

A Study of the "Changes  
in Land Use in the Central  
Area of the City of "Brantford"  
from 1820 to 1925

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## Acknowledgements

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## A Study of the Changes in Land Use in the Central Area of the City of Brantford from 1820 to 1925

### Introduction

In researching and writing a paper on the development of industry in the city of Brantford, 1844 to 1925, it became apparent to me that a study showing the interplay of all land uses in the central area of the city was desirable. No cohesive and continuous geographical record of the land uses in early Brantford presently exists. Material documenting the history and geography of the city prior to 1850 is particularly scarce. My primary objective, therefore, was to at least attempt to create such a record for this city, by tying together all of the varied bits and pieces of data relating to land use in early Brantford.

A second desire was to see if one could identify the date and circumstances under which zones of specialized land use first emerged in the central area of the city. It is quite clear that the early community would have a mix of land uses due in part to the time factor (nineteenth century) and to the scale (under 4000 population in a pioneer region) factor. Yet in spite of these controls, recognizable specialized land use areas did emerge at a surprisingly early date.

The final objective was to see if the factors that influenced the growth and change in the central area, particularly those that relate to specialization, could be identified and isolated for this one community.

### Why the Central Area?

The term "central area" refers to a rather vaguely defined area of a city. Since no precise universal criteria can be established for locating this central area, each particular city that one might wish to study must be considered independently. However, the central area does exhibit general identifying characteristics that are a significant help in defining the region. The central area usually contains the original nucleus from which the city has subsequently grown in all directions. Consequently the central area contains much of the original village and town boundaries and hence will, in general, be the oldest part of the community. The central area is usually the most important part of the community with respect to the carrying on of business and local governmental functions. The central area usually exhibits the greatest intensity of land usage with little or no space between buildings, traffic congestion, and presently, much vertical development. Since these conditions vary considerably from city to city, particularly as the size of the city increases, and since these characteristics are highly generalized, a situation prevails where ultimately an arbitrary decision must be made as to the location of the central area.

Given these general characteristics, I have arbitrarily defined the central area of Brantford as being that area of land contained within a circle of one-half mile radius centered on the original town (market) square of Brantford. This circle includes the original crossing point on the Grand River, a significant fact preserved in the name of the city. While the crossing area has been a major focus in Brantford's development, the Grand River, in fact, has been more of a deterrent factor to extensive growth on the western side of the river. The eastern side has grown rapidly and because of



this the focal point of significance shifted very early from the "ford" at the river to the area near the town square (Colborne, Dalhousie, Market and George Streets). This square has continued to be the central focus of the community right up to the present day, in spite of the recent relocation of the city hall two blocks to the north, and the market function two blocks to the south of this square. Historically, the significance of the square can not be debated. It is for this reason that the market square was selected as the center of the half-mile radius circle.

The central area, as I have defined it, appears on the 1850, 1875, 1900 and 1925 maps. For the period 1800 to 1850 the central area included almost all of the built up section of the village; consequently no attempt has been made to show this half-mile radius circle on these early maps. With the exception of a small part of West Brantford and Holmedale, both of which were very sparsely inhabited by 1850, the entire community is represented on the 1823-24, 1829 and 1830 maps.

### Why to 1925?

In attempting to reconstruct patterns of land use for the city of Brantford, the period 1820 to 1925 offers a very real challenge. As would be expected, the volume of available data on the topic steadily increases to the present. Generally, after 1900 there is no shortage of material from which one is able to reconstruct and map land uses for the city. City directories are available for consecutive years following 1896, thus allowing one to conduct a street by street search. Published maps recording land uses, although not abundant, do become more readily available especially after 1940 to the present when urban renewal and land use planning studies for the city and township come into vogue.

A second and perhaps more important reason for ending this paper at 1925 is the fact that this date is the culmination of factors of growth and change that had been set in motion in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The period 1900 to 1925 was generally a boom time for Brantford. Population grew from 16,200 in 1900 to 30,600 in 1920. In response to a general prosperity in Canada, Brantford's industrial sector grew quickly. The railroads serving Brantford completed their growth period. Patterns of land use were consolidated; the role of industry in the city was clearly highlighted. These were indeed good times. And then for the next twenty years Brantford became virtually static in its growth patterns. The period of 1925 therefore marks a clear break between the forces that led to Brantford's development throughout the nineteenth century and the renewed growth patterns that occur after 1945, in what might be called the modern era. For Brantford, the period 1900-1925 was clearly a rapid continuation of growth and change elements that had been developed in the city by the end of the nineteenth century. An entirely whole new set of conditions and circumstances surround the more recent growth of the city.

The year 1925, therefore forms a convenient and logical terminal point for this paper.

## Notes on Sources

The major problem concerning the collection of data lies in the paucity of material before 1850. This is to be expected in view of the fact that Brantford was not incorporated as a town until 1847 (at which time assessment records, voters lists, court records and council minutes became available). However, the site of Brantford has a record of settlement dated as early as 1805. By the date of incorporation the community had grown to a population of about 3000. Thus a significant amount of development had already taken place in the community. Documenting this growth is a real problem.

The map of 1823-24 was drawn from verbal descriptions given in a number of sources, the main one being Reville.<sup>2</sup> The descriptions appear to be the recollections of one of the early settlers, James Wilkes, who arrived in Brantford in 1822. Although the sources show some disagreement with respect to individual facts (such as the number of taverns or shoemakers), generally there is a basic agreement on the broad elements of land use in Brantford.

The Burwell sketch of 1829 is reconstructed from a listing of land claimants given in Reville.<sup>3</sup>

The 1830 map is reconstructed from a lot by lot verbal description given by Peter Robinson in his Census of Brantford dated 14 May, 1830. Following up on a comment made by C.M. Johnston<sup>4</sup> a search was made for this document. The census appears to be unknown in Brantford. The search led ultimately to the Public Archives in Ottawa. It would appear that this document is a true "find" in terms of early historical and geographical data regarding early Brantford.

The base for the 1830 map was the original land survey of Brantford carried out by Lewis Burwell in 1830.

The map of 1850 was generated from an existing map of Brantford prepared by U.S. Smith.<sup>5</sup> The land uses were extracted from two sources: first, the Smith map shows buildings on each lot and identifies many of the major uses; secondly, an assessment roll, dated to approximately 1847-49, available at the Public Archives of Ontario, gave a lot by lot account of the occupant and the use being made of the lot.<sup>6</sup>

The 1875 map was extracted from the Atlas of Brant County, 1875, but redrawn to a reduced scale. The land use was mapped from identifications given on a "bird's-eye" view map of Brantford,<sup>7</sup> and from the Evans Directory of the city, 1875.<sup>8</sup>

The 1900 map was constructed in a similar fashion. The base map was extracted from a 1907 Expositor map, while the land uses were reconstructed by a street by street search of the Union Company's directory for Brantford, 1900-01.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, the 1925 map was again reconstructed through a directory search.<sup>10</sup>

### Land Use Classification

The time span covered in this paper presented a problem when attempting to set up a uniform land use scheme. The two categories that present particular problems in definition are commercial and industrial land use. With only minor adjustment, the interpretation of the other categories used in this paper is substantially similar throughout the entire time span.

Prior to 1850, industrial and commercial land uses appear to be reflections of the individual trades and professions of the inhabitants of Brantford. Industry appears to be essentially an individual enterprise, with the owner then selling his products directly to the local population. For this reason no attempt is made to distinguish or to classify land use by general groupings until the 1850 period.

In 1844, the first true manufacturing industry was established in Brantford. Increasingly, as more factories are established, the trades and professions are absorbed into these new firms, leaving it necessary to distinguish only between commercial land uses and manufacturing factories. Thus by 1850 it is possible to group land uses into broad general categories.

