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A HISTORY OF THE SMITHS FALLS LOCK
STATIONS, 1827-1978

by Peter DeLottinville

1979

Volume I

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Volume I

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Introduction

This report is divided into two general sections. Part One describes the initial construction and the subsequent maintenance of the canal structures and buildings. Each of the three lock stations, Smiths Falls combined, Smiths Falls detached and Old Slys, are examined separately. Part Two of the report concerns the economic activities related to the canal. The large number of businesses in Smiths Falls associated with the Rideau requires some organization of their history. The second section of the report is divided into five basic periods of economic development. Within each of these chronological periods, secondary themes of local economic activities are examined. Although each of these parts stands as an independent study, the relationship between the general economic developments and the individual lock stations should not be overlooked. The amount of money spent upon the maintenance of the stations, as well as the types of buildings erected, is clearly linked to the significance of the Rideau Canal to the local economy.

Criteria for distinguishing between periods of development in Smiths Falls was based upon the economic significance of particular local events rather than general historic developments on a provincial or national level. The first period of development extends from 1832 until 1858. The town of Smiths Falls begins its history with the completion of the canal. For the following twenty years, it is dependent upon the canal for transportation and its industrial development based upon the abundant water power of the river. This situation is changed in 1858 when the first railway locomotives of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway were transported up the canal to Smiths Falls. The second period extends from 1859 to 1885 and is characterized by the growing importance of railways to the local economy. Local industry is still concentrated along the canal, which continues to

exert considerable influence, but the dominance of the Rideau gradually wanes until railways assume the first priority in local growth patterns. The decision to make Smiths Falls the eastern divisional point of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 distinguishes the second and third periods of development. The third period extends from 1886 until 1923. It illustrates the continuation of the themes begun in the second period. The canal plays a secondary role in the local economy, although industry located on its banks is still significant to the local economy. The nature of that industry, however, is significantly different from the preceding period to warrant separate examination.

The final two periods of development concern the decline of the economic significance of the Rideau to Smiths Falls. The fourth period extends from 1924 until 1954. It is defined by the 1923 closure of the Wood grist mill, which was the last of its kind in town, and the closure of the Frost and Wood agricultural implement factory in 1954. As the largest and oldest company on the canal banks, the Frost and Wood firm's decline ends the industrial significance of the canal area. The final period from 1955 until 1978 is characterized by the growth of park land along the canal. Although plans for recreational development had been underway since the 1920's, it is only in the last twenty years that such development has had priority.

Each of these five periods includes a great deal of information, and to facilitate the understanding of the economic history, each period is discussed in two chapters. The first chapter of each period presents a thematic overview of the years examined and relates these developments to the growth of Smiths Falls. The second chapter for each period describes the various industries in detail and elaborates upon the themes in the preceding chapter. Industries are divided according to lock station and then by type of activity such as lumber or metal industries. The exception to this rule is the industry at the combined locks owned by Abel Ward and William Simpson. Because of the particular importance of these men in local history, their mills are discussed separately, and their tenants are also discussed in one section. Each of the detailed chapters on economic development follows this pattern.

The sections on the lock stations themselves were not divided into major periods, although parallels between economic developments and these structures were pointed out when significant. Each of the lock stations follows the same pattern. After a description of the original construction of the works and the activities immediately related to it, each of the major canal buildings and engineering structures is described separately.

The limitations and errors of this study will be for the reader to decide, but a general comment upon the basic thesis of this report is not out of place. This study attempts to show that the town of Smiths Falls grew as a result of the Rideau Canal, but through the efforts of local millers and industrialists rather than public policy. In fact, the rapid expansion of the town was made in opposition to the plans of the Royal Engineers. The exploitation of the water power of the canal for industrial purposes did not become public policy until the 1860's. By that time, most of the power sites at Smiths Falls were occupied and this earlier development of the town no doubt contributed to its success in later years. This industrial activity made a much greater contribution to the local economy than the commercial activities, but by itself could not insure continued prosperity. Late nineteenth-century development was the result of the Canadian Pacific Railway's involvement in the local economy. By the end of the First World War, changing technology and economic conditions contributed to the decline of the canal banks as an industrial area. This economic decline of the area allowed for the growth of park land along the Rideau. In the last twenty years, this has become the major thrust of local improvements.

The above arguments suffer in two ways. Because of the terms of reference for this study which emphasized buildings rather than commercial trade, the research collected for this project may have been biased in favour of industry to the detriment of commercial activities. This does not affect the basic argument of the earlier years of the canal when commercial activities were important, but once the volume of trade declined, it is difficult to state the marginal influence such trade had on the local economy. The influence of the trade in the later years might have been underestimated. Another difficulty arises with the last chap-

ters on economic development. Because of the declining significance of the canal related industry to the local economy, it is difficult to assess the role these industries played in the general decline of local economic power.

The second limitation is one which affects every study confined by strict geographic boundaries. While the study can relate the growth of the town to the canal, the relationship between the growth of Smiths Falls and the surrounding region of eastern Ontario was difficult to assess. This was compounded by the fact that much of the history of Smiths Falls was influenced by the Canadian Pacific Railway which had national influence. Until the precise nature of the railway industry and the local economy can be studied, the history of the town remains incomplete.

The exploration of such questions would have made for a much more enlightening report, but the following chapters present a full study of the relationship between Smiths Falls and the Canal. It is hoped this will provide a basis for further investigations.

Part One History of the Lock Stations

Smiths Falls Combined Locks

Construction

The Smiths Falls combined locks consist of a series of three locks, a waste weir and a stone dam. They were the major works in this area undertaken during the construction of the canal. The detached lock is situated above the combined locks and Old Slys locks below. The falls which the locks were required to overcome was the source of water power for the early mills of the town, and as a result the locks are now located in the centre of town.

When the original surveyors came to Smiths Falls in order to lay out the best route to overcome the falls, they were not encouraged with the task before them. John Mactaggart wrote,

To the minds of people accustomed to canalling business, these Falls become as appalling an object as any that is to be met with: they fall over beds of hard bastard marble rock, 36 feet in less than one quarter of a mile. At this place there are numbers of islands formed by snies winding around the Falls.¹

Another traveller described a "series of rapids in which many low green and rocky islands abound".² The main problem was not the actual height of the falls, but the fissured nature of the rock which made it difficult to contain the water behind dams and embankments.

The original scheme of construction, which later had to be abandoned, was described in detail in Mactaggart's report to Col. By.

Between one of these [islands] and the west bank of the river, we propose a dam of 23 feet; this dam is directly in the middle of the rapid, and nearly opposite to Rykert's Store: 96 feet at bottom, 200 at top, will be the length of the dam.

The dam is proposed to check the water oozing through the fissures at the above rocky island, and to throw the water over the Falls, so that the still-water above may be deepened 2 feet 7 inches, and also that the snie immediately behind the island may be filled with water; for in this place we propose three locks of 11 feet 2 inches lift each, the dam forming the waste-weir to the same.

The width of the Rocky Island, from dam to snie, is 290 feet, and of height sufficient for the dam. The snie has low banks of 420 feet on its east side, which will require a stone embankment, so as to get above the rapid from wing wall to upper lock, and save Ward's Farm from inundation. At the bottom, the rock is of a shelving nature, doing away with the necessity of having inverted arches: indeed, few arches seem to be necessary throughout the whole work. The first lock-pit will have to be excavated seven, the second two feet: the bottom of the third is five feet above the level. Considerable backing-in and retaining wing-wall work are required about the Hornet's Snie - we denominate it so from the trouble these insects gave us; while patiently measuring and surveying we were severely stung, yet this snie could not be lost sight of: its average width is 60 feet, its banks, at lower end, are 20 feet, and width 80 feet. The banks of the Rideau, opposite, the mouth of the snie, are 86 feet, and the mouth is 220 feet, beneath a saw mill. This mill is 150 feet beneath the end of the proposed dam, being nearly between the Saw-mill Dam and the saw mill. We are thus particular as the dam to be built nearer the mill would destroy it, and if farther up the stream, the water would get out of the snie behind it.³

At the time, Mactaggart's plan was accepted because it was a much better alternative than the early proposal to build a three mile canal around the falls through a difficult terrain, "with rock that defies the strength of

of gunpowder or crow-bars to remove it, and would weary the British treasury with expense".⁴

Mactaggart's plan did not call for any detached lock above the three combined locks or a separate waste weir channel. The Hornet's snie was the present waste weir channel. Such a proposal was much simpler than the locks and dam which were eventually built. While the plan was theoretically sound, further studies of the local situation turned up some practical problems which led to the abandonment of this scheme (See Figures 2 and 14).

Keeping this basic change in the plans of the works in mind, it is possible to describe the details of construction. The contractors at Smiths Falls were Rykert, Simpson and Company who were also known as Rykert, Simpson and Adams. The contract was signed on 10 May 1827 and work commenced shortly after that.⁵ Most of the supervision of the construction was done by Mr. Rykert and James Simpson, who later bought land around the locks and engaged extensively in milling. Adams did not appear to take an active part in the operations.

In July 1827, Col. By ordered John Burrows and a party of men to lay out the line of the Rideau Canal. By 27 July, the Burrows party made their way to the isolated construction site. His diary recorded,

Saturday 27

...Arrived at the head of Smiths Falls about Dark much fatigued, wet and hungry - pitched our tent and reposed for the night.

Sunday

On inspecting our provisions found it much injured by the rain and stray from the rapids, spread it to dry (the biscuits was not well baked). Mr. Mactaggart still quite unwell from the curious alement [sic] he has on him. Saw Mr. Rykert who has got a long line of cutting done and some grubbing - saw a quarry he has just opened on the NW side of Smiths Falls near the Mill. The [stone goods?] not look well.⁶

By August, Rykert had grubbed a strip 80 feet wide along Hornet's snie and half cleared the remaining area along the canal.⁷

The first major work that the contractors attempted was the main dam between the north shore of the river and Jason Island. When Burrows was laying out the line of the canal he recorded,

The situation of the Dam being a little above the head of the head of the locks there will be required a wing wall on the N side sweeping round to the Dam on the Island - for the necessary Puddle...there is good clay and sufficient supply to be had at Mr. Olmsteads farm near the head of the Locks - about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile distance.⁸

By December 1827, it was reported that the Smiths Falls site, as well as other lock stations, "have been extensively opened and a quantity of cut stone prepared for the Locks and Cuts at these stations are in a forward state of progress".⁹ This quarry at Smiths Falls appeared to be one source of the stone used in construction. An early traveller on the canal remarked, "Limestone of very hard quality abounds here, which will answer to construct the works with, but will be difficult to cut and dress".¹⁰ The hardness of this rock apparently impressed most canal authorities and John Mactaggart referred to the "long ledges of Plutonic rock"¹¹ he encountered during his initial survey.

By January 1828, Rykert and Simpson were well into construction. The official report on progress stated,

Dam 23 feet high with considerable side walls, contracted for by Messrs. Rykarts and Co., these works are proceeding rapidly, they have cleared the land, quarried a large quantity of good stone, and have the Dam more than two thirds built, the side walls to retain the water for its level are in a forward state.¹²

Troubles with the work soon appeared, however, which would eventually lead the Engineers to abandon the original plan. In October 1828, N.H. Baird's field notes recorded,

Smiths Falls - Met Rycart and with Col. By and Mr. Burrows inspected Dam. Col. found great fault with stuff being removed from face of Dam and _____ he had formerly given orders none should be removed, to which Rykarts replied he

had not removed any since Dam having been _____ off at present height and now further raised makes Cnd. Com. Col. By proposed to pull up some stones to break land. Went along retaining wall which does not appear high enough. Went into Houses and warned them they might be flooded. Proposes Embt. from End of Dam to Knoll - but I remarked the ground fell away beyond, at which Col. By order me on my return to make an inspection and see what Land would be flooded or what Embankment requisite.¹³

The early plan for the dam and three locks were unsuitable because they would flood a great deal of land, as well as put pressure on the local rock structure.

When Baird returned in November, he and Rykerts examined the south side of the Rideau River and found that, "the whole up to Rapids nothing but a confused mass of _____ Rocks with wide chasms by which the Water escapes in spring floods, which would seem an [objection?] to burthen this with the pressure of water".¹⁴ The crevassed nature of local rock formations would not only leak a great deal of water, but it was always possible that it would cause the works to give way. With the existing plan, there seemed to be no alternative. Later in November Baird, Lieutenant Pooley and Mr. Frome held meetings to discuss the problem, which Baird noted "seems rather a puzzler".¹⁵

During the following year, the Royal Engineers decided to abandon the original plan of construction. The problems created by the rock structure and increased flooding of land proved too difficult to solve. The final plan of the combined locks was summarized by Col. By in his April 1830 report to the British Government on additional expenses incurred in the canal construction.

On taking fresh levels and more carefully examining the Country than was possible to do prior to forming the plan and Estimate approved of by the Committee, it was ascertained that the surmounting of the total rise of 33 ½ feet by placing three locks in the Hornet's snie as at first proposed was impractical arising from the low nature of the Banks of the

River, the great quantity of Land which would be flooded, and the high and extensive Embankments required to retain the Water, the exact nature and quality of which could not from the impenetrable state of the Swamps be accurately ascertained but it was evident, that their Construction would in the first instance be attended with an immense additional expense and that their ultimate security could not be relied upon, from the fact that works of the description alluded to are not at all times precarious subject to casual ties of various descriptions and entailing a constant and endless expense in order to keep them in proper repair. It was equally evident that the Hornet's Snie was too confined and not at all adapted for the Locks on the increased scale its lower entrance was also contracted and bound by the opposite banks of the River, that Steam Boats could not possibly have entered without incurring considerable expense by cutting off a rocky point, and even then, the object required would not have been fully obtained, and the original Plan was in this point of view alone, a defective one. The Rock forming the bed of the River proving very unsound, a Waste Weir is necessary to provide for the safety of the Dam. Taking the above circumstance into consideration but more particularly the low nature of the Banks of the River and the consequent extensive Embankments required, I felt it my duty to deviate from the original plan, being at the same time fully convinced that it could not be carried into effect without incurring an enormous additional expense and what is of more importance, that it did not provide for the permanent security of the Works or afford the necessary facilities for a Steam Boat navigation, facts not known at the period when the Committee went through the line of the Canal but having subsequently been ascertained it was indispensibly necessary to provide for and the attainment of which ought not for one moment to be placed in comparison with the apparent increase which the deviation or question has occasioned [sic] at the

time, I feel convinced that the extensive Embankment, above alluded to, which would have been required to carry into execution the original Plan, the final expense of the same would have exceeded the amount of the Works as at present constructing when completed, and have been at the same time an inferior design. The following alterations have been adopted mainly. Three locks of 8 feet 5 inches lift each are placed in connection to the south of the Hornets Snie which now forms a Waste Channel, a fourth detached Lock is to be constructed at the foot of the Rapids of 8 ½ feet left in consequence of this arrangement, the bed of the River between the combined locks and the detached one, has to be deepened and an Embankment from the head of the latter to the high land on the right bank is required which must also have been formed had the original Plan been carried into execution; a Dam to serve also as a Waste Weir to be constructed across the north Branch of the River to give 5 feet depth of Water over the Upper Sill of the detached Lock.¹⁶

By's lengthy defence of his change in plans indicated two things, a man asking for money from an unfriendly Committee, and a man dedicated to build a canal which would be useful both as a military route and a commercial waterway.

Now that the general plan of construction has been explained, it is possible to concentrate upon the two major parts of the works. The stone dam across the northern part of the river remained in its original position, but illustrated the problems encountered by the first engineering works attempted on the canal. The three locks, which were shifted from the waste weir channel to their present location, followed the construction of the main dam and the improvement in their construction by local labour reflected the high quality of the canal structures as a whole.

The general design of the works was only one problem the Engineers and contractors had to face. The skilled labour to lay the stone work required for the canal structures did not exist in Canada. As a result,

the first works built encountered difficulties due to inexperience. This occurred in the construction of the dam. Col. By explained that,

the Dam at the Hog's Back and that at Smith's Falls were the first commenced; at which time there was not a man in the country that had ever done any key work, and I had repeatedly to pull down their work until they understood it, but as there are now plenty of men who understand this work I hope all my other Dams will stand the test of ages.¹⁷

This general inexperience on the part of the workmen no doubt contributed a great deal to the friction between Rykert and Simpson and the Royal Engineers.

By's explanation of the situation at Smiths Falls was prompted by Lieutenant Pooley's report on a major leak which had developed in the main dam. A month before the leak developed everything was reported well,

Clearing, grubbing, etc...completed. Dam about 3/4 finished.

Excavation for lock pits only commenced. Embankment at head of Horner's Sluice 1/2 done. 1/2 the quantity of cut stone drawn to the spot and 1/8 of ditto in the quarries.¹⁸

The inexperienced workmanship of the dam, however, revealed itself in early spring. Pooley was the immediate overseer of the works, and on 23 April 1829, he sent a messenger to By to inform him of the dangerous state of affairs.

About five o'clock p.m. on the 20th Instant, a leakage was first observed through the arch key work, issuing from it about the top of the lower course, two feet six inches or three feet from the bottom, and extending from the west abutment across to [about?] centre of course, coming through muddy, evidently wasting away the puddle. Upon this alarm, a body of about thirty men set to work, excavating behind the key work, in order, by sinking a trench, to discover where the run of water proceeds from, and then to choke and repuddle it. The clay been hard frozen about six or ten feet deep, little progress was made; the working parties were regularly relieved all night, but the thunder storm and heavy rains

precluding the possibility of doing much work. By three o'clock in the morning, the rush of water through the key work had considerably increased since first discovered, and by day-light, when I visited it, the leak extended along the lower course of the west abutment, two thirds across the dam, the greatest quantity issuing from about the centre, muddy with the puddle, level of the water above dam not perceptibly lowered. Mr. Rykert being absent at Brockville, I directed his foreman to persevere sinking behind the key work, over the principle rush of water, and to collect at hand a quantity of fresh puddle, brushwood, sheeting poles, horse dung, etc....to choke it as expediently as possible on discovering the run of it; other parties were at work wheeling clay in front of the dam, opposite the leaks, but with no effect: they continued to work yesterday, and last night. Today Mr. Rykert having returned, I found him pursuing the same plan, but there is so little energy manifested by his workmen or foreman, who do not appear to be competent to conduct a work of this nature, and so indifferently supplied with tools, that I cannot refrain from expressing my apprehension as to the result. The excavating party had not got down below frost, although about seven feet, and had been blasting all morning. The rush of water had not been however much increased although this evening I thought it was rather gaining ground.¹⁹

The actions of Rykert pointed to another aspect of the conflict between contractor and supervisor. In part, Rykert's action, or lack of it, was motivated by a belief the water was leaking through the rock fissures rather than the dam itself. Pooley's efforts finally led Rykert to hasten his men and repair the leaking dam.

While the dam successfully held the water required, it was not one of the better examples of the skill of the Royal Engineers. Col. By, in his re-evaluation of the total cost of the Rideau Canal, estimated a further £ 1221.19.0 would have to be spent on the dam to excavate

the loose rocks to form a sufficient foundation.²⁰ British money and supervision could not compensate for the basic inability of the workmen to carry out their job. In February 1830, one traveller noted,

The Dam is of very inferior workmanship, both as to the form and qualities of the materials. The stones are far too light for such a work, and very indifferently put together. It may stand, but the fact is questionable.²¹

The dam, of course, did stand but the above comment illustrated that this dam was not regarded equal to the regular standard demanded by the Royal Engineers.

The second part of the initial construction was the erection of three locks to overcome the rapids at Smiths Falls. John Burrows laid out the initial locks on 24 August 1827.

Proceeded to _____ the line of locks in the snie on the south side of the river at Smiths Falls, commenced the first on river [bank?] 250 feet from the opposite on N. Side of river at the bottom of the falls and 12 feet from the first table rock fall, there being no excavation except what may be necessary for foundation of works. 96 feet above said fall to head of first lock in which there will be about seven feet of Rock Excavation on an average. The 2nd Lock extends to the 2nd fall and will require but little excavation - the 3rd Lock extends to the 3rd rapid and requires no excavation - from the head of the Locks a retaining wall will be required to the high land on the S. side. This wall requires to be built - with sloping sides and Puddle in the Middle.²²

These locks in the Hornet's Snie were to have 11 feet 2 inches lift each. With By's April 1830 report, however, these plans were changed and the locks located in their present position. In By's estimates to the Committee he reported an additional £ 2009.2.0 necessary to build these locks. Along with their increased size of 134 ft. by 33 ft., these locks required more excavation than the earlier locks, which used the natural tables in the falls to surmount them. The new locks were to have a combined lift of twenty-five feet. Additional expenses were required for backing and pudd-

ling, for the replacement of rack and pinions with chains and crabs, and wood with cast iron valves. In order to excavate the loose rock at the head of the combined locks a further £ 503.15.6 3/4 was requested. The porous nature of the local rock formations necessitated grouting the fissures in the rock formation to prevent the water from finding a passage under the lock walls. It was also necessary to drain the water from numerous springs behind these walls. A coffer dam had to be erected to permit the removal of the rock in front of the locks.²³

Rykert and Simpson did a much better job on the construction of the locks than the main dam. A visitor in February 1830 remarked,

The Locks are very superior to the Dam in workmanship, built of a species of sand stone brought from a distance of seven miles, and as a large portion of materials are upon the spot no delay is anticipated here, if the dam holds good.²⁴

The improvement in the workmanship resulted from the fact that the locks were not built until the dam was well underway. Most of the mistakes were contained in that structure.

Besides general clearing and a few more embankments, the new plan called for a waste weir instead of having water flowing over the dam. Col. By explained that it was considered, "indispensably necessary to prevent the Water flowing over the Dam, the Rock forming the bed of the River not being sufficiently sound to resist the action of water falling from the height of the Dam".²⁵ The waste weir was in the Hornet's Snie, where the original locks were planned. The unstable rock which caused the alteration would continue to trouble the canal authorities for several years to come.

These changes added to the overall cost of the locks. The original estimate given to the Committee was £ 20,408.10. 5.3/4. By 31 March 1831, £ 21,604. 6. 10.1/4 had already been expended, with a further £ 11,612. 16. 5 1/2 estimated necessary to complete the work. This would make a final total of £ 33,217. 3. 3.3/4.²⁶ The added expense was not due solely to technical problems.

On 3 January 1831, James Simpson abandoned his contract for the construction of the works at the site, preferring to spend his energies in the local milling business. The project was finished by Bell and Richard-

son, who were working on Old Slys Locks at the time. At the time of this abandonment, Simpson still owed £ 2,000 to the Government for work unfinished. This resulted in the launching of a suit by the Government in December 1831 to recover the money.²⁷ Before this, it was necessary to assess the amount of work done by Rykert and Simpson before giving up the contract.

In measuring the stone quarried by the contractors and attempting to lay out the lands belonging to the Ordnance Department, Lieutenant Pooley was obstructed in almost every possible way by James Simpson. Simpson was in a delicate position, not only from his failure to complete his contract. While he was building the works at Smiths Falls, Simpson also built several mills on Jason Island. The land on which these mills were built belonged to the Government as part of the lands laid out for the canal. As long as Simpson was contractor, the Engineers allowed him free rein to improve the property. They always assumed Simpson would pay a nominal rent to the Department as an acknowledgement of their claim when the works were completed. In January 1831, all this changed. Lieutenant Pooley was required to re-establish the Department's claim to all the land originally appropriated for the canal. Simpson, on the other hand, had to prevent this or lose control of the mills. There were two main confrontations in this dispute, one involving the removal of quarried stone for the works, and the second involving the marking off of the government lands at Smiths Falls.

The actions of Simpson to prevent the Department from staking out its land at Smiths Falls were summarized by the Ordnance lawyer for the resulting trial, Mr. Hagarman.

It must be borne in mind in this case, that previous to the failure of [Simpson] in the performance of his contract, no difficulty of any kind whatever accured, either in regard to land, or materials required; but AFTER the contract had been let to other individuals, every obstacle was thrown in the way of the Government by [Simpson]. The pickets marked with the broad arrow, placed by the Officer in charge, to designate the boundaries (and which the Statute requires)

were torn up by [Simpson] and thrown into the water, almost immediately after they were put down by Lieutenant Pooley the most of them in his presence; that [Simpson] had used the most abusive language to the servants of the Government on all occasions; and that both himself and his servants had carried this opposition so far, that the [officers?] could not in some instances proceed properly in the execution of their work; that during a temporary cessation, of that particular description of work, which required puddle, he had fenced in the bank from which puddle had always been obtained; that the occupants of certain houses, built by said [Simpson], when a Contractor, for the convenience of individuals in his employment, refuse to leave them, after notices were duly served upon them so to do: in which perverse conduct Mr. Simpson encouraged them, and in fact requested them to hold possession against the servants of the Crown.²⁸

When Pooley succeeded in removing the required materials, Simpson launched a suit against him for trespass and taking away puddle, stone and other materials. The suit was heard in August 1831, and the Ordnance Department easily won the case since the legislation relating to the construction of the canal clearly gave them the right to remove all materials required.²⁹

The victory achieved by the Department would be clouded by later events, for though Simpson had lost in court, he won a partial victory at Smiths Falls. His mills continued to operate despite the Government claim to ownership. Hagerman charged that Simpson launched the lawsuit for "vexatious motives, and with a view of recovering exorbitant requital, for damages, done to lands, which comparatively speaking, were not worth any thing, two years prior to the works of the Rideau Canal going into operation".³⁰ There was some truth to Hagerman's charge, but in his concentration on the immediate benefit or loss to Simpson, the lawyer revealed an unawareness of the popular impact of such proceedings. Despite the legality of the Department's case, popular support appeared to rally behind the civilians rather than the military.

This was evident in a second lawsuit involving William Mittleberger and the Royal Engineers. The suit involved stone taken from a quarry by Lieutenant Pooley after Simpson had abandoned the contract. The quarry was located at Merrickville and had been used to supply stone to Smiths Falls, Edmund's Rapids and Merrickville. On 11 January 1831, Lieutenant Pooley attempted to enter the quarry to measure the stone dressed and determine how much Simpson had been paid. The men working as sub-contractors for Simpson refused admission to the officials. Two days later, however, these men willingly assisted the officers in their task. William Mittleberger was officially Simpson's clerk though the Ordnance officers suspected he was actually a silent partner. Simpson sold the stone quarry to Mittleberger when he abandoned the contract possibly with the intention of being paid twice for the stone, once when the Department paid Simpson himself and a second time when they settled with Mittleberger.³¹

Mittleberger's suit had as little legal validity as Simpson's suit. After hearing his case, the Solicitor-General moved for a Non-Suit, in which the Judge agreed. Mittleberger's lawyer shrewdly refused to do so and placed his faith in the local Jury. Hagerman, the Ordnance lawyer, wrote that this procedure was "a thing almost unprecedented in the Courts of Justice for any one of the respectable part of the profession, to go in direct opposition to the Judge's opinion".³² Respectability, however, did not win law suits, and Mittleberger proceeded to do just that. This outcome perplexed Hagerman who explained away the verdict by assuming the jury, "either misconceiving the grounds, upon which the Judge recommended the Nonsuit, or being previously biased in favour of the Plaintiff, he being considered, a poor and persecuted man".³³ The verdict was so contrary to the law, it had to be reserved for the consideration of the Judges in Term. Further details on this matter are not available, but this trial illustrated the unpopularity of the British officials among the Canadian jurors. These early trials would have a significant effect on the larger issue of land claims at Smiths Falls which would remain unsettled until forty years later.

The Simpson and Mittleberger trials were followed by the Department's unsuccessful attempt to recover £ 2000 which Simpson owed them. The ini-

tial suit was launched in December 1831, but soon was dropped when Simpson fled to the United States. It was brought up again during arbitration proceedings at the Court of Kings Bench in 1836, but because of disagreement among the arbitrators, it was again postponed. In 1839, the Attorney General was requested to restart the proceedings, but the case was apparently given up as hopeless.³⁴

These matters did not prevent the Royal Engineers from taking a well-deserved pride in the final completion of the works. The three locks on the south bank of the river had a combined lift of twenty-five feet with seven feet of water below and five feet six inches on the upper sill of the upper lock. Immediately above the locks was a large basin formed by the water backed up to the detached lock. This was formed by embankments extending 850 feet on the south side from the wing wall of the combined locks to the canal below the detached lock. On the north side a 180 foot embankment connected the locks to a cut-stone pier which formed an abutment to the waste weir. The waste weir was built of timber, with four sluices to regulate the height of water. The embankment then extended 200 feet to a rocky island where the twenty-three foot high stone dam connected the island and the north shore of the Rideau River. The dam was six feet above the height of the water to prevent the water from flowing over the top. The basin itself was five feet six inches deep.³⁵

The works served their function well, but they were not perfect, and would require repairs in a short time. By 1834, Barker observed,

The embankments at the basin and other parts of these extensive works are said not to be in the most perfect state of repairs, several breakages having made their appearance, which threaten much expense in effectually remedying.³⁶

Early Buildings

The arrival of the workmen of Rykert, Simpson and Company at Smiths Falls marked the beginning of settlement. Preceding these men was Abel Russell Ward, the first permanent settler, who built a saw mill and a log house

nearby. The mills and other economic activities will be discussed in a later section on the economic development of the area, but it is best to mention the buildings erected by the contractors at this time.

The earliest map of the site was made by John Burrows as a rough sketch in his diary in August 1827. The sketch showed Jason Island, Ward's saw mill and dam and four other buildings. These four buildings were clustered on the north shore of the river. One of these buildings was later marked as Rykert's store.³⁷ Rykert no doubt recouped a lot of the wages he paid his men in this store as the closest competition was miles away. The other three buildings were possibly dwellings or barns. These buildings were probably all of log construction. There were at least two buildings which Burrows did not locate on his sketch. In his notes, he reported that six buildings worth £ 25 each had been erected.³⁸

By May 1828, there were four more structures marked. One of these was a barn to the north west of Rykert's store, which was probably a stable erected by James Simpson. To the south-east were three buildings clustered together which served as the Engineer's Offices.³⁹ In his 1830 estimate of canal expenses, Col. By mentioned that a log house was required to serve as an office for the Overseer of the works, and for the security of the stores.⁴⁰ Jason Gould, brother-in-law to James Simpson and an early settler of Smiths Falls, testified in court that there had been one building used by the canal officials about 300 feet from the canal reserve. The building was not erected by the Engineers but was there before the works commenced. Possibly this was the dwelling erected by Abel Ward. Another witness, Benjamin Jones reported one building occupied by Matthews which also contained machinery for the locks.⁴¹ All these references were apparently to these three buildings.

The next maps of the area were drawn in January and April 1831.⁴² The Engineers offices were clearly marked, though the January map showed four buildings instead of three. In addition to Simpson's barn and Rykert's store, there are several other buildings located. The April map, which appeared to be more detailed, marked eight buildings along the river bank. One was labelled "Old Shop" and this would appear to be Rykert's store. The two buildings to the east of Rykert's store were marked "stores".

These could possibly refer to new merchants' shops or simply to store-houses used by Rykert. The five buildings to the west of Rykert's store were unmarked.

The April 1831 map also indicated a bridge from the north shore to Jason Island, which was built by Jason Gould in order to gain access to the mills on the island. A kiln was located between Gould's bridge and the Government Dam.

North of Rykert's store were two buildings designated "Simpson and Wards". Since these two buildings were located next to Simpson's barn, it is possible they were erected at the same time as that structure, but omitted from the earlier maps. Further north of Simpson's barn or large stable was "Schofield's barn".

The final map for the construction period was dated 20 December 1832.⁴³ The Engineers' offices were again clearly marked. Schofield's barn as well as Ward and Simpson's two buildings were also located on the same sites as shown in earlier maps. The buildings clustered around Rykert's store were shown to be seven structures instead of eight.

This map marked the early roads at the site for the first time. A short road connected the Engineers' offices to the Government dam. This road intersected the main road which paralleled the river in front of these offices. This main road led to Perth and First Rapids. Further east, this main road intersected a road running north and south along the same route as Beckwith Street. To the south, this road crossed the river and Jason Island. The intersection of the two roads was labelled "Mr. Simpson's Town" referring to the contractor James Simpson.

There were nine buildings located near the intersection of the north-south road and the east-west road. Three were on the north west corner and two on the south west corner. The other four were located along the road running south between the main intersection and the river. Unfortunately, none of these buildings' purposes was marked and all were drawn the same size making it impossible to measure accurately the dimensions of these structures. Though most of the buildings were probably hastily constructed, the constant addition of new structures indicated the growing activity centred upon the construction of the works and the

early mills. (See Figure 2 and 14.)

Lockhouse

The first lockhouse at this station was built at the same time as the locks themselves, but not by the canal officers. The house was started by the canal contractors before the land was reserved for canal purposes. The log house was left unfinished by the contractors and sold to Martin Carroll for £ 20. Carroll finished the house and added a stone chimney at a cost of £ 10. Carroll had been employed on the canal and when it was finished, he rented the house at 15 shillings a month before the lockmaster took over the house.⁴⁴

Carroll filed a claim for compensation for this building described as, "1 log house well built, floored glazed etc. and stone chimney near Smiths Falls lower lock locks £ 25.0.0."⁴⁵ George Adams, the Government Arbitrator valued the house at £ 15 to £ 20 when taken and advised \$ 30 compensation. Captain Boulton's 1832 map clearly showed this house to the south of the combined lock on the same spot as the present lockhouse.⁴⁶ Bolton's map also indicated another building between the lockhouse and the locks. This was probably a storage shed or stable. This log house must have been removed to make way for the stone lockhouse.

The stone defensible lockmaster's house was planned as early as May 1832 when a large blockhouse was proposed at Smiths Falls combined lock station.⁴⁷ The exact date of construction is uncertain. In the 1852 Inspectional Report, the lockmaster's house was described as a stone building, shingled and loopholed in good condition. It was the same size as that at Maitlands, 27 ft. 6 inches square, built of rough masonry covered with tin and loopholed on each face. The house was probably built in the early 1840's, since in 1843 ladders were requisitioned for the building.⁴⁸ Martin Carroll's claim was settled in 1841 and was likely prompted by new plans for the station.

The construction of this stone lockhouse indicated the Ordnance plans to protect the canal from possible attacks. The original log house served

its purpose as a dwelling house for the lockmaster, but would offer little protection from any serious attempt to disrupt canal affairs. The new lockhouse provided security for the canal staff, but what decisive influence this would have upon the station in a state of war remained vague, especially if one considered the large civilian population and commercial structures of this area. While the lockhouse would offer a point of refuge for a few attendants, it was not a fortress to protect these civilians. Such matters were never raised by the course of events, and the only attacks upon the property of the Ordnance came from the local millers. If lockmaster Matheson's defence against Abel Ward or William Simpson was an indication of the ability of the Ordnance, then the role of the new lockhouse must have been more psychological than practical.

Indeed, the military role of the canal which was certainly paramount in the minds of the Ordnance officers should not overshadow the fact that the lockhouse served primarily as a home for the lockmaster. As a result, the property was treated by the lockmaster as his own. This was especially true in the early period of the canal when lockmasters usually held their positions for life. An 1846 Ordnance Map illustrated the effect this attitude had upon the property. Although only the stone lockhouse was officially recognized as being on the spot, several other buildings were apparently erected by the first lockmaster Alexander Matheson who held his office until 1866.⁴⁹ Between the lockhouse and the canal was an harbour, to the east of the lockhouse a root house and in the back two stables, a dairy, a storehouse and an unidentified building, perhaps Matheson's privy.⁵⁰ This collection of buildings indicated that Matheson used the Ordnance property to make himself as self-sufficient as possible. In Matheson's case, there were no complaints from the officers as there were with the detached lockhouse.

In 1869, there was an addition made to the lockhouse which was used as a collectors office, but the size or location of this addition was not mentioned.⁵¹ It was probably a frame structure, as were all the later additions to the building. In 1878, new windows were put into the lockhouse itself, at a cost of \$ 40. There were also minor repairs such as the shingling of the lockhouse roof in 1880. Together these additions and

repairs reflected a lessening of the military character of the structure. The addition of a shingle roof to replace the tin one present in 1854 would seriously increase the risk of fire, which would almost certainly break out if the building ever came under attack. The collector's office pointed out the commercial nature of the lockmaster's role. The new windows and window sash also reflected the fact that the lockhouse was primarily a residence and efforts were being made to make it as comfortable as possible.

