

## INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

**UMI<sup>®</sup>**

Bell & Howell Information and Learning  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA  
800-521-0600



**SALUBRIOUS SETTINGS AND FORTUNATE FAMILIES:  
THE MAKING OF MONTREAL'S GOLDEN SQUARE MILE,  
1840 - 1895**

**RODERICK MACLEOD**

**Department of History  
McGill University  
Montreal**

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

**(c) Roderick MacLeod  
August 1997**



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-44507-0

Canada

## ABSTRACT

The Golden Square Mile is well known as the historic domain of Montreal's anglophone elite. Its idyllic setting on the mountainside, overlooking the city and the St Lawrence River, was a natural magnet for wealthy nineteenth-century families, just as it had been in the days of fur traders such as James McGill. As an urban environment, however, the Golden Square Mile was far more complicated than the sum of its mansions. Despite a long history of habitation by gentlemen farmers, the "GSM" took shape only as of mid-century, accompanying the rise of capitalist institutions and the middle classes. Furthermore, it was the result of a considerable amount of planning and salesmanship, which made fortunes for some landowners and speculators even before the first mansions appeared. The anglophone, Protestant character of the area also had to be encouraged, reflecting a growing cultural dichotomy within Montreal society. This thesis considers the Golden Square Mile within the context of urban history: it is a study of town planning, land ownership, architecture, and social geography. It also considers the built environment as a venue for broader social and cultural change.

## RESUME

Le Mille Carré Doré est bien connu comme le domaine historique de la haute bourgeoisie anglophone de Montréal. Son cadre idyllique sur la côte de la montagne, avec vue sur la ville et le fleuve St-Laurent, attrayait les riches familles du dix-neuvième siècle, comme avait été le cas au temps des marchands de fourrures tels que James McGill. Cependant, le milieu urbain du Mille Carré Doré est beaucoup plus compliqué que la somme de ces résidences. Malgré la présence de gentilhommes campagnards depuis longtemps, le Mille Carré Doré ne prit forme que vers la moitié du dix-neuvième siècle suivant l'ascension des institutions capitalistes et de la classe moyenne. De plus, sa création a été le résultat de beaucoup de planification et de commercialisation qui a fait des fortunes pour quelques propriétaires et spéculateurs avant même que les premières résidences soient construites. Le caractère anglophone et protestant du secteur s'est imposé, créant, en effet, une société distincte. L'objectif de cette thèse est de présenter l'histoire d'une communauté en tenant compte de la planification urbaine, de la propriété foncière, de l'architecture, et de la géographie sociale. Elle considère aussi l'influence du milieu urbain comme catalyseur de plus amples changements sociaux et culturels.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract / Résumé.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	vi
List of Maps.....	viii
List of Figures.....	xv
List of Tables.....	xx
Introduction - <i>The Golden Square Mile in Context</i> .....	1
1. Analyzing the Built Environment.....	2
2. Montreal and the Anglophone elite.....	10
Chapter I - <i>Montreal in 1840</i> .....	16
1. The Shape of the Town.....	17
2. "A Very Conspicuous Object": The Mountain.....	30
3. Institutional Changes.....	44
Chapter II - <i>Planning the Golden Square Mile</i> .....	49
1. The Committee on Roads and Improvements.....	51
2. GSM Landowners and the City Plan, 1840-1842.....	55
3. Secondary Planning, 1843-1846.....	68
4. Planning in the 1850s and 60s.....	73

<b>Chapter III - Subdivision.....</b>	<b>79</b>
1. John Redpath and the Art of Subdivision.....	80
2. A Family Business: The Phillips and Lamothe Subdivisions.....	90
3. Subdivision by Corporation: The "McGill College Properties".....	97
4. Shareholders and Subdivision: The McTavish Estate.	109
5. Women and Subdivision.....	115
<b>Chapter IV - Building the Golden Square Mile.....</b>	<b>120</b>
1. Mountain Fever.....	122
2. Speculative Building.....	130
3. Artisans, Contractors, and Architects.....	137
<b>Chapter V - Transformation of the Landscape.....</b>	<b>150</b>
1. Patterns of Development, 1842-1853.....	151
2. The New Town.....	157
3. McGill College and its Environs.....	163
4. Dominion Square.....	168
5. St Catherine and Sherbrooke Streets.....	173
6. Mount Royal.....	177

<b>Chapter VI - <i>The GSM and its Institutions</i></b> .....	183
1. Places of Worship.....	184
2. Schools.....	195
3. Public Collections.....	198
4. Other Institutions.....	202
<b>Chapter VII - <i>Residents of the GSM</i></b> .....	205
1. The Move.....	206
2. House and Garden.....	220
3. Suburban Households.....	225
<b>Conclusion - <i>The Golden Square Mile in Retrospect</i></b> .....	232
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	236
<b>Maps, Figures, Tables</b> .....	251



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The last year or so of a dissertation spent writing in a lonely room easily leads one to forget that this stage can be reached only with the help of others. In my case this experience, which at times has seemed endless, has been alleviated considerably by the support and tolerance of family and friends, and by the encouragement of colleagues. Of the latter, there can be few words of gratitude strong enough for Brian Young, my supervisor, who has given my work so much scrupulous attention, and has always found time to absorb and nurture my often rambling chains of thought. He may not have realized what he was getting into, but it was his enthusiasm, right from that winter day years ago when I stumbled into his office with vague talk of topographical analysis, that enabled this dissertation to leave the ground, let alone be completed.

Thanks must also go to other colleagues at McGill who have taught me much about Canadian history, and how to think about people and space. I am grateful to the History Department for their confidence in me, as well as their financial support. I would also like to thank the Department's administrative staff, particularly Mary McDaid, for minimizing so much of the stress involved in completing a degree.

The staff of the McGill Rare Books Room, the Blackader-Lauterman Library, and the McGill University Archives, must receive my gratitude; I would single out Rob Michel for guiding me through the vast material on McGill College and the Royal Institution. I have also appreciated the helpfulness of the staff at the *Archives Nationales du Québec*, especially Jean-Marc Garant for unearthing the wonders of the *Cartotheque* for me and sharing his knowledge of Montreal geography.

Public acknowledgement must be given to Elena Cerrolaza for her work on the maps and illustrations in this thesis. Her untiring support, as well as companionship through many difficult moments in our own lives, can never be properly rewarded. I am grateful to my parents for their interest in my work and their knowledge of Montreal; they have also shown great wisdom by carrying on the sensible tradition of the *donation*, an act that has enabled me to experience suburban life first hand. My thanks go to Elisa Beatriz for keeping me on my toes during the last two months of writing. My thanks also go to Andrés Javier for his great patience and good company; I am sure he has learned far more about church

architecture and the Sulpician Order than is healthy for a pre-schooler. Most of all, my thanks and my heart go to Celina, who has probably taught me more than anyone.

## LIST OF MAPS

### *Explanatory Note*

Most of the maps in this thesis have been redrawn from actual surveyors' plans, which are difficult to reproduce with clarity. These are available at the *Archives Nationales du Québec à Montreal (ANQ-M)*, either in the *Cartothèque*, or on microfilm within the *greffe* of the notary with whom the plan was originally deposited. References below are to the call numbers of individual maps within the *Cartothèque*, or to the notarial act (listed by the notary's name, the number of the act, and the date) where the plan can be found. In some cases (eg. Map 16.) the map is in fact a compilation of several plans or sketches, redrawn for clarity.

Other maps are the result of detailed reconstruction, based on information gleaned from other maps, and more typically from notarial documents. Maps 11, 15, 18, 22, and 50 fall into this category. Maps 4 through 7 were abstracted from Cane's 1846 map of Montreal, though the exact size and shape of each property is a reflection of the dimensions given in deeds and acts of commutation. Maps 41 through 46 purport to show all the streets and buildings that existed in the given years, as indicated in various maps, descriptions, and deeds (where the presence or absence of houses is normally indicated). Future research may well result in minor changes to these maps, but they do illustrate the rate at which the GSM developed and the nature of that development. Map 41 (1840) was based on Goad's 1881 map of Montreal with almost everything removed; buildings and streets that had appeared by 1848 were then added to this nearly blank slate to make Map 42, which in turn formed the framework to which structures that had emerged by 1856 were affixed to make Map 43 - and so on, up to Map 46 (1881) which is a partial redrawing of Goad's actual map. Although the years chosen tend to mark eight year intervals, this is technically a coincidence; these years represent key watershed dates in the building history of the GSM.

1. **Montreal and Environs c.1800 showing boundaries of the "GSM"**  
(Loosely based on Charland's 1801 map)
2. **Present-day Montreal showing boundaries of the "GSM"**
3. **Old Town and faubourgs c.1840**  
(Loosely based on map in Bosworth's *Hochelaga Depicta*)
4. **Landowners on Mountain slope c.1810**
5. **Landowners on Mountain slope c.1836**
6. **GSM estates with dates at which they were acquired by developers**
7. **GSM estates with dates of subdivision schemes**
8. **Detail of James Cane's 1846 Map of Montreal showing GSM**
9. **Craig's plan of the New Town of Edinburgh**  
(Source: Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*)

*Redpath Estate*

10. **La Ferme de la Montagne c.1836, after Trudeauux**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Bedouin #5012, 4 November 1836)
11. **Redpath's commutations**
12. **1840 plan for Upper Drummond Street, after Ostell**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Bedouin #5630, 20 January 1841)
13. **1842 plan for lower subdivision, after Ostell**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Bedouin #5914 1/2, 20 September 1842)

14. **Original purchasers of Upper Drummond Street lots**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Bedouin #5927, 26 September 1842)
15. **Original purchasers of lower subdivision lots**
16. **Subdivision of the Terrace Bank area**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Pelton #1869, 13 July 1844; Joseph Belle #13584 & 13585, 3 June 1853)

*Beaver Hall estate*

17. **Frobisher estate subdivision c.1817, after Viger**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Cartothèque MCA 601 353 974 1/2)
18. **Lower part of Phillips subdivision, before alterations**
19. **Phillips's subdivision plan c.1844 showing alterations made 1842-43**  
(ANQ-M, Ross #973, 26 September 1844)
20. **1856 plan for land above Sherbrooke Street, after Perrault**  
(ANQ-M, Easton #5848, 27 August 1856)

*Lands of the Royal Institution*

21. **Parry's plan for McGill College, 1838**  
(Source: MacMillan, *McGill and its Story*)
22. **Ostell's 1840 plan for the lower part of the Desrivières Strip (conjectural) showing links with the Beaver Hall estate**
23. **Ostell's 1842-45 plan for Royal Institution land south of Sherbrooke Street**  
(ANQ-M, Cartothèque MCA 601-53, 26)

24. **Perrault's 1863 plan for the Desrivières strip above Sherbrooke Street**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 543)

*McTavish estate*

25. **Wells's 1845 plan for land below Sherbrooke Street**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 1334)
26. **1847 partage of land above Sherbrooke Street, after Fisher, Hayes, and Ostell**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Easton #2671, 1 November 1847)
27. **1853 plan for Upper Peel and McTavish streets, after Perrault**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Gibb #15201, 21 December 1853)
28. **1856 partage of land below Sherbrooke Street, after Perrault**  
(Based on ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 146)
29. **Perrault's 1858 subdivision plan for Smith's land**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 335)
30. **Perrault's 1860 subdivision plan for Smith's land**  
(ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #31422, 11 January 1870)

*Other estates*

31. **Lamothe subdivision plan 1843**  
(Based on ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-28, 6074)
32. **Mackenzie estate 1845, after Thompson**  
(Based on ANQ-M, Gibb #8386, 10 November 1845)

33. 1845 plan for the Mackenzie estate, lower subdivision,  
after Macfarlane  
(Based on ANQ-M, Gibb #8396, 17 November 1845)
34. 1845 plan for the Mackenzie estate, upper subdivision,  
after Macfarlane  
(Based on ANQ-M, Gibb #8714, 21 April 1846)
35. 1850 sub-subdivision of 4 lots from the Mackenzie estate,  
after Springle  
(Based on ANQ-M, Gibb #15781, 7 September 1854)
36. 1857 plan for the Shuter estate, after Perrault  
(Based on ANQ-M, Cartothèque MCA 601-53, 308)
37. 1856 sale of the Douglas estate to the Joseph family  
(ANQ-M, Cartothèque MCA 601-53, 237)
38. 1867 plan for the Mills estate, after Rielle  
(Based on ANQ-M, Hunter #12814 1/2, 18 May 1867)
39. 1868 plan for the Hoyle estate, after Rielle  
(Based on ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #29322, 14 August  
1868)
40. 1868 plan for the Auld estate, after Rielle  
(Based on ANQ-M, Hunter #13760, 23 April 1868)

*The Evolution of the GSM*

41. The GSM in 1840
42. The GSM in 1848
43. The GSM in 1856
44. The GSM in 1864

- 45. **The GSM in 1872**
- 46. **The GSM in 1881**
- 47. **Olmsted's 1877 plan for Mount Royal Park**  
(Source: Murray, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park")
- 48. **Proposed extension of University Street, 1858**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 419)

*Buildings and grounds*

- 49. **Burnside farm, 1852**  
(ANQ-M, Gibb #13695, 16 March 1852)
- 50. **Building activity on the Lamothe estate, 1843-53**
- 51. **Watson's Hanover Street terrace, 1850**  
(ANQ-M, Gibb #12844, 4 April 1851)
- 52. **Mountain Terrace, 1848**  
(ANQ-M, Gibb #11486, 26 December 1848)
- 53. **Perrault & Payette's terraces ("Montmorency Terrace"), 1859**  
(ANQ-M, Gibb #18989, 4 April 1860)
- 54. **Gibb house, 1859**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 385)
- 55. **Terrace Bank and grounds, 1869**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 644)
- 56. **Prévost terrace, 1870s**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 3073)



57. **Prévost house and grounds, 1872**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 504)
  
58. **Prévost house and grounds, 1883**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 978)
  
59. **Workman house and grounds, 1879**  
(Based on ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-53, 229)
  
60. **Beaudry terrace, 1880s**  
(ANQ-M, *Cartothèque* MCA 601-62, 130)

## LIST OF FIGURES

(With Sources)

1. **View of Montreal in 1762, by Thomas Patten**  
(Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*)
2. **Portrait of James McGill**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
3. **Burnside Farm c.1810 with McTavish Castle in background**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
4. **View from the Haymarket of Beaver Hall Hill c.1850 with St Andrew's Church (upper left, under construction) and Unitarian Church (centre right)**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)
5. **Beaver Hall Hill facing south c.1860 with St Andrew's Church (right)**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)
6. **View of New Town c.1870 with St Patrick's Church (centre)**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)
7. **View from Ravenscrag c.1866 with McTavish Reservoir (foreground)**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
8. **Gates on Sherbrooke Street leading to Terrace Bank**  
(Feltoe, *Redpath: History of a Sugar House*)
9. **Sherbrooke Street c.1900**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
10. **East side, Dominion Square c.1878 with Knox Church (left) and Roman Catholic Cathedral (right, under construction)**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)

11. **South side, Dominion Square c.1878 with St George's Church (right)**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
12. **North side, Dominion Square c.1878 with Erskine Church (centre) and New High School (behind church)**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
13. **West side, Dominion Square c.1880 with Windsor Hotel and Dorchester Street Methodist Chapel (left)**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
14. **Windsor Station**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
15. **Morgan's Store, Phillips Square**  
(Pinard, *Montréal: son histoire, son architecture*)
16. **Birks' Store, Phillips Square**  
(MacLeod, *The First Century*)
17. **The St James's Club, Dorchester Street**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
18. **Notre Dame Church**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
19. **Old Christ Church**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
20. **Old St Gabriel's Street Presbyterian Church**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
21. **Old St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St Peter Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
22. **Old St Paul's Presbyterian Church, St Helen Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)

23. **Old American Presbyterian Church, St James Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
24. **Scots Secession Church, Lagauchetière Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
25. **Old Baptist Chapel, St Maurice Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
26. **Old Congregational Chapel**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
27. **St James Street Wesleyan Chapel**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
28. **Old Synagogue, Chenneville Street**  
(Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*)
29. **New St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Beaver Hall Hill**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
30. **New Christ Church, Phillips Square**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)
31. **St James the Apostle Anglican Church, St Catherine Street**  
(Photo: author)
32. **New American Presbyterian Church, Dorchester Street**  
(Lighthall, *American Presbyterian Church*)
33. **St George's Anglican Church, Dominion Square**  
(Choko, *Les grandes places publiques*)
34. **Wesleyan Congregation Church / New St Gabriel's  
Presbyterian Church, St Catherine Street**  
(Gersovitz, *The Golden Square Mile*)
35. **New St James Methodist Church, St Catherine Street**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)

36. **Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Stanley Street**  
(Gersovitz, *The Golden Square Mile*)
37. **German and Polish Synagogue, McGill College Avenue**  
(Gersovitz, *The Golden Square Mile*)
38. **High School of Montreal, Belmont Street c.1857**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)
39. **Burnside Hall, University Street**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)
40. **McGill College c.1860**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)
41. **McGill Arts Building with new Molson Hall**  
(James, *Ostell: Architect and Surveyor*)
42. **McGill Campus in 1875**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)
43. **Protestant Orphan Asylum, St Catherine Street**  
(James, *Ostell: Architect and Surveyor*)
44. **Royal Victoria Hospital**  
(Terry, *The Royal Vic*)
45. **Crystal Palace showing ceremonial arch**  
(Demchinsky, *Montreal Then and Now*)
46. **Art Association Gallery, Phillips Square**  
(Gersovitz, *The Golden Square Mile*)
47. **Redpath Museum, McGill campus**  
(Feltoe, *Redpath: History of a Sugar House*)
48. **McGill Medical Building, McGill campus**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)

49. **Two surviving units of Mountain Terrace, Mountain Street, today**  
(Photo: author)
  
50. **Mount Royal Terrace, McGill College Avenue**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
51. **Rose house, Simpson Street ("Rosemount")**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
52. **"Rosemount" c.1890 with new facade**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
53. **Stephens house, Dorchester Street ("Homestead")**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
54. **Burnside house c.1855**  
(Frost, *McGill University*)
  
55. **Gault house, McTavish Street ("Braehead")**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
56. **Gault house, Sherbrooke Street ("Rokeby")**  
(Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*)
  
57. **Lyman house, McTavish Street ("Thornhill") with Savage house ("The Elms") behind**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
58. **Prince of Wales Terrace, Sherbrooke Street**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
  
59. **Dow House, Beaver Hall Square ("Strathearn")**  
(Communauté Urbaine de Montréal, Répertoire  
*d'architecture traditionnelle*)
  
60. **"Terrace Bank" refurbished, front**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)

61. **"Terrace Bank" refurbished, rear**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
62. **Ravenscrag**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
63. **Linton house, Sherbrooke Street ("Mount View")**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
64. **Hamilton house, Sherbrooke Street**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)
65. **Prévost Terraces, St Catherine Street, today**  
(Photo: author)
66. **Forget house, Sherbrooke Street**  
(Remillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*)
67. **Ross house, Upper Peel Street**  
(Mackay, *The Square Mile*)

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Commutation of GSM properties

Table 2. Redpath sales before Thomas Bedouin, September - December 1842

Table 3. Redpath sales before Thomas Pelton, April 1844 - August 1845

Table 4. Beaver Hall sales before William Ross, November 1843 - September  
1844

Table 5. Beaver Hall sales before Isaac Jones Gibb and William Easton,  
November 1844 - November 1845

Table 6. Purchasers of GSM lots 1842 - 1845, by occupation

Table 7. Mount Royal Terrace households, 1861

Table 8. Number of domestic staff in relation to size of elite GSM  
households, 1871-1891



## Introduction - The Golden Square Mile in Context

This is a study of the evolution of a particular space. It deals with the physical transformation of an area measuring roughly one square mile over the course of half a century: an area on the southern flank of Montreal's Mount Royal which gradually became known first as part of the St Antoine faubourg, then the "New Town", then the "Square Mile", and now "Downtown". Until it was developed the area was farmland, and knew only topographical boundaries: the heights of Mount Royal to the north, the gentle escarpment running parallel to it to the south, the highway leading over the mountain to the west, and the outer limits of the St Laurent faubourg to the east. [Map 1.] In modern terms, the boundaries of this area are: the mountain to the north, the CPR tracks (which run along the line of the "Dorchester escarpment", somewhat below what was once Dorchester Street and is now Boulevard René-Lévesque) and Central Station to the south, Côte des Neiges Road to the west, and what are now Durocher, Aylmer, and St Alexander streets to the east. [Map 2.]

The term "Square Mile" has traditionally been used to define what was seen as the most exclusive residential neighbourhood in Canada: the square mile in which could be found the families who controlled 70% of the country's wealth. The prefix "Golden" is often added to imply an especially idyllic setting; neither term was used until the 20th century, long after the period covered by this study.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, "Golden Square Mile" is a useful unifying name for the area,

---

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of this area's nomenclature see Mackay, *The Square Mile*, p.8; Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, ix.

in part to distinguish it from other square miles, including the better known "Square Mile of London", which refers to that city's financial centre. It also permits the abbreviated form "GSM", which will be used throughout this study; as well as being less cumbersome, "GSM" recalls the "CBD" (Central Business District) used by many urban geographers to distinguish a city's downtown from its outskirts. To an extent, it is possible to argue that the "GSM" is generic, that most cities have one just as they have a CBD. A neighbourhood removed from the centre, where the social elite live in relative isolation, can be seen as a feature of urban growth at the early stages of industrial capitalism, whether they are called Back Bay, the Upper East Side, the New Town, the West End, or the Barrio de Salamanca. Such neighbourhoods generally predate the modern residential suburb - though they often coincide with the creation of urban railways - which eventually tend to draw the city's elite further away from the centre, and diminish the social importance of a "GSM".

### *1. Analyzing the Built Environment*

The purpose of this study is to consider the various forces which contribute to the creation of a particular urban space. As such, it attempts to remove the analysis of space - what architects tend to call "city form" and geographers "morphology" - from the boxes into which in the past it has been placed by these disciplines. An inherent question is to what extent a space is the product of overriding social structures, and to what extent it is the result of human agency - and if the latter, whether the objective was aesthetic improvement, or merely exploitation. Most studies

of urban form assume one or the other of these points of view; either cities evolve "organically", or they are the deliberate creation of either benevolent governments or a self-interested elite. In an effort to generalize, particular circumstances are too often overlooked; alternatively, detailed studies which reveal human involvement can fail to take into account the long-term effects of major social and economic change. A compromise position, one that recognizes the importance of human agency within a framework of broader change, will result in a more balanced, and historically relevant, presentation of changing space. To this end, social history has much to offer.

The fascination which architectural historians have had with the way cities take shape has too often amounted to an aesthetic analysis of form with little regard for the circumstances that brought it about - or at best, too great an emphasis on the efforts of great architects and their patrons; as a result, the broad stylistic terminology of art history - Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque - is used to describe physical changes of cities, and a causal link assumed between style and structure. At other times, historical periodization appears to serve the same end, the assumption being that political or economic systems translate easily into the shape of buildings and streets. Many of best known works on the physical development of cities rely at one point or another on these stereotypes - Lewis Mumford's *The City in History* (1961), Leonardo Benevolo's *Storia della Città* (1975), and A.E.J Morris's *History of Urban Form* (1974) - but none to a greater and often confusing extent than Edmund Bacon's *Design of Cities* (1967), which assumes that a rational, benevolent *Zeitgeist* accounts for the growth and appearance of all cities, and it is this, rather than specific human motivation that must be studied to understand these environments. Alternatively, geographers and other social scientists have

traditionally been concerned with forming theories to explain urban development - "central place" is perhaps the best known of these theories, and "ekistics" certainly the most bizarre - at the expense of studying specific historical circumstances.<sup>2</sup> The move by social scientists away from abstraction toward a closer examination of how humans relate in specific urban environments, be it "humanist" or Marxist in approach, has also tended - quite appropriately - to move the focus of study away from how cities are built. Some geographers, in an attempt to return to this question, have fallen into the architects' habit of relying on broad aesthetic and intellectual factors to explain the peculiarities of urban form: the well-meaning, but historically inaccurate James E Vance's *This Scene of Man* (1977) is a case in point.

More recent scholarship has made strides to present the development of urban form more thoughtfully, typically by means of an interdisciplinary approach; the growing consensus is that the techniques and outlook of social history can contribute much to the understanding of how human spaces are created and how people inhabit them. The leading figure in this endeavour is the architectural historian Spiro Kostof, who in *America By Design* (1987), *The City Shaped* (1991), and *The City Assembled* (1992) shifted the emphasis from aesthetic ideas to social groups, political structures, and popular culture as the agents of city building - an approach, he confessed that had more to do with social history and urban geography than architecture.<sup>3</sup> Another architectural

---

<sup>2</sup> "Central Place" is most closely associated with Walter Christaller, *Central Places in Southern Germany* (1966); "Ekistics" is the invention of Konstantinos Doxiades, in *Ekistics: an Introduction to the Science of Human Settlement* (1970)

<sup>3</sup> Kostof, *The City Shaped*, p.25

historian, Mark Girouard, has done much to blend the study of custom and behaviour with that of the built environment, notably in *The Victorian Country House* (1979), and *Cities and People* (1985), whose subtitle is "A Social and Architectural History". One historian, Donald J Olsen, has reinterpreted the aesthetic approach to urban space by considering it as part of social history: in *The City as a Work of Art* (1986), Olsen demonstrates how the nineteenth-century middle classes of London, Paris, and Vienna rebuilt their cities to suit their own tastes. This work took to a level of culture and ideology Olsen's more prosaic analysis of planning and subdivision in *Town Planning in London: the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries* (1964); both tackle different aspects of the building process, though with a notable absence of cynicism regarding the motives of those with an influence on space.

The process by which an environment takes shape is best studied in terms of specific cities. Olsen's *Town Planning*, H.J Dyos' *Victorian Suburb* (1961), and A.J Youngson's *The Making of Classical Edinburgh* (1966) all attempt to trace the evolution of a space from the planning stage through to its building and occupation by people and institutions. All take into consideration the impact of broad social, economic, and demographic changes. The scale of these studies, however, allows for only bit parts to be played by individuals, few of whom emerge from the myriad of forces at work, or not for more than a brief instant. On the level of planning, individual motivation and special interests are evident in Anthony Sutcliffe's *The Autumn of Central Paris* (1970), but in general it is difficult to bring the discussion of planning and building down to the individual level without turning it into biography. Unless one does so at least to some degree, however, cities can begin to appear as though they build

themselves, as Dyos all but admits.<sup>4</sup> To ignore the human scale is to ignore the degree to which urban expansion is the work of people with specific, often self-serving, agendas - even if such agendas were largely shaped by the individual or group's position within a changing society.

Two works on Montreal's urban development are good examples of smaller scale studies, where the emphasis on individuals and the interplay of property and entrepreneurship gives a somewhat more subtle picture of the process. One is Paul-André Linteau's *Maisonnette, ou comment des promoteurs fabriquent une ville* (1981) which concerns the creation of an industrial suburb as of the late nineteenth century, focusing on the landowners and speculative builders who turned land development into a hugely profitable endeavour. The other work is Alan Stewart's *Settling an Eighteenth Century Faubourg* (1988) which presents a similar process in a pre-industrial setting, showing how a landowning class subdivided its property in order to create building lots, and how a class of artisans and shopkeepers responded. A third study, David Hanna's *The New Town of Montreal* (1977) forms a good, general overview of the process analyzed in this thesis; it is particularly strong on the link between economic change and housing patterns, though perhaps too charitable towards the developers themselves, who were generally motivated less by aesthetics than by the desire to make money, and were far from united in their approach to land development.

In this light, Montreal's GSM serves as a good case study of the building process. For one thing, its growth was relatively rapid: the years 1840 to 1895 witnessed the complete transformation of this area from farmland into a well-populated urban community with houses, churches, schools, museums, and businesses. At the level of planning and

---

<sup>4</sup> Dyos, *Victorian Suburb*, p.85

building, the role of individuals, families, and corporations can be presented in some detail. The GSM was also developed during a period of fundamental social and economic change, and therefore stands in sharp contrast to the communities studied by Linteau and Stewart. Maisonneuve was clearly an industrial space, and its development the product of mature capitalism; in St Laurent, on the other hand, the pattern of land transfer and settlement was governed by feudal forms of tenure. The GSM was created during a time of transition: the emergence of industrial capitalism, and the rapid expansion of the middle classes - the former being clearly a catalyst for the outward movement of the latter. Maisonneuve attracted industry and the working class, while St Laurent housed artisanal families and their businesses; both communities were extensions of the existing city and its economy. The GSM became home to the city's middle classes and their institutions, although at mid-century both were comfortably ensconced in the old town. The luring of the middle classes to the GSM required deliberate cultivation by developers of the advantages of suburban living; this was achieved by means of advertising and the careful packaging of space.

At the same time, what a close reading of the GSM's evolution reveals is that it is highly unusual. The cultural and political situation in Montreal had few parallels - perhaps none, at least in North America and Europe; it is impossible to understand the making of the GSM without an appreciation of the complex social and ethnic divisions within nineteenth-century Quebec society. Indeed, one of the broader conclusions of this thesis is that there is no such thing as a "case study" in urban history, or at any rate none that is universally applicable; local circumstances always complicate the process of an area's development beyond the point of useful generalization. However, the manner in which social and ethnic tension helped shape the GSM as a space is

fascinating in itself, particularly because it was subtle: unlike much neighbourhood ethnic rivalry, it was never expressed violently or even aggressively - or at least, not in the GSM itself. It took the form, rather, of street plans that recalled Anglo-Saxon elements in British cities, of the struggle between Protestant and Catholic churches for visual prominence within a city square, and of the ethnic division of middle class households along class lines. Factors such as these account for the GSM's particular "morphology", though they have almost nothing to do with stylistic trends or the abstract attributes of "Victorianism".

The obverse of this point is also true, that the development of the GSM reveals a great deal about the society of nineteenth-century Montreal - and, by extension, that of Lower Canada and Quebec - which engendered its particular form. In claiming this, however, it is important not to fall into the trap of assuming a link between the culture of an urban society and its architecture and street layout, as do the likes of Mumford, Bacon, Vance, and even to an extent, Olsen. In the words of Spiro Kostof:

We "read" form correctly only to the extent that we are familiar with the precise cultural conditions that generated it. Rather than presume...that buildings and city-forms are a transparent medium of cultural expression, I am convinced that the relationship only works the other way around. The more we know about cultures, about the structure of society in various periods of history in different parts of the world, the better we are able to read their built environment.<sup>5</sup>

We cannot know that Montreal was permeated with cultural divisions simply because the planning of the GSM recalled that of Edinburgh's New Town, or because Neo-Gothic became a

---

<sup>5</sup> Kostof, *The City Shaped*, p.10



popular style for Protestant churches, or even because most owners of GSM mansions were Anglican or Presbyterian while most of their servants, at least in the early years, were Irish Catholic. The cultural situation must be known first. Accordingly, it informs this study, rather than being explained by it. The story of the making of the GSM opens a window onto many aspects of nineteenth-century Quebec society, all of which must be factored in to understand the evolution of this particular built environment. The wide range of issues on which this study touches - often superficially, it must be admitted - serves to emphasize how relevant the subtle interweaving of class, religion, language, and gender is to the history of this community - and, indeed, to any community.

In an attempt to analyze the variety of forces at work making the GSM - and not to present the process either as a purely creative act or as the mere byproduct of monumental social change - it is crucial to separate as fully as possible the stages of its development. Chapter I, therefore, begins with an overview of Montreal in 1840, a time when Montreal still consisted of the old town and some outer faubourgs, and the GSM was but an idea; it was also a year that saw the introduction of a number of crucial institutional changes to Quebec society. Chapter II deals with the planning stage: a number of private schemes devised in co-ordination with an overall city plan, which together set the physical - and by implication the cultural - character of the GSM. Chapter III concerns subdivision, the first tangible transformation of the mountainside as space, which often required considerable strategy on the part of landowners beyond merely displaying a building plan and offering lots for sale. Chapter IV considers the development of the GSM from the point of view of builders and speculators who responded to this particular building opportunity. Chapter V is an overview of the physical GSM as it emerged over the decades, with special

attention given to the smaller spaces - often at the level of streets and squares - around which the community grew. The final two chapters discuss the manner in which institutions and residents came to locate in the GSM, giving it its very anglophone and Protestant character which had only been hinted at at the planning and subdivision stages. If at times this structure fails to allow some issues the consideration they deserve - the actual day-to-day construction of mansions and institutional buildings, for example, or the nature of domestic space as it was understood by both men and women - it is to be hoped, at least, that it suggests the tremendous variety and subtlety of the factors contributing to the making of space.

## 2. Montreal and the Anglophone Elite

The emphasis placed here on religion and language as cultural factors should not come at the expense of a consideration of social class. Ethnicity is what made the making of the GSM unusual, but this should not be to argue, as some writers on the North American city have done, that it is more significant than class as a cause of residential differentiation.<sup>6</sup> On the whole, Canadian historiography - indeed, Canadian society - has been too concerned with the effects of ethnicity; Quebec historiography has been even more preoccupied with it, often at the expense of social change and the nature of economic exploitation. Nevertheless, ethnicity has been a central tenet of public life in Quebec, and

---

<sup>6</sup> See for example David Ley, *A Social Geography of the City* (New York, 1983), especially chapter three.

especially in Montreal where it has taken a geographical form. Nationalist historians in Quebec are often inclined to dismiss the contribution of people of British origin as foreign, and therefore ephemeral to mainstream culture; for their part, anglophones are inclined to overemphasize their own role in business, and in the founding of various cultural institutions. But whatever importance Quebec anglophones are given as historical players, in their efforts to be distinct from francophones they have helped create a cultural dialectic that has proven fruitful; notably, it is responsible for much of Montreal's physical shape. As was implicit at almost every stage of the GSM's development, the anglophone elite did its best to isolate itself from the province's mainstream - which is not to say that it recognized the francophone majority as a mainstream; Montreal anglophones saw themselves as a majority culture, citizens of a British nation and participants in a North American commercial world. This somewhat paradoxical view of their own identity was never more visible than in the development of the GSM.

The cultural strength of the anglophone elite stemmed from their disproportionate involvement in the management and ownership of Lower Canada's emerging urban economy. As a British colony, political and military power was based in Britain, which was also the major source of capital for building canals and railways. The imperial connection gave an advantage to people of British origin, beginning with the fur traders of the North West Company and the merchants of the St Lawrence valley, who enjoyed a privileged relationship with their overseas clients. By the early nineteenth century, local exchange was challenging fur, timber, and other staples as the motor of the St Lawrence economy. Steamship services operated by the Molson and Torrance families were joined by those of the Allans, which would later develop into giant transatlantic shipping lines. By the 1820s, Montreal was also

expanding its American trade links, such as the one run by the Lyman family, originally of Vermont, importers and manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, or that of the American hardware supplier, Harrison Stephens. The commercial networks established by these businesses were based on family, national, and religious connections. The capital accumulated in these commercial enterprises, or in successful artisanal trades such as John Redpath's masonry business, formed the base of Montreal's industrial production. Much of the impetus for industrialization came, then, from people whose ethnicity was neither French Canadian nor that of the ruling Anglican elite. Americans, Scots, and others who would have been considered non-conformists played a proportionately stronger role in the accumulation of wealth, and consequently in the development of the GSM.

Much of Montreal's commercial and industrial strength was based on its St Lawrence River location and its potential as a forwarding, manufacturing, and service centre for the Great Lakes region. Canals and railways, and an expanding Irish and French labour force, added to the city's economic growth. Moreover, feudal tenure declined in Montreal after 1840. That decade saw the enlargement of the Lachine Canal, to accommodate not only more shipping but factories. The eventual result of this expansion was a commercial and industrial boom, but the later 1840s witnessed a short but critical depression; this had the effect of dampening consumer enthusiasm for new commodities - including suburban lots, as GSM developers were to discover. By the mid 1850s, however, this trend had been reversed, and the housing market steadily improved along with the rest of the economy. By the 1860s, the Montreal region had acquired rail links to New York, New England, Upper Canada, and much of Southern Quebec, an advantage that further stimulated industrialization. The completion of the Victoria Bridge in 1859 gave Montreal not

only rail connections from the Atlantic to the Great Lakes, but a powerful symbol of triumphant capitalism and technology; the following year this spirit was celebrated in an exhibition, modelled after the Great Exhibition in London, held in its own Crystal Palace, located in the heart of the GSM. Capitalism flourished in Montreal over the course of the next quarter century, much of it concentrated in the hands of a few large corporations. Confederation and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway placed Montreal at the core of a pan-Canadian economy.

A word must be said about the use of the term "middle class". It has been used here instead of "bourgeoisie" for several reasons. One is that this group was in practical terms quite distinct from the "upper" class, which was a tangible social force, at least at the beginning of the period of study. Most of the GSM's early residents did not figure among the colonial aristocracy, but had their origins in local commerce, transport, and industry. The distinction between the various generations of merchants and manufacturers since the conquest is also important, especially when considering the development of the GSM. The people who moved to the mountainside as of the 1840s were largely those who had risen to prominence over the previous two or three decades - very different in outlook from the fur traders of the late eighteenth century, as this study will show. Furthermore, the likes of John Redpath and Thomas Phillips, of the Torrances, Workmans, Allans, Lymans, Gaults, Dows, and Josephs, were very different again from the large numbers of families that rose to positions of relative wealth and comfort in the wake of accelerated industrialization of the 1850s. This difference can be seen in the GSM's pattern of settlement: in the 1840s and 1850s and even 1860s the rate at which families moved into GSM villas and terraced houses was slow compared to the numbers that came as of the 1870s. Both the Redpaths et al

and the later generation are described here as being "middle class", although the former is often distinguished as the "GSM elite". The "anglophone elite" or "Protestant elite" refers to the social leaders of these groups, without regard for social class *per se*. Finally, even when the middle class had clearly become an elite, the former term is still preferable when it comes to the GSM; however much they might resemble an aristocracy, their attitudes towards home, community, church, and education were those of the middle class. Like a great many places of its kind, the GSM was a middle class suburb.

To avoid anachronism, most streets and squares mentioned in this text have retained the names by which nineteenth-century Montrealers would have known them: for example, Dorchester Street (instead of Boulevard René-Lévesque) and Dominion and Beaver Hall Squares (instead of Square Dorchester and Place Frère André). The only exception to this is "Beaver Hall Hill", a name not applied until the 20th century; to have given it its nineteenth-century name, "Beaver Hall Terrace" would lead to confusions that will become obvious. Street names with the prefix "saint" - Alexandre, Edouard, Henri - have generally been given an English spelling, as GSM residents would have done, making them Alexander Street, Edward Street, and Henry Street: only St Catherine Street escaped the anglophone censure, although it did lose an "e" in its new role as a GSM thoroughfare. In the text, measurements are also uniformly given in "English" feet (instead of metres, or the terms inherited from the French régime), as they appear on most documents; however, some of the maps have reproduced the French terms *arpent* (used as a unit of length, approximately 209 feet) and *perche* (approximately 16 and a half feet), employed by many surveyors. Finally, as was the civil-law practice, reflected in legal documents, married women are referred to here by their "maiden names": accordingly, Mrs Redpath, Mrs Phillips, Mrs Lyman, and Mrs

Mills figure in this study as Jane Drummond, Martha Anderson, Mary Corse, and Hannah Lyman.

## Chapter I - Montreal in 1840

In 1840 Montreal was a city on the brink of radical change. That the year marks one of the traditional political divisions in the periodization of Canadian history is actually only of secondary importance to the physical transformation of the city, although the union of the two Canadas did bring new institutions which facilitated much of this change. This study begins in 1840 because it was in that year that three of the major landowners on the slopes of Mount Royal - John Redpath, Thomas Phillips, and the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning - began the process of subdividing their estates. This process was inspired by the expectation of order and prosperity brought about by the union, following years of political unrest. More specifically it was linked to the re-establishment in 1840 of a municipal government - one which had some interest in city planning - and to the ordinance of that year which permitted the commutation of seigneurial tenure on the Island of Montreal. These institutions were crucial to the GSM's development, enabling mountain landowners to capitalize their lands by means of subdivision, and allowing people with sufficient means to acquire suburban lots that were both accessible and free from seigneurial obligations. 1840 represents a time immediately prior to this development, when the appearance and use of land on the slopes of Mount Royal was little different from what it had been half a century earlier. 1840 also marks a relatively early stage in Montreal's industrialization; the previous few decades had seen the steady evolution of businesses and the emergence of a labourforce, but the impact of industry on the physical form of the city was as yet minimal, and the social



transformations wrought by industrial capitalism were still in their infancy. The period 1840-1895 straddles the economic transition as it pertained to Montreal, and it is no coincidence that these years also saw the GSM take shape.

### 1. *The Shape of the Town*

In 1840 Montreal consisted of 40,000 people living and working in what would soon be referred to as the "old town", an area roughly two kilometres in width and less than half that in breadth. [Map 3.] The city had seen a fourfold increase in population since the beginning of the nineteenth century, partly the result of a gradual rise in employment prospects brought about by new industries and transport; more significantly, it was due to immigration from the British isles, which would bring the city's anglophone population to nearly 50 percent by mid century. On the whole, this increase led to a much denser concentration of people than before, rather than a physically expanding city. The old town - the original Ville Marie plus the extra-mural faubourgs - now contained a flourishing sector of industrial production, which was well-distributed geographically, rather than concentrated in the outskirts as would be consistent with the "pre-industrial" urban model.<sup>1</sup> Manufactures that did exist at the edge of town, such as the Molson brewery or the Ogilvie flour mills, had not yet created working class residential areas near them; indeed, most of the Molson family itself lived in

---

<sup>1</sup> Lewis, *Industry and Space*, p.210. The urban model proposed by Sjoberg (*The Pre-industrial City*, 1960) is discussed in the context of Montreal in Hertzog, *A Stake in the System*, pp.94-95.

the neighbourhood of the brewery, and would continue to do so for decades. Montreal was, in short, ready for the industrial revolution, but its geographical and visual impact so far was minimal. Smoke from factories did not streak the air above Montreal in 1840. The railway that would concentrate so much economic activity in the city, and make fortunes for GSM residents, had by then only reached the south shore of the St Lawrence river at Laprairie. City streets were unpaved. The provision of water was an ongoing concern, especially given the constant risk of fire; it would not be resolved until the 1850s when the a major aqueduct system was created which pumped water from the river up through underground pipes to a reservoir built on the side of the mountain. Finally, industrialization would result in a mushrooming of the city's population over the following five decades, a change that would indeed bring the urbanization of the surrounding countryside, including the GSM.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the greater numbers, the city's basic topographical layout and the orientation of urban life had changed relatively little by 1840. Place d'Armes was still the heart of the town, surrounded on one side by the parish church (Notre Dame) and the residence of the seigneurs, the Sulpicians; the construction in 1819 of the Bank of Montreal on the opposite side had merely confirmed the importance of this square. The most important physical change to the city in recent years was the removal of its fortifications, undertaken from 1803 to 1817; as in many nineteenth-century European cities, this action opened up much valuable land, providing attractive locations for new buildings. By 1840 the Haymarket, the Champs de Mars, Dalhousie Square, and adjoining streets laid out on the site of the walls were lined with

---

<sup>2</sup> Montreal's population reached nearly 60,000 by the 1850s, over 140,000 by the 1880s, and a quarter million by the end of the century.

prestigious homes, shops, and churches, albeit with as yet many gaps between them.<sup>3</sup> St James Street was becoming the favourite address of lawyers and other professionals. New streets had also been laid out over the demolished citadel at the east end of town and over the site of the abandoned Recollets monastery at the west end, while the Jesuit headquarters had been replaced by the courthouse and jail.

The absence of the city walls blurred earlier distinctions between the old *faubourgs* and the centre. The largest of these was the St Laurent faubourg, an area to the north of the old centre which had been developed in the later part of the eighteenth century and settled by a relatively dense artisan and merchant population. A few of the newer religious and civil institutions, including the Montreal General Hospital and the Protestant Burial Grounds, had taken root there. The Recollets faubourg to the west of town and the Quebec (or St Mary) faubourg to the east had also lost a sense of distinctness since the beginning of the century, even as they gained population and buildings. The area east of the Champs de Mars, which had been developed since the demolition of the walls and citadel, was known as the St Louis faubourg; by 1840 it had spread some distance northward along Sanguinet and St Denis streets, where it blended with the St Laurent faubourg. New faubourgs were emerging along the roads leading out of town: St Mary Street, out of the Quebec faubourg; St Joseph Street, a westward extension of Notre Dame Street; and St Antoine Street, which meandered up the mountain and connected with the road leading to the parish of Côte des Neiges. The old Lachine road leading south-west from town had

---

<sup>3</sup> Newton Bosworth's *Hochelaga Depicta*, the most complete description of the city at this time, refers (p.92) to what will be the "noble" appearance of Craig, St James, and McGill streets once the "empty spaces in each are filled up with elegant houses".

become the main street of a sprawling neighbourhood known as the St Anne faubourg or Griffintown; it had been developed since the turn of the century with an eye to the area's industrial potential, especially with the construction of the Lachine canal in the 1820s. This massive public works project provided a vital transport link with Upper Canada but the area would not become the hub of Montreal's industrial revolution until after the canal's expansion in the later 1840s. This development would gradually turn the St Anne faubourg, which was as yet sparsely inhabited by artisans and small-scale merchants, into the city's first working class area, the "city below the hill".<sup>4</sup>

In the decade or so prior to 1840 the outlying reaches of these faubourgs attracted a number of well-to-do families. Sherbrooke Street, which crossed St Laurent Street some distance north of town, contained several large houses, including the Baggs' "Fairmount Villa" and John and Mary Anne Molson's "Belmont Hall". The bulk of the Molson family lived on their estate near the brewery on St Mary Street. The western part of St Antoine Street was the domain of the equally influential Torrance family; their villa, known as St Antoine Hall, was set like a country house amid landscaped gardens. A number of judges and their families also had homes at a considerable distance from town, including the Quesnels' "Manoir Souvenir" on St Antoine Street, the McCords' "Temple Grove" off Côte des Neiges Road, and the Fouchers' "Piedmont" at the eastern foot of Mount Royal.

The increasing number of these mansions inspired some nearby landowners to sell parcels of their own property in the hope of attracting middle class residents. In 1833 Benjamin Berthelet, the owner of a tract of land to the northwest of

---

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Braun Ames, *The City Below the Hill* (1897). For a detailed study of the industrialization of the St Anne suburb, see Lewis, *Industry and Space*, pp.265ff.

the St Laurent faubourg, arranged for its subdivision into lots, which he then sold by means of auction, a *tirage au sort*. Like the later GSM subdivisions further west, this project required the services of a surveyor (J Hughes), an auctioneer, and a notary (Etienne Guy) to arrange the deeds of sale.<sup>5</sup> As many purchasers came forth, the Berthelet subdivision could be considered a successful land transaction, although by 1840 only a few of them had built houses on their lots - not enough to suggest that a site so far from town would automatically attract urban residents. Less ambitious, but more successful in terms of developing the built environment, was James Ferrier, who in 1839 sold portions of his small estate on the west side of Alexander Street south of the Berthelet subdivision; the three purchasers proceeded to build villas on their lands, as did Ferrier himself on the portion he retained.<sup>6</sup> Both these real estate experiences, in different ways, would provide useful examples for the GSM developers of the 1840s.

These new houses, like most early nineteenth-century buildings in Montreal, tended to be sober and symmetrical in appearance, however physically imposing. Older houses, whether of wood or stone, were distinguished by their tin roofs, which were often bright red in colour and gleamed from a distance - a feature that impressed most visitors. If there was a discernable British influence to recent construction it lay in the uniformity of its facades and the solidity of its materials:

---

<sup>5</sup> ANQ-M, Etienne Guy #2620ff, May 1833 to September 1834

<sup>6</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1038, 21 January 1845.

The recent houses are almost universally built of the greyish limestone which the vicinity of the mountain affords in abundance...even the new stores and warehouses are finished in the same manner, exhibiting an appearance far more agreeable than those which were constructed of the rough stones, made to fit as far as the mere placing of them could do it...

This image would also characterize much of the GSM's New Town as it emerged in the 1850s. Larger institutional buildings were equally solid and uniform, impressing more by their size than their design: the monumental facade of Notre Dame church in Place d'Armes, built in the 1820s, was a case in point.<sup>8</sup> [Figure 18.] Its much-touted "gothic" elements masked features that were heavy rather than soaring, very different in spirit from the lighter, ornate gothic of the later nineteenth century, especially that of the Protestant GSM. In 1840 British rule was expressed principally by neo-classicism, a style equally adaptable to churches, banks, public buildings, and grand residences. Columns graced the facades of the Anglican parish church, the Methodist and Congregationalist chapels, the synagogue, the Bank of Montreal, St Ann's market, the Theatre Royal, the Customs House, the McCord family's "Temple Grove", and, as it emerged on the mountainside, McGill College. Most buildings lacked this sort of adornment, but nevertheless followed the standard square block format - from the Court House to Rasco's Hotel to St Antoine Hall - that would prevail, even in the GSM, for

---

<sup>7</sup> Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*, p.93

<sup>8</sup> Visitors to Montreal in the 1830s, when not impressed simply by there being a catholic church on British soil, were struck by its size, reputedly the largest in North America. See for example John Macgregor, *British North America* (Edinburgh, 1832); Theodore Pavie, *Souvenirs Atlantiques: voyage aux Etats-Unis et au Canada* (Paris, 1833); George Henry, *The Emigrant's Guide* (New York, 1832); Thomas Fowler, *A journal of a tour through British America* (Aberdeen, 1832).

another two decades.

Just as Montreal's anglophone elite had superimposed architectural idioms from Britain on what had been a French city, so did their institutions stand side by side with their older, francophone, and Catholic counterparts. Two religious bodies founded in the seventeenth century - the Hôtel Dieu on St Paul Street, and the Grey Nuns to the south of the old town walls at the foot of St Pierre Street - were devoted to the care of the sick, but the latter's *hôpital générale* should not be confused with the Montreal General Hospital, an institution developed by leading anglophones and built on Dorchester Street in the early 1820s. These Catholic orders also cared for orphans and foundlings, though some groups, such as the Irish Catholics, also had their own orphanages.<sup>9</sup> The task of providing a Protestant equivalent was taken up by middle class ladies, who built the Protestant Orphan Asylum on St Antoine Street. Education was also divided along confessional lines: Catholic boys were taught at the Sulpician-run *Collège de Montréal* in the Recollet faubourg, and Catholic girls at the school of the *Congrégation Notre Dame* on Notre Dame Street, but Protestant children suffered from the lack of cohesion between their parents' fragmented faiths. The Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning had been created to provide schools for Protestant communities throughout Lower Canada, but it had lost this mandate by 1840.<sup>10</sup> Protestant Montrealers had to content themselves with the National School on Bonsecours Street, the British and Canadian School on LaGauchetière Street, and the Royal Grammar School on St James Street; the first two of these were expressly charitable

---

<sup>9</sup> Bosworth (*Hochelaga Depicta*, p. 124) describes an orphan asylum lying next to the Recollets church (used by Irish Catholics) on Notre Dame Street.

<sup>10</sup> Frost, *McGill University*, p.44

institutions, for the children (girls as well as boys) of labourers. The Royal Institution did continue to operate McGill College, which as yet consisted only of the Medical Faculty, which made use of a building on St James Street and the General Hospital; at the end of 1839 work had begun on a proper college building on the slopes of Mount Royal. St James Street was also home to the Natural History Society Museum and Library, but the Mechanics Institute and the recently formed Mercantile Library Association had to rent houses to accommodate their collections.

By far the most important institution in the lives of all Montrealers, of all classes, was religion. To belong to a congregation was much more than a matter of faith; it meant loyalty to a select group, to social as well as theological tradition, and even to a specific building. There was no mistaking the symbolic importance of a church's appearance and location in a city where seminary and bishopric clashed over the right to determine parish structure: having rebuilt at great expense the parish church of Notre Dame of which they were titular priests, the Sulpicians grudgingly agreed to the establishment of a Catholic bishopric in Montreal; the cathedral, however - the church of St Jacques, built in 1824 on St Denis Street at the eastern edge of the St Laurent faubourg - could not hope to compete with the parish church either in grandeur or location. The Sulpicians also operated the Recollets church (the former chapel of the dissolved Recollets community) for Montreal's Irish population. The city's other episcopal religion, the Church of England, had its parish church on the north side of Notre Dame Street, a short distance to the east of Place d'Armes. [Figure 19.] This building, Christ Church, was the spiritual home of the city's Protestant elite, claiming as it did the allegiance of most British officials, as well as some of the most prominent middle class families such as the McCords, the Molsons, and



the Moffats.<sup>11</sup> In the early part of the nineteenth century it was not uncommon for Scots families to attend Anglican services as well as Presbyterian, or even to join the Church of England for social advancement.<sup>12</sup> For most Scots, however, Presbyterianism remained the sole acceptable religion, as well as a bulwark against Anglican attempts to monopolize Protestant civil life.<sup>13</sup> The High Kirk was represented in Montreal by a modest building, erected in 1792, with one of the finest locations in the old town: on St Gabriel Street at the western side of the Champs de Mars, overlooking the St Laurent faubourg and the mountain beyond. [Figure 20.]

The nineteenth century saw further religious movements attracting middle class membership, and competing for space in the old town. Presbyterianism began to unravel, due to doctrinal, ethnic, or class differences: the first break from the St Gabriel Street church came in 1803, when a splinter group set up their own church at the western end of town, later known as St Andrew's. [Figure 21.] This new church came to embrace local Presbyterians, especially those of American origin, who disagreed with the established Church of Scotland. In the 1820s there was a clearly perceived social distinction

---

<sup>11</sup> Senior, *British Regulars in Montreal*, pp.153-154

<sup>12</sup> Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.285. Campbell laments the numbers of families who left his church due to uninspiring preachers in the first half of the century; many joined the Anglicans "for social reasons".

<sup>13</sup> Within the United Kingdom only the "established" church had the right to perform marriages and other civil functions until the 1830s; the Church of Scotland was tacitly accepted by England as "established", at least for Scotland, but this did not stop the Anglican hierarchy from asserting its sole legitimacy in British North America. The Scots resisted, successfully, though the issue was frequently revived. See Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.205; W Stanford Reid, "The Scottish Protestant Tradition" in Reid, *The Scottish Tradition in Canada*, p.122

between the city's two Presbyterian churches: one "was attended by the higher classes of the Presbyterian Community, and [the other] by the tradesmen and mechanics of the Presbyterian faith".<sup>14</sup> This second congregation soon saw a defection of the American element, who formed their own church on St James Street in 1824. [Figure 23.] Other Presbyterians opposed to the Church of Scotland formed their own congregation, and in 1835 built what became known as the Scotch Secession Church on Lagauchetière Street in the St Laurent faubourg. [Figure 24.] The St Gabriel Street church was divided again in the 1830s over a minister some considered insufficiently rigorous in his teachings; this argument even led to blows and the temporary closing of the church, though eventually the splinter group built their own church, called St Paul's, located on St Helen Street. [Figure 22.] This new congregation included such prominent people as the Redpaths, the Fergusons, Peter McGill, and even the young Hugh Allan, confirming St Paul's as a church of rigorous doctrine but without the "tradesmen" of St Andrew's. Many of the same people would be involved a decade later in the Free Church movement, the result of a major split, known as "the disruptions", at the heart of the High Kirk in Scotland over the issue of a congregation's right to choose their own minister.<sup>15</sup> Others left Presbyterianism altogether, such as Henry Wilkes who became a Congregationalist minister and founded a chapel on St Helen Street in 1836. [Figure 26.] It

---

<sup>14</sup> This was according to the Honourable James Leslie, writing in 1860, as quoted in Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.181

<sup>15</sup> It was John Redpath, in fact, the pragmatic land developer and speculative builder, who led the movement to establish the Free Church; he resigned as an elder of St Paul's, tried and briefly succeeded in bringing the St Gabriel Street congregation to his views, and then provided the bulk of the funds to build the Côté Street Church.

stood next to the Baptist chapel, built five years earlier. [Figure 25.] Both these institutions attracted a wide membership from amongst recent British and American immigrants. This dizzying array of splinter movements points to the centrality of religious belief in the lives of the anglophone middle class.

Other spiritual forces were also present in the community. Methodists had led the movement to extend the right to register marriages, burials, and baptisms to non-conformist churches as early as 1818.<sup>16</sup> Catherine Embury, daughter of the founder of American Methodism, married the Montreal merchant Duncan Fisher and brought up her many children in that faith; their marriages into other prominent families such as the Torrances and Hutchisons helped spread the Methodist network.<sup>17</sup> In 1821 the community built a chapel on St James Street, which presented a respectable alternative to Presbyterianism for any who were disenchanted with lacklustre preaching. [Figure 27.] One of the prize converts was the merchant James Ferrier, who cemented the association with the marriage of his daughter to one of David and Jane Torrance's sons.<sup>18</sup> By the 1840s other Methodist chapels had been built in the Quebec and St Ann faubourgs, but it was the central one on St James Street that retained the loyalty of these important families, many of whom came from

---

<sup>16</sup> Mair, *The People of St James*, p.6

<sup>17</sup> Armstrong, "Duncan Fisher", DCB; Mair, *The People of St James*, p.3

<sup>18</sup> According to Campbell (*A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.327) James Ferrier was wooed by the Methodists into attending, and then actively supporting, their "young and struggling cause". If John Torrance were behind the plea, it is hard to picture Methodism as either young or struggling, but Ferrier's family remained in the fold even when Torrance's sons (Frederick William, at any rate) turned back to Presbyterianism.

the western extreme of the city or the mountain to take part in the evangelical zeal. Many prominent families, however, moved in the other religious direction, and joined an organization that not only tolerated various forms of worship but did not discourage membership in other churches: Unitarianism.<sup>19</sup> Although for much of the first half of the century Unitarianism was seen as a pariah - to judge from the invective hurled at it from most pulpits and from Tories, both of whom saw the movement as anti-establishment in every sense - the presence of the Workmans and Frothinghams and Stephens families among its ranks hardly suggested a hotbed of social radicalism.<sup>20</sup> In 1840 Unitarians still lacked a place of worship, but they would soon become the first religious group to build in the GSM. The reverse was true for Montreal's Jewish population: in 1838, after years in a small building in the old town, the Congregation Shearith Israel established a synagogue on Chenneville Street in the St Laurent faubourg, where a number of prominent Jewish families already lived.<sup>21</sup> [Figure 28.] This spot would remain the centre of Judaism in Montreal for another half century, even though by then leading families such as the Josephs, of which the rabbi was a member, had long since moved to the slopes of the mountain.

Like the synagogue, Notre Dame, Christ Church, St Gabriel's Presbyterian, and the St James Street Methodist chapel were all symbolic centres of specific communities,

---

<sup>19</sup> John Frothingham, an enthusiastic supporter of Unitarianism, and who left the church \$1000 in his will, nevertheless was a member of St Andrew's Presbyterian church to the end of his life. This was part of the paradox of the movement, according to Philip Hewett (*Unitarians in Canada* p.15).

<sup>20</sup> Hewett, *Unitarians in Canada*, p.24.

<sup>21</sup> Greenbaum, "The Chenneville Street Synagogue of 1838", p.7

though their congregations were scattered about town. The central importance of religion to any notion of ethnicity in 1840 makes it difficult to assess other divisions within Montreal society; members of the St Gabriel Street church may have looked down their noses at those of St Andrew's because the latter were "tradesmen", but whether they would have looked further down at Unitarians, or Catholics, or Jews, or only at tradesmen in general, is far from clear. Segregation along class lines occurred at the level of each institution, making the position of one's rented pew a matter of status in certain churches.<sup>22</sup> With industrialization, class differences were increasingly reflected in spatial segregation: the middle class suburb, and of course its working class counterpart. The GSM would attract residents of all creeds, and many nationalities, but not members of the working class except for servants. The GSM would comprise a culture that transcended earlier denominational differences, even though virtually all the old town congregations, and most of its Protestant institutions, would move uptown with all their mutual rivalries intact. But this culture, this new sense of community, resulted from more complex factors than mere snobbery; its Protestant and anglophone character would be at least as important to its residents as its middle-class status. The most celebrated social division between Montrealers, the linguistic one, would also be central to the creation of the GSM, but it had no geographical reality in 1840, despite some tendency for francophone middle class families to settle in the St Louis faubourg and for their anglophone counterparts to follow the Ferriers along Alexander and Bleury streets. That the mountain slope became the focus of anglophone settlement had little to do with the existing

---

<sup>22</sup> Pews were often reserved by notarial contract; see for example those of Christ Church: ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #14211, 9 December 1856.

situation in the old town; it stemmed, rather, from a certain mythology surrounding the mountain and its former inhabitants, one which was carefully exploited by landowners and developers in the years following 1840.

## 2. "A Very Conspicuous Object": The Mountain

Bosworth's description of Mount Royal in 1839 echoes that of most visitors to the city who tended to be impressed by its bulk, especially when seen from a choice vantage point such as the Champs de Mars or across the river.<sup>23</sup> Artists trained to be appreciative of the "sublime" often exaggerated its rather modest height, depicting it as a great craggy mound with the town huddled at its base.<sup>24</sup> [Figure 1.] The view from the mountain itself was also *de rigueur* for passing artists and adventurous tourists, but the climb was by no means easy; to reach it required a journey into the countryside, and the public road that travelled some distance up its slopes would still leave a visitor to negotiate a steep kilometre of dense forest to the summit. The experience was clearly worth the trouble, however; all early visitors were highly impressed, both by the view itself and by the majestic

---

<sup>23</sup> Bosworth, *Hochelaga Depicta*, p.88

<sup>24</sup> There is a vast literature on the impact of Romanticism on poetry and landscape painting in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; one of the clearest discussions of this development is in Andrew Wilson, *Turner and the Sublime* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, and the Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, 1980). The notion of the "sublime" as an experience of awe when confronted by nature was classically expressed by Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757).

environment which surrounded them, particularly so close to civilization. Indeed, their raptures indicate how important the culture of the sublime was to the nineteenth-century appreciation of nature. Whereas for centuries the wilderness had represented an obstacle to human endeavour, now it was seen as an antidote to the corrupt artifice of urban life. Nature had become a moral force, even a spiritual one, and to journey into its most rugged and inaccessible parts was to experience most vividly the wonder of creation. Mount Royal was the best place in the Montreal region where this wonder could be evoked, and so was an obvious focus of pilgrimage; in 1850 it even attracted the period's most famous proponent of nature, Henry David Thoreau.<sup>25</sup> The mountain was also an object of veneration for Montrealers, especially middle class Protestants, whose contacts with philosophical movements in Britain and the United States often inclined them to nature worship.

At the same time, it was always in the best interests of landowners to protect the mountain from too casual human contact. Even as promoters actively encouraged settlement on its upper slopes, as of the 1840s, they were careful to preserve a fine line between what was accessible - or what could be made accessible for those able to afford the land - and what would remain exotic wilderness. Both terrains were owned by the same people; most mountain estates ran from about the level of the escarpment (some one hundred metres above St Antoine Street) right up the southern slope and over the summit. This control of the mountaintop by the owners of the farms below was a crucial factor in the development of the GSM: it allowed promoters to capitalize lands on the southern slope without having constantly to look upwards, as it were, over their shoulders. The mountain was the GSM's best asset,

---

<sup>25</sup> Collard, *The Days That Are No More*, p.266

forming as it did a magnificent backdrop to its homes. Just as it capped that view, the mountain would set a limit on residential expansion, and thereby maximize property values. Some of the early visitors that climbed to the top expressed the wish for better paths and perhaps a chalet in which to rest before starting down again; such sentiments would later help inspire the creation of Mount Royal Park in the 1870s.<sup>26</sup> Any changes to the mountain, however, would only occur on the landowners' terms. To them, the mountain's primary function was to lend a sense of aloofness to the adjoining lands, and to enhance the view of homes lying just below.

The mountain also contributed to the landowners' image by sheltering the farms on the lower slopes from the worst of the winter weather, making their fertility a matter worthy of comment by early visitors:

Between the Mountain and town of Montreal, there are a great many very fine gardens and orchards, abounding with a variety of fruit of the very first quality...<sup>27</sup>

Since the late eighteenth century, these desirable lands had been the property of what can best be described as "gentlemen farmers", merchants and professionals who acquired estates on the mountainside to serve as summer residences, where they could enjoy the fine views and fresh air, and harvest crops without any pretence of making a living at it. These narrow farms contained both grazing fields, generally on the lower,

---

<sup>26</sup> Benjamin Silliman, *Remarks made, on a short tour, between Hartford and Quebec in the Autumn of 1819* (New Haven, 1820); Theodore Dwight, *The Northern Traveller* (New York, 1825); Theodore Pavie, *Souvenirs Atlantiques: voyage aux Etats-unis et au Canada* (Paris, 1833). Pavie describes being attacked by a snake on the way to the summit, but is otherwise impressed.

<sup>27</sup> Hugh Gray, *Letters from Canada* (London, 1809), p.150



flatter portions, and orchards, on the higher, steeper land. Lanes ran up from St Antoine Street, past the one or two-hectare vergers at the crest of the escarpment, and across the fields to the large, comfortable residences that crowned each of the mountain estates. These homes were typically large one-and-a-half-storey stone farmhouses with sharply inclined gabled roofs, each surrounded by an enclosed yard with barn and stables. They would have been easily seen from town, familiar to Montrealers as symbols of lives of prosperity.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century these estates were nearly all owned by various members of the North West Company, who had retired from the fur trade to live their later years in rural comfort. [Map 4.] It was their legacy, as gentlemen farmers, that particularly coloured any perception of the mountain as residential space by 1840. The "Nor'westers" have figured prominently in Montreal's anglophone culture, to a degree quite out of proportion with their actual contribution to nineteenth-century society. No figure set his mark on the mountainside more distinctly than James McGill. From an ambitious Glasgow artisan family, McGill came to North America as a young man and rose quickly in the business world. He made numerous large purchases of land about the Canadas, but it was the strip of farmland on the slope of Mount Royal, which he called Burnside, purchased in the 1790s, that he made his second home. A portrait of McGill [Figure 2.] reveals him as a prosperous burgher, a man of solid character and serious interests, to judge by the book which he holds, his finger between the pages as though he had been interrupted in his reading by the artist, and by the faint disdain on his lips, as though he were mildly annoyed to have been so interrupted. In the background is a view of Montreal, or at least enough aspects to make it recognizable: the mountain, the port, the church of Notre Dame, and - as though it were comparable in significance to the rest - the

Burnside farmhouse. The inclusion of this house serves primarily to remind the viewer of a place dear to James McGill's heart, but its prominence in the painting also makes it McGill's most important attribute, the way the subjects of Renaissance portraits are surrounded by objects which symbolize their occupations or virtues. It is significant that Burnside, rather than some aspect of the fur trade or especially of McGill's extensive political career - he served in the local militia, in the Legislative Assembly and on the Executive Council - should have been chosen to represent the man. The estate was obviously more than a favourite summer retreat; it represented McGill's success in a way that no other achievement in his life could do.

The other gentlemen farmers of the North West Company attached similar importance to their mountain estates. James McGill married Charlotte Guillimin, widow of another prominent fur trader, Amable Desrivieres. His sons inherited the Desrivieres estate, often known as "la ferme de la montagne", which lay some distance to the west of Burnside; at the beginning of the nineteenth century the eldest son, Francois, purchased another, smaller farm lying immediately to the east of McGill's land.<sup>28</sup> At about the same time, McGill's business partner Isaac Todd bought the estate to the west of "la ferme de la montagne", and another fur trader, Alexander Mackenzie, acquired the one beyond that. Like McGill, they retreated to their farmhouses in the summer to enjoy the view of the St Lawrence river valley and to supervise the apple crop. Mackenzie's urban tastes for Montreal, and especially London, increasingly kept him away from the farm, and in this respect he differed from McGill; his love of pleasure, however, put him in very much the same camp as two other fur

---

<sup>28</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5012, 4 November 1836 and #5026, 30 November 1836

traders who acquired land on the mountain. Joseph Frobisher and Simon McTavish brought the social world of Montreal onto the slopes of Mount Royal, entertaining there frequently on a lavish scale. Both were bachelors, as was Mackenzie; all three married only late in life, to women much younger than themselves. This lifestyle was in marked contrast to the image of sober prosperity cultivated by James McGill; it was even further removed from the family-centred domesticity of typical mountain residents half a century later. Despite this variety of behaviour, a link was established between the fur traders' leisured lives and the ground they inhabited; they were men whose public image was largely defined by the location and appearance of their country estates. Such a link would serve future GSM residents well.

Frobisher and McTavish, furthermore, did their best to transform the essentially rural nature of their estates to suit this image. Plans and descriptions of Frobisher's home, which he named Beaver Hall, suggest that it was a long, rambling wooden house surrounded by barns and stables; Frobisher added a "spacious garden" behind the house, one which reputedly contained a maze based on the one in Hampton Court.<sup>29</sup> McTavish went one step further by constructing a second house - what would have been, in effect, his third residence, given that he had a place in town - considerably higher up the mountain from the old farmhouse. It was to resemble his neighbours' homes only in its tin roof; it stood at least a whole storey taller and measured well over one hundred feet wide, so that it was bigger even than Beaver Hall in every way. It can be seen in the background of a print depicting Burnside [Figure 3.] where it resembles some sort of

---

<sup>29</sup> See the plan by Jacques Viger (ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CN 601/353/974.5) and the inventory ordered by Martha Anderson (ANQ-M, Ross #487, 29 June 1842); ANQ-M, Lukin #2384, 17 January 1832; Mackay, *The Square Mile*, p.19.

gloriette or *petit trianon*; nevertheless, it is clearly a much larger building, and more striking: its massive chimneys serve to emphasize its height, and the two cylindrical wings on each side recall the martello towers in front of the Sulpicians' *fort de la montagne* to the west. McTavish was in the process of completing this mansion in 1804 when he suddenly died. Like the fate of one of his countrymen, nothing became McTavish's life like the leaving of it; the unprecedented, almost excessive scale of the building project, its sudden abandonment, and rumours about the cause of his death left a fascinating legacy for the McTavish "castle". It stood empty for half a century, its ruinous form crowning the northward view from town like a feudal stronghold, its ghosts figuring prominently in local lore. McTavish was buried behind the house, adding to the area's mystique.

James McGill left a very different sort of legacy. In his will he bequeathed Burnside to the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning with the proviso that it be used to build a college that would bear his name. The land was not meant to provide income to fund a college elsewhere; the Burnside that dominated the background of McGill's portrait was intended as the actual site of a place of learning. Whether or not it was a suitable site does not appear to have concerned him; certainly the thought of building so far from town proved a deterrent to the Royal Institution for nearly three decades. There is some irony in that today James McGill's name is known the world over - irony because the university has very little to do with the man, and although it was built on his estate, it has nothing to do with McGill's beloved Burnside. In the end the Royal Institution dispensed with the old house and its grounds altogether, and sold much of the land to pay for the college. Despite this blatant departure from McGill's wishes, he was regularly referred to as "the founder", putting him in the company of John Harvard

and Elihu Yale. The mythology surrounding James McGill has been further developed by the university, which sings songs in his praise and even moved his tomb to a place of honour on the campus.<sup>30</sup> Like those of Simon McTavish, James McGill's physical remains came to rest in, and gave an additional aura of importance to, the ground in which the GSM would later take root.

These early landowners were all dead by 1820, and their young widows and children had generally moved elsewhere. The exception was Charlotte Guillimin who continued to reside at Burnside while the Royal Institution debated what to do with her husband's bequest. By this time her own family had become the area's largest landowners, possessing four of the large farms on the mountain slope, plus some smaller lands purchased from the Durocher estate to the north-east of Burnside. Charlotte Guillimin's grandson, named James McGill Desrivières in honour of her second husband, had married Joseph Frobisher's daughter and resided at Beaver Hall.<sup>31</sup> His uncle, François Desrivières, opted to contest his step-father's bequest, given the Royal Institution's apparent reluctance to build a college on the estate.<sup>32</sup> The ensuing legal battle resulted in the almost complete disappearance of the family from the area. By refusing to surrender Burnside after his mother's death, François Desrivières forced McGill's executors to take the case to the Privy Council in London, which eventually decided in their favour and he was obliged to vacate the premises. A second suit had to be launched against him over the possession of £10,000 which McGill had promised

---

<sup>30</sup> Frost, *McGill University*, appendix.

<sup>31</sup> See ANQ-M, Lukin #2384, 17 January 1832.

<sup>32</sup> For the complete account of this contestation, see Frost, *McGill University*, chapter two, and MacMillan, *McGill and its Story*, chapter three.

the Royal Institution upon completion of the college - a condition they claimed to have fulfilled by arranging for the establishment of McGill College in 1821, even though it did not hold classes until 1829 or begin construction on the site until 1839. Desrivières was dead by the time this second case was settled, in 1836, by which time the £10,000 had become almost £22,000, the interest having been calculated over twenty three years.<sup>33</sup> In order to pay this inflated sum, his heirs were obliged to liquidate their assets; by the end of the year they had sold "la ferme de la montagne", their Durocher lands, and the strip of land adjoining Burnside.<sup>34</sup> James McGill Desrivières had already encountered financial problems and had sold the Beaver Hall estate in 1832.

During these years of litigation, much of the land on the mountain slope was left in the hands of tenant farmers. Even after it came into the possession of Burnside the Royal Institution, whose board consisted of public officials who met in Quebec, let it out to local farmers; so too did the heirs of McTavish and Mackenzie, now resident in England and the United States respectively.<sup>35</sup> The image of the gentleman

---

<sup>33</sup> In its decision of June 1825, the Court of King's Bench set the rate of interest on the sum of £10,000 at 5% per annum calculated from December 1816 (officially when the government agreed to create the college) to May 1823 (when the suit for the money was brought against Desrivières), and then at 6% calculated from then until the sum was paid. (MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11073.) In October 1836, the Royal Institution calculated the total interest on these terms when it was considering a settlement by the Desrivières heirs, and reached a figure of £11,621.18.4. See MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11082: Resolution made by the Royal Institution, 26 October 1836.

<sup>34</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5012, 4 November 1836 and #5018, 18 November 1836 and #5020, 19 November 1836 and #5626, 30 November 1836.

<sup>35</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56/343: Henry May to the Royal Institution, 27 May 1839. ANQ-M, Lacombe #1855, 28 August 1845; AN-Q, Henry Griffin #20299, 21 December 1843

farmer continued to attract wealthy individuals to the mountain, most notably James Reid, chief justice for the district of Montreal from 1823 to 1837, one of James McGill's executors, and a governor of McGill College. Reid purchased part of the old Todd estate, a gently sloping field with a good-sized farmhouse, though it lacked the height and the orchard setting enjoyed by most other mountain homes; neither he nor the other merchants and judges who acquired the smaller farms nearby appear to have spent much time there.<sup>36</sup> The only mountain landowner who appears to have actually lived on his estate during this period was John McGregor, who described himself as a "gardener"; McGregor purchased the triangular farm near Cote des Neiges Road in 1826. This land, often referred to as the *habitant* farm, was worked by its owner, who would go on doing so into the 1860s, by which time the rest of the GSM had lost all traces of its rural past.<sup>37</sup>

The departure of the Desrivières family in the late 1830s meant that the mountainside was now almost entirely owned by anglophones. [Map 5.] This homogeneity coincided with a period of resurging British confidence after their victory in the rebellions of 1837-38. The rebellions and their aftermath underlined the ethnic differences within this society, and served as an impetus to spatial segregation; the GSM would emerge in response to a need for a distinct anglophone area within Montreal. Although they had become the landlords of Burnside in 1829, it was only in 1838 that the Royal Institution began seriously to consider constructing a proper college building on the mountainside. This move was also due to pressure from John Bethune, the new college principal who was also rector of Christ Church and an outspoken promoter of

---

<sup>36</sup> See ANQ-M, Gibb #5630, 6 September 1842

<sup>37</sup> See ANQ-M, Lacombe #888, 7 May 1841

the Anglican faith.<sup>38</sup> Bethune convinced the Royal Institution not merely to refit McGill's old farmhouse, but rather to construct a grand new building on the higher part of the Burnside estate.<sup>39</sup> Such a structure, especially with its mountain backdrop, would truly distinguish McGill College from the French and Catholic educational establishments in town; it would also provide an important counterpart to the Sulpicians' *grand séminaire* being planned for their mountain domain further to the west.

Crucial to the plan for McGill College, and to the later subdivision schemes of other landowners, was Sherbrooke Street, which was extended across the slope of the mountain in 1838. Indeed, the landowners that promoted this extension may well have had the development of their own estates in mind already, given that the street departed considerably from the angle at which it ran in the St Laurent faubourg, cutting across the long mountain farms at an exact ninety degrees, which lent itself to the surveyor's grid. All the proposals for McGill's new college building showed it at the head of an avenue leading up at right angles from Sherbrooke Street.<sup>40</sup> [Map 21.] The roads to the McTavish, Derivières, and Mackenzie farmhouses now ran straight up from this new thoroughfare, rather than meandering up across escarpment and fields from St Antoine Street, a kilometre to the south. Better access increased the value of these locations, and made Sherbrooke Street an obvious site for future settlement.

---

<sup>38</sup> For details of Bethune's attempts to turn McGill College into a narrowly Anglican institution, see Frost, *McGill University*, p.73.

<sup>39</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minutes, 10 May 1838

<sup>40</sup> Only one of these designs has survived, but descriptions confirm their similarity. See MUA, RG.4 - c.56/343: Royal Institution correspondence, 1838-39



These improvements would have been of special interest to the new owner of "la ferme de la montagne", John Redpath.<sup>41</sup> Unlike most of the previous mountain landowners, Redpath's background was not in trade but in construction; although he had invested profitably in mining, transport, and banking, his fortune had been made as a contractor for such major projects as Notre Dame Church and the Lachine canal. Redpath's training as a mason would have inclined him to visualize open space in three dimensions. He also reversed the practice of seasonal occupation by moving into the old Desrivières farmhouse - which he named "Terrace Bank" - along with his wife, Jane Drummond, their infant daughter, and several children from his first marriage. With the echoes of McTavish, Mackenzie, and McGill all around them, the Redpaths' move could be seen purely as social advancement, answering the call of the gentleman farmer. John Redpath, however, was only forty years old when he acquired his estate, and his career as an industrialist would not really blossom for another decade and a half. James McGill and his colleagues, despite remaining active politically and socially, had essentially retired to the countryside after lucrative careers; such behaviour had been typical of successful merchants for centuries. Redpath, by contrast, was a prominent member of a group of entrepreneurs that had gained their wealth at various commercial, artisanal, and industrial pursuits since the 1820s. Jane Drummond, moreover, was only twenty in 1836, and had over seventy years' residence at Terrace Bank ahead of her, during which time she would act as a pillar of the anglophone community. Although in the course of later land sales the Redpaths would retain sufficient quantities of

---

<sup>41</sup> Redpath purchased the estate in 1836 from the heirs of François Desrivières for £10,000 which he paid in ten annual instalments to the Royal Institution, to whom the Desrivières were indebted; see ANQ-M, Bedouin #5026, 4 November 1836.

orchard and garden to ensure that their home would remain aloof from any nearby houses, Terrace Bank soon lost its resemblance to a country estate and became a suburban villa; in the 1860s the house would even be rebuilt in the more fashionable style of GSM mansions.

Although they had seen more regular habitation in recent years than those on the higher ground, the estates on the escarpment were also taking on a more middle class, and clearly anglophone, character by the 1830s. With the exception of Joseph Maurice Lamothe, a "captain in the Indian Department of Lower Canada", the landowners in this area were uniformly anglophone merchants: Archibald Ferguson, Andrew Shaw, and John Easton Mills. Like Redpath, they lived on their estates with their families, and were pillars of middle class society.<sup>42</sup> The most important of these landowners was Thomas Phillips, who had purchased the Beaver Hall estate from James McGill Desrivieres in 1832.<sup>43</sup> Like Redpath, with whom he had often been a business partner, Phillips had a background in masonry and construction, having played a key role in the building of the Lachine Canal; he was also the owner of a brewery in the St Laurent faubourg. He shared Redpath's aptitude for shaping space, which would serve him well in his later attempts to impose a striking urban design on the area around his home. After some years of neglect, Beaver Hall was a shadow of its former glory, but Phillips, his wife Martha Anderson, and their many children had turned the site of fur trader festivities into a middle class home, complete with pianoforte in the drawing room, landscape paintings on the walls, and mahogany furniture.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #6075, 15 September 1843; Lacombe #2150, 2 March 1847; Pelton #824, 30 August 1839

<sup>43</sup> ANQ-M, Lukin #2384, 17 January 1832

<sup>44</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #487, 29 June 1842

Subdivision would set a process in motion whereby the entire mountainside would be remade in this domestic image.

In 1840, however, subdividing the mountain was by no means an obvious thing for a landowner to do. Whatever possibilities were suggested by the extension of Sherbrooke Street it would clearly take more than improved access to attract new residents there. The mountain was still distant from the city, and despite middle class encroachment along the escarpment, the higher ground near Terrace Bank and Burnside house was popularly associated with rich gentlemen farmers. It would take some effort on the parts of people like Redpath and Phillips to turn the resonance of names like McGill and McTavish into an advantage. If the mountain was seen as the home of gentlemen, then it was necessary to convince ambitious merchants and industrialists that they, too, could live that way. If the mountain was seen as far away, then it became important to show that the middle class could be brought to the mountain. If the mountain was seen as wild and mystical, then it was vital to convince people that to live near a wild and mystical place - without necessarily having easy access to it - was a desirable thing. The land developers of the 1840s had an area blessed with natural features and a rich history; this would give their subdivision schemes an edge over those of Benjamin Berthelet a decade earlier. The opportunity for real change, however, came only in 1840, when new political and social institutions unlocked doors for the likes of Redpath and Phillips.

### 3. Institutional Changes

The Special Council which was set up in 1838 following the suppression of the rebellions undertook an investigation of all institutions it considered suspect. Feudalism, having withstood the challenge from the radical reformers who wished to see it abolished, now faced similar pressure from anglophone merchants and industrialists who had the ear of the Special Council. The most influential among this elite, all of whom had opposed the Rebellion and even taken up arms against it, had argued for years that their obligations as *censitaires* impeded the capitalist development of their lands.<sup>45</sup> The pressure they now exerted was mitigated somewhat by the cautious nature of the colonial government and its longstanding relationship with the seigneurs of Lower Canada, especially those of the island of Montreal, the Seminary of St Sulpice. The Special Council satisfied the anglophone political agenda in 1840 by re-establishing a municipal government for Montreal - with a member of the Special Council, Peter McGill, as mayor - and by legislating the union of the two Canadas, which it was hoped would diminish the influence of francophones. On the social and economic front there was compromise: the legitimacy of feudal institutions was upheld, even as mechanisms for replacing them were set in motion. The most significant innovation for the GSM was the Ordinance of 1840, which allowed the Sulpicians to enforce their seigneurial rights, but also enabled Montreal *censitaires* to convert their lands into freehold tenure. The capital involved usually limited this option to the wealthiest landowners, a group which included those on the flank of the

---

<sup>45</sup> Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity*, pp.43ff

mountain.

The importance of commutation can be discerned from the haste with which the owners of GSM lands converted their properties to freehold tenure. Table 1, which lists the major acts of commutation pertaining to the GSM in chronological order, has an entry as early as September 1840, when James Ferrier commuted his family estate on Alexander Street; his neighbours Smith and Pawson, whose lands he had sold to them the year before, soon followed suit.<sup>46</sup> This promptness is understandable in a period of rising markets, given that commutation was based on the value of a property.<sup>47</sup> Ferrier, who owned many other lucrative properties in Montreal, had his private estate on Alexander Street commuted first. Other GSM landowners who lived on their estates - John James Day, John McGregor, Thomas Kay - appear to have been similarly motivated. Non-resident landowners, however, such as the Corse brothers or Thomas McKay, were just as keen to commute their properties. The Royal Institution was something of an exception; they did not have the McGill College Campus commuted until 1874.<sup>48</sup>

Most GSM landowners, however - including the Royal Institution when it was in the business of subdivision - understood that commutation was a pre-requisite for selling land. Marguerite Fouquet was the first landowner in the GSM to take real advantage of commutation; she commuted her estate - a narrow strip running alongside Mountain Street - in

---

<sup>46</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #756, 15 September 1840 and #775, 21 October 1840 and #779, 26 October 1840

<sup>47</sup> Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity*, p.91

<sup>48</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11080: commutation for the Royal Institution, 28 February 1874 (Notary: J. Bonin)

October 1840 and began to sell parts of it one month later.<sup>49</sup> When purchasers appeared interested in the vast McTavish and Mackenzie estates, in 1843 and 1845 respectively, the owners' Montreal agent, Hugh Taylor, arranged for commutation before selling them.<sup>50</sup> Alexander Miller commuted his Dorchester Street estate on the same day (7 September 1841) that he sold it to Charles Phillips.<sup>51</sup> Not all lands sold in the years following the Ordinance were commuted first, however; for example, when Charles Phillips bought his 11 hectare farm to the north of Dorchester Street from James Reid in September 1842, it remained "subject to *cens et rentes* and *lods et ventes* until commuted the following December.<sup>52</sup> Landowners wishing to subdivide always commuted their estates, though not necessarily the entire estate at once; the Royal Institution only commuted the parts of Burnside they wished to sell, while Redpath's several commutations reflected the various stages in his subdivision agenda. [Map 11.] The lots offered for sale on Redpath's estate were considerably more desirable pieces of property to the anglophone middle class than those that had been available from the nearby Berthelet subdivision since 1833. They also had an advantage over the Royal Institution lots. As James Ferrier advised his colleagues on the Board of the Royal Institution in 1845, "a strong prejudice exists in the minds of the public against titles of a seigniorial

---

<sup>49</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #780, 26 October 1840; see reference in Joseph Belle #6241, 25 January 1844

<sup>50</sup> For the McTavish estate, see ANQ-M, Lacombe #1481, 9 December 1843; Henry Griffin #20299, 21 December 1843. For the Mackenzie estate, see ANQ-M, Lacombe #1855, 28 August 1845; Gibb #8315, 13 October 1845 and #8386, 10 November 1845.

<sup>51</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #970 and Ross #258, both 7 September 1841

<sup>52</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #5630, 6 September 1842; Lacombe #1288, 10 December 1842

character for Property of Value in cities".<sup>53</sup> Despite this advice, the Board chose to convey their lots under a form of leasehold tenure, charging an annual ground rent which they hoped would bring them a regular income; as Ferrier had predicted, the response was lukewarm. (See Chapter III).

The Registry Act of 1841, another of the Special Council's innovations, brought further changes to land transactions by forcing owners to register all claims to their properties. By acknowledging only those rights that had been registered, the Act lessened ambiguities between family and contract law under the Custom of Paris, facilitated mortgages, and clarified ownership. It did, however, complicate Redpath's subdivision plans, which he put on hold in the spring of 1841 while he made arrangements with the children from his first marriage; in return for land or other gifts they formally surrendered all claims to the estate he wished to sell.<sup>54</sup> A widow's right of dower was a more frequent matter. When Thomas Phillips died in June 1842 just as he was about to begin the subdivision of the Beaver Hall estate, Martha Anderson was obliged to renounce any claim she might have - or which it might be construed she might have - given that the couple had no written marriage contract and so by default their property was held under the *communauté de biens* regime.<sup>55</sup> Although it complicated the subdivision process, in the long run the Registry Act facilitated sale of these estates.

