

HISTORIC SITES & MONUMENTS BOARD OF CANADA

RAILWAY STATION REPORT

Title: Canadian National Railways Val-Royal (Lazard) Station
Ville St-Laurent, Québec

Source: Susan D. Bronson, architecte, Montréal

RSR-195

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian National Railways (CNR) station that is known as Val-Royal (Figure 1), constructed ca. 1916-18, is the westernmost of three St-Laurent stops on the Montréal/Deux-Montagnes commuter line (Figure 2). Today, it is marked by a modest station building that serves the purpose for which it was designed some 75 years ago: it houses the office of the line's operator and a waiting room for its passengers. Originally, the structure was part of an important divisional point on the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR) line connecting Toronto and Ottawa to Montréal from the northwest.

Shortly after the tunnel line was inaugurated in 1918, CNoR interests were taken over by the CNR, which completed the electrically operated commuter line to Deux-Montagnes in 1925. After some seven decades of service with minimal upgrading, the infrastructure of the line will be subjected to a much-needed modernization programme over the next three years. As this involves the relocation of the passenger facilities and operational activities at the existing Val-Royal station to a new intermodal station located slightly to the west, the destiny of the original station building, which has been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair, remains uncertain.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Thematic

The consequence of CNoR's ambitious and competitive effort to establish transcontinental connections, the Montréal/Deux-Montagnes commuter line played, and continues to play, an important role in the development of local and regional transportation networks in the Montréal area, as well as suburban communities northwest of its downtown. Conceived during one of the most progressive periods in Canadian railway history, the 1910 plan for this line involved coring a tunnel through Mount

Royal, as well as implementing new ideas about electrically operated train systems, commuter suburbs, downtown passenger terminals and the integration of local and regional transportation networks; its realization continues to this day.

The station known since the late 1920s as the "Val-Royal" stop on this line was christened "Lazard" when it opened around 1916 as a divisional point on the CNoR line between Montréal and Toronto, via Ottawa, with its branch line to Cartierville on the north shore of the island. In 1995, it will be re-named "Bois-Franc," and the existing station facilities will be replaced by a new intermodal station located on the site of the former yards. Interestingly, each name change represents the beginning of a new phase in the thematic development of the station and its line.

The story of the Lazard station starts during the progressive years in Canadian railway history when no dream was too big to conquer and, in the words of Canadian Northern historian T.D. Regehr, there was "not a cloud in the sky."² In fact, the station would never have come into existence had it not been for one of the most ambitious railway-related enterprises of those years, the coring of a tunnel through Mount Royal, and for Lazard Brothers, the British financial firm which facilitated the project's optimistically aggressive beginning by securing support for it from British and European money markets.³

In 1910, when the idea was first proposed, the CNoR was pushing its lines to the west coast, where it was holding its own against its two main rivals, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR). But its principal financiers, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, were well aware that their goal to create a competitive transcontinental railway system depended upon achieving entry into a major passenger terminal in the heart of Montréal, the nation's largest city, which was to be their main distributing point in the east.

There was a problem, however: the city's business district was situated on a narrow piece of land between the slopes of Mount Royal and the St. Lawrence River, and the GTR and CPR had established rights-of-way along the riverfront years earlier, when real estate was less expensive. The Moreau Street station, which had served the CNoR since 1903, was not considered acceptable because it was located over three miles east of the downtown area and lacked the facilities to provide satisfactory service to passengers and shippers.

Undiscouraged by this obstacle, Henry K. Wicksteed, Chief Engineer of Surveys for Mackenzie, Mann & Company, Ltd., devised an expensive and daring scheme that was intended to provide the CNoR with "better facilities than those possessed by any company in that city."⁴ His complex plan involved several ideas that were considered technologically advanced for the day. In a nutshell, he proposed to bore a three-mile long tunnel through Montréal's mountain, allowing the CNoR to approach the heart of

the city along a direct line from the sparsely settled lands to the northwest (Figure 3); the tunnel would lead to a new multi-level passenger terminal on Dorchester Street (today Boulevard René-Lévesque), just east of Mansfield, where land prices were affordable and direct connections could be made to existing freight facilities near the St. Lawrence River (Figure 4). In addition, an electrically operated train system would be designed for the tunnel (since steam engines produced too much smoke), and this line would be extended to provide commuter service to existing residential suburbs along its route, as well as to the new Model City (soon known as the Town of Mount Royal, or TMR), the development of which would help to finance the project.⁵

The construction of the tunnel, which started in 1912, took longer than expected due to the Great War, economic difficulties and legal hassles.⁶ In the fall of 1918, as the war was finally winding to an end, the line to Toronto, via Ottawa, was announced (Figure 5), and the first passenger train passed through under Mount Royal on October 21 of that year. This event drew less attention than it otherwise might have due to the fact that eastern Canada was suffering from a major outbreak of the Spanish influenza, and public gatherings were prohibited.⁷

Shortly afterwards, an every 13-minute train service between Montréal and the Model City was introduced, and the new commuter suburb was marketed as an attractive place to live because of its "country advantages combined with city conveniences and rapid transit" (Figure 6).⁸ A temporary station on Dorchester Street, known as the "Tunnel Terminal," served as the CNOR's main station downtown, and the newly constructed yard of the Lazard station in St-Laurent was used for servicing the steam and electric locomotives that used the line (Figure 7).

Following the opening of the tunnel, the Canadian Northern Railway operated 16 trains daily between Montréal, Lazard, Ottawa and Toronto.⁹ Only a few months after the inauguration, however, the company was acquired by the federal government and amalgamated with the Canadian Government Railways to form the nucleus of the Canadian National Railways, which also included the Grand Trunk Railway after 1923.

The use of the line for commuter purposes increased steadily, and in July 1925, the electric wiring, which had originally extended as far as the Lazard station and its branch to Cartierville, was continued nine miles further to St-Eustache-sur-le-lac (today Deux-Montagnes). That same year, two 88-passenger multiple-unit motorcoaches were added to accommodate the growing number of commuters who had settled along the line.¹⁰

It was around 1927 that the Lazard station was re-named Val-Royal,¹¹ initiating the longest and least eventful phase in the history of the commuter line. The next few decades witnessed rapid suburban development in the communities along its route, and the demand for frequent service increased until the 1960s,

when improved autoroutes in the metropolitan region of Montréal led to a gradual, and then rapid, decrease in the number of passengers using the line. At the same time, the costly upgrading of the ageing trains and infrastructure was reduced to a minimum, resulting in the eventual decline of the quality of its service.¹²

When the company announced its plan to abandon the line due to its growing deficit in 1976, the Québec government provided assistance but service was soon reduced. In 1982, an agreement between the Commission de Transport de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal (STCUM after 1985) and the CNR was signed, and it is thanks to further funding from the provincial government that service on the line, which is suffering more from old age and lack of upgrading as time passes, continues to this day.¹³

Over the last few years, a \$250 million proposal for the modernization of the Montréal/Deux-Montagnes line has been developed by Québec's Ministère des Transports, in collaboration with the Service de l'Environnement, the municipalities along the route, the CNR and the STCUM. Material and rolling stock have been ordered and work is scheduled to start during the summer of 1993; by the end of 1995, the line's trains and infrastructures will be replaced, and the station stops, including some new ones and some relocated ones, will be upgraded (Figure 2).¹⁴

Thus the next phase in the thematic development of the Val-Royal station, as it becomes an intermodal station and assumes the name "Bois-Franc," will begin in a few years when the modernization of the line is complete and local and regional transportation systems are finally integrated in an efficient, economical manner. The new Bois-Franc station, to which the métro will eventually be extended, will be located on the site of the former Val-Royal yards. It is envisioned as an important transfer point for local and regional passengers travelling by different modes of transport - train, bus, métro, taxi, automobile - as well as a focal point for a major new development.

Local Development

Although Ville St-Laurent has always insisted upon maintaining independence from the city of Montréal, its transportation links to the larger metropolis were, and still are, instrumental in its development as an independent entity. This was true when the CNoR first built its line through its sparsely populated Côte Bois-Franc (Figure 8), and it is the basis of the present scheme to develop the area around its new intermodal station.

In the early 18th century, the fertile territories occupied by the village and parish of St-Laurent were settled by farmers who harvested wheat, oats and potatoes, and raised a few cattle and horses. They travelled to Montréal twice a week to sell their produce at the market, but remained virtually unaffected by the political and financial developments that were taking place in

that city. In 1765, St-Laurent, with its rural population of 795 (a mere 8% of the population of the metropolis on the other side of the mountain), was one of the most prosperous agricultural parishes of the region.¹⁵

In the middle of the 19th century, Montée St-Laurent (the future Boulevard Laurentien, or Route 117) was built to connect the village of St-Laurent to Cartierville, where the ferry crossed Rivière des Prairies, and to the Laurentians beyond. By this time, the population of St-Laurent was 2,500. Although it was to remain an agricultural parish until the turn of the 20th century, its inhabitants started to witness the development of local industry, such as the quarries that opened up at Cartierville; inns were built to accommodate travellers on their way to Montréal, and local grocers, blacksmiths, carpenters, carters and shoe-makers established themselves to meet the needs of the growing population. In addition, the religious institutions opened schools, and the Collège St-Laurent was established.¹⁶

It was in the 1890s, with the encouragement of local real estate speculator and politician Édouard Gohier, that St-Laurent became aware that the realization of the full potential of its excellent geographic position in the centre of the island depended on a proper transportation network linking it to Montréal's business district. Disturbed that the existing omnibus system was archaic and that the GTR and CPR lines that passed by St-Laurent did not service its territory, Gohier asked the GTR to provide a morning and evening train between St-Laurent and Montréal so that more downtown workers could live in the suburb; he also investigated the idea of an electric railroad such as the one that had been operating in the streets of Montréal since 1892, and which greatly impressed the inhabitants of St-Laurent. It was not long afterwards that the Montreal Park & Island Railway linked the centres of Cartierville (later annexed by Montréal) and St-Laurent with Montréal (Figure 9).¹⁷

When the CNoR decided to build its line to Montréal from the northwest, it acquired right-of-way through St-Laurent, and the location that it chose for its main divisional point was at the junction of the electric tramway route on Rue King George (today Rue Grenet) and the city's main east-west artery, St-Louis Road (later Chemin Bois-Franc, and today Boulevard Henri-Bourassa); Montée St-Laurent passed through the property. Several residents of St-Laurent and Cartierville were employed at the Lazard yard, where the servicing of the trains using the line took place.

