888, Richard Ely, a John Hopkins political economist, questioned the relevance of monopolies in municipal services. He argued that businesses supplying gas, streetcar, electric lighting, railway, postal service, telegraph, telephone, and other services were *natural monopolies*. Unlike enterprises where greater capital expenditures could result in increased profit, mergers in these areas led to lower outlays on labour and lower consumer prices. He called for *public regulation* of commerce, land, and agriculture, where greater concentration did not necessarily result in lower consumer costs, but for *public control* of these natural monopolies.¹¹⁰ We shall see that in 1904-05 the class implications were recognized and articulated, with little effect.

Drawing from a source of supply at the southwestern limit of the City of Montreal, with the main pumping station situated on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River in line with the west side of Charlevoix Street in Pointe Saint-Charles, the Montreal Water and Power Company supplied low level water pumping to Saint-Henri, Sainte-Cunégonde, Côte Saint-Paul, Verdun and Westmount. The waste-evacuation system of Westmount drained into that of Saint-Henri which in turn flowed into that of Sainte-Cunégonde and that of Montreal. After 1896, Côte Saint-Paul sewage drained into the Lachine Canal. In

¹⁰⁹A.H. Sinclair, "Municipal Monopolies and Their Management (1891)," in *Saving the Canadian City*, 20.

¹¹⁰Richard T. Ely, *Problems of To-day* (New York: Cromwell, 1888; third edition, 1890), 107-139. An economic literature elaborates on the development of natural monopolies and the regulation of public utilities, notably Armstrong and Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment*; Alfred E. Kahn, *The Economics of Regulation*, 2 vols. (New York: John Wiley, 1970); Richard Schmalensee, *The Control of Natural Monopolies* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1982); and Thomas P. Hughes, *Networks of Power* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins, 1982).

1901, the Verdun sewage system was under construction.¹¹¹

Most of the interventions of council in Saint-Henri and Montreal were with regard to water billing and taxation. The lack of water-closets, building residents sharing single taps to save on costs, and typhoid and other epidemics relating to the contaminated water supply were serious problems, with comparable repercussions in Montreal and its suburbs.¹¹² Saint-Henri tenants paid twice for these services: directly to the company in the form of water bills and indirectly to the town through an onerous and contentious municipal water tax.¹¹³ A 1905 editorial claimed that *La Presse* had been calling for a public debate on the water tax problem for over twenty years.¹¹⁴ Despite suggested alternatives, the City of Montreal, where there was no private company, and the suburbs made no changes to water taxation over this period.¹¹⁵

In comparable situations analyzed by Bettina Bradbury in Montreal's Saint-Ann and Saint-Jacques wards, working families could barely scratch together the necessary cash for the city water tax, let alone additional costs.¹¹⁶ During periods of prolonged economic

¹¹¹AVM, FV, *Expert-Conseil, Soeurs de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame*, P49/F,5, 156; Goad, *Atlas of the City of Montreal and Vicinity*, Vol. II, St. Gabriel Ward, Plate 57; "Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association, General Report on the Waterworks System of the Montreal Water and Power Company, as on April 2nd, 1904," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2, 252, 10602.

¹¹²*La Presse*, 24 mai 1899, 2; Copp, Chapter 6; Ames, *The City Below the Hill*; Daniel J. Russell, "H.B. Ames as Municipal Reformer," (M.A. Thesis [History], McGill, 1971), 2-8, 37-38, 45-48.

¹¹³Bellavance et al., 8; Linteau, *Maison neuve*, 48. Recovery of water rates due to the MWPC became the responsibility of Saint-Henri's Recorder's Court (1895-1905). Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1898, 60 Vict. (Quebec: 1898), cap. 55, 90.

¹¹⁴*La Presse*, 9 septembre 1905, 14. For a summary of the newspaper's position to that date, see *La Presse*, 16 août 1895, 2.

¹¹⁵*La Presse*, 16 janvier 1901, 10; 22 février 1901, 10; 23 avril 1901, 10.

¹¹⁶Bradbury, 97.

crisis, Montreal women protested increases in water rates and water being turned off.¹¹⁷ From 1895 to 1899, the Saint-Henri council intervened on the part of the poor, sometimes paying their water bills and sometimes not. In March 1895, for instance, the Saint-Henri town council paid half of the unpaid bills for its poor, but obliged the MWPC to pay the balance.¹¹⁸ In February 1897 the MWPC hired an agent to recover over four thousand of their outstanding accounts in Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde.¹¹⁹ *La Presse* reports that the town councils were slated to intervene on the part of the poor:

Cette action de la part de la compagnie a crée un malaise parmi les populations de St Henri et de Ste Cunégonde. Les personnes qui vont se trouver ainsi exposées à être poursuivies sont en majorité de pauvres familles qui n'ont pas plus les moyens de payer aujourd'hui leur eau qu'il y a trois ans...

Des citoyens influents vont s'adresser aux conseils municipaux des deux villes pour les prier d'intervenir et d'empêcher que les pauvres gens soient inquiétés. La Montreal Water and Power Company demande assez souvent des faveurs aux municipalités avec qui elle fait affaire qu'elle soit plus tolérante envers les pauvres.¹²⁰

A month later a city council resolution to stop covering water costs for poor families provoked this strong reaction in March 1897:

Le conseil municipal de St-Henri semble bien décidé à ne plus payer l'eau pour aucun des citoyens pauvres. Il est bon d'être économe, mais il n'est pas permis de se montrer inhumain.

Lorsqu'une corporation n'est pas capable de comprendre qu'un service aussi indispensable que l'eau ne doit pas être livré entre les mains d'un monopole, elle devrait avoir au moins la charité d'assurer l'eau à ses pauvres...

Encore hier, Son Honneur le maire a été obligé de faire une collecte parmi les employés de la corporation pour payer l'eau d'un pauvre vieillard qui n'a pas même de quoi manger.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 157. Water was turned off periodically in Saint-Henri and Montreal in this period. The extensive newspaper coverage of a 1895 murder case on Notre-Dame Street discloses that the water was shut off in the entire town on June 13, 1895, the day of Mélina Massé's death. *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, September 16, 1895, 13.

¹¹⁸*La Presse*, 2 mars 1895, 10.

¹¹⁹Out of a combined population ranging from 22,704 to 32,104 for both communities from 1891 to 1901, this is quite extreme.

¹²⁰*La Presse*, 11 février 1897, 1.

Cela est très joli, mais on se demande pourquoi les employés de la corporation et M. le maire seraient-ils plus obligés de payer l'eau des pauvres de la municipalité que la municipalité même.¹²¹

Condemning both the city of Saint-Henri and the monopoly for its treatment of the water question, *La Presse* reported in April of the same year that "les contribuables sont fatigués de cette compagnie".¹²² Frustrations with the water billing and taxation issue reached a peak from 1898 to 1900. After a long and sometimes violent discussion on this question in 1898, a Saint-Henri councillor proposed obliging those who wanted exemptions from the water tax to get a certificate from the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society, attesting to their poverty.¹²³

Like other low-lying areas on the Island of Montreal, notably Pointe Saint-Charles and Griffintown, Saint-Henri was subject to floods, particularly in the southwestern portions of the city near Rivière Saint-Pierre.¹²⁴ On March 2, 1882, water covered most of Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde. As water levels rose, flooding house and store basements, people could only leave their homes and negotiate city streets in boats and rafts. Building foundations rotted and wooden buildings mildewed. Horses passed the night standing in water two to three feet deep. Notre-Dame was less severely affected than streets like Bethune, Rose de Lima, Sainte-Marguerite, and Dagenais, which were completely covered. Comparable conditions in Sainte-Cunégonde prompted an intense debate at a general taxpayers' meeting on April 3, 1882, with an influential faction of property owners threatening to call an election if draining facilities were not improved.¹²⁵

¹²¹*Ibid.*, 12 mars 1897, 1.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 3 avril 1897, 1.

¹²³The vote was divided and the proposal did not pass. *La Presse*, 10 mars 1898, 1.

¹²⁴Christopher G. Boone, "Private Initiatives to Make Flood Control Public: The St. Gabriel Levee and Railway Company in Montreal, 1886-1890," *Historical Geography* 25 (1997):100-112; Boone, "Language Politics and Flood Control in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Environmental History* 1, 3 (July 1996):70-85. "Ces Inondations," *La Presse*, 30 juillet 1895, 6.

¹²⁵*La Voix populaire*, 25 avril 1951, 24, 25 (1882 flood in Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde).

As City Engineer, Joseph-Émile Vanier was asked to present evidence in several legal cases. He was questioned on the ability of the sewers to withstand thirty inches of torrential rains which fell in the space of a few hours in February 1900. Heavy rains on September 29, 1901 ruined the basements of a number of properties, among them two, Eugène Desjardins' store at the corner of Notre-Dame and Sainte-Marguerite (Figure 2.16 & 2.17), and Philippe Blais' property at 3893 Notre-Dame. In the cases of Lefevre, Rombach, Duquette, and Leduc versus the City in September 1904, Vanier was asked to determine whether water overflow came from Westmount.¹²⁶

Industrial pollution worsened the situation. Both Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde suffered from industrial contamination of the water supply. Waste from Saint-Henri tanneries and Notre-Dame Street abattoirs seeped into the rivière Saint-Pierre which fed the Sainte-Cunégonde aqueduct and Saint-Gabriel.¹²⁷ The situation deteriorated to such an extent that the Congrégation de Notre-Dame Sisters' water was cut off by the MWPC, hampering the operation of their farm and school in Saint-Gabriel in 1901. This situation prompted the order to take legal action against the City of Saint-Henri, along with Montreal, Verdun, Lachine, Sainte-Cunégonde, Westmount, and Côte Saint-Paul, for failing to take effective measures against the industries polluting the water supply.¹²⁸

Relations between the municipality of Saint-Henri and the MWPC deteriorated after the outbreak of a 1904 typhoid epidemic. Billing problems, floods, and the opening of street sewers without municipal approval paled by comparison with the risks of poor water quality. The outbreak was not as widespread as the 1885-86 smallpox epidemic. In fact, the local nature of typhoid outbreaks made it possible to discern and test for probable

¹²⁶AVM, FV, *Réclamations et litiges*, P49,B8; AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23, C1,2, 397.

¹²⁷AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23, E3, 4; *La Presse*, 29 août 1895, 6.

¹²⁸The litigation files includes requests for two reports done by Vanier in 1895 and 1902. AVM, FV, *Expert-Conseil*, Soeurs de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame vs. Cité de St-Henri, P49/F,5. AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23, C1,2, 360. The nuns were also resistant to giving up their land for the St. Gabriel levee project, and forced an injunction in 1888, threatening to delay the levee's completion. Boone, "Private Initiatives", 109; *La Presse*, 12 décembre 1895, 1.

sources. Saint-Henri had a death count of three hundred by January 1904. Sainte-Cunégonde reported one hundred deaths, and Westmount had 60.¹²⁹ John Gethings, a foreman at Merchants Cotton Mills on Sainte-Ambroise Street, made a personal plea to council. A father of six children with the youngest a three month-old infant, he reported that just that morning he had taken his typhoid-stricken wife to the hospital where the doctor had declared that her illness was due to the water. In the department where he worked at Merchants, almost seventy workers were absent for the same reason.¹³⁰ Complaints to the Saint-Henri Hygiene Committee were so numerous that councillors refused to serve on it.¹³¹ Between 1900 and 1910, during a series of small epidemics, the incidence of typhoid fever reported in Montreal was between 18 and 54 cases per 100,000 people. Linking the typhoid epidemics to archaic methods of water distribution and polluted waters from the Ottawa River, a 1909 issue of the *Canadian Engineer* declared Montreal a 'hygienic disgrace to civilization'.¹³² It was already known that after filtration plants were built in certain American cities, the number of cases reported dropped drastically.¹³³ In effect, typhoid was not conquered until chlorination.

Finally, in the year prior to annexation, Saint-Henri took action against the MWPC. After the provincial board of health in a February 1904 report drew definitive links between the unfiltered water supplied to the suburbs and the typhoid epidemic, the

¹²⁹The absence of 1904 death figures does not permit estimates of deaths per thousand. *La Presse*, 9 janvier 1904, 16; 5 septembre 1895, 1; 16 juillet 1896, 8; 30 juillet 1896, 1; 6 août 1897, 8; 13 décembre 1900, 12; 20 décembre 1900, 12. Saint-Jean, Québec also had a typhus-infected water supply in this period. Kathleen Lord, "Louis Molleur," *DCB*, Vol. XII, 713.

¹³⁰*La Presse*, 14 janvier 1904, 5.

¹³¹Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de Montréal*, Tome 3 (Montréal: Fides, 1972), 365.

¹³²Louise Pothier, "Réseaux d'eau potable et d'eaux usées: L'hygiène publique dans la société montréalaise, 1642-1910," in *L'eau, l'hygiène publique et les infrastructures* (Montréal: Groupe PGV, 1996), 43.

¹³³Dany Fougères, "Le public et le privé dans la gestion de l'eau potable à Montréal depuis le XIX^e siècle," in *L'eau, l'hygiène publique et les infrastructures*, 56.

Mayor of Saint-Henri, Eugène Guay, called a rare meeting of suburban officials on April 15, 1904.¹³⁴ Representatives from Saint-Henri, Sainte-Cunégonde, Maisonneuve, Côte Saint-Paul, De Lorimier, and Outremont attended, and they fixed a meeting with the company for April 26. Westmount and Saint-Louis joined their colleagues. When George E. Drummond, the company President, informed them that the cost of a filtration system would have to be borne by the municipalities, the suburban delegates were incensed, pointing out that their contracts obliged the company to provide them with drinkable water. Drummond asked for a few weeks to prepare plans and an estimate of costs. The company finally submitted its written conditions a few weeks later. Choosing to "divide and conquer", the company went about revising its contracts with individual suburbs, extending the contracts of Westmount, Sainte-Cunégonde, and Saint-Louis du Mile-End to fifty years like that of Saint-Henri. Costs were revised in a few cases, and in Maisonneuve, the company asked for a tax exemption.¹³⁵ In November of 1904, owing to the direct links between poor water supply and the typhoid epidemic and technicalities related to the 1892 agreement, Saint-Henri sued the company for damages totalling \$75,000.¹³⁶

Saint-Henri's motives and final actions lend to speculation. Suing the MWPC may have been a last desperate measure to accumulate funds as the city's debt reached unmanageable proportions and the annexation committee put greater pressure on Saint-Henri to join Montreal. By this point, the situation was so drastic that Père Décarie, the local *curé*, intervened to the local council, pressuring for annexation.¹³⁷

¹³⁴"Rapport de l'examen bactériologique de certaines eaux de St-Henri et d'ailleurs par J. George Adams, M.A., M.D., Professeur de Pathologie à l'Université McGill, Bactériologiste consultant du Bureau Provincial d'Hygiène de la Province de Québec et Jules A. Chopin, M.D., Chimiste assistant et Bactériologiste du Bureau Provincial d'Hygiène de la Province de Québec au Bureau Provincial d'Hygiène de la Province de Québec, 2 février 1904," AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3.5.

¹³⁵Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, 142-144.

¹³⁶*La Presse*, 9 novembre 1904, 12.

¹³⁷Bellavance et al., 11; Rumilly, 365.

Differing political and class ideologies influenced the decision to sue the MWPC and annex with Montreal. By the early twentieth century, some people were articulating the class interpretation which challenged the economic liberalism of petit bourgeois municipal leaders. Faced with the intransigence of monopolies controlling essential utilities such as the MWPC, several politicians and journalists turned to progressive liberalism. A prevalent ideology in the Laurier era, it is perceived as an attempt to rescue liberalism from the threat of socialism.¹³⁸ On the local level, liberalism encountered opposition from workers' parties and journalists advocating municipal socialism and publically controlled utilities. In Saint-Henri, Mayor Eugène Guay (1897-1905) personified the progressive liberal ideology (Figure 5.1). A prosperous "self-made" man, he was committed to the growth and success of Saint-Henri. Having apprenticed in the United States, he established a prosperous shoemaking business on Saint-Joseph Street in the 1880s while pursuing night school.¹³⁹ As alderman and mayor, he supported bonusing to solvent industries which employed Saint-Henri workers.¹⁴⁰ The establishment of night classes in Saint-Henri under his administration, and his hosting of meetings inaugurating a Saint-Henri chapter of the Independent Workers' Party, attest to his commitment to the betterment of the working classes.¹⁴¹ As the municipal reform movement gained momentum and *La Ligue des Citoyens* contested his candidacy in every election, he increasingly supported municipal reforms and annexation.¹⁴² His initiative in organizing a meeting of the suburbs to

¹³⁸For a discussion of Liberal Progressivism in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Quebec, see Patrice Dutil, *Devil's Advocate* (Montreal & Toronto: Davies, 1994).

¹³⁹Bellavance et al., 7.

¹⁴⁰*La Presse*, 16 avril 1896, 1; 10 avril 1898, 12; 23 avril 1896, 1; 25 avril 1899, 10; 30 août 1900, 7; 21 septembre 1900, 10.

¹⁴¹Annick Germain, *Les mouvements de réforme urbaine à Montréal au tournant du siècle* (Montréal: Département de sociologie, Université de Montréal, 1984), Chapter 7; Bellavance et al., 7; *La Presse*, 12 avril 1899, 1; 13 avril 1899, 1; 14 avril 1899, 1; 17 avril 1899, 8; 18 avril 1899, 10; 25 janvier 1900, 12; 12 mai 1900, 11.

¹⁴²*La Voix populaire*, 21 mai 1952, 34; *La Presse*, 14 août 1900, 1; Bellavance et al., 7; Rumilly, 255, 364-465.

pressure the MWPC is indicative of this tendency. His alliance with reformer and Montreal Mayor Hormisdas Laporte (1904-1906), who worked alongside H.B. Ames and supported the municipalization of essential services, cemented his role as a philanthropic francophone businessman.¹⁴³

Progressive Liberals and municipal reformers focused on modifying the existing political system to better living conditions. Increasingly disaffected with the major political parties, workers' parties and journalists advocated municipal socialist policies condemning monopolies. After 1884, Jules Helbronner, who wrote weekly articles in *La Presse* under the pseudonym of Jean-Baptiste Gagnepetit and served on the 1886-1889 Canadian Royal Commission on Labour, denounced social injustices at the municipal level.¹⁴⁴ Condemning utilities that gouged the working-class public, Colin McKay called for publicly owned corporations in the *Montreal Herald* in 1905.¹⁴⁵ *La Patrie* and *La Presse* ran regular columns entitled "Chez les ouvriers", "Le monde ouvrier", and "Nouvelles Ouvrières" in the late 1890s and took editorial positions condemning fare hikes and special taxes for municipal tram and other services.¹⁴⁶ A 1901 front-page article in *La Presse* likened the recent financial merger of the Montreal Light, Heat and Power Company to those of U. S. "robber baron" J. Pierpont Morgan and others in Europe. The *Parti ouvrier indépendant* founded by J.-A. Rodier, *La Presse* journalist and former printer, organized chapters in Saint-Henri, as well as Saint-Louis, Sainte-Marie, and Saint-

¹⁴³*La Presse*, 12 juillet 1992, A-4; Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 58, 172, 177, 254, 256-58, 263, 266, 271, 274.

¹⁴⁴Fernand Harvey, "Une enquête ouvrière au XIXe siècle: la commission du travail, 1886-1889," *RHAF* 30, 1 (juin 1976), 43; Jean de Bonville, *Jean-Baptiste Gagnepetit* (Montréal: L'Aurore, 1975).

¹⁴⁵McKay, ed., *For a Working-Class Culture in Canada* (St. John's, Newfoundland: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1996), 22.

¹⁴⁶*La Presse*, 8 mai 1899, 8; 27 janvier 1900, 10; 3 février 1900, 10; 1 septembre 1900, 10; 29 septembre 1900, 10; 27 octobre 1900, 10; 18 novembre 1905, 14. Godfroy Langlois, editor of *La Patrie* since 1897 and a committed Progressive Liberal, viewed the founding of the Labour Party in Montreal with some trepidation. J.A. Rodier and another *La Presse* journalist had recently joined the Labour Party. Fearing a loss of Liberal support to Labour, Langlois urged Laurier to address the concerns of the working-classes. Dutil, 132-133; André Beaulieu et Hamelin, *Les Journaux du Québec de 1764 à 1964* (Québec: Université Laval, 1965), 135-136, 142-143.

Jacques. The workers' party pressed for municipalization of local services, nationalization of businesses, and the abolition of property qualifications for municipal voting and council representation.¹⁴⁷ From 1890 to 1905, as monopolies took over local utilities, complaints increased. Reflecting public discontent, trusts and monopolies dominating water, tram, electric and gas services met the particular ire of Rodier's *Parti ouvrier*. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the concentration of wealth and financial and business mergers had acute effects on workers in several North American cities.

Conclusion

Public utilities and services posed a puzzling problem for managers and politicians of the late nineteenth-century city.¹⁴⁸ How could the interests of private capital and the economic propensity toward the development of natural monopolies be reconciled with the social needs of the majority population? As Delos F. Wilcox has observed in a study of municipal franchises and regulation of public utilities in the early twentieth century, "The public welfare is pitted against profit-hunger in a perennial, never-settled contest."¹⁴⁹ The absence of building regulation until city incorporation in 1894 and the reluctance shown by Saint-Henri leaders to install sewers in 1888 is symptomatic of an emerging local state whose social governance was being formed simultaneously between public and private powers and resources in the context of specific class relations.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷*La Presse*, 26 octobre 1898, 5; 12 avril 1899, 1; 13 avril 1899, 1; 8 avril 1899, 20; 20 avril 1899, 16; 18 avril 1899, 10; 17 avril 1899, 8; 14 avril 1899, 1; 16 avril 1899, 9; 2 mai 1899, 1; 25 janvier 1900, 12; 12 mai 1900, 11; Jacques Rouillard, "L'action politique ouvrière au début du 20^{ième} siècle," *Le mouvement ouvrier au Québec* (Montréal: Boréal, 1980), 186-206.

¹⁴⁸Thomas G. Gies, "The Need for New Concepts in Public Utility Regulation," in *Utility Regulation: New Directions in Theory and Policy*, eds. William G. Sheperd and Thomas G. Gies (New York: Random House, 1966), 105.

¹⁴⁹Delos F. Wilcox, *Municipal Franchises* (New York: Engineering News Publishing Co., 1911), Volume 2, 727.

¹⁵⁰Mariana Valverde, "Six Dimensions of Social Governance: Research Questions beyond the Dichotomy of *Public and Private*," *Cahiers d'histoire* (XVII,1-2, 1997), 45.

Chapter 4

The Modernizing of Streets, 1875-1905

"Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job,
here is a tall bold slugger...
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a
savage pitted against the wilderness.

Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,..."¹

The analysis of water and drainage issues has demonstrated that the public space of the nineteenth-century street in an industrial suburb was subordinated to the interests of private capital.² A natural monopoly emerged as part of the development of the 'private city', with profits largely in the hands of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal. The question is how were the conflicting concerns of the public citizenry and the private city managed, and more specifically, to what extent the city government, governed by a local elite, attempted to regulate them. I have concluded that 'the public interest' was neglected and treat the other utilities of gas and electricity, paving, sidewalks, and transportation as further clarification of class interests and additional evidence of the trend I have discerned toward greater regulation.

The changing name, function and form of Notre-Dame Street from 1875 to 1905 reflect the transition in the city-building process. By the late 1890s and early 1900s, Notre-Dame Street was entrenched as the main business street. Several physical transformations occurred as a result. Municipal leaders prioritized work on this street over that of other city streets. Leveling began on Saint-Joseph Street in 1887, and extensive work took place

¹Carl Sandburg, "Chicago," in *Poetry of Our Time*, ed. Louis Dudek (Toronto: Macmillan, 1966), 54.

²Davies and Herman, eds., *Social Space*, 75.

throughout the 1890s (Appendix B).³ Transformations comprised further leveling, widening, lengthening, paving, macadamizing, building sidewalks, installing water and sewage pipes, manholes, fire hydrants, tramway rails, gas mains, and electric lighting poles.⁴ I shall look in turn at three types of activities which in the 1890s radically changed the visual environment of the street, affected everyday 'navigation' in street-space, and kept up a constant irritable conflict between public and private enterprise.

Gas and Electricity

Paul Rutherford observes a trend toward greater regulation of utilities in early twentieth-century Canadian cities. The confrontation of Saint-Henri Mayor Eugène Guay with the water company in 1904 is indicative of this tendency. In 1906, the provincial government of Ontario organized both the Hydro-Electric Power Commission and the Railway and Municipal Board, and in 1907 Manitoba and Alberta began their own telephone systems.⁵ The trend is not as obvious in Quebec, and certainly not in Saint-Henri. In 1928, after more than three decades of strained relations between the monopoly and the municipalities it served, the MWPC was expropriated by the City of Montreal.⁶ In Quebec, private power companies owned and operated local utilities until the "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960s.⁷

Access to the new technologies was dependent on income, but innovations penetrated the territory of Saint-Henri rapidly, and in comparison with water and sewers,

³The 1890s was a particularly active decade for physical changes on city streets. Gilliland, "Annihilating Time and Space: Redimensioning the Streets of Montreal, 1842-1914," CHA Conference, June 6, 1999.

⁴AVM, FV, *Registre des travaux*, P49/B1,2.

⁵*Saving the Canadian City*, 4.

⁶Fougères, "Le public et le privé," 56-69; Poitras, 521.

⁷H.V. Nelles, *The Politics of Development, Forest, Mines, and Hydro-electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1974); William F. Ryan, *The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec, 1896-1914* (Québec: Université Laval, 1966).

monopolistic companies which dominated electricity, gas, and transportation services did not engender such tragic consequences. Oil lamps or lanterns, supported by wooden or iron posts or brackets affixed to houses or buildings since 1875, were replaced by electrical lighting and arc lamps on Saint-Henri's major streets in the 1890s.⁸ Electrical companies were allotted shorter contracts and less exclusive rights than the water company. In 1891, for example, Saint-Henri gave a ten-year contract to *Syndicat Drummond and Clarkson*.⁹ The right to provide electricity was shared with Robert Bickerdike, a Notre-Dame Street pork butcher who rose to become manager of Dominion Abattoirs and Union Stock Yards on the western portion of Notre-Dame Street (Figure 2.7). Bickerdike served as the first anglophone alderman, and became the chief promoter of Standard Light and Power Company, as well as running local trams.¹⁰ In 1891, Bickerdike also obtained the exclusive privilege of laying the gas pipes in the community for both domestic use and street lighting, for a period of thirty years.¹¹ In 1892, Citizens Light and Power acquired a former Saint-Henri firm, *La Compagnie d'éclairage et de pouvoir moteur Saint-Henri*, and obtained contracts for lighting several suburbs, including Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde, and in 1895 Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End.¹²

⁸An oil refinery was located near the Grand Trunk Railway tracks on the second portion of Notre-Dame. Goad, *Atlas of the City of Montreal and Vicinity*, Vol. II, Plate 61. Trépanier, *La Voix populaire*, 8 juin 1950, 20; By-law 4 (1875), AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,3. "Le Reservoir de Gaz de la Montreal Light, Heat and Power, 1917" SHSH, Fonds Huard, 35-PH-1.

⁹Bellavance et al., 9.; Règlement 63 (16 oct. 1891), AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2, 1, pp. 283-290.

¹⁰*Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1876-77*, 760; *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1892-93*, 668; AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1881*, P23,D1,2; *Rôle d'évaluation de 1888-1889*, P23/D1,3; Règlements 66 (15 déc. 1891) & 67 (23 déc. 1891), AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2, 1, pp. 309-329. Henry James Morgan, *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time* (Toronto: Briggs, 1913), 98; Claude Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", A.3.

¹¹An act incorporating the Saint-Henri Gas Company was passed in the same year as the town's incorporation. AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 249, 10521. Règlement 65 (15 déc. 1891), AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2, 1, pp. 293-308.

¹²Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 137.

Private control led to extensive changes and continual movement on the downtown stretch of Notre-Dame Street in 1894. As contractors paved the street and built sidewalks, disrupting the Montreal Gas Company and Montreal Water and Power Company mains, the Montreal Street Railway Company was also laying double tram rails and installing wires.¹³ In addition, Citizens was erecting lighting poles on this part of Notre-Dame Street, and Great Western Telegraph Company poles had to be moved.¹⁴ By 1898, as general disenchantment with such monopolies was growing, Saint-Henri expressed dissatisfaction with the service provided by Citizens' Lighting, cancelled its contract, and allowed Royal Electric to enter the city.¹⁵ At this time, one hundred electric lamps lined Notre-Dame, Saint-Jacques, and other major arteries (Figures 2.1 & 3.3).¹⁶ By 1901, Saint-Henri was being serviced by Lachine Hydraulic, but complained of lower rates of \$60 a lamp in Montreal as opposed to costs of \$100 in Saint-Henri.¹⁷ As the Ross-Forget conglomerate, the Montreal, Light, Heat and Power Company amalgamated all the lighting and gas companies which had serviced Saint-Henri over the years (Montreal Gas, Royal Electric, Lachine Rapids Hydraulic & Electric, Standard Light & Power, and Citizens' Light & Power), the battle shifted to the Montreal municipal arena.¹⁸ By the time of annexation in 1905, Notre-Dame Street had electric lights on almost every street corner (Figure 2.1 &

¹³Taking over rival companies, Montreal Gas established itself as a monopoly in this period. Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 134-135, 273-274.

¹⁴AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49, B6,1.

¹⁵*La Presse*, 8 septembre 1898, 1; Claude Bellavance et Linteau, "La diffusion de l'électricité à Montréal au début du XX^e siècle," in *Barcelona-Montréal*, 241.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 11 août 1898, 7; "Rapport concernant les lumières électriques dans la Cité de St-Henri," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2,249, 10501.

¹⁷*La Presse*, 3 octobre 1901, 10.

¹⁸AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2, 250, 10534; Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 274-275.

3.3).¹⁹ Access to these technological innovations was dependent on income, and like all North American cities in the 1890s, the character of the street was transformed by the muddle of overhead electric wires.

Road Surface

Road surfacing serves as a good measure of the rapid pace of technological innovation in this period, and the extent to which municipalities implemented available options. The choices consisted of asphaltting, paving, and macadamization. By the turn of the century, advanced petrochemical and civil engineering practices produced smooth street surfaces through the introduction of Trinidad asphalt. Until that time, nineteenth-century cities experimented with a variety of materials, ranging from cobblestone in downtown cores to wood, concrete, and block pavement.²⁰ Paving is a general term referring to the covering of a road or street with an undivided hard surface of cement, concrete, asphalt, or other material to produce a more or less uniform and smooth surface.²¹ Devised by British surveyor John McAdam in the early nineteenth century, macadamization is the process of

¹⁹"Rapport concernant le fonctionnement des lumières électriques, 30 mai 1905," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2, 250, 10548; 251, 10597. As of March 13, 1905, Saint-Henri streets were lighted by 106 electric arc lamps of 2,000 candle power and 19 incandescent lamps of 32 candle power. "Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association, Report on Municipal Fire Preventive Appliances in the City of St. Henry, P.Q., as on March 13, 1905," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2, 252, 10602; Rutherford, ed., *Saving the Canadian City*, 15.