However, the period 1850 to 1900 in Brantford, is a time of rapid growth, with individual initiative and enterprise playing a major role. Many individuals, retaining their basic trade or profession and not willing to become a mere employee in a growing firm, established their own small factories employing one or two individuals. Thus the size of the operation becomes a significant factor in helping to define this type of land use.

Ultimately it was decided to accept the 1901 Census of Canada definition of what constitutes a factory. The report states "no factory is to be so recognized unless five persons are employed". Although this definition eliminates a few small enterprises from the mapping scheme, it does relate the size of an operation to its ultimate contribution to the welfare of the community, and does ensure a meaningful scale that can be uniformly applied from 1875 to the present.

The following general categories of land use are employed in this paper:

a) commercial uses include any land or building where trade or business is carried on

b) industrial uses include both heavy and light manufacturing plants and their lands; wholesale and warehouse activities are considered to be a part of this land use.

c) parks and playgrounds are those areas of the city specifically set aside for public use and have some indication of "improvement".

d) public and semi-public property includes all city land and buildings that serve the citizen body (such as city hall, court house, library, schools, churches). Private fraternities, orders and societies are also included.

e) residential uses include all types of dwellings that serve primarily as homes for the citizen body. No distinction is made regarding the type of residence, except that the land use must occur on the ground floor.

f) vacant land indicates all land or buildings that are not being occupied. This is not to indicate that the land is useless or not owned, Therefore, speculative lands will appear in this category.

### Mohawk Village

The first recorded settlement of any description in or near the central area of Brantford is that of the Mohawks, who initiated their village in this area shortly after their arrival in the Grand River land grant subsequent to their expulsion from New York State. The Mohawk village was located about two miles south of present downtown Brantford. However the main river crossing place was near what is today Brantford's main street, Colborne St., where the iron railway bridge crossed the river). A large church (Church of England: Her Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks) erected in 1785, the oldest Protestant church in Ontario, ensured the permanent importance of the village site. The habitual crossing of the river, which came to be known as Brant's Ford, ensured the permanent significance of this particular point on the river.

Other than these two facts, little of significance resulted from the Mohawk village, insofar as land use in Brantford was to be concerned. The river crossing, however, was to play a most prominent role in the development of the white settlement of Brantford.

### White Settlement

The first white settler in the central area of Brantford is recorded as being one John Stalts, a half-breed, who established a log hut near Brant's Ford close to the present day South African War Memorial, in 1805.<sup>12</sup> By 1818, the population had grown to twelve inhabitants.

Joseph Brant and his followers did not strongly object to the white squatters. In fact there appears to be an active attempt on the part of Brant to encourage white settlers to develop the Indian lands and to generate

an example for the Indians in terms of farming techniques.<sup>13</sup> This policy would ultimately lead to the wholesale loss of much of the original Indian land grant on the Grand River, with resulting unfortunate circumstances for the native owners.

The completion in 1823 of the Hamilton to London Road which passed through the site of Brantford and made use of Brant's Ford increased the significance of the place as a crossing point on the river and thereby accentuated the attractiveness of this particular site for further development.<sup>14</sup>

True to this spirit, by 1823-24, the population at this river crossing site had grown to about one hundred inhabitants. Already on the site were three trading stores, engaged primarily in trade with the Indian community and with the transient trade based on the Hamilton-London road, two shoemaker shops and a black-smith shop and the inevitable tavern.<sup>15</sup> (See map 1.)

These early inhabitants were squatters, occupying their lands without rightful title. Many of these people appear to have entered into rather loose lease agreements with the Indian owners of the land (through Joseph Brant). Some of these settlers, in turn, then leased lots to other white settlers who desired some property.

This lack of legal title to the lands was an early constriction on the growth of population and the expansion of this site. Without recognition by law of land ownership, many of the inhabitants were afraid to sink extensive capital into the development of the land.<sup>16</sup> A major result of this problem was the generation of considerable agitation on the part of the whites for the lawful purchase by the Crown of their lands from the Indians, with recognition of their titles to the



lands to follow.

### Brantford in 1823-24 (See Map 1)

The lots occupied at this date were all located within three blocks of the river crossing and clustered along both sides of what would later become Colborne Street.

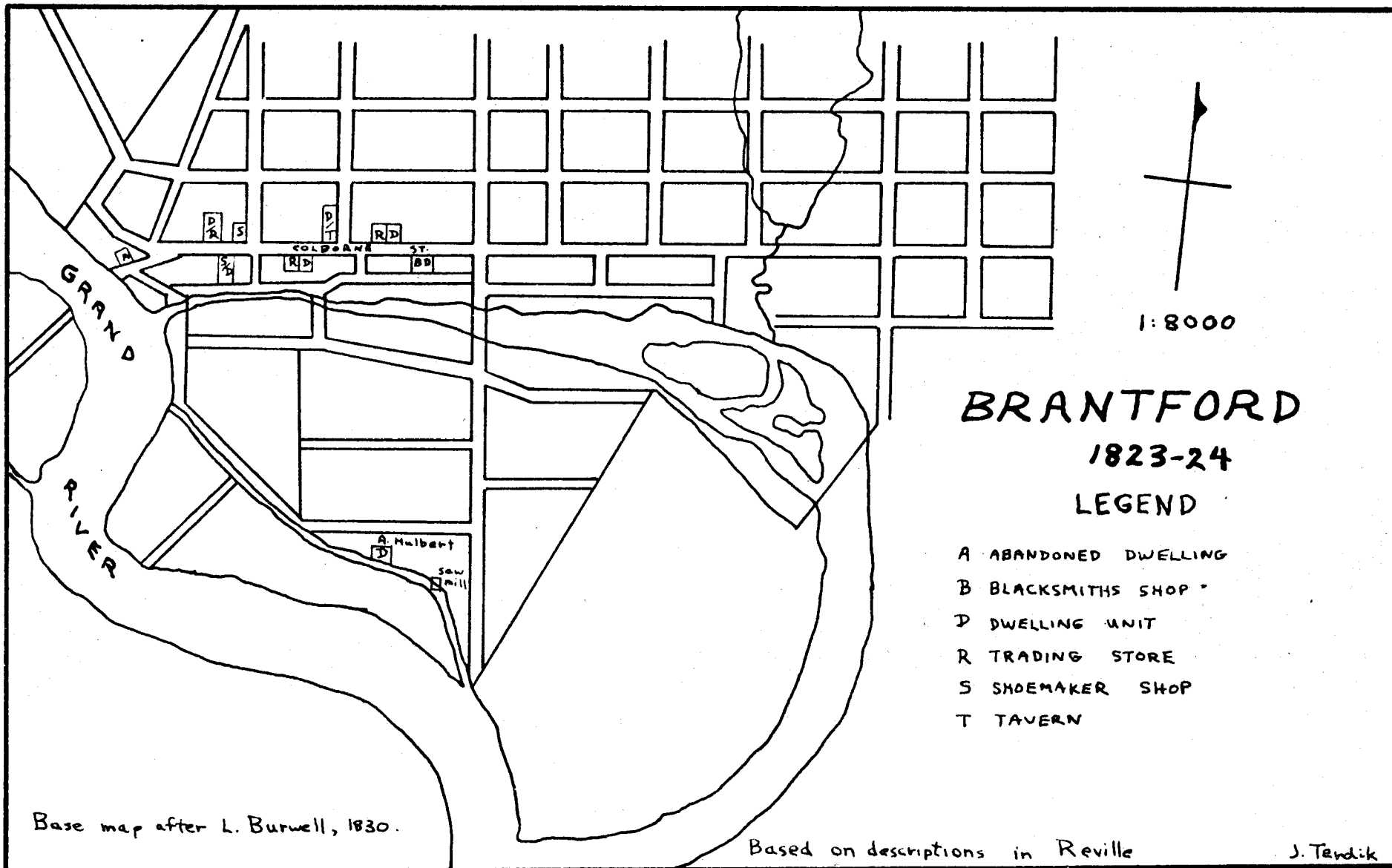
The dwelling that had been built by the earliest white inhabitant, John Stalts, had been abandoned by this time. The site of this building is in close proximity to the river.

