

# PROPERTY OF LACHUTE HIGH SCHOOL

## CHAPTER IV

LACHUTE 1876 - 1900

### THE PERIOD OF EXPANSION

#### *Boundaries*

Grenville was incorporated into a municipality in 1875 but Lachute did not become a town with its own town council and mayor until 1885. The town charter was drawn up by Joseph Palliser, a barrister, who was the second son of Thomas Palliser, the blacksmith, who came to Lachute from Lachine in 1844. The town was carved out of the Parish of St. Jerusalem and was roughly in the form of a rectangle. The boundary followed the Seigniority boundary on the west from the upper dam on the river for 2700 yds. in a northerly direction crossing the Brownsburg Road about 1100 yds. above Barron's Bridge. At the base of the mountain, it turned east for 2650 yds. to the river, then south for 1300 yds., across the more westerly bridge (Power's or Copeland's), crossing the St. Jerome Road at Lane's'Corner, then turning west for 2200 yds., finally going along where is now Henry Street, then south again along Isabella Street for 1100 yds. before turning west for 1320 yds. to the upper, dam. In 1886, the town purchased a seal depicting a factory, a maple leaf and the rapids. Just before the incorporation of Lachute, a new cadastral map had been drawn for the Parish of St. Jerusalem; the cadastres giving everyone's lot dimensions and description came into force on September 30, 1880.

#### *Population*

With the advent of railways, the population increased rapidly after 1876. In 1880, Lachute was a village with about 650 people; in 1885, this had increased to 1311; in 1891, to 1751; and in 1895, to 2000. Other statistics of the 1891 census were that Lachute contained 344 families, 342 inhabited houses of which 238 were wood, 95, brick; and 9

of stone; 26 of these houses had more than 10 rooms. Grenville was another railway town which grew rapidly having a population in 1891 of 2180, whilst the little village of Calumet, which in 1870 had only four houses, had ten times that number a few years after the railway came. Contrast these growths with St. Andrews which had 1100 population in 1850 and only 1700 in 1891, since St. Andrews was not directly linked by railroad to the growing centres of Montreal and Ottawa.

Between 1876 and 1900, the French population of Lachute increased rapidly, whereas in 1851, only 8 per cent were French-Canadians; by 1900, this had increased to about 35 per cent and they had their own school and school board. The first two French mayors were J. A. Bedard and Pierre Rodrigue who both took office in 1894. The Watchman regularly inserted a news column in French after 1879.

By 1880, Lachute became the accepted county centre of Argenteuil, being the meeting place for the Circuit Court, the County Council, Parish Council and Town Council.

The old Court House was the usual meeting place, but as early as 1883 was considered unsafe for documents because of periodical flooding. In 1887, a new Court House was built by O. B. Lafleur and Sons; the red brick for the building came from Almonte and the white brick from Irish Creek in Ontario. Although some thought it to be too far from the centre of Lachute standing in the middle of fields, (Grace St., 1963) nevertheless it was considered the finest County Court House in the Province. The court room was furnished by Lafleur and was ready for use in July 1889.

Between 1875 and 1879, another hall was built by the Sons of Temperance, the money being loaned by T. Barron. This was a two storey, red brick building on the west corner of Main Street and Barron called the Victoria Hall. Still a third hall was available in 1880 when James W. Rain erected his wood frame store and house west of the Victoria Hall on Main Street, the hall forming the upper storey of the building. This hall was to be the meeting place of the Town

Council for several years, whereas the County Council met in the Court House.

## Events

Lachute Town came to be known as a thriving and up-coming community. The Montreal Historical and Geographical Society elected to visit it in 1880, when Lachute was described in the Montreal Witness as a town lying between the river and railway track with 125 houses, 5 churches and 4 hotels. The Watchman pointed out there were 60 houses around the mills as well as 2 beautiful railway bridges, river walks, mill dams and mineral springs. The Society, however, after its visit was only impressed with the ferocity of the mosquitoes, voting them the most vicious they had ever encountered.

In 1884, Lachute was considered along with St. Lambert as being a suitable location for a protestant asylum. The authorities visited two sites, one on the north-west and the other on the north-east side of the town but they eventually decided on a location nearer to Montreal.

## ***The Great Flood***

In the spring of 1885, the water rose so high that the river overflowed its banks and much of Main Street, the West End and the mills were under. several feet of water. Houses were evacuated, the old Court House had several inches of water and T. Barron had to move to an office upstairs. Then the ice began to scrape against Barron's Bridge which was securely tied to overhanging trees. This proved to be a wise precaution for the bridge was lifted off its piers and would otherwise have been carried down the river to the railway bridge. The boom in front of the Campbell saw mill gave way and the logs floating down the river wrecked the Watchman office, part of which floated away down stream. Finally, the water cut a stream from the North to the West River west of the Clunie house with such force that it toppled over Madame Fournier's house just as the family sat down to

their Sunday breakfast After two or three days of great anxiety, the water began to subside, but not before much damage had been done particularly in the West End and to the bridges, for White's Bridge and the one at St. Andrews were destroyed. The bridge at St. Andrews was then replaced by a cast iron one in October 1885 — said to be the best of its kind in Canada.

### *The Town*

The town was extending in all directions; Foundry Street (now Lafleur St.) was made in 1884 and resurfaced in 1889 whilst in 1887, T. Barron was auctioning lots in the area. Hamelin and Ayers opened up the west side of the river by driving a road to their mill site and erecting a dwelling in 1878. A number of new brick dwelling houses appeared on Main Street, some of the most notable being Dr. E. G. Christie's house and McConnell's house, both built in 1884, and a house with lawns and flower beds in front built by Archie Mitchell in 1895 east of the United Church (Pollock and Graves garage, 1963). Houses, too, were being built beyond Main Street. Millway was opened up in 1883 and houses with neat picket fences in front were built on this street by Messrs. ~~Bison~~, Bedard, Barley and Tessier. In 1881, O. B. Lafleur, a well-known figure in Lachute with a venerable beard, built a frame dwelling house on Bethany Street; and J. W. Cottingham built his home further along the road in 1899, using hard brick from Vankleek Hill and softer brick from Beech Ridge for the inside. In 1884 houses were also going up in the East End for a quarter of a mile along Main Street where lots ranged from 50 to 190 dollars. Also in 1899, P. R. McGibbon built a house on the north-west corner of Highway 8 and the Brownsburg Road (now disappeared), whilst further up the road, R. Dobbie in 1883 built another brick house which was later bought by John Hay (Mr. Underhill, 1963). 1885 and 1886 saw much building, as many as 100 houses being erected at one time. Some of these were splendid buildings. F. C. Ireland's house built on

Princess Street in 1883 was steam heated with hot and cold water, a conservatory, barns, stable and coach house and was appropriately called "The Chateau". But all were not so well housed, as the rapid industrial expansion created an acute housing shortage with considerable overcrowding, one house 12 by 14 feet of one storey had two families of 13 living in it.