The newly re-incorporated municipal government was equally instrumental in shaping the GSM, especially through the Committee on Roads and Improvements. This committee co-

---

<sup>53</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.438/11070: Report by Ferrier et al to the Board of the Royal Institution, 7 August 1845

<sup>54</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5713, 10 July 1841

<sup>55</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #494, 11 June 1842

ordinated the city's physical development by issuing guidelines for laying out streets and squares, by purchasing land for public use, and above all by establishing a vision of the city, one whose values the GSM would come to personify. Like the municipal government in general, the committee's membership was disproportionately anglophone. Its vision was practical and rational, a deliberate radical departure from what was seen as the topographical legacy of the *ancien régime*: the broad straight lines of new thoroughfares would be very much by way of contrast to the congested streets of the old town. Two of the most influential figures on the Committee were John Redpath and Thomas Phillips, who were also, not co-incidentally, in the vanguard of the GSM's development. A third figure was John Ostell, the city surveyor, whose task was to design the city plan that would incorporate these new guidelines, and who would be the obvious choice for mountain landowners wishing to subdivide their own estates. Ostell also became the chief surveyor for the Sulpicians, assessing lands for *censitaires* seeking to have their lands commuted. As such, Ostell and his work lay at the heart of the GSM's development - above all at the planning stage, but also as an architect, a speculative builder, and a resident of the GSM for over thirty years. As this study will show, the GSM was composite and complex, like Ostell himself.



## Chapter II - Planning the Golden Square Mile

The Committee on Roads and Improvements set to work sometime in the latter part of 1840 to devise a city plan.<sup>1</sup> Like most works of modern urban planning, it sought to impose order onto what had hitherto seemed haphazard; in his study of the St Laurent faubourg, Alan Stewart characterizes the opening of streets during the eighteenth century as a process of negotiation, not planning.<sup>2</sup> In the 1840s, negotiation between landowners was still occasionally required in order to open certain streets, but the city plan provided an overall structure within which individual planners could operate. It also provided opportunities for profitable real estate. With the municipal government ready to purchase land for public use, private land that was well-situated took on an additional importance, as the members of the Committee on Roads and Improvements, particularly major landowners such as John Redpath and Thomas Phillips, understood well. The relationship between the early subdivision plans of these landowners and the evolution of the city plan is an indication of how well the interests of developers were served by the Committee, and by the new municipal government in general. The planning of the GSM is a study in accommodation, by a landowning elite, for their mutual enrichment. Landowners had served on similar committees in the past - James McGill, for example, was partly responsible for the demolition of the old fortifications - but they had had to answer to distant governments and enjoyed few opportunities to turn such

---

<sup>1</sup> Hanna, "Creation of an Early Victorian Suburb in Montreal", p.44.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart, *Settling an Eighteenth-Century Faubourg*, p.114

projects to their own advantage. Planning in the 1840s was a product of modern capitalism; instead of working through (or around) the agency of a central authority, planners now could operate by means of institutions which they themselves created and controlled.

The city plan also addressed the growing cultural distinctions within Quebec society, which the rebellions had underscored. Particularly as it pertained to the GSM, the plan was an expression of confidence in a new era, an opportunity to shape the city along new lines which corresponded to British values. The Committee on Roads and Improvements would advocate broad straight streets as an antidote to the confined spaces of the old town which often offended British visitors. To judge by the private plans they commissioned, Redpath and Phillips must have actively promoted such an orderly image. After examining some of the work done for Redpath in the summer of 1840, the lawyer Frederick Griffin recommended that any new plan should provide:

a liberal allowance of width for streets and of extent of ground for lots as will render the lots desirable sites for the residences of families in the upper classes of society. A distribution in the old French system (narrow streets and small lots) will attract none but the poorer classes, and such a population, it will be admitted, will not be a desirable one in the immediate vicinity...<sup>3</sup>

Griffin effectively expressed the class prejudices of the anglophone elite, which now ran City Hall, and which was about to begin its relocation to the side of the mountain.

---

<sup>3</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56/349: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 10 June 1840

### *1. The Committee on Roads and Improvements*

As a planning authority, the Committee on Roads and Improvements intervened in land subdivision chiefly over the matter of laying out streets and squares. They recommended, for example, that new streets should run in straight lines and have widths of at least fifty feet; Sherbrooke Street, the most important new thoroughfare across the mountain, was a full 84 feet wide.<sup>4</sup> The Committee also envisaged the extension of St Catherine and Dorchester streets from the St Laurent faubourg across the side of the mountain, even though the latter would be obstructed by the Roman Catholic and Jewish burial grounds. Side streets running perpendicular to these thoroughfares would form a grid. Private landowners wishing to subdivide their estates had to conform to this basic pattern; their ideas would figure on the city plan as "projected improvements", which they would then implement at their convenience. The Committee would authorize the opening of new streets, providing landowners ceded the necessary strips of land to the city; the municipal government were also willing to undertake the work required for opening such streets, though landowners were obliged to foot the bill. For example, in 1845 the owners of the McTavish estate, donated land for several new streets on the condition that the city furnish them with a "brick sewer", "macadamize" the surfaces, and provide "twelve foot plank sidewalks...or stone pavements".<sup>5</sup> For this they also advanced the city £1000, to be repaid at 6% interest. Work was to be done "in a season during the years" 1846, 1847, 1848 and 1849, the assumption being that it would take that long, not counting the winters.

---

<sup>4</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 21 January 1841

<sup>5</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1186, 23 August 1845

The date on which any such land was ceded to the city should therefore be read as a *terminus post quem* for the opening of these streets, but work often took many years to complete.

Although it is mentioned in municipal records as early as 1842, Ostell's city plan unfortunately does not survive; most likely it was lost or destroyed in a fire.<sup>6</sup> It is also possible that Ostell never entirely completed it. Given his other commitments, he may have handed the work over to another surveyor, James Cane, who was "employed in the drawing and making of a survey and plan of the said city of Montreal" in 1844, and who issued a map conforming to the Committee's specifications two years later.<sup>7</sup> [Map 8.] Although it is not without some errors, Cane's plan shows most of the GSM's individual subdivision plans that had been devised by that date. This is not to say all the streets indicated on the plan had actually been laid out; many, if not most, were mere "projections" in 1846. The complexities of subdivision as a business enterprise, especially during a period of sharp economic change, meant that much of what was drawn in the early 1840s was not realized for another two decades - in some cases longer. From the planning point of view, however, the GSM was conceived between 1840 and 1846, and its design as expressed by Cane's map would see very little revision over the next half century.

The GSM was conceived by the Committee on Roads and Improvements as a New Town, in the manner of Edinburgh's late eighteenth century extension and London's West End.<sup>8</sup> Georgian England seems to have been a direct influence on Thomas Phillips's topographical thinking, but the Edinburgh example is particularly relevant, given that its New Town was

---

<sup>6</sup> Hanna, "Creation of an Early Victorian Suburb in Montreal", p.64.

<sup>7</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1786, 4 March 1844

<sup>8</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 8 May 1844

a political and cultural statement as well as a social and economic opportunity. It was the product of the anglicization of local culture, a point that would not have been lost in the climate of Montreal during the Union period. The streets and squares of Edinburgh's New Town were named after members of the English (Hanoverian) monarchy, and so represented a contrast to the old city's disinherited Catholic roots. [Map 9.] The GSM, significantly, would see two of its new streets called Hanover and Brunswick; furthermore, all new street names in the GSM would make reference to British public figures: Peel, Windsor, Victoria, Stanley, and - including Canadian governors general - Sherbrooke, Dorchester, Metcalfe, Aylmer, and Cathcart. Montreal's New Town was an implicit symbol of the sort of assimilation Scots had experienced within the British empire, and which Lord Durham had recently recommended as a means to deal with ethnic strife in Canada. The term "New Town" was also a pleasant conceit for the Committee on Roads and Improvement, whose counterparts in Edinburgh had planned their New Town as a whole; the planning of Montreal was to be far less ambitious, driven more by landowners than by government.<sup>9</sup> In practice the GSM evolved more like London's West End, which was planned in a more piecemeal fashion.<sup>10</sup> In any case, the association was a powerful one, and would be a key factor in making the GSM attractive to purchasers of lots.

This, the profitable suburban development of Montreal, rather than an aesthetic vision for its own sake, was the main objective of the Committee on Roads and Improvements. As such it had more in common with North American municipal corporations than with the more complex administrations of Old World cities. It can be placed in the company of such

---

<sup>9</sup> Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*, p.74

<sup>10</sup> Olsen, *Town Planning in London*

unsentimental planners as the three-member team of Commissioners who imposed a rigorous grid onto the expansion of New York in 1811, with little regard for the need for public spaces or visual relief from the monotony of unbending streets; by virtue of its limitless adaptability, New York's grid pattern lent itself to capitalist exploitation of land on a far greater scale than was possible with a more self-contained plan such as Edinburgh's.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, unlike its counterpart in New York which owned virtually all the land north of the city, Montreal's municipal government did not stand in a jurisdictional void; the GSM, like all areas on the periphery of the city, had a long history of ownership and occupation against which suburban forms had to be placed. The transition to capitalist land tenure, though not sudden, was a very tangible thing; it meant the transformation of inhabited space, not merely the colonization of open ground. Montreal's development, and the GSM's especially, needed the limitations set by the city plan to give it form; indeed, the GSM owed its eventual success as a community to its closed territorial boundaries - which were to a large extent natural, but also very much the result of planning. As an agent of change, Montreal's city plan was perhaps even more a product of capitalism than the Commissioners' work for New York, which merely helped capitalists buy land.

---

<sup>11</sup> Kostof, *The City Shaped*, p.121

## 2. GSM Landowners and the City Plan, 1840-1842

Despite their involvement in opening streets and setting the overall vision, the planning of the GSM was not principally the work of the Committee on Roads and Improvements, nor even that of Ostell in his capacity as city surveyor. The GSM may have been laid out in bold strokes by the Committee in 1840-42, but the details came from the individual subdivision schemes, some of which pre-dated the Committee's formation. Redpath and Phillips no doubt applied their own experiences as planners, as well as their professional experience as contractors for large public works projects, to the design of the city plan over the course of 1841 and early 1842. Naturally, as members of the Committee, they were also in a position to subdivide their own estates in the most advantageous manner possible. The fact that Ostell was the surveyor of choice for most private schemes during these years is no coincidence, but rather an illustration of city planning at its most efficient. Even so, planning the GSM was by no means a straightforward matter, given the considerable variation in terrain and topography, the existing road network, and the often conflicting agendas of neighbouring landowners.

The Redpath estate, for example, consisted of a strip of land over 1500 feet wide running from slightly above the level of Sherbrooke Street for more than a mile over the mountain, plus a narrower strip 700 feet wide running down to about the level of Dorchester Street.<sup>12</sup> [Map 5.] A plan attached to the deed of sale, drawn by the surveyor André Trudeau gives some sense of the estate's appearance and types of terrain. [Map 10.] The lower strip was pasture, used for grazing like the

---

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5012, 4 November 1836.

lands on either side. The higher ground consisted of orchards, and contained the old stone house ("Terrace Bank"), the stables, and barn. A private road ran up to the house from the corner of Mountain and Dorchester streets, along the boundary between Marguerite Fouquet's farm (labelled "Letourneau" on the map, after her husband) and Redpath's field. The upper portion, by far the largest, consisted of the densely forested mountaintop. This last was clearly uninhabitable, but the lower portions of the estate lent themselves readily enough to subdivision. The area that struck Redpath as most conducive to residential building was the orchard east of Terrace Bank, on the other side of the lane running up from Sherbrooke Street. Being on an incline, this area afforded the same view enjoyed by Terrace Bank; at the same time, it would not interfere with that view, nor would the residents of these lots impede the comings and goings and general comfort of the Redpath family. Redpath also considered the narrower strip below Sherbrooke Street, which was flatter and lacked the trees of the higher ground, but which seemed wide enough for several rows of lots.

In the spring of 1840 Redpath hired John Ostell to design a subdivision plan for the first of these areas, one that would best exploit its natural features. Ostell proposed two ranges of lots straddling a central street - which Redpath would call Drummond, his wife's family name. [Map 12.] It would be ninety feet wide - an extraordinary breadth for what was to be a residential street. This extravagance would be explained in the first deed of sale:



In as much as...Drummond Street is laid out to be ninety feet wide, and the intention of the said seller in giving it that dimension is principally to afford a better view of the other lots which are to be bounded by the said street...the said purchaser shall forever have the right of enclosing immediately in front of the said lot with an open rail fence, and planting of trees or any kind of ornamental shrubs or flowers [on] a space of twenty feet out of the said ninety feet by the whole front of the said lot, but not at any time to erect or place thereon any other fence or any building whatsoever on pain of forfeiting the right arising...from the present clause.<sup>13</sup>

By means of this stipulation Redpath intended to control the appearance of his new development, ensuring a sense of openness at the expense of stables or other structures that might otherwise have cluttered the street frontage. The clause also reveals much about Redpath's vision of the street's residents, for whom Drummond Street would form the framework of a small community. As it would be later for stereotypical suburban residents, it was assumed that such people would place more importance on the view of each other's properties than they would the view of the city below about which Redpath's own advertisements had boasted. In a later revision Redpath abandoned these restrictions, preferring to make the lots larger: Drummond Street would now be 60 feet wide, which still made it very broad in comparison to most secondary streets, while the lots would now measure 170 feet wide by 280 feet long, the additional length coming out of the 20 feet previously assigned to the street. The stipulations forbidding construction near the street were dropped. Purchasers were required only to enclose each lot with fences and make a drain along the rear line for water running off the mountain, which was a perennial problem.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5630, 20 January 1841

<sup>14</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5927, 24 September 1842

So far, Redpath's subdivision agenda had needed to make no reference to the city plan, other than building on the recent presence of Sherbrooke Street. If St Catherine and Dorchester streets were to be extended across the mountainside, however, they would need to figure on any subdivision of Redpath's lower field. No doubt it had been with this expectation in mind that Redpath had acquired, in 1836, an additional piece of land at the base of the larger estate along the line of Dorchester Street, which made its prolongation much easier.<sup>15</sup> There were no difficulties inserting a segment of St Catherine Street on a subdivision plan - except that it would remain just that: a segment, divorced from the main body of St Catherine Street by a half mile of field until landowners in between came to an agreement with the City. Redpath's lower subdivision would depend on Mountain and Sherbrooke streets for access, and have little in common with what Phillips was planning for the Beaver Hall area to the east. In the summer of 1842, Redpath again turned to Ostell to design a plan for this part of his estate. Ostell's design made the best of the land's limitations. In addition to St Catherine and Dorchester streets, the plan also called for three new north-south streets, each to be sixty feet wide. [Map 13.] The chief advantage of their width was not to show off the lots, as it had been for upper subdivision, but to give an abstract impression of space, which was the chief advantage of an open field. The size of the lots contributed to this impression: they were 120 by 145 feet on average, smaller than their counterparts above, but far larger than most urban lots.

To create these streets Redpath had to sacrifice land. Mountain Street was widened by setting aside a strip of land running along the eastern side of the existing lane. Drummond

---

<sup>15</sup> ANQ-M, Etienne Guy #1213, 31 October 1836

Street, which was to be extended southwards across the field, required a sixty foot wide strip of land. The easternmost street, which bordered on the McTavish estate, was more problematic. Assuming his neighbour would concede half the necessary land, Redpath allotted only a 30-foot wide strip; deeds to lots bordering this strip would describe it as land "belonging to the seller and reserved for a street", and they included the stipulation that if no agreement with the heirs McTavish were reached within nine months that portion of the strip would be automatically sold to the purchaser for £25.<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, no agreement was possible. Deeds from a year later to similar lots state that they were bounded on the east merely by "the heirs McTavish", implying that the lots had been duly extended. Thanks to the ongoing difficulties of the subsequent owners of the McTavish estate, the street - eventually named Stanley after the new head of the Colonial Office - was still being described as "projected" in deeds from the 1860s.<sup>17</sup> Dorchester Street was extended eastward as far as the line of Stanley Street - in fact, slightly beyond, as the Redpath estate included a small chunk of land, roughly 60 by 135 feet, extending over the boundary line. As it turned out, the purchaser of Redpath's lot No.37 also bought this extra piece, so that when Stanley Street failed to be opened, he became the owner of one large (150'x 350') and later extremely valuable piece of land.<sup>18</sup> All these streets would be duly conveyed to the City, who would open them over the course of the next year or two.

Thomas Phillips's estate differed considerably from Redpath's in its location, its dimensions, and its terrain.

---

<sup>16</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5921, 22 September 1842

<sup>17</sup> ANQ-M, IJ Gibb #19124, 25 April 1861

<sup>18</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5923, 24 September 1842; see also John Carr Griffin #33837, 19 October 1872

[Map 5.] It lay much closer to town, its southern boundary on Lagauchetière Street being just over 100 metres from the Haymarket; Beaver Hall itself was nearer to Place d'Armes than to Terrace Bank. A map of Frobisher's original estate, drawn by the surveyor Jacques Viger in 1817, shows the variety of large lots which had been connected in a somewhat patchwork manner, and were to be acquired by a number of new owners, including the Lamothe family to the west, and Pierre de Rocheblave, whose widow would later sell the land to the east of Beaver Hall as a site for St Patrick's church.<sup>19</sup> [Map 17.] In 1832 Thomas Phillips acquired those pieces of Frobisher's estate containing the house, gardens, barn, and stables, as well as some forty acres of land, which extended back over the fields and up the side of the mountain; unlike Redpath's estate, however, it did not continue over the summit.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, instead of one long narrow strip, Phillips' land was irregular; at its broadest it measured only 625 feet wide, while its frontage along Lagauchetière Street was under 300 feet.<sup>21</sup>

In Thomas Phillips's mind, however, the awkward shape and size represented possibilities rather than drawbacks. His interest in subdivision went back as early as December 1836 when he appears to have made some suggestions to the McGill College governors about the need to open new streets.<sup>22</sup> He did have a subdivision scheme worked out by July 1840, when John Ostell commented that "Mr Phillips is proceeding

---

<sup>19</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CN 601/353/974.5, 7 June 1817

<sup>20</sup> ANQ-M, Lukin #2384, 17 January 1832

<sup>21</sup> These measurements are taken from a map drawn for Phillips by the surveyor Alexander Stevenson, which may have been commissioned as a prelude to subdivision. See ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CN 601/353/974.5, 17 May 1838.

<sup>22</sup> MacMillan, *McGill and its Story*, p.109. Principal Bethune described Phillips as "a man difficult to deal with if thwarted by delay", though on what experience of Phillips he was drawing is not clear.

leisurely in his arrangements, determined to wait until circumstances will admit of carrying out his intentions".<sup>23</sup> It is possible that Ostell actually designed this plan for Phillips, given their mutual involvement on the Committee on Roads and Improvements, and given Ostell's work for Redpath and the Royal Institution.<sup>24</sup> At any rate, the plan is remarkable. [Map 19.] The irregular shape of the Beaver Hall estate required several parallel and perpendicular segments rather than a few straight avenues, and where these segments met there were to be two formal squares. This arrangement clearly suggested the layout of London's West End, the product of Georgian town planning. These English squares of Phillips' design are unique, not only in the GSM but in the entire city. The names he gave to parts of his subdivision emphasize its British character, especially the use of terms such as "Terrace", "Place", and "Avenue" instead of the ordinary "street" - though he stopped short of using "road", which in North America has had a more specifically rural connotation.

Phillips no doubt expected that these broad streets would be lined with terraced housing in the manner of Bloomsbury or Mayfair; presumably he intended these houses to attract a class of residents similar to those of fashionable London suburbs. This image - the architectural one, at any rate - is suggested by the plan, both in the arrangement of streets and squares and, even more, in the size and distribution of the lots along them. Unlike the large lots of Redpath's lower subdivision which commanded a street frontage of nearly 150 feet, the Beaver Hall lots were typically 60 or even only 54 feet wide. Lots of this size would prove ideal from the point of view of terrace builders, who could buy piecemeal according

---

<sup>23</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56/350: Ostell to the Royal Institution, 23 July 1840

<sup>24</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/357: Frederick Griffin to the Royal Institution, 21 April 1842. Griffin mentions in passing that the Phillips plan was drawn by Ostell.

to how many units they wished to erect. The plan's major drawback for the Phillips family was that it meant the destruction of their home. The principal street of this subdivision would run right through the middle of the grounds, the gardens, and at least one end of Beaver Hall itself. There was no alternative; unlike Terrace Bank, Beaver Hall was inconveniently situated right in the front of the estate, which was the most important part of the subdivision, given its proximity to town. Whereas Redpath could preserve the core of his farm and its gardens for his own family's use, the Phillips family had to expect a change in their domestic environment. It may well be that they eagerly anticipated the prospect of replacing their old wooden farmhouse.

Some members of the Committee on Roads and Improvements appear to have objected to the line of the proposed central avenue because it met Lagauchetière Street at a point 100 feet or so west of the top of Radegonde Street, so that there would be in effect a jog in the thoroughfare running north from the Haymarket.<sup>25</sup> The solution was to widen the new avenue in two broad curves as it met Lagauchetière Street, so that the lots on the two northern corners of this intersection were now in effect pie shaped. [Maps 18. & 19.] This did not provide much of a continuum across Lagauchetière Street, but it did soften the otherwise abrupt angles and made possible some unusual vistas. In all other respects, Phillips' design accorded with "a plan fyled in the offices of the surveyor of the city," which is clearly the one Ostell had drawn up.<sup>26</sup> Thomas Phillips died before he could put the

---

<sup>25</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #585, 30 November 1842. It is curious that Cane's 1846 map, which in other ways seems to reflect the new guidelines - often at the expense of accurately presenting changes to the individual subdivisions - shows the intersection as containing roughly right angles, and not the "quadrants" the executors agreed to provide. However, these curves are referred to in the deeds to those corner lots, and they appear on later detailed maps.

<sup>26</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #585, 30 November 1842

final touches on this plan, but in November 1842 the executors of his estate donated to the City the land required for the opening of Dorchester and St Catherine streets across the Beaver Hall estate, as well as

a certain other street intended to be run through the said estate...at right angles with [Dorchester and St Catherine]...from Radegonde to Sherbrooke streets, and also for the opening and making of certain squares in the line of the said new street...<sup>27</sup>

This new street was not, of course, to be a single thoroughfare, but rather a series of connected segments. The donation also included the money necessary to pay for the work opening these new streets, on the understanding that it would be later repaid by the city.

In 1840 the land to the north and west of the Beaver Hall estate was also being considered for subdivision: this was the strip of land which the Royal Institution had received from the Desrivières family by way of payment for what they were due from the McGill bequest.<sup>28</sup> [Map 5.] They had no intention of developing their other mountain property, Burnside, which was to be reserved for the college in compliance with the wishes of "the Founder", but the adjoining Desrivières strip was another matter. It comprised a portion about 450 feet square, its southern boundary being on a line with Dorchester Street, and an additional narrow strip running north from one corner along the entire length of the Burnside estate at a width of just over 200 feet. The Royal Institution's legal representative in Montreal, Frederick Griffin, although personally unenthusiastic about their prospects as land developers, was eager to secure for them the

---

<sup>27</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #585, 30 November 1842

<sup>28</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5626, 30 November 1836

services of John Ostell.<sup>29</sup>

The plan which Ostell devised for the Desrivières strip has not survived, but some idea can be had of it from the explanatory comments he provided.<sup>30</sup> [Map 22.] He was concerned that it should not clash with Thomas Phillips' plan for the adjoining land to the east, and that it should permit the westward extension of Dorchester and St Catherine streets, which would constitute the principal means of access to the lots. It also made sense to open north-south streets along the borders between the two properties, notably a 60 or 70-foot wide avenue which would run all the way up to Sherbrooke Street, enabling lots to be offered on either side of it; this would eventually be called University Street. Although Ostell had designed what he described as "town lots" to correspond with those on Phillips' plan, it was his own belief that such small lots would not generate much money very quickly, and he recommended "cottage lots containing generally a little less than three quarters of an arpent in superfacie so as to admit a garden around the dwelling."<sup>31</sup> By this it seems that Ostell was advocating the sort of scheme he would later design for Redpath's lower subdivision. Whether this really would have been popular with purchasers, given the higher price of land closer to the city, is uncertain. At any rate, the Royal Institution was unimpressed by the plan. The President, George Jehosephat Mountain, who had never been in favour of subdivision, complained that the proposed new street would spoil the future appearance of the college. Any lots to the west of this street would also border on the Burnside estate, and that this would have "the unpleasant effect of exposing to view of the college the back yards and outdoor offices of the

---

<sup>29</sup> MUA, RG.4 -c.1: Royal Institution Minute Book, 3 June 1840

<sup>30</sup> MUA, RG4 - c.56/350: Ostell to the Royal Institution, 23 July 1840

<sup>31</sup> MUA, RG4 - c.56/350: Ostell to the Royal Institution, 21 July 1840



houses."<sup>32</sup> Better, he thought, to run the street some hundred feet to the west, along the boundary between Burnside and the land in question, so that the lots would be across the street from the college and houses built along it would show their facades and not their dirty laundry. This comment reflects the conviction that all of Burnside would eventually be developed as McGill College.

In 1840, however, Burnside was still every inch the farm it had been when James McGill had acquired it half a century earlier. It consisted of about 43 acres of land, slightly larger than the Beaver Hall estate. From a line somewhat above the level of Dorchester Street it extended half way up the mountain, at a width of nearly one thousand feet. [Map 5.] It consisted mainly of field, with some trees towards the higher ground behind the house. [Figures 3. & 54.] Burnside house was surrounded by a walled yard which contained barns and stables; it was reached by a lane, the long straight continuation of St Monique Street. [Map 49.] McGill's home was a large, comfortable residence: in addition to the main floor, which contained a hall and two large (24 foot square) rooms, there was an extensive cellar with kitchen and servants' quarters, and a top floor with at least two finished rooms and plenty of attic space.<sup>33</sup> It had been the view of the college principal, John Bethune, that this house should serve as a principal's residence, and he had moved into it with his extensive family shortly after assuming office. Having made the decision to begin work on a new college building in 1839, the Board of the Royal Institution had forced Bethune out of Burnside house so it could be used for teaching.<sup>34</sup> With the laying out of Sherbrooke Street,

---

<sup>32</sup> MJA, RG4 - c.56/353: Mountain to the Royal Institution, 22 February 1841

<sup>33</sup> Frost, *McGill University*, p.57.

<sup>34</sup> MJA, RG.4 - c.1: Royal Institution Minute Book, 16 October 1839

however, Burnside was effectively divided into a college portion above and a farm portion below this new thoroughfare. As the college was still in no position to receive students, the house and farm were again leased out; the rents, to be collected by the principal, would help pay for the construction of the Arts Building.<sup>35</sup>

Despite having been evicted from Burnside, Principal Bethune exercised considerable control over the estate. Early in 1842 he convinced the Royal Institution to convey the lower part of Burnside formally to the college governors so that they could undertake a subdivision scheme; in the interests of the college, he argued, it was imperative to raise as much money as possible, and that meant making use of all available property.<sup>36</sup> His plan, which he apparently devised himself, has not survived; it showed that part of Burnside below Sherbrooke Street divided into 55 lots, each presumably what Ostell called "cottage" lots, as opposed to the smaller lots on the plan for the Desrivieres strip. Griffin, whose comments constitute the only description of Bethune's plan, criticized it for failing to correspond with Ostell's design for the adjacent land.<sup>37</sup> If Bethune's plan did indeed not include the provision for the extension of St Catherine Street, it would certainly not have been acceptable to the Committee on Roads and Improvements. In the end, a legal problem prevented the Royal Institution from conveying Burnside to the governors, so the faults of the plan are a moot point. By then, however, it had become clear to the Royal Institution that any proper subdivision would require a professionally-designed plan which took into consideration the municipal

---

<sup>35</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11085: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 17 June 1842; MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11083: Joshua Pelton to the Royal Institution, 5 April 1842.

<sup>36</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56/356: Bethune to the Royal Institution, 31 December 1841

<sup>37</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/357: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 21 April 1842

guidelines.<sup>38</sup> They turned once again to Ostell, asking him to incorporate the lower portion of Burnside into his original design for the Desrivières strip.<sup>39</sup>

Ostell's revised plan divided both estates into some 158 lots. [Map 23.] They were not the "cottage lots" which he had recommended in 1840, but smaller ones - on average 55 feet wide and 120 feet long - along the lines of the Beaver Hall subdivision. By that time there was plenty of evidence that smaller lots were popular in that part of the city. The plan called for three new north-south streets over Burnside south of Sherbrooke Street. One of these, Mansfield, was to straddle the boundary line with the McTavish estate to the west. The proposed middle street was to be called McGill College Avenue, and would extend the grand entrance up to the Arts Building another 1200 feet south of Sherbrooke Street, entirely ignoring St Monique Street, which ran straight up from St Antoine Street to the front door of Burnside house. Far from giving special prominence to the Founder's former residence, the plan turned it into a dwelling like any other, sitting in the middle of Lot 74, its western side giving onto McGill College Avenue. The name "Burnside" would be retained in the form of a new east-west street, Burnside Place, which would run roughly halfway between Sherbrooke and St Catherine streets, more or less in front of the old house. The plan also involved opening University Street and Union Avenue with the Phillips executors, and the westward extension of Cathcart Street.<sup>40</sup> The end result was to push the pattern of the New Town some distance across the flank of the mountain. The establishment of the "McGill College Properties" also

---

<sup>38</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11085: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 25 April 1842.

<sup>39</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/357: Triggs to the Royal Institution, 10 May 1842

<sup>40</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.58/389: Alfred Phillips to the Royal Institution, 15 January 1845

represented the last work of subdivision by John Ostell in the GSM.

### *3. Secondary Planning: 1843-1846*

With work on the city plan well underway by mid-1842 and developers such as Redpath beginning to sell lots, other landowners on the mountainside decided to participate, building to an extent on existing subdivision schemes. While the Phillips executors were making their arrangements with the City, the Lamothe family to the west of Beaver Hall began to negotiate the opening of new streets on their estate. It was a 400-foot wide rectangle extending from Lagauchetière Street to a full depth of 650 feet. It was not a large piece of land compared to others on the mountain, but as with the Beaver Hall estate it was located close to the edge of town. [Map 5.] The house lay at the crest of the escarpment, reached by a road curving up from Lagauchetière Street. This house, like Beaver Hall, threatened to be in the way of subdivision if the Lamoths were to open any streets up the escarpment from Lagauchetière Street. Instead, they reached an agreement with the Phillips executors whereby they would purchase lot No.5 of the Beaver Hall estate and use it to form a new street which would run perpendicular to the central avenue of the Beaver Hall subdivision. [Maps 18. & 19.] The Phillips executors agreed to sell this lot on the condition that the street be "kept perpetually opened to the public without the heirs Lamothe having power to obstruct or close up the same."<sup>41</sup> The prospect of Belmont Street, as it was to be called,

---

<sup>41</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #719, 18 August 1843

drawing people through the Beaver Hall subdivision can only have delighted the Phillips heirs.

The plan for the Lamothe estate, issued in September 1843, involved only that part of the estate above Belmont Street, leaving the lands around the house and below it for the family's own use.<sup>42</sup> [Map 31.] The plan called for two new north-south streets to run perpendicular to Belmont Street; the Committee on Roads and Improvements later called them Hanover and Brunswick streets.<sup>43</sup> These would be 40 feet wide, which was narrow given the new municipal standards. Each was to be lined with a half dozen small lots, most of them about 50 by 90 feet. As with the Phillips plan, the small lots were well suited to the builders of terraces, who could buy as many lots as they needed and put two houses per lot, with space behind for yard and outbuildings. At the top of the plan lay Dorchester Street, to be opened in cooperation with the Royal Institution; Hanover and Brunswick streets would not be continued further north, however, although in the 20th century they would be absorbed by University Street and Union Avenue. Nevertheless, the Lamothe plan broadened the New Town street network at its most crucial point, just up from the Haymarket and the old town.

Similarly, the plan for the McTavish estate filled the gap left on the mountainside between the Redpath subdivision and Ostell's design for Burnside. Apart from a substantial slice of the mountaintop, this estate consisted a 1000-foot wide strip running from well above the line of Sherbrooke Street down to the level of the Roman Catholic cemetery, and

---

<sup>42</sup> At one point, they did consider subdividing the entire estate, judging from a reference in the act of commutation to a piece of land "marquée N.3 du plan que les dits heritiers Lamothe ont fait faire du dit terrain..." (ANQ-M, Lacombe #1352, 18 April 1843).

<sup>43</sup> In the deeds of sale they are simply referred to as "new" streets; it would fit with the Committee's agenda to give them names associated with the British monarchy.

even further down along the western side of the Jewish cemetery right to Janvier Street. [Map 5.] By the 1840s the higher ground was separated from the lower part by Sherbrooke Street; a road led from it up to the old farmhouse and barn, and then snaked higher still up to the ruins of McTavish's castle, which had been left to decay after the fur trader's death. The three lawyers who acquired the estate in 1843 - Hugh Taylor, James Smith, and Duncan Fisher<sup>44</sup> - appear to have had designs on the higher ground which afforded the commanding vistas already enjoyed by Terrace Bank and McGill College; James Smith, who at the time was Attorney General for Canada East, even had the old farmhouse rebuilt as a private residence for himself and his new wife.<sup>45</sup> That part of the estate below Sherbrooke Street, however, was a natural extension of the New Town, and in 1845 they commissioned the architect John Wells to design a subdivision plan.

Wells's plan is unoriginal - borrowing somewhat from the designs on either side of it - but serviceable. [Map 25.] It called for four new north-south streets (Stanley, Peel, Metcalfe, and Mansfield), each to be 60-feet wide.<sup>46</sup> St Catherine Street would, of course, be continued across the McTavish estate, but not Burnside Place. Along these new streets were distributed 113 lots, of medium size for the most part, although some along Sherbrooke Street were to measure 72 by 150 feet. Like those on the Royal Institution and Beaver Hall estates, they were to be served by a network of back lanes or "mews" in the manner of contemporary British

---

<sup>44</sup> ANQ-M, Henry Griffin #20299, 21 December 1843 and #21117, 26 August 1845; Gibb #9484, 4 February 1847.

<sup>45</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8749f, 28 April 1846

<sup>46</sup> Stanley's width is given as only 50 feet, but as it lay on the boundary with Redpath's estate this measurement would be a matter of negotiation.

planning.<sup>47</sup> Wells did not undertake to subdivide any of the land below the level of the lots on the south side of St Catherine Street; this area bordered on the cemeteries, whose fate was as yet uncertain. In August 1845 the owners of the estate made a *grant and cession* to the city of "so much ground as shall be required for forming the four principal streets through the estate, to wit Stanley, Peel, Metcalf, and Mansfield streets, and also for the continuation of St Catherine street through the property".<sup>48</sup> The City readily received these lands, and opened St Catherine Street almost immediately; disputes between the three owners of the estate, however, kept the remaining streets - and the lots - in the planning stage for many years.<sup>49</sup>

The Mackenzie estate was the last in the GSM to be developed in the 1840s, and its subdivision had little to do with the city plan, though it was obviously inspired by the success of other landowners. It was a long, narrow piece of land running from Dorchester Street (where it was only 115 feet wide) along the length of Côte des Neiges Road to the level of Sherbrooke Street, whereupon it broadened slightly (a width of 450 feet) as it climbed up and over the mountain. [Map 5.] A map by the surveyor David Thompson shows the location of the house, barn, well ("of very good water") and the road connecting them to Côte des Neiges Road. [Map 32.] George Simpson, head of the Hudson's Bay Company, purchased it late in 1845, and commissioned the surveyor Henry Macfarlane to design a subdivision plan for all the land on the slope.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Hanna, "The Creation of an Early Victorian Suburb in Montreal", p.47

<sup>48</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1186, 23 August 1845

<sup>49</sup> A later contract for the opening and finishing of Metcalfe Street was made late in 1859: ANQ-M, Ross #9417, 16 September 1859

<sup>50</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8586, 10 November 1845. Thompson's map was drawn in order to show the land which the Mackenzie heirs wished to sell; Simpson purchased only the land on the slopes, the mountaintop having been acquired by Hosea Ballou

Macfarlane devised two plans by April 1846. One showed the strip below Sherbrooke Street divided into 36 lots, each about 50 feet wide, their depth depending on the width of the estate at each point; there would be no break in the line of lots, even for St Catherine Street, but a lane ran behind the lots the entire length of the strip. [Map 33.] The land above Sherbrooke Street was divided into a series of very large lots, two rows of which would straddle a new street, to be called Simpson; it was created by extending the line of the private road straight down. This arrangement was an obvious reference to the Drummond Street subdivision on the Redpath estate. A third row of lots would line the street to be opened in conjunction with Redpath, the neighbour to the east.<sup>51</sup> [Map 34.] Simpson, who had no desire to live on the estate, sold the lot containing the old Mackenzie farmhouse with the proviso that it be torn down.<sup>52</sup> The purchaser did not comply, however, preferring to enjoy its rustic charms even though the house would soon be dwarfed in size and comfort by a number of large mansions lining Simpson Street.

By 1846 Cane's map had been published, errors and all, giving a form to the GSM that would remain more or less intact for many decades.<sup>53</sup> [Map 8.] The groundwork had been done by Ostell, and other surveyors filled in the missing details, but the result suggested a high degree of unity. In practice, the plan was a mere sketch of a community, but it helped fix the GSM in the imagination, and rendered the subsequent work

---

Smith. (ANQ-M, Gibb #8315, 13 October 1845)

<sup>51</sup> To make some of these lots square, and to provide enough land for this street, an agreement was reached between Simpson, Redpath, and McKay, whose estate extended north of Sherbrooke Street slightly. See ANQ-M, Gibb #8776, 8 May 1846.

<sup>52</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8714, 21 April 1846.

<sup>53</sup> One of Cane's errors is the line of Simpson Street, which the map shows as a curved road, as was the original lane leading to the Mackenzie farmhouse. Evidently the map was published prior to the completion of Macfarlane's plan.



of developers and speculators that much easier. The most striking feature of the GSM's new street pattern was the degree to which it ignored older lines of communication which did not conform to the city's guidelines. With the exception of Mountain Street, none of the new north-south streets planned by Ostell or Wells was an extension of, or connected directly with, any of the narrow lanes running up from St Antoine Street. McGill College Avenue would all but reduce St Monique Street, which had enjoyed a commanding vista of Burnside house, to insignificance. Access to the New Town would be via Sherbrooke and St Catherine streets, though significantly none of the streets in the recent Berthelet subdivision would be extended into the GSM. The important new gateway was Beaver Hall Hill, the central avenue of Phillips's subdivision which ran up from the Haymarket.<sup>54</sup>

#### *4. Planning in the 1850s and 60s*

No subdivision activity took place in the GSM between 1846 and 1853 when the depression that had dulled the real estate market began to wane. The most fruitful area for profitable subdivision was the land above Sherbrooke Street, which wealthy purchasers had always shown a special

---

<sup>54</sup> It was originally "Beaver Hall Terrace", but the row houses built along it were also called that, to much confusion. Houses on the street itself were often listed as being on "Beaver Hall Place", unless they were an actual part of the terrace. By the late 1870s addresses no longer included the name of the terrace as well as that of the street, so that in 1881 Goad could label the street between Lagauchetière and Dorchester as "Beaver Hall Terrace" with impunity. Nevertheless, "Beaver Hall Hill" will be used here, for clarity, even though that name was only given in the 20th century, when it applied both to the original "Beaver Hall Terrace" (the street) and to Radegonde Street, which ran between the Haymarket and Lagauchetière Street.

willingness to acquire.<sup>55</sup> The first to revive the subdivision of the GSM were John Torrance and James Hutchison, who had acquired Duncan Fisher's share of the McTavish estate.<sup>56</sup> In September 1853 they reached an agreement with the other owners whereby the land required for the opening of two streets, running north from Sherbrooke, would be ceded to the City.<sup>57</sup> These were to be 60-foot wide avenues: Upper Peel Street, which was roughly an extension of its counterpart below Sherbrooke Street, only with a prestigious prefix, and McTavish Street, which had no counterpart below. The McTavish monument stood directly in the line of Upper Peel Street, which could have been extended to meet it. The two new streets were connected at the top by a lane, which was to be the first segment of Pine Avenue. Torrance and Hutchison hired Henri-Maurice Perrault to design a subdivision plan for this strip of land.<sup>58</sup> [Map 27.] It provided for five narrow lots (60 feet) along Sherbrooke Street, and another four on each side above them; further back were to be a number of very large lots, each a full 300 feet wide. The whole strip was to be crowned by a huge lot, nearly 300 foot square, which contained McTavish's ruined mansion; although not likely to attract a purchaser searching for a ready home, the haunted house was presented as an exciting feature of the subdivision. As it turned out, they had no difficulty selling this lot, even at the inflated price of £2650; the purchaser, however, was quick to tear it down, thereby bringing to an end the

---

<sup>55</sup> Simpson's sale of the Mackenzie estate subdivision in 1846 resulted in the sale of many of the upper lots, but none of the lots below Sherbrooke Street. MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 3 November 1846

<sup>56</sup> ANQ-M, Easton #2691, 1 November 1847

<sup>57</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14939, 17 September 1853

<sup>58</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15201, 21 December 1853

colourful legacy of Simon McTavish.<sup>59</sup>

Perrault took over from Ostell as the chief surveyor for the GSM during the 1850s and early 60s. He prepared several subdivision plans for James Smith, who attempted on many occasions to sell his share of the McTavish estate, with only partial success. [Maps 29. & 30.] In 1856 the Phillips executors sold the remainder of the Beaver Hall estate above Sherbrooke Street to lawyers John Ashworth and John J.C. Abbott, the latter hoping to extend University Street northwards in co-operation with his colleagues at McGill.<sup>60</sup> [Map 20.] It would be another seven years before the Royal Institution would put lots up for sale on the western side of Upper University Street, for which scheme Perrault provided the plan. [Map 24.] He also did work for Joseph Shuter, whose subdivision attempted to open up the area between Upper University Street and the boundary with the St Laurent faubourg, as of 1855. [Map 36.]

Perrault's most important contribution to the shaping of the GSM, however, was his work incorporating the old burial grounds into the New Town street pattern. As of the mid-1850s the City began to extend Dorchester Street westward beyond University Street, cutting through the small estates straddling the escarpment; they had reached the edge of the cemetery by 1857, but for obvious reasons the owners of the burial grounds, though no longer receiving bodies, were reluctant to let streets be opened across it. By 1864, however, they relented, and Perrault was commissioned to impose a grid of streets over the old cemeteries' irregular outline. Perrault's plan opened up the GSM's entire southern rim to suburban development. It called for the southward

---

<sup>59</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15203, 21 December 1853; Hunter #4082 and 4083, 16 November 1858

<sup>60</sup> ANQ-M, Easton #5848, 27 August 1856

extension of Peel and Metcalfe streets and the northward extension of St Francis de Sales and Cemetery streets; in time, the latter would be renamed Cathedral Street, after the Roman Catholic cathedral planned for its eastern side, and St Francis de Sales Street would be changed to Windsor, after the Royal family. Each of these ran to Dorchester Street, which would be extended right across the old burial grounds, uniting the two unconnected segments. Northern and southern extensions did not quite meet, a casualty of the failure to align new GSM streets with the lanes below the escarpment. The main extent of the cemetery would now consist of two slightly staggered blocks. These new streets were soon opened, but the exact fate of these two blocks remained uncertain for the rest of the decade, though Perrault did provide a sketch showing how they could be subdivided into building lots.<sup>61</sup>

Connecting the two segments of Dorchester Street had the effect of prompting the owners of the small estates along the escarpment to subdivide. In 1867 the Mills estate, for example, emulated the Lamothe subdivision of a quarter century earlier by extending Belmont Street north of the old farmhouse and offering lots only above the street. [Map 38.] On the other side of the disaffected cemeteries (which were to become Dominion Square), the Hoyle estate allowed Drummond and Stanley streets to be extended through it as far as Janvier Street - which was about to be renamed Osborne. [Map 39.] These last two plans were the works of Joseph Rielle, who had become the major surveyor in the GSM by the later 1860s. Rielle completed the transformation of the higher ground into suburban real estate in 1868 by designing a plan for the *habitant* farm, now owned by the merchant John Auld, at the extreme western corner of the GSM. Rielle's task was somewhat

---

<sup>61</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: MCA 601 53, 556-557

difficult, given that the estate did not touch on Sherbrooke Street, and required an east-west connection such as the higher ground had not really seen. [Map 40.] Rielle proposed two streets: McGregor, after the previous owner (and Auld's father-in-law), and Summerhill, which was the name of the farmhouse. McGregor Street would connect Côte des Neiges Road to the top of Simpson Street, running along the northern side of the house; Summerhill Street promised merely to be a secluded enclave. Like other surveyors before him, Rielle found solutions to planning problems posed by irregular estates and difficult terrain; unlike them, he had an established pattern on which to build; by the late 1860s Rielle was inserting pieces into a puzzle that had long since been all but completed.

This is not to suggest, however, that Ostell had been some sort of visionary with whom all subsequent planners paled by comparison. His work on the city plan, like that for individual landowners and for the Sulpicians, was that of a professional surveyor, not a Christopher Wren or Baron Haussmann, or even a James Craig, who had won the competition set by the City of Edinburgh for a New Town design in 1767.<sup>62</sup> Aesthetics clearly did play a role in the development of the GSM, especially given the plan's implicit references to social class and ethnicity. Planning in the GSM was not, however, principally a matter of making a grand aesthetic statement, even in the service of marketing a commodity. The role of the plan was to give to a piece of land an importance it would not otherwise enjoy, maximizing its value in the eyes of potential purchasers. Naturally, the process of turning a small square of field into a suburban lot that could be profitably sold required more than a mere plan; nevertheless, a plan was the single most important element in successful subdivision. A

---

<sup>62</sup> Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*, p.71

plan by a surveyor of the calibre of Ostell or Perrault could be a work of art - indeed, it had to be, as the reality was often quite different. A prospective purchaser of land walking along St Catherine Street at most any time in the 1840s would have seen fields on either side, but the same individual looking at a subdivision plan, would have seen the GSM.

### Chapter III - Subdivision

By imposing orderly street and lot patterns onto what might be called an organic urban landscape, planners greatly facilitated the subsequent stages of the GSM's development. Those who embarked on subdivision schemes in the 1840s proved equally innovative in their use of various strategies; until this time subdivision had been an unsystematic process, its goal to secure regular financial returns from landed property, rather than to sell a product.<sup>1</sup> For a landowner such as John Redpath, subdivision was a business venture, a matter of carefully creating a commodity and selling it to a public whose needs and ambitions he understood well. Even so, there was no certainty in this venture; success depended on good timing, good advertising, and good management of the entire process. In mid-century Montreal, land was not a simple commodity like boots or sugar or other manufactured products; its exchange dragged with it complicated relations rooted in the Custom of Paris: the historic rights of family members, neighbours, tenants, and seigneurs. GSM landowners were testing the waters of capitalist real estate - waters that had undergone a sea-change as a result of the political and social aftermath of the rebellions. Many of them were only partly successful at this undertaking: the Royal Institution had itself to be transformed in order to exploit its property, while the McTavish estate came to have too many owners with conflicting agendas for subdivision to take place effectively. Many landowners waited years before selling their lands; some

---

<sup>1</sup> Stewart, *Settling an Eighteenth-Century Faubourg*, pp.93, 114, 127

left subdivision up to their widows, who were consequently obliged to resort to strategies of their own. [Map 7.] If Redpath's ability to market an idealized suburban way of life is a textbook case of capitalist subdivision, the wide variety of experiences across the GSM reveal a world still in the process of transition. Subdivision constituted the first phase in the complex process of creating the GSM. In its use of new forms of land tenure, marketing techniques, and changing terms of mortgage payment, it was an integral part of the penetration of capitalist relations into Montreal land.

### *1. John Redpath and the Art of Subdivision*

In May 1840, the following advertisement appeared in the *Montreal Gazette*:

The subscriber having had several applications for Building land, has laid out the most eligible part of his property into Sixteen lots containing about one acre and one third each; they are situated between McTavish's House and his own Residence, extending from Sherbrooke Street to the base of the wood on the Mountain, nearly the whole are in Orchard...combining such advantages of soil and situation, commanding a most extensive prospect of the City, River and surrounding country... their proximity to the City rendering them equally desirable for permanent residences or summer Cottages. The approaches to them are by Sherbrooke Street, which is eighty four feet and by Mountain Street which is about sixty feet in width. A superior road through the centre of the Lots is now in progress, and will be completed in the course of the summer...[Apply to] Mr Ostell, Architect and Surveyor,<sup>2</sup> Notre Dame Street, opposite Recollets church...<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, May 1840.



In this manner, the subdivision of the GSM was begun.

The chief purpose of Redpath's advertisement was to seduce. The undercurrent of the discussion of orchard, soil, and view is the mountainside's rural past; this forms an attractive conceit, equating the future purchasers of lots with the gentlemen farmers of old - notably Simon McTavish, whose name and whose house are clear points of reference. One and a third acres also has more of a ring of landed property than to have given the dimensions of lots in feet, impressive though they were. Redpath raises the possibility that purchasers might only build "summer cottages", like the fur traders, rather than permanent residences. At the same time, the rural idiom is complemented by other features which in Redpath's words manage to sound practical, up-to-date, even convenient. The whole tone of this advertisement, and of later references to lots, is one of enterprise, of establishing the print of urban living on the mountainside. The care that was taken to supply lots with adequate roads and other services, marks the spread of the city and its values out into the country, and not merely the popularization of the art of gentleman farming. It is for this reason that Redpath so matter-of-factly refers to the "proximity of the city", hoping to dispel any notions of remote countryside. To emphasize the advantages of a site - in this case the mountain and the views and the general sense of space - and to downplay the disadvantages of distance is the task of the suburb promoter. In the 1840s, the transition from farmland to suburb was still a very tentative one; it had to be established in the mind before it could be marked on the ground.

When Redpath said that "several" people had already inquired about his land, this was almost certainly a device to impress prospective buyers; it removed any doubt that the lots

were desirable, and instilled a vague sense of urgency. There was, however, little response to the advertisement until Orlin Bostwick appears to have expressed interest. Redpath continued to advertise his subdivision scheme during the summer of 1840, but it was only in December that he had the land commuted; the sale of one lot (No.7) to Bostwick took place the following January.<sup>3</sup> Significantly, Redpath only commuted that part of his estate that he wished to subdivide: the area covered by the subdivision plan, and the strip of field below it. [Map 11.] This piece of land was evaluated at £4000, requiring a capital payment of £202 10s; upon completing this transaction, Redpath now held this land in freehold tenure. The rest of his estate - the land around Terrace Bank and the higher ground above - he did not yet deem worth commuting, as there were as yet no plans for its development.

Over the course of the winter Redpath appears to have rethought his subdivision strategy, partly because interest in suburban lots seemed low, and partly because of the enactment of the Registry Act. This legislation convinced Redpath to make arrangements with the children of his first marriage so that any future lots he might sell would be clearly unencumbered by claims from his descendants. His children renounced any such claims in return for gifts of land, to take effect once they had reached the age of majority. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, had turned twenty-one the previous September, and on 10 July 1841 she signed a *donation*, in which she surrendered her rights "due to the love and devotion she bears her father...trusting [him] to make by will or otherwise such provision for his family".<sup>4</sup> Such a provision came two

---

<sup>3</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #808, 22 December 1840; Bedouin #5630, 20 January 1941

<sup>4</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5713, 10 July 1841

days later in the form of a gift of one of the Drummond Street lots (No.4) on which she and her husband John Dougall were later to build a home.<sup>5</sup> Redpath and Bostwick agreed to cancel the deed signed in January and a new one was issued two days later.<sup>6</sup> A week later Redpath sold another lot to Bostwick, who soon put a house on it - this made him not only the first purchaser of a suburban lot in the GSM, but the first to build on one - and another to the merchant Henry Vernor.<sup>7</sup>

During this period Redpath was active on the Committee on Roads and Improvements devising the city plan, the completion of which was expected to stimulate interest in GSM real estate. In the mean time, Redpath prepared his own property. In the autumn of 1841 he acquired land from James Reid and Marguerite Fouquet, those portions of their estates that had been isolated from the rest by the line of Sherbrooke Street.<sup>8</sup> He commuted the Reid portion almost immediately in December 1841; Mme Fouquet had already commuted her land.<sup>9</sup> [Map 11.] These transactions brought Redpath an additional

---

<sup>5</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5716, 12 July 1841

<sup>6</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5711 & 5712, 10 July 1841.

<sup>7</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5719, 23 July 1841. Orlin Bostwick is listed in the 1842 census as living on Sherbrooke Street next to John Redpath; the census makes no mention of Drummond Street, which at that time had not been completed.

<sup>8</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5754, 3 November 1841 for the Reid sale. Redpath acquired the other 140-foot wide strip from Damase Masson, who had bought part of Margu rite Fouquet's farm. The deeds of C.W. Brault, who arranged the Masson sale on the 16 October 1841 (see ANQ-M, Pelton #1870, 13 July 1844) are in poor condition, and this particular one is unavailable; the cost of this part of the Fouquet estate is therefore unknown.

<sup>9</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1035, 30 December 1841; the Letourneau farm commutation was Lacombe #780, 26 October 1840

720 feet of prime land fronting on Sherbrooke Street, its depth varying from 250 feet on the western side to 400 on the east due to the angle of its northern boundary. This he intended to exploit only after the Drummond Street lots had been sold, and so did not think in terms of a subdivision plan yet. Instead, he commissioned Ostell to design a plan for the strip of field below Sherbrooke Street. This subdivision was ready in the spring of 1842, but Redpath decided to put the lots on Upper Drummond Street up for sale first, reckoning that a number of high-profile purchasers would make the remaining lots all the more desirable. In July a number of prominent parties came forward, and by the end of the summer most of the upper subdivision had been sold [Map 14.] along with two lots on the south side of Sherbrooke Street.<sup>10</sup> These sales alone brought Redpath over £1600 in downpayments, £1000 of which came in cash from David Torrance, who had acquired most of the lots on the west side of Drummond Street, giving him a piece of land over 900 feet long. The balance on these purchases would come to Redpath by instalments, with interest, over the subsequent two or three years - again, save for Torrance, to whom Redpath gave two years to pay the remaining £750. The promise of over £4000 from this subdivision represented nearly half the amount he had spent on the entire estate six years before. It was also the amount at which the land in question, plus the strip of field below Sherbrooke Street, had been assessed in December 1840; so far, subdivision had more than doubled the value of this land.

This success prompted Redpath to embark on the sale of the lower subdivision. For this he resorted to an auction, which would have the effect, it was hoped, of focusing public

---

<sup>10</sup> Deeds to these lots were all passed before Bedouin: ANQ-M, Bedouin #5884 & 5885, 20 July 1842; #5887 & 5888, 23 July 1842; #5889, 24 July 1842; #5926 & 5927, 24 September 1842

attention on the lots and driving their prices up. The auction was well publicized; this time Redpath's advertisement was simpler and more straightforward, leaving no doubt about the use of the lots or their most outstanding feature:

The Subscriber having laid out that part of his Property situated between Dorchester and Sherbrooke Streets, St Antoine Suburbs, into Building Lots, proposes to offer the same for Sale by Auction on Monday the 12th September inst... The delightful situation of these Lots renders them admirably adapted for private residences, besides being situated on spacious and airy streets, within about fifteen minutes' walk of the centre of the city. The Lots are from 145 to 150 feet front, and contain nearly 20,000 superficial feet each. Easy terms of payment will be given...<sup>11</sup>

This appeal to spaciousness and airiness would not have been lost on dwellers in the old town. The result was more than satisfactory: twenty eight lots were sold, for an average of about £210 per lot. Deeds were issued over the course of the next few days by Redpath's notary, Thomas Bedouin.<sup>12</sup> (See Table 2.) The main stipulation in the deeds was that purchasers were responsible for enclosing their lots with fences. Redpath appears to have had little of the concern for aesthetics that he showed in regards to the Upper Drummond Street lots - perhaps because the lower subdivision was further removed from his own home. The deeds are clear on the terms of payment, which the advertisement claimed were "easy". A purchase required a downpayment, typically one-sixth of the agreed total price, which was normally paid before the deed was signed. The balance was to be paid in five equal instalments, on 1 June of each year. Accordingly, the

---

<sup>11</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 2 September 1842

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5914 through 5925, 20-24 September 1842; also #5935, 21 October 1842 and #5953, 24 December 1842

September sale brought Redpath nearly £900 in downpayments, and the promise of approximately the same amount, plus 6% interest, every year for the next five years. The exception to this arrangement was the deed issued to John Ostell, who was given until December 1847 to pay half the £404 owed, and until December 1849 to pay the rest.<sup>13</sup>

Having completed this profitable transaction, Redpath withdrew from the business of subdivision for some months. He made one sale in August 1843, and then left other would-be purchasers hanging until the following spring.<sup>14</sup> By that time the owners of the Beaver Hall and Lamothe estates had met with some success at subdivision, albeit of land much closer to town and further down the hill. With the interest level high, Redpath put another ten lots up for sale in the spring of 1844, and sold them all, this time employing a younger notary, Thomas Pelton, to issue the deeds.<sup>15</sup> (See Table 3.) These later purchases were similar in nature to the earlier ones, except that the term for paying off the balance was doubled from five to ten years. This longer term with its smaller annual payments made the purchase a more attractive prospect; it also made Redpath a significant lender of money. He had no difficulty selling the remaining six lots over the course of 1845. [Map 15.]

In the summer of 1844, Redpath began the last leg of the subdivision of his estate. By that time sizeable construction had begun on the higher ground: the Torrances built a mansion well set back from Sherbrooke Street, while the Workmans, who by then had bought Smith's lots as well as the lot above from

---

<sup>13</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5953, 24 December 1842

<sup>14</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #6063, 24 August 1843

<sup>15</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1833, 25 April 1844. Pelton had been active for only a decade or so; the previous year he had married (ANQ-M, Gibb #6558, 1 May 1843).

Henry Vernor, had created a family estate that was almost as large as the Torrances' and which also contained a private mansion; the Mulhollands, too, built somewhat more modestly on the lower side of the street.<sup>16</sup> The scale of this construction made the task of selling nearby land all the easier. Out of his remaining land Redpath carved five spacious lots, fronting on Sherbrooke Street with their backs to Terrace Bank and its gardens. [Map 16.] Three of these lots were roughly 100 feet wide by 200 feet long, and the other two 155 feet wide by 240 feet long. There would also be two roads: one dividing the three smaller lots from the two larger ones, which would later become Ontario Avenue (now Du Musée), and the other, which would be called Redpath Street, running up alongside the boundary with the McKay farm. Yet another strip ran alongside the lane leading to Terrace Bank next to the easternmost lot.<sup>17</sup> The mere presence along Sherbrooke Street of these roads, suggests that Redpath intended eventually to sell more land further up the slope. As Terrace Bank lay over a thousand feet from Sherbrooke Street, a fair amount of land could be granted before the house and its gardens would be encroached upon. Appropriately, prior to selling the three smaller lots, Redpath commuted the remainder of his estate.<sup>18</sup> [Map 11.]

These three lots were sold in July 1844 for £333.6.8 each, and a month later a 40 foot wide strip was added to the rear of all three to give them the same depth as the two

---

<sup>16</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1782, 27 February 1844

<sup>17</sup> The deed to the adjoining lot (ANQ-M, Pelton #1871, 13 July 1844) states that "should Mountain Street be hereafter continued towards the mountain the said hereby sold lot of land shall be bounded on the north-east by such continuation."

<sup>18</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1602, 13 July 1844. The deeds to these three lots were issued the same day before Pelton #1869-71

western lots.<sup>19</sup> These, in turn, were sold later in July for a total of £1100.<sup>20</sup> Though not the original purchasers, William Brewster and Canfield Dorwin soon acquired them and proceeded gradually to buy more land from Redpath higher up the slope, so that by the early 1850s Brewster owned a lot measuring 175 by 640 feet and Dorwin's was not much smaller at 155 by 400 feet.<sup>21</sup> The three smaller lots remained intact into the 1880s; they could not be extended further back once Redpath, in January 1846, had sold a 320 foot long lot immediately behind them which ran the entire distance between Ontario Avenue and Redpath Lane.<sup>22</sup> For this and subsequent sales of lots which did not touch on Sherbrooke Street, the question of right of access had to be raised. Redpath had not conveyed any of the land to the city for these streets, and did not even make a commitment to turn the lane leading to Terrace Bank into a full street. It remained his land; purchasers had to pass over it in order to reach their lots. Deeds guaranteed right of access,

in common with others to whom a like permission may be granted, provided always that such intended street shall be at all times kept properly enclosed and fastned by a gate at Sherbrooke Street...at the joint expense of the said purchaser and those who may be so permitted to use the same, until such time as the said vendor...may think proper to open the same altogether.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1891-93, 7 August 1844

<sup>20</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1878 & 1879, 24 July 1844

<sup>21</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1943, 19 October 1844 and #2080, 30 April 1845 and #2157, 22 July 1845 and #2450, 18 July 1846. ANQ-M, Joseph Belle #12344, 16 August 1851

<sup>22</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #2294, 22 January 1846

<sup>23</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #2138, 2 July 1845



Redpath's reason for restricting access to these lots was personal: his own house and grounds lay just above. Indeed, this street would remain a private enclave even after it was "opened", and Redpath took pains to ensure this from the beginning. Deeds stipulated that purchasers could not build a "stable, shed or other outhouse whatsoever on the line of the said intended new street," which suggests that Redpath saw such a street as being the sort on which stables and outhouses would be inappropriate.

Redpath's remaining sales would be of land bordering on these streets, including a 550-foot long strip to Elizabeth Molson, and a lot measuring roughly 310' by 340' at the level of Terrace Bank to James Blackwood Greenshields.<sup>24</sup> In cases such as these, Redpath had to strike a balance between making a profit from sales of land - land, it was true, that was made more attractive by the nearby presence of Terrace Bank - and preserving enough of the house and its grounds for his family's enjoyment. Indeed, the Greenshields lot rubbed shoulders with Terrace Bank, nearly touching its gardens; no doubt it was assumed that the social class of these purchasers was enough to guarantee enough peace and quiet to suit the Redpath family. By the summer of 1853 Redpath had subdivided his estate as much as he could without endangering his house or its access to the mountain above via a private road that snaked up into the forest. The bulk of Redpath's subdivision activity, however, had been completed by the economic downturn of 1846 - a time when most other GSM landowners were still attempting to sell lots. Redpath had the perspicacity to market and sell his commodity when demand was high. As a result, he raised a staggering amount of capital. In little over a dozen years, sales on this one estate - on which Redpath and his family continued to live in grand style, with

---

<sup>24</sup> ANQ-M, Joseph Belle #13584 & #13585, 3 June 1853

little infringement on their space - generated nearly £25,000.<sup>25</sup> With this sum, Redpath proceeded to build his sugar refinery on the Lachine Canal, the contract for which was signed in December 1853.<sup>26</sup>

## 2. A Family Business: The Phillips and Lamothe Subdivisions

Thomas Phillips's subdivision would likely have been executed in a similar manner to Redpath's - allowing for the considerable differences in the nature of the designs and the location of the estates - had it not been for Phillips's steadily declining health, which by the latter part of 1841 made him realize that he would not live to see his scheme implemented. His actions from that time show a certain desperation to arrange his affairs and safeguard his estate. Phillips had two major concerns. One was that his subdivision scheme be free of complications associated with seigneurial tenure. In this regard he was prompt to commute his entire Beaver Hall estate for £205.13.5, in August 1841.<sup>27</sup> But the integrity of the estate could also be jeopardized by his widow's and children's claims to a share of the property. These were the same concerns that Redpath had addressed the previous July when he had arranged for the children of his first marriage to make a *donation* of their claims in return

---

<sup>25</sup> This is not reckoning on the vast mountaintop, which the Redpath family sold to the city in the 1870s to make Mount Royal Park, or the area just below the forest which they developed as Redpath Crescent prior to the First World War.

<sup>26</sup> Feltoe, *Redpath*, p.40

<sup>27</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #959 & 961, 24 August 1841

for gifts of land. Thomas Phillips and Martha Anderson had been married in Massachusetts; lacking a written contract, their marriage fell under the regime of community of property, under which a widow would be guaranteed certain rights.<sup>28</sup> This problem was partly one of perception, and of avoiding misunderstanding regarding the estate, since there is every indication that the Phillips family wished the Beaver Hall subdivision to proceed without complication. Indeed, Phillips's other major concern was that his family be provided for, if possible by deriving the maximum profit from subdivision.

In February 1842 Phillips drew up his last will and testament, which set forth his intentions for the Beaver Hall estate with some detail as to its subdivision. The will also expressed his wish that Martha Anderson should accept various "legacies, provisions, bequests, benefits, and advantages...in lieu and satisfaction of all and every right, interest, claim or demand which she might make upon the estate."<sup>29</sup> Along with his business associates John Redpath, Benjamin Hall, and John Boston, Phillips named his wife and his eldest son Alfred as executors of his estate, by which means they could be assured a degree of control over the subdivision process. Phillips also made a curious stipulation regarding the terms of payment for Beaver Hall lots: after making their downpayment, purchasers would not pay the balance until one year following the thirtieth birthday of Thomas and Martha's youngest child, Elizabeth, who was then ten years old; in the interval, buyers would pay to the estate the sum of 6%

---

<sup>28</sup> See Alan M Stewart and Bettina Bradbury, "Marriage Contracts as a Source for Historians", in Fyson et al, *Class, Gender and the Law*, p.41

<sup>29</sup> The will itself is unavailable, though its contents are described in the Renunciation of Dower: ANQ-M, Ross #494, 11 July 1842.

interest on the purchase price annually.<sup>30</sup> This arrangement meant that a sizeable capital sum could be accumulated in interest from the subdivision sales, and held in trust for the Phillips children by the executors.

Work had begun on laying out new streets when Thomas Phillips died on 10 June 1842. Subdivision plans were postponed while the provisions of the will were put into effect. Redpath and the other associates, along with Alfred Phillips and Martha Anderson, assumed their duties as executors, a task that lasted over two decades. The courts also granted Martha Anderson guardianship ("tutrix") of her four minor children, which meant that she could speak for them on matters regarding the estate.<sup>31</sup> This power was crucial to the orderly execution of the subdivision scheme; Redpath was given the title of "sub-tutor". An inventory of Phillips' property and debts was drawn up by notary William Ross, and Martha Anderson signed a formal Renunciation and Release, whereby she declared that she was "desiring of conforming herself in all things to [Thomas'] last will and testament".<sup>32</sup> By renouncing all claims to the property in return for certain provisions in her husband's will, she could keep the subdivision intact and ensure that her children would eventually receive the capital realized from its sale. As one of the executors Martha Anderson would also retain a degree of control over the estate, her name heading the list of vendors of all Beaver Hall lots.

The subdivision of the Beaver Hall estate might have been undertaken by the autumn of 1842, but Redpath was busily arranging his own schemes during this period. In November the

---

<sup>30</sup> See for example ANQ-M, Ross #808, 30 December 1843

<sup>31</sup> See reference, ANQ-M, Ross #487, 29 June 1842

<sup>32</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #487, 29 June 1842 and #494, 11 July 1842

executors made the necessary arrangements with the City and neighbouring landowners over opening streets: work on Beaver Hall Hill and St Catherine Street resumed, although a plan to extend Union Avenue south of Phillips Square to the level of Dorchester Street along the boundary with the Royal Institution's land came to nought.<sup>33</sup> The 1843 agreement with the Lamothe family over the opening of Belmont Street helped give shape to the lower part of the subdivision, as did Redpath's intention to build a row of houses along the western side of Beaver Hall Hill, for which purpose he bought all the lots between Belmont Street and the square above in October 1843. This transaction brought the estate £1400, all but £100 of which Redpath paid as cash.<sup>34</sup> When the final plan for the Beaver Hall subdivision was prepared late in 1843, it did not contain lots No.5, Nos.7 and 9, or Nos. 11 through 19; it did, however, contain lot No.36, which was to have been replaced by part of Union Avenue. [Map 18. and 19.] For the time being Martha Anderson and her younger children intended to stay in Beaver Hall, and the corresponding lots on the east side of the new street were therefore not put up for sale.<sup>35</sup>

The Beaver Hall subdivision had been advertised as of the previous August:

---

<sup>33</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/361: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 8 November 1842

<sup>34</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #774, 28 October 1843. On the deed of sale, Redpath's name among the sellers (as one of the executors) is crossed out.

<sup>35</sup> Two years later, however, a purchaser came forward and bought lot No.12, including the house, for £1500; nevertheless, Martha Anderson continued to live in Beaver Hall for some years, perhaps as a tenant. ANQ-M, Gibb #8168, 23 July 1845

The lots on the Beaver Hall property situated on each side of the splendid new streets of sixty and seventy feet wide, which have been opened up through the estate...are now offered for sale. Parties desirous of securing eligible sites for building in the immediate proximity of the centre of the City, within five minutes's walk of the Post Office, Banks, etc, are now presented with the means of doing so in decidedly one of the best, most healthy, and delightful situations in or about the city of Montreal. One or two squares of 120, 180 or 240 feet by 200 feet, well adapted for public institutions, may be obtained on advantageous terms, if immediate application is made for them.<sup>36</sup>

According to the advertisement, the site's advantages were chiefly those of design and location. There is no question of summer residences here: purchasers were expected to be professionals or other people in business who would appreciate the convenience of a five minute walk to their place of work or other services. As in Redpath's case, the Phillips advertisement stresses the healthful nature of these lots, especially the purity of air, which would have impressed a city that had recently endured cholera and would soon suffer from typhoid. In their advertisement, the executors appear to have envisaged the possibility of schools or churches on Phillips Square. In this, they were prophetic, for fourteen years later the cornerstone of Christ Church cathedral would be laid on the north-west corner of this square.

The first auction of Beaver Hall lots was held in November 1843 with some success: purchasers signed deeds to eleven lots over the next few weeks. Other auctions were held in the spring and summer of 1844, after which the deeds to twenty lots were issued by notary William Ross. (See Table 4.) These deeds were more limiting than those Redpath issued,

---

<sup>36</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 27 October 1843. The ad was first placed on 1 August.

largely because of the vision Phillips had of Georgian terraces. Purchasers were forbidden to build in wood, on pain of the forcible demolition of any such houses; the exception to this rule, duly noted in the margin of the first deed, was outhouses.<sup>37</sup> This prohibition was intended to guard against the construction of cheap housing at the expense of Georgian brick and stone. It was also a matter of fire prevention, though there was a certain irony in this, as Beaver Hall itself was build of wood - and would burn down at the end of the decade. The Phillips executors continued to sell lots as of November 1844, but with Ross working full time for the city, they employed the rising anglophone notary, Isaac Jones Gibb, who issued deeds with some frequency over the next year. (See Table 5.) The sale of lot 85 in May 1845 represents the first venturing into the far side of the estate bordering the lands of the Royal Institution; by that time University Street had been laid out - as had the southern extension of Union Avenue, for which the Phillips executors did, in the end, sacrifice the yet unsold lot No.35.<sup>38</sup> The slowness of these arrangements meant that the majority of Beaver Hall lots were unsold by the economic downturn in the later 1840s; with the revival of the real estate market in the early 1850s, however, the number of sales increased, and with the purchase of an entire block by the Anglican bishopric the remaining lots were purchased quickly.<sup>39</sup>

The terms of payment set out by Phillips' will did not prove a deterrent to either purchasers or builders. For the Phillips children, however, especially the older ones, it meant a long wait. In the later 1840s three of the Phillips

---

<sup>37</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #774, 28 October 1843

<sup>38</sup> See ANQ-M, Gibb #11483, 23 December 1848

<sup>39</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #17334, 17 April 1857 and #17349, 23 April 1857

daughters were obliged to take loans from the estate of £400 each, which they would have to pay back at 6% interest when they came into their inheritance.<sup>40</sup> By that time, however, on the occasion of Elizabeth Phillips' thirty-first birthday in October 1862, there was every cause to celebrate: their father's subdivision scheme had become a considerable legacy.<sup>41</sup>

The arrangements made for the Phillips family may be compared to the experience of their neighbours the Lamothes, who undertook the subdivision of their estate as a family. Their parents, Joseph-Maurice Lamothe and Marie Josephte Laframboise, were long dead by the time they considered subdivision, and the estate had been settled. The five surviving children - the notary Pierre, the advocates Jules and Arthur, and two minors Guillaume and Hermine - had inherited the immoveable property, their mother having received other parts of the estate; their uncle Alexis Laframboise acted as guardian to the minor children.<sup>42</sup> All six names appear on the act of commutation in April 1843, and on the deeds of sale issued by their notary Thomas Bedouin the following September.<sup>43</sup> The Lamothes put all 29 lots up for sale at the auction, and each was sold. This success was partly due to the location of these lots near the town and next to Beaver Hall Hill, but it was also due to the terms of sale: payment would consist of a small downpayment and the

---

<sup>40</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1123, 23 May 1845; Gibb #11969, 15 August 1849

<sup>41</sup> The purchase price of all lots acquired between 1843 and 1846 was over £18,000; this figure would have been significantly inflated by 1862 after nearly two decades receiving 6% annual interest payments.

<sup>42</sup> See reference, ANQ-M, Bedouin #6075, 15 September 1843

<sup>43</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1352, 18 April 1843; Bedouin #6075-6084, 15 September 1843



balance conveyed in easy yearly instalments of £20 or £25, spread over 30 years or more. These devices proved effective, and brought the Lamothes a small fortune. The remainder of the estate was sold piecemeal, beginning in 1845 with the land to the west of the old farmhouse which was acquired by the High School of Montreal.<sup>44</sup> Members of the Lamothe family continued to live in the house until 1846, when it was rented out.<sup>45</sup> The profits from these transactions were divided up according to the provisions in their parents' will, as the Phillips estate would be in 1862. Although not as lucrative as the Redpath estate, these two subdivisions provided the Phillips and Lamothe families with sufficient sums to enhance their social standing.

### *3. Subdivision by corporation: the "McGill College Properties"*

This was the only case in the GSM where subdivision was the work of a corporation, not an individual or family. The Royal Institution was singularly unsuited to the business of subdivision, given both the character of the Board and its members, and the limitations on the use of property placed on it by law. The Royal Institution's leaders were unwilling landlords and even less willing land developers; they believed their role was to provide education. Nevertheless, they were

---

<sup>44</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.187: Deed of sale, 7 June 1845. See also ANQ-M, Gibb #12582, 30 October 1850; Denis-Emery Papineau #3224, 30 November 1853; and Hunter #3524, 6 May 1858.

<sup>45</sup> ANQ-M, Denis-Emery Papineau #1787, 31 October 1846 and #1801, 12 November 1846. The leases were renewed until 1857 when Guillaume Lamothe returned to live there, according to the Lovell's *Directory*. The house was sold the following year.

mandated to receive and possess land; furthermore, with the increasing involvement of the colonial government in public education, and with the principal and governors of McGill College making academic decisions, their work was eventually restricted to managing James McGill's estate and a few other properties, including the strip of land adjacent to Burnside which had belonged to François Desrivières. Until 1845 the Board was divided on the matter of subdivision; the president, George Jehosephat Mountain, was generally against it. It was only after the appointment of a new, more business-oriented Board in 1845 that subdivision was undertaken wholeheartedly. Even so, it met with little success, thanks to the decision to lease lots, rather than sell them. At the root of the problem was the issue of land tenure. Under the terms of the various legislative acts that governed the Royal Institution, its properties became a sort of no-man's land between seigneurial and freehold tenure; although lots were disposed of in perpetuity and in freehold tenure, payment was in the form of perpetual rents. It was only during the 1850s, with the passing of legislation regarding seigneurialism and tenure, that this inconsistency was resolved.

The first attempt to subdivide Royal Institution land came in the spring of 1842 following a suggestion by the McGill principal, John Bethune, as to a means of ensuring long-term maintenance of the college.<sup>46</sup> Until that time there had been no question of relinquishing any part of Burnside, which would have violated the spirit of James McGill's bequest. A subdivision plan for the Desrivières strip did exist, but had so far not been acted upon. (See Chapter II). Bethune proposed that the portion of Burnside below Sherbrooke Street be leased for 99 years; this was a

---

<sup>46</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56/356: Bethune to the Royal Institution, 31 December 1841

form of land conveyance still common in Britain, whereby the lessee would be in charge of subdivision but the landlord would receive the property back, along with any improvements to it, at the end of the period.<sup>47</sup> After some soul-searching, the Board agreed to this scheme, and ordered their lawyer Frederick Griffin to arrange for the transfer of Burnside to the college governors, who would become the official landlords.<sup>48</sup> The intention was for the governors to hold an auction, and grant a lease to the highest bidder, to begin on 1 May 1842. The condition was that the land be subdivided according to a prescribed plan and that the leaseholder arrange for all the necessary streets to be opened. Rent would be increased by 20% after 33 years and then by another 20% after another 33 years to ensure that the college's income reflect rising rental values in the area.<sup>49</sup>

Bethune scheduled the auction for 28 April 1842:

Lease of valuable Real Estate... All that portion of Burnside Farm appertaining to the Corporation of McGill College, which lies on the South East side of Sherbrooke Street and containing about Twenty five Arpents in superfacie on which is erected a substantial stone House, Covered with Tin, a Barn, stables, Ice House, Root House, etc. A plan of the Property may be seen at the Office of the subscriber, who will give applicants information respecting the terms and conditions of the lease...<sup>50</sup>

The conditions included the prohibition of any sort of

---

<sup>47</sup> See Olsen, *Town Planning in London*

<sup>48</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.1: Royal Institution Minute Books, 5 April 1842

<sup>49</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11085: Bethune to the Royal Institution, 15 April 1842

<sup>50</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 19 April 1842

quarrying or manufacturing, with a special emphasis on "noxious" substances

such as Distillery, Brewery, Tannery, soap or Tallow Chandlery, Butchery, Manufactory of Neats foot oil, of Glue, of nitric Acid, vitriolic Acid, or any other Chemical preparation, or any other Trade or manufacture which can or may be considered a nuisance in a respectable neighbourhood.<sup>51</sup>

Such activities would have severely deterred future purchasers, as well as spoiling the approach to the new college building. The tone of these conditions reflected the expectation that the land would no longer be used as a farm, but developed as suburban housing. All parties would have been surprised to learn that Burnside farm would still be functioning fifteen years later.

Reading over James McGill's will just prior to the auction, Griffin discovered that the transfer of Burnside to the governors would not be possible. Under the terms of the will, the Royal Institution was entitled to found and build other colleges on the Burnside estate; "McGill College", therefore, had no right to possess all of James McGill's land.<sup>52</sup> Bethune was informed of this fact, but held the auction anyway, believing that the Board would not refuse the transfer once a willing lessee had appeared. On 28 April a speculator, Joshua Pelton, was awarded the leasehold of the entire lower portion of Burnside at an annual rent of £255.<sup>53</sup> Although they could not acknowledge his bid, the Royal Institution felt Pelton deserved some recognition, and

---

<sup>51</sup> The Conditions may be found in MUA, RG.4 - c437/11085

<sup>52</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11083: "Facts of Mr Pelton's Case", 15 October 1845

<sup>53</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/357: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 29 April 1842

wondered if they might grant him a lease directly. Griffin, however, convinced them not to consider any claim Pelton might make.<sup>54</sup> He also advised them against the idea of leasing Burnside at all:

[Burnside] is situated very near the commercial part of the city, and in a direction towards which commercial men are shewing a strong inclination to resort, as affording pleasant sites for dwelling houses at a reasonable walking distance from their stores, that the completion of Sherbrooke Street, and the contemplated immediate opening through the property of...St Catherine [Street] will greatly facilitate the access to it...<sup>55</sup>

Until this time, the Board, which met in Quebec, do not seem to have been aware of the potential value of their Montreal property.

They had, however, agreed to the subdivision of the Desrivières strip, which Griffin had been actively promoting. During April and May 1842 he made arrangements with Thomas Phillips over the opening of streets along common boundary lines.<sup>56</sup> He also secured favourable terms for commutation from the Sulpicians, who granted the Royal Institution special status.<sup>57</sup> The Desrivières strip was commuted on 8 June 1842, just two days before Phillips' death.<sup>58</sup> The settlement of

<sup>54</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.1: Royal Institution Minute Books, 20 July 1842

<sup>55</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11085: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 14 June 1842

<sup>56</sup> See reference, MUA, RG.4 - c.56/349: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 10 June 1842

<sup>57</sup> These terms had, in fact, been arranged two years before when the Board had first considered subdividing the Desrivières strip. MUA, RG.4 - c.56/350: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 12 August 1840

<sup>58</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1131, 8 June 1842

the Beaver Hall estate postponed any subdivision activity on the Royal Institution's part until November. By that time the Board had begun to consider the wisdom of making a formal subdivision of Burnside as well, although the Royal Institution's 1801 charter (41 George III cap. 17) prohibited the actual sale of land. It was decided to move the legislature to amend the charter, and to ask Ostell to prepare a new subdivision plan that would incorporate both estates.<sup>59</sup>

This legislation was not amended until March 1845, following a long government inquiry into the nature of McGill. It was decided to transform the Royal Institution into a Montreal body, and to replace the clerical element on the Board with lay members of the Montreal anglophone elite. The driving force behind the new Board was James Ferrier, who at that time was Mayor of Montreal, and whose home lay within the GSM area, on Alexander Street just above Beaver Hall. Ferrier headed a committee to arrange and supervise the subdivision of all Royal Institution lands south of Sherbrooke Street. According to the new legislation, the Royal Institution were allowed to

lease such portions of the said property, from time to time, and for such limited periods as they may think fit, or to dispose thereof in perpetuity for an annual irredeemable ground rent (*rente foncière*), or otherwise to alienate such parts and portions of the said lands...<sup>60</sup>

In presenting their report to the Board in August 1845, Ferrier and his committee argued against the idea of *rente foncière*:

---

<sup>59</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.57/359: Royal Institution correspondence, 11 October 1842

<sup>60</sup> *Provincial Statutes and Ordinances*: 8 Victoria cap. 78, 29 March 1845

However desirable to corporate bodies may be the provision for perpetual income, increasing at stated intervals...a strong prejudice exists in the mind of the public against titles of a seigniorial character for property of Value in cities, and that neither the present nor permanent interests of the college would be advanced by selling the ground...on such conditions.<sup>61</sup>

Lots, they argued, would fetch so little that it would not matter how long the leases were for, or by how much the rent was increased. Better, they said, to sell freehold, but to grant very generous terms for payment, such as a period of thirty or forty years, so that the college would have a sense of regular income for some time. But even within the new Board there was uncertainty at the wisdom of this advice. Other members feared that "difficulties may arise in the satisfactory investment of the proceedings of the sale", apparently fearing that the Board would be responsible for an investment business.<sup>62</sup> Cautious heads prevailed: it was decided to offer 18 lots on the basis of *rente foncière* to test the waters. A leasehold on each lot would be taken for 100 years; the rent would increase by 25% every 20 years. If this should prove unattractive to purchasers, or if the lots should start to sell for less than an agreed minimum amount, then "the Committee must immediately put a stop to the auction and report the failure of their *experiment* in order that no time be lost in adopting other measures for the disposal of these lots".<sup>63</sup>

The lots in question were the same that the old Board had

---

<sup>61</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11070: Ferrier et al, Committee Report, 7 August 1845

<sup>62</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 7 August 1845

<sup>63</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 7 August 1845

originally considered offering: those at the base of the Desrivieres strip, on or near Dorchester Street. By that time a number of houses had appeared on the Lamothe and Beaver Hall subdivisions, and the Royal Institution could expect to benefit from the same sorts of eager builders. Hearing of the Board's plans, the McGill Medical Faculty requested that it be given some of the lots for a new building, feeling that the two branches of the college should be close to each other. The Board's response shows their concern for the values of the emerging suburb at the expense of accommodating the college. To grant this request, they told the Medical Faculty, would result "in the diminution of the price of the other lots...caused by the dislike which is generally felt to a residence in the vicinity of a dissecting room".<sup>64</sup> Aiming their lots at the market for middle-class residences, the Board were unsure they wanted medicine to be taught in the GSM, any more than they wanted industry there.

The subdivision scheme was soon underway. The Board hired Nicholas William Crawford and lawyer John Rose to arrange the deeds, and Norman Bethune (no relation to the principal) to handle the auction; a printer was also hired to provide lithographs of Ostell's plan. [Map 23.] The auction, held on 22 September, was successful, and the Board decided to hold a second auction of 34 lots on 27 October.<sup>65</sup> These lots were to be those bounded by Sherbrooke, University, St Catherine, and Victoria streets; in other words, most of the rest of the original Desrivieres strip, and a strip of land off the eastern side of Burnside. This was the first attempt since April 1842 to put any part of Burnside up for public

---

<sup>64</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 7 August 1845

<sup>65</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 24 September 1845



auction. Accordingly, the lower part of James McGill's estate was commuted on 27 September 1845.<sup>66</sup> No sooner had the second auction been announced, but Joshua Pelton served the Royal Institution with a protest, claiming that he had been awarded the leasehold of the Burnside farm in April 1842, and was the only one legally entitled to subdivide it.<sup>67</sup> The Royal Institution retorted in vain that they had never acknowledged the outcome of the 1842 auction, but it was not until May 1847 that Griffin and Ferrier and the threat of legal proceedings convinced Pelton to withdraw his claim to Burnside; by that time it was clearly too late to recommence subdivision.<sup>68</sup> The Board concluded that "the great depression under which commerce now labors in consequence of the unexpected decline in the value of the Staples of the Country" had also destroyed the zeal for buying lots.<sup>69</sup>

Until the economy improved, Burnside was leased to three individuals. Part of the house and a piece of garden was rented to the chemist John Birks for £40 a year; the rest of the house - four rooms in the basement - and most of the garden was rented to the market gardener William Riley for £45, while the pasture was let to the "grazier" John

---

<sup>66</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1882, 27 November 1845. Again, the Royal Institution received favourable terms from the Sulpicians: £262.10. This sum was raised by selling some shares which the Royal Institution had recently invested in the Bank of Montreal. MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 13 March 1846

<sup>67</sup> ANQ-M, Easton #1141, 1148, and 1153, all 26 September 1845

<sup>68</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 4 May 1847

<sup>69</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 7 September 1847

Cunningham for £17.10.<sup>70</sup> [Map 49.] The continuation of Burnside's agricultural vocation was not inconsistent with future subdivision: a clause in Cunningham's lease provided for compensation in the form of a 5 shilling reduction in his rent for every lot sold.