²⁰Scoria blocks laid on Notre-Dame were blocks of stone made from slag, the remnants of foundries. Later more advanced methods used tar to cover roadbeds and gravel, which produced a smooth, clean surface. These blocks often shifted on their foundations, trapping water and filth between the blocks, producing bumpy tram and cart rides. Scobey, 152-153; Interview with Guy Chiaisson, President SHSH, October 14, 1998.

²¹*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1971), 1986 ed., Vol. II, 571, s.v. "Pavement."

compacting successive layers of crushed stone over roadbeds,²² but a lack of upkeep was always a problem in Saint-Henri. (Figure 2.1).²³

As the city was experimenting,²⁴ sections of the same street were covered with different materials. Notre-Dame Street was reportedly macadamized in Montreal in 1896, paved in Sainte-Cunégonde as far west as the Grand Trunk railway bridge in Saint-Henri, macadamized to Place Saint-Henri, and merely covered with dirt to Côte Saint-Paul Road. By 1898, it was asphalted from Dalhousie Square to the Grand Trunk bridge, with the last portions remaining macadamized until annexation in 1905.²⁵ The failure of Saint-Henri to pave all of the last parts of Notre-Dame, and any other Saint-Henri streets in this period, was a consequence of increasing preoccupation with its public debt. The asphalt surface on the downtown stretch of Notre-Dame Street contrasted sharply with American city streets, which were nearly one-third were asphalted by 1909.²⁶

²²John Loudon McAdam, *Remarks on the Present System of Road Making* (London: Longman, 1821), 41. Macadam and stone sidewalks were first introduced to Montreal streets in the 1860s. Michèle Benoit et Roger Gratton, *Pignon sur rue* (Montréal: Guérin, 1991), 10-11; AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49/B6.1, 86.

²³An unstable crushed stone was often used. "Quantités de macadam, trottoirs et passerelles en madriers, etc.," AVM, FCSH, "Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri au 31 décembre 1903, *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3.5, 47. The uses of the term macadamized are varied. In Montreal it seems to refer to tamping and layering the broken stone; in England it is a better-engineered gravel road. In Daumier cartoons in Paris of the 1850s, McAdamizing refers to a gocey, probably asphalt mixture.

²⁴City engineers and health officials pressured for smooth-surface pavements such as asphalt or concrete, which were easier to clean and more sanitary than cobblestone or wooden block pavements. McNally, 35; Clay McShane, "Transforming the Use of Urban Space: A Look at the Revolution in Street Pavements, 1880-1924," *Journal of Urban History* 5, 3 (May 1979):279-307.

²⁵*La Presse* reports that Montreal's Notre-Dame Street West was paved in 1897; all Ste-Cunégonde streets were paved by 1896, and a part of Notre-Dame's first portion in Saint-Henri was paved by 1898. *La Presse*, 14 septembre 1897, 1; 27 septembre 1897, 8; 16 mars 1896, 1; 9 avril 1898, 8. Figure 2.4 attests to conditions from Place Saint-Henri to Côte Saint-Paul Road. AVM, FV, *Registre des travaux*, P49/B1.2; *Pavage*, P49/B6.1; P49/B6.2. AVM, FCSH, "Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri au 31 décembre 1903, Quantités de macadam, trottoirs et passerelles en madriers, etc.," *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3.5, 46-48.

²⁶Mclosi, 137.

The transformations of Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri in the 1890s are comparable to those on the 'better class' of commercial streets in Montreal at that moment.²⁷ The acquisition of city status and the expansion of legal powers in 1894 may have prompted street improvements on the downtown stretch of Notre-Dame Street.²⁸ The July 20, 1894 paving contract awarded to Désormeault and Charette, the lowest bidders, resulted in complaints and lawsuits which lasted beyond the 1905 annexation. Following the installation of sewers, the paving operation involved extensive roadwork and sidewalk construction affecting a number of services such as water and gas, and disrupting access to homes and businesses. To complicate matters further, The Montreal Street Railway Company was doubling the tramway tracks with overhead wires, Citizens was erecting lighting poles, and the Northwest Telegraph Company had to move the old telegraph poles. The next year, the Grand Trunk Railway Company built a new wooden bridge over their tracks (Appendix B). There was such a patchwork of asphalt, scoria, and block paving that engineer Vanier suggested in a 1895 letter to council that the problems with the downtown stretch be dealt with before moving on to work on the rest of the street.²⁹

The unkempt nature of nineteenth-century streets and sidewalks posed aesthetic, practical, and sanitary concerns.³⁰ A brief history of working-class architecture reports that "houses were built right next to wooden sidewalks and close to unpaved streets that rain or snow turned into mud or slush."³¹ In the heat of summer months, garbage often

²⁷Gilliland, "Time and Space".

²⁸Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 57 Vict., Cap. 60, 1894 (Québec: Langlois, 1894), 193-198.

²⁹AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49, B6,1; *Réclamations et litiges*, P49/B8.

³⁰*La Presse* contains repeated reports about these poor conditions. "La ville condamnée par la négligence du département des chemins," *La Presse*, 29 avril 1899, 4; 1 août 1895, 6. Battles between French and English factions on Montreal's city council affected the politics of road maintenance, with complaints that the eastern French-Canadian portions of the city were the least maintained. *La Presse*, 21 avril 1896, 1; 7 mai 1896, 1; "Nos Chemins: Leur état est révoltant," *La Presse*, 28 février 1898, 8.

³¹Bernard Vallée, *Maisons ouvrières de Montréal* (Montréal: L'autre Montréal, 1992), 6.

rotted on sidewalks and lanes, for days before being removed.³² Garbage was a widespread problem.³³ Unlike Westmount and Outremont which had garbage incinerators, Saint-Henri and Maisonneuve did not.³⁴ In Saint-Henri, little public money was set aside for the sweeping and watering of Notre-Dame and other city streets.³⁵

Essential to commercial and domestic needs, the keeping of horses, pigs, and cows exacerbated the problem.³⁶ Dr. Joseph Lanctôt, a Notre-Dame Street resident and head of the Hygiene Commission in Saint-Henri, mentioned in a February 5, 1896 sanitation report that in an effort to eradicate street debris, eleven dead horses, a cow, and more than seven hundred cats and dogs were picked up and buried that year.³⁷ In a May 29, 1905 letter to council, F.X. Parent, Saint-Henri's garbageman, reported on extensive removal of refuse

³²Urban reformer H.B. Ames raised concerns and solutions regarding these problems on city council. *La Presse*, 19 octobre 1898, 3; 13 mai 1904, 1. Saint-Henri cleared a plot of land for a garbage dump in 1876. Ouellet, "Les élites municipales", 9. Picking up garbage was not a priority for the city. In 1893, the city spent \$33,000 on a bonus to attract Cledenning, an industry, to the community and only \$700 on garbage removal. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23, B2,1, p.361.

³³Melosi, 21-50. To little avail, the MLCW, a local council of Montreal women, protested to council with regard to the filthy state of streets in 1899. Their complaints met with the city inspector's response that the public had the right to complain, but insufficient funds were being allotted to their cleaning and upkeep. *La Presse*, 27 avril 1899, 1. For a broader discussion of women's roles in cleaning up American cities at the turn of the century, see Suellen M. Hoy, "'Municipal Housekeeping': The Role of Women in Improving Urban Sanitation Practices, 1880-1917" in *Pollution and Reform in American Cities, 1879-1930* (Austin: University of Texas, 1980), 173-198.

³⁴Collin, 29.

³⁵Martin Melosi indicates that smooth pavement permitted mechanical sweeping in early twentieth century American cities. Melosi, 134-151. Saint-Henri's general by-law 8 of 1876 included provisions for cleaning city streets. AVM, FCSH, "General By-law of the Town of St. Henry, *Règlements*, P23,B2,3, p. 49. Financed through special and general taxes, the 1905 budget set aside only \$840 for watering of the streets. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,2, p. 358. 'Watering' is a cheap and ineffective, unsatisfactory way to keep down dust.

³⁶For household animals and their role in the domestic economy, see Bettina Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders: Non-Wage Forms of Survival among Montreal Families, 1861-1891," *Labour/Le Travail* 14 (1984), 9-46.

³⁷Lettre du Bureau de Santé de la Cité de St-Henri à Mr (sic) le Président et à M.M. les membres de la Commission locale d'Hygiène de St-Henri, 5 février 1896, AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3, 3.

and cleaning of streets, lanes, and courtyards, after the May moving season.³⁸

In Montreal, winter snow and ice hid the street filth, but also provided an obstruction to transport. Sleighs and pedestrians often negotiated narrow paths trodden between enormous snowbanks. A much sought-after job for many an unemployed day labourer or carter, snow removal was a monumental task.³⁹ Françoise Mainville-Desjardins' description of snowclearing on Notre-Dame Street attests to the extensive manual labour following a snowfall on New Year's Day in 1890:

Une semaine plus tard, les festivités reprennent pour fêter le Jour de l'An. Cette fois-ci, on se met courageusement en route pour Châteauguay pour rendre visite à la famille d'Honorius. Victoria a couvert ses enfants à l'excès. Il n'y a pas de chance à prendre. On est souvent retardé par la circulation dans les rues achalandées. Tant de traîneaux et de chevaux se croisent sur les routes rendues étroites par l'accumulation de tonnes de neige! 'Les hommes de la Corporation' comme on appelle alors les employés municipaux, ont beau arriver avec leurs *sleighs* et leurs pelles, ils n'ont pas le temps de déblayer entre les bordées. Aussi, voit-on d'énormes bancs de neige le long des trottoirs, à la plus grande joie des enfants. C'est beaucoup moins drôle au printemps, quand tout fond en lacs d'eau glacée et boueuse. Les trottoirs sont recouvert d'une glace de six à huit pouces d'épaisseur. Marie-Anne et ses frères s'amuse follement à faire des rigoles avec leurs petites haches. Vincent, l'aîné, leur donne un véritable cours de géographie. Il y a un grand fleuve, des rivières, des affluents. Bâton en main, les enfants s'imaginent perdus dans une immensité de neige et de glace, entourés des cours d'eau dangereux. Dangereux, en effet, car jamais explorateurs intrépides n'ont attrapés autant de rhumes, de maux de gorge et d'otites.⁴⁰

After a 1898 snowstorm Saint-Henri proudly employed three hundred and fifty men and one hundred carts to clear the streets, purportedly setting an example of efficiency for the

³⁸AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 252, 10594. On June 1 of the same year Parent reported on the removal of dead animal carcasses from city streets and lanes. AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 252, 10600. Frequent moves not only occurred in May, but throughout the year in Montreal. Gilliland, "Modeling Residential Mobility in Montreal, 1860-1900," *Historical Methods*, 31, 1 (winter 1998):27-42. See *La Presse*, 29 avril 1899, 1 for an interesting sketch of Montreal's May moving season.

³⁹Studio Notman, "Tempête de Neige, rue Sainte-Catherine, en 1901, Collection privée, "Déneigement à la pelle et au banneau, en 1887," Collection Archives Notman, Lessard, Photographes 13 & 65. Carters were particularly affected by structural unemployment in this period. Heap, 373; Dickinson & Young, 122.

⁴⁰Mainville-Desjardins, 171-172.

City of Montreal.⁴¹

Sidewalks

Wooden sidewalks lined most of Saint-Henri streets throughout this period. The question as to whether they were sources of dirt and disease was debatable.⁴² By 1903, the only cement sidewalks were those in front of the city hall on Place Saint-Henri and on the Bernard property at the intersection of Notre Dame and rue de la Gare, which led down from the wooden bridge to the Grand Trunk Railway station.⁴³ While the asphalted portion of Notre-Dame had sidewalks built on cement foundations and bordered with stone, most Saint-Henri sidewalks were constructed of pine planks on wooden beams (Figure 4.1).⁴⁴ Maintained at the discretion of the property owner, they often had missing, bent, or cracked planks which made walking hazardous.⁴⁵ Displays of

⁴¹*La Presse*, 30 janvier 1895, 6.

⁴²In response to a reader who raised these health concerns, *La Presse* reported the opinion of Dr. Lachapelle, President of Montreal's Hygiene Committee. While not disputing the dangers of wooden sidewalks, he pointed to the paving and cleaning of lanes as more urgent priorities. *La Presse*, 2 avril 1900, 2.

⁴³AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3,5.

⁴⁴The 1894 asphaltting contract made provisions for these somewhat more elaborate sidewalks on the eastern portion of Notre-Dame. AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49,B6,1,42. By-law 8 (1876) directed individual proprietors to build sidewalks of pine wood timber of not less than three inches thick. Sidewalks were to be forty-five inches wide, with the space between each timber not more than half an inch. The timbers were supposed to lie on three cross pieces of wood of at least three square inches. AVM, FCSH, "General By-law of the Town of St. Henry, *Règlements*, P23,B2,3, pp. 10-13. Located on Atwater Street in Sainte-Cunégonde, W. Rutherford & Sons Company supplied wood timbers. "1908 Dumpcart operated by William Rutherford & Sons," SHSH, Fonds Duquette, 26-PH-1. AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23,E2, 252, 10601.

⁴⁵Bellavance et al., 8; Bylaws 29 (June 26, 1882) and 147 (April 27, 1904) reiterated regulations about individual sidewalk maintenance. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,1, pp. 100-101. By-law 147 made provisions for stone sidewalks. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23 B2,2, pp. 336-339.

storeowner merchandise further obstructed pedestrian movement.⁴⁶

Conditions worsened in the winter months,⁴⁷ but other owners and tenants neglected to clear snow or strew ashes, leading to pedestrian injuries. Michael Flynn, for example, sued the city for physical and financial losses when his wife Mary Ann Agar could not care for their three children after fracturing her ankle on December 13, 1898 and Isaïe Duval fell on a Notre-Dame Street sidewalk, broke his leg on the icy slope, and claimed \$68.60 worth of damages from the city due to poor sidewalk maintenance on February 18, 1904.⁴⁸

Street modifications sometimes worsened the situation, as in the case of the 1895 building of a viaduct over the Grand Trunk railway tracks on the downtown stretch of Notre-Dame (Figure 2.4). The street was raised eighteen to twenty inches higher than the sidewalk in front of the door of Robert Bickerdike, a prominent Saint-Henri citizen, who was not amused when rain caused water, garbage, and other debris to run onto his property.⁴⁹ James Virtue claimed \$899.50 worth of damages from council in Aug. 23, 1893 when the street exposed his foundation to frost at the corner of Notre-Dame and Bourget. Architect Haustin Jones testified that sheds at the rear end of Virtue's flat were left "in such a condition that by any heavy rains they may fall into street."⁵⁰ *La Presse*

⁴⁶AVM, FCSH, "General By-law of the Town of St. Henry, *Règlements*, P23,B2.3, p. 35. Merchants and grocers who did so faced a twenty dollar fine or thirty days imprisonment by virtue of by-law 29. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2.1, pp. 100-101. Police Chief Massy decided to be more vigilant in applying this regulation in 1899. *La Presse*, 7 avril 1899, 10.

⁴⁷AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23,C, 342. In a letter pertaining to a longstanding dispute between the city and F.X. Borduas regarding the changed elevation of Notre-Dame Street in 1894, Vanier notes that Borduas would do well to remove one foot of snow from the entrance to his home. Merchants invariably cleared sidewalk entrances to their shops in the wintertime. AVM, FV, *Réclamations et litiges*, P49, B8, 94.

⁴⁸AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23,C, 342; AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23.E2, 249, 10496.

⁴⁹AVM, FV, *Réclamations et litiges*, P49, B8, 1. For a blue print plan of Hurtubise's property alignments on Notre-Dame Street, see AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 251.

⁵⁰AVM, FV, *Réclamations et litiges*, P49,B8,1, 133-134; AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23,C, 96.

Figure 4.1 Drawbacks of Wooden Sidewalks



Source: *La Presse*, 16 juillet 1898, 1.

featured front page coverage complete with sketches and itemized streets where sidewalks were particularly dangerous (Figure 4.1).⁵¹ Given these conditions, it is not surprising that residents on Saint-Jacques Street requested asphalt sidewalks in front of their homes in 1901.⁵²

Transportation

Controversy and complaints amongst Saint-Henri citizens with regard to train and tram transportation shifted from the local to federal political arena. Strained relations with the federal government marked the bid to provide safe and improved services for the citizens of Saint-Henri. We observe tense and lengthy negotiations with respect to: Grand Trunk Railway bridges over Notre-Dame Street, construction of train stations in 1879 and 1896, the employment of gatekeepers, and the maintenance of barriers at level crossings. These disputes prompted a local delegation to lobby the Privy Council Railway Safety Committee in 1900. In 1904, Saint-Henri was unsuccessful in securing the cooperation of the Grand Trunk to build a viaduct at Sainte-Élizabeth Street. Frustration with the company was a motivating factor for annexation in 1905. Discussions with the Montreal Street Railway Company, which ran electrified trams as a monopoly on Notre-Dame Street from 1894 onward, pertained to the lack of regular service, fares which exceeded the means of local workers, and the speed of tramcars.

Trains

The Grand Trunk Railway Company was generally reticent to implement safety measures. It considered local standards to be the responsibility of the municipality. Rail installation was expedient in this part of the city, given the flat land. Rail service and sidings attracted industry, and workers lived close to their places of work. As we see, the unhealthy and unsafe conditions occasioned by constant railway traffic were a nuisance and

⁵¹*La Presse*, 16 juillet 1898, 1.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 11 juillet 1901, 10; 12 juin 1899, 8.

danger to residents.

Local political leaders occasionally pressured the Grand Trunk for local railway services and safety regulations. As early as 1877, the Saint-Henri municipal council sought to improve transportation and communications with downtown Montreal, points in Ontario and the United States, by lobbying for the construction of a train station.⁵³ Council communicated with the Grand Trunk Railway Company on at least three occasions in 1879 and 1896: in the first instance on April 16, 1879 asking for a grant toward the construction of a Saint-Henri train station, with a subsequent November 5, 1879 council resolution accepting the conditions set forth by the Grand Trunk. On October 10, 1896, the Saint-Henri city council signed a contract for the construction of a station and depot facing Notre-Dame Street (Figure 4.2).

In exchange, council granted the Grand Trunk property tax exemptions for twenty-five years on its declared municipal land.⁵⁴ Hidden in a gulley to the north of the Grand Trunk Railway bridge off Notre-Dame on a short street sometimes referred to as "chemin de la Gare" or "rue de la Station" or "avenue Dépôt", the classic design of the train station represented a connection to the continental economy and sense of adventure for some Saint-Henri residents.⁵⁵ The construction of the local railway station improved links between town and country, providing Saint-Henri residents with sufficient means to visit

⁵³E.Z. Massicotte refers to a railway depot at this site in 1862. Massicotte, "Quelques Rues et Faubourgs du Vieux Montréal," *Les Cahiers des Dix* (1936), 147; Massicotte is also cited in Auclair, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries de Montréal*, 15; Ouellet, "Les élites municipales," 6.

⁵⁴AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E2,251, 10588. Council welcomed submissions for the construction of the second train station. *La Presse*, 24 septembre, 1. Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1897, 60 Vict. (Quebec: 1897), cap. 62, 191; Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1904, 4 Ed.VII (Quebec: 1904), cap. 52, 126.

⁵⁵AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3,5; *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1911-1912*, 346.

⁵⁶Peter Brimblecombe, *The Big Smoke* (London: Methuen, 1987).

Figure 4.2 Saint-Henri Train Station, undated



Source: SHSH, Fonds Dubuc, 23-1.426-1.

family and friends in Quebec villages and towns and New England textile communities.⁵⁶ The train station contrasts with the domestic vernacular architecture and the cohesive Second Empire design of public buildings which reflect the French-Canadian character of the community (Figures 2.1, 3.3, and 3.4).

Grand Trunk Railway trains were the source of noise and air pollution. Conditions in Saint-Henri were comparable to the smog and pollution which permeated nineteenth-century London.⁵⁷ Steam trains symbolized the inherent contradictions of Victorian progress. They combined the speed and efficiency of modern technology with the negative ramifications of noise and air pollution. The vibrant rhythm of passing trains, with sirens bellowing, were a constant feature on nineteenth-century Notre-Dame Street (Figure 4.3). Immortalized in *Bonheur d'occasion* (1945)/*The Tin Flute* (1947) by Gabrielle Roy over half a century later, trains passed at all hours of the day and night, rattling houses, leaving remnants of soot, and holding up traffic.⁵⁸ Referred to as the "Smoking Valley", the air in Saint-Henri was filled with fumes from steam locomotives and local industries.⁵⁹

The Grand Trunk Railway Company resisted taking any precautions regarding railway safety in the community. Accidents occasionally occurred, especially at the level crossings at the intersection of Notre-Dame and Place Saint-Henri (Figure 4.6) and on Sainte-Élizabeth north of Notre-Dame. The most dramatic accidents were collisions between trains, trams, and carts, particularly at points where tram and railway tracks converged. *La Presse* and *The Montreal Daily Witness* reported on at least nine accidents involving trains passing through Saint-Henri between 1893 and 1905. Pierre Soulière, a sixty-nine year old milkman, and his fifty-nine year old wife from 36 Turgeon Street were

⁵⁷An in-depth study could examine in-migration, out-migration, and travel patterns in Saint-Henri in this period.

⁵⁸Roy, *Bonheur d'occasion*, volume 1, 39; Gabrielle Roy, *The Tin Flute*, 19-20, 152; *Bonheur d'occasion*, réalisateur Claude Fournier (n.p.: Ciné 360, 1983); "Locomotive 'Vulcan' de type, Consolidation' du Grand Tronc vers 1907," Collection des Archives nationales du Canada, PA-123715.

⁵⁹SHSH, Exposition "150 Ans de Trains à Saint-Henri," automne-hiver 1998; "Electrified Tram 658 'Extra to Côte Saint-Paul' crossing Saint-Ambroise Grand Trunk Train Tracks on Côte Saint-Paul Road, 1896," SHSH, Fonds Morel, 60-PH-1.

Figure 4.3 Steam Locomotive in Saint-Henri, 1900



Source: SHSH, Fonds Morel, 60-PH-2.

badly injured when the Notre-Dame Street barrier came down suddenly on their cart as they set out for morning mass at Église Saint-Henri on March 10, 1897. As Madame Soulière was already paralysed on one side previous to the accident, her survival was doubtful. On December 3, 1897, Madame Gauthier who was living with her son-in-law, M. Dusseault, at 130 Beaudoin Street was hit by an oncoming train and died after crossing the tracks on Notre-Dame Street. The habit of hitching rides resulted in the death of twenty-three year old Joseph Charbonneau, who worked at Wilson's wood and coal warehouse in Saint-Henri, on September 26, 1903.⁶⁰ On August 9, 1899, twenty-five year old Annie Ripley from Sebastopol Street in Pointe Saint-Charles was killed on Notre-Dame at the corner of Saint-Ferdinand on a tramway she had boarded with her cousin. Returning from work in Saint-Henri, Ripley died shortly after the closed tram was hit by a train following the railway gatekeeper's indication that the tracks were clear. Delphis Paquette and mechanic Eugène Gagnon transported Ripley to the nearby Petit Hôtel on Notre-Dame Street where the hotelkeeper and his wife cared for her until the ambulance from Notre-Dame Hospital arrived.⁶¹

The city obtained minimal concessions from the Grand Trunk in this regard. In 1886 and 1888, the municipality stipulated that railway watchmen were to be stationed and barriers erected at level crossings, trains were to observe a speed limit, and not block street traffic for an unreasonable length of time.⁶² Abolishing level crossings was considered at a 1900 Railway Safety Committee of Privy Council, yet the Grand Trunk refused to have anything to do with city plans to build a viaduct beneath its tracks on Sainte-Élizabeth in

⁶⁰*La Presse*, 10 mars 1897, 8; 4 décembre 1897, 16; 28 septembre 1903, 1; *The Montreal Daily Witness*, January 9, 1893, 7; Other accidents: *La Presse*, 11 novembre 1899, 10; 2 octobre 1899, 7; 7 mars 1900, 10; 7 mars 1903.

⁶¹*La Presse*, 10 août 1899, 8; 11 août 1899, 8.

⁶²Government of Quebec, *Statutes of Quebec*, 1886, 49-50 Vict. (Quebec: 1886), cap. 56, 130-131; Règlement 51 (11 octobre 1888), AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,1, pp. 204-207. In 1901, freight trains of as many as fifty to seventy-five cars obstructed tram traffic on Notre-Dame at the Place Saint-Henri crossing. *La Presse*, 3 mai 1901, 10.

1904.⁶³ Taken together with confrontations with the Montreal Water and Power Company, council sought more political clout in the struggle against powerful monopolies and business interests.⁶⁴

Trams

The usage of trams by Saint-Henri residents has not been firmly established. In contrast to the eastward extension of the Notre-Dame Street route in 1861, delays until 1872 and 1886 characterized the westward expansion of the system. The obstruction of the Grand Trunk Railway tracks and difficulties in raising private capital explain the lateness. Transportation research indicates that most residents walked to work until the early twentieth century, despite significant increases in tram usage by Montreal workers from 1892 to 1901.

Dany Fougères' research on early forms of urban transportation indicates that private initiatives and municipal jurisdiction governed Montrealers' use of trams.⁶⁵ Jean-Pierre Collin points out that this southwestern part of the city was the site of the first railroad on the island of Montreal, the Montreal to Lachine Railroad (1847).⁶⁶ From 1861 to 1894, Saint-Joseph and Notre-Dame Streets in Saint-Henri obtained fewer services than Sainte-Marie, the eastern extension of Notre-Dame Street. Trams ran on Sainte-Marie as

⁶³ *La Presse*, 21 juillet 1900, 16; 13 octobre 1900, 20. AVM, FV, *Viaduc*, P49,B7 (written and visual plans for the viaduct construction). Geo. A. Mountain, Grand Trunk's Chief Engineer, claimed that "the low, swampy nature of the ground around Saint-Henri would make it very difficult to build a subway under these tracks". AVM, FV, *Viaduc*, P49,B7, 323.

⁶⁴ Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 131-132; Bellavance et al., 11.

⁶⁵ Dany Fougères, "Les Services Urbains sous surveillance politique: Le pouvoir municipal et l'établissement du service de transport en commun à Montréal, 1869-1880," *UHR/RHU* XXVI, 1 (October 1997): 18-31; Dany Fougères, "L'encadrement juridique des infrastructures et des services publics urbains: le cas du transport en commun à Montréal," (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], UQAM, 1991).

⁶⁶ Collin, *Histoire de l'urbanisation*, 73.

⁶⁷ Omer S. A. Lavallée, "The Advent of the Street Railway," "Rail Lines of Montreal City Passenger Railway Company, 1861-1894," & "Extensions, Expansion and 'Episootic'," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

early as 1862, but did not reach Saint-Joseph Street west of Place Saint-Henri until 1886, some twenty-four years later.⁶⁷ A decided shift occurred in the 1890s. By contrast, the timing and introduction of electrified trams into the community in 1894 was consistent with that of Montreal, Toronto, and other North American cities.⁶⁸ Confrontation with monopolies intensified. Citizens requested more frequent trams and clearer schedules.

In 1861, horse-drawn trams operated by the Montreal City Passenger Railway Company replaced stagecoaches travelling between Montreal, Saint-Henri, and Lachine on the old Lachine Turnpike Road. The majority of Notre-Dame Street and Saint-Henri residents could not afford the five-cent fare, the standard price for tram transportation in the Montreal area until 1905. According to Omer S.A. Lavallée, *The Montreal Herald* ran an ad in early December 1861 offering "slips" of tickets of twenty-five for one dollar, and schoolchildren could purchase packets of fifty for the same price. As he states, "one wonders what school child in the Montreal of 1861 had \$1.00 at one time to spend on school tickets!"⁶⁹

Rails were laid and trams ran on Notre-Dame Street in Montreal and Sainte-Marie in the east as early as 1861, with a westward extension on Saint-Joseph Street to Canning in 1862. Tram rails only reached Saint-Joseph from Canning to Atwater in 1872, three years prior to Saint-Henri's incorporation. Following the construction of the first wooden bridge over the Grand Trunk tracks on Saint-Joseph, rails were extended as far west as Place Saint-Henri in 1872.⁷⁰

By 1879, the company owned two properties in Saint-Henri, a garage at the northeast corner of Upper Lachine Road and the Glen, and stables for their horses to the

⁶⁸Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 132; 270; Jacques Pharand, *A la belle époque des tramways* (Montréal: Les Éditions de l'Homme, 1997), 29; Lavallée, "The Horse Car Bows to the 'Electric,'" *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

⁶⁹Lavallée, "Inauguration of the First Routes," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

⁷⁰Pharand, 24. The exact date of rail construction on Saint-Joseph beyond Atwater is not known. Lavallée, "The Advent of the Street Railway," "Rail Lines of Montreal City Passenger Railway Company, 1861-1894," & "Extensions, Expansion and 'Episootic'," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

southwest, before Côte Saint-Paul Road and across from the St. Henry Hotel.⁷¹ As E.Z. Massicotte informs us in a colourful description of this trip, westbound trams continued to leave from the old point of departure in Montreal as late as 1885:

En été, le véhicule était un omnibus; en hiver, c'était un traîneau, fermé et à compartiments. A Montréal, le point de départ de la diligence était l'hôtellerie de la Cité, tenue par Charles Larin et que fréquentaient surtout les cultivateurs du haut de l'île de Montréal et de la rive sud du S.-Laurent. Avec sa cour pavée en cailloux et ses vastes écuries blanchies, l'établissement offrait un coup d'oeil pittoresque, en plein coeur de la métropole. Sis côté sud de la rue Notre-Dame, près de la rue Dupré, il fut rasé en 1892.

Le cocher de la diligence de Lachine, entre 1880 et 1885, était un nommé Deschamps, gaillard à l'allure décidée, qui avait voyagé dans 'les pays d'en haut' et à qui une longue chevelure noire et un teint basané donnaient l'apparence d'un aborigène. Jamais, automédon n'a conduit un chariot avec une plus parfaite maestria. Les anciens le voient encore trônant sur le siège de son lourd véhicule en débitant à ses chevaux de kyrielles de mots sonores.

De temps à autre, pour stimuler leur ardeur, il s'armait d'un fouet à lanière interminable. Sous l'effort d'un bras habile, cette lanière décrivait dans l'air des courbes ou zigzags qui finissaient en claquements secs comme des coups de pistolet.

A des distances fixes, afin de racoler la clientèle, Deschamps déposait son fouet et son brûle-gueule pour emboucher une trompette dont il sonnait aussi bien que les lévites à Jéricho, surtout avant l'arrêt obligatoire, à S-Henri, chez l'hôtelier Pierre Larante.⁷²

To improve the slow and uncomfortable service of these early trams, the company began installing rails upon which the horse-drawn trams rolled (Figure 4.4):

not only did the light but smooth iron rails afford a more pleasant ride than was possible in omnibuses bouncing over cobblestoned streets, or buried to their axles in the muddy morasses of spring, but the greatly reduced friction of the railway principle allowed the draft animals to pull larger loads without noticeably increased effort."⁷³

In 1886, with investment by Sir A. T. Galt and other individual proprietors, rails were laid by the Montreal Street Railway Company up to Saint-Rémi. The Tramway Number Twelve Route extended from Sainte-Marie in the east through Notre-Dame and Saint-Joseph, ascending the hill past the "First and Last Chance" Tavern on Upper Lachine Road

⁷¹Hopkins, *Atlas of the City*, Plate 79.

