

THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS RESEARCH CENTRE POSTCARD COLLECTION

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In the spring of 2001, under the auspices of a grant from the Bélanger Gardner foundation, the ETRC undertook a project to organize and describe its collection of nearly 500 postcards. Janice LaDuke was hired to arrange meticulously the postcards collection. The project resulted in the creation of a finding aid that will allow researchers to search efficiently for postcards that they may be interested in. This finding aid is accessible via the ETRC's Archivist. The postcards are arranged by municipality and are subdivided by subject matter. They are indexed by place name and by subject. Furthermore, the postcards have been described as a collection, using the *Rules for Archival Description*.

These historical postcards date from the nineteenth and early twentieth century, with a large majority of the collection dating from the first two decades of the twentieth century. This collection consists of a wide variety of postcards from every corner of Quebec's Eastern Townships – from Bedford, to Leeds, to Lac Megantic, to Stanstead, with a large proportion coming from the Townships' largest city, Sherbrooke. The postcards depict scenes from various aspects of the region, especially of structures and landscapes that are of explicit importance to the area. In the ETRC's Postcards Collection, there are a total of 16 subject categories.

Postcards serve many functions. Their first and most obvious function is to provide people with a quick and easy means of communication. Their second function is to provide the general public with access to a visual representation of a local landmark, or specific point of interest that is necessarily associated with the region in which the postcard was purchased. Essentially, postcards are a medium for the public and for commercial distribution of popular photography. This visual representation serves both as a souvenir for the consumer and as a publicity tool for the postcard producer.

Without minimizing the practical and commercial functions of the postcard, in the opinions of archivists and researchers, the most

important function of the postcard is to serve as a window into the past and a vital representation of life as it was. To find examples of how a postcard would be important to the researcher, one only needs to take into account how much urban and rural landscapes have changed over the years. As buildings, bridges and streets are built or taken down, as trees are planted or cut, as river erode their banks, a permanent alteration of the landscape is made. Photography documents this alteration of the landscape and as postcards act as the popular medium for photography, they are the most effective tools for observing these changes. Of course, in all of this, we must never forget the popular appeal these postcards have to those wishing to have access to vivid reminders of the way the Eastern Townships used to look.



Canadian Johns-Manville Co. Asbestos Que.

V. Dubois, Phot.-Edit. — Asbestos 1900

*Commercial and Industrial Structures:
Canadian Johns-Manville Co. Asbestos, Quebec.*



Culture and Recreation Structures: Library. North Hatley, Quebec.

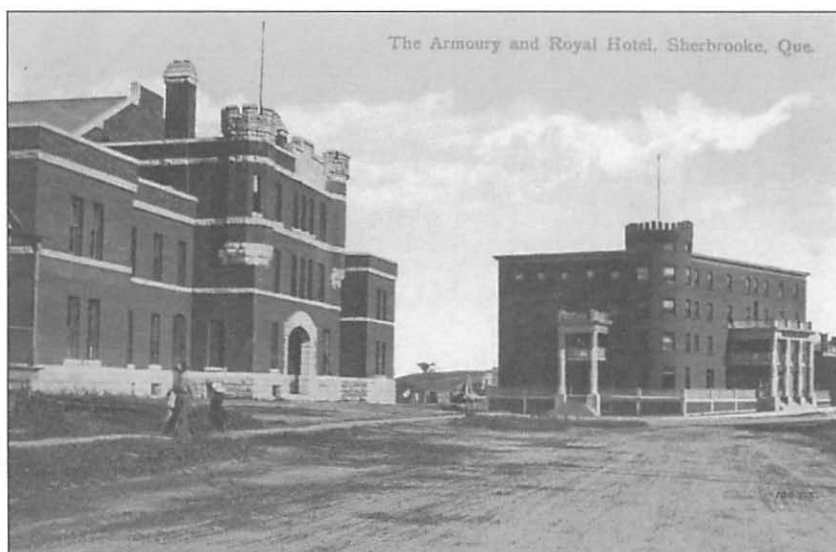


Education Structures: Sherbrooke High School. Sherbrooke, Quebec.



Arrivée (Arrival) de Son Altesse le Duc de Connaught, à Farnham, Que., 22 Juin 1912, Photo P. Larochelle

Events: Arrival of Lord Connaught. Farnham, Quebec.



The Armoury and Royal Hotel, Sherbrooke, Que.

Military Structures: The Armoury and Royal hotel. Sherbrooke, Quebec.



Government Structures: Post Office, Granby, Quebec.



Houses and Palaces: Farm Daillac, Knowlton, Quebec.



Landscapes: Owl's Head Mountain. Lac Memphrémagog, Magog, Quebec.



