

**God's Mobile Mansions:
Protestant Church Relocation and Extension in Montreal, 1850-1914**

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Abstract

Extensive church building programmes and the relocation of existing churches were important features of Protestant congregational life in industrializing cities across Britain and North America. In Montreal, building booms in the 1860s, 70s, and 80s led many congregations to abandon their old churches in the centre of the city and rebuild on a grander scale 'uptown', closer to the residential neighbourhoods to which their wealthier members were moving. In the early twentieth century, when a new phase of growth engulfed the city, many of the same congregations again faced the dilemma of whether or not to move. Whereas the earlier period was characterized by a strong evangelical consensus, the subsequent period was associated with wider-ranging theological and social debates: the context of decision-making had changed.

For each period, I explore the impact of building decisions on 'domestic' ministries to church members and on the 'public' ministries that congregations carried out in the environs of their churches and in working-class neighbourhoods. In doing so, I draw on a variety of methodological approaches and on local sources that have not previously been synthesized. A database containing temporal and spatial information for every Protestant church built in Montreal between 1760 and 1914 was also constructed for this project. Case studies of six 'uptown' congregations, and of a downtown neighbourhood that was a popular mission field, are carried out. Investigation of documentary sources such as church minute books and correspondence is complemented by cartographic and sociological analyses of church membership using city directories, tax rolls, censuses, and the recently completed *Montréal l'Avenir du Passé* historical geo-database. A systematic sampling of local newspapers and denominational records brings to life the many congregational controversies and dilemmas that spilled over into the public sphere during a time of dramatic urban, social, and theological change.

A range of external factors, both material and spiritual, affected the choices that were made. I show how investment in religious edifices during the original phase of church moves, as well as the heightened social exclusivity that these moves generated, made it more challenging for the next generation to adapt their religious institutions to the needs of the twentieth-century city. Congregations simultaneously had to deal with a number of ongoing tensions: the logic of institutional maintenance versus the logic of mission, competition versus cooperation amongst Protestant institutions, and the dynamic between capitalist materialism and Christianity. Unless these tensions were skilfully negotiated by church leaders, they threatened to destroy either the viability or the integrity of religious institutions.

Résumé

Au dix-neuvième siècle, des villes à travers l'Amérique du nord, ainsi qu'en Grande-Bretagne, ont connu l'agrandissement et l'industrialisation. La vie des paroisses protestantes dans ces villes a été fortement marquée par des programmes de construction d'églises et de relocalisation d'églises existantes. À Montréal, au cours des années 1860 à 1890, l'expansion de la ville a motivé l'abandon par leurs congrégations de plusieurs vieilles églises du centre-ville. Leurs paroissiens les plus aisés déménageaient vers de nouveaux quartiers résidentiels cossus, où ils faisaient construire de nouvelles églises plus extravagantes. Au début du vingtième siècle, Montréal a connu une nouvelle période de croissance. Beaucoup de ces mêmes congrégations ont ainsi dû faire face au même dilemme qu'auparavant: perdre les fidèles ou rebâtir encore ailleurs. Alors que la première période a été caractérisée par un fort sentiment d'accord, dû à l'esprit évangélisant de l'époque, à la deuxième s'associait des débats sur des questions sociales et théologiques plus larges. Le contexte de la prise de cette deuxième décision était donc très différent du premier.

Pour chacune de ces périodes, je considère l'impact de la nouvelle construction sur les activités de l'église, autant au niveau des interventions personnelles dans la vie des individus que dans les grandes missions publiques aux environs des églises et dans les quartiers ouvriers. Pour ces recherches, j'ai puisé dans plusieurs sources locales de données, et appliqué des méthodologies diverses pour en faire une synthèse entièrement originale. J'ai également assemblé, dans le contexte de ce projet, une base de données spatio-temporelles informatisée pour toutes les églises protestantes construites à Montréal entre 1760 et 1914. Je présente les résultats de six études en profondeur de congrégations de la « haute-ville », et d'un quartier ouvrier qui était le champ de leurs activités missionnaires. L'examen des sources documentaires, telles que les comptes-rendus des églises et leur correspondance, est augmenté d'analyses cartographiques et sociologiques des paroissiens, en faisant référence aux registres d'impôts, aux répertoires commerciaux, aux recensements nominatifs, et à la très récente base de données géo-historiques « Montréal l'Avenir du Passé ». Un échantillonnage systématique des journaux locaux nous permet de revivre les multiples dilemmes et controverses qui animaient la sphère publique dans une époque bouleversée par des changements radicaux sur les plans urbain, social et théologique.

Toute une gamme de facteurs externes, tant matériels que spirituels, ont influencé les choix faits par les églises. Je démontre comment l'investissement en pierres et en poutres pendant la première phase des déménagements, ainsi que l'amplification de l'exclusivité sociale que ceux-ci ont engendrée, ont augmenté le défi confronté par la prochaine génération, qui a dû adapter ses institutions religieuses aux besoins d'une ville du vingtième siècle. Les églises ont dû faire face simultanément à toutes sortes de tensions: la concurrence des besoins financiers et temporels de l'église avec ceux de son oeuvre missionnaire; la nécessité de la coopération parmi les divers organismes protestants naturellement concurrentiels; la dynamique entre le matérialisme capitaliste et la foi chrétienne. Les dirigeants des églises devaient naviguer habilement autour de toutes ces menaces à la viabilité et à l'intégrité des organismes religieux.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

*This is the first time I was ever in a city where you couldn't throw a brick
without breaking a church window.*

- Mark Twain, 1881¹

The rapid urban expansion of Montreal that took place during the mid-to-late nineteenth century transformed the physical and social fabric of the city and demanded a response from traditional religious institutions. While Montreal's Roman Catholic hierarchy embarked on the creation of an orderly system of French and English parishes,² many Protestant congregations abandoned their old church buildings in the centre of the city and rebuilt on a grander scale 'uptown', closer to the residential neighbourhoods to which their wealthier members were moving. In the early twentieth century, when a new and explosive phase of growth engulfed the city, many of these same congregations again faced the dilemma of whether to remain in place or make way for commercial expansion. Whereas the earlier period was associated with a strong Protestant evangelical consensus in Canadian society³, the subsequent period witnessed a weakening of this consensus and the emergence of social Christianity, accompanied by more varied debate and reflection regarding social and theological ideas. Thus, while congregations had to make important

¹ Quoted in Edgar Andrew Collard, *Call Back Yesterday* (Don Mills: Longmans Canada 1965), 143.

² For further discussion of English- and French- language parishes in Quebec, see Serge Courville and Normand Séguin, eds., *Atlas historique du Québec: La paroisse* (Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval 2001); Lucia Ferretti, *Entre voisins. La société paroissiale en milieu urbain: Saint-Pierre-Apôtre de Montréal 1848-1930* (Montréal: Boréal 1992); Louis Rousseau and Frank Remiggi, eds., *Atlas historique des pratiques religieuses: le sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa 1998), and Rosalyn Trigger, 'The Geopolitics of the Irish-Catholic Parish in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 27(4) (2001), 553-572.

³ For discussion of the evangelical consensus in the Canadian context, see Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992), 4; Brian Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 270; David B. Marshall, *Secularizing The Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 19; Marguerite Van Die, "'The Marks of a Genuine Revival': Religion, Social Change, Gender, and Community in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario", *The Canadian Historical Review*, 79 (3) (1998), 524-525. Van Die, for example, refers to 'a pervasive evangelical culture that emerged during the period from 1835 to 1885'.

decisions concerning their buildings and church locations during both periods, the context in which these decisions were made had changed dramatically.

It might be argued that a focus on places of worship, on the bricks and mortar of Christian life, introduces a materialist bias and is inappropriate as a means of gaining insights into the transition experienced by Protestant congregations during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Protestants have, after all, traditionally emphasized that they themselves are God's temple,⁴ and have looked forward to a New Jerusalem in which no temple would be present 'because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple'.⁵ Throughout much of Christian history, however, congregations – the basic building blocks of Christian community – have found it convenient to build specially-designed places in which to worship. Whenever Christian groups have gained access to economic surpluses, they have not been immune to what appears to be a universal human tendency to divert funds towards the creation of monumental religious architecture,⁶ as witnessed by the preoccupation throughout the Middle Ages with the erection of ever-larger and more magnificent cathedrals.

In the context of increasing prosperity during the nineteenth century, it is therefore not surprising that wealthy and middle-class Protestants in Montreal devoted substantial resources to church building projects, and that these efforts constituted an integral part of their religious experience. The places of worship that they erected for themselves, as well as the smaller churches and mission buildings that they helped others to erect, communicated significant messages about the spiritual beliefs, social aspirations, and ideologies of their members. Church relocation was a more novel process, since it was associated explicitly with the exceptional growth of cities during this period, their extension into 'suburbs', and increasing social and geographical segregation along class lines. Observation of this process nevertheless has much to reveal regarding the internal dynamics of congregational life and the values of church members. The fact that church relocation and extensive Protestant church building efforts occurred in large cities across

⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.

⁵ Revelation 21:22.

⁶ For further discussion of elite art and architecture in seven early civilizations, see Bruce G. Trigger, *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2003), Chapter 24.

Britain and North America at this time supports the idea that these phenomena deserve more extensive investigation.

An historical-geographical approach, focusing on the processes of church building and relocation, will enable us to study the ways in which Protestant religious institutions adapted to the dramatic urban, social, and theological changes that took place between 1850 and 1914, and themselves had an impact on city life. It also makes it possible to explore the consequences of decisions made by Montreal's leading Protestant congregations regarding their buildings, not only on their own 'domestic' ministries to church members, but also on the 'public' ministries that they carried out in the environs of their churches and in working-class neighbourhoods. This study examines the range of external factors, both material and spiritual, that affected the choices that were made by congregations regarding their places of worship. I shall demonstrate that investment in an elaborate religious infrastructure during the original phase of church moves, as well as the heightened social exclusivity that these moves generated, ultimately made it more challenging for subsequent generations to adapt their religious institutions to the needs of the twentieth-century city. Congregations simultaneously had to deal with a number of ongoing tensions, which will be discussed in more detail below. These included the logic of institutional maintenance versus the logic of mission, competition versus cooperation amongst Protestant institutions, and the dynamic between capitalist materialism and Christianity. Unless these tensions were skilfully negotiated by church leaders, they threatened to destroy either the viability or the integrity of religious institutions.

Church Building and Relocation: Material Landscapes and Geographic Processes

Historians studying religion in nineteenth-century cities have generally been attentive to the urban context, but it is nevertheless rare for *material landscapes* and *geographical processes* to be placed at the heart of historical analyses. It is unfortunate, therefore, that few historical geographers have taken it upon themselves to study the religious structures and landscapes of North American cities, nor have they considered the impact of the changing social geography of the nineteenth-century city on religious

life.⁷ As a result, existing work on church buildings and the process of church relocation has tended to be more descriptive than analytic, and has rarely formed a sustained element in discussions of the urban religious experience.

Geographers have a long tradition of interpreting the material and social evolution of urban landscapes, and have adapted a range of qualitative and quantitative methods to assist them in doing so. As will be shown in detail further on in this chapter, my research strategy was defined by the need to combine a variety of methodological approaches. The creation of a comprehensive database of Protestant church buildings, containing both spatial and temporal coordinates, was necessary. Modern geo-database (GIS) techniques were adopted to map systematically the evolution of the institutional-religious landscape of the city, and contribute a geographical dimension to micro-sociological analyses of church membership. These techniques enable a picture to be built up of the processes of church building, extension, and relocation. To understand the decisions that were made to build, rebuild, reach out, or relocate required the use of more 'talkative' qualitative sources including minutes of church meetings, correspondence, sermons, civil court records, and newspaper editorials. These records bring to life the dilemmas and controversies of congregational life, most of which were contained within the congregational realm, but which occasionally spilled over – sometimes with dramatic effect – into the public arena; they allow us to weave together subtle debates amongst church members, impassioned pleas by ministers, the stinging critiques of parish nurses, and the anguish and elation of the trustees, deacons, elders, vestrymen, and pewholders responsible for the volatile spiritual and temporal aspects of congregational life. Handling such sources requires strategies of containment. This chapter is therefore laid out first to ground the research in the literature, then to justify my decision to adopt a 'congregational' approach, and, finally, to introduce some features of Montreal which make it such an interesting microcosm in which to study a phenomenon common to so many industrializing cities of Christendom.

⁷ Exceptions include Richard Dennis, *Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: A Social Geography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1984), 280-285; David Harvey, 'Monument and Myth', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 69 (1979), 362-381; Gregory Levine, *In God's Service: The Role of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches in the Cultural Geography of Late Nineteenth Century Kingston* (Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's University 1980); Trigger, 'The Geopolitics of the Irish-Catholic Parish', 553-572.

In this section, a brief examination of the recent developments in cultural geography that inform this study will be followed by a longer survey of the existing research on nineteenth-century church building and relocation. Contemporary cultural geographers, in contrast with their historical geography counterparts, have shown a stronger interest in the geography of religion, and their work offers useful insights. Prior to the emergence of the 'new' cultural geography in the 1980s,⁸ the geography of religion focused primarily on the task of determining the role played by religion in moulding settlement and landscape. Isaac argued in the 1960s that the first priority was to 'separate the specifically religious from the social, economic, and ethnic matrix in which it is embedded, and to determine its relative weight in relation to other forces in transforming the landscape'.⁹ In contrast, the 'new' cultural geography has led to greater stress being placed on the need to understand interactions and interconnections amongst these various categories.¹⁰ The idea has also been emphasized 'that material landscapes are not neutral but reflect power relations and dominant "ways of seeing" the world'.¹¹ These trends have had an invigorating impact on studies of the geography of religion, as demonstrated by Lily Kong's work on religious buildings in Singapore.¹² Rather than simply describing the sacred structures of a particular group or seeking to determine the impact

⁸ Discussion of the 'new' cultural geography can be found in Denis Cosgrove and Peter Jackson, 'New Directions in Cultural Geography', *Area*, 19(2) (1987), 95-101; Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography* (London: Unwin Hyman 1989); Linda McDowell, 'The Transformation of Cultural Geography', in *Human Geography: Society, Space and Social Science*, eds. Derek Gregory et al. (London: MacMillan Press 1994), 146-173; Marie Price and Martin Lewis, 'The Reinvention of Cultural Geography', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 83(1) (1993), 1-17.

⁹ Quoted in Lily Kong, 'Geography and Religion: Trends and Prospects', *Progress in Human Geography*, 14 (1990), 358.

¹⁰ Kong, 'Geography and Religion', 362.

¹¹ McDowell, 'The Transformation of Cultural Geography', 161.

¹² Lily Kong, 'Negotiating Conceptions of "Sacred Space": A Case Study of Religious Buildings in Singapore', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers N.S.*, 18(3) (1993), 342-358; Lily Kong, 'Ideological Hegemony and the Political Symbolism of Religious Buildings in Singapore', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 11 (1993), 23-45. It should be noted that more traditional work in this field continues. See, for example, Wilbur Zelinsky, 'The Uniqueness of the American Religious Landscape', *The Geographical Review*, 91(3) (2002), 565-585. Discussions of trends in the geography of religion can be found in Kong, 'Geography and Religion', 355-371; Lily Kong, 'Mapping "New" Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity', *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(2) (2001), 211-233; Gregory Levine, 'On the Geography of Religion', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers N.S.*, 11 (1986), 428-440.

of religion on the landscape, geographers have become increasingly interested in exploring the meanings attached to sacred buildings and landscapes, and in understanding how these meanings have been contested or changed through time.¹³ They have also become more attentive to the role played by social and political forces in the creation and transformation of sacred structures and landscapes.¹⁴ Consistent with this trend, I have organized a research strategy on the premise that focusing on the physical 'infrastructure' of religion can - when combined with social geographic analyses of urban spatial processes associated with church relocation - make an important contribution to our understanding of the dynamic role played by these interrelated aspects of congregational life on the transformation of urban Protestantism, and on the role played by Protestant religious institutions in the evolution of city life.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the physical and demographic expansion of towns and cities, in conjunction with the production of increasing amounts of surplus capital and wealth, created a demand for additional places of worship in British and North American cities. Church building and church relocation were related processes that, in response to these pressures, transformed the physical, social, and religious landscapes of fast-growing cities on both sides of the Atlantic during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. As S.J.D. Green argues in his work on religion in late nineteenth century industrial Yorkshire, the process of church extension 'was certainly the most visible and very probably the most significant contemporary *response* of local religious organizations to the various social changes and institutional difficulties which they

¹³ Kong, 'Geography and Religion', 363.

¹⁴ At times, this can lead to excessively materialist approaches that either downplay or ignore the role played by religious ideas and ideals. This criticism can be applied to David Harvey's depiction of the Basilica of Sacré-Coeur in Paris primarily as a conservative political symbol ('Monument and Myth', 362-381). A similar approach is taken in Dmitri Sidorov's study of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow ('National Monumentalization and the Politics of Scale: The Resurrections of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 90(3) (2000), 548-572).

faced'.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the fragmentation of cities along class and ethnic lines led to the emergence of more exclusive and socially segregated residential districts. In the case of Protestants, the gravitation of wealthier elements of the population towards these districts was often accompanied by a desire on the part of those who were moving to sell old church buildings located in city centres and rebuild on a grander scale in the new residential districts.

Church Building

Although church building projects were not confined to the middle classes of society, it was the growing wealth and influence of this group that lay behind the massive expansion of religious institutions over the course of the nineteenth century. In cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, and London, the period from 1850 onwards witnessed an enormous investment of both financial and personal energy in church and chapel building.¹⁶ A similar phenomenon occurred in Canada, where Brian Clarke has observed that 'partly because of the demand created by growing urban populations, and partly because of economic prosperity and the rapid expansion of the middle class, a church-building boom occurred in the towns and cities'.¹⁷ In Ontario, church building on the part of Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Methodists was so intense that the average size of congregations actually declined between 1851 and 1881, in spite of population growth.¹⁸

Various attempts have been made to explain the intensity of church building during this period. While some historians, such as Marguerite Van Die, stress that both material aspirations and religious faith played a role in inspiring the church building boom, and draw attention to the importance of material considerations such as the availability of surplus capital as well as more spiritual matters such as the influence of

¹⁵ S.J.D. Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline: Organisation and Experience in Industrial Yorkshire, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), 29.

¹⁶ Ian Sellers, 'Congregationalists and Presbyterians in Nineteenth Century Liverpool', *Transactions The Congregational Historical Society*, 20(2) (1965), 84. See also Simon Gunn, 'The Ministry, the Middle Class and the "Civilizing Mission" in Manchester, 1850-80', *Social History*, 21(1) (1996), 32; John H. Taylor, 'London Congregational Churches Since 1850', *Transactions The Congregational Historical Society*, 20(1) (1965), 25.

¹⁷ Brian Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 272.

¹⁸ William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989), 129.

revivals, others have developed more detailed arguments emphasizing one factor or the other.¹⁹ Despite acknowledging the relation between growing wealth and church building in Ontario, William Westfall argues that the decision to invest so much in the religious sector during this period represented an attempt to proclaim 'the reality and power of the sacred as a force in a secular world'.²⁰ Thus, Gothic churches were intended to act as sermons in stone, challenging the materialistic ethos of society and helping to maintain the social order by proclaiming 'a counterworld of spiritual values'.²¹ Lynne Marks challenges this type of interpretation, arguing that local congregations were always more preoccupied with material than spiritual progress. While acknowledging that new churches may have been symbols of the sacred in a secular age, she suggests that congregation members were motivated above all by a self-interested desire to proclaim and reinforce their respectability by worshipping in larger and more elegant buildings.²² According to Marks, '[t]he late-nineteenth-century craze for church building and church improvements shows most clearly how the inequalities of the world had entered the churches as the definition of what it meant to be a respectable Protestant increasingly included some ability to contribute financially to the imposing new buildings'.²³

While those making more idealist or spiritual arguments have often depended heavily on what Protestants said about their motivations at the time, those advancing primarily materialist ones tend to adopt a more modern secular outlook, focusing as much on the consequences of elaborate church building programmes as on the original causes. I attempt to bring these two viewpoints together, recognizing that what was really significant was the dynamic tension that existed between an increasingly complex capitalist system and the ideals of Christianity. This tension, I shall argue, became embodied in the landscape through the building of monumental churches. To appreciate this tension is to recognize, as S.J.D. Green does, 'the inherent complexity of motives

¹⁹ Marguerite Van Die, 'A "Christian Businessman" in the Eastern Townships: The Convergence of Precept and Practice in Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Gender Construction', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, (1999), 115.

²⁰ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 138.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 151. The quotation is from page 202.

²² Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 60.

²³ *Ibid.*, 52-53.

surrounding church-building activity itself' and the fact that the church-building boom 'emerged, developed – and even changed – in the midst of an ever expanding and fast transforming urban environment, a continuously evolving economic and social milieu which often radically altered its earlier goals and purposes'.²⁴

Church Relocation

An important element of the fast transforming urban environment was the development of socially segregated residential neighbourhoods, and the tendency of leading congregations to desert city centres and build new churches in the most desirable of these neighbourhoods. While church relocation occurred on both sides of the Atlantic, the phenomenon was more pronounced in North America than in the United Kingdom. This can be attributed to the presence of established churches in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in contrast with the voluntarism and religious pluralism of both Canada and the United States during the period under examination. Although dissenting or nonconformist groups were present in the United Kingdom, there was nevertheless a deeply rooted system of Anglican, or – in the case of Scotland – Presbyterian, parishes covering well-defined geographic areas, receiving financial support from the government, and considering all people living within the parish boundaries as parishioners.²⁵ Although Anglicans, and to some extent Presbyterians, attempted to recreate the parish system in North America, it has been argued that on this side of the Atlantic the parish became primarily an ideological or social unit, bringing together individuals who shared common ideas or who were associated with one another socially.²⁶ Thus, parishes became 'associational rather than physical, social rather than geographic' and their bounds were defined by the proximity of the homes of the largest number of members to each other, rather than to the church.²⁷ While it was rare for Anglicans or Presbyterians to move their churches to new locations in cities in the United Kingdom, in the North

²⁴ Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline*, 93.

²⁵ Robert M. Kingdon, 'Protestant Parishes in the Old World and the New: The Cases of Geneva and Boston', *Church History*, 48 (1979), 291; Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London: MacMillan Press 1996), 11.

²⁶ Kingdon, 'Protestant Parishes', 291.

²⁷ Michael S. Franch, 'The Congregational Community in the Changing City, 1840-70', *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 71(3) (1976), 371.

American environment where all churches had to depend on congregational resources to survive, they were more likely to behave like their nonconformist counterparts.²⁸

It seems obvious that a church's participation in the social and spatial fragmentation of the city would have had significant consequences both for it and for the community as a whole, yet the phenomenon of church relocation has rarely been analyzed in any depth in historical studies. The existence of this phenomenon is frequently noted in passing, however, which enables us to gain a sense of its significance. Because church relocation was less often a solution to the problems posed by urban change in the United Kingdom than was the case in North America, greater emphasis is placed in the British literature on the difficulties that were faced by congregations left behind in no longer desirable neighbourhoods, rather than on church relocation per se. K.S. Inglis noted that, as the departure of wealthier churchgoers from central city areas to the suburbs gained speed after 1850, nonconformist chapels in particular struggled to survive.²⁹ Taylor's more detailed work on London demonstrates that, while there was a general outward movement of Congregational churches in the period after 1850, many congregations in the central part of the city slowly decayed, while others avoided total extinction by joining more stable churches, and a few sold their original buildings and moved to more desirable locations.³⁰ Thus, he concludes, 'with churches rising and falling like timber in a forest, it is small wonder that congregations found it their constant labour to raise money: for new buildings, for long-standing debts, and for the old hard-hit churches'.³¹ Callum Brown has likewise observed that the upward social and accompanying spatial mobility of nineteenth century urban dwellers translated into mobility on the part of congregations, particularly those of dissenting groups.³² Anglicans meanwhile struggled with the dilemmas posed by their parish system. During the British Royal Commission

²⁸ By the 1850s, efforts to have a church establishment in the Canadas had failed. W.S. Reid has written an interesting volume describing the Church of Scotland's efforts to achieve a co-establishment with the Church of England from a Lower Canadian perspective (*The Church of Scotland in Lower Canada: Its Struggle for Establishment* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications 1936)).

²⁹ K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1963), 62.

³⁰ Taylor, 'London Congregational Churches Since 1850'.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

³² Callum G. Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', *Urban History Yearbook*, (1988), 8.

on the Subdivision of Parishes in the 1850s, for instance, concern was expressed that the creation of smaller parishes would segregate rich from poor, leading the wealthy to no longer feel obligated to provide charitable assistance to those now living in a different parish.³³

North American contemporaries were more concerned with the departure of churches from downtown areas. This was a subject of great concern to Josiah Strong, a Congregational minister from Ohio who rose to become General Secretary of the American Evangelical Alliance in the 1880s. Strong was worried by the fact that ‘wealthy residences and churches retire before advancing business, while the poorer classes must remain near their work; so that there come to be an “up-town” and “down-town”, an “east side” and “west side”, which are far separated geographically, and vastly further socially’.³⁴ He accused the Protestant churches of moving uptown, ‘not because there are no perishing men all around them, but because the class for which they exist has moved up-town; showing unmistakably that they are class churches’.³⁵

The presence of this phenomenon has been noted in various North American cities, including Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Toronto, as well as Montreal.³⁶ In his study of the urban impact on Protestantism between 1865 and 1900, Aaron Abell observed that by the end of the Civil War nearly fifty important congregations had left the lower section of Manhattan Island, while in Boston historic meeting houses in the central commercial district were being deserted for ‘sumptuous edifices in the Back Bay’.³⁷ By way of explanation, Abell cited a contemporary source in which it was argued that the moves were intended to

³³ See, for example, *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, Great Britain, Vol. LXIX, Royal Commission on the Subdivision of Parishes, Minutes of Evidence, 1854, 341-342.

³⁴ Josiah Strong, *The New Era or The Coming Kingdom* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co. 1893), 195. For further information on Strong see Andrew Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1985), 165.

³⁵ Strong, *The New Era*, 213.

³⁶ For examples of church relocations in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, see Charles D. Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2000), 237-238. Examples for the other cities will be discussed in further detail in the text.

³⁷ Aaron Ignatius Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism 1865-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1943), 6.

accommodate the wishes of a few wealthy families and did not reflect the changing residential patterns of their congregations more generally. Similar patterns of church relocation have been observed in large and rapidly expanding cities such as Cleveland and Baltimore, with churches moving from the business district to developing elite residential areas.³⁸ In Baltimore, most central congregations found that their buildings were becoming inconvenient for their more influential members from the late 1850s onwards, resulting in declining congregational revenues. This brought about the sale of old places of worship and the exodus of congregations to more fashionable residential neighbourhoods in the 1860s and 1870s, as even congregations that wished to continue serving the downtown population found that it was simply not financially viable to do so.

Most of the above accounts offer materialist explanations of what triggered church relocation, focusing on factors such as the creation of socially-differentiated neighbourhoods, the need to maintain institutional prestige, and church financing. Daniel Bluestone likewise refers to these factors in his analysis of church relocation in Chicago, but also considers the spiritual and symbolic importance of church moves.³⁹ Like Westfall, Bluestone argues that the increasing popularity of Gothic revival architecture amongst church builders during the 1850s and 1860s reflected a desire to create a visual distinction between spiritual matters and secular affairs, but adds that the adoption of the 'new' style was often accompanied by flight from the downtown area. By locating themselves in residential districts, he suggests, the churches were identifying themselves with the domestic realm, thereby standing in opposition to the commercial world and at the same time providing middle class men with a respite from the vulgar and soul-destroying world of Mammon. This interpretation echoes Westfall's argument, but Bluestone also makes the point that the creation of a geographic as well as a visual separation between the churches and the realm of commerce made it easier 'to confine religious precepts to the domestic realm' and may have helped 'to debar religion from the marketplace'.⁴⁰ Despite their inherent appeal, one of the problems with symbolic

³⁸ Craig E. Colten, 'Shaping Sacred Space in Urban Ohio: 1788-1860', *Ohio Geographers*, 13 (1985), 77-78; Franch, 'The Congregational Community', 370, 375.

³⁹ Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

interpretations is that evidence demonstrating that contemporary church members actually thought about their moves in these terms is often very meagre.

The phenomenon of church relocation has also featured in studies of Toronto and Montreal, often in the context of work in architectural or church history or as part of broader studies of urban historical geography.⁴¹ In his study of the development of Montreal's uptown district, Roderick MacLeod suggests that the exodus of Protestant institutions from the old town to the uptown district represented 'an implicitly political act' and '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'.⁴² While this is an interesting argument, my findings do not substantiate this claim. Single-congregation accounts of church relocations have been provided by Janine Butler, Sandra Coley, and Janis Zubalik in their social and architectural studies of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Toronto, St Andrew's and St Paul's Presbyterian Church in Montreal, and Erskine Presbyterian Church in Montreal respectively.⁴³ All three interpret the significance of the succession of buildings inhabited by these congregations as they adopted new architectural styles and new locations as reflecting the changing needs of their members. These studies draw on careful readings of the records of individual churches, in contrast with most of the other writing on church relocation, which is either

⁴¹ In their atlas of religion in the south-west of Quebec during the nineteenth century, Louis Rousseau and Frank Remiggi have, for example, provided maps showing church locations and relocations in Montreal for the period between 1840 and 1890 (Louis Rousseau and Frank Remiggi, eds., *Atlas historique des pratiques religieuses: le sud-ouest du Québec au XIXe siècle* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa 1998), 137, 139). H. Keith Markell has similarly documented the movement of Protestant congregations in Montreal from older to newer districts as part of his massive survey of the Protestant response to urbanization and industrialization in Canada between 1885 and 1914 (H. Keith Markell, *Canadian Protestantism Against the Background of Urbanization and Industrialization in the Period from 1885 to 1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago 1971) 565-573). Also see David B. Hanna, *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).

⁴² Roderick MacLeod, *Salubrious Settings and Fortunate Families: The Making of Montreal's Golden Square Mile, 1840-1895* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 1997), 183.

⁴³ Janine Butler, 'St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto's "Cathedral of Presbyterianism"', *Ontario History*, 83(3) (1991), 169-192; Sandra M. Coley, *The Church of St Andrew and St Paul, Montreal: An Architectural History 1805-1932, and Catalogue of Memorials* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1993); Janis Zubalik, 'A Modern Montreal Church: The Erskine Presbyterian in 1894', *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers*, (1994), 147-161; Janis R. Zubalik, 'Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom': *The Erskine Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 1894* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1996).

primarily descriptive or based largely on information gleaned from newspapers, journals, and other published sources.

While a number of the studies discussed above supply maps showing the movements of churches, only Franch's study of Baltimore explores the distribution of members belonging to various churches and measures such things as the distance of the members' residences from their churches.⁴⁴ These studies do not, however, pursue more detailed analyses to determine the impact of church relocation on the social composition and geographical distribution of church membership, an omission that the present study is designed to remedy.

The existing literature confirms that the movement of Protestant churches from the central parts of North American cities to the middle and upper class residential districts that were developing from the 1840s onwards was a widespread phenomenon. The timing of church relocation was also very similar from place to place, with the bulk of moves taking place during the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s. Less attention has been paid in the literature to the continuation of this process in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as further commercial expansion caught up with many congregations that had already moved in the earlier period.⁴⁵ As we will see in Chapter 5, the very different social, economic, and theological contexts in which Protestant congregations found themselves in the early twentieth century meant that they did not, or could not, necessarily respond in the same way as they had done previously. Understanding why this was the case sheds light on the transformation of urban Protestantism during the intervening period, but also draws attention to the way in which the buildings and

⁴⁴ Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, 72; Colten, 'Shaping Sacred Space', 74-77; Franch, 'The Congregational Community'. Also consult fn. 41 above.

⁴⁵ A contemporary, J.S. Woodsworth, drew attention to the removal of churches from densely populated areas of Canadian cities during this period in *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church 1911), 162-165. The issue is also discussed regarding Toronto in Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier Press for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion 1988), 79-80; 91-92. Jon Caulfield links cycles of church building in Toronto with stages of Canadian urban development in his study of church abandonment during the twentieth century ('The Growth of the Industrial City and Inner Toronto's Vanished Church Buildings', *Urban History Review*, 23(2) (1995), 3-19). The impact of suburbanization on British churches during this period is discussed in Callum G. Brown, 'The Mechanism of Religious Growth in Urban Societies: British Cities Since the Eighteenth Century', in *European Religion in the Age of Great Cities, 1830-1930*, ed. Hugh McLeod (London: Routledge 1995), 255-256.

locations that had been chosen by earlier generations of church members could sometimes constrain the ability of subsequent generations to create places of worship that were consistent with their Christian ideals.

Urban Religious History From a Congregational Perspective

‘Urban religion’ has been defined by Robert Orsi as the product of ‘the dynamic engagement of religious traditions...with specific features of the industrial and post-industrial cityscapes and with the social conditions of city life’.⁴⁶ While Anglo-American historians have devoted increasing attention to studying urban religion in recent years,⁴⁷ this has not yet had a major impact on the historiography of nineteenth-century Canadian Protestantism, which has focused primarily on thematic studies or studies of small towns.⁴⁸ In choosing to embed a study of the institutional religious life of Montreal’s Protestant community within its urban context, this study represents a response to calls for a closer integration of urban history and Protestant religious history.⁴⁹ My approach is also inspired by Marguerite Van Die’s advocacy of local studies examining evangelicalism ‘as part of a broader pattern of community building’, in the hope that this will lead to studies of social change that do justice to the complex interconnections between religion and social categories such as class and gender.⁵⁰ Her work, along with that of Lynne Marks, has done much to spark interest in applying the methods of social history to the study of Protestantism in the Canadian context, where scholars have traditionally been more focused on denominational concerns, intellectual histories of

⁴⁶ Robert Orsi, ‘Introduction: Crossing the City Line’, in *Gods of the City*, ed. Robert Orsi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1999), 43.

⁴⁷ On this topic, see Callum G. Brown, ‘Review Essay: Religion in the City’, *Urban History*, 23(3) (1996), 372-379; Kathleen Neils Conzen et. al., ‘Forum: The Place of Religion in Urban and Community Studies’, *Religion and American Culture*, 6(2) (1996), 107-129; Robert Orsi, ‘Introduction: Crossing the City Line’, 1-78; Diane Winston and John Giggie, ‘Introduction: Special Issue, Religion and the City’, *Journal of Urban History*, 28(4) (2002), 395-397; Diane Winston, ‘Babylon by the Hudson; Jerusalem on the Charles: Religion and the American City’, *Journal of Urban History*, 25(1) (1998), 122-129.

⁴⁸ Canadian works on religion that have explicitly focused attention on the cities include S.D. Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1948); Markell, *Canadian Protestantism*; Neil Semple, ‘The Impact of Urbanization on the Methodist Church of Canada, 1854-1884’, *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History*, (1976), 20-61.

⁴⁹ Jon Butler, ‘Protestant Success in the New American City, 1870-1920’, in *New Directions in American Religious History*, eds. Harry S. Stout and D.G. Hart (New York: Oxford University Press 1997), 296-333.

⁵⁰ Van Die, “‘The Marks of a Genuine Revival’”, 525.

religion, and studies of evangelicalism and Protestant culture.⁵¹ While gender issues have received relatively good coverage, much less attention has been devoted to examining the role of social class in the evolution of Canadian Protestantism.⁵² This presents a striking contrast with the British literature on nineteenth-century religion, in which class forms one of the central elements of debate.⁵³ At least part of the explanation for this lies in the strong social history tradition within British religious history, much of which is deeply rooted in locally-based research focused on urban areas. Because of my own interest in urban Protestantism, I have found that the British historiography provides a useful methodological and interpretive guide.

One of the strengths of the current British literature is that – after decades of exhaustive debate – a consensus has emerged that ‘secularization theory’, the simplistic idea that ‘the growth of modern industrial and commercial cities inevitably led to the inexorable decline of religion’, fails to offer an adequate explanation of what was actually occurring in nineteenth and early twentieth century British cities.⁵⁴ Much attention

⁵¹ See Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*; Lynne Marks, ‘Railing, Tattling, and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender, and Church Regulation in Upper Canada’, *The Canadian Historical Review*, 81(3) (2000), 380-402; Lynne Marks, ‘Heroes and Hallelujahs – Labour History and the Social History of Religion in English Canada: A Response to Bryan Palmer’, *Histoire sociale / Social History*, 34(67) (2001), 169-186; Marguerite Van Die, “‘The Marks of a Genuine Revival’”; 524-563; Marguerite Van Die, ‘A “Christian Businessman”’, 103-127. Lynne Marks provides a summary of recent Canadian work by religious historians that has incorporated a social history perspective in ‘Heroes and Hallelujahs’, 170. This is part of a broader North American trend, for a discussion of which see Harry S. Stout and Robert M. Taylor, Jr., ‘Introduction’, in *New Directions in American Religious History*, eds. Harry S. Stout and D.G. Hart (New York: Oxford University Press 1997), 4-5.

⁵² See discussion in Robert K. Burkinshaw, ‘Aspects of Canadian Evangelical Historiography’, *Historical Papers of the Canadian Association of Church History*, (1995), 188-189. Exceptions include the following works which do explore class issues: Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada*; Markell, *Canadian Protestantism*; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*; and Doris Mary O’Dell, *The Class Character of Church Participation in Late Nineteenth-Century Belleville, Ontario* (Ph.D. Thesis, Queen’s University 1990). The exchange between Bryan Palmer and Lynne Marks in *Histoire sociale / Social History* is also relevant. See Bryan D. Palmer, ‘Historiographic Hassles: Class and Gender, Evidence and Interpretation’, *Histoire sociale / Social History*, 33(65) (2000), 105-144 and Lynne Marks, ‘Heroes and Hallelujahs’, 169-186.

⁵³ A summary of the key debates in the British historiography can be found in McLeod, *Religion and Society in England*, 1-10. For British works that consider the issue of class, see Callum G. Brown, ‘Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?’, *Urban History Yearbook*, (1988), 1-14; Jeffrey Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1982); Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*; E.R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London: Lutterworth Press 1957); Mark Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society: Oldham and Saddleworth 1740-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1994).

⁵⁴ Callum G. Brown, ‘Review Essay: Religion in the City’, 372. Debates over ‘secularization’ continue to thrive in the Canadian context. See James W. Opp, ‘Revivals and Religion: Recent Work on the History of Protestantism in Canada’, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 32(2) (1997), 183-194; also David B. Marshall,

continues, however, to be devoted to understanding 'religious change'.⁵⁵ There is now a greater tendency than in the past for British historians to see the nineteenth century as a period in which Protestant religious institutions demonstrated great dynamism and adaptability, and to emphasize the important social role played by the churches in urban life.⁵⁶ Many nevertheless conclude that the period between c.1890 and 1914 represented a phase of religious crisis during which the churches encountered substantial challenges. Rejection of the deterministic idea that Protestant churches were passive victims of a process over which they had no control has opened up a much more interesting field of discussion. The resulting institutional studies of local congregations are more attentive to the possibility that processes taking place within the churches themselves may have contributed to the difficulties that they experienced in the early twentieth century. S.J.D. Green, for example, considers the impact of both endogenous and exogenous factors in his study of the evolution of church life in industrial Yorkshire during the period between 1870 and 1920. In doing so, he adopts an institutional history perspective because he feels that 'no other approach better respects the concrete realities of contemporary spiritual life'.⁵⁷ This approach, he argues, 'permits a more integrated understanding' because it must necessarily comprehend 'the social history of religion, the history of the churches and the history of religious (and many other) ideas'.⁵⁸ I am largely convinced by this argument, and it is for this reason that I have adopted a congregational approach in my own study of urban religion.

'Canadian Historians, Secularization and the Problem of the Nineteenth Century', *CCHA, Historical Studies*, 60 (1993-1994), 57-81.

⁵⁵ Brown, 'Review Essay: Religion in the City', 373.

⁵⁶ See McLeod, *Religion and Society in England*, 3-4. Examples of those adopting this view include Callum Brown, Jeffrey Cox, S.J.D. Green, and Mark Smith. See Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society*; Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline*; Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*. All disagree with A.D. Gilbert's conclusion that the peak of religious influence had already been reached by the mid-nineteenth century, and that there was an important link between urbanization/ industrialization and the secularization of English society. See A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (London: Longman 1976).

⁵⁷ Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline*, 21. Green discusses his use of the terms 'endogenous' and 'exogenous' on p.35 of his book.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

A very different type of congregational approach is employed in Charles Cashdollar's study of over 150 Reformed congregations in Britain and America during the period between 1830 and 1915.⁵⁹ Rather than focusing on a particular city or area, Cashdollar's aim is to identify the trends in congregational life that transcended locality and therefore had an impact on Protestant churches whether they were located in Chicago, London, or Edinburgh. This approach very successfully identifies trends in congregational life, the most striking being a shift in emphasis from piety to fellowship. It is much weaker when it comes to actually explaining why these changes occurred. Ignoring the local context of church life also has the tendency to produce a picture of consensus and calm transition, and fails to address the frictions that were generated by many of the changes he describes. His study is nevertheless successful at achieving its stated aims, and provides researchers engaged in local community studies with an invaluable means of determining whether or not changes taking place within their own local congregations can be identified with a broader trans-Atlantic pattern of change.

While congregational approaches do not provide deep insights into the personal religious experiences of the individuals in the pews, they do offer a multifaceted understanding of the role played by religion in what Gregory Levine describes as 'its instituted, social form'.⁶⁰ One reason for this is that they do take into account the importance of religion as 'a spiritual act directed toward understanding life'⁶¹ and as a means of articulating the 'meanings that orient people in the world',⁶² rather than treating religion in purely functionalist terms as a latent force for either legitimating or challenging the social order. In this sense, I would agree with Hugh McLeod's suggestion that the most interesting studies of religion 'have not been those which assume a neat fit between religion and social roles, but those which have explored the unintended consequences of people's beliefs, and the contradictions between different deeply held convictions'.⁶³

⁵⁹ Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*.

⁶⁰ Levine, 'On the Geography of Religion', 431.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 432.

⁶² Conzen et. al., 'Forum', 121.

⁶³ McLeod, *Religion and Society in England*, 222.

Congregational approaches also allow us to explore the tensions that play a dynamic role in the existence of all religious institutions. Three tensions, in particular, appear to have contributed to the transformation of urban Protestantism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Within any given religious institution, a logic of mission exists in tension with a logic of maintenance. Gregory Baum argues that while the logic of mission ‘deals with the aim and function of an organization, the purpose for the sake of which it has been established’, the logic of maintenance is responsible for ensuring ‘the well-being of the organization itself, its upkeep, security, and perpetuation in the years to come’.⁶⁴ While both are essential to the success of any given congregation, there is a tendency for institutions to become more focused on the logic of maintenance over time, ultimately running the risk of undermining the original *raison d’être* of the institution itself. Protestant congregations in North America have also had to contend with the tension between their desire to cooperate with one another as Christian institutions, and the need to maintain a competitive edge over other congregations and denominations in a society characterized by religious pluralism and the voluntary, rather than state-sponsored, support of religious institutions. Finally, the economic growth of the nineteenth century did much to exacerbate tension between a Protestant vision of progress centred on the spread of Christian moral values and a capitalist vision of society that makes ‘the attainment of material riches...the supreme object of human endeavour and the final criterion of human success’.⁶⁵ While many Christians have sought to deny or ignore this tension, Tawney’s proclamation that worship of mammon ‘is the practical religion of capitalist societies’ and that ‘[c]ompromise is...impossible between the Church of Christ and the idolatry of wealth’ reminds us of the uneasy relationship that is at the heart of Christianity. This study will argue that the ways in which Montreal’s Protestant congregations dealt with these three sets of tensions not only had important consequences for their own religious institutions, but also had an impact on the ability of these institutions to perform a meaningful role in the broader community and still maintain their integrity and independence as Christian institutions.

⁶⁴ Gregory Baum, *Theology and Society* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press 1987), 234-235.

⁶⁵ Richard H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (London: Transaction Publishers 1998), 286.

The Cultural Context of Montreal Protestantism

It has been observed that one of the shortcomings of single-group studies is that they fail to capture a sense of the impact of urban society's turbulence and complexity on religious behaviour.⁶⁶ It is therefore not surprising that this is also a feature of studies adopting a congregational perspective: Charles Cashdollar, for example, has been criticized for failing to come to grips with Catholicism as part of the social context of nineteenth-century North America.⁶⁷ This criticism is not entirely justified, since the tendency to marginalize the Roman Catholic presence reflects an important reality of Protestant congregational life. Let me set the stage, therefore, with a brief discussion of the cultural context in which Montreal's Protestant community existed, and explain why Roman Catholics will, more often than not, likewise seem strangely absent from my own discussion of Protestant congregational life in Montreal.

Given the leading role played by Protestant Montrealers in the commercial, economic, and financial development of Canada, and the immense amount of research that has been devoted to the history of Montreal⁶⁸, it is surprising that we do not know more about the social and cultural life of the city's Protestant community. A large number of published and unpublished histories tell the stories of individual congregations and institutions,⁶⁹ and are accompanied by a smaller number of studies of individual

⁶⁶ Butler, 'Protestant Success', 319.

⁶⁷ See the review of Charles Cashdollar's *A Spiritual Home* by Paul T. Phillips in the *American Historical Review*, 106(4) (2001), 1326.

⁶⁸ A bibliography of pre-1992 published work relating to Montreal is available. See Joanne Burgess et. al., *Clés pour l'histoire de Montréal: Bibliographie* (Montréal: Boréal 1992). Summaries for subsequent years can be found in the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique Française*.

⁶⁹ A few of the best studies of individual churches include: Frank Dawson Adams, *A History of Christ Church Cathedral Montreal* (Montreal: Burton's Limited 1941); James Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots: The History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal 1803-2003* (Montreal: The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul 2003); Robert Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, St Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal: W. Drysdale and Co. 1887); A.P. Gower Rees, *Historical Sketch of St George's Church, Montreal and its Constitution* (Granby: Simms Printing Co. 1952); David C. Knowles, *The American Presbyterian Church of Montreal 1822-1866* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1957); Nathan Mair, *The People of St James Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal: St James United Church 1984); Elizabeth McDougall, *The American Element in the Early Presbyterian Church in Montreal, 1786-1824* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1965). Robert Campbell's account of the history of the St Gabriel Street Church, published in 1887, stands out for the sheer mass of information that he accumulated, not just about his own congregation, but about the Protestant community in general. Some very good architectural histories of individual churches have also been written: Sandra M. Coley, *The Church of St Andrew and St Paul, Montreal: An Architectural History 1805-1932, and Catalogue of Memorials* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia

denominations, or of a particular ethnic group.⁷⁰ Jane Greenlaw's examination of the parish registers of seven Nonconformist churches in Montreal between 1825 and 1842 is more unusual, and concludes that there were significant differences in the social composition of the various congregations.⁷¹ Another work that stands out is Margaret Westley's oral history that very successfully conjures up the lived experiences of elite Protestant Montrealers in the period between 1900 and 1950.⁷² Historians applying the lens of gender have provided insights into the beliefs and thought-worlds of the middle and upper-class women and men who were responsible for organizing and managing Montreal's charitable institutions during the nineteenth century.⁷³ These studies reflect

University 1993); Susan Stanley, 'From Cathedral to Citadel: Emmanuel Congregational Church in Montreal', *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers*, (1994), 176-185; Janis Zubalik, 'A Modern Montreal Church: The Erskine Presbyterian in 1894', *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers*, (1994), 147-161; Zubalik, "Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom". Clarence Epstein, approaching church buildings as 'vehicles for cultural definition', explores the ecclesiastical architecture created by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish groups in Montreal between 1760 and 1860 (*Church Architecture in Montreal During the British-Colonial Period 1760-1860* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh 1999)). Studies of Protestant institutions and associations include: Harold C. Cross, *One Hundred Years of Service With Youth: The Story of the Montreal YMCA* (Montreal: 1951); Edgar Andrew Collard, *The Irish Way: The History of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society* (Montreal: IPBS 1992); Brian Young, *Respectable Burial: Montreal's Mount Royal Cemetery* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2003).

⁷⁰ Montreal's Presbyterians receive attention in works dealing with the history of the Scots in Quebec. See Lynda Price, *Introduction to the Social History of the Scots in Quebec (1780-1840)* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada 1981); Heather McNabb, *Montreal's Scottish Community, 1835-65: A Preliminary Study* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1999); and Elizabeth McDougall, *The Presbyterian Church in Western Lower Canada, 1815-1842* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 1969). The Anglicans are well served by two diocesan histories. See John Irwin Cooper, *The Blessed Communion: The Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-1960* (Montreal: The Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal 1960) and Mary Ellen Reisner, *The Measure of Faith: Annals of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-2000* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre 2002). Joan Marshall provides an account of the role played by the Anglican Church in helping Montreal's anglophone community adapt to the changing realities of life in post-Quiet Revolution Quebec in *A Solitary Pillar: Montreal's Anglican Church and the Quiet Revolution* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1994). An excellent account of Protestant religious activity in the nearby Eastern Townships can be found in Françoise Noël's *Competing for Souls: Missionary Activity and Settlement in the Eastern Townships, 1784-1851* (Sherbrooke: Université de Sherbrooke 1988).

⁷¹ Jane Greenlaw, 'Choix pratiques et choix des pratiques: le non-conformisme protestant à Montréal (1825-1842)', *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique Française*, 46(1) (1992), 91-113.

⁷² Margaret W. Westley, *Remembrance of Grandeur: The Anglo-Protestant Elite of Montreal 1900-1950* (Montreal: Libre Expression 1990).

⁷³ Janice Harvey, *Upper-Class Reaction to Poverty in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Montreal: A Protestant Example* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1978); Janice Harvey, *The Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Montreal Ladies' Benevolent Society: A Case Study in Protestant Child Charity in Montreal, 1822-1900* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 2001); Ann K. Perry, *Manliness, Goodness, and God: Poverty, Gender, and Social Reform in English-Speaking Montreal, 1890-1929* (M.A. Thesis, Queen's University 1998). Cynthia Fish has also looked at the changing images of fatherhood amongst Montreal's middle class

the current interest amongst North American social historians in understanding the emergence and development of middle and upper class society in the urban context, a subject that has already received considerable attention in the European literature.⁷⁴ Sven Beckert has suggested that the belated focus on this topic is a product of the success with which bourgeois Americans have denied the existence of social classes, while simultaneously managing to identify their own interests and ideas as being those of Americans as a whole.⁷⁵ This may also have been the case in Canada, contributing to the paucity of information on Montreal's generally well-to-do Protestant community. The tendency of British-origin Protestants to present themselves as the 'mainstream' of North American society has also, I would argue, discouraged historians from embarking on social histories of urban Protestant groups in the same way that they have, for example, studied Irish Catholics.⁷⁶

As was the case in many other nineteenth-century North American cities, Montreal had a predominantly Protestant elite, mainly of British origin, and a working-class population that contained a large Roman Catholic element. Despite their leading role in business, Protestants were deeply conscious of their minority position, and of their relative political powerlessness in the province as a whole in the period following Confederation.⁷⁷ While intermarriage did occur between Protestants and Catholics, it was

population from 1870-1914 (*Images and Reality of Fatherhood: A Case Study of Montreal's Protestant Middle Class, 1870-1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 1991)). In doing so, she was surprised to observe that discussion of the religious aspect of life was rare in correspondence between fathers and their children.

⁷⁴ Sven Beckert's *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1986* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2003), 9-12 gives a detailed account of this trend. His study should also be consulted for further references to North American and European work on the upper and middle classes, contained in his comprehensive footnotes.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁶ An example of a single-city study of a Protestant group is James W. Lewis' *Protestant Experience in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1975* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press 1992). For an ethno-religious community study in the Canadian context, see, for example, Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993). Studies of ethno-religious communities in the United States include Jay P. Dolan's *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1975) and Robert A. Orsi's *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*, 2nd Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press 2002).

⁷⁷ In 1861, Protestants made up just over 25 percent of Montreal's population. For an account of Montreal's ethnic and social divisions during this period, see Paul-André Linteau's *Histoire de Montréal*

the exception rather than the rule, and linguistic barriers meant that Anglo-Protestants were more likely to marry Irish Catholics than to choose partners from the city's much larger French-Catholic population.⁷⁸ Religious, class, and linguistic divisions were all reflected in the social geography of the city, although they were never as clearly defined on the ground as in visitors' depictions of Montreal as a city 'divided sharply into two parts, the French and the English, the East and the West ends', with factories, mills, and working-class homes at either end of the city, and the houses of the middle and upper classes lining wide and shady streets on the terraces rising up towards Mount Royal.⁷⁹

As first or second generation immigrants to a city that had been founded by religiously-inspired settlers from France in 1642, Montreal's nineteenth-century Anglo-Protestants encountered an urban environment imbued with a deeply-rooted Roman Catholic ecclesiastical tradition. One of the most important religious institutions to survive the transition from French to British rule in the latter part of the eighteenth century was the Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice, traditional seigneur of the Island of Montreal. The financial resources that the Sulpicians derived from their extensive land holdings contributed to the early creation of an impressive network of Catholic churches and social institutions.⁸⁰ The wealth of the Sulpicians, combined with the Ultramontanism of Quebec's ecclesiastical hierarchy, was a source of frustration to certain evangelical elements within Montreal's Protestant community. In their eyes, the Roman Catholic Church's 'perfect organization, vast wealth, political influence, [and] social prestige', as well as its perceived ability to use 'all kinds of worldly means for maintaining and strengthening its position', took on almost mythical proportions and were seen as a serious hindrance to the progress of Protestantism.⁸¹

depuis la Confédération (Montréal: Boréal 1992), 39-73. Linteau's study represents the most up-to-date general history of Montreal during this period that is currently available.

⁷⁸ Sherry Olson, 'Le peuplement de Montréal', in *Atlas historique du Québec: population et territoire*, ed. Serge Courville (Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval 1996), 85.

⁷⁹ *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 79(469) (June 1889), 91, 94.

⁸⁰ For a discussion of the business and financial affairs of the Sulpician community, see Brian Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution 1816-1876* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1986).

⁸¹ Jones H. Farmer, ed., *E.W. Dadson, B.A., D.D. The Man and His Message* (Toronto: William Briggs 1902), 64.

The views of militant Protestants were most forcefully articulated in *The Montreal Witness*, a religious newspaper dedicated to promoting 'evangelical truth', temperance, and the conversion of Roman Catholics.⁸² While the newspaper was politically independent, its editorials generally supported Liberal positions, although its main priority seems to have been to promote any party showing itself ready 'to withstand Vaticanism'.⁸³ Sectarian tensions were part of daily life in Montreal, but only occasionally flared up into acute episodes of violence and social unrest, notably in the early 1850s and late 1870s. The most notorious incident was the Gavazzi Riot of 1853, provoked by a lecture given at Zion Congregational Church by visiting apostate priest Alessandro Gavazzi (see Figure 2.19).⁸⁴ Had the Protestant working classes been larger, and had a greater segment of Montreal's Protestant population not merely imbibed, but also sought to put into practice, the aggressively evangelical stance of the *Witness*, it seems likely that a larger number of major disturbances would have occurred. In the interests of maintaining social harmony, however, most members of the city's Protestant community were unwilling to support large-scale conversion efforts amongst the Roman Catholic population.⁸⁵ Nor were they prepared to criticize groups like the Sulpicians, whose preoccupation with 'social order, public morality, labour discipline, and poor relief' suited their interests as employers of labour.⁸⁶ Large numbers of Protestants were also willing to support the Conservatives in Quebec, despite the accusation that in doing

⁸² John Irwin Cooper, 'The Early Editorial Policy of the *Montreal Witness*', *Canadian Historical Association Report*, (1947), 53-62.

⁸³ The quotation comes from an editorial regarding the Protestant Defence Alliance that appears in the *Montreal Witness*, 23 December 1875. A biography of John Dougall, the *Witness*'s founder, can be found in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. XI (1881-1890) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1982). The *Witness* claimed in the early 1870s that at about 8000 copies its circulation was greater than that of any other daily, either French or English, in the city (see *Montreal Witness*, 27 February 1871). It is not clear how many of these copies were circulated outside of Montreal. The longevity of this newspaper is, however, a reflection of its commercial success.

⁸⁴ Robert Sylvain, 'Le 9 juin 1853 à Montréal - encore l'affaire Gavazzi', *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique Française*, 14(2) (1960), 173-216. John Dougall, editor of the *Witness*, was a principal instigator of Gavazzi's visit and Zion Church was his home congregation.

⁸⁵ For a discussion of Protestant mission work amongst the French Canadian population in the early nineteenth century, see Robert Merrill Black, 'Different Visions: The Multiplication of Protestant Missions to French-Canadian Roman Catholics, 1834-1855', in *Canadian Protestant and Catholic Missions, 1820s-1960s: Historical Essays in Honour of John Webster Grant*, eds. J.S. Moir and C.T. McIntire (New York: Peter Lang 1988), 49-73.

⁸⁶ Young, *In Its Corporate Capacity*, 166.

so they were effectively allying themselves with the Ultramontanes.⁸⁷ The eagerness with which the *Witness's* editor and correspondents embraced resistance to the Jesuit Estates Act in 1889 as an awakening of 'the old spirit of Protestantism', and as a rejection of passivity and accommodation on the part of the Protestant community, suggests that it was only in the context of explicit provocation that more militant Protestants were able to rally support from the broader community.⁸⁸

Because in the twentieth century the term 'evangelical' has been appropriated by those adopting a fundamentalist theology and a conservative outlook, let me define what is meant by the term in a nineteenth-century Canadian context.⁸⁹ During this period, evangelicalism was still associated with revivalism, but many Protestants who did not belong to churches with revivalist traditions also considered themselves to be evangelicals because they accepted and put into practice the core evangelical beliefs and principles. These included a belief in salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, acceptance of the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, belief in the need for 'conversion from sin and the world to a godly and Christian life', and the desire to spread the Christian message to others.⁹⁰ According to Marguerite Van Die, conversion was expected to 'express itself in a new life of service within one's community', and it was anticipated that its impact would extend 'beyond family and church to include one's social and business relations within the wider community'.⁹¹ Groups such as the Methodists and Baptists, who were most closely associated with the more radical and emotional strain of evangelicalism, were relatively weak in Montreal. While not all of Montreal's Anglicans and Presbyterians considered themselves to be evangelicals, many

⁸⁷ See *Montreal Witness*, 22 August 1889, Letter to the editor from 'A French Canadian'.

⁸⁸ See *Montreal Witness*, 29 April 1889, Letter from a member of St Paul's Church; also the editorial in *Montreal Witness*, 4 June 1889. Discussion of this topic continues throughout April, May, and June of this year in the *Witness*.

⁸⁹ A comprehensive overview of Canadian evangelicalism can be found in George A. Rawlyk, ed., *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997).

⁹⁰ This definition is adapted from the one provided by John G. Stackhouse, Jr. in "'Who Whom?: Evangelicalism and Canadian Society'", in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, ed. G.A. Rawlyk (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997), 56. The quotation comes from Ashton Oxenden, *The History of My Life: An Autobiography* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 1891), 61.

⁹¹ Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival", 528.

did.⁹² It seems likely that the large segment of the Protestant community that was made up of these two groups (70 percent) ensured that a rather accommodating and 'respectable' form of evangelicalism prevailed (see Figure 1.1).⁹³ The lack of zeal for a militant Protestantism should not be therefore be interpreted as signifying the weakness of evangelical Protestantism in Montreal, but instead reflected the denominational and class composition of the community.

Despite their internal diversity, Protestant Montrealers recognized the need for cooperation. A minister in the early twentieth century observed that, because the English-speaking element in Montreal constituted only a fourth or a fifth of the population, Protestants were compelled 'to pull together both in church and in business life', creating 'a genuine community spirit'.⁹⁴ Many were also motivated by a desire to demonstrate that Protestantism was not 'that piebald, heterogeneous thing which Romanists are taught to believe, but that it is substantially *one*'.⁹⁵ These factors encouraged Protestants of all denominations to work together in the development of hospitals, a school system, a common burial ground, and charitable institutions such as the Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Protestant House of Industry, although some denominational charitable institutions were also established, primarily by the Anglicans.⁹⁶

⁹² It has been observed that the evangelical wing of Anglicanism tended to be strongest in places with a significant Roman Catholic presence such as Liverpool or Ireland. See Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals: Protestant Secessions from the Via Media, c.1800-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), 62-63; also Richard W. Vaudry, 'Evangelical Anglicans and the Atlantic World: Politics, Ideology, and the British North American Connection', in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, ed. G.A. Rawlyk (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997), 158-159. Fortified by the influence of Irish Protestant immigrants, this also appears to have been a feature of Anglicanism in Montreal according to Vaudry, 163-165.

⁹³ For a discussion of the historical evolution of radical and formal strands of evangelicalism, see Rawlyk, *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, xiv-xvi.

⁹⁴ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 237.

⁹⁵ *Montreal Daily Witness Evangelical Alliance Extra*, October 1874, 3. This quotation comes from an address given by the Rev. Dr. Jenkins at the meetings of the Dominion Evangelical Alliance.

⁹⁶ John Irwin Cooper describes Diocesan institutions such as the Church Home, St Margaret's Home, and the Andrews Home (*The Blessed Communion: The Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-1960* (Montreal: The Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal 1960), 131-135). Protestant poor relief was given out by individual churches to their needy members, but was also provided by a range of other non-denominational bodies including the city's Scottish, Irish Protestant, and English national societies, the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Poor Relief Committee of the House of Industry. A good description of the competing Roman Catholic poor relief system is provided by Huguette Lapointe-Roy (*Charité bien ordonnée: le premier réseau de lutte contre la pauvreté à Montréal au 19^e siècle*

Figure 1.1 Denominational Composition of Montreal's Protestant Community

Montreal	Anglican	Presbyterian	Methodist	Baptist	Cong.	Unitarian	Other	Total
1861	9739	7824	3775	604	768	475	839	24024
1871	11573	9104	4503	928	891	474	1363	28836
1881	14338	11597	5327	1402	1311	410	1972	36357
1891	19684	14853	6803	1525	871	448	1912	46096
1901	20471	15637	6378	1536	975		3217	48214
Montreal (%)	Anglican	Presbyterian	Methodist	Baptist	Cong.	Unitarian	Other	Total
1861	40.5%	32.6%	15.7%	2.5%	3.2%	2.0%	3.5%	100%
1871	40.1%	31.6%	15.6%	3.2%	3.1%	1.6%	4.7%	100%
1881	39.4%	31.9%	14.7%	3.9%	3.6%	1.1%	5.4%	100%
1891	42.7%	32.2%	14.8%	3.3%	1.9%	1.0%	4.1%	100%
1901	42.5%	32.4%	13.2%	3.2%	2.0%		6.7%	100%
Canada (%)	Anglican	Presbyterian	Methodist	Baptist	Total			
1871	24.8%	27.3%	28.5%	12.0%	92.6%			
1891	22.7%	26.6%	29.8%	10.6%	87.9%			

Source: Clarke p. 263; Census of Canada.

One of the features of ethnic or religious institutions is that, by enhancing day to day contacts within a particular group and reducing the level of contact with other groups, they play an key role in insulating elements of society from one another.⁹⁷ While considerable interaction took place amongst Montreal's various Protestant religious institutions, Protestant and Catholic religious institutions did not maintain sustained contacts, and most charitable and missionary work respected the boundary between the two groups. Some readers may therefore find themselves frustrated when reading the following chapters to discover how easy it is to lose a sense of the distinctiveness of Montreal, and of the presence of the city's Roman Catholic population, as soon as one enters the inner workings of the city's Protestant churches. Based on almost thirty years of participation in one of the city's 'uptown' congregations, I would argue that this sense of detachment from the wider community persists to this day and provides an accurate reflection of the experiences of congregation members.

(Montréal: Boréal 1987)). Janice Harvey has written extensively on Montreal's Protestant charitable institutions and Brian Young has written a history of the Protestant Mount Royal cemetery (for references see fn. 69 and fn. 73 above). I have not yet had an opportunity to read Roderick MacLeod and Mary Anne Poutanen's recent study of Protestant school boards in Quebec (*A Meeting of the People: School Boards and Protestant Communities in Quebec, 1801-1998* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2004)).

⁹⁷ For further discussion of this issue, see Trigger, 'The Geopolitics of the Irish-Catholic Parish', 555.

This is not to deny that living as a Protestant in Montreal was then, and continues to be, a distinct experience. Nor does it mean that Protestants and Catholics did not keep abreast of what was happening in each other's respective religious institutions. On the contrary, they were anxious to ensure that their own buildings and charitable works did not fall behind those of the other group.⁹⁸ The commitment of Protestants to their religious institutions may have been strengthened by the leadership their ministers provided in protecting the rights of the Protestant minority in Quebec. Likewise, irritations may also have intensified a sense of attachment to Protestant religious institutions: church services were annually disturbed by a Corpus Christi procession, a sermon might be drowned out by the ringing of Roman Catholic church bells, and - less frequently - bricks were thrown through church windows.⁹⁹ Such events, while presumably important in terms of the formation of an explicitly 'Protestant' identity in Montreal, played only a minor role in the transformation of the religious institutions themselves. It is one of the paradoxical elements of Protestant life in Montreal that, despite the distinctive cultural milieu, institutions have been more responsive to changes taking place elsewhere in Canada, in Britain, and in North America, than they have been to the Quebec context. This study suggests that urban-geographic, social, and theological changes that were occurring not just in Montreal, but also in other British and North American cities, provide a better explanation of the transformation experienced by the city's Protestant congregations during the period between 1850 and 1914, than do factors related to the local Protestant encounter with Catholicism.

Sources and Research Design

Data for this project was generated from a wide range of sources. These include the extensive records of six leading uptown congregations, as well as the existing records

⁹⁸ This could lead to quixotic interfaith encounters, such as the son of a prominent evangelical minister finding himself accidentally incarcerated in a Roman Catholic church through his desire to examine a new organ! See Rare Books Collection McGill University, MS 216, Lighthall Family Papers, C.22, File 22/34, Letters of Alice (Elsie) Sabine Wilkes 1854-1881, Letter from John Aston Wilkes to Elsie A. Sabine, 23 June 1860.

⁹⁹ For complaints against church bells, see *Montreal Witness*, 28 June 1852. On the Corpus Christi processions during a time of tense relations between Orange and Irish-Catholic factions in Montreal, see *Montreal Witness*, 22 January 1879 and 24 March 1879. Joan Marshall's *A Solitary Pillar* explores the role played by Montreal's Anglican Church in addressing issues faced by modern-day anglophones in Quebec.

of all the churches and mission congregations located in the downtown Griffintown district. With a view to building up a more multifaceted picture of congregational life, information gleaned from session minute books and church reports has been woven together with facts and ideas found in denominational records, local newspapers, religious journals, congregational magazines, civil court cases, royal commission reports, family papers and memoirs, as well as contemporary novels. A quantitative foundation comes from the analysis of church membership lists, as well as data from the 1881 Census of Canada. The *Montréal l'Avenir du Passé* (MAP) historical geo-database project facilitated the linking of church members to their entries in the 1881 Census of Canada and various nineteenth-century city taxrolls.¹⁰⁰ This enabled me to generate information about the ethnic and socio-economic composition of each congregation, and to determine how the socio-economic composition of each congregation changed through time. The ability to link taxroll and census entries for 1881 likewise made it possible to compare the socio-economic profiles of the several denominations. Resources of the MAP project also enabled me to map the distribution of Protestants and Catholics in the city, as well as of household heads belonging to the city's various Protestant denominations. Rectified¹⁰¹ versions of historical maps of Montreal for 1846, 1880, and 1907, also part of the MAP project, facilitated the mapping of church membership lists, allowing me to track their changing residential distributions. The various quantitative and cartographic methods used in this study will be described in detail in Chapter 3. Here I will explain my research design, which combined both strategic and opportunistic elements.

Soon after embarking on this research, I recognized that one of the greatest difficulties I faced in adopting a congregational perspective was that of deciding how many and which churches to study in depth. In contrast with the Irish Catholics who had only five parish churches in Montreal by the end of the nineteenth century, the Protestant population – despite being only somewhat more numerous – had managed to erect approximately seventy-five places of worship covering an identical territory. Given the

¹⁰⁰ The MAP project was developed by an interdisciplinary team of scholars led by Sherry Olson. For a description of the achievements of this project, see Robert C.H. Sweeny and Sherry Olson, 'MAP: Montréal L'Avenir du Passé – Sharing Geodatabases Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, *Geomatica*, 57(2) 2003, 145-154.

¹⁰¹ In essence, the rectification process involved digitally 'warping' a scanned image of the original map so that it corresponded geographically with the City of Montreal city planning database for 2000.

length of the time period I wished to cover, my desire to delve into congregational records in all their complexity and abundance¹⁰², and the time-consuming nature of quantitative analyses involving the linking of membership lists to other sources, it was clear that only a small number of congregations could be studied in this way. It was also instructive to note that reviewers of Charles Cashdollar's work, which was based on an examination of the records of more than 150 congregations in Britain and America, were still not convinced that a different sampling might not have revealed somewhat different patterns of change in congregational life.¹⁰³ The diversity of Protestantism is such that the idea of achieving a 'representative' sample of congregations within any given area is simply not viable. My goal therefore was to choose a small number of congregations according to the following criteria: they had to have histories going back to the first half of the nineteenth century as well as good sets of records that I was able to access (thereby eliminating a substantial number of congregations whose records were lost to fires); the chosen congregations also had to have played an active leadership role in church extension or mission efforts outside the immediate environs of their own churches. It was obvious that the city's three largest Protestant denominations needed to be represented, but I also wanted to include at least one congregation belonging to a smaller mainline denomination. These criteria were designed to identify leading congregations with substantial numbers of middle and upper class members.

To assist in the discernment process, I used local church histories, city directories, and contemporary maps to construct a database containing both temporal and spatial information for every Protestant church built in Montreal between 1760 and 1914. This enabled me to create maps showing the locations and moves of Protestant congregations over the course of the study period. Based on the above criteria, I chose six congregations for in-depth study: St George's Anglican Church, St James Street Wesleyan Methodist Church, St Paul's Church of Scotland, Côté Street (later Crescent

¹⁰² For congregations with records housed in the Archives Nationales du Québec, it was not unusual for an individual church to have twenty or more archival boxes of material to go through. In the case of church archives, it was more often a question of being shown into an archives room filled with masses of uncatalogued documents.

¹⁰³ See, for example, Paul T. Phillips' review of Charles D. Cashdollar's *A Spiritual Home* in the *American Historical Review*, 106(4) (2001), 1325-1326.

Street) Free Church¹⁰⁴, the American Presbyterian Church, and Zion Congregational Church (as well as the portion of the congregation that went on to form Emmanuel Congregational Church). The seeming overrepresentation of Presbyterian congregations reflects their proportionally large number relative to other denominations, and makes it possible to take account of the schisms within the Presbyterian polity. The American Presbyterian Church was included to give representation to the element of U.S. origin within the community. Time and logistical considerations made it impossible to include Baptist, Unitarian, and High Church Anglican congregations. French Protestant congregations were also excluded from this study. I can only apologize to anyone who is disappointed not to find their own group sufficiently represented.

Analysis of the records belonging to the ‘case-study’ congregations indicated that the working-class district known as Griffintown played an important role in the missionary endeavours of middle and upper class Protestants in Montreal. Presbyterians and Congregationalists were both active in setting up (or attempting to set up) mission congregations in this district. Anglicans and Methodists in Griffintown, as well as Church of Scotland Presbyterians, were served by their own churches, but also received support from congregations outside the area. This suggested that in order to understand the ‘public’ ministries engaged in by the city’s leading congregations, I should study Protestant congregational life in this district in its entirety.

Given the relatively limited number of congregations whose church records it was possible to examine in depth, I felt it was important to place my very detailed knowledge of individual congregations in a broader context by obtaining an overview of church building and relocation in the city as a whole. To do this, I generated a list of significant dates related to these processes from my congregational database. The Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec’s Massicotte Collection also contains a large number of images of churches, mostly compiled from local newspapers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, from which I was able to obtain additional references to articles on similar topics. These events were then researched in a range of local newspapers. This technique for extracting information from local newspapers was complemented by a more

¹⁰⁴ Most of the records of this church were lost to fire in the 20th century, but an exceptionally good run of annual reports is available in the library of the Presbyterian College. Because of its more limited records, it does not feature as heavily in the discussion as the other two Presbyterian congregations.

systematic examination of the *Montreal Witness*. As it was impractical to read the entire run, I selected one year in every decade: 1869, 1879, 1889, 1899, and 1909. This provided information on individual congregations and church life, and also gave me an overview of the broader theological, ideological, and cultural shifts taking place within the Protestant community.

Use of the Massicotte Collection led me to one of my most interesting ‘finds’, namely a series of twenty-five articles in the *Montreal Standard* – all by a single individual – each providing a fascinating account of what it was like to participate in a worship service in a given church in the final years of my study period. All six of my ‘case-study’ congregations were visited by this perceptive reporter, providing rare insights into the visual and oral aspects of the congregational worship experience. The descriptions of the worship services are of a high calibre, systematically detailing the appearance of each church interior and its congregation, as well as describing the minister and his message. This demonstrates the benefits to be derived from a combination of systematic and opportunistic strategies when engaging in the study of urban congregational life.

Plan of Thesis

This thesis is divided into two major parts, the first of which deals with the period between 1850 and 1889, while the second covers the shorter period between 1890 and 1914. My treatment of each period is divided into three chapters, with the chapters in each section mirroring one another in terms of subject matter in order to make it easier to identify and understand the process of change through time. Chapters 2 and 5 focus on the church buildings of leading congregations and explore the reasoning that lay behind their location decisions. The arrangement of the remaining four chapters is informed by a desire to determine the impact of the changes described in Chapters 2 and 5 on the way the churches carried out what they considered to be their principal tasks in society, which can broadly be categorized as their ‘domestic’ and ‘public’ ministries.¹⁰⁵ The ‘domestic’ ministry of a congregation was centred around its own church building, and focused on

¹⁰⁵ This terminology comes from Jeanne Halgren Kilde’s *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press 2002), 91.

providing its members with a place to worship and engage in fellowship. Chapters 3 and 6 explore the 'domestic' ministries of the city's leading congregations through an examination of the interior design and layout of the uptown churches and an analysis of the social composition and geographic distribution of church membership. The 'public' ministry of a congregation, in contrast, involved outreach to the wider community; it required church members to spread the Gospel to others, engage in charitable work, and ensure that less wealthy members of society had access to places of worship. Chapters 4 and 7 investigate the missions and churches of the downtown Griffintown district to gain insights into the ways in which the city's leading congregations interpreted the problems of city life and addressed them through their 'public' ministries. While there were many similarities amongst the various Protestant denominations, an attempt is made throughout the thesis to identify denominational particularities.

Part I: The Age of Ambition, 1850-1889

*'What a strange mass a congregation is! a mere volcano. The elements of ruin are always there, though there may be beauty and fertility on the surface; and let the pressure only be removed, and fire, desolation, and uproar are the consequences'.**

* ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, A521 *Sermons by George W. Perkins, With a Memoir* (New York: Anson D.F. Randolph, 1859), 20. The above observation was made by the Rev. George W. Perkins on 10 December 1836, while he was minister of the American Presbyterian Church in Montreal.

CHAPTER 2

Church Building and Relocation

Old things were passing away, and all things were becoming new.
- John H. MacVicar, 1904, writing about Montreal in the 1860s¹

In April 1864, the *Montreal Herald* observed the appearance of an interesting new phenomenon in Montreal, which it described as ‘the migration of the doctors and the churches’.² ‘We do not know of any more striking indication of the rapid increase of our population’, the author maintained, ‘than the migration of the physicians, for souls and bodies, which is just now taking place’. The article went on to describe the earlier north-westerly relocations of various Protestant churches, noting that there had then been a lull in such movements until the destruction of the Anglican cathedral by fire in 1856 had convinced its congregation to rebuild on the outskirts of Montreal. This event had triggered what was described as a ‘grand hegira’³ of churches and doctors. By way of explanation, the author observed that ‘the residences of doctors and the sites of churches are alike selected with the object of being as nearly as possible in the centre of population, which has...been pushed forward within a few years to a district at the beginning of the period altogether out of town’. Protestant churches, the majority of which had been transplanted from the centre of the city, were to form a significant part of this new residential landscape.

Following a more general discussion of church building and relocation in Montreal, analysis of the experiences of the six case study congregations will allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the reasoning that lay behind decisions to relocate churches in the period between 1850 and 1889. Contemporary church records and newspapers make it possible to explore how the decision was made, how new locations were chosen, and the extent to which resistance was encountered. The impact of

¹ John H. MacVicar, *Life and Work of Donald Harvey MacVicar, D.D., LL.D.* (Toronto: The Westminster Company 1904), 47.

² *Montreal Herald*, 12 April 1864.

³ The term ‘Hegira’ is an interesting one to choose to describe the migration of Protestant churches, since it originally referred to Muhammad’s flight from Mecca to Medina in the early 7th century AD. It is used here to conjure up the image of a mass departure or exodus.

denominational traditions, with their varying levels of congregational participation in decision-making, will likewise be considered. This chapter also explores the role of revivals as motivating factors in church building and relocation, and suggests that in a number of cases revival activity – and in particular the Hammond Revival of 1862 – played an important role in generating the enthusiasm, congregation numbers, and funds necessary to embark on church building and church extension projects. While the phenomenon of church relocation represented a seemingly logical response to changing urban conditions, it also posed new challenges as increasing class segregation resulted in less wealthy members being left behind or moving to areas where church provision was by contrast poor. These outcomes will be explored in greater depth in Chapters 3 and 4. Meanwhile, the troubled economic times of the late 1870s, and the associated financial problems encountered by many congregations, resulted in critiques of elaborate church building programmes, with some arguing that the city's Protestant population had become 'over-churched'.

The Early History of Montreal's Protestant Churches

Before embarking on a discussion of the relocations that took place from the 1850s onwards, it is necessary to look backwards briefly to establish the original distribution of Protestant churches in the city. In pre-industrial Montreal, the majority of Protestant church buildings were concentrated on the western side of the central part of the old town (see Figure 2.2). Following the British Conquest of New France, Anglican worship was conducted for the first time in September 1760, initially using the chapel of the Hotel Dieu and then the Recollet Chapel before finally settling in the old Jesuit chapel in 1789. When that church burnt down in 1803, the Anglicans worshipped with the Presbyterians until 1814, when Christ Church was finally completed.

Initial co-operation amongst Protestants of different ethnic backgrounds and denominational traditions gave way over time to divisions along various lines. St Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church, which had been built in 1792, started out on a broad national and religious basis: Englishmen, Irishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, New England Loyalists

and Scots were all part of the early congregation.⁴ In 1803, disagreement over the choice of a minister led to a split in the congregation and the formation of the St Peter Street Church, later called St Andrew's. While the St Gabriel Street congregation represented the higher status members of the Presbyterian community, the St Peter Street Church was supported mainly by tradesmen and mechanics of the Presbyterian faith.⁵ A small group of American traders and merchants also belonged to the St Peter Street congregation until 1822, when they - along with other sympathetic members - split away to form the American Presbyterian Church. Further disagreement over ministerial leadership led to another schism in the St Gabriel Street congregation and the formation of St Paul's Presbyterian Church in 1831. The Secessionist Presbyterians also formed their own congregation and built Erskine Church in 1833. Following the disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843, which saw the separation of the evangelical party to form the Free Church of Scotland, Côté Street Free Church was founded in Montreal.⁶ All these Presbyterian congregations built churches in close proximity to one another in or near the central part of town.

With increasing immigration in the 1840s, the Anglicans also recognised the need for more church accommodation, but unlike the Presbyterians were guided by the desire to provide places of worship that would be convenient for people living in different parts of town. Trinity Church was built in the eastern part of the old town in 1840, while St Thomas' was built farther east by brewer Thomas Molson the following year. Likewise, St George's (a proprietary chapel) was erected in 1843 just to the west of the town centre, while a permanent place of worship was built for St Ann's Chapel somewhat further west in Griffintown the following year. Meanwhile, the Methodists had begun to organize in the early years of the nineteenth century, erecting their original church in the centrally-located St Sulpice Street in 1807, and then rebuilding nearby on St James Street in 1821 in order to accommodate their growing congregation. Like the Anglicans, the Methodist community focused on building branch chapels in the eastern and western parts of town.

⁴ Robert Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, St Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal: W. Drysdale and Co. 1887), 83.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁶ Rev. D. Fraser, *A Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal* (Montreal, 1855).

Meanwhile, the Baptists established themselves in Montreal in the 1820s, building a church on St Helen Street in the central part of town in 1831, and the following year the Congregationalists erected a church on St Maurice St.

The various denominations drew on their diverse traditions as they sought to extend their networks of churches. The Rev. George W. Perkins, who was minister of the American Presbyterian Church between 1829 and 1839, was troubled by the jostling and ill-will among the Protestant churches at this time, as each competed for its continued existence. During his predecessor's ministry, the American Presbyterian Church had been supported by 'people of evangelical opinions, of different denominations, Baptists, Independents, and dissenting Presbyterians, having no congregations of their own'.⁷ When six new congregations were established for these groups during his first six years of ministry in the city, the Rev. Perkins worried that, with eleven churches and a Protestant population of only 10,000, Montreal had become 'even more crowded than New York', which had one hundred and twenty churches to a population of 250,000.⁸ Thus, during this period we see the initial co-operation that existed within the Protestant community coming under threat, as denominational, theological, and to a lesser extent ethnic and class cleavages, began to emerge and take physical form in the city.

Church Building and Relocation in Montreal: An Overview

The decade of the 1860s was an important period of transition not only for the Protestant churches, but for the city as a whole. During the late 1840s and early 1850s, Montreal had experienced an extended commercial depression, generated in part by Britain's decision to eliminate, in the interests of free trade, the preferential tariffs upon which much of Montreal's commerce had depended. The depressed atmosphere was intensified by the outbreaks of cholera that swept through the city in the late 1840s and early 1850s.⁹ The situation was exacerbated by the burning of the parliament building in

⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A380 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon preached by the pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873).

⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 184, A521 *Sermons by George W. Perkins, With a Memoir* (New York: Anson D.F. Randolph 1859).

⁹ David B. Hanna, *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), 94.

1849 by a mob of Tories angered by the Rebellion Losses Bill. This unfortunate incident led to the seat of government being removed from the city, which further contributed to the exodus of residents. A final devastating blow was the destruction of a sizeable portion of the city during a massive fire in 1852. Although the economic situation improved with the signing of the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States in 1854, further international economic troubles in 1857-58 slowed recovery. An era of prosperity had nevertheless been inaugurated. It was noted by the biographer of the Rev. Donald Harvey MacVicar that his subject, who came to Montreal in 1860 to begin his pastorate at Côté Street Free Church, had arrived during a transitional period, when 'old things were passing away, and all things were becoming new'.¹⁰ Dilapidated buildings were being razed to make way for more modern structures, and factories of all sorts proliferated along the Lachine Canal. Meanwhile, swept away by the 'march of modern progress', Montrealers marvelled at innovations like the horse-car system, the Crystal Palace, and the Victoria Tubular Bridge, one of the great engineering feats of the age.

To suggest, as did the author of the *Herald* article quoted above, that the churches and doctors were moving so as to remain in the 'centre of population' obscured an important process that was gaining momentum. The author admitted as much when he stated that Montreal had 'now reached that stage when the business man cannot afford to live over his business, but has to seek, not less for economy than for elegance and comfort, a portion of the city appropriated expressly to private dwellings'. In other words, the migration of Protestant churches represented an attempt to remain central not to the general population, but to a specific element within that population. Hence, the movement of churches was intimately connected with the emergence of the city's first spatially segregated upper middle-class residential neighbourhood. Given the prominence of the English-speaking Protestant population in business and commercial enterprises, this neighbourhood was also distinguished by the ethno-religious composition of its residents. To emphasize the rapidity of the changes taking place, John Aston Wilkes, the son of the city's most prominent Congregational minister, suggested to his absent fiancée in 1860 that she would be amazed by the transformation that had occurred in her absence,

¹⁰ MacVicar, *Life and Work of Donald Harvey MacVicar*, 47. These words echo Revelation 21:4-5 which describes the New Jerusalem.

particularly along streets such as Dorchester and St Catherine where fields were rapidly giving way to long rows of handsome houses.¹¹

These houses were located in the upper portion of St Antoine Ward, sometimes referred to as the 'New Town' or 'West End', which in the twentieth century came to be known as the 'Square Mile'.¹² More often, the area was simply referred to as being 'uptown'. By 1870, it was noted that most of the 'first-class' housing being built was restricted to the upper part of St Antoine ward, while new working-class housing was grouped in certain sections of the suburbs such as the western end of St Joseph and Point St Charles. Intermediate housing, in contrast, was more generally distributed throughout the city.¹³ Development of the uptown district accelerated following the introduction of a horse-drawn streetcar service, which by 1864 took passengers as far along St Catherine as Mountain Street.¹⁴ The physical geography of the city also played an important role. Defining features of Montreal's physical landscape are terraces created by glacial, marine, and fluvial activity.¹⁵ A pedestrian walking from the old city centre on the edge of the St Lawrence River towards the summit of Mount Royal, in the middle of Montreal Island, encounters a series of terraces or plateaus which are separated by relatively steep inclines. An uptown move offered wealthier residents an escape from the unhealthy and fire-prone high density living conditions of the lower parts of town, while institutions that moved uphill could hope to benefit from the visibility afforded them by an elevated location (see Figure 2.1). While the few Protestant churches that moved outwards in the 1840s and 1850s tended to concentrate just to the north-west of the city centre on the Beaver Hall Hill approach to the plateau above, the decision by Christ Church Cathedral

¹¹ Rare Books Collection McGill University, MS 216, Lighthall Family Papers, C.22, File 22/34, Letters of Alice (Elsie) Sabine Wilkes 1854-1881, Letter from John Aston Wilkes to Elsie A. Sabine, 17 June 1860.

¹² See Figure 2.4 for boundaries of the area being discussed. Definitions of the boundaries of the district in question are somewhat flexible, but generally specify the Mountain to the north, the edge of the plateau (later the CPR tracks) just below Dorchester Street to the south, Cote des Neiges to the west, and University Street / Phillips Square / Beaver Hall Hill to the east. For descriptions of these boundaries see Edgar Andrew Collard, *Montreal Gazette* 20 May 1989; Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, viii; Roderick MacLeod, *Salubrious Settings and Fortunate Families: The Making of Montreal's Golden Square Mile, 1840-1895* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 1997), 1.

¹³ *Montreal Witness*, 5 December 1870.

¹⁴ Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, 155.

¹⁵ Jean-Claude Robert, *Atlas historique de Montréal* (Montréal: Libre Expression 1994), 17.

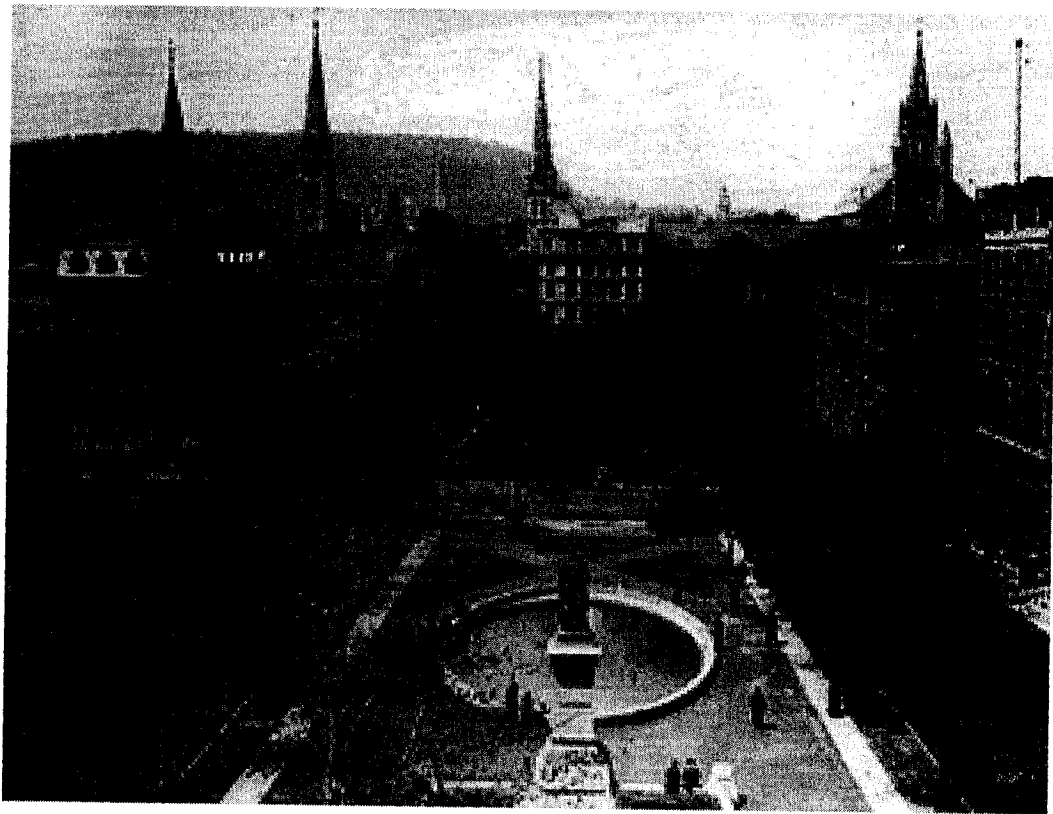


Figure 2.1 Victoria Square looking towards Mount Royal, 1887.
(Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, VIEW-1565.A.2).

to build on the upper-level terrace signalled the beginning of a trend that was to take off in the 1860s and 1870s. By 1889, every one of Montreal's centrally-located Protestant churches had 'moved up the hill' from the increasingly commercial downtown core, with all but one choosing to rebuild in the prosperous uptown district, alongside the new churches that were being established in this area. By the 1880s, enthusiasts were willing to write of this district that 'there is perhaps no wealthier city area in the world than that comprised between Beaver Hall Hill and the foot of Mount Royal, and between the parallel lines of Dorchester and Sherbrooke Streets in the West End'.¹⁶

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 provide an overview of the phenomenon of Protestant church relocation as it unfolded in Montreal between 1841 and 1880. With Anglicans making up about 40 percent of Montreal's Protestant population, Presbyterians about 30 percent, and Methodists slightly over 15 percent, it is not surprising that these three denominations accounted for the vast majority of church relocations. Presbyterian churches were the principal movers, particularly in the 1860 to 1880 period, and they tended to move greater distances than congregations belonging to other denominations. As the more detailed map focusing on relocations to the uptown district indicates (see Figure 2.4), the Presbyterian congregations moved there *en masse*, resulting in a concentration of Presbyterian congregations within just a few blocks of each other. This can be explained by the affluence of the Presbyterian community in Montreal and also by the schismatic nature of Presbyterianism, which encouraged the proliferation of congregations in the first half of the nineteenth century and hindered the implementation of the Church of Scotland's traditional parish system. Despite the creation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875, which all the Presbyterian churches in Montreal joined with the exception of the American Presbyterian Church and St Andrew's, it was nevertheless accepted that the various congregations would continue to be quite distinct from one another as a result of their diverse historical traditions and ministerial preferences.¹⁷ In the case of the Anglicans, while the Parish of Montreal was not officially subdivided into ten separate parishes until 1872, each church was allocated its own district by the early

¹⁶ Rare Books Collection McGill University, Lande Collection 2173, *The St Lawrence Hall Montreal City Guide* (Montreal: Canada Bank Note Co. 1885), 25.

¹⁷ *Montreal Herald*, 7 May 1877; Robert Campbell, *On the Union of Presbyterians in Canada* (Montreal: F.E. Grafton 1871), 33.

Figure 2.2 English Protestant Churches in 1860, Showing Moves 1841-1860

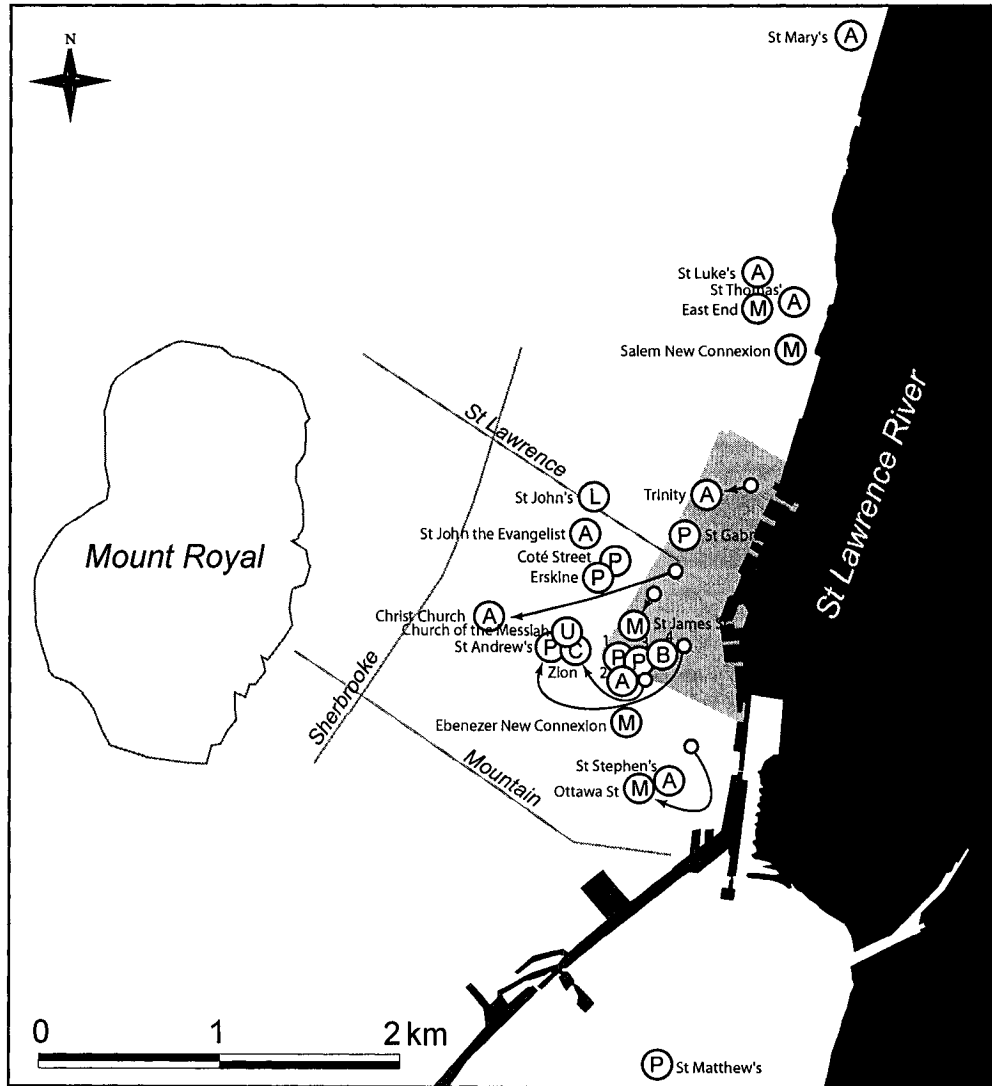


Figure 2.3 English Protestant Churches in 1880, Showing Moves 1861-1880

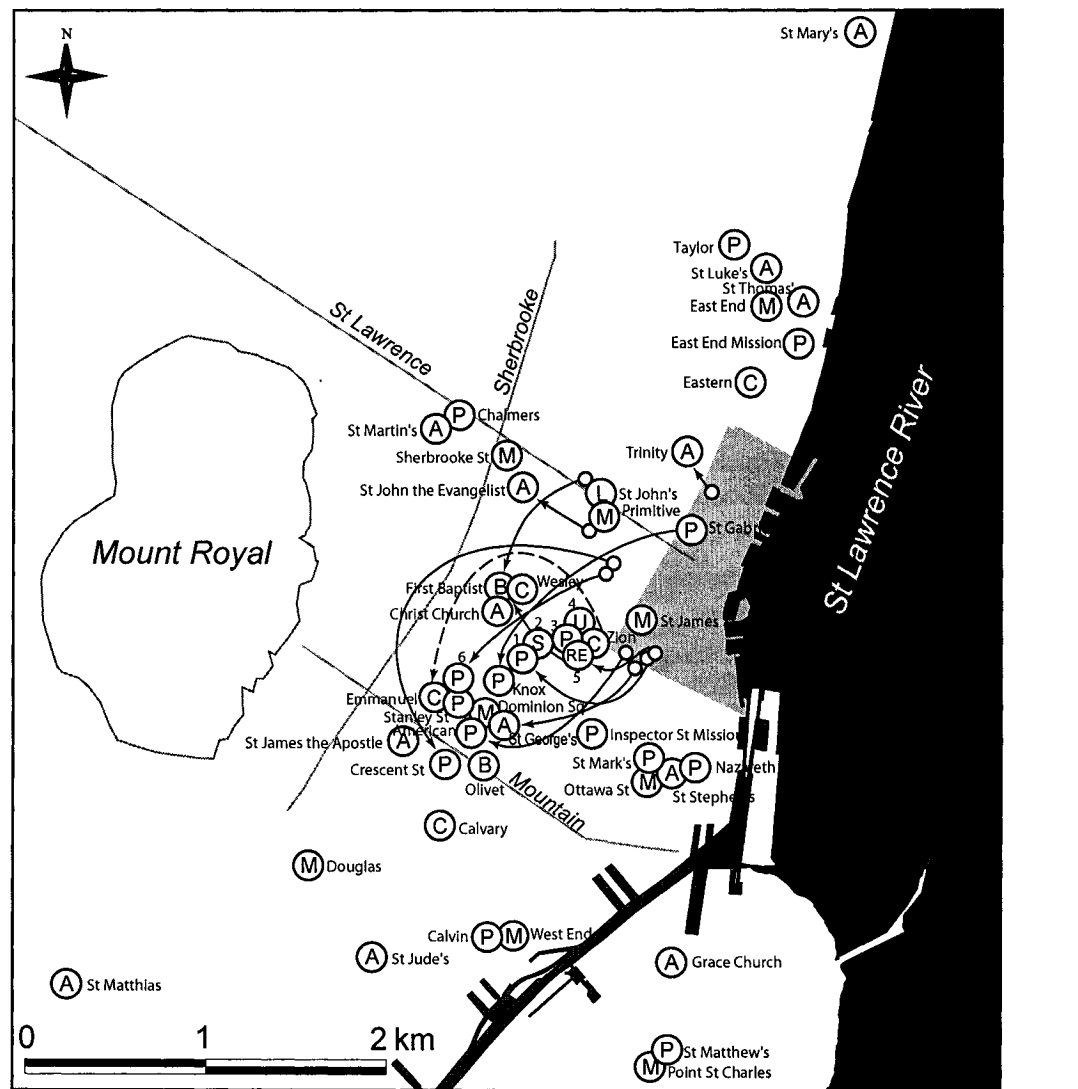
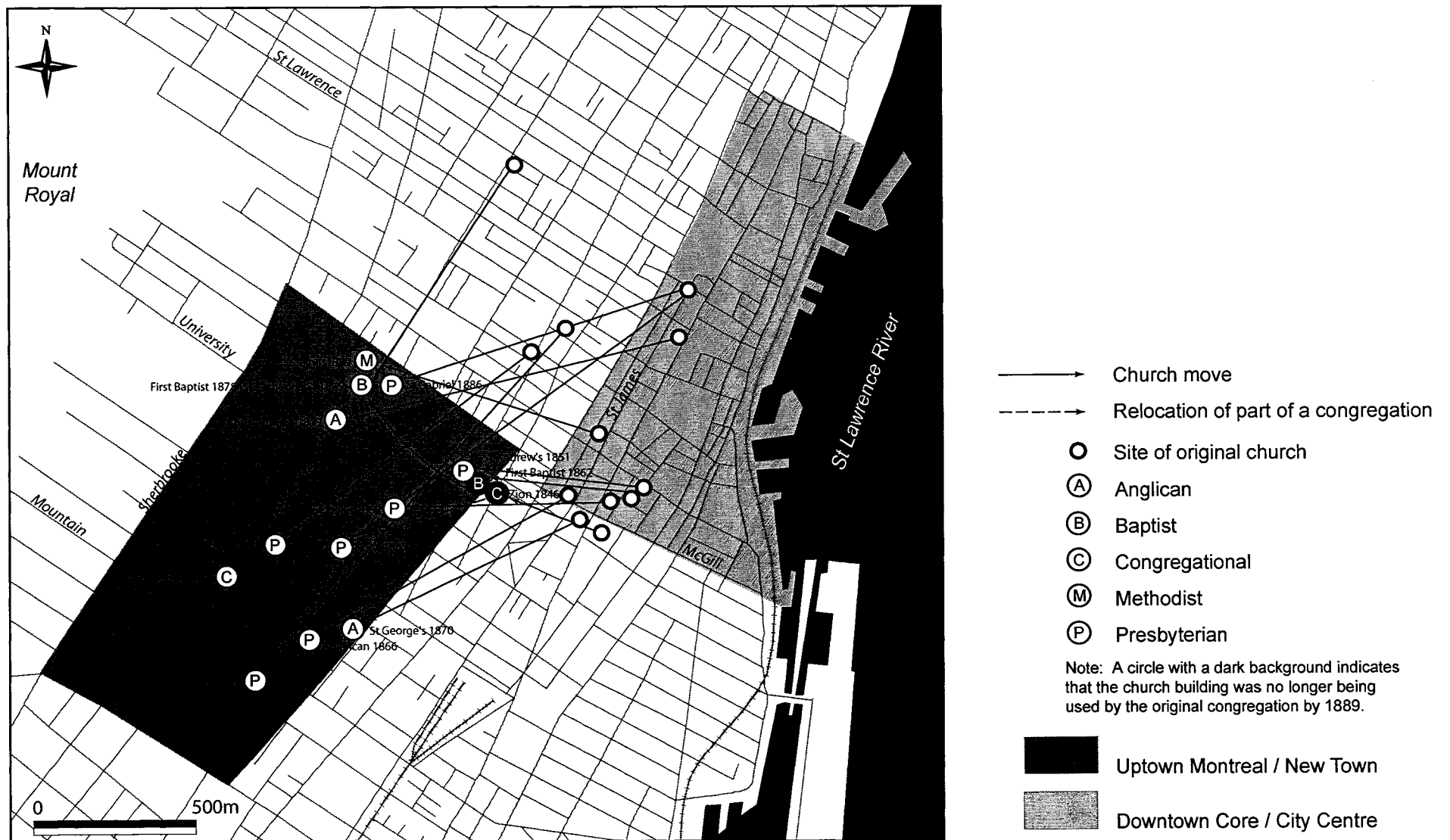


Figure 2.4 Relocation of Churches into the Uptown District 1846-1889



1860s.¹⁸ The imposition of district boundaries limited the ability of churches to move freely from one part of the city to another, although some churches had boundaries that allowed them to make an uptown move while still remaining within their 'parish'. The Methodists had a similar system of circuits, with St James Methodist Church acting as the 'mother church' to virtually all the other Wesleyan Methodist churches in the city, thus ensuring a more orderly and well-dispersed pattern of church extension, and restricting the amount of church relocation that could take place. It should be noted, however, that the overall mobility of Protestant congregations was in stark contrast with the much greater permanence and stability of the city's French and Irish Roman Catholic churches, with their corresponding French and English parishes.

Congregations offered practical and apparently straightforward explanations for their decisions to abandon older places of worship in the centre of the city. The commercialization of the downtown core, and the movement of the Protestant population to residential areas to the north and west, were cited as the main factors motivating church relocation. Most church moves involved distances of between half and one-and-a-half kilometres, with the majority of churches choosing sites less than a kilometre from their original homes. In other words, as has been observed in other cities, the distances involved were in most cases relatively small.¹⁹ While contemporary Montrealers were reputed not to be enthusiastic walkers, the distance between the residences of congregation members and their churches can provide only a partial explanation of the momentous decision to abandon churches located in the centre of the city.²⁰

The need to keep congregations together and prevent loss of membership to other congregations was also important, particularly in a context where churches depended on voluntary donations to finance all church expenditures. Thus, an uptown move was often seen as a necessity if a congregation was to improve, or at least maintain, its financial position. Financial incentives for moves were also provided by the increasing land values

¹⁸ John Irwin Cooper, *The Blessed Communion: the Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-1960* (Montreal: The Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal 1960), 102; *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada, June 16, 17, and 18, 1863* (Montreal: John Lovell 1863), 34.

¹⁹ Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991), 79.

²⁰ Rev. Ashton Oxenden, *The History of My Life: An Autobiography* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 1891), 166.

in the city centre. Although the money obtained from the sale of old church properties was never enough to finance the building of a new uptown church, it often provided a substantial nucleus for the building fund. The desire to erect churches in the uptown district may also have been influenced by the acknowledged ability of churches to enhance the value of surrounding property, although more often this argument was used by congregations after the fact to encourage financial support from people living in the neighbourhood.²¹ Some congregations also hoped to reduce the chance of losing their building to fire by moving to the outskirts of town; this was especially true in the case of Christ Church Cathedral which had already lost two earlier places of worship in this way. Other congregations, such as St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, were more concerned with improving and expanding church facilities, which could only be done by escaping the cramped conditions downtown.

When one looks at individual congregations, it is clear that in each case a slightly different combination of factors generated the decision to move and that certain factors were more important at different points in time. Churches that relocated in the late 1840s and 1850s tended to move to the closest edge of the uptown district and were primarily concerned with the unfavourable situation of their old buildings and the inability of these structures to accommodate their congregations in a comfortable manner. By the 1860s, congregations were moving further west as a result of the realization that the Protestant population was beginning to move out to the 'west end' of the city and that it would become increasingly inconvenient for their members to travel to downtown churches. By the 1870s and 1880s, congregations that remained in their original locations were experiencing a significant loss of membership, and considered it unviable to remain any longer.

Changing ecclesiastical architectural styles spurred on the desire to abandon old buildings and construct new ones. The vast majority of church buildings that were being left behind had been erected within the past thirty to forty years and therefore had little perceived 'historic' value. The absence of burial grounds in connection with these churches also made moving much easier. Virtually all of the churches built uptown were impressive Gothic mansions, and conformed to much higher architectural standards than

²¹ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 25 March 1879. See also *Montreal Witness*, 31 August 1889.

their predecessors, which had been built in a range of different styles. This was in keeping with the broad Anglo-American shift that took place during the Victorian era that promoted Gothic as opposed to neoclassical as being the most appropriate form of Christian architecture. 'Grecian and Roman temples,' it was argued, 'being constructed for the peculiar rites and ceremonies of the Pagan religion, were never proper types of temples for the worship of the true God'.²² In contrast, the Gothic style with its steep roof and tapering spire and pinnacles, all pointing upwards, 'lead the mind from earthly thoughts to things above'. This shift has been well-documented for Montreal and elsewhere.²³ Clarence Epstein's detailed examination of church architecture in Montreal during the period between 1760 and 1860 demonstrates that in the period prior to 1860, most nonconformist churches were disinclined to adopt the neo-Gothic style, although the Methodists were more willing to do so in their efforts to compete with the Anglicans.²⁴ Of the case study churches that will be studied in more detail below, only St Paul's (Church of Scotland) Presbyterian and St George's Anglican built their original churches in the Gothic style in 1834 and 1844 respectively. In the case of St James Methodist Church, the shift to Gothic took place when they built their third church in 1845. Côté Street Free Church and Zion Congregational Church both erected neoclassical churches in the 1840s, as did the American Presbyterians (albeit with some Gothic elements) when they opened their first church in 1826. Only when they moved uptown in the 1860s did the American Presbyterian congregation choose to adopt the Gothic style, as did the Côté Street congregation when they moved to the higher level to build Crescent Street Church in the 1870s. Unable to resist the appeal of Gothic uniformity and grandeur, the members who left Zion Church to build the uptown Emmanuel Congregational Church in 1877 also

²² *Canadian Independent*, 20(8) (February 1874), 238.

²³ See Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, 82; Charles D. Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2000), 234-235; Les *Eglises: Répertoire d'architecture traditionnelle sur le territoire de la communauté urbaine de Montréal. Architecture religieuse I*. (Montréal: Communauté urbaine de Montréal, Service de la planification du territoire 1981); *Le patrimoine de Montréal: document de référence* (Montréal: Ville de Montréal 1998); William Westfall and Malcolm Thurlby, 'Church Architecture and Urban Space: The Development of Ecclesiastical Forms in Nineteenth-Century Ontario', in *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S. Careless*, eds. David Keane and Colin Read (Toronto: Dundurn Press 1990), 140-142.

²⁴ Clarence Epstein, *Church Architecture in Montreal During the British-Colonial Period 1760-1860* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh 1999), 207-208.

opted for what had by then become an almost universal architectural style for Protestant churches in Montreal.

Competition with rival churches or denominations also played a part in decisions to relocate and rebuild on a grander scale. Prior to their amalgamation into the Methodist Church of Canada in 1884, smaller Methodist groups such as the Primitive Methodists agonized over their inability to compete. In 1875, a Primitive Methodist preacher wrote of the need to obtain a proper church to replace the hall where they were currently worshipping, since Montreal was a city in which all were drawn into the 'giddy stream' of fashion, and all the other denominations had splendid churches.²⁵ Great care was nevertheless taken to ensure that competition with rival churches or denominations did not become too obvious, as Protestants were generally anxious to avoid being criticized by Catholics for their internal divisions. The Methodists, for example, emphasized that St James Street Methodist Church was moving uptown and taking its stand in its magnificent new location 'not in the attitude of hostility but of honourable rivalry in God's service with other churches'.²⁶ Rather surprisingly, given their close proximity to one another and the tensions that had been caused by the schisms of the earlier nineteenth century, the Presbyterian congregations exhibited very little hostility to one another following their uptown moves. It was noted by the Rev. Henry Wilkes at the cornerstone laying of the Crescent Street Church, that its erection so near the locality of four other churches of the same denomination elicited nothing but cordial feelings from their respective occupants.²⁷

There was also competition with the Roman Catholics, who - like the Protestants - were engaged in major church building projects. As one Methodist correspondent noted: 'Popery has her gorgeously decorated temples, looking proudly down on us from every quarter, while amongst Protestants there is a tremendous competition as to who shall rival

²⁵ *Christian Journal*, 1 January 1875, as quoted in S.D. Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), 333.

²⁶ G.E. Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church, Montreal: from the first rise of Methodism in Montreal to the laying of the corner-stone of the new church on St. Catherine Street* (Toronto: William Briggs 1888); *Montreal Herald*, 13 June 1887.

²⁷ *Montreal Herald*, 7 May 1877.

her'.²⁸ Bishop Ignace Bourget's ongoing project to build a scaled-down version of St Peter's Basilica as his new cathedral, right in the heart of the uptown district, represented a particularly threatening form of competition, as it eventually came to dwarf the surrounding Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches (see Figure 2.5).²⁹ Churches could take on an especially potent symbolism during periods of tension between Protestants and Catholics. During the controversy over the Jesuits' Estates Act in 1889, Douglas Borthwick wrote to the *Montreal Witness* to contradict the view that Protestantism was dying out in Quebec:

Surely, when one looks around and sees the marks of Protestant prosperity in Montreal alone, in its grand churches, built and being built, in its Protestant schools, ever increasing and taxing to the utmost the Commissioners' power to supply buildings to accommodate the children – when we see the marks of the prosperity of Protestantism in the immense mills of every kind in the city and throughout the country, the large factories, foundries, and the grand lines of steamers owned by Protestants – when we look at the banks, insurance companies, institutions of learning, and as fine private residences as can be seen in any city – surely the cry cannot go forth that Protestantism is dying out in the city of Montreal and Province of Quebec. Never.³⁰

Thus, like other indicators of prosperity in the urban landscape, elegant and monumental religious structures could be used to bolster the self-confidence of a Protestant community that grew to see itself as a threatened minority, stranded in a sea of Roman Catholicism, in the years following Confederation.

While travellers' guides and visitors' descriptions of Montreal presented churches simply as one element, albeit an important one, among a wide range of civil, commercial, and private buildings that contributed to the civic pride of the city, from the perspective of the churches it was important that their places of worship compare favourably with the impressive secular buildings that were being built at this time. At the cornerstone laying of the new Anglican cathedral in 1857, Bishop Francis Fulford reminded his flock that their efforts should not be influenced by rivalry with the other domes and spires that were rising round about, nor should they be guided by the desire to adorn the commercial

²⁸ *Christian Journal*, 6 August 1875, as quoted in Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada*, 333.

²⁹ Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990), 210-213; *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899.

³⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 27 June 1889. The author of this letter is probably the Rev. John Douglas Borthwick, an Anglican minister in Montreal.



Figure 2.5 Looking eastwards along Dorchester Street, c.1878. Knox Presbyterian Church is in the foreground on the left. St James Roman Catholic Cathedral is under construction on the far right, and it is clear from the scale of construction that it will soon dwarf the surrounding churches. St Paul's Presbyterian Church, St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, and the various Protestant churches on Beaver Hall Hill are also visible in the background (Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, MP0000.1452.23).

capital of the province with yet another handsome architectural ornament. Instead, with 'the private dwelling, the mart, the exchange, the bank, the store, advancing in grandeur and magnificence', the Bishop argued that they should dedicate their best to God.³¹ Thus, competition with the secular world helped to spur on and justify the erection of imposing church buildings. The Methodists shared the view that their places of worship needed to keep pace with the costly secular buildings that were being erected in the commercial, political, and intellectual centres of the nation.³² Presbyterians likewise agreed that 'the temples of religion should hold their proper place alongside the halls of justice, the marts of commerce, the shops of traders, and the mansions of our merchant princes'.³³ In the face of growing prosperity and worldliness, the building of imposing churches allowed churchgoers to demonstrate their Christian liberality and faith in God, while simultaneously believing that they were helping to secure Canada's future as a Protestant land.

The idea of fighting worldliness in the surrounding society by erecting beautiful places of worship represented a shift in thinking for groups like the Presbyterians and Methodists who had previously made a virtue of simplicity and austerity in the design of their places of worship. Such old-fashioned ideals were, however, difficult to sustain in an increasingly prosperous society, where physical appearances were believed to reflect the inner spiritual state of institutions as much as individuals, and where prosperity was seen by many as a sign of God's blessing. James Smith, an architect speaking before the Central Association of Congregational Ministers and Churches in Toronto in 1874, recommended that everything possible be done to make a church attractive, since the appearance of a church building was generally thought to be indicative of the state of its membership. 'If we see a church dirty and out of repair', he maintained, 'we must naturally conclude that piety is at a low ebb in that church'.³⁴ The ubiquitous attempts, at cornerstone layings and church openings, to provide Biblical validation for the grandeur of the churches that were being erected in the uptown district nevertheless suggests a

³¹ *Montreal Gazette*, 22 May 1857.

³² *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, 29 (January to June 1889), 472-473.

³³ *Montreal Gazette*, 10 June 1867. This statement was made by the Rev. Kenneth McLennan, Moderator of Synod, at the cornerstone laying of St Paul's Church.

³⁴ *Canadian Independent*, 20(8) (February 1874), 237.

perceived need to justify the changes that were taking place. A favoured Biblical precedent was that it was unseemly for congregation members to live in ‘houses of cedar’ while the worship of God was carried on in meaner buildings, referring to the passage in 2 Samuel where King David expressed concern that he was living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remained in a tent.³⁵ The overall argument in favour of monumental church building was, however, summed up at the opening of St James Methodist Church in 1889 by the Rev. Dr. Shaw, who argued that ‘the humbler style of church architecture has its place: but its place, except in the opinion of open foes or doubtful friends, is surely not here, if we would make our church in this city most potent in moving men to God and goodness’.³⁶ At the same time it was recognized that earthly temples were only necessary because of the sinfulness of mankind. Churches were seen as monuments of faith, but they were also described as being like the ‘garrisons of a king in a once loyal but now disloyal province’, their very presence a sorrowful reflection of human disobedience in light of God’s Word.³⁷

The Impact of Revivalism

The vision of churches as garrisons implies that those within the churches saw themselves as a select group of individuals who were loyal to God and willing to take action on His behalf. Such an image was in keeping with the evangelical ethos of the age, in which conversion from sin and the world was expected to lead to a godly and Christian life.³⁸ One factor that is often ignored in modern accounts of nineteenth-century church building and relocation is the role played by revivalism. As suggested in the introductory

³⁵ This passage from 2 Samuel 7:2 is explicitly referred to at the cornerstone laying of Christ Church Cathedral (*Montreal Gazette*, May 22 1857) and at the opening of St Paul’s Church (*Montreal Witness*, 28 September 1867). It is referred to more obliquely at the openings of Stanley Street Church and the new St Gabriel Church (*Montreal Witness*, 28 December 1874; *Montreal Herald*, 27 September 1886).

³⁶ Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church*, 54.

³⁷ Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, 732.

³⁸ For further discussion of nineteenth century Canadian evangelicalism, see G.A. Rawlyk, ed., *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1997); Chad Reimer, ‘Review: Religion and Culture in Nineteenth-Century English Canada’, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 25(1) (1990), 192-203; Marguerite Van Die, ‘“The Marks of a Genuine Revival”: Religion, Social Change, Gender, and Community in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario’, *The Canadian Historical Review*, 79 (3) (1998), 524-563. For a contemporary discussion of evangelicalism from an Anglican perspective, see Oxenden, *The History of My Life*, 61-64.

chapter, there tends to be a dichotomy between those who argue that spiritual motivations dominated the elaborate Gothic church building programmes of the mid-Victorian era and those who emphasize the secular social and economic factors that were at play.³⁹ And yet, as will be demonstrated more thoroughly in the congregational case studies below, explanations that try to understand the dynamic interactions among these various factors provide a more satisfactory explanation of what was actually taking place at the congregational level. While the growing prosperity and material aspirations of the times certainly encouraged congregations to embark on impressive church building projects, the decision to divert surplus capital to fiscally non-productive communal enterprises such as church building also took place in the context of the transatlantic revival movement of the late 1850s and early 1860s.

This period witnessed the emergence of a new type of urban revivalism, which was usually led by professional evangelists, and which was more subdued and respectable than earlier forms of revival activity. Individuals were still expected to undergo some sort of religious experience, but greater emphasis was placed on practical outcomes, such as living a Christian life and participating in good works, rather than on the outward displays of emotion associated with earlier revival conversions.⁴⁰ Timothy Smith has argued that the familiar image of earlier frontier camp meetings has obscured the extent to which the revival measures used in nineteenth-century American cities were associated with progressive theology and humanitarian concern, and suggests that it was only as a result of this emphasis that they received the broad support of those who saw Christianity as having a vibrant role to play in the reformation of human society, albeit on highly individualistic terms.⁴¹ Greater emphasis on the outcome of conversion rather than the act of conversion itself broadened the appeal of revivalism and made it easier to downplay theological differences between Arminian Methodists, for whom a conversion experience was a prerequisite to salvation, and Protestant Calvinists, who placed greater

³⁹ Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 60.

⁴⁰ Brian Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 284.

⁴¹ Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press 1957), 46, 60.

importance on right belief. Revivals took on more of an interdenominational character during this period, and over time traditional participants such as the Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, and secessionist Presbyterians were joined by other Presbyterians and evangelical Anglicans who had previously remained aloof.⁴²

While a revival could be limited to a particular church, denomination, or area, a transatlantic revival movement such as that which emerged in North America in 1857, and went on to sweep through Ulster, Wales, Scotland, and parts of England, represented a more widespread phenomenon. There is a general consensus that, despite its geographical scope and extended duration, this revival movement did not constitute a true 'awakening' since it failed to bring about any 'fundamental upheaval in the broad patterns of religious and secular life'.⁴³ Similarly, McLoughlin differentiates between revivals, which transform the lives of individuals, and awakenings, which 'alter the world view of a whole people or culture', and suggests that the Prayer Meeting Revival of 1857 helped to confirm rather than challenge the prevailing ideological consensus.⁴⁴ One of the interesting features of the revivals that took place during this period was the impact that they had on urban businessmen. Economic depression and financial crisis in 1857-58 appears to have played a role in triggering the revivals in the United States, as discouraged businessmen turned to God in troubled times.⁴⁵ As a result, the revival was sometimes referred to by contemporaries as the Businessman's Revival.⁴⁶ According to Carwardine, the converts, who were drawn disproportionately from the northern US states and from urban areas, contained an unusually large proportion of adult men, some of whom were leaders in their communities.⁴⁷ It has also been noted that the majority of converts 'came from within the unregenerate but evangelically minded group of church

⁴² Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', 284.

⁴³ Richard Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 1978), 159.

⁴⁴ William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1978), xiii., 141.

⁴⁵ Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 159; McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, 141; Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival", 123.

⁴⁶ McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, 141.

⁴⁷ Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 162.

adherents', rather than from those beyond the boundaries of respectable society.⁴⁸ Economic factors alone cannot, however, provide a sufficient explanation for the revivalism of this period, as revivals only began to occur in Britain once the economy had begun to improve.⁴⁹ By the time the well-known revivalist Edward Payson Hammond arrived in Montreal in December 1862, the economy was performing well, but this does not appear to have prevented Protestant Montrealers from experiencing the revival that some within the community had long been praying for.

Montreal's Methodists and Congregationalists had experienced revivals in 1851, but their impact was short-lived.⁵⁰ By 1852, the deacons of Zion Congregational Church were already complaining of spiritual coldness and lack of participation in church life, and were puzzled by the fact that people were failing to turn towards God in such troubled times, since 'when Israel of old was visited with calamity, enquiry and anxiety were uniformly followed by repentance and a more zealous performance of duty and seeking after the smiles of God's countenance'.⁵¹ Another cholera epidemic in 1854 was also noted as having produced a 'hardening effect'.⁵² Under such conditions, it proved difficult to translate the gains of the 1851 revivals into sustained action on the part of congregations. No doubt encouraged by news of the revivals taking place in the United States, in 1858 the evangelical Protestant Ministerial Association decided to hold daily united prayer revival meetings in the American Presbyterian Church in an attempt to stimulate an atmosphere of spiritual enquiry.⁵³ While these meetings produced evidence of renewed commitment within congregations, the ministers were disappointed that their

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 193.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁵⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 15 April 1851; P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/1/1 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1832-1857, June 1851.

⁵¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, 27 September 1852; Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1852, presented 5 January 1853.

⁵² ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 12 December 1854.

⁵³ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 2 March 1858; May 1858; 22 November 1858.

efforts failed to reach 'the mass of the non-religious community'.⁵⁴ Further ministerial meetings were held which discussed the ongoing revivals in the United States, and then, once the revivals had spread to Ireland and Scotland, they considered the question of 'Revivals in Ireland and Scotland and what shall we do?'.⁵⁵ Montreal was not yet ready to experience a revival of its own, but stirrings of religious enthusiasm began to be felt and the evangelical ministers continued to hope that people would respond to their plain and earnest preaching of the gospel message.⁵⁶ In January 1863, the ministers were finally able to report that a remarkable work of grace was in progress in the churches of the city.⁵⁷

Edward Payson Hammond, fresh from successful revival meetings in Hamilton and London in Upper Canada, inaugurated a new revival movement in Montreal when he preached to crowded meetings in the American Presbyterian Church in December 1862.⁵⁸ Hammond was a college graduate and a New Englander of Congregationalist background. Converted at the age of seventeen, and determined to devote his life to missionary work, he had as a student participated in the New York revival of 1858. While pursuing his studies in Glasgow, Hammond found himself swept up in the enthusiastic revivalism that had followed him there, and in 1859 took on the role of itinerant evangelist with considerable success.⁵⁹ On his return to the United States, he gained a national reputation following his successful leadership of revivals in Boston, Massachusetts and Portland, Maine, which led to further invitations to carry out union meetings in various cities on the Eastern seaboard. His experience in both the United States and Scotland, as well as elsewhere in Canada, must have proved useful in a city like Montreal.

⁵⁴ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, May 1858.

⁵⁵ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 22 December 1858; 8 November 1859.

⁵⁶ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 8 November 1859; 9 December 1859; 19 November 1861; P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1858, 1859.

⁵⁷ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 13 January 1863.

⁵⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862.

⁵⁹ Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 186-187; Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, 73-74.

Hammond's theology, like that of later evangelists such as Dwight L. Moody, emphasized Divine love while avoiding the tactics of earlier revivalists such as James Caughey, who was better known for inspiring terror in his listeners.⁶⁰ Thus, although Hammond did tell one of his audiences at the American Presbyterian Church that he hoped that they would come speedily to Christ, so as not to 'tempt God to take from them children, relatives, wealth, and all that was held dear, in order to bring them to the knowledge of His gospel', in his farewell address he stated that 'one of the most pleasing features of this revival was the large number of Christians who had learned something of the Divine love'.⁶¹ The call to serve Christ also formed an important part of Hammond's message, and he entreated audiences in Montreal 'to serve Jesus now' while they were still able to engage in the work.⁶² In an article concerning the ongoing revival in the *Montreal Witness*, Christians were similarly warned not to allow the avid pursuit of business, pleasure, and other interests to distract them from their duty of participating personally in the evangelization of the world.⁶³

Hammond was known for the undenominational character of his efforts. Early on in the Montreal meetings, attention was drawn to the 'catholic and union character of the work' and all Christians were called upon to co-operate.⁶⁴ Local American Presbyterians, Free Church Presbyterians, Wesleyan Methodists, and Congregationalists all took part in and were influenced by the revival. Services were originally held at the American Presbyterian Church, where the Rev. Hammond was assisted by James Bonar, the church's minister, as well as by Henry Wilkes, minister of Zion Church, and William Parker, minister of the Methodist Church in the east end.⁶⁵ At one meeting, the Rev. Mr Brookman, an Anglican minister from the Diocese of Huron, also participated in the service by making 'an eloquent and fervid appeal to the audience', which suggests that

⁶⁰ Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 118. James Caughey preached revivals in Montreal's Methodist churches in 1835, 1841, and 1851.

⁶¹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862; 31 December 1862.

⁶² *Montreal Witness*, 31 December 1862.

⁶³ *Montreal Witness*, 24 December 1862.

⁶⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862.

⁶⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862.

some local Anglicans may also have been involved.⁶⁶ The evening meetings eventually became so large that they were moved to the nearby St James Street Methodist Church which was the largest Protestant place of worship in the city. Ultimately, this too became overcrowded, and those who were already Christians were asked to move to the Lecture Room of the church and pray for the conversion of souls, so that the Gospel could be preached to the unconverted above. It was estimated that three thousand people formed the main congregation, while another three or four hundred participated in the prayer meeting in the basement below.⁶⁷

Hammond's approach to revivalism appealed to conservative evangelicals, and involved holding separate inquirers' meetings where those who were anxious about their souls could pray and converse with ministers or other Christian laypeople.⁶⁸ The Rev. James Bonar of the American Presbyterian Church, who described himself as being 'by nature conservative', initially had misgivings about the inquiry meetings but quickly warmed to them once he saw them in operation.⁶⁹ To whom did these meetings appeal? One inquiry meeting was reported as attracting nearly two hundred people of all ages and positions in life, some of whom were already members of churches, but who confessed to being only 'nominal professors' or 'backsliders'.⁷⁰ Hammond was also known for his emphasis on special services for children and young people, and in Montreal special services were held for this group on a daily basis.⁷¹ Both Zion Congregational Church and the American Presbyterian Church kept good records of their membership, and both compiled new membership lists shortly after the revival.⁷² Figure 2.6 and Figure 2.7

⁶⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 24 December 1862. The Diocese of Huron was known for its high concentration of evangelical ministers according to Richard W. Vaudry, 'Evangelical Anglicans and the Atlantic World: Politics, Ideology, and the British North American Connection', in *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States*, eds. G.A. Rawlyk and M.A. Noll (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997), 173.

⁶⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 31 December 1862. Such figures are plausible, as the capacity of the St James Street Methodist Church was variously estimated at between two to three thousand (*Montreal Gazette*, 8 May 1845; *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888).

⁶⁸ Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 187; *Montreal Witness*, 31 December 1862.

⁶⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862.

⁷⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 20 December 1862.

⁷¹ *Montreal Witness*, 31 December 1862.

⁷² The following discussion is based on evidence from: ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/12/1 Church Register 1842-1903; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A394/3 *Manual of the*

show the membership of Zion Congregational Church in 1865 and the American Presbyterian Church in 1864, charted by date of admission to the congregation and gender. Although one would expect a large percentage of members to have joined in more recent years, the graphs clearly show that 1863 represented an extraordinary year in terms of membership growth. According to Marguerite Van Die, nineteenth-century observers considered a key mark of revival to be the equalizing of gender imbalances in the churches through an influx of male converts, although she found no evidence of this occurring as a result of revivals in Brantford during the 1850s.⁷³ The membership of both Zion and the American Presbyterian Church was approximately 40 percent male and 60 percent female overall, a figure which remained remarkably constant over the course of the century, and yet in the case of Zion Church the number of male members who joined in 1863, soon after the revival, actually surpassed the number of new female members. New male members were only somewhat more prevalent than usual at the American Presbyterian Church during the same year. Henry Wilkes, the minister of Zion Church, kept very detailed records that indicated the family relations of his members. An analysis of those who joined in 1863 shows that of the 56 who did so by profession rather than by letter of transfer (out of the 79 individuals who joined in total), at least 70 percent (39 individuals) had a relative who was already a member of the congregation. Of the 39 new members who were related to congregation members, almost 70 percent (27 individuals) were the sons or daughters, nephews or nieces, of congregation members. A year after the Hammond Revival, members of the evangelical Ministerial Association reported on the impact of the revival. Data from seven churches demonstrated that additions to membership by profession of faith far exceeded those of former years, with 430 new members joining the seven churches during 1863. Other churches connected with the Ministerial Association also experienced membership increases, leading the brethren to bear ‘unanimous and emphatic testimony to the genuineness of the work, as proved by the

American Presbyterian Church in the City of Montreal, compiled by order of session, July, 1864 (Montreal: John Lovell, Printer, 1864).

⁷³ Van Die, “The Marks of a Genuine Revival”, 535.

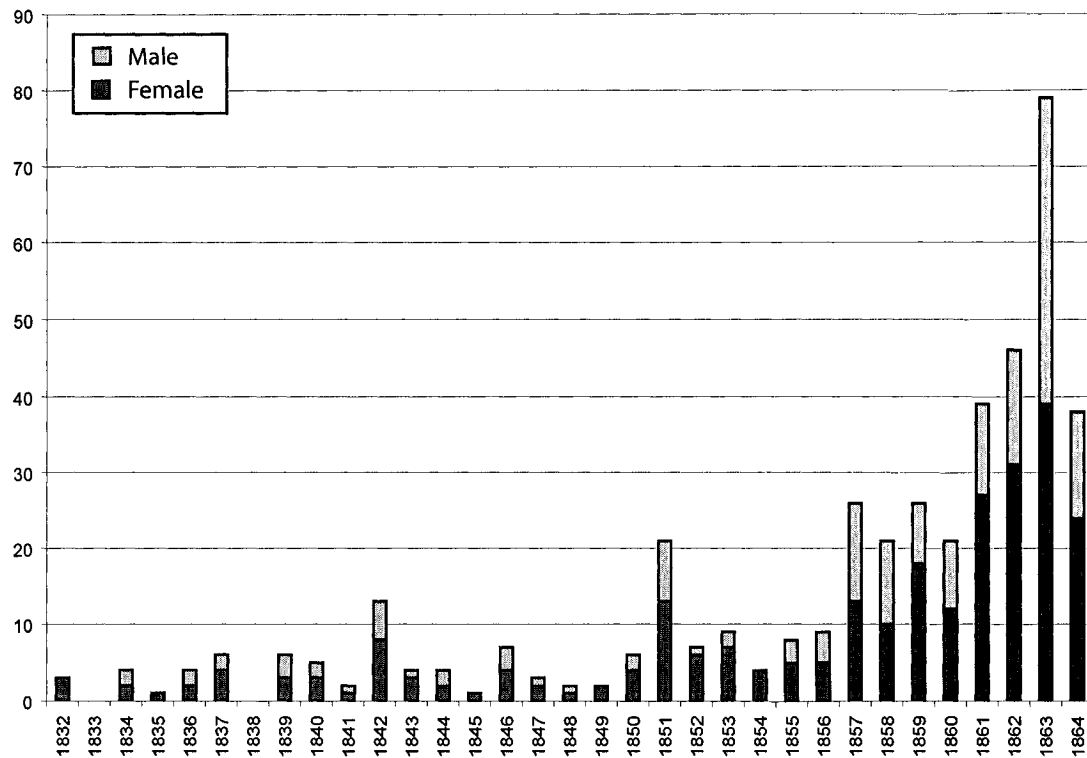


Figure 2.6 Members of Zion Church, January 1865, by gender and date of admission (Source: ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/12/1 Church Register 1842-1903).