The only other facility of significance recorded on this map was the saw mill operated by Asabul Hulbert. This mill was located on one of the channels of the river. It appears that small control dams were built on at least two of the major channels in an attempt to regulate the water flow. The Hulbert saw mill was on one of these channels. By 1827 a grist mill had been constructed immediately to the south of the small community. (See Map 2)

### Land Occupants By 1829 (See Map 2)

Reville states that Burwell made a preliminary map of the village of Brantford in 1829, using as part of his reference, a sketch drawn by one Joseph Read in 1824.<sup>17</sup> This early surveyor<sup>is</sup> unknown; no evidence of his work survives to the present.

This map was constructed from the verbal descriptions given by Reville. The chief value of the map lies in the fact that it identifies the claimants (lease holders) to various areas of land along the main street of Brantford.



# BRANTFORD

1823-24

## LEGEND

- A ABANDONED DWELLING
- B BLACKSMITHS SHOP
- D DWELLING UNIT
- R TRADING STORE
- S SHOEMAKER SHOP
- T TAVERN

Base map after L. Burwell, 1830.

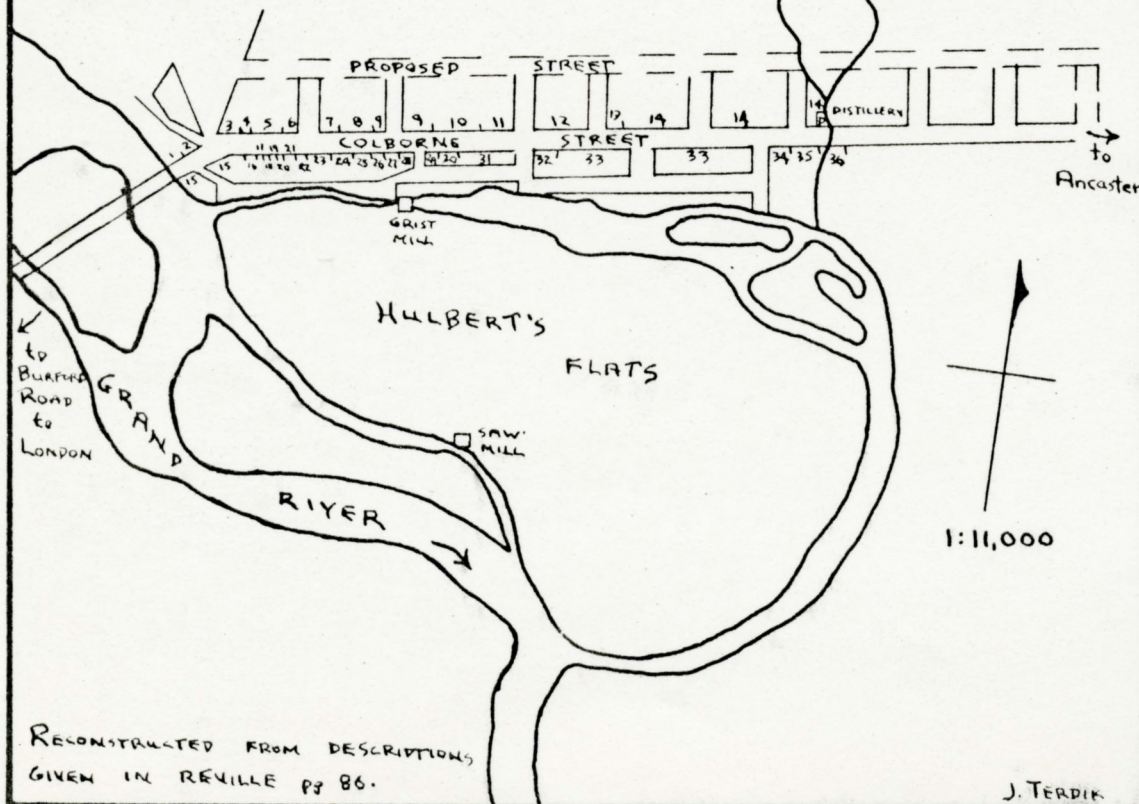
Based on descriptions in Reville

J. Tendik

# INITIAL SKETCH OF BRANTFORD

L. BURWELL 22 OCTOBER 1829

Partially based on a sketch of Brantford,  
1824, drawn by Joseph Read



## COLBORNE STREET

NORTH SIDE

SOUTH SIDE

1. W. DUTTON
2. AUSTIN
3. W. RICHARDSON
4. S. V. DOUGLAS
5. W. DUTTON
6. W. DUTTON
7. J. MUIRHEAD
8. J. A. WILKES
9. J. LOVEJOY
10. A. HULBERT
11. J. LOVEJOY
12. PUBLIC SQUARE
13. J. LOVEJOY
14. J. A. WILKES

15. A. SHARPE
16. ANDERSON
17. TOMPKINS
18. HOUGHTON
19. GRIFFIN
20. S. HURD
21. W. DUTTON
22. MARKWEN
23. EMERSON
24. J. A. WILKES
25. M. WILLSON
26. N. GAGE
27. MORGAN
28. M. LEWIS
29. M. LEWIS
30. N. GAGE
31. J. JACKSON
32. J. READE
33. J. JACKSON
34. HOUGHTON
35. MESSELAIR
36. DR. THOMAS

NUMBERS REFER  
TO LAND AREAS  
HELD UNDER JOES.  
BRANT LEASES  
BY THE NAMED  
SETTLERS.

J. TERPIL

The increase in pressure for lots in Brantford is apparent in the number of claimants. Furthermore, the map illustrates the linear growth of the village along Colborne Street, and the beginnings of what would become a northerly expansion onto the proposed Dalhousie Street. The grist mill operated by Matthew Lewis is shown, along with the distillery operated by J.A. Wilkes, further signs of a growing community.

Because of the continued requests by these land claimants for official recognition of their property rights, three significant developments took place:

1) Arrangements were made for a descriptive assessment of Brantford. The first official census of the village was completed on May 14, 1830 by Peter Robinson.

2) Negotiations with the Six Nations were started in an attempt to secure a village plot. These attempts proved to be successful when in 1830, the Mohawks surrendered 807 acres of land as a village plot.<sup>18</sup>

