

Magog's SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE CHURCH and the architectural dynamics
between two of Quebec's founding institutions during the twentieth century:
the Roman Catholic Church and the Corporate Industrial Manufactory

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A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Art History

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Fine Arts) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 2011

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CONCORDIA UNIVERISTY

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ABSTRACT

Magog's SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE CHURCH and the architectural dynamics between two of Quebec's founding institutions during the twentieth century: the Roman Catholic Church and the Corporate Industrial Manufactory

Caroline Beaudoin

Unlike many of Quebec's earliest communities which colonized as parishes around the area's Catholic Church, the Township of Magog was first and foremost an industrial town. The community's history traces back to the first half of the nineteenth century when the area was commonly referred to as the Outlet, referring to the geographic area where Lake Memphremagog pours into the Magog River.

This research study's objective is to conduct a spatial and visual analysis of Magog's Sainte-Marguerite-Marie Church based on the plans designed by Sherbrooke architect Joseph-Aimé Poulin between 1946 and 1949. The working class community's social history will be considered in terms of the factory workers' collective commitment to build a rare and exceptional church in the shadow of the Dominion Textiles Company's imposing factory. The intent is to illustrate how the relative monumentality of the church and its streamlined design respond to the factory both directly and indirectly relative to Henri Lefebvre's theories of the *everyday*. The building is not only a product of the architect's creative vision and technical logic and skill, the clients' expectations and motivations are also a significant part of the equation. Religious architecture's professional climate during the inter-war era requires attention, as does the environment within which the building was inserted, and how that building integrates or conflicts with its existing surroundings. Finally, this essay presents the church as a rather unique example of the modern design influence, erected in a Quebec neighbourhood historically rooted in traditional values, practices, and beliefs.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my favourite architect, Roland Oscar Beaudoin, for recognizing and enjoying the extraordinary in everyday people and ordinary life; his granddaughter, my angel, for inventing the *Dream Button*; and *Team CAB* for never doubting I could.

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Introduction

Quebec's Roman Catholic heritage and Henri Lefebvre's *everyday*

The Quebec population's progressive divorce from the Roman Catholic Church as of the 1960s coincided with a fundamental and pervasive social revolution which was well underway throughout the western world's capitalist nations at the time. One study concluded that the number of practicing Catholics in the province of Quebec dropped from 80% in 1960 to 8% in 1996. (Noppen, Morisset 50) Once the province's sustained wave of rejection subsided, it was left with a daunting number of superfluous churches as parishes either merged or closed due to low attendances, lack of funding, and/or a decline in available active clergy. A renewed collective interest in the buildings emerged once the public realized that many of these churches were being systematically and permanently erased from the province's cultural landscape. This erasure, perceived by many as a cultural identity crisis, prompted attention from heritage advocates, government agencies and everyday and the general public. Scholars continue to scrutinize this phenomenon from various perspectives as the future of these buildings, now commonly referred to in terms of the 'nation's castles', is at stake and has come to symbolize, in large part the population's collective identity. In *Les Églises du Québec: un Patrimoine à Réinventer* Morisset and Noppen consider how and whether the nation's religious architectural legacy can successfully fill the deepening collective void left in the wake of the Church's absence. The authors call for an open and honest reflection on the potential future vocations of the province's vacant churches in order to ensure the past's continuity, stemming from the premise "sans projet, plus d'église." They also consider society's passionate and emotional 'collective' attachment to the buildings as well as analyzing more quantitative issues such as funding and privatization.

Quebec's present religious architectural dilemma, and the accompanying attempts to re-establish a collective sense of identity and continuity with the past, stands to gain from art historical research probing current issues such as for example, public spaces, material culture, temporality, heritage, cultural landscapes, social change, urban planning and tourism. Emergent conflicts, issues and discourses arising from such studies partner well with Henri Lefebvre's theories regarding the everyday, by responding to his conclusion that "the days follow one after another and resemble one another, and yet-here lies the contradiction at the heart of everydayness - everything changes."(Lefebvre qtd. in Harris, Berke 36)

Lefebvre's work has been enlisted by scholars striving to identify and promote the 'extraordinary' buried beneath banal, everyday routine objects or buildings. This goes back to Nikolaus Pevsner's nineteenth century infamous comparison of a bicycle shed, "a building", to Lincoln Cathedral, "a piece of architecture." Researchers have grappled with architecture's subtle distinction between 'art' architecture and 'vernacular' architecture ever since. Art historian Dell Upton argues that for Lefebvre "there can be no Architecture, only architecture. Lincoln Cathedral and the bicycle shed are parts of the same landscape, fragments of one whole."(713)

This case study is a qualitative study of architect Joseph Aimé Poulin's 1949 design of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's church in Magog, Quebec. The ensuing analysis embodies Upton's view, consistent with Lefebvre's ideas, that "professionally designed structures constitute extraordinary landmarks in a vast expanse of the ordinary."(709) I will present Poulin's success in creating a transparent synthesis between 'academic' architectural principles and the 'humble' quality of the surrounding ordinary everyday working class environment.

Lefebvre's corpus of the everyday is inclusionary, and therefore, has the potential to encompass an extensive scope of studies relating to modernity. This malleable and democratic quality allows for a greater appreciation for and understanding of modern society's otherwise marginalized and ordinary underbelly, such as industrialization's working class for instance. Architect Margaret Crawford viewed everyday space somewhat intangibly as "the connective tissue that binds everyday lives together", as it lies "between such defined and physically definable realms as the home, the workplace, and the institution."(Upton 707) Michel de Certeau, like Lefebvre, defended everyday architecture as having the creative potential to "undergird a less oppressive society."(Upton 712) Lefebvre's vision of "everyday life as a colonized space" however conflicts with de Certeau's view of everyday life "as spaceless and formless practises without an organizing discourse."(Upton 714) This study presents Poulin's architectonic use of everyday elements on behalf of the workers while emphasizing the link forged by those elements between the church and factory. My thesis builds upon Upton's view that:

For Lefebvre the complementary nature of the Quotidian and the Modern means that neither sphere monopolized power or powerlessness, banality or innovation. Everyday life is *both* a colonized setting of oppression, banality, routine, passivity, and unconsciousness *and* the focus of an ultimate reality and a source of potential liberation. (712)

From an urbanism perspective Crawford looked at how everyday space "stands in contrast to the carefully planned, officially designated, and often underused spaces of public use that can be found in most [North] American cities."(Upton 711) Architect Steven Harris' premise likewise held that a consideration of the everyday in architecture can resist "the bureaucracy of controlled consumption, that is, the forces of late capitalist economy and their complicit governmental authority."(3) Poulin's design of the church in Magog resisted

conventionality while confirming Harris' opinion that "the resistance [to authority] lies in the focus on the quotidian, the repetitive, and the relentlessly ordinary." (4) This essay considers how the architect's integration of ordinary and repetitive patterns into his design not only engaged the Dominion Textile Company Limited's neighbouring factory in a visual dialogical exchange with the church. The design also broke, or at the very least interrupted, what Kim Dovey has referred to as architecture's "silent complicity"¹ by expressing the working class' ordinary and routine everyday lives. Poulin's plans support Upton's argument that:

The idea of the everyday forces us to acknowledge that Architecture is part of architecture, that designers are a part of the everyday world, not explorers from a more civilized society or detached doers *for* clients and *to* cities. (711)

Given contemporary culture's rapacious appetite to consume images that are globally disseminated via multiple electronic mediums which essentially occupy a virtual world without boundaries, the study of material culture in contrast offers art historians the opportunity to study artefacts *in situ*, while reinforcing Upton's view that "architecture's materiality makes it a natural conduit to the specificity of everyday life." (707)

An Extraordinary Everyday Church

The origins of architecture are best understood if one takes a wider view and considers sociocultural factors, in the broadest sense, to be more important than climate, technology, materials, and economy. In any situation it is the interplay of these factors that best explains the form of buildings. No single explanation will suffice, because buildings...are more than material objects or structures. They are institutions, basic cultural phenomena.

- Amos Rapoport (qtd. in Ching 8)

The parish of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's church is located at 340, rue Saint-Patrice East in Magog Quebec, a small city situated approximately 120 kilometres east of Montreal and 30

¹ See Kim Dovey's essay "The Silent Complicity of Architecture" pp 283-295, in *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, for a compelling analysis of architecture and the built environment relative to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theories of the 'habitus', "a set of embodied dispositions towards everyday social practice" (283).

kilometres north of the Vermont border. The building's westerly oriented facade is situated on a lot that occupies a city block surrounded by four streets: Saint-Patrice East, Saint-David, Cartier, and rue Saint-Pierre. The structure's atypically large overall interior volume measures approximately 716 000 cubic feet.² Its striking design and relative monumentality of scale are compellingly intriguing due to its location in an industrial/residential working class neighbourhood historically referred to by the local residents as either *le bas de ville* or *le swamp*. The parish of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie occupies a topographic dip relative to the surrounding communities which constitute the City of Magog. In comparison to other neighbourhoods and parishes it is routinely overlooked by the city's large tourist population and generally bypassed by local residents, rendering the area undeservedly marginalized despite its historical significance to the rest of the city and perhaps the entire region as well. Yet the church's 127 foot symmetrical bell towers, visible from various angles and vantage points throughout the small city without highrises, are defiantly inserted into its everyday landscape, proudly calling attention to Magog's historical origins. The building's open and uncomplicated facade reassuringly conveys a sense of continuity, accessibility and stability (fig. 1). Its substantial dense mass convincingly imposes a sense of endurance and dignity while prompting curiosity in light of the contrasting surrounding structures which are mostly multiple family residences, apart from the textile factory's expansive instalment. The factory and church are separated by a mere 180 meters and linked by Saint-David Street (fig. 2). Due to the church's striking appearance within the lower income working class neighbourhood, I reasoned that a measure of collusion had perhaps existed between the Catholic Church and the Dominion Textiles Company Limited. Research indicated, however, that rather than an explicit collusion existing, there was indeed

² Église Ste Marguerite A Magog PQ *3^{ème} Projet*. Plan- Nef & Sanctuaire. 10 oct. 1946, PLAN 4602 Feuille 4. AP79/B, les archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke.



Figure 1- Magog's Sainte-Marguerite-Marie Church. Photograph c. 1951.
BaNQ Montreal, fond E6, S7, SS1, D52779 À 52794, Joseph Guibord – 1951
<http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=201106031410261133&p_centre=06M&p_classe=E&p_fonds=6&p_numunide=838071> consulted June 3 2011.

This photograph illustrates the church as it appeared in its original environment situated on the corners of St.-David and St.-Patrice. The twin bell towers extend well beyond the roof and are still visible from many different vantage points throughout Magog. Note the contrasting modest surrounding residential buildings. The white house, situated middle right, served as the parish's first presbytery and was later converted into a library.

an ambiguous dynamic between the two institutions. This circuitous dynamic was characterized by shifting policies and loyalties motivated by their mutual objective of maintaining authority over the workers in particular, and their indiscriminate perceptions of good social order overall. For example, when 400 workers spontaneously went on strike for the first time in Magog in 1900, the mill called upon the city's only pastor to intervene. (Héту 17) A meeting was promptly held in the parish presbytery, at which point the workers declared “qu'ils sont capables de se gouverner seuls”, rejecting what they perceived as the pastor's overzealous interventions. (Héту 17) During another stike in 1909 it was reported that “le curé Brassard de Magog prend une attitude franchement hostile aux grévistes.” (Héту 18) Despite this initial schism between the Church and workers, the *Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada* (CTCC) was

eventually founded in 1921. (Gaudreau 119) The moderate syndicate “puisait son inspiration dans la doctrine sociale de l'Église.”(Gaudreau 119) Due to the Church's support for the union which became the *Syndicat catholique des ouvriers du textile de Magog* in 1935 (Hétu 22), “le mouvement ouvrier était maintenant perçu par la communauté comme un partenaire social respecté et un moyen de défense légitime pour les travailleurs.”(Gaudreau 120) The company, however, made its position clear by publicly announcing in the media that although “il préférait les syndicats catholiques aux centrales américaines [...] elle n'avait aucune intention de laisser un tiers intervenir entre elle et sa main-d'oeuvre.”(Gaudreau 121)

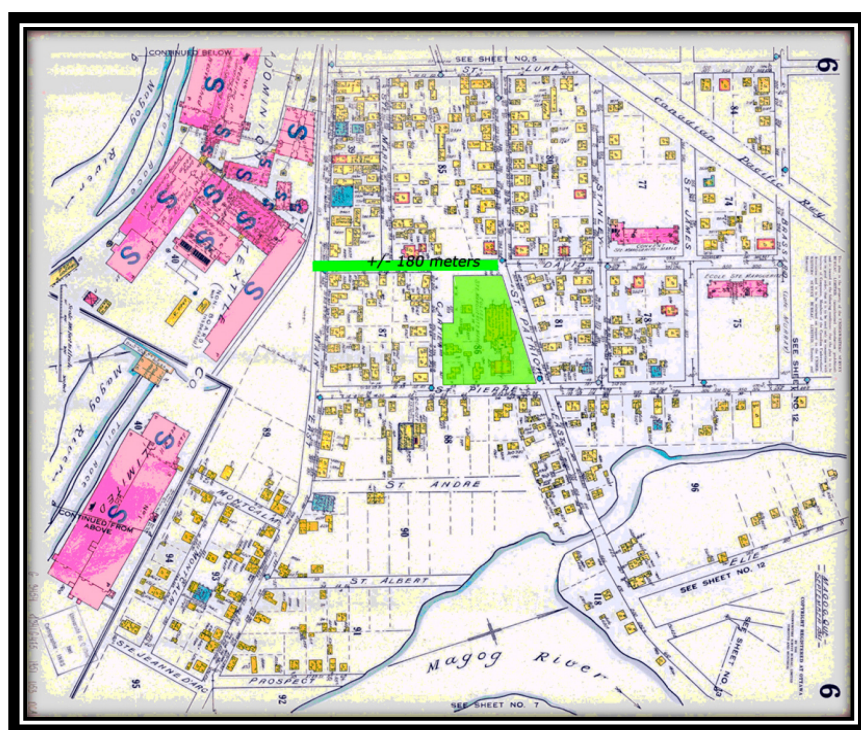


Figure 2. Underwriters' Survey Bureau 1951 Insurance plan of the city of Magog Quebec. Courtesy of BaNQ Quebec. Iris catalogue no. 0000223552. <<http://services.banq.qc.ca/sdx/cep/document.xsp?id=0000223552> > consulted on August 22 2011.

The green highlighted area represents the city block where the church is located and indicates the short distance, +/- 180 meters separating the church and factory. Also note how much more densely developed the area is in contrast to figure 4's 1897 map.

By the mid 1940s Magog’s church and factory were undeclared allies and then at times adversaries, who seemingly managed to agree as often as they disagreed within their unspoken

and unofficially created social spectrum. The two forces inadvertently formed a socio-institutional relationship cemented by their aversion to the post war threat of communism, their efforts to modernize, and their vested interest in the workers' everyday lives. In this thesis I propose that the experienced and respected Joseph Aimé Poulin's design of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's church without ostentatious ornamentation and luxurious materials was a sensitive and meaningful creative choice directed towards the majority of the parish's French catholic factory workers, his clients. The sophisticated architect was mindful of Lefebvre's ideal that "man must be everyday, or he will not be at all" (Harris, Berke 9) which stems from his philosophy that rejects "pretension, and heroicism in favor of a more sensitive engagement with people's everyday environments and lives." (Harris, Berke 9) I will argue that Poulin deliberately chose an architectural vocabulary familiar to the workers by adapting and referencing simple and plain architectonic elements from the very building they worked in: industrial architects T. Pringle & Son Limited's neighbouring Dominion Textile Company's factory built in 1927 (fig. 3). For the purpose of this thesis and in this context "everyday architecture" refers to both "the quotidian, the repetitiveness, and the relentlessly ordinary" quality of life of the workers as well as to the two principal buildings in which their public, everyday, routine activities unfolded- keeping in mind that "the character of the everyday has always been repetitive." (Harris, Berke 36)



Figure 3. Magog's Dominion Textile factory c.1927. Architecte T. Pringle & Sons. *L'industrie textile primaire au Canada: Histoire et patrimoine*, p. 192.

This photograph illustrates the building I argue Joseph-Aimé Poulin referenced for his plans of Ste.-Marguerite's church.

My research objective is to conduct a spatial, visual and material analysis of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's church in the shadow of the Dominion Textile's imposing presence in order to shed light on the working class community's social history. Kenneth Clark's following anecdote is relevant to my discussion:

Ruskin said: 'Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art. . .but of the three the only trustworthy one is the last.' On the whole I think this is true. If I had to say which was telling the truth about society, a speech by a minister of housing or the actual buildings put up in his time, I should believe the buildings. (quoted in Ching, 8)

Similarly, from a material culture perspective, Jules Prown reasoned that any art object "is self-sufficient, and when apprehended evokes in the perceiver a certain attitude towards reality which resonates with the maker's attitude towards reality." (16) For the purpose of this case study, the 'maker' is a plural entity comprised of the architect and the workers he represented, with obvious influence from the Catholic Church. My intent is to illustrate how the relative monumentality of the church and its streamlined design respond to the factory both directly and indirectly. The building is not merely a product of the architect's creative vision and technical logic and skill, as the clients' expectations and motivations are also significant factors within the overall equation. The architectural profession as a whole during the given era requires consideration, in addition to the environment within which the building is inserted, and questions of how that building conforms to or conflicts with its existing surroundings. I will then consider to what extent the church assimilates or resists its environment and develop conclusions based on that analysis. Finally, I will challenge recent scholarship which categorizes the church as art deco by systematically discussing the building in terms of how it represents a rather unique example of

the post war modern design era, unexpectedly erected in a historical neighbourhood rooted in traditional values, practices, and beliefs.