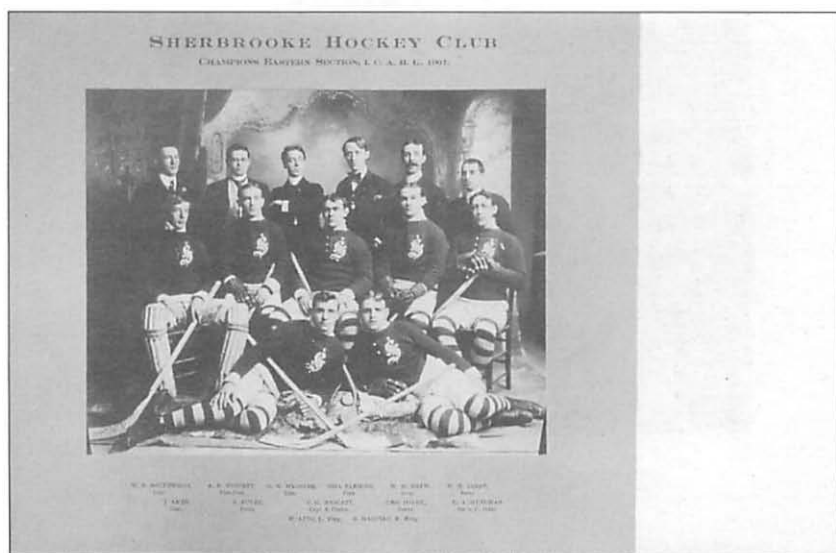
Medical Structures: Protestant Hospital. Sherbrooke, Quebec.



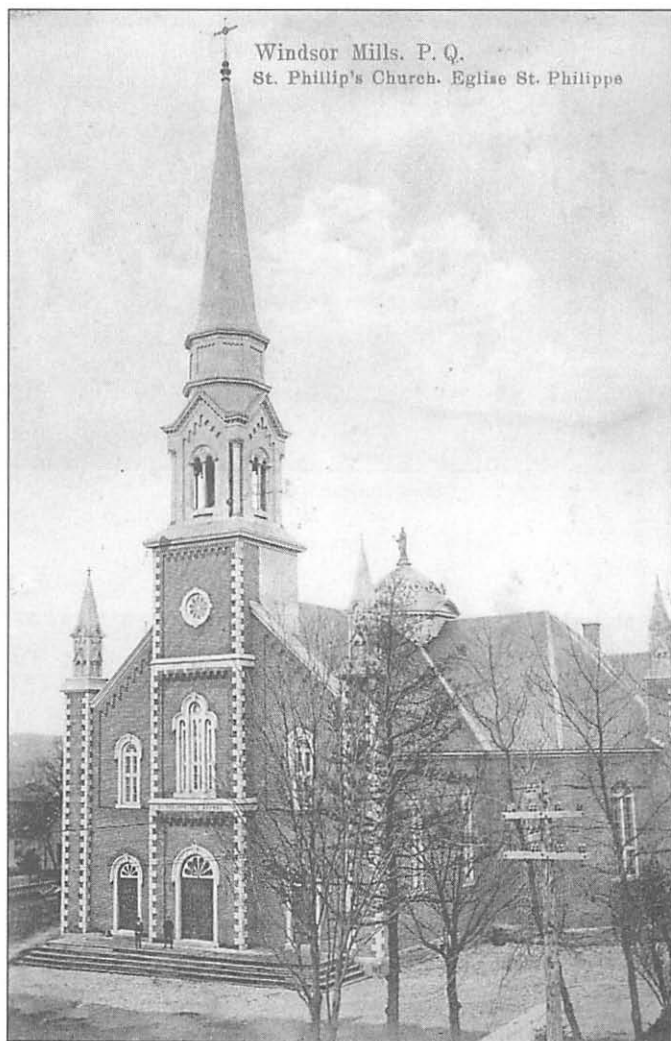
Monuments: Statue of John Sawyer. Sawyerville, Quebec.



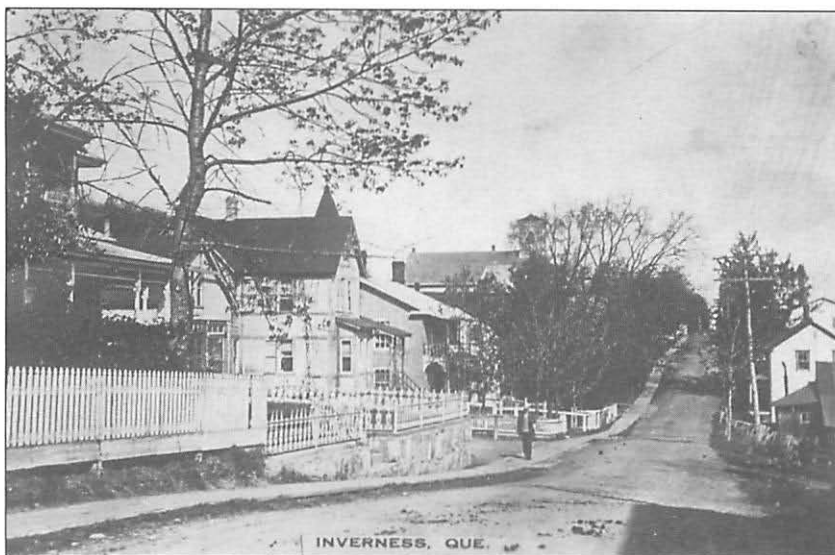
Park Gardens and Squares: Victoria Park, Sherbrooke, Quebec.