Like the other municipalities along the Deux-Montagnes commuter line, St-Laurent benefited from the service, and for seven decades local residents have used it regularly. Because of its strategic location with respect to Route 117 (formerly Montée St-Laurent), the main route to the north, the Val-Royal station also attracts commuters from the Lower Laurentians who work downtown but do not wish to deal with inner-city traffic and parking rates.¹⁸

Although residential areas grew gradually around the Val-Royal station, as did the ever-expanding industrial area to its south and west (Figure 9), it cannot be said that the existence of the station, in itself, was the only cause of the rapid development that took place starting in the 1950s (Figure 10). However, the current proposal to develop the former Val-Royal yards into an important intermodal station that will serve as a transfer point for passengers using different modes of transport is expected to have a major impact on the local development of the area.¹⁹ In a way, this plan for the future of the line and the area around the station reflects an interesting extension of Wicksteed's progressive ideas about combining local and regional transportation with ambitious real estate deals.

ARCHITECTURE

Aesthetic/Visual Qualities

The Val-Royal station building (Figure 1) constitutes a relatively intact specimen of the many modest railway station buildings that were constructed by CNoR and its rivals during the first quarter of this century. Despite some relatively minor modifications and its unfortunate state of disrepair, its original design - which exemplifies long-proven principles of railway station design - can be read from its existing physical fabric.

Although we know that the Lazard yards were built at the same time as the tunnel through Mount Royal,²⁰ the exact construction date of the station building has not been convincingly confirmed.²¹ Documentation that has been uncovered to date suggests that construction probably took place between 1916, when the line between Lazard and the point further east known as "M-5-82" was opened, and 1918, when the tunnel linking "M-5-82" and downtown was inaugurated and passenger service on the line to Toronto, via Lazard and Ottawa, was established.²² It is also possible, but less likely, that the station building dates to as late as 1925, when the electrically operated commuter line between Lazard and Deux-Montagnes was completed.²³

The single-storey building is rectangular in form and modest in expression. Like other stations along the line, including the one at the Town of Mount Royal (Figure 11), it is distinguished by its low-lying profile (Figures 1 and 12). This is reinforced by its gently sloping bellcast roof, covered with asphalt shingles today, but probably protected originally by cedar shingles; its generous 7-foot overhang is supported by sturdy curved brackets (Figure 13). Unlike the more prestigious brick-clad station of the Model City (Figure 11), however, the Val-Royal building was designed to be built out of the most economical materials. Its details are simple but carefully conceived: a continuous moulding at sill height separates its

base, articulated by vertical boards, and its upper walls, which are clad in shingles (Figure 13). It is likely that these two materials, both painted grey today, were originally rendered in different shades, which would have further emphasized the building's horizontality.

On the track side of the station (Figure 1), the generously windowed rectangular bay which accommodates the operator's table, a standard feature in stations of the day, is located off-centre with respect to the building's length. This projection, which is mirrored on the rear elevation, is expressed in the raised articulation of the roof.

A 1953 construction drawing (Figure 14) reveals a proposal to extend the station in a manner that unfortunately did not respect the simple integrity of its original design. Although the small addition to the rear was clad in the same materials as the existing structure and did not extend beyond the roof overhang (Figure 15), it failed to respect the subtle relationship between the building's existing projection and its roofline, resulting in an intervention that remains visually uncomfortable to this day (Figure 16).

Despite some modifications, the inside of the station appears to retain much of its original visual and aesthetic character and many of its early features. Tongue-and-groove wood paneling lines the ceilings and walls of the waiting room (Figures 17 and 18) and office; its continuous horizontal moulding at about eight feet above the floor probably served as the line of separation between two different paint colours. Despite the application of white paint throughout, the woodwork is in relatively intact condition. Waiting passengers still sit on handsome benches with elegantly crafted iron arm rests and legs (probably standard furniture that dates to the early days of the station). The telephone booth, with its oak frame and embossed interior, is clearly an early (although, judging from its installation, probably not an original) feature. In the cluttered office, some original furnishings can be found amongst later additions.

Recent installations - such as the grey rubber flooring and emergency lights - seem to fade into the background of this rather quaint interior setting. Although two boxlike metal-covered furnaces have replaced the old wood-burning stoves, the sight of waiting passengers huddling around a central heat source on a cold winter day lends an air of authenticity that would never have been possible had baseboard heaters been installed in their stead.

Such necessary interventions seem minor, in terms of their impact on the integrity of the building's architecture, compared to the regrettable lack of maintenance that has allowed the deterioration of its physical fabric. An inspection survey from the early 1980s²⁴ reported that the building was in "mauvaise condition," and this is certainly still the case. Although

interior painting seems to have been carried out, the exterior walls, windows and doors are rapidly deteriorating: their damaged surfaces have not been repaired and their paint is peeling off, leaving their wood surfaces unprotected (Figure 19).

Functional/Technical Qualities

A simple wood-frame building of modest proportions (about 15' x 53'), the Val-Royal station was designed in a manner that was similar, in its functional and technical qualities, to many commuter stations of similar size and importance.²⁵

Although no construction drawings for the building have been located, it is possible to hypothesize on its original layout based on the existing, somewhat modified interior arrangement, on the 1953 drawing for the extension (Figure 14), and on a basic understanding of the typical features of stations of the day.

Its rectangular footprint, with projecting bays on its long elevations, was not unusual. The bay on the trackside, which housed the operator's counter, was well windowed - two pairs of windows to the front and a single window on each side - to offer an excellent view of trains approaching from either direction.

Often, in cruciform plans such as this, the rear projection housed public restrooms (as was the case in the CPR station in Sherbrooke, and several standard-plan CPR stations). We know, however, from the early drawings of the site, that there were no public restrooms in the Val-Royal station building, since there was an exterior privy at the rear of the property. The 1953 addition, which accommodated small washrooms for each sex, involved the "retirement" of this 6' x 10' structure.²⁶

On the east side of the operator's office, which also served as the ticket office, was (and still is) the waiting room; beside it was the baggage room (which is currently used for storage), with double doors to both the front and the rear of the building. The room to the west of the operator's office may have served as a second (ladies') waiting room (in which case it would have been connected to the general waiting room by a corridor), or it may have been used as additional office space (as is the case today); since 1953, an exterior door has been added in its west wall.

In terms of construction technique, the simple wood-frame structure rested on wooden posts. It was uninsulated, of course, and in the winter, a great deal of heat escaped through its single-glazed windows and doors; this is still the case. Although the washrooms possess electric baseboard heaters and the rest of the building is heated by two furnaces with exposed round pipes leading to a single chimney, the existing set-up is less than efficient and must be checked regularly to ensure the safety of the building and its occupants.

Although most of the building's original architectural fabric appears to be present in the existing structure, the effects of age and many years of minimal maintenance have taken their toll. The misalignment of the door and window openings and the noticeable slope in the floors (which, according to one worker, allows for convenient drainage!) suggest that the structure has experienced movement, and it is not possible, without a proper testing period, to ascertain whether it is still moving. Although gutters have been installed to direct the water that falls from the new asphalt shingle roof, the lack of proper end pipes has allowed water to collect at the base of the building, which will eventually cause damage, if it has not already. And the peeling paint mentioned earlier has resulted in structural decay as well as aesthetic compromise.

According to the 1992 environmental impact study for the modernization of the line, the station building's current condition, its age and its state of disrepair suggest that its continued use would imply a significant investment in major work, including the replacement of its foundations, the restoration of its exterior cladding, the renovation of its interior, and the installation of a safe heating system. In addition, the report quite rightly points out that the building does not conform to current codes for public buildings, particularly with respect to fire protection.²⁷

Almost a year after this report was published, this evaluation is still valid, and the station's state of repair continues to decline. In November 1992, CN claimed that no decisions about the future of the building had been made, and that the company had not requested permission to remove the station from its inventory.²⁸

ENVIRONMENT

Setting

When considering the historical and future implications of its setting, it is important to understand that the strategic location of the Val-Royal station site was the basis for its original importance as a major divisional point on the CNOR's entrance line to Montréal, as well as its future as an intermodal station that serves as an important transfer point for the local and regional transportation networks. From the beginning, this factor has affected the relationship of the station to its surrounding context.

The property occupied by the former yard and the existing station building is divided into two parts by Boulevard Laurentien (formerly Montée St-Laurent), or Route 117, the main artery connecting St-Laurent to the north shore of the island, and the Laurentians beyond (Figures 20 and 21). When it was designed,

the reason for constructing the yard on the large tract of land west of Montée St-Laurent, and the station building on the remaining triangular wedge to the east, was obvious. The yards required expansive space to accommodate the railway-related structures,²⁹ and numerous tracks (all demolished) required for servicing the train cars and locomotives that used the line. The station building, on the other hand, could be housed comfortably on the smaller site to the east, which also possessed enough space for a driveway, a bit of parking, a freight shed and an exterior privy (both demolished). A wooden shelter (now covered in aluminum siding³⁰) was installed on the other side of the tracks, and eventually a ticket booth (still extant) and a parking attendant's shed (recently removed) were added to the ensemble. Stairs on both sides of the track provided access to the electric tramway (now replaced by a bus), which passed under the tracks at the eastern extremity of the property, on its way between the residential neighbourhoods of Cartierville to the north and St-Laurent to the south.

It is interesting to compare the setting of the Val-Royal and Town of Mount Royal (TMR) stations in terms of their relationship to the track and to their respective urban contexts. While the former (Figure 1) was built on the level of the platform beside the raised tracks, with its overhead electric wiring, it is physically remote from the streets beside it, which are forced to dip down to pass under the viaduct. In the case of TMR (Figure 11), the sunken tracks are much less predominant on the urban landscape, and the station - which occupied a central position in the radiating plan of the Model City that was designed around it - is located at street level. Both situations, neither of which provided the station with an entirely satisfactory relationship with both the track and the streets around it, resulted from the necessity to avoid level crossings, which were considered dangerous.³¹

In terms of its larger context, a comparison of the military maps dating from 1915, 1928, 1938 and 1944 (Figure 9) suggests that the area around the Val-Royal station was only sparsely settled when the line was built, and industrial and residential developments followed very gradually. Today, the station building is situated in the midst of a rather undistinguished area made up mostly of low-rise residential buildings and industrial structures and lots (Figures 10, 21 and 22). The yards are no longer required, and their tracks and other structures have already been cleared away in preparation for the transformation of the property to accommodate its new use as an intermodal station, and eventually the proposed developments around it.

In its 1992 environmental impact study, Québec's Ministère des Transports put forward some conceptual sketches showing the physical implications of this plan, which aims to improve the environmental and urban qualities of the line: its deteriorating infrastructure will be replaced, and a less industrial-looking

wire support system and landscaping will be introduced (Figure 23); the Bois-Franc intermodal station on the site of the former yards, with its improved street access, abundant parking facilities and new shelters, will replace the existing Val-Royal station (Figures 24 and 25); and its surrounding area will be developed with new residential and commercial structures and parkland.³²

Community Status

The difficulty in finding people from the community who were familiar with, or - harder still - interested in, the Val-Royal station suggests that local support for its longterm preservation within the context of the proposed modifications of its site may be limited unless an awareness campaign, aimed at both the community and the municipal officials, is launched.