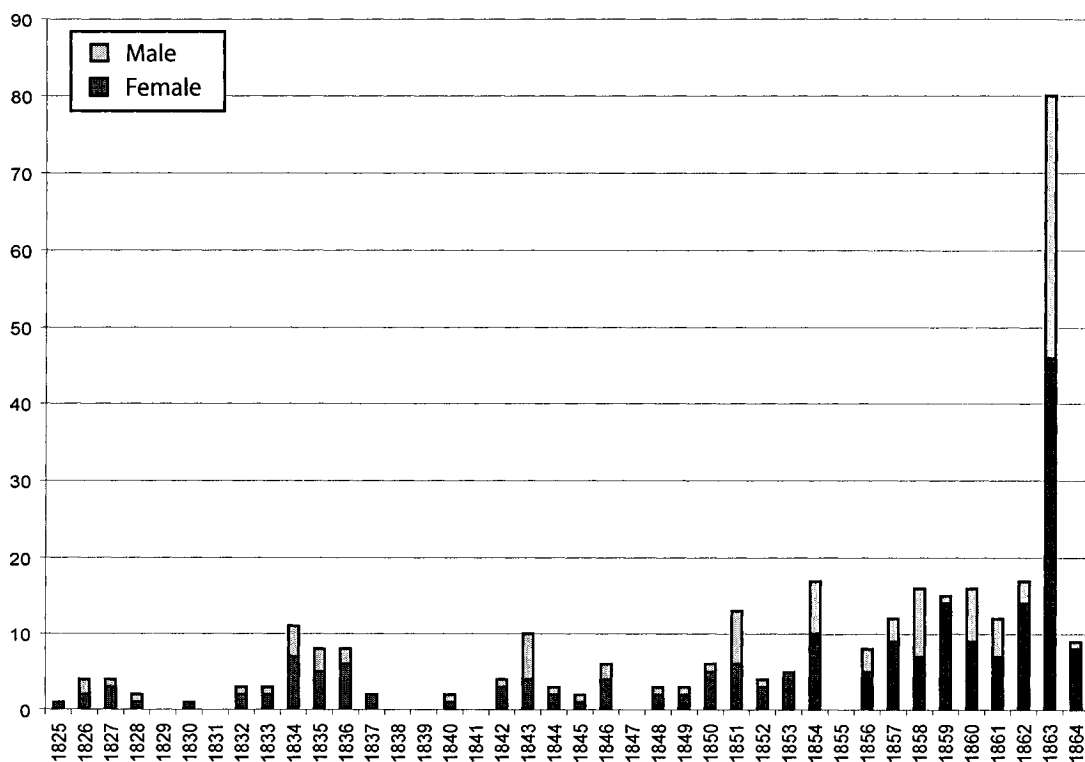


Figure 2.7 Members of the American Presbyterian Church in 1864, by gender and date of admission (Source: ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A394/3 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church in the City of Montreal, Compiled by Order of Session, July, 1864* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1864).

permanence of its fruits', which included increased attendance at devotional meetings and heightened activity in the Sunday Schools.⁷⁴

These facts and figures allow us to draw certain conclusions. First of all, there is no evidence that the Hammond Revival drew into the churches large numbers of people who had previously had no connection with the evangelical congregations. Instead, its significance lies in the extent to which it generated commitment and enthusiasm on the part of the rising generation within congregations and those who previously had only a loose commitment to the Church. As a result, the Young Men's Christian Association, which had been languishing prior to the revival, found itself revitalized when Hammond's meetings 'sent a thrill through every department of the Church of Christ'.⁷⁵ Years later, 'A Church Deacon' recalled his experience of the Hammond Revival as a young man at the Protestant High School. Influenced by the religious spirit that had pervaded the laity as a result of Hammond's visit, he had become part of a group of six or seven boys who met together at each other's houses for prayer. Two of the other boys had in the years following the revival become, like himself, active Christians holding 'honourable positions' in the city, while the others had also, to the best of his knowledge, remained true to the faith, and now represented at least four different denominations.⁷⁶ The revival also bolstered and reaffirmed the faith of those who were already decided Christians. The Rev. Donald MacVicar wrote in his diary that on one night during the Hammond Revival he 'experienced more of the grace of God than ever before' and had since then had a new heart for his work.⁷⁷ It seems probable that congregation members would have had similar experiences. While the revival in Montreal did not take on the explicit character of a businessman's revival, as happened in some cities in the United States, it does appear to have boosted male membership in some congregations. Given the socio-economic composition of the congregations that moved uptown (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3), and the large number of businessmen connected with these congregations, it

⁷⁴ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 1 December 1863.

⁷⁵ CIHM 13341, Alfred Sandham, *History of the Young Men's Christian Association* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873).

⁷⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 29 December 1879.

⁷⁷ MacVicar, *Life and Work of Donald Harvey MacVicar*, 52.

is, however, likely that the image of the 'Christian businessman' that had been popularized through the revivals in the United States would have contributed to a growing sense of compatibility between successful business enterprise and evangelical religion.⁷⁸ Thus, the Hammond Revival in Montreal was very much a part of the transatlantic revival movement described above in the sense that, while it did not transform the way in which people viewed the world in any radical sense, it did reaffirm the evangelical consensus by bringing people from various denominations together through a shared experience.

In this context, and given the changes that were taking place in the urban environment, it seems natural that congregations channelled some of their new-found religious enthusiasm and sense of fellowship into collective action through church building and church extension programmes. On a more practical level, the augmented membership of some congregations increased both the need for more space as well as the funding available for church building projects. By increasing male participation, the revival also helped to make available the leadership and managerial skills perceived as necessary for such undertakings. Furthermore, there is the likelihood that the heightened commitment of both male and female church members motivated them to embark on more ambitious building projects to glorify God than would otherwise have been the case. Given the other social, economic, and geographic factors favouring the uptown relocation of Protestant churches at this time, it should be emphasized that the decision to relocate would have been made by most congregations whether or not the Hammond Revival had occurred and that the churches that moved uptown during this period included those that had remained aloof from the evangelical fervour of the revival. These congregations were nevertheless competing with evangelical churches in which commitment levels had been strengthened, which left them little choice but to build equally impressive uptown churches. All congregations, whether or not they participated in the revival, felt the impact of the more intense religious activity that it generated within the Protestant community. Had the revival occurred at another time, perhaps less of its enthusiasm would have been channelled into the bricks and mortar of the uptown churches, an

⁷⁸ Marguerite Van Die, 'A "Christian Businessman" in the Eastern Townships: The Convergence of Precept and Practice in Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Gender Construction', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, (1999), 111; 123.

outcome that was to have important consequences in terms of the ability of the churches to promote an equally vigorous Christian faith in the future.

Explaining Church Relocation: The Case-Study Churches

An understanding of the congregational dynamics involved in the relocations of the six case-study congregations is essential if we are to understand the complex ways in which religious motivations interacted with class, power, and denominational structures to produce the heavily-churched upper middle class residential landscape of uptown Montreal. When embarking on a major change in the life of a congregation, such as the relocation of the place of worship, the importance of maintaining a high level of community solidarity was recognized. The records of individual congregations indicate, however, that while congregation members with the right to participate in the decision-making process generally did not question the need to move, controversy did arise over the choice of new sites, the timing of moves, and who had the right to determine the location of the new church building. For each church, I shall explore the following questions: What reasons did congregations provide for their decision to move uptown? What impact did revivals and other forms of religious motivation have on the decision to relocate? How and when was the decision to move taken and who participated in the decision-making process? Did the move result in conflict or division within the congregation? What impact did traditional denominational frameworks have on the decisions that were made? Given the growing social and spatial fragmentation of the city, the negotiations that took place concerning church relocations had an important role to play in consolidating the relationship between the business and professional classes and the leading churches in the city.

The American Presbyterian Church: A Fine Building or a Blunder?

In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, the question of selling the original church building, that had been erected in 1825 (see Figure 2.8), initially arose during the 1850s but no definite action was taken until June 1863.⁷⁹ The American

⁷⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 185, A467 Brief History of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 24 December 1822 – 26 April 1865 by Rev. James Blair Bonar; Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 27 December 1859.

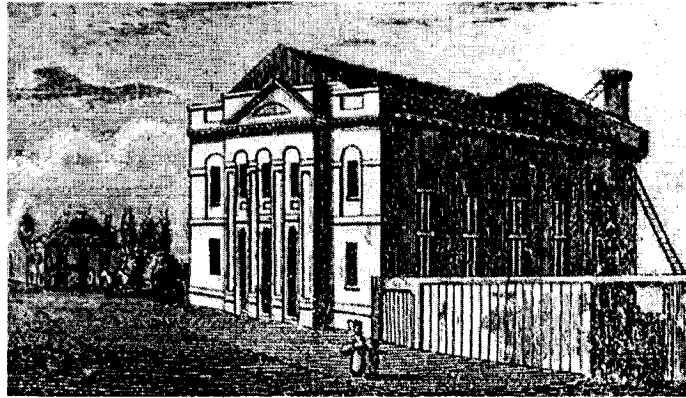


Figure 2.8 American Presbyterian Church, 1826-1865.
Great St James corner McGill Street (Source: Bosworth, 1839).

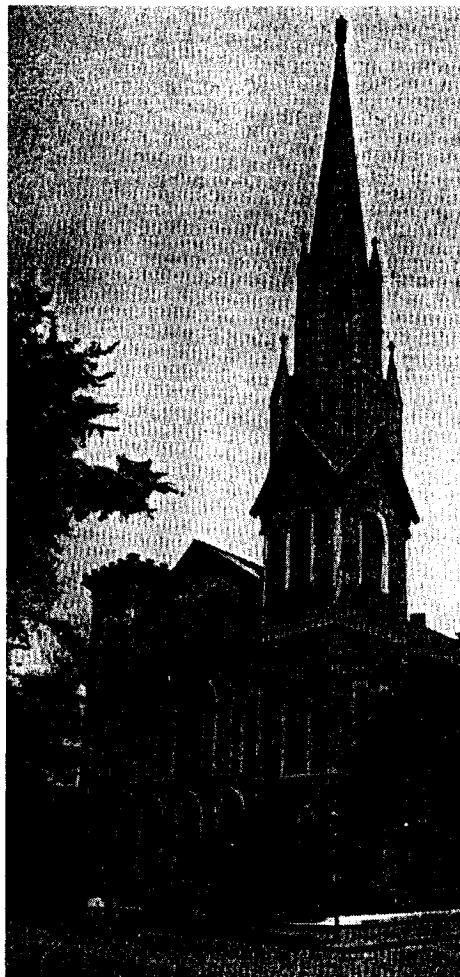


Figure 2.9 American Presbyterian Church 1866-1934.
Dorchester corner Drummond Street (Source: Lighthall, 1923).

Presbyterian Church had played a central role in the Hammond Revival the previous December, and – as we saw in the graph showing the membership of the church in 1864 – received a significant influx of new members as a result. Although no explicit connection is made in the church records between the revival and the decision to rebuild, it seems likely that the revival helped to galvanize enthusiasm for the project. To understand the way in which the move unfolded, it is, however, necessary to know something about the structure of church government at the American Presbyterian Church. The congregation's temporal affairs were controlled by a body known as the American Presbyterian Society. Each individual renting or owning a pew in the church had the right to vote at the proceedings of the Society, regardless of whether or not they were a communicant member of the church, but only those who were pew owners were eligible for election as trustees by the Society. To have a separate 'society' responsible for temporal affairs reflected the congregation's roots in New England, where it was quite common for Congregational churches to be managed in this way.⁸⁰ What was significant when the time came to discuss the sale of the old church was that the signed consent of three-fourths of the pew owners was required before the move could be made.⁸¹ Thus, unlike most Presbyterian congregations, where trustees and seat holders were required to be members in full communion with the church if they wished to participate in any type of congregational decision making, only financial qualifications were necessary to play a role in the temporal affairs of the American Presbyterian Church. As the only church in the city that belonged to an American presbytery, the congregation was not constrained by any need to serve broader denominational interests, and to all intents and purposes was able to operate as if it were a Congregational church.

In June 1863, seventeen members of the Society - virtually all of whom were merchants or manufacturers living in the uptown district and many of whom were pew owners - convened a special meeting to consider the erection of a new church in 'a more

⁸⁰ David C. Knowles, *The American Presbyterian Church of Montreal 1822-1866* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1957), 27.

⁸¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A385 An Act to Incorporate the Trustees of the American Presbyterian Society of Montreal, c.1865.

retired locality'.⁸² The current location was considered to be too noisy and inconvenient as a result of encroachments by business, and too far from the houses of congregation members, the majority of whom now lived above Beaver Hall Hill.⁸³ A motion having been passed in favour of the plan, a committee was then appointed to ascertain the views of the pew owners. A total of seventy-three pews were owned by thirty-five individuals living in the city, two individuals living outside the city, and sixteen estates.⁸⁴ By the time of the Society's annual meeting in December, twenty-nine resident proprietors had approved the idea of a new church, along with the two non-resident proprietors, and ten of the estates, leaving six individuals and six estates that had declined their approval, although some not absolutely. It was agreed that the committee had 'demonstrated the fact that a very large majority of the proprietors of pews in this church are not only willing but anxious to place this Society in its true position', and also that 'it was believed that a corresponding majority of members of this Society not proprietors are equally desirous of advancing the interests of this church and congregation in any manner that may be deemed advisable'.⁸⁵ Any failure to carry out the speedy erection of a new church edifice would, it was decided, be nothing less than an admission of the inability or unwillingness of the Society to maintain its prominent and rightful position in the community.

A certain amount of disagreement arose over the choice of a site for the new church, with a large majority of the Society opting for a site on Dorchester Street despite opposition from a small minority that preferred a more distant site between St Catherine and Sherbrooke Streets.⁸⁶ Further difficulties emerged when it was determined that it would be impossible to construct the church according to the plans decided upon by the

⁸² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 18 June 1863.

⁸³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 185, A467 Brief History of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 24 December 1822 – 26 April 1865 by Rev. James Blair Bonar.

⁸⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 26 December 1863.

⁸⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 26 December 1863.

⁸⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A242/1 Minutes Building Fund 1863-1868, 28 January 1864; Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 4 February 1864.

Society without exceeding the \$50,000 cap that they had placed on expenditures.⁸⁷ Believing that any amendment of the plans would result in 'the withdrawal of the subscriptions of some, lessen the interest of others, and generally lead, if not to an abandonment of the project, to the erection of a building that will be rather a discredit than an honor to this Society', the \$50,000 limit was unanimously abandoned with the result that the cost of the church eventually exceeded \$60,000.⁸⁸ It seems likely that the desire to spend what the majority of trustees feared were imprudent amounts of money led to their refusal to sign the contracts necessary to proceed with the building of the church. This brought about their replacement by trustees willing to fulfil the wishes of the Society, which was accompanied by a call to remain 'united and firm' in order to help the Society overcome its difficulties and retain the high position which it had traditionally held in the community.⁸⁹ The new trustees attempted to reassure the Society on the latter point by reporting the following year that 'many of our most respectable fellow citizens of other denominations, are beginning to appreciate as well as to commend the good sense displayed in the exterior as well as interior of this new house of worship'.⁹⁰ At the time of the cornerstone laying in 1865 there were still a few who continued to be dissatisfied with the site that had been chosen, although there were hopes that a growing number of these individuals could yet be persuaded to support the church building project.⁹¹ Meanwhile, the Rev. James Bonar continued to worry that the location, despite having been chosen in the belief that it would be in the centre of the city in a few years time, was currently too far west.⁹²

In the years following the opening of the new American Presbyterian Church in 1866 (see Figure 2.9), a rift emerged between the Rev. Bonar and three of the leading

⁸⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A242/1 Minutes Building Fund 1863-1868, 14 July 1864; Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 17 March 1864.

⁸⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A242/1 Minutes Building Fund 1863-1868, 14 July 1864; Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 24 September 1868.

⁸⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A242/4 Minutes Building Fund 1863-1868, 26 December 1864.

⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A401 First Annual Report of Trustees of American Presbyterian Society, 26 December 1865.

⁹¹ *Montreal Herald*, 28 April 1865; *Montreal Witness*, 3 May 1865.

⁹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 185, A467 Brief History of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 24 December 1822 – 26 April 1865 by Rev. James Blair Bonar.

congregation members who had been instrumental in forwarding the church building project. It is unclear whether the dispute initially arose because these members blamed the minister for the failure of the new church to attract a sufficiently large congregation, but the problems associated with the new building and its location featured prominently in the ensuing debates. As can be seen in Figure 2.10, showing the membership of the American Presbyterian Church in 1880 by gender and year of joining, very few individuals connected themselves with the congregation during the period between 1864 and 1870. These years were a time of transition, temporary homelessness (the congregation worshipped in the Normal School Hall for over a year while the new church was being completed), and financial stress, all of which discouraged people from joining. Thus, while the Hammond Revival may have helped generate the enthusiasm required to embark on an ambitious church-building project, the difficulties encountered as a result of the move contributed to what was described as a 'spiritual depression'.⁹³ Soon after the church's opening, the trustees acknowledged that the erection of the new church 'was in advance of the necessities of the Society as well as in excess of its means', but that nothing could be done but continue to find ways to reduce the church's debt.⁹⁴ It was in this context that the dispute arose between the Rev. Bonar and George Hagar, Horatio A. Nelson, and Benjamin Lyman. Seeking counsel from the Third Presbytery of New York, these individuals complained on behalf of themselves and twenty-two other 'aggrieved' members that, despite having what they described as 'a fine building favourably located', the average attendance was under three hundred in a church which was capable of seating 1200 to 1500 people. 'Some of us feel', they stated, 'that the real work and mission of the church are not being accomplished, the masses are not reached, and the ways of Zion mourn'.⁹⁵ As part of a lengthy response, the Rev. Bonar questioned the claim that the church building was well located, pointing to the severe winters in Montreal with their heavy snow-storms, and suggested that the new site was so far removed from the centre

⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 182, A338/11 Letter from H.A. Nelson, Benjamin Lyman, George Hagar to the Third Presbytery of New York, 2 April 1868.

⁹⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A401 Third Annual Report of Trustees of American Presbyterian Society, 26 December 1867.

⁹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 182, A338/11 Letter from H.A. Nelson, Benjamin Lyman, George Hagar to the Third Presbytery of New York, 2 April 1868.

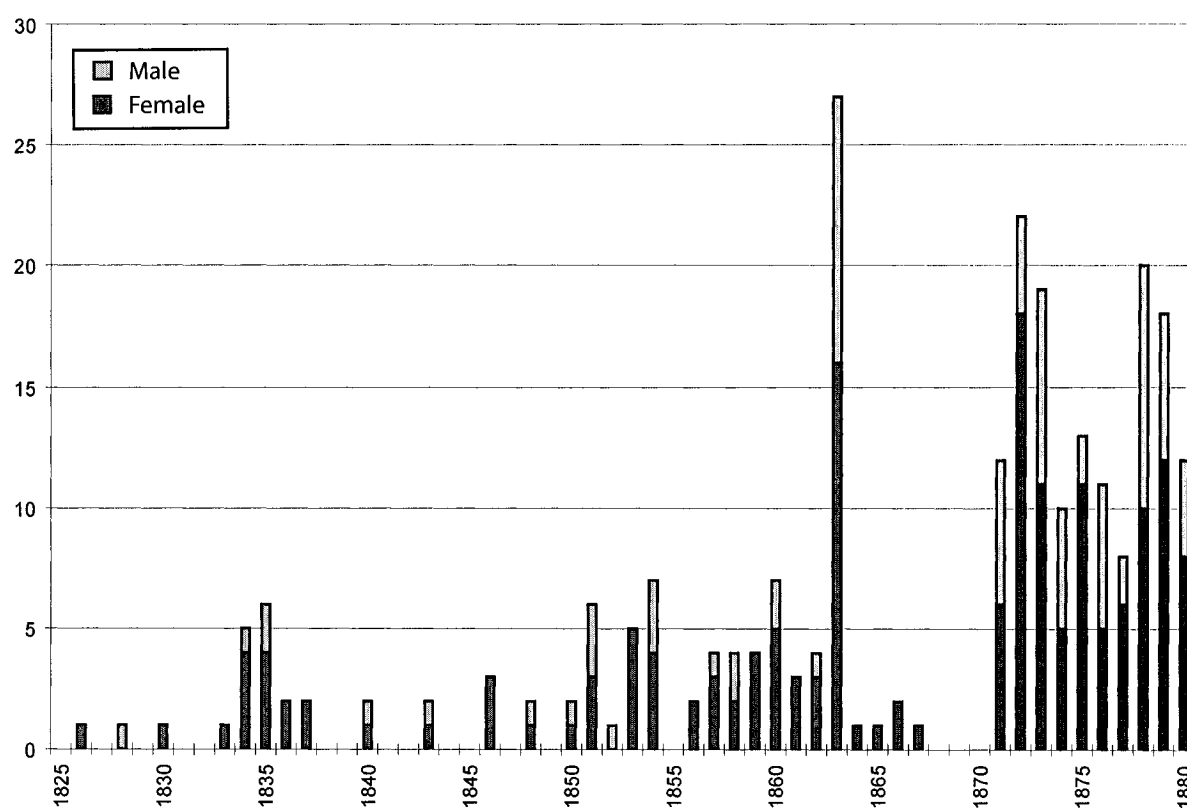


Figure 2.10 Members of the American Presbyterian Church in 1880, by gender and date of admission (Source: ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A395/3 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church in the City of Montreal, Compiled by Order of Session, May, 1880* (Montreal: Becket Bros., 1880).

of population that the majority of congregation members had to go past three, four, or even five Protestant churches to make their way to the American Presbyterian Church. He even went so far as to state that 'there are few persons in this church or city who do not regard this location as exceedingly unfavorable – in short, as a blunder'. As for the 'masses' not being reached, he pointed out that the masses 'were not here' (presumably referring to the uptown district), and that even if they were they would be unable to pay the pew rents at the American Presbyterian Church which – as a result of the need to pay off the church debt - were 'by far the highest in the city'.⁹⁶ It was unreasonable, he maintained, that anyone would expect such a large church situated on the outskirts of the city to be filled within two years of its opening. He also pointed to the limitations posed by the American national character of the church, given its location in a British province and the small and apparently stationary size of the American population in the city, which he estimated at 1,706. He felt that the time had passed when national feeling could outweigh religious training and theological preferences in determining where an individual would choose to worship, which meant that many Americans attended Unitarian, Baptist, and Congregational churches, while others who were married to non-Americans attended their spouses' churches. Thus, the early years of the new American Presbyterian Church's residence on Dorchester Street were marred by disunity within the congregation, brought on by the difficulties involved in funding a large church in a peripheral part of town.

Despite the continued support of the Society, and his belief that he had materially and spiritually improved the congregation during his eleven year ministry, the Rev. Bonar eventually felt constrained to tender his resignation as pastor of the American Presbyterian Church.⁹⁷ As a result of the conditions under which he departed, his farewell address to the congregation was perhaps more frank than it might otherwise have been. He reiterated the principal evangelical doctrines that had guided his ministry, including the total depravity of man, the belief that all men could be saved, and the idea

⁹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 182, A338/18 Letter from Rev. James B. Bonar to the Commission of the Third Presbytery of NY in session in Montreal, 20 June 1868.

⁹⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 24 September 1868.

that faith without works provided insufficient evidence of regeneration.⁹⁸ He then went on to warn his congregation that 'the patriarchal simplicity which formerly characterized the Christians of this city was melting away, and ostentation and extravagance were taking their place' as Christians conformed more and more to the world around them. Instead of working together in a united fashion, as Protestants ought to do 'in the presence of Romanism', he accused the leading men in the churches of exhibiting an isolated, denominational spirit, before arriving at the conclusion that:

The building of very costly churches has divided the rich from the poor, practically excluding the latter. Both of these classes are needful each to the other, and the church that does not provide for the presence of the poorer of Christ's flock must die of the disease of gentility.⁹⁹

While the Rev. Bonar evidently perceived the building of expensive uptown churches as a reflection of broader changes taking place in society that he believed were having a detrimental effect on the well-being of both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, there is no evidence to suggest that his congregation as a whole shared these views. The leading contributors to the church funds also claimed to be concerned about the material and spiritual state of their church, but believed that all that was required to improve matters was to secure a larger congregation and thus place the church on a more secure financial basis. Ultimately, the growth of population in the uptown area made it possible for the issues raised by the Rev. Bonar to be ignored. Only four years later, his successor, the Rev. George Wells, was able to make the following statement:

It was not singular that so great a change in the site and appearance of the church, should for a while unsettle and disturb the people, nor strange that they gathered somewhat slowly to the new house, so that it seemed almost too large and costly for its use. But, with the increase and movement of the population, the location has rapidly improved, and is now among the best. Other congregations have followed our example, or are preparing to do so, and testify both to the excellence of our site and our good qualities as neighbors, by settling as near us as they can.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 1 February 1869.

⁹⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 1 February 1869.

¹⁰⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A380 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon preached by the pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873).

As we shall see, by delaying their uptown moves by just a few years, other congregations were able to avoid the brief period of uncertainty, doubt, and questioning experienced by the American Presbyterian Church.

St Paul's Presbyterian Church: Not Getting Left Behind in the Race

When the trustees of St Paul's Presbyterian Church initiated their proposal to move uptown in 1865, various arguments were made as to why the old church (see Figure 2.11) should be sold and a new structure built. Two principal reasons were given: first, the value of the current church property in St Helen Street for business purposes and, second, the inconvenience of the present situation of the church 'as far as a large proportion of the congregation is concerned'.¹⁰¹ The trustees also argued that the pews in the lower part of the church were now fully occupied, as well as a large proportion of pews in the gallery, which made it difficult to provide accommodation for newcomers. While a considerable number of members and adherents of St Paul's had thought a move desirable for several years, the trustees had previously hesitated because they felt that the congregation would be unable to carry out the enterprise without burdening the church with an unacceptably high level of debt. Action could now be taken, the trustees argued, because 'spontaneous' offers of considerable sums of money had been made by a few individuals, emphasizing that these offers were conditional on the move taking place at once. Despite the fact that discussion of relocation arose soon after the Hammond Revival, there is little reason to believe that St Paul's, as a Church of Scotland congregation, was heavily influenced by the revivalism of the period. At the same time, however, the advent of the Rev. John Jenkins' ministry in 1865 contributed to an increase in congregation numbers.¹⁰² Prior to his 'conversion' to Calvinism, Jenkins had been minister of St James Methodist Church in Montreal (1848-1853) and his effectiveness as a preacher carried over into his Presbyterian ministry.¹⁰³ This may have encouraged the trustees of St Paul's to anticipate future growth.

¹⁰¹ SAP, *Report of Trustees of St Paul's 1866* (printed), 22 October 1866. Much of this information is also contained in the Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 4 November 1865 – 22 October 1866.

¹⁰² *Montreal Witness*, 25 February 1869.

¹⁰³ James Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots: The History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal 1803-2003* (Montreal: The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul 2003), 103-105.

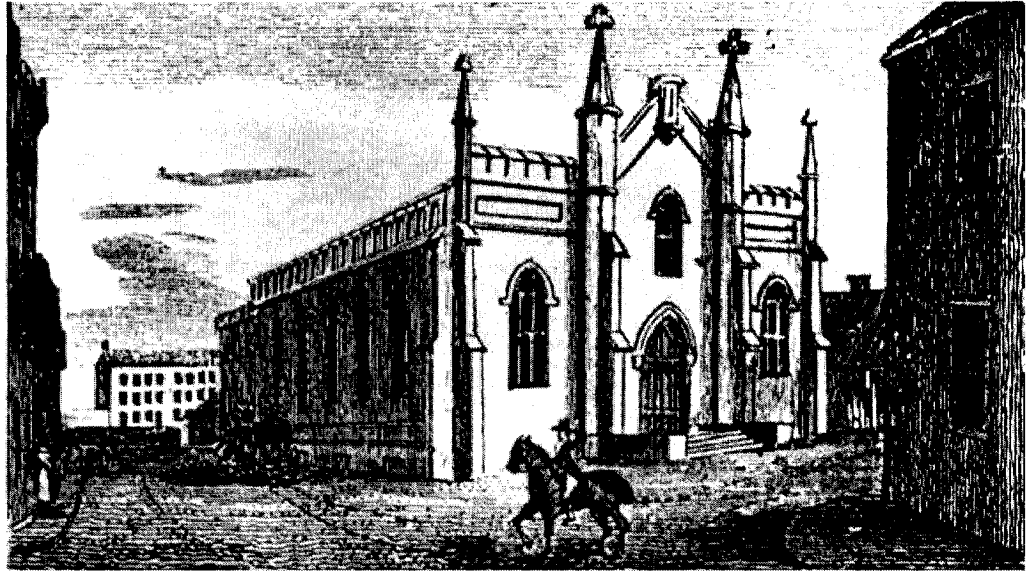


Figure 2.11 St Paul's Presbyterian Church, 1834-1867.
Corner St Helen and Recollet (Source: Bosworth, 1839).

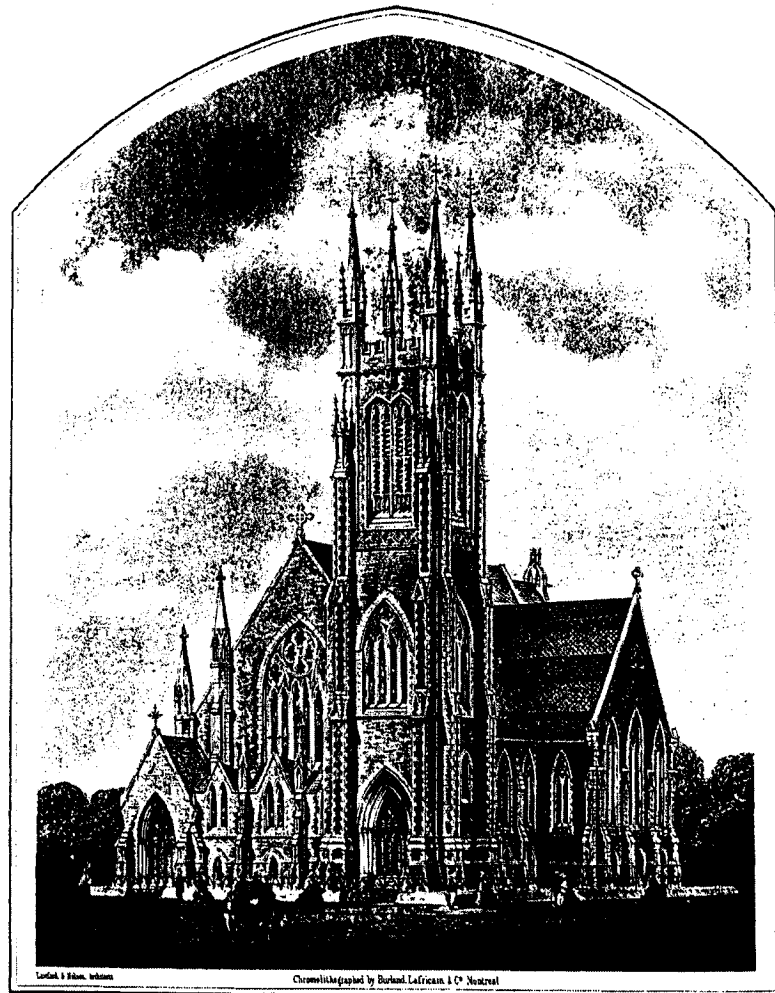


Figure 2.12 St Paul's Presbyterian Church, 1868-1930.
Dorchester Street, corner St Monique (Source: DeVolpi and Winkworth, 1963).

St Paul's congregation was also motivated by a desire not to be left behind by St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, which had moved from the city centre to an edifice noted for its architectural beauty on Beaver Hall Hill in the early 1850s. The *Witness* maintained that it was the erection of St Andrew's, the design of which had been inspired by Salisbury Cathedral, that 'chiefly gave the impulse in Montreal to the taste which has since been so rapidly developed for architectural display'.¹⁰⁴ Having reached 'a like stage in its history' as St Andrew's, St Paul's Church sought by moving 'not merely to supply its actual wants in respect of accommodation, but also to erect an edifice which shall arrest the attention of the community by its splendour, and rank amongst the foremost of the noble buildings already to be found in this noble city' (see Figure 2.12).¹⁰⁵ Both St Andrew's and St Paul's belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland at this time, but there is no evidence of any coordinated attempt to implement the traditional parish system of the Church of Scotland when choosing new locations. Likewise, the presence of two other Presbyterian churches under construction nearby - Knox Church, which belonged to the Canada Presbyterian Church, and the American Presbyterian Church - failed to deter St Paul's from moving to Dorchester Street.

In the case of St Paul's, it was the trustees who initiated the relocation in the mid-1860s, and they were supported by the elders of the congregation who agreed that the building of a new church was not just desirable but necessary.¹⁰⁶ Despite a statement by the trustees expressing the hope that there would be the freest expression of members and adherents on the matter, the trustees presented the relocation project to the congregation more as a *fait accompli* than as a decision that had to be made. Nevertheless, the rules and regulations of the church stipulated that the approval of two-thirds of trustees and voters present at a special congregational meeting was required to raise money by mortgage on the church property, and similar requirements were presumably necessary in order to sell. To have the right to vote, one needed to be a seat holder in full communion

¹⁰⁴ *Montreal Gazette*, 15 January 1851; *Montreal Witness*, 25 October 1869.

¹⁰⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 10 June 1867.

¹⁰⁶ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 25 November 1865.

with the church.¹⁰⁷ Only thirty-three people (three of whom were women) voted at a congregational meeting held to consider the project of building a new church. Twenty-five of these were in favour of appointing a committee to sell the old church and choose a new site, whereas eight voted against the resolution.¹⁰⁸ Those voting against appear to have disapproved of giving the committee the power to choose a new site without further consultation with the congregation, rather than objecting to the new church project *per se*. Trustees chosen for the building committee represented the congregation's elite, and included prominent men in the city's business community such as Andrew Allan of the Allan Line Steamship Company and George Stephen, later Lord Mount Stephen, president of the Bank of Montreal. It is impossible to know why so few seat holders chose to participate in a meeting on such an important subject. The trustees were, however, anxious to gain a better sense of the needs of the congregation as a whole, so the site committee conducted a survey of where congregation members lived. It was determined that one hundred and forty-five families lived in Dorchester Street and south of Dorchester Street, leaving only sixty-seven families north of Dorchester Street. Forty-two families lived north of St Catherine Street, while only ninety-one families lived east of Bleury Street. This led the committee to conclude that the convenience of the large majority of congregation members would be served by a site in the neighbourhood of Dorchester Street in the heart of the uptown district. Having ascertained this, the site committee then discovered that – as was the case with the American Presbyterian Church – several influential members of the congregation had a strong desire that the church be built closer to the northern edge of the uptown district, preferably on Sherbrooke Street. Recognizing that many members would object to such a distant site, they decided to canvas the seat holders of the church for their opinions, at the same time asking them how much they would be willing to subscribe to the new church. Seventy-six seat holders favoured a Dorchester Street site, thirty-five preferred St Catherine Street, while only thirteen wanted the new church to be built on Sherbrooke Street. Eight declared themselves to be satisfied with the present site. Those canvassed would mainly have been

¹⁰⁷ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 5 July 1852.

¹⁰⁸ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 4 December 1865; also *Report of Trustees of St Paul's 1866* (printed), 22 October 1866.

male heads of households, presumably speaking on behalf of their families. The views of those belonging to the small group who attended the church but could not afford to pay for their seats were not taken into account. Despite an overwhelming endorsement of the Dorchester Street site by the majority of seat holders, the influential members of the congregation continued to press for a Sherbrooke Street location. A final deliberation was therefore held, at which the trustees and site committee were joined by the members of the Church Session, the body responsible for the spiritual life of the congregation. So strong was the opinion of the Session in favour of Dorchester Street and against Sherbrooke Street that the trustees and site committee ultimately decided in favour of the former site, representing an apparent triumph of congregational democracy.

The negotiations that took place in St Paul's Church during this period both reflected a general consensus in favour of relocation and illustrate the subtleties involved in choosing a new uptown site. Elite members of the congregation were willing to provide substantial funds for the church-building enterprise, and expected that their voices would be listened to when making decisions about the new church location. At the same time, the lay leadership at St Paul's – which included many members of the elite group – acknowledged the importance of ensuring that the voices of all those who contributed financially to the congregation were heard, so that ultimately the convenience of this broader group was the key factor in deciding the new location of the church. From the perspective of the trustees, the move appears to have been a success. By 1869, 760 of the 900 sittings in the new church had been let.¹⁰⁹ According to the Rev. Robert Campbell's assessment in the late 1880s, St Paul's took the decision to move uptown just at the critical moment. He felt that 'a delay of even a year or two would have left St Paul's behind in the race ... The old congregation was not only kept well together by this movement, but the situation was one to command a constant growth; until now it stands at the head of the Presbyterian community of the country in powerful resources'.¹¹⁰

St George's Anglican Church: A Parish to Consider

As was the case with St Paul's, the removal of St George's Anglican Church from

¹⁰⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 25 February 1869.

¹¹⁰ Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, 758.

its original location on St Joseph Street (see Figure 2.13) to the rising ground between St Antoine and Dorchester Streets on the edge of Dominion Square appears at least on the surface to have been a relatively straightforward and uncontroversial process (see Figure 2.14). St George's had been organized in 1842 as a proprietary chapel in connection with the parish church. Although the secularization of the clergy reserves did not take place in Canada until 1854, Anglicans recognized much earlier that government funds to build new churches were unforthcoming and that, like other Protestant denominations, they would have to depend on the voluntary support of congregation members if they wished to extend their network of churches in the growing city.¹¹¹ Proprietary chapels, a common form of Anglican church extension in well-to-do parts of growing British cities during the Georgian period, represented one model that was available.¹¹² St George's was therefore built to serve an area which was described as 'the aristocratic quarter of the west end', and contributions of £12 10s entitled contributors to become joint proprietors. Contributors had to be congregation members, which at St George's meant that they had to be seat holders in the church and pay an annual rent for this privilege.¹¹³ The proprietors were responsible for overseeing the management of the church, which included prerogatives such as electing the churchwardens and vestry (to be eligible for which one had to be a male seat holder) and the right to present a clergyman to the Bishop and Rector of the Parish of Montreal for approval as their minister.¹¹⁴ Each additional contribution of £12 10s entitled its donor to an additional vote, which means that St George's was alone among the case-study churches in making an explicit link between the level of an individual's financial contribution to the church and their influence in

¹¹¹ W.S. Reid, *The Church of Scotland in Lower Canada: Its Struggle for Establishment* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications 1936), 105. Reid states that the government had ceased subsidizing the erection of church buildings in Lower Canada by 1841.

¹¹² Chris Brooks and Andrew Saint, eds., *The Victorian Church: Architecture and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1995), 32; Epstein, *Church Architecture in Montreal*, 210.

¹¹³ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(1) (October 1907), 9-10; CIHM 94650, *St George's Church: Its Constitution and History* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Company 1884).

¹¹⁴ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(1) (October 1907), 10; Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, introductory pages outlining proposals for the erection and establishment of a proprietary chapel in the western part of Montreal.

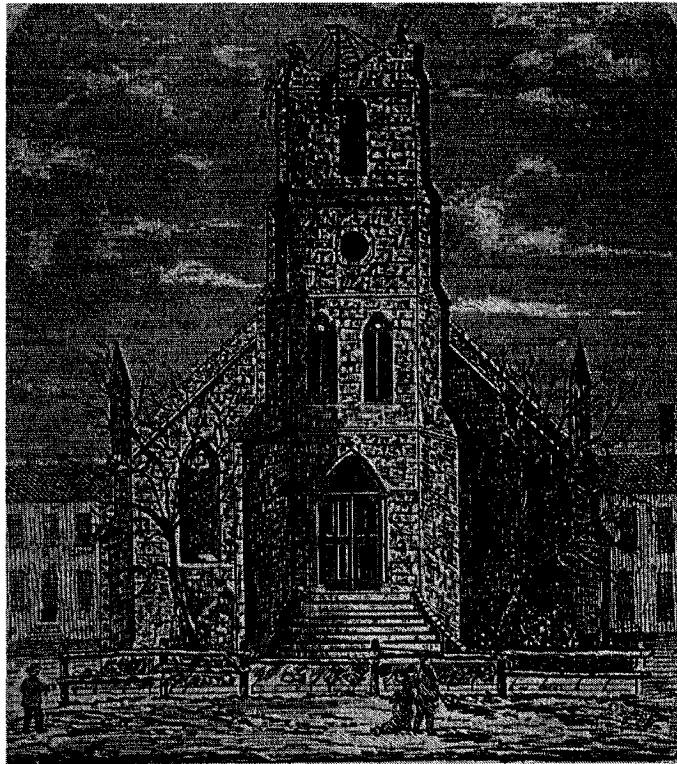


Figure 2.13 St George's Anglican Church, 1843-1870, in course of demolition. St Joseph Street (Source: *Canadian Illustrated News* 15 April 1871).

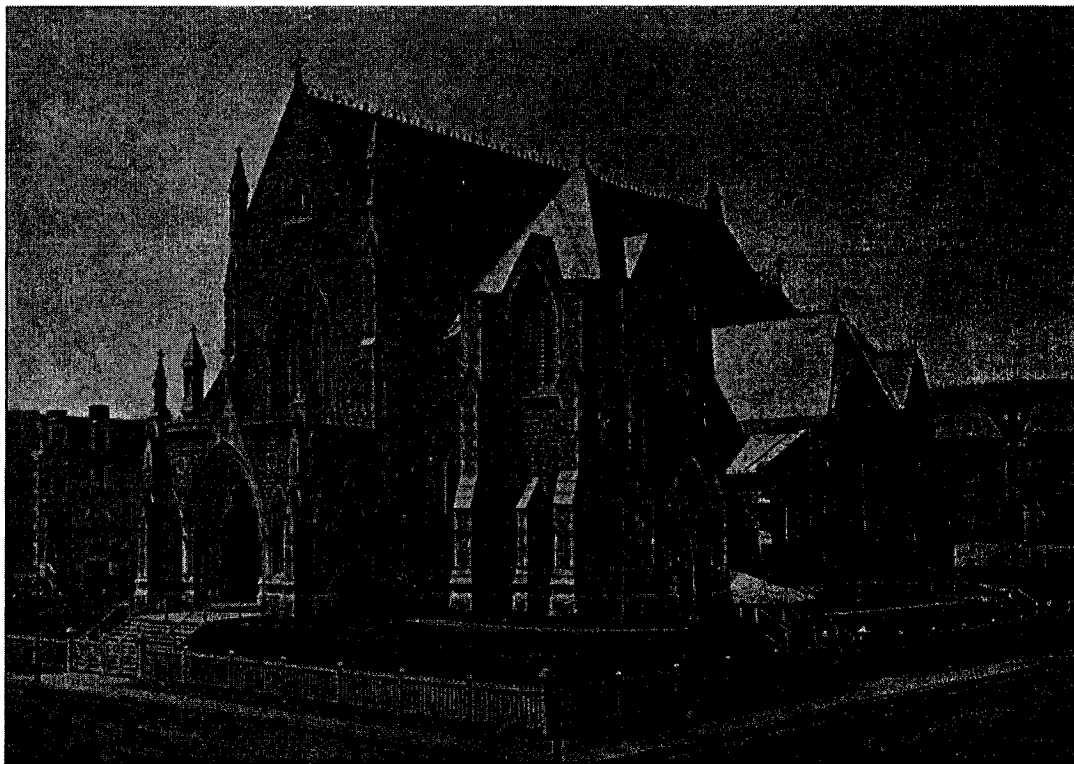


Figure 2.14 St George's Anglican Church, 1870-present. Windsor corner Osborne Street (Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection).

congregational decision making, although many of the other churches clearly did so on an informal basis.¹¹⁵ As in the American Presbyterian Church, the right to participate in decisions concerning the temporal affairs of the church was based entirely on an individual's financial qualifications, without any reference to their level of religious commitment.

Only months after paying off the debt on their original building, the vestry of St George's began to look for an uptown site on which to erect a new place of worship.¹¹⁶ Five years earlier, in 1860, vestry members had anticipated and then witnessed a falling off in church revenue, and although no reason is given for this it seems likely that they were losing congregation members to the impressive Christ Church Cathedral, which had recently opened in the uptown district.¹¹⁷ The decision to move uptown may thus have reflected a sense of competition between these two leading congregations, similar to that between St Andrew's and St Paul's Presbyterian churches. The parish system did not at this time pose any obstacle to uptown relocations on the part of Christ Church and St George's, since both had been assigned 'districts' which at their northern ends went as far as the mountain.¹¹⁸ In December 1866, a congregational meeting was held to discuss the prospects for relocation, at which it was pointed out that only twenty-seven of the church's pew holders and seat holders resided south of the line of Craig and Bonaventure Streets.¹¹⁹ As was the case with St Paul's, a relatively small group was present at this meeting (only one of whom was a woman), and only those who were pew holders or seat holders appear to have had the right to participate.¹²⁰ Twenty-eight voted in favour of moving 'to some more suitable locality', while thirteen voted against the motion. The vestry was clearly confident that the proprietors of the church were in favour of the move,

¹¹⁵ No proprietor was allowed to have more than twenty votes. See STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 17 March 1853.

¹¹⁶ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 14 December 1865; 31 March 1866; 18 October 1866; 1 November 1866; 22 November 1866; 29 November 1866.

¹¹⁷ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 4 May 1860; 18 September 1860.

¹¹⁸ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada, June 16, 17, and 18, 1863* (Montreal: John Lovell 1863), 34.

¹¹⁹ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 10 December 1866.

¹²⁰ See CIHM 94650, *St George's Church: Its Constitution and History* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Company 1884), 6 (Article III).

as their official consent to the sale of the old building and the application of the assets to a new church was only officially sought in August 1868.¹²¹ The approval of Dean Bethune, Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, and of Bishop Fulford was also required before the move could take place.¹²²

Relatively little discussion of the reasons for moving is included in the church records, reflecting the general consensus among the congregation's leadership that the move was desirable. Like St Paul's, those at St George's were influenced by rapidly rising property values in the neighbourhood of the old church, and also by the desire to possess a church that was 'worthy of the front rank among the existing churches of the city'.¹²³ The Rev. Canon William Bond, who was minister of St George's at the time, gave a more detailed explanation of some of the other reasons for the uptown move at the opening of the new church in 1870:

It had long been witnessed and it was a source of sorrow that a great many of the oldest members were frequently prevented from attending more than one service on Sunday, and some were constrained to give up their connection altogether. The church had, in a great measure, become isolated by the tide of commerce sweeping away toward the southern and western suburbs, the residences of all ranks and conditions of society, until not more than five or six families were left in the immediate vicinity of the church. The necessity was therefore recognized of seeking a position calculated to meet this exigency, involving the interest of those living along the valley, and on the higher ground.¹²⁴

St George's sense of parochial responsibility for a specific territory, which included a large uptown component, but also straddled the hill to include the original area in which the old church had been located, meant that emphasis was placed on the fact that the new church had been positioned to meet the needs of both the generally wealthier congregation members who were moving uptown and the less wealthy who continued to live down below. The Rev. Bond also expressed a hope that the 'great many poor families belonging to the congregation', who could not currently be accommodated in the

¹²¹ STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 17 August 1868.

¹²² STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 22 February 1868.

¹²³ STG, Minutes Building Committee St George's Church 1867-1871, 17 October 1867; see also 23 January 1868.

¹²⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 10 October 1870.

old church for lack of space, would find room for themselves in the new church.¹²⁵ The fact remained, however, that only those who contributed financially to the church had a voice in the relocation process. While the Rev. Bond gave the impression in his address that there was only a negligible residential population remaining in the district surrounding the old church, only two years previously the Rev. Maurice Baldwin had engaged in negotiations with St George's with a view to retaining the old building for continued use as an Anglican church.¹²⁶ A parishioner of the neighbouring St Stephen's parish, writing in the late 1870s, likewise felt that 'it would have been wiser ... to have left the old St George's Church where it was, for it was needed there, and to have divided the parish, building the new church in the western division'.¹²⁷ This suggests that while the majority of St George's congregation may have been in favour of the move, the interest of those living in the lower portion of the parish was not best served by the new location.

Coté Street Free Church: A Controversial Move

For the Coté Street Free Church, the decision to move further uptown proved more controversial and divisive than for any of the three previous congregations. After its formation in 1845, the congregation initially built a 'shanty' or temporary wooden building on Lagauchetière Street (see Figure 2.15), before erecting a more substantial church in Coté Street in 1847 (see Figure 2.16). The site chosen was at the time considered to be 'most respectable and quite uptown', according to John Stirling, who joined the congregation in 1847.¹²⁸ Not only was the church closer to the mountain than the majority of other Presbyterian congregations in the city, but it was also farther east than any other Protestant church, with the exception of the St Gabriel Street congregation. Like the American Presbyterian Church, the Coté Street congregation experienced the spiritual uplift associated with the Hammond Revival, which was sustained and built

¹²⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 17 May 1869.

¹²⁶ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church, 19 December 1867.

¹²⁷ *Dominion Churchman*, 4 July 1878.

¹²⁸ CIHM A00394, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1898* (Montreal, 1899), 10-11, Historical Memoranda concerning Crescent Street Presbyterian Church Montreal by John Stirling.



Figure 2.15 Free Church,
Lagauchetière Street, 1845-1847
(Source: Stirling, 1900).

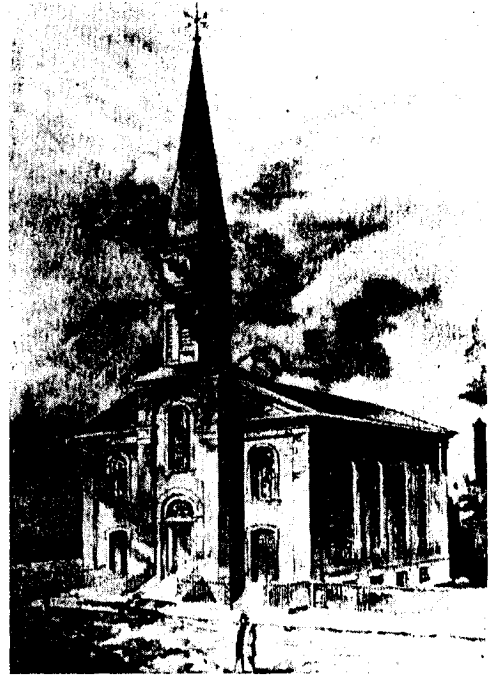


Figure 2.16 Free Church, Côté Street,
1848-1878 (Source: Stirling, 1900).

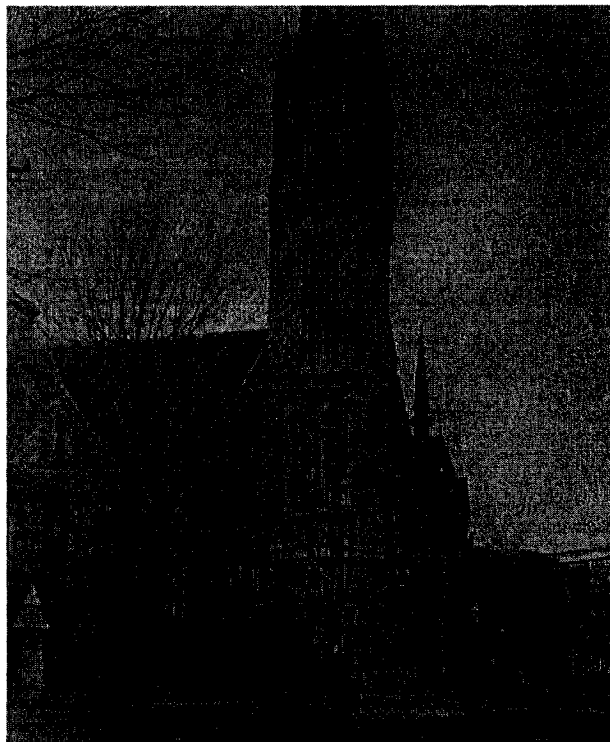


Figure 2.17 Crescent Street Presbyterian Church,
1878-1946 (Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection).

upon by their own minister, the Rev. Donald MacVicar.¹²⁹ As a result of this, the communion roll increased from over 300 to 572 members between 1861 and 1868.¹³⁰ The high level of commitment was demonstrated by the fact that members in full communion with the church filled almost two-thirds of its 900 sittings.¹³¹ The relatively recent construction of the church building, its good size, and its location to the north of the city centre meant, however, that the Côté Street congregation did not feel the same urgency to move as did other churches that were experiencing growing attendance and renewed commitment during this period.

The question of a new location first arose at the annual congregational meeting in 1873, at which a motion was carried by a large majority in favour of immediate steps being taken by the Deacons' Court to build a new church. It should be noted that only church members in full communion were allowed to vote at congregational meetings.¹³² According to John Stirling, 'the Protestant part of the population had mostly removed westward to an inconvenient distance from the Church, and the remnant were gradually moving away in the same direction', resulting in a decrease in congregation membership as families joined churches more convenient to their homes.¹³³ A slight decrease in Sunday School numbers was also attributed to the poor location.¹³⁴ Given these issues, and that the character of the surrounding locality was changing rapidly, it was deemed suicidal for the congregation to remain on Côté Street any longer. In March 1874, another congregational meeting was held at which the deacons' recommendation was accepted by a vote of forty-one against fifteen that an eligible site be secured on St Catherine and Crescent Street if \$30,000 could be raised for the building project within

¹²⁹ MacVicar, *Life and Work of Donald Harvey MacVicar*, 52.

¹³⁰ PCL, *Report of the Deacons' Court of the Côté Street Church (Canada Presbyterian) for eight months ending 31st December, 1868* (Montreal, 1868), 6.

¹³¹ PCL, *Report of the Deacons' Court of the Côté Street Church (Canada Presbyterian) 1865* (Montreal, 1865), 8.

¹³² ANQ, Notarial Archives, William Ross, Act #2095, 13 June 1848.

¹³³ CIHM A00394, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1898* (Montreal: 1899), Historical Memoranda concerning Crescent Street Presbyterian Church Montreal by John Stirling, 10-11. See also PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1874* (Montreal, 1875), 7-8, Kirk Session Report.

¹³⁴ PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1874* (Montreal, 1875), 33.

the next three months.¹³⁵ By the time the next meeting was held in November, however, opposition to the plan had arisen. Subscriptions of \$26,105 had been obtained from only thirty-two individuals (an average of \$815 per person), narrowly missing the target amount, but suggesting that those in favour of the move represented a very wealthy element within the congregation. The question also arose of whether the open vote at the previous meeting provided a fair indication of the thoughts of the congregation as a whole, and a motion was passed by a slim majority asking that circulars be sent to the entire congregation to ascertain their views on the topic of church relocation. Soon after this, the effort to build a new church on Crescent Street ran aground and the Deacons' Court was instructed to look for a site that would be more convenient for the eastern portion of the congregation. No action was, however, taken until after the union of the Canada Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland to form the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875. In spite of the concentration of churches now belonging to this body in the uptown district, a new site was chosen on the corner of Crescent and Dorchester Streets, and yet another resolution was passed in favour of the move by a majority of congregation members.¹³⁶ They then petitioned Presbytery to approve the sale of the old church, a step that was opposed by a protest from a number of office-bearers and members of the congregation.¹³⁷ Those who wished to move argued that the sale of the old church was vital if the congregation was to build anew in the West End, and resented that the minority who did not wish to leave the old church felt that they had a right to a portion of the proceeds should the church be sold. David Morrice, who was a successful businessman as well as an elder and superintendent of the Sunday School, argued that 'it would be very unfair if those who built the church should be deprived of the privilege of disposing of that which belonged to them', pointing out that 'the parties who were opposed to the movement had done nothing in the raising of the church' and would be

¹³⁵ PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1874* (Montreal, 1875), 18-20.

¹³⁶ PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1875* (Montreal, 1876), 13-14.

¹³⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 12 January 1876. The proportion of those objecting to the sale may have been as high as one-third of church members, according to John Stirling's Historical Memoranda.

unable to support a church in the East End of the city on their own.¹³⁸ The Presbytery committee appointed to consider the matter ultimately recommended a compromise, which was accepted, whereby the minority group would receive \$10,000 from the proceeds of the church sale, but only if they numbered no less than 100 members in full communion, and formed either a new church or joined a Presbyterian church located to the east of Bleury Street.¹³⁹ When Crescent Street Church opened in 1878 (see Figure 2.17), all opposition to the selling of the old church had apparently melted away.¹⁴⁰ By this time, however, the city had sunk even deeper into economic depression, with the result that the original church building was eventually sold for only \$15,500, representing less than half the amount that the congregation originally hoped to obtain from the property.¹⁴¹

While the Coté Street Church ultimately made its way up to Crescent Street with its assets intact, the experience of this congregation demonstrates the extent to which those who had paid for the original churches felt that these buildings were theirs to dispose of as they wished. A minority within the Coté Street Church clearly resented such views, but in the end were not numerous or organized enough to obtain what they considered to be their 'share' of the proceeds of the church sale. While there may have been similar minority elements resistant to church relocation in the other congregations discussed above, the more hierarchical decision making structures employed by their congregational leadership ensured that only those who contributed to the financial well-being of the congregation were allowed to participate in decision making. A greater willingness at the Coté Street Church to take into account the views of the wider church membership slowed down the relocation project and eventually forced them to concede that the minority group had certain claims on the original property, even if those claims were never successfully realized.

¹³⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 13 January 1876.

¹³⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 13 January 1876.

¹⁴⁰ CIHM A00394, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1898* (Montreal, 1899), Historical Memoranda concerning Crescent Street Presbyterian Church Montreal by John Stirling, 12.

¹⁴¹ PCL, *Free Church, Coté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1874* (Montreal, 1875) 18; *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports 1883* (Montreal, 1884) 12.

Zion Congregational Church: A Divided Congregation

In the case of Zion Congregational Church, disagreement over the topic of church relocation proved so controversial in the 1870s that it ultimately resulted in the departure of one of the church's ministers and nearly all of its lay leadership to form the new Emmanuel Congregational Church in an uptown location. This left the majority of church members who stayed loyal to the old Zion Church struggling to cope with the financial burdens that had been left behind and willing to turn to a maverick preacher who ultimately brought the church to the brink of extinction. The Congregationalists had worshipped in their original church on St Maurice Street (see Figure 2.18) for just ten years before building Zion Church on a new site just to the south of Beaver Hall Hill in 1845 (see Figure 2.19). This is not, for the purposes of this discussion, considered to be an uptown relocation, although in terms of the direction of movement it foreshadowed the relocation of churches that was to take place in the following decades. Various decisions that were taken on entering this church building are, however, relevant to the current discussion because they influenced subsequent debates about whether or not the congregation should move once again in the 1870s.

Montreal's Congregationalists were major participants in the revivalism of the early 1840s, holding special revival meetings and organizing district meetings throughout the city, and the need for a larger place of worship was a key factor prompting the move in 1845.¹⁴² One of the decisions that was made on entering the new church, was that it should endeavour to be an explicitly 'missionary church', reaching out to the poor in the surrounding neighbourhood.¹⁴³ Associated with this was the decision, apparently at the instigation of deacon John Dougall, founder of the *Montreal Witness*, to abolish pew rents, and instead rely entirely on voluntary donations.¹⁴⁴ One of the explicit aims of this measure was to 'do away with distinctions in the Christian sanctuary on account of

¹⁴² ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/1/1 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1832-1857, 14 March 1842 – 25 March 1842; 1 February 1843; CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 14. See also Figure 2.6.

¹⁴³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Letter from James P. Clark to Henry Vennor [inserted following the Deacons' Report for 1862, presented 14 January 1863], no date; see also *Montreal Witness*, 9 August 1852.

¹⁴⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 22 April 1899.

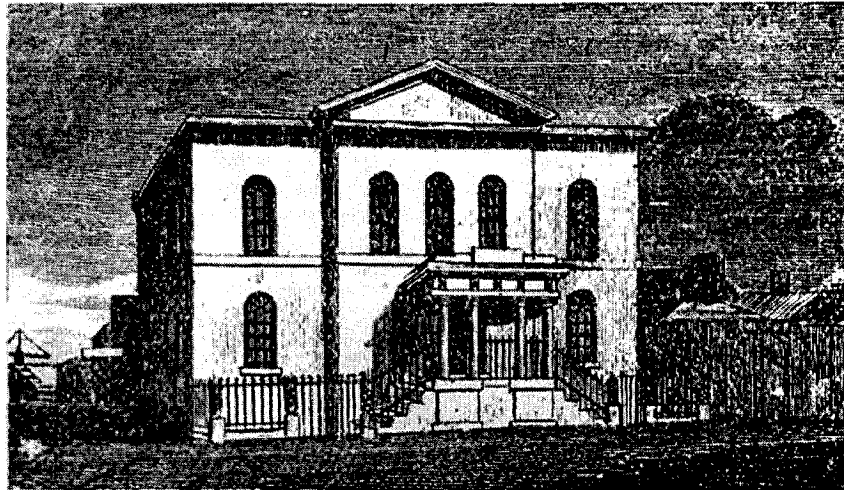


Figure 2.18 First Congregational Church, 1835-1845.
St Maurice Street (Source: Bosworth, 1839).

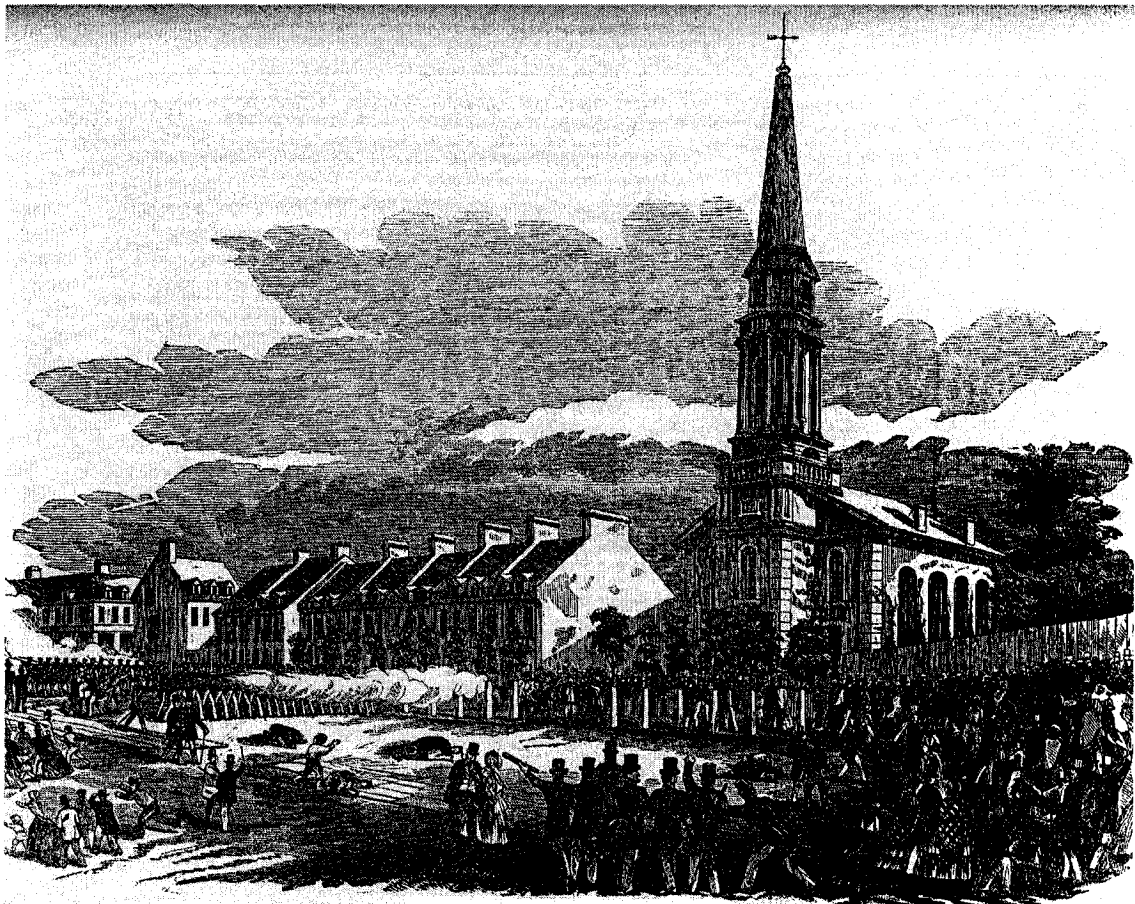


Figure 2.19 Zion Congregational Church, 1846-1880, showing the Gavazzi
Riot in 1853. Corner Radegonde and Latour Streets.
(Source: DeVolpi and Winkworth, 1963).

relative measures of wealth'.¹⁴⁵ As we have seen in most of the other churches, pew rents were frequently used to determine who could participate in decisions concerning the temporal affairs of the church. By abolishing pew rents, Zion Church reaffirmed its commitment to allowing all church members, whether male or female, to participate in the monthly congregational meetings on the basis of their spiritual status in the church. In making this resolution, Zion Church differentiated itself not only from the other case-study churches discussed here, but also from the great majority of Protestant congregations in the city. This may have exacerbated the financial troubles experienced by the church during the depression of the late 1840s. As congregation members found themselves unable to pay the donations they had promised, church revenues rapidly dwindled to such an extent that at one point there was even concern that they would lose their 'fine house' and have to return to dwelling in a 'cottage', the choice of terminology demonstrating the close association between churches and places of residence in the minds of their supporters.¹⁴⁶

The fortunes of Zion Church improved dramatically in the aftermath of the Hammond Revival in 1862. At least sixty-two new members sought admission to the church on profession of their faith, the remains of the debt were paid off, and enthusiasm to extend the work of the church was manifest.¹⁴⁷ Although pressed for accommodation to house the new members, the congregation did not consider selling the current church and rebuilding elsewhere as others were doing, presumably because Zion Church was already situated at what was then a convenient midway point between the downtown area and the uptown district. Instead, the congregation considered (in the words of deacon Henry Vennor) 'enlarging the family mansion or sending off some of the members of the family to set up housekeeping on their own account but still under direction of the old

¹⁴⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/1/1 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1832-1857, 'Zion Church, Radegonde St., Haymarket - Dedicatory Sermons Next Lord's Day, Nov. 8. 1846 ... A Collection after each service in aid of the Building Fund' [inserted], 5 November, 1846.

¹⁴⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1862, presented 14 January 1863. See also: Rev. John Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes, D.D., L.L.D., His Life and Times* (Montreal: F.E. Grafton and Sons 1887), 135-136.

¹⁴⁷ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 186-187.

home'.¹⁴⁸ As the only Congregational Church in the city at this time, Zion Church saw itself as a potential 'mother church' and was anxious to promote the Congregational cause in the city. This was a difficult task, however, since Congregationalists made up only 3 percent of the Protestant population in the city.¹⁴⁹ The emphasis placed on congregational participation in decision making and the absence of a hierarchical power structure within the Congregational Church also complicated organized church extension efforts, since groups of enthusiastic laymen tended to promote particular projects that they favoured, which tended to diffuse the already limited resources of a small denomination. Some of the congregational leadership at Zion Church already felt disillusioned by recent failed attempts to promote Congregationalism elsewhere in the city and were hesitant to throw further money away.¹⁵⁰ A compromise was therefore reached at a congregational meeting in 1864 which allowed for the enlargement of the current church as well as the erection of a branch church in the eastern part of the city, while simultaneously promising further enquiries vis-à-vis the erection of another branch church in the western part of the city.¹⁵¹ Not all members supported this decision. As the Rev. George Cornish explained later, it had been the decided opinion of a 'respectable minority' within the congregation that it was their duty as a church 'not simply to establish mission stations in destitute parts of the city, but also to send forth a strong and godly band from our ranks to occupy new ground in some of its many populous and growing districts'.¹⁵² The long time pastor of the congregation, the Rev. Henry Wilkes, likewise believed that it would have been preferable to spend the \$8000 cost of the enlargement on church extension.¹⁵³

These differences of opinion re-emerged following the destruction of Zion Church by fire in the summer of 1867. A decision was immediately taken to rebuild on the

¹⁴⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1862, presented 14 January 1863. Hence 'God's Mobile Mansions'.

¹⁴⁹ *Census of Canada*, 1861.

¹⁵⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, 5 February 1863; Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Letter from James P. Clark to Henry Vennor [inserted following the Deacons' Report for 1862, presented 14 January 1863], no date.

¹⁵¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, 2 May 1864.

¹⁵² *Canadian Independent*, 21(4) (October 1874), 124.

¹⁵³ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 186-187.

original site. The Rev. Wilkes, who was himself away in England at the time, subsequently wrote that it was unfortunate that the fire had taken place during the summer time, because the 'leading people' of the church were out of town during this period and 'the decision to rebuild on the old site was reached during their absence, and contrary to the expressed wishes of many of them'.¹⁵⁴ Thus, the very group that was pushing for uptown relocations in other churches found themselves excluded from this important decision. The great affection and respect that members of the congregation had for Rev. Wilkes nevertheless ensured the continued allegiance of this group to Zion Church. His resignation to become principal of the Congregational College in 1871 and his replacement by the Rev. Charles Chapman, whose 'instructive and scholarly' preaching did not appeal to all sections of the congregation, quickly led, however, to further discussion of the need for an uptown church.¹⁵⁵

In the spring of 1872, the trustees concluded that in light of the lack of accommodation in Zion Church, the growth of the city in population and extent, the desire not to lose members to other denominations, and the wish to promote the principles of Congregational church government, the time had come to build a church in the west end of the city.¹⁵⁶ The debt resulting from the rebuilding of Zion Church was still a source of concern, and ultimately it was recognized that the congregation could not afford to retain their old place of worship as well as build a new uptown church.¹⁵⁷ A special church meeting was therefore held in December 1872, at which church members were told they had to decide whether it would not be in the best interests of the church to leave the business section of the city and remove to a location that would be more central to the bulk of the congregation and 'more likely to stand well for the generation rising up'.¹⁵⁸ They were also informed that, with one exception, all the deacons and trustees supported

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 196. See also William Archibald Wood, *The Days of John Wood, Watchmaker* (Hudson, Quebec: Wood Family Archives 1986), 200; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 161, EMM/1/3 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1875-1890, Historical Sketch at beginning of the book.

¹⁵⁵ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 209.

¹⁵⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/2/1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1871-1884, Report of the Board of Trustees for 1871, presented 16 January 1872 [inserted].

¹⁵⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, For 1873 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1872. Presented at the annual meeting of the Church held Jany. 15th and 29th, 1873* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1873), 11.

¹⁵⁸ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 210.

the sale of Zion Church and the purchase of a site on which to erect a new building in the Western part of the city. The majority of church members appear to have added their support to this proposal.¹⁵⁹ An article in the *Canadian Independent* suggests that this decision formed part of a broader plan for Congregational church extension in Montreal. By moving Zion Church to the corner of St Catherine and Stanley Streets, the danger would be avoided of a new western church draining away the congregation of the original church. It was also proposed to transform the Shaftsbury Hall Mission¹⁶⁰ into a church to serve the manufacturing population in the south-western part of the city, and to move the Eastern Congregational Church farther north into a more promising district, where it could be reinforced by the more easterly-dwelling members of the old Zion Church.¹⁶¹ In January 1873 the congregation proceeded with a formal vote to permit the trustees to sell the old building, which required the signed approval of two-thirds of the membership of the church. At the meeting itself, 101 members – including both men and women – agreed to the sale, with 13 objecting, and two neutral. A further 153 signatures were subsequently acquired, making a total of 254 in favour of selling the old church out of a potential total of 374 members residing in or near the city.¹⁶² Although this vote does not tell us how many members whose signatures were absent actually objected to the sale of the old church and how many simply did not get around to signing, it does suggest a remarkable level of active participation in the decision making process when compared with most of the other congregations under examination. Also unusual was that women were allowed an equal role alongside their male counterparts in deciding the fate of their old church. Despite the fact that an uptown property had been bought on behalf of the congregation by three members of the church, the decision to sell the old building was indefinitely postponed. This was at least partly due to the Rev. Wilkes' plea that the old neighbourhood and church not be forsaken, and that many congregation members

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 211; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, For 1873 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1872 (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1873), 12; *Canadian Independent*, 19(7) (January 1873), 232.

¹⁶⁰ The origins of this mission are described in Chapter 4.

¹⁶¹ *Canadian Independent*, 19(7) (January 1873), 232.

¹⁶² ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/2/1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1871-1884, Annual Meeting of members of Zion Church, 15 January 1873.

apparently sympathized with his views despite the vote to sell the church.¹⁶³ There is also evidence that, with the onset of a commercial depression, the trustees were having trouble obtaining a satisfactory offer for the old church and site.¹⁶⁴

Pressure continued to mount from those who were unhappy with the Rev. Chapman's ministry and those who wanted an uptown church in which to worship, leading to the unusual step being taken of calling a second minister, the Rev. J.F. Stevenson. The idea behind this decision was that a joint pastorate would be established, with each minister having equal powers and working under one church organization, but with two places of worship – the old Zion Church and another in an uptown location – with the ministers preaching alternately in each place.¹⁶⁵ As one might expect under such circumstances, difficulties arose and in March 1875, 111 members of Zion Church seceded to form an independent uptown congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. Stevenson (see Figure 2.20).¹⁶⁶ While the departing minority felt that they were entitled to a share of the old property, the majority of congregation members who remained with Zion Church disagreed, arguing that the minority were leaving an organized institution and therefore had no right to the property in question.¹⁶⁷ Thus, the majority retained the rights to the Zion Church property, as well as all of the church's considerable liabilities, while the new Emmanuel Congregational Church gained possession of the vacant lot that had been purchased (but not yet fully paid for) with a view to building an uptown church. The new Emmanuel Church also benefited from the fact that nearly all the officers of the old Zion Church were among those who left to form the new church.¹⁶⁸ As will be documented in Chapter 3, those who left also represented a generally wealthier group than those left behind at Zion Church.

¹⁶³ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 211.

¹⁶⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, for 1874 with reports for 1873* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1874), 12.

¹⁶⁵ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 211-212; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 161, EMM/1/3 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1875-1890, Historical Sketch at beginning of the book; *Canadian Independent*, 21(1) (July 1874), 26.

¹⁶⁶ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 214-215; *Canadian Independent*, 21(10) (April 1875), 342.

¹⁶⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/3 Minutes Deacons' Meetings 1879-1921, Letter from Rev. Dr. Wilkes dated 15 March 1880 [inserted], 29 March 1880.

¹⁶⁸ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 4(11) (August 1885), 232.

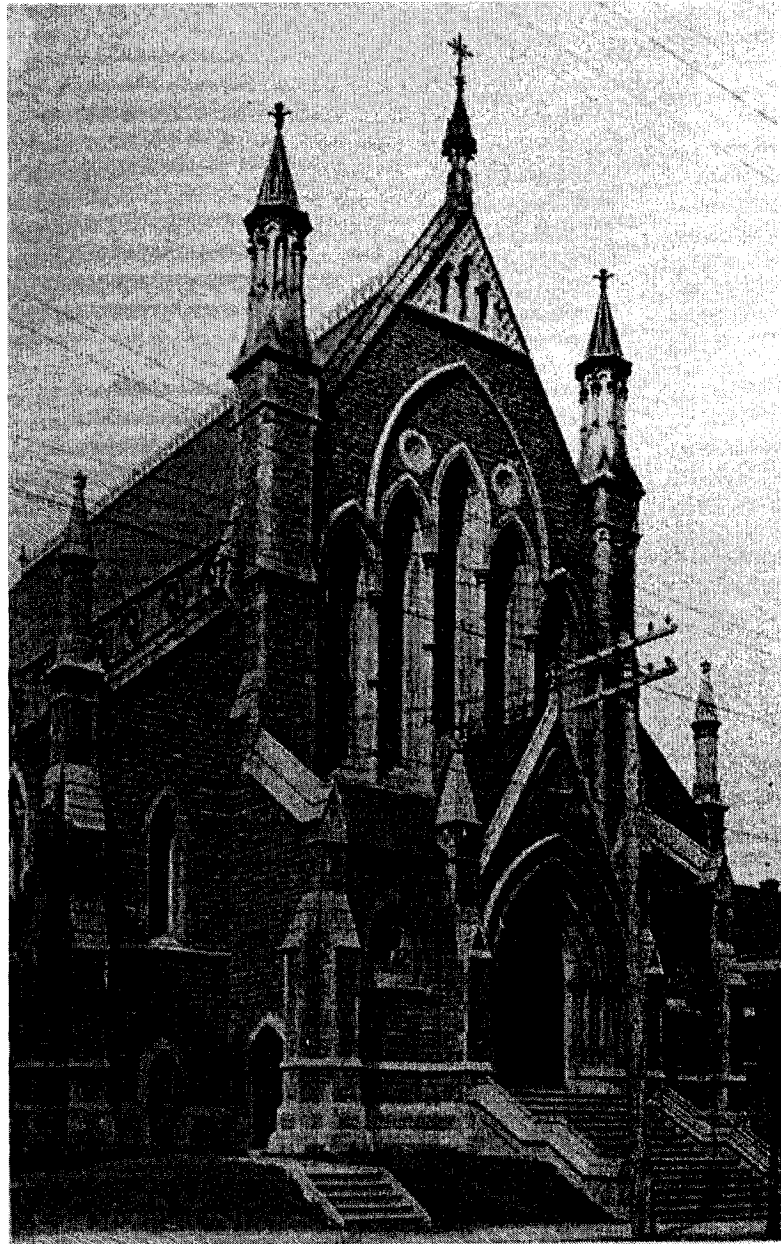


Figure 2.20 Emmanuel Congregational Church, 1877-1906.
St Catherine corner Stanley Street (Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection).

While the depressed economic climate of the late 1870s was blamed for having a detrimental effect on the financial and spiritual prosperity of Emmanuel Church during its early years, those left behind in the old Zion Church fared much worse.¹⁶⁹ In 1876, the Rev. Charles Chapman resigned as pastor of Zion Church and was replaced by the Rev. A.J. Bray of Manchester who, influenced by the 'New Ideas' that were then at work in the churches in England, was noted for being extremely liberal in doctrine and for emphasizing that Christianity was essentially a moral religion.¹⁷⁰ The Rev. Bray was also vocal in speaking out against ministers whose preaching was designed simply to please their congregations and who were afraid to speak out against the love of wealth, the haste to be rich, and the sins of commerce. In an age of steam and iron, in which brute force was 'almost deified' and success had been made the 'measure of worth', he warned young men to acknowledge God in their pursuit of wealth by making gains only by fair and honest means.¹⁷¹ The choice of such a minister was an innovation for a congregation that had traditionally been one of Montreal's most conservative evangelical churches, with a strong emphasis on the need for personal salvation. The Rev. Bray's explicit criticism of the means by which modern wealth was being gained would also, one suspects, have alienated at least some of the wealthy members of uptown congregations. This suggests the complexity of motives lying behind the division of the original Zion Church, with geographical, class, and theological factors all influencing the decisions of individual congregation members to remain with Zion Church or else remove to the uptown Emmanuel Church.

With the unusually large stipend promised to the Rev. Bray, the many liabilities for which the congregation retained responsibility, and the prolonged economic depression of the late 1870s, Zion Church soon found itself mired in financial problems.¹⁷² Reluctantly, the congregation agreed that they would have to sell their

¹⁶⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 161, EMM/1/3 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1875-1890, 4 June 1887.

¹⁷⁰ *Canadian Independent*, 23(3) (September 1876), 90; *Canadian Independent*, 23(5) (November 1876), Supplement.

¹⁷¹ *Canadian Independent*, 23(8) (February 1877), 225-228.

¹⁷² ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 2 July 1879. Zion Church retained responsibility for the Rev. Wilkes' retirement allowance, the debt that remained on Zion Church, as well as the debts on the various branch churches.

church building, use the proceeds to pay off the church's debts, and start afresh by renting the Queen's Hall on St Catherine Street as a temporary place of worship.¹⁷³ The depression meant, however, that few buyers were interested in converting the old church into a warehouse or manufacturing premises, which delayed the sale and meant that the property was ultimately sold for an amount that only just covered the indebtedness of the church.¹⁷⁴ While some looked upon the removal of the congregation to a public hall 'as an experiment that could end in nothing but disaster and early dissolution', others felt liberated from the burdens imposed by the ownership of a church building and liked the fact that their 'comfortable, old-fashioned church home' had been replaced by 'a more active and progressive, and it is hoped, more valuable centre of religious life'.¹⁷⁵ The Rev. Bray fell into the latter group, and thus took after fellow religious modernists of the period such as David Swing and Hiram Washington Thomas of Chicago, whose rejection of traditional conservative theology was accompanied by a rejection of traditional places of worship.¹⁷⁶ The insecurity of the church's position, dependent as it was on the Rev. Bray's ability to attract the 'large audiences' that came to hear his controversial preaching was, however, apparent.¹⁷⁷ In an effort to secure a more settled financial situation and congregational life, a move was therefore made to the vacant Wesley Church building (also on St Catherine Street) in 1882, but the Rev. Bray's decision to return to England soon afterwards, in 1884, left the congregation in a state of disarray.¹⁷⁸ While many outside the congregation blamed the Rev. Bray for bringing about the virtual extinction of one of Canada's noblest Congregational churches as a result of his 'loose teaching,

¹⁷³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/3 Minutes Deacons' Meetings 1879-1921, 5 January 1880; 2 February 1880; Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 25 February 1880.

¹⁷⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/2/1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1871-1884, 3 January 1881.

¹⁷⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 3 February 1882. See also Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/3 Minutes Deacons' Meetings 1879-1921, 2 March 1881.

¹⁷⁶ Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, 99-103.

¹⁷⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/2/1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1871-1884, 13 October 1881; 24 October 1881.

¹⁷⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/2/1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1871-1884, 31 December 1882; Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 2 January 1884; *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(2) (February 1884), 45.

unministerial demeanour and unfaithful pastorate', his supporters within the congregation reluctantly accepted his resignation while eulogizing him for his 'talent, ability and character and the great good they believed he had done in liberalizing theological thought in the City and throughout the whole country'.¹⁷⁹ Soon afterwards Zion Church was resuscitated by remaining members and friends of the congregation under 'the old lines of doctrine and order from which it had strayed', but the congregation was only a remnant of what it had been immediately following the creation of Emmanuel Church.¹⁸⁰

As an anomaly in terms of the uptown church relocations of this period, Zion Church sheds light on many of the processes that were taking place at the time. Although the creation of Emmanuel Congregational Church was similar in many respects to the uptown relocations of other congregations, what was unusual was the fact that the group that moved uptown was unable to take assets derived from the sale of the original church building with them to invest in their new location. This was a direct result of Zion's democratic form of church governance, which made it more difficult for leading congregation members to bring about the sale of the old church. As early as 1864, the wishes of this group were thwarted by the decision to enlarge the original church rather than begin a new building uptown. They were disappointed once again when the church was rebuilt after the fire in 1867 without consulting them. Despite finally obtaining the support of the congregation for the sale of the old church, this group ultimately realized that it was easier for them to depart and form a new congregation uptown than wait for the affairs of Zion Church to work themselves out, a decision that was reinforced by differences of opinion over the choice of minister. The difficulties experienced by Zion Church following the departure of its leading members demonstrated, however, the extent to which churches depended on such a group to provide both leadership and financial support. As in the Coté Street Church, a greater willingness to take into account the opinions of all groups within the congregation led to major differences of opinion concerning church relocation being openly expressed and debated. Particularly interesting in the case of the continuing Zion Church were the differences of opinion that

¹⁷⁹ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(4) (April 1884), 112; Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 214; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 2 January 1884; 23 January 1884.

¹⁸⁰ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 225.

were expressed as to the merits of worshipping outside a traditional church edifice. While some saw the experiment as an exciting novelty, providing an ideal venue for the expression and promotion of modern theological views, others felt that worshipping in a public hall was undignified and found themselves unable to agree with the Rev. Bray's contention that 'the feeling for the Church as a community was stronger than as a building'.¹⁸¹

The St James Street Methodist Church: Building a Methodist Cathedral

The extent to which the desire to have a monumental church building in a desirable location could come to dominate the life of a congregation was evident in the case of the St James Street Wesleyan Methodist Church. The St James Street Church was one of the last of the old Protestant congregations to leave the central part of town. By this time, the old place of worship was seen as 'an oasis amid the desert of lofty business offices, warehouses, stores and other worldly accessories, by which it is surrounded'.¹⁸² The congregation was well-established in the downtown area, having opened its first chapel there in 1807, and subsequently rebuilt on nearby sites in 1821 (see Figure 2.21) and 1845 (see Figure 2.22) to accommodate ever-growing numbers. While neighbouring churches belonging to Presbyterians, Anglicans, Congregationalists, and Baptists gradually made their way up the hill, erecting ever more elaborate structures as they did so, St James Methodist initially focused its attentions on nurturing the numerous 'daughter' churches that it had helped to build up in various parts of the city.

In her research on the Ottawa Valley, Vicki Bennett has noted that an interesting correlation began to emerge during the 1840s and 1850s between religious revivals and church building projects, and that this connection was particularly strong amongst Methodists.¹⁸³ The connection was also clear to contemporaries such as James A. Mathewson, wholesale grocer and committed member of the St James Street congregation, who described 'what he called the missionary epochs in connection with

¹⁸¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 364, ZIO/1/7/2 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1879-1895, 25 February 1880.

¹⁸² *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888.

¹⁸³ Vicki Bennett, *Sacred Space and Structural Style: The Embodiment of Socio-Religious Ideology* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press 1997), 86.

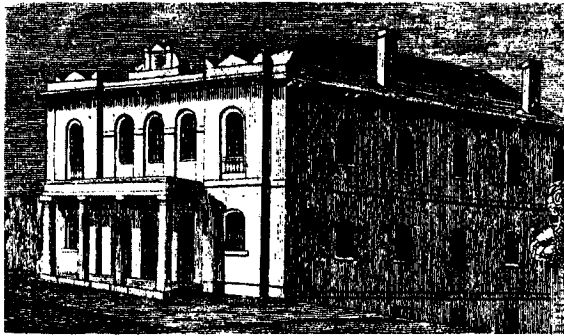


Figure 2.21 St James Street Methodist Church, 1821-1844 (Source: Jaques, 1888).

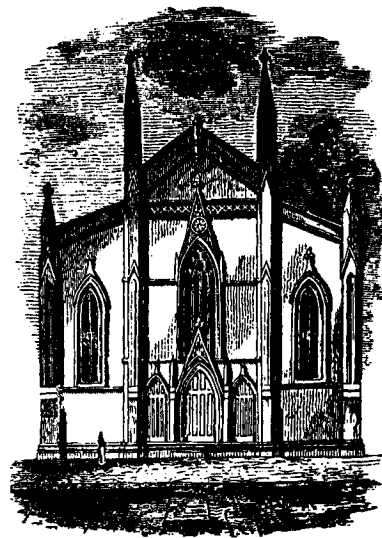


Figure 2.22 St James Street Methodist Church, 1845-1888 (Source: Jaques, 1888).



Figure 2.23 St James Methodist Church, 1889-present.
St Catherine Street, corner St Alexander (Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection).

old St James in 1819, 1841, and 1862, each of which led to the erection of churches and the extension of the work in the city'.¹⁸⁴ The first missionary meeting to be held in a Methodist Church in Montreal took place at First Methodist Church (the original name of the St James Street congregation) in 1819. Overflow crowds led them to borrow the St Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church temporarily, before deciding to erect a larger church on St James Street, which was opened in 1821.¹⁸⁵ Similar events occurred following the revival precipitated by evangelist James Caughey in 1841. As well as leading to the replacement of the original St James Street Church with a large and handsome structure capable of seating over 2,000 people in 1845 (see Figure 2.22), the revival also resulted in new and more spacious churches being built to house congregations in Griffintown and the Quebec Suburbs.¹⁸⁶ As we have seen above, the St James Street Church played a central role in the Hammond Revival of 1862. Although the revival did not lead to any transformation of the St James Street building, it did bring about a major church extension programme which led to the creation of Dorchester Street (later renamed Dominion Square), Sherbrooke Street, West End and Point St Charles Methodist Churches.¹⁸⁷ Unlike other churches that were planning their own uptown moves at this point, the St James Street congregation was heavily involved in the creation of the Dominion Square Church to serve the needs of members who had moved to the uptown district.¹⁸⁸

When the church building projects of the 1840s took place, the entire city of Montreal still formed one Methodist circuit, under the oversight of a Quarterly Board that consisted of ministers, class leaders, and stewards connected with each church. While each congregation had its own class leaders and stewards, the trustees of the St James Street Church continued to be financially responsible for the whole.¹⁸⁹ Thus, when the trustees initiated the church building projects of the 1840s, they consulted the Quarterly

¹⁸⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 13 February 1889.

¹⁸⁵ *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, 28 (July to December 1888), 462.

¹⁸⁶ *Montreal Gazette*, 8 May 1845; Epstein, *Church Architecture in Montreal*, 221.

¹⁸⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 22 April 1899.

¹⁸⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 12 May 1863; 25 May 1863; 10 May 1864.

¹⁸⁹ Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church*, 41.

Board as to preferred locations for the new church buildings and also held a public meeting of friends and supporters of Wesleyan Methodism in the city in order to gain the cooperation and financial support for the proposed chapels of as broad a group of people as possible.¹⁹⁰ Following the erection of more substantial places of worship in the east and west ends of the city, it was decided in 1851 that the circuit should, on a trial basis, be divided and each church be placed in charge of its own financial affairs.¹⁹¹ Despite the willingness of the central St James circuit to provide financial assistance to other circuits, those in the west circuit in particular wished to revert to the original joint arrangement, and disagreement over this eventually led to the withdrawal of the majority of members from both the Eastern and Western churches in 1854.¹⁹² Many of the individuals who left went on to form small New Connexion Methodist congregations on Panet Street and Dupré Lane. This left the St James Street congregation struggling to pay the debts on all three churches. In an appeal for assistance, the trustees pointed out that, while they themselves had subscribed £5356 to reduce debt over the past eight years, the actual congregations, despite ‘worshipping in three of the best Churches in Montreal’, had subscribed a mere £478. Arguing that these churches were built ‘as much for your benefit, welfare and accommodation, as for that of any of those Trustees who have...contributed successively such large amounts to preserve them to you and the cause of God’, the trustees pleaded in 1856 for a united effort to reduce the debt.¹⁹³ This appeal appears to have been successful, raising subscriptions (payable over six years) of \$51,374.¹⁹⁴

A collective approach was adopted once again when the time came for further church extension in the 1860s. Almost immediately following the Hammond Revival, the ministers, trustees, and representatives from each circuit held a meeting to consider the

¹⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 16 January 1844.

¹⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 12 April 1853; Rev. George H. Cornish, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism, Volume 1* (Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House Cornish 1881), 253.

¹⁹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 4/7 July 1853; Jaques *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church*, 41.

¹⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 317, STJ/43/1 A Statement of Trustee Debt drawn up by Mr Thomas Kay, March 1856.

¹⁹⁴ Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church*, 73.

need for church extension in the rapidly expanding city. This was followed by a public prayer meeting asking for God's blessing on the extension effort as well as a large social meeting at which \$31,000 was subscribed by the Methodist public, which, with subsequent subscriptions, raised a total of \$43,755.¹⁹⁵ What differentiated the Methodist church building enterprise from that of other congregations during this period was the extent to which it was seen as a collective Methodist project rather than an individualistic congregational undertaking. This speaks to the effectiveness of the Methodists' connexional system. Among the churches being studied, St James Street Methodist Church was the only one that actively supported the building of an uptown church that it knew would take away at least some of the wealthier congregation members that provided its leadership and financial support.¹⁹⁶ The fact that membership numbers soon rose again after the departure of those who joined Dominion Square and other congregations, suggests that the St James Street Quarterly Board was right not to question the continued need for a downtown church at this point. Since Methodist ministers – unlike their counterparts in other denominations – were usually allowed to spend only three consecutive years with any given congregation, they were motivated to focus on the good of the entire Methodist organization rather than to be interested solely in the well-being of their own church. As for the trustees and leading church members, their willingness to think of the wellbeing of Methodism in the city as a whole rather than just that of St James Street Methodist Church is more difficult to understand in light of the example set by congregations belonging to other denominations. One explanation may simply be the strong enthusiasm exhibited by Methodists for spreading 'scriptural holiness through the land'.¹⁹⁷ It was a source of pride that the St James Street Church had 'like a mother' ... 'colonized almost every part of the city of Montreal'.¹⁹⁸ Given Methodism's relatively humble origins and associations, there may also have been a desire on the part of middle-class Methodists, many of whom were themselves rising in the social spectrum, to ensure that the profile of their denomination rose with them.

¹⁹⁵ *Montreal Herald*, 31 March 1864; 3 October 1864.

¹⁹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 15 May 1866.

¹⁹⁷ *Montreal Herald*, 3 October 1864.

¹⁹⁸ *Montreal Star*, 4 June 1888.

By the 1880s, however, many came to feel that the location of the St James Street Methodist Church was no longer suitable. By this time, the St James Street Methodist Church and the St Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church were the only Protestant churches remaining in the downtown core of Montreal. At the same meeting at which the Quarterly Board first discussed the possibility of selling the old church and rebuilding on a more suitable and convenient site, a motion was carried asking the trustees to employ a special constable 'whose duty it shall be to see that order is maintained in the Gallery during Divine Service'.¹⁹⁹ A few years later, in association with the disturbances that followed the Salvation Army's 'invasion' of Montreal in December 1884, the *Gazette* noted that 'on Sunday nights things are even worse than usual on account of the crowd of foolish young men, or what pass for men, who congregate around the door of the St James Street Methodist Church, ogling the ladies as they come out'.²⁰⁰ The fact that respectable churchgoers had to confront rowdy elements of the populace not just on their way to and from church, but within the church service itself, would probably alone have provided a sufficient incentive to move the church to a more desirable location. Other stimuli were also present, however. In 1872, Methodists in Toronto had erected the Metropolitan Wesleyan Church, a monumental edifice which cost over \$150,000 and illustrated the leading role played by Toronto's Methodists in Canadian Protestantism.²⁰¹ Other Canadian cities, including Halifax and Ottawa, had likewise erected large and costly 'central' churches in the 1860s and 1870s.²⁰² The perceived need for commanding central churches reflected the belief that the cities were 'the strategic points in the country' and that 'the religious denomination which most largely holds the cities will largely hold the country'.²⁰³ The St James Street Church had always fulfilled this role in Montreal, hosting most of the large annual meetings of the various Protestant societies,

¹⁹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 23 May 1882.

²⁰⁰ *Montreal Gazette*, 5 January 1885.

²⁰¹ Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996), 208.

²⁰² John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1988), 174.

²⁰³ *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, 29 (January to June 1889), 472. See also Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada*, 334.

the annual New Year's Day gathering of all the Methodist Sunday School scholars in the city, as well as the many of the large revival meetings.²⁰⁴ Despite its size, by the mid-1880s the forty year old St James Street Church would have compared unfavourably with the monumental Methodist churches that had been erected in other Canadian cities, as well as with the new uptown churches belonging to other denominations.

Such factors no doubt influenced the trustees' decision at the end of January 1886 that the time had come 'to erect a central representative Church, large and handsome' on an uptown site on St Catherine Street (see Figure 2.23).²⁰⁵ So did revivalism, which once again seems to have played a role in encouraging church building. At the beginning of January, Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey had held a successful four-day evangelistic campaign at the St James Street Church which showed 'the eagerness of the people to listen to the word of life simply, clearly, and earnestly set forth'. St James, reputed to hold about 3,000 people, was filled at every service, with overflow crowds being diverted to a neighbouring hall.²⁰⁶ Thus, when the Rev. John Philp, who had become minister of St James in 1885, left three years later, he was thanked not only for having inaugurated the new church enterprise but also for having converted hundreds of souls during his ministry.²⁰⁷ The trustees were also influenced by the same factors that had encouraged other congregations to move uptown years earlier:

For many years past the regular members of the church have decentralized themselves and moved to suburban residences so that today there is hardly one official of the church living within a mile of the building, and the trustees for a long time past have with reluctance had to face the fact that they must leave the old familiar spot and remove to higher ground. The regular congregation had to walk long distances to attend the services, and as many of the members were growing in years, it was felt that the movement could no longer be delayed, matters of a financial nature also pointing to the advisability of quitting the downtown position.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888.

²⁰⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1886-1889, 29 January 1886.

²⁰⁶ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 5(3) (1 February 1886), 33.

²⁰⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 29 May 1888.

²⁰⁸ *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888.

As was the case in other congregations, special emphasis was placed on the convenience of leading and elderly congregation members when considering the need for a new location. The officials of the church included well-known citizens such as Alderman J. McBride, representative of the West Ward, and Alderman J. Griffin, representative of St Lawrence Ward, and Senator James Ferrier, all of whom were trustees. Also prominent were numerous businessmen, most influential of whom was John Torrance, secretary-treasurer of the Board of Trustees since 1863, whose grandfather had been the treasurer of the first St James Street Church, and whose father had been a trustee of the second St James Street Church.²⁰⁹ No evidence could be found in either the Trustee minutes or those of the Quarterly Board as to whether the opinion of the church membership as a whole was sought at any point in the process. The trustees did, however, receive the approval of the Quarterly Board, which by this time included a number of congregational representatives.²¹⁰ Thus, it is difficult to gauge the level of support for the move amongst the congregation as a whole. James A. Mathewson, a long time church member and one of the class leaders, objected forcefully to the building of a large and handsome uptown church, and suggested in a letter to John Torrance that he was not alone in disapproving of the resolution commending the Rev. Philp for his role in inaugurating the new church.²¹¹ His concern about the church building project may have stemmed from his observation that 'many members of the church if not the majority are really poor, so that reliance for any special financial help from the membership would not be wise'.²¹² This suggests that the scale and grandeur of the proposed church reflected the ambitions and aspirations of the church's wealthy leadership much more than the financial reality of the lives of most of its congregation members. This would be in keeping with Clark's argument that during this period the Methodist Church in Canada was distancing itself from its traditional constituency, which included the economically and socially

²⁰⁹ *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888.

²¹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 15 March 1886.

²¹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, Letter from J.A. Mathewson to John Torrance [inserted at end of book], 30 May 1888; Nathan Mair, *The People of St James Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal: St James United Church 1984), 50.

²¹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 313, STJ/33/1 Report made by J.A. Mathewson on his class, 14 March 1886.

dispossessed, and associating itself more closely with the social respectability of those who had raised themselves in the world by obtaining wealth and social standing.²¹³

When it opened in 1889, the new St James Methodist Church was described as 'one of the largest and most imposing structures of its kind in Canada', a 'Methodist Cathedral'.²¹⁴ Underneath the optimism expressed at the opening ceremonies, however, was the knowledge on the part of the trustees that the church was in a financially precarious situation. Having failed to secure an acceptable offer for the old church property, they had taken the bold and risky step of building a seven-storey office building, called the 'Temple Building', on the site of the old church, in the hope that it would generate revenue to support the new church while awaiting a more auspicious moment to sell the property.²¹⁵ With the cost of the new church and land mounting to over \$300,000, John Torrance feared that the church's level of indebtedness would be 'utterly impossible to carry' and that it would be 'disastrous to the spiritual interests of the church, crippling her energies, and preventative of the incoming of new adherents'.²¹⁶ His suggestion that the trustees themselves subscribe \$50,000 as part of a 'bold push on opening day', in the hope that the congregation would come up with an equal amount, was not enough to save the congregation from the years of financial turmoil and insecurity that followed, transforming one of the most generous congregations in the city into a church that itself needed external support from Methodists across Canada to survive.

The foregoing discussion illustrates the complex interaction of temporal and spiritual motivations in influencing the process of church relocation. The tendency to see church building activity not just as evidence of material prosperity and social status but also as evidence of 'large Christian liberality, of faith in God, and of earnest endeavors to mould the future of this land on a lofty Christian model' meant that it was difficult to resist the temptation to build churches that were beyond the means of their immediate

²¹³ Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada*, 334, 352, 391.

²¹⁴ *Montreal Herald*, 17 June 1889; *Montreal Witness*, 15 June 1889.

²¹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1886-1889, 8 March 1888; Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James St. Methodist Church*, 116.

²¹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1886-1889, 9 April 1889.

congregations.²¹⁷ The interconnection between the temporal and spiritual welfare of churches was likewise apparent when churches found their spiritual lives flagging as a result of undue emphasis being placed on temporal affairs in order to reduce unwieldy church debts.

Critique of Church Building and Relocation

The prolonged and severe economic depression that afflicted Montreal along with other parts of North America during the 1870s brought into bold relief the fiscal, social, and spiritual dangers associated with church-building enterprises. Some of these difficulties have already been alluded to in the context of the case-study churches. While church relocation and rebuilding almost always generated debate within congregations, in most cases discussion abated once the new church was opened and those objecting to the plans had either come on board, or else decided to attend another place of worship. From the perspective of their ministers and leading congregation members, the new uptown churches were generally seen in a positive light, although the debts that had been contracted to build them could generate considerable anxiety for many years, especially during periods of economic depression. The collective experiences of individual congregations ultimately fed, however, into a more sustained critique of monumental church building that made its way into local newspapers and denominational magazines. Criticism focused on the ‘over-churching’ of certain districts, in particular the uptown district where so many of the leading congregations had regrouped, and on the excessive grandeur of many of the new church buildings.

In the midst of the depression in the 1870s, the President of the Montreal Methodist Conference announced that ‘seldom has the vanity of earthly things received a more striking illustration than it has during the last few months. How many who imagined themselves rich have suddenly awoke to find themselves in deepest poverty?’²¹⁸ Such events, he maintained, illustrated the foolishness of placing trust in anything but God, while at the same time demonstrating ‘the wisdom, as well as the duty, of faithfully

²¹⁷ *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, 29 (January to June 1889), 472.

²¹⁸ *Minutes of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, Third Session* (Toronto, 1876), 84-85.

employing the wealth placed at our disposal as an instrument of good, in promoting the well-being of our fellow creatures and the glory of God'.²¹⁹ An editorial in the *Montreal Witness* presented a very similar message when it suggested to readers that the vast sums of money that had been lost through the depression ought really to have been given away long before.²²⁰ The editor went on to argue that one of the positive outcomes of the troubled financial times was that they had made 'people feel the insecurity of earthly possessions' and reminded them 'that what they call their own is only entrusted to them by their Lord, to be used to the best advantage by them for His glory and the good of those about them'.²²¹ Such opinions would have sent mixed messages to congregations that found themselves struggling to pay for their new church buildings in the face of declining congregational giving. On the one hand, it could be argued that church buildings counted among the 'earthly possessions' to which Christians needed to become less attached. Ministers certainly seemed to suggest as much when they reminded congregations at opening ceremonies for new uptown churches that 'a grander thing by far is a saved soul than a completed sanctuary'.²²² On the other hand, the case could be made that churches were built with funds entrusted to the wealthy by God in order to glorify Him and promote His work in the world. Such a choice represented a dilemma for middle-class churchgoers, who recognized that the spiritual life of their churches was being undermined by ongoing fiscal crises, but who at the same time believed in the benefits of an economic system fuelled by the desire to possess increasing quantities of 'earthly things'.

One way of circumventing this dilemma was to focus on a critique of the numbers and distribution of Protestant churches in the city. A simple mention by the *Montreal Witness* that there were over fifty Protestant churches in Montreal, while the total adult Protestant population was estimated at only 16,000, elicited a flurry of response on the

²¹⁹ *Minutes of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, Third Session* (Toronto, 1876), 85.

²²⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 20 August 1879.

²²¹ *Montreal Witness*, 20 August 1879.

²²² *Montreal Witness*, 11 March 1878. This remark was made by the Rev. Mr Ormiston at the opening of Crescent Street Church.

part of readers.²²³ One reader, who signed him or herself 'M.Y.', carried out an impressionistic calculation in which it was estimated that, since not more than one half to two thirds of people attended church regularly or at any one time, there could only be 12,000 regular churchgoers, or 240 adults for each church. With an estimated 600 sittings on average per church, that left over 18,000 seats empty on any given Sunday, out of a total of 30,000 sittings.²²⁴ Such figures, M.Y. acknowledged, were 'very creditable to the generosity and benevolence of the Protestant community', but raised the issue of whether it was 'wise or Christian to spend so much of the Lord's money in building and sustaining so many fine churches where they are not needed, when so many millions of the human race have never heard the Gospel of salvation?'. The fact that M.Y. could stand at his or her window and count eleven Protestant churches suggests that the target of criticism was the uptown churches, since – as can be seen from Figure 2.3 showing the distribution of churches in 1880 – this was the one part of town where such high concentrations existed. While critical of all denominations, another reader reserved an especially dramatic simile for the Presbyterians, who were described as having 'caught the building fever' to such an extent that they were now swimming 'in the sea of difficulty, blowing like exhausted porpoises as they make leap after leap and are still in the water, - five churches are in a bunch where three would do'.²²⁵ A number of readers contrasted the Protestant situation with that of the Roman Catholic churches.²²⁶ It was observed that, while the Catholic population was three times larger than the Protestant one and despite the wealth of the Catholic Church, the Catholics had fewer churches in Montreal than the Protestants.²²⁷ This was attributed to the Roman Catholic clergy's restriction of the number of churches 'to the actual wants of their people, reserving their surplus funds for other purposes better calculated to aid the cause than the mere multiplication of bricks and mortar'.²²⁸ Part of the problem, of course, was the competition amongst the various Protestant

²²³ *Montreal Witness*, 7 November 1879.

²²⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 15 November 1879.

²²⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 13 December 1879.

²²⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 12 November 1879; 2 December 1879; 13 December 1879.

²²⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 2 December 1879.

²²⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 2 December 1879.

denominations, as many readers pointed out.²²⁹ The desire to appear strong led to the multiplication of church buildings and the scattering of Protestant forces, a problem that could only be resolved through church amalgamations, a willingness to cooperate amongst the laity, and a greater readiness on the part of leading denominations to allow for more flexibility in the details of religious doctrine and practice.²³⁰ This suggested that, just as the competitive, laissez-faire economic system needed to be tempered by Christian charity and moral values, the anarchy and competitiveness of Protestant church building likewise needed to be moderated in some way. One perceived solution was to find ways to reduce the surplus of churches and thereby free up funds for missionary and charitable work. While straightforward in theory, this idea was nevertheless impractical given people's strong attachments to their places of worship.²³¹ Such seemingly pragmatic solutions must, however, have appealed to the business-minded, and successfully avoided having to grapple with the more difficult dilemma of whether elegant uptown churches compromised a true expression of Christian faith.

Others were more willing to confront this issue head on. The editor of the *Montreal Witness* responded to the suggestion that revival meetings would resolve the 'over-churching' problem by filling up the churches with new converts, by questioning whether ministers and leading church members continued to have faith in such measures.²³² Preoccupied by their buildings, music programmes, and social events, church members had become distracted from their religious purpose.²³³ Others agreed that it was not possible to serve both God and Mammon. According to S. Huxley of Montreal, the church was 'fast degenerating into a gigantic institution for erecting expensive piles of masonry instead of building spiritual temples'.²³⁴ The need to pay off church debts not only forced congregations to hold bazaars and other fund-raising

²²⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 15 November 1879; 24 November 1879; 2 December 1879; 5 December 1879; 13 December 1879.

²³⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 5 December 1879.

²³¹ The only known case of a church merger during this period was that of the First Baptist and St Catherine Street Baptist Churches.

²³² *Montreal Witness*, 29 December 1879.

²³³ *Montreal Witness*, 29 December 1879.

²³⁴ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(5) (May 1884), 139.

endeavours which some considered inappropriate, but also diverted funds from charity and prevented congregations from supporting missionaries.²³⁵ The Rev. Brandram Ussher of St Bartholomew's Reformed Episcopal congregation, which had recently installed itself on Beaver Hall Hill in a building inherited from the First Baptist congregation, expressed his views forcefully in a Sunday evening sermon:

In a spirit of extravagance that has no redeeming feature, all denominations have launched out into palatial churches, where modest comfort is left away behind in vulgar costly display. The funds that should have been gathered to sustain missionaries, have gone into gorgeous painting and massive masonry, and the usefulness of the majority of our churches is impaired by this curse of debt.... The fault lies with the laity, who are not content to have large, comfortable, inexpensive buildings, but in a mad race of pride, each strives to outvie the other, and much of the spirituality of the church is killed in the indecent pestering of people for money that is required by church officers to meet the constantly accruing interest. Jehovah has too often been deserted for the god of Fashion; you of the laity are not contented with that which would have contented your forefathers. Old churches whose walls were made sacred by gospel ministry, and the hallowed memories of dear associations, have been abandoned, the sheep scattered, and the veneration that filled the memory as rich perfume might a case, has been spilled, while the sight of the deserted home gives so sharp a pang that it is not eased by the superior glitter and appointments of the new church.²³⁶

Despite their eloquence, it was never entirely clear whether such pleas by ministers were designed primarily to elicit more generous donations from congregations members, or whether they represented a heart-felt condemnation of upper- and middle-class church-building practices. The fact that so much of the criticism took place in the context of the financial depression of the 1870s suggests that the principal objection was to the debilitating spiritual consequences of church debt, rather than to the grandeur of the buildings themselves.

Although some questioned the social exclusivity of the uptown congregations, associated at least in part with their new locations, such changes were largely accepted during this period as a natural and unproblematic result of the growth of the city. While congregations that had moved uptown acknowledged that it was their Christian duty to assist with the provision of places of worship in downtown districts that their churches

²³⁵ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 17 June 1865; 6 January 1880; *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(6) (June 1884), 176.

²³⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 6 January 1880.

could no longer easily serve (as will be examined more closely in Chapter 4), they appear to have been relatively unconcerned as to whether socially exclusive church membership was compatible with the life of a Christian church. Elsewhere, fear was expressed that the old conception of the Christian church as the place where people from all walks of life could come together to worship was being lost, as Protestant churches increasingly came to be regarded as ‘the property of migratory individuals’.²³⁷ Through the *Montreal Witness*, Montrealers were aware of the opinions of clergymen in the United States, one of whom argued that ‘...as the church is for a common salvation of rich and poor alike, no system that shuts out the poor or puts the rich into a fashionable house with a saint’s name at one end of town and the poor into a bare chapel by themselves at the other end can ever be a system that God will prosper’.²³⁸ As noted in the case of the American Presbyterian Church, some debate took place concerning the new church’s failure to reach the masses, and the Rev. Bonar warned that the exclusion of the poor from costly new church buildings threatened the spiritual life of the community.²³⁹ An article in Montreal’s *Presbyterian College Journal* suggests, however, that many believed it was appropriate for the wealthy to attend places of worship that were in keeping with their opulent daily surroundings, and for the poor to assemble in humbler buildings where, it was felt, they would feel more at ease.²⁴⁰ To the author of the article, this seemed at odds with Biblical preaching to ‘Let the rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all’.²⁴¹ A further incident demonstrates the extent to which the social exclusivity of the uptown churches was considered unproblematic by churchgoers in Montreal. An article was reprinted in the *Montreal Witness* which contained the following comment by one Dr Pierson:

In Montreal is a superb church edifice, built by a few wealthy families for their own luxurious enjoyment, where the aristocratic members are “fanned with eloquent sermons, sprinkled with the lavender of ease, and swung in a

²³⁷ These views were expressed by the Rev. Morgan Dix, Rector of Trinity Church, New York City, in an Ascension Day Address in 1871, the text of which is reproduced in Robert D. Cross, ed., *The Church and the City 1865-1910* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc. 1967), 59.

²³⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 14 March 1889.

²³⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 1 February 1869.

²⁴⁰ *Presbyterian College Journal*, 7 (1887-88), 399.

²⁴¹ From Proverbs 22:2.

hammock, one end of which is fastened to the cross, while the other is held by the fingers of mammon".²⁴²

Instead of questioning the truthfulness of the charge, or expressing indignation that such a church should exist, everyone was instead 'anxious to discover on what particular corner of St Catherine or Dorchester streets ... the "superb religious edifice" was situated'.²⁴³ Thus, seemingly impervious to the criticism of worldliness, the insulation of Montreal's upper- and middle-class Protestants in socially and spatially exclusive churches was not yet seen as a major hindrance to the ability of these institutions to promote the glory of God and preach the gospel to the city's less wealthy citizens.

Conclusions

Given the variety of competing motivations that lay behind the creation of a residential landscape dominated by monumental Protestant churches on the upper level of the city, it is hardly surprising that the outcome could be interpreted as somewhat ambiguous. It must be remembered that residential segregation along class lines was a new development in nineteenth-century North American cities, which meant that congregations had no previous experience on which to draw when deciding how they should respond to the departure of wealthier members to more suburban districts. With relatively weakly developed denominational structures, enmeshed in a highly competitive religious environment, and dependent entirely on the voluntary support of congregation members, it was perhaps inevitable that most city-centre congregations would, finding themselves increasingly surrounded by commercial buildings, choose to move to those districts promising the best prospects for future growth and prosperity. The fate of churches like Zion Congregational served as an example of what happened to those who failed to make the right choices, and the precariousness of the finances of even the wealthiest congregations when faced with financial downturn meant that there was little room for error.

While denominational structures had an impact on the timing of church relocation, and in some cases encouraged congregations to participate in church extension or

²⁴² *Presbyterian College Journal*, 7 (1887-88), 398.

²⁴³ *Presbyterian College Journal*, 7 (1887-88), 398.

consider the needs of their parish district before looking after their own interests, what is interesting is that ultimately such factors did little to affect the process of uptown relocation by leading congregations. Revivals generated religious enthusiasm, creating an environment in which there was a great willingness to divert large sums of surplus capital into church building projects, and may help to explain the simultaneity of such processes occurring in very different settings on either side of the Atlantic Ocean. The church building and relocation projects of congregations that did not participate in revivalism were nevertheless very similar.

Evidence suggests that it was the internal decision-making structures within congregations that had the greatest influence on the church relocation process. The earliest churches to move uptown were those in which financial credentials determined an individual's right to participate in the management of a church's temporal affairs. While evangelical congregations were more likely than other congregations to have a form of church governance in which the right to participate in decision making was based on an individual's state of grace rather than on a person's ability to pay a pew or seat rent, this was not necessarily the case. Despite its evangelical orientation, the American Presbyterian Church, for example, did not even require that a pew owner or seat holder be a member in full communion in order to participate. Churches like the American Presbyterian Church, St Paul's, and St George's, where little conflict emerged over the relocation process, demonstrated the extent to which consensus could be generated in congregations where financial means were required to participate in decision making. While many of the families connected with these churches would have had at least one seat holder, the level of participation in congregational meetings to discuss the question of selling old downtown churches and moving to a new location was generally very low. In some cases, efforts were made to gain the opinions of a broader section of seat holders and occasionally of the congregation more generally. Although a few women seat holders were present at meetings to decide on church relocations, most women were limited to expressing their views through their male head of household. The St James Street Methodist Church is something of an anomaly, since its trustees wielded a great deal of power, but it was nevertheless one of the last Protestant congregations to leave the city centre because of its involvement in promoting Methodist church extension

throughout the city. Resistance to relocation and delayed removals from the downtown core were more likely in the case of congregations that had a higher level of congregational participation in determining whether or not to move uptown. This reflected the fact that it took longer (and in some cases proved impossible) to build the necessary consensus, since those who lacked a voice in the more elitist congregations were also those most likely to resist an uptown move. An extreme example of this was Zion Congregational Church, where the decision to abolish pew rents played an important role in democratizing congregational life and ensured that virtually all church members, both male and female, had a say in the debate over whether or not to sell the old church.

Examination of the case-study churches demonstrates that even congregations that attempted to encourage democratic decision making found themselves heavily dependent on the financial contributions and leadership of wealthy middle- and upper-class businessmen. Thus, the power of this group was expressed in the decisions made by all six case-study churches. With St Paul's, for example, it was the offer of substantial contributions from wealthy congregation members that set the wheels in motion for the uptown move. Likewise, at the St James Methodist Church the trustees contributed a disproportionate amount of funding for church building projects, while at the Coté Street Church the wealthy felt that the old church building belonged to them because they provided the bulk of contributions. The example of the Coté Street Church illustrates that, while groups did exist within congregations that objected to the uptown movement of their churches, the wishes of wealthier congregation members usually prevailed. Even in the case of Zion Church, the retention of the old building was a pyrrhic victory, since its members were unable to cope without the financial support of the minority who had left to form Emmanuel. Some ministers and congregation members did express concern that the location and grandeur of the new uptown churches limited their accessibility to 'the masses' or 'the poor', but on the whole emphasis was placed on the convenience and wishes of the body of individuals upon whose financial support the church depended. To do otherwise was to court congregational extinction.

Thus, the churches did not just respond to the social transformations that were taking place, but were themselves contributing to the social fragmentation of Protestant society. Leading congregations were not only moving away from the more

heterogeneous environment of the city centre to districts inhabited primarily by the business and professional classes; they were also erecting luxurious churches that emphasized the wealth of those who worshipped in them. Each of these processes reinforced the other, and both provided a very dramatic visual expression of broader social and economic changes taking place in society. While some were fearful that the construction of extravagant places of worship in elite neighbourhoods was leading to conformity with the ways of the world, most members of the middle and upper classes were willing to support the idea that there was nothing inconsistent about fighting worldliness by building monumental churches. Spiritual prosperity and financial prosperity were seen as being inextricably linked, and the physical state of a church building was therefore interpreted as a reflection of the spiritual state of those within. While it was recognized that poor financial conditions could have a detrimental impact on the spiritual quality of church life, such problems were attributed to temporary financial downturns or to there being too many churches; they did not in most cases lead to a more profound questioning of whether elaborate church buildings provided the most appropriate context for Christian worship. What congregations did not foresee was that their individual actions, taking place in cities as far apart as Manchester, Cleveland, and Montreal, would result in the dynamic tension between capitalism and the ideals of Christianity becoming embodied and concretized in the collective urban landscape.

CHAPTER 3

The Church as Community: Physical and Social Transformation Within the Churches

At the opening of the new American Presbyterian Church on Dorchester Street in June 1866, the minister declared that ‘out of the many church buildings in the city there was none which more distinctly declared its purpose’ than the one in which they were now assembled.¹ The interior of the new building was very different from the one left behind on Victoria Square, and clearly the Rev. James Bonar believed that its appearance and physical layout provided an improved setting in which to carry out Protestant worship. Less obvious, but perhaps noticeable to those sitting in the pews, was the fact that not all who had worshipped in the old church building - which had already been sold to make way for business premises - took their places in the new uptown church. Focusing on the period between 1850 and 1889, this chapter will examine the physical and social transformations that took place within the case-study congregations in connection with the uptown removals of their places of worship from the perspective of the church as a community of people who worship together.

To understand why such an examination provides an effective way of analyzing the impact of the uptown moves on congregational life, it is necessary to take a brief look at the role of the church, as it was generally understood by Protestants at this time. First and foremost, the purpose of a church - by which I mean any organized group of Christians - was to facilitate the worship of God. Sixteenth-century Protestant Reformers, seeking inspiration from the early Christian Church, had emphasized that worship need not be elaborate: all that was required was that the Word of God be preached and that the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper be celebrated when appropriate.² New Testament precepts also indicated, however, that churches should promote fellowship amongst believers, discipline church members who appeared to be straying from the Christian path, provide charitable assistance to members of the Christian community who

¹ *Montreal Herald*, 26 June 1866.

² André Biéler, *Architecture in Worship: The Christian Place of Worship* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd 1965), 49.

were in need, and spread the gospel message to others. Statements that were made in newspapers, religious publications, and church records in Montreal during the period under examination suggest a continued adherence to this vision of the role of the church, although different Protestant denominations emphasized some of these roles more than others.³ Thus, there was general agreement that churches should engage not just in common worship, but also in united work. The preamble to the rules and regulations of the American Presbyterian Church (dated 1823), for example, stated not only that they were coming together in order to worship God, but also that they intended to encourage those who were not yet churchgoers to join them. They also wanted to set a good example by promoting morality and giving relief to the poor and destitute, so that the next generation would 'grow up in the fear of God striving to emulate one another in becoming good and peaceful subjects and useful members of Society'.⁴ This pointed to another role that became increasingly central to the work of the Protestant churches in the nineteenth century, namely the promotion of Christian education amongst the young through the development of elaborate Sunday school programmes.

As in other cities, the emergence of more socially homogeneous residential neighbourhoods in Montreal drew attention to the differences between those elements of a church's work that catered to those who already belonged to the congregation and those elements that sought to reach out to the broader community. Thus, in the same way that the uptown relocations of individual families led to the creation of distinct residential and business districts, the uptown removals of the case-study churches created a geographical distinction between the places *in which* these family-oriented congregations worshipped, engaged in fellowship, and raised funds to carry out the work of the church, and the places *towards which* much of their work and mission were now directed. It therefore makes sense to consider each major element of church life separately, focusing in the present chapter on the impact of church relocation on the 'domestic' ministries of the

³ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 26 June 1866, 'Opening of the American Presbyterian Church'; Rev. John Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes, D.D., L.L.D., His Life and Times* (Montreal: F.E. Grafton and Sons 1887), 225; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, For 1873 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1872. Presented at the annual meeting of the Church held Jany. 15th and 29th, 1873* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1873), 9; *Montreal Herald*, 27 September 1886, 'The Opening of the New St Gabriel's'.

⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 7 January 1823.

churches, and then proceeding in Chapter 4 to examine the changes that took place in their 'public' ministries. In order to gain insights into the evolution of the domestic ministries of the uptown congregations, I will begin with a survey of the interior designs and layouts of the new church buildings, contrasting them with the structures that they replaced. In order to interpret these choices, we need to know more about the social and ethnic composition of the various denominations and of the people in the pews, and about the impact of church relocation on the geographic distribution and social composition of church membership. The consequences of church relocation in terms of the role played by women in congregational life will also be examined. Thus, while the first section of this chapter will be devoted to examining the physical transformation of church interiors, the second part will focus on the evolving social characteristics of congregational life.

Fulfilling the Wants of a New Age: The Changing Physical Layout of Church Interiors

Underneath the Gothic Revival exteriors of the uptown churches could be found a range of different interior layouts, each tailored to suit the needs and preferences of the congregation that worshipped therein. Despite their differences, congregations belonging to all denominations shared a common desire to keep pace with contemporary ideas of what was considered desirable in the layout of a place of worship, and at the same time satisfy increasingly demanding middle-class notions of comfort and elegance. Significant shifts, both functional and aesthetic, had taken place along both these lines in the interim between the erection of the first generation of Protestant churches in Montreal, and the period during which these congregations built new places of worship for themselves in the uptown district. As a result, the interiors of the new churches often indicated a conspicuous break with earlier traditions. As we will see in the examples provided by the case study congregations, while Anglicans generally adopted traditional ecclesiastical plans, evangelical Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists experimented with the possibilities offered by the auditorium-style sanctuary. Changes also took place in the design of those parts of church buildings that housed the various organizations involved in planning and carrying out the work of the church. According to an editorial that was published in the *Montreal Witness* in 1879:

[t]here never was a time when congregational life was so highly developed as at present.... Our congregations are now organized to perfection. In addition to the old Sunday services, Wednesday evening services or prayer-meeting, the Sunday-school and the Dorcas Society, there are now the Ladies' Missionary Association, the Young Men's Literary Association, the Ladies' Literary Association, the organized Bible-class, the Band of Hope, the Congregational Temperance Society, the monthly or fortnightly sociable, the cottage meetings and others. Some congregations have the majority of these organizations all at work through the winter months to a high degree of efficiency.⁵













This expansion of congregational activity required additional space. A comparison of the building footprints made by each of the case study churches before and after their uptown moves demonstrates that the new churches were invariably larger than the ones that had been left behind (see Figure 3.1). Estimates of seating capacity suggest, however, that congregations did not take advantage of the moves to increase dramatically the number of people that could be seated in their sanctuaries. Instead, while the larger footprints may in part have reflected a desire for increased space per worshipper (an important consideration in an age when fashionable women's skirts were voluminous), in many cases they resulted from greater amounts of above-ground space being devoted to the provision of Sunday school facilities, as well as rooms in which missionary, charitable, temperance, and other groups could meet.

First-Generation Interiors

To appreciate the significance of the changes that were taking place, it is necessary to consider what was being supplanted. The interiors of most of Montreal's

⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 8 March 1879. The uptown congregations were largely inactive during the summer months due to the large number of congregation members who left the city during this period. In 1888, the Rev. F.H. Marling of Emmanuel Church reported that 'Montreal has come to share with the great American cities one serious drawback to Church life and work.... With many of our people, the eight months from October to June are all the time spent in the city. With some, this tapers down to hardly more than six' [ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/6 *Yearbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, for 1888, with Reports, Etc., for 1887, Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Church, held January 16th and 25th, 1888* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1888)]. Another source reported in 1895 that 'it is doubtful whether there is on the continent a city which sends a larger percentage of its people out of its limits during the hot season' [*The Week*, 21 June 1895]. The impact of these peregrinations had a particularly dramatic impact on the upper portions of the city, which are described as 'beginning to awake from their long nap' in September [*The Week*, 13 September 1895], following a four month period in which 'literary, musical, artistic, and social Montreal is dead ... But commercial Montreal goes steadily on; it knows no rest and no stoppage. Day after day in blazing July, as in arctic January, the great factories, foundries, refineries, warehouses, and the thousand-and-one establishments which go to make Montreal's greatness, grind out wealth. For the workers in these there is no visit to the seaside, lake, and farm' [*The Week*, 21 June 1895].

Figure 3.1 : Building Footprints for Original and Uptown Case Study Churches, Showing Estimated Seating Capacity (where available).

	Original	Uptown	Attendance†
St George's Anglican	 1500	 1200-1500	543
St Paul's Presbyterian	 1000	 1000	526
American Presbyterian	 	 1200	500
Coté St / Crescent St Presbyterian	 1000	 1200	702
St James Methodist	 2000-2800	 2700	460
Zion Congregational / Emmanuel Congregational	 1250	 720	300

†This figure shows the results of a survey of Sunday morning church attendance carried out by the theological students of Montreal, as reported in the *Presbyterian College Journal*, Vol. 7, 1887-1888, p.402-403. The attendance figure refers to the congregations worshipping in the church buildings represented in light grey, except in the case of the St James Street Methodist Church which was probably still worshipping downtown when the survey was taken. The survey was said to have been carried out on a day when the weather was neither an inducement nor a deterrent to church attendance.

Sources: Rectified Cane Map of Montreal 1846; Rectified Goad Atlas of Montreal 1881; Rectified Pinsoneault Atlas of Montreal 1906; John Langford (1865) *The Stranger's Illustrated Guide to the City of Montreal* (Montreal: M. Longmoore & Co.); *Montreal Gazette*, 8 May 1845; *Montreal Herald*, 28 April 1865; 17 June 1889; *Montreal Star*, 2 June 1888; *Montreal Witness*, 11 March 1878, 10 October 1870; *The Canadian Independent*, Vol. XXIII, No. 8, February 1877, p.253; *Illustrated London News*, 21 November 1868.

first generation of Protestant churches had been constructed of very plain design, reflecting a lack of surplus funds in the community at the time when they were built, but also the traditional simplicity that Protestant worship had retained until this time. The source of inspiration for groups such as the Presbyterians and Congregationalists lay in their Calvinist roots. Although Calvin had said very little about church architecture as such, services in Geneva were centred around the pulpit, from which the Word of God was read, preached, and prayed.⁶ As a result, most Reformed churches were endowed with prominent pulpits, with the altar being replaced by a less prominent communion table. Because of the importance of being able to hear what was said by the minister, galleries were also used to bring as many people as possible close to the pulpit. As another means of focusing the attention of congregation members on the Word of God, and at the same time freeing up funds to assist the needy, Reformed Christians also stripped their churches of all images, as well as any extravagant or unnecessary embellishments, and in many cases also eliminated choirs and instrumental music. Despite the influence of Calvinist theology on the Church of England, at the time of the English Reformation Anglicans had remained much closer to the traditional liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church than was the case with groups like the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. As a result, while Anglican church interiors were often simplified, with chancels no longer considered essential and pulpits given greater prominence as in Calvinist churches, altars were nevertheless retained as an important feature.⁷ Although the chancels of English cathedrals continued to be used by their choirs, in the early nineteenth century the small choirs of parish churches were most often located in western galleries.⁸ In the case of the Methodists, despite their close association with the Anglican tradition from which they had evolved, their churches tended to resemble those of other nonconformists: prominent pulpits were the order of the day, and plainness was encouraged, since many of the early adherents of Methodism were poor and the leadership of the Methodist movement was anxious not to make itself beholden to

⁶ James F. White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press 1964), 458-459.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 94-98.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

wealthy supporters.⁹ Communion tables were usually located at the base of a central pulpit, and some churches retained the kneeling step and communion rail since some communicants continued to kneel.¹⁰ Space for a choir was not initially an issue, since congregational hymn singing prevailed. Early Methodists were, however, willing to preach outdoors, in barns, and even in theatres, if they felt it would enable them to reach a greater number of people.

The similarities that existed between the interiors of early Methodist churches and traditional Calvinist places of worship masked important theological differences. As one of the leading evangelical revival movements of the eighteenth century, Methodism sought to revitalize the Church of England by countering the deism and formalism that had come to characterize that denomination in the eighteenth century. As such, revivalism - with its associated quest for personal conversion and sanctification - became an essential part of the Methodist movement. Unlike orthodox Calvinism, that had traditionally emphasized predestination and the salvation of the elect, the followers of John Wesley - the leading figure in eighteenth-century Methodism - emphasized the Arminian belief that salvation was available to all who had faith and sought God's grace.¹¹ Meanwhile, a parallel evangelical revival movement, usually referred to as the first Great Awakening, was sweeping British North America in the early to mid-eighteenth century. Methodism first arrived in North America during this period, but the Awakening also had a profound influence on many Congregational and Presbyterian groups that had previously espoused orthodox Calvinist beliefs, helping to create what Timothy Smith describes as a 'Revivalistic Calvinism' that by the mid-nineteenth century was virtually indistinguishable from its 'Evangelical Arminian' counterpart.¹² What brought these groups together was their belief in the need for a more vibrant experiential religion. The common goals and beliefs shared by Methodists, as well as those Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist congregations who identified themselves

⁹ *Ibid.*, 114-116.

¹⁰ See Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, *Hallowed Walls: Church Architecture of Upper Canada* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company 1975), 284.

¹¹ Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996), 14.

¹² Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press 1957), 32-33.

with the evangelical cause, were reflected in the very similar designs that they adopted for their sanctuaries during the church-building frenzy of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Auditorium-Style Sanctuary: An Evangelical Adaptation

The main challenge that they faced was to find innovative ways of adapting the interior spaces of their new Gothic Revival-inspired buildings to reflect the central role that preaching and revivalism continued to play in their services. A typical evangelical adaptation was to move towards an auditorium-style sanctuary, which in its most extreme form bore a strong resemblance to a theatre.¹³ In her study of auditorium-style churches in the United States, Jeanne Halgren Kilde observed that 'interest in the auditorium sanctuary developed exactly contemporaneously with the exodus of middle-class evangelical congregations from their earlier downtown locations and the growth of the first ring of suburban developments flanking city centres'.¹⁴ The American Presbyterian Church in Montreal represented an interesting early example of this trend, but to understand the significance of the changes taking place one must first examine the original sanctuary in which the congregation worshipped, which was housed in a neoclassical exterior. As can be seen in Figure 3.2, its most prominent feature was a pulpit, reached by long stairs on either side. The building itself was rectangular in shape, with rows of plain pews on either side of a wide central aisle, and a horseshoe-shaped gallery that reached around three sides of the building. American Presbyterians were much less resistant to the introduction of organs than were the Scottish Presbyterians, and the Montreal congregation appears to have placed one in the gallery, at the opposite end to the pulpit, at least as early as 1840.¹⁵ Sunday school and evening meetings were held in the basement. No doubt many members of the congregation felt at home in

¹³ For discussion of this phenomenon, see Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991), 85-90; Angela Carr, 'Fields and Theatre Churches: The Non-Traditional Space of Evangelism', *Architecture and Ideas*, 3 (1999), 62-79; Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press 2002).

¹⁴ Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre*, 113.

¹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A1 Minutes Board of Trustees 1822-1864, 18 April 1840.

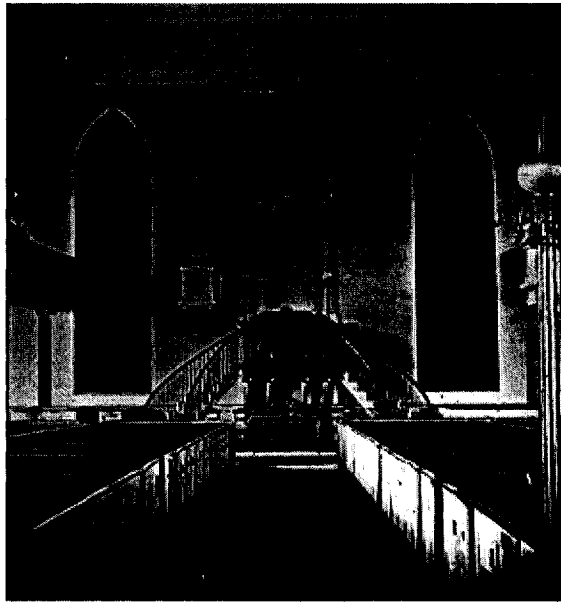


Figure 3.2 Interior of the Original American Presbyterian Church, 1865
(Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, I-15721)

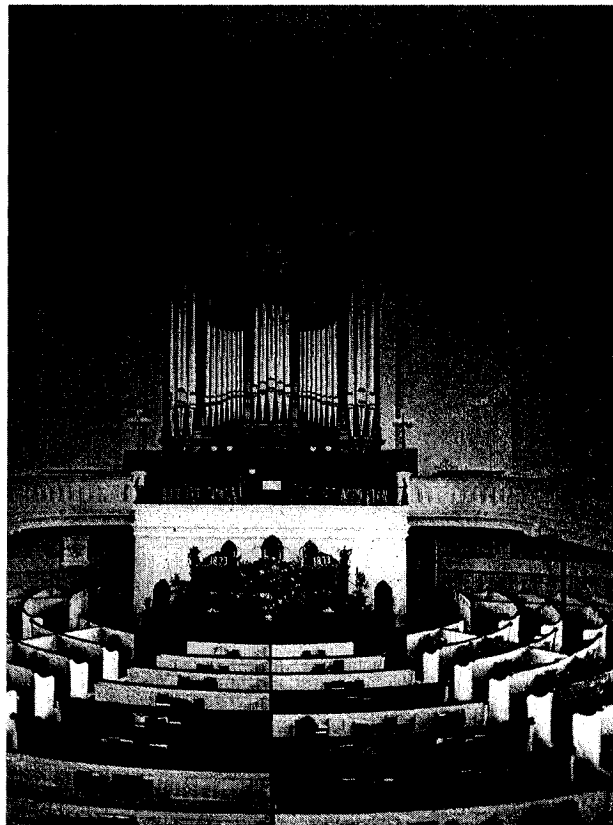


Figure 3.3 Interior of the American Presbyterian Church, Dorchester Street, 1873
(Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, I-84967).

surroundings that bore so much resemblance to the meetinghouse churches they had known in New England.

Despite some elements of continuity, Figure 3.3, showing the sanctuary of the new American Presbyterian Church that was opened in 1866, indicates the different choices that were made when building their second church. Although the pulpit retained its central position, the tall and dominating pulpit of the earlier church had been replaced by a preaching platform, described by one newspaper as:

a kind of compromise between the box, adapted to a single speaker, whose motions are supposed to be confined to arms and tongue, and those platforms which, in American Churches...furnish room for the preacher to carry out the Demosthenian¹⁶ direction – ‘action, action, action’ – with all his limbs at once.¹⁷

The preaching platform was popular in the United States, and was intimately connected with revivalism. In making this choice, members of the building committee may have recalled the success of the Hammond Revival, held in their old church only a few years previously, and the fact that E.P. Hammond had spurned their pulpit and taken his stand upon a platform, which allowed him to move from side to side as he addressed his audience.¹⁸ The visual impact of the pulpit was also diminished by the fact that attention was drawn instead to the large organ and choir loft that provided it with a backdrop, signifying the greater importance that was now being accorded to the musical portion of worship services. The sanctuary itself was described as ‘a short oblong’ with graded galleries running round almost the entire room. It was also observed that the wide spaces of the interior were broken by neither pillars nor arches, and that the walls and ceiling were painted in light-coloured fresco, giving it ‘an appearance more akin to that of a concert hall or lecture room than to that which we commonly associate with the interior of a church’.¹⁹ Contributing to this effect was the absence of a central aisle, and the presence of curved pews, that at the front were arranged around the pulpit in semicircular arcs, with aisles radiating outwards. Such a layout, which it was claimed could seat 1200

¹⁶ Demosthenes (384-322 BC), an Athenian statesman, was known as a great orator.