From the 1880's almost no references occur in the Department's records on the lockhouse and with good reason. In 1885, the CPR came to Smiths Falls marking the end of the Rideau Canal as a major transportation route even on a local level. The declining role of the canal was accompanied by a decline in money spent upon the buildings. What was not considered essential to the canal, was not done. Such a policy resulted in two developments. The first was that local lockmasters often spent their own money to make their residence a tolerable habitation. To wait for public funds to make needed repairs would have meant a very mean existence for such individuals. The second development was a marked deterioration in the building's condition.

Through much of the period, the lockhouse was used by the Richey family. When Alexander Matheson died in 1866, Josiah Richey was appointed lockmaster. In 1871, Josiah was succeeded by his son, William M. Richey who remained at that station until his superannuation in June 1902 at the age of 72.⁵² After his retirement William Richey wrote to the Department requesting to be compensated \$ 100 for improvements he made to the lockhouse during his stay there, and paid for out of his own pocket. These improvements included office furniture for the Collector's office, storm windows for the lockhouse, a furnace, a system of piping and water ram, and a large outbuilding. The significant aspect to these improvements was that almost all appeared to be necessary to the operation of the locks and comfortable housing for the lockmaster. The officials recognized this fact and agreed to pay Richey only because he said he would remove the improvements if not compensated.⁵³ This would require the Department to replace them at a much higher cost.

The second development from the neglect of the lockmaster's house in the late nineteenth century was a decline in the structure's soundness. In 1907 the Annual Report stated,

The lockmaster's house was to have been repaired last summer, but it was found to be so far decayed that I consider the only thing to do is to build a new house, as the present one is not worth repairing.⁵⁴

Nonetheless, during 1906, the frame additions of the lockhouse were painted slate gray to match the lock gates, and the window frames, corner boards and all the trimming white. The paint, no doubt, made the unsound structure more presentable. Funds for a new house were not available and \$ 2000 was allotted in 1909 and 1910 to rebuild the house.⁵⁵ It was unlikely that all this money was spent.

Plans for rebuilding began in March 1907 when the lockmaster was authorized to spend \$ 100 to put up a summer kitchen. The work was to be done by local men, as the canal carpenters had more important work to do. In August 1909, the lockhouse was repainted. In 1910, the old frame addition to the lockhouse was torn down and rebuilt. The whole building was resingled. In 1911, a telephone was added to the house to facilitate canal business. In 1913, the walls of the lockhouse were painted, and the following year saw the repair of the lockhouse porch.⁵⁶

This refinished lockhouse was probably the one photographed early in the twentieth century (see Figure 50). The photograph showed the north and west sides of the house from Beckwith Street. The stone section of the lockhouse was a one storey structure with a porch on the north side with two large windows on either side of the front entrance. On the west side, the stone house had a frame addition running the full length of the building. The north door of this frame addition was protected by a trellis which also covered a large window besides the door. On the west side of the addition, facing Beckwith Street, were two more windows and a door. This frame addition might have been used as the lockmaster's office. The summer kitchen to the south end of the stone building was not visible in the photograph. The photograph showed that the lockmaster's yard was enclosed by a picket fence. Between the lockhouse and the canal was a

frame shed which did not appear on any official plans of the area. This was probably a storage shed of some kind.

Further improvements to the house were caused by a local by-law passed in December 1916 which required all residents to connect with the local sewer system where available. Until that time, the lockhouse was not connected to the sewer or water system of Smiths Falls. The cost of installing the pipe to the house was \$ 250. C. Williscroft, a local plumber, was awarded the \$ 120 contract to install the interior plumbing and fittings. This work was done during the summer of 1917.⁵⁷

The final addition during the First World War was a shed built by the lockmaster to house his car. He was allowed to build the shed only if it did not interfere with the canal buildings, and erected far enough away from the house to prevent any fire spreading. The shed marked another stage in the development at the site. With the repairs done during the war, canal officials were more concerned with the building of unauthorized structures. The popularity of automobiles in the next decade would further erode the significance of the canal.

A 1922 plan of the area showed that only the shed and main house remained on the grounds around the lockmaster's house.⁵⁸ The car shed was located to the south-east of the lockhouse, and was approximately 20 ft. by 20 ft. The summer kitchen on the southend of the lockhouse was 20 ft. by 44 ft. The stone section with the frame addition was 31 ft. by 44 ft. The shed which appeared in the photograph was no longer standing at this time.

The last major change in the lockhouse occurred in 1927 when a second storey was added to the one storey structure, and the frame addition to the west of the stone structure was removed. The second storey was a frame structure built by the canal carpenters. This added four rooms to the lockhouse which was occupied at the time by lockmaster D.H. Grant. Mr. Grant was present during the construction. While removing the roof to add the second storey, the carpenters uncovered an oak beam which rested on top of the stone wall. The beam had slots cut into it about three inches high and about two feet across at the outside narrowing towards the inside of the beam. The purpose of these slots is unknown. Being on the top

of the wall, it is unlikely they had any defensive purpose, though they might have been used to improve ventilation. During the alterations, the summer kitchen was moved over a few feet to bring it into line with the stone section of the lockhouse.⁵⁹

A photograph taken during the 1930's indicated the remarkable change these alterations made (see Figure 51). The landscaped lawns and trees in the lockmaster's yard added to this new appearance. In the 1928 Annual Report, the concern for neatness was apparent.

The old lockhouse was remodelled, and a new storey built thereon: - all the old unsightly outbuildings being removed, and the house is now in keeping with the appearance of the Town Park, in which it stands.⁶⁰

The concern over the appearance of the house grounds continued from the 1920's until the present day. Lockmaster Grant, who remained at the lockstation until 1942, vividly remembered the hours spent upon the upkeep of the lawns and trees. The final phase of the lockhouse was caused by the growing recreational role that the canal played.

No major changes were made to the lockhouse after 1927. Lockmaster Grant built the garage which still stands at the lockhouse during his time as lockmaster. In 1927, Grant installed electrical fixtures in the lockhouse at his own expense, as well as a wash basin and bath tub. In 1935, the chimney of the lockhouse was repaired. Similar repairs were made in the following decade, but none of them altered the general appearance or structure of the house.⁶¹

The changes which occurred over the years to the lockhouse fall into three basic periods. The first was characterized by a concern for military security which originally justified the house's construction. By the 1860's, the house began to be used more as a commercial building, concerned with collecting tolls and regulating traffic. With the general decline of the commercial importance of the canal, the lockhouse was neglected, and surrounded by a series of frame additions which served the requirements of the local lockmasters. The original stone lockhouse survived the neglect until it was repaired between 1907 and 1914. After surviving decades of neglect, the original structure was altered to conform

with the new standards following the recreational role taken on by the canal in the 1920's. This final phase in the structure's history has continued to the present day.

Locklabourer's House

The original date of construction is unknown, but in 1843 some repairs were made to the house, so its construction must predate that year.⁶² It was possible that this structure was built at the same time as the stone lockhouse. An 1846 map of the area located Adamson's lock labourer's house just north of the combined locks.⁶³ Considerable repairs were made again in 1865, but the house could not have been very elaborate. In 1867, the wooden house was valued at \$ 150.00.⁶⁴ This first lock labourer's house was used until 1893.

In 1893, a second lock labourer's house was built at a cost of \$ 400.00.⁶⁵ W.C. Simmons lived in this house for a number of years, and in 1912 spent between \$ 200 and \$ 300 adding a summer kitchen to the back of it.⁶⁶ Simmons did not own the house, but was only a tenant of the Government. In June 1915, this house was partially destroyed by fire. The fire originated when the stove in the summer kitchen became too hot and set some cloths on fire. The entire downstairs was destroyed. To refinish this frame house with clapboard exterior would have cost from \$ 750 to \$ 1000.⁶⁷

Rather than incur this expense, the Department decided to rebuild the house as a storehouse, with facilities for the lockmen to sleep upstairs. Since the house had been built, the Department had abandoned the policy of erecting houses for lockmen. The Simmons house had been the cause of some jealousy among the men. Simmons soon found a house in town to live in after the fire.⁶⁸

In early 1917, the roof of this building was resingled to protect its interior. The final repairs were completed by March 1918. In 1922, a kitchen was added onto the house to replace the one destroyed by fire.⁶⁹ A photograph of the Frost and Wood factory showed the building

in the foreground. It was a square two storey building with a veranda on the front (see Figure 52 and 41).

The storehouse continued to be used for storage space and as sleeping quarters for canal workers. The building was 23 feet by 23 feet, and the only building used at the site as a residence except the lockhouse.⁷⁰

In November 1949, the facilities of the building were upgraded by connecting it with the town water supply. A contract was awarded to Mr. Hambleton for \$ 940 to install facilities in this building and the storehouse. For the new bathtub, basin, closet combination, flat rim sink and water heater, lockman A.T. Lumsden agreed to a monthly rent increase from four to eight dollars.⁷¹

No other changes to the building have been discovered after this date. The house was removed to make way for the new lock in 1973.⁷²

Storehouse

The storehouse at the station was located on the northern edge of the locks, south of the locklabourer's house. The dates of the first storehouse are unknown but in 1865, a new store house was erected, and in 1866, two shutters were ordered to cover the windows.⁷³

This building was replaced in 1892 when a new storehouse was erected. Like the locklabourer's house after the 1915 fire, the storehouse was used as a sleeping quarters for the second locklabourer or work gangs.⁷⁴ In 1915, the roof of this storehouse was replaced, and in 1923, storm sashes were purchased. Besides general repairs, no major additions seemed to have been made to the storehouse during its existence. In 1935, the building was described,

The present storehouse at the Smiths Falls combined locks is 18' x 24' outside and is two stories high. It has an outside addition to it about 10' x 16' at one end for storing the driver's equipment. This building is also worn out and was listed in our 1930 report to you as "getting old".⁷⁵

A photograph taken earlier seemed to match this 1935 description (see

Figure 41).

As a result of the deteriorating nature of the storehouse it was removed by the canal carpenters in July 1953.⁷⁶ The total cost of the new storehouse was \$ 2959. This included excavation for a concrete foundation, dressed lumber for the frame building, all windows and doors, bricks for the chimney with a stove and stove pipes. The building was to be given three coats of paint, grey and white. Local labour and supplies were used. A 1956 survey of canal buildings gave the dimensions of this structure as 24 ft. by 18 ft. with two storeys.⁷⁷

In November 1949, at the request of residing labourers, both the storehouse and locklabourer's house were connected to the local water supply. The new facilities included a bath tub, a basin, a closet combination, a flat rim sink with water heater and the necessary pipes. Mr. Hambleton was awarded the \$ 940 contract. Because of the new improvements, lock labourer G.E. Mitchell was required to pay six dollars a month rent instead of two.⁷⁸

No other changes to the structure have been discovered, and though no longer used as a residence, the building remains in much the same condition.

Long Shed

This building is located south of the canal at the foot of the locks. On the same location there was a smaller shed, approximately 12 feet by 20 feet, in 1922.⁷⁹ The original date of construction is known, and judging from its size was probably used for general storage. In 1935, this small shed was removed to make way for a one storey frame building 25 ft. by 50 ft. This shed was used to house derricks and built at a cost of \$ 800.⁸⁰ This shed is still standing.

Other Houses

There are two other houses associated with the lockstation for which little information has survived. The first of these was Widow Balfour's house

south of the lockmasters house along the Brockville Road. The house first appeared in the 1846 Ordnance map of the area (see Figure 4).⁸¹ The second reference occurred in June 1860 when the lands around Smiths Falls were examined to see what should be retained for canal purposes. That report noted, "Widow Balfour holds a small tenement at an annual rent of five shillings on the South side of the Canal. This piece of land should be retained".⁸² In 1860, part of Widow Balfour's garden was taken by the Town for a public road, probably River Street. She was paid £ 5 compensation.

The 1846 Ordnance Map also indicated a house and garden occupied by locklabourer James on the southwest corner of the Brockville Road and Lombardy Street.⁸³ The 1860 Dominion Lands Bureau report on canal lands noted,

Lock labourer - the small tenement occupied by them are on the land south of the Locks which I propose to retain.

If settlement is made with Ward and Simpson on the Basis proposed I would then suggest that all land and buildings thereupon which may be retained should be transferred to the department of Public Works in charge of the Canals.⁸⁴

An 1863 map indicated the house still stood,⁸⁵ but since the land was eventually given to Abel Ward, the house was probably not used as a locklabourer's residence after 1873.

Basin

The largest problem relating to the maintenance of the engineering structures at Smiths Falls was the leakage of water from the basin through the numerous fissures in the rock. It was a long time before the problem was solved. In 1834, a traveller noted, "the basin at Smiths Falls is so leaky as to compel boats to make a stop to give time to fill the basin prior to their passages through it".⁸⁶ Despite several repairs, the problem still existed in 1898 when it was reported the basin leaks required "considerable expenditure to make them right. As it is now, a large quantity of water is wasted every time the basin is filled".⁸⁷ Effective efforts on this leakage would not be made until the twentieth century.

The first repairs to the basin were made in 1832. An embankment 600 ft. long, 12 ft. high and an average thickness of 42 ft. was built from the waste weir to the river bank on Jason Island. This embankment cost £ 620.⁸⁸ In May 1847, high water flowed over parts of this embankment causing part of it to be washed away. It was necessary to plank the embankment with rough pine and fill it with gravel.⁸⁹

When the Ordnance transferred the canal's management to the Province, the Superintendent reported that,

Many ineffectual efforts were made by the late Ordnance to stop these leaks. In very dry seasons the water particularly draws off; in this case a supply is let down from the station above to pass vessels. A quantity of gravel and sundry repairs are required here.⁹⁰

The transfer of the canal to civilian authorities was accompanied by an effort to use the water power of the Rideau system for industrial development. Because of this, the need to preserve water for useful purposes was impressed upon the canal authorities. In 1874, clay was put behind the basin wall to stop leakage and a year later, the inside of the basin was sheeted to improve it.⁹¹ In the 1880's, further repairs were made to the basin including the practice of carting shingle shavings to stop the leaks. Considering the problem saw dust and wood waste caused to navigation, this practice indicated the singular nature of the leakage.⁹² A trench was blasted through the rock and filled with puddle to stop the leakage in 1894. While partially successful, these works did not cover all the fissures in the rock and the leakage continued.

In 1899, the area from the swing bridge to the waste weir was enclosed with a concrete wall with a substantial iron railing on the top. This allowed the little park at the Jason Island bridge to be extended by the Town.⁹³ This concrete wall was the first of several to be erected along the edge of the basin to stop leakages. Between 1906 and 1910, the south side of the basin was gradually filled in with waste from local foundries in order to cut down the leakage in that side.⁹⁴ In January 1909, the Rideau Canal forwarders complained of the leaks in the basin delaying passage of boats. This prompted the canal authorities to take further action.

Some years earlier, they had tried to stop major leaks in the northern area of the basin but had been prevented by J.H. Gould and Company whose foundry used this water for power.⁹⁵ Gould based his claim to this water on the 1873 settlement of land claims at this station. While this agreement gave Gould one half of the surplus water rights to the leakage, the canal officials always retained the power to maintain the canal.

During the winter of 1909-1910, the lockmaster was instructed to fill empty sacks with concrete and ram them into the cracks around the shore. It was hoped that this would cut the water necessary to fill the basin by one half. Water levels had to be maintained in order to allow steamers to use the wharves in the basin. These boats were given priority over the requirements of the foundry. Since the leakage water was a traditional source of power for the foundry, the founders complained vigorously to the canal officials but to no avail. Lockmaster Foster was instructed that,

You will pay no attention to any protest that may be made by any person with regard to stopping of these leaks; and unless you receive orders from the Department...to the contrary, you will proceed with the work until it is finished, no matter what any person may say.⁹⁶

With the sealing of these leaks, the major source of water loss was closed. Such an action, however, would have been impossible during the nineteenth century. At that time, the local mills using this leakage water were important to the local economy and the actions taken in 1910 illustrated their declining role in Smith Falls' economy.

In the winter of 1912-1913, a 900 ft. wall was built from the detached lock on the south side of the basin. The wall was eight feet high, with a four foot wide base tapering to two feet at the top. On top of the wall was a four and a half foot wide sidewalk and an iron pipe railing. The wall was anchored to the rock by 1 1/2 inch rods five feet long driven two feet into the rock at intervals of ten feet. The cost of this wall was approximately \$ 8000.⁹⁷

Up until this time, repairs to the basin were prompted by a concern over canal navigation but in May 1916, the Town of Smiths Falls complained that the leakage was responsible for the flooding of basements in houses

south of the canal. After negotiations, the Department agreed to pay one half the \$ 4600 cost to construct a cut-off drain. The 1200 ft. trench ran from Abbott and Elm Streets northwards for 500 ft., then eastwards for 700 ft. to the creek flowing along the south side of the basin. The trench was completed in the spring of 1917. By contributing \$ 2300 to the trench, the Department was released from any future claims relating to flooding by canal water.⁹⁸

In early 1921, the wall on the south side of the basin was completed. This 800 foot wall was part of a winter relief programme to ease the unemployment in town, as the Frost and Wood plant shut down. With this wall, the entire side of the basin was walled in and most of the leakage from that section was stopped.⁹⁹ Because of this, the creek to the south of the basin lost much of its volume. In the 1860's, this creek had been considered a good water power for local industry.

Repairs conducted after this date were basically those required for canal maintenance and not especially connected with leakage. In 1923, the old timber facing on the north east side of the basin was replaced by a concrete wall with an iron pipe railing. In February 1932, the Town Council requested that the corners of the eastern end of the basin at the head of the combined locks be filled to prevent refuse from accumulating in the corners. During the summer, this refuse gave off a strong smell. The Department did not have the required \$ 13,000 to correct this situation and as a temporary measure instructed the lockmaster to sweep out these corners periodically. Plans for the construction, however, were drawn up and the change made once money had been allocated.¹⁰⁰

Other requests for improvements were made by the Town Council in the following years. In April 1946, the Council asked the Department to construct a wall in front of the main dam and fill in the area behind. At that time, the land was wanted for a new school. This request was later dropped, but in May 1957, another resolution was passed by the Council for a wall from the dam at the bridge to the swimming pool area. The wall was estimated to cost \$ 50,000 and approximately 600 ft. long and from ten to sixteen feet high. The purpose of the wall was described as intended, "to improve the appearance of the Canal Basin and to stop leakage of water

from the Basin through and under lands adjoining the Basin. Since the Department did not control the land which would benefit from such a project, they decided to pay only 30 to 40 per cent of the cost. The bulk of the project was paid for by Town funds.¹⁰¹

In 1965, the Town Council purchased the land on Jason Island for a Centennial park, and at that time requested the Department continue the 300 ft. wall built during the winters of 1958 and 1959 as a winter work project. The new request was for a 280 ft. wall to link the existing wall to the waste weir dam. The Department grew concerned over this attempt to use canal funds to improve municipal lands.¹⁰² The canal officials had intended to build a more important wall on the south side of the basin and feared this new request would complicate that project. As the Superintending Engineer wrote,

I have general information that by any means possible, the town intends to pull every string to have this department construct a retaining wall in front of their property in order to improve its appearance and value.¹⁰³

The Department and Town, however, worked out an agreement in which the wall would be built at an estimated cost of \$ 60,000 if the Town gave a fifteen foot strip of land to the canal and agreed to maintain the bridge crossing the waste weir. John H. Code was awarded a \$ 65,000 contract in February 1966 to build this wall.¹⁰⁴

The final two walls built at the basin were constructed by Paquette Builders Ltd. of Kirkland, P.Q. In December 1967, the Company was awarded just under \$ 68,000 to build a new wall on the south side of the canal basin. The wall extended from the lower south wing wall of lock 31 east along the site of the existing wall to the dock on the south bank of the basin, which was a total distance of 955 ft. The wall was to be seven feet at the base tapering to two feet at the top. Part of the project was the removal of the old wall. This wall was completed in June 1968.

In the following year, the same company built a new wall on the north side of the basin between Lock 30 and 31, from the lower north wing of Lock 31 east for a distance of 700 ft. The old wall was removed at that time. The \$ 62,000 project was completed by 7 May 1969.¹⁰⁵

Government Dam

This dam originally received complaints about the poor quality of the workmanship, but the following years indicated that it served its purpose well. No major repairs to this structure were recorded. Regularly gravel and clay were placed in front of the dam to stop leakage of water. Due to the fissured nature of the rock, most of the water escaped around the dam and not through it. In 1959, a retaining wall was built in front of the dam and the area between the two filled in. After this time, the dam served no purpose. As the years went on, the passage behind the dam was also filled in by the Waterworks Commission who owned that part of Jason Island. The dam still exists but is landlocked and partially buried by the filling operations.

Waste Weir Dam

At the head of the waste channel was a waste weir to regulate the water flowing out of the basin. The original structure was described as "constructed of timber, with four sluices to regulate the height of water".¹⁰⁶ In 1850, the barge Elizabeth, owned by Dickenson and Company, drifted into the waste weir and knocked out the stop logs and broke down the last pier making a breach of 23 ft.¹⁰⁷ During the winter of 1859, a new dam and bulkhead were constructed by William Pulin. This new dam proved strong enough for the task. A few years later, a number of saw logs jammed against the structure and caused the water to rise, but the extra pressure did not cause the dam to crack.

General repairs were carried out on this structure from time to time. In 1862, the crib work of this "wooden flat pressure dam" was filled with stones. In 1887, a stone dam was built west of the bulkhead to stop leakage from the basin. One plan of this area showed the main dam to be 83.5 ft. long with two gates. The west gate was 25 ft. wide, and the east gate 20 ft.¹⁰⁸

In 1909, major repairs were made. The dam was partially reconstructed

and the east stoplog bulkhead rebuilt, with another stoplog bulkhead 20 ft. wide added to it. The flat dam was removed to enable the run off from the basin to get out more easily. The remainder of the flat dam between the double east bulkhead and the west bulkhead was repaired and replanked.¹⁰⁹

The timber waste weir on the west side of the dam was taken down and rebuilt in 1928 with steel stoplog checks. A portion of the dam adjoining the weir was rebuilt in concrete and the remainder completed in the next winter. A new deck for the stoplogs was framed and placed on the concrete weirs.¹¹⁰ In August 1957, plans were underway to construct beam and slab decks on the three waste weirs at this dam. The work was completed by March 1958. Total cost for the repairs was \$ 4,000.¹¹¹

Waste Weir Bridge

This fixed bridge was located north of the basin joining the two parts of Jason Island across the waste weir. The earliest record of the bridge was in April 1871 when the Town of Smiths Falls complained of "a very old and delapidated Bridge". The 1870 flood had damaged the old structure which required rebuilding for some time anyway. The canal officials considered this bridge "indispensably necessary" for canal operations as it provided access to the bulkhead where the water was regulated. The canal authorities recommended the Town be compensated for part of the expenses of the bridge, which apparently was replaced shortly after.¹¹²

In 1904, the old wooden bridge was replaced with a steel span bridge 153 ft. long resting on stone piers at a cost of \$ 5,000. The two span bridge was erected by the Locomotive and Machine Company of Montreal. It was painted regulation grey.¹¹³ In 1913, a four foot sidewalk was added to this bridge by the Dominion Bridge Company.¹¹⁴

In 1924, the fixed bridge was replaced. A two span through steel truss bridge with each span 80 ft. long and 17 ft. wide was erected by the Locomotive Machine Company. At the same time, they added a 3 ft. 6 in. sidewalk on the upstream of the bridge.¹¹⁵

This bridge was transferred to the Town of Smiths Falls as part of

the agreement to build a wall around the Centennial park area.

Combined Lock Bridge

The first bridge over the locks was built at the time of their construction. The bridge was described as "a rolling bridge" which lay across the chamber wall of the centre lock.¹¹⁶ The early bridge was replaced, however, by a swing bridge. The date of construction is unknown but in May 1865, the turntable for the bridge was replaced, suggesting the bridge had been in use for some time. This turntable did not require a crab, but could be worked by hand. The approaches were widened and new sheeting put on the bridge. In the winter of 1867-1868, the bridge itself was replaced.¹¹⁷

Even with the limited traffic this bridge must have handled, it was not entirely safe. In the spring of 1878, Mr. Lynch of Smiths Falls was killed at the bridge. Having spent the day drinking in town, Lynch started running his horses home, standing in his sleigh and whipping the horses. As they approached the bridge, the horses ran too close to the fence and veered away quickly. The sleigh swung around as a result of this and hit the fence sending Lynch over the fence into the lock. He was killed from the accident. After a second incident, lockmaster Richey was ordered to prosecute those who persisted in reckless driving.¹¹⁸

Perhaps as a result of these incidents, the Town Council asked the canal authorities to change the location of the bridge over the first lock. This would put the bridge in line with Beckwith Street. The canal engineers disagreed with such a move. By placing the bridge over the lowest lock, the road grade would be altered from a level crossing to a descent of eleven feet in 450 ft. This would only allow teams to pull one third loads in winter, as well as expose travellers to winds and snow. If such arguments did not convince local Councillors, perhaps the cost of upgrading the single swing bridge to a double bridge did. The new bridge would require a centre pier so that the heel of the bridge would clear the recess, as well as an extension of the wing walls and return walls which would cost \$ 4500. With the cost of the bridge itself and grading the streets, the total cost of the Council's suggestion was \$ 10,000.

The Department was willing to make the changes if the Town paid for them, but this offer was declined. A later attempt to have the federal government install the bridge also failed.¹¹⁹

In 1884, the Department allocated \$ 1,200 to build a new swing bridge. The money, however, was delayed for some years and by 1889, the foundations for the new iron swing were built, as well as piers in the basin to protect the structure from damage. The position of the bridge was shifted from the centre lock to the upper lock. The old wooden bridge remained at the lock until 1896 and apparently sometime after that a new bridge was installed.¹²⁰ During the late 1890's, the swing bridge also conformed to the regulation colours for lock structures. The September 1898 Inspectional report noted, "Swing Bridge and railing painted by lockmen, regulation grey colour. Big improvement over old red colour".¹²¹ Red paint was cheaper and more durable. These qualities made it a popular choice for exposed structures. Both Abel Ward's mill and the wooden bridge owned by the Town were painted red.

The bridge at the locks was maintained by periodic repairs. In 1904, the rest piers were rebuilt and in 1910, a new circular rest wall of concrete laid under the heel of the bridge.¹²² These repairs could not maintain the old bridge indefinitely, and in June 1913, the Department issued tenders for a new bridge.¹²³ Money for the bridge was never forthcoming and some basic repairs were made instead. As traffic increased because of the growth of Smiths Falls and the introduction of automobiles, new efforts were made to replace the aging bridge.

In 1922, plans were made to replace the old bridge. Much of the extra work associated with the bridge, piers, sidewalks and approaches was done by day labour instead of contract to save money.¹²⁴ In the spring of 1923, the Hamilton Bridge Works Company constructed and erected a bob-tailed plate girder swing span 74 ft. long, 21 ft. wide from girder to girder and a five and one half foot wide sidewalk on the upstream side. The bridge cost \$ 7,934.¹²⁵ The new bridge was not entirely satisfactory to the local residents. In May 1926, the Town Council complained that the bridge was unsafe for horses because the corks of their shoes wedged between the bridge end and abutment.¹²⁶ Suitable repairs were made by adding a plate

onto the end of the bridge.

The swing bridge over the locks became a constant complaint of local residents off and on during the following years. In August 1930, the Town Clerk wrote to the Minister of Transport and stated,

I have been instructed by the Town Council to write to you regarding the disgraceful condition of the swing bridge on the Rideau Canal on Beckwith Street. The planks on the bridge have worked loose and some of the spikes which held them in place are projecting making it dangerous for cars passing over the bridge.

When a car or truck passes over the bridge, the rattle of the loose planks can be heard for a good many blocks. There are three highways converging on this at all hours of the night and the noise is very disturbing to residents living anywhere in that vicinity.¹²⁷

Repairs were begun four days after the Council wrote to the Minister. The canal authorities were not negligent in their duties, since their last repairs to the bridge were carried out in November 1937. The bridge simply became more frequently used with the advent of automobile traffic, and required more maintenance.

In 1947, the canal officials did consider erecting a new bridge, but rejected the idea as too costly. Instead, a four foot sidewalk was built outside the existing bridge to alleviate the problems caused to pedestrians by the narrow crossing. This addition was made by the Dominion Bridge Company at a cost of \$ 3,400.¹²⁸

The question of the bridge continued to be raised, and in September 1962, Mayor Arnold Gough wrote to the canal officials complaining the bridge slowed traffic while swinging because it was too old, too narrow and too slow. Furthermore, Gough complained that the approaches to the bridge made visibility poor. Gough asked for an engineering study of the problem, but the only action taken was to replank the deck of the bridge.¹²⁹ The Town Council made its own study of local traffic problems. Inquiries made by Damas and Smith of Toronto revealed that cars were stopped for ten minutes

while the bridge was opened and closed. Out of 710 lockages, traffic was disrupted 87 times or about 12 per cent of the time. The amount of traffic on the canal had risen steadily from 219 craft in 1947 to 951 in 1962.¹³⁰ The traffic problems created by the swing bridge could only get worse as the popularity of the canal increased.

The problem created by the bridge was more than just one of inconvenience. In August 1965, Theodore Senkow, an 83 year old resident, was killed in an accident near the bridge. The Coroner's Jury into this fatality condemned the bridge as a "definite traffic hazard" and made a strong recommendation to have guard rails extended on either side of the bridge to prevent pedestrians like Senkow from crossing where they were not visible to motorists.¹³¹ In March 1967, a canal engineer inspected the bridge and reported, "this bridge has come to the end of its useful life. Replacement of this structure should be a major item in the coming years estimates; it simply cannot be put off".¹³² No action, however, was taken. In June 1970, while the bridge was replanked, it was discovered that several structural members were corroded. The bridge was limited to a five ton limit and 15 m.p.h. speed limit. This meant that town fire trucks could not legally cross the bridge and so would lose five minutes on every fire in the south section of town. This development prompted one Councillor to describe the bridge as "an old tin can".¹³³

Clearly, the bridge was a hazard and a nuisance to the town of Smiths Falls. The proposal for a new bridge became part of a re-development scheme involving the construction of a new lock at Smiths Falls in place of the three combined locks. The general problems surrounding this re-development will be dealt with in the section on the new lock. The Damas and Smith study commissioned by the Town Council recommended a five lane fixed bridge, seventy six feet wide, to carry traffic over the new lock. The cost of between \$ 312,000 to \$ 350,000 prompted the Council to favour a two lane bridge, with three quarters of the cost paid by the Ontario Department of Transport and Communication.¹³⁴

This proposal for the original five lane bridge was finally abandoned after months of negotiation which reduced the cost to the Town to \$ 290,000. The new plans, which called for bridges over the Rideau River,

the new lock and the original combined locks, were carried out in 1973 in conjunction with the other changes at the site.¹³⁵

Combined Locks

It was perhaps a tribute to the talents of the original builders of these locks that no major repairs were made to these three locks. The maintenance of these structures required the periodic replacement of lock gates, and machinery and the occasional grouting and pointing of the stonework. These standard repairs, however, occupied much of the time of the lock master and labourers and fortunately, the local newspaper The Echo, recorded the repairs carried out in 1896.

Lockmaster Richey and his men have had a busy time lately. After boarding the side of the basin they started to grout the locks and this is now almost done. This is done by inserting a tin pipe, at an angle, in an opening and pouring the cement down it. In this way, every hole and cranny back of the masonry is filled and as Mr. Richey said the lock is made as tight as a bottle. Carpenters are also at work making a pair of gates for the lock immediately below the old gate. How long have the gates been in position? We asked, and the reply was: Seventeen years. When native oak could be obtained the gates would last twenty years but the Michigan oak now used is no [sic] so durable, and the average life of lock gates now is about fifteen or sixteen years.¹³⁶

The replacement of lockgates and other lock structures continued in much the same way for several years.

Even in the 1930's, canal carpenters were largely dependent upon hand tools: cross-cut saws, chisels, and wooden planes. Carpenter gangs travelled along the canal carrying out major repairs. One gang worked from Ottawa to Smiths Falls, another from Smiths Falls to Kingston Mills. Lock gates were built alongside of the lock during navigation season, and once navigation closed put into place with a tripod and winch. Power equipment was not used extensively until the 1950's.¹³⁷

The New Lock

The events and controversy which preceded the construction of the new lock at Smiths Falls in 1973 and 1974 illustrated the problems involved with the preservation of historically significant public works. The Rideau Canal had survived years of neglect more or less intact, but the increasing recreational use of the waterway caused changes at Smiths Falls which drastically altered the lock station.

The proposal to replace the locks at Smiths Falls originated with a Federal Provincial study of the Rideau-Trent-Severn waterways. Among several other suggestions for modernizing the Rideau system, the report recommended that the locks and bridge at Smiths Falls be replaced by one lock upstream and a new low level bridge. This would eliminate a bottleneck for boat traffic, as well as the traffic problem created by the swing bridge to local motorists.¹³⁸ The proposal to replace the locks and bridge coincided with decisions taken by the local Town Council. In May 1968, proposals for the replacement of the Beckwith Street bridge were considered, and it was recorded that,

The question of the desirability of maintaining the old locks was very thoroughly discussed and it appeared that the committee did not feel that the old locks should, in fact, be retained in an urban area and specifically, they did not feel that these locks should be maintained.¹³⁹

It was considered that the old locks might be used as a flared entrance to the new lock.

The local Council decision was similar to that reached by the Department of Transport. In June 1960, Superintending Engineer L.W. Clark outlined the Department's proposal to build a single lock in line with and upstream of the old locks, which would have resulted in the tearing out of the old locks. Clark reported that,

The Committee made it very clear that they had no objections at all to tearing out one of these three locks to permit con-

struction of the new lock and it was my impression that the Committee would, themselves, be willing to fight any battle with the Historians in respect to removal of the old locks.¹⁴⁰

With this matter of responsibility for the move settled, the Town Council wrote to Paul Hellyer, Minister of Transport, in September 1968. Explaining that the Beckwith bridge was on a main traffic artery and that the original canal locks existed at three points in town, Council recommended that the combined locks be replaced to the "mutual benefit both of the Town of Smiths Falls and the Department of Transport".¹⁴¹

Reaction to the decision was not long in appearing. The Rideau Action Association formed out of a steering committee of the Rideau Historical Society and soon gathered members from Ottawa to Kingston. The major role of the Association was to assist the several organizations interested in the planning and development of the Rideau Waterway. Besides working for the preservation of the historical character of the lock sites and associated structures, the Association advocated adequate recreational and park facilities, conservation areas, prevention of pollution of the system and a planned and orderly development of the area.¹⁴² In the face of such public concern, the Department of Transport postponed any major developments until the clarification of the issues surrounding the modernization plan.

Opposition to the development plan was also present in Smiths Falls. The town's residents were quite aware of their part which had been commemorated by the Old Home Week celebrations of 1925 and 1950, and again during the 1975 Settlers Days celebration. As an editorial in the local press argued,

It is unfortunate that the Rideau Canal appears doomed to be altered in character for the sake of "efficiency" and "progress". The argument that there is a need to speed up the passing of boats through the Rideau Canal locks may appeal to some boaters, but they are in the minority. Anybody who is in a hurry should not be going up or down the Rideau.¹⁴³

The attempt by the Department of Transport to modernize the system in consideration of its historic value was termed a "sad sort of compromise".

Local residents, however, were also aware of the daily inconvenience caused by the Beckwith bridge. The bridge replacement was dependent upon the replacement of the locks because the Damas and Smith report commissioned by the Council had worked on the premise the locks would be replaced. When the Town Council announced their plans to replace both the locks and bridge, they were quickly supported by the Record-News. While continuing to support the position that the system should retain its historic character, the Record-News stated,

But at Smiths Falls alone, the situation is different. It is a point of commerce along the Rideau and often used as an overnight stopping place for boat visitors who want to restock and then move further along this fascinating waterway. At Smiths Falls, the beauty of the Rideau is reflected, but not to the extent it is at such locations as Jones Falls, Merrickville, Kingston Mills, etc. A serious bottleneck is created by the three combined locks which bisect the town's main street - a major connecting link...

It is therefore with considerable enthusiasm we are witness to the start of what will be the most important change within the community.¹⁴⁴

With local support and backing from the Department of Transport, the project appeared to be well established in principle.