Several reasons for this apparent lack of community awareness can be identified. The most obvious is the remote siting of the station with respect to the hearts of St-Laurent and Cartierville, as well as to the streets around it.³³ Another difficulty is the lack of clarity regarding which municipality is actually responsible for the station building; although the building is physically situated within the limits of the City of Montréal, its civic address is in Ville St-Laurent (Figure 21).³⁴ When it comes to municipal protection, neither city seems to have considered it. Finally, since the dissolution of the Société d'histoire de St-Laurent a few years ago, the community seems to lack leadership and participation in local heritage concerns.³⁵

Despite its state of disrepair, the Val-Royal station building has been preserved by its continued use for the purpose for which it was designed. When the rest of the infrastructure of the electrically operated commuter line is replaced, it will constitute one of the few relatively intact testimonies to ambitious ideas underlying the construction of this line.

Endnotes

- 1 The station building is actually located just inside the limits of the City of Montréal, but since its civic address (2675, Boulevard Laurentien) is in Ville St-Laurent, as are its parking lot and the railway yards further west, this report will refer to it as part of the territory of the latter city.
- 2 T.D. Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895-1918 (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1976), pp. 303-331.

- 3 Several sources were consulted in the preparation of the summary of the design, construction and early development of this line (covered in the following paragraphs): J.W. Boorse, Rapid Transit in Canada (Philadelphia: Almo Press, c.1968), pp. 50-60; "Canadian Northern Montreal Terminal," Railway Age Gazette, Vol. 55, no. 15, pp. 651-653; "Canadian Northern Railway Mount Royal Tunnel," Canadian Railway and Marine World, Aug. 1913, pp. 360-362; "The Canadian Northern Railway's Montreal Entrance," The Railway and Marine World, Feb. 1912, pp. 69-70; The Canadian Northern Railway, The Mount Royal Tunnel, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (Dec. 1913), 41 p.; Anthony Clegg, The Mount Royal Tunnel: Canada's First Subway (Montréal: A Railfare Book, 1963), 29 p.; Encyclopedia C.N.R., 1918 edition (photocopied pages in Dechief Library), Vol. V, pp. 1-10 and Vol. VII, pp. 7-21; T.D. Regehr, Op. Cit., pp. 303-332; G.R. Stevens, Canadian National Railways, Vol. II (Toronto, Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1962), pp. 73-75.
- 4 T.D. Regehr, Op. Cit., p. 322.
- 5 To this day, the realization of the scheme, which is updated with each successive phase, continues. Some of Wicksteed's ideas - such as the tunnel under the mountain, the establishment of the Model City, and the electrically operated commuter line linking the city's northwest suburbs to downtown - became reality within the next decade. Others - such as the multi-level passenger terminal development in the heart of downtown and the connection to an underground rapid transit system - were eventually realized, in somewhat different form than originally conceived (the Central Station / Queen Elizabeth Hotel / Place Ville Marie complex, and Montréal's métro system) in the decades leading up to and including the 1960s. The idea of the integrated local and regional transportation system, which has been an ongoing concern, is finally coming into its own with the realization of the upcoming modernization plan for the commuter line.
- 6 The construction of the electrically operated tunnel and railway system was undertaken by the newly established Canadian Northern Montreal Tunnel and Terminal Company, Limited, which was re-named the Mount Royal Tunnel and Terminal Company Limited in 1914 (T.D. Regehr, Op. Cit., p. 322).
- 7 The Montreal Daily Star, 22 Oct. 1918, p. 1, and La Presse, 21 Oct. 1918, p. 1.
- 8 Advertisements in The Montreal Herald, Oct. 1918.

- 9 Anthony Clegg, Op. Cit., p. 21.
- 10 Ibid., p. 21.
- 11 According to notes prepared by the Dechief Library (23 June 1992), the station name was changed from Lazard to Val-Royal in 1927; the military map of 1928 (Figure 9), however, identifies it as Lazard.
- 12 The recent history of the line is covered in the following sources: Ministère des Transports (M.T.Q.) et Service de l'Environnement, Gouvernement du Québec, "Modernisation du train de banlieue Deux-Montagnes, Étude d'impact sur l'environnement" (Jan. 1992), tome 1, pp. 5-45; Villes de Deux-Montagnes, Mont-Royal, Pierrefonds, Roxboro, St-Laurent, "La Ligne Gare Centrale / Deux-Montagnes" (Aug. 1987), 43 p.
- 13 M.T.Q., Op. Cit., tome I, pp. 5-11, and meeting with Gilles Leboeuf, urbaniste, Ministère des Transports, Service des Trains de banlieue, Gouvernement du Québec, 23 Nov. 1992.
- 14 Le ministre des Transports, Gouvernement du Québec, Communiqué de presse, et fiche de renseignements, Montréal, 15 Oct. 1992; M.T.Q., Op. Cit., tomes I, 2, résumé.
- 15 Robert Rumilly, History of Saint-Laurent (translation) (Montréal: Librairie Beauchemin Ltée, 1970), pp. 9-57.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 80-90.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 133-135.
- 18 M.T.Q. Op. Cit., tome I, tableau 1.4, p. 19.
- 19 According to Ville St-Laurent's 1990 "plan d'urbanisme," the area in the immediate vicinity of this new Bois-Franc Station - including properties presently owned by CN and Hydro Québec - is zoned for commercial and residential development (Saint-Laurent, "Plan d'urbanisme et amendements au 26 juin 1992;" meeting with Jean Massé, directeur-adjoint, Conception et développement, Service de l'urbanisme, Ville St-Laurent, 13 Nov. 1992). The proposed "Carrefour Laurentien" will no doubt be marketed on the basis of its prime location, with its easy access to both downtown and outlying areas without the disadvantages of either. In addition, the nearby site of the former airport has apparently been zoned for residences, and its future inhabitants will be promised all the advantages of contemporary suburban living within 10 minutes of downtown.

- 20 Encyclopedia C.N.R. (1918 edition), Vol. VII
(photocopied pages in Dechief Library), p. 19.
- 21 Different dates have been put forth in the various studies that have been carried out on the station, but unfortunately none of them provide convincing sources: The environmental impact study on the modernization of the line suggests that it was constructed in 1910 (M.T.Q., Op. Cit., tome II, p. 161), as do both the report prepared by the Ministère des Affaires culturelles (Ministère des Affaires culturelles, Direction générale du patrimoine (Montréal), "Gare de Val-Royal, Ville St-Laurent" (Dossier no. 4430-A0-06, prepared by Jacques Robert, analyste en architecture, 3 August 1990, for M. Jean Dumont, archéologue, M.T.Q., p. 1) and the "Inventaire des sites ferroviaires" (Ethnotech Inc, 1989, sheets on Val-Royal (MAC 109-0)). However, the military map for 1915 (Figure 9) shows that neither the railway line nor the station existed in 1910, and other sources mentioned above confirm that this was the case.
- 22 McCorry, F., Engineering Dept., CNR. NOTES: Synoptical History; Leases; Trackage History; Running Rights, Subsidiary Railways, etc. (photocopied document in Dechief Research Library). Based on this document, this hypothesis regarding the date of the station was put forth by Doug Smith, who is researching the history of the CNR for an upcoming publication.
- 23 Unfortunately, the original construction drawings, which would have helped to confirm the date of construction, could not be located by CN officials, and none of the obvious sources of this type of information mention a precise construction date for the station building. It does not appear that its opening was a memorable highlight in the histories of either the community or the railway company, and the lack of early photographs of it in the archives of both the Ville St-Laurent and CN suggests that the Val-Royal station did not spark the same pride as stations in other communities.
- 24 The report (found in the files of CN's Laurentien Division) was undated, but its purpose was to define work to be carried out over the next five years, and it recommended the painting of the washrooms and waiting room in 1982.
- 25 In its Rapport synthèse, Ethnotech inc. has identified the Val-Royal station as belonging to Type 14, along with Bonaventure (CN), Chandler (CN), Causapscal (CN), La Tuque (CN), Lyster (CN), Montréal-West (CP), New Richmond (CN), Percé (CN), Port-Daniel (CN), Trois-

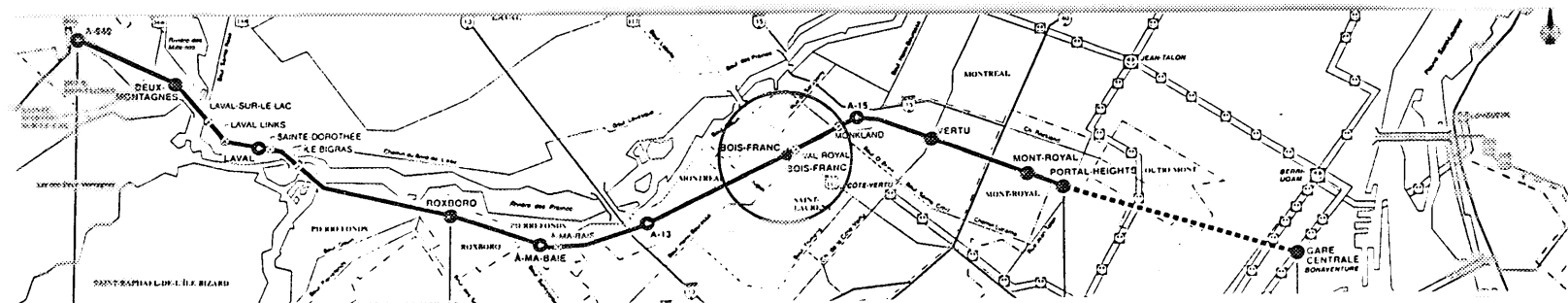
- Pistoles (CN), and Val-d'Or (CN). These stations are distinguished by their "air de famille" and their projecting bay, among other features (Ethnotech, inc. "Le patrimoine ferroviaire au Québec: Rapport synthèse" [Ministère des Affaires culturelles, direction générale du patrimoine, juin 1991], p. 91). The plan-type, however, is certainly not unique to Québec.
- 26 CN construction drawing, File 5100-35, Plan no. 720-A, July 7, 1953, revised July 15 and Oct. 1, 1953 (Figure 20).
- 27 M.T.Q. Op. Cit., tome II, p. 163.
- 28 Telephone conversations with Gail Dever, Public Relations, CN, 24 and 25 November 1992.
- 29 Apparently there was a water tower on the site (Ethnotech, inc., "Inventaire des sites ferroviaires," Val-Royal, Code MAC (109-0), n.d. (1990?)), but there were probably other structures, such as a coal storage shed, shops, etc.
- 30 The wooden shelter on the north side of the tracks was covered in aluminum, re-roofed and painted in 1981. (Rapport d'inspection de bâtiments et autres structures, programme des travaux, cinq prochaines années: Abri #12, 05/06/80).
- 31 In Montréal, level crossings were forbidden.
- 32 M.T.Q. Op. Cit., résumé, tome I, tome II.
- 33 Ironically, the strategic location in the midst of major arteries leading to and from other centres - the very feature that made it such an ideal location for an important divisional point some 80 years ago and that justifies the proposal to transform it into an intermodal station in the near future - seemed to destroy the possibility of making it an identifiable symbol for the people of St-Laurent (which possesses two other, more centrally located stations) or Cartierville (which had its own station, now demolished). Furthermore, although thousands of local people pass by the station in cars and buses everyday, the low-lying building is difficult to see from the streets that surround it.
- 34 See note 1.
- 35 The difficulty of finding accessible historical information about the area and public programmes aimed at creating an awareness of its heritage, which is incredibly rich, is most unfortunate. In 1993, however,

Ville St-Laurent will be celebrating its centenary, and an exhibition on the history of the town is being organized by the Musée d'art de St-Laurent. Perhaps this exhibition will stimulate awareness and appreciation of the local heritage.