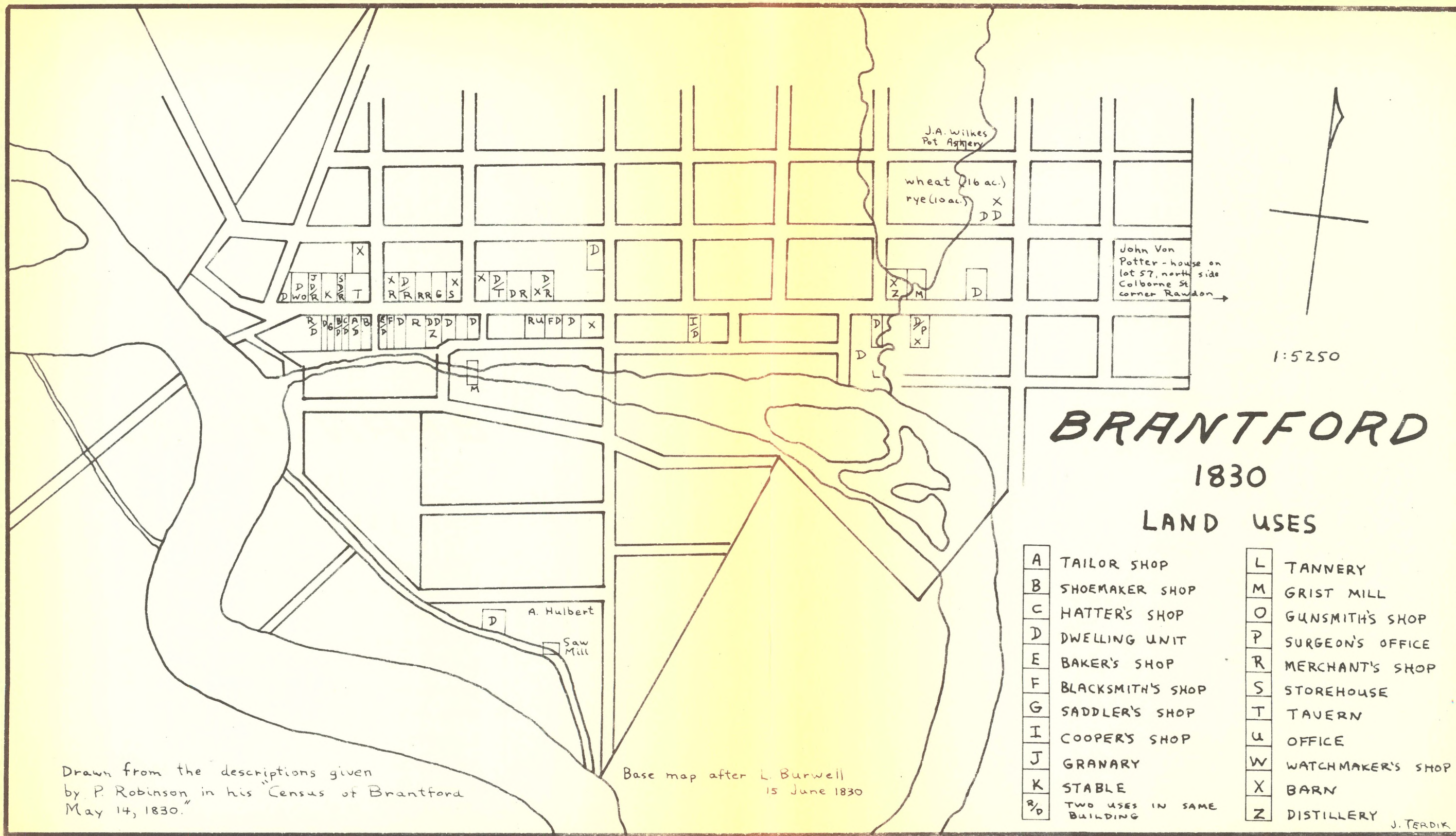
3) Lewis Burwell was appointed to carry out an official land survey of the village plot. He completed this survey by the end of June 1830.<sup>19</sup>

#### Brantford in 1830 (Map 3)

The first Census of Brantford, dated May 14, 1830, and prepared by Peter Robinson, is an important and interesting document.

Robinson presents a clear verbal picture of the community and its state of development in 1830. He accurately described the location of each property; the number, size and construction of any buildings on the lot; the owner or occupant of the lot including a note indicating





the date of initial occupancy; and submitted a summary indicating the value of each property. This clarity of the record, together with its early date makes this a significant document. This importance is further enhanced by the fact that very few people in the city of Brantford know of the existence of this census; certainly there does not appear to be any record or copy of this census in the city.

The document also reveals an early case of land speculation. Even before the official survey of the town and more importantly, before official legal title was obtained to the land, several of the lease holders had already sold long term leases to other white settlers.

Map 3 was prepared from the descriptions given by Robinson. As would be expected, an expanded area of occupancy is shown. A larger number of trades and professions is represented in the town. The land use is a total mix representing the goods and services available in the town.

There is still a concentration of land claims within three blocks of the river crossing, along both sides of Colborne Street. The area occupied by 1824 has been completely filled in with the recent settlers. Some expansion can be observed eastward along Colborne Street, with an initial dwelling occupying a lot on Delhousie St.

Many of the buildings have multiple usage indicated, with the ground floor space serving as the business or trade area and the rear or second story serving as the dwelling place.

It is quite clear that by as early as 1830, the community

would grow primarily on the north and eastern side of the Grand River. This area was the higher ground and therefore not susceptible to flooding, whereas the areas to the west and south were much lower and did suffer from flooding. More important, however, was the fact that Hamilton, Lake Ontario and York, which were to the east of Brantford, were much more important to the welfare of the village than was London, on the west side of the Grand.

Lewis Burwell started his official survey of Brantford on March 15, 1830 and completed his work on June 24, 1830. The town site consisted of 807 acres of land granted by the Mohawks. Of the total acreage "there is not more than 20 occupied by the village inhabitants: about 200 have been improved as farm lands, and the remainder is yet unclaimed by the white population".<sup>20</sup>

With the Indian transfer of the 807 acre town site, the white settlers' claims became legal. The surveyed lots were to be sold at public auction. The first such sale took place one year later on May 14, 1831. Subsequent auctions were held to dispose of further lots.

By 1830, in spite of the legal restrictions on land holdings, the population of the community had grown to approximately 300-400 persons.

With these initial hurdles overcome, Brantford grew rapidly. By 1842, when the next recorded census was taken, the population had risen to 1500 approximately. Once again a larger mix of trades and professions was represented in the population. (See Table 1.) The large group of carpenters is indicative of the vigorous growth taking place in the town.



Table 1

## Census Returns, 1842, Canada West:

Gore District: Brantford

## Trades and Professions

20 carpenters	2 coopers
1 minister	1 shingle maker
3 school teachers	2 tailors
18 labourers	10 millers
8 merchants	1 cabinet maker
8 innkeepers	1 harness maker
4 physicians	1 wagon maker
4 lawyers	1 distiller
1 surgeon	1 millwright
4 blacksmiths	1 civil engineer
4 shoemakers	

Source: Census of Canada 1842

Microfilm Reel #C-1345



Brantford was prospering. It was in a good farming district. The Hamilton to London road provided reasonably good access to the east, and brought considerable traffic to Brantford. The Grand River Navigational Company had been formed by 1832, although the deep channel to Brantford was delayed until 1847. Prospects of using the river as an export route aided the growth and provided hope for added future development.

No map is available for 1842, even though a census exists. The census is primarily a population census, and even in this respect is not complete. Thus map reconstruction is impossible.

#### Brantford in 1850 (Map 4)

By mid-century, Brantford's prospects for growth were well defined. The Grand River Navigational Company's canal, already very active after 1843, was further improved in 1847 by the completion of the "deep-cut" just to the south of the town. Brantford was becoming the gathering point for trade goods from the surrounding countryside. Timber and agricultural products were especially important exports sent out via the canal.

The Hamilton to London road continued to be used heavily for the transfer of both goods and passengers. This traffic encouraged further growth and development in Brantford.

The year 1844 saw the emergence of the first true manufacturing industry in Brantford, the P.C. VanBrocklin stove works. In very short order additional manufacturing firms appeared, including the Goold-Bennett iron and brass foundry and the Morton Stoneware factory.