In March 1972, the Government estimates announced the intention to proceed with the new lock. \$ 1.7 million were allocated in the 1972 budget and an additional one million dollars in the following year. The Eastern Ontario Development Council withdrew their opposition to the plan when a recently released review of the CORTS Study reassured them the new lock would retain the historical integrity of design. It was planned to have an antique facing on the new lock.¹⁴⁵

Just as construction was scheduled to start, a major reconsideration of the project was made when the Rideau Canal was transferred to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In May 1972, meetings were held at the Carousel Inn in Smiths Falls among federal officials in an attempt to preserve the historic locks. This eleventh hour inter-

vention quickly drew the ire of the local press. After four years of planning, the much needed bridge over the canal was being challenged. The Record-News wrote,

Since the Rideau Canal has been moved from the responsibility of the Department of Transport to Indian Affairs, it would seem that a handful of historians and staff within the Department now have the loudest voice and have successfully obtained the ear of the Minister who should know better. The Rideau it would now appear, has become another plaything of a few traditionalists, with costs thrown out of the window and community development ignored.¹⁴⁶

The meetings resulted in three recommendations. The primary task was to preserve the three original locks. The bridge could be replaced, or an alternative traffic route be made by constructing a high level bridge from the foot of River Street thus routing traffic around the locks. The Record-News called these plans "high flights of fancy" by officials in the Department of Indian Affairs, opposed to the new lock at all costs. It rejected a swing bridge because by its very nature it created a bottleneck for traffic. The high level bridge, besides being expensive, was basically unsound, the editorial charged. It pointed out that in saving the locks several historic houses would be sacrificed.

The local press was correct in its criticism of these alternative proposals. Beckwith Street had always been the major connecting link between the north and south halves of the town precisely because it was the only logical place for the crossing. Established patterns of urban development necessitated a bridge of some sort at that point. Since the Town was already committed to a bridge built in conjunction with the new lock, it would have been difficult to change plans at this late date. On the other hand, the destruction of the old lock would have eliminated the only original structure of the Canal. Since most of the canal buildings had been replaced or renovated, only the locks accurately reflected the work of the Royal Engineers.

The trend over the previous fifty years had been the gradual elim-

nation of historically significant structures from the area. Part of this was due to policies of the Department of Transport. The growth of municipal parkland forced out the last economic concerns of the area. The economic changes in the town had caused the demolition of the major factories along the river. In their attempt to save the locks, the federal officials were trying to save one of the last physical vestiges of the town's history. The eventual outcome of that attempt, when one considered the trends of development over the preceding years, was a success though not a total one.

The final solution to the problem consisted of a compromise between those attempting to preserve the locks and those proposing a new lock and bridge. The new lock was located north of the combined locks which were left undisturbed. A five lane fixed bridge was planned to cross both these locks. Financing for the compromise would be shared between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development which would pay for the new lock and some of the bridge costs, the Ontario Department of Transport which would pay 75 per cent of all road work and bridges, and the Town of Smiths Falls which would pay the remaining 25 per cent of the bridge costs.¹⁴⁷

The specifications for the new lock called for a clear width of 33 ft. and 140 ft. length between the two gates. The average lift was 26 ft. with a normal draft of 7 ft. Excavation work was done between December 1972 and March 1973. The upper gate monoliths and entrance walls had to be built and stoplogs placed before May 1973. The coffer dam material was cleared from the navigation channel of the old locks both up and downstream by the same time. The bridge was built under a separate contract for the Town of Smiths Falls. This high level bridge was constructed across the lower entrance of the new lock and the work began in April or May of that year. As part of the new construction, the lock labourer's house was removed, and a control building built on the north side of the new lock. This one storey building was to have a full basement, and be of wood frame construction with a stone masonry veneer. The structure would serve as a lock office, storage room, lunch room, and contain two washrooms.¹⁴⁸

Excavation work was carried out by Gordon Mulligan Construction Ltd.

of Ottawa, between November 1972 and June 1973. Besides removal of the buildings on the site, that firm did most of the excavation work and constructed a coffer dam across the upper entrance of the lock to the canal wall on the south side of the basin. The final cost of this operation was \$ 335,937.83. The De Leuw Cather Company of Ottawa supervised the construction of the lock. The actual construction was done by the Ron Engineering Company. This stage of the project was completed in the fall of 1974. Miscellaneous site work and landscaping of the area was completed by Expanso Construction. This Company was responsible for topsoil and backfilling, construction of driveways and walks, concrete paving, stone paving the underpass and the stone drywall along the creek bed. Three pedestrian bridges were also included in the contract as well as sodding, and seeding the area.¹⁴⁹

The completion of the new lock ended the changes which occurred during the life of the canal. It solved the traffic problem for the local residents, and allowed boaters to move more quickly through the locks. The old combined locks were retained in a functioning manner to enable them to be used by travellers who wished to do so. The lock site was radically altered in appearance (see Figure 67). The five lane bridge overshadowed the original locks ending their long standing dominance of the site. The new lock sliced through the canal reserve and destroyed the lock labourer's house which had stood for a number of years. With the old locks and lock-house, a corner of the original lockstation was preserved.

The events surrounding this development indicated that historically significant structures cannot be maintained in their original state unless they adapt to the modern requirements placed upon them. The failure of the various authorities to make plans which would correct the traffic problems at the site without destroying the historical character of the area almost led to the destruction of a fundamental element in local history. The preservation of the old locks, though in a less than ideal surrounding, was the direct result of the efforts of concerned individuals in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The major problem with these efforts was that detailed plans were well underway before such individuals were effective. This eleventh hour rescue of the

locks alienated local authorities who saw it as an outside interference in local problems. Since no viable alternative could be found in so short a time, the initial plans were only partially modified. Historical significance of the site was given third priority after local traffic problems and modernization plans.

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Smiths Falls Combined Lock Station

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Smiths Falls Detached Lock

Construction

The detached lock was not planned for Smiths Falls until the end of 1829 when Colonel By rejected the earlier plan to build three combined locks in the Hornet's Snie. As a result, the records relating to the construction of the works were not as extensive as those for Old Slys and the combined locks. The works at the detached lock were located about 600 yards above the combined locks and consisted of a single lock, a waste weir dam and embankments.

The earliest record of the area was made by John Burrows. In July 1827, Burrows visited the combined locks and then proceeded upstream.

I started from the head of the falls 8 o'clock. The Canoes took the east side of the Island where they had no little trouble to pass. The passage _____ for the gentlemen & passengers was very difficult by reason of the swamp covered with Canadian thistle and Prickley Ash & which stung through the clothes and caused intolerable pain. _____ had our friend which [sent?] Mr. MacDonald (who took the west channel) who had the kidneys to take the Officers in his canoe [to?] the head of the Island and returned for the remainder of Party. This Island is about a mile long about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the head of cutting of Mr. Rykert. There is about 9 in. water at place where the [line joins?] the River Table lime stone rock - The line is a compleat lime stone Excavation for 1 mile.

There is [sic] many shoals in the river which must be excavated or the water rose to a sufficient depth either will meet no little attention, as the expenses deepening the solid rock will be immense and raising the water difficult from the

low state of the banks.¹

The alterations to the original topography caused by canal construction make it difficult to exactly fix the landmarks Burrows mentioned, but the above description gave a rough idea of the original site of the detached locks. The low banks noted by Burrows eventually lead to the change of plans at Smiths Falls.

For reasons more fully explained in the section on the construction of the combined locks, Colonel By decided that a fourth lock was necessary at Smiths Falls. By constructing the additional lock, acres of land surrounding the canal were saved from flooding. The revised plan was also more secure because it did away with the long embankments which would have been required in the original plan. As Colonel By explained to the Committee responsible for canal expenses,

a fourth detached lock is to be constructed at the foot of the Rapids of 8½ feet lift in consequence of this arrangement, the bed of the River between the combined locks and the detached one, has to be deepened and an Embankment from the head of the latter to the high land on the right bank is required which must also have been formed had the original Plan been carried into execution: a Dam to serve also as a Waste Weir has to be constructed across the North Branch of the River to give 5 feet depth of Water over the Upper Sill of the detached Lock.²

The additional cost of the works at Smiths Falls resulting from the detached lock was difficult to estimate because the figures for excavation, embankments and other general works were not divided according to the two lock sites. The masonry for this extra lock cost £ 4,717.7.6 alone with that figure representing only a fraction of the total expense.³

Work on this lock must have begun early in 1830, and since James Simpson abandoned his contract a year later, much of the final work on the lock was probably done by Richardson and Bell. They completed the combined locks, as well as building the works at Old Slys. Lieutenant Frome, in his Account of the Causes which led to the Construction of the Rideau Canal, described the finished works:

The depth of the water in the basin, and in the canal, to the single lock, about 600 yards above, is five feet six inches, and the lift of this lock, which is built upon a solid rock foundation, is eight feet, allowing seven feet water on the upper sill, which is retained to that level by a low wooden dam or waste-weir about four feet high, crossing the river nearly abreast of the upper wing walls of the lock, from which on the south side an embankment extends, till it meets the high land, by two rough stone walls with puddle between them, and a slope of earth on each side, guarded of course against the rise of the river. The canal excavation extends about 300 yards above, and the same distance below this single lock.⁴

The completion of the detached lock did not herald a new era of industrial activity for the site. Though possessing a good mill site, the future of this lock focused more upon its harbours created by the rise in the water level which were suitable for pleasure craft.

Lockmaster's House

The first lockhouse at this station was located south of the lock. Nothing is known of this house except that it existed between 1832 and 1840.⁵ As at the other two lock stations, this early lockhouse was probably a frame structure built at the time of construction. This was considered a temporary measure until the stone lockhouse could be constructed.

By 1846, the stone lockhouse was constructed though the exact date of its erection is not known. The building was located north of the lock on what was known as Lock Island. In addition to the stone house, there was a cook house built separate from the main house and located north east of it.⁶ In 1853, this main house was described as tinned and loop-holed, same as the combined locks, in good condition.⁷ The lockhouse was a one storey building 27 ft. 6 in. square, built of rough stone masonry with loop holes on each side.

There was a porch attached to the stone lockhouse for in 1867, repairs were made to the porch floor. In that year, the house was valued at \$ 1200.

The size and style of this porch is unknown, but it could have been similar to the porch which survived on the combined lockhouse. The porch on the combined lockhouse was not part of the original structure and possibly that at the detached lock was also a later addition (see Figure 50). In 1878, new windows were added to the lockhouse at a cost of \$ 36.⁸ This appeared to be a very high price for glass alone and suggested that the windows casements were altered as well.

The house continued to serve as a lockmaster's residence until 1894. In that year, further repairs to the structure were considered a waste of money and a new lockhouse was requested. Superintendent Phillips explained, "The house is in bad condition and should be pulled down and rebuilt, as it cannot be repaired owing to the walls & foundation having given way".⁹ The lockmaster was allowed to live in the lockhouse until the end of that fiscal year when money could be set aside for construction.

In August 1895, tenders for the new house were solicited from local contractors and Matthew Ryan was awarded the \$ 1150 contract. The new two storey house was built of brick, probably taken from Ryan's brickyard. The dwelling was completed by November 1895, "in a most satisfactory manner" according to canal authorities.¹⁰ The plans for the house were supported by the canal officials and the brick blockhouse did not differ substantially from the other houses in Smiths Falls built by Matthew Ryan. The house had a good cellar, and on the first floor, a hall, a front and back living room, and a dining room. Upstairs were three bedrooms and a room used by the lockmaster as an office (see Figure 53).¹¹

The replacement of the original stone lockhouse with this brick residence illustrated the changing role of the canal during the sixty years after its construction. The security of a watch house was replaced by the comfort of a standard residence. Military requirements had long been forgotten. The lockmaster's residence had no special function other than to serve as his home and office. Unlike later repairs which were done at the combined locks, there was also no mention of a special effort to co-ordinate the canal reserve appearance to local park sites.

The significance of this house cannot be comprehended unless some background is known about the lockmasters at the detached lock. Locally,

the lockstation is still known as "Jones Lock" after the family which controlled the position of lockmaster for ninety years. The first Jones was John Jones, who originally came from Tralee, County Carey, Ireland. John Jones was a nailer by profession who joined the army and soon became a corporal with the Royal Sappers and Miners. Arriving in Canada in 1827 with Colonel By to build the canal, Jones made nails for the regimental barracks at Ottawa, the locks and Deep Cut there, and the old Sappers bridge. In 1832, Jones was made lockmaster at Old Slys Lock.

In 1840, he moved to the detached lock in Smiths Falls. As James Kinloch remarked in his article on the family, "despite the fact that they were Government property, Jones' Locks were for ninety odd years a part of the Jones household, like the Jones sideboard or the Jones kitchen table".¹² John Jones retired in June 1871 and was replaced by his son, James G. Jones, who continued as lockmaster until May 1913. In July 1872, James was joined by his brother Arthur Sidney Jones, the new locklabourer. While this made the lockstation more or less a family business, the canal supervisors took a dim view of any failure to keep up the reputation of the Rideau Canal. In September 1890, James Jones was reported to his superiors for a certain casualness in the lockstation's appearance. Superintendent Wise inspected the grounds and wrote angrily to Jones, "Your station is without exception the most slovenly kept on the whole canal".¹³ Jones was ordered to remove the old picket fence, clear the walks of weeds and thistles, and make the station and garden "look as if there was some person in charge".¹⁴ The new lockhouse must have made Jones' life easier.

When the new lockhouse was built, it was accepted by the Jones family as their very own. The lock staff was increased by one man and Samuel Wilson Jones filled that position.¹⁵ The new house needed a few extras to make life comfortable. Storm windows were provided in 1898, and a frame kitchen added on to the back of the house. The June 1898 Inspection Report noted,

Told Jones we would start kitchen after July 1st. He asked for a verandah, but I told him I would promise him nothing. If however we decided to give him the lumber, he would have to put it up at his own expense.¹⁶

This series of improvements to the house apparently inspired Jones to take the advice he was given eight years ago to heart. When the inspector returned in September, he reported,

Found Jones having verandah built out of all reason. Says costs will not exceed \$ 75.00, but from appearance, \$ 125.00 won't cover it. Told him to cut expenditure down not to exceed \$ 50.¹⁷

The finished verandah extended along the front of the house and down one side.

After this initial construction, little was done to change the basic structure of the house. In 1908, a new brick chimney was built, the roof was resingled in 1917. In the same year, the Citizens Electric Light Company installed electric lights into the house.¹⁸ In 1934, doors and windows were added to the verandah on the side of the house.¹⁹

By 1931, the Jones family was no longer associated with the detached lock. Arthur Jones, who had replaced his brother as lockmaster in 1913, retired in December 1930; he had been on the canal since 1872 starting as a locklabourer. For his service to the Rideau Canal, Arthur Jones was presented with the Imperial Service Medal.²⁰ Arthur Jones was not the only one of the family associated with the canal's history. Lisa Jones, his sister, worked as a cook on the Rideau Queen for a number of years.²¹ His brother Charles founded the Malleable Iron Works with William Frost which eventually became one of the largest factories in town. With the retirement of Arthur Jones, however, a long period of the lock station's history was brought to a close.

The brick residence, of course, continued to serve as the lockmaster's house. In 1935, a concrete foundation was put under the kitchen. New wiring was installed in 1948 to accomodate new electric appliances such as washing machines and stoves. In 1955, plumbing was installed in the house.²² These improvements kept the lockmaster in step with the changing quality of life. Being somewhat secluded from the centre of the town, one resident of the lockhouse during the 1930's recalled the peaceful surroundings of the station with its large garden. During these years, the lockmaster's office was located upstairs in a sitting room. The rest of the house was used by

the family of lockmaster McLean.²³

This fine example of the late canal architecture was demolished by the Department of Transport in 1973.²⁴

Lockhouse Shed

To the north of the lockhouse was a storage shed but little is known of its history. The shed was standing in 1922, and was torn down in 1973 when the lockhouse was demolished. It was a frame building approximately 16 ft. by 32 ft.²⁵

Storehouse

The storehouse was located on the south side of the lock. The first building on this site was erected in 1870. It was described as a "small tool and store house", 12 ft. by 18 ft. At a cost of \$ 67, it was undoubtedly a frame building, possibly one storey.²⁶ During 1890, this building was replaced with a \$ 200 storehouse. Like the other storehouses along the canal, this was probably a two storey structure with the upper section serving as a sleeping quarter for canal work gangs.²⁷

In 1912, the old storehouse was taken down and a new one erected. A small addition to the original structure was added in 1914.²⁸ This addition appeared to be removed by 1922 when a map of the area indicated that only a 24 ft. by 17 ft. building existed.²⁹ This building was replaced in 1935, by a frame two storey building 24 ft. by 17 ft. The upper section of the storehouse was still used by lock labourers as late as 1956.³⁰

The storehouse acted as a meeting place for all the local men associated with the canal who often spent their afternoons and evenings there discussing matters of the day. In the evenings, the Jones family would be visited by people such as Captain Foster, who made his living running a shipping and coal business which depended on the canal. Alexander May, a local flour and feed merchant, and Bob May were also frequent visitors to what one resident called "a regular damned old friend's home".³¹

This building is still standing at the detached lock.

Dignum's House

This house was located on Lombard Street south of the cut leading from the lock to the basin. The original owner of this log house was Bartholomew Dignum who built the house around 1837.³² Dignum lived in the house until around 1854, when he rented the house to his son-in-law Isaac Clute. In October 1857, Clute wrote to the Ordnance Land Officer, William Coffin, in an attempt to secure a lease on the building and the land to the east of it as a residence and garden.³³ Though Dignum still owned the house, his son-in-law leased the place to Martin Mulvey in 1857.

In July 1859, lockmaster John Jones claimed that the house should be turned over to his son who was a locklabourer and recently married. Jones called Dignum "a trespasser on the Government Land" and believed Mulvey was "nothing but a squatter".³⁴ During the following year, the claims to this land were examined and it was reported,

This plot of land cannot be sold. It should in fact be transferred to Dept. Public Works as indispensable to the Canal Works.

Dignum has no claim in the world. Twenty years ago he was permitted to occupy or put up a shanty and gave the use of the building and temporary occupation of the place to his daughter who married one Clute. Clute sold his "good will" of the hut to one Mulvey and Mulvey in his turn sold to one Conway or Colloway. These parties have no right as agt., the Crown between each other Colloway is the rightful occupant. He pays a small rent to the Ordnance, but must give up possession when demanded. He might remove the house.³⁵

Thomas Conway continued to occupy the house until May 1866 when John Jones bought his "good will" to the house. Jones agreed to pay an annual \$ 2 rent.³⁶ The subsequent history of this house is unknown, but the 1874 "Birds Eye View Smiths Falls" indicated it was no longer standing that year.³⁷

Locklabourer Johnson's House

The house was located south of the canal cut fronting on Lombard Street. An 1860 report on Ordnance Land at Smiths Falls stated,

John Johnson two of his name have occupied small house and plot of land (shown on plan as Johnsons Lock Labourers House) on S. side of Canal.

The original John Johnson, who was a lock labourer occupied on sufferance. He was promoted to be lockmaster at Dan's Lock Station, on removal he rented the house to another John Johnson, also a lock labourer who has since agreed to pay \$ 2 ground rent to the Ordnance and pays it. The first Johnson wants to buy the ground.

The ground cannot be sold. It is necessary to the Works of the Canal. The first Johnson ought to be satisfied with what he has enjoyed and what he now gets. The second Johnson holds on from year to year. The land can be resumed and House removed at any time.³⁸

Although it is not entirely clear, the house appeared to have been rented to John Jones' son in the following years. In 1865, the house occupied by Jones was destroyed by fire.³⁹ It was not rebuilt as Jones' son moved into his father's house. Later he moved into Dignum's house.

Jones Cottage

This cottage was built around 1933 by Samuel W. Jones who was superannuated as lockmaster at Beveridges in that year. The cottage was located on the site formally rented to Mr. Rowe for a workshop and situated on Lombard Street near the end of the embankment running south to the detached lock. For \$ 10 a year, Jones was leased a 60 ft. by 40 ft. lot upon which he erected a frame building on a concrete foundation. The outside of the studding was sheeted with boards which were covered by tentest fiberboard

Since Jones did not live in the house during the winter, it was not classed as a permanent dwelling.⁴⁰

By 1942, the cottage was owned by Mrs. Jean Atkinson who sold the house to Mrs. S. Johnston in that year. In May 1964, the house was sold again, this time to James C. Cameron. The frame cottage was reported to be no longer used in December 1964, and apparently removed shortly afterwards to make room for the new Central Headquarters building.⁴¹

Dymond Cottage

This building was located on the north side of the Rideau River between the dam and Abbott Street west of the Frey Instrument Works. The lease has been held by Edna Ellen Dymond since January 1954 on this summer cottage. This three room building was used as the year round residence of Mrs. Dymond until 1972. During that year, Mrs. Dymond was informed that due to the fact that hers was the only cottage at the site and sewage problems were created by the house, her lease on the property would not be transferable to anyone else.⁴² This house is still standing.

Government Dam

The waste weir dam across the river was erected as part of the original works at this station. By 1863, the old dam was deteriorated. As the report for that year stated,

retaining embankment and waste weir dam, composed of posts and struts with stop logs in front. The dam is very old, and portions of it break away occasionally, but it is easily patched up again.⁴³

In 1869, the dam was damaged by high water and it was remarked that the old wooden dam could not be trusted and a new one was required.⁴⁴ Major repairs were apparently done over the next few years.

By 1895, steamers were having difficulty getting through the rock cut at Poonamalie, and the several rocky shoals below it, so the detached

lock dam was raised ten inches. The dam was rebuilt in the shape of a bulk-head so that water could easily be regulated and the basin filled more easily. Earth embankments were built on each end of the dam to prevent land from being flooded.⁴⁵

It is possible that this dam, or the previous one, was also used as a bridge. A photograph tentatively dated around 1890 (see Figure 54) shows a roadway crossing the waste weir dam. The amount of boating done in this area would certainly make such a bridge convenient for boaters going to and from their boathouses. The Abbott Street bridges built in 1897 made this waste weir bridge unnecessary.

During 1920 and 1921, a new concrete retaining dam was built in place of the old wooden structure. These changes cost \$ 4500. Another \$ 4000 was spent in 1959 to rebuild the deck of this dam in reinforced concrete.⁴⁶

Gould's Dam

This dam, used by Citizens Electric Light Company, was built by James Henry Gould in the waste channel below the Government dam. Gould had wanted to build such a dam since February 1870, when he wrote to the canal authorities asking what type of dam they would allow at that spot. Superintendent Slater wrote,

To define the height of the Dam near the Detached Lock. The Dam should be 18 inches lower than the present one opposite the Lock, and lower if it is to be found necessary or desirable, the channel not to be contracted and sufficient openings with convenient gates to draw down the water at any time it may be required, the Gates to be at all times under the control of the Lock Masters, and plans of the work to be submitted to the Department of Public Works for approval.⁴⁷

Gould postponed his plans until after the land settlement between himself and the canal authorities was completed in May 1873. In September 1877, Gould was reported building a dam across the waste weir channel. Since he owned the land on both sides of the dam, Gould claimed he owned the channel as well.⁴⁸

The canal officials quickly protested this claim because if Gould's dam was finished, they would have lost control of the water flow at the detached locks. The officials sought the advice of the Minister of Justice on this matter. The outcome of this particular dispute is unknown but apparently some agreement was arranged between Gould and the canal authorities through which the dam fell under the canal's regulation.

In June 1895, Gould received permission to raise the height of his dam to fourteen inches below the height of the government dam, which he did. Canal officials had to be most careful about the privileges they gave to this dam because of its location. Being in the channel at the detached lock, the dam was the first one in Smiths Falls to receive water from the river. All the other dams in town depended upon the water which flowed through Gould's dam. It was only after Gould and Adam Foster settled their private dispute over water rights, that the Department allowed Gould to raise his dam another six inches after the close of navigation.⁴⁹ This was at the same time that the Government dam was raised ten inches. The Gould dam was of the post and stop log type.

The dam continues to be used by the power station until the present but there appears to be no record of repairs made in the twentieth century. The present structure is made of concrete with four gates, and still in the same location as the earlier dam.

Locks

There were a few major repairs made to the lock at this station. The major one was in 1904 and 1905 when the upper wing walls had to be rebuilt. Because the wing walls overhung the lock so much, it was impossible to hang new gates until the walls, hollow quoins and gate recesses were rebuilt plumb. The walls were taken down as far as the gate piers and rebuilt, and the gate recesses and manholes grouted with Portland cement. Once these repairs were made, new gates were hung at the upper end of the lock.⁵⁰

Other repairs indicated the changing nature of lock improvements. In 1909, the lower sill was concreted, and in 1926, the timber mitre sill replaced with a concrete sill with steel.⁵¹

Swing Bridge

The swing bridge at the detached locks was built in 1897 and reflected the growth of the town which required a passage over the canal along Abbott Street. The work was done by the Wendell Bridge and Engineering Works of Trenton, Ontario. The bridge was of steel lattice girder design, with a bob-tailed swing span 95 ft. long. The width of the bridge was 17 ft. from centre to centre of the girders. On the upstream side of the bridge, a three and half foot wide sidewalk was erected for pedestrians.⁵²

By 1920, substantial repairs were necessary to this structure. The south approach to the bridge was repaired. New joists and flooring were laid on the bridge including the sidewalk during the following year. In 1932, another plank floor was put into the swing bridge.⁵³

In 1958, plans were made to replace the old bridge with a new swing bridge. The replacement was to be a wider and heavier steel plate girder swing bridge with a 24 ft. roadway, a load capacity of H-20 tons, and five foot sidewalk on the upstream side. To maintain the 6 ft. 7 in. clearance above the water, the bridge was raised by 20 inches. The Department erected the pivot pier and abutments, while the Dominion Structural Steel Company of Montreal installed the bridge itself.⁵⁴ To accomodate the new bridge, the Town of Smiths Falls raised the street and widened it by four feet.⁵⁵ The cost of the new bridge was estimated at \$ 100,000.

Fixed By-Wash Bridge

This bridge was built in 1897 by the Central Bridge and Engineering Company of Peterboro at a cost of \$ 2646. The steel truss fixed span was 152 ft. long and 21 ft. wide.⁵⁶ In 1925, the bridge was damaged by a heavy truck belonging to the Ontario Department of Highways and had to be repaired.⁵⁷ A six by six timber was laid down the middle of the bridge to divide the lanes of traffic.

The bridge did not have a pedestrian crossing attached to it when

originally constructed because that area of town was not highly developed. By 1927, however, pedestrians used the bridge quite often, and the local Board of Trade asked the canal authorities to erect a sidewalk.⁵⁸ A sidewalk was not built at this bridge until 1935 when both the Town Council and local M.P. T.A. Thompson petitioned the Department. The roadway was reduced to 16 ft. and a three and a half foot wooden sidewalk was built over the guard rail.⁵⁹

In the fall of 1959, a new bridge consisting of two reinforced concrete box girder spans and one concrete pier was built. The bridge had a 24 ft. roadway and a five foot sidewalk. The centre line of the bridge remained the same as the old light steel bridge and on the same level. Abbott Street was widened four feet and graded to the level of the bridge. Code Construction of Smiths Falls received \$ 42,393 for the job.⁶⁰

CNR Bascule Bridge

The original plan for the CNR crossing of the lock and waste weir was to lay the bridge directly across the lock, but the conditions laid down by the canal authorities caused the Railway company to shift their bridge site to a point 350 ft. above the lock.

Plans for the bridge were begun in February 1910, and the bridge was built during the following year. The bridge was raised 8½ ft. above the level of water to allow the small boats to pass under it without having to open the bridge. Care was taken by canal officials so that the bridge would not cut off access to the boathouses and the Canoe Club House on the far side of the island and mainland.⁶¹ The original design of the bridge called for a double arm swing span to carry the rail line across the canal, but in July 1911, this was replaced by a Scherzer Rolling Lift Span of 60 ft. clear. The bridge span was lifted by a small electric motor which could raise the bridge in one minute because the main span was counterbalanced by a weight.⁶² With the completion of this second railway bridge, the three locks in Smiths Falls were bracketed by railway bridges since the CPR bridge at Old Slys also passed within a few hundred yards of the locks.

A few years after the bridge was erected, the electric motor used to raise the bridge was removed and the bridge raised by hand.⁶³ This caused certain problems for the canal traffic. By hand, the bridge took fifteen to twenty minutes to be raised, and usually it was never fully opened but left at a 45° angle. As a result, the signal lights which indicated whether the bridge was opened or closed, always showed red. To shine green lights, the bridge would have to be opened to its full extent. Since boats had the right of way over trains, the canal authorities requested that the bridge be fully opened to end the confusion to boaters.⁶³

In 1931, the canal authorities required the CNR to reinstall the electric motor to raise the bridge or to raise it to a 90° angle. During the previous season, the bridge had been raised fifty-five times.⁶⁴ The bridge was not raised when the canal closed for the winter. The railway, however, did not comply with this request and continued to operate the bridge by hand.⁶⁵

Foot Bridge

In 1968, the Smiths Falls Hydro Electric Commission and the Smiths Falls Recreation Association erected a small metal foot bridge across the waste weir channel below the power station dam. The bridge crosses from the Hydro property to land on the island leased to the Town for a park. The purpose of the bridge was to make it easier for the children living in the southend of town to reach the swimming area in the basin.⁶⁶

General Improvements

Until quite recently, the general topography of the station was not changed, other than by embankments built to maintain the security of the canal. During 1920 and 1921, some fill was placed behind the retaining wall between the lock and swing bridge north of the canal and some more on the south side of the canal. Such filling operations were designed primarily to stop leakage.⁶⁷

In early 1966, a retaining wall 425 ft. long was erected by A.J. Clark from the south east wingwall of the CNR bridge eastward to the lay by wharf and north and east along the wharf to the south west wingwall of the lock. This wall along the south side of the canal cut off the bay extending up to Lombard Street. This bay was filled in and used as the site of the Department of Transport headquarters which housed the Rideau Canal offices from Ottawa to Kingston. In addition to this retaining wall, a new 207 ft. wharf was erected in place of the old timber crib approach wharf at the lock. The wharf was designed for crafts of all sizes and had 43 moving posts. The project cost \$ 64,000.⁶⁸

Smiths Falls Detached Lockstation

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- 8 Ibid., vol. 588, p. 1220, Repairs required before 30 June 1878, 2 January 1878.
- 9 PAC, RG 43, B4(a), vol. 156, p. 232 - Phillips to Schreiber, 3 October 1894.
- 10 Ibid., p. 578, List of Tenders for rebuilding of Lockhouse at Smiths Falls Detached Lock 13 August 1895; p. 580, Phillips to Ryan, 15 August 1895.
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 - 28 Ibid., vol. 226, p. 203, Annual Report. 1 April 1912; vol. 229, p. 445, Annual Report 1 April 1914.
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Old Slys Locks

Construction

The construction of the works at Old Slys was undertaken by Bell, Richardson and Company on the 1st of February, 1828. The contractors were required to build two locks of eight and nine foot lifts and a nineteen foot high dam with considerable embankments. Bell and Richardson also undertook contracts for Edmunds Rapids and Phillips Bay.¹ As with the construction of Smiths Falls, the eventual plan of the works changed considerably from Colonel By's first intentions.

The original plan for the locks at Old Slys rapids was outlined by John Mactaggart,

At an old settlers house of the name of Sly, a dam is proposed, called Sly's Dam, to do the business of these rapids, and form a free navigation to the foot of Smiths Falls, four miles above. Dam 19 feet in height, width of river 150 feet, and length of embankment 250 feet, averaging six feet high. The banks are extremely favourable for retention on both sides, and there is plenty of white free-stone rock. Two locks are proposed to be placed here on the west side of the river, where a favourable height is discovered; one lock will require to be 8 feet lift, another 7. By this dam no land of any consequence will be drowned or molested, but the lower part of Old Sly's house will be inundated, and a new one will be required for him at 50£ value. At this place, the cubic feet of water passing down the Rideau per hour are 345,000; a sufficient supply for ten locks of ten-feet lift every hour; but when the large lakes and reservoirs are filled, they will be able to supply more than a thousand locks per hour, without being sensibly

diminished in level.²

The optimistic predictions of Mactaggart were soon proven inaccurate.

Bell and Richardson must have started clearing the site sometime during the summer of 1827. When John Burrows made his trip along the canal in August 1827, he noted that some clearing had been done. On examining the site, Burrows decided that there was, "no place fit for a Dam to raise the water to the foot of the fall better than in front of Mr. Slys house".³ He proceeded to lay out the dam and mark out the two locks on the north side of the dam as well.

During the rest of that year and throughout the next, Mr. Richardson, who supervised the site for the contractors, continued to proceed with the construction of the works. The work was not going too well as far as the Ordnance officers were concerned. In October 1828, N.H. Baird noted that, "some rubble work under lock is being very badly done very bad indeed".⁴ Seeing the state of the works, Baird,

Ordered Richardson to get on with Wing Embt. to get Bye Wash immediately made 50 feet wide and to close end of Dam. Col.

By told him he could not be answerable for the Consequence if Dam was not closed before Winter.⁵

This prompting by the Canal supervisors apparently had its intended effect because one month later, it was reported that "Bell & Richardson had taken up the bad masonry, and finished off the superstructure pretty well, but Foreman says it must come all down".⁶ Work on the waste weir was also proceeding well and the contractors considered closing up the temporary outlet. The work continued that fall and by March 1829 the dam was nearly finished. The foundation of the upper breast work was laid out and stone for the two locks drawn to the spot. The stone used in construction was described as "bluish bastard limestone"⁷ and brought from a quarry eleven miles away. Clearing was completed, as were the lock excavations. The excavation through the point of land below the lock was about half done.⁸

In April 1829, the leak in the dam at Smiths Falls threatened to wash away the works at Old Slys. Had the dam given way, the resulting flood of water would have quickly swept to Old Slys rapids a few miles below. Lieutenant Pooley in his report on the Smiths Falls situation wrote,

I have given directions to Mr. Richardson to continue raising the clay parts, and he has been extremely [active?] since the alarm at Smiths Falls, making every preparation and using every precaution to resist any sudden rush of water that would come down in the event of a breach being made through the Dam at Smiths Falls, and I see no reason to apprehend any danger at Old Sly's. The waste weir carries off the surplus of water of the floods.⁹

Fortunately, the dam held at Smiths Falls, and Pooley's claim was never put to the test. Late in 1829, Colonel By re-examined his plans for Old Slys and concluded changes were necessary. As he explained to the British authorities,

Having commenced laying out the Works upon the Increased Scale approved by the Committee, it was ascertained that a Deviation from the Original Plan, with respect to the directions & Site of the Locks, was indispensably necessary to provide for a Steam Boat Navigation, from the following circumstances. 1st. The position of the Breast Work of the Upper Lock did not allow of a sufficient space between it and the Bank immediately in front of the same, for a Steam Boat, without cutting away a large portion of the Bank in question and deepening the Bed of the River, Services the Execution of which would have caused a much greater Expenditure than the alterations adopted and the Entrance would still have been extremely confined. 2nd. The direction of the Lock, as originally proposed, formed an Angle with the River to enter the Lower Lock, a Steam Boat must therefore have first gone nearly into the Centre of The River, but as the Dam which it was proposed to place at Phillips Bay would not back up a Depth of water sufficient to provide for the event, the removal of large Boulders and Rock Excavation to form the required channel would have been necessary, entailing an almost endless expense in Cofferdams, Pumps and Pumping. To alleviate the above defects, I have placed the Locks in a parallel direction with the North Bank Excavating

the Canal from the River nearly in a direct line to the Lower Lock. I have also considered a Waste Weir indispensably necessary for the permanent security of the Dam.¹⁰

These alterations increased the cost of the works considerably, but the final completion of the lock station indicated that Colonel By had made the proper decision. The new plan required several additional expenditures. The amount of clearing and grubbing had increased to improve the circulation of air and to prevent sickness. More excavation was also required in order to provide a better entrance to the locks. Substantial changes were made to the dam and locks during their construction. The dam was increased because of the unsound rock at the bottom and the sides of the river.

This rock was removed and the dam's height increased to prevent water from passing over it. An embankment, originally planned for the works, was abandoned because of the unsound rock and its length had to be added to the dam. The outer walls of one of the locks had to be faced with cut stone since it rose above the natural surface of the ground. The altered position of the locks also required an increase in backing and filling. During construction, pumps had to be used to remove spring water which proved more abundant than first contemplated. Some excavation of the river channel was required because of the decision not to build a dam at Phillips Bay. Finally, Richardson was expected to remove all of the drift around the rapids to prevent this from floating into the locks. All the work was to be completed by August 1831.