Historical Context

Industrial Magog

Unlike many of Quebec's young communities which evolved into Roman Catholic parishes, with the church typically located at the center of the settlement, the Township of Magog was first and foremost an industrial town. Following the United States' war of independence, some of New England's Loyalists settled around the banks of Lake Memphremagog in search of new opportunities. During this period Nicholas Austin received the Township of Bolton on the lake's west bank to colonize as a reward for his loyalty to the British Crown. He soon relocated to the east bank, drawn by the lake's natural outlet pouring into the Magog River. He used the river's current to establish the area's first saw and flour mills.³ In 1799 Ralph Merry III purchased the mills from Austin, enhancing their productivity to such an extent that he was officially recognized as the Outlet's founder.⁴ The community's history thus traces back to the first half of the nineteenth century when Magog was still named the Outlet, referring to the point where Lake Memphremagog funnels into the Magog River. It was not until 1849 that the Township of Magog was established, and the community's name was changed from the Outlet to Magog.

As early as 1845 the area's first textile mill, the Magog Manufacturing Co., opened for business along the Magog River banks, an ideal location given the river current's proven

³ <http://ville.magog.qc.ca/b_1.asp?idMenu=60>, *La Ville de Magog >portrait de la ville>historique*, consulted on May 25, 2011.

⁴ ---

capacity to generate power. This first mill employed fifteen people who annually produced several thousand yards of cotton cloth. (Gaudreau 13) An aggressive fire destroyed the original buildings in 1857. The mill eventually reopened in 1875 only to shut again after a few short years. (Gaudreau 14) As one of the country's greatest resources during the early industrial era, particularly in Quebec, the rivers were promoted early on by Eastern Township politicians and merchants eager to advance the region's economic development. During an address in 1883 to the House of Commons, Standstead's first Member of Parliament Charles C. Colby asserted:

I maintain that in Canada we can build a cotton mill as cheap, if not cheaper, than it can be built elsewhere on this continent...we have here abundant water power, and you cannot overestimate the importance of water power as an economical factor." (Gaudreau 23)

Undeterred by the previous mill owner's failure, William Hobbs⁵, Alvin Head Moore⁶ and Deputy Charles Colby secured the waterway rights in 1881 from the British American Land Company for a period of twenty-five years, on behalf of a renewed Magog Manufacturing Co. (Gaudreau 16-7) The three partners transformed the older company into the Magog Cotton & Print Co., incorporating it in 1883, making it "the largest joint stock enterprise ever undertaken in the Townships" (Gaudreau 25) and "the only calico printing plant in Canada" (Paradis 24). Barbara Austin has described how the textile industry in Canada began with men who "were seeking to circumvent British control of the cotton trade in Canada by setting up domestic manufacturing facilities." (55). By 1887 the factory employed 150 workers and produced six million yards of fabric, an output which represented 25% of the total printed cotton consumed in Canada. (Gaudreau 30) The next year, due in large part to the factory's success, the Township of

⁵ Hobbs was chiefly instrumental in the [earlier] building of the Coaticook Cotton Mills as well as the Valleyfield Cotton Mills (Gaudreau 21).

⁶ Moore and Colby were friends and business partners, "together they formed a company, and in 1878 built the Magog and Waterloo Railroad" (Paradis 24). The company was sold to C.P.R. in 1887 (Paradis 28).

Magog was raised to the municipal status of Village. The Village of Magog soon upgraded its status again, gaining official recognition as the City of Magog in 1890, with an estimated population of 2100 (Gaudreau 30) (fig.4). By 1907 Magog’s factory had “become the largest calico print works on the continent, with the Magog label on fabrics carrying its [n]ame to every corner of the world” (Paradis 44) (fig. 5).



Figure 4. Goad 1897 fire insurance map for Magog, Quebec. Courtesy of BaNQ Quebec, Iris catalogue no. 0003029287, < <http://services.banq.qc.ca/sdx/cep/document.xsp?id=0003029287>> consulted on August 22 2011.

Page 7 (left image) illustrates the Dominion Cotton Mills Co.' substantial layout in 1897 relative to the underdeveloped, scarcely populated surrounding area featured on page 5 (right image). The green highlighted area indicates lot number 86, the lot where the future parish of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's first chapel will be built in 1921.



Figure 5- Photograph of the Magog Textile Mill c. late nineteenth century. Courtesy of the Eastern Township Research Center (P042 Newton Brookhouse fonds).

This historical photograph illustrates the expansive layout of Magog’s textile factory as it was at the turn of the twentieth century.

The City of Magog, like several other industrial cities throughout Quebec, was permanently settled due to its two main waterways the Magog River and Lake Memphremagog. During the early 1950s the Magog River was ranked “second as the most fully developed water flow in the world, with only about seven feet of unused head between Lake Memphremagog and the St. Francis River.” (Paradis 28) Clearly it was the potential to generate hydroelectricity which attracted private investors who sought to exploit the abundant natural resources in industrial towns like Magog, such as Shawinigan Falls, Riverbend, Témiscaming, and Arvida (fig. 6). In *Villes Industrielles Planifiées* Robert Fortier suggested that Quebec’s “villes industrielles” could be more aptly named “villes du pouvoir.” (17) Certainly his pun regarding an industrial city's source of power is reinforced by the following excerpt from Magog’s local newspaper in 1949:

La ville de Magog loue de la Compagnie Dominion Textile Limitée au prix nominal d’un dollar par année, le droit à la moitié des terrains et de l’eau sur l’emplacement de son barrage d’énergie électrique. Quand ce barrage et l’usine d’énergie électrique furent érigés, en 1911, les frais de construction ont été payés grâce à un prêt consenti par la Compagnie.⁷

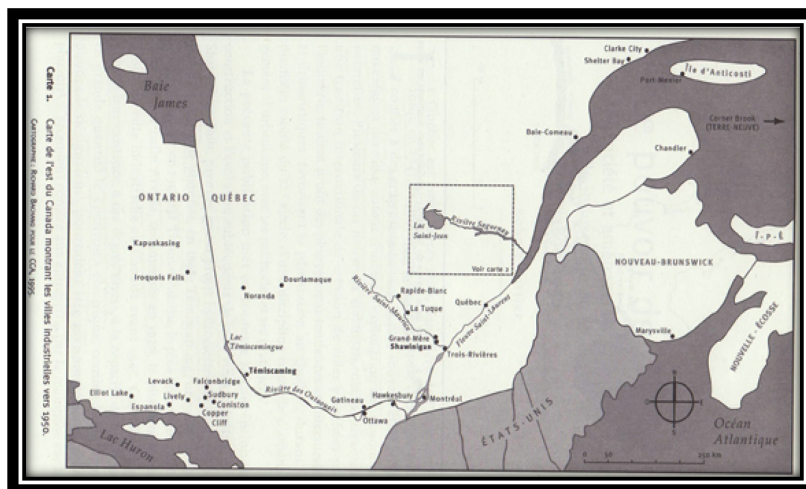


Figure 6- Eastern Canadian planned industrial cities circa 1950. *Ville Industrielles Planifiées*, p.14.

⁷ “Le gros apport de la Dominion Textile Ltée au bien être de Magog”, *La Chronique de Magog*, VOL. 13- No. 41. Magog, Jeudi, 13 Octobre 1949, page 15.

The towns or cities that emerged during the first wave of industrialization between 1850-1890, such as Magog, were characterized by an organic, spontaneous growth which developed in tandem with the Company's progress, unlike later patriarchal 'Company Towns' which were rigorously structured and systematically planned based on the underlying conviction that "de bons logements dans un environnement adéquat produisant des employés adéquats, la ville planifiée est préférable au laisser-faire" (Fortier 18) (fig. 7). Fortier further elaborated on the corporately planned urban settlements:

Ces villes ont été des laboratoires sociaux et urbanistiques; elles ont remplacé la structure sociale pluraliste de la ville traditionnelle par un ordre simplifié, basé sur l'occupation de l'employé et les rapports de classes engendrés par la production industrielle. Leur conception tend à créer un environnement rationalisé en vue d'atteindre une forme poussée de contrôle social, les compagnies régissant l'aménagement et la gestion de ces villes avec la même pugnacité qu'elles appliquent à la conquête d'un marché... la ville sert de modèle, elle devient une vitrine ou l'entreprise expose ses réalisations comme autant de trophées. (18)

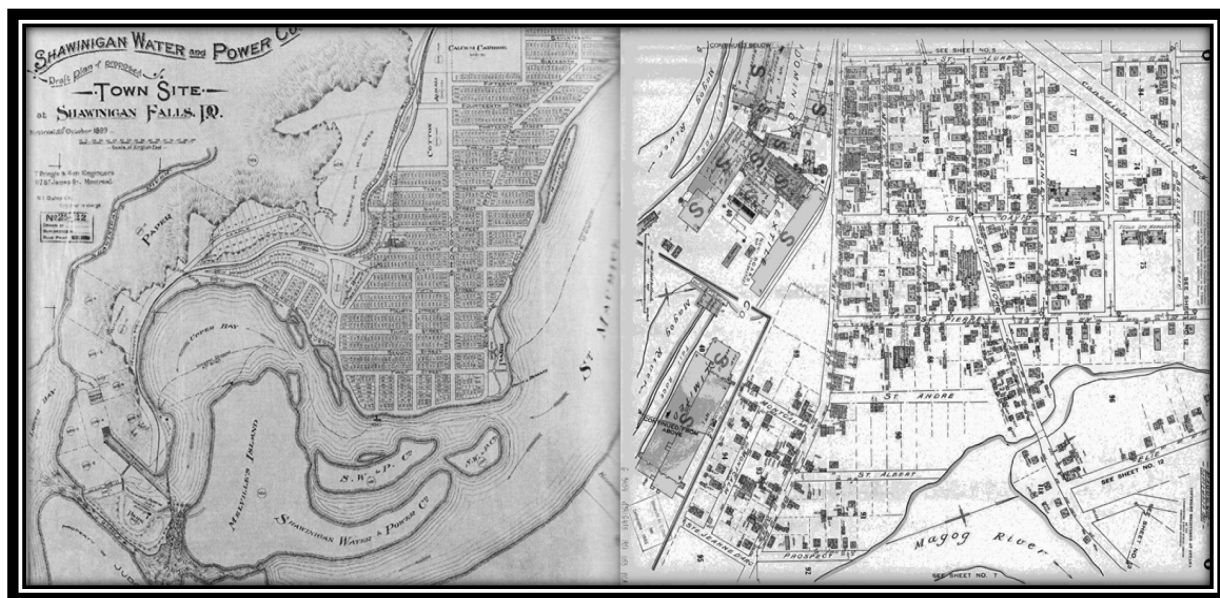


Figure 7. (Left) T. Pringle & Sons' Shawinigan Falls 1899 Town Site. *Villes Industrielles Planifiées*, p. 64. (Right) Underwriters' Survey Bureau 1951 Insurance plan of the city of Magog Quebec. BaNQ Quebec. Iris catalogue no. 0000223552. <<http://services.banq.qc.ca/sdx/cep/document.xsp?id=0000223552>> July 18 2011.

These maps illustrate the organizational differences between a 'planned' orthogonal company town (left) versus an 'organically' developed one (right). Note 1951 map of Magog's irregular spacing between, and orientation of, buildings and lots cut in different sizes and shapes with the highest concentration of buildings closest to the factory, gradually fanning outward. Compare to Shawinigan Falls uniformly subdivided, parallel, rigidly organized, condensed plots of land with larger properties located on the outskirts of town.

As early as 1876 Magog had also become known as a summer resort, attracting Montreal's elite industrialists including Sir Hugh Allan, the Redpath family, the Gaults, and the Molsons who "bought land and erected buildings." (Paradis 5) While Canada's wealthy Anglophone industrialists were developing the nation's financial empires, Quebec's dominantly francophone Roman Catholic Church was actively spreading its spiritual and social influence throughout the province. Claude Bergeron discussed the relationship between the two institutions relative to architecture in terms of the following:

l'industrie et le commerce furent les principaux facteurs de changement et de modernisation auxquels réagit la puissance traditionnelle de l'Église. Ces puissances ont dominé la production architecturale du début du siècle. L'une et l'autre cherchaient à s'affirmer par une architecture imposante qui emprunte un langage traditionnel. Pour les premières, il s'agissait de se donner une image de dignité. Pour l'Église, il importait de faire valoir son autorité. (XX 12)

Like Bergeron, Fortier also broached the apparent dynamic between the two institutions, although from an urban planning perspective rather than an architectural one. He identified a more direct dichotomy underlying the Church and Industry:

Cette disposition de l'église en face de l'usine prendra une importance majeure dans les villes de compagnies du Québec, ou elle atteste d'une certaine manière la dualité patronat anglophone et protestant/ ouvriers francophones et catholiques. (24)

It is significant to note here how Poulin's design of the new church, relative to the original chapel, rotated its orientation to no longer be perpendicular to the factory (fig. 8), choosing rather to align it with the factory to within a few degrees, shifting the entrance to St. Patrick East which runs parallel to Main Street and The Dominion Textiles' imposing installation (fig. 9). As a result the church becomes less subordinate to the factory, both physically and symbolically, by occupying a central position in its own right on one of the city's main east/west arteries, while additionally enabling the workers to approach their church without having to first confront their

workplace in order to do so. St-Patrice is a primary road in Magog in comparison to Saint-David, a mere side street, therefore the heightened traffic on the street would enable more people to notice the church's impressive facade and tall towers from 'le haut de la ville', just as those travelling along Rue Principale encountered the factory site's imposing installation.

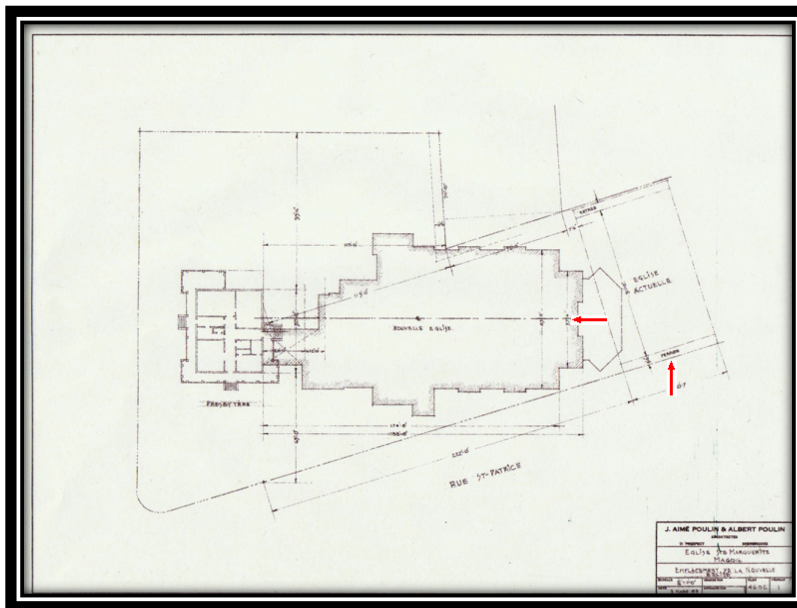


Figure 8- Emplacement de la nouvelle église, plan 4602 feuille 1. Centre d'archives de l' Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin (P7.S2)

The red arrows illustrate the orientation of the entrances for the original chapel and the new church.

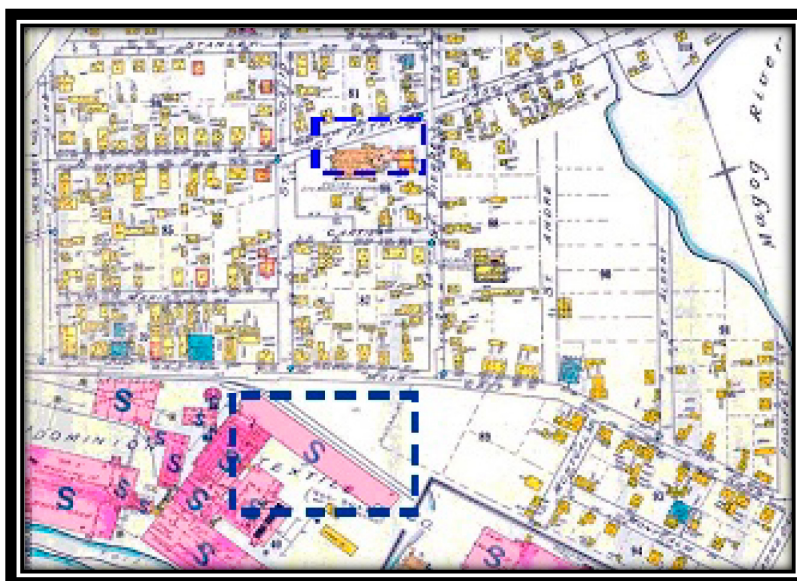


Figure 9. Detail of map illustrating the factory and church's alignment and proximity to one another. Underwriters' Survey Bureau 1951 insurance plan of the City of Magog. Courtesy of BaNQ Quebec. Iris catalogue no. 0000223552, <<http://services.banq.qc.ca/sdx/cep/document.xsp?id=0000223552>> consulted on August 22 2011.

The outlined buildings represent the church and factory and their proximity and relative alignment to one another. Note that each building parallels one of Magog's two main roadways running east-west.