¹⁷ *Montreal Herald*, 26 June 1866.

¹⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 17 December 1862.

¹⁹ *Montreal Herald*, 26 June 1866.

people²⁰, was better adapted for hearing the preacher than the long rectangular design that characterized the traditional Gothic church.

While the American Presbyterian Church contained elements that drew comparisons with a concert hall, it lacked many of the theatrical features that were adopted by other evangelical congregations, such as graded amphitheatrical seating on the main floor and a proscenium arch to draw the attention of the audience/congregation to the 'performance area' at the front.²¹ The interior also retained a relative simplicity that bore little resemblance to the more lavish furnishings adopted by some congregations, but nevertheless revealed that Presbyterian attitudes towards comfort and beauty inside their churches were evolving. Only a few weeks before the opening of his own uptown church, the Rev. Bonar made the following comment at the inaugural soiree of the new Erskine Presbyterian Church nearby²²:

The reproach against Presbyterians for the baldness and barrenness of their church edifices was being taken away. Their churches ought to be as beautiful as was their worship. They were now having them made comfortable with warm air, and if they had not the saints in the windows they had stained glass – This beauty might, too, not tend alone to the improvement of their artistic taste, but lead the congregation to love yet more the house of God.²³

Despite the popularity of Gothic architecture in the design of church exteriors, most evangelical Protestant congregations were willing, if not enthusiastic, to forego an architecturally-correct interior in favour of one that better met the needs of preaching-centred worship. In the case of the new American Presbyterian Church, one observer noted that:

On the whole this Church would be regarded with little satisfaction by zealous adepts in the mysteries of ecclesiology, and advocates of the Gothic reaction.... On the other hand, putting aside special tastes, old associations, and notions of an ecclesiastical *renaissance*, we think it likely that this Church will hold more persons with comfort to themselves, and with the

²⁰ *Montreal Herald*, 28 April 1865.

²¹ Jeanne Halgren Kilde discusses the similarities and differences between church and secular auditoriums in *When Church Became Theatre*, 124-130.

²² For a full discussion of the architectural history of Erskine Church, see Janis Zubalik, "*Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom*": *The Erskine Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 1894* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1996).

²³ *Montreal Witness*, 2 May 1866.

power of seeing and hearing the preacher without excessive exertion on his part than any other church in the city.²⁴

Most evangelical Protestants, especially those living in a predominantly Catholic environment such as Montreal, were also anxious that their church interiors not resemble those of the Roman Catholic Church, and this provided an additional incentive for avoiding traditional ecclesiastical layouts. A discussion of this contrast formed a central theme of the Rev. Bonar's opening day sermon at the American Presbyterian Church, in which he preached on the functions of a church:

He said there were two ideas entertained on this subject. One regarded the minister as a priest, whose function was to administer rites and conduct ceremonies. The other regarded the minister as a teacher, who was to instruct the people from the scriptures, and who, in administering the most sacred ordinances, explained their import, and guarded against any superstitious veneration for them. The one kind of worship was found in perfection in the Church of Rome, with its dim religious light, fretted aisles, images, and sacrifice of the mass. There the Bible was a sealed book and general education was discouraged. The other was illustrated by such a building as this; light, airy, commodious, well adapted for hearing, and connected with lecture-room, school-rooms, and every means and appliance for instruction; and this he contended was the true object of an edifice for worship.²⁵

He then 'spoke at some length on the superior efficacy of a teaching church to one which placed its chief functions in the celebration of ritualistic observances, remarking that the countries blessed preeminently with preaching churches were Scotland and New England, where, accordingly, true religion flourished more than in almost any other part of the world'.²⁶ In his sermon, the Rev. Bonar alluded to another architectural adaptation embraced by evangelical Protestants during this period. Given their emphasis on preaching, rather than the sacramental elements of worship, most Protestant churches had little need for a chancel. They did, however, require extensive facilities in which to hold Sunday school lessons, social events, and an increasingly varied array of church meetings. Many churches – including the American Presbyterian Church – resolved this problem by placing these rooms in the space where a chancel should otherwise have been,

²⁴ *Montreal Herald*, 26 June 1866

²⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 26 June 1866.

²⁶ *Montreal Herald*, 26 June 1866.

which had the additional advantage of elongating the exterior building shape to make it appear more in keeping with the spirit of Gothic architecture.²⁷

Variations on this interior layout were used by the more evangelical case study congregations, including Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Emmanuel Congregational Church, and St James Methodist Church, when they built their uptown churches.²⁸ An early twentieth century visitor at the Crescent Street Church in Montreal made the following observation of its interior, which he described as being modelled on the auditorium of a theatre:

[It] gave one an impression of modernity, of an age of ratiocination that has cast aside visible mysteries and taken up hygiene. The pews are comfortable. One has one's fair share of pure air. The place is pleasantly warm. But such churches only live while their services are going on. Afterwards they relapse into dull halls, for unlike the Gothic church, they preach no sermons in stone....²⁹

While an uptown move provided the best opportunity to make major changes, alterations were also made to older buildings. The congregation of Zion Church, for example, modified the sanctuary of its neoclassical church at the bottom of Beaver Hall Hill in the late 1850s in an attempt to bring it up-to-date with contemporary trends. A more beautiful and powerful organ was purchased and moved to the lower part of the building, where it was placed in a newly-built 'recess' behind the pulpit, which was also lowered at this point (see Figure 3.4).³⁰ This was believed at the time to add to the attractiveness of the sanctuary, and was also aimed at improving the musical portion of the service. Such changes - which were not yet a standard feature of places of worship belonging to

²⁷ For further discussion of the ways in which evangelical congregations modified the interiors of Gothic-style churches to suit their needs, see William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989), 153-154; William Westfall and Malcolm Thurlby, 'Church Architecture and Urban Space: The Development of Ecclesiastical Forms in Nineteenth-Century Ontario', in *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S. Careless*, eds. David Keane and Colin Read (Toronto: Dundurn Press 1990), 128-130.

²⁸ For a description of the new Crescent Street Church, see the *Montreal Herald*, 7 May 1877. The new Emmanuel Congregational Church is described in the *Canadian Independent*, 22(11) (August 1876), 347 and in the *Canadian Independent*, 23(8) (February 1877), 253-254. For a description of St James Methodist Church on St Catherine Street, see *Montreal Herald*, 17 June 1889 and *Montreal Witness*, 15 June 1889.

²⁹ *Montreal Standard*, 7 February 1914.

³⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1856, presented 14 January 1856 [error, should read 14 January 1857]; Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, April 1856.

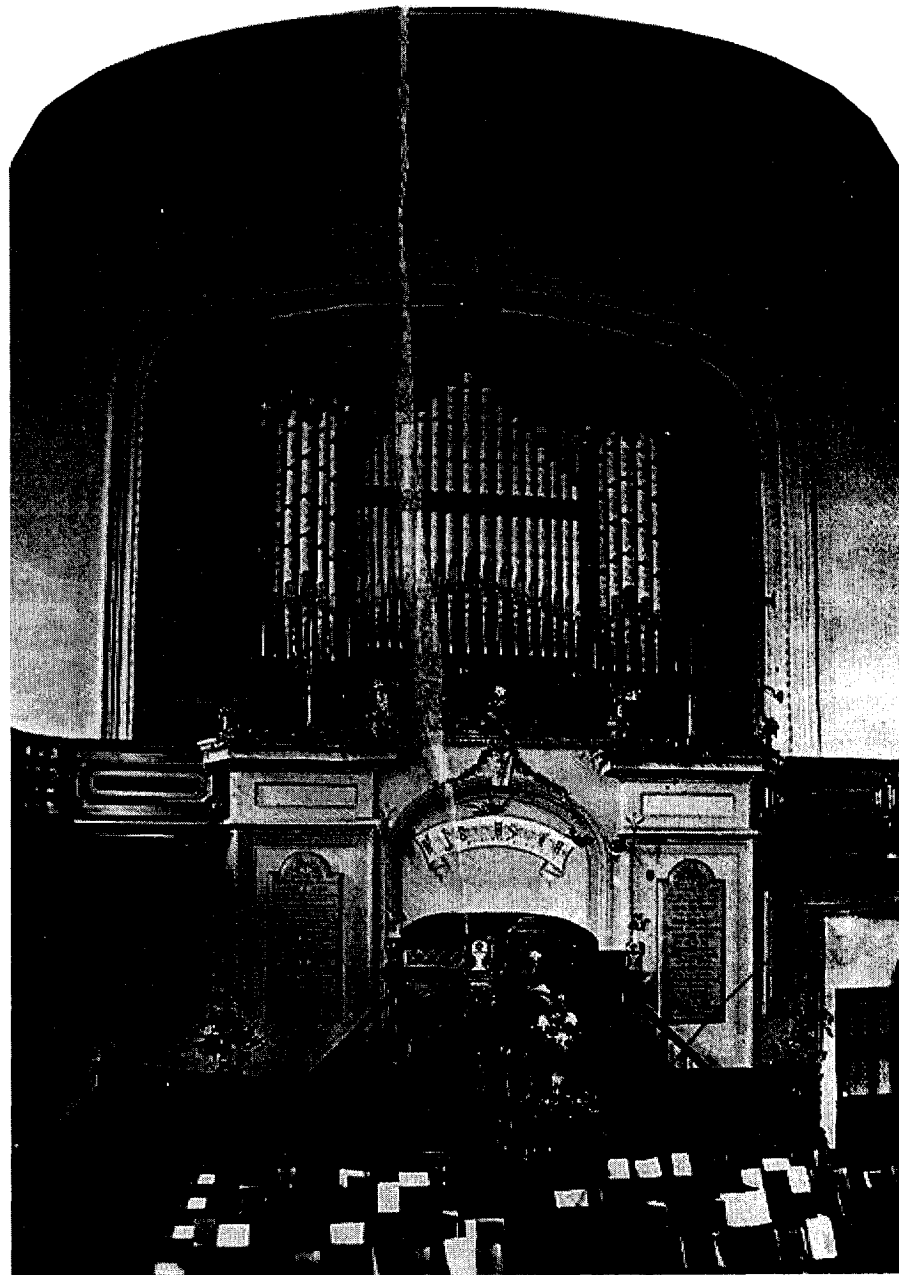


Figure 3.4 Interior of Zion Congregational Church, 1878
(Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, II-50277.1).

evangelical Presbyterians and Congregationalists - were considered controversial at the time, and caused a temporary 'lack of harmony' in the congregation.³¹ The congregation of Zion Church did, however, have a later opportunity to worship in an auditorium-style church. After being forced to leave their home on Beaver Hall Hill, and temporarily worshipping in a public hall in the early 1880s (see Chapter 2), the congregation rented an uptown church building that had been opened in 1879 to house the Wesley Congregational Church. The congregation of the short-lived Wesley Church had been composed of schismatic Methodists who had left the Sherbrooke Street Methodist Church in support of their minister, the Rev. James Roy, whose liberal theology had caused him to be driven from the Methodist connexion.³² As can be seen in Figure 3.5, showing a church plan as well as a drawing of the church interior during the opening services, the sanctuary had all the elements of an auditorium church, with curved seating radiating around a central pulpit that was overshadowed by an enormous organ and choir loft. Having originally rented the church in 1882, the congregation of Zion Church was distressed to discover in 1886 that their place of worship had been 'sold from under them' to the old St Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church.³³ This unusual example of a church building being used in succession by Methodist, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian congregations indicates the extent to which the auditorium-style church had, by the 1880s, been embraced by these denominations.

Conforming to Traditional Ecclesiastical Plans

It was nevertheless the case that the auditorium-style church never satisfied the worship requirements of all Protestants. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Anglicans found themselves increasingly influenced by the various High Church movements in England that, under the influence of Romanticism, sought a renewed emphasis on the visual and sacramental elements of worship.³⁴ Thus, in Montreal, as

³¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Deacons' Report 1856, presented 14 January 1856 [error, should read 14 January 1857].

³² *Canadian Illustrated News*, 27 July 1878, 50-53.

³³ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 5(14/15) (August 1886), 190.

³⁴ For further discussion of these movements, see Vicki Bennett, *Sacred Space and Structural Style: The Embodiment of Socio-Religious Ideology* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press 1997), 128-134; White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture*, 130-139.

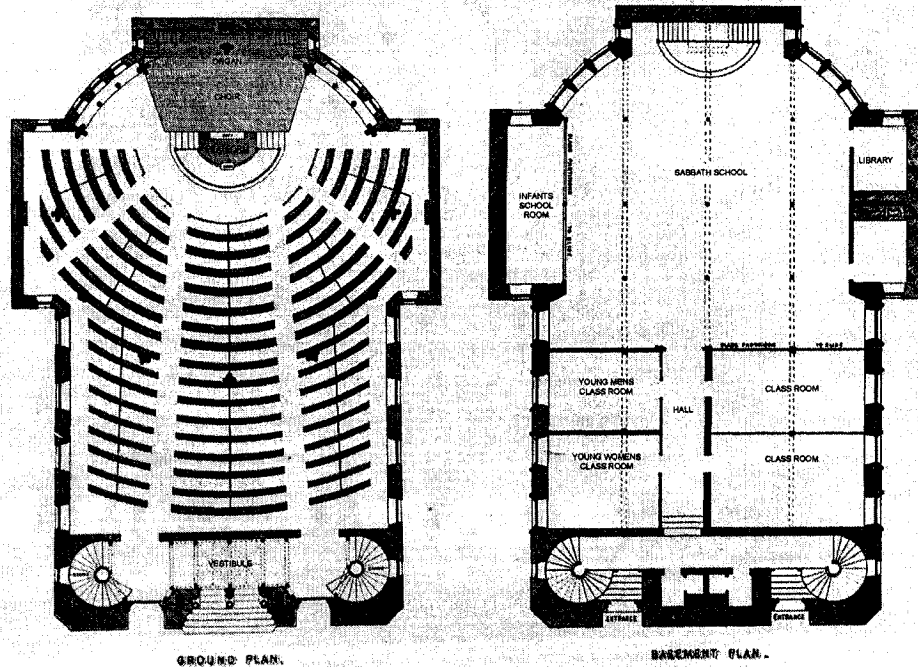


Figure 3.5 Image and Plan of the Interior of the Wesley Congregational Church
 (Sources: *Canadian Illustrated News*, Volume XVIII, 27 July 1878, p.53; *Canadian Illustrated News*, Volume XIX, 7 June 1879, p.356).

elsewhere, the interior arrangements of the Anglican churches that were built in the latter part of the century tended to conform closely to traditional ecclesiastical plans, when funds to do so were available.³⁵ When the new St George's Church opened in 1870, the newspapers described the softened rays of the sun entering the church through its stained glass windows, and shedding 'a dim religious light' which gave 'quite a cathedral appearance to the interior'.³⁶ It should also be noted that, unlike any of the other case study congregations, St George's constructed a separate school building that could also be used for congregational meetings just behind the church, with class rooms on the ground floor and a large room on the first floor.³⁷ The principal reason for this was that St George's still supported a day school, but, by separating the church rooms from the sanctuary, it also allowed for the construction of a more authentic Gothic church. Its cathedral-like appearance was enhanced by its long central aisle, transepts, divided chancel housing a central altar and choir stalls facing one another on either side, and pulpit located to one side of the entrance to the chancel (Figure 3.6). While many resisted the trend towards more ritualized worship, even evangelical Anglicans such as those at St George's Church do not appear to have had any objection to such layouts, which worked well with the Anglican liturgy.³⁸ Some congregation members did, however, protest when the vestry agreed in 1876 to comply with a request from Bishop Ashton Oxenden that the clergymen of St George's abandon their black preaching gowns – traditionally seen as a symbol of Protestantism – and instead preach their sermons wearing white surplices.³⁹ This move appears, in fact, to have been part of an attempt by the Bishop to promote greater uniformity in the Anglican Church as a means of curbing the most extreme High Church elements in the city, led by Father Edmund Wood, the Rector of the

³⁵ Working class churches could not always afford to erect their chancels at the same time as their naves. See, for example, the case of St Jude's Church, Montreal, as described in the *Montreal Witness*, 7 April 1879.

³⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 10 October 1870

³⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 4 October 1870

³⁸ Mr E.L. Bond declared that St George's was the 'representative evangelical church of the Province, if not of the Dominion so far as both doctrine and practice are concerned' (as reported in the *Montreal Witness*, 4 October 1889).

³⁹ *Montreal Evening Star*, 25 November 1876. Further newspaper clippings concerning this issue can be found in STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, p.349.

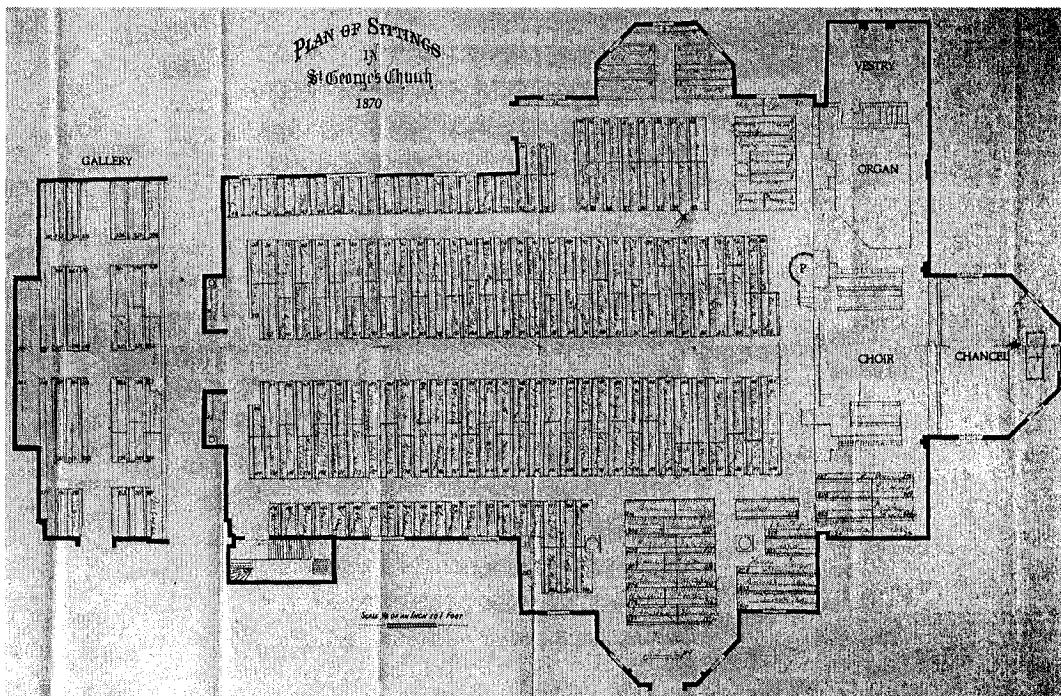


Figure 3.6 Image and Plan of the Interior of Uptown St George's Anglican Church
(Sources: *The Dominion Illustrated*, Volume VII, No. 175, 7 November 1891, p.451; McGill University Archives, M.G. 2020, Caroline Henrietta Pelton Collection, Plan of Seatings in St George's Church, 1870).

Parish of St John the Evangelist.⁴⁰ While some were not pleased with the change, there is no evidence that it caused any long-term disruption in the congregation, in contrast with the Presbyterian Church where disputes over such things as the introduction of the organ continued to lead to schism and the creation of new congregations.⁴¹

An Indecisive Layout

The only case study congregation not yet accounted for is St Paul's Presbyterian Church, in part because its sanctuary failed to fit neatly into either of the two categories outlined above. With its Church of Scotland traditions, St Paul's appears to have remained aloof from evangelical efforts to encourage a more emotional religious experience, and there is no reason to think that the nature of the congregation that entered the new St Paul's Church in 1868 differed greatly from that described towards the end of the century:

The chaste, sombre beauty of this building admirably adapts it for the quiet intellectual devotion of its typical Scottish congregation. Most of its principal members were reared among the traditions of the old land, and have completed their business training amidst the severe competition of Canada's commercial gateway. They are men outwardly solid and apparently unsympathetic, masters of severe, critical analysis, and long accustomed to repress every sign of feeling, men who think it a sin to greet a friend in the sacred edifice on the Sabbath day, and who read Caird's *Evolution of Religion* as a summer recreation. The severely intellectual atmosphere of the congregation, its aristocratic reputation, and the calm, immobile faces turned towards its pulpit, each one like the countenance of a judge about to utter the sentence of death, make it the despair of every preacher who depends on the responsiveness of his audience. Yet underneath the somewhat chilly exterior there is a large volume of warm religious life, unwavering devotion to religious truth and honor, and unconquerable loyalty to their friends and to their Church and its work.⁴²

Little is known about the internal layout of the church that was left behind when the congregation moved uptown, although one source describes it as having had a 'Grecian'

⁴⁰ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, Letter to Dean W.B. Bond from Bishop Oxenden, dated 7 November 1876, inserted p.351.

⁴¹ Stanley Street Presbyterian Church, for example, was formed in the early 1870s by members of Erskine Church who objected to the introduction of an organ.

⁴² SAP, Journal Clipping, 'The Westminster Portrait Gallery VII: Rev. James Barclay, DD, St Paul's, Montreal', c.1896.

interior.⁴³ The interior may have resembled that of the original American Presbyterian Church, with a dominant central pulpit, gallery, and closely packed pews, although - unlike the American Presbyterian Church - St Paul's did not have an organ prior to its uptown move.⁴⁴ When the congregation relocated to Dorchester Street, the impressive Gothic exterior of the new church was matched in some respects by a more traditional ecclesiastical interior design than was the case with the auditorium-style sanctuaries. Thus, there was no gallery in the new church, and a wide central aisle separated long banks of forward facing pews, with the exception of the transepts where pews faced inwards (Figure 3.7). Unusually for a Presbyterian church, carved wooden angels graced the ends of each beam of the open timbered roof. As was the case in the original building, the Sunday school and lecture rooms were confined to a large basement.⁴⁵ While the layout of the main nave of the church resembled that of St George's, the front of the sanctuary was arranged more like that of the American Presbyterian Church, although St Paul's had a much taller pulpit with stairs reaching up to it. Behind the pulpit there was an organ recess or alcove, containing a choir loft, organ with tall organ pipes, and arched windows on either side.⁴⁶ Music was rapidly 'gaining ground' in Presbyterian and Congregational worship services during this period⁴⁷, and this led to problems at St Paul's, where the tall pulpit was felt by some to interfere with the ability of the choir to perform. St Paul's was eager to maintain a voluntary, rather than a paid choir, but congregation members in the choir appear not to have liked facing the congregation from the highly visible space created by the original choir loft.⁴⁸ In 1878, the trustees therefore decided to remove the choir loft, and lower the organ and choir from the elevated gallery to the floor of the church. This solution did not satisfy the organist and choir leader,

⁴³ *Montreal Gazette*, 31 August 1831.

⁴⁴ James Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots: The History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal 1803-2003* (Montreal: The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul 2003), 41.

⁴⁵ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 5 September 1859; Sandra M. Coley, *The Church of St Andrew and St Paul, Montreal: An Architectural History 1805-1932, and Catalogue of Memorials* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1993), 50.

⁴⁶ A picture of this interior can be found in Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots*, 108.

⁴⁷ For one individual's opinion of this phenomenon, see the letter to editor in the *Montreal Witness*, 9 January 1879, under the heading 'Music In Churches'.

⁴⁸ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1868-1898, 12 September 1878; CIHM A01510, *St Paul's Church, Montreal. Reports for the Year Ending 31 December 1878* (Montreal, 1879), 22.

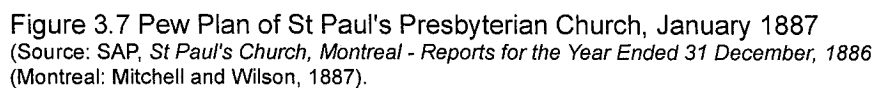


Figure 3.7 Pew Plan of St Paul's Presbyterian Church, January 1887
(Source: SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1886*
(Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1887).

Samuel Greenshields, who felt that the large mass of the pulpit made it difficult for the organist to direct the choir and prevented the choir from working properly together. In 1882, he therefore suggested that the pulpit should be reduced in size and moved from its central position to the south-west corner of the organ recess, and that the floor on which the choir stood should be raised by about a foot.⁴⁹ Supplanting the pulpit by the choir represented a major step for a Presbyterian congregation, but the trustees nevertheless agreed to a three-month trial of the new arrangement. In response to the 'repeated and decided disapproval of the change' that was expressed by a number of members and adherents, the trustees sent out a circular to congregation members asking for their opinions on the matter.⁵⁰ The choir lobbied hard for the new layout, arguing that the musical portion of the service would suffer if they had to return to singing from behind the pulpit, and also pointing out that it was 'not usual in churches of cruciform style such as ours to have the pulpit in the centre, neither is such a position looked upon by authorities in the matter as correct from an architectural point of view'.⁵¹ The majority of members were unmoved by this desire for architectural correctness; out of 248 circulars returned by communicants and seat holders, 155 favoured a central pulpit, 88 wished to have a side pulpit, and only 5 were indifferent. As a result, the trustees felt they had no choice but to restore the pulpit to its central position, thus maintaining the rather indecisive combination of congregation-facing choir and organ pipes, prominent central pulpit, and traditional cathedral-style seating arrangement for the congregation.⁵²

While some changes were resisted, as at St Paul's, congregations nevertheless considered their church interiors to be works in progress, and funds were constantly being sought to make further improvements. Congregations were particularly active during times of economic prosperity. During the late 1880s, calls went up for renovations at the American Presbyterian Church, where it was felt that the church's appearance was 'not in

⁴⁹ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1868-1898, 12 January 1882.

⁵⁰ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 27 May 1882; Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1868-1898, 3 June 1882; 6 June 1882.

⁵¹ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees, 15 June 1882.

⁵² SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees, 27 June 1882. An image of the church interior as it appeared in 1903 is available in J.S.S. Armour's *Saints, Sinners and Scots*, 130.

keeping with many of the churches in this vicinity little or nothing having been done in this direction for nearly 20 years when we first moved up to this new edifice'.⁵³ By the following year, 'a thorough work of improvement' had been carried out at a cost of \$10,000. Among other things, the interior had been decorated and painted, with new carpets and cushions to match, and the congregation was told that they could now congratulate themselves on having 'one of the most complete and attractive churches in the city'.⁵⁴ Nearby St Paul's Church, having reached 'a point of prosperity unequalled in its past history' so far as material well-being was concerned, was quick to follow this example.⁵⁵ Dissatisfied with the plainness of the walls and ceilings, major renovations were undertaken that transformed the appearance of the church interior. According to one report:

St Paul's Church, whose new decorations were seen by the congregation for the first time last Sunday, presents now perhaps the finest interior in Canada. Among the windows there is a remarkable one to the memory of Mrs Andrew Allen by the celebrated William Morris, poet and decorator, and one to the memory of William Wood Redpath by Ballantyne of Edinburgh. The coloring has just been finished by Mr Taylor, architect, of this city, who has already done satisfactory though simple work on the cathedral and some other churches. In St Paul's he appears to have had free scope. A warm dark red is the prevailing color throughout. The tone of the ceiling is gradated lighter and lighter to the apex, giving the roof an appearance of greater loftiness. The pulpit end and organ recess are very rich in gilding, bronze coloring and ornament, and the upholstery has been partially renewed in harmony with the prevailing color.... The old organ and chandeliers have been left for the present almost untouched, as there is an intention of enlarging the organ and altering the lighting arrangements. The effect of the light will be to make it what Milton, perhaps in sarcasm, called 'religious', and this effect will increase as the other windows are filled.... The cost, \$2,200, is regarded as surprisingly small for the results obtained.⁵⁶

⁵³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A401 Sixty-Second Annual Report of Trustees of American Presbyterian Society, 26 December 1885.

⁵⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A401 Sixty-Third Annual Report of Trustees of American Presbyterian Society, 27 December 1886.

⁵⁵ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1888* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1889), 11.

⁵⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 13 September 1889. The reference to Milton probably refers to the following lines: 'And storied windows richly dight, Casting a dim religious light... Dissolve me into ecstasies, And bring all Heaven before mine eyes' (John Milton, *Il Penseroso*, l.159-166).

Since only black and white photos remain, it is easy to forget the extent to which church interiors were transformed during this period by a growing acceptance of stained glass, gilding, vibrant paint colours, and plush upholstery.

It seems safe to assume that the uptown congregations that were engaged in beautifying and elaborating their church interiors during this period were doing so because they felt that these changes would enhance their worship and encourage others to join their churches. Dialogue in the *Montreal Witness* indicates, however, that not all members of the community felt that the altered interiors were having the desired effect. One letter-writer to the *Montreal Witness*, who claimed to be a converted working-man 'In search of the Church of Christ', complained that he had attended many of the grand churches in Montreal, but did not feel that what was going on inside was the worship of Jesus Christ, since it bore so little resemblance to the churches described in the New Testament.⁵⁷ The editorial remarks that followed were unsympathetic. Most Christians, the editor replied, had devoted time to considering whether 'the primitive era of simple fishermen evangelists could not be restored', but, since no outward condition of things could ever be perfect, had generally come to the conclusion 'that such a state of things would not fulfil all the wants of the present age'.⁵⁸ Further letters on this topic followed over the next few months, and while at least one 'rustic' reader wrote in with an encouraging account of his own experiences attending various churches in Montreal⁵⁹, others took the opportunity to warn of the dangers that grandeur and ceremony posed to Protestant worship:

It must be admitted that the things which he says in reference to city churches are only too true. An awakened soul is never satisfied with grandeur or ceremony. True faith seeks not only humility of heart, but also humility of worship. Splendid edifices, organs, choirs, surplices, gowns, bands, etc. will never charm or captivate an awakened soul. Church attendance has become alarmingly fashionable, and services are too frequently conducted with a desire to establish a mere reputation for being a fashionable place. May the Church awake to a true sense of her danger, and shake off this formalism

⁵⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 4 April 1879, 'In Search of the Church of Christ'.

⁵⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 4 April 1879.

⁵⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 3 May 1879, 'In Search of the Church of Christ: Where It May Be Found – An Encouraging Experience of Montreal'.

which is creeping not altogether unawares into all the various denominations in our land.⁶⁰

There was additional concern that 'formalism' was affecting not just worship, but also the way in which the work of the church was being carried out. The editor of the *Witness* shared these concerns, admiring the well-developed machinery of congregational life, but also warning that 'one of the prevalent errors of the nineteenth century is to bow down and worship machinery and to forget that after all it is the spirit which makes the moral machine good or bad, effective or non-effective'.⁶¹ Such discussion points, once again, to the dilemmas encountered by uptown churches as they sought to reconcile their improved material circumstances with the continued fulfilment of their roles as churches. Despite evidence suggesting that the new interiors satisfied the requirements of middle-class churchgoers, it was nevertheless inevitable that such changes would reawaken the perennial Christian fear that spiritual weakness would be the result of too great an involvement with the material world.⁶²

The People in the Pews: The Impact of Uptown Relocation on the Social Composition of Church Membership

The previous section has demonstrated that uptown moves by the case-study churches were associated with major changes taking place in the physical layout and accompanying worship practices of the congregations that were involved. This section will go on to determine whether there is evidence to support the premise that the uptown relocation of churches alienated less wealthy church members and transformed the case-study churches into more homogeneously middle-class institutions. Quantitative analysis of the social and ethnic composition of church membership is necessary if we are to understand the full impact of uptown relocation on congregational life. A variety of questions present themselves. First of all, did the overall social or ethnic composition of a given denomination influence the extent to which its churches colonized the uptown district? Secondly, did the social composition of individual churches change as a result of

⁶⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 3 May 1879, 'An Increasing Danger'.

⁶¹ *Montreal Witness*, 8 March 1879, 'What A Congregation Can Do'.

⁶² H. Richard Niebuhr discusses how Christians have addressed this problem over the centuries in *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row 1951); in particular, see Chapter I 'The Enduring Problem'.

the move to a new uptown location and, if so, which groups within the congregation were most affected? Finally, it is necessary to explore whether changes in the social composition of church membership over time were attributable to the loss of less wealthy church members or whether the upward mobility of church members was also a factor. A combination of quantitative and geographic methods will be used to answer these questions, using sources including municipal tax rolls, the 1881 manuscript census, and church membership lists for the case study congregations.

Methodology

Research analyzing the social composition of congregations has generally not been designed to examine whether or not change occurred within individual congregations through time, despite the fact that this has been identified as an 'important phenomenon, and one little remarked upon in the literature'.⁶³ Instead, social composition analysis has been used, particularly in the British context, primarily by those seeking to counter broad and often impressionistic generalizations about low levels of working-class participation in urban nineteenth-century church life.⁶⁴ The results of such enquiries have shed light on the influence of both class and gender on decisions about church-going, as well as on the contrasts in social makeup amongst the various Protestant denominations.⁶⁵ Such studies have also drawn attention, however, to some of the difficulties involved in conducting this type of analysis. First of all, decisions have to be made concerning which sources to draw upon. While baptismal registers are readily available for all denominations, and frequently provide the father's occupation, they do not always discriminate between those who were regular churchgoers and participants in congregational life, and those with looser affiliations.⁶⁶ Doris O'Dell's work on churches

⁶³ Callum G. Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', *Urban History Yearbook*, (1988), 8.

⁶⁴ Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', 8-10.

⁶⁵ For a review of the findings of various studies, see Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London: MacMillan Press 1996), 62-70. See also Peter Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Glasgow: a Study of Nine Churches', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 32(1) (1981), 47-64.

⁶⁶ Birth, marriage, and death records were particularly well kept in Quebec, where duplicate copies of church registers were sent to the government and served as the Civil Register. In the early 19th century, Nonconformist Protestant groups and Jews were not permitted to maintain official registers. The right to do so was only obtained in the late 1820s and early 1830s as different groups petitioned the Legislative Council

in Belleville, Ontario, suggests that whereas the majority of working-class individuals who appeared in church records only did so in connection with having their children baptized or sent to Sunday school, the vast majority of wealthier individuals also showed up on lists of members, communicants, church leaders, or financial contributors, suggesting that the latter group was more actively engaged in congregational life.⁶⁷ While lists of church members or communicants provide a better picture of active and committed churchgoers, they have the disadvantage of being less readily available than church registers.⁶⁸ Despite the fact that membership records were not available for all my case-study congregations throughout the period under study, I nevertheless decided to base my analysis on those records that were available, since my main interest was in determining how uptown church relocation affected the social composition of those who were actively engaged in congregational life.⁶⁹ Membership and communicant lists had the additional advantage of presenting a 'snap-shot' of a congregation at a particular moment in time, making it easier to link individuals to city directories and tax rolls. In many cases, it would have been necessary to collect baptismal information over the course of many years in order to build up a congregational sample of equivalent size. It

(for more details, see Jane Greenlaw, *"Fractious Individuals": Protestant Non-Conformity in Montreal 1828-1842* (M.A. Thesis, UQAM 1989), 122). The problem of using baptismal registers is compounded by the fact that some denominations were more demanding of parents than others. While the Church of England traditionally assumed that all baptized individuals living within the parish boundaries belonged to the church, and were therefore eligible to have their children baptized, many evangelical groups had stricter definitions of membership and would usually only baptize the children of members. Peter Hillis claims that both the Established and Non-established churches in mid-19th century Scotland would only baptize a child if at least one parent was a communicant member of the church and regularly attended church services and that baptismal registers therefore provide an accurate picture of church membership for these groups (Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class', 49-50).

⁶⁷ Doris Mary O'Dell, *The Class Character of Church Participation in Late Nineteenth-Century Belleville, Ontario* (Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's University 1990), 86. A problem with O'Dell's approach is that it is difficult to determine exactly how she constructed her initial sample of 'church participants'.

⁶⁸ When using church membership lists, one also has to address the question of whether or not to include adherents. Adherents were not church members and did not take communion, but attended regularly, contributed financially to the church, and were often related to church members. Their names were usually not included in church membership lists, but in some cases were listed separately, while in others members and adherents were listed together. In cases where adherents were listed separately, I have excluded them from my analysis. In cases where they were not distinguished from members, I had no choice but to include them. There is no reason, however, to think that members and adherents came from different social groups.

⁶⁹ Comparisons between church membership lists for the American Presbyterian Church and Zion Congregational Church (both of which had very strict membership criteria) and their baptismal registers suggest that children were being baptized who did not belong to church members.

should also be noted that many membership lists included not just names, but also occupations (until the late 1870s) and (from the late 1870s onwards) addresses, and that the records of female congregation members frequently indicated their husband's name. This type of additional information was vital in terms of correctly linking individuals to other sources.

Another obstacle frequently associated with social composition analysis of congregations is that of how to place individuals into appropriate socio-economic categories. In most cases, the only available option has been to group individuals based on their occupations, using a variety of different categorization schemes adapted for use in the context of industrializing economies.⁷⁰ This methodology operates well if one is assessing such things as the working-class presence in congregations, or studying churches in smaller towns where one would expect to find individuals from all walks of life worshipping together and an absence of extremes of either wealth or poverty. Because such categorization schemes focus on assigning people to different groups based primarily on their relations to the means of production, however, they are unable to differentiate effectively between various elements within the middle and upper classes in an urban context, something that is very important in terms of the congregations that I am studying. Fortunately, another source of information is available in the form of the City of Montreal rental tax rolls. These records were compiled annually from 1846 onwards in order to assess the amount that both tenants and owner-occupiers would have to contribute to help pay for the waterworks. The city assessor recorded each household head's name, address, and occupation, as well as providing an assessed rental value for each property (in the case of owner-occupiers this represented an estimated market value for rent).⁷¹ Although the accuracy and fairness of nineteenth-century property assessments have often been questioned⁷², previous researchers have verified that the

⁷⁰ See, for example, Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class', 48-49; Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 222-226; O'Dell, *The Class Character of Church Participation*, 40-49.

⁷¹ This information comes from Jason Gilliland, 'Modeling Residential Mobility in Montreal, 1860-1900', *Historical Methods*, 31(1) (1998), 29.

⁷² See discussion in O'Dell, *The Class Character of Church Participation*, 50-52.

assessed rental values for Montreal represent a reliable estimate of market rental values.⁷³ According to Gilliland and Olson, 'since rents show near-perfect correlation with floor areas and moderate correlation with incomes, the inequality of rents accurately represents the inequality of household purchasing power in general, as well as the inequality of claims on space in particular'.⁷⁴ Given that the assessed rents reflected meaningful differences in the living conditions and purchasing power of families, it seemed reasonable to use the assessed rental values of church members' dwellings as a means of analyzing the social composition of the case study congregations through time.

As with all techniques, there are deficiencies and methodological issues that need to be addressed. The principal shortcoming of the proposed technique is that because the tax roll only provides the names of household heads, individuals such as servants and other congregation members who did not live with their own nuclear family were effectively excluded from the analysis. I was, however, able to include married women whose husbands were not church members, since membership lists often provided their spouse's names, making it possible to link them to the appropriate dwelling in the rental tax roll.⁷⁵ It should also be noted that I chose to link all membership lists for the 1840s to the 1848 tax roll, all lists from the 1860s to the 1861 tax roll, and all lists from the late 1870s and 1880s to the 1881 tax roll. These years were selected because previous researchers had already compiled the tax rolls in a digital format, making it possible to search for individuals by their last names.⁷⁶ As can be seen in the charts in Figure 3.8, the overall distribution of assessed rents reflected Montreal's low-wage economy and did not

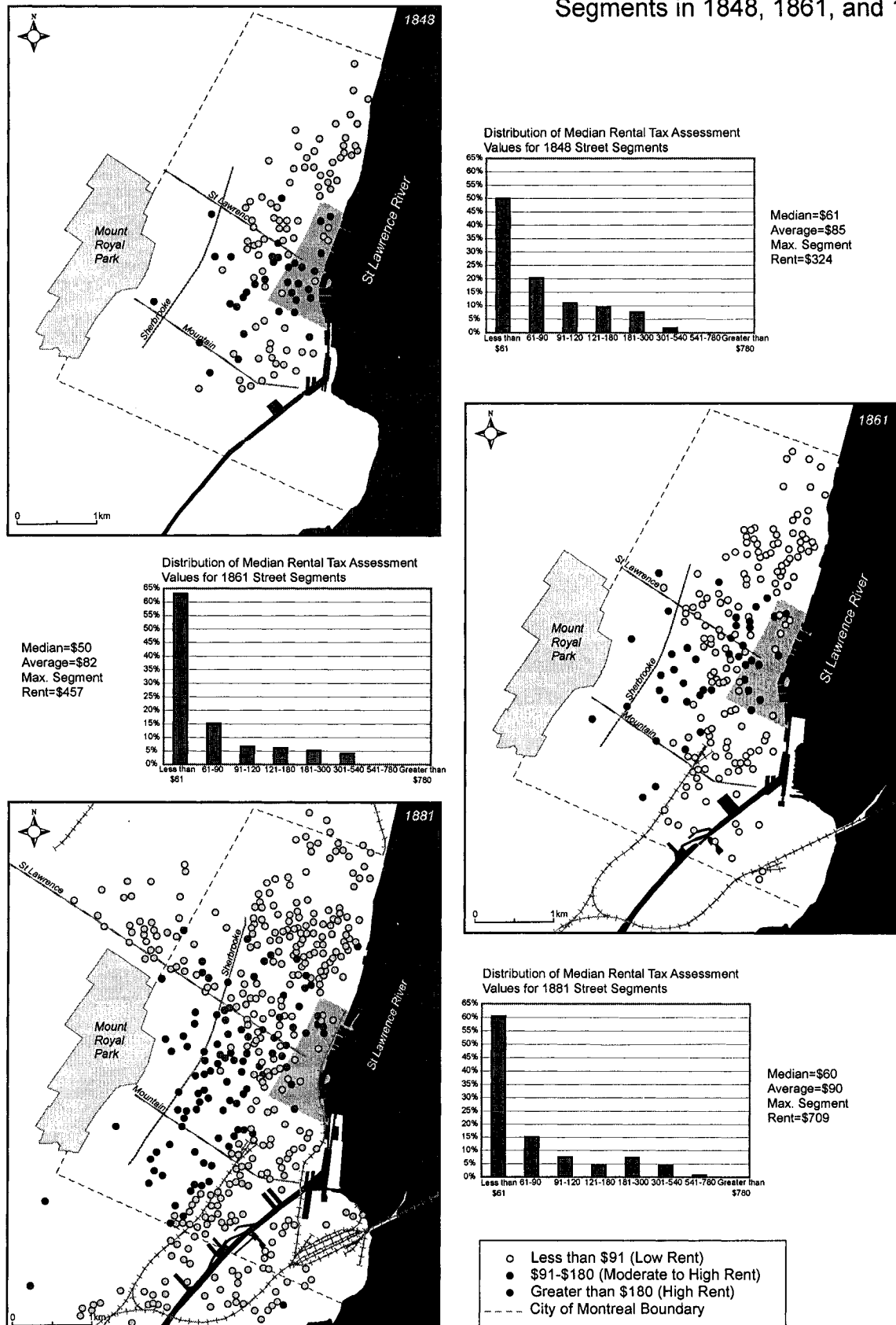
⁷³ David Hanna and Sherry Olson, 'Métiers, loyers et bout de rue: l'armature de la société montréalaise de 1881 à 1901', *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 27(71) (1983), 255-275; Sherry Olson, 'Ethnic Partition of the Work Force in 1840s Montréal', *Labour/Le Travail*, 53 (Spring 2004), fn. 72.

⁷⁴ Jason Gilliland and Sherry Olson, 'Claims on Housing Space in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 26(2) (1998), 5.

⁷⁵ In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, where neither occupation, spouse's name, nor addresses were included in the nineteenth-century membership lists, I used the *Index des Mariages Non-Catholiques*, available at the *Archives Nationales du Québec*, to obtain the husband's name of female congregation members who had been married in Montreal. This made it possible to link a slightly greater number of individuals to the city directory and tax roll. Note that in cases where membership lists included a husband and wife, or a husband, wife, and young adults all belonging to the same family and living at the same address, only one assessed rent value was assigned to the whole family and used in the calculations.

⁷⁶ Only the 1881 tax roll is currently available in a searchable digital format. The two earlier tax rolls are available in the form of print outs (in the possession of Sherry Olson), sorted alphabetically by tenant's name.

Figure 3.8 Distributions of Median Rental Tax Assessment Values for Montreal Street Segments in 1848, 1861, and 1881.



Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1848, 1861, 1881. The originals are held in the City of Montreal Archives. These maps and charts were created from digital files in the possession of Sherry Olson, giving the median rent for each street segment.

change dramatically between 1848 and 1881, since inflation was not a significant factor during this period. There are, however, certain problems with the rents for 1848. Because the rental tax roll was still in the early stages of development at this point, the issue of how to deal with houses containing more than one dwelling unit had not yet been ironed out. This led to an upward skewing of assessed rental values in the early years.⁷⁷ Overall median rents increased somewhat between 1861 and 1881, but the most important thing to note during this period is the increasing spread of rents at the elite end of the housing spectrum. While only a very select group of increasingly wealthy individuals could afford these elegant residences, many of them were members of the uptown Protestant congregations and will appear in the case studies below. Finally, a word on the rental categories that I have adopted for use in Figure 3.8 and throughout my analysis, which are the same as those used by Sherry Olson and David Hanna in Plate 49 of the *Historical Atlas of Canada*.⁷⁸ The first two categories (assessed rents less than \$91) include the low-rent dwellings that housed three-quarters of the population, many of whom were employed in occupations such as labourer, carter, or shoemaker, while the following two categories (assessed rents \$91-\$180) embrace moderate to high-rent dwellings for those with occupations such as clerk, commercial traveller, or bookkeeper. Rents greater than \$180 constitute high-rent dwellings, affordable only to those with lucrative occupations such as doctor, lawyer, or merchant. As is clear from the maps in Figure 3.8, by 1861 most of the high-rent dwellings were already situated in the uptown district.⁷⁹

A final issue associated with the social analysis of church membership is that of how to place the socio-economic profile of any given congregation in a meaningful context. To do so requires that it be possible to compare the profiles of the case study congregations with that of the larger population. In a city like Montreal, in which the

⁷⁷ Robert D. Lewis, 'Home Ownership Reassessed for Montreal in the 1840s', *The Canadian Geographer*, 34(2) (1990), 150-152.

⁷⁸ Sherry Olson and David Hanna, 'Social Change in Montreal, 1842-1901', in *Historical Atlas of Canada: The Land Transformed 1800-1891, Volume 2*, ed. R. Louis Gentilcore (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993), Plate 49.

⁷⁹ For further discussion of class and residential segregation see Robert Lewis, 'The Segregated City: Class, Residential Patterns and the Development of Industrial Districts in Montreal, 1861 and 1901', *Journal of Urban History*, 17(2) (1991), 123-152.

majority of inhabitants were Roman Catholic, and where the Protestant community contained a much larger percentage of well-to-do families than was the case in either the French or Irish Catholic communities⁸⁰, it is not adequate simply to compare the socio-economic profile of a given congregation with that of the city as a whole. One of the reasons why Lynne Marks chose to study religion in small-town Ontario was that it allowed her to assemble relatively complete church membership records for all the churches in a given community.⁸¹ This made it possible to identify not just individuals with church affiliations, but also those who were not active church members. As a result, she was able to explore the ways in which gender, marital status, and class affected levels of church participation, and to come to the conclusion that only half the Protestant families in the two small towns she studied included even one church member.⁸² In a large and growing urban centre like Montreal, it would of course be virtually impossible to identify and compare those individuals who were and were not church members. Recent efforts to develop historical geo-databases for Montreal as part of the *Montréal l'avenir du passé* (MAP) project⁸³, conducted by an interdisciplinary team of scholars directed by Sherry Olson, now make it possible, however, to link the rental tax roll for 1881 to household heads in the census of 1881.⁸⁴ By enabling household heads in the rental tax roll to be distinguished on the basis of variables such as denominational affiliation or ethnicity, it was then possible to create overviews of the socio-economic profile of the Protestant population as a whole, as well of the various ethnic and denominational sub-groups that made up Montreal's Protestant population. These, in turn, provide a better basis for understanding why certain socio-economic groups were under- or over-represented in the profiles of the individual case study congregations. The MAP project also made it possible to map ethnicity and denominational data (for

⁸⁰ Sherry Olson, 'Le peuplement de Montréal', in *Atlas historique du Québec: population et territoire*, ed. Serge Courville (Sainte-Foy : Les Presses de l'Université Laval 1996), 85.

⁸¹ Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 219.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 50.

⁸³ For a description of the project design, see Robert C.H. Sweeny and Sherry Olson, 'MAP: Montréal L'Avenir du Passé – Sharing Geodatabases Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', *Geomatica*, 57(2) 2003, 145-154.

⁸⁴ Overall, approximately 61 percent of household heads with dwelling rents greater than zero were matched to their census records (16,434 out of a total of 26,928). This project is still undergoing refinement.

household heads) from the 1881 manuscript census by census district⁸⁵, which - when presented alongside charts showing associated distributions based on the rental tax assessment - highlights the geographical dimensions of the relationship between ethnicity/denomination, class, and the locations of Protestant churches in Montreal. This provides a framework for the analysis of the case-study congregations.

Analysis and Discussion

Figure 3.9, showing the geographical distribution of Protestant and Catholic household heads in Montreal, clearly illustrates the uptown concentration of the Protestant community by 1881. This distribution overlaps considerably with the high-rent area shown in the corresponding map in Figure 3.8, and reflects the fact that, at \$120, the median rental tax assessment for Protestants was double that of the population as a whole.⁸⁶ The tendency for a greater proportion of Protestant household heads to be engaged in the more lucrative bourgeois, petit bourgeois, and white collar occupations was not a new phenomenon. Previous research has shown that a majority of the Protestant population in 1860 belonged to these three groups, in contrast with the Irish Catholic and French Catholic populations which were dominated by unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers.⁸⁷ These differences were not as pronounced in the commercial city of the 1840s, although even then merchants and professionals, at the top of the occupational hierarchy, were overrepresented within the Protestant population, while unskilled labourers were underrepresented.⁸⁸ Despite their concentration in the uptown district in 1881, Protestants continued to live throughout the city, but only made up a majority of the population in two other census districts, located in the vicinity of the Grand Trunk Railway workshops in Point St Charles.

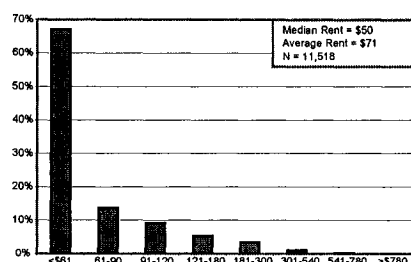
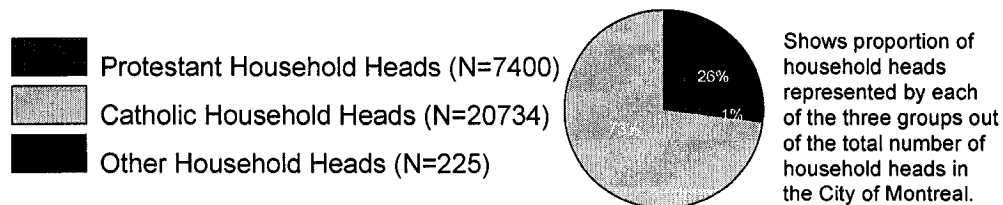
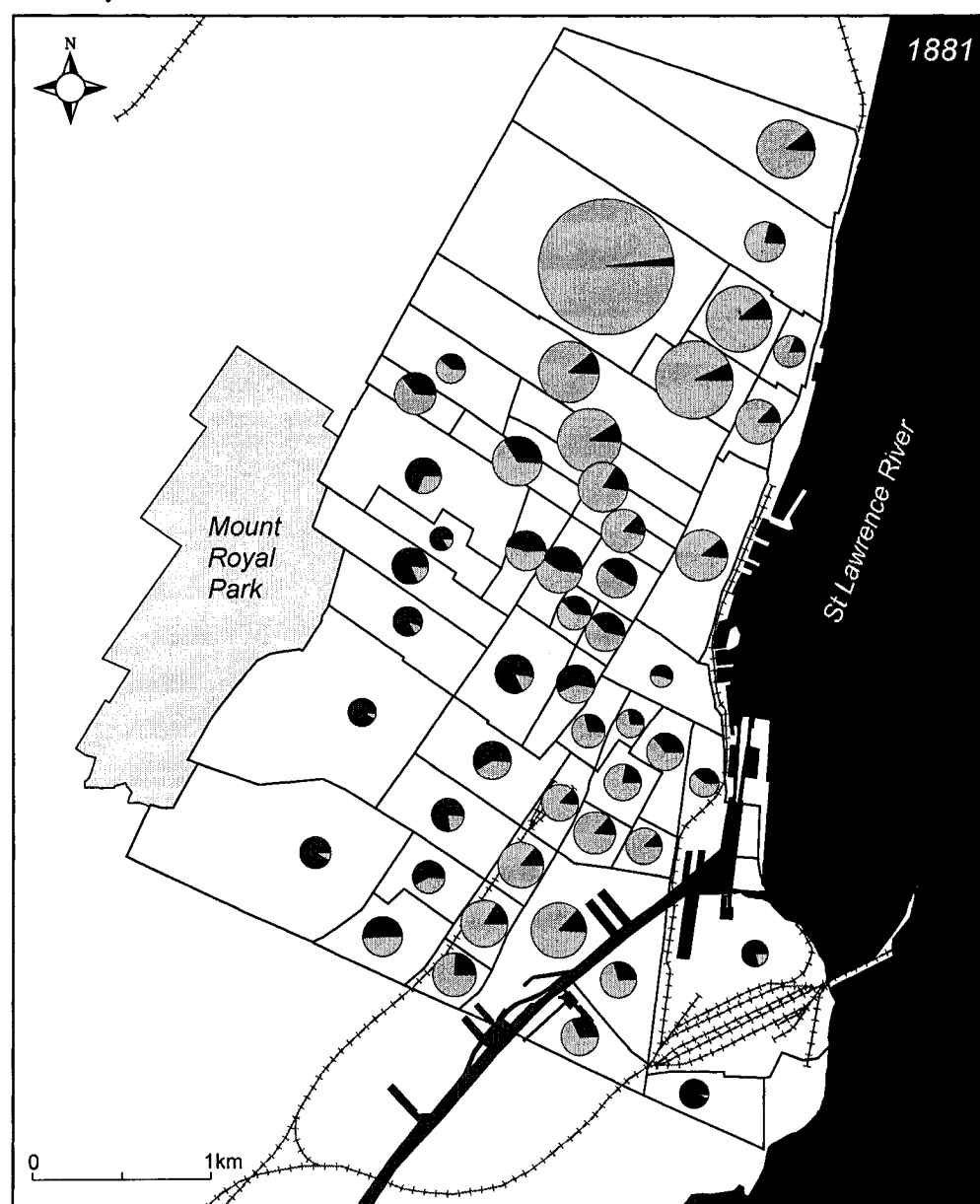
⁸⁵ No maps showing the boundaries of census districts are known to have survived. The ones that are used here were reconstructed by Sherry Olson of McGill University. For the purposes of this study, I have aggregated a number of census districts, most of which were in the east end of the city, that contained very small numbers of Protestants.

⁸⁶ The figure of \$120 is based on a sample of 4822 Protestant tenants/owners with assessed dwelling rents greater than zero who were linked to the Manuscript Census of 1881. The tax roll had an overall median assessed rent of \$60.

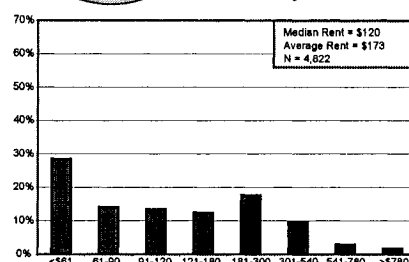
⁸⁷ Sherry Olson, 'Le peuplement de Montréal', 85, Figure 2.

⁸⁸ Sherry Olson, 'Ethnic Partition of the Work Force in 1840s Montreal', Table 6 and Figure 1.

Figure 3.9 Distribution of Protestant and Catholic Household Heads in the City of Montreal, 1881.



Distribution of Rental Tax Assessment Values of Catholic Household Heads (Montreal and Suburbs) Located in 1881 Census



Distribution of Rental Tax Assessment Values of Protestant Household Heads (Montreal and Suburbs) Located in 1881 Census

Sources: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format; 1881 Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll in Digital Format; MAP Project.

While the distribution of Protestants and Catholics looks somewhat lifeless when presented cartographically, it nevertheless created visible differences in the built and social landscapes of the city. Not only were a large number of the Protestant churches and charitable institutions concentrated in the uptown district (see Figure 2.3), but different conceptions of appropriate Sabbath observance ensured that - on at least one day of the week - Protestant-dominated areas assumed a very different atmosphere from that of their Catholic counterparts. H. de Lamothe, a Frenchman who visited Montreal during the 1870s, observed that 'in Montreal, Sunday is a middling term, a sort of compromise between the Puritan "Sabbath" of New England and the day of recreation enjoyed by the French worker and peasant'.⁸⁹ He was critical of the Protestant districts, which he described as taking on 'the air of a necropolis' on Sundays, and expressed relief at the fact that the French Canadians, though somewhat infected by the habits of their neighbours, as yet did not 'feel obligated to stay indoors pretending to commune with Ezekiel and Jeremiah'. From the Protestant perspective, the observance of the Sabbath throughout the day was an important element defining Protestant respectability, identity, and superiority in a largely Catholic milieu (see Figure 3.10). The Rev. Dr. Leach of St George's Church felt that 'as *men*, as *christians*, and as *protestants*' his male congregation members were called upon to endeavour to prevent the violation of the Sabbath, especially since they found themselves living in a 'Romish Country' where there was an even greater need to be strenuous in preserving one's identity.⁹⁰ Although most Protestant complaints against Sabbath-breaking were directed towards the east end of the city, Point St Charles, and the suburban villages,⁹¹ a desire to observe the Sabbath in a quiet and peaceful environment may have contributed to the perceived desirability of both residential and church moves to the uptown district.

⁸⁹ Quoted in translation in Bryan Demchinsky and Elaine Kalman Naves, *Storied Streets: Montreal in the Literary Imagination* (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross 2000), 72. The original text is found in H. de Lamothe, *Cinq mois chez les Français d'Amérique* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie. 1880, 2ième édition).

⁹⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 25 October 1852.

⁹¹ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 10 May 1869, 11 May 1869, 7 July 1869, 13 July 1869, 17 July 1869, 9 August 1869, 6 September 1869, 14 September 1869, October 21, 1869.

Figure 3.10 The Extremes of 'Sabbath Observance' as Practised in Montreal

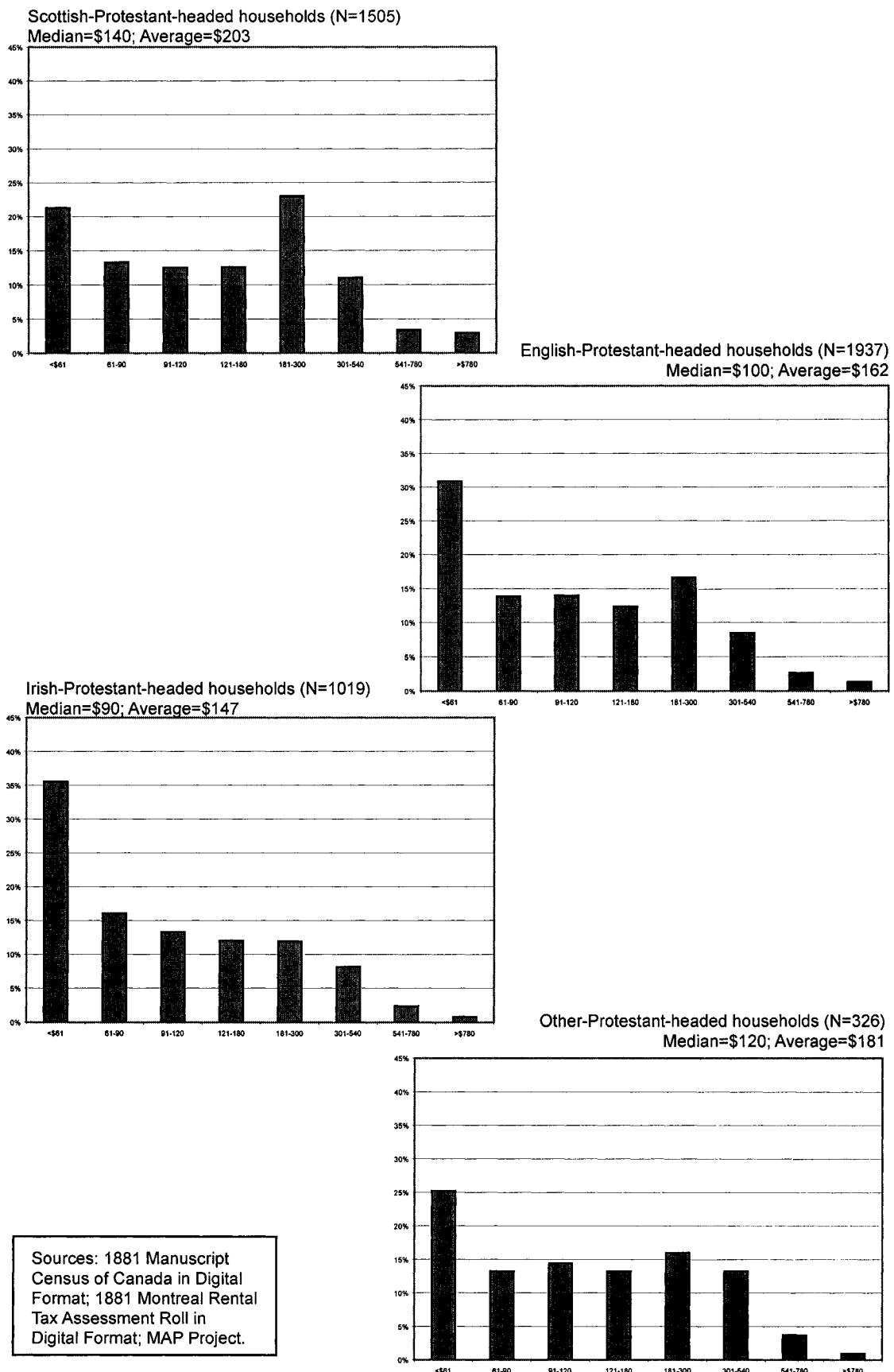


Source: *Canadian Illustrated News*, Volume 2, 22 October 1870, p.268-269.

Figure 3.11, showing the distribution of rental tax assessments for Scottish, English, and Irish Protestants in the City of Montreal in 1881, sheds further light on the relationship between ethnicity and class. Although the differences between the various Protestant ethnic groups were not as pronounced as those between Protestants and Catholics, there was nevertheless a clear hierarchy, with a median rent of \$140 for Scottish Protestants, \$100 for English Protestants, and \$90 for Irish Protestants. The Scots also had the smallest percentage of low rents⁹² at 34.6 percent, compared with 44.6 percent for the English, and 51.6 percent for the Irish Protestants. Once again, these figures reflected persistent, rather than short-term, differences amongst the various groups. Previous research has demonstrated that as early as the 1840s, the collective occupational profile of Irish Protestants was less favourable than that of other

⁹² Defined as assessed rents less than \$90.

Figure 3.11 Distributions of Rental Tax Assessment Values for Scottish, English, Irish, and Other-Protestant Headed Households (Montreal and Suburbs), 1881.



Protestants.⁹³ In contrast, as early as 1818, a traveller passing through Montreal identified the leading role played by the Scots in the city's commerce:

Of the merchants in Montreal I believe the greater proportion are Scotsmen, and not a few are from our native city [Glasgow]. A few Englishmen mingle with them, and there are also a considerable number of Americans, from the New England States, who are distinguished by the characteristic shrewdness and perseverance, which have made the natives of that part of the Union so noted throughout the rest of the country.⁹⁴

Many of the Americans referred to in this passage would have been affiliated with the American Presbyterian Church, and prospered despite encountering anti-American prejudice during British-American conflicts such as the Trent Affair.⁹⁵ By the 1870s and 1880s, however, the importance of the American element in the commercial life of the city had diminished considerably.⁹⁶ The Scots retained their pre-eminence, and in 1889 were described as 'easily the leading people' in Montreal, 'as they are so generally in British colonies'.⁹⁷

Figure 3.12 shows the geographical distribution of Scottish, English, and Irish Protestants in Montreal. As one would expect given their privileged economic position, the Scots were overrepresented in the high-rent uptown district in comparison with English and particularly Irish Protestants. While schisms within Presbyterianism were an important part of the explanation for the inordinate presence of Presbyterian churches in

⁹³ Olson, 'Ethnic Partition of the Work Force in 1840s Montreal', Figure 1.

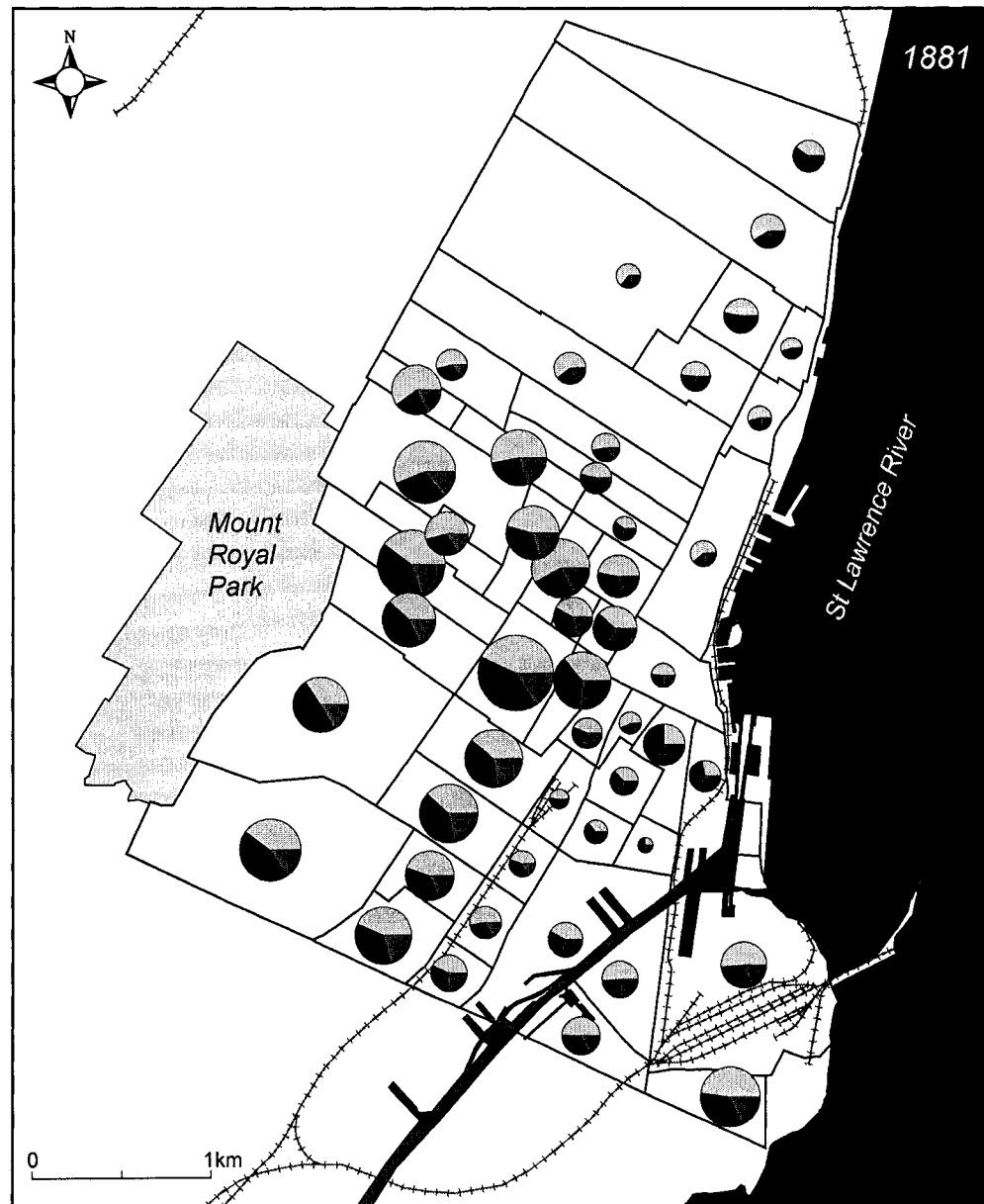
⁹⁴ This quotation comes from John M. Duncan's account of his visit to Montreal in 1818, which was published as part of a two volume work in 1823 under the title *Travels Through Part of the United States and Canada in 1818 and 1819*. The selection reproduced above appears in Gerald M. Craig, ed., *Early Travellers in the Canadas 1791-1867* (Toronto: MacMillan 1955), 54. Gerald Tulchinsky provides a discussion of the ethnic origins of early merchants in Montreal in Chapter 2 of *The River Barons: Montreal Business and the Growth of Industry and Transportation 1837-53* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977). His findings support the statement made by John M. Duncan.

⁹⁵ For discussion of anti-American prejudice, see ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A380 Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon preached by the pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873 (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873), 7-8; also Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 24 September 1868. For further discussion of the Trent Affair, see Elinor Kyte Senior, *Roots of the Canadian Army: Montreal District 1846-1870* (Montreal: Historical Publications, The Society of the Montreal Military & Maritime Museum 1981), 48-50.




⁹⁶ See *Montreal Witness*, 1 November 1879; *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 79(469) (June 1889), 98, 'Montreal' by C.H. Farnham. An explanation for the decline of American influence in the commercial life of Montreal is provided by Tulchinsky in *The River Barons*, 234.

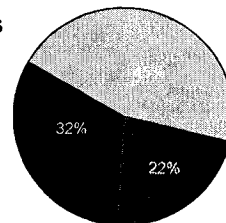
⁹⁷ *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 79(469) (June 1889), 86, 'Montreal' by C.H. Farnham.

Figure 3.12 Distribution of Scottish, English, and Irish Protestant Household Heads in the City of Montreal, 1881.



Source: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format; MAP Project

-  Scottish Protestant Household Heads (N=2174)
-  English Protestant Household Heads (N=3064)
-  Irish Protestant Household Heads (N=1507)



Shows proportion of household heads represented by each of the three ethnic origin categories out of the combined total of these three groups in the City of Montreal [N=6745, representing approximately 90% of the total Protestant household heads in the city].

the uptown district, the greater relative wealth of the Scottish Protestant population clarifies how this group managed to sustain as many churches as it did. English Protestants were overrepresented primarily in eastern sections of the city, where the overall Protestant population was small, while Irish Protestants, in contrast, were disproportionately represented in the census districts to the north of the Lachine Canal. Many of these districts lay within Griffintown, which was best known as the city's principal Irish-Catholic working-class district and will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4. This is consistent with Sherry Olson's analysis of social segregation in Montreal in 1861, which suggested a tendency for Irish Protestant and Irish Catholic residences to overlap to a greater extent than was the case with residences of Irish Catholics and Other Protestants.⁹⁸

Figure 3.13 Cross-tabulation of Ethnic Origin and Denomination, 1881 (Protestants Only)

	Presby- terian	Congrega- tional	Anglican	Metho- dist	Baptist	Unit- arian	Other	Total (%)	Total (N)
English	13%	43%	60%	48%	48%	28%	33%	40%	16592
Scottish	66%	35%	10%	14%	27%	30%	17%	31%	12591
Irish	14%	14%	24%	30%	12%	22%	13%	21%	8452
American/U.S.	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	14%	1%	1%	551
French/F.C.	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%	7%	3%	1092
Other/Unknown	3%	5%	3%	5%	6%	5%	29%	4%	1818
Total (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Total (N)	13090	1488	16649	6260	1543	447	1619		41096

Source: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format

In order to understand how the above factors influenced the process of church building and relocation, it is necessary to explore the relationship between ethnicity and denomination. A cross-tabulation of ethnicity and denomination for all Protestants registered in the 1881 manuscript census is shown in Figure 3.13. The boxes highlighted in grey indicate ethnic groups that made up 30 percent or more of their denominational total. As has already been assumed in the above discussion, a large percent of Presbyterians (66 percent) were of Scottish origin, while an almost equally large percent

⁹⁸ Sherry Olson, 'Occupations and Residential Spaces in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Historical Methods*, 22(3) (1989), 87.

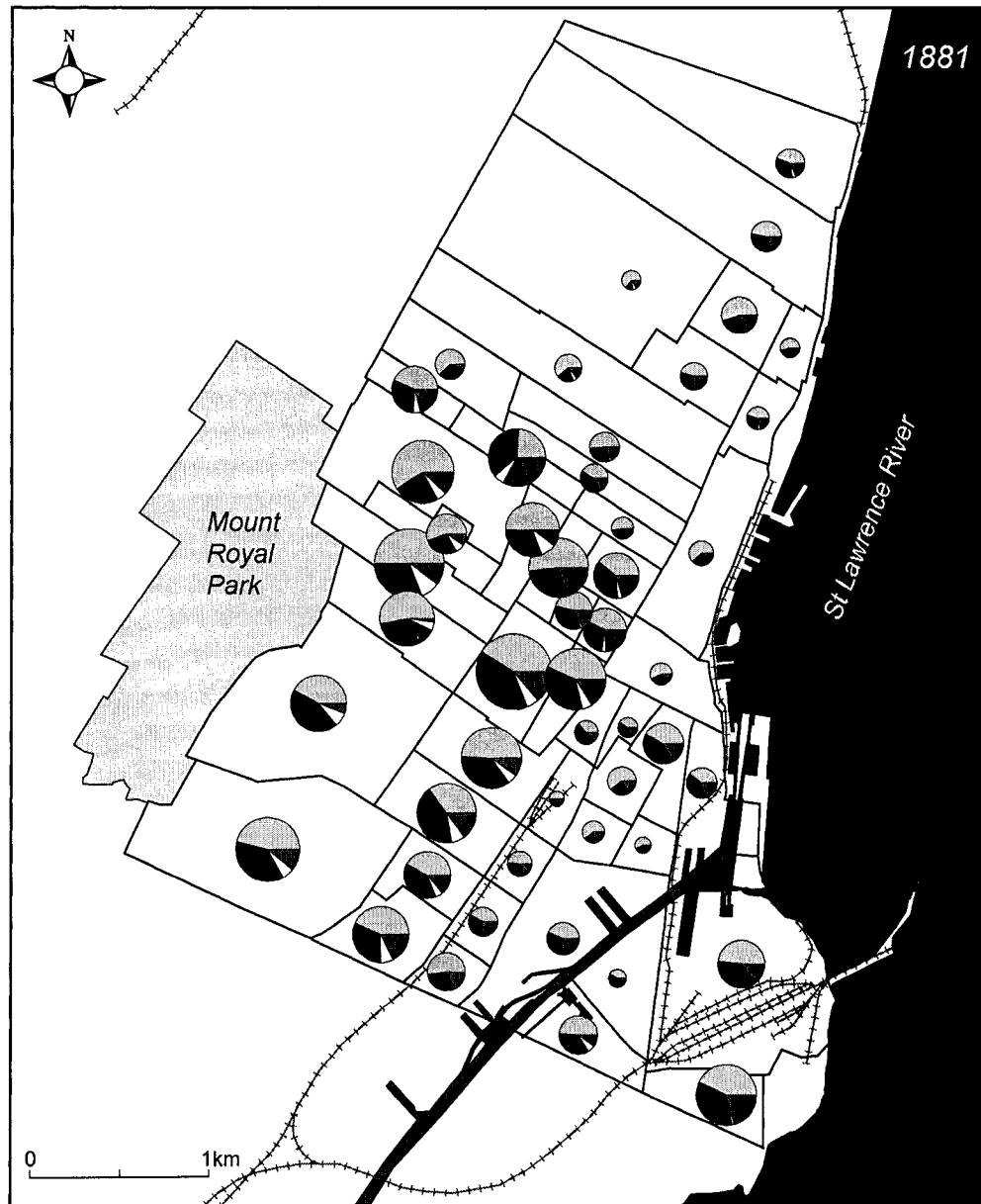
of Anglicans (60 percent) were of English origin. Other denominations were more mixed. The significant Scottish presence in both Congregationalism and Unitarianism should be noted, as should the American element within Unitarianism. Also significant in understanding the socio-economic composition of congregations is the fact that Irish Protestants formed a much larger segment of the Methodist community than they did of any other denomination.

Given the large Scottish element within Presbyterianism, one would expect to find Presbyterians overrepresented in the uptown district. In contrast, Methodism's large component of Irish Protestants made it less likely that members of this denomination would find themselves living and worshipping uptown. This observation is confirmed by Figure 3.14, which shows the relative geographical distributions of Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, and Congregational household heads. Thus, while the pronounced concentration of Presbyterian churches (see Figure 2.3) in the high-rent uptown district reflected divisions within Presbyterianism, it also made sense given the large numbers of Presbyterians living in this district. Similarly, the existence of only one uptown Methodist church in 1881 reflected not just the greater ability of the Methodists to implement a parish-like system of circuits, but also the insufficient number of uptown Methodists to sustain another church. Even by the time of the St James Street Church's uptown move in the late 1880s, the Dominion Square Methodist Church had only managed to consolidate a membership of 290.⁹⁹ Figure 3.14 also demonstrates that, by 1881, the vast majority of Congregationalists were concentrated in the uptown area. Given that Zion Congregational Church was located right on the downtown edge of this district, one can well understand the strong pressure that existed to relinquish the old church building and rebuild on a site more central to the residences of denominational adherents. Despite a sizeable Scottish component within Congregationalism, however, the ethnic make-up of the denomination fails to explain the observed distribution of Congregationalists in the city.

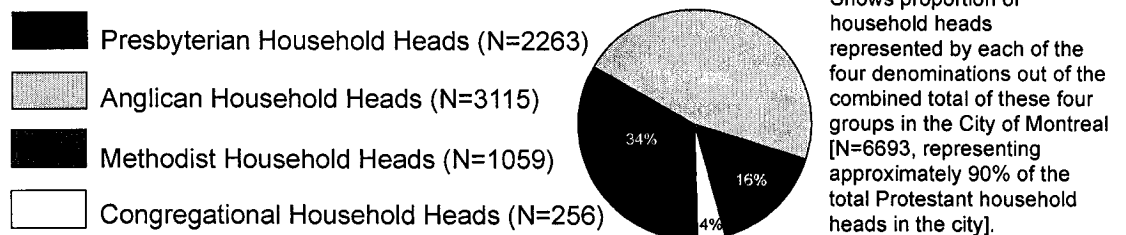
While the ethnic composition of each denomination was clearly associated with the extent to which its churches colonized the uptown district, the traditional appeal of

⁹⁹ *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1887), 19.

Figure 3.14 Distribution of Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, and Congregational Household Heads in the City of Montreal, 1881.



Source: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format; MAP Project

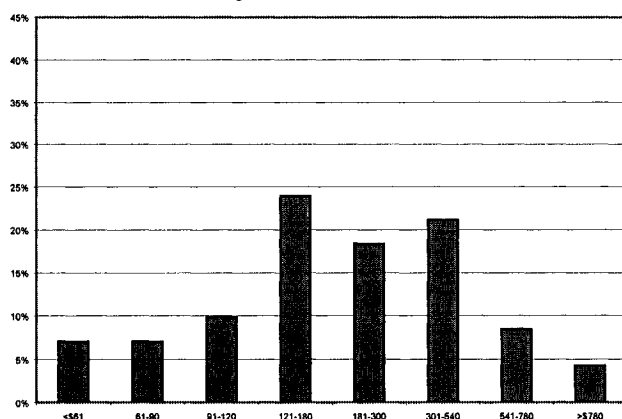


different denominations to individuals belonging to different classes in society also played a role.¹⁰⁰ Distributions of rental tax assessments for household heads belonging to each of Montreal's six major Protestant denominations were therefore created, revealing three main patterns (see Figure 3.15). Not surprisingly, the two largest denominations, the Anglicans and Presbyterians, had distributions that were similar to those of the Protestant population as a whole, as did the Baptists. The median assessed rent for the Presbyterians and Baptists was \$120, which corresponded with the overall value for Protestants, while that of the Anglicans was slightly lower at \$100. The percentage of individuals in the two low-rent categories was comparable for all three denominations, ranging from 40 percent for the Presbyterians to 44 percent for the Anglicans. While only 1.2 percent of Baptists were assessed in the two highest rent categories (\$541 and above), the homes of 4.6 percent of Anglicans and 5.8 percent of Presbyterians were assessed in that range, which accounts for the fact that the average assessed rent of Presbyterians (\$190) and Anglicans (\$172) exceeded that of the Baptists (\$155). In contrast, those identifying themselves as Congregationalists and Unitarians represented a more exclusively middle- and upper-class group of individuals, although the small size of these denominations meant that they nevertheless represented only a small portion of these classes overall. The median assessed rent of both groups was high at \$200, with an average of \$242 for Congregationalist-headed households and \$286 for Unitarian-headed households. Only 18 percent of Congregationalists and 14 percent of Unitarians lived in dwellings assessed in the two low-rent categories, while as many as 9 percent of Congregationalists and almost 13 percent of Unitarians were assessed with rents above \$541. Over 60 percent of both Congregationalists and Unitarians were, however, concentrated in the less extreme, though still high-rent, categories between \$121 and \$540. The Methodists were the sole denomination exhibiting the third pattern of assessed rent distribution. With a median assessed rent of only \$90, and an average assessed rent of \$126, the Methodists represented the least wealthy Protestant denominational grouping, despite being considerably better off than the Roman Catholics. Over 50 percent of Methodists were in the two low-rent categories, while only 1.3 percent had

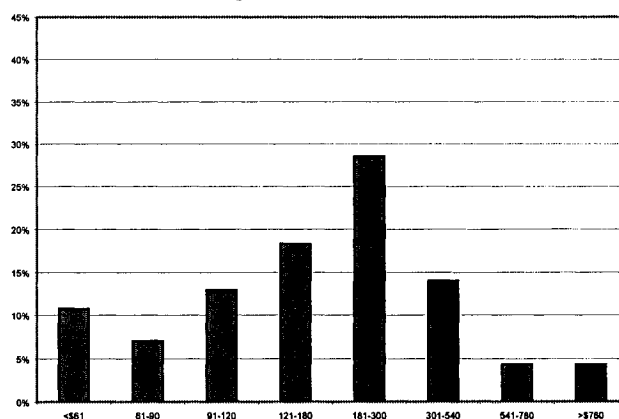
¹⁰⁰ This theme is explored in depth in H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith 1987, Reprint of 1929 edition).

Figure 3.15 Distributions of Rental Tax Assessment Values for Household Heads Belonging to Various Protestant Denominations (Montreal and Suburbs), 1881.

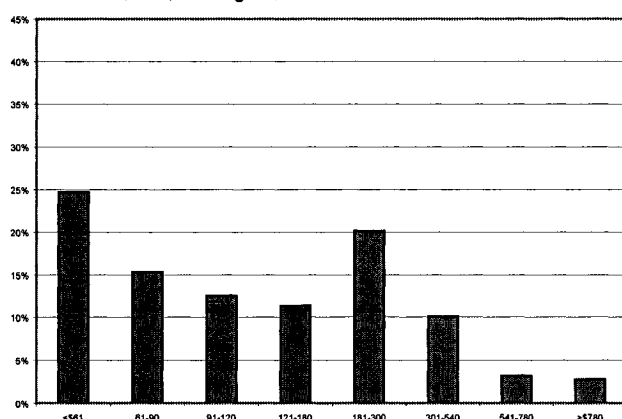
Unitarian-headed households (N=71)
Median=\$200; Average=\$286



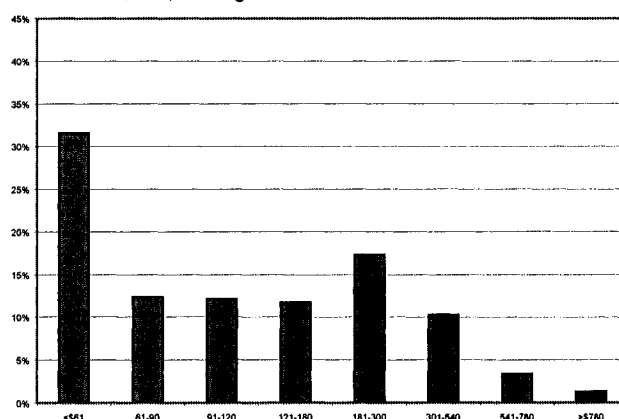
Congregationalist-headed households (N=186)
Median=\$200; Average=\$242



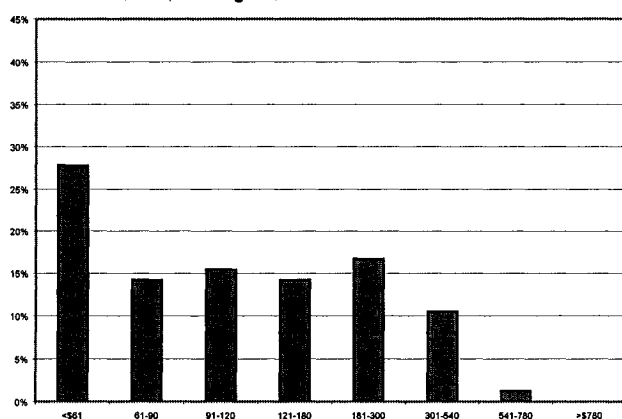
Presbyterian-headed households (N=1530)
Median=\$120; Average=\$190



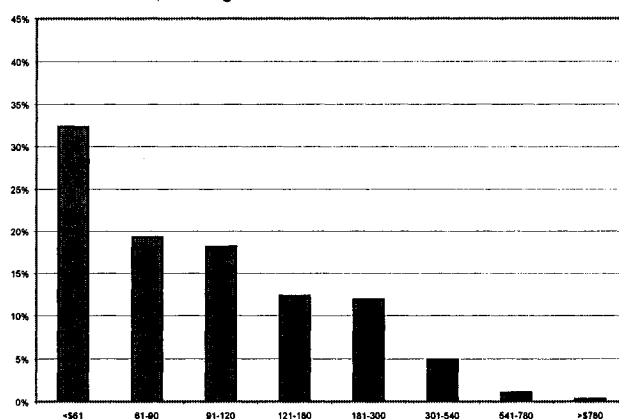
Anglican-headed households (N=1943)
Median=\$100; Average=\$172



Baptist-headed households (N=162)
Median=\$120; Average=\$155



Methodist-headed households (N=706)
Median=\$90; Average=\$126



Sources: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format; 1881 Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll in Digital Format; MAP Project.

rents above \$541. In terms of building elaborate and expensive uptown churches, the Methodists were clearly at a disadvantage. Not only were they a smaller denomination than the Anglicans and Presbyterians, but they were also more limited in terms of wealthy individuals who could be called upon to provide leadership and financial resources.

Many of the patterns described above had their roots in the British Isles. Methodism, for example, was traditionally known for its appeal to the working classes in England¹⁰¹, while the broad appeal of Anglicanism and Presbyterianism reflected their common heritage as the 'established' churches in Scotland and England respectively. Ian Sellers' description of the differing social complexions of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in nineteenth-century Liverpool also suggests similarities with Montreal:

[W]hile Liverpool Congregationalism seems, as Charles Booth described its London counterpart, the religious expression of a particular social grouping (and that in the very middle of the social spectrum), Presbyterianism, while no less a middle class body, was far broader both above and below, embraced in other words, a larger number of extremely wealthy families, and a far bigger segment of the city's artizanry.... No matter where we look, Presbyterians are to the fore in every kind of business enterprise connected with the port.¹⁰²

The immigration process did, however, have an impact on the way in which denominations reconstituted themselves in the North American context. Congregationalism, for example, was always a numerically weak denomination in Canada, and the Rev. Henry Wilkes attempted to account for this by explaining that Australia had received 'quite a number of tried Congregationalists from England, including men of substance', while Canada had received 'the same class mainly from Scotland, and therefore Presbyterians'.¹⁰³ The trans-Atlantic crossing did not, however, isolate the Canadian churches from schisms that continued to take place in the motherland. As there was a tendency for denominations to fracture to some extent along

¹⁰¹ McLeod, *Religion and Society in England*, 64; Jane Greenlaw, 'Choix pratiques et choix des pratiques: le non-conformisme protestant à Montréal (1825-1842)', *RHAF*, 46 (1) (1992), 101.

¹⁰² Ian Sellers, 'Congregationalists and Presbyterians in Nineteenth Century Liverpool', *Transactions The Congregational Historical Society*, XX(2) (1965), 80-81. Sellers also suggests that the differing class structures of the two denominations helps to explain why Congregationalists were virtually all Liberals, while Presbyterians were equally divided between Liberal and Tory parties. It seems likely that some of these political affiliations would have carried over into the Canadian context. For example, the *Montreal Witness*, a paper run by a family of Congregationalists, was considered to be a Liberal newspaper.

¹⁰³ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 187.

class lines, this meant that such divisions had an impact on the class composition of individual congregations in Montreal. The Rev. Robert Campbell describes the way in which the St Gabriel Street Church, considered to be Montreal's leading Presbyterian congregation in the early nineteenth century, lost many of its wealthy and influential families to St Andrew's and St Paul's churches when it left the Church of Scotland in 1844 to become a Free Church congregation.¹⁰⁴ St Andrew's then emerged as the premier Presbyterian congregation, only losing its position to St Paul's after 1875 when 'a very influential and active minority' left because they were unhappy with St Andrew's decision not to join the newly united Presbyterian Church in Canada.¹⁰⁵ Change in the social composition of denominations also occurred as a result of upward mobility on the part of church members, and was often commented on in the case of Methodism. By the 1880s, some argued that new organizations such as the Salvation Army were justified in both Britain and Canada because of the extent to which the Wesleyan Methodist body had risen socially over the course of the century through its emphasis on hard work and temperate living, making the denomination less capable of fulfilling its original role of reaching the 'irreclaimed masses'.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, Sir Robert Perks, a British Methodist who visited Canada in the early twentieth century, observed differences between Methodists at home and in Canada and suggested that British Methodism contained a much larger percentage of the 'industrial classes' than was the case in Canada.¹⁰⁷ This may have reflected the upward mobility of Methodists in the Canadian context, but may also have resulted from transfers of individuals from one denomination to another. While this frequently occurred as a result of intermarriage, it was also the result of individuals trying to find a 'match' between their social position in society and their denominational allegiance. Methodists, for example, complained in the 1890s of

¹⁰⁴ For a description of these divisions in Glasgow in the 1840s-1860s period, see Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class', 47-64.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, St Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal: W. Drysdale and Co. 1887), 509, 749-751.

¹⁰⁶ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(3) (March 1884), 71. Also see H. Keith Markell, *Canadian Protestantism Against the Background of Urbanization and Industrialization in the Period from 1885 to 1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago 1971), 192-194; Neil Semple, 'The Impact of Urbanization on the Methodist Church of Canada, 1854-1884', *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History*, 1976, 20-61.

¹⁰⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 31 May 1909.

having 'two great leakages' in their ship, 'the one high up in the social hold, the other lower down', as those with social ambitions left for 'the Cathedral', while poorer individuals began to feel less comfortable in a denomination that was becoming ever more 'respectable'.¹⁰⁸ The loss of members to the Anglican communion was also a source of concern to Presbyterians earlier on in the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁹ One of the arguments presented by the Rev. Robert Campbell in favour of the unification of the various Presbyterian bodies in Canada in the 1870s was the hope that it would dissuade wealthy Scotsmen from leaving the Presbyterian Church:

We fear it is the case that many of them become ashamed of belonging to a small fragmentary church when they reach a position of wealth and social influence, and in their well known ambition and desire to be on the winning side, are too prone to betake themselves to a larger and more influential communion. But a church of the dimensions and social and political power that a Union would create, would enlist the sympathies of all Scotsmen, and the children of Scotsmen, as well as Scottish Irishmen. And thus all those whom we are at present in danger of losing, would be retained - we should then be as a church for Scotsmen, what the English Church is for Englishmen, and the Roman Catholic Church for Frenchmen and the bulk of Irishmen.¹¹⁰

While the fear of losing members to other denominations may have been greater than its actual occurrence, the inter-denominational transfer of individuals nevertheless appears to have had some impact on denominational social composition.

The preceding discussion suggests that a complex assortment of factors, including ethnic origin, the original class composition of denominations in Britain, the differential immigration of denominational and class groupings to Canada, social mobility, and the 'leakage' of church members from one denomination to another, accounted for the variations that were observed in the distributions of assessed rents for each Protestant group. As anticipated, socio-economic differences amongst the various denominations

¹⁰⁸ From a sermon by Dr James Henderson, quoted in Markell, *Canadian Protestantism*, 167. James Henderson was minister of the St James Street Methodist Church between 1888 and 1891.

¹⁰⁹ At an Anglican Synod meeting in Montreal in 1869, Harriet Beecher Stowe – who was then visiting Montreal – noted 'the unmistakable Scotch faces of the laity' and came to the conclusion that 'there is no doubt about it that Scotchmen are but indifferently adapted to the Episcopal Church' (*Evening Telegraph and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 1 June 1869). She came to this conclusion because the Synod, which was supposed to be choosing a new bishop, had reached a deadlock due to differences of opinion between the clerical and lay delegates.

¹¹⁰ Robert Campbell, *On the Union of Presbyterians in Canada* (Montreal: F.E. Grafton 1871), 39. Campbell also comments on the number of Scottish families embraced by Anglicanism in Montreal in *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, 202.

expressed themselves geographically when 'superimposed' on the class-divided social topography of Montreal in 1881, helping to clarify why some denominations were better represented in the uptown district than others. The fact that the rent distributions corresponded well with available qualitative information concerning denominational social composition supports the reliability of the methods that will be used to examine individual congregations. By providing an overview of the social composition and geographical distribution of each denomination, they also give an idea of the population from which a church belonging to any given denomination might have hoped to draw its membership.

Bearing this information in mind, more detailed socio-economic and ethnic profiles of the case-study congregations can now be examined in context. Nineteenth-century membership lists are not available for either the Coté/Crescent Street congregation or for St George's Anglican Church. Good series of membership records do, however, exist for three out of the six case-study congregations, and records are also available for the St James Street Methodist Church for the 1880s. The following analysis will therefore rely on these records. Household heads in each membership list were linked to the appropriate rental tax roll, as described above, and – in cases where addresses were not provided – they were obtained from Lovell's City Directory.¹¹¹ This made it possible to chart changes in the distribution of assessed rents of church members over time, as well as to illustrate the changing residential distributions of church members.¹¹²

¹¹¹ If an individual could not be found in the directory corresponding with the exact year in which the membership list was compiled, the directories for years on either side were consulted and an address was obtained from there if possible. Not everyone could be found in the city directories, and it is known that working-class individuals were less likely to appear in city directories than those who were better off.

¹¹² Addresses accompanied the 1886 membership list for St Paul's Church and the 1888 membership list for the St James Street Methodist Church. I therefore decided to map all congregation members for these churches for these years. For churches without address lists, it was only possible to map the residences of household heads. Unless otherwise indicated, church members were mapped using a very efficient system of 'street segments' (twinned block faces) created by Sherry Olson. The dots that appear on each map represent the centre point of each street segment in which church members lived. To test the efficacy of this system, church members belonging to Emmanuel Church in 1878 were mapped using both the street segment system and also by precise location of residence. No major discrepancies were observed in terms of the patterns that emerged on these two maps. The one shortcoming of the street segment system for mapping uptown Protestants was that, because many of the street segments in this district extend above and below Sherbrooke Street, the maps that emerged were unable to differentiate effectively between the elite families living on the hill leading up to Mount Royal and those who lived in the flatter and somewhat less prestigious district below. The street segment system was also used to create Figure 3.8.

The memberships lists of the late 1870s and 1880s were also linked to the 1881 manuscript census, in order to gauge the ethnic composition of each congregation. The results of this latter analysis did not provide any particularly striking insights (see Figure 3.16), but it did verify that the American Presbyterian Church contained a significant percentage of individuals of American origin (17 percent)¹¹³ and that the Scottish component of St Paul's Presbyterian Church was very high (81 percent). At St Paul's, Zion, Emmanuel, and St James Methodist churches the Scots were overrepresented compared with the overall populations of their respective denominations. The 31 percent of members at St James Methodist Church who claimed Irish Protestant origin confirmed, however, that in this respect the membership of St James reflected the ethnic makeup of the Methodist population as a whole. Given St James' position as the leading Methodist Church in the city, it is not therefore surprising that a number of prominent members of Montreal's Irish Protestant community were church members, including Hugh Mathewson, George Armstrong, Richard Holland, and William Clendenning, all of whom had participated in the creation of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society in 1856.¹¹⁴

Figure 3.16 Ethnic Origins of Members of Case Study Congregations, Based on 1881 Census Data

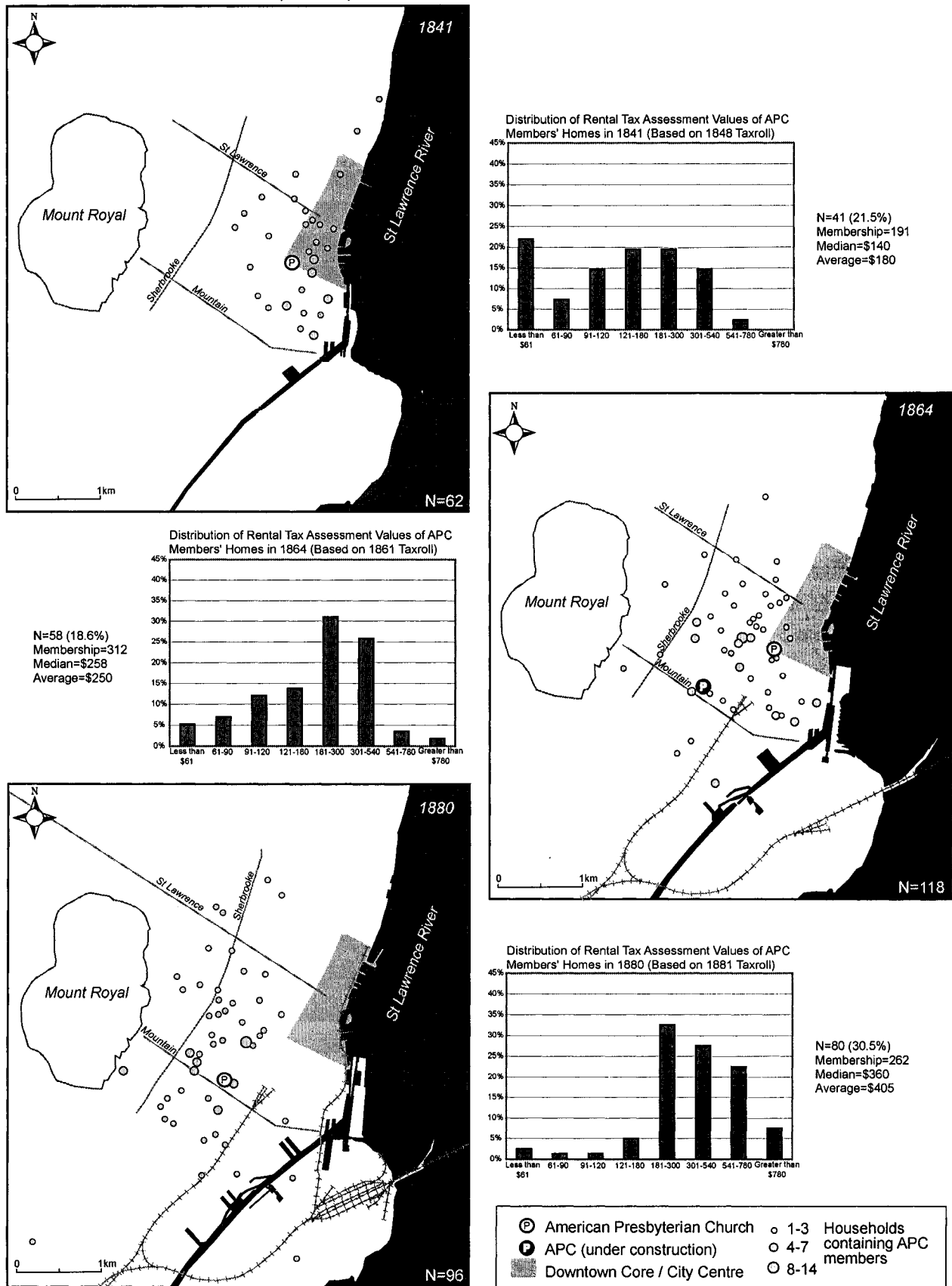
ORIGIN	APC (1880)	St Paul's (1886)	Zion (1876)	Emmanuel (1878)	St James (1888)
English	26%	12%	44%	41%	40%
Scottish	34%	81%	43%	42%	23%
Irish	16%	5%	7%	12%	31%
American/U.S.	17%	-	1%	3%	1%
French/F.C.	1%	1%	3%	-	1%
Other/Unknown	6%	2%	2%	2%	3%
No. of records matched	150	198	136	98	233
Membership	262	454	300	186	611
% Matched	57%	44%	45%	53%	38%

Sources: 1881 Manuscript Census of Canada in Digital Format; Congregational Membership Lists for Dates Indicated (For precise archival references, see Figures 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.21, and 3.23).

¹¹³ The percentage of Americans is likely to have been higher, given that many would have claimed English, Irish, or Scottish origin. This is confirmed by the fact that 28 percent of the congregation was listed in the census as actually having been born in the United States, and many more would have been born in Canada to American parents.

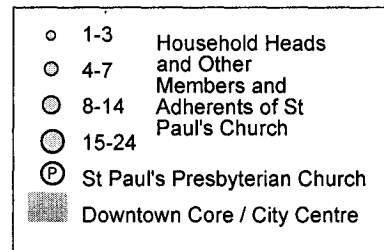
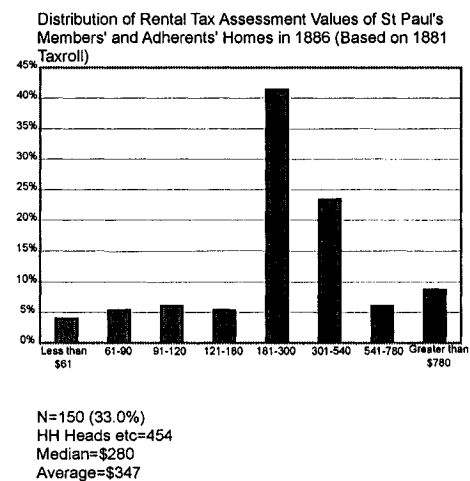
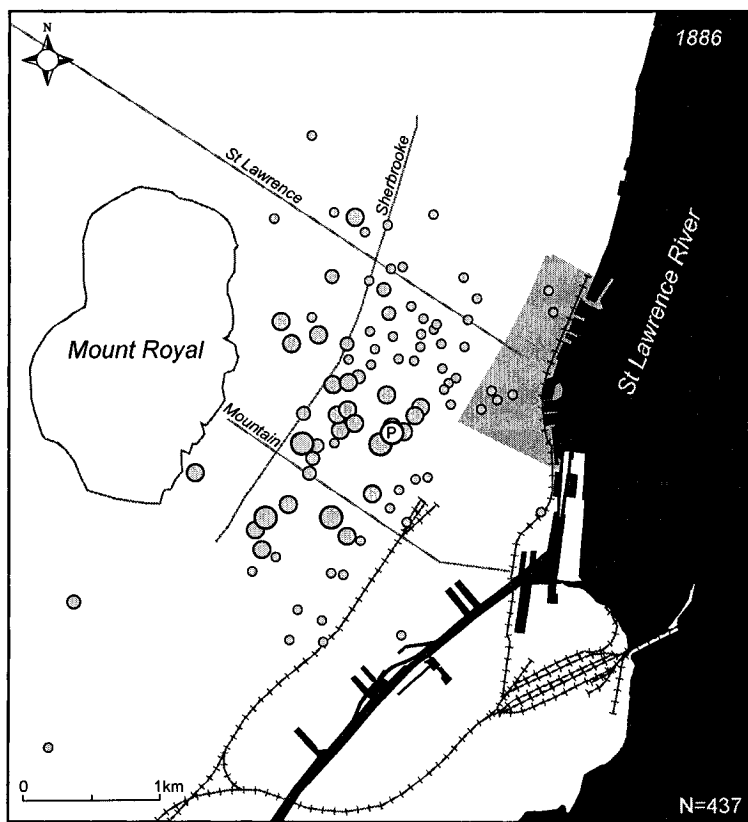
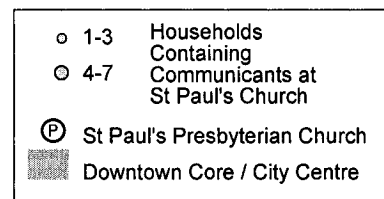
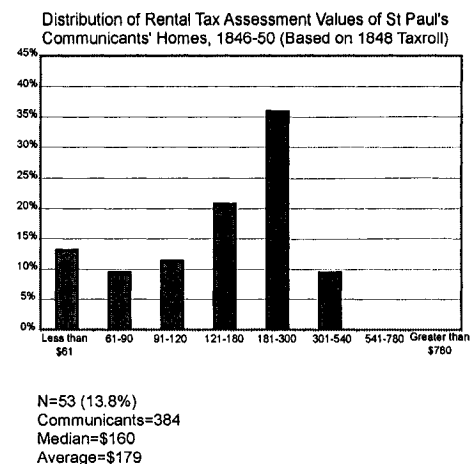
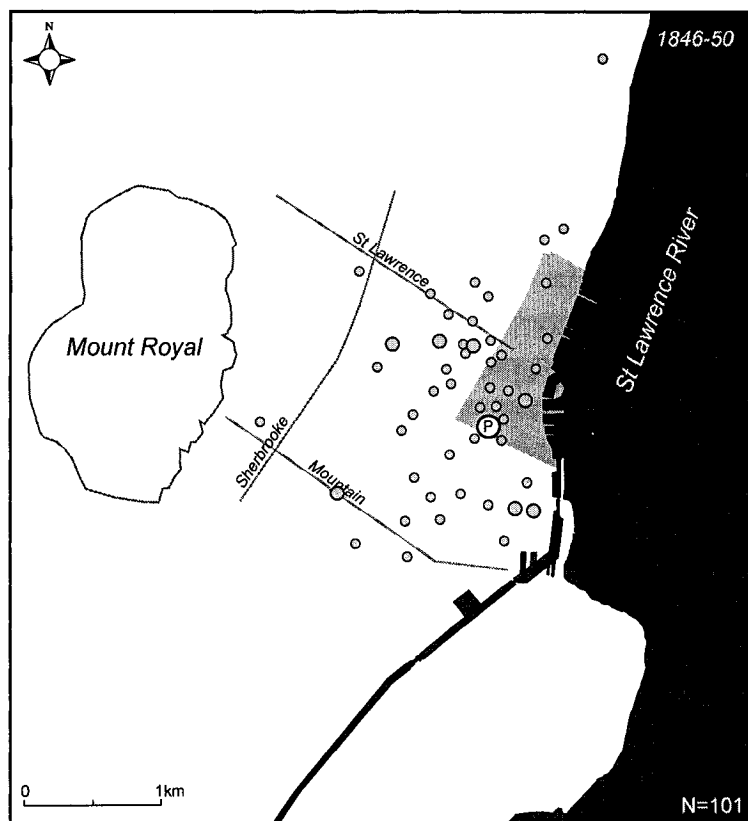
¹¹⁴ William Henry Atherton, *Montreal 1535-1914: Under British Rule 1760-1914*, Volume II (Montreal: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co. 1914), 386. These individuals all appear on the 1887-88 membership list of the St James Street Methodist Church.

Figure 3.17 Distributions of American Presbyterian Church Members' Homes and Assessed Rents for 1841, 1864, and 1880.



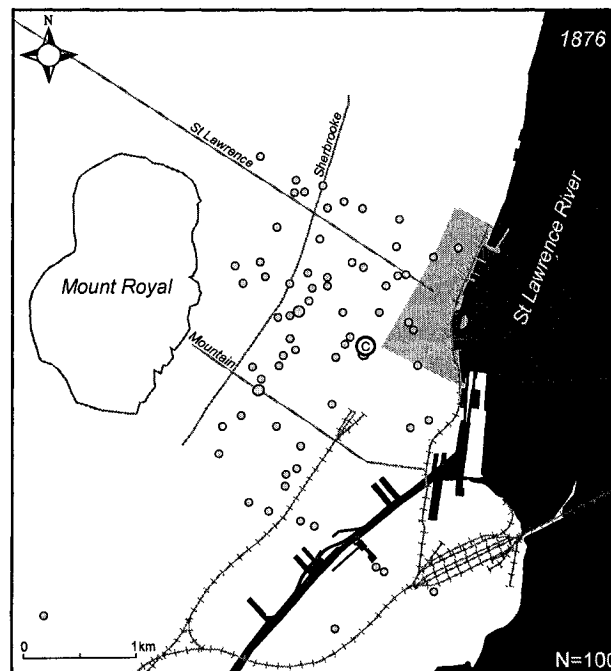
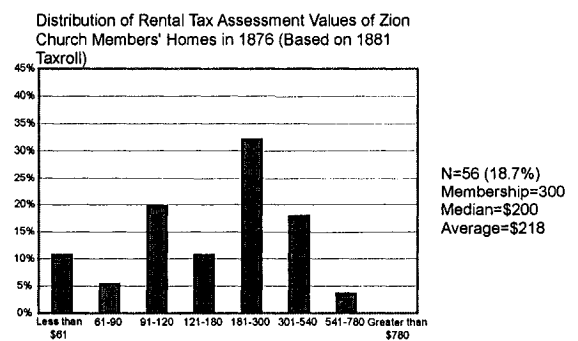
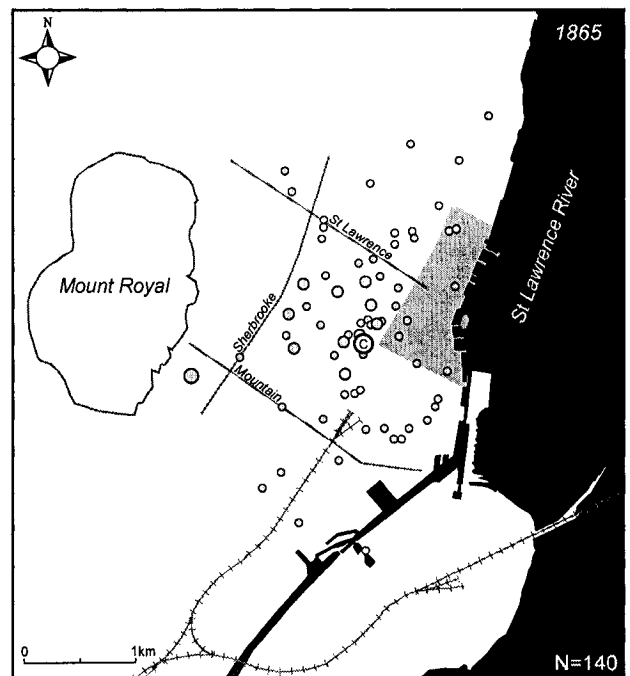
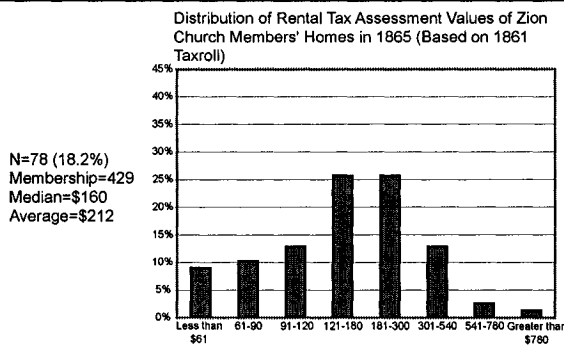
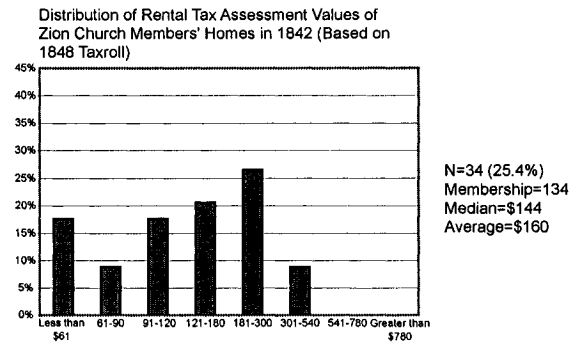
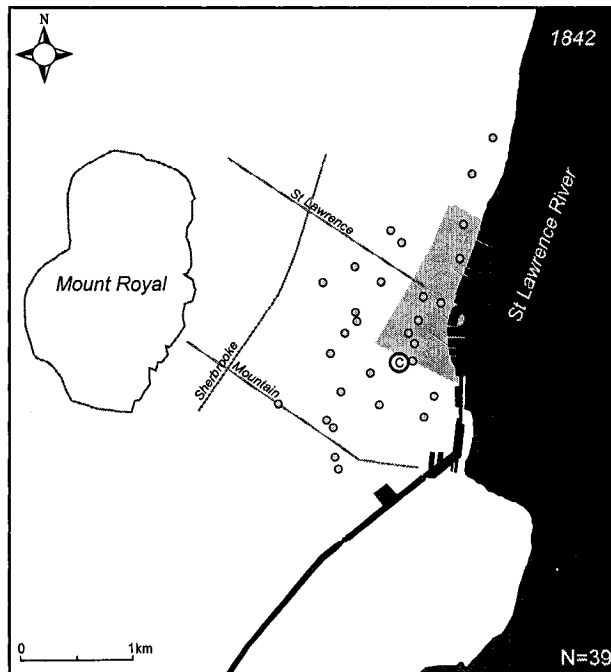
Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1848, 1861, 1881; ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A392 *Confession of Faith and Covenant of the Members of the American Presbyterian Church, in the City of Montreal* (Montreal: Campbell and Becket, 1841); A394/3 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church in the City of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell, Printer, 1864); A395/3 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church in the City of Montreal* (Montreal: Becket Bros., 1880).

Figure 3.18 Distributions of St Paul's Presbyterian Church Members' Homes and Assessed Rents for 1846-50 and 1886.



Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1848, 1881; SAP, Microfilm Reel 229, Book Containing Communicant Lists for St Paul's Church for the 1840s and 1850s, List of Communicants 1846-1850; *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1886* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1887), List of Heads of Families and Other Members and Adherents of St Paul's Congregation.

Figure 3.19 Distributions of Zion Congregational Church Members' Homes and Assessed Rents for 1842, 1865, and 1876.



- ⊙ Zion Congregational Church (originally St Maurice Street)
- ⊙ 1-3 Households
- ⊙ 4-7 Containing Zion
- ⊙ 8-14 Church Members
- Downtown Core / City Centre

Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1848, 1861, 1881; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/12/1 Church Register 1842-1903, List of Members as of 1 April 1842; New Roll of Members of Zion Church opened January 1865; Members as of last Sunday in October 1876.

For the 1840s, membership lists were available for the American Presbyterian Church, Zion Congregational Church, and St Paul's Presbyterian Church. Maps showing the distribution of members' residences for each of the three churches look very similar to one another, and in each case the church building was centrally located in relation to its members' houses (Figures 3.17, 3.18, 3.19). As was shown in Figure 3.8, during this period Montreal still retained the organization of a classic pre-industrial city, with the most affluent families residing in the centre, while poorer members of society lived on the outskirts.¹¹⁵ Members of all three churches lived in both central and peripheral locations, but were primarily concentrated in the western part of the city. Members of all three also had median assessed rents that were substantially higher than that of the city as a whole (see Figures 3.17, 3.18, and 3.19). The majority of household heads fell into the moderate or high-rent categories, but it was nevertheless the case that approximately one-fifth (in the case of St Paul's) to one-third (in the case of the American Presbyterian) were to be found in the two low-rent categories. Given the tendency of the tax roll to inflate rents during this period, we must also assume that a larger percentage of church members should, in fact, have fallen into these categories. Unfortunately, it was not possible to create charts showing the distribution of Protestants alone for the rental tax rolls of 1848 and 1861, making it difficult to determine exactly which groups were missing from these churches.¹¹⁶ Jane Greenlaw's occupational analysis of nonconformist congregations in Montreal between 1825 and 1842 demonstrates, however, that skilled workers formed the largest segment of individuals appearing in the parish registers of the churches that she studied, but also indicates that both the American Presbyterian and Zion Church contained a substantially higher percentage of merchants and professionals than most of the other nonconformist churches she examined, including the St James Street Methodist congregation.¹¹⁷ This makes it likely that the membership of Zion, St Paul's, and the

¹¹⁵ Lewis, 'Home Ownership Reassessed', 151.

¹¹⁶ Although hypothetically possible using the same methods as those used for 1880 in the context of the MAP Project, the creation of these charts is beyond the scope of this thesis.

¹¹⁷ Greenlaw, 'Choix pratiques et choix des pratiques', 99, Tableau 2. Although there is no reason to question Greenlaw's statistics for individual churches, there do appear to be problems with the data that she used to compare the denominational composition of the Protestant population of Montreal in the period between 1825 and 1842 on pages 94-95 of her article. While she states that she is comparing figures for the City of Montreal for these two years, she does in fact appear to be comparing figures for the Parish of

American Presbyterian Church already represented a wealthier segment of Protestant society, as one would expect in light of the earlier discussion of the relationship between denomination, ethnicity, and social class. At the same time, however, leaders in these churches still believed that efforts to persuade the poor to attend church should be accompanied by a willingness to make space for them in their own places of worship. A good example of this was the decision of the kirk session of St Paul's Church to add a gallery in 1841, the idea being to create pews 'having such a gradation of rent as would meet the circumstance of all classes of the poor'.¹¹⁸ By carrying out this project, which was to be accompanied by city mission work, the kirk session hoped to discharge 'a duty imposed on them by Him who said: "Go out into the hedges and highways and compel them to come in that my house may be filled"'.¹¹⁹

No church membership lists for the 1860s were found for St Paul's Church, but analyses of the membership lists of the American Presbyterian and Zion Church show increases in both membership numbers and also in the assessed rents of church members (see Figures 3.17 and 3.19). In the interim, Zion Church had made a short move from St Maurice Street to the bottom of Beaver Hall Hill, but was still located not far from the original American Presbyterian Church. The median rents of the two congregations, at \$144 and \$140, had been virtually identical in the 1840s, but by the 1860s a greater rift had emerged. While the median rent of Zion Church members showed modest improvement at \$160, that of the American Presbyterian membership was significantly higher at \$258. The percent of low-rent members at Zion Church, at 19 percent, was also somewhat higher than the 12 percent of American Presbyterians who fell into this category. Important differences also occurred higher up in the social spectrum. Compared with the American Presbyterian Church, Zion was not as well furnished with those with assessed rents in the very high \$301 to \$540 range, but instead had a much larger proportion of members with rents in the somewhat more modest \$121 to \$180 range. One explanation for the emergence of these differences might be that Zion

Montreal for 1825 with figures for the County of Montreal for 1842, both of which represent substantially larger districts than the City of Montreal on its own.

¹¹⁸ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1834-1862, 29 September 1841.

¹¹⁹ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1834-1862, 29 September 1841.

Church had chosen to abolish pew rents when it moved to its new church in 1845, making it more appealing to those with lower incomes and less desirable to those wishing to emphasize their wealth by acquiring an expensive pew. By this time, the members of the American Presbyterian Church had already started planning their uptown church building project, and clearly felt confident that their growing and increasingly wealthy congregation could afford to pay for the new church. A comparison of the geographical distribution of church members for these two churches for the 1860s shows that, while members' residences were somewhat more spread out than was the case in the 1840s, the patterns for the two congregations remained very similar to one another and both church buildings retained a more-or-less central location in relation to their members' houses. In contrast, as can be seen in Figure 3.17, the location of the new church being built by the American Presbyterian Church was located on the western fringe of members' residences and was clearly not as convenient a location for many of those who were currently attending the church. Aware of the direction in which the wealthier elements within the Protestant population were moving, the leadership of the American Presbyterian Church had clearly decided that their new church was going to be a leading element in the urban development of the uptown residential district.¹²⁰

In the 1860s, complaints were voiced in the *Montreal Witness* that no adequate accommodation was being provided in fine new churches for 'the poor working classes', and the observation was made that you could look out over some congregations without seeing any poor people.¹²¹ Others suggested that churches were needed in districts such as Mile End in the northern part of the city, arguing that there were 'a great number of the poorer class settled there, who have a delicacy in going to the fine and expensive churches that have been built through our city'.¹²² These comments suggest a disinclination on the part of poorer people to go out of their way to attend churches that were no longer located close to their homes, as well as an unwillingness on the part of wealthier Protestants to make space for the poor in their new churches. One member of

¹²⁰ David B. Hanna makes a similar point in *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), 132.

¹²¹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 June 1865.

¹²² *Montreal Witness*, 8 February 1869.

St Paul's Church, Mr. J.L. Morris, observed that St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church was crowded with poor men, while 'scarcely one was to be seen' in the Protestant churches, and wondered whether this occurred because Protestants failed to sympathize with the poor or because their pew rents were too high.¹²³ Figure 3.20 compares the values of pews in the original American Presbyterian Church with those in the new uptown place of worship. While poorer members would never have aspired to pew ownership, the cost of annual pew rental – very like the city's rental tax assessment on dwellings – was determined as a percentage of the value of each pew. The range of rents was therefore much greater in the new church than had been the case in the previous one, with a smaller number of pews available at the low end of the scale. Since pew rents stood at 12.5 percent of the pew value when the new church opened in 1866, some individuals were paying annual pew rents as high as \$93.75, a sum greater than the annual rent that most Montrealers paid for their homes.¹²⁴ Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the poor felt even less at home in these churches than they would have done prior to the uptown move.

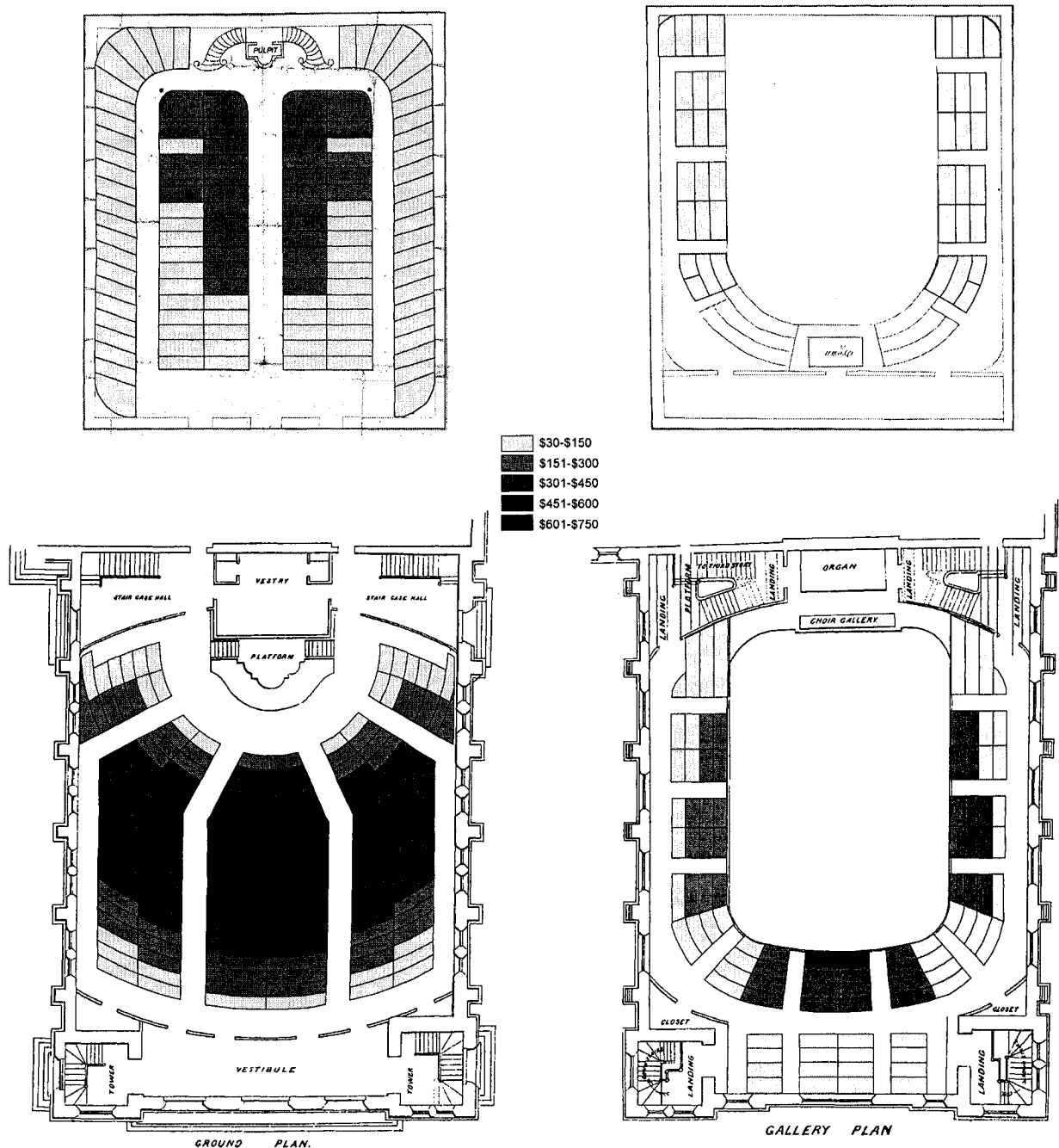
Distributions of the city's assessed rents of church members belonging to the case study congregations for the 1880s confirm that the uptown relocation of churches dramatically reduced the proportion of members in the four lowest rent categories, excluding not just the poor and working-classes, but also those who were relatively comfortably off. Those who were left represented Montreal's most prosperous Protestant citizenry. In St Paul's Church and the American Presbyterian Church, 80 and 90 percent of members respectively had assessed rents greater than \$181 (Figures 3.17 and 3.18). At Emmanuel Congregational Church, the uptown off-shoot of Zion Church, 84 percent of members likewise had assessed rents in this range (see Figure 3.23). The slightly higher presence of less wealthy members at St Paul's may have resulted from the availability of 56 free sittings.¹²⁵ Median rents had also increased dramatically, rising to \$280 at St

¹²³ *Montreal Witness*, 12 January 1876. John L. Morris may still have been a member of St Andrew's Church at this point, since he was among those who left St Andrew's Church to join St Paul's when St Andrew's Church opted not to join the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the mid-1870s.

¹²⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 31 May 1866; Contenant 173, A184 American Presbyterian Church Rental of Pews 1866-1880.

¹²⁵ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1883* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1884), 12.

Figure 3.20 Plans of the Sanctuaries of the Original Downtown and New Uptown American Presbyterian Churches, Showing Values of Pews

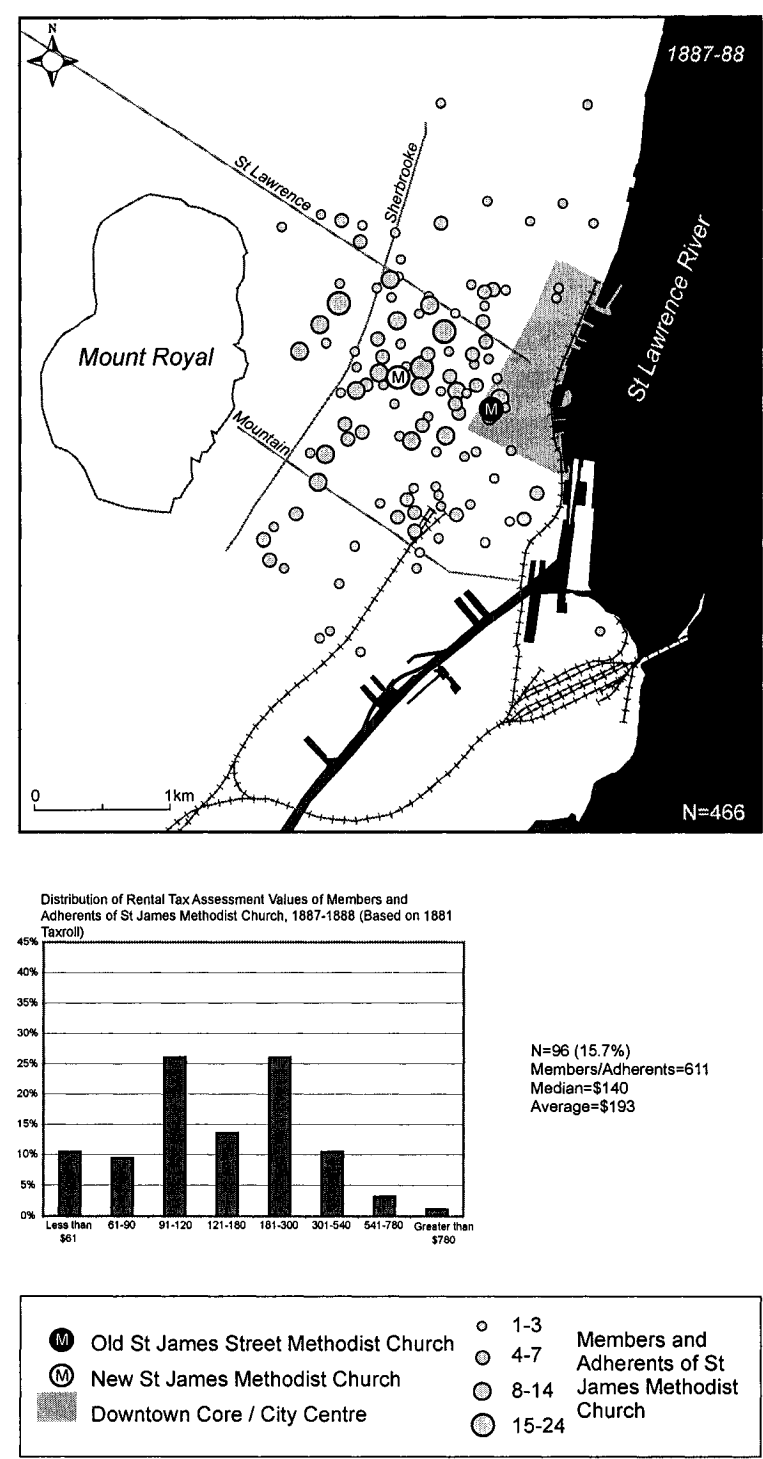


Sources: ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A182/1 Plan of the Gallery of the Original American Presbyterian Church, no date - but probably c.1852 since this was when the pews in the gallery were sold; A182/2 Plan of the Ground Floor of the Original American Presbyterian Church, dated 27 April 1827; Contenant 177, A201 Cash Book 1866-1902, Recapitulation: Value of Pews 1866; Contenant 183, A408 *Annual Report of Trustees of American Presbyterian Society of Montreal* (Montreal: John C. Becket 1866) - contains the pew plan for the APC on Dorchester Street.

Paul's, \$330 at Emmanuel, and \$360 at the American Presbyterian Church. The situation was very different for churches that remained behind. At Zion Church, where only a slight majority of members had rents above \$181, the median rent was lower at \$200 (Figure 3.19). Unlike any of the uptown congregations, the rent distribution for Zion Church members resembled that of Congregationalists in the city as a whole (see Figure 3.15). In the case of the St James Methodist Church, a list of members and adherents was available for 1887-88, just at the time when it was in the process of moving to its new uptown location on St Catherine Street. While the membership of Zion Church comprised a group of generally less wealthy Congregationalists who did not wish to abandon the old church and move further uptown, that of the St James Street Church represented a relatively wealthy group by Methodist standards, the leadership of which was anxious to make its mark on the uptown landscape (compare Figure 3.21 and Figure 3.15). Although the rent distributions for Zion and St James resembled one another more than they resembled those of the uptown congregations, the fact remained that St James was drawing on a much less wealthy group to begin with. As a result, at \$140, its membership had a substantially lower median rent than any of the other case-study congregations, and only 40 percent of members had assessed rents higher than \$181 (Figure 3.21). In spite of the healthy size of St James' membership, the scale and grandeur of the new church that the leaders of this congregation undertook to build on St Catherine Street seems astonishing in light of the resources of its members.

Differences in the socio-economic composition of congregations were also reflected to some extent in the geographical distribution of church members. In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, St Paul's, and Emmanuel, members' residences overlapped to a significant degree with the high-rent zone shown in Figure 3.8 (see Figures 3.17, 3.18, 3.23). Having accurately predicted the direction in which wealthier Protestants were moving, by 1880 the American Presbyterian Church no longer found itself located to the west of the residences of most of its members, and, like St Paul's and Emmanuel, was now more centrally located in relation to its congregation. As a result of the uptown concentration of Congregationalists generally, there was no striking difference between the pattern of residence of the members of Zion Church and that of the uptown congregations, but – as was the case more dramatically in the context of the St

Figure 3.21 Distribution of St James Street Methodist Church Members' and Adherents' Homes and Assessed Rents for 1887-88.



Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1881; G.E. Jaques, *Chronicles of the St James Street Methodist Church, Montreal* (Toronto: Wm Briggs, 1888), pp.101-113.

James Street Methodist Church – there was a relatively greater presence of church members in the more moderate-rent district that approached St Lawrence Boulevard from the west. Unlike the other churches, the St James Street Methodist Church continued to draw members from a diverse range of areas in the city, with quite a number of members living in Griffintown, to the south-west of the city centre, as well as a cluster of members residing in the vicinity of the Bonaventure Street Railway Station. This may have reflected the fact that the St James Street Methodist Church was only just in the process of relocating at this point, and had not yet ‘shed’ members living in these districts from its membership list, but it may also have been related to the high percentage of Irish Protestants who were members of St James, as well as to the general distribution of Methodists in the city.

Based on the facts presented above, it seems safe to conclude that the uptown relocation of churches had a significant impact on the social composition of church membership. Particularly striking was the extent to which the membership of churches that moved uptown came to be dominated by merchants, manufacturers, professionals, and those engaged in the finance and insurance industries.