During this period the Board encountered difficulties with the conveyances from the September 1845 auction: some purchasers refused to pay their *rentes foncières* or even to sign their deeds.<sup>71</sup> The problem stemmed from uncertainty over what rights purchasers had to their lots; to many, charging *rente foncière* on a commuted property was incompatible. In order to straighten out this confusion, the Royal Institution needed to be given the legal means to annul deeds signed in 1845. The arrival of lawyer Charles Dewey Day as president of the Board in 1852 led the Royal Institution to undertake a fresh start in their subdivision plans. In November of that year, the legislature was amended so that they could

cancel and annul any deed or deeds heretofore by them granted for the disposal of any portion of the said lands...upon such terms as by them and the other parties to such deed or deeds may be mutually agreed upon.<sup>72</sup>

Negotiations could now begin between the Board and the current holders of Royal Institution lots to have the deeds annulled;

---

<sup>70</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #13711, March 23 1852 (Birks); Gibb #13695, 16 March 1852 (Riley); Gibb #13712, 23 March 1852 (Cunningham)

<sup>71</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 13 April 1846 and 25 June 1846

<sup>72</sup> *Provincial Statutes and Ordinances*: 16 Victoria cap.58, 10 November 1852

by April 1853, deeds of "retro-cession" were being signed.<sup>73</sup> Soon after, the Board moved to sell the re-possessed lots. This time it was clear that Royal Institution land was held under freehold tenure; however, the Board would still collect payments for lots in the form of ground rent. To ensure the college a steady income, the legislature had forced the Royal Institution to

alienate and dispose in perpetuity [lands] held in trust for McGill College...for an annual irredeemable ground rent (*rente foncière non-rachetable*), and not otherwise, subject to such terms and conditions and with such formalities only of procedure as they may deem most advantageous for the said college...<sup>74</sup>

This form of payment proved to be not in the least advantageous. Only 28 lots were sold at the auction held in April 1853, and the Board were still faced with the task of collecting rents and dealing with recalcitrant purchasers.<sup>75</sup> Faced with these ongoing difficulties, the Board decided to hold no further auctions and consider only those purchasers that made a formal application for specific lots.<sup>76</sup>

The fortunes of the Royal Institution would only turn once they began to treat their landed property the way Redpath had done: as a commodity. In May 1857 a further amendment to their charter observed that land held *franc aleu roturier* (freehold tenure) could not

---

<sup>73</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb, #14610-15, 7 April 1853

<sup>74</sup> *Provincial Statutes and Ordinances*: 16 Victoria cap.58, 10 November 1852

<sup>75</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 9 January 1854

<sup>76</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 4 July 1854

be charged with any such irredeemable rent...[the Board] were not authorized to dispose in perpetuity of their land otherwise than by a form of Contract which the law regards with disfavour, and in effect prohibits.<sup>77</sup>

The new law permitted the Royal Institution to sell "outright", and previous purchasers could "commute" their *rentes foncières*. From this time on sizeable lump sums came steadily into the Board's hands, from past sales, but especially from new purchasers. Burnside tenants Riley, Birks, and Cunningham had been granted renewed three-year leases in 1855, but a year later they had to be compensated when the Board granted land for the opening of McGill College Avenue and the other streets across the farm.<sup>78</sup> By the end of the 1850s, the Board reversed their earlier reluctance to be a lending institution and declared they were willing to grant house-building loans to prospective purchasers.<sup>79</sup> Throughout the 1860s terraces were built across Burnside, and by 1865 virtually all the lots on Ostell's original plan had been sold. In that year, the Board commenced the subdivision of the strip of land along Upper University Street next to the campus, sales of which quickly brought them nearly \$50,000. [Map 27]

By this time the Royal Institution had merged entirely with McGill College; since 1852 the members of the college Board of Governors were all *de facto* members of the Royal Institution's Board, meeting in that capacity to decide

---

<sup>77</sup> *Provincial Statutes and Ordinances*: 20 Victoria, cap.53, 27 May 1857

<sup>78</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 17 August, 16 September, and 5 October 1854. MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 29 July 1856. MUA, RG.4 - c.188/11113: Riley to the City, 15 January 1857

<sup>79</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter, 28 July 1860

matters regarding property and finance. In practice, McGill College became the owner of all Royal Institution lands, which by then were generally referred to as the "McGill College Properties". With the improvements to the campus over the course of the later 1850s and 60s, the college began to acquire a more sophisticated appearance, which contributed to the successful sale of adjacent lots. The chief factor in this success, however, was the abandonment of *rente foncière* as a form of payment, which had slowed down sales and prevented the Royal Institution from making profits on the scale of landowners such as Redpath. From the late 1850s McGill made the transition from an institution dependent on land rents to one based on capitalist incomes. At the same time, it became a vital institution within Montreal's anglophone community, and a pillar of the GSM. In the process, however, Burnside farm was forgotten; the house was eventually sold to William Riley, whose family occupied it until it was destroyed by fire in 1872.<sup>80</sup> The estate that had been so dear to James McGill's heart was buried by broad streets and terraced houses, while he himself was placed in a monument at the centre of a landscaped campus a thousand feet further up the mountainside.

#### 4. Shareholders and Subdivision: the McTavish Estate

The success of many GSM landowners at subdivision by the end of 1843 drew the attention of other ambitious people to the potential benefits of mountain real estate. One such was Hugh Taylor, a Montreal lawyer who acted as attorney to John

---

<sup>80</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #2939, 25 November 1857.

McTavish, the absent owner of the McTavish estate. Taylor intended to purchase the estate himself, but appears to have felt that his role as attorney constituted a conflict of interest; he opted instead to find other wealthy investors who would admit him as a kind of silent partner.<sup>81</sup> Two fellow lawyers, James Smith and Duncan Fisher, partners in the same firm, were willing to advance two thirds of the cost if Taylor supplied the other third, and were also willing to put their names on a deed of sale and later award Taylor his one third interest at a nominal fee. Duncan Fisher, QC, came from a distinguished family of merchants and landowners, with connections through marriage to many important people in Lower Canada: his brothers-in-law included John Torrance, William Hutchison, William Lunn, and John Gordon Mackenzie. James Smith, a younger man at 37, had risen much higher in circles of power, as a judge, an MLA, a member of the Executive Council, and as of January 1844 Attorney General for Canada-East. Early in December 1843, Taylor arranged the commutation of the McTavish estate, the cost of which was to be shared by the three parties.<sup>82</sup> A fortnight later the deed of sale to the McTavish estate was signed by Smith and Fisher, at a cost of £15,500.<sup>83</sup> Each of the three parties put £1000 as a

---

<sup>81</sup> ANQ-M, Henry Griffin #21117, 26 August 1845: "previous to the purchase...it was fully and clearly understood...that the said purchase of the said land...should be upon their joint account each to hold have and enjoy the one equal entire undivided third part thereof and each to be held to pay and discharge the one equal third part of the purchase money...but [they] did further agree that the deed of sale...should be taken in the individual names only of the said James Smith and Duncan Fisher...until otherwise determined upon."

<sup>82</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #1481, 9 December 1843

<sup>83</sup> ANQ-M, Henry Griffin #20299, 21 December 1843. For details about the unorthodox nature of this transaction see Griffin #21117, 26 August 1845 and Gibb #9484, 4 February 1847.

downpayment; the remaining £12,500 was to be paid in six annual instalments, plus 6% interest, beginning in January 1845.

By the spring of 1845 a subdivision plan was ready and an advertisement published:

These LOTS, situated on the most elevated and salubrious part of the City of Montreal, offer to Capitalists, rare opportunities of advantageous, and, surely profitable investment; and to those seeking a permanent residence, an agreeable and healthful place of abode. Having directly *behind* them - the Mountain of Montreal, and forming the very *back*, of the gentle declivity towards the Town, they must ever command delightful views, and the purest air.<sup>84</sup>

Like other GSM developers, Fisher and Smith aimed at middle class purchasers. They used the term "capitalists", the only occasion in the 1840s when it appeared in a GSM advertisement; five years earlier Redpath had evoked the idea of summer residences to entice purchasers, but now appeals were made directly on the grounds of investment. Even so, the emphasis on the healthy air and the views of mountain and city recalls Redpath's selling points. Restrictions in the first deeds of sale to McTavish lots were similar to those in other subdivisions: no breweries, distilleries, or manufacturing was permitted, nor could houses be constructed of wood.<sup>85</sup> With the plan in hand, the sale advertised, the arrangements with the city made over opening streets, Smith and Fisher proceeded to convey the rights to one third of the McTavish estate to Hugh Taylor, for the token sum of 10s.<sup>86</sup> These

---

<sup>84</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, April 1845

<sup>85</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8413, 27 November 1845.

<sup>86</sup> ANQ-M, Henry Griffin #21117, 26 August 1845. For the arrangements with the City, see ANQ-M, Ross #1186, 23 August 1845

rights did not, however, mean that Taylor was recognized as a seller of land, merely as someone with a one-third interest in the estate; in deeds of sale, only Smith and Fisher's names are indicated as the vendors.

From the start, the subdivision of the McTavish estate was fraught with problems. Purchasers may have been put off by Taylor's somewhat unorthodox involvement in the proceedings; others may have been perturbed by Duncan Fisher's mounting financial problems. By the autumn of 1845 Fisher had still not paid his one-third share of the instalment on the McTavish estate nor his share of the commutation fee, and another instalment of £833 6s 8d would be due in January 1846, plus £250 interest. Two deeds issued in November 1845 to four McTavish lots along St Catherine Street would be the only ones during the entire winter. Both mention that payments were to be made directly to John McTavish, the estate's previous owner - or rather to his agent in Montreal, Hugh Taylor.<sup>87</sup> Although it was not unusual for purchasers to make payments to the previous owners, bypassing the current ones, here it was a sign of trouble.<sup>88</sup> The final blow came with Fisher's death on 7 December 1845: Smith, as "fiduciary legatee and trustee", was left to pay the bills. Fisher also left a widow, Agnes Munn, and an infant son, Frederick Embury Fisher, who confronted an estate ridden with debts. Notary Isaac Jones Gibb was hired to draw up an inventory of the estate, which evaluated the house and its contents at only £222 10s, an amount which would hardly have made a dent in what was owed.<sup>89</sup>

After making a list of the contents of the house, Gibb

---

<sup>87</sup> See ANQ-M, Gibb #8413, 27 November 1845

<sup>88</sup> Nearly all of Redpath's payments on his estate, which he had bought from the heirs of François Desrivières, were made directly to the Royal Institution, to whom the Desrivières were indebted. See MUA, RG.4 - c.56/349: Griffin to the Royal Institution, 11 June 1840

<sup>89</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8626 (no.2), 25 March 1846.



did not complete the inventory. This omission was due to the intervention by two of Fisher's principal debtors, his brothers-in-law John Torrance and William Lunn, who between them were owed over £4000. To offset these debts, they took over Fisher's one third share of the McTavish land; they also promised to acknowledge Frederick Embury Fisher's rights to that share in some form when he reached the age of majority. This arrangement was ratified by a Declaration in February 1847, whereby Torrance and Lunn paid the £3381 10s now owed John McTavish, Fisher's widow renounced all claims to the McTavish estate, and Hugh Taylor was confirmed as the owner of the remaining third part of the property.<sup>90</sup> Torrance and Lunn also insisted on a formal division of the McTavish estate north of Sherbrooke Street into three equal portions, so that each could be developed independent of the others. This resulted in an *acte de partage* in November 1847, accompanied by a plan showing the three long strips of land, each containing a section of mountain and orchard; the farmhouse, the McTavish monument, and the McTavish castle were all factored into the agreement.<sup>91</sup> [Map 26.]

A year after the *partage* William Lunn sold his "undivided sixth" of the McTavish estate for £3400 to a relative by marriage, James Hutchison.<sup>92</sup> As soon as the real estate market improved in 1853, Hutchison and Torrance set to work on a subdivision of their portion. [Map 27.] These lots were swiftly acquired by the likes of the Lyman, Savage, and

---

<sup>90</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #9484, 4 February 1847

<sup>91</sup> ANQ-M, Easton #2691, 1 November 1847. The surveyors applied their own value to each section of the estate. Land closer to Sherbrooke Street, which lent itself more readily to subdivision, was considered more expensive than higher, more densely treed land. The marketability of the houses, rather than their size or location, determined their appraisal: the farmhouse, even before the improvements Smith made to it, was valued at £450, whereas McTavish's famous mansion, in far worse shape, was listed at only £200.

<sup>92</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11455, 14 December 1848.

Workman families; Hugh Allan also purchased all the land above the subdivision, including a major section of the mountain itself.<sup>93</sup> John Torrance did not forget his promise to acknowledge the rights of Frederick Embury Fisher: in November 1854 he and Hutchison granted Frederick, who was still only ten years old, the sum of £1000, to be held by his mother in trust until he reached the age of majority; on security of this sum they mortgaged lots 6 and 7 of their subdivision.<sup>94</sup> Hugh Taylor also made a profit, selling most of his one-third share in 1852 to the City as a potential reservoir site.<sup>95</sup> James Smith was content to use his strip as a private estate, having converted the old McTavish farmhouse into a residence, "Chesnut Hall". He lived there with his family until September 1860 when the land was subdivided; the house was sold and the Smiths moved into 2 Montmorency Terrace on St Catherine Street.<sup>96</sup> [Map 53.]

The economic recovery of the 1850s also convinced these disparate owners of the McTavish estate to arrange for the partage of their land below Sherbrooke Street.<sup>97</sup> This daunting task was given to engineer Thomas C. Keefer, who took nearly three years to work out the relative value of each piece, accounting for the lots already sold and for the expected development of the cemeteries, and preserving the spirit of Wells's 1845 plan. Henri-Maurice Perrault designed a colour-coded plan showing the distribution of the various

---

<sup>93</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15202, 21 December 1853 and subsequent deeds.

<sup>94</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15923, 15 November 1854

<sup>95</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CA 601 53,114. The remaining strip of land between McTavish Street and the McGill campus was bought in 1860 by the architect and speculator James Springle. (ANQ, John Carr Griffin #18933, 21 July 1860)

<sup>96</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #18989, 4 April 1860. See also Lovell's *Directory*, the 1861 Census, and McGill University Rare Book Room: MS 234.

<sup>97</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14996, 15 December 1853

blocks. [Map 28.] Signed in August 1856, this *acte de partage* allowed the three parties to act separately in the matter of subdivision. James Smith made various attempts to offer lots on his land, as well as on land he had acquired from Redpath's subdivision nearly two decades earlier. [Map 29. and 30.] The results were not encouraging, however, and once again deeds of sale mention that payment should be made to the people to whom Smith owed money.<sup>98</sup> James Smith died in 1868, having reaped few of the expected fruits from subdivision. John Torrance died in 1870 a very rich man, but he sold no more of his McTavish land; this was partly due to the uneven quality of the terrain caused by the brook running alongside Metcalfe Street, but mostly it was due to James Hutchison's backing out of the partnership in favour of William Lunn's children, who claimed rights to Hutchison's share of the estate.<sup>99</sup> Hugh Taylor made a number of small land sales, but by 1880 much of his portion of the estate remained vacant.<sup>100</sup> Subdivision had proved a far more complicated matter than Taylor had expected back in 1843.

#### 5. Women and Subdivision

Martha Anderson's active role in the Beaver Hall subdivision was atypical of women's experience in the GSM, at least in the 1840s. It was directly linked to her husband's death and the consequent need to preserve the integrity of his

---

<sup>98</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #12601, 1 March 1867. Payments on this lot equalling \$5200 were to be made directly to William Workman, to whom Smith was indebted for that amount.

<sup>99</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #9417, 16 September 1859; Hunter #7797, 5 January 1863

<sup>100</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #1725, 23 September 1856; John Carr Griffin #23779, 2 January 1864; Hunter #12547, 8 February 1867

estate during a critical period; had Thomas Phillips lived a few years longer, a legacy based on the sale of lots would have been established for his heirs during his lifetime, and Martha Anderson need not have been involved other than to provide for her own long-term security. As a widow, Martha Anderson's position was in marked contrast to that of Jane Drummond, who appears to have had little to do with her husband's, John Redpath's, business, be it contracting, sugar manufacturing, or subdivision. The early GSM developers were all men: not only the landowners, but of course the surveyors, notaries, lawyers, and auctioneers, members of professions denied to women. Needless to say, no women were involved in the administration of McGill College and its lands. The only woman connected with a GSM subdivision scheme in the 1840s was Hermine Lamothe, and she was a minor at the time the lots were sold and therefore represented by her guardian. Marguerite Fouquet commuted and sold land, but she did not undertake a formal subdivision.<sup>101</sup>

Much of the later subdivision of the GSM, however, was the work of women, especially by the 1860s. Most were widows, the wives of men who had acquired land in the 1830s or 40s and who had not yet subdivided it at the time of their deaths. John Easton Mills, whose estate lay south of the lands of the Royal Institution, appears to have been planning a subdivision scheme in 1846; he proposed that the Board extend Victoria Street southwards to the line of Dorchester Street, which he intended to open across his land.<sup>102</sup> Mills died the following year, and it was not until a decade later that the City succeeded in opening that segment of Dorchester Street. The presence of this thoroughfare promised lucrative real estate possibilities on either side of it, but it was by no

---

<sup>101</sup> ANQ-M, Lacombe #780, 26 October 1840; see references in Joseph Belle #6241, 25 January 1844

<sup>102</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11084: Ostell to the Royal Institution, 14 August 1846

means a straightforward matter for Mills's widow, Hannah Lyman, to sell any part of the estate. As it had been for Martha Anderson, Hannah Lyman's first task was to petition the courts to be recognized as guardian of her minor children. On 18 October 1856 she was authorized as "tutrix" to sell any property belonging to her youngest daughters, Ada and Alice; however, as such property was held jointly by all four of her children, she had to seek the permission of her unmarried daughter Mary Elizabeth, of her married daughter Hannah Jane, and of her married daughter's husband Nathaniel Whitney.<sup>103</sup> She was further obliged to announce the sale, making clear these legal arrangements, in both *The Gazette* and *La Minerve* for three consecutive weeks, and to post the same on the door of the parish church for three consecutive Sundays.

At the auction held on 15 November 1856, the property was purchased by Harrison Stephens. No more of the Mills estate was sold for another decade, but the efforts Hannah Lyman had taken proved worthwhile when her youngest daughters became engaged in 1866 - both to sons of John Redpath - and she decided to live with one of them in England. This meant a formal subdivision and sale of the rest of the estate, including the family home, Belair Villa. [Map 38.] Having commissioned the plan and hired notary James Stewart Hunter to issue the deeds, Hannah Lyman gave power of attorney over her affairs and those of her unmarried daughters (until their marriages) to John Redpath and his son Peter. Sales were excellent, and deeds promising over \$2000 per lot were being signed by the time Hannah Lyman had settled into her new home at Upper Norwood, South London, where she spent the last fourteen years of her life.<sup>104</sup>

Some widows played an active part in protecting the value of their children's heritage. Thomas McKay's land in the GSM

---

<sup>103</sup> ANQ-M, Isaacson #4418, 27 November 1856

<sup>104</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #12819, 18 May 1867 and subsequent deeds.

had been willed to his four daughters, who would come into their inheritance upon the death or second marriage of their mother, Ann Crichton. Not anticipating either possibility, Ann Crichton - who lived in Bytown, where her husband had made his fortune and built a palatial home, Rideau Hall - turned to the legislature to have the will modified so that with her permission her daughters could open MacKay Street and sell lots along it.<sup>105</sup> Elizabeth Lockhart, James Smith's wife, played a more traditional role at first, but would later take control of the subdivision process herself. Having undertaken the subdivision of his part of the McTavish estate in 1860, Smith's attention was drawn by the purchasers of the first lots to the risk of inconvenience should his wife make a claim to the property. Elizabeth Lockhart complied by renouncing all dower rights to the lots already sold and appearing regularly at signings to assure purchasers that she had no claims on her husband's property.<sup>106</sup> Smith's will made her the sole executor of his estate; upon his death she had their marriage contract registered in Montreal to avoid any further confusion, and set to work selling lots.<sup>107</sup>

Unmarried women did not face the same legal hurdles. The only case in the GSM of an unmarried woman undertaking a subdivision scheme was Lydia Hoyle, who had acquired her land along the escarpment to the west of the cemeteries in the 1830s.<sup>108</sup> After having lived on this estate for three decades, she began selling pieces of it in 1864 once the final

---

<sup>105</sup> *Provincial Statutes and Ordinances*: 24 Victoria cap. 133, 18 May 1861. The additional "a" in the street's name is due to Christina McKay's marriage to Robert Mackay, with whom she lived in a mansion on the estate, at the corner of Sherbrooke Street.

<sup>106</sup> McGill University Rare Books, MS 234: Renunciation of Dower and Matrimonial rights, 19 June 1861

<sup>107</sup> See references, ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #31422, 11 January 1870

<sup>108</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #16647, 8 August 1855

extension of Dorchester Street across the GSM had been decided.<sup>109</sup> A formal subdivision came in 1868, which brought her the promise of over \$18,000 by the end of the following year.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup> ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #24135, 14 May 1864 and #24143, 18 May 1864 and #27458, 5 March 1867

<sup>110</sup> ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #29323, 14 August 1868 and subsequent deeds.

## Chapter IV - Building the Golden Square Mile

The GSM differed in several crucial ways from the typical pattern of suburban development. Most studies on the city building process emphasize the integration of the various forces at work: London's suburbs, for example, were the product of landowners using a variety of forms of conveyance to entice speculative builders to improve their lands, for their mutual profit.<sup>1</sup> The complex nature of London's propertyholding system made such integration possible, even essential; in some circumstances granting a building lease was more advantageous to a landowner than selling outright.<sup>2</sup> In the GSM, by contrast, commuted properties were purchased as freeholds by builders, who then undertook construction without input from the original landowners. Deeds of sale did typically require that stone and brick rather than wood be used for construction, but this was essentially a means to keep property values high, rather than a specific direction to the builder. In most examples of suburb building, services were also integral to an area's development, especially the

---

<sup>1</sup> The classic work in this field is Dyos, *Victorian Suburb*, though these issues figure in Olsen's *Town Planning in London*, Youngson's *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*, and Muthesius' *The English Terraced House*. Although Dyos (p.85) comments that the Victorian suburb was "no consciously made artifact", it is clear that the sheer complexity of the building process necessitated a high degree of co-operation between the various parties, at least when the desired product was respectable middle class housing.

<sup>2</sup> Dyos, *Victorian Suburb*, p.88



transport link.<sup>3</sup> The GSM's developers were concerned with the supply of water, and - what was especially important on a mountainside - drainage, but although road access was crucial to the area's settlement, public transport was a minor factor. The tram, which was extended along St Catherine Street in the 1860s, may have proved useful to some GSM residents, but neither it nor the McTavish reservoir were part of the original conception. Apart from imposing the street layout and determining the size and shape of the lots, planners were not directly involved in the actual building of the GSM.

Because subdivision had been undertaken as a capitalist endeavour in its own right, the GSM saw more casual speculation than was the case in cities where land, services, and building were more integrated. Instead of professional estate developers, most purchasers of GSM lots, at least during the 1840s, were members of the middle class interested in land as an investment. The economic climate largely determined the rate of sales, as witnessed by the number of lots purchased during the three year period 1842 to 1845, and the sharp decline which followed. Alongside these middle-class speculators there emerged a class of small-scale builders and contractors who began to construct terraces, a form of housing that would eventually characterize the New Town. The success of these specialized builders, as well as of a few enterprising amateurs, led to a wave of terrace construction in the late 1850s and 60s, attracting builders from a wide variety of occupations. By this time, terrace building in the GSM was to a large extent the work of people who lived in nearby mansions, individuals who already had an investment in the area's built environment; alternatively,

---

<sup>3</sup> Such integration is obvious from the title of Sam Bass Warner's *Streetcar Suburbs*, but is also a feature of Dyos' *Victorian Suburb*, Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier*, and even Linteau's *Maisonneuve*.

professional builders often acquired a GSM address by reserving for themselves one unit in a terrace they had built. These phenomena were the result of the GSM growing tighter as a community: with very few exceptions, the people who sold and bought land, who built houses and other structures, and who came to live in the GSM, had a great deal in common socially, ethnically, and culturally. The GSM acquired its particular builders, just as it acquired its particular layout, landscape, architectural style, and residents.

### *1. Mountain Fever*

The 1840s subdivision of the GSM introduced suburban lots onto the market: lots in a striking location, which had formed part of the great mountain estates, but which were now available at reasonable prices. Aside from its setting, the land was attractive because it was commuted, which was of great importance to Montreal's anglophone middle classes to whom it meant security for their capital and freedom from supposed feudal restrictions. Having been demanded by the anglophone elite for decades and suddenly possible after 1840, freehold tenure contributed to the rush to buy GSM lots. With the notable exception of the Royal Institution, GSM landowners had little to do with their lots once they had been sold. To have intervened in the development process, even by means of complex stipulations or building covenants, would have diminished the appeal of these lots and dampened the enthusiasm of middle class speculators. The GSM's most enterprising landowner, furthermore, was not especially interested in encouraging building; John Redpath was more concerned with maximizing the value of what he was selling and

not infringing on the personal space of his own family and a few other neighbours. Given Redpath's background in construction, one might have expected him to have been directly involved in the development of the lower part of his estate; this flatter area was a natural part of the New Town as it was conceived, and would have lent itself to the building of terraces. However, Redpath appears to have concluded that speculative building so far from town was a risky endeavour in the early 1840s. Rather than attempt to involve developers in grandiose projects of doubtful value, as landowners in other cities often did, Redpath preferred to leave the actual use of the lot up to the purchaser.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, lots were offered with very few conditions, even regarding construction materials. The result of this sort of liberalism was a frenzy of lot acquisition in the 1840s.

The 48 lots on Redpath's lower subdivision, all of which were acquired within three years of the first sale in September 1842, were bought by only 18 individuals.<sup>5</sup> No doubt many were influenced by the example of the Torrances and Workmans who had purchased several adjoining lots from Redpath along upper Drummond Street and were in the process of building mansions in the middle of what had become large

---

<sup>4</sup> According to Linteau's analysis of the building process (*Maisonneuve*, 1981, pp.36-39 and p.41ff) Redpath's activities constitute elements of both the second and third phases of urban development: those of the relatively passive *speculateur*, who acquires land and sells it at an inflated price, and of the *promoteur*, who is involved in the laying out of streets and services, and as often as not in actual building projects. The crucial difference is, of course, that *Maisonneuve* was developed at a time of mature industrial capitalism, as of the 1880s, putting it in the company of Boston's Roxbury and Dorchester (Warner, 1978) and to some extent of Camberwell (Dyos, 1966), rather than the GSM.

<sup>5</sup> Susan and Catherine Conolly, who bought two lots together, have been counted as one of the 18 purchasers. ANQ-M, Bedouin #6063, 24 August 1843

estates. Even so, of all the construction on Redpath's lower subdivision in the 1840s, only the Mulholland house which appeared on the corner of Sherbrooke and Drummond Streets made any pretence of being a mansion set in spacious grounds.<sup>6</sup> Most purchasers acquired back-to-back lots, forming long properties running the entire distance between Mountain and Drummond, or Drummond and Stanley streets, presumably with the intention of building a home at one end and using the rest as an extended back garden. [Map 15.] Only two such homes were built in the 1840s, those of Hayes and Mathews, both on Mountain Street: one was a suburban two-storey brick house with stables, but the other was a "one-storey wooden cottage" - not the sort of dwelling the GSM generally encouraged, though consistent with the terms of the deed.<sup>7</sup> Two other structures appeared on these lots during the 1840s: one was a double house facing St Catherine Street built and immediately sold for profit by John Ostell; the other was William Laurie's 7-unit Mountain Terrace.<sup>8</sup>

These five purchasers were the only ones to build on their lots during the 1840s. Mathews, moreover, soon went bankrupt and was obliged to sell his cottage and its grounds. Many of the other purchasers also experienced financial difficulties, to judge by the rate at which they resold their lots without profit. At least 18 lots were exchanged again within a decade of the original purchase. Many purchasers fell victim to falling land values in the economic decline of the later 1840s: for example, in 1850 when James Lavens Mathewson tried to raise cash by selling the two lots he had

---

<sup>6</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1782, 27 February 1844

<sup>7</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #2701, 26 July 1847; Gibb #12060, 30 December 1849

<sup>8</sup> See reference, ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #8835, 5 November 1851

acquired six years earlier for £400, he was obliged to part with them for only £300.<sup>9</sup> More fortunate purchasers retained their lots until the market revived in the early 1850s. A number of them made a profit selling to terrace developers, while others followed Hayes' and Mathews' example and built homes at one end of their double lots, leaving the rest for gardens; this was especially the case with those whose rear lots adjoined the unopened Stanley Street. Even so, many lots remained vacant beyond the economic revival. For example, the lots that James Smith bought in 1842 were sold with no buildings in 1869.<sup>10</sup> The least active developer, surprisingly, was the merchant William Laurie, who after the success of Mountain Terrace did very little with the other lots he had acquired; Goad's 1881 map shows no less than nine lots without houses belonging to Laurie. These vacancies underline the problems resulting from the overenthusiastic purchase of Redpath's lots in the early 1840s.

A different picture emerges further down the hill, where 60 of the Beaver Hall lots and all 29 of those from the Lamothe estate had been bought by 1845, by 56 purchasers.<sup>11</sup> The ratio of purchaser to lot is significantly lower than for Redpath's subdivision, where each purchaser acquired at least two lots; in the Beaver Hall area a significant number of purchasers bought only one lot each. Cost was a likely factor here: Beaver Hall lots sold for as much if not more than those on Redpath's lower subdivision, which were three times larger.

---

<sup>9</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1862, 28 June 1844; Gibb #12426, 25 July 1850

<sup>10</sup> ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #30285, 13 March 1869

<sup>11</sup> This reckoning excludes John Redpath, whose acquisition of 7 lots and whose construction of Beaver Hall Terrace cannot be considered in the same light as the activities of speculators who were not executors of the Phillips estate.

The value of Beaver Hall lots was high because of their relative proximity to town, and the lots at the lower part of the estate were more expensive than those further away: lot No.4 just up from Lagauchetière Street, for example, sold for £365, compared to the mere £175 paid for No.75 on Union Avenue. Squares were apparently more prestigious than streets: for example, the comparatively small lot No.45 on Phillips Square sold for £212, compared to £188 for the somewhat larger No.31 on Phillips Place.

Purchasers clearly responded to Thomas Phillips's grand design for New-Town-type terraced housing. Beyond the enticing plan, however, there was no direct encouragement to build terraces, though unlike Redpath, the Phillips executors did insist any construction be undertaken in brick or stone. Many of the houses built on these lots during the first decade of sale were double houses, half of which the builder's family would inhabit while the other half was rented out.<sup>12</sup> These semi-detached dwellings, like the duplexes and triplexes that would emerge in other parts of the city, proved a good compromise between occupying the entire property and using it purely as a means of income. From a design point of view, the double house came as close to a terrace as was possible if a builder only bought one lot; it was also a good deal less costly than to undertake a project on the scale of Beaver Hall Terrace. When it came to encouraging building on their lots, the Lamothe family went one step further than the Phillips executors, by stipulating that each purchaser must erect a dwelling house within one year of the date of sale.<sup>13</sup> This was the only occasion in the GSM when such a proviso was made;

---

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1056, 17 February 1845; Gibb #7982, 24 May 1845 and #8430, 3 December 1845 and #8491, 26 January 1846; also reference, John Carr Griffin #23843, 11 February 1864

<sup>13</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #6075ff, 15 September 1843

the Lamothe estate was also the only one to sell its entire subdivision at one auction, and the only one to see a majority of these lots built upon within a decade of that sale. The Lamothe lots were nearly as well situated as those on nearby Beaver Hall Hill, and the terms of sale were considerably easier, as was seen in Chapter III. As if in anticipation of the terraces they would build, most of the purchasers bought many consecutive lots each.

Occupations of purchasers also differed considerably across the GSM subdivisions. A comparative study of the 78 people who acquired lots from Redpath's lower subdivision, and from the Beaver Hall, Lamothe, and McTavish estates, during the height of subdivision activity from 1842 to 1845, reveals a disparate group. [Table 6.] While a third (26) described themselves in deeds of sale as "merchants" and another 17 referred to themselves as "gentlemen" (including Redpath) or simply "esq", the rest included four advocates, a minister, a student, seven that could be considered manufacturers, and eleven (including Ostell and Wells) connected in some way to the building trades. Four purchasers were women. Those who built houses tended to be merchants or "gentlemen", although of the Beaver Hall builders two were advocates, one a cabinetmaker, and one a woman.<sup>14</sup> Those who bought the Lamothe lots, by contrast, were mostly involved in construction, either brickmakers, masons, or "master builders". Before long - though not necessarily within a year - many of these individuals were fulfilling their requirement and building houses. They took their cue from Redpath's Beaver Hall Terrace nearby, which he sold for £13,500 as soon

---

<sup>14</sup> This last was a widow, Ann Place, who built two semi-detached houses on Beaver Hall Square, one of which she rented out. ANQ-M, Gibb #7982, 24 May 1845

as he had begun to secure tenants.<sup>15</sup> Other Lamothe estate purchasers did not build; some, even the masons and bricklayers, chose to resell, and some held onto their lots in defiance of the deed's stipulation until they were able to begin construction. For these purchasers, mountain fever also included the prospect of a fortune made from speculative building, although not always one that could be realized.

This fever had clearly run its course by the end of 1845; the rate of Beaver Hall sales slowed and those landowners just embarking on subdivision generally met with disappointment. The sheer number of lots coming onto the market dampened interest in speculation, and the larger economic difficulties which began to be felt by the following year reduced home-building prospects. The only people building homes during the years 1846 to 1853 were elite families: Judge James Smith, lawyer John Rose, and General George Augustus Wetherall. One less wealthy - and less lucky - purchaser was the auctioneer John Leeming, who did not enjoy the home he built in 1847 on Simpson Street for much more than a year before bankruptcy forced him to sell.<sup>16</sup> Despite the economic downturn, some builders were able to benefit from the ongoing desire to live in the GSM. In December 1848, William Laurie sold all of Mountain Terrace, which he had built at least two years before, except for the one he kept for his own use.<sup>17</sup> These difficult years also drew a few adventurous speculators to mountain lots, including James Major, the city's Inspector of Ashes, who purchased two lots late in 1845 and periodically acquired more; by 1857 he owned 11 adjoining lots along Côte des Neiges Road which he soon transformed into the grounds of

---

<sup>15</sup> ANQ-M, Joseph Belle #8029, 18 October 1845.

<sup>16</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #2695, 19 July 1847; Gibb #11976, 20 August 1849

<sup>17</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11486, 26 December 1848



a mansion.<sup>18</sup> Even more enterprising was the architect James Springle, who purchased four huge lots between Simpson and Redpath streets for £1200 in 1851 and subdivided them into sixteen smaller lots which he sold for as much as £250 starting in 1854 when market conditions improved.<sup>19</sup> [Map 35.] This case of what was in effect sub-subdivision was rare in the GSM. Springle's 50-foot wide lots, apparently intended for terraces or at any rate much narrower houses than were generally built above Sherbrooke Street, were readily purchased, though they remained undeveloped for many years. The same could be said for the lots Torrance and Hutchison successfully sold between Upper Peel and McTavish streets at the end of 1853: none of the initial purchasers built on them - which is not to say they did not make a profit on their investment.<sup>20</sup>

The revival of interest in GSM lots as of 1853 could be called a mild second case of mountain fever. Speculation in land gradually gave way to speculative building as the New Town took shape, and to the purchase of lots expressly for building a home. Another wave of lot acquisition accompanied the sale of the "McGill College Properties" in the later 1850s and 1860s, especially when McGill began offering home-building loans to prospective purchasers. Loans of \$1000 on average per house resulted in a number of new dwellings, most of them single or occasionally double houses which served as the builder's residence.<sup>21</sup> McGill's enticement was the closest that GSM landowners came to an active role in the building

---

<sup>18</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #4536ff, April 1859

<sup>19</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #13153, 6 August 1851 and #15781, 7 September 1854

<sup>20</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15202ff, 21 December 1853 and others

<sup>21</sup> See ANQ-M, Hunter #7483-85, 14 October 1862 and #10109, 18 June 1864 and #10557, 4 October 1864

process. If the first decade of the GSM's development was dominated by landowners, some of whom made impressive profits by exploiting the public's desire for mountain land, the 1850s saw the initiative pass to the speculative builders. Despite the architectural implications of some of the subdivision plans, it was the builders that determined the appearance of the New Town, having embraced a form of construction that was both straightforward to produce and relatively easy to sell. Compared to the feverish acquisition of lots in the 1840s, "speculative" building was a careful endeavour, requiring as much financial strategy and timing as subdivision itself had done.

## *2. Speculative Building*

The early career of Thomas Watson is a good illustration of the kind of building activity that laid the foundations for the New Town. In 1843 Watson was a 32-year-old mason whose prospects were hopeful enough for him to acquire two of the Lamothe lots, on which he made a downpayment of only £15. [Map 50.] These two lots were Nos.28 and 29, located at the corner of Belmont and Brunswick streets, bordering on the backs of Beaver Hall Terrace. Within three months he had begun to build a pair of brick cottages (one storey houses) on No.29.<sup>22</sup> These completed, he mortgaged both properties to the Montreal Provident and Savings Bank to finance the building of two grander houses next door on No.28, each of

---

<sup>22</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #6080, 15 September 1843 and #6107, 14 December 1843; the last is an agreement between Watson and Redpath over the opening of a lane between the two properties.

them two storeys high and made of brick and stone.<sup>23</sup> Work proceeded slowly, and these houses were not entirely finished by the beginning of 1846, when Watson sold them to the merchant Alexander Robertson, who undertook to complete them and rent them out.<sup>24</sup> Watson then acquired another lot on the corner of Dorchester and Hanover streets on which he built two houses, one for himself, his wife Margaret, and their six children, and the other to rent out.<sup>25</sup> He also bought three other lots further down Hanover Street on which he built a row of six terraced houses, which he sold to the merchant Robert Anderson in April 1851 for £2450. [Map 51.] Of this sum Watson used £1350 to pay off the mortgage, while £50 was owed to the lots' previous owners, £95 went to the Lamothe family, and £380 was withheld by Anderson until some last minute work on the terrace was completed. Watson cleared a profit of £575.<sup>26</sup>

Others imitated Watson's enterprise in the area. David Brown and Hector Munro (both 1843 purchasers) and James Dunbar, George McDougall, and John Morrison (who acquired lots since the original sale) had built houses on their properties by 1846, and had sold or were renting them out. One speculator from outside the building trades had also done so: John Cunningham Beckett, a printer. With the exception of the 6-unit terrace on Hanover Street, these were all modest

---

<sup>23</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1825, 12 April 1844

<sup>24</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8491, 26 January 1846; Pelton #2322, 23 February 1846

<sup>25</sup> See reference, ANQ-M, Gibb #14046, 2 August 1852

<sup>26</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #12844, 4 April 1851. The final touches included raising the roofs so they were in line with the adjoining houses (the street was on a slant), planting trees in front, and emptying the privy pots in back. For contracts to the terraced houses, see Isaacson, 23 September & 2 November 1850.

undertakings, mostly double houses like those on Beaver Hall Hill; however, for several such builders to have acquired many contiguous lots does suggest that they intended to build terraces. Their failure to do so, during the 1840s at least, was a reflection of economic uncertainty, even though William Laurie's successful sale of Mountain Terrace at the end of 1848 proved that terrace units could be sold even in the depression. Terrace building was a major undertaking even for the likes of Hector Munro, who was no newcomer to large building projects, having made a name for himself as a mason for the Bonsecours Market.<sup>27</sup> Munro probably intended to fill the lots he had acquired along Brunswick Street with houses, but stopped after building two, and in late 1845 sold all five lots (and the two houses) to carpenter and joiner Charles Ross.<sup>28</sup> If Ross had intentions for these properties they came to nought, and Munro bought them back three years later, though it would be another four years before he undertook to complete his original building program. By the time he sold the 6-unit terrace in 1857, Munro had accrued a debt of over £3000.<sup>29</sup>

By that time, however, the housing boom had made the construction of terraces a profitable endeavour. In 1853 Henry Bulmer, a contractor and member of a prominent building family, was at work on houses on Brunswick Street, while the following year Munro, with more borrowed capital, built two houses on the nearby Beaver Hall Square.<sup>30</sup> When the Royal Institution began leasing lots on the site of the Burnside

---

<sup>27</sup> Robert, "Hector Munro", *DCB*, vol.X, p.620

<sup>28</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #1228, 15 November 1845

<sup>29</sup> ANQ-M, Joseph Belle #10761, 2 February 1849; Gibb #14423, 12 January 1853 and #17530, 28 July 1857

<sup>30</sup> See reference, ANQ-M, Gibb #17530, 28 July 1857

farm, the first to take advantage included Henry Bulmer and Thomas Watson; the former built St George's Place, a 7-unit terrace on Cathcart Street, while the latter built a terrace of 8 units, Balmoral Place, on St Catherine Street next to the site of Christ Church cathedral. Bulmer was also responsible for Mount Royal Terrace, the first houses on McGill College Avenue, which he was selling by December 1858.<sup>31</sup> Others with construction backgrounds tried their hands at terrace building, including David Brown, who erected Dunedin Place on University Street a decade and a half after his efforts on Belmont Street. Among the new faces were Daniel McNevin, originally a carpenter, who built terraces on University Street and McGill College Avenue, and George Browne, an architect with a series of public buildings in Quebec and Kingston to his credit, who put up Wellington Terrace on St Catherine Street.<sup>32</sup> Others were attracted to lots on the McTavish and Redpath estates: masons Joseph Perrault and Jean-Baptiste Payette, and painter John McArthur, were responsible between them for most of the terraces along the western part of St Catherine Street.<sup>33</sup> [Map 53.]

This building activity during the 1850s and early 1860s is similar to what David Hanna found city-wide during the later 1860s and 1870s: in this respect the GSM, like the rest of Montreal, was built by small builders.<sup>34</sup> The social backgrounds of Watson, Munro, and Bulmer were essentially artisanal, though by no means humble; they were prosperous

---

<sup>31</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #18212, 3 April 1858 and #18300, 14 December 1858

<sup>32</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #6248, 5 July 1861. See also Stewart, "George Browne", DCB, vol.X, p.119

<sup>33</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #18280, 2 December 1858 and #18989, 4 April 1860 and #18903ff, 18 January 1860

<sup>34</sup> Hanna, *Montreal: A City Built by Small Builders*, p.157

enough to assemble sufficient capital to build terraces. It proved a lucrative venture, especially by the late 1850s when, for example, each of the units of Mount Royal Terrace brought Bulmer £1150, and when Payette and Perrault sold their St Catherine Street houses for £1200 each.<sup>35</sup> Although terrace construction was by no means the only successful enterprise for these builders, their work in the GSM did establish many of them socially. Having sold his Dorchester Street house in 1852, Thomas Watson and his family moved out of the GSM, but returned to occupy one of the Balmoral Place units in 1858; similarly Henry Bulmer lived at St George's Place on Cathcart Street, David Brown lived at Dunedin Place on University Street, and John McArthur lived at his terrace on St Catherine Street.<sup>36</sup> By retaining one unit of these terraces, these builders secured fine homes for their families - and although this practice was common in the city, for these anglophone builders it meant a residence in the prestigious GSM.

Until the 1860s, people connected with the building trades dominated terrace construction - although this was less true outside the Beaver Hall area: William Laurie (of Mountain Terrace) and Charles Phillips (who built Bellevue Terrace on the western part of Dorchester Street about 1845) were both merchants. Once the way had been shown by Watson, Munro, and Bulmer, other investors began to take interest in the potential of terraces. These investors tended not to be from the construction trades themselves, but could produce sufficient capital to undertake terrace construction. One of the first was Marie Sophie Raymond, widow of wealthy merchant Joseph Masson; she built the aptly named St Sophie Place, one

---

<sup>35</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #17530, 28 July 1857 and #18918, 31 January 1860 and #18989, 4 April 1860

<sup>36</sup> 1861 Census #4236 (Brown), #4281 (Bulmer), #4303 (Watson), #4399 (McArthur), and #4738 (Munro).

of the terraces that helped turn McGill College Avenue from farmland into an elegant residential street.<sup>37</sup> Francis Edward Dorion, who completed the east side of McGill College Avenue in 1860, did so having taken advantage of the Royal Institution's loans.<sup>38</sup> Others responsible for New Town terraces included Mungo Ramsay, Henry Joseph, Archibald Ferguson, and George Simpson - who built the GSM's most prestigious row houses, the Prince of Wales Terrace. The latter served to enhance the image of the row house from a standard comfortable middle-class dwelling to a veritable mansion distinguishable from most grand villas merely by the fact that it formed a united whole with its immediate neighbours.

The role of terraces in attracting subsequent building in the New Town is discussed from the point of view of the built environment in Chapter V; there is, however, no question that they enhanced property values and hence made living next to them as desirable a prospect as living in them. It was for this reason that owners of villas, at least those below Sherbrooke Street, began to build terraces on their lands, even adjacent to their own homes. In the 1870s the Prévost family built a row of five houses on the part of their estate that had been separated from the rest by the continuation of St Catherine Street, while Jean-Louis Beaudry, who had lived for over twenty years at the corner of Dorchester and Drummond streets, turned his villa into one of a series of nine houses

---

<sup>37</sup> For a comprehensive list of terraces and their builders from the mid-1850s see Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, pp.181-185.

<sup>38</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #5657, 28 July 1860 and #5803, 2 October 1860

spreading over the entire width of a block.<sup>39</sup> [Maps 56. and 60., Figure 65.] In some cases terrace building coincided with the needs of an expanding family: having purchased the lots on the east side of Beaver Hall Square, which backed onto his own mansion and grounds on Alexander Street, James Ferrier built four houses over which he retained control and into two of which he installed two of his children and their families.<sup>40</sup> These houses completed the enclosure of Beaver Hall Square, considerably enhancing its overall appearance, no doubt much to the delight of the other owners.

Although in terms of capital and social standing these individuals ranked among the city's elite, they too can be considered "small builders" in that each undertook only a project or two. Marie Raymond, Charles Phillips, Henry Joseph, and Jean-Louis Beaudry did not make their fortunes from building GSM terraces, though no doubt it contributed substantially to their incomes. Terraces were profitable endeavours, but in the GSM they were not limitless opportunities for capital investment. The vast expansion of suburban London was considered a safe market, and so readily attracted surplus capital from unadventurous investors; this frequently resulted in an oversupply of middle class housing.<sup>41</sup> This situation did not occur in the GSM, where speculative building, like every other aspect of the area's development, was forever barely one step ahead of demand. Unlike the acquisition of lots, which was often the result of

---

<sup>39</sup> ANQ-M: MCA 601-53, 3073 and MCA 601-62, 130. The Prévost houses are a rare example of a terrace that has survived almost intact, if considerably restored.

<sup>40</sup> Ferrier had been careful to buy the land in 1845, but did not bother to develop it, despite activity on the other side of the square in the interval, until after the Dow family had built "Strathearn" next door, in the early 1860s.

<sup>41</sup> Dyos, *Victorian Suburb*, p.80



rash land booms, speculative building, whether by Thomas Watson or Marie Raymond or George Simpson, was undertaken with the expectation of fulfilling an immediate need. The romantic names of most terraces up until the later 1860s contributed to a sense of exclusiveness, concentrating the attention of house buyers in a way that endless rows of identical units would not have done. But even after this romantic fashion disappeared and houses were erected at a greater rate, it was rare for them to stand empty for long. In the 1880s there were still many vacant lots in the New Town, an indication that the grasp of these builders was firmly within their reach. The GSM was a product of caution.

### *3. Artisans, Contractors, and Architects*

In October 1848, George Augustus Wetherall, who had commanded British forces in Montreal during the Rebellions, undertook the construction of a home at the top of Simpson Street. The design was the work of architect John Wells, who provided plans and elevations which the builders were to follow; it was to be a two storey brick house containing a hall, a drawing room, a dining room, a breakfast room, a basement kitchen (complete with servants' quarters, storage areas, pantries, closets, and a wine cellar), four upstairs bedrooms, a bathroom, and a toilet. Wetherall commissioned Robert Drake and William Tabb, master builders, to carry out the major construction, along with the carpenter Edward Maxwell, the plasterer Peter Moir, and the painters John Walker and John Little. The contracts were very specific as to the requirements, spelling out in minute detail the exact width of walls, depth of foundation, diameter of columns and

mouldings, thickness of window sills, size of sinks, archways, shelving, and steps, the type and quality of finish to every surface, and the style of every bit of decorative carpentry, paint, and plasterwork in the house - including the W.C., which was to have "a seat and riser with a turned lid and clamped cover [and] a ventilator in the ceiling with means of opening and closing it within reach".<sup>42</sup> For this work Drake and Tabb would be paid £548, Maxwell £744, Moir £94.10, and Walker and Little £55.

Contracts such as this give a precise picture of the sorts of highly specialized tasks to which artisans applied their skills in the GSM. Industrialization was transforming this work: new technology, mass production, changing work practices, and the rise of large construction companies using unskilled labour. The work of the architect was also becoming a specialized profession, even though in the 1840s and 50s architects were still men of diverse *metiers*: planning, surveying, engineering, and masonry.<sup>43</sup> Although the full impact of such change is beyond the scope of this study, its ramifications for the GSM are worth noting: just as terrace construction drew a particular sort of speculative builder to the GSM - both professionally and as a resident - so did the area's special building opportunities attract artisans like Drake, Tabb, and Maxwell at crucial junctures in their careers. For such skilled workers, building in the GSM often facilitated the passage from artisanry into larger scale capitalist production. At the same time, traditional forms of work did not disappear, but in many cases became even more valuable in finishing luxury homes. The GSM also provided

---

<sup>42</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11211, 9 October 1848ff

<sup>43</sup> For a discussion of the 18th century architectural profession in Britain, which continued at least until the founding of the Institute of British Architects in 1834, see Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*, appendix.

work for a younger generation of architects than Wells, a more professional group that catered to the idiosyncratic demands of the resident elite, and often won considerable fame in the process.

By mid-century the practice of building houses, at least on the scale of homes such as Wetherall's, was already slightly more hierarchical than it had been traditionally. Drake and Tabb are described as "master builders and contractors", which implies that they acted as overseers of the entire project, rather than representing one trade only.<sup>44</sup> Even though they may have hired labourers for the job, they were not, however, responsible for hiring other skilled trades. Typically, Wetherall contracted personally with the individuals undertaking each specific task, including Drake and Tabb.<sup>45</sup> Although they sound like Wetherall's chief agents in building the house, the title "master builders" belies what was almost certainly training in the trades of masonry or bricklaying; at any rate, it was Drake and Tabb that provided the brickwork for Wetherall's brick house.<sup>46</sup> Even so, the provision of brickwork and masonry for a mansion or other large project was a complicated and important job, especially given the deadlines stipulated by owners in the

---

<sup>44</sup> In early nineteenth-century England the term "master builder" came to mean one who contracted all the other trades, what was later referred to as a general contractor; this function was common for speculative building but not for private homes, where owners made separate contracts with each trade. See Muthesius, *The English Terraced House*, pp.27-28

<sup>45</sup> See the multiple contracts for other mid-century GSM villas such as the ones made by Smith, Rose, Beniah Gibb, and Major. ANQ, Gibb #8749, 28 April 1846ff and #11677, 17 March 1849ff and #15048, 4 November 1853ff; Hunter #4536, 21 April 1859ff

<sup>46</sup> Horatio Nelson Tabb, no doubt a relative of William's, was responsible for laying the bricks for Burnside Hall in 1853. ANQ-M, Gibb #14610-15, 7 April 1853

contract, and may have required more labour than an artisan and his family could provide. Carpentry formed a similarly large part of the work, and Edward Maxwell was described as a "contractor" as well as a carpenter, suggesting that he, too, hired labour. Contracts for the McGill Arts Building from 1839 even refer to the "carpenter and his forman", indicating an additional layer in the hierarchy.<sup>47</sup> Whether or not painters and plasterers would have had a similar range of assistants for work on a mansion such as Wetherall's is more problematic.

When it came to building mansions, GSM patrons only gradually came to deal with a single builder instead of contracting separately with each artisan. In 1860, the Dow family commissioned a master builder to supervise the construction of "Strathearn" on Beaver Hall Square, and the following year the Allans did the same when they undertook to build "Ravenscrag".<sup>48</sup> In both cases the builder was William Speir - or, rather, "William Speir and Son" - whose origins were in masonry but who operated what was in effect a construction company. Speirs also had ambitions as an architect, as did a number of other former masons, but it was as a builder that he appears to have made his mark; he was also responsible for the completion of the McGill Arts Building at about the same time.<sup>49</sup> Contracting companies

---

<sup>47</sup> ANQ-M, Henry Griffin #16800, 17 December 1839. See also James, *The Civil Architecture of John Ostell*, p.118

<sup>48</sup> ANQ-M, Smith #6588, 26 April 1860 and #7929, 27 May 1861. Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p.78.

<sup>49</sup> Hector Munro was another who offered his services as an architect later in life (Robert, "Hector Munro", *DCB*, vol.XI, p.621), although it is unlikely he and Speirs really expected to compete with such fashionable designers as JW Hopkins and William T Thomas. See James, *The Civic Architecture of John Ostell*, p.248.

typically did not appear until the later part of the century. One example is Peter Lyall, who provided the masonry for several GSM mansions in the 1880s and 90s, including his own home on Bishop Street; in 1890 he established a family contracting business which went on to receive major public commissions, including the rebuilding of the Parliament Buildings in 1916.<sup>50</sup>

Long before these contracting companies had replaced the practice of multiple contracts, artisans were effectively becoming "contractors" by engaging in speculative building. As has been seen above, masons and bricklayers such as Thomas Watson and Hector Munro built terraces only after they had succeeded with smaller houses. What had been required to produce the double houses on the Lamothe estate during the 1840s, let alone the one storey cottages that Watson built in 1843, was the sort of labour the builders could provide themselves, making use of family and trade connections. By the 1850s and 60s the greater use of unskilled labour probably facilitated the construction of larger terraces. When Hector Munro came to build his Brunswick Street Terrace in 1853, he made contracts with artisans much as Wetherall had done for his house; these included a carpenter, Charles Ross, to whom Munro paid £947, and various plasterers and painters to whom he paid close to £300.<sup>51</sup> Munro himself was responsible for the masonry. These owner-builders like Munro tended to put "mason" or "bricklayer" as their occupation on the deeds of sale for their lots, but before long they were describing

---

<sup>50</sup> Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p.119. See also Communauté Urbaine de Montréal, *Répertoire d'architecture traditionnelle: Les résidences*, p.429.

<sup>51</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14423, 12 January 1853

themselves primarily as "contractors".<sup>52</sup> Indeed, many of them made a good living as general contractors.

Masonry was the occupation from which the majority of the GSM's contractors emerged; this was very much by contrast to the city as a whole, where by the 1860s and 70s the majority of housing contractors had worked as carpenters.<sup>53</sup> This may be because the GSM was built more uniformly in stone than the rest of Montreal, despite regulations against wooden construction following the great fire of 1852. One carpenter who built at least one terrace, Laird Paton, was a major exception to this trend; another was Daniel McNevin, who was not only responsible for a number of (brick) GSM terraces, but in 1860 he received the commission from the Board of Arts and Manufacturers for the Provincial Exhibition and Museum, more commonly known as the Crystal Palace.<sup>54</sup> There was some irony in this commission, given that the building was intended to be a celebration of modern technology, but instead of glass and iron it was composed largely of brick and wood. Edward Maxwell, who worked on Wetherall's house, made a very good living as a "carpenter and contractor" for several GSM houses, but it was his son, Edward John, who diversified into the lumber business (as did Henry Bulmer's son John); by the end of the century his sons Edward and William Maxwell had become two of the GSM's most prestigious architects.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Munro was the exception to this later trend: on the 1861 census (#4738) he gave "mason" as his occupation. He also made it clear that was "not in business and has not employed any men during the last twelve months", though he claimed to be worth a capital sum of £8000.

<sup>53</sup> Hanna, *Montreal: A City Built by Small Builders*, pp.172-73.

<sup>54</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #5462, 27 March 1860

<sup>55</sup> The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *The Architecture of Edward and WS Maxwell*, p.20

Mid-century architectural drawings, such as the ones John Wells provided for Wetherall's house, served to illustrate the patron's wishes in such a manner that they could be realized by the builders. Contracts normally specified that all work must conform to the plans, copies of which were always retained in the architect's office to ensure that this should happen. In most cases, the drawing marked the end of the architect's contribution to the building process, although for large projects the architect often remained on site to supervise the work and to liase between patron and builder; Ostell, architect of the McGill Arts Building, clearly had this function during its construction in the early 1840s.<sup>56</sup> When it came to residences, architects provided an important service, but the supervision of building the house was usually left in the hands of the masons and carpenters. It was only as the style of GSM mansions became fiercely idiosyncratic that architects became closely identified with each specific product, and their work a matter of status for the homeowner.

As the GSM evolved, the change in the architect's role can be seen in the form and function of the drawings themselves. At mid-century, architectural drawings were not particularly detailed, except where there was an important feature that needed to be illustrated clearly. Plans showed the division of rooms, and elevations showed the proportion and distribution of windows, doors, and other features, but included few statistics.<sup>57</sup> The more specific the commission, the more precise the drawings tended to be, though they remained illustrative rather than technical. Ostell's work for the 1848 Protestant Orphan Asylum on St Catherine Street,

---

<sup>56</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.56 and c.57: Royal Institution Correspondence, 1839-40

<sup>57</sup> For examples of early plans see ANQ-M, Cartothèque: CN 601-134, 9181r etc

for example, included plans of three floors, the principal elevation, and several drawings of windows, cornices, and mouldings which the masons, William Hutchison and James Morrison, were expected to follow.<sup>58</sup> This is in marked contrast to architects' drawings of the 1880s and 90s, which give the dimensions of all rooms, corridors, stairs, windows, and doors, in the manner of modern technical blueprints; one example is the plan by AT Taylor for the 1882 Drummond house.<sup>59</sup> The extreme precision regarding quantity and dimension given in the early building contracts themselves served to compensate for the lack of detail in accompanying architectural drawings. Later projects relied on the plans to a much greater extent, and this implicitly elevated the architect's contribution - and to some degree that of the contractor or foreman who interpreted the plans.

Although architects played a minimal role in the building of houses such as Wetherall's, employing one at all was by that time already a mark of distinction. The 1844 contract for the Mulholland house on Sherbrooke Street makes a reference to a plan, but not to an architect, which probably means that owner and builders worked out the straightforward design together; the Mulholland contract was, significantly, one of the most precise as to the desired architectural detail.<sup>60</sup> Contracts for smaller, plainer homes at that time often did not even bother describing the requirements at length; the one for the double house that Phineas B Merritt was building on Beaver Hall Hill required merely that it should be "in all respects similar" to another pair of houses

---

<sup>58</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #10649, 31 May 1848

<sup>59</sup> McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library: Nobbs Room

<sup>60</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1782, 27 February 1844



nearby.<sup>61</sup> The early terraces, which were no doubt quite uniform in appearance and layout, did not normally require the services of an architect - at least, not to produce plans and elevations. Architects did provide another sort of plan when it came to selling the terrace units, one associated more with surveying than with architecture. These plans described the entire terrace and surrounding property, and unlike architectural drawings of the period, they were precise as to measurement, showing the breadth of each unit, the length of each yard, and the width of the lanes. William Laurie, who built Mountain Terrace, employed architect James Springle to draw a plan of the seven units, including yards, outbuildings, and access to lanes, when they went on sale at the end of 1848; Watson turned to Ostell for a similar service when selling his Hanover Street terrace in 1851, and Henri-Maurice Perrault prepared a plan for the sale of Montmorency Terrace on St Catherine Street in 1859.<sup>62</sup> [Maps 51., 52., 53.] In some cases, these architects may have also designed these terraces.

Most GSM villas were clearly the work of architects. Even when it came to making additions to the old McTavish farmhouse in 1846, James Smith employed Wells.<sup>63</sup> Wells was also responsible for "Rosemount", the home of the Rose family, built just above Wetherall's mansion in 1849, and Springle was the architect of the Anglican See House built on Dorchester

---

<sup>61</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8430, 3 December 1845; Easton #1208, 23 October 1845

<sup>62</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11486, 26 December 1848 and #12844, 4 April 1851 and #18989, 4 April 1860

<sup>63</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8749f, 28 April 1846

Street in 1852.<sup>64</sup> The contract for Hector Munro's Brunswick Street terrace of 1853 refers to a plan by James Springle, but this may have been a formality; a plan was a useful point of reference, but having employed an architect does not necessarily mean that a terrace was especially unusual or ornate.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, when the architect was George Browne one might expect a terrace to be visually impressive; Browne himself was the builder and owner of the 1855 Wellington Terrace on St Catherine Street.<sup>66</sup> Browne provides an example of an architect, as opposed to a mason or carpenter, acting as general contractor for a speculative building project. Later, grander terraces tended to be architect-designed, and builders usually turned to the best in the business. George Simpson hired Browne and William Footner (the architect of Bonsecours Market) to design the Prince of Wales Terrace, the intended grandeur of which apparently necessitated such professional attention; when the time came to sell the units, however, Simpson employed Henri-Maurice Perrault to draw the ground plan.<sup>67</sup>

As mansions and institutional buildings began to appear in the GSM at an unprecedented rate after the late 1850s, a new generation of architects was drawn to the area. The first

---

<sup>64</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11677-78, 17 March 1849 and #14264-66, 8 November 1852. Drake and Tabb were also the "master builders" of Rosemount.

<sup>65</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14423, 12 January 1853

<sup>66</sup> Hanna ("The Creation of an Early Victorian Suburb in Montreal", p.53) describes Wellington Terrace as an aesthetically innovative building, a fact which he ascribes to its having been designed by an architect. This would tend to support the view that architects had only a small or superficial role in the building of earlier terraces.

<sup>67</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #7843, 8 January 1863. Although Perrault was a successful architect by then, he did almost no work in the GSM; at the same time, he had become the GSM's leading surveyor.

of these was John William Hopkins, whose first big commissions included the completion of the McGill Arts Building, the design of the Crystal Palace, and important parts of Ravenscrag; he went on to design the St James Club, the Art Association Gallery, and several mansions.<sup>68</sup> In 1880 Hopkins became the first president of the Quebec Order of Architects, a body that established the profession as distinct from the building trades out of which it had grown. A number of the GSM's architects also specialized in major institutional buildings: Alexander C Hutchison (the Redpath Museum, Erskine Church), Frederick Lawford (Knox and St Paul's churches), Andrew Taylor (the Redpath Library and the McGill science buildings), and Bruce Price (Windsor Station). Others dedicated themselves to designing GSM mansions: William T Thomas, the leading figure in the 1860s, 70s and 80s, was responsible for such diverse projects as "Homestead", "Thornhill", the Brown and McIntyre houses, the Workman house on University Street, the Stephen house, and "Craiguie"; John James Browne (George's son) was another popular figure, to be outshone only at the end of the century by the GSM's most famous and fashionable architects, Edward and William Maxwell. Significantly, with the exception of Victor Bourgeau, who designed the Roman Catholic cathedral on Dominion Square, all the GSM's leading architects were anglophone.

These men tapped into the heart of GSM culture in a way that Wells and Footner and even Browne half a century earlier could not have conceived. In its thirst for visual distinction, the GSM came to depend on its architects to provide novelty, something to set each house apart from its neighbours, and to set the GSM apart from the rest of the city. Architects had to be familiar with the array of foreign

---

<sup>68</sup> For a discussion of what was required to complete the Arts Building's design, see James, *The Civil Architecture of John Ostell*, pp.110-11.

influences, especially from Britain and the United States; emigré architects, such as Taylor and Price, had an advantage when it came to winning important commissions. Even with the strength of their family background in construction, Edward and William Maxwell were sent to schools in Boston and Paris to study architecture.<sup>69</sup> Older GSM residents also took advantage of the prestige that these architects could bring, even if it meant completely rebuilding their homes. The Stephen family had lived in a good-sized house on Mountain Street since the 1860s; in 1882 they hired William T Thomas to design a new home for them which would stand on the rear portion of their land, facing Drummond Street. The Drummonds of Sherbrooke Street went to similar lengths, hiring Andrew Taylor to design a grander home for themselves on an adjoining lot in 1888. Other residents simply put new facades on older houses, such as the one Hutchison added to Rosemount in 1890 to please its current owners, the Ogilvies.<sup>70</sup> [Figures 51. and 52.] The greatest example of disregard for the old in the pursuit of ostentation was the McIntyre family's 1889 demolition of Chesnut Hall (the old McTavish farmhouse) and another house nearby in order to build the monumental "Craigie", also designed by William T Thomas.<sup>71</sup>

Many carpenters and masons worked to satisfy this market for luxurious detail. The carpenter and onetime contractor Laird Paton went into business ("Laird Paton and Son") providing intricate woodwork for the interiors of mansions, while Peter Lyall and his sons provided masonry - although by the 1880s actual "sculptors" were often employed; Lyall

---

<sup>69</sup> The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *The Architecture of Edward and WS Maxwell*, pp.17 & 20.

<sup>70</sup> Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p.56

<sup>71</sup> Gersovitz, *The Golden Square Mile*, p.78

himself handled the masonry for his own 1889 house, but he hired the sculptor Henry Beaumont to execute the ornate Romanesque detailing.<sup>72</sup> The most famous of these luxury artisans was the plasterer Edward Colonna, whom William Van Horne hired to refurbish the interior of the Hamilton house on Sherbrooke Street which he had acquired in 1889.<sup>73</sup>

The idiosyncrasy of GSM architecture was celebrated in contemporary magazines sporting photos of mansions, inside and out, and descriptions of the lavish lifestyle of their residents. The *Canadian Architect and Builder*, first published in 1888, had within a decade devoted articles to the homes of the Drummonds, Reids, Mackenzies, McIntyres, Lyalls, and Aulds, each of which served as a tribute both to the architect and to the taste of the patron.<sup>74</sup> Such mutually advantageous publicity had the effect of fixing in the popular imagination an image of the GSM as the home, not only of Montreal's elite, but of the nation's aristocracy, a group capable of employing the leading architects to design their homes. In this light, GSM homeowners were the successors to the great patrons of the past, and their architects the successors to the great names in architectural history.

---

<sup>72</sup> Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p.119. See also *Communauté Urbaine de Montréal, Répertoire d'architecture traditionnelle: Les résidences*, p.429.

<sup>73</sup> Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p. 60

<sup>74</sup> *Canadian Architect and Builder*: March 1890, March 1892, May 1892, March 1893, April 1894, February 1898

## Chapter V - Transformation of the Landscape

An examination of the GSM's physical evolution shows the manner in which its component parts came to form a coherent piece of urban space - or rather a collection of spaces united by a developing notion of community. In the GSM, the presence of one structure, or some other feature of the landscape, encouraged others to follow, and so on until an entire area had taken shape. This was especially true for the first decade or so of the GSM's existence, when the economy was less promising and the GSM's character was only partially defined: the efforts of the various landowners and planners, though in many ways so compatible, offered a number of quite different possibilities to developers and potential residents. By the later 1850s the New Town had been established as an identifiable space with distinct cultural implications, as had the McGill campus and its surrounding area. By the following decade the central part of the GSM had taken shape with the development of Dominion Square and the linking of the two segments of Dorchester Street. Other parts of the GSM began to grow once these key spaces had been fixed, and some of the older areas even saw significant changes to their characters by the end of the century, notably Sherbrooke Street and Phillips Square. Of subtler, but crucial importance to the shaping of the community was the GSM's appropriation of the mountaintop as of the 1870s in the form of Mount Royal Park.

This chapter focuses on various key areas, or spaces, within the GSM: Beaver Hall Hill, the McGill campus, Dominion Square, etc. Prints and early photographs are valuable tools to understanding the built environment of the past, although

they are at best isolated pieces of a much larger puzzle. Another way to show the evolution of space would be to make use of computer animation, a series of images taken over a fifty year period and run at high speed.<sup>1</sup> Maps are the next best thing, and if not moving images, then at least a series of "snapshots". Maps 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, and 46 show the extent of building and other topographical features in the GSM in the years 1840, 1848, 1856, 1864, 1872, and 1881. A comparison of these maps reveals the rate of urban growth, which should be seen very much by way of contrast to the impression given by Cane's 1846 map and by most of the subdivision plans, which indicate projections, rather than reality. Maps 41 through 46 show how parts of the GSM influenced other parts, how urban growth does echo plant growth in its tendency to expand along existing lines.

#### *1. Patterns of Development, 1842-1853*

The first part of the GSM to attract suburban residents was the lower portion of the Beaver Hall subdivision, and by extension the Lamothe subdivision just next to it. The area's principal thoroughfare ran upwards from the Haymarket at the edge of the old town, more or less parallel to Alexander Street, which at that time marked the westward limit of the St Laurent faubourg and contained a number of large middle class homes. Beaver Hall Hill comprised several connected street

---

<sup>1</sup> John Summerson gives an imaginative overview of the development of London from the 17th to 19th centuries seen from an air-balloon with time flashing forward like "those nature films which accelerate into immodest realism the slow drama of plant life." Summerson, *Georgian London*, p.17

segments and two squares, a layout charged with the promised elegance of London's West End, with the added features of a stately upward slope and a view of the town left behind. Some distance up this hill, partly obstructing the street, stood Beaver Hall itself, which would remain the home of the Phillips family until it was destroyed by fire in 1850. The other old home in the area, that of the Lamothe family, stood on the south side of Belmont Street, which ran at right angles westward from Beaver Hall Hill. New construction in the area was begun by John Redpath, who purchased all the lots on the west side of Beaver Hall Hill between Belmont Street and Beaver Hall Square, and built the first of the GSM's terraces there. Beaver Hall Terrace, which consisted of fifteen two-storey stone houses, each with a yard, outbuildings, stables, and coach house, set the dominant architectural tone for the emerging New Town, a tone which until then had merely been implied by the classically-inspired plan. [Figure 5.] The terrace also brought new residents to the GSM as of the autumn of 1844.<sup>2</sup>

A handful of other houses arose in the wake of Beaver Hall Terrace: several along Belmont Street around the corner, and at least three on Beaver Hall Hill below the old farmhouse, one of which was the Unitarian parsonage.<sup>3</sup> The church itself was built in 1845 at the corner of Beaver Hall Hill and Lagachetière Street. [Figure 4.] Later that year the Montreal High School appeared on Belmont Street next to the Lamothe house. [Figure 38.] These were new institutions seeking a location, and the Beaver Hall area, with its commanding site and proximity to town, was a natural choice. For similar reasons, the Catholic church acquired a large

---

<sup>2</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1926, 26 September 1844.

<sup>3</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1825, 12 April 1844; Gibb #8430, 3 December 1845; Pelton #2821, 28 February 1848



tract of land to the east of Beaver Hall and built St Patrick's Church, intended to serve the city's Irish population. [Figure 6.] The corner of Beaver Hall Hill and Lagauchetière Street also attracted the church of the Zion Congregation and, by the end of the decade, St Andrew's Presbyterian. At the top of the hill, the city bought a strip of land from the Ferrier estate in 1844 to form the continuation of Dorchester Street, thereby linking Beaver Hall Square with the homes in that part of the St Laurent faubourg.<sup>4</sup> The first house in Beaver Hall Square appeared, as if on cue, in the autumn of 1844; it was soon followed by a number of others, two as far north as Phillips Square.<sup>5</sup> St Catherine Street, which formed the north side of this square, also linked the Beaver Hall area with the St Laurent faubourg.

West of the Beaver Hall area was an expanse of farmland that would not immediately be developed due to disputes between the owners. The smaller farms straddling the Dorchester escarpment were owned by merchant families, but their houses gave onto the various lanes leading up from St Antoine Street, and so had no contact with the emerging GSM. The St Antoine burial grounds, also reached by one of these lanes, was for the time being another barrier to suburban development. Access to the western part of the GSM was by Mountain Street, which was opened above the level of Dorchester Street in the 1840s to serve the lots on Redpath's lower subdivision. This junction became another focus of residential development. Charles Phillips, a merchant grocer and prominent patron of the Anglican Church - no apparent relation to Thomas Phillips - owned the large mansion below

---

<sup>4</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #880, 6 May 1844. At this time the Ferriers were in the process of building themselves a grand new house on the same site: ANQ-M, Gibb #7335, 9 March 1844

<sup>5</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #951, 27 August 1844; Gibb #13642, 23 February 1852 & #13750, 13 April 1852

Dorchester Street and much of the farmland above.<sup>6</sup> In the mid 1840s he attempted to do to the area what Redpath had done to Beaver Hall Hill by building a row of terraced houses. Bellevue Terrace proved attractive to tenants despite its odd setting in the middle of a field and despite the view of which its name boasted, which was as much of the Phillips mansion across the street as of the valley beyond. For some years Phillips let the farmhouse behind Bellevue Terrace to John Bethune, the Rector of Christ Church,<sup>7</sup> and in the early 1850s when Montreal became the centre of an Anglican diocese he donated land beside the terrace for the building of a residence for the new Bishop, Francis Fulford.<sup>8</sup> The result of this selective building and leasing was a length of street quite distinct from the comparatively crowded area just below the escarpment.

Around the corner on Mountain Street stood Mountain Terrace: seven cut-stone houses, each with a yard and shed behind it, and access to a lane. Although apparently lacking the stables and coach houses of Beaver Hall Terrace, these units were highly desirable dwellings, to judge by how quickly they sold.<sup>9</sup> [Figure 49.] This success points to a continuing readiness of the public to respond to attractive designs, although Redpath's lower subdivision could not compete as a site for terraces with the Beaver Hall area, where the shape of lots and layout of streets made for more profitable

---

<sup>6</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #258, 7 September 1841 and Gibb #5630, 6 September 1842

<sup>7</sup> The 1842 Directory lists Bethune as living at the "head of Mountain Street"; the census has him on Dorchester Street surrounded by 32 acres of farmland, which can only mean he was occupying the old Reid farm, owned by Charles Phillips.

<sup>8</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #12951, 23 May 1851 & #14264-66, 8 November 1852

<sup>9</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11486, 26 December 1848

speculative building. Only a few single or semi-detached houses appeared in the area during the 1840s, three on Mountain Street and another pair on St Catherine Street.<sup>10</sup> By the end of the decade St Catherine Street had been extended across the GSM as far as Mountain Street, but this segment of the street contained only one house, plus the Protestant Orphan Asylum, built in 1848.<sup>11</sup> [Figure 43.]

A third and very different pattern of building emerged in the 1840s along Sherbrooke Street, the GSM's other east-west thoroughfare. It consisted of a number of mansions set well back from the street, in the manner of Terrace Bank, the Redpath family home. Ostell's original designs for Redpath's land did not anticipate this preference for more isolated dwellings; his 1840 Drummond Street plan implied a series of houses facing each other on either side of a central avenue, but although one such house was built on one of the upper lots, all the lower lots were acquired by two families, the Torrances and Workmans, who formed two great strips of land leading up from Sherbrooke Street, their mansions overlooking the city rather than each other. To the east of this development, James Smith, one of the owners of the McTavish estate, refurbished the old McTavish farmhouse as an elegant mansion known as Chesnut Hall, also reached by a road leading up from Sherbrooke Street.<sup>12</sup> West of Mountain Street this pattern was repeated whereby residents purchased strips of land and built houses at some distance from the street; three appeared there in the 1840s, and a fourth was built just up

---

<sup>10</sup> The Provost family are listed in Lovell's *Directory* as living at the "head of Mountain Street" in the later 1840s.

<sup>11</sup> Gibb #8537, 14 February 1846 and #10649, 31 May 1848

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8749, 28 April 1846

from Côte des Neiges Road.<sup>13</sup> Simpson Street emerged as a more isolated enclosure, leading to three mansions, including Wetherall's "Trafalgar Lodge" and the Rose family's "Rosemount"; in 1847 a narrow passage was put through to connect Simpson Street with the lane extending eastward from Côte des Neiges Road, which contained a much older cluster of mansions, including the McCord family's Temple Grove.<sup>14</sup> During this decade only one house was built on the south side of Sherbrooke Street, on a large piece of land assembled from several of the lower "villa" lots; its orientation confirmed the subtle class distinction between the mansions of Sherbrooke Street and the more modest homes south of it, on which it turned its back.<sup>15</sup>

The Sherbrooke Street and Beaver Hall areas represented two architectural tendencies within the GSM, with the Dorchester-Mountain Street corner containing elements of both. Although these distinctions remained throughout the century, a community emerged as these areas gradually became connected, as streets were opened, spaces created, and institutions positioned which gave the GSM its character.

---

<sup>13</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #9053, 23 August 1846 and #2695, 19 July 1847; Crawford #579, 5 June 1846

<sup>14</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8714, 21 April 1846 and #11211, 9 October 1848 and #11677-78, 17 March 1849. See reference to the lane, established in 1847, ANQ-M, Gibb #15244, 5 January 1854

<sup>15</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton, 27 February 1844

## 2. *The New Town*

Until it began to attract middle class residents in the 1840s, the high ground above the Haymarket was known as Coteau St Louis, and then for a decade or so it was referred to simply as "Beaver Hall". The term "New Town" referred to the entire area to be subdivided on the flank of the mountain, as conceived by the Committee on Roads and Improvements and illustrated by Cane's 1846 map: essentially the array of projected streets below Sherbrooke Street, between the St Antoine faubourg boundary on the east and Redpath's subdivision on the west. In practice, however, the New Town developed around the Beaver Hall Hill axis and slowly spread westward, though only to about the line of the St Antoine burial grounds and the McTavish estate. Although each of these areas was slated to be subdivided, various problems delayed development until well into the 1860s, leaving a gap in the middle of the GSM. The area west of this line could be considered part of the New Town only in the loosest sense. The characteristic feature of the New Town was the terraced house, a form which came naturally to the builders and developers who took their cue from Beaver Hall Terrace and the grand design of Thomas Phillips's subdivision plan. But what David Hanna has called the "terrace landscape" of the New Town applies chiefly to the south east quarter of the GSM, despite the existence of terraced houses to the north and west of this area.<sup>16</sup>

The idea of a "New Town", however, ran much deeper than a mere geographical designation. It was first used in the 1840s' subdivision propaganda to suggest a radical departure

---

<sup>16</sup> Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*

from the built environment of the old town, with all its inherent disadvantages: narrow streets, cramped buildings, and ancient ownerships.<sup>17</sup> The obvious association was with the New Town of Edinburgh, an indirect reference to the capital of the land from which many GSM landowners and potential residents hailed. As it had done in Edinburgh, the term also implied a radical departure from the old town with its predominant Catholic and seigneurial institutions. The subtle devices used by planners to reinforce this distinction - from the very English street names to the imposition of broad new streets over the older lines of communication - have been discussed in Chapter II. Architecturally, the Montreal New Town's historic links were with Georgian Britain and Colonial America, the latter being also in keeping with the origins of another major segment of the GSM's population. By the mid nineteenth century, therefore, the notion of the New Town was, at least implicitly, an agent of acculturation, and carried with it the promise of ethnic distinction for its residents. Montreal's francophones were by no means hostile to the terrace as a form of housing, but the GSM's anglophone character took its cue from what emerged along the streets of the New Town.

Even more significant in determining this character was the appearance of the Anglican cathedral at the heart of the New Town in 1857, following the destruction by fire of the old Christ Church the previous year. The impact of the new church on the GSM can hardly be underestimated. Architecturally, it enhanced the entire area, improving the property value of surrounding lots and the view of nearby houses. [Figure 30.] Its symbolic importance, however, was far greater than the mere physical presence of a church in the suburbs, a fact that

---

<sup>17</sup> See the advertisement for McTavish estate, *Montreal Gazette*, April 1845

was obvious to the Anglican community. As the headquarters of the Montreal diocese, which included the western part of Lower Canada as well as the city itself, Christ Church elevated the status of the GSM to that of a religious centre. The position of the new cathedral, dominating Phillips Square, recalled the city's most famous monument, Notre Dame church, set prominently on Place d'Armes; structurally Christ Church would be to the New Town what Notre Dame was to the old. Its appearance, moreover, was calculated to impress: whereas the original church had been soberly classical in design, the new structure was soaring Gothic, which was becoming a popular style in Britain for public buildings, however much the more traditional forms were still preferred for houses. The overall effect of Christ Church was clear: by relocating their cathedral there Anglicans had staked the GSM as Protestant space.

The Beaver Hall area had begun to attract the builders of terraced houses in the early 1850s, but in the wake of Christ Church terraces steadily appeared along St Catherine, Cathcart, and University streets. As of the summer of 1856 work began on the grading and finishing of the streets within the Burnside estate - Burnside Place, Victoria Street, and McGill College Avenue - bringing to an end the long working life of James McGill's old farm: McGill College Avenue now ran right through the farmyard and the orchards behind it.<sup>18</sup> It proved the choicest terrace address, capitalizing on the presence of the college campus at its head and the lingering aura of McGill himself, whose house had very nearly been turned into the Anglican rectory. Instead, it was engulfed by tall narrow stone structures, beginning with Henry Bulmer's

---

<sup>18</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 29 July 1856

Mount Royal Terrace in 1858.<sup>19</sup> [Figure 50.] That year also saw work begin opening the north-south streets on the McTavish estate, the ownership of which had only been settled two years before.<sup>20</sup> The grading and finishing of these streets was complicated by the irregular terrain; Metcalfe Street had to be raised by two feet and be rounded at its edges so as to allow draining, a process which halted residential building at that point for some years, save for along St Catherine Street.<sup>21</sup>

Although the terraced house prevailed in the New Town, there were a few detached villas, one even on land that was prime for terrace building: the brewer William Dow had acquired all the lots along the east side of Phillips Place, and in 1860, after holding them for a decade and a half, built the mansion "Strathearn" on the north corner of Beaver Hall Square and turned the land behind it right to Phillips Square into gardens, even though they were in plain view of the houses across the street.<sup>22</sup> [Figure 59.] This allocation of space went against the spirit of Thomas Phillips' grand design, but it assured the Dow family a large patch of greenery while retaining a commanding, yet unobtrusive presence at the heart of the New Town. Other mansions were built on land that had not been subdivided. The 1854 Gibb house was a neat stone structure set in an wide yard, protected by a gate from St Catherine Street just east of

---

<sup>19</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #18300, 14 December 1858

<sup>20</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #1623, 23 August 1856

<sup>21</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #9417, 16 September 1859; ANQ-M, MCA 601, 53/168

<sup>22</sup> ANQ-M, Ross #815, 12 January 1844; Smith #6588, 26 April 1860



Phillips Square.<sup>23</sup> A more substantial mansion was the Stephens family's "Homestead", built in 1857 on Dorchester Street, which was had just been extended westward across the small farms straddling the escarpment.<sup>24</sup> The owner of one of these farms, Archibald Ferguson, built a terrace on that part of his estate that fell on the north side of Dorchester Street; the Fergusons then moved into one of the units, and disposed of the house and grounds that lay on the southern part.<sup>25</sup> The 1850s and early 1860s also saw the appearance of a number of non-residential buildings in the New Town. At the corner of Dorchester and University streets stood Burnside Hall, which McGill had erected for teaching in 1853.<sup>26</sup> [Figure 39.] The St James's Club, the city's most fashionable gathering place for gentlemen, was built on the west side of University Street in 1863, turning this sedate tree-lined corner into a pocket of Pall Mall.<sup>27</sup> [Figure 17.] Further north, a very different structure came to occupy nearly the entire block bounded by Cathcart, University, and St Catherine streets, and McGill College Avenue: the Crystal Palace, built in honour of the Prince of Wales' visit to Montreal in 1860.<sup>28</sup> Despite its name, which was a reference to the hall of the Great Exhibition held in London nine years

---

<sup>23</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15048, 4 November 1853 and #15205, 22 December 1853 and other contracts through the early part of 1854.

<sup>24</sup> ANQ-M, Isaacson #4950f, 12 November 1857

<sup>25</sup> 1861 census #4335

<sup>26</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14610-15, 7 April 1853. Burnside Hall was destroyed by fire and rebuilt; ANQ-M, Hunter #1234, 3 May 1856

<sup>27</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #8191, 2 April 1863

<sup>28</sup> A portion of this block had also been given to the Natural History Society for their museum, built in 1859: ANQ-M, Gibb #18203, 9 October 1858

earlier, Montreal's Crystal Palace actually contained very little glass; instead, its cast iron frame was filled in with brick and other decorative elements.<sup>29</sup> During the prince's visit a great arch flanked St Catherine Street, turning it into a kind of triumphal way leading to the exhibition. [Figure 45.] The prince and his entourage gave a dignity to the proceedings; the Crystal Palace even provided the setting for a royal banquet. The exhibition proved a success, but once it was over, this monstrous 180' x 120' structure served no purpose, and stood for years, gradually crumbling, until it was torn down.

These New Town institutions served to attract ever greater numbers of terrace builders and residents. By 1860 there were some 140 terraced housing units in the New Town, not including those of the original Beaver Hall Terrace; the end of the following decade would see an additional 120.<sup>30</sup> These numbers were relatively small compared to the space available along the streets of the New Town; denser construction would have to await the 1870s and 80s. Later building, however, lacked the unity of the terraces, which attracted residents not only by their appearance, but by their names - "Staffordshire Place", "Wellington Terrace", "St George's Place" - all reinforcing the GSM's projected character. That so many of these names were specifically Scottish - Balmoral, Argyle, Dunedin - was an indication of the growing romanticism, and innocuousness, of Highland ancestry. By the 1870s these names began to disappear, giving way simply to a street address. The need to create an image had passed; the British, or "anglo-saxon" character of the GSM was established, and appropriate residents were arriving thick

---

<sup>29</sup> Lella, "The Montreal Crystal Palace", p.2. See also Triggs et al, *Victoria Bridge: The Vital Link*.

<sup>30</sup> Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, pp.182-183

and fast. The 1870s also saw this image spread beyond the New Town as the rest of the GSM took physical shape.

### 3. McGill College and Environs

McGill was crucial to the development of the GSM, not only as an educational institution but as a space in its own right, and a shaper of its surroundings. Despite its long history as a college in the making, and the importance of the Royal Institution as a landowning body in the 1840s, McGill, like the New Town itself, was more properly a creation of the later 1850s and 60s. When John William Dawson arrived at the college in 1855 to serve as principal he found not the flourishing institution he had been led to expect, but

a wilderness of excavators' and masons' rubbish, overgrown with weeds and bushes. The grounds were unfenced, and pastured at will by herds of cattle, which not only cropped the grass, but browsed on the shrubs, leaving unhurt only one great elm, which still stands as "the founders tree".<sup>31</sup>

Such recollections, of course, must be seen in context. The cattle in question actually belonged to a number of professors, who kept them for additional income.<sup>32</sup> Although there was no fence around the campus as such, something of the original fence dividing the Burnside estate from its neighbours must have survived, even though adjacent lands were

---

<sup>31</sup> JW Dawson, *Fifty Years of Work in Canada*, as cited in Frost, *McGill University*, p.198

<sup>32</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 27 October 1847 & 13 April 1853. MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 4 April 1848

being turned over to building lots. The mason's rubbish was the more telling sign of decay, as the Arts Building had been left incomplete and was used only for professors' residences, including that of the Dawson family. Teaching in the Faculty of Arts took place in Burnside Hall, a far more convenient and better appointed building, while the Medical and Law faculties held classes on Côté Street and the courthouse respectively. It would take a concerted effort on the part of Dawson and McGill's patrons over the next decade to restore the campus as the heart of the college.