Magog's Second Parish and The Dominion Textiles Company

On Magog's current website the Company's historical role to its development is prominently recognized:

Au 20^e siècle, l'histoire de Magog demeure intimement liée aux progrès de l'industrie textile, principal employeur de la ville. Des liens importants se tissent entre la compagnie et le conseil municipal pour développer des services de loisirs et de santé.⁸

Such health and recreation services paid for by Dominion Textiles included: the maintenance cost for the four school rinks, paying the admission fees for students to use the municipal arena, and a \$20 000.00 investment in the arena's construction. The company also provided various other athletic facilities including baseball and football fields, tennis courts, and a public beach. It made regular donations to the school boards above and beyond what it owed in taxes, and contributed substantially to financing the development of the city's Providence Hospital. It also subsidized many associations including the Scouts and Guides. The company provided hot meals in the cafeteria priced below cost as well as hosting various social events such as dances, card games, and sports banquets. Less tangibly but of equal importance, as the Company pointed out, it offered:

L'assurance et le sentiment de sécurité avec lesquels la population de Magog peut envisager l'avenir...La stabilité immuable dont la Compagnie Dominion Textile Limitée a fait preuve, à travers les années de crises économique et les autres

⁸ "Ville de Magog", portrait de la ville, historique: <http://ville.magog.qc.ca/b_1.asp?idMenu=60>, Consulted on may 25th, 2011

épreuves d'une ampleur nationale, a apporté la prospérité à Magog et à ses citoyens.⁹

The parish of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie, Magog's second catholic parish, was founded in 1921 within close proximity to the factory which had become the Dominion Textiles Company Ltd. since 1905. The working class community directly and indirectly experienced the factory's pervasive influence throughout the city even prior to the parish's creation. The workers were determined to have their own church and parish closer to their homes rather than having to climb the hill to celebrate mass at Saint-Patrice, Magog's first parish founded in 1872. In a letter dated May 21 1921 in response to the request put forward by the lower- income east side residents, to establish its own parish, Curé Brassard from the St.-Patrice parish explained to the Sherbrooke diocese's Mgr. Lefebvre:

Le temps n'est pas arrivé encore de faire cette division; on ne peut raisonnablement localiser la place de la nouvelle église. La manufacture batira avant longtemps un agrandissement considérable et ce sera probablement de l'autre côté de la rivière et alors il sera facile de trouver un endroit salubre et convenable. En attendant les gens ne sont pas plus éloignés de l'église qu'ils l'ont été depuis cinquante ans et nous leur continuerons leur ministère comme toujours.¹⁰

Despite the pastor's initial objections underscored by the significant influence the factory's potential location had over the area, Sainte-Marguerite-Marie was canonically ordained by Bishop Larocque on September 15 1921.¹¹ The first three elected parish wardens were Albert Pratt, Didace Audet, and Philippe Hamel. The wardens, with unanimous support from the parish residents, were authorized to borrow the necessary funds to purchase the required land to erect a

⁹ "Le gros apport de la Dominion Textile Ltée au bien être de Magog", *La Chronique de Magog*, VOL. 13- No. 41. Magog, Jeudi, 13 Octobre 1949, p. 15.

¹⁰ Letter signed by Curé Brassard to Monseigneur P.J.A. Lefebvre P.D. Supérieur du Séminaire de Sherbrooke. Magog 21 Mai 1921. Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.

¹¹ Jubilé d'Or – Paroisse Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog, 1921-1971, 34.

‘temporary’ chapel, subject to Monseigneur Larocque’s approval. On October 9 1921 the parish representatives purchased the following three properties: Siméon Simard’s land and house for the sum of \$6000.00, Achille Binette’s land and house for \$2 500.00 and L.A. Audet’s land for \$1000.00. The minutes of the meeting stipulated a second clause requesting:

L’autorisation de construire en bois un local convenable et assez grand pour permettre à la population de se réunir pour les offices divins, cette chapelle temporaire, devant avoir environ quatre-vingts pieds en longueur sur soixante en largeur, pouvant contenir au moins six ou sept cents sièges et coûter approximativement la somme de huit milles piastres. (\$8000.00).¹²

The original clapboard chapel was quickly erected by the residents and the newly formed parish celebrated its first midnight mass on December 25 1921 (fig. 9). The parish's consideration of the chapel as temporary suggests that it had grander intentions for its temple from the beginning, and attests to the parishioners’ patience and willingness to wait until it became financially feasible to erect a more permanent, noble structure. The practice of erecting temporary chapels throughout Quebec dates back to early nineteenth century principles advocated by architect, philosopher and priest Jérôme Demers. Although the newly formed parish managed to borrow the necessary funds to realize their initial project, financial challenges were recurrent for the lower income, working class population. Its first collection yielded a mere \$85.15, which at the time was described by Curé Courtemanche as a “jolie somme”. In a letter written by Curé Fraser to the archdiocese regarding the collection of tithes¹³, the priest described the parish’s precarious financial circumstances, emphasizing how the majority of the residents, as factory workers, were tenants and not home owners, and to a large extent transient, “il faut nécessairement tenir compte

¹² ASSEMBLÉE DE PAROISSE pour permettre aux marguilliers d’acheter un terrain et de faire les démarches et dépenses voulues pour construire un local servant de chapelle temporaire. October 9, 1921. Archives de l’Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.

¹³ The collection of tithes was a common practice by the Catholic Church to finance parish activities, the pastor’s living expenses, and the parish buildings. The amount of tithes owing to the Church was calculated based on a household’s annual income.

que, étant une population flottante, le gros tiers ne paie rien soit pour cause de pauvreté ou n'étant ici souvent que quelques mois; ils partent souvent sans même qu'on les connaisse.”¹⁴



Figure 10. Sainte-Marguerite’s original chapel constructed in 1921, (left) exterior and (right) interior. Courtesy of SHM.

These photographs illustrate the exterior and interior ‘temporary’ chapel that eventually served the parish for almost three decades between 1921 and 1950.

The house included with the purchase of Simard’s property served as the presbytery for the first two curés, Hector Courtemanche and Herménégilde Fraser (fig. 2). It later became the parish library in 1945, under Curé Origène Vel’s apostolate. The parish hired an architect to design a new presbytery to house their priests in 1927 (figs. 11, 12). The chosen architect was Joseph Aimé Poulin, marking the beginning of his professional *rapport* with the young parish. He thus established an early relationship with the parish’s founders as they laid the groundwork by conveying their aspirations, intentions and vision for the future of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. The building was designed in 1927, although construction was delayed until 1929, a situation which reoccurred two decades later when the parish hired the same architect in 1946 to design its new church, and construction was postponed until 1949, again due to financial reasons. The cost of the tan brick presbytery was estimated at \$29 111.97 in the church wardens’ recorded minutes

¹⁴ Undated letter signed by H. Fraser, ptre cure, the parish’s second Curé. Archives de l’Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.

dated October 13 1929, a sizable sum reflective of the desired quality of design and materials insisted upon by the parish as suitable to house its esteemed clergy. The luxurious structure had a basement, ground floor, and first floor featuring, amongst other things, a separate dining room, seven bedrooms, three studies, three bathrooms, a wrap around covered porch, a solarium, and a smoke den. Seemingly then, a precedent was set early on by the parish to uncompromisingly spare no expense in obtaining enduring craftsmanship and materials for its architecture. In the same document the wardens proposed borrowing an additional \$10 000.00, raising the young parish's total debt at the time to approximately \$33 911.97. In a letter written by Sherbrooke's Bishop Alphonse-Odias on July 11 1929 he advised Sainte-Marguerite's Pastor Emile Genest to inform the parish that:

Il est indifférent à l'évêque de Sherbrooke que la construction du presbytère soit faite à l'entreprise ou à la journée. Mais faites leur savoir aussi que quand il s'agit de dépenser la somme de vingt mille piastres que la paroisse a eu la générosité d'allouer à cette fin, il tient que cet argent soit employé à construire une maison qui vaille cette somme une fois construite... Il est reconnu qu'un constructeur de maisonnettes de quelques cents piastres ne rendrait pas justice aux paroissiens qui veulent avoir un presbytère de vingt mille piastres.¹⁵

Impeded by limited financial resources as the parish was, it is unsurprising that the 'temporary' chapel served for twenty-nine years. It eventually sold at auction for \$600.00 and was subsequently demolished in 1950 to make way for the new church's substantial front steps according to Poulin's plans. In the accompanying contract the architect stipulated,

¹⁵ Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.



Figure 11. Presbytery, Ste.-Marguerite-Marie exterior plans. Architect Joseph-Aimé Poulin 1927. Centre d'archives de l'Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin P7, S1, SS41.

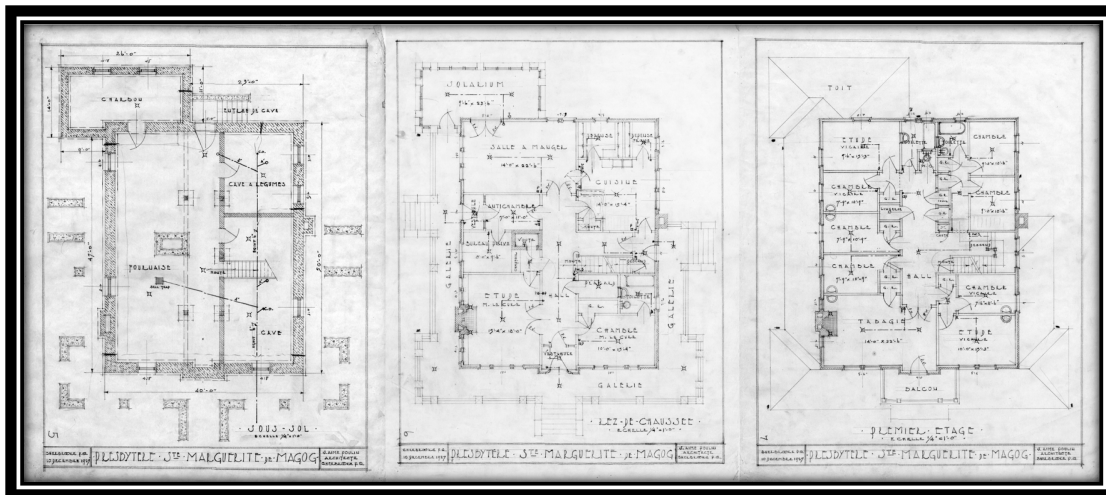


Figure 12. Presbytery, Ste.-Marguerite-Marie interior plans. Architect Joseph-Aimé Poulin 1927. Centre d'archives de l'Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin P7, S1, SS41

These images illustrate the presbytery as it appeared prior to its annexation to the new church in 1949-50. It is currently used as the headquarters for Magog's Carrefour du Partage, a non-profit organization that provides services and assistance to the community.

“le perron en pierre de la façade de l'église ne pourra pas être construit en même temps que l'église. Il faudra garder l'ancienne église jusqu'à ce que les exercices religieux puissent se faire dans la nouvelle église.”¹⁶ (fig. 13).

¹⁶ J. Aimé Poulin & Albert Poulin Architectes, 71, Prospect, Sherbrooke, *Devis pour la construction de L'ÉGLISE STE-MARGUERITE à Magog*, Janvier, 1947 : 5-6.



Figure 13- Ste-Marguerite’s chapel in front of scaffolding surrounding the new church. SHM C001 51 D0098. *As stipulated by the architect, the original chapel could not be removed until the new church was ready for regular celebrations. Here the chapel’s featured in the foreground with the new church surrounded by construction scaffolding in the background.*

Magog a été, et ce près d’un siècle, une véritable ‘company town’ (ville mono-industrielle). Tant sur le plan économique, que démographique ou géographique, ce sont les usines de textile, l’imprimerie et la filature, qui ont été ses principales pôles de développement.¹⁷

The parish’s financial climate responded to the mill’s cycles of prosperity and decline, as the workers collectively relied on the company for their income. The company’s social responsibility to the community and commitment towards the workers was sustained even during the depression. As Austin summarizes, “in the 1930s, when the company operated at a loss for seven years, it continued to produce goods, even at below cost so workers and the towns the mills were located in, would have at least some income.” (60) Astonishingly, in 1936 the Magog branch hired 1 250 workers. (Hétu 25) Throughout the years *le bas de la ville*’s population growth was also contingent on the mill’s progressively steady expansion. Historian Alain Roy explained how:

¹⁷ Serge Gaudreau, “Un fil conducteur de l’histoire magogoise vient de se rompre: fin des activités à la PGI Difco.” *Le Reflet du Lac*, jeudi 12 mai 2011 p.22

La politique de recrutement de l'usine textile à donc contribuer à métamorphoser la situation ethnique et religieuse au cours de la première moitié du 20e siècle: d'anglophone et protestante qu'elle était à la veille de l'industrialisation, elle devient majoritairement francophone et catholique en dix ans. (75e 5)

Gail Cuthbert Brandt's study *Women in the Quebec Cotton Industry 1890-1950* investigated the large French Canadian population available for work "relative to the supply of arable land" (100), describing how the cotton companies in Quebec sent recruitment agents into the countryside, using "the Slater or family method...to persuade entire families to move to the mill centres well into the 1920s." (100) Due to industrialization, during the forty year period between 1891 and 1931, Quebec's population almost doubled rising from 1.5 to 2.9 million people, and the proportion of urban dwellers in the province rose from 28 to 60% (Fortier 20). Brandt's study also indicated that:

Family and kin networks were extremely important...for the determination of work assignments. Close relatives frequently worked in the same departments because foremen tended to do their hiring on the basis of family connections." (101)

Her research revealed that "French Canadian families provided the unskilled and semi-skilled labour needed in the grey mills, while British and English-Canadian workers held a virtual monopoly on skilled positions in the dye and print works." (101) Figure 14 illustrates the cover and introductory page taken from a twelve page bilingual recruitment booklet printed by the Dominion Textile Company in 1917 describing the benefits and lifestyle of living in Magog and working at the mill. The recruiters most likely distributed the booklets during their visits to the countryside, promoting how:

The Dominion Textile Company believes in taking good care of its workers, so they are always fit for and enjoy their work. In the cotton mill, the heating and air cleansing systems are the most modern on the continent. Conditions in the

Printing Works are also better than are usually found in such plants, and cleanliness is of a high order. (7)

The natural landscape was featured to endorse a healthy, enjoyable lifestyle and the promise of a quality everyday existence and was promoted as a resourceful commodity or material space to be inhabited, exploited, and enjoyed. Municipal amenities, schools, churches, and recreational activities were also described and favourably illustrated with supporting photographs. Nearing the end of World War I the Magog branch of Dominion Textile Company was in need of labourers to operate its newly acquired machinery, advertising that “at present, there is an opportunity for 100 families in Magog” (9). Following the United States’ commitment to the war campaign in 1917 the factory began operating twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week in order to supply the increased demand (Gaudreau 81). As new company towns emerged throughout Quebec, Ontario and New England, all seeking to recruit francophone workers, there was additional pressure for existing companies such as Dominion Textiles Co. to recruit and stabilize their workforce by offering decent living conditions and fair salaries in order to remain competitive.



Figure 14. Dominion Textiles Company's recruitment booklet. A. McKim Limited, Montreal, August 1917. Printed by The Federated Press Limited. Courtesy of SHM.

Note the cover page's picturesque landscape to the left and the caption on the right that reads: 'Magog A busy town of happy homes located in a district noted for its beauty. The center image lists salaries offered for a 55 Hour Work Week, and average rents for five to seven roomed houses with electric lights and running water.'

Architectural Analysis

Influences on Religious Architecture in Quebec

During the second half of the 1920s national heritage advocate and art historian Gérard Morisset, in support of Viollet-le-Duc's rationalist principles, wrote "la façade d'un édifice doit découler de l'organisation interne, en être le reflet, et que toute décoration doit être subordonnée à la construction."¹⁸ Also, in keeping with Viollet-le-Duc's doctrines, Morisset insisted "l'architecture moderne ne pourra parvenir à son épanouissement que si les matériaux et les procédés modernes lui fournissent un langage bien à elle, sincère et raisonné."¹⁹ Dom Bellot, the acclaimed French Benedictine monk and architect who designed Austin's St.-Benoit Abbey and contributed to Montreal's St.-Joseph's Oratory, was the leading spokesman for rationalism in Quebec beginning in the 30s until his death in 1944. Open to adapting new materials and new techniques for his designs, his rationalist desire to renew religious architecture inspired him to use the materials themselves to create decorative effects. (Bergeron *Églises* 43) Traces of Bellot's influence and signature style can be detected on Poulin's work with Sainte-Marguerite-Marie as he too used the materials decoratively (fig. 15), although so minimally in contrast to Bellot's earlier practice. Architect Alphonse Bélanger on the other hand, the Sherbrooke diocese's most prolific modern architect,²⁰ references Bellot's style quite directly in his 1946 design of Magog's Saint-Jean-Bosco church (fig. 16).

¹⁸ Gérard Morisset, "Propos d'architecture religieuse. Architecture religieuse nationale. Rationalisme en architecture. Styles", *Almanach de l'Action sociale catholique*, X: 1926, 111-2.

¹⁹ ---, "Propos d'architecture religieuse. Architecture religieuse moderne", *Almanach de l'Action sociale catholique*, XIII : 1929, 53, 54, 56,57.

²⁰ "Alphonse Bélanger", Patrimoine Religieux du Diocèse de Sherbrooke: Archevêché de Sherbrooke. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/3-5.html>> August 13, 2011.