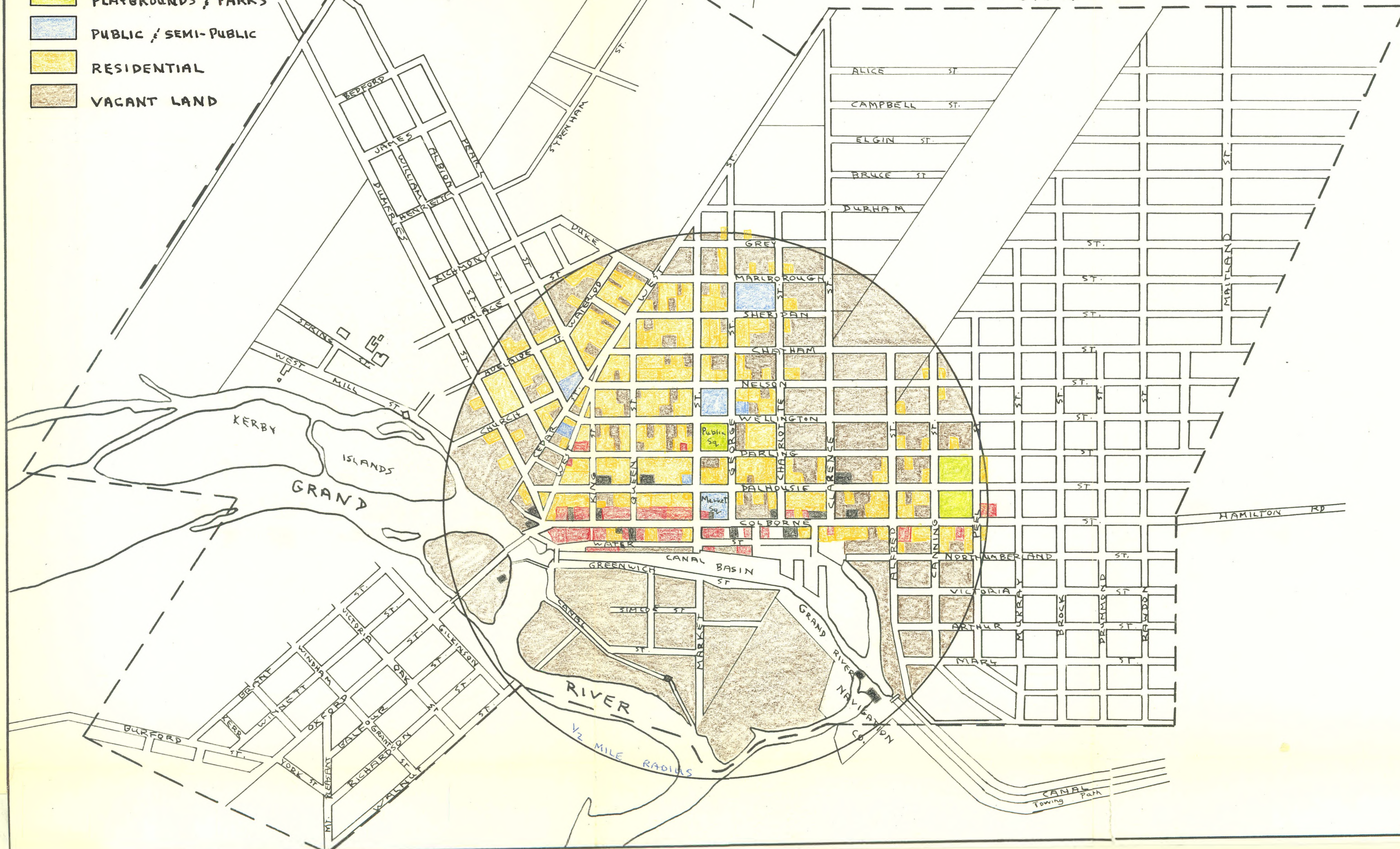
# LAND USE LEGEND

- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL / TRADES
- PLAYGROUNDS / PARKS
- PUBLIC / SEMI-PUBLIC
- RESIDENTIAL
- VACANT LAND

MAP 4

## BRANTFORD 1850

1 inch = 870 ft.





In response to these general conditions, Brantford continued to grow both in area and in population. By 1850, the population had risen to 3750 approximately.

The land use patterns in Brantford in 1850 are a clear reflection of this growth. The areas of the town towards the north and east of the core were the prime growth regions. This trend was merely a continuation of a pattern already evident in 1830. Some growth had taken place in West Brantford but the potential for development on this side of the river was seriously handicapped by the uncertainty of lasting bridges across the Grand. The history of the community, in the nineteenth century, is highlighted by a continuing story of bridge construction and collapse.

The northern areas of the town were ideal for expansion. The land was flat to gently rolling and most important, not subject to flooding. The area near the East Ward Creek (east of Clarence-see Map 1) was quite marshy and as a result settlement was deflected away from this region towards the west and to a lesser extent towards the east.

These areas became the prime residential land space for the community. Map 4 shows the filling in of the land north and east of the core. Some expansion across Cedar Street and between Dumfries St. and Duke St. can also be observed on this map. The residential land space was not continuously occupied. Many lots were not built on, either because of land speculation, absentee ownership or large multi-lot ownerships by the residents.

The quantity of vacant land increased sharply towards the margins of the town. The vast flats of the Grand

River to the south of the town continued to lie dormant, mainly because of the flood danger.

Public and semi-public land uses were neither plentiful nor unique in their location. Three types of facilities are represented in the town at this time: local governmental land (Market Square, townhouse, Court House property), churches (three), and school (one in the central area) property.

The prime location for both commercial and industrial land uses was along Colborne Street (stage road) and clustered within three blocks of the river crossing. This location provided optimum access to traffic on the main land artery (Colborne St.) and water route (canal).

Industrial land use was spread out in the area bounded by Darling, Colborne, Cedar and Alfred Streets. Concentration of industrial firms on adjacent land space was not a consideration at this time. The key elements in the location of these firms can be related to river and Colborne Street access. Furthermore, many of these industries grew out of individual trades, particularly those relating to woodworking, wagon making, and blacksmithy activities. Since these trades had been carried on near the core in earlier times and since the scale of the activities was small, the industries could easily remain in this area. Another factor to be considered is that the bulk of these manufactured goods were destined for the immediate market. Since the number of firms concerned is small, and because of their specialized nature, competition within this sector of the economy would not have been of much importance. Consequently, a central but not necessarily a core location was desirable for these firms.

Very little use was made by industry of the river property. The flats areas were low lying and in danger of flood. The land on either side of the canal was a tow-path reserve for the Grand River Navigation Company. As such the river and the canal were not inviting as sites for industry. Two firms did however, locate on the canal. Both establishments located here to take advantage of the available water power at the control dams on the canal.

Commercial land use occupied a relatively small and compact area in the core area of the community, on both sides of Colborne Street between the bridge and Market Street. Business places fell into a few major groups: professional services (lawyer, physician); transient services (hotels, saloons, stage houses); general goods (hardware, boots, shoes, clothing, dry goods); and food goods (groceries, wines, baked goods).<sup>21</sup>

With three exceptions there is no discernible pattern to the commercial land use. Grocery and dry goods establishments tended to be concentrated near the ends of each town block. Here they would be able to intercept local traffic on intersecting streets. The major hotels in the community, serving primarily the transient traffic on the stage road were located on the main corners of Colborne and Market (west side), Colborne and King (west side) and south west Colborne Street near the bridge. The only other evidence of areal specialization was found in the western end of the block between King and Queen Streets on the northern side of Colborne Street. Here there was a concentration of the two banks serving the community, and within five buildings of one another, agents representing five different fire and life assurance companies. Thus, as early as 1850 after a period of only twenty-five

years, there is some evidence of areal specialization in the land use pattern of Brantford.

#### Brantford to 1875 (Map 5)

The period between 1850 and 1875 was highlighted by an extensive railway building campaign across Canada. Brantford was not to be denied this latest form of transportation, and so after having failed to obtain the passage of the Great Western Railway through the town, proceeded to construct its own railway, the Brantford and Buffalo Railway. This railway created hope for an expanded trading area for Brantford. Unfortunately, the construction of other railroads in Ontario had severe consequences for the community.