⁷²Massicotte, "Saint-Henri des Tanneries," *Bulletin des recherches historiques* 41,1 (janvier 1935):45-46.

⁷³Lavallée, "Introduction," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*.

to Saint-Joseph Street in Lachine. Given the obstruction of the Grand Trunk railway tracks, passengers travelling beyond Place Saint-Henri often had to switch trams.⁷⁴

Taken to enhance the company's prestige and mark the introduction of new rails, the 1886 omnibus photograph may not represent daily reality (Figure 4.4). Only three male passengers appear in this staged photo. Characteristic of Victorian photography, the driver and the conductor posed for the camera, as did the man in the bowler hat waiting below the wooden sign indicating the Saint Mary, Notre-Dame, and Saint-Joseph route. The MSRC sign was in English only, despite its location in a largely francophone area.

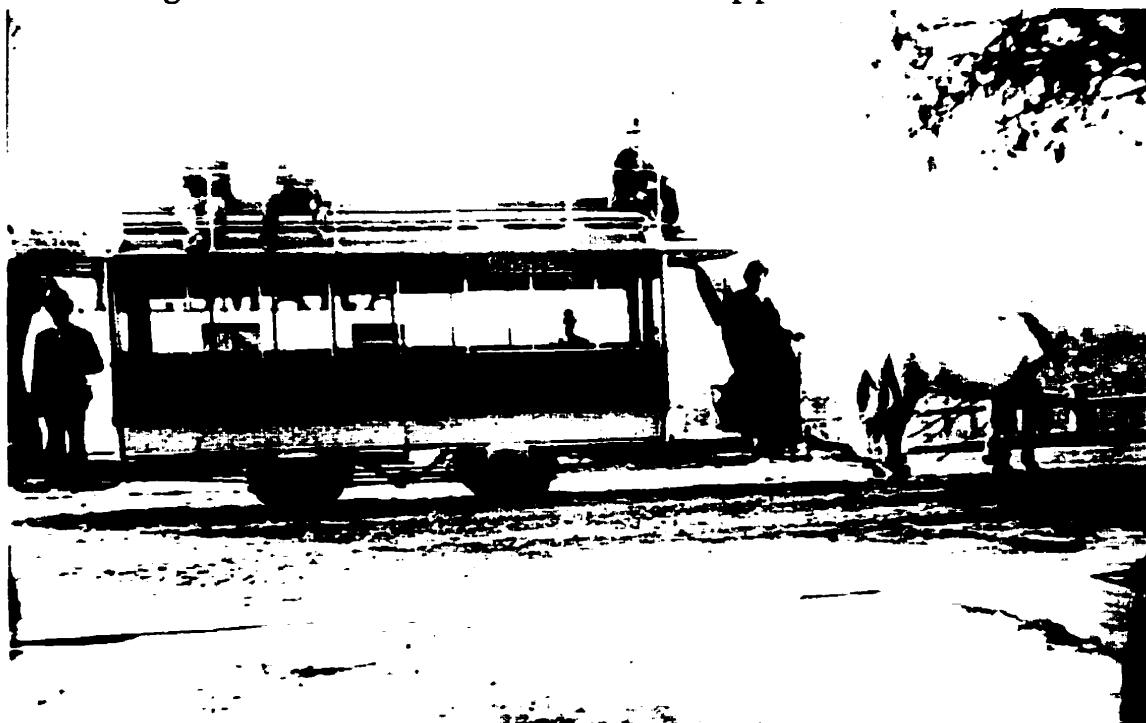
Tram services did not engender bitter rivalries in Saint-Henri as in other Montreal suburbs.⁷⁵ After 1892, the year electrification commenced in Montreal, the Montreal Street Railway Company, *la Compagnie des Chars Urbains de Montréal*, ran trams on Notre-Dame (Figure 4.5) and Saint-Antoine. Robert Bickerdicke operated transportation services on Saint-Jacques and other streets. Electrified trams were slated to continue on the old route along Notre-Dame Street, ending at the Glen terminus in western Saint-Henri, with omnibuses taking over thereafter. Difficult negotiations with Craig and Sons who provided electricity to Sainte-Cunégonde delayed electrification on the western portion until 1894.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Boone, "The Politics of Transportation", 25. At \$9,500, the cost of rail extension through the Tanneries Village was substantial. Lavallée, "Extensions, Expansion and 'Episootic'," & "Rail Lines of Montreal City Passenger Railway Company, 1861-1894," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company*. Despite irregular service, Saint-Henri granted the Montreal Street Railway Company rights to operate for a ten-year term on Notre-Dame from Atwater to the Côte Saint-Paul barrier in 1886. Notre-Dame Street from Côte Saint-Paul Road to Place Saint-Henri later became Saint-Jacques Street. By-law 66 (15 décembre 1891) refers to a council resolution and notarial contract signed to this effect between the town and *La compagnie des Chars Urbains de Montréal* on June 13, 1886. AVM, FV, *Viaduc*, P49,B7, 224-231. *La Voix populaire*, 6 juin 1951, 15; SHSH, *La Taverne 'First and Last Chance', Upper Lachine Road, 1905*, Fonds Kearney, 38-PH-3.

⁷⁵Boone, "The Politics of Transportation", 25-39; Van Nus, "Suburban Government", 93.

⁷⁶Collin, "Montreal Street Railway Co., 1892: Electrification commenced in this year," *Histoire de l'urbanisation*, carte 85-A. Notre-Dame Street trams ran on one of six east-west routes. Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 132. The company stopped using horses in 1894. Pharand, 37.

Figure 4.4 Horse-drawn Tram on Upper Lachine Road, 1886



Source: SHSH, Fonds Raymond, 70-PH-1.

Figure 4.5 Electric Tramway Car on Notre-Dame Street, 1895



Source: STCUM Photo Collection, SS1/2.2.2; reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 8.

The 1895 photo of electric tram 123 on Notre-Dame Street was taken to promote the company's new technology. The photograph is staged, and not indicative of usage.⁷⁷ Not a typical street scene, it reveals one female passenger somewhat obscured beneath the conductor's left arm and a well-dressed older man one seat back to her right (Figure 4.5). Despite the company's efforts to publicize its achievements, the installation of new technology was not a smooth process. The laying of rails in Saint-Henri was further obstructed by the poor 1894 asphaltting contract, which disrupted service on Notre-Dame's downtown stretch until the early twentieth century.⁷⁸ Pending Privy Council approval for MSRC tracks to cross the Grand Trunk rails at Place Saint-Henri, electrified tram operations on the new section of Notre-Dame began only after 1896.⁷⁹ Robert Bickerdike ran transport on other Saint-Henri streets for up to thirty years from 1891 onward, but was obliged to provide public services until Montreal Street Railway tracks were laid on the new section of Notre-Dame and on Saint-Jacques.⁸⁰ Both companies were tax exempt.

Council was more intimidated by the MSRC, a Montreal monopoly, than by Robert Bickerdike, one of their own. Bickerdike's local operations were subject to greater fee restrictions. The Montreal Street Railway Company could operate between six in the morning and eleven at night, and could not charge more than five cents per fare. Bickerdike was permitted to run cars beyond eleven at night if he liked, but he had to provide those who worked in Saint-Henri and Montreal with a five-cent return fare. The question of winter track cleaning was the subject of periodic negotiations and disputes between the City of Montreal, Saint-Henri, and the Montreal Street Railway Company. In

⁷⁷Interview, André Vigneau, STCUM Archives, December 23, 1998.

⁷⁸AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49,B6,2, 153, 182, 241.

⁷⁹AVM, FV, *Alignements et niveaux*, P49, B4, 1, 68. Saint-Henri and the Montreal Street Railway Company were still working out the details of electrical rail installation on the street's new stretch in 1896. *La Presse*, 6 août 1896, 1; 24 septembre 1896, 1.

⁸⁰Electrified cars were also operating on Saint-Jacques by 1897. Pharand, 40.

principle, Bickerdike was supposed to remove snow from his own tracks.⁸¹ In 1895, Saint-Henri agreed to clear snow from the MSRC tracks, sharing the costs with the company.⁸² Most trams were closed, but following Sainte-Cunégonde's written request, a few summer electric cars were operating on Notre-Dame by 1895 (Figures 4.5 & 4.6). Once the federal government granted permission for trams to cross the Grand Trunk tracks at Place Saint-Henri in 1896, excursions like the annual summer picnics held at Bout de l'Île for children from Saint-Henri were made possible (Figure 4.6).⁸³

As a rich depiction of the people of Saint-Henri and their interaction with the built environment, this sketch deserves discussion. In 1898, the open tram cars were located at the intersection of Place Saint-Henri and Notre-Dame Street. Grand Trunk Railway barriers were raised to allow passage of streetcars. In 1890, the entire street scene would have taken place on Place Saint-Henri, between two portions of Notre-Dame. A strike of the town secretary's pen, a strip of Goad's correction tape, and the course of Notre-Dame Street was transformed, but not the sense of place. J. B. Jackson explores the endemic qualities of a sense of place in his classic cultural landscape study. A place situated along a road is increasingly imbued with special meanings, specific feelings, and various recollections distinct from those of its final destination. The place takes on a particular significance in people's minds and memories through social interactions, daily and select

⁸¹ Lavallée, "The Third Decade," *The Montreal City Passenger Railway Company; The Gazette*, November 27, 1895, 3. Disputes between Montreal and the Montreal Street Railway Company over snow clearance on tram tracks resulted in a 1901 legal case in the Court of the Queen's Bench. *La Presse*, 27 décembre 1901, 12; By-law 66 (15 décembre 1891) AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23/B2.1, pp. 309-319.

⁸² *La Presse*, 12 décembre 1895, 1. MSRC trams specially equipped for snow clearance and track sweeping were in service by 1900. *La Presse*, 27 janvier 1900, 1.

⁸³ *La Presse*, 11 juillet 1895, 4; 28 août 1895, 1; 18 avril 1899, 1. For negotiations regarding Montreal Street Railway trams crossing the Grand Trunk train tracks at Place Saint-Henri, see *La Presse*, 12 août, 1895, 6; 7 mai 1896, 8. Picnics at Bout de l'Île were organized by *La Presse*, leaving various city locations in the late 1800s and early 1900s. *La Presse*, 23 juillet 1898, 1; 15 juillet 1899, 16; 16 juillet 1899, 1; 16 juillet 1901, 1.

events related to it.⁸⁴

Place Saint-Henri was such a place. Originally situated on the Upper Lachine Road, Hugh Brodie's land was transformed to a town centre by the late nineteenth century as various ecclesiastical and civic buildings, the parish church, schools, post office, and town hall, were erected there. It attained a special status in the daily lives of Saint-Henri's people. As the heart of the community, Place Saint-Henri had a unique symbolic significance. It brought together institutional structures which represented the Church and State, powerful forces in Quebec society affecting the daily lives of Saint-Henri's people in a multitude of ways. The sketch artist was positioned with his back to a cluster of religious buildings: the imposing Église Saint-Henri built in 1869-1870 on a site chosen by Monseigneur Ignace Bourget in 1867 as part of the initial dismemberment of the Montreal parish; Collège Saint-Henri (1877), a boys' school administered by the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes; Asile Saint-Henri (1885), a daycare, shelter, and orphanage run by the Grey Nuns; and the recently constructed Ange-Gardien convent (1897-98) of the Sisters of Saint Ann.

The artist faced a number of civic buildings. To the right of the holiday trams stood the Post Office, designed by architect Alphonse Raza for the federal government in 1889. Beyond it peep the dormer window of Léotine Hébert's and E. H. Therrien's two-storey home and the upper windows and cornice of a wooden duplex or triplex. There is a profusion of tram, telegraph, and telephone wires. With the foreground filled with children, the artist's attention was especially focused on the town hall to the left. Designed by architect William Edward Doran and built in 1883, with its false mansard roofed towers, segmented windows, and awnings, stylistically it resembled the second fire station being built at the corner of Notre-Dame and Sainte-Élizabeth that year (Figure 3.4).⁸⁵

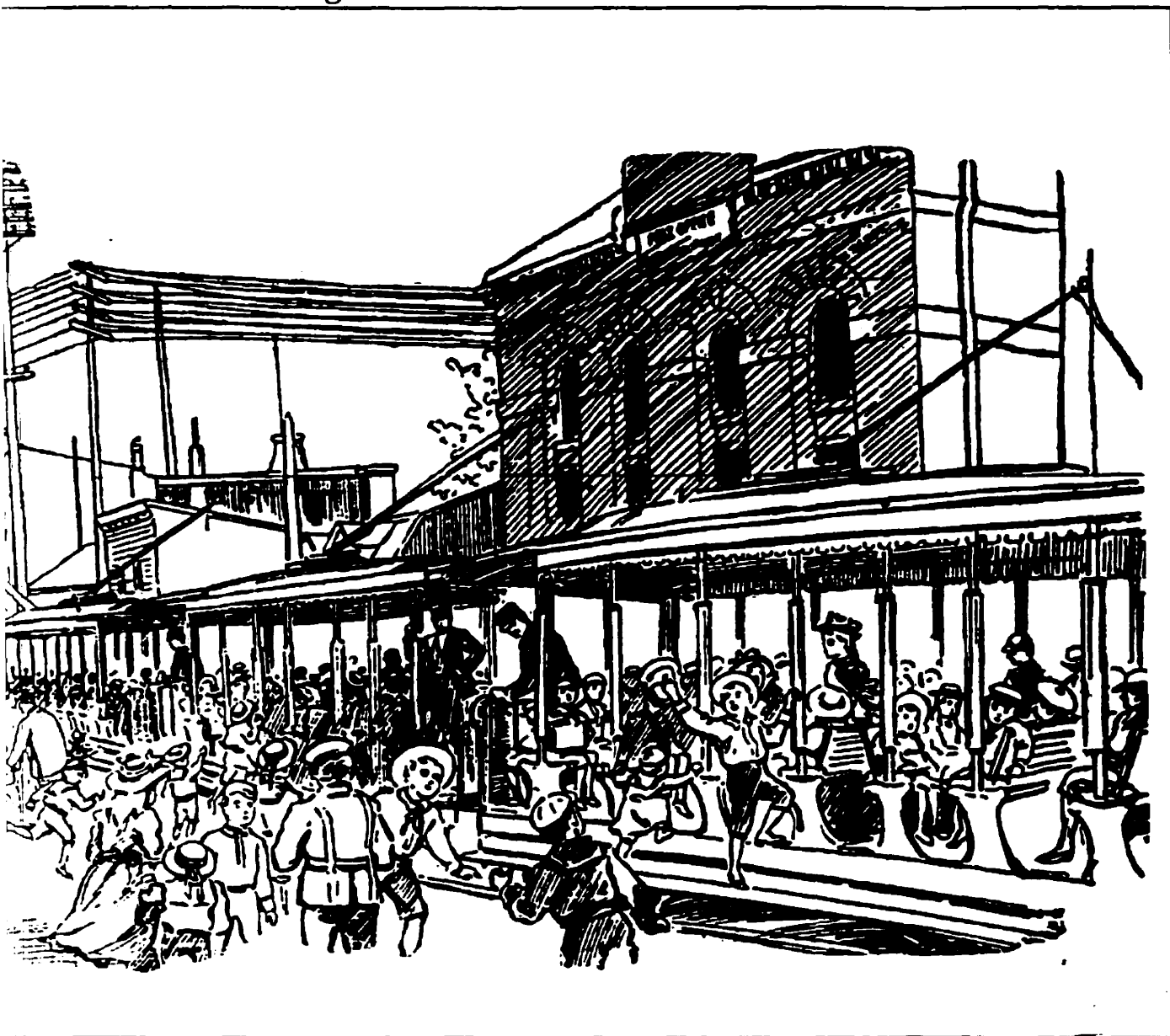
⁸⁴Jackson, 151-205.

⁸⁵Fontaine et al., 27; Auclair, 72-73; Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Les Édifices publics*, 40-41; Belisle, 2-4; Joseph-Émile Vanier, "Plan de la Place St-Henri et d'une partie des rues Notre-Dame et St-Jacques," 31 décembre 1898, AVM, FCSH, *Plans*, P23.F.2.



Source: *La Presse*, 23 juillet 1898, 5.

Figure 4.6 1898 Picnic for the Children of Saint-Henri



Posed authoritatively along the footsteps of the town hall were the city fathers, most likely among them Mayor Eugène Guay, who sponsored the outing, along with Madame Guay and *La Presse*. Montreal Street Railway conductors supervised the seating of children on the trams. A few mothers and older sisters were in sight. Given that the trams were departing at eight o'clock on a Monday morning, many were busy attending to the needs of their younger children or at work in a local factory or shop.⁸⁶ Dominating the sketch is a throng of children dressed in their Sunday best, sporting berets and straw hats, girls in fancy dresses and boys in short pants, all excitedly anticipating the day's food, baseball games, and dances.⁸⁷ A 1890 photo taken by Alfred Dubuc, a Saint-Henri resident, portrays a more realistic depiction of daily life. A closer look at the clothing of his son, Alex Dubuc, the boy in a white shirt delivering oil for Saint-Henri lamps, and that of his companion, indicates more wear and tear (Figure 4.7).

Daily tram usage reveals a harsher reality. Despite a clamour for service, there is a lack of evidence regarding usage. Studies indicates that most residents walked to work until the early twentieth century, yet in principle, these various forms of transportation were available to people travelling greater distances between home and work from the 1880s through to the 1900s. Local controversies were marked by irritation with the increasing dominance of the monopoly. They comprised requests for more frequent MSRC tram service on Notre-Dame Street, more affordable fares, and complaints regarding the incessant noise, and the speed which caused accidents with trains, carts, bicycles, and other vehicles.

1896 newspaper reports contain requests from the city of Saint-Henri for services comparable to those in Montreal. By 1897, Saint-Henri threatened to take legal recourse against the MSRC if it didn't provide service every five minutes instead of every twenty or thirty.⁸⁸ An excerpt from "Chronique de la Banlieue", a regular *La Presse* column

⁸⁶*La Presse*, 16 juillet 1901, 1; Bradbury, Chapters 4, 5 and 6. It is not known whether local factories gave working children the day off.

⁸⁷*La Presse*, 23 juillet 1898, 5.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 17 juillet 1896, 1; 23 juillet 1896, 1; 6 mai 1898, 5.

Figure 4.7 Dubuc Oil Lamp Delivery on Place Saint-Henri, 1890



Source: SHSH, Fonds Dubuc, 23-PH-29.

in the late 1890s, reports,

La compagnie du tramway n'est pas en odeur de sainteté auprès des citoyens de St-Henri, auprès de ceux surtout qui sont desservis par la ligne de la rue Notre-Dame. Les citoyens allèguent, et ils ont peut-être raison, que la compagnie agit comme si à ses yeux tout était bon pour St-Henri. Si la compagnie a quelque vieux char tout démantibulé (sic), qu'elle n'ose plus mettre sur les autres lignes, elle leur donne inévitablement du service sur la rue Notre-Dame, se disant sans doute: "les citoyens de St-Henri sont de braves gens; ils endureront bien cela en silence." Mais les meilleurs caractères finissent par perdre patience, à St-Henri, comme ailleurs.

Depuis le printemps, la compagnie n'a mis sur la ligne de la rue Notre-Dame qu'un seul tramway ouvert. Ce sont tous de vieux chars qui font un bruit infernal. La nuit, tout le monde est empêché de dormir. Les chars qui font le plus de bruit portent les numéros 268 et 352.

La compagnie ne pourrait-elle pas se montrer plus clément pour les citoyens de la rue Notre-Dame Ouest?⁸⁹

By 1900, as Montreal workers increasingly boarded trams to travel to local factories and shops, the Roads Commission was pressing the company to provide service every two minutes between six and nine in the morning, from noon to two o'clock in the afternoon, and from five to eight o'clock in the evening on Notre-Dame. Montreal city aldermen claimed that few riders used the service outside peak commuter hours.⁹⁰ The city and the company struck a compromise for very frequent service on the portion of Notre-Dame Street in Montreal, every two and a half minutes during these hours, yet by 1901, there were still reports of service at three minute intervals. These schedules and promises in Montreal are not indicative of usage within Saint-Henri. Following complaints by some Saint-Henri citizens that only two cars travelled between Montreal and Côte Saint-Paul Road, Mr. Kennedy of the MSRC promised three-car service and transfers beyond the Grand Trunk tracks at Place Saint-Henri at no extra cost to the consumer.⁹¹

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 15 juillet 1897, 1.

⁹⁰Similar demands were made for more frequent services on other major city streets. *La Presse*, 17 mars 1900, 1.

⁹¹*La Presse*, 29 avril 1901, 1; 3 mai 1901, 10.

Political activism heightened in the late 1890s and early twentieth century. As usage increased and dissatisfaction with the increasing role of monopolies in the development of urban society mounted, Saint-Henri's demands grew. In 1899, A. J. Constantin who headed the firm Constantin and Company, sent a petition to the MSRC with over one hundred and forty signatures from Saint-Henri residents complaining of the deafening noise produced by trams travelling on Notre-Dame and Saint-Jacques.⁹² By 1899, relations between Saint-Henri, Sainte-Cunégonde, and the MSRC had deteriorated to such an extent that the two cities tried to prevent the company from laying electric tracks on Atwater between Saint-Jacques and Saint-Antoine.⁹³ In 1901, Saint-Henri agreed to build a lane for the MSRC on Côte Saint-Paul Road if the company cleaned up its properties on Saint-Jacques Street and provided fifty additional cars on Notre-Dame with transfers beyond the Place Saint-Henri Grand Trunk tracks at no additional cost to riders.⁹⁴

Taken together with public resistance to monopoly control of water and sewers in Saint-Henri and other Montreal suburbs in the early twentieth century, the 1901 Forget-Ross merger of tram and navigation services in the transportation sector led to more widespread protest.⁹⁵ Patrice Dutil notes that, sanctioned by the provincial government, the Montreal Light, Heat and Power's exclusive ownership of wires and equipment effectively established its "*de facto* monopoly of street space."⁹⁶ A tight elite of anglophone and francophone businessmen and politicians consolidated power in a number of municipal services in Montreal and Saint-Henri under the auspices of the Montreal Light,

⁹²*Ibid.*, 12 juillet 1899, 8.

⁹³Bastien and Valiquette had recently paved Atwater, the dividing line between Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde, for the city of Sainte-Cunégonde. This matter was raised at a Montreal City Council Roads Committee meeting. *La Presse*, 12 juin 1899, 8; 15 juin 1899, 1; 3 octobre 1900, 1. By 1905, the MSRC was building a ticket office and waiting room on the northwest corner of Notre-Dame Street and Côte Saint-Paul Road. AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 251, 10561.

⁹⁴*La Presse*, 29 avril 1901, 1; 3 mai 1901, 10.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 9 juillet 1901, 1.

⁹⁶Dutil, 173.

Heat and Power Company through an interlocking web of directorships. Prominent representatives of Montreal's bourgeoisie were backed by Bank of Montreal financing, a capital investment of seventeen million dollars. These men included Senator L.J. Forget, a prominent Sherbrooke Street resident and President of the MSRC and the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company, Rodolphe Forget, President of Royal Electric and the St. Lawrence Light and Power Companies, H. S. Holt and Robert Mackay, President and Directors of the Montreal Gas Company and Canadian General Electric, and James Ross, Director-General of the MSRC and Director of the Bank of Montreal.⁹⁷ As the Montreal Terminal Company attempted to move in on the Montreal Street Railway Company services within the jurisdiction of the City of Montreal in 1900, several workers' delegations presented a petition to the Montreal Roads Committee supporting this move.⁹⁸ Hormisadas Laporte and H.B. Ames voiced opposition to the MSRC's control on council.⁹⁹ Despite the efforts of workers and municipal reformers, by 1901, the MSRC secured further control of the Montreal tramway network through its purchase of the Montreal Park and Island Company.¹⁰⁰

Research indicates significant increases in tram usage by Montreal workers from 1892 to 1901. In order to draw accurate conclusions regarding local tram usage on nineteenth-century Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri, a systematic study could be conducted, comparing and contrasting tram travel in this suburb with Christopher

⁹⁷*La Presse*, 23 mai 1901, 8.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 13 août 1900, 8; 28 septembre, 1900, 2; 18 octobre 1900, 10; 9 juillet 1903, 1.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 18 décembre 1901, 1.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 21 juin 1901, 10; AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 249, 10522. Urban geographer Chris Boone treats the nasty and sometimes comical dispute between the MSRC and the Montreal Park and Island Railway Company in Mile End. It culminated in 1893 when the Mile End Mayor tore up a half-mile of the MSRC's tracks on Parc Avenue. Boone, "The Politics of Transportation," 25-39; STCUM Archives, "Schéma explicatif des créations d'entreprises de leurs fusions, de leurs changements de noms ainsi qu'une chronologie, 1861-1985."

Armstrong's and H.V. Nelles' figures for Montreal and Toronto.¹⁰¹ As political awareness and fear of monopoly control heightened in the late 1890s and early 1900s, pressure for affordable fares increased, allegedly due to Montrealers travelling greater distances daily between home and work. In a study of Canadian mass urban transit, Paul-André Linteau reveals that

Les tramways électriques remportent un succès instantané et attirent une clientèle beaucoup plus considérable que leur prédécesseurs. Ainsi, l'entreprise montréalaise transporte 11 millions de passagers en 1892; ce chiffre grimpe à 60 millions en 1904 et à 107 millions en 1914. En proportion de la main d'oeuvre montréalaise, cela représente un taux d'utilisation de 10,6 % en 1892, de 40,6% en 1901 et de 63,1 % dix ans plus tard; à Toronto, les chiffres correspondants sont de 25,7%, 52,5% et 83,9%.¹⁰²

Linteau claims that the higher speed of the tramway offered an efficient alternative to walking, and that as cities expanded, the distance between work and home increased, and fares became more affordable with higher salaries and reduced rush-hour rates.¹⁰³

Ralph F.H. Hoskins' research findings on the journeys to work of Grand Trunk employees concur with Linteau's conclusions and Armstrong's and Nelles' data. From an analysis of payrolls at the Grand Trunk Railway shop in Pointe Saint-Charles, Hoskins concludes that about ninety per cent of anglophone employees and eighty-two per cent of francophone workers lived within two miles of the shops before 1902. By 1917, forty-five per cent of francophones travelled more than two miles to work. Living beyond practical walking distance, they probably took advantage of 1894 tram electrification.¹⁰⁴ Lured by the promise of reduced fares, workers and municipal reformers thus increasingly supported efforts by competing companies to enter the city. For instance, the Ottawa River

¹⁰¹Armstrong and Nelles, 52-55. Researchers would encounter difficulties estimating tram usage on Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri. Figures on passenger fares and revenue from Annual Reports and minutes in this period are cumulative. These were useful for Nelles' and Armstrong's general observations, but less so for traffic on specific lines. STCUM Archives, "Montreal Street Railway Company Statistical Statement," *Montreal Street Railway Company Annual Report, 1904*.

¹⁰²Linteau, "Le transport en commun," in *Bâtir un pays* (Montréal: Boréal, 1988), 78.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 78-80.

¹⁰⁴Ralph F.H. Hoskins, "An Analysis of the Payrolls of the Point St. Charles Shops of the Grand Trunk Railway," *Cahiers de Géographie du Québec* 33, 90 (décembre 1989): 323-344.

Railway Company presented an offer to the Montreal Roads Committee in 1903 which included selling strips of ten tickets for twenty-five cents for travel anytime during the day.¹⁰⁵

There is little evidence of use of trams by Saint-Henri workers on Notre-Dame Street in this period. A fictional reconstruction of a 1890s merchant daughter's daily life, photos, and newspaper reports of accidents, give scant indication. An excerpt from Françoise Mainville-Desjardins' *Victoria: Saint-Henri des Tanneries (1890)*, a literary interpretation and reconstruction of the lives of two Saint-Henri women, demonstrates that even for the daughter of a 1890s Notre-Dame Street wood merchant, a Sunday tram ride was a special delight:

Marie-Anne apprécie l'agrément des promenades en 'p'tit char' en compagnie de son père, dans l'oisiveté des dimanches après-midi. C'est un plaisir tout neuf que de se laisser griser par la vitesse de ces engins étincelants, qui viennent tout juste de remplacer les chars à chevaux dont le règne est révolu...

Autant les voyages à bord de ces tramways sont agréables en été, autant ils sont pénibles en hiver. Les premières voitures d'hiver étaient chauffées par une petite fournaise au charbon. Si on avait la chance d'être assis près du feu, on était plutôt bien, mais il ne fallait pas s'en éloigner beaucoup pour avoir les pieds gelés, car le rayonnement de la chaleur était bien réduit. Ce confort relatif fut de courte durée.¹⁰⁶

Coverage in *La Presse* of the collision at the Notre-Dame Street crossing which resulted in Annie Ripley's death reveals tram usage by two single working women and two male commuters from neighbouring communities.¹⁰⁷

Traffic on the portions of Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri was much less congested than on the central section in the Montreal business district.¹⁰⁸ As the population of Saint-Henri grew over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth

¹⁰⁵*La Presse*, 11 décembre 1903, 5.

¹⁰⁶Mainville-Desjardins, 156-157; "Vue intérieure, No. 350 Le Rocket, 1892," STCUM photo collection, SS1/7.1, première chemise.

¹⁰⁷STCUM Archives, "Map Showing the Lines of the Montreal Street Railway Company, Montreal Park & Island Railway, and the Suburban Tramway & Power Company, 1905".

¹⁰⁸Lessard, Plates 83 & 86.

centuries, pedestrians and other vehicles, such as bicycles, passenger and delivery carts, competed with trains and trams for street space (Figure 4.7). By the turn of the century, MSRC trams were equipped with fenders, popularly referred to as “bum sweepers”, to pick up pedestrians who fell in front of their vehicules.¹⁰⁹ Around nine-thirty in the morning on July 12, 1899, two young children from Saint-Philippe Street, five and seven-year old Ernest and Émilie Deslauriers were hit by a Notre-Dame Street tram near the Grand Trunk viaduc. Émilie fell into the wire grate or basket in front of the tram, while Ernest averted the tram’s wheels. Both survived.¹¹⁰ Drivers stationed at the nearby *poste de cochers* at the tram transfer point at Place Saint-Henri may have witnessed the accident.¹¹¹ Horses leading carts and *calèches* occasionally replenished at three Notre-Dame Street *abreuvoirs* or drinking troughs and, when freed, sometimes ran loose on city streets.¹¹² At six-thirty in the evening of April 20, 1904, carter Labelle’s horse collided with another horse and cart after frenetically dashing into street traffic.¹¹³

Bicycles became a popular form of transportation and recreation in the 1890s.¹¹⁴

Cycling enthusiasts belonging to the Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde Bicycle Clubs

¹⁰⁹*La Presse*, 2 août 1899, 1; 3 février 1900, 14. This popular appellation alluded to the numerous homeless, drunks, and vagabonds wandering on nineteenth-century city streets. Verbal communication, Yves St-Hilaire, SHSH, October 15, 1998; SHSH, Fonds Dubuc, 60-PH-6. “Car 458, October 31, 1904,” STCUM photo collection, S1/7.1, première chemise.