When allowing quantitative evidence to speak for entire congregations, there is, however, a danger of losing sight of the individual, and of the complexity of the processes that actually took place in order to bring about the changes illustrated above. Given the increase in the median rent of American Presbyterian Church members between 1841 and 1864, how can one be sure, for example, that the even higher median rent of the post-relocation membership in 1880 did not just reflect upward mobility on the part of church members? Qualitative evidence, much of it drawn from contemporary newspapers, has been presented in this chapter and in Chapter 2, which supports the case that the loss of less wealthy members was also a factor. Lending a human face to this argument is the Rev. Robert Campbell’s account of Charles Esplin, a native of Lintrathen Parish, Angusshire, who lived on Duke Street in Griffintown and made packing cases. According to Campbell, Charles Esplin ‘was first connected with St Andrew’s Church; but, being a champion of the interests of the part of the city in which he lived, when that congregation moved uptown, he joined St Paul’s, - and when St Paul’s followed, in the

same fashion, he espoused the cause of St Gabriel's'.¹²⁶ Before doing so, however, he resisted the uptown removal of St Paul's, and was one of a minority of congregation members who voted against the sale of the old church.¹²⁷ Death appears to have spared him from witnessing the uptown departure of the St Gabriel Street Church.¹²⁸ In order, however, to provide a more definitive answer to the question of which factors contributed significantly to the changes in congregational social composition described above, two case studies will be presented which 'follow' individuals from one membership list to the next to determine who was or was not still present, and use these individuals' assessed rents to explore such questions as whether or not differences existed between the group that remained and the group that had left.

The first case study is based on the membership lists of the American Presbyterian Church. Out of a list of 41 church members for whom assessed rents were available for 1841, I identified 21 who were still members of the church just over twenty years later in 1864.¹²⁹ The median [1848] rent of those who remained was \$160, while the median [1848] rent of those whose names had disappeared was \$134. This process was repeated for the 1864 membership list. Out of a list of 58 individuals present in 1864, I identified 29 who were still present in 1880. The median [1861] rent of those still present was \$280, compared with a median [1861] rent of \$160 for those who had disappeared. While the difference between those who left and those who remained was not very large for the earlier period (\$26), a much greater disparity (\$120) existed between these two groups in the later period. In other words, those who were better off in 1861 were more likely to still belong to the church in 1880 than those who were less well-to-do. Given that this had not been a factor affecting the retention of church members in the earlier period, this seems to support the argument that the uptown move, which took place in 1866, alienated

¹²⁶ Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church*, 623.

¹²⁷ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 4 December 1865.

¹²⁸ Charles Esplin does not appear in the Manuscript Census of 1881. One George Esplin is listed as a 28 years old Scottish Presbyterian box manufacturer living in St Ann's Ward. He is also found in the 1881 tax roll, living on Duke Street, with an assessed rent of \$120. This is probably George Esplin's son, given the other similarities and the rarity of this surname.

¹²⁹ If a woman appeared on an earlier list as the wife of a 'household head', and then appeared alone as the household head on the second list, this counted as 'still being present', since it represented the continuity of a household.

less wealthy members. This conclusion was also supported by the fact that the total church membership in 1880 was actually lower than it had been in 1864. A much smaller difference between the *average* rents of the two groups for the later period raised questions, however (see Figure 3.22). The problem appeared to be that the category of those who had disappeared from the membership list by 1880 included not just those who had made an active decision to leave the church, or those who had left town, but also those who had passed away. A number of wealthy congregation members died in the period between 1864 and 1880, and it was the inclusion of these individuals that appeared to be raising the average rents in this category. To test this idea, I used the date at which each individual had joined the church to separate members who had joined the church prior to 1840 (and were therefore more likely to have died by 1880) from those who had joined from 1840 on (and were therefore more likely to still be alive in 1880).

Figure 3.22 Analysis of 1864 Membership of the American Presbyterian Church

		1864 Members no longer present in 1880	1864 Members still present in 1880
OVERALL	Median [1861] assessed rent Average [1861] assessed rent (N=58)	\$160 \$231 (29)	\$280 \$268 (29)
Members in 1864 who joined prior to 1840	Median [1861] assessed rent Average [1861] assessed rent (N=16)	\$330 \$303 (8)	\$300 \$333 (8)
Members in 1864 who joined from 1840 onwards	Median [1861] assessed rent Average [1861] assessed rent (N=42)	\$144 \$172 (21)	\$270 \$244 (21)

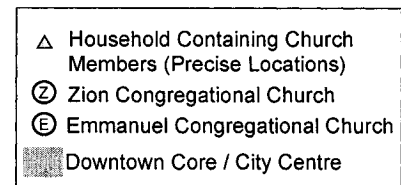
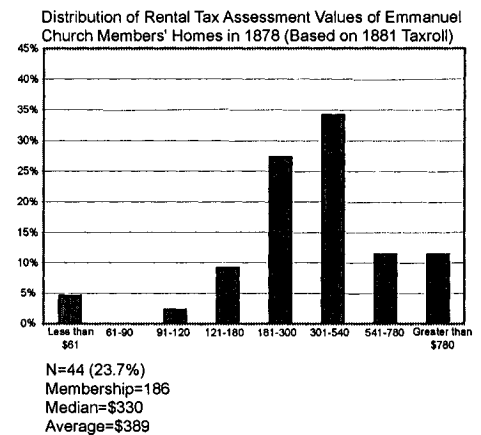
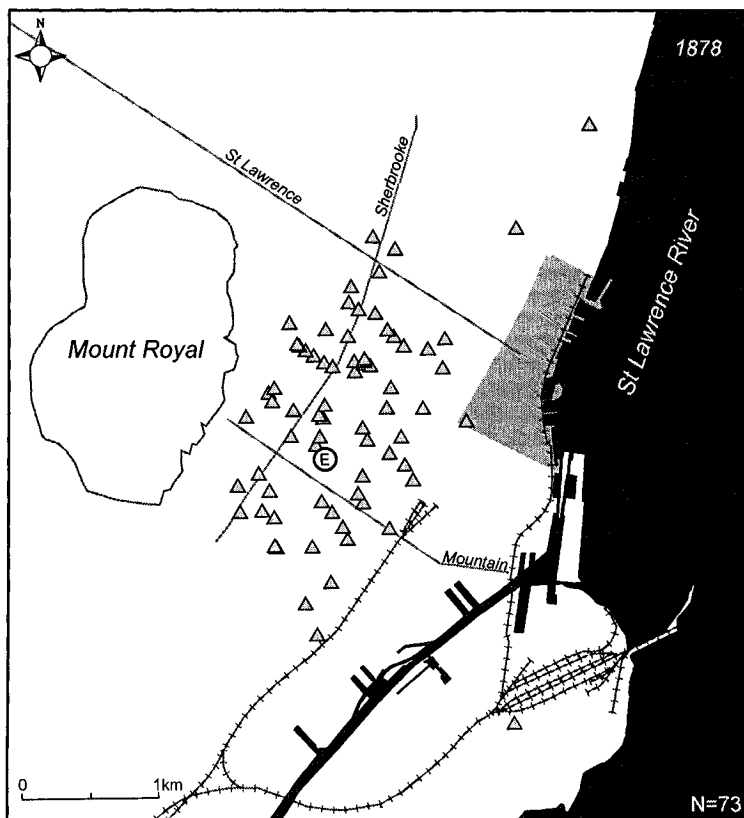
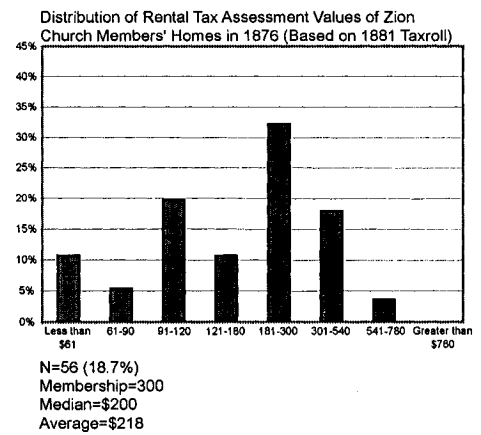
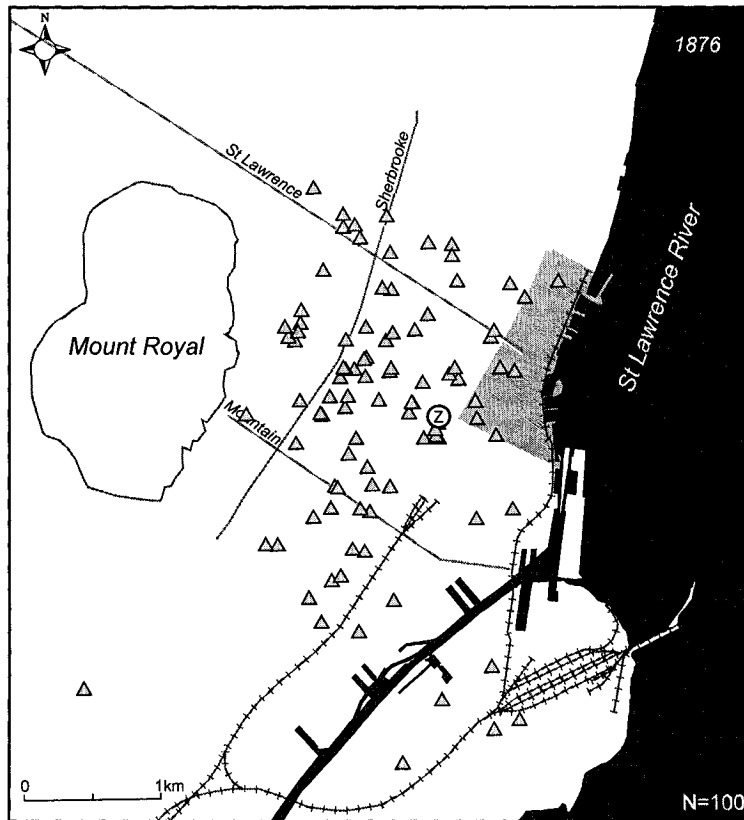
Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1861; American Presbyterian Church Membership Lists for 1864 and 1880 (For precise archival references, see Figure 3.17).

As shown in Figure 3.22, the median and average [1861] rents of those who had probably died by 1880 were very similar to those who had joined in the same period but were still active church members. In contrast, the median and average [1861] rents of those who were more likely to have decided to leave the church by 1880 were significantly lower than those of individuals who had joined in the same period but were still members in 1880. Although the number of individuals that I am dealing with here is admittedly small, these results nevertheless support the argument that less wealthy members were lost as a result of the uptown move.

This does not mean, however, that other processes were not also at work. The median [1881] assessed rent of those listed in the 1880 membership list who had joined the church between 1865 and 1880 was \$320, in contrast with a much lower median [1861] rent of \$220 for those who had been admitted to membership between 1842 and 1864. This implies not only that wealthier individuals in the 1864 membership list were more likely to move uptown with the church, but also that the new members who joined the church following the uptown move collectively represented a wealthier group than those who had joined in the past. The upward mobility of individuals may also have contributed to the changes taking place in the social composition of the congregation. The median rent of the 23 individuals for whom rental tax assessments were available for both 1861 and 1881 almost doubled during this period, rising from \$280 to \$500. Only two of these members (both women) lived in dwellings with lower assessed rents in 1881 than in 1861, while - with the exception of one individual whose rent remained unchanged - the rest lived in dwellings with substantially higher assessed rents. It should also be noted that the great majority of individuals whose rents increased already had assessed rents that were greater than \$181 in 1861, and their rent increases cannot therefore account for the substantial decline in the percentage of individuals falling into the four lowest rent categories by 1880, illustrated in Figure 3.17. Upward mobility on this scale within an individual's lifetime was not the norm for most Montrealers, and more often occurred from one generation to the next.¹³⁰ While the small number of individuals being discussed here makes it unwise to extrapolate too much from these data, it seems safe to conclude that this at least demonstrates the presence of an element within the congregation that was experiencing a marked and rapid rise in prosperity that allowed them to improve their already privileged living conditions.

¹³⁰ Sherry Olson, 'Mobility and the Social Network in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', unpublished paper presented at the *Colloque Barcelone-Montréal*, 5-7 May 1997, 6 and fn. 16. The Rev. Robert Campbell, for example, maintained that there was 'scarcely a single exception to the rule that members of the families of tradesmen and what are usually named the working classes have alone become distinguished citizens, and helped to make Montreal the great commercial centre it is today', and that it was the descendants of the shoemakers and carpenters and blacksmiths of sixty years ago who were now foremost among the citizens of Montreal (*Montreal Herald*, 20 September 1886). It is beyond the scope of this work to test these claims, but Gerald Tulchinsky argues that many of those occupying leading roles in Montreal's commercial life had not emerged from humble beginnings, but had instead succeeded because of their access to family business connections, capital, and education (*The River Barons*, 25).

Figure 3.23 Distributions of Zion Congregational and Emmanuel Congregational Church Members' Homes and Assessed Rents for 1876 and 1878 Respectively.



Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1881; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/12/1 Church Register 1842-1903, Members as of last Sunday in October 1876; P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/6 Annual Reports of the Church Board, *Yearbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, for 1878, with Reports for 1877* (Montreal: J. Starke & Co., 1878).

The second case study focuses on Zion and Emmanuel Churches. As discussed in Chapter 2, while the explanation given at the time for the creation of Emmanuel Church emphasized dissatisfaction over Zion Church's joint-pastorate, there had for many years been a group within the congregation that had been lobbying for an uptown move. It has already been demonstrated above that Emmanuel Church members had a higher median [1881] assessed rent than those who worshipped at Zion Church. Figure 3.23 also shows that, while there was considerable residential overlap between the two congregations, Emmanuel Church had a more exclusively 'uptown' constituency. Because the congregation of Zion Church split in two, with one group remaining downtown at the old church, and another building a new place of worship on St Catherine Street, it was possible to perform an analysis of the pre-division membership list of 1865 to determine whether differences in wealth existed between the group that would remain at Zion Church, the group that would move up to Emmanuel Church, and those who would no longer be attached to either congregation by the late 1870s. Despite the peculiarities of this example, its particular interest lies in the fact that this is the only case-study congregation in which we do not simply 'lose sight' of individuals who opted not to join an uptown church. Although the number of individuals being discussed is once again small, the results confirm that those who left to build Emmanuel Church on St Catherine Street represented a wealthier segment of the original congregation than those remaining behind at the old church (Figure 3.24). The contrast between the assessed rents of those who moved to the new uptown church and those who remained behind is also comparable with that observed at the American Presbyterian Church between those who moved uptown to the new church and those whose names had disappeared from the membership rolls by 1880 (see Figure 3.22). It must be emphasized, however, that in the case of Zion Church many members remained behind out of a sense of attachment to their old church home, and this included quite a number who were just as wealthy as those who had joined Emmanuel. What made the two congregations different was that Zion (until its troubles under the Rev. Bray) continued as a more heterogeneous downtown congregation, while Emmanuel emerged as a more exclusive congregation for the uptown elite.

Figure 3.24 Analysis of 1865 Membership of Zion Congregational Church

1865 Membership of Zion Church	Median [1861] Rent	Average [1861] Rent	N
Those who were still members of Zion Church in 1876 ¹³¹	\$160	\$169	27
Those who were members of Emmanuel Church in 1878	\$260	\$271	17
Those who no longer belonged to either congregation by late 1870s	\$160	\$217	34
Overall	\$160	\$212	78

Sources: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1861; Zion Congregational Church Membership Lists for 1865 and 1876; Emmanuel Congregational Church Membership List for 1878 (For precise archival references, see Figures 3.19 and 3.23).

These two case studies demonstrate that a variety of factors worked together to bring about changes in the social composition of congregations following the uptown relocation of their church buildings. As expected, less wealthy church members were more likely to find themselves left behind by the uptown moves, resulting in an upward trend in the social composition of congregations. This trend was reinforced, however, by the greater wealth of incoming church members and the presence of at least an element within the congregations that was experiencing a marked increase in their standard of living. Together, these factors created a strong association between the uptown churches and the most economically successful elements within the Protestant population, which would have been reinforced by the business and family connections that emerged within these congregations over time. It therefore seems likely that the concept of upward mobility played an important role in the congregational ‘psyche’ of most uptown congregations, helping to explain and justify the growing wealth of individuals and families as well as the ‘upward mobility’ of the congregations to which they belonged.

Church Relocation and the Role of Women Within the Churches

While the most obvious social repercussion of church relocation was the changing class composition of congregations, it has also been suggested that church relocation to middle-class residential neighbourhoods reinforced the association of religion with the

¹³¹ The 1876 membership list for Zion Church was compiled just before the Rev. Bray took over. It included members of Zion Church who were then involved in building up the Shaftsbury Hall congregation, and would later transfer their membership to Calvary Church, but did not include the names of any of the Shaftsbury Hall members who had never attended Zion Church (ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/12/1 Church Register 1842-1903, Note accompanying list of members as of last Sunday in October 1876, signed by Henry Wilkes).

domestic realm of women and the home.¹³² Protestant women in Montreal were certainly exposed to the then current 'separate spheres' ideology, which ordained that, as one local minister put it, 'man and woman had alike their proper sphere', which for women meant that their role was to 'mould the character of their offspring, and plant in their souls the seeds that would vegetate, and bear the fruits of philanthropy, morality and religion'.¹³³ While the role assigned to women was considered to be profoundly important, not all middle-class women were satisfied with this highly circumscribed definition of their purpose in life, including 'Iris', who wrote to the *Witness* following the publication of the above lecture asking what women who failed to get married and have children were supposed to do.¹³⁴ The fact remained that, while the female sphere could be defined very narrowly in relation to the home, those who advocated or supported greater female participation in church life generally opted simply to interpret women's work in the church as an extension of the domestic duties that they fulfilled in the home. Thus, another way of looking at the situation might be to suggest that Protestant women took advantage of the porous boundaries that existed in the churches between domestic and public spheres in order to extend their participation in activities that took them outside their homes and allowed them to work and socialize with other women of similar social status in respectable surroundings. Maintaining proximity between their homes and churches was important because it allowed them to do this with greater ease.

¹³² Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991), 79. A growing body of literature exists which explores the role of gender relations in Protestant congregational life. Particularly helpful in the Canadian context is Chapter 3 of Lynne Marks' *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. Also relevant is Ruth Compton Brouwer's survey of research related to the historical study of women and religion in Canada ('Transcending the "unacknowledged quarantine": Putting Religion into English-Canadian Women's History', *Journal of Canadian Studies / Revue d'études canadiennes*, 27(3) (1992), 47-61).

¹³³ *Montreal Witness*, 6 March 1869. These views were presented at a lecture on 'women's rights' given by the Rev. Irvine of Knox Church in aid of the Library Fund of the Mechanics' Hall. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue that while the precise doctrines of manliness, femininity, and the family varied from denomination to denomination in England, 'there was enough common ground to allow for the emergence of a series of beliefs and practices as to the distinct and separate spheres of male and female which provided the basis for a shared culture among the middle class by mid-century' (*Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Hutchison 1987), 74). They also argue that evangelical religion made a significant ideological contribution to the construction of the notion that men and women were suited to operating in distinct and separate spheres (115).

¹³⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 12 March 1869.

Figure 3.25 Analysis of Gender Composition of Church Membership for Case Study Churches

Church	Year	Total Members	Female	Male	Unknown
American Presbyterian Church	1841	191	65%	34%	1%
Zion	1842	134	58%	42%	0%
St Paul	1846-50	384	60%	38%	2%
American Presbyterian Church	1864	312	64%	36%	1%
Zion	1865	429	61%	39%	0%
American Presbyterian Church	1880	262	65%	34%	1%
Zion	1876	300	59%	40%	0%
Emmanuel	1878	186	58%	43%	0%

Sources: Membership Lists for the American Presbyterian Church for 1841, 1864, and 1880; Membership Lists for Zion Congregational Church for 1842, 1865, and 1876; Membership Lists for Emmanuel Congregational Church for 1878; Communicant List for St Paul's Presbyterian Church for 1846-50 (For precise archival references, see Figures 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, and 3.23).

The process of uptown church building also had an impact on the prominence of certain roles that were performed by female congregation members. As discussed in Chapter 2, in most congregations women did not participate directly in decision-making concerning church relocation. One assumes, however, that the male leadership of the churches considered the convenience of female congregation members, especially that of their own wives and daughters, when making these decisions, since women not only comprised the larger segment of church membership (see Figure 3.25), but also made important contributions to the new churches in terms of raising funds and helping to furnish the new buildings. In the late 1870s, the well-known American Congregational pastor Washington Gladden observed that few churches were built or had paid their debts without the active help of women whose industry and skill helped to furnish the necessary funds. He also noted that the work of beautifying church sanctuaries was largely committed to women, whose efforts helped to make the sanctuary a more homelike and attractive place.¹³⁵ Women performed similar roles in the case-study congregations in Montreal before as well as after the uptown moves. It is difficult to establish the origins of this type of women's work, since in many cases it is referred to only very briefly in the minute books kept by male church leaders. At St Paul's Presbyterian Church, for example, we find the ladies of the Dorcas Society and the Young Ladies Association being thanked by the trustees during the 1850s for their help liquidating the debt on the

¹³⁵ *Canadian Independent*, 22(7) (January 1876), 202.

old church.¹³⁶ During the same period, the ladies at Zion Church were thanked for their substantial £500 contribution towards reducing the church debt, while the following year the pastor expressed concern that the ladies' effort appeared to be failing, and asked the deacons to find some way to encourage them, as their labours were too important to be lost.¹³⁷ In the case of the St James Street Methodist Church's Ladies' Aid Society, however, their original minute book included the following account of the origins of their society:

In the summer of 1856, many of the Ladies of our church appreciating the increasing exertions of the trustees and sympathizing with them in the financial difficulties with which they had to contend became anxious to render them assistance. Encouraged by the example and success of their sisters in the Quebec, Toronto, Hamilton and other churches, they resolved to form the organization of a "Ladies' Aid Society" as the most feasible means for carrying out their desires. Correspondence having been entered into and some valuable information gleaned from the experience of others certain regulations were proposed as the basis of operations and on the 31st of January 1857, at a meeting of the ladies in the Lecture Room presided over by Rev. W. Jeffers the society was organized.¹³⁸

This account suggests that the women were not just responding to an immediate local need, but were also encouraged by the fact that women elsewhere were mobilizing to undertake similar work.

The more costly and elaborate uptown churches offered an enlarged scope for women's activity, given a growing willingness on the part of congregation members to depart from the austerity of the past and the greater variety of rooms requiring decoration and furnishing in the new churches. As a result, there is evidence in many of the case-study congregations of female involvement in furnishing and carpeting the new

¹³⁶ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1834-1868, 26 February 1852; 22 June 1852; 10 September 1857.

¹³⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/1/1 Minutes Congregational Meetings 1832-1857, 22 December 1852; ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, 17 October 1853.

¹³⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/13/1 Minutes Montreal Wesleyan Ladies Aid Society Secretary's Book 1857-1860, 3 February 1858. For further discussion of Methodist Ladies Aid Societies, see Marilyn Färdig Whiteley, "Doing Just About What They Please": Ladies' Aids in Ontario Methodism', *Ontario History*, 82(4) (1990), 289-304.

churches.¹³⁹ The increased scale of church debt also meant that the funds required by the churches were greater than ever before. Examples can be found of women raising impressive sums of money, as was the case at St George's Anglican Church, where they collected \$6,092 as their contribution to the Building Debt Fund in 1884.¹⁴⁰ The women nevertheless continued to operate under the close supervision of the trustees and their suggestions for improvement were not always heeded. In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, for example, a request by the ladies to have a portion of the church's lecture hall divided off for their use as a church parlour was repeatedly set aside by the trustees.¹⁴¹ Both male and female church members appear to have shared definite ideas about which activities it was most suitable for women to perform, but there was also a willingness on both sides to be flexible in cases where doing so would benefit the church community. The ladies of the St James Street Church's Ladies' Aid Society, for example, were pleased to discover that the trustees had managed to raise sufficient funds on their own to pay for the cleaning of the church, as this allowed the women to use their own monies to undertake what they considered to be the 'more appropriate duty of fitting up the parsonage'.¹⁴² In another case, the Church Board of Emmanuel Congregational Church praised the Ladies' Aid Society for the vast amount of time and effort that they had put into organizing a bazaar in order to help pay the church debt, but at the same time expressed a wish to remove this debt entirely so that the ladies' 'willingness to work and do good may be free to exercise itself in more fitting ways than this'.¹⁴³ While the new churches offered promising opportunities for female intervention, it was only through a slow process of negotiation with male trustees that women were able to exert their influence on the church interior.

¹³⁹ See, for example, STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 17 September 1874; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/6 *Yearbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, for 1878, with Reports for 1877* (Montreal: J. Starke & Co., 1878).

¹⁴⁰ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 14 April 1884

¹⁴¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 26 December 1874; 15 February 1875; 3 January 1877.

¹⁴² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/13/1 Minutes Montreal Wesleyan Ladies Aid Society Secretary's Book 1857-1860, 3 February 1858.

¹⁴³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/6 *Yearbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, for 1883, with Reports of Church Board, Etc., for 1882* (Montreal, J.Theo. Robinson 1883), 12.

Even then, activities that implicated women in raising money for the church remained controversial. Some men maintained that the employment of women in money-raising endeavours provided yet another argument against the church debts that were so often the result of church building projects. One letter-writer to the *Witness* who shared this view suggested that bazaars turned a church into:

a den of thieves...where men are taken in and done for by seductive but none too scrupulous saleswomen, who think anything is right for a church, and urge a person to buy at an extravagant price that which they have not the money to pay for without cheating their creditors. A lottery presided over by a pretty young lady in a church lecture-room is no less a lottery than one controlled by a forbidding-looking foot-pad, who takes turns with his partner in fleecing victims gathered from the public street.¹⁴⁴

Others complained that attractive young ladies were appointed to raise funds because 'of course, no gentleman can say no to a lady'.¹⁴⁵ Ministers were usually quick to come to the defence of their female congregation members, arguing that their sales were honest and that there was nothing wrong with women labouring together for the glory of God.¹⁴⁶ Some ministers nevertheless felt that female congregation members ought to be involved in more meaningful Christian work. Always outspoken, the Rev. Bray of Zion Church gave a sermon in which he criticized those who 'think, or seem to think, that they have done all that is...required of them if they have attended a service or two on the Sabbath' and suggested that the modern lady was particularly prone to this failing:

I am sorry for her: her powers are running to waste. She attends some fashionable church, listens to some pretty preacher, sheds a few sentimental tears over the sufferings of the poor, talks a little sentiment about it in the week, and that is all.... Women might carry cleanliness and light into those homes which are so full of crime and misery. Let them feel the shine of your love upon their hearts; let them hear your tender, cheering words; let them know that as servants of Christ you care for them, and they will not remain in hardness and indifference long.¹⁴⁷

Fashionable women also found their choice of church-going attire being blamed in the *Witness* for 'the separation of society into classes in matters of religion as elsewhere,

¹⁴⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 24 November 1879.

¹⁴⁵ *Canadian Independent*, New Series 25(10), 13 March 1879, 6.

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 24 February 1879, 'Bazaars as a Means of Raising Money for Church Purposes'; *Canadian Independent*, New Series 25(13), 3 April 1879, 1.

¹⁴⁷ *Canadian Independent*, 23(11) (May 1877), 335.

particularly in our cities'. Although willing to admit that this was not the sole cause of the alienation of the poor from the churches, the author of the article wondered whether 'our good Christian women realize the harm they are doing when on a Sabbath morning they sail up the aisle of the church, in rich silks and luxurious velvets and with diamonds flashing in brooch or ear-ring'.¹⁴⁸ From a feminist perspective, these criticisms could be interpreted as attempts by men to use religion to define appropriate female dress and behaviour. At the same time, the fact that these views were generally expressed by those who disapproved of the way in which commercial life and class differences were infusing themselves into congregational life suggests that middle and upper class women – despite their lack of official power – were nevertheless perceived to be active agents of transformation within the churches.

Conclusions

Between 1850 and 1889, the locales in which most of the case-study congregations worshipped were transformed both aesthetically and socially in the wake of the decision being taken to leave their original churches in the city centre and rebuild uptown. An uptown location made sense in terms of the ability of individual churches to fulfil their 'domestic' ministries, since it was important to retain proximity to members' residences. As the maps shown above indicate, by the 1880s the uptown church buildings were centrally located in relation to their membership, making it easier for congregation members, and in particular for women and children, to come together and participate in worship and other church-related activities.

Although it was also possible to make changes to older church buildings, uptown moves provided an ideal opportunity to create church interiors that responded to the growing desire for more aesthetic and emotive places of worship. While Protestant worship had traditionally been conducted in relatively unadorned and simple surroundings, there was little to inhibit congregations from embellishing their worship services and the sanctuaries in which they were conducted as long as the basic elements of Protestant worship were retained. The choices that were made reflected

¹⁴⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 8 February 1879. Reprint from the *Illustrated Christian Weekly*. Similar views were expressed in a local letter to the editor of the *Montreal Witness*, 22 March 1869, 'Ladies' Skirts'.

denominational and theological differences, with auditorium-style sanctuaries being favoured by non-conformist evangelicals, while others chose to return to (or retain) more traditional ecclesiastical plans. The appeal of the auditorium-style design lay in the fact that it was not associated with the performance of ritual, thus allowing for the preservation of a greater sense of difference between Protestant and Catholic worship. At the same time, the prominent organs and choir lofts in these churches emphasized the growing importance of music in worship services, while circular seating patterns and lower pulpits created a sense of proximity between preacher and congregation that was suitable for the type of personal preaching that was practised in evangelical churches. In the case of congregations like St George's, that opted for more traditional ecclesiastical interior layouts, the architecture itself and the decorative schemes that were chosen helped to create a more self-consciously 'religious' atmosphere. While the case-study congregations presumably designed their new sanctuaries with a view to creating spaces that would correspond better with contemporary ideas concerning appropriate worship, as well as fulfil increasingly demanding notions of middle-class comfort and beauty, some felt that these changes were leading to a growing 'formalism' in worship that inhibited true religious experience.

By distancing the buildings in which church members worshipped from those districts in which they carried out most of their missionary and charitable efforts, the uptown church relocations also added a new territorial dimension to decisions about how to distribute the churches' energies and funds between their 'domestic' and 'public' ministries, which will be explored further in the following chapter. With their grander and more elegant places of worship, uptown congregations not only had large debts and interest to repay, but were also tempted to devote ever-increasing sums of money to improving church interiors and facilities in order to keep up with neighbouring churches. As voluntary institutions, dependent on the donations of congregation members to survive, churches could not afford to ignore what theologian Gregory Baum calls 'the logic of maintenance', referring to those things that institutions require to be successful, such as good facilities and sound finances.¹⁴⁹ Too much emphasis on maintenance,

¹⁴⁹ Gregory Baum, *Compassion and Solidarity: The Church For Others* (Montréal: CBC Enterprises 1987), 42.

however, left uptown churches open to the criticism that they were evolving into exclusive religio-social clubs and were losing their force as evangelical and missionary organizations. The design of the uptown church interiors nevertheless reflected a growing need for spaces in which congregation members could meet to organize missionary and charitable work, strengthen the social ties upon which such collective endeavours depended, and inculcate the youth of the congregation in the beliefs and values that underpinned such efforts. While fellowship was always an important element of Christian community, Charles Cashdollar's description of this period as one in which a gradual shift in emphasis was taking place in congregational life from piety to fellowship rings true in the context of the case-study churches.¹⁵⁰

Thus, the design of the new uptown churches reflected the efforts that were being made to provide a more aesthetic and elegant worship experience and also to enable congregations to pursue their evolving 'public' ministries. These changes cannot, however, be divorced from the broader social and economic context of the times. The abandonment of simple and unadorned church interiors in favour of more elaborate sanctuaries with a greater assortment of well-furnished congregational rooms was made possible largely as a result of profits coming directly from the business enterprises of wealthy congregation members. While the Roman Catholic Church was also building costly churches with ornately decorated interiors during this period, the funds that enabled it to do so were derived from church taxes on properties owned by Roman Catholics within each parish, as well as revenues from church-owned lands.¹⁵¹ This system meant that Catholic churches were not seen as belonging to exclusive groups of individuals, as was often the case with the Protestant churches, nor were they as obviously a product of capitalist enterprise.

The relocation of Protestant church buildings also had unavoidable consequences for the social composition of Protestant congregations. The logic of church financing meant that churches usually chose to rebuild in areas in which the largest number of Protestants were concentrated (or were likely to be concentrated within a relatively short

¹⁵⁰ Charles D. Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2000).

¹⁵¹ For a Protestant critique of this practice, see *Montreal Witness*, 18 February 1889, 'Catholic Church Taxes'.

time), and also dictated that churches would move to areas inhabited by those with the greatest ability to pay for the new buildings. These factors alienated not just the poor, but also those with only moderate means, from the new uptown churches, resulting in the creation of churches with much more homogeneously well-to-do congregations than had existed in the past. The processes that brought about these changes were mediated through the complex lives of countless individuals whose adaptations to the social and economic changes that were taking place in society determined whether they would or would not be able to afford seats for their families in the uptown churches. While ethnic background remained an important factor defining the congregational identities of some uptown churches, such as the American Presbyterian Church and St Paul's, shared social status emerged as a defining feature of these congregations. As Charles Cashdollar has pointed out, similar tastes and social backgrounds provided an effective basis for fostering a sense of fellowship amongst congregation members.¹⁵² This enhanced the ability of the churches to serve as a medium through which the social networks of the elite were strengthened, but simultaneously led to a type of sociability that made the churches less able to act as socially inclusive institutions.¹⁵³

While male church leaders were responsible for making most of the decisions concerning church relocation (as discussed in Chapter 2), female congregation members nevertheless played an active role in encouraging social exclusivity by their dress and their enthusiasm for creating more elaborate church interiors that more closely resembled their middle and upper-class homes. Likewise, their involvement in bazaars and other fund-raising endeavours that were not always in keeping with their assigned roles as bastions of family religion and symbols of Christian purity, drew attention to the increasingly commercial nature of the church enterprise.

The class composition of certain denominations made it much easier for some congregations to move uptown, while inhibiting others from doing so, drawing attention to the way in which these groups were defined not only by their theological underpinnings but also by the social composition of their adherents. The adherence of the

¹⁵² Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 243.

¹⁵³ See Sven Beckert's comments on this topic in *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1986* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2003), 59.

majority of Montreal's working-class population to the Roman Catholic Church created an even greater association between capitalism and Protestantism, as Samuel Loomis observed was the case in U.S. cities in the late 1880s:

[C]ity churches of the Protestant order are usually attended by persons of means and intelligence.... The Protestant city churches are, therefore, to the laborer, the churches of the capitalist. He will have nothing to do with them. Their cushions and carpets, their polished pews, stained windows, and pealing organs, as well as the rich garments of their prosperous congregations, were purchased, as he thinks, with money wrested from his toil-worn fingers. What wonder that the invitations of the church ring in his ears like tones of hollow mockery, from which he turns away with a bitter heart!¹⁵⁴

This situation reinforced, yet again, the extent to which Protestantism was implicated in the social and economic system that provided a basis for capitalist society.

While it is clear that at least some of the congregations that moved uptown in Montreal had at no point in their history represented truly inclusive institutions embracing a broad cross-section of the Protestant community, what I have attempted to demonstrate here is that the evolving urban geography that encouraged churches to relocate to newly created middle-class districts set in motion an historically specific process of great practical and symbolic significance. Church buildings located in the centre of a village, small town, or city were at least suggestive of an institution that was open to all. The uptown removal of churches, in contrast, drew attention to urban social divisions and led to the new phenomenon of 'fashionable' churches catering to elite elements within society. While these congregations represented a vital part of the religious infrastructure of urban society, enabling wealthy Protestants to worship in a variety of different ways that reflected their theological, cultural, and social backgrounds, they also presented a very visible demonstration of the power of capital and class to differentiate amongst Christians and intensify a sense of belonging to, or alienation from, a particular social grouping. The already ambiguous relationship between Christianity and wealth was thus further complicated as the city's changing social geography led those congregations that moved uptown into an even closer partnership with the business classes, making them increasingly dependent on capitalist enterprise to support their buildings, worship, and other endeavours.

¹⁵⁴ Samuel Lane Loomis, *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Company 1887), 99.

CHAPTER 4

The Church as Mission: Protestant Evangelization and Church Extension in Working-Class Districts

When she visited in 1869, Harriet Beecher Stowe described Montreal as ‘a mountain of churches’. ‘Every shade and form of faith’, she wrote, ‘is here well represented in wood or stone, and the gospel feast set forth...to suit the spiritual appetite of all inquirers’.¹ Her comments not only emphasize the large number of places of worship in the city, but also draw attention to the denominational and class distinctions that differentiated one place of worship from another. Issues related to both denomination and class had an important impact on the way Protestants responded to the transformations taking place in the social geography of Montreal at this time. As a brief visitor to the city, however, Stowe was unable to capture the extent to which so much of this religious landscape - seemingly fashioned to suit the needs of all - in fact primarily reflected the aspirations of two of the city’s most influential groups: the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy and the Protestant business elite.

Of all the transformations taking place, the increasing spatial segregation of various elements of urban society produced some of the most intractable problems facing the Protestant churches of Britain and North America at this time. As cities became increasingly heterogeneous, they also became ‘ever more fragmented into discrete, homogeneous domains differentiated by function, class, ethnicity, and religion’.² The removal of middle-class congregation members, and many of the Protestant churches to which they belonged, from downtown areas to more desirable residential locations, coupled with the emergence of predominantly working-class suburbs, created practical concerns about how to meet the moral, spiritual, and material needs of those left behind in the lower reaches of the city. While the perceived problem of poor church attendance on the part of less wealthy members of society was not a new phenomenon, the uptown removal of the leading churches meant that it was no longer sufficient for the middle

¹ *Evening Telegraph and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 1 June 1869.

² Robert A. Orsi, ‘Introduction: Crossing the City Line’, in *Gods of the City*, ed. Robert A. Orsi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1999), 16.

classes to imagine that city missionaries and house-to-house visitation could bring the poor and labouring classes into the fold of mainstream congregational life.

Studies of Protestant religion in nineteenth-century Canada have thus far paid little concerted attention to the extensive urban evangelization and church extension efforts that were undertaken amongst the working classes by the mainline Protestant denominations prior to the 1880s.³ In *Church and Sect in Canada*, one of the earliest works to explore the relationship between class and Canadian evangelism, S.D. Clark argues that the mainline churches' desire to increase their social respectability made it difficult for them to accommodate the poor and members of the working classes.⁴ He maintains that the void thus created was, during the period between 1885 and 1914, filled by new evangelical sects such as the Holiness Church and the Salvation Army.⁵ Neil Semple likewise comes to the conclusion that, by the 1880s, Methodism's dependence on the business classes had created a pronounced cleavage between the poor and the church.⁶ Others have noted that, while branch churches and missions were organized by some large congregations in working-class areas, they 'tended to preserve and strengthen the middle-class character of the churches in more desirable locations' and simply served to emphasize disparities between rich and poor.⁷ Thus, there appears to be a consensus that Canada's mainline Protestant churches assumed a more middle-class character over the course of the nineteenth century and increasingly mirrored the inequalities that existed in the surrounding society, ultimately leading to the estrangement of less wealthy members of society from these churches. While this position may hold a certain element of truth, it fails to acknowledge the extensive efforts that were made to ensure that the working classes remained within the mainline denominations. It also ignores the presence, during

³ H. Keith Markell has provided the most thorough study to date of the relationship between Protestantism and urbanization and industrialization in the Canadian context in the post-1880 period. See H. Keith Markell, *Canadian Protestantism Against the Background of Urbanization and Industrialization in the Period from 1885 to 1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago 1971).

⁴ S.D. Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1948).

⁵ S.D. Clark, 'Religious Organization and the Rise of the Canadian Nation, 1850-85', *Report of the Canadian Historical Association*, (1944), 91.

⁶ Neil Semple, 'The Impact of Urbanization on the Methodist Church of Canada, 1854-1884', *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History*, (1976), 52-53.

⁷ Brian Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 275.

the period covered by this study, of numerous Presbyterian, Anglican, and Methodist churches and missions that were attended primarily by members of the working classes. An exceptional work in the Canadian context is Lynne Marks' study of religion and leisure in small towns in Ontario: she emphasizes the complex nature of working-class participation in the mainline churches and points out, for example, that members of working-class families were more likely to make individual decisions about church membership than were middle-class family members.⁸ While Marks' study looks at a number of small towns in Ontario, we must assume (as she does) that social relations operated differently in larger towns and cities, where workers at least had the option of worshipping in predominantly working-class congregations.⁹ Much, in other words, remains to be learned about the evolution of the relationship between Protestant religion, the working classes, and the changing social geography of the nineteenth-century Canadian city.

These questions are more thoroughly explored in the British literature. As in Canada, there is general agreement that the mainline churches faced challenging logistical problems in the cities.¹⁰ Likewise, there are those, such as E.R. Wickham and K.S. Inglis, whose work emphasizes the 'persistent alienation of the urban industrial masses [from the churches] from the time of their very emergence in the new towns'.¹¹ Others, however, have challenged those who see the Victorian 'religious boom' as a phenomenon in which the working classes played only a very minor role.¹² Callum Brown, for example, suggests that those making this argument have depended too heavily on the writings of clerics and other 'bourgeois' commentators and points out that the industrial worker is usually 'the silent player whose story of alienation from religion the cleric berates, the

⁸ Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 14.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 27, 216.

¹⁰ Hugh McLeod, *Piety and Poverty: Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London, and New York, 1870-1914* (New York: Holmes and Meier 1996), xxi.

¹¹ E.R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London: Lutterworth Press 1957), 177. For further discussion of this position see Callum G. Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', *Urban History Yearbook*, (1988), 3.

¹² Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London: MacMillan Press 1996), 3, 6-7.

intellectual applauds and the historian sympathetically chronicles'.¹³ While recognizing that urban social fragmentation had an important influence on social relations within the churches, he nevertheless argues that we should not underestimate working-class participation in the religious life of the nineteenth-century city.¹⁴ Most writers do not question the fact that working-class church attendance rates were lower than those of the middle and upper classes, but suggest that this is no excuse for neglecting the substantial minority who did attend and who were actively involved in the lives of churches, chapels, and missions.¹⁵

The British literature also contains numerous detailed studies of middle-class evangelism in specific cities, including Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, and London.¹⁶ The 1830s and 1840s have been described as a 'take-off' period for urban missionary work¹⁷, the first city mission having been established in Glasgow in 1826 by David Nasmith, and the concept diffused throughout Britain and North America by its evangelical founder.¹⁸ Although it was initially intended that mission stations would help integrate non-churchgoers into existing congregations, it was at this stage, according to Peter Hillis, that a 'hierarchy of services' began to emerge, particularly amongst the non-established churches.¹⁹ Thus, while members of the middle classes and skilled working classes attended proper churches, labourers and the urban poor were ever more likely to find themselves worshipping at a mission service. As middle-class congregations grew in

¹³ Callum G. Brown, 'The Mechanism of Religious Growth in Urban Societies: British Cities Since the Eighteenth Century', in *European Religion in the Age of Great Cities, 1830-1930*, ed. Hugh McLeod (London: Routledge 1995), 241.

¹⁴ Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', 10.

¹⁵ McLeod, *Religion and Society*, 178-179, 221.

¹⁶ See Simon Gunn, 'The Ministry, the Middle Class and the "Civilizing Mission" in Manchester, 1850-80', *Social History*, 21(1) (1996), 22-36; Martin Hewitt, 'The Travails of Domestic Visiting: Manchester, 1830-70', *Historical Research*, 71(175) (1998), 196-227; Peter Hillis, 'Education and Evangelisation, Presbyterian Missions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Glasgow', *The Scottish Historical Review*, LXVI,1(181) (1987), 46-62; Ian Sellers, 'Congregationalists and Presbyterians in Nineteenth Century Liverpool', *Transactions The Congregational Historical Society*, XX(2) (1965), 74-85; John H. Taylor, 'London Congregational Churches Since 1850', *Transactions The Congregational Historical Society*, XX(1) (1965), 22-41.

¹⁷ Hillis, 'Education and Evangelisation', 47-48.

¹⁸ For further discussion of early mission work and home visiting, see H.D. Rack, 'Domestic Visitation: A Chapter in Early Nineteenth Century Evangelism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 24(4) (1973), 357-376; McLeod, *Religion and Society*, 142-143.

¹⁹ Hillis, 'Education and Evangelisation', 59-60.

prosperity, particularly in the post-1850 period, they began to embark on much more ambitious evangelization schemes. According to Callum Brown, whose research focuses on Glasgow, 'in the 1850s, 60s and 70s, it became *de rigueur* for fully sanctioned Protestant congregations to set up mission stations where fledgling working-class churches were nurtured to full status and financial self-reliance, and for congregational members to assist in large numbers as "district visitors"'.²⁰ Similarly, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Liverpool responded to the 'home missionary' problem from the 1850s onwards by establishing, in downtown areas, missions that were supported and managed by the parent church, as well as by attempting to build up independent congregations in working-class districts.²¹

John Taylor associates the growing awareness amongst middle-class Congregationalists in London of the need for downtown mission work with their relocation from central areas to less crowded suburban locations in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Recognizing that they were leaving religious and social problems behind, most were willing to make efforts 'to help spread the Gospel in the area where their families had once lived, where old relatives still lived, and where the family chapel was falling into decay'.²² Simon Gunn ties this into a broader framework by arguing that an 'evangelical shift' took place within Anglicanism as well as Nonconformity during this period, not so much in a doctrinal sense as in the sense that "Evangelicalism" and "evangelism" came to stand in close proximity to one another'.²³ While competition continued amongst the various Protestant denominations, he suggests that there was nevertheless a 'fundamental congruence of means and ends across denominational lines'²⁴ as the middle class – then at the zenith of its political power and self-confidence²⁵ – attempted to present itself as the promoter of both spiritual and material 'progress'.

Although interdenominational mission work became increasingly popular in Montreal in the 1850s, revivalism and church relocation combined in the 1860s to bring

²⁰ Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain', 11.

²¹ Sellers, 'Congregationalists and Presbyterians', 83-85.

²² Taylor, 'London Congregational Churches', 33.

²³ Gunn, 'The Ministry, the Middle Class and the "Civilizing Mission"', 31.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

²⁵ Bruce G. Trigger, *Sociocultural Evolution* (Oxford: Blackwell 1998), 71.

denominational city mission and church extension work to the fore. What is notable in the Canadian context is that the timing of growing interest and involvement in home mission work corresponds very closely with that outlined in the British (and also the American)²⁶ context, and was clearly connected with similar processes, such as church relocation from downtown areas as well as the emergence of a widely-shared evangelical culture.²⁷ This suggests that mainstream Protestants in urban Canada were active participants in the mid-century trans-Atlantic movement to evangelize the working classes and provide them with places in which to worship.

In-depth studies of individual Canadian cities are therefore required in order to understand this movement better. In the case of Montreal, for example, it is imperative to begin by recognizing that Protestants (making up only one-quarter of the population in 1860), 'accounted for half of the bourgeoisie, petite bourgeoisie, and white collar workers; and those three groups amounted to 60 percent of the Protestant community'.²⁸ Under such circumstances one might expect to find a Protestant working-class population that was thoroughly evangelized by their more numerous middle-class counterparts, and plentiful resources available to provide the working classes with church accommodation and charitable support. Detailed studies of particular urban settings are also important because much of the evangelization and church extension that took place in the mid-to-late nineteenth century was organized by individual congregations or groups of congregations. This means that it is best observed through the study of local church records. Another difficulty to be overcome is the tendency (common also in the nineteenth century) to merge the poor and the working classes into one homogeneous category, rather than distinguishing among the various elements that made up the working classes.

²⁶ See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City: The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1971), 159.

²⁷ For further discussion of the emergence of a pervasive evangelical Protestant culture in Canada, see Robert K. Burkinshaw, 'Aspects of Canadian Evangelical Historiography', *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History*, (1995), 181-195; Marguerite Van Die, "'The Marks of a Genuine Revival': Religion, Social Change, Gender, and Community in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario", *The Canadian Historical Review*, 79(3) (1998), 524-563; and William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989).

²⁸ Patricia Thornton and Sherry Olson, 'Family Contexts of Fertility and Infant Survival in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Journal of Family History*, 16(4) (1991), 404.

This chapter attempts to fulfill these objectives by comparing the strategies adopted by the various Protestant denominations in Montreal as they reorganized and improved the provision of church accommodation in the industrial working-class suburb of Griffintown between 1850 and 1889. While denominational responses to the changes taking place shared many similarities, I shall show that denominational differences, as well as class differences within the working classes, resulted in a complex array of churches and missions, each catering to a slightly different 'niche' within the community. By privileging the detailed study of the churches and missions in a particular area, rather than focusing on a broader topic such as middle-class outreach in the slums,²⁹ we are able to gain a better understanding of the diversity of religious institutions serving working-class neighbourhoods at this time and of the variety of ways in which uptown church-goers were involved in supporting these institutions.

The Problem of the City

To understand the rationale that lay behind the provision of places of worship for those living in areas like Griffintown, it is necessary to explore some of the ways in which middle-class Protestants and their clergymen conceptualized the city and urban problems more generally. As early as the 1860s, Protestant Montrealers were expressing concern that the exodus of churches from downtown areas was leaving certain districts with insufficient church accommodation. The non-church-going classes were perceived to be growing, and it was felt that the moral environment experienced by those living in the poorer sections of the city was making it increasingly difficult to elevate people living in such places either spiritually or materially.

Middle-class concern was fuelled by the idea that industrialization was resulting in a breaking down of traditional relations between different social ranks.³⁰ An important component of this was the view that the geographical segregation of rich and poor was increasing. Writing about Manchester, Simon Gunn argues that the perception of social relations as being inherently dichotomous 'was reinforced by the spatial division between

²⁹ For this type of approach, see Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City*.

³⁰ Brown, 'Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?', 2.

city and suburb'.³¹ Evangelical moralists believed that, by depriving the poor of the spiritually uplifting influences of more affluent members of society, social and geographic segregation along class lines contributed to the infidelity and depravity to which poverty was largely attributed.³² Thus, the only way of solving the perceived problem was for the middle classes to find new ways of involving themselves personally in the lives of the working classes.

This dovetailed with the evangelical belief that true Christians demonstrated their conversion to Christ by bringing others to Him and behaving towards others in an appropriately Christian fashion. Thus, evangelicals saw themselves as having two distinct, but inseparable, mandates, one spiritual, the other social.³³ While Protestants with a less evangelical orientation were not as preoccupied by the need for personal conversion, they generally agreed that Christians had a duty to promote attendance at divine worship, so that the Gospel could be heard and the sacraments administered. Many also shared the belief that since one's personal wealth was a gift from God, it was natural that some of it should be used to assist the less fortunate. The religious state of society was therefore seen by middle-class evangelicals and non-evangelicals alike as having important moral, economic, and social consequences. By encouraging individual morality, religion was believed by many to contribute to the avoidance of dire poverty amongst the working classes and even improve chances of achieving upward mobility.

Temperance had a vital role to play in this process. First of all, temperance was often implicated in religious and moral transformation. As Mr Libby, a workman at the St Lawrence glass-works, explained in 1869, 'religion, morality and temperance went hand in hand, and neither could flourish without the others'.³⁴ Temperance could also

³¹ Gunn, 'The Ministry, the Middle Class and the "Civilizing Mission"', 33. On this topic, see also Thomas Bender, *Towards an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in Nineteenth Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1975), 131; Hewitt, 'The Travails of Domestic Visiting', 197-198; David Ward, 'The Early Victorian City in England and America: On the Parallel Development of an Urban Image,' in *European Settlement and Development in North America: Essays on Geographical Change in Honour and Memory of Andrew Hill Clark*, ed. James R. Gibson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1978), 171-172.

³² Ward, 'The Early Victorian City in England and America', 185-186. See also Bender, *Towards an Urban Vision*, 131.

³³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books 2000), 403.

³⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 11 August 1869.

contribute to economic betterment of the individual. As an illustration of this, the Rev. George Douglas used the example of his fellow Methodist Mr William Clendinneng, a long-time member of the St James Street Methodist Church and founding member of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society. At an outdoor temperance meeting, he told the crowd that Mr Clendinneng had come to Montreal 'a poor Irish boy', but that today, 'by a strict adherence to temperance principles, he was at the head of one of the most extensive manufacturing establishments in the city'.³⁵ Given the perceived moral and social benefits of temperance, it is not surprising that, while evangelical Protestants were the most fervent advocates of total abstinence, even uptown churches with less extreme views supported missions that promoted temperance.³⁶

By promoting morality, temperance, and contact between rich and poor, religion was also believed to play a role in maintaining social stability. According to the Rev. McArthur, a visiting Baptist minister from New York, who preached at the opening of the new Olivet Baptist Church in 1879:

Every man in Montreal knows to-day that the morals taught in our churches tend greatly to preserve the business prosperity of the city. Close the churches in Montreal and real estate would not be worth much. Real estate was worth very little in Sodom on that morning when Lot left that city. Our churches if closed to religious worship would be soon opened as prisons. It is, therefore, for the interest of every man to contribute to the maintenance of religion and the preaching of the truth.³⁷

While such blatant declarations of the social utility of religion were quite rare, these comments nevertheless reflected a common middle-class fear that irreligion would lead to social unrest amongst the lower classes in urban society, a fact that Karl Marx also recognized when he declared that religion was 'the opium of the people'.³⁸ Although Marxist historians have argued vigorously that religion was systematically used by

³⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 4 August 1869. For further discussion of the relationship between temperance and upward mobility, see *Montreal Witness*, 24 July 1869; 9 August 1869; 16 September 1869; 25 November 1869; 21 November 1879.

³⁶ This was true, for example, of St Paul's Presbyterian Church. See CIHM A01510, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ending 31 December, 1878* (Montreal, 1979), 20; SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 1 April 1888.

³⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 24 March 1879.

³⁸ John Raines, ed., *Marx on Religion* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 171.

nineteenth-century capitalists as a means of social control,³⁹ others have maintained that such interpretations disregard the depth of religious commitment demonstrated by many businessmen during this period and fail to appreciate the extent to which moral and social issues were interconnected in the thought-worlds of many middle-class Victorians.⁴⁰ As Charles Cashdollar suggests: 'Congregations understood their mission work to be liberating in the sense that it broke the chains that bound people not only to sin but to poverty, and empowering in the sense that it offered not only spiritual salvation, but the tools of economic betterment'.⁴¹ It is, of course, impossible to know what truly motivated Protestant Montrealers to engage in extensive mission work and church building in working-class neighbourhoods, but one cannot help suspecting that – as in so many human endeavours – there was a subtle combination of altruism and self-interest. More clear is the fact that evangelization and the provision of places of worship for those living in poorer districts was seen as an important means by which middle-class Montrealers could bridge the gap between uptown and downtown neighbourhoods and thus ensure the moral and social reform of the city.

The understanding that middle-class Protestant Montrealers had of the challenges posed by the city was shaped not only through observation of the situation in Montreal, but also through participation in broader discourses taking place in Britain and North America.⁴² Christian commentators frequently upheld the critical views of the city that were voiced throughout much of the nineteenth century in Britain and North America.⁴³ Attitudes towards the nineteenth-century city were nevertheless varied. Some applauded the material and intellectual progress associated with urban life, but were at the same time

³⁹ For further discussion of this debate, see David J. Jeremy, *Religion, Business and Wealth in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge 1998), 18-20.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City*, 7-8; Ward, 'The Early Victorian City in England and America', 186.

⁴¹ Charles D. Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2000), 186.

⁴² For further discussion of the parallel development of the image of the early Victorian city in England and America, see Ward, 'The Early Victorian City in England and America'.

⁴³ Andrew Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1985), 6-7.

critical of the city's failure to achieve an equivalent moral advance.⁴⁴ Coleman has argued that, while the 1830s and 40s, as well as the late Victorian (post-1880) period, were times during which deep concern was expressed at the plight of the city in Britain, the prosperity of the mid-Victorian era resulted in an interlude of greater optimism. Likewise, he suggests that Nonconformists in Britain, who were often associated with the Liberal party, tended to see the large towns as 'bastions of political and religious liberty' and thus viewed them more favourably than their Anglican Tory counterparts.⁴⁵ Important for understanding the Protestant perspective in Montreal is the fact that Scottish society, with its Enlightenment tradition, tended to adopt a less hostile attitude towards urban life than its English counterpart.⁴⁶ What was particularly striking about this period in Montreal was not so much the pessimism that was expressed concerning urban life, as the extent to which urbanization and the rapid growth of the city unleashed discussion and experimentation as to how best to respond to the changes taking place.

Even before the exodus of middle-class Protestants and their churches from the downtown core of the city began to get underway in the late 1850s and 1860s, Protestants in Montreal were already well aware of the challenges facing certain British and American cities. Some suggested that measures should be taken immediately in order to prevent similar problems from arising in Montreal. As an advocate of early YMCA mission work in Montreal argued:

[U]nless this city be well supplied with missionaries, or an efficient lay agency, we may expect to witness those scenes of immorality and licentiousness which are the disgrace, the shame, and the terror of cities and towns in the fatherland, and in some cities in the neighboring States. There are, within a few yards of most of our churches, ten, twenty, or more Protestant families, who never enter a place of worship. Many plead their poverty as a barrier to their doing so; but the majority want the inclination.

⁴⁴ Aaron Ignatius Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism 1865-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1943), 3.

⁴⁵ B.I. Coleman, ed., *The Idea of the City in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1973), 4-12, 17. See also Lees, *Cities Perceived*, 45. The Congregationalist minister, Robert Vaughan, is often cited as one of the foremost proponents of urban civilization as a result of his book published in 1843, entitled *The Age of Great Cities*.

⁴⁶ Coleman, *The Idea of the City*, 2. Although the Rev. Thomas Chalmers (who later became one of the evangelical leaders of the Scottish Free Church movement) published one of the earliest studies of large towns in Britain, his attitude was not one of despair, but instead reflected a desire to come up with innovative solutions to urban problems.

There are localities where families composed of both sexes and of all ages, are crowded to an extent alike prejudicial to health and to morals.... If religion does not find a place in the families of this city, irreligion will, and vice will abound. It should be borne in mind, that it is wiser and cheaper to employ an agency for promoting the spiritual and temporal well-being of men, than to have them in their vice and misery, and have to pay the cost of their immorality and crime.⁴⁷

Clergymen were among those who most forthrightly expressed their concerns about the ways in which city life was undermining the moral and religious values of city dwellers.⁴⁸ The Reverend James Bonar, who was minister of the American Presbyterian Church in Montreal (1857-1870), presented his views on this subject in a sermon in 1864. He began by contrasting the material progress of Montreal with its moral retrograding, arguing that immorality was increasing far more rapidly than either population or wealth. To explain this phenomenon, he pointed to the fact that unlike the countryside or small towns, where happiness and morality were preserved by the 'general diffusion of the necessities of life', 'large cities contain many persons who are very rich, and many others who are very poor'. Bonar believed that, while extreme poverty often resulted from 'vicious practices', the elements that characterized extreme poverty (such as over-crowded and filthy dwellings, poor nourishment, lack of opportunities for personal advancement, and absence of access to recreation) could themselves lead people into vicious and immoral ways. True to his Reformed Protestant tradition, he likewise believed that extreme wealth, by fostering pride, luxurious living, and passion for display, and by creating a craving for excitement and pleasure and other forms of extravagance and licentiousness, led 'as directly and inevitably to immorality as extreme poverty'. 'It was not the vices of the poor,' he maintained, 'but the extravagances, the licentiousness and consequent effeminacy of the rich, which led to the downfall of the Roman Empire, to the corruption of the Christian Church and the ruin of the great cities of antiquity'. Bonar went on to argue that 'no community can have a true or permanent *pecuniary* prosperity which is indifferent to the tone of public morals' and concluded (seemingly forgetting his suggestion that environmental and economic factors also contributed to immorality) that it was only by multiplying the means of grace and leavening the whole city with the

⁴⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 13 December 1854.

⁴⁸ Lees, *Cities Perceived*, 28.

Gospel that it would be possible to ensure, not just its morality, but also its healthy growth and permanent prosperity. In terms of practical measures that could be taken by congregation members to bring this about, he recommended that they should set an example by acting in a pious and moral fashion and by using their wealth to build attractive churches and fund Sunday schools and city missions.⁴⁹

Given that this sermon was delivered to a congregation that had recently started building a new and more luxurious church in an uptown location, it seems likely that his message was designed to remind them not only of their own building fund but also of the needs of those who could not afford to participate in such extravagant undertakings. Such people would require the assistance of uptown congregation members if they too were to be provided with places of worship. Bonar's sermon also presents a striking illustration of the complex ways in which spiritual, moral, and social issues were intertwined in the minds of nineteenth-century evangelicals. His statement that the evangelization of the city would lead to greater economic prosperity could be seen as evidence that the instrumental value of religion was well-recognized and exploited by its nineteenth-century practitioners. At the same time, however, it is clear that Bonar was principally concerned with the material welfare of society only insofar as deficiencies or excesses of wealth were seen as a hindrance to public and private morality. He clearly recognized that not just social harmony, but Christianity itself, was threatened by the tendency of unregulated capitalism to generate extremes of wealth and poverty in urban centres; yet his proposed solutions indicate great faith in the ability of Christian religion to generate the moral restraint, generosity, and social action required to combat this threat. Thus, while a prosperous and harmonious society was not necessarily the principal goal of evangelization, it was seen as a natural outcome of applied evangelical Christianity working in harmony with commercial capitalism.

The Study Area: Griffintown and Surrounding District

One area identified by evangelical middle-class Montrealers as being in special need of evangelistic and philanthropic work was Griffintown and the surrounding area

⁴⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 18 June 1864.

(Figure 4.1).⁵⁰ Located to the west of the increasingly commercial downtown core, this heavily English-speaking district was an important hub of industrial development in Montreal from the late 1840s onwards and was home to an emerging industrial proletariat.⁵¹ A retrospective account described Griffintown in the late 1840s as ‘a place of large manufactories and small dwellings, the latter being generally occupied by poor or destitute people.... Lodgings were to be had at cheap rates, and as misery likes company, there were at least two reasons why half destitute people chose the unlovely suburb of Griffintown as their place of abode’.⁵² As presented to the Protestant Ministerial Association in 1865, the ‘alarming statistics of Griffintown’ revealed that the area contained over 700 Roman Catholic families and 432 families of nominal Protestants, and that of the latter, nearly one-half, or 202 families, claimed that they seldom or never attended any place of worship.⁵³ In the district lying directly to the north of Griffintown, between St. Antoine and College streets, 328 Protestant families were discovered, of which 140 were classified as ‘habitual neglecters of church privileges’.⁵⁴ These figures suggest that during the early stages of industrialization the Protestant working classes already contained a significant proportion of non-church-goers, although it was observed by the Protestant Ministerial Association the following year that the large majority of Protestant working men did attend church.⁵⁵

By 1861, Griffintown formed part of a larger working-class suburb. As Robert Lewis has demonstrated, the spatial separation of social classes in Montreal was already in place by this time, dividing the city into three distinct class ‘zones’, one of which was

⁵⁰ For the sake of simplicity, the study area is referred to in the text as ‘Griffintown’ although the area being discussed covers more ground than the district traditionally known by this name (see Figure 4.1).

According to one definition, Griffintown was “bounded on the east by McGill Street, on the north by St Maurice, Chaboillez Square, and Notre Dame [St Joseph], on the west by McCord, down to William, and by the latter street westward to Guy. On the south it was bounded by the Lachine Canal” (“A Lost Town,” *Montreal Gazette*, 17 November 1936).

⁵¹ Robert D. Lewis, ‘The Development of an Early Suburban Industrial District: The Montreal Ward of Saint-Ann, 1851-71’, *Urban History Review*, 19(3) (1991), 166-180.

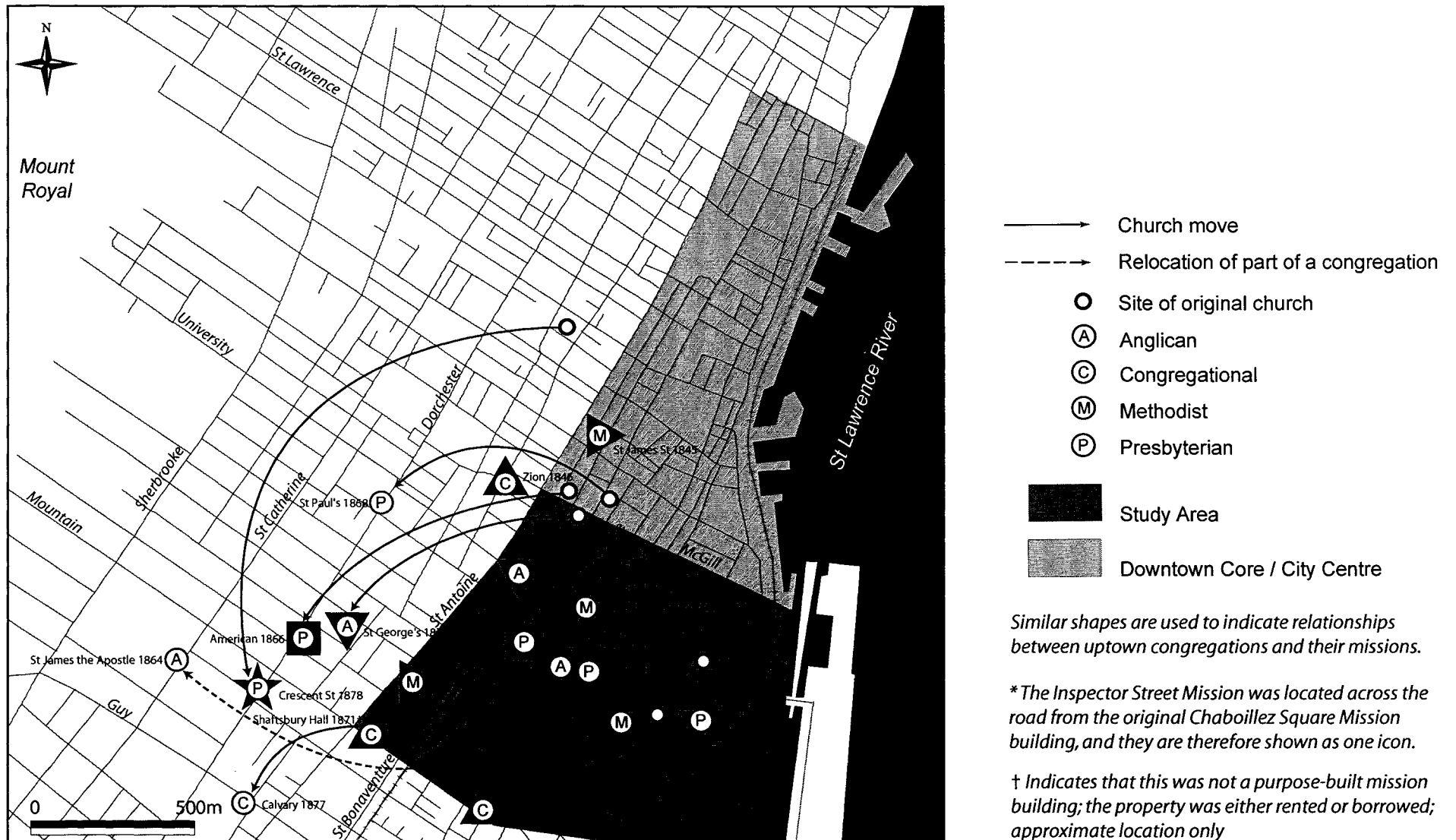
⁵² *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878.

⁵³ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 7 November 1865.

⁵⁴ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 13 February 1866.

⁵⁵ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 19 December 1867.

Figure 4.1 Case Study Area: Showing places of worship in Griffintown and surrounding district, as well as related uptown congregations mentioned in the text.



the predominantly working-class zone to which Griffintown belonged.⁵⁶ As one satirical publication of the time put it, the western district of Montreal was, 'like Edinburgh, divided into the Upper and Lower Town – the one tenanted by swells, the other by smells'.⁵⁷ Such statements, of course, obscure the socio-economic variations defining different elements within the working classes. Significant life-style gaps existed between the skilled trades and labourers, and spatial differentiation occurred within the working classes along occupational lines.⁵⁸ As late as 1897, Herbert Ames noted that the families of the poor (defined as those whose average weekly family income did not exceed five dollars) were not, as in many other cities, concentrated into a locality with well-defined limits.⁵⁹ Although the southerly sections of Griffintown contained levels of poverty as high as 26 percent of families, areas further north in Griffintown contained a smaller percentage of poor families and percentages of well-to-do families (those whose weekly average family income exceeded twenty dollars) as high as 15 to 19 percent.⁶⁰ As will be demonstrated further on, it was the absence of socio-economic uniformity within Griffintown that created the need for a diversity of Protestant places of worship.

Another notable feature of Griffintown was its large Irish-Catholic working-class community. While there is little evidence that Protestants made any large-scale efforts to proselytise this group, their presence may nevertheless have helped to draw attention to Griffintown as a 'problem area'. Many evangelical Protestants had a strong desire to convert Roman Catholics, yet they quickly discovered that it was difficult to gain access to Catholic families and that conversions were rare.⁶¹ In the mid-1820s, a young Henry Wilkes, enthused by the recent revival that had taken place at the American Presbyterian

⁵⁶ Robert Lewis, 'The Segregated City: Class, Residential Patterns and the Development of Industrial Districts in Montreal, 1861 and 1901', *Journal of Urban History*, 17(2) (1991), 142-143. Lewis also describes zones dominated by the bourgeoisie and the petite bourgeoisie, and an intermediate 'mixed-class' buffer zone.

⁵⁷ *Diogenes*, 13 November 1868.

⁵⁸ Jason Gilliland and Sherry Olson, 'Claims on Housing Space in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Urban History Review*, 26(2) (1998), 13.

⁵⁹ Herbert B. Ames, *The City Below the Hill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 (reprint)), 69.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Map H, 70-71.

⁶¹ Hewitt ('The Travails of Domestic Visiting', 216) observes that Protestant missionaries in Manchester rarely gained access to Irish Roman Catholics and that most worked under the assumption that Catholic households were off limits.

Church and acting on behalf of its Sunday School Visiting Committee, had attempted to recruit Irish-Catholic children living in St Ann's Suburb (of which Griffintown formed a part).⁶² Although he and his fellow visitors initially received a friendly enough reception in the homes that they visited, Irish Catholics were rarely willing to entrust their children to the care of a Protestant Sunday School.⁶³ By the following year, the visiting committee reported that they had 'invariably met a most decided refusal from every catholic they have called on the last 2 months, insomuch that there seems a brazen opposition to everything they can look upon as protestant interference among them'.⁶⁴ The increasing dominance of the area by Irish Catholics from the 1840s onwards, and rising tensions between Protestants and Catholics, may have discouraged further evangelistic work. The population of Griffintown during this period was described as being 'chiefly Irish, a mixture, and it may be added, a very violent one, of Roman Catholics and Orange Protestants – an irascible lot, who had brought their enmities with their other possessions from the old world to the new'.⁶⁵ In the late 1850s, the Protestant Ministerial Association acknowledged with concern that nothing was being done to reach the Irish-Catholic population. They agreed that they should 'have faith in the convertibility of the Irish Roman Catholics', and that it was desirable to find some way to evangelize them since they had 'perishing souls' and also represented an element that was 'turbulent and dangerous to the peace of the community'.⁶⁶ A further report recommended that evangelization of the Irish-Catholic population should commence in areas of the city in which Irish Catholics were well-interspersed among other groups, making Griffintown an

⁶² Henry Wilkes, as minister of Zion Congregational Church, went on to become a founding member of the interdenominational French Canadian Missionary Society. The FCMS gained the support of many members of the growing evangelical community, and was another blow to the less sectarian attitudes of the late 18th and early 19th century (See John Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes, D.D., L.L.D., His Life and Times* (Montreal: F.E. Grafton and Son 1887), 108-109).

⁶³ See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 168, A69 Sabbath School Reports 1826-1827, Report of the Visiting Committee, 10 April 1826.

⁶⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 168, A70 Sabbath School Reports and Correspondence 1827, Report of the Visiting Committee, 16 July 1827.

⁶⁵ *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878.

⁶⁶ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 24 November 1857.

unlikely venue for such activity.⁶⁷ The report's recommendation that 'whatever is done should be done without noise or parade', and that neither public meetings be held nor public reports made of proceedings, indicates just how controversial Irish-Catholic conversion efforts were considered to be.⁶⁸ The practical outcome, however, was that each group focused attention on providing for the spiritual and temporal needs of its own religious community.⁶⁹ As the missionary in charge of one of the Presbyterian missions in Griffintown reported in the 1880s, his work was 'almost exclusively confined to Protestants; because Roman Catholics are less accessible, and our lapsed Protestants furnish ample scope for our undivided attention'.⁷⁰

Interdenominational City Mission

As in other cities, evangelical Protestants in Montreal initially made efforts to conduct mission work along interdenominational lines. This type of work, which involved systematic evangelical outreach, as well as the provision of relief to the needy on a personal basis, had been conducted in Montreal as early as the 1830s when David Nasmith, the founder of the Glasgow City Mission, visited Montreal and inspired the

⁶⁷ This would not be the first time that Protestants in Montreal attempted to exploit areas of geographical weakness on the part of Roman Catholics. Following the Rebellion of 1837-1838, the Quarterly Board of the St James Street Methodist Church noted that confidence in the 'French priests' had been shaken and that this provided a good opportunity for the Methodists to establish a French Mission in Lower Canada. It was suggested that the areas in which French Canadian priests had been implicated in the rebellions should be targeted as places in which missionaries or colporteurs should commence their labour (ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 13 January 1838).

⁶⁸ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 8 December 1857. Only one account has been located of a conversion from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism taking place in Griffintown. The lengths to which the Session of St Mark's Presbyterian Church went to emphasize that Lillian Bray was not converting as a result of Protestant proselytism confirms how sensitive a subject this was considered to be: 'Lillian Bray is a young woman, a native of Ireland, and was reared in the doctrines of the RC Church, she voluntarily, and of her own free will, called on the Pastor, the Rev. John Nichols, and made a statement to him to the effect that, some two yrs ago, she found an opportunity to read a Protestant Bible, and this has been the sole cause of enlightening, and impressing her mind with a sincere and earnest desire to abjure the doctrines of the RC Church and to become a member of a Presbyterian Church' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2a Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1870-1885, 29 May 1885).

⁶⁹ For discussion of this question from the Irish-Catholic perspective, see Rosalyn Trigger, 'The Geopolitics of the Irish-Catholic Parish in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 27(4) (2001), 553-572.

⁷⁰ *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1885* (Montreal, 1886), 29.

creation of a city mission, which later foundered.⁷¹ Soon after its formation in Montreal in 1851, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) hired a city missionary - Samuel Massey, formerly of the Manchester City Mission - and revived this type of non-sectarian work among the city's unchurched and needy citizens.⁷² There seems to have been general agreement at this point that the major problem facing the churches was not that of insufficient church accommodation. Instead, it was felt that the existing churches were not well adapted to caring for the needs of the poor, and that other means were required to carry the Gospel to those unwilling to attend church.⁷³

A further cooperative effort was inspired by the Rev. H. Newcombe of Brooklyn, New York, who visited Montreal in 1858 and convinced the members of the Protestant Ministerial Association to conduct a systematic house-to-house visitation of the city.⁷⁴ The Rev. Newcombe would have arrived in Montreal fresh from the remarkable revival that was then taking place in his home town, and Montreal's evangelical ministers - anxious to see a similar event take place in Montreal - would therefore have been very attentive to his suggestions. The city was divided into three main divisions, sections of which were then allocated to the various participating congregations, which included all

⁷¹ Nathan Mair, *The Story of the Montreal City Mission* (Montreal: United Church of Canada, Montreal Presbytery 1985), 1-4.

⁷² See Mair, *The Story of the Montreal City Mission*, 4-6; *Montreal Witness*, 13 December 1854. The latter source states that seven denominations were represented on the Committee of the YMCA. More specifically, Harold C. Cross says that the following churches were represented on the membership committee of the YMCA: St Helen St. Baptist, American Presbyterian, United Presbyterian (Erskine), Coté St. Presbyterian, St Gabriel St. Presbyterian, First and Second Congregational, New Connexion Methodist, St George's Anglican, Trinity Anglican, and St Stephen's Anglican, (*One Hundred Years of Service With Youth: The Story of the Montreal YMCA* (Montreal, 1951)). It seems likely that the evangelical Anglican congregations may have become less involved following the creation in 1856 of The Church of England Association for Young Men of Montreal (See MDA, Fonds Church of England Association for Young Men of Montreal, Minute Book of the Church of England Association for Young Men of Montreal, 1856-1860). In 1864, subscribers to the YMCA City Mission included the following churches: First (St Helen St.) Baptist, American Presbyterian, Dr Taylor's Canada Presbyterian Church (Erskine), Coté St. Presbyterian, St Gabriel St. Presbyterian, Zion Congregational, St James St. Methodist, and St Paul's Presbyterian, with the three largest subscribers being the Zion Congregational, American Presbyterian, and First Baptist congregations and the Anglicans being notably absent from the list (See ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 184, A475 *Report of the Montreal Young Men's Christian Association 1864* (Montreal: James Starke & Co.)). This indicates that there was broad support for interdenominational city mission work amongst the city's leading denominations at this point.

⁷³ See *Montreal Witness*, 13 December 1854; ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 8 March 1859.

⁷⁴ CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 25; also ANQ P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361 ZIO/6/1 Minutes of Annual Meetings Deacons of Zion Church 1850-1864, Annual Report 1860.

the leading city congregations, with the notable exception of those belonging to the Church of England and Church of Scotland.⁷⁵ An information bulletin that appears to have been printed to assist the visitation effort recommended that each congregation should further subdivide its district into smaller subdivisions containing not more than five to twenty families. Each subdivision was then to be allocated to a congregation member who would be responsible for visiting on a monthly basis and for providing spiritual oversight. The bulletin also included useful tips for congregational visitors, such as trying to find 'some common ground of feeling or principle on which to stand in your intercourse with every person' and remembering to '[g]ive a fraternal aspect, instead of an inquisitorial, patronizing one' to all visits.⁷⁶ It is unlikely that the home visitation was sustained for any length of time, but it does seem to have given the city churches a larger sense of responsibility for different sections of the city.

In 1864-65, soon after the success of the Hammond Revival, a group of nine evangelical congregations decided that the time had come to inaugurate their own non-denominational mission which was to be known as the Montreal (or Union) City Mission.⁷⁷ Samuel Massey left the YMCA at this point to take up an engagement with the Montreal City Mission, and it was understood that some of the work previously carried out by the YMCA would also be transferred to the new organization. The united effort was short-lived, and by May 1866 the Session of the American Presbyterian Church had declared that the united city mission effort was a failure.⁷⁸ Such an outcome was hardly surprising, given that many of the participating churches already supported their own congregational missionaries, and continued to develop congregational and

⁷⁵ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 9 November 1858; CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 25.

⁷⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS96, Fonds ERS, Contenant 440, E31 Montreal United Presbyterian Church Missionary Committee Minute Book 1856-1872, 15 February 1859, see bulletin pasted in at end of book.

⁷⁷ See ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/2/1 Minutes Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal 1854-1876, 8 November 1864; CIHM 13341, Alfred Sandham, *History of the Young Men's Christian Association* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873), 58; Cross, *One Hundred Years of Service With Youth: The Story of the Montreal YMCA*, 96; *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. XII (1891-1900) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), 'Samuel Massey', 710.

⁷⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A30 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1847-1874, 21 May 1866; Mair, *The Story of the Montreal City Mission*, 9.

denominational missionary endeavours alongside those of the Montreal City Mission.⁷⁹ As a result, by the 1870s most of the missions in Montreal were carried on along denominational lines, with individual uptown congregations sponsoring their own missions and specially dedicated mission buildings in the lower reaches of the city. Thus, despite being given new impetus as a result of the recent revival, the evangelical ideal of Protestant cooperation gave way under the more mundane pressures of denominational self-sufficiency. While interdenominational cooperation was more in keeping with the ideals of Christianity, the competition between the many rival denominations that existed at this time seems oddly reminiscent of the small-scale, highly competitive, entrepreneurial capitalism that was so characteristic of this era.

Presbyterians in Griffintown

While the failure of the Union City Mission effort was an important factor in encouraging individual congregations to take up further mission work, there was also a correspondence between the uptown relocation of individual Presbyterian congregations and their decisions to consolidate work in Griffintown by building missions or supporting the erection of churches. Although the Côté Street Free Church did not relocate and change its name to Crescent Street Presbyterian until 1878, leaders in the congregation had been planning an uptown move since the early 1870s, and this corresponded with the opening of new mission premises on Nazareth Street in December 1869.⁸⁰ The American Presbyterian Church embarked on mission work just to the north of Griffintown in 1866, the same year that they opened their new uptown church on Dorchester Street.⁸¹ The changing distribution of American Presbyterian Church membership between 1864 and 1880, illustrates the way in which the church ceased to serve individuals living in the

⁷⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS96, Fonds ERS, Contenant 440, E31 Montreal United Presbyterian Church Missionary Committee Minute Book 1856-1872, 23 October 1860.

⁸⁰ See PCL, *Report of the Deacon's Court of the Côté Street Church for Eight Months Ending 31st December, 1868* (Montreal, 1868), 7; *Report of the Deacon's Court of the Côté Street Church for the Year Ended 31st December, 1869* (Montreal, 1870), 7, 23; and *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1869.

⁸¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fond APC, Contenant 167, A99 42nd Annual Report of the American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society, 27 January 1868. Mission work in the area appears to have been started by a group of congregation members in 1864 (See ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A380 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon Preached by the Pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co., 1873), 43).

Griffintown area following the uptown move (see Figure 3.17). The distribution of Inspector Street members in 1892 indicates that the mission was clearly designed to serve the area deserted by the uptown congregation (Figure 4.2). St Paul's Church also moved to Dorchester street in 1868, and then contributed to the building of a Church of Scotland church, St Mark's, in Griffintown the following year. *The Presbyterian* confirmed that it was the removal of St Paul's Church from St Helen Street that had necessitated the erection of this church for the accommodation of families living in the south-western part of the city.⁸² Thus, although the Presbyterian places of worship in Griffintown were not geared exclusively towards serving individuals with particular sectarian affiliations, each was initially organized by congregations belonging to a different branch of Presbyterianism, at least in part to serve members left behind by the uptown moves. I will now examine the Presbyterian missions and churches in Griffintown, exploring the processes by which each one came to cater to a distinct 'niche' within Griffintown's predominantly working-class community, thus serving a diverse range of needs and providing for various levels of participation and commitment on the part of worshippers.

The Nazareth Street Mission

For the greater part of its existence, the Nazareth Street Mission appears to have devoted its attention to the evangelization of the poorer and more transient elements in Griffintown, giving special emphasis to the needs of neglected youth. Unlike both the Inspector Street Mission and St Mark's Church, during the latter part of the nineteenth century the 'floating character' of the population associated with the Nazareth Street Mission meant that it had 'no membership in the strict sense of the term'.⁸³ The mission was a direct descendant of earlier interdenominational work and its roots lay in a Sunday school that the YMCA had organized in Griffintown in 1859. When the YMCA decided to pull back from mission work in the mid-1860s, James Ross – a young immigrant recently arrived from Scotland – assumed a leadership role and kept the school open with the help of financial assistance from one of the elders of Erskine Church. Following the official transfer of the school to the Sunday School Association of the Canada

⁸² *The Presbyterian*, May 1871, 115.

⁸³ CIHM A00394, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports for the Year Ending 31st December, 1897* (Montreal, 1898), 36.

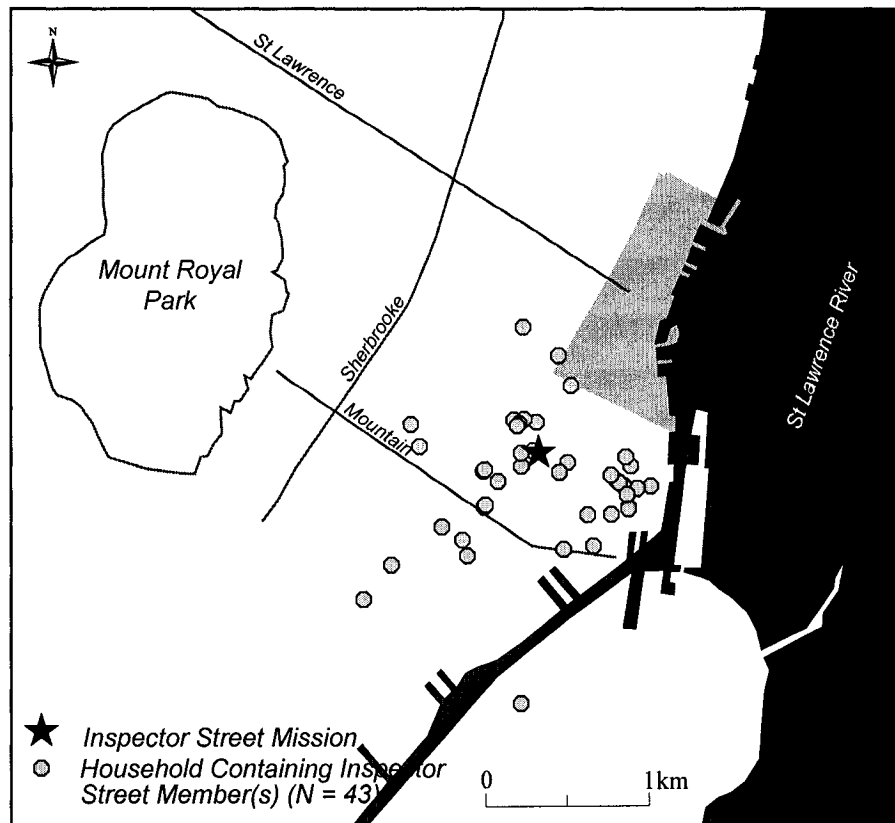


Figure 4.2 Distribution of Households Containing Inspector Street Mission Members, 1892 (Source: ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, inserted 31 October 1892).

Presbyterian Church in 1867, Ross – who by this time had become an elder of the Côté Street Church – persuaded his congregation to take up missionary work in Griffintown and erect a mission building to provide the Sunday school with a permanent home.⁸⁴

For the first ten years of its existence, the Sunday school had experienced a migratory existence as it moved from one set of rented rooms to another in Griffintown, so the new school house on the corner of Nazareth and Wellington streets provided much-needed stability (Figure 4.3). A description of the interior provides us with a rare glimpse into the interior of a type of building for which few visual records survive:

The new building is both in form and construction remarkably adapted for the purposes for which it has been reared. A large square room occupies the back of the lot which is enlarged by two spacious class rooms of less height connecting with it by folding doors which flank the main doorway – a very convenient porch or entrance hall of much value being between them. Above these class rooms and the porch is the residence of the keeper of the building.

⁸⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1869; 10 September 1912; PCL, *Report of the Deacon's Court of the Côté Street Church for Eight Months Ending 31st December, 1868* (Montreal, 1868). A printed pamphlet was found in the archives of the American Presbyterian Church, listing the 'Principles of the Griffintown Free Church, Montreal' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A383 'Principles of the Griffintown Free Church, Montreal', May 1867). This congregation is a bit of a mystery. The Griffintown Free Church (GFC) stated its determination to exist as a distinct communion, since other Presbyterian churches on the continent were deemed 'not to be scriptural in their practical principles as in their theological doctrines'. All seats in the GFC were to be free, no one was to become a member unless they were able to demonstrate evidence of being 'a converted person', and a church building was only to be erected once this could be done without incurring debt. Christians wishing to support the GFC were asked to send contributions to the Rev. Robert Kennedy, Montreal or to Mrs J. Aitken, 114 Wellington Street. The pamphlet also noted that the congregation was currently worshipping in a room at 70 Duke Street. Goad's Atlas of 1880 shows that the two addresses referred to – 114 Wellington and 70 Duke Street – were adjacent properties on the corner of Wellington and Duke Streets, and that both belonged to Mrs J. Aitken. Lovell's city directory for this period lists a Presbyterian Sunday school (1865-66) and then a Canada Presbyterian meeting house (1868-69; 1869-70; 1870-71) at 70 Duke Street, and this seems to refer to the Nazareth Street Mission's predecessor, which is known to have been housed in premises on Duke St (*Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912). Another source states that St Mark's Church grew out of a mission Sunday school that was held for many years in a room off Wellington Street, belonging – once again – to Mrs Aitken (Robert Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, St Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal: W. Drysdale and Co. 1887), 769), and Mrs James Aitken was also listed as one of the contributors to St Mark's Church (ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/5 List of Contributors to St Mark's Church to 23rd October 1869). Given the radical principles laid out by the Griffintown Free Church, and the fact that the Rev. Robert Kennedy is not mentioned in any of the historical sources available for either the Nazareth St Mission or St Mark's, it is possible that the GFC was an attempt to establish yet another Presbyterian congregation in Griffintown. This would mean that three different Presbyterian groups were simultaneously using what another source refers to as 'Aitken's school room' (*Montreal Witness*, 12 April 1869). There is no evidence that the GFC ever made any headway (unless it was associated in some way with the Nazareth Street Mission), but its presence nevertheless indicates that at least some Presbyterians strongly opposed the example set by the uptown congregations that depended heavily on pew rents to sustain their ministry and were then engaged in borrowing large sums of money to build new places of worship.



Figure 4.3 Nazareth Street Sunday School, opened 1869.
(Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection).

The acoustic properties of the room and the ventilation have been attended to with remarkable skill and success by the architect Mr Hutchison.⁸⁵

The \$6,000 structure was designed to accommodate the Sunday school's 22 teachers and 230 pupils, and was also to be used for prayer meetings, evening classes, temperance meetings, and 'any other religious services which may be deemed proper'.⁸⁶

To the distress of the trustees of the nearby St Mark's Church of Scotland congregation, the Nazareth Street Mission rapidly evolved towards becoming a fully-fledged church. Complaints were voiced in St Mark's annual report for 1871:

Before the building of St Mark's was commenced, it was distinctly understood by your Trustees that the Canada Presbyterian Church did not intend to take up the district of Griffintown as one of its mission fields. In their opinion one Church is quite sufficient for the present Presbyterian population, and land has been acquired in rear of St Mark's should it be necessary at a future time to extend the building. They know that the course now being pursued by the managers of the Wellington Street School [i.e. the Nazareth Street Mission] does not meet with the approval of many of the influential members of the C.P. Church.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, the evangelical approach of the Canada Presbyterian Church succeeded in drawing together a congregation, and in 1873 the Presbytery to which the Côté Street Church belonged agreed to constitute the people worshipping at Nazareth Street as a regular congregation with a right to their own minister, communion roll, and church register.⁸⁸ The families that formed the congregation appear to have represented a different group from those for whom the Sunday school had originally been created, as a distinction was made between 'the children of the congregation' and 'the poorer class of children in Griffintown' when discussing the work of the Sunday school.⁸⁹ Only a few

⁸⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1869. A.C. Hutchison was the prolific Montreal architect whose firm was responsible for many of the city's Protestant church buildings, including the American Presbyterian (1866), Crescent Street Presbyterian (1877), Taylor Presbyterian (c.1879), and Erskine (1893) churches. He also built a number of other mission buildings, including the Inspector Street Mission (1892) and the Old Brewery Mission (1892).

⁸⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1869. See also PCL, *Report of the Deacon's Court of the Côté Street Church for the Year Ended 31st December, 1869* (Montreal, 1870), 23.

⁸⁷ UCAL, Folder on St Mark's Presbyterian Church, *St Mark's Church (Church of Scotland) Montreal, Report for the Year 1871*, Trustees' Report, 7.

⁸⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912; PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1873* (Montreal, 1874), 14.

⁸⁹ PCL, *Free Church, Côté Street, Montreal (Canada Presbyterian) - Annual reports for the year ending 31st December, 1873* (Montreal, 1874), 14.

years later, however, the creation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875 brought St Mark's and the Nazareth Street Mission under the supervision of the same Presbytery, and this inspired an attempt to rationalize operations by amalgamating the two congregations.⁹⁰ Negotiations proving unsuccessful, a decision appears to have been taken to dissolve the Nazareth Street congregation circa 1877.⁹¹ In spite of St Mark's objection that there was no need to maintain a second school in the neighbourhood, the Presbytery allowed the Nazareth Street Mission to return to its earlier focus on Sunday school work.⁹² St Mark's further complained that the Crescent Street Church was violating the decision of the Presbytery and encroaching on the rights and privileges of St Mark's when, in 1882, it appointed a congregational missionary to hold services and conduct mission work at the Nazareth Street School.⁹³ Thus, in the same way that church union failed to effect any consolidation of the uptown Presbyterian churches, it was equally unsuccessful when it came to rationalizing Presbyterian efforts in Griffintown.

One explanation for this might be that the Nazareth Street Mission in fact occupied a very specific niche in the community, and catered primarily to the needs of a different group from that served by a self-sustaining congregation such as St Mark's. Supported by a wealthy uptown congregation, the missionary attached to the Nazareth Street Mission was able to focus on conducting evangelistic services and searching out 'individuals and families and children, not attending any stated place of worship'.⁹⁴ The majority of those visited claimed to be Presbyterian, but Anglicans, Methodists, and families with no religious connection whatsoever were also approached. The missionary was able to reassure his uptown congregation that it was not usually religious scepticism

⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2a Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1870-1885, 7 February 1876; also STM/1a Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1873-1878, 26 March 1876. St Mark's does not, however, appear to have officially joined the new Presbyterian Church in Canada until April or May 1876.

⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1a Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1873-1878, 26 March 1876; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 181, Letters of Dismission and Recommendation 1870s and 1890s, Letter certifying that Mrs Boeckh was a member in full communion with the Nazareth St congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, 23 October 1877.

⁹² *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912; ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2a Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1870-1885, 24 February 1878.

⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2a Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1870-1885, 5 November 1882; *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912.

⁹⁴ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1885* (Montreal, 1886), 29.

or 'avowed infidelity' that afflicted those he visited, but instead much more commonplace evils such as liquor, indifference, and improvidence.⁹⁵ Persistent home visiting was therefore required to rescue such souls from 'the enslaving influence of a wide spread and vulgar species of materialism'.⁹⁶ Some of those visited had even at one time been members in full communion with evangelical churches, including the old Coté Street Church, but had not 'darkened a church door' for periods as long as twenty years.⁹⁷ It was reported that the majority of those who participated in the life of the mission could not be induced to attend any of the uptown churches, illustrating the depth of the social gulf that had been created between those living in Griffintown and those living in the upper levels of the city.⁹⁸

The Inspector Street Mission

The activities engaged in by the mission belonging to the American Presbyterian Church, which later became the Inspector Street Mission, were initially very similar to those carried out at the Nazareth Street Mission. The first few years were spent in a property on Chaboillez Square, which also provided a home for the Free School that the American Presbyterian Church had been sponsoring for many years.⁹⁹ The Ladies Sewing Society of the American Presbyterian Church supplied at least \$2,000 out of the \$3,000 required to purchase this property.¹⁰⁰ The similarities between the American

⁹⁵ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1885* (Montreal, 1886), 29.

⁹⁶ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1886* (Montreal, 1887), 35.

⁹⁷ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1886* (Montreal, 1887), 33.

⁹⁸ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal - Annual Reports 1889* (Montreal, 1890), 36.

⁹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A401 American Presbyterian Society Annual Reports 1865-1891, Second Annual Report of Trustees A.P. Society of Montreal, 26 December 1866; Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 23 February 1866. Some sources suggest that the American Presbyterian Free School was in operation as early as 1830 (See Contenant 185, A467 Brief History of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 24 December 1822 – 26 April 1865 by Rev. James Blair Bonar). The origins of the Chaboillez Square Sunday School go back somewhat further than 1866. It may have been one of the efforts organized by the Montreal City Mission; alternatively, it may have been organized independently by congregation members and then handed over to the church (See A380 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon preached by the pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co. 1873), 43; A99 42nd Annual Report of the American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society, 27 January 1868).

¹⁰⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A229 Account Book c.1866-1868, See note attached at end of book dated 24 October 1866; Contenant 183, A401 American Presbyterian Society Annual Reports 1865-1891, Third Annual Report of Trustees A.P. Society of Montreal, 26 December 1867.

Presbyterian and Nazareth Street missions are hardly surprising, given that both bore the imprint of Samuel Massey. Having previously worked for the YMCA City Mission and then for the Montreal City Mission, he was subsequently employed by the American Presbyterian Church in 1866, following the failure of the united mission effort.¹⁰¹ Although organized and run by the American Presbyterian Church, the mission was considered to be practically nondenominational.¹⁰² Massey focused his attention on visiting and attempting to convert those families 'who may be said to belong to the neglected classes, many of whom never enter our city churches'.¹⁰³ Clearly identifying with the American context, the first annual report of the Chaboillez Square Sunday School enthusiastically testified to the 'hopeful conversion' of quite a number of men and women living in what was melodramatically described as 'Montreal's Five Points'.¹⁰⁴ The mission also promoted total abstinence from intoxicating beverages, condemning liquor as 'the source of almost all the evil, poverty and sin that exist'.¹⁰⁵ After three years at Chaboillez Square, the secretary of the American Presbyterian Church's Home Mission Committee concluded that two important lessons had been learned: first of all, that the best way of evangelizing the city was for congregations to concentrate their efforts on particular localities; and second, that it was important for temperance work to play a central role in any city evangelization effort, since religion and temperance were 'essentially one, and should never be separated'.¹⁰⁶ The secretary also concluded that the mission had made a difference in the downtown area:

Before the establishment of the Chaboillez Square Mission, three years ago, the people residing in that locality, could say with some degree of truth, No man careth for our souls. Godlessness, and intemperance, with its

¹⁰¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A30 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1847-1874, 21 May 1866.

¹⁰² *Canadian Illustrated News*, 27 May 1871.

¹⁰³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A176 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Home Mission Committee 1866-1878, Newspaper clipping inserted 11 May 1870.

¹⁰⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 167, A99 42nd Annual Report of the American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society, 27 January 1868. Five Points was a slum area in New York that contained a large number of Irish Catholics and was thus a source of concern to the city's Protestant population.

¹⁰⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 8 May 1869

¹⁰⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 8 May 1869.

accompanying vices, abounded, and the people were destitute of the means of religious and intellectual improvement. But this can now be said no longer.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, despite making nearly 7,000 home visits in 1868, distributing 4,190 tracts, giving out 2,000 soup tickets, and providing 212 families with provisions and clothing, only 19 people actually joined the mission that year.

The Sunday School work was more popular, and the mission building quickly became so overcrowded that more than sixty children occupied the fifteen foot square infant class room.¹⁰⁸ During the heat of the summer, the discomfort was such that the trustees of the American Presbyterian Church gave permission for the Sunday school to move temporarily into the Lecture Room of the mother church on Dorchester Street. It soon became evident, however, that despite the relative proximity of the two buildings, the children were unwilling to attend an uptown Sunday school.¹⁰⁹ This prompted a return to the downtown location, and drew attention once again to the rift that had emerged between those living in uptown and downtown neighbourhoods. The opening of new schools in the vicinity by other denominations also resulted in a decline in numbers at the Chaboillez Square Mission in the late 1860s.¹¹⁰ At the mission's inception, there had only been two other schools, with a total attendance of 250 pupils, whereas by 1872 there were six schools with a regular attendance of over 1,000. While this represented a substantial overall gain, it was recognized that, once they were given a choice, many parents preferred to send their children to a Sunday school that was affiliated with a church with an ordained minister and a distinct denominational identity, rather than have their children attend an effectively non-denominational mission.¹¹¹

The erection of a commodious and substantial stone building on Inspector Street in 1871 provided the mission with better accommodation and appears to have had an

¹⁰⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A176 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Home Mission Committee 1866-1878, 29 April 1868.

¹⁰⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 167, A100 Third Annual Report of the Chaboillez Mission Sabbath School, 1 February 1869.

¹⁰⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 167, A102 Superintendent's Report School No.4 (Chaboillez Square), 16 January 1871.

¹¹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A176 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Home Mission Committee 1866-1878, 3 November 1869.

¹¹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 167, A103 Annual Report of the No.4 School (Chaboillez Square), 5 February 1872.

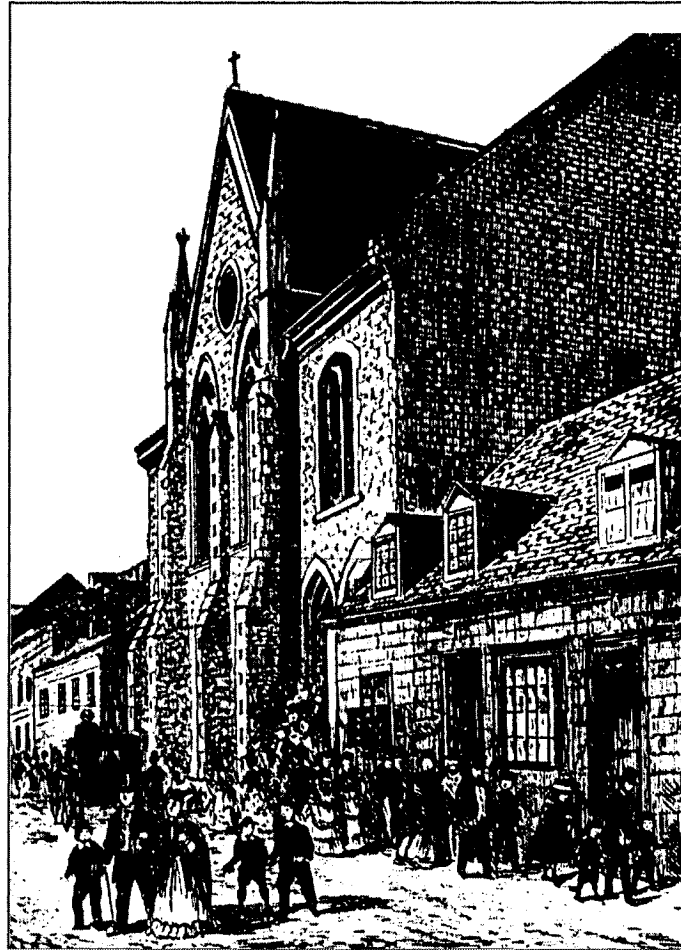


Figure 4.4 Inspector Street Mission, opened 1870.
(Source: *Canadian Illustrated News*, 27 May 1871).

impact on congregational life. The structure contained seating for approximately 500 worshippers, and – as can be seen in Figure 4.4 – resembled a proper church building. The disappearance of ‘the most turbulent and lawless’ of the Sunday school scholars was noted with relief soon after the removal to the new building, and was attributed to the opening of the News Boys’ Home on Mountain Street.¹¹² This event was seen as ushering in a new era in which the remaining students could be instructed properly.¹¹³ By 1873 the congregation worshipping at the mission was described as being ‘respectable in size and appearance’.¹¹⁴ The following year, it was reported once again that ‘a marked improvement’ was noticeable ‘in the appearance and demeanour’ of the Sunday congregations at Inspector Street.¹¹⁵ Careful records of membership were kept, and the names of new members at Inspector Street were entered in the minutes of session of the American Presbyterian Church. Pews in the mission were free, but both plate and envelope donations were collected from mission members. This boded well for the future ability of the congregation to provide for the maintenance and support of the Gospel amongst themselves, and by the early 1880s the congregation at Inspector Street was covering all the expenses of the mission-chapel¹¹⁶, with the exception of the pastor’s

¹¹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 169, A129 American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society Minute Book 1855-1871, 22 February 1871. For more on the News Boys’ Home, which was housed in Shaftsbury Hall, see Janice Harvey, *The Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Montreal Ladies’ Benevolent Society: A Case Study in Protestant Child Charity in Montreal, 1822-1900* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 2001), 102-105.

¹¹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 169, A129 American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society Minute Book 1855-1871, 6 November 1871.

¹¹⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A380 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Historical Sermon Preached by the Pastor, Rev. George H. Wells, May 18, 1873* (Montreal: D. Bentley and Co., 1873), 43.

¹¹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A176a Report of the Home Missionary Committee of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal for the year ending 30th April, 1874.

¹¹⁶ It is important to differentiate between the various possible meanings of the word ‘chapel’. The term ‘chapel’ (or ‘chapel of ease’) was used by both Anglicans and Catholics to refer to a church that was subordinate to a parish church. Prior to the subdivision of the Anglican Parish of Montreal in the early 1870s, all the other Anglican places of worship in Montreal were officially ‘chapels’ although many called themselves churches long before this event occurred. The term ‘chapel’ (or ‘branch church’) was also used in a similar way by non-Anglicans to refer to missions that were on their way to becoming independent churches, but that had not yet become fully self-sustaining churches, and it is in this sense that the term is used here. In Britain, the term chapel was also traditionally used to refer to a place of worship for Nonconformist bodies. Although this usage of the word was current in Montreal in the early part of the 19th century (e.g. St James Street Methodist Chapel), it appears to have gone out of fashion once the equality of the various Protestant groups was established in Canada. In the early 1870s, the Rev. Chapman – a Congregationalist minister in Montreal – told the members of his former chapel in England that in Canada

salary.¹¹⁷ Over time, members of the mission appear to have become more involved in the management of the mission-chapel and at some point during the 1880s a board of management was created that included members of both the uptown church and the mission. The chapel members also became more assertive, asking to be allowed to establish direct relations with some presbytery (while retaining their connection with the American Presbyterian Church) and for two elders to be appointed for the chapel, preferably chosen from the Inspector Street congregation.¹¹⁸ Thus, by the end of the period discussed in this chapter, the Inspector Street Chapel appeared to be well on its way from being a mission to becoming an independent congregation. The American Presbyterian Church still carried on charitable and mission work at the chapel, but at the same time an independent and near self-supporting congregation had emerged that was anxious to take on the duties of managing and financing their own place of worship.

St Mark's Presbyterian Church

St Mark's Presbyterian Church was initially built to replace a mission station that had been started in Griffintown in 1864 (Figure 4.5). The various Church of Scotland congregations in Montreal had been coordinating their missionary efforts as early as the mid-1840s, when leading members of the Church of Scotland formed the 'Lay Association of the Presbyterian Church in Canada' to help poor or small congregations pay for their clergy and erect places of worship.¹¹⁹ The Presbytery had wanted to erect a building in this district for a long time, feeling that the Church of Scotland families in the neighbourhood needed 'the ordinances of Christianity brought closer to their doors'.¹²⁰ A \$2,000 gift by William Dow for the purchase of a site, active assistance from members of

'they called all places of worship... churches', which did away with distinctions 'which at times might be unpleasant to their feelings' (*Canadian Independent*, 20(3) (September 1873), 'State of Religion in Canada', 77-79).

¹¹⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A243 Benevolent Fund Reports 1876-1893, 7 November 1882; also Contenant 181, Correspondence and Receipts 1880s, Report of the Treasurer of the Home Mission Committee (W.S. Patterson) to the Benevolent Fund Committee of the American Presbyterian Church, 7 November 1882.

¹¹⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 30 March 1887; 28 November 1887.

¹¹⁹ *Statutes of Canada*, 27th Victoria (1863), Cap. LXXXVI, p.406-407.

¹²⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 25 October 1869; *The Presbyterian*, May 1871.



Figure 4.5 St Mark's Presbyterian Church, opened 1869.
(Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection. Photo taken in 1910).

St Andrew's and St Paul's churches, as well as donations from individuals in Scotland and Liverpool, made it possible to carry out the church-building scheme.¹²¹ St Mark's Church appears to have catered to a somewhat better-off congregation than the missions: a list of the church's initial members included skilled workers such as boltmakers, machinists, and fitters, as well as those belonging to the lower-middle classes, including clerks and local shop owners.¹²² It was noted, however, that the Rev. John Nichols' ability to achieve 'a fairly good and regular attendance in a district where such attendance at church services is hard to secure'¹²³ was attributable to his constant visitation of parishioners and that - like his non-ordained counterparts at the missions - he accepted the call to become minister of the church in 1876 because of 'the many opportunities for spreading the Gospel tidings among the working classes'.¹²⁴

Unlike the two missions, St Mark's had an ordained minister and its own registers throughout the period under study and was opened primarily with the intention of serving the church-going population belonging to the Church of Scotland. St Mark's also had its own session, as well as a board of management, and was therefore responsible for its own spiritual and temporal affairs. It initially raised money through pew rents, before shifting to the envelope system in the late 1870s.¹²⁵ When switching to the envelope system it was estimated that eight dollars per annum would be needed from each member and adherent to keep the temporal affairs of the church in order, a sizable sum in a district where labourers lived in dwellings with assessed yearly rents in the \$30-\$40 range, and individuals with slightly better paying jobs, such as carters, tailors, and policemen, lived in dwellings with assessed rents in the \$50-\$60 range.¹²⁶ The congregation struggled to

¹²¹ *The Presbyterian*, December 1869; ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/5 St Mark's Miscellaneous, List of Contributors to St Mark's Church to 23rd October 1869.

¹²² ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2a Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1870-1885, 26 May 1871. Occupations are from Lovell's City Directory for Montreal, 1870-71, 1871-72.

¹²³ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, June 1898, 5.

¹²⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1a Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1873-1878, Newspaper clipping inserted c. September 1876.

¹²⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1a Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1873-1878, 6 June 1877; 8 November 1877; 21 November 1877; 29 December 1877.

¹²⁶ Dorothy Cross, 'The Irish in Montreal, 1867-1896' (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1969), 204-205, 304-305. The figures quoted are based on Cross's values for 1881. For more detailed information on rent scales in Montreal, see Sherry Olson and David Hanna, 'Social Change in Montreal, 1842-1901', in

raise such sums, particularly during the prolonged economic depression of the late 1870s and early 1880s, when they came under threat of having their property sold at a Sheriff's sale.¹²⁷ They also had difficulty caring for the church property, which in turn threatened the ability of the church to retain its members. A committee appointed to conduct a house-to-house collection to fund the cleaning of the church interior reported that they had heard numerous complaints concerning the 'dirty dusty and unventilated condition' of the church, as well as the 'outside surroundings which are very discreditable in or near a place of worship'. Fearing that church membership would decrease, since a short walk would bring members to clean and comfortable places of worship, they urged that instant measures be taken 'to remedy the evils so bitterly complained of by many'. Otherwise, they maintained, 'the most eloquent preaching, the most assiduous attention on the part of the Minister and his Elders will utterly fail to secure and retain a congregation in St Mark's Church under existing circumstances'.¹²⁸ Even at the best of times, church finances were precarious as a result of the small size of the membership (never more than 187 in the pre-1889 period)¹²⁹ and competition with other Presbyterian places of worship, with the result that St Mark's depended on financial assistance from Presbytery funds for much of the period under study.¹³⁰ Thus, while St Mark's maintained its status as a church rather than a mission, and served a group of church-goers who were anxious to support themselves and manage their own church affairs without the assistance of the uptown churches, the congregation never attained (on any sustained basis) the full independence to which its members aspired.

Historical Atlas of Canada: The Land Transformed 1800-1891, ed. R. Louis Gentilcore (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993), Vol.2, Plate 49.

¹²⁷ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 25 December 1881.

¹²⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1b Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1886-1897, 28 March 1888.

¹²⁹ Douglas Walkington, *Statistical Tables of the Churches, Missions, Finances of the Synod of Montreal & Ottawa, Presbyterian Church in Canada 1875 to 1925* (Montreal and Ottawa Conference, United Church of Canada 1977), Vol.1, 69.

¹³⁰ See, for example, PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, January 1885; 10 May 1887; March 1895.

It was noted in the late 1860s that four or five churches now served Griffintown, where but a few years before there had only been two churches.¹³¹ The perception of Griffintown as an area in desperate need of both spiritual and material improvement had evidently resulted in an impressive increase in the provision of church and mission accommodation over a relatively short period of time. Presbyterians were disproportionately responsible for this increase, partly as a result of their sectarian divisions, and partly because of the greater tendency for their city-centre congregations to depart for the uptown district, which encouraged them to erect places of worship to serve those left behind in areas such as Griffintown. The uptown relocation of numerous Presbyterian congregations also removed all the original Presbyterian 'assets' from the downtown area, which meant that entirely new funding had to be found to support efforts in Griffintown. These factors contributed to the presence of two Presbyterian missions, and the relative smallness and simplicity of all three places of worship. Such an outcome was consistent with the fact that Presbyterians were among the more outspoken advocates of people worshipping in buildings that corresponded with their financial means.¹³² It was nevertheless the case that a greater willingness on the part of uptown Presbyterian congregations to cooperate would almost certainly have made it possible for local churchgoers to sustain one substantial Presbyterian church in the district. The sectarian divisions within Presbyterianism, and the desire on the part of the American Presbyterian and Crescent Street congregations to continue evangelization and charitable work in the district, hindered efforts to amalgamate the various Presbyterian concerns. This ensured the continued dependence of all three places of worship, and in particular the two missions, on uptown churches for their survival. It also effectively created a hierarchy of services, in which each Presbyterian church and mission in the area served a slightly different niche within the community and was granted a level of autonomy that was defined largely by the socio-economic status of its members.

¹³¹ *Montreal Witness*, 22 September 1869

¹³² See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 28 November 1879.

Congregationalists in Griffintown: Lacking Critical Mass

Theologically, Zion Congregational Church was closely related to the American Presbyterian Church, and - as its members became swept up in the revivalism of the late 1850s and early 1860s - it experienced a similar wave of renewed enthusiasm for evangelizing the more destitute parts of the city. Zion Church was also similar to the American Presbyterian Church in the sense that the denominational body to which it belonged represented only a very small segment of the Protestant population, which meant that up until this point each had only been able to sustain one congregation in the city.¹³³ The American Presbyterian Church seems to have accepted that it was to some extent an 'ethnic' church, and therefore decided to leave church extension work to the mainstream Presbyterian denominations and instead concentrate its own efforts on mission work in various parts of the city. In contrast, the Congregationalists found themselves torn between the desire to multiply the number of fully-fledged Congregational churches in the city and their wish to participate in more explicit mission work in working-class districts. As discussed in Chapter 2, Zion Church was also very different from the elitist American Presbyterian Church in terms of its expressed desire to be a missionary church that welcomed the poor who lived in close proximity to its site at the base of Beaver Hall Hill.

Throughout the 1850s, the deacons of Zion Church tried to persuade the congregation to employ a city missionary, arguing that such an appointment would enable the church to fulfil its role as a missionary enterprise.¹³⁴ They critically observed that Zion's Sunday school consisted primarily of the children of members of the congregation, and that only a very few children belonging to 'the poor and destitute classes' were in

¹³³ The Congregationalists had attempted to establish a Second Congregational Church on Gosford Street, in the eastern section of the old town, in 1843. Riddled by debt, this effort was forced to close c.1853. The building was later used by the congregation of Christ Church following the destruction of their church in 1856, and also by Trinity Anglican Church while their new building was under construction. The elegant neoclassical building was subsequently used as a theatre, an opera house, and a vinegar factory, before being demolished to make way for the annex to City Hall (*Montreal Churchman*, Vol. 30(6) (September 1942), 'The early history of Gosford Street Church', by Frank D. Adams, 5).

¹³⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 363, ZIO/1/3/1 Minutes Deacons Meetings 1848-1864, 22 March 1852; 6 August 1852; 27 September 1852; 12 December 1853; 18 December 1854; December 1858; Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes of Annual Meetings Deacons of Zion Church 1850-1864, Deacons' Report for 1854, presented 17 January 1855.

attendance.¹³⁵ Financial constraints prevented the congregation from carrying out the deacons' wishes until 1860, when John Gray was engaged as their city missionary.¹³⁶ Rather than working in the district surrounding the church or in nearby Griffintown, Mr Gray was assigned to cover the area that Zion Church had been allocated as part of the systematic visitation inspired by the Rev. H. Newcombe's visit in 1858 (described earlier in this chapter). Soon thereafter a mission station was opened in the western end of the city on St Joseph Street (somewhere between Mountain and Guy streets), in which a Sunday school and religious services were conducted.¹³⁷ It was anticipated that the mission would evolve into a second Congregational church, but hopes were dashed in 1862 when – as the Rev. Henry Wilkes put it – 'Our Presbyterian friends stepped in: a wealthy member of that denomination erected St Joseph St. Presbyterian Church, and, of course, our mission was at an end, and we withdrew'.¹³⁸ As a result, Mr Gray resigned as their missionary and Zion's mission focus in the west end shifted farther east to a Sunday and day school located on Mountain Street, on the fringes of the study area (see Figure 4.1).¹³⁹ As described in Chapter 2, it was at this point that tensions began to surface in the congregation between those favouring church extension in promising localities, those

¹³⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes of Annual Meetings Deacons of Zion Church 1850-1864, Deacons Report for 1853, presented 28 December 1853.

¹³⁶ CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 25.

¹³⁷ CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 25; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes of Annual Meetings Deacons of Zion Church 1850-1864, Annual Report 1860; Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 12 April 1859; 14 May 1860; P603, S2, SS96, Fonds ERS, Contenant 440, E31 Montreal United Presbyterian Church Missionary Committee Minute Book 1856-1872, 23 October 1860. There also appears to have been a day school attached to this mission.

¹³⁸ Wood, *Memoir of Henry Wilkes*, 168. The St Joseph Street Presbyterian Church was later renamed Calvin Presbyterian.

¹³⁹ It is unclear whether there was any continuity between an earlier Mountain Street Mission School that was opened by Zion Church in 1846 and the subsequent Mountain Street Sunday School that existed during the 1860s. The original mission was given up by Zion Church in 1849 as a result of the financial depression (ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 10 December 1849). It is possible that the Mountain Street Mission School continued to be carried on independently by members and friends of Zion Church during the period between c.1848-1860 (see ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, 1872 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1871. Presented at the annual meeting of the Church held Jany. 17th, 1872* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House 1872), Report of Shaftsbury Hall Sunday-School, 20).

promoting the establishment of mission stations in poorer neighbourhoods, and those who wished to place more emphasis on evangelizing the neighbourhood surrounding Zion Church.

There appears to have been relatively little support for the position of those seeking to reemphasize Zion Church's role as a missionary church. An exception was James P. Clark, a dry goods merchant and long-standing church member, who wrote a letter expressing his opinion following the collapse of the mission and the resignation of Mr Gray as church missionary:

If you will recollect our Church in St Maurice Street resolved that Zion Church should be above all a Mission Church to the poor in its vicinity. We lost sight of that very soon I fear and have scattered our means twice now on the same distant vicinity.¹⁴⁰ - I should advise that now, the Church (not its individual members brought to face the responsibility specially, but that the church) support a missionary; that he be employed about our own neighbourhood among the neglected in our immediate vicinity, the children of such could be easily brought to a Sabbath morning school held for them and brought together by the Missionary's labours, and during the week meetings of the parents and others called together in our own lecture room. By this means all expenses would be saved except the Missionary's salary [emphasis in original].¹⁴¹

While Mr Clark's views reflect a business-like attention to matters of economy, his belief that it was desirable for people from all ranks of society to come together (albeit at different times) in the same building was decidedly at odds with contemporary trends. By 1865, the congregation was anxious to extend the work of their denomination outside the bounds of the home church, but was still divided over whether to emphasize mission work or church extension. A debate by members of Zion's Sabbath School Society over whether the title of 'Congregational Church Building Society' was an appropriate name to give to the new organization that was being created to raise funds for the erection of new places of worship in the city sheds light on these divisions.¹⁴² Charles Alexander, a well-known philanthropist and one of the founders of the News Boys' Home, and Theodore

¹⁴⁰ Mr Clark appears to be referring to the mission on St Joseph Street, as well as to an earlier Mountain Street Mission School that had opened in 1846. See previous note.

¹⁴¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6/1 Minutes Annual Meetings 1850-1864, Letter from James P. Clark to Henry Vennor [inserted following the Deacons' Report for 1862, presented 14 January 1863], no date.

¹⁴² See ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 20 November 1865.

Lyman both argued that the word 'mission' should be included in the name of the society. Others, including Messrs. Baylis and Popham, objected to this...

because all the missionary efforts of Zion Church had hitherto [the word 'failed' is crossed out here] been of a temporary character, and the name of mission attached to a church building would give it a temporary character, which would not so readily attract a congregation as would one known and recognized to be permanently established.¹⁴³

This led to further disagreement over the type of building that should be constructed. Theodore Lyman – as a proponent of mission work – felt that 'the class for whom the proposed Church was intended would prefer to enter a small mission building than a capacious church'.¹⁴⁴ Peter Wood, who favoured church extension, objected that the erection of small mission churches would prove a failure and that what was needed was a second Congregational church that was sufficiently large to accommodate a congregation capable of sustaining it. The ultimate decision to call the new organization the 'Montreal Congregational Mission Church Building Society' reflected the inconclusive outcome of the above debate.¹⁴⁵

A lack of consensus also existed over whether priority should be given to work in the west or the east ends of the city. By 1866, it had been decided that the congregation would first move forward with plans for an eastern Congregational church, and then turn its attention towards the rapidly growing western section of the city.¹⁴⁶ Some congregation members were eager, however, to get involved in mission work in Griffintown and saw the area as providing an opportunity to carry out 'a real Missionary effort, as the persons attending there neither belonged nor attended any other church'.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 20 November 1865.

¹⁴⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 20 November 1865.

¹⁴⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 3 January 1866.

¹⁴⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 3 January 1866. For more information on the Eastern Congregational Church, see *Montreal Witness*, 1 March 1869; 11 February 1871. The Eastern Congregational Church became an independent congregation in 1871, but was eventually forced to close in 1880 – partly due to its poor location, and partly due to the ongoing economic depression.

¹⁴⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 3 January 1866; see also 20 November 1865.

At a time when the Montreal City Mission's days were numbered, Zion Church's Sunday School Society seems to have considered hiring Samuel Massey to work under their auspices, the idea being to have a mission building in some locality where his work in Griffintown could be combined with that of the Mountain Street Mission already belonging to Zion Church.¹⁴⁸ Instead, the American Presbyterian Church took over this field, which then became the Chaboillez Square Mission (discussed above). The American Presbyterian Home Mission Committee evidently felt somewhat threatened by the proximity of the Mountain Street Sunday School. Aware that Zion Church wished to commit more resources to the area and possibly build a mission station at the corner of St Joseph and Mountain Streets, they proceeded to monitor the situation closely until they were convinced that the plans of Zion Church would not 'interfere with the usefulness' of the Chaboillez Square Mission.¹⁴⁹ Only a few years later, in the late 1860s or early 1870s, the Mountain Street Mission found itself homeless, but was given permission by the Methodists to use their Desrivières Street Mission Building temporarily.¹⁵⁰ A more permanent home was found in 1871, when the Sunday School moved into Shaftsbury Hall (on the periphery of the study area; see Figure 4.1).¹⁵¹ What became known as the Shaftsbury Hall Mission prospered in its new location and eventually evolved into an

¹⁴⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 362, ZIO/15/1/1 Minutes First Congregational Sabbath School Society 1847-1868, 3 January 1866. A twentieth-century history of the congregation (George R. Lighthall, ed., *A Short History of the American Presbyterian Church of Montreal 1823-1923* (Montreal, 1923), 24) suggests that the American Presbyterian and Zion churches initially worked together in Griffintown, but subsequently went their separate ways. Although no evidence could be found of this in the church records, it is possible that the two churches may have worked together in Griffintown under the auspices of the Montreal City Mission.

¹⁴⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A175 Letter from C.A. Stark to H.A. Nelson Esq., 12 February 1867. See also ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A176 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Home Mission Committee 1866-1878, 7 May 1866; 4 June 1866; 4 March 1867; 7 May 1867.

¹⁵⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, 1872 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1871. Presented at the annual meeting of the Church held Jany. 17th, 1872* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House 1872), Report of Shaftsbury Hall Sunday-School, 20.

¹⁵¹ Shaftsbury Hall was located higher up on Mountain Street, just above the Grand Trunk railway station. The building did not belong to Zion Church, but was instead erected by wealthy members of Zion Congregational Church to house homeless boys. Space in the building was therefore offered to the church free of charge. See CIHM 42749, *Brief Annals of Zion Church, Montreal, from 1832 to 10th May, 1871* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House, 1871), 71; ANQ, P603, S2, SS52, Fonds ZIO, Contenant 361, ZIO/6 *Year Book of Zion Church, Montreal, 1872 with lists of office-bearers and reports for 1871. Presented at the annual meeting of the Church held Jany. 17th, 1872* (Montreal: Witness Steam Printing House 1872), Report of the Church Board for 1871.

independent congregation. In 1877, with \$5,000 of financial assistance from Zion Church, the congregation chose the name Calvary for their new church which was located on Guy Street, outside the boundaries of the study area.¹⁵² While it was hoped that the new church would serve the manufacturing population located 'in that part of the city',¹⁵³ it was nevertheless carefully positioned on the edge of the more prosperous uptown district where it would be able to attract a congregation capable of supporting a minister and paying for the maintenance of the church building.

Representing only a very small percentage of the Protestant population, Congregationalists lacked the critical mass required to sustain an independent church in a working-class and predominantly Catholic area such as Griffintown. While larger denominations had the resources to pursue mission and church extension schemes in working-class districts, the Congregationalists had a much smaller number of wealthy members on whom to draw for support. The Congregational form of church government also mediated against the erection of churches in working-class neighbourhoods because it lacked the hierarchical structures that other denominations used to coordinate and sustain their efforts. This left the members of Zion Congregational torn between their desire as enthusiastic evangelicals to pursue mission work amongst unchurched individuals living in a challenging district like Griffintown, and their desire to promote Congregationalism in Montreal by placing missions in areas where they stood a better chance of eventually becoming fully-fledged independent congregations. The latter, more pragmatic course, prevailed, although even this proved problematic. Because of the loss of many of its leading members to Emmanuel Congregational Church, those remaining at Zion found themselves weighed down by the financial obligations that had been undertaken as part of the church extension efforts. Meanwhile, without 'start-up' funds from the sale of an old church building, the congregation at Emmanuel Church had little money left over to support outside causes. As a result, the Eastern Congregational Church that had emerged out of mission work in the east end collapsed during the depression of the late 1870s, while the financial burden imposed on Zion Church itself as a result of its church extension efforts contributed to its financial downfall in the 1880s.

¹⁵² *Canadian Independent*, 20(8) (February 1874), 247; *Canadian Illustrated News*, 8 July 1876, 19.

¹⁵³ *Canadian Independent*, 19(7) (January 1873), 232.

Despite their enthusiasm for home missionary endeavours, it seems likely that the failure of the Congregationalists to see mission and church extension efforts through to a successful conclusion in working class districts of Montreal helped to ensure that Congregationalism remained the religious expression of a social grouping representing the very middle of the social spectrum, as was the case in England.¹⁵⁴

Anglicans in Griffintown: St Stephen's Church

The better-implemented parish system, more hierarchical power structure, and unity of the Anglican Church might lead one to anticipate that class issues, church relocation, and competing forces within the denomination would have had a less significant influence on the provision of church accommodation in Griffintown than was the case with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. While this was largely the case, closer examination revealed that, because Anglicans in Griffintown also had to respond to many of the same changes taking place in the social geography of the city, there were numerous similarities amongst the various denominations.

A chapel, later called St Stephen's, was built to serve Anglicans living in Griffintown in the 1840s. Thus, they had their own place of worship long before their Presbyterian counterparts in the neighbourhood. According to John Irwin Cooper, Anglican services were conducted in rented rooms on Wellington Street as early as 1834, supported by the Pastoral Aid Society in connection with Christ Church.¹⁵⁵ By the 1840s, the newly-created Montreal District Association of the Diocesan Church Society was continuing the support of missionary work among the labouring and poorer classes in St Ann's Suburb, with the hope that improved circumstances would soon enable the people to provide for a clergyman on their own.¹⁵⁶ Given the distance to Christ Church on Notre Dame Street, the Rector of the Parish of Montreal soon gave permission for a chapel of ease to be built in the area.

¹⁵⁴ Sellers, 'Congregationalists and Presbyterians', 80.

¹⁵⁵ John Irwin Cooper, *The Blessed Communion: the Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-1960* (Montreal: The Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal 1960), 40.

¹⁵⁶ MDA, Fonds Church Society of the Diocese of Montreal, Minutes Montreal District Association 1843-1845, 10 January 1844.

Unlike the other Protestant congregations in Griffintown, there is evidence that an important Irish Protestant and Orange element was associated with the Anglican congregation.¹⁵⁷ At the laying of the cornerstone for the new chapel, which took place just days before the 12 July 1844, an attempt to decorate an arch with the highly symbolic orange lily resulted in an unfortunate incident. Although accounts vary somewhat, conflict appears to have broken out, precipitating an accident in which several people were severely injured and forcing the postponement of the cornerstone laying ceremony in which the Governor General, Sir Charles Metcalfe, was supposed to take part.¹⁵⁸ Many of the clergymen associated with the chapel were Irish or of Irish descent. The chapel's first clergyman, Rev. Dr. Falloon, was not only an Irishman and an Orangeman but also a former Methodist and an historian of medieval Ireland.¹⁵⁹ He was succeeded in 1848 by the Rev. Jacob Ellegood who, although not Irish, gained the respect of the Irish community as a result of his ministrations to the Irish famine victims who arrived in the late 1840s.¹⁶⁰ The succeeding rector (1864-1873), the Rev. W.B. Curran, was an Irish Canadian,¹⁶¹ while the Rev. William Sanders, who was rector from 1898 to 1938, was a committed and active Orangeman.¹⁶² The congregation's response to the Rebellion Losses Bill in 1849 is also suggestive. Unhappy with Lord Elgin's support for the Bill, a deputation from the congregation (representing what one parishioner later described as

¹⁵⁷ Given that those of Irish Protestant origin made up a higher percentage of Methodists (29.7%) than Anglicans (24.3%) according to the 1881 Manuscript Census, it seems likely that the Ottawa Street Methodist Church would also have had a strong Irish Protestant presence.

¹⁵⁸ *Montreal Gazette*, 10 July 1844; Cooper, *The Blessed Communion*, 40; SJA, *Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine*, Vol. 1(8) (August 1895), 'Parochial Reminiscences by the Rector (Rev. Canon Ellegood)'. During the elections that took place the same year, Sir Charles Metcalfe was accused by reformers of collaborating with Orangemen (Hereward Senior, *Orangeism: The Canadian Phase* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson 1972), 43).

¹⁵⁹ *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878; G.R.C. Keep, *The Irish Immigration to Montreal 1847-1867* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1948), 81. Very few parish records survive for the early years of St Ann's Anglican Church. We must therefore rely on accounts of parish life written later on in the nineteenth century, including a very detailed account that was published in serial form in the *Dominion Churchman* in 1878, written by 'An old parishioner'. This account is later quoted by the Rev. Canon Ellegood in his own account of the parish, which was published in the parish magazine of the Church of St James the Apostle in 1895. The willingness of Canon Ellegood to use this source suggests that he considered it to be reliable.

¹⁶⁰ *Dominion Churchman*, 25 April 1878.

¹⁶¹ *Montreal Gazette*, 'The Church in Weredale Park' by Edgar Andrew Collard, 16 November 1974.

¹⁶² MDA, Fonds St Edward's Parish, Box 2, Folder 1, Memorial Pamphlet for Rev. Canon William Sanders: A service of grateful remembrance in St Edward's Church, Montreal, on Sunday 3rd November 1940.

the 'irascible people who sympathized with the lawless class of that period') approached the Rev. Ellegood and requested that he cease saying the appointed prayer for the Governor General. They argued that 'His Excellency had behaved badly, for he had not stood by the loyal party, and generally had fallen into grave errors and worse'.¹⁶³ Although the Rev. Ellegood found himself unable to comply with their request, the congregation registered their protest by collectively omitting the responsive 'Amen' at the end of the prayer. Orangemen received much of the blame for the revolt that occurred in Montreal in protest against the Rebellion Losses Bill. The refusal to participate in prayers for the Governor General can therefore be seen as a more sedate expression of the same feelings that were voiced in a more animated fashion by the mobs who burned down the parliament buildings.¹⁶⁴

Land for the Anglican chapel, which was at first known as St Ann's, was donated by John Crooks and Judge McCord, although the latter subsequently allowed his property to be sold in order to help pay for the building.¹⁶⁵ The chapel was described as follows:

The building was of the 'Ebenezer' type, large, commodious and ugly. It was never finished, the galleries were without seats, the wood work was without paint, and there were neither vestry...nor school rooms. The furnishings were very limited; there was no organ and no choir books; the sacred vessels were of inferior metal. In fact the seal of poverty was broadly set everywhere. Everything about the place was as bare as indigence, and as hard as the uncushioned boards on which the worshippers sat.¹⁶⁶

Despite donations from outside sources, a large debt remained on the building. The financial outlook was therefore gloomy, as the congregation was composed, with only a few exceptions, of 'mechanics and persons whose employment was irregular and uncertain'.¹⁶⁷ The following observation was made, however, of the more stable ministry that was established under the Rev. Ellegood:

People [were] gradually drawn towards the new Church, and notwithstanding the difficulties occasioned by distance and darkness, for street lamps were few and far between, the congregation, not only very sensibly increased in

¹⁶³ *Dominion Churchman*, 25 April 1878.

¹⁶⁴ Senior, *Orangeism*, 44-45.

¹⁶⁵ *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878.

¹⁶⁶ *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878.

¹⁶⁷ *Dominion Churchman*, 11 April 1878.

number, but it was composed of all sorts and conditions of people, who seemed generally to be possessed of an excellent spirit towards their Church.¹⁶⁸

This suggests that the congregation at this time included both a relatively poor local element, as well as a more socially diverse component that was attracted to the church from a broader area.

In 1850, the chapel was destroyed by fire, along with about 200 surrounding buildings that housed blacksmiths, carpenters, and mechanics, some of whom were parishioners.¹⁶⁹ Although distressed at the loss of their church, the congregation was nevertheless comforted by the fact that the insurance money allowed them to pay off the heavy debt still remaining on the building. It was also believed that it would be much easier to collect funds to build a new church than it would have been to raise money to pay off the debt on the old one.¹⁷⁰ With the sanction of the recently-arrived Bishop Fulford, an appeal for assistance was printed and sent out to Anglicans elsewhere in the city, throughout Canada, and abroad. It was emphasized that the church was 'emphatically the church of the poor' and that the congregation was incapable of rebuilding without outside assistance.¹⁷¹ Subscriptions were thus obtained from as far afield as the Bishop of Durham, and sufficient money was soon raised to justify getting started on the new church.¹⁷² Discussion arose, however, as to the prospective site of the new building. According to one account:

[m]any persons desired that the second building should be put up in the higher latitudes of respectability and fashion in order that the inhabitants of those latitudes might be saved from walking through dreary and unattractive localities. Besides the argument of convenience, there was also a very fair one put forward, grounded on a basis of expediency and worldly prudence, which, being reduced to a few words, meant, 'the better neighbourhood the better revenue'.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ *Dominion Churchman*, 25 April 1878.