Throughout 1876-1900 there were many and continuous grumbles about the terribly muddy condition of the streets and this was aggravated by the high railway embankment. In the spring, a small brook flowed diagonally across Main Street from a spot opposite Bellingham Street to Water Street then to the river. This drained the north side of the track but did not stop the basements on Main Street getting flooded in the spring. In 1884, this drain was the subject of a law suit when J. A. Bedard sued Alexander McGibbon for discharging offensive effluents into the drain from his tannery. Foundry Street on the south side of the embankment was worse, for in 1880 there was a pond opposite the Watchman's office that could have submerged a team of horses.

A sidewalk made of wooden planks was first constructed high above the road by J. Taylor in front of his West End store and other storekeepers quickly followed suit. In 1888 the Town Council passed a by-law forcing people on Main Street to build and maintain sidewalks and to keep them free from snow to within 6 inches of the surface. Needless to say, they were often allowed to deteriorate and in 1900 the people of Water Street were ordered by the Council to repair their sidewalks.

The bridges, too, quickly fell into disrepair and with \$1500 for running expenses, the Council were limited in how much they could undertake. In 1885, D. Joss and W. Moore rebuilt the bridge over the West River and in 1886 Barron's Bridge was repaired by O. B. Lafleur. In 1884, Fish offered his bridge, which had cost him \$2000 to build, to the town who repaired it in 1885 at a cost of \$1300. In 1900, the Town Council had to build a more substantial bridge over Cruise's gully along the St. Andrews Road near

the Catholic cemetery and in that same year, the Parish Council which had rebuilt Power's Bridge in 1886 had to close White's Bridge as it was in a dangerous condition, although the bridge had been rebuilt in 1885 after the great flood.

In spite of the muddy condition of the streets and the frail bridges, there were narrow escapes from accidents. Even in 1879, there were traffic problems, particularly during the winter evenings with people who would not fix sleigh bells to their sleighs. In 1889, a by-law was passed prohibiting driving in the town at more than 8 miles an hour and all horses had to walk over the bridges. There were, however, complaints of furious driving "brutes riding through the town at great speed". A letter in the *Watchman* in 1896 urged pedestrians to stand up for their rights. "A person walking has the full right to half the road and a loaded sleigh has not the right to the whole of the road at the expense of people on foot."

The taxpayers were not satisfied — they complained in 1896 that "People had no water, no light, no protection against robbery; they maintain the sidewalks and yet pay taxes!" But by 1900 a start had been made to removing these criticisms.

## PUBLIC SERVICES |

### *Water*

Before 1880, any water for houses was umped from the river which explains why one lady in the West End was disconcerted to find a 3-foot eel in her bath tub.

But about this time, O.B. Lafleur, who also came to Lachute from Ste. Scholastique in 1877, entered into partnership with P. Rodrigue and T. Stewart to build the town's first water supply. The ducts were made from 7 in. diameter logs of cedar or tamarac with a 2 in. central bore, being fabricated in a shed in the East End (site of the Niederkorn apartment block, 1963). One of these ducts was found in 1963 when excavating a trench in front of the United Church.

The source of the water was a creek on the James' farm on the north side of the river, west of Copeland's Bridge.

In 1887, the Lachute Aqueduct Company was threatening to cut off the water supply from all customers who had not paid their bills. In the same year, on the Queen's birthday, McQuat and McRae with their new force pump were throwing up a water jet 30 feet high to demonstrate the feasibility of supplying the whole town with water and in 1895, the Town Council. were discussing the possibilities of a waterworks.

### *Lighting*

In 1880, it was dangerous to walk in Lachute at night for the only illumination was that from the windows and doors of houses and taverns. Mrs. T. Jackson and Mrs. St. Quentin on their way home from a prayer meeting lost their sense of direction in the dark and walked into the river, but still the town provided no oil lamps. In 1885, J. Palliser introduced electric light into Lachute by installing a generating plant in a part of the Fish-Ireland mills on the east side of the river, which was later purchased by Wilson. In 1888, the Edison Electric Light Company came to Lachute and installed a generator which supplied four 32 candle power lamps and one 50 candle power lamp. The result was sensational; every plank on the sidewalk in front of Todd's store could be clearly seen. Lights-out was at midnight. In 1900, the Town Council formed a committee to consider the project of lighting the town.

### *Fire Brigade*

One of the first acts of the new Town Council in 1885 was to float a loan of \$5000 out of which they purchased a fire engine with a hose and reel. Since this loan was only redeemed after 30 years, the town was still paying for this fire engine long after it had been relegated to the scrap heap.

### *Telegraph and Telephone*

The Telegraph came with the railway and by June 1881, there were two telegraph offices in Lachute. By 1885,

telephone communications had been established between Montreal and Ottawa, the wires running through the town; so J. Palliser who had already started his electric light plant decided that Lachute should also have a telephone service. He interviewed the Bell Telephone Company in Montreal who stipulated a minimum of 25 subscribers at \$25 a year for 5 years. The subscribers were duly obtained and the exchange was set up in Palliser's office building east of the Anglican Church with a paid girl to look after it by day and students at night who were given free board. In the new exchange, the Registry was No. 1, the station No. 5, Hamelin and Ayers, 23 and J. C. Wilson, 2 1. In 1889 the number of subscribers had increased to 45.

### *Police*

People were beginning to complain of tramps in the town, of vicious dogs roaming the streets and of furious driving, but nothing could be done for there was no policeman. Finally McArthur's butcher shop was robbed, so in 1889 a town police officer was appointed, provided with a new suit and sent to Montreal to be sworn in. He was urged to be particularly severe on fast driving.

### *Communications*

The mills east of Brownsburg were on both sides of the road. Robert Morrison's woollen mill had been burnt down but his sons rebuilt it in October 1891, and made tweeds and blankets. On the north side of the road was the Lane and Owens sawmill. By 1894, there was a reasonable road connecting the busy little Brownsburg and Dalesville communities with Lachute (Fig. 3).

In 1887, the road over the mountain to Dunany was improved with the help of 200 dollars contributed by the Quebec Government. This connected Lachute with the-mills at Lake Louisa and the farms at Gore, (*Fig. 4*).

The Quebec Government who. were now the owners of the railroad from Montreal to Lachute gave a contract to

Duncan Macdonald in 1876 to, construct the line as far as Hull but a disagreement arose between Macdonald and the Government, who temporarily placed, the Militia in charge of the stations. The Government then sold the Montreal-Ottawa and Occidental Railroad in January 1881 to the Pacific Railway Syndicate for seven million dollars. This company became the C.P.R. in 1882 and has been running the railroad ever since. The section of track between Lachute and Staynerville, then called Muddy Branch, was built by W. H. Chisholm and O'Brian who were employing 150 men in 1881 hauling ballast from the East Settlement for the railroad. In 1895, the C.P.R. was running four passenger trains each way from Lachute — twice the number running in 1963 !

The first rail tickets were issued from a box car, then a station was built at the east end of the freight sheds. In September 1883, an octagonal water tank was constructed between Princess Street and the track which was later moved further west towards Hamford Street.

However, not every railway construction was as beneficial to Lachute as the C.P.R. The line from Montreal to St. Jovite was in operation in 1891 and by 1895 a branch line, the Montfort Colonization Railroad connected first St. Sauveur and 16 Island Lake, then later Arundel with this line. -This took much trade off the Lachute merchants for the communities in the north of the county were now able to buy in St. Jovite or even in Montreal.