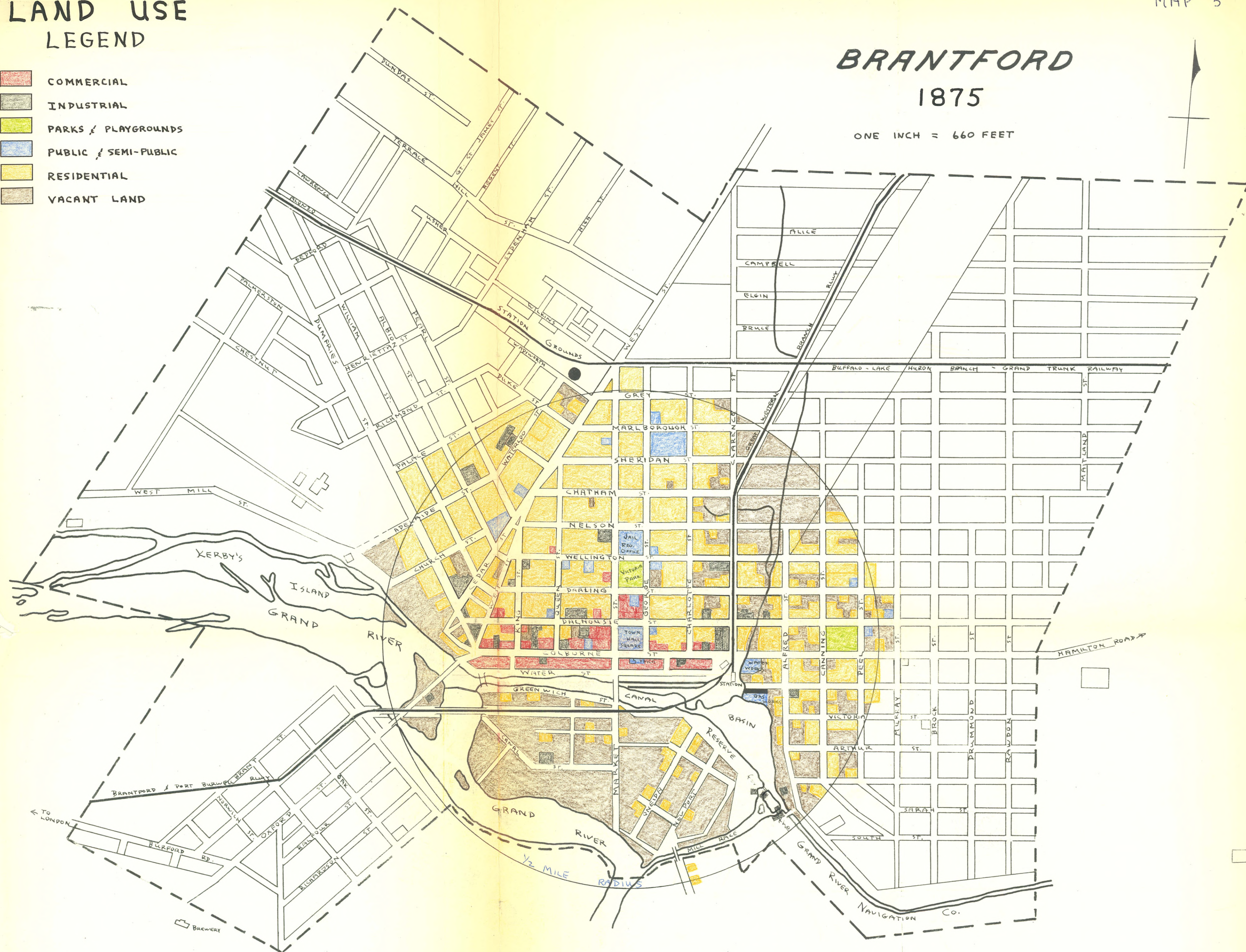
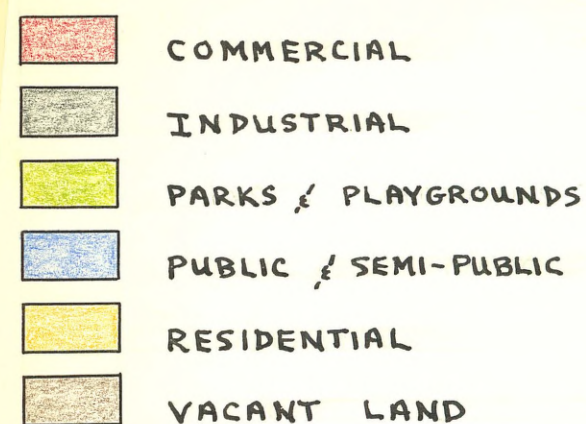
Initially, the construction of the railway had meant increased local employment and new orders for some of the local manufacturing firms. However, the hope of an enlarged trading area and the resulting business and traffic increase could not be fulfilled. Competing railways, the Great Western and the Grand Trunk, actually cut through the earlier hinterland that had been served by the Grand River Navigational Canal. The railways spelled doom for the canal, and although the waterway continued to be used during the decade of the 1860's, no attempt was made to keep up the repairs so badly needed by the system.

Not only did the competition dissect Brantford's former trade area, but they also denied the community main line transportation.

However, the railway era was a time of confusion, over-extension of railway building and in the final act, bankruptcy and take-over.



ONE INCH = 660 FEET





The consequences of Brantford's misadventures in railway building would not become apparent until much later. This was a time of general prosperity and growth was the order of the day. Brantford's population more than doubled to about 9000. The year 1853 saw the creation of Brant County and the designation of Brantford as the County seat, thereby giving the town added importance.

The major income producing sector of the town's economy, manufacturing, continued to grow rapidly. By 1875 the "heavy" industries, foundries, metal working and agricultural implements, had established dominance. Woodworking industries and carriage makers ranked next in importance.

The land use patterns in Brantford in 1875 show considerable change from 1850. Fewer vacant lots can be found, particularly in the area north of the core and west of Cedar Street. The swamp area to the east of Clarence Street remains essentially vacant, although the southern portion of this block (south of Nelson) shows increased occupancy. Even the river flats to the south of the core area, virtually untouched in 1850, have been occupied for residential land use and one industrial firm.

Public and semi-public land use in the central area of the community shows a limited amount of change. The 1850 public land use areas, with one exception, are retained in 1875. Eight new churches occupy space in the central area by 1875, with the majority of these clustered in the vicinity of Victoria Park. Two new school properties, both near the margins of the central area, have been developed by this date. A new firehall, post office, gas works and waterworks complete the public land use sector.



Park space in 1875 in the central area has been reduced by the development of one of the parkland blocks in the eastern end of the area. The reason for this change is not clear.

The location of industrial land use in 1875 does not show any significant modification of the 1850 pattern. The core of the central area continues to be the dominant location for manufacturing. The small size of the factories allowed them to co-exist with business and residential land uses in the core. The canal area did not experience much growth. With the loss of its usefulness as an artery of transportation, the only advantage of the canal was its potential for hydraulic power. With extensive use of steam power by industry only a few flour and woollen mills sought use of the canal.

Oddly enough the railways had very little effect on the location of manufacturing industries at this particular date. Since the bulk of the industries can still be considered to have been workshops serving primarily a local market, the railways meant little to them. By the same token, the larger foundries and farm implement firms were within a few blocks of the Great Western Branch station at the base of Clarence Street. Access was not at all difficult to the railway. In contrast, the Grand Trunk line (Brantford and Buffalo Railway) was considered to be too far away from the main business area, located as it was along the northern periphery of the community. Thus the locational factors of 1850, with the exception of the role of the canal, appear to have been maintained in 1875.