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC

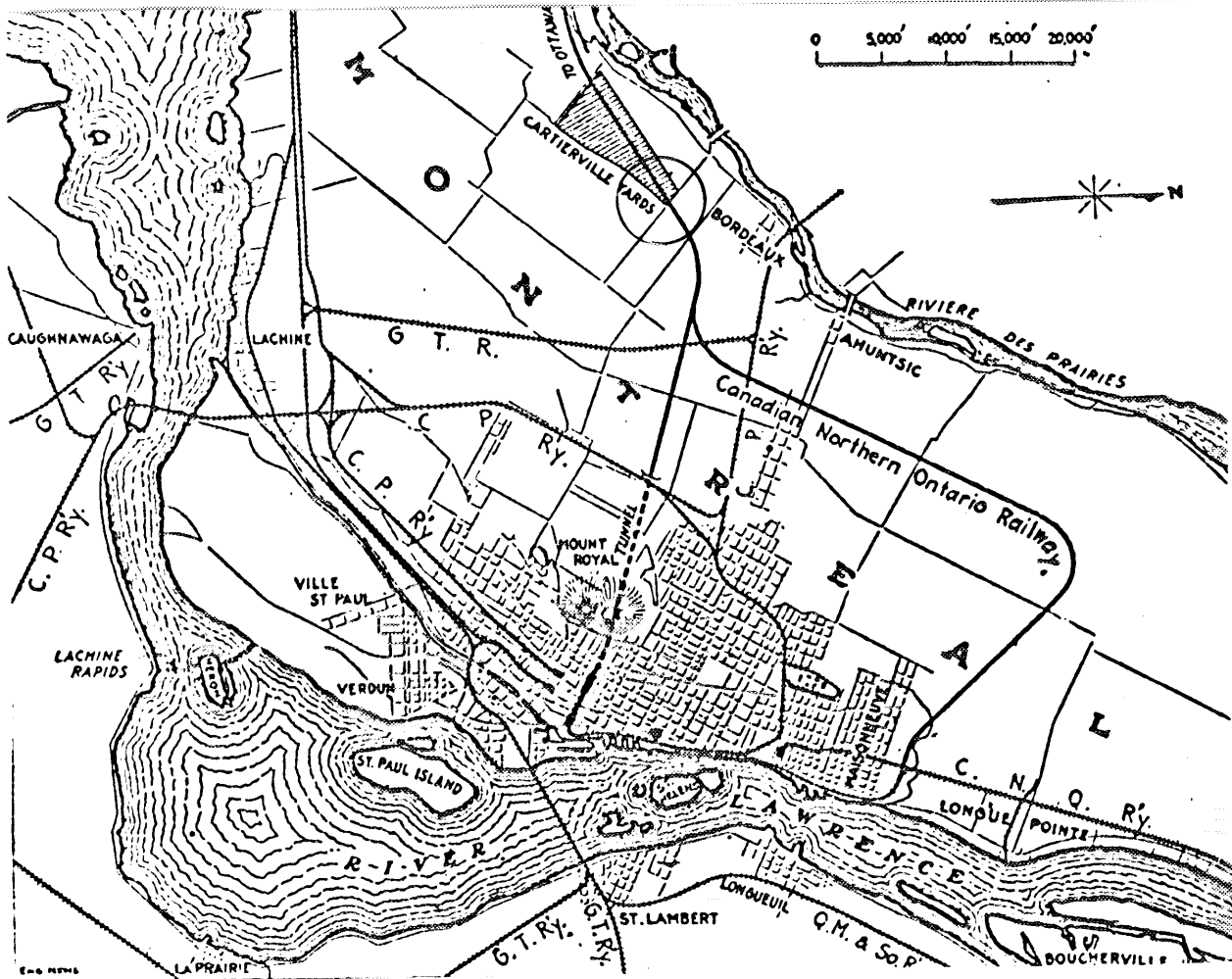


- 1 Today, the Canadian National Railways (CNR) Val-Royal station, constructed ca. 1916-18 by the Canadian Northern Railway (CNOR), accommodates a waiting room for passengers who use the Montréal/Deux-Montagnes commuter line, as well as the office of the operator, who sells tickets. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)



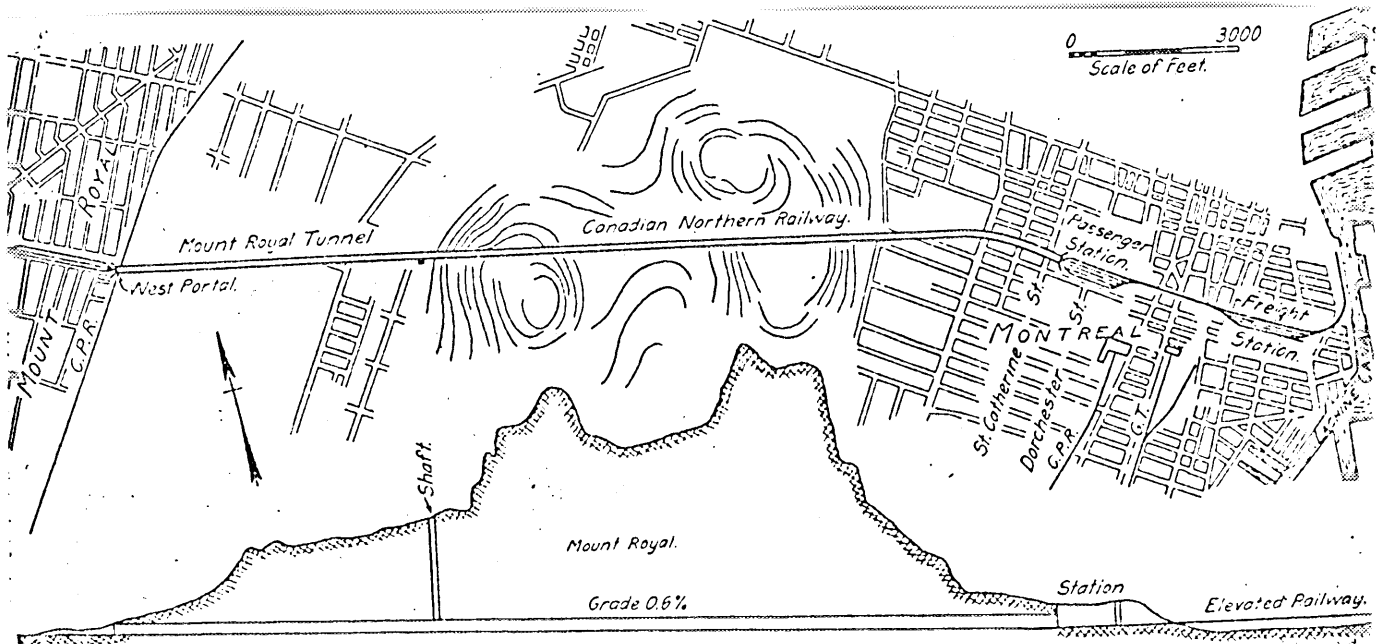
- 2 This 1992 plan of the public transportation network in the Communauté urbaine de Montréal shows the proposal to close the existing station building at Val-Royal and construct a new intermodal station to the west of Boulevard Laurentien. (MTQ. Op. Cit., résumé, fig. 3.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



3 This 1913 map shows the Lazard (later Val-Royal) yards (identified here as the Cartierville yards because of their location at the junction of the future branch line to that city), just west of the station building site, and the tunnel through Mount Royal that was under construction at the time. (The Canadian Northern Railway. "The Mount Royal Tunnel" (published article), Dec. 1913, fig. 1.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



4 This plan and profile of the Mount Royal tunnel shows its entry into a new terminal station in the heart of downtown Montréal, and an elevated connection to freight facilities near the river (Railway Age Gazette, Vol. 55, No. 15.)

Mount Royal Tunnel Open Oct. 21st.

The New Montreal-Ottawa Short Line

THROUGH TRAINS BETWEEN MONTREAL, OTTAWA AND TORONTO

	READ DOWN				READ UP	
Through Parlor Cars	6 15 p.m.	† 8 15 a.m.	Lv MONTREAL	Ar	† 11 00 p.m.	• 12 00 a.m.
	10 15 p.m.	12 15 p.m.	Ar OTTAWA	Lv	7 00 p.m.	8 00 a.m.
Through Sleeping Cars	10 45 p.m.	12 45 p.m.	Lv OTTAWA	Ar	6 30 p.m.	7 30 a.m.
	7 30 a.m.	† 9 45 p.m.	Ar TORONTO	Lv	† 10 00 a.m.	• 11 00 p.m.

* Daily. † Daily except Sunday.

AT TORONTO — Connecting Monday, Wednesday and Friday to and from Western Canada and Pacific Coast points.
AT MONTREAL — Connections to and from all points in Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, New York and Eastern States.

LOWEST FARES — THROUGH TICKETS AND RESERVATIONS EVERYWHERE — ENQUIRE C.N.R. AGENTS.

City Offices: 226 St. James St., Tunnel Terminal, 418 LaGauchetière St. W., or St. Catherine St. E. Station, Montreal 1283

CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY

5 "The New Montreal-Ottawa Short Line," with through service to Toronto, was to be inaugurated on October 21, 1918. (The Montreal Herald, Oct. 1918.)