The continually changing plan for the Old Slys works naturally increased the total cost for the lock station. Colonel By's original estimate had been £ 10.709.10.10½ which rose to £ 12.248.18.10½ when the larger locks were introduced. By December 1829, however, £ 10.672.1.3 3/4 had already been spent with a large amount of work still to be completed. The total cost was estimated at £ 20.591.15. 10 3/4 currency.¹¹

If these growing financial costs did little to improve Col. By's relationship with the British Government, the constant changes of the construction plans, as well as the insistence on top quality workmanship, did little to improve By's reputation with the contractors. In February

1830, a traveller inspected the Old Slys project and made the following report.

There is a small job let under contract to a plain blunt Englishman of the name of Richardson. The work to be performed consists of two locks one of 8 feet 5 inches lift and the other of 7 feet lift with a Dam of 135 feet [wide] height to back the water up to Smiths Falls. The stones for the construction of the locks are bluish bastard sandstone brought from a distance of eleven miles. Here as generally happens where honest men find themselves watched with too great a degree of jealousy, the work is not done with that conscientious care which a generous and unfettered mind would execute. The locks to be sure appear to be well built, but the Dam will hardly pass muster even in a rear rank and among that of the second grade. Nor is this altogether owing to the Contractor. [Change] upon change in the plan has [been] made. More than once the Dam has been finished and the workmen subjected to the exactious [sic] duty of undoing the coping and augmenting the height of it. Even at the period I inspected it an uncertainty prevailed and I saw Lieutenant Pooley, the Officer in charge, taking levels...If this part of the work be delayed, no blame for this can be attached to the Contractor - he appears to be hard working and industrious man and capable of executing plans when they are correctly given.¹²

Despite the frustration of working under contract to the British Ordnance, Richardson apparently successfully met those standards since Bell and Richardson completed the combined locks at Smiths Falls when James Simpson abandoned the contract in spring of 1831.

The works at Old Slys were completed more or less on schedule. Proceeding from Smiths Falls locks, a mile and three quarters above, the two locks were on the left hand side of the river. The walls facing the river were built three feet thick and faced with ashlar instead of having earth backed around them. The total lift was sixteen feet six inches which

allowed five and a half feet of water on the lower side and seven feet on the upper side. Both the stone sides were laid in cement. During construction, the rock floor of the upper floor had been cracked by blasting and pieces of wood were fitted into the rock between the piers and bolted to it. The completed dam was about 250 yards long and abutted on the wing-wall and pier of the upper lock. Though basically following the original plan for the dam, the height was raised to prevent water flowing over it. To ensure safety of the works, a channel sixty feet wide was cut through the rock on the right hand side of the river to the level of the bottom of the required navigation. At the head of this channel, a wooden waste weir was built with moveable stop logs to act as a regulating mechanism. An embankment was built from the dam to the waste weir. After the locks were built, a basin was formed at the foot of the locks which was large enough for steam boats to pass one another.¹³

Early Buildings and Settlers

The original settler of this area, for whom the rapids were named, was William Sly. Little is known about Sly, except that he apparently lived on the spot as early as 1798.¹⁴ In 1797, a "William Slye" petitioned the Crown Lands Commissioner for 200 acres in Leeds County, but it is unknown if this was the settler at Old Slys. In his petition, Sly commented that he had come to Canada two years earlier with his wife and five children.¹⁵

In the fall of 1827 or early 1828, Sly sold his land to Dr. Thomas Hicock, who was also involved in land transactions in Smiths Falls. Hicock planned to settle on Sly's farm after the completion of the canal. He raised wheat and began to move his furniture into the house Sly built. Hicock paid \$1000 for the farm which had a house and a barn on it, though the barn had no roof. These buildings were valued at £ 265 to £ 270.

In 1832, Dr. Hicock died and Ira Schofield, who was also involved in the early development of Smiths Falls, married his widow, Doreas Hicock. The farm remained in his possession for a number of years, and Schofield applied to the Government for compensation for damages due to the canal construction. The Ordnance had taken the best third of the farm for the

lock station. Schofield was awarded £ 80 currency for the land in November 1835.¹⁶ A map showing the location of the early buildings was made by Joshua Richey for this settlement (see Figure 3).

Another early land holder in the area was William Morris who possessed the land on the opposite side of the river from Sly. The land taken by the Ordnance officers was in Lot 30, Concession E, Welford Township. The land itself was not valued very highly, but the mill site which the land surrounded had great potential. In August 1830, William Morris wrote to By explaining the effects the canal had upon the property.

[As] the lands which the Government requires for the use of the Canal at Old Slys will embrace the most valuable part of my property, I feel disposed to sell the whole quantity as the residue will be much injured when the water is raised to its intended height; and as I own other Lots on the Banks of the Canal, which will also be required by the Government for public use, I take the liberty of offering the whole at once...

Then adjoining the former, as you ascend the River, is Lot No. 30, Concession E, in the same Township, containing 98 acres and 75 perches, more or less, and embracing the works at Old Sly's. The importance of this Lot for the erection of Mills is well known and I have already declined several offers to purchase from men of capital, conceiving that you would probably take the whole at once - I informed you sometime ago that a person had applied for it in order to build an iron furnace, to work the bed of ore which is on the spot, and which I have now to repeat that the application was renewed last week, and when I am certain of selling four acres for one half of the sum which I value the whole Lot at; you will trust not think me unreasonably when I say that I would not take less than £ 400 for it. This also skirts the River more than a mile and a quarter.

As I stated to you in a former letter, I have, under a supposition that the sale of small lots would involve the Government in difficulty with the purchasers, refused to sell

spots for building to several respectable individuals, and I am now sensible of having injured the value of the land to a great extent particularly at Old Sly's where, a 3 storey stone mill would now have been in operation, and much of the business transacted which is carried on at Smiths Falls, had I accepted an offer of advantage nearly three years since.¹⁷

Morris, no doubt, stressed the importance of the land to increase the price the Ordnance officers would pay in compensation, but the above claim to the rapids' importance was backed by the statements of James Simpson and others. Final settlement of this claim awarded Morris £ 300 currency for the entire lot, but £ 200 currency was stated as the price of the mill site and seven acres.¹⁸ No one used the site until Joshua Bates leased the land in 1853.

Little information remains on the buildings erected at the site before the completion of the canal. Besides the house and barn of William Sly, there were several buildings put up by contractor Richardson. An 1831 map indicated that all of these buildings were located on the Montague side of the river.¹⁹ There were approximately eight buildings located on the canal reserve beside the Sly buildings. Just above the locks on the same side of the river were two more buildings. The purpose of these buildings is unknown, but they were probably dwelling houses, stables and workshops to accommodate Richardson and his men. Since the Royal Engineers had offices at Smiths Falls, it would be unlikely that there would be a separate office at this lock station.

Lockmaster's House

The first lockmaster's house at this station was the former residence of William Sly. Originally, this house was to be removed, but when it was found necessary to relocate the dam, Sly's house was left standing. The cost of removing the house was £ 200 which must have included the compensation paid to the owner.²⁰ This house was built in 1823 or 1824. The main house was valued at £ 35, with an unvalued addition on the rear of the main building. The accommodation this house provided lockmaster John Jones left much to be desired. In 1835, he reported that,

He had occupied the House since January 1831 and had suffered the greatest misery in it - there were no doors or windows in it, and had lost 250 bushels of potatoes frozen in the cellar.²¹

This original house was probably demolished to make way for the stone lockhouse. As at several other stations, Colonel By originally intended to erect a blockhouse at the same time as the initial construction. In his April 1830 report, By wrote, "a Block House is proposed, which will answer as a Dwelling for the Lock Master and Labourers and which if erected immediately will cost £ 800 sterling".²² The cost of this building, which would have been a two storey structure, eventually led to its abandonment. Plans for a new lockhouse, however, were revived in 1836 when a sketch of the lockhouse site was made, and by May 1838, lockmasters at Old Slys and Nicholson's were instructed to inspect the contractor's work.

Lockmasters at the two stations are to examine the lockhouse at least three times daily while they are in progress to make sure contractors not doing poor work or using bad materials.²³

The house must have been finished during that season.

In 1843, the exterior of the lockhouse was painted, but by 1854, the structure was basically unaltered from its original state. The 1852 Inspectional Report described the house as a rough stone building, shingled, built on the same plan as the house at Nicholson but not loopholed.²⁴ In 1867, the house was resingled at a cost of \$ 34.50. Unspecified repairs were carried out in 1874 for \$ 100.²⁵

The turn-over among lockmasters at this station was slightly higher than at the combined locks in Smiths Falls. The original lockmaster, John Jones, remained at the station until he was appointed to the detached locks in 1838. Alexander Kinnimouth served as lockmaster from that time until 1845, when he was replaced by Clowes lockmaster Daniel Buck. In June 1871, William McCann was appointed. It was possible that this relatively large number of lockmasters at one station prevented the erection of many large unauthorized buildings on the site.²⁶

William McCann's term as lockmaster ended abruptly in February 1882 when he was superannuated due to insanity. During the year prior to this,

McCann was reported absent from the station and drunk much of the time. In May 1881, McCann was absent for a week, and some government property was destroyed. During his absence, McCann's son and five or six young men went into the lockhouse and, after drinking, began to throw the furniture out of the house, "and otherwise behaved in a most scandalous manner".²⁷ McCann's son also used the government fencing as firewood. After McCann was committed to an asylum, Robert McCreary was appointed in May 1882.²⁸ The Old Slys lock station was locally referred to as McCreary's locks.

Soon after McCreary was appointed lockmaster, a kitchen was added to the original stone building²⁹ (see Figure 55). Major changes of this kind usually occurred a few years after a lockmaster was appointed which suggested that the lockhouse was modified to suit the needs of the individual employees and their families. This pattern of repairs was followed when John Nichols was appointed lockmaster in June 1908.³⁰ In August of that year, Matthew Ryan repaired the cellar of the lockhouse. Ryan cleaned and laid out 3 in. field tile laid 4 ft. apart leading to one corner possibly to aid drainage. Another line of pipe was to lead directly from the well in the corner. The floor was finished with a substantial granolithic covering. These repairs cost \$ 60. At the same time, the house was reshingled.³¹

If the new lockmaster received the benefits of these repairs, lockmaster McCreary was allowed to remove the stable he had built at his own expense from the station. McCreary was also allowed to harvest the crop which he planted in the garden.³² This last request indicated the importance placed upon the garden land provided to all lockmasters. As a result of their gardens, lockmasters would not have to spend as much of their salary on food. This must have been one of the benefits of the position.

Unlike the lockhouses at Smiths Falls combined and detached locks, the Old Slys lockhouse seemed to have been well maintained during the late nineteenth century. It is uncertain whether this was due to the relatively frequent changes of the lockmasters or simply the original quality of construction. The next major series of repairs occurred in the 1930's. In August 1932, G.N. Sommerville plastered the ceilings and walls of the house, and lockmaster Moston relaid the kitchen floor in pine flooring.³³ In August 1937, a furnace was installed in the house. This was considered a

necessity. As the Department reasoned, "This is the lockmaster's residence and it is difficult to heat as it is one of the old stone blockhouses with frame additions built on to it".³⁴ While this complaint was justified, it certainly illustrated how far the living conditions of lockmasters had progressed from the days of John Jones in Sly's old house.

A 1956 record of buildings owned by the Department described the House No. 30, or the lockmaster's house, as 26 ft. by 26, with a two storey 17 ft. by 23 ft. addition. The first section of the house referred to the stone lockhouse and the two storey building apparently to the kitchen section added in 1882.³⁵

During the late 1950's and early 1960's, more repairs were made. In 1956, Mr. Dignam installed sanitary plumbing in the lockhouse. A new furnace was put in during November 1958, and this was converted to gas in October 1962. Heating ducts were extended into the second storey part of the house a year later.³⁶ In March 1964, a windstorm caused some damage to the building. Shingles were torn off the front porch and the roof of the two storey wooden section of the lockhouse. The wind shook the house and caused the plaster in the second floor to crack.³⁷

These damages appeared to force a reconsideration of the role of the lockhouse. During the summer of 1965, all of the frame extensions of the lockhouse were demolished and the site levelled. In January 1966, J.I. Bennaugh of Smiths Falls was awarded a \$ 8800 contract to reconstruct the lockhouse. The contract called for the removal of the interior partitions, lath and plaster, floor, ceiling, roofing, window and door frames, leaving the outside stone walls intact. The basement was to be filled with pit run gravel to the level of the underside ground floor slats. A concrete ground floor 8 in. thick with reinforced steel was also built. The exterior walls were stone pointed and pencilled and insulated. The interior was completely rebuilt, with interior wood trim in pine. The windows were replaced. Twelve inch square acoustic tile was put on the ceiling, the walls finished in gypsum plaster board with taped joints. The washroom was finished in ceramic tile, and included a vanity with an arbrite top. The office and storeroom floors were laid with vinyl asbestos tile. In addition to these interior changes, the roof was shingled with blue asphalt shingles,

eave troughing erected, and 450 ft. of weeping tile was laid in rows 50 ft. to 75 ft. A 500 gallon aerobic sewage disposal unit completed these improvements.³⁸

These changes allowed the lockhouse to function as a watch house. It still serves this purpose.

Locklabourer's House

The exact date of construction and location of this building is uncertain. Since there was a locklabourer at this station since the canal opening, some form of accommodation must have been provided. The map accompanying the Schofield settlement in 1835 indicated two buildings on the site, though the second building was just outside of the Ordnance boundary line. The second building could have been Sly's barn, rather than a second house.³⁹

The 1852 Inspectional Report recorded a "Lock Labourers House - log house 24' x 18' good condition".⁴⁰ The plan submitted by Joshua Bates in March 1851 to show his plans for the mill site on the opposite side of the river showed two clusters of buildings. The first was marked as sheds and located near the site of Sly's barn. The second cluster of four buildings was between the lockhouse and the wharf above the locks. Two of these buildings were marked as a stable and a shed. The third appeared to be the general size of the locklabourer's house. The fourth building was much smaller than any other and might have been a privy.⁴¹ The fact that the locklabourer's house was a log house suggested it was not of recent construction in 1854. The 1831 plan of the lockstation, however, does not locate any buildings on the site of the labourer's house.

Further references to this house are limited. In 1866, the floor of this building was repaired by a carpenter at an expense of \$ 6.90.⁴² A year later, the building was described as, "1 House wood (old) locklabourers: \$ 150".⁴³ There are no later references to the building. If the building was originally constructed in the 1830's, then by the end of the 1860's, the structure probably needed replacement. No other building designated as a lockman's house was recorded, though a storehouse was built

in 1884. As the sections dealing with the combined locks at Smiths Falls illustrated, storehouses were used by locklabourers and canal work gangs as residences. This might have been the case at Old Slys. By the 1870's, however, the area around the lock station became developed and a second possibility was that the locklabourer found a house outside the canal reserve. The location of original lockman's house was very close to the street allowance for the road crossing the lock (now Carthage Street), and this may have accounted for the house's removal.

Storehouse

In the estimates for 1885 and 1886, \$ 250 was allocated for a new storehouse at Old Slys, and the building was erected in 1887.⁴⁴ No changes were made to this building after its initial construction, although in 1912 a new shingle roof was added.⁴⁵

The building continued to serve its purpose until 1935. In that year, it was reported,

The present Old Sly's storehouse is 18½' x 24½' outside dimensions and is two storeys high. It is set on stones on the ground.

In the 1930 report to you on all our buildings it was listed as being "very old".⁴⁶

The old storehouse was removed in that year and a new one erected.⁴⁷ The new building was also a two storey frame building, 17 ft. by 23 ft.⁴⁸ It continued to stand in 1956, but was not there in 1968.⁴⁹ The removal of the storehouse probably coincided with the removal of the frame buildings attached to the lockhouse in 1965.

The storehouse was located directly north of the lower lock, just west of the railway line.⁵⁰

Other Buildings

There were several sheds marked on the maps of Old Slys for which very little information was discovered. In July 1849, lockmaster Buck asked permission from the canal officers,

to renew a part of an old shed, or place erected by Mr. Kinimouth as a kind of cooking house, and woodshed, under the restriction contained in your order dated 9th December 1847. I beg leave to mention that I would not cover any new ground, and that part that I want to remove is become useless as it is merely rotted down.⁵¹

Buck was allowed to build his new structure.

The 1851 plan of the station indicated a building to the east of the lockhouse and this was probably used by Buck and later lockmasters for their own personal storehouse.⁵²

A second building mentioned at the station was a stable, which was reshingled in 1917.⁵³ This belonged to the lockhouse as well. A 1925 plan indicated that a stable stood to the north of the lockhouse, across the road.⁵⁴ This was the approximate spot of the old locklabourer's house. A 1851 map indicated that the locklabourer's house also had a stable. Though it is unlikely one building would have remained standing for so long, both stables were in the same spot.

Locks

The two locks at this station were 134 ft. by 33 ft. with rock bottoms. The lower one had a lift of 8 ft. 6 in., the upper one had a guard of three feet, with a total lift of 15 ft. 6 in. Being formed on a sloping bank, the side next to the river was raised to its proper height by masonry with an iron railing on the top.⁵⁵

Necessary repairs were made throughout the lock's history, but at Old Slys leakage through the locks was a particularly difficult problem. The main cause of this was the fissured nature of the rock, though the quality of the original construction may have also been a factor. In 1863, it was reported, "The masonry of the upper wing wall of the lock is in very bad order, and must be rebuilt at the first opportunity".⁵⁶ These repairs were carried out. In 1867, the wooden flooring of the upper lock had to be replaced to stop leakage. In the following year, water excavated a large breach in the bottom of the lock and passed under the eastern wall. This

was filled with crib work and stone and a new timber floor laid.⁵⁷ The replacement of the wooden floors and grouting the masonry did not solve the problem.

It was only in 1893 when a cement floor was laid in the upper lock that progress was made.⁵⁸ With regular repairs, this stopped all the leaks from the lock.

Dam

The dam was described in 1854 as a 284 ft. long work, 20 ft. high running from the south upper wing wall to a small tongue of land. It was formed of rough keyed masonry and filled in front with gravel and stone.⁵⁹ Like the dam at Smiths Falls, no major repairs were made to the structure. After Joshua Bates built the bridges across the lock and river at Old Slys, a roadway was built on the top of the dam. This also required periodic grading and repairs.

Waste Weir

The original waste weir was a wooden structure with movable logs which acted as a regulating system.⁶⁰ It was located at the head of the channel just above the position of the bridge. Periodically, the stop logs or other parts of the weir were replaced when necessary. There was a boom in front of the waste weir, at least in the 1890's and early twentieth century, which held back the ice during spring freshets.⁶¹ The ice breaker cribs were also periodically rebuilt due to ice damage.

In 1935, the old waste weir was completely removed. New timber bents were placed under the fixed bridge and this was used as a bridge and waste weir combined. A short piece of concrete wall along the upstream side of the south approach of the fixed bridge was built to prevent leakage under the road.⁶²

This was replaced in the fall of 1959 by a concrete waste weir approximately ten feet below the old weir. The structure was five to six

feet lower than the original waste weir. The position was changed to avoid the deteriorating crib work. The number of openings in the weir was reduced from four to three.⁶³

CP Railway Bridge

With the construction of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway during the 1850's, a bridge was built across the river and canal at Old Slys. Though it was never a threat to navigation in a physical sense, symbolically the railway bridge did more harm to the Rideau Canal than any other single structure in Smiths Falls.

Plans for the bridge were submitted for the canal authorities approval in January 1855 and approved in April.⁶⁴ Although construction was to begin immediately, it apparently was not finished until 1858. By March 1855, however, the railway bridge was attracting the attention of the local press. The Brockville Recorder, in a survey of local industry, described Old Slys rapids and then reported,

The above locality is to be the site of the bridge across the Rideau for the Brockville and Ottawa Railroad. The bridge will be built of stone and iron, its height will be thirty-three feet above the water level and twenty-six feet wide. Mr. Booth is the contractor for the bridge. There will be a lumber depot at this locality. It will therefore be seen that a little energy on the part of the proprietors of the adjoining property, by advancing improvements, will at no distant day render Mathesonville a pretty formidable rival to Smiths Falls, there being extensive water privileges on this spot.⁶⁵

These optimistic predictions for Old Slys were not fulfilled.

Hoping to make up for lost time, the bridge builders asked lockmaster Buck to run the water through the lock since navigation was temporarily stopped due to a breach at Long Island. This would permit the contractor to put in the foundation for the stone piers in a week or ten days. Superintendent Slater refused to let this be done. While the Long Island breach halted navigation, it was necessary to keep the water running normally in

the Smiths Falls area.

Otherwise between 20 and 30 mills of a rich and thickly settled Country including such Towns and Villages [sic] as Merrickville, Burritts Rapids, will be shut out altogether - a number of large Mills Manufactories etc. and a small rebellion would be raised against us were we to deprive them of the Navigation of the canal to accommodate the Railway Contractor.⁶⁶

The bridge builders had to make other plans.

By December 1858, the bridge was nearly completed. It was 160 ft. long, built on five masonry piers. The Rideau Gleaner thought the new bridge deserved some attention.

Viewed from a distance, and having a very handsome dread of any railway accidents happening in our neighbourhood one is disposed to think it rather slight, but as we draw nearer to it, its strength becomes more apparent, and when you get actually on the top of it, (which, by the way, is not a very safe occupation yet, for those who cannot trust themselves to walk a stick of timber at a height of forty or fifty feet above the water) and examine the braces and bars, and bolts and rods, you would pronounce it perfectly satisfactory, were our railway experience of less tragical kind. However, as most accidents on railway, as well as elsewhere, happen more from carelessness and inattention than anything else, we do not doubt that if due care is taken, the bridge in question will be able to stand any fair test to which may be subjected and that it will carry all the traffic which the Brockville and Ottawa Railway is likely to have for some time to come.

We may also mention that we do not know of any place from which so good a view of the village can be obtained as from the top of the bridge, so that those who go to see it for the gratification of their curiosity, will also be rewarded by seeing the village of Smiths Falls in all its glory stretching away in the distance. Mr. Wilson's Hotel is by far the most conspicuous object, and it towers above other houses

to a height which rather surprises one who has viewed it only from the street. We hope the time will come, and who dare say it will not, when our village will reach down even to the bridge, and when instead of stretching away in the distance it will be seen lying more nearly at its feet.⁶⁷

It was surprisingly apt that the editor should get a new perspective on his town from the trestles of a railway bridge, because the railway would indeed give a new perspective to the town's development.

The bridge remained unchanged throughout its history. Quite surprisingly, the canal authorities never issued a lease for this bridge. It was not until 1925 when this error was discovered. The bridge, then owned by CPR, was described as a single track carried across the river on four masonry piers and two abutments, across the canal on two masonry abutments below the lower lock, with three sections of solid embankment at each end and between the two bridges crossing the river and canal. A \$ 25 annual rent was suggested as appropriate for the infringement of the canal reserve.⁶⁸

Swing Bridge

The first bridge over the lock at Old Slys was built by Joshua Bates in the fall of 1852 to assist in the construction of his mills. The temporary bridge was built at the close of navigation and removed in the spring.⁶⁹ In July 1857, Bates again requested permission to erect a bridge across the lock as a convenience for the customers of his grist and carding mills. The Department agreed to let Bates construct a bridge if he assumed all costs for construction and maintenance and paid an annual rent of £ 4 to the lockmen in consideration of the additional labour spent on the bridge attendance.⁷⁰

The importance of this bridge was soon recognized by the local residents. In May 1858, 173 citizens of Smiths Falls including such prominent residents as Alexander Wood, German M. Cossitt, Jason Gould and John Ward, petitioned the canal authorities that this bridge, as well as the one over the waste weir, be operated day and night by the lockmen at Old Slys.⁷¹

They were apparently successful in their attempt since in 1859, the lock labourers erected a new fence on the bridge. This early bridge was a wooden draw bridge.⁷²

In June 1882, T.R. Ward, who had taken over Bates mills, petitioned the authorities to assume responsibility for this bridge. Among the supporters of the petition were the Reeves of the area. At first, the authorities were agreeable to Ward's petition. One canal official reported,

It is the only private Swing Bridge on the Canal and it is now used by the Public to a large extent, it is hardly just to ask a private person should maintain it.

I may state that it is in a bad state of repair and will require to be renewed very shortly.⁷³

In July, however, the lockmaster at Old Slys was ordered to tell Ward to repair the bridge himself or it would not be swung over the canal. The Department did not want to be responsible for any accident.⁷⁴ In August, the bridge was declared unsafe for public travel. A new bridge was estimated to cost \$ 2000.⁷⁵

The canal authorities took responsibility for the bridge, and in 1886, a new swing bridge was built.⁷⁶ After this, maintenance of the bridge became a public responsibility. In 1895, the road over the stone dam was raised and graded. In 1909, the pivot pier of the bridge was repaired. This bridge was supposed to be replaced in 1911 after the wing walls were rebuilt at the lock, but apparently the old bridge remained.⁷⁷

In 1920, a new ballast pocket was framed and placed in the swing bridge, and during the following season, a new pivot pier was laid, the rest piers rebuilt in concrete and a new floor laid in the bridge.⁷⁸ By 1924, the bridge was said to be beyond repair. The wooden bridge over the upper lock was taken down along with the old wooden pivot pier which was replaced in concrete. New concrete approaches were also built on each side and an iron pipe railing erected, but no further repairs were recorded.⁷⁹

In 1936, a new swing span was framed, so repairing the old bridge. The canal authorities were discussing the possibility of replacing the timber swing bridge with a steel one in September 1949, but these plans seemed to have been dropped.⁸⁰ In the fall of 1962, the old bridge was re-

moved. W.D. Laflamme Ltd. built the substructure for the new bridge and the Canada Machinery Corporation built the new steel bridge itself. The new bridge was valued at \$ 65,000.⁸¹

Waste Weir Fixed Bridge

When Joshua Bates erected the draw bridge over the lock in 1857, he also erected a wooden bridge over the waste weir channel. In the following year, the citizens of Smiths Falls petitioned the government to put a twenty-four hour attendant on the bridge. In this petition, they referred to the second bridge as well. When T.R. Ward turned over the swing bridge in 1882, the fixed bridge also came under canal jurisdiction.⁸²

In 1886, along with the swing bridge, the fixed bridge was replaced by the Department. During 1920, the bridge below the waste weir was rebuilt with the old timber piers being replaced with concrete.⁸³ These repairs served only a few years for in 1929 it was reported the wooden waste weir and road bridge were combined on concrete piers. The bridge was in good condition and not likely to require any repairs for a few years.⁸⁴

In 1934, Smiths Falls officials became concerned about the bridge. As it passed over the dam, there was a twenty foot drop into the water and local authorities feared that if a car went off the bridge, the occupants would be killed. For protection, the canal officials had placed long logs on the banks but these had become rotten and the Town requested that a wall be built along the downstream side of the bridge. No wall was erected, but a 300 ft. cable fence was installed along the stone arch dam.⁸⁵

In 1959, plans were made to replace the old wooden bridge and waste weir across the river with a wide steel and concrete one, and a separate waste weir. The bridge was to have 24 ft. roadway and a five foot sidewalk on the upstream side. The downstream side of the bridge would coincide with the line of the old one, but the floor was to be three feet above the floor of the timber bridge.⁸⁶ These repairs were carried out in the following year.

General Improvements

While the Old Slys lock station never underwent the complete landscaping operations of those of the Smiths Falls combined lock station, during the twentieth century alterations were made to the original topography of the site in order to improve appearances.

The area most effected by these improvements was between the lockhouse and the lock. Between 1910 and 1914, lockmaster Nichols was allowed to have fill placed in this area to bring the area level with the locks.⁸⁷ After that time, further efforts were probably made to improve the site, but no record of such changes was discovered.

Major developments of this kind did not occur until the 1960's. In 1961, the Town of Smiths Falls was given a lease for the ground bordered by the locks, the CPR railway line, the waste weir channel and Carthage Street. Once landfill operations were completed, the area was used as a public park. Previous to this, the area had been covered with water except for the strip of land created by the main dam and the island on which Joshua Bates' mills were originally located.⁸⁸

In 1967 and 1968, further improvements were made to the station. Arnold J. Clark was awarded a \$ 19,400 contract to erect a concrete wharf immediately south of the locks. The wharf was to extend from the south east limit of the CPR bridge abutment parallel to the east lock wall to the rock outcropping of the easterly canal bank. The footing of the 158 ft. long wharf was to be on rock and supported by a gravity retaining wall. Ten moving posts on sixteen foot centres were to line the edge of the wharf.⁸⁹ Operations of this land were completed in June 1968 when M. and S. Martin, landscapers, were contracted to raise the gradient of the land between the lockhouse and the locks.⁹⁰

Old Slys Lockstation

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Part Two Economic Significance of the Rideau
Canal in Smiths Falls

Introduction

Before examining the various economic activities related to the Rideau Canal, it is necessary to give a general sketch of the development of Smiths Falls during the canal's operation. The Rideau served an entire region and it would be a mistake to assume that the success of Smiths Falls was directly attributable to the canal and no other influence.

Generally, the Rideau Canal has been considered a commercial failure after the completion of the St. Lawrence route. Indeed as early as 1850, one critic lamented the waste of public money upon the canal. Its one saving feature, it was remarked, was its role in opening up the land in the Rideau corridor to settlement.

Its only use has been as a means of opening up and settling the fine country through which it runs; and although it is undoubtably of considerable importance in this point of view, it is deeply to be regretted that the large sum which it cost had not been more judiciously expended.¹

The importance of the canal to early settlement cannot be over-estimated, as the history of Smiths Falls illustrated. Once the initial impact of the canal was felt, however, the counties surrounding it did not maintain population growth. In fact, V.A. George, in his "The Rideau Corridor: The Effect of a Canal System on a Frontier Region, 1832-1895", has indicated a general decline in settlement.

In summary, therefore, the building of the Rideau Canal did not significantly attract settlement. In fact, the growth rate was slower than that of the province as a whole. At a relatively short interval following the construction of an excellent transportation system, settlement in the area had not only peaked, but out-migration was occurring. By the

period 1871-81, which coincided with the start of the physical deterioration of the canal and the decline in lumbering, practically all of the townships of the corridor were annually recording losses in rural population.²

Bearing in mind the general decline in population in the area, an examination of the growth of Smiths Falls indicates some interesting developments.

The following table lists the population growth of Smiths Falls, Lanark County and the county seat, Perth, from 1851 to 1961. To facilitate comparison, the population for 1871 has been assigned a value of 100.

Table 1. Population Growth, 1851-1961

Year	Smiths Falls		Perth		Lanark County	
1851	595	52 %	1,916	81 %	---	
1861	1,137	99 %	2,465	103 %	---	
1871	1,150	100 %	2,375	100 %	33,020	100 %
1881	2,087	181 %	2,467	104 %	33,975	103 %
1891	3,864	336 %	3,136	132 %	37,725	114 %
1901	5,155	448 %	3,588	151 %	37,232	113 %
1911	6,370	554 %	3,588	151 %	34,375	104 %
1921	6,790	590 %	3,790	160 %	32,993	100 %
1931	7,108	618 %	4,099	173 %	32,856	100 %
1941	7,179	624 %	4,458	188 %	33,143	100 %
1951	8,441	734 %	5,034	212 %	35,601	108 %
1961	9,603	835 %	5,360	226 %	40,303	122 %

Source: Census of Canada

The figures for population growth for the county support George's thesis that the area was experiencing out-migration during much of its history. The total population for 1891 was not regained until 1961. The figures for the whole county, however, do not indicate the shifting nature of the population. Perth experienced a slow, but steady growth during its history. This meant that the majority of migrants from Lanark were rural residents who either moved to the urban areas or out of the county. This shift from rural to urban settlement was experienced in most areas of Canada.

The growth of Smiths Falls during the years 1851 to 1961 appears remarkable against the background of declining population. The town grew steadily and quickly. If the 1871 population of Perth and Smiths Falls is compared, it can be seen that the 1871 Perth population was not doubled until 1951, but Smiths Falls had tripled its 1871 population within twenty years. Indeed it is between 1871 and 1900 that the town experienced its greatest period of growth. After 1901, the Smiths Falls population continued to grow but at a reduced rate.

How did this growth relate to the Rideau Canal? Although one cannot claim the canal increased the population of the county as a whole, was it responsible for the dramatic rise of Smiths Falls? By itself, the Rideau cannot take credit for the expansion of the town. Before 1861, the canal was a major factor in local development since it was the only means of long distance transportation. It also provided access to the excellent water power at Smiths Falls. The largest gains in population occurred after 1871 when the railways connected the town to the outside world. When considering transportation links, the canal was a secondary service, often supplying the railway rather than dealing in other goods. The canal's water power, which allowed several factories to be built at Smiths Falls, did contribute to this later growth. Once an industrial area was created in town, the economic power generated by the mills and foundries maintained the predominance of the town over the surrounding area. It is difficult to say whether this industrial momentum carried the railway or vice versa, but the combined transportation links and industrial strength of the town created continued growth throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century.

The growth of the town no doubt increased the traffic on the canal, but this continuation of canal traffic should not be considered a cause of local

expansion. It was rather an effect of Smiths Falls' dominance of the surrounding townships. The central location of Smiths Falls on the Rideau system also assisted in the maintenance of some trade along the canal because the town was ideally situated as a distribution point.

The great differences between the demographic history of Smiths Falls and the surrounding rural areas had led to some difficulty in co-ordinated efforts. A. R. Sim noted in his recent Study of Lanark County,

A startling aspect of social organization in Lanark County is the cleavage between Smiths Falls and the rest of the county. Even though Smiths Falls is not a city, it has withdrawn from the county organization. It is within the county geographically speaking, but not politically...

It was difficult to secure an explanation of these differences. One factor is the location of Smiths Falls at the southern edge, with a hinterland in two other counties. Another factor was Smiths Falls' traditional role as a railway divisional point. It faced the outside world more than it faced into the centre of the county. Moreover, it would appear Smiths Falls has a more urban point of view accountably in part to its size.³

Sim's explanation of the different attitudes of the Smiths Falls residents and the surrounding population seem to be supported by research conducted for this report.

In fact, a curious aspect of local boosterism in the town was an absence of inter-urban rivalry. Neither Perth nor Merrickville received much attention from local industrialists, either as places of investment or possible trade rivals. The dominance of Smiths Falls over the area appeared to be taken as a natural condition by local developers. Nineteenth century development was funded largely through the investment of established Smiths Falls capitalists. When more capital for expansion was needed in the twentieth century, local businesses went outside the region entirely to secure the necessary funds.

This general sketch of population growth and the social attitudes which resulted from that growth should caution against expanding the themes of

Smiths Falls economic development to cover the entire Rideau corridor. Evidence suggests that the history of Smiths Falls is not typical of the entire region unless one considers a number of economic developments outside the immediate concerns of canal trade and related industry. A more comprehensive study of the Rideau region would no doubt place the history of Smiths Falls into a general scheme of regional development, but until someone undertakes a detailed study of railway development in the region and an examination of shifting agricultural land uses and population fluctuations related to the province as a whole, conclusions of that nature must only be tentative.

General Introduction

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The Canal Era, 1832-58

In May 1832, Colonel By and his party travelled from Kingston to Ottawa aboard the Rideau to open the newly completed Rideau Canal to commercial traffic. A crowd of people gathered at Smiths Falls to welcome the distinguished visitors, and to celebrate the occasion, a cannon was loaded to fire a salute. As the steamer approached the crowd, the cannon was discharged only to burst into fragments. It was an unfortunate incident but no one was hurt. The celebrations went on without further interruption. Yet it was possible that By was glad to leave the Smiths Falls crowd behind as he continued on his way.

Had that crowd known what was to happen in the next forty years, it might have waited until By got a little closer before firing the cannon. Smiths Falls' leading citizens, Abel Russell Ward, William Simpson, Jason Gould and James Shaw, would all become involved in bitter and sometimes violent confrontations with Col. By and his successors. The main problem was the control of water rights. In order to maintain the canal for military and commercial purposes, the Royal Engineers were obliged to put the operation of the canal before any individual claim. The local millers, however, needed as much water as possible to run their numerous mills. It was a battle neither side could win. Before the railways came in the 1860's, the local millers depended exclusively upon the canal for shipping their product. The Royal Engineers, constantly reminded that the Rideau canal had a commercial and industrial role to play as well as a military one, were forced to allow local industries to develop, provided they did not interfere with the maintenance of the canal. Both sides, therefore, did not question the overall importance of the canal to local development. Within the grey area of "interference in the maintenance of the canal", local millers and the Ordnance officers battled each other. The outcome of that struggle illustrated the key role played by the local developers.