¹⁶⁹ *Montreal Gazette*, 17 June 1850

¹⁷⁰ SJA, *Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine*, Vol. 1(10) (October 1895), 'Parochial Reminiscences by the Rector (Rev. Canon Ellegood)'.

¹⁷¹ *Montreal Gazette*, 24 September 1850.

¹⁷² SJA, *Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine*, Vol. 1(10) (October 1895), 'Parochial Reminiscences by the Rector (Rev. Canon Ellegood)'.

¹⁷³ *Dominion Churchman*, 9 May 1878. Rev. Ellegood confirms that this statement is true in his own parochial reminiscences.

The Rev. Ellegood argued, however, that as the land had originally been donated for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Griffintown and for Anglicans generally living in that part of the city, it would be unprincipled to move to another location.¹⁷⁴ Having persuaded his parishioners and supporters to back this position, a modest church was erected and reopened in the old location towards the end of 1851 (Figure 4.6). Since the Irish Roman Catholics had meanwhile dedicated their newly-built church in Griffintown to St Ann, the Anglicans felt compelled to change the name of their chapel to St Stephen's at this point. Although some wished that St Stephen's could join the ranks of 'free and open' churches, financial considerations required that pew rents be levied to support the church and pay down the debt that remained on the building until 1857. Thus, despite economic hardship and encouragement to relocate by those wishing to transplant the church to a more promising location, the Anglican church in Griffintown resisted the temptation to follow other churches uptown. The fact that Anglicans had purposefully established churches in poorer neighbourhoods in their efforts to implement a parish system, and had collected funds from outside donors with the express understanding that the money would be used to assist poorer parishioners, ensured that those living in working-class districts such as Griffintown would retain their own church buildings.

It was not long, however, before St Stephen's lost a considerable number of members to the newly erected Church of St James the Apostle when it opened in 1864. The Rev. Ellegood was very active in the church extension efforts that led to this event. With support from the management of the Grand Trunk Railway, he had already helped to establish an Anglican mission about a mile to the south-west of St Stephen's, to serve the mechanics and labourers who had moved into Point St Charles when building the Victoria Bridge between 1854 and 1859.¹⁷⁵ He also turned his attention to the direction in which the city's more affluent citizens were moving. As a result, the Church of St James the Apostle was built on a lot of land in the north-west of the city that had been donated by Mr and Mrs Charles Phillips. Funds for the project were provided by a number of wealthy donors, many of whom owned land in the area, including the heirs of the Mackay

¹⁷⁴ SJA, *Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine*, Vol. 1(10) (October 1895), 'Parochial Reminiscences by the Rector (Rev. Canon Ellegood)'. See also *Dominion Churchman*, 9 May 1878.

¹⁷⁵ This effort ultimately evolved into Grace Church, which opened in 1871 and was for many years the city's largest working-class Anglican congregation.

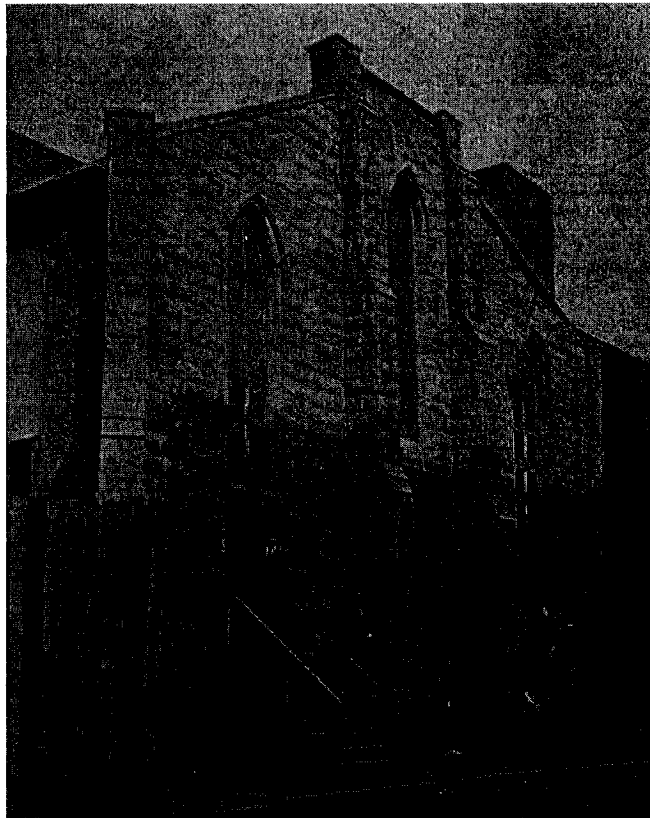
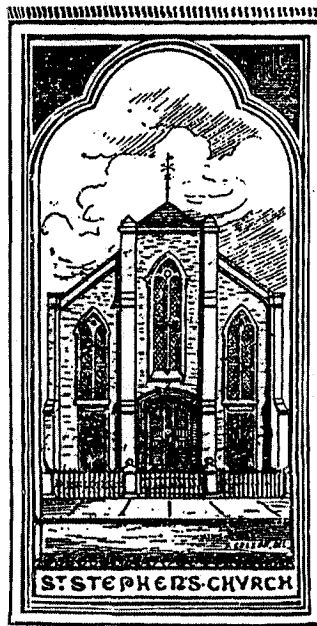


Figure 4.6 St Stephen's Anglican Church, Dalhousie Street. Both images show the second church, constructed on the site of the original church c.1851. The photograph at the bottom is of the church as it appeared in 1912, windows broken, long after it had been abandoned by the congregation for a new location on Haymarket Square (Sources: MDA, *Historical Sketch of St Stephen's Parish*, n.d. (top); BNQ, Massicotte Collection (bottom)).

estate, who were Presbyterians, and the Irish Protestant Unitarian, William Workman.¹⁷⁶ When the Rev. Ellegood agreed to take charge of the new parish, many of the seat holders of St Stephen's living in the upper part of the city decided to join their minister in his new uptown church, leaving a depleted St Stephen's under the care of the Rev. W.B. Curran.¹⁷⁷ In timing and geography, this move was in fact very similar to that of other churches that had moved uptown. In the case of St Stephen's, however, the parish structure at least ensured that the original church edifice, its parish registers, and its system of church governance were left for the use of communicants remaining in the original church district.

By the late 1870s, the building housing St Stephen's, despite being less than forty years old, was the oldest place of public worship belonging to the Anglican Church in Montreal, and plans were underway to replace it with a new church somewhat further uptown, on land recently donated to the parish by Mr John Harris.¹⁷⁸ Although the new location was not far from the original site, it was nevertheless necessary for the north-western boundary of the parish to be officially extended in order to permit the move to be made.¹⁷⁹ This may explain why the Young Men's Christian Association of St George's Church - the driving force behind the extensive missionary work and church extension efforts associated with that congregation¹⁸⁰ - decided to discontinue their Bonaventure Street Mission in 1879, arguing that the mission was not really needed and that the children attending its Sunday school could be accommodated by adjacent parochial Sunday schools.¹⁸¹ Significantly, the Bonaventure mission had been established soon after the uptown move of the mother church and was located in the downtown sector of St

¹⁷⁶ *Dominion Churchman*, 6 June 1878.

¹⁷⁷ *Montreal Herald*, 27 January 1864; 30 January 1864.

¹⁷⁸ *Dominion Churchman*, 4 July 1878.

¹⁷⁹ *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada - held in the City of Montreal on the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th days of June, in the year of our Lord MDCCCLXXV* (Montreal: John Lovell 1875), 640-641.

¹⁸⁰ See STG, *St George's Monthly*, Vol.1(7) (April 1908), 8-9. St George's YMCA was founded in 1865. The congregation's decision to move uptown was taken the following year, suggesting that once again there was a correlation between the decision to embark on mission work and uptown church relocation.

¹⁸¹ *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1879. The mission was located midway between McGill Street and the Grand Trunk railway station (STG, *St George's Monthly*, Vol.2(4) (January 1909), 22).

George's parish, close to the site of the original St George's Church (see Figure 4.1).¹⁸² This suggests that, despite the nearby presence of St Stephen's Church in Griffintown, St George's Church – like its Presbyterian counterparts – felt the need to engage in mission work in the district it had left behind.

The new Gothic church of St Stephen's, with its soaring steeple, was much grander and architecturally sophisticated than its predecessor, and outshone any of the various Presbyterian structures in the neighbourhood (Figure 4.7).¹⁸³ Also notable were the extensive facilities that formed part of the new building, including a Sabbath school, class rooms, library, young men's Christian association rooms, parochial school room, cloak and washrooms, and an apartment for the vestry clerk. Despite erecting a church that cost \$45,500 (in contrast, for example, with St Mark's which cost only \$6,500), St Stephen's congregation nevertheless managed to have the church consecrated at the same time as it was opened in 1884, a remarkable feat that was almost unheard of since it required the church to be free of debt.¹⁸⁴ This was only accomplished, however, by drawing once again on support from the larger Anglican community. Many years later, when questioned about the church-building project, the Rev. Lewis Evans described how he was assisted by generous donations from the many wealthy friends he had made during his years as assistant at Christ Church Cathedral.¹⁸⁵ He nevertheless denied (albeit rather ambiguously) that his appeal for funds from outside the parish had been based on the need to assist a poor district, arguing that St Stephen's congregation would have resented him doing any such thing:

If you ask me to state whether thirty years ago I asked for a subscription, and somebody said: 'Are there many poor down there' as to whether I said: 'Yes, there are a good many poor there', perhaps I may have said so. Perhaps I may

¹⁸² The *Montreal Witness*, 4 December 1879, states that the mission had existed for seven years, so it would have opened c.1872.

¹⁸³ See *Montreal Witness*, 12 June 1879, for a detailed description of the proposed new building.

¹⁸⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 25 October 1869; MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Examination of the Very Rev. T.F.L. Evans, 28 February 1908, 56; Fonds STS, *St Stephen's Church, Montreal. Opening Services, Sunday March 30, 1884* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Co. 1884); *Montreal Daily Star*, 31 March 1884.

¹⁸⁵ MDA, Fonds STS, Minutes Vestry St Stephen's, 14 April 1884; Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Cross-examination of the Very Rev. T.F.L. Evans, 28 February 1908, 64.

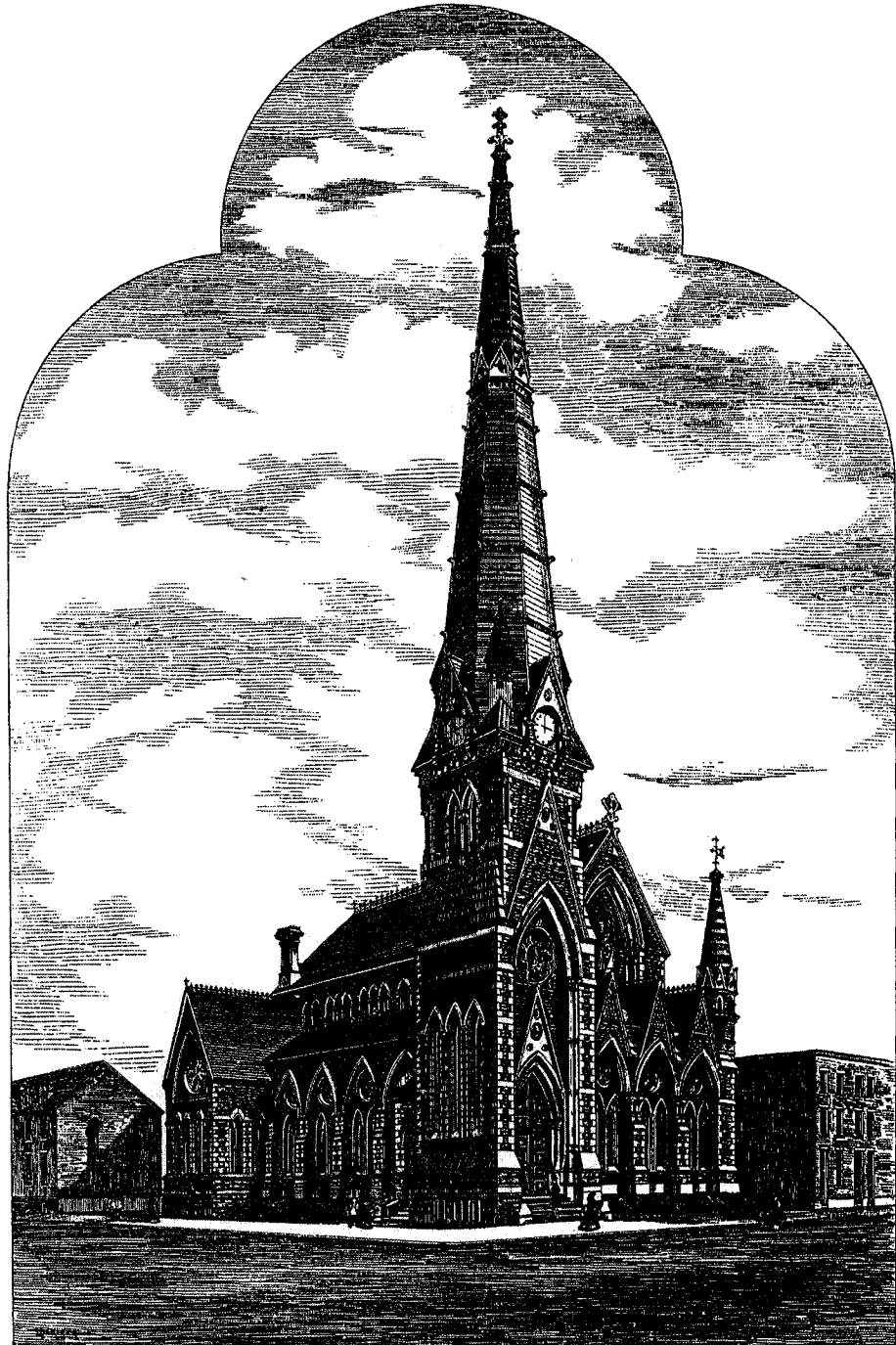


Figure 4.7 St Stephen's Church, Haymarket Square, opened 1884 (Source: DeVolpi and Winkworth (1963) Volume II, 302; Reproduction of an image from the *Canadian Illustrated News*, 16 April 1881).

not. That is something I cannot remember. I will state, however, that the general basis of my appeal was not on the ground that it was a poor, impoverished district.¹⁸⁶

The rector maintained that the church had been built in what was then a relatively well-to-do district inhabited by 'a thrifty class of people, people who were living in their own houses'.¹⁸⁷ There were, he argued, very few Church of England residents in the parish at that time who were not pew-holders or seat-holders, although he admitted that a certain number of poor people attended less regularly, generally when they wanted financial assistance.

These comments suggest that the congregation of the new St Stephen's Church – and in particular its committed members – represented a higher social stratum than that of the general population of Griffintown and that a tension existed between the desire to serve the interests of the pew-holders of the congregation and a broader sense of mission to all parishioners. They also draw attention once again to the complexities of church life in areas that contained the diverse elements that made up Montreal's working-class population, as well as to the difficulties of creating institutions with a sufficiently broad appeal to embrace all members of this community. The fact, however, that the Anglican church in Griffintown had originally been created for the express purpose of serving the poor meant that, unlike the leading Presbyterian churches or a proprietary chapel like St George's, it was able to resist attempts to remove the religious assets of the community to a more fashionable location. This could not, however, prevent the siphoning off of church members, and even the loss of its clergyman, to newly-created uptown churches like St James the Apostle. While the parish system encouraged Anglicans to concentrate their efforts on ensuring that adequate church accommodation was available in different parts of the city, this did not deter wealthy congregations like St George's from conducting mission and charitable work in the lower reaches of their parishes, and it seems likely that some of the poor living in St Stephen's parish would also have benefited

¹⁸⁶ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Cross-examination of the Very Rev. T.F.L. Evans, 28 February 1908, 64.

¹⁸⁷ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Cross-examination of the Very Rev. T.F.L. Evans, 28 February 1908, 59.

from their efforts. Thus, in terms of the overlapping of church and mission and the need to deal with the repercussions of uptown residential moves by wealthier members of the Protestant population, the Anglican scenario in Griffintown and surrounding district bore a certain resemblance to its Presbyterian counterpart. Anglican clergymen appear, however, to have been particularly successful in garnering funds from outside sources to assist with church-building projects. This eventually allowed Anglican churchgoers in Griffintown to construct a much more substantial church building than would have been expected given their numbers and means, a process that was assisted by Anglican unity (in contrast to Presbyterian divisiveness). Although the costs involved in maintaining such a substantial place of worship would later create difficulties, the parish system – combined with outside benevolence – meanwhile ensured that the Anglicans in Griffintown were provided with superior church accommodation.

Methodists in Griffintown

Wesleyan Methodists

Much less is known about the Wesleyan Methodist congregation in Griffintown, since few of its nineteenth-century records appear to have survived. Apart from the important role played by revivals in the life of the Methodist chapel in Griffintown, it is clear, however, that the way in which Wesleyan Methodism laid down its roots in this part of the city bore a strong resemblance to the Anglican pattern. As described in Chapter 2, Montreal's Wesleyan Methodists took a centralized and collective approach to church extension, which meant that in the same way that the Anglican Church in Griffintown received substantial support from Christ Church and Anglicans living outside its church district, the Wellington Street Methodist Chapel was also heavily subsidized by the St James Street Methodist congregation. The fact that church relocation was not part of the Methodist response to the developments associated with urbanization until the late 1880s also meant that, during the course of the period being examined, the Methodists in Griffintown experienced fewer dramatic changes than did their Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and even Anglican counterparts.

Following a revival that took place in connection with the cholera epidemic of 1832, the first efforts were made to establish a Wesleyan Methodist society in

Griffintown, and the following year a very plain chapel was constructed on Wellington Street (Figure 4.8).¹⁸⁸ This place of worship had a short life-span, and was destroyed by fire in 1845.¹⁸⁹ While the congregation was waiting for their new chapel to be built, they were given permission to hold services in the local Anglican Church, which apparently was a source of concern to Bishop Mountain, who feared exposing his flock to their more evangelical counterparts.¹⁹⁰ While the Wesleyans were anxious to prevent the peace and unity of their churches being disturbed by William Miller's adventist crusade in the early 1840s,¹⁹¹ the Anglicans no doubt felt equally threatened by the success of mainstream Methodist evangelists such as James Caughey during his 1841 revival in Montreal.¹⁹² The 'imposing edifice' that was opened in Griffintown in 1847 by the Wesleyan Methodists would have done little to allay their fears. The new place of worship was located on Gabriel St (which later became Ottawa Street), in close proximity to St Ann's Anglican church. As can be seen from Figure 4.9, it was a handsome Gothic structure built in stone, and a description of the interior - which seated 900 people - suggests that it would have compared favourably with its Anglican counterpart at this time (as described above):

On entering the church, the effect of the interior is very striking; the eye rests upon the pulpit which occupies an octagonal niche or recess, terminating in a pointed groining, and divided into compartments richly ornamented with

¹⁸⁸ G.E. Jaques, *Chronicles of the St. James St. Methodist Church, Montreal: from the first rise of Methodism in Montreal to the laying of the corner-stone of the new church on St. Catherine Street* (Toronto: William Briggs 1888), 28. The Reverend Perkins of the American Presbyterian Church, describes walking through the streets of Montreal during the cholera epidemic to visit an ill church member: 'I took my course through one of our most thronged and busy streets; it was silent as the grave; one or two solitary passengers alone met the eye; taverns were forsaken, trades and buildings stopped; the dead-carts alone gave a horrible animation to the scene. Through this street I painfully took my way, with every probability that by the next day I should be dead and buried' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 184, A521 *Sermons by George W. Perkins, With a Memoir* (New York: Anson D.F. Randolph, 1859, 15-16, Quoting a letter written by the Rev. Perkins 13 July 1832). The cholera epidemic of 1832 was at least partly responsible for raising the membership of the St James Street Church from 187 in 1832 to 350 in 1833.

¹⁸⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 14 October 1845

¹⁹⁰ Clarence Epstein, *Church Architecture in Montreal During the British-Colonial Period 1760-1860* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh 1999), 225.

¹⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 10 January 1843.

¹⁹² Jaques, *Chronicles of the St. James St. Methodist Church*, 30; Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996), 140.

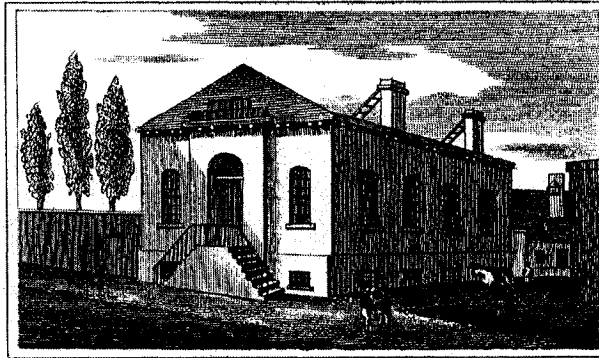


Figure 4.8 Wellington Street Methodist Chapel, 1833-1845.
(Source: DeVolpi and Winkworth (1963), Volume I, Plate 43;
Reproduction of an image from Bosworth (1839)).

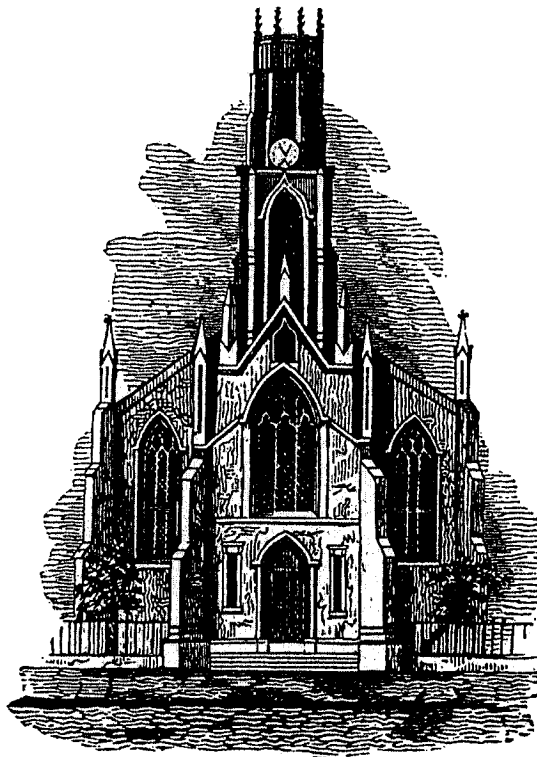


Figure 4.9 Ottawa Street Methodist Church, 1847-1887.
(Source: Epstein (1999), Figure 73; This image also
appears in the *Montreal Gazette*, 27 January 1847).

Gothic mouldings. The pulpit itself deserves more than a passing notice – it occupies the whole of the recess, nearly seventeen feet in width, and seats with handsome draperies, are carried round the back of the recess, so that the pulpit is in reality, a platform or tribune. It is approached by two flights of stairs, and is altogether one of the handsomest specimens of Gothic pulpit-architecture we remember to have seen... In the basement-story is a commodious school-room, with accommodation for five hundred scholars; the remainder of this story is disposed in five suitable class-rooms.¹⁹³

All of the pews in the gallery, which accommodated at least 250 people, were reserved for free sittings, as were 16 out of the 108 pews in the main body of the church.¹⁹⁴

New Connexion Methodists

As described in Chapter 2, the Wesleyan Methodists suffered a setback in the early 1850s, as members of their western and eastern congregations protested a top-down decision to subdivide the Montreal circuit by withdrawing from the denomination and forming New Connexion Methodist congregations. The Methodist New Connexion was a natural choice for those who left, since this much smaller Methodist denomination placed greater emphasis on lay participation in decision making.¹⁹⁵ Although the precise numbers are unknown, the claim that a substantial number of members of the Griffintown church withdrew at this point appears to be substantiated by church statistics.¹⁹⁶ In 1851, prior to the division, the Wesleyan Methodists had claimed a total membership of 880 in Montreal. When reliable reporting of statistics resumed in 1856, the combined membership (now representing three separate circuits) had declined to 600.¹⁹⁷ This gave a boost to the New Connexion Church, which had struggled to hold services in Montreal since the late 1830s.¹⁹⁸ A small congregation met in the eastern section of the study area,

¹⁹³ *Montreal Witness*, 27 January 1847.

¹⁹⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 27 January 1847.

¹⁹⁵ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 110.

¹⁹⁶ Jaques, *Chronicles of the St. James St. Methodist Church*, 41.

¹⁹⁷ Rev. George H. Cornish, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism, Volume 1* (Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House Cornish 1881), 253-254. The 600 membership mark had originally been surpassed by the Wesleyan Methodists in 1843. Not all of those who left can have connected themselves officially with the New Connexion Methodist Church, since its total membership in Montreal in 1856 was only 82 (Cornish, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, 502).

¹⁹⁸ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 111.

on College St, in the early 1840s, but this effort had been abandoned by 1846.¹⁹⁹ With the support of its new western members, the New Connexion Methodists were able to open a small but well-designed place of worship, called Ebenezer New Connexion Methodist Church, in Dupré Lane in 1857 (see Figure 4.1 for location).²⁰⁰ The membership of this church remained more or less static over the coming years. In contrast, the Ottawa St Wesleyan Church benefited from the Hammond Revival which brought about an increase in membership from 163 in 1862 to 292 the following year.²⁰¹ Attendance also appears to have been good, with a travel guide of the mid-1860s noting that services at the Ottawa Street Church were ‘for this part of the city, well attended’.²⁰² The union of the Wesleyan Methodists in central and Atlantic Canada and the New Connexion in 1874 was more successful than the Presbyterian union the following year in bringing about a reunification of the denomination in Griffintown.²⁰³ Although they contemplated selling both the Ebenezer and Ottawa Street churches to build a new place of worship, presumably in the same district, the amalgamated congregations later decided to remain in Ottawa Street and undertake a thorough renovation of the original building.²⁰⁴

The Desrivères Street Sunday School

The Methodists were committed to evangelizing the city, and like other evangelical denominations placed great emphasis on spreading both the Gospel and

¹⁹⁹ Cornish, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, 502; Lovell’s City Directory 1842-43 to 1845-46.

²⁰⁰ Jaques, *Chronicles of the St. James St. Methodist Church*, 59. Beautifully-drawn colour plans for this church, which was designed by the well-known Montreal firm of Hopkins, Sanford, and Nelson, can be viewed at the ANQ (P147, Collection plans d’architecture, Contenant 1973-00-000\45, #396, n.d.). For a black and white image of the same, see Epstein, *Church Architecture in Montreal*, Figures 199, 120.

²⁰¹ Cornish, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, 254.

²⁰² Rare Books Collection McGill University, Lande Collection, S1222 John Langford, *The Stranger’s Illustrated Guide to the City of Montreal...being a synopsis of its history, statistics &c. and a thorough guide to its drives, public works and public resorts and also giving carriage tariff, distance and time-tables* (Montreal: M. Longmoore and Co. 1865), 29.

²⁰³ Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 195; Nathan Mair, *The People of St James Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal: St James United Church 1984), 47.

²⁰⁴ *Minutes of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, Third Session (Toronto, 1876)*, 50; ANQ, P601, Fonds Eglise Methodist, Contenant 14, M/7/1 Montreal District Minute Book 1873-1899, 24 May 1876; *Montreal Witness*, 11 December 1879.

temperance in working-class districts such as Griffintown.²⁰⁵ They were also, however, committed to ensuring the success and advancement of the Methodist cause in the city, and - during the period between 1850 and the late 1880s - middle-class Methodists largely seem to have believed that their societies provided an adequate means of reaching out to those living in poorer neighbourhoods. Methodists with the means to do so therefore opted to pour their resources into ensuring that less wealthy neighbourhoods such as Griffintown were provided with good church accommodation. Like the Anglicans, however, they were occasionally willing to supplement their churches with additional Sunday school buildings in less well-served neighbourhoods. This led to the creation of the Desrivières Street Sunday School, located on the northern edge of the study area. Little is known about the origins and workings of this institution, which continued to operate as a Sunday school as late as 1914, but references to it first appear in the late 1860s when it was associated with the Wesleyan Sunday School Union.²⁰⁶ At a later date, the mission Sunday school appears to have been (or have become) the responsibility of the St James Methodist congregation. It should also be noted that the owner of the Desrivières Street property is listed on the Goad Atlas of 1880 as James A. Mathewson, a long-standing and well-respected member of the St James Street congregation, whom we encountered championing the needs of the poor in Chapter 2. There is no evidence that religious services were ever held in the building, but other sorts of religious meetings do appear to have taken place there.²⁰⁷ If I have identified the building correctly, the exterior of the Desrivières Street Sunday school was similar to that of the Nazareth Street Mission in the sense that it was plain and did not have any exterior features that clearly identified it as a building used for religious purposes (see Figure 4.10). It was also similar to the Nazareth Street Mission in the sense that its Sunday school provided a focus for the charitable efforts of middle-class Methodist women, and in particular the Dorcas Society of the St James Street Methodist Church. By supplying destitute children with warm

²⁰⁵ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 2 June 1869.

²⁰⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 6 February 1869; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 311, STJ/4/7 Wesleyan Sunday School Union Committee Minutes 1851-1887, List of Members of the Union Committee 1868.

²⁰⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 15 May 1878.

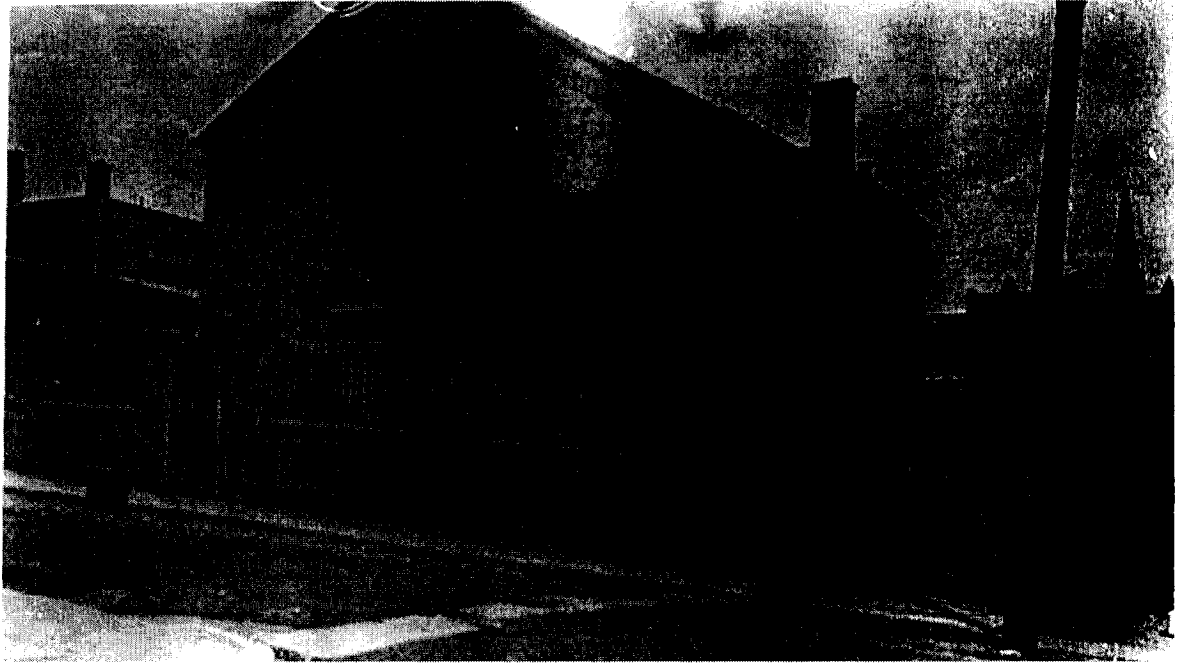


Figure 4.10 Desrivieres Street Methodist Sunday School, date of construction unknown (Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection). This photograph was taken c.1910. Massicotte describes the building simply as the 'Temple des Nègres', which is in keeping with the fact that a 'colored' congregation met at the Desrivieres Street Mission during this period (See *Montreal Witness*, 6 December 1909).

clothing, these ladies effectively combined charitable and evangelistic work, since their goal was to ensure that the children would be able to attend church and Sunday school during the cold winter months.²⁰⁸ While Methodists appear to have reserved this type of special effort for those who were particularly destitute, it demonstrates once again how difficult it was for the various denominations to come up with a single unified response to the challenges that they faced in Griffintown.

Outside the Study Area

When one ventures outside the confines of Griffintown to examine the totality of missions and Sunday schools associated with the uptown case study congregations (see Figure 4.11), it becomes clear that all the congregations discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 were involved in mission work in various parts of the city. This supports Gunn's contention that 'the means by which the working class were to be rescued from an alleged state of moral and spiritual destitution were typically shared across denominations'.²⁰⁹ Since an independent Church of Scotland congregation was able to sustain itself in Griffintown, for example, the members of St Paul's Church decided to take up their work just across the canal in Point St Charles. They established the Victoria Mission in 1866, and the surrounding district was worked as a mission field until the early 1890s, when Victoria Church was created. Likewise, St George's Anglican Church was involved in another mission project in the western end of the city (Figure 4.12), that later evolved into the working-class parish of St Jude's (Figure 4.13). In other words, the desire to pursue various objectives - including the evangelization of the poor and unchurched, the performance of charitable work, the Christian education of young people, and the building up of independent congregations in working-class districts - encouraged virtually all the leading uptown congregations to establish Sunday schools or missions in Montreal's working-class districts, thereby providing them with outlets through which to establish contact with members of the poor and labouring classes. The more long-term missions and Sunday schools tended to be concentrated in the older central area discussed

²⁰⁸ See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/12/2 Secretary's Book Ladies Wesleyan Dorcas Society St James Street 1874-1898, Annual Meeting 1875-1876; 1875-76.

²⁰⁹ Gunn, 'The Ministry, the Middle Class and the "Civilizing Mission"', 33.

Figure 4.11 Missionary Activity Undertaken by Uptown Case Study Congregations in Montreal, 1850-1889

Case Study Churches	Missions and Sunday Schools	Location	Opened	Closed/ new status	Comment on Outcome
American Presbyterian Church	Cross Mission SS	Marlborough St., Hochelaga	1826	1897	New building 1865; sold to Methodists
	Tannery Mission SS	Tanneries des Rollands	1826	c.1885	Discontinued due to Methodist church being built nearby
	(a) Chaboillez Square Mission	Chaboillez Square	1866	1870	Continued as Inspector St Mission
	(b) Inspector St. Mission	Inspector St.	1871	1931	Joined with Mountain St. Methodist to form Central United Church
Zion Congregational	Mountain St. SS	Mountain St.	c.1846	1849	Discontinued due to funding problems
	St Joseph St. Mission	St Joseph St, between Mountain & Guy	1860	1862	Discontinued due to competition from CPC
	St Catherine St. Mission SS	St Catherine St. corner St Elizabeth	c.1864	c.1867	Discontinued
	(a) Wolfe St. Mission	Wolfe St.	c.1866	1869	Continued as Eastern Congregational
	(b) Eastern Congregational Church (semi-independent)	Craig & Amherst	1869	c.1880	Discontinued due to financial collapse
	(a) Mountain St. SS	Mountain St. near Barré	Pre-1864	c.1870	Continued as Shaftsbury Hall Mission
	(b) Shaftsbury Hall Mission	Mountain St. just above Bonaventure St.	1871	1877	Continued as Calvary Church (at new location)

Figure 4.11 Continued

CASE STUDY CHURCHES	MISSIONS AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS	LOCATION	OPENED	CLOSED / NEW STATUS	COMMENT ON OUTCOME
Emmanuel Congregational	St Dominique St. Mission (in connection with students at Congregational College of BNA)	St Dominique St. probably near St Lawrence Market	c.1881	c.1882	May have been continued briefly as Pilgrim Church, which was discontinued in 1884
St Paul's Presbyterian	Victoria Mission	Forfar St.	1866	1890	Continued as Victoria Church (at same location)
Crescent Street Presbyterian	Nazareth St. Mission	Nazareth & Wellington	1869	1916	Merged with St Mark's Church
St George's Anglican	(a) St George's Mission SS	Seigneurs St.	1866	1868	Continued as St George's Mission
	(b) St George's Mission School House	Workman St.	1868	1879	Continued as St Jude's Church (at new location)
	Bonaventure Mission	Bonaventure St. between McGill & GTR Station	c.1872	1879	Discontinued
St James Street Methodist	St Lawrence Methodist Mission	Dorchester & St Charles Borromee	1877	1884	Continued as Dorchester Street Church (at new location)
	Desrivieres St Mission SS	Desrivieres St	Late 1860s	Still in operation in 1914	Unknown

Note: Contemporary information concerning missions and Sunday schools is often lacking in detail. I have done my best to be accurate, but it is possible that missions have been left out or that dates are not exact. I have included in the above table only those missions that were solely organized and run by the case study congregations, except where otherwise indicated.

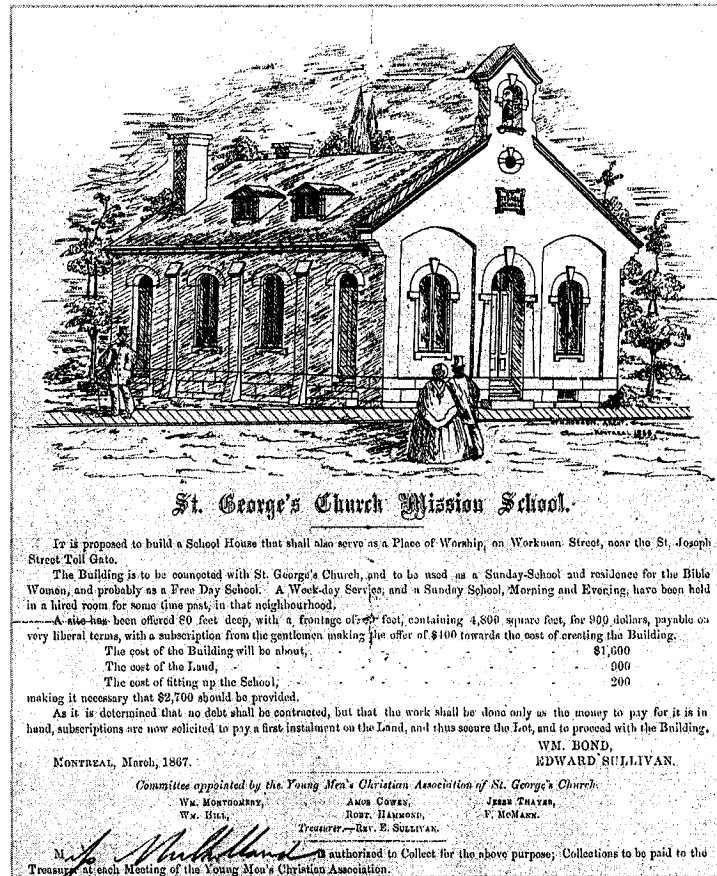


Figure 4.12 Prospectus for St George's Church Mission School, Workman Street, March 1867. A mission building was erected by St George's YMCA in Workman Street the following year (Source: St George's Anglican Church Archive).

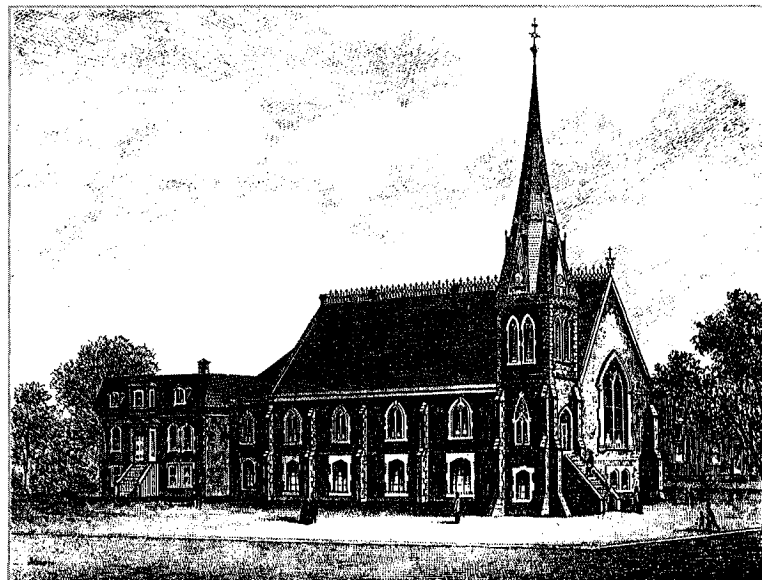


Figure 4.13 St Jude's Anglican Church, corner Coursol and Vinet, opened 1879. Note that the steeple and chancel were not yet completed when the church opened (Source: DeVolpi and Winkworth (1963), Volume II, 271; Reproduction of an image from the *Canadian Illustrated News*, 17 November 1877).

above, including Griffintown as well as the district between William and St Antoine streets. In contrast, the missions that were created in outlying districts of the city with rapidly expanding Protestant populations, such as Point St Charles and the West End of the city, more often led to successful church extension.

Conclusions

In *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems* (1887), the Rev. Samuel Loomis argued that there were 'two distinct systems on which the religious life of a town may proceed'.²¹⁰ One was to divide the town into a number of distinct parishes, build a church in each, and make that church responsible for the religious welfare of all the households within the boundaries of its parish. Alternatively, churches could simply be built on the sites that appeared most desirable to those building them, and count as parishioners only those who chose to attend. Loomis felt that the benefit of the parish system was that it made somebody responsible for each family in the city, whereas the alternative system only served the needs of select groups. The reality of the situation in Griffintown demonstrates, however, that the complexity of the social geography of the city, and the diversity of elements making up the working classes, made it virtually impossible for any given denomination to choose between the two straightforward options laid out by Loomis. Most of the major Protestant groups agreed that places of worship representing their particular denomination should be available to Protestants living in all parts of the city, and denominational differences did have an impact on the way they went about providing church accommodation for the working classes. At the same time, however, the common conditions to which they were all responding ensured that there were also many similarities between the approaches adopted by each denomination.

Although the Anglicans and Methodists were more successful than their Presbyterian counterparts at ensuring the even distribution of their churches throughout the city, the common challenges posed by church financing, inter-denominational competition, and the uneven social geography of the city hindered the efforts of each to implement a coherent system of parishes. In terms of church financing, the secularization

²¹⁰ Samuel Lane Loomis, *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Company 1887), 198.

of the clergy reserves in the 1850s had placed all religious denominations on an equal footing, so that Anglican churches had to raise funds exclusively from voluntary donations in the same way as other groups. Thus, while in theory every soul living within the limits of a parish was under the charge of the rector and had a claim upon his ministrations, a 'selfish feeling' nevertheless grew up that restricted the attachments of many rectory congregations 'to one church building and the people who worship therein'.²¹¹ Likewise, the presence of competing Protestant denominations in any given neighbourhood meant that it was unrealistic for any one church to claim responsibility for all Protestant parishioners, which in turn encouraged ministers to focus their attentions on those who were members or attendees of their respective churches. Finally, spatial segregation along class lines challenged the traditional basis of the parochial system. With wealthy citizens moving to uptown neighbourhoods, it was recognized that the traditional parish, in which wealthy benefactors sustained a place of worship in the centre of a town or village for the use of all members of society, was not well adapted to the changing urban setting.

Since none of the Protestant denominations was placed in an especially advantageous position when it came to ensuring that Protestants living in Griffintown were provided with adequate church accommodation, all were required to come up with innovative solutions. Three factors appear to have had an important influence on the options that were available to the different denominations and the choices that they made in terms of serving working-class neighbourhoods. One key factor was the way in which congregations belonging to the various denominations responded to the westward and northward drift of middle-class and wealthy Protestant Montrealers during the 1850s and 1860s. In particular, the uptown relocation of so many of the Presbyterian churches during this period meant that they suffered a more acute shortage of church accommodation in the lower reaches of the city than did other denominations. Having removed all their 'religious assets' from downtown areas, they then sent resources and personnel back into the district from the uptown churches, building and administering missions and supporting relatively humble churches, each of which served a particular

²¹¹ *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1883), 519; *Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1909), 36.

'niche' within the working-class community. In contrast, greater continuity was experienced by Anglicans and Methodists living in the downtown area, in part because there was less of a tendency for congregation members moving to more desirable parts of town to take the 'religious assets' of the area with them. They nevertheless had to cope with the challenges posed by the removal of middle-class parishioners to the upper levels of the city. The strength and unity of any given denomination in Montreal also had an impact on its ability to serve a less wealthy district such as Griffintown, in which Protestants as a whole were relatively sparsely distributed amongst a heavily Roman Catholic population. The ability of the Anglican clergymen in Griffintown to generate support from wealthy Anglicans living outside the parish on the basis of the well-known poverty of Griffintown stands in contrast with the Congregationalists who found themselves forced to abandon the idea of pursuing mission work in Griffintown in order to further more pragmatic church extension goals elsewhere in the city. Also important were the evangelical impulses of each congregation, and whether greater emphasis was placed on the conversion of the unchurched or on the need to provide church accommodation for those already belonging to the denomination in question.

As a result of the choices that were made, distinctions emerged between those who worshipped in churches and those who worshipped in missions. While churches were responsible for their own governance and were generally able to pay for the upkeep of a minister and a place of worship, missions were dependent on outside bodies to provide leadership and funding and were largely geared towards the evangelization of non-churchgoers alongside the provision of charity. Architectural features provided visual clues as to the status of any given place of worship. Nevertheless, the identities of the churches and missions in Griffintown were complex, since both attempted to cater not only to those traditionally ministered to through mission work, but also to churchgoers left behind as a result of the uptown moves of congregations. While certain efforts by uptown congregations were designed specifically to serve the needs of the poor, many Sunday schools and missions were initiated with the hope that they would soon evolve into a branch church or chapel, and ultimately an independent and self-sustaining church. When a successful transition was made from mission to church, it not only reflected the improved financial conditions of a congregation, but also implied that working-class

congregation members were no longer considered to need the moral and religious supervision of their uptown counterparts. The tendency of uptown congregations to use their missions as a base for conducting charitable work amongst the poor as well as for more general evangelization contributed, however, to the lack of clarity that existed vis-à-vis the goals of the missions, since such activities were not necessarily compatible with the encouragement of independent congregational life. The clear distinction between church and mission was also eroded by the fact that many of the nominally independent churches in Griffintown depended heavily on assistance from outside sources, particularly when money was needed to erect new places of worship. As we will see in Chapter 7, both churches and missions struggled to cope with what many considered to be an unsustainable religious landscape as the century progressed.

While it is difficult to determine whether any significant relationship existed between industrialization, proletarianization, and long-term trends in working-class church attendance, it is clear that the churches and missions in Griffintown came to reflect the social divisions that had emerged in an urban-industrial society and that the religious landscape of Griffintown was largely moulded by the aspirations of Montreal's uptown business elite. At the same time, districts like Griffintown challenged the straightforward way in which imagined dichotomies, such as uptown-downtown, rich-poor, and moral-immoral, were inscribed onto the urban landscape. Despite the broad designation of Griffintown as one of the poorer and more irreligious sections of the city by outsiders, closer investigation of the churches and missions in the area reveals that the Protestant population had a diverse range of needs when it came to the provision of church accommodation. These findings are consistent with those for cities such as London, where the designation of large zones of the city as 'immoral' and 'heathen' by middle-class contemporaries does not appear to have done justice to the much more complex and differentiated reality.²¹² Despite evangelization efforts by uptown Protestants, levels of religious participation amongst the working classes continued to be a source of concern and certainly never reached the levels wished for by contemporary clergymen. It does seem likely, however, that the concern that was voiced by clergymen and middle-class churchgoers from the 1850s and 1860s onwards could as easily have

²¹² McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*, 38.

been generated by the evangelical revivalism of the period and by the moral and practical difficulties posed by the emergence of socially segregated neighbourhoods, as by any dramatic changes in working-class church attendance. It could also have been a product of the feeling that class relations were in flux, as well as of a desire on the part of the increasingly self-confident and prosperous middle-classes to imprint their moral and social vision on the downtown landscape. Despite its conservatism, this was nevertheless a fundamentally optimistic vision. In contrast with the embrace of social Darwinism amongst the well-to-do in cities like New York during this period, there is little evidence to suggest that middle- and upper-class Protestant Montrealers came to see the condition of being rich or poor as being attributable to natural advantages or disadvantages inherited by individuals through the process of natural selection.²¹³ Likewise, the belief that structural economic problems had a central role to play in creating poverty and inequality had yet to make its mark. Instead, uptown churchgoers continued to exhibit great confidence in evangelical Christianity's ability to transform individuals, both rich and poor, and thereby contribute to the resolution of any moral, social, or temporal problems associated with the rapid growth and development of the city.

²¹³ Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993), 212-213.

Part II: The Age of Social Responsibility, 1890–1914

*'If we were spending this money on men, not monuments, what a missionary work it would do! The real work does not demand stones, but men. The Church in the country districts is shrinking away. In the metropolis they are selling chapels and churches. The stones grow up into the cathedral building, the living stones are not built up into the church. If the process were long enough carried on there would be an awful monument of mingled architecture, but the inscription would be In Memoriam'.**

* STG, *St George's Monthly*, 8(3) (December 1914), 4. This quotation originally appeared in a U.S. publication and was part of a longer critique of the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York. By 1914, the Cathedral had already cost nearly \$7 million to build and was still not complete. The article was reproduced in the monthly magazine of St George's Anglican Church, Montreal, presumably as a cautionary tale. The Cathedral, an undercapitalized work in progress for over a century, remains unfinished today.

CHAPTER 5

Advance or Retreat? The Response of Protestant Congregations to the Commercialization of the Uptown Environment

In one respect the rival churches of Plutonia Avenue had had a similar history. Each of them had moved up by successive stages from the lower and poorer parts of the city.... Thus both the churches, as decade followed decade, made their way up the slope of the City till St Asaph's was presently gloriously expropriated by the street railway company, and planted its spire in triumph on Plutonia Avenue itself. But St Osoph's followed.... As the two churches moved, their congregations, or at least all that was best of them – such members as were sharing in the rising fortunes of the City – moved also.

- Stephen Leacock, 1914¹

With the expansion of Montreal's commercial life into the previously residential uptown district from the 1890s onwards, many Protestant congregations were once again faced with the difficult decision of whether to remain in place or to sell and rebuild their churches elsewhere. This chapter will explore how a new generation of church leaders confronted this now familiar dilemma, during a phase of urban, socio-economic, and religious change equally if not more profound than that which had given rise to the church relocations of the 1860s and 1870s. Following the North-America-wide depression that engulfed Montreal during the early 1890s, the turn of the century ushered in a new phase of explosive population growth and urban expansion that brought to the city many of the urban-industrial problems that Canadians had previously only read about in the British or American context.² The period also witnessed the consequences of a shift from competitive to corporate capitalism, with small businesses and partnerships being swept away by mergers and the creation of consolidated enterprises better-suited to the requirements of large-scale economic activity. This led to the expansion of the managerial classes and white-collar sector, created new investment opportunities for the well-to-do, encouraged economic speculation, and helped to bring into being a culture

¹ Stephen Leacock, *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart 1991), 134. This book was originally published in 1914.

² Richard Allen, 'The Social Gospel in Canada', *National Museum of Man Mercury Series*, History Division Paper No.9, Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference on the Social Gospel in Canada, March 21-24 1973, at the University of Regina (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), 2-34; H. Keith Markell, *Canadian Protestantism Against the Background of Urbanization and Industrialization in the Period from 1885 to 1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago 1971) 784-785.

more dedicated than ever to the consumption of both goods and services.³ Meanwhile, a property and building boom during the years leading up to World War I enabled developers to take advantage of the possibilities created by the introduction of an electric streetcar system in 1892. This led to the rapid dispersal of the city over a much larger territory, and the flourishing of new residential neighbourhoods. Thus, in 1909 it was reported that no one had anticipated that Montreal would extend at such a rapid rate as it had done during the previous ten years.⁴ One church magazine declared that:

Montreal has entered upon a career of rapid growth, and the whole city is undergoing change. Old suburbs are becoming centres, and new suburbs are springing into existence. Old residences are being transformed into places of business, and new residences are rising swiftly on ground hitherto unoccupied. Business is cognizant of these changes.... The churches ought not to be behind hand.⁵

During this period, the district in which the case-study churches were located continued to be referred to as 'uptown', a term used in North America to designate the bourgeois-residential portion of a town or city. While the term 'downtown' continued to refer to the lower parts of Montreal, including the old city centre and nearby working-class districts, the fact that it also became appropriate in the early twentieth century to use this label to denote the more business-oriented sections of the uptown district was a reflection of the transformation that was underway.⁶ As their previously quiet residential surroundings gave way to hotels, places of entertainment, and department stores, uptown congregations had to decide, as many of them had already done once before, whether it was feasible and/or desirable to adapt their institutions to a changing and increasingly commercial environment, or whether the needs of their members would be better served by relocating to the exclusive suburban neighbourhoods that were becoming home to a growing proportion of their membership.

³ Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992), 64.

⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 8 December 1909.

⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 1(9) (October 1908), 1.

⁶ See, for example, the way in which the term is used in the newspaper text reproduced in Figure 5.4. To avoid confusion, I will continue to refer to the district and its churches as being 'uptown' throughout the text.

Although the observation was made in 1906 that the churches in Montreal had started 'a sort of stampede from the central parts of town to the outlying quarters',⁷ such comments do not do justice to the more complex scenario that eventually unfolded. Some congregations did sell their buildings, but merged with other nearby congregations or moved only short distances to quieter sections of the uptown district. Others opted to remain in place. Such choices reflect the greater diversity of decisions that were made by congregations in the early twentieth century in comparison with those taken during the period between 1850 and 1889. In his ecological history of the Protestant churches in Montreal, written as a thesis in 1929, Sidney Garland suggests that the locations of the churches were determined largely by forces beyond the control of their congregations:

The present distribution of religious institutions is largely the resultant of the ecological facts, - natural areas within the city, competition for position, segregation over natural areas, succession, and all that accompanies the shifting population, both in regard to its initial stages and throughout its process.⁸

Such statements reflect the Chicago School training of his thesis supervisor C.A. Dawson,⁹ but the case studies presented by Garland in fact reveal a more pragmatic and flexible understanding of the situation, and an awareness that Montreal's Protestant congregations had made a variety of different choices when faced with similar circumstances. Garland did not, however, consider the possibility that religious ideals may have influenced congregational decision-making concerning their church buildings.

In failing to do so, he may have neglected an important factor influencing the choices that were made by the uptown congregations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This period was characterized by a weakening of the broad evangelical

⁷ *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 19(3) (1906), 'Montreal Notes'.

⁸ Sidney G. Garland, *The Church in the Changing City: Types of Urban Churches Associated With Types of Urban Communities* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1929), 26.

⁹ C.A. Dawson taught at McGill University. He had had contact with 'Chicago School' sociologists E.W. Burgess and Robert Park while obtaining a doctorate at the 'strongly service-minded' divinity school at the University of Chicago. The links between the social gospel and the emerging discipline of sociology were very close during this period, and both were influenced by organic and evolutionary theories of society. Burgess and Park transferred the ideas of human ecology to the urban arena, and developed theories based on their understanding of the city as an organism, which – through Dawson – influenced Garland's study of the Protestant churches in Montreal. See Marlene Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption: McGill, the Chicago School and the Origins of Social Research in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 75-80.

consensus that had existed in the nineteenth century, and the emergence of a new phase of debate, associated with the growing influence of social Christianity, regarding the interconnections between social and theological ideas. Detailed exploration of the way in which the uptown churches responded to the changes taking place in the early twentieth century city will help to determine whether social Christianity had a significant impact on the decisions that were made by congregations at this time regarding their buildings. This will also provide a better understanding of the role played by individual congregations in a religious movement that is more often studied through the lens of key individuals or national denominational committees.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of some of the circumstances that brought social Christianity to the attention of Protestant Montrealers, as well as provide an overview of its distinguishing features. I will then focus on a particular area within the uptown district – Dominion Square – as a way of gaining a detailed understanding of the forces of urban and economic change that were at work in the uptown district. Practical and material motivations encouraging churches to remain in the uptown district will then be considered. Since none of the case-study churches opted to leave the area, two other congregations, both of which moved to suburban Westmount, will be examined more closely in order to ascertain whether the circumstances they encountered may have deterred other churches from making similar moves. The focus will then return to the choices that were made by the congregations whose fortunes we have been following since the beginning of this study. While the decisions made by congregations concerning the fate of their church buildings appear to have been heavily influenced by financial and practical considerations, scrutiny of church records reveals that their choices also reflected a variety of different responses to the message of social Christianity. This sheds light on the ways in which prevailing religious ideas moderated congregational responses to the pressures of urban change and growing tensions between capitalism and Christianity.

New Religious Ideals and the Need for Revival

Despite the material wealth that was being generated by the economy during the early twentieth century, some were concerned that the path being taken was not in

keeping with Christian principles and was unlikely to benefit the bulk of ordinary Canadian citizens. In a controversial sermon, the Rev. W.D Reid of the primarily working-class Taylor Presbyterian Church in the East End of Montreal described the business world as being largely in the hands of big companies 'engaged in a fierce hand-to-hand struggle for bare existence'. He went on to suggest that if Christ came to Montreal today, he would tell them that their commercial life was 'on an entirely unchristian basis'. The foundation of the Christian gospel was love and sacrifice, he argued, while that of the business world was 'competition and the slaughter and trampling down of your fellow-men'.¹⁰ Other ministers became concerned that the consolidation of business into monopolies would further enrich the few at the expense of the many, and (perhaps naively) suggested that business should be encouraged to place service above profits.¹¹ Ministers of uptown congregations also considered the question of whether capitalist enterprises could be run on Christian principles. The Rev. Allan P. Shatford of St James the Apostle took the unusual step of mailing this question to twenty-five leading businessmen, and was reassured by the replies he received, all of which provided him with a 'strong, certain, glad affirmative'.¹² A critic argued, however, that Shatford had asked the wrong question. Clearly Christianity and business were compatible, the critic insisted, since 'if we Christians have not by this time demonstrated that successful business is compatible with Christianity, then we are hypocrites and Christianity is a failure'. The more relevant issue, he maintained, was whether the abnormal prosperity of the period was undermining business morality and causing businessmen to lose sight 'of the Christian ideal of a square deal in relation to their business affairs'.¹³ While Reid was more outspoken than his ministerial counterparts in the uptown churches, the very fact that such issues were being widely discussed indicates that members of the Protestant

¹⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 6 May 1899.

¹¹ Rev. Murdoch A. MacKinnon, 'The Church and the New Patriotism', in *Pre-Assembly Congress of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Board of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Church in Canada 1913), 207. The Rev. Hugh Pedley of Emmanuel Church in Montreal also expressed the view that monopolies posed a danger to the community in one of his sermons: 'Even in our own city of Montreal there is a group of less than fifty men who could do anything they wished, if they were not carefully watched. It is their fault and also the fault of the community that it is so' (*Montreal Standard*, 1 November 1913).

¹² *Saturday Mirror*, 15 March 1913.

¹³ *Saturday Mirror*, 15 March 1913.

community were concerned at the growing prominence of the rift between modern commercial life and Christian principles.

Protestant ministers also feared that the increasingly materialistic and consumer-oriented nature of society was leading to growing 'worldliness' amongst church members and in society as a whole.¹⁴ In 1900, the Montreal Methodist Conference observed that the general hopefulness and progress of church work was accompanied by 'great danger from increased worldliness, luxurious living and questionable pleasure-seeking', leading it to emphasize the need for revival.¹⁵ The Rev. John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, agreed that 'the cold blast of chilling worldliness' was deadening the spiritual power of the Church, and likewise called for 'an awakening, a real revival in spiritual life'.¹⁶ Reid was outspoken on this issue, too, and in a paper delivered to the Protestant Ministerial Association he suggested that 'when one looks at the worldly theatre-going, euchre-playing, ballroom-frequenting, style-aping, money-grabbing, fault-finding so-called Christians, which are the majority in every church, one often wonders if we are merely playing at Christianity'.¹⁷ He went on to argue that people were coming to realize that society was an organic whole, rather than an aggregation of independent units, which inspired him to believe that a revival of the social message of Jesus Christ was imminent.¹⁸ While members of Montreal's leading denominations often drew on the familiar language of revival when proposing solutions to the spiritual deficiencies of their churches, it is also evident, at least in the case of Reid's address, that he was working with a concept of revival somewhat different from that which had inspired the transatlantic movement that had swept through Montreal in the early 1860s. Although personal conversion experiences continued to take place in those churches that had traditionally endorsed the religious revival (see Figure 5.1), it often seemed to be the case that evangelistic meetings were primarily held as a means of getting young people (often

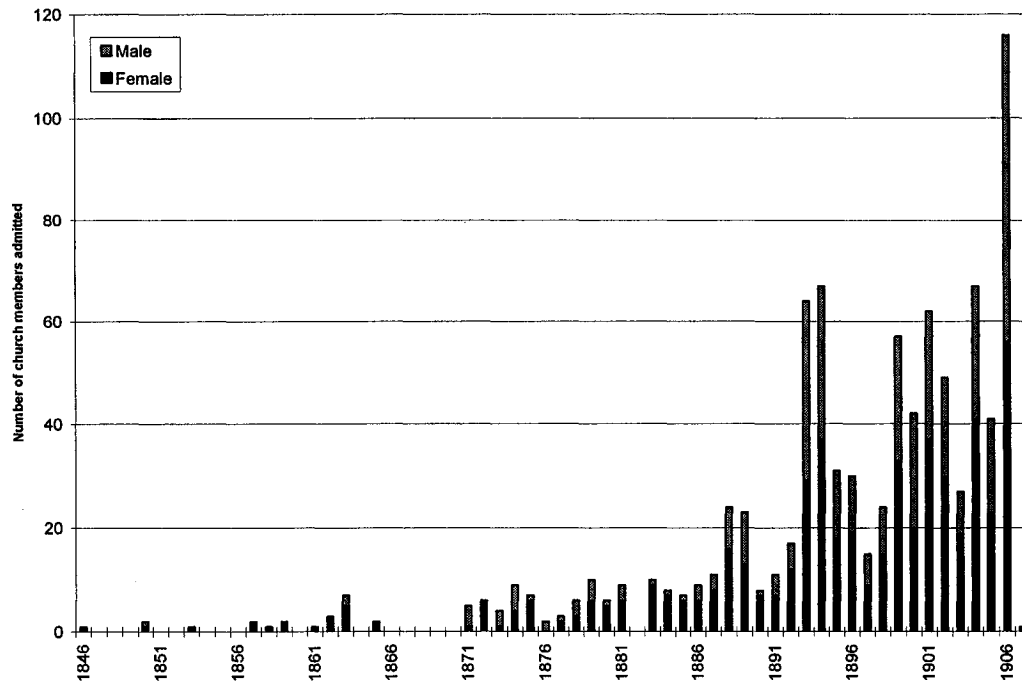
¹⁴ See discussion in David B. Marshall, *Secularizing The Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 128.

¹⁵ *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Seventeenth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto: 1900), 406.

¹⁶ *Proceedings of the Fifty-Third Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1912), 52.

¹⁷ *Montreal Daily Star*, 15 May 1905.

¹⁸ *Montreal Daily Star*, 15 May 1905.

Figure 5.1 Members of the American Presbyterian Church in 1907, by gender and year of admission

Source: ANQ, P603,S2,SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A420/3 *American Presbyterian Church Year Book* (January 1907), 18.

the children of members) to join the church.¹⁹ Revivals came under sustained criticism during this period,²⁰ and some have suggested that conversion at this time demanded a lesser level of commitment and belief.²¹ In the past, the enthusiasm generated by conversion experiences had made an important contribution to the proliferation of evangelistic and home mission work, helping to bring about the original wave of church relocations from the city centre. What was needed in early twentieth-century Montreal was a method of presenting the gospel that would recapture the imaginations of

¹⁹ The Methodists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians, for example, cooperated in order to bring the evangelist, the Rev. B. Fay Mills, to Montreal in 1894. Following his evangelistic campaign, Emmanuel Congregational Church reported that a large number of people had applied for admission to the church, most of whom were the children of church or congregation members (ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/2 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1890-1899, 28 February 1894). A similar report appears in the records of the American Presbyterian Church (ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 169, A133 American Presbyterian Sabbath School Society Minute Book 1891-1899, 12 December 1894). A number of churches also participated in what seem to have been very successful union evangelistic meetings in 1906-1907 period.

²⁰ See, for example, discussion in: *Montreal Witness*, 13 February 1909; 27 February 1909; 6 March 1909; 29 May 1909. For further information on revivalism and the conversion experience during this period, see Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 4, 120.

²¹ Marshall, *Secularizing The Faith*, 97-98.

congregation members of all ages, and inspire them to get involved in a new type of church work capable of satisfying the complex requirements of a more modern age.

The 'social gospel' (more often referred to as 'social Christianity' in the British context) attempted to satisfy this need. The term usually refers to a broad transatlantic trend in Protestant religious life that emerged in the late nineteenth century and remained prominent into the early decades of the twentieth century. Although the term embraces a heterogeneous variety of Christian responses to the social changes taking place during this period,²² scholars generally agree that there was a great deal of continuity between traditional evangelical Christianity and the early social gospel movement in the Canadian context.²³ While more radical social gospellers rejected the existing social order as un-Christian and believed that 'evil was so endemic and pervasive in the social order that ... there could be no personal salvation without social salvation',²⁴ middle-class Canadians were more often inspired by a belief that social reforms could perfect the flaws in what was otherwise considered to be a satisfactory social system. Advocates of the more moderate position continued to recognize the need for individual regeneration, but at the

²² For further discussion of the definition of the term 'social gospel', see Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 104; Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1971), 17; Brian Clarke, 'English-Speaking Canada from 1854', in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 324-325; Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion 1988), xi-xii; Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Volume II 1870-1914 (New Haven: Yale University Press 1985), 238-239. Allen and Fraser describe the different wings (conservative, progressive, and radical) that emerged within the social gospel movement, with differences becoming more pronounced over time. According to Airhart, historian William R. Hutchison has argued that it was the elevation of social salvation over individual salvation, both temporally and in importance, 'that made the social gospel a distinctive movement' (104). This very narrow definition of the social gospel would exclude almost all of what I will refer to as the social gospel or social Christianity in the following discussion. It should be noted that the term 'social gospel' was not in current use in Montreal in the pre-1914 period. The term 'social Christianity' appears in the *St George's Monthly* magazine (Vol.1, No.5, February 1908, 32), where it is used in reference 'to the flood of recent publications which advocate the solution of social problems by the application of the principles of Christ's teaching'. This definition is more in keeping with what I mean when using the terms 'social gospel' and 'social Christianity'.

²³ Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 9, 77, 108-109, 144; Allen, *The Social Passion*, 3-6; Markell, *Canadian Protestantism*, 26, 795; James W. Opp, 'Revivals and Religion: Recent Work on the History of Protestantism in Canada', *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 32(2) (1997), 188-189; Chad Reimer, 'Review: Religion and Culture in Nineteenth-Century English Canada', *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 25(1) (1990), 198-199. The same argument has been made in the American and British contexts. See Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press 1957), 148 and Ian M. Randall, 'The Social Gospel: A Case Study', in *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain 1780-1980*, ed. John Wolffe (London: SPCK 1995), 155-174.

²⁴ Allen, *The Social Passion*, 17.

same time acknowledged that social institutions needed to be redeemed if Canadian society was to be brought back to God. These ideas were sometimes framed in progressive evolutionary terms, with social Christianity representing an evolutionary advance over the more individualistic Christianity that had predominated during the nineteenth century.²⁵ As such, the insights of the natural and social sciences, as well as the more efficient organizational and bureaucratic techniques being developed in the business world, were all to be harnessed to help achieve the redemption of society. This faith in progress and in the potential for human goodness helps, I think, to account for the intense optimism that was often expressed by those advocating more moderate forms of social Christianity during the period leading up to World War I.²⁶ While the social gospel held little appeal for social conservatives, who did not believe that the current socio-economic system was in need of reform, or for the theologically orthodox, who felt that religion had no business interfering in such matters, it appealed more strongly to laymen and pastors wishing to respond to the urban-industrial problems that were emerging during this period, and those anxious to provide their churches with a renewed sense of purpose, commitment, and relevance in a rapidly-changing world.

Methodists are often identified as the group most closely associated with the social gospel in Canada, but all the major denominations, including Presbyterians and Congregationalists, were influenced by the movement. According to Richard Allen, Anglicans who were inspired by social Christianity tended to come to it 'not so much by the avenue of evangelicalism as by the traditional ways of the established church', which found a new channel in social service.²⁷ Evangelical Anglicans were nevertheless active in Montreal, and, in 1908, the congregational magazine of St George's Church reported that a significant event had occurred at an annual gathering of evangelical clergymen in England. The 'Protestant voice', with its emphasis on doctrinal issues, had finally been silenced, and the 'modern men among the Evangelicals' had succeeded in refocusing attention on Christian social service and wider humanitarian issues. This, it was argued,

²⁵ See, for example, STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(5) (February 1908), 32.

²⁶ For discussion of the optimism that was associated with the social gospel movement, see Marshall, *Secularizing The Faith*, 179, 234; and Welch, *Protestant Thought*, Volume II, 259-260.

²⁷ See discussion in Allen, *The Social Passion*, 5.

represented a 'reversion to type' as it followed in the footsteps of respected evangelical leaders such as William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftsbury.²⁸ Although they preferred to emphasize continuity with past traditions, some Anglicans in Montreal appear to have been as receptive to the ideals of social Christianity as their non-conformist counterparts.

The appeal of social Christianity lay also in the fact that it shifted emphasis from a doctrinal basis of belief to an ethical or moral basis of belief. Whereas evangelical orthodoxy had traditionally required adherence to specific doctrines, such as that of the atonement, many found that these beliefs had been undermined by the doctrinal controversies of the late nineteenth century and the emergence of liberal theology.²⁹ With the rise of moderate social Christianity, greater emphasis came to be placed on social action inspired by Jesus' second great command to love one's neighbour.³⁰ While orthodox evangelicals continued to maintain that it was impossible to separate 'the ethics of Christ from his doctrine',³¹ this did not necessarily prevent them from working alongside more liberal Christians in their efforts to redeem Canadian society through applied Christianity. It would be surprising if such a significant theological and social movement did not have some impact on the response of uptown congregations to the changes taking place in the urban environment.

Dominion Square: 'Where Fortunes Are Being Made'

Certain parts of the uptown district were subject to greater pressure from commercial interests than others. One area that experienced dramatic change was that which surrounded Dominion Square, and, by focusing on the transformation of this locale

²⁸ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(7) (April 1908), 29.

²⁹ Marshall argues that Christian beliefs were profoundly transformed in the period between the 1870s and the 1890s (*Secularizing the Faith*, 70). Doctrinal controversies emerged in Montreal in the late 1870s, and the Rev. James Roy was tried for preaching heretical beliefs (for more details, see Chapter 3; also the *Canadian Illustrated News*, 27 July 1878 and *The Canadian Independent* 23(12) (June 1877), 372). The Rev. Alfred Bray, who arrived in Montreal during this period to be pastor of the traditionally very orthodox Zion Church, also attracted attention and disapprobation for his liberal beliefs (for further details, see *The Canadian Independent*, 23(3) (September 1876), 90; and 23(5) (November 1876), Supplement; *Canadian Independent*, New Series 3(2) (February 1884), 45). There was also much discussion of 'scepticism' at this time (see, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 24 March 1879; 27 March 1879; 29 September 1879).

³⁰ See, for example, Chapter VI in the Rev. Josiah Strong's *The New Era or The Coming Kingdom* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co. 1893).

³¹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 May 1899, Letter from 'Justice'.

in the period between 1890 and 1914, one is able to gain a sense of the larger forces that were affecting congregational life in the uptown district as a whole (see Figure 5.2). Originally home to the city's Roman Catholic burial ground, the site was transformed in the late 1850s into a public park, and its surroundings built-up with high-quality residential housing inhabited largely by members of the Protestant community. Contributing to the elegance of the neighbourhood were the numerous churches that had chosen sites near the square.

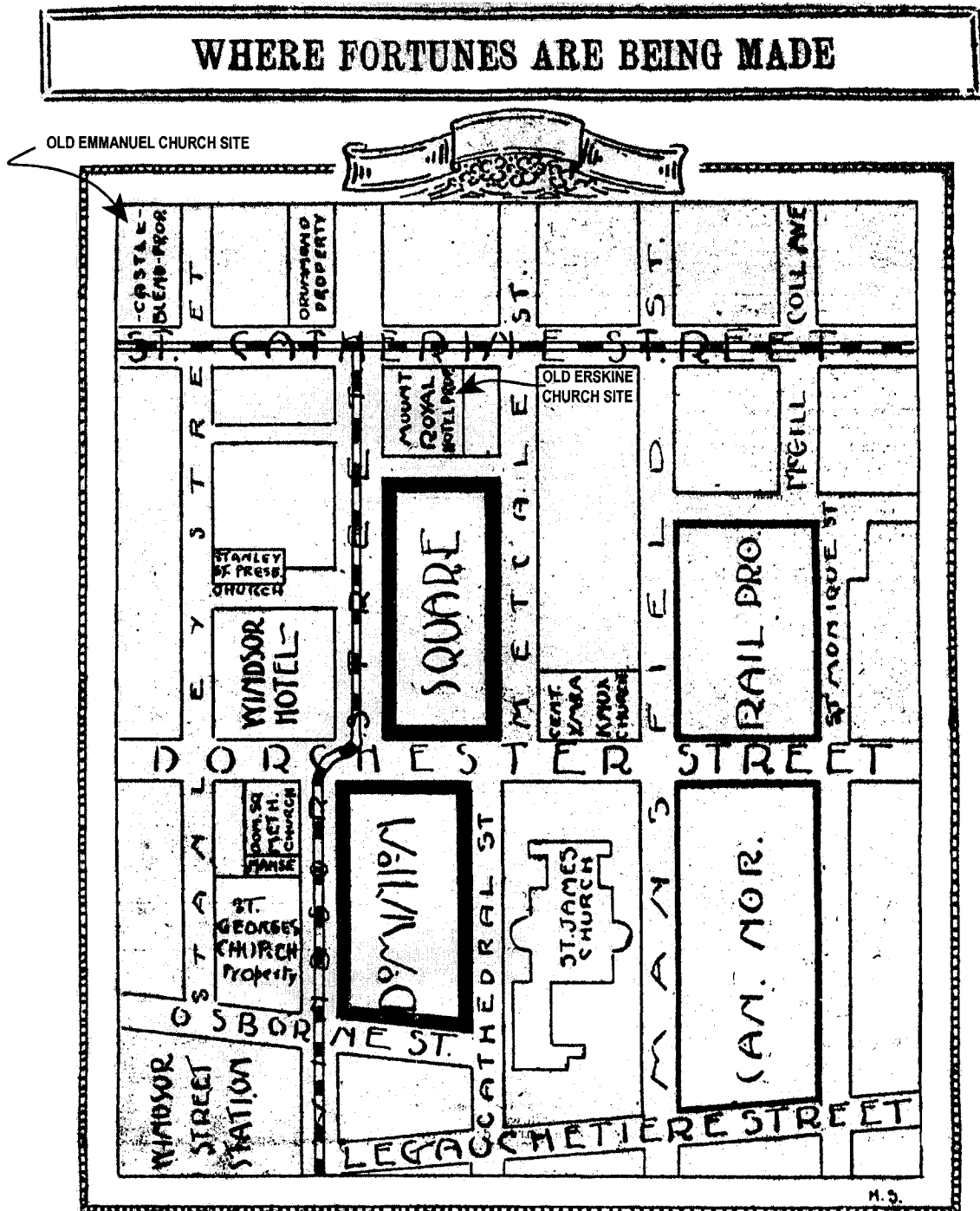
It was not long, however, before new elements began to appear in the landscape. The imposing Windsor Hotel introduced a commercial dimension when it opened in 1875, looking down in one direction on Dominion Square Methodist Church and in the other on the Stanley Street Presbyterian Church. Construction began on St James Roman Catholic Cathedral in 1875, a faithful, albeit scaled-down, version of St Peter's Basilica in Rome. Located on the south side of Dominion Square, the long-planned cathedral served as a symbol of the 'the energy and wealth of Rome' in the heart of Protestant Montreal, and, by the time of its completion in the mid-1880s, dwarfed the surrounding Protestant churches.³² The decision by the Young Men's Christian Association to leave their original building on Victoria Square and rebuild uptown, following the pattern of the churches, also resulted in an addition to the square in 1891.³³ Perhaps the most significant impetus for change came from the opening of the Canadian Pacific Railway's new terminus and head office on the corner of Dominion Square in 1889. For some, the massive grey limestone walls of Windsor Station evoked 'the national spirit' which it was felt had contributed to the success of the trans-Canadian railway enterprise.³⁴ The railway station brought a more heterogeneous mix of people into the neighbourhood, creating a demand for further commercial developments to serve the needs of travellers. A former assistant minister at St George's Church observed in 1909 that the building of the C.P.R. station had 'completely altered the surroundings of the Church'. Whereas prominent members had in the past lived 'within a stone's throw' of the church door, it was not long

³² *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899.

³³ A drawing of the new uptown YMCA can be found in *Montreal Witness*, 17 January 1889. For plans of the building, see *Montreal Witness*, 5 January 1889.

³⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899.

Figure 5.2 'Nothing is Sacred' - Churches on the Front Lines of a Property Boom



SPECTACULAR BLOCKS AROUND DOMINION SQUARE.

Dominion Square has been the centre of a most remarkable real estate activity during the last couple of years, and some of the most ambitious schemes of this season have been associated with properties fronting on or near the big central square. Millions of dollars are involved in some of the big projects now under consideration.

Source: *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

before 'a dozen hotels opened their bars in the vicinity and a long line of cabs took their stand in front of the Rectory'.³⁵ Despite sustained efforts by the vestry and temperance society of St George's Church, supported by a number of other leading congregations, to oppose the opening of taverns in the neighbourhood, they found themselves powerless to prevent the 'liquor interest' from degrading their surroundings.³⁶

A commentator in the *Montreal Witness* associated the transformation of Dominion Square with the decision by Erskine Presbyterian Church to sell its second church home at the corner of Windsor and St Catherine streets, and move even further uptown in the early 1890s (see Figures 5.2).³⁷ Unlike previous church moves, the initiative for which had originated within the congregational leadership, this time the idea was planted by the Presbytery of Montreal. By the late 1880s, the Presbytery was attempting to implement a more organized system of church extension and had come to the conclusion that one of the cluster of Presbyterian churches in the vicinity of Dominion Square should move westwards in order to serve the Presbyterian population that was taking up residence west of Guy Street.³⁸ While congregations including St Paul's refused to consider this proposition,³⁹ Erskine showed greater interest: lists were drawn up of members living to the west of the church and meetings were held to discuss the question of whether Erskine should be the one to go west.⁴⁰ It transpired that many of those in favour of building a new church were influenced not so much by 'the desire to go west' as to have a larger church that would compare more favourably with the other fine buildings on Dominion Square.⁴¹ Others, of course, objected to change of any kind. One individual protested against Montreal's 'mania for pulling down churches', expressing the

³⁵ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 2(4) (January 1909), 23.

³⁶ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 2(4) (January 1909), 23-24; CIHM A01463, 1889-90. *St George's Church, Montreal. Parish Work* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Co. 1890), 18; STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 7 April 1890; *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic: Minutes of Evidence, Volume II Province of Quebec* (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson 1894), 4 December 1893, Evidence provided by the Very Rev. James Carmichael of Montreal, Rector of St George's Church, 764.

³⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

³⁸ Janis R. Zubalik, "Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom": *The Erskine Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 1894* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1996), 34.

³⁹ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 11 November 1889.

⁴⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1889; 5 November 1889; 3 December 1889.

⁴¹ *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1889.

view that Erskine Church should be left alone as it was ‘only yesterday’ that it was erected.⁴² Given the lack of consensus, no immediate action was taken, but – after extensive debate between those favouring a Guy Street site and those preferring a site closer to the old church – the latter prevailed and the congregation moved to a fashionable new Richardsonian Romanesque-style church on Sherbrooke Street in 1894.⁴³ Although the property they left behind fronted on St Catherine street – an artery that was rapidly being given over to commercial uses – the site reached back to Dominion Square. It was this that led the *Witness*’s commentator to maintain that it was the sale of the Erskine property that allowed ‘the entering wedge of commerce’ to reach Dominion Square, drawing attention to a part of the city that was at that time ‘much coveted, but little bought’.⁴⁴

Commercial development temporarily abated while the depression that had commenced in 1893 took its toll on the material prosperity of churches and businesses alike.⁴⁵ The congregation of Olivet Baptist Church, which was located close to the new C.P.R. tracks, just a few blocks west of Dominion Square (see Figure 5.5), found itself increasingly disturbed by the ‘persistent whistling, bell ringing, and shunting’ of the locomotives, but was unable to dispose of its property because of a depressed property market.⁴⁶ The minister complained to the company’s manager, Sir William Van Horne, that ‘Sunday after Sunday, as I speak, one engine is stationed twelve yards behind me, eruptive and diabolic; another, peripatetic, belches and thunders with aggravated

⁴² *Montreal Witness*, 9 December 1889.

⁴³ Guy Tombs, ed., *One Hundred Years of Erskine Church, Montreal 1833-1933* (Montreal: United Church of Canada c.1933), 20-21; Zubalik, “*Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer’s Kingdom*”, 36; *Montreal Daily Star*, 3 August 1893; 1 October 1894. According to Zubalik, the site that was chosen belonged to Warden King, who also happened to be the largest contributor to the church building fund.

⁴⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

⁴⁵ Financial depressions were often commented upon in church minutes. See, for example, SAP, *St Paul’s Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1894* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1895), 14; Rare Books Collection McGill University, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1896* (Montreal: 1897), 11; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/2 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1890-1899, 17 January 1898.

⁴⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 12 February 1889.

diabolism. What is the man on the platform to do?’⁴⁷ Despite a gracious reply from Van Horne, the Rev. E.W. Dadson was convinced that his church was ‘a losing cause’ unless an improved location could be obtained.⁴⁸ This situation was symptomatic of the conflicts that were emerging between the Protestant churches and commercial interests regarding Sabbath observance in the uptown district.⁴⁹ Congregations began to complain that certain shops on St Catherine Street were staying open all day Sunday, while the Ladies’ Aid of Emmanuel Church wondered whether something could not be done to ‘do away’ with the boys selling Sunday newspapers at the corner by the church.⁵⁰ Business interests were quick to take advantage of Montreal’s more ‘continental’ approach to Sabbath observance, and the fact that Protestants had a relatively weak influence over municipal affairs. This meant - among other things - that while evangelicals in Toronto continued to resist the operation of Sunday street cars during the 1890s, their counterparts in Montreal had moved on to debating whether or not it was consistent with their beliefs for Protestants to ride in them to get to church.⁵¹

The introduction of electric street cars in 1892 had a particularly marked impact, since their routes ran along the western side of the square and along St Catherine Street (see Figure 5.5). Emmanuel Church appointed a deputation to interview the street railway’s management – at least some of whom must have been uptown church members themselves - to see whether it would be possible to find a way of lessening ‘the street car

⁴⁷ Jones H. Farmer, ed., *E.W. Dadson, B.A., D.D. The Man and His Message* (Toronto: William Briggs 1902), 70.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* The congregation appears to have been relieved when the C.P.R. purchased the property for \$50,000 in 1901, allowing a new site to be secured on Guy Street (*First Baptist Church in Montreal 1831-1981* (Montreal: First Baptist Church 1981), 6). See Figure 5.5.

⁴⁹ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1892), 74; *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Ninth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto: 1892), 67.

⁵⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons’ Minutes 1875-1916, 5 February 1903; Contenant 160, Minutes of the Ladies’ Aid Society 1895-1906, 6 December 1904.

⁵¹ Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888-1897* (Toronto: Peter Martin & Associates Ltd. 1977); *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Ninth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto: 1892), 67; *Montreal Witness*, 28 March 1899.

annoyance' during the hours of worship.⁵² The kirk session of St Paul's Church attempted to take pre-emptive action, sending a delegation to appear before the city's Road Committee in 1907 to oppose what was ultimately a successful proposal to run a line along Dorchester Street.⁵³ While the street cars had a detrimental effect on the quality of the worship environment, they also enabled more rapid development of suburban areas. In 1909, a lecturer at the Canadian Club of Montreal compared older cities with their more modern counterparts: whereas 'older cities were compact because the human foot and the horse marked the circumference for business centres', the modern city, with its electric railways, 'spreads out tentacles or radiates like a star-fish'.⁵⁴ This, in turn, had an impact on uptown congregation membership, particularly as urban development gathered pace in the early twentieth century, spurred by economic revival and a massive influx of both foreign and Canadian migrants into the city. It was observed that with the extension of the electric street car service, the Protestant population of the city was rapidly moving westward, leading the trustees of St Paul's Church to conclude that, 'as in many other large cities, the uptown church of a few years ago must inevitably, in the course of time, lose many of its former members and adherents'.⁵⁵

While the commercialization of the area around Dominion Square and the movement of congregation members to more suburban districts were factors that encouraged congregations to consider, once again, whether it might not be best to seek a new location, an unprecedented element in the process was the intense property speculation that gripped this part of the city between the end of the economic depression and the beginning of World War One. The same features that made specific parts of the uptown district less suitable for religious purposes also attracted the attention of property developers. This, of course, made it very tempting for congregations to take advantage of the high prices being offered for their properties, particularly if they were in any way dissatisfied with the size or facilities of their current church buildings. When 1912 was

⁵² ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 154, EMM/1/3/1 Minutes Emmanuel Church Board 1896-1906, 25 April 1904; Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, 20 January 1902, Pastor's Address.

⁵³ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 28 April 1907.

⁵⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 1 February 1909.

⁵⁵ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1895* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1896), 16.

hailed by the *Montreal Standard* as the biggest year ever known in the history of Montreal real estate, Dominion Square was singled out as one of the spots in which millions of dollars had been made.⁵⁶ Particularly attractive to the 'covetous eyes of commerce' were the church properties, which investors became ever more eager to acquire as 'church after church passed into secular hands for commercial purposes'.⁵⁷

The properties of the YMCA and Knox Presbyterian Church were purchased by the Sun Life Company in 1909 and 1911 respectively, with the YMCA being sold for the large sum of \$250,000 and Knox Church for \$150,000 (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3).⁵⁸ The managing director of the Sun Life Company, Mr. T.B. Macauley (who was also a member of Calvary Congregational Church and founder of the Welcome Hall Mission), estimated that his company could have made a clear profit of over a million dollars had it resold these two properties at the end of 1912, but planned instead to erect a palatial head office on the site.⁵⁹ On the northern side of Dominion Square, the old Erskine Church property, after several changes of hands, was bought by the Mount Royal Hotel Company (whose plans to build a big hotel on the site fell through), and re-sold for over a million dollars in 1912 to new owners.⁶⁰ The Stanley Street Presbyterian Church site was sold three times in 1912 alone, first by its congregation for \$125,000 (in March), before being resold in November for \$150,000, and then transferred to a hotel syndicate for \$178,000 (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3).⁶¹ The Dominion Square Methodist Church also fell into the hands of speculators following its sale in 1911, and by 1913 was being remodelled into shops and offices (see Figure 5.2 and 5.3).⁶² Having made arrangements with the purchasers of their properties that enabled them to continue using their church buildings for a certain period of time, these congregations had to suffer the indignity of worshipping in churches decorated with 'For Sale' signs, as shown in Figure 5.4. To the consternation of some

⁵⁶ *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

⁵⁷ *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

⁵⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 7 December 1909; 13 June 1911.

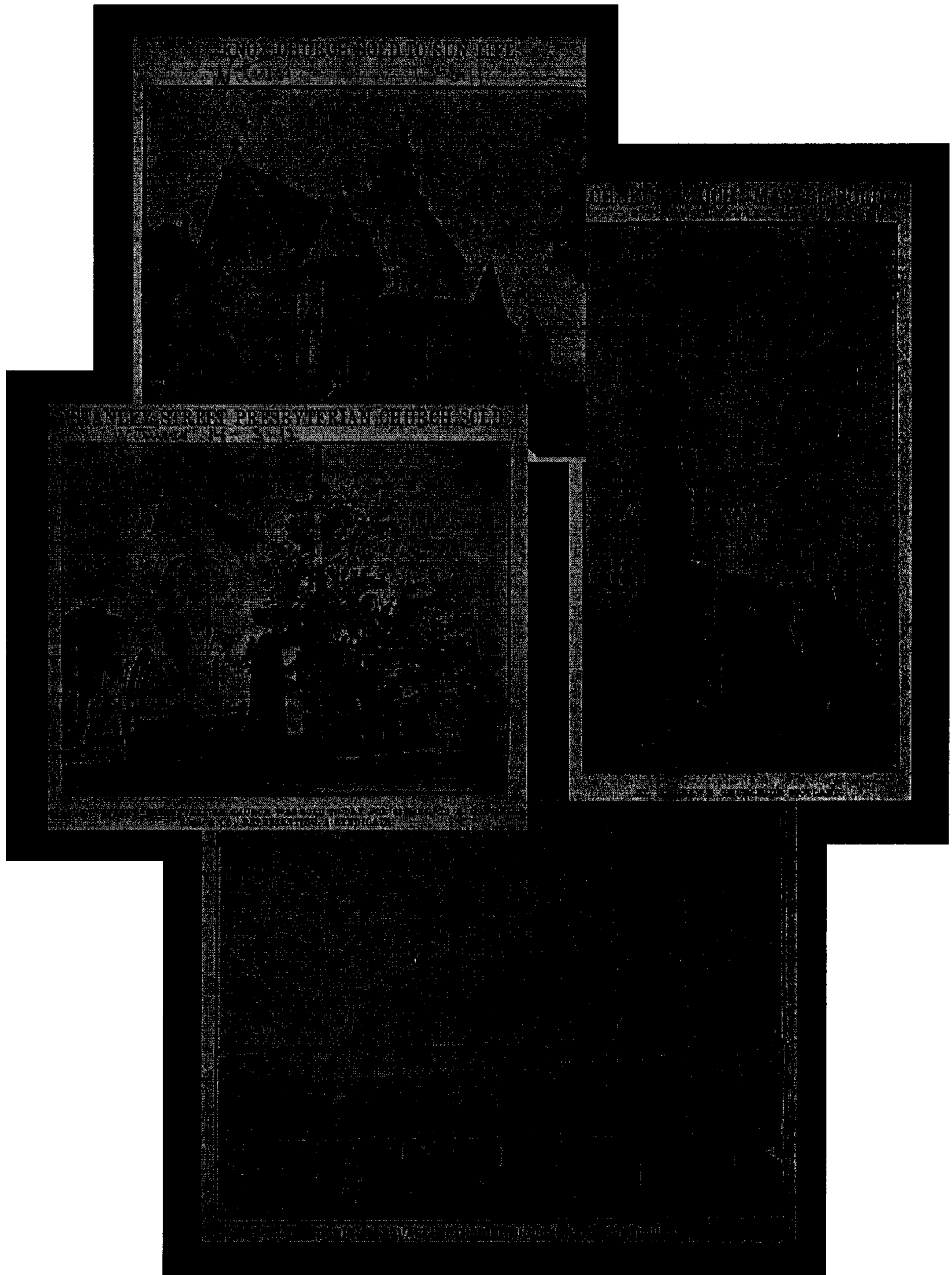
⁵⁹ *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

⁶⁰ *Montreal Standard*, 1 February 1913.

⁶¹ *Montreal Witness*, 15 March 1912; 30 October, 1912; 2 November 1912; *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913. For further discussion of sale of Stanley Street Church, see *Montreal Daily Star*, 16 June 1911.

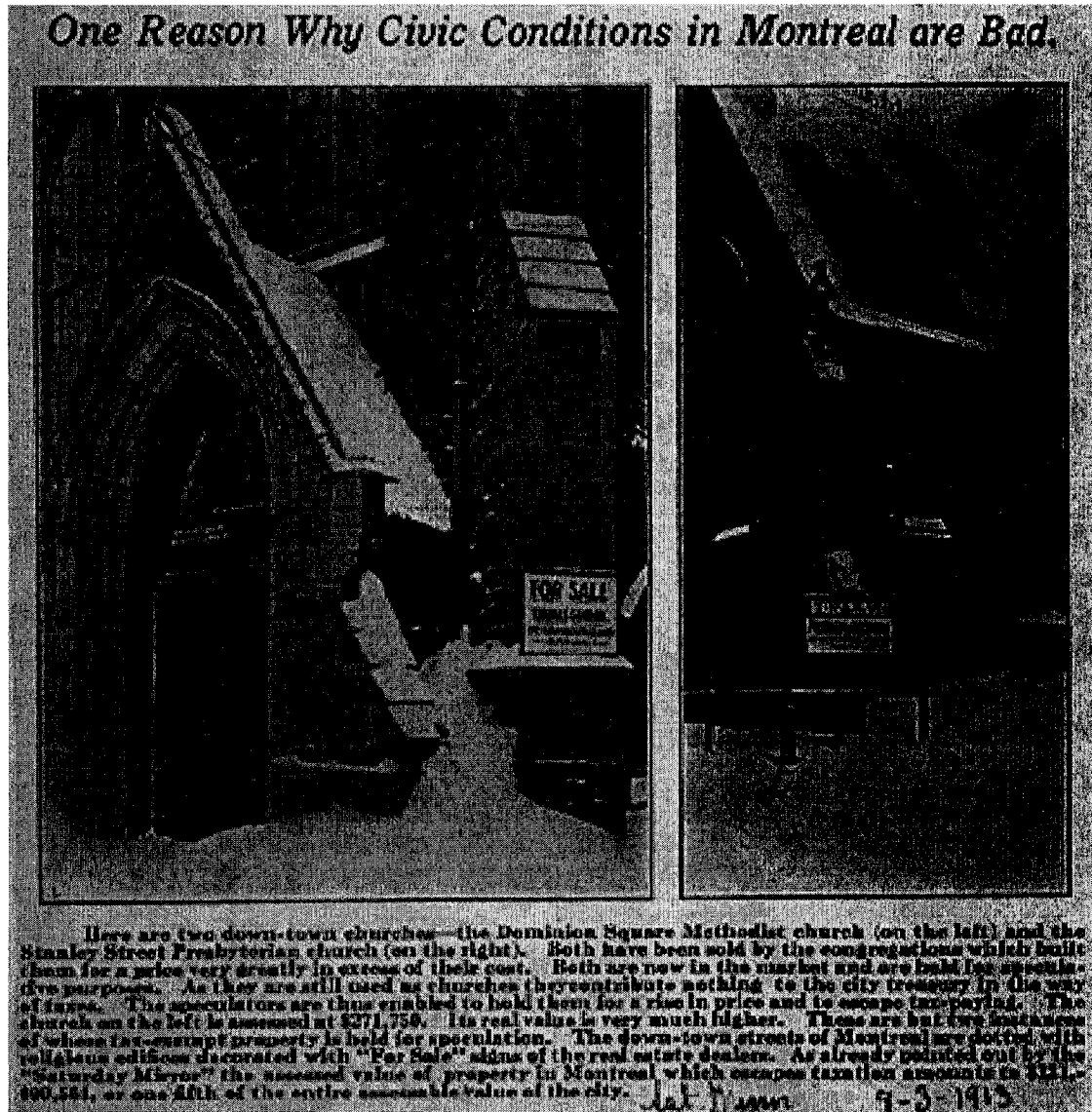
⁶² *Montreal Witness*, 27 September 1912; *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

Figure 5.3 A Disappearing Religious Landscape: The Sale of Uptown Protestant Churches in Early 20th-Century Montreal



Sources: BNQ, Massicotte Collection. Images are originally from *Montreal Witness*, 13 June 1911; 15 March 1912; 26 March 1912; *Montreal Standard*, 22 November 1913.

Figure 5.4 Dominion Square Methodist Church and Stanley Street Presbyterian Church, Decorated with 'For Sale' Signs, 1913



Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection. Original image is from the *Saturday Mirror*, 8 March 1913.

observers, the continued use of these buildings for religious purposes worked to the advantage of the land speculators by exempting them from property taxes.⁶³ Although the congregations were not to blame for this, and must have regretted that they were no longer the beneficiaries of rising property values, photos of bought churches appearing under the heading 'One Reason Why Civic Conditions in Montreal are Bad' can have done little to enhance the image of Protestant religion in the city.

Even more intriguing was the speculation that surrounded St George's Anglican Church, wooed by offers in excess of \$1 million. Excited reports began to appear in the papers late in 1912 suggesting that if St George's were sold, there was a possibility that the two other uptown Anglican churches might also sell their properties, so that the three could merge and together build a large cathedral on a big uptown block.⁶⁴ Despite reports that the proposal was 'not considered very seriously even by those who are advocating it',⁶⁵ the newspapers seemed to delight in the possibility of such an enormous real estate proposition, involving over \$4 million and the properties of three of the city's largest Anglican churches. As early as 1870, it had been reported that some members of Christ Church Cathedral were 'already beginning to discuss the desirability of building a new cathedral, leaving the present one to be what some of them say it simply is – a parish church'.⁶⁶ Few would have taken such a suggestion seriously at the time, but the atmosphere of anticipation created by the sale of so many other churches in the early twentieth century lent an aura of plausibility to the proposed scheme. Unofficial meetings reportedly took place between the leaders of the three congregations and it was claimed to be 'well known in Anglican circles' that Bishop Farthing was in favour of the big cathedral plan.⁶⁷ Here, after all, was an opportunity for the Cathedral to escape from the shops that had surrounded it, and – together with St George's and St James the Apostle – embark on the erection of a palatial cathedral that would be unsurpassed in Canada, with

⁶³ For further discussion of tax exemptions during this period, see Gregory J. Levine, 'Tax exemptions in Montreal and Toronto, 1870 to 1920', *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 35(94) (1991), 117-134.

⁶⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 18 November 1912; 20 November 1912; 30 November 1912.

⁶⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 18 November 1912.

⁶⁶ *Canadian Illustrated News*, 5 February 1870, 210.

⁶⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 20 November 1912.

money left over to support mission stations in various parts of the city.⁶⁸ Toward the end of November, it was announced that the 'Cathedral Scheme' had been dropped due to lack of enthusiasm on the part of St James the Apostle, and because the Cathedral 'did not relish the idea of its magnificent home passing into commercial uses'.⁶⁹ Reports of Bishop Farthing's support for the plan appear to have been exaggerated, if not invented, as he later denied ever having wished to build a grand cathedral and emphasized that church extension in the suburbs was his principal concern.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, a Montreal syndicate had obtained a promise of sale from St George's Church for \$1.25 million, paving the way for the demolition of the church and its replacement by a large and lavish hotel in which, it was rumoured, New York interests would 'figure largely'.⁷¹

Although congregations continued to worship in many of the churches that had been sold, by 1913 the future of Dominion Square as the home to so many of the city's finest churches looked bleak. Rumours were even circulating concerning the possible sale of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, the one religious property on the square that remained untouched by commercial interests. Discussion centred around the Canadian Northern Railway, which had come up with an ambitious plan for entering the city by tunnelling under Mount Royal. To secure a central site for a terminus, the railway's promoters started buying real estate in the uptown district.⁷² In October 1912, the *Witness* reported that 'ever since the C.N.R. entered upon its land-buying campaign in the central part of the city over a year ago, there has been a hardy, persistent story appearing at regular intervals that the railway was desirous of securing the church block', referring to the site of St James Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace.⁷³ Soon after, the papers suggested that a \$7 million offer for the site by a syndicate of 'Western capitalists'

⁶⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 20 November 1912.

⁶⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

⁷⁰ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(3) (January 1913), 8.

⁷¹ *Montreal Daily Star*, 30 November 1912; *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912; *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

⁷² T.D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies 1895-1918* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada 1976), 321-323; G.R. Stevens, *Canadian National Railways, Vol. 2: Towards the Inevitable* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co. 1962), 73-75.

⁷³ *Montreal Witness*, 5 October 1912.

(presumably connected with the C.N.R.) had failed.⁷⁴ The C.N.R. had meanwhile been buying in the adjoining block to the east, and it was here that the station was ultimately built (see Figure 5.2).⁷⁵ Given the improbability of the Roman Catholic Church being willing to part with its cathedral, one suspects that the rumours reflected the unbounded ambition of corporate enterprise and its inability to appreciate the symbolic value of a miniaturized St Peter's in the heart of Protestant Montreal.

Although the sale of Protestant churches in and around Dominion Square generated considerable excitement in the press, it also elicited reflection and nostalgia, as well as criticism and debate. One writer observed that the tale of Dominion Square illustrated 'the ruthless tendency of the big, modern city' in which 'nothing is sacred and, so, able to withstand the march of progress and development'.⁷⁶ Another, who visited the doomed Dominion Square Methodist Church in 1913, echoed these sentiments, suggesting that 'whenever a church is destroyed or put to baser uses, as more than once has been the case in Montreal, one feels that cruel commercial necessity has been allowed to play a legalized felon's part'.⁷⁷ There was something almost sacrilegious, the writer argued, about the destruction of a house of God:

It makes one wonder whether we really are so religious as our fathers were. For here, on Dominion Square, they built numberless houses of worship, remembering, perhaps, that no other place could be more fitting for the erection of such fabrics as this, Montreal's most famous Square. And, perhaps, too, in their minds was the thought, that the newly arrived stranger, the immigrant from Europe, and all those other people, who come to Canada's metropolis, would be impressed by this array of churches, and read, perhaps, in their prominence, something of the place of religion in the national life of the Dominion. Who knows?⁷⁸

Such an argument was ahistorical, of course, since the square had had little to recommend it as a public space at the time when many of the churches had been built, and uptown

⁷⁴ See *Montreal Witness*, 5 October 1912; 30 November 1912; *Montreal Standard*, 4 January 1913.

⁷⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

⁷⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 30 November 1912.

⁷⁷ *Montreal Standard*, 22 November 1913. This article forms part of a series of 25 articles describing worship in Montreal churches, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The author also visited St George's Church, and lamented the fact that it was going to be 'swallowed up in an expressionless building in which people will sit at desks with telephones, hoping to make their fortunes' (*Montreal Standard*, 31 January 1914).

⁷⁸ *Montreal Standard*, 22 November 1913.

church sites had been chosen not so much for their prominence as for their suitability as refuges from the commercialization of the original city centre. The comment nevertheless evoked a poignant sense of nostalgia for what was believed to have been the firmer faith of past generations.

In another article, entitled 'Must Picturesque Dominion Square Lose its Charm to March of Modern Business?', a reporter from the *Montreal Standard* interviewed a number of individuals from City Hall concerning the transformation of the Dominion Square Church into stores. The head of the Building Department, M. Chaussé, agreed that the proposed changes would 'spoil the neighbourhood', and acknowledged that he had issued a building permit with great reluctance, as no legal measures were in place to protect the site.⁷⁹ Alderman L.A. Lapointe also lacked enthusiasm for the project, but was at the same time willing to argue that 'commerce comes before beauty and must be given first consideration'.⁸⁰ 'I am afraid we moderns are vandals', he acknowledged, 'but the point is that we must have room for progress, and the city must spread'. The views of Controller Lachapelle were even less sentimental:

The churches should look ahead and not build themselves right in the way of the city's progress, declared M. Lachapelle. "They ought to be built in the subsidiary streets; if they are not, when the city wants her streets they will have to move. I would not be surprised to hear that the Roman Catholic Cathedral, in Dorchester, has accepted an offer for her site, and will be moved away. In course of time, that must occur, for the churches can be moved out, and commerce cannot".⁸¹

When asked by the reporter whether it was not a pity to drive the local residents away, Lachapelle simply replied:

"Drive them away? Nonsense. The street cars would do that. When the street cars were taken up Dorchester, it was already recognized that the quarter was dead as a residential quarter. No, if the people are to have work, and the needs of a growing population supplied, the citizens and the churches must be reasonable enough to move and make room".⁸²

⁷⁹ *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913.

⁸⁰ *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913.

⁸¹ *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913. Lachapelle was, of course, mistaken about this, as the Cathedral still stands today.

⁸² *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913.

Despite opposition from 'the older, better class citizen, who still think that commerce is not the only need of Montreal', it appeared that little could be done to resist the forces of modernization and progress that were responsible for the 'horrible vandalism' that was engulfing the square.⁸³

What was happening to the Protestant churches around Dominion Square was also transforming the religious landscape elsewhere in the uptown district, and Protestant churches were being sold in other parts of the city as well. At the same time that Stephen Leacock was busy satirizing the churches of 'Plutonia Avenue' in *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*, his good friend, Andrew Macphail, was drawing attention to the fate of Montreal's Protestant churches in the *University Magazine*.⁸⁴ Macphail was a McGill University professor and 'man of letters' who, like Leacock, was a social conservative.⁸⁵ Both were concerned that the rapid economic development of Canada was giving birth to a society in which unfettered individualism, plutocratic social Darwinism, and excessive materialism were superseding the values that they cherished.⁸⁶ In an article entitled 'Unto the Church', Macphail provided a detailed account of the church properties that were being remodelled for use as stores, hotels, and theatres, observing that within the past few years no less than seventeen churches had been sold, while five more were currently seeking buyers. 'One cannot fail to remark', he added, 'that in this ominous list there is not the name of a single Catholic church'.⁸⁷ Macphail believed that churches should be first and foremost places of worship, in which people could experience 'the sheer pleasure of losing themselves in the infinite'.⁸⁸ He therefore resisted the trend, associated with the social gospel movement, towards higher levels of church involvement in worldly matters

⁸³ *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913.

⁸⁴ As editor, Macphail transformed *The University Magazine* into a leading journal in Canadian intellectual life, reaching a circulation of nearly 6,000 (Ian Ross Robertson, 'Andrew Macphail: A Holistic Approach', *Canadian Literature*, 107 (1985), 179).

⁸⁵ Ian Ross Robertson, 'Andrew Macphail: A Holistic Approach', *Canadian Literature*, 107 (1985), 179-185.

⁸⁶ Ramsay Cook, 'Stephen Leacock and the Age of Plutocracy, 1903-1921', in *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Grant Creighton*, ed. John S. Moir (Toronto: MacMillan 1970), 163-181. For further discussion of Andrew Macphail, see S.E.D. Shortt, *The Search For an Ideal: Six Canadian Intellectuals and Their Convictions in an Age of Transition 1890-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1976), 2-38.

⁸⁷ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 363.

⁸⁸ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 364.

such as politics, legislation, and the resolution of social problems. Simply by their presence, he argued, churches could serve as 'a witness to the world that the spirit of religion is not yet vanished, and that some humanity remains'.⁸⁹ Macphail was therefore distressed that, in a city where people were 'growing rich by selling their real estate to one another', so many congregations had been unable to resist profiting from the increased value of their properties:

Here was an opportunity for the churches to declare to the world that there are other considerations than those which can be reckoned in money. The very existence of a church - the more humble the better - occupying an expensive site in company with buildings which scrape the sky, as the saying is, would be a perpetual protest against the practices which go on in those buildings, more powerful than the words of any preacher.⁹⁰

All the Protestant denominations, he concluded, shared equal blame for the fact that 'nearly all of the holy places for Protestants in Montreal have been desecrated by the churches themselves'.⁹¹

Alongside such commentaries, photographs continued to appear in the local newspapers of churches that were for sale or that had just been sold (see Figure 5.3 and 5.4). Churches undergoing demolition or being modified to accommodate tea-rooms, moving picture shows, and even brewing concerns had become an element in the urban landscape.⁹² Especially damaging to the reputations of the uptown Protestant churches was the speculation in the press about the large sums of money involved, reinforcing the impression that the congregations of these socially-exclusive Protestant churches were preoccupied with pecuniary matters. It also associated them with a speculative process that was enabling certain individuals and groups to generate substantial wealth in a fashion that called into question the traditional evangelical emphasis on the connections between morality, hard work, and material reward. Some accounts portrayed the churches as the victims of commercial expansion, powerless in the face of progress, but such an image was equally unflattering, since it made religious institutions look weak in relation to economic forces. Either scenario presented a stark contrast with social

⁸⁹ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 362.

⁹⁰ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 362.

⁹¹ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 362.

⁹² *Montreal Witness*, 13 November 1909, Letter from 'Nolo Episcopari'.

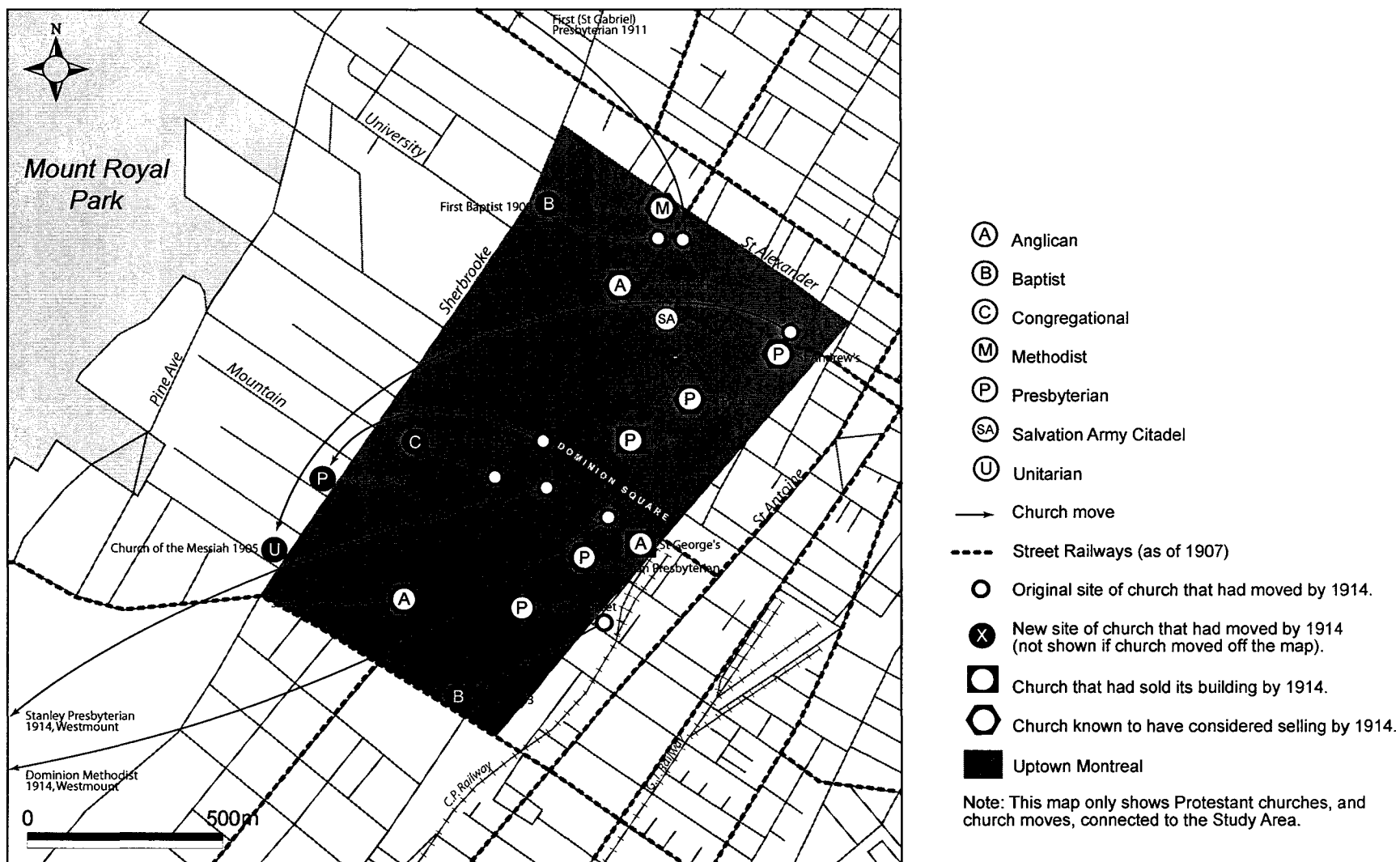
Christianity's vision of religious institutions that were deeply engaged in the project of redeeming and regenerating urban society.

God's 'Less Mobile' Mansions: Practical and Material Reasons for Remaining Uptown

Despite accounts of church sales, described above, many congregations in fact chose to remain in their original uptown church buildings, or to move only short distances. Some, but not all, were motivated to do so because they believed it would enhance their ability to reach out to the surrounding community. This more nuanced scenario is illustrated in Figure 5.5, showing the changes that took place in the religious landscape of the uptown district prior to 1914. While the empty circles identify eight congregations that vacated their buildings prior to 1914, only three actually moved away from the uptown district. Four congregations, including Emmanuel Congregational, moved relatively short distances (six blocks or less) within the uptown district, while the Unitarian Church made a somewhat longer move to Sherbrooke Street. Two more congregations - St George's Anglican and Knox Presbyterian - agreed to the sale of their buildings, but did not have plans to leave the neighbourhood. A number of other congregations, including St Paul's, American Presbyterian, and St James Methodist, considered and then rejected the idea of a sale, while others, including Crescent Street Presbyterian, do not appear to have considered moving at all. As late as 1940, all six case-study congregations remained in the uptown district, three (St James, Crescent Street, and St George's) in their original uptown buildings. By this time, a number of congregational mergers had taken place to resolve the problem of Presbyterian 'overchurching' and adjust to demographic change: Knox joined forces with the Crescent Street congregation in 1918, St Andrew's and St Paul's likewise amalgamated in 1918 and built a new church on Sherbrooke Street in 1932, while the American Presbyterians merged with Erskine and moved into their church on Sherbrooke Street in 1934. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to understanding the practical, material, and spiritual reasons that led the case-study congregations to remain in an area that shared many similarities with the old city centre their predecessors had deserted.

While the newspapers were preoccupied with the soaring value of church properties, leaders of the case-study congregations were more interested in monitoring the

Figure 5.5 Uptown Montreal, 1914: A Protestant Landscape in Transition



impact of urban change on their membership. From 1895 onwards, the kirk session of St Paul's Presbyterian Church kept a close eye on this issue. In that year, it reported that despite the extension of electric street car service, which had precipitated a rapid westward movement on the part of the Protestant population, no crisis had yet arisen at St Paul's.⁹³ In 1898, a slight net increase in the number of names on the communion roll was deemed 'gratifying in view of the tendency of families to remove their residence to the western limits of the City'.⁹⁴ Although the communion roll showed no increase in 1902, the kirk session was again pleased: 'it is rather a matter of surprise, owing to the westward trend of residence, and the erection of new suburban churches and congregations, [that] it has not been lessened'.⁹⁵ In 1913, the minister of St Paul's, the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor, was again able to report that 'in spite of the fact that the extension of the city means a constant migration west and north, the attendance at the Sunday services has been well maintained'.⁹⁶ Church statistics suggest that the experience of St Paul's was not dissimilar to that of the other case-study churches. Although various factors, such as a change in minister at the Crescent Street Church, caused fluctuations in membership, each case-study congregation recorded an overall membership increase in the period between 1889 and 1914 (see Figure 5.6). Given the upheavals in congregational life that had been caused by past population movements within the city, it was understandable that the westward trend of the Protestant population raised concern amongst church leaders. The discovery that their congregations did not appear to be declining was, however, a source of unexpected reassurance.

Fundamental changes were nevertheless occurring in the geographical distribution of the membership of the case-study congregations. As can be seen in Figures 5.7 and 5.8, by the early twentieth century the relatively compact distributions of the 1870s and 1880s (see Chapter 3) had given way to a more widely dispersed pattern, with the highest

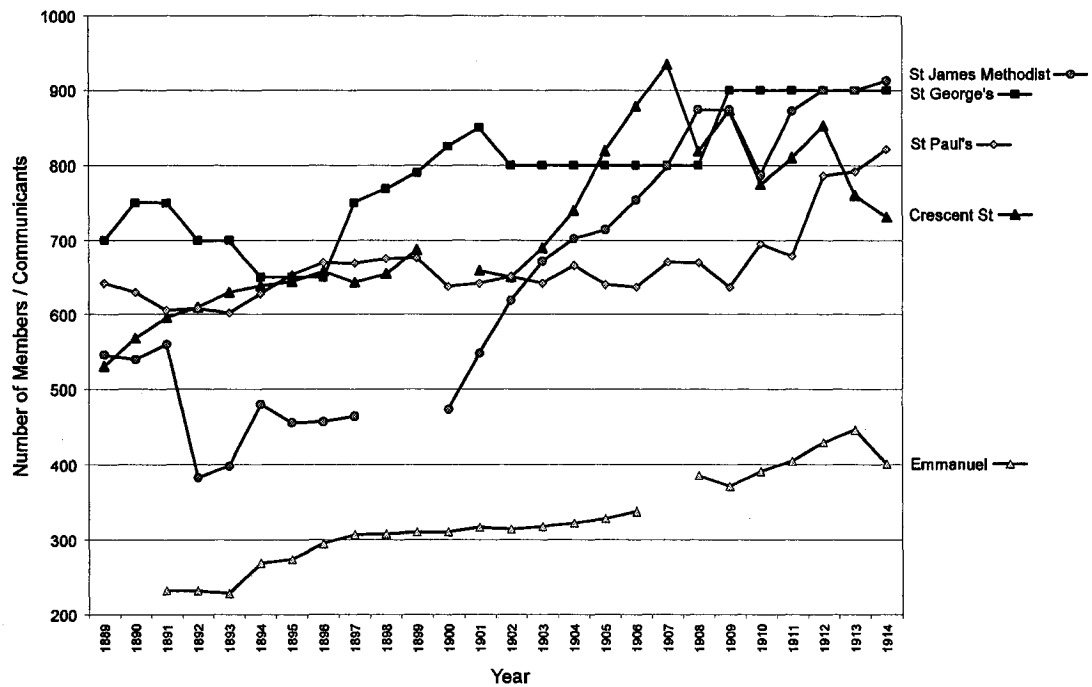
⁹³ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1895* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1896), 16.

⁹⁴ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1898* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1899), 13.

⁹⁵ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1902* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1903), 15.

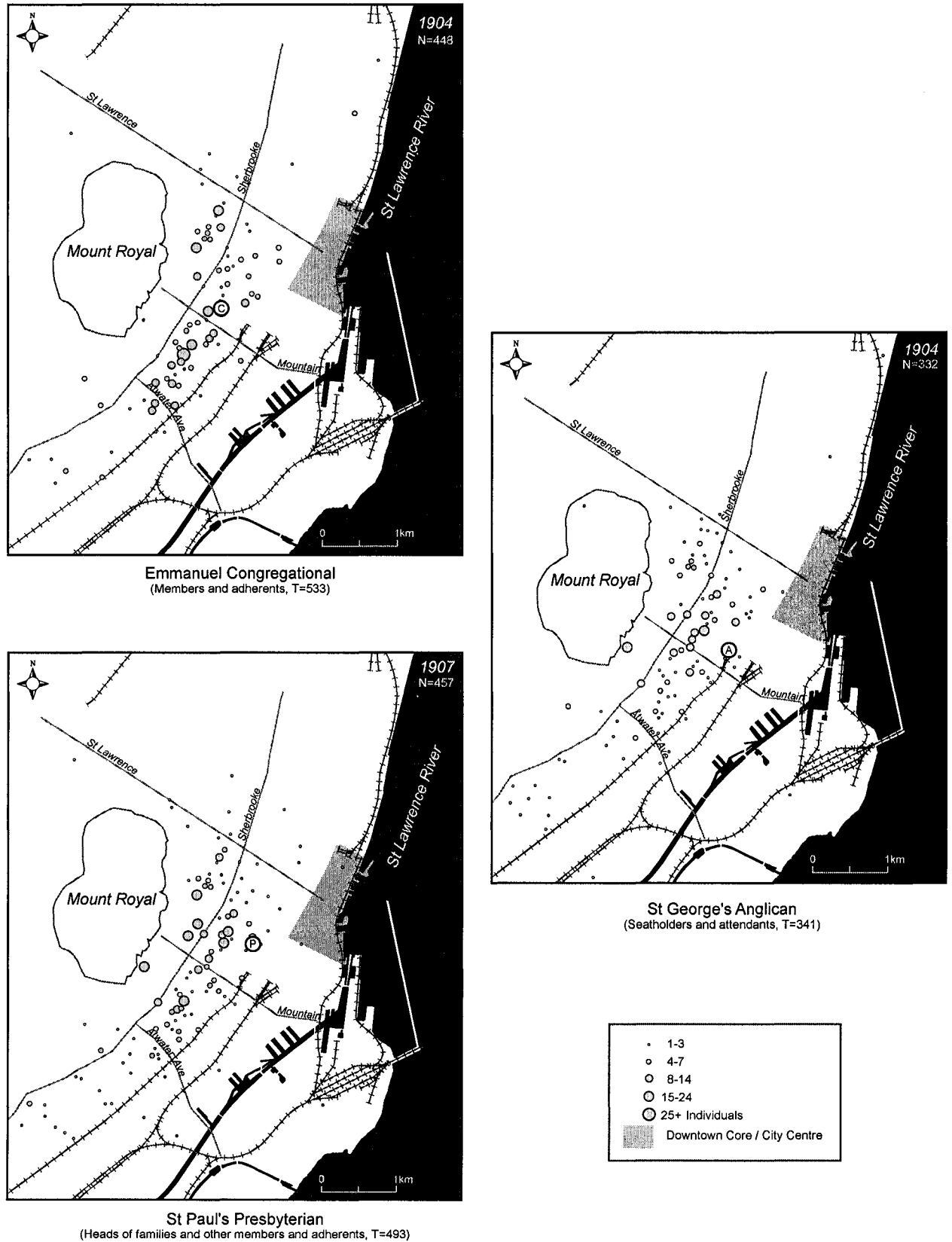
⁹⁶ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1913* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1914), 8.

Figure 5.6 Number of Members / Communicants Belonging to Uptown Congregations



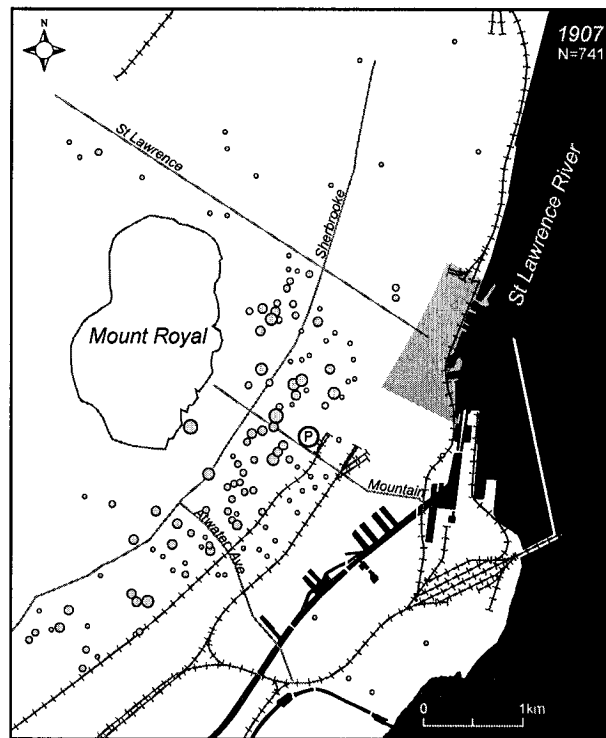
Source: Walkington 1977, 1979; *Minutes of the Montreal Methodist Conference 1889-1914*; *Proceedings of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal 1889-1914*.

Figure 5.7 Early 20th-Century Distributions of the Congregations of Emmanuel, St George's, and St Paul's

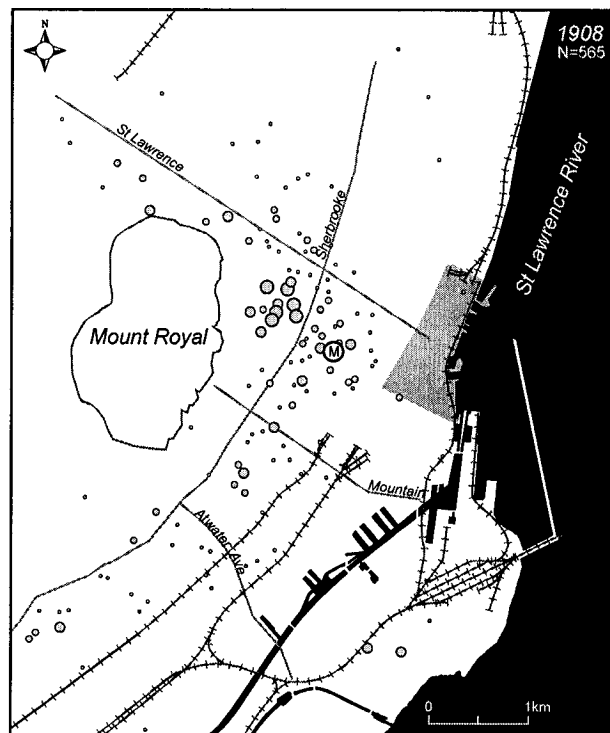


Sources: ANQ, P603,S2,SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/13 *Handbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, 1904* (1904), 23-36; STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son, 1904); SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1907* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1908), 39.

Figure 5.8 Early 20th-Century Distributions of the Congregations of American Presbyterian and St James Methodist Churches



American Presbyterian
(Members, T=919)



St James Methodist
(Members, T=874)

- 1-3
- 4-7
- 8-14
- 15-24
- 25+ Individuals
- Downtown Core / City Centre

Sources: ANQ, P603,S2,SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A420/3 *American Presbyterian Church Year Book* (January 1907), 18; P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 314, STJ/35/10 Circuit Register: Register of Members' Names in Connection with the Methodist Church of St James Church Circuit, Montreal Conference (1901, 1908).

concentration of members still located within approximately a kilometre of the church building. This reflected the fact that the street cars not only enabled the city to spread with great rapidity, but also made it possible for church members who moved to suburban areas to continue attending the uptown churches. From the beginning of the twentieth century onwards, travel for the city's wealthiest citizens was also facilitated by introduction of the automobile. Although some individuals chose to shift their affiliation to a neighbourhood church when they moved to the suburbs, Figures 5.7 and 5.8 indicate that the case-study churches were able to retain (and also perhaps attract) individuals living within a wide area. In the case of St George's Anglican Church it was observed in 1908 that 'hundreds of our people live nearly two miles from the church' and that it was no longer a compact congregation.⁹⁷ Emmanuel Church also noted the changed conditions, finding that the residences of the congregation covered 'a very much larger area than they did a few years ago'.⁹⁸ St James Methodist Church regarded the entire city as its parish,⁹⁹ and the minister of St Paul's Presbyterian Church, with approximately seventy families in Westmount and fifty beyond Mount Royal, concluded that his 'parish' stretched right round the mountain by 1913.¹⁰⁰ A committee appointed by the American Presbyterian Church in 1912 to consider the location of the church in relation to the residences of its members, similarly observed that a considerable number of members had, in recent years, moved from within a relatively circumscribed radius of the church to areas such as Westmount. The committee concluded, however, that there was little to be gained from moving the church building as it remained 'practically in the centre of the family life of the congregation'.¹⁰¹ Likewise, when the amalgamation of the churches of

⁹⁷ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(5) (February 1908), Letter to the Editor from A.P. Willis, 25.

⁹⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons' Minutes 1875-1916, 6 October 1912.

⁹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 29 September 1909.

¹⁰⁰ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1913* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1914), 8.

¹⁰¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A23 Session Correspondence 1912-1914, Report to the Moderator and Members of Session of the American Presbyterian Church from the Committee appointed to consider and report upon the policy of the church, first in connection with the present location of the Church, and second in regard to its ecclesiastical connection with the Canadian Presbyterian Church, 7 February 1912.

St Andrew's and St Paul's was proposed in 1917, and the suggestion made that the joint congregation should have a new building, one member questioned whether it was worthwhile doing so on the grounds that 'it would hardly be possible to select a site convenient and within easy reach of the homes of more than about 25 percent of the members'.¹⁰² While it had been relatively straightforward in the context of nineteenth-century Protestant population movements to propose a new church location that was more convenient for the majority of members, the growing dispersion of early twentieth-century congregations (facilitated by the developing street car networks) made such a decision increasingly problematic.

It should be emphasized that the dispersal of the uptown case-study congregations was not characteristic of other Protestant churches in the city at this time, and reflected the evolution of a distinct and new type of church. In 1910, the Montreal Council of Congregational Churches prepared a map showing the residences of families attending each of the several Congregational churches in the city in a different colour. Zion Church (the new incarnation of which was a relatively modest church, located above Sherbrooke Street, and to the east of University Street) was described as a 'neighbourhood' church, since it drew 40 percent of its membership from within a third of a mile of the church building. In contrast, Emmanuel Church attracted its members from all parts of the city, with fewer than 25 percent living within that radius.¹⁰³ The Rev. R. Bruce Taylor of St Paul's made a similar comparison between his own congregation and that of the Presbyterian church in working-class Point St Charles: 'A congregation such as St Matthew's...has seven hundred families within fifteen minutes walk of the church', he observed, whereas 'we have a membership of eight hundred persons, but probably half of the number live half an hour's journey from the church'.¹⁰⁴ The transition from 'family' or 'neighbourhood' church to 'uptown central' or 'city' church posed challenges but also offered new opportunities to congregations that were willing to embrace change.

¹⁰² SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1898-1918, Clipping inserted from the *Montreal Gazette*, Letter to the Editor from 'A Live Member', 24 December 1917.

¹⁰³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(6) (June 1910), 7-8.

¹⁰⁴ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1913* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1914), 8-9.

Adaptability on the part of ministers and congregation members played an important role in demonstrating that the continued existence of the uptown churches was feasible. The Rev. Bruce Taylor felt that 'the amount of time spent in reaching the point at which the pastoral work for the day commences is often so great as to induce a feeling of hopelessness as to the possibility of ever coming to know the congregation with any real intimacy'.¹⁰⁵ Some churches, including St George's and Emmanuel, tried to overcome this lack of intimacy by introducing monthly magazines in the early years of the twentieth century. In the case of the *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, its explicit aim was to 'bind together the congregation in practical fellowship; keeping them acquainted with the doings and ideals of the church'.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the greatest concern was the decline in Sunday school attendance that was observed in many of the case-study congregations. At St Paul's it was felt that 'the distance at which the majority of the members of the Church live tells more heavily against the Sunday School than against any other agency'.¹⁰⁷ The Rev. Hugh Pedley of Emmanuel Church also observed that children of Sunday school age were not well-represented in the neighbourhood surrounding his church, maintaining that it was well known that 'in churches of a central character in a great city, the schools are not large in proportion to the size of the congregation'.¹⁰⁸ What appeared to be happening was that parents living further away from the uptown case-study churches found it inconvenient to send young children long distances to attend afternoon Sunday school classes. They therefore opted to send their children to the schools of local suburban churches, but continued themselves to belong to an uptown congregation and attend its services.¹⁰⁹ While ministers encouraged parents to bring their children with them to the morning services, they also recognized that further efforts would be required to establish

¹⁰⁵ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1913* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1914), 8.

¹⁰⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 1(1) (February 1908), 1.

¹⁰⁷ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1912* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1913), 8.

¹⁰⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(3) (March 1910), 2; also *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(2) (February 1910), 2.

¹⁰⁹ STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son 1904), 9.

a lasting connection between these children and the uptown churches to which their parents belonged.¹¹⁰

At the same time, many of the uptown churches attempted to minister to an increasingly heterogeneous population as the neighbourhood had, 'in the twinkling of an eye', become a mixed district containing residences, boarding houses, hotels, shops, and places of commercialized amusement.¹¹¹ Instead of fleeing from these changes, congregations were encouraged by their ministers to embrace the opportunities that they presented. As Pedley pointed out:

The city is growing not only by additions on the outskirts, but also by a greater concentration of population near the centre. Many old family houses have either multiplied their inmates by becoming boarding-houses, or else have been torn down to give way to apartment houses, a process which means that on a plot of land where one or two families once lived twenty or thirty families are now using the same area. The churches in the central part of the city may find the character of their congregations changing, but the size of them should be on the increase.¹¹²

At St Paul's Church, proximity to McGill University brought a body of young men to the services, but it was also noted that many of the newcomers were recent immigrants, 'young men and women who have come to push their way'.¹¹³ Although this group was unable to contribute much financially to the work of the church at present, the Rev. Bruce Taylor welcomed their 'special gifts of enthusiasm and loyalty', and pointed out that, in a few years, many of them were likely to fill positions of importance in the city.¹¹⁴ A similar view was expressed in the first edition of the *Emmanuel Church Outlook*:

We ought to pay special attention to the new life that is coming into our city. If we are to hold our own to say nothing of growing we must have power to absorb new material.... Among those who come within our reach are some

¹¹⁰ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1911* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1912), 10.

¹¹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/15 Emmanuel Church Scrapbook, 1875-1915 *Emmanuel Church, Special Services in Connection with the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of Emmanuel Congregational Church, March 7th-14th, 1915*.

¹¹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 2(12) (December 1909), 2.

¹¹³ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1912* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1913), 8.

¹¹⁴ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1912* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1913), 8.

who in days to come will be strong men, and influential women in this community; but apart from the possibility of future success the fact that they are human beings with all humanity susceptible to sorrow and to joy should make it worth our while to shew them all consideration and give them heartiest welcome.¹¹⁵

For congregations that had previously catered primarily to well-to-do families, the welcoming of these new – and often more transient – younger elements did not necessarily involve their immediate assimilation into the more traditional membership. Some congregations were more welcoming than others, but those with the greatest interest in the spiritual well-being of these newcomers made an effort to gear their Sunday evening services towards them, as well as introduce clubs and amusements that would be attractive to young people, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Another factor that may have encouraged churches to remain uptown, but which was never to my knowledge discussed openly by the congregations themselves, was the persistence in the district of a large segment of the Protestant elite. In the U.S. context, traditional theories emphasizing the tendency for the wealthy to move continuously towards the urban periphery in search of more desirable housing and living spaces have been criticized for masking ‘a long history of continuing elite residence within some cities as well as considerable diversity in upper-class residence patterns and landscapes among cities’.¹¹⁶ Such an interpretation expands upon an argument made by Walter Firey in the 1940s, suggesting that Boston’s elite Beacon Hill district achieved a certain symbolic quality that members of the elite wished – and had the agency and financial means - to sustain even if it was not necessarily in their economic best interest to do so.¹¹⁷ In Montreal, although commercial and office developments began to encroach on middle-class residences in the uptown district from the 1890s onwards, the most exclusive area to the north of Sherbrooke Street (identified as Rent Class 7 in Figure 5.10), that housed the mansions of Montreal’s wealthiest inhabitants, remained intact and continued to be the

¹¹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 1(1) (February 1908), 2.