¹¹⁰*La Presse*, 12 juillet 1899, 8.

¹¹¹AVM, FV, *Pavage*, P49/B6,2, 50.

¹¹²By 1903, three Notre-Dame Street *abreuvoirs* were located at the corners of Rose de Lima, Saint-Ferdinand, and Sainte-Elizabeth. Two others were situated on Saint-Ambroise near Beaudoin and Saint-Jacques near the “Chemin de la Gare”. Installed by the municipality, they cost \$80 each, for a total of \$400. AVM, FCSH, “Bilan de la cité de Saint-Henri au 31 décembre 1903,” *Documents non numérotés*, P23/E3,4, D.

¹¹³*La Presse*, 21 avril 1904, 16.

¹¹⁴McNally, 35; Anita Rush, “The Bicycle Boom of the Gay Nineties: A Reassessment,” *Material History Bulletin* 18 (fall 1983):3–4. In light of their popularity, council introduced \$1.00 bicycle licenses to Saint-Henri in 1897 by virtue of By-law 96. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,2; p. 69. *La Presse*, 26 avril 1899, 10; *La Presse*, 25 mai 1897, 1, 9.

could peddle the course of a circular track in Sainte-Cunégonde.¹¹⁵ Bicycles negotiated city streets as merchants delivered ice, coal, hay, wood, oil, milk, bread, and groceries by cart (Figure 4.7).¹¹⁶ William Rutherford & Sons Company, located on Atwater Avenue in Sainte-Cunégonde, supplied Saint-Henri with sidewalk planks and crosses, and claimed to be one of the few businesses paying city taxes.¹¹⁷ Perceived as a public nuisance by local authorities, street peddlars pulling carts loudly announcing their fruits, vegetables, fish, and other wares, punctuated by occasional trumpet blasts, also enhanced the street atmosphere.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

The treatment of utilities and services in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Saint-Henri indicates that the interests of private capital predominated over the social needs of the majority population, particularly in the 1870s and 1880s. The harsh social conditions induced by late nineteenth-century urbanization and industrialization were of little concern to politicians and businessmen. The provision of utilities and services came into play more in response to crises, than the scientific advance of technological

¹¹⁵Massicotte, *La Cité de Sainte-Cunégonde*, 124.

¹¹⁶F.X. Dubé of 217 Sainte-Marguerite Street delivered wood, coal, and grain to Saint-Henri citizens. "Memorandum, 12 mai 1905," AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 251, 10523. A nearby coal shed was situated in St. Gabriel ward. Goad, *Atlas of the City of Montreal and Vicinity*, Vol. II, Plate 57. Wilson's wood and coal warehouse was located in Saint-Henri. *La Presse*, 28 septembre 1903, 1. "Saint-Henri Provides Relief for Poor from Coal Scarcity," *The Montreal Daily Star*, October 9, 1902, 1. The Dominion Ice Company, south of Saint-Ambroise Street, near the Lachine Canal, was subject to city sanitation inspections. Goad, *Atlas of the City of Montreal and Vicinity*, Vol. II, Plate 61; AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 72, 3939. SHSH, "Commerçants de glace (André & Raymond Brunet)," Fonds Brunet, 12-PH-2; "Laitier (Wilfred Lussier)," Fonds Lussier, 54-PH-1. Employed by Ovila Touchette, Louis Cantin, a milkman, made deliveries on Notre-Dame Street. He appeared as a witness in the 1895 preliminary inquest with regard to Mélina Massé's murder. *La Presse*, 1 juillet 1895, 1; "Le Boulanger," Fonds Laframboise, 41-PH-6; "Le livreur de pain," Fonds Laframboise, 41-PH-5; "Livreur d'Épicerie," Fonds Laframboise, 41-PH-4.

¹¹⁷AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23, E2, 251, 10565.

¹¹⁸By-law 93 obliged street peddlars to purchase city licenses. By-law 98 made provisions for fining loud and musical peddlars. AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23/B2.2; pp. 51-60; 69-70.

improvements. The spread of disease and unsanitary conditions led to the introduction of water and sewage facilities. Garbage, filth, and waste on city streets lent to the construction of paved roads and cement sidewalks. Frequent fires led to the outlawing of wooden buildings.

Municipal politicians in Saint-Henri were generally reticent to regulate utilities and services. Natural monopolies developed as a result, with substantial profits in the hands of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal. Although a trend toward greater regulation resulted in the 1890s and early twentieth century, local leaders only intervened in emergency situations. A 1904 typhoid epidemic prompted legal action against the Montreal Water and Power Company once the infectious causation of disease was linked to water quality. In spite of repeated attempts on the part of local delegations, the federal government also failed to act with regard to the pollution and dangers created by Grand Trunk Railway trains and tracks crossing the community.

The working-class population suffered as a result. Capital was largely in private hands. Attracted by the substantial profits and minimal operating costs of utilities, untaxed individuals, private companies, and monopolies gouged the working-class public. The persistent refusal of the Montreal Water and Power Company to supply clean and filtered water to the community serves as the most extreme example. Municipal reform and worker resistance mounted in the early twentieth century as the perils of working-class life were heightened through monopoly intransigence. Political movements for municipalization and regulation of utilities and services were increasingly sensitized to social concerns and the attainment of decent conditions.

Chapter 5

Celebration

"If boulevards are good --
 Parades come often --
 Then why do historians run away
 From noisy boulevards
 And move into boardinghouses
 On streets too narrow for parades?¹

Although the fanciful musings of a Canadian poet allude to the dwelling of historians on narrow streets on the outskirts of open celebration, parades and processions have captured the historical imagination as ritualistic representations of civic life and symbolic uses of public space. Several historians of the late nineteenth-century North American city, notably Mary Ryan, Susan Davis, and Peter Goheen, believe that parades inform us about power relations, and most treat the parade as a theatrical display of some consensus or 'overarching' ideology.² Bonnie Huskins traces the exclusion of women in Saint John and Halifax parades as a means of regulating female sexuality, with increased female involvement in the late Victorian period, "albeit confined to a limited repertoire of roles".³ In her treatment of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Barcelona, Temma Kaplan interprets parades as expressions of resistance, and views women as vital agents in

¹Deborah Eibel, "Streets Too Narrow for Parades," *Streets Too Narrow for Parades* (Victoria, B.C.: Sono Nis, 1985), 45.

²Ryan, "The American Parade", 131-153; Ryan, *Women in Public*; Ryan, *Civic Wars*, Chapter 6; Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1986), 31; Goheen, "The Ritual of the Streets in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11 (1993): 127-145; Goheen, "Parading as a Lively Tradition in early Victorian Toronto," in *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective*, eds. Alan R. H. Baker and Bigger, Gideon (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 330-351; Goheen, "Symbols in the Streets: Parades in Victorian Upper Canada," *UHR/RHU* XIII, 3 (February 1990):237-243; Alan Gordon, "Contested Terrain: The Politics of Public Memory in Montreal, 1891-1930," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], Queen's, 1997), 249-286; Gordon, "Inventing Tradition: Montreal's Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day Re-examined," CHA Conference, June 1996; Michèle Guay, "Fête de la Saint-Jean Baptiste à Montréal, 1834-1909," (Thèse de maîtrise [histoire], Université d'Ottawa, 1972).

³Bonnie Huskins, "The Ceremonial Space of Women: Public Processions in Victorian Saint John and Halifax," in *Separate Spheres*, eds. Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 1994), 145-159.

protest organization.⁴ Christine Sheito perceives contestation in her analysis of the *Fête-Dieu* or procession or the Feast of Corpus Christi in late nineteenth-century Montreal.⁵

The Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade was only one of many parades in late nineteenth-century Montreal. It played a central role in forming French-Canadian identities, in contrast to the Saint Patrick's parade and other expressions of ethnic and religious identities.⁶

Saint-Jean was traditionally a Midsummer Night, with all its pagan and medieval overtones. The *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* was a mate of the Saint Patrick's Society in the 1830s, when the several 'national' societies organized mutual visitations and toasted each others' cultures. In the late nineteenth-century, people often stayed up until all hours of the night, viewing fireworks, listening to public pronouncements, and partaking of an abundance of food, drink, and entertainment.⁷

I interpret the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade of the late nineteenth century as a special event of ceremonial and symbolic significance which utilized religious and nationalist celebration as a means of maintaining order on city streets. Power relations were manipulated by the local elite. Parades served as a concealment, rather than a revelation of class, and a subordination, rather than a display of womanhood. I shall employ two specific parades, one which took place within the community in 1898, and city-wide celebrations in 1899, comparing the order of presenters and parade routes to reflect social hierarchy and class allocation. In the little parade on the margins of the city, special

⁴Kaplan, *Red City, Blue Period*, Chapter 1; Kaplan, "Civic Rituals and Patterns of Resistance in Barcelona, 1890-1930," in *The Power of the Past*, eds. P. Thane, G. Crossick, and R. Floud (Cambridge: University Press, 1984), 173-193.

⁵Christine Sheito, "Une fête contestée: la procession de la Fête-Dieu à Montréal, au XIXe siècle," (Thèse de maîtrise [anthropologie], Université de Montréal, 1983).

⁶Rosalyn Trigger, a McGill doctoral student, is exploring the role of the 'national' parish in shaping Montreal's Irish-Catholic community. Rosalyn Trigger, "The Parish as a Binding Force: Maintaining Irish-Catholic Communal Identity in nineteenth-century Montreal," Canadian Studies Graduate Students' Conference, McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, February 1998.

⁷Napoléon Demers was inebriated after festivities in Sohmer Park on June 24, 1895. *La Presse*, 24 juin 1895, 6; 28 juin 1895, 6; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6; *The Gazette*, July 30, 1895, 3; July 31, 1895, 4; Yvan Lamonde, Raymond Montpetit, *Le Parc Sohmer de Montréal, 1889-1919* (Québec: IQRC, 1989).

attention is given to a Catholic identity, gendered participation, and the manipulation of historical figures as symbols of French-Canadian nationalism. I inquire as to whether there are any elements of resistance in the Saint-Henri scene and if not, why not.

Mary Ryan points to the spectacle of the parade as expressing a sense of community on the principal streets of the city, with important changes over time. The transition to industrial capitalism was characterized by more pronounced class and gender divisions, and parades increasingly reflected social cleavages. The uses of the streets became more restricted; parades were tightly organized and policed. A defined urban social structure was represented in spatial segments on local sites of social life, with an implicit political theory and a prescribed notion of popular sovereignty. Parades were exclusively male affairs, icons of femininity proliferated, and ethnic, religious, and racial groups organized independent parades.⁸

For Susan Davis, parades were shaped by power relations in the city. Late nineteenth-century city streets gave the illusion of freedom, yet "paradoxically, while the social life of the city became more complicated and varied, some of the uses of open space were more contested, as the propertied worried about how public spaces should be used and what public events communicated."⁹ The propertied classes in late nineteenth-century Philadelphia employed the parade to present an image of consensus and unity through selective representations of white manhood. Contradictions existed between the available repertoire of structured public performances and social expressions of vernacular and popular culture. Uneasy about the gatherings of poor people, respectable propertied men organized parades as ceremonious images of the city's social makeup, excluding marginalized groups, such as the working classes, women, and blacks.¹⁰ Parades were thus political acts, not only patterned by social forces, but "part of the very building and

⁸Ryan, "The American Parade", 131-153; Ryan, *Women in Public*; Ryan, *Civic Wars*, Chapter 6.

⁹Davis, *Parades and Power*, 31.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, Chapters 1, 2, 5, & 6.

challenging of social relations.”¹¹ Parades were modes of propaganda, recreation, local celebration, and national commemoration.¹²

Temma Kaplan treats parades and processions in late nineteenth-century Barcelona as forms of ritual and political resistance. Parades presented the ‘common people’ with visual statements about what was going on in their community and where political lines were drawn. Values were not necessarily shared by all. In the streets, the ‘common people’ and the elite defined themselves in opposition to each other. Kaplan emphasizes human agency and the agency of women. She views the portrayal of women through religious symbolism as an indicator of power. Women were also active members in the community, political antagonists who took to the streets in struggles with the city’s establishment, the clergy, and secular republicans.¹³

In Canada, Peter Goheen interprets the ritual of the streets in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto as an adjudication of social conflict and an attempt to build consensus through the manipulation and control of the streets as a valuable collective asset.¹⁴ He views the 1884 Semi-Centennial Celebrations in Toronto as a ‘pageant of progress’, marked by negotiations which involved a conflict between people’s claims to public space and the political imposition of regulation and order on city streets.¹⁵ Goheen also compares the Thomas D’Arcy McGee funeral procession in Montreal in April 1868 and a Worker’s Day parade in Hamilton in May 1872 as selective images of Irish Catholic and working-class identity.¹⁶ Alan Gordon renders the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade in Montreal as a significant event that testified to the importance of religious and nationalist heroes in

¹¹*Ibid.*, 5.

¹²*Ibid.*, Chapters 1, 2, 5, & 6.

¹³Kaplan, *Red City, Blue Period*, Chapter 1; Kaplan, “Civic Rituals”, 173-193.

¹⁴Goheen, “The Ritual of the Streets”, 127-145; Goheen, “Parading”, 330-351.

¹⁵Goheen, “Creating Public Space”, 245-252.

¹⁶Goheen, “Symbols in the Streets”, 237-243.

the public memory of French Canada.¹⁷ Michèle Guay traces the resurgence of Saint-Jean-Baptiste parades from 1894 to 1909 to the outgrowth of religious nationalism in the 1830s.¹⁸

Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parades, 1895-1899

June 24, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, was the peak religious and national holiday of the year in late nineteenth-century Quebec. In Saint-Henri, a dominantly French-Canadian and Catholic community, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade was a special occasion filled with pomp and circumstance for the working masses, which signalled the beginning of the summer season. In addition to sports and recreational activities ranging from street hockey to organized baseball tournaments and cycling clubs, participation in a local band or *funfare*, and literary and dramatic societies,¹⁹ spontaneous political victories took to the streets of Saint-Henri and formal holiday and funeral processions and parades occurred.²⁰ Apart from special holidays, Sundays were the only days off for many workers.²¹ Sunday mass was an opportunity to socialize with neighbours. On a summer evening, one could venture to Parc Saint-Henri where local musicians, a peanut stand, and a merry go-round offered diversion²² or to Sohmer Park in Montreal to observe weightlifting tournaments, musical and dramatic events.²³ These 'moments of pleasure' complement the harsh

¹⁷Gordon, "Contested Terrain", 249-286; Gordon, "Inventing Tradition".

¹⁸Guay, "Fête de la Saint-Jean Baptiste à Montréal, 1834-1909".

¹⁹*La Presse*, 20 août 1897, 1; 14 octobre 1897, 1; 24 janvier 1895, 6; AVM, FCSH, *Procès-verbaux*, 26 avril 1905 (Cercle dramatique, founded 1876).

²⁰*La Presse*, 15 mai 1896, 1; 13 novembre 1896, 1; 16 novembre 1896, 8; 8 octobre 1897, 1; 9 octobre 1897, 8; 18 janvier 1898, 1; 17 février 1899, 8; 2 mai 1899, 1.

²¹McCullough, 165.

²²*The Montreal Daily Star*, June 29, 1895, 7.

²³*La Presse*, 24 juin 1895, 6; 28 juin 1895, 6; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6; *The Gazette*, July 30, 1895, 3; July 31, 1895, 4; Lamonde, et Montpetit, *Le Parc Sohmer*.

realities of everyday life, the *grande misère*, presented in socio-economic studies of working-class history.²⁴ Recreational pursuits and special religious occasions punctuated the rhythms of everyday street life.

Five Saint-Jean-Baptiste parades which took place on Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri in the late nineteenth century present a common identity rallied around religious nationalism, characterized by popular forms of recreation and the dominance of a male elite. From 1895 to 1899, the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* organized both central and local parades. According to Michèle Guay, the changes in parade venues and the extent of celebration are explained by political and economic circumstances. After the economic crisis of 1893, there was a resurgence of parades in the late 1890s. In 1894, each section requested its own parade.²⁵ The suburbs of the southwest portion of the city celebrated together in 1895, with a route beginning in Saint-Henri, and extending to Pointe Sainte-Charles and Sainte-Cunégonde. Saint-Henri also had a section in the Montreal parade.²⁶ In 1896, a federal election year, the Montreal parade was subdued, and the eastern and western sections of the city held separate celebrations. On the occasion of Queen Victoria's sixtieth birthday in 1897, Saint-Jean-Baptiste festivities in Montreal celebrated both English and French, Protestant and Catholic traditions. In 1898 and 1899, local chapters of the society came together from all sections of the city to proceed along Notre-Dame Street, and separate celebrations also took place.²⁷ Municipal councils and newspapers instructed citizens to adorn homes along the procession routes with flags.²⁸ Centralized celebrations were marked by a mass at Notre-Dame Cathedral and fireworks at Sohmer Park, Parc

²⁴Bradbury, *Working Families*; Copp, *Anatomy of Poverty*. Bryan Palmer emphasizes the importance of recreation and ritual in working-class life. Palmer, *Culture in Conflict* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1979), 58-60.

²⁵Guay, 88-134, 246-317.

²⁶*La Presse*, 27 juin 1895, 6; 28 juin 1895, 1; Guay, 101.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 22 mai 1896, 7; 19 juin 1896, 1; 27 juin 1896, 1; 14 juin 1897, 1; 16 juin 1897, 1; 27 juin 1898, 1; 23 juin 1899, 1; Guay, 102-130.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 27 juin 1895, 6.

Lafontaine, on Mount Royal or Île Sainte-Hélène.²⁹ Saint-Henri held its own mass, followed by a banquet, speeches, and fireworks.³⁰

Given the widespread fear of the volatility of the streets, the ordering of the urban environment was a dominant characteristic of late nineteenth-century parades. The propertied classes sought to convey a sense of respectability and classlessness, which stood in stark contrast to labour disputes and incidents of street crime.³¹ Exercised to varying degrees, distinctions of class and social structure were inscribed in parades, and dependent on the site and the social constituency served.³² Although the logical linear arrangement may have been arbitrary,³³ Tables 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that four categories were inscribed in the SSJB parade: Catholic church organizations, interlocking social activities of the neighbourhood, occupational identities, and sports. One-third of the organizations in the SSJB parades were strongly influenced and promoted by the Catholic church: two parishes, the school commission, Collège Saint-Henri, a boys' school administered by the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, the Union Saint-Joseph, a mutual aid society, the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul,³⁴ a benevolent association, and the League of the Sacred Heart, a morality and censorship group. The SSJB was one of the only church organizations that was not subject to clerical management. In her study of the Montreal parish of Saint-Pierre-Apôtre, Lucia Ferretti has demonstrated that parishes played an active

²⁹Guay, 99-130, 257-308.

³⁰*La Presse*, 27 juin 1895, 6; 16 juin 1897, 1; 27 juin 1898, 1; 23 juin 1899, 1.

³¹Social disorder is treated in Chapter 6.

³²Prominent parades in Toronto and Philadelphia had distinct divisions. Goheen, "The Ritual of the Streets", 134; Davis, 1-3.

³³Ryan, "The American Parade", 143.

³⁴Éric Vaillancourt, a UQAM doctoral student, is conducting a study of the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society. Éric Vaillancourt, "La société Saint-Vincent-de-Paul: acteur social et religieux de première importance, 1848-1930," Communication présentée à la Société historique de Montréal, 25 mars 2000.

role as a form of community expression and local control.³⁵ In 1898, parish life for the majority Roman Catholic population³⁶ was organized around two churches, Église Saint-Henri and Église Sainte-Élisabeth. Église Saint-Henri was built in 1869-1870 on a site

Table 5.1
Order of Procession, 1898 Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parade

1. A group of bicyclists	16. Float of electricians
2. Saint-Henri Fire Brigade	17. "Le Canadien" Snowshoeing Club
3. Fanfare Saint-Henri	18. "La Canadienne" ball club
4. Students from Collège Saint-Henri	19. A baseball club
5. League of the Sacred Heart	20. Saint-Jean-Baptiste float of St-Henri*
6. Canadian Foresters	21. Security force dressed as a cavalcade of cowboys
7. Independent Foresters	22. Representatives from Sainte-Cunégonde
8. Catholic Foresters	23. Notre-Dame de Grâce SSJB float
9. L'Alliance Nationale	24. Citizens from Saint-Henri and Sainte-Elisabeth parishes
10. Canadian Mutual Benefits Association	25. School Commission
11. Union Saint-Joseph	26. Saint-Henri municipal council
12. Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society	27. The organizing committee
13. Float representing a working forge	
14. Float of plumbers	
15. Float of printers	

Source: *La Presse*, 27 juin 1898, 1.

chosen by Monseigneur Ignace Bourget as part of the initial dismemberment of the Montreal parish.³⁷ It was situated at the town centre on Place Saint-Henri, known in 1890-

³⁵Lucia Ferretti, *Entre voisins* (Montréal: Boréal, 1992).

³⁶In 1881 and 1891, Roman Catholics accounted for 93 to 93.5 per cent of Saint-Henri's population. People belonging to various Protestant sects also lived in the community, as did several Jews. By 1901, owing to the rising influx of Protestants, the proportion of Roman Catholics fell to 88.5 per cent, while people belonging to several Protestant denominations composed 11 per cent of the population. A small minority of Jews, Mennonites, and people belonging to various unnamed sects and with unspecified religious affiliations made up the balance. *Census of Canada, 1880-81*, Vol. 1, Table II, 154-155. In 1891, Protestants made up 6 per cent and Jews and others, the remaining one per cent. *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, Vol. 1, Table IV, 3-4-305; *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1, Table X, 240-241.

³⁷In 1905, a third parish, Sainte-Irénée was established, and five Roman Catholic colleges and convents existed. Chambers, 297, 302; Auclair, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries*, 21, 74, 84, 87; CCA, Fonds Ludger Lemieux, *Bâtiments divers*, chemises numéro 2 & 3; Le groupe d'animation urbaine, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries*, 28; Communauté urbaine de Montréal, *Architecture religieuses I: Les Églises*, 222-223. Protestants appear to have belonged to three main sects, Episcopal (Anglican), Methodist, and Evangelist, and could attend Prince Albert College. St. Simon's Episcopal Church was located on Notre-Dame at the corner of Sainte-Élisabeth, across from the city's second fire station. *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1904-05*, 429; Chambers, 302 (pictures of St. Simon's and Saint-Henri's Methodist Church).

91 as Notre-Dame Street (Figures 3.2 & 4.6). The second parish of Sainte-Élisabeth was created under the stable administration of Curé Rémi Décarie in 1892.³⁸

The parade reveals a Catholic view of corporatism and relations between classes. By the 1890s the church was attentive to promoting a certain idea of mutual interdependence to overcome the class antagonisms thought so threatening to society. The inclusion of occupational identities, a mix of traditional (a working forge and printers) and modern trades (plumbers and electricians) and sporting activities is an attempt to conceal rather than reveal class differences. In the 1899 parade in particular, the official image Saint-Henri

Table 5.2

Order of Procession, 1899 Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parade

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. J. Brault, Commanding Officer | 12. Dramatic Society with floats representing Tragedy and Comedy |
| 2. Fanfare de Saint-Henri | 13. French-Canadian craftspeople |
| 3. A congregation of men | 14. Electricians with car |
| 4. Union Saint-Joseph de Saint-Henri | 15. League of the Sacred Heart |
| 5. Float of Jacques Cartier's arrival in Canada | 16. Cercle des Intimes |
| 6. L'Alliance Nationale | 17. Blacksmiths and carter float |
| 7. Canadian Mutual Benefits Association | 18. Float of Dollard des Ormeaux and his companions |
| 8. Carpenters and joiners float | 19. Cavalcade of Business |
| 9. Catholic Foresters | 20. Bicyclist Brigade |
| 10. Baseball Club | 21. Float of Saint-Jean-Baptiste |
| 11. Canadian Foresters | 22. Saint-Henri municipal council and School Commission |

Source: *La Presse*, 23 juin 1899, 1.

projected was generally business and corporate. The Montreal parade gave more prominence to the organizational efforts of the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste*.³⁹ The inclusion of a group of businessmen and a local dramatic society points to the official nature of the Montreal parade and the prominence of a petite bourgeoisie and local elite. The local parade, by contrast, was more informal in tone and was led by a group of cyclists and included a security force dressed as cowboys. The local street band and ordinary

³⁸Auclair, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries*, 74.

³⁹Jean-Pierre Blain, "L'idéologie nationaliste de la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montréal," (Thèse de maîtrise [science politique], Université de Montréal, 1964).

citizens are featured in both parades. Official representatives of the local elite, the school commission, municipal government, and organizing committee, bring up the rear. Of note is the special attention given to skilled workers, the more privileged members of the working classes.

According to Alan Metcalfe, many young men, especially working-class and 'aspiring-to-better', took part in organized sports in the 1890s. Bicycling was a new and fashionable activity, and baseball, snowshoeing, and other clubs were also quite popular.⁴⁰ Varda Burstyn interprets this trend as the emergence of a masculinity based on competitive elements which nurtured the practices and ideology of business and capitalism.⁴¹

The current class hierarchy and political and social forces are illustrated in the exclusion of specific groups, notably women, unskilled labourers, and the marginal classes. The community conveyed a civic and religious image which was homogeneous, that of a dominantly white male and francophone Catholic elite. Jean-Pierre Blain notes that membership in the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* was restricted to reputable French-Canadian Catholics committed to a nationalist ideology and the preservation of the culture and language of French Canada, and that the increasingly bourgeois character of the society was an issue of internal dispute in the early twentieth century.⁴² The historical figures presented in the allegorical floats were male symbols of religious nationalism. The selection of the male child to portray Saint-Jean-Baptiste was subject to local competition, and a source of pride for the chosen family, with *La Presse* publishing sketches of the little Saint-Jean-Baptistes.⁴³ Combining religious and civic purposes, Saint-Jean-Baptiste appears with his lamb emblazoned with visual symbols of French-Canadian nationalism,

⁴⁰Alan Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987).

⁴¹Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1999), Chapters 1, 2 & 3.

⁴²Blain, 5-9, 27.

⁴³*La Presse*, 22 juin 1901, 1.

Figure 5.1 Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parade at Place Saint-Henri, 1896



Source: *Le Monde Illustré*, 11 juillet 1896, 166; Reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 11.

maple leaves and the flags of Britain and France in a *La Presse* supplement in 1898.⁴⁴ The selection of the son of Narcisse Trudel, the town secretary, in 1898 and in 1905, the son of Joseph Richer, a Saint-Henri mill-owner, attests to the importance of the local elite.⁴⁵

Women do not appear as active participants in a photograph and sketch of SSBJ parades in 1896 and 1899 (Figures 5.1 & 5.2). Women did not take part in the organization of these parades; there is no evidence of women on floats, and the gender symbolism was exclusively male until the early twentieth century.⁴⁶ As Mary Ryan and Susan Davis have noted in late nineteenth-century American parades, the female presence was confined to that of onlookers.⁴⁷ According to Michèle Guay, women requested participation in the *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste* in the early 1900s, when they formed a separate committee.⁴⁸ The role of children was also limited. Young boys were employed as central religious symbols, and children appeared as decorative elements on floats and as participants in marching bands (Figures 5.2 & 7.8). Instead, the children lined the curbs, observing a parade designed to impress them.

Dignity is an important motif. The working classes aspired to dignity, a self-respect and mutual respect, cherished values which were often denied in everyday life. Women, men, and children donned their Sunday bests on a special day that was charged with an atmosphere of bright colours, carriages, and martial music. A photographer from the Saint-Denis Street firm Laprès and Lavergne was positioned on the steps of Église Saint-Henri to capture a bird-eye's view of an allegorical float of Saint-Jean-Baptiste and

⁴⁴Guay, 27. The SSJB also promoted the *fleurs de lys* as a symbol of French-Canadian nationalism. Blain, 7.

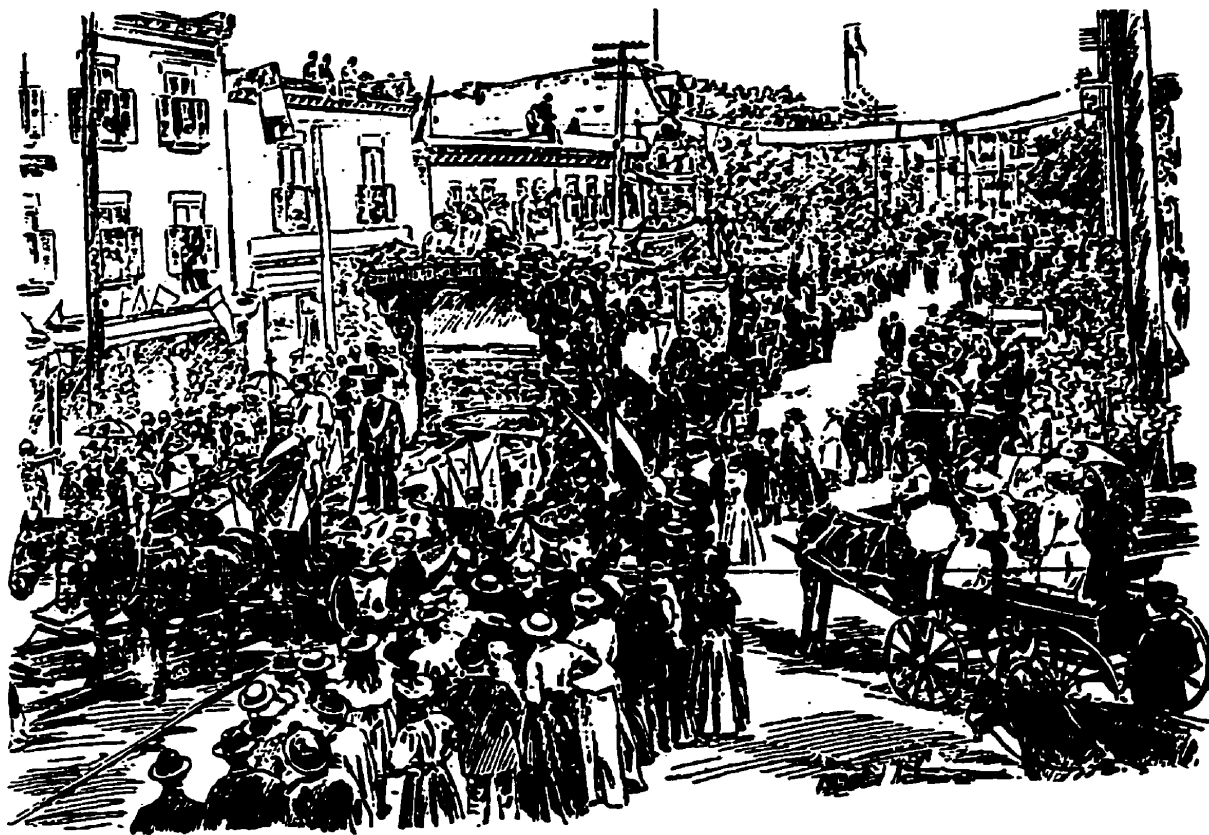
⁴⁵*La Presse*, 23 juin 1899, 1; 16 juin 1905, 1.

⁴⁶A female appears for the first time as part of national celebrations in a coloured sketch on the front page of *La Presse* in 1904. A woman draped in white plays a trumpet and holds a *tricolore*, with the little Saint-Jean Baptiste at her feet. Guay, 285-286.