NOTICE

We regret that owing to the present epidemic we have, at the request of the Board of Health, cancelled the arrangements we have, for the special train to the Town of Mount Royal on the 27th October. The railway tickets already distributed, however, are available during next week on any of the trains of our local service to

— MOUNT ROYAL — (MODEL CITY)

This service will commence on **MONDAY, OCTOBER 28th**, and trains will run during the winter as follows:

MONTREAL—MOUNT ROYAL

STATIONS	401		402		407		408		411	
	Ex.	Sen.	Ex.	Sen.	Ex.	Sen.	Daily	Daily	Wed. & Sat.	
MONTREAL ... Lv.	A.M. 8.15	A.M. 8.30	P.M. 1.30	P.M. 1.45	P.M. 6.00	P.M. 6.15	P.M. 6.15	P.M. 6.30	P.M. 11.15	P.M. 11.30
(Tunnel Terminal)										
Pointe St-Jacques ... Ar.			8.45	9.00	6.15	6.30	6.30	6.45	11.30	11.45
Mount Royal ... Ar.			8.57	9.12	6.27	6.42	6.42	6.57	11.42	11.57

MOUNT ROYAL—MONTREAL

STATIONS	401		402		407		408		411	
	Daily	Sen.	Daily	Sen.	Daily	Sen.	Wed. & Sat.	Sen.	Sen.	
Mount Royal ... Lv.	A.M. 8.30	A.M. 8.45	P.M. 1.45	P.M. 2.00	P.M. 6.15	P.M. 6.30	P.M. 6.30	P.M. 6.45	P.M. 11.30	P.M. 11.45
Pointe St-Jacques ... Lv.										
MONTREAL ... Ar.	8.00	8.15	1.30	1.45	6.00	6.15	6.15	6.30	11.15	11.30
(Tunnel Terminal)										
Pointe St-Jacques ... Ar.			8.00	8.15	6.00	6.15	6.15	6.30	11.15	11.30

Flag. Stop at signal only.

We invite you to take advantage of the present fine weather to visit our properties, and see for yourself the present state of the town's development, and the class of homes built by the company.

LOTS AND HOUSES FOR SALE

Select your site now for your future home. Special terms and prices for a limited time. Choice lots available within easy reach of the Mount Royal Station.

We shall be glad to furnish transportation to and from Mount Royal to those interested.

**Country Advantages Combined With
City Conveniences and Rapid Transit**

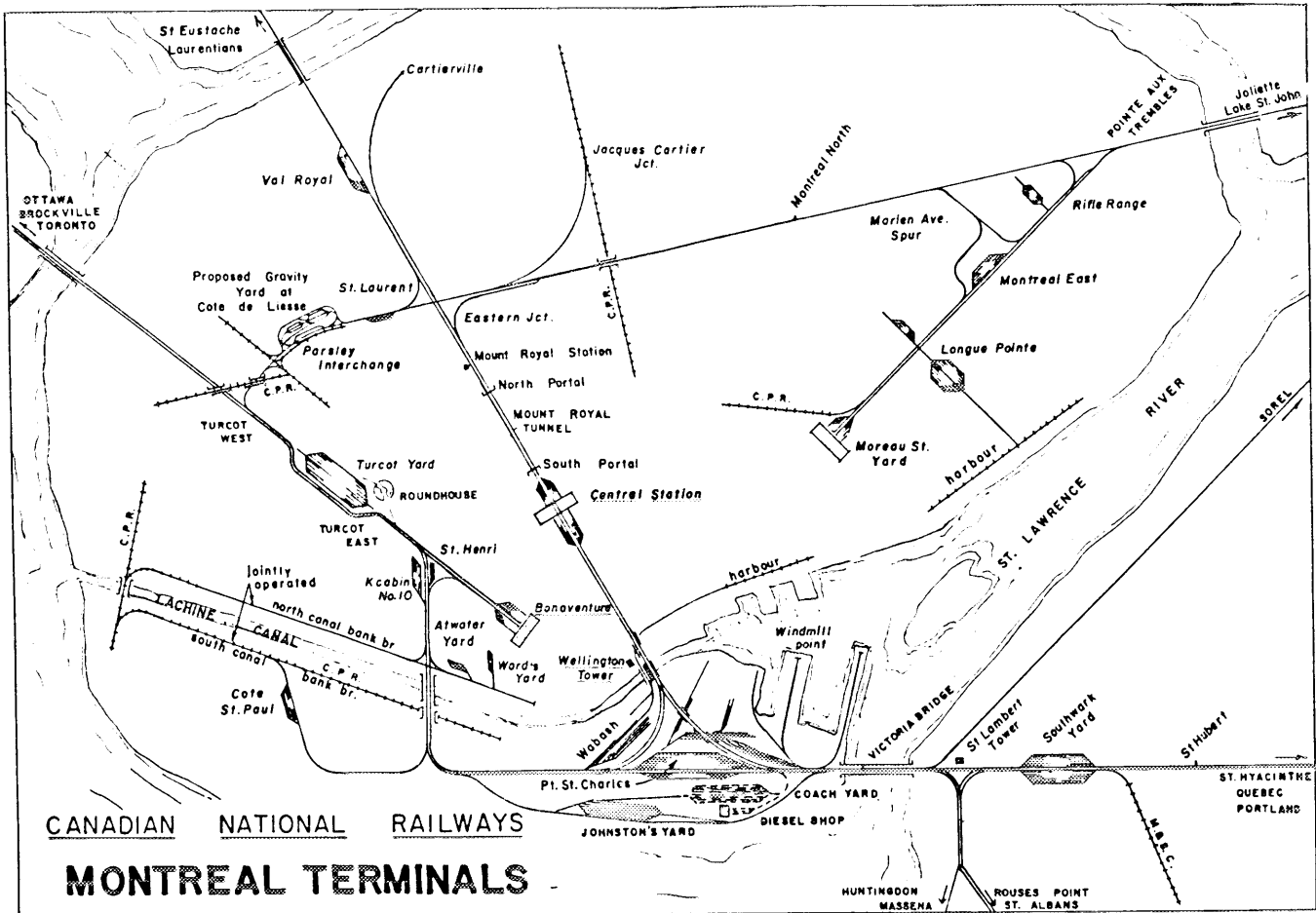
See Our Agent on the Property, or inquire of:

**The Canadian Northern Montreal
Land Company, Limited**

Phone Main 7416. 261 St. James Street, West, in Square

- 6 The inauguration of commuter service linking Montreal's "Tunnel Terminal" to the Town of Mount Royal, a 13-minute run, was postponed due to the Spanish influenza epidemic, but the advertising campaign for the new bedroom community continued nonetheless. (The Montreal Herald, Oct. 1918.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



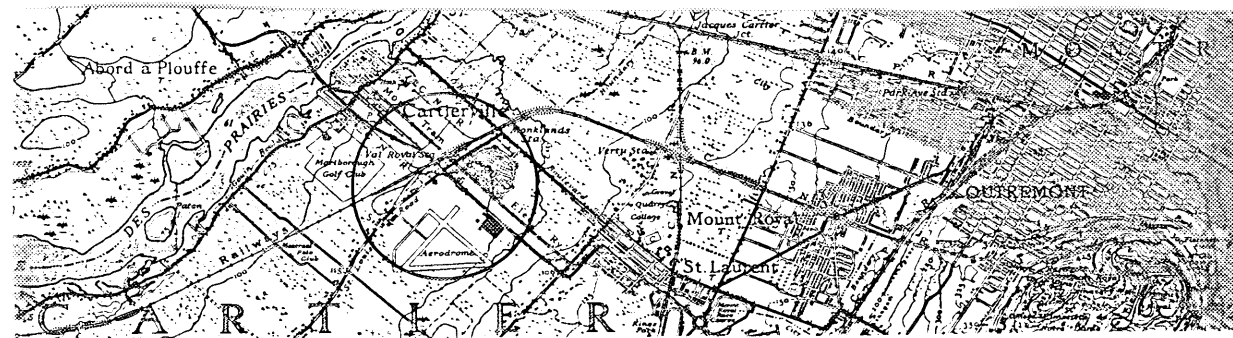
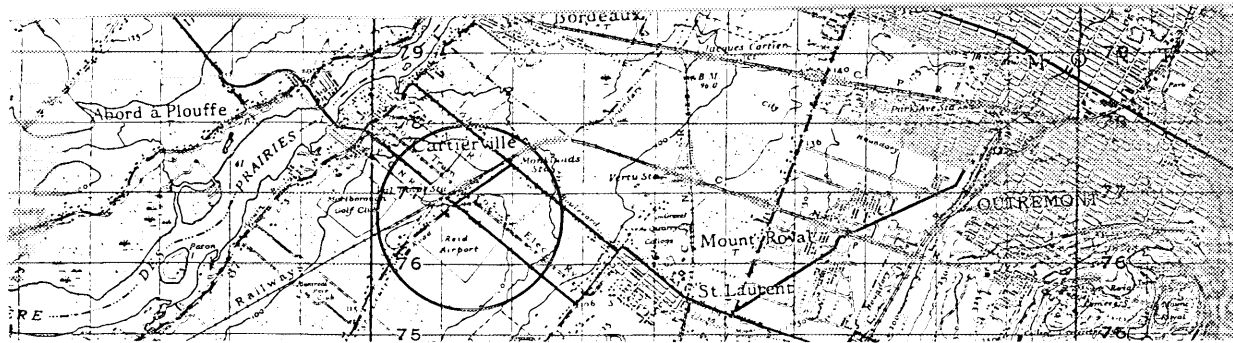
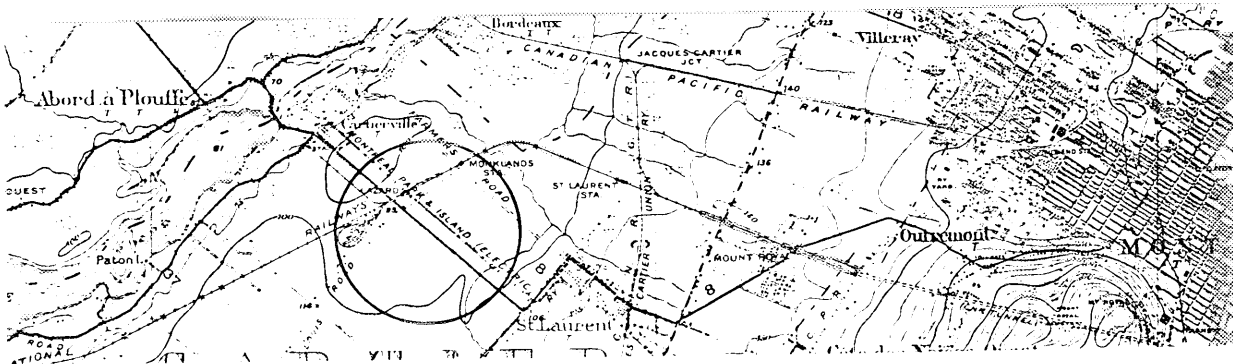
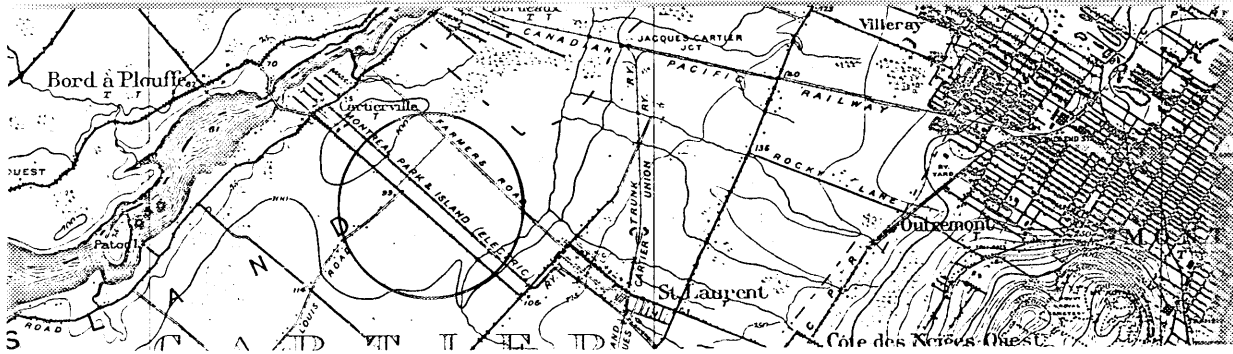
7 This early map shows the extent of CNR's lines in the 1920s, as well as the Montreal terminals which served them. (Canadian National Railways. Descriptive Sketch of Principal Points of Interest in Montreal Terminals, n.d.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