The C.P.R. was severely criticized. The station was considered inconvenient and in June 1887, the C.P.R. authorities relocated the platform, at a position some 230 feet east of the present station. The gradient was a trouble to the heavy freight train which had to back down to the bridges, the piers of which showed signs of giving way even in 1880. There was much talk by the Company of building a station on the west side of the North River, but this found favour with no one.

Between 1871-1882, the canal system between Carillon and Grenville had been rebuilt at the Government's expense

with larger locks 300 by 45 feet that would take boats of 9-foot draft. A dam had also been completed in 1882 across the river to increase the depth of water and eliminate the Chute a Blondeau rapids. In view of the expected increase in trade along the river there was a proposition to build a railway between Lachute and St. Andrews which would eventually be extended across the river into Ontario. The plan was approved by the Quebec Government in June 1881 but after a false start in 1882, work was eventually begun in August 1889, and the line completed in 1891. The official title was the Ottawa Valley Railroad, but it was universally known as the 'GOP' (get out and push). From the outset, the line proved unprofitable and the farmers were never compensated for the land, in lieu of which they took the rails to repair their barns when the line ceased to function after 1905. The line was connected with the C.P.R. line by a switch; then it crossed over Foundry Street just east of the Watchman office and ran between Mary and Barron. Avenue, then through the Cruise farm. There was a boarding platform north of Foundry Street, a little to the east of the Watchman office.

A more successful- venture was the line being laid around 1900 by the Great Northern Railway which ran through Lachute from Quebec City by way of St. Jerome, the line then continuing to Cushing and Grenville. The station in Lachute was on the west side of Water Street and the line crossed the St. Jerome Road about a quarter of a mile above the cemetery, then ran between the road and the river to 'the station. It then continued west, crossing the river on a steel bridge about a quarter of a mile upstream from Barron's Bridge; then it crossed the Brownsburg Road just south of the junction with Hamford Street, went behind the Exhibition Grounds, intersected the C.P.R. track north of the Hull Road, crossing the road east of St. Philippe. In 1899 the railroad bridge across the Ottawa River was begun to continue the line to Hawkesbury and then to connect with the Grand Trunk Railroad along the St. Lawrence.\* The Lachute station was

built in 1900 and this along with the octagonal water tank and the piers of the bridge over the North River are still in evidence, the first two structures now serving as dwellings.

## INDUSTRIES

### *The Old Mills*

In 1876, the only mills in Lachute were those of Fish and Ireland on the east bank of the river, located between the upper dam and where Bedard Boulevard now meets Main Street. These consisted from north to south of a saw mill, grist mill and a carding and fulling mill. In 1877, Fish built his bridge to enable the Chatham farmers on the east side to gain access to his grist mill.

By 1879, Fish had leased his mills, the carding and fulling mill with 4 looms, 2 jacks and 3 sets of cards now being run by F. Poitras and his son. In 1879, Fish added another mill just south of the fulling mill for making wooden ware, but in March, 1880, this new mill along with the carding and fulling mill were destroyed by fire, the total damage being estimated at 25,000 dollars, Fish himself sustaining a personal loss of 7,000 dollars. The carding mill started up again, but in 1882 it was pulled down and the McQuat foundry was built on the site, a narrow alleyway separating the foundry from the grist and saw mills. Ireland and Leggo owned the river lots on the west side of the river below Fish's Bridge and there was an agreement with Fish that no grist or saw mills would be erected on the west side to compete with his mills on the east side. Between 1879 and 1881, J. C. Wilson bought all the land on the west bank and this agreement still held; further the mills on the east side had prior claim to all water power.

Fish and Peter Campbell were operating the grist and saw mills on the east side installing new grinding stones and a Lafelle water-wheel. They next introduced new machinery for rolling oats and in 1885, the mills were grinding 1000 bushels a day and the products gained awards at various exhibitions including a medal at the London Exhibition in 1887.

Fish and Ireland next started a new venture of cooking the oatmeal and then distributing it in cans — the forerunner of “instant foods”. In 1883 the grist mill was enlarged to meet the growing demand of “National Foods” as the new product was termed. This National Food venture for a time was very successful; the mills were running night and day, and the produce was being shipped all over Canada and as far as the Barbados and Antwerp.

Production problems finally resulted in the Fish-Ireland partnership being terminated in 1887, Ireland taking all the National Food machinery to Toronto to begin business there.

In 1882 Fish concentrating on his National Food venture had leased his grist and saw mill to Peter Campbell who then bought them in 1890. Campbell, in turn, sold them to Simpson. and Boyd. John Boyd was the son of Nathaniel Boyd, who, as a member of the Royal Staffs Corps, had been employed on the construction of the first canal system, whilst W. J. Simpson was Argenteuil’s representative in the Quebec Government.

In 1887, J. C. Wilson having built his paper mill bought more property between -his mill and Fish’s Bridge on the west side of the river which included the Ireland residence known as the Chateau which became Wilson’s home and a lime kiln belonging to J. Bradford which Bradford then relocated in 1884 on the north side of Chatham Street. Previous to this, Ireland had been very active selling many building lots on Princess Street which was developing rapidly.

In 1895, J. C. Wilson then bought the grist and saw mills from Boyd and Simpson on the east side of the river and Peter Campbell managed them until the saw mill was finally taken down in 1896 when the flag pole at the entrance bearing the emblem of a fish, a well-known landmark in the West End, disappeared forever.

The old grist mill housed the electric generating plant which also came into Wilson’s possession. Since this was a stone structure, the walls survived for many years after all the machinery had been removed.

## NEW INDUSTRIES

Between 1876 and 1900, Lachute acquired its two leading industries and the growth and prosperity of the town has depended largely on them ever since.

### ***The Ayers Mills***

T. Ayers emigrated in 1858 from Cornwall, England, to Columbus, Ohio, and worked in mills there until his death in 1891. His son, Thomas Henry Ayers, also worked in the Columbus mills until 1868 when he entered into partnership at Perth, Ontario, with Felix Hamelin. In 1870, they hired the McGill Woollen Mills in Hawkesbury; then in 1876, they purchased 20 acres of land on the west side of the North River about half a mile below Fish's Bridge where there were falls which would supply water power. This land was virgin forest with no road access but in 1878 they constructed a road to the site, erected a dwelling and built a dam. In 1879, they built their first woollen mill and it was in operation in 1880. In 1886, a new dam was built just below the paper mills to drive a Vulcan water-wheel, but a new steam boiler was also installed in the same year.

At first, blankets and felts, were traded for farm products, mostly wool, but business grew and in 1887, a large four storey woollen mill was built by O. B. Lafleur which doubled the capacity of the old mill. In 1895 in their woollen mill, they had 1000 spindles, 18 looms and machinery for finishing and dyeing cloth. In 1871, T. H. Ayers married Miss Olive Paquette and when he decided on his new venture to manufacture felts for the rapidly growing paper industry, his wife found out how to splice the felts which was a closely guarded trade secret of the feltmakers in England. They next built a plant half a mile from the felt mills on the river side to make wood pulp. In 1895, the woollen mill had a capacity of 60 pounds of wool per hour and their products consisted of tweeds, flannels, blankets, felts for pulp and paper, printing felts and wood pulp. They then employed about 45 hands and the payroll was about 1000 dollars per month.