⁴⁷Ryan, "The American Parade", 147; Ryan, *Women in Public*, 19-20; Ryan, *Civic Wars*, 244-251; Davis, 47.

⁴⁸Guay, 307-308.

Figure 5.2 Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parade in Montreal, 1899



Source: *La Presse*, 23 juin 1899, 1.

the *Fanfare Saint-Henri* proceeding along Saint-Jacques Street to Notre-Dame Street in 1896 (Figure 5.1). *Fleurdelysés* and Union Jacks waved in the breeze of a bright summer's day as an orderly succession of male dignitaries marched alongside the float and an electric tram on its tracks. A group of predominantly male spectators stood on the steps of a Post Office, store, and hotel, the institutional and commercial establishments of Place Saint-Henri. Clearly distanced from the formality of the public procession were the polite Victorian women poised beneath their umbrellas on the sidewalk in front of the parish church.

The same firm was responsible for a sketch of a more elaborate SSBJ parade along Notre-Dame Street as part of celebrations in the western section of the city in 1899 (Figure 5.2). The artist gives prominence to the temperance float from the Saint-Pierre parish where an official dignitary stood posed in the front of a horse-drawn carriage with children on top. A throng of men and women were positioned attentively in the foreground. Most spectators stood on the sidewalk, some sat in carts, children were perched in windows, and still others sat on the roofs of buildings where citizens of Sainte-Cunégonde proudly displayed a flag of Ireland as public testimony to their ethnic pride.⁴⁹

The introduction of allegorical floats with male historical figures in the late 1890s signifies the symbolic role of French-Canadian nationalism and a civic identity associated with a specific hero. Although Marguerite Bourgeoys, Jeanne Mance, and the Virgin Mary figure prominently as heroines in the pantheon of French-Canadian national and religious symbolism, they do not appear in these floats. After 1897, Jacques Cartier and Dollard des Ormeaux figure prominently in Saint-Henri floats (Table 5.2).⁵⁰ There is also a renaissance of these heroes in the mid-1890s and early 1900s when the anglophone bourgeoisie also adopts them on plaques and memorials in Place d'Armes and central parts of Montreal.⁵¹ The arrival of Jacques Cartier in Canada took on a particular significance for

⁴⁹*La Presse*, 23 juin 1899, 1.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 14 juin 1897, 1.

⁵¹Alan Gordon, "Contested Terrain: The Politics of Public Memory in Montreal, 1891-1930," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], Queen's University, 1997).

Figure 5.3 Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parade Route in Saint-Henri, 1898



Source: *La Presse*, 27 juin 1898, 1.

the local elite of Saint-Henri.⁵² Sculpted by Joseph-Arthur Vincent, a monument of Jacques Cartier was erected in 1893 in Square Saint-Henri, also referred to as Parc Saint-Henri, alongside the homes of the petite bourgeoisie and the local elite.⁵³ The historical significance of the arrival of European explorers and the conquest of the territory of native inhabitants is further attested by Dollard des Ormeaux's struggle with natives at Long Sault in 1660.⁵⁴

A historical monograph could treat the symbolic importance of different parades in late nineteenth-century Montreal. SSJB parades can reflect the power relations of the late nineteenth-century city in a multitude of ways, drawing connections between an ideology of religious nationalism, class assignation and gendered representation, political and social forces which were played out on the streets in a prescribed manner. A comparison of the routes of a Montreal parade in 1899 and a local parade in 1898 reveals a hierarchy in the importance of streets and the places which were invested with symbolic meaning. The 1899 parade proceeded westward along Saint-Jacques Street from Victoria Square to Place Saint-Henri and then turned eastward along Notre-Dame Street, ending with a mass at Notre-Dame Church (Figure 5.2).⁵⁵ This route reflects a claim to the public space of the two major business streets of late nineteenth-century Montreal, Notre-Dame Street and Saint-Jacques, by the francophone Catholic majority of the southwest portion of the city. It also draws attention to the importance of the main street as a link to Montreal and of Place Saint-Henri as the symbolic center of the community invested with social meaning. The elaborate adornment of the city center is noted by the colourful description of a *La Presse* reporter:

Le trait saillant de tout cela, était l'arc énorme de verdure, élevé à l'hôtel de ville de Saint-Henri, par les soins du conseil municipal, sous la direction de M. Blais, inspecteur de la municipalité. Sur cet arc qui avait une quarantaine de pieds

⁵²Société historique de Montréal, *Colloque Jacques Cartier* (Montréal: auteurs, 1985).

⁵³Belisle, 6-7; Denis Martin, *Portraits des héros de la Nouvelle-France* (Ville de LaSalle: Hurtubise HMH, 1988), 85-86.

⁵⁴Patrice Groulx, *Pièges de la mémoire* (Hull: Patrice Groulx et Editions Vents d'Ouest, 1998).

⁵⁵*La Presse*, 23 juin 1899, 1.

en hauteur, au delà de 200 enfants, de l'école des Frères, avaient pris place, avec une soixantaine d'autres personnes. Cette multitude d'enfants, groupés par ordre sur de gradins, produisait d'en bas, un éclatant coup d'oeil parmi eux, par leur belle contenance. Si l'on ajoute à tout ce déploiement, la splendeur d'une journée ensoleillée, ni trop chaude, ni trop froide, le carillon endiablant des cloches sonnant à pleines envolées, et la senteur grisante qui montait ce frissonnement d'érables coupés de frais, on aura une idée de cette fête pittoresque, destinée à défrayer longtemps le souvenir de ceux qui y ont assisté, et particulièrement des étrangers.⁵⁶

The routes designated for parades and processions in late nineteenth-century Montreal reflect a social ordering of public space along class, ethnic, and religious lines. Beginning at Parc Saint-Henri and ending at Place Saint-Henri, places invested with symbolic meaning for the local elite and the broader community, a 1898 parade proceeded on main commercial streets, but also on adjoining streets in each ward of the city (Figure 5.3).

Conclusion

As an instrument of power in the hands of the propertied classes, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade conveyed an image of order, respectability, and classlessness designed to promote an ideology of religious nationalism on the late nineteenth-century streets of Saint-Henri. These interests were deployed through the manipulation of male historical figures. As a ritualistic form of religious and civic celebration, the parade presented a narrow range of social relations, largely confined to political, recreational, and religious associations. The spectacle excluded the presentation of many people, notably women, unskilled labourers, and the marginal classes.

The motif of dignity is an important characteristic of religious parades. It serves to enhance the concealment of class and the promotion of social order inherent to the Catholic view of corporatism. In part, these factors explain the absence of elements of resistance noted from a limited range of sources. It is left to the following chapter to examine further attempts on the part of the locale elite to order public space and the negotiation, transgression, and resistance involved in the broad range of visible social forces which constitute a genuine community life.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

Chapter 6

Negotiation, Transgression, and Resistance

A regular column in *La Presse* in the late 1890s entitled “Chronique de la Banlieue” reports a scene on Saint-Jacques Street in Saint-Henri on the morning of April 26, 1897. A dozen police constables, in shirtsleeves and rubber boots, were scraping mud off the road. Spectators lined the wooden sidewalks, observing the policemen performing a job normally carried out by city labourers, while a coterie of substantial property owners, *les grands contribuables*, stood bemused. A group of unemployed day labourers who had been deprived of pennies to feed their families grumbled about the recent layoffs due to municipal budget cuts. A neighbourhood drunk, who was picked up by the police a couple of times a week, seemed amused to see authority figures engaged in such a humiliating task, doing extra work to make up for their reduced salaries.¹

In this tableau, the simple act of removing mud from a road surface encapsulates various visions of the nineteenth-century street, where class contention and differing ideologies were played out in the politics of public space. Committed to an ideology of economic liberalism and Victorian progress, the decisions of owners who dominated council had serious implications with regard to the several classes of larger tenant population. Streets were sites of political negotiation, social transgression, and considerable resistance. This chapter treats the local elite’s concerns with ‘boosterism’, that is incentives to attract industry, to promote land values, and indirectly, their own social, financial, and political success. Class relations involved strategies of negotiation or accomodation of the needs of the majority renting classes. Some of these people appear in the opening street scene: the more privileged members of the working classes represented by the policemen, and the vast majority of renting poor and marginal classes, personified in the group of disenchanted and unemployed day labourers and the local recidivist.

¹*La Presse*, 26 avril 1897, 1.

In an age of unbridled capitalism and a state dominated by the interests of property, the enhancement of the elite's wealth and prosperity overshadowed the social need. This led to resistance, particularly as the municipal debt approached two million dollars in the late 1890s. Taxpayers increasingly opposed generous incentives to industry and street expropriations. A considerable faction of Saint-Henri citizens followed the example of other Montreal suburbs by pressing for annexation to the City of Montreal. Studies of the suburbs of Maisonneuve and Notre-Dame de Grâces indicate that the burden of municipal debt mounted in the years preceding annexation. The involvement with municipal debt in Saint-Henri appears to have been similar, but more long-term. Owing to minimal tax revenue and considerable expenditures, the debt accumulated over ten to fifteen years prior to annexation. The political clout of the municipal elite effectively subjugated pro-annexation forces until 1905.

The volatility of the streets presented another dilemma for local leaders. Street crime contravened the notion of bourgeois propriety and order. I shall show that the limitation of tavern licenses was one attempt at social control and moral regulation of urban street space. Through a command of public space, the transgressions of the working and marginal classes demonstrate resistance to the ideology and practices of the dominant classes. Contestation of local street space challenged the prevalent liberal ideology which sought to convey a sense of class harmony, a euphemism for bourgeois domination. Ignoring the nice distinctions of public and private space, working-class culture spilled onto the streets not solely in forms of sociability, but also in contravention of local by-laws monitoring and regulating street behaviour. Drunk and disorderly conduct accounted for most arrests in this period. Prostitution was largely confined to brothels on secondary streets. Theft and other petty crimes occurred; local recidivists screamed and loitered on streets.

Role of the Municipality

"All politics are local."²

The ideology of economic liberalism was integral to the development of the modern Western state and the rising political and social status of a nascent bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie. To a considerable extent, it shaped the political practices of the bourgeois classes in England as they were wresting power from a landed aristocracy in the wake of the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³ Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, one of the early documents of liberal discourse in modern history, outlines a political philosophy which legitimized the practices of natural order, the spatial practices of inclusion and exclusion, and the productive power of the economy driven by the consumptive ability of the wealthy.⁴ Victorian liberal economists involved Smith's work to justify the pursuit of individual self-interest in an expanding free market.⁵

In large measure, economic liberalism conditioned the political practices of a local elite dominating government in many North American municipalities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The growth in the powers of municipal government in this period abetted the role of the local elite as active agents of economic and urban development.⁶ The increasing involvement of contractors, entrepreneurs, merchants, professionals, and businessmen resulted in state intervention favouring their interests.

²The late Tip O'Neill, U.S. Democratic Congressman, cited on CBC *This Morning* radio broadcast, November 13, 1998.

³Thompson, *Customs in Common* (New York: New Press, 1991), 18-32, 87-90, 95-96.

⁴Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁵Smith, ix; Shapiro, 54.

⁶Wickett, ed., *Municipal Government in Canada; Saint-Pierre, L'évolution municipale du Québec des régions*, 61-75.

Through the politics of boosterism,⁷ specifically land and industrial promotion, municipal leaders across Canada and the United States demonstrated a firm belief in the maximization of material benefits to the lowest members of society.⁸ In the mindset of the elite of industrial towns such as Saint-Henri, greater economic productivity meant more jobs for local workers and increased political support. I address the vigorous policy of industrial development by the mayor and council which became a major bone of contention and led in 1905 to the demise of the municipal corporation. The questions addressed are: Was their 'bonusing policy' a success or failure? While it was wrapped in a rhetoric of economic liberalism, this behaviour of the local state is quite the opposite of 'laissez-faire'. Was it therefore necessary? Did it pay off? Who reaped the benefits?

Boosterism entailed an aggressive policy of land and industrial promotion in Quebec towns and cities during these years. Paul-André Linteau has demonstrated in his study of Maisonneuve how land promotion schemes and municipal contracts enhanced the profits of francophone businessmen in the development of an industrial Montreal suburb in a later period.⁹ Although evidence points to active land promotion in Saint-Henri as well,¹⁰ my attention focuses on bonusing, tax exemptions, and other incentives to attract industry.

⁷A voluminous literature in the 1970s and 1980s explored the role of the local elite in boosting towns and cities: Carl Abbott, *Boosters and Businessmen* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), Chapter 4; Alan F.J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913," and Paul Voisey, "Boosting the Small Prairie Town, 1904-1931: An Example from Southern Alberta," *Town and City* (Regina: Canadian Plains, 1981), 209-235, 147-176; Artibise, "Continuity and Change: Elites and Prairie Urban Development, 1914-1950," *The Usable Urban Past* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), 130-165; Artibise, *Winnipeg*; Max Foran, *Calgary* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1978); Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History* VIII (May 1975): 77-101; John C. Weaver, "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal: Businessmen and Boosters in Canadian Civic Reform, 1890-1920," *Papers of the Western Canada Urban History Conference*, Winnipeg, October 1974 (Ottawa: National Museum, 1975), 48-73; Peter Ennals, "Cobourg and Port Hope: The Struggle for Control of the 'Back Country,'" in *Perspectives on Landscape and Settlement in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 183-195.

⁸Smith, ix.

⁹Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, Chapter 2.

¹⁰"Lots à Vendre, Conditions Faciles," ANQM, Fonds Achille-Cléophile-Amédée Bissonnette, CN699, S1, P1; *The Montreal Gazette*, June 21, 1895, 5 (land promotion ad); "Plan de Terrains à Vendre, C.H. Letourneux," AVM, FCSH, *Plans*, P23/F.2.

A bonus is a cash payment to attract new industry or a subsidy to prevent an existing industry from moving elsewhere. The practice of granting bonuses and other forms of aid to industry reached epidemic proportions in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Quebec.¹¹ Studies of industrial promotion in the regional industrial towns of Saint-Hyacinthe, Sherbrooke, Sorel, Trois-Rivières, and Saint-Jean indicate some variation. The ultimate success or failure of local political intervention was often dependent on the central factor of location.¹² Adjoining Montreal to the southwest and southeast, the suburbs of Saint-Henri and Maisonneuve benefited from easy access to raw materials, energy resources, a largely available and cheap labour force, proximity to markets, and amenable transportation facilities.¹³ As Guy Mongrain argues in his study of the residential suburb of Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End, establishing the link with Montreal was an essential factor of suburban development.¹⁴ Saint-Henri had transportation facilities for freight, by laying sidings from a factory to either the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railroads, or both, three streetcar lines, and navigation facilities by means of the Lachine Canal and Saint Lawrence River.¹⁵ With such advantages, the questions arises as to why they needed to 'bonus'. Because they were in competition with one another, these suburbs often attained a broad industrial base through active promotion.¹⁶

¹¹Tom Naylor, *The History of Canadian Business*, Vol. II (Toronto: Lorimer, 1975), 140-143.

¹²A town's success or failure was often dependent on its location along a rail line. The success of Saint-Hyacinthe and Sherbrooke, located on the Montreal to Portland route as part of the Grand Trunk system, contrasted with the demise of late nineteenth-century Saint-Jean. Ronald Rudin, "The Development of Four Quebec Towns, 1840-1914: A Study of Urban and Economic Growth in Quebec," (Ph.D. Dissertation [History], York, 1977); Rudin, "Boosting the French Canadian Town: Municipal Government and Urban Growth in Quebec, 1850-1900," *UHR/RHU* XI, 1 (June 1982):1-10; Lord, "Nineteenth-century Corporate Welfare: Municipal Aid and Industrial Development in Saint-Jean, Quebec, 1848-1914," *RHU/UHR* XIII, 2 (October 1984):105-115.

¹³Lord, "Municipal Aid", 74.

¹⁴Mongrain, 95.

¹⁵Chambers, 301-302.

¹⁶Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins, 2000), 250-253; Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, Chapter 4.

In Saint-Henri, evidence suggests that promotion was a major aggressive and consistent factor until 1905, and its industrial development surpassed any other suburb of Montreal in manufacturing activity in 1901.¹⁷ Tom Naylor has noted that Saint-Henri was active in the bonusing craze.¹⁸ Research conducted by Yves Bellavance and Marie-France Leblanc reveals substantial municipal intervention. In their estimation, industrial promotion became "la pierre angulaire de la politique d'urbanisation du conseil municipal à partir de 1878."¹⁹ These conclusions are concurrent with the findings of Fernande Roy, Ronald Rudin, and Paul-André Linteau who reveal the active participation of a francophone bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie in the state intervention of the Quebec economy at this time.²⁰

The adamant practice of industrial promotion in Saint-Henri throughout this period points to two causes: a determined bid to support urban growth at all costs, and an initial rivalry with neighbouring Sainte-Cunégonde. Shortly after the attainment of town status in 1875 and the separation from Sainte-Cunégonde the following year, Saint-Henri began dispensing tax exemptions and bonuses, with stipulated conditions. Saint-Henri was not yet as industrialized as Sainte-Cunégonde which benefitted from closer proximity to Montreal and earlier developments along the Lachine Canal.²¹ Council documents reveal that tax exemptions, cash incentives or bonuses, and land concessions were allotted throughout the period of study, and with increasing frequency through two phases of industrial development. Robert Lewis traces the first period to the early 1870s, and the

¹⁷Saint-Henri surpassed Maisonneuve in the number of manufacturing establishments, employess, and total salaries and wages. The cost of materials and the value of products in Maisonneuve were greater than those of Saint-Henri. *Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 3, Table XX (Manufactures), 329-339.

¹⁸Naylor, 142.

¹⁹Bellavance et al., 8.

²⁰Roy, *Progrès, harmonie, liberté*; Rudin, *Banking en français*; Linteau, *Maisonneuve*.

²¹See p. 65 of this thesis.

second, to the 1890s.²² Bellavance and Leblanc situate the beginnings of the first stage in 1882, and the second, as lasting from 1894 to 1902.²³ In 1879, for example, Saint-Henri lured a sewing machine factory from Montreal, C. W. Williams Manufacturing Company (Figure 2.6), through the promise of a twenty-year tax exemption. Williams accepted the offer, employed exclusively male adult and child labour, and remained in the community until 1923.²⁴ The following year the town offered a three hundred dollar subsidy to the Grand Trunk for a train station.²⁵

Council appears to have favoured the establishment of Merchants. A protective tariff, favourable market conditions, and the availability of a cheap labour force, favoured the expansion of the Quebec textile industry in this period. Andrew F. Gault and David Morrice were dominant figures. As a Commission Agent responsible for the distribution of cotton and wool products from more than forty textile plants in Canada, Morrice exercised virtual monopoly control. Merchants was an independent company until its fusion with the Colonial Bleaching and Printing Company of Saint-Henri to become Dominion Textile in 1905.²⁶ Merchants was drawn to Saint-Henri in 1881 by a generous package of a \$10,000 bonus and a twenty-year property tax exemption (water excluded) on the conditions that the factory was built within town limits and that it employed three hundred workers for five years.²⁷ The Sainte-Cunégonde council sweetened the offer by

²²Lewis, 433-439.

²³Bellavance et al., 14.

²⁴"Saint-Henri Industriel" exhibit, SHSH, spring 1994; visite à la compagnie New Williams, 2740 et 2750, rue Notre-Dame est, mars 1994.

²⁵Bellavance et al., 8.

²⁶"Saint-Henri Industriel" exhibit, SHSH, spring 1994; Interviews, Christine Hiller, Records Management and Archives, and Sylvain Dufort, Audio-visual Technician, Dominion Textile; Barbara J. Austin, "Life Cycles and Strategy of a Canadian Company" (Ph.D. thesis[Management], Concordia, April 1985), 179-206; Yvonne Callaway, "Acquisition and Divestiture Strategies" (M.B.A. Thesis, Concordia, 1992), 8-22.

²⁷AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,3, By-law 25, pp. 81-87.

\$5,000 if Merchants located on its border. The provision of essential services attests to council's continued support of Merchants. Perhaps owing to inadequate water and sewer provisions at the time, the initial agreement did not include a water tax exemption. When underground water and sewer pipes were finally installed in 1890-91, however, a main line ran along Saint-Ambroise Street where Merchants was located, as well as on Notre-Dame Street, the site of most commercial establishments (Figure 3.4).

With a workforce of 495 people in 1891, 318 of whom were women and children (Figure 2.5), Merchants was the largest single employer in the community.²⁸ A. B. McCullough notes that "its labour practices were representative of the industry", and marked by intense friction between French-speaking workers and an English-speaking management.²⁹ The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital investigated Merchants in 1888 for fines and dismissals and withholding salaries to young children under the age of fourteen.³⁰

Council's intervention in a 1891 labour dispute at Merchants discloses class and ethnic frictions within the community. Taken together with local resistance to monopoly control of essential services and council's opposition to George A. Drummond's refusal to pay tax increases on his substantial land holdings, class and ethnic struggle appears to have intensified in this community in the 1890s and early 1900s.³¹ McCullough summarizes the sequence of these particular events:

In 1891 about 200 weavers struck in protest against the dismissal of the overseer, Mr. Duplessis. It was said that he had been dismissed because he was a French Canadian, the last French Canadian in a responsible position in the plant. A worker's delegation, the mayor and the priest, met with the management and demanded reinstatement. The workers also demanded a diminution of fines for soiled goods, a maximum work week of 60 hours, better filling of the spools that were used in weaving, and the dismissal of a cloth inspector, Mr. Butterworth.

²⁸Bellavance et al., 8, 17-18, 20.

²⁹McCullough, 165.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 165-166; Bellavance et al., 17.

³¹See pp. 96-120 & 204-209 of this thesis.

All of their demands were rejected, and after nearly a week the employees abandoned the strike.³²

Newspaper coverage provides further details. On October 5, 1891, Mayor Ferdinand Dagenais (1887-1894), a francophone entrepreneur, wrote a letter to company management, expressing support for Duplessis and the workers. Merchants' position was intransigent. The administration dismissed the sexual harassment charges and pointed out that only forty of the five hundred employees were anglophone. They neglected to mention that all of these people occupied management positions. In a communication with the press the following day, Albert A. Ayer, president of Merchants, categorically stated that his company would not succumb to worker demands and the mayor's appeals, and if the conflict persisted, he would take his business elsewhere. Subsequent to the disruption of a monthly town council meeting by two Merchant workers, Dagenais formed a negotiation committee exclusively composed of himself, Curé Rémi Décarie, and Doctor Joseph Lanctôt, a sanitation officer and former Mayor (1886). No workers were represented. Following the refusal of a fourth set of demands, Père Décarie led a worker delegation through the streets of Saint-Henri to the Merchants plant. Despite this show of open protest, Merchants still refused to concede on any major points, and ordered Décarie to monitor the workers' return to the factory.³³ This conflict of interests may explain the cancellation of an additional bonus to Merchants in 1893.³⁴

The results of industrial promotion and competition among municipalities were mixed. Some industries which had received bonuses such as Merchants contributed to the growth and prosperity of the community through the exploitation of cheap labour, while others left. Weak fire protection led to the departure of Moseley's tannery for Saint-Jean in

³²McCullough, 165-166.

³³Bellavance et al., 20.

³⁴AVM, FCSH. *Règlements*, P23,B2,4, By-laws 77 &78, pp. 370-374.

1887.³⁵ Located on the Lachine Canal since 1859,³⁶ the tannery had initially been attracted by a \$10,000 bonus. A fire on September 3, 1887 resulted in the total loss of the tannery due to an inadequate water supply and pressure from Berger and Beique's installations.³⁷ Council then proposed a fifteen-year tax exemption to convince Moseley to remain in the community. Two factions developed: one headed by former Mayor Narcisse Trudel (1884-1885) opposing a tax exemption, and another group which rallied behind Dr. Joseph Lanctôt in support of an incentive. The signatures on the petition supporting municipal aid far outnumbered those opposed.³⁸

The dispute over Moseley's signalled the beginnings of local protest to industrial promotion and the crystallization of factions of support and opposition to bonusing. In light of increased subsidies, mounting public debt, special tax increases, and tax exemptions for certain companies and individuals favoured by council, resistance heightened in the late 1890s, and persisted until annexation.³⁹ A proposed \$20,000 bonus for a carpet manufacturing establishment was defeated through a vote of property owners in 1896.⁴⁰ The return of Moseley's shoe and boot factory and another offer of aid was the source of intense dispute in 1897.⁴¹ *La Ligue des Citoyens*, a municipal protest organization, and workers' parties which were opposed to bonusing, objected to municipal encouragement of Tooke Brothers, a shirt and collar factory that obtained a \$25,000 bonus

³⁵Lord, "Municipal Aid", 41.

³⁶Lauzon, 1875, *Saint-Henri*, 15.

³⁷Charron et Lewis, 75-76.

³⁸AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E2.55, 3186, 3178, 3184.

³⁹*La Presse*, 16 avril 1896, 1; 23 avril 1896, 1; 5 décembre 1903, 24.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 16 avril 1896, 1; 21 avril 1896, 1; 23 avril 1896, 1; 24 avril 1896, 1; 25 avril 1896, 16.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 21 septembre 1897, 1; 6 octobre 1897, 1; 13 octobre 1897, 1; 23 octobre 1897, 16; 10 décembre 1897, 1; AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2.5, By-law 100, p.100.

and ten-year tax exemption in 1900.⁴² Local delegations attended public council meetings and contested Mayor Eugène Guay's position in support of bonusing for industries which employed Saint-Henri workers.⁴³

Increasing anti-bonusing sentiment was reflective of a more widespread phenomenon elsewhere in the province. Competition amongst towns vying for the same industries and the 1893-94 recession led to the increasing indebtedness of municipalities actively engaged in bonusing. These factors prompted provincial legislation to discourage abuse. On March 10, 1899, the first of two provincial laws was passed to restrict bonussing. The legislation stipulated that no bonus was to be granted for establishing a factory similar to one already in the municipality which had not received a bonus or for the removal of a plant one from one municipality to another.⁴⁴ Although no evidence of reaction in Saint-Henri has been found to this legislation, the council appears to have circumvented the legislation by providing other forms of aid. The granting that year of a free land concession valued at \$30,000 to the Colonial Bleaching and Printing Company serves as a case in point.⁴⁵ J.A. Chicoyne, a Conservative from the Sherbrooke region, found the practice so alarming that in the following year he proposed legislation banning bonusing altogether. Chicoyne's proposals were watered down and slightly stricter anti-bonusing legislation came into effect in 1901. A bonus could not be granted to an industry which was already established in the province.⁴⁶

Anti-bonusing sentiment in Saint-Henri was principally motivated by a high municipal debt and the ensuing burden of taxation which eventually led to annexation.

⁴²*La Presse*, 13 avril 1899, 12; 21 avril 1899, 10; 25 avril 1899, 10; 13 septembre 1900, 8; 19 septembre 1900, 2; 21 septembre 1900, 10; 22 novembre 1899, 2; 30 août 1900, 7; AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,5, By-law 105, pp. 117-122.

⁴³*La Presse*, 3 juillet 1903, 1.

⁴⁴Lord, "Municipal Aid", 47-50; Lord, "Corporate Welfare", 109-110; Bellavance et al., 14.

⁴⁵Bellavance et al., 8.

⁴⁶Lord, "Municipal Aid", 47-50; Lord, "Corporate Welfare", 109-110.

Table 6.1 indicates that loans, mostly incurred from debentured bonds, totalled \$1,776,000 from 1883 to 1903. Calculated at an annual interest of \$76,330 in 1905, this amount virtually accounted for the municipality's entire public debt by 1903.⁴⁷ Mayors were not interested in sinking these loans, but wanted to continue rolling them over. Cash outlays were dispensed for public works, bonusing, and expropriations. Bonuses accounted for almost one-third of the municipal debt in this period. The financing of overexpansion, loans incurred for physical infrastructure and street expropriations, made up the remaining

Table 6.1

Loans Incurred by the Saint-Henri Municipal Council, 1883-1903

Public Works	\$792,000
Bonusing	\$584,000
Expropriations	\$400,000
	<hr/>
	\$1,776,000

Source: "Bilan de la Cité de St. Henri, Tableau des Emprunts de la Cité de Saint-Henri au 31 décembre 1905," AVM, FCSH, *Documents non numérotés*, P23,E3.5.

two-thirds. Cash outlays for construction were supposed to be recovered from increased property value. An accurate estimate of bonusing costs would include these cash outlays, as well as taxes foregone, that is how much money the city would have collected from these 'taxpayers' without the bonus deals. No significant opposition appears relating to most public works.⁴⁸ Extensive property expropriations, particularly on Saint-Jacques Street in 1895 and 1897, and bonusing employed to attract outside industries in the late

⁴⁷Through their legal representatives, Canada Life Insurance and the Bank of Montreal, which secured the loans and municipal bonds, periodically called upon the municipality to honour their debts. AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23 C2,1, 3961.

⁴⁸An influential faction of property owners opposed water and sewage improvements which accounted for \$110,000 in expenditures for Notre-Dame and other streets in 1890, and \$200,000 in 1894.

1890s and early 1900s, were contentious local issues.⁴⁹ These voices nonetheless had few repercussions on the entrenched ideology of boosterism, industrial promotion, and progress which drove municipal leaders.

All of the bonuses Saint-Henri dispensed in the late 1890s and early 1900s were financed through debentures or loans sanctioned by the provincial government.⁵⁰ Insufficient funds were generated from property and rental taxes, a particularly acute problem in a municipality with a majority renting population and the remaining quarter of the population paying tax on properties evaluated amongst the lowest in the Montreal area. As expenses accumulated, strapped for cash, council increasingly relied on increases in business license fees. These piecemeal measures were insufficient.

Widespread concern with municipal financing began in earnest in 1897. The financial report that year explains the accumulation of the long-term debt. The city's revenue was \$57,000; expenses were \$92,000. Council thus proposed an additional \$200,000 loan to finance expropriations on Saint-Jacques and secondary streets, and short-term and long-term expenses. This solution to the problem incited much controversy, with some councillors and a majority of taxpayers, owners of both large and small properties, expressing opposition to the proposal.⁵¹ The loan was eventually ratified by a majority of voters.⁵² According to newspaper reports, citizens of both Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde began expressing a lack of confidence in their representatives at this point and the first of many more calls was made for annexation to the City of Montreal.⁵³

⁴⁹*La Presse*, 9 mars 1897, 8; 11 mars 1897, 8; 5 avril 1898, 8; 15 avril 1899, 20; 22 janvier 1903, 12.

⁵⁰AVM, FCSH, *Index aux Règlements*, P23,B2,5, 419-423, 592-595.

⁵¹*La Presse*, 22 février 1897, 1; 9 mars 1897, 3; 16 mars 1897, 8.

⁵²AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23,B2,5, By-law 97, pp. 71-79.

⁵³*La Presse*, 31 mars 1897, 1 ; 9 septembre 1897, 1.