The river flats continued to be unattractive to industry, although one new firm did locate here. Residential land use had expanded on to the flats in spite of the continued flood danger.

Commercial land use retained its essentially compact form in the core. The commercial presence became more dominant by 1875 with the elimination of some residential land uses, particularly on the south side of Colborne Street. Two major expansionary trends can be observed:

a) commercial land use has spread on to both sides of Dalhousie Street within the area bounded by West and George Streets.

b) the commercialization of the entire block just north of the townhall square and south of Victoria Park. This is the first appearance of commercial growth on Market and George Streets.

Thus, by 1875, it would appear that only commercial land use is sufficiently specialized to occupy a common land area within the core. Even so, other land uses, particularly industrial and public land areas, intrude into the commercial zone.

#### Brantford to 1900 (Map 6)

Brantford continued to grow in the interval between 1875 and 1900 in spite of the general economic depression that affected much of the world following 1873. Two factors were primarily responsible for this growth.

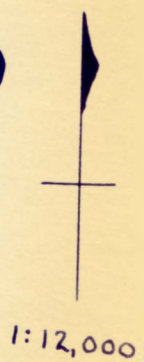
1) Continued emphasis on agricultural production in Ontario and towards the end of the century in Western Canada resulted in a constantly increasing demand for agricultural machinery. Brantford, whose economic sphere was by 1875 dominated by foundries and farm implement manufacturing could only benefit from these demands. And so it is not surprising to find out that the period 1871 to 1895 saw the amalgamation of the A. Harris, Massey, J.O. Wisner and Verity Plow Companies into the Massey-Harris





# BRANTFORD

## 1900



### LEGEND

- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
- PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC
- RESIDENTIAL
- VACANT LAND

### LAND USE

J. TERDIK

MAP 6



Company. By 1900, this one company was the single largest industrial employer in Brantford. The Cockshutt Plow Company started in Brantford in 1877 and by 1900 had shown dramatic growth.

2) The protective tariffs provided for the manufacturing industries in Canada by the National Policy of 1879, provided a direct stimulus for growth of farm machinery and textile manufacturing in Brantford.

With assured growth in the manufacturing sector of its economy, Brantford continued to progress. City status was attained in 1877. Improvements were made in the city with the provision of electrical energy from the old Grand River Navigational Canal system. A new waterworks system was built in this period and further improvements were made in the rail system with provision of a branch line to tie in with the Michigan Central line. By 1900, Brantford's population had reached 16,000 approximately.

The land use patterns in the central area of the city were further modified by 1900. The amount of vacant land within this central area has declined. A small vacant area persists in the former swamp area in the north east part of the city. The bulk of vacant land continues to be found in the river flats to the south of the core. Other than these two areas the city space within the central area is fully occupied.

Public land use is changed very little from the previous period. A church in the core area was relocated. A widows' and orphans' home were added to the list of public buildings (corner of Sheridan Street at Queen). The addition of the Brantford Armouries near the bridge complete the modification of the public land use pattern.

Parkland remains essentially unchanged from 1875, although a very small parcel of land at the corner of West and Darling Streets has been added to this category.

Residential land use occupies much the same space as it did in 1850 and 1875. Two differences do exist, however. Very few vacant lots exist in the residential areas, and secondly the growth of the core area of the city can be seen to be placing considerable pressure on the residential areas immediately adjacent to the core. The residential land in this zone is being slowly replaced by commercial functions.

Commercial land use has expanded considerably from the area it occupied in 1875. Particularly evident is the strong linear growth northward along the west side of Market Street, and eastward along Colborne Street. Commercial land can be found along a much larger section of Darling Street at this date. Scattered throughout the residential areas, numerous small stores can be seen occupying corner lots. This would appear to mark the emergence of the local corner convenience stores in Brantford.

Commercial land use was becoming more intense by 1900. The pressures exerted on the land by business were slowly reaching the point where competing land uses were being forced away from the core. Entire city blocks can be seen to be taking on a purely commercial function. This commercial specialization in the core, recognizable in a somewhat subdued form as early as 1850, would gather momentum in the next fifty years of the city's development.

Industrial land use patterns were beginning to slowly change by 1900. The core area is still heavily occupied by

manufacturing firms at this date. However, in order to be compatible with the commercial land uses, these manufacturing firms were usually small firms employing relatively few men, and could be considered to be "clean" industries. Food, beverage and confectionery firms make up the bulk of the core industries.

The larger, and "dirtier" heavy industries had grown rapidly during the preceeding decade. In many cases the firms suffered from an acute shortage of space and so sought new factory sites that would allow expansion in future years. In addition, the export business of these firms, particularly the farm implement group, required land served by the railways.

The most advantageous site for industrial expansion was the river flats. This land was flat and therefore easily built upon. It was adjacent to the old canal which was being used to generate electrical energy. The flats were served by two branch rail lines. The land was relatively unused although a small amount of residential land development had occurred. Furthermore, the flats were close to the business core where financial, insurance and export advice could be obtained. With these advantages some of the larger firms, Waterous Engine Works, Massey-Harris, and Cockshutt, seized the opportunity and located new plants on these flats.

Three other areas came to be favoured as industrial sites. The primary advantages offered by all three were:

- 1) expansion possibilities because of remoteness from the core and
- 2) rail transportation.

These areas were:

- a) the area around the station grounds of the Grand Trunk Railway (see Map 5)

- b) the area near Bruce, Elgin and Campbell Streets in the northeast section of the city
- c) the Greenwich-Mohawk Street area in the southeast sector of the city.

With this emerging trend of industrial concentration in specific locations, we see the initial areal specialization of industry in Brantford. This areal intensification can be attributed in part to changes in scale of production of the individual firms because of external demand for their products and in part to changes in technology. (especially farm implements and carriages). Faced with the need to be close to a railway for export, and to have available a land bank that would allow future expansion, these industries sought out such sites.

Thus by 1900, specific areas of Brantford can be recognized and identified in terms of their land use functions.

#### Brantford to 1925 (Map 7)

With the opening up of the Canadian West came large scale demands for farm machinery. This demand started in the last decade of the nineteenth century but was accelerated in the first decade of the twentieth century. The major farm implement firms of Brantford, Massey-Harris and Cockshutt, prospered and grew rapidly during this period. However, most industrial firms appeared to benefit by the general level of prosperity in Canada. Brantford was able to attract new industries to the city thereby allowing considerable diversification of her manufacturing base, although the basic dominance of the farm implement firms and foundries would continue.



# BRANTFORD

1925

## LEGEND

1:12,000

- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
- PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC
- RESIDENTIAL
- VACANT LAND

## LAND USE



J. TERDIK

MAP 7



The period 1900-1925 was the culmination of Brantford's growth pattern, the fulfillment of a trend initiated in 1850 and one that had gathered momentum up to 1900. This was the period of Brantford's most rapid growth both in terms of the number of new industries that came to the city, and in terms of population. By 1920, Brantford had a population of about 30,600. Very little was done outwardly to actively cultivate this rapid growth. Rail transportation was improved by the construction of two electric lines, the Lake Erie and Northern Railway and the Brantford to Hamilton Railway. The city was finally placed on the mainline of the Grand Trunk system in 1905. Electrical energy became available for general use, and certainly active advertisement was made regarding the advantages of the city for industry. None of these improvements can satisfactorily explain the surge of development in the city in this period. Rather, it appears that all of the basic elements of the growth that had slowly been developed over a fifty year interval surged forward in a final outburst. One thing is certain: after this period Brantford would cease to grow for a period in excess of twenty years.