Much of the later success of Smiths Falls was founded upon the success of the millers in avoiding restrictions placed upon them by official policy.

In the initial period of Smiths Falls' history, from By's voyage in 1832 until the first railway locomotives were towed down the canal in 1858, there are several areas worthy of examination. The development of a local road system was the result of construction of the lock station which brought many of the first settlers into the area. The general importance of the canal to the growth of Smiths Falls can be seen in both commercial and industrial sectors of the local economy. This growth was not uniform or without difficulty. The nature of early development was illustrated by the practical difficulties of water control caused by Jason Gould and the complicated legal disputes involving the land upon which the mills were located. The legal difficulties were not simply a matter of private v. public ownership of the land, but influenced the local economy and the development of the law in Upper Canada. By a careful examination of the dispute between William Simpson and Terrence Smyth, as well as the one between Simpson and the canal authorities, the importance of the canal during this period can be understood.

As detailed earlier in the section on the construction of the combined locks, the history of Smiths Falls really started with the opening of the Rideau Canal. In the 1820's, Thomas Smyth, the original owner of the town site, built a saw mill but soon abandoned it. The earlier mill of Mr. Waterman at Old Slys was abandoned.¹ What caused the abandonment of these mills was not entirely clear, but the isolation of the Smiths Falls area from other settlements certainly played a part. With no major roads into the area, no large scale settlement was likely. Both Smyth and Waterman, however, realized the possibilities of the water power at Smiths Falls.

It was that potential which attracted other men. Abel Russell Ward, the founder of Smiths Falls, was born in 1796 in New York State near the Massachusetts border. He moved to the area in 1824, and refitted Smyth's abandoned mill.² Possibly Ward would have suffered the fate of his predecessors had not Col. By laid out the Rideau Canal through Smiths Falls. With the canal construction came a 26 year old engineer from Lockport,

New York, James Simpson, a partner in Rykert, Simpson and Adams which had been awarded the contract to build the works at the site. Simpson's family had emigrated from the County of Londonerry, Ireland, in 1794 and settled in New York State.³ At the same time, Simpson's brother-in-law, Jason Gould, came from Roxbury, New York, to work on the canal.⁴ James Shaw was also among the canal workers, as a master mason with the Ordnance Department.⁵ Each of these men realized the economic value of the water power at the Falls and was prepared to use every possible means to secure it for their own benefit.

Before any major changes could take place at the site, roads had to be opened up. With the coming of the canal contractors, this was begun. In 1844, James Simpson reflected on his first actions.

When I came to Smyth's Falls or Wardsville in 1827, the place had no roads leading to it. It was an entire wilderness, with the exception of an old saw mill newly rigged up by Abel Russell Ward, for the purpose of sawing lumber to build with, and his own dwelling, a log house nearby. The saw mill had hardly commenced operation when, by order of Col. By, the officer in charge of the entire works, I removed it to make way for a dam for the Canal. I came on with about twenty men and with teams, and we opened a road from Smyth's Falls to the By-town road, a distance of eight miles, also roads towards Perth about nine miles, improved a road toward Merrickville, three miles, also a road to Dack's Tavern, on the post route to Brockville, and a road of five miles from the Falls to the Rose Settlement. In my opinion, the opening up of these roads all leading to this quarter and the improvements made by myself, Abel Russell Ward and others who settled in, tended more than all other things to make Smyth's Falls what it is today.⁶

Jason Gould, who came with Simpson, later wrote, "It is now almost seventeen years since I came to this place, at that time almost a wilderness having to cut the road ten miles to get here in company with those that came with me".⁷ With the construction of the Rideau Canal came communication by road as well as by water.

Even after Simpson abandoned his contract with the canal in 1831, he energetically promoted the building of new roads. One witness commented, Sometime after the canal was commenced, and after he (Simpson) had erected grist mills, stores and sundry buildings; I saw him with a crowd of people about him telling them it would be a public convenience to have a road opened from Smyth's Falls to Beckwith, and urging them to give assistance, and the people including myself and a number, went to work and cut out a road of about six miles, to intersect a road leading to Beckwith. It was what is called a "Bee", and James Simpson provided provisions and drinks. This road proved of great benefit, tending to increase the resources of the village and give custom to the mills and shops and to accommodate inhabitants living in that settlement.⁸

Simpson built roads for more than the public good. As the above witness stated, the roads tended to increase the importance of Smiths Falls as a milling centre. They also accelerated the rate of growth in the town. As the major millers and sole land owners in town, James Simpson and Abel Ward were no doubt handsomely rewarded for their provisions and drinks.

The network of roads developed by Ward and Simpson complimented the canal system. While the canal was useful in shipping goods over long distances, the road system allowed Smiths Falls to establish an agricultural hinterland. By directing trade to one place, the road system not only increased the amount of canal shipping of raw products but allowed finished products from Smiths Falls to be transported over a greater area.

While the Rideau Canal provided the opportunity to develop a transportation system, Smiths Falls in the 1830's remained a rough, isolated settlement. A traveller passing through the town in January 1833 wrote that, "there is no place more in need of efficient magistrates -- no sabbath kept -- no laws observed -- rioting and drunkenness pass unrestrained".⁹ The isolation of the town struck another traveller around 1839. Smiths Falls, he described, was "this village buried amid immense forests on the sides of the Rideau River".¹⁰ In contrast to the boisterous Sundays which greeted the earlier visitor, the later visitor noticed,

As the day was a sabbath of rest and the artificiers had retired after a week of labor to the repose of their cabins, the village was mute and as silent as the tomb. Entering within the precincts I was met by a solitary old man overwhelmed with age who loitered along the margin of the canal, musing upon friends from who he was separated for ever; a young girl bright in the blossom & beauty of nonage sat by the door of a little rustic Inn with a younger sister by her side in artless simplicity; while the picture was completed by a contemplative person whose face was browned with the climate bespoke him the native of another hemisphere meditating alone on a rock above the cascades which tumbled among the cliffs and broken hedges below: Approaching this stranger to inquire about a hotel I was met by a rustic canaller on a rude bridge who enquired of me if I was from the old country? Another demanded what wages Canallers got elsewhere but neither satisfied my enquiries about a hotel-- "A hotel? asked a third "There it is," pointing to a loghut across the river...¹¹

These early descriptions indicated the newness of the village. Even to the casual visitor who wrote the above description, it was obvious that the people living in Smiths Falls were not native to that place. Their pasts were varied and their presence in the backwoods town as much a product of accident as planning. During these first twenty years, however, a sense of community did emerge. Facing common difficulties, the inhabitants of Smiths Falls recognized the ties which bound all residents together: a clear title to their land and a bright future.

One of the common ties between all local residents was the dependence on the Rideau Canal. As the sole means of transport to Kingston and Montreal, the canal determined the success of the town. While local millers and the canal authorities had their differences, the overall importance of the canal was never denied. The growing industrial role of the canal complimented the commercial traffic of the route. Before discussing any aspect of local growth in detail, a general outline of development places this period in perspective.

Though no statistics exist to illustrate the nature and extent of shipping in the town, all commentaries stressed the active nature of local shippers. In 1834, E.J. Barker, in his Observations on the Rideau Canal, wrote,

The country on all sides is in a good state of cultivation; and the extreme facility of conveying produce to market, and procuring supplies in return from Montreal by Canal, must inevitably, in the course of a few years raise this rising and promising village into a town of second rate importance.¹²

In 1835, a visitor remarked upon the trade of Smiths Falls.

The business done at the comparatively obscure village is really immense; one merchant, James Shaw, Esq. having shipped for Montreal several hundred barrels of potash alone, and two or more of the others are already treading closely upon his heels.¹³

Shaw's wharf continued to attract the attention of local travellers. In 1837, it was reported,

The men of business at Smith's Falls are many, but James Shaw Esq. as a merchant, takes the decided lead. I cannot point out a greater proof of the immensity of business transacted at this comparatively small place, than in stating that last year, Mr. Shaw shipped to Montreal nearly one thousand barrels of Potashes, and this year, although the price of Ashes has greatly fallen, and business in general has been in a languid condition, yet he has already forwarded nearly two thirds of that quantity. And this done by one merchant out of a dozen settled in the village.¹⁴

Such testimony indicated that the shippers of the town were as ambitious as the local millers in improving their trade.

The prominent position given to potash exports emphasized that the area surrounding Smiths Falls in the 1830's was a pioneer community still clearing the forests for farm land. In trading potash, local farmers no doubt received what finished goods they could afford from the Smiths Falls' merchants. This relationship between the rural hinterland and the town

became firmly established by the 1840's. In 1847, Thomas MacQueen wrote that, "the favourable advantages of the situation as a shipping depot for a large extent of a good country, has already raised it to a village of considerable magnitude and wealth".¹⁵ The growth of commercial importance depended upon the growth of the milling interests in town, as well as the transportation system.

The mills at Smiths Falls attracted farmers to the town to have their grain processed rather than to another place. The potash brought to town resulted in the early success of James Shaw and other shippers. The business of the mills also encouraged the selling of finished goods to farmers which tied the success of the local retailers to an active milling industry. Since the mills were the foundation for local prosperity, both retailers and shippers closely supported the millers in their disputes with the canal authorities. Abel Ward and William Simpson also held most of the land in the area which would increase the reasons for local support of their attempts to control the water power on Jason Island.

This early period in the history of the town was not one of uninterrupted growth. During the 1830's, there was a dramatic growth in the millers' business as the canal provided the means and opportunity to exploit the water power. This activity prompted one visitor to boast, "I should be led to the conclusion, that a busier and far more prosperous place of business, for its size, can hardly be found in Upper Canada".¹⁶ By 1843, however, the legal battles over the title of the town site began to restrain this activity. The editor of the Brockville Statesman wrote,

I was sorry to observe so little improvement in the place since I last saw it; and perhaps its stationary state is owing not a little to the uncertainty hanging about the title to the Freehold..It is much to be desired that this Equity controversy should be speedily terminated, so that the titles to property be secured, and an impetus given to the improvement of the place.¹⁷

This sluggishness continued while the Smyth vs. Simpson suit was before the Courts. William Smith, in his Canada, Past, Present and Future remarked that this lack of growth continued into the 1850's. He attributed

this to the "unwise cupidity of the original owners, in asking exorbitant sums for building lots".¹⁸ Smith reported that the 1845 population was stated at 700 and in 1852 as at 800, but noted critically the 1850 census gave the population as 674.

If the growth of Smiths Falls during the 1840's failed to live up to the predictions of its local boosters, by the mid-1850's the town came under outside influences which profoundly changed the local economic prospects. In 1853, the Brockville and Ottawa Railway received its charter. The details of railway development will be discussed later, but almost immediately the land boom began in Smiths Falls. The previous descriptions of the town invariably focused upon the mills and canal trade, but in 1854 one visitor noticed only the effects of the promised railway.

It is here that the two branches of the Brockville & Ottawa Railway will diverge from, while the main route continues on some 80 miles north to the Ottawa. Here also is to be a locomotive factory, furnace, engine repair shop, car shop, and all the requisite mechanical work for the road. The depot is located on the farm of some 200 acres, adjoining the village boundary line, formerly belonging to Capt. Chambers of the Bay of Quinte. It has recently been sold to Messrs. Snow and Dwight for £ 4,000, and is now being surveyed into town lots to meet the growing wants of the Village. Over one thousand of the lots have been applied for by the businessmen and mechanics of the town.¹⁹

It was significant that Captain John McGill Chambers was the one who sold his land at so high a price.

John McGill Chambers was born on 20 August 1805 in Edwardsburg, Grenville County, and in 1832 became a captain of a passenger steamer. He travelled between Kingston and the Bay of Quinte, east to Montreal and along the Rideau Canal to Ottawa. Having lived in Smiths Falls since 1828, Chambers retired in Smiths Falls in 1854 to become a magistrate and notary.²⁰ The end of his career as a steamboat captain pointed out that there were new opportunities opening up in the town.

While the commercial traffic of the canal indicated that Smiths Falls

was a prosperous village, local industry contributed equally to its growth during this period. From the early grist and saw mills of Abel Ward and others, several industries developed. By 1850, the industrial concerns of the village began to attract the attention of visitors.

In 1830, there were only two houses at the Falls, whereas at the present time there are over 200, many of them built in the most handsome style. Indeed the situation of the place is such, from the plentiful supply of water, for milling and other purposes, and the intercourse by steamboat between the upper and lower portions of the province, that in the course of a few more years, it cannot fail to become a town of considerable note...

Smith's Falls contains three sleigh and wagon factories; seven blacksmith shops; six tailoring establishments, eight shoe shops, one tinsmith, two axe factories; seven stores and four taverns, or hotels. There are also saddlers shops and tanners. Mr. S. Ketchum having been engaged in the manufacture of upper and harness leather for the past fourteen years. Mr. F. Hall having been engaged in the same business, as well as shoemaking, for the last five years.

There are also grist, saw, carding and fulling mills in active operation, belonging to Mr. Ward, a grist mill belonging to J. Gould; a saw mill and shingle factory belonging to Mr. Beckwith. Messrs. Frost and Woods have also a foundry in full work, where a large number of ploughs and stoves are made. There are also several cabinet shops, but the principle one is that of Mr. Bartlett, in which we were assured by parties competent to form an opinion, articles in the line are made which cannot be surpassed in the colony.²¹

The above description detailed the significant role industry played in the village. Though all the above mentioned industries were not directly related to the canal, their prosperity depended upon the continued success of the mills.

Industry associated with the canal became far more important to the

town in later years after the commercial role of the waterway declined. The long term significance of these industries raises the question of who was responsible for their growth. Certainly the transportation facilities and water power of the Rideau Canal provided the physical conditions for growth, but in themselves, these factors could not entirely explain the town's success. The local millers and industrialists created much of the industry through their own efforts. This fact was illustrated in the conflicts between the canal authorities and local developers. While there can be no denying the symbiotic relationship between the canal and local industry, it was clear that Jason Gould, Abel Ward and William Simpson greatly exceeded the limits set upon local mills by the canal authorities. Private efforts rather than public policy were responsible for early growth in the village. Jason Gould's effort to build a dam despite the orders of the canal officials to the contrary, indicated how this conflict was resolved on a local level. The legal disputes over title to the land upon which the mills were located documented the importance placed upon such developments by both the Royal Engineers and local capitalists.

The circumstances surrounding Jason Gould's attempt to build a dam gave a practical illustration of the strengths and weaknesses of the local capitalists and canal authorities during the early years of Smiths Falls. As the brother-in-law of William Simpson, Gould was instrumental in erecting several mills in the 1830's along the leakage behind the main dam at the combined locks. This "leakage" was a considerable flow of water which passed around the dam through several large fissures in the rock of the original river channel. In order to operate his mills, Gould needed to make a few changes to the course of this water. Several years later, Gould explained his intentions.

During the latter part of the summer and the Fall of 1836 from the low state of the water in the Rideau River the Mills were stopt and the whole community was suffering for bread not being able to get their grain ground. I was advised by a Gentleman residing in this place who had formerly been in the employment of the department, and I believe possesses some science in engineering to apply to Major (then Capt.) Bolton for

the privilege of erecting a temporary dam below the stone dam at this place and make a cut across the Island in order to turn the waste water to the use of the Mills. Major Bolton was then up at Kingston on his return down a few days after I applied to him for the privilege above mentioned and understood him to say that I might take any measures that I chose to make the waste water available for the use of the Mills so that I did not damage the Public Works.²²

Receiving Bolton's verbal permission, Gould went ahead with his plans. Apparently Gould failed to make it clear to Bolton that in cutting a raceway from the leakage channel to the waste weir channel considerable blasting would be necessary. Such explosions could have unpredicted results in rocks as fissured as those at Smiths Falls. When Bolton learned of Gould's blasting, he ordered him to stop immediately.

This angered Gould who was a few days from finishing his construction. To aggravate matters, lockmaster Alexander Matheson was less than co-operative with Gould. In November 1836, Gould wrote Bolton complaining of the,

injudicious if not to say vindictive manner in which the Lockmasters have managed the water of the Canal the last three months by flooding down the water during the night four times as much as was necessary for the use of the Mills and to keep the levels also, and stopping it in the day time when the water was most wanted for the use of the Mills, and no longer past than last Sabbath when from a consciencious observance of the Lords day the Mills would not go, the water was flooded down all day and night, which consequently from the low state of water in the Lake and River has drawn down the levels.²³

Considering the actions of the lockmasters a deliberate attempt to frustrate his efforts, Gould resumed work on his dam and raceway.

In order to stop this violation of Bolton's order, lockmaster Matheson went to the local magistrates and had warrants sworn out against Gould and his men. When the constable presented the warrants, Gould drove him off.

Matheson later reported what followed.

The Magistrates then called down several of the inhabitants to assist the Constable sent previous to their reaching this works Mr. Gould had collected a large Mob to assist the Work men about the Mills, when the Constable and party had again to retreat. Mr. Gould appears very conspicuous encouraging the Mob and giving them defensive weapons.

This morning all his Men were armed with Guns and Rifles and still progressing with the trespass.²⁴

In early December, the Court met at Smiths Falls and Gould was held over to face charges of trespass, rioting and resisting arrest at the next session of the Court of Kings Bench at Brockville. Through the efforts of James Shaw and others, however, Gould's actions were considered a public benefit. The completed dam and raceway remained intact.²⁵

Although William Simpson directly benefitted from Gould's improvements, he realized the dangers of such confrontations. He wrote to Bolton,

The unfortunate differences with Mr. Gould I very much regret, and I must say that I did not wish Mr. Gould to do or attempt to do any thing which would be disagreeable to you or the department which you represent.²⁶

Later, Simpson asked the Department to drop the charges, but they were determined to prosecute Gould to the full extent of the law. In 1840, the Court ruled in favour of the Crown, but gave Gould the right to appeal the decision if he amended his plea and paid the Court costs. When Gould neglected to do this, the decision became final.²⁷

The most effective control of Gould, however, did not occur in the court. In February 1844, Gould applied to build a wharf and storehouse at the south end of his property fronting the Basin. The Ordnance office told him to wait.²⁸ By April, Gould got tired of waiting and renewed his application. He explained that,

being the proprietor of mills at this place the want of a storehouse and Wharf for the purpose of receiving and shipping wheat & flour is a matter of serious inconvenience and I cannot see why I am not as well entitled to this privilege as my neigh-

bours... and the place that I propose to improve cannot in the remotest degree infirm the Canal or interfere with the navigation, and all improvements of this kind contribute to the support of the canal, without wharves, and storehouses how are we to get our business connected with freighting on the canal done.²⁹

In the same letter Gould admitted that there had been a confrontation between himself and the constable, but firmly declared, "I defy any person to point out the time or place, when, or where, I have ever placed a straw in the way of the navigation of the Rideau Canal".³⁰

The Ordnance office understood Gould's situation quite clearly, but no word was sent. In December 1844, Gould again wrote to the authorities stating another wharf was necessary since the two existing wharves were, "entirely insufficient to accomodate the increasing business of this village and surrounding country".³¹ After a year of petitioning, Gould finally received a reply to his request. The request was refused by order of the Montreal Head Quarters.

The actions of the Ordnance office illustrated that their most effective weapon against the local millers was an economic one. Failing to secure his own wharf, Gould was forced to ship his grain through an intermediary which would increase his costs. Following the Gould incident, confrontations over water rights did not reach such dramatic heights. The millers realized that the Department had a discretionary power which could be used against unco-operative individuals. The Department, however, could not afford to block the erection of wharves altogether. This would interfere with the commercial transportation of the canal which the military was trying to encourage. Since the commercial traffic played an important role in the local economy, any restrictions upon wharves would have seriously damaged local industry and farming. Since the residents of Smiths Falls were aware of the interdependence of these aspects of the local economy, the Ordnance officers had to be careful not to turn public opinion against them. As a result, only the most blatant cases of interference with the canal could be acted upon.

The Gould incident did not stop all interference with the canal reserves.

It was simply the method of operation which changed. Alexander Matheson witnessed most of the transgressions of the local millers and was particularly quick in reporting the violations of Abel Ward. In November 1845, when Ward built a store on the canal reserve, Matheson wrote, "It is remarked that Mr. W. received a letter lately from the Resp. Offrs. directing him to take away this building. Mr. Wm. Ferguson informed me that he heard Ward say he would see them da--first".³² Later he spoke of "Wards [sic] overbearing and violent conduct"³³ in his dealings with canal authorities. Ward and his associates continued to encroach on the canal reserve despite the efforts of Matheson. In March 1852, the Lockmaster wrote in despair,

Simpson and Ward hold possession of nearly all the land but the Works, and all materials required to stop leaks in the latter, have to be brought from a distance.

Mr. Simpson, except in 1832 when he was going to shoot the Lockmen for cutting sods, have [sic] acted by his brother-in-law Mr. Gould, and latterly by his nephew John Beckwith, in making encroachments. Simpson is generally courteous, but must have Mr. Wards [sic] sanction in all matters concerning the Ordnance Department.

Mr. A.R. Ward is in the unfortunate habit of using low and coarse language, does what he likes on the Ordnance property, defies all, and everybody...a regular bully.³⁴

The unfortunate Matheson, abused by the millers and receiving little help from the Bytown office, continued to report on his losing battle for some time.

The Jason Gould incident was really only part of a larger dispute between local millers and the Ordnance officers over the ownership of Jason Island which was originally part of the land reserved for canal operations. The canal authorities claimed jurisdiction over this land which was developed by Ward and Simpson. Since this land contained the major mill sites at Smiths Falls, control of Jason Island became imperative to the local millers and residents who wished to develop its potential. Earlier descriptions of the industrial sector of Smiths Falls indicated that the

prosperity of the mills and the town itself were threatened by an uncertainty over title to the land. The basic dispute between the Ordnance and the millers was complicated by the actions of Terence Smyth who tried to recover the property by reason of his father's original title to the land. The resulting lawsuit of Smyth vs. Simpson in the Court of Chancery became a test case over the right of redemption for mortgaged land. Because of this, the case of Smyth vs. Simpson had influence far beyond Smiths Falls.

The original title for Lots 1 and 2, 4th Concession, Elmsley Township, upon which Smiths Falls was located, was held by Thomas Smyth. Thomas was the son of Dr. George Smyth, a medical doctor, who emigrated in 1770 to New York State. During the American Revolution, Thomas became a lieutenant in Sir John Johnson's King's Royal Regiment of New York and after the war came to Upper Canada with his brother Terence. As Loyalists, both received land for their efforts to retain British control over its former colonies. Terence was rewarded with 1200 acres and Thomas with 2000 acres on waters of the Rideau River. Terence soon died but Thomas resided in Leeds County where he became a farmer and a major in the Leeds Militia. Thomas Smyth died in 1831.³⁵ In addition to their own land, the Smyth brothers received land for the services of their deceased father who had been a surgeon and an agent for the secret service during the revolution. For this, they received 3000 acres.³⁶

The original location deed for the town site was dated 17 October 1810,³⁷ but Thomas Smyth was in financial difficulties at the time and quickly mortgaged it for £ 233.11.3 to Joseph Sewell, a Boston merchant. Smyth never paid this mortgage, however, and on 27 July 1824, Sewell brought an action against him for the debt of £ 467.2.6 at Toronto. In order to enforce judgement, the Sheriff offered the land for sale at the Brockville Court House on 25 August 1825. The highest bidder was Charles Jones of Brockville who paid £ 105 for the two lots.³⁸

While Charles Jones still owned the town site, plans were made for the construction of the Rideau Canal. In May 1827, Col. By laid out the land at Smiths Falls required for the maintenance of the works. Shortly after this, on 16 May 1827, Rykert, Simpson and Adams signed their contract for the construction of these works. One of the securities for this

contract was Abel Russell Ward. On 13 July 1827, Trueman Hicock and contractor James Simpson bought the lots from Charles Jones who retained a mortgage on the property.

The purchase of the land by Hicock and Simpson was made four months after Simpson had signed the contract with the Ordnance Department. On 3 January 1831, James Simpson abandoned that contract with £ 2000 owing to the Department. Simpson's decision to abandon his contract was the mistake which threatened the claims of himself and Ward. Four months after this, Abel Ward acquired from Trueman Hicock his share in the property. Simpson and Ward probably thought that their future was bright having secured such a valuable piece of real estate. The troubles, however, were just beginning.³⁹

In December 1831, the Ordnance Department launched a suit against James Simpson to recover their £ 2000. If successful, the Department would have ruined Simpson. He probably could not have raised the £ 2000 and would be forced to sell his property. Through his efforts, the property had been transformed from a wilderness to a valuable mill site. With its roads, mills and slowly growing population, the property could only have increased in value. James Simpson's haste to quit the difficult job of construction for the more lucrative occupation of milling had also put the unwitting Abel Ward into a difficult situation. As a security for the original contract, Ward was responsible for the £ 2000 debt should Simpson default. Both men, on the verge of achieving financial security, were suddenly facing the loss of all they had worked for. It was a time for action.

It was a difficult problem but not one without hope. On 21 February 1832, just two months after the suit was launched, Abel Ward and James Simpson sold their interest in the property to James' brother William for £ 5000. By this bit of legal juggling, the town site was beyond the reach of the Department. William Simpson had no connection with the earlier dealings with the Ordnance officers. Abel Ward, and especially James Simpson, had no property worth seizing. To make sure he was safe, James left for the United States. He was engaged on contracts in other provinces and eventually turned up in the 1849 California gold rush. He made three trips

to the west coast rounding Cape Horn on the way. On one of these voyages, he died and was buried at sea.⁴⁰

All this was a prelude to the canal's official opening and no doubt on Col. By's mind as his steamer was greeted by the citizens of Smiths Falls. In the crowd, Abel Ward probably did not look like a man who had just lost his chance to make his fortune. Between Ward and William Simpson there had been a "gentleman's" agreement. On 5 June 1834, William resold parts of the land back to Ward for £ 2000.⁴¹ Having out-foxed the Ordnance officers once, Ward and William Simpson settled down to develop their land. Their property, however, did not include the valuable mill sites upon which they had erected mills. This had been part of the land Col. By reserved in May 1827. Securing title to those lands was the first priority of the ambitious millers. Their first step was to launch a claim with the Department for damages to their property due to the canal construction.

Ward and Simpson charged that By had expropriated an excessive amount of land at Smiths Falls locks when he reserved all of Jason Island for canal purposes. The Island was the site of Ward's mill and contained all the major power sites. In testimony before the Court in Brockville during the trial of Simpson vs. Pooley and Mathews, described in an earlier section, Col. By stated his reasons for taking so much land.

The object in taking so much was to prevent persons erecting Booths near the works for the sale of liquor and also to secure the Government against claims for **damages** in case the dam gave way (which however he [By] had confidence to believe would never happen) and destroyed the buildings below which it would most inevitably. The first plan was to erect the dam below the island on which the mill was placed and drown it; but afterwards altered to where it is now.⁴²

Col. By's argument was backed by several witnesses and corresponded with other evidence. When the position of the locks was changed, however, the northern section of Jason Island with its profitable mill sites did not interfere directly with the works.

During the years after 1832, Abel Ward and Jason Gould, who acted on William Simpson's behalf, developed these sites as if they owned them. The

fact that Ward continued to occupy the same sites for several years gave weight to his claim that the lands were wrongly taken from him and damages should be awarded. If the land had been necessary for the canal's operation, how could the officers successfully run the commercial waterway without Ward's land for so many years? In 1884, during a trial for trespass by Abel Ward on Government property, it was reported that, "Mr. Simpson formerly a canal contractor swore that Col. By had stated to him that he had reserved more land than the Canal service required to be a security for a debt claimed from Simpson".⁴³ Had this been true, Col. By must not only have been a good engineer but something of a mystic, since he reserved the land four years before Simpson abandoned his contract. Testimony during the Simpson vs. Pooley trial clearly established that the Department always claimed this land, but that as long as Simpson was a contractor, they allowed development without a formal agreement.⁴⁴

The awards dispute between the Ordnance Department and Ward and Simpson was complicated by the actions of Terence and George Henry Smyth, the sons of the original owner of the town site, Thomas Smyth. In 1834, Terence Smyth wrote to the Department stating, "I intend to loose no time in taking such steps as the law directs for the recovery of said property".⁴⁵ Smyth was not alone in his attempt to recover land lost through the default on a mortgage. Before the establishment of a Court of Chancery in 1837, the laws of Upper Canada placed the mortgage holder in a more favourable position than the mortgagor. Under common law, the mortgagee could sue for damages by bringing an action of covenant for breach of the mortgage debt. The mortgagee's right of possession could be enforced by an action of ejectment. Equity was established in Upper Canada to supplement the common law and provide a more balanced system of law for the mortgagor. He was provided with a longer period of time, usually twenty years, in order to redeem his property by paying the value of the original mortgage. The court could also examine the original agreement in order to determine the fairness of its terms.

The Court of Chancery's establishment in 1837 raised a fundamental question about mortgages given before that date. If such agreements were

allowed the same rights as those after 1837, then several fortunes besides that of Simpson and Ward would be jeopardized. Since mortgages on land had been used extensively in the early commercial development of Upper Canada, a decision favouring Smyth would raise serious questions about the legality of the ownership of other settled areas.⁴⁶

This new complication appeared to favour the Ordnance Department. Although this new court action would delay the final settlement of the claim and strengthen Ward's case based upon occupation of the site, the Department's legal advisors thought the Smyth claim could be their salvation. William Draper commented on the Smyth case,

which I think will not improbably terminate in a manner which will do away with any claim of Messrs. Ward and Simpson for as far as I can learn their claim to the land is (devised?) under a mortgage and Mr. Terence Smith as heir at law or deviser of the Mortgage insists on his right of redemption which it is highly probable may be allowed by the Vice Chancellor.⁴⁷

Draper advised the Department to make no move on the matter until the Smyth case was heard. His advise was accepted.

For Abel Ward and William Simpson, the Smyth suit came at an unfortunate time. A year before Draper advised the officers to stop the proceedings, the Government Arbitrator on damage claims, George Adams, recommended that if any of the original lands reserved for the canal could be given up they should be turned over to Ward and Simpson.⁴⁸ Perhaps sensing the change of mood, William Simpson made an offer to Adams. In November 1841, Simpson complained of the long delays and wrote that,

the Government should have the titles to the lands in question vested in them, and should give me a perpetual lease of occupation of that part of the premises covered by deeds at nominal cost, said lease of occupation to be in lieu of all damages claimed by me from Government.

The lands so leased subject to be taken at any time when wanted to be occupied for purposes of the Canal by Government and to be subject to the supervision at all times.⁴⁹

Abel Ward also agreed to this formula. Such an agreement would have ensured

the canal's safety and protected the millers' investment in the property. It would have also given the Department a strong power to make the local millers conform to the water control of the canal authorities. It looked like a good solution for both sides, yet if Smyth was successful in his suit, this agreement would be worthless. All things considered, Ordnance officers decided their best chance lay with Smyth. They were wrong.

The point of contention between Terence Smyth and William Simpson was the legality of the August 1825 sale by the sheriff, of land seized in satisfaction of an action of debt successfully launched by Sewell. Terence Smyth claimed that the equity of redemption had not been conveyed at the sale and that he was entitled to reclaim the property. Simpson argued that the equity of redemption had been conveyed because Thomas Smyth acquiesced in the sale, full value was paid for the land and that Smyth was offered a chance to redeem the property at the sale but had not done so. The Court of Chancery decided in favour of Terence Smyth.⁵⁰

Once again it looked like Ward and Simpson had lost their property. This Chancery decision must have caused panic among the citizens of Smiths Falls. Since their land had been bought from Ward and Simpson, their titles were also in doubt. After ten years of work and investment, their fate hung upon the efforts of Ward and Simpson. William Simpson immediately launched a suit against this decision in the Court of Appeals. The Montreal Pilot described the appeal as "one of the most important cases that has ever been decided in the Province in the Court of Appeals".⁵¹

The trial ran from 25 August to 29 August 1846. The cases for each party were restated. The opposing arguments on the legality of the Sheriff's sale of August 1825 were weighed by the Court. Upon the question, "whether an equity of redemption is saleable by a Sheriff, under a writ of execution, upon a judgement at law",⁵² the Court ruled in favour of Smyth. Simpson's lawyers then went into the events which followed the sale, with Thomas Smyth's failure to redeem his property, and that subsequent "large improvements were made by Simpson, without any notice from the Smyths, or any claim made -- and that they stood by, with folded arms, and evinced a further acquiescence".⁵³ This appeal was also dismissed. Simpson's last hope centred around the discretionary powers of the Court of Appeal to refuse

redemption with just cause. Having won their first two points, Smyth's advocates argued that the Court had no discretionary power. Once the question of the equity of redemption had been decided, the redemption followed automatically. Simpson's lawyers could only point out the injustice of awarding the land to the Smyths after Simpson had been in possession for so many years, expending his capital and developing an expanding town. On returning upon this question, the Court was uncertain if the Vice Chancellor had power to refuse redemption. The Court, however, was convinced that "if the court were given this power this was a very proper case for refusing redemption".⁵⁴

This was a great concession for Simpson's case. Another trial would be necessary but the future suddenly looked brighter. In December 1846, the trial had to be postponed because there were no Executive Councillors, who sat on the Court of Appeal, present unconnected with the Smyth vs. Simpson dispute.⁵⁵ In the spring, another session was held. On 27 March 1847, the Court ruled in favour of Simpson.⁵⁶ The title to the land was verified. With that verdict, the titles of the community were also secure. News of the victory travelled fast. One inhabitant wrote,

an unusual buzz and stir was observable throughout the village. All countenances betokened a general rejoicing, easily observable as each sallied forth to greet his neighbour. Evening shewed that the bustle had not been for naught; the Inhabitants had vied with each other in illuminating their houses; a large Bonfire, hastily piled, blazed on the hill. Fire works flitted about -- the young shouted, the Bag-pipes screamed, and a procession perambulated the streets with rejoicing.

The most pleasing and flattering I have to add, is, that at an early hour all dispersed quietly to their homes, satisfied that there was now a prospect of each one's individual **property acquired by a number of years' industry and labour**, and on which many had spent their whole earnings for a dozen years and more, being made at length available, which will enable then to begin and prosecute their trades and callings anew

with vigour and decision.⁵⁷

This rejoicing of the inhabitants contrasted with the earlier descriptions of village life. For the majority of land owners, the 1840's had forged a common purpose. Thoughts of the old country or other places had been replaced by a determination to make their life in Smiths Falls. The troubles over land claims had pointed out their common interests and shaped a sense of community. They had faced a common threat and had been successful.

The victory of Simpson also protected the property of many powerful interests in Upper Canada whose fortunes had started with the control of mortgaged land. Assured that the new Court of Chancery could not overturn earlier decisions, the present owners of such land could continue development much in the same way William Simpson and Abel Ward did at Smiths Falls.

The news of Simpson's court victory could not have been received well by the Ordnance officers. Having placed their hopes in the Smyths, they had rejected Simpson's earlier proposal to surrender his claims on the mill sites. Backed by the Court of Appeals, Simpson and Ward now held clear title to the land and their bargaining power was increased. The one hope of the Smyths and the Department was with the Privy Council in England. Smyth launched such an appeal but without success.

Alexander Matheson, the lockmaster at Smiths Falls since 1832, witnessed all the activities of the local millers. Born in Ireland and a former member of the 13th Regiment who had worked on the canal's construction, Matheson was well aware of the irony of the situation.⁵⁸ Having built the canal to protect the British colonies in North America from attacks by the Americans, the British Ordnance officers had not counted upon those former Americans, Simpson and Ward, or their finesse in the courts. In July 1850, Matheson wrote to the Ordnance office in Bytown about the reactions of the Smiths Falls citizens to the Privy Council decision.

I very respectfully beg to state, that information have arrived [sic] that the Privy Council (in the appeal Smith versa Simpson) have awarded this place to Simpson. Mr. Shaw says he saw the letter; Ward and the American inhabitants, have been

making great rejoicing yesterday and today, by firing guns,
and shouting through the Village.⁵⁹

The Loyalist ally of the Department, Terence Smyth, had been routed by the local millers and would be regarded by posterity as the man who tried to steal the town site.