Council hence explored other means of increasing revenue. A proposal to increase property taxes by two per cent in 1897 was contested by both large and small property owners, and rescinded in favour of a cost-cutting device.⁵⁴ As the opening street scene attests, council's solution was to diminish the salaries of municipal employees. Police Chief Massy's salary was cut by \$250; the sheriff's by \$200, and labourers' wages were reduced to \$1 a week.⁵⁵ A newspaper account discloses the strong objections of labourers to this decision. They drew attention to the class conflict between renters earning minimal salaries and property owners on council:

Plusieurs journaliers, à l'emploi de la corporation, et dont les salaires ont été réduits de \$1.25 par jour à \$1.00, disaient ensemble ce matin, l'injustice qu'on leur a fait. Le conseil municipal, de par la loi, se compose exclusivement de propriétaires, disaient-ils, et s'il y a eu des gaspillages de fait, nous n'en sommes pas la cause: pourquoi donc alors nous en fait-on payer la façon?⁵⁶

This measure also incited the critical comments of a municipal affairs columnist in *La Presse*. He pointed out that other municipalities which had implemented these measures had reversed them in light of unfavourable public opinion.⁵⁷

Financial problems continued to plague the community until 1905, with the crisis provoking a diversity of opinions. In light of rumours of declining property values and the disclosure of problems in Saint-Henri, in 1898 Mayor Guay (Figure 6.1) wrote a letter to *La Presse*, calling for a public meeting, and the debt issue prompted the resignation of Councillor S.D. Vallières.⁵⁸ Some prominent members of the local elite rallied to Guay's defence, and an additional \$126,000 loan ratified by a majority of forty-two votes in 1899,

⁵⁴*La Presse*, 26 février 1897, 8. A growing number of property owners and renters in Saint-Henri reportedly delayed or did not pay their taxes in these years. *La Presse*, 16 mars 1897, 8.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 5 mars 1897, 1.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 24 mars 1897, 8.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 5 mars 1897, 1.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 5 avril 1898, 8.

attests to the continuance of overspending.⁵⁹

Led by Mayor Guay, council stood firmly against annexation (Figure 6.1). Anxious to retain political power, the dominantly francophone local elite of Saint-Henri withstood both external and internal pressures for several years. The early efforts of the Montreal annexation committee which canvassed all the suburban communities in 1896, were futile.⁶⁰ Negotiations between Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde and the annexation committee begun in 1900, but were not finalized until 1905.⁶¹ The hegemony of the local elite appears to have been explained by a combination of factors: a sense of pride in retaining a distinct community and an obvious political and economic self-interest also apparent in other suburban municipalities.⁶²

Guay nevertheless defeated all rival candidates of the *Ligue des Citoyens*⁶³ and rebuffed the efforts of the *Association immobilière de Saint-Henri*, which called for resignation of his entire council in 1905.⁶⁴ As late as June 26, 1905, *La Presse* reports that the majority of taxpayers supported annexation, but that council remains opposed, even in light of the recommendations of a provincial Finance Commission.⁶⁵ The deteriorating conditions eventually prompted the intervention of Curé Rémi Décarie.⁶⁶ Following the ratification of a majority of taxpayers, the councils of Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 8 avril 1899, 20.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 23 juin 1896, 1.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 17 décembre 1900, 1; 21 octobre 1905, 28; 26 juin 1905, 14; 1 août 1900, 1; 3 août 1900, 7.

⁶²Guy Mongrain points to the resistance of francophone leaders to annexation in his study of Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End in the same period. Mongrain, 52.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 12 décembre 1900, 10.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 28 janvier 1905, 24.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 26 juin 1905, 14.

⁶⁶See p. 117 of this thesis.

reluctantly followed the examples of Saint-Jean-Baptiste and Hochelaga by joining with the City of Montreal in 1905.⁶⁷ This movement was part of a second wave of suburban annexations and a broader phenomenon in North American cities in this period.⁶⁸

The question remains, "Why did the local elite persist in dispensing such generous municipal incentives to industry despite insufficient funds?" A closer examination of the local elite provides some clues. Ronald Rudin's research on the regional towns of Sherbrooke, Saint-Hyacinthe, Trois-Rivières, and Sorel sheds some light on the persistence of bonusing practices. His findings indicate different levels of support for incentives on the basis of the occupational makeup of the local elite in a particular town. Towns dominated by entrepreneurial elites generally practiced more aggressive strategies than councils dominated by professionals.⁶⁹ This was the case in Saint-Jean.⁷⁰ Table 6.2

Table 6.2

Occupations of Saint-Henri Mayors, 1875-1905

1875-1877	Narcisse Trudel	Contractor
1878-1879	Joseph Lenoir	Doctor
1880-1882	Alphonse Charlebois	Contractor
1883	François Daignault	Clerk
1884-1885	Narcisse Trudel	Contractor
1886	Joseph Lanctôt	Doctor
1886	Séverin Lachapelle	Doctor
1887-1894	Ferdinand Dagenais	Manufacturer
1895-1896	Toussaint Aquin	Contractor
1897-1905	Eugène Guay	Manufacturer

Source: Bellavance et al., 5.

⁶⁷*La Presse*, 26 juin 1905, 14; 10 août 1905, 9; 2 mai 1905, 1; 14 juillet 1905, 1; 24 août 1905, 14; 22 septembre 1905, 1; 17 novembre 1905, 1; 21 novembre 1905, 14;

⁶⁸Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 202-208. In the case of Maisonneuve, Linteau argues that a heavy debt incurred through the beautification efforts of the Michaud-Dufresne administration led to annexation. Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, 178-179; Chapter 9. Walter Van Nus claims that the substantial costs of adequate street and sewer improvements for middle-class homebuyers led to the annexation of a residential suburb. Van Nus, "Suburban Government", 98-100.

⁶⁹Rudin, "Four Quebec Towns", 162-167.

⁷⁰Lord, "Municipal Aid", Appendices I-V.

indicates that professionals occupied the mayoralty of Saint-Henri for only three of the thirty years of its existence as a separate municipality. Evidence points to the dominance of an entrepreneurial elite of contractors and manufacturers.

Manipulation of local government enhanced the wealth and prosperity of a local elite and facilitated their upward social mobility. The local elite persisted in its public spending policy because while the city was losing substantially, they were making significant gains. As in Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End and Maisonneuve, the local elite of Saint-Henri profited from land speculation in a period of overexpansion.⁷¹ As noted earlier, the deployment of private capital, property ownership, land speculation and promotion, profited both a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a local francophone petite bourgeoisie.⁷² The commitment of the local administration to the continuing progress of the community and the interests of private property is illustrated in Eugène Guay's 1903 election victory speech:

Ce soir, messieurs, vous assistez à l'inauguration du nouveau conseil. Je dois vous dire de suite que notre terme s'annonce plein d'actualité. La ville ou plutôt le conseil, a entre les mains, une grande tâche, et à parachever de grandes entreprises, qui ont été commencées. Dans le passé, nous avons dû canaliser et éclairer des rues où sont de grand terrains vacants. Nous avons dépensé beaucoup pour l'expropriation, d'où il s'en suit que la dette de la ville s'est accrue considérablement. Ce qui a beaucoup nuit, c'est le fait de tous les propriétaires, qui détiennent tous les terrains vacants. Ils ont profité de l'élan de progrès que la ville traversait pour faire une spéculation plus que rémunératrice. Ils ont doublé le prix de leurs terrains. Le résultat en a été que les constructeurs ou spéculateurs ont dû jeter les regards sur une autre localité et abandonner Saint-Henri, nous laissant de grands terrains vacants et entretenus à grands frais, sans apporter aucun revenu au trésor municipal. Je compte, comme pas le passé, sur l'appui du conseil: je compte sur le bon vouloir et l'intelligence des échevins, pour travailler au progrès et au développement continuel de Saint-Henri.⁷³

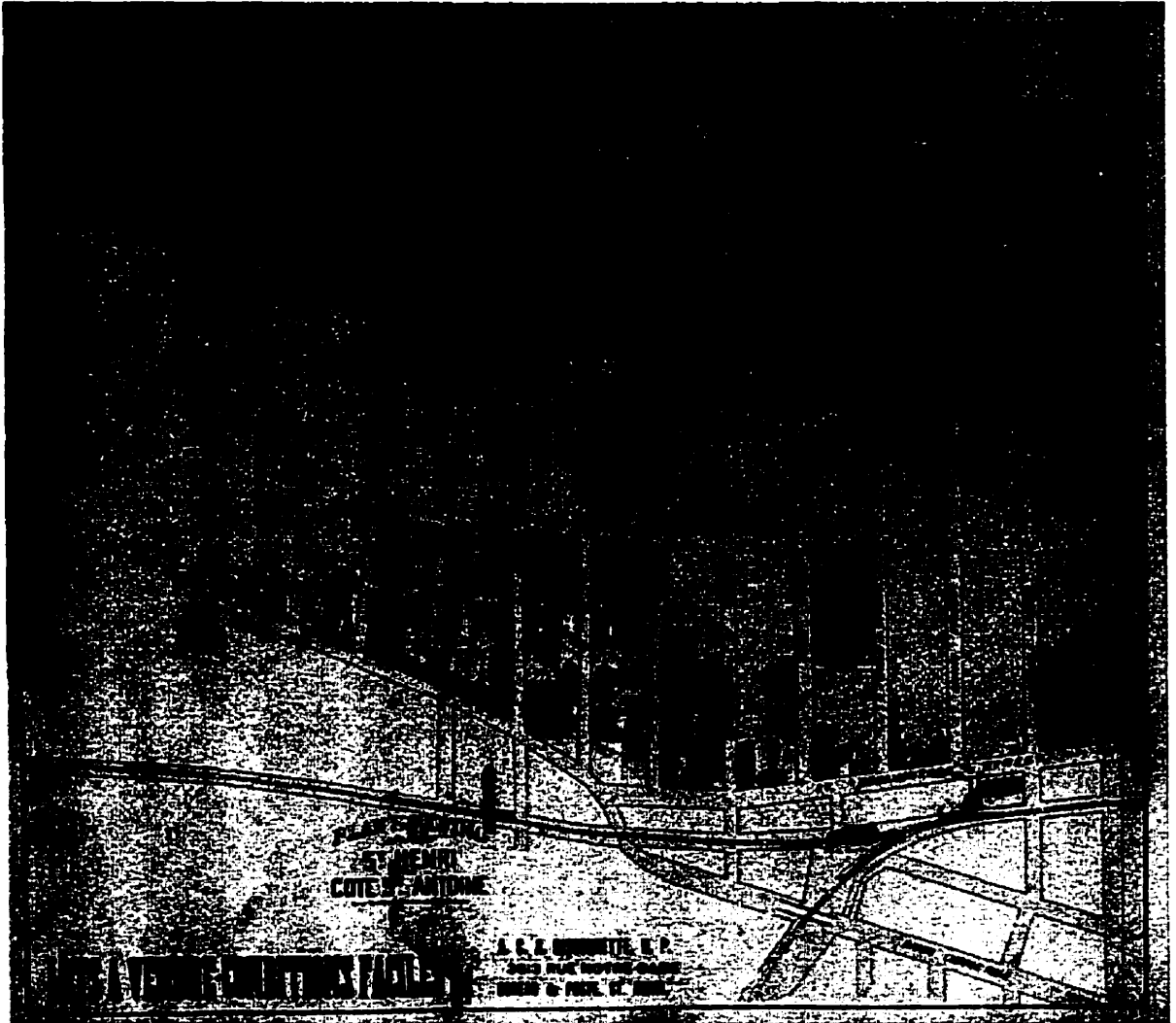
Guay's overriding concern with the development of vacant lots for revenue purposes encouraged active land promotion. Figure 6.2, a newspaper advertisement, and council documents attest to these efforts on the part of private promoters who offered competitive

⁷¹Mongrain, 97; Linteau, *Maisonneuve*, Chapter 2.

⁷²See pp. 182-196 of this thesis.

⁷³*La Presse*, 22 janvier 1903, 12.

Figure 6.2 Land Promotion in Saint-Henri, undated



Source: ANQM, Fonds Achille-Cléophile-Amédée Bissonnette, CN699, S1, P1.

prices and financing to attract local investment.⁷⁴ His councilmen profitted substantially from land promotion, speculation, lot subdivision, and construction. Despite their different backgrounds and their rivalries, all of them seem to show an exceptional upward mobility which reinforced their faith in the economic system and their own judgment. Table 6.3 indicates a steady increase in the property values of select mayors and councillors from 1881 to 1905:

Table 6.3
Property Values of Councilmen, 1881-1905

	1881	1891	1896	1902	1905
<u>Mayors</u>					
Alphonse Charlebois (1880-1882)	19 300	28 000	35 500	11 200	7 500
Toussaint Aquin (1895-96)		10 850	36 230*		
Eugène Guay (1897-1905)	250	3 300	8 300	30 950	23 650
<u>Councillors</u>					
Wilbrod Labrèche (1894-1905)	3 700	12 750	10 650	11 250	
Willfrid Robidoux (1898-1905)	3 600	10 000	14 200	18 600	

* 8 760 owned jointly with Louis Itzweire

Source: Bellavance et al., 6.

The prevalent economic liberal ideology promoted the interests of the 'self-made man' and a 'rags to riches' scenario. A few men rose from small beginnings to substantial wealth. The success of Mayor Alphonse Charlebois (1880-1882) in the contracting business demonstrates considerable profit. Maclean's 1888 biography is cited at length due to his biased references to the natural business propensity of anglophones and an allusion to French-Canadians as a 'race'. Maclean points to Charlebois' upward social mobility and his humble French-Canadian roots as exceptional:

Alphonse Charlebois, contractor, Quebec, is well known throughout the Dominion as an extensive and successful undertaker of great public works. A French-Canadian, he is endowed with more than the ordinary energy and versatility of his race, and his career furnished an apt illustration of the triumph of tact and

⁷⁴*The Montreal Gazette*, June 21, 1895, 5 (land promotion ad); "Plan de Terrains à Vendre, C.H. Letourneux," AVM, FCSH, *Plans*, P23/F,2.

pluck over adverse circumstances. He was not of the fortunate class who are said to come into the world with 'a silver spoon in their mouth.' His parents were simple Lower Canadian *habitants*, and our subject was born of their marriage at the town of St. Henri, Hochelaga county, on the outskirts of Montreal...⁷⁵

By the time his Saint-Henri assets had reaching peaked value, he had obtained lucrative public work contracts across Canada.⁷⁶

Figure 6.3 conveys an image of the prosperous family of Toussaint Aquin, the ninth mayor of Saint-Henri (1895-96), another prominent local contractor. Taken in 1890, Aquin is seated with his wife and six children. On the original photograph, his wife had written these words: "Image d'une famille heureuse".⁷⁷ Characteristic of the Victorian period, Madame Aquin's inscription contrasts with the sober demeanour of the family members posing for the photograph. The harmony of the family may be subject to historical interpretation, yet their material prosperity is less questionable. It contrasts sharply with that of the majority renting classes whose access to capital was far more limited than that of either the local elite or the *grande bourgeoisie*. Aquin's assets increased at a moment of maximum spending in Saint-Henri and during severe depression for others, at the point when city labourers were being laid off. Indicative of the wealth of *grands contribuables*, the Aquins hosted a silver wedding anniversary with three hundred people in attendance at their lavish Vaudreuil country estate on Sunday, June 28, 1896. Numerous presents were given, and Doctor Lanctôt made an eloquent speech. A sumptuous dinner was accompanied by the strains of the *Fanfare de Saint-Henri*, a local band, and magnificent fireworks.⁷⁸

⁷⁵Maclea, 607-608.

⁷⁶These included the Dufferin improvements at Quebec City, the graving dock at Levis, the Georgian Bay branch of the C.P.R., the construction of four sections of the same road in British Columbia, and the erection of the new parliament buildings at Quebec, and of the new departmental buildings on Wellington Street, Ottawa. Maclea, 607-608.

⁷⁷Bellavance et al., 6.

⁷⁸*La Presse*, 30 juin 1896, 1.

Figure 6.3 Mayor Toussaint Aquin and Family, 1890



Source: SHSH, Fonds Vachon, 78-PH-3; reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 6.

A close-knit group of local contractors served as mayors throughout this period and dominated the first unstable years of municipal administration until 1887. Two manufacturers, Ferdinand Dagenais and Eugène Guay, led council for longer periods from the late 1880s until annexation (Table 6.2). Dagenais' career (1887-1894) illustrates overlapping political and financial concerns, and social and philanthropic interests in the town. He would be considered a local hero according to the tenets of individual liberalism. Léon Trépanier discloses that his business and political concerns were well entrenched in Saint-Henri and Montreal. The son of a Sault au Récollet farmer, he benefited from a considerable degree of education in the schools of Montreal. He was employed at Montreal Rolling Mills in Sainte-Cunégonde, then went on to co-own the Dominion Horse Shoe Nail Company. He served as a town councillor and school commissioner before becoming mayor. A prominent local entrepreneur, he became a manager of Standard Light and Power, an electrical, railway, and lighting conglomerate, as well as *Téléphone des Marchands*. His local philanthropic concerns included the Union Saint-Joseph, the Alliance Nationale, and the Saint-Vincent de Paul Society. Committed to public improvements and progress, Saint-Henri underwent an active period under his mayoralty: sewers were installed, Notre-Dame and other streets were extended and opened, Parc Saint-Henri was created, and the Jacques Cartier monument was erected. He also served as School Commissioner and replaced François Martineau as Montreal alderman in Sainte-Marie.⁷⁹ Dagenais' career characterizes the municipal elite studied by Paul-André Linteau. They established themselves in the suburbs, rose to become Montreal municipal councillors, and occasionally went on to provincial or federal politics.⁸⁰

The personal wealth of these local entrepreneurs and politicians was founded on municipal overexpenditure and restraints on the comforts of the rest of the people of Saint-Henri. Robert Bickerdike's career was exceptional in this regard. One of two anglophones

⁷⁹*La Voix populaire*, 15 juin 1950, 10; *La Presse*, 14 janvier 1899, 20; Bellavance et al., 5.

⁸⁰Linteau, "Le personnel politique de Montréal, 1880-1914: évolution d'une élite municipale," *RHAF* 52, 2 (automne 1998): 189-215.

who sat on council in the 1870s and 1880s,⁸¹ he reaped personal benefits from the material growth of the community in his early career by obtaining local lighting, gas, and tram contracts.⁸² From modest beginnings in Saint-Henri, Bickerdike rose in the political and business elite of anglophone Montreal. He served as a municipal councillor in Montreal and advanced in the ranks of federal politics. He became the founder and mayor of the town of Summerlea, a Liberal representative in the Quebec Assembly (1897-1900), and a federal Liberal M.P. President of the Montreal Board of Trade, he was also involved in the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, the Royal Victoria and Montreal General Hospitals. Bickerdike went on to champion the rights of anti-smokers and allied with the WCTU (Women's Christian Temperance Union) on issues relating to alcohol consumption. This prompted critics to question his masculinity.⁸³

Adversaries on the local political scene, Doctors Joseph Lanctôt and Séverin Lachapelle, who both operated offices on Notre-Dame Street, were representative of the professionals in the local elite. Although both men were advocates of sanitation reform, Lanctôt's pro-bonus position in 1887 is indicative of an economic liberal ideology consistent with that of the entrepreneurial elite. The political contest between the two illustrates the intense conflict between *Rouges* and the *Bleus* in Quebec in this period, and their employment of these political connections to achieve some 'reform'.⁸⁴ Lachapelle successfully contested Lanctôt's candidacy for the Saint-Henri mayoralty and held the position until January 21, 1887. Lanctôt, a staunch *Rouge*, went on to become a Liberal representative in the Quebec Legislative Assembly in 1892 and sat on the Legislative Council in 1898. Lachapelle represented the county of Hochelaga as a Conservative in the

⁸¹Ouellet, "Les élites municipales," UQAM, 1982, A.3.

⁸²See p. 155 of this thesis.

⁸³Morgan, *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time*, second edition, 98; Verbal communication, Jarrett Rudy, autumn 1998.

⁸⁴Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain* (Montréal: Boréal, 1989), Chapter 32.

House of Commons in 1892.⁸⁵

The local elite played an influential role in the direction of the community. The experience with generous incentives to industry, a heavy burden of debt, and annexation speaks to the active intervention of a local francophone elite in the Quebec economy of the period. The practices and policies of the Saint-Henri council demonstrate an adherence to an economic liberal ideology which promoted urban growth and development at all costs. The political hegemony of municipal leaders weathered popular resistance and the organization of municipal reform leagues and workers' parties. Their behaviour was motivated by the considerable benefits they reaped at the expense of the working classes in a period of overexpansion and industrial promotion. By 1905, once the local elite was launched in national politics and playing on the bigger stage of Montreal, they no longer needed the stepping-stone to advancement Saint-Henri had initially provided. The following pages examine the role of the local elite in the political regulation of the street environment and the conflicting ideologies of the working and marginal classes played out in street crime.

Street Culture and the Law

"Tout état nous opprime."⁸⁶

The adherence of the local elite to a liberal ideology extended beyond industrial promotion to the maintenance of order on city streets. The prevalent liberal ideology defined a closed system, drawing a fundamental political distinction with perceived social boundaries between public space and private space. C. I. Davies and Kathleen Herman have observed that "the social space of the street is bounded by normative constraints, laws, modes of interaction, as well as by physical space and time factors," which raise

⁸⁵*La Voix Populaire*, 1 juin 1950, 19; 15 mai 1950, 10; 16 mai 1951, 22; 6 juin 1951, 15, 20; 13 juin 1951, 19, 21. For sketches of each man and a discussion of public health issues, see *La Presse*, 14 décembre 1901, 1.

⁸⁶Graffiti sighted on the wall of a house on Sainte-Marguerite Street in Saint-Henri, south of Notre-Dame ouest, Montréal, February 5, 1999.

issues of access and control.⁸⁷ Although the local elite employed the law as a means of ensuring conformity of behaviour and restricting freedom of movement in public space, many people did not choose to accept these limitations.

The streets presented a freedom and volatility familiar in other cities and other eras.⁸⁸ The constant backdrop of alcoholic binges, brawling, and sexual exploitation point to the persistent nature of 'antagonism' and 'excitement'. The visible public presence of the working and marginal classes on the streets of Saint-Henri indicates an open system, and social claims to this physical space took many forms. Harmonious social encounters often took place in the course of travel from home to work, school, shops, offices, religious celebrations, and recreational pursuits, yet there were many incidents of street crime. These particular claims to public space played out in the social usage of the street conflicted with the bourgeois ideology which advocated class harmony and propriety.

'Right-thinking' people, agents of civic and moral reform (the elite, the council, temperance organizations, the priest, the police chief) aimed primarily to confine 'disorder' and 'original sin' to private spaces and keep it out of the streets, which were spaces they conceived of as public, and in fact, the spaces they necessarily frequented. Various forms of crime were thus subject to social control and moral regulation through the enforcement of local by-laws and police arrests, fines, and imprisonment. Municipal street offences were subject to deliberations in Police and Recorder's Courts in Montreal from 1875 until the attainment of city status in 1894. A Recorder's Court was subsequently established in Saint-Henri from 1895 until annexation.⁸⁹ Criminal offences such as murder were the responsibility of a Superior Court in Montreal. I employ particular episodes to illustrate recurrent battle lines: lines of class cleavage, male and female, conflicts between two rival gangs, between the forces of 'order' and the gangs, and between the neighbouring municipalities of Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde.

⁸⁷Davies and Herman, eds., *Social Space*, 50.

⁸⁸Goheen, "Public Space", 479.

⁸⁹Government of Quebec, *Statutes of the Province of Quebec*, 1894, 57 Vict., Cap. 60, (Québec: Langlois, 1894), 197-198; *La Presse*, 13 juillet 1895, 7.

The disturbance of the peace resulting from excessive alcohol consumption was the most frequent cause of arrests in this period. The extenuating economic circumstances of people's daily lives led to considerable drink consumption and social behaviour which prompted the concern of local representatives of Church and State. Street action was more intense on weekend nights and in summer weather, and formed a foundation for 'the news' and the judgments people made of one another.⁹⁰ Numerous taverns were located on Notre-Dame, Saint-Jacques, and other adjoining streets. These licensed establishments were mostly frequented by male workers after their return from local factories. Women and youth imbibed at unlicensed corner grocery stores and in hidden public spaces. The *auherge* was an ambiguous space, at once public and private, subject to public authorization and confinement, but the consequences spilt unto the street. Drunk and disorderly conduct in late night drinking bouts accounted for most of the policing tasks of Chief Zéphérin Benoit from 1875 to 1888.⁹¹ Sample police reports from 1886 and 1887 indicate that more than half of the arrests in these years were due to drunken behaviour:

Table 6.4
Arrests, 1886-1887

	1886		1887
Drunkenness	42	Drunkenness	61
By warrant	16	Assault & Battery	34
Vagrancy	2	Maintenance of brothels	2
Theft	3	Frequenting brothels	13
Blaspheming in the streets	7	Theft	5
Disturbing the public peace	9	Illegal garbage disposal	4
Assaulting a police officer	1	Driving horses on train tracks	2
Driving a horse too quickly	1		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Total	81		121

Source: AVM, FCSH, *Documents numérotés*, P23/E2,50, 56, 2892, 3265.

⁹⁰*The Montreal Daily Star*, June 22, 1895, 6 (summer heat); June 29, 1895, 7 (Letter to the editor complaining of constant noise from a band, a peanut stand, and a merry-go-round in Parc Saint-Henri every Sunday night in the summer); *La Presse*, 2 juillet 1897, 1 (Report on fireworks and Canada Day celebrations in Parc Saint-Henri).

⁹¹See pp. 196-199 of this thesis.

Local representatives of Church and State promoted moral regulation and social control in light of these transgressions. Although recidivists accounted for a frequency of arrests,⁹² the problems associated with excessive drinking were widespread. From 1876 to 1886, council attempted to regulate public drinking by limiting the number of tavern licenses. Local controversies accentuate the conflicting ideologies of the petite bourgeoisie and the working-classes and ethnic divisions within the community. *Auberge* licenses became the subject of heated dispute at general council meetings and a source of conflict between anglophone and francophone innkeepers. Frustrated with the abuse of alcohol, temperance leagues, the clergy, and the Grand Trunk stationmaster (whose employees frequently imbibed) pressured town councillors to limit the number of drinking licenses. Council was hesitant to take action as drinking licenses were a significant source of revenue.⁹³

In a particular dramatic moment in the mid-1870s, an ethnic conflict erupted into a perennial dispute over tavern licenses. In 1876, councillor Alphonse Charlebois, who aspired to the mayoralty, pressed for the limitation of licenses to nine. Twenty-three saloons or hotels existed in Saint-Henri at that time. Foreseeing trouble, Chief Benoît, his constables, and the fire brigade policed a dramatic town meeting on March 7, 1876. Previous to the arrival of the councillors, Sam McDonald, a local character and fiery Scot saloonkeeper at the old Tanneries site, sat in the mayor's chair. Hailing the tradition of British tavernkeepers, he proceeded to distribute fake licenses. After council proclaimed the decision to grant licenses only to francophone tavernowners, anglophones protested furiously at the injustice. Sam McDonald shouted profanities, then physically attacked Alphonse Charlebois. Chief Benoît had to restrain the enraged Scotsman. Charlebois subsequently pressed McDonald with assault charges.

⁹²*La Presse*, 23 juillet 1895, 6; 11 septembre 1895, 6; 24 février 1896, 6; 12 juillet 1896, 8; 1 juin 1896, 1; 21 octobre 1896, 1; *The Montreal Gazette*, September 24, 1895, 2.

⁹³1875: \$25; 1883: \$50; 1887: \$100; and \$10 per pool table or other amusement. Charron et Lewis, 105.

Petitions circulated, addressing the ethnic prejudice, and demanding to know what made francophone saloonkeepers special. It was pointed out that F.X. Marlo was granted a license even though he ran an illegal dance hall in his establishment. Tempers flared. In a May first council meeting, Annie Redman, a widow who ran Liverpool House, a saloon on Saint-Philippe Street,⁹⁴ and Kerrigan and Scullion, made passionate speeches. On June 5, anglophone saloonkeepers hired lawyers Curran and Lefebvre, to defend their cause. Councillor Kerr put forward a proposal to grant three licenses to British innkeepers at a subsequent meeting, but the motion was defeated by the tie-breaking vote of Mayor Narcisse Trudel (1875-1877). Unlicensed taverns continued to operate illegally. A. Kerrigan, Octave Rousseau, Sam McDonald, and Jean-Baptiste Maranda received \$75 fines. Annie Redman kept up the fight and was granted a license one year later, in April 1877. Six of the nine licensed establishments remained open on Sundays, despite the outlawing of alcohol sales on religious holidays.⁹⁵

Renewed temperance efforts in the early 1880s led to a reduction in street crime. With the separation of Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde in 1876, the ethnic and moral conflict momentarily subsided. Sainte-Cunégonde doubled its drinking licenses when Saint-Henri progressively diminished its drinking permits. Subsequent to a request written by Père Lussier, the local *curé*, signed by several residents in Saint-Augustin in 1882, council made the draconian move of awarding only one license in Saint-Augustin ward and one in Saint-Henri ward. Père Lussier's letter deplored the moral decay of youth, disrespect for religion, and the drain on the finances of impoverished families:

... depuis plusieurs années le nombre des auberges dans notre ville a toujours été trop considérable.

Que des licences pour tenir ces maisons d'entretien public ont été accordées trop facilement à des personnes pour qui le bon ordre, la décence et la morale sont choses parfaitement indifférentes, pour ne pas dire plus.

⁹⁴ANQM, CN 601, S153, Ferdinand Faure, 3336, Annie Redman, lease, March 13, 1874; 3521, Annie Redman, commutation, 9 juin 1874.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 105-108; Bellavance et al., 5.

Que la vente des boissons se pratique ouvertement tous les jours de la semaine à des jeunes gens qui ont à peine atteint l'âge de raison, à des pères qui dépensent ainsi un argent péniblement gagné au détriment d'épouses et d'enfants souffrant de la nudité, du froid et de la faim.⁹⁶

The limitation of tavern licenses resulted in a reduction in crime. Although 230 arrests were reported in 1879, they fell to 118 in 1881, with only 73 arrests related to drunk and disorderly conduct.⁹⁷

The situation did not persist. Pressed for revenue, council dispensed ten licenses in April 1883 and eleven by 1886. A theft and assault reported in *Le Monde* in June 1886 signalled the danger for women walking on Saint-Joseph Street after dark, with so many drunk men around. At 9:30 P.M. one evening a woman was assaulted by a gang of drunks on the main street, demanding five cents. Frightened, she gave one of them the money. Once the other men saw that her purse was full, they demanded five cents each. In panic, she ran away, but one of the men pursued her and grabbed her towards him. The woman began screaming, and fortunately caught the attention of passersby. The drunks ran away.⁹⁸

Street gang activity was often associated with drink, theft, and prostitution rings. Two rival gangs, the *Gang des Rouges* and the *Gang des Bleus*, established their respective turfs in Saint-Henri and Sainte-Cunégonde in the 1870s and 1880s. This was a spontaneous comment on the party politics of *Rouges* and *Bleus* which dominated this era.⁹⁹ Fearful of attaining a bad reputation in the area, the criminal activities of these gangs prompted the efforts of both town councils to establish stable law enforcement. In the estimation of Huguette Charron and Françoise Lewis, Chief Benoît was primarily responsible for the suppression of these gangs in Saint-Henri. Despite the employment of local hero Louis Cyr as police constable in 1885, Sainte-Cunégonde was less successful in

⁹⁶Charron et Lewis, 108-109.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 109.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 110.