During the 30s and 40s, following the 1929 stock market crash “fidelity to tradition [once again] gained momentum and gathered an increasing number of supporters, to the point where every art reformist who came from abroad felt obliged to join the movement” (Bergeron *Rethinking* 64). During prosperous times throughout the twentieth century international influences and technological innovations, commonly referred to as universalism or modernism, were enthusiastically explored by architects. During unstable economic periods, however, they

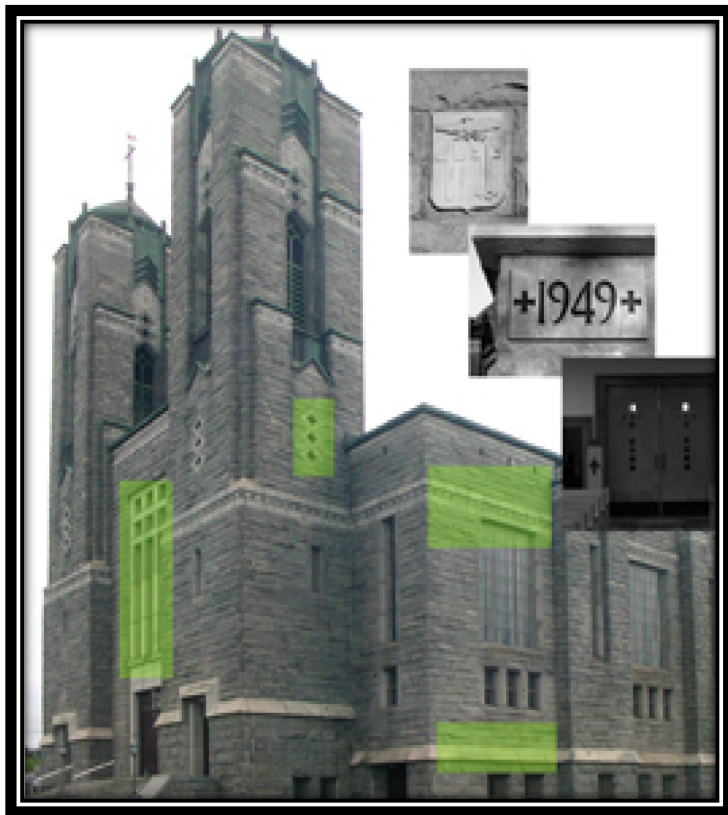


Figure 15. Ste-Marguerite's church exterior featuring decorative details. Photo montage: (background) courtesy of La Fondation du Patrimoine Religieux du Québec, insets (Flickr by Colros)

The green highlighted areas illustrate where the architect used the materials decoratively through contrast, disposition, and depth in order to create ‘real’ shadows without promoting three dimensional illusions as advocated by l’Art Sacré. Monseigneur Desranleau’s bas-relief coat of arms and the dated cornerstone are subtly integrated into the exterior walls and constitute the church’s only exterior sculptural elements, also in resistance to three dimensional illusions. The interior doors are both decorative and symbolic as geometric glass crucifixes were inserted into the wooden doors.

typically reverted to more traditional, conventional and regional materials and styles. (Bergeron *XXe* 116) Architects’ tendency to return to the ‘tried and true’ principles of their profession

during periods of instability complements Harris' observation, relative to Lefebvre's critique of everyday life, that simply put people were seeking "real life" or the "here and now":

In the 1930s, the financial crash, mass unemployment, the perpetual parliamentary crises, and the rise of Nazism and Fascism had led numerous young French thinkers in various factions- including fascists, Catholic reformers, existentialists, and nonconformist Marxists- to seek "the concrete" and the "real." (Harris, Berke 12)



Figure 16. (Left) Exterior. (Right) interior- Saint-Jean-Bosco Church, Magog Quebec. Architect Alphonse Bélanger 1946. Inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec: fiche 2003-05-066. Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec. < http://www.lieuxdeculte.qc.ca/fiche.php?LIEU_CULTE_ID=45405&LieuSuivant=1&LieuPrecedent=-1&debut=0&nlieux=4&type_requete=nom_libre&lignes=25&NomLibre=Saint-Jean-Bosco > consulted on July 18, 2011.

Note the church's innovative octagonal stone exterior and concrete vaulted arched ceiling that echo Dom Bellot's earlier signature style.

It was during this inter-war, socially volatile yet architecturally cautious period in history that a climactic clash within the Catholic Church emerged:

si les constructions religieuses de l'époque semblent procéder d'un conservatisme bien tranquille, il importe de souligner qu'au même moment, au sein de l'Église québécoise et parmi la communauté des architectes et des personnes intéressées à l'art, un débat de plus en plus animé maintenant en éveil une réflexion sur le renouvellement de l'architecture religieuse. (Bergeron *XXe* 119)

A Roman Catholic liturgy reform movement, originating in Germany during the 1930s, challenged architects to invent ways to seat worshippers closer to the altar in order to enhance their participation in the Eucharistic celebration. During Hitler's regime the movement shifted

from Germany to Switzerland until the end of the Second World War. (Bergeron *Églises* 3) The movement was eventually officially sanctioned by Pope Pius XII in 1947 who encouraged “la participation active des fidèles au sacrifice eucharistique, en union étroite avec le prêtre.” (Bergeron *Églises* 24) He urged bishops throughout the world to establish the necessary means within their respective diocese to facilitate the mutual participation of the congregation and priest during the holy celebration of communion. (Bergeron *Églises* 25) Throughout this transitional period there were two influential groups within the church: those who supported *l’Art d’église’s* ideology and those who supported *l’Art sacré’s*. Although both journals, published in France, called for a renewed religious architecture, *l’Art sacré* was the most progressive of the two, expressing a somewhat more radical view. (Bergeron *Églises* 12)

l’Art d’église was founded in 1927.²¹ The journal advocated designing new churches to be built with reinforced concrete, a modern material introduced to religious architecture during the early 1920s in Montreal. Its goal was to move the Church in new architectural directions while aligning it with Academy principles and traditions, rather than merely reinterpreting past styles. The publication’s director argued that modern architecture’s three fundamental mistakes were its subjectivity, its arbitrary symbolism, and its functionality. (Bergeron *Églises* 8-9) Significantly, those same three fundamental principles are very present in Poulin’s design of Sainte-Marguerite- Marie. In Steven Harris’ introduction to *Architecture of the Everyday* the author explains how, also in obvious contrast to *l’Art d’église’s* views, Lefebvre’s “critique is a rejection of...universal rationality, and of the suppression of difference. It is also a refusal to accept the death of subjectivity.” (28-9) Those who subscribed to the magazine viewed form and function as incompatible. Their underlying opinion was that a church’s architectural form was

²¹ Dom Paul Bellot, the influential French monk and architect previously mentioned, was admired by the journal throughout most of the 30s (Bergeron *Églises* 13).

the architect's domain, but its function as a holy place was inseparable from the Roman Catholic Church's sacred nature, thus beyond any architect's authority. (Bergeron *Églises* 11) This perspective was indeed an enduring one, as Sherbrooke's Archbishop Jean-Marie Fortier wrote in Magog's Saint-Patrice centennial booklet in 1994 "de cette paroisse, la plus populeuse du diocèse, Dieu seul est l'architecte."²²

L'Art sacré was first printed in 1935. It halted publication throughout the Second World War and resumed in 1947 (fig. 17). Maurice Denis, the journal's founder, called for:

an art in touch with the realities of present life and appealing to modern sensibilities. For architecture, he recommended the use of modern materials, especially concrete: rational construction: and simple decoration eschewing three-dimensional illusion. (Bergeron *Rethinking* 58-9)

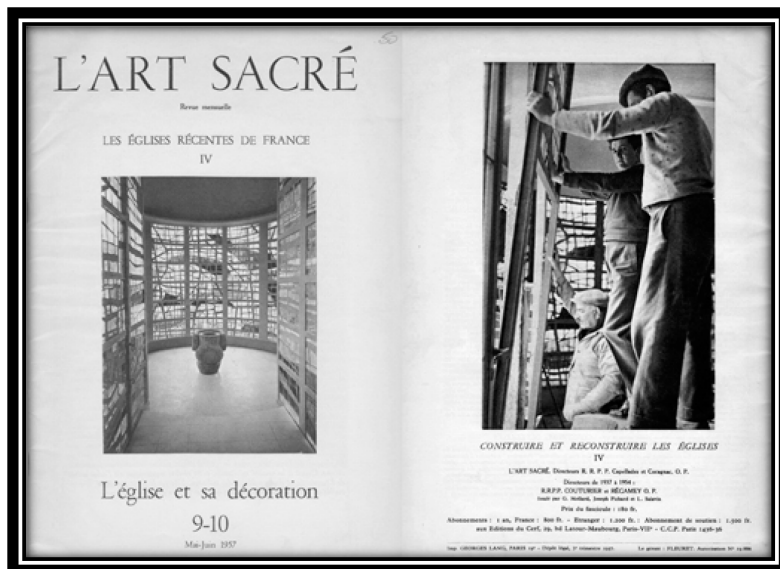


Figure 17. *L'Art Sacré*, “L’église et sa décoration”, Mai-Juin 1957. Private Collection.

Although this image features the cover and back of an edition printed in 1957, the French journal was very influential in matters of religious art and architecture throughout Joseph-Aimé Poulin's career.

Both journals endorsed modernity, although Denis' journal advocated an architectural functionality which was opposed by *l'Art d'église*. Joseph Pichard, head writer for *L'Art sacré*,

²² Centenaire de la construction de l'Église Saint-Patrice de Magog 1894-1994 (SHM).

argued that “l’adaptation franche de l’édifice religieux à sa fonction lui assurera un caractère sacré qui évitera de la confondre avec une usine ou une salle de cinéma.” (Bergeron *Églises* 13)

The directors preferred simplicity over ostentation, favouring churches such as Ste.-Marguerite which resonated with their communities rather than those which represented elaborate and luxurious Houses of the Lord:

il faut que l’édifice cultuel évite de se différencier des autres constructions de la cité...[L’église] doit avoir un caractère sacré qui la distingue des autres édifices. Mais il ne faut pas que cette distinction la fasse paraître plus importante que l’usine ou le cinéma, ni qu’elle lui confère un rôle dominant par rapport à eux. (Bergeron *Églises* 18)

Seemingly Poulin was an advocate of *l’art sacré* and was in agreement with Lefebvre’s underlying principles, as he succeeded in designing a church which was simultaneously particular and personal to the workers. He qualified the design as being utterly unique when he declared “la paroisse Sainte-Marguerite-Marie peut se dire qu’elle possède un temple dont il n’existe nul part ailleurs de modèle.”²³ The two publications reached a critical fracture when *l’art sacré’s* mission became to align religious art and architecture with the revolutionary twentieth century artists and artistic current (Bergeron *Églises* 15). The idea was adamantly rejected by the directors of the older magazine, who vehemently opposed:

les nouvelles formes d’expression de l’art du XXe siècle parce que cet art, qui n’obéit à aucun ordre premier et objectif, se vautre dans l’anarchie du subjectivisme et qu’il n’est, par conséquent, pas pleinement humain. (Bergeron *Églises* 15)

In Quebec this sustained transitional period was characterized by a persistent fluctuation between modernity (universalism) and traditionalism (regionalism) exasperated by the cultural community’s mutual desire to keep Quebec’s distinct architectural appeal and character intact, in

²³ MM. Aimé et Albert Poulin, La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l’ occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé.

order to resist perceived undesirable trends emerging in the United States during that era. Canada's nationalist advocates wanted to maintain a distinction between Canadian architecture and its southern neighbour, and the trend “which forced modernists such as Couturier and Lecoutey to adopt a conciliatory position, came to an end in the early fifties.” (Bergeron *Rethinking* 66) The resistance ultimately gave way to internationalism, at which point starting in the 1950s “on ne pourra plus prétendre que l’architecture religieuse québécoise ‘est différente de celle des autres provinces du Canada et de l’étranger.’ ” (Bergeron *Églises* 43)

Due to Roman Catholic liturgical reform, church architecture changed more during the twenty years following WWII than it had during the preceding four centuries. Prior to *Vatican II* in 1962,²⁴ the Roman Catholic Church’s liturgy, the embodiment of its traditions and teachings, had not been amended since the 16th century and the *Council of Trent*. (Bergeron *Églises* 23) Tremendous emphasis was placed on featuring the altar through lighting, elevating and centering it, and approaching it to the nave, thus the congregation. Churches revised their traditional hierarchical organization and diminished their monumentality. Distinct elevations between the nave and chancel, and the altar and sanctuary were nonetheless maintained, although downscaled, to symbolically reinforce the Catholic Church’s fundamental hierarchical divisionism between man and God: “une élévation différente pour le nef et le choeur, le présanctuaire et la table de communion serviront à souligner cette distinction entre les deux espaces fondamentaux de l’église.” (Bergeron *Églises* 27) The church shifted from representing the House of the Lord to becoming the house of the people of the Lord. (Bergeron *Églises* 27) As a result of emphasizing the congregation’s participatory role within the Catholic Church,

²⁴ In 1962 Pope John XXIII officially opened the *Council of Vatican II* with the intent to renew the Church and to open a discourse with the contemporary world, leading to modernizing the architecture of new churches ultimately initiating a new generation of religious architecture in Quebec, characterized by a new architectonic vocabulary referencing traditional elements. This era was marked by an explosion of expansion through the creation new parishes and new churches.

churches were no longer viewed as “la maison de Dieu pour laquelle rien n’est trop beau ni trop riche.” (Bergeron *Églises* 26)

Social Climate and Change

Steven Harris refers to the essays in *Architecture of the Everyday* as “tentative proposals and tangential provocations that describe a territory irregular and open, inexact and conceptually fragmented.”(4) Much like the dynamic between Sainte-Marguerite-Marie and The Dominion Textiles Company, “alliances are often unlikely, contradictions blunt [...] it is in the dialectical relationships among and between these various contributions that the everyday resides.” (4) I want to reiterate that this everyday zone is indeed where the factory workers' lives unfolded. I contend that it is this “conceptually fragmented” gap that J.A. Poulin successfully linked architectonically in recognition of his clients and on their behalf. The architect seamlessly entwined architecture and everyday life into one cohesive structure, essentially blurring “distinctions between high and low culture” (Harris 27) by representing the fundamental and “extraordinary” spirit of the workers with elements that quote their mundane and “ordinary” daily lives at the factory. For Lefebvre modernity’s initial value was “its relentless questioning of social life.” (Harris 27) He also recognized that everyday life should not be denied the “the energy, humanity, and creativity embodied in the humble, prosaic details of daily existence.” (Harris 27) He emphasized “the concrete and the real, the humble and the ordinary, as reservoirs of transformation.” (Harris 28)

Born in 1882 in a small area east of Saint-Jean close to the American border, Monseigneur Philippe Desranleau was appointed as the Sherbrooke Diocese’ fourth bishop in 1941, becoming the Archdiocese’ first archbishop in 1951. Under his guidance twenty-eight parishes were created and thirty-one churches or chapels were built, including the church at

Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. (Larose 62) At an early age Desranleau had acquired an interest in politics and social issues from his father. (Larose 60) He studied at the “Séminaire de Saint-Hyacinthe où il baigne dans un climat nationaliste.” (Larose 60-1) He was described as an ambitious and proud man with a pronounced interest in status and prestige.²⁵ He embraced the Church’s traditional internal hierarchical order and structure in addition to its position of authority within the community; “il se renseignait sur le patron de la paroisse. Il avait le culte du patron.”(Larose 62) Considered as “un homme de prière et d’action, il se fait le défenseur des ouvriers²⁶ [...] Il fait partie des leaders de l’implantation du catholicisme social au Québec.” (Larose 60) Interestingly, in 1936 a large public assembly was held in Magog's Saint-Patrice church basement. Between five and six hundred workers attended the conference referred to as “la journée d'étude syndicale” (Héту 26). In *La Base syndicale* Jean-Paul Héту describes the meeting:

La journée d'étude syndicale était une grande fête religieuse et sociale, qui avait pour objectif de faire de la propagande syndicale et du recrutement. Le syndicat [...] mit 4 mois à le préparer. Dans le diocèse de Sherbrooke, on favorisait de telles manifestations. (26)

During the 1937 strike, the Sherbrooke diocese’s bishop authorized additional collections for the workers at church entrances which “symboliquement...devait aussi être de nature à rassurer les travailleurs du textile quand à la valeur morale de leur démarche.” (Gaudreau 125) Their slogan throughout the strike was “il vaut mieux mourir de faim bien reposé que de mourir de faim fatigué.”(Héту 31) They were striking for better conditions and better wages in order to obtain

²⁵ Larose: DVD presentation included with *Une Église Entre Lacs et Montagne: Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke 1874-2010*.

²⁶ In a speech given to the syndicats catholiques in 1938 Desranleau made the following four pledges to the workers: Le bien commun, c’est la somme des biens d’ordre matériel et moral que les hommes peuvent se procurer dans une société bien organisée. Je défendrai cette justice sociale; je défendrai aussi parmi ce qui est bien, la propriété privée ou le droit de propriété; je défendrai en troisième lieu le juste salaire qui est la récompense du contrat de louage d’ouvrage due au travailleur en stricte justice. En quatrième lieu, j’appuierai et je défendrai les organisations ouvrières professionnelles (Larose 68).