Whatever their condition, the extensive grounds lying just outside Dawson's own home were an obvious focus for his naturalist's curiosity and pragmatist's tinkering. He hired a botanist, George Shepherd, to plant trees and ornamental shrubs over the entire campus, most of which were donated by various college patrons but others grown on the site in an improvised arboretum.<sup>33</sup> In 1863 work began on a small "Botanic Garden" in the south-east corner of the campus, completing the landscape with a floral display, a "Graduates' Walk" and the "founder's elm" that had so impressed Dawson.<sup>34</sup> The passage up to the Arts Building was enhanced by a row of elm and maple trees on each side, and the road itself was paved.<sup>35</sup> [Figure 40.] A fence along Sherbrooke Street was installed, with a gate halfway along at the top of McGill College Avenue, and a house for the gatekeeper just beside

---

<sup>33</sup> MUA, RG.2 - c.3: Dawson's Papers, B5/16, B6/24, B8/20. Collard, *Oldest McGill*, pp.76-77

<sup>34</sup> MUA, Scrapbooks, vol.I, p.22-23. MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors' Minute Book, 23 May 1856

<sup>35</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 24 April 1856

it.<sup>36</sup> The fence and gate marked the extent of college property, but also defined the campus as a place apart, a somewhat rarefied space which was distinct from the developing residential area around it yet linked to it visually. This landscaping had little to do with the actual teaching needs of the college, which functioned quite well elsewhere. Nevertheless, it was this space that proved the real making of McGill: the campus now cried out to be exploited as a setting for higher education.

The obvious next step was to restore the Arts Building, and complete its construction along the lines of Ostell's original design, which included a west wing and connecting corridors.<sup>37</sup> The cost of this was naturally exorbitant. McGill's long tradition of private patronage began when William Molson, who had recently been made a college governor, agreed to subsidize this project.<sup>38</sup> [Figure 41.] Molson Hall, as the west wing was called, and the other additions provided enough space for the entire Arts Faculty, which by then included natural science and engineering; in 1862 it moved back to the campus. The Arts Building now occupied a stunning site at the head of a tree-lined avenue, overlooking landscaped grounds and the New Town beyond. Moreover, it became a powerful symbol: more than any other institution, including Christ Church, Ostell's octagonal tower in its monumental setting defined the GSM as Protestant anglophone space. [Figures 40. & 42.] It remained only to bring the rest of the university to the campus for McGill to be united. This

---

<sup>36</sup> The decision had been made before Dawson's arrival: MUA, RG.4 - c.2: Royal Institution Minute Book, 18 January 1855. See also Winfred Jhu, "The Early Buildings of McGill University", p.17

<sup>37</sup> MUA, RG.2 - c.4: Dawson's Papers, 1856 Memo, 10/26

<sup>38</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.437/11087: commission appointing trustees, 30 April 1857

would happen in part in 1872 when the Medical Faculty was given a new building at the north east corner of the campus, although the Law Faculty would wait for the 20th century before coming to the higher ground. [Figure 48.]

The landscaping of the campus also had the effect of enhancing the community around it. The prospect of permanent greenery coincided with the construction of several mansions along McTavish Street, beginning with the Lyman family's "Thornhill" in 1859. The area, including Upper Peel Street, had been subdivided in 1853 in the wake of plans to build the nearby reservoir, but despite the completion of that engineering project three years later, owners of lots were slow to put up homes. The new campus provided them with a finer view than the "rubbish" they would have seen (according to Dawson's description) when they had purchased the lots. Their view of the reservoir would also have been impressive, but not so aesthetically pleasing until it was arrayed with a boardwalk, railing, and lamps; these features, though promised, had not yet been installed in September 1863 when Hugh Allan, who had just built his palatial home "Ravenscrag" above the reservoir, wrote the city a letter of protest.<sup>39</sup> [Figure 7.] The reservoir was of less concern to those living at the base of McTavish Street, where the McGill campus with its elegant gates [Figure 42.] had enhanced that stretch of Sherbrooke Street. One mansion, "Dilcoosha", was built right at the edge of the campus, where the landscaped grounds served as a kind of extended gardens to the house. In 1860 the GSM's grandest terrace, the Prince of Wales, was built on the north side of Sherbrooke Street between McTavish and Upper Peel streets.<sup>40</sup> [Figure 58.] Two other fine rows of houses were

---

<sup>39</sup> For the text of the letter see Giulio Maffini, "The McTavish Pumphouse", p.4

<sup>40</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #14033-40, 24 November 1860

built a few years later immediately behind the Prince of Wales Terrace, forming a block that was architecturally distinct for that part of the higher ground, which would continue to attract detached villas.

The east side of the McGill campus took shape at a similar rate. The boundary between Royal Institution land and that of its eastern neighbours was along the line of University Street, and given pressure to extend this street northwards for subdivision in the later 1850s the college governors had to decide how to develop their side of it. One possibility was to extend Victoria Street northward also, sacrificing a strip of land along the eastern edge of the campus to form an entire block for building lots. Dawson, in the process of landscaping the grounds, had no objection to this scheme so long as houses along the extension of Victoria Street facing the campus should have uniform facades, and he saw access to the college grounds as a desirable feature of such houses.<sup>41</sup> The Royal Institution abandoned this scheme by 1863 and began selling lots along the western side of University Street only. The houses that soon emerged on these lots did not of course face the campus, but rather, like "Dilcoosha", used it as an extended rear garden.<sup>42</sup> Houses were also built further up the hill, including a number of terraces on the east side of the street. McGill would eventually expand into this area, acquiring many of the lots along the western side of Upper University Street for the

---

<sup>41</sup> MUA, RG.2 - c.5: Dawson's papers, 46B/2

<sup>42</sup> This was the concern expressed two decades earlier by George Mountain when the Royal Institution first considered selling lots on the western side of University Street. Like Dawson, he was concerned that the college - in this case the portion of the Burnside estate below Sherbrooke Street, still considered integral to the campus - should not look out on the back sides of houses, and recommended a plan whereby their facades should frame the college's open space.

series of science buildings it began to erect in the 1890s, and other lots for the newly affiliated Diocesan, Wesleyan, and Congregationalist Theological colleges. It did the same on McTavish Street, where the Presbyterian College was built in the 1870s and the Redpath Library in the 1890s.

#### 4. *Dominion Square*

The land between Mansfield and Stanley streets, and the St Antoine burial grounds below it, remained largely vacant until the early 1860s, save for a ribbon of development along St Catherine Street. Peel and Metcalfe streets were opened as far south as the burial grounds, but further extension was impossible until the latter's fate was decided. The Catholic cemetery had closed in 1854, a new site having been found in Côte des Neiges on the far side of Mount Royal; the smaller cemetery beside it used by the Shearith Israel congregation since 1772 had also reached capacity and in 1858 it was closed and the grounds sold.<sup>43</sup> With the creation of new cemeteries, the old graveyards could be absorbed into the GSM's overall design; in 1864 a plan was launched to open the remaining streets, including Dorchester Street which until that point had been divided in two segments. The actual development of the former cemetery, now two open blocks straddling Dorchester Street, had to await the exhumation of bodies, a process that was itself delayed when fears of contamination led to a popular campaign to stop this work.<sup>44</sup> Despite the delay,

---

<sup>43</sup> Blaustein et al, "The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue"

<sup>44</sup> Collard, *Montreal Yesterdays*, pp.64-65



speculators built terraces along the nearby sections of Peel and Metcalfe streets. Connecting the two segments of Dorchester Street had the effect of opening the area immediately to the west of the cemetery to new building, including the American Presbyterian Church, and a Methodist branch chapel. East of the cemetery, Knox and St Paul's Presbyterian churches emerged, and on the northern side, Erskine Church. The last Protestant church to be built in the area was St George's, which laid its cornerstone on the west side of the open ground in 1869.

In that same year, the city announced it would purchase the two cemetery blocks and turn them into a square. This decision had less to do with the controversy over exhuming bodies and more to do with the growing appreciation for the value of open spaces. Until then, the notion of a public area at the centre of the GSM was a foreign one. The success of Beaver Hall and Phillips squares at attracting residents might have alerted developers to the benefits of open spaces, but no other GSM subdivision contained a square and no attempt was made to turn a block over for common use in the manner of many planned communities.<sup>45</sup> In the 1850s and early 60s GSM landowners thought foremost in terms of the profit to be made from the booming demand for suburban housing; every inch of land within the GSM was at least implicitly slated for subdivision, including the St Antoine cemeteries. The creation of the McGill campus was possible only because the land had been reserved by law for use as a college; even so, much of that property had been whittled away, with legislative approval, and it was only due to Dawson's botanical interests that the project to landscape the rest was undertaken at all. But with so many churches and other institutional buildings in

---

<sup>45</sup> Kostof, *The City Shaped*: Chapter 2 ("The Grid"); also, Reps, *The Forgotten Frontier*

the GSM by the end of the 1860s, the earlier sense that the GSM would be exclusively residential was clearly not true; given the Victorian delight in showing off public buildings, the creation of a square on the site of the cemeteries seemed highly appropriate.

It was also a good business move, especially for the area's landowners. The Torrance and Lunn families owned a 250'x 200' lot of land at the head of the cemetery which they sold to the city to form part of the new square.<sup>46</sup> This meant that the Peel and Metcalfe street terraces, and Erskine Church which fronted on St Catherine Street, could now face an attractive open space. The Torrances and Lunn also owned a small but strategic piece of land at the corner of Dorchester and Peel streets, acquired from the Shearith Israel congregation after its cemetery was closed; with this and other land they had received from the McTavish estate they formed a large block, which they sold at great profit in 1875 to the developers of the Windsor Hotel.<sup>47</sup>

Monumental buildings helped define Dominion Square as physical space, but nineteenth century squares had to be more than a mere gap in the built environment. Landscaping open spaces was part of the Victorian fascination for civilizing nature, and for introducing civilized nature into cities. As of the 1840s many of Montreal's squares, including Place d'Armes, were transformed by the addition of trees, flowers, statues, and fountains, but it was not until the 1870s that open spaces large enough to count as parks began to appear. The notable exception was Viger Square, created at mid-century as a public garden on the swampy ground north-east of the old town; it was partly in response to this place, so popular with

---

<sup>46</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #1623, 23 August 1856 and #7797, 5 January 1863

<sup>47</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #18861, 5 December 1859

francophones who lived near it, that the GSM promoted the creation of Dominion Square as an anglophone counterpart.<sup>48</sup> Over the course of the 1870s the square was transformed by the laying out of walkways and the planting of trees and shrubs.<sup>49</sup> [Figure 11.] The square's ordered greenery provided a backdrop to the Windsor Hotel's formal balls and other fashionable social events. [Figure 13.] In 1882 the city held the first winter carnival in Dominion Square, which was intended to attract people of all ethnic backgrounds despite its GSM location; only after threats of alternative francophone events did the anglophone organizers consent to hold the carnival in other more convenient and less culturally specific places.<sup>50</sup>

Dominion Square was not entirely Protestant, however. Visible at the south-east corner of the cemetery was the Roman Catholic Bishop's palace, which until then had been considered to lie "off St Antoine Street", according to the Directory. [Figure 11.] It had been built in the early 1850s by the Bishop of Montreal, Ignace Bourget, who wanted to establish an episcopal foothold in the St Antoine faubourg.<sup>51</sup> The Cathedral of St Jacques on St Denis Street had burned down in the course of the great fire of 1852, and it was the bishop's intention to model its replacement after St Peter's in Rome: a quarter-scale replica from the *baldechino* to the row of

---

<sup>48</sup> Laplante, *Les parcs de Montreal*, p.51. Laplante also describes (pp.32-38) the development of a number of Montreal places (public spaces, including planned squares such as Place d'Armes) into squares (areas with landscaped greenery in the centre) in the 1840s and 50s.

<sup>49</sup> Marc Choko, *Les grandes places publiques de Montréal*, p.153

<sup>50</sup> Dufresne, "Le Carnaval d'hiver de Montréal", pp.39-40

<sup>51</sup> Young, *Promoters and Politicians*, pp.31-32

saints across the facade.<sup>52</sup> He was also determined to counter Protestantism's apparent monopoly over GSM space. In August 1857, shortly after the Anglicans began buying the Phillips Square lots for their new cathedral, Bourget purchased a 250 by 600 foot lot next to the cemetery between the palace and the recently extended Dorchester Street; this huge space gave plenty of scope for such an ambitious architectural scheme.<sup>53</sup> The cornerstone was laid in August 1870, and the vast building rose steadily over the next quarter century. [Figure 10.]

In 1885 the last spike was driven into the Canadian Pacific Railway, and within a few years Ontario, the prairies, the Rocky mountains, and the west coast beyond were connected by rail to the GSM. The CPR's directorship, who tended to be GSM residents, wished for a more appropriate site for their central passenger terminus than Dalhousie Station at the eastern edge of the old town; apart from it making sense for westbound trains to leave from the city's west end, it was only fitting that a grand new terminal building should serve the homes and institutions of the anglophone elite. The Grand Trunk's passenger station had stood for over three decades on Bonaventure Street south of the GSM, a convenient but not especially striking location. The CPR chose Dominion Square for their terminus; the massive greystone structure that rose on the south-west corner of the square next to St George's church, just down from the Windsor Hotel, and facing the Catholic bishop's palace and cathedral, was ready to receive its ceremonial wagon of dignitaries in February 1889.<sup>54</sup> Windsor Station, named after the street on which it opened but

---

<sup>52</sup> Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, pp.207-212

<sup>53</sup> ANQ-M, Easton #6231, 7 August 1857

<sup>54</sup> Pinard, *Montreal: son histoire, son architecture*: tome 1, p.284

more symbolically after the royal family, confirmed Dominion Square's role as the monumental heart of anglophone Montreal - despite the presence of the cathedral. [Figure 14.]

### *5. St Catherine and Sherbrooke Streets*

Until the creation of Dominion Square had opened the cemeteries up to east-west traffic, the western part of the GSM was linked to the New Town chiefly via St Catherine Street, which by then contained buildings along almost its entire length. The area, which had originally developed in relative isolation around the Dorchester-Mountain street axis, gradually spread eastward as far as the boundary with the cemeteries and the yet undeveloped McTavish estate. Redpath's "villa" lots north of St Catherine Street had attracted a number of villas by the early 1860s; those along the east side of Drummond Street had gardens extending right to the McTavish boundary; Stanley Street was not opened until the 1870s. The southern part of Redpath's subdivision contained only a few terraced houses. In 1863 the availability of land there attracted the promoters of the Victoria Skating Rink, who developed two lots near Dorchester Street into an indoor arena. A handful of larger homes were built on the west side of Mountain Street, but beyond them to the west lay a large expanse of undeveloped land reaching to Côte des Neiges Road, save for the home of the Major family, built in 1859 on one of the Mackenzie estate lots.

Most of this vacant land belonged to Charles Phillips, who allowed part of it to be used as a playing field for the

Lacrosse and Cricket clubs.<sup>55</sup> In the early 1860s Phillips built the church of St James the Apostle in the middle of this open ground, half way between Dorchester and Sherbrooke streets. He and the city's Anglican leadership were optimistic that the area would soon help populate the area, but even at that date the church seemed isolated.<sup>56</sup> When the foundation was laid the church could only be reached by Bishop Street or the lane on the other side of Bellevue Terrace called Crescent Street, but by the time it was completed in 1864 St Catherine Street was opened across this field and the nave of the church was extended to meet it. [Figure 31.] In 1866 Mackay Street was opened along the line of the narrow McKay estate, and a corner lot next to the church was used to build a rectory.<sup>57</sup> Although the new church did not succeed in immediately attracting large numbers of residents to the area - the fields continued to be used for sports until the later 1880s - St James the Apostle did serve to draw traffic westward along St Catherine Street.

By the mid-1860s St Catherine Street had become a major thoroughfare. In 1864 the Montreal City Passenger Railway laid tracks along it as far west as Mountain Street and began regular horse-drawn streetcar service.<sup>58</sup> This development brought the GSM into closer contact with the bustling St Laurent faubourg to the east, given that the tram line ran to St Laurent Street and from there south to the city, rather than down what had been the New Town's principal artery, Beaver Hall Hill. The tram also helped transform St Catherine

---

<sup>55</sup> Metcalfe, "The Evolution of Organized Physical Recreation in Montreal", p.157

<sup>56</sup> Shatford, *The Year of Jubilee*, p.7

<sup>57</sup> ANQ-M, John Carr Griffin #27173, 22 November 1866

<sup>58</sup> Pinard, *Montréal: son histoire, son architecture*: tome 3, p.386

Street from a residential into a commercial thoroughfare. Small shops began to appear during the 1870s, especially in the neighbourhood of Phillips Square; the Art Association Gallery, built in 1879 on the east side of the square, even leased its ground floor to shopkeepers to help support the running costs of exhibitions.<sup>59</sup> The first major retail store to appear in the GSM was that of Henry Morgan, who in 1890 acquired the best site on the whole street: the entire northern side of Phillips Square. The store's elegant triple-arched facade recalled that of the Art Association, but it was taller by two storeys; it was also more massive than Christ Church beside it, somewhat diminishing the cathedral's impact on surrounding space.<sup>60</sup> [Figure 15.] The huge Birks jewellery store, built four years later on the west side of Phillips Square, served to attract a particularly select range of customers. [Figure 16.] By 1896 commerce had spread as far west as Mountain Street, where long-time GSM resident John Ogilvy relocated his department store. While St Catherine Street never became a financial hub, it was the ideal place for a local branch office; the Bank of Montreal built its "west end" branch on the corner of Mansfield Street in 1889. Demolition of housing to make way for commercial establishments was taking place as early as 1880, when Hugh Allan began to tear down the units of Balmoral Terrace; Morgan's also necessitated the destruction of a number of homes in Phillips Square.<sup>61</sup>

If St Catherine Street gradually became synonymous with commerce, Sherbrooke Street emerged as the GSM's most elegant

---

<sup>59</sup> Propst, "The Architecture of the Art Association of Montreal", p.5

<sup>60</sup> Pinard, *Montréal: son histoire, son architecture*: tome 5, p.442

<sup>61</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CA 601 - 90,58

residential avenue. The legacy of 1840s construction was stately mansions set well back in spacious grounds; right up to the 1880s the characteristic feature of the western part of Sherbrooke Street was its ornate, wrought-iron fences and gates. Behind the gates were either the drives leading up to grand mansions, such as the one to the Linton family's "Mount View" near Simpson Street, [Figure 63.] or the private lanes giving access to the properties on the higher ground. The gate at the foot of the lane that would later become Ontario Avenue had been installed by Redpath in 1845 as a means of ensuring the privacy of his family and his neighbours; it also provided a striking status symbol.<sup>62</sup> [Figure 8.] Further east along Sherbrooke Street, however, houses tended to be set much closer to the street, giving it a more enclosed appearance than the segment below Terrace Bank. Imposing town houses, such as the Prince of Wales Terrace and the new homes of the Drummond and Abbott families, proved that the grand mansion set in spacious grounds was not the only model of housing attractive to the GSM's wealthiest residents. In 1870 the Hamilton house was built on the corner of Stanley Street; though it was a large mansion, its residents had merely to descend a few steps from their front door to be on the sidewalk. [Figure 64.] As the large estates which had been formed in the 1840s were broken up, mansions set close to the street gradually began to emerge in front of the older villas. The Forget and Craig houses, for example, between Stanley and Drummond streets, were built at the base of the Workman estate, subdivided in 1879.<sup>63</sup> [Figure 66.] The presence of mansions set relatively close together on both sides of the street made Sherbrooke Street a showpiece of middle-class residential architecture. The planting of elm trees along its

---

<sup>62</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #2138, 2 July 1845

<sup>63</sup> ANQ-M, Cartotheque: MCA 601 - 53, 229-232



entire length completed the image of a stately *boulevard* by century's end. [Figure 9.]

### 6. Mount Royal

The landscaping of the mountain summit in the 1870s was undertaken in the same spirit that had given Dominion Square its shrubs and walkways, and Sherbrooke Street its elm trees: a belief that natural elements had a vital role to play in urban environments. This attitude had its roots in a romantic faith in the restorative powers of nature, a sense that unspoiled wilderness was an antidote to the ills caused by urban life. The High Victorian reading of this notion had both religious and pragmatic connotations, influenced by the rise in scientific curiosity and given a particular urgency by industrialization. Nature was a moral force, as well as a spiritual one, and it was the role of science to spread its gospel. According to North America's leading landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, the best way to impart the benefits of nature to urban people was to create public parks.<sup>64</sup> Olmsted had already provided parks in numerous American cities; by 1874 he was asked by Montreal's city council to design one for Mount Royal. Olmsted was at first dismayed by the dense forest and rough terrain of the mountain summit, which did not seem to lend themselves to the creation of a park, but he soon warmed to the challenge and produced a plan that opened Mount Royal to public access without

---

<sup>64</sup> Kostof, *America by Design*, p.216

disrupting the wilderness.<sup>65</sup>

Until that time, however, the mountain was anything but a public place. It remained the property of a small number of landowners who jealously guarded access to it. The private road leading up to Terrace Bank continued beyond the house up into the forest; the forbidding gate on Sherbrooke Street ensured the Redpaths' private access. The McCords, and other families whose homes lay just off Côte des Neiges Road, enjoyed similar access. James Smith retained the strip of the old McTavish estate running north from his home, Chesnut Hall, where a short walk would bring one to the secluded tomb of Simon McTavish. Hugh Allan acquired the rest of the fur trader's estate above the top of Upper Peel and McTavish streets, where he built Ravenscrag, a home that left little immediate room for future neighbours.<sup>66</sup> [Figure 62.] The landowner with the greatest investment in the mountain was Hosea Ballou Smith, who purchased the upper part of the Mackenzie estate and built a retreat overlooking the new cemeteries on the opposite slope.<sup>67</sup> Such people were hardly likely to volunteer to open this wilderness up to the general public; ironically, however, transforming the mountain into a public place eventually proved an ideal way for the GSM elite to reserve this environment for their own use.

In the late 1850s a group of promoters, incorporated as the Mountain Boulevard Company, sought to create a public road which would "run at the back of all the various properties, at about the level of the McTavish Monument, rising a little...as

---

<sup>65</sup> Murray, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park", p.166

<sup>66</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15273, 17 January 1854 and #15388, 3 March 1854

<sup>67</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #8315, 13 October 1845

it approaches the Côte des Neiges Road".<sup>68</sup> Another branch of the boulevard would "start from the McTavish Monument and run across the top of the mountain", connecting the GSM directly with the new cemetery on its northern flank. A third branch would connect the boulevard with a proposed northward extension of University Street.<sup>69</sup> [Map 48.] The Company's steering committee contained such prominent mountain landowners as John McCord, Hosea Ballou Smith, and John Redpath, each of whom had a vested interest in the use of the mountain. Without jeopardizing the access enjoyed by these families, the proposed boulevard would allow the residents of the GSM to reach the summit via Peel and University Streets.<sup>70</sup> The Mountain Boulevard did not materialize, however. Allan, the one mountain landowner conspicuously absent from the Company's leadership, built Ravenscrag in 1861; this blocked the proposed road connecting the McTavish monument with University Street.

A decade later, however, as the practice of landscaping urban places took hold on the Victorian imagination, a new scheme was put forward. As had been the case with Dominion Square in 1869, the city would need to purchase the land in order to turn the still forested portions of the mountain into a park. The willingness of the city to do so meant that mountain landowners could make handsome profits selling their land without surrendering their enjoyment of the summit. The project was criticized, notably by liberal politician John Young, for the excessive expense of public money to purchase

---

<sup>68</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 28 July 1859. The boulevard would also extend westwards of Côte des Neiges Road, where several landowners planned to subdivide their estates. This would be the only segment of the scheme to be implemented; today the road is called "The Boulevard".

<sup>69</sup> See ANQ-M, CA 601-53, 419

<sup>70</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: CA 601 - 53, 419

mountain properties.<sup>71</sup> This view was echoed in some popular feeling: one correspondent to the *Montreal Star* pointed out that without a carriage, ordinary families would find it difficult to visit the mountain.<sup>72</sup> Despite the criticism, the city proceeded to negotiate with the landowners. The Redpath family, though eager enough to part with their vast holdings at the summit, held out over the parcel of land just above Terrace Bank, and in the end the city did not buy it.<sup>73</sup> Ravenscrag was obviously untouchable. [Map 47.] But by 1874 the bulk of mountain land had been acquired, and the actual landscaping of the park could proceed.

In the extensive literature on Olmsted and his work, the Montreal councillors are invariably presented as inefficient and obtuse, incapable of transcending local petty differences so as to allow a scheme to be implemented that respected Olmsted's artistic vision.<sup>74</sup> That local rivalries and conflicting interests should have complicated a project such as this is hardly surprising, especially given the proposed park's location at the crest of the GSM, and its identification with its former owners. Olmsted himself sensed that the councillors and many citizens were indifferent to the project, associating him with the interests of the former mountain landowners.<sup>75</sup> He interpreted this attitude as an

---

<sup>71</sup> Collard, *The Days That Are No More*, p.265

<sup>72</sup> Letter to the *Montreal Star*, 25 July 1871, cited in Metcalfe, "The Evolution of Organized Physical Recreation in Montreal," p.155

<sup>73</sup> Murray, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park," p.170

<sup>74</sup> See for example Thomas Emerson Todd, *Frederick Law Olmsted* (1982) pp.115-118; also Murray, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park.

<sup>75</sup> Olmsted, *Mount Royal, Montreal*, p.7

inability to appreciate his vision of Mount Royal Park as a natural haven, not a popular playground:

If [the mountain] is to be cut up with roads and walks, spotted with shelters, and streaked with staircases; if it is to be strewn with lunch papers, beer bottles, sardine cans and paper collars; and if thousands of people are to seek their recreation upon it unrestrainedly, each according to his special tastes, it is likely to lose whatever of natural charm you first saw in it. It is true, moreover, that when the mountain is suitably fitted for public use and traversed by gaily-dressed throngs of ladies and children, polished carriages, and highly groomed and caparisoned horses, that much of its original nature will appear comparatively rude, harsh, incongruous, and dreary.<sup>76</sup>

The mountain's former owners could hardly have said it better. In many ways, Olmsted did represent the interests of the GSM elite, who were to be the chief benefactors of the new park. As many had predicted, the mountain was too far away for most families from other parts of the city to reach it without a carriage.

Mount Royal's influence on the development of the GSM was indirect, until the end of the century. The mansions built just below it during the later 1870s and 80s did not connect with the park itself; by 1890, however, the completion of Pine Avenue across the base of the park allowed the area nearby to be developed as real estate. At one point the developers of the Royal Victoria Hospital considered a site immediately to the west of Ravenscrag, but opted instead for a site further to the east.<sup>77</sup> Their first choice, the strip of land that had once belonged to James Smith, became the GSM's main access point to Mount Royal, as it is today. Across from this

---

<sup>76</sup> Olmsted, *Mount Royal, Montreal*, p.26

<sup>77</sup> Lewis, *The Royal Victoria Hospital*, p.10

parkland on the south side of Pine Avenue, stately homes began to emerge as of the 1890s, such as the two Meredith family mansions. The highest portion of Peel Street also saw much building in the wake of the opening of the park entrance at its head, beginning with the Ross mansion which was completed by 1893. The landscaping of Mount Royal encouraged mansion builders to go ever higher up the mountain; whereas once landowners had been wary of encroachment, now development could take place right to the park's boundary without threatening nearby residents' access to the summit and its beauty.

## Chapter VI - The GSM and its Institutions

As Chapter V has shown, institutions played a key role in shaping the GSM; buildings such as Christ Church, McGill College, the Crystal Palace, St James's Club, and the Windsor Hotel served as focal points of urban space, attracting residents, activities, and other institutions to their vicinity. They also had the effect of giving such space a specific character, that of a fundamentally anglophone and Protestant community. To an extent, this character was evident from the beginning: even before planners were designing the New Town, the mountainside was dominated by anglophone landowners and one major Protestant institution, McGill College. Nevertheless, the GSM was essentially conceived as a residential suburb, an area distinct in terms of the class and ethnic composition of its inhabitants, but still linked socially and culturally to Montreal as a whole. There was little sense in the early plans that well-established institutions would seek to relocate to the GSM from the old town. The only institutions to build in the GSM during the 1840s were new ones, such as the High School and the Unitarian Church, which had had no proper home until then. The later 1850s, however, and especially the 1860s and 70s, witnessed an exodus of institutions from the old town that rebuilt in the GSM. The decision to do so was in each case deliberate, an implicitly political act; relocation was not about the convenience of local residents, but about creating a tight, culturally self-contained community and all but shunning the rest of Montreal. The result was a city that was physically divided along ethnic lines at most levels of public life. By considering the experiences of a number of key

institutions, this chapter will show how the GSM became the religious, educational, and cultural centre of anglophone Montreal.

### *1. Places of Worship*

The relocation of churches from the old town to the GSM illustrates the importance of culture within the new community more effectively than the transfer of any other institution. Despite some early co-operation between faiths in the use of buildings, churches represented specific doctrines and ethnic identity, and said a great deal about an individual's place in society. Even more fundamental was the middle-class Protestant sense of having a stake in the church fabric, its administration, and upkeep. Renting a pew, or in the case of wealthier members, having made donations for windows, bells, and organs, increased this sense of participation. St George's Anglican church was technically a "proprietary chapel", meaning that members became co-proprietors upon making a contribution to the fabric, with one vote in all proceedings for every £12.10s they spent.<sup>1</sup> Disputes over religious tradition could become battles over church property, as in the 1840s when a group of old-school Presbyterians within the St Gabriel Street church challenged the right of the minister and congregation, who were moving away from traditional Scottish practice, to occupy the church and make use of its accoutrements; this led to a twenty-year legal

---

<sup>1</sup> Gower-Rees, *Historical Sketch of St George's Church*, p.8



case, which ended in a formal split of the congregation.<sup>2</sup> Such ruptures served to entrench members, old and new, in their respective buildings. All the more significant, then, was the speed with which congregations chose to relocate in the GSM.

When the Anglican cathedral was rebuilt in the New Town in 1857, there was no real precedent for making such a dramatic move. The Unitarian church, built on Beaver Hall Hill in 1845, and St Patrick's Catholic church, built at the same time just above it for the city's Irish community, were new institutions who found location in the New Town appropriate. The two churches that did relocate to the Beaver Hall area during its first decade, the Zion Congregation and St Andrew's Presbyterian, had recently experienced a surge in membership - the former as a rising new denomination, the latter having received much of the conservative element that had fled St Gabriel's following the 1840s' dispute over the church - and so needed larger quarters. But relocation was not the only option for an expanding congregation: in 1845 the Methodists tore down their main church on St James Street, replacing it with a much larger building on the same site, capable of holding 2000 people.<sup>3</sup> There were also plenty of sites within the city offering land suitable for church building. The Free Church, which also broke from the Presbyterian mainstream in the 1840s, made no attempt to establish their new congregation in the GSM, even though a leading member of the movement, John Redpath, was offering large lots for sale there; they opted instead for Lagauchetière Street in the St Laurent faubourg, near where

---

<sup>2</sup> Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, Chapter XXIX

<sup>3</sup> Jaques, *Chronicle of the St James Methodist Church*, p.34

the Scots Secession church had stood for close to a decade.

Nevertheless, when the old Anglican cathedral on Notre Dame Street burned to the ground in December 1856 the diocesan leaders decided not to rebuild on the same site, but to erect a brand new church in the GSM. This decision was clearly not made in order to serve those Anglicans living in the area, of whom there were very few; John S McCord and George Moffatt, who formed a committee to find a site, were not residents of the GSM *per se*. The "west end" already had a branch Anglican church in the form of St George's chapel, which had been established in 1842 on St Joseph Street just to the west of McGill Street, to relieve the pressure on the old Christ Church; by the 1850s the membership of St George's included the leading Anglican families residing in the western and northern sections of Montreal.<sup>4</sup> The committee, however, were "resolved to anticipate the movement of the population towards the suburbs", even though for the time being the new location of Christ Church would have been inconvenient to most of the congregation.<sup>5</sup>

McCord and Moffatt first made an offer to the Royal Institution for an entire block of lots from their subdivision, significantly the block that contained James McGill's old home.<sup>6</sup> The plan was to build the cathedral on the south side of Sherbrooke Street, facing the college, and use the house as a residence for the rector or bishop. This scheme would have dramatically enhanced the appearance of the

---

<sup>4</sup> In the list of church wardens which Gower-Rees (*Historical Sketch of St George's Church*, p.65) provides are such prominent GSM names as Moffatt, Gault, and Phillips, all of whom lived away from the city centre by the 1850s.

<sup>5</sup> Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.214

<sup>6</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 27 January 1857

campus and increased the value of the other lots, but McGill declined the offer, preferring, like Redpath, to encourage the building of private dwellings on their land. The Christ Church committee may also have considered a site far to the west on the extensive property of Charles Phillips, who had already arranged for the Anglican bishop's See house to be built there, though there is no record of his having offered to donate land for a cathedral. At any rate, McCord and Moffatt opted to buy a block of undeveloped lots on the north side of St Catherine Street at the corner of Phillips Square, even though six of the lots were already owned by speculators and needed to be rebought. These transactions were completed by April 1857, and the cathedral was erected over the subsequent two years, at a cost of \$175,000, half of which was raised from the sale of the old site and the insurance collected after the fire.<sup>7</sup> The bishop, Francis Fulford, had a second See House built in Phillips Square and sold the old one to a middle class family (Methodists, at that) who were released from the original deed's proviso that it be forever used as a bishop's residence.<sup>8</sup>

All Protestant congregations would have been struck by the decision to relocate Christ Church, and by the implication that the GSM was a worthy alternative to the old town for religious institutions. With the Roman Catholic bishop's purchase of a site along Dorchester Street in the same year, the prospect of two cathedrals, to say nothing of the one-upmanship between Anglicans and Catholics, suggested that the setting for historic rivalry was shifting to the GSM. It also piqued the competitive pride of most congregations. Few could

---

<sup>7</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #17307 and 17312, and #17334, 17 April 1857. Borthwick, *History of the Diocese of Montreal*, pp.197-198.

<sup>8</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #3698, 9 July 1858

have failed to notice, moreover, that by the 1860s most of the old churches were architecturally passé. The plain or stoically classical look of early nineteenth-century buildings paled in comparison to the Neo-Gothic angles and ogives and soaring towers of St Patrick's and Christ Church and even St Andrew's. [Figure 29.] The potential impact of the new style was brought home in 1858 when the Unitarians decided to tear down their Beaver Hall Hill building and replace it with a much more ostentatious Gothic structure on the same site; the old church, they claimed, although large enough for their needs, was too plain to properly reflect the status of its leading members.<sup>9</sup> But it was the ornate style of the building that most caught the eye, and clinched its use in virtually all church construction in the GSM over the following three decades. The obvious exception was the Catholic cathedral which had a very specific agenda in choosing to emulate Vatican Baroque; even so, Gothic was seen increasingly as a British style, and so was embraced by Protestants just as it was rejected by Catholics.<sup>10</sup>

To rebuild a church was a serious enough undertaking, but to do so on a new site far away was fraught with complications. The more democratic the church, the longer the process might take, with the election of committees, discussion of their findings, and decisions regarding complicated matters such as real estate. In order to afford a new church old properties would normally be sold first. Transitions were seldom smooth; indeed, several years might go by while a new church was under construction, and the congregation would have to meet elsewhere. This is in effect what happened to the American Presbyterians, who took the initiative on the question of relocation. A committee was set

---

<sup>9</sup> Hewett, *Unitarians in Canada*, p.57

<sup>10</sup> Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, pp.203-205

up in 1859 to investigate the feasibility of a move, but a decision was not made until June 1863. The following February they purchased a site on Dorchester Street just to the west of the cemeteries. The old church was sold the following year and the congregation met in the High School until June 1866 when the new building was completed. [Figure 32.] It proved a fitting reflection of the congregation's social status, but many members nevertheless regretted leaving the old church, a symbol of their years as immigrants.<sup>11</sup> While the minister, James Bonar, expressed concern that his accustomed following might be jeopardized, it soon became clear that the congregation would soon be largely made up of GSM residents.

The laying out of new streets across the St Antoine burial grounds by the mid-1860s opened up new possibilities for relocation. Within a few years several congregations rebuilt their old town churches within this area. The Methodists established a branch chapel on the western side of what became Dominion Square, and were soon followed on the north side of the square by the Presbyterian Secession church, now called Erskine after their 18th century Scottish founder. [Figures 12. and 13.] St George's "west end" Anglican chapel acquired a new site just below the Methodist chapel, and it became a parish church in its own right, serving that part of the GSM between Mountain Street and McGill College Avenue; as such, it was generally considered to have the largest Anglican congregation - indeed, the largest Protestant one - in the city.<sup>12</sup> [Figure 33.] St Paul's Presbyterian Church, sensing that "a delay of even a year or two would have left [them] behind in the race", soon relocated to the corner of

---

<sup>11</sup> Lighthall, *A Short History of the American Presbyterian Church*, p.13

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #12547, 8 February 1867; Gower-Rees, *Historical Sketch of St George's Church*, pp.14 and 22.

Dorchester and St Monique streets.<sup>13</sup> The legal dispute dividing the St Gabriel Presbyterian congregation was settled at this time: the liberal element agreed to relinquish the building to the traditionalists and set up on their own; the result was Knox Church, built on the corner of Dorchester and Mansfield streets. [Figure 10.] Later, part of the Erskine congregation left in disgust over the introduction of music into the service, and built a church on Stanley Street in 1874. Five years after that, the Free Church joined the others in the GSM on the corner of Dorchester and Crescent streets. It was the spectacle of these new buildings, plus the construction of the monumental Catholic cathedral, that prompted Mark Twain to comment during his 1881 visit that one could not throw a rock in Montreal without breaking a church window.

In the GSM, a new church could also be created, given the involvement of a wealthy sponsor. Having lost the honour of having the Anglican bishop as a neighbour when Fulford moved to his new house near Christ Church in 1858, Charles Phillips and his wife Ann Bain searched for another means of advancing the cause of the Church of England. Their influence as prominent patrons, and their friendship with Jacob Ellegood, an ambitious Anglican minister then working in Griffintown, led to a donation of land and a gift of \$4000 for a new church to which Ellegood would be rector.<sup>14</sup> [Figure 31.] It would also be the centre of a new parish, which would consist of the area between Mountain and Fort streets from the mountain down to the Grand Trunk railway tracks, including the outer and wealthier portions of St Antoine and St Joseph streets.

By the 1870s and 80s most of the other denominations had

---

<sup>13</sup> Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.758

<sup>14</sup> Shatford, *The Year of Jubilee*, p.9.

built churches in the GSM. The Baptists had one chapel at the bottom of Beaver Hall Hill and two others on the fringes of the GSM to serve their small and widely scattered membership in the western part of the city. A splinter group of Methodists broke away from the main church and set up what they called the Wesleyan Congregation, building a church on the south side of St Catherine Street west of Phillips Square.<sup>15</sup> [Figure 34.] Even the congregation of the historic St Gabriel Street Church felt the need to relocate in the GSM. In 1886, St Gabriel's celebrated its centenary, but it was clearly no longer the dynamic institution it had once been, let alone the home of the city's Presbyterian elite. On this occasion Robert Campbell wrote his commemorative history of the church, in which he describes himself rather mournfully as "the last minister".<sup>16</sup> The time had come to join the ranks of the GSM, which it was hoped might restore some of its flagging membership. Sentiments ran high, especially among the doggerel-writing element within the congregation:

Old house of stone! wherein men meet to pray,  
 In that same faith their fathers knew before,  
 And art thou doomed, alas! to pass away,  
 Destroyed, in all save memory, evermore! ...

Old house of stone! Men prophesy thy doom.  
 They say thine honoured walls must be pulled down,  
 That other new improvements may have room,  
 To meet the growing business of the town.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.799

<sup>16</sup> Campbell, *History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, title page

<sup>17</sup> Cited in Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.781

The city's oldest surviving church was sold to the provincial government for \$17,780, a sum sufficient to purchase the Wesleyan church on St Catherine Street, whose congregation had dissolved in 1885.<sup>18</sup> While the "business of the town" might be blamed, the real reason for the move was that St Gabriel's had been all but abandoned in the old town by every branch of Presbyterianism and every other Protestant denomination.

For the Methodists to move their mother church to the GSM was as momentous an abandonment of the old town as the Anglicans' relocation of Christ Church three decades earlier. St James's church<sup>19</sup> stood in the centre of the city with branch chapels serving the suburbs, including the one in Dominion Square. Although the mother church still held the loyalty of the original families, the younger generation clearly preferred the convenience of Dominion Square.<sup>20</sup> With St James's membership dwindling and structure crumbling, the Methodists' image suffered. The obvious alternative was the GSM, by now Protestant Montreal's religious centre. They chose a site some distance from the branch chapel: St Catherine Street, two blocks over from Christ Church and facing the new St Gabriel's. Given the inevitable comparisons with these rival structures, the Methodists planned a vast Gothic structure with a seating capacity of 2500. The expected budget of \$150,000 escalated to \$240,000 before the

---

<sup>18</sup> Campbell, *History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.782. The building was used as a police headquarters until 1903 when it was torn down.

<sup>19</sup> St James's, like St Gabriel's, had dropped the suffix "Street" from its name in an attempt to maintain a link with tradition even over the course of a move. This Methodist church, which survives today as St James United, is not called that because of the saint, but because it once lay on St James Street. See Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.602

<sup>20</sup> Mair, *The People of St James*, p.51



project was completed, straining the generosity of the Torrance and Ferrier families. James Ferrier himself, at the age of 86, laid the cornerstone of the new building in June 1887; significantly, however, when Ferrier died the following year he was buried in the old church, even though it was soon closed up and sold.<sup>21</sup> The size and ostentation of the new church, the richly carved gables and traceried windows and the 200 and 140 foot towers, did not strike the congregation as out of place, not even for a religion whose origins lay in the criticism of Anglican luxury. [Figure 35.] According to the minister preaching the inaugural service, large churches were absolutely necessary:

The humbler style of church architecture has its place; but its place...is surely not here, if we would make our church in this city most potent in moving men to God and goodness... [This church] has, I believe, as its object, the glory of God and the salvation of men. A curse be upon its towers and minarets, its groins and gargoyles, its marbles and frescoes,<sup>22</sup> if these came between Christ and the human soul...

Churches like St James Methodist clearly reflected the wealth and aspirations of their members. Bourget's Roman Catholic cathedral was designed to surpass the Anglicans' in grandeur, and the other Protestant denominations gravitated towards equally ostentatious architectural styles.

In their new setting, denominational differences ran as deeply as ever, and the GSM remained an intensely religious place; doctrine and ritual mattered to the point where one congregation divided over the presence of an organ in their

---

<sup>21</sup> Mair, *The People of St James*, p.56

<sup>22</sup> This speech was reproduced in the *Montreal Witness*, quoted in Jaques, *Chronicle of the St James Methodist Church*, pp.53-54

church.<sup>23</sup> These differences, however, were rendered less obvious by the acceptance of common Protestant cultural traditions and attitudes which were alien to Catholics. These traditions were hardly less alien to Jews, but by the 1880s, Montreal's two synagogues had also relocated to the GSM. Although the GSM did not contain a great number of Jewish families compared to the St Laurent faubourg and elsewhere, it was home to the wealthiest members. The synagogues were unprepossessing buildings, tucked into the streets of the New Town: the Congregation Shearith Israel moved to Stanley Street, while the other congregation, later known as the Shaar Hashomayim - the German and Polish Jews, as opposed to the Spanish and Portuguese - were re-established on McGill College Avenue among the rows of terraced houses. [Figures 36. and 37.] The appearance of the synagogues reflected their increasing linguistic, educational, and social association with the anglophone community.

The transfer uptown of so many churches had the additional effect of bringing to the GSM a particular social component which reinforced its Protestant identity: the minister and his family. Normally a congregation would build a parsonage or rectory next to the new church, although on occasion ministers leased nearby houses. With their families, ministers added respectability and a strong moral presence to the GSM and its cultural life.<sup>24</sup> The parson might be seen first as a pillar of the community and only second as a preacher and scholar; in this role, the moral example of the minister's wife was crucial. As residents, the clergy and

---

<sup>23</sup> Sheets-Pyenson, *John William Dawson*, p.83

<sup>24</sup> Jacob Ellegood was apparently an enthusiastic golfer, while Henry Wilkes was known as a horseback rider and general outdoorsman. See Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.323; Shatford, *The Year of Jubilee*, p.22

their families confirmed the GSM's Protestant character; having absorbed the city's principal Protestant churches, and provided a home to its clergy, the GSM had broken a major link with the old town.

## 2. Schools

The GSM's principal secondary school, as well as the city's main Protestant school during the second half of the nineteenth century, was the High School of Montreal. It was founded in 1843, the same year the McGill Faculty of Arts opened, with a view to providing middle-class boys with a suitable preparation for university.<sup>25</sup> After two years in a house on Notre Dame Street the trustees looked to the GSM for a proper location; they purchased land from the Lamothe family on Belmont Street west of Beaver Hall Hill.<sup>26</sup> By the time the new building was ready in 1846 the High School had absorbed the staff and students of the Royal Grammar School, the city's first Protestant middle-class educational institution. The High School remained on Belmont Street until 1853 when it became a department of McGill College and was installed on the second floor of Burnside Hall; when the Arts Faculty moved out of the lower floor in 1862 the High School expanded to fill the entire building.<sup>27</sup> The 1850s also saw

---

<sup>25</sup> Rexford et al, *The History of the High School of Montreal*, p.5

<sup>26</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.187/13/1: deed of sale, 7 June 1845

<sup>27</sup> For a discussion of school curriculum, and the link between McGill and the High School, see Rexford et al, *The History of the High School of Montreal*

the creation of provincial Normal Schools, with McGill being given responsibility for the English-speaking school, which took over the Belmont Street building. In 1870 McGill relinquished its control of the High School, and sold the building to the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, which had been created following Confederation to supervise Protestant education in Quebec.

Until 1875 the education of middle-class girls took place in modest private schools, usually operated by unmarried daughters of middle class families, often out of the home. One such was the "young ladies select school" run by Miss B Burrage - daughter of the Reverend Robert Burrage, former secretary to the Royal Institution - on University Street across from the Anglican Rectory.<sup>28</sup> In 1875 the High School of Montreal began accepting girls, 150 of whom registered. These could not be accommodated in Burnside Hall along with the 188 boys - for reasons of propriety as well as of space - and so they were taught in rented rooms until a suitable location could be found.<sup>29</sup> The Commissioners decided to build a new school, which would be designed so as to accommodate both genders. Although the available space for institutions was becoming limited by the 1870s, the GSM was still the obvious site for a new school. An entire block, an unsold portion of the McTavish estate between Peel and Metcalfe streets below Burnside Place, was finally chosen; it provided enough room for the school and extensive playground. [Figure 12.] The imposing semi-spherical structure built on this lot by 1878 had an usual design: its three storeys allowed boys and girls to occupy different floors, leaving a third floor for an assembly hall. Classrooms were arranged around an open area in the centre where the Head, with a view

---

<sup>28</sup> Lovell's *Directory*, 1871

<sup>29</sup> Gillett, *We Walked Very Warily*, p.46

into each, was able to supervise.<sup>30</sup> Private schools continued to attract GSM girls, however, especially the largest of these, the Trafalgar Institute, established in the 1890s at the top of Simpson Street, occupying the former Wetherall mansion; it lay at some distance from the more trafficked parts of the GSM but was within easy reach of most residents.

McGill also evolved to meet the needs of its host community and its faculties reinforced the anglophone claim to separate institutions, particularly after Confederation. Until the 1850s, the Medical Faculty's affiliation with the Montreal General Hospital, the city's leading centre for practical medical training, attracted a number of francophone students, but the development of the *Ecole de médecine et de chirurgie de Montréal* confirmed McGill's role in educating English-speaking students.<sup>31</sup> As well as McGill's strengths in law and medicine, engineering and other practical sciences were of increasing importance in industrial Canada. Educating the Protestant clergy in Quebec also gravitated to McGill and the GSM. Having to recruit ministers abroad, or train Presbyterians in Toronto and Anglicans in Lennoxville, pointed to a need for local theological colleges. The Presbyterian College, and the Montreal Diocesan College were established in the 1860s and were soon affiliated with McGill. Like that of churches, McGill's presence in the GSM made that community self-sufficient.

---

<sup>30</sup> Rexford et al, *The History of the High School of Montreal*, p.65

<sup>31</sup> Frost, *McGill University*, p.143

### 3. Public Collections

In the latter half of the nineteenth century the GSM became home to many institutions devoted to the arts and sciences: natural history museums, the art gallery, and the city's first public library. It was not unusual for Victorian cities to build their museums and libraries in middle class areas, where they would be near the homes of the people who promoted them and where they would project an edifying image of middle class values and interests. Like the drive for public education, public collections of natural history, art, and books were means of imparting an appreciation for knowledge and aesthetics on people whose households did not contain large numbers of books and *objets d'art*. Montreal's Redpath Museum, for example, was intended to appeal to all ranks of society, even the "intelligent wageman [or] tradesman" with a small amount of leisure on his hands. But unlike their counterparts in most North American cities, the GSM elite was an insular group, operating in the midst of a linguistic and religious majority.

Protestants, who were used to thinking of their faith as liberating, saw the move toward public collections as part of general intellectual enlightenment: art, no less than science, ought to be rescued from Catholic dogma, and books ought certainly to be available outside the reach of the Sulpicians, who until the 1880s operated the city's largest library. John William Dawson, whose position as McGill principal gave him an enormous influence in scientific matters, led the campaign to create a Natural History Museum. That Dawson was a devout Presbyterian who rejected Darwin for being atheist significantly coloured his views on science, and this was reflected in his display of geological and paleontological

exhibits; Dawson studied rocks in order to understand God.<sup>32</sup> The Montreal Art Association's implicitly Protestant character was evident when it chose the Anglican Bishop, Francis Fulford, as its first president. More significant was the collection itself, which for half a century consisted mainly of those quintessential expressions of Protestantism, Dutch landscapes.<sup>33</sup> The Fraser Institute set out to be the city's first public lending library - a role it did not concede to the *Bibliothèque Saint Sulpice* - and although it came to absorb the extensive collection of the liberal francophone *Institut Canadien*, it was generally perceived, correctly, as an anglophone institution.<sup>34</sup>

The absorption of older collections into the GSM began with Dawson's desire to find a suitable venue in which to display the mysteries of nature. Having been disappointed by the completely non-existent natural history collection at McGill, whose equally non-existent department of Natural History he had insisted on directing as a condition of his accepting the college principalship, he turned to the amateur Natural History Society, where, armed with his knowledge and his own collection of geological samples, he was quickly elected president.<sup>35</sup> At that time the society's museum was housed in a cramped series of rooms off St James Street which

---

<sup>32</sup> The moral and religious program of the Redpath Museum as a feature of its basic design, is discussed in Bronson, *The Design of the Peter Redpath Museum*, pp.99ff. See also Zeller, *Inventing Canada*.

<sup>33</sup> Brooke, *Discerning Tastes*, p.15

<sup>34</sup> Lamonde, *Les bibliothèques de collectivités à Montréal*

<sup>35</sup> Bronson, *The Design of the Peter Redpath Museum*, p.30. McGill's Natural History collection, in fact, consisted of a single rock, which the secretary kept in his desk.

emitted a "strong, musty and sickening odour".<sup>36</sup> In June 1858 Dawson arranged for McGill to grant the society a 94'x 46' lot on the corner of Cathcart and University streets, on generous terms in return for which McGill students were given perpetual free access to the collection and its library.<sup>37</sup> In this new building the society offered public lectures, held scientific discussion groups, and organized field trips to Mount Royal and even off the island to study flora and fauna.<sup>38</sup> But for all these attempts to reach a wider audience, the Natural History Society Museum remained a private institution, its doors generally closed to the general public.

The block used by the Natural History Society was also the site of the 1860 Crystal Palace. For their exhibition hall, the Montreal Board of Arts and Manufacturers needed a site that was both attractive and large enough; their president, William Molson, who was also one of the governors of McGill, used his influence to secure the entire stretch of St Catherine Street between University Street and McGill College Avenue. The prospect of a huge garish building nearly across the street from Christ Church, attracting crowds to the heart of the GSM, was a source of concern for many. The terms of the lease were designed to reassure McGill and its neighbours: the property was to be for "purposes connected with the promotion of the practical sciences or the arts", but not as a "theatre, tavern, saloon, or any other like place of entertainment", and was under no circumstances to be open to

---

<sup>36</sup> Dawson's memoirs, cited in Sheets-Pyenson, *John William Dawson*, p.167

<sup>37</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors' Minute Book, 17 June & 6 July 1858. ANQ-M, Gibb #18203, 9 October 1858

<sup>38</sup> MUA, Scrapbooks, vol.I, p.5. Frost, "Science Education in the Nineteenth Century", p.40



the public on Sunday.<sup>39</sup> This clause guaranteed local residents their day of rest, and once a week would restore to Christ Church a sense of the sacred. The Crystal Palace proved an asset to the New Town, but only temporarily; it had been intended as permanent exhibition space for the Art Association, but this never materialized and the vast structure was eventually dismantled.<sup>40</sup> In the 1870s, however, a number of wealthy patrons enabled various institutions and their collections to find homes in the GSM. The first of these was the merchant Hugh Fraser who, in the manner of James McGill, bequeathed his collection of books to a public library that would bear his name. In 1877 the merchant tailor Beniah Gibb "erected for himself a monument more durable than marble" by willing over 90 paintings and 8 bronzes to the Art Association.<sup>41</sup> At the end of the decade, Dawson's friend and fellow Presbyterian Peter Redpath promised to fund the construction of a new natural history museum to contain the college's own collection, which Dawson had initiated.

The Fraser Institute found a permanent home in Burnside Hall in 1885, premises it shared with the McGill Faculty of Law.<sup>42</sup> The site chosen for the Peter Redpath Museum of Natural History was at the top of the campus's central drive, slightly to the left of the Arts Building. The appearance of this massive structure, with imposing columns and a broad stone staircase leading up to the doors, set an appropriate

---

<sup>39</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.188/11113: lease & agreement, 4 August 1860

<sup>40</sup> Conrad Graham, "The Celebration", in Triggs et al, *Victoria Bridge*, p.83

<sup>41</sup> Campbell, *History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, p.116

<sup>42</sup> Moodey, *The Fraser-Hickson Library*, pp.83-84

tone of reverence, a seriousness of purpose. [Figure 47.] Inside was a celebration of God's wonders, an arrangement which proved very popular with early visitors, having captured an idiom of public space which was both reassuringly middle class and, by implication, divinely inspired. It is less clear that Dawson's desire to attract the popular classes met with success. The Art Association used the Windsor Hotel on Dominion Square as its main exhibition venue when it opened in 1878, but thanks to the Gibb bequest of \$8000 and a lot of land in Phillips Square, a permanent gallery was soon created.<sup>43</sup> [Figure 46.] The new gallery was officially opened by the governor general in June 1879, a grand ceremony which set the social tone of this institution. The Art Association - now the *Musée des Beaux Arts* - was Montreal's version of the public art collections developed at that time in many cities; like the other institutions, it was attractive mainly to residents of the GSM.

#### 4. Other Institutions

The transfer of the St James's Club to the GSM was in many ways more radical than the relocation of churches and schools; the city, especially St James Street, was a natural place for men to gather at what was intended to be a kind of home away from home. Nevertheless, in 1863 the club decided to move from their original St James Street address. Led by their chairman, Harrison Stephens, the members were fairly specific about where they wished to relocate: "not further North than the English Cathedral, nor further East than Beaver

---

<sup>43</sup> Propst, "The Architecture of the Art Association of Montreal", Blackader-Lauterman Collection, 1867.

Hall Hill Square, and not further West than Mr Harrison Stephens' House".<sup>44</sup> There were few vacant lots within this rather tiny area except the obvious one immediately adjacent to Stephens' house, at the corner of University Street across from Burnside Hall.<sup>45</sup> Significantly, many club members at this time were not GSM residents; their acquiescence to the move can only have been due to the New Town's image of tranquillity and its aura of Englishness.

Charity work and philanthropy were enormously important for GSM residents, but few of the institutions to which they contributed were actually situated in the GSM. The few that were relocated there were run by prominent GSM women who no doubt wished them to be part of their world. As early as 1848, the ladies of the Protestant Orphan Asylum built an orphanage on two lots they had acquired on St Catherine Street, a site which at that time was relatively isolated.<sup>46</sup> The initial attraction was the prospect of fresh air and open space, but as the New Town grew around it the orphanage benefitted from the respectable and very Protestant social climate of the GSM. The Montreal Ladies Benevolent Society, an agency for destitute women and children, had its headquarters on Mountain Street below the escarpment and then just to the east of the GSM on Berthelet Street. The Home and School of Industry moved in the 1880s from the St Laurent faubourg to the corner of Mountain and Dorchester streets, at which point it became known as the Hervey Institute. Finally, the Protestant Infants' Home, whose board consisted of men but whose steering committee was female, also moved in the 1880s

---

<sup>44</sup> Cited in Collard, *The Saint James's Club*, p.34

<sup>45</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #8191, 2 April 1863; see also Gibb #14702, 30 May 1854

<sup>46</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #9977, 10 August 1847 and #10649, 31 May 1848

to Guy Street just below Sherbrooke Street.<sup>47</sup>

One of the anglophone community's oldest and most ambitious works was the Montreal General Hospital, which by the 1880s was outgrowing the premises in the St Laurent faubourg it had occupied for six decades. A number of prominent GSM benefactors offered \$1 million to build a new hospital if the city would provide a site - ideally some of the appropriated mountain land that was not being used for the park. The goal of this new hospital was, they said, to provide health care to the poor without regard to race or creed; new facilities for medical training were also needed.<sup>48</sup> Opponents of the mountain site, notably the General Hospital itself, argued that it was vital to have the improved facilities near the more densely populated parts of town, especially given the professed orientation of the new hospital towards the poor.<sup>49</sup> Supporters of the plan argued that the benefits of healthy mountain air in recovery from sickness outweighed any concern for convenience. Besides, they added, when the General Hospital had first been built it had stood some distance from the town; why should the new hospital not soon lie at the heart of a thriving community?<sup>50</sup> While the Montreal General Hospital continued to concentrate on the poor and medical training, the Royal Victoria Hospital, became the GSM hospital of choice. It was built in the early 1890s at the corner of Pine and University streets, at the head of a road so steep that no sick person could climb it without a carriage regardless of the quality of the air. [Figure 44.]

---

<sup>47</sup> Lovell's *Directory*, 1891

<sup>48</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 18-19 April 1887

<sup>49</sup> Lewis, *The Royal Victoria Hospital*, p.11

<sup>50</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 16, 24, 31 July 1889

## Chapter VII - The Residents of the Golden Square Mile

The GSM's residents are without doubt its most familiar feature. The image of Montreal's anglophone elite posed in lush gardens or luxuriously cluttered drawing rooms has been fixed by Notman and other society photographers, who also captured the same people ready for winter sports, on carriage outings, and at fancy balls. What such photos reveal is a fair representation of the life of this elite, at least by the end of the century - albeit with a bias for men and for the grandest mansions; residents of terraced houses get short shrift, as do women and children, while servants are as invisible in photos as they were expected to be inside these homes.<sup>1</sup> In a study of the built environment, it is important to concentrate on the heads of households, as it was they, not the children or servants, who largely determined where the family would live; in this case, a "head" does not necessarily mean a man, for a number of GSM households were headed by women. At the same time, choice of residence was always a reflection of larger considerations. The presence of children in a family, for example, might inspire a decision to move, especially to the suburbs where nature could better exert its influence on young minds and bodies. In the GSM, as in many suburbs, a family's status and image was as important a concern as health and comfort. This is evident from the

---

<sup>1</sup> In Donald Mackay's *The Square Mile* there are 87 photos of people: 46 are of adult men only, 21 show families (couples or parents and children, often only fathers and sons), 20 are portraits of women and/or children alone, and only 1 is exclusively of servants (p.79), arranged awkwardly on the lawn of the Allan estate like the stage crew of an amateur musical production.

efforts taken by GSM families to show off their homes by means of grand entrances and formal gardens; it is also evident from the sheer scale of many GSM mansions, and the number of servants employed to maintain them. By examining the manner in which families moved to GSM houses, and the way houses were made to reflect a suburban, middle-class image, this chapter will address the remaining element in the creation of this built environment: residential space.

### 1. *The Move*

In 1842, shortly after arriving in Montreal from Ireland, the merchant Leslie Gault died of cholera, leaving a widow and several children ranging in age from twenty to newborn. It was the task of Mathew, the eldest, and two brothers Robert and Andrew to secure the comfort of the family.<sup>2</sup> A decade later saw them living in a house on Bleury Street to which they had moved after a period in the Recollet faubourg.<sup>3</sup> In 1854 Mathew, by then an agent with several leading insurance companies, married Elizabeth Bourne, and the couple moved to a house on Drummond Street in the GSM. When Mount Royal Terrace on McGill College Avenue opened in 1858 the rest of the family bought No.3. In 1865 Robert married Charlotte Dorwin and moved to Tamworth Place, a terraced house on Upper

---

<sup>2</sup> For details on the life of M H Gault see Pollack and Tulchinsky, "Mathew Hamilton Gault", *DCB*: vol.XI. For Andrew Gault see Michael Hinton, "Andrew Frederick Gault", *DCB*: vol.XIII.

<sup>3</sup> When not otherwise indicated, information given in this chapter on residential mobility has been gleaned from the census and Lovell's *Directories*.

Peel Street; a few years later saw the couple at a somewhat less prestigious address on Aylmer Street which they shared with Charlotte's younger sister Caroline, but before long they built a large house for themselves, and five children, in spacious grounds on Osborne Street just west of St George's Anglican church. Two of the Gault sisters, Mary and Fanny, married and moved away from Mount Royal Terrace, leaving another sister, Emma, to care for their aging mother. Andrew and his new wife Louisa moved next door, to No.2 Mount Royal Terrace. By that time Mathew was managing director of the Sun Life Assurance Company, and the family - eight children, plus Elizabeth's widowed father - moved into Braehead, a mansion at the top of McTavish Street. [Figure 55.] After her mother's death in the late 1870s, Emma married banker Thomas Craig, a widower with a young son, and took over Andrew's next-door house when he and his family built a mansion, "Rokeby", on Sherbrooke Street; by then Andrew was a leading textile manufacturer, and he and Louisa had two children. [Figure 56.] The Craigs, too, eventually built on Sherbrooke Street, one block to the east of Rokeby. Mathew died in 1887, but his children, like their uncles and aunts before them, remained at home with their mother for many years, some until they were well into their thirties; only three had left home before the end of the century.

The experience of the Gaults provides a useful illustration of the manner in which the GSM became home to well-to-do anglophone families. The progression through several stages of increasingly luxurious accommodation ending with mansions on the scale of "Braehead" and "Rokeby" illustrates the family's changing wealth and its use of the home to express social status. Even more striking is how important the GSM was in this progression; the three Gault brothers and at least one sister each made several moves within its boundaries. The GSM served its residents at many

stages of their lives, not only as the ultimate destination for the very wealthy, as it is so often seen. As such, it paralleled the social transformations of the second half of the nineteenth century. These changes were reflected in attitudes towards the family home: Braehead meant something very different to Mathew and Elizabeth's children than No.3 Mount Royal Terrace had meant to the previous generation of Gaults. Finally, it is clear from the experience of Leslie Gault's widow, Mary Hamilton, and of Emma Gault and Elizabeth Bourne, that not only was the move to and within the GSM different for women, but it affected widowed and single women differently than it did wives and mothers.

The GSM of the 1840s would not have struck the Gaults as the obvious place for an anglophone middle-class family to locate. Most wealthy citizens, anglophone and francophone, continued to live in the old town during these years.<sup>4</sup> Those that chose to build in the GSM during its first decade were a varied group, representing what would be considered both "old" and "new" money: on the one hand established merchant families such as the Torrances and Workmans, and members of the political and military elite such as General Wetherall and James Smith; on the other hand younger merchant families such the Mulhollands and Prévosts, and young lawyers such as John Rose and John Honey and their families. For such people, who could afford to build almost anywhere, the GSM was particularly good value; for nearly two acres of land at the top of Simpson Street, and one of the finest settings in

---

<sup>4</sup> The 1842 census (which lists households under the name of the owner or tenant whether or not it is the family residence) mentions a number of well-to-do anglophone men with houses on old town streets who, given the presence there of a married couple and/or children and given no other apparent home, probably lived there: these include John Ostell, Samuel Greenshields, Peter McGill, Theodore Hart, Joseph Tiffin, and Thomas Brown Anderson. Prominent francophone families were similarly or better represented at city addresses.



Montreal, the Roses paid £650, which would have bought an ordinary-sized lot in the city. Even so, the £1365 which the Roses spent building their home represented a serious financial investment at a time when most purchasers of GSM land were merely speculating.<sup>5</sup> To choose the GSM as a permanent residence in the 1840s was an expression of confidence in a scarcely tangible suburb.

An alternative to building was to purchase an existing house. The units of Mountain Terrace were purchased eagerly, even in 1848 at a low point in the housing market, because at only £560 each they enabled less wealthy buyers to take up residence on the mountainside. David and Almira Wood were Mountain Terrace residents for ten years before building a villa across the street.<sup>6</sup> A less daunting option was to rent; the GSM's most desirable rental location was assuredly Beaver Hall Terrace. For £70 a year, tenants could enjoy both convenience and prestige.<sup>7</sup> By the late 1840s Beaver Hall Terrace had attracted a virtual cross-section of the city's elite: besides lawyers and merchants, tenants included the paint manufacturer Edwin Atwater, Mary Redpath (daughter of John Redpath) and her husband Thomas M Taylor, Andrew Allan, Louis-Joseph-Amédée Papineau (son of the rebellion leader), the Congregationalist minister Henry Wilkes, General Thomas Evans, and a captain in the armed forces, John Vesey Kirkland.<sup>8</sup> Leases at Beaver Hall Terrace indicate a high turnover; the Atwater family, who occupied No.15 for over twenty years, were exceptional in their stay. The presence of

---

<sup>5</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11188, 30 September 1848 and #11677-78, 17 March 1849

<sup>6</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #11494, 28 December 1848

<sup>7</sup> ANQ-M, Pelton #1926, 26 September 1844

<sup>8</sup> ANQ-M, Charles Emmanuel Belle #458-991 (1847-50 leases). Senior, *British Regulars in Montreal*, p.95.

political and military figures suggests that Beaver Hall Terrace provided attractive rental accommodation for people who might be in Montreal only for a few years.

Instead of moving to the GSM, the Gault family opted to live on Bleury Street in the north-west corner of the St Laurent faubourg. There, their neighbours included such future GSM residents as the Lymans, the Ferriers, the Mackay brothers, and Hugh and Mathilda Allan. To judge from the household account book kept for 1849-50 by Mary Corse (Mrs Lyman), such families enjoyed a solid, middle class existence: good food, a smart wardrobe, church, charity work, modest but formal entertainment, all supported by a small number of servants.<sup>9</sup> There was probably little material difference between life on Bleury Street at mid-century and that in Beaver Hall Terrace. For that matter, there was little to distinguish houses on Bleury Street from those on McGill College Avenue a decade later. Nevertheless, for the Gaults to move there constituted a clear step up the social ladder, as did Mathew's move to a Drummond Street Villa with his new family. By 1860, a home such as No.3 Mount Royal Terrace was in the heart of the New Town, a community which always projected a sense of class distinction and a specific ethnic character: McGill College and its newly landscaped campus lay just up the street, and Christ Church was only two blocks to the east - of great significance to the Anglican Gaults.

Although their new neighbours were less socially prominent than those from Bleury Street - all of whom by then had built or were building villas in the GSM - they were clearly people of means: of the 12 owners of Mount Royal Terrace units in 1861, seven were merchants, one a banker, one a broker, and three called themselves "gentleman" or "esq" - one of whom was lawyer Arthur Ross, John Samuel McCord's

---

<sup>9</sup> McGill University Rare Book Room, MS.234 (Lyman Family)

brother-in-law.<sup>10</sup> Most of these households were young; except for two in their 50s - and Robert Gault, who at 29 was the youngest of them - all the male heads ranged in age from 32 to 44. The Gault household was the only one in the terrace not to be headed by a married couple, and only one of these couples was childless. The rest had many children, averaging nearly five each - and those with only one or two were young couples who would doubtless have more. The Gaults had two servants, both women; this was standard for Mount Royal Terrace where only two households had as many as four servants, and where all but four of the 32 servants employed were women. The families that had moved to this area along with the Gaults were roughly similar in age and size and social class, and although they represented a variety of denominations they were all Protestant, and all anglophone.

Mathew Gault and his family spent a decade and a half on Drummond Street in a three-storey stone and brick house - possibly half a double house - built on land that had been parcelled off from one of Redpath's villa lots. In addition to the parents and four children, the household in 1861 contained Elizabeth's widowed father, George Bourne, and two female servants. Their neighbours up the street included the Taylors, Thomas and Mary (Redpath), recently moved from Beaver Hall Terrace, and Mary's brother Peter and his wife Grace Wood, in another double house; the latter couple were childless, and occupied the house with only two servants, but the Taylor household had six children, four servants, and a young woman who might have been a governess. As neighbours these were all wealthier families than those on McGill College Avenue. When the Gaults moved to Braehead in 1868 they were in equally distinguished company: the Allans, the Lymans, the Savages, the Harts, and the Josephs lived nearby. Braehead

---

<sup>10</sup> 1861 Census #4261-4272

itself had been built seven years earlier, reputedly out of stones taken from the demolished McTavish Castle; this would certainly have given it a prestige no other GSM house could claim.<sup>11</sup> Of the other Gault houses, Robert's may have been chosen because of its convenience to St George's Church, while Andrew's "Rokeby", and to some extent the nearby Craig house built for Emma Gault and her new husband, occupied prominent positions on Sherbrooke Street.

In the 1860s, living in the New Town was itself a mark of achievement; indeed, for all the mounting excitement about villas, most well-to-do anglophones continued to find terraced houses entirely adequate to their needs. Nevertheless, for some New Town residents the prospect of steadily rising income would eventually turn their thoughts to the more open parts of the GSM. The distinction in status between terrace unit and villa, which was negligible in the 1840s and early 50s, was beginning to be apparent ten years later, and was clearly a factor by 1870. The 1861 census lists a number of families living in terraced houses who would later move to villas, which suggests that the New Town was used in effect as a kind of stepping stone to more luxurious homes. The Gault brothers seem to have used No.3 Mount Royal Terrace in this manner; other families who did so were the Savages of St Catherine Street (later of "The Elms" on Upper Peel Street), the Nelsons of Dunedin Place (later of the west side of Mountain Street), and the Hamiltons of Brunswick Street (later of the corner of Sherbrooke and Stanley streets).<sup>12</sup> The Savages even bought a terraced house while already owning the land on which they would later build their mansion, which suggests they had a

---

<sup>11</sup> Remillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, p.84

<sup>12</sup> ANQ-M, Gibb #15344, 11 February 1854 (Savage); Hunter #7561, 5 November 1862 (Nelson); Hunter #13292, 7 November 1867 (Hamilton).

kind of residential strategy. Others took advantage of sudden opportunities; in 1868, after two decades at No.15 Beaver Hall Terrace, the Atwaters moved around the corner into Belair Villa which the Mills family had recently vacated.<sup>13</sup> Some families started their climb from much higher up the mountain: Robert and Catherine Reford and their children lived in Tamworth Place on Peel Street (where they briefly had Charlotte and Robert Gault as neighbours) from the mid-1860s to the early 1880s; then they purchased the old Torrance mansion on Drummond Street.

The lure of the villa in a garden was a powerful one in the second half of the nineteenth century, and more complex than the mere pursuit of status. It was part of the importance the middle class attached to landed property, dating back to the mountain's fur trader landowners, combined with the more recent belief in the physical and moral benefits of fresh air and open spaces. The move to a villa generally had little to do with an actual need for more room: most GSM terraced houses were large enough for an expanding family, including servants and relatives. Psychologically, however, terraces lacked the sense of space and privacy that came to characterize the North American middle-class home.<sup>14</sup> A villa with a garden implied not only a place to grow flowers and vegetables, but a summertime extension of the family's living space. Children also had a safe place to play; when Mathew and Elizabeth Gault arrived at Braehead in the late 1860s their six children between the ages of four and fourteen would have found several suitable playmates from their social class: three Lymans, one Savage, and eight Allans (from two households) in the immediate vicinity.

The individuality of a villa implied something quite

---

<sup>13</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #12819, 18 May 1867

<sup>14</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, p.58

different about its residents than a terraced house. Terraces projected a standard image - which to many was highly desirable - but villas were idiosyncratic, suggesting a distinct personality on the part of the owners, who in most cases had commissioned the house themselves. Identification of a villa with a particular family suggested aristocracy and deep-rooted claims to land. Most GSM residents were "new money", but wished to imply otherwise. In building their villas, residents evoked the mythology of the ancestral home: to have given villas romantic names such as "The Elms" and "Thornhill" and "Mount Pleasant" was to suggest the timeless beauty of the English countryside. Roswell Lyman acknowledged this mythology when in an 1873 letter to his brother he facetiously referred to "the family mansion of the Limons [sic] of Thornhill" as a "stately pile"; his humour depended on a widely accepted view of such houses as approximations of grand country homes.<sup>15</sup> [Figure 57.] To depict a GSM house as a "family mansion" was to evoke the idea of dynasty, a legacy for the next generation. A family mansion in the GSM conveyed a permanence that would outlast the first generation and reinforce the social position to which the original occupants had risen.

This permanence did not work out in practice, however: the children of these first residents were likely to move away as soon as they were in a position to own their own home. The best documented example of this dispersal is the GSM's oldest family, the Redpaths.<sup>16</sup> John Redpath had carefully provided for his children by his first marriage by various legal settlements (see Chapter III) which typically included GSM

---

<sup>15</sup> McGill University Rare Book Room, MS 234 (Lyman Family): Roswell Lyman to his brother (Frederick?), 26-28 July 1873

<sup>16</sup> Feltoe, *Redpath: The History of a Sugar House*, pp.290-292.

property: Elizabeth lived with her family nearby on Mountain Street, while Peter and Mary lived with theirs on Drummond Street; John James, who had lived in Toronto as a young man, came to board with his sister Helen and brother-in-law George Drummond until his own marriage to Ada Mills (Hannah Lyman's daughter) in 1867, whereupon the couple built a villa on Sherbrooke Street.<sup>17</sup> Without moving very far from it, they all surrendered any claim to Terrace Bank, leaving it to the children of their father's second wife, Jane Drummond. [Figure 60.] In 1861 five of these children were living with their parents, including the eldest son George, who would shortly leave to take up a ministry in England. The other surviving Redpath son, Frank, who was a manager of the sugar refinery, went to live at Terrace Bank after his father's death in 1869, but seven years later he married Caroline Plimsoll and settled with her in a terraced house on MacKay Street. All three daughters - Margaret, Augusta, and Emily - were married by the 1880s. The Redpath's youngest son William died in the summer of 1881. By that time, George Redpath's widow Anne Savage and family had returned to Montreal and settled in a house near Terrace Bank. It took ten separate households - at least seven of which were in the GSM - to accommodate the children of John Redpath, none of whom lived as an adult in Terrace Bank. While this itself was exceptional, the pattern of dispersal was typical of much of the GSM.

The normal pattern was for children, sons as well as daughters, to move away from their parents' home upon getting married. Mathew Gault did this even before his family had moved to McGill College Avenue. Catherine Dow left her home on Beaver Hall Square to live with her husband Joseph Hickson

---

<sup>17</sup> There is no trace in the census of John Redpath and Janet McPhee's daughter Jane Margaret, who remained unmarried, and yet was not living at Terrace Bank in 1861, at which time she was thirty two.

in a Mountain Street mansion. George Washington Stephens left "Homestead", the family mansion on Dorchester Street, for a house in Beaver Hall Square. The Atwaters' son Henry and his family lived in a number of homes in the New Town. In almost no case, significantly, did this second generation move away from the GSM, unless it was in the service of the family business or to take up a career in politics or the church. There was a tendency for children to settle very near their parents' home, or to return to the vicinity after a time spent elsewhere. Roswell Lyman's older brother Frederick built a house (or had it built for him) next door to Thornhill, and lived there with his own family. James Ferrier Junior lived in a terraced house on Beaver Hall Square, back to back with his parents' house on Alexander Street; his sister Margaret also lived on Beaver Hall Square with her husband, John Torrance (David and Jane's son). When Henry Atwater's parents purchased the Mills home in 1867, he and his family moved into a house across from them, on the north side of Belmont Street.

Unmarried children generally continued to live in the family home. In 1891 the Abbott, Drummond, Lyman, and Prévost households - as well as Braehead - contained several unmarried children, many of them sons, in their twenties, thirties, and even forties. In most cases siblings would share the house even after their parents' death: the 1991 census lists four Allan brothers and sisters living in Ravenscrag, and four of James and Alicia Major's children inhabiting the house on Guy Street. If individuals married, they would leave - though not necessarily the eldest son, whose property the family house had become: Hugh Montagu Allan married in 1892 and brought his wife to Ravenscrag, though the others continued to live there; John Auld Junior and his wife Margaret shared Summerhill with



his three younger siblings for many years.<sup>18</sup> Unmarried sons might also move away, if circumstances required it; unmarried daughters almost never did. Two or more sisters did constitute a stronger agency, however, as in the case of Frances and Mary Ann Ogilvie, who appear to have preferred life on their own to being under their brother's roof; when William Ogilvie purchased Rosemount at the top of Simpson Street in the early 1870s and moved there with his wife and children, the sisters, who were then in their forties, acquired a terraced house at 84 Union Avenue, where they lived for decades.<sup>19</sup> David Ross McCord lived in Temple Grove with his two sisters Jane and Anne after their parents' death, but when he married Letitia Chambers, a woman of whom they did not approve, they moved out, and like the Ogilvie sisters settled in the New Town.<sup>20</sup>

By century's end, few children of older GSM families built new homes in the GSM; the mansions constructed as of the 1890s belonged to new ranks of the elite, whose fortunes had been made during the full maturity of industrial capitalism. Some of the older homes, such as Braehead, Ravenscrag, Summerhill, Temple Grove, and the Dow and Major homes, were inherited by the original owners' eldest son or other, unmarried children who had not moved away. In many households, all the surviving children had married and left home, and so the original owners often remained alone for years. The last decades of the century saw a number of couples in their seventies or eighties, such as the Mulhollands and Ferriers, inhabiting the same home they had built as the heads of young families four decades earlier.

---

<sup>18</sup> Mackay, *The Square Mile*, p.146

<sup>19</sup> *The Genealogy of the Ogilvies of Montreal*, pp.93-94.

<sup>20</sup> Pamela Miller and Brian Young, "Private, Family and Community Life" in Miller, *The McCord Family*, p.74

The lives of such couples would certainly have been comfortable, but they had designed their houses to accommodate large numbers of people, and were now surrounded by space they did not need.

Even more common than elderly couples were widows. Jane Drummond lived in Terrace Bank for nearly forty years after John Redpath's death; Rosalie Prévost survived her husband Amable by over twenty, and Ann Bain outlived Charles Phillips by nearly as long. Widows rarely moved out of their homes, which often represented their principal asset. It was largely thanks to the arrangements Redpath had made with his children, concerning his first wife's property, that Jane Drummond came to enjoy the use of Terrace Bank for so long. It was a daughter's responsibility in Victorian society to care for aging parents, a relationship that might be mutually beneficial if she remained unmarried. The Gault brothers left their mother, Mary Hamilton, in the care of their sister Emma, even though Mathew's wife Elizabeth brought her father to live with them. A widow whose daughters all married would tend to live with one of them; when the youngest Mills daughter married and moved to England, her mother, Hannah Lyman, sold the house and went abroad with the young couple.<sup>21</sup> Thomas Phillips's legacy provided his widow with sufficient means to continue residence in the GSM even after the destruction of her home: after leaving Beaver Hall, Martha Anderson spent the subsequent decade in a terrace unit on Aylmer Street before moving, along with two daughters, to a large detached house on Mansfield Street, where she died in 1882, in her ninety-fifth year.

Despite all the efforts to create dynastic homes, when

---

<sup>21</sup> Feltoe, *Redpath: The History of a Sugar House*, p.71. Note that it was George Redpath's second wife, Anne Savage, who returned to the GSM following his death; Hannah Lyman's daughter had predeceased him.

many long-time GSM residents died their houses were often sold. As early as the 1870s, GSM homes were becoming redundant. In 1879 the estate of William and Eliza Workman, whose children had all predeceased them, was subdivided into lots and auctioned off.<sup>22</sup> At about the same time, the junior Torrances sold the house on Drummond Street, which their parents had built in the 1840s, to the Refords. By 1907 when Jane Drummond died, her ancient house was of no interest to her children as a home, even though it had been refurbished in the 1860s; the Redpath heirs emptied Terrace Bank of its furniture and valuables, and sold the entire property.<sup>23</sup> Only occasionally did married sons and daughters opt to move back into their childhood homes. George Washington Stephens returned to "Homestead" with his wife and children after his parents' death in the 1880s. Margaret Ferrier and her husband James Torrance lived for years in a terraced house backing onto her parents' home, but when the senior Ferriers were both in their late 80s, Margaret and her family moved back into the family mansion on Alexander Street, and continued to live there after her parents had died.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: MC A 601, 53/230

<sup>23</sup> Feltoe, *Redpath: The History of a Sugar House*, p.209

<sup>24</sup> The 1881 census lists both the Ferrier and the Torrance households at "100 Alexander Street", so they must have made the move by then, although enumerators were often not particularly careful listing addresses, especially given that James Ferrier owned both properties. At any rate, the 1891 census, taken after the Ferriers were dead, lists the Torrances at 100 Alexander Street.

## 2. House and Garden

The sense of community which gradually emerged in the GSM was paralleled in the material establishment of the residential suburb. Despite the fixing of street patterns and the building of several houses, much of the GSM retained links with its agricultural past for many years. Charles Phillips's estate west of Mountain Street, for example, was a 32-acre farm which in 1842 produced 500 bushels of barley, 40 bushels of Indian corn, and 1000 potatoes, as well as being home to 3 cows, 4 horses, and 5 hogs.<sup>25</sup> This sort of production continued for at least a decade, even though Phillips built Bellevue Terrace on the southern rim of this land a few years later and the first Anglican See House next to it in 1852; the use of these fields only changed in the later 1850s when Phillips rented them to the Cricket Club.<sup>26</sup> For most of the 1850s, Burnside was occupied by tenant farmers who harvested apples and let cows out to graze on its fields; until Dawson began to landscape the McGill campus, it was also home to grazing cows.<sup>27</sup> Even after the disappearance of these fields, there were plenty of cows in the GSM; until the 1880s when milkmen began to make daily visits to the mountainside, a cow was the only available source of fresh milk.<sup>28</sup> The 1861 census shows that most owners of villas kept one or two

---

<sup>25</sup> See 1842 census #1440, under "John Bethune", who was a tenant of the farmhouse at the time.

<sup>26</sup> The Cricketers had been expelled from the McGill campus shortly before. MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 13 April 1853

<sup>27</sup> MUA, RG.4 - c.3: Board of Governors Minute Book, 27 October 1847. ANQ-M, Gibb #13712, 23 March 1852

<sup>28</sup> Bettina Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders", p.27

cows, as did even a sizeable minority of terrace dwellers: in 1861, 3 of the 12 residents of Mount Royal Terrace declared ownership of a cow. The number of cows steadily declined, however, as grazing became incompatible with the GSM's suburban character. Other rural elements would also be gradually eliminated as residents came to embrace the GSM not for its remnants of country living, but as a kind of space that was ideally suited to their time and class.

Old homes like the Redpaths' Terrace Bank, the Smiths' Chesnut Hall, the Lamothe house, the Mills' Belair Villa, and Burnside house itself had previously been farmhouses, and their yards contained elements of working farms: barns, sheds, greenhouses, vegetable patches, root houses, and stables. [Map 49.] Although the cultivation of apples remained important for some families on the higher ground, by the 1860s it was becoming desirable to transform these old farms into urban homes. Subdivision, of course, had already required the demolition of numerous barns and other outbuildings, as on the Lamothe estate. [Map 31.] New streets gave new entrances to old houses, and served to relegate barns and other outbuildings to the less visible parts of the estate. Belair Villa, for example, was originally reached by a lane running up from St Geneviève Street, but the extension of Belmont Street meant that visitors now arrived from the other side without passing the barn and stables. [Map 38.] The new owners of the Douglas farm to the west, the Josephs, demolished the farmhouse on St Monique Street and built a new villa at the top of their estate, fronting on the newly extended, and more prestigious, Dorchester Street; they retained the old St Monique Street entrance for the use of horses and carriages. [Map 37.] This manipulation of space turned the old streets into back or side lanes, which gave access to the stables and sheds. Lanes, of course, were a key feature of terraced houses, but even new villas with plenty of

street frontage, like the 1854 Gibb house, made use of lanes for horse and carriage access. [Map 54.] According to the 1861 census, most owners of GSM villas owned at least one horse and carriage; the Beaudry family had four carriages and the Josephs five, though each only reported owning one horse each. A number of respondents listed the possession of horses without mentioning any carriages; this may mean they deemed carriages not worth reporting, or that they kept horses principally for riding. Many dwellers of terraced houses also owned horses and carriages; the Gordons of Mount Royal Terrace owned no less than four carriages.<sup>29</sup>

Many residents went much further, creating grand new entrances and driveways. The Redpath home already had its private lane leading up from Sherbrooke Street with its elegant gate, but in the 1860s the estate was redesigned to show off the renovated mansion to even greater advantage.<sup>30</sup> [Map 55.] Terrace Bank, which had always been set attractively in the midst of fruit trees, now stood at the crest of a meandering driveway adorned with a fountain; the stables and other buildings well to the back of the house were reached by going further along this drive. Nearby, the Workmans also began landscaping their estate at about this time, making clear distinctions between the formal entranceway in front, and the service area with stables and sheds around back. [Map 59.] The Workman house still gave onto Drummond Street, but the old Leaming house to the west received a new orientation when it was reconstructed in 1865.<sup>31</sup> The house had been deliberately set as high on the lot as possible, a visual echo of the Torrance and Workman mansions, but like

---

<sup>29</sup> 1861 Census, #4264

<sup>30</sup> ANQ-M, *Cartothèque*: O6M P.147, 30-49ff

<sup>31</sup> ANQ-M, Hunter #11662, 30 December 1865; for the original contract, see Pelton #2695, 19 July 1847.

them had made use of a side street for access; the new owners ignored Simpson Street and laid out a driveway running down to Sherbrooke Street which could be closed off by ornate gates. [Figure 63.] Because the house was set so far back, the driveway occupied the lion's share of a lot, circling vast stretches of grass; the result was a truly commanding entrance.