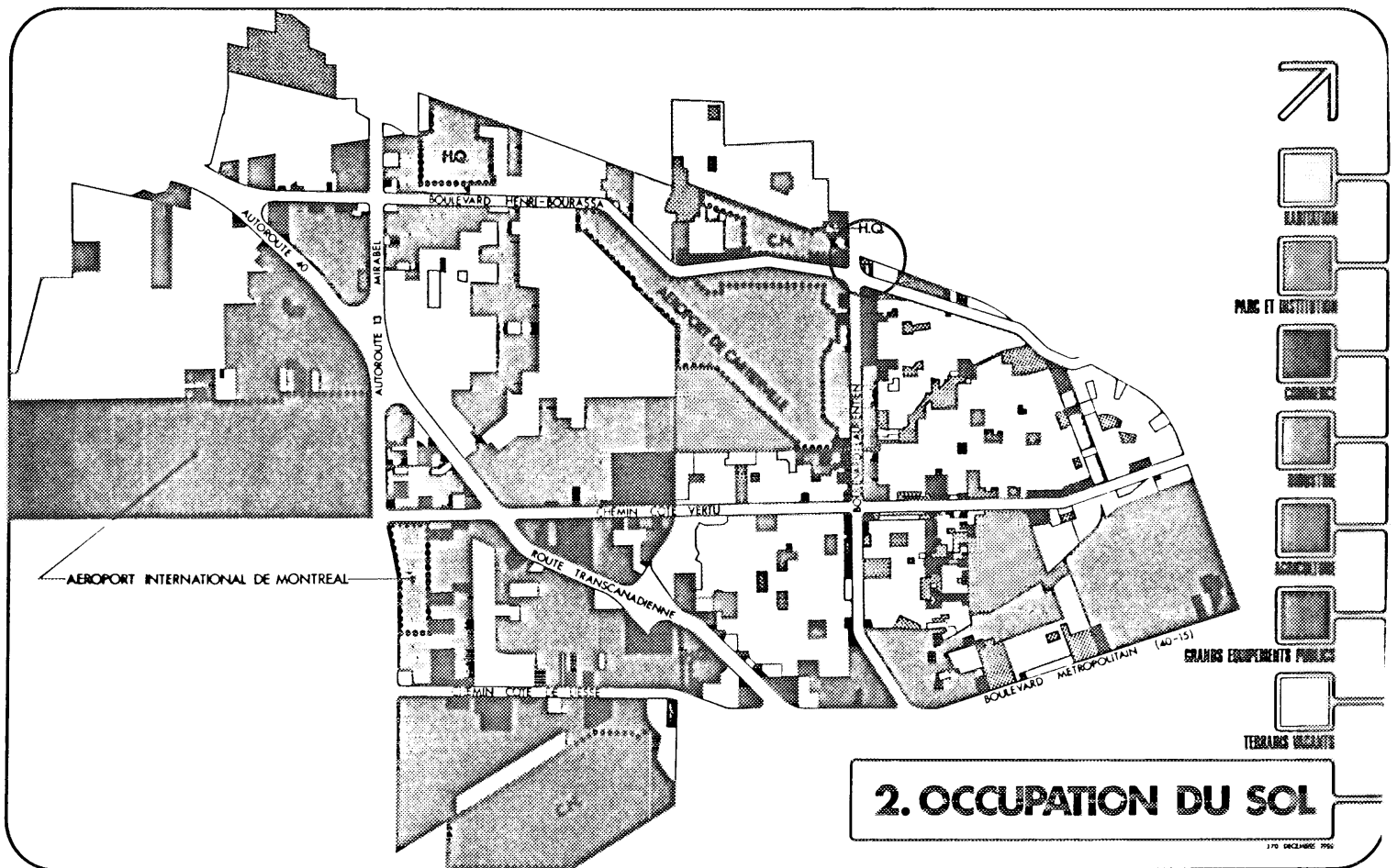
8 This 1907 map shows the extent of St-Laurent during the first decade of the 20th century. The future location of the Val-Royal station is south of Cartierville in Côte du Bois-Franc. (The Publishing Company of the Island and City of Montreal Ltd., A. Pisoneault, pl. 52 (no. 105), 1907, BNQM.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



9 These four topographical maps (1915, 1928, 1938, 1944 from top to bottom) show the gradual development in Ville St-Laurent, and around the Val-Royal station, over time. (Dept. of National Defence, Laval sheet, BNQM.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



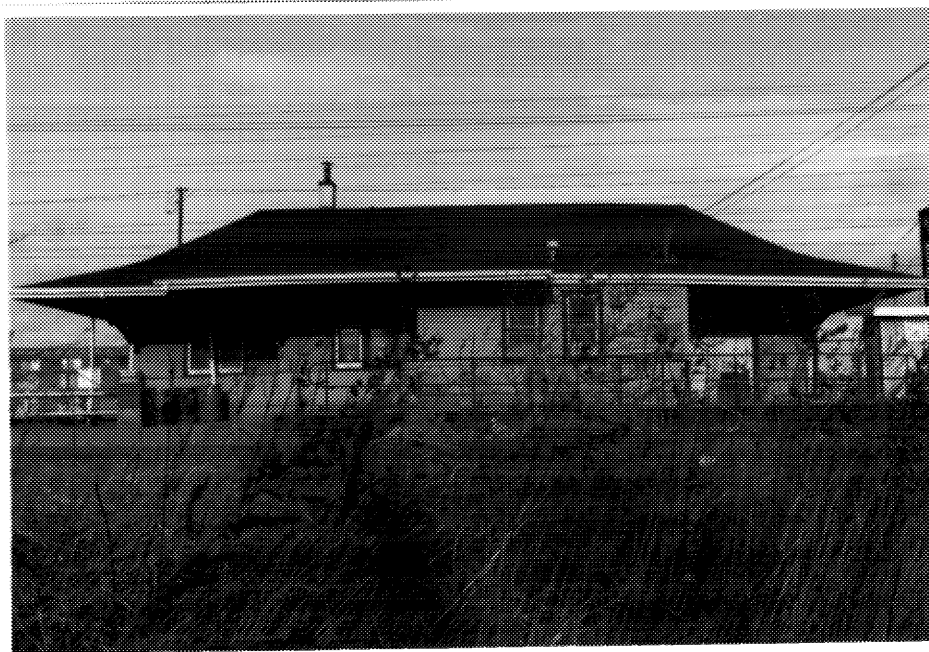
10 The 1990 plan of the existing land use shows that residential and industrial development has taken place around the station since the 1950s. (Ville St-Laurent, plan d'urbanisme, annexel (la situation actuelle), 1990, p. 7.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



- 11 The Town of Mount Royal (TMR) station is similar to the station at Val-Royal in its basic form, but more elaborate in its materials and details. Unlike the Val-Royal station, which was constructed on the same level as its raised platform, physically removed from its immediate context, the TMR station was designed as the focal point for the "Model City" around it, and its sunken tracks did not compromise the urban plan. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