“justice pour les ouvriers.” (Hétu 23) Specifically, they were concerned with “les extrêmes de chaleur et d'humidité [...] l'abondance de poussière dans les salles de cartage et de filage [...] les vapeurs ou les gaz qu'ils respiraient [...] Enfin, ils voulaient diminuer les heures de travail hebdomadaire qui étaient fixées à 55 heures. ” (Hétu 24)

The corporate industry's values were also traditionally motivated by social responsibility and stability, in order to foster national growth, as were those of the Catholic Church's. Stability was so entrenched in the Dominion Textiles Company's culture that astonishingly “between 1907 and 1965, Domtex had only four Presidents, the latter two being the sons of the first two men.”(Austin 61) Austin's research on the Company determined that it “only began to develop as a modern corporation after 1950.” (Austin 61) Prior to that the company's “corporate development took place within a culture in which business was dominated by a close linkage between government and industry [and] Canada emphasized good order and tradition.”(Austin 68) Interestingly, the corporation's transformation into a modern managed company after 1950 coincides with the modern and decisive shift in the Catholic Church's religious architecture identified by Bergeron, as previously discussed. This coincidence suggests that both powerful and authoritative institutions understood the benefits of, and appreciated the need to, respond to the social shifts which were gaining momentum following World War II. Hétu described how the company ran a profit based industry entrenched in capitalism which controlled the workers up until 1947, at which point the workers succeeded in asserting their rights and inserting a new order within the company:

Ce nouvel ordre a écarté l'arbitraire hiérarchique et a établi des règles de fonctionnement sociales et économiques qui respectent les droits des travailleurs dans les promotions, les mises à pied, le salaire, la charge de travail, la durée de travail, le repos, la santé, etc. À Magog, les travailleurs...ont dû faire au moins cinq grèves depuis 1937...pour implanter ce nouvel ordre socio-économique dans l'entreprise. (8)

He outlined three required components to establish an effective syndicate, “une démocratie appartenant à la base, une stratégie mesurée et efficace, et une solidarité vivifiante. C'est à partir de la grève de 1947 qu'on retrouve ces conditions syndicales réunis.”(9)

During the early industrial age company logos often proudly featured the factory. The corporate image hinged on the factory's appearance and thus much emphasis was placed on promoting its cleanliness and modernity. This incentive was compounded by the need to recruit and stabilize a productive workforce. In 1949, following work completed on Magog's ever growing plant, a company spokesman proudly confirmed:

On a complété l'été dernier, des travaux de modernisations dans cette filature, en y installant des appareils les plus perfectionnés, de même qu'un système d'air climatisé et d'éclairage fluorescent. En conséquence cette filature se classe parmi les plus modernes du continent. Elle produit maintenant chaque semaine 1, 000,000 de verges de marchandises de coton qui servent à fabriquer les tissus imprimés. C'est la plus forte production du genre au Canada.²⁷

As a show of respect and goodwill extended by the company to its majority catholic workers, a public ceremony was organized to bless the new facility. Over two thousand people attended the event, including then President Mr. Blair Gordon. Despite the proximity of Vel's church to the factory and the high percentage of workers who lived in that parish, it was nonetheless Curé Bouhier from Magog's first parish of St.-Patrice who presided over the ceremony, and was “le seul à parler. [Il] parla quelque peu du syndicalisme chrétien, rappelant que les ouvriers ont des devoirs aussi bien que des droits.”²⁸ In contrast to the thousands who attended the factory's ceremony, only hundreds of people attended the blessing of Ste-Marguerite-Marie's new church's cornerstone that fall. Curé Vel, on this occasion, was the ceremony's first speaker. He

²⁷ “Un million de verges par semaine, a la Dominion Textile.” *La Chronique*, vol. 14 no.4, page 1. Magog, jeudi 26 janvier, 1950.

²⁸ “Bénédiction de l'annexe de Dominion Textile”, *La Chronique*, vol. 13 no. 11, page 1. Magog, jeudi 17 mars, 1949.

used the opportunity to promote the church's modern design and to emphasize the parish workers' generosity:

La future église de Ste-Marguerite sera belle à voir... Elle sera une source de joie précise pour les paroissiens avec son absence de colonnes qui permettra de mieux apercevoir le saint Tabernacle. Aussi cette fête de dimanche était-elle celle des paroissiens à la générosité desquels on doit ce prochain temple du Seigneur.²⁹

Origène Vel was born on Christmas day 1898 in the village of Stukely, approximately 20 kilometres west of Magog. He studied at “le Séminaire St-Charles à Sherbrooke” and “au Grand Séminaire de Montréal.”³⁰ He was Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's fourth pastor for a thirty year term beginning in 1939. Vel shared Desranleau's views on leadership and order. Initially he cautioned workers to consider the consequences which striking would have on their domestic lives and warned them to only declare “une grève seulement pour une raison très grave.” (Huard 46) He was eventually nominated as union chaplain in 1959 to represent *le syndicat catholiques des ouvriers*. From that time forward he supported striking workers unconditionally, “animant des messes à tous les jours et visitant régulièrement les cabanes de piquetage situés autour des usines.” (Huard 46) According to Abbé Paul Paré, Vel once confided to him that he remembered the strikes fondly because the workers gathered more closely around the church, enabling him to offer his support and guidance throughout these periods of crisis.³¹ Vel was considered a proud, ambitious, and authoritative man who was extremely devoted to his parish and personally invested in its everyday activities. He inserted himself into the community's daily lives, extending his involvement beyond moral and spiritual issues to social matters. Prior to becoming Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's fourth pastor, Vel had held prominent positions in the

²⁹ “L'Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie a sa pierre angulaire bénite, dimanche, par Mgr. Desranleau; grande foule : dignitaire, paroissiens”, *La Chronique*, vol. 13 no. 40, page 1. Magog, jeudi 6 octobre, 1949.

³⁰ La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (courtesy SHM)

³¹ Telephone discussion with Abbé Paul Paré from the Sherbrooke Archdiocese on August 5 2010.

Sherbrooke diocese for seventeen years, including master of ceremonies, secretary to the bishop, and vice-chancellor. He was thus accustomed to comfort, authority, business, and ceremony.³²

In the parish's commemorative golden jubilee publication Vel's term was summarized by a fellow priest:

Avec l'arrivée du nouveau Pasteur, les œuvres, les associations naissent à une allure fracassante et ce sont 30 ans de sa vie que M. le Curé Vel va donner à Ste-Marguerite-Marie. C'est le cas de dire il a été mangé ici; il n'a rien épargné pour guider ce peuple qui lui était confié : temps, dévouement, argent, enfin tout y a passé pour les œuvres, les pauvres, les vocations, les enfants, en un mot, l'apostolat de cet homme au tempérament violent, au cœur généreux...n'était que d'un seul désir, faire du bien.³³

During the two world war periods "the Canadian textile industry could sell as much as it could produce." (Austin 67) Due to the plants running their machinery continuously to supply goods for the war, the factories typically used their resources in the years immediately following these periods to repair, modernize, and renovate its manufacturing facilities.³⁴ In 1946 the Dominion Textile's Magog branch supported this trend by announcing its intentions to build a new addition to the plant. Based on the company's fire insurance plans, building No. 6 was completed in 1947 (fig.18). At this time, the city of Magog was experiencing an optimistic period of growth and prosperity due to the factory's economic gains from the war. During the same period Magog's third parish, Saint-Jean-Bosco was formed. Construction of its church began in 1946 according to architect Alphonse Bélanger's octagonal design. With reference to the Sherbrooke diocese overall, Bergeron concluded:

³² La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé.

³³ *Jubilé d'Or – Paroisse Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog, 1921-1971*, 41.

³⁴ C.L Collins, *The Gale Directory of Company Histories: Dominion Textile Inc.* <<http://www.answers.com/topic/dominion-textile>>, March 2, 2011.

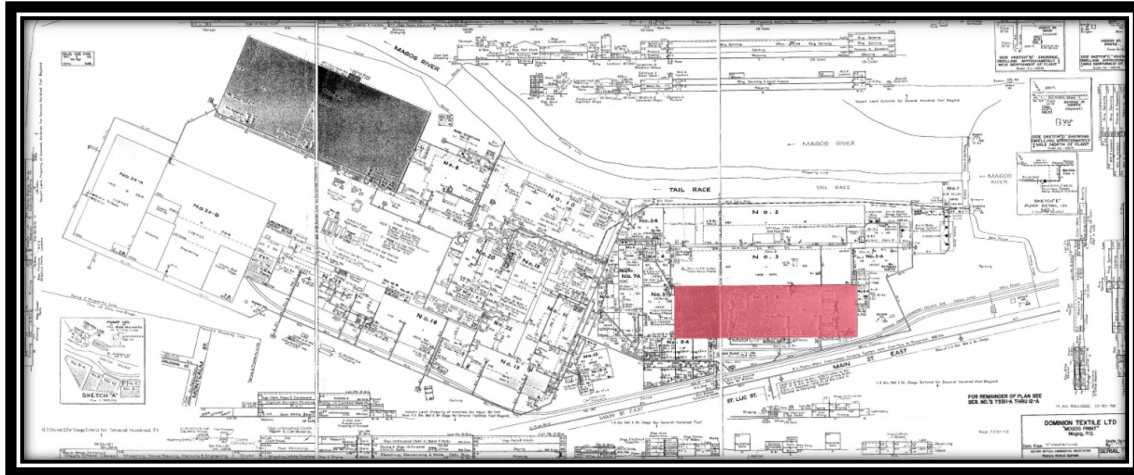


Figure 18- Magog 's Dominion Textile Company Limited's fire insurance plans. Private Collection.

Building No. 6, highlighted in red, was a post war addition to the plant, completed in 1947. The extension was under construction during the parish's fundraising campaign to finance the construction of its new church.

Il faut toutefois préciser que les deux églises de Magog, Sainte-Marguerite-Marie et Saint-Jean-Bosco, sont à plusieurs titres exceptionnelles. Leur monumentalité et la richesse de leurs matériaux font qu'elles n'ont rien en commun avec les tendances dominantes. (Bergeron *Églises* 125)

Given Vel's propensity to plan and endorse new projects, he undoubtedly shared the parishioners' aspirations to replace and enlarge the crowded "temporary" chapel in light of the developments and prosperity surrounding his parish. As an ambitious and progressive man operating within a conservative institution which was advocating renewal, Vel would welcome a new church to reflect this dynamic period while finally emerging out of the shadow of its influential neighbour. The period's climate was characterized by an overall enthusiastic eye looking towards the future. The city at large was moving forward. It was on February 4 1945 that "M. le curé soit autorisé à demander l'architecte Poulin Aimé de commencer les plans de la nouvelle église."³⁵ Earliest plans for the church are dated October 10 1946 (fig. 19). A unanimous decision by the parish representatives followed on November 24 1946, accepting the

³⁵ Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.

design submitted by J. A. Poulin, providing that “M. le Curé et les marguilliers du banc soient autorisées à surveiller les travaux des dites constructions. Adoptés à l’unanimité.” The plans’ accompanying contract or “*DEVIS pour la construction de L’EGLISE STE-MARGUERITE à Magog*” is dated January 1947. Burdened by financial limitations once again, the lower income working class parish would have to delay construction until 1949 due to reservations raised by the churchwardens on behalf of the parish. In a letter to Msgr. Desranleau from Curé Vel dated March 13 1947 the priest explained:

Devant le cout élevé de la construction, les anciens et la plupart des jeunes m’ont conseillé de retarder pour attendre une baisse dans les prix des matériaux. Je les ai félicités de leur prudence et leur a dit qu’ils pensaient comme son Excellence Mgr. l’Évêque qui demandait un an ou 2 de délai pur la construction de la nouvelle église.³⁶

Work on the new church eventually began on March 26 1949 and was completed on June 23 1950. The general contractor for the project was Raoul Cabana, a local entrepreneur (fig. 20). The construction cost for the building was \$325 650.00 plus an additional \$32 000.00 estimated for extras including the Holy Table, granite altar, pews, confessionals, and various other materials listed in the contract by the architect.

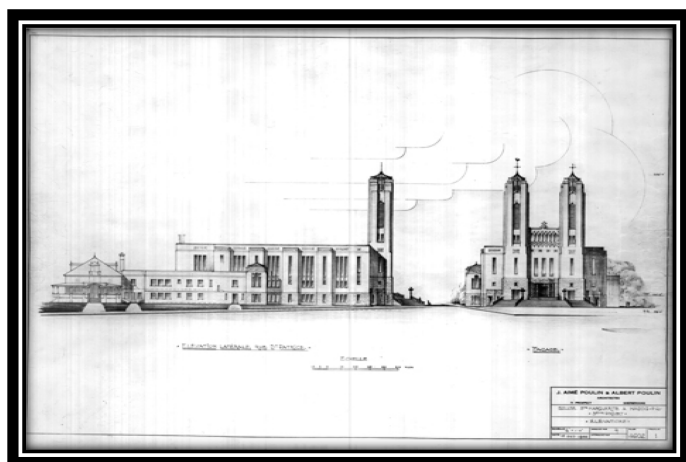


Figure 19- Joseph Aimé Poulin's 1946 plans for L’église Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. Plan d’Élévations, plan 4602 feuille 1. October 1946. Projet non réalisé. AP79/B, les archives de l’Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke.

³⁶Archives de l’Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, FP79 Fonds Fabrique Sainte-Marguerite-Marie de Magog.

Note the west elevation shows five windowed pilasters versus church's actual three. The façade on these plans is more ornate than the 1949 streamlined version, and the presbytery was annexed to the church, not linked by an extension as shown in this drawing.

ÉGLISE STE-MARGUERITE-MARIE		
Joseph-Aimé et Albert Poulin, architectes		
Cabana Construction, entrepreneur général		
Contrat Original \$325 650.00 + Extras (autels, bancs, confessionnaux, autres) \$ 32 000.00 = \$357 650.00		
Sous Contrats		
Excavation	Bosco Construction	
Acier Armature	Trucson Steel Co.	Montréal
Béton	Cabana Construction	Magog
Bois de forme pour béton	C.C. McPherson	
Ciment pour béton	C.C. McPherson	
Granit pour extérieur	Laurent Paquin et fils	Trois-Rivières
Électricité	J.C. Bergeron	Magog
Plomberie et chauffage	Magog Plumbing Enrg.	Magog
Terra-Cota	East-Angus Brick & Tile	East Angus
Enduit et plâtre	Ubold Blouin	Montréal
Menuiserie	J.E. Lemieux	Windsor Mills
Couverture gravier pour toit	Delphes Coté	Montréal
Corniche et clocher métal	Magog Plumbing Enrg.	Magog
Terrazzo et ciment fini	Bilodeau Terrazzo	Québec
Peinture	Andeol Ledoux	Sherbrooke
Ste. Table et autels	Laurent Paquin et fils	Trois-Rivières
Pose de pierres extérieures	Cloutier et St-Jacques	Magog
Fourniture de bancs	Désilets et fils	Beloeil
Verrière (plomb) et vitrage	Jos Charlebois Ltée.	Montréal
Quincaillerie Complète	Codère Ltée.	Sherbrooke

Figure 20. List of subcontractors that contributed to the church's construction. Data Courtesy of the Société d'Histoire de Magog, INCR.6.1.

This table names the architect and general contractor and lists the specialized subcontractors who contributed to the church's construction in 1949-50.

The Sherbrooke Diocese

Parishes within the Sherbrooke diocese were often founded in pre-existing communities unlike much of the province's other Catholic parishes. Historically in Quebec parishes were formed by communities settling around the church which frequently became the center of town.

Claude Bergeron has identified some of the Eastern Townships other key architectural particularities:

La région des Cantons-de-l'Est, dont le diocèse de Sherbrooke couvre la majeure partie, s'est de tout temps distinguée par l'architecture de ses maisons et par l'aspect de ses villes et villages qui ont des affinités bien connues avec ceux des États voisins de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, d'où venaient les loyalistes, premiers habitants des Cantons-de-l'Est... Pour le diocèse de Sherbrooke... Les églises qu'on y a construites, depuis 1940 au moins, ont presque toutes été dessinées par des architectes locaux. (Bergeron *Églises* 121)

Joseph Aimé Poulin was a prolific and respected architect within the Sherbrooke diocese. Throughout his career he designed approximately forty churches, twenty schools, and other civic buildings throughout Quebec, Ontario, and New Brunswick, including Sherbrooke's Civic Hospital and l'école Chalifoux.³⁷ Born in 1889 in Lambton, Quebec the architect was admitted into the professional order of architects and established his private practice in Sherbrooke in 1924.³⁸ As early as 1929 he was recognized as one of the "well known men of the Eastern Townships", having "prepared the plans for many of the new and modern buildings which have been erected throughout the district."³⁹ Arguably Poulin designed a structure, as commissioned by the parish and pastor, worthy of the workers' otherwise marginalized contribution to the city's development and mindful of the parish's original aspirations and collective values. He anticipated the church's endurance and potential role as a legacy to the community by proclaiming, "les matériaux employés dans la construction sont les meilleurs connus et c'est aux générations qui se succéderont pendant plusieurs siècles que les paroissiens actuels lèguent ce

³⁷ "L'architecture : l'œuvre magnifique de M. J.-A. Poulin", *La Tribune*. Sherbrooke, mercredi le 13 décembre, 1950. p. 3.

³⁸ "L'architecte Aimé Poulin a succombé à la maladie", *La Tribune*. Sherbrooke, lundi 10 mars, 1952, p. 1-2.

³⁹ W. C. Skinner, "Well known men of the Eastern Townships", *Sherbrooke Daily Record*. November 23, 1929, p.3.

temple.”⁴⁰ Influenced by universal modern currents rather than restricting himself to regional diocesan traditions, the architect qualified his design as follows:

l'église est la demeure de l'Homme-Dieu, de l'infini, elle représente pour nous la source de la vie éternelle, et son architecture doit constituer dans la mesure du possible *une invitation à faire monter notre pensée vers l'Au-Delà*. C'est ce que veulent exprimer les formes verticales des tours et des pilastres latéraux...Nul doute, cet édifice est comme un essai entièrement nouveau pour appliquer les principes de l'architecture moderne à la construction des églises.⁴¹

Poulin's plans break with the region's conventional diocesan standards on several levels. The Sherbrooke diocese typically favoured the use of red brick as the material of choice for the exterior of its churches. Claude Bergeron found “les églises en briques représentent 75% des nouvelles constructions” built in the region during the fifty year period between the 1930s and 80s (*Églises* 119). Sainte-Marguerite-Marie is a unique religious architectural specimen relative to the diocese' favoured design currents during the same period. The church's overall order is simple due to its geometric abstractions. Its size is atypical for the fifty year period between the 1930s and 1980s which was characterized by smaller scaled buildings suitable for an average seating capacity of approximately 500, with many churches designed to accommodate no more than 300. (Bergeron *Églises* 123) Sainte-Marguerite-Marie is an architectural anomaly in view of these numbers with its seating capacity of 936, almost double the norm. The 1946 plans originally had seating for 1050 to accommodate the parish's approximate 4 000 residents (fig. 19). In contrast to the smaller scaled churches that used the Eastern Townships' topography to their advantage by strategically situating the buildings on hilltops to enhance their presence (Bergeron *Églises* 124), Sainte-Marguerite-Marie is situated in a topographical dip located

⁴⁰ MM. Aimé et Albert Poulin, La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (courtesy SHM).