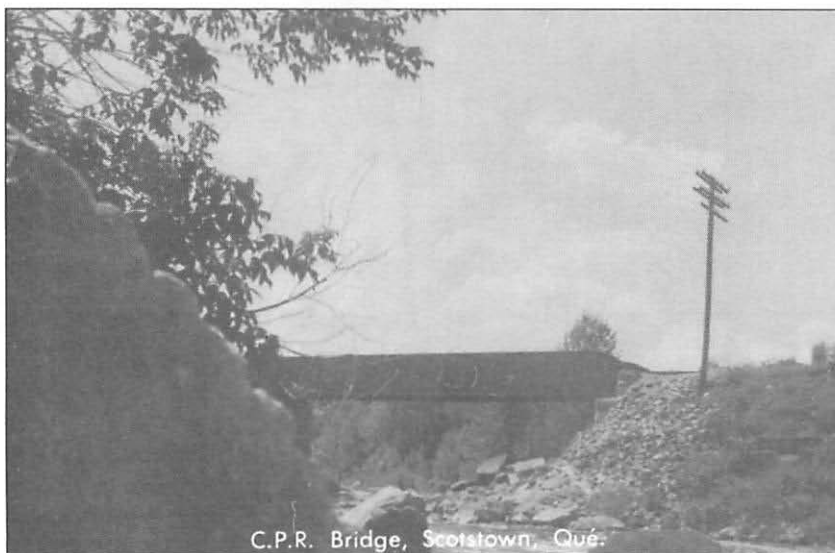
People: Sherbrooke Hockey Club.



Religious Structures: St. Phillip's Church. Windsor Mills, Quebec.

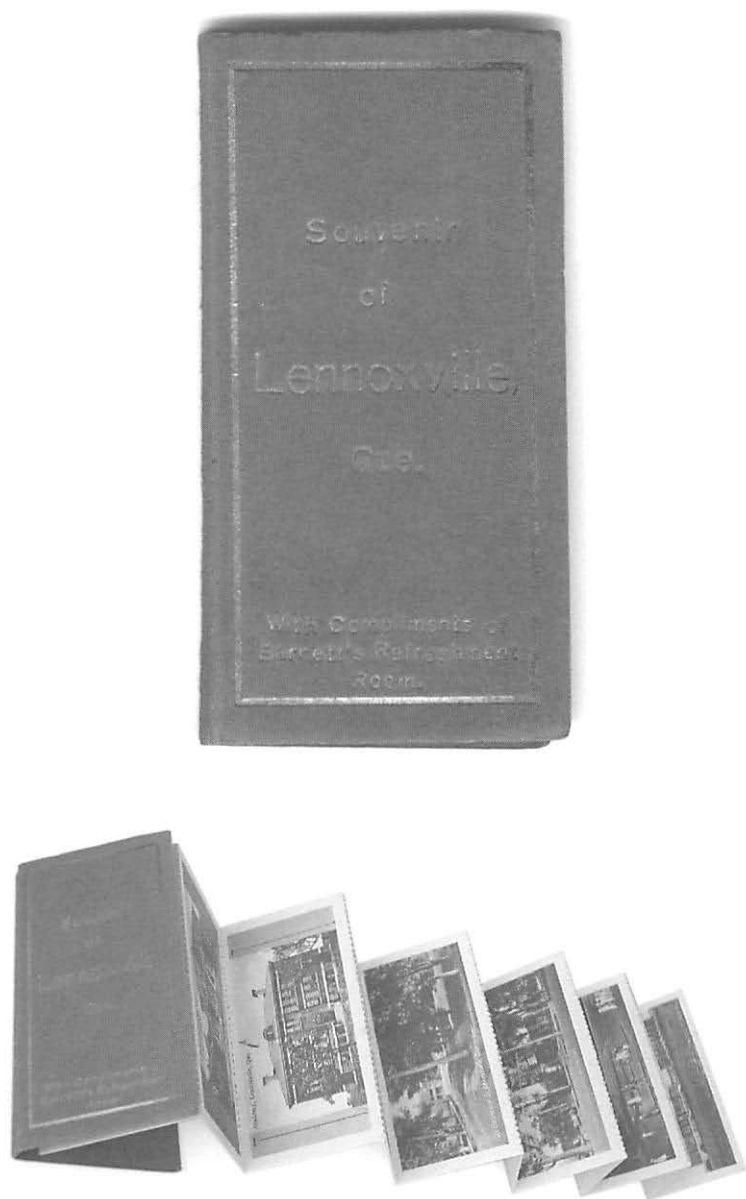


Streets: Inverness, Quebec.



C.P.R. Bridge, Scotstown, Qué.

Transportation Structures: CPR Bridge, Scotstown, Quebec.



Souvenir postcard albums: Souvenir of Lennoxville, Quebec.