⁹⁹See page 234 of this thesis.

this regard.¹⁰⁰

Upon his arrival in Saint-Henri in 1875, Chief Benoît observed youth gangs which often engaged in street fights and thefts, and insulted passersby. Headed by Émile Ouellet and Joseph Plouffe, the oldest member of the gang was sixteen years old. Members of this group were incarcerated for a theft of one hundred dollars from the Workman property in Sainte-Cunégonde in 1876.¹⁰¹ These gangs reigned over the streets at night. The base of the operation of the *Gange des Rouges* was the Bois à Quesnel, a secluded wooded lot north of the Williams factory in Saint-Henri. Benoît captured McAulee, Protier, Saint-Germain, and Bouthillier following the theft by the *Gang des Bleus* of six bottles of gin from the licensed grocery of Saint-Germain de Benoît in December 1879. In April 1882, these same men were responsible for a theft in the new Saint-Henri train station.¹⁰²

Through the collaborative efforts of the police in Côte Saint-Antoine, Montreal, and Saint-Henri, a theft in November 1877 revealed the involvement of the *Gang des Rouges* in a local prostitution ring. Four trunks of silk dresses and fur coats were stolen from Alexander Murray's Côte Saint-Antoine home and siphoned to Madame Émilie Dalcoeur's brothel on Bonaventure Street in Saint-Henri. Benoît's arrest of Montreal residents Isaac Lobière, Jacques Richard, Édouard Therrien, Baptiste Labonté, Joseph Desbiens, and Marie-Louis Parent followed. Parent and Therrien had previous prison sentences; other stolen goods were recovered.¹⁰³

Charron and Lewis compare Benoît's cleanup of Saint-Henri with the terror which reigned in Saint-Gabriel and the anarchy of Sainte-Cunégonde. In the thirteen years of Benoit's length of office (1875-1888), Sainte-Cunégonde had exhausted five different police chiefs. Ben Weider claims that the gangs "were so well entrenched that the police had not set foot there for several months", and that Sainte-Cunégonde "was the base

¹⁰⁰Charron et Lewis, 176-185.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 176.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 177-179.

of operations for criminals in Montreal".¹⁰⁴ Anxious to combat the power of the *Gang des Bleus* and other street gangs in neighbouring communities, Sainte-Cunégonde Police Chief Pagé accepted the new position in 1885 on the condition that council hire three constables. One of the men was three hundred-pound Louis Cyr. At twenty-two, Cyr had already gained a local notoriety for his physical prowess and benevolent nature.¹⁰⁵ He later went on to establish a career as a world weight-lifting champion.¹⁰⁶

Cyr's career as a police constable was brief, and prompted by the escalating thefts and assaults of the *Gang des Bleus*. Pagé trained his police force and concentrated his efforts on cleaning up Notre-Dame Street, the main artery. Although Pagé's initial efforts were successful,¹⁰⁷ according to Huguette Charron and Françoise Lewis, Cyr's masculine domination did not result in the successful suppression of local street gangs. In fact, Cyr was almost killed in a dramatic incident on October 23, 1885:

Alors que le constable Louis Cyr faisait sa ronde avec David Young, un ancien constable, il aperçut quatre hommes ivres qui insultaient les passants et leur lançaient des pierres. Ces hommes faisaient partie de la gang des Rouges. Cyr empoigna l'un des quatre, Dolphis Paquette. Il le fit facilement. Il pouvait lever, disait-on 210 livres d'un seul bras et tenir ce poids au-dessus de sa tête pendant cinq minutes. Mais les trois autres bandits se jetèrent alors sur Young. Un attroupement se fit. Young réussit à se sauver. Il laissa Cyr tout seul et courut chercher du renfort.

Lorsque Young revint avec le constable Proulx, ils aperçurent le géant Cyr, par terre, sans connaissance. Il avait été atteint à la tempe gauche par une grosse pierre. Trois de assaillants s'étaient sauvés, il ne restait que Dolphis Paquette, trop saoul pour bouger.¹⁰⁸

Louis Cyr resigned from the Sainte-Cunégonde police force shortly thereafter.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴Ben Weider, *The Strongest Man in History* (Newark, N.J.: Selco, 1976), 59.

¹⁰⁵Massicotte, *Athlètes canadiens-français* (Montréal: Beauchemin, 1909), 195.

¹⁰⁶Charron et Lewis, 182; Weider, Chapters 9-13.

¹⁰⁷Weider, 60-61.

¹⁰⁸Charron et Lewis, 182-83. This incident is also cited in Massicotte, 197 and Weider, 62-63.

¹⁰⁹Weider, 63.

A sketch artist creates an illusion of lightness and playfulness which contrasts with the brutality of the encounter conveyed in the written account (Figure 6.4). Cyr is depicted as a symbol of working-class masculinity and domination,¹¹⁰ a hero, a single individual who combats the forces of crime and evil. His corpulence, shoulder-length hair, and dark uniform distinguishes him from the arm-wielding thugs that surround him, other police officers, and spectators. He stands over a fallen criminal and constable like a conqueror. His valiant bare-armed struggle is hailed by a young boy positioned on the sidewalk in the background. The artist significantly chose the point in the struggle when Cyr was in control, rather than lying unconscious on the street.

The criminal activities of street gangs was set in an 'ordinary' background of streetwalking and street noise, against which the excitement in 1875-76 stands out. Along with drink-related offences and street gang activity, the sexual conduct of females was particularly subject to moral regulation and social control. In the spirit of Mary Ryan, the social geography of the entire city could be mapped on class and gender lines. Sarah Schmidt has argued that 'respectable' women were frequented parks such as Mount Royal. Sexual regulation entailed the monitoring of loitering, vagrancy, and any intimation or explicit act of sexuality.¹¹¹

Evidence points to a social geography of prostitution which was concentrated, but not limited to the central city core.¹¹² Prostitution also existed in suburban communities. Economic circumstances may have led some young Saint-Henri women to venture uptown to Saint-Laurent Street to ply their trade. Tamara Myers' scrutiny of Recorder's Court records in Montreal indicates that one sole resident of Saint-Henri, Léontine Robert from

¹¹⁰Bourdieu, *La domination masculine* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).

¹¹¹Schmidt, "Domesticating Parks and Mastering Playgrounds", Chapter 1-3.

¹¹²In her examination of the activities of female prostitutes and vagrants in Montreal, Tamara Myers points to the concentration of the sex trade on Saint-Laurent Street in this period. Tamara Myers, "Criminal Women and Bad Girls: Regulation and Punishment in Montreal, 1890-1930," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], McGill, 1995), 65-69. Julie Podmore's recent investigation of Saint-Laurent Street traces the development of this Red Light District to the early twentieth century. Podmore, "Saint-Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City'", Chapter 5.

Figure 6.4 Louis Cyr as Street Hero, 1885



Source: Ben Weider et E.Z. Massicotte, *Les hommes forts du Québec de Jos. Montferrand à Louis Cyr* (Trois-Pistoles: Éditions Trois-Pistoles, 1999), 193.

Workman Street, was subject to arrest for vagrancy on Ontario Street, and incarcerated in the Saint-Jean-de-Dieu insane asylum in 1912.¹¹³ Annual police reports submitted to the Saint-Henri council do not record arrests on the basis of gender or age. Although no evidence exists of brothels being run in Notre-Dame Street hotels, brothels were located on adjoining streets. The criminal activities of the *Gang des Rouges* point to collusion with a group of prostitutes on Bonaventure Street in 1877. Table 6.4. indicates two arrests for the maintenance of brothels and thirteen arrests of clients in 1887.

Prostitution was particularly viewed as morally repugnant and suppressed by legal authorities in this period. A 1901 declaration by Judge Weir of the Recorder's Court previous to the sentencing of a Montreal prostitute condemns the practices of female sex workers and promotes a cult of female virtue and domesticity:

Je n'hésite pas à déclarer que ces maisons [brothels] sont un véritable fléau pour notre ville et un élément de destruction social et national. Je ne vois pas comment la défendresse puisse se livrer à un commerce aussi vil et aussi honteux et prétendre élever ses enfants convenablement.¹¹⁴

The reform efforts of Chief Benoît reflected these general concerns and focused on suppressing local prostitution as well as street gangs. Brothels often occupied flats on secondary streets, but rarely operated in the same location for long periods of time. As soon as they were subject to police scrutiny, they moved to a new site. Neighbours often alerted Benoît and a police raid was conducted, with the arrests of the madam, prostitutes, and clients. All the names of those involved, including the informer, were published in local newspapers. Residents questioned the motives of landlords who rented to these establishments. On February 23, 1876, Madame Guitard and her three employees, Aguilé, Marceline, and Philomène were brought down to the Police Station on the instigation of Auguste Bellefleur. Soon after this brothel was closed, another one was established on Bonaventure Street. Arrests followed, then Madame Pariseau set up a brothel on Rose-de-Lima in close proximity of the Police Station. Benoît's crackdown appears to have incited

¹¹³Tamara Myers, Data base of Recorder's Court arrests, 1899-1918, entry 823. Tamara Myers, "Criminal Women and Bad Girls: Regulation and Punishment in Montreal, 1890-1930," (Ph.D. Thesis [History], McGill University, 1995).

¹¹⁴ *La Presse*, 5 juillet 1901, 8.

the movement of brothels to Sainte-Cunégonde from 1879 to 1886.¹¹⁵

Victorian sexual mores also governed the regulation of female dress and public displays of affection and overt acts of sexuality. Fearful that they would fall into prostitution, young girls from unfortunate circumstances were sometimes fined for 'indecent' exposure. Any indication of cleavage or exposure of the female breast was considered morally suspect. Such was the case for Marie Caron, a seventeen-year old who was fined ten dollars in 1875. Given the proximity of dwellings and the penury of privacy, couples often wandered to the Bois à Quesnel, a secluded lot, to engage in sexual activities. They too were subject to Benoît's arrests.¹¹⁶

Then, as now, the city streets were home to the lonely, the dispossessed, and the mad. Male and female vagrants of all ages wandered the streets of Saint-Henri, with some making periodic appearances in Recorder's Court.¹¹⁷ The vagrancy problem was particularly acute in the late 1890s, when police cells served as overnight shelters for over four hundred individuals per year.¹¹⁸ In 1896, municipal authorities were alerted to a concentration of vagrants who insulted passerby at the corner of Notre-Dame and Sainte-Elizabeth Streets. The president of the Police Committee signalled the need for more constables in Saint-Henri to deal with the augmenting problem. By 1899, vagrancy accounted for the second number of arrests after drink-related charges.¹¹⁹ In the age of gentility, women were particularly perceived as emotionally volatile. Victoria Johnson, a local recidivist, was an emotionally disturbed woman who took to the streets of Saint-Henri in the late 1890s, singing and screaming. Her arrest on April 19, 1899 was subject to the

¹¹⁵Charron et Lewis, 163-64. This movement of brothels is corroborated by the absence of prostitution-related arrests in the 1886 police report (Table 4.4).

¹¹⁶Charron et Lewis, 163, 165-66.

¹¹⁷*La Presse*, 30 avril 1896, 1; 21 mai 1896, 1; 4 juin 1896, 1; 18 juin 1896, 8; 17 novembre 1896, 1;

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 7 août 1896, 1; 22 juillet 1896, 1.

¹¹⁹Out of a total of 197 arrests in 1899, drunkenness accounted for 86; vagrancy, 24. *La Presse*, 26 janvier 1899, 10.

colorful description of a *La Presse* reporter:

L'arrestation, par le constable Brault, de dame Victoire Johnson, a donné lieu, cet avant-midi, au poste de la rue Saint-Jacques, à une scène des plus bruyantes.

Dame Victoire est une récidiviste endurcie. Dix mois sur douze, les murs de la prison des femmes ont l'honneur d'abriter sa corpulence et de préserver des rayons du soleil la figure rubicoude que la nature, dans un moment d'humeur, sans doute, lui a plantée de travers sur les épaules...

Victoire connaît l'art de la boxe, sait chanter, crier, déclamer, blasphémer et bien d'autres choses encore. Elle ne demande aucune réclamation pour son savoir-faire, et chaque fois qu'on lui met le grappin dessus, on peut être assurée de lui voir donner une 'répétition' des plus amusantes.

C'est au beau milieu d'une kyrielle de protestations et déclamations de tous genres qu'on est parvenu ce matin, à l'enfermer dans une cellule, en attendant son procès.¹²⁰

Gender relations sometimes broke down, resulting in domestic violence disputes which spilt unto the streets.¹²¹ Police Chief Benoît was familiar with certain wife-beaters and intervened in conflicts in the 1870s and 1880s. His arrest and incarceration of wife-beaters prevented a number of murders.¹²² With an increase in population and residential mobility in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, domestic violence disputes were not only subject to police intervention, but to the philanthropic concerns of the Montreal Society for the Protection of Women and Children and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of the Province of Quebec. Given the frequency of domestic violence disputes caused by excessive drinking, the Montreal Society made declarations before the 1894 Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic.¹²³

¹²⁰*La Presse*, 19 juillet 1899, 10.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, 14 octobre 1895, 6; 15 juin 1896, 1; 21 juillet 1896, 8.

¹²²Charron et Lewis, 166-68.

¹²³*La Presse*, 15 mars 1896, 3; Fernand Hébert, "La philanthropie et la violence maritale: le cas de la *Montreal Society for the Protection of Women and Children* et de la *Woman's Christian Temperance Union of the Province of Quebec*," (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], UQAM, 1999), 14, 76-77; Harvey, "To Love, Honour and Obey", 63, 69.

Conclusion

Class antagonisms characterized the political regulation of public space in Saint-Henri. The social claims to public space of the working and marginal classes conflicted with the political definition of public space governed by the local elite through the enactment of municipal by-laws. Because political representation on council was based on property ownership, the working and marginal classes were disempowered. Driven by an ideology of economic liberalism, the local elite was consumed with their own priorities: industrial promotion, expansion and the city-building process, which enhanced their own businesses, profits, and votes. Resistance to a public debt resulting from the financing of these expenditures mounted from the mid-1890s onward. The local elite retained their political hegemony until 1905 despite repeated calls for annexation to the City of Montreal.

This political system also gave the local elite the exclusive legal authority to monitor behaviour on city streets which did not conform to their Victorian mores of bourgeois gentility. The local elite thus employed the law as a means of regulating various forms of social behaviour and association which, from their perspective, employed the public space of the street as a private space. The criminal behaviour of the working and marginal classes associated with excessive drink, prostitution and other sex-related offences, theft, and vagrancy were often driven by the exigencies of economic survival and constituted popular forms of transgression and resistance. The persistent uses of the late nineteenth-century street as a social space did not conform with the liberal ideology of the local elite. These social practices were thus subject to the moral regulation and social control. The presence of women, men, and children engaged in a variety of social activities on city streets nonetheless remained an essential facet of working-class experience and cultural identity.

Chapter 7

A Day and Night: June 12, 1895

“‘Not to laugh at the actions of men, nor yet to deplore or to detest them, but simply to understand them’ – that is all that the historian may strive for, and more than he can at best accomplish.”¹

Despite the gendered bias of this dated citation, it reveals the historian’s acute awareness and continuous striving toward a greater understanding of human experience. This dimension forms one component of my work on the reconstruction of a nineteenth-century street. The historical generalizations of urbanization, industrialization, class construction, state formation, moral regulation, and political ideology lend insight into the understanding of people’s lives, and they are enriched by a deeper perception of the personal involvement of the people who inhabited and frequented Notre-Dame Street. As G.T. Robinson observes in his classic account of Russia’s peasant revolution of 1917,

Lines laid down upon cross-section paper will perhaps contribute to this understanding, and in so far as they may do so, they are good; but there is so much of truth that cannot be caught within this net! Historical generalization is not simply what the word implies; it is falsification too, since the truth about the actions of men (sic) cannot be compressed, without undergoing in the process a *qualitative* change. The statistics on the death-rate in the villages – what empty things they are, unless one remembers a certain village near Tambov, a certain house with broken windows and rotted thatch, and the sound of wailing that went on all night.²

In the process of assembling information from various written and visual documents, the scattered fragments of people’s lives analyzed in preceding chapters have often appeared to me like an over edited film, with lengthy interludes and passages clipped from historical memory. As a synthesis of this dissertation, the final chapter recreates an actual day and night on the street from the perspective of different individuals and families over the course of a summer day. Newspaper coverage of a six-month legal process resulting from a critical moment of domestic violence on June 13, 1895 permitted me to reconstitute events on the previous day. Careful attention is paid to the timing and daily rhythm of activities

¹G.T. Robinson, *Rural Russia under the Old Régime* (London & New York: Longmans Green, 1932), 117.

²*Ibid.*

and events which comprise a significant facet of working-class urban culture and are revealing mechanisms of social space.

The convergence of Marxist and phenomenological thought is central to my approach. The writings of Henri Lefebvre, in particular, combine the historical constructs of class position and structural history with a critique of everyday life. In *Éléments de rythmanalyse* and *La vie quotidienne*, Lefebvre enhances our understanding of everyday experience and the situation of critical moments of celebration and tragedy which punctuate the rhythms of daily street life.³ Lefebvre's rhythm analysis traces the relations of linear time and circular time, drawing important connections between spatial structures and subjective experience. Lefebvre argues that people's daily experience of social space is governed by these two perceptions of time: through the cycles of our body, which are circular and tied to nature; and to the structures of society, which are repetitive and linear.⁴ Of specific relevance is Lefebvre's 'theory of moments',⁵ which allows us to situate a critical 'moment of truth' in the everyday:

Nous ne saisissons normalement que des rapports entre rythmes, qui les brouillent. Et, cependant, ils ont tous une *existence* distincte. Normalement, aucun ne se *classe*; par contre, dans la souffrance, dans le trouble, tel ou tel rythme surgit, s'impose: palpitation, essoufflement, douleurs au lieu de la satiété. Le rythmanalyste doit atteindre tel rythme sans se mettre dans la situation pathologique, et sans y mettre l'observé. Comment? Dans la rue, un cri, un grincement de freins, un accident rendent sensibles les rythmes confus et les brisent.⁶

Lefebvre's acute analysis of everyday life is particularly pertinent to the female experience, as well as that of children, the working classes, and other marginalized groups where he asserts that

... les tâches fastidieuses, les humiliations, la vie de la classe ouvrière, la vie des femmes... pèse la quotidienneté. L'enfant et l'enfance toujours recommencé. Les rapports élémentaires avec des choses, avec les besoins et l'argent, comme avec les marchands et les marchandises. Le règne du nombre. Le rapport immédiat avec le

³Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*; Lefebvre, *La vie quotidienne*.

⁴Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, 13-18.

⁵Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, 7.

⁶Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, 34.

secteur non dominé du réel (la santé, le désir, la santé, la spontanéité, la vitalité). Le répétitif. Les survivances de la pénurie et le prolongement de la rareté: le domaine de l'économie, de l'abstinence, de la répression des désirs, de la mesquine avarice.⁷

For Lefebvre, although everyday life may weigh heaviest on women and other disempowered groups, it also “provides women realms for fantasy and desire, for rebellion and assertion – arenas outside of bureaucratic systemization”.⁸

The phenomenological analysis of Gaston Bachelard nuances these individual and social perceptions of space, linking causal events with psychic reactions. Brief and isolated acts, a singular image or movement, a specific spatial arrangement, incite both individual and shared, subjective and objective, intuitive and cognitive, rational and irrational perceptions of space, which encompass the metaphysics of the imagination. In his words, “L'espace ... est vécu, non pas dans sa positivité, mais avec toutes les partialités de l'imagination”, where *un espace heureux*, *un espace louangé*, and *un espace d'hostilité* can evoke a range of human values.⁹

The interference of space, class, gender, and subjective experience is disclosed in the daily life of Mélina Massé, the victim, and those of her neighbours on Notre-Dame Street in Saint-Henri. Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis is especially relevant in that it allows us to position a melodrama alongside true 'history'. Mélina's daily life was at once governed by the rising of the sun, her awakening and that of her children and husband, and the household routine which a working day entailed. The structures of society are evidenced by the delivery of milk on her doorstep, the passing of her neighbours to morning mass,

⁷Lefebvre, *La vie quotidienne*, 71-72.

⁸McLeod, 18.

⁹Bachelard, *La poétique de l'espace*, 17.

the opening of stores, and the departure of her husband Napoléon for work. Mélina's apprehensions regarding the interminant violations of her personal space, given the abuse she suffered at the hands of her husband, were an added dimension specific to her individual experience.¹⁰

The situation of a critical moment of truth in the everyday requires historical subtlety and a questioning of sources. Although Mélina's eventual plight, her murder, a tragic moment in the everyday, may have allowed me to reconstruct daily movement on the street, the question arises, "Why is it that an aberrant event, a critical murder and the ensuing six-month coverage of this event in newspapers reveals more detail of everyday life than all of the other sources thus combined?" I return to the question of the nature of historical sources. I treat the source as a *fait divers* which, taken alone is not true 'history', but by combining the structure and analysis of feeling with the structure and analysis of society, reveals particular elements of historical truth.¹¹ The trial is hence treated in its social context whereby the justice system establishes the female virtue of the victim, revealing social relations and racial prejudices, and the implications of this critical event for the social space of the street.

¹⁰Kathleen M. Kirby, "Mapping Subjectivity: Cartographic Vision and the Limits of Politics," and Nancy Duncan, "Renegotiating Gender and Sexuality in Public and Private Spaces," *Body Space* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 45-55; 127-145.

¹¹Peter Burke, ed., *A New Kind of History* (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1973), 12-15.

*Some things do not bear much telling. I think my father knew this. I think he knew how words can sometimes flatten the deepest emotions or pin them like wild butterflies stunned out of magnificent flight, flimsiest souvenirs of what moved and coloured air like silk. Better to imagine it. Imagine music playing, imagine light falling though clouds into the morning street...*¹²

5:00 A.M.

Lingering in languid semi-consciousness, Mélina Massé (Figure 7.1) groped toward the shed to gather the morning's wood.¹³ Gazing at the muted daylight on the eastern horizon, she pondered the stillness of the morning air. In these brief moments before factory whistles blew, summoning streams of neighbouring women, men, and children to work, and thick coalsmoke emitted from Merchants and other nearby factories, the city conjured up memories of her former Saint-Charles home. Blemished by the untimely deaths of her two parents, Mélina's recollections of early childhood were scarce. Her aunt and uncle kindly provided for her needs, and her cousins were good companions, yet she still longed for the warm presence of her mother and father. In young adulthood, her thoughts often turned to them as she swept and dusted the local presbytery.¹⁴

How she longed for happiness then. When Napoléon, a handsome carter, came to call, courting her with wild daisies plucked from the grassy banks of the Richelieu River, he personified her hopes and intense desires (Figure 7.2).¹⁵ She remembered well the man she knew.¹⁶ How had it come to this? Last night he had struck her once again after she refused him money for liquor.¹⁷ She stroked the spots on her arms and legs where

¹²Niall Williams, *Four Letters of Love* (London: Picador, 1997), 289.

¹³*The Gazette*, September 19, 1895, 3.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, June 15, 1895, 3, September 24, 1895, 2; *La Presse*, 23 septembre 1895, 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶Amanda Marshall, "Birmingham" *Amanda Marshall* (North York, Ontario: Sony, 1995), 2.

¹⁷*The Gazette*, July 20, 1895, 2.

Figure 7.1 Mélina Massé



Source: *La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1.

Figure 7.2 Napoléon Demers



Source: *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 15, 1895, 1.

Figure 7.3 Rosalma Sauvé



Source: *La Presse*, 28 juin 1895, 6.

throbbing pains remained, a numbing reminder of his senseless and calculated actions. They perturbed her heart and saddened her soul. Chilling testimony of Napoléon's violence and abuse remained obscured from neighbours, family, and friends.¹⁸

Life can be cruel and arbitrary. Years had been wasted, but she had no time for tears.¹⁹ She drew on unknown reserves of strength. Her thoughts focused on her two children, her young boy and her sickly infant, and the baby she lost last year, and the letter she wrote to her sister-in-law about her miserable life with Napoléon.²⁰ Where did he wander nights? Just yesterday, Madame Poirier told her he had been seen at Sohmer Park last Saint-Jean Baptiste Day with Rosalma Sauvé, a piano teacher from Atwater Avenue (Figure 7.3).²¹ Countless evenings she anxiously awaited his return from Latimer's Carriage Factory in Montreal with supper warmed.²² She tired of his drinking bouts, philanderings, and the frequent moves since their arrival in Montreal, yet the downstairs neighbours, the Déguise, seemed kind enough (Figures 7.4 & 7.5).²³ Only last week she had met Père Décarie (Figure 7.6) on Notre-Dame Street as she returned from the home of

¹⁸*Ibid.*, July 1, 1895, 6; July 6, 1895, 6; September 13, 1895, 5; *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 28, 1895, 7; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6; *La Presse*, 7 octobre 1895, 6.

¹⁹Marshall, 2.

²⁰*The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; June 20, 1895, 5; July 1, 1895, 6; *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 15, 1895, 1; June 28, 1895, 7; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6; *La Presse*, 23 septembre 1895, 6; 7 octobre 1895, 4. Her baby boy died on August 31, 1895 at the home of his grandparents, during the course of her husband's court proceedings. *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, September 9, 1895, 11.

²¹*La Presse*, 24 juin 1895, 6; 28 juin 1895, 6; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6; *The Gazette*, July 30, 1895, 3; July 31, 1895, 4; Lamonde, et Montpetit, *Le Parc Sohmer*.

²²Napoléon rarely returned home for supper. *La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1; *La Patrie*, 14 juin 1895, 3; *The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10; *The Gazette*, September 11, 1895, 2.

²³*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 3; *Rôle d'évaluation 1891*, P23/D1,5, 6, 163; *Lovell's City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; *La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1; 29 juin 1895, 12; 2 juillet 1895, 6; 4 juillet 1895, 6; *The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; June 20, 1895, 5; June 21, 1895; July 1, 1895, 6; September 24, 1895, 2; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6.

Figure 7.4 Mélodie Déguise



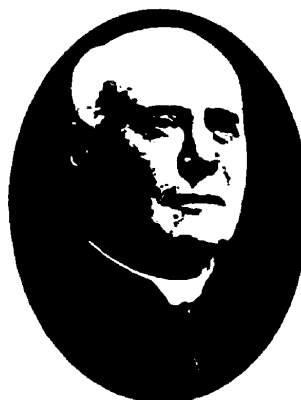
Source: *La Presse*, 21 juin 1895, 1.

Figure 7.5 Charles Déguise



Source: *La Presse*, 28 juin 1895, 6.

Figure 7.6 Père Décarie



Source: L'abbé Élie-J. Auclair, *Saint-Henri des Tanneries à Montréal* (Montréal: Imprimerie de-La-Salle, 1942), 64-65.

Madame Nantel, her Sainte-Cunégonde washerwoman.²⁴ His gaze was warm and caring. She thought of confiding in him, expressing her unhappiness, but she feared he would think her an unfit wife and mother.

The clatter of bottles on the front steps on Notre-Dame siphoned through the lane, rousing Mélina from her reveries. They signalled the arrival of Ovila Touchette, who delivered milk between five-thirty and five-forty-five.²⁵ She sauntered back to the kitchen door, pondering the day's tasks, starting up the stove and preparing tea and toast for Napoléon and her child.

Mélina Massé was murdered in her home at 3426 Notre-Dame Street on June 13, 1895 (Figure 7.7).²⁶ A series of lengthy court proceedings followed. They entailed a preliminary inquest and a first and second trial at the Court of Queen's Bench in Montreal. The prosecution's persistence in the case indicates that Napoléon Demers, her abusive husband, was thought to be guilty of the murder, yet he was acquitted on December 31, 1895 on grounds of insubstantial evidence.²⁷ There was extensive coverage in several Montreal newspapers, including *La Presse*, *La Patrie*, *The Gazette*, and *The Montreal Daily Star*. The murder trial was one of the longest in Canadian criminal history up to that point²⁸ and attained national coverage in *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*. Sensationalist reporting included sketches of the deceased, complete with demarcated knife

²⁴*The Gazette*, June 17, 1895, 5; *La Presse*, 19 juin 1895, 6; 11 septembre 1895, 3; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 6. In the course of trial proceedings, Père Décarie testified that he knew Mélina by sight. *The Gazette*, September 12, 1895, 3; Bradbury, "Surviving as a Widow", 151-2.

²⁵*The Gazette*, July 1, 1895, 6; September 14, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 2 juillet 1895, 6; 19 juillet 1895, 6.

²⁶*La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1; *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 15, 1895, 1; *The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; *La Patrie*, 14 juin 1895, 3; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10.

²⁷*La Presse*, 31 décembre 1895, 6; *The Gazette*, October 9, 1895, 2.

²⁸*Ibid.* According to a *La Presse* report, the trial lasted 53 days and cost the state \$40,000.

Figure 7.7 Site of Mélina Massé's Murder, 1895



Source: *La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1.

wounds.²⁹ This incited a letter from Monseigneur Bruchési to *La Presse* editors, and criticism of newspaper coverage by Judge Wurtele. Both authorities called for more discretion.³⁰

The murder gripped the community.³¹ It heightened the number of social interactions on the main street.³² Crowds gathered on the sidewalk the entire day, discussing the crime and the family of the victim.³³ Initially, women feared for their safety in their own homes. As the murder trial progressed, interest mounted. Courtroom dramas were a source of free entertainment for many nineteenth-century Montrealers, and crowds flocked to the preliminary inquest at the Saint-Henri town hall.³⁴ An estimated three hundred spectators, mostly female, crowded the courtroom; many of them brought their lunches and knitting and participated noisily.³⁵ The trial became the subject of a popular musical drama, entitled "La complainte de Demers", published in leaflet form by *La Presse*.³⁶

²⁹*La Presse*, 20 juin 1895, 1.

³⁰*The Gazette*, September 4, 1895, 2; Cyrille Felteau, *Histoire de La Presse*, Tome I (Montréal: La Presse, 1983), 304.

³¹*La Presse*, 20 juin 1895, 1.

³²Erving Goffman, *Behaviour in Public Places* (New York: Free Press, 1963); Goffman, *Behaviour in Public Space* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1966); Goffman, *Relations in Public* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

³³*The Montreal Daily Star*, June 15, 1895, 1.

³⁴Bradbury, *Working Families*, 47; *The Gazette*, June 18, 1895, 3.

³⁵*The Gazette*, June 20, 1895, 5; September 25, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 12 septembre 1895, 6; 23 septembre 1895, 6.

³⁶*La Presse*, 10 octobre 1895, 6.

Newspaper coverage reflects a range of contemporary social mores, notably a social awareness of the injustice of domestic violence,³⁷ a cult of female domesticity, and racial prejudices. Of primary concern was the establishing of the female virtue of the victim. In the week following the murder, *The Gazette* reports that "Mrs. Demers was a good looking woman of thirty years of age, and all who knew her say that she was most ladylike and quiet in her habits," and that she was "industrious and a good housekeeper."³⁸ She was deemed "the best of wives ... and all her neighbors gave her a reputation that any woman would be proud to bear."³⁹ The first suspects were Syrian street pedlars who made periodic visits to homes selling leaf tobacco, religious ornaments, trinkets, scissors, and knives.⁴⁰ Newspaper reports reveal elements of bigotry, racism, and distrust of these pedlars. Isolated from the majority francophone and anglophone community, a group of Syrians inhabited an apartment block in central Montreal.⁴¹ Both English and French newspapers reveal racist attitudes. A *La Presse* account on June 15, 1895 notes that

³⁷Duncan, 132; Judith Fingard, "The Prevention of Cruelty, Marriage Breakdown and the Rights of Wives in Nova Scotia, 1880-1920," in *Separate Spheres*, 211.