⁴¹ MM. Aimé et Albert Poulin, La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (courtesy SHM).

downhill from the more affluent area of the city and its founding parish St.-Patrice. During the 40s a diocesan trend emerged, favouring façades of almost square proportions by lowering the gable's slope to minimal proportions (Bergeron *Églises* 126) (fig. 21). Poulin's treatment of Sainte-Marguerite omitted the gable's slope altogether, qualifying his design as exceptional. Bergeron conceded,

malgré son aspect monumental et très lourd, Sainte-Marguerite-Marie est la première église québécoise à se distinguer par une aussi grande abstraction géométrique qui la libère, bien que d'une manière modérée, des formes académiques. (*Églises* 224)



Figure 21. Église-Notre-Dame-du-Perpétuel-Secours, Sherbrooke Quebec. Architect Joseph-Aimé Poulin. Inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec: fiche 2003-05-218. Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec. <http://www.lieuxdeculte.qc.ca/fiche.php?LIEU_CULTE_ID=62177&LieuSuivant=9&LieuPrecedent=7&debut=0&nlieux=9&type_requete=nom_libre&lignes=25&NomLibre=Notre-Dame-du-Perpétuel-Secours> consulted on July 18 2011.

This church designed by Joseph-Aimé and Albert Poulin was built in 1947-8. Note how the red brick building's highlighted gable is lowered to almost square proportions, illustrating Bergeron's observation regarding diocesan trends. Unlike Sainte-Marguerite-Marie the use of arched curvilinear windows contrasts with the design's predominantly rectilinear forms.

It is significant to note that during this same period Couturier and Régamey, editors for *L'Art sacré*,

insisted on the use of modern materials and techniques, and they also stressed that a church must reflect the living conditions of its time...maintaining that a church should not appear more important than other buildings because modern society no longer accords religion the importance it once had. (Bergeron *Rethinking* 60)

Plans for an enduring church

The church's orthogonal lines enable the structure to seamlessly insert itself into the urban environment. The presbytery's annexation to the church reiterates the company's practice of spontaneously expanding the plant's installations through additions to its existing buildings. The church's irregular design integrates well into the rest of the parish's spontaneous, existent urban fabric which gradually developed since the nineteenth century (fig. 22). Poulin's plans for Sainte-Marguerite-Marie

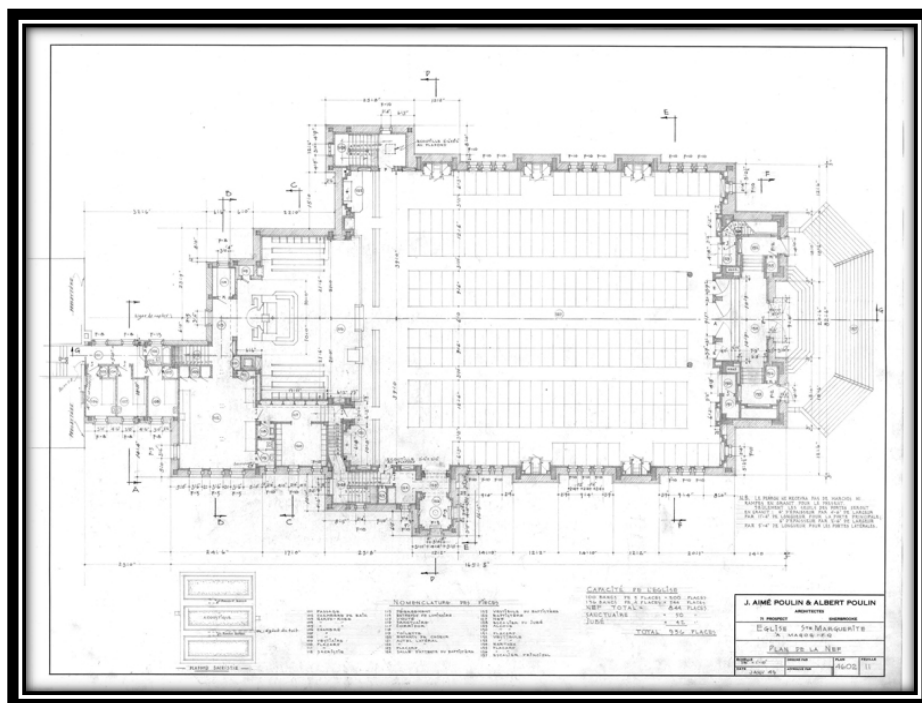


Figure 22- Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie's Plan de la Nef. Plan 4602 feuille 11. January 1949. Centre d'archives de l' Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin P7, S1, SS68.

The plan of the nave illustrates the building's irregular perimeter due to the west elevation's baptismary and the church's annexation to the presbytery. Note also the total seating capacity of 936 places.

reflect of international post war architectural practices, which embraced the optimistic social climate and trend towards modernity, and the parish's three key occupants at the time: the parish workers, the Catholic Church, and the omnipresent factory. As a mature, prolific and experienced professional, Poulin clearly exercised an experimental and modern approach to his work on Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. His plans manifest an intuitive and decisive appreciation for the factory's significance to the "bas de la ville's" working class parish and history. Poulin's chosen architectonic vocabulary represents the workers' everyday environment, characterized by routine and repetition, in a neighbourhood that marked time with church bells and factory whistles, while calling attention to the city's historic origins. Historian Gail Cuthbert Brandt's interviews with female factory workers of various age groups in Magog revealed that:

Among the women interviewed who did not marry and remained in the mills until retirement, none experienced any significant upward mobility; in fact, some reported performing essentially the same tasks, day after day, for half a century. (101)

Given the architect's extensive experience by 1949 it is beyond mere coincidence that Sainte-Marguerite's rectilinear geometric shape thus references the factory's shape, most strikingly and unexpectedly through its flattened roof and insistently horizontal, dense structural mass relieved by regular vertical rhythms. Couturier and Régamey "thought that the new churches in Switzerland most adequately fulfilled the ideas they advocated." (Bergeron *Rethinking* 60) Special mention was made of "Swiss constructions...such as the churches of Saint-Joseph and Saint-Charles in Lucerne, with their flat roofs and simple geometry" (Bergeron *Rethinking* 60) (fig. 23). Bergeron found "Swiss architects typically stressed the contrast between a heavy, bulky bell tower and a needle-like fleche on top of it, a picturesque feature that became very popular among Quebec architects around 1950." (*Rethinking* 62) Poulin opted for

a pair of towers, substituting the Swiss fleche with delicate eight foot wrought iron crucifixes (fig. 24), paralleling the factory's two sets of towers which were prominent features in industrial architecture during the 19th and early twentieth century. Bergeron confirmed that "il n'existe pas

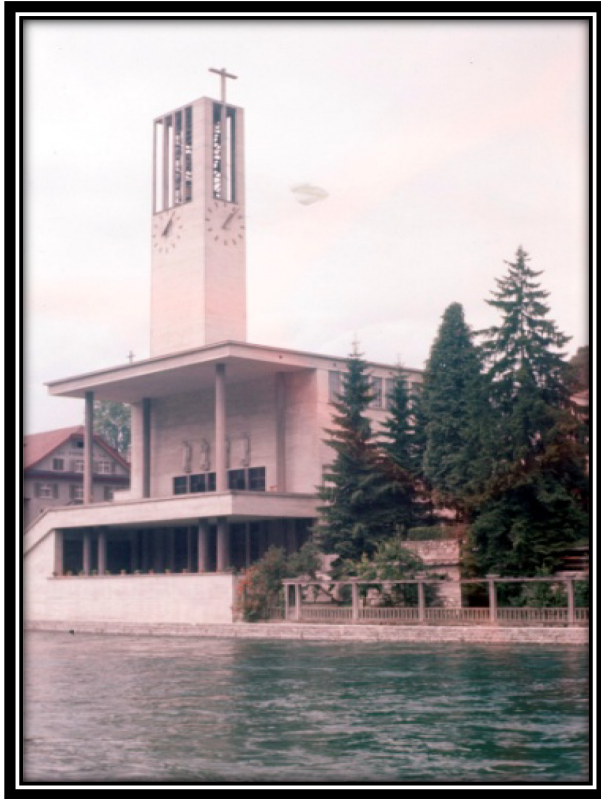


Figure 23. St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Lucerne, Switzerland. Architect Fritz Metzger, 1933. <<http://sanctuaryforsacredarts.com/S4SAGallery/displayimage.php?album=random&cat=10&pos=-679>> consulted on February 6, 2011.

This image illustrates one of the Swiss churches admired by Couturier and Régamey due to its flat roof and simple geometry. Note the tall bulky bell tower and rectilinear emphasis similar to Poulin's design of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. It is of interest to note that Lucerne as well was once an industrial town.

dans l'architecture d'après-guerre d'autres églises à façades symétriques dominées par deux clochers monumentaux." (XXe 222) This suggests that Poulin's design of Sainte-Marguerite deviated from current religious architectural practices of the time in favour of quoting existing architectural elements from the neighbouring factory and older churches. The factory's 1928 fire insurance plans illustrate the plant's sets of prominent twin towers and chimneys (fig. 25).

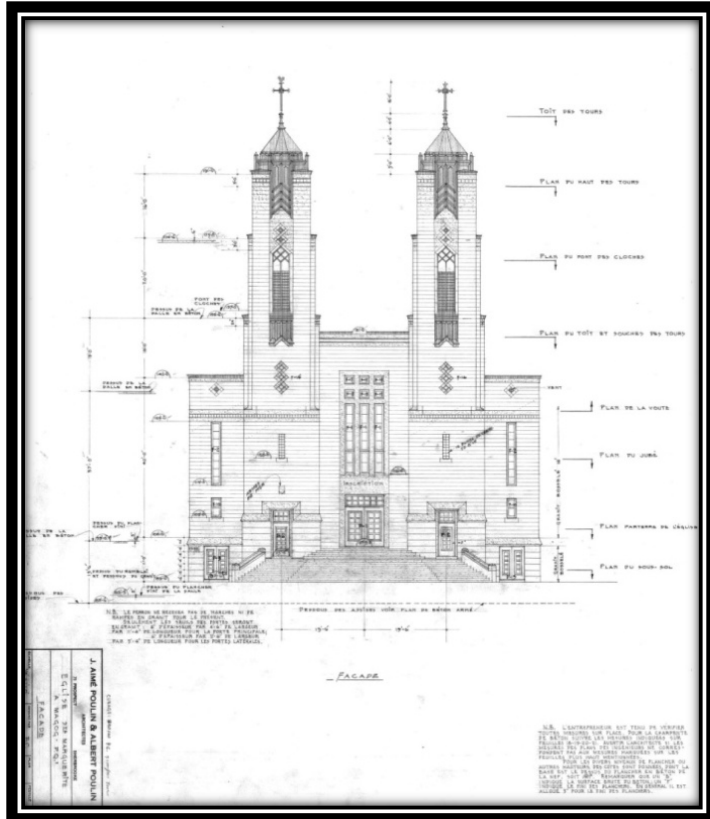


Figure 24. Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie's plan de la Façade. Plan 4602 feuille 1. January 1949. Centre d'archives de l' Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin (P7.S2).

This plan features the paired bulky bell towers topped by delicate 8 foot wrought iron crucifixes.

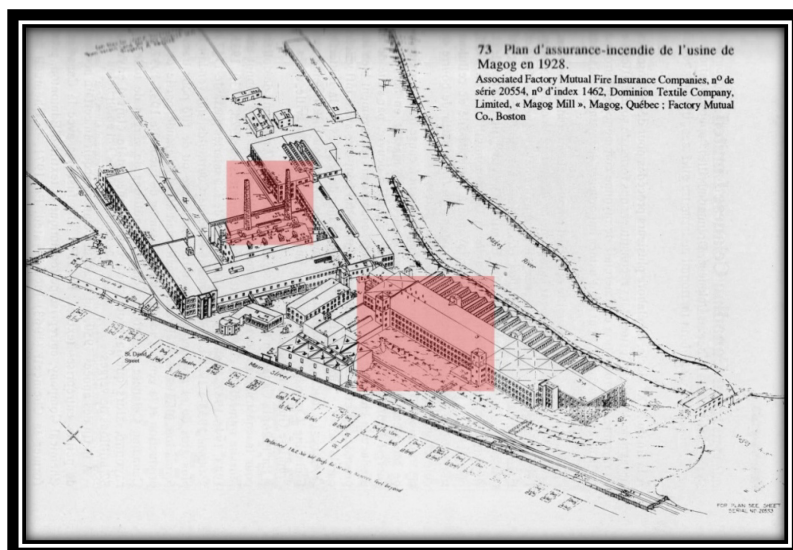


Figure 25. The Dominion Textile Company's 1928 fire insurance plans. A.B. McCullough: *L'industrie textile primaire au Canada : histoire et patrimoine*, page 193.

The highlighted areas indicate the pairing of identical chimneys and towers similar to those on Poulin's later design.

Ste.-Marguerite's church is constructed of reinforced concrete clad with quarry-faced granite stone slabs from Trois-Rivières cut to measure on site. All openings are trimmed with contrasting smooth granite stones, including the doorways. All doorways and entrances are rectilinear, right angles with no arches present anywhere in or on the building (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 23), similar to the factory. Polished stones were used for decorative details by creating a textural contrast to the building blocks' rougher surface, establishing a dominantly monochrome exterior in keeping with the factory's predominantly monochrome red brick structures. Poulin's use of contrasting polished or alternating patterns of polished/rough stone bands to relieve the exterior's monotonous surface recalls T. Pringle & Sons' use of contrasting horizontal concrete strips, both color wise and texturally, to offset the prevalent red brickwork (fig. 26). Where the church's exterior surface corresponds to the sub-basement, larger blocks of stone are used. The subsequent higher rows maintain a shorter and narrower stretch of stone laid in a sequence similar to the factory's four course running bond brickwork. The use of smaller cut upper stones creates a visual sense of lightness which counters the building's overall density.



Figure 26. (Left) J.A. Poulin's Ste.-Marguerite church.(Right) T. Pringle & Sons' Magog factory. Photographs 2009, Caroline Beaudoin.

The highlighted areas illustrate where contrasting materials were used ornamentally by capping the pilasters and emphasizing the structures' horizontal orientation. The horizontal bands also mark the floors' and ceilings' placement within both structures.

The two buildings incorporate pilasters at regular intervals creating a general sense of symmetry informing the structures' east and west elevations (fig. 27). Their repetitive rhythm establishes lateral movement while inserting an alternate vertical direction which lends a sense of balance to the substantial and imposing walls. Each building contrasts the pilaster tips, drawing attention upward, accentuating the composition's secondary and subordinate vertical orientation. Poulin places a single uniform lozenge between each pair of pilasters and caps them with a pediment, pointing heavenward. The intervals between the pilasters dictate the fenestration's regular, homogeneous and symmetrical placement while challenging the walls' lateral emphasis. The lower and mid level windows are primarily vertically oriented which reinforce the pilasters resistance to the buildings' dominant horizontal form. The factory's upper level horizontal ribbon windows add variety and contrast to the vertical fenestration while enhancing a sense of lightness to the structure as it approaches the flat roof, gradually leading the eyes to its sudden disappearance. Poulin borrows the uppermost delicate square cavities found on his plans directly from the factory where they are used purely decoratively, arranged in precise lozenges that separate the upper and midlevel windows. He rotated the cavities horizontally, echoing the factory's ribbon windows, and placed them in a linear series of threes. The strips of miniature windows function as vents in addition to their decorative value that provides a repetitive lighter alternate to the two polished granite bands which surround the building and mark the interior's nave from ceiling to floor. The architect's repetitive use of trios symbolically references the Christian trilogy, a recurring theme he uses throughout the church's design.

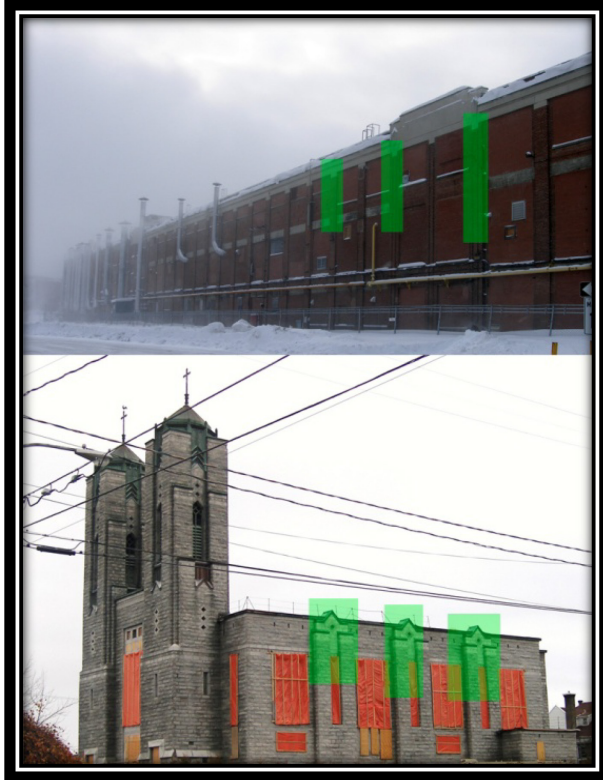


Figure 27. (Lower) J.A. Poulin's Ste.-Marguerite church. (Upper) T. Pringle & Sons' Magog factory. Photographs 2009, Caroline Beaudoin.

Note both buildings use of pilasters at regular intervals to challenge the structures dominant horizontal orientation. Poulin caps the pilasters with a pointed pediment drawing attention further upward to the 'au-delà'.