The Ordnance Department was forced to reconsider the question of settlement in the light of the recent court decisions and the growing files of correspondence were collected and re-examined. A certain weariness was apparent in their opinions. In January 1853, one officer reflected this attitude when he wrote,

The Ordnance Officers in Canada consider that if the question be submitted to Arbitration, and an appeal be made to a Jury, a considerable sum of Money could be obtained, but they are of the opinion that Messrs. Simpson and Ward might be induced to come to an amicable arrangement of 2½ acres of land so taken upon which they have built valuable Mills and [run] since the construction of the Canal, were given up to them subject to certain restrictions as to the use of Water Privileges.

The question now at issue, is whether it would be better now to endeavour to make this amicable arrangement, or whether it should wait until after the transfer of the Lands in Canada to the Colony, and leave it to be settled by the Provincial Government, it having been found that Canada Juries [sic] award heavily against the Imperial Government.⁶⁰

Considering discretion the better part of valor, the British Ordnance let the Provincial Government assume the responsibility of the Simpson and Ward case when they took over the management of the canal in 1856.

The millers' position was enhanced greatly by the long delay in settling the claim during which they enjoyed the rights to the property in practice for which they did not hold legal title. They could afford to wait. The fact that they would be dealing with their own government did not lessen their determination to drive a hard bargain. When the Canadian authorities assumed responsibility, they soon realized the nature of the problem with which the British Ordnance had saddled them. In October 1857, Abel

Ward made a new offer. He would surrender his claim, together with the improvements, mills, houses, along with his claim for his old mill and drowned land for £ 10,000. Simpson would do the same for £ 7000. If this was not acceptable, Ward wanted the rights to all lands not necessary to the canal, which he defined as all land 40 feet from the edge of the locks, plus the point of land below the combined locks, all land 40 feet from the detached locks with one acre north of these locks including the water rights with free access to the water, and, of course, damages for his old mill demolished by the contractors.⁶¹ Faced with such a choice, the Canadian officials decided to postpone the decision until further study.

The years between 1832 and 1858 recorded several changes but the main currents of development remained constant. The central focus of these years was the Rideau Canal. The mills on Jason Island adjacent to the canal were the industrial heart of the community. The initial lay-out of the streets of "Wardsville" reinforced this fact. Beckwith Street began at Ward's mills and ran northward. Along the northern shore of the Rideau, the commercial sector developed along with the major residential areas. Because of the extreme importance of the Rideau Canal, land prices were determined by proximity to that canal, with the land on Jason Island being most expensive. A handful of land owners, Abel Ward, William Simpson, Jason Gould, James Shaw and John McGill Chambers directed the growth of the town. When Chambers sold his farm in 1854 for railway development on land far from the banks of the Rideau, he recognized the shifting pattern of development. After that time there would not be a single focus for development but two, the railway and the canal.

In the early years, Abel Ward and William and James Simpson had the situation in control. For a number of reasons, they had gotten the best of the canal authorities. They reaped the benefits of improved transportation and milling facilities. The Ordnance Department could only defend itself from the most blatant violations of their property and military authority. The growth of Smiths Falls in this period was shaped by the efforts of Abel Ward and his partners, often in direct violation of the orders of the British Ordnance. In later years, Ward would be recognized as the founding father of the town. With that honour came the respectability of success.

In the achievement of that success, however, every means within the law and a few without were acceptable. Ward proved himself adept in most of them.

The one restraint on local millers was their dependence on the canal as the sole economical transportation route. No matter what action they took, they always claimed it would not interfere with the operation of that canal. The railway would change that dependence on the canal but at the same time the railway, and with it the heavy industry of the later nineteenth century, would successfully challenge the millers for control of the town's development. In 1858, however, there were still several years of decision and adjustment. With the arrival of the first railway locomotives, a new force entered the local scene.

If the opening of this period in local history was marked by Col. By's arrival by steamer, its close was marked by the arrival of a much different cargo. Having completed most of their construction, the officials of the Brockville and Ottawa railway decided to move some of their locomotives to Smiths Falls. The following account described this significant event.

What was needed now were locomotives to hasten the work, and preparations were being made at Gourlay's Tannery Wharf for their arrival. The railway company took advantage of the canal to bring the first locomotives from Kingston. With the exception of the natural curiosity of the people who gathered in crowds along the canal to see the "Iron Horses" floating down on their barges the trip was uneventful. A temporary track had been laid down George street from the main line just back of where the St. Francis hospital now stands, to what was then called Gourlay's Wharf now used as a coal dock by the Mackenzie Coal Co.

At last the day came when the first two -- the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa -- (in those early days the engines had names instead of numbers) were to be unloaded. The writer has seen many large buildings moved, but none of them ever made anything like the impression that seeing that first engine -- the St. Lawrence -- start to move off that barge propelled by its own steam. I was perched on the roof of a building close

by, but believe me if I had been on the ground I would have run for my life. I was scared half to death -- but -- that was a confession which I have to make even at this late day.

The signal is given; the whistle tooted, the steam whizzed -- she moved, but there's a shout, a warning, and quicker than I can tell it, the engine backed up again to her old position. The foundation had sunk and a near disaster occurred. Two days elapsed before they made everything secure and the St. Lawrence, with Mr. John Souls, father of Mrs. Thos. Johnston, George street, engineer at the throttle, ran off on to the solid earth. Then the people shouted, the whistle blew and the bells clanged. The first engine on what was to be the greatest railway in the British Empire was ready for her job. No. 2 "the Ottawa" followed that same afternoon. No. 3 "the Tay" three or four days later, when, by the way, her arrival was hardly noticed, so soon do we accept things as a matter of fact.⁶²

As the local residents accustomed themselves to the sounds of railway locomotives and rolling stock, they grew familiar with the force which would turn the Rideau Canal from a commercial waterway to a costly backwater.

The Canal Era, 1832-58

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Economic Development, 1832-58

Introduction

This section is an elaboration of the preceding chapter. It contains the details of the individual buildings and businesses located upon Jason Island and its immediate vicinity. There are two major sections in this chapter, one on the activities of Abel Ward and a second on those of William Simpson. Preceding this is a short section on the pre-canal mills in the area. Following these two main sections are separate sections on the Frost and Wood Company and the commercial businesses. All these factories and other buildings are located at the combined locks, and their location is shown on the maps corresponding to this period (see Figures 2 and 4).

Pre-Canal Mills

The first attempt to establish a mill in the Smiths Falls area was made by a Mr. Waterman. The site of the mill was below the rapids at Old Slys on the Montague shore of the Rideau River. Information on this mill came to light when William Morris applied to the Ordnance Department for compensation for lands taken in the canal construction. In September 1830, John Burrows, the overseer of the works at Old Slys, wrote to Col. By,

With respect to the great value of the Mill privilege, it may be remarked that if of any value, the Mill commenced by Mr. Waterman would not have remained unfinished (having commenced nearly 10 years since) for such a length of time. The mill and privilege are now the Government property, forming part of the purchase from Mr. Roach, and situated on Old Slys's rapids.¹

It was suggested that Waterman never completed his mill because of a lack of capital.² The identity of Mr. Waterman is not known, but he might also have

been connected with the next mill in the area.

This false start at development in the area was followed by a similar venture by Thomas Smyth. In July 1822, Smyth with his two sons, Terence and Henry; his nephew and son-in-law, Mr. Merrick and Alexander McCrea; and Thomas Waterman - erected a saw mill at Smiths Falls. With the building of the Smyth mill, an eighth of an acre was cleared and a small log shanty built, in which the men cooked their meals. The mill did not have a roof, and the dam was of flimsy log construction.³

This mill was located on the north shore of the Rideau River between Mr. Rykert's store and the quarry used in construction. This supposition is based on the fact that Abel Ward's first mill was located on this position and it was described as "an old saw mill newly rigged up",⁴ which suggests that it was actually the old Smyth mill (see Figure 2). After this, Simpson built the government dam across the river, and he located it between the saw mill and the saw mill dam. When the dam was completed it drowned out the mill dam and the saw mill was taken down.

When Joseph Sewell brought an action against Smyth for the mortgage of the land in July 1824, Smyth removed the machinery from the mill and abandoned it.⁶ Since the mill could only have been in operation for a year, it could not have had a significant impact upon the area.

Although Smiths Falls was named after Thomas Smyth, it did not appear that either Smyth or Waterman were really interested in settling the area. Before roads were built into this site by James Simpson, the Falls remained an isolated area. Evidence is slight, but it was possible that these early mills were only erected to exploit the timber resources of the area. The fact that Smyth quickly mortgaged the future town site as soon as he received a location grant, and then failed to meet the terms of the mortgage, indicated that he was short of capital. Thomas Waterman, if he is indeed the Mr. Waterman referred to by John Burrows, also failed to complete his mill for lack of capital. Because Waterman was later involved in the Smyth mill, these two mills seemed to have the same purpose. Had Smyth truly intended to settle the area, he would have taken more care in erecting his mill.

Abel Ward's arrival at the site in 1826 indicated that he was going to attempt a similar operation. Since Ward did not hold title to the land until after the canal was built, his actions require some interpretation. Before Ward came to Smiths Falls, he was engaged with his family in the lumber trade near Brockville. In the mid-1820's, however, they met with financial reverses. In 1826, Ward married Lavinia Merrick, from Merrickville, so he must have been acquainted with the original builders of the mill.⁷ Had Ward intended to settle there permanently he would have bought land, but he did not do so. Instead he fitted up Smyth's mill and built a house for himself and family. There must have been some form of agreement between Ward and Smyth over the use of the mill. It was Ward's good luck, and Smyth's misfortune, that the Rideau Canal was built. By connecting Smiths Falls with the outside world, the Rideau greatly increased the potential of the water power. Realizing this, Ward then bought land from James Simpson's partner, Trueman Hicock. If this was true, then it throws an interesting light upon the later dispute between the sons of Thomas Smyth and William Simpson. The Smyths must have felt left out in the cold by Ward's actions.

The Ward Mills

The industrial land at Smiths Falls controlled by Abel Ward consisted of that section of Jason Island north of the combined locks and east of the waste weir channel. While the most valuable improvements were the mills, Ward also rented buildings to a variety of artisans. Along with increased revenue, such tenants provided weight to Ward's claim to the property which in law belonged to the Ordnance Department. These tenants, however, soon found themselves in the middle of the land dispute and pressured by both Ward and the Ordnance officers to pay rent. Drawings of these early buildings were made by William Clegg and John Burrows (see Figures 16 and 17).

Ward's Grist Mill

Although Ward was the most prominent man associated with Jason Island, little

is known about his milling business. He owned grist, saw and carding mills located at the extreme northern end of the island. Ward's first grist mill seems to have been built before 1832 since a map of the area shows a building located on that sight.⁸ No doubt it was built soon after the construction began on the canal. The first mill continued in operation for twenty years until Ward decided to build a new mill.

In April 1852, Ward was reported collecting stone, cedar, and other materials to erect a new grist mill immediately to the north and adjoining the old mill. The old mill was to be used as a grain store.⁹ In 1855, the Brockville Recorder noted,

Mr. Abel R. Ward has erected a new flouring mill, built of stone, and capable of doing a large amount of work. The old mill, we perceive, has been altered and repaired, and has all the appearance of a large factory.¹⁰

The above description suggests that Ward might have used the old mill for more than just a storehouse. Perhaps the increase in business allowed him to operate both mills. In December 1856, Ward advertised 5000 bushels of corn for sale.¹¹

Abel Ward's Saw Mill

This saw mill should not be confused with Abel Ward's first saw mill or the mill of John W. Ward which was located on the opposite side of Beckwith Street from Ward's grist mill. In July 1840, Alexander Matheson compiled a list of all encroachments on the Government land and these two mills were listed separately.¹² The only indication of Ward's saw mill is on the 1858 Booth Map of Smiths Falls. It showed a building about half the size of the grist mill standing in the waste weir channel next to that mill.¹³ Booth's map, based upon his 1833 map of the town, suggested that this saw mill remained after the erection of the new grist mill in 1852.

John W. Ward's Saw Mill

One of the early successful saw mills was erected by the brother of Abel

Ward, John W. Ward. It was located on the northern part of Jason Island just east of the Beckwith Street bridge. The original date of construction is unknown, but the legal problems involving this mill shed some light on early Smiths Falls development. John Ward apparently ran short of capital soon after opening his mill. In order to secure necessary funds, he mortgaged his property to two different people. In May 1831, Ward signed over his bond to the land he owned in Smiths Falls (originally held by Trueman Hicock) to James Simpson for £ 900. According to the terms of this agreement, Ward would repay Simpson in two years or forfeit his property. Once Ward received this money, he promptly sold another bond to William Mittleberger for another £ 150 with a promise to repay him in one year. As security Ward promised Mittleberger that he could operate the mill for one year before the Simpson agreement ran out if Ward failed to repay the £ 150 within the specified time.¹⁴

John Ward failed to repay Mittleberger, but also refused to leave his saw mill. In order to escape from his obligations, Ward turned to the Ordnance Department. On 8 November 1832, he wrote to Captain Bolton asking for a lease to the land around the mill. Ward claimed that he had "expended all my property in the erection of a saw mill", and that he needed the land to store lumber. Playing upon the conflict between his brother and the Department, John Ward added that he had not given the authorities any trouble.¹⁵

Having made his application, John Ward then tried to evade Simpson's bond by telling him that the Government had leased the land to Ward himself. The Government had not done so because Ward made a second application in 1833. At the same time, Simpson bought Mittleberger's bond to the mill and attempted to solicit Bolton's help in getting Ward out of the mill.¹⁶ Bolton, however, seems to have sided with John Ward, since the 1840 list of encroachments indicated that John Ward paid rent to the Ordnance on this mill. In 1840, Ward had let the mill to a John Hilburn.¹⁷

Abel Ward's Carding Mill

This was located along the waste weir channel south of the grist mill. The

1832 map which indicated Ward's grist mill did not indicate any other building on the island, so this carding mill must have been built later. The 1840 list of encroachments listed E. Boyce as the occupant of Ward's carding and fulling mill.¹⁸ An earlier list of encroachments compiled in 1839 listed a Michael Boyce who owed three years rent to the Department for a carding machine.¹⁹ If Michael Boyce occupied Ward's mill, then the carding mill must have been constructed between 1832 and 1836. The Boyce family appeared to occupy the mill for the initial period of development.

In 1846, Ward erected a dyeing house near his grist mill, and this must have been part of the Boyce's business. The addition was a 20 ft. by 16 ft. one and one-half storey framed timber structure.²⁰

Ward's Tenants

These three mills were Ward's main interests on the island, but they were not the only ones. Throughout these early years, Ward continued to substantiate his claim to the property by erecting several buildings. This naturally led to disputes between the Ordnance Department and Ward. In these disputes, he ignored their restrictions, but at times exhibited a certain sensitivity to the effects upon his honour. In August 1844, Ward objected,

to be dealt with as a trespasser therefore instead of a pioneer of the forest, on land legitimately [sic] obtained, and occupied, long before the canal was thought of, is a hardship to which British Subjects generally are not subjected to.²¹

The reasons for these disputes are described below.

Stores

In addition to the mills on the Island, there were at least two stores. One was occupied by Ira Schofield and the other by a Mr. Harper. Schofield's store, which also served as a house, was constructed in late August 1845. Schofield was scheduled to move in a month later, but arrived earlier.²²

Lockmaster Matheson reported, "that last Friday this 7th instant a Mr. Schofield from the Township of Bastard opened a store in this house erected by A.R. Ward on the Government land on this island. Ward's son is assisting to sell the goods."²³ Though ordered to remove this building, Ward refused. A year later, in October 1846, Matheson reported an addition to this store on the west side which was used to house coarse goods.²⁴ Schofield's store was located on the 1846 Ordnance map on the west side of Lock Street to the north of Edward Chalmer's blacksmith shop.²⁵ The extent of Schofield's business is not known, but this store continued to operate for some time. Schofield did not retain proprietorship of this store for very long, for by 1856 James Rath occupied the building.²⁶

The second store on Jason Island was marked on the 1846 Ordnance map as "Harper's store", located just north of the combined locks at the east end of the island.²⁷ In 1840, Matheson listed a G.E. Mittleberger as the occupant of a stone store erected by Ward and this was probably later occupied by Harper.²⁸ In April 1857, Ward built a frame addition onto this main building which was one half the size of the existing building.²⁹ Again, nothing is known about the business but the location of Harper's store, surrounded by water on three sides, suggested Harper did some business with the passing steamers. No doubt his location made delivery of goods by steamer relatively easy. There is no record of any wharf in front of the store.

Distillery

Listed among Ward's encroachments onto the Government land was a distillery. The 1846 Ordnance Map did not show the location of this building. In September 1838, Ward was reported taking down a distillery and erecting a house on the island. John and William McGregor, who were working on the house at the time, told Matheson Ward received £ 900 per year for the ground on which the distillery stood. The figure seems incredibly high.³⁰

In November 1839, when Matheson reported all the encroachments on the reserve, he stated that William Pring had a house and distillery with three years rent due to the Department.³¹ These two distilleries appear to be

one and the same for in July 1840, Matheson reported that Pring had a distillery and three other buildings, which were erected by Abel Ward and William McGregor. He located the distillery north of the combined locks.³²

The distillery appeared to stand for several years for in September 1868, the Ordnance claimed 29 years back rent upon a distillery operated by William Price.³³ It is uncertain whether Price was a clerical error for Pring, or whether there was a change of ownership.

Blacksmiths

There were two blacksmiths located on Ward's section of Jason Island, Edward and Henry Chalmers. Their business was located between Ira Schofield's store and the Canal Basin. Henry Chalmers had rented the property from the Ordnance at least as early as 1838 and probably a few years before that.³⁴ The 1840 list of encroachments recorded a blacksmith shop, dwelling and stable rented to a Mr. Chalmers, but gave the builders of the structures as Arthur Wall and "Chiney(?)".³⁵ It was likely that these men were contractors rather than earlier occupants.

In 1851, Edward Chalmers business was described as, "blacksmith and harness factory -- harness of every size, wholesale and retail, at as low prices and equal quality, to any manufactured in Canada".³⁶ Chalmers appeared to do quite well for in 1850 he asked permission to erect a coal shed near his shop and seven years later to buy the property outright.³⁷ Both requests were denied until the Ward claim was settled. Like others who rented from the Department, Edward and Henry Chalmers would be pressured by Ward to acknowledge his claim. In later years, the Chalmers' would experience what it was like to have Abel Ward as an opponent.

Houses

There were at least five houses that Ward claimed to be on his property. The first was marked as the Weekes house on the 1846 Ordnance map. This house was originally built by John Milburne who agreed to pay rent to the Department in November 1839.³⁸ Eight years later, Milburne lost possession

of the house. Lockmaster Matheson reported,

Mr. John Milburne (who owns the House and Store on the Ordnance property near the Combined Locks) have [sic] requested me to state that, for the last three years, he rented these premises to Edward Weekes, who lately without Mr. Milburn's knowledge, or sanction, gave permission to a man named Daniel McGinty, a low character, this latter by the persuasion of Mr. Abel R. Ward gave up the place to him, and in which Ward have [sic] last Monday placed a man named Gilroy one of his workman; Mr. Milburne aware of Wards overbearing and violent conduct respectfully begs, that the Respective Officers will be pleased to take such steps as may again place him in possession as he understands that Ward also states that the ground is his, and defies everybody.³⁹

The only store in the area was the Harper store, possibly seized by Ward at the same time, though no other reference to a store occurred in the Milburne case.

In June 1845, Milburne regained possession of his house, but had to make repairs to it due to the neglect of the former tenants. Milburne also wished to demolish a small log stable erected by a locklabourer between the house and stable. No action was taken until the Ward claim was settled.⁴⁰ The 1846 Ordnance map indicated these stables still standing. This house eventually became the property of Robinson Harper. As the following report on the buildings on Ordnance land stated,

Widow Milburn occupies a tenement on the North side of the locks at an annual rent of \$ 14 which she paid regularly to the 31 December 1859. Has since disposed of her "goodwill" to Robinson Harper.⁴¹

The Ordnance report stated that Martha Milburn had no right to sell the house. Since the building was not necessary for canal operations, the Ordnance was willing to turn it over to Ward once a settlement was made.

The second house on the island was occupied by John Walters. This was a frame house built by Ward to the south of his grist mill and north of the Ira Schofield store.⁴² The 1840 list of encroachments identified the

occupants of this house as "John Walters & others".⁴³ This possibly suggested that the house was used by single labourers, perhaps employed at Ward's mills. Ward was known to have housed at least one of his workers in the Weekes house.

The other three houses claimed by Ward were not on the island, but built upon the three and one-half acres north of the Government dam. One of the frame houses was built by George Forbes, and in 1840 occupied by John Kirkwood. The second frame house was built by Ward and an unidentified American. In 1840, it was occupied by a Widow Graham. The other building was a log house and stable originally built by John McGregor. Peter Comeford was listed as the occupant in 1840.⁴⁴ The 1846 Ordnance map showed that this ground was occupied by Francis Hall's house, stable and tannery. It is not known if Hall incorporated these earlier buildings into his developments.

Other Buildings

There were a few buildings which existed on the Ward land for which only a few references survive. One was Ferguson's tannery and out buildings which were indicated on the 1846 Ordnance map, located between Ward's saw mill and Harper's store. Business directories listed a William Ferguson in 1851 as the owner of a tannery and shoe shop, and in 1857 gave his occupation as shoemaker.⁴⁵ He appeared to be the tenant of the tannery shown on the map.

The 1840 list of encroachments listed a dwelling and cooperage occupied by Edward Burk. The buildings were erected by Jason Gould but claimed by Abel Ward as they were on the three and a half acres north of the Government dam. An 1857 business directory listed a distiller and brewer by the name of Thomas Bourk, but no Edward Burk.⁴⁶ Since there was also a distillery whose location is unknown, the cooperage and that business might have been related. Barrels would be necessary to store distilled spirits.

William Simpson's Mills: Introduction

The property owned by William Simpson was that part of Jason Island west of the waste weir channel. Simpson did not take an active part in the construction of these mills, some of which were erected by his brother James. William Simpson left the immediate supervision of the mills to his brother-in-law, Jason Gould, and later his nephew, John T. Beckwith. Simpson was more involved in farming than industry. In 1847, Thomas MacQueen described the Simpson farm with admiration.

Among the very few who have endeavoured to keep pace with the progress of modern agriculture, William Simpson, Esq. of Smiths Falls, on the Rideau, deserves to occupy a prominent position both as a theoretical and as a practical farmer. His Barns, Stables, Cattle, Sheds and other out-buildings are so skillfully and conveniently arranged as to require perhaps not more than one half of the manual labor generally needed in establishments of an equal extent. His farming implements are numerous and of an improved description. His system of drill husbandry is equal to almost anything of the kind now practised in Britain, and in cattle, sheep, and pigs he can exhibit beautiful specimens of almost every full and every cross breed that has been cultivated and approved of in the cattle-breeding world; besides he has the credit of having raised many of the best horses which have honored this part of the province.⁴⁷

This pastoral life was far removed from the world of Jason Gould and Abel Ward with its noisy mills and battles with canal authorities.

The fact that William Simpson was somewhat removed from the daily business of the canal must have contributed to lockmaster Matheson's respect for Simpson's courteous behaviour. This outward civility, however, did not mean that Simpson was any less capable than Abel Ward in protecting his own interests. In 1853, Matheson reported,

I have been informed that a short time ago, David Simpson brother of William Simpson who resides back of Morris Town United States took from here, about forty horses and all the

horned cattle belonging to William Simpson; of course this move places them out of the power of the Law here, whether from the Ordnance or a civil suit. Simpson expected Lt. Elliott Esq. and other of our officers, to come here to settle about money due the Ordnance Dept. and land taken.⁴⁸ Ward would not have done better himself.

Grist Mill

The main influence of William Simpson upon the local economic development was his milling concerns. The original mills were built by James Simpson while he was still contractor for the works at Smiths Falls. The exact date of construction is uncertain. Jason Gould claimed that these mills were started at the time of the Rideau Canal construction and that improvements continued to be made. During the 1831 Simpson vs. Pooley trial, Gould testified that Lieutenant Pooley forbade him, as the agent of Simpson, to erect an addition to the grist mill, but that it was put up anyway. At that time, Simpson had both grist and saw mills with foundations laid for other buildings which were stopped due to the law suit. Simpson's clerk, William Mittleberger, placed these mills 200 ft. from the Basin on one side of the island.⁴⁹ This corresponded to later maps of the area which located Simpson's mills along the bank of the waste weir channel directly opposite Abel Ward's mills. The 1846 Ordnance map indicated two grist mills with a saw mill to the south and a foundry to the north.

By 1830, both the saw mill and grist mill were in operation. One traveller reported,

Mr. James Simpson appears to be a man of considerable enterprise -- he has erected a good saw mill, also a flour mill at this place. The latter carries two run of stone, one for flour of the French burr, and the other for corn etc. made from a common granite boulder, such as are common in this country, and which answers the purpose very well. He likewise formed here a weighing machine of somewhat new construction. The level which raises the scale has an iron rod descending from it, and

a hook to which is affixed a common steelyard, the opposite hook of the steelyard affixed to a staple made fast to the ground. From the difference of the points of attachment of these hooks the steelyard transverses, and the weight is indicated by the same means as in weighing with this instrument in the usual manner.⁵⁰

The description of Simpson's grist mill indicated a man of high intelligence and practical experience. Had he put his mind to it, he probably could have built the works at Smiths Falls to suit the demands of the Ordnance. The potential of the water power, however, obviously attracted his talents.

The original grist mill was replaced apparently in 1842. Matheson reported Gould's men quarrying stone near the mill on the island. He was informed that Gould had plans to take down the old mill in April and erect a larger stone one in its place.⁵¹

Besides erecting a larger mill, Gould was also interested in improving the machinery of his mill. In December 1856, he offered for sale two run of French burr stones, one run of St. Lawrence granite with Curlis drivers, spindles, Curlis hoppers, Bolt reels and Cutt Gears, with a smut machine and screen.⁵² Since the mill continued to operate after this date, it is supposed these were sold to make room for new equipment.

Saw Mill

The saw mill was located south of the grist mill on the waste weir channel just north of the cut Jason Gould made across the island in 1836. The 1840 list of encroachments reported that LeChay and MacFarlane were the occupants of both Simpson's grist and saw mill, as well as a large frame shed built by Jason Gould.⁵³ Sometime later, LeChay and MacFarlane were replaced by the Mr. Bartlett named on the 1846 Ordnance map. This was probably Russell Bartlett, a cabinet maker.⁵⁴ Dealing in various types of furniture, Bartlett would no doubt benefit from the use of a saw mill.

Bartlett was soon replaced by John T. Beckwith, a nephew of William Simpson. By January 1852, Matheson described Beckwith as one, "who for some

time has had charge of [Simpson's] saw mills".⁵⁵ Matheson reported that Beckwith was erecting a small building, intended as a shingle factory powered by water from the raceway built by Gould in 1836. In March 1853, Beckwith erected another building along this raceway. It was a 26 ft. by 20 ft. frame building 12 ft. high, but its purpose was not indicated. At the same time, Matheson complained that Beckwith had covered the area north of this raceway with saw logs and lumber. The new building probably had some connection with the saw mill.⁵⁶

In 1853, Beckwith rebuilt the saw mill. The old mill was in a very bad condition, since in May 1852 it was reported "Gould's mill" was "in so ruinous a state as to be almost useless".⁵⁷ The correspondent claimed Gould had abandoned the mill because he believed the Ordnance would eventually take possession of it. For some reason, Beckwith changed this policy when he wrote to the Department in August 1853.

I am and have been for several years occupying the premises previously occupied by Mr. Gould. At this place last fall I found that the timbers of the old saw Mill were so decayed as to require replacing and I had the old building removed and a new one built on the site of the old one which since last spring I have had in operation as a saw mill and only occupying the same site and space of the old mill.⁵⁸

Despite Beckwith's claim the mill was the same size as the old mill, the new mill was reported as "much enlarged".⁵⁹

Like Simpson and Gould before him, Beckwith had his disagreements with lockmaster Matheson. The lockmaster once complained of the saw mill interfering with his work.

He [Beckwith] has covered the island with lumber and saw logs, this spring I had to employ a horse and cart to fill in a settlement back of the Rubble dam, this had to go round thro' the village as the Road was block up [sic]. Mr. B. promised to have this cleared which was not done. It is well known that no faith whatever can be placed in this man's word respecting any matters.⁶⁰

The caustic temperament of Matheson should not obscure the fact that these

confrontations were much more than personal feuds. They were bound to happen when the same land was claimed by two parties for contradictory purposes.

Simpson's Tenants

Like Abel Ward, Simpson tried to improve his claim upon the land by leasing the land and building to tenants. In doing so, William Simpson started to build up local industry. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the Cossitt brothers.

Hall's Tannery

The 1846 Ordnance map indicated a tannery and bark mill west of the Government Dam. This tannery and surrounding buildings belonged to Francis Hall. The date of construction or when Hall first moved into these buildings is unknown. It is possible some of them were structures erected by the canal contractors discussed above. In 1850, however, Hall advertised these for sale. The advertisement read,

The building occupied as a Tannery, 82 x 24 feet, and recently fitted up with new vats on the most improved principle for carrying on business. Also a new frame Barn, 36 x 24 feet, with sheds attached; all situated on the margin of the Rideau Canal.⁶¹

Obviously, Hall believed the canal to be a selling point of his tannery. It is unknown whether Hall sold his business in 1850, but by 1857 James or George Gourlay was operating the business. When the railway locomotives were unloaded in 1858, the wharf at the tannery was known as "Gourlay's Wharf" which suggested Gourlay had occupied the tannery for a number of years. By December 1858, Gourlay had sold his business to Allen Templeton who continued to run it for several years.⁶²

Hardy's Foundry

Among the earlier buildings erected by James Simpson was a foundry located at the extreme north end of the island. This foundry was built by Isaac, or Israel, Hardy. Hardy testified during the 1831 Simpson vs. Pooley trial that Simpson "gave witness privilege to erect buildings for Iron-Works after the land had been staked out".⁶³ The Ordnance officers tried to prevent Hardy from erecting his buildings, but once Simpson returned to Smiths Falls after a few days absence, Hardy completed the job. Simpson promised to indemnify Hardy against prosecution. The Ordnance officers also tried to get Hardy to sign a lease with the Department, but Hardy remained with Simpson.

One of the reasons for this action was that Hardy and Simpson were about to go into business together. In July 1831, the foundry's opening was reported in the Brockville Recorder.

It affords us much pleasure to notice that Messrs. Simpson, Hardy & Co, of Smith's Falls have recently got a Foundry into operation at that place, at which, Plough Irons, Stoves, Wagon Boxes, Andirons, Potash Kettles, Coolers and Other castings are made. This we consider a desirable establishment in that section of the district and we hope that persons desirous of purchasing articles in the line will not omit to encourage the enterprising proprietors.⁶⁴

Whether the public took the Recorder's advice is not known. In 1831, James Simpson left town for reasons other than those concerned with the foundry business. In March 1833, Hardy was still running the foundry under the name of "Smith's Falls Furnace".⁶⁵

G.M. Cossitt and Brother's Foundry

As part of his continuing improvements to his uncle's land, John Beckwith erected a large frame building, 36 ft. long, 26 ft. wide and 18 ft. high, near Gould's saw mill in July 1853. Lockmaster Matheson added that this building was to be leased to "two American fanning mill makers".⁶⁶ The

Americans were German M. Cossitt, born in 1824, and his younger brother Newton, born in 1830.⁶⁷ In August 1853, Beckwith rebuilt the Gould saw mill and at the same time added to the original building a second storey. The Cossitt's building was connected to the saw mill by a platform which ran between the second storey of each building.⁶⁸

The Cossitt brothers lost no time in attempting to develop the potential of the area. In December 1853, they made an unsuccessful attempt to lease the mill rights on the north side of the Rideau Canal near Poonamalie Locks.⁶⁹ On this refusal, they concentrated their efforts upon their fanning mill and planing machine business. Five years later they were ready to expand.

The new building was built with the assistance of John Beckwith and located below the Government dam on the "leakage" channel which was the old river bed north of Jason Island. It was a large stone building 100 ft. long, 30 ft. wide at one end and 60 ft. at the other where a small wing extended. The activity of the Cossitt's attracted the attention of the local Rideau Gleaner in December 1858.

We are astonished at the rapidity with which it [the foundry] has progressed so far. Scarcely a stone laid when masons were beginning to think of the end of the building season was near, it furnishes a good practical illustration of the go-ahead character which Americans claim credit, and which we confess deserve...

From the size of the building, and the means of the Messrs. [Cossitt and Beckwith], we have no doubt they will intend making all kinds of work usually made in such establishments, and if the same energy and business talent that the Messrs. Cossitt have displayed in their fanning mill manufactory, are brought to bear, as we have no doubt they will, on their new line of business, they will unquestionably receive their full share of public patronage, and we trust also a sufficient remuneration for their labour and capital.⁷⁰

The Gleaner obviously did not share Matheson's dislike for the American residents and welcomed the competition the Cossitts would give to the es-

tablished firm of Frost and Wood.

Frost and Wood

The founder of the Frost and Wood Company, which became one of the largest agricultural implement factories in the country, was Ebenezer Frost. He was born on 9 October 1790 in Battleboro, Vermont. At the age of thirteen, Ebenezer left home to make his living and at the age of twenty-two entered the United States army as part of a cavalry regiment in the War of 1812. At the end of the War, he settled in Hopkinton where he built a trip hammer, the fore-runner of the rolling mill. Apparently, he ran this shop on his own, selling hammered iron until he moved to Canton, New York. He remained in that city for a period of sixteen years before he moved to Canada in the 1830's.⁷¹

In 1837, Ebenezer rented the Hawkesbury Foundry, at Hawkesbury, Prescott County, which he repaired and opened for business. Frost sold all types of castings, as well as cooking and parlour stoves, caldrons, kettles, coolers, bake pans, handirons, cast and waggon boxes and cast iron plows.⁷²

It was not until 1839, as an experienced man of 49, that Frost moved to Smiths Falls. He established a small business on Jason Island. The original building was owned by William Simpson and was situated on the waste weir channel where the waterworks was later built.⁷³ On 17 March 1843, a twenty year old moulder named Alexander Wood arrived in town and was hired by Frost to work in the foundry.

Wood had been born on 14 August 1824 at South Branch, Glengarry County. It was later claimed Wood arrived in town "without so much as a valise as far as worldly possessions go, but had possessions of far greater value in a clear head, a strong right arm and a determination to succeed".⁷⁴ If this was true, Wood must have decided he would never succeed in Smiths Falls because he left town after six months for Ottawa. In May 1846, however, Wood returned to form a partnership with Ebenezer Frost and the Frost and Wood Company began.

When Ebenezer Frost first started his business in Smiths Falls, he

probably "ironed" plows as part of his work, by putting iron onto wooden plows to protect them from wear. It was said that in this occupation, Frost realized the need for agricultural implements and decided to add a small foundry to his original blacksmith shop. To do this he needed a skilled moulder and Alexander Wood was hired. Wood would set up enough moulds to make a cast which might take a week to ten days. Ebenezer Frost and Richard Shaw would act as blacksmiths. Power was supplied by a treadmill. When Frost's team of horses were away making deliveries, he used to treat the farmers at the local tavern in order to use their horses on the treadmill. To keep the small foundry and blacksmith shop in business, Frost made a variety of products including drag saws, and tread and sweep horse powers.⁷⁵ The early plows were single furrow with cast iron mould boards and standards with wooden beams and handles.⁷⁶

The firm of Frost and Wood had only begun when their shop was destroyed. In late April 1847, the lockmaster reported water flowing through parts of the embankment, caused by a boat breaking loose from its mooring and ramming the embankment.⁷⁷ The sudden flow of water picked up the small building sitting on the edge of the waste weir channel and carried it into the river. According to this local account, the building washed ashore on the northern side of the river where the later Frost and Wood factory was built.⁷⁸ At the time, this must have seemed a blow to the company but it was probably a blessing in disguise. By building away from Jason Island, Frost and Wood avoided all the problems associated with the land claims. Their new location also provided room for expansion while still having access to the Rideau Canal for shipping.