The grounds of the Prévost house on Mountain Street underwent a particularly comprehensive change over several decades. Part of the narrow (130 feet) Fouquet farm that ran almost the entire distance from Dorchester to Sherbrooke streets, the 500-foot-wide lot acquired by the Prévosts in the 1840s was large enough to put several animals out to graze, especially as it lay directly adjacent to the Phillips fields.<sup>32</sup> In the 1860s, however, St Catherine Street was extended westwards beyond Mountain Street, bisecting the Prévost estate; the portion they retained north of the new street effectively became a corner lot, with a somewhat awkward 130 square-foot open space next to the intersection. A 1872 map of the house and grounds makes no mention of what this area was used for, but it does show that the estate still contained several features from its days as a country retreat: stables and sheds, a greenhouse at the back next to the kitchen, and a "summer house" next to the street. [Map 57.] It also shows that the residence was now reached by means of an impressive circular driveway, with a fountain in the middle much like the one at Terrace Bank, and a 30-foot-wide gate. A subsequent map from 1883 does not show the summer house - it may have been a casualty of the street extension, and torn down - or the greenhouse, though the Prévosts appear to have radically enhanced their stable and carriage facilities. [Map 58.] The map does label the corner area as "jardin",

---

<sup>32</sup> ANQ-M, Joseph Belle #6241, 25 January 1844

suggesting something more formal than grass. Such a garden would not have provided the Prévosts with much privacy, with a street on two sides and trams going by, but a garden with flowers, set on a slight incline, would have greatly enhanced the appearance of the Prévost house.

The garden was the most important formal addition to the grounds of most GSM houses over the course of the second half of the century. Early GSM villas tended to have private gardens to the rear, especially those situated in or near the New Town where space was limited: "Strathearn", which stood directly on Beaver Hall Square with only shrubs and flowers separating its walls from the pavement, had an extensive walled garden behind the house. [Figure 59.] An 1859 map of the Gibb estate around the corner on St Catherine Street shows that its rear ground consisted of "garden" - as distinct from the "yard" which lay next to the side lane, serving the stables. [Map 54.] Later gardens were more conspicuous, like the Prévost's on Mountain Street. As villas were built on relatively smaller lots without grand entrances, flower beds became an important way to enhance a house's appearance. On the higher ground, most houses were set back from the street, and were shown off by rolling lawns, ornamental trees, and exotic plants. [Figures 61. and 67.] By the end of the century, gardens had transformed the GSM. The fruit trees which had dominated the mountainside were replaced by more stately, and less functional, elms and poplars. Fields gave way to lawns. This was entirely in keeping with the Victorian love of nature - especially when ordered and controlled - which had resulted in the McGill Campus and Dominion Square, and had reached its fullest expression in the development of Mount Royal Park.

To own a garden was one of the chief factors drawing people to GSM villas, and became an essential part of suburban living. In the crowded city privacy could only be achieved by



means of walls; the middle class suburb, however, was itself a private, insular place, which meant that within its confines gardens became open and highly visible. Although they fell well short of being public spaces, they were available for public scrutiny much of the time, at least so far as neighbours were concerned; indeed, as Redpath had understood back in the 1840s, the view of one's neighbour's house and property was one of the great features of residential streets.<sup>33</sup> At all times, gardens formed a link between urban people and nature. A garden party, for example, literally opened up a formal event to the healthful benefits of fresh air and open spaces. The garden was not so much the antithesis of the city as it was its improvement, much as life in the GSM was seen as an improvement on life in the city; urban values had been brought out to nature, and made better. If anything, the garden was the antithesis of what it had replaced: as a symbol of the mature GSM, the garden marked the distinction between the farm, which exploited nature, and the suburban home, which celebrated it.

### *3. Suburban Households*

To judge from the literature on houses in the GSM, the image they conveyed was one of rugged individualism: terms such as "railway barons" and "merchant princes" suggest a male world of economic giants who were also architectural patrons and collectors of fine objects. Owners are emphasized at the expense of other residents of these houses. Even to refer to "the Hugh Allan house" and "the Harrison Stephens house",

---

<sup>33</sup> ANQ-M, Bedouin #5630, 20 January 1841

instead of "Ravenscrag" or "Homestead", reinforces this patriarchal impression.<sup>34</sup> Contemporaries, however, would have seen the majority of GSM houses for what they were: the homes of families. Wives and mothers were essential figures in these homes, as domestic managers, hostesses, and moral examples. Children implied a confidence in the future, a sense that a family's wealth and position would devolve. GSM households also contained "extended" family members - aged parents, maiden aunts, sisters and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, and cousins - whose presence merely underlined the significance of the family home. Finally, the household staff, who constituted a surprisingly large proportion of GSM residents, played an important role in maintaining a house's overall image.

Alongside these traditionally-structured families were many households that bore no resemblance to the image of merchant princes. The GSM did have its famous bachelors, but they almost always lived with at least one family member, usually a sister. "Dilcoosha" at the edge of the McGill campus was known as the residence of Jesse Joseph, but it was equally the home of his sister Sarah who had moved there with him in 1865. Similarly, No.2 Prince of Wales Terrace was the home not only of tobacco manufacturer William Christopher McDonald but of his sister Helen Jane, at least until her death in the 1880s whereupon her place was taken by their niece Anna. The more typical caregivers and companions were unmarried daughters, like Emma Gault. One such woman was Louisa Frothingham, who cared for her widowed father for three decades before becoming mistress of "Piedmont" in 1870; she was then able to marry her childhood sweetheart, JHR Molson,

---

<sup>34</sup> See for example Rémillard and Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*.

who came to live with her.<sup>35</sup> While unmarried women were only rarely the heads of GSM households, it was common for widows, especially the older mansions. In fact, some GSM mansions consisted largely of women for much of their history. Hannah Lyman lived with two of her daughters in Belair Villa for two decades after John Easton Mills' death, as did Martha Anderson with her two daughters on Mansfield Street. Luther Holton's widow Eliza Forbes and her unmarried sister Saphronia grew old together in their mansion on Sherbrooke Street. "Strathearn", the Dow home in Beaver Hall Square, was a veritable female enclave after William's 1868 death: Mary (William's sister-in-law) and at least two of her daughters, plus three female servants, constituted the entire household in 1871 and 1881; only in 1891 does a man, a 50-year-old groom, figure among the residents.

Less visible among the GSM mansions were another class of permanent residents: the gardeners and coachmen and their families who lived on many of the larger estates. In 1871, for example, Ravenscrag's gardener was Thomas Wall, who lived in the "Allan Cottage" with his wife Harriet, four young children, and a nurse. The presence of the nurse suggests a certain status for the Wall family<sup>36</sup>; their origins may have been in "market gardening", like many who described themselves in the census as "gardeners".<sup>37</sup> The line between gardener and farmer was often a fine one; in 1871, Henry Bowden, who lived with his wife and daughter in a cottage behind Terrace Bank next to a large conservatory, and who cultivated apples

---

<sup>35</sup> Woods, *The Molson Saga*, p.181

<sup>36</sup> It is also possible, of course, that the nurse living with the Walls was in fact taking care of the Allans.

<sup>37</sup> For example, William Riley, who rented Burnside farm in the 1850s and later purchased the house. (1861 Census #4258; ANQ-M, Hunter #2939, 25 November 1857)

for the Redpaths, called himself a "farmer". [Map 55.] But the men hired to care for the grounds of mansions such as Ravenscrag were not tenant farmers but live-in skilled workers. In 1891 the Allan cottage was occupied by a gardener named Dunbar, his wife, and four children; their social status is evident from the trades of their two grown sons (granite cutter and carpenter) and the eldest daughter (dressmaker).

For the owners of these mansions, a resident gardener was a mark of prestige, as was a coachman who lived full-time on the estate. To an extent, the same was true for the domestic staff inside the house, who appeared to have increasingly specialized functions. When they lived in the St Laurent faubourg the Lyman family had a resident cook and a nurse, a part-time cleaning lady, and a hired man; in their mansion on McTavish Street they had several servants, designated variously as "parlourmaid", "tablemaid", and "housemaid" - along with the coachman and gardener.<sup>38</sup> By the 1880s GSM mansions regularly contained a "groom", "butler", "valet", and "housekeeper". In rarer cases there was also a "governess", whose presence was a particular mark of status. This array of domestic staff was only the case in the largest households, of course; in terraced houses one or two servants was still the norm. Even prominent families, such as those of jeweller Henry Birks of University Street, Rabbi Abraham de Sola of McGill College Avenue, and John Ostell of Brunswick Street, had but one resident servant in 1881 and 1891.

In the homes of the GSM elite, however, there was a distinct rise in the number of resident servants as the century progressed, even though the non-servant population of such houses declined. The Lyman household consisted of seven family members and four staff in 1871; by 1881 the eldest son

---

<sup>38</sup> McGill University Rare Book Room, MS.234 (Lyman Family)

Frederick had moved away (to a house with three servants on staff) but his parents' household now included five servants; by 1891 there were only five Lymans at Thornhill to six servants. At Ravenscrag in 1871 Hugh and Mathilda Allan headed a household that was 22 persons strong, only eleven of whom were family members; the rest were domestic servants. Twenty years later the four Allan children were supported by a resident staff of 16, plus coachman and gardener and their families. These trends can be seen from Table 8, which lists 25 of the most prominent GSM households that can be traced in the 1871, 1881, and 1891 censuses.<sup>39</sup> In 1871, 102 "servants" supported 129 "owners", but this ratio had changed to 119:128 by 1881 and 147:120 by 1891. These figures suggest that the number of household servants was not linked directly to the size of the family they worked for, or even to the size of the house in which they were employed, which in most of these cases did not change over two decades. The increase in the number of staff can only be explained as an example of conspicuous consumption. Less wealthy families in the GSM faced a "servant problem" by the end of the century; in 1897, the Gazette cited the "great difficulty now with domestic

---

<sup>39</sup> This survey assumes anyone listed in the census as a member of the homeowners family, or without occupation and therefore most likely in-laws or wards of the household head, to be "owners", while anyone clearly in a service function, including nurses, coachmen, and gardeners, to be "staff". The families of coachmen and gardeners, however, have been excluded, as have been any children of servants within the household (housekeepers were often widows, and occasionally had small children living with them). In many cases, therefore, the actual population of GSM households, or at any rate the estates, was substantially larger than the numbers given here, as gardeners and coachmen often had large families themselves.

servants" as a major cause of the flight to the suburbs.<sup>40</sup> For the wealthiest families to employ so many resident servants would have impressed their contemporaries.

The presence of servants in these households, significantly qualifies statistics about GSM residents. For example, the GSM's population cannot be seen as overwhelmingly middle class, the way wealthy 20th century suburbs, with few resident domestic workers, have tended to be; at the level of the 25 households of Table 8, the majority of residents were staff. The large number of Roman Catholic servants in these households serves also to reduce somewhat the percentage of Protestants in the GSM population, though this did not affect the GSM's overall Protestant character. Of Table 8's 103 servants in 1871, 58 were Catholic, though only 60/119 were Catholic in 1881, and 66/146 by 1891; it would seem that as time passed, GSM families were more inclined to hire Protestants. The number of anglophones in the GSM is not affected much by considering the presence of servants, as few francophone servants were hired. Of the 58 Catholic servants of 1871, only five were "French", three of these part of the francophone Prévost household; the rest were mostly Irish. For these Irish Catholics resident in GSM households, St Patrick's church on Dorchester Street was highly convenient. By 1891, however, the apparent preference by GSM families for Irish serving girls was waning: only about half of the 66 resident Catholic servants were Irish, and most of the rest

---

<sup>40</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, February 12 1897. Another reason given for this exodus was the growing objection by ladies to the "old-style basement kitchens" of the older houses; however, this sounds less like a changing preference and more like the facing of a grim reality caused by the scarcity of good help. Technology, too, obliged middle-class women to spend time in their kitchens.

were English or Scottish.<sup>41</sup> GSM families were increasingly employing servants from Britain, which naturally served to promote the British character of this community.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> The 1891 census did not ask for ethnicity or nationality, but place of birth, which in many cases is Quebec; Irishness can only be determined by names.

<sup>42</sup> Mackay, *The Square Mile*, p.147; Westley, *Remembrance of Grandeur*, chapter two.

## Conclusion - The Golden Square Mile in Retrospect

The GSM was "made" over the course of the half century after 1840, through the various stages that have been outlined here: planning, subdivision, speculation, and the building of homes and institutions. The result was a tightly-knit community, united by wealth and participation in the ownership and management of many of Canada's leading corporations. This community was mature by the 1890s; the Golden Age of the Golden Square Mile could be said to have lasted from then to the start of the First World War, its flavour lingering through the 1920s - and beyond, as the mythology of the "merchant princes" took shape in the popular imagination and became identified with their successors in the modern corporate world. The link between the emerging GSM and its Golden Age is weakened only when one considers that most of what survives today - the subject of much dispute between architectural conservationists and developers - was not yet built in 1890. Many of the houses constructed in the 1840s, 50s, and 60s were demolished by the end of the century, some as early as the 1870s, to be replaced by even grander mansions which seemed to their owners a better reflection of their image. Of the churches that were transplanted to the GSM only the three Anglican, the one Methodist (now "St James United Church"), and the Roman Catholic Cathedral survive; the rest relocated again, as of the 1890s, many of them to Sherbrooke Street, including St Andrew's and St Paul's, Erskine and American, and the Unitarians' Church of the Messiah. Even some institutions from the 1870s were relocated and the original buildings demolished, such as the High School of Montreal on Peel Street, and the Art Association Gallery on



Phillips Square, which were moved in the early twentieth century, to Upper University and Sherbrooke streets respectively. This continuing tendency to relocate and demolish suggests that the process begun in the 1840s was not completed by the 1890s, that the GSM went on developing; like all human settlements, it was never "finished". But even if buildings that are revered today as historic landmarks stand on the ruins of original GSM structures, it is to the builders of the 1840-1890 period, who forged the built environment, that they owe their existence.

The community that had emerged by the 1890s had also been "made" in another sense: by the establishment of a specific character which has been broadly defined as middle class, anglophone, and Protestant. This character was evident at every stage of the GSM's development, albeit most often implicitly, rather than explicitly. It was in the cultivation of this character that the GSM differed from most nineteenth-century suburbs, which were often middle class in orientation but lacked the specifically anglophone element, or were consciously English and Protestant (as in Edinburgh's New Town) without reflecting the needs of an emerging middle class. The creation of the GSM paralleled the rise of Montreal's middle classes and the advance of industrial capitalism, which also resulted in a hardening of ethnic divisions within Quebec. Despite the subtlety with which these lines were often drawn - churches competing for prominence in a city square, the location of exhibition halls and winter carnivals - the process was more or less complete by the 1890s. The GSM had become not only the home of the city's anglophone elite, but the cultural centre of anglophone Montreal: for religion, education (post-secondary and some *sécondary*), health care, many leisure activities, and, to an extent, shopping, most English speaking Montrealers would go to the GSM - and would continue to do so well into the second

half of the twentieth century. Eventually it became known as "downtown", but it remained a curiously insular place, culturally well-connected with Toronto, New York, and Los Angeles, but ignorant of much of Montreal. Indeed, until quite recently, many anglophones would not dream of venturing "east of Morgan's" into a very different cultural world. The complexity of such an attitude can be partly understood in the light of how the GSM emerged as a particular community. In an age when Quebec anglophones are reinventing themselves as a beleaguered minority, it is sobering to recall the confidence - even the brazenness - with which GSM residents once asserted their cultural significance.

It remains to be considered, however, whether this community was "made" well. By the 1890s, the GSM as a built environment reflected the wealth and power of the anglophone elite, but did it do so as a result of conscious design over the previous fifty years? This study of the various forces involved in making the GSM would suggest not. Much of the planning of estates and the marketing of suburban lots was handled with great skill, but at the same time much of it consisted of less talented individuals attempting to take advantage of others' success, often with disappointing results. Furthermore, because there was little co-operation between subdividers and speculators, as occurred in many other cities, the building of the GSM was undertaken by people who had not been involved in its planning. This situation was partly due to landowners such as John Redpath, whose goal was to make money from real estate, not to deliberately create a particular kind of space; Thomas Phillips clearly had a more concrete vision of how the streets on his subdivision would be developed, but he could certainly not force this vision on purchasers. The planting of many religious and educational institutions in the GSM as of the 1860s was not something that 1840s planners had envisaged; it stemmed, rather, from the

nature of this community as it had evolved over the previous two decades. The GSM was, in part, the product of a constant exchange of influences: one decision affected another, one success led to emulation, one fashion rapidly spread. More fundamentally, it was the product of much larger forces: the rise of the middle classes, the impact of industrialization, the intensification of cultural sensibilities. The GSM is a window, not so much onto the planning and building process, as onto a complex and changing society.

## Bibliography

### Manuscript Sources

#### Archives Nationales du Québec à Montréal (ANQ-M)

This thesis has made extensive use of material available at the *Archives Nationales*, above all notarial documents concerning land transactions: deeds of sale, leases, acts of commutation, inventories, and building contracts. These documents are found within the *greffe* of the notary responsible, where they are arranged chronologically. References in this text to such documents consist of the notary's last name (and first name if there are two notaries with the same last name), the number of the act, and the date. The *greffes* of the following notaries provided most information on the GSM:

Beaufield, Raymond  
 Bedouin, Thomas  
 Belle, Charles-Emmanuel  
 Belle, Joseph  
 Crawford, William Nicholas  
 Easton, William  
 Gibb, Isaac Jones  
 Griffin, Henry  
 Griffin, John Carr  
 Guy, Etienne  
 Hunter, John Stewart  
 Isaacson, John Helder  
 Lacombe, Patrice  
 Papineau, Denis-Emery  
 Pelton, Thomas  
 Ross, William  
 Smith, James

It is worth observing the overwhelming number of anglophone names in this list, testimony to the tendency of the GSM's promoters and residents to employ anglophone professionals. Patrice Lacombe, one of the few francophone notaries listed, was employed full-time by the Sulpicians between 1841 and 1863 to draw up acts of commutation; these are among the most useful sources of information on the size, shape, and value of properties.

Another invaluable resource at the ANQ-M is the *Cartothèque*, repository of countless maps and plans by Montreal architects and surveyors, much of it as yet uncatalogued. References to these documents include the word "Cartothèque" and the call number.

#### McGill University Archives (MUA)

The collection of documents relating to the university's own administration, located in McGill's McLennan-Redpath Library, is organized into Record Groups (RG.) and containers (c.). The main sources used in this thesis were:

RG.2, the Office of the Principal and Vice Chancellor, notably  
 c.2 - c.14 relating to Dawson's improvement of the college and grounds.

RG.4, the Secretariat of the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning and the Board of Governors:  
 c.1 - c.2: the Royal Institution Minute Book, 1837-1856  
 c.3: the Board of Governors Minute Book, 1829-1865  
 c.55/337-342  
 c.56/343-356  
 c.57/357-362  
 c.58/378-391  
 c.187: documents relating to Royal Institution property, including deeds of sale, etc  
 c.188/11108, 11113  
 c.437/11072-11087  
 c.438/11060, 11070

McGill University Scrapbooks, vol.IA

#### McGill University, Rare Book Room

The Rare Book Room, also located in the McLennan-Redpath Library, contains a number of pertinent works, notably a collection of business correspondence, household accounts, and personal letters relating to the Lyman and Corse families, as well as a genealogy of the Lymans: MS.234.

McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library Collections

The Blackader-Lauterman Library of Art and Architecture contains a number of special collections, including architectural drawings of GSM mansions in the Nobbs Room. It also holds an extensive range of Undergraduate theses relating to the architecture of various Montreal buildings; these vary in quality, but some are useful compilations of facts and photos. They are available for consultation upon request at the Library, and are listed in the university library cataloguing system; they have been referred to here simply under "Blackader-Lauterman Library".

**Government Documents**

*Census of Canada: Individual returns for 1842, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891*

*Provincial Statutes and Ordinances, Legislative Assembly:*

- 8 *Victoria, cap.78, 29 March 1845 (Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning property)*
- 16 *Victoria, cap.58, 10 November 1852 (Royal Institution property)*
- 20 *Victoria, cap.53, 27 May 1857 (Royal Institution property)*
- 22 *Victoria, cap.53, 4 May 1859 (Royal Institution property)*
- 24 *Victoria, cap.133, 18 May 1861 (Thomas McKay property)*

**Newspapers and Periodicals**

*The Canadian Architect and Builder, 1888-1898*

*The Montreal Gazette*

*Lovell's Montreal Directory, 1842-1895*

## Maps

Louis Charland, *Plan de la ville et cité de Montréal*, 1801

John Adams, *Map of the City and Suburbs of Montreal*, 1825

James Cane, *Topographical and Pictorial Map of the City of Montreal*, 1846

Plunkett and Brady, *Plan of the City of Montreal*, 1872

H.W. Hopkins, *Atlas of the City and Island of Montreal*, 1879

Charles E Goad, *Atlas of the City of Montreal*, 1881

## Books and Articles

The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (DCB) is a vital reference work for any research on 19th-century Montreal; countless articles have been consulted for this thesis, only the most useful of which (to the GSM) have been included in the bibliography below. Also of use are W. Stewart Wallace (editor), *MacMillan's Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1978) and Henry James Morgan, *Canadian Men and Women of the Time* (Toronto, 1912). Volume 3 of William Henry Atherton's *Montreal 1835-1914* (Montreal, 1914) includes valuable biographical information, especially on the individuals, such as Thomas Phillips and his family, who have been overlooked by the DCB.

Works on the GSM, its Residents, and its Institutions

- Adams, Frank D, *History of Christ Church Cathedral* (Montreal, 1941)
- Appleton, Thomas E, *Ravenscrag: the Allan Royal Mail Line* (Toronto, 1974)
- Blaustein, Esther I, Rachel A Esar, and Evelyn Miller, "Spanish and Portuuese Synagogue (Shearith Israel) Montreal, 1768-1968", *Jewish Historical Society of England Transactions* (23,1969-70)
- Borthwick, D, *History of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal, 1910)
- Bronson, Susan, *The Design of the Peter Redpath Museum at McGill University: the Genesis, Expression and Evolution of an Idea about Natural History* (M.Sc. Thesis, Université de Montréal, 1992)
- Brooke, Janet, *Discerning Tastes: Montreal Collectors, 1880-1920* (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1989)
- Campbell, Robert, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church at St Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal, 1887)
- Collard, Edgar Andrew, *Oldest McGill* (Toronto, 1946)
- Collard, Edgar Andrew, *The St James's Club* (Montreal, 1957)
- Cooper, John Irwin, *The Blessed Communion: Origins of the Montreal Diocese, 1850-1910* (Montreal, 1960)
- Erskine Church of Montreal, *One Hundred Years of Erskine Church, 1833-1933* (Montreal, 1933)
- Feindel, Susan et al, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile* (Montreal, 1976)
- Feltoe, Richard, *Redpath: the Making of a Sugar House* (Toronto, 1991)
- Frost, Stanley Brice, *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montreal, 1980)



- Frost, Stanley Brice, "Science Education in the Nineteenth Century: the Natural History Society of Montreal, 1827-1925, *McGill Journal of Education*, Vol.XVII, No.1 (Winter 1982)
- Frost, Stanley Brice, *James McGill of Montreal* (Montreal and Kingston, 1995)
- Gersovitz, Julia, *The Golden Square Mile, 1860-1914* (M.Sc. Thesis, Columbia University, 1980)
- Gilbert, Heather, *Awakening Continent: The Life of Lord Mount Stephen* (Aberdeen, 1965)
- Gillett, Margaret, *We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill* (Montreal, 1981)
- Gower-Rees, A.P, *Historical Sketch of St George's Church, Montreal* (Montreal, 1952)
- Greenbaum, Morris, "The Chenneville Street Synagogue of 1838" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1960)
- Greenlaw, Jane, *Fractious Individuals: Protestant Non-conformity in Montreal, 1828-1842* (M.A. Thesis, Université de Québec à Montréal, 1989)
- Hanna, David, "The Creation of an Early Victorian Suburb in Montreal", *Urban History Review*, IX: October 1980
- Hanna, David, *The New Town of Montreal: Creation of an Upper Middle Class Suburb on the Slope of Mount Royal in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (M.A. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1977)
- Hawkins, Giles Nicholas Chessel, *The Montreal Exhibition Building and Museum, 1860: A Monument to Pre-Confederation Canadian Economic Nationalism* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University, 1986)
- History of the Montreal Ladies' Benevolent Society, 1815-1920* (Montreal, 1920)
- Howard, Oswald, *The Montreal Diocesan Theological College: A History from 1873-1963* (Montreal, 1963)
- Jacques, G.E. jr, *Chronicle of the St James Street Methodist Church, Montreal* (Montreal, 1888)
- Jhu, Winfred, "The Early Buildings of McGill University" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1966)

- Kittson, Arthur, *The Saga of Serbrooke Street, 1853-1949* (Montreal, 1949),
- Klassen, Henry C, *L.H. Holton: Montreal Businessman and Politician, 1817-1867* (Ph.D Thesis, University of Toronto, 1970)
- Knowles, David C, *The American Presbyterian Church of Montreal, 1822-1866* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1857)
- Kredl, Lawrence P, "Upper Peel Street, Montreal: The Changing Character of a Street, 1861-1978 (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1978)
- Kredl, Lawrence P, *The Origin and Development of Mount Royal Park, 1874-1900: Ideals versus Reality* (M.A. Thesis, York University, 1984)
- Lamothe, J. Cléophas, *Histoire de la corporation de la cité de Montréal depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours* (Montreal, 1903)
- Lella, Matthew C, "The Montreal Crystal Palace" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1989)
- Lighthall, George R, *A Short History of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal, 1823-1923* (Montreal, 1923)
- Lewis, D Sclater, *The Royal Victoria Hospital, 1887-1947* (Montreal, 1969)
- Mackay, Donald, *The Square Mile: Merchant Princes of Montreal* (Vancouver, 1987)
- MacLeod, Kenneth O, *The First Century: The Story of a Canadian Company: Henry Birks and Sons, 1879-1979* (Montreal, 1979)
- MacMillan, Cyrus, *McGill and its Story, 1821-1921* (London, New York, and Toronto, 1921)
- Maffini, Giulio, "The McTavish Pumphouse" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1970)
- Mair, Nathan, *The People of St James, Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal, 1984)
- Markell, H Keith , *History of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, 1865-1986* (Montreal, 1987)

- McDougall, Elizabeth Ann, *The American Element in the Early Presbyterian Church in Montreal, 1786-1824* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1966)
- McLennan, Hugh (ed), *McGill: The Story of a University* (London, 1960)
- Miller, Pamela J (editor), *La famille McCord: une vision passionnée / The McCord Family: a Passionate Vision* (Montreal, McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1992)
- The Montreal Diocese, *The Story of 75 Years: St Patrick's Church, 1847-1922* (Montreal, 1922)
- The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *The Architecture of Edward and WS Maxwell* (Montreal, 1991)
- Moodey, Edgar C, *The Fraser-Hickson Library: An Informal History* (London, 1977)
- Murray, A.L, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park, Montreal, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.XXVI: No.3, October 1967
- The Genealogy of the Ogilvies of Montreal* (1903)
- Olmsted, Frederick Law, *Mount Royal, Montreal* (New York, 1881)
- Propst, Stephen, "The Architecture of the Art Association of Montreal" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1967)
- Rémillard, Francois, and Brian Merrett, *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile, Montreal, 1850-1930* (Montreal, 1987)
- Rexford, E., Gammell, I., McBain, A.R., *The History of the High School of Montreal* (Montreal, 1950)
- St Andrew's and St Paul's, *One Hundred and Seventy Five Years, To Be Continued, 1803-1978* (Montreal, 1978)
- Sheets-Pyenson, Susan, *John William Dawson: Faith, Hope, and Science* (Montreal and Kingston, 1996)
- Sheft, Gerald, "The Prince of Wales Terrace" (McGill University, Blackader-Lauterman Library, 1963)
- Shotford, Allan Pearson, *Year of Jubilee: A Brief Sketch of Fifty Years' Work in the Church of St James the Apostle, Montreal, 1864-1914* (Montreal, 1914)

Stevens, George R, *Ogilvie in Canada, Pioneer Millers, 1801-1951* (Montreal, 1952)

*The Story of One Hundred Years: St Patrick's Church, Montreal, 1847-1947* (Montreal, 1947)

Terry, Nigel, *The Royal Vic* (Montreal, 1990)

Traquair, Ramsay, "The Buildings of McGill University", *Journal, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, 2 (1925)

Triggs, Stanley, et al, *Le pont Victoria: un lien vital / Victoria Bridge: the Vital Link* (Montreal, McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1992)

Westley, Margaret W, *Remembrance of Grandeur: Montreal's Anglo-Protestant Elite, 1900-1950* (Montreal, 1990)

#### General Works

Adams, Annemarie, *Architecture in the Family Way: Doctors, Houses, and Women, 1870-1900* (Montreal, 1996)

Artibise, Alan F.J, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth* (Montreal, 1975)

Benevolo, Leonardo, *The History of the City* (London, 1980)

Bliss, Michael, *Northern Enterprises: Five Centuries of Canadian Business* (Toronto, 1987)

Borthwick, J Douglas, *History and Biographical Gazetteer of Montreal to the Year 1892* (Montreal, 1892)

Bosworth, Newton, *Hochelaga Depicta* (Montreal, 1839)

Bradbury, Bettina, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders: Non-Wage Forms of Survival among Families, 1861-91", *Labour/le travail*, 14 (Fall 1984)

Briggs, Asa, *Victorian Cities* (London, 1963)

Brown, Jane, *The Art And Architecture of English Gardens* (London, 1889)

- Bunting, Bainbridge, *Houses of Boston's Back Bay: An Architectural History, 1840-1917* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967)
- Choay, Françoise, *The Modern City: Planning in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1969)
- Choko, Marc H, *Les grandes places publiques de Montréal* (Montreal, 1990)
- Coffin, David R, *The English Garden: Meditation and Memorial* (Princeton, N.J., 1994)
- Collard, Edgar Andrew, *Montreal Yesterdays* (Toronto, 1963)
- Collard, Edgar Andrew, *Call Back Yesterdays* (Don Mills, Ontario, 1965)
- Collard, Edgar Andrew, *The Days That Are No More* (Toronto, 1971)
- Communauté Urbaine de Montréal, *Répertoire d'architecture traditionnelle sur le territoire de la communauté urbaine de Montréal, Architecture domestique I: Les résidences* (Montreal, 1987)
- Courville, Serge, *Paroisses et municipalités de la région de Montréal au XIXe siècle, 1825-1861* (Montreal, 1988)
- Davidoff, Leonore, and Catherine Hall, "The Architecture of Public Life: English Middle-Class Society in a Provincial Town, 1780-1850", in Duncan Fraser and Anthone Sutcliffe (editors), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983)
- Davidoff, Leonore, and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (Chicago, 1987)
- Demchinsky, Bryan, *Montreal Then and Now: The Photographic Record of a Changing City / Montréal, hier et aujourd'hui: L'évolution d'une ville sous l'oeil de la caméra* (Montreal, 1985)
- Dubuc, Alfred, "Problems in the Study of the Stratification of the Canadian Society from 1760 to 1840", *The Canadian Historical Association*, 1965
- Dufresne, Sylvie, "Le carnaval d'hiver de Montréal, 1803-1889, *Urban History Review*, Vol.XI, No.3 (February 1983)
- Dyos, H.J, *Victorian Suburb: A Study in the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1966)

- Edwards, Arthur M, *The Design of Suburbia: A Critical Study in Environmental History* (London, 1981)
- Elliott, Brent, *Victorian Gardens* (London, 1986)
- Fishman, Robert, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York, 1987)
- Fyson, Donald, Colin M Coates, and Kathryn Harvey (editors), *Class, Gender and the Law in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Quebec: Sources and Perspectives* (Montreal History Group, 1993)
- Girouard, Mark, *The Victorian Country House* (Oxford, 1979)
- Girouard, Mark, *Cities and People: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven and London, 1985)
- Girouard, Mark, *The English Town: A History of Urban Life* (New Haven, 1990)
- Hall, Lee, *Olmsted's America: An "Unpractical" Man and His Vision of Civilization* (Boston, 1995)
- Hanna, David, and Frank Remiggi, *Montreal Neighbourhoods: The Dynamics and Diversity of Montreal Neighbourhoods in Expansion at the End of the 19th Century* (Montreal, 1980)
- Hanna, David, *Montreal: A City Built by Small Builders, 1867-1880* (Ph.D Thesis, McGill University, 1986)
- Hanna, David, *The Layered City: A Revolution in Housing in Mid-Nineteenth Century Montreal* ("Shared Spaces", McGill University, Department of Geography: Montreal, 1986)
- Harvey, Janice, *Upper Class Reaction to Poverty in Mid-Nineteenth Century Montreal: A Protestant Example* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1978)
- Hertzog, Stephen, *A Stake in the System: Domestic Property Ownership and Social Class in Montreal, 1847-1881* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1984)
- Hertzog, Stephen, and Robert D Lewis, "A City of Tenants: Homeownership and Social Class in Montreal, 1847-1881", *McGill University Department of Geography: Shared Spaces, No.2* (Montreal, 1985)
- Hewett, Philip, *Unitarians in Canada* (Toronto, 1970)
- Iberville-Moreau, Luc d', *Lost Montreal* (Toronto, 1975)

- Igartua, José, "A Change in Climate: the Conquest and the 'Marchands' of Montreal", *Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers* (1974)
- Jackson, Kenneth T, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (Oxford, 1985)
- James, Ellen, *The Civic Architecture of John Ostell* (Ph.D Thesis, McGill University, 1982)
- James, Ellen, *John Ostell: Architect, Surveyor* (Montreal, McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1985)
- Jooste, Johan K, *The Montreal Villa, 1830-1930* (M. Arch Thesis, McGill University, 1985)
- Kalfus, Melvin, *Frederick Law Olmsted: the Passion of a Public Artist* (New York, 1990)
- Katz, Michael B, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975)
- Kemble, Roger, *The Canadian City, St John's to Victoria: A Critical Commentary* (Montreal, 1989)
- Kostof, Spiro, *America By Design* (New York, Oxford, 1987)
- Kostof, Spiro, *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History* (London, 1991)
- Kostof, Spiro, *The City Assembled* (Boston, 1992)
- Lacelle, Claudette, *Domestiques en milieu urbain canadien au XIXe siècle / Urban Domestic Servants in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Ottawa, National Historic Parks and Sites, 1987)
- Lamonde, Yvon, *Les bibliothèques de collectivités à Montréal, 17e - 19e siècles* (Montreal, 1979)
- Laplante, Jean de, *Les parcs de Montréal* (Montreal, 1990)
- Lewis, Robert D, *The Segregated City: Class and Occupation in Montreal, 1861-1901* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1985)
- Lewis, Robert D, *Industry and Space: the Making of Montreal's Industrial Geography, 1850-1918* (Ph.D Thesis, McGill University)

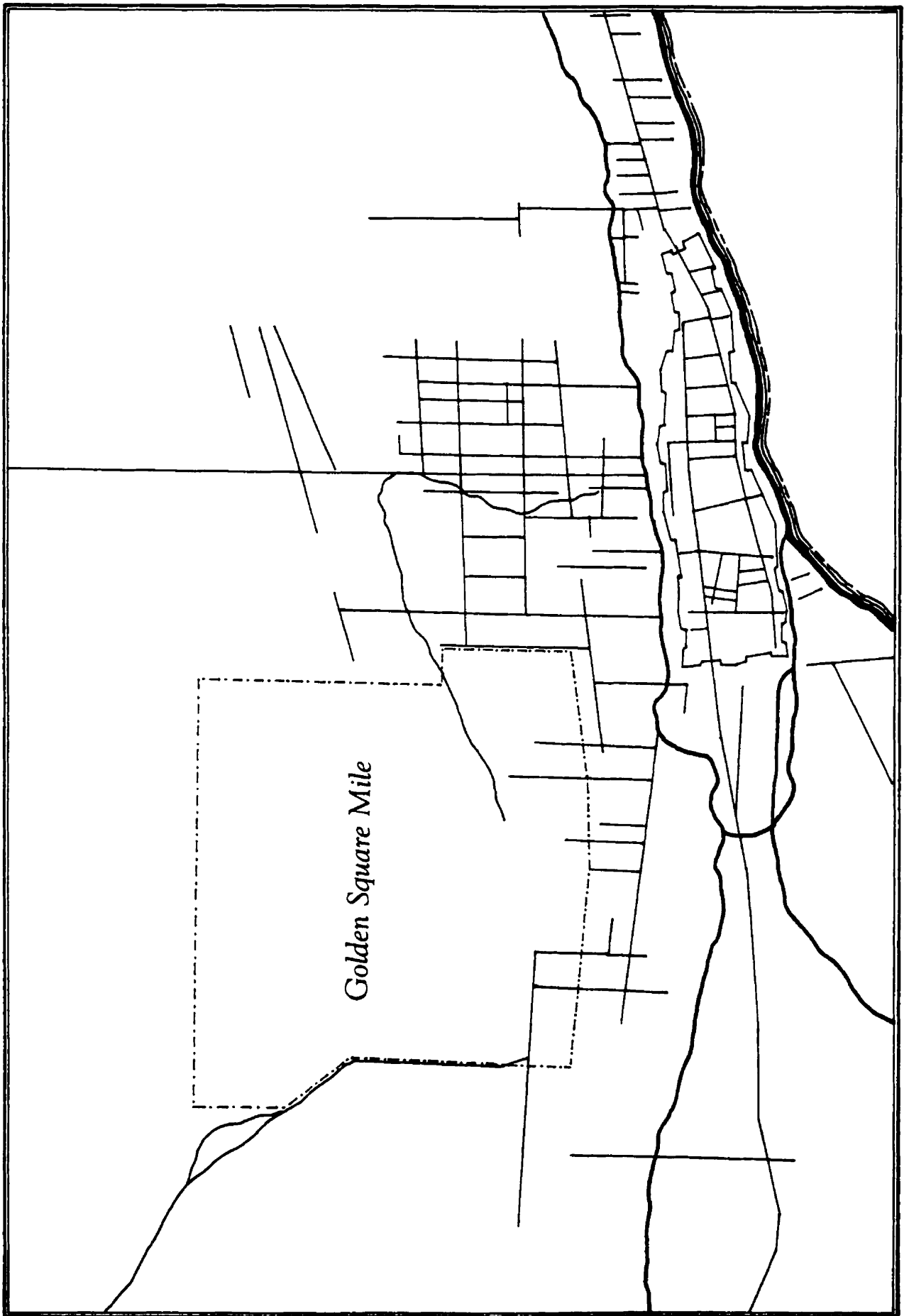
- Linteau, Paul-André, *Maisonneuve, ou comment des promoteurs fabriquent une ville* (Montreal, 1981)
- Linteau, Paul-André, and Jean-Claude Robert, "Propriété foncière et société à Montréal, *Revue historique de l'Amérique française*: 28,1 (juin 1984)
- Linteau, Paul-André, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération* (Montreal, 1992)
- Mair, Nathan H, *Protestant Education in Quebec: Notes on the History of Education in the Protestant Public Schools of Quebec* (Québec, 1981)
- Maitland, Leslie, *Neo-Classical Architecture in Canada* (Ottawa, 1984)
- Marsan, Jean-Claude, *Montréal en évolution* (Montreal, 1974)
- McKelvey, Blake, *The Urbanization of America, 1860-1915* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1963)
- Metcalf, Alan, "The Evolution of Organized Physical Recreation in Montreal, 1840-1895", *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, XI:21 (May 1978)
- Montreal in 1856* (Montreal, 1856)
- Morris, Robert J, "The Middle Class and British Towns and Cities of the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1870" in Derek Fraser & Anthony Sutcliffe (editors), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983)
- Mumford, Lewis, *The City in History* (London, 1961)
- Muthesius, Stefan, *The English Terraced House* (New Haven, 1981)
- Olsen, Donald J, *Town Planning in London: the 18th and 19th centuries* (New Haven, 1964)
- Olsen, Donald J, *The Growth of Victorian London* (New York, 1976)
- Olsen, Donald J, *The City as a Work of Art* (New Haven, 1986)
- Pinard, Guy, *Montreal: son histoire, son architecture, tome 1 à 5* (Montreal, 1987)
- Reid, W Stanford (editor), *The Scottish Tradition in Canada* (Toronto, 1976)



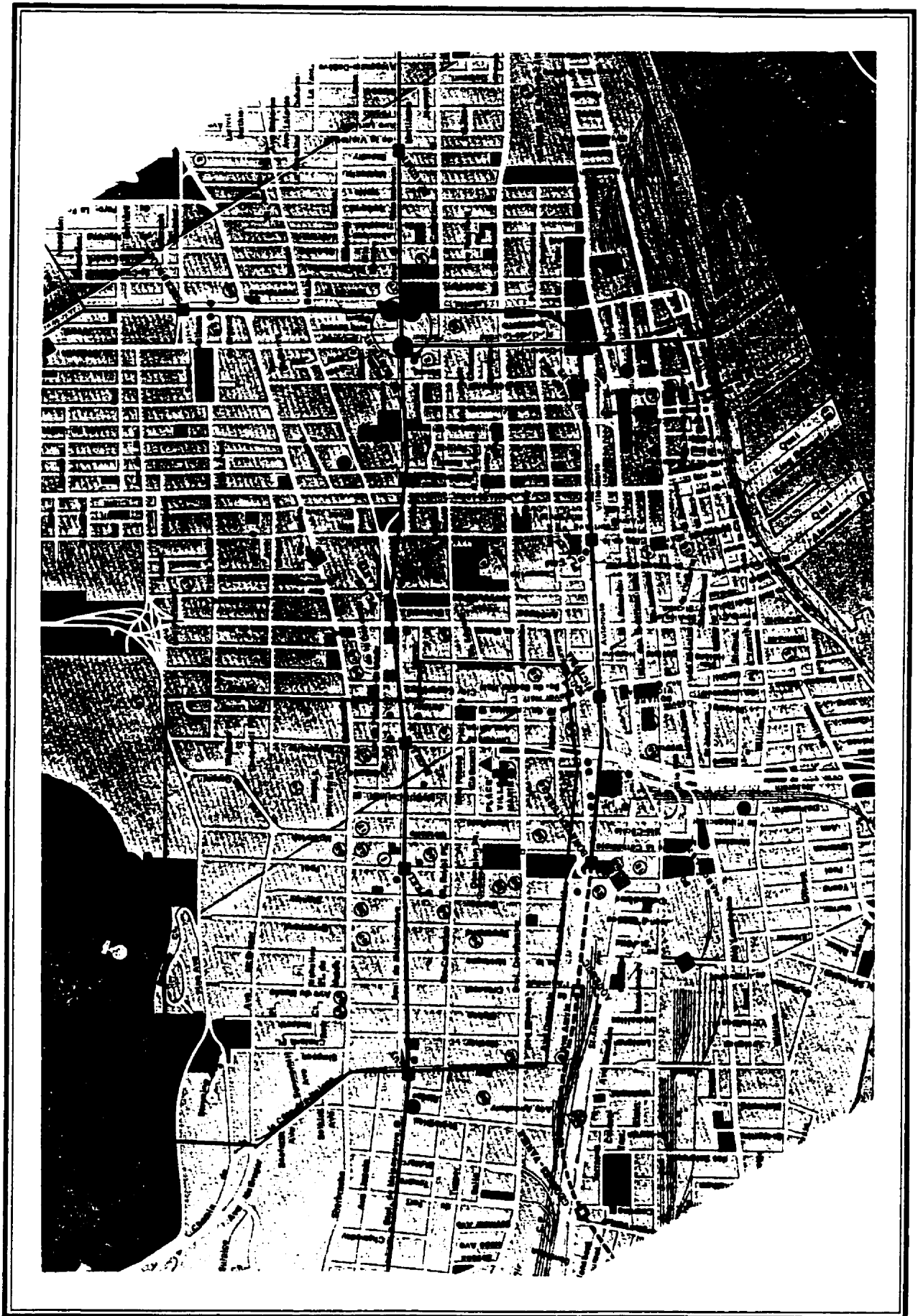
- Reps, John W, *Cities of the American West: A History of Frontier Urban Planning* (Princeton, N.J., 1979)
- Reps, John W, *The Forgotten Frontier: Urban Planning in the American West before 1890* (Columbia, Missouri, 1981)
- Robert, Jean-Claude, "Les notables de Montréal au XIX siècle", *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, VIII: 15 (mai 1975)
- Rubinstein, W.D, "The Victorian Middle Classes: Wealth, Occupation, and Geography", *Economic History Review* (XXX, 1977)
- Rudin, Ronald, *The Forgotten Quebecers: A History of English Speaking Quebec, 1759-1980* (Québec, 1985)
- Senior, Elinor Kyte, *British Regulars in Montreal: An Imperial Garrison, 1832- 1854* (Montreal and Kingston, 1981)
- Stewart, Alan, *Settling an 18th Century Faubourg: Property and family in the Saint-Laurent Suburb, 1735-1810* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1988)
- Summerson, John, *Georgian London* (London, 1945)
- Sutcliffe, Anthony, *The Autumn of Central Paris* (Montreal and Kingston, 1970)
- Sutcliffe, Anthony, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States, and France, 1789-1914* (London, 1981)
- Sweeny, Robert, "A Brief Sketch of the Economic History of English Quebec" in Gary Caldwell and Eric Waddell, *The English in Quebec: From Majority to Minority Status* (Québec, 1982)
- Thorns, David C, *Suburbia* (London, 1982)
- Trofimenkoff, Susan Mann, *The Dream of Nation: A Social and Intellectual History of Quebec* (Toronto, 1982)
- Tulchinsky, Gerald, "The Montreal Business Community, 1837-1953" in D.S. MacMillan (editor), *Canadian Business History: Selected Studies, 1497-1971* (Toronto, 1972)
- Tulchinsky, Gerald, *The River Barons: Montreal Businessmen and the Growth of Industry and Transportation, 1837-1853* (Toronto, 1977)

- Toker, Franklin, *The Church of Notre Dame in Montreal: An Architectural History* (Montreal, 1971)
- Van Nus, Walter, "The Role of Suburban Government in the City Building Process: the Case of Notre Dame de Grace, 1876-1910, *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*, XIII (October 1984)
- Vance, James E, *This Scene of Man: The Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization* (New York, 1977)
- Wallot, Jean-Pierre, *Un Quebec qui bougeait: trame socio-politique au tournant du XIXe siècle* (Trois Rivières, 1973)
- Warner, Sam Bass, *Streetcar Suburbs* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978)
- Webb, Michael, *The City Square: A Historical Evolution* (New York, 1990)
- Woods, Shirley E. jr, *The Molson Saga, 1763-1983* (Scarborough, Ontario, 1983)
- Young, Brian, *Promoters and Politicians: North Shore Railways in the History of Quebec, 1854-1885* (Toronto, 1978)
- Young, Brian, *George-Etienne Cartier, Montreal Bourgeois* (Montreal and Kingston, 1981)
- Young, Brian, *In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution, 1816-1876* (Montreal and Kingston, 1986)
- Youngson, A.J, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1966)
- Zeller, Suzanne, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Trans-Continental Nation* (Toronto, 1987)
- Zucker, Paul, *Town and Square: From the Agora to the Village Green* (New York, 1959)

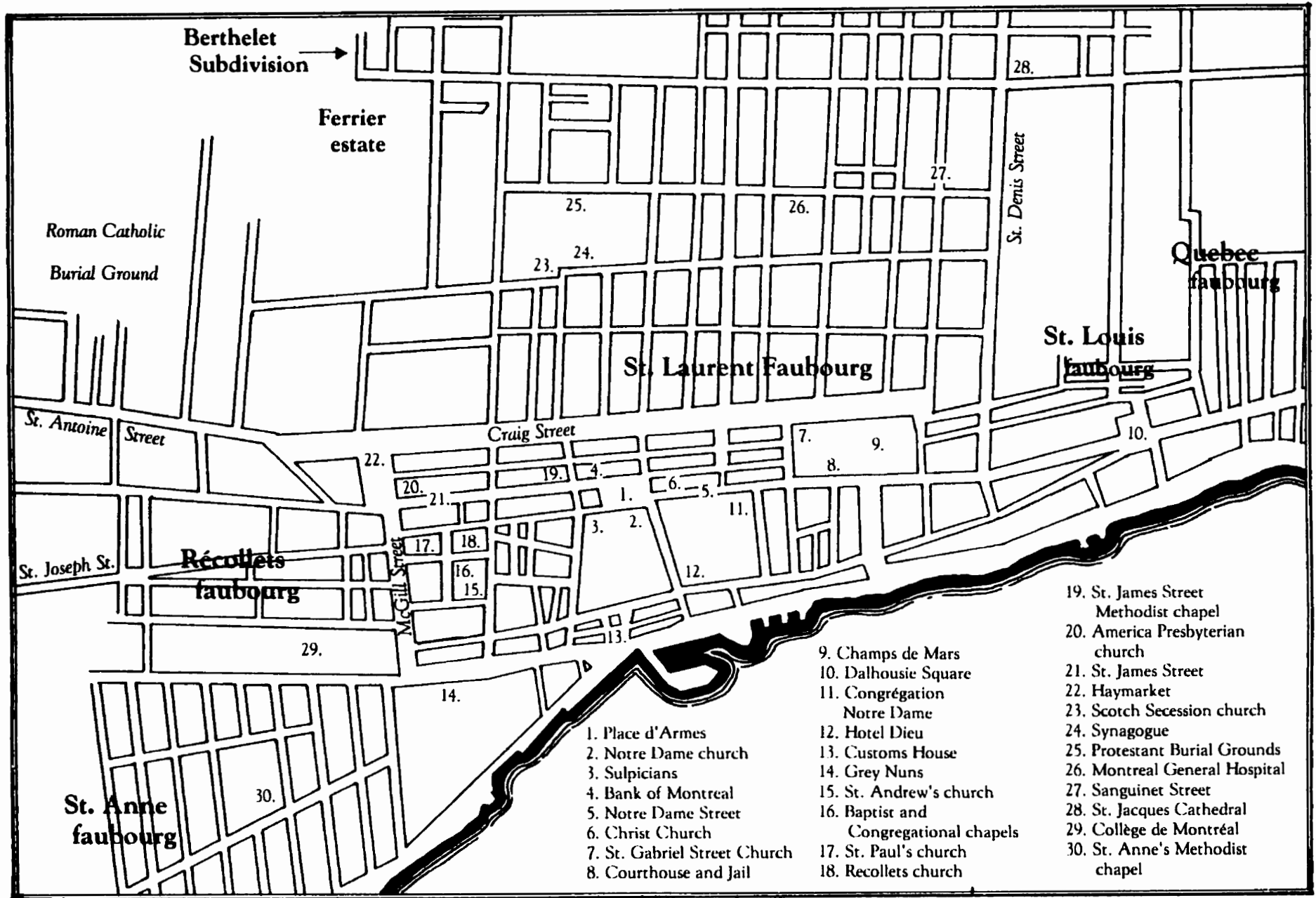




1. Montreal and Environs c. 1800 showing boundaries of the "GSM"



2. Present-day Montreal showing boundaries of the "GSM"



Berthelet  
Subdivision →

Ferrier  
estate

Roman Catholic  
Burial Ground

St. Antoine  
Street

St. Joseph St.

Récollets  
faubourg

St. Anne  
faubourg

Craig Street

McGill Street

St. Denis Street

St. Laurent Faubourg

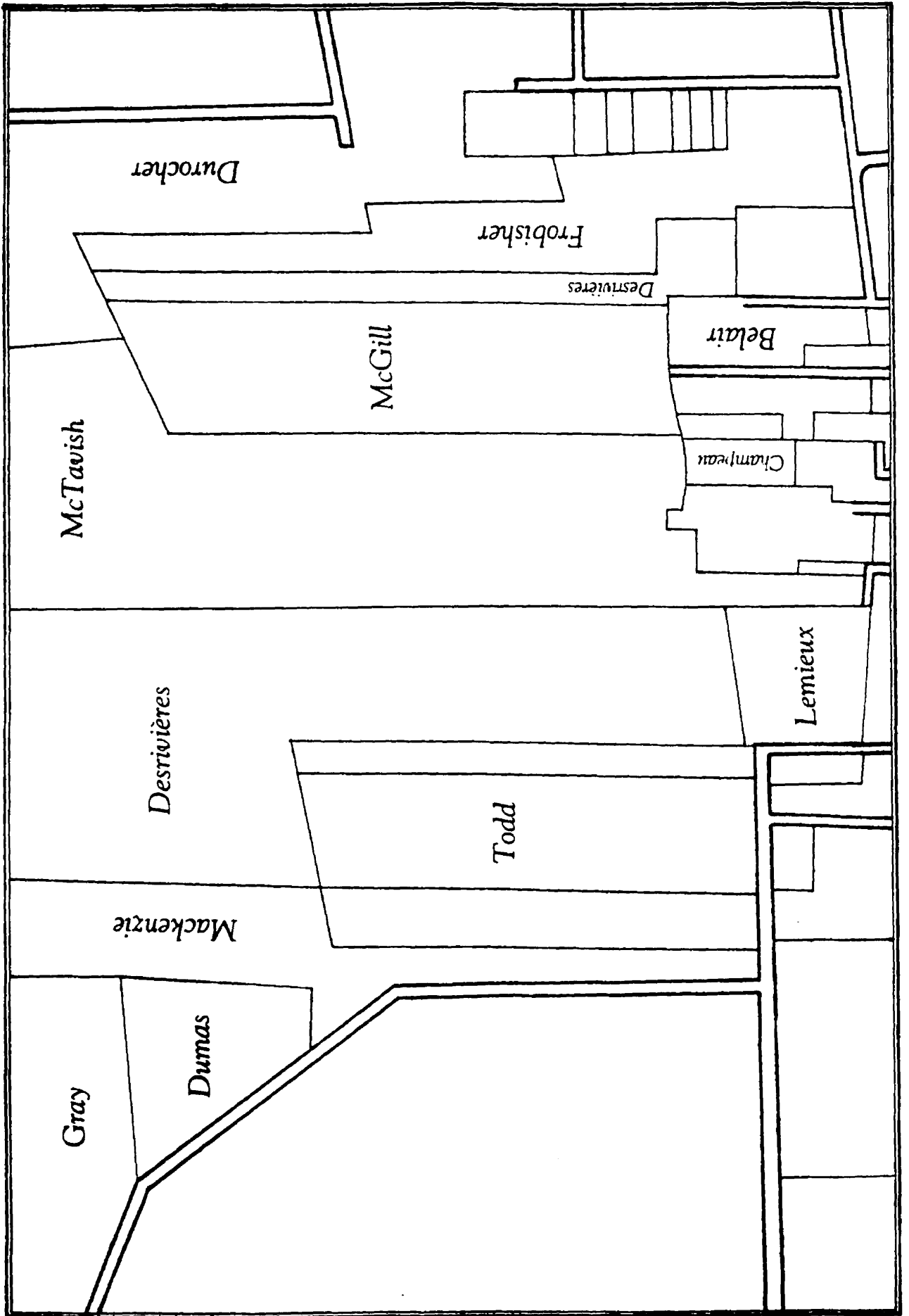
St. Louis  
faubourg

Quebec  
faubourg

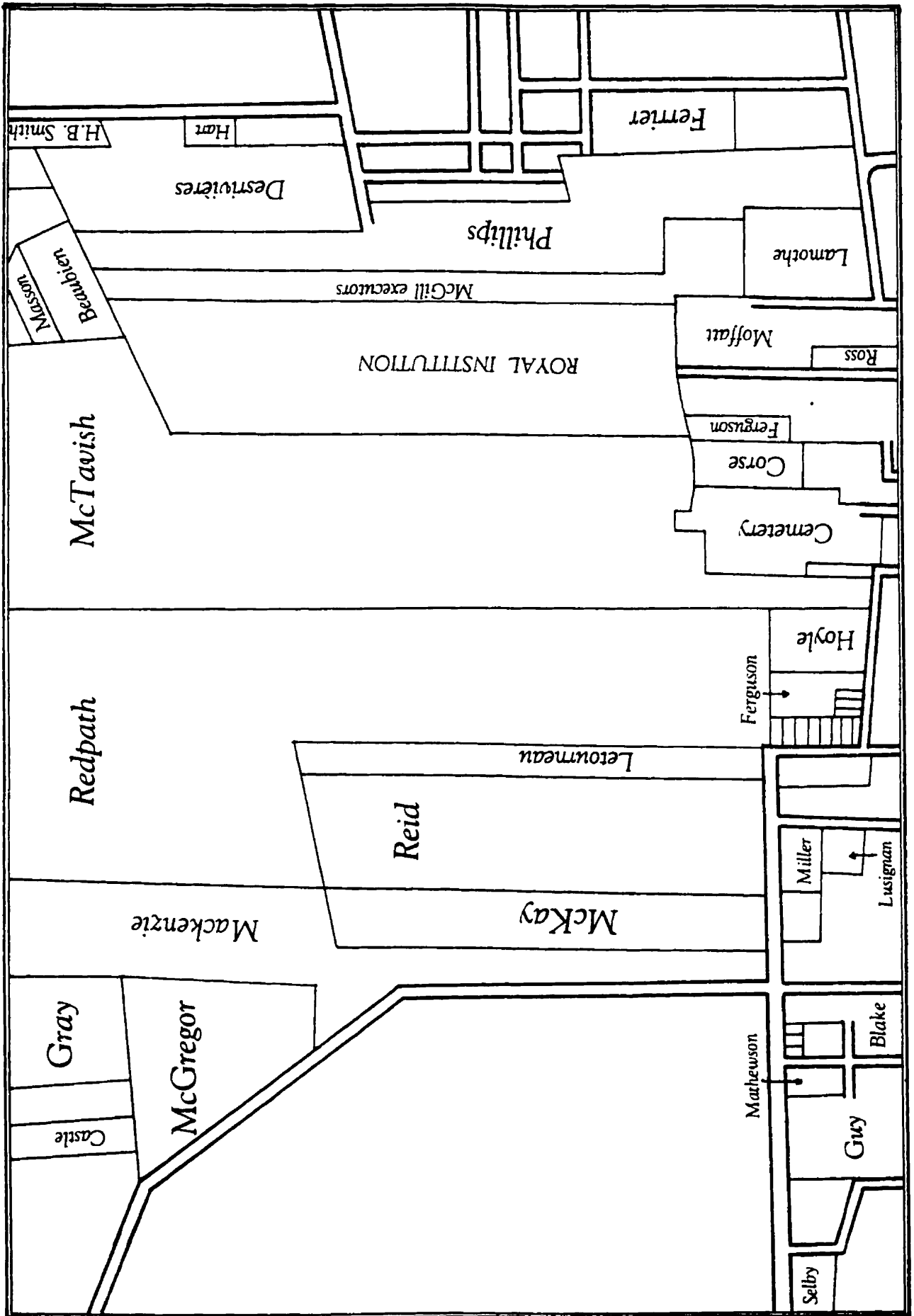
- 1. Place d'Armes
- 2. Notre Dame church
- 3. Sulpicians
- 4. Bank of Montreal
- 5. Notre Dame Street
- 6. Christ Church
- 7. St. Gabriel Street Church
- 8. Courthouse and Jail

- 9. Champs de Mars
- 10. Dalhousie Square
- 11. Congrégation  
Notre Dame
- 12. Hotel Dieu
- 13. Customs House
- 14. Grey Nuns
- 15. St. Andrew's church
- 16. Baptist and  
Congregational chapels
- 17. St. Paul's church
- 18. Recollets church

- 19. St. James Street  
Methodist chapel
- 20. America Presbyterian  
church
- 21. St. James Street
- 22. Haymarket
- 23. Scotch Secession church
- 24. Synagogue
- 25. Protestant Burial Grounds
- 26. Montreal General Hospital
- 27. Sanguinet Street
- 28. St. Jacques Cathedral
- 29. Collège de Montréal
- 30. St. Anne's Methodist  
chapel

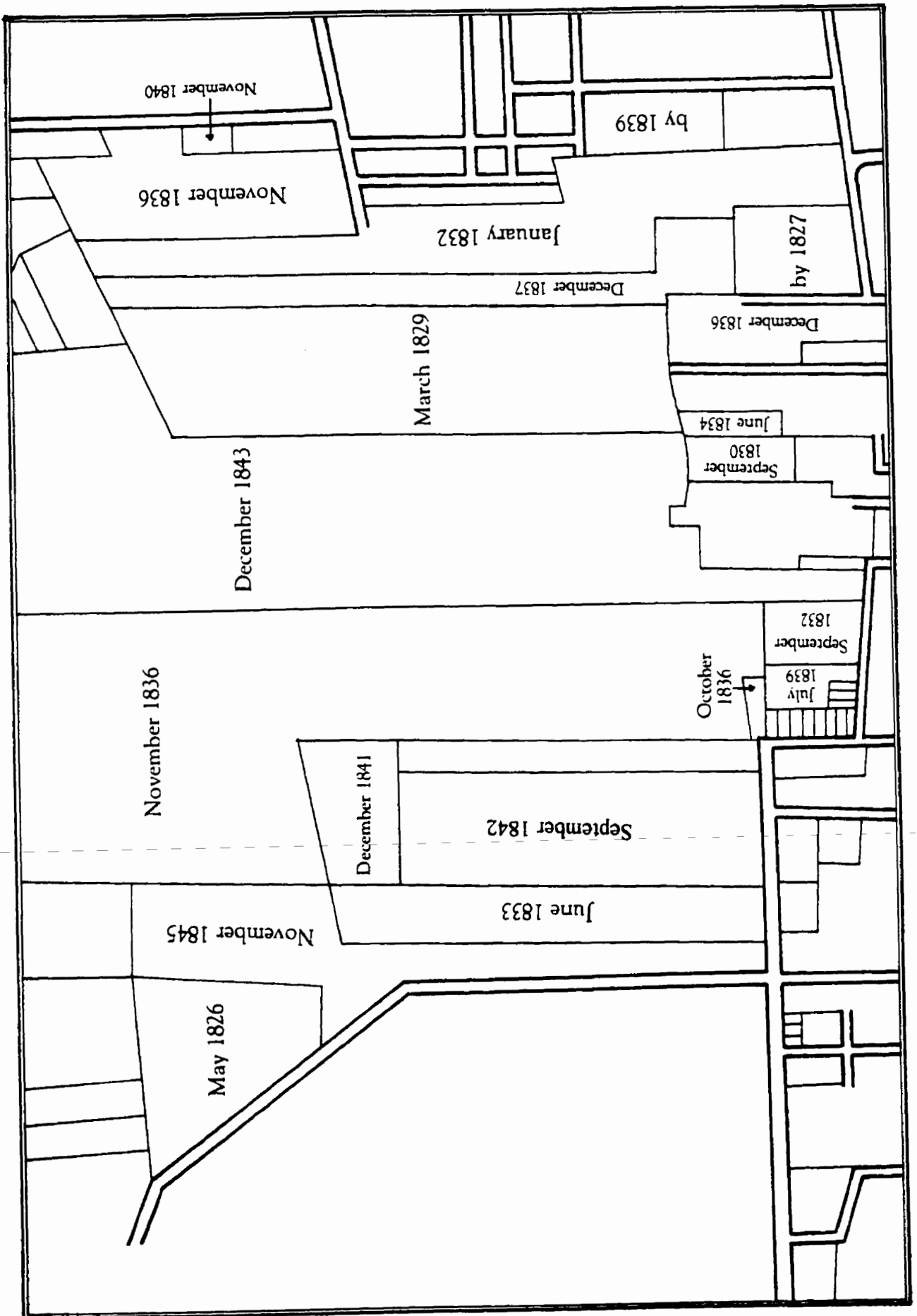


4. Landowners on Mountain slope c. 1810

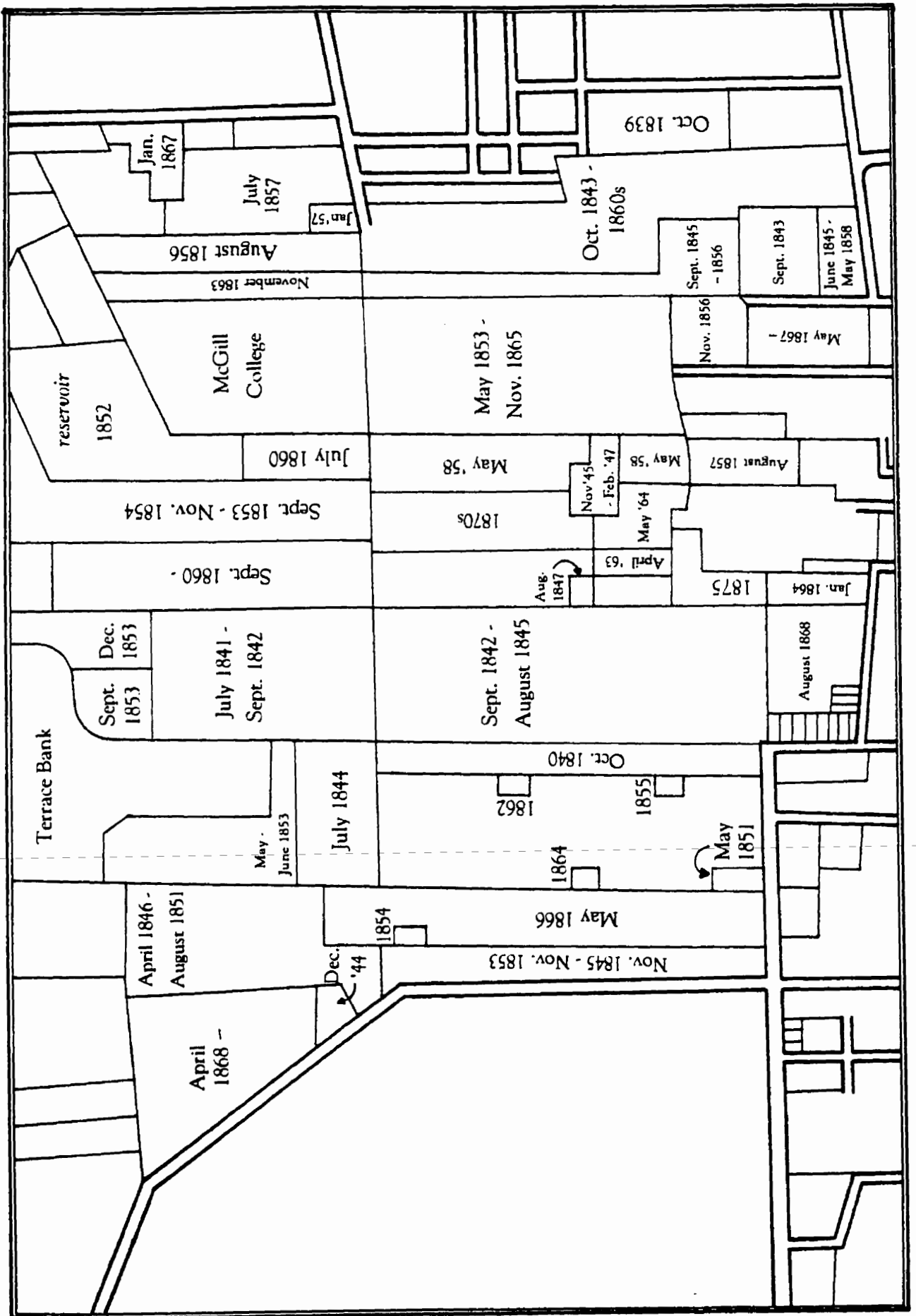


5. Landowners on Mountain slope c. 1836

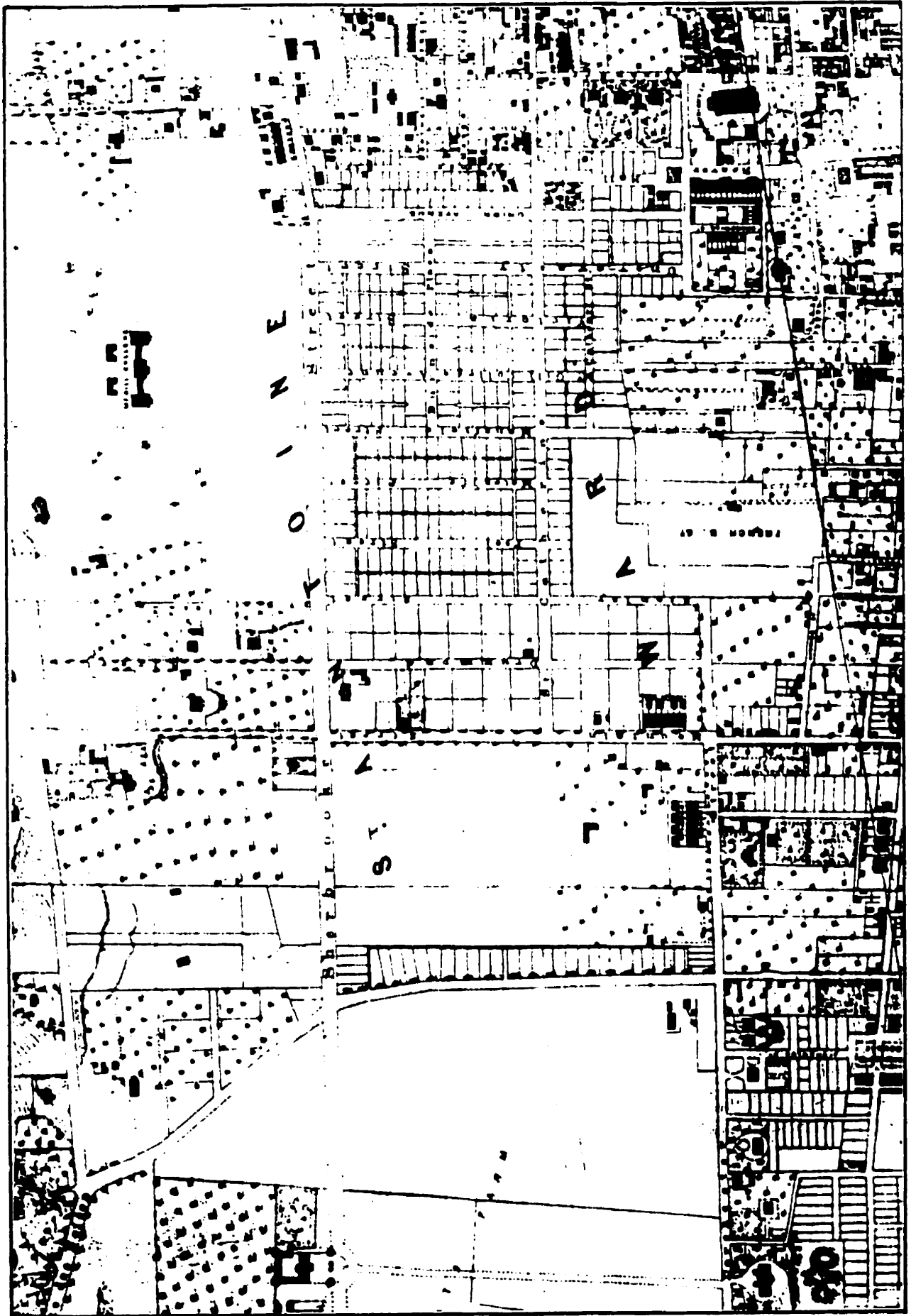




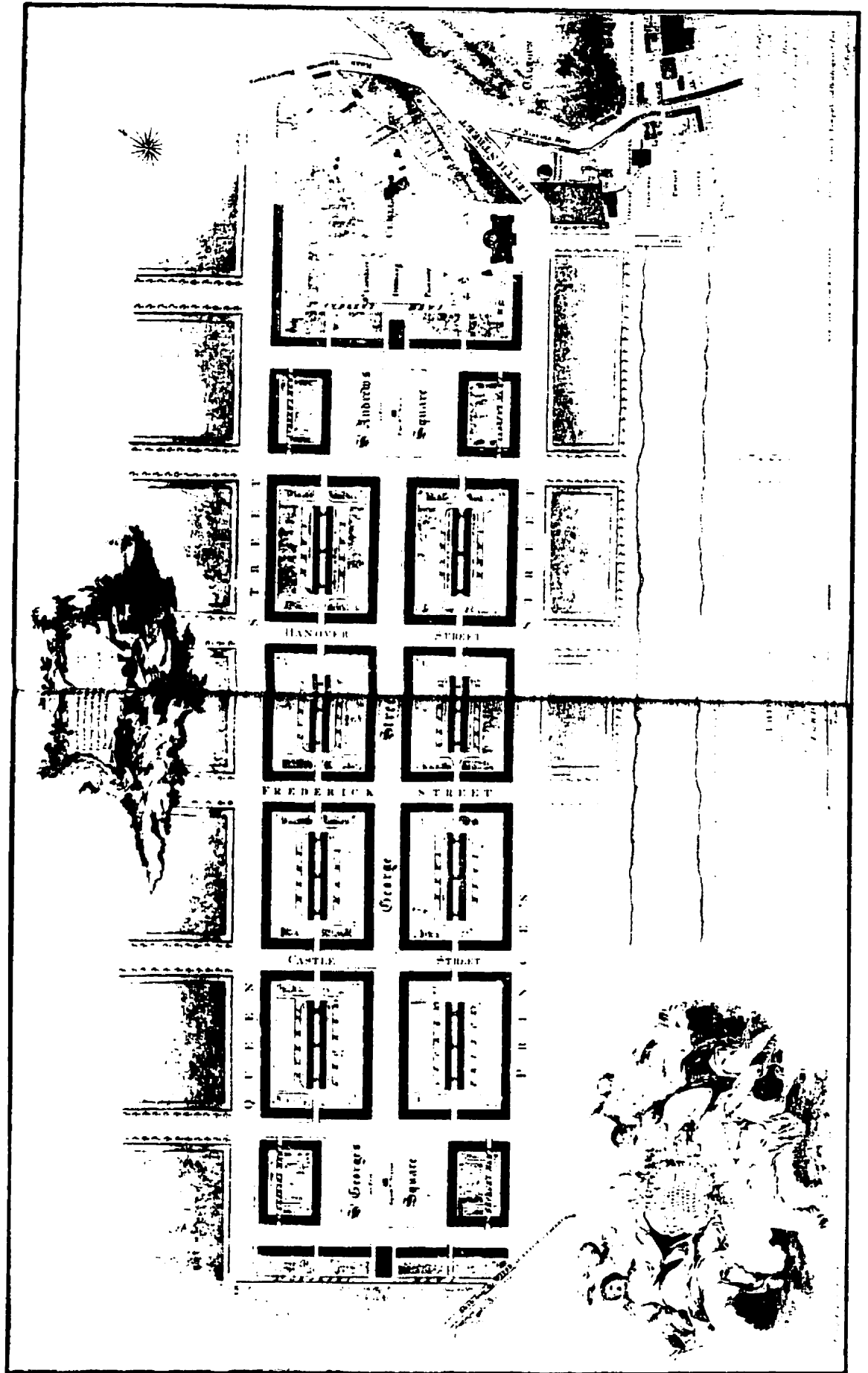
6. GSM estates with dates at which they were acquired by developers



7. GSM estates with dates of subdivision schemes

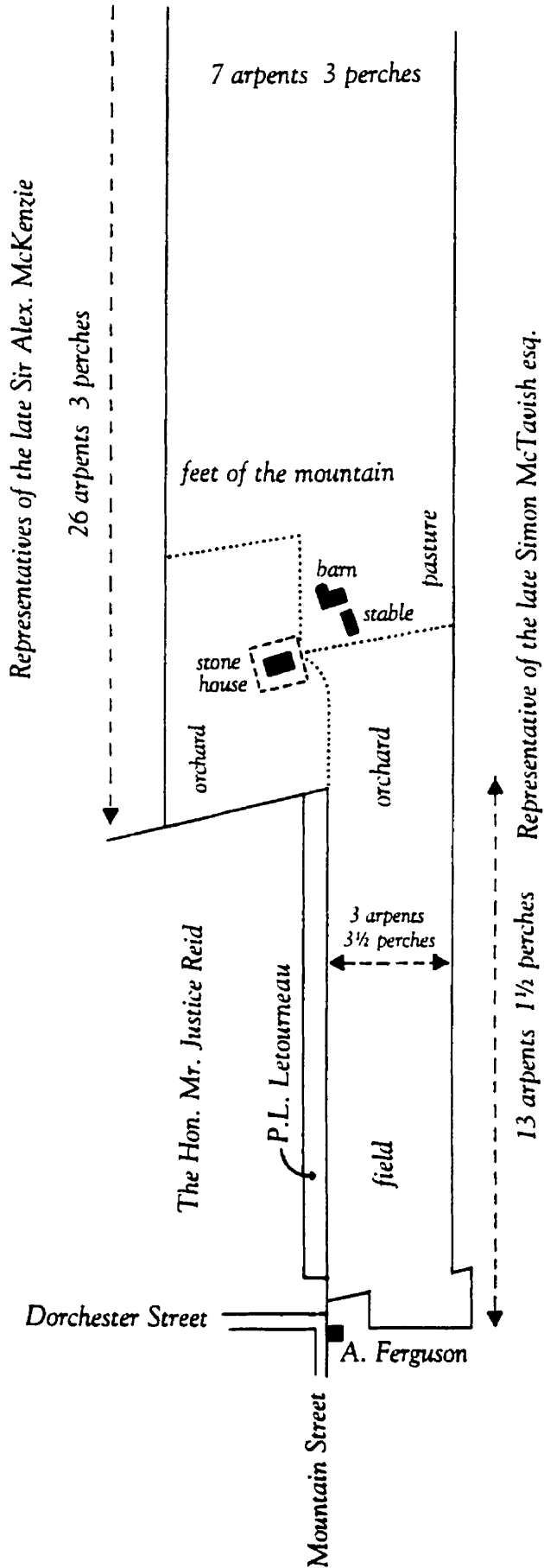


8. Detail of James Cane's 1846 Map of Montreal showing GSM

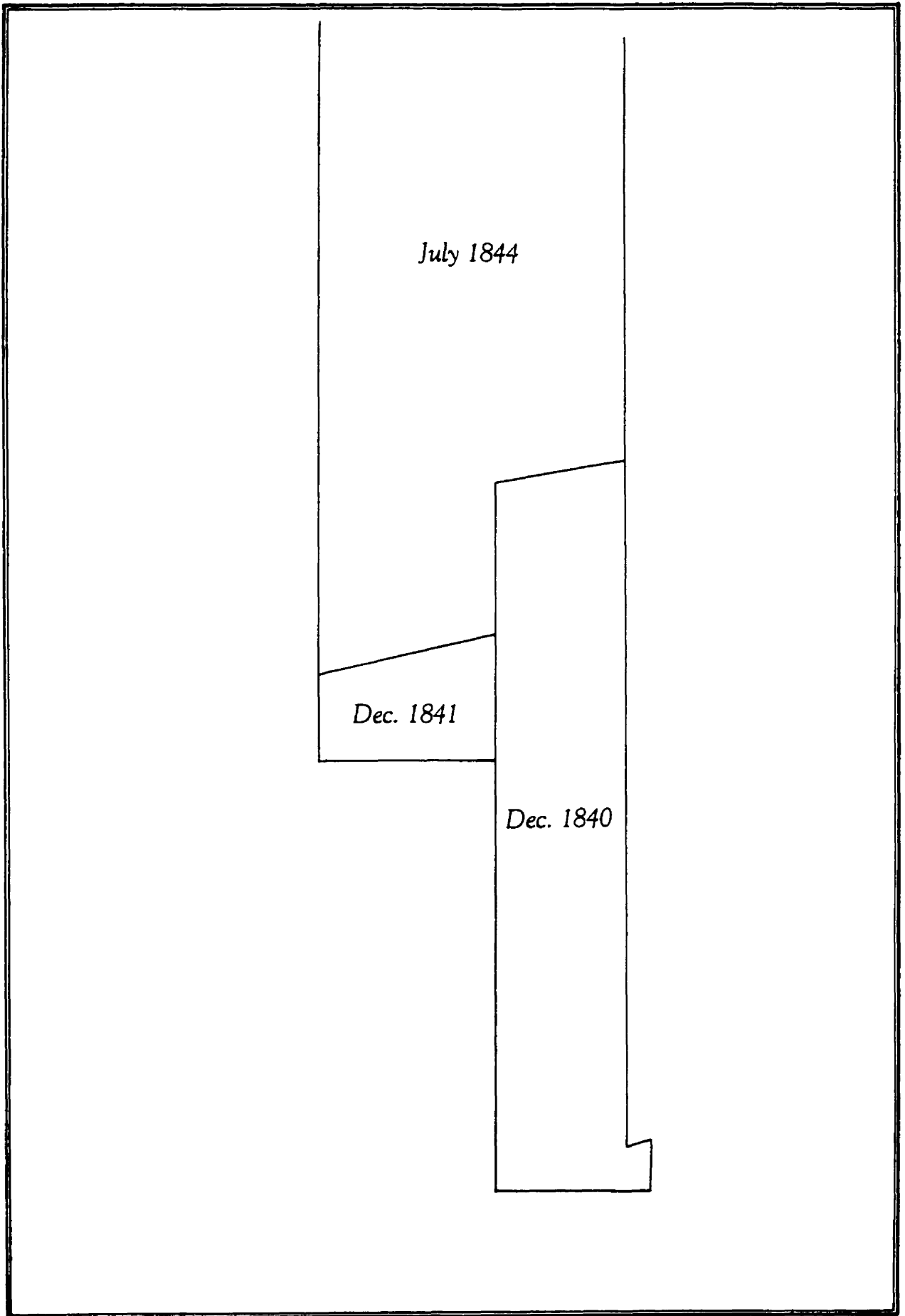


9. Craig's plan of the New Town of Edinburgh

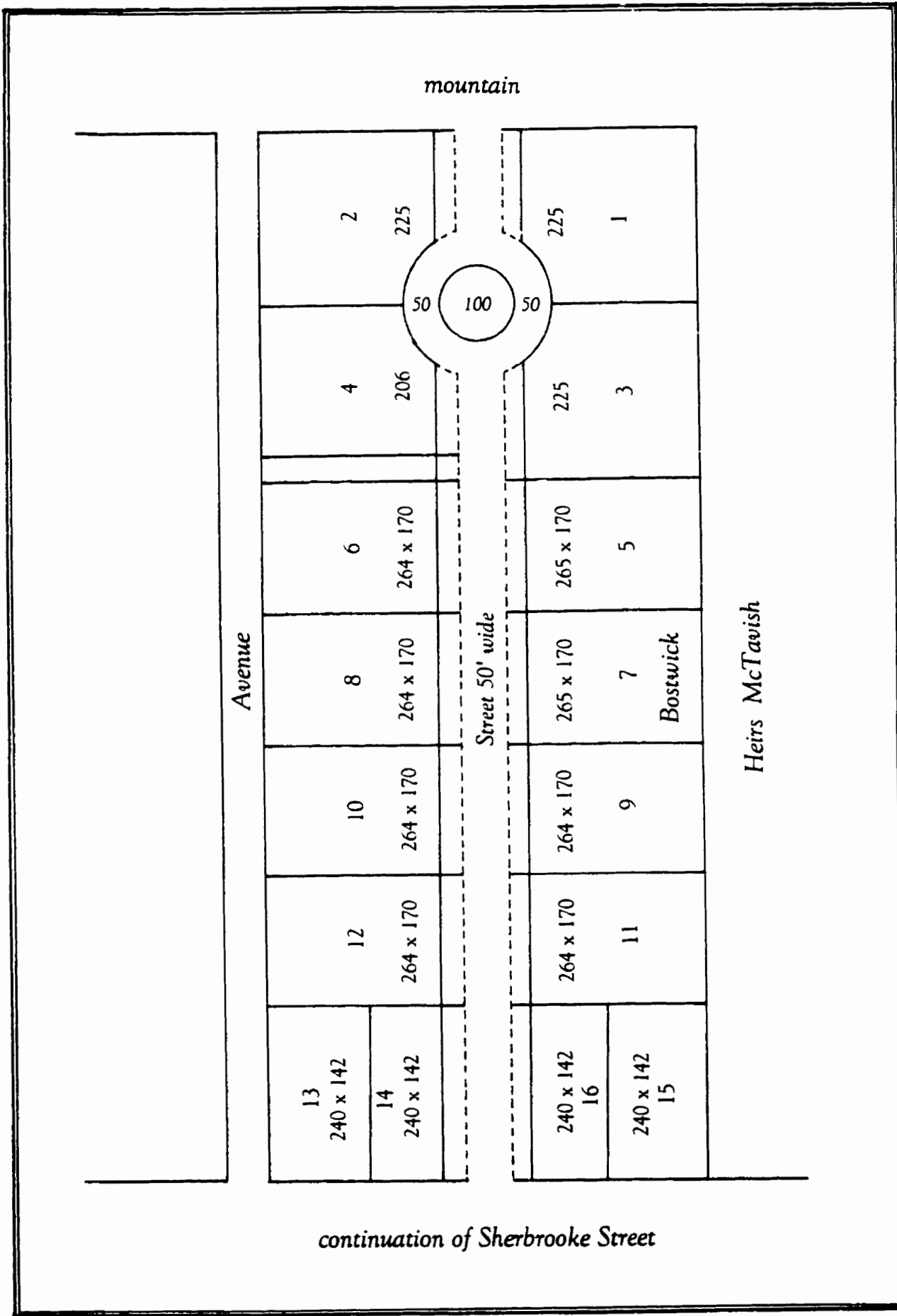
Plan of the property known under the name of Ferme de la Montagne depending of the Estate of the late François Desrivières from a survey by André Trudeauux



10. La Ferme de la Montagne c. 1836, after Trudeauux



11. Redpath's commutations



12. 1840 plan for Upper Drummond Street, after Ostell

Sherbrooke Street

No. 12 200 x 139	No. 35 145'9" x 139
No. 11 145'9" x 139	No. 33 145'9" x 139
No. 10 145'9" x 139	No. 31 145'9" x 139
No. 9 145'9" x 139	No. 29 145'9" x 139
No. 8 145'9" x 139	No. 27 145'9" x 139
No. 7 145'9" x 139	No. 25 145'9" x 139
No. 6 145'9" x 139	No. 23 145'9" x 139

No. 36 200 x 124	No. 48 200 x 124
No. 34 145'9" x 124	No. 47 145'9" x 124
No. 32 145'9" x 124	No. 46 145'9" x 124
No. 30 145'9" x 124	No. 45 145'9" x 124
No. 28 145'9" x 124	No. 44 145'9" x 124
No. 26 145'9" x 124	No. 43 145'9" x 124
No. 24 145'9" x 124	No. 42 145'9" x 124

Mountain Street

Drummond Street

St. Catherine Street

No. 5 148 x 139	No. 21 148 x 139
No. 4 148 x 139	No. 19 148 x 139
No. 3 148 x 139	No. 17 148 x 139
No. 2 148 x 139	No. 15 148 x 139
No. 1 153 x 139	No. 13 151 x 139