¹¹⁶ James Borchert and Susan Borchert, ‘Downtown, Uptown, Out of Town: Diverging Patterns of Upper-Class Residential Landscapes in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, 1885-1935’, *Social Science History*, 26(2) (2002), 312.

¹¹⁷ Walter Firey, ‘Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables’, *American Sociological Review*, 10(2) (1945), 144; Borchert and Borchert, ‘Downtown, Uptown’, 335.

preferred place of residence for the Protestant elite well into the twentieth century. Although the upper elevations of Westmount would later take precedence as the setting of choice for new mansions, in the early years of the twentieth century Westmount remained, in the words of Stephen Leacock, 'too rich for the poor but too poor for the superrich'.¹¹⁸ Using *Dau's Society Blue Book for Montreal*, I estimate that approximately 12 to 13 percent of Montreal 'society' lived in Westmount by 1898, and that this percentage had risen to between 23 and 24 percent by 1914.¹¹⁹ Although the removal of French Catholics from the calculation would no doubt reveal a larger proportion of English-speaking 'society' living in Westmount during this period, these figures confirm that Westmount had not yet taken precedence as the residential area of choice for the elite. Those sitting on the board of trustees of St Paul's Church in the early twentieth century included leading members of Montreal society such as Andrew Allen, Sir Hugh Graham (later Lord Atholstan), and Donald A. Smith (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal), all of whom continued to reside in the uptown district.¹²⁰ As the church's principal decision makers, these individuals were unlikely to encourage any church move that would be inconvenient for their families. Many of the uptown central churches were faced with substantial deficits at the end of each year, particularly once it was recognized that the ability to pay for a lavish music programme and high-calibre minister were essential features of any city church that hoped to continue to draw wealthy individuals from across the city and at the same time attract newcomers. In the case of St Paul's and the American Presbyterian Church, these deficits were frequently paid off by large

¹¹⁸ Stephen Leacock, *Montreal: Seaport and City* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company 1942), 233.

¹¹⁹ CIHM A00482, *Dau's Society Blue Book for Montreal* (Montreal: Dau Publishing Co. 1898); Rare Books Collection McGill University, *Dau's Blue Book for Montreal and Ottawa: A Social Directory* (Montreal: Dau Publishing Co. 1914). These figures represent rough calculations based on families with last names beginning with letters between A and D (inclusive) in the two volumes. Extrapolation based on average listings per page was used to estimate the total number of families listed in each volume, arriving at a figure of 3724 listings for 1898 and 2879 for 1914. Given the extent to which Montreal's population increased during this period, these figures suggest that more exclusive criteria may have been used when compiling the later edition. According to Borchert and Borchert, 'blue books' were designed to act as a guide to who 'belonged' in society and who did not, and were an attempt to cope with the social turmoil caused by the rapid expansion of the ranks of the urban rich during the late 19th and early 20th century. Although the criteria for inclusion were never explicitly stated, studies have suggested that blue books for U.S. cities usually included 'a broader spectrum of upper- and upper-middle-class members' than some of the other more exclusive society listings available in the United States, as well as 'a wider range of racial, ethnic, religious, and social groupings' (Borchert and Borchert, 'Downtown, Uptown', 316).

¹²⁰ See SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1898-1918.

subscriptions collected from a small number of the churches' most generous supporters.¹²¹ Given the prestige, leadership, and financial support that such high-profile members brought to their churches, one would hardly expect the congregations to which they belonged to take any steps that might alienate their support. As we shall see in the following section, the obstacles encountered by congregations that did move to Westmount may provide additional insights into why the case-study churches opted to remain uptown.

Relocation to Westmount vs. 'The Larger Conception of the Church of Christ'

Since none of the case-study congregations moved to Westmount, the experiences of the Dominion Square Methodist Church and Stanley Street Presbyterian Church will be considered in order to understand why this option was not more popular amongst the uptown churches. Westmount, originally known as Cote St Antoine, was a suburban district with a largely middle-class British-Protestant population (the location of Westmount is shown in Figure 7.6).¹²² As an independent municipality, Westmount provided its Protestant inhabitants, many of whom felt increasingly excluded from municipal affairs in the City of Montreal, with an opportunity for self-government. It also created an environment in which Protestants could police such things as Sabbath observance as strictly as they wished, rather than having to accommodate themselves to Catholic cultural norms.¹²³ As areas surrounding Westmount joined the City of Montreal, Westmount came to be seen as 'a British island ... capably administered in a French-Canadian lake'.¹²⁴

¹²¹ See, for example, SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1898-1918, December 1908-January 1909 minutes; ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 11 September 1914.

¹²² John Stephen Bryce, *The Making of Westmount, Quebec 1870-1929: A Study of Landscape and Community Construction* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1990), 61. For discussion of parallels between uptown development from 1840s onwards and the development of Westmount, see David B. Hanna, *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).

¹²³ Bryce, *The Making of Westmount*, 82.

¹²⁴ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 234. For the Rev. Taylor of St Paul's, 'In Montreal itself the pot-holes in the streets, and the crooked poles carrying wires, were not merely facts but symbols'.

One of the initial factors hindering relocation to Westmount was that by the time most of the uptown congregations began to consider selling their buildings, a number of new churches, representing all the principal Protestant denominations, had already been built to serve this growing suburban municipality. Many of these churches had evolved from Sunday schools supported by uptown congregations and most were located in the lower parts of Westmount that had been built up during the 1880s and 1890s.¹²⁵ During the building boom that took place between 1905 and 1914, development spread further north towards the summit of Westmount mountain, and, as it did so, the rows of well-constructed town houses on the plateau gave way to more elegant upper-middle-class houses and mansions.¹²⁶ For any uptown congregation contemplating a move to Westmount at this time, it therefore made sense to select a site somewhere on the upper level. After considering a range of different options, the trustees of Dominion Square Methodist Church decided to do just that, selling their original church building in 1911, and then purchasing a 61,000 square foot site on Westmount Boulevard the following year.¹²⁷ The trustees of Stanley Street Presbyterian Church proposed a very similar move, having secured a nearby site of somewhat more modest dimensions.¹²⁸ Both churches had relatively small congregations in comparison with many of the other uptown churches, which may have encouraged them to seek new locations with improved opportunities for growth.

These congregations soon realized, however, that it was no longer possible to relocate with the same ease as in the laissez-faire days of the 1860s and 1870s. The two Presbyterian churches already situated in Westmount opposed the establishment of a third church, and took steps to prevent the Stanley Street congregation from building in the vicinity.¹²⁹ After months of discussion in Presbytery meetings, the congregation's application for permission to relocate to the upper elevations of Westmount was rejected

¹²⁵ Bryce, *The Making of Westmount*, 53.

¹²⁶ Hanna, *The New Town of Montreal*, 150.

¹²⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, 'Annual Report Dominion Square Methodist Church for the year ending April 30th 1912'.

¹²⁸ *Montreal Daily Star*, 30 April 1912.

¹²⁹ *Montreal Daily Star*, 30 April 1912

by a close vote and it was recommended that they look for an alternate site.¹³⁰ When they failed to find an acceptable site within the recommended boundaries and insisted on retaining their chosen site, the Presbytery was finally persuaded to approve the new location, despite continued resistance on the part of the Westmount churches.¹³¹

Soon afterwards, however, the church-building projects of the two congregations came under the scrutiny of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal. This body, which first met in 1912, had been jointly organized by the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, and one of its principal goals was 'to prevent as far as possible any waste of energy and money by the overlapping of parishes and the duplication of efforts'.¹³² Such cooperative efforts were strongly motivated by the movement towards church union. The three denominations had been negotiating with one another for over ten years at this point, and it seemed likely that church union would become a reality in the near future. As well as believing in the spiritual benefits of cooperation amongst Christians, church leaders also appear to have been inspired by the consolidation that was taking place in modern business, believing that a united church would also be more efficient and cost-effective.¹³³ The Interdenominational Committee was quick to observe that the plans of the Dominion Square and Stanley Street churches to build two large and expensive churches in close proximity to one another, when only one church was really needed, did not coincide with their goal of promoting Christian unity and efficiency.¹³⁴ Some members of the committee felt that 'such a course as this might have been pursued without challenge a few years ago, but in the light of the larger conception of the Church of Christ that now obtains would be exposed to serious general, and we believe,

¹³⁰ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, P/9/5 Minutes of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, January 1912; March 1912, April 1912.

¹³¹ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, P/9/5 Minutes of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, 19 April 1912; *Montreal Daily Star*, 30 April 1912.

¹³² ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 29 January 1913.

¹³³ See discussion in Robert Campbell, *Union or Co-Operation - Which? The Proposed Union of Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians in Canada... A Critical Study of the Situation* (Montreal: Foster Brown Co. 1907), 20.

¹³⁴ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 26 February 1913.

justifiable criticism'.¹³⁵ The trustees of the two congregations agreed to meet and discuss a wide range of options, including the idea of building a Union Church.¹³⁶ Although the two congregations had little choice but to express an interest in the proposal, there were numerous thorny issues to be resolved, including such questions as whose minister would lead the new congregation and whose site would be used for the new church. The scheme was abandoned when it became clear that the existing legal framework made it impossible for trustees to alienate church property from their respective denominations.¹³⁷ Given that the spectacular design for the proposed new church for the Stanley Street congregation appeared in the newspapers while negotiations were still ongoing, and that planning for the new Dominion Square Church was already well-advanced, one suspects that it was already too late to generate enthusiasm for a Union Church.¹³⁸ While the efforts of the Interdenominational Committee failed, the point had been made that many within the churches now considered the dedication of energy and funds towards unnecessary church buildings to be a waste.

As they proceeded with the planning of their new church, the Dominion Square trustees discovered that the 'larger conception of the Church of Christ' posed further obstacles to building a church in upper Westmount. Correspondence amongst various trustees indicates that a number of proposals were examined before deciding to sell the original church, some of which involved retaining the old church building and attempting to adapt to the changing conditions in the uptown district. One trustee thought it might be possible to develop parts of the church property for commercial purposes in order to increase revenues and then adjust Sunday evening worship services and church activities in order 'to reach the masses which are coming into the district within a radius of 3/4

¹³⁵ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 28 May 1913.

¹³⁶ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 30 April 1913, 8 May 1913, 28 May 1913.

¹³⁷ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, P/9/5 Minutes of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, 27 May 1913; *Montreal Gazette*, 28 May 1913, 29 May 1913, 30 May 1913, 31 May 1913.

¹³⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from Mr. D.J. Spence [Finley & Spence, architects, BHH] to Mr. C.C. Holland, 4 December 1912; *Montreal Witness*, 17 March 1913; *Montreal Standard*, 26 April 1913.

mile'.¹³⁹ Should such a scheme be carried out, he felt that 'it would be necessary to have a church going out at Westmount that our families could look forward to going to, should they feel sensitive over the changing policy in the church'.¹⁴⁰ Thus, unlike church relocations in the 1860s and 1870s, which focused almost exclusively on the requirements of church members, it appeared that church leaders were trying to think more holistically about ways in which the church could serve the needs of a wider range of different people. This was in keeping with the Methodist tradition in Montreal, which – under the leadership of the St James Street Church – had always taken a more cooperative approach to church extension issues than had the other Protestant denominations.

Once the decision had been taken to move, and plans drawn up for the new church, it became clear that it would require all of the congregation's resources to carry out the proposed scheme. The design for the lavish new church incorporated a number of up-to-date features, including a bowling alley, gymnasium, dining room, entertainment hall, locker rooms, and shower rooms.¹⁴¹ In October 1913, the minister, the Rev. S.P. Rose, warned John Leslie, one of the trustees, that they would have to act very carefully if they were to secure approval and support from 'the non-Dominion Square Methodist[s] on the hill'.¹⁴² Rose had gone to some trouble to gauge public opinion, and had uncovered 'a singular unanimity of judgment, so uniform indeed as to suggest a good deal of conversation among our friends as to what we ought to do':

It seems to be the unanimous feeling that Dominion Square owes it to itself and to Methodism to do something distinctly generous for the Church Extension movement of the city.... We ought, it is repeatedly said, to pay back at least what we got when the church was young, - \$40,000, or was it \$30,000?¹⁴³ Leaving downtown as we are we should not fail to do a generous

¹³⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from Mr. C. Holland to Mr John Leslie, 11 April 1911.

¹⁴⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from Mr. C. Holland to Mr John Leslie, 11 April 1911.

¹⁴¹ *Montreal Witness*, 21 June 1913.

¹⁴² ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from the Rev. S.P. Rose to Mr. John Leslie, 24 October 1913.

¹⁴³ This refers to the amount that the St James Street Church contributed towards the erection of the original Dominion Square Church.

thing to assist the down town work. I have pointed out the fact that we have not eno' money as it is to build our church on the present plans, and have suggested that to meet the wants of the constituency we hope to serve on the hill, a less ambitious plan would be an error.... I am answered with great frankness that unless we do something in the way desired or suggested, we shall not get the most important people of the upper level at all. More than this, I am also told that the very bitter feeling which dwells in some, yes many, minds will grow more bitter, and that we shall find ourselves a most unpopular church, regarded as a club of exclusive Methodists, neither caring nor meriting the sympathy of the community at large. I am also assured that if we do the generous thing we may count on the early and enthusiastic help of practically the entire Methodism of the hill.¹⁴⁴

Under these circumstance, Rose suggested that the trustees would be well-advised to postpone erection of the main church building, and begin by completing the school room. The church could then position itself 'at the very heart of a plan for the uplift of the entire city' by providing funds for church extension, which would generate support from the non-Dominion Square Methodists on the upper level, who could then be asked to supply the rest of the funds required to erect the proposed church. As Rose explained,

My Winnipeg experiences taught me how hard it is to fight down a popular prejudice against a church on the ground that it is fashionable, or a rich man's preserve. If by generous action we can turn the tide of feeling that is now very much opposed to us in many quarters into a tide in our favour, our future will be much the pleasanter.¹⁴⁵

Such statements illustrate the biases with which 'fashionable' uptown churches had to contend if they opted to move to suburban Westmount. Since the church relocations of the nineteenth century had been one of the factors leading to the creation of socially-exclusive congregations in the first place, this was an issue that had not previously been encountered in the context of church moves. Although street car services made it possible for individuals to travel longer distances to get to church at this point, churches moving to Westmount anticipated leaving behind quite a large section of their congregation, which was why it was so important to secure broader support within the

¹⁴⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from the Rev. S.P. Rose to Mr. John Leslie, 24 October 1913.

¹⁴⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Papers pertaining to purchase of property on Windsor and Dorchester Streets, Dominion Methodist / John Leslie Correspondence 1909-1930, Letter from the Rev. S.P. Rose to Mr. John Leslie, 24 October 1913.

Westmount community.¹⁴⁶ It could be argued that the difficulties encountered by the Dominion Square congregation were also a product of the 'larger conception of the Church of Christ' that was gaining ground in Montreal. The trustees of the Dominion Square congregation discovered that public opinion no longer considered it acceptable to build a large and expensive church in an exclusive residential suburb to suit the needs of church members, and only afterwards concern themselves with the needs of Methodists elsewhere in the city. Instead, the wealthy were expected to lay aside their own plans for the time being in order to assist with broader church extension efforts. Although it is not clear whether matters of conscience or the high costs of construction ultimately postponed the erection of the main church building, the congregation ended up worshipping in the commodious Sunday school room from the time it opened in 1914, until 1927, when the original church plans were finally completed.¹⁴⁷

The examples of the Dominion Square Methodist and Stanley Street Presbyterian churches suggest that the context for church relocation had changed by the early twentieth century. The erection of elaborate and expensive churches in the residential districts of the well-to-do was viewed more critically within denominations, which now had committees responsible for redistributing funds and attempting to provide all parts of the rapidly-growing city with church accommodation as efficiently as possible. Interdenominational cooperation was a new factor, calling into question the divisions within Protestantism that had led to the earlier erection of so many Protestant churches in the uptown district. At the same time, uptown congregations moving to Westmount had to convince the broader Westmount community that their churches were not simply social clubs with exclusive memberships. Although the Dominion Square and Stanley Street churches were ultimately able to retain their independent congregational identities and carry out their original plans, in order to do so they were obliged to take numerous steps

¹⁴⁶ Following the opening of the school room of the new Dominion Church in 1914, the Rev. S.P. Rose told his congregation that with a new name, a new site, and to some considerable extent a new congregation, they must turn their faces towards the future and adjust themselves to their new and unfamiliar environment (ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, 'Annual Report Dominion Square Methodist Church for the year ending April 30 1914').

¹⁴⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, 'Annual Report of the Dominion Methodist Church Westmount for the year ended April 30th, 1922', 20-21.

to respond to negative public opinion and overcome opposition. Such a reception may have discouraged other congregations from following in their footsteps.

The Impact of Social Christianity on the Case-Study Churches

Practical and material considerations offer only a partial explanation of what motivated congregations to remain in the uptown district. Many of their choices make sense only when viewed through the lens of the fresh theological perspective of social Christianity. As we shall see in the discussion that follows, individual congregations attempted to graft these new ideas onto pre-existing frameworks that reflected the unique background of each church, resulting in a range of different outcomes. Examples will be developed from three of the original six case-study congregations: Emmanuel Congregational, St George's Anglican, and St James Methodist.

Insufficient archival material was available for the Crescent Street Church to enable it to be included in this discussion. The congregations of St Paul's Presbyterian and the American Presbyterian remained relatively unresponsive to the currents of change. Both were prepared to search for a new location if compelled to do so by the intrusion of the railways, but otherwise members seem to have been content to continue worshipping in and making use of their church buildings as they had done in the past.¹⁴⁸ The wealth of their members was such that it helped to insulate these two conservative congregations from the changes taking place in the surrounding community. The Rev. Bruce Taylor of St Paul's attempted to impress upon his congregation the fact that there were growing 'opportunities of doing good work in the Kingdom on God' in the environs of the church, 'even though that work may possibly not be along the lines pursued when the church was in the midst of a purely residential neighbourhood'.¹⁴⁹ The reaction of church members to such suggestions was relatively lukewarm and no desire was ever

¹⁴⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1904-1913, 6 December 1911; 7 February 1912; Contenant 164, A23 Session Correspondence 1912-1914, Report to the Moderator and Members of Session of the American Presbyterian Church from the Committee appointed to consider and report upon the policy of the church, first in connection with the present location of the Church, and second in regard to its ecclesiastical connection with the Canadian Presbyterian Church, 7 February 1912; SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1898-1918, 3 February 1913; 7 August 1913. St Paul's was particularly worried about the CNR tunnel and terminal that were being built.

¹⁴⁹ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1912* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1913), 10.

expressed to adapt the physical plant of the church in order to provide a more hospitable environment for this type of social outreach. This response seems largely to have been dictated by views similar to those of Andrew Macphail, emphasizing dignified worship and sound preaching as the principal *raison d'être* of a church building. As we will see in Chapter 6, this does not necessarily mean that these two congregations remained entirely aloof from the influences of social Christianity, but does suggest that they chose not to embrace it as a central part of their congregational identity.

Emmanuel Congregational Church: Training for Social Service

Emmanuel Congregational was the only case-study congregation that not only sold its original uptown church, but also built a new place of worship in the period prior to 1914. Although the plan initially arose out of dissatisfaction with the acoustics and ventilation of their old building,¹⁵⁰ the influence of social Christianity had an important impact on how the congregation ultimately interpreted their decision to rebuild in a new location. During the late 1890s, members began to suggest that if they were unable to pay for renovations and improvements, then it would be better to sell the church and replace it with a modern building in a nearby location.¹⁵¹ In 1900, the congregation gave the Church Board their permission to carry out this proposal, but it was only to do so once sufficient funds could be generated from the sale of the old church property to pay for the erection of a more suitable edifice.¹⁵² Although never explicitly stated, it seems that a desire to support their new minister's social-gospel inspired vision of the church's future may have helped them to arrive at this decision. According to the church secretary, A.K. Grafton, the Rev. Hugh Pedley wished to see his church transformed into 'a real, living power in the community...above all a Church where the Spirit of Christ may be manifested in its membership, ever ready to lend a hand where help is needed and to

¹⁵⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 153, EMM/1/2 Board of Trustees Correspondence 1877-1909, Letter from George Cornish, Church Secretary, to Jas. Linton, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Trustees, 4 October 1877.

¹⁵¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 154, EMM/1/3/1 Minutes Emmanuel Church Board 1896-1906, 16 January 1898.

¹⁵² ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons' Minutes 1875-1916, 20 September 1900; Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, 28 November 1900.

endeavour to right the wrongs that ought not to be'.¹⁵³ Over the next few years, as the trustees waited for the value of their property to increase, Pedley continued to impress this ideal on his congregation:

A man should have his ideal, so should a church.... What shall Emmanuel church be? What shall we try to make it? A church where we are growing up in the strength and beauty of Christian character; a church where membership is synonymous with activity; a church which shall burn with such a glow of brotherhood that by the very warmth men will be attracted; a church that shall be hospitable to all phases of the truth whether old or new; ... ; a church whose members shall be known in the community for their generosity and public spirit; a church that shall be in some degree an approximation of that Bride of Christ spoken of in the scripture as "glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing".¹⁵⁴

The Church Board embraced this vision as their own, and in 1903 expressed the opinion that Emmanuel Church had the material, the organization, and the means to do 'more aggressive and progressive work than ever before'.¹⁵⁵ Though not essential, a new church building with improved facilities came to be seen as offering possibilities in terms of implementing this programme. The trustees finally received an acceptable offer for their St Catherine Street building in 1905, and plans were soon underway for the erection of a new church.¹⁵⁶

There appears to have been no question of moving very far from the original location. It is clear, however, that the congregation hoped that by relocating to a more residential street they would be able to purchase a less expensive site than the one they had left behind and so build free of debt.¹⁵⁷ At the same time, the trustees expressed a

¹⁵³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, Report of the Church Board, 21 January 1901.

¹⁵⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, Pastor's Address, 20 January 1902.

¹⁵⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 156, EMM/1/7/4 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1902-1915, Report of the Church Board, 19 January 1903.

¹⁵⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons' Minutes 1875-1916, 21 June 1905; Contenant 156, EMM/1/7/4 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1902-1915, 6 September 1905.

¹⁵⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 153, EMM/1/2/1 Board of Trustee Minutes 1905-1919, Copy of a circular sent to church members and subscribers on behalf of the Board of Trustees (insert), dated 16 October 1905.

strong desire to select the site that would be 'best suited to effective Christian work' and asked church members, when expressing their personal choice of 'locality' in response to a congregational circular, to answer the question, 'Where will the church do its best and highest service?'¹⁵⁸ The wording of this question reflected a very different type of thinking from that which had motivated the original uptown church relocations. Then, the focus had been on a practical desire to choose the site that would be most convenient for the majority of church members. Now, church members were being asked to determine which location would place the church in the best position to reach out and serve the needs of the surrounding community.

Further emphasis was placed on serving the community once the new Emmanuel Church on Drummond Street was opened in 1907. An article in the *Emmanuel Church Outlook* pointed out that with a new building, well-equipped for Christian work and entirely free from debt, they were now much better off than most other congregations in Canada.¹⁵⁹ While this was a matter for congratulation, it also brought with it great responsibility: the Church Board hoped that the motto 'Free to Serve' would impress itself upon the congregation and that church members would 'increasingly realise that the truest life is one of service – to God first, and then of a necessity, to our fellow man'.¹⁶⁰ With such ideals laid before them, and recognizing that the new church's dramatically improved financial conditions freed them to carry out these aims, congregation members seem to have had no qualms about leaving the old church building to its commercial fate, confident in the knowledge that 'the church building might be demolished, but the Church itself would remain' (see Figure 5.9).¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 153, EMM/1/2/1 Board of Trustee Minutes 1905-1919, Copy of a circular sent to church members and subscribers on behalf of the Board of Trustees (insert), dated 16 October 1905.

¹⁵⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 1(1), (February 1908), 1-2.

¹⁶⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 156, EMM/1/7/4 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1902-1915, Church Board Report, 20 January 1908.

¹⁶¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/13 Bulletins / Historical Material 1916-1948, 'Last service held in Emmanuel Church', Newspaper clipping, Address delivered by founding member Charles Black.

Figure 5.9 The Original Emmanuel Congregational Church, 1911, following the sale of the property to the Castle Blend Tea Company



Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection. The original source of this image is unknown, although it is identified as dating from 1911. Similar photos appear in the newspapers at this time. See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 16 March 1912.

When choosing a design, the Building Committee took the decisive step of abandoning Gothic architecture in favour of the neo-classical style.¹⁶² This represented a stylistic break not only with their previous church, but also with the conventional architectural style of all the other uptown Protestant churches. A commentary in the *Canadian Architect and Builder* suggested that the design 'gets over the objection to Gothic...that it is out of keeping with our time and the buildings in which we live our daily life'.¹⁶³ Similar views were expressed at this time by advocates of the 'socialized' church in the United States, who criticized the traditional church building for being 'separated from the everyday life of the people' and standing 'only as the representative of spiritual and eternal interest'. It was argued that 'the church ought to suggest, not an "absentee God" and a future heaven, but the kingdom of God here and now and coming daily in every community'.¹⁶⁴

Once in their new building, the congregation of Emmanuel Church embarked on an ambitious plan to provide for the social and religious needs of various classes in the community by expanding the variety of programmes available through the church, and transforming it into a scene of constant daily activity. Over time, Emmanuel Church's sense of mission became intimately connected with the decision that had been made to remain in the uptown district:

Church after church has fled from the down-town sections as they have been surrounded by business and boarding houses and a new type of population. It is for Emmanuel Church to take the better part of remaining on the firing line and finding the new mode of attack that shall capture the enemy's trenches. It is for the members of Emmanuel Church by their continued loyal devotion to make of her the church of the open door and the helping hand. So shall she not simply hold her own in the changed community, but work out for herself a glorious future of service.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² See Susan Stanley, 'From Cathedral to Citadel: Emmanuel Congregational Church in Montreal', *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers*, (1994), 179.

¹⁶³ *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 19(10) (1906), 149.

¹⁶⁴ Rev. Josiah Strong, *The Challenge of the City* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada 1911), 251.

¹⁶⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/15 Emmanuel Church Scrapbook, 1875-1915 *Emmanuel Church, Special Services in Connection with the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of Emmanuel Congregational Church, March 7th-14th, 1915*

By remaining in an increasingly heterogeneous central neighbourhood, it was hoped that Emmanuel Church would act as 'the leaven that will leaven the whole lump', by training her members for social service and cooperating with other groups that were working for 'human betterment' in the city.¹⁶⁶ Congregationalists had always been active in interdenominational charitable endeavours in Montreal, so to some extent this represented continuity with past interests. At the same time, the social gospel's call for Christians to cooperate in social service work appears to have shifted the emphasis from the transformation of individual lives to the creation of a more harmonious social order, seen as being more in keeping with Christian ideals.

St George's Anglican Church: Solving Social Problems

Like his counterpart at Emmanuel, the Rev. Dr. Paterson Smyth of St George's Anglican Church introduced a monthly magazine to help keep in touch with his large and dispersed congregation, to communicate new trends in Christian social thought, and to engage his parishioners in finding Christian solutions to the city's social problems. Having emigrated to Montreal from Dublin in 1907 in order to become Rector of St George's, Dr. Smyth brought with him a certain amount of experience in dealing with social issues. At the first convention of the City Improvement League, founded in 1909, he led the discussion on housing problems and described how the Dublin City Council had taken steps to demolish unsanitary dwellings and replace them with model tenement flats. He then went on to depict the current situation in Montreal:

In Montreal the conditions under which some of the poor lived were indescribable. He had sometimes had thoughts of photographing some of the dwellings of the poor in his parish so as to give some idea of the manner in which the people are compelled to live, and the insanitary nature of the dwellings. He then gave a few descriptions of some of the houses he had visited to show the terrible conditions of life of some of the people, and the nature of the city's slums.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/15 Emmanuel Church Scrapbook, 1875-1915 *Emmanuel Church, Special Services in Connection with the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of Emmanuel Congregational Church, March 7th-14th, 1915.*

¹⁶⁷ CIHM 72003, *For A Better Montreal: Report of the First Convention of the City Improvement League* (Montreal: 1910), 40-41.

Like other proponents of social Christianity, Dr. Smyth believed that the Church had a central role to play in improving social conditions in the city, and attempted to communicate this vision to his congregation. In a sermon entitled 'A New Montreal', he raised a wide range of issues - including crowded tenements, high infant mortality, crushing rents, the White Plague, unemployment, and the corruption of municipal government - and emphasized that it was the religious duty of all citizens to help resolve these problems. He pleaded for 'a broader, grander ideal for the Church', in which 'individual religion' would reach 'its crown and blossom in social religion', suggesting that it was the role of the church not just to comfort the miserable, but also to combat the sources of their misery.¹⁶⁸ Evidently aware that many in his congregation remained to be convinced, he continued:

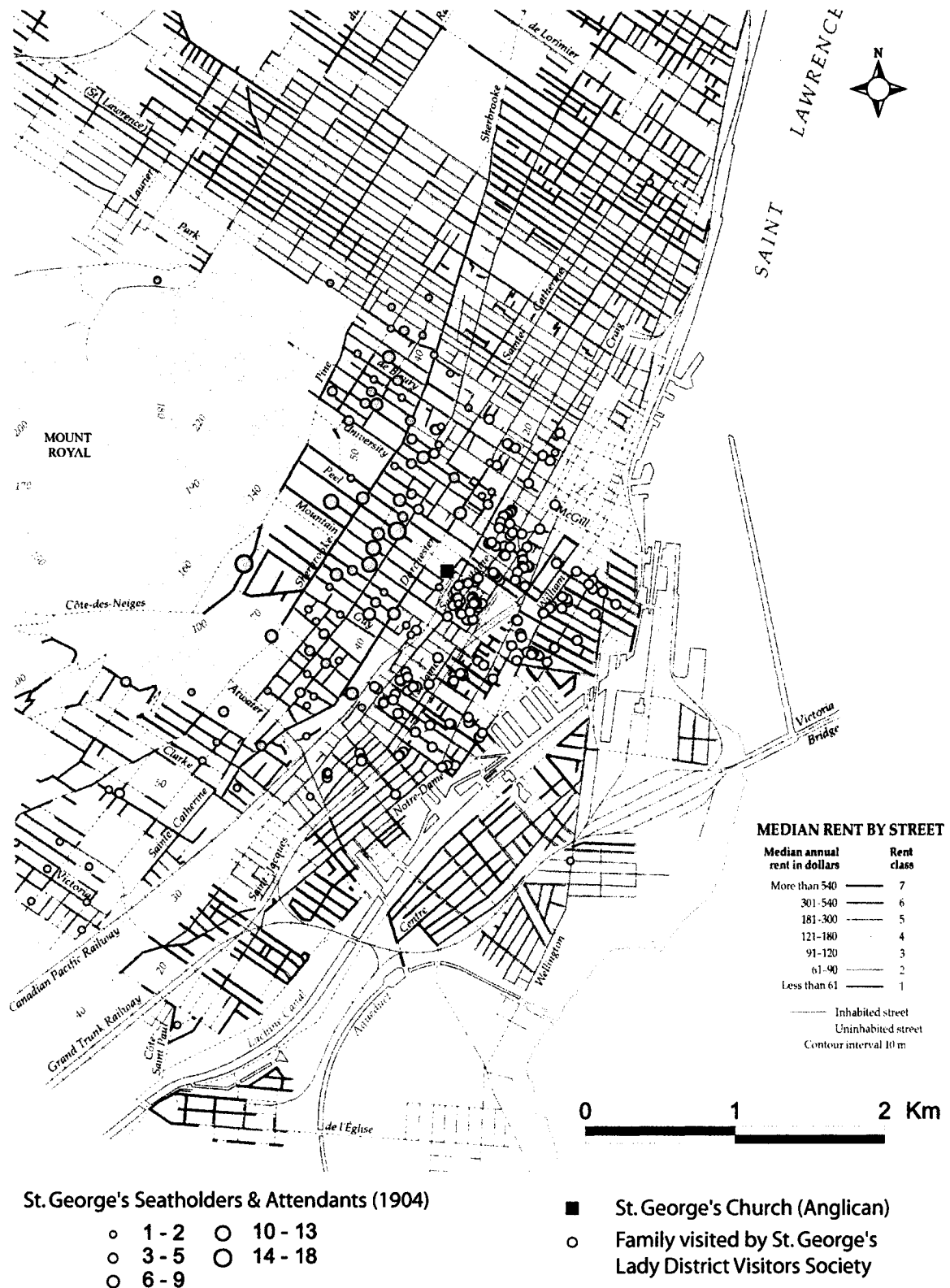
I know quite well what some of you are saying in your hearts. "We are sound, common-sense, practical people; we are not sentimentalists and visionary fools; we don't believe in any nonsense of a new Jerusalem or a new Montreal coming on earth. These dreams of the future are impossible and Utopian" ... Do you forget that Christ has a great project for a Kingdom of God on earth? Do you forget that Christ is behind us in our struggle? Are you blind that you cannot see the signs of the times in these past ten years? Why there never was a time when your pessimism was more out of place than in this new century palpitating with great social enthusiasms of many kinds. Men of faith are looking forward with glad expectancy at the signs that God is calling the Church in this new age to a new social application of his Gospel. Let pessimists say what they will, never before in any century has there been such an awakening of the public conscience, such growing sensitiveness to the sufferings and temptations of the helpless classes. One almost gasps at the unexpected progress.¹⁶⁹

St George's had traditionally carried out extensive mission and charitable work in the lower reaches of its parish, using the wealth and resources of uptown congregation members, and it therefore seemed natural that the congregation would direct at least some of its efforts at improving the social conditions which affected these same individuals. The symbiotic relationship between the two sectors of the parish is illustrated in Figure 5.10, showing the distribution of seat-holders in 1904 (in grey) and the distribution of poor families visited by the St George's Ladies District Visiting Society in 1900 (in violet). The church sat on the edge of the hill between the two. When the sale of St

¹⁶⁸ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 3(2) (November 1909), 7-8.

¹⁶⁹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 3(2) (November 1909), 8-9.

Figure 5.10 Map Showing Distribution of St George's Anglican Church Seatholders and Attendants (1904) and Families Visited by the St George's Lady District Visitors Society (1900), Against a Backdrop of Median Assessed Rents by Street



Sources: STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son 1904), 55-61; St George's Lady District Visitors Society Minute Book 1900-1905; *Historical Atlas of Canada: Addressing the Twentieth Century, 1891-1961*, eds. Donald Kerr and Deryck W. Holdsworth (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Vol.3, Plate 30. The map underlay showing median rent by street (1901) was adapted from Plate 30 of the *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Vol.3.

George's Church began to be discussed seriously in 1912, the Rector was pained to find that the associated publicity and rumours (described above) were generating an image of his church distinctly at odds with the public-spirited vision he was attempting to promote. In December 1912, he complained that the press had been 'making rather free with our projects for St George's, which they know nothing about' and expressed regret at having heard unkind comments made within the parish 'suggesting that we are worldly and are going to desert our poor and become a wealthy and prosperous parish'.¹⁷⁰

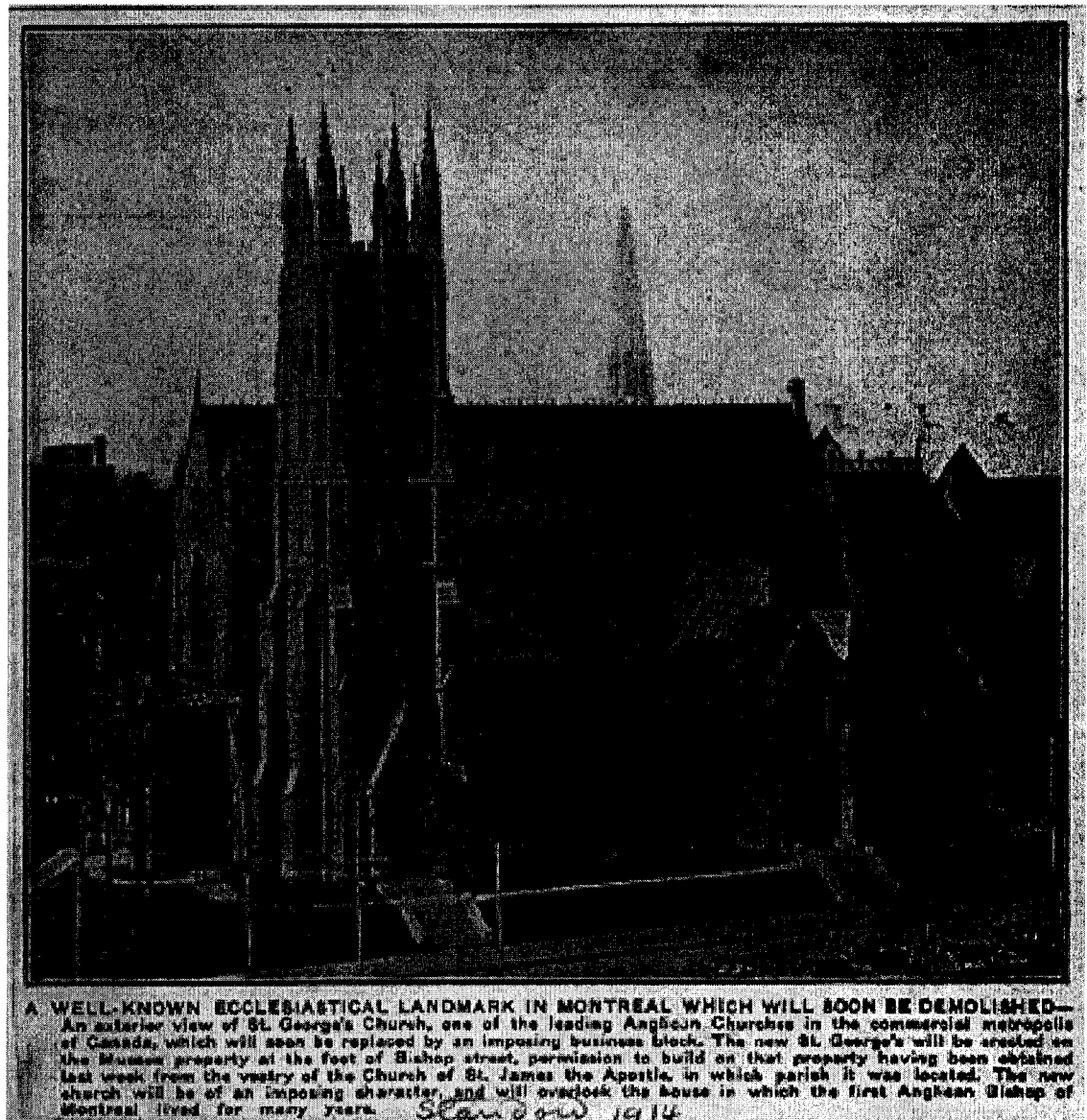
Misunderstandings appear to have arisen in part because of the uncertainty surrounding the choice of a new location. When the proprietors and vestry of St George's agreed to its sale late in 1912, no definite arrangements had yet been made for a new site (see Figure 5.11).¹⁷¹ In light of the growing commercialization of the area surrounding Dominion Square and the threat of having part of their property expropriated by the C.P. Railway, and with over 95 percent of seat-holders living beyond the parish boundaries, church leaders appear simply to have been anxious to take advantage of the high price that was then being offered for their site.¹⁷² Since there was no consultation with ordinary church members concerning the sale and relocation of their church, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which the congregation supported this decision. Evidence suggests that St George's intended to remain in the uptown district, but anticipated being able to move into the more residential area above St Catherine Street, with a site on Sherbrooke Street being preferred. Problems arose, however, because the uptown boundary of the parish lay along Dorchester Street and the vestries of both Christ Church Cathedral and St James the Apostle refused to alter their boundaries to accommodate St George's. Vestrymen at St James the Apostle were concerned that there would not be enough room for two Anglican churches so close to one another and feared that their church would be overshadowed by 'a Church with a million and a quarter dollars at its back'; some maintained that the

¹⁷⁰ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(3) (December 1912), 31.

¹⁷¹ STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 19 November 1912; Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1902-1925, 19 November 1912.

¹⁷² MDA, Fonds Synod of the Diocese of Montreal Parish Boundary Records (hereafter PBR), Parish Dossiers, Petition to the Lord Bishop of Montreal from communicant members of the Church of England residing in the parish of St Georges or in adjoining divisions of the original parish of Montreal, 10 November 1913; Copy of a request from the Rector and Wardens of St George's Church to the Rector and Wardens and Vestry of St James the Apostle, 28 December 1913. Unless otherwise indicated, the rest of the information in this paragraph was obtained from these sources.

Figure 5.11 St George's Church, Sold for \$1,250,000 and Slated for Demolition, 1914.
The outbreak of World War I and the failure of the church's purchasers to fulfil their obligations allowed the congregation to reconsider their decision to sell.



Source: BNQ, Massicotte Collection.

proper place for St George's was the distant suburb of Notre Dame de Grace.¹⁷³ Eventually, however, they agreed to a compromise which would force St George's to remain in what was considered undesirable territory to the south of Dorchester Street, but would at least allow the parish to extend its boundary a couple of blocks to the west so that a new church could be built at the foot of Bishop Street.¹⁷⁴

Throughout the negotiations, leaders at St George's stressed that they did not intend to desert the downtown portion of their parish. At the Annual Dinner of the St George's Men's Bible Class, held soon after the sale of the church, the rector emphasized that rather than deserting the people 'below the Hill', it was hoped that the sale of the church would make it possible to do more than ever before to solve the problems that existed in that part of the city. 'If present hopes and ambitions are carried out and attained', he suggested, 'St George's will surpass all her past traditions, and rise up as never before in the work of social service'.¹⁷⁵ At a time when it looked as if St George's would have to choose a site some distance from the downtown portion of its parish, the rector very reluctantly accepted that it might be necessary to build two separate churches, but promised that the clergy of St George's would continue to preach in both locations.¹⁷⁶ He was also anxious to point out, somewhat bluntly, that 'St George's people are not out for money',¹⁷⁷ and that instead of spending the profits of the sale of their church on themselves, they intended to contribute to Diocesan projects and assist with social service needs in the city.¹⁷⁸ Although many uptown church members would have preferred a

¹⁷³ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, Special Meeting of the Vestry of St James the Apostle to consider a renewed application for permission to erect a church for the parish of St George upon a piece of ground situated within the bounds of the Parish of St James the Apostle and to finally decide thereon, 2 January 1914.

¹⁷⁴ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, Special Meeting of the Vestry of St James the Apostle to consider a renewed application for permission to erect a church for the parish of St George upon a piece of ground situated within the bounds of the Parish of St James the Apostle and to finally decide thereon, 2 January 1914; 7 January 1914.

¹⁷⁵ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(3) (January 1913), 8.

¹⁷⁶ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(9) (June 1913), 2; *St George's Monthly*, 7(4) (January 1914), 2.

¹⁷⁷ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(9) (June 1913), 2.

¹⁷⁸ MDA, Fonds Synod of the Diocese of Montreal PBR, Parish Dossiers, Copy of a request from the Rector and Wardens of St George's Church to the Rector and Wardens and Vestry of St James the Apostle, 28 December 1913; SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, Special Meeting of the Vestry of St James the Apostle to consider a renewed application for permission to erect a church for the parish of St George upon

more prestigious Sherbrooke Street location, a site on the south side of Dorchester was deemed acceptable and was seen as having the advantage of ensuring that the church remained well, if not better, placed to deal with the problems existing in the downtown part of its parish.¹⁷⁹ By June 1914, plans for the magnificent new church were on display, and it was observed that ample room remained on the property for the church 'to build settlement houses or to carry out schemes that will make it an active force in promoting the community's welfare'.¹⁸⁰ It appeared likely that the outcome of this extended process would be a church fabric that avoided resembling 'a sort of Church club for a set of idle people to meet in on Sundays', but would instead suggest a parish that was well-equipped and ready to 'help on the Kingdom of God'.¹⁸¹

The inability of the company that had bought the old St George's Church to fulfil its obligations, and the disruption of World War I, brought these plans to a halt and eventually led the congregation to retain its old building.¹⁸² The experience of this congregation nevertheless resembled that of Emmanuel Congregational in a number of important respects. As at Emmanuel, the decisions that were made at St George's reflected the belief - very different from that which had motivated nineteenth-century church moves - that an institution that hoped to transform society needed to maintain a physical presence in the centre of the city, in at least relative proximity to the areas that were in greatest need of transformation. Like their predecessors, both congregations took an unsentimental approach towards their old buildings, but this time emphasized that their sale would liberate funds for more active and productive Christian work in the city. At Emmanuel, a short move was seen as being highly compatible with the desire to promote greater congregational involvement in social service work and reach out to new social elements in the uptown district. In the case of St George's, it was the church's paternalistic connection with the downtown portion of its parish, and the presence of very

a piece of ground situated within the bounds of the Parish of St James the Apostle and to finally decide thereon, 2 January 1914.

¹⁷⁹ *The Montreal Churchman*, 2(4) (February 1914), 9.

¹⁸⁰ *The Montreal Churchman*, 2(8) (June 1914), 6.

¹⁸¹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(3) (December 1912), 11.

¹⁸² A.P. Gower Rees, *Historical Sketch of St George's Church, Montreal and its Constitution* (Granby: Simms Printing Co. 1952), 35-36.

definite social problems that needed to be addressed in that district, that strengthened the argument in favour of finding a site not far from the original church. At the same time, the defensiveness of St George's rector reflected the critical climate of opinion that was now being faced by the uptown churches. While the idealistic vision of a 'New Montreal' may have emerged from broad currents of thought that were sweeping the western world, individual congregations were also aware of local criticism and wished to make it clear that their detractors' opinions were misinformed.

St James Methodist Church: Inspired by the Institutional Church Model

Compared with Emmanuel and St George's, there was much less unanimity within the church leadership concerning the fate of St James Methodist Church. As described in Chapter 2, when the new church on St Catherine Street opened in 1889, the trustees were already very concerned about its precarious financial situation. Its financial position worsened during the depression of the 1890s, and – with mounting yearly deficits and a total indebtedness of over \$500,000 – by 1895 there was already talk of taking the drastic step of selling the building.¹⁸³ Such an outcome was considered highly undesirable from various perspectives. Many of the trustees responsible for St James were leading businessmen, and the failure of their church would have been an acute embarrassment to them. Some of the trustees, such as John Torrance and George Vipond, had also taken on personal liability for various church-related debts, leaving them economically vulnerable.¹⁸⁴ Despite more personal concerns, they were also worried about bringing 'lasting disgrace' to the Methodist Church as a whole.¹⁸⁵ According to the *Methodist Magazine*, it was felt 'that the surrender of St James and the eclipse of all the hallowed influences which for so many years have been associated with it, would be not only a

¹⁸³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/3 Loose papers from Trustee Minute Book 1889-1902, Published accounts of St James Methodist Church, 6 June 1891; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 2 December 1895; *Methodist Magazine and Review*, Vol.L (July to December 1899), 563-564. By 1898, the indebtedness of the church stood at \$607,449 (Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 29 November 1898).

¹⁸⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/4/3 Minutes Board of Trustees 1889-1902, 12 December 1890; 23 September 1897; Contenant 306, STJ/4/3 Loose papers from Trustee Minute Book 1889-1902, Letter from Geo. Vipond [of Vipond, McBride & Co, wholesale fruits] to John Torrance, 3 December 1898.

¹⁸⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/4/3 Minutes Board of Trustees 1889-1902, 23 September 1897.

blow to Methodism, but to Protestantism in this country, from which it would take many long years to recover'.¹⁸⁶ Unwilling, therefore, to go down without a fight, church leaders organized a Relief Fund and campaigned across Canada to raise money to save their church.¹⁸⁷ With the improving economy, the trustees were able to realize approximately \$275,000 from the sale of the business block that had been erected on the site of the old church, which, together with the proceeds of the Relief Fund, helped to stabilize the church's financial situation by 1903.¹⁸⁸

By 1910, however, rumours were once again rife concerning the sale of St James Methodist Church.¹⁸⁹ As with other uptown congregations, its trustees were tempted to take advantage of rising property values.¹⁹⁰ The profound changes taking place in the surrounding neighbourhood were also having an impact on congregational life. It was observed that St James was becoming more than ever a 'People's Church', although it still retained 'a strong body that constitute[d] the family church'.¹⁹¹ The sale of two churches in the immediate vicinity altered the surrounding environment. First Baptist, which was just across the street, was sold in 1906, and its site occupied by a vaudeville theatre.¹⁹² The trustees and quarterly board kept the new establishment under close surveillance, and participated in a successful petition to ensure that it was unable to obtain

¹⁸⁶ *Methodist Magazine and Review*, Vol.L (July to December 1899), 564.

¹⁸⁷ *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourteenth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto: 1897), Report of Committee re. St James Church, 74; ANQ, P601, Fonds Eglise Methodist, Contenant 15, M/7/2 Financial Secretaries Book Montreal District 1876-1908 / Montreal North Financial District Meeting 1909-1918, 17 January 1899; *Montreal Witness*, 5, 11, 18, 31 January 1899; 1 February 1899; 6, 16, 20, 22 March 1899; *Methodist Magazine and Review*, Vol.L (July to December 1899), 563-564; Nathan Mair, *The People of St James Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal: St James United Church 1984), 65-67; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 313, STJ/33/1 St James Methodist Church Relief Fund Cash Book 1902-1904; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 18 May 1903.

¹⁸⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/1 Minutes Board of Trustees [loose papers 1820-1906], 2 April 1903; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 18 May 1903.

¹⁸⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 316, *St James Methodist Church, Montreal. Annual Report for the year ending April 30th, 1910*, 3.

¹⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 28 November 1910; Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 12 December 1910; 7 March 1911.

¹⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 316, *St James Methodist Church, Montreal. Annual Report for the year ending April 30th, 1910*, 2.

¹⁹² *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 19(11) (1906), 170.

a liquor license.¹⁹³ Soon afterwards, St Gabriel Presbyterian Church moved away, forcing St James to embark once again on a crusade to prevent a liquor license from being issued to the hotel that was to take its place.¹⁹⁴ 'The sale of intoxicating liquor in such close proximity to a place of public religious worship', they argued, 'would be seriously offensive to the worshippers connected with this church, and detrimental to the moral interests of this locality'.¹⁹⁵

As was the case with Emmanuel and St George's, the argument was made that the church could be sold for a very large sum (estimated initially at \$1.25 million) and a new place of worship erected in a good locality such as Sherbrooke Street, while still leaving surplus funds available for carrying out 'aggressive Christian work' in the city.¹⁹⁶ Some also argued that such a property was now 'too valuable...to be held by the Church, in the absence of a sufficient endowment to enable it to do the larger, aggressive work which ought to be done in the neighbourhood'.¹⁹⁷ Others were utterly opposed to the sale and believed that removal to a new location would result in the loss of its distinctive character.¹⁹⁸ It was also felt that 'it would be a severe blow to the church at large, as well as a great shock to Canadian Methodism, to lose the church which occupied such a commanding and strategic position, and round which the sentiment of the whole Denomination clustered'.¹⁹⁹ The subtext, of course, was that Methodists from across Canada had rallied in support of the Relief Fund, and would see the sale as a betrayal of

¹⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 7 May 1907; Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 22 November 1908; 9 March 1909.

¹⁹⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 17 August 1909, 8, 15 September 1909; ANQ, P601, Fonds Eglise Methodist, Contenant 15, M/7/2 Financial Secretaries Book Montreal District 1876-1908 / Montreal North Financial District Meeting 1909-1918, 14 September 1909; Contenant 19, M/29/2 Montreal Methodist Ministers' Association Minutes 1905-1916, 13 September 1909; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 1 September 1909.

¹⁹⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 8 September 1909.

¹⁹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 12 December 1910.

¹⁹⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 30 January 1911.

¹⁹⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 12 December 1910.

¹⁹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 7 March 1911.

their trust.²⁰⁰ A compromise solution suggested that the land that surrounded the church could be sold or leased for shops, or, more drastically, that the church could be moved to one side of its large lot so that the other half of the property could be sold.²⁰¹ The revenues thus generated could serve as an endowment, generating funds to improve the church's facilities and allowing it to carry out more effective work in the neighbourhood.

While the leaders of St James shared many of the aspirations of leaders at Emmanuel and St George's, the symbolic weight of their 'cathedral of Methodism' was such that it initially tipped the balance in favour of retaining the church building.²⁰² Then, in October 1911, a \$2 million offer for the property caused them to reconsider their previous decision.²⁰³ For a while, it looked as if the church would be sold, but some were dissatisfied with the terms offered, while others continued to argue that a way should be found to keep the church and equip it for a larger and more aggressive work.²⁰⁴ In March 1912, Sidney R. Badgley, a well-known church architect based in Cleveland, examined the church and declared that the present building could be adapted for the type of work envisaged, and soon afterwards a Commission was appointed by the Montreal Methodist Conference to assist the church in making a decision concerning its future.²⁰⁵ In September 1912, the Rev. Dr. William Sparling declared from the pulpit that St James would not be sold:

²⁰⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 1 February 1912. Nathan Mair has observed that letters appeared in the *Christian Guardian*, a national Methodist publication, at this time expressing strong disappointment at the proposed sale of St James. One correspondent felt that 'St James belongs to the Protestant Church from the Atlantic to the Pacific in a way that no other church edifice does. Many people, out of their very limited resources contributed something to the salvation of the building' (quoted in Mair, *The People of St James*, 74).

²⁰¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 12 December 1910; 16 December 1910.

²⁰² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 23 February 1911; 7 March 1911.

²⁰³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 20 October 1911; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 20 October 1911.

²⁰⁴ *Montreal Daily Star*, 23 December 1911; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 4, 8, 14 November 1911, 4 January 1912; 21 March 1912; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 1 February 1912.

²⁰⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 21 March 1912; 27 May 1912; 10 September 1912; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 16 September 1912.

“It may please some if the church were sold”, he stated, “and the money taken to build a beautiful edifice in the more select and wealthier portion of the city, where others have already gone, but St James Church will stand right where it is, in the very heart of the masses, so that it can continue work in a section of the city where it is needed”.²⁰⁶

He nevertheless continued to struggle with what he described as the ‘double desire to sell the land and keep the church’.²⁰⁷ He felt that tearing down the church ‘would be to waste a magnificent building’, but at the same time recognized that greater revenues would be needed if St James was to take up the mantle of being an institutional church, open throughout the week to serve the religious, social, intellectual, and recreational needs of the community.²⁰⁸ Institutional churches were becoming increasingly popular in North America at this time, and were described by a contemporary as:

an organized body of Christian believers, who, finding themselves in a hard and uncongenial social environment, supplement the ordinary methods of the gospel...by a system of organized kindness, a *congeries* of institutions, which by touching people on physical, social and intellectual sides will conciliate them and draw them within reach of the gospel.²⁰⁹

The services offered by institutional churches varied depending on their locales, and many congregations adopted specific ‘institutional features’ rather than becoming fully-fledged institutional churches. All were inspired by a common desire to transform their places of worship into institutions that were actively serving the surrounding community on a daily basis. Seeing St James’ current location as ideal for this type of work, Sparling favoured a scheme, also supported by the Commission appointed by the Conference, that involved moving the bulky church to one corner of its large lot.²¹⁰

Throughout 1913, no agreement was reached as to the best solution to this dilemma. The destiny of St James Church continued to be debated by the Montreal

²⁰⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 30 September 1912.

²⁰⁷ *Montreal Daily Star*, 14 November 1912

²⁰⁸ See discussion of institutional churches in *Social Service Congress, Ottawa 1914: Report of Addresses and Proceedings* (Toronto: Social Service Council of Canada 1914), 130-131; also *Montreal Daily Star*, 14 November 1912.

²⁰⁹ J.S. Woodsworth, *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church 1911), 306. The definition was supplied by Edward Judson.

²¹⁰ *Montreal Daily Star*, 14 November 1912; *Montreal Witness*, 14 November 1912; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 7 March 1913; see also Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 25 April 1913.

Conference, leading George Vipond, a trustee, to express his disgust that there was still talk of the sale of the church: 'Are we all turned real estate agents to get bits of commission?' he asked, before going on to declare that 'there has been too much of this kind of thing'.²¹¹ The lack of consensus led to inaction, and the departure of Dr. Sparling at the end of his appointed term resulted in a shift in focus. Dissatisfied with the choice of Canadian ministerial candidates to replace him, the church took the somewhat unusual step of securing a minister from Dublin, the Rev. C.A. Williams, who embarked on a vigorous campaign to raise money.²¹² The addition of institutional features such as a gym, swimming bath, and reading room continued to be discussed, although it was recognized that nothing further could be done until the church's \$60,000 debt had been cleared.²¹³

Thus, despite initially being swayed by the argument that the church building should be sold in order to free up funds for carrying out more 'aggressive' Christian work in the city, church leaders at St James eventually came to the conclusion that, if their old building were better equipped for institutional church work, then its location in the heart of the city would provide an ideal base from which to carry out this type of work. Although they differed from their counterparts at Emmanuel and St George's in terms of their decision to retain the old church building, they likewise saw their resolution to remain in the uptown district as being motivated, not primarily by material concerns or the desire to satisfy the convenience of church members, but by the more idealistic belief that the adaptation of their church to the social needs of the changing uptown environment would contribute to the moral and spiritual uplift of society.

Conclusions

While the challenges that faced the uptown churches in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were similar in many ways to those that had led their predecessors to make their way up the hill from the original city centre, the response and outcome were quite different. The evidence suggests that impersonal urban forces are unable to provide

²¹¹ *Montreal Gazette*, 9 June 1913.

²¹² Mair, *The People of St James*, 74; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 7 March 1913; 5 May 1913; 24 November 1913.

²¹³ *Daily Telegraph and Daily Witness*, 11 October 1913.

a sufficient explanation of the decisions that were made by the city's leading Protestant congregations concerning the locations of their churches, and we need to incorporate both idealist and materialist interpretations in order to understand the evolution of their congregational life. Certainly population movements and the changing character of the uptown district caused congregations to reassess their situation. What they found was that the new transportation options were making it possible for a new type of central church to emerge, which drew its congregation from across the city. Some congregations also discovered new constituencies. It was clear that the churches had a greater range of options available to them than ever before.

Some congregations decided that very little adjustment was required, since – with effective preaching and a sufficiently attractive service – they could continue to worship in their original uptown buildings and gather together the wealthier members of Protestant society from across a wide area. Others opted to move to Westmount, but found that new denominational and interdenominational structures dedicated to promoting efficiency and co-operation made such ventures more complicated than in the past. A third option was to sell the church building, make a shorter move to a quieter and less expensive uptown site, and use the excess funds to rid the church of debt and place it in a better position to carry out the work that was called for under the banner of social Christianity.

As I have shown, certain congregations were more influenced than others by social Christianity. Whereas traditional evangelical Christianity, with its emphasis on the conversion of the individual, had provided little incentive for churches to remain in the city centre in the 1860s and 1870s, the renewed aspiration to place Christian religion at the heart of the city's social, political, and economic life made the positioning of a church in the centre of the city much more meaningful. Of the three case-study congregations most heavily influenced by these ideals, each worked with a slightly different vision that was inspired in some way by the congregation's traditional interests. Emmanuel Congregational placed emphasis on training its members for social service, while St George's Anglican Church focused on resolving social problems in the downtown portion of its parish. St James Methodist, in contrast, styling itself as 'the people's church', planned to adapt its plant for institutional church work.

Of the three congregations, Emmanuel was the most successful at implementing its vision, in part because it moved early and decisively, had the freedom to choose the site that would be best suited for the work it wished to carry out, and succeeded in building a new church entirely free of debt. St George's was never able to realize its plans fully because the purchasers of the old church failed to fulfil their obligations. Meanwhile, St James remained torn between the need to derive revenue from the church property in order to carry out its proposed plan and the realization that their current church was placed in an ideal location to serve the social needs of the surrounding community. None of these strategies of location and finance was likely to transform the current social system, and well-known Canadian social gospellers such as J.S. Woodsworth felt that more radical interventions were required to address the social needs of the Canadian city.²¹⁴

Questions were being raised during this period as to whether certain developments within modern capitalism were not at odds with Christian values and responsible for the worsening social conditions in the cities. Because the uptown churches had become so closely associated with the business classes, church leaders felt that it was important that their churches not be seen as catering too exclusively to the interests of the wealthy, and this appears to have had an impact on the decisions that were made concerning church buildings. Churches that opted to take advantage of high property values in the uptown district and build impressive churches on the upper levels of Westmount found it necessary to deflect the criticism of those who felt that they were placing the self-interest of their own members ahead of the more pressing needs of others.²¹⁵ In the earlier era of church relocations during the 1860s and 1870s, church leaders had been able to move their churches to prosperous residential areas in order to satisfy the convenience of the majority of church members without encountering this type of censure, despite the fact that the moves often resulted in a segment of generally less-wealthy church members being left behind. While some spoke out against the erection of such expensive churches

²¹⁴ Woodsworth, *My Neighbor*, 334.

²¹⁵ Protestant churches in other cities faced similar problems. In Toronto, the decision of Knox Church to move to a more desirable residential district in 1899 was greeted with the criticism that its decision to do so was 'based on the notion that the Church is in the world to be ministered unto, not to minister; that it is a religious club, not a missionary force' (quoted in Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*, 92).

during the initial wave of uptown moves, the argument that such monuments were erected to the glory of God was widely accepted at that time.

By the early twentieth century, some Protestants in Montreal had come to believe that it would be wrong to retain such valuable properties when there was so much Christian work to be done in the city, but also felt that it was important to remain in the uptown district. Church properties, they argued, were not being sold to benefit members, but in order to free them to do such things as carry out social service work or build the facilities that were required of an institutional church. In making these choices, congregations were effectively trying to undo problems that had been created by the original uptown moves: instead of fleeing from the increasingly commercial uptown district, they wished to retain a spiritual presence in the heart of the city; instead of suffering from the spiritually-debilitating consequences of debt, they wished to escape it; and instead of catering to a socially-exclusive membership, they were trying to reverse the fragmentation of the past, and reach out to the more heterogeneous population that was moving into the uptown district. Congregations inspired by such ideals nevertheless found it difficult to dissociate themselves from the tarnish of worldliness that was the inevitable outcome of so many Protestant churches being sold, many for fabulous sums of money, within such a short period of time. The image of churches being demolished to make way for commerce prevailed, perhaps giving credence to the warning that it was only by resisting tempting offers to sell their churches in the first place that Protestants would be able to demonstrate the power of the sacred over and against the secular commercial world.

CHAPTER 6

The Community-Oriented Church: Adapting Church Interiors to Urban and Religious Change

Modern Protestant congregations have been quick to emulate businesses and other institutions by formulating mission statements that can be displayed on their websites. More corporately-minded congregations also set annual goals for themselves, designed to help them fulfil these mission statements. Unfortunately for the researcher, congregations in the nineteenth and early twentieth century did not generally create such clear statements of what they hoped to achieve, making it more difficult to determine to what extent and in what ways these visions changed over time. This also deprives us of a benchmark against which to measure the actual actions of congregations and to find out how successful they were at carrying out their aims.

Based on the discussion in Chapter 5, it seems very likely that – had such documents existed at the time – many congregations would have been busy tearing up, or at least rewriting, their old mission statements in the early years of the twentieth century. Had they done so, I suspect that relatively straightforward statements regarding the preaching of the Gospel, Christian education, evangelism, and participation in charitable and benevolent activities (formulated in the 1850s, 60s, and 70s) would have been replaced by more complex and idiosyncratic statements. These statements would have included many of the old elements, but might also have emphasized the need for worship to be carried out in a more dignified and inspiring manner, or called upon congregations to do such things as work towards the overthrow of all forms of evil, make efforts to infuse politics with a more Christian spirit, initiate social movements, participate in social service, promote brotherhood, act as a vitalizing force in the community, or provide recreational facilities.¹ Some might also have made reference to the wrongs of the social and economic system and of the need to counter socialism by dealing with such problems, while others would have firmly maintained that it was beyond the scope of the Church's

¹ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 28 March 1899; 15 December 1899; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, 20 January 1902, Pastor's Address.

mission to resolve the problems 'of which the Socialists and their sympathizers complain'.² While many of these goals could only have been achieved by participating in activities outside the church building itself, others would have required that church facilities be modified or put to different uses. They might also have involved making uptown churches more accessible to a broader range of social groups.

As in Chapter 3, we will turn to analyses of the physical layouts of church buildings and the social composition of church membership to gain a better understanding of the ways in which the domestic ministries of the uptown case-study churches were redefined in the period between 1890 and 1914. Whereas in the nineteenth century, uptown church buildings had been used for activities which, with few exceptions, had been explicitly religious and theirs alone to perform, by the early twentieth century these boundaries between religious and secular activity had become much less precise. By 1915, it was being observed that:

The religious life and the social life of Montreal are so interwoven at many points that in considering one there is constant transgression on the territory of the other.... The social life of the church has...rightly come to be considered an important factor in keeping the feet of the members from straying from the paths of righteousness, and all the denominations are beginning to extend their activities in so many ways that a consideration of the religious life must also make constant reference to the social life of Montreal.³

In order to determine what impact this interweaving of social and religious life had on the domestic ministries of the uptown congregations, this chapter will begin by examining the ways in which middle and upper class congregation members modified, or considered modifying, their sanctuaries and the physical layouts of their churches. Such an analysis sheds light on the growing formalisation of worship that was taking place at this time, and the growing range of activities that were deemed suitable as part of congregational life. I will then proceed with an analysis of the people in the pews and attempt to determine whether steps were being taken by uptown congregations to reach out to the more diverse constituencies that were moving into the uptown neighbourhood.

² *Montreal Witness*, 10 June 1899; 15 December 1899.

³ Rare Books Collection McGill University, Lande Collection 2003 Folio, *Montreal - Old and New: Illustrated With Over One Thousand Engravings of the City's Chief Institutions, Churches, Statues, Homes and Citizens, Both of the Past and of To-day* (Montreal: International Press Syndicate 1915), 108.

Upgrading Sanctuary Space and the 'Aestheticization' of Worship

Whereas the interior layouts of the sanctuaries of the uptown case-study churches had undergone quite dramatic changes between 1850 and 1889, fewer modifications were called for in the period between 1890 and 1914. In most cases, it was simply a matter of further embellishing a place of worship, or in some cases of struggling with the dilemma of how to accommodate growing numbers of well-to-do worshippers in comfort. While sanctuary layouts remained more or less the same, this did not prevent the early years of the twentieth century from witnessing a flurry of innovation in terms of the form and visual impact of worship services, which in some cases set the stage for alterations to sanctuary layouts later on in the twentieth century. After considering the physical alterations that were made to the sanctuaries of the uptown case-study churches during this period, I will proceed with a discussion of the aesthetic and liturgical innovations that were introduced and attempt to explain the forces that lay behind this movement.

As the children and grandchildren of those who had participated in the original uptown moves in the 1860s and 1870s were joined by new families of similar social status to their own, church trustees found that the problem was not a lack of seats per se, but the lack of a sufficient quantity of the more desirable seating demanded by well-to-do churchgoers. Early in the 1880s, the trustees at the American Presbyterian Church had arranged for screens to be erected at the rear of the sanctuary so as to increase both the attractiveness and rental value of certain seats further back in the auditorium.⁴ This not only allowed the church to raise more money in pew rents, but also seems to have been part of a more explicit attempt to equalize both the value and desirability of seating in different parts of the church. As ground floor accommodation filled up, trustees then considered how to improve the image of gallery seating, since church managers found that they had trouble persuading families to rent pews there.⁵ Correspondence between

⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 2 November 1882; 7 December 1882.

⁵ During the 1880s, the trustees at St Paul's considered erecting galleries in the transepts or at the end of the church, since they were unable to satisfy all the requests that they were receiving for 'sittings' and pews. The project was abandoned because of fears that galleries would compromise the aesthetic appearance of the church interior (SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 6 October 1889; 11 November 1889; *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1889* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1890), 13-14).

pew renters and trustees at the American Presbyterian Church suggests that it was difficult to overcome the social stigma attached to taking up what were traditionally considered to be less prestigious seats in the gallery. C.A. Cooley of the Royal Electric Company informed the trustees that his mother objected so strongly to sitting upstairs that he would wait until he could be accommodated downstairs before renting a pew.⁶ Another individual, who appears to have been asked to vacate his pew downstairs because he was unable to pay its pew rent, informed the trustees that his wife and daughter did not like the idea of going upstairs, 'never having used the gallery in any church'.⁷ Efforts were made to increase the competitiveness of gallery seating by dealing with some of its most serious drawbacks, one of which was the presence of gas fumes. When it came to the attention of the kirk session of the Crescent Street Church in the early 1890s that families were unwilling to move to pews in the gallery, even when they had insufficient accommodation in the downstairs portion of the sanctuary to enable all family members to attend church together, the decision was taken to introduce electricity and make other improvements.⁸ Under similar circumstances, the trustees of the American Presbyterian Church decided to invest in electric lighting almost ten years later.⁹ Only by transforming sanctuary space that had previously been designated by the middle classes as less desirable into something more appealing, could trustees hope to accommodate newcomers adequately.

Changes made to the actual physical layouts of the sanctuaries of the case-study churches during this period were generally aimed at improving or embellishing existing features. At St James Methodist Church, a decision was taken in 1909 to enlarge the choir space at the front of the church to accommodate seventy-five rather than the

⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 181, Correspondence and Receipts 1880s, Letter from C.A. Cooley (Royal Electric Company) to J.C. Holden, dated 11 January 1887.

⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 181, Correspondence and Receipts 1880s, Letter from Edward Hollis (2673 St Catherine) to J.C. Holden, dated 9 July 1887.

⁸ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports 1890* (Montreal: 1891), 14; *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports 1891* (Montreal: 1892), 9.

⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 8 October 1902.

previous forty-five singers.¹⁰ Although it is unclear why a larger choir was seen as necessary at this particular point in time, the Rev. Dr. Sparling's view that 'a great church cannot be conducted without a good choir that would attract old and young and minister to a great floating crowd of people' suggests that it may have formed part of the church's strategy to appeal to unchurched individuals in the surrounding community.¹¹ In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, a complete renovation of its auditorium-style sanctuary was undertaken in 1913, but it was explicitly stated that 'the design and ornamentation should remain unchanged'.¹² A visitor who worshipped at the church soon after the renovations were completed described its interior as follows:

You are in one of the older type of Presbyterian churches. I do not know when it was built, but, it was clearly designed before Art had invaded the interiors of Presbyterian churches. Not that by this statement I mean to imply that the interior of the American Presbyterian is lacking in grace and charm. It is simply the plain oblong hall type of structure with its walls washed a light yellow and a dark varnished gallery running all round it.¹³

The fact that the trustees felt no pressing need to alter the arrangements of their almost fifty year old sanctuary suggests that it continued to satisfy the worship requirements of the congregation. Despite the American Presbyterian Church's reaffirmation of its support for the auditorium-style sanctuary, it should be noted that this layout was already beginning to lose popularity at this time. New Presbyterian churches that were built in Montreal during this period, such as St Giles Church in Outremont, were admired for the way in which the 'gothic effect' was deepened by a sweeping central aisle and seats running in straight lines across the long nave of the building.¹⁴ A church commentator in Toronto in the 1890s had foreseen this architectural shift, writing that he was 'more and more convinced that churches with seats placed more or less in concentric circles are a mistake. I do not think the fashion will continue. The notion that a church is an

¹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 302, STJ/2/1 Minutes Joint Meetings of the Quarterly and Trustee Boards 1908-1910, 23 February 1909.

¹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 302, STJ/2/1 Minutes Joint Meetings of the Quarterly and Trustee Boards 1908-1910, 9 April 1910.

¹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 27 January 1913.

¹³ *Montreal Standard*, 10 January 1914.

¹⁴ *Montreal Standard*, 30 August 1913; *Montreal Star*, 8 February 1913.

auditorium – more or less a lecture-room – a theatre for performances, will pass away’.¹⁵ Although St Paul’s had never had an auditorium-style layout of its pews, the front of the church was arranged in a similar fashion to those that did, with the choir facing the congregation as if performing for them, while simultaneously competing with the organ pipes and pulpit for attention. This arrangement had never been considered entirely satisfactory, and the issue of moving the pulpit from its central position to one side of the church was raised once again in 1914.¹⁶ As the matter was deferred for future consideration, it cannot be said that major changes took place within the period being studied. It is worth noting, however, that significant alterations were eventually carried out in the early 1920s, when church leaders finally opted for what had become a conventional Anglican ecclesiastical layout: the pulpit was moved to one side, and what had previously been an organ recess was transformed into a divided chancel with choir stalls and organ pipes facing one another on either side of a large stained glass window.¹⁷ This development was symbolic of the distance that St Paul’s, like many other Reformed congregations, had travelled from the early days of the nineteenth century when organs and choirs were unheard of, ritualism shunned, and the sanctuary dominated by a central pulpit. As the twentieth century progressed, an increasing number of Protestant churches, many of which had previously worshipped in auditorium-style sanctuaries, made similar modifications.¹⁸

The introduction of various formalities and liturgical innovations into church services in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in a process that I will refer to as the ‘aestheticization’ of worship, helped to prepare the way for a return to favour of traditional ecclesiastical layouts. As congregations became more dependent on voluntary

¹⁵ *The Week*, 31 May 1895. The author of this statement correctly foreshadowed the fate of this type of church building in Canada. For further discussion, see Angela Carr, ‘Fields and Theatre Churches: The Non-Traditional Space of Evangelism’, *Architecture and Ideas*, 3 (1999), 62, 74-75.

¹⁶ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul’s Church 1898-1918, 29 April 1914.

¹⁷ James Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots: The History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal 1803-2003* (Montreal: The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul 2003), 142-143.

¹⁸ Ian G. Lindsay, *The Scottish Parish Kirk* (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press 1960), 79-80. One of the best documented examples of this type of change in Montreal took place at the Erskine and American Church on Sherbrooke Street between 1937-1939. See Janis Zubalik, ‘*Advancing the Material Interests of the Redeemer’s Kingdom*’: *The Erskine Presbyterian Church, Montreal, 1894* (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University 1996), Chapter 6.

weekly offerings, the offertory gained greater prominence as part of the worship service. St Paul's, the American Presbyterian, and St James Methodist churches all took steps around the turn of the century to ensure that the offerings were collected and presented in a more decorous fashion. At St Paul's, the session decided that the collectors should begin at the front and work their way to the back pews, and that two of them should then bring the offerings forward to the table at the front, presumably using the church's long central aisle.¹⁹ A more elaborate procedure was designed at St James in which collectors for both the ground floor and gallery were to proceed to the table inside the altar rail to receive the collection plates. Then, once the collection was taken up, all the collectors including all those from the gallery were to 'form in pairs in the two centre aisles and walk down to the altar rail, deposit the plates, and return to their places by the same way'.²⁰ Efforts were also made at St James to increase 'the impressiveness' of their communion services.²¹ Meanwhile, the pastor at the American Presbyterian Church specified that he wished the offertory to be conducted in 'a more dignified manner than heretofore', generating considerable discussion amongst the elders and trustees who eventually decided to leave the matter in the minister's hands.²² In the course of further discussion of the presentation of offerings at St James, in which the Trustees and members of the Quarterly Board debated whether or not to abandon having the choir sing the prayer after the collection, one individual 'pleaded earnestly for more informality in service'.²³ Such entreaties were rarely responded to, and the proliferation at this time of the custom of providing leaflets outlining the order of service suggests that more complicated and formal worship services had come to stay.²⁴

¹⁹ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 27 November 1910.

²⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 22 April 1904.

²¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 15 November 1907.

²² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 14 October 1897.

²³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 302, STJ/2/1 Minutes Joint Meetings of the Quarterly and Trustee Boards 1908-1910, 23 February 1909.

²⁴ See, for example, SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 16 September 1906.

A contentious issue in the Methodist and Anglican churches was the question of who should participate in the performance of the liturgy and how it should be performed. When St James Methodist Church moved to its new uptown building in 1889, a motion was proposed calling for the revision of the order of service to enable the congregation to play a more active role.²⁵ Preferring to wait for further guidance from the General Conference, it appears that the Quarterly Board deferred making a final decision, although there is some evidence to suggest that the congregation was requested to join audibly in repeating the Lord's Prayer at this time.²⁶ The subject was again taken up in 1895, when the responsive reading of the Psalms and the chanting of the Lord's Prayer by choir and congregation was agreed to by the Quarterly Board.²⁷ The following year, a motion to discontinue the singing of the Lord's Prayer at the Sabbath evening service was rejected, as was another motion to omit the singing of the Gloria.²⁸ Similar debates were taking place in St George's at this time, where a motion to reverse a decision to introduce sung responses led to intensive debate, but was ultimately rejected at a well-attended vestry meeting.²⁹ Much of the resistance that was encountered to the introduction of these types of choral elements into worship services was inspired by the fear that they represented a surrender to High Church tendencies, or else that they had the potential to create a situation in which the choir worshipped for the people rather than with the people.³⁰ The decisions that were made at this time illustrate that the determination to enhance the beauty and emotional appeal of worship services generally prevailed over such fears.

Two of the more visually significant elements that became prominent in the sanctuaries of the uptown case-study churches during this period were choir gowns and

²⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 28 May 1889.

²⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/1 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1834-1892, 19 November 1889; Undated motion by J. Murphy inserted at the end of the minute book.

²⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 2 December 1895.

²⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 1 December 1896.

²⁹ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 29 June 1891.

³⁰ See, for example, *Proceedings of the Fifty-First Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1910), 54.

floral decorations. In a move that was still considered controversial by some Anglicans, the vestry of St George's adopted surplices for its all-male choir in 1893. A previous attempt to do so in 1889 had failed, despite the choir director's argument that surpliced choirs were no longer the exception, but the rule, in the mother church in England.³¹ It was also pointed out that the Anglican Church now accepted many things that had in the past been deemed 'as much indicative of Papistical tendencies' as surpliced choirs were still considered to be by some.³² St George's was nevertheless held up as 'the representative evangelical church of the Province, if not of the Dominion, so far as both doctrine and practice are concerned', and some felt that it should therefore take a stand against 'the evident advance in ritual and ornamental clothing that was taking place in the Church of England in Canada'.³³ Attitudes had shifted by 1893, when the choir once again requested to be surpliced.³⁴ Pew and seat-holders were surveyed: 123 were found to be in favour of the introduction of surplices, 73 were against, and 13 were indifferent, leading to the granting of the choir's request.³⁵ The introduction of choir gowns was much less controversial in churches belonging to other denominations, who considered the question from a purely aesthetic perspective. St Paul's and Emmanuel both brought in choir gowns in 1907, as did St James the following year, with the American Presbyterian Church waiting until 1910 to do the same.³⁶ St Paul's and St James also provided their sextons³⁷ with gowns during this period, so that they could contribute to the aesthetic effect of worship while performing such tasks as bringing the Bible into the sanctuary.³⁸ At Emmanuel, the decision to adopt choir gowns corresponded with the

³¹ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 3 October 1889.

³² *Montreal Witness*, 11 October 1889.

³³ *Montreal Witness*, 4 October 1889.

³⁴ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 3 April 1893.

³⁵ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 9 October 1893.

³⁶ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 25 November 1906; 3 March 1907; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons' Minutes 1875-1916, 22 April 1907; Contenant 154, EMM/1/3/2 Minutes Emmanuel Church Board 1906-1924, 29 April 1907; P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 21 April 1908; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 13 May 1910; Contenant 165, A33 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1904-1913, 18 May 1910.

³⁷ The sexton is referred to as the 'church officer' in Presbyterian churches.

opening of their new church, where it was hoped they would 'add dignity to the service and also lend uniformity to the general appearance of the choir'.³⁹ The church's Psalmody Committee was clearly pleased with the outcome, proclaiming: 'How much better to see our choristers quietly and uniformly attired than to have to sit distracted by a motley millinery display which so often obtains in church choirs where they face the congregation!'.⁴⁰ Floral decorations also added beauty to worship services during this period, particularly in the context of special services for Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas.⁴¹ The work was often placed in the hands of a special ladies' committee, or chancel guild in the case of Anglicans, and represented one facet of the more far-reaching efforts by women, to be discussed further on in this chapter, to gain greater control over the day-to-day management of the domestic affairs of their churches at this time.⁴²

Taken collectively, the change that took place in the form and visual impact of worship services during this period heightened the aesthetic effect produced by the elegant and visually-rich interiors that had become popular in all mainline denominations during the second half of the nineteenth century. A variety of factors encouraged individual churches to embrace a more aesthetic worship experience. Some of the changes described above can be traced to the growing influence of the Oxford Movement outside the Anglican communion from which it had emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, leading to renewed emphasis on worship's visual and sacramental elements.

³⁸ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 28 April 1907; ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 26 January 1914.

³⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 154, EMM/1/3/2 Minutes Emmanuel Church Board 1906-1924, 29 April 1907.

⁴⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 156, EMM/1/7/4 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings 1902-1915, 18 January 1909, Report of Annual Meeting from *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 9.

⁴¹ See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 19 September 1905; *Montreal Standard*, 31 January 1914, Article on St George's Church. Further discussion of this topic can be found in Charles D. Cashdollar's *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2000), 41. Observance of the liturgical year only regained its prominence in the Reformed churches as the nineteenth century progressed. Attendance at 'a grand service with old carols' at Emmanuel Church on the Sunday before Christmas caused one individual to observe that the church was going 'straight to Rome' (Rare Books Collection McGill University, Lighthall Family Papers, MS 216, C.23, File 23/5, Letters and Papers of Cybel Wilkes Lighthall July-December 1889, Letter from W.D. Lighthall to Cybel Wilkes, dated 24 December 1889).

⁴² See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 6 January 1911; SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 22 October 1911; STG, *St George's Monthly*, 7(2) (November 1913), 11.

Without embracing the sacramental theological underpinnings of the movement, and its associations with Roman Catholicism, Methodist and Reformed churches were nevertheless attracted by the high standards of worship that it promoted. The loosening of the traditional doctrinal anchors of Christian faith at this time, and the routinization of revival services, may also have increased Protestant responsiveness to a movement that offered alternative ways of satisfying the emotional needs of worshippers. Emphasizing the ethical side of Christ's teaching was one way of responding to this need. Another was to embrace the idea that worship, if it was to be inspirational, also needed to be beautiful and to be conducted in a manner that was capable of evoking religious feeling.⁴³

There were, of course, other forces that inspired congregations to invest in choir gowns and floral decorations. Some found it difficult to let go of the belief that the physical appearance of a church building, inside and out, somehow reflected the spiritual state of church members. In 1904, looking back over the progress of his diocese during the past quarter century, Archbishop W.B. Bond's attention was drawn 'to the material improvement as indicative of spiritual progress'.⁴⁴ In particular, he observed that the House of God was 'held more sacred' and was 'kept with more care' than in the past:

Its services are ministered with more thoughtful, reverential order. It is held by pastor and people a 'sanctuary'. It may be remarked ... that formality and superstition could accomplish all this, that also is true, and I shall not controvert the objection, because the controversy would be unprofitable; that which caused me to rejoice was the increasing seemliness of everything connected with the House of God; slovenliness, whether it be in the ministration or in the accessories, not only indicates a slovenly religion, but it also promotes that slovenliness which reaches to the soul and penetrates to the place of secret prayer, if it does not originate there.⁴⁵

⁴³ James F. White suggests that 'it is only in comparatively recent times that Protestants have come to look upon worship as primarily concerned with feelings instead of being a matter of work done in God's service' (*Protestant Worship and Church Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press 1964), 19). He associates this development with the rise of the two movements that had the greatest impact on nineteenth century liturgical arrangements, namely revivalism and romanticism, arguing that despite their differences (one leading to a 'concert stage arrangement', the other to 'the so-called divided chancel') both emphasized the importance of feeling and individual experience in worship and discouraged congregational participation as the clergy and choir came to perform more and more of the service.

⁴⁴ *Proceedings of the Forty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1904), 20.

⁴⁵ *Proceedings of the Forty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1904), 20.

While admitting that material prosperity was not always a reliable indicator of spiritual well-being, and acknowledging that 'the aim of the Church should be spiritual ... rather than material' advancement, Bond nevertheless continued to use it as a benchmark for measuring progress. The persistence of such views ensured that congregations went on seeking new ways of improving the appearance and sophistication of worship services.

Competition with, and imitation of, other congregations also played a role in the aestheticization of worship. In 1910, the pastor of the American Presbyterian Church recruited elders to visit neighbouring churches in order to compare his own evening services with those being offered elsewhere.⁴⁶ Messrs. Hannah and Kingman reported on their visits to Erskine and St Paul's churches, describing Erskine as 'a small congregation with few strangers and an apparent lack of enthusiasm', while clearly being more impressed by St Paul's, where they found the music attractive, the congregation large, and the choir surplined to 'pleasing effect'.⁴⁷ Only months later, the American Presbyterian Church decided to adopt caps and gowns for their own choir members.⁴⁸ As Charles Cashdollar points out, prosperous urban congregations tended to be leaders in these types of developments because their members 'had more exposure to the aesthetic models provided by elite secular culture and a greater need to belong to a church that mirrored their own social status'.⁴⁹ It was also the case that the wealthiest congregations were in the best position financially to introduce changes that were essentially cosmetic, but which nonetheless cost substantial sums of money to introduce and maintain. Given that many of the uptown congregations were concerned that they might lose members to suburban churches in Westmount and other neighbourhoods, there was also a strong incentive to make whatever changes were necessary to ensure that their churches retained their status as the leading Protestant congregations in Montreal. Although none of the uptown churches that I studied turned to the 'aestheticization' of worship as an explicit

⁴⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1904-1913, 18 March 1910.

⁴⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1904-1913, 18 March 1910.

⁴⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 13 May 1910.

⁴⁹ Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 44.

survival strategy, at least one church in Toronto, finding itself in almost identical circumstances, adopted these changes in order to maintain its prestige.⁵⁰

Congregational 'Living' Space

As suggested in Chapter 3, exploration of the facilities that were built to house Sunday schools and provide space for fellowship, mission, and charitable activities can shed light on the educational and missionary preoccupations of a congregation. The 'living', as opposed to the worship, space of congregations gained even greater importance as interest in social Christianity intensified in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In his 1911 book, *The Challenge of the City*, American Congregationalist Josiah Strong described the way in which 'the prevailing conception of religion and of the mission of the church shapes religious architecture'.⁵¹ The great cathedrals, he suggested, were built at a time 'when thought had little to do with religion and the great object of the church service was to impress the senses and to inspire devout feelings'. The plain-style meeting houses of the Reformed Churches, in contrast, were dominated by their auditoriums, reflecting the emphasis that was placed in this tradition on the central role of religious instruction in worship. Strong saw the mission of the Church in the early twentieth century as being to hasten the coming of the kingdom of God on earth 'by bringing men into glad obedience to the divine will as expressed in every law of life, whether physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual or social'.⁵² In keeping with this role, he envisioned a 'socialized' or 'institutional' church which was heavily involved in the life of the surrounding community and capable of serving all its needs:

The auditorium no longer monopolizes the structure. There are added parlors for the cultivation of the social life, club-rooms and reading-rooms, class-

⁵⁰ Janine Butler, 'St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto's "Cathedral of Presbyterianism"', *Ontario History*, 83(3) (1991), 186-187. Like so many of the Presbyterian churches in Montreal, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Toronto, already having moved westward in the early 1870s, once again found itself being surrounded by commercial enterprises in the 1890s. St Andrew's contemplated moving to a new location yet again, but – like its counterparts in Montreal – decided instead to adapt to its new surroundings. Major renovations were undertaken in 1907, leading to the addition of a chancel and a new central aisle, which were accompanied by changes in the order of service very similar to those introduced in Montreal's Presbyterian churches at this time.

⁵¹ Josiah Strong, *The Challenge of the City* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada 1911), 250.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 251.

rooms and shops for intellectual and industrial training, besides facilities for physical culture and for recreation. And this edifice, full of multiform life, is kept open every day and every night.⁵³

As is clear from the inclusion of such things as shops for industrial training, Strong's 'institutional' church was primarily designed with the needs of less wealthy districts in mind, and was often suggested as an adaptation for churches in downtown neighbourhoods that were losing their wealthier members to the suburbs.

Despite Strong's distinction between three different 'phases' of church building, many uptown congregations in Montreal found themselves moving towards more elaborate and visually-stimulating worship services that impressed the senses, while at the same time attempting to adapt their facilities to the needs of the surrounding community. Although the uptown district was losing residents to the suburbs, it was different from the areas with which institutional churches were normally associated in that, rather than declining, it was instead attracting prestigious commercial enterprises such as department stores, head offices, and hotels, and thus retained its desirability as a location for the city's leading congregations. Under these circumstances, churches that decided not to move could choose whether they wished to retain their facilities for the exclusive use of church members (many of whom no longer lived in the neighbourhood), or whether they also wished to make use of them to carry out a larger work within the now more diverse uptown community. As suggested in Chapter 5, it was the case-study churches most influenced by social Christianity that made the greatest efforts to modify their buildings in order to pursue this latter option, believing that the churches had a role to play in the redemption of urban society. Congregations were also influenced by those who felt that church buildings should be put to better use:

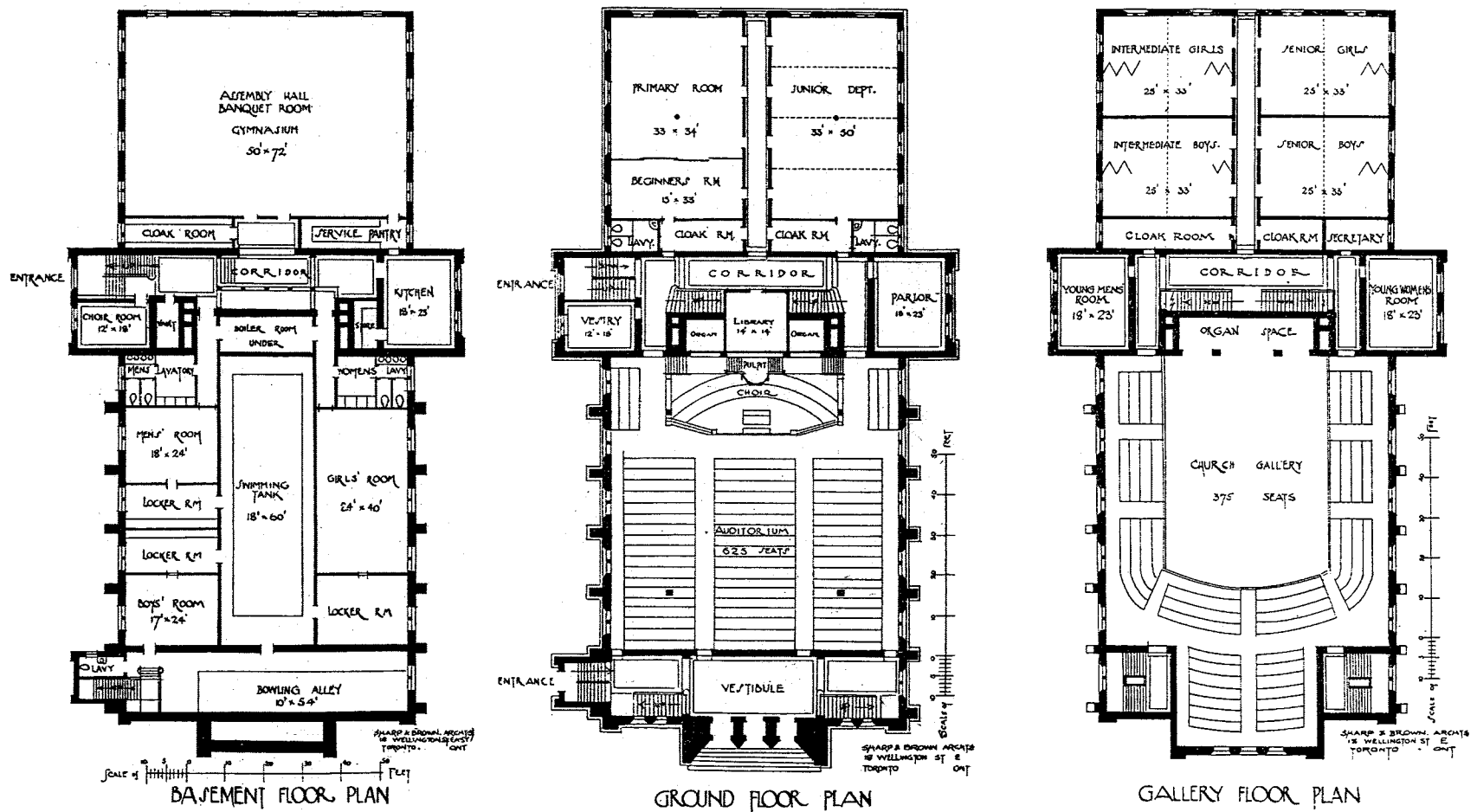
As one passes some beautiful and stately city church, into the construction of which an immense sum of money has gone, and reflects upon the great need of resources with which to carry on the work of extending the Kingdom, it seems little more than an expensive luxury that all this should lie idle throughout the week and only be put to use for a few hours on Sunday.⁵⁴

While some uptown congregations in Montreal expressed an interest in adopting specific features of Strong's 'socialized' or 'institutional' church, the fact remained that the

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 251-252.

⁵⁴ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(10) (August 1913), 5, Editorial on 'The Open Church'.

Figure 6.1 Worship, Education, Recreation: Suggested Plans for a Church with Sunday School Accommodation for 500 Pupils, as Proposed by the Commission on Religious Education of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1914.



Source: *The Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1914* (Toronto: Murray Printing Co. 1914), 'Report of Commission on Religious Education: Report on Architecture'.

principal constituency of these churches continued to be their well-to-do membership. This had an important influence on the way in which they negotiated the relationship between their traditional identities as private or domestic spaces for members and their potential new identities as more community-oriented facilities.

Designing a More Community-Oriented Church

A special report on religious education that appeared in the *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* in 1914 provides examples of 'typical plans' for church buildings 'designed to meet the needs of a congregation attempting to render the larger service demanded by the changed conditions of modern life' (see Figure 6.1).⁵⁵ The suggested floor plan for a 'larger church' emphasized what were described as 'three phases of one work'; namely, worship, education, and recreation. The former two elements were already a familiar part of Protestant church life. In reference to the worship space, the discussion accompanying the floor plans simply stated that 'no special significance need be attached to the arrangement of the pulpit, choir and seating in the church auditorium', as these matters could be arranged 'according to individual taste'.⁵⁶ More attention was paid to the housing of the 'modern Sunday School', advocating a design in which there were a sufficient number of smaller rooms to allow children to be graded according to age, and – for older children – by gender. Nevertheless, it was the amount of space dedicated to recreation in the basement of the floor plan that represented the major design innovation. Not only were there club-rooms for boys, girls, and men, as well as kitchen facilities, but also a gymnasium (that could double as a banqueting hall), a bowling alley, and even a swimming pool located directly beneath the sanctuary. Such features, which may have been inspired by the YMCA buildings of the time, were intended to encourage more extensive use of the church building as well as to promote contact between the church and the surrounding community.⁵⁷ They were also intended to act as counter-attractions to the commercial

⁵⁵ *The Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1914* (Toronto: Murray Printing Co. 1914), 247.

⁵⁶ *The Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1914* (Toronto: Murray Printing Co. 1914), 247.

⁵⁷ According to Harold C. Cross, the facilities of the YMCA building that was erected in Montreal in 1891 'were the last word in Association architecture', and included a reading room, club and class rooms,

world of leisure and recreation that was expanding so rapidly during this period.⁵⁸ The integration of sports into religious life was also seen as a means of promoting a more 'muscular Christianity' that would counteract concerns that Christianity was seen by many men as being too sentimental and 'effeminate'.⁵⁹ Sport was viewed as a means of combining the development of the individual with the fostering of characteristics such as cooperation and team spirit in a way that was conducive to the promotion of the ideals of social Christianity (broadly defined).⁶⁰ It also happened that these traits were well-suited to a world in which men were increasingly likely to find themselves working as employees of large and well-diversified corporations, or – as would become apparent after 1914 – fighting together in large-scale modern warfare.

Not all Protestants agreed that the provision of secular recreational facilities was in keeping with the church's role in society. Many ministers were already concerned about the inroads that were being made into church life by secular society, and were anxious to avoid a situation in which secular activities taking place within their churches overwhelmed and then marginalized the religious functions that were traditionally carried out there.⁶¹ A 1909 article in the parish magazine of St George's Anglican Church observed that great changes had taken place in church methods over the past fifteen to twenty years, leading to the almost universal adoption of 'the "institutional church" idea in a more or less elaborate form'.⁶² While acknowledging that the expansion of facilities for education, recreation, and amusement had done a great deal of good, the author

gymnasium, locker and shower rooms, swimming pool, bowling alleys, library, large auditorium, and kitchen facilities (*One Hundred Years of Service With Youth: The Story of the Montreal YMCA* (Montreal: 1951), 170). I would like to thank Janis Zubalik for drawing my attention to this point.

⁵⁸ For a detailed study of the relationship between religion and leisure activities in small towns in Ontario during this period, see Lynne Marks' *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996).

⁵⁹ See discussion in Hugh McLeod's *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London: MacMillan Press 1996), 151-152. Susan Curtis' article on the Social Gospel and Victorian masculinity is also relevant. See Susan Curtis, 'The Son of Man and God the Father: The Social Gospel and Victorian Masculinity', in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, eds. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1990), 67-78.

⁶⁰ McLeod, *Religion and Society*, 152.

⁶¹ David B. Marshall, *Secularizing The Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 127.

⁶² STG, *St George's Monthly*, 3(2) (November 1909), 11.

nevertheless wondered whether such measures were not distracting the church from its primary work, which continued to be 'to preach Christ and Him crucified'.

Inside the Case-Study Churches

Although other uptown case-study churches made plans to move or expressed the desire to renovate or remodel their buildings between 1890 and 1914, only Emmanuel Congregational Church actually succeeded in bringing a church-building project to completion during this period. Figure 6.2 shows the plan of the ground floor of this church. There was also a smaller second storey containing gallery seating for the Sunday School and church, space for organ loft and choir, as well as men's and women's choir rooms. As was the case with the typical church plans presented in the *Proceedings*, the 'living' space at Emmanuel Church was carefully segregated along gender lines, with the kitchen, Ladies' Parlour, and Ladies' Choir Room on one side of the building and facilities for male congregation members on the other. The Sunday School, which doubled as a Lecture Room, was centrally located. The absence of graded school rooms may have been the result of space constraints or else was considered better suited to the needs of a centrally-located church in which church-school numbers tended to be small in relation to the size of the congregation.⁶³ A somewhat unusual feature in the plan for Emmanuel Church was the presence of a room designated as the 'Chinese Classroom'. A group of young ladies at Emmanuel Church, a forerunner of the church's Women's Missionary Society, had been the first Protestant group in Montreal to organize 'Sunday School' work amongst the city's Chinese population in 1884, which consisted mainly of attempting to teach the Chinese English so that they could be evangelized.⁶⁴ Although the group initially met their mainly adult male pupils in the old YMCA building on Victoria Square, they later moved the Chinese Sunday School class into their church building on St Catherine Street. When the new church was built, a special space was set

⁶³ See the discussion of this question in Chapter 5. Also ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(2) (February 1910), 2; and *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(3) (March 1910), 2.

⁶⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 2(12) (December 1909), 5-7. The Presbyterians, with their strong interest in missionary work in China, subsequently became the leaders in Chinese Sunday School work in Montreal, with seventeen Chinese Sunday Schools operating by 1914 (ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterien, P/9/5 Minutes of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, 699).

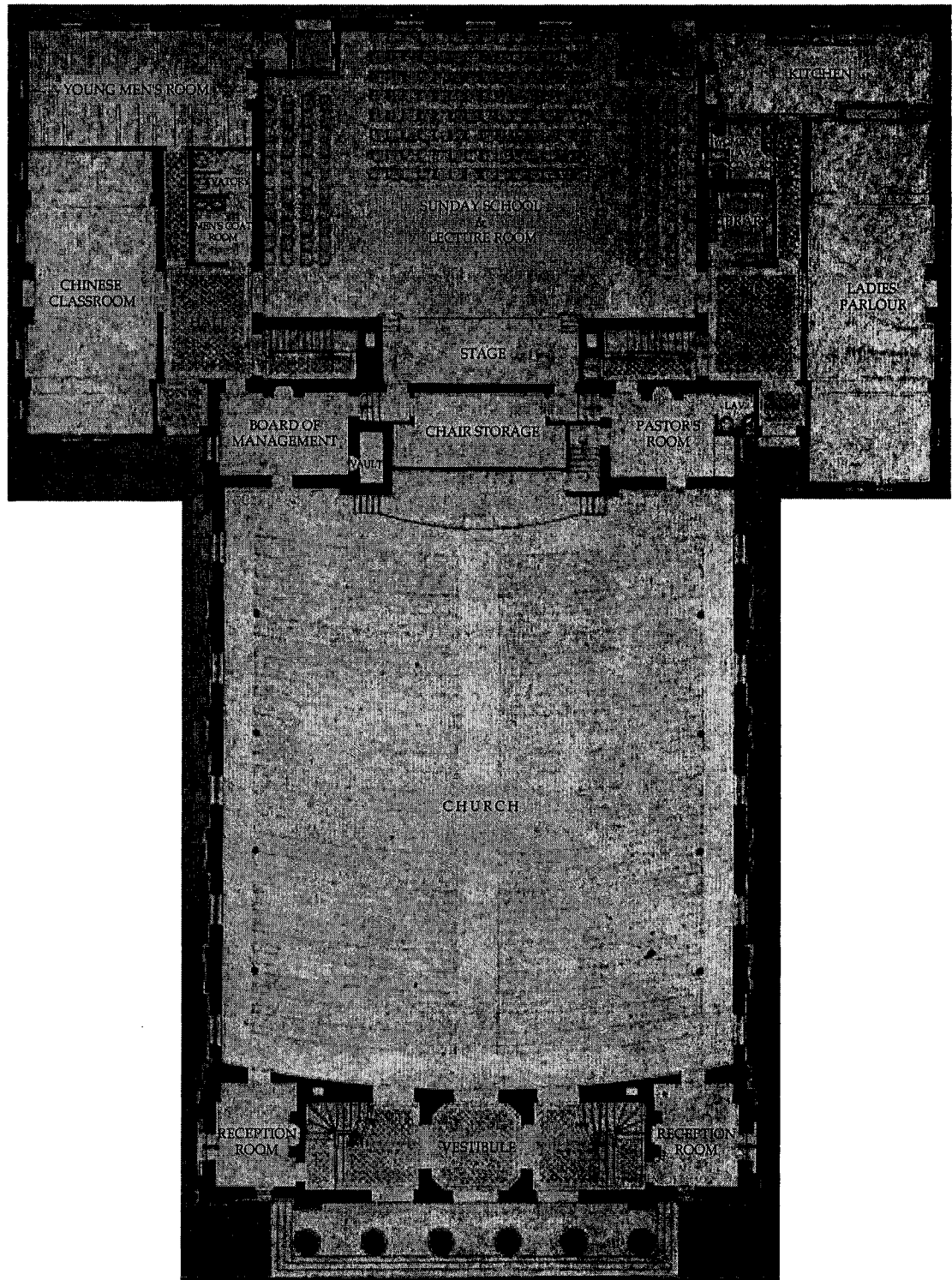


Figure 6.2 Emmanuel Church, Montreal. Floor Plan by Messrs. Saxe and Archibald, Architects. The Gallery Plan (not shown) showed gallery seating for the Sunday School and Church, as well as a Men's Choir Room (above the Board of Management Room) and a Ladies' Choir Room (above the Pastor's Room). An Organ Loft was located in the space above the Sunday School Stage, while the Choir was situated above the Chair Storage area.

Source: *Canadian Architect and Builder*, Volume 19, October 1906, Supplement.

aside for this work. Rather than viewing the Chinese Sunday School as part of the 'home' missionary endeavour, the women at Emmanuel saw it as providing 'a great opportunity ... for real foreign missionary work within the walls of our own church', and the decision to make this work such an integral part of the new church building reflected the importance that was attached to foreign missionary endeavours during this period.⁶⁵ Emmanuel Church also placed considerable emphasis on training church members, and in particular young men and women, for altruistic social service and 'citizenship in church and state'.⁶⁶ Much of the daily activity that took place in the building seems to have centred around making the church 'a vitalizing force in the community',⁶⁷ and rooms were therefore needed in which to hold meetings and study classes, as well as to accommodate reputable outside organizations that were involved in community work.⁶⁸ Activity at the church along these lines seems to have intensified following the appointment of Mr. W. Randolph Burgess as pastor's assistant in 1912 (he was later given the title of Director of Religious Instruction and Social Service),⁶⁹ leading the church caretaker to request a salary increase 'owing to the increasing amount of work entailed by the increased activity of the church among the People during the week days'.⁷⁰ Emmanuel did not, however, see itself as an institutional church and, as is clear from its floor plan, made no attempt to incorporate recreational facilities.⁷¹

⁶⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 2(12) (December 1909), 7.

⁶⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(3) (March 1910), 3. See also, Contenant 154, EMM/1/3/2 Minutes Emmanuel Church Board 1906-1924, 14 January 1914.

⁶⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, 20 January 1902, Report of the Church Board.

⁶⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/15 *Emmanuel Church Scrapbook, 1875-1915 Emmanuel Church, Special Services in Connection with the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of Emmanuel Congregational Church, March 7th-14th, 1915*.

⁶⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 152, EMM/1/1/1 Deacons' Minutes 1875-1916, 'Statement read to the church re. appointment of Mr Burgess as Pastor's assistant', Sunday, October 6, 1912; and 30 March 1914.

⁷⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 153, EMM/1/2 Board of Trustees Correspondence 1908-1914, Letter from James Wood, the church caretaker, to the trustees of Emmanuel Church, dated 20 April 1915.

⁷¹ Emmanuel Church was, however, involved in supporting institutional church work in connection with the Congregational Church in Point St Charles during the 1890s (ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/2 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee

Of the uptown case-study congregations, St James Methodist Church appears to have been most drawn to the institutional features described in the *Proceedings*. The trustees did not, by 1914, have sufficient funds to incorporate the desired gym and swimming bath, but church leaders were committed to serving the surrounding neighbourhood by making the church building more accessible to the community during the week. One option was to offer other types of leisure activity that did not require the physical plant of the church to be upgraded to the same extent, but which would still be attractive to young city dwellers. As a result, the young people of the church's Epworth League were given permission to use the east side of the church grounds as a tennis court.⁷² The Men's Association was also active, first obtaining permission to use church facilities once a week, and then later receiving permission to fit up rooms in the basement for the use of the Association.⁷³ Alderman James McBride, one of the trustees, also suggested that 'instead of having the large and handsome edifice idle six days of the week it could be used to advantage in providing a place of recreation for the thousands of working girls in the city who have no proper place in which to spend their evenings' and was of the opinion that this would make the church, rather than the dance halls, 'the nightly resort of young people.'⁷⁴ The Rev. Dr Sparling agreed that the church 'should be open to the people, not merely twice on Sunday and on Wednesday nights, but throughout the week':

Our central position and immense congregation renders us liable to larger work than we are doing.... We want to entertain our people with enlightening lectures and concerts at a nominal figure. Every body cannot afford to pay the exorbitant prices asked to see a concert, and if we are to do this, to secure good talent which costs money, we must have more money. While our revenue at present is sufficient to meet our present expenses, it is not large enough to support this new and important work⁷⁵

Reports 1890-1899, 28 November 1894). Little is known about the outcome of this operation which got underway in 1893 with the opening of O'Brien Hall, a solid brick structure designed to house a modern gymnasium, dressing rooms, lavatories, parlours, reading rooms etc. (*Montreal Star*, 24 November 1893).

⁷² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 28 May 1910.

⁷³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 1 December 1910; 22 December 1913; Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 11 May 1914.

⁷⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 16 November 1912.

⁷⁵ *Montreal Star*, 14 November 1912.

Given the limitations of most church budgets, it was clear from the start that the prohibitive costs involved in subsidizing sufficiently attractive leisure activities would make it difficult for the churches to compete effectively with commercial amusements. An important issue that this raises is whether St James' decision to try and participate in such activities was undertaken primarily as an attempt to prevent young people, as individuals, from getting involved in the types of amusements (drink, dancing) that evangelical Methodists had traditionally associated with immorality and alienation from Christian life, or whether they were acting in the belief that the promotion of recreational activities in the churches could contribute to the social uplift and transformation of society as a whole. There is no evidence to suggest that such matters were ever thought through very clearly at a congregational level, perhaps because the avoidance of explicit discussion made it possible to satisfy congregation members who retained more traditional evangelical beliefs, while at the same time offering hope to social gospellers who believed that such endeavours contributed to the reform and redemption of Canadian urban society.

The case of St George's Anglican Church was somewhat different as it already made use of its school house, located next door to the church building, in its work with those living 'below the hill' in the poorer part of its parish (see Figure 5.10).⁷⁶ When the sale of the church building was decided upon in the early twentieth century, church leaders opted for a new site that would continue to allow the needs of both the uptown and downtown segments of the parish to be served from the same location. The failure of this move to take place, described in Chapter 5, dashed the hopes of those who had planned to use the money gained from the sale of the old church to develop a new

⁷⁶ The precise date at which the St George's school house building stopped being used for day school purposes and began to be used for church purposes alone is unclear. Originally supported by a grant from the Colonial Church and School Society, the day school was still in operation 1875 (*Proceedings of the Sixteenth Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell 1875), 662). In 1885, members of the Vestry of St George's requested that an attempt be made to find alternative premises for the day school until the small-pox epidemic came to an end (STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 1 October 1885). It seems likely that the school closed down soon after this, as there is a reference in the Vestry Minutes the following year to paying off the debt of \$3000 on the School Building, as arranged with the Colonial Church & Building Society (STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 5 November 1886). The Protestant Board of School Commissioners was extending its system of non-denominational schools in Montreal during this period, leading to the decline of Anglican parochial schools throughout the 1880s. See John Irwin Cooper, *The Blessed Communion: The Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal 1760-1960* (Montreal: The Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal 1960), 108-110.

property containing not only a new church, school house, and rectory, but also potential for the inclusion of such facilities as a settlement house. Had such facilities been built, they would have enabled St George's to expand its social service work and dedicate greater efforts towards finding solutions to some of the social problems that existed in the lower portion of the parish.⁷⁷ As it happened, church members had to continue working with their traditional resources and facilities. As at St James Methodist, the Men's Club was given special use of a room in the church basement, which it opened as a reading and games room.⁷⁸ The church's 'charitable' efforts continued as before, but over time came to be referred to as 'social service' work. In 1914, the Rector of St George's made the following observation while thanking those who had assisted with parish work during the previous year:

I often think how little many of our people know about the large Social Service work that is being done in St George's. People tell me much of settlement and Social Service plans in the city and sometimes even suggest that St George's should be doing more of it. They have not the least idea of the great silent work that this parish has been doing for the past 30 years. I look at new settlement work and new efforts for the poor largely weakened by the fact that religion has to be kept out of them. The best of those engaged in such work confess that you may make people more comfortable, but you cannot really lift up life without religion. And I turn with happy heart to the Settlement work and social work in our parish, with religion permeating it all.⁷⁹

The Rector's definition of 'social service' work appears to have embraced traditional charitable activities such as the Mothers' Meetings, which were designed to 'encourage habits of thrift, cleanliness and independence'⁸⁰ amongst poor women living in the lower section of the parish. At the same time, the use of the term 'social service' was clearly designed to appeal to reformers who believed in taking more objective, scientific, and businesslike approaches to dealing with social problems. In the same way that it was difficult to determine whether the recreational focus at St James reflected 'traditional' or 'modern' Methodist preoccupations, such statements indicate just how difficult it could

⁷⁷ *The Montreal Churchman*, 2(8) (June 1914), 6.

⁷⁸ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(6) (March 1913), 8.

⁷⁹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 7(4) (January 1914), 3.

⁸⁰ STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son 1904), 34.

be at the congregational level to distinguish between the social mandate, focused on the individual, that had traditionally been associated with evangelical Christianity, and what was perceived to be a more modern and community-oriented call for social service.

In contrast with the three previous congregations, there was little evidence in the records of St Paul's or of the American Presbyterian Church to suggest any significant desire for change in the layout of their church interiors during this period, or of any strong inclination to transform their church buildings into more community-oriented facilities.⁸¹ While willing to engage in the new enthusiasm for social service by reinvesting in mission activities in other parts of town (as will be discussed in Chapter 7), as well as providing financial support for initiatives organized by the wider Presbyterian Church, such as Chalmers House Settlement in the East End, there was less interest in reaching out to the changing population in the immediate neighbourhood of the church. At St Paul's, it is unlikely that any action would have been taken along these lines were it not for the influence of the Rev. Robert Bruce Taylor. He recognized that 'the church had been built before the need of accommodation for religious agencies was understood', and that the only space with any potential for this kind of work consisted of 'a dull room used for Sunday School purposes', located in the church basement.⁸² He nevertheless remained convinced that an effort should be made to start a club for Scottish working girls living in the surrounding neighbourhood. Even so, opposition to the project was encountered from 'some who thought that to open the basement of the church two or three nights a week to shop girls and to servants was not in line with the position of the church', and who preferred 'to keep the church premises locked throughout the week, rather than to profane them by giving an amusing or improving evening to the people around the doors'.⁸³ Unwilling to be guided by those who believed that 'the church was a Sunday morning club for rich people of approved social standing', the Rev. R.B. Taylor

⁸¹ SAP, *St. Paul's Church, Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1909* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1910), 21. To meet the wishes of the older boys in the Sunday School, a Hockey Club was organized at St Paul's. It was observed that this was a 'new departure' for St Paul's, but that it was in line with what other Sunday Schools were doing at the time. It seems unlikely, however, that this group met on church premises.

⁸² Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 226.

⁸³ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 227.

obtained permission from the church session to use the school room to carry out more extensive religious, educational, and social work.⁸⁴ It is important to note that while no comparable evidence was found of active resistance to such activities in other case-study congregations, this is the type of information that rarely makes its way into church records. It is therefore possible that wealthy members of other congregations raised similar objections. The work that could be carried out was constrained by the space available, and the congregation's lack of interest in adapting its facilities in order to accommodate a more diverse range of community activities suggests a preference for the status quo in which the church building was used primarily for worship and other meetings of church members, while recreation and mission work was carried out elsewhere.

Despite being less constrained in terms of facilities than St Paul's, church leaders at the American Presbyterian Church showed even less desire to involve their building in community or social service work during the week, and in doing so parted ways with other traditionally evangelical congregations such as Emmanuel and St James.⁸⁵ Garland's sociological study of 1929 confirmed that the American Presbyterian Church was 'one of the few churches in the downtown area which shows relatively slight departure from its historical position and practice'.⁸⁶ With relatively low levels of activity occurring in the church building apart from Sunday services, he described it as a place of worship that was being maintained by a 'comparatively wealthy group' that was able to 'pay for the privilege of attending and maintaining a church at the centre of the city'.⁸⁷ Like St Paul's, the American Presbyterian Church contributed financially to some of the broader Presbyterian social service initiatives that had been launched in the city,

⁸⁴ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 227. There is no mention of resistance to this project in church records. See, for example, SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1912-1918, 19 January 1913.

⁸⁵ Janice Harvey notes that the Diet Dispensary, which provided the poor with nourishing food supplements that were beyond their financial means, was housed in the basement of the American Presbyterian Church between 1880 and 1897 (*The Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Montreal Ladies' Benevolent Society: A Case Study in Protestant Child Charity in Montreal, 1822-1900* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 2001), 108). Although the church contributed to the support of the Diet Dispensary financially, it remained an independent rather than a church organization and was rarely mentioned in church records.

⁸⁶ Sidney G. Garland, *The Church in the Changing City: Types of Urban Churches Associated With Types of Urban Communities* (M.A. Thesis, McGill University 1929), 66.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

while the Inspector Street Mission continued to serve as the outlet for the congregation's charitable and missionary efforts.⁸⁸ The kirk sessions of both the American Presbyterian Church and St Paul's also appear to have considered providing facilities for the young men in their congregations, which would in the case of St Paul's have involved renting a room or a house away from the church premises, while the men at the American Church hoped that club rooms could be provided for them in the church basement.⁸⁹ There was no evidence that these plans were ever approved or carried out. Although it is difficult to determine exactly which factors account for the decisions taken by these two congregations to preserve their facilities primarily for the use of church members and not to get too involved in providing space for purely recreational activities, it seems likely that the elite social composition of the churches' leadership played a role. It is also possible that the greater opportunities that these congregations had for carrying out work through their mission buildings in the lower parts of the city encouraged the continued physical separation of their 'domestic' and 'public' ministries.

Assertive Domesticity

The continued efforts by leading female church members to 'domesticate' and gain greater control over the interior spaces of their churches in the early twentieth century may also have helped to perpetuate the idea that these were private areas for church members rather than facilities accessible to the community at large. In the face of increasingly commercial surroundings, women in many congregations emphasized that church facilities should be managed with the same care and efficiency as their own homes. The importance of the work performed by women in the churches was frequently

⁸⁸ Like so many of the other Presbyterian churches in the city, both the American Presbyterian Church and St Paul's housed Chinese Sunday Schools.

⁸⁹ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 25 April 1909; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1904-1913, 16 October 1912. The Crescent Street Young Men's Association (which was organized in 1902) appears to have fared better. Rooms were rented for the association on the 5th floor of the YMCA building in 1904, and a house on Dorchester Street was leased the following year with the view of renting bedrooms to members (Rare Books Collection McGill University, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1904* (Montreal: 1905), 40; *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports for the year ending 31st December, 1905* (Montreal: 1906), 14.

commented upon at this time⁹⁰, no doubt giving them added leverage when negotiating with male trustees over how the various rooms in the church buildings should be used.

The case of the American Presbyterian Church provides interesting insights into this rapprochement between church and home. When the trustees of the church decided to embark on renovations early in 1912, they elected a 'House Committee of Ladies' whose appointed role was to cooperate with the trustees in the care of the church.⁹¹ In their second annual report, Tena Thom, the convenor of the committee, reported that:

During the period of interior transformation of the Church, the House Committee in some small measure endeavoured to be of assistance to the often troubled Trustees, who - in the maze of selecting from many tones, of ivory, or white - were more perplexed than in dealing with a larger financial transaction.... House-keeping for forty years or more without a woman's directing hand had its drawbacks, and more than two years will be required to remedy the laxity of these past years. Gradually we hope to place all the housekeeping assets - dishes, linen, silverware, and proper kitchen equipment, in such a condition as to satisfy the most efficient house-keeper in the Church.⁹²

While deferring to the authority of the male trustees, Thom made it clear that women's expertise in terms of running their own households made it more appropriate for them to be in charge of the day-to-day management of the church interior. The activity of the committee diminished once the renovations were complete, but the ladies continued to pursue their goal of transforming the church into a 'well-regulated household', arguing that moral and material effort were required in order to obtain perfection.⁹³ Though

⁹⁰ An 1896 report on women's work in St George's Church observed that 'the value of woman's work in God's Church is every year becoming more apparent through the marked success that rests on it wherever faithfully persevered in' (MDA, Fonds St George's Parish, Box 1, Folder 5 St George's Reports, *Woman's Work in St. George's Church, Montreal. 1895-96* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Company, 1896)). A report on women's work at the American Presbyterian Church during the same period observed that 'The American Church has great cause to be proud of her women workers. She has always been thoroughly alive to the very important part which women should take in the carrying on of a great church organization' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A411/1 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (1898), 47).

⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 24 January 1912; Contenant 173, A178 Minute Book House Committee of the American Presbyterian Church 1912-1933, 15 April 1912.

⁹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A427/1 *Financial Reports, The American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (December 1913), Second Annual Report of the House Committee, 6.

⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A178 Minute Book House Committee of the American Presbyterian Church 1912-1933, Copy of Annual Report of the House Committee Submitted by Mrs James Thom, Convenor, at the Annual Meeting of the AP Society, January 1913.

apologetic for the 'domestic sound' of the House Committee's annual reports, which she felt must mean little to 'the masculine ear', Thom maintained that detailed attention to commonplace house-keeping matters such as kitchen towels and dishes was vital if the general comfort of the congregation was to be properly attended to.⁹⁴

While Thom was one of the more vocal advocates of the domestication of church interiors, the Ladies' Aid at Emmanuel invoked 'feminine instinct' in favour of their involvement in similar matters, while the members of the Ladies' Aid at St James Methodist busied themselves with purchasing cups and saucers and looking into kitchen improvements.⁹⁵ In a financially-troubled congregation like St James, the desire for domestic improvements on the part of the women could, at times, lead to disharmony between the men and women of the church. Tired of not having sufficient funds to carry out their own domestic projects around the church and parsonage, and no doubt aware of the efforts being made by women in neighbouring congregations, the Ladies' Aid of St James eventually rebelled against the traditional practice of handing over the hard-earned profits from their bazaars to the trustees in order to help service the church's debts. Having eventually been persuaded by the minister's wife to provide the trustees with a four month loan at an interest rate of 5 percent, the women were informed by their president, Mrs. Torrance (who also happened to be the wife of one of the trustees), that 'some of the men were not satisfied with the ladies'.⁹⁶ Undaunted, they went on to renovate the vestry, leaving even less money to contribute to the general funds of the church.⁹⁷ The ladies at St James also became increasingly assertive concerning their right

⁹⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 173, A178 Minute Book House Committee of the American Presbyterian Church 1912-1933, Copy of Annual Report of the House Committee Submitted at the Annual Meeting of the AP Society, 27 January 1915.

⁹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 155, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1899-1902, Ladies' Aid Annual Report, 21 January 1901; P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/1 Minutes Ladies' Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1896-1910, 29 October 1906; 26 November 1906.

⁹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/2 Minutes Ladies' Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1910-1914, 2 December 1912.

⁹⁷ For the unravelling of this debate see ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/2 Minutes Ladies' Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1910-1914, 2 December 1912; 30 December 1912; 27 January 1913; 28 April 1913; May 1913.

to determine how various rooms in the church were used, reflecting the growing demands that were being made on the church's 'living' space at this time.⁹⁸

The association of the case-study churches' interiors with the homes of middle- and upper-class women tended to emphasize the essentially closed and private nature of these spaces, and the extent to which those who worked there together were expected to belong to a sufficiently homogeneous social grouping that they could socialize with ease. In 1902, Mrs Duff, on behalf of the Emmanuel Ladies' Aid Society, took the opportunity 'to make a very pointed and earnest address refuting the prevalent idea that sewing societies [were] gossiping meetings'.⁹⁹ Although her main point was to defend the seriousness of women's work within the church, the comment also draws attention to the way in which social and religious functions often overlapped. A later report of the same society observed that:

In looking back on the year's work, our memories are principally of bright afternoons spent in our comfortable Ladies' Parlor [sic], where we feel ourselves drawn more closely together by intimate little talks, and by the sense of comradeship, which comes with any combined effort for the good of others.¹⁰⁰

Such comments conjure up an image of a peaceful and domestic space in which select women could socialize and pursue charitable work together. The fact that ministers at St James and St George's made efforts to encourage their women's associations to find ways of embracing a broader cross-section of women suggests that the exclusivity of such groups was not considered compatible with the community-oriented church's need for greater numbers of volunteers, nor with its aim of reaching out to neglected groups in the surrounding community. At St George's, the Rev. H.P. Plumptre felt that neither the Girl's Friendly Society nor the Sewing Circle could be said to 'to welcome "all sorts and conditions of women"', in the same way that the Men's Association did, which meant that 'hundreds of girls and women ... whose assistance would be valuable to the church, and

⁹⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/1 Minutes Ladies Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1896-1910, 7 February 1898; Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 6 December 1910; 21 May 1914.

⁹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 162, EMM/15/2 Minutes Ladies' Aid Society of Emmanuel Church 1895-1906, 7 April 1902.

¹⁰⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 3(2) (February 1910), 9.

who in their turn need all the assistance we can give them, are lost to the church'.¹⁰¹ The Rev. Dr. W. Sparling wanted the Ladies' Aid Society of St James Methodist Church to become 'a real live factor in the bringing about of reforms' and urged the ladies to undertake 'larger and broader efforts to reach the hundreds of women who attend the church, and are untouched'.¹⁰² As a result, a special monthly programme was introduced consisting of a lecture and musical entertainment, as well as a social hour, to which 'strangers' were invited.¹⁰³ Significantly, the women of the Ladies' Aid dubbed these meetings their 'At Home' gatherings, choosing to take on the role of hostesses who were inviting other women to participate in a domestic reception, rather than emphasizing the more public nature of these assemblies. While middle-class women appear to have gained greater influence over the management of church interiors at this time, their continued promotion of the model of 'church as home' did not necessarily create more open and welcoming institutions, but instead had the somewhat paradoxical effect of placing even stricter limits on who felt embraced by its fellowship.

Analysis of the 'living' spaces of the churches, both real and imagined, provides one way of exploring evolving conceptions of the roles that church facilities were expected to perform. While leaders at the American Presbyterian Church and St Paul's (with the exception of the minister) showed relatively low levels of interest in transforming their church buildings into more community-oriented structures, those in charge of the other uptown case-study churches at least embraced the idea that church buildings should be more involved in serving the diverse social, intellectual, recreational, and spiritual needs of the surrounding community on a daily basis, although this could at times conflict with ongoing efforts by female church members to transform their churches into more domestic and social spaces over which they could exert greater influence. Congregations found, however, that their old buildings, which had been designed to accommodate the needs of middle-class families living in a predominantly residential

¹⁰¹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(8) (May 1908), 5.

¹⁰² ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/1 Minutes Ladies Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1896-1910, 1 November 1909; 26 September 1910.

¹⁰³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/1 Minutes Ladies Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1896-1910, 29 November 1909.

neighbourhood, were ill-equipped to carry out the social service and recreational activities that they envisaged. Of the three case-study churches that expressed an interest in building new facilities or remodelling old ones, only Emmanuel succeeded in achieving its goals in the period prior to 1914. St James and St George's found they had little choice but to allow a disjuncture to emerge between their church fabrics and the images that had been projected of what ideal church facilities should look like. Despite this disappointing outcome, these congregations showed a willingness to adapt what facilities they did have to new types of social service and recreational uses, and to keep their church buildings open for longer hours during the week. Although they shared some of the characteristics of the 'socialized' church described by Josiah Strong, the activities that were undertaken were uniquely tailored to the requirements of individual uptown churches with their predominantly middle- and upper-class memberships. In most cases, they constituted practical responses to changing urban conditions, which could be supported by traditional evangelicals and promoters of social Christianity alike. As such, they were little more than a pragmatic echo of the idealistic aspirations - which included the supplanting of self-interest by brotherhood, the regeneration of Canadian society, and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God on earth - that were voiced in church magazines of the time. While significant in the sense that they represented an attempt to break down the boundaries between church buildings and the everyday life of the world around them, on the whole these measures can only be seen as relatively small and tentative steps that embraced the vocabulary of social Christianity more ardently than its message.

The People in the Pews: Making Room?

We have already established that the membership of the uptown case-study churches increased in size and spread out geographically during the 1890s and early twentieth century. A question that remains is whether the changes taking place in the city had any impact on the social composition of these congregations. In theory, the introduction of electric street cars diminished the barriers of distance that had contributed to the emergence of more socially-exclusive congregations in the first place, although the appeal of attending a neighbourhood church remained. Social Christianity's emphasis on the need to infuse not just individuals, but also institutions and society as a whole, with a

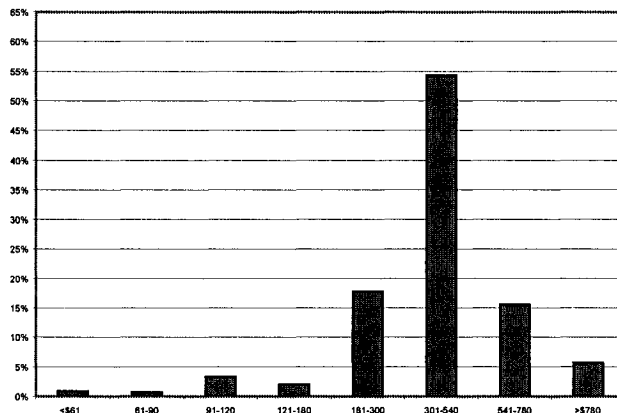
less self-interested and more Christian spirit, might also have been expected to encourage churches to move away from socially-divisive practices, such as allocating seating on the basis of an individual's ability to pay. Beginning with a closer examination of the social make-up of the membership of the case-study churches, this section will examine to what extent this actually occurred.

Church Membership and the Definition of Congregational 'Personalities'

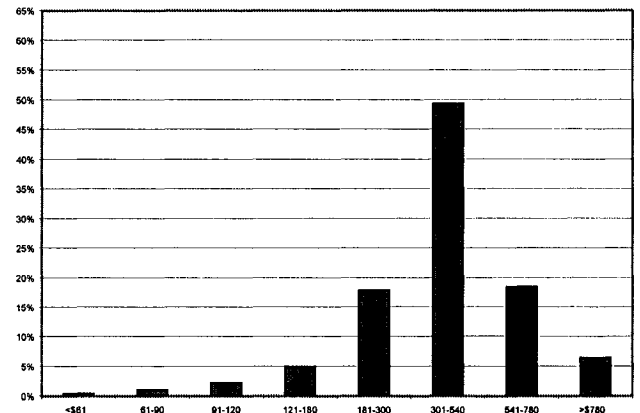
As can be seen in Figure 6.3, the uptown case-study churches that had attracted wealthier members in the 1880s, including St Paul's, the American Presbyterian Church, and Emmanuel, continued to do so in the early twentieth century.¹⁰⁴ No membership lists existed for St George's Anglican Church for the earlier period, but a 1903 list of seat-holders and attendants indicates that the social composition of its congregation was very similar to that of St Paul's. As was the case in the 1880s, the congregation of the St James Methodist Church represented a less well-to-do constituency than that of the other churches. St James continued to have a higher proportion of church members living in street segments with low and moderate rents, and the residential geography of its membership was concentrated more in the easterly sector of the uptown district than that of the other case-study churches (see Figure 5.8). The distribution of assessed rents for

¹⁰⁴ The technique used to create Figure 6.3 is different from that used to create similar charts in Chapter 3. In Chapter 3, individuals (mainly male household heads) from the churches' membership lists were linked, where possible, to the assessed rental value of their specific residences. No searchable version of the municipal tax roll was available for the early twentieth century, making it difficult to create similar linkages during this period. I therefore decided to link each individual represented in the twentieth-century church membership lists to the 1901 median rental tax assessment values of the street segment in which they lived (see Chapter 3, fn. 112, for a description of the 'street segment' system). This was feasible, since most twentieth-century membership lists contained members' addresses, and a digital file of the median rents of street segments for 1901 had already been created by Sherry Olson for other purposes. The assumption underlying this technique was that, given the social homogeneity of most residential streets, the assessed rent of a given street segment was likely to provide a reasonable estimate of the assessed rent of an individual living on that street. To test the validity of this assumption, I compared the distribution obtained by linking 'household heads and other members and adherents' of St Paul's Church for 1886 to the (1881) rental tax assessment value of their homes, with that obtained by linking them to the median (1881) rental value of properties located in the street segment in which they lived. As can be seen in Appendix A, despite compressing the 'elite' end of the spectrum, the 'street segment' technique nevertheless provides a reasonable approximation of the distribution of assessed rents of church members. A general upward shift in rents occurred between 1881 and 1901 (Thornton and Olson 2001, fn.8; also compare Figure 3.8 with the distribution of median rental tax assessment values for all Montreal street segments shown in Figure 6.3). Because of this, the results shown in Figure 6.3 will only be used to examine differences amongst the various congregations in the early 20th century, and will not be used to assess change over time through comparison with the charts presented in Chapter 3. There is no reason to believe that any major shifts occurred in the social composition of church membership during this period.

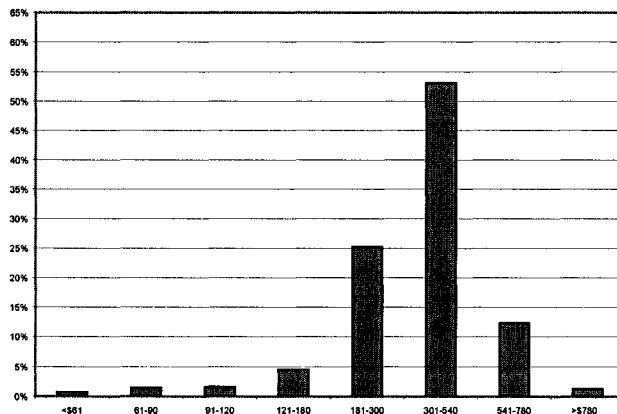
Figure 6.3 Distributions of the Median Rental Tax Assessment Values (1901) of the Street Segments Inhabited by Members of the Case-Study Churches



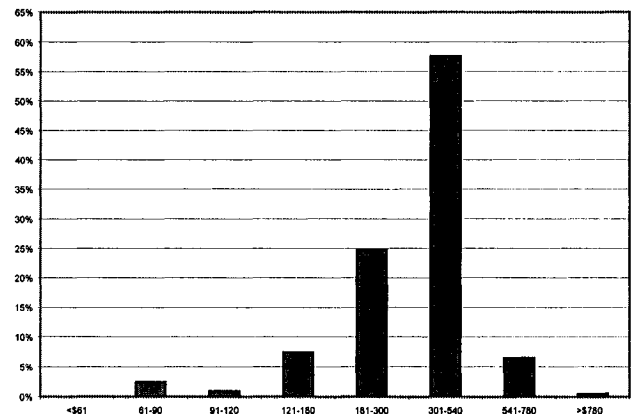
St Paul's Presbyterian Church
Heads of families and other members and adherents (1907)
Median=\$363; Average=\$400; N=457



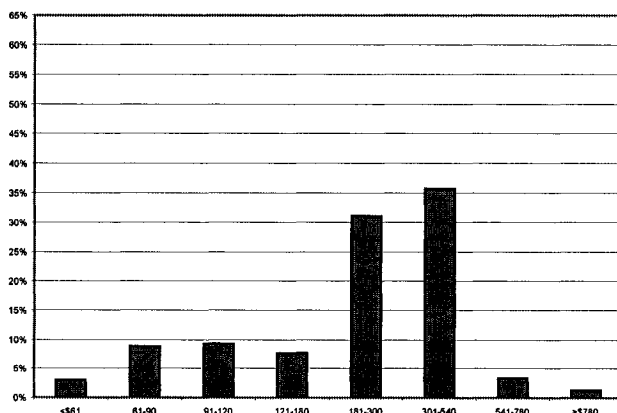
St George's Anglican Church
Seat-holders and attendants (1903-1904)
Median=\$363; Average=\$404; N=332



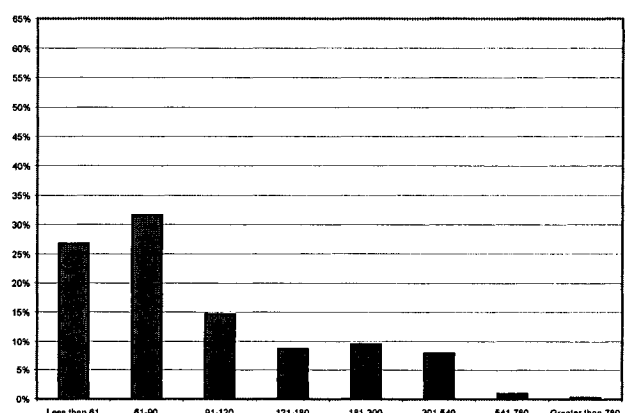
American Presbyterian Church
Members (1907)
Median=\$324; Average=\$353; N=741



Emmanuel Congregational Church
Members and Adherents (1904)
Median=\$302; Average=\$326; N=448



St James Methodist Church
Members (1908)
Median=\$240; Average=\$257; N=569



Distribution of Median Rental Tax Assessment Values
For All Montreal Street Segments in 1901
Median=\$79; Average=\$124

Sources: Digital file in the possession of Sherry Olson giving the median rent for each street segment for 1901; SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1907* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1908), List of Heads of Families and Other Members and Adherents of St Paul's Congregation, 39; STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son 1904), List of St George's Church Seat-holders and Attendants, 55-61; ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 157, EMM/13 *Handbook of Emmanuel Church Montreal, 1904*, List of Members and Adherents, 23-36; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A420/3 *American Presbyterian Church Year Book (January 1907)*, Roll of membership, 18; P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 314, STJ/35/10 Circuit Register, Register of Members' Names in Connection with the Methodist Church of St James Church Circuit, Montreal Conference, Membership List for 1908.

members of St James Methodist Church in 1908 was nevertheless more similar to that of the other uptown churches than it had been at the time of the church's uptown move in the late 1880s (see Figure 3.21). Comparison of Figures 5.7 and 5.8, showing the geographical distribution of each congregation's membership, with the distribution of median rents in the city (shown in Figure 5.10), demonstrates that the vast majority of members belonging to all these congregations lived in the high-rent areas of the city.