The exact size of their first factory on this location is unknown. In 1850, a substantial stone building was added to the wooden buildings which had housed their operations in the first three years.⁷⁹ In 1854, these buildings were partially destroyed by fire. The fire was supposed to have originated in the boxes used to cast their products. Some of the fire remained in these boxes when they were piled against the side of the building.⁸⁰ The 19 January edition of the Brockville Recorder reported,

About 7 o'clock, on the evening of Thursday last, the extensive foundry of Messrs. Frost & Wood, in the village of Smiths

Falls, was discovered to be on fire. The firemen were early on the spot, and were assisted in a very spirited and praiseworthy manner by the inhabitants; and by their united efforts succeeded in containing the flames to the building in which they first originated. The two wings were saved though one of them was of wood, and the large stone building used as ware rooms, paint shop, tin room etc. The loss will be severe as there is only a small amount insured on the property. Too much praise cannot be given to Capt. Girvin of the "Rideau" Engine Co. for the spirited manner in which he performed his duty. Several persons were injured, some of them severely, on account of everything being covered with ice; and their eagerness in the laudable endeavors to excel each other in conquering the flames or saving property. Messrs. Frost and Wood are actively engaged in clearing away the rubbish, and intend to rebuild immediately.⁸¹

By March, the firm was back in business proudly proclaiming they were, "Burnt Out but Not Burned Up", and advertised for a pattern maker finisher and two carpenters.⁸²

Their new factory was depicted in an engraving accompanying H.F. Walling's 1863 map of Lanark and Renfrew County (see Figure 35). The stone building next to the river was a two storey 50 ft. by 120 ft. structure. The front of this was the moulding shop. Attached to this main building was a 40 ft. by 60 ft. frame addition used to store castings and coal as well as serving as a cleaning room. Behind the moulding shop was the machine shop which one witness described as a "labyrinth of belts, wheels, shafts, and various machinery, all busy at their prescribed duties, which confuse the eye and stun the ear".⁸³ Upstairs was the wood working room. Beside this main stone building was another stone structure of the same appearance but slightly smaller. Finished manufactured goods were stored in it. Between the two main buildings were a 25 ft. by 60 ft. blacksmith shop and a small office.⁸⁴

The business of Frost and Wood in the 1850's was widely diversified. They made mill casings, as well as finishing and boring, and had a large

number of lathes to do the work. They made Union and Champlain Reaction waterwheels for saw mills, various stoves, ploughs, kettles, coolers, wagon and cart boxes, and road scrapers.⁸⁵ The 1863 Walling engraving clearly showed the reliance of the company on the canal. They had a wharf in front of their plant to receive materials from steamers which included the steel and iron imported from England and shipped through Montreal.⁸⁶ Other supplies had to be teamed in from Brockville. The canal, however, was not suited to the distribution of the finished product and most of these were teamed to small farming communities.

In this early period, Frost and Wood's was just one factory among many, but its development reflected the growing importance of Smiths Falls. Not only was the town a milling centre, but becoming a centre for farm equipment as well. The farming communities of the area would greatly benefit from such a factory from the machinery it produced, and as an easily accessible source of spare parts. The foundry's diversification into water wheels would also make the erection and maintenance of the local mills much easier. Like the railway, Frost and Wood would dominate the town in the following decades.

Commercial Development

In Smiths Falls, commercial interests were second only to the milling operations in importance. The ability to ship bulk goods cheaply and quickly was a necessary part of establishing the town as the place of business for the surrounding agricultural hinterland.

James Shaw

James Shaw was the most prominent shipper at Smiths Falls. Beginning as a master mason on the canal, Shaw eventually rose to a position of prominence in town. In addition to his commercial business, Shaw also had a farm near the town, which one visitor claimed, "his having seen a very fine field upon it, containing 11 acres, without a stump or a stone on it; which in a

country so new is somewhat remarkable".⁸⁷ Like William Simpson, Shaw found time for both agricultural and business concerns.

The first storehouse Shaw built was located on the north side of the Basin between the waste weir and the combined locks. Shaw's original request for this storehouse was made in 1832 and approved by Col. By in late 1833.⁸⁸ Shaw expanded his storehouse in March 1844 and two years later applied to erect a small wharf into the Basin to overcome some gravel the Department had placed along the shore.⁸⁹ In September 1846, Shaw again asked permission to expand his activities on the Basin. He wanted permission to pile 400 to 500 cords of wood at the detached locks for the use of the steamers. He claimed he would sell all this wood before the fall. Shaw received the Department's permission, and seemed to fulfill the bargain.⁹⁰ A further increase in business forced Shaw to ask for additional land around his storehouse. This request was denied until the Simpson and Ward claims were settled.⁹¹ This was another indication of the impediment these claims had become upon local business.

The uncertainty over land titles also frustrated James Shaw's attempt to enter into industrial development in the town. In December 1852, Shaw applied for a lease to the water power at the detached lock with six acres of ground on the north side of the river. Shaw explained that,

Should I be able to procure a lease of this plot of ground and the mill site connected with it, my intention is to erect several kinds of machinery, to manufacture various articles which we are now obliged to import from the United States, as I am one of those persons who were in the employment of the Engr. Dept. during the construction of the Rideau Canal, I think it should give my application some preference over that of strangers.⁹²

Despite old ties, Shaw was refused this piece of land which eventually was given to the Gould family as part of the claim settlement.

The extent of Shaw's business is not known in any detail. The information quoted in the last chapter indicated Shaw's pre-eminence in local trade. In November 1858, he advertised 50 chaldrons of best Newcastle double screened coals suitable for blacksmiths.⁹³ In May 1856, he advertised 10,000 lbs of wool for sale.⁹⁴ These would indicate a wide range of import

and export activity. The coal trade would continue for some time on the Rideau Canal by a variety of Shaw's successors.

Other Shippers

General descriptions of local trade emphasized that Shaw was only one of several men connected with the Rideau Canal trade. The only other storehouse on the canal basin was erected by Mr. Richardson, the contractor for Old Slys Locks, at the same time as Shaw's first wharf.⁹⁵ This wharf does not appear to have been used extensively for trade since it was located on the south side of the basin. The town and its mills were on the north side of the basin and river.

In March 1846, when Shaw asked permission to erect a wharf in the basin, he threatened to move his business to the storehouse at the foot of the canal locks. He emphasized that the Ordnance did not collect rent upon this storehouse.⁹⁶ Shaw was probably referring to the wharves at the foot of Bay Street. The 1863 H.F. Walling Map of Lanark and Renfrew Counties indicated that Shaw did have a wharf here in the 1860's.⁹⁷ It is not known if these wharves were built in the 1850's.

At this location, Alexander Clark also had a wharf in the 1860's. Clark was one of the more prominent merchants in town having established his business in 1840.⁹⁸ He was probably one of Shaw's strongest competitors. In 1857, his business was described as, "dealer in dry goods, groceries, provisions and hardware; warehouse for receiving and shipping".⁹⁹

Shipping was not restricted to these commercial men. Frost and Wood had their own wharf, as did Gourlay's tannery. This wharf at the foot of George Street must have been quite extensive since it was used to unload the railway locomotives in 1858. The involvement of these local industries indicated that the division between industrialists and commercial traders must be made with care. Alexander Clark's shipping interests were the logical extension of his retail business. Between millers and shippers, there was no conflict over the appropriate uses of the canal. While the canal authorities considered the millers a threat to commercial traffic, the local shippers considered them their natural ally. In order to establish a

commercial centre, men like James Shaw worked closely with Abel Ward and Jason Gould.

Economic Development, 1832-58

- 1 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1670, Claims 1830-31, p. 8, Burrows to By, 20 September 1830.
- 2 Ibid., Claims 1832, p. 90, Cole to By, 21 February 1832.
- 3 A.K. Gould, "Out of the Wilderness", Old Home Week Souvenir Programme, (Smiths Falls: Record News, 1925), p. 16.
- 4 Ibid. There has been some confusion over the location of the Smyth mill. Alice Gould, who based her history upon testimony given during the trial between William Simpson and Terence Smyth, stated that Smyth's mill was located, "on the spot designated as 319 Lock Street (the identical site of the saw mill destroyed recently by fire)". (See A. Gould, "Out of the Wilderness", Old Home Week Souvenir Programme, 1925). This mill was actually John Ward's mill, described in the text.
- 5 PAC, NMC, VI/410 - Rideau Canal, 1827-John By-Smiths Falls; Diary of John Burrows, 1827, p. 959.
- 6 A.K. Gould, op.cit., p. 16.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Smiths Falls Rideau Canal Office, Engineering Department, Early and Pre-1900 Site Information, Folder 13 - Smiths Falls, Map accompanying Capt. Bolton Communication, 20 December 1832.
- 9 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1668, 10, p. 14, Matheson to Resp. Officers, Bytown, 5 April 1832.
- 10 Brockville Recorder, 8 March 1855, p. 2.
- 11 Carleton Place Herald, 25 December 1856.
- 12 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 1, Matheson, Return of Buildings on the Government Land at Smiths Falls, 20 July 1840, (hereinafter cited as Matheson Return 1840).
- 13 Ontario. Public Archives, Map Division, R-S(8), Plan of Part of the Town, Lock & Jason Island and the Rideau Canal Basin, John Booth, 1858.
- 14 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 1, Simpson to Bolton, 11 September 1853.
- 15 Ibid., Ward to Bolton, 8 November 1832.

- 16 Ibid., Simpson to Bolton, 11 September 1833.
- 17 Matheson Return 1840, op.cit.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 1, Ordnance Office, Bytown to Ordnance Office, Montreal, 18 June 1842.
- 20 Ibid., Matheson to Resp. Officers, Bytown, 24 August 1846.
- 21 Ibid., Ward to Thomas, 12 August 1844.
- 22 Ibid., Matheson to Resp. Officers, Bytown, 29 August 1846.
- 23 Ibid., 12 November 1845.
- 24 Ibid., 30 October 1846.
- 25 PAC, NMC, M/410 - Rideau Canal, 1846.
- 26 Smiths Falls, Town Clerks Office, Assessment Book, 1856, n.p.
- 27 PAC, NMC, M/4 10 - Rideau Canal, 1846.
- 28 Matheson Return 1840.
- 29 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1667, p. 86, Matheson to Resp. Officers, Bytown, 24 April 1851.
- 30 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 1, Matheson to Burrows, 15 September 1838.
- 31 Ibid., Ordnance Office, Bytown to Ordnance Office, Montreal, 18 June 1842.
- 32 Matheson Return 1840.
- 33 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1695, p. 108, Rideau Canal Land Rents Due September 1868.
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The Railway Era, 1859 - 1885

"What is to become of our Canal?", was the question concerning the editor of the Rideau Gleaner in March 1859.¹ It was a question which various people would ask in the next thirty years. The Rideau Canal was constructed as a military necessity in order to ensure the security of British North America and, through the efforts of Colonel By, enjoyed a brief commercial importance as well. The arrival of the first trains of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway in 1859, however, ended the dominance of the canal over local transportation. Though an immediate decline of canal trade did not occur, the railways assumed priority in the minds of local developers. For them, the key to growth was in better railway communications. The transfer of the Canal to the Canadian government added a new urgency to the examination of the cost of, what one critic termed, "a worse than useless canal".²

In this re-examination of the significance of the canal to the local area, there were several factors which had to be considered. Though no longer the most important transportation route, the Rideau Canal still contained several water power sites which could be used to develop industry. This policy was supported by several people because it would reduce the overall cost of the canal to the general public. The limitations of such a policy, however, were clearly pointed out by the situation in Smiths Falls. The legal dispute between Ward and Simpson and the canal authorities continued to make a stable industrial policy unlikely. More fundamentally, by the 1860's local industrialists began to complain about interference from each other's mills.

This problem of reorientation among those connected with the canal was caused by local railway development. The railways, from the first trains of the Brockville and Ottawa in 1859 to the establishment of the Canadian Pacific eastern divisional point at Smiths Falls in 1885, determined the

economic future of the town. Their effects, however, were not immediately evident. By examining the industrial nature of Smiths Falls through the 1871 Census, it is clear that the canal area remained the central industrial area. The type of industry in that area underwent a basic change. The grist and saw mills which dominated local development in the 1830's and 1840's were replaced by the agricultural implement factories of Frost and Wood and Cossitt Brothers.

The railway and the new industries were signs of the declining significance of the Rideau Canal in Smiths Falls. The saw and grist mills continued to operate, but the advantages of water power failed to meet the demands of an increasingly industrialized economy. Similarly, the canal steamers failed to meet the demands of the larger transportation system. During these years, the history of the Rideau Canal and the history of Smiths Falls diverged. In 1859, the Canal was no longer the center of growth, and by 1885 its very importance had been called into question.

When the Report of the Commissioners of Public Works for 1858 was examined by the local press, grave doubts arose about the fate of the Rideau Canal. The Department of Public Works had found the canal in a poor condition after the British Ordnance had failed to make repairs for several years. The Rideau Gleaner commented,

Since then a large outlay has been incurred in barely keeping it in working order. It is now in such a state that without the expenditure of a great sum it threatens ere long to get completely damaged. Meanwhile, aside from the amount that would be necessary to put it and maintain it in good repair, the salaries of the officials, permanent and occasional, employed on it immensely more than exceed the revenue derived from it.³

With tolls averaging between \$ 6,000 and \$ 7,000 and maintenance costs three times that amount, it was not a question easily answered.

The cause of the decline in revenue was fairly easy to discover. In November 1858, the Gleaner remarked the canal's decline was "mainly attributable to the greater convenience both for travelling and traffic, furnished by means of railway communications".⁴ The opening of the Brockville and

Ottawa line would only add to the troubles. Local support seemed to be behind the maintenance of the canal, indeed several businessmen still depended upon it for their living. To do so at the risk of large public debt, however, was not popular. As much as possible, the canal should pay for itself. Both the Kingston Daily News and the Gleaner advocated that the decline in the transportation role of the canal could be compensated by the expansion of its industrial role. The Daily News wrote that under present circumstances it would be,

desirable for the Government to direct its attention to the necessity inducing capitalists and manufacturers to avail themselves of the numerous water privileges formed by the waste water of the Canal, to build up under a protective tariff, manufacturers of such coarse goods as are most in demand and which are now imported from England and the United States.⁵

The canal authorities realized the importance of the Smiths Falls water power which an 1860 survey described as "extensive and valuable".⁶

As a policy of development, this increased industrialization received widespread approval. Testimony given before the 1871 Canal Commission revealed that the industrial role of the canal justified the expenses of maintenance. W.K. Dickinson of Manotick, argued that these industries relied upon the continuation of the canal.

These establishments are wholly dependent upon a regular and sufficient water supply to the various mill privileges, for which the Government have under granted leases, and receive an annual rent. Under these circumstances many persons have made heavy investments in good faith. It is, therefore, obviously unjust on the part of the Government to allow this route to become unreliable, as indeed has been the case for some time past.⁷

Dickinson's testimony was supported by James Shaw, Jr., of Smiths Falls. Though he stated that the business of the canal could double before the locks would require enlargement, Shaw expressed a concern that water supply was insufficient to supply both commercial traffic and industrial requirements.⁸ The concern over the increasing importance of industry was reflec-

ted in the attitude of the canal authorities towards the local millers. In studying the Ward and Simpson land dispute, Colonel William Coffin of the Ordnance Land Branch stressed the economic costs of delay in settling the claim. Reminding his superiors that the canal was kept at the Province's expense, Coffin wrote:

The utilization of water power at Smiths Falls and elsewhere will increase the commerce and the traffic of the canal and creates public freight which will compensate the expense. As it is, these water powers are improperly employed. Ward & Simpson practically retain possession of that to which they have no right, and can give no title. The Ordnance would give no title so long as the question remained in disputation, and one of the best situated villages in the country has been stayed in improvement and in the progress of population, which would have repaid the value of the land and water power to the Provinces a thousand fold.⁹

While Coffin recommended a change in general policy in light of the new changes, lockmaster Richey of Smiths Falls received instructions to pay more attention to the requirements of local millers. After receiving several letters from mill owners in Smiths Falls and Merrickville complaining of water regulations, Superintendent Slater told Richey, "it is of greatest importance to them, and to the country generally that this should be done, it is desirable that you should accommodate them as much as possible".¹⁰ Such instructions contrasted sharply with the actions of lockmaster Alexander Matheson during the 1830's and 1840's.

In their eagerness to find justification for the cost of the Rideau Canal, its supporters overlooked the actual details of such industrialization. What looked good in government reports and commissions, in actual practice ran into fundamental problems. In Smiths Falls, the development of the early saw and grist mills had largely filled the best water power sites. Except for the site at the detached locks, every significant water power had been occupied by the early 1860's.

If the canal authorities wished to duplicate the development in other parts of the canal, they would have to cope with the problems such policies

created. In the 1860's it became evident that the Smiths Falls mills were seriously interfering with the operation of the canal. In his 1860 Annual Report, the Superintendent for the Rideau Canal wrote of the interference caused by saw mills in Ottawa, then added,

the same thing occurred at Smiths Falls. The navigation between this place and Old Sly, is much impaired; the steamers, sometimes, stick on the banks of sawdust. The Millers here have, however, been more careful since the new rules were promulgated last spring.¹¹

The Superintendent's hope that official regulation would solve this problem proved to be in vain. In October 1863, Joshua Bates, a miller at Old Slys rapids, wrote to complain of the situation. In defending himself for his refusal to pay rent to the Department, Bates said,

I have repeatedly complained to the Superintendent as to the damages I was daily sustaining in consequence of the mills and manufacturing at Smyths Falls being allowed to throw all the refuse they wanted into the canal or Rideau River. In consequence of which the entrance to my mill race was sometimes nearly filled with edgings and refuse from the Sawmills and shavings bark and edgings from the Stave Factory, the Shingle Factory and Planing machines.¹²

Bates' complaint was not an isolated incident. In 1869, the Department of Marine and Fisheries threatened several local millers, including John and William Ward, with legal action for their continued interference with the Rideau River through dumping of refuse and sawdust.¹³

There were obvious limitations to the industrialization policy. The canal authorities retained their responsibility for maintaining a transportation route no matter how costly. In Smiths Falls at least, the water power paid no direct benefits to the authorities in the form of rent because Ward and Simpson refused to acknowledge the Department's claim to the land. The indirect benefits of such water power were significant and are detailed below. Indirect benefits, however, were difficult to measure and the canal authorities were not empowered to use public funds for the benefits of private industrialists.

In this debate over industrialization, the original purpose of the canal was not entirely overlooked. Not since the War of 1812 had the Americans threatened British North America, but with the outbreak of the American Civil War, Canadian officials reconsidered the military role of the canal. Such a reconsideration raised another problem with the industrial policy. Colonel Coffin wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in February 1867,

Recent events have to a certain extent restored to the communications their former military importance, and after an interval of ten years, enables us to understand the prudent reluctance of the Royal Engineers, a reluctance difficult to explain at the time, or to make intelligible to interested parties in utilizing water power to the prejudice of the main object for which the canal was constructed. In a military point of view, the navigation is the first consideration.¹⁴

Military concerns made a choice between public finance and public security necessary. For Coffin, the answer was clear. "It would be better that there should be no mills at all on the navigation than that the navigation should be endangered."¹⁵ Fortunately, that choice was not pressed.

By the 1870's, the limitations of the industrial growth associated with the Rideau Canal were recognized. The federal government acquiesced in fact that the canal would remain a financial burden upon the country. During the attacks by Opposition members upon the cost of the canal in the House of Commons, the Conservative Government defended its actions by pointing to the indirect benefits created by such expenditures. It was an accepted fact that the canal would never have a major role in transportation. As John A. Macdonald summed up the situation in 1885,

As long as the canal is kept open it must be supplied with water. It is quite true that it is not nearly so useful as it was when first built. I remember the time when all trade between Lower and Upper Canada was carried through the Rideau Canal. But since the improvements on the St. Lawrence and the construction of railways, the canal has become less useful than it was. But still there it is. People are settled along its

banks. Government cannot close it up, without great injury to that whole country, where the people have been in the habit of using it as their means of transport for two generations.¹⁶

Political and economic realities dictated that the canal be maintained but even Macdonald would not question the fact that its better days were forever in the past.

If the promise of the Rideau Canal diminished in the 1850's, the railways excited the interest of the local governments. The United Counties of Lanark and Renfrew were caught up in that railway building excitement. In June 1853, the Counties entered into negotiations with Mr. Bell and Mr. Watson of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway in order to determine whether a loan would be practical. The Counties' Railway Committee reported that, taking into consideration the prosperous state of your United Counties, the rapid increase of wealth and population, the serious difficulties the inhabitants have to contend with for the want of ready access to a market and the incalculable benefits to arise from a Railroad of the kind being made through our Counties, most respectfully recommend that your council do pass a By-law for the purpose of guaranteeing a sum of £ 200,000 to the said company.¹⁷

By July, a majority of the municipalities of the two Counties had agreed to borrow the £ 200,000 from the Municipal Loan Fund for Upper Canada.

The Loan Fund was established by the Canadian government to promote the building of railways. The Provincial government became the endorser for local governments on the money they borrowed. The debentures covering the loan were to be issued for 20 years. As a security for this loan, the Brockville and Ottawa Railway agreed to pay 8 % per annum the County had to forward to the Receiver-General. If any debentures were still due after 20 years, the Company would pay these as well. The Counties' Council held a mortgage upon the property of the railway in common with the other municipalities concerned in the loan. In addition to the £ 200,000 loan of Lanark and Renfrew, the Brockville and Ottawa was financed by £ 100,000 from Brockville and £ 50,000 from Elizabethtown.¹⁸

On the 2nd of December 1853, the Railway Company hired James Sykes and Charles De Berque of Sheffield, England, along with William Sykes of Montreal, to build the railway. The railway was to start at Brockville on the St. Lawrence and continue to the Rideau River at Smiths Falls, then to Arnprior and on to Pembroke on the Ottawa River. A branch line was to run from Smiths Falls to Perth. The railway was a single track line, but graded for a double track. Stations were to be built at Brockville, Smiths Falls, Perth, Arnprior and Pembroke. The contractors were also to provide locomotives and rolling stock. The initial cost estimated for opening the line from Brockville to Carleton Place and Perth was estimated over £ 200,000.¹⁹

The financial problems which would plague the Railway from almost its first day of construction indicated one of the realities of railway development. Whatever the eventual indirect benefits of railways, their construction was a heavy financial burden. Most of this loss was borne by public funds. This situation contrasted with the construction of the Rideau Canal whose costs were paid by the Imperial Government. Any commercial development which resulted from the canal benefitted the local area which had not contributed to construction costs. The indirect benefits of the Brockville and Ottawa, however, were really only the return upon initial investments.

In March 1854, John T. Beckwith, the Smiths Falls representative of the Railway Committee, reported that the Committee felt the "contractors are men of standing and character, and the sureties men of the highest character and responsibility", and the railway would be built on schedule and within original estimates.²⁰ Sykes, De Berque & Co. had been allotted £ 960,000 sterling for the job.

By June 1855, however, the Company failed to meet the interest of the Municipal Loan Fund which amounted to £ 1946.13.14. The Counties' Railway Committee held a special meeting with the contractors. The answers given by Robert Watson, Managing Director of the Brockville and Ottawa were "so evasive and dissatisfactory",²¹ the Committee ordered a halt to further advances upon debentures. Samuel Keefer, the Supervising Engineer of the

railway, eventually satisfied the Committee's request for information. He outlined the assets of the Company, and although he criticized the contractor for not using enough men, he was generally confident the railway would be completed. Yet in their appeal to Keefer, the Committee emphasized the lack of confidence the contractor's performance had created. The public, wrote the Committee,

have lost all confidence in the ability of the present Contractors to complete the work and they are fearful the whole project will fall through or otherwise be thrown upon the Municipalities to carry out upon their own strength.²²

After a meeting with Messrs. Sherwood, Watson and Shaw, however, the Committee regained confidence in the contractors. In January 1856, they recommended that a further \$500 be taken in stock to cover the outstanding interest and that grading be reduced for a single line.

The railway continued to be built. In 1857, the contractors appealed to the County for further aid.²³ By November 1858, there were still eight to nine miles of track to lay between Smiths Falls and Brockville and six to seven miles on the Perth line. By December, however, construction was halted when the debentures of the company, which were intended to pay its accounts, were seized on behalf of the Bank of Upper Canada.²⁴ In early 1859, the inaugural train passed along the line. Travelling from Brockville to Smiths Falls at 15 m.p.h., the train made the trip in two and a half hours. Unfortunately, it took seven and three quarter hours to cover the twelve miles to Perth, because of a broken coupling, and a lack of water.²⁵

After the railway reached Smiths Falls, it continued to slowly build along the routes its charter allowed. By 1864, it had reached the Ottawa River by an extension from Almonte to Arnprior and Sand Point. Expansion was seen as the only way to recoup earlier losses. With an increase in traffic, the Counties hoped to repay their debts with the Municipal Loan Fund. For this reason, the Counties' Council agreed to let the Brockville and Ottawa turn over (to the Canada Central Railway) its exclusive right to build from Arnprior to Pembroke. Cooperating with each other, the railway from Carleton Place to Ottawa was built. In the 1870's, the railway was extended north

through Renfrew County. On approaching North Bay, it was united with the Canadian Pacific Railway in a transcontinental network in 1881.²⁶

The expectations of rapid development following the establishment of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway were lessened by the financial problems of the venture. While the costs of the road were met by the county as a whole, Smiths Falls developers had hoped that a greater portion of these indirect benefits would be allotted to their town. Already possessing a sizeable industrial base, the addition of the railway station was seen as the keystone for more trade and industry. The absence of any reliable body of statistics makes it difficult to assess the influence of the railway on the developments from 1859 to 1885, but other sources indicate that the predictions made before the Brockville and Ottawa opened were not fulfilled.

In 1854, Captain Chambers sold his farm to Mr. Snow and Mr. Dwight who planned to develop areas around the railway station. If it was true, as the Carleton Place Herald reported, that over one thousand lots had been applied for, then several residents must have been stuck with land which would go undeveloped for thirty years.²⁷ The three maps of Smiths Falls made between 1859 and 1886 indicated that urban development remained focused upon the canal. The 1863 H.F. Walling Map of Lanark and Renfrew Counties marked the major streets, factories and houses in Smiths Falls.²⁸ It showed that the town was still largely concentrated north of the river in the area bounded by George, Mary and Elmsley streets. With the exception of a few private houses, the only establishment close to the railway station was B. William's hotel directly north of the station. Industry continued to be centred upon the canal.

The second map for this period was the 1874 "Birds Eye View of Smiths Falls".²⁹ This map indicated a slight development along Montague Street north of the tracks with the growth of a residential district east of Elmsley Street and south of William Street. Except for the slight extension of the town north of the tracks, the Brockville and Ottawa line was the town boundary. In fact, the next major land development occurred south of the Rideau River. In 1875, the Ward family sub-divided their land bordered by Lombard, Brockville and Abbott Street.³⁰ Several of the 250 lots were retained by John B. Ward or sold to Adam Foster, J.H. Gould, G.F. Cairns or

D.A. Fergusson. By the mid-1870's at least, local land development still reflected the importance of the canal and its related industries.

It was not until J.M.O. Cromwell's map of 1886 that the area around the railway station appeared to be developed.³¹ By then, all the land east of Elmsley Street between Chambers and Cornelia Streets had been laid out into lots. In 1885, the CPR projected their Ontario-Quebec Division from Montreal to Toronto and into Chicago. With the divisional point in Smiths Falls, about 230 men were on the payroll.³² This was the event which gave the impetus needed to expand the northern section of the town.

If there was no great land developments in Smiths Falls immediately after the railway construction, this does not mean that there were no beneficial effects at all. With 230 men employed on the CPR in 1885, the railway was one of the largest industries in town. This was a position it would retain. Unlike canals, railways were in themselves major industries. After its initial construction, the Rideau Canal could not have employed more than a dozen local men. Exact figures for the Brockville and Ottawa are not available, but one would suspect it employed far more men than the canal authorities did.

The key area which the railway was supposed to influence was the industrial and commercial sector of the town. The canal banks remained a prime industrial area. In 1885, a correspondent for the Perth Courier remarked upon this fact.

Near the southwest part of the village on the bank of the Rideau, is a nest of buildings which do not require much ocular evidence to prove the presence of manufactories of some kind or other - the din and clamor heard on approaching it making this a fact sufficiently clear.³³

This thriving industrial sector did, however, change from the early developments of Abel Ward and William Simpson. An analysis of the 1871 Industrial Census indicates the nature of this "nest of buildings". Table No. 2 is composed of the top twelve industries in 1871 which had annual product levels over \$ 4,000. The figures are somewhat distorted by the fact that Ward's saw mill was closed for most of the year undergoing repairs.

Table 2. Smiths Falls Industries, 1871

Description of Industry	Total Capital		Yearly Wages		Value of Raw Material		Value of Product	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Frost & Wood, agric. implts.	78,000	36	26,000	35.2	55,000	25.1	115,000	27.9
J. & J.H. Gould, Grist Mill	11,200	5.2	700	0.9	100,000	45.6	108,000	26.2
Cossitt & Bro., agric. implts.	80,000	36.9	25,000	33.8	27,700	12.6	107,000	25.9
Percy & Son, merchant tailor	2,500	1.2	3,643	4.9	10,000	4.6	17,060	4.1
W. Williamson, stove & rake mfr.	13,000	6.0	6,000	8.1	7,500	3.4	16,000	3.9
J. & J.H. Gould, saw mill	9,000	4.2	1,800	2.4	3,500	1.6	12,000	2.9
Morgan & Washburn, merchant tailor	1,050	0.5	1,812	2.5	5,000	2.3	8,500	2.1
Williamson & Graham, match mfr.	3,500	1.6	1,400	1.9	3,300	1.5	8,000	1.9
Harris & Richey, shingles	6,000	2.8	2,000	2.7	2,000	0.9	6,000	1.5
J. Niblock, shoes	3,500	1.6	1,500	2.0	3,000	1.4	6,000	1.5
R. Lock sash, blind mfr.	5,500	2.5	2,000	2.7	1,000	0.5	4,500	1.1
M. Currie, shingles	3,400	1.6	2,100	2.8	1,500	0.7	4,000	1.0
Total	216,650	100	73,955	100	219,500	100	412,393	100

Source: Industrial Census of Canada, 1871.

The most striking information in this analysis is the dominance of the two agricultural implement factories, Frost and Wood, and Cossitt Brothers, upon the local economy. These two factories accounted for almost 54 per cent of the total value of products and over 37 per cent of the total value of raw materials. More significantly, they paid 69 per cent of the total wages made in Smiths Falls.

The grist mills still played an important role in the local economy, especially J. & J.H. Gould's grist mill. That one mill alone processed \$ 100,000 of grain during 1871. The Ward grist mill, which does not appear in the table, produced 17,000 barrels worth \$ 2040 during that year, only a small fraction of the Gould mill output. The grist mill must have generated a lot of local commerce from this trade with the surrounding rural areas.

There were a number of small industries relating to wood products, namely William Williamson's stave, rake, and heading factory; J. and J.H. Gould's saw mill; Williamson and Graham's match factory; Harris and Richey's shingle mill; Richard Lock's sash and blind factory and Martin Currie's shingle factory. Together they accounted for slightly more than 12 per cent of the value of products and over 20 per cent of the local annual wages. Unlike the grist mills, which employed very little labour, these wood related industries accounted for one fifth of the local wages.

The nature of capital investment also indicated the difference between the agricultural implement factories and the other industries. These two plants alone accounted for almost 73 per cent of investment into buildings, machinery, and operating capital. The next highest capital investment in one factory was Williamson's stave factory. At \$ 13,000 investment, however, it was only one sixth the total for either of the agricultural implement factories. These factories were much more highly mechanized than either the grist or wood processing carriers. They were distinguished not only in size, but in style of industry. Like the railway, Frost and Wood and Cossitt Brothers were beginning to dominate the town.

The table also suggests certain influences of the railway development. Two of the major industries, Morgan and Washburn, and Percy and Son, were merchant tailors. For the size of their total product value, the original

capital investment was quite low at \$ 1050 and \$ 2500, respectively. As employers of women, their wage costs were low as well. The major investment for both these companies was raw material. Since the major investment was in raw material and its transportation in and out of Smiths Falls, the existence of a railway connection might have led to the expansion of these businesses.

The role of transportation costs must also have played a major part in the success of J. & J.H. Gould's grist mill. The processing of \$ 100,000 of grain must have represented the product of a large rural hinterland. Most of this product must have been shipped to areas outside the immediate vicinity of Smiths Falls. By this time, Frost and Wood were serving a national market, and from production figures Cossitt Brothers were probably doing the same. Frost and Wood, in later years, had a railway line extended into their plant. Though it is uncertain whether such a line existed in 1871, they could only reach the national market by rail.

The 1871 Census also revealed another change in the local industrial situation. More factories were using steam than water power. Only the Gould interests, and their tenant, Cossitt Brothers, continued to employ water power. All the other major factories - Frost and Wood, Williamson's stave factory, Williamson and Graham, Harris and Richey, Richard Lock's factory and M. Currie's shingle factory used steam. The Rideau River was still important especially for the lumber factories, but this introduction of steam power was another indication of the changing nature of the industrial development.

Several things had changed in the local situation by 1871, and one of the more constructive ones was the final settlement of the Ward and Simpson claim against the canal authorities. William Simpson had died in November 1861, leaving his estate to his sister's children, Jason, Henry and Anna Gould.³⁵ Abel Ward, however, was still in fine form and determined to protect his interests. In September 1862, he wrote William Coffin, Ordnance Land Agent,

Yours of the 7th is before me with respect to Rents. I cannot understand why I am called upon in this way.

I came here 35 years ago, bought and paid for my property, and am not aware of ever becoming a tenant of your department,

as I never availed myself of any improvements that you may have made. When your department came here, I had mills in operation, and still have, although, I must say I have had frequent obstructions thrown in my way by your department, causing great damage to my business and property.

I am, and have been, for the last 26 years, ready and willing, to have a perfect understanding about these matters.³⁶

Ward had known for several years what he was about, and finally the Ordnance Land Branch was finding out as well.

William Coffin was the man who eventually sorted out all the legal twists and turns of Ward's claim. When he delivered his report in June 1860, Coffin realized the canal authorities had no choice but to give in to Ward.

Evidence has disappeared, facts have become confused, even the physical confirmation of localities has been metamorphosed by time. I believe that to proceed to an arbitration would be protracted, expensive, uncertain and unsatisfactory...

The injury of thirty three years disputation should not be aggravated by the injuries of one hours avoidable delay. We should offer them compensation, at once, the only question is what should that compensation be.³⁷

Coffin's advice seemed to be the thing which set the final process of agreement into motion. Once the canal authorities realized that the only possible choice was to settle, it was only a matter of working out the details.

This process, however, would take seven years. A plan of settlement was drawn up on the 12th of December 1867 by J.M.O. Cromwell. The heirs of Simpson and Abel Ward were granted almost all of the land they had occupied for the last thirty years. Abel Ward would receive all of Jason Island east of the waste weir channel except for the street allowances and a strip of land running parallel to the combined locks. In addition, Ward received a section of land south of Water Street near the Government dam, a strip of land north of Lombardy Street beside the reserve at the detached lock. The Gould family were allowed title to all of Jason Island west of the waste weir channel, except for the street allowance. The Goulds also received a piece of land south of Water Street near the Government dam, the lot of

land north of the water power site at the detached lock, part of the island at the detached lock, a strip of land running parallel to the embarkment south of the detached lock near Lombardy Street and a plot of land just east of the combined lock house at the foot of the locks. The Gould family was also given title to Turtle and Duck Islands in the Basin³⁸ (see Figure 6).

Such a settlement, of course, pleased both the Goulds and Ward. In May 1868, Alexander Morris, who did much of the negotiating in this matter, delivered a letter to Mr. Langevin, Secretary of State, from Abel Ward and J.H. Gould. They expressed their eagerness for a final settlement.

The delay is causing us serious inconvenience and we trust that the patents may be at once passed to us of the land and water powers at Smiths Falls agreed to be relinquished. We would state that we agree to abandon all claim for the lands expropriated for the Canal on conviction of the law and water powers not required for Canal purposes being restored to us.³⁹

In November of that year, the Goulds and Ward divided up the water power rights between them. Each would have an equal half of the water rights, instead of the two-thirds to one-third share Simpson and Ward originally enjoyed. Certain lots were exchanged. Ward gave the Goulds control over the water rights to Cossitt's factory in exchange for the water rights to the water passing on the south side of the combined locks known as Matheson's Creek. By February 1869, the agreement was complete.⁴⁰ The troubles which had begun on the 3rd of January 1831, when James Simpson abandoned his contract, were finally settled after thirty-eight years of deceit, evasion and threats.