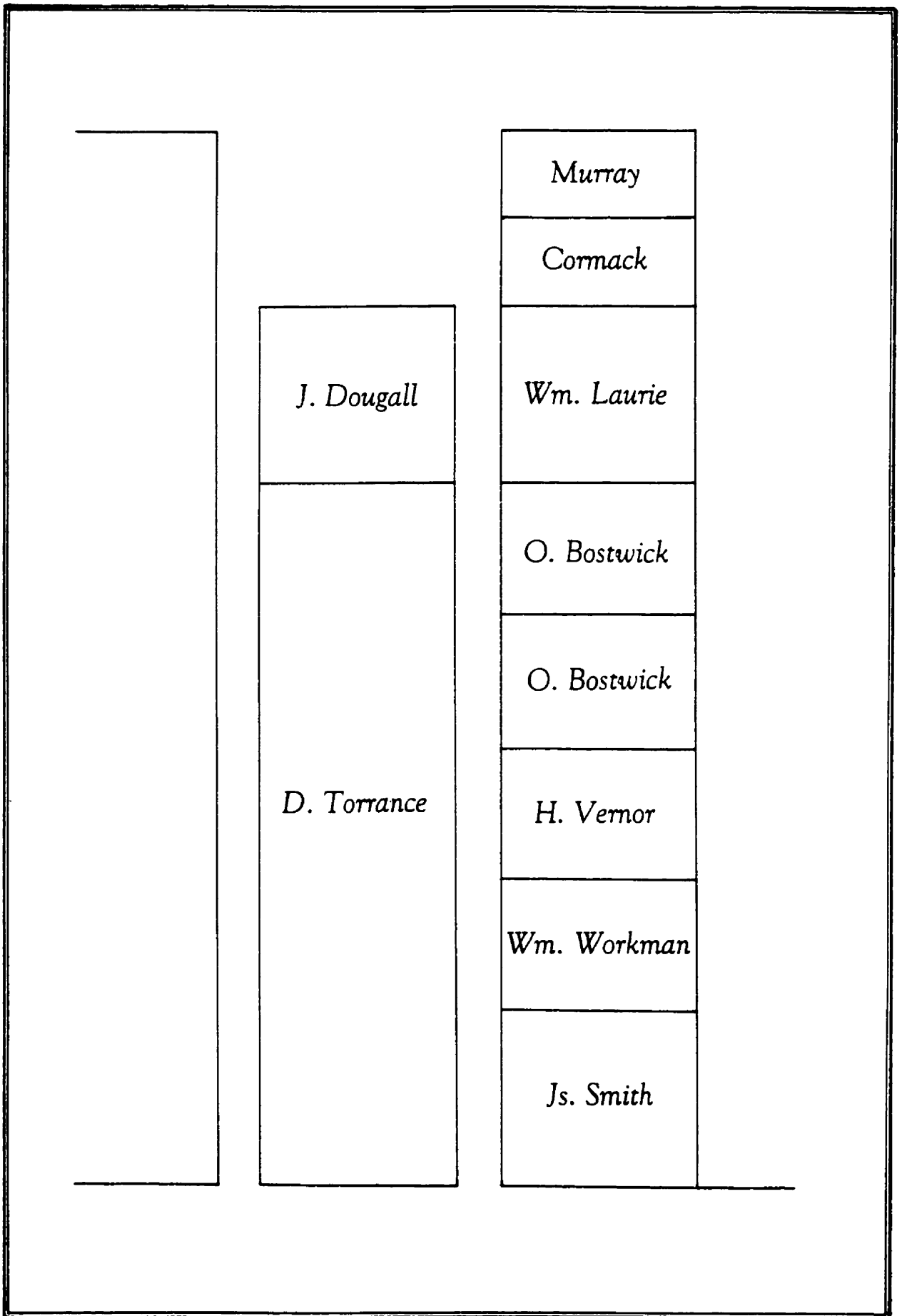
No. 22 148 x 124	No. 41 148 x 124
No. 20 148 x 124	No. 40 148 x 124
No. 18 148 x 124	No. 39 148 x 124
No. 16 148 x 124	No. 38 148 x 124
No. 14 148 x 124	No. 37 148 x 124



Dorchester Street

59 x 147 x 56'6" x 135





14. Original purchasers of Upper Drummond Street lots

Henry Mulholland (July 1842)	
W Laurie Sept. '42	F.T. Hall Sept. '42
F.B. Mathews (Sept. 1842)	
William Leste (Sept. 1842)	
Mary Kittson (Sept. 1842)	
William Laurie (Oct. 1842)	
William Laurie (Sept. 1842)	

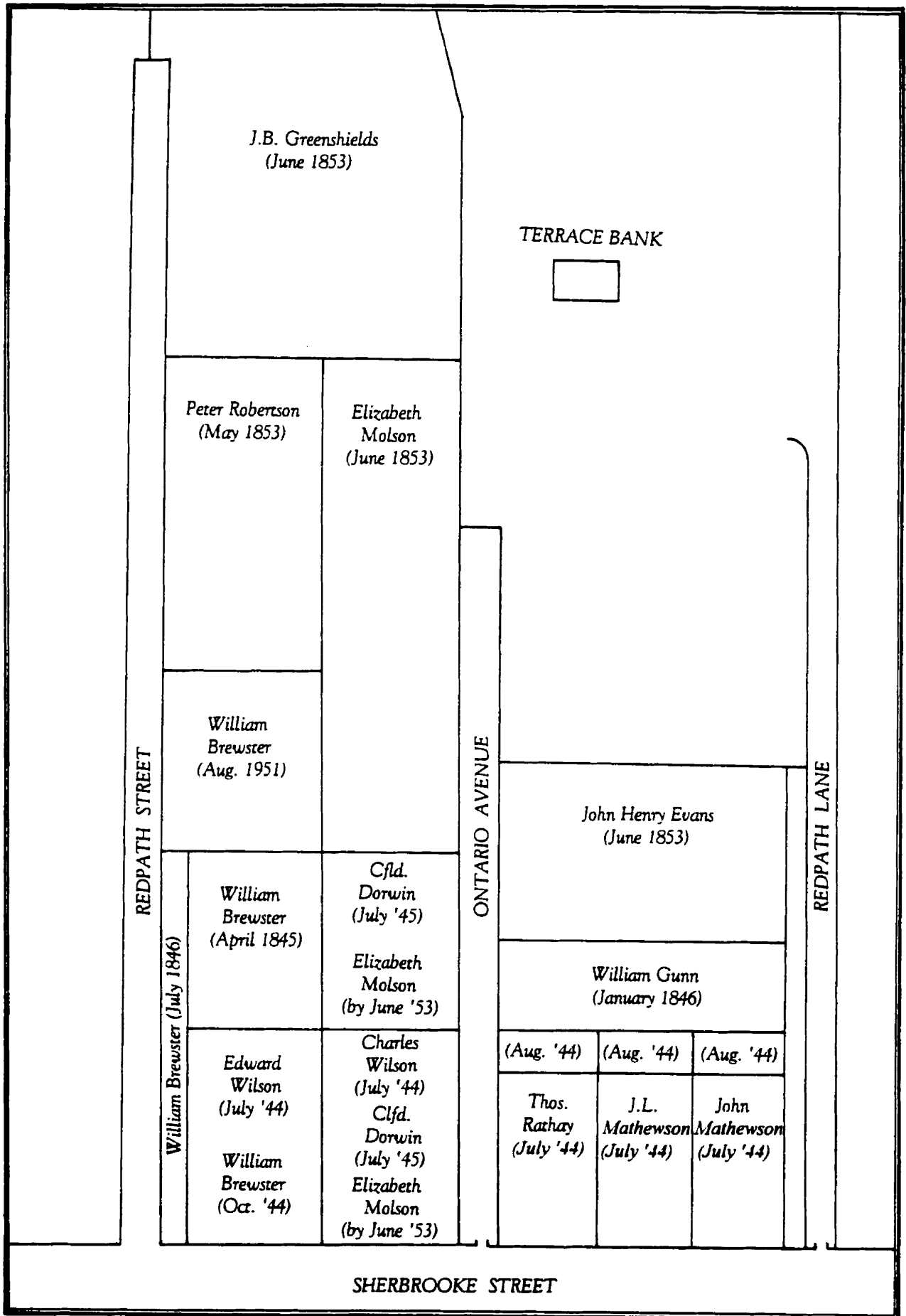
James Smith (Sept. 1842)
F.T. Hall (Sept. 1842)
J.P. Hetherington (Aug. 1844)
John Sinclair (Sept. 1842)
J.L. Mathewson (June 1844)
G.W. Wicksted (March 1845)
John Ostell (Dec. 1842)

William Laurie (April 1844)
Andrew Hayes (Sept. 1842)
Thos. Workman (May 1844)
William Laurie (Sept. 1842)

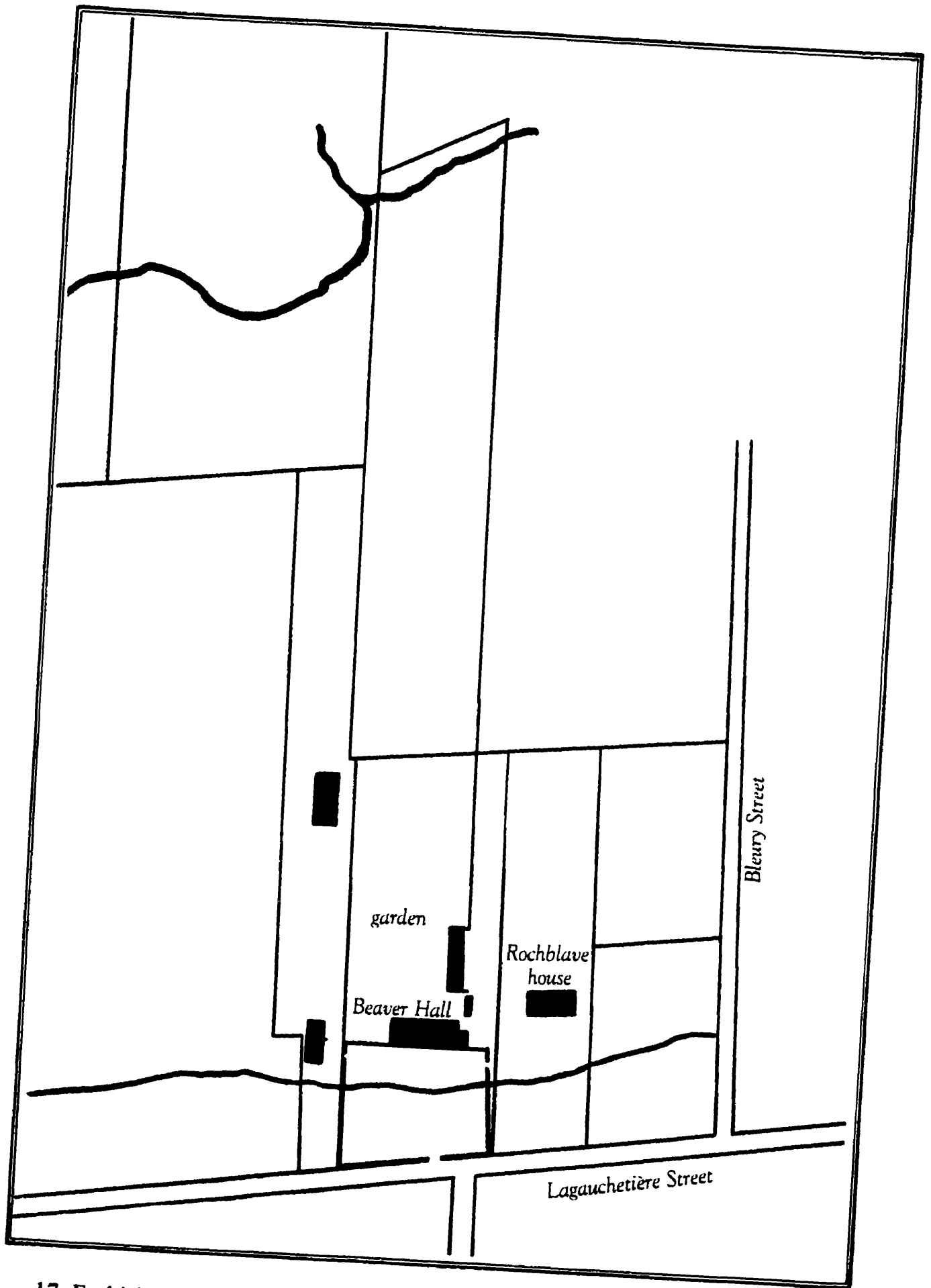
John Wells (July 1844)
Theo. Hart (Aug. 1845)
Misses Conolly (Aug. 1843)
John Glass (Aug. 1845)
J.L. Beaudry (Sept. 1842)



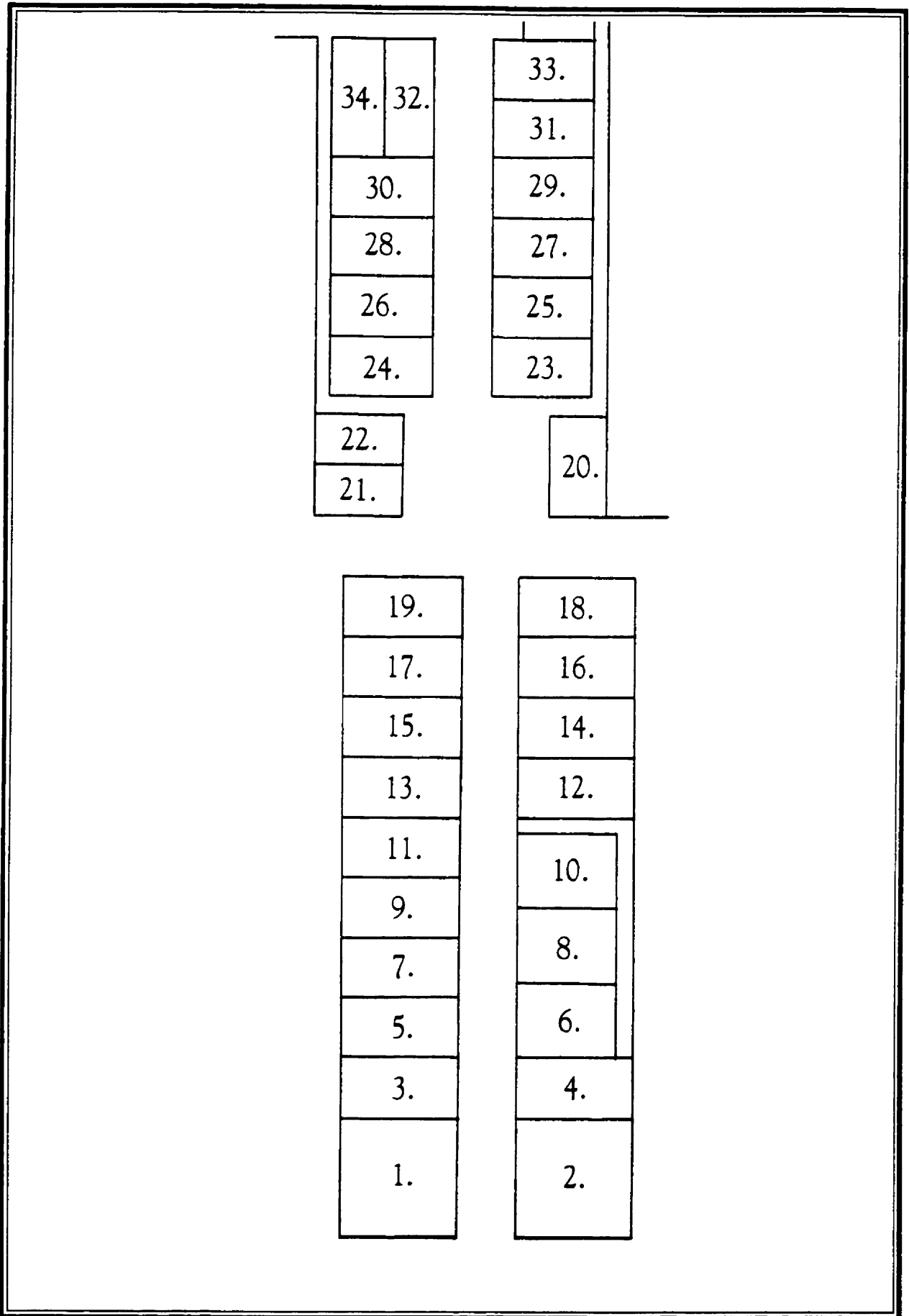
J.L. Beaudry  
(Sept. 1842)



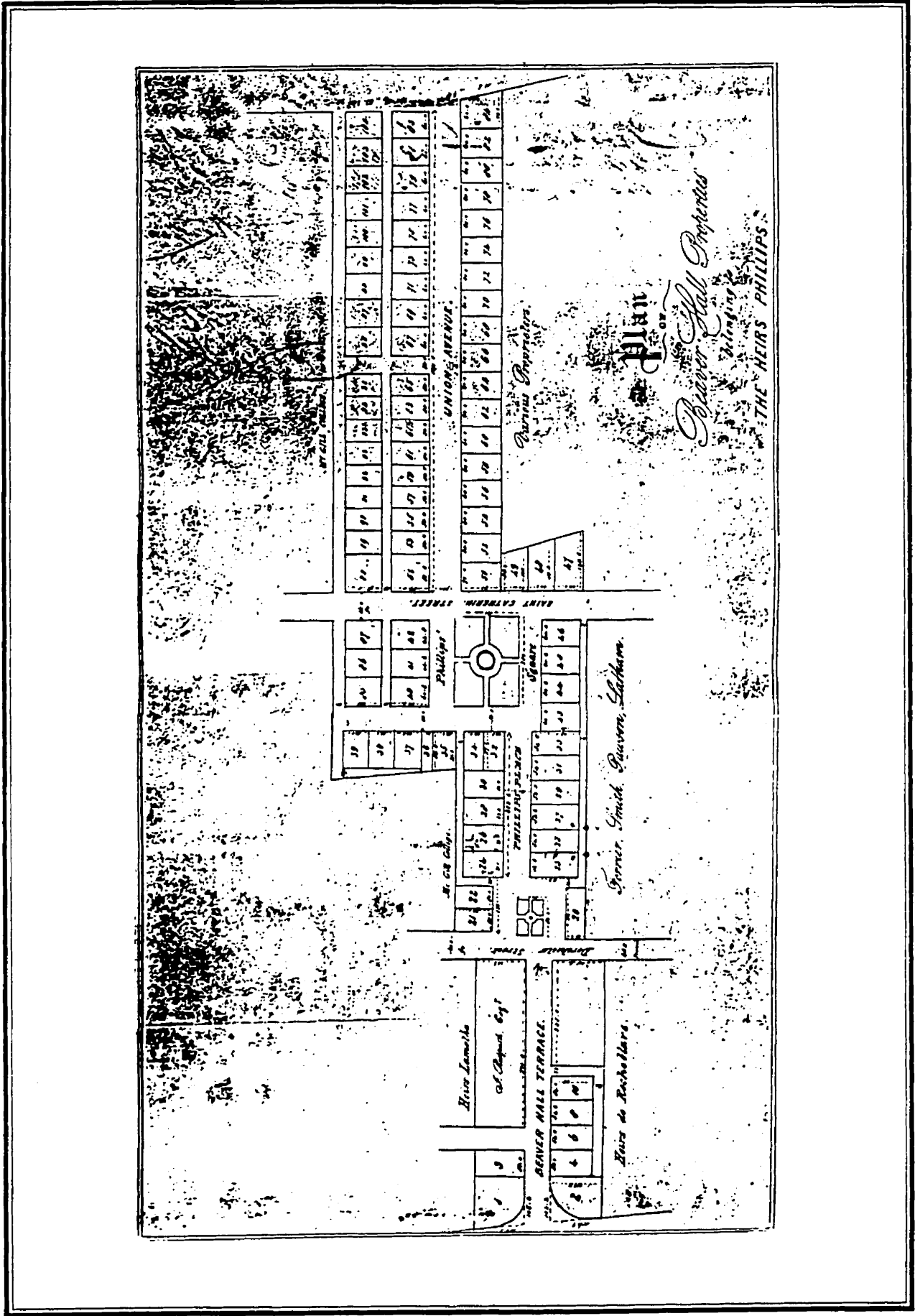
16. Subdivision of the Terrace Bank area



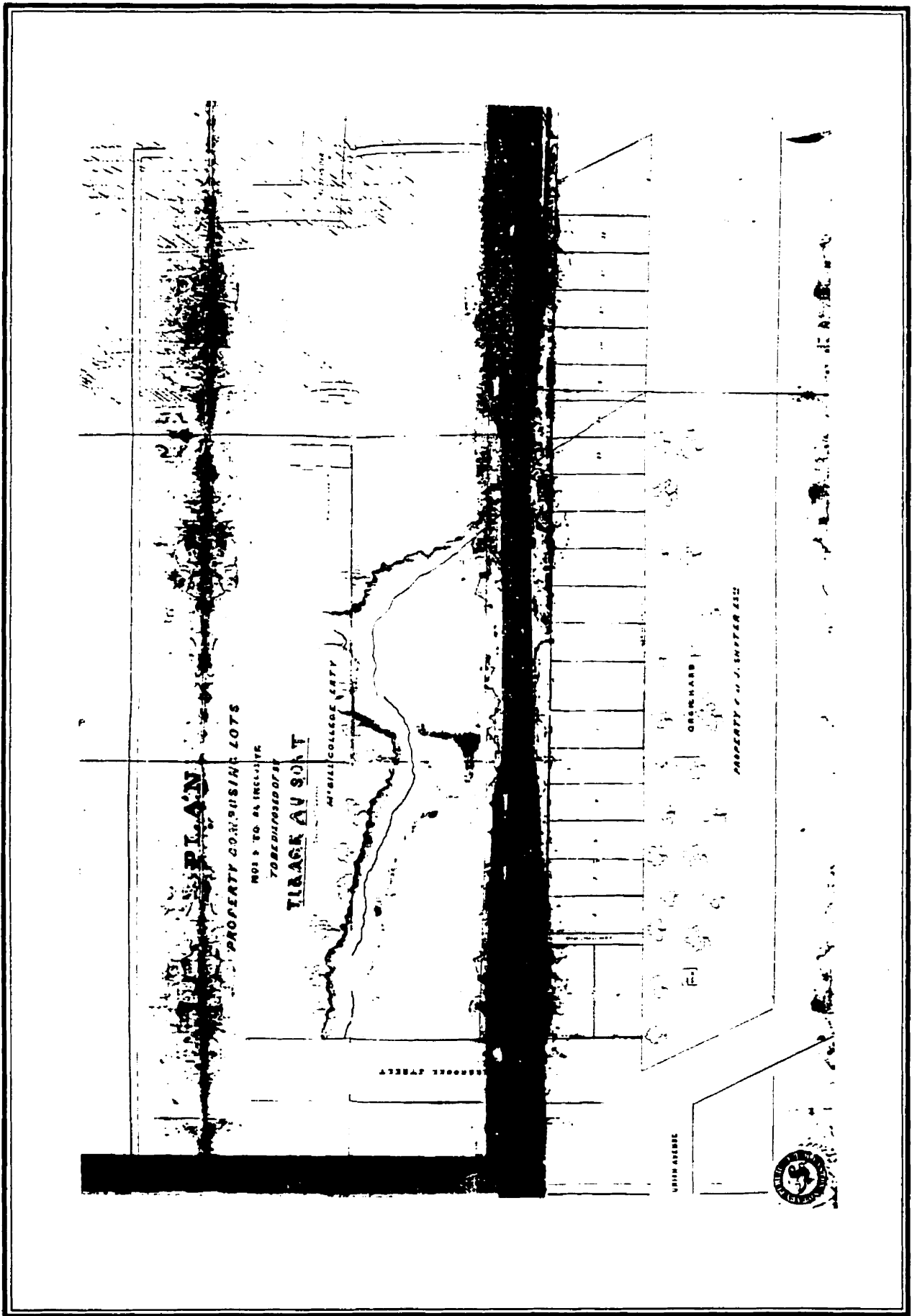
17. Frobisher estate subdivision c. 1817, after Viger



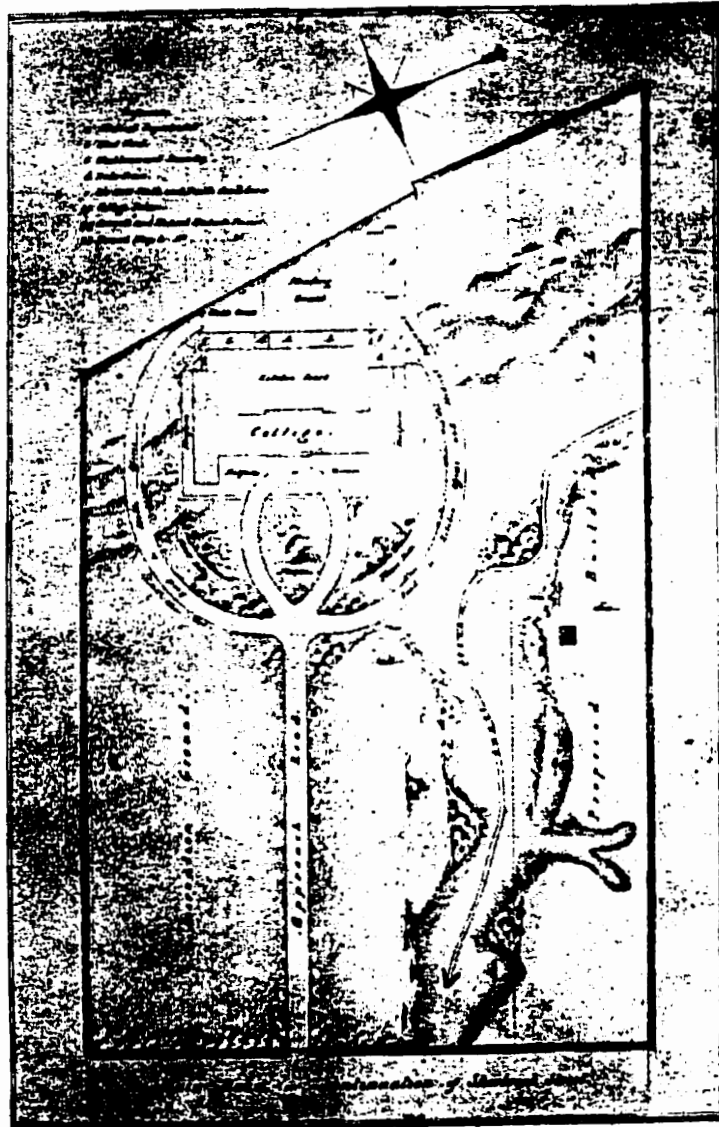
18. Lower part of Phillips subdivision, before alterations



19. Phillip's subdivision plan c. 1844 showing alterations made 1842-43

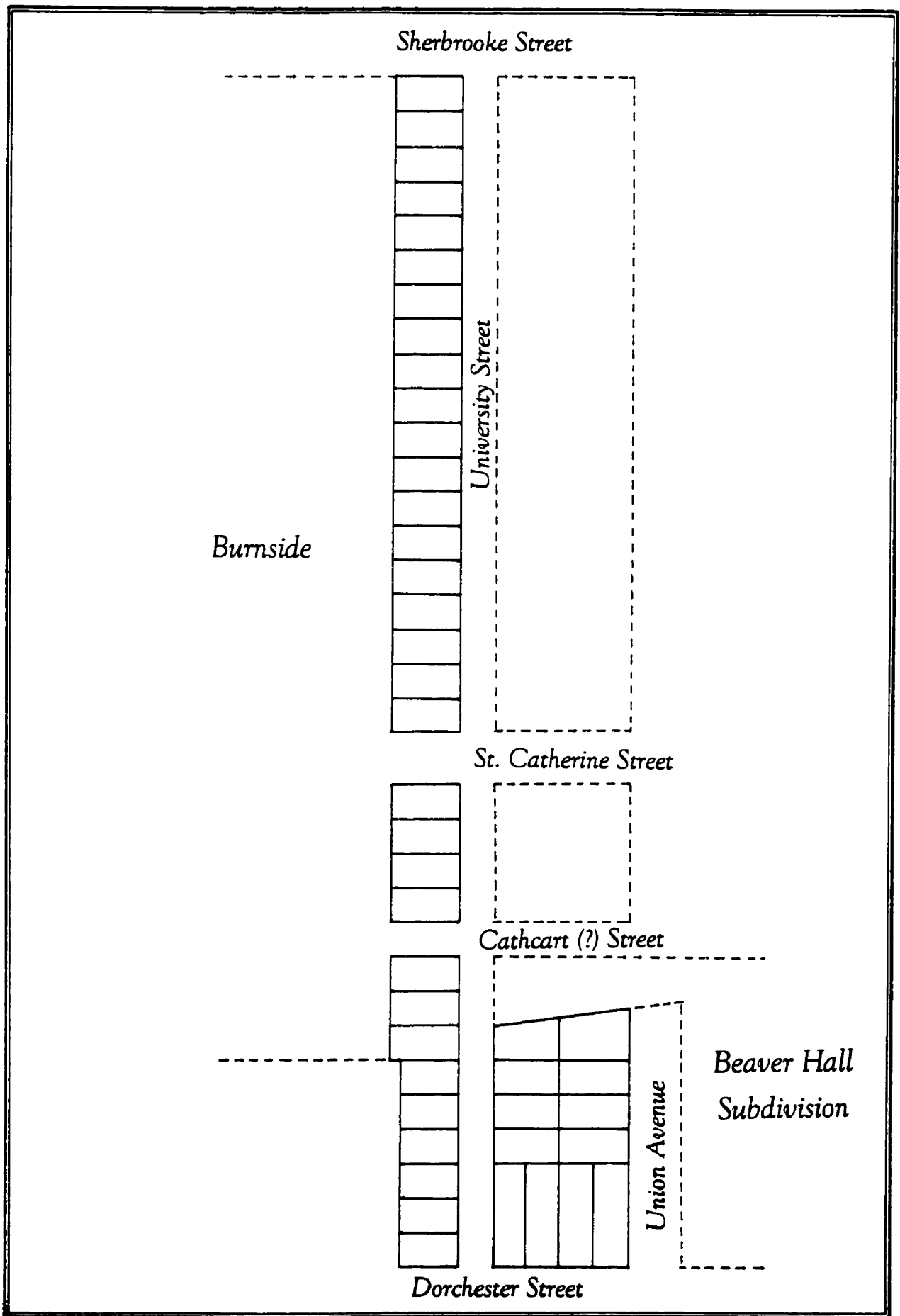


20. 1856 plan for land above Sherbrooke Street, after Perrault

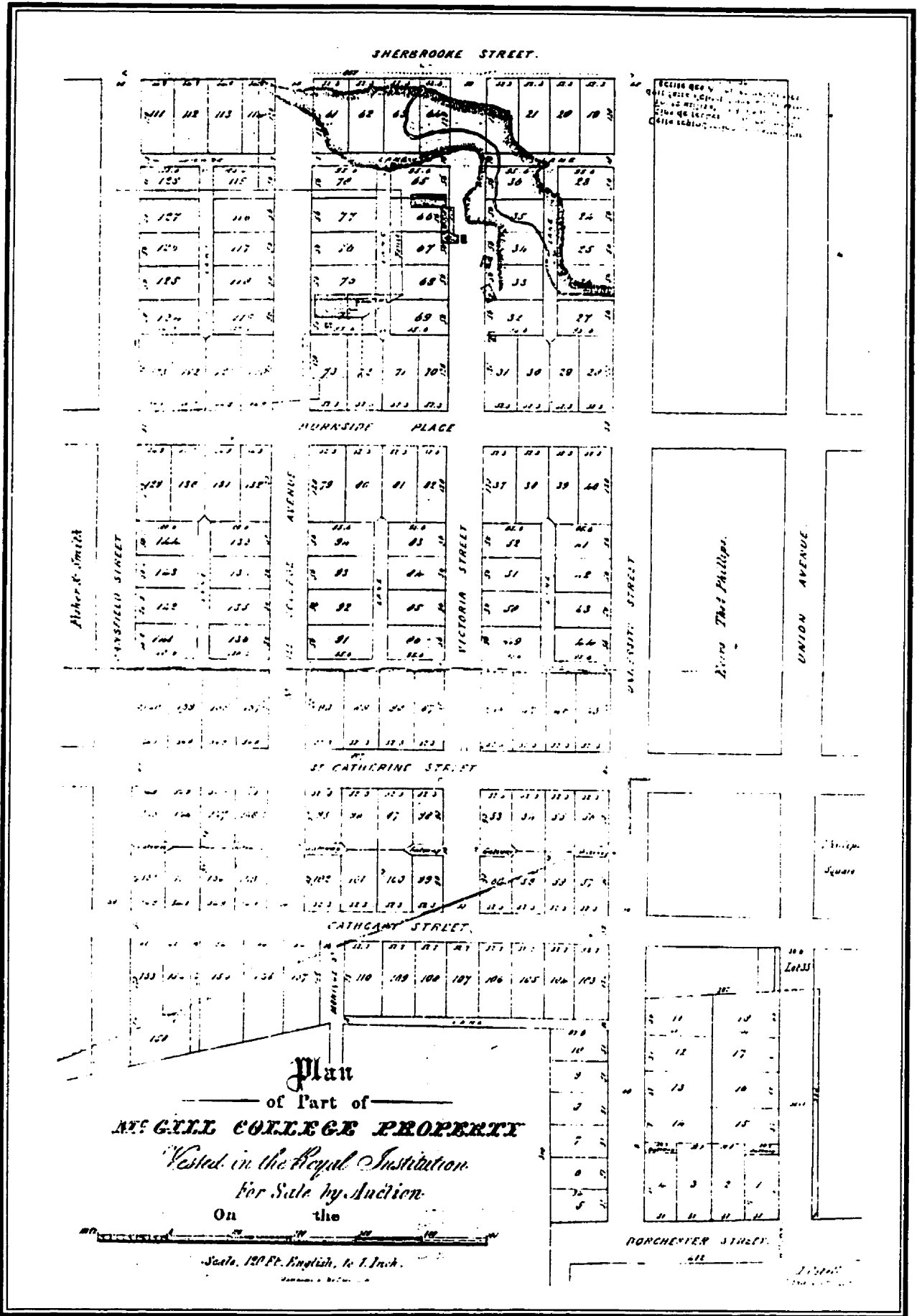


21. Parry's plan for McGill College, 1838





22. Ostell's 1840 plan for the lower part of the Desrivières strip (conjectural) showing links with the Beaver Hall estate



23. Ostell's 1842-45 plan for Royal Institution land south of Sherbrooke Street

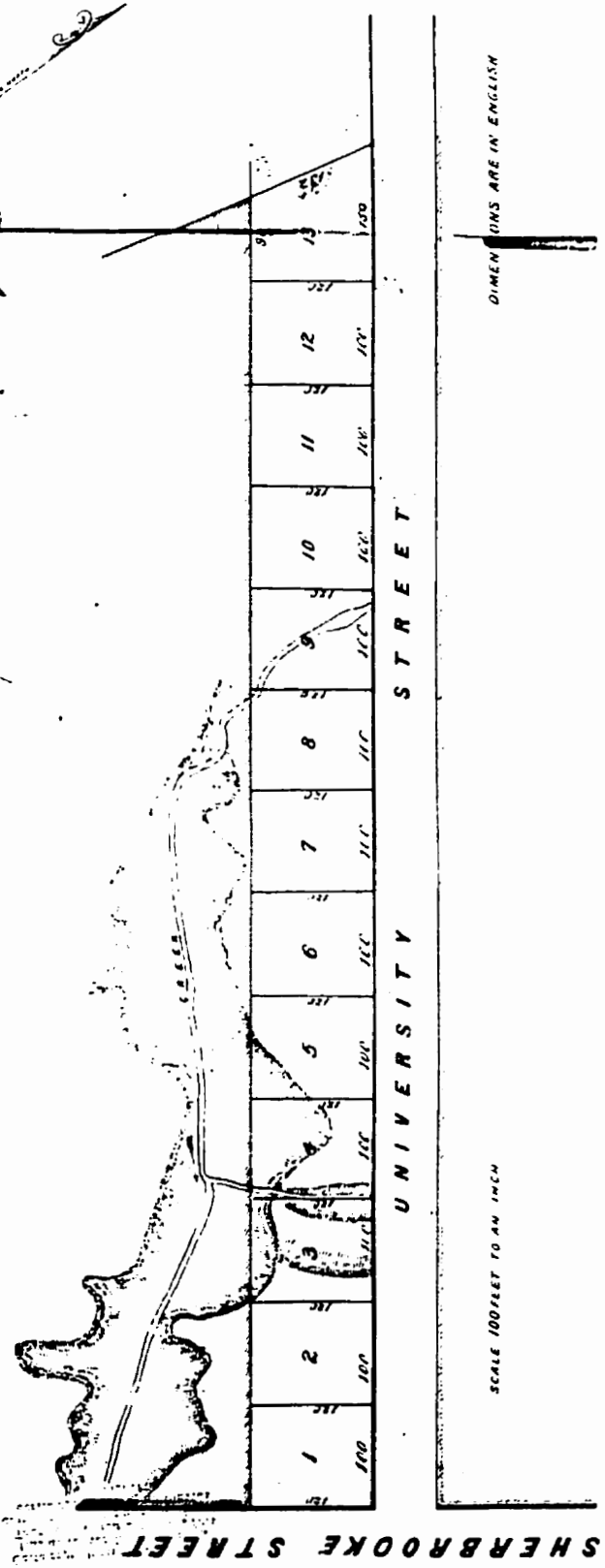
FORMING THE EASTERN BOUNDARY  
OF THE

# PARK of MCGILL COLLEGE MONTREAL

MONTREAL, 1863

DRAWN BY

*H.M. Perrault*  
*P. & L. Desrivieres*

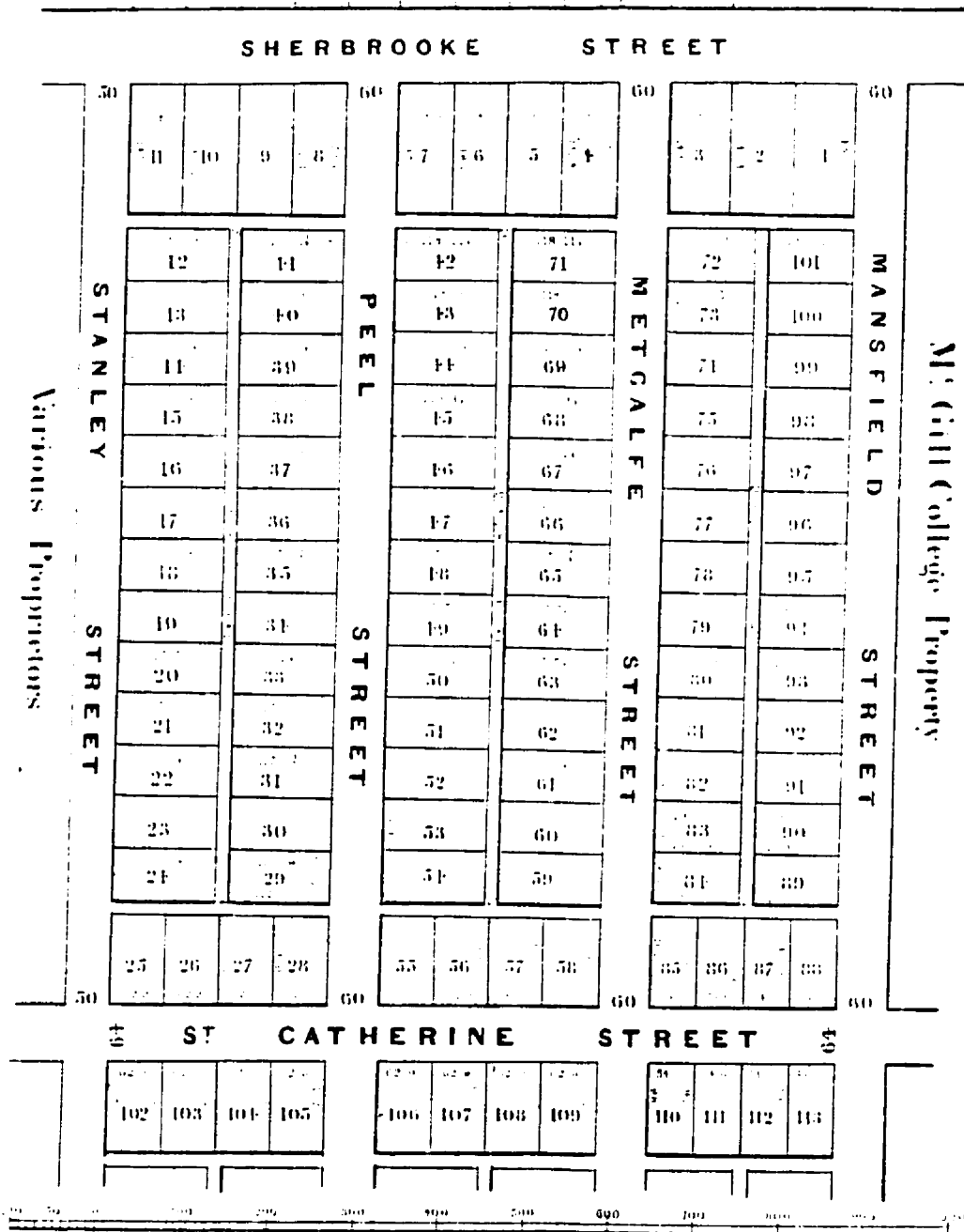


SCALE 100 FEET TO AN INCH

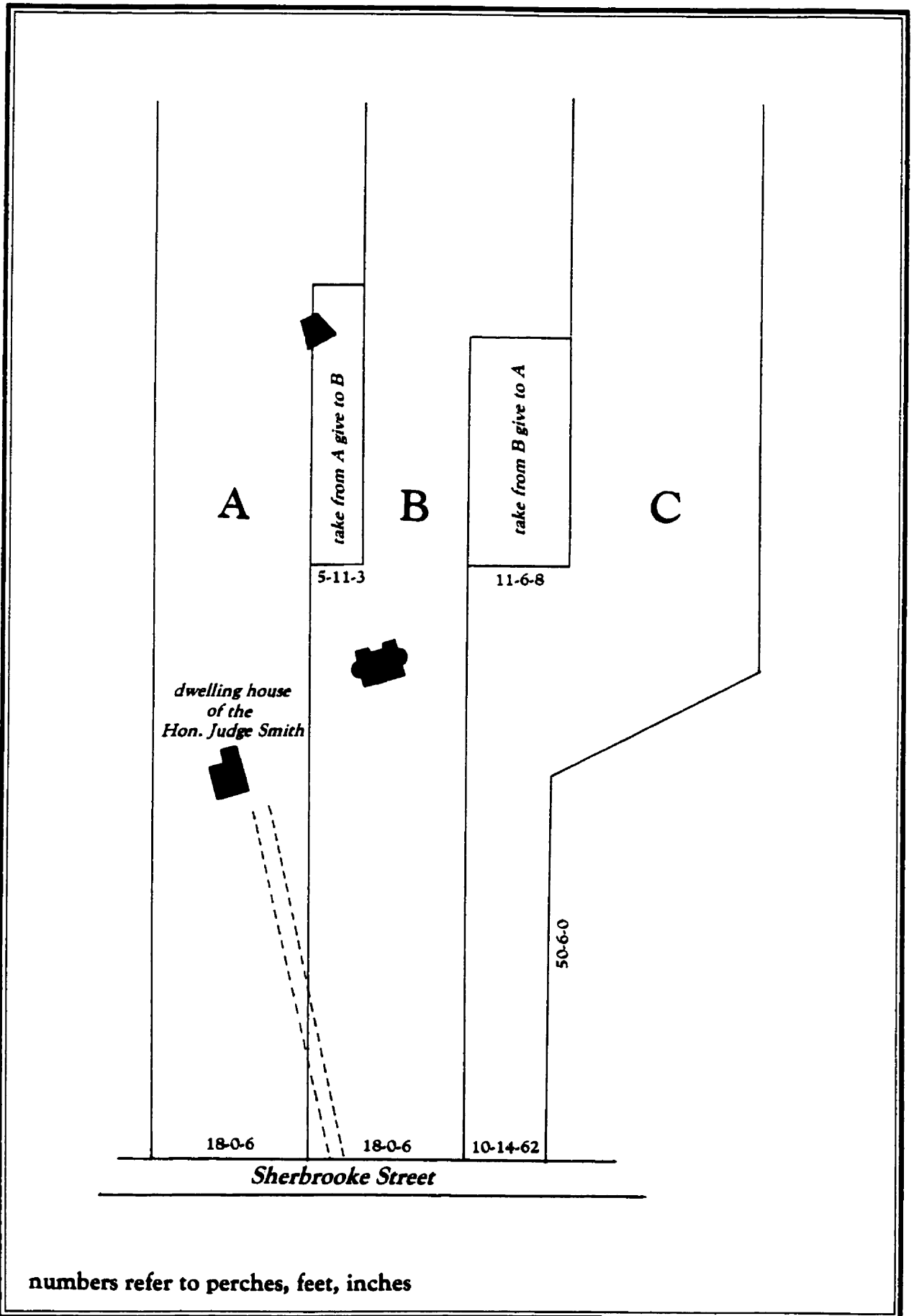
DIMENSIONS ARE IN ENGLISH

24. Perrault's 1863 plan for the Desrivieres strip above Sherbrooke Street

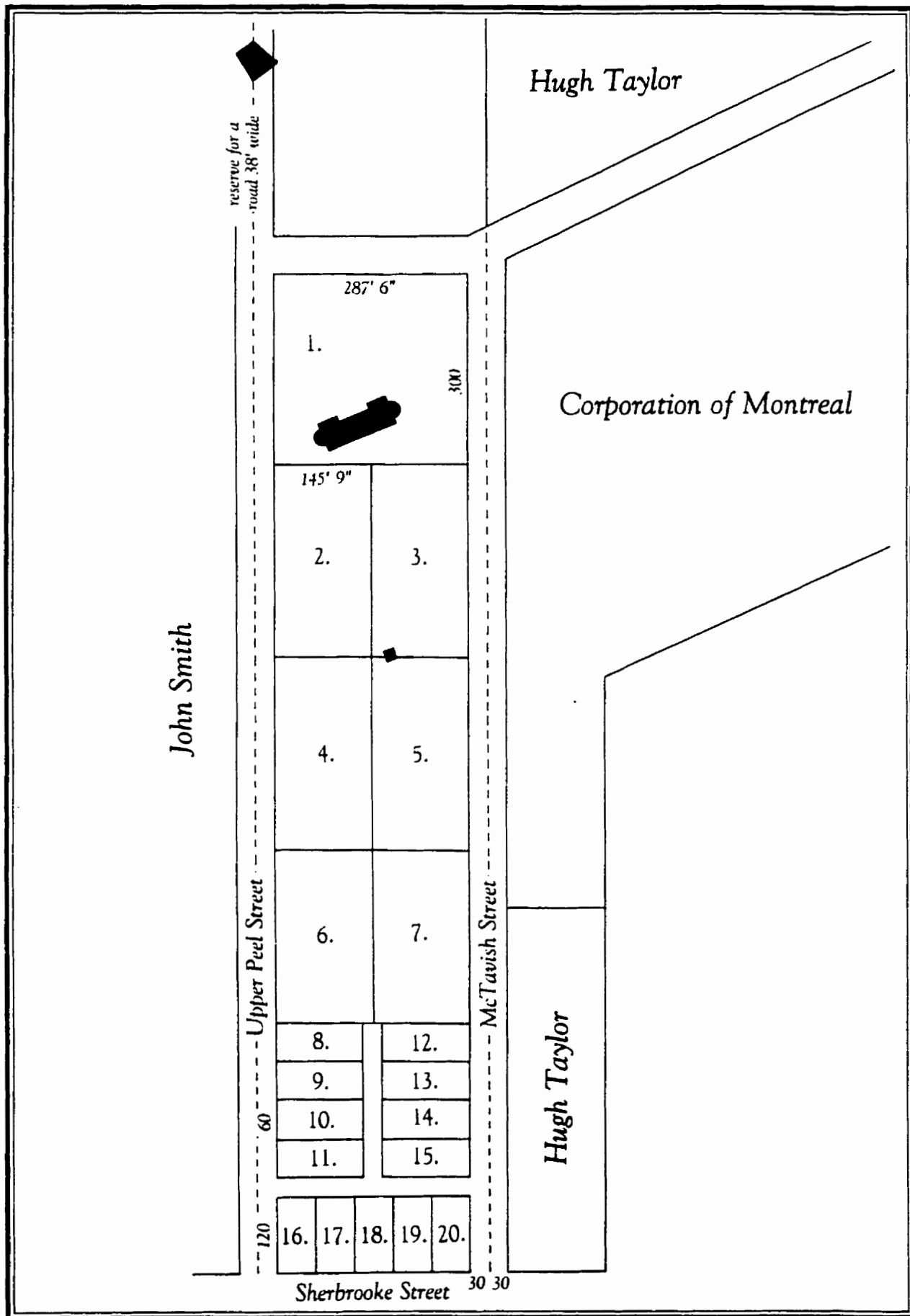
**PLAN OF SOUTH-EAST PART OF  
M<sup>rs</sup> TAVISH PROPERTY  
AS LAID OUT IN BUILDING LOTS.**



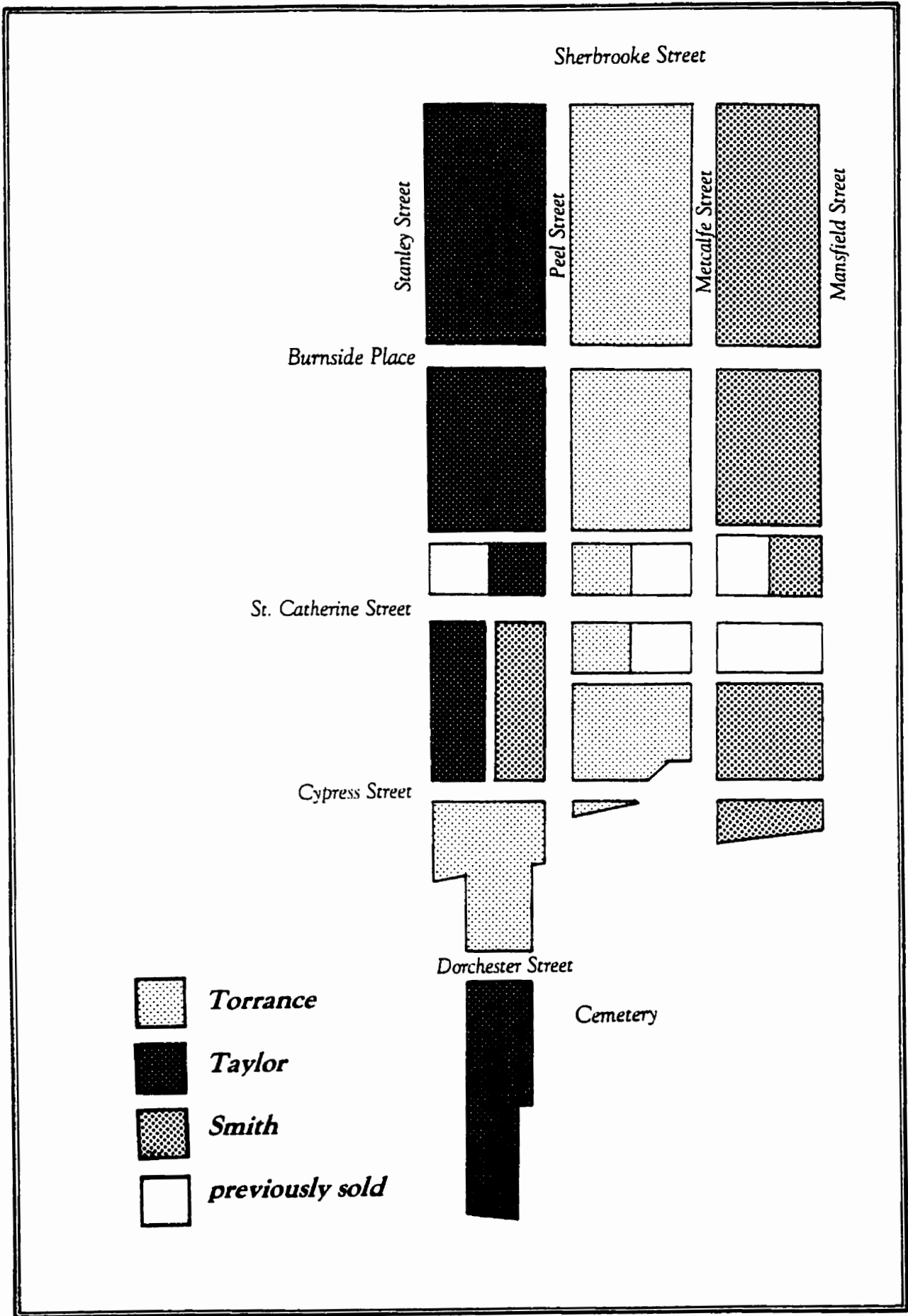
25. Wells's 1845 plan for land below Sherbrooke Street



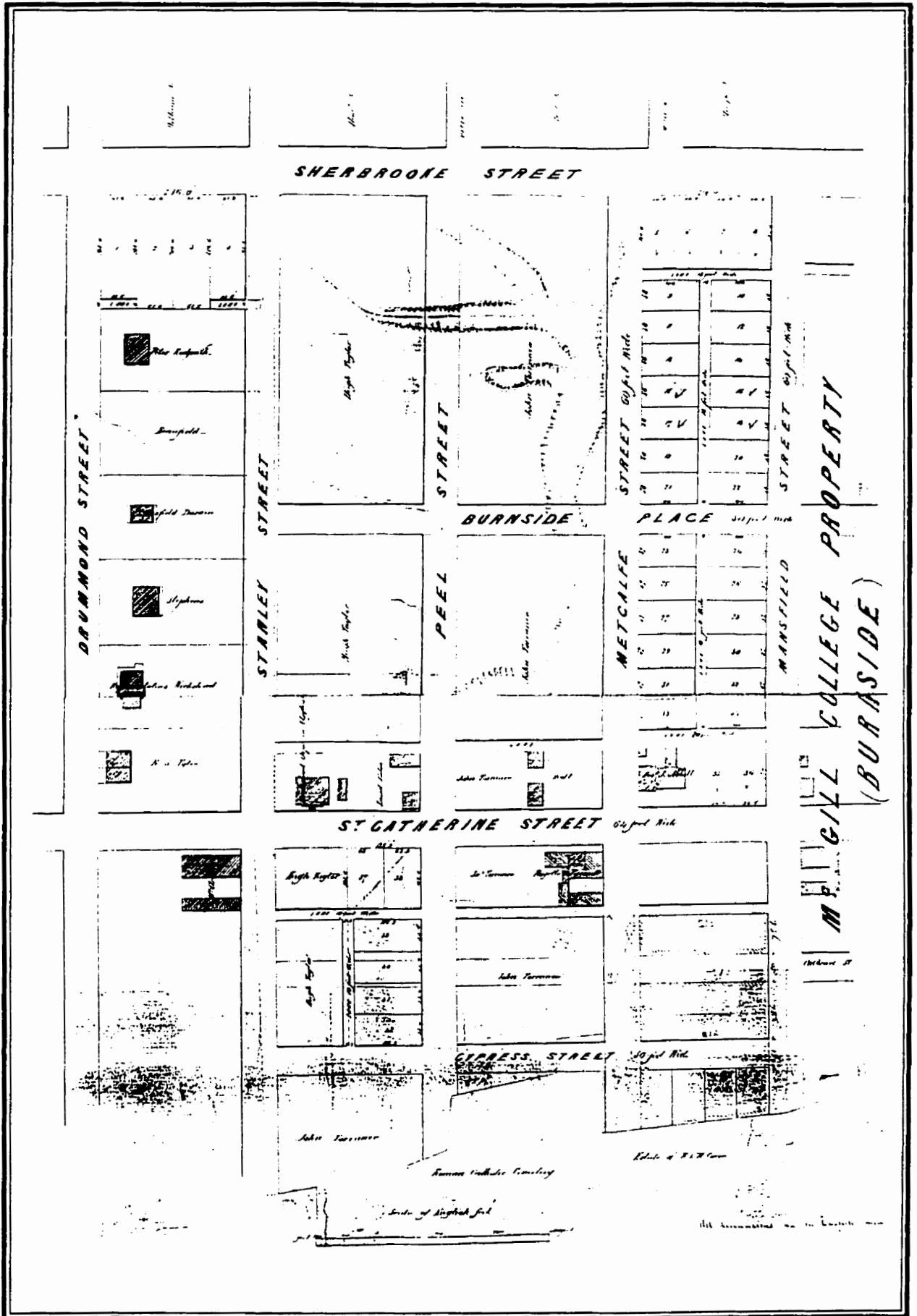
26. 1847 partage of land above Sherbrooke Street, after Fisher, Hayes, and Ostell



27. 1853 plan for Upper Peel and McTavish streets, after Perrault



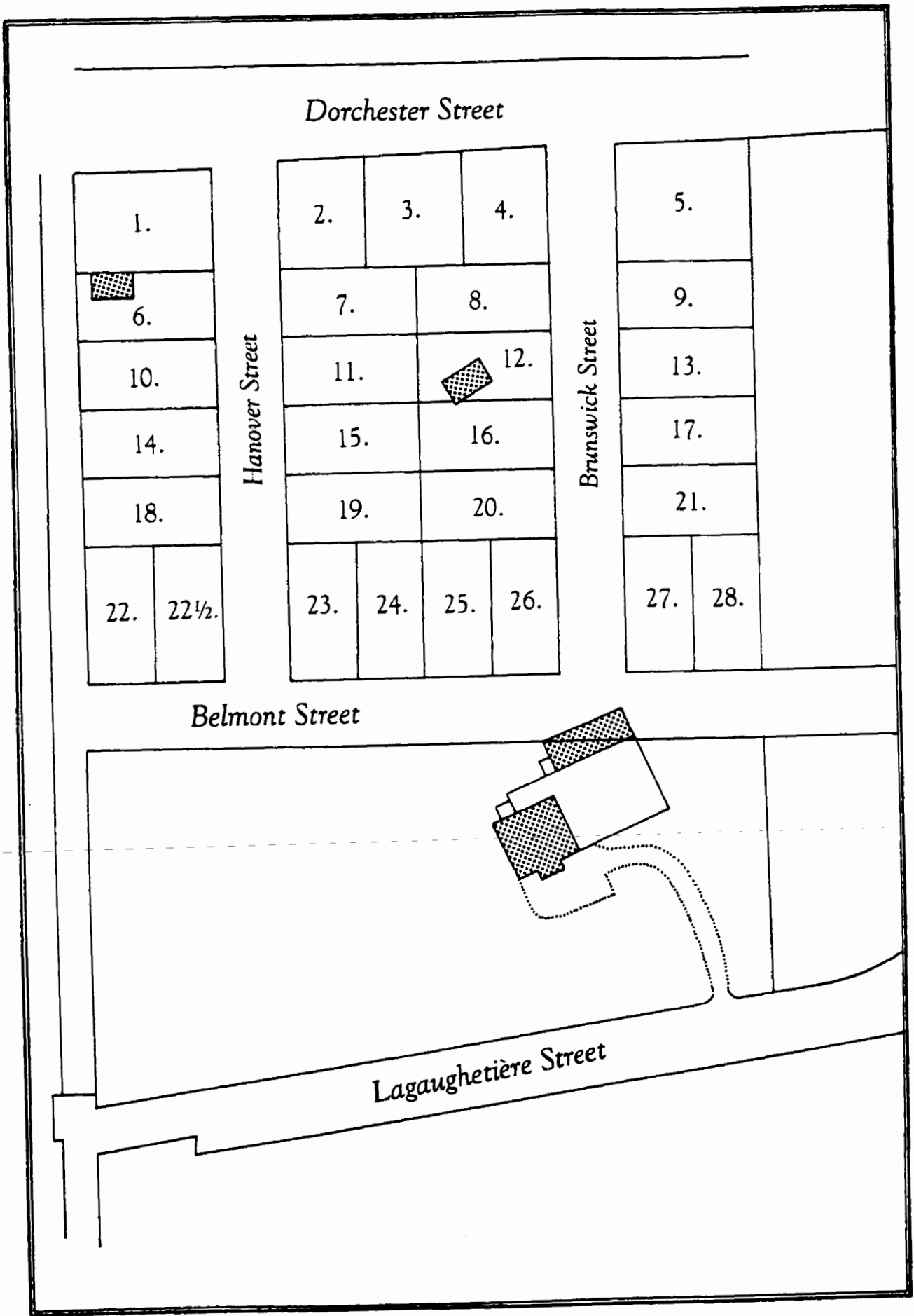
28. 1856 partage of land below Sherbrooke Street, after Perrault



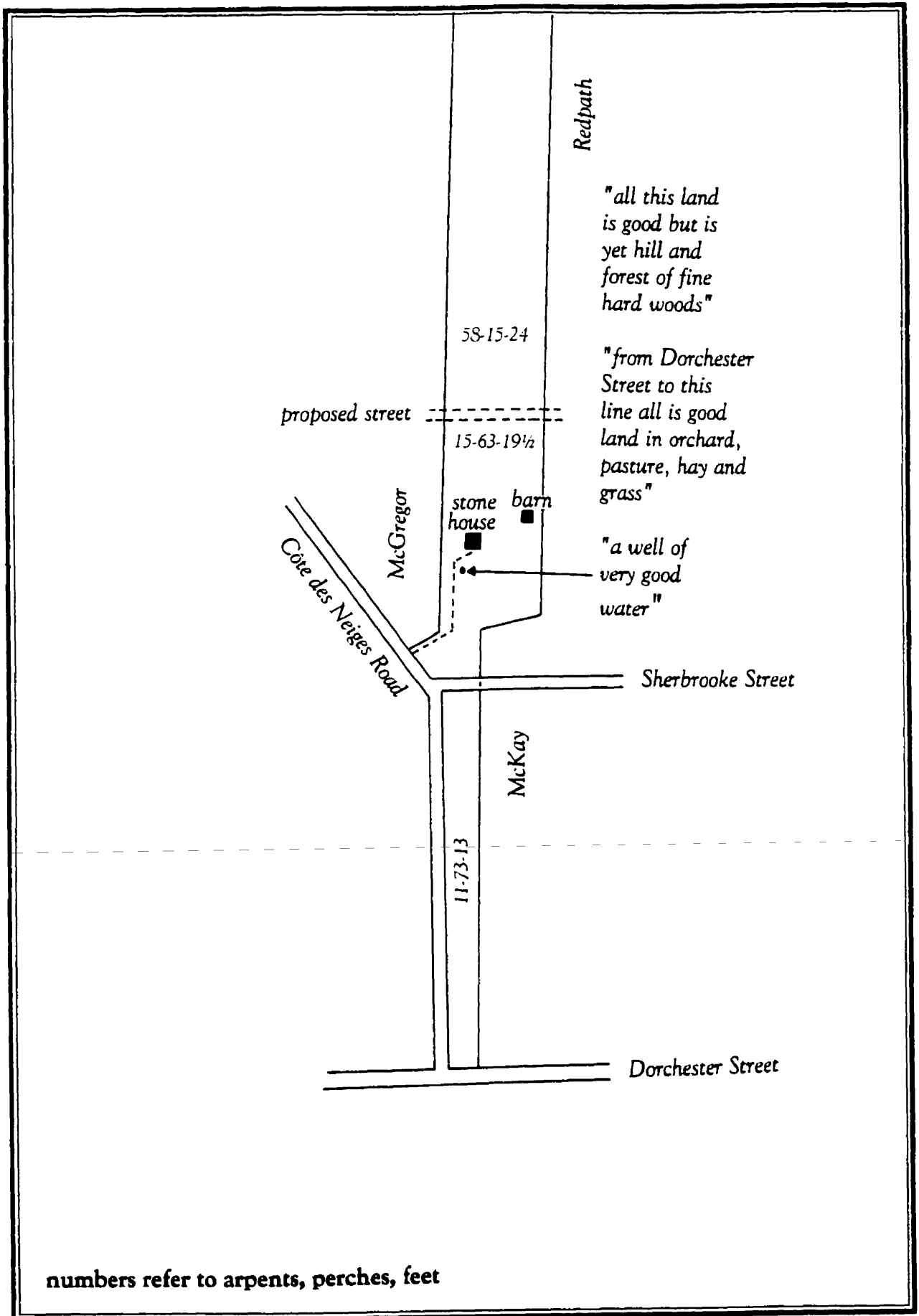
29. Perrault's 1858 subdivision plan for Smith's land



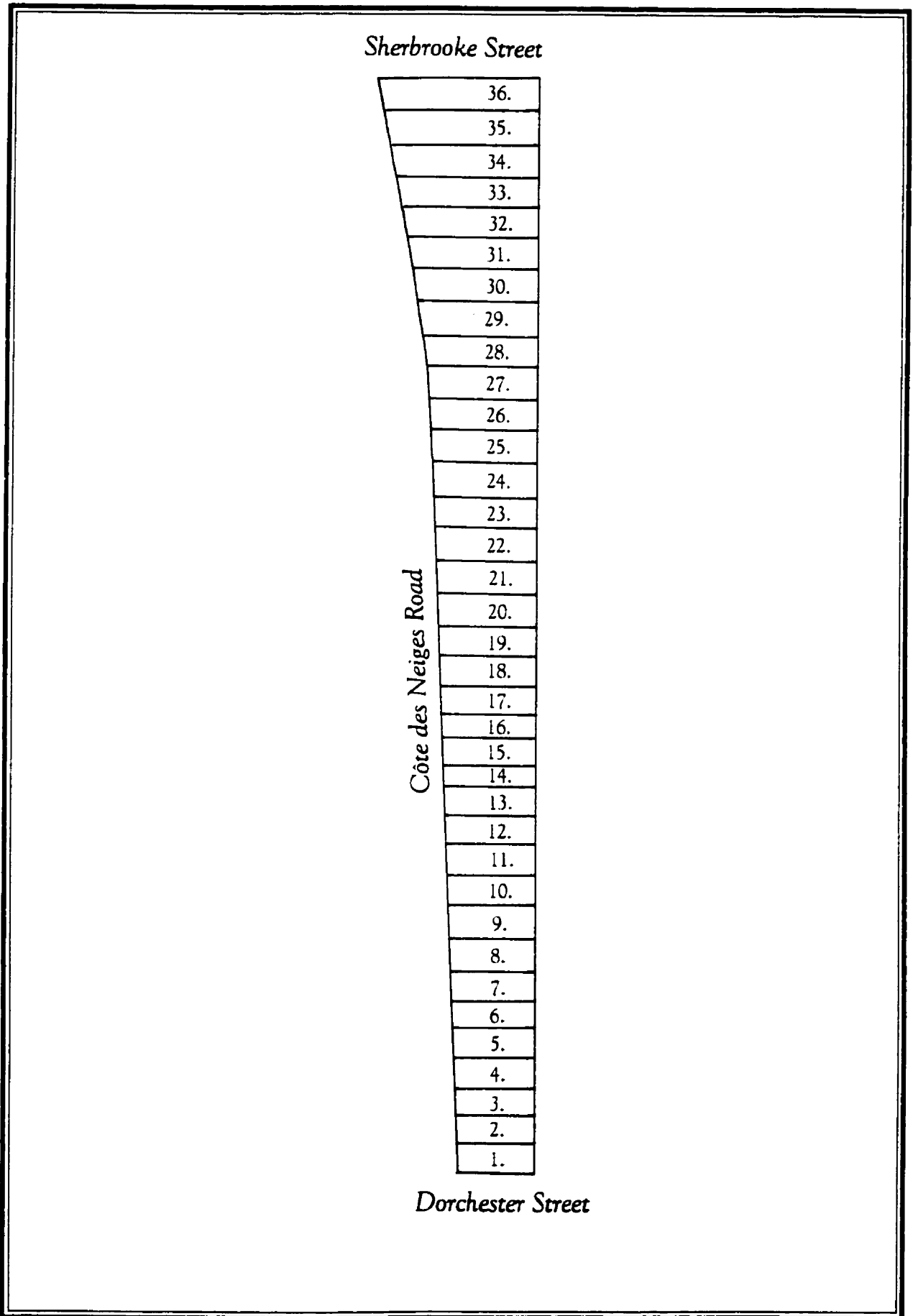




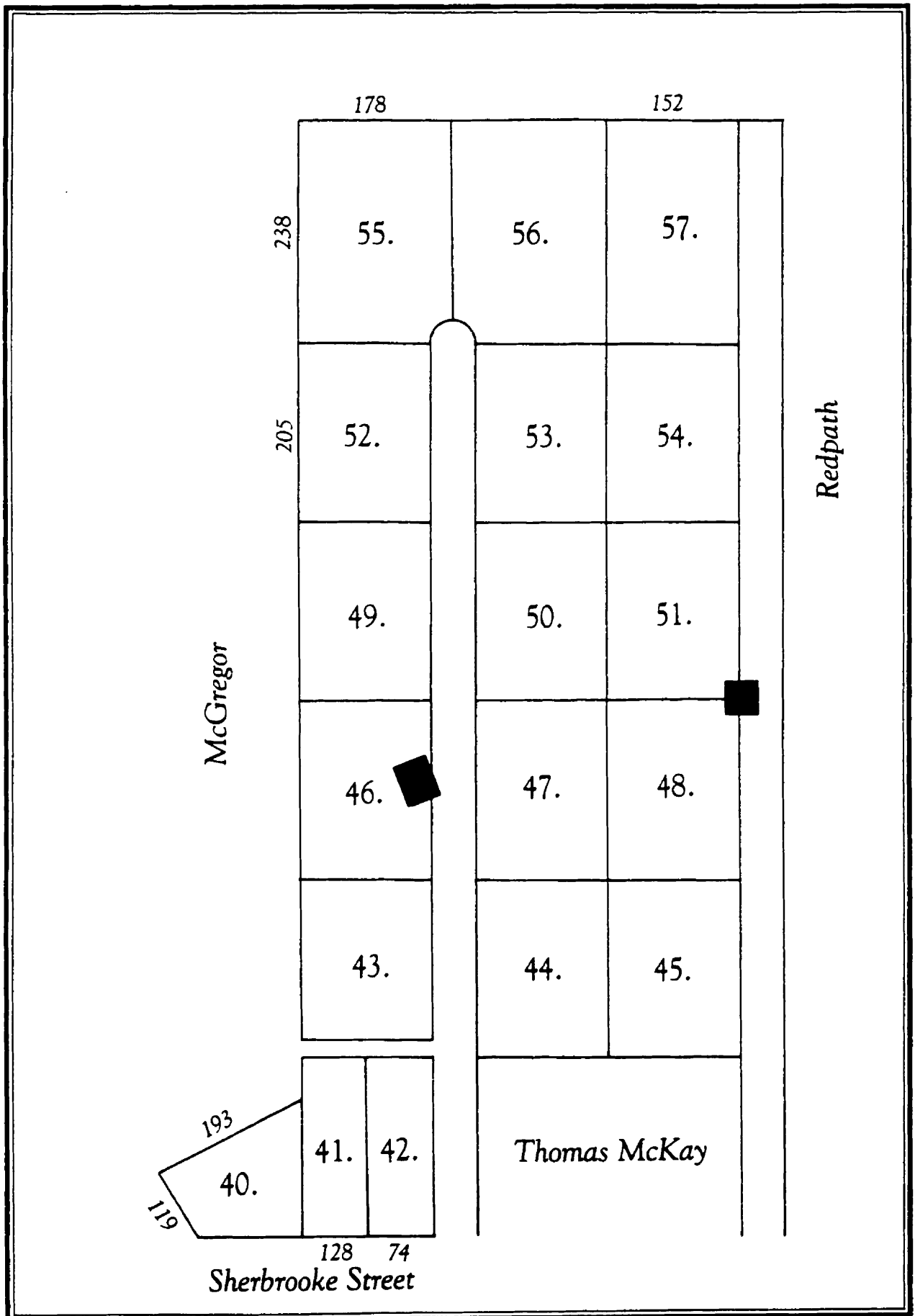
31. Lamothe subdivision plan 1843



32. Mackenzie estate 1845, after Thompson



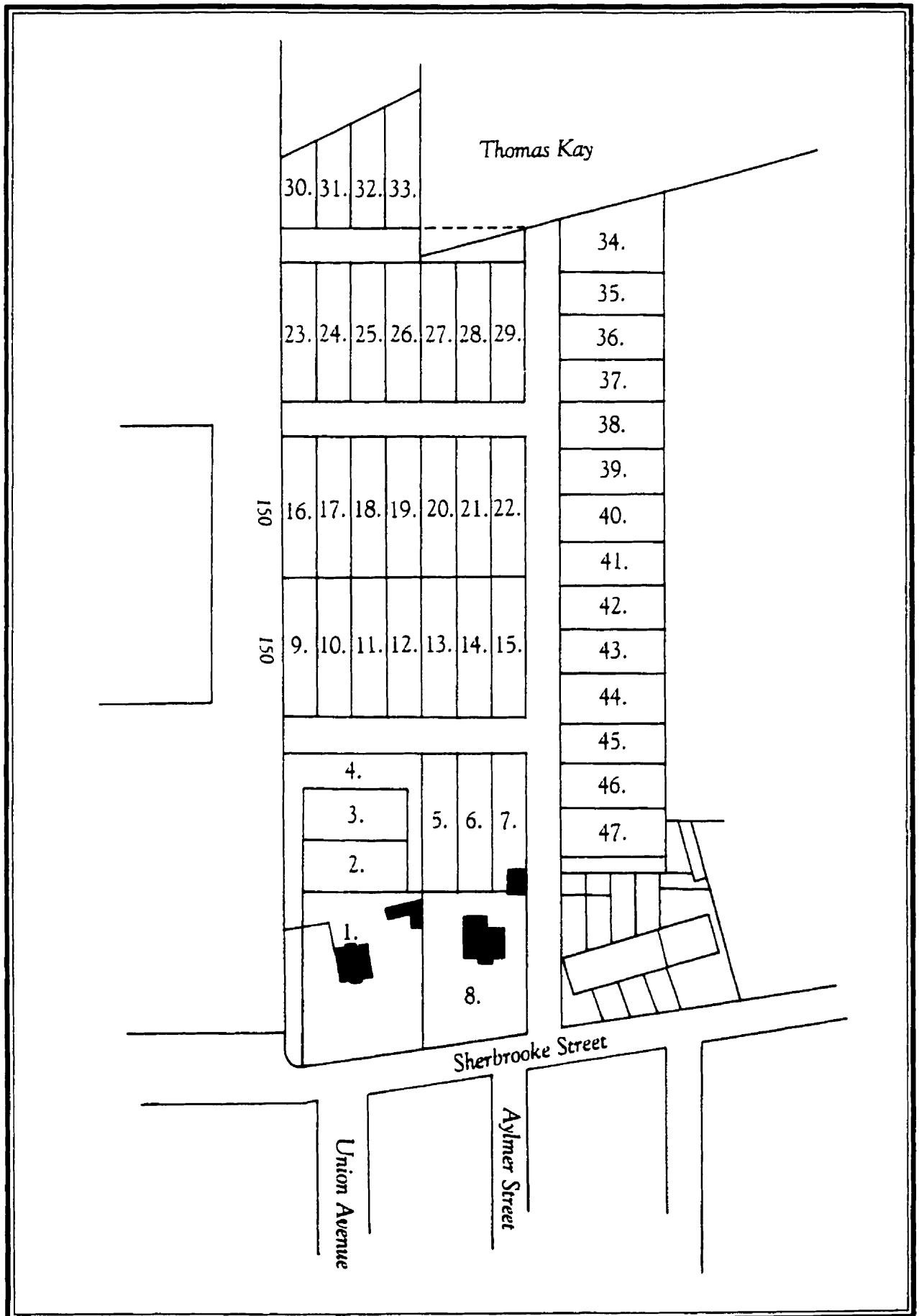
33. 1845 plan for the Mackenzie estate, lower subdivision, after MacFarlane



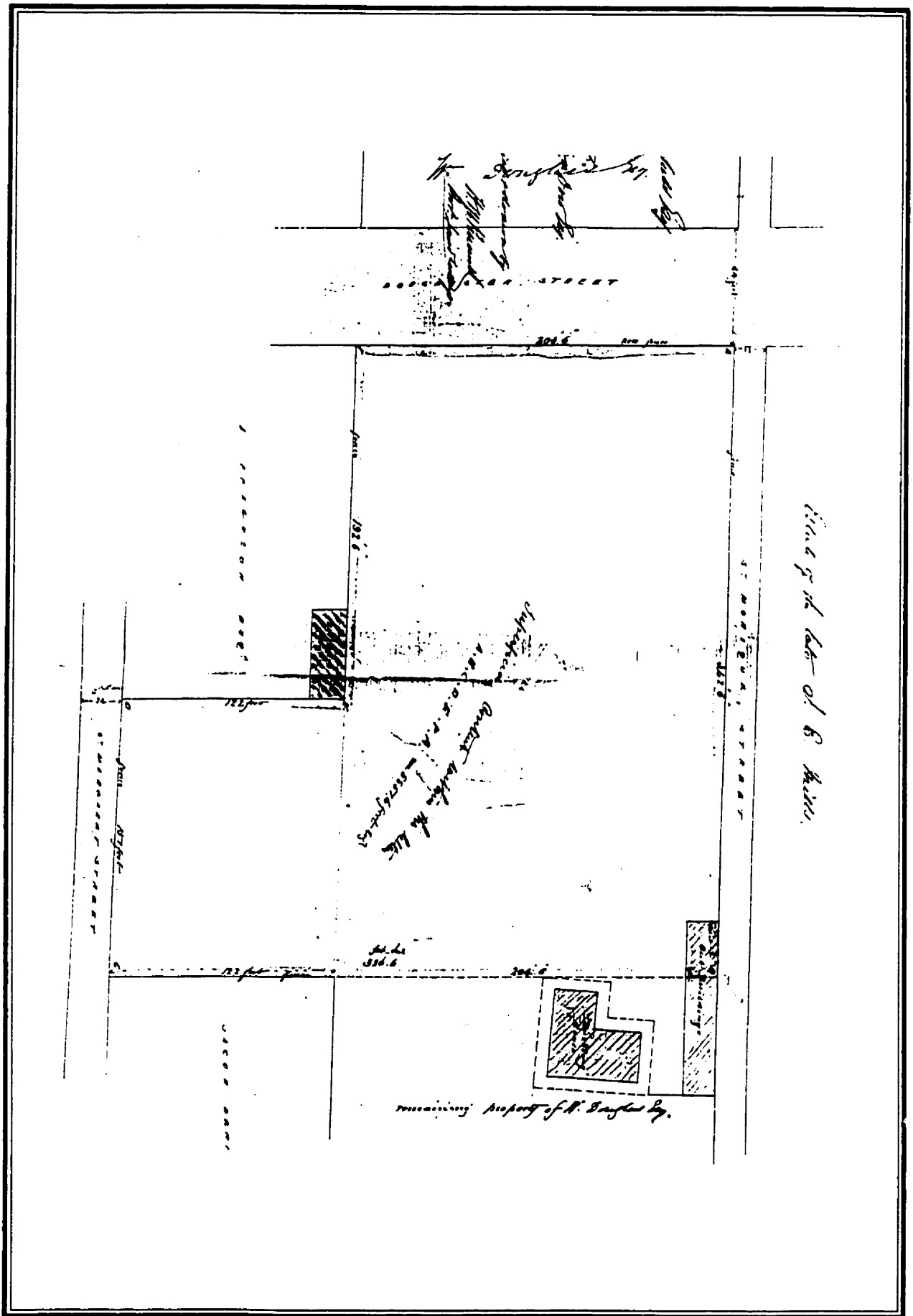
34. 1845 plan for the Mackenzie estate, upper subdivision, after MacFarlane

	<i>Simpson Street</i>			<i>Redpath Street</i>	
		15.	16.		
		13.	14.		
		11.	12.		
		9.	10.		
		7.	8.		
		5.	6.		
		3.	4.		
		1.	2.		
		McKay			