The land use pattern for 1925 shows slight modification from 1900. Vacant land is still a dominant factor in the river flats area of the city. Elsewhere, the only vacant lots occur where some of the industries in the central area have either ceased operations completely, or else moved to better areas. The canal basin has been extensively filled by 1925. However, other than providing a right of way for the Brantford to Hamilton Electric Railway, this filled land remains unused.

Public land use is still scattered over a wide portion of the central area. There appears to be a discernable

but poorly developed trend for the concentration of such land uses in the area around Victoria Park. A new post office and the Y.M.C.A. building are the most notable additions to public land use.

Two new parkland areas are in evidence by 1925, a small triangular area at the apex of the intersection of Bridge and West Streets and a small lot at the southeastern corner of the block at the corner of Nelson and George Streets. The small lot added in 1900 is missing by 1925, having been reconverted to commercial land use.

Residential land use has been pushed out to some distance away from the central area. Further use has been made of the river flats for residential purposes. The pressures being exerted by competing land uses in the core of the city against residential areas has intensified by 1925. Commercial and public uses are increasing at the expense of residential land.

Commercial land areas exhibit continued expansion since 1900, again north along Market Street and eastward along Colborne Street. The core area itself has started to take over the land blocks between Darling, Dalhousie, Bridge and George Streets. The tendency towards entire commercial blocks can be seen to be increasing by 1925.

Industrial land use shows a significantly weaker presence within the central area of the city and more particularly, within the core area of the city. By 1925 many of the industrial firms had increased to such an extent in size, and had relied so heavily on mechanized production as to render the old facilities in or near the core obsolete.

These firms continued to move to the areas first noted in 1900, namely, the station area of the Grand Trunk Railway, the Bruce, Elgin and Campbell Street area, the Greenwich-Mohawk area, the river flats, and a new area in 1925, the Holmedale region.

The only manufacturing firms that persisted within the core were those dealing in the production of foods, tobacco, beverages and confectionery goods. The core of the central area was increasingly dominated by commercial and public land uses.

### Conclusion

The basic threads in the land use fabric of Brantford were established very soon after the site had been settled. As early as 1830, two small nuclei of future growth could be observed in the community. One of these nodes was on the west side of the Grand River and the other, on the east side. Both of these centers were on the Hamilton to London (later Colborne Street) road, which, at the time, was the main regional communications and trading system for Brantford. Since the communities at the head of Lake Ontario were much more important to Brantford than London, much greater emphasis was placed on the eastern node. The bridging problems encountered on the Grand River, a difficulty that persisted until the present Lorne Bridge was completed in 1923, further retarded the growth of West Brantford. This trend continues to be true right up to the present day.

Thus the dominance of the eastern nucleus was established. This is where the bulk of development, resulting in a specific pattern of land uses, would and did take place.

The earliest white settlement was located in this eastern node. The expanded settlement, observed in 1823-24, occupied more of this same area. By 1830, the concentration of human activity in this node (along Colborne Street within three blocks of the bridging point on the Grand) was an undeniable fact. More important, the essential character of this area had already been established with the apparent predominance of retail and workshop businesses. Residential land use occurred within the same area, either as second storey uses or occupying separate lots.

The next ninety years sees further growth spatially in response to a growing population; a clearer delineation of the land use patterns develops in terms of zones of specialization, in response to the changing technology of manufacturing and transportation. Essentially, a struggle ensues for dominance in the core area between commercial, industrial and residential land uses.

Ultimately the core becomes a clearly specialized zone of commercial land use. Residential land use is squeezed out to the margins of the core, thereby creating expansion at the edges of the city. Residential land uses that remain in the core are forced to exist as generally sub-standard second or third storey uses.

Industry undergoes dramatic changes that render the workshop method of production increasingly obsolete. Mechanization and mass production become the prime forces in industrialization. Larger factories, both in terms of space and in labour force, is the direct result. Whereas the workshop industries, essentially small and clean in nature could remain in the core well into the twentieth century, the heavier and dirtier iron, steel and implement

foundries sought relief from the restrictions in the core by moving to areas on the peripheries of Brantford. The one exception to this was the industrial occupancy of the river flats to the south of the city. This, however, was a good move. This land, hitherto unused, offered numerous advantages to industry.

Transportation routes played a significant role in determining where certain land uses would ultimately locate. The road and railroad pattern of Brantford was complete by 1905.

The initial influence of the Hamilton to London road created attractive conditions for commercial and workshop activities along this road. With the advent of the Grand River Navigational Canal, attention was again focused on Colborne and Market Streets. Relocation of workshops in response to the influence of the canal did not occur primarily because the canal property offered few attractive building sites. Thus the workshops stayed and expanded within the central area, near the core within easy reach of the canal. Accessibility to the canal was important, but location on this artery was not. The core offered easy access to both land and water routes.

The first railways in Brantford, like the canal, did not attract industry to land adjacent to the rails. The Brantford and Buffalo route was peripheral to the main part of the town. It could be easily reached from the town, and of its own accord, did not appear to offer any additional benefits to industry. The Great Western line, running northward along the edge of Clarence Street, was simply a branch feeder to the main line that had by-passed Brantford. This branch was inconvenient and inefficient, suffering as

it did from long delays. It most certainly did not offer advantages for re-location. However, starting after 1875, and very definitely by 1900, the location of the railways strongly influenced industrial location. At the turn of the century, the increasingly modern manufacturing plants were heavily involved in the export trade. Rail transportation became an essential feature of industrial land use areas.

Thus areal specialization, first recognizable as an element in the townspace as early as 1850, would emerge with greater clarity as the various expansionary forces operated within the city through the next seventy-five years.

In the final analysis, industrial development proved to be the key factor in stimulating expansion of Brantford. As industry went, so went the fortunes of Brantford. By 1925 it had become clear that Brantford could not offer sufficient advantages to industry to enable the city to have a competitive edge. Subsequently, Brantford entered a period of difficulty from which it emerged at a very slow rate.

### Footnotes

1 Note that this central area includes but is not confined to the Central Business District. The precise delimitation of the C.B.D. is in itself a major problem.

2 Other sources include: Toronto Globe, 1877; History of the Congregational Church in Brantford, 1872; Warner-Beers, 1888; Brantford Expositor, 1927; and the Burwell papers, P.A.O.

3 F.D.Reville, History of the County of Brant, Brantford, Hurley Printing Co., 1920, p. 71.

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5 U.S.Smith, Map of Brantford, Hamilton, Helliwell Publisher, 1852.

6 Assessment Roll of Brantford, Microfilm G. S. 1768-1772; Public Archives of Ontario, date believed to be 1847.

7 Bird's Eye View of Brantford, 1875, Chas. Shoder and Co., Chicago Lithography Co.

8 W. Evans, Directory of Brantford, Brantford, J. Johnston Printer, 1875.

9 Brantford City Directory, Ingersoll, Union Publishing Company, 1900-01.

10 H. Vernon, City of Brantford Directory, Hamilton, Griffin and Richmond Co., 1925.

11 Census of Canada, 1901, p.vii.

12 Brant Historical Society, A Glimpse of the Past, a Centennial History of Brantford and Brant County, Brantford, Brant Historical Society, p.14.

13 Johnston, Valley of the Six Nations, p.xliii

14 C.M. Johnston, Brant County, 1784-1945, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1967, p.26.

15 Reville, County of Brant, p.70-71.

16 Johnston, Valley of the Six Nations, p. 185.

17 Reville, County of Brant, p.86.

18 Johnston, Valley of the Six Nations, p.lxviii.

19 Diary of Lewis Burwell, regarding the survey of the Indian surrender: Brantford, June 26, 1830, Public Archives of Ontario.

20 Loc. cit.

21 R.W.S. MacKay, The Canada Directory, Montreal, J. Lovell Publ., 1851 pp. 35-38.



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