Previously, this report dealt with the reasons for this dispute's long delay, but its conclusion also revealed the nature of the local situation. While the canal remained under the control of the British Ordnance, military considerations prevailed. A quick settlement would have certainly saved the Ordnance a lot of trouble. Their fear, which had some justification, was that Ward and Simpson would use local water power in such a manner as to damage the transportation requirements of the canal. If Jason Gould would build a dam and raceway upon land for which he did not have clear

title, then what co-operation could the authorities expect once the title was given? The admission by the canal officials that they had made a mistake would seriously weaken any future arguments that local mills were interfering with canal operation. Gould and others could stand upon the sacred right of property and run their mills as they pleased. Only a costly and lengthy court battle could settle any dispute and such methods were inappropriate for cases of urgency. The transfer of the Rideau Canal to the Provincial Government reordered priorities. As William Coffin explained to the Assistant Commissioner,

The Military authorities looking at the subject exclusively in a Military point of view could not consistently with their duties and the responsibilities entertain the proposition presented by Messrs. Ward and Simpson in 1840.

But time has greatly modified the Military considerations. The Rideau Canal is now the property of the Province and maintained at its expense. The utilization of the water power at Smiths Falls and elsewhere will increase the commerce and traffic of the Canal and create public benefit which will compensate expense.⁴¹

Subject to political pressures, the provincial government and later the federal government were more receptive to questions of economic stability. With men such as Alexander Morris and James Shaw acting on their behalf, Ward and the Goulds probably had some political influence.

More fundamentally, the entire climate of local development has changed. It would be hard to imagine J.H. Gould building a dam under armed guard in the 1860's as his father had done thirty years before. Ward himself was now a prosperous man, respected by the community, and with a social position to live up to. His sons controlled his saw and grist mills, and no doubt he wanted to secure the title to his life's achievements. In 1862, Ward wrote to the Hon. James Morris, Receiver General, "I am now getting old and am very anxious to have all my worldly affairs arranged as soon as possible".⁴² Jason Gould and J.H. Gould were the largest grist millers in Smiths Falls. Such an investment would never be entirely secure with an uncertain land title unresolved. The 1860's were a time for consolidation

for the local industrialists, and, ironically, they would secure the title to land which was already declining in importance.

During the years between 1859 and 1886, there were a number of significant developments concerning the Rideau Canal which gave that period a distinctive quality from the years preceding it and those which followed. These changes centre around the building of the local railway network and the economic forces which depended upon it. As detailed above, this period continued to be influenced by the canal to a significant degree but the canal was no longer the critical force in developments.

This continued influence was maintained in part by the individuals involved. The Gould and the Ward families retained their pre-eminence in Smiths Falls. By their control of land development, these families continued to plan urban growth as if the canal would continue its local role. By 1885, however, the CPR underscored that the canal was no longer the single focus of growth. The emergence of the Frost family, in connection with Frost and Wood and the Smiths Falls Malleable factories, reflected the shift within the type of local industrial development. Paralleling the growth of the railways, the emergence of the local agricultural implement factories signalled the decline of milling and the rise of manufacturers' interests. This shift from canal to railway, or from milling to manufacturing, was a gradual one and throughout this era, such developments probably were complementary rather than conflicting forces.

Considering such developments within a larger framework, the emphasis of the canal's administration also differed from the earlier period. The transfer of the responsibility for the canal from the Imperial Government to the Provincial, and later Federal governments, made it more accommodating to local interests. Once the canal's development became a political issue instead of a military concern, local industrialists were able to avoid the confrontations which marked the initial period of development. But this increased awareness of local interests could not counteract the basic limitations of the development. By the 1860's, the Rideau Canal in Smiths Falls had been almost fully industrialized. That industrialization probably softened the commercial decline of the canal but it could not compensate entirely for the loss in trade.

Unlike the immediate post-construction period of the canal, these years following the establishment of the Brockville and Ottawa railway were not accompanied by a dramatic increase in local economic activity. Although this report is unable to examine the detailed impact of the railway on the local economy, it may be suggested that the railways absorbed some of the loss of canal trade as well as most of the increase in local manufactured exports. The canal continued to be useful in the transportation of bulk shipments such as coal, but such activity was an ancillary development of the railway. In determining such trade patterns, however, one would have to consider the changes in regional and national trade. The arrival of the CPR in Smiths Falls pointed out the fact that the continued growth of the town would depend increasingly upon its usefulness in a national economic system. While grist and saw mills might rely upon local supplies and markets, the more industrial concerns, such as Frost and Wood, were tied into national markets. Through tax bonuses and other means, the municipal government could make Frost and Wood competitive with other agricultural implement factories, but the ultimate success would be determined by the company's product lines and ability to finance expansion.

It should also be noted that after 1885, the history of the economic impact of the Rideau Canal on the town, and the economic history of the town itself are two very different things. Until 1885, the canal does play a significant role in local development, but after that date it was the CPR which determined local success or failure. In the following sections, it should be realized that canal related industries, with the exception of Frost and Wood, account for an increasingly diminishing portion of the town's economic interests.

The Railway Era, 1859-1885

- 1 Rideau Gleaner (Smiths Falls), 10 March 1859, p. 2.
- 2 Canada. Parliament. House of Commons Debates, 12 March 1877, p. 623-28.
- 3 Rideau Gleaner (Smiths Falls), 16 March 1859, p. 2.
- 4 Ibid., 10 November 1858, p. 2.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1737, Schedule 10, p. 17-18, 15 June 1860.
- 7 Canada. Parliament. Sessional Paper No. 54, 1871, Canal Commission, Appendix "A"-5, p. 103.
- 8 Ibid., p. 101-105.
- 9 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1887, p. 417. Coffin to Assistant Commissioner, 30 June 1860.
- 10 PAC, RG 43, B4(a), vol. 151, Letterbook No. 3, p. 41, Slater to Richey, 12 December 1867.
- 11 Canada. Legislative Assembly. Appendix No. 4, 1861, Appendix E, "Report of the Superintendent of the Rideau Canal for 1860", n.p.
- 12 Canada. IAND, File 751-12-1-E-30, Bates to Coffin, 27 October 1863.
- 13 PAC, RG 11, Series III, vol. 37, Whittier to Trudeau, 29 September 1869.
- 14 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1694, p. 341-42, Coffin to Commissioner of Crown Lands, 4 February 1867.
- 15 Ibid., p. 342-43.
- 16 Canada. Parliament. House of Commons Debates, 1 July 1885, p. 3312-13.
- 17 Lanark and Renfrew County. Minutes of Proceedings between the Counties of Lanark and Renfrew and the Brockville and Ottawa Railway (Perth: W.R.F. Berford, 1856), p. 3-4.
- 18 Ibid., p. 5-11.
- 19 Ibid., p. 32-37, 43.
- 20 Ibid., p. 8.
- 21 Ibid., p. 17.
- 22 Ibid., p. 19.
- 23 PAC, MG 9, D8-64, H.M. Brown Collection, vol. 3, p. 58-9.

- 24 Rideau Gleaner (Smiths Falls), 10 November 1858; 8 December 1858.
- 25 H.M. Brown Collection, op.cit.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Carleton Place Herald, 23 May 1854, p. 3.
- 28 PAC, NMC, V1/440 - Smiths Falls - 1863, H.F. Walling Map of Lanark and Renfrew Counties.
- 29 Ibid., M 4412, Bird's Eye View of Smith's Falls, Province Ontario, Canada, 1874 (1973, Smiths Falls Historical Society).
- 30 Ibid., V1/440, Section of the Plan of Smiths Falls, J.M.L. Cromwell, 1875.
- 31 Ibid., - H 1/440, Smiths Falls, 1886, Plan of the Town of Smiths Falls, J.M.O. Cromwell.
- 32 H.M. Stiles, Who's Who In Smiths Falls 1924, (Smiths Falls: Record News 1978), p. 11.
- 33 Perth Courier, 30 October 1868, p. 2.
- 34 PAC, RG 31, Census of Canada, Manuscript of Industrial Activities of Smiths Falls, 1871.
- 35 Ontario, Public Archives, RG 22, Surrogate Court Records, Lanark County, G 51, No. 424.
- 36 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 2, Ward to Coffin, 26 September 1860.
- 37 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1687, p. 415-16, Coffin to Ass't. Commissioner, 30 June 1860.
- 38 PAC, NMC, RG 84 M - 1867, No. 121 A, Plan Intended to Exhibit the Government Ordnance Lands at Smiths Falls Station, J.M.O. Cromwell, 12 December 1867.
- 39 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 2A, Gould and Ward to Langevin, 14 May 1868.
- 40 Ibid., Agreement between J.H. Gould, J. Gould and Anna Gould and A.R. Ward 2 November 1868; Ward and Gould to Langevin, 27 February 1869.
- 41 PAC, RG 15, vol. 1687, Coffin to Assistant Commissioner, 30 June 1860.
- 42 IAND, File 751-12-1-4-1, vol. 2, Ward to Morris, 6 December 1862.

Economic Development, 1859-85

Introduction

The following chapter details the industrial activities along the canal at Smiths Falls and Old Slys locks. The businesses located at Old Slys are discussed first, and are followed by those at the combined locks. The order of these industries follows that established in the earlier chapter on economic development. The factories located on Abel Ward's land are examined first, followed by those on the land originally belonging to William Simpson. The remaining industries are grouped according to type, such as foundries, lumbering industries and tanneries.

The locations for these industries are given in the maps accompanying this report (see Figures 6, 7 and 8).

Old Slys

Matheson's Store

Roderick Matheson's store and warehouse were located on the north shore of the Rideau River immediately west of Old Slys lock station.

The Hon. Roderick Matheson was born in December 1793 in the parish of Loch Arren, Roreshire, Scotland and brought to Canada at the age of twelve by his brother. After fighting in the War of 1812, Matheson settled in Perth where he resided until his death in 1873. Matheson served as a life member of the Legislative Council from 1847 and was appointed a senator in 1867.¹

Little is known of Matheson's activities at Old Slys. In October 1846, the lockmaster reported that Matheson had recently built "a large Stone Building in the rear of the lockstation".² The function of this building was not stated, but by 1851, Matheson had built a store and wharf west of Ordnance reserve boundary line. Maps of this area continued to show the wharf and store until 1873. Since this date corresponded to Matheson's death, perhaps the store was abandoned after then.

Matheson was much more than storekeeper and seemed to be involved in the land development as well. In March 1855, a traveller remarked upon the extent of Matheson's effort:

Following the course of the Rideau Canal, a short distance from Smiths Falls, the buildings became rather scarce, but here too improvements meet the eye. The owner and leasee of property in this locality appears actively engaged in shadowing out a location for a village, which, in time may equal the older neighbour of which we have just spoken. The embryo village has, however, already earned a local habitation and name. "Mathesonville" sounds rather musically, but the water power in the vicinity has a more practical and profitable music, capable of bringing from its rippling roar what will yet add to the increase and progress

of Canada.³

This water power was leased by Joshua Bates in 1851. The extent of "Mathesonville" was not stated, but the 1886 Cromwell Map of Smiths Falls showed a developed area bounded by Lorne Street, the Brockville and Ottawa Railway line and the river.⁴ It was probable that this area was built up through Matheson's efforts.

Bates Mills

Joshua Bates, the man who built all of the original mills at Old Slys rapids, was born in 1801 to George and Patience Bates on a 715 acre farm on the rear of Yonge Township. His father had bought the farm after emigrating from Niscanny, New York, in 1791. There were fourteen children in all, eleven of whom survived to maturity.⁵ Nothing is known of Bate's early life but around 1839, he moved to Lot 10, Concession 10, Yonge Township and began clearing a farm. The lot was mostly a tamarack and cedar swamp about two miles from the town of Farmersville. After seven years of work, Bates had managed to clear about eight acres of land with a log house and barn. In 1847, Bates purchased the land from the government.⁶

Bates, however, was more than just a farmer and his early years were closely associated with the settlement of Farmersville. In her "Historical Sketch of Leeds and Grenville", Ruth McKenzie noted,

Joshua Bates built the first store in the village and the first grist mill. Later he built a saw mill and carding mill. Bates became the first postmaster of Farmersville in 1836. The post office was located in his store.⁷

Bates also "sank a large fortune" into the Brockville and Ottawa Railway,⁸ and it was perhaps this which attracted him to Old Slys which was directly on the route of the railways.

On 15 November 1850, Bates wrote from Brockville asking a lease on the land and mill site of Old Slys. He wanted a lease of twenty-one years or longer and offered to pay £ 30 annually.⁹ The Ordnance Department was favourable to the request if Bates provided them with more details. In April 1851, Bates specified his plans for the site.

I do not expect to erect all of the buildings at one time, but should I be fortunate in business, all the buildings marked (on the attached plan) would be required for the accomodation of myself and the public...The foundations of all buildings will be of stone and the upper part of wood. This is the principle I now intend building upon, the saw mill is intended to be 50 ft. by 60 with an addition of 24 ft. for the purposes of making room for two shingle machines to be put in operation therein. The saw mill is intended for two gang of saws, one shingle saw and a circular saw. The grist-mill to be 40 by 60 and intended for 4 run of stone. The size of the other buildings will depend upon circumstances.¹⁰

Bates' plans for the site were elaborate. On the island Bates proposed a grist mill, and a carding and fulling mill of the same size, plus a tool shop and shed. On the riverbank opposite the carding and fulling mill, the saw mill was to be built, and behind the saw mill a tannery about 25 ft. by 30 ft. In addition, a workshop, blacksmith shop and six dwellings, three with sheds, were planned.¹¹ Such plans, however, were too ambitious for the Ordnance Department and it informed Bates that permission would only be given to those buildings with immediate reference to the mill privilege. The tannery was forbidden outright, and only those houses necessary for himself and workmen were allowed. Additional structures were permitted only after new requests.¹²

While the Ordnance Department drew up the lease, Bates began developing the site. In October 1852, he received permission to erect a temporary bridge across the lock at the close of navigation which he promised to remove in the spring. As Bates explained, "it would be of great accommodation to me through the winter more particularly in the spring and fall - before the ice is strong, and after it begins to fail".¹³ The bridge was apparently part of Bates' construction work for he complained that his occupation of the site had been delayed.

I see by your letter that the rent recommended before I had possession of the place, it was in the month of July when I got possession, which was a damage to me - as it kept back the

heavy part of the work until late in the fall. Could I have had possession on the first of May, it would have made at least £ 100 difference in my past operations and could have been grinding all last winter with one run of stone.¹⁴

This suggested that Bates did not start his operations until the spring or summer of 1852. Bates' lease was still being processed at the time.

In November 1852, Bates requested that he be allowed to lease "a small piece of land for meadows and pasture" which was the 34 acres remaining in Lot 30, Concession E, Welford Township that contained the mill site.¹⁵ The Ordnance Department was willing to grant Bates' lease provided he take the Ordnance property in Concession D and Dan's Island as well for a total of 42 acres. Bates paid £ 10 for this annually.¹⁶

In July 1853, Bates again requested he be allowed to make improvements to the property. To keep up with his expanding business, the miller requested a wharf 120 ft. by 66 ft., a bridge over the canal locks and a shed and warehouse. Bates outlined his plans.

The lower part of the warehouse to be built of stone on three sides of support, height to answer the purpose of a shed for driving horses and carriages under, by persons coming to the Mill. The opening fronting the mill, the foundation is solid rock, the wall (west?) the Embankment will not be less than three feet thick at the foundation and the space between the wall and Embankment to be filled in with stone which will have the effect of strengthening the Embankment and Dam materially. The Entrance in the warehouse will be from the top of the Embankment which is nearly on a level with the height required for the lower floor of the warehouse, by this means the Building answers a double purpose, a shed below and a warehouse above on the opposite side of the Embankment. I propose to build a Wharf the front of Timber filled with stone and made solid to the Embankment which would also strengthen the Dam and Embankment. The bridge to be built on the Railroad principle of the best material and furnished upon good style, the sides of the (lock?) at each end of the Bridge to be planked, the top of

the Dam to be gravelled if required, the bridge to be attended at my own expense.¹⁷

Bates said that he did not have any plans to ship his product, but from the general increase in business he needed the shed and warehouse. It was also difficult for him to reach the mill from the north side, "except in a scow which is quite inconvenient, besides very expensive and to me dangerous when the wind blows from the west strong. It is almost impossible to cross".¹⁸

The success Bates enjoyed at his new grist mill added to his problems. Apparently, he was cutting into the market of the Smiths Falls millers. When Bates cleared the mill site, he had made arrangements to have a road built on the south side of the canal to the Falls. His plans, however, were never carried out. As Bates explained,

I had the promise of it [the road] from the party owning the land but since the mill was built they see that it cuts off a little of their business, and have refused to allow the road opened unless they receive heavy damages from the Municipal Corporation, and these parties having some influence in the Council refuse as yet to open the road unless I pay the damage the parties demand.¹⁹

Bates was able to get around this obstruction by building his bridge. This example showed that the Smiths Falls millers knew the potential of Bates' mills and were prepared to see that Bates never seriously challenged their dominance of the local market.

The Ordnance Department refused the request for a bridge but in October 1854 new developments occurred which caused him to renew his application. The Brockville and Ottawa Railway had built their crossing at Old Slys and agreed to put up a "lumber station". Such developments meant the bridge was more important than ever. For Bates, improved transportation would permit new development:

Had I a bridge across the canal, I would soon start some other manufacturers which would be the means of developing the resources of the country and bring the water power into general use.²⁰

This time, the Department granted Bates' request and in August 1855 the lease was issued. For the bridges Bates was to pay £ 1 per annum with an additional £ 3 for the storehouse, wharf and roadway.²¹

By 1855, Bates had developed the site into a prosperous milling centre. In March of that year, one visitor described the Old Slys mills,

here he has erected one of the best finished flouring mills in the Province. It has been erected at a cost of some three or four thousand pounds. It is not the largest we have seen, but is decidedly the handsomest and best fitted up. It is supplied with four run of stones and two mills, worked by separate iron wheels, and the machinery and gearing work as smoothly as clock work. The mill is worthy of the progressive character of its public-spirited owner. Mr. Bates has also erected a carding and clothing mill alongside his flouring mill.²²

This passage described the mills at the height of their prosperity, for soon after this outside forces would begin to turn against Joshua Bates.

During the late 1850's, Bates' business appeared to suffer losses. His troubles were complicated no doubt by the poor financial state of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway into which Bates had invested heavily. By 1860, the Ordnance Department was pressing Bates to pay his rent which was \$ 100 in arrears.²³ In order to cut his losses, Bates asked that the 45 acres he leased in November 1852 be taken off his hands. He would retain only the land around the mill site. This land, 10 acres of Lot 30, Concession D, and 35 acres of Lot 30, Concession E, Welford, the Department decided to sell. William Coffin proposed "to divide this lot off in Villa Lots, being picturesquely situated on the Rideau, near the _____ village of Smiths Falls. I feel assured that at public auction they would realize fifty (50) per acre = \$ 2,200".²⁴ Though the Department was willing to take advantage of the improvements Bates had made, they still required he pay the back rent before he was allowed out of the lease.

By 1863, things were worse. In that year, Bates mills were described as a grist mill with 4 runs of stone, and one woollen mill for which he paid \$ 120 a year.²⁵ Though Bates still owned both his mills, he did not run them himself. As early as May 1860, J.H. Dayton had taken over the carding

mill.²⁶ His losses continued to increase. By December 1863, Bates owed \$ 450 in back rent with his 1863 rent of \$ 150 still unpaid. In defence Bates complained of the problems of water power and the interference caused by the Smiths Falls mills upstream. The Department did not listen to such explanation and William Coffin recommended:

The questions are questions of fact and law, which can in no way be advanced by discussion between the parties. It may give Mr. Bates delay to the withholding of the money. I have had many such discussions with this gentleman, who is an adept at legal difficulties.

It appears to me, that the only and true way (to settle?) the one at present raised is to bring the case before a Court of Law.²⁷

The advice was never followed, because Bates was soon beyond legal jurisdiction.

On 1 January 1864, Joshua Bates died. In the Brockville Recorder his obituary noted that,

Mr. Bates was known as one of the most active and prosperous men in this section of the country and was ever ready to lend a helping hand to others, but for the past few years difficulties had to be encountered which cramped his energies. Had he lived a few years longer, however, we have no doubt his active mind and business tact would have relieved him of this burdens pressing him down.²⁸

Bates' property was seized for debt,²⁹ and the Department would have to collect their rent from Bates' successors.

T.R. Ward's Mills

After the death of Joshua Bates, the mills at Old Slys were taken over by Trueman Russell Ward, a son of Abel Ward. At the beginning of his financial difficulties, Bates had mortgaged his property to the Hon. George Crawford on 30 October 1858.³⁰ Trueman Ward then purchased this mortgage from Crawford and came into possession of the land.

As early as February 1867, Ward was living at the site, and a business directory for that year described him as the proprietor of "flour and carding mills Rideau Canal".³¹ These were certainly the mills at Old Slys. For the next few years, Ward ran the two mills on his own, but by 1869, he leased the carding mill to Robert Walker of Walker & Co., woollen factors. Walker's partner in the business was Russell Ward,³² an older brother of Trueman. The last recorded year for which Walker & Co. were at Old Slys was 1875. By 1882, Trueman Ward was again using both mills, and apparently continued to do so until his death on 25 July 1884 at the age of 54.³³

If Ward made any improvements to the mills while he was there, these have gone unrecorded. The takeover of the Old Slys mills was an interesting development in the Ward family. Bates himself had complained that certain millers in town had opposed improvements to the Old Slys area because they feared the competition. Trueman's actions were probably based on the knowledge of the potential threat of Bates mills to his family's interests in town. In 1881, when John B. Ward, as part of Foster and Ward, took over the Gould's grist mill, the two brothers had control over two of the three local grist mills. The third was owned by Alexander Wood. Trueman Ward's actions at Old Slys appeared to be an attempt to monopolize the local milling industry.

Smiths Falls Combined

Ward's Mill

The grist, carding and saw mills of Abel R. Ward continued to operate under the control of the Ward family until 1880. From 1859 until about 1864, these mills were run by Abel Ward, but in that year the saw mill located east of the Beckwith Street bridge, was taken over by Ward and Kavanagh.³⁴ Mr. Kavanagh's operation of the saw mill was short-lived for by 1866, Abel Ward operated this mill by himself once again. By 1868, Abel Ward turned over

the actual operation of these mills to his sons William M. and John B. Ward who operated under the firm of W.M. Ward and Brother.³⁵ In 1873, William M. Ward ceased to control these mills. In that year, John B. Ward formed a partnership with George A. Ward for the purpose of milling and farming.³⁶ An advertisement in 1876 listed these two as the operators of the grist, flour, oatmeal and carding mills. The saw and shingle mill was apparently operated by George A. Ward alone. The residence of both John B. and George A. was listed as Brockville which suggests the family was expanding its economic interests.³⁷ The Ward mills continued to be in their control until Abel Ward sold the property and mills on Jason Island to Alexander Wood in 1880.

At the extreme north end of Jason Island were the grist and oatmeal mills. In 1868, it was reported that these mills were operated by the Ward Brothers and comprised "a grist mill and oatmeal mill - with three run of stone in each".³⁸ The 1871 Census only gave production figures for the grist mill. With fixed capital of \$2200 and \$400 operating capital, W.M. Ward and Brother employed two men for twelve months of the year. The mill was powered by water estimated to be the equivalent of fifty horse-power. The annual production, however, was surprisingly low with \$2040 total for the year with only \$1000 worth of wheat and coarse grain being bought.³⁹ Probably this figure represented only the custom work, and not the total production. For example, the census recorded that the Gould grist mill did \$8333 custom work and \$100,000 other work. If the Ward mill did a similar percentage of custom and other grinding, then their yearly total would be far greater.

In 1871, the Ward brothers also operated the saw mill at the Beckwith Street bridge. It was much smaller than the grist mill with only \$725 fixed capital and \$100 operating capital. During that year, the saw mill was closed for ten months while unspecified repairs were made. Even with only two operating months, the mill used 4000 saw logs to make \$1300 of hemlock timber. The mill, like all the Ward mills, was water-powered, with the equivalent force of twenty horse-power.⁴⁰

The Ward shingle mill was housed, at least between 1863 and 1871, in a small building attached to the south end of the carding mill. The build-

ing and machinery were valued at \$ 600, with an additional \$ 100 in operating capital. Employing two men for five months of the year, the mill used 2000 shingle blocks valued at \$ 600 to manufacture 800,000 shingles worth \$ 1360. Water power for the mill was equivalent to ten horse-power.⁴¹

During the period that these mills were in control of the Ward family, there were no detailed descriptions of their appearance. In 1881, one year after the Wards sold their interest, the building dimensions were given. The grist mill was a 66 ft. by 37 ft. building; the oatmeal mill 60 ft. by 40 ft. and the saw mill 40 ft. by 35 ft. The carding mill was a 25 ft. by 75 ft. building, with the 20 ft. by 35 ft. shingle mill built into the south end. To the east of the carding mill was a 40 ft. by 20 ft. mill shed which probably served as a storage facility.⁴²

The water for these mills was taken from the waste weir channel and passed on the east side of the carding and shingle mill. Once the water reached the north end of the shingle mill, it was split into two channels. One continued in a covered flume to the oatmeal mill directly north of the carding mill, and then back into the waste weir channel. The second flume, which was ten feet wide, cut across Jason Island to operate the grist mill and saw mill before emptying into the river near the bridge.⁴³

If the years between 1859 and 1885 saw a slight decline in the influence of Abel Ward and the rise of his sons, it was also a time which celebrated Abel Ward's role in the town. This was particularly evident in the Lanark and Renfrew Illustrated Historical Atlas, originally published in 1881. That publication lavished generous praise upon the life of Abel Ward.

Since the settlement in the wilderness where Smiths Falls now stands, he has witnessed the gradual metamorphosis of that desolate scene into one of the smartest villages of Eastern Ontario, and to this gratifying change no man has contributed by labor or enterprise more than he, nor has any other been more intimately identified with any of the numerous schemes of public improvement or social, moral or municipal advancement.⁴⁴

It would be wrong to dispute Ward's importance to the early development of the town, but when Beldon continued to state that in "all his dealings Mr. Ward has borne the reputation of an honest man and a gentleman",⁴⁵

there must have been a few raised eyebrows in town. After witnessing years of Ward's violent behaviour, it was enough to make lockmaster Alexander Matheson, who died in 1866, turn in his grave. Ward's actions in maintaining control over Jason Island were anything but gentlemanly.

Ward's Tenants

Chalmers' Blacksmith Shop

During the years 1859 to 1885, Chalmers' shop continued to operate. By 1866, Henry D. Chalmers and Samuel M. Barnes formed a partnership. Chalmers and Barnes were described as "waggon makers and blacksmiths, Lock St. Waggon and Carriages made to order, in the best style of the art. Particular attention paid to horse shoeing".⁴⁶ This partnership continued until at least 1871, but by 1882, Barnes had taken over the business. In that year, he was described as a blacksmith, carriage maker and agent of agricultural implements.⁴⁷ The business appeared to be a prosperous one for in 1871 it employed five men, and had an annual production of \$ 3000.⁴⁸

Besides building up his own business, Henry Chalmers also erected a house. In July 1861, lockmaster Matheson reported, "a large House next the Blacksmith's shop, which he has rented to a Waggon maker named Scott, and is now preparing to erect another building".⁴⁹ In the next few months, Chalmers and the canal authorities came to an agreement upon this building.

As a resident upon the Ward land, Chalmers became involved with the land settlement in the late 1860's. Chalmers had been paying rent to the Ordnance for several years and he was suddenly faced with becoming a tenant of Abel Ward. As Chalmers wrote in October 1868,

Being an occupant of Ordnance land and paying rent for the same and has been for over thirty years in possession as a tenant of the Government and now to be told that I am to be left to the mercy of A.R. Ward. I think it is not using one of the public servants just right without a hearing of case by Myself, and I am now applying to you for information wither my improve-

ments is to be taken from me at whatever Mr. Ward has a mind to give.⁵⁰

The Chalmers settlement became the last disagreement between Ward and the Government. Eventually, Chalmers was given a ten year lease with Ward. At the end of ten years, Ward would have to pay Chalmers for the buildings on the land.⁵¹

The Chalmers property consisted of two small wooden buildings and a garden. According to sketches made by local surveyors during the dispute, the blacksmith shop was 40 ft. by 56 ft. and sat on the corner of Lock and Basin Street. The house, which was 28 ft. by 34 ft., sat to the north of this. Attached to the house were two small sheds. Behind the blacksmith shop was a stable and wood shed. All these buildings sat upon a quarter of an acre.⁵²

Around 1879, Chalmers sold the business to his son-in-law Samuel Barnes, and by May 1881, the lease with Ward on the house and shop ended. By that time, Abel Ward had sold his property to Alexander Wood. Barnes and Wood disagreed over the new terms of rent, so Barnes went to the canal authorities and obtained permission to build a shop on the corner of Lock and Basin Street. By July 1881, Barnes had completed the large frame building. When Wood complained to the canal officials about this development, they cancelled Barnes' lease.⁵³

In May 1881, Barnes' original shop and house were valued at \$ 150 and \$ 600 respectively. Although Barnes had bought the business from his father-in-law, Chalmers received full valuation for these structures from Alexander Wood. In November 1886, Barnes paid \$ 200 for the building and promised to move them before June 1887.⁵⁴ This apparently settled the dispute between Barnes and Wood.

James Scott's Waggon Shop

Almost nothing is known about the tenant of Chalmers' building which he erected in 1881. The 1863 H.F. Walling Map of Lanark and Renfrew indicated Scott's shop to be on the location of Chalmer's shop.⁵⁵ It was possible that Chalmers himself later occupied this building. In 1871, James Scott had

moved his business to Main Street. The 1871 Census described his shop as a "Hub Factory" making 3000 waggon and carriage hubs worth \$ 700 annually.⁵⁶ Since Chalmers occupied the site for several years after 1871 and did use two buildings, Scott probably moved during the late 1860's.

The Gould Mills

When William Simpson died on 19 November 1861, he divided his estate between the children of his brother-in-law Jason Gould. At the age of thirty, William Simpson Gould, usually referred to as Sim Gould, received one half of the estate. Anna and James Henry Gould each received three sixteenths of the estate with the remaining two sixteenths going to Jason Gould.⁵⁷ The death of William Simpson made the Gould family responsible for recovering the land from the canal authorities. This was done by the late 1860's.

By that time, the Gould family controlled the buildings which housed Cossitt Brothers' Rideau Foundry, the saw mill built by John Beckwith, plus the grist and carding mills to the north of the saw mill. On the 1st of January 1869, James Henry Gould and Jason Gould formed a partnership to manage the family's concerns.⁵⁸

Even before the partnership had been formed, the Goulds were making improvements to the property. In October 1868, a new grist mill was constructed. The Perth Courier reported on the building,

It is a greyish blue limestone structure, 40 x 50 feet, four storeys high, including the basement; plain, without being homely, and neat without being ornamented; and covered with a felt roof impervious to fire or water.⁵⁹

The mill machinery was installed by Cossitt Brothers. There were four central discharge waterwheels which took advantage of the abundant water power of the waste weir channel. The interior walls of the mill were plastered from top to bottom which the Courier remarked was, "a peculiar though improved feature in the construction of flouring mills".⁶⁰ The mill, when finished, would contain four run of stone, each driven by a separate water-wheel, so the stoppage of one wheel would not effect the entire mill. At

the same time, the saw mill, described as a 60 ft. by 80 ft. building, was undergoing repairs. It contained two circular saws.

Available figures suggest that the new mills were successful. The 1871 census listed the grist mill at \$ 10,000 fixed capital and \$ 1,200 floating capital. Employing two men it ran for twelve months of the year, powered by water power equivalent to 100 horse-power. Annual total of wheat and other grain processed in the mill was 100,000 bushels worth \$ 100,000. 20,000 barrels of custom flour was milled worth \$ 8333; thus the yearly value of the work was \$ 108,333.

Though smaller, the saw mill also did a healthy business. With a fixed capital of \$ 5,000 and a floating capital of \$ 4,000, the mill ran ten months of the year and employed six men. It was also powered by water, with an equivalent force of sixty horse-power. The mill used 24,000 logs worth \$ 3,500 to produce 1,200,000 board feet valued at \$ 12,000.⁶¹

The settlement of the land dispute with the Gould family did not mean the end of all confrontations with the canal authorities. In February 1870, James Henry Gould wrote the authorities about certain changes in the waste weir. He wanted their permission to maintain and use the slide in the waste weir, to define the height of a dam he planned to build on the river at the detached lock, to use the waste water known as Matheson Creek and to be given a guarantee no land would be sold in front of his properties.⁶² If the authorities had granted such requests, they would have given away much of the control of the water levels that they possessed. J.D. Slater, Superintendent of the canal, realized this and wrote to his superior, F. Braun:

The Government will have to be exceedingly careful what leases or privileges are granted at Smiths Falls, there is more meant than meets the eye, in what they ask, the principal cause of low water, and frequent interruption to navigation is caused by the Mills which are being continually enlarged and need more water to run them than can be spared.⁶³

The problem was a crucial one since the increased industrialization of the canal was a government policy backed by local support.

The authorities granted Gould's request for a slide only if the gate

was under the control of the lockmaster. Similarly, Gould was given permission to build a dam at the detached lock provided the gates were in the control of the lockmaster. His request to use Matheson Creek, which flowed from leakage of the Basin, was refused outright. Also, no reserve land would be sold in front of Gould's property. This was an easy concession, since Gould already owned all the land not necessary for the maintenance of the canal. This 1870 agreement between Gould and the canal authorities marked a new style of water control. In the future, the issue of water control would become heated but it would never reach the level of confrontation common in Jason Gould's days. Gould, however, lived throughout most of this period. He dies on 24 October 1882.⁶⁴

Foster and Ward's Mills

On 1 May 1881, Adam Foster and John B. Ward formed a partnership as woollen manufacturers and custom carders at Smiths Falls. Adam Foster was also involved in the commercial traffic on the canal, but these activities will be discussed below. John B. Ward was a son of Abel R. Ward and born in 1840.⁶⁵

Soon after their partnership was formed, Foster and Ward apparently bought a large section of the Gould property of Jason Island. An 1881 map indicated Foster and Ward's property covered all of the island west of the waste weir channel except for the land around the Rideau Foundry.⁶⁶ With this land, they received one half of the water right to the waste weir channel. The map also indicated the series of flumes and dams constructed by the Goulds to operate these mills.

After the water passed the bridge over the waste weir, a wall divided the water between the Goulds and the Wards. The Gould's water supply was increased by a pond created by the dam Jason Gould built in 1836 behind the Government dam. These two streams met in front of the saw mill. On the south end corner formed by these two streams was a 40 ft. by 23 ft. building owned by Foster and Ward, which might have been a planing mill. To the north of the juncture of these two channels was the saw mill built by John Beckwith. The 1881 map showed this as a 50 ft. by 51 ft. building

with a 13 ft. by 45 ft. addition on the north side.

The water continued under the saw mill through a nine and three-quarter foot flume. The water was then used by the grist mill built by the Gould family in 1868. After passing under the 50 ft. by 40 ft. grist mill, the flume narrowed to about one half of its former width and carried the water to Foster and Ward's carding mill. The main part of this building was 33 ft. by 50 ft., with an addition on the east end, 14 ft. by 30 ft. To the east end of this mill was a mill shed 40 ft. by 20 ft. which was probably used for storage. This carding mill was also built by the Gould family.

The exact date of the construction of this carding mill is unknown. The 1867 Cromwell map indicating the lands to be given to the Gould family does not show any building on this site.⁶⁷ The map, however, is unreliable in building locations since it also does not show Cossitt's factory. The earliest recorded date for this carding mill was 1874, when the "Birds Eye View of Smiths Falls" located the Gould carding mill on this site.⁶⁸ In 1879, however, Jason Gould refused to pay the assessment for their carding mill saying T. and W. Davidson should pay the local assessment.⁶⁹ Though they are not listed in any business directory for the period, the Davidsons might have been