35. 1850 sub-subdivision of 4 lots from the Mackenzie estate, after Springle

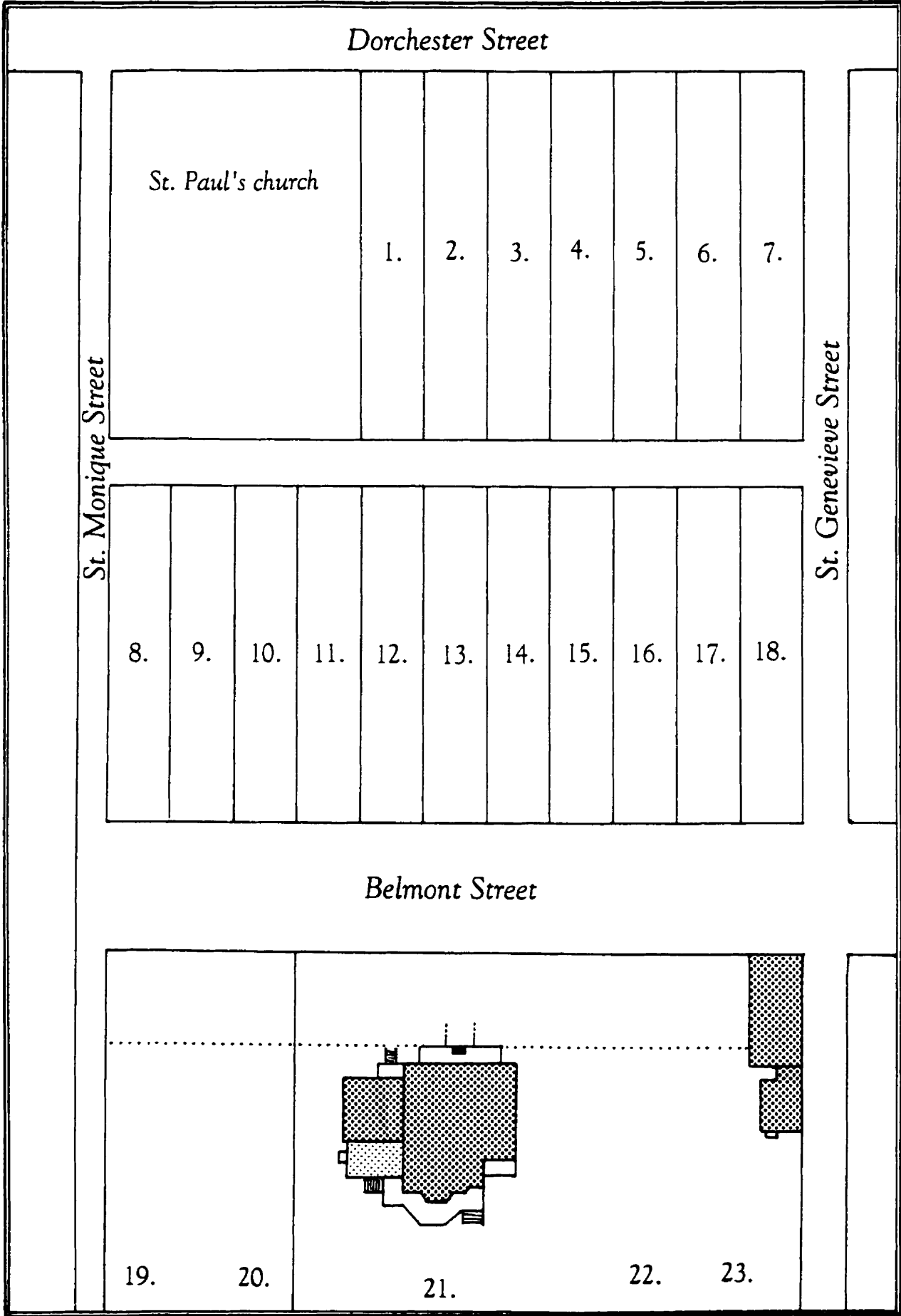


36. 1855 plan for the Shuter estate, after Perrault

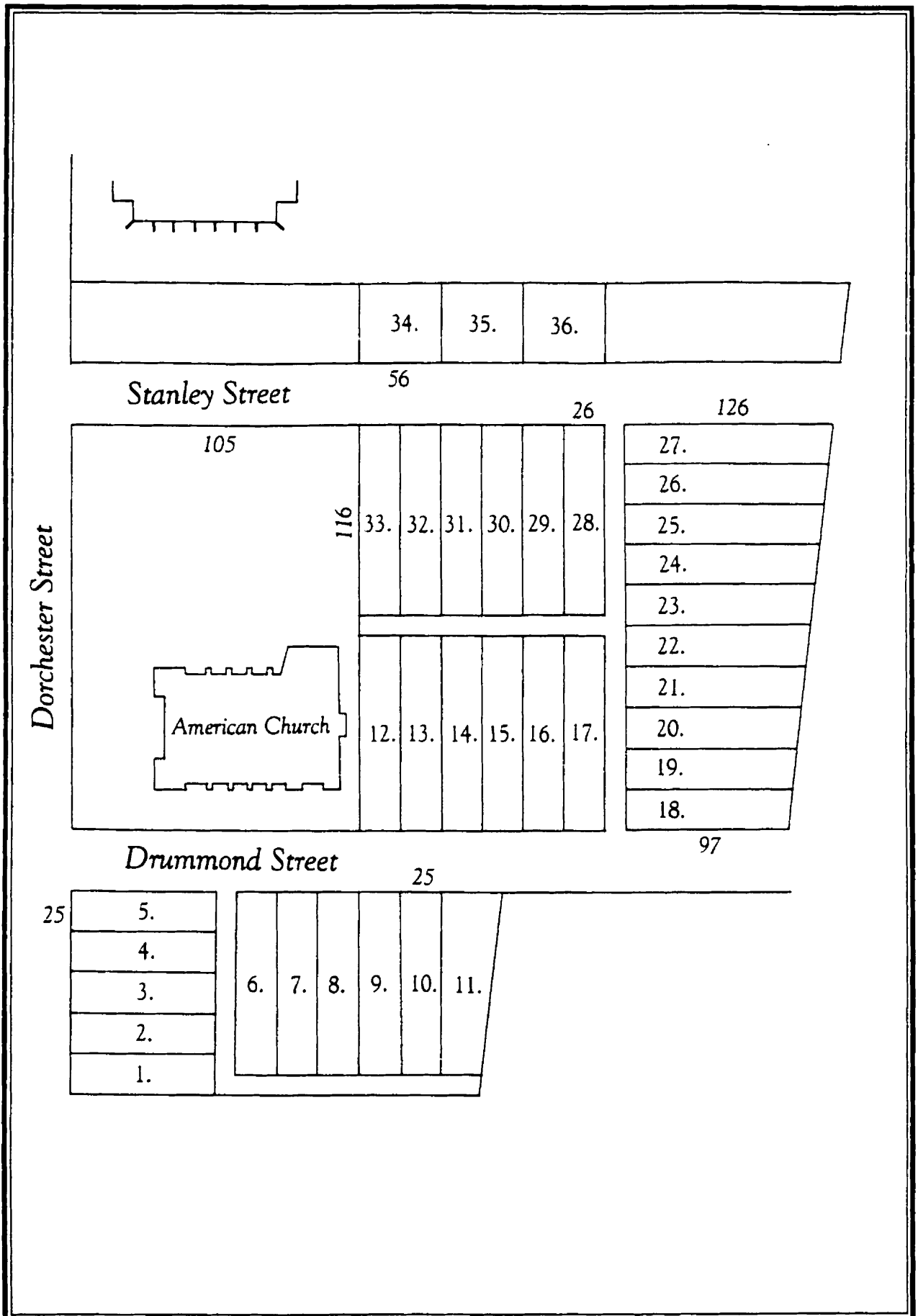


37. 1856 sale of the Douglas estate to the Joseph family

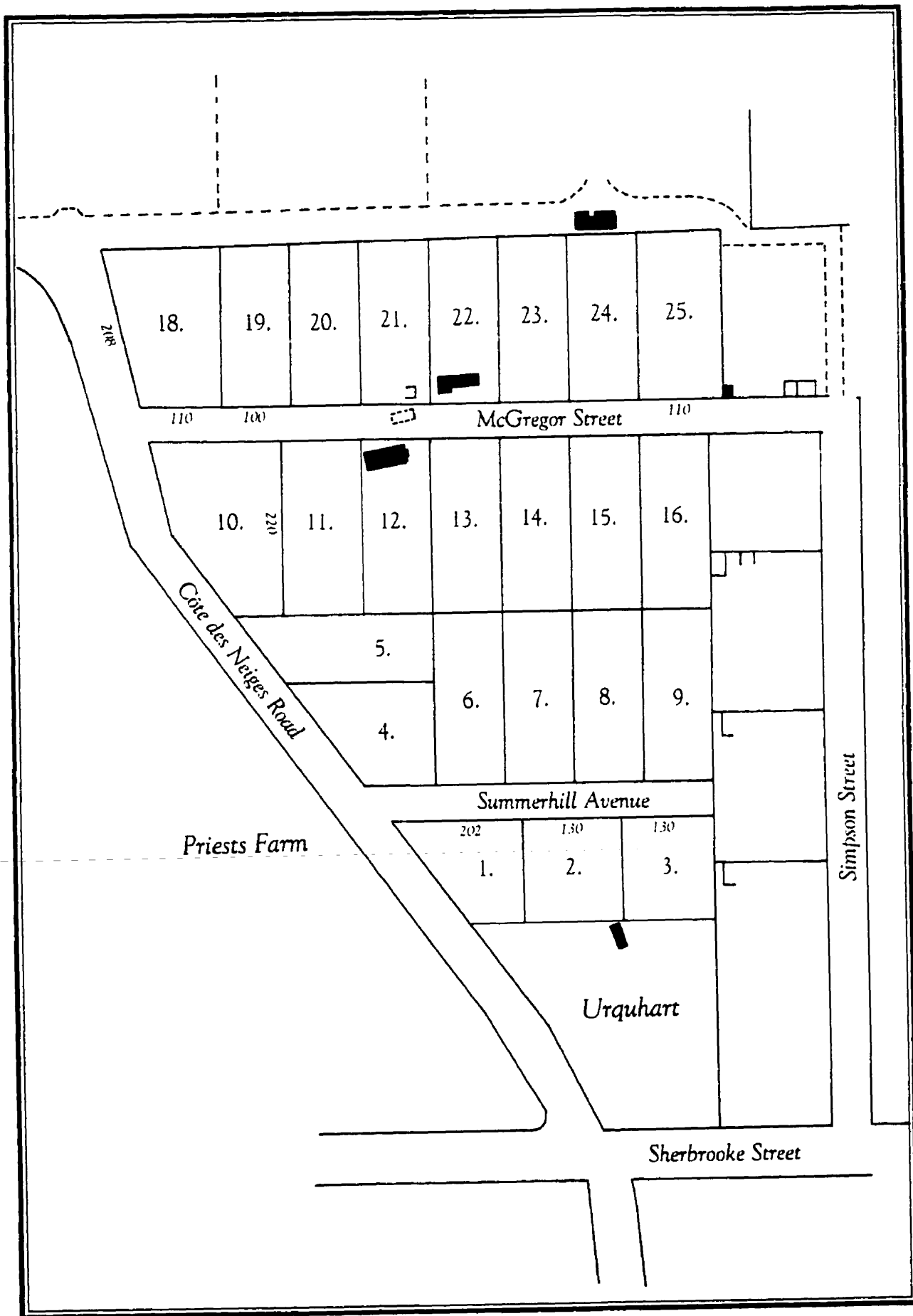




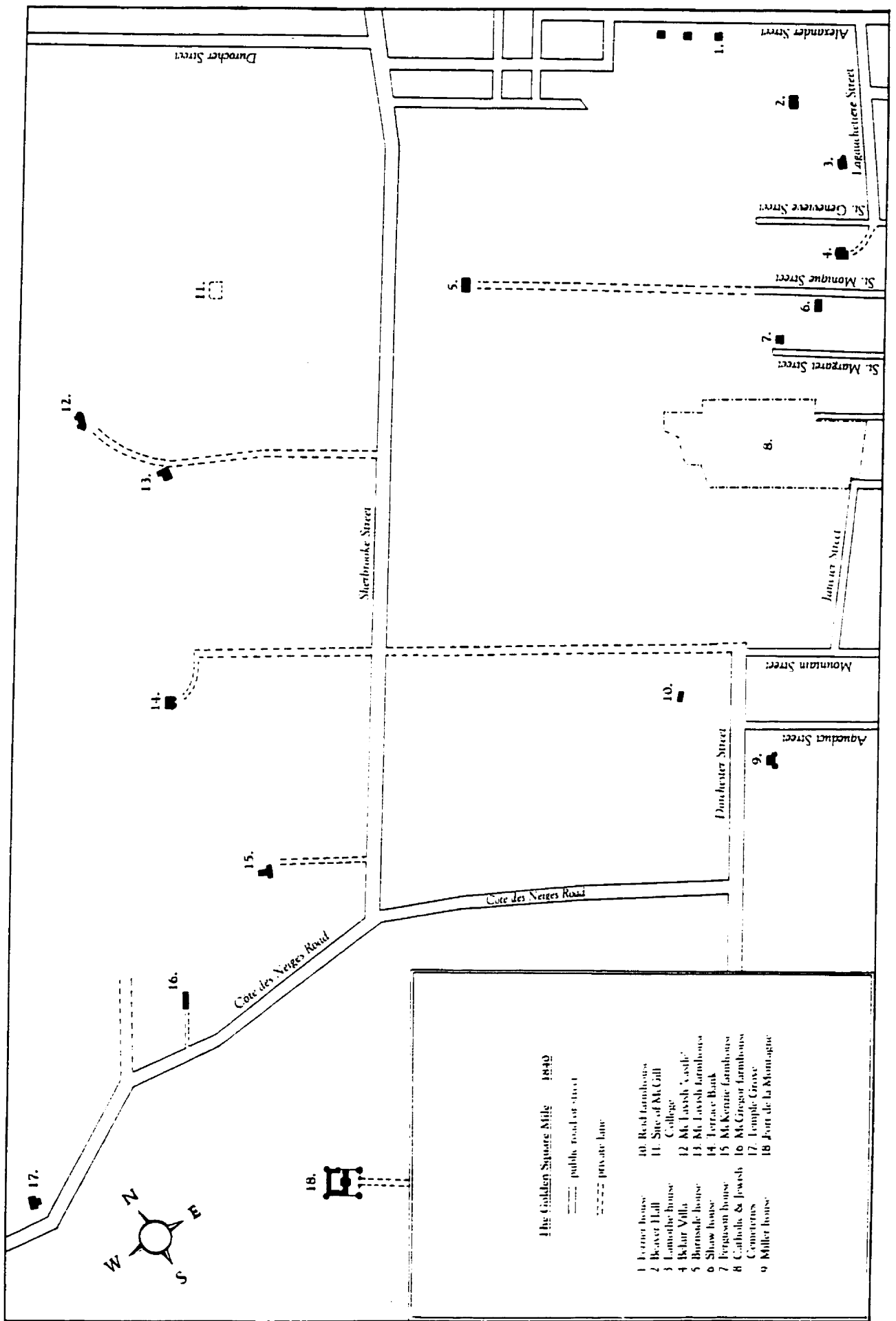
38. 1867 plan for the Mills estate, after Rielle



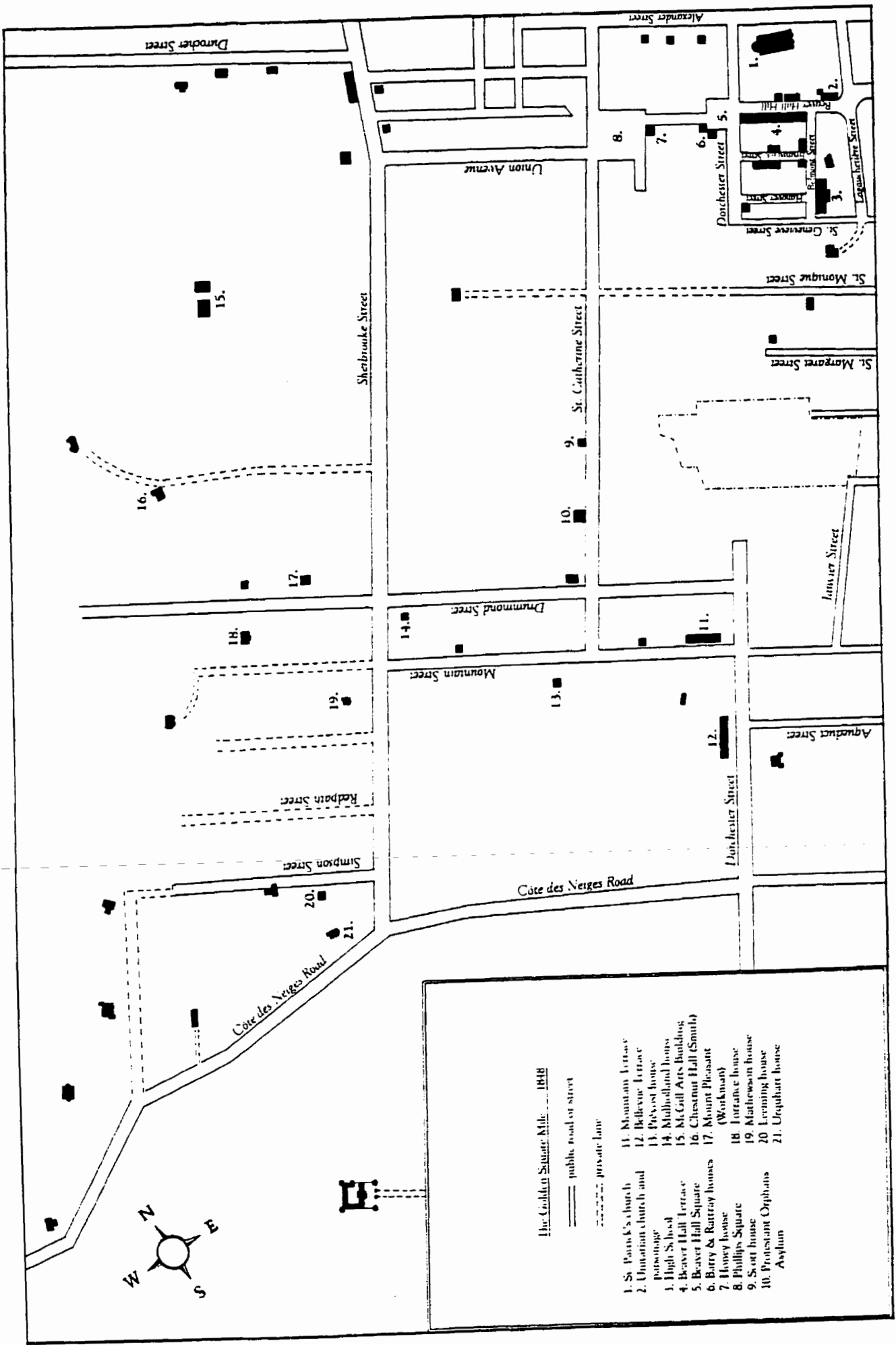
39. 1868 plan for the Hoyle estate, after Rielle



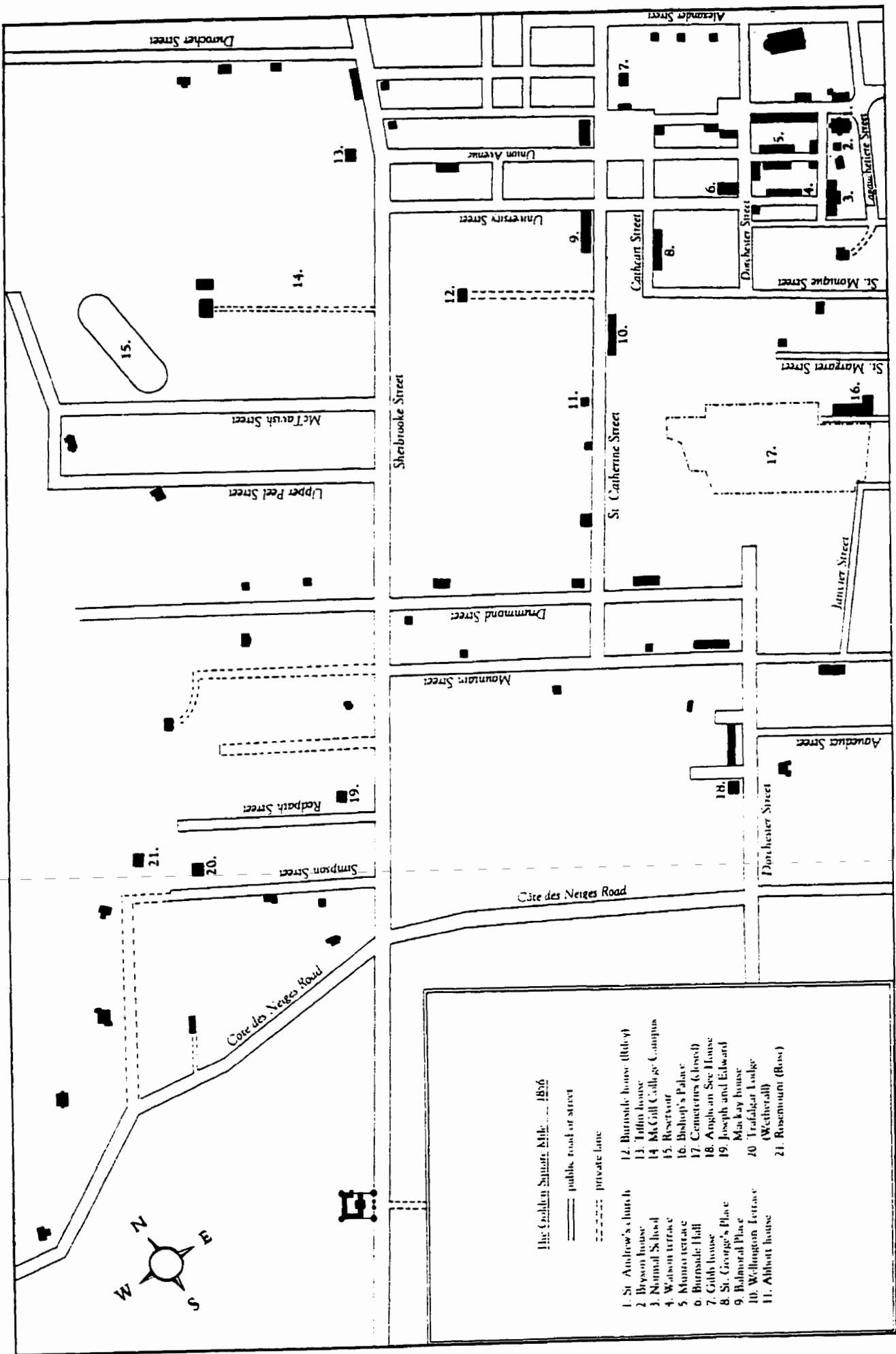
40. 1868 plan for the Auld estate, after Rielle



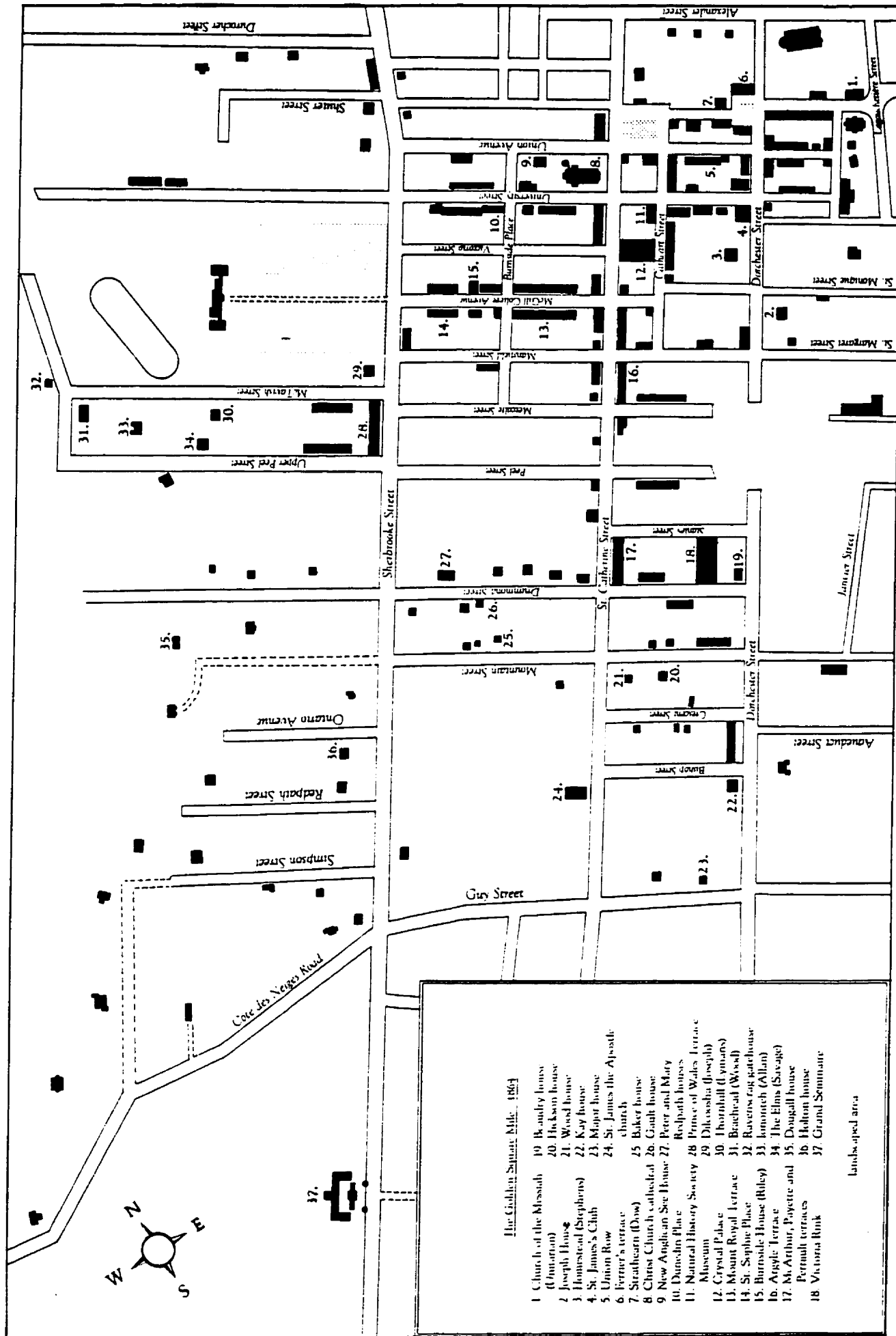
41. The GSM in 1840



42. The GSM in 1848



43. The GSM in 1856

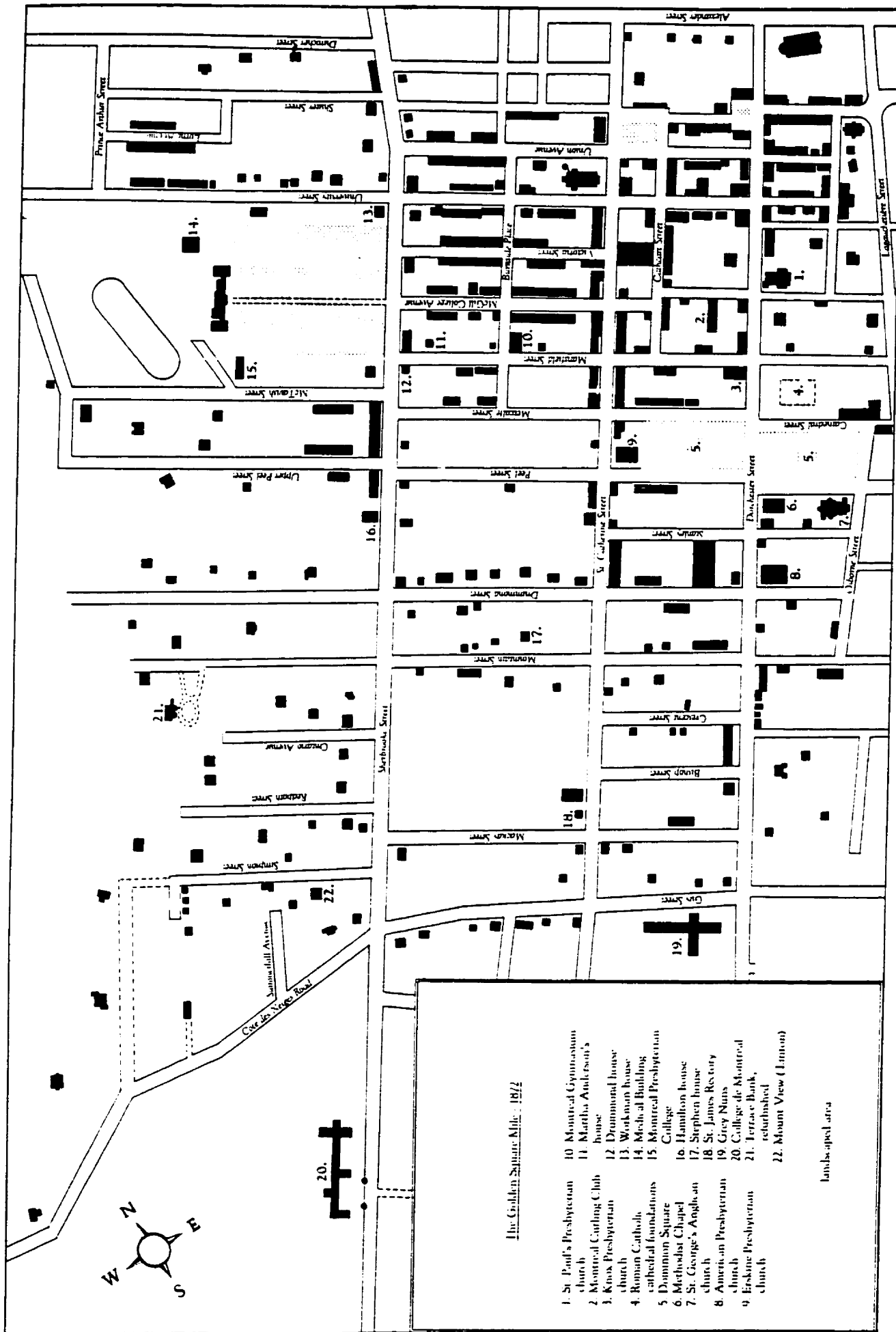


The Golden Square, Mile, 1864

- 1 Church of the Messiah (Unitarian)
- 2 Joseph House
- 3 Homesick (Stephens)
- 4 St. James's Club
- 5 Union Row
- 6 Ferrer's terrace
- 7 Strathern (Dow)
- 8 Christ Church Cathedral
- 9 New Anglican Site House
- 10 Du Rocher Place
- 11 Natural History Society Museum
- 12 Crystal Palace
- 13 Mount Royal Terrace
- 14 St. Sophie Place
- 15 Burnside House (Riley)
- 16 Apple Terrace
- 17 St. Arthur, Fayette and Perault terraces
- 18 Victoria Rink
- 19 Laundry house (Hickson)
- 20 Hickson house
- 21 Wood house
- 22 Kay house
- 23 Major house
- 24 St. James the Apostle church
- 25 Baker house
- 26 Gault house
- 27 Peter and Mary
- 28 Prince of Wales Terrace
- 29 Dikowsha (Joseph)
- 30 Thornhill (Lyons)
- 31 Becheval (Wassil)
- 32 Ravenscroft house
- 33 Lamoignon (Allan)
- 34 The Elms (Savage)
- 35 Douglass house
- 36 Holtan house
- 37 Grand Seminaire

landscaped area

44. The GSM in 1864

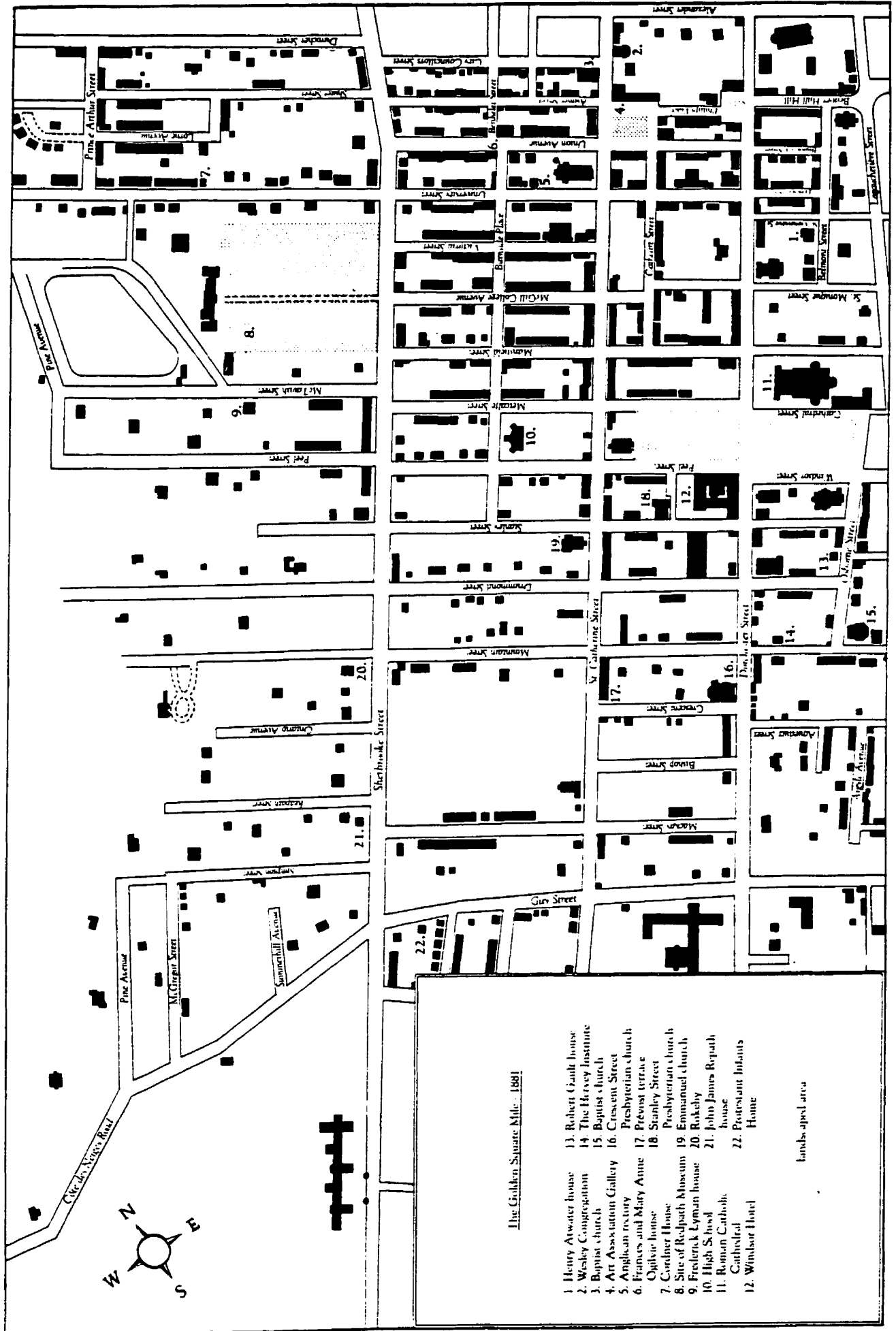


The Golden Square Mile - 1872

- 1. St. Paul's Presbyterian church
- 2. Montreal Curling Club
- 3. Knox Presbyterian church
- 4. Roman Catholic cathedral foundations
- 5. Dominion Square
- 6. Methodist Chapel
- 7. St. George's Anglican church
- 8. American Presbyterian church
- 9. Esplanade Presbyterian church
- 10. Montreal Gymnasium
- 11. Martha Anderson's house
- 12. Drummond House
- 13. Workman house
- 14. Medical Building
- 15. Montreal Presbyterian College
- 16. Hamilton house
- 17. Stephen house
- 18. St. James Rectory
- 19. Grey Nuns
- 20. College de Montreal
- 21. Terrace Bank, refurbished
- 22. Mount View (Lanion) landscaped area

45. The GSM in 1872

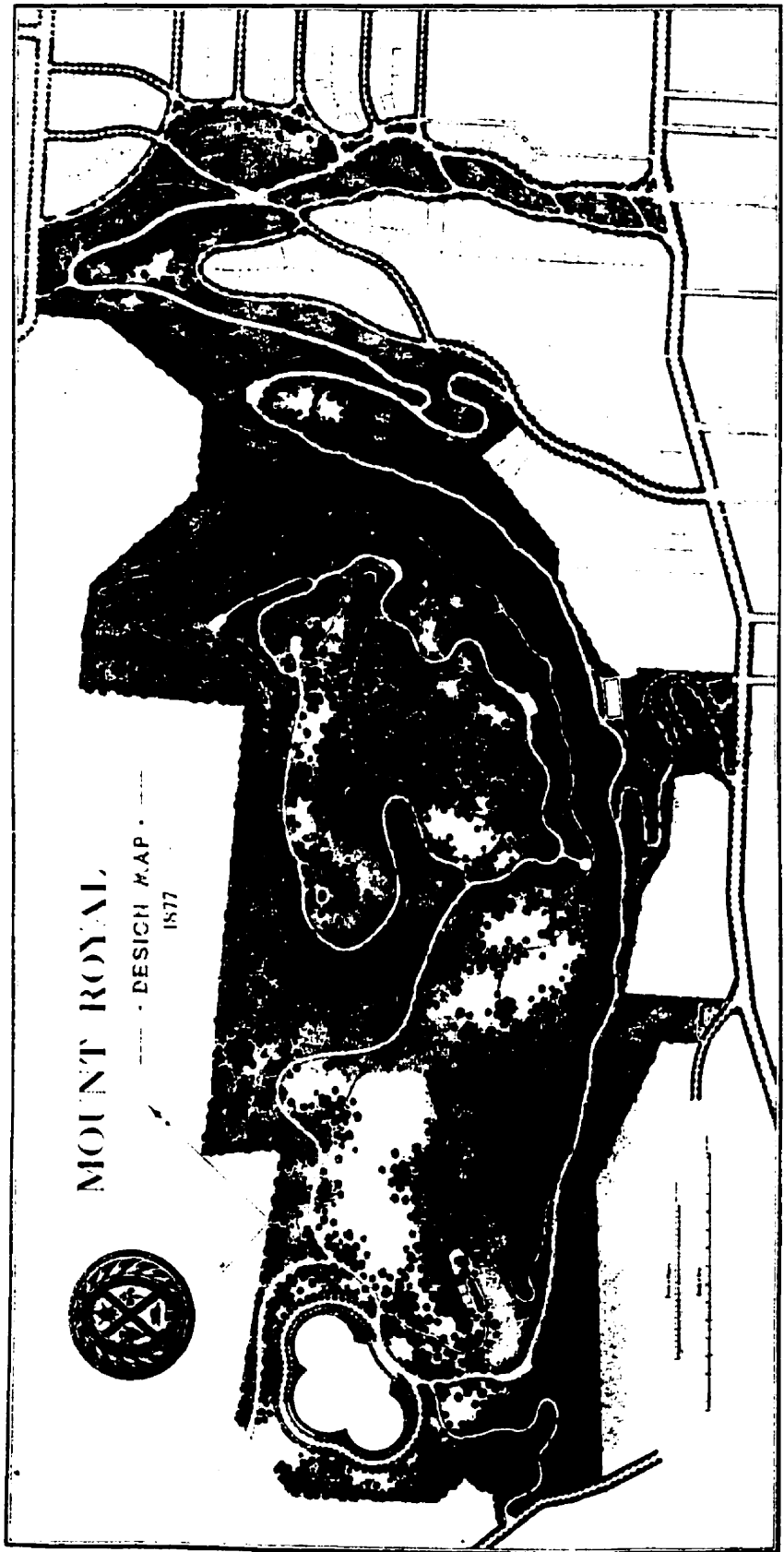




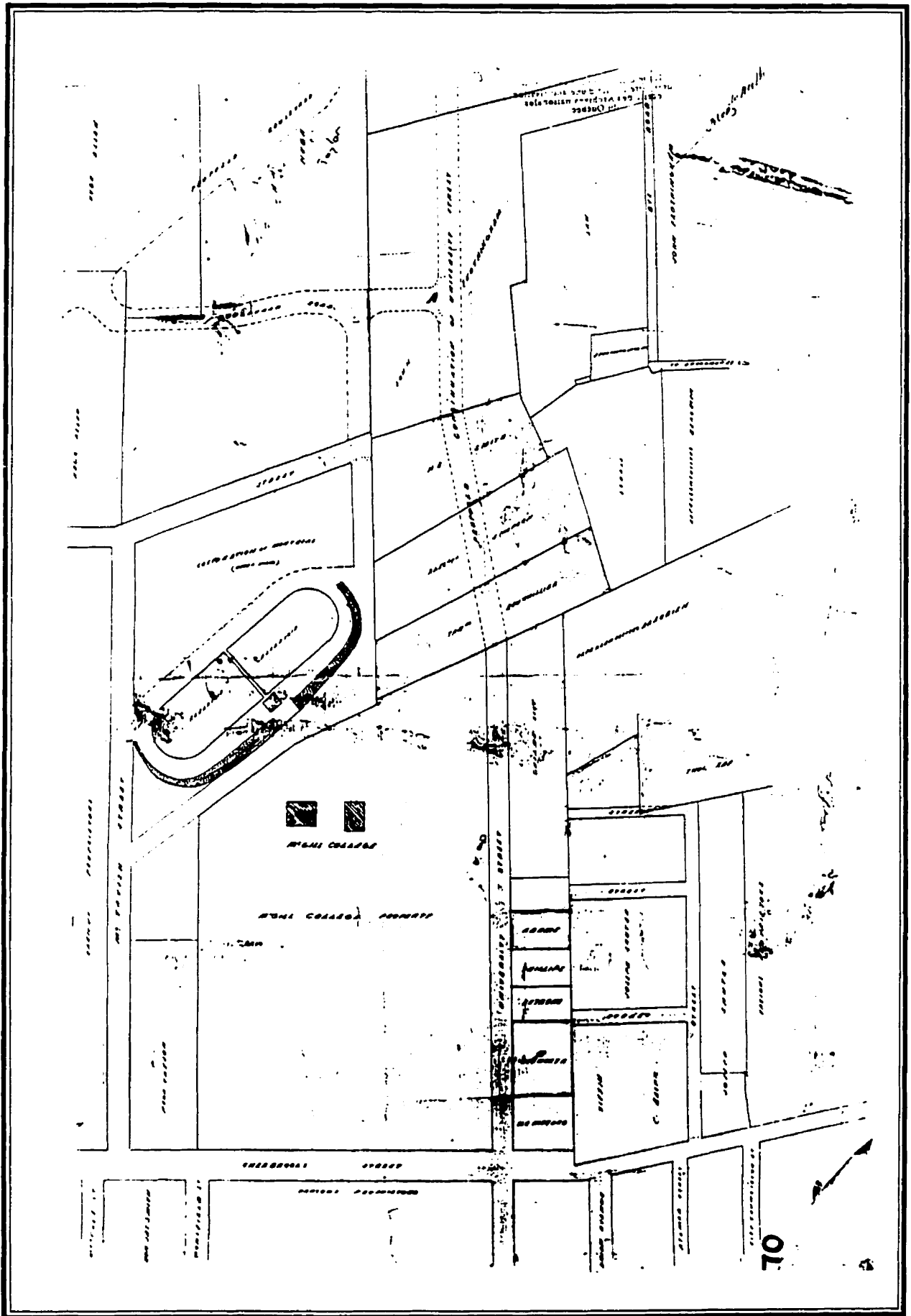
The Golden Square Mile - 1881

- 1. Henry Atwater house
- 2. Wesley Congregation
- 3. Baptist church
- 4. Art Association Gallery
- 5. Anglican rectory
- 6. Frances and Mary Anne Ogilvie house
- 7. Cardner House
- 8. Site of Rodolph Museum
- 9. Frederick Lyman house
- 10. High School
- 11. Roman Catholic Cathedral
- 12. Windsor Hall
- 13. Robert Gauld house
- 14. The Hervey Institute
- 15. Baptist church
- 16. Crescent Street Presbyterian church
- 17. Prevost terrace
- 18. Stanley Street Presbyterian church
- 19. Emmanuel church
- 20. Rokeby house
- 21. John James Repath house
- 22. Protestant Infants Home

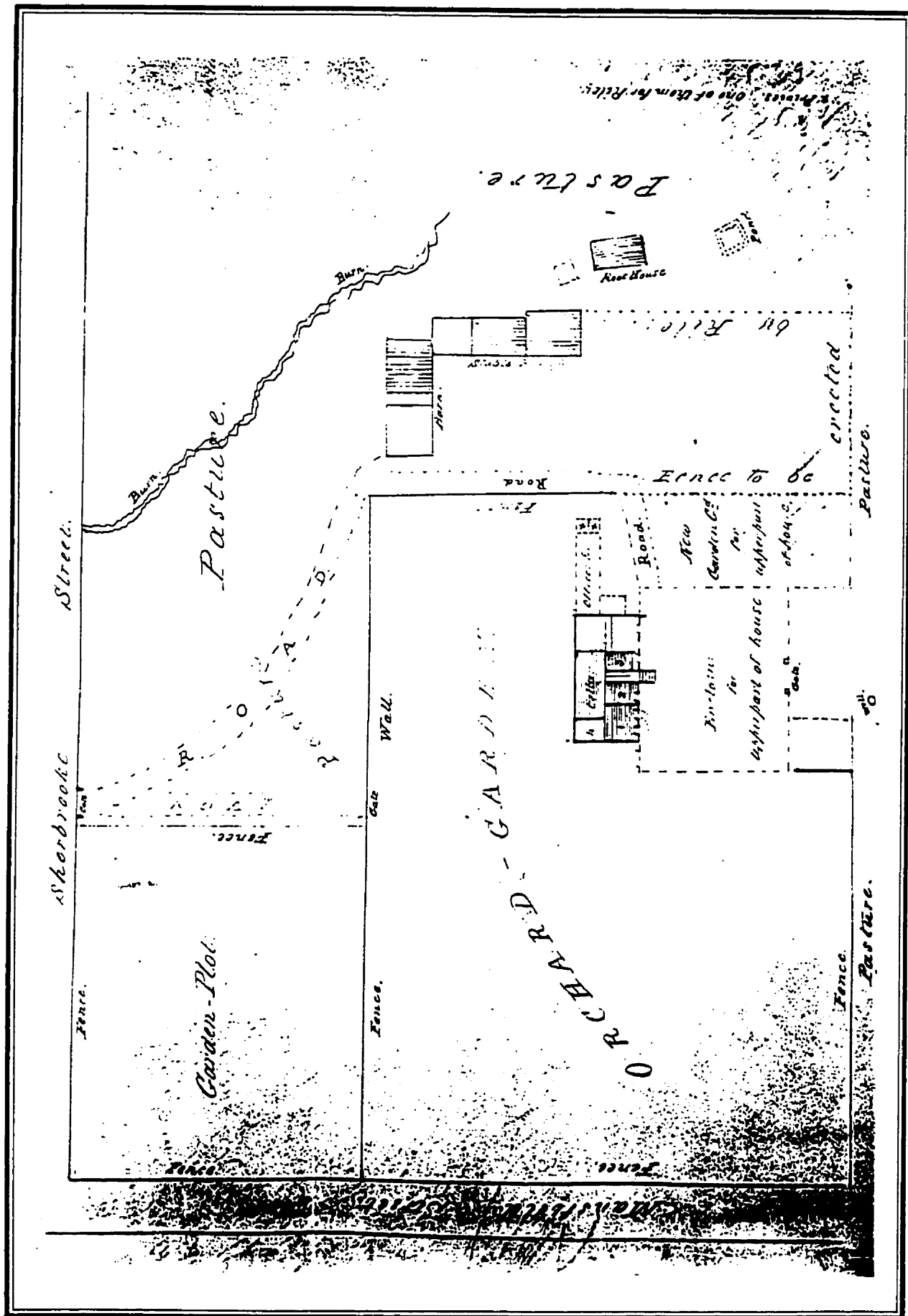
lands-apud area



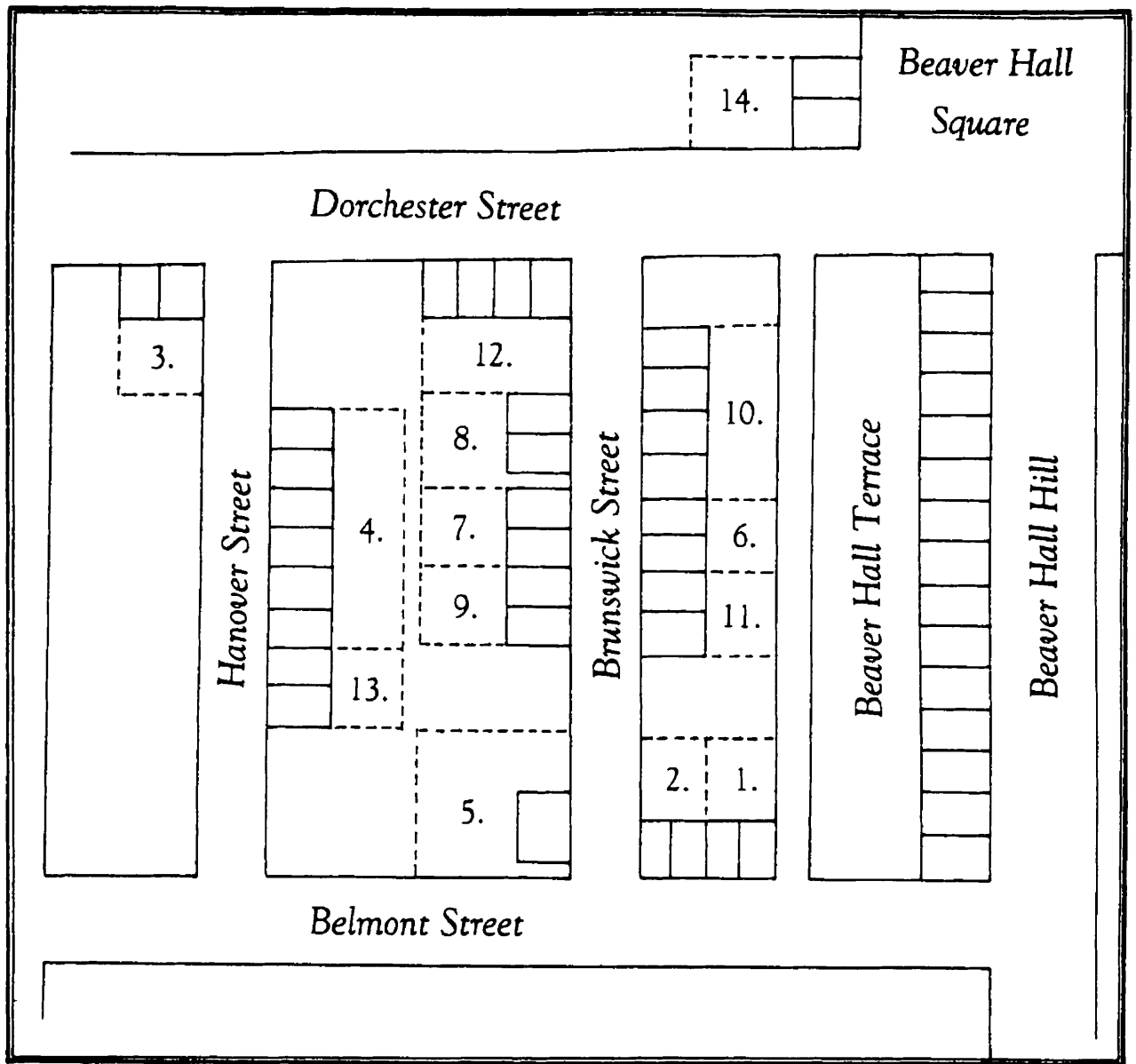
47. Olmsted's 1877 plan for Mount Royal Part



48. Proposed extension of University Street, 1858

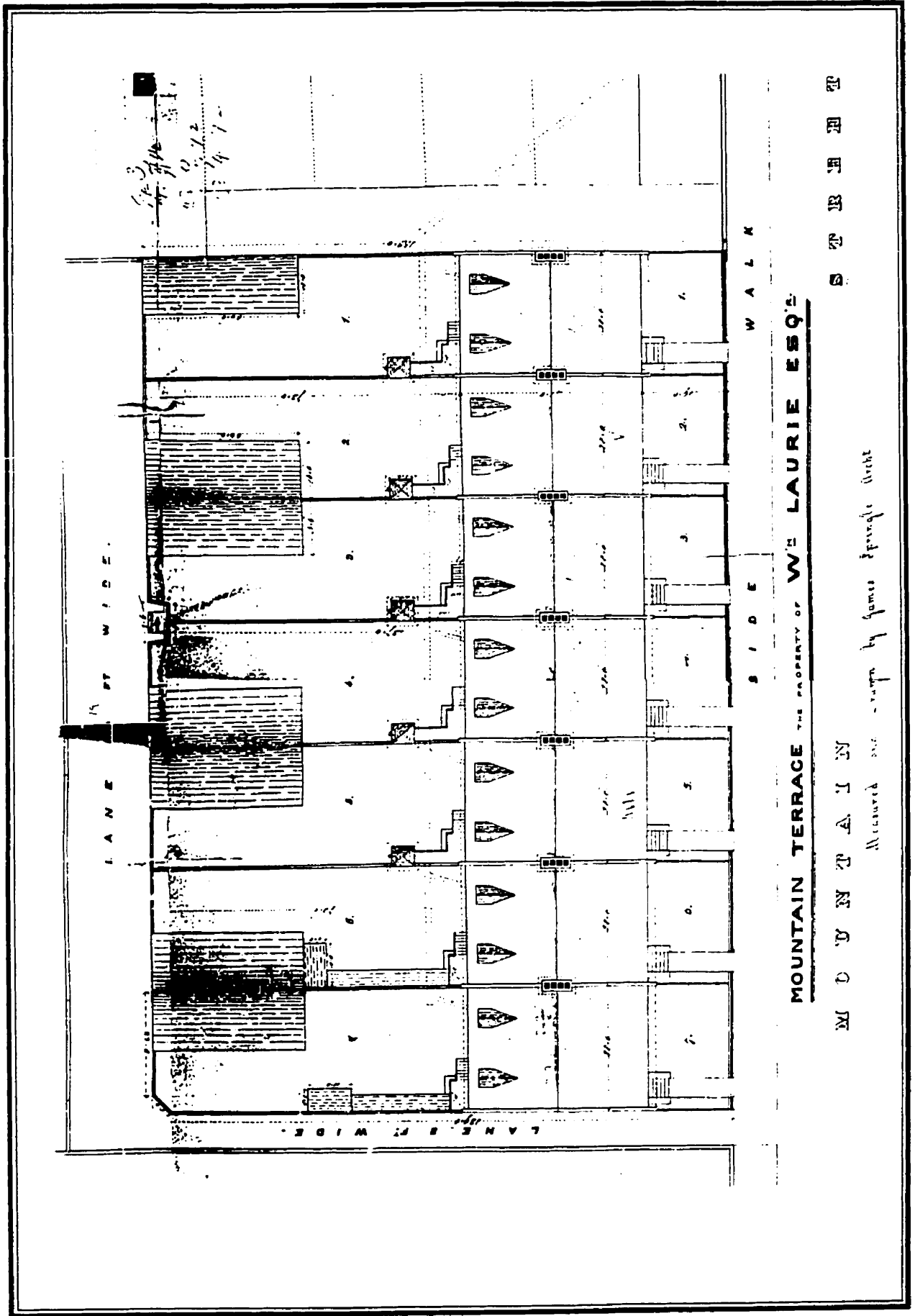


49. Burnside farm, 1852

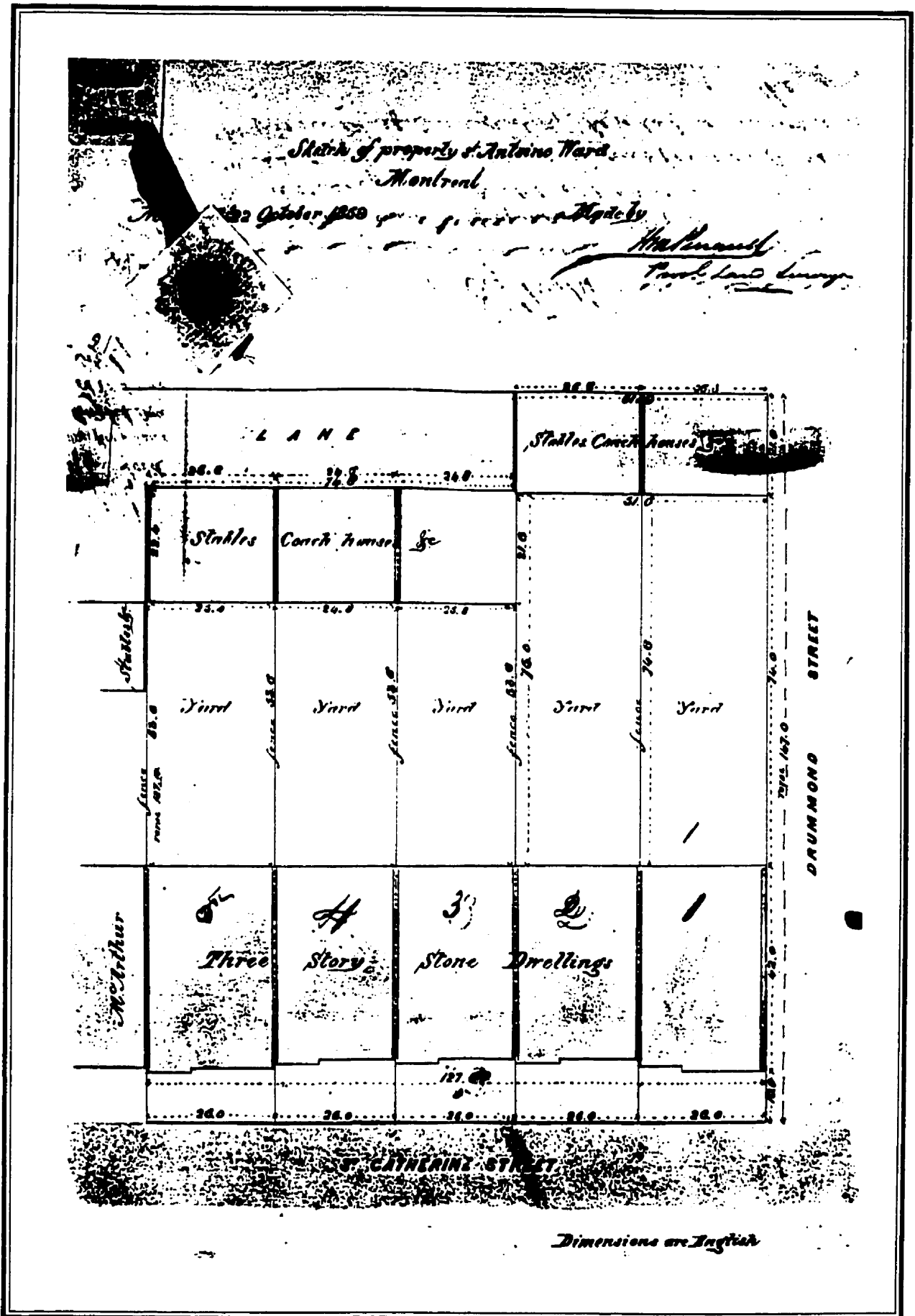


1. Thomas Watson - 2 brick cottages 1843
2. " " - 2 brick and stone houses 1845-6
3. " " - 2 houses c. 1848
4. " " - 6 houses 1850
5. David Brown - 1 house c. 1846
6. Hector Munro - 2 houses c. 1845
7. James Dunbar - 2 houses c. 1846
8. George McDougall & John Morison - 2 houses c. 1846
9. John Cunningham Beckett - 2 houses c. 1844
10. Hector Munro - 4 houses 1853
11. Henry Bulmer - 2 houses c. 1853
12. Robert Anderson - 4 houses 1853
13. Mungo Ramsay - 2 houses c. 1853
14. Hector Munro - 2 houses 1854



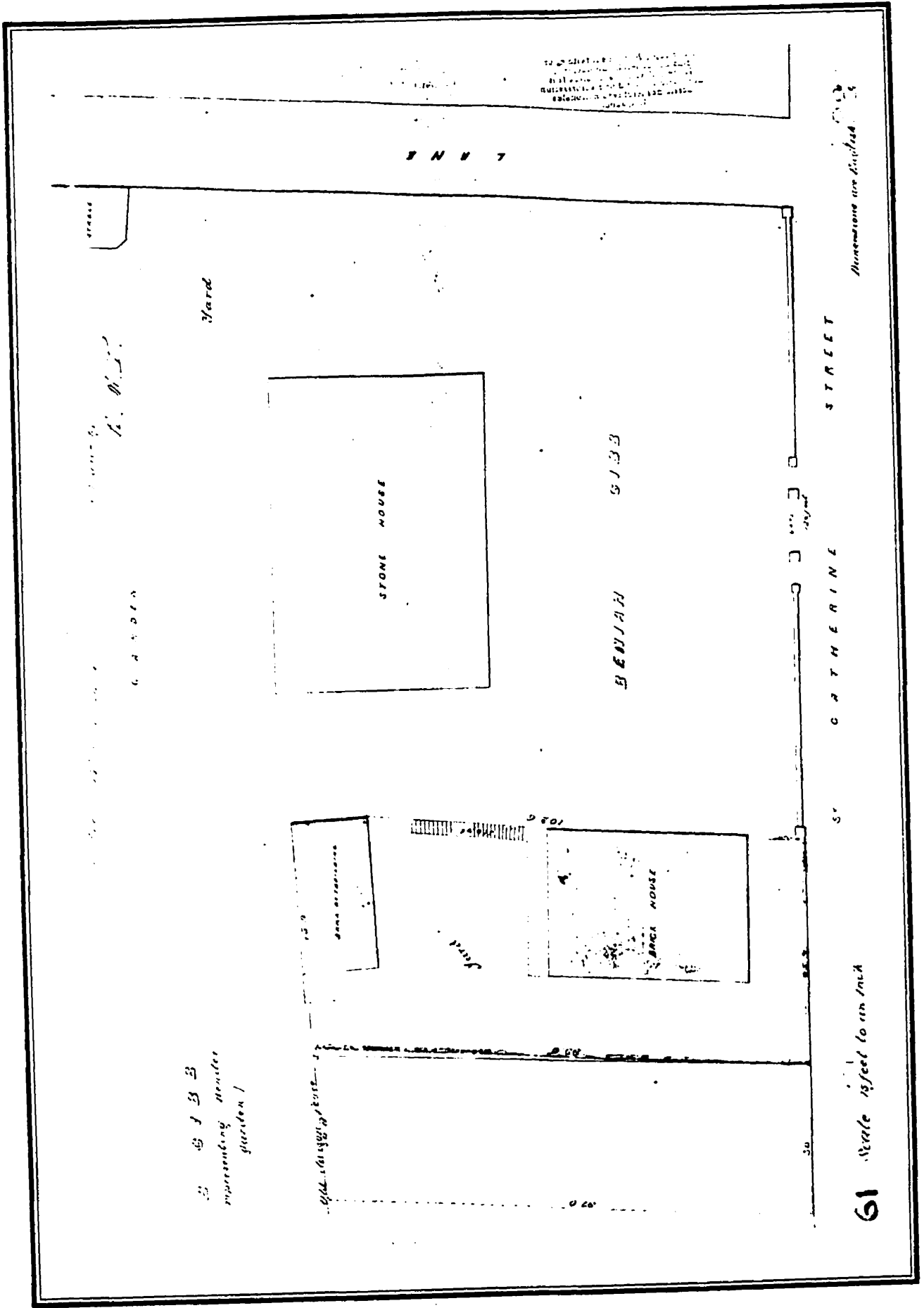


52. Mountain Terrace, 1848

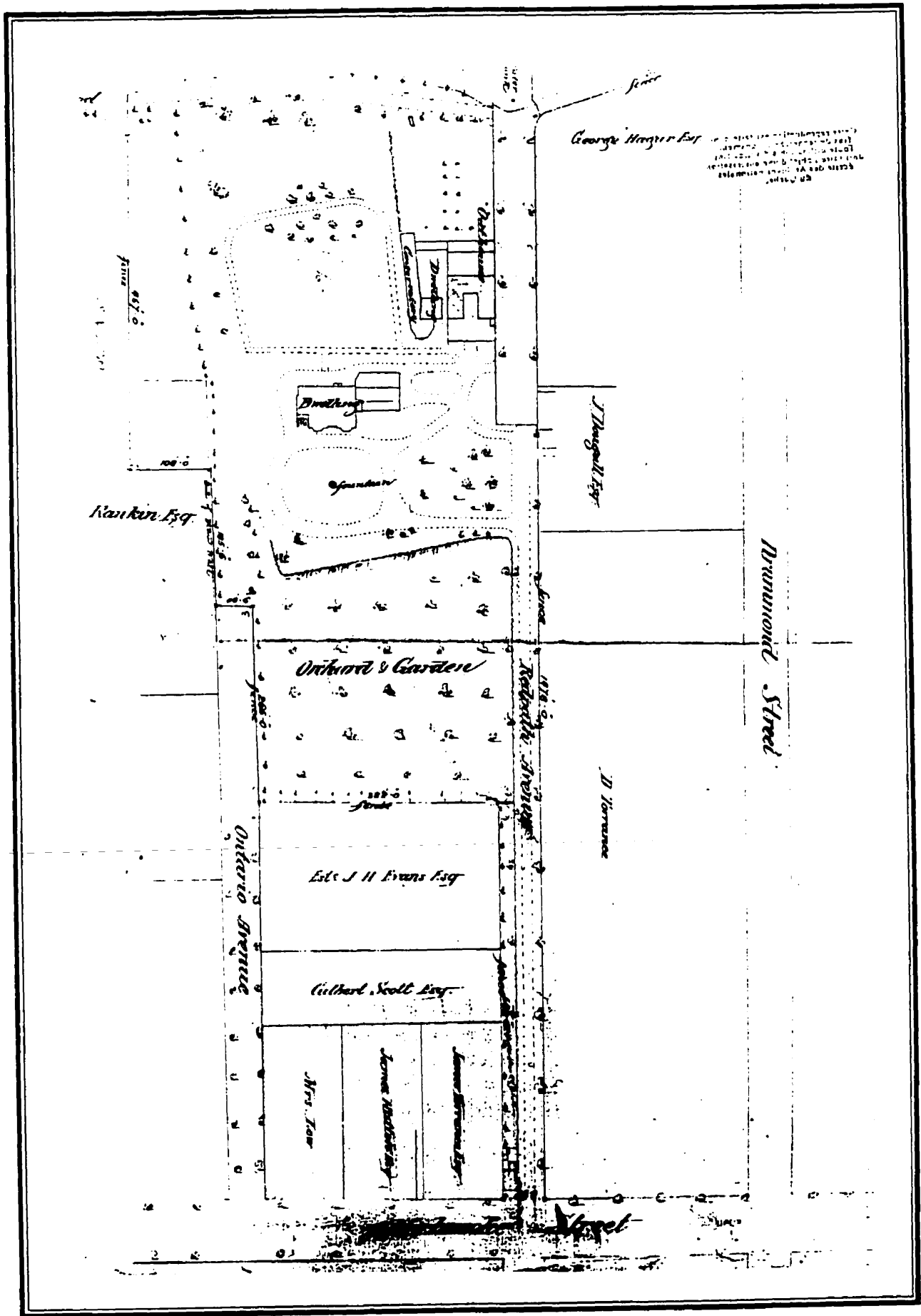


53. Perrault & Payette's terraces ("Montmorency Terrace"), 1859



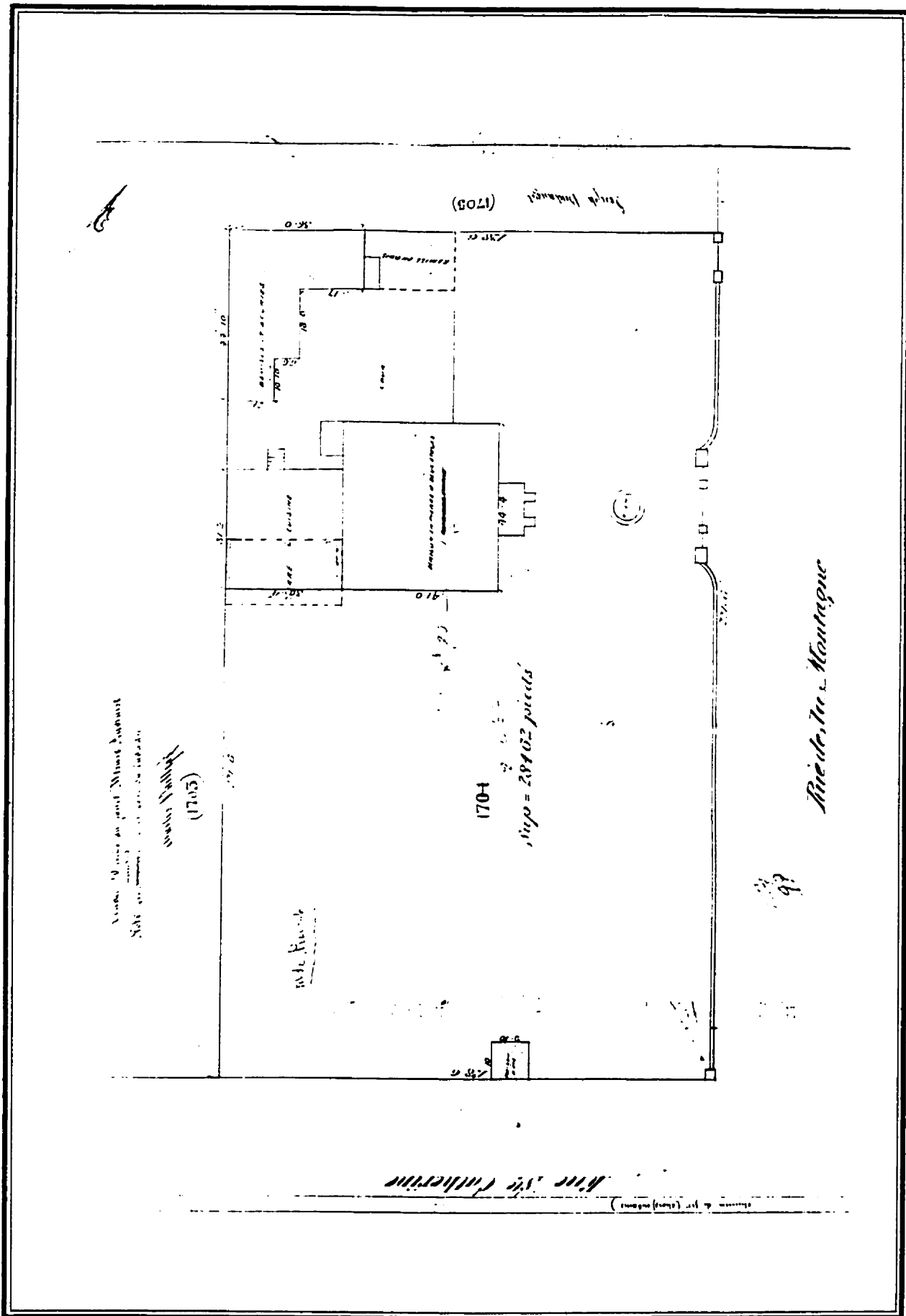


54. Gibb house, 1854

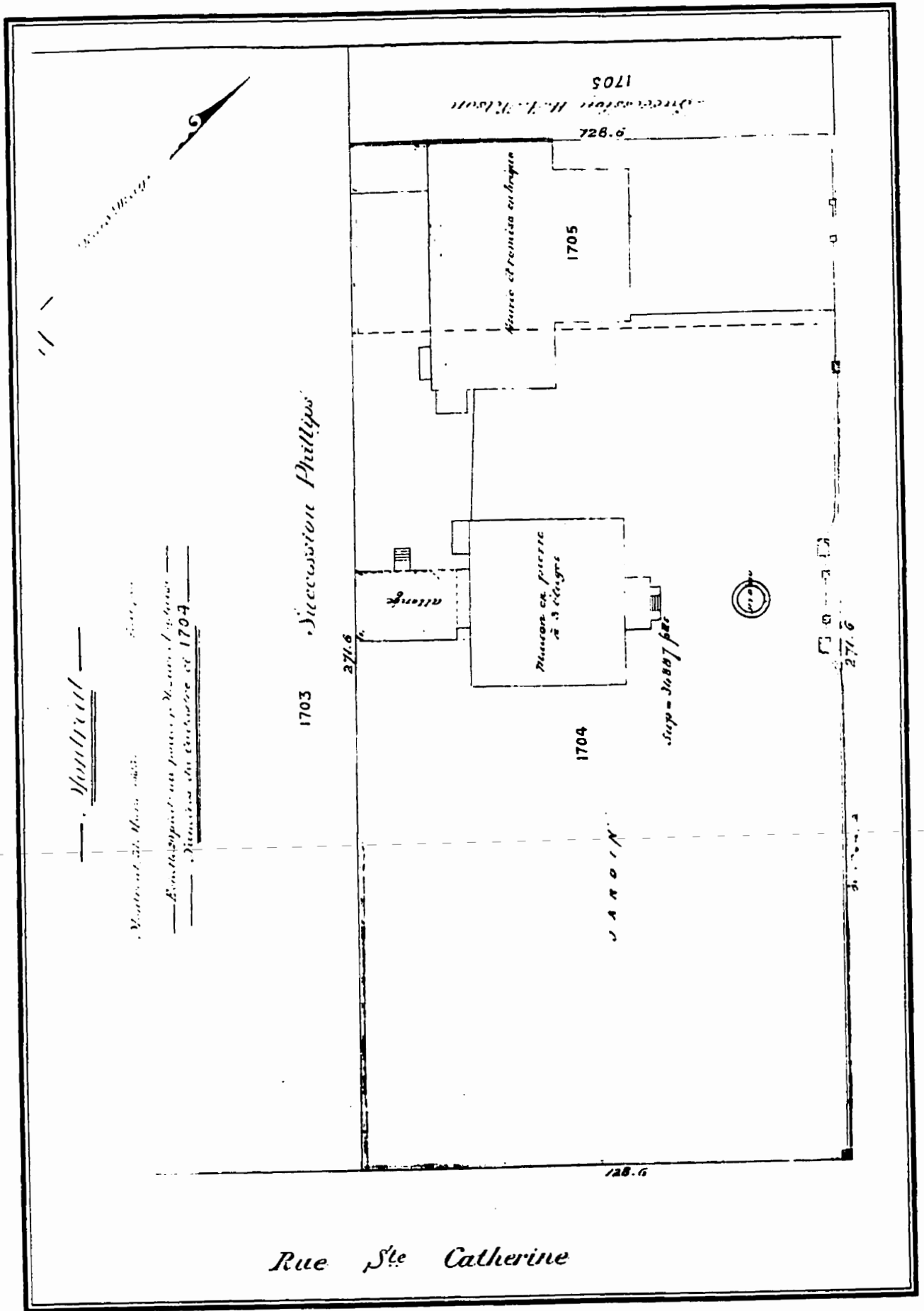


55. Terrace Bank and grounds, 1869

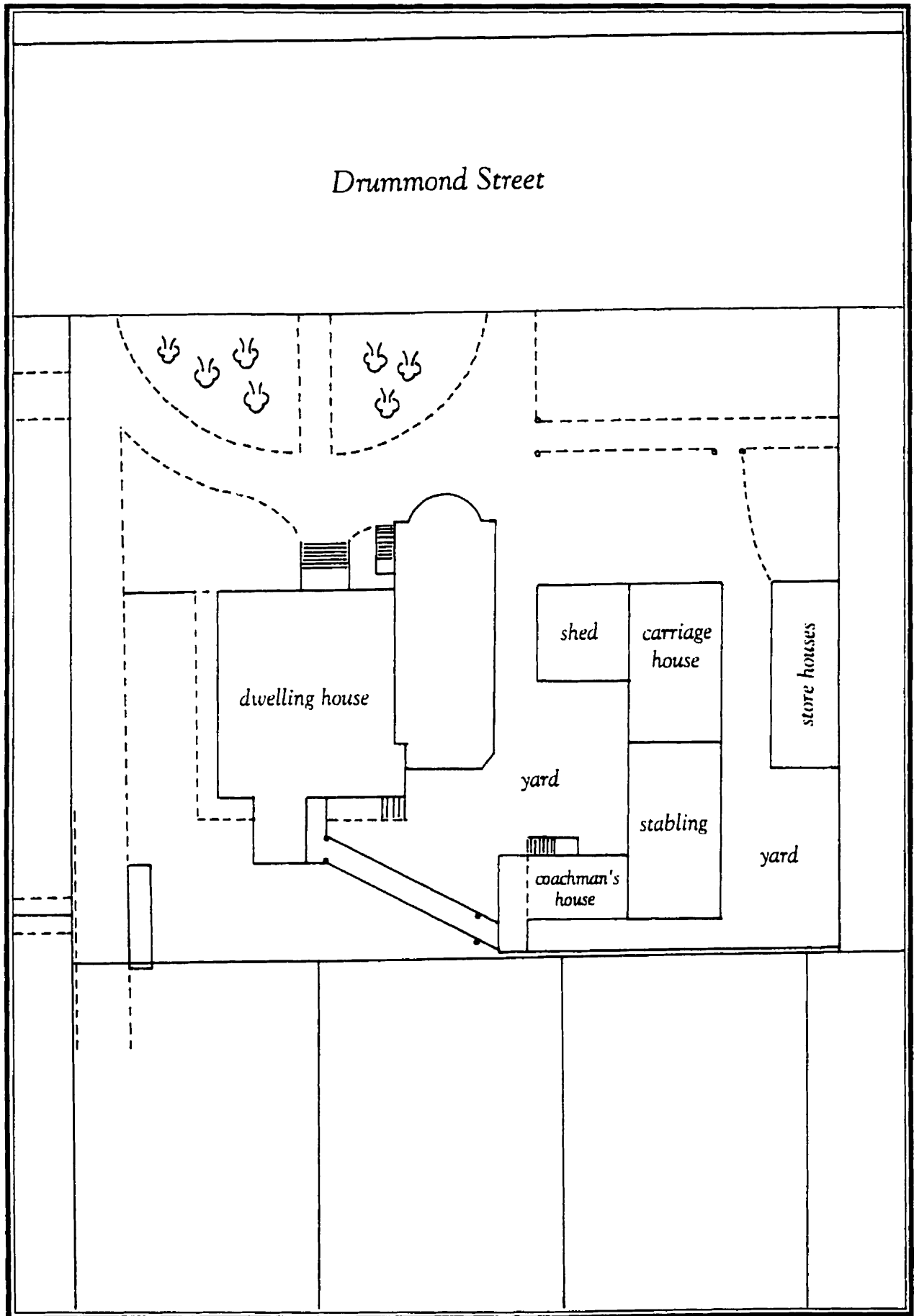




57. Prévost house and grounds, 1872

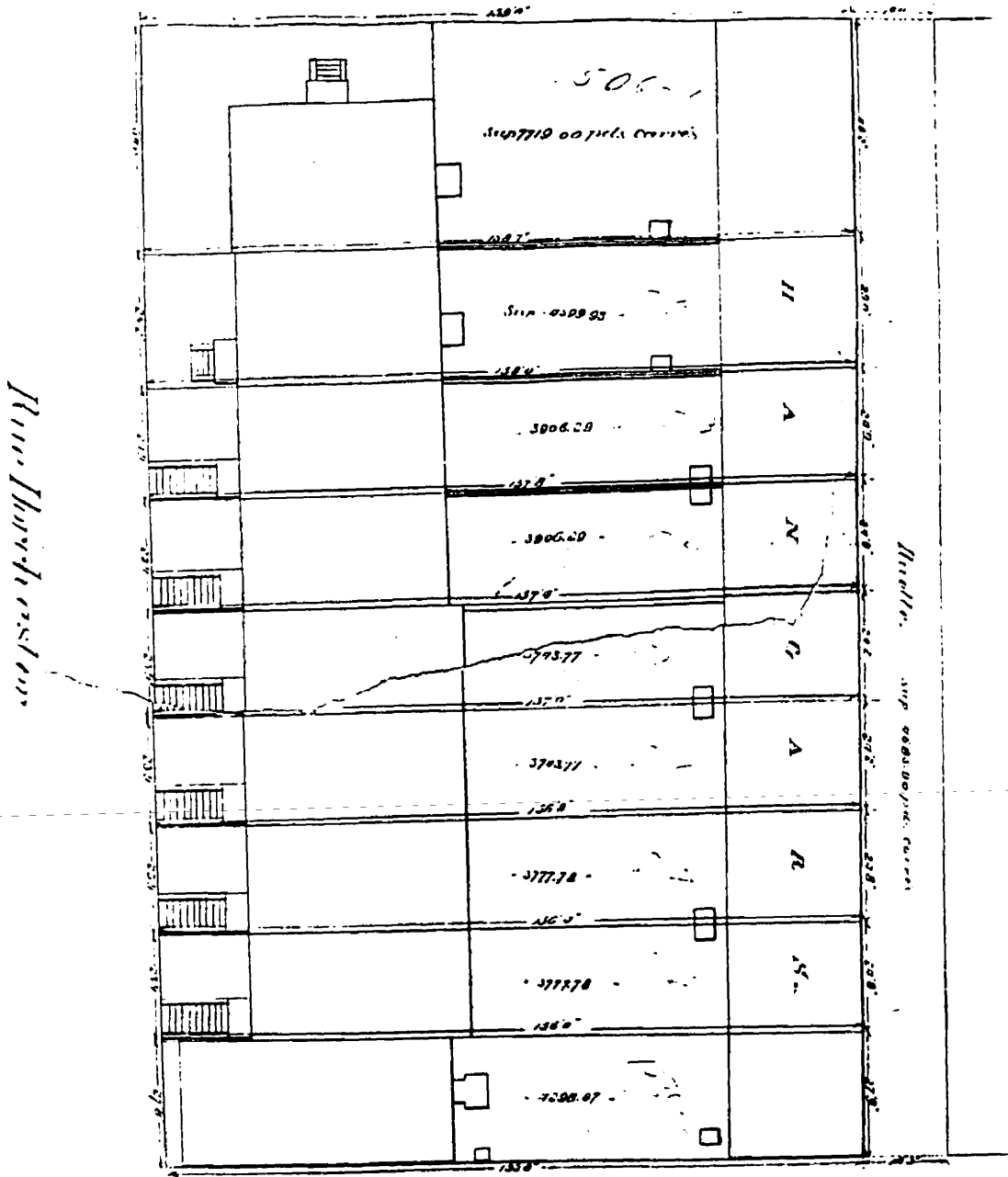


58. Prévost house and grounds, 1883



59. Workman house and grounds, 1879

Rue Thimmoed.

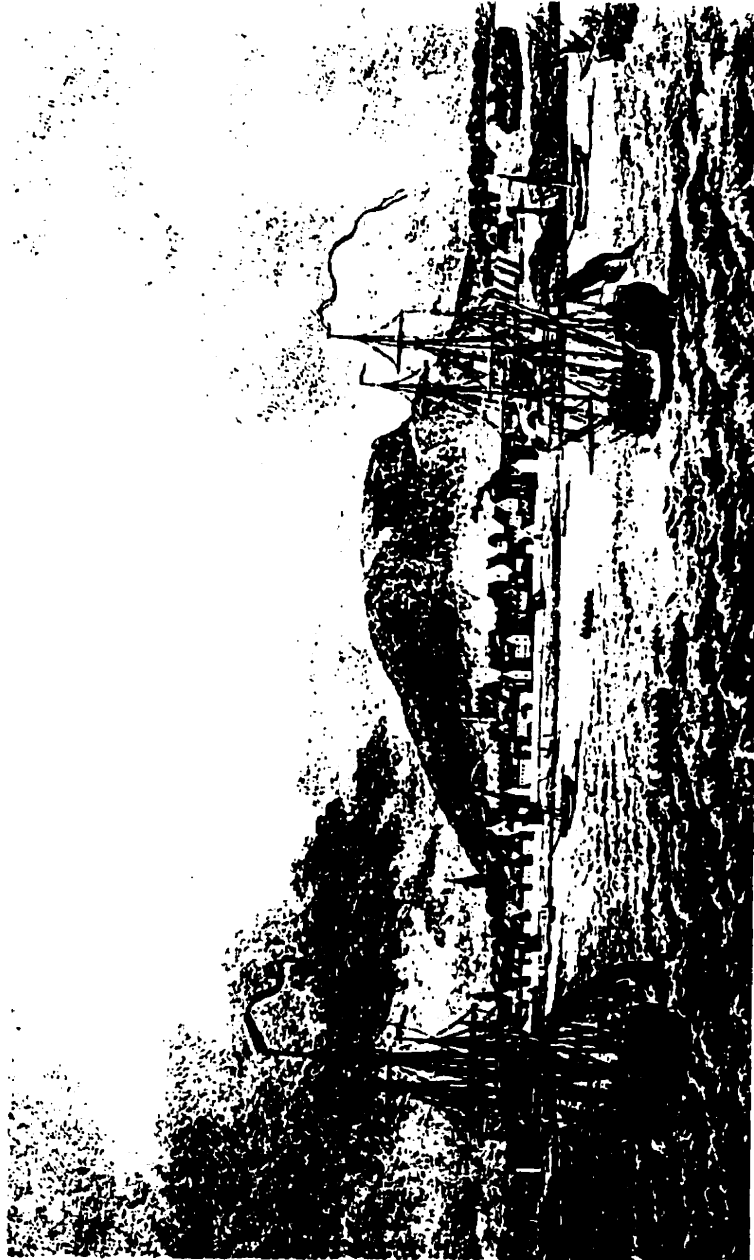


Rue Stanley

60. Beaudry terrace, 1880s







1. View of Montreal in 1762, by Thomas Patten



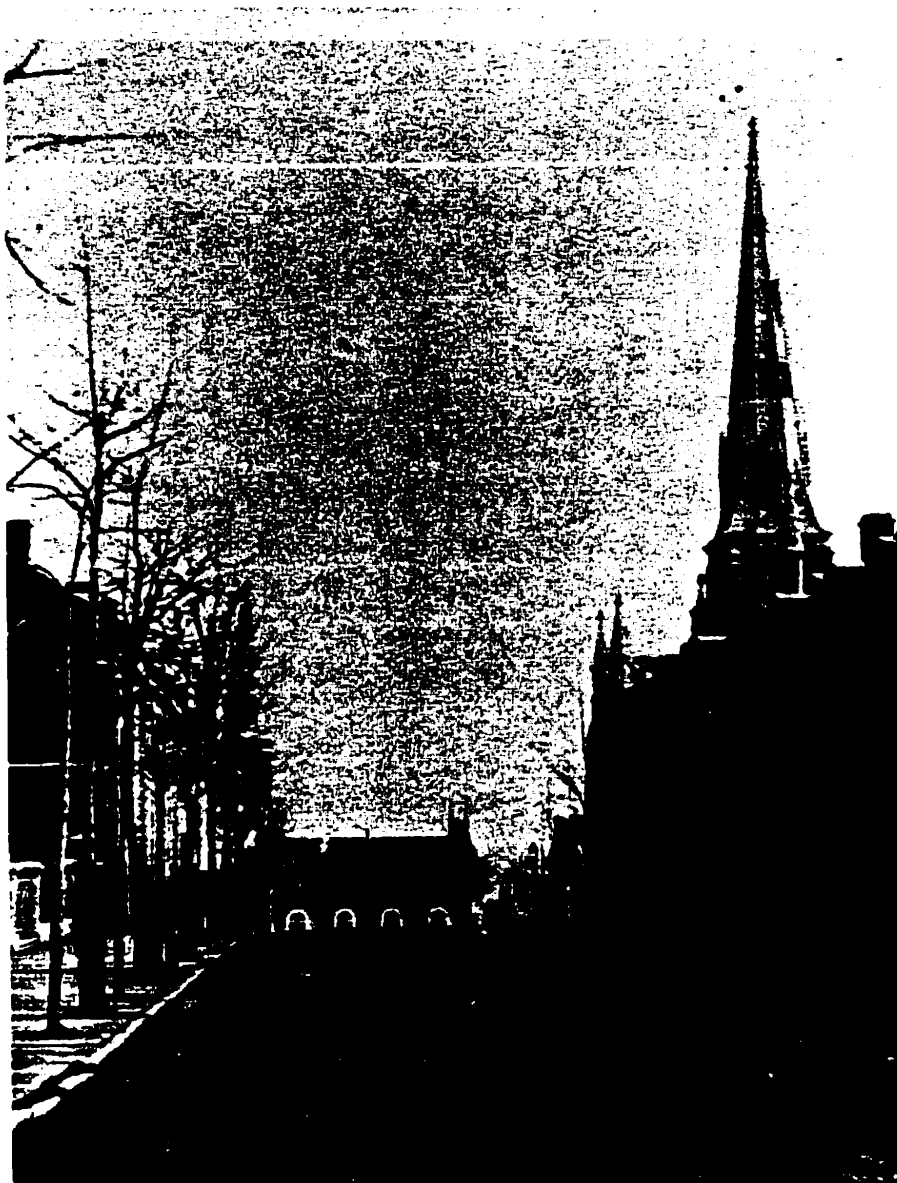
2. Portrait of James McGill



3. Burnside Farm c. 1810 with McTavish Castle in background



4. View from the Haymarket of Beaver Hall Hill c. 1850 with St. Andrew's Church (upper left, under construction) and Unitarian Church (centre right)



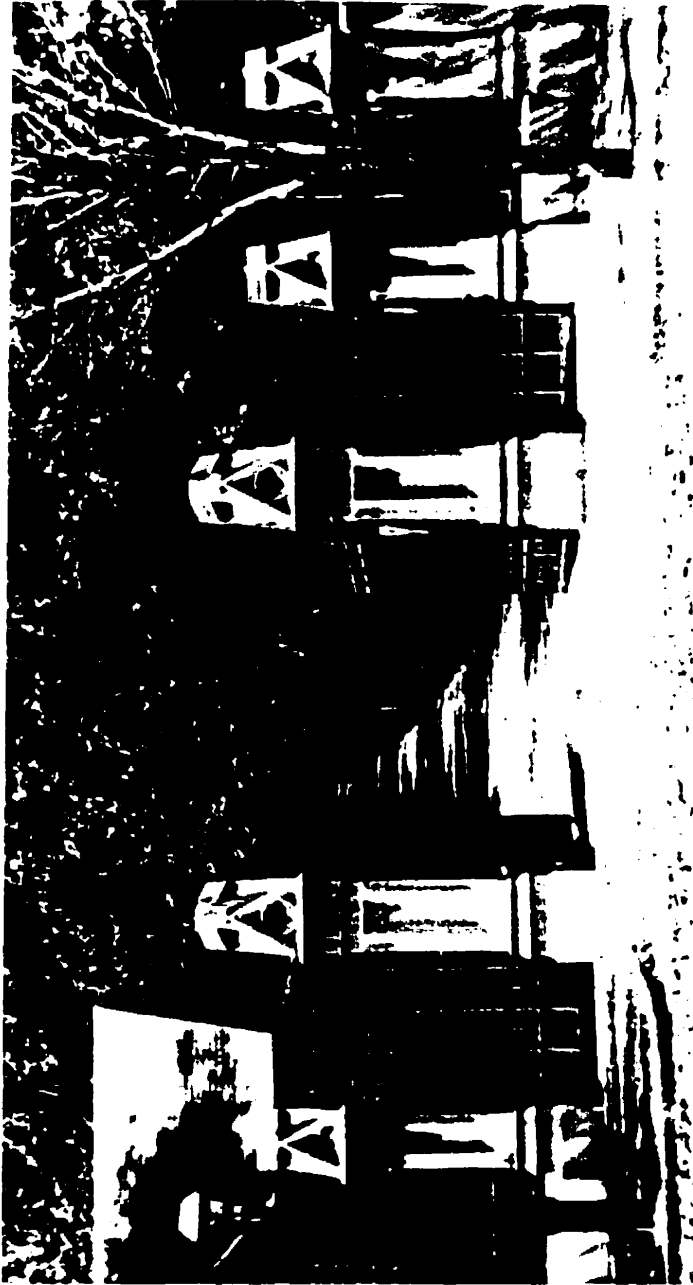
5. Beaver Hall Hill facing south c. 1860 with St. Andrew's Church (right)



6. View of New Town c. 1870 with St. Patrick's Church (centre)



7. View from Ravenscrag c. 1866 with McTavish Reservoir (foreground)



8. Gates on Sherbrooke Street leading to Terrace Bank





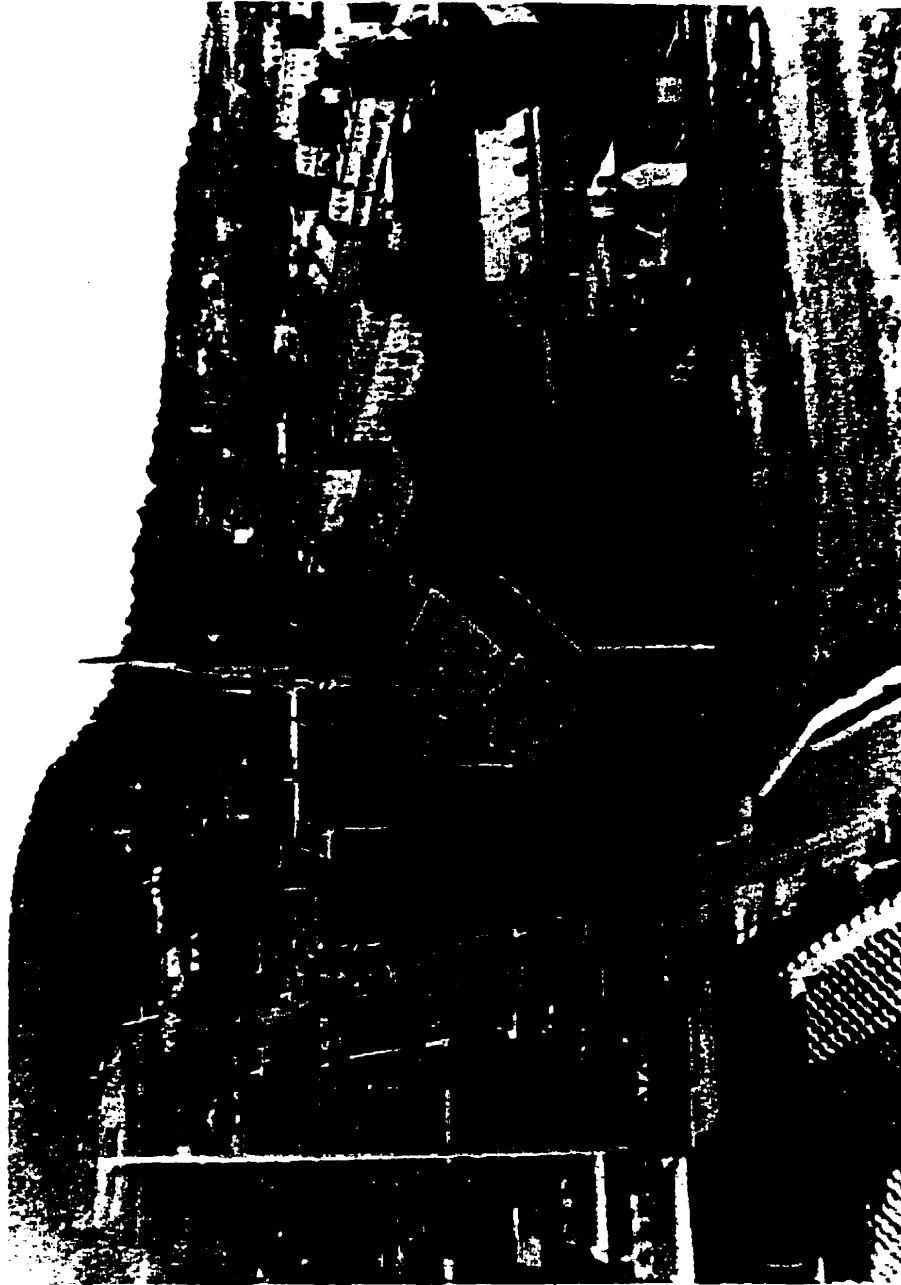
9. Sherbrooke Street C. 1900



10. East side, Dominion Square c. 1878 with Knox Church (left) and Roman Catholic Cathedral (right, under construction)



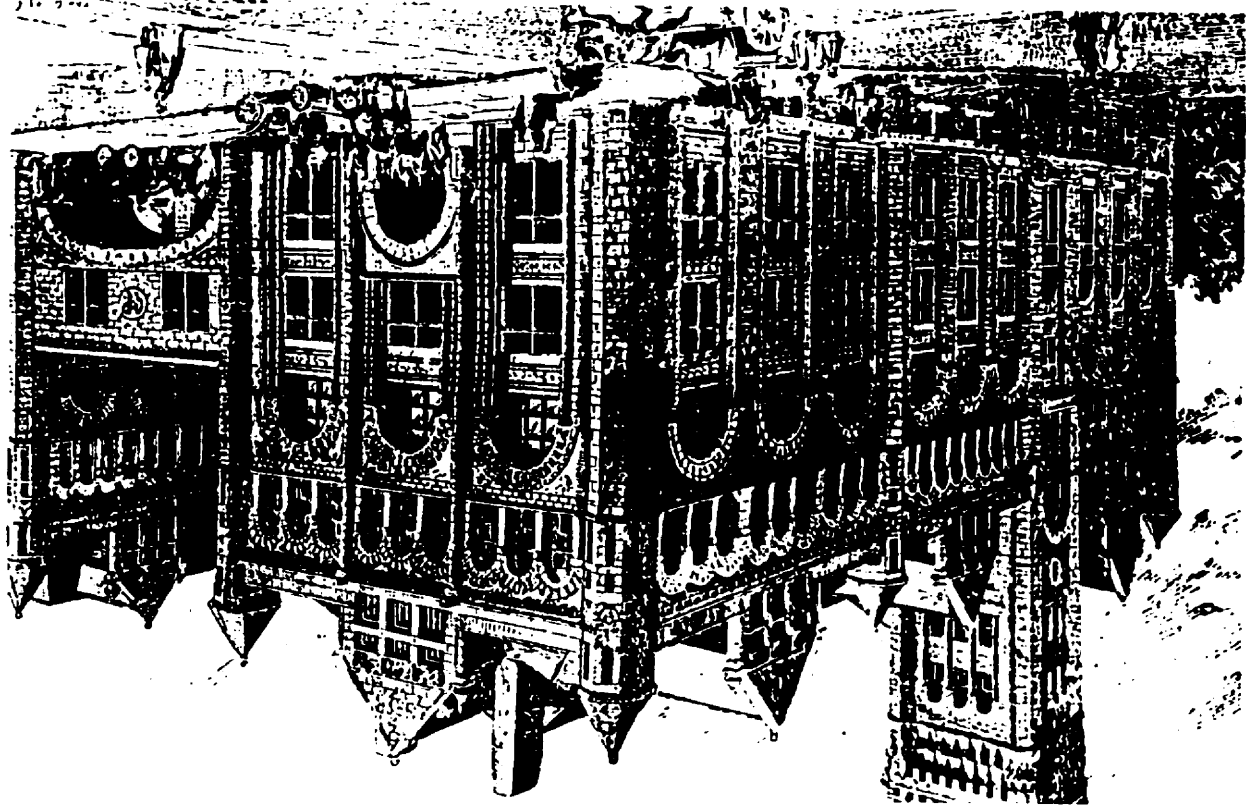
11. South side, Dominion Square c. 1878 with St. George's Church (right)



12. North side, Dominion Square c. 1878 with Erskine Church (centre) and New High School (behind church)



13. West side, Dominion Square c. 1880 with Windsor Hotel and Dorchester Street Methodist Chapel (left)



14. Windsor Station



15. Morgan's Store, Phillips Square



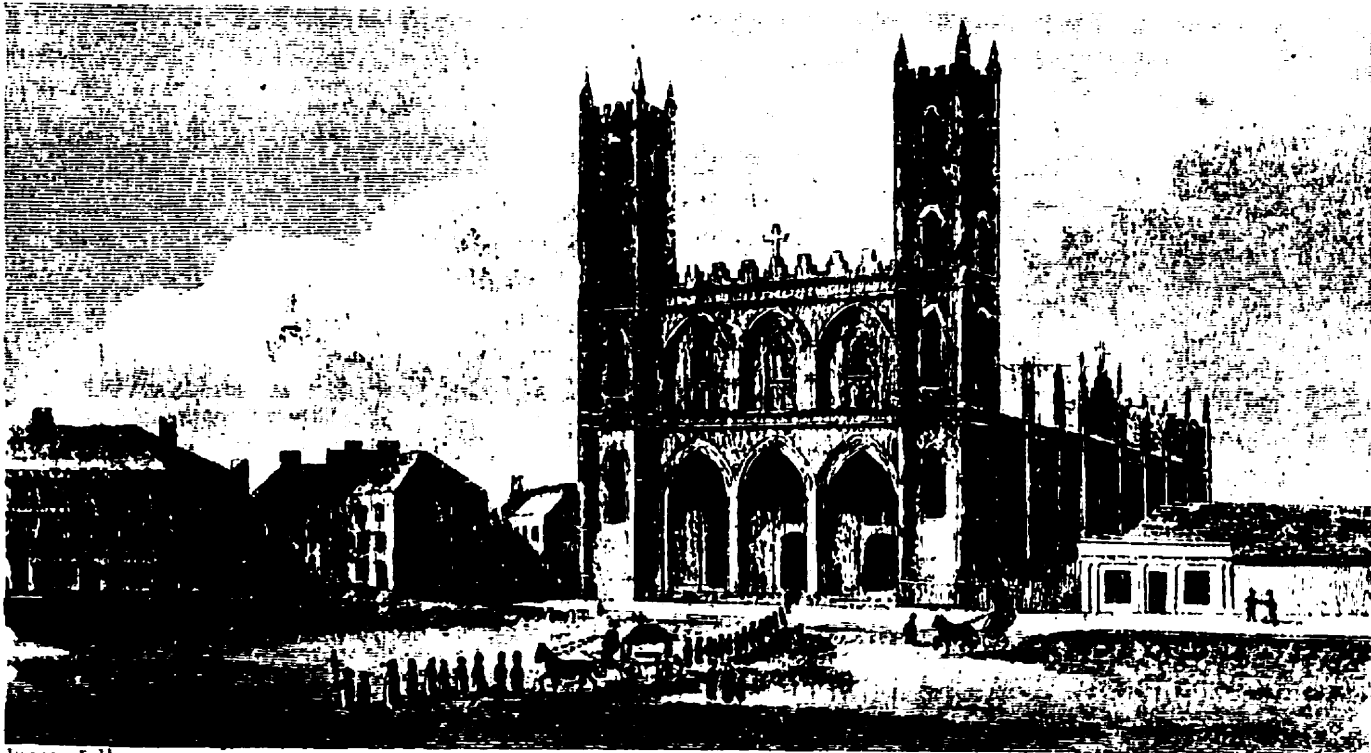
16. Birk's Store, Phillips Square





17. The St. James's Club, Dorchester Street

18. Notre Dame Church

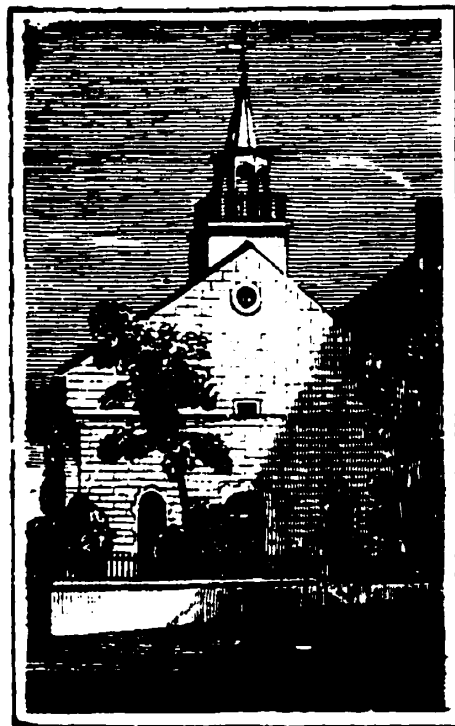


Duncannon, Ire.