## ***J. C. Wilson Paper Mills***

J. C. Wilson was born in Ireland but came to Montreal as a boy with his family where he was apprenticed as a machinist.

His first introduction to paper was in the publishing business, and in a modest way he entered into the manufacture of paper bags in Montreal from purchased paper. In 1879, he conceived the idea of manufacturing his own paper. Lachute attracted him because of the water power on the river and the fact that the railway was in operation. He placed his proposition before the Parish Council who agreed to exempt any factory from taxation for 20 years. He purchased 170,000 sq. ft. of land on the west side of the river just below Fish's Bridge, 100 yards south of the railway track, paying 2,540 dollars for it. By 1880 the slate roof was on the first block of buildings and the 90-foot stack was being built. The first paper was produced around April 1881.

In 1883, a special type of manilla paper was being made which became preeminent in Canada. -The capacity of the mills was taxed to the utmost, so in 1885 a second machine was added and began production in January 1886. In 1891, the mill was again greatly extended and a third machine was in operation in 1894 which was one of the largest in Canada. In 1895, the daily capacity was 15 tons a-day. In 1900, a fourth paper machine was added.

In 1890, Wilson transferred his bag manufacturing business from Montreal to Lachute. By 1896, having purchased all the old mills, he had possession of all the water power on the river in front of his mill which had a frontage of 360 feet and was the largest mill in Canada. His manager was H. Slater who was to figure prominently in politics in the next 25 years. In these early days, the raw materials were jute, burlap, rags and rope which were digested with lime in rotary boilers. By 1900 the company had some 200 employees and were paying 5000 dollars a month in wages.

All this tremendous upsurge of industry created an acute

housing shortage in the vicinity of the mills and the area on the west side of Fish's Bridge began to develop rapidly.

#### OTHER NEW INDUSTRIES

A company to make bobbins was formed as early as 1870 with a mill on the east side, of the river just north of the Fish-Ireland grist mill. In 1883, Hamelin and Ayers built a new mill for a David Hambleton and bought a machine from England for making handles. In 1884, Hambleton purchased the machinery of the old bobbin mill for 1000 dollars and the factory was re-located at the south end of Princess Street, the old mill having been burnt in March 1884. In 1888 the mill was being driven by a 5 ton steam boiler. Hambleton made his bobbins, spools, etc., from selected hard woods, some of which such as persimmon. and dogwood had to be imported. This was the only factory in Canada that made shuttles. In 1900 it employed about 30 hands with a payroll of 700 dollars -a month and was shipping shuttles to all parts of the Dominion.

In July 1880, Robert Bannerman started a rope factory on the east side of the river opposite and a little higher up than the mills of Hamelin and Ayers with a capacity of one ton of rope a week. It had a rope walk some 600 feet long which ran parallel to the river. After a few years it was leased to the Consumers Cordage Company for 21. years, but they closed the plant before 1895 after going to litigation with Hamelin and Ayers on the question of water power. This became a classic court case and the findings were often quoted when water power was the subject of dispute.

In 1879, T. McQuat, a younger son of Andrew McQuat, entered into partnership with John McRae to start a foundry business in Lachute. Both partners had learned the trade in the Victoria Foundry in Ottawa. Their first business was housed in an old wooden building on the site of the Lafleur Furniture Company, later the Farmers' Supply Company on Foundry Street, which was called the Victoria Foundry after the Ottawa business. At first, the blower was driven by a

horse attached to the end of a long arm which it kept in motion by tramping round in a circle, but business was so brisk that in 1882 they moved to the river-side opposite where Bedard Boulevard now joins Main Street on the site of the carding and fulling mill which had been destroyed by fire. Here they utilized the water power from a water-wheel and chute. The foundry was extended several times and, in 1895, was a two story building, with several out-buildings. It had a great reputation specializing in agricultural machinery but also making school desks and domestic stoves which were shipped as far west as Manitoba. In 1884, the foundry made the castings for the new locks at Carillon. Later the business was to move across the river. For a long time, Lachute had two foundries, the other one being a small business owned by Charlebois on the north-west corner of Foundry Street and Bethany which started about 1880.

The pattern of industry was slowly being revolutionized by steam power, and the introduction of steam boilers meant that mills could be located away from the river. In 1882 R. Campbell and McKenzie built a saw mill on the triangle of land between Robert Street and Mary Street. The mill was 125 by 50 feet with an engine room 50 by 44 feet to house four steam boilers and the steel smoke stack had the dubious distinction of being the largest in Canada, 110 feet high. A railroad, siding was constructed from Barton Avenue to the mills and a ditch was dug from the river across Foundry Street to float the logs from a boom on the river into the mills. There was a bridge carrying Foundry Street over the ditch, the repair of which was the responsibility of the mill. But this mill was of short duration for it was found difficult to float the logs up the ditch from the river. The mill was sold, then dismantled and in 1889 all the machinery had been removed. For a long time, the stack lay on the ground and several, dignified elderly inhabitants of Lachute can remember their delight as boys on cycling through the stack.

The McQuat saw mills on Davis Creek at Hill Foot also continued to operate during this period, as did the

Lane-Owens saw mills on the Brownsburg Road. In 1889 Peter and Archie McGibbon, the sons of Finley McGibbon and grandsons of John McGibbon, the 1820 Dalesville pioneer, purchased a site on the Clunie estate and built a steam-driven saw mill. The mill was on the south side of Chatham Street between the road and West River (IGA store, 1963). In 1895, the company was sawing and planing some 20,000 logs a year, and the iron smoke stack was a prominent feature of the skyline. In the construction business O. B. Lafleur and Fils Ltd. bought a derelict business in 1894 known as the Lachute Furniture Factory which had been the premises of Chapman and Drysdale who made sashes and doors in 1886. They built or rebuilt between 1877-1900 Meikles, Giles and McQuat stores on Main Street, the Rodrigue Hotel, Hamelin and Ayers' mill, the new Court House, and the new Lachute Academy, whilst Joss Bros., carpenters, were building or strengthening the bridges.

In 1880, G. L. Moir started the Lachute Marble Works and was joined by E. H. McCoy in 1886, who conducted the business after the death of Moir in 1891. This was located on the south side of Main Street in the East End almost opposite Gilbert Street. In 1889, Simon McKimmie, who had built several houses- in Lachute, gave up his carpenter's shop to become an undertaker. Also in 1880, John McNiece opened a tinsmith's shop at Lachute Mills, but in 1889 this was taken over by Robert McArthur, who was later to superintend the laying of the first iron water pipes.

A creamery and cheese factory was started in the old Methodist Church after it was sold in 1882, but it finished in August 1883. The local farmers then built a cheese factory along the Bethany Road in 1895 and there was another in Hill Head that began in 1888.