Quantitative analyses are unable, however, to capture the more subtle social and ethnic differences that defined the character of each of the uptown congregations. In 1913, a series of articles began to appear in the *Montreal Standard*, each one providing an account of the impression left by a Montreal church – its minister, congregation, and building – upon a single author, who attended a Sunday morning worship service in each church. The *Standard* claimed to have employed a well-known (but unnamed) Canadian writer to carry out the investigation, whose decision to view congregations as entities in their own right, rather than simply as assemblages of individuals, conformed with the strain of thought that was leading social gospellers to adopt an organic vision of society:¹⁰⁵

Each congregation can be said to have a distinct personality of its own. For years we have recognized this in the case of the individual, but the psychology of crowds has only lately been a subject for observation. For a congregation is, after all, only a glorified individual with the thousand and one inconsistencies of an individual magnified to its total. For there must be some similarity in the minds of a congregation, besides mere accident that brings it together to worship under one roof.¹⁰⁶

All six of the uptown case-study churches were featured in the series. While the author took pains to emphasize that individuals bearing 'outward signs of poverty' were conspicuously absent from these congregations in order to highlight their predominantly middle- and upper-class social composition¹⁰⁷, he was at the same time attentive to the

¹⁰⁵ Determining the authorship of this series remains an ongoing project.

¹⁰⁶ *Montreal Standard*, 7 February 1914.

¹⁰⁷ *Montreal Standard*, 10 January 1914. See also *Montreal Standard*, 4 October 1913; 1 November 1913. Despite these observations, the uptown congregations continued to administer poor funds for congregation members. These were generally used to assist small numbers of 'deserving' individuals or families, often widows and orphans, who had come upon hard times. There may have been larger numbers of people needing assistance at St James: in 1896, the Ladies' Aid Society observed that there were 'so many poor to provide for in St James' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 310, STJ/11/1 Minutes Ladies Aid Society of St James Methodist Church 1896-1910, 19 October 1896).

subtle cues that differentiated the various groups within the middle and upper-classes from one another.

By 1913, St Paul's had become the leading Presbyterian Church in Montreal, and represented one of the wealthiest groups of Protestants in the city. Contemporaries claimed that the wealth represented by Montreal's Presbyterian community was 'probably as great as that of the rest of the population combined', so that there was 'no other group of 20,000 people in the Dominion today in a position to exert an equal influence on the future destinies of the country'.¹⁰⁸ The *Montreal Standard* series' author concluded that St Paul's was 'a church of businessmen, who had grown into magnates; a church that had been conceived by citizens in solid comfort, but whose greatness had grown far beyond mere comfort; a church upon which the affluence of its congregation had been thrust'.¹⁰⁹ Out of the twenty-nine individuals identified as being millionaires in Montreal in 1892, at least eight were members of St Paul's.¹¹⁰ The wealth of the congregation was also displayed in the picturesque hats, and other stylish and costly apparel worn by female congregation members.¹¹¹ The congregations encountered at the American Presbyterian and Crescent Street churches were also described as being prosperous, but to a somewhat more modest extent than St Paul's. The appearance of those attending the American Presbyterian Church gave the impression that it was a congregation of 'well-to-do businessmen and their wives', and that the former spent their working hours directing markets and financial concerns as the heads of large business undertakings.¹¹² 'They are the kind of people', the author surmised, 'who only relax in their efforts, when they attain comfort', and 'even then they remember the virtue of economy'.¹¹³ The Crescent Street

¹⁰⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 22 April 1899. Peter Baskerville's analysis of a 5 percent sample of the 1901 Census of Canada for 'Urban Quebec' as part of the Canadian Families Project confirms the superior wealth and status of Presbyterians compared with all other groups at this time ('Did Religion Matter? Religion and Wealth in Urban Canada at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: An Exploratory Study', *Histoire Sociale / Social History*, 34(67) (2001), 79-81).

¹⁰⁹ *Montreal Standard*, 4 October 1913.

¹¹⁰ *La Presse*, 23 August 1892. Sir Donald Smith, Lord Mount Stephen (George Stephen), Richard B. Angus, James Ross, Robert Anderson, E.B. Greenshields, Andrew Allan, and James Burnett were all members of St Paul's in 1886. The first four of these individuals were involved in the Canadian Pacific Railway project.

¹¹¹ *Montreal Standard*, 4 October 1913.

¹¹² *Montreal Standard*, 10 January 1914.

¹¹³ *Montreal Standard*, 10 January 1914.

congregation represented a similar constituency: 'in several pews you had a hint of wealth; in the majority that prosperity which shines so kindly on all the Scotch in Canada'.¹¹⁴ In contrast with the fashionable apparel encountered at St Paul's, the author noted that the women at the Crescent Street Church preferred 'conservative finery ... to the broad effects you find in the world of absolute leisure'.¹¹⁵ The Scottish character of all three Presbyterian churches was duly observed, and it seemed to the writer that St Paul's represented 'a shrine for a great deal of the Scotch glory of Montreal'.¹¹⁶

Like the congregation of St Paul's Church, that attending St George's Anglican Church was composed of a well-dressed throng in which 'prosperity was written in every line of numberless double chins, in the fat, well-dressed men and the charming refinement of the women'.¹¹⁷ At least two of the city's millionaires of 1892 belonged to St George's.¹¹⁸ A distinguishing feature of this congregation, however, was the presence of a number of 'colored' people at the back of the church, and other sources indicate that this group also participated in the St George's Men's Bible Class.¹¹⁹ Those attending Emmanuel Congregational Church were described as being more representative of 'that great body of Canadians...people, if not affluent, at least in comfortable circumstances'.¹²⁰ From its appearance, it was judged to be a congregation of 'business men or men occupying positions of trust', who might be considered to be 'almost wealthy'.¹²¹ As one would expect from the quantitative evidence, those attending St James Methodist Church appeared, as a collective group, to represent a somewhat less elevated social status: 'As a body they were suggestive of comfort rather than wealth; and, above all, one might safely say that they were representatives of claimant

¹¹⁴ *Montreal Standard*, 7 February 1914.

¹¹⁵ *Montreal Standard*, 7 February 1914.

¹¹⁶ *Montreal Standard*, 4 October 1913.

¹¹⁷ *Montreal Standard*, 31 January 1914.

¹¹⁸ *La Presse*, 23 August 1892. A.F. Gault and James Crathern appear on a 1904 list of seat holders for St George's Church.

¹¹⁹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 5(3) (December 1911), 4.

¹²⁰ *Montreal Standard*, 1 November 1913.

¹²¹ *Montreal Standard*, 1 November 1913.

respectability'.¹²² Visual cues also led to the conclusion that St James was 'a national congregation':

By that I mean that it was an assembly of Canadians. There was no foreign element. There may have been a few old country people; but, they were not in evidence. Take (sic) by and all, it was such a congregation as one would wish to show a stranger or to one of our pessimistic publicists who prated of Canada as still a child. Here was that quantity the politician so loves to talk of - the people of Canada.¹²³

Such an observation was consistent with the census figures for 1901 which indicate that a higher percentage of the city's Methodist population in 1901 had been born in Canada (74 percent) than was the case with either the Presbyterians (68 percent) or Anglicans (66 percent).¹²⁴

Comments on the gender composition of the case-study churches suggest that the gender imbalance between male and female worshippers was less noticeable in the city's Presbyterian churches than in Anglican and Methodist places of worship. At the American Presbyterian Church 'the men were almost as numerous as the women'¹²⁵, and many children were also present, while at the Crescent Street Church 'whole families sat together worshipping in common'.¹²⁶ In contrast, women were in the majority at St George's Anglican Church¹²⁷, and a preponderance of female worshippers appears to have been a feature of nearly all the Anglican churches that were visited in Montreal.¹²⁸ At St James Methodist Church, the *Montreal Standard* series' author made the interesting observation that while the proportion of women to men in the main body of the church was at least three to one, the gender ratio was more equal in the sweeping gallery that ran

¹²² *Montreal Standard*, 18 October 1913. A somewhat wealthier group of Methodists may have attended the Dominion Square Methodist Church, which was then in the process of moving to Westmount, although the *Montreal Standard* series' author conjectured that their homes were probably 'fairly comfortable places', but doubted very much whether any of them were very wealthy (*Montreal Standard*, 22 November 1913).

¹²³ *Montreal Standard*, 18 October 1913.

¹²⁴ This data is derived from the Canadian Families Project's 5 percent sample of the 1901 nominal Census of Canada.

¹²⁵ *Montreal Standard*, 10 January 1914.

¹²⁶ *Montreal Standard*, 7 February 1914.

¹²⁷ *Montreal Standard*, 31 January 1914.

¹²⁸ *Montreal Standard*, 6 December 1913.

round three sides of the church.¹²⁹ It was noted in Montreal in the 1930s that English workingmen were less likely to become church members than were Scottish workingmen because they considered church attendance to be effeminate¹³⁰, suggesting the possibility that ethnic or cultural differences may explain why wealthier Presbyterian men also appear to have been more willing to attend church than their Anglican and Methodist counterparts.

Although the descriptions of worshippers provided by the *Montreal Standard* are anecdotal, the attention devoted by the author to questions of social class and ethnicity indicates that these social markers had a profound influence on the ethos of a congregation. Distinctions between those who were 'magnates' and those who were merely wealthy, as well as between those who were wealthy and those who were only in comfortable circumstances, were clearly considered to be a palpable element of congregational life. Likewise, the ethnic background of congregation members was also considered to be significant, as was the extent to which they could be identified as a predominantly Canadian group or one that retained closer ties to Britain. While representatives of the various groups were present in most of the uptown congregations, their varied proportions could nevertheless influence the character and appearance of a congregation. Individuals walking into one of the uptown churches for the first time on a Sunday morning would, like the author of the *Montreal Standard* series, have looked around and quickly gained a sense of whether or not they fitted in, even before participating in the actual service and determining whether the preaching and other elements of worship were suited to their needs. With their well-established and self-perpetuating social reputations, the uptown churches were unlikely to attract newcomers of more varied backgrounds to their worship services unless they took active steps to do so.

Pew Rents and Participation

One option that was open to the uptown churches was to modify the system of allocating seating in their sanctuaries based on an individual's capacity to pay for a pew.

¹²⁹ *Montreal Standard*, 18 October 1913.

¹³⁰ Lloyd G. Reynolds, *The British Immigrant: His Social and Economic Adjustment in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1935), 220.

The question of whether or not it was appropriate for an individual's financial status to determine where they sat in church had been an ongoing debate throughout the nineteenth century, but the movement to abolish pew rents gained momentum as the century drew to a close. In 1889, a resolution was passed by the Anglican Synod of Canada declaring that it was desirable that the sittings in all churches be free and unappropriated.¹³¹ This resolution was supported by the Rev. George Osborne Troop, who was rector of St Martin's Anglican Church in Montreal. In 1890, he persuaded a reluctant congregation to switch to a voluntary system of church financing, while agreeing to a compromise that would see families continuing to sit in allocated seats.¹³² Over time, Troop became convinced that this arrangement was simply pew rent in disguise and threatened to resign unless the congregation supported him in this matter, arguing that the church was not 'a club for the comfort and entertainment of a select few, but the House of God, open to all, without distinction, who feel their need of His salvation and come to worship Him'.¹³³ Congregational life was in urgent need of a 'holy revolution', and pew rents, he maintained, were unchristian because they excluded the poor, paid homage to money by giving the best seats to those who could pay for them, and were antagonistic to the missionary spirit of Christianity. The congregation voted to support their rector.¹³⁴ This decision was not, however, supported by the church's Finance Committee, resulting in the resignation of many of St Martin's leading professionals and businessmen from this body.¹³⁵

Few ministers felt as strongly as the Rev. G.O. Troop about this matter, or at least few felt strongly enough to be willing to risk losing the confidence of those who were responsible for the financial management of their churches. Of the case-study congregations, only Emmanuel Congregational Church did not charge rent for its pews, following the tradition established by Zion Church. Pews were nevertheless allocated to

¹³¹ *Montreal Witness*, 13 September 1889.

¹³² MDA, Fonds St Martin's Parish, Rev. Canon Roger S.W. Howard, *The Story of St Martin's, 1874-1954*, (Montreal: The Corporation of St Martin's Church 1954), 10.

¹³³ MDA, Fonds St Martin's Parish, Printed letter from G. Osborne Troop to the congregation of St Martin's, 19 May 1900.

¹³⁴ MDA, Fonds St Martin's Parish, Vestry Minutes St Martin's Church, 21 June 1900.

¹³⁵ MDA, Fonds St Martin's Parish, Vestry Minutes St Martin's Church, 12 July 1900.

families and individuals, and, at least until the move to the new church, there seems to have been an expectation that a minimum assessed value would be paid for a given pew.¹³⁶ Given the high demand for pews, and the fact that pew rents played such a central role in the governance and financing of so many of the uptown churches, it is hardly surprising that few of them seriously considered abandoning the traditional practices of pew rents and allocated seating altogether. There is also no evidence to suggest that uptown church members were dissatisfied with the pew-rent system, and most individuals were no doubt happy to have reserved seating in their well-attended churches. One suspects that modification of the temporal status quo of the churches was also unpopular because it represented a challenge to the fundamental underpinnings of the larger socio-economic system to which it bore such close resemblance.

The persistence of pew rents meant that most congregations continued to use them as a qualification for participation in decision-making. While most congregations simply left their regulations unchanged, the two congregations with the most exclusive forms of church governance – St George's Anglican Church and the American Presbyterian Church – did take steps to enable new members of their growing congregations to participate in the management of church affairs. In the case of the American Presbyterian Church, it was recognized that the original system, in which only the holders of entire pews had a right to vote at meetings of the American Presbyterian Society, deprived 'a large proportion of the more recent members of the church and society...of any voice in the expenditure of moneys which they contribute'.¹³⁷ A decision was therefore taken in 1900 to enlarge the franchise by allowing all seat-holders to participate in the business affairs of the church.¹³⁸ Eligibility for election as a trustee continued to be more restrictive, since an individual had to be an owner (rather than just a renter) of a pew. The number of individuals eligible for election was nevertheless enlarged by allowing those

¹³⁶ Relevant references to this matter can be found in: ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 161, EMM/1/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings 1875-1890, 2 November 1876; 29 November 1876; Contenant 156, EMM/1/7/4 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings, including Committee Reports 1902-1915, 29 October 1907.

¹³⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 2 January 1900.

¹³⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A413 *Financial Reports of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (December 1900), Pastoral Letter from the Rev. T.S. Williams.

who subscribed a sufficiently large sum to the church's debt-reduction fund to count as 'owners'.¹³⁹ In the case of St George's Church, the number of individuals eligible to act as proprietors was similarly enlarged in 1880 by admitting those who contributed \$50 over a two-year period towards the debt-reduction fund.¹⁴⁰ The qualification for proprietorship was widened once again in 1896, when it was decided that those contributing \$50 or more to the general revenues of the church during the course of a two-year period, over and above their pew rents, would count as proprietors.¹⁴¹ At the same time, the sons of pew holders were given the right to belong to the vestry, on payment of the sum of \$10 per annum.¹⁴² Although all these measures were introduced with the intention of broadening participation in decision-making, they were at the same time carefully designed to ensure that the decision-making power remained in the hands of those who were most able and willing to contribute financially to the well-being of the church.¹⁴³

Despite maintaining the pew-rent system, most of the case-study churches did turn increasingly to voluntary contributions during the 1870s and 1880s in order to supplement

¹³⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A413 *Financial Reports of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (December 1900), 30. By 1914, the trustees were contemplating making all pew holders, by lease as well as ownership, eligible for election as trustees (ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 164, A4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1905-1924, 6 January 1914).

¹⁴⁰ STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 20 April 1880.

¹⁴¹ STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 27 April 1896; 28 May 1896.

¹⁴² STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 28 May 1896.

¹⁴³ At the annual Synod meeting of the Diocese of Montreal in 1900, a vote was passed requesting that the Church Temporalities Act be amended so as to allow women to have the right to participate in vestry meetings (*Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Co. 1900), 38). The clergy were more in favour of this amendment than were the lay members of Synod (35 clergymen supported the motion versus 15 against, compared with 18 laymen in favour versus 11 against). This amendment did not dramatically increase the number of women eligible to participate, since in most churches only pew or seat-holders were allowed to do so, and this position was held in most families by the male head of household. No mention was made of female pew holders participating in vestry meetings at St George's, which may have been exempt from the amendment as a result of its status as a Proprietary Chapel (see *Proceedings of the Forty-Third Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1902), 57). At the Church of St James the Apostle, however, the wardens recorded 'with great pleasure, the fact that ladies holding pews or sittings in the church have legal status as members of the church vestry.... Our hope is that the ladies of our congregation thus entitled to take part in and vote at vestry meetings, will exercise their privilege, for we feel sure that their presence and influence will enhance interest and be for the material welfare and progress of our church' (SJA, Book Containing Printed Wardens' Reports 1878-1929, Wardens' Report 1901). In 1913, a meeting of Montreal's Anglican clergymen concluded that women only attended vestry meetings 'when there was some special reason and that their presence was certainly never harmful', suggesting that the amendment did not generate significant changes in the composition of vestries during the period under investigation.

church revenues without having to raise pew rents, a move that was often facilitated by the introduction of the weekly envelope system.¹⁴⁴ Although pew rent increases continued to be proposed from time to time, by the 1890s such increases were rarely approved without considerable debate and concern being expressed (often by the minister) that they would cause hardship for certain congregation members.¹⁴⁵ When the Finance Committee at St George's Church argued in 1896 that a pew rent increase of almost 25 percent was necessary to put the institution's finances on a businesslike basis, one member presented a minority report in which he expressed the fear that such a substantial increase would 'bear heavily upon some of the oldest members and best friends of the church' and would force some to leave the church. He suggested that the charities of the church should be cut back instead.¹⁴⁶ Eventually, a compromise was reached, which combined a 15 percent rise in pew rents with an intensified effort to promote additional voluntary offerings.¹⁴⁷ James Carmichael, the rector of St George's, would have preferred to see increased revenue secured entirely through voluntary contributions rather than pew rent increases, but recognized that options were limited since 'the envelope system had been practically repudiated by the bulk of the congregation' and he absolutely refused to see money taken away from the poor of the city.¹⁴⁸ Thus, while an effort was made to promote voluntary weekly offerings during this period, economic pragmatism continued to be seen by trustees as a more reliable basis for ensuring the financial well-being of their churches than Christian idealism.

Fearing that the removal of church members to the suburbs might eventually create even more serious financial difficulties for any church that chose to remain in the centre of the city, the trustees of some uptown churches began to look into the creation of

¹⁴⁴ Church financing was never straightforward, and the trustees of most congregations experimented with different means of raising funds during this period. See discussion in Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 166-175.

¹⁴⁵ See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 5 January 1897; Contenant 183, A425/2 *The American Presbyterian Church Financial Reports and Directory* (December 1911), Board of Trustees Report, 4.

¹⁴⁶ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, Special Meeting to Receive Report of the Finance Committee, 27 April 1896.

¹⁴⁷ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, 7 May 1896.

¹⁴⁸ STG, Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902, Special Meeting to Receive Report of the Finance Committee, 27 April 1896.

endowment funds.¹⁴⁹ In the early years of the twentieth century, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal came to the conclusion that an endowment fund for Christ Church Cathedral was a pressing necessity in light of the shrinking residential population in the surrounding uptown district.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, the trustees of St Paul's Presbyterian Church decided to use a legacy of \$1000 to form the 'nucleus' or 'first instalment' of an endowment fund, and invested the money in street railway bonds.¹⁵¹ It has been suggested that the result of such measures in the longer term was to thrust 'church boards even more fully into the world of commerce and banking', an outcome that was at odds with the vision of Christians supporting their ministers, buildings, and missions through the voluntary weekly offerings of church members.¹⁵² It was, however, perfectly in keeping with contemporary attempts to portray Christianity as a manly and businesslike religion, which could benefit from the further application of commercial principles and techniques to the management of church finances.¹⁵³ Drawing on earlier evangelical notions of the 'Christian businessman', a new ideal (that might be called 'businesslike Christianity') was gaining prominence at this time, emphasizing the need to infuse businessmen with a sense of personal responsibility in religious matters and thus ensure that they ran their churches and missionary organizations as well and as efficiently as they ran their own businesses.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ For further discussion of endowments, see Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 177-178.

¹⁵⁰ *Proceedings of the Forty-Third Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1902).

¹⁵¹ SAP, Minutes Board of Trustees St Paul's Church 1898-1918, 17 February 1903; Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1894-1912, 25 January 1903.

¹⁵² Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 178.

¹⁵³ Discussion of efforts to 'masculinize' the Protestant churches in the early twentieth century, and possible explanations for why this became an issue during this period, can be found in the following sources: Gail Bederman, "'The Women Have Had Charge of the Church Work Long Enough': The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-1912 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism", *American Quarterly*, 41(3) (September 1989), 432-465; Mary L. Mapes, *Visions of a Christian City: The Politics of Religion and Gender in Chicago's City Missions and Protestant Settlement Houses, 1886-1929* (Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University 1998), especially Chapter 3; Ann K. Perry, *Manliness, Goodness, and God: Poverty, Gender, and Social Reform in English-Speaking Montreal, 1890-1929* (M.A. Thesis, Queen's University 1998), especially Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 4 June 1909. In his address to the Montreal Methodist Conference's Missionary Meeting in Pembroke, Ontario, Mr. A.O. Dawson of St James Methodist Church argued that 'Businessmen must carry business into the Church. Our churches have not been run in the business way in which we have run our business. On the other hand, we must carry our religion into our business'. The Laymen's Missionary Movement, which arrived in Canada in 1907 from the United States, had an impact in most of

Accommodating Strangers

A number of the uptown congregations did, however, demonstrate a willingness to accommodate the new elements that were moving into the uptown district through the introduction of free and unappropriated seats at their Sunday evening services. As the geographical spread of the church membership increased and as Protestant observance of the Sabbath became less strict, attendance at the Sunday evening services by pew-holders declined. This left more space for those who were often referred to in church records simply as 'strangers', and included younger individuals living alone in boarding houses who had no church home of their own to attend, as well as members of other congregations who were attracted to the evening service of a church other than their own by a popular preacher. As early as 1877, the proprietors at St George's had considered having all pews free at evening services 'to increase the efficiency of the church and to extend the blessings of her services to a greater number', but only succeeded in implementing the policy in 1910.¹⁵⁵ By this time, a large proportion of the evening congregation was already made up of non-seat holders, who had previously had to wait until the just before the service began to be shown to seats remaining unoccupied by pew-holders.¹⁵⁶ In 1892, St Paul's had likewise declared that sittings at its evening service would be open to the public, although pew-holders could request that their pew be reserved for their own personal use.¹⁵⁷ St James Methodist Church does not appear to have adopted a policy of entirely free pews at its evening services, but instead announced that all seats remaining unoccupied ten minutes before the service would be available to visitors.¹⁵⁸

the uptown case-study churches and tried to interest businessmen in world-wide mission by setting forth its merits as 'a business proposition' (ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 1(2) (March 1908), 4).

¹⁵⁵ STG, Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925, 2 April 1877; Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1902-1925, 2 November 1910.

¹⁵⁶ STG, *The Year Book of St George's Church Montreal 1903-1904* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son 1904), 6.

¹⁵⁷ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1892* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1893), 21; *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1893* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1894), 16.

¹⁵⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 16 November 1914.

Ministers recognized that they were, to a certain extent, preaching to a different crowd in the evenings, and some adapted their services accordingly. Others experimented with new ways of reaching out to those without fixed church homes. In his memoirs, the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor described how he dealt with the problem of poorly-attended evening services:

The down-town situation of the church, and the claims of social life made the second service quite a problem, and yet the fact that the church was so distinctly down-town suggested an answer. All over the neighbourhood were 'rooming' houses, and it might be possible to attract this young business and student element. The office bearers were quite willing to give me a free hand in the way of experiment and as McGill University was situated close to the church, the attempt was made to interest this youthful constituency. On the first Sunday evening of every month, as had been done in London and Aberdeen [where his previous churches had been located], a lecture was given on some literary or historical subject. What was dwelt on was the religious side of the topic, and from the standpoint of evangelism the method was open to criticism. One knew that, whatever happened in the pulpit, the organist and choir would give a worthy and beautiful service. At once the evening attendance began to improve, and after two months the church was filled before the bells had begun to ring. The morning congregation, the pew-holders, began also to come to this evening service, and did not like it when, arriving in good time, they found their seats occupied by rows of young men.¹⁵⁹

At St George's Anglican and St James Methodist churches, experiments in outdoor preaching on church grounds were undertaken during the same period, apparently in an attempt to draw greater attention from passers-by. In the case of St George's, an outdoor pulpit opposite the CPR station was set up in the summer of 1908 by the Men's Association.¹⁶⁰ During the summers of 1910 and 1911, the Evangelistic Committee at St James held evangelistic meetings in a tent that had been erected on church grounds, perhaps with the idea of rekindling the atmosphere of traditional Methodist camp meetings as a means of grabbing the attention of those who might not usually come into the church.¹⁶¹ There is no evidence to suggest that these outdoor meetings ever made it

¹⁵⁹ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 222-223.

¹⁶⁰ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(9) (June 1908), 19.

¹⁶¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 404, STJ/1/2 Minutes Quarterly Official Board 1892-1917, 17 May 1910; Contenant 306, STJ/4/4 Minutes Board of Trustees 1908-1932, 28 May 1910; 19 May

beyond the experimental stage, but the changes to the Sunday evening services were more long-lasting.

As was made clear by the *Montreal Standard* series, the social composition of the membership of individual uptown congregations continued to play a vital role in determining their overall ethos and reputation. Although certain types of urban change, such as neighbourhood decline, could cause a congregation to lose leading members and vital financial support, the developments that were occurring in uptown Montreal were less threatening to the churches that were located there. The continued presence of other important institutions, such as McGill University, the Montreal High School, and various charitable organizations also helped to maintain the importance of the uptown district as an institutional 'zone' for the Protestant community. Under these circumstances, and with the benefits of modern transportation, even if church members moved to more distant parts of the city, the well-developed social networks that existed in these churches tended to remain intact and operational, thereby helping to perpetuate the established congregational 'personality'. Nevertheless, as the uptown district shifted from being a predominantly middle-class residential neighbourhood to becoming a central area with a more diverse population, rather than simply excluding those who did not fit in with the established membership, many uptown churches instead embraced a system in which they ministered primarily to the needs of their traditional family-oriented membership in the morning, while reaching out to a more diverse and youthful constituency by offering free pews at evening services and experimenting with new types of services.¹⁶² This, along with the encouragement of voluntary offerings, represented a pragmatic adjustment to the changing needs of the surrounding community as well as a very incomplete response to the criticisms of those who felt that the pew-rental system was contrary to the ideals of

1911. The fact that these services never seem to have reached beyond the experimental stage suggests that they were not considered a success.

¹⁶² Lloyd G. Reynolds (*The British Immigrant*, 151) describes the way in which Montreal's central churches had come to serve a large number of 'divergent interest groups' by the 1930s, 'each with little knowledge of the others'. These groups included the 'old members' – mostly Canadian-born and residing in Westmount or adjacent areas – who provided most of the funding and comprised the Sunday morning congregations. The Sunday evening congregations, in contrast, had a larger British-born component and were described as being composed of 'transients, drifters, persons who are clients rather than members, who form the backbone of church clubs, though they contribute little to their support'.

Christianity. The businessmen and professionals who were in charge of church finances nevertheless held firmly to the conventional system of church financing and governance based on social position and an individual's corresponding ability to pay for the right to consider a particular space in the church as their own. In a sense, this measured response was similar to the one described above for making church facilities more accessible to the broader community. While the Rev. G.O. Troop made it clear that it was possible to take a strong stand for inclusiveness on the basis of firmly-held theological convictions, church officers saw the businesslike management of church affairs as being more conducive to the survival of their churches and thus as being the best way of ensuring their continued ability to serve the religious needs of others.

Conclusions

Some uptown congregations took more meaningful steps than others towards embracing the vision of the community-oriented church building, in terms of dedicating space in their churches towards social and recreational activities and making their church sanctuaries and buildings more accessible to various groups outside the mainstream church membership. These shifts revealed a willingness to rethink the established geographic division between 'domestic' and 'public' ministries in light of the growing complexity of the uptown environment during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. They also reflected a situation in which deepening concern for social and economic conditions, and the belief that Christianity offered the best hope for the reform of urban society, were expanding and diversifying the potential role of the churches in society. These changes increased the scope of activities in which individual uptown churches, originally designed to accommodate a relatively limited and well-defined set of activities, might choose to participate. Most church leaders came to the conclusion, however, that space constraints and financial limitations made major efforts in these directions impractical. Given the social and economic resources of most uptown congregations, it seems reasonable to assume that these constraints could have been overcome had the will to do so existed.

Implementation of the community-oriented church model was hindered by the absence of major dissatisfaction on the part of church members with the existing design

and layout of their churches, and the fact that the community-oriented church model had to compete with a growing variety of other conceptions of the church, not all of which were fully compatible with one another. The extent to which any given model prevailed depended on the social and theological backgrounds of ministers and church members, as well as the perceived needs of the surrounding community. This interpretation corresponds with Charles Cashdollar's observation that in seeking to refashion their churches for the twentieth century, congregations 'experimented with numerous – and often conflicting – models: the church as efficient business operation, as refuge for the weary, as agent of empowerment of the poor, as prophetic pulpit, as social center, as source of entertainment and recreation, as family, as circle of friends, as place of worship and prayer, as spiritual home'.¹⁶³

For some of Montreal's uptown congregations, the desire to create a more aesthetic worship experience was paramount. Since attractive services were essential for any central church that hoped to draw large crowds, such efforts could in theory work alongside the movement towards a more community-oriented church. In practice, they tended to integrate the aesthetic tastes of well-to-do church-goers even more profoundly into worship services, reinforcing the association between the uptown churches and the middle and upper-classes and emphasizing the ability of these congregations to engage in conspicuous consumption. Another model that churches like St Paul's and the American Presbyterian Church in particular continued to subscribe to (though they would not themselves have used this term) was the much-maligned notion of the church as club, in which the church building was seen as a 'private' space for church members, while the mission and charitable work of the congregation were carried out elsewhere. Conservative elite congregations like St Paul's, that had never endorsed the revivalist evangelical tradition, appear to have viewed this format more favourably than less elite congregations like Emmanuel and St James Methodist, in which strong evangelical roots had evolved into the desire to promote social Christianity. At the same time, attempts by female church members to emphasize the domestic nature of church interiors, and assert their right to manage these spaces, likewise led away from the community-oriented church model. Efforts by trustees to implement their vision of more businesslike

¹⁶³ Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home*, 242.

churches had a similar effect. Those advocating a more efficient and methodical approach to church affairs tended to emphasize that the churches, if they were to be effective as institutions, had to place the financial well-being and good management of church finances ahead of more sentimental notions, such as the desire to ensure that no one felt excluded by such things as pew rents. These views tended to discourage congregations from embarking on expensive renovations to upgrade their facilities, unless they could do so, as in the case of Emmanuel Church, in a fiscally responsible manner. Whereas denominational differences and schisms had played a prominent role in differentiating the various uptown congregations during the nineteenth century, by the early twentieth century these differences were no longer as meaningful. It was more a question of individual congregations trying to determine which elements from a range of different models would fit best with their 'congregational personality', while simultaneously enabling them to retain their competitive position vis-à-vis other churches as well as fulfil their emerging roles as 'city' or 'uptown central' churches. These various competing views of what a church should be, and how its facilities should be deployed, continued to reflect the middle- and upper-class preoccupations of the vast majority of their members, upon whose support these churches depended.

The advisability of adopting the community-oriented church model was also called into question as a result of the extent to which it brought the churches into competition with organizations that were attempting to satisfy similar needs in the secular domain outside the churches. Despite the impressive architects' plans that were available showing churches with extensive social and recreational facilities designed to carry out the larger work demanded by modern life, most uptown congregations remained uncertain about how far they should go in physically integrating secular activities into their church plans. The area of leisure and recreation was particularly problematic. Most of the members of elite congregations would have had access to other recreational facilities, and hence little need for their churches to provide them. If available, such facilities were most likely to appeal to the young men and women who lived in boarding houses or who attended university in Montreal – the Sunday evening crowd. Churches found themselves using limited means and unsuitable premises to compete with commercial providers of leisure and entertainment, but there was no guarantee that better facilities would have

enabled the churches to compete more effectively. Greater involvement in social service was more in line with the traditional charitable work of the churches, but – as had been recognized in the past – certain types of work could be more effectively carried out by essentially secular (albeit often religiously-inspired) Protestant agencies outside the bounds of church organizations. Some churches like Emmanuel made use of their church buildings in order to take a more active role in social service work, but many of the flourishing social and civic reform movements that existed in Montreal in the early twentieth century had no connection with any given church or denomination, despite being funded and motivated by large numbers of church members. As Christian work became less distinct from activity taking place in the secular realm, churches had to decide whether it was worthwhile attempting to adapt their church buildings and the machinery of their churches to accommodate such efforts, or whether it was more profitable to focus on promoting social movements and inspiring members to participate in outside organizations that were carrying out this type of work. As a result, and given the presence of competing ideas concerning the appropriate uses of church facilities that existed at this time, the community-oriented church model was most often integrated into uptown church life as one facet of a more complex congregational identity, rather than as its driving force.

CHAPTER 7

The Downtown Problem: Protestant Religious Institutions in the City Below the Hill

This chapter will explore the way in which the missions and churches in Griffintown and the surrounding district were affected by changes taking place in the downtown environment and by the growing debates over the nature and causes of urban social problems in the period between c.1890 and 1914. In the earlier period examined in Chapter 4, it was generally assumed – at least by middle and upper class Protestants in Montreal – that the fulfilment of the spiritual and social mandates of the Christian Church and the promotion of social harmony were feasible within the context of the contemporary socio-economic system, then characterized by commercial and relatively small-scale industrial capitalism. Despite differences of opinion over doctrinal matters and issues related to church governance, there was also broad agreement concerning the work that needed to be carried out by the Church in downtown areas like Griffintown. Evangelical Protestants naturally emphasized the need for conversion more strongly than did their ‘establishment’¹ counterparts, and tended to be more optimistic about the ability to transform the character of individuals. It was generally agreed, however, that reaching out to the unchurched and ensuring access to places of worship offered an important means of deterring individuals from engaging in the immoral and destructive behaviours that were believed to lead to a life of poverty. Those suffering as a result of unfortunate circumstances such as ill health or widowhood in turn provided opportunities for the expression of Christian charity. The ability of Montreal’s Protestant middle and upper-classes to support religious institutions in downtown neighbourhoods like Griffintown had therefore enabled them to see themselves, as well as present themselves to others, as being promoters of both the spiritual and material well-being of the larger community.

By the late nineteenth century, however, the question was being actively debated as to whether personal discipline and private charity provided an adequate means of addressing the more complex and large-scale problems, such as poor housing, inadequate

¹ This term is used to refer to churches with traditional attachments to the established church of either England or Scotland.

sanitation, and insufficient wages, that had emerged in the cities.² A broader range of social ideologies - to be explored in this chapter - began to exert an influence, both within and outside the churches, offering new ways of conceptualizing and responding to these problems. These debates were driven in part by the rise of the labour movement and socialism within the working classes. 'New' liberal or social liberal elements within the middle and upper classes were also critical of laissez-faire capitalism, but hoped that moral suasion would inspire greater social cooperation, lessen inequality, and lead to improved urban living conditions, thereby averting the need for a complete overhaul of the socio-economic system. As Christie and Gauvreau have shown, many social Christians espoused similar views, and saw Christianity as having the ability to inspire the 'change of heart' that would be required to persuade more prosperous members of society to support reforms and thus demonstrate that Christian ethics and capitalist practice could once again be reconciled.³ It was hoped that improved living conditions and the lessening of the struggle for day-to-day existence amongst the working classes would divert the inhabitants of poorer neighbourhoods from a purely material existence and increase their willingness to embrace the Gospel. Some church leaders were also anxious to demonstrate that the Protestant churches were not, as was sometimes claimed, in bondage to the rich, and saw social Christianity as offering an important means of demonstrating the Church's impartiality when it came to class-related issues.⁴

The long tradition of uptown intervention in Griffintown and the surrounding area in terms of evangelization, charitable work, and the provision and support of places of worship made it a logical place in which to try to demonstrate that the ideals of social Christianity could make a difference on the ground. What was needed was to show that social Christianity had the ability to motivate uptown churchgoers to embrace the need for greater interdenominational cooperation and the redistribution of resources between rich and poor, with a view to contributing towards the resolution of urban social

² David J. Jeremy, ed., *Religion, Business and Wealth in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge 1998), 21.

³ Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada 1900-1940* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996), xiv, 90-92.

⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 29 July 1899, Letter to the Editor signed G.G. Huxtable. Huxtable was the minister of the East End Methodist Church.

problems. Both Presbyterian and Methodist advocates of social Christianity were inspired by the vision of well-equipped churches capable of uplifting the surrounding neighbourhood and providing for the moral and social welfare of its inhabitants. Anglicans also began to place greater emphasis on having their churches in working-class districts provide more fully for the needs of parishioners through such measures as the employment of well-trained deaconesses and district nurses. While advocates of social Christianity were aware that these measures on their own would be insufficient to resolve the social problems of the day, they nevertheless wanted their religious institutions to exemplify the ideals that they felt the Christian Church should be advancing in society at large.

By examining the influence of social Christianity at the congregational level, we gain a very different perspective from that gleaned from studies adopting a national or denominational vantage point.⁵ As will be demonstrated in this chapter, this approach highlights the central role played by class-related issues in impeding the development of the consensus required to implement the precepts of social Christianity in a working-class district such as Griffintown. Chad Reimer has suggested that the failure of liberal Protestants to recognize the 'class-boundedness' of their version of the social gospel was one of its major flaws.⁶ Brian Fraser has similarly argued that the urban middle class backgrounds of the clergymen who were most closely involved with the promotion of social Christianity within the Presbyterian Church in Canada led them to seek reforms 'that would make the social and economic system work more harmoniously and efficiently', rather than to engage in a more 'fundamental critique of the values and institutions that had been the vehicles for the providential progress of Anglo-Saxon civilization throughout the nineteenth century'.⁷ The tendency of working-class churchgoers to embrace a more traditional and doctrinally-conservative evangelical faith

⁵ See, for example, Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992); Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1971); Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.

⁶ Chad Reimer, 'Review: Religion and Culture in Nineteenth-Century English Canada', *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 25(1) (1990), 201.

⁷ Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier Press for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion 1988), xii.

than their middle-class counterparts in the context of the twentieth century has also been commented upon, suggesting that social gospel solutions were not always suited to the needs of this group.⁸ Exploring the way in which these debates unfolded at the local level in the context of an urban working-class community sheds light on the extent to which uptown churchgoers were willing to modify their traditional city mission programmes to conform with the message of social Christianity. It also makes it possible to explore the response of downtown churchgoers to these efforts, and to examine the influence that changes taking place in the urban environment had on these processes.

The Problem of the City Revisited

The growing concern about urban social conditions that had re-emerged in the 1880s and 1890s in Britain and the United States initially filtered its way into the Canadian consciousness through the newspapers.⁹ By the early years of the twentieth century, many Canadians had accepted that problems such as poor housing and sanitation, widespread poverty and unemployment, labour unrest, municipal corruption, and vice were a threat to the well-being of their own cities. While many of these problems had long been a feature of urban life, there was a general feeling during this period that the scale, severity, and complexity of these problems had increased. This was no doubt the case, but the heightened concern also reflected a nativist reaction to the presence of growing numbers of non-English-speaking and non-Protestant foreigners in Canadian cities.

As was the case in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, clergymen and church bodies were active participants in discussions of social problems. Sermons dealing with social issues frequently emphasized the interdependence of urban dwellers. In 1909, the Rev. E.H. Tippet of Calvary Congregational Church in Montreal declared in a sermon that 'the modern type of city, with its vast population and complex life, is something "new under the sun"', pointing to the fact that 'a dweller in the modern city can no more live unto himself than can a worker in a modern factory make by himself the

⁸ See discussion in Robert K. Burkinshaw, 'Aspects of Canadian Evangelical Historiography', *Historical Papers of the Canadian Association of Church History*, (1995), 188-189.

⁹ Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 65.

finished article'.¹⁰ The Rev. Herbert Symonds of Christ Church Cathedral likewise observed that those living in a city were 'knit together by a thousand subtle connecting links' and emphasized the need for 'Civic Christianity' to combat urban conditions that posed a threat to the community as a whole.¹¹ Meanwhile, other ministers spoke out on the related need for greater cooperation amongst the city's various 'religious' and 'racial' groups, with Bishop John Farthing of the Anglican Church coming to the conclusion that it would take 'the full force of all religious communions' in Montreal to rescue the city from the dangers it was facing.¹²

The belief was often expressed at this time that Canada's delayed urban and industrial development gave it the advantage of being able to learn from mistakes that had been made elsewhere and thus ensure that Canadian cities avoided similar pitfalls, such as the development of slums. In 1912, the *Presbyterian Record* announced that 'the experience of American cities is particularly profitable for us, because we stand today at the beginning of a development that they have so largely accomplished'.¹³ Others adopted a more alarmist stance, threatening that unless lessons were learned 'from our neighbour's folly', Canadian cities would experience the same fate as their American counterparts.¹⁴ Some even concluded that urban problems in the United States 'had gone well nigh beyond solution', but hoped that Canadian cities could still be 'saved' if the churches took immediate action to address 'the problem of the city'.¹⁵

The Role of Local Churches in Generating an Understanding of Social Problems

One way in which the local churches contributed to the discussion of social issues within the Protestant community was to host visiting lectures by prominent urban

¹⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 27 February 1909.

¹¹ *Montreal Witness*, 26 June 1909. Many sermons reported in the newspapers at this time were intended to inspire the ongoing municipal reform movement in Montreal.

¹² *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1913), 46, 50.

¹³ *Presbyterian Record*, March 1912, 'The Problem of the City' by Rev. Edward Horne, 111.

¹⁴ *The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Ottawa, Ont., June 7-15, 1911* (Toronto: Murray Printing Company 1911), Annual Report of the Board of Moral and Social Reform and Evangelism, 270.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 267.

reformers such as W.T. Stead and Jacob Riis. As editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* Stead had played an important role in publicizing *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*, a pamphlet produced by the London Congregational Union that had created a sensation when it first appeared in 1883. *The Bitter Cry* drew attention to the terrible living conditions existing in the working-class slums of London, and, by emphasizing the association between poor living conditions and irreligion, had helped to make progressive elements in the churches more aware of the need for environmental reform measures rather than just personal reformation.¹⁶ When Stead visited Montreal in 1893, he spoke before 'an immense gathering' in St Paul's Presbyterian Church about the civic responsibilities of the Christian Church. 'Have you realized', he asked his audience, 'that you are responsible for the city as well as for your own souls and your neighbor's souls?'¹⁷ He went on to stress the importance of all churches, both Protestant and Catholic, working together to take concrete steps to transform the entire atmosphere of Montreal, rather than allowing the abstract points on which they differed to lead to inaction. New York reformer Jacob Riis' message was very similar when he delivered a lecture on 'The Battle With the Slum' at the American Presbyterian Church in 1912. Riis was the author of the influential book, *How the Other Half Lives*, and his lecture was viewed by the minister of the American Presbyterian Church as a contribution to 'the fight for righteousness'. Among other things, Riis 'threw doubt upon the idea that drunkenness was a cause of slum conditions' arguing that 'poor environment leads to drunkenness, not the other way around'.¹⁸ He warned Montrealers that 'the slum was at their door' and maintained that slums were the product of urban dwellers forgetting that they were neighbours.

While much could be learned by analysing conditions elsewhere, concerned individuals also recognized that a greater awareness and understanding of local problems was required if effective action was to be taken. When Herbert B. Ames, an active civic reformer and member of the American Presbyterian Church, published his innovative sociological study of the lower west end of Montreal in 1897, he emphasized that there

¹⁶ Andrew Mearns, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* (New York: Humanities Press 1970), Introduction by Anthony S. Wohl; Jeremy, *Religion, Business and Wealth*, 5.

¹⁷ *Montreal Daily Star*, 27 November 1893.

¹⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 18 October 1912; *Montreal Gazette*, 29 October 1912.

was a need for the rich and well-to-do to educate themselves concerning the social and economic conditions that existed in 'the city below the hill'.¹⁹ 'Most of the residents of the upper city', he claimed, 'know little – and at times seem to care less – regarding their fellow men in the city below'. He therefore felt that it was 'opportune that the citizens of Montreal should, for a time, cease discussing the slums of London, the beggars of Paris and the tenement house evils of New York' in order to 'learn something about themselves and to understand more perfectly the conditions present in their very midst'.²⁰ While Ames' belief in the benefits to be gained from applying social scientific methods to the study of urban social problems was shared by many church leaders at this time²¹, most uptown churchgoers continued to rely on less systematic, but more readily available, information to piece together an understanding of local conditions.

Charitable and evangelical work carried out by volunteer workers and district visitors at the downtown missions had traditionally provided at least some uptown church members with the opportunity to meet poorer members of society in person and gain a more intimate understanding of their problems and living conditions. While this type of work continued to be carried out in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, growing concerns about communicable diseases, personal safety, and the reception that uptown dwellers would receive in the lower parts of the city raised questions about its viability and practicality. When calling for more volunteers to conduct visitation work in Griffintown in the mid-1880s, the missionary at the Nazareth Street Mission emphasized that people were wrong to think that the work was unsafe, and argued that 'in thousands of calls in Griffintown district, your missionary has suffered no evil, and scarcely any incivility'. 'Our poorer working people', he maintained, 'are very hearty if courteously treated, and will gladly welcome any Christian visitor, at any hour'.²² Only a few years later, the congregation was criticized once again by its city missionaries for allowing the

¹⁹ Herbert Brown Ames, *The City Below The Hill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972), 6-7. First published in 1897.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

²¹ See discussion in Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, Chapter 3.

²² PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports 1885* (Montreal, 1886), 30.

work in Griffintown to be 'carried on too much *by proxy*'.²³ The Rev. Charles Doudiet, who was in charge of St Paul's Mission in Point St Charles at the turn of the century, likewise had to reassure visitors from the uptown St Paul's Church that it was safe for them to return to their duties following an outbreak of scarlet fever.²⁴ The work of young women, who had traditionally been active in visiting and Sunday school work, was particularly susceptible to these types of concerns. In the late 1880s, for instance, one of the young ladies who belonged to the St George's District Visiting Society was obliged to give up her district 'in obedience to her mother's wishes'.²⁵ With the growing 'foreign' presence in the city in the early twentieth century, some ministers took the stand 'that it was not the place of the family church to send its daughters to come into contact with the unknown men and women in the slums'.²⁶ While more detailed study would be required to determine the precise impact that these fears had on participation in church work in downtown areas, it has been observed elsewhere in North America that 'personal involvement in charity work by the better-off classes' was on the decline in the late nineteenth century.²⁷

This made uptown churchgoers much more dependent on the mediated accounts of downtown conditions provided by the professionals that they employed to carry out Christian work on their behalf. It also expanded the scope of action for paid female workers, such as deaconesses and parish nurses, who were given greater official recognition by the churches during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These expert workers were on the one hand anxious not to make uptown congregation members feel as if they were neglecting their Christian duties by not carrying out their charitable work in person. Thus, one of the deaconesses working for St James Methodist Church

²³ PCL, *Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal (Presbyterian Church in Canada) - Annual Reports 1888* (Montreal, 1889), 33.

²⁴ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1900* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1901), 29.

²⁵ STG, St George's Lady District Visitors Society Minute Book 1884-1900, 8 May 1888.

²⁶ *Montreal Gazette*, 17 October 1913, 'Should Not Send Girls Slumming'.

²⁷ Thomas Bender, *Towards an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in Nineteenth Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1975), 154-155. In *The New Era*, published in 1893, the Rev. Josiah Strong observed that Christian work was becoming 'largely *institutional* rather than *personal*, and, therefore, largely mechanical instead of vital' because 'the average Christian today is hiring his Christian work done by proxy - by societies, institutions, the minister, the city missionary' (218).

told her congregation that 'it is because your hearts beat with the Christ-love and you long to bring comfort, joy and peace into many hearts, but are prevented by home and business ties from doing the amount of personal work you would like to do for the Master, that you have a deaconess in your midst'.²⁸ They were at the same time conscious of the need to emphasize that their training and skills enabled them to gain special insights into the needs of the poor. Miss Lena Church, a district nurse working for St George's Anglican Church, saw her role as being that of 'a medium between the rich and the poor' and often repeated her opinion that 'a district nurse, or any other salaried officer, going into the highways of our...slums' was in a much better position than the volunteer to judge what was required to improve the living conditions of the poor.²⁹

Miss Church was an outspoken advocate of the poor and, in her reports in the St George's parish magazine, devoted a great deal of effort to trying to educate the uptown population concerning the living conditions and economic circumstances of those living in the lower portion of their parish. The tone of her reports indicates that she was often frustrated by her inability to convince those without personal experience of the lower levels of the city of the truthfulness of her statements and of the need to take immediate action. 'I am told I exaggerate the conditions of Montreal slums', she wrote in her report for 1911, defending her position by pointing out that 'not five minutes' walk from St George's there is a yard of tenements, the sight of which would make a tender-hearted woman shudder and perhaps stir a man to action not words'.³⁰ She felt that it should be evident to uptown congregation members that the children of the poor could be 'neither innocent nor ignorant of evil' when they lived in such cramped quarters, surrounded by 'the conditions for sin and degradation', and that the obvious solution was to 'set about improving social conditions'.³¹ Her solutions frequently demanded economic sacrifices on the part of the wealthy. As well as criticizing the landlords who owned rear tenements, she expressed the opinion that the shareholders of large industries, by

²⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 311, STJ/24/15 Minutes of the General Committee of the St James Methodist Sabbath Schools of Montreal 1890-1925, *St James Methodist Church, Montreal - Annual Report for the year ending April 30th, 1908*, Deaconess' Report by Caroline Wilcox, 7 [inserted].

²⁹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 1(6) (March 1908), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 9; *St George's Monthly*, 5(6) (March 1912), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 9.

³⁰ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 5(6) (March 1912), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 10.

³¹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 3(6) (March 1910), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 19.

demanding high dividends, were responsible for reducing the wages of labouring men and making it difficult for them to support their families.³² She also felt that the conspicuous consumption of well-to-do women was indirectly responsible for the ruin of many of their poorer sisters, who were exposed to temptation because of their inability to earn sufficient wages to live respectably.³³

Miss Church was also impatient with charity work that simply helped to alleviate the symptoms of poverty, such as bread tickets and free clothing, arguing that 'what Montreal needs more than anything else is justice'.³⁴ While acknowledging that charity was greater than justice, she maintained that you could not have real charity without having justice as its foundation. This understanding informed her distinction between two types of philanthropy: 'There is one class of philanthropist that undertakes when a man commits an evil to help him out of it. There is another class that endeavours to abolish that temptation. The first is sentiment. The last is Christianity'.³⁵ This was a somewhat courageous position for an employee of an uptown congregation to adopt, given that so much of the charitable work being carried out at this time belonged in the former category. Miss Church's willingness to speak out nevertheless emphasized the extent to which she was inspired by the ideals of social Christianity. It also reflected a fundamental divide that was beginning to emerge within the Protestant churches between those who continued to refer to Christian charity or love (*agape*) as the basis for assisting less wealthy members of society, and those who expressed themselves using the more modern, and potentially more secular, language of justice and human rights. Reinhold Niebuhr has emphasized the distinction between a *religious* ethic that 'makes love the ideal' and a *rational* ethic that 'aims at justice'.³⁶ Many advocates of social Christianity in the early years of the twentieth century were nevertheless trying – as Miss Church was

³² STG, *St George's Monthly*, 2(5) (February 1909), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 19.

³³ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 6(6) (March 1913), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 15.

³⁴ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 4(6) (March 1911), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 19.

³⁵ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 4(6) (March 1911), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 20. This quotation comes from an unnamed source.

³⁶ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis Books 2000), 402.

doing – to integrate the two, or to argue that contemporary demands for social and economic justice had evolved out of a Christian framework.³⁷

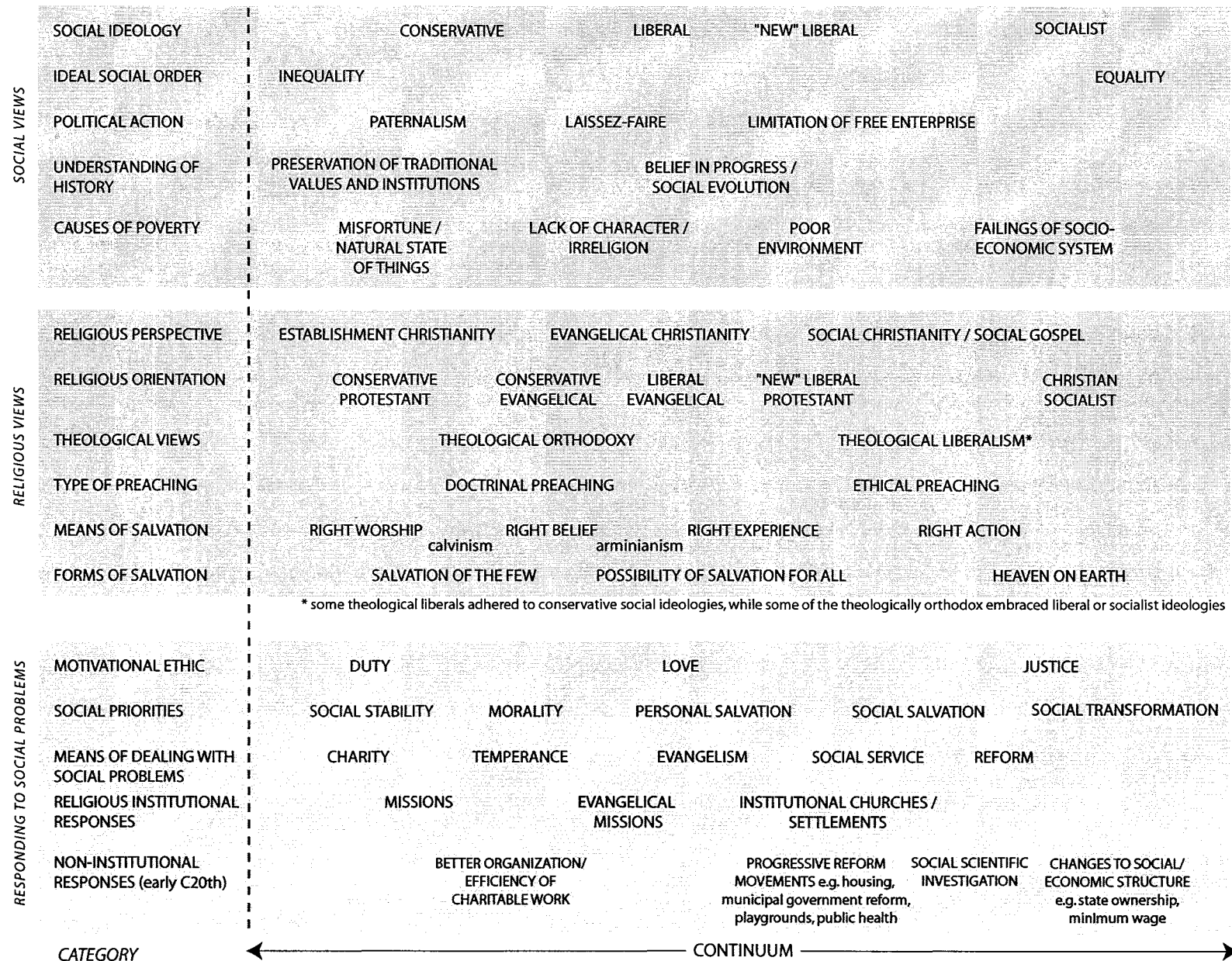
While individuals like Miss Church played an important role in informing uptown churchgoers about living conditions in the lower parts of their city, there was little that she could do to convince those who remained sceptical of her portrayal of the miseries that she encountered in that region, nor did it necessarily mean that her audience agreed with her interpretation of the causes of social problems. Despite the advocacy of social Christian ideals by visiting urban reformers, a vocal segment of ministers from all the mainline Protestant denominations, and many others who came into direct contact with the social and economic conditions that existed in the lower parts of the city, there was – as we shall see in the following section – a lack of consensus within the Protestant community as to the nature and cause of these problems, as well as disagreement over the role that religious ideologies and institutions should play in their resolution.

Finding Solutions to Urban Social Problems

Figure 7.1 illustrates the complex range of views that were being debated at this time within the Protestant churches in Montreal, including the interrelations that existed between social and religious ideologies, and the way in which this affected an individual's response to the social problems of the time. The perspectives shown towards the left-hand end of the spectrum predominated during the earlier period discussed in Chapter 4. What was taking place in the 1890s and early twentieth century was a 'stretching' of the spectrum of opinion to include a wider range of views associated with 'New' liberal and socialist thought, which helped to fuel debate on the role of religion in the resolution of urban social problems. It should be noted that there were exponents of each of the various social ideologies who saw religion as having only a minor role, if any, to play in social and economic issues, preferring instead to place their faith in secular ideals such as efficiency or working-class solidarity.

³⁷ See, for example, *The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Ottawa, Ont., June 7-15, 1911* (Toronto: Murray Printing Company 1911), Annual Report of the Board of Moral and Social Reform and Evangelism, 274; or *Montreal Witness*, 5 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed Anstance Rede.

Figure 7.1 Relations Between Social and Religious Views and Responses to Social Problems



Insights into these debates can be gleaned from the heated discussion that unfolded in the pages of the *Witness* following the publication of a controversial sermon by the Rev. W.D. Reid in 1899.³⁸ The sermon was published as Reid's response to the accusation that it 'did not take much courage' to preach such a sermon to a mainly working class congregation like his own in Montreal's East End, 'but that it would take more grit than the average minister possessed to let the sermon go before the public and stir up discussion'.³⁹ Not only was Reid critical of modern business practices for failing to be governed by Christian principles, but he also spoke in favour of the nationalization of key industries such as the railways and utilities.⁴⁰ He nevertheless concluded that a permanent solution to the inequalities of the present social system would come about 'not by change of state or government', but by a 'change of heart' brought about by the universal acceptance of the principles taught and put into practice by Jesus of Nazareth.⁴¹ Thus, while Reid expressed support for certain socialist ideas, the main thrust of his argument was the need for greater social cooperation based on Christian ethics.⁴² Like others influenced by social Christianity, he remained optimistic that the Church had a central role to play in resolving social problems and in bringing about a more harmonious society through its ability to inspire a 'change of heart'. This expression was frequently used in the *Witness* at this time, and seems to have represented an attempt to find a term that could encompass both the orthodox evangelical experience in which an individual was expected to respond to conversion by engaging in good works and the desire of more theologically-liberal individuals simply to follow Jesus' ethical example. Also characteristic of this approach was a tendency for the actual mechanism by which social

³⁸ This refers to the same sermon, entitled 'The Golden Rule in Business', mentioned in Chapter 5. Further information on the life and work of the Rev. W.D. Reid can be found in W. Stanford Reid, ed., *Called to Witness: Profiles of Canadian Presbyterians. A Supplement to Enduring Witness, Volume Two* (Hamilton, Ontario: The Presbyterian Church in Canada 1980), 93-106. W.D. Reid was active in evangelistic campaigns and later in life came to fear that the Presbyterian Church in Canada 'was losing its Christ-centred gospel to a humanistic ethic and institutionalism' (106).

³⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 31 May 1899, Letter to the Editor signed W.D. Reid.

⁴⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 6 May 1899, 'Mr. Reid's Sermon: The Golden Rule in Business', 14.

⁴¹ *Montreal Witness*, 6 May 1899, 'Mr. Reid's Sermon: The Golden Rule in Business', 14.

⁴² Christie and Gauvreau point out that clergymen often spoke favourably of 'socialism' during this period, when what they actually meant was 'social cooperation, which they believed grew directly out of a spiritual ideal of harmony founded upon Christianity' (*A Full-Orbed Christianity*, 16).

improvement was to take place to remain vague or unspecified.⁴³ While reference to a 'change of heart' was usually associated with a call to social action on the part of Christians, it was ambiguous enough to be used by those envisioning relatively minor reforms such as improved housing and sanitation or more effective 'social service' work, as well as by those demanding substantial modifications to the social and economic organization of society.

A number of the *Witness's* correspondents strongly approved of Reid's sermon. One, signing himself 'Workingman', expressed the hope that if the churches could once again be persuaded to preach 'true Christianity', this would encourage those within the churches to do their duty towards others regarding the problem of poverty as well as the cause of labour, and this in turn would help to reconcile alienated working people to the Church.⁴⁴ Another correspondent, writing under the epithet 'Humanitas', also found Reid's 'ethical' preaching refreshing, and looked forward to the 'church of tomorrow' preaching a more complete gospel that included 'the brotherhood of man and love of neighbor':

When that gospel shall be proclaimed from our pulpits, not only will the common people again hear it gladly, but all classes of society will be brought under its sway. And then in our market places and in our streets (not in the slums, for the slums will then disappear) there will flourish the tree of life, whose fruitage will be social regeneration and universal brotherhood, and whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations.⁴⁵

By placing this process within a social evolutionary framework that assumed that the moral and spiritual development of human beings over time was enhancing their 'capacity for the comprehension of truth', 'Humanitas' emphasized his belief in the inevitability of social progress and effectively evaded the question of what precise measures were required to resolve contemporary urban social problems. In contrast with mid-nineteenth century evangelicals who had viewed greater social harmony as an anticipated outcome of evangelisation efforts, but had focused on personal conversions as the most important measure of the success of the Church, there was a tendency amongst social Christians to

⁴³ See Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, 18; also Reimer, 'Review: Religion and Culture in Nineteenth-Century English Canada', 201.

⁴⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 24 June 1899; also 10 May 1899, Letters to the Editor signed 'Workingman'.

⁴⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899; also 12 May 1899, Letters to the Editor signed 'Humanitas'.

see the creation of a harmonious and equitable social order as the central aim of Christianity, making a 'change of heart' as much a means to an end as an end in itself.

Traditional evangelical and 'establishment' Christians were more likely than social Christians to downplay the novelty of contemporary social problems and to defend the validity of evangelization and charitable work as an appropriate response. Representing this general perspective in the Reid debate was a letter writer signing himself 'A Close Observer' [A.C.O.]. A.C.O. defended the charitable work that was being done by the Protestant churches, and objected to those who felt that they were not doing enough to alleviate poverty.⁴⁶ Since the poorer classes in Canadian cities were not as a general rule 'sunken in misery and degradation', A.C.O. argued that there was little need for a social revolution 'to lift them up as a class out of vice and misery'.⁴⁷ For individuals who found themselves in this position, A.C.O. emphasized the need for religious conversion, supporting his position with the argument that Jesus Christ himself had focused his attention on individual regeneration rather than the reorganization of society. He was also adamant that 'ethics should not be put in place of the gospel'⁴⁸ and would have agreed with another participant in the debate who contended 'that the power of evangelical truth is in its doctrine', making 'mere ethical preaching' powerless on its own.⁴⁹ While the more theologically orthodox social Christians, who continued to adhere to traditional tenets of the Christian faith such as the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the atonement, would have concurred with this statement, they would not have agreed with A.C.O.'s conceptualization of poverty and other social problems from a purely individualistic perspective. His belief, for example, that evangelisation could improve a poor neighbourhood by transforming the character of its inhabitants and making them wish for more clean and comfortable surroundings was ridiculed by 'Humanitas', who questioned whether it would be possible for Montreal's estimated 30,000 poor to escape

⁴⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 19 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'A Close Observer'.

⁴⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 29 July 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'A Close Observer'.

⁴⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 19 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'A Close Observer'.

⁴⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 May 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Justice'.

from the 6,000 'death-dealing cesspools'⁵⁰ of the city simply by having 'clean hearts' and a desire for 'sweet surroundings'.⁵¹

Despite their radically different views on most issues, socialist materialists agreed with traditional evangelicals and 'establishment' Protestants in maintaining that it was outside the scope of the Church's mission to 'right the wrongs of which the Socialists and their sympathizers complain'.⁵² One of the leading proponents of this perspective in the debate generated by the Rev. Reid's sermon was Frank F. Stone, a stenographer working for the Grand Trunk Railway in Point St Charles, who signed himself as 'Rational' in his letters to the *Witness*.⁵³ His underlying motivation for adopting this position was, however, quite different. Unlike A.C.O., Stone was a critic of the status quo and believed that a major transformation of the social and economic system was required.⁵⁴ In contrast with social Christians like the Rev. W.D. Reid, however, he had no faith in the ability of 'the changed heart' to bring about these reforms, pointing to the fact that the same spiritual agent animated 'thousands of those who are the most stubborn supporters of an economic system which they claim fulfils the Master's will'.⁵⁵ Over the course of a series of letters to the *Witness*, Stone outlined his belief that people had to strive for 'common justice' without the aid of any 'spiritual agent', and suggested that this could only be done by dealing with the root cause of the problem, which he believed to be the competitive commercial system.⁵⁶ Although Stone did not specify what action should be taken to transform the system, supporters of the growing labour movement hoped that better organization and solidarity would place workers in a sufficiently powerful position to force concessions from employers and governments, rather than leaving them to depend on a 'change of heart' on the part of those in control of capital.

⁵⁰ This refers to contemporary debates over the insufficiencies of Montreal's sanitation facilities.

⁵¹ *Montreal Witness*, 19 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'A Close Observer'; *Montreal Witness*, 26 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Humanitas'.

⁵² *Montreal Witness*, 10 June 1899, Letter to the Editor signed G. Dawson.

⁵³ *Montreal Witness*, 30 June 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Rational' (Frank F. Stone); *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1899-1900*, 1199.

⁵⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 20 May 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Rational'.

⁵⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 20 May 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Rational'. See also *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Rational'.

⁵⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 20 May 1899; 27 May 1899, 10 June 1899, Letters to the Editor signed 'Rational'.

Advocates of social Christianity therefore encountered difficulties when they assumed that the reform measures that they were advocating, most of which could be described as conforming to 'New' liberal or social liberal ideals, would appease those elements within the working classes who were turning towards the labour movement and socialism at this time. According to political scientist David Marquand, 'the New Liberals of the turn of the century sought to reconcile capital and labour, to moralize market relationships, to achieve a just distribution of resources within a capitalist framework', basing their project on the premise 'that this attempt was feasible as well as right' and 'that capitalism was sufficiently flexible and productive for it to be reformed in such a way'.⁵⁷ Underlying this perspective was the fundamentally optimistic assumption that widespread social and economic change could be generated largely through the education and moral suasion of individuals at the grassroots level.⁵⁸ It was therefore argued that top-down socialist measures, such as intensive state intervention in the economy, were not only unnecessary, but also unlikely to achieve their intended aim of bringing about the more equitable and just distribution of society's wealth that many workers felt they deserved. As one editorial in the *Witness* observed in 1909: '...the theories of the socialist are vain attempts to enforce by outward ordinance that mutual good will that can only be created in the individual by a "change of heart", and can only become part of public polity when the communal conscience has become sublimated and purged of selfishness'.⁵⁹ Socialist materialists remained unconvinced by such arguments, believing that the supposed panacea of the brotherhood of man and love of neighbour was an illusion, and that only outside pressure would convince the wealthy to provide anything more than charity.⁶⁰

At least in the short term, this view was reinforced by the fact that the only concrete action to emerge out of the extensive debate generated by the Rev. Reid's sermon was the formation of a Charity Organization Society in Montreal. As a direct

⁵⁷ David Marquand, *The New Reckoning: Capitalism, States and Citizens* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1997), 74.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 24-25. For an example of the expression of such views, see *Montreal Witness*, 27 February 1909, 'New Varieties of Sin in the City' by the Rev. E.H. Tippet of Calvary Congregational Church, Montreal.

⁵⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 3 July 1909, Editorial.

⁶⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 20 May 1899; 27 May 1899; 10 June 1899; 30 June 1899, Letters to the Editor signed 'Rational'.

result of the discussion in the *Witness*, a non-denominational conference of ministers and influential charitable workers was convened to discuss 'the betterment of the condition of the poorer classes of this city', and initially endorsed a recommendation that a permanent central committee be formed to coordinate charitable work in Montreal and promote improved sanitation and better housing.⁶¹ This moderately progressive plan envisaged the churches taking on a larger role, with each church being made responsible for implementing 'applied Christianity' in the district assigned to it. Such a scheme, it was felt, would overcome 'the gulf between the many cities below the hill and those above the hill' with 'the old-fashioned bridge of Good Samaritanism, buttressed upon the foundation of love of neighbor'.⁶² As a result of intervention by the Local Council of Women, however, it was decided instead to establish a Charity Organization Society (COS) to coordinate the city's poor relief efforts 'in the interests of the economy and right direction of relief'.⁶³ While sharing many similarities with the original plan for poor relief, the outcome was nevertheless based on a more conservative, individualistic, and secular understanding of poverty that prioritized efficiency over more traditional notions of Christian charity and did little to respond to calls for greater social cooperation and broader socio-economic and environmental reforms on the part of social Christians. The principal goal of the COS system was to put an end to 'indiscriminate' almsgiving and replace it with a more systematic, scientific, and cost-effective system designed to reform paupers by providing employment rather than alms whenever possible.⁶⁴ While the COS's decision to avoid 'all questions of religion and race' did not win it the support of Catholic Archbishop Bruchesi, the new organization was more successful in gaining the approval of many of the city's Protestant ministers, charitable institutions, national

⁶¹ *Montreal Witness*, 17 October 1899. Also see discussion in *Montreal Witness*, 3 October 1899; 28 October 1899.

⁶² *Montreal Witness*, 3 October 1899.

⁶³ *Montreal Witness*, 28 October 1899. The London Charity Organization Society was founded in 1869. The movement spread to the United States in 1877. For further discussion, see Janice Harvey, *The Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Montreal Ladies' Benevolent Society: A Case Study in Protestant Child Charity in Montreal, 1822-1900* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University 2001), 295, 302-304; also Ann K. Perry, *Manliness, Goodness, and God: Poverty, Gender, and Social Reform in English-Speaking Montreal, 1890-1929* (M.A. Thesis, Queen's University 1998), Chapter 3.

⁶⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 28 October 1899; also 13 December 1899.

societies, businessmen, and benevolent women.⁶⁵ At least one individual, signing himself 'Below the Hill' in a letter to the *Witness*, expressed his lack of confidence in the ability of wealthy Montrealers to relieve the needs of the poor in this way and accused them of wanting to force people to work 'at starvation prices'. Far from building bridges between those living above and below the hill, the action taken by leading uptown Montrealers simply confirmed his opinion that 'that unfortunate hill divides us, and will prove a hill of difficulty'.⁶⁶ Thus, what became clear from the debate in the *Witness*, as one correspondent observed, was that while there was widespread agreement that problems existed with the current social and economic system, there was no agreement as to the best means of resolving them.⁶⁷

The Church's Downtown Problem

At the same time that the churches were being challenged to rethink traditional understandings of the role of religion and the churches in addressing social problems, they were simultaneously trying to deal with related pressures, collectively referred to as 'the downtown problem', that were threatening the viability of Protestant places of worship in downtown districts:

The churches in Montreal are recognizing the fact that down-town churches cannot support themselves. The chief cause of this is the tendency of church going people to move uptown, leaving the enterprise to those who can ill afford to subscribe, their places in the district being often taken by those who do not come within the reach of the church at all.⁶⁸

This situation was a source of concern to those who believed that it was important for all members of society to have access to a place of worship, but was particularly troubling to those who felt that the church should be playing an active role in resolving the problems of the industrial city. The fear that this might lead to a religious void in working-class neighbourhoods and be interpreted as a withdrawal of forces 'from the thickest and most

⁶⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 28 October 1899; 22 November 1899.

⁶⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 23 December 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'Below the Hill'.

⁶⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 10 June 1899, Letter to the Editor signed G. Dawson.

⁶⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 11 September 1912.

important points in the battle with evil'⁶⁹ was at least in part related to past precedents. As we saw in Chapter 2, the relocation of Protestant churches to the uptown district had become an established response to the removal of wealthier church members from the city centre throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, and it therefore seemed natural that better-off churchgoers in other downtown districts might be tempted to adopt a similar strategy.

Church attendance also continued to be a major source of concern. In the city as a whole, a survey conducted by theological students in the late 1880s indicated that between 12,000 and 13,000 Protestants attended morning services on the Sunday chosen for analysis, out of a population (including city and suburbs) of approximately 50-60,000. Such estimates suggest that only about one in five Protestants attended church that morning.⁷⁰ It was understood, however, that there was a distinct geography to the distribution of non-attenders, leading attention to be drawn to an estimate made by one experienced city missionary suggesting that there were at least 2,000 families in the lower sections of the city who never entered a place of worship.⁷¹ In a speech to the Congregational Union in 1912, T.B. Macaulay of Montreal's Sun Life Corporation came to a similar conclusion:

If we take a broad survey of the religious conditions of our great cities, what do we see? In the upper and middle class districts we find numerous churches working with more or less success, and having considerable influence, though not as great as they should have, on the neighboring population. But when we turn to the down-town sections, what do we find? There, where humanity exists in seething numbers, the forces of evil are strongly entrenched, and the overwhelming majority of the residents rarely enter a place of worship.

When a city-wide religious census was conducted in Montreal the following year it was likewise observed that 'in the uptown districts at nearly every house visited the inmates expressed some religious preference' while 'it was in the downtown parts that those with

⁶⁹ Samuel Lane Loomis, *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Company 1887), 189.

⁷⁰ *Presbyterian College Journal*, 7 (1887-88), 398-399, 402-403. The estimate given for the total Protestant population at this time corresponds with the number of Protestants living in the City of Montreal plus those living in its suburbs in the Census of 1891. There appear to have been variations in attendance amongst the various denominations, with Anglican attendance being particularly low in relation to the proportion of Anglicans within the Protestant population.

⁷¹ *Presbyterian College Journal*, 7 (1887-88), 399.

no special inclination were found'.⁷² Making matters more complex in certain parts of the city was the influx of immigrants speaking neither English or French, many of whom were either Roman Catholic or Jewish in religion.⁷³ Although relatively few Protestant churches were located in the areas that were most heavily settled by new immigrant groups, it was felt that this was contributing to the tendency for churches 'gradually to creep out to the outskirts of the city, and leave the centre barren of any religious influences'.⁷⁴ When faced in 1899 with the accusation that 'the Montreal churches had all moved away to the fashionable sections of the city, leaving the poor to look after themselves', Protestant Montrealer George Hague had pointed confidently to the wide range of Protestant churches that were still stationed in poorer neighbourhoods. While most of the churches that he listed as serving artisans and poorer families remained in place by the end of the succeeding decade, it was nevertheless observed that it was not unusual to 'see a church leave a downtown section where a large, English-speaking and nominally Protestant population still exist[ed]' and that most of the churches that remained downtown were starved of both financial and human resources.⁷⁵ While it was recognized that certain church moves were unavoidable in older districts that were being

⁷² *Montreal Gazette*, 30 May 1913. This census or 'home visitation' was inspired by similar efforts being carried out around North America at this time in association with the International Sunday School Association (ISSA). Mr. J. Shreve Durham, Superintendent of the ISSA's Department of Home and Visitation, came to Montreal to supervise the undertaking. Local leadership was provided by the Rev. J.G. Fulcher, General Secretary of the Quebec Sunday School Union, and involved coordinating the volunteer efforts of some 3,000 'home visitors'. Whereas similar home visitations in the United States secured the cooperation of the Roman Catholic Church, organizers in Montreal failed to do so, despite promises that information collected from each household and recorded on specially-designed cards would be forwarded to the priests, rabbis, and ministers of the appropriate denomination so that they could conduct follow-up work. Because organizers wished to avoid creating a competitive atmosphere amongst the various denominations, and as the purpose of the visitation was to identify non-churchgoers who would be appropriate targets of missionary efforts, the overall results of this census were never fully tabulated and analyzed. Out of the approximately 460,000 individuals about whom information was obtained, it was, however, estimated that there were about 70,000 (15 percent) who were not connected with any place of worship (*Montreal Star*, 30 May 1913; Rare Books Collection McGill University, Lande Collection 2003 Folio, *Montreal - Old and New: Illustrated With Over One Thousand Engravings of the City's Chief Institutions, Churches, Statues, Homes and Citizens, Both of the Past and of To-day* (Montreal: International Press Syndicate 1915), 111).

⁷³ *Montreal Witness*, 12 September 1912.

⁷⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 12 September 1912.

⁷⁵ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/37 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1912-13*, Vol. 40 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1912), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by Mr. T.B. Macaulay, his subject being 'The Brotherhood Movement in Relation to the Problem of the Church and the Masses', 28.

taken over by factories and warehouses, some nevertheless feared that the difficulties being experienced by downtown churches were evidence that 'present church methods' were not succeeding in reaching 'the great masses of the people'.⁷⁶

The Response of the Churches to the Downtown Problem

When it came to dealing with the difficulties facing downtown churches, there was no clear consensus regarding possible solutions, which – it will be argued – was closely associated with the lack of agreement that characterized debates over how to approach the city's social problems. In the earlier period examined in Chapter 4, missions or mission Sunday schools had provided most denominations, and the Presbyterians in particular, with a means of serving areas that had lost their churches to uptown districts, or that lacked either the resources or the inclination to pay for their own churches. Thus, one possible response to the downtown problem was simply to replace churches that could no longer support themselves, or that were moving out, with mission stations.

By the late 1880s, however, growing criticism had begun to appear in newspapers and religious periodicals of the contrast between the elegant and well-appointed churches of the wealthy and the small and dreary missions that were provided for those living in the lower parts of the city.⁷⁷ This criticism also applied to some of the churches in working-class neighbourhoods that were not unlike missions in the sense that they were housed in modest and unprepossessing buildings and frequently relied on at least some outside support. The expression of such views coincided with a period of rising working-class activism that brought to light the lack of esteem in which the mainline churches were held by many members of the working classes.⁷⁸ When presenting evidence before the *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic* in 1892, William Darlington, a blacksmith

⁷⁶ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/37 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1912-13*, Vol. 40 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1912), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by Mr. T.B. Macaulay, his subject being 'The Brotherhood Movement in Relation to the Problem of the Church and the Masses', 28.

⁷⁷ See discussion in H. Keith Markell, *Canadian Protestantism Against the Background of Urbanization and Industrialization in the Period from 1885 to 1914* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago 1971), 617-618.

⁷⁸ Lynne Marks provides an interesting discussion of the relationship between working-class religion and the Knights of Labor in *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), Chapter 6.

employed by the Royal Electric Light Company and one of an estimated 1,100 English-speaking members of the Knights of Labour in Montreal at the time, declared that 'workingmen feel that the church is a religious institution without Christianity'.⁷⁹ Church leaders recognized that the uptown church relocations of previous decades made them vulnerable to such criticism, because they had contributed to a situation in which the stark inequalities that workers hoped to diminish through unionization were symbolically displayed in the Protestant religious landscape of the city. They therefore feared not only that the dramatic contrasts between the quality of worship space available to Protestants living in different parts of the city was rendering their work ineffective, but also that it was reinforcing the belief amongst workers that the mainline Protestant churches were in sympathy with the capitalist classes.

Criticism of missions was expressed by church leaders, but was also voiced in letters written by members of the working classes to the *Montreal Witness*. In 1889, for example, debate was generated by an article that appeared under the heading 'Heathen in Montreal'. It described a traditional evangelical mission that had been organized a couple of months earlier in a small wooden house in the East End of the city by young members of First Baptist Church. The initial service at the mission was depicted as a scene of chaos, in which 'thirty or forty of as promising specimens of the genus "rough" as can be seen anywhere in Montreal' heckled, jeered, and otherwise abused the earnest uptown missionaries.⁸⁰ At the end of the service, the room was discovered to be 'in terrible condition', with 'quids of tobacco and pools of spittle' ornamenting 'the floor, the benches and the walls'. While admitting that Christian work amongst 'such youngsters as are to be found in the various manufactories at the East End' was very arduous, the article went on to describe how 'firmness' and 'kindness' on the part of the mission workers had succeeded over time in obtaining 'a modicum of order' and even one or two 'hopeful cases of conversion'.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic: Minutes of Evidence, Volume II Province of Quebec* (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson 1894), 17 September 1892, Interview with William Darlington, of Montreal, blacksmith, page 383, line 25143. Although nominally a member of the Parish of Grace Church in Point St Charles, Darlington told the commission that he was a non-communicant and attended church only a couple of times a year.

⁸⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 12 February 1889.

⁸¹ *Montreal Witness*, 12 February 1889.

This narrative of perseverance, bearing so much resemblance to contemporary accounts of missionaries amongst the 'heathen' of China and India, understandably irritated some of the *Witness's* East End readers. One individual, signing himself 'Mechanic', responded by arguing that the lack of respect on the part of the young people in question was a product of the poor worship environment:

It is the meanest looking building I think I have seen, a poor dilapidated affair. Had it been a cheerful looking place, at least, it would have commanded more respect, even from those heathen so-called. Had those people a respectable hall or a light and bright church to have gone to, do you think they would have acted so rudely?

He then proceeded to criticise the general state of the Protestant churches in the East End:

Look at what a doleful place St Thomas' Church is placed in; hardly any dwellings near it; a brewery near by and a lumber yard not far off. How much better to have, as they ought to have, a noble church in a more eligible situation. Is there any external attraction about the church?... Then, again, look at the East End Methodist Church. What a sombre affair. Situated in a hollow.... The entrance to the school-room below is through a passage, dark and dismal, a sort of winding stair, first to the right, and then to the left, and so dark! Plain wooden benches for the children to sit on, such as were used some 50 or 60 years ago.... Such are our conveniences at the East End.⁸²

'Mechanic', at times sounding somewhat sardonic, went on to suggest that those dwelling in the uptown district had the means, and perhaps a duty, to provide them with better accommodation:

Now then, is it not time that all the Protestant churches should lend a hand to reclaim this end of the city, and if it is heathen to change it to Christian? The various denominations have splendid churches uptown. Will you not help us down here? Perhaps the proprietors of the factories and others who have business at the East End will help; they ought to help. Protestants should have at the East End for churches and schools bright and pleasant places to meet in. See what fine churches our Catholic friends have down here.... Now, if our uptown friends, who build such grand churches, would combine and give us a fifty thousand dollar church on Craig street, and perhaps another one on St Catherine street east, perhaps we would, in time, become converted heathen.⁸³

Another correspondent, identified as 'East End', disagreed with 'Mechanic's' assessment of the local churches, arguing that they had the merit of being 'bright, comfortable,

⁸² *Montreal Witness*, 19 February 1889.

⁸³ *Montreal Witness*, 19 February 1889.

spacious, well heated buildings, from which the poor are not turned away', despite being rather old and not as grand as the West End churches.⁸⁴ Rather than calling on uptown churchgoers for further assistance, 'East End' emphasized the pride and self-sufficiency of the Protestant inhabitants of 'this much despised portion of the city', and objected to the unflattering way in which they had been depicted in the original article. 'East End' pointed out that a recent district visitation had revealed that most of the Protestant families in the area were already connected with a church, and that the majority of young people, despite being poor and unable to 'dress à la dude', were 'generally respectful, and above all things [are] reverential in the House of God'. Such people objected to being repeatedly urged by those at the Baptist mission to worship with them, leading the author of the letter to suggest that the uptown missionaries would have been better received had they confined their attentions to those not connected with any church. The author also maintained that the boys who were making 'the Baptist mission a rallying place for an evening of sport' were, in fact, Irish Roman Catholics who wished to break up the mission. The implication of 'East End's' letter was that those planning to conduct mission work in working-class districts needed to be better informed of local circumstances, and should not assume that the areas they were entering consisted exclusively of the unchurched. The chaotic nature and poor accommodation of the Baptist East End Mission in its early days were not, of course, typical of Protestant missions in Montreal, many of which were conducted on more professional lines and in purpose-built structures. The fact that it represented an extreme, however, made it an irresistible target to those who were opposed to the general principle of having luxurious church accommodation for the wealthy and more modest places of worship for the poor, as well as to members (and advocates) of the 'respectable' working classes who objected to the simplistic and condescending way in which better-off church members viewed working-class districts and their inhabitants.

By the early years of the twentieth century, there was also an awareness that places of worship in working-class districts needed to be made more comfortable and attractive to compete effectively with outside attractions. When raising money from uptown churchgoers to help build a new Congregational Church in Point St Charles in

⁸⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 25 February 1889.

1909, to replace an older structure that was described as ‘the antipode of comfort’, fundraisers emphasized that ‘the competition of churches with outside attractions, in these days of conflict between frivolity and seriousness, renders it practically useless to erect a cheap and unattractive building’.⁸⁵

More traditional evangelicals and ‘establishment’ Protestants felt that the above critique of the traditional mission could be responded to simply by reminding uptown churchgoers of their duty to make more generous contributions to their missions and by improving their methods of reaching out to less wealthy members of society. When the uptown Anglican Church of St James the Apostle embarked upon mission work in the downtown portion of its parish in the 1890s, it placed the Rev. Samuel Massey – previously of the Presbyterian Inspector Street Mission - in charge of the work. Massey had covered a lot of ground since his arrival in Montreal in the early 1850s, but had always remained true to his commitment to serving wherever he felt he would be given the best opportunity to evangelize the non-church going population. With the Anglican Church becoming more interested in this type of work towards the end of the nineteenth century, Massey had decided in the mid-1880s to study at the Montreal Diocesan Theological College to become an Anglican clergyman. The evangelistic methods that he applied in his work in the lower portion of the Parish of St James the Apostle were considered ‘unusual for the Church of England’, but were nevertheless applauded for their success in reaching the ‘submerged classes’.⁸⁶ The downtown mission lapsed when Massey moved on to take charge of St Simon’s Church in the St Henri district, but reopened again in 1895.⁸⁷ Those responsible for the management of the mission had great difficulty finding premises that were sufficiently large and well-ventilated, and – having acknowledged in 1903 that their current mission building was ‘a disgrace’ and reflected ‘anything but credit upon the Church’ – decided to purchase an old stone house

⁸⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, Contenant 158, EMM/20 *Emmanuel Church Outlook*, 2(5) (June 1909), 6.

⁸⁶ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1891), 117.

⁸⁷ SJA, *Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine*, 1(2) (February 1895), Parish notes.

on St Antoine Street.⁸⁸ Only a few years later, however, this building was likewise condemned by the priest-in-charge. According to his report, it was so small, unsanitary, and ill-smelling 'that cleanly people cannot long work there', making it 'absurd to ask decent people to help us'.⁸⁹ The Rector of St James the Apostle, the Rev. Allan P. Shatford, appealed to the charitable instincts of his congregation:

I am sure that the vestry is anxious to look after the poor people in the parish. Any attitude of opposition to the work there would be a sad reflection upon our Christianity. We cannot think of providing extensively for our own comfort and worship in the parish church and yet neglect those hard-working, earnest people whom God has placed within our borders. I would consider my Rectorship of this parish a sad failure did I not plead most earnestly and endeavour most zealously for the parishioners "below the hill".⁹⁰

While not questioning the concept of the mission itself, Shatford clearly felt that by reminding the members of his congregation of their duty to assist those less fortunate than themselves, he could encourage them to provide better mission facilities.

Others agreed that the places of worship in downtown districts suffered from a lack of both financial and human resources, but emphasized that the heart of the problem lay not in the buildings themselves but in the techniques that were being used to reach 'the masses'. T.B. Macaulay, who was a traditional evangelical, told the Congregational Union of Canada in 1912 that 'as a business man' he felt that the problem was 'largely one of methods'.⁹¹ 'Even a man in close touch with the divine power house will fail to influence the masses', he maintained, 'unless he be also on the earthly side in close touch with the people who are to be reached'. His proposed solution was the Brotherhood Movement, which had grown out of the 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Meetings' that had

⁸⁸ SJA, Letter Book of the Corporation of the Church of St James the Apostle 1902-1906, Letter from Henry Miles to Mr. John Gault, dated 3 March 1903.

⁸⁹ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, 8 April 1912, Annual Meeting of the Pewholders of the Church of St James the Apostle, Report by Rev. G.O.T. Bruce on the St Antoine Street Mission.

⁹⁰ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, 8 April 1912, Annual Meeting of the Pewholders of the Church of St James the Apostle, Report by Rev. G.O.T. Bruce on the St Antoine Street Mission.

⁹¹ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/37 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1912-13*, Vol. 40 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1912), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by Mr. T.B. Macaulay, his subject being 'The Brotherhood Movement in Relation to the Problem of the Church and the Masses', 29. Macaulay later went on to become company president in 1915.

first been held in a Congregational Church in the Midlands of England in the 1870s.⁹² Macaulay brought the movement to Canada, and organized the first Brotherhood on the continent at Calvary Church in Montreal in the mid-1890s, believing that 'gatherings of men only, where brotherhood and Christianity are strongly emphasized' created an atmosphere in which men were willing to 'open their hearts to the divine influence'.⁹³ In this evangelical formulation of 'businesslike Christianity', God could be imagined as the director of a large corporation (the church) in which substantial numbers of individual employees (churchgoers) were failing to carry out the tasks they had been assigned:

If a business employer gave instructions to an employee to go to certain people, and to deliver them a business message, and that employee, instead of literally carrying out his instructions, opened an office in which he could speak to such people as might choose to come to him, fully realizing that three-quarters of them would never come to him at all, would he be considered as obeying his instructions?⁹⁴

Thus, what was needed was for well-to-do churchgoers to recommit themselves to evangelism. Better organizational techniques and more effective methods were also required to ensure that the missions and churches in working-class districts served their designated purpose of reaching the non-church going population of the city.

Those influenced by social Christianity took the critique of missions more seriously and questioned whether religious institutions that focused solely on the individual offered the most effective means of furthering the work of the Protestant churches in downtown districts. In the same way that 'institutional' features were adopted by some uptown congregations, such as St James Methodist, as a means of enhancing the social lives and recreational options of the young men and women who were coming to live, work, and study in the surrounding district, fully-fledged

⁹² For further discussion of the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement, see K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1963), 79; Allan Swift, *The Least of These: The Story of Welcome Hall Mission* (Montreal: Welcome Hall Mission 1982), 24.

⁹³ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/37 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1912-13*, Vol. 40 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1912), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by Mr. T.B. Macaulay, his subject being 'The Brotherhood Movement in Relation to the Problem of the Church and the Masses', 30.

⁹⁴ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/37 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1912-13*, Vol. 40 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1912), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by Mr. T.B. Macaulay, his subject being 'The Brotherhood Movement in Relation to the Problem of the Church and the Masses', 33.

institutional churches were seen as a potential instrument through which the social and moral environments of those living in less well-to-do neighbourhoods could be transformed. Underlying the concept of the institutional church was a growing acceptance of the idea that poverty, immorality, and irreligion on the part of the individual was at least to some extent the product of living in a deprived and corrupt environment.⁹⁵ Thus, the conversion of the individual, while continuing to be necessary, was insufficient if a convert's daily surroundings made it impossible for him or her to live a Christian life. Advocates of the institutional church therefore thought that the creation of churches that served traditional religious functions, while simultaneously providing social, recreational, educational, health, and other social services to the surrounding community, would make it possible to reintegrate the social and spiritual mandates of the Church.

Institutional churches were also seen as a providing a means of responding to the critique of missions, as well as to the financial problems that were plaguing churches in downtown areas as a result of the removal of better-off churchgoers. An editorial that appeared in the *Montreal Witness* in 1912 observed that there was a need for wealthier churchgoers to help out their less fortunate counterparts:

This is not adequately done by stinted grants, to enable the down town work to eke out a struggling existence. There must be a generous concentration, not only of the material resources of the church on fraternal efforts for the uplift of those who are down, but of its best soul and energy. It is a poor business for the uptown Christians enjoying their cushioned auditoriums and luxurious music to say, we have a very nice mission for you people down there.⁹⁶

The annual report for 1911 that was published by the Board of Moral and Social Reform and Evangelism, a national Presbyterian committee responsible for carrying out social

⁹⁵ For further discussion of institutional churches, see J.S. Woodsworth, *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church 1911), 306; *Social Service Congress, Ottawa 1914: Report of Addresses and Proceedings* (Toronto: Social Service Council of Canada 1914), 130-131; and Rev. Josiah Strong, *The Challenge of the City* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada 1911), 210-222.

⁹⁶ *Montreal Witness*, 11 September 1911.

surveys of Canadian cities in cooperation with the Methodist Church⁹⁷, came to similar conclusions:

The problem will not be solved by planting "Missions" among the poor or the foreigners or in congested districts. They must be "Churches" fully equipped and adapted to local conditions. This will entail in many instances provision for constructive philanthropy, education, social life in a Church home, clean, elevating recreation, medical dispensary, nursing-at-home, crèche... This must be done in combination with sane but aggressive Evangelism, often through specialized workers, and with use of special methods, going out into the streets and lanes and compelling all classes and conditions of men to come in.⁹⁸

For those struggling to maintain churches in areas that were being deserted by better-off families, it was anticipated that the institutional church option would offer a more acceptable adaptation to changed conditions than the sale of churches and their replacement by missions. It was also hoped that a willingness to support well-equipped churches, rather than missions, would demonstrate to the working classes that uptown Protestants recognized the need to achieve a fairer distribution of resources within the Church. The underlying message applied to society at large, and reflected an optimistic belief in the ability of Christianity to generate generosity and moral restraint in a capitalist setting, making upheaval of the current social and economic system unnecessary.

Given the complexity of the problems being faced and the greater resources required to implement and maintain fully-fledged institutional churches, the need for greater cooperation both within and among denominations was seen by many church leaders as being vital. In 1913, the minister of Emmanuel Congregational Church, the Rev. Hugh Pedley, published *Looking Forward*, a didactic novel set predominantly in Montreal that was written as an argument in favour of Church Union. The plot centres around a Presbyterian minister called Fergus McCheyne who wakes up in 1927, after

⁹⁷ A social survey of Montreal was undertaken at this time, and numerous references to it can be found in minute books belonging to the Protestant Ministerial Association of Montreal, the Presbytery of Montreal, and the Methodist Ministerial Association. I was unable, however, to locate a copy of the final report of the Montreal survey in either the Montreal and Ottawa Conference Archives of the United Church of Canada (housed at the Archives Nationales du Québec) or in the National Archives of the United Church of Canada in Toronto. For further information on the social survey movement in Canada, see Alan Hunt, 'Measuring Morals: The Beginnings of the Social Survey Movement in Canada, 1913-1917', *Histoire Sociale / Social History*, 35(69) (May 2002), 171-194.

⁹⁸ *The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Ottawa, Ont., June 7-15, 1911* (Toronto: Murray Printing Company 1911), Annual Report of the Board of Moral and Social Reform and Evangelism, 271.

being unconscious in a Laurentian cave for twenty-five years, only to discover that most of Canada's Protestant population has come together in a United Church of Canada. Prior to falling unconscious, McCheyne had expressed his belief in the need for a parish system that would place 'a well-equipped church in every section of the city, and lay upon it special responsibility for the moral and social welfare of that section', so he is naturally delighted to find that his wishes have been implemented in his absence.⁹⁹ Anxious to see what 'the new regime' has been able to effect, he is taken to visit a United Church located in an area that was previously a disgrace and finds the neighbourhood much improved and a church very like a community centre - containing a swimming bath, bowling alley, gymnasium, and rooms for various social and educational purposes - serving as a focus for the social and religious lives of over 3000 Protestants.¹⁰⁰ One of McCheyne's colleagues reminds him of 'how things used to be done':

how now one and now another of the churches would start a mission in what was known as the downtown district, where a few heroic workers without adequate equipment or sufficient backing would launch themselves upon the tremendous social problem. There was something pitiful about it, was there not, the mean little premises, the one-sidedness of the work, the lack of any general plan, the failure of the Church as a whole to grasp the seriousness of the situation?¹⁰¹

Sitting in the new church, memories flood back to McCheyne of a mission he had known in the past, with its 'mean, dingy hall', its small and sad-looking congregation composed mostly of women, and the associated sense of 'inadequacy and futility', providing a dramatic contrast with the great hall he is currently sitting in 'with its radiant light, its immense congregation' and 'its air of hope and courage'.¹⁰² At the church service, a visiting speaker who is the superintendent of an institutional church in the heart of London speaks of Christianity 'as the birthright of the people and not the monopoly of a class', leading McCheyne to marvel at the fact that the 'people have come, even as the people did long ago, to believe that Christ belongs to them'.¹⁰³ Despite its melodrama,

⁹⁹ Hugh Pedley, *Looking Forward: The Strange Experience of the Rev. Fergus McCheyne* (Toronto: William Briggs 1913), 35.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 138-141.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 141.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 142.

Pedley's story vividly captures the optimistic idealism of the time, reflecting a firm belief in the ability of Christianity to transform both the Church and the broader society in its image.

The idea of the institutional church was not without its critics. Andrew Macphail - not theologically orthodox, but representing the conservative end of the spectrum - believed that the church should mould individuals, not their environments.¹⁰⁴ Writing in 1913, he was distressed to find that the term 'institutional church' was 'now in every Protestant mouth':

It is an acknowledgement that the old order has changed, that the old fabric is shaken. It is a confession, too, that merely as a place of worship the churches have failed: they must now be made a place of "work". They are to be institutes. Classes are to be held.... Clubs are to be formed.... Lectures are to be given on politics, medicine, and sanitation; and men and women who would otherwise be idle are to engage in "social service" and in the "uplift of the poor". Dissatisfied with their mission to the souls of men, the churches now propose to minister to their bodies, adding all things to them so that afterwards they will be induced to seek the kingdom of Heaven. As the spirit decays the institution takes its place; and the churches now propose to compete with the schools by teaching trades, and with the powers of darkness by providing amusement. The churches are beaten at the start in that course.¹⁰⁵

Macphail argued that it was a mistake to believe that the misery of the poor was any worse at the present time than it had been in the past, and therefore suggested that it was unnecessary for the churches to move away from their traditional focus on worship in order to deal with problems that he suggested were largely a 'literary creation' and 'figment of the imagination'.¹⁰⁶ At the other end of the spectrum, there were social gospellers like the Rev. J.S. Woodsworth, a Methodist minister who would later leave the church to pursue his vision through secular channels.¹⁰⁷ When visiting Montreal in 1913 to participate in the meetings of the Missionary and Social Service Institute, Woodsworth emphasized the importance of having churches and settlements that were open for use as recreation and social centres in congested areas of the city in order 'to offset the lowering

¹⁰⁴ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 356.

¹⁰⁵ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 357.

¹⁰⁶ *The University Magazine*, Vol.XII (April 1913), 'Unto the Church' by Andrew Macphail, 357-358.

¹⁰⁷ For more on the life and thought of J.S. Woodsworth, see Allen Mills, *Fool For Christ: The Political Thought of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991).

effects of the influence of the streets'.¹⁰⁸ At the same time, however, he was becoming 'more and more convinced that such agencies [would] never meet the great social needs of the city'.¹⁰⁹ Thus, while some Protestants believed that institutional churches and settlements offered solutions to the religious and social problems encountered in urban environments, more radical social gossellers saw these measures merely as temporary palliatives that were required 'until the community at large [was] dominated by the social ideal'.¹¹⁰

The Study Area: Griffintown and Surrounding District

Given the lack of consensus concerning theoretical solutions to the problems of downtown churches and regarding the role of the churches in responding to the social problems of the city, it seems reasonable to wonder how real congregations in working-class districts adapted to the changes that were taking place around them. Griffintown and the surrounding district experienced significant changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As a result, the Protestant places of worship that were located in the vicinity experienced many of the problems that were typical of downtown areas at this time, making it an ideal environment in which to study the varied congregational responses to these challenges. As in Chapter 4, the adoption of a territorial approach allows us to explore the varied ways in which local efforts to adapt to changing circumstances interacted with, and at times conflicted with, uptown interventions in the downtown neighbourhood.

In the same way that churches in the uptown district were finding their residential surroundings infringed upon by business and commercial enterprises from the 1890s onwards, places of worship in Griffintown were affected by the growing number and size of manufacturing establishments, which led to the wiping out of whole rows of houses and the displacement of many former residents.¹¹¹ Street widenings also disrupted the

¹⁰⁸ *Montreal Gazette*, 17 October 1913.

¹⁰⁹ J.S. Woodsworth, *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church 1911), 334.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Report re. St Stephen's and St Edward's, Executive Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1904.

fabric of life in this downtown neighbourhood.¹¹² The rector of St Stephen's Anglican Church welcomed one prospective street widening because he expected it to lead to the demolition of a saloon facing his church, but the impartial nature of this phenomenon meant that it also endangered the survival of homes and other places of worship.¹¹³ In the early twentieth century, the buying up of property by the Canadian Northern Railway also had an impact. While local landowners, including the managers of St Mark's Church, petitioned against the C.N.R.'s plans to build a powder magazine in the neighbourhood, such plans were indicative of the broader transformations that were making the area less congenial as a residential district.¹¹⁴

The increasingly industrial character of St Ann's ward, of which Griffintown formed a part, meant that the residential population grew slowly compared with other areas of the city, expanding from 16,200 in 1861 to only 23,003 in 1891, before dropping to 21,835 in 1901.¹¹⁵ During this same period, the number of people living in St Ann's ward who declared themselves to be Anglican increased from 1,725 in 1861, peaking at 2,803 in 1891, before declining to 2,698 by 1901. The Presbyterian population, at around 1,900, was virtually identical in size in 1861 and 1901, having reached only 2,192 in 1891. The Methodist population in 1901, at around 780, was likewise very similar to that of 1861. All three denominations continued to experience declining numbers between 1901 and 1911.¹¹⁶

While a shrinking Protestant population was clearly undesirable from the perspective of church and mission managers, the fact remained that all the major denominations had as many, if not more, people to look after at the turn of the century as they had when their local missions and churches were first established. The real concern being expressed by church managers at this time instead seems to have been related to the

¹¹² For further information on street widenings in Montreal, see Jason Gilliland, 'The Creative Destruction of Montreal: Street Widenings and Urban (Re)Development in the Nineteenth Century', *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 31(1) (Fall 2002), 37-51.

¹¹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 181, Correspondence and Receipts 1880s, Letter from the Rev. Canon Evans of St Stephen's Church to H.A. Nelson, Chairman of APC Trustees, dated 8 May 1882.

¹¹⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1e Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1909-1915, 7 October 1912.

¹¹⁵ *Census of Canada*, 1861, 1901; Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993), 41.

¹¹⁶ *Census of Canada*, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911.

loss of many of the wealthier individuals who were pewholders and major contributors to church funds. Although membership records do not necessarily provide a good indication of congregation size, most of the Protestant churches in Griffintown had never managed to attract large memberships, which meant that they were heavily dependent on the support of a relatively small number of people.¹¹⁷ The changing character of the district, as well as the extensive and damaging floods which temporarily submerged Griffintown in 1885, 1886, and 1887, encouraged those with the financial means to do so to move to higher ground.¹¹⁸ The inauguration of the electric street car system in 1892 also made it much easier for better-off members of the working classes and white collar workers to move out to the rapidly-developing suburban districts of the city. Griffintown was therefore viewed as an area that was constantly losing its more prosperous and upwardly mobile members to more desirable residential districts. In his sociological study of the 'city below the hill', Herbert B. Ames observed that, when families became 'well-to-do', they tended to leave areas like Griffintown, which had the unfortunate effect of depriving these neighbourhoods of 'such ameliorating influences as can only be sustained where at least a fair proportion of the community are of the well-to-do class'.¹¹⁹ The extended economic depression of the 1890s only exacerbated the problems being faced by the churches, leaving them with little choice but to respond to the social and environmental changes taking place around them.

Anglicans in Griffintown

The Anglican church in Griffintown spent much of the first decade of the twentieth century embroiled in a legal battle that pitted the interests of more prosperous church members who had left Griffintown and wished to sell the old church building against those of generally poorer parishioners remaining behind in the lower part of the

¹¹⁷ Statistics for St Mark's Presbyterian Church can be found in Douglas Walkington, *Statistical Tables of the Churches, Missions, Finances of the Synod of Montreal & Ottawa, Presbyterian Church in Canada 1875 to 1925*, Vol. 1 (Montreal and Ottawa Conference, United Church of Canada 1977), 69. Statistics for St Stephen's Church are available in the annual *Proceedings of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal*, while those for the Ottawa Street Church are found in the annual *Minutes of the Montreal Methodist Conference*. Only intermittent statistics are available for the Inspector Street Mission.

¹¹⁸ For further discussion of these floods, see Christopher G. Boone, 'Language Politics and Flood Control in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', *Environmental History*, 1(3) (1996), 70-85.

¹¹⁹ Ames, *The City Below the Hill*, 72.

city. An examination of how this case arose and of the facts that emerged as it progressed through the courts provide intriguing insights into the dilemmas being faced by the Protestant churches in the downtown district at this time. The situation was an acute embarrassment to church leaders. Not only did it draw attention to the difficulty of reconciling the interests of various groups of churchgoers, but it also did little to counter the image of Protestant churches as institutions favouring wealthier members of society. The sight of two factions belonging to the same denomination arguing over the possession of a church building also created an unsettling contrast with optimistic assertions concerning Christianity's ability to arouse brotherly love and mutual cooperation, and thus inspire moral solutions to the social ills afflicting Montreal.

Flooded: A Large and Handsome Place of Worship

What had not been foreseen in the early 1880s, when a new church was built for St Stephen's parish in Griffintown with the assistance of outside funds, was that it would ultimately prove difficult for the congregation to maintain such a large and handsome place of worship in an increasingly deprived area. The severe floods of the late 1880s acted as the catalyst for an exodus of church members to the higher levels of the city (see Figure 7.2). The Rev. James Carmichael, then Dean of Montreal, observed in 1893 that rapid changes were taking place in the downtown portion of the city and was probably thinking of St Stephen's when he noted that the whole aspect of at least one downtown parish had been transformed over the course of only a few years.¹²⁰ At a special vestry meeting called to discuss the future of St Stephen's in 1898, the rector, Archdeacon Lewis Evans, observed that the church had been struggling to maintain its position ever since the floods:

You are all well aware that for several years past, in fact since the floods of 1886, 1887 the strength of our church numerically and as a natural consequence financially has been upon the wane. Not only have many of its oldest and most generous supporters been removed by death with no one coming in to take their places, but also that there has been a steady migration of our members from this district to reside at distances of from one to three miles from the church. It goes without saying that since there has not been any influx of Protestant residents to replace them, this has told upon the

¹²⁰ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1893), 113.



Figure 7.2 St Stephen's Anglican Church, Haymarket Square, during the flood of 1887, with St Mark's Presbyterian Church in the background.
Source: McCord Museum, Notman Collection, MP-0000.236.8.

number of our attendants, and the amount of our income, so that during the last two years...our expenditure has exceeded our income by upwards of \$1100. This in itself is bad enough but everything clearly points to a steady continuance of this state of things.¹²¹

The northward and westward relocation of St Stephen's pewholders meant that few continued to reside in the neighbourhood of the church. Despite the loyalty of those who travelled downtown for Sunday services, the rector realized that he was rapidly losing members whose financial support was crucial to church financing, leaving behind only those described in private correspondence as needing 'mission work to be done among them'.¹²² Thus, despite framing the problem in terms of a general decline in the Protestant population living in Griffintown, it was evident that the crux of the matter lay in the desertion of the district by church-goers who could afford to pay pew rents and support a place of worship. Calling upon the vestry 'to witness whether we have not stood the work here just as long as it seems to be of any use or indeed possible', Evans urged them to abandon their present location and move to a new chapel that was being built (once again with the financial assistance of outside 'friends') in 'a splendid section of the city' that would provide them with a field promising 'to be one of growth and progress'.¹²³ Such a move was possible within the confines of the parish system only because two years previously, with relocation already in mind, the pewholders of St Stephen's had successfully petitioned to have the boundaries of their parish altered to include a non-contiguous area in the West End of the city.¹²⁴ Thus, despite the fact that the new chapel was located in lower Westmount, far from the original church, the move was technically justified on the grounds that it simply involved shifting the place of worship from one section of the parish to another.¹²⁵

¹²¹ MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 7 February 1898.

¹²² MDA, Fonds PBR, Parish Dossiers, Folder for St Stephen's, 'Replies to His Lordship's Questions', Presumably written by Archdeacon Lewis Evans, Rector of St Stephen's, to Bishop Bond, n.d. but probably c.1896.

¹²³ MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 7 February 1898.

¹²⁴ MDA, Fonds PBR, Parish Dossiers, Folder for St Stephen's, Petition by (14) pewholders of St Stephen's to the Bishop of Montreal to alter the boundaries of their parish, 16 March 1896; also Letter from Strachan Bethune to the Bishop of Montreal, dated 17 March 1896; Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 28 January 1895; 7 February 1898.

¹²⁵ MDA, Fonds PBR, Parish Dossiers, Folder for St Stephen's, Letter from Strachan Bethune to the Bishop of Montreal, dated 17 March 1896.

A Question of Ownership

The new chapel in Westmount was opened in 1898, with eighty-seven of the approximately one hundred pewholders transferring from the old church to the new.¹²⁶ At the time of the move, the vestry had agreed to a motion stating that the old church would be placed in the charge of a clergyman so that religious services could continue, but in 1900 the issue was once again raised of obtaining assets from the old church in order to help finance the new building.¹²⁷ The vestry of St Stephen's had discussed the possibility of disposing of the old property to fund the erection of the new church as early as 1895 and clearly felt entitled to the assets of the older portion of the parish.¹²⁸ Bishop W.B. Bond, however, sympathized with the plight of poorer families left behind in large churches that they could no longer afford to maintain, having been abandoned by those who 'following the tide of fashion' had taken up residences in the west and north of the city.¹²⁹ He acknowledged that those remaining downtown were 'unable to provide – suitably – either for maintenance of the buildings or for a settled pastorate', but nevertheless felt that it was not right 'to leave these families without Church services, and religious instruction and care'.¹³⁰ Ever since the opening of the new St Stephen's chapel, Bond had attempted to persuade the Rector of St Stephen's to abandon all claims to the older portion of his parish, arguing that his refusal to do so would be 'fatal to the interests of St Stephen's' and 'injurious to your new Church, to yourself, and if not over-ruled by infinite mercy, to the cause of Christ in this City'.¹³¹ A definitive solution appeared, however, to have been reached in the autumn of 1900, when the vestry of the new St

¹²⁶ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Examination in Chief of the Very Rev. T.F.L. Evans, 28 February 1908, 55; *Montreal Daily Star*, 16 April 1898.

¹²⁷ MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 7 February 1898; St Stephen's (Westmount) Vestry Minute Book 1899-1926, 12 June 1900.

¹²⁸ MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 28 January 1895.

¹²⁹ *Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Co. 1900), 19.

¹³⁰ *Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Co. 1900), 19.

¹³¹ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Letter from Bishop Bond to Evans, dated 19 March 1898, 86-87.

Stephen's reluctantly accepted a 'basis of settlement' that allowed it to carry the name of 'St Stephen's' up to the new chapel as well as retain ownership of the rectory (valued at between \$5000 and \$6000).¹³² In 1901, the parish was officially sub-divided, and the Rev. William Sanders, who had officiated at the Griffintown church since 1898, took charge of the newly created Parish of St Edward, which covered the same territory as the original St Stephen's parish.¹³³ Soon after, Archdeacon Evans signed a legal deed transferring the land and property in Griffintown to the Bishop 'for the benefit and on behalf of the Parish of St Edward'.¹³⁴ The property was subsequently transferred to the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, it being understood by those at St Edward's that St Stephen's parish no longer had any claim to their church.

Matters did not, however, rest there. In a letter written to the Executive Committee of Synod in 1904 regarding the restructuring of the Church of St Edward's debt, the Rev. Sanders voiced his concern about rumours that St Stephen's Parish in Westmount still had 'some sort of a possible hold upon our property'.¹³⁵ The findings of a special committee appointed to investigate this matter and make enquiries into the needs and prospects of St Edward's Church were not reassuring.¹³⁶ The committee observed that industrial enterprises were erecting new factories in Griffintown, wiping out 'whole rows of houses' and displacing large numbers of inhabitants. This led them to conclude that the district in which St Edward's was located would never again be a residential section of the city. The committee was also concerned about the financial viability of the congregation. It observed that the fabric of St Edward's Church was deteriorating due to

¹³² MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's (Westmount) Vestry Minute Book 1899-1926, 26 November 1900; 8 April 1901; Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), 7, 130-131.

¹³³ MDA, Fonds PBR, Parish Dossiers, Folder for St Edward's, Decree for detaching a portion of the parish of St Stephen and creating a new parish, 12 January 1901; Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), 131-132; *Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1901), 35-36.

¹³⁴ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), 132.

¹³⁵ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Letter from W. Sanders, St Edward's Church, to Rev. Canon Baylis, Executive Committee, dated 21 October 1904, 110.

¹³⁶ MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Report re. St Stephen's and St Edward's, Executive Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1904.

lack of funds, giving the interior 'a gloomy – not to say a forbidding look – but little calculated to attract those who prefer to worship amid bright and inviting surroundings'. During the time in which St Edward's had operated as an independent entity, the congregation had failed to reduce the debt that it had inherited, and was only just managing to cover basic expenses. Although the Rev. Sanders had 281 families on his visiting list, representing a total population of over 1000 parishioners, the committee commented that Sunday morning attendance was low¹³⁷, that relatively few individuals made regular or substantial financial contributions, and that the great majority of these families lived outside the parish boundaries. The circumstances of St Edward's were compared with those of nearby places of worship belonging to other denominations:

Quite convenient to St Edward's Church there are three Presbyterian places of worship two of which are maintained by large Presbyterian Churches in the City; the third which is said to be self-supporting, has lived of late years a precarious and uncertain life. But the point is, that they are all small, and commodious, but very cheap buildings admirably suited to the locality, while, as is well known, St Edward's is a lofty and imposing structure altogether too large for the needs of the Parish, difficult to maintain in the matter of services and administration and involving a large annual outlay for necessary repairs.¹³⁸

Given their assessment of St Edward's prospects, committee members felt unable to recommend a continuation of the current state of affairs. They acknowledged that Anglicans remaining in the neighbourhood would 'always have a claim upon the love and respect of the Church in this City, however little able they may be to assist in the general work of the Church, or even to bear their own local burdens', but at the same time found themselves facing a dilemma:

No member of your Committee could look with satisfaction on the loss to the Church of England of such a building as St Edward's Church. But the question is one of loss in any case. If we sell it we lose the brick and mortar. If we retain it we lose by it for it cannot maintain itself, nor pay its debts, nor do needful repairs. To maintain the status quo is but to perpetuate a living death, and, in the judgment of your Committee, a double error, 1st to saddle a Parish with a building wholly unsuited to its conditions and 2nd to maintain

¹³⁷ This was not unusual in working-class districts, where Sunday evening services were often more popular than morning services.

¹³⁸ MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Report re. St Stephen's and St Edward's, Executive Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1904. The first two Presbyterian places of worship referred to are the Inspector Street and Nazareth Street Missions. The self-supporting Presbyterian Church is St Mark's.

the building by resource (sic) that could be more advantageously employed elsewhere.¹³⁹

The committee also drew attention to the predicament of St Stephen's in Westmount, which, having built a larger church in 1903 and transformed its original sanctuary into the church hall, now had an enormous debt of nearly \$48,000. Pointing out that those currently attending the new St Stephen's parish had contributed over \$15,000 to the erection of St Edward's Church, while those continuing to worship at St Edward's had contributed only \$322, the special committee came to the conclusion that the congregation that had moved uptown still had a claim on the old Griffintown property. Their report recommended that St Edward's Church be sold, and, once all debts to the Synod had been paid, that the balance be divided between St Edward's and the new St Stephen's. The proceeds accruing to St Edward's were then to be used to purchase or erect a neat and suitable edifice, costing only \$6,000 to \$8,000, so that the rest could be invested as an endowment for the parish. Considering that \$17,000 had been spent by the American Presbyterian Church when erecting its new and rather homely Inspector Street Mission in 1893¹⁴⁰, it was clear that implementation of the committee's recommendations would have left the Anglican population in Griffintown with a mission-style building of the smallest and meanest variety.

The vestry of St Stephen's Church in Westmount was pleased with the special committee's report¹⁴¹, and it seems likely that a certain amount of behind-the-scenes lobbying may have helped to achieve the desired outcome. While the special committee was still deliberating, the rector of St Stephen's had sent a personal letter to his old friend Coadjutor Bishop James Carmichael detailing the desperate financial straits of his parish and emphasizing that the decision arrived at regarding St Edward's would also determine the future of his own church. 'Unless financial relief comes', he wrote, 'my church must go, and as I am personally responsible, all that I have must go, even to my furniture'.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Report re. St Stephen's and St Edward's, Executive Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1904.

¹⁴⁰ *Montreal Daily Star*, 18 November 1893.

¹⁴¹ MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's Church Vestry Minute Book 1875-1898, 7 February 1898; St Stephen's (Westmount) Vestry Minute Book 1899-1926, 14 February 1905.

¹⁴² MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from Lewis Evans, 1 Essex Ave, to 'My Dear Bishop' [Coadjutor Bishop Carmichael], dated 23 January 1905.

This provided the background for his presentation of a case favouring the sale of St Edward's:

If the retaining of the status quo of St Edward's is of sufficient importance to justify this being permitted then I have nothing more to say - But is it? St Edward's represents the accumulation of my congregation during the best years of my life and ministry, and the best efforts of my people. They gave and worked to supply a place of worship for themselves and their families - when they desired to sell it, it was to move to another part of their own parish, and so long as they had need of what they gave, for the purposes for which they gave - surely they had a right to it - but as a fact they only asked for half their own - being willing to leave half for work in the old sphere. When the Archbishop insisted on retaining St Edward's intact, I faced the work without it, but I faced what has proved to be the impossible.... I feel that it is only fair to the archbishop, to you and to me, that he and you should know the naked facts.¹⁴³

Such statements make it clear that Evans placed the survival and maintenance of his own congregation ahead of the needs of the old neighbourhood that he had left behind. He found a sympathetic ally in James Carmichael, who had been assistant minister at St George's Church at the time of its uptown move in 1870 and who felt that the congregation of St Stephen's should have the same right to benefit from the sale of its old building as other congregations like St George's had done in the past.¹⁴⁴ In contrast, Archbishop Bond - despite having been rector of St George's at the time of its uptown relocation, and having justified the sale of the old St George's on grounds very similar to those now used by Evans - refused to accept that there was any analogy between the two cases.¹⁴⁵ This outlook was partly attributable to his vision of himself as a 'watchman', placed by God in the position of Bishop of Montreal in order to promote the spiritual interests of all parishioners in his diocese.¹⁴⁶ He also argued that, since the matter had previously been settled by mutual agreement, and given the Griffintown congregation's continued opposition to the sale of their church, it would be an injustice to deprive them,

¹⁴³ MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from Lewis Evans, 1 Essex Ave, to 'My Dear Bishop' [Coadjutor Bishop Carmichael], dated 23 January 1905.

¹⁴⁴ MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from Js Carmichael to 'My Dr Lewis' [Canon Lewis Evans], dated 1 July 1905.

¹⁴⁵ MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from W.B. Bond to 'My Dear Lord Coadjutor of Montreal' [Bishop James Carmichael], dated 10 August 1905.

¹⁴⁶ See MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from W.B. Bond to 'My Dear Lord Coadjutor of Montreal' [Bishop James Carmichael], dated 10 August 1905.

‘tho’ they were poor’, of their place of worship.¹⁴⁷ In coming to this decision, he also took into account the fact that St Edward’s was ‘admirably situated’, was essentially self-sustaining, and had grown from 129 families in 1898 to 281 families in 1905.¹⁴⁸

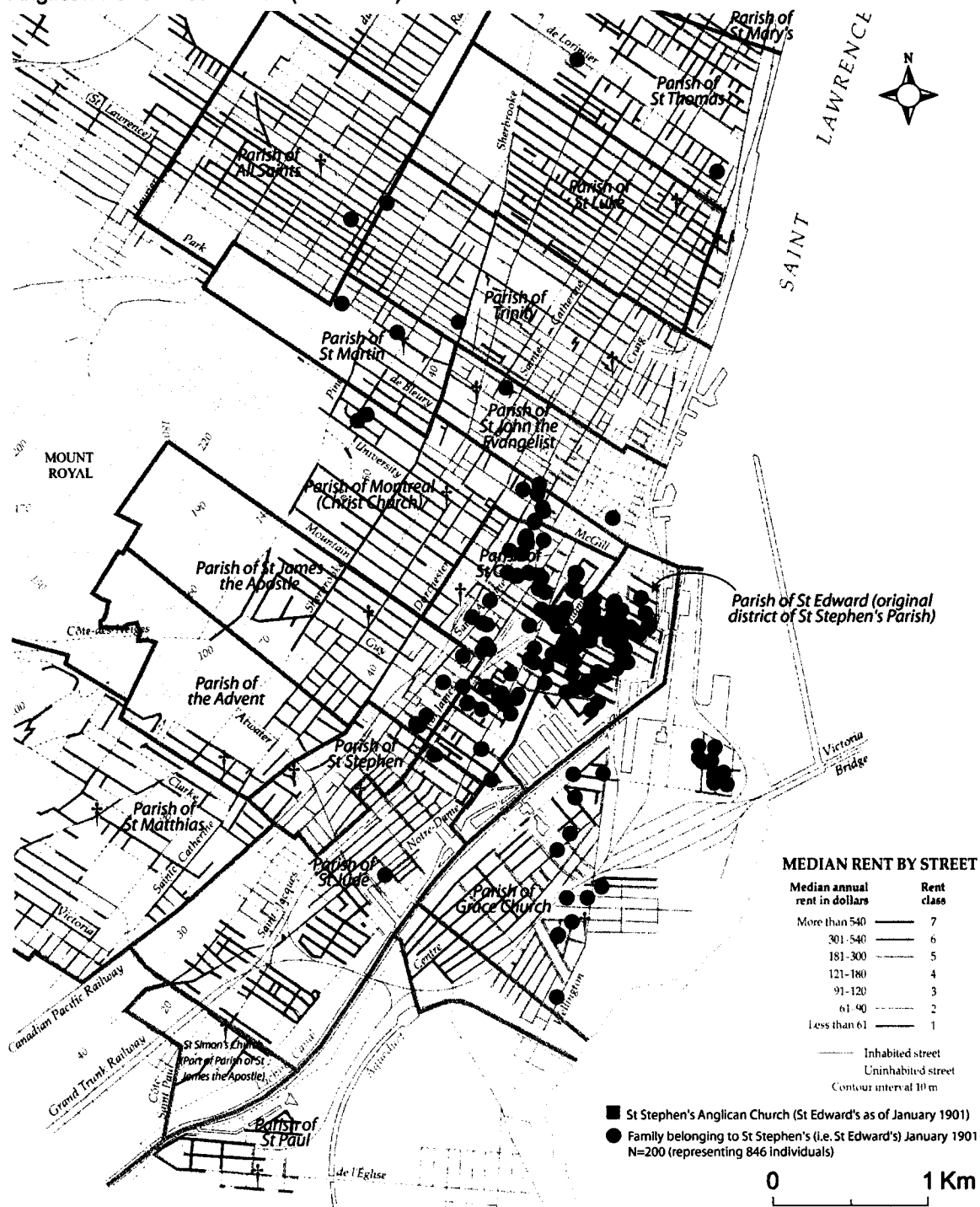
Figure 7.3, showing the distribution of families belonging to St Edward’s in 1901, supports Bond’s contention that the church continued to be well-situated. While the special committee’s observation that many of those attending St Edward’s lived in other parishes was correct, the implication that these individuals would have been equally content to attend their own parish churches if St Edward’s had been replaced by a small mission building was less certain. The distribution of families attached to St Edward’s indicates that, regardless of where official parish boundaries lay, the city’s social geography had a more important influence on the choices that were made concerning which church to attend. As we saw in Figure 5.10, the distribution of seatholders at St George’s Church spread well beyond its parish boundaries into other parts of the uptown district, but stopped abruptly along the boundary dividing this area from the ‘city below the hill’. While members of St George’s Ladies’ District Visiting Society conducted charitable work in the lower and less-wealthy section of their parish, Figure 7.3 indicates that many individuals living in this district preferred to attend a church like St Edward’s, where they could worship with individuals of similar occupational and socio-economic status to their own. The names of 142 of the 205 household heads listed as belonging to St Edward’s in 1901 were identified in the Lovell’s City Directory of 1900-01, and their occupations confirmed that this was a relatively homogeneous congregation made up of the families of labourers, carters, blacksmiths, and other members of the working classes, as well as a number of clerks and a few grocers.¹⁴⁹ Such individuals would have felt more at home at St Edward’s than St George’s, and may also have been attracted by the

¹⁴⁷ MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from W.B. Bond to ‘My Dear Lord Coadjutor of Montreal’ [Bishop James Carmichael], dated 10 August 1905. See also MDA, RG 204 c.2, Fonds Diocesan Council, Minute Book of the Executive Committee 1904-1911, Letter from W.B. Bond, Archbishop of Montreal, to the Rev. Canon Baylis, Secretary of Synod, dated 3 April 1905 [inserted 9 May 1905]. For expression of the Vestry of St Edward’s resistance to the sale of their church building, see Fonds STE, Copy of Resolution being part of the Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of the Vestry of St Edward’s Church, held on 15 May 1905.

¹⁴⁸ MDA, RG 204 c.2, Fonds Diocesan Council, Minute Book of the Executive Committee 1904-1911, Letter from W.B. Bond, Archbishop of Montreal, to the Rev. Canon Baylis, Secretary of Synod, dated 3 April 1905 [inserted 9 May 1905].

¹⁴⁹ *Lovell’s Montreal Directory for 1900-01*.

Figure 7.3 Map Showing Distribution of Families Connected with St Stephen's (i.e. St Edward's) Anglican Church in January 1901, Against a Backdrop of Median Assessed Rents by Street and Anglican Parish Boundaries (also 1901)



Note: The original boundaries of the Anglican Parish of Montreal were coterminous with those of the Roman Catholic Parish of Montreal, and covered an area much greater than the City of Montreal alone (Adams 1941, 61). In response to the growth of the city, and following the example of the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans first subdivided their original parish in 1872. Nine new parishes were carved out of the original parish at this time. By 1901, further subdivision of the Parish of Montreal and of the parishes created in 1872, as well as numerous alterations to parish boundaries, had led to the parish boundaries shown above. Unless indicated as belonging to one of the newer parishes, all areas shown on the map continued to belong to the Parish of Montreal. I am somewhat unsure of the boundaries in the southern sector of the map. A large area in St Henry and Cote St Paul was transferred from St Jude's Parish to St James the Apostle Parish in 1875, despite the fact that it was non-contiguous with the latter parish. The Parish of St Paul was subsequently erected at the turn of the century, leaving the district surrounding St Simon's Church as part of the Parish of St James the Apostle. No decree could be located in the Proceedings of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal indicating that this had become an independent parish by 1901, although it appears to have been functioning as an independent parish at this time.

Sources: MDA, Fonds STS, Small book containing a 'List of families in St Stephen's', January 1901; MDA, Fonds Synod of the Diocese of Montreal Parish Boundary Records; Proceedings of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1873-1903 (Canons and Decrees relating to the division of the Parish of Montreal etc.); Historical Atlas of Canada: Addressing the Twentieth Century, 1891-1961, eds. Donald Kerr and Deryck W. Holdsworth (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Vol.3, Plate 30. The map underlay showing median rent by street (1901) was adapted from Plate 30 of the Historical Atlas of Canada, Vol.3, which was created by Sherry Olson and David Hanna.

free but assigned seating that had been introduced following the departure of the Westmount contingent.

Another factor that may have drawn families to St Edward's was that it continued to represent the more evangelical wing of the church at a time when High Church tendencies were making inroads in most Anglican congregations.¹⁵⁰ Although never openly discussed, the church's long-standing associations with Orangeism and the Irish-Protestant community may also have attracted people to the church and enhanced their loyalty to the building. The Rev. William Sanders was an Orangemen, 'faithful unto death' according to the memorial bronze erected in his memory many years later by members of the Loyal Orange Association and the Ladies Orange Benevolent Association.¹⁵¹ With its tall spire, St Edward's was the only Protestant place of worship that effectively challenged St Ann's Roman Catholic Church for dominance in the Griffintown landscape. It seems reasonable to suppose that the replacement of a grand and imposing structure like St Edward's Church with a humble mission-style building would have been a blow to the prestige of Orangemen associated with the congregation. Thus, insofar as the church served symbolic ethno-religious interests, as well as the religious and social needs of a large working-class district covering a much wider territory than that contained within its own parish boundaries, it could be argued that St Edward's Church had an important role to play in the Anglican parish system.

Taking It To The Courts: The Case of St Edward's Versus St Stephen's

Despite his convictions, the fear that both St Edward's and St Stephen's would be lost to the Church eventually led a reluctant Archbishop Bond to consent, in December 1905, to the sale of St Edward's Church and a division of the proceeds between the two congregations.¹⁵² Unable to accept this decision, St Edward's embarked on what proved

¹⁵⁰ When the new St Stephen's Church in Westmount introduced a vested choir in 1906, those opposed complained that 'they had been assured in leaving the Old St Stephen's and coming uptown that no radical changes would be made in the services, which would be the same as at Hay Mkt Square' (MDA, Fonds STS, St Stephen's (Westmount) Vestry Minute Book 1899-1926, 26 November 1906).

¹⁵¹ MDA, Fonds STE, Memorial Pamphlet for Rev. Canon William Sanders: A service of grateful remembrance in St Edward's Church, Montreal, on Sunday 3 November 1940.

¹⁵² MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of a letter from Lansing Lewis to Dean Evans, dated 13 December 1905; RG 204 c.2, Fonds Diocesan Council, Minute Book of the Executive Committee 1904-1911, 19 April 1906.

to be a lengthy and complex legal dispute.¹⁵³ The court case, which eventually made its way to the Supreme Court of Canada, brought the quarrel between the two parishes more fully into the public gaze, as the differences of opinion outlined above were rehearsed before the courts and in the newspapers. Justice John Dunlop of the Superior Court was convinced by the argument of those representing St Edward's that the original benefactors of the old St Stephen's (now St Edward's) Church had contributed land and funds on the understanding that it would benefit 'persons of very limited means and wage-earners' living in Griffintown, rather than a 'comparatively well-to-do and even affluent population' such as that represented by the new St Stephen's.¹⁵⁴ He came to the conclusion that the uptown St Stephen's Parish had no claim on the Griffintown church, and also ruled that the Rev. Evans' transfer of St Edward's to the Bishop, and then to the Synod, was null and void.¹⁵⁵ This judgment was upheld following an appeal by St Stephen's to the Court of the King's Bench.¹⁵⁶ St Stephen's final appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1912 was also dismissed with costs, although the final judgment by Sir Charles Fitzpatrick recognized that the parishioners of St Stephen's had 'some equitable interest in the property' and encouraged church authorities to come to an amicable solution to a case that Fitzpatrick felt should have been settled by them in the first place.¹⁵⁷ After years of legal wrangling in the civil courts, a definitive solution was as elusive as ever.

In a final effort to resolve the dispute, Sir Melbourne Tait, late Chief Justice of the Province of Quebec, was called in to chair a meeting between the two congregations in

¹⁵³ See MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910).

¹⁵⁴ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Answer to Intervention, 10 May 1907, 19.

¹⁵⁵ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Judgment of Mr. Justice Dunlop of the Superior Court, 112-126; also Notes of Judgment of Mr. Justice Dunlop in the Superior Court, 139-140.

¹⁵⁶ MDA, Fonds STE, Documents relating to the case of St Stephen's vs. St Edward's as published and prepared for transmission to the Supreme Court of Canada (c.1910), Judgment of the Court of the King's Bench, 143-153.

¹⁵⁷ *Dominion Law Reports Volume II* (Toronto: Canada Law Book Co. 1912), St Stephen's vs. St Edward's, Supreme Court of Canada, 12 February 1912, 595, 598-599. See also *Montreal Gazette*, 16 November 1974, 'The Church in Weredale Park'.