³⁸*The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; June 20, 1895, 5.

³⁹*Ibid.*, June 15, 3.

⁴⁰There were many arrests of illegal street pedlars in Saint-Henri, often with the same persons making recurring appearances before the Recorder's Court. *La Presse*, 1 février 1895, 6; 9 décembre 1896, 8; 11 décembre 1896, 8; 24 juin 1897, 1; 29 février 1898, 13; AVM, FCSH, *Règlements*, P23/B2.2; pp. 51-60; 69-70.

⁴¹*The Gazette*, June 15, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 15 juin 1895, 6; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10; Verbal communication, Jarrett Rudy, spring 1998. This phenomenon was widespread in North America; the cities and surrounding countryside of Montreal, Halifax, and Toronto were no exception. Worthy of a historical dissertation, this subject is treated in Margaret Atwood's recent novel, *Alias Grace*, and in Tanya Gogan's historical paper on Halifax. Bradbury, *Working Families*, 38, 162, 170, 198-99, 290-91, n47; Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1996); Tanya Gogan "East Meets West: 'Alien' Peddling in Rural Nova Scotia, c. 1890-1914," Paper presented at the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference XII, Charlottetown, May 1998. The presence and regulation of street pedlars on late nineteenth-century Canadian city streets could be compared with the situation in the Bowery and other working-class neighbourhoods of New York where hucksters and stalls proliferated on city sidewalks and streets, and in European cities where peddling was an established tradition. Stansell, *City of Women*, 13-14, 50, 193, 203-4; Vincent Milliot, *Puris en Bleu* (Paris: Parigramme, 1996); Laurence Fontaine, *Histoire du colportage en Europe* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993).

On croit généralement à Saint-Henri que l'auteur du crime est un colporteur. Durant les dernières semaines, Saint-Henri et Sainte-Cunégonde ont été envahis par une nuée de colporteurs de toute nuance qui pénétraient dans les maisons sans s'annoncer, et qui, une fois à l'intérieur, ne sortaient que sous l'effet de menace. C'est la même chose un peu partout dans la ville. Quand les hommes ne sont pas à la maison, ce qui arrive presque toujours, ces gens sont d'une insolence et d'une grossièreté inconcevables. Sous prétexte qu'ils ne comprennent pas un mot de français ou anglais, ils refusent de s'en aller quand on le leur dit. Beaucoup ne partent pas sans qu'on recourt aux moyens violents.⁴²

On the same day, *The Gazette* reports that "one lady was surprised to find one of the Syrian genus in her bedroom, and when she told him to get out he simply grinned until she set the dog on him, when he got out."⁴³ This newspaper commentary was indicative of a widespread phenomenon that persisted until the early twentieth century, resulting in federal government attempts to restrict Syrian and Jewish immigration in 1900.⁴⁴ A *La Presse* article in 1903 headlined "Les farouches bédouins dans les rues de Montréal," declared that "heureusement que ces bédouins n'ont pas l'intention de demeurer longtemps au milieu de nous."⁴⁵

The case raises many implications for the gendered analysis of social space in a working-class milieu. It contributes to a body of feminist historical writing, the works of Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Mary Ryan, and Christine Stansell⁴⁶ who "modify traditional perspectives on women's role in the family by challenging the dichotomy that divided the nineteenth-century world into female domestic and male economic spaces."⁴⁷ The crucial elements of daily life and social practice stemming from this tragic event

⁴²*La Presse*, 15 juin 1895, 6.

⁴³*The Gazette*, June 15, 1895, 3.

⁴⁴*La Presse*, 13 août 1900, 1.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 28 avril 1903..

⁴⁶Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991); Stansell, *City of Women*; Ryan, *Women in Public*; Ryan, "Gender and Public Access", 259-88.

⁴⁷Harvey, "'To Love, Honour and Obey'", 12-13.

demonstrate that the social exchanges of working-class life transcend the dichotomies of public and private.

A trial of this sort meant that "private, individual acts of violence were no longer hidden from public view in the home."⁴⁸ From the moment when Madame Nantel found Mélina dead on the bedroom floor (Figure 7.7) with her sick baby by her side at 2:35 P.M. on June 13, 1895, the domestic violence was open to public scrutiny. Madame Nantel alerted local authorities, and neighbours gathered at the scene of the crime. Chief Massy of the Saint-Henri Police force, Coroner McMahon, and Père Décarie, (Figure 7.6) arrived shortly thereafter.⁴⁹

This murder case could form part of a broader study examining domestic violence situations in various class contexts within the same time frame and different locales. In view of the proximity of dwellings, the thinness of walls, the amount of traffic on the street, and neighbourhood ties, the murder appears to have been premeditated and carefully orchestrated.⁵⁰ The downstairs neighbours, Charles and Mélodie Déguise (Figures 7.4 & 7.5) testified to having heard no unusual sounds throughout the day. Their only departure from their shop and home prior to the murder was for five o'clock morning mass at Église Saint-Henri celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi or *Fête-Dieu*.⁵¹

Significant residential mobility in late nineteenth-century Montreal⁵² may have contributed to a breakdown in social support networks and the lack of community intervention in the prevention of the crime. The Demers family had only lived in this

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁹*La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1; *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 15, 1895, 1; *The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; *La Patrie*, 14 juin 1895, 3; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10.

⁵⁰*The Gazette*, June 20, 1895, 5.

⁵¹*The Montreal Daily Star*, June 14, 1895, 7; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10; June 14, 1895, 12; July 1, 1895, 6; September 16, 1895, 13; *La Patrie*, 14 juin 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 14 juin 1895, 1; 21 juin 1895, 1; *The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2.

⁵²Gilliland, "Modeling Residential Mobility," 27-42; Gilliland, "Residential Mobility in Montreal, 1861-1901," (M.A. Thesis [Geography], McGill, 1993).

dwelling for a month and a half. Prior to this move, they reportedly lived in Saint-Henri, at the corner of Richelieu and Atwater, and in Hochelaga.⁵³ In the course of court proceedings, a former boarder and family members testified to having witnessed Napoleon's abuse of his wife and child.⁵⁴ Mélina's appeals for help were directed to family in Saint-Charles, and not to neighbours in Saint-Henri or Montreal.⁵⁵ Mélina's entrusting of the care of her eldest child to grandparents in Saint-Charles prior to the murder may have resulted from the occurrence of escalating abuse characteristic of the cycle of domestic violence.⁵⁶

5:45 A.M.

Barely awakened from the slumber of his warm bed, widower Norbert Émond joined his daughter Caroline for morning coffee after she nudged the children awake for school.⁵⁷ After bidding her goodbye, he moved from his upper flat to open the grocery below. As he swept the dust off the wooden sidewalk, he spotted Napoléon Demers (Figure 7.2) entering Charles Lachapelle's butcher's shop down the street. Shortly after, Napoléon crossed the street, and unlocked his front door, with his brown meat package in hand.⁵⁸

⁵³*The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; *The Montreal Daily Star*, June 26, 1895, 6; *La Presse*, 19 juillet 1895, 6.

⁵⁴*The Gazette*, July 1, 1895, 6; July 20, 1895, 2; September 4, 1895, 2.

⁵⁵Kinship networks in nineteenth-century Montreal were established between the countryside and the city. Olson, "Mobility and the Social Network," Colloque Barcelone-Montréal, May 5-7, 1997.

⁵⁶*The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, September 9, 1895, 11.

⁵⁷*Lovell's City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 10; *Rôle d'évaluation 1891*, P23/D1.5, 6, 143. A dispute between municipal authorities and merchants surrounding store hours took place in Saint-Henri and Montreal in the late 1890s. Despite attempts at regulation, some stores remained open at all hours of the day and night. *La Presse*, 9 avril 1896, 8; 4 mai 1896, 8; 5 mai 1896, 8; 7 mai 1896, 8; 8 mai 1896, 8; 11 mai 1896, 8; 19 mai 1896, 1; 21 mai 1896, 1; 29 mai 1896, 8; 11 juin 1896, 1; 9 juillet 1896, 8; 29 octobre 1896, 8; 9 février 1897, 4.

⁵⁸*The Gazette*, July 23, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 22 juillet 1895, 6; 23 septembre 1895, 6.

Funny man, that Napoléon. Unlike his own family who had been established in the community for decades,⁵⁹ Napoléon, his wife and children had just moved in above the Déguise family at the corner of Notre-Dame and Rose-de-Lima Streets in May.⁶⁰ Last week, Lucien Boucher, a Saint-Henri innkeeper, had told him that Napoléon was a frequent customer at his tavern.⁶¹ In the short time he had lived in Saint-Henri, Napoléon had gained a reputation for his late night drinking bouts. Neighbours had mentioned that Mélina, Napoléon's wife, was somewhat uncommunicative, preferring to keep to herself.⁶² She often walked home alone after Sunday mass rather than mixing with the crowd.⁶³

He was thankful for his own fortune. Business had picked up this year compared to the downturn of the 1893-94 depression.⁶⁴ Merchants had hired more workers and Williams Sewing Machine Manufacturing was doing well (Figures 2.5 & 2.6). Some of the more fortunate workers were spending money a bit more freely. His family was healthy. The children were doing well in school. Soeur Marie Jeanne had complimented him last week on Aurore's progress at the Ange-Gardien convent.⁶⁵ His son Norbert would play in the local band in the Saint-Jean Baptiste parade which would proceed past his store front on June 24 (Figure 7.8). He must remember to ask Caroline where they had

⁵⁹AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation* 1881, P23/D1,2; *Rôle d'évaluation* 1891, P23/D1,5, 6; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 10.

⁶⁰*The Montreal Daily Star*, June 26, 1895, 6.

⁶¹*La Presse*, 24 septembre 1895, 4; *The Gazette*, September 24, 1895, 2; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, July 1, 1895, 10.

⁶²*The Gazette*, June 14, 1895, 2; September 13, 1895, 5; *La Presse*, 19 juin 1895, 1; 5 juillet 1895, 6.

⁶³*The Gazette*, July 20, 1895, 2.

⁶⁴Hamelin et Roby, 96-97.

⁶⁵*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1881, folio 5; Soeur Marie-Jean-de-Pothros, S.S.A., *Les Soeurs de Sainte-Anne*, Tome 1 (Lachine: Soeurs de Sainte-Anne, 1950), 235-237.

Figure 7.8 Fanfare Saint-Henri, 1910



Source: SHSH, Fonds Belair, 4-PH-1; Reproduced in Yves Bellavance, Marie-France LeBlanc, Claude Ouellet et Louise Chouinard, *Portrait d'une ville: Saint-Henri, 1875-1905* (Montréal: SHSH, 1987), 10.

stored the little *fleur de lys* flags which hung from the brackets on the front wall.

10 A.M.

The gentle rhythm of Mélina Cantin's deft fingers slipped the needle in and out, in and out of the olive green felt hat.⁶⁶ She took special pride in putting the finishing touches to an elaborate creation commissioned by Mary Brodie.⁶⁷ The widow could have afforded a Montreal hatmaker, but chose to come to Mélina instead. As she arranged three fine feathers on the wide brim, she envisioned Mary proudly descending the steps of a Notre-Dame Street shop on a Sunday stroll (Figure 2.1).

People occasionally questioned her need to work and her status as a married woman operating her own business. Louis' milk delivery job did not always bring in enough cash to feed the family of nine and cover the rent of the home and shop.⁶⁸ Operating a shop offered flexibility. The children could enter as they pleased. In the event of emergencies, like Frédéric's accident on the train tracks last year, she simply displayed a sign, indicating her imminent return. As she scanned the room, proudly displaying her various works, she felt an immense satisfaction in her abilities, her achievements, and her independence. The jingle of the storefront door signalled the arrival of another customer.

12:20 P.M.

Despite his mother's request, ten-year old Jules Bergeron (Figure 7.9) stubbornly refused to fetch milk for neighbour Monsieur Migneault.⁶⁹ Perched on a wooden box in a lane off Notre-Dame Street,⁷⁰ his contemplations of the universe and the unfairness of his

⁶⁶*Lovell's City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 52.

⁶⁷AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1895*, P23/D1, 10, 123; *Lovell's City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 23.

⁶⁸*The Gazette*, July 1, 1895, 6; September 14, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 2 juillet 1895, 6.

⁶⁹*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 113.

⁷⁰*La Presse*, 4 juillet 1895, 6.

Figure 7.9 Jules Bergeron



Source: *La Presse*, 4 juillet 1895, 6.

daily chores were distracted by the calls of a Syrian pedlar. He bounded toward the cart of goods negotiating the main street. His father, a railway gatekeeper, said these Syrians were no good and that he should stay away from them, but the trinkets fascinated him.⁷¹ His friend Cécile, a servant in a wealthy home,⁷² assured him that a pedlar who visited her often was very kind.

2 P.M.

Michael Dincel stepped onto the street after his latest appearance before Judge Larochelle at the Saint-Henri Recorder's Court. Joining William O'Brien later for beer on the sidewalk, he chuckled as he recounted his retort to the judge's questioning. When asked why he drank so much, he had replied, "I am neither priest nor minister. Every man has his weakness. Mine is drink."⁷³

4 P.M.

As he toiled in his shop at the corner of Notre-Dame and Sainte-Marguerite Streets, Eugène Desjardins recalled the many floods which ruined his basement stocks (Figures 2.16 & 2.17).⁷⁴ Originally macadamized, the street surface quickly converted to a muddy morass. Even on the best of days, a thin layer of coal soot, dirt, and dust penetrated the air, veiling his merchandise. When not helping him out in the store, his wife tired easily from the long day's toil of successive mundane tasks: sending the children off to school, preparing meals and doing laundry, a particularly cumbersome task when the water was turned off. He stepped out briefly into the afternoon light, catching a gleam of the reflecting sun on the steeples of Église Saint-Henri. He recalled neighbours complaining of

⁷¹*The Gazette*, June 15, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 15 juin 1895, 6; 28 avril 1903, 1; *The Family Herald and Weekly Star*, June 17, 1895, 10.

⁷²Claudette Lacelle, *Domestiques en milieu urbain canadien au XIXe siècle* (Ottawa: Parcs Canada, 1987).

⁷³Both men were periodically arrested by the Saint-Henri police for drunk and disorderly conduct. *La Presse*, 23 juillet 1895, 6; 11 septembre 1895, 6; 24 février 1896, 6; 12 juillet 1896, 8; *The Gazette*, September 24, 1895, 2.

⁷⁴AVM, FV, *Réclamations et litiges*, P49,B8; AVM, FCSH, *Documents légaux et juridiques*, P23, C1,2, 397.

sharing a single water tap for their entire building to save on costs.⁷⁵

6:35 P.M.

Exhausted, thirteen-year-old Élisabeth could barely put one foot before the other as she crossed the main street in her return home from work at Merchants (Figure 2.5).⁷⁶ The voice of her companion Ovide was barely audible as he vented tales of the foreman's cruelty. Her mother said that at twelve, Ovide was too young to be working as a bobbin boy and that he should be in school. As they approached his darkened home, she regretted the fact that his father was a day labourer often out of work. Her own father has just been rehired at Williams. She thought of bringing Ovide some warm soup later to comfort his aching bones and broken spirit.

Black bag in hand, Doctor Joseph Lenoir rushed to the home of a sick patient. He was flustered by the sight of the two beleaguered children crossing the street toward him. The image of his own healthy seven-year old son Joseph, whom he has just embraced a few moments ago, came to mind.⁷⁷ He pondered the constant demands of daily rounds and the futility of numerous infant deaths. He worried about the recent arrival of so many poor working families, and the deplorable conditions at Merchants. He recalled the tense negotiations of the 1891 strike, when workers took to the streets.⁷⁸ As he reflected on the injustices of these daily realities, he was struck by two evocative verses from his father's 1853 poem, *L'ouvrier*:

J'ai des bras comme un autre et je puis travailler!
Je ne redoute point un labeur journalier,
Si ce labeur m'apporte joie!
Dieu m'a fait libre et fort, m'a rempli de santé,
Et je ne serais pas digne de liberté
Si, louche paresseux, je désertais sa voie!

⁷⁵*La Presse*, 24 mai 1899, 2.

⁷⁶Bellavance et al., 20; McCullough, 164-68.

⁷⁷*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 42.

⁷⁸Bellavance et al., 20.

Je sais mettre une borne à mes âpres désirs;
 Peu me suffit; pourvu qu'en de simples loisirs,
 Je puisse achever ma journée!
 Il faut quelque repose au robuste ouvrier,
 Et puis qu'il ait le temps d'aimer et de prier
 Pour sa large famille au travail condamnée.⁷⁹

7:30 P.M.

Clara Lanctôt stood before the mirror in her comfortable bedroom, adjusting a corset and assessing her red velvet dress for tonight's musical performance of *L'Homme au figure de cire* by the Cercle Dramatique.⁸⁰ The town hall was a modest venue, but she looked forward to meeting friends, neighbours and patients of her devoted husband. In part, she did this for Joseph's sake. She was also anxious to outdo Madame Eugène Guay, who was so proud of her elaborate Parc Saint-Henri home and so vainly presided the prize-giving committee at the annual bazaar.⁸¹ As Joseph was the honorary president of the Saint-Henri Social Club, their presence was required. Besides, proceeds went to the Union Saint-Joseph, which helped out the many poor people in the community whose bleak conditions constantly distressed Joseph.⁸²

8 P.M.

You could tell a man by the cut of his cloth, Louis Abinovitch mused, as he closed up his tailor shop for the day. Sighting throngs heading for a musical performance, he reflected on the loneliness of his craft, the absence of a larger Jewish community and synagogue in Saint-Henri, and the prospect of opening up a larger store one day. He consoled himself by sharing with his brothers William and Jacob his fractured childhood memories of Russia and the joy and peace his religion brought him. Together they

⁷⁹Joseph Lenoir, 190-91.

⁸⁰*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 88; *Lovell's City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; *La Presse*, 12 mars 1895, 1.

⁸¹Chambers, 299; *La Presse*, 14 août 1897, 16.

⁸²*La Presse*, 26 mai 1902, 8.

celebrated the sabbath and read from the Torah.⁸³

10 P.M.

Stroking his thick dark moustache, Mayor Toussaint Aquin (Figure 6.3) proudly surveyed his dominion as he stepped out of the town hall.⁸⁴ The fundraiser had gone well, he thought. The community was prospering and his contracting business was showing substantial gains. In his typically jovial fashion, he greeted John Guest, the Grand Trunk clerk who was returning home to his wife Mary and their three children after closing up the station for the night.⁸⁵

Midnight

Victoria Johnson's yelps pierced the eerie stillness of the moist night air. Confused feelings periodically overcame her, leading her to wander the streets whilst others slept.⁸⁶ Accustomed to her uncontrolled and drunken behaviour, Mélina Massé and other Saint-Henri women were awakened from their dreams by Victoria's disturbing screams. A cloud broke the full moon's silvery spell and enfolded the street once more in darkness.⁸⁷

⁸³Lovell's *City Directory*, 1895-96, 270; AVM, FCSH, *Rôle d'évaluation 1895*, P23/D1,10, 160; *Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 11; Tulchinsky, *Taking Root* (Toronto: Lester, 1992), 96-116, 129-130, 242.

⁸⁴Bellavance et al., 6.

⁸⁵*Manuscript Census*, Saint-Henri, 1891, folio 20.

⁸⁶*The Gazette*, December 11, 1895, 3; *La Presse*, 11 juin 1896, 1.

⁸⁷Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1998), 74.

Conclusion

The reconstruction of a summer day on a late nineteenth-century street explores a range of social relations, involving the activities of many people of different classes, and of a specific gender, age, race, ethnicity, and religion. The clearest class demarcation is between that of the petite bourgeoisie and the working and marginal classes. A petite bourgeoisie of merchants, entrepreneurs, and professionals dominated local government, philanthropic, and cultural organizations. Their differing concerns are characterized by attendant rituals and leadership at various social gatherings. The visible presence of women on city streets is evidenced by several examples: the peregrinations of washerwoman Madame Nantel from Sainte-Cunégonde to visit her employer Méline Massé in Saint-Henri; women and children departing and returning from work in local factories; as employees and customers in local shops, and exceptionally, as owners. For male and female vagrants, the street was home. The role of children in the social space of the street is subject to further investigation. Racial prejudices toward Syrian pedlars in particular reveal a local defence of neighbourhood street use. A summer day was deliberately chosen as a period of heightened activity for the urban working-classes. The rhythm of daily routine which took people to the street was punctuated by moments of pleasure, comedy, and tragedy: special seasonal celebrations, religious holidays, parades and processions, and in this particular instance, a crime.

Conclusion

This case study of a main street in an industrial suburb in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries indicates how and why streets are significant for social history as a critical representation and a political construct of everyday life. The intricate use of public space and its relation to social space demonstrates the complex workings of a diverse society and a broad range of class and gender relations. I employ Marxist and phenomenological thought to draw the connections between a material base, social practice, subjective experience, and ideology in an attempt to explore the power relations of a modern Western city and the nature of political intervention as an instrument of transforming reality. This approach helps interpret the usual, repetitive events of everyday life, as well as the tragic and unusual ones.

The centrality of my argument revolves around the differences between the prevailing economic liberal ideology of the propertied classes, which abetted the prevailing social and political distribution of power, and the daily experience of the majority population. A liberal ideology created divisions between public and private spaces, with a concentration of private capital and political control in the hands of the propertied classes. The attempts of the local elite to exclude disempowered groups through the political regulation of public space contrasts with the social usage of urban space. These contradictions were manifested in several ways: through the exclusion and appropriation of social and symbolic spaces characterized by distinct property ownership and rental patterns; through the shaping of a physical infrastructure marked by the profits of a *grande bourgeoisie* of Montreal, the growth of monopolies and minimal local intervention; through the public manifestations of the ordered and ritualistic celebration of the parade; and finally, through attempts to impose an appropriate and genteel code of behaviour on city streets.

The relations of class and property on Saint-Joseph Street and an examination of local utilities and services reveal that capital was largely in private hands. Profiting from the exchange value of land, a *grande* and *petite bourgeoisie* busily acquired property, staking out their respective territories in an expanding suburb. Land and property

transactions indicate that rapid urban expansion in the late 1870s and 1880s profited an anglophone grande bourgeoisie of Montreal who dominated land speculation and ownership of vacant lots and an established resident francophone petite bourgeoisie who owned most properties. 'The majority renting classes' occupied upper flats on the main street and homes on adjoining streets.

The mixed use of the street was reflected in changes over time. A combination of institutional, commercial, domestic, and recreational spaces were located on the main street from 1875 to 1890. As public institutions invested the symbolic centre, the downtown street environment comprised commercial, domestic, and recreational spaces. The new section fulfilled a mixed use function after the 1890-91 expropriation and design of the new street by the business elite. Homes, shops, offices, and taverns hedged the street with sociability.

Motivated by the principal concerns of profit, a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal and a local petite bourgeoisie benefited substantially from the physical expansion of a growing industrial suburb, to the detriment of the working classes. The treatment of utilities and services in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Saint-Henri reveals that the interests of private capital predominated over the public good, particularly in the 1870s and 1880s. The harsh social conditions induced by late nineteenth-century urbanization and industrialization were of little concern to politicians and businessmen. Municipal politicians in Saint-Henri were generally reticent to regulate utilities and services. Natural monopolies developed as a result, with substantial profits in the hands of a grande bourgeoisie of Montreal. Although a trend toward greater regulation resulted in the 1890s and early twentieth century, local leaders only intervened in emergency situations.

The working-class population suffered as a result. Attracted by the substantial profits and minimal operating costs of utilities, untaxed individuals, private companies, and monopolies gouged the working-class public. The persistent refusal of the Montreal Water and Power Company to supply clean and filtered water to the community serves as the most extreme example. Municipal reform and worker resistance mounted in the early twentieth century as the perils of working-class life were heightened through monopoly

intransigence. Political movements for municipalization and regulation of utilities and services were increasingly sensitized to social concerns and the attainment of decent conditions.

The regulation of public space by the propertied classes led to the exclusion of many social classes and women. Bourgeois and petit bourgeois attempts to impose order and propriety on city streets is evidenced by the ceremonious ritual of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade in the late nineteenth century. As a public manifestation of the political culture of French-Canadian nationalism, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste parade reflected the social control of a male francophone and Catholic elite and presented a respectable image of religious nationalism and female subordination.

The principal concerns of the local elite were motivated by profit, the luring of industrial capital, and land promotion. Class antagonisms were marked by increased resistance in the community in the late 1890s and early 1900s as tensions heightened with a mounting debt and repeated calls for annexation to the City of Montreal. Protest took many forms: *protêts* or notarized letters, petitions, and non-payment of taxes; opposition to expropriation and bonusing and to the dominant property ownership of George A. Drummond, a grande bourgeois of Montreal, and monopoly control of utilities; labour conflicts, the rise of workers' parties, and municipal reform leagues.

Access to the open space of the street gave people the illusion of freedom and presented a dilemma for lawmakers and 'right thinking people' who sought to constrain movement and impose an acceptable code of behaviour. The visible presence of women, men, and children on city streets involved in a wide range of social activities and relations led to moral regulation and social control. From the perspective of the local elite, the public space of the street was often treated as a private space. Attempts to suppress the volatility of the streets are evidenced by police arrests and fines in Recorder's Court following incidents of street crime.

The study of a particular street lends one perspective on the daily reality of working people in a late nineteenth-century suburb. This dissertation makes no pretence of being a history of the community as a whole. Many social and cultural aspects are subject to

further investigation, notably the participation of children, social support networks, the role of ethnicity, religious institutions, philanthropic organizations, and mutual aid societies. Taken together with other recent studies of single communities,¹ this case study could form part of a history of public space and its relations to social space in Quebec which could consider class assignation and gender relations, noting levels and degrees of difference in a nuanced treatment of Quebec cities and regional towns.² A historical survey could help interpret the broader implications of modernity and ideology, the transformations in experience and thought brought about by the transition to industrial capitalism and urban development.

Ultimately, this study of the past serves as a relevant inspiration for present political mobilization. For "the point, as Marx observed it, is not only to interpret the world, but to change it".³ In the aftermath of the dismantlement of the modern welfare state and the current transition to global capitalism, recent events in Seattle and in Washington indicate that disempowered youth strive to stake out their claim to an equitable share of society's spoils. Comparable in some respects to the transition to industrial capitalism, the pressing social need once again predominates, with visible signs of public protest and resistance taking people to the turf of city streets.

¹Peggy Roquigny, "Sainte-Cunégonde: société et espace dans le contexte de l'industrialisation, 1876-1905," Communication présentée au Congrès annuel de l'ITHAF, 22 octobre 1999; Guy Mongrain, "Population et territoire dans un contexte de croissance urbaine: Saint-Louis-du-Mile-End, 1881-1901" (Thèse de maîtrise [Histoire], UQAM, 1998); Gilles Lauzon, "Habiter un nouveau quartier ouvrier de la banlieue de Montréal: village Saint-Augustin (Municipalité de Saint-Henri), 1855-1881" (Mémoire de maîtrise [histoire], UQAM, 1986).

²In light of the recent publication of a history of domestic space in Canada, the treatment of public and social space is in order. Peter Ward, *A History of Domestic Space* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).

³Henry Abelcove, Elizabeth Blackmar, Peter Dimock, and Jonathan Schneer, eds., *Visions of History*, xi.

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Page 84 -		RÔLE D'ÉVALUATION DE LA VILLE DE ST-HENRI.										FOLIO 18	
N°	NOM	LOCALITÉ DE L'ÉVALUÉ	ÂGE	ÉTAT	PROFESSION	QUALIFICATION				MONTANT DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ	MONTANT DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ		REMARKS
						1	2	3	4		5	6	
6													
506		Papineau John	25	Single	Cop. St. Henri								
507		Knatchbull James	30	Married	"								
508	Lacoste Edmund		45	Married	"					3210	105	part 1/2	
509		Angus B.C.	25	Married	"								
510		Thomas Curran	25	Married	"								
511	Lacoste August			Married	"					2800	104		
512		Walter Smith	24	Married	"								
513		Loring John	25	Married	"								
514		Loring Louis	23	do	"								
515	Lacoste Joseph		42	Married	"					3540	105		
516		Rogers Albany	25	Married	"								
517		Smith John	38	Married	"								
518		Thomas Joseph	25	Married	"								
519		John Smith	29	Married	"								
520		William Thomas	25	Married	"								
521	Lacoste Joseph		42	Married	"					3525	105	part 1/2	
522		Lacoste August	49	Married	"								
523	Lacoste James		58	Married	"					2350	100	part 1/2	
524		Lachapelle August	52	Married	"								
525		Lachapelle John	21	do	"								
526	Robinson William			Married	"					2350	100	part 1/2	
527		William Alexander	32	Married	"								
528		William Arthur	25	Married	"								
529		John Smith	45	Married	"								
530		John Smith	24	Married	"								
531	Ducharme Joseph			Married	"					1200	105		
532		Papineau August	29	Married	"								
533		James D. Smith	27	Married	"								
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APPENDIX B

Select Chronology of Public Services & Regulations in Saint-Henri, 1875-1901

<u>Date</u>	<u>By-law</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Public Service</u>
1875	4		Saint-Henri Gas Company
1880	19, 20		Proposed Aqueduct and Water Pipes
1883	31	\$22,000	Town Hall Construction
1885	39		Regulation of Smoke Pollution from Grand Trunk Railway trains
1888	48,49	\$110,000	Water and Sewer Pipe Installation (delayed until 1890)
1890	51		Regulation of Grand Trunk Railway: Notre-Dame Street Bridge over tracks; speed and blockage of streets
1890-91	55	\$100,000	Notre-Dame Street widening, extension, sewer & sidewalk installation
1891	56		Building Regulations: stone foundations & fire walls
1891	57		Regulation regarding smells emanating from the abattoirs
1891	58,62		Purchase of Aqueduct from Montreal Water and Electric Company; Sale to MWPC
1891	59, 61	\$150,000	Notre-Dame Street improvements
1891	63		Electric Lighting Contracts to Drummond & Clarkson & Robert Bickerdike
1891	65		Gas Contract to Robert Bickerdike
1891	66		Tram Contracts to Chars Urbains de Montréal & Robert Bickerdike
1891	67		Electric Lighting Contract to Robert Bickerdike

1894			Widening and Paving of Notre-Dame Street (Atwater to Grand Trunk Railway Bridge)
1894	83	\$200,000	Sewer Installation
1894			Citizens Lighting on Notre-Dame Street's downtown stretch
1894	84		Outlawing of wooden buildings & houses of less than 2 stories high, unless cottages
1895			Grand Trunk Railway Station
1895-97			Montreal Street Railway Tram Line Installation on new section of Notre-Dame Street
1897	95		Building Regulations
1898	101	\$10,000	Notre-Dame Street Fire Station
1901	118	\$200,000	Saint-Ambroise Street improvement
1901	120		Regulation regarding abattoir smells