Industries growing outside Lachute were also bringing business and money into the town. In 1882, Dan Smith's powder mill on the west side of Brownsburg was bought by the Acadia Powder Company then dismantled since the company had other mills.

A. L. "Gat" Howard came to Canada from New Haven, Connecticut, in 1885 and persuaded the Canadian Government to set up an ammunition plant in Canada. Howard took over the Acadia site, built a factory and started manufacturing ammunition with 30 employees. This became the Dominion Cartridge Company, a joint stock company with the Hon. J. J. C. Abbott as president. In 1892, Howard relinquished the management to F. G. Verity and went to Capelton to manage a plant making mercury fulminate. He returned, however, in 1897 and built a residence, club house and six houses, only to leave again to fight in the South African war where he was killed in February 1901. But the enterprise grew and in 1900 manufacture was going on in 30 separate buildings with over 200 employees.

The locations of the Lachute industries are shown in Fig. 5.

### STORES

In 1875, there were 3 stores on Main Street and 2 hotels; in 1900, there were some 20 stores and 1 hotel, all except Jim Raitt's tinsmith's store being east of Bellingham Street, i.e. in the station locality. On the south side of Main Street was Meikle's store, but G. L. Meikle, son of the founder died in 1877, so the store passed to -his son-in-law, Hugh Gall, who took the old part down and rebuilt it in 1900. W. Banford had purchased P. H. Lane's store at Lanes Corner which along with the old Methodist Church was destroyed by fire in 1894. He then moved to Main Street and occupied a store originally built by T. Stewart in 1885, on the west side of Station Street. Even today, this store is one of the most characteristic on Main Street with its central tower and verandahs. Another store west of the hotel built in 1885 was that of J. R. McQuat, the first store in Lachute to have a plate glass window. It survives in part today as the Banque Provinciale. Between McQuat's store and a store built by Henry Giles in 1887 was one purchased from R. Evans by Hugh Fraser in 1881, a Montrealer who was originally in partnership with J. R.

McQuat. This store was sold in 1887 to T. Stewart and later came into the possession of J. D. Campbell and others before it was rebuilt, (site of Beaton's drug store, 1963) .

On the north side of the street just east of Bethany, a local building firm, Riddell and Sutherland, built the jewellery store of T. Jousse in 1887. Jousse was a Frenchman who had lived through the siege of Paris in 1870 before coming to Lachute. This handsome store still survives in 1963 (Lagarde's) but the famous croquet lawn on the west side is no more.

Between Clyde and Water Streets was the Creswell Block containing Creswell's flour and feed store, T. Dallaire's store, followed by a new -block built by John Hope who came to Lachute in 1877 and opened a bakery here, supplying most of Lachute with bread. This block was destroyed by fire in October, 1963. The next block to the west was the Creswell home, the last remnants of which, a low gable roof, survived until mid 1963. The property between here and the Mitchell and Dudderidge carriage shop consisted of two stone buildings, one containing Burch's grocery shop, a millinery store kept by a man called Davidson, and the other, Roby's tailor shop. These were destroyed by fire in 1892 (the Davidson fire). After the fire, G. Roby in 1895 built one of the finest brick buildings on Main Street. Andrew Boa rebuilt the next block west which was to become the stores of Burwash and Garretsee (Kingsbury, Walker and Lamarche, 1963) . Then came a new store built by Hugh Fraser after he had sold his 1881 store on the other side of the street to Thos, Stewart 'in 1887 for 1700 dollars. This later became Carpenter Bros., then R. McFaul (site of Beamish Store, 1963) . In 1895, the Mitchell and Dudderidge carriage shop was advertising carts for 15 dollars, covered buggies for 65 dollars and Gladstones, the equivalent of Cadillacs today, for 110 dollars. This partnership survived until the death of Dudderidge in 1888 when Mitchell continued the business.

Joseph A. Bedard was re-building his store and house to the east of Bellingham Street which still bears the inscription,

“J. A. Bedard and Sons, 1900”. Lachute also had a book shop in 1895 run by Dawson Kerr whilst Miss C. Kenneburgh was selling organs — indications that the community had time to enjoy the refinements of life. In 1883, the possession of a piano or organ in the home was a status symbol and many thousands of dollars were spent on these articles.

Besides stores on Main Street, others had opened along Foundry Street and in Bethany where Charlebois was building a store and show room near his foundry. In the West End was the large brick store of James and John McFaul at the corner of Grace Street which they had purchased from Robert Banford (Hector Powers, 1963). These were grandsons of Archibald McFaul an early settler from County Antrim, Ireland. Across Fish's Bridge, David Wilson opened a meat market in 1891 where is now the McQuat store on the river bank.

As early as 1881, the town council talked of establishing a town market in a building on the west end of Foundry Street erected by J. Larmonth in 1883, for the sale of agricultural implements, but this did not come to fruition until 1886, Mondays and Thursdays being market days. Between 1878 and 1896, prices of many commodities dropped appreciably, brown sugar from 10 cents to 4½ cents per pound; flour from 3.25 dollars a cwt. to 2 dollars, though butter at 14 cents per pound remained unchanged.

A few stores were opened outside Lachute town. In 1892, G. H. Hills bought Samuel Orr's store on the Upper Lachute Road and in 1896 there were two stores in Brownsburg.

#### HOTELS

In 1887, Argenteuil House, the proprietor being P. Rodrigue, was enlarged, but it burnt down in January, 1892. When rebuilt, it was the largest hotel in Lachute, being of brick of three stories with a two-storey extension. It had a flat roof and was encircled by a verandah on each floor. Even in 1895, it had spacious grounds and stables and could accommodate 100 guests.

With the advent of the railway, two hotels were built on Foundry Street near the station. The hotel built by Alfred Lafleur was a three-storey brick building with large stables. Alfred Lafleur, not to be confused with O. B. Lafleur et Fils, came to Lachute in 1878 from Ste. Adele where he previously had a hotel. The other hotel was built by Moise Paquette who came to Lachute from Ste. Scholastique in 1878 and this too was a brick building occupied in 1879. A brother of M. Paquette opened the first barber's shop originally housed in the hotel but later moving to Main Street. The fourth hotel was the old Victoria Hotel, begun by Milo Lane in the West End which later became Allan's Hotel, then passed into the hands of James Currie in 1887. By 1900, there was a fifth hotel, the Windsor Hotel, built by T. Stewart and operated by Mr. Gauthier, again near the station at the corner of Bethany and what is now Berry Street, (*Fig. 5*).

#### CHURCHES

In 1875, there were three churches in Lachute, all half a mile or so east of Bethany. By 1880 it was obvious that the centre of population had shifted much further west. The Methodists sold their church at Lane's Corner in 1882, to J. Staniforth for 600 dollars. It became a cheese factory until August, 1883, then a private dwelling until it burnt along with Lane's store in 1894. In February 1883, at a meeting held in the Olivet Hall, all the Methodist factions agreed to unite as one body. In 1881, a new church, 55 by 38 feet, was built of wood cased with brick at the west corner of Bellingham Street and Main Street, on land generously donated by a stalwart Methodist, T. Jackson. Today the Margaret Rodger Memorial Presbyterian Church occupies the site. This second Methodist Church had a square tower and octagonal spire facing Main Street with its axis parallel to Bellingham Street, (*Fig. 5*).