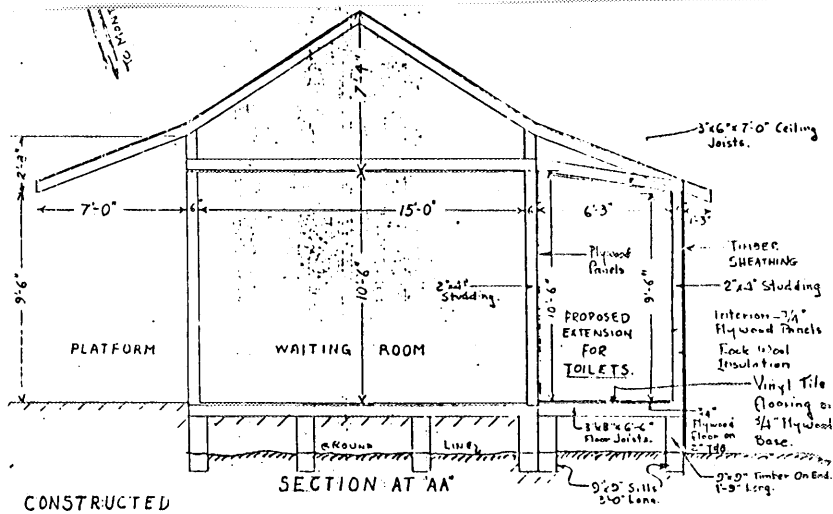
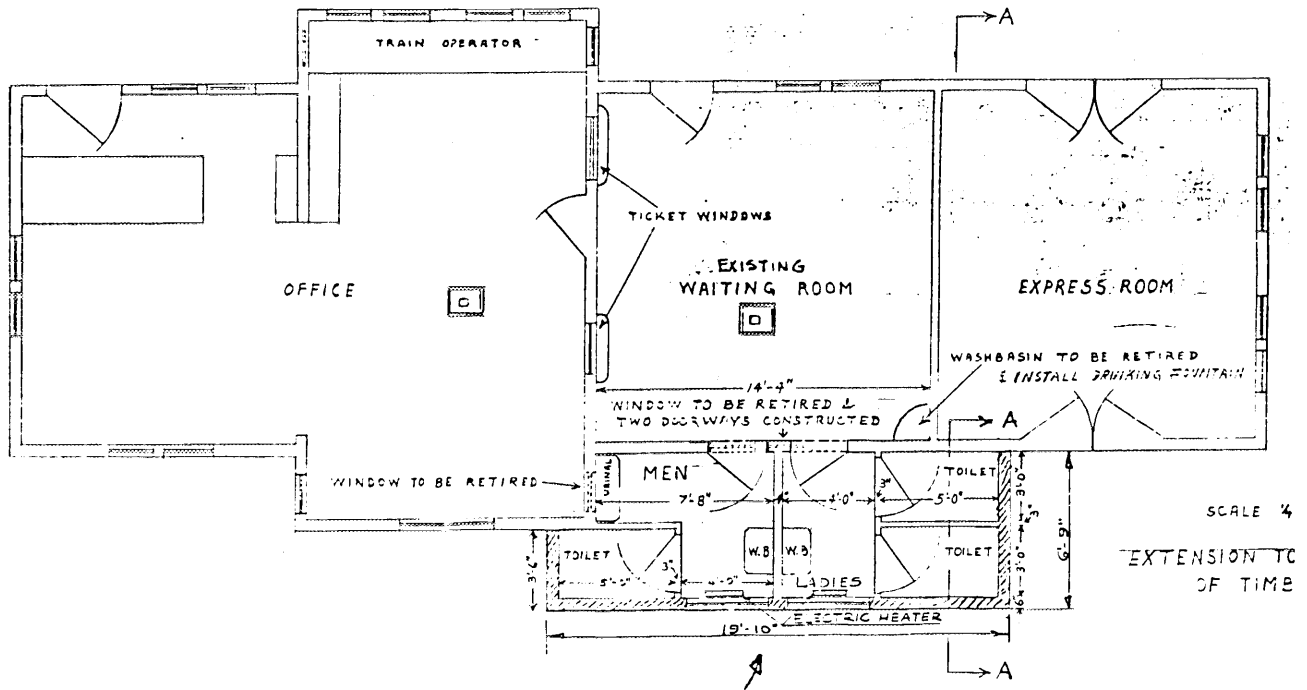
- 12 The Val-Royal station, like many other stations of its day, is a modest low-lying structure with a bell-cast roof. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



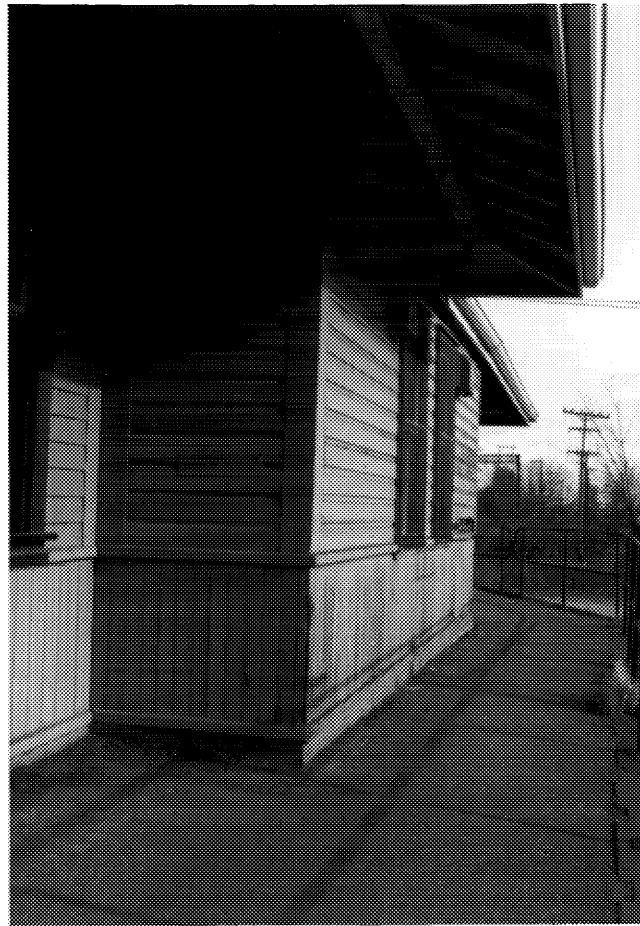
- 13 The curved brackets that support the overhanging roof spring from the building's base, which is defined by vertical boards topped with a horizontal trim. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



14 This 1953 plan and section show the addition to accommodate new washrooms. (CN, File 5100-35, Plan no. 720-A, Jul. 7, 1953, revised Jul. 15 and Oct. 1, 1953.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



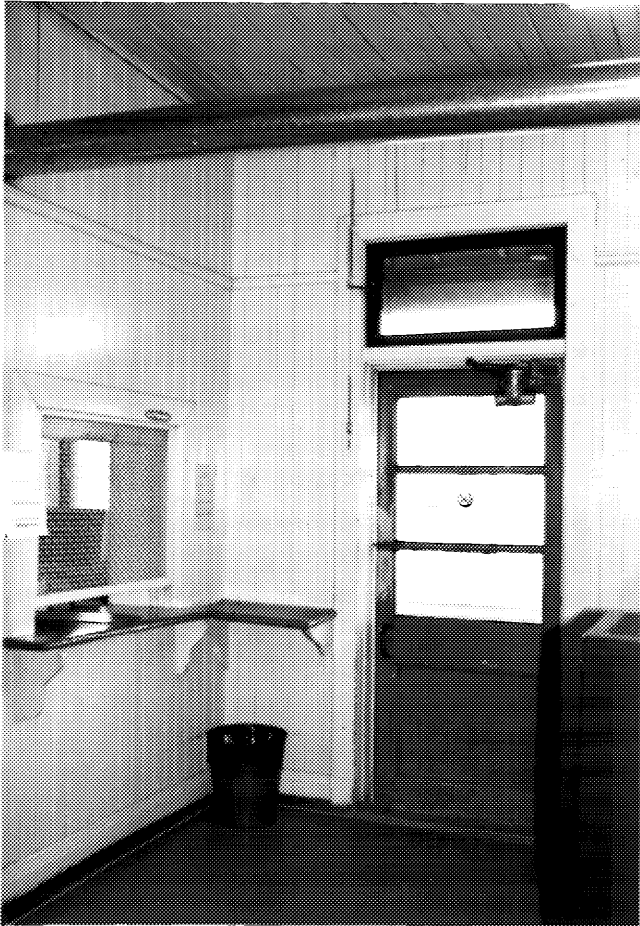
- 15 The rear addition was rendered in materials that match the existing building. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



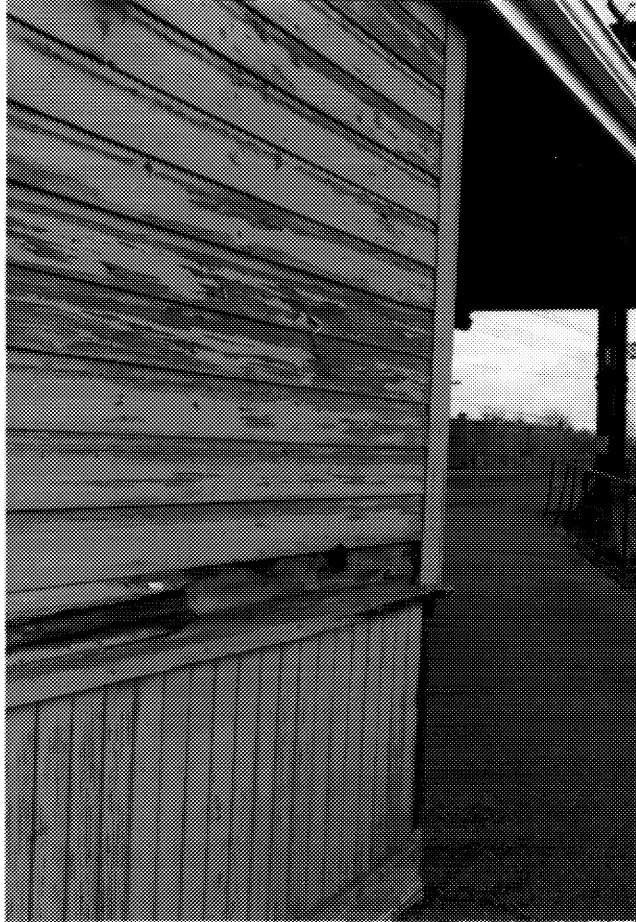
- 16 Unfortunately, the simple integrity of the form of the Val-Royal station building has been compromised by its 1953 addition. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



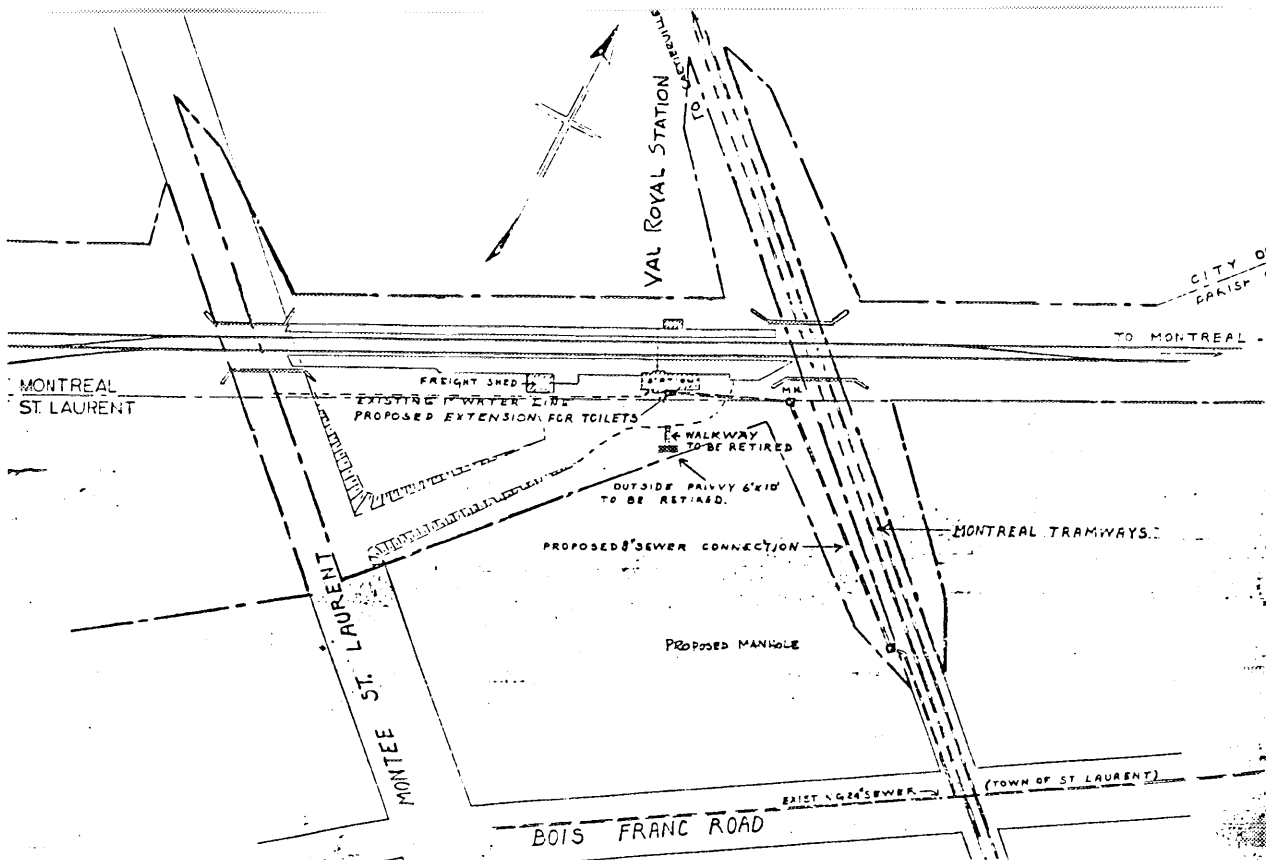
- 17 The interior of the station has been updated and refreshed periodically with a new coat of paint, but many of its original details are still intact. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)
- 18 The installation of required architectural features - a furnace, washroom doors, rubber flooring, emergency lights - has modified the original appearance. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