By repeating the Christian Trinity iconography throughout the church's exterior and interior, Poulin subtly endorsed *L'Art Sacré's* conviction that the church should have "un caractère sacré qui la distingue des autres édifices" (Bergeron *Églises* 18) without making it necessarily appear more important than its surrounding buildings. The front steps leading to the church's geometric portal are laid out in a fan-like shape extending beyond the width of the façade, providing a wide and open access to the church's entrance, embracing the Catholic Church's renewed image as the House of the People of the Lord. The shape is inviting and welcoming, comparable to the human gesture of opening one's arms or extending one's hands outward in greeting. According to Richard Taylor, church doors are symbolically linked to Jesus Christ. In *How to Read a Church* he discussed how passing through the doorway symbolizes

accepting Jesus' invitation to commune with God. As a result the decorative elements "over or around doorways are connected with Jesus: Jesus sitting in majesty, a Virgin and child, a Lamb of God, a Crucifixion." (Taylor 26) Poulin decorated the exterior portal with a stylized and geometric variation of the Trinity composed of linear windows (fig. 28). The inner doors leading to the nave refer to the crucifix represented by an empty cross designed out of glass cubes inserted into the wooden panels. An empty cross is "a cross without the figure of Jesus hanging on it...an image of God's power, and of hope." (Taylor 40-1)



Figure 28. Façade of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie. Fondation du patrimoine religieux du Québec, inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec; 2003-05-039-01-01.

Note the highlighted areas' patterns of three and the open, inviting width of the stairway leading to the entrance. The towers are densely ornamented with emphasis on the inverted chevron motifs pointing heavenward.

The architecture's exterior decorative elements are clearly subordinate to the building's construction, adhering to the theories advocated by rationalists. The façades of the church and factory are distinguished by strikingly similar understated rectilinear false pediments which

slightly rise above the flat roof tops, centering the buildings while offering subtle ornamentation without function (fig. 29). Poulin adds symmetrical bell towers to each side of the frontispiece that extend over fifty feet beyond the roof, decidedly the most traditional element of his design. The imposing tall towers act as beacons for the working class parish, visible from various vantage points throughout the city's more affluent communities to the west and north. The copper louvered towers are the most ornately and densely decorated exterior features. The inverted chevron motif retraces the outline of an equilateral triangle, while pointing skyward with arrowhead precision towards what Poulin described as the "au-delà" (fig. 28). The triangles are a catholic symbol referencing the Holy Trinity. According to Taylor equilateral triangles are "one of the oldest Christian symbols, the equality of the sides of the angles expressing the equality of the Persons of the Trinity."(48) The architect repeats the pattern at the tips of the exterior's pilasters and on the interior's stylized crushed marble terrazzo floors, directing attention towards the altar and tabernacle, two of the Church's holiest vessels (fig. 27). Taylor asserted that "in a number of senses, and to different degrees, churches were built to be read."(2) He elaborated by explaining:

Churches and Cathedrals are packed with meaning. Outside, the spire points heavenwards; carvings around the entrance announce the holiness of the space inside; the aisle that draws you to the altar, with its ranks of pews on either side, is the gangway of a ship carrying worshippers to God; the altar, the holy heart of the building, is contained in a separated and sacred space; all around, numbers, colours, the animals and plants in the stonework, and the scenes in the stained glass, point to aspects of Christian teachings about God.(1-2)

On a similar note *In The Meaning of the Built Environment*, Rapoport explained "If the design of the environment is seen partly as a process of encoding information, then the users can be seen as decoding it. If the code is not shared or understood, the environment does not communicate."(57) Based on these explanations Poulin's persistent use of repetition can be



Figure 29. False pediment façades. (Left) T. Pringle & Sons' factory. Photograph 2011, Caroline Beaudoin. (Right) Sainte-Marguerite's church. Photograph c.1950s, Fondation du patrimoine religieux du Québec, inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec 2003-05-039-57-01.

interpreted as a subtle strategy or approach to communicate with the workers, as routine and repetitive cycles were familiar everyday patterns within their factory work environment.

Therefore, as Rapoport argued “by increasing redundancy, the likelihood of messages and meanings getting through is greatly increased.”(84) As such Poulin not only communicated Christian teachings about God to the parishioners by repeating simple and humble cues, but he also created visual similarities between the church and factory, rather than emphasizing their differences.

The nave’s center aisle represents the structure’s longitudinal local symmetrical line which centers the design’s irregular shape. The building’s east elevation incorporates a small projected baptistery capped with an octagonal copper dome (fig. 30). The roof, ledges, cornices and pilaster tips are also all of copper. The cheviot, the church’s east extreme that includes the apse and ambulatory, is flat rather than traditionally curved, maintaining the structure’s overall rectilinear angles. All windows on the main floor are part of a stained glass series of identically fabricated daisies (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 18), one of Quebec’s naturalized ‘common’ field flowers, sharing the church’s patron saint’s namesake ‘marguerite’ in French. The daisy is

repetitiously depicted throughout the interior as for example on the terrazzo floor and on the strips of moulding decorating the ceiling and walls (fig. 31).

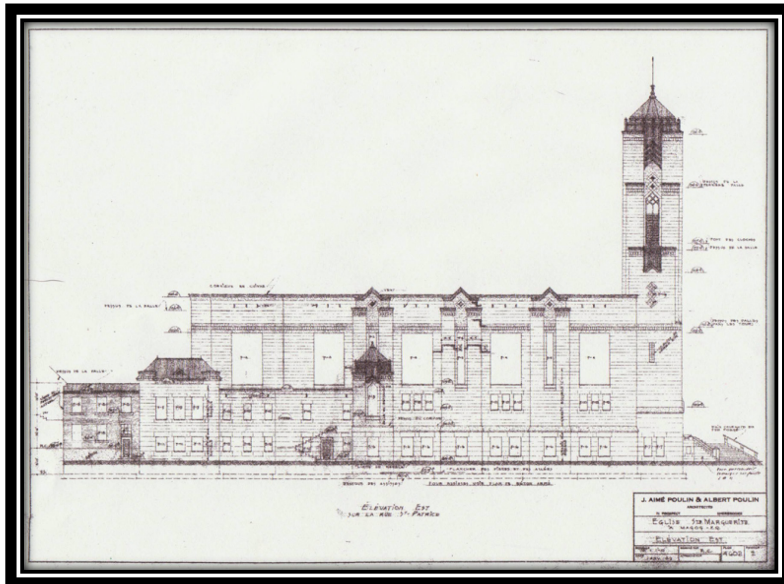


Figure 30. Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie's East Elevation. Plan de l'Élévation Est, plan 4602 feuille 2. January 1949. Centre d'archives de l' Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin P7, S1, SS68.

Note the small baptistery, located on image's lower center, capped with a similar copper dome to the ones topping the towers.



Figure 31. Interior details depicting Sainte-Marguerite's daisy motifs. Original photographs taken by *colros*: <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/73416633@N00/1312149904/sizes/m/in/photostream/>>, consulted on July 19, 2011.

Note the recurring daisy motif, a humble field flower, featured on the marble terrazzo floor, ceiling, walls, and windows.

The main and basement floors slope gently downward towards the corresponding level's sanctuary and theatre stage. This was a highly innovative way to encourage and facilitate the congregation's approach to the sanctuary as advocated by the liturgical reform. The single nave is shorter and much wider than traditional designs in order to seat the congregation closer to the altar. The plan of Sainte-Marguerite's nave illustrates not only the church's irregular shape but also its annexation to the existing presbytery. Prior to the reform presbyteries were separate from the church. Poulin's plans annexing the presbytery and replacing the chapel with a significantly larger church parallel the Dominion textiles Co.'s corporate strategy of progressive growth and expansion, while demonstrating the parish's cautious patience, having waited twenty-eight years to begin construction of their permanent temple. The company's 1987 insurance plan illustrates how the Magog branch systematically added annex upon annex to its original property, siting buildings such as numbers ten and eighteen which date back to 1883 (fig. 15).

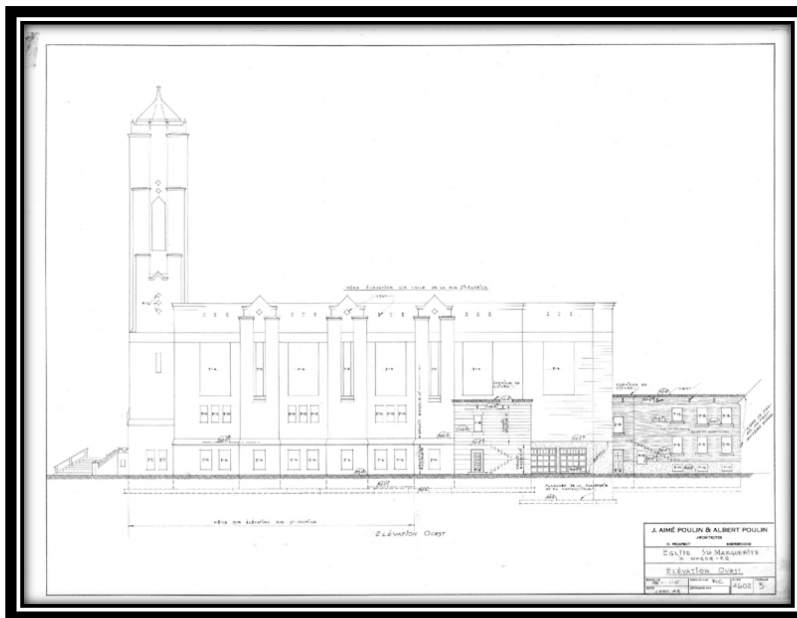


Figure 32. L'Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie West Elevation. Plan de l'Élévation Ouest, plan 4602 feuille 3. January 1949. Centre d'archives de l'Estrie, fonds Albert Poulin P7, S1, SS68.

The two car garage is located near the lower right of this plan to the left of the annexed presbytery at the far right.

Following the Second World War there was a pervasive optimistic social climate fuelled by new ideals and technological developments. The church's west elevation *plan 4602 feuille 3* illustrates the insertion of a two door garage into the building's design (fig. 32). This feature is not only architecturally modern for churches, it is also indicative of the extent to which automobiles became socially conventional commodities immediately after the war; in retrospect, however, this contributed to the parish's subsequent eventual decline by enabling more residents to move further away from the factory as they gravitated towards larger and younger surrounding urban areas such as the newly formed parish of Saint-Jean-Bosco.

Poulin's church plans break with tradition while adhering to what progressive writers for *L'Art Sacré* were advocating for religious architecture. Given that the neighbourhood's most significant structure was the factory, in such close physical proximity to the church, it is likely that the experienced architect would have intentionally looked to it as a visual reference for his design, on behalf of his clients the workers. During this particular era the parish was characterized by an intimate collectivity based on religious orientation and its common employer. Poulin provided Curé Vel with a temple having an impressive scale and dignified presence worthy of his parish while giving the workers an inviting, naturally bright, open, humble space suitable for contemplation and prayer. The church's interior featured:

seulement trois marches séparent la nef du chœur. C'est un signe évident que la célébration eucharistique se veut en harmonie entre le célébrant et les fidèles. L'intérieur de l'église est très sobre et fait une place importante à la lumière du jour. Alors qu'il faudra attendre le Concile Vatican II (1962-1965) pour que les fidèles se voient confier un rôle plus important aux offices religieux, l'aménagement même de l'église faisant en sorte qu'ils se sentent mieux intégrés et davantage invités à participer activement au déroulement des célébrations. En ce point, l'aménagement de notre église paroissial devançait donc d'une quinzaine d'années les grandes idées du grand Concile.⁴²

⁴² La Société Histoire de Magog. *75 ans et plus d'histoire*.

The modern interior's overwhelming simplicity and use of repetition throughout reinforces Lefebvre's theory that "in modern life, the repetitive gestures tend to mask and to crush the cycles. The everyday imposes its monotony." (qtd. in Harris, Berke 36) The flat plaster ceiling and uniform plaster walls for the nave and chancel were a modern treatment for the period, strategically intended to diminish the distinction between the two spaces by using the same materials, monotone colours, and lighting of equal intensity. Box beams and columns are spaced on the ceiling and walls at regular intervals, showcasing the interior's original minimalist décor (fig. 33). Identically patterned wooden moulding bands were used to decorate the chancel's cherry wood furnishings and trim the nave and chancel's upper dados while establishing continuity, further minimizing the distinction between the two spaces (fig. 34). The same patterned moulding was further used to trim the gallery's ledge and to frame the upper doorways. The chancel was designed to host a pair of lateral altars that featured statues shown in figure 32. Poulin's distinct and deliberate rectilinear architectonic vocabulary illustrates the extent to which "the everyday is situated at the intersection of two modes of repetition: the cyclical, which dominates in nature, and the linear, which dominates on processes known as "rational"." (Harris, Berke 36)



Figure 33. Sainte-Marguerite-Marie Church interior during the early 1950s.

Centre d'archives de Montréal de BAnQ, fonds E6,S7,SS1,D52779 À 52794, Joseph Guibord – 1951.
06M_E6S7SS1_P052791-51.jpg. Photo Joseph Guibord.
<http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=201106031410261133&p_centre=06M&p_classe=E&p_fonds=6&p_numunide=838071 > consulted on June 3 2011.



Figure 34. Interior of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie following updates to the interior. Fondation du patrimoine religieux du Québec, inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec; 2003-05-039-30-01.

Note the moulding on the walls which continues over the doorways and extends from the nave into the chancel, subtly minimizing the distinction between the two areas.

The structure is a two storied building. The upper or main floor was the actual church, including from east to west, the mass celebrants' room, the sacristy, the nave, and the narthex, or entrance hall, covered by an upper gallery for the choir and organ. Sainte-Marguerite's organ was a *Casavant et frères* 'opus 124', 1900 model.⁴³ The lower or basement level, inaugurated on February 5, 1950 (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 5), provided a theatre complete with a stage and ticket office. (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 11) As with the upper level, the theatre's floor gently sloped down towards the stage (fig. 35). The main room had seating for 664 people and was surrounded

⁴³Fondation du patrimoine religieux du Québec, Inventaire de lieux de culte du Québec : ÉGLISE SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE, NUMÉRO 2003-05-039.

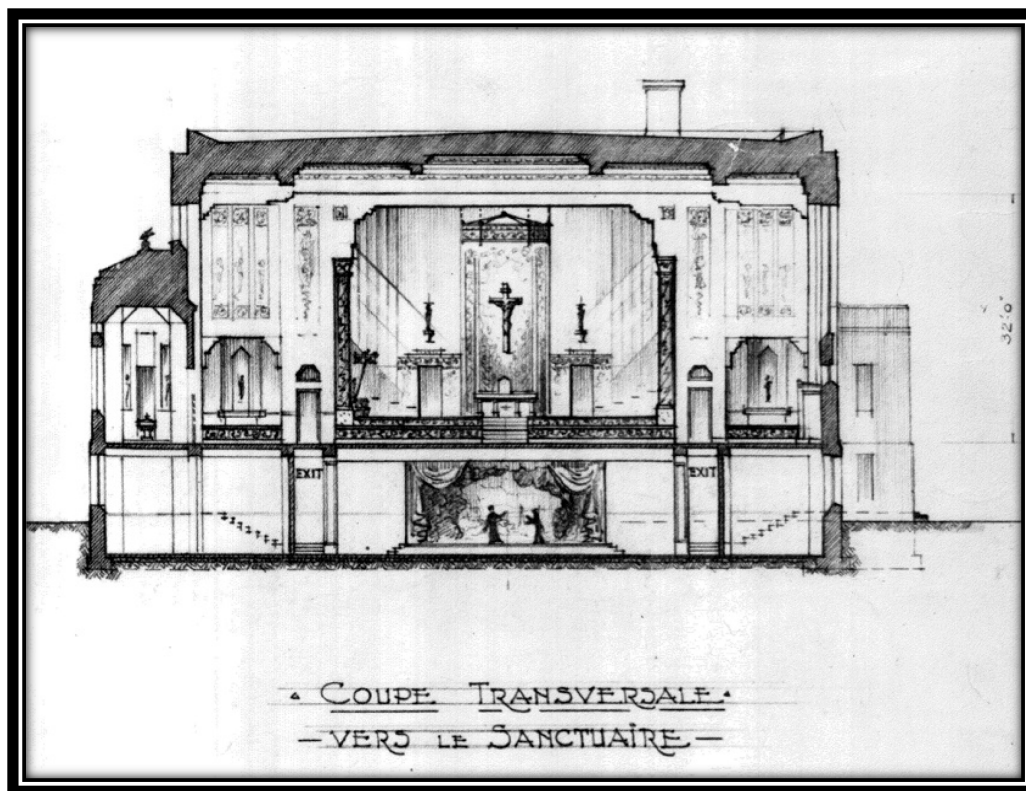


Figure 35. Detail of the 1946 interior plan for Église Ste-Marguerite-Marie. Plan de Coupes, plan 4602 feuille 2. October 1946. Projet non réalisé. AP79/B, les archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke.

This plan illustrates the basement theatre's stage directly beneath the upper church's chancel while emphasizing the social and holy spaces contained under one roof as emphasized by Poulin.

by smaller rooms all around.⁴⁴ Poulin's large basement community hall was a modern and desirable quality for advocates of *L'Art sacré*. They promoted the parish's involvement with the Church as a collective Christian body, essentially by minimizing the hierarchical divisionism found within liturgical theory, and physically in practice through architectural innovations.

Poulin described the importance of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's basement to the parish:

L'église proprement dite s'élève au-dessus d'un vaste soubassement, bien éclairé; on aperçoit les entrées de la salle paroissiale, élément devenu presque indispensable dans tous nos programmes d'église, et faisant de celle-ci un centre social en même temps qu'un lieu de prière.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l'occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (SHM).