The Presbyterians still had two congregations and two ministers until they united in 1899 to form the Lachute Presbyterian Church. Rev. W. Forlong, who lived on Main

Street just east of Barron, found that Henry's Church was too far out of town so he held services in the Victoria Hall in 1881 and these were continued by his successor, the Rev. N. Waddell, whilst the Rev. Mackie was holding his services in the old Court House. In 1885, Mackie's congregation presented him with new robes and a new sleigh complete with a horse blanket and whip. In 1900, a new church was built to hold both congregations, seating 750 people. This church was a brick edifice of dimensions, 85 by 53 feet, with a gallery and a square tower at the south-east corner. It is now the United Church on the north side of Main Street about 100 yards west of Harriet Street and though partially rebuilt after a fire, it still retains many of its original characteristics (Fig. 5). It was dedicated on February 3, 1900. In 1884, the congregation of Henry's Church purchased a property on the river bank just south of the Clunie house from P. Latour for 2000 dollars and this became the Presbyterian, later the United Church Manse.

The Anglicans in 1868 were first holding their service in the old College building, next in a hall owned by David Christie behind his shoemaking shop on the north side of Main Street east of Bethany. In 1878, no services were held, then the Rev. H. J. Evans came in 1878. He was the first regularly constituted incumbent and was greatly esteemed by his congregation who presented him with a racoon coat. His territory was a vast one stretching as far north as Arundel until separated from Lachute in 1887.

In October 1881, the first Anglican Church was dedicated on the site of the present church. It was a simple rectangular wooden structure with a square tower at the south-west corner housing a bell (Fig. 5). The Rev. H. J. Evans departed in 1883 and was followed by two other ministers, then the Rev. Alex Boyd Given came in 1892. In 1886 land to the north of the Clunie house was purchased and a brick parsonage was built.

In 1886, the Baptist community held services in the Olivet Hall occasionally baptising in the North River near the

Cruise Farm. In 1887, they purchased a site overlooking the river on Main Street west of the C.P.R. track. By January 1888, the church was ready for services, this being the present brick church, but has received some modernization in more recent times. During the building, Rev. J. Higgins was pastor of the church but he went to Thurso in 1894 and was succeeded by the Rev. J. R. Creswell.

About 1878, the Plymouth Brethren, who had been meeting in the old Court House, built a small brick hall at the corner of Hugh and College Streets and have used this building for their meetings until the present day.

The Roman Catholic Church on Bethany Street was extended by 20 feet, a gallery added and a sacristy built during the incumbency of Rev. Arthur Derome. Father Derome moved to Montreal in 1894 and was succeeded by the Rev. Anthime Carriere who added two lateral galleries and greatly improved the fine brick presbytery. In 1895, the Roman Catholic congregation was a large one, numbering about 700 communicants.

In 1885, a 30-piece Salvation Army band came to Lachute and held a meeting in the Victoria Hall which was packed, a great crowd overflowing into the street.

### SCHOOLS

Because of the influx of population in the newly-made Princess, Queen and Millway Streets, a small brick school was opened in the West End on Princess Street in 1884 called No. 1 School which took the place of the old log schoolhouse long since closed. In 1886, this was overcrowded and the school overflowed into the Olivet Hall.

In 1879, a new wing was added to Lachute Academy to house the influx of elementary grades since the two Boards, College Directors, and Commissioners had agreed to use the same building. However, the enlarged college could not take all the pupils but the congestion was relieved after Lachute town was formed in 1885 since the parish of St. Jerusalem Commissioners then re-opened the East End school by renting

it from G. J. Walker, and this school continued until 1932. In 1891, 'the school commissioners of Lachute town decided the only solution to the overgrowing number of pupils was to build a new school to house 200 pupils. At that time, Joseph Palliser was chairman of the school board and J. W. McQuat was principal.

Four acres of land were purchased between Harriet and Belhingham Streets behind Main Street, 3 acres for grounds and 1 acre for the building, and in 1892, O. B. Lafleur, at a cost of 12,000 dollars, built the finest school buildings in the Province, of brick, with the main entrance on Harriet Street. The new school had many benefactors, among them John Meikle, Sidney Bellingham and J. C. Wilson. The school from its inception drew scholars from a wide area and was to educate nearly all the leading citizens in the county. N. T. True11 became the first headmaster of the new Academy as J. W. McQuat had then been made a school inspector.

The French population, meanwhile, had been increasing rapidly and the French School Commissioners in 1881 bought school buildings for their children on the north side of Grace Street opposite their church.

Of course, there were many district schools including a model school at St. Andrews, a school at the River Rouge, though the one at Beech Ridge was closed in 1896.

The locations of the schools in Lachute in 1885 are given in Fig. 5.

## BANKS

The first bank in Lachute was run by R. G. Meikle in a block on the east corner of Clyde and Main Streets. In 1885, the merchants of Lachute requested that the Ville Marie Bank of Montreal should establish a branch in the town. This was opened just west of the present Caisse Populaire ( 1963 ) in a building previously occupied by Lapointe, a tailor and built on the site of the Andrew Boa home. Because of bad investments, the bank went into liquidation in 1899, the manager of the Lachute branch, Henry Ford, having resigned in 1896.

In 1899, the Bank of Ottawa came to Lachute with J. T. Brock as manager. A new brick building was constructed by O. B. Lafleur on Main Street, on the site of the old McGibbon tannery opposite Bellingham Street. Between 1895 and 1896, there were three fires which had destroyed all the property on the south side of Main Street from the tannery to Barron Avenue including the tannery and two houses, a brick house belonging to the Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Forlong, and a wooden one on the east corner of Main and Barton that was owned by D. McPhail, an undertaker. The new bank on the tannery site was three stories with a flat facade and is still in existence in 1963 adjoining the new Bank of Nova Scotia building. About 1900, Brock was succeeded by J. R. Parris, who remained with the bank for over 20 years and was a well-known and esteemed member of the community.

#### POST OFFICES

Between 1875-1900, the post office system was extended with Lachute as the centre. The transport of mail from Lachute to other local centres was arranged by private contracts. In 1880, Brownsburg had a postal service three times a week and there were numerous district post offices.

A post office was also opened in Lachute Mills in July 1880, housed in a new store built by James Fish who was in charge.

#### NEWSPAPERS

The first local newspaper, "The Argenteuil Advertiser" had appeared in June 1872, to serve the people in the Ottawa Valley. It was the first paper to be printed on the north side of the Ottawa between Montreal and Ottawa. The modest capital was put up by a local citizen residing in Montreal on the understanding the paper would be non-political, but in time this paper, appearing once a week, began to show strong Liberal leanings. It was purchased by J. A. Bedard then sold to Dawson Kerr, who then began to publish "The Watchman

and Ottawa Valley Advertiser". In 1892, it passed into the possession of two brothers, G. F. and C. Calder and also had the backing of W. J. Simpson then the Conservative M.P.P. for Argenteuil. In 1885, this paper was permanently established in a building just east of the Larmonth building at the west end of Foundry Street with a press that would print 100 sheets an hour.