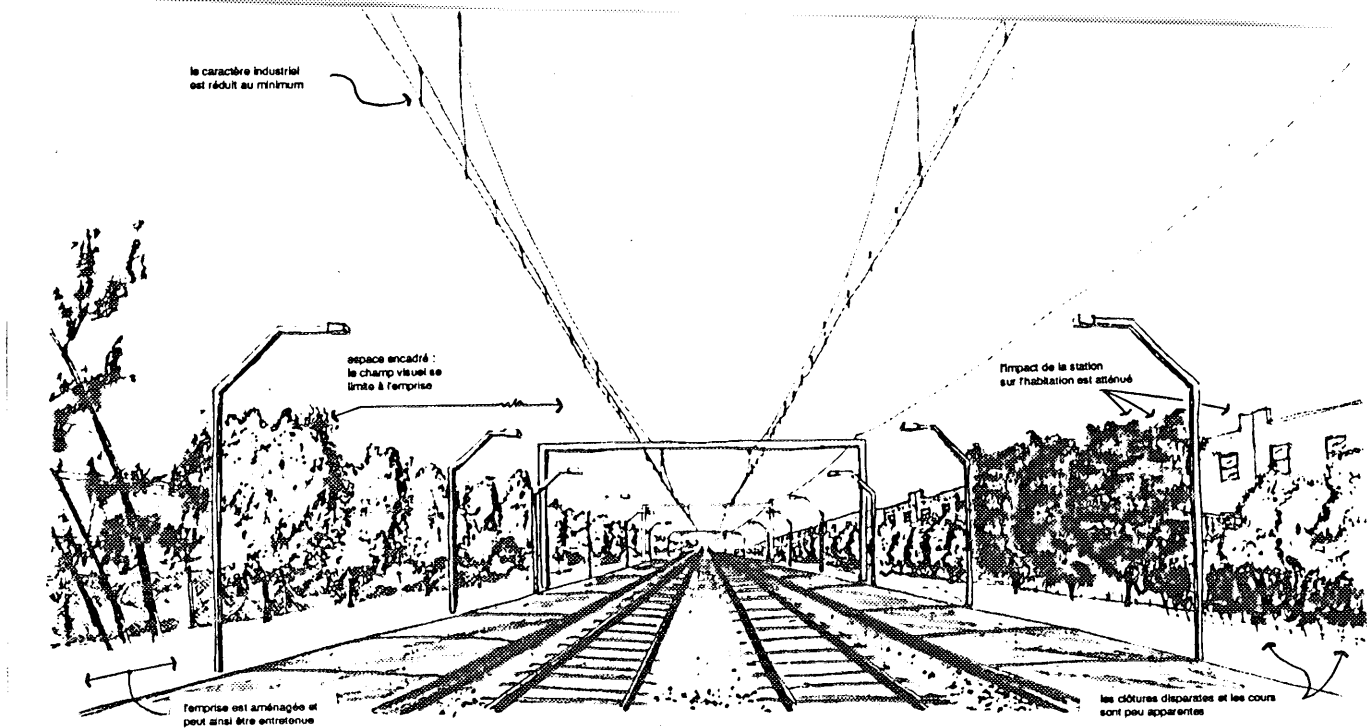
- 19 The exterior of the station building has been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair. (S.D. Bronson, 1992.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC

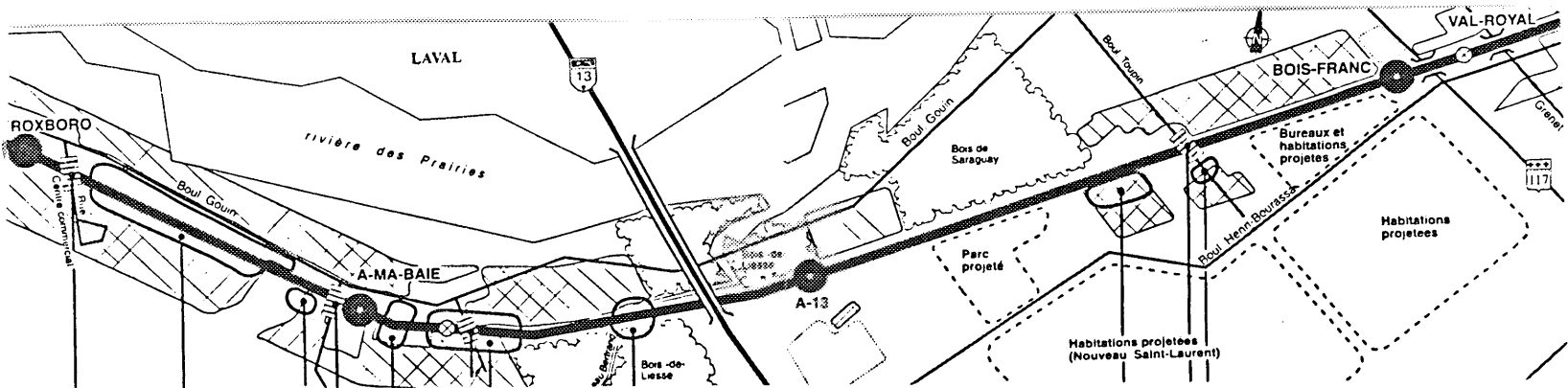


20 This 1953 plan of the triangular eastern portion of CN's property shows the siting of the station, and the exterior privy at the base of the sloped area beside the driveway; (Canadian National Railways, File 5100-35, Plan no. 720-A, Jul. 7, 1953, revised Jul. 15 and Oct. 1, 1953.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC

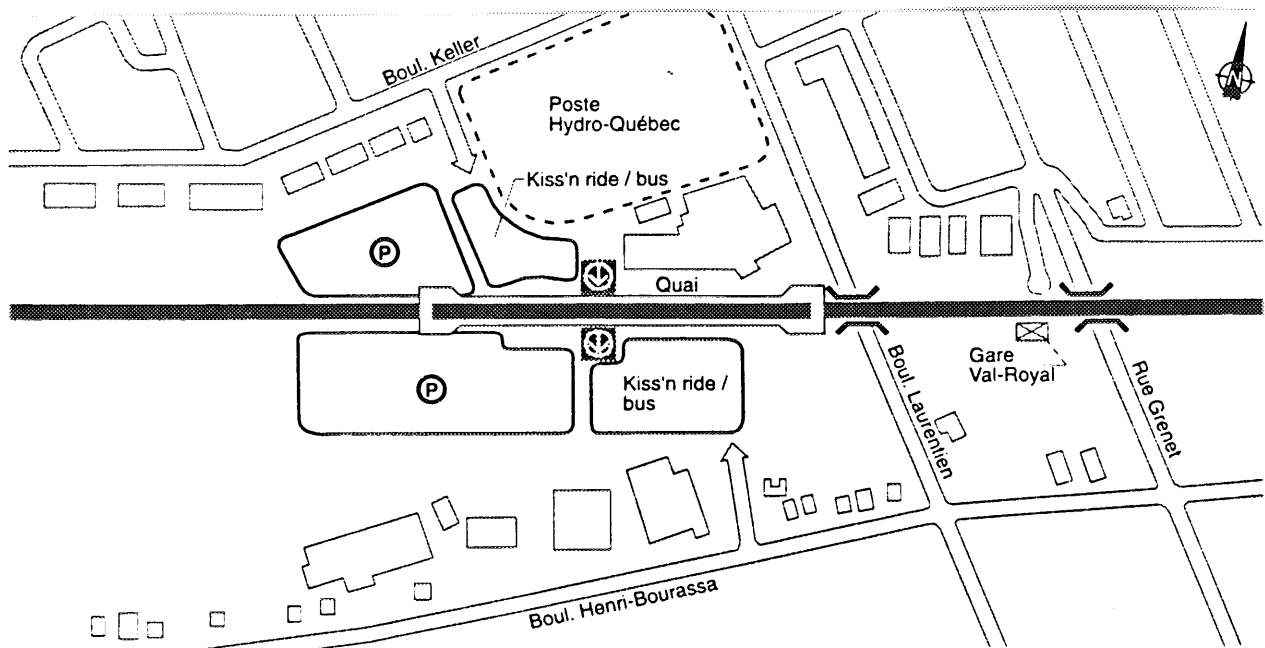


23 This sketch shows the proposed modifications to the line's existing infrastructure, aimed at creating a less industrial look. (MTQ, Op. cit., tome I (1992), fig. 4.2.)



24 This conceptual plan shows the proposed developments around the new station, which will be called "Bois-Franc." (MTQ, Op. Cit., résumé (1992), fig. 12.)

VAL-ROYAL CNR STATION, VILLE ST-LAURENT, QUÉBEC



- 25 This conceptual sketch shows the proposed developments in the immediate context of the new intermodal station. In some ways, it represents the ultimate extension of Wicksteed's 1910 idea, but the future of what will soon be one of the few remaining testimonies of this idea - the Val-Royal station building - remains uncertain. (MTQ, Op. cit., résumé (1992), fig. 11.)