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Progressive and innovative design features

The shorter and wider nave sat more people closer to the altar, in contrast to the traditionally longer and much narrower design (fig. 36), with minimal obstructions such as pillars due to the use of reinforced concrete (fig. 37). The inclined floor leading to the altar and a mere three stairs

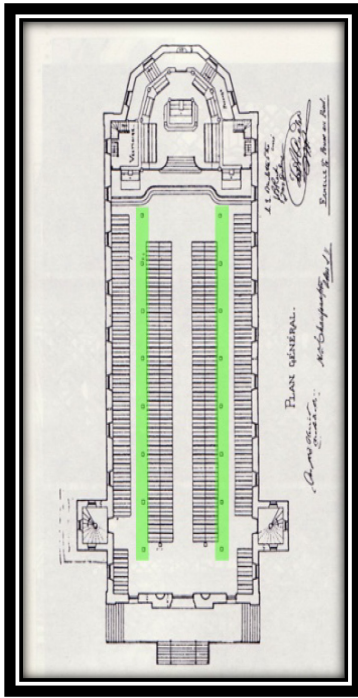


Figure 36. Architect Jean Baptiste Verret’s 1893 plan of nave for Magog’s Saint-Patrice church. *Centenaire de la construction de l’église Saint-Patrice de Magog, 1894-1994*, Magog: Paroisse Saint-Patrice de Magog 1994, 32. This plan illustrates traditional church design featuring long and narrow naves. The highlighted squares running the length of the aisles represent the placement of pillars that interrupted the view of the altar for much of the seated congregation.

separating the nave from the chancel symbolically reduce the hierarchical divisionism between the devoted congregation and ordained clergy and was further reinforced by using the same materials throughout the two areas. Bergeron emphasized that this “relation étroite entre les deux parties constituantes d’une église est considérée comme une nouveauté à la fin des années 1940.” (*Évaluation* 24) The surface uniformity of the walls and uninterrupted flat ceiling between the nave and the chancel along with lighting of equal intensity for the two spaces enhances an overall uniformity which diminishes the traditional divisionism distancing the

clergy and the altar from the parishioners. The communion table and balustrade separating the nave from the chancel, usually made out of wood, were made of polished pink granite. It was common practice for churches to originally install wooden parapets then subsequently replace them over time with stone ones. (Bergeron *Évaluation* 14) Sainte-Marguerite's initial installation of granite balustrades reinforces the building's planned endurance and relative permanence intended by the parish.



Figure 37. (Left) St.-Patrice's traditional nave. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/st-patrice-de-magog/interieur/1-6.jpg>>, consulted on August 2, 2011. (Right) Sainte-Marguerite's innovative nave. Fondation du patrimoine religieux du Québec, inventaire des lieux de culte du Québec; 2003-05-039-50-01.
Note St.-Patrice's pillars which obstruct the view to the altar for much of the congregation.

In *Stone and its Substitutes* J.B. Jackson refers to one of twelve apostles Thomas, also known as Judas Thomas, who was “by way of being an architect.” (105) Jackson proceeds to discuss the differences between building in stone and other materials, and the meanings these materials have had and now have on our landscapes. Stone was viewed by early Christians as a “noble material, not just because it was used for noble purposes, noble buildings.” Jackson explained it was “noble because it had been extracted from the depths of the earth and was timeless.” (106) He determined that duration “seems to have been a way of classifying buildings.” (107) This article relates to Poulin's church relative to questions of materiality and

temporality. Jackson projected that the apostle Thomas would have expected from the landscape “a monument or two of stone, a series of landmarks to remind us of what we believe and of our origin and identity.” (108) He then states that Thomas would have “insisted that these landmarks have a permanent, visible character, that they be an integral part of the landscape, part of the cosmic order, and that they have the immediate emotional appeal of a widely recognized archetype.”(107) Such characteristics are attributable to Poulin’s design. Jackson recalls however, “the distinction between buildings meant to last and buildings meant to be temporary is still part of our contemporary landscape.” (110) Given contemporary nomadic lifestyles, dwellings are no longer built to last, many of which are prefabricated or built from plastic and synthetic materials, buildings Jackson described as “deliberately designed to serve a temporary need” (110), such as the parish’s original chapel for instance. He observes “we have yet to learn that we can no longer aspire to permanence in our communities, but merely to their continuity.” (111) Jackson concludes that a “landscape is not complete or even liveable unless it acknowledges and celebrates the role of time and unless it builds monuments to give meaning and dignity to our short existence on earth.” (112) This is precisely how Sainte-Marguerite provides meaning and dignity to the workers’ historical contribution to Magog. The church’s current conversion to a municipal library enables the building to provide continuity despite shifting vocations by remaining a community space, successfully marking a transitional period in history while recalling the past.

Between Tradition and Modernity

Bergeron argued that Sainte-Marguerite’s traditional longitudinal orientation and monumental exterior make the church appear older than its time, despite the interior’s striking design innovations. “Sainte-Marguerite-Marie exprime fort bien un curieux paradoxe: elle se

démarque au moment de sa construction par des innovations, mais demeure éminemment classique dans sa composition.” (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 25)

Peter Collins defended modern architecture’s banality, decades ago, in terms of its meaning ‘common to all’, arguing that an architect succeeds when disciplining “their architectural forms to harmonize with earlier forms without sacrificing any of the principles of the modern age.”

(299) Poulin’s church appears older than it actually is, as Bergeron suggested, precisely because the architect harmonized his design with the area’s existing forms including the long established factory and early homes in the area. Bergeron situated Sainte-Marguerite-Marie’s architecture somewhere between modernity and tradition. I concur, noting that the architect’s extraordinary church design simultaneously recalled the parish’s inaugural origins in 1921, while responding to its imposing and authoritative neighbour, the progressively evolving factory. Had Poulin designed a smaller scaled, more humble church in keeping with the diocesan trends of the time, justice would not have been done to the parish’s historical significance to the city at large, nor to the Catholic Church’s social position in the face of the Dominion Textiles Company’s imposing facility. Furthermore, I believe Poulin knowingly and deliberately designed the church to appear older than its time, again situating it somewhere between ‘tradition and modernity’, in order to situate the parish’s historical rank relative to Magog’s only other two parishes at the time: the oldest, Saint-Patrice founded in 1894, and the youngest Saint-Jean-Bosco founded in 1945 (fig. 38).

Designed in 1946 by Alphonse Bélanger, Saint-Jean-Bosco’s stone church located at 900 Rue Sherbrooke in Magog, was one of the first church’s designed according to a modern, octogonal “*plan centré*” (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 25), securing Bélanger’s reputation as an innovative architect. Born in Sherbrooke Quebec in 1909, Bélanger eventually became the

diocese's most prolific modern architect. He was also the first architect from Sherbrooke to study at Montreal's École des Beaux Arts.⁴⁶ Saint-Jean-Bosco's concrete polygonal vaulted arched ceiling is strongly influenced by Dom Bellot's earlier style. Bergeron confirmed "bien que s'inspirant du style Dom Bellot, l'architecte de l'église Saint-Jean-Bosco traite néanmoins avec beaucoup de liberté les divers éléments de ce style." (216) The floor plan forms a polygon surrounding the interior's single nave; the exterior roof is finished with asphalt shingles and the interior walls are brick featuring high windows⁴⁷ (fig. 39).

Magog's much older Église Saint-Patrice, located at 115 Rue Merry Nord, was designed by Jean-Baptiste Verret in 1894. The church's exterior is inspired by Neo-gothic influences although it presents a traditional façade.⁴⁸ By 1994 the parish was the most populated within the Sherbrooke diocese.⁴⁹ The field stone exterior measures 165 feet long, by 65 feet wide and 48 feet high, with the steeple doubling the structure's height.⁵⁰ The highly ornate interior features three naves, two galleries, plaster walls and a ceiling supported by a series of wooden broken arches. The roof is sealed with slate shingles (fig. 40).



⁴⁶ Patrimoine Religieux du diocèse de Sherbrooke, Alphonse Bélanger. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/3-5.html>> consulted on August 2 2011.

⁴⁷ <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/2-1-1-3-1.html>> consulted on June 23 2011

⁴⁸ Patrimoine Religieux du Diocèse de Sherbrooke. Saint-Patrice de Magog. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/2-1-1.html>> consulted on August 3 2011.

⁴⁹ Jean-Marie-Fortier, Archevêque de Sherbrooke, Centenaire de la construction de l'Église Saint-Patrice de Magog 1894-1994, p.2.

⁵⁰ Patrimoine Religieux du Diocèse de Sherbrooke. Saint-Patrice de Magog. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/2-1-1.html>> consulted on August 3 2011.

Figure 38. 1951 photographs from left to right, in order of parish inauguration: Saint-Patrice (1894), Sainte-Marguerite-Marie (1921), and Saint-Jean-Bosco (1945). Centre d'archives de Montréal de BANQ, fonds E6,S7,SS1,D52779 À 52794, Joseph Guibord – 1951. Photos Joseph Guibord.
 <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqsid=201106031410261133&p_centre=06M&p_classe=E&p_fonds=6&p_numunide=838071> consulted on June 3 2011.

These photographs situate Ste-M-M's architecture between tradition (left) and modernity (right).



Figure 39. Alphonse Bélanger's Saint-Jean-Bosco church built in 1946-7. Photographs from left to right: interior showing concrete vaulted arches, exterior clad in stone with asphalt roof, and interior polygonal ceiling. Patrimoine Religieux du Diocèse de Sherbrooke, Saint-Jean-Bosco de Magog.
 <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/saint-jean-bosco/interieur/1-4.jpg>>
 <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/saint-jean-bosco/exterieur/1-8.jpg>>
 <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/saint-jean-bosco/interieur/2-1.jpg>>consulted August 2 2011.



Figure 40. Jean-Baptiste Verret's Église-Saint-Patrice constructed in 1894. Photographs. (Left) Interior. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/st-patrice-de-magog/interieur/6-1.jpg>>. (Right) Exterior. <<http://www.patrimoine.diosher.org/images/pics/st-patrice-de-magog/exterieur/2-3.jpg>>, consulted August 2, 2011.

Note the ornate interior featuring three elongated naves, wooden vaulted ceilings, and double galleries, and the exterior's predominantly clad in field stones, 46 foot steeple or bell tower, and roof covered in slate shingles.

Conclusion

Les matériaux employés dans la construction sont les meilleurs connus et c'est aux générations qui se succéderont pendant plusieurs siècles que les paroissiens actuels lèguent ce temple...⁵¹

MM. Poulin, architects

Ste.-Marguerite's symmetrical façade dominated by twin bell towers is a more common feature of the inter-war era according to Bergeron. Poulin was undoubtedly aware of these traditions and developments. In *The Meaning of the Built Environment*, Amos Rapoport discusses how:

Height...may well be an important universal category for indicating the meaning of importance; certainly in the sense of relative size or scale, that is, the temple as a whole vis-à-vis the houses and other urban elements. (107)

Indeed the tall boxy twin towers have three distinct meanings or functions which are to echo the factory's paired chimneys, add imposing height to the temple to compensate for its flat roof, conspicuously similar to the factory's yet unlike the region's other religious architecture of the period, and thirdly to conspicuously insert Ste-Marguerite-Marie's vital presence into the city's larger urban landscape. During the early 1940s the majority of the factory's workforce not only worked at the factory, they also lived in its mammoth shadow. Every which way the community turned, The Dominion Textiles Company's plant loomed. Poulin created a church which would resonate with the workers' daily lives while attesting to their significant role within the community by designing a building financed by the working class parish, a temple worthy of their contribution to the community and the city of Magog at large. If the church appears older than its time, as Bergeron observed when he stated "le temple a une apparence plus ancienne que sa date de construction l'indique" (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 42), it is a deliberate tribute to the

⁵¹ MM. Aimé et Albert Poulin, La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (courtesy SHM).

parish's founders dating back to 1921 as an acknowledgement of the community's history. A modern looking structure, like Saint-Jean-Bosco for instance, would appear out of place in an area dating back to the nineteenth century. Poulin cleverly designed a church using modern innovations and technology, paralleling the factory's industrial progression, while using quality and enduring materials worthy of the area's significance to the city at large, and as an authoritative response to its imposing neighbour, the factory. Furthermore the workers were well accustomed to technological innovations as the factory regularly modernized its facilities and machinery, thus the church was essentially keeping stride with the post war current without neglecting the past. It was designed as a source of pride for the workers while emphasizing their historical importance to the area. This unique architectural specimen represents a link between modernity and tradition, a reality underscored by Katia Tremblay's following observation, "comme à l'extérieur, une continuité avec le passé est présent dans l'aménagement de la nef et du chœur." (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 20) Unlike the parish's first chapel, referred to from the beginning as 'temporary', the church, due to its monumentality and quality materials, could not be mistaken for a temporary structure, rather it was built for endurance. Furthermore its imposing dimensions measuring 893, 24 metres² could not be overlooked amidst its immediate surroundings including a Caisse Desjardins, the syndicats catholiques des ouvriers' headquarters, a convenience store, and modest residences. (Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 16) The extraordinary design demonstrates, especially in contrast to the original chapel's scale and quality of materials, that the parish took pride in their community and were motivated to assert their position within the City of Magog's greater urban plan, earning it very high praise amidst the province's religious architecture climate "Sainte-Marguerite-Marie se démarque sur le plan régional autant que national."(Bergeron Gagnon Inc. 43) Bergeron added:

Une église aussi imposante et d'une aussi grande qualité située au Coeur d'un quartier ouvrier a une valeur de représentativité élevée. Elle se veut un point de rassemblement et un <phare dans la trame urbaine de Magog> (*L'Évaluation* 41).

Poulin's design, representative as it is of "the idea that buildings communicate to their users within an everyday universe of commonly-held ideas," (Harris, Berke 77) suggests that the architect inserted modern and everyday theory into his practice which enlightens, however slightly, the fundamental question "why would the architect use modern materials and practices to design a building that appeared older than its time"? Had the patient and determined workers settled for a less monumental and high quality structure their legacy might, in recent years, have been slated for permanent erasure from the city of Magog's urban landscape.

In Magog the industry provided, amongst other things, staple foods and firewood at cost, regular wages, and free electricity during week-ends and low water periods. (Paradis 54) The church on the other hand looked after the schools, an early form of daycare at La Crèche, clubs, and associations. Lefebvre's

notion of everyday life can be seen as existing somewhere between the base (economic determinants) and the superstructure (ideas, concepts, values), or, more precisely, as challenging any hierarchical division between the two. (Harris, Berke 14)

Poulin did challenge the hierarchical division between the parish's two authorities by subtly incorporating architectural elements from the factory into his church's design. The spirit of modernity arises from breaking with traditional hierarchical limitations and oppression. Poulin's rectilinear design challenged religious architecture's traditional hierarchies by favouring an overall relatively uniform organization and treatment, other than the bell towers which are the structure's most traditional elements. His plans lightened the church's overwhelming authority

symbolically, visually and rationally by physically and intellectually enhancing its accessibility through simplicity. He described his design's fundamental quality as follows:

La simplicité, l'unité et la clarté sont les caractères principaux qui font de cette église un lieu de paix et de prière... La décoration de l'église est aussi toute simple. Le principal motif représente une marguerite, une humble fleur des champs.⁵²

Everyday architecture not only refers to the vernacular, it also refers to “the quotidian, the repetitive, and the relentlessly ordinary” daily lives of, for example, the factory workers and the buildings in which their collective activities unfolded during the 1940s. Poulin's consistent use of repetition and simplicity thus caters to the workers' everyday lives by reinforcing familiar patterns while referencing a visual vocabulary present in their daily experiences. In so doing he engages the factory and church in a visual dialogical exchange of sorts for the benefit of the community.

Although it remains debatable and a matter of opinion as to whether or not, as Curé Vel proclaimed in 1949, “la future église de Ste-Marguerite sera belle à voir”, one thing is compellingly clear. The church of Sainte-Marguerite-Marie is still today, as it has been since its completion in 1950, an artefact that incontestably embodies modernity's quest for identifying something extraordinary in the ordinary. It is a magnificent legacy left to the city and future generations by the workers in recognition of their everyday collectivity, their daily lives, and their identity. It is a tribute to the architect for recognizing and dignifying this marginalized yet culturally invaluable class within Quebec's social history, its cultural identity. Crawford suggests that:

the practices of everyday urbanism should inevitably lead to social change, not via abstract political ideologies imposed from outside, but instead through specific concerns that arise from the lived experience of different individuals and groups in the city. (qtd. in Upton 718)

⁵² MM. Aimé et Albert Poulin, La Paroisse de SAINTE-MARGUERITE-MARIE de MAGOG, A l' occasion de la bénédiction de sa nouvelle église le 17 septembre 1950, non paginé. (courtesy SHM).

Upton summarizes architecture's fundamental role within urban planning practices by stating "everyday life can be oppressive or liberating, depending on the ways it is organized temporally and spatially."(720) Poulin's treatment of the church's interior illustrates a sensitivity to the workers "lived experience" by incorporating familiarity into his design while also attempting to create what is arguably a "liberating" space for them through an open, bright, and simple layout.

Today we see a worldwide tendency to uniformity. Rationality dominates, accompanied but not diversified by irrationality; signs, rational in their way, are attached to things in order to convey the prestige of their possessors and their place in the hierarchy.

Henri Lefebvre (qtd in Harris, Berke 32)

There is an undeniable correlation between cultural landscapes and collective identities and to a large degree the erection of the church marks the workers' conclusive moment of affirming, and perhaps to some extent even reclaiming, their identity within the *bas de la ville's* urban landscape. Sainte-Marguerite-Marie's construction represented the workers' collective contribution to the area while challenging the factory's omnipresent monopoly by erecting their own adjacent monumental structure. The factory belonged to distant company shareholders while the church of Ste-Marguerite-Marie belonged to very present workers. Today the municipal library which was once a parish church, through its design, scale and select quality materials has become a monument to the workers who not only settled the community, but contributed to the city's industrial success. Poulin was familiar with the parish having designed the presbytery in 1927 and an extension to La Crèche during the 30s. He was aware of the factory's influence over the workers' everyday lives. He subsequently designed a temple that was simultaneously meaningful to their factory lives, but distinctly separate from and beyond it, successfully creating a unique specimen of religious architecture with one eye on modernity and the other winking at tradition. The building stands as a testament to the significant historical contributions of an often

overlooked social class whose hard, tedious work and socially committed values have shaped Quebec's current heritage and contemporary cultural landscape.

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