In 1887 another paper, "The Independent," was launched from a small wooden office on the corner of Barron and Foundry Streets, described as "a vivacious and bellicose sheet" and run by C. Norris and K. Massiah. The Watchman was always taking this paper to task accusing it of being deliberately misleading in its facts and suggesting that it should confine itself to abuse. J. S. Giles bought the Independent for 500 dollars and he then launched the "Argenteuil County News" in 1895.

He moved the paper from Barron Avenue to a house on Main Street opposite Water Street that had originally been the Dudderidge home, then was sold to John McGibbon the son of A. McGibbon who had owned the tannery. The house later became the home of P. Dobbie (C. McFaul's store, 1963). Then G. F. Calder was appointed County Registrar and his brother C. Calder had an insurance agency, so Simpson invited J. S. Giles to accept the editorship of the Watchman. The Watchman's competitors gradually fell by the wayside and from 1897 to the present time, "The Watchman" has been run by the Giles family, first by J. S. Giles, then by his son, R. A. Giles.

#### MEDICAL AND LEGAL SERVICES

Dr. T. Christie in 1876 shared Lachute with Dr. William Smith, a native of the district and a product of Lachute College and McGill. Smith served in public life; was a Justice of the Peace, Mayor of Lachute between 1890-94, and for a short while a School Commissioner. He also took a great interest in military affairs, was a good shot and the medical officer for the 11th Battalion of Argenteuil Rangers. He decided to

build a house on Main Street just east of Clyde Street (Painter house, 1963) but never completed it as he died in September 1895, at the age of 44, when there was a day of mourning for a much lamented and well-loved figure.

His practice was taken by another McGill graduate, a native of Prince Edward Island, Dr. W. W. Alexander, who took up duty in 1895, and first resided in Dr. Smith's house, before moving to the corner of Bethany Street in the timber frame house built by Meikle. In 1887, Lachute had a third medical practitioner in Dr. J. B. Menzies also a graduate of McGill who set up his plate in the West End. Dr. L. P. A. Rodrigue, the third son of Pierre Rodrigue of hotel fame, also received his schooling in Lachute and Laval University. He started to practise in Lachute in 1895 with an office in the Rodrigue block, and later succeeded to Dr. Menzie's practice.

By 1900, Lachute also had two dentists who were visiting the town a few days each month. B. S. Stackhouse was a native of St. Andrews who built a brick house and office on the north side of Main Street in 1885 west of Dr. Smith's house. Both these houses stand in 1963 though converted into stores, the former having been rebuilt after a fire. The other dentist, Dr. C. McConnell who came in 1887 also built a fine brick house just east of Barron in 1896 which was later occupied by Dr. Drew, then by Dr. Fitzgerald. It was demolished in October 1963. In 1879, Mr. T. Christie, son of Dr. T. Christie built the "Medical Hall", 'Lachute's first drug store opposite the family home in Harrier Street and it became well-known in Lachute not only for the variety of its products but as a social centre.

In 1885 the newly constituted Town Council drew up a "Board of Health" containing no less than 22 clauses. In the same year, there was a serious smallpox epidemic and prayers were offered in all the churches for the alleviation of this scourge. The Council purchased a tract of land beyond the West End of the town from P. Cruise and Joseph David built a small isolation hospital there at a cost of 409 dollars, but there is no record that it ever received any patients. As

a result of compulsory vaccination, the epidemic was gradually stamped out. Diphtheria was another terrible disease and in 1885, T. Bedard lost five of his children within a few months.

By 1875-1900, Lachute had several advocates the most notable being G. E. Bampton, M. Desjardins, A. Berthelot, J. E. Valois and of course Joseph Palliser who was in partnership with Bampton. Valois eventually absorbed Berthelot's practice and three generations of this family have now served the legal interests of Lachute people. Like many professional 'French-Canadians, Joseph E. Valois came from Ste. Scholastique in 1890. His first office was in Palliser's law building but this was later moved to the south-west side of College and Bethany, a new brick house being built on the original site on the north side.

### **REGISTRARS**

In 1897, G. F. Calder followed T. Barron as County Registrar. Calder was the grandson of James Calder, the Paisley weaver who came to Lachute in 1827. He received his education first at Lachute Academy, then at McGill.

### **MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

During the period 1875-1900, the chief 'protagonists were the Hon. J. J. C. Abbott, Conservative, and Dr. T. Christie of Lachute, Liberal. Dr. T. Christie was Dominion representative from 1875-1880 and again from 1891-1895. He again won the seat in the election of 1898 against Abbott and in 1900 against Simpson whilst J. C. Wilson was successful in holding the seat from 1886-1890.

The Quebec Legislative representative in 1878 was R. G. Meikle, the son of the founder of the Lachute store. Another Lachute man, W. J. Simpson became M.P.P. in 1892 when the seat was contested by the Liberal, John Hay, the prosperous Lachute farmer. In 1900, Simpson stood for Dominion Parliament but was defeated by Dr. T. Christie.

### **MAYORS**

The first mayor of the newly constituted town was T. Barron, followed by R. Dudderidge, 1886; J. Fish, 1887-88;

Dr. T. Christie, 1889; Dr. W. Smith, 1890-94; J. A. Bedard, 1895; but the election was annulled in March, 1895 and P. Rodrigue became mayor; J. McRae in 1896-1900.

## SOCIETIES

John Hay, the Lachute farmer, cattle breeder, mayor, school commissioner and municipal councillor, was president of the Argenteuil Agricultural Society in 1876-1879. He was a son of John Hay who came to Lachute from Invernessshire in 1834. In 1879, the Society held its annual exhibition in and around the Victoria Hall and had some of the exhibits in the centre of Main Street and in an adjoining field. In 1883, the Society held its annual exhibition at St. Andrews but in 1887, it decided that it would be best to have a permanent site. After much controversy, five acres of the Hammond farm were selected to the west of Lachute on the north side of the Chatham Road, and the O. B. Lafleur Company erected an 8-foot fence around the site whilst contracts for buildings were given to Chapman and Drysdale of Lachute. For many years, G. J. Walker was to be the secretary-treasurer of the Society. The Society held its annual exhibition in September which in those days consisted of showing livestock and farm produce, and they also organized an annual Fall ploughing match on one of the larger farms in the County. The Society has always been very actively supported by the farmers of Argenteuil and a Farmers Club met regularly since 1884 with J. Hay as president. There was also annual horse shows held at the bottom of Clyde Street, this street getting its name from the Clydeshire horses that were a conspicuous feature of these shows.

Other societies sprang from the churches, notably the "Young Peoples Christian Endeavour Society" — sponsored by the Methodist Church and founded in 1895, the Lachute Branch of the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society with Dr. T. Christie as president founded in 1896, and the W.C.T.U. Women's Christian Temperance Union founded in 1883. These temperance societies continued to flourish. The Sons of

Temperance met in their Victoria Hall on the west corner of Barron and Main until in 1880, T. Barron distrained on this society and took back the Victoria Hall, so further meetings were continued in the West End Olivet Hall that had been enlarged in 1877 by J. Fish. One of the contentious issues was that alcoholic beverages were sold by the licensees on Sundays and in 1900 Mayor Bedard said that no licensees complied with the law by not selling on Sunday. In 1900, there was a disorderly brawl at the one-time stronghold of temperance, the Victoria Hall which prompted Father Carriere to preach a sermon in the Catholic Church on the excessive drunkenness in the town caused by liquor being sold during prohibited hours.