June 1912.¹⁵⁸ As a result of these negotiations, it was agreed that if St Edward's could be sold for at least \$75,000, a sum of \$15,000 would be awarded to St Stephen's as a final settlement of all its claims.¹⁵⁹ The substantial balance of funds was to be used to provide the congregation of St Edward's with a suitable building in which to continue its work.¹⁶⁰ In a private memo written to Bishop John Farthing to explain his thinking on the matter, Tait made it clear that he believed St Edward's had done well out of this arrangement. 'How many so called remnants of congregations', he asked rhetorically, 'have been left downtown after the large proportion have gone up without being left with a property which may possibly realise them \$65,000'.¹⁶¹ However true this statement may have been, those belonging to St Edward's could hardly help but be disappointed that, despite winning the legal case against St Stephen's in the Supreme Court, they still had little choice but to agree to the sale of the church building they had fought so hard to preserve. This fact was acknowledged in a letter written by Bishop Farthing to the Rev. Sanders soon after the agreement between the two congregations had been reached:

I want to express my great satisfaction that this long outstanding lawsuit has been ended. It will be a great relief to you, and to your people. I know that it is not what you all had hoped to gain, that this settlement is a disappointment to you all, yet I am sure that whatever sacrifices you have made you will be blessed for in the end, as you have purchased peace, and have ended what was a scandal in this diocese.¹⁶²

As it turned out, the old St Edward's Church continued to serve the Griffintown community for many years to come, before finally being deconsecrated and demolished in the early 1950s. Although the reasons for its survival are not entirely clear, it is likely that the end of the property boom and the onset of World War I delayed the implementation of the settlement. The ability of St Edward's Church to persist for such a

¹⁵⁸ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(1) (November 1912), 8.

¹⁵⁹ If the church building was sold for more than \$75,000, St Stephen's was to receive twenty percent of the excess.

¹⁶⁰ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(1) (November 1912), 8; MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Minutes of a meeting of the Representatives of the Churches of St Stephen's and St Edward's, held in the Committee Room of the Synod, Sir Melbourne Tait presiding, 11 June 1912.

¹⁶¹ MDA, Fonds STE, Memo for the Lord Bishop, n.d. [prob. c.11 June 1912], 'Sir M. Tait's notes' [written on back].

¹⁶² MDA, Fonds STE, Letter from John Montreal [Bishop Farthing], 42 Union Ave, to Mr Sanders, dated 24 July 1912.

long time after the work was declared to be unviable suggests that such pronouncements were premature.

The case between St Edward's and St Stephen's illustrates the persistence of the belief that church buildings were the private property of those with the financial means to support them. Individuals who were unable to afford such luxuries should, it was felt, worship in more humble mission buildings. In contrast with congregations that had sold their original church buildings and rebuilt uptown earlier on in the nineteenth century, however, the pewholders at St Stephen's Church encountered significant resistance from those remaining in Griffintown when they attempted to carry out a similar move at the end of the century. While the rationale for the relocation of St Stephen's - the fact that better-off members were moving away from the old neighbourhood - was very similar to that of earlier moves, the context was somewhat different. First of all, even if the practical outcome of earlier moves had been to leave less-wealthy church members behind, it had in the past been possible for church leaders to portray these departures as the inevitable outcome of commercial expansion in the city centre. Despite efforts in the case of St Stephen's to suggest that residences in Griffintown were being squeezed out by industry, the greater awareness of social-geographical segregation that existed at the turn of the century made it more difficult to obscure the fact that the sale of the old church property would deprive a working-class neighbourhood of an established place of worship. Another difference was that the large and handsome church in Griffintown had largely been paid for through the benevolence of those living outside the district, making the question of ownership less straightforward. It was also significant that, whereas earlier Anglican church moves had been made within the extensive boundaries allocated to the original districts (which later became official parishes), St Stephen's involved relocation to a non-contiguous territory that had only recently been added to its original 'parish'. Given that the parish system was expressly designed to ensure that everyone living within a specific area had access to a place of worship, this represented an anomaly. Regardless of these circumstances, leading Anglican clergymen and laymen supported the right of the vestry of St Stephen's to determine the fate of the old church in Griffintown, forcing those remaining downtown to turn to the civil courts for protection.

While it is difficult to gauge the impact that this dispute would have had on the Protestant population at large, there was clearly something incongruous about preaching sermons in uptown pulpits encouraging wealthy parishioners to improve the disgraceful and cramped housing conditions in the lower part of the city, while simultaneously attempting to deprive a downtown congregation of their church home. A growing awareness nevertheless existed within the Church of the difficulties associated with the uneven geographical distribution of financial and human resources between the city's wealthier and poorer parishes. In 1893, Bishop Bond observed that parochial charity work was very well done in those churches that had a pretty equal distribution of rich and poor parishioners.¹⁶³ Other churches, however, were described as being like that of Laodicea: 'They are rich, and have need of nothing, but are poor because - having no poor of their own - they lack the natural outlet of Christian charity'.¹⁶⁴ An assistant minister at St George's made a similar observation in 1910: 'There are congregations which possess large resources and few necessities, and then there are again those whose necessities are numerous but whose resources are few'.¹⁶⁵ He suggested that 'a new era of spiritual efficiency and power in the churches' would emerge only if 'the excesses of the one could only be applied to the deficiencies of the other' and challenged traditional thinking within the Protestant community concerning the link between church building, social status, and urban geography:

My first question is, Where should the beautiful temples of worship be found, they whose architecture and lines and colorings and tones speak to us of the quiet and peace of fellowship with the Most High, the inspiration and hope and consolation of the divine? Do not say right off the reel, "Why of course in those centres and in those parishes where they can pay for such things".... Is that really the disposition you would make were you free to order such things at will?... I ask that men and women of wealth in the church, whose abundance places them beyond all financial anxiety, should become for a time

¹⁶³ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1893), 20.

¹⁶⁴ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1893), 20.

¹⁶⁵ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 4(1) (October 1910), 'Some Problems of City Churches' by the Rev. Jas. A. Elliott, 25.

at least sort of financial godfathers and godmothers for such churches until they could carry on their own work with the efficiency desired.¹⁶⁶

The Rev. F.L. Whitley of St Clement's Belcher Memorial Church in Verdun also criticized the way in which 'habits formed in the older individualistic era' had persisted even though the conditions that had created them had 'passed away'.¹⁶⁷ There was, he argued, a need to 'break down the barriers that are between the stronger parish Churches which control the source of supply and the weaker parish Churches which are dependent in a certain degree on their bounty'. The problem, he argued, was not one of organization so much as a question of 'temper of mind' and it was therefore necessary to 'try to create in the minds and hearts of the people of our Church a willingness for a redistribution of men, a redistribution of money and above all a redistribution of spiritual power'.¹⁶⁸ The retreat of churches from downtown areas was clearly at odds with this type of thinking, but nevertheless reflected the deep-rooted nature of the individualistic and congregation-centred beliefs - referred to earlier as the logic of maintenance - that these ministers were attempting to reform.

Methodism Below the Hill

By the end of the period under examination, the Methodists were the only one of the three leading Protestant denominations in Montreal to no longer have a place of worship in the heart of Griffintown. Despite moving only a relatively short distance, the relocation undertaken by the Ottawa Street congregation in the late 1880s compounded pre-existing fears about the growth of the non-church-going population and - as was the case with the Presbyterians in the 1860s - encouraged uptown Methodists to consider introducing new types of institutions in the lower part of the city. Downtown churchgoers, uptown evangelicals, and those promoting the development of institutional churches all competed to make their mark on the downtown landscape, which was itself experiencing ongoing transformation.

¹⁶⁶ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 4(1) (October 1910), 'Some Problems of City Churches' by the Rev. Jas. A. Elliott, 26-27.

¹⁶⁷ *The Montreal Churchman*, 2(7) (May 1914), 'Some Problems Affecting the Suburban Parishes of Montreal' by the Rev. F.L. Whitley, 7.

¹⁶⁸ *The Montreal Churchman*, 2(7) (May 1914), 'Some Problems Affecting the Suburban Parishes of Montreal' by the Rev. F.L. Whitley, 7.

Ottawa Street Methodist Church: Leaving Griffintown

Like their Anglican counterparts, the Methodists in Griffintown decided to move to higher ground in the wake of the floods of the mid-1880s.¹⁶⁹ In the case of the Ottawa Street congregation, however, the decision to move was taken much sooner, the old church was sold, and the cornerstone of the new Mountain Street Methodist Church, located at the corner of Torrance Street, was laid in September 1886. Since few Protestant places of worship in Montreal at this time were considered to have heritage value, one factor that may have contributed to this decisive action was the age of their old church building, which, with almost forty years of history behind it, was the oldest Protestant place of worship in Griffintown.¹⁷⁰ Also significant was the fact that while Anglican and Presbyterian populations in St Ann's ward continued to expand into the 1880s, the Methodist population, which was smaller to begin with, had already begun to decline. Although the Mountain Street Church seated fewer people than its predecessor, the new building, built in the Norman style, was still considered to be a 'handsome edifice'.¹⁷¹ The interior, however, was plain and gave the impression of 'extreme simplicity combined with a modest sense of neatness and fitness', emphasizing its respectability but also differentiating it from the more elaborate churches located in the nearby uptown district.¹⁷²

The paucity of surviving church records makes it impossible to determine whether there was disagreement within the congregation over the relocation project, or precisely

¹⁶⁹ For locations of old and new churches, see Figure 7.5.

¹⁷⁰ Much of the interest that was expressed in heritage preservation by Protestants at this time focused on the rescue of old Roman Catholic buildings dating from the French Regime. Protestants took credit, for example, for preserving the old Bonsecours Chapel from being torn down to make way for a railway station (see Charles G.D. Roberts, *The Canadian Guide-Book: Complete in One Volume, A Guide to Eastern Canada and Newfoundland* (New York: D. Appleton 1898), 62-63; *Montreal Witness*, 25 March 1889, Letter to the Editor from Edmund Wood, Rector of St John the Evangelist). An unsuccessful effort was also made to save the original St Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church from destruction in the late 1880s (PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1884-1900*, 5 October 1886, 6; 22 March 1887, 8). One 'Old Montrealer' wrote to the *Witness* in 1889 complaining that 'vandalism' was destroying more and more of the city's ancient buildings and churches. 'Why is Europe so attractive and America so plain and tiresome?', asked the writer rhetorically, before coming to the conclusion that while Europe 'preserves religiously all its antiquities and peculiarities', 'here everything is new and cast in the same mould. Our cities are demolished and rebuilt every fifty years, and all vie to imitate and copy each other' (*Montreal Witness*, 13 March 1889).

¹⁷¹ *Montreal Herald*, 27 September 1886.

¹⁷² *Montreal Herald*, 7 May 1888.

why church leaders chose the particular location that they did. The Rev. Hansford's official explanation for the move focused on the changes taking place within the old neighbourhood, rather than emphasizing the benefits of the new location:

Two causes have so co-operated in Griffintown as to interfere very strongly with the growth and success of this church. First, the large increase of manufacturing establishments in that part of the city, thus displacing many of its former Protestant residents, and then such have been the damaging effects of successive inundations in that part of the city that our congregation has been agitated and consulted again and again as to the expediency of building in some better locality. Hence the ultimate choice of this site on Mountain street, and the new church edifice in the course of erection.¹⁷³

The new site was less than a kilometre away from the old church, remaining just within the study area. Thus, despite being located in what was considered to be a 'better locality' than the original building, it continued to serve the lower part of the city that lay to the south-east of the uptown district, which would presumably have made the move more acceptable to those who continued to live in Griffintown. Groups that moved out of Griffintown later on in the 1890s, like those at St Stephen's and those who left the Inspector Street Mission to form Westminster Church (to be discussed in more detail further on), erected their new places of worship much farther to the south-west in lower Westmount. The choice of a site only a comparatively short distance away from Griffintown by the Ottawa Street congregation may have been related to the earlier timing of its move. Electric street cars had not yet been introduced at this point, which meant that church leaders would have been unaware of the extent to which this development would give white collar workers and manual labourers of sufficient means the freedom to spread out into more suburban areas in the 1890s and beyond. Given the absence of other Methodist places of worship serving the lower West End of the city, it would also have been difficult for the Ottawa Street congregation to obtain the Conference's permission to move to a more distant location.

Filling the Void

Despite the relatively short distance of its move, the departure of Griffintown's only Methodist place of worship did not go unnoticed in the broader community. One

¹⁷³ *Montreal Herald*, 27 September 1886.

inhabitant of Montreal's East End, who participated in the debate, discussed earlier, concerning the usefulness of the Baptist mission that had been established in his neighbourhood, argued that while the eastern part of Montreal was relatively well supplied with churches, only a handful were to be found serving the larger Protestant population living between Notre Dame Street and the Lachine Canal in the lower West End. Under these circumstances, he felt that the efforts of compassionate uptown churchgoers should instead be directed towards 'that part of the West End commonly called Griffintown, so lately deserted by the Methodist body'.¹⁷⁴

Methodist churchgoers, who also witnessed the uptown relocation of the St James Street Methodist Church at this time, agreed that something needed to be done to fill the void that had been created 'through the removal of so many churches'.¹⁷⁵ They were not as concerned, however, by the lack of church buildings per se, as by the absence of Methodist organizations that were successfully reaching out to the non-church going population. Methodists may also have been competitively inspired by the Salvation Army's much-publicized 'invasion' of Montreal that had commenced in 1884 and subsequently demonstrated that there was 'abundant work' to be done even in the midst of the established churches.¹⁷⁶ In 1888, a special committee appointed by the Montreal Methodist Conference to look into evangelistic work among 'the non-church going population in cities and towns' had reported a pressing need for further evangelistic and benevolent efforts, and urged ministers and congregations to take action 'inasmuch as no existing organization reaches the classes that are outside the churches'.¹⁷⁷ The following April, a large meeting of Methodist Sunday-school workers and other interested parties took place in the uptown Dominion Square Methodist Church to discuss the possibility of building a 'great mission hall' in some central part of the city to serve the 'large element...gathering into our cities that must be dealt with in mission work proper that cannot be reached by the churches as now constituted'.¹⁷⁸ The plan had been under the

¹⁷⁴ *Montreal Witness*, 25 February 1889, Letter to the Editor signed 'East End'.

¹⁷⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 15 April 1889, 'A Great Mission Hall'.

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 7 March 1889, Letter to the Editor from 'One of the Workers'.

¹⁷⁷ *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fifth Session of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1888), 59.

¹⁷⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 15 April 1889, 'A Great Mission Hall'.

consideration of the Methodist Ministerial Association for some time, and envisaged the construction of a hall capable of holding 1000 to 1500 people, as well as coffee and reading rooms.¹⁷⁹ The description of the proposed enterprise suggests that it may have been inspired by the Wesleyan Central Missions that were established in English city centres from the mid-1880s onwards. These large mission halls, which were promoted in Britain by the well-known Wesleyan preacher and advocate of social Christianity Hugh Price Hughes, provided simple but compelling gospel services alongside a wide range of social services.¹⁸⁰ They were therefore very similar to the institutional church model that was gaining prominence in North America at this time. According to S.W. Dean, Superintendent of the Methodist Union in Toronto, the Central Halls of Great Britain and the institutional churches of North America were 'almost identical in ... spirit' because both adapted themselves to the requirements of the surrounding community, seeking 'to supply any physical, intellectual, social or religious need of the people' that was not otherwise being met.¹⁸¹

The Old Brewery Mission

The Methodist agency that actually came into being in the lower part of Montreal was rather different from that described above. In the late 1880s, two prominent women belonging to the Dominion Square Church had established a soup kitchen in Griffintown.¹⁸² Realizing that more needed to be done for the many poor and homeless men they encountered, they encouraged the trustees of their church to engage in more extensive mission work in this district. A building on College Street that had previously been home to the Williams Brewery was occupied circa 1889 to provide further

¹⁷⁹ *Montreal Witness*, 15 April 1889, 'A Great Mission Hall'.

¹⁸⁰ See Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London: MacMillan Press 1996), 136-137; 143-145; Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 74-76.

¹⁸¹ *Social Service Congress, Ottawa 1914: Report of Addresses and Proceedings* (Toronto: Social Service Council of Canada 1914), 130.

¹⁸² For further information on the origins of the Old Brewery Mission, see Ann K. Perry, *Manliness, Goodness, and God: Poverty, Gender, and Social Reform in English-Speaking Montreal, 1890-1929* (M.A. Thesis, Queen's University 1998), Chapter 1; Bill McCarthy, *The Rev: Memoirs of Montreal's Old Brewery Mission* (Montreal: Robert Davies Publishing 1996), 7-8.

accommodation, and soon became known as the Old Brewery Mission.¹⁸³ A couple of years later, the architect A.C. Hutchison was commissioned to design a purpose-built home for the mission, with a new site being chosen on Craig Street.¹⁸⁴ This took the mission outside Griffintown proper, but placed it in an equally central position that allowed it to continue serving 'the poor' as a distinct group, rather than any particular district. The new mission building was a three storey brick structure which, like the new Inspector Street Mission designed by Hutchison only a year or so later, had functional rather than ecclesiastical pretensions.¹⁸⁵ The ground floor, which was used as a mission hall and as a place in which meals could be served, was designed so that it could be converted into shops at any time, while the upper storeys provided temporary night-time lodging for transients.¹⁸⁶ Although the mission property was owned by the trustees of the Dominion Square Church, and many of the subscribers to the mission were Methodists, it was officially run as an independent and non-denominational organization under the control of a general committee.¹⁸⁷ This elicited the support of wealthy individuals belonging to other denominations, such as the Presbyterian Herbert B. Ames.¹⁸⁸ By the time the new mission building opened its doors in April 1892, over \$10,000 of the \$22,500 required to pay for the land and building had been subscribed by only fifty-one individuals, representing a substantial average donation of approximately \$200.¹⁸⁹

In contrast with traditional evangelical missions, such as the Inspector Street Mission, the Old Brewery was a more specialized institution geared primarily towards serving the distinct needs of poor and destitute individuals. While the promotion of temperance and the evangelization of non-churchgoers had always been a central part of

¹⁸³ The Annual Sunday School Report of the Dominion Square Church for 1889-90 stated that a mission Sunday school had been started in the Old Williams Brewery (ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, *Annual Report of the Dominion Square Methodist Church for 1889-90*, 14).

¹⁸⁴ For location, see Figure 7.5.

¹⁸⁵ A sketch of the new mission building can be found in the *Montreal Witness*, 6 November 1899.

¹⁸⁶ *Montreal Daily Star*, 4 April 1892; *Montreal Gazette*, 4 April 1892.

¹⁸⁷ See *Montreal Daily Star*, 4 April 1892; *Montreal Gazette*, 4 April 1892. See also ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, *Annual Report of the Dominion Square Methodist Church for 1890-91*, 4.

¹⁸⁸ *Montreal Gazette*, 4 April 1892.

¹⁸⁹ *Montreal Gazette*, 4 April 1892.

Protestant mission work, the Old Brewery Mission conducted what was known as ‘rescue work’.¹⁹⁰ Rescue work was inspired by the evangelical belief that ‘it was possible, by right methods, to make men of the most worthless’, a category deemed to include drunks, gamblers, tramps, and other poor outcasts.¹⁹¹ ‘Right methods’ involved the conversion of ‘perishing’ individuals to Christianity, accompanied by the provision of sufficient practical assistance to get these individuals back on their feet without encouraging dependency. Thus, while traditional missions had always acted as conduits through which charitable assistance had been provided to help families in times of sickness or unemployment, the provision of specific social services such as a soup kitchen and night-time lodging at the Old Brewery Mission was more explicitly used as a means of bringing those perceived to be in need of salvation inside the doors of the mission in the first place. The mission’s facilities also served the very necessary and practical role of providing food, lodging, and a place to bathe (either free or at nominal cost) to those who would otherwise have had nowhere else to go.¹⁹²

Rather than being modelled on the Wesleyan Central Halls in England, the Old Brewery Mission seems to have been directly inspired by the Water Street Mission of New York, which was the creation of a converted convict named Jerry McAuley. McAuley’s work of conversion in the slums caught the attention of uptown New Yorkers, who – according to one account – went down from their ‘luxurious, fashionable and aristocratic’ churches on Fifth Avenue to visit the mission ‘merely out of curiosity and took Jerry up as a kind of “fad”’.¹⁹³ J.R. McConica, the superintendent of the Old Brewery Mission, had himself been converted at McAuley’s mission, and individuals associated with the New York mission were speakers at the opening services of the new building in 1892, as well as at the mission’s ten-year anniversary services in 1899.¹⁹⁴ The

¹⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS99, Fonds DOM, Contenant 468, Annual Reports Dominion Methodist Church 1888-1914, *Annual Report of the Dominion Methodist Church Westmount for the year ended April 30th, 1922*, 19.

¹⁹¹ *Montreal Witness*, 6 November 1899.

¹⁹² *Montreal Herald*, 4 April 1892.

¹⁹³ *Montreal Witness*, 3 November 1899. This story was told by Mrs. E.M. Whittemore who, when she went down to the McAuley mission with her husband out of curiosity, found herself ‘soundly converted to God’ and went on to devote her life to rescue mission work amongst fallen women.

¹⁹⁴ *Montreal Daily Star*, 5 April 1892.

speeches that were given at such events helped to raise funds from uptown churchgoers by reassuring them that the traditional evangelical approach, when properly adapted to the modern context, continued to be effective. In 1899, McConica told the audience of a 'mass meeting' held at an uptown concert hall that about 500 people had been converted since the inception of the mission, while another 200 had signed the total abstinence pledge. It was his descriptions of the individual lives that had been transformed, however, that were intended to catch the attention of his evangelical audience:

Mr. McConica instanced a few of many, many happy results of the work of the mission. Two men now preaching the gospel in the United States had come under the speaker's attention in a miserable plight, and had found Christ at the mission. Six had gone out of their doors as missionaries to China. Another graduate was assistant manager of a bank in New York. He once went to a Christmas dinner, ragged and filthy, and was led to give his heart to Christ, and learning to honor God, God had from that moment begun to honor him. Others were filling positions as school-teachers, bookkeepers, janitors etc., with few exceptions men who had entered the mission in the lowest depths of depravity.¹⁹⁵

The demonstration that an encounter with Christ could transform society's most unproductive members into gainfully employed individuals would have had the same appeal as in the past to those who continued to believe that poverty was primarily a product of individual moral failings. At the same time, the fact that rescue missions were set aside as separate institutions, focusing much of their effort on those suffering from alcohol addiction, could also be seen as an acknowledgment that a variety of causes for poverty did exist, and that this type of mission provided only one means of dealing with a more complex problem.

Mountain Street Methodist: On The Wrong Side of the Tracks

The Old Brewery Mission was Montreal's pioneer rescue mission, but was soon joined by the Welcome Hall Mission, which was founded by T.B. Macaulay of Calvary Congregational Church in 1892.¹⁹⁶ This mission initially established itself in rented accommodation on St Antoine Street, but moved to a more permanent home in 1907 which was ideal for this type of work, being 'practically surrounded by saloons and other

¹⁹⁵ *Montreal Witness*, 6 November 1899.

¹⁹⁶ Like the Old Brewery Mission, the Welcome Hall Mission was non-denominational and received support from some of the city's leading businessmen.

low dives'.¹⁹⁷ This site was only a few blocks away from the Mountain Street Methodist Church, reflecting the fact that changes that had taken place in the surrounding district since the congregation had moved there in the late 1880s. At the time the location was chosen for Griffintown's Methodist congregation, the trustees were probably not aware that the Canadian Pacific Railway was already developing plans to build Windsor Station just up the hill. This left the new church sandwiched between two large and busy railway stations and on the 'wrong' side of the tracks. This part of the city already had the reputation of being 'unhealthy',¹⁹⁸ but it was only in the wake of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks that dramatic signs of decline began to appear.¹⁹⁹ The parish nurse of St George's Church observed in 1912 that immigrants from Britain would never have the opportunity to 'make good' in Montreal 'if all the old, and a few years ago beautiful, houses in the neighbourhood of the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railways are to be the homes of about thirty people when there is only room for about eight'.²⁰⁰ She also noted that the rear tenements in this area were increasing in number and were 'a disgrace to any modern civilized city'.²⁰¹ The Anglican minister working at St James the Apostle's downtown mission observed that the population was becoming increasingly congested as a result of the C.P.R.'s buying up of residential properties.²⁰² He also pointed out that the closure of the nearby Calvary Church, which had moved to a site not far from St Stephen's Anglican Church in Westmount, had left scores of people churchless. The 'better class' of resident was, he reported, moving away to the suburbs, leaving behind a 'constantly shifting population', made up of 'labourers, tradespeople,

¹⁹⁷ *Montreal Witness*, 19 October 1912.

¹⁹⁸ See *Montreal Witness*, 6 September 1879, 'Health Map of Montreal'.

¹⁹⁹ For a discussion of the impact of railways on Victorian cities in Britain, see J.R. Kellett, 'The Railway as an Agent of Internal Change in Victorian Cities', in *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History 1820-1914*, eds. R.J. Morris and Richard Rodger (London: Longman 1993), Chapter 6.

²⁰⁰ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 5(6) (March 1912), 9.

²⁰¹ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 5(6) (March 1912), 9.

²⁰² SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, 8 April 1912, Annual Meeting of the Pewholders of the Church of St James the Apostle, Report by Rev. G.O.T. Bruce on the St Antoine Street Mission.

foreigners, Italians, negroes' as well as young tradesmen living in boarding houses.²⁰³ The Rev. Dr. Bruce Taylor of St Paul's Presbyterian Church likewise described this area between the upper and lower sections of the city as one that 'had been left behind, no longer residential but too remote for business purposes'.²⁰⁴ His words were echoed by the fictional Rev. Fergus McCheyne, who was the mouthpiece of his creator, the Rev. Hugh Pedley of the uptown Emmanuel Church:

[I]n my day there were certain sections of the city that had come into the nondescript class. They were neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring. They lay between the lower and the upper business sections, were in no demand for business purposes, and had lost their character as residential districts.... Only a poor class would come into the neighbourhood, and they could not afford to rent an eight or ten room house. The only way to get a return was to put anywhere from four to eight tenants in one house, and you know what that means, - overcrowding, filth, disease, and vice.²⁰⁵

While such environments offered ample scope for rescue mission work, they were less conducive to the success of independent congregations. Thus, the Mountain Street Methodist Church, having deserted one area in transition, promptly found itself in the middle of another. Although membership climbed to record levels following the relocation of 1888, briefly rallying at over 300 between 1890 and 1895, it subsequently declined so that by 1912 the church was once again left with fewer than 200 members.²⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the financial situation of the Mountain Street Methodist Church appears to have been much better than that of St Edward's Anglican Church, suggesting that its relocation to a position somewhat closer to the uptown district may have enabled it to draw on a more socially-mixed congregation than churches remaining behind in Griffintown.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, 8 April 1912, Annual Meeting of the Pewholders of the Church of St James the Apostle, Report by Rev. G.O.T. Bruce on the St Antoine Street Mission.

²⁰⁴ Queen's University Archives, R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 234.

²⁰⁵ Pedley, *Looking Forward*, 137.

²⁰⁶ *Minutes of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1875-1914).

²⁰⁷ *Minutes of the Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1875-1914). More detailed lists of church membership are not available, making it difficult to learn more about the social composition of this congregation.

In the early twentieth century, various Methodist bodies in Montreal again began to voice concern about the perennial problem of 'the non-church-going population in the lower west end of the city', and to look into methods by which the Mountain Street Church could be used to reach out more effectively to this group.²⁰⁸ Apart from the Old Brewery Mission, the only other Methodist organization in the district that was specially dedicated to this type of work was the Desrivières Street Mission Sunday School, operating under the auspices of St James Methodist Church. Like the Presbyterian Nazareth Street Sunday school, it focused its attentions on the children of the unchurched and provided opportunities for uptown churchgoers to conduct charitable and evangelistic work in the lower part of town. In 1898, its superintendent reported that one of the disadvantages encountered by the school was that because the scholars' parents rarely attended church themselves, the children had no proper church home and thus received only very basic religious teaching. He also noted that the school's impoverished finances, as well as the presence of large schools nearby, 'with their many attractions of companionship', meant that prospects for growth were limited.²⁰⁹ Under such circumstances, one wonders why the school continued to operate, since the Mountain Street Methodist Church was only a few blocks away and would have had a Sunday school of its own. There is no evidence, however, that the pastor of the Mountain Street Church desired an amalgamation, and in 1905-06 he cooperated with representatives of St James and the Dominion Square Church in setting up a committee to provide better support for the mission.²¹⁰ In 1914, Mountain Street officials also rejected a plan suggested by the Methodist Union that they dispose of their property and 'unite with West End [Church] in a large Institutional Enterprise at some intermediate point' on the

²⁰⁸ ANQ, P601, Fonds Eglise Methodist, Contenant 19, M/29/1 Methodist Ministerial Association Minutes 1891-1905, 21 December 1903. See also Contenant 15, M/7/3a Montreal District Minute Book 1900-1912, 16 May 1900.

²⁰⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 311, STJ/24/15 Minutes of the General Committee of the St James Methodist Sabbath Schools of Montreal 1890-1925, 'The 81st Annual Report of the St James Methodist SS' [inserted], Desrivières Street Mission School Superintendent's Report, for the year ending 31 October 1898, signed by W. Godbee Brown, Acting Superintendent, 12.

²¹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS42, Fonds STJ, Contenant 311, STJ/24/15 Minutes of the General Committee of the St James Methodist Sabbath Schools of Montreal 1890-1925, 'Annual Report of St James Methodist SS for 1905-06' [inserted], Desrivières Street SS Superintendent's Report, by C.R. Westgate, 17.

grounds that their church continued to be well located to do successful work.²¹¹ Such decisions hindered the efforts of both the Methodist Union and the Interdenominational Committee to promote the more efficient and cooperative use of resources.²¹²

Like those at St Edward's, officials in charge of the Mountain Street congregation appear to have been confident that their place of worship continued to satisfy the religious and social needs of its membership, despite the changes that had taken place in the immediate vicinity. While the central hall or institutional church model appealed to church leaders inspired by social Christianity and those emphasizing the need for Christian work to be carried out in a more 'concentrated, economical and effective' way, downtown churchgoers were not necessarily inspired by such sentiments.²¹³ Rather than being willing to sell their building to participate in the creation of an institutional church designed to serve the broader needs of Methodists living in the lower part of the city, the Mountain Street congregation opted to preserve its status as an independent and self-sustaining community of worshippers, while leaving wealthier uptown congregations to conduct mission and charitable work through separate institutions. For their part, many wealthy uptown Methodists favoured the creation of downtown institutions with a more traditional evangelical emphasis. While the methods used by narrowly-focused 'rescue missions' were considered innovative by Montrealers at this time, they nevertheless bore a strong ideological resemblance to those employed by traditional missions. Unlike a traditional mission, however, most rescue missions were cooperative and interdenominational efforts on the part of wealthy churchgoers rather than the effort of just one congregation. This encouraged the continued existence of relatively small churches and specialized evangelical missions, which worked against the efforts of those who argued that working-class districts were in need of large, attractive, and generously-funded institutional churches that had the facilities to preach the Gospel to the

²¹¹ ANQ, P601, Fonds Eglise Methodist, Contenant 19, M/27/1 Methodist Union of Montreal Minute Book, Board of Directors Meetings 1913-1926, 19 March 1914. Also see 12 March 1914. The Methodist Union was the organization responsible for Methodist city mission and church extension in Montreal. When the West End Church burnt down in 1915, the Mountain Street Church once again refused to consider amalgamation (See Methodist Union Minute Book, 6 January 1915; 4 February 1915).

²¹² ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 29 January 1913.

²¹³ ANQ, P628, Fonds IDCM, Contenant 624, 3/3/1a Minute Book of the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal 1912-1925, 2 December 1912.

unchurched while simultaneously acting as centres serving the varied social service, recreational, and spiritual needs of the whole community.

Downtown Presbyterians

As the committee investigating the predicament of St Edward's Anglican Church at the beginning of the twentieth century observed, all three Presbyterian places of worship in Griffintown were housed in small, cheap buildings.²¹⁴ While those in favour of the sale of St Edward's felt that these buildings were 'admirably suited to the locality', at least some Presbyterians were frustrated by their inability to cooperate in order to provide better-equipped religious, social, and recreational facilities for the downtown community. As was the case with the Methodists, however, those promoting the institutional church model found themselves competing against downtown churchgoers anxious to retain their independence, as well as uptown supporters of missions who continued to place the evangelization of individuals at the centre of their work. The attempt to cope with major disruptions such as floods, street widening projects, and railway incursions, while at the same time trying to harmonize the work of institutions that had evolved to cater to the needs of different groups within the downtown community, proved challenging.

Inspector Street Mission

In the late 1880s, it was announced that the Inspector Street Chapel would soon be torn down as part of a long-anticipated municipal street widening project.²¹⁵ Thus, the congregation had weathered the floods, and carried out the necessary renovations in their wake, only to find itself threatened by another of the inherent dangers of urban life. For a number of years prior to this announcement, the board of managers at the mission had been engaged in negotiations with the American Presbyterian Church, with the aim of gaining greater independence for the congregation. The elders of the home church had reacted somewhat coolly to certain proposals, such as the idea that elders should be

²¹⁴ MDA, Fonds STE, Copy of Report re. St Stephen's and St Edward's, Executive Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1904.

²¹⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 2 December 1889; 1 December 1890.

selected from within the ranks of the chapel's own membership, but were impressed by the growing financial contributions of the downtown worshippers.²¹⁶ As we saw in Chapter 4, rather than directly competing with one another, each of the three Presbyterian places of worship in Griffintown focused their attention on the needs of a different group, with the Inspector Street Chapel specializing in the evangelization of non-churchgoers, the intemperate, and others wishing to better themselves. At the time the street widening project was announced, it was clear that the chapel was well on its way to becoming an ordinary church and officers at the American Presbyterian Church appear to have been torn between a willingness to see their chapel gain its independence and their wish to retain it as a mission through which they could continue to carry out evangelical and charitable work. For chapel members enthusiastic about taking responsibility for the management and financing of their own affairs, the proposed demolition of the chapel represented a serious set-back, not only because it created uncertainty, but also because it provided a potential opportunity for the home church to implement a change in policy.

The members of the Inspector Street Chapel anxiously turned to the officials of the American Presbyterian Church to determine what impact the street widening would have on their place of worship. As secretary of the board of managers at Inspector Street, Edward Ardley was responsible for much of the correspondence that took place between the chapel and the home church during this period. Although the uneven power relations between the two groups emerge palpably in this correspondence, the very fact that the session at the American Presbyterian Church was willing to engage in dialogue with an individual like Ardley, who worked as the janitor at the Peter Redpath Museum at McGill University²¹⁷, reflects the unusual in-between character of the Inspector Street Mission as both the mission of an uptown congregation and as a working-class congregation aspiring for greater independence. With demolition looming, and having previously ascertained that the American Presbyterian Church intended to rebuild²¹⁸, Ardley asked the session of

²¹⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 30 March 1887; 20 April 1887; 28 November 1887.

²¹⁷ *Lovell's Montreal Directory for 1889-90*; ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, A300 Correspondence 1890-1899, Letter from E. Ardley to the Session of the APC, dated 28 November 1891 (E. Ardley's address is given as the Peter Redpath Museum).

²¹⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 1 December 1890; 29 December 1890; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC,

the home church to 'kindly consider' a number of points, including when and where the new building would be constructed. Most important, perhaps, was the question of whether the session intended the future work to be conducted 'as at present' or whether it was to be of a 'strictly mission character'.²¹⁹ E.F. Ames, who replied on behalf of the session, was able to reassure the congregation that the chapel would be rebuilt, on the same spot if possible, and that a temporary place of worship would be secured in the interim. He was unable to give a definite response as to whether the Inspector Street work would revert to being more exclusively mission-oriented, but suggested that if more land could be bought at the rear of the present building it might 'afford facilities for more extended usefulness, while giving to the present congregation all the privileges they now enjoy'.²²⁰

Dissatisfied with the replies they received and the uncertainty surrounding the future of their place of worship, representatives of the Inspector Street Chapel announced in November 1891 that they were ready to meet the whole expense of their worship and planned to strike out on their own.²²¹ A petition containing the signatures of 75 communicants and 38 adherents was favourably received by the Presbytery of Montreal, and Westminster Church was born.²²² Anxious to remain together, the Inspector Street families were willing to select a site as far west as Atwater Street for their new church.²²³ The congregation also managed to retain the services of the Rev. M.S. Oxley, who had

Contentant 163, A2 Minutes Board of Trustees 1864-1905, 17 March 1891; Contentant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 12 December 1890.

²¹⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contentant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 4 June 1891; also P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contentant 182, A302 Correspondence re. Inspector St Chapel, Letter from E. Ardley, Secretary Inspector St Chapel, to the Session of the APC, dated 8 June 1891.

²²⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contentant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 4 June 1891; also P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contentant 182, A302 Correspondence re. Inspector St Chapel, Letter from E.F. Ames to Mr E. Ardley, Secretary Inspector St Chapel, dated 26 June 1891. Note that E.F. Ames was Herbert B. Ames' father.

²²¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contentant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 3 November 1891.

²²² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contentant 182, A343/2 Copy of Minute from Presbytery of Montreal meeting, 10 December 1891.

²²³ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, March 1892, 3.

been their pastor since 1883.²²⁴ As a church extension project of the Presbytery, Westminster Church had its own session and operated as an independent congregation. They received financial assistance with the erection of their new building and continued to receive support from Presbytery funds until 1907.²²⁵

The location chosen by the Westminster congregation was not far from the new St Stephen's Anglican Church.²²⁶ Their determination to dissociate themselves from the work of a mission, and their willingness to build so far to the west, suggests that the members may have belonged to the better-off segment of the Griffintown community that was moving out of the district following the floods of the late 1880s to take up more desirable residential quarters farther west in the city. As one Canadian commentator noted: 'It is one of the glories and, in a sense, one of the heartbreaks of the down-town mission, that men and women who are led to Christ through its efforts soon find themselves able to leave their grimy surroundings and move to better districts'.²²⁷ While it is impossible to determine whether missions genuinely played a role in generating upward mobility, it is clear that under certain circumstances the social advancement of working-class individuals - like that of their middle-class counterparts - was reflected in their collective relocation to form new congregations in more prosperous neighbourhoods. In other words, not just individuals, but groups of individuals within the working class, were collectively 'moving up' in the city in association with the religious institutions to which they belonged.

Following the formation of the Westminster congregation, only a small number of members remained to form the nucleus of a new Inspector Street congregation in Griffintown.²²⁸ Having surveyed this group, Mr. Donald Grant, who had been placed in

²²⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 10 October 1883.

²²⁵ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, September 1893, 7; June 1897, 3; ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/4 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1905-1908, March 1907, 11.

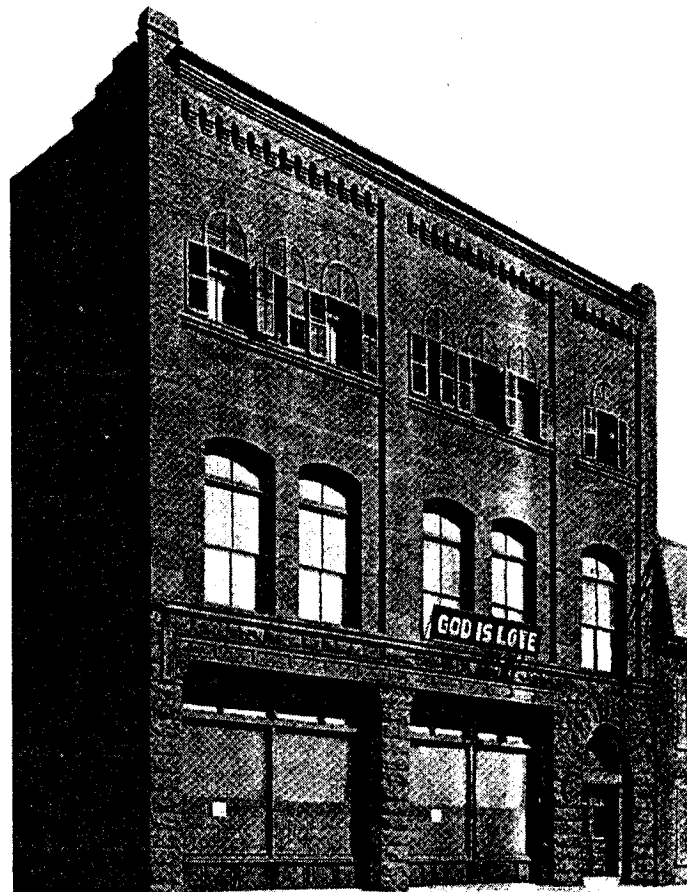
²²⁶ For location, see Figure 7.5; PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, June 1892, 2-3.

²²⁷ R.G. Macbeth, *Our Task In Canada* (Toronto: The Westminster Co. 1912), 138.

²²⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A411/1 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (Montreal, c.1898), 43. See Figure 4.2, showing the geographical distribution of members of the Inspector Street Mission in 1892.

charge of the work, concluded that the 'moral and social life of the people' was 'very low' and that there was 'room for a general evangelistic or mission work to be carried on, to much better success than a regularly organized church'.²²⁹ When the new building, designed by A.C. Hutchison, was opened on the site of the original chapel in November 1893, its functional rather than ecclesiastical appearance and layout was in keeping with this assessment of the neighbourhood (Figure 7.4). The ground floor consisted of rooms to be used for Sunday school work, prayer meetings, women's work, and other types of mission activity, while the second storey held an auditorium with a seating capacity of approximately 500. The top floor provided accommodation for the sexton and pastor.²³⁰

Figure 7.4 Inspector Street Mission (rebuilt 1893)



Source: ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A375

²²⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 31 October 1892.

²³⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A411/1 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (Montreal, c.1898), 43.

In the weeks prior to the opening of the new building, the session of the American Presbyterian Church appointed a variety of committees – visiting, home economy, relief, musical, educational, and entertainment – to organize the work that was to be carried out by uptown churchgoers at the mission.²³¹ The mission congregation continued to have representation on a board of managers of the Chapel, but growing tensions emerged as the representatives of the mission began to feel excluded from the governance of their place of worship. At one meeting, ‘the question was brought up has [sic] to wether [sic] this Board had any power or not ... has [sic] the Board has [sic] a whole present thought their [sic] were no need to come just to hear the amount of collection’.²³² Further dissatisfaction was expressed later on in 1895 when members of the board of managers once again asked the session of the American Presbyterian Church to clarify whether or not the board had any power and argued that the appointment of a permanent pastor was necessary if the membership of the chapel was to increase. Members at Inspector Street, they claimed, currently ‘feel that they have really no direct pastoral service’ and were hesitant to call on the pastor of the home church in cases of illness because he was so busy performing his duties in connection with his uptown congregation.²³³ George A. Childs, an uptown church member who was superintendent of the Inspector Street Sunday School, likewise acknowledged that the Sunday services and weekday prayer meetings were making very little progress, but emphasized that the activities that were being conducted directly by members of the home church at the mission were ‘in a flourishing condition’, with more being accomplished than ever before.²³⁴ In other words, a sort of tug-of-war was going on between members of the home church who felt that the district was better suited for mission work, and had intended that the new building be used

²³¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 166, A31 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1874-1893, 18 October 1893.

²³² ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/2 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1889-1896, 1 April 1895.

²³³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A32 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1893-1904, Letter from Mr. H. Steel, Secretary of the Board of Managers of the Inspector St Chapel, to Geo. A. Childs, dated 11 December 1895.

²³⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, A133 Minute Book of the American Presbyterian Sunday School Society 1891-1899, Annual Report of the Inspector Street School by Geo. A. Childs, Superintendent, 11 December 1895.

primarily as a vehicle through which uptown churchgoers could carry out charitable and Sunday school work amongst the poor, and a small number of local churchgoers who wished the mission to build itself up again into a subsidized 'branch' of the American Presbyterian Church, in which working-class members could exert some influence on the place of worship to which they belonged.

During the following year, the session of the American Presbyterian Church vacillated among the various options. Meetings of the board of management appear to have been discontinued at this point, and the lower floor of the building was rented in order to increase revenues.²³⁵ Following the sale of their chapel in Hochelaga to the Methodists early in 1897, the attention of the Benevolent Committee of the American Presbyterian Church returned to the Inspector Street Mission and the evangelist John Currie (who as a younger man had been permitted by Joe Beef to conduct gospel services in his famous saloon) was hired as its pastor.²³⁶ Currie seems to have succeeded in re-establishing the conditions that had existed prior to the disruption caused by the demolition of the old chapel, whereby a vibrant congregation, recruited at least in part through evangelistic and temperance efforts amongst the 'needy and neglected classes', evolved within the framework of a mission that simultaneously enabled uptown church members to participate in educational and philanthropic endeavours amongst the city's poor.²³⁷ By 1898, it was reported that the congregation was 'larger and more flourishing than at any time in its history', and the following year the minister of the American Presbyterian Church observed that the financial contributions of the downtown congregation reflected 'not only generosity but self-sacrifice'.²³⁸

²³⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A32 Session Minutes American Presbyterian Church 1893-1904, 10 November 1896.

²³⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 178, A244 Minute Book of the Benevolent Fund, 17 March 1897; Harold C. Cross, *One Hundred Years of Service With Youth: The Story of the Montreal YMCA* (Montreal, 1951), 126. For further information on Joe Beef's Tavern, see Peter DeLottinville, 'Joe Beef of Montreal: Working-Class Culture and the Tavern, 1869-1889', *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 8/9 (Autumn/Spring 1981/82), 9-40.

²³⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A411/1 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (Montreal, c.1898), 26, 43.

²³⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A411/1 *Manual of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (Montreal, c.1898), 43; A412 *Financial Reports of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal* (December 1899), Pastoral Letter from the Rev. T.S. Williams.

Congregational representation on the committee responsible for managing the mission was also reintroduced.²³⁹ Since the mission building was used by the uptown congregation as a centre for carrying out benevolent, educational, and recreational activities, this at least gave chapel members a forum for expressing their views as to whether or not certain activities were compatible with their own use of the building. In 1907, for example, a soup kitchen was organized to assist the 'floating unemployed male population' in the area, but was discontinued when the board of managers expressed the opinion that the disagreeable odour made it an unsuitable occupant of chapel space.²⁴⁰ The members and adherents at Inspector Street also took the unusual step in 1906 of lobbying to have their long-time pastor, Mr. John Currie, ordained so that he would have the right to administer the sacraments of communion and baptism and to keep registers of births, marriages, and deaths.²⁴¹ Currie had been a Christian evangelist for over thirty years at this point, and had recently conducted very successful revival meetings at Inspector Street with the assistance of Scottish evangelist Farquhar McLennan.²⁴² The petitioners argued that Currie was better qualified for ordination than many with the usual college degree, and pointed out that the chapel now had 500 adherents and over 250 members, 'most of them being added to the Lord through the teaching and testimony of our beloved Pastor and of his Christ-like walk and conversation amongst us'.²⁴³ The session of the American Presbyterian Church was very slow to respond to this petition,

²³⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/4 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1898-1915, 1 November 1898; see also 4 December 1900.

²⁴⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A421 *American Presbyterian Church Financial Reports* (December 1907), 14; P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/4 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1898-1915, 13 October 1908; 3 November 1908; 1 December 1908.

²⁴¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/4 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1898-1915, 5 June 1906; P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, 27 March 1908.

²⁴² ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, 4 April 1906.

²⁴³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, Letter from the Members of the APC in Inspector Street to the Session of the APC, dated 19 June 1906 [copied into minutes of 27 March 1908].

which contained 243 names, but authorization was eventually obtained for Currie's ordination from the Presbytery of New York in 1908.²⁴⁴

The desire of chapel members to have their minister ordained, to participate in the management of chapel affairs, and to contribute to its financing reflected Currie's success in building up a working-class congregation. Despite the many similarities between the chapel and a regular church, evangelism – as proclaimed by the 'God is Love' sign above the entrance to the building – nevertheless remained at the centre of its identity to a greater extent than was the case in most self-sustaining congregations.²⁴⁵ The Inspector Street Mission followed other religious agencies in introducing athletic activities for young people and experimenting with new types of relief work, such as fresh air schemes, in the early twentieth century, but efforts were made not to allow these activities to detract from the evangelistic side of the work.²⁴⁶ The Chapel also differed from a regular church because the building in which its congregation worshipped did not belong to them. As a result, there was no opportunity for those who moved away from the downtown neighbourhood to take the assets of the chapel with them, although the group that went on to form the Westminster Church would no doubt have been happy to do so. Thus, the loss of wealthier families to the suburbs occurred at the Inspector Street Chapel as it did at other places of worship in the neighbourhood,²⁴⁷ but did not represent a threat to institutional survival because the substantial funding and human resources provided by the American Presbyterian Church ensured that the logic of mission was free to prevail over the logic of maintenance. The ability of some chapel members to move to better neighbourhoods also reinforced the belief of conservative evangelicals that 'improvement

²⁴⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, 1 May 1908; 26 June 1908; P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/4 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1898-1915, 17 April 1908.

²⁴⁵ In 1912, Currie received the Board of Managers' permission to publish a tract entitled 'Who Owns All the Wealth?'. The content of this tract is unknown, but the title suggests that Currie, like many other pastors in working-class districts, may have combined a strong evangelical faith with a critique of contemporary capitalist practice.

²⁴⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 183, A425/2 *The American Presbyterian Church Financial Reports and Directory* (December 1911), 20.

²⁴⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS18, Fonds ISM, Contenant 128, ISM/4 Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Inspector Street Chapel 1898-1915, 9 November 1909.

of the temporal condition of the poor follows upon the reception of the gospel'.²⁴⁸ Such beliefs contrasted with those of social Christians who instead emphasized the need for churches to play a role in creating a more 'Christian environment' in downtown areas, a goal far from being realized. While the control exerted by the uptown church was at times a source of frustration to chapel leaders, evangelical agencies like the Inspector Street and the Old Brewery missions could not have survived had their message of salvation and self-improvement failed to appeal to at least a section of the working-class population.

St Mark's & the Nazareth Street Mission: Negotiating Amalgamation

As was the case in other churches in Griffintown, officials at St Mark's complained of 'the removal of so many names from the Church' and a decline in the number of allocated sittings in the period following the floods.²⁴⁹ It should be noted, however, that no dramatic fluctuations occurred in the size of the overall membership, suggesting that new people continued to join during this period.²⁵⁰ One of the main problems facing the congregation was the on-going instability of its financial situation.²⁵¹ Despite being a fully-organized church with its own minister, session, and board of management, St Mark's depended heavily on grants from the Presbytery of Montreal to survive, and in the late 1880s the Rev. John Nichols found it necessary to canvas the broader Protestant community to raise funds to reduce the church's debt.²⁵² This involved approaching the sessions of wealthy uptown congregations such as St Paul's and asking for their 'sympathy and assistance...in the crisis which has overtaken' St Mark's.²⁵³ Although the canvas was successful in eliminating the church debt, the 'hard times'

²⁴⁸ *Montreal Witness*, 19 August 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'A Close Observer'.

²⁴⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1b Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1886-1897, 11 February 1890.

²⁵⁰ Douglas Walkington, *Statistical Tables of the Churches, Missions, Finances of the Synod of Montreal & Ottawa, Presbyterian Church in Canada 1875 to 1925*, Vol. 1 (Montreal and Ottawa Conference, United Church of Canada 1977), 69.

²⁵¹ See, for example, ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1b Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1886-1897, 19 June 1888.

²⁵² *Montreal Witness*, 2 January 1889; 19 March 1889.

²⁵³ SAP, Session Minutes St Paul's Church 1881-1893, 2 December 1888.

associated with the economic depression of the 1890s, in conjunction with the cost of much-needed repairs to the church building, left St Mark's struggling to cover basic expenses.²⁵⁴ Given the changes taking place in the neighbourhood, and the competition that St Mark's faced as a result of the close proximity of the Inspector Street Chapel and Nazareth Street Mission, it seemed unlikely that the situation at St Mark's would improve in the absence of outside intervention.

This led the Presbytery of Montreal to appoint a committee to consider 'the future of Presbyterianism' in St Ann's Ward in 1895.²⁵⁵ The committee concluded that 'the time had not yet arrived for definite action', but the death of the Rev. Nichols in 1898 precipitated further discussion.²⁵⁶ Negotiations between St Mark's and the session of the Crescent Street Church (which was responsible for the Nazareth Street Mission) did not prove fruitful, leaving St Mark's free to call the Rev. Alexander King as minister.²⁵⁷ By the time he resigned only a year and a half later, the congregation had dwindled to just over 100 members, the Ladies' Aid was dormant, and it was necessary to re-mortgage the church property.²⁵⁸ The church found itself in an increasingly hostile environment, which led the board of management to seek police protection for the church on Sunday evenings.²⁵⁹ It was not unusual for Protestant churches and missions located in working-class districts to be subject to occasional disruption or vandalism.²⁶⁰ A number of more

²⁵⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1896 *The 27th Annual Report of St Mark's Church, Montreal, for 1896* (Montreal: Witness Printing House 1897), Board of Management Report, 2.

²⁵⁵ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1884-1900*, October 1895, 3. See also March 1895, 5.

²⁵⁶ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1884-1900*, October 1895, 3. See also March 1895, 5. See also June 1898, 4-5; September 1898, 8; December 1898, 8; March 1899, 13.

²⁵⁷ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1884-1900*, March 1899, 13; *Montreal Witness*, 4 October 1899.

²⁵⁸ Walkington, *Statistical Tables*, 69; ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1901 'Report of the Bd of Management of St Mark's Presbyterian Church for 1901'.

²⁵⁹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1c Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1897-1904, 11 September 1900.

²⁶⁰ St Paul's Mission in Point St Charles, for example, offered both French and English services and was under the supervision of the Rev. Charles Doudiet who was a member of the Orange Order (see *Montreal Witness*, 1 October 1879). In his annual report for 1902 he reported that attendance at the mission had improved since gratings had been placed outside the windows to protect them from having stones flung through them. Prior to this, 'timid people were afraid of getting hurt if they came; for a time, from about March 15th to July, it seemed as if the place would be utterly wrecked by miscreants in that neighbourhood.'

serious incidents did, however, occur around this time. In May 1899, the windows of Taylor Presbyterian Church in the East End were riddled with stones and bullets, leading to complaints that the police were not providing adequate protection.²⁶¹ Such actions were generally ascribed simply to the 'rowdy' element, but they may also have been a response on the part of certain elements within the Roman Catholic population to expressions of jingoistic imperialism within the Protestant community in association with the situation in the Transvaal. Vandalism was also a problem at St Mark's, as was the frequent, but presumably accidental, breakage of church windows by a neighbouring dealer in scrap metal.²⁶²

In June 1901, the Presbytery expressed 'its sympathy with the Congregation of St Mark's in their effort to maintain ordinances in the face of increasing difficulties', and appointed yet another committee 'to consider the changed circumstances of the Congregation, and the whole situation religiously, in that quarter of the city, and confer with the other Presbyterian churches who have Mission Schools and Chapels in the same neighbourhood'.²⁶³ Negotiations between St Mark's and the Crescent Street Church were embarked upon once again, resulting in a proposal for amalgamation with the Nazareth Street Mission that would have shared responsibility for financing and management between local churchgoers and uptown church members in a manner very similar to that already existing at the Inspector Street Mission.²⁶⁴ Those attending St Mark's were

The church was entered three times, locks were forced open, the desks and table in the school-room were torn down and piled in a corner, the books thrown about the floor and many of them torn. The police seemed helpless to protect us. It was no unusual thing for six to ten panes of glass to be broken in an evening. The Sunday-School children were insulted on their way home, and one was cruelly beaten. Things have been quieter since last August, and in consequence the attendance at all the services has been very encouraging' (SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1902* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1903), 27.

²⁶¹ *Montreal Witness*, 27 May 1899; 12 September 1899.

²⁶² ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1b Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1886-1897, 3 August 1896; STM/1c Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1897-1904, 27 April 1903.

²⁶³ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/3 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1895-1905, June 1901, 5.

²⁶⁴ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/3 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1895-1905, December 1901, 9-10; P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1c Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1897-1904, 4 December 1901; Contenant 336, STM/3-1901 'Report of the Bd of Management of St Mark's Presbyterian Church for 1901'. The Crescent Street Church agreed to contribute \$650 per year to the costs of the new enterprise for a period of at least seven years. James Ross, the Crescent Street elder who had founded the Nazareth Street Mission Sunday

willing to support the plan, but ruled out the possibility of moving into the Nazareth Street Mission building, even in a remodelled and enlarged form. Instead they insisted that both buildings be sold and the proceeds applied to the purchase of a new site and the erection of a new place of worship.²⁶⁵ Architectural preferences may have influenced opinions on this matter, but it is also likely that the pride and independence of those attending St Mark's made them unwilling to move into a mission-style building that had so long been associated with the charitable and missionary efforts of an uptown church. Being free to manage their own church affairs independently had traditionally differentiated the members of St Mark's from those who worshipped as part of a mission congregation, and the position taken by its trustees and session regarding the proposed merger suggests a group of individuals torn between the need for outside financial assistance and the desire to avoid the dependency experienced by those, presumably less well-off families and individuals, who worshipped in missions.

The impetus to resolve the problem of Presbyterian overchurching in Griffintown seems to have weakened in the early years of the twentieth century as the membership of St Mark's expanded once again and its financial situation improved.²⁶⁶ By the end of 1904, St Mark's once again employed a full time minister and had even progressed from receiving outside support to becoming a financially self-sustaining church.²⁶⁷ Although church leaders at St Mark's had not completely abandoned the idea of amalgamation, believing that what was needed was not 'the stimulus of unchristian rivalry but the stimulus of union', they had nevertheless resigned themselves to being 'unhappily situated where there is considerable overlapping of church and mission' and to holding their own until a suitable remedy could be found.²⁶⁸ This led St Mark's – like many other Protestant churches at this time – to devote greater attention to cultivating the recreational

School and devoted over forty years of his life to the work in Griffintown, was to become superintendent of the united Sunday schools. The plan was for the elders of St Mark's to work alongside an equal number of elders from the Crescent Street Church.

²⁶⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1c Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1897-1904, 4 December 1901.

²⁶⁶ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/3 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1895-1905, December 1902, 3; September 1903, 4; P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1903 'Report of the Secretary of the Board of Management for 1903'.

²⁶⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1904 'St Mark's Session Report 1904'.

²⁶⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1905 'St Mark's Session Report 1905'.

needs of its male constituency.²⁶⁹ A Men's Social Club began to meet in the upstairs hall of the church with the aim of bringing 'the men of the church and neighbourhood together for Social and Physical improvement' and gymnasium equipment was installed.²⁷⁰ Meanwhile, despite an average attendance of only a handful of women at its regular meetings, the Ladies' Aid Society of St Mark's managed to raise approximately one-third of the church's annual income by organizing church socials.²⁷¹ While grateful for their assistance, the board of management did not like to depend on entertainment to pay the church's bills. This type of fundraising was also difficult to sustain, especially with so few women involved, and in following years the women began to complain that their work was very 'hard and discouraging' and that it was causing their 'home duties' to be neglected.²⁷² Thus, while the situation at St Mark's had improved, congregational finances were still precarious and liable to fluctuation.

As the movement for Church Union amongst Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists gained strength on the national scale, the presence of three small Presbyterian places of worship in such close proximity to one another in the Griffintown district became an embarrassment. This led the Presbytery of Montreal to raise the question of amalgamation yet again in 1910, but this time it proposed that the Inspector Street Mission also be included in a united congregation.²⁷³ While there was general agreement that the district was overchurched and that none of the buildings had the full 'equipment' needed to operate effectively, it again proved difficult to obtain a

²⁶⁹ For a discussion of the Nazareth Street Mission's activities in relation to the early twentieth century 'crisis of masculinity' within the churches, see Perry, *Manliness, Goodness, and God*, 69-77.

²⁷⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1906 'Report of Men's Social Club', n.d. The report states that the club was started on the 22 September 1907. An earlier, less formal, men's club also existed. See Contenant 335, STM/1c Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1897-1904, 2 November 1903; 9 November 1903.

²⁷¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1906 'Board of Management Report for 1906'.

²⁷² ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1908 'Secretary's Report of the Ladies Aid Society'.

²⁷³ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/5 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, June 1910, 406; November 1910, 431; P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1e Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1909-1915, 14 October 1910.

consensus.²⁷⁴ Members of the American Presbyterian Church were sympathetic to the movement in theory, but did not feel able to endorse the Presbytery's vision of a union between the Inspector Street Mission and St Mark's in which the mission's more secular-looking building would be transformed into an 'institute' catering to the social, spiritual, and recreational needs of the surrounding community, while St Mark's more church-like building would serve as a common place of worship.²⁷⁵ The Presbytery Committee on Church Work in Griffintown then put together a detailed proposal that recommended a union of the Nazareth Street Mission and St Mark's along similar lines to those contemplated in 1901, except that this time it was the Nazareth Street congregation that was to lose its building.²⁷⁶ While the congregation of St Mark's agreed to this proposal, those at the Nazareth Street Mission refused, despite assurances that they were 'to be admitted on an equality of position and privilege with the members of St Mark's'.²⁷⁷ Such comments suggest, once again, that differences in social status between the two congregations, as well as attachment to their own ministers and places of worship, may have been an issue. As a result, negotiations were broken off once more and St Mark's requested that the Nazareth Street Mission be removed from Griffintown and placed in a district where 'overlapping' was not such a problem.²⁷⁸

With concerns about the changes taking place in downtown districts gaining greater prominence at both the local and national levels, the Presbytery of Montreal finally organized a 'Committee on the Downtown Problem' to take responsibility for the Griffintown situation as well as deal with other issues such as the need for 'redemptive

²⁷⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, 2 November 1910.

²⁷⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS14, Fonds APC, Contenant 165, A33 Minutes of the American Presbyterian Church Session 1904-1913, 17 February 1911.

²⁷⁶ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1911 Report of a meeting of the congregation of St Mark's Presbyterian Church to consider uniting with the Nazareth St. Mission, dated 25 March 1911.

²⁷⁷ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1911 Report of a meeting of the congregation of St Mark's Presbyterian Church to consider uniting with the Nazareth St. Mission, dated 25 March 1911. See also Contenant 335, STM/2b Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1909-1926, 1 June 1911.

²⁷⁸ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2b Session Minutes St Mark's Church, 1 June 1911.

work' amongst young women.²⁷⁹ Further developments in Griffintown ensued. In 1912 it was announced that the Crescent Street Church had sold the Nazareth Street Mission property to the Canadian Northern Railway, and was thinking of erecting a new building in 'the growing working class district of Point St Charles'.²⁸⁰ While a desire to show a cooperative spirit and further the aims of Presbyterianism at large may have encouraged the uptown congregation to sell its old mission building, other factors, including 'the changing character of the district' and 'the migration of the population westwards' also appear to have had an influence.²⁸¹ This provided an opportunity for the Committee on the Downtown Problem to promote its goal of making 'institutional work' part of the life of all congregations, using St Mark's as a trial.²⁸² As one of the city's wealthiest Protestant congregations, St Paul's Church was recruited to make this possible by assisting St Mark's financially, upgrading the church's facilities, and helping to extend mission work in the Griffintown area.²⁸³ In return, St Paul's was to be given representation 'in a consultative capacity' on the session and board of management at St Mark's.²⁸⁴

The need for diplomacy when engaging in this type of arrangement between two independent congregations of such unequal socio-economic status was evident in the remarks made by the minister of St Paul's, the Rev. Dr Bruce Taylor, to a joint meeting of the sessions of the two congregations. He emphasized that 'there was no desire to suggest interference with the status or independence of St Mark's as a self-sustaining congregation'. It was 'simply that St Paul's wanted an outlet for its activities, while St

²⁷⁹ ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/5 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, January 1912, 530; March 1912, 548.

²⁸⁰ *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912. My thanks to Janis Zubalik for drawing my attention to this article.

²⁸¹ *Montreal Witness*, 10 September 1912.

²⁸² ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/5 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, January 1912, 530.

²⁸³ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1912* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1913), 11; ANQ, P602, Fonds Eglise Presbyterian, Contenant 53, P/9/5 Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal 1909-1914, September 1912, 583.

²⁸⁴ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/2b Session Minutes St Mark's Church, Joint Meeting of Session and Managers, 10 November 1912.

Mark's might be able to extend its work with a little assistance'.²⁸⁵ Similar discretion was required on the part of St James the Apostle Anglican Church when its downtown mission on St Antoine Street was merged with St Jude's Church in 1914. As was the case with St Paul's and St Mark's, St James the Apostle agreed to provide St Jude's with additional financial and human resources in the hope that this would allow it to embark on 'a new era of usefulness' by expanding its relief work, as well as enhancing its recreational and educational programmes.²⁸⁶ The assistant minister at St Jude's, whose stipend was paid by the uptown congregation, was pleased to report to his sponsors that 'our mission people have been made real parishioners', but he also observed that it was 'difficult to write a report of work which is connected with a self-supporting church like St Jude's':

I do not wish to give the impression that St Jude's is not independent. The ordinary expenses are met by the offerings of the people. But for anything extra we must appeal to the more favoured congregations. There are many urgent needs which we cannot supply ourselves. Let me mention the two most pressing ones. [W]e badly need a Parish house with gymnasium and club rooms. Are there not two or three dozen families in St James the Apostle Church who by putting their heads and hearts and purses together could build us a Club House?... And secondly we need a paid woman worker, who will take over all the women's work and visit among the poor and undertake the rescue work. We shall never do this part of our work properly until we have such a worker.²⁸⁷

Such requests reflected an awareness on the part of church leaders of the need to avoid offending the dignity of downtown churchgoers who did not wish to be seen as beneficiaries of the charity of the wealthy.

At the same time, it was recognized that the revenues of downtown churches were usually insufficient to do much more than maintain their building and pay their minister's stipend, leaving little left over to assist the poor in the neighbourhood or provide facilities that would enable their churches to exert an improving influence on the surrounding social or physical environment. It was for this reason that the Presbytery of Montreal had introduced extra-parochial measures in order to improve its ability to reach out to the

²⁸⁵ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1e Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1909-1915, 10 November 1912.

²⁸⁶ *The Montreal Churchman*, 3(1) (November 1914), 8; SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, 28 September 1914.

²⁸⁷ SJA, Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942, Eighth Annual Report, signed G.O.T. Bruce, no date (but must be c.1916) [inserted in book].

city's poor in the mid-1890s. As well as employing a city missionary, a system had been instituted whereby stronger congregations were grouped with those that were financially weaker, 'with a view to looking after the wants of the poor in a district of the city assigned to them'.²⁸⁸ This was not a particularly novel plan, since congregations like Crescent Street and American Presbyterian were simply grouped with their respective missions.²⁸⁹ With the move away from traditional missions and the growing popularity of the institutional church model in the early twentieth century, however, certain congregations that had previously supported their own missions were willing instead to assist independent churches in downtown areas. Professional church workers and recreational and sporting facilities were seen as having an important role to play in institutional church work, but were only affordable to congregations like St Jude's and St Mark's because of the outside assistance they received. Despite efforts to make these contributions more palatable to those who derived satisfaction from being able to support their own churches, the fact remained that they tended to blur the boundary between church and mission and made downtown churches heavily dependent on voluntary funding provided by uptown churches on a year to year basis.

It was therefore understandable that church officials at St Mark's were anxious to keep the level of assistance required from St Paul's as low as possible. They nevertheless expressed relief that their church, 'after years of effort to maintain gospel ordinances and retain her place in a down-town district', was 'now strengthened and enabled to enlarge her sphere of work through the promise of St Paul's Church to assist and co-operate in the Church's undertakings'.²⁹⁰ They were particularly pleased when 'the generosity of a lady member of St Paul's Church' as well as of other uptown church members led to the fitting up of a room in which the men and boys of the congregation could spend their evenings, as well as the donation of a player piano, reading material, and games.²⁹¹ Further improvements were postponed, however, due to uncertainty as to whether the church

²⁸⁸ SAP, *St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31st December, 1895* (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson 1896), 17. See also PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900*, January 1895, 9.

²⁸⁹ PCL, *Minutes of Meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal (of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) 1884-1900* (October 1895), 9-10.

²⁹⁰ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1912 'Session Report for 1912'.

²⁹¹ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 336, STM/3-1912 'Session Report for 1912'.

property would be affected by the Canadian Northern Railway's activities in the district, demonstrating once again the difficulties that were experienced by congregations that remained in the downtown parts of the city during this period of urban transformation.²⁹² In 1916, the Nazareth Street Mission opted to merge with St Mark's, to form 'St Mark's United Church', rather than moving across the canal to Point St Charles. The negotiated agreement amongst the various parties led to a deaconess being hired to work in the surrounding district, and also resulted in the emergence of an even more complex financing and management structure involving both St Paul's and the Crescent Street Church.²⁹³

In terms of the Presbyterian presence in Griffintown, what had therefore emerged were two places of worship that were jointly supported, and to some extent jointly managed, by uptown and downtown church members, but which were nevertheless quite different from one another. While evangelism and revivalism remained a central goal of the Inspector Street Mission, the co-operative effort engaged in by St Paul's, Crescent Street, and St Mark's United Church was more focused on sustaining congregational life in the downtown neighbourhood. Much of the assistance provided to St Mark's consisted of straightforward financial aid, while efforts were also undertaken to make the church more attractive to working-class churchgoers by improving the social and recreational facilities that were available. Charitable endeavours previously carried out by the uptown churches through their missions continued to be carried out by wealthy church members or else by the professionals they employed. Had it been viable to do so, St Mark's (like the Mountain Street Methodist Church) would almost certainly have opted to retain its original status as a fully-independent church, since the pride of its members made outside interference in its affairs unpalatable. Nevertheless, the changes taking place in the downtown neighbourhood compounded the difficulties associated with St Mark's never-ending struggle to make ends meet in the face of competition from two active Presbyterian missions, forcing the congregation to accept outside help. In their turn, St

²⁹² ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1e Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1909-1915, 14 January 1912; 21 January 1912; STM/2b Session Minutes St Mark's Church 1909-1926, 10 November 1912.

²⁹³ ANQ, P603, S2, SS101, Fonds STM, Contenant 335, STM/1f Minutes of the Board of Management of St Mark's Church 1915-1924, 3 January 1916 [written as 1915 by mistake].

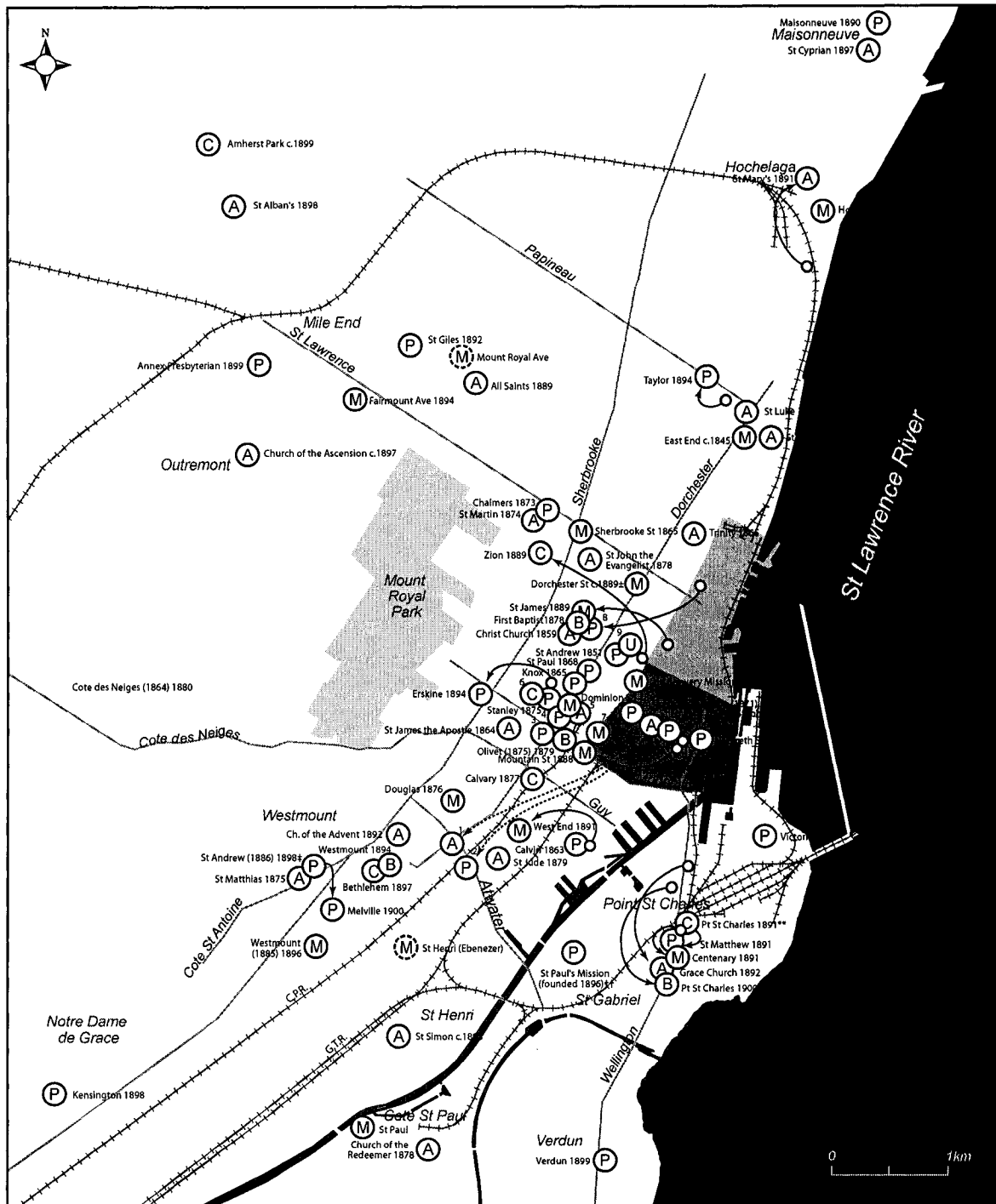
Paul's and the Crescent Street Church were responding to the Presbytery of Montreal's demand that the overlapping in Griffintown be eliminated as a demonstration of Presbyterian cooperation. The emphasis on recreational facilities was something of a new departure, but on the whole the level of commitment to improving the surrounding downtown environment or resolving the social problems experienced by downtown dwellers does not appear to have changed radically. It was evidently hoped, however, that the amalgamation of Presbyterian places of worship in Griffintown, accompanied by cooperation between uptown churches, would improve the efficiency of their work in the lower part of the city and allow them to do a better job of alleviating the symptoms of poverty through more effective charitable endeavours. Such efforts reflected the general tendency in all mainline denominations to move towards more centralized and bureaucratic solutions as a means of coping with the scale of the work that needed to be done in a rapidly-growing city. Thus, while St Mark's United Church was perhaps the closest thing to an institutional church that emerged in the Griffintown district, evidence suggests that it was inspired more by pragmatism than by the breaking-through of an idealistic new social order.

Church Extension in a Rapidly Growing City

While diverse opinions existed within the Protestant community as to how best to serve the social and religious needs of downtown neighbourhoods, establishing a concerted response to the 'downtown problem' was also hindered by the heavy demands that were simultaneously being placed upon uptown congregations to assist with church extension efforts in Montreal's rapidly expanding suburban districts (see Figures 7.5 and 7.6). Those moving to suburbs like Westmount had the resources and management skills required to build new churches with little, if any, outside assistance. In contrast, church leaders came to the conclusion that those moving into the newer industrial working-class suburbs were not in a position to buy land and erect churches on their own behalf. There was also concern that many of the British working-class immigrants arriving in Montreal at this time were only nominal members of Anglican, Presbyterian, and other denominations, and it was therefore feared that a failure to integrate them into congregational life would lead to a growth in the proportion of the working class

Figure 7.5 English Protestant Church and Mission Buildings in 1900, Showing Moves 1881-1900

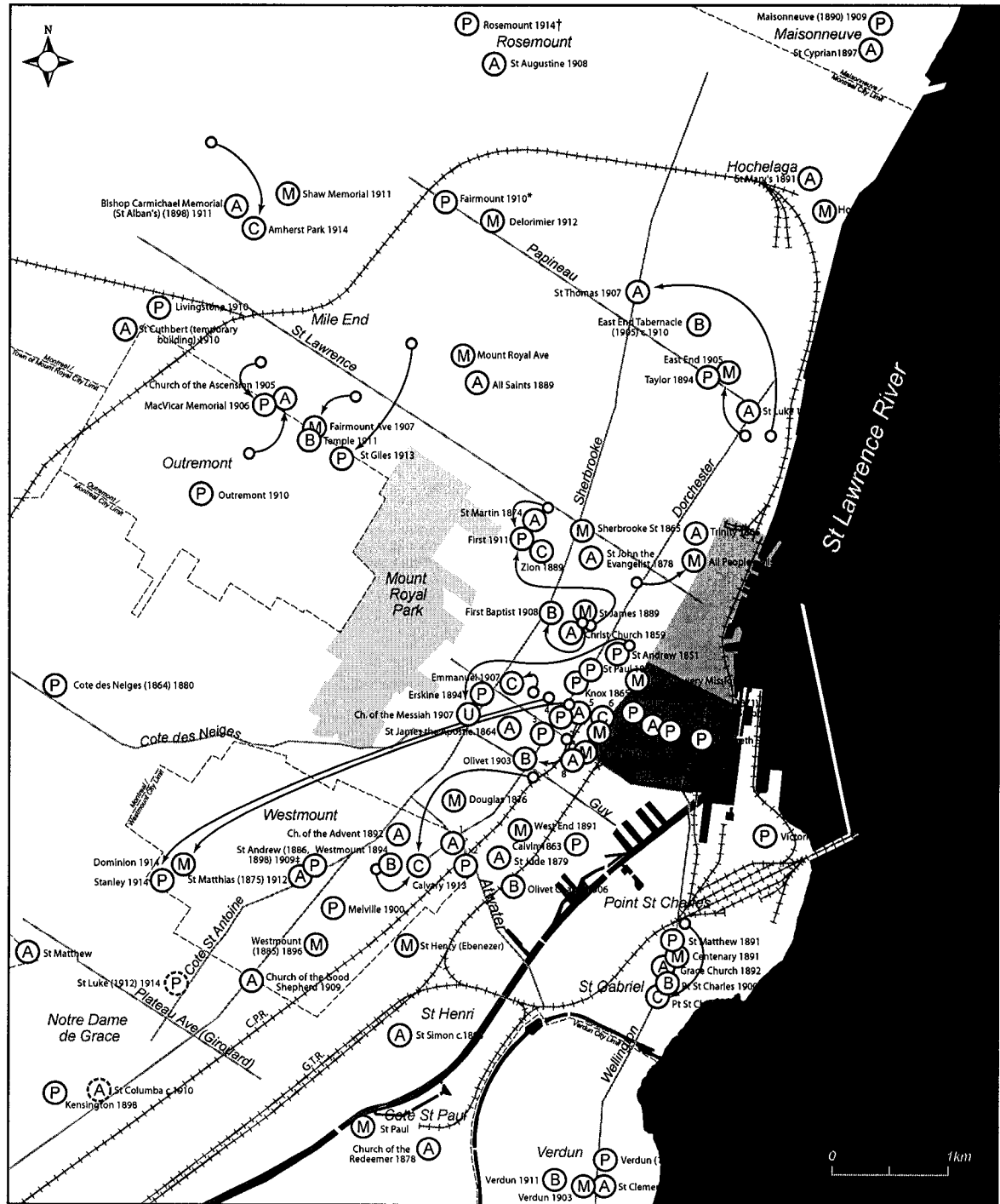
[Note that only Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, and Unitarian churches are shown; rented accommodation is not shown]



Sources: MAP Project; Database of Protestant Churches in Montreal 1760-1914 (created by author)

Figure 7.6 English Protestant Church and Mission Buildings in 1914, Showing Moves 1901-1914

[Note that only Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, and Unitarian churches are shown; rented accommodation is not shown]



Sources: MAP Project; Database of Protestant Churches in Montreal 1760-1914 (created by author)

population that was considered to be permanently lost to the Church and perhaps to all religious influences.²⁹⁴ The scale of the problem resulted in efforts being made within all the leading denominations to design more effective ways of mobilizing resources, which tended to increase the extent to which church extension was planned and financed by denominational bodies acting with the entire city in mind.

Given the 'silent river of life' that was pouring into Montreal from rural Canada and the mother country during the early years of the twentieth century, the implementation of this plan called for a substantial commitment of resources on the part of wealthy uptown congregations.²⁹⁵ Between 1891 and 1911, the Protestant population of Montreal and surrounding suburbs grew from approximately 60,000 to 105,000, with all the growth after 1900 occurring in suburban areas lying outside the boundaries of the old City of Montreal as they had existed prior to the municipal annexations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.²⁹⁶ An important segment of those arriving from overseas during this period were British artisans and mechanics seeking employment in Montreal's expanding railway shops, textile mills, and other large industries that were creating new working-class communities in areas like Verdun, Rosemount, Hochelaga, and Maisonneuve.²⁹⁷ The Anglican Church was most affected by these developments, since those from England made up a large proportion of new arrivals. In 1891, for example, it was observed that at least half of the nearly 3,000 Protestants who had immigrated to Montreal during the previous year belonged to the Church of England, which led church leaders to conclude that 'such an emigration, encouraged and fostered by the Church, cannot fail in time to increase her influence and responsibility largely in the city'.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ See, for example, *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 37.

²⁹⁵ *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1907), Bishop James Carmichael's Charge, 27.

²⁹⁶ *Census of Canada*, 1891, 1901, 1911. The Protestant population living within the old City of Montreal actually declined by approx. 3,500 during this period.

²⁹⁷ Lloyd G. Reynolds, *The British Immigrant: His Social and Economic Adjustment in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1935), 118-119.

²⁹⁸ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Canada* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1891), Report of the Deanery of Montreal by James Carmichael, 116.

The advent of electric street car services in the early 1890s also encouraged the rapid development of Montreal's suburban hinterland and the dramatic expansion of the territory that needed to be provided with places of worship. In his address to the Synod in 1907, Bishop James Carmichael argued that 'the weak spot at present in the diocese lies in the suburbs of the city of Montreal'.²⁹⁹ He observed that, prior to the 'magical influence of trolly (sic) cars on the population', suburban growth had been 'slow and measured in its step', making it comparatively easy to keep up with the need for new church accommodation. The 'step' having become a 'stride', the contemporary situation was perceived as more challenging.³⁰⁰ While additional problems were posed by the scattered nature of Protestant settlement in the eastern and heavily Roman Catholic parts of the city in particular, the street cars did at least make it possible to bring individuals belonging to any given denomination together from a much larger 'catchment' area than in the past, which meant that many of the new suburban churches were built in close proximity to street car lines.³⁰¹

Suburban church extension was a less controversial topic than the downtown problem, and uptown churchgoers espousing the whole range of social ideologies and religious orientations could agree that it was an issue requiring immediate and concerted action. One aspect of suburban church extension that worked in its favour when competing with the 'downtown problem' for resources was that it was easier to argue that only temporary assistance would be required, since it was anticipated that the rapid expansion of suburban districts would enable many of the new churches to become self-sustaining in the near future. Linked to this was the argument that it was the more independent and industrious members of the working classes who were moving to the suburbs, and that in doing so they were demonstrating that the problems of overcrowded and unsanitary housing conditions in downtown areas could be resolved by the workers

²⁹⁹ *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1907), Bishop James Carmichael's Charge, 27. This information is also discussed in Markell, *Canadian Protestantism*, 604-605.

³⁰⁰ *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1907), Bishop James Carmichael's Charge, 27.

³⁰¹ On the problem of the scattered nature of Protestant settlement in Montreal, see *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 37. Harold C. Cross discusses the problems that this posed for choosing sites for YMCA extension in the East End of Montreal (*One Hundred Years of Service*, 229).

themselves. In 1910, Mr. Griffith, a workingman participating in Montreal City Improvement League's discussion of housing problems, drew attention to the:

praiseworthy efforts that were being made at present by industrious and self-respecting working men and women who were solving the slum problem by migrating from the slums to the outlying districts in the North while land was still fairly cheap. There they were building their little cottages with their own hands so that their children might have God's sunlight and fresh air, and thus grow up strong and effective citizens of the future.³⁰²

The five prosperous churches that had lined themselves up along Wellington Street in the older industrial suburb of Point St Charles were often cited as evidence that successful Protestant churches did not necessarily have to be limited to wealthy neighbourhoods.³⁰³

The author of the *Montreal Standard* series, discussed in Chapter 6, made one foray into Point St Charles, taking the street car out along Wellington Street to attend Centenary Methodist Church. The church sanctuary was described as 'a good, substantial, and commodious hall, or auditorium' having been built 'for a matter-of-fact, plain, commercial age', but it was the congregation that most impressed the writer:

Point St Charles does not breed loafers. It is essentially the locality for a large number of good honest, hard workers. So the congregation of Centenary Methodist was almost entirely made of these types. There were poor, and there were prosperous families there. None of them, I fancy, above the present pinch of the high cost of living. For they were the makers of Canada the great hive which is building up by their hands and sweat, the commercial prestige of Canada. Mechanics, artisans, technical workers down to mere day laborers were present. And it is a striking testimony to the efficacy of the church that so many were present at a Sunday morning service.³⁰⁴

Given the known presence in Montreal of 'slums as bad as any European city', the author was also pleased to find that the congregation was 'sound of teeth and eyes' and

³⁰² CIHM 72003, *For A Better Montreal: Report of the First Convention of the City Improvement League* (Montreal, 1910), 44.

³⁰³ This was one of the issues that was debated in the *Montreal Witness* as part of the controversy stirred up by the Rev. W.D. Reid's sermon. See, for example, *Montreal Witness*, 15 July 1899, Letter to the Editor signed 'H.N.C.'. In response, 'Workingman' agrees that there are six prosperous and well-filled churches in Point St Charles, but argues that this is not relevant because H.N.C. 'does not tell us of the large percentage of women, children and clerks in those congregations. Neither does he give figures showing the small percentage they contain of the 20,000 people in that part of the city, which if he were to gather figures to show the percentage of the workingmen in Point St Charles in these congregations, such figures would show that... the great majority of workingmen in Canadian cities are no longer loyal to the Church' (*Montreal Witness*, 22 July 1899).

³⁰⁴ *Montreal Standard*, 17 January 1914.

'uncontaminated by the muddy-complexioned, thin-blooded sections of a big city's life'.³⁰⁵ It was the image of this type of congregation that church leaders tried to conjure up when promoting church extension in suburban districts. Thus, when providing those at St George's Church with an update on Anglican church building projects then underway in the suburbs of Montreal in 1908, the Rev. J.J. Willis (the 'Bishop's Missionary') emphasized that:

The class of people for whom this work is being done are well worthy of present assistance. They are generally mechanics who earn good wages, who have bought lots of land on the instalment plan, and are erecting small, comfortable homes - i.e. they are putting rent into planks, bricks and concrete. They are thrifty, independent, and of course, permanent parishioners.³⁰⁶

A general consensus on the part of the uptown churches that suburban church extension was an important undertaking, combined with positive depictions of those requiring assistance, made it relatively easy to generate cooperative approaches to church extension within any given denomination. This did not, however, eliminate competition amongst the various denominations. While the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists attempted to prevent wastage of money and duplication of effort after 1912 by establishing the Interdenominational Committee of Montreal (discussed in Chapter 5), it is clear from Figure 7.6 that overlapping had already arisen in a number of suburban districts. Meanwhile, the Anglicans continued to work independently, anxious to ensure that those who belonged to the Anglican Church did not, through neglect, become 'the prey of Dissent'.³⁰⁷

Despite the large numbers of churches that had been built, rebuilt, or enlarged in the pre-war period, Bishop John Farthing still maintained in his pastoral address to the Synod in 1914 that the Church faced 'an appalling problem' in suburban districts.³⁰⁸ In

³⁰⁵ *Montreal Standard*, 17 January 1914.

³⁰⁶ *St George's Monthly*, 1(7) (April 1908), 7. For the expression of similar views, see *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 37; and ANQ, P603, S2, SS13, Fonds EMM, EMM/1/2 Board of Trustees Correspondence 1908-1914, Letter from A.R. Grafton to Mr Charles Gurd, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, dated 21 March 1913.

³⁰⁷ *The Montreal Churchman*, 1(9) (July 1913), 4.

³⁰⁸ *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 37. See also *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1913), Bishop John Farthing's Charge.

spite of the greater consensus that existed on the topic of church extension, this project ultimately faced the same fundamental dilemma as did the resolution of the 'downtown problem' and most other altruistic endeavours funded by voluntary contributions. While better-off Protestants in Montreal could be persuaded to contribute generously to the work of the Church out of a sense of duty, Christian charity, or a desire for social harmony, it was nevertheless rare for such funds to be oversubscribed. In his 1914 address to the Synod, Bishop Farthing went on to examine the question of 'What hinders the Church from going forward to seize upon this great opportunity of serving men, and more firmly establishing the Kingdom of God?'.³⁰⁹ Drawing on a traditional Christian theme, one of his conclusions was that the desire for riches and the love of money had 'contaminated' the present generation, leading to purely selfish expenditure on 'personal comforts and luxuries' and 'social pleasures and entertainments', an accusation from which many members of the uptown churches were not entirely immune.³¹⁰ Such disbursements, he argued, could not be justified from a Christian perspective and diverted wealth from being used as 'a great power for service'.³¹¹ This perspective placed the growing work that the churches felt called upon to undertake in terms of social service and church extension throughout the city, not to mention commitments to mission elsewhere in Canada and overseas, in direct competition with a burgeoning capitalist consumer culture. It was partly for this reason, and in recognition of the growing needs of the age, that social Christians hoped that the preaching of the 'true Christian' message would lead to 'changed hearts' and ultimately the emergence of a 'communal conscience...purged of selfishness'.³¹² Given the lack of consensus concerning these issues within the Protestant churches, and potential limitations regarding the extent to which society could in fact be purged of its selfishness (or sinfulness) in light of human nature, this exposed the churches to the danger of creating spiritual and material expectations that they were not

³⁰⁹ *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 39.

³¹⁰ *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 42.

³¹¹ *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal* (Montreal: John Lovell and Son 1914), Bishop John Farthing's Charge, 42-44.

³¹² *Montreal Witness*, 3 July 1909. Marxists believed that a similar outcome could be achieved by applying appropriate methods of education to the general populace.

able to fulfil. It also failed to address the demands of those who wished to see a system established in which the labouring classes would receive a more 'just' reward for their labour, eliminating the need for social service work, except in the case of the 'helpless' poor, and making it possible for working people to build and support their own churches, should they choose to do so.

Conclusions

Because of its emphasis on social action rather than on specific beliefs, the success of social Christianity depended heavily on its ability to achieve visible and concrete results involving not just the transformation of individuals, but also the transformation and improvement of society as a whole. Most of the outcomes that social Christians hoped to inspire were largely outside the direct scope of the churches to implement, but it was nevertheless believed that the churches - given their importance as key institutions in Canadian society - had the ability to make a substantial contribution to meeting the varied social and recreational needs of the city. This was considered to be particularly true in downtown areas like Griffintown, which were deteriorating as residential neighbourhoods, leaving local congregations struggling to make ends meet. As this chapter has demonstrated, however, the transformation of downtown religious institutions envisaged by champions of social Christianity was never implemented very effectively on the ground, whether in Griffintown or in other Canadian cities.³¹³ This was largely due to the lack of an agreed-upon understanding of the principal causes of urban social problems amongst uptown churchgoers and the presence of people living in both the uptown and downtown districts who continued to believe that more narrowly-defined religious activities such as worship and evangelism should be the primary *raison d'être* of a place of worship.

The fact that Protestant religious institutions adapted in a variety of different ways to the changes taking place around them in Griffintown, but rarely in ways that embodied social Christianity's commitment to promoting universal brotherhood and a more

³¹³ Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*, 90-91. Small numbers of specialized evangelical social settlements were introduced under the auspices of national bodies like the Presbyterian Board of Social Service and Evangelism during this period. These settlements implemented social service work that was similar to that proposed for the institutional churches.

equitable distribution of resources within society, created an image problem for its advocates. Particularly troublesome was the very visible way in which social differences remained firmly entrenched in the bricks and mortar of the mainline Protestant churches in Montreal. When increasing spatial segregation along class lines had led, in the 1850s and 1860s, to the emergence of a Protestant religious landscape characterized by wide variations in the type and quality of religious accommodation available to different groups in society, few had questioned the appropriateness of having places of worship that reflected the social status of those worshipping within. Part of the thinking that lay behind the concept of the institutional church, however, was the belief that this imbalance needed to be addressed in order to lend credibility to the message of social Christianity. Thus, individuals like the Rev. Hugh Pedley hoped that inter-denominational cooperation and the investment of resources in downtown neighbourhoods would lead to the creation of larger, more multi-functional, and better-equipped institutional churches. The dispute that arose over St Edward's Anglican Church and the decision by the American Presbyterian Church to replace their old chapel in Griffintown with an edifice that more clearly defined itself as a mission building made it clear, however, that it was still widely accepted that places of worship should be in keeping with the means of the people who worshipped inside. Similar thinking was also reflected in the decision on the part of uptown Methodists to build a specialized evangelical rescue mission to supplement the work being carried out in downtown areas, while setting aside the idea of erecting a Central Hall. Despite a partially-successful effort on the part of Presbyterian church leaders to amalgamate Presbyterian interests in Griffintown with a view to providing one substantial and well-equipped place of worship, there was otherwise very little evidence at this stage of the more general inter-denominational cooperation that many felt was required to erect church facilities that would adequately provide for the social and religious needs of the neighbourhood and at the same time reduce the contrast between the quality of church accommodation available in uptown and downtown districts. The buildings belonging to the various missions and churches that served Griffintown and the surrounding area instead continued to reflect the status of the group or groups they were designed to serve.

St Edward's (the old St Stephen's) Church stood out as an imposing anomaly, but the circumstances surrounding its survival simply drew attention to the extent to which Protestant churches continued to be regarded as the private property of their better-off members rather than as institutions dedicated to serving the surrounding community. While the sale of downtown churches had long been considered an acceptable response on the part of congregations that were losing their wealthier members to more prosperous uptown neighbourhoods, it was recognized by advocates of social Christianity that the removal of resources from areas that could no longer afford to support a church on their own failed to model the mutual cooperation that they were arguing was required to resolve the city's social problems. Although a number of congregations abandoned their places of worship in Griffintown during this period, it was the move by the congregation of St Stephen's Church that proved the most controversial. In the case of the Inspector Street Mission, those that left in the 1890s to form a new congregation were unable to take the assets of their place of worship with them because the building belonged to the American Presbyterian Church. While the decision on the part of the Ottawa Street Methodist Church to sell its old building and move farther uptown following the floods was viewed critically by some, the relatively short distance of the move and the fact that the church remained accessible to all elements of its original congregation mitigated its impact. In contrast, the decision by clerical and lay leaders within the Anglican Church to support the ownership rights of the group that had chosen to relocate to a new site in lower Westmount, erupted into controversy. The fact that the ultimate survival of St Edward's Church was the result of a battle fought out in the civil courts, rather than a manifestation of generosity on the part of the more prosperous group of congregation members that had decided to move uptown, meant that the case served more than anything else as a demonstration of the challenges that social Christianity was seeking to overcome both in the church and in society at large.

In their eagerness to address the needs of downtown areas and to reduce the starkness of the contrast between uptown and downtown places of worship, middle-class advocates of institutional churches also failed to distinguish adequately between the poor and members of the 'respectable' working classes, and to recognize that the latter often had no more of a desire to worship within institutions geared towards the uplift of

downtown neighbourhoods than they had been in the past to associate themselves with missions supported by uptown churchgoers. This represented a failure to grasp that for many working-class churchgoers, it was not necessarily the buildings themselves that were important, but the independence of being able to support a minister and place of worship without substantial outside assistance. The ability to do so had traditionally differentiated congregations like St Mark's and Mountain Street Methodist from their more mission-oriented neighbours, and enabled members to define their congregational identities independently of the uptown churches. The right to self-determination was therefore zealously guarded, even when congregations were subject to financial strain as a result. As a result, those at the Mountain Street Methodist Church rejected an overture which would have seen their church unite with another downtown Methodist congregation to form an institutional church. While the congregation of St Mark's Church eventually accepted assistance from uptown congregations, the decision was ultimately made on the basis of financial necessity, rather than out of enthusiasm for the improved facilities and services that were being offered to them. A concerted effort was made to retain its institutional independence to the greatest degree possible under the circumstances. Such feelings on the part of committed churchgoers in downtown areas were another factor working against the creation of the types of institutions envisaged by middle-class social Christians. At the same time, continued interest in evangelical missions sponsored by uptown churchgoers, such as the Old Brewery Mission and the Inspector Street Mission, reflected the fact that elements within the poor and working classes were still drawn to traditional evangelical preaching and the call for personal conversion.

The inability of social Christians to mould downtown religious institutions in the image of their ideals tended to undermine confidence in the optimistic assertion that the Protestant churches would prove effective instruments for rapidly transfiguring society as a whole. The absence of dramatic improvements in the physical and social conditions of districts like Griffintown likewise made pronouncements concerning the potential of the 'changed heart' to bring about change ring somewhat hollow, leading individuals like Miss Church to question whether the current fashion for talking about social reform, the

brotherhood of man, and social service amounted to 'very much more than talk'.³¹⁴ This is not to deny the validity of Christie and Gauvreau's argument that those speaking on behalf of the churches had an important influence on social policy in Canada in the early twentieth century.³¹⁵ Ministers and other professional church workers played a significant role in making uptown Protestant Montrealers more aware of the social problems confronting those living in downtown areas, and in the longer term provided support for the 'new' liberal project by convincing large sectors of the community that individualistic approaches were incapable of resolving the more complex social problems facing urban dwellers in the twentieth century. Social Christians also challenged others to think about the need to maintain the bonds of compassion amongst different social classes at a time when contacts between these groups were becoming less immediate and personal, and drew attention to the issue of the uneven distribution of wealth within the churches as well as within society at large. In the short-term, however, large numbers of church members remained indifferent to the ideals of social Christianity.³¹⁶ The Protestant Church's dependence on businessmen and professionals for financial support and lay leadership also contributed to its timidity when dealing with social and economic matters in its corporate capacity.³¹⁷ It was therefore inevitable that these groups would continue to have an important influence on the ways in which the churches and missions in downtown districts responded to the physical and social changes taking place around them. What was ultimately demonstrated by efforts to graft social Christianity onto downtown religious institutions was the impossibility of achieving a coherent social outcome within a framework in which a range of small institutions each reacted according to the religious, moral, and socio-economic convictions of those who provided them with financial support on a voluntary basis.

³¹⁴ STG, *St George's Monthly*, 3(6) (March 1910), Annual Report by Miss Lena Church, Parish Nurse, 18.

³¹⁵ Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.

³¹⁶ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/38 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1913-14*, Vol. 41 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1913), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by the Rev. G. Ellery Read of Sherbrooke, Quebec, his subject being 'The Church's Obstacles and Opportunities', 35.

³¹⁷ ANQ, P600, Fonds Eglise Congregationalist, Contenant 3, C/1/38 *The Canadian Congregational Yearbook 1913-14*, Vol. 41 (Toronto: Congregational Publishing Co. 1913), Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of Canada by the Rev. G. Ellery Read of Sherbrooke, Quebec, his subject being 'The Church's Obstacles and Opportunities', 32.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

Determined to be in all ways the complete tourist, I took a rough preliminary survey of Montreal in an 'observation-car'.... The outcome of it all was a vague general impression that Montreal consists of banks and churches. The people of this city spend much of their time in laying up their riches in this world or the next.

- Rupert Brooke, 1913¹

The natural topography of Montreal has provided a dramatic setting for this story of church building and relocation by the city's Protestant middle and upper classes. While few other North American cities were supplied with the rising terraces and mountain backdrop that displayed the residences and churches of Montreal's Protestant elite to such advantage, and provided such a striking contrast with 'the city below the hill', the processes taking place were nevertheless very similar. By examining the impact of building decisions on the 'domestic' and 'public' ministries of Montreal's leading Protestant congregations, this study has provided insights into nineteenth- and early twentieth-century congregational life and into the beliefs, aspirations, and ideals that inspired middle- and upper-class churchgoers. It has also made it possible to explore the ways in which congregations responded to the significant urban, social, and theological changes that occurred over the course of the two periods covered by this study. While complex interactions of exogenous forces, both material and spiritual, affected the choices that were made, the institutional approach adopted here suggests that congregations should not be seen as passive entities responding to outside forces over which they had little or no control. The uptown relocation of churches and the decision to invest so heavily in the building of large numbers of monumental edifices had far-reaching consequences not just for the uptown congregations, but for Protestantism in the city as a whole. One of the most significant outcomes was the extent to which the buildings themselves became central actors in the drama of congregational life.

This study has demonstrated the benefits to be derived from engaging in local congregational studies that integrate a variety of methodological approaches and are

¹ Sandra Martin and Roger Hall, eds., *Rupert Brooke in Canada* (Toronto: PMA Books 1978), 24.

based on a range of qualitative and quantitative sources. The documentary records of six of Montreal's leading congregations, and of the Griffintown mission field, provided the data that were the foundation of this study. On their own, however, they would have failed to uncover much of the material that was so vital to explaining the changes that took place over the course of the study period. The cartographic and sociological analyses of church membership and denominational composition using city directories, tax rolls, and censuses were essential to understanding the processes that were occurring within congregations. Likewise, the creation of a database containing temporal and spatial information for every Protestant church built in Montreal between 1760 and 1914 made it possible to produce maps illustrating city-wide patterns of church relocation and extension. This made it easier to identify patterns of change and to place accounts of individual congregations within a wider framework. The systematic sampling of the *Montreal Witness* and other local newspapers provided crucial insights into the shifting social and theological debates that took place over the course of the study period, and helped to bring to life the many congregational controversies, some of which spilled over into the public sphere.

My synthesis of these data suggests that three central tensions or oppositions – each with a geographical dimension – were at the heart of the dynamism, as well as the dilemmas, of Protestant congregational life during this period. The first was internal to congregations, the second was between congregations, and the third was between congregations and society. Internal to each congregation was the tension between the logic of maintenance and the logic of mission, and the tendency for church relocation and elaborate building projects to alter decisively the equilibrium between these two logics. A second tension, that between competition and cooperation, characterized relations amongst the city's various Protestant congregations. While church building programmes contributed greatly to the competitiveness of congregational life, the duplication of effort that ensued convinced many Protestants that greater efforts should be made to work cooperatively together. The final tension, representing the dynamic between the churches and the surrounding society, was that between capitalist materialism and the spirit of Christianity. Christian spiritual teachings have always coexisted uneasily with the social and material realities of the world, and congregations struggled to ensure that their

buildings retained their symbolic and functional relevance as a new social and theological context emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As this concluding chapter will demonstrate, these three structuring patterns provide a basis for gaining insights into the tumultuous changes experienced by Montreal's middle and upper-class congregations during the period between 1850 and 1914.

I

Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.
- Mark 16:15

Like other institutions, Protestant congregations in Montreal struggled to achieve a workable balance between the logic of maintenance and the logic of mission. As voluntary institutions, even the wealthiest congregations were subject to bouts of financial uncertainty, and the impact of economic downturns was almost instantly felt. While the mission of each religious institution was shaped by the way in which its members understood the Bible in relation to the contemporary social context, evangelical congregations in particular experienced a sense of 'spiritual depression' at times when efforts to maintain the institution itself seemed to be overwhelming its spiritual *raison d'être*. Paradoxically, by pouring the fruits of revivalism into church building programmes, evangelical congregations in some cases seem to have impeded further spiritual growth by shifting the emphasis of congregational life from spiritual to temporal matters. Less evangelical congregations pursued similar building projects and also experienced financial struggles, but, perhaps because their members did not expect the same emotional religious experience, seem to have been less perturbed by an emphasis on maintenance.

The size and grandeur of the new uptown churches that were built in the 1860s, 70s, and 80s reflected the wealth that was being generated by upper and middle class Protestants, but also had the long-term effect of ensuring that the logic of maintenance would henceforth play a more central role in congregational life. The contrast between the earlier Protestant places of worship in the old city centre and the elaborate Gothic uptown churches with their stone exteriors, towers, and steeples was dramatic. The relative simplicity of earlier interiors was abandoned, and the embellishment of the new churches became an ongoing part of congregational life: sanctuaries were beautified and redecorated, new and more powerful organs were purchased, and ways were continually

being found to improve the facilities of the now more extensive congregational 'living' spaces. Not only were large debts often incurred to build the new churches, but the ongoing maintenance costs ensured that a substantial portion of the donations of future generations would also be dedicated to maintaining infrastructure rather than engaging in more explicitly mission-oriented activities.

The logic of maintenance also dictated that congregations take into account the wishes of wealthier church members when making decisions regarding church moves, and – once they were in their new buildings – made them increasingly dependent on the continued support of these individuals. Calamitous consequences were experienced by more democratic, mission-oriented evangelical churches like Zion Congregational that failed to respond to the wishes of their more prosperous members. As has been demonstrated through quantitative analyses of church membership lists, less well-to-do church members were those most likely to be left behind by uptown moves, which tended to transform what had once been communities of spiritual equals into congregations of social equals. Quantitative analyses of the social and ethnic composition of the city's various Protestant denominations also demonstrate that certain groups were able to draw on much greater resources than others for the support of their churches. This economic inequality explains, for example, why Presbyterians, with their large and wealthy Scottish contingent, could afford to support so many churches with relative ease, while the Methodists, with their smaller proportion of wealthy church members and larger proportion of generally less prosperous Irish Protestants, were more likely to find themselves overwhelmed by the cost of maintaining their institutions.

With trustees often anxious to recruit help in fund-raising, and with more elaborate church buildings to look after, there was a tendency for female church members to devote increasing amounts of their time to maintenance objectives. As the largest contingent in most congregations, the work performed by female churchgoers was a vital element in congregational life. Without their charitable endeavours, and work as Sunday school teachers and home visitors, it would have been impossible for most churches to fulfil their sense of mission. In churches like St James Methodist, where the need to raise funds became a dominant objective, women's groups operated as powerful entities within the congregation and authority was increased by the dependency of the trustees on their

contributions. While it is difficult to measure the impact that this had on their ability to carry out more mission-oriented activities, the reorientation of women's work as a result of the new buildings may have contributed to the more general shift towards emphasis on maintenance.

However great an investment had been made in their buildings, most uptown congregations nevertheless felt that their work was incomplete unless they were involved in evangelization and charitable or church extension efforts. The uptown moves had the effect of creating a geographical separation of the churches' 'domestic' and 'public' ministries: activities such as worship, fellowship, and the religious education of church members and their children were carried out in the uptown buildings, while evangelization and charitable efforts frequently occurred 'off-site' in downtown neighbourhoods. This did not initially have the effect of making mission activities any less central to uptown congregational life. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, middle-class Protestants generally believed in the importance of different elements in society having personal contact with one another, and in the need for Christians to participate personally in evangelization and charitable endeavours and in the communication of middle-class moral values. Hence, many uptown churchgoers, both male and female, were willing to travel to neighbourhoods such as Griffintown to contribute to church work in these areas. In some cases, uptown moves even encouraged congregations to increase the scope of their work in the city below. While some mission chapels were built in the hope of eventually creating independent congregations, others were designed to provide uptown church members with a more permanent base for evangelizing and conducting mission work in the surrounding neighbourhood. It was not unusual for the latter type of work to be carried out in the vicinity of independent downtown churches such as St Mark's and the old St Stephen's (later St Edward's), since their own congregations were so preoccupied with institutional maintenance that they had few resources to devote to such activities.

While wealthy congregations such as St Paul's remained content with their buildings and locations in the early twentieth century, others saw the pre-war property boom as an opportunity to escape from their bondage to the logic of maintenance. Certain congregations planned to sell their current buildings and either merge with

another congregation or else move to suburban districts like Westmount. Others, however, were inspired by social Christianity's vision of religious institutions that were more actively engaged in redeeming not just individuals but also the social environments in which people lived. Emmanuel, St George's, and St James Methodist all considered selling their well-located buildings and purchasing less-expensive sites elsewhere in the uptown district. The substantial profits from the sale of their old sites could then be used to erect buildings better suited to the new types of social service and institutional work they wished to pursue. Money left over could also be used to create endowments that would ensure that sufficient means were available to carry out this larger work amongst the increasingly diverse social constituencies living in the vicinity. Although studies of the trajectories of a greater number of congregations would be needed to confirm this, it is interesting to observe that congregations with strong evangelical traditions often seem to have been those most willing to part with their old buildings and embrace the opportunity to create more mission-oriented institutions. The successful completion of these plans proved more difficult in practice than in theory, however, and ultimately only Emmanuel Church succeeded in implementing its plan. Without the ability to liquefy the assets that were tied up in their properties, and given the expense involved in maintaining the elaborate services that were required to attract an increasingly-dispersed population of middle and upper class churchgoers, it proved very difficult for congregations to modify their current buildings or embark on new projects. The logic of maintenance prevailed.

At the same time, growing working-class class consciousness, increasing fear of communicable diseases on the part of the well-to-do, and greater distances between the homes of uptown churchgoers and downtown neighbourhoods, meant that downtown mission work was increasingly likely to be carried out by trained professionals who specialised in work amongst the poor, rather than in person by uptown church members. As moral explanations of poverty gave way to understandings that took into account environmental and structural-economic factors, personal contact between rich and poor also came to be seen as less necessary, although district nurses like Miss Church feared that this would breed a lack of sympathy on the part of the wealthy and used the parish magazine to ensure that the members of St George's continued to participate vicariously in the 'public' ministries that were being carried out on their behalf. This nevertheless

represented an important shift in the mission work of uptown congregations and heralded the coming of a time when their 'public' ministries would come increasingly to be defined by the writing of cheques, rather than by active evangelism and personal involvement in the lives of others. Given the tendency observed in all institutions for excessive attention to be devoted to maintenance, leading to an undermining of institutional well-being,² finding ways to engage church members in distant and often impersonal mission projects was one of greatest challenges to face Protestant congregations as they entered the twentieth century.

II

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 12:12

The phenomenon of church building brought the tension between competition and cooperation that existed amongst the city's various Protestant religious institutions and denominations to the fore. William Westfall has argued that the adoption of medieval architectural styles by all the leading denominations in Ontario in the period leading up to Confederation signified the growing unity of Protestantism itself.³ It was also the case in Montreal that shared doctrines provided the city's evangelical congregations with a sense of common purpose during this period, and that even Anglican and Church of Scotland congregations that did not participate in revivals or expect their members to experience emotional conversions nevertheless shared similar beliefs and undertook similar mission projects in the city, ensuring that the working classes had access to the gospel and providing charitable assistance to the poor. Most Protestants in Montreal, and evangelicals in particular, were aware of the importance of presenting a united front in the face of an influential and well-organized Roman Catholic Church, and evangelical, non-denominational associations like the YMCA and the Evangelical Alliance flourished. This did little, however, to lessen the contrast between a Roman Catholic Church that was able to match its supply of churches to the population requiring accommodation, and the Protestant system in which over-churching and competition for members and resources

² Gregory Baum, *Theology and Society* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press 1987), 235.

³ William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989), 131.

were a way of life. Part of the explanation for this contrast lay in the different conceptions of church life that were held by Roman Catholics and Protestants: the more intimate nature of Protestant congregational life made it impossible for thousands of individuals to be accommodated in one church building. In the same way that some began, in the early twentieth century, to question the benefits to be derived from ruthless competition in the realm of business, many Protestants also started to search for more cooperative ways to organize their churches.

During the first phase of church relocation, denominational frameworks had some influence on the decisions that individual churches made, but ultimately did little to inhibit the city's leading congregations from placing their own best interests at the forefront when choosing new locations. This was because, prior to the fuller development of Canadian denominational structures involving such things as the consolidation of the different branches of Presbyterianism and Methodism in the 1870s and 1880s, congregations operated in what was effectively a much less 'regulated' denominational environment than would emerge later. The choices made by Anglican congregations, with their bishops and parish system, and Congregationalists, with their emphasis on the liberty of individual congregations, were not as different as one might expect. The schisms within Presbyterianism nevertheless represented an extreme case, and the sight of Church of Scotland, Free Church, Secessionist, and American Presbyterian congregations all building in close proximity to one another in the central part of the city, and then one by one re-establishing themselves uptown, must have been a source of puzzlement to French-Canadian onlookers. The example of the St James Street Methodist congregation also stood out. The leading Methodist laymen at St James initially resisted an uptown move and focused instead on financing a systematic programme of church extension throughout the city. When the trustees eventually decided to rebuild uptown in the late 1880s, they emphasized their desire to construct a central Methodist church that could host large Methodist gatherings, and thus contribute to unity within the denomination. What they actually embarked upon was the construction of a cathedral of Methodism that would dwarf other Protestant churches in the uptown district, and rival leading Methodist churches in cities like Toronto. Given the less prosperous membership of St James in comparison with other uptown churches, the

ambition of leading church members proved to be greater than the financial means of the congregation. The outcome was a church in an almost perpetual state of financial crisis, and the transformation of one of the city's most outward-looking and generous congregations into a church dependent on donations from across Canada for its very survival. While the effects of competition were felt most strongly during periods of financial downturn, the over-provision of church accommodation in the uptown district had the effect of producing a number of chronically weak congregations. Most churches benefited from population growth as the nineteenth century unfolded, and empty pews were filled over time, but the need to survive nevertheless encouraged a Darwinian scenario in which churches with the best preachers and music programmes, the most beautiful interiors and services, and the wealthiest congregations prevailed.

This process was carried out with much less subtlety in downtown neighbourhoods. One of the paradoxes of revivalism in Montreal was that it succeeded in bringing evangelicals from all denominations together to listen to preachers such as E.P. Hammond, who emphasized their common salvation in Christ, but failed to inspire them to work together as Christians in areas of the city that were most in need of cooperative efforts. While evangelicals initially supported interdenominational work in Griffintown, this soon gave way to denominational insularity and even direct competition amongst the various groups. This was no doubt encouraged by the fact that the theological and ethnic traditions represented by the various denominations were just as meaningful for downtown churchgoers as they were for their uptown counterparts. The Presbyterians, with one church and two missions in the neighbourhood, again stood out. Given the relatively sparse Protestant population in working-class Griffintown, the desire of each major denomination to erect its own places of worship ensured that very few congregations could operate without outside support. While this was a source of frustration to better-off churchgoers who lived in the district, many of whom were anxious to support their own religious institutions, poorer individuals may have benefited from the greater range of charitable, educational, and evangelical services that were offered by missions directly supported by uptown churchgoers.

A renewed emphasis on cooperation emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This reflected the consolidation of denominational administrative

structures that mirrored similar developments in the world of business, but also occurred in association with the emergence of a moderate version of social Christianity that emphasized the need to redeem social institutions as well as individuals. When uptown churches again faced the decision of whether to retreat in response to commercial encroachment on their neighbourhood, it was no longer possible to take decisions based purely on the self-interest of individual congregations. Denominational committees had to be consulted, and new sites approved by other congregations already established in areas in which congregations wished to rebuild. The leaders of the Dominion Square Methodist Church found, for example, that it was considered unacceptable for them to use all the proceeds from the sale of their old church to fund a new building in Westmount, and that they were instead expected to make a substantial contribution to the church extension effort then underway in the city. An Interdenominational Committee was also active in Montreal in the early twentieth century, controlled by ministers and laymen anxious to further the cause of church union. Despite the best efforts of this committee to ensure that elaborate Methodist and Presbyterian churches were not built in close proximity to each other in upper Westmount, legal concerns and congregational apathy stymied its efforts to conserve resources by building a union church. With the explosion of suburban districts in the pre-war years, the Interdenominational Committee attempted, with only limited success, to prevent Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational churches from competing with one another. The cause of Protestant cooperation was also hindered by the Anglican Church's decision not to participate in this body, after opting not to continue further in the nationwide church union debate.

Attempts were also made to rationalize the provision of church and mission accommodation in downtown areas such as Griffintown. Like their uptown counterparts, downtown churchgoers were attached to their own places of worship and unenthusiastic about mergers, particularly when they involved a mission congregation joining forces with a previously self-supporting congregation. Congregations belonging to the same denomination could also find themselves competing for resources, as in the case of St Edward's versus St Stephen's. The Anglican parish system should have prevented this controversy from arising, but the precedent set by earlier uptown moves suggested to the parishioners of the new St Stephen's that the old church property was theirs to dispose of

as they wished. This had the unfortunate effect of pitting the group that had moved to lower Westmount against their less well-to-do counterparts in Griffintown, who wished to retain the old church building even if they did not have the means to pay for it.

Diverse denominational traditions, the tendency for Protestant congregations to regard their places of worship as the personal property of those who financed them, and the uneven social geography of the city all made it more challenging for Protestants to work towards a more cooperative model of congregational life. While church buildings contributed to these divisions, the debates that they engendered also drew attention to the shortcomings of unfettered competition, and inspired some Protestants to imagine new forms of organization that would offer a more constructive embodiment of the spirit of Christianity.

III

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

- Matthew 6:24

As Max Weber pointed out, capitalism – despite being inseparable from the pursuit of profit – does not necessarily imply ‘unlimited greed for gain’ and can be associated with the exercise of restraint when subject to ethical and religious constraints.⁴ In the early and mid-nineteenth century, middle class Protestants in Montreal saw no incompatibility between successful business enterprise and Christianity, assuming that employees were fairly treated, business was conducted honestly, and only reasonable levels of credit and risk were undertaken. The popular belief that upward mobility was accessible to all able-bodied men who worked hard and lived temperate and godly lives served to reinforce the connection between an individual’s spiritual and material prosperity. Some evangelicals saw business cycles as being under God’s control, designed to humble those who had prospered but not been sufficiently willing to use their wealth generously.

In light of these associations, it made sense that Montreal’s successful businessmen chose to erect more elegant churches to glorify God as their economic position improved. Thus, the combination of urban expansion, revivalist enthusiasm, and

⁴ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge 2001), xxxi-xxxii.

prosperity in the 1860s encouraged many congregations to abandon their central locations and rebuild on a grander scale uptown. While some concern was expressed at the debt incurred, and at the tendency for uptown moves to leave poorer church members behind, there was no evidence of widespread controversy over church building and relocation during this period. The middle classes simultaneously devoted funds to building missions and assisting smaller churches in working-class neighbourhoods, and in doing so were able to present themselves as being promoters of both spiritual and material progress. The idea of ensuring that members of the working classes had access to places of worship that were as well-designed and spacious as those erected in uptown neighbourhoods never arose. This presented a striking contrast with the Roman Catholics, who managed to build imposing parish churches even in poor neighbourhoods with the assistance of tithes, small voluntary donations from large numbers of the faithful, and financial help from the Sulpicians. Because Protestants in Montreal were overrepresented in the middle and upper strata of society, and because their most prominent churches were largely funded by relatively small groups of wealthy capitalists, this had the effect of creating a powerful symbolic association between their places of worship and capitalist enterprise.

In the more class conscious and theologically-divided environment of the early twentieth century, it was increasingly difficult for uptown congregations to make decisions concerning their buildings that did not arouse controversy. The introduction of electric street cars in the early 1890s meant that the need to relocate was not as immediate as it had been in the earlier period, but there were now a variety of competing reasons why congregations might wish either to keep or sell their valuable properties. Congregational sources make it clear that, while economic and practical considerations were important, decisions were also guided by Christian ideals. What was new was the lack of consensus over what exactly these ideals were, and how they should be expressed. Perhaps the most significant division was between emphasizing the importance of church buildings remaining in busy commercial arteries to signify the power of the sacred in an increasingly secular world and the view that it was more appropriate to sell valuable properties and generate funds for new types of church work. Congregations discovered that they were subject to criticism whichever choice they made. Those that opted to retain their old properties and make no modifications to their programmes were censured

for being exclusive social clubs for the rich, and for holding onto properties that – if sold – could liberate substantial resources for more worthwhile endeavours. Congregations that took advantage of the red hot property market to sell and move to Westmount were criticized for deserting the central part of the city and for caring only for the interests of their own members. Even congregations like St George's that hoped to move only short distances and use the proceeds from the sale of their old properties to erect better facilities and enhance their ability to carry out mission work found themselves accused of greed, and of making way for commerce. The decision to open churches up during the week for recreation and leisure activities could also evoke the criticism that they were entering too fully into the secular realm. While many congregations remained in the uptown district, by 1914 a sufficient number of church properties had been sold and either demolished or transformed into theatres and shops to create the impression that religion was making way for commerce and that the Protestant congregations involved in these transactions were preoccupied with pecuniary matters.

Social and theological shifts that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century also made it much harder to justify the contrasts that had emerged between uptown and downtown places of worship. Although many continued to adhere to a moral understanding of the causes of poverty, debates increasingly centred around the issue of whether urban conditions such as poor housing and sanitation did not themselves make it difficult for people to live Christian and moral lives. Low wages and irregular employment were also seen as contributing to urban poverty, suggesting that capitalists and property owners were responsible for much of the misery that existed in the lower parts of the city. Middle-class Protestants who accepted such ideas, and embraced the ethical Christianity that emerged during this period, believed that it was the duty of wealthy Christians to modify the worst excesses of capitalist greed and individualism, and work towards such things as improved housing and playgrounds in working-class neighbourhoods. This reflected an optimistic belief that Christianity, by inspiring people to act more generously towards one another, had the power to resolve the moral, social, and temporal problems of the city without requiring any major modification of the socio-economic system. It also represented a response to socialists and those in British and North American labour movements who were calling for more dramatic structural

changes. Within this framework, the contrast between the elegant and artistically-decorated uptown churches and their small and under-funded counterparts in areas like Griffintown became emblematic of the social inequalities and injustices of society, and of the lack of 'true' Christianity on the part of the wealthy. Promoters of institutional churches hoped to rectify this situation by providing downtown areas with well-equipped buildings that were able to act as community and social service centres as well as places of worship. More traditional evangelical missions continued, however, to be popular amongst both their uptown supporters and working-class participants, and the energies of many working-class churchgoers remained devoted to retaining their own independent churches.

The lack of consensus that was evident in the decisions that were made concerning both uptown and downtown church buildings in Montreal during this period reflects the wider range of social and theological positions that were being debated at this time. Some middle-class Protestants remained committed to individualistic social and theological positions, and saw decisions concerning their places of worship as having little to do with those who were not church members. Others remained committed to capitalism itself, but were concerned that the unfettered form in which it was being practised in the early twentieth century was leading to undesirable social consequences. Embracing social Christianity's call for greater social cooperation, these individuals believed that it was important for decisions concerning church buildings to communicate a willingness on the part of wealthy Christians to respond to the injustices of society, fearing that a failure to do so would lead to Protestant Christianity becoming seen as the servant rather than the conscience of the upper and middle classes.

What is most striking about Protestant congregational life in Montreal during the nineteenth and early twentieth century was its responsiveness to the dramatic urban, social, and theological changes that occurred during this period. While the sectarian divide between Protestants and Catholics was one of the key social dynamics in the city, and seems to have enhanced a shared sense of Protestant identity, evidence suggests that denominational and class (and to a lesser extent ethnic and gender) divisions within the Protestant community had a more significant impact on congregational life. Given the

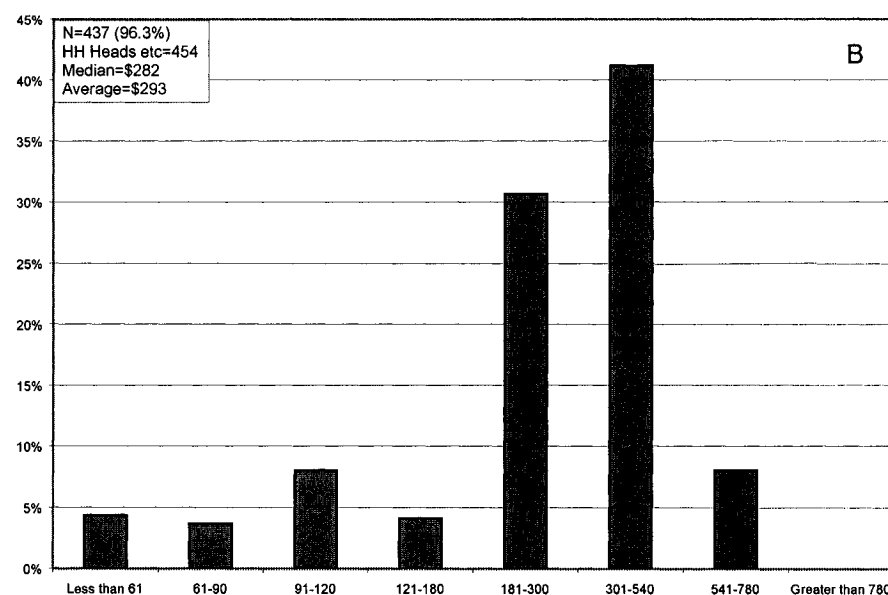
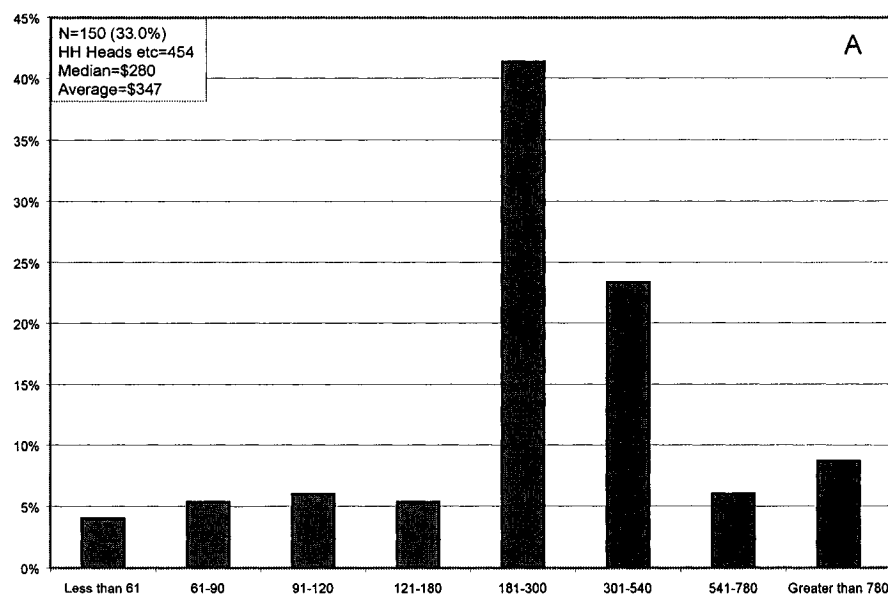
prominence of church buildings in the urban landscape and their ability to reflect the spiritual and social beliefs and aspirations of those who built them, the decisions that were made during the original phase of church moves had important consequences for the subsequent ability of churches to adapt their domestic and public ministries to changing circumstances. Heavy investment in religious edifices during the nineteenth century, as well as the social exclusivity that was generated by uptown moves, made it more difficult for the next generation to adapt their religious institutions to the needs of the twentieth-century city. Urban, social, and theological changes also had an impact on the three tensions that were at the heart of the dynamism, as well as the dilemmas, of Protestant congregational life during this period. Congregations recognized that these tensions had to be skilfully negotiated if religious institutions were to remain viable and at the same time retain their integrity. Despite the challenges that were faced, and the differences of opinion that emerged, there was a continued belief amongst uptown churchgoers that the ministries carried out by their churches had an important contribution to make to the spiritual, social, and cultural life of the city.

By concluding this study in 1914, we leave Montreal's uptown Protestants at the height of their prosperity and at the dawn of a new era. With their strong sense of British identity, they threw themselves into the war effort, and the memorial windows that can be found in virtually all of Montreal's uptown churches that remain today are a testimony to the impact that this event had on the community. Given the insights that have been gained by applying an institutional approach to the study of nineteenth and early twentieth century congregations, it would be interesting to follow the evolution of congregational life further into the twentieth century. Church Union in 1925 represented a massive upheaval of the entire system of religious infrastructure that Protestant Montrealers had devoted so many resources and so much labour to creating, and in many cases induced churchgoers to sever their strong attachments to their buildings. Did this have a cathartic effect, reducing the burden of bricks and mortar that had been handed down to them by previous generations and freeing congregations to devote more attention once again to the logic of mission, or was it simply the culmination of a bureaucratic process, and the logical accompaniment of mergers in the world of business? In light of Christie and Gauvreau's controversial argument that the cultural influence of the

Protestant churches was at its height in Canada during the first four decades of the twentieth century, and that church bodies had a vital impact on the evolution of Canadian social policy during this period, it is also important to discover to what extent local congregations supported the efforts of church leaders and intellectuals.⁵ By the time we part from Montreal's middle and upper-class Protestants in 1914, the denominational differences that accompanied the evangelical consensus of the mid-nineteenth century had diminished in importance, only to be replaced by a more general absence of theological and social consensus. Despite the efforts of local ministers to promote a moderate version of social Christianity in the early years of the twentieth century, by 1914 there was as yet little evidence to suggest that their efforts had produced significant results within Canada's most influential community during this period.

⁵ Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada 1900-1940* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996).

APPENDIX A



Comparison of distributions obtained by linking 'household heads and other members and adherents' of St Paul's Church for 1886 to [A] the (1881) rental tax assessment value of their homes, and [B] the median (1881) rental value of properties located in the street segment in which they lived.

Source: Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll 1881; Digital file in the possession of Sherry Olson giving the median rent for each street segment for 1881; St Paul's Church, Montreal - Reports for the Year Ended 31 December, 1886 (Montreal: Mitchell and Wilson, 1887), List of Heads of Families and Other Members and Adherents of St Paul's Congregation.

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Abbreviations

ANQ	Archives Nationales du Québec
APC	American Presbyterian Church
BNQ	Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec
CIHM	Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproduction Collection
DOM	Dominion Square Methodist Church
EMM	Emmanuel Congregational Church
ERS	Erskine Presbyterian Church
IDCM	Interdenominational Committee of Montreal
ISM	Inspector Street Mission
MAP	<i>Montréal l'Avenir du Passé</i> Project, Directed by Sherry Olson, Department of Geography, McGill University.
MDA	Montreal Diocesan Archives
PBR	Parish Boundary Records
PCL	Presbyterian College Library, Presbyterian College Montreal
PMA	Protestant Ministerial Association
SAP	The Church of St Andrew and St Paul Archives
SJA	St James the Apostle Anglican Church Archives
STE	St Edward's Parish
STG	St George's Anglican Church Archives
STJ	St James Methodist Church
STM	St Mark's Presbyterian Church
STS	St Stephen's Parish
UCAL	United Church of Canada – Montreal and Ottawa Conference Archives, Lachine
ZIO	Zion Congregational Church

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

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Eglise Congregationalist	P600
Eglise Methodist	P601
Eglise Presbyterian	P602
Emmanuel Congregational Church (EMM)	P603, S2, SS13
Erskine Presbyterian Church (ERS)	P603, S2, SS96
Inspector Street Mission (ISM)	P603, S2, SS18

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St Andrew's-Dominion Douglas United Church (DOM)	P603, S2, SS99
St Mark's Presbyterian (United) Church (STM)	P603, S2, SS101
St James Methodist (United) Church (STJ)	P603, S2, SS42
Zion Congregational Church (ZIO)	P603, S2, SS52

Other Collections / Documents:

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Notarial Archives Collection, William Ross, Act #2095, 13 June 1848

The Church of St Andrew and St Paul Archives, Montreal (SAP)

Annual Reports of St Paul's Church, Montreal (Bound) 1880-1918

Book Containing Communicant Lists for St Paul's Church for the 1840s and 1850s,
Microfilm #229

Minutes Board of Trustees, St Paul's Church 1834-68; 1868-98; 1898-1918

Minutes of the St Paul's Church Sabbath School Association 1868-1900

Report of Trustees of St Paul's 1866 (printed), 22 October 1866

Session Minutes, St Paul's Church 1834-62; 1862-68; 1868-80; 1881-93; 1894-1912;
1912-18

Westminster Portrait Gallery Clipping, n.d.

Montreal Diocesan Archives (MDA)

Fonds Church of England Association for Young Men of Montreal

Fonds Church Society of the Diocese of Montreal

Fonds Diocesan Council, R.G. 204

Fonds *Montreal Churchman*, R.G. 212

Fonds St Edward's Parish (STE)

Fonds St George's Parish

Fonds St Martin's Parish

Fonds St Stephen's Parish, Westmount (STS)

Fonds Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, Episcopal Clergy Meetings Records

Fonds Synod of the Diocese of Montreal Parish Boundary Records (PBR)

Note: The MDA was in the process of changing its archival referencing system while I was working there. I have included the new record group numbers when available, otherwise I have simply used the Fonds name.

McGill University Archives

Caroline Henrietta Pelton Collection, M.G. 2020

Rare Books Collection McGill University

Lighthall Family Papers, M.S. 216

St George's Anglican Church Archives, Montreal (STG)

Minutes Building Committee St George's Church 1867-1871
 Minutes Proprietors St George's Church 1842-1925
 Minutes Vestry St George's Church 1843-1902; 1902-25
 Prospectus for St George's Church Mission School, Workman Street, March 1867
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St James the Apostle Anglican Church Archives, Montreal (SJA)

Book Containing Printed Wardens' Reports 1878-1929
Church of St James the Apostle Parish Magazine, Vol. I & III, 1895, 1897
 Letter Book of the Corporation of the Church of St James the Apostle 1902-1906
 Minutes Vestry Meetings 1903-1942

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R. Bruce Taylor Collection, Memoirs of the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor (unpublished manuscript, n.d.)

United Church of Canada – Montreal and Ottawa Conference Archives, Lachine (UCAL)

Folder on St Mark's Presbyterian Church, Montreal

Images / Maps

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<http://www2.biblinat.gouv.qc.ca/massic>
 McCord Museum, Notman Photographic Archives
 Rectified Cane Map of Montreal 1846, MAP Project
 Rectified Goad Atlas of Montreal 1881, MAP Project
 Rectified Pinsoneault Atlas of Montreal 1906, MAP Project

Digital Data

Canadian Families Project 5 percent sample of the 1901 Census of Canada
 City of Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Roll for 1881, MAP Project
 Digital street segment files of Montreal for 1848, 1861, 1881, and 1901. Created by Sherry Olson, Dept. of Geography, McGill University.
 Digital files giving the median rents of Montreal street segments for 1848, 1861, 1881, and 1901. Based on Montreal Rental Tax Assessment Rolls for same years, held in the City of Montreal Archives. Created by Sherry Olson, Dept. of Geography, McGill University.
 Manuscript Census of Canada for 1881, MAP Project

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- Lovell's Montreal Directory (Montreal: J. Lovell), various years.
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