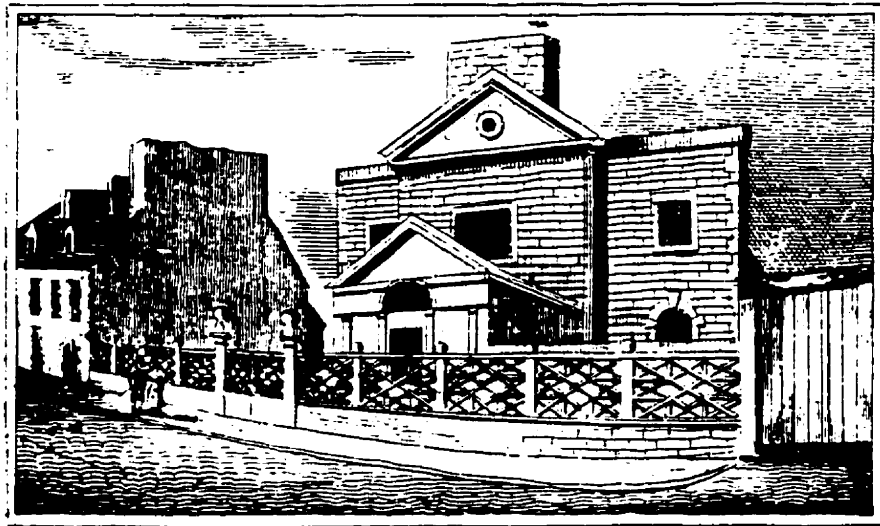
Christie, New



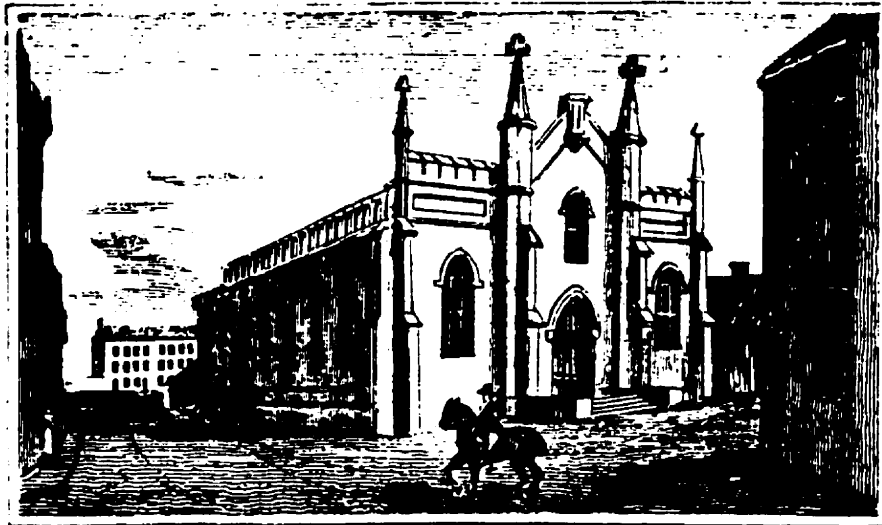
19. Old Christ Church



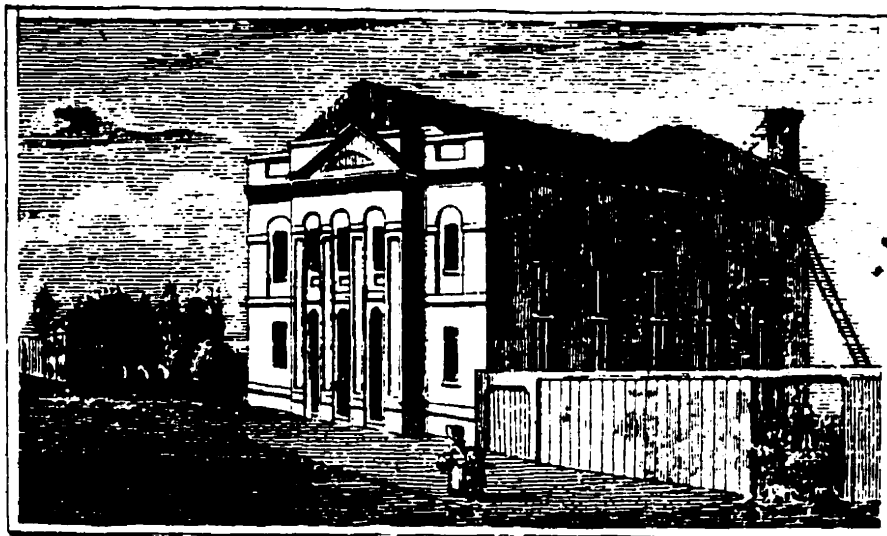
20. Old St. Gabriel's Street Presbyterian Church



21. Old St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. Peter Street



22. Old St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, St. Helen Street



23. Old American Presbyterian Church, St. James Street



24. Scots Secession Church, Lagauchetière Street



25. Old Baptist Chapel, St. Maurice Street



26. Old Congregational Chapel



27. St. James Street Wesleyan Chapel

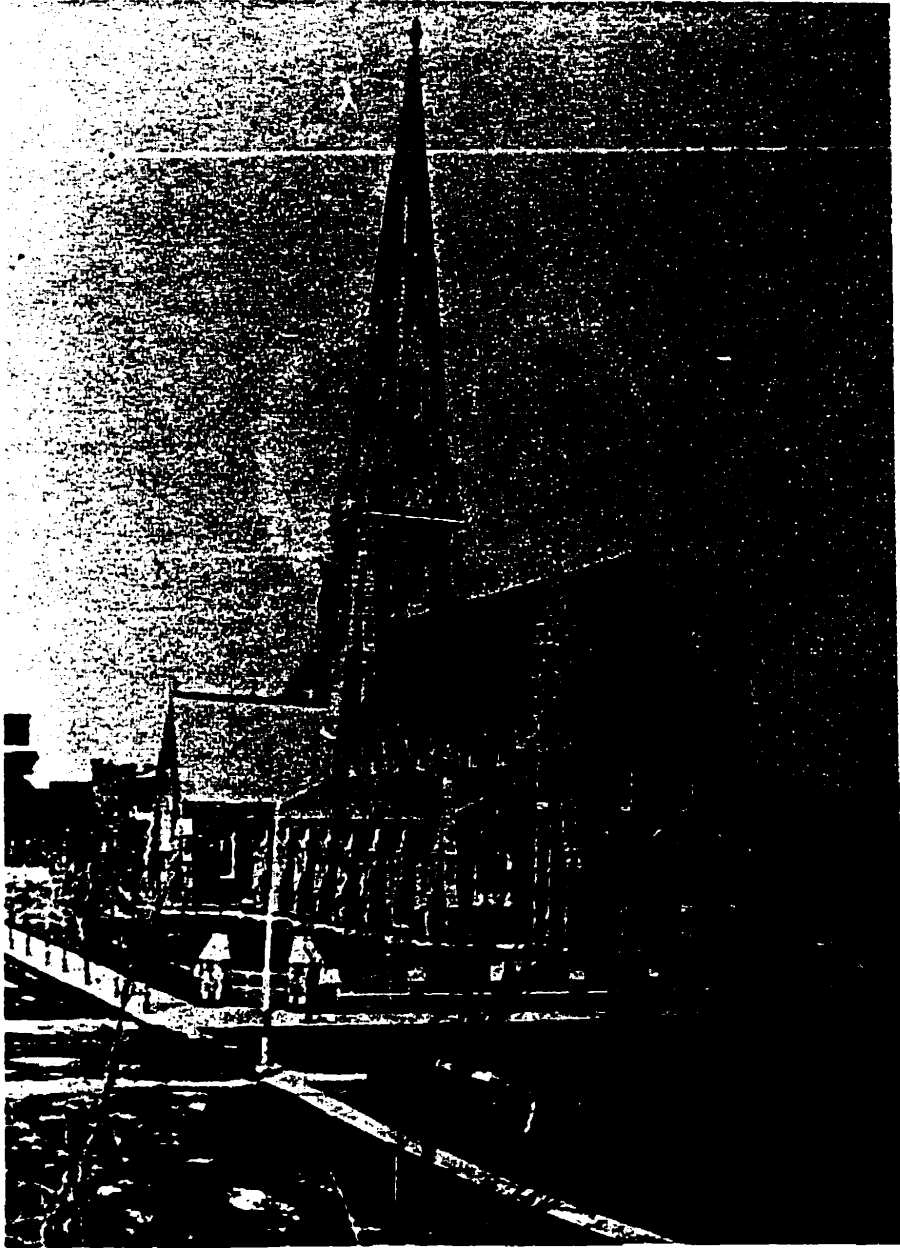


28. Old Synagogue, Chenneville Street



29. New St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Beaver Hall Hill

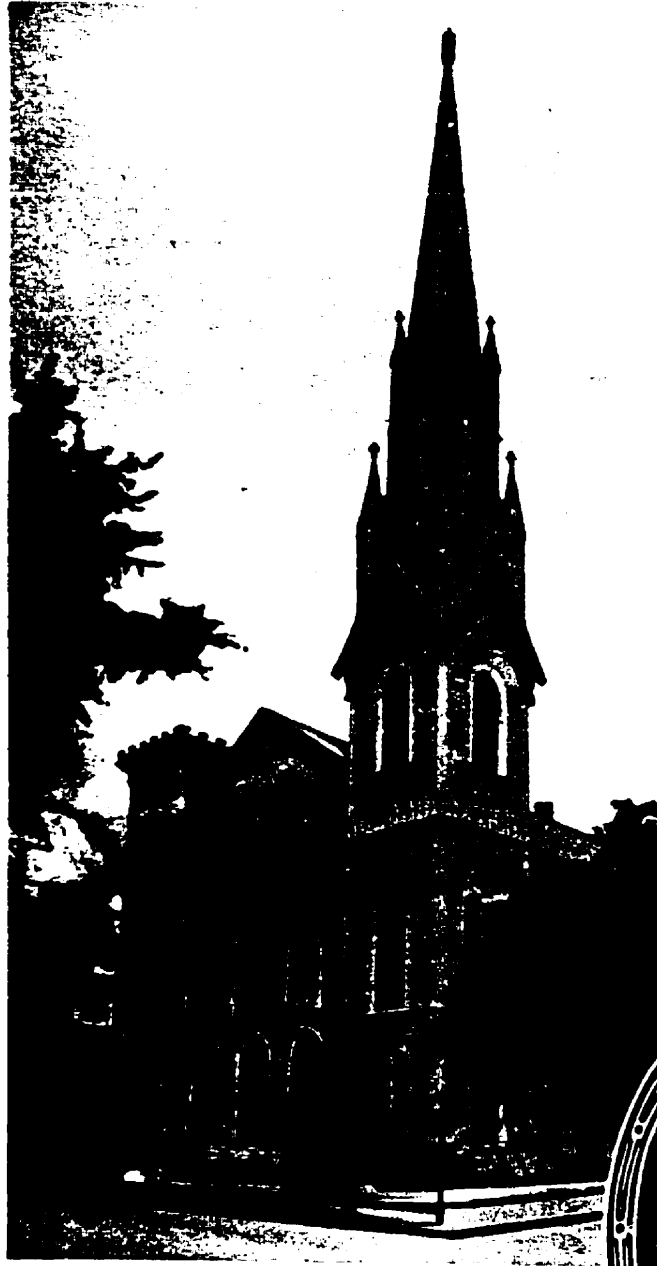




30. New Christ Church, Phillips Square



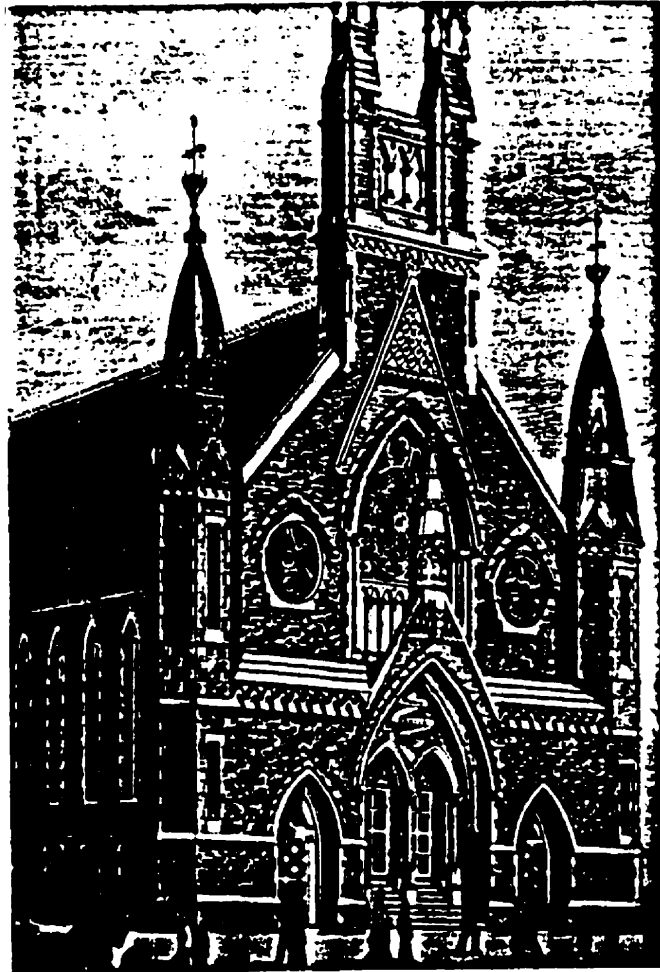
**31. St. James the Apostle Anglican Church, St. Catherine Street**



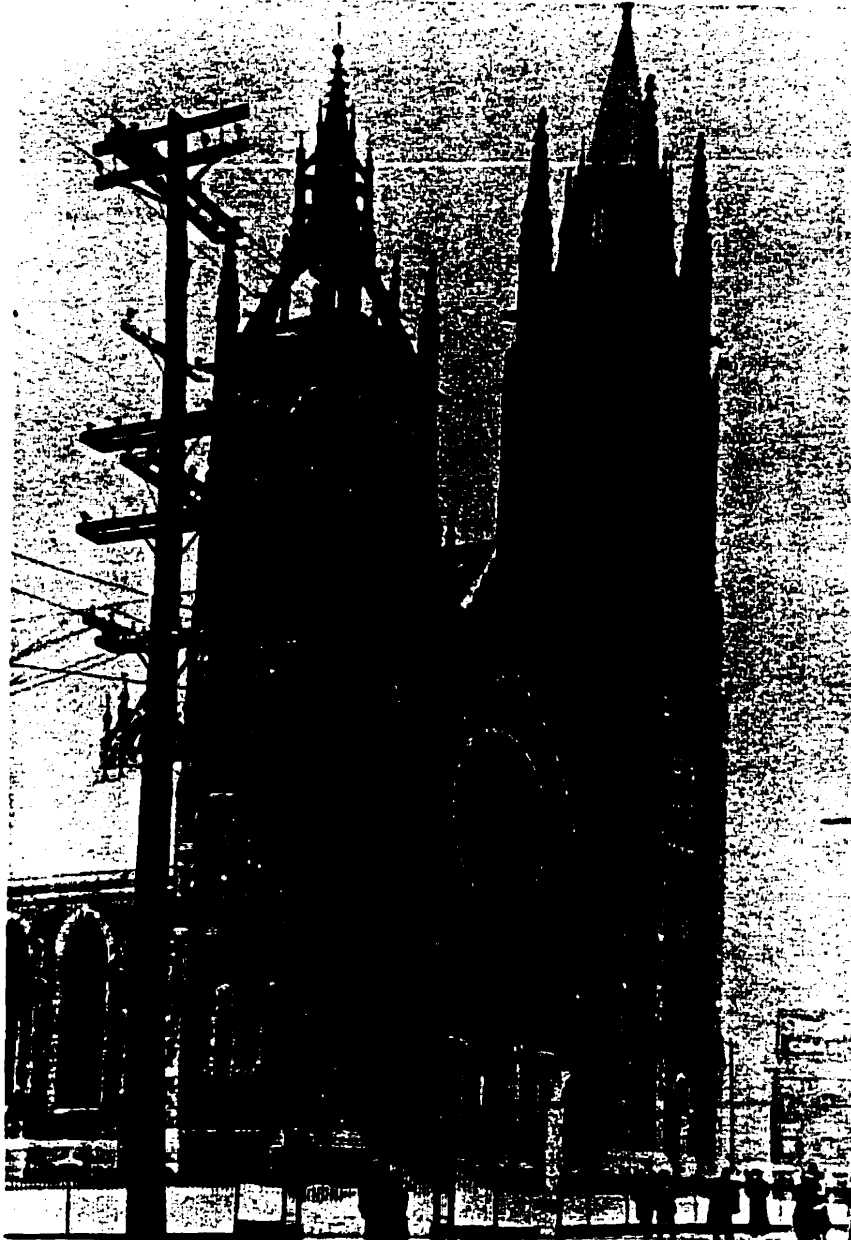
32. New American Presbyterian Church, Dorchester Street



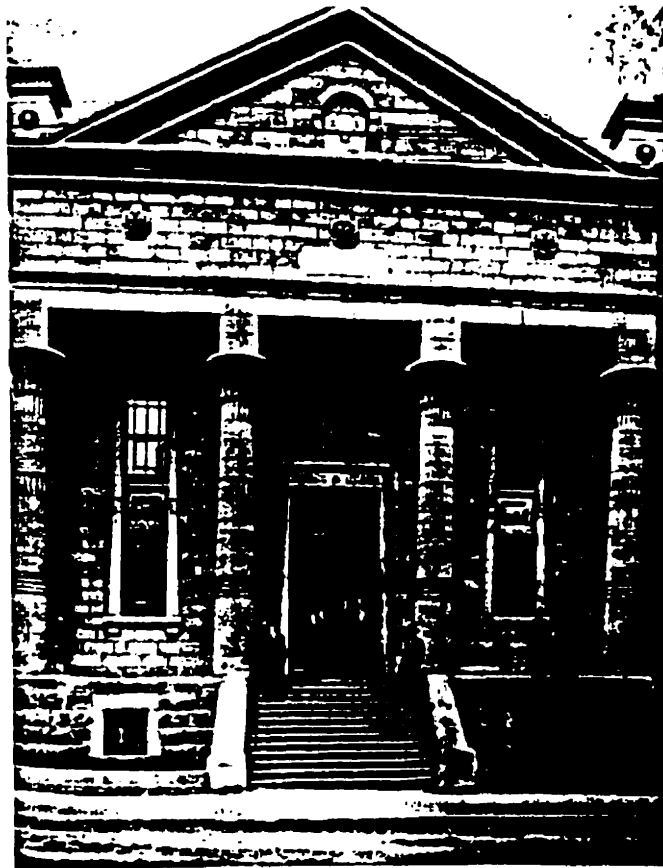
33. St. George's Anglican Church, Dominion Square



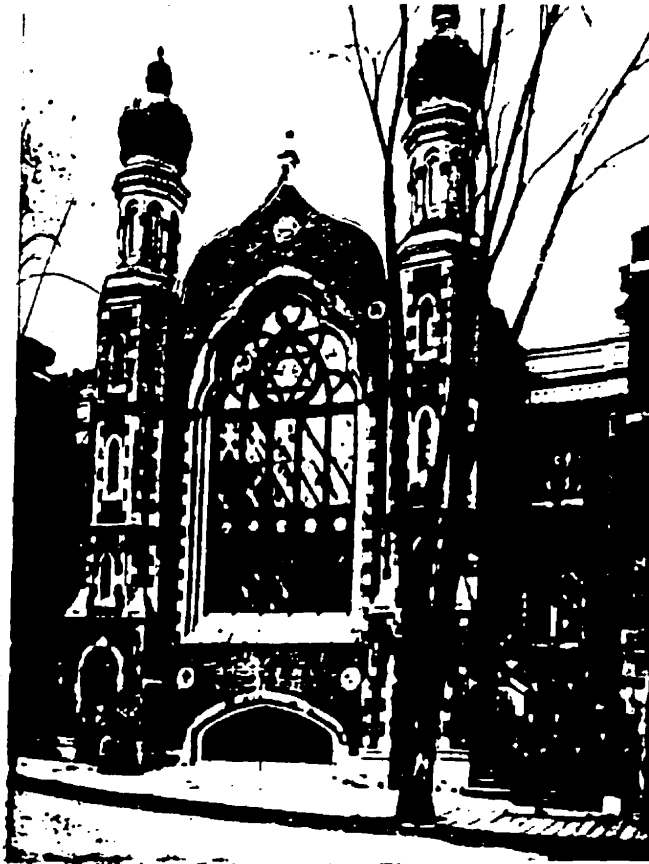
34. Wesleyan Congregation Church / New St. Gabriel's Presbyterian Church,  
St. Catherine Street



35. New St. James Methodist Church, St. Catherine Street



36. Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Stanley Street

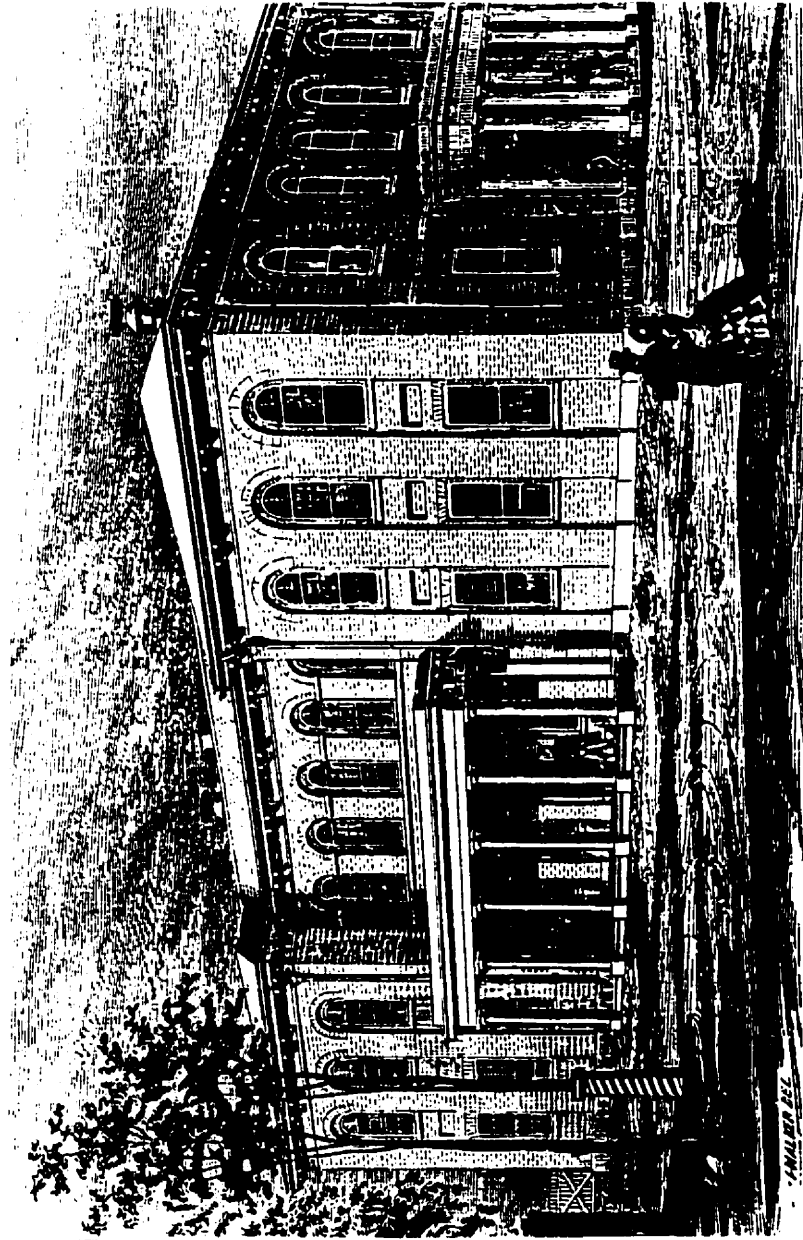


37. German and Polish Synagogue, McGill College Avenue





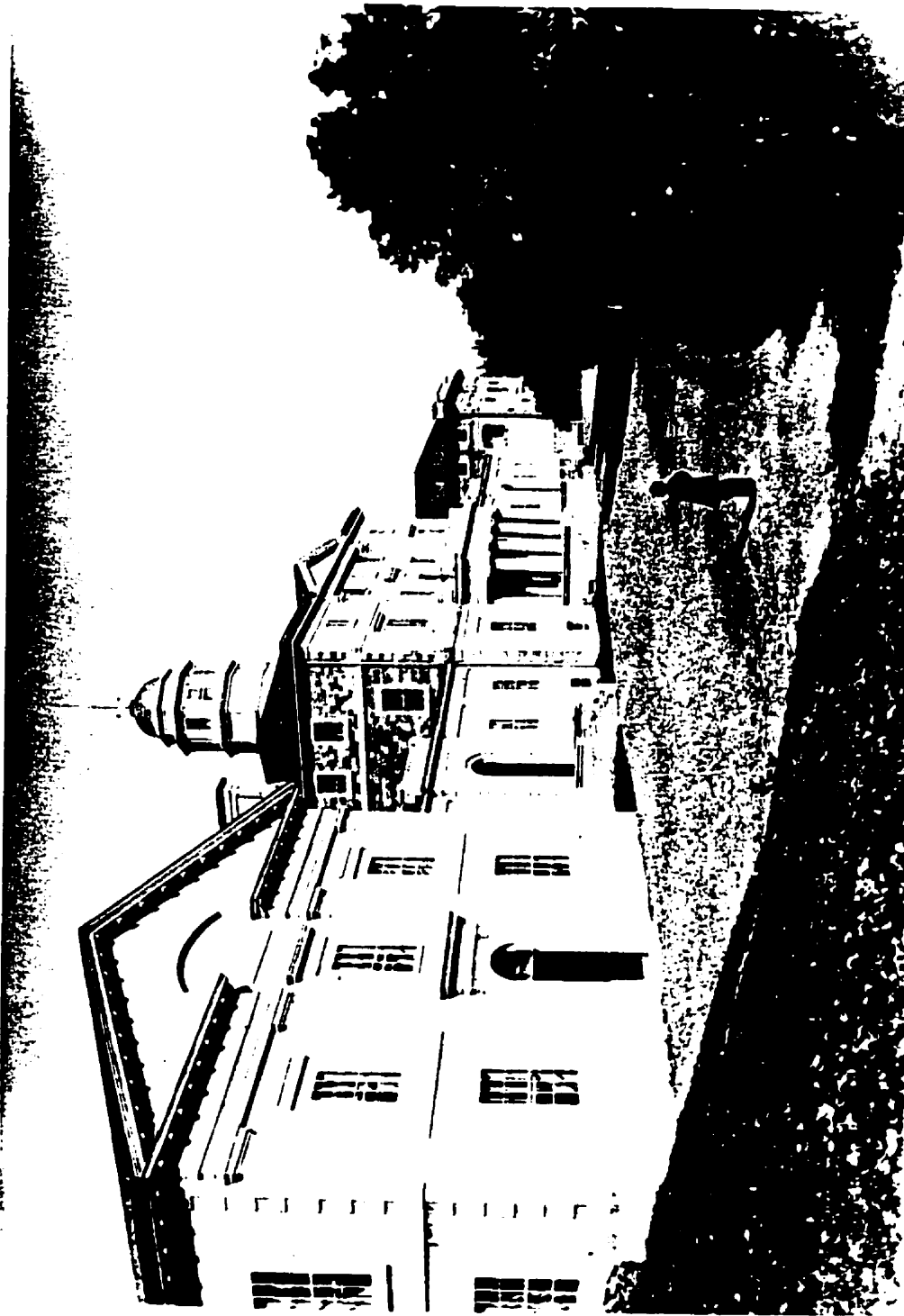
38. High School of Montreal, Belmont Street c. 1857



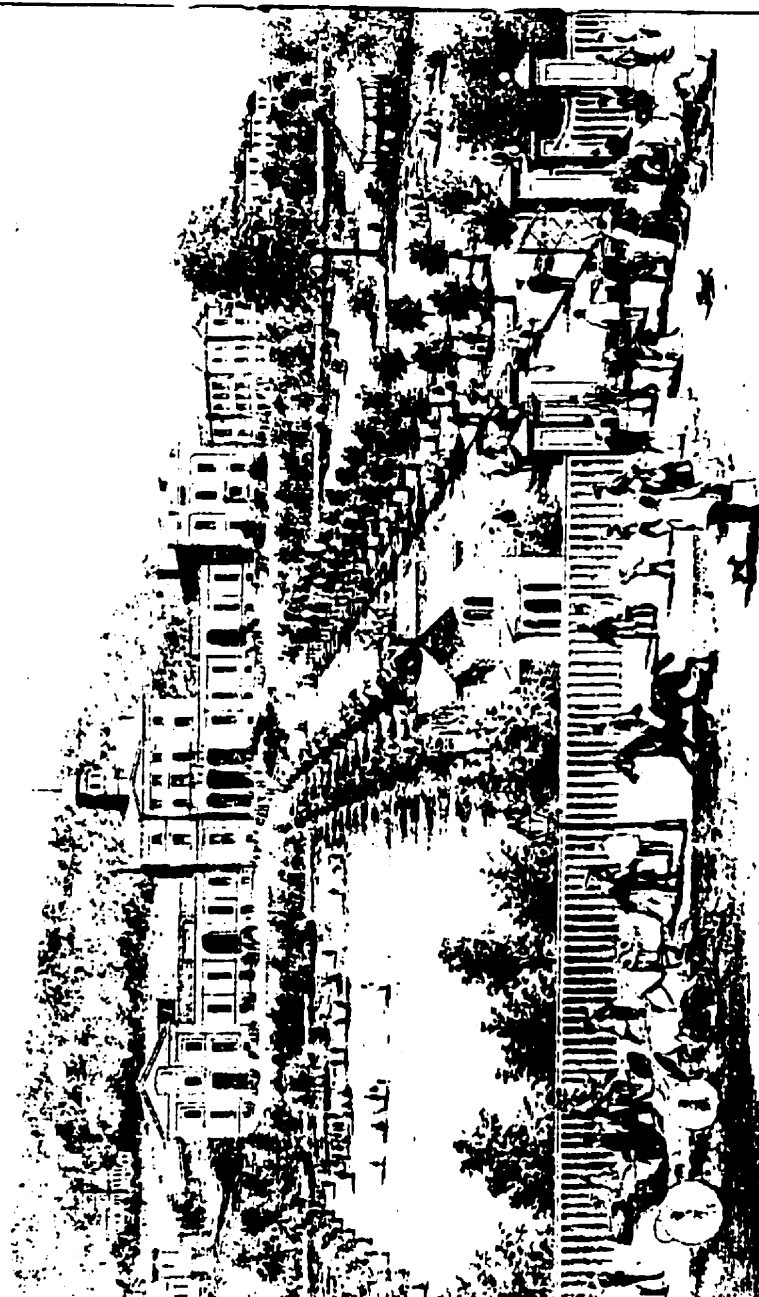
39. Burnside Hall, University Street



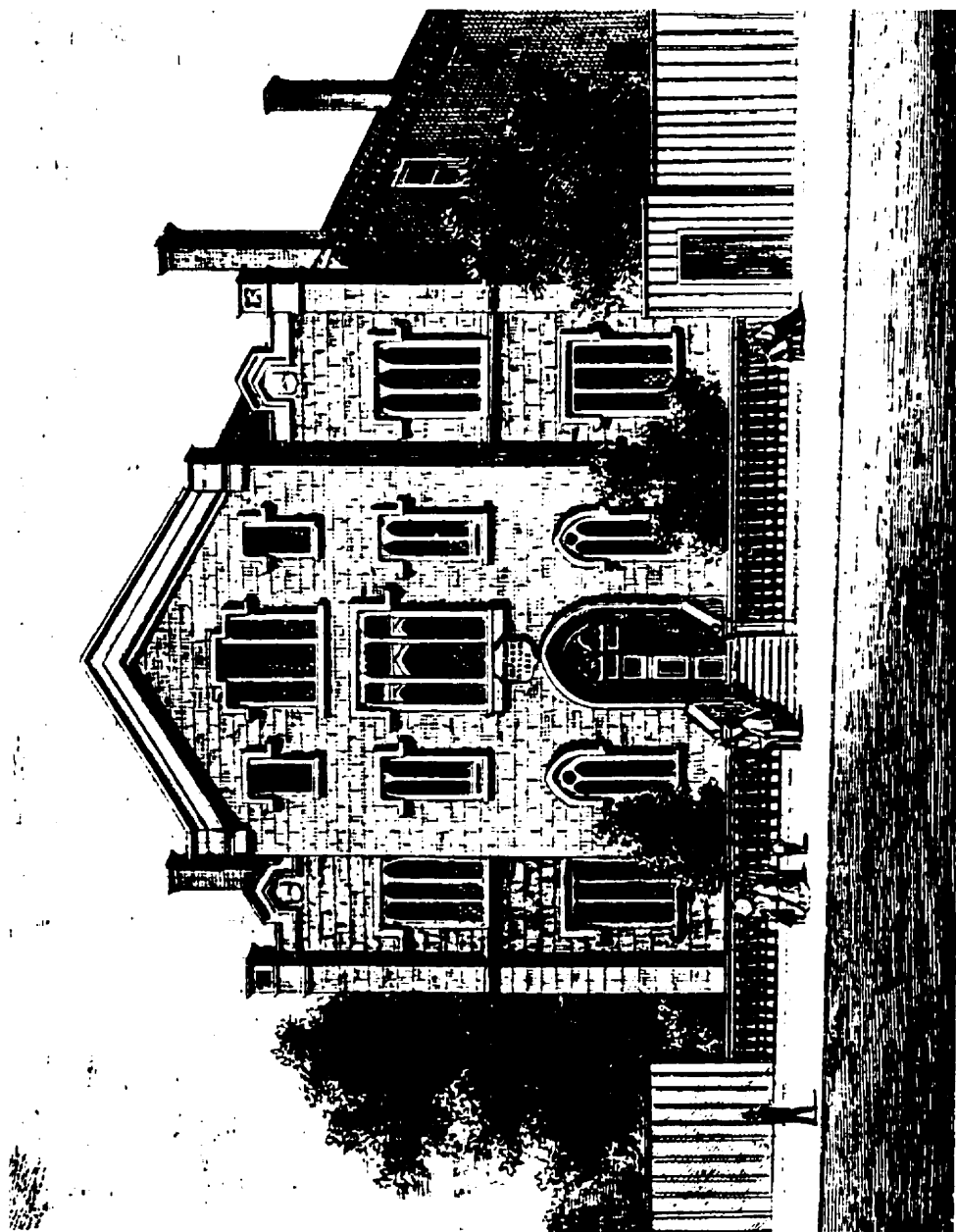
40. McGill College c. 1860



41. McGill Arts Building with new Molson Hall



42. McGill Campus in 1875



43. Protestant Orphan Asylum, St. Catherine Street



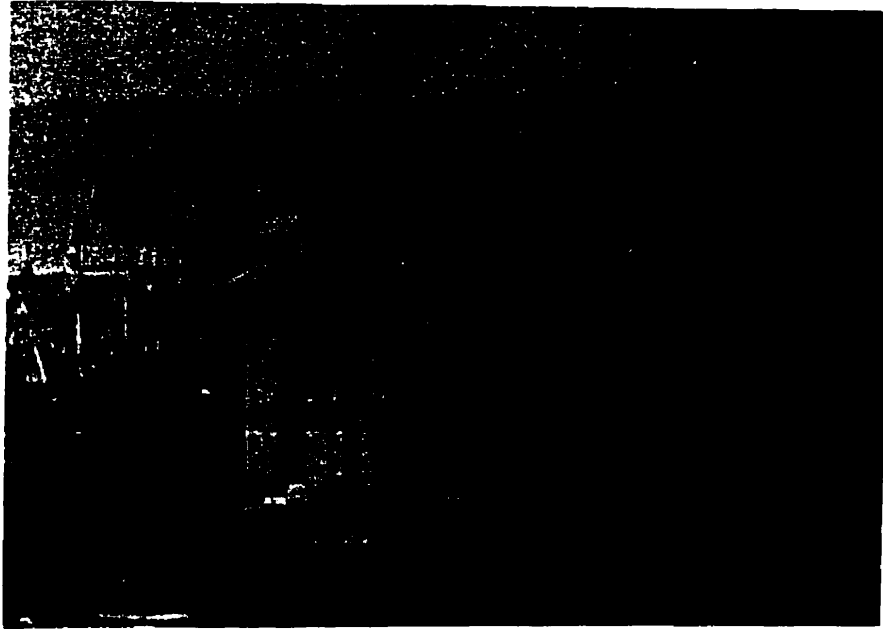


45. Crystal Palace showing ceremonial arch





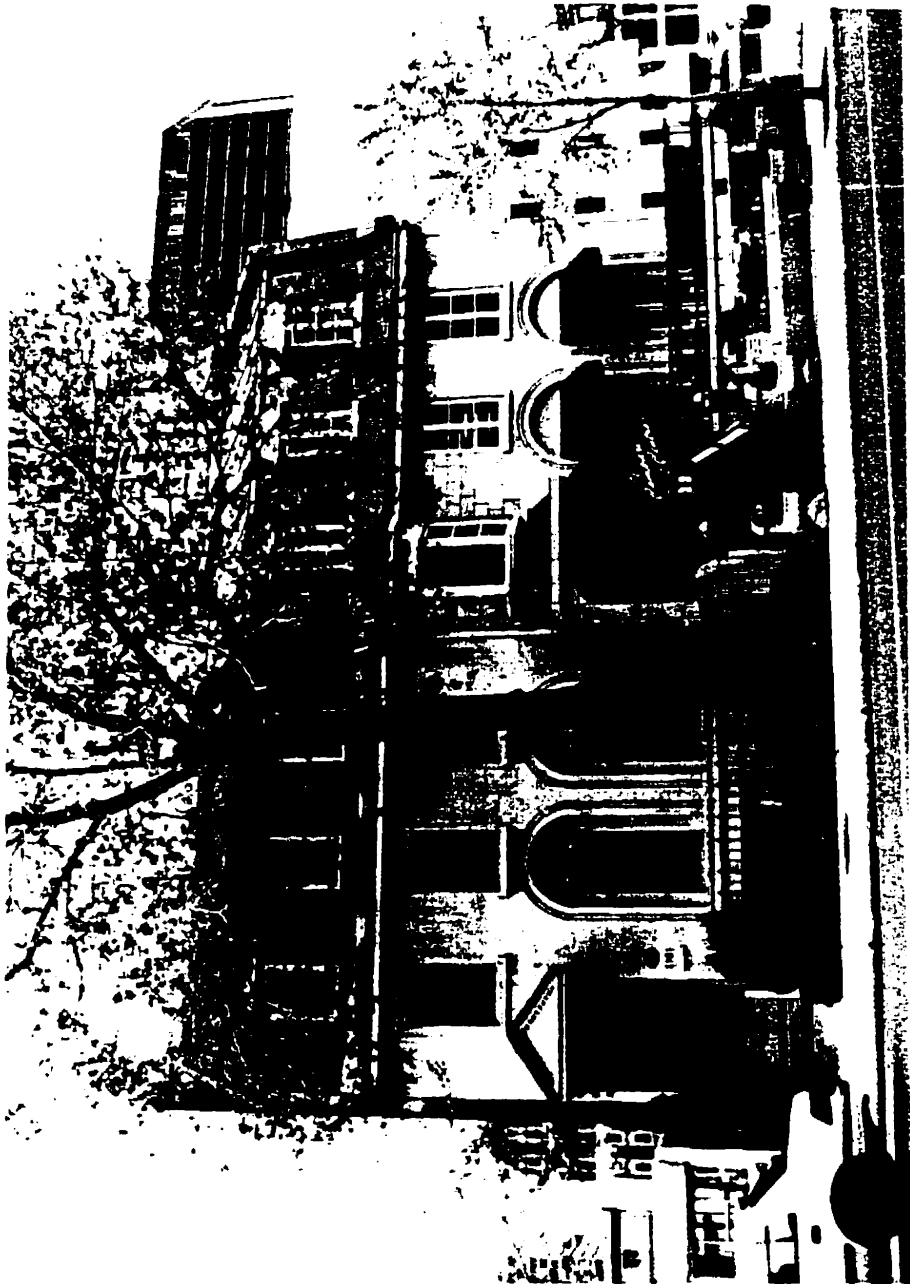
46. Art Association Gallery, Phillips Square



47. Redpath Museum, McGill campus



48. McGill Medical Building, McGill campus



49. Two surviving units of Mountain Terrace, Mountain Street, today



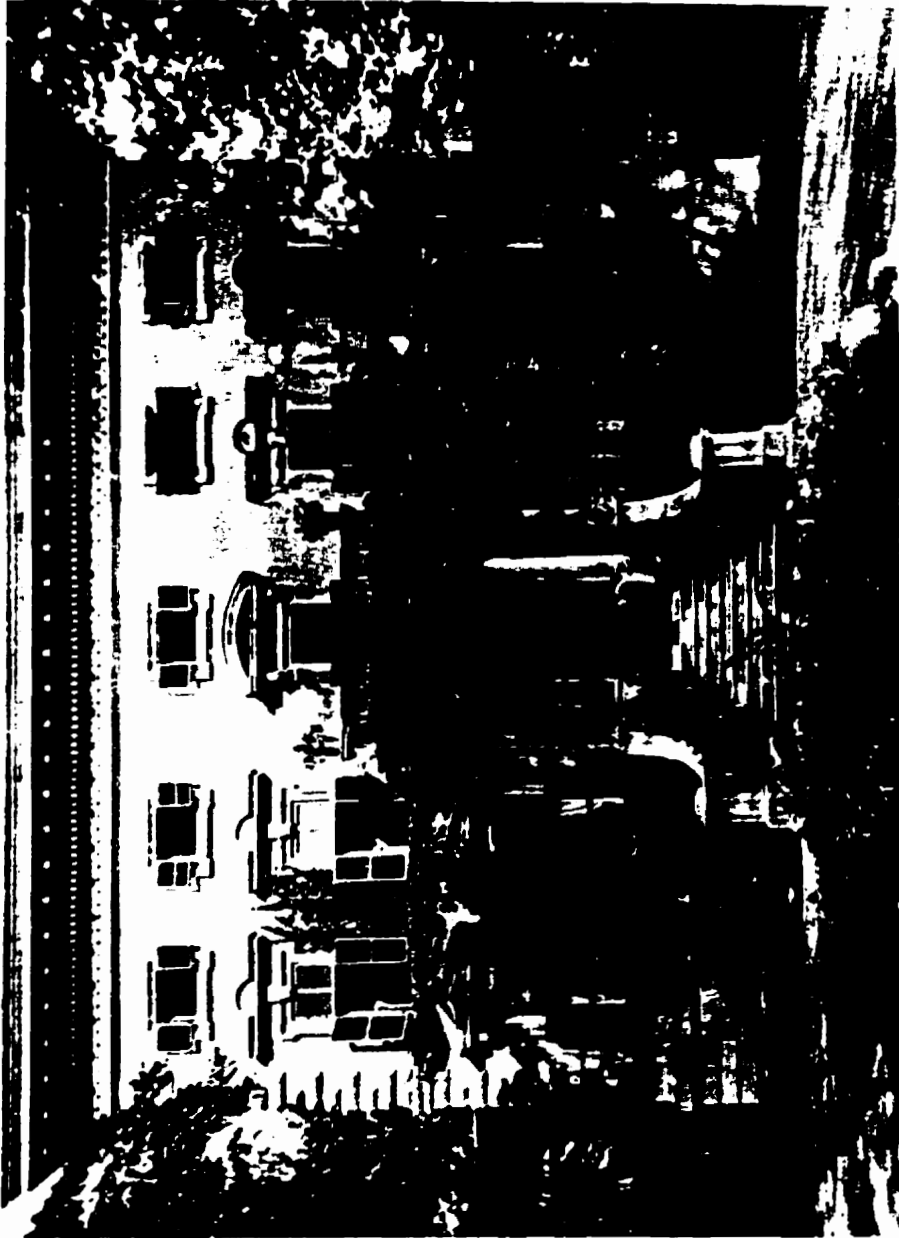
50. Mount Royal Terrace, McGill College Avenue



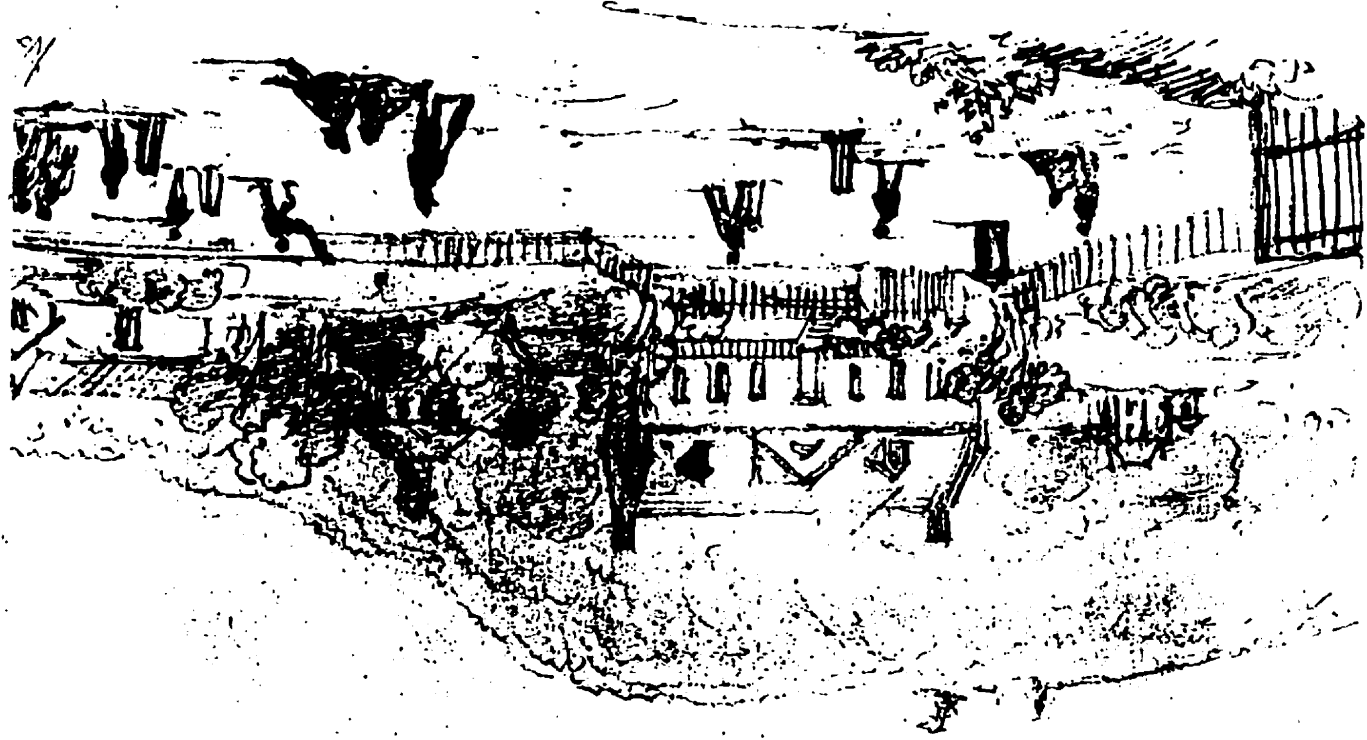
51. Rose house, Simpson Street ("Rosemount")



52. "Rosemount" c. 1890 with new façade



53. Stephens house, Dorchester Street ("Homestead")



54. Burnside house c. 1855

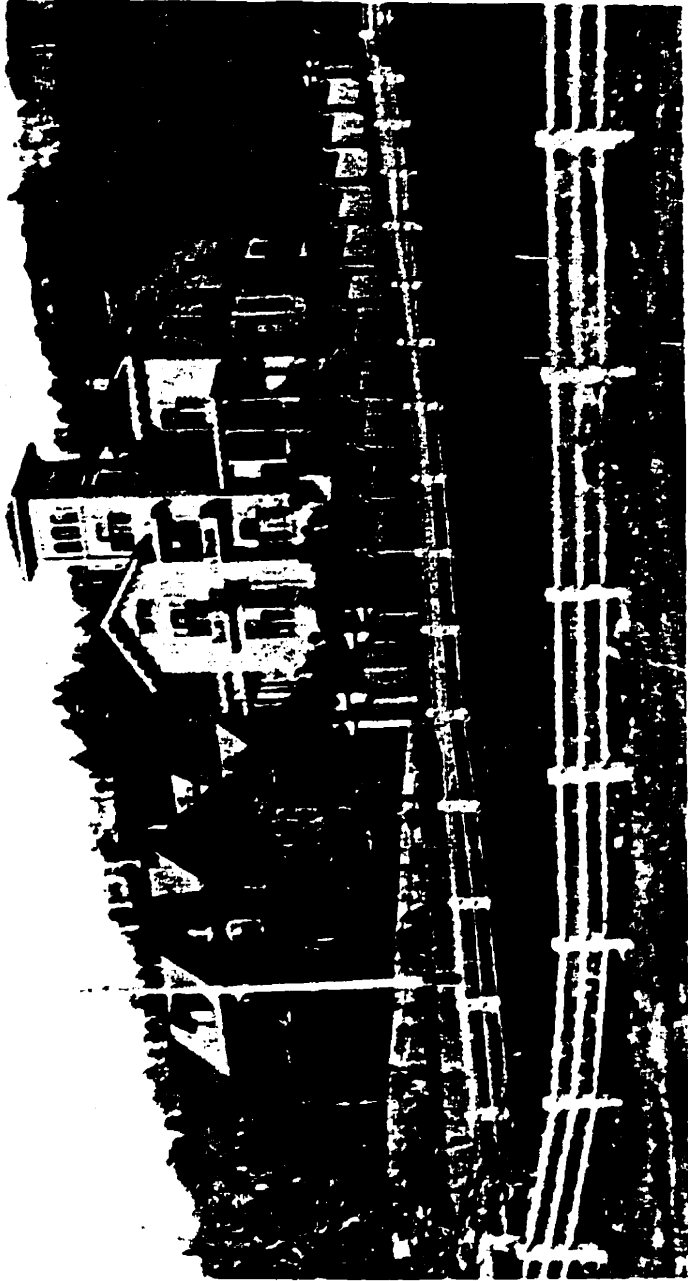


55. Gault house, McTavish Street ("Braehead")

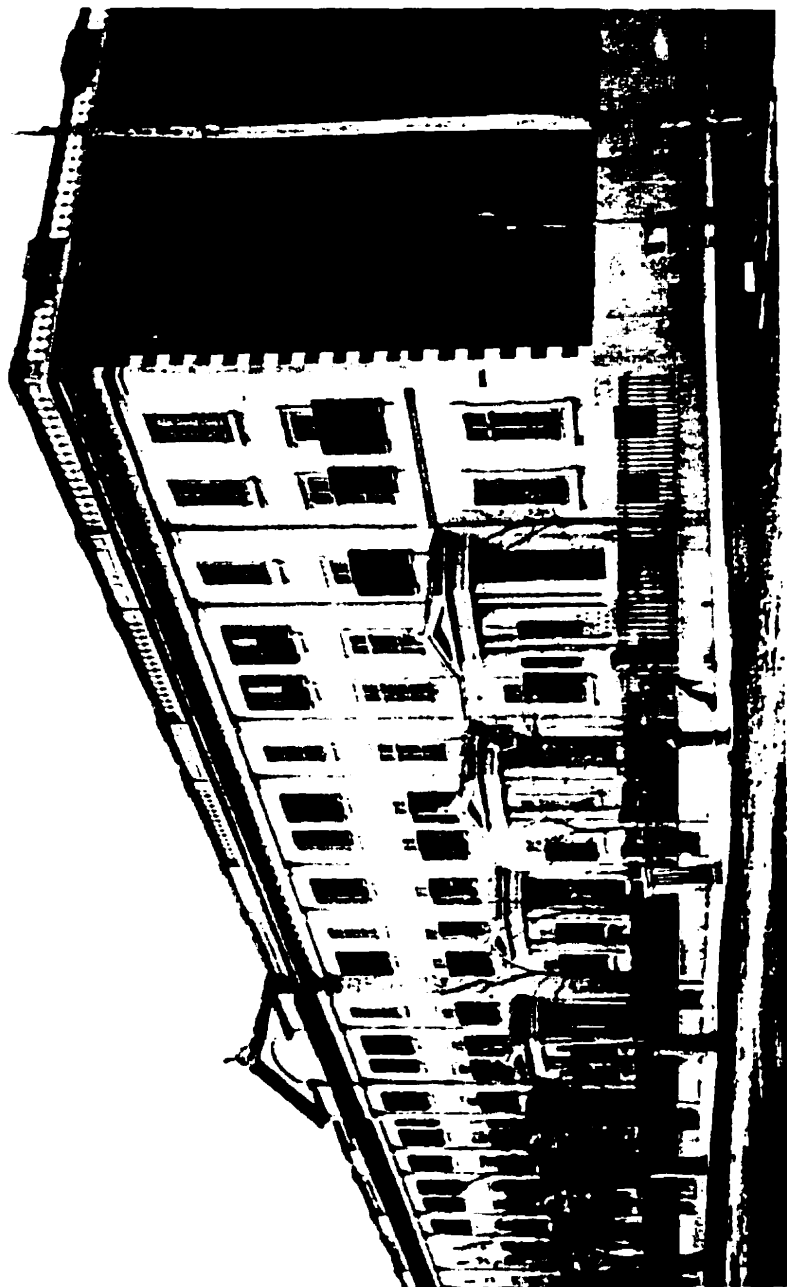


56. Gault house, Sherbrooke Street ("Rokeby")

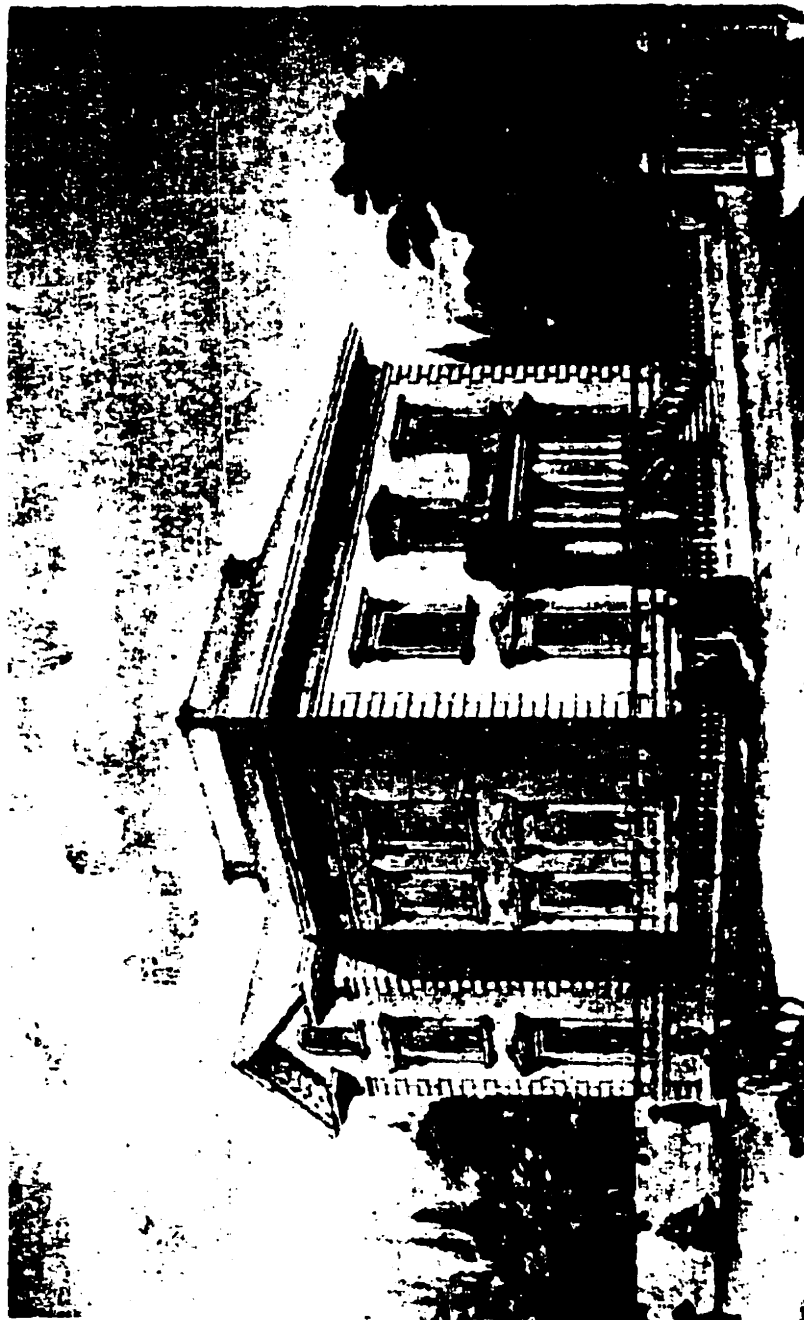




57. Lyman house, McTavish Street ("Thornhill") with Savage house ("The Elms") behind



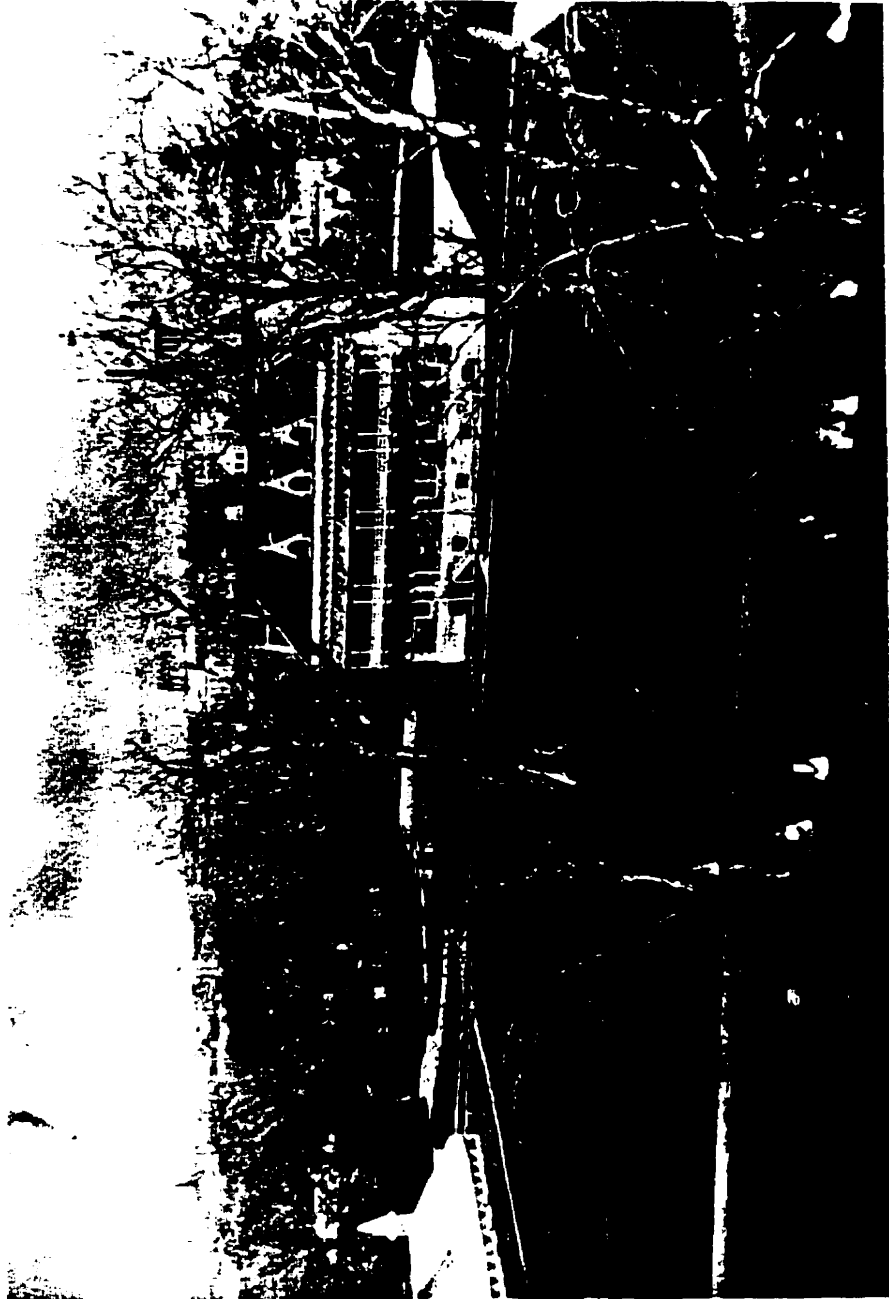
58. Prince of Wales Terrace, Sherbrooke Street



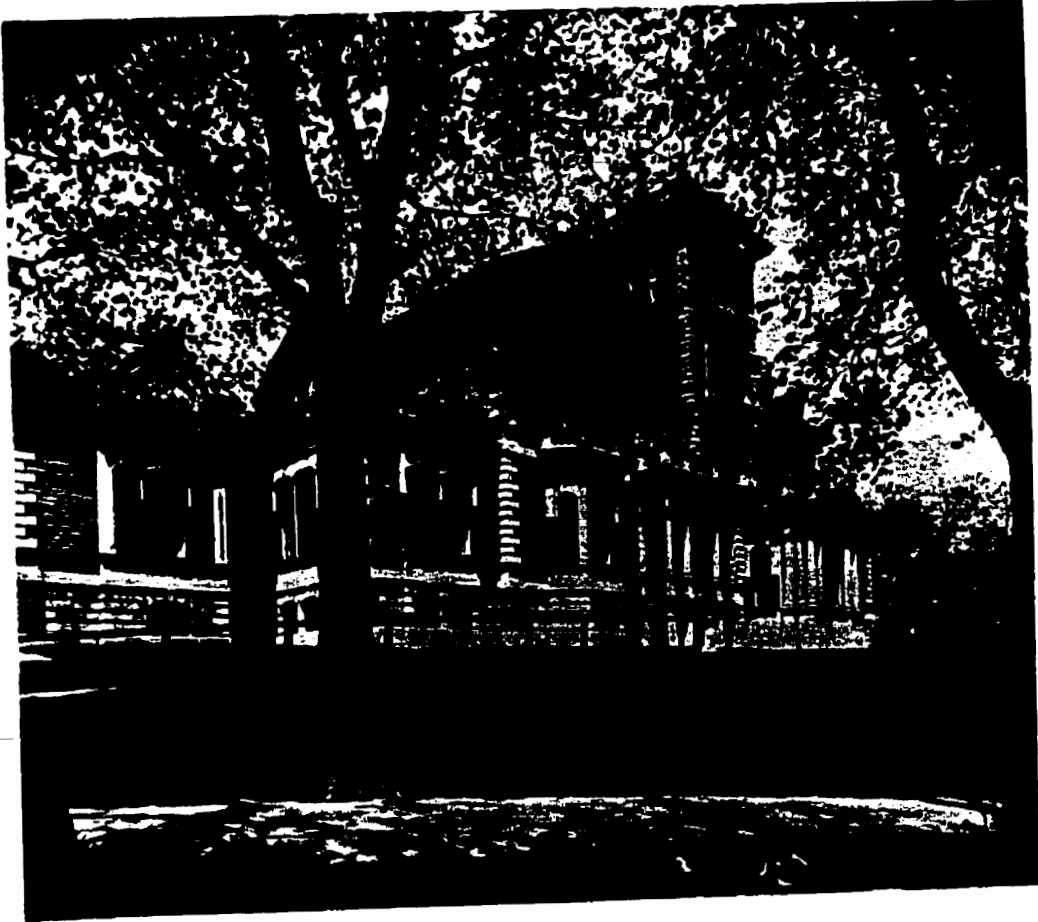
59. Dow house, Beaver Hall Square ("Strathearn")



60. "Terrace Bank" refurbished, front



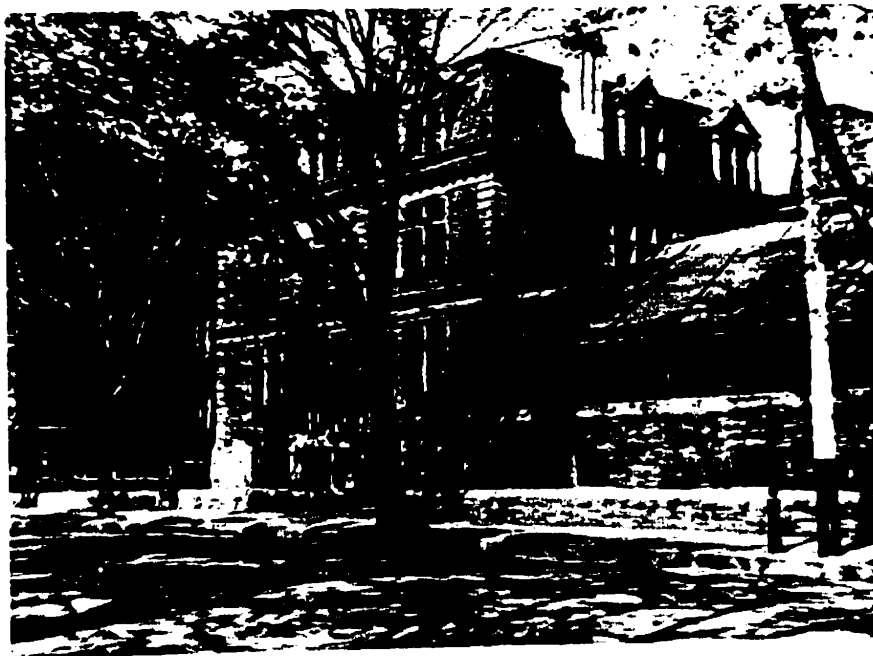
61. "Terrace Bank" refurbished, rear



62. Ravenscrag



63. Linton house, Sherbrooke Street ("Mount View")



64. Hamilton house, Sherbrooke Street





65. Prévost Terraces, St. Catherine Street, today



66. Forget house, Sherbrooke Street



67. Ross house, Upper Peel Street

Table 1 - Commutation of GSM properties

name of censitaire	date of commutation	date at which land sold
James Ferrier	20 September 1840	/
John Smith	21 October 1840	/
William Pawson	26 October 1840	/
Marguerite Fouquet	26 October 1840	27 October 1840
John Redpath	22 December 1840	as of 20 Jan 1841
John McGregor	7 May 1841	as of April 1868
Thomas Phillips	24 August 1841	as of Oct 1843
Alexander Miller	7 September 1841	7 September 1841
Thomas Kay	16 October 1841	as of April 1867
Roswell & Henry Corse	20 October 1841	7 August 1857
John Redpath	30 December 1841	as of 13 July 1844
The Royal Institution)	8 June 1842	as of 22 Sept 1845
Richard Latham	28 September 1842	/
Charles Phillips	10 December 1842	/
John James Day	19 December 1842	/
Alexis Laframboise (for the heirs Lamothe)	18 April 1843	as of 15 Sept 1843
Hugh Taylor (for John McTavish)	9 December 1843	21 December 1843
Thomas McKay	8 June 1844	as of April 1866
John Redpath	13 July 1844	as of 13 July 1844
Joseph Shuter	15 May 1845	as of 23 May 1855

name of censitaire or attorney	date of commutation	date at which land sold
Hugh Taylor (for the heirs Mackenzie)	28 August 1845	13 October & 10 December 1845
The Royal Institution)	27 September 1845	as of 30 Oct 1845
Archibald Ferguson	2 March 1847	as of 1857
John Easton Mills	26 May 1847	as of 27 Nov 1856
Beniah Gibb	21 December 1847	/
Lydia Hoyle	before August 1855	as of 14 May 1864
The Royal Institution)	28 February 1874	/

Table 2 - Redpath sales before Bedouin, to lots below Sherbrooke Street, September - December 1842

purchaser	occupation	lot numbers	price
Andrew Hayes	hatter + furrier	4, 19	420
William Laurie	merchant	6, 23, 11, 1, 2, 13, 15	1,476
Frederick Bernard Mathews	gentleman	10, 31	432
James Smith	advocate	36, 48	475
Mary Kittson	/	8, 27	440
William Leste	merchant	9, 29	428
John Sinclair	"	30, 45	402
Jean-Louis Beaudry	"	14, 37, extra piece	450
Frederick Thomas Hall	student at law	33, 34, 37	558
William Laurie	merchant	7, 25	424
John Ostell	city surveyor	24, 42	404

Table 3 - Redpath sales before Pelton, to lots below Sherbrooke Street, April 1844 - August 1845

date of deed	purchaser	occupation	lots	price
25 Apr 44	Wm Laurie	merchant	5, 21	450
24 May 44	Th Workman	gentleman	3, 17	450
28 June 44	James L Mathewson	merchant	28, 44	400
5 July 44	John Wells	architect	22, 41	450
7 Aug 44	John P Hetherington	wesleyan methodist minister	32, 46	400
21 March 45	Gustavus William Wicksted	advocate	26, 43	450
7 Aug 45	John Glass	merchant	16, 38	400
7 Aug 45	Theo Hart	"	20, 40	300

Table 4 - Beaver Hall sales before Ross, November 1843 - September 1844

date of deed	purchaser	occupation	lot numbers	price
13 Nov 43	John Young	merchant	1/2 of lot 2	350
13 Nov 43	James Dougall	"	1/2 of lot 2	450
30 Dec 43	James Edward Major	inspector of ashes	27	190
4 January 44	John Smithe	merchant	31	188
5 January 44	LT Drummond	advocate	55, 63	305
5 January 44	Joseph Potts	gentleman	79	195
12 Jan 44	William Dow	distiller + brewer	23, 25	549
6 Feb 44	Ch. Phillips	"esq"	45	212
8 Feb 44	John Andrew	plasterer	43	200
23 April 44	Ann Plaece	/	35?	220
17 May 44	Edwin Atwater	merchant	1, 3	1,200
28 May 44	Th Rattray	"esq"	24	220
3 June 44	John Redpath	/	28, 30	410
13 June 44	Hiram Seymour	hatter + furrier	10	312.10
11 July 44	Jesse Thayer	gentleman	70, 72	400
22 July 44	Wm Workman	merchant	4	365
24 July 44	L Haldimand	merchant	76	150
5 August 44	F.X. Brazeau	"	?	170
5 August 44	George Fox	mchnt tailor	58, 60	300
17 Sept 44	Benj Lyman	druggist	75	175
17 Sept 44	Robert Scott	merchant	51	295
17 Sept 44	Chs Geddes	merchant	50, 52, 59	565
26 Sept 44	PB Merritt	cabinet maker	8	333.10



Table 5 - Beaver Hall sales before Gibb + Easton, Nov 1844 to Nov 1845

date of deed	purchaser	occupation	lot numbers	price
27 Nov 44	Chas S Dunlop	merchant	48	235
7 Dec 44	Thomas White	shoemaker	86 (canc.)	150
9 Dec 44	John Honey	advocate	32, 34	570
24 Dec 44	Hugh Thompson	shoemaker	37	200
24 Dec 44	John Boston	"esq"	33	275
26 Dec 44	Julia C Mittelberger	/	61	185
25 Jan 45	Wm Pawson	merchant	44	312.6
28 Jan 45	Wm Murray	"esq"	38, 39	390
20 Feb 45	Henry Starnes	gentleman	78 (canc.)	160
18 April 45	James D Gibb	"esq"	6, 26	680
23 April 45	Hannah Ferguson	/	80, 82, 84	687.10
29 April 45	Joseph Potts	merchant	77	205
30 April 45	Wm Footner	grocer	12, 14, (canc.)	1500
5 May 45	George Fax	mcht tailor	85	235
8 July 45	Henry Graham	"esq"	40, 41, 42	975
8 July 45	John Smith	merchant	29	160
23 July 45	Wm Footner	grocer	12	1500
23 July 45	Fran. Hincks	"esq"	part of 14	200
23 July 45	Chas Wilson	merchant	part of 14	400
24 Sept 45	H Ferguson	/	78	160
25 Sept 45	Dd O'Connor	bootmaker	61.5	180
25 Sept 45	James Curley	"	46 (canc.)	305
8 Oct 45	James Ferrier	"esq"	20	335
24 Oct 45	Thos Cringon	merchant	54, 56	380
13 Nov 45	Benjmn Lyman	druggist	73	205
15 Nov 45	Fran. + John Leclaire	merchants	81, 83	570

Table 6 - Purchasers of GSM lots 1842-45 by occupation.

occupation	Redpath estate	McTavish estate	Lamothe estate	Beaver Hall estate	Totals
women	1			3	4
"gentleman" or "esq"	2	2	1	12	17
merchant	8	1	1	17	27
grocer				1	1
advocate	2			2	4
notary		1			1
student	1				1
minister	1				1
brewer				1	1
druggist				1	1
shoe or boot maker				4	4
printer			1		1
surveyor	1				1
architect	1				1
plasterer				1	1
cabinet maker				1	1
house builder			4		4
brickmaker			2		2
mason			1		1
inspector of ashes				1	1
unknown		1	2		3
Totals	17	5	12	44	78

Table 7 - Mount Royal Terrace households, 1861

family name	age of head, spouse	ages of children	ages of other residents (non-employed)	ages of servants	horses, cows, carriages
Walker	34, 31	7, 6, 4, 2	/	30, 25, 21, 19	1 horse 1 cow 1 car.
Ross	57, 54	19, 18, 17, 16, 10	/	55, 23	/
Smithers	39, 35	16, 14, 12, 10, 7, 5, 3	/	23, 22	/
Gordon	38, 33	13, 12, 7, 5, 3	25	31, 30, 22, 22	1 horse 1 cow 4 car.
Murphy	52, 40	22, 20, 17, 14, 12	25	31, 19	/
Robertson	32, 28	4, 1	/	25, 25, 20	/
Glenford	44, 40	15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 6, 3, 2	/	26, 25, 24	1 cow
Coverhill	42, 31	1	24, 15	28, 24, 20	/
Fowler	44, 40	15, 12, 11, 7, 2	/	22, 15	/
Gault	29	/	57, 35, 27, 20, 17	28, 14	/
Hutchins	43, 41	13, 11, 9, 6, 4	/	46, 22, 20	/
Roe	40, 32	/	/	25, 25	/

Table 8 - No. of domestic staff in relation to size of elite GSM households, 1871-91

owner's name	no. of "owners" 1871	no. of staff 1871 (M/F)	no. of "owners" 1881	no. of staff 1881 (M/F)	no. of "owners" 1891	no. of staff 1891 (M/F)
Abbott	10	1 / 4	10	1 / 5	6	4 / 6
Allan, H	11	4 / 8	9	4 / 6	4	8 / 10
Allan, A	8	4 / 6	5	2 / 7	3	2 / 6
Dow	3	0 / 3	3	0 / 3	3	1 / 4
Drummond	7	0 / 5	7	0 / 4	9	3 / 7
Ferrier	2	1 / 2	2	1 / 3	6**	1 / 3
Gault, M	11	2 / 2	12	2 / 4	8	3 / 4
Gault, R	4	0 / 2	7*	1 / 4	8	0 / 1
Gault, A	2	1 / 2	3*	2 / 3	4	0 / 4
Hickson	2	2 / 3	7	1 / 4	8	1 / 6
Holton	5	1 / 1	4	1 / 2	2	1 / 2
Jamieson	7	0 / 3	9*	0 / 3	9	0 / 3
Joseph	3	0 / 2	2	1 / 3	2	0 / 3
Lyman	7	1 / 3	6	1 / 4	5	2 / 4
Major	8	1 / 4	7	1 / 5	4	0 / 3
McDonald	3	1 / 2	2	1 / 3	2	2 / 3
Phillips	3	0 / 2	1	2 / 1	2	0 / 2
Prévost	6	1 / 2	5	1 / 3	4	1 / 3
Redpath, J. James	5	1 / 3	7	0 / 3	6	0 / 4
Reford	4	1 / 2	7*	2 / 4	7	1 / 4
Savage	5	1 / 2	2	1 / 2	4	0 / 3
Smith	4	1 / 2	1*	1 / 2	2	4 / 9
Stephen	3	3 / 4	2	2 / 3	2*	5 / 2
Stephens	2	1 / 2	4	3 / 3	6**	2 / 5
Urquhart	4	1 / 3	4	1 / 3	4	2 / 3
Totals	129	29/74 (103)	128	32/87 (119)	120	43/104 (147)

\* Family has moved to a new (& larger) residence

\*\* Son or daughter has moved into deceased parents' home