In 1880, the Oddfellows opened a Lodge in Lachute called Laurentian Lodge No. 14 which met first in the Olivet Hall then in the West End over the store of the brothers McFaul. The Orangemen were also active and in 1882, two Lachute lodges amalgamated.

The Argenteuil Lodge of Masonic Brethren opened a Lodge in Lachute in 1880 with Wm. Hay as the first master. He was the son of John Hay and had a flourishing flour and feed business on Main Street. The Lodge, like the Oddfellows, first met in Lane's old building in the West End that had been taken over by the McFaul Bros., then in 1885, above John Hope's bakery shop on Main Street. Meikle then extended his store towards the west where he had previously had his horse sheds, and the room above was to be the meeting place of the Masonic Brethren for many years. Meikle then closed the old store which was to the east of his house. In 1900, the Masons were holding dinners in the newest hotel, the Windsor, just behind the store.

For festive occasions, Lachute had organized a pipe and drum band as early as 1877 under John Calder, containing 9 pipes, a snare drum and a triangle. They practised assiduously in the West End, "making the night hideous or melodious according to one's musical taste," said the Watchman. They gave a yearly concert in the Victoria Hall and there were also

periodical torchlight processions. In 1884, the band was attached to the 11th Battalion of the Rangers. In 1896, J. E. Valois organized the Argenteuil Brass Band which was later to be taken over by his son, Gaetan Valois. This was mainly for the French-Canadian community. In 1881, there was an orguINETTE recital in the Olivet Hall, this instrument being billed as "the musical wonder of the age."

More educational efforts were also started. In 1889, a Literary Club was formed that sponsored periodical lectures illustrated by the lime-light lantern such as that given in 1883 on the Cathedrals of Europe.

### SPORTS

In 1881, organized sport in Lachute was placed on a firm footing by the formation of the Caledonian Club. In 1882, this Club with T. Barron as president was organizing sports in a field where the High School now stands. The Lacrosse Club, founded in 1880, was also re-organized but the great ambition of the Club was to build a curling rink. Curling had been sporadically played in the open air on a pond in front of the Fraser House in the East End. In 1883 Lachute had its first covered-in skating rink, 140 by 80 feet, near the river on Meikle Street. A carnival was held each year in which all participants were in costume. In 1884, the first curling rink was built, 120 by 16 feet, behind Main Street on the corner of Clyde Street and Paquin and in the same year a friendly match was arranged between Lachute and Carillon. Later this curling club was to be disbanded and J. Hope, the baker and protagonist of curling was to build his house on the site.

In those days the river was very beautiful and unpolluted. Pike weighing 1 to 2 pounds were plentiful but Presbyterian consciences were affronted by people fishing on Sundays. The wealthier families had boats on the river and in 1889, Wm. Owens, the member in the Legislative Assembly took some of his supporters on a pleasure cruise up the North River. Boys were always offending the staid inhabitants by bathing nude

around Barron's and Fish's Bridges, so in 1888, P. and A. McGibbon gave lumber to build a bath house at Fish's Bridge.

In 1884, F. C. Ireland's son, J. E. Ireland, intrigued Lachute by riding the first "penny-farthing" bicycle and endeavouring to form a bicycle club. The Lachute Gun Club in 1889 was practising on their shooting range at the foot of the mountain and scaring the "high-spirited" horses pulling the carriages along the Brownsburg Road. In 1880, lawn tennis, archery, croquet, quoits and baseball were being played in Lachute and F. C. Ireland was complaining that dancing had become a mania.

Some delightful aspects of living which might be revived with advantage today were the snow-shoe hikes in the winter and the steamer excursions on the Ottawa River between St. Andrews and Hudson which were held on moonlight nights in summer.

#### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Great occasions were celebrated with enthusiasm. As early as 1887, boys and girls were demanding treats at Hallowe'en; it was also observed on this occasion that a number of disguised grown-up ladies were mingling in the crowd with the children and two were surreptitiously smoking !

In 1880, the Queen's birthday was celebrated by the town going "en-fete"; sports were held on Barron's field; the Orange Young Britain's drum and fife band serenaded the town on a waggon and at night fireworks were let off on Main Street in front of Meikle's store, which was a favourite pitch for the Punch and Judy shows that periodically visited the town to the children's delight.

The town was a favourite choice for excursions; the Temperance Society held a large meeting in Barron's Grove and The Argenteuil Rangers held their summer camp in Lachute in 1879.

Every year, the 12th of May was Arbor Day when everyone was encouraged to beautify their town by planting trees. Balm of Gilead trees were very popular and grew in many of the gardens.

## LACHUTE SUMMARY — 1875-1900

Between 1875-1900, the present pattern of Lachute was beginning to crystallize. Substantial industry was growing on the west side of the river opposite the old mills and the river falls were being harnessed to supply electric power. A colony of workmen's houses with a few shops was developing around the mills and Millway, Princess and Queen Streets had come into existence. Both Barron's and Fish's Bridges were wooden tressle bridges but the red railway bridges were steel, all of which had to be rebuilt. Bethany had a number of buildings, and Main Street, besides the score or so of stores, 3 churches, a hotel and the Victoria Hall, also had a number of fine brick houses, the most impressive being the houses of Dr. T. Christie, A. Mitchell, and Graham on the north side, the McConnell house, Berry house built in 1900 (Dr. Papineau, 1963) and the three fine brick houses occupied by the brothers, Henry and Harlow Giles, and their mother on the south side, (Canadian Tire, Leonard's store and Mrs. Mason, 1963).

Main Street in 1900 was a conglomeration of houses and stores much as at present, except there were more houses further back from the sidewalk and more space between them. The western part was narrower than it is today; the road surface was rough and rutted whilst grass grew in the centre, and in the spring, the flood water flowed diagonally across from the Bank of Ottawa to the corner of Water Street. The sidewalks were high wooden planks with railings in front of the stores to hitch the horses. There were a number of trees lining each side and a particularly fine clump of maple trees at the corner of Main and Bethany.

Foundry Street too had its two hotels, some shops (Lavigne's) and a McQuat house, and Grace Street to the south was just beginning to take shape. On the north side of Main Street was the Great Northern Railway just completed in 1900 with many small wooden houses between the track and Main Street mainly occupied by French families.

By 1900 Lachute had built or was building several impressive buildings, the new Court House ( 1887), the new

Lachute Academy (1892) now altered beyond recognition, the Presbyterian Church (United Church, 1963), the Methodist Church, 1882 (disappeared) and the Ottawa Bank building (1900).

At the same time, Lachute was also emerging as a community, entertaining themselves with curling, lacrosse and quoits, whilst the Orange Lodge, the Oddfellows, the Masonic Brethren, the Literary Club and the band performances provided less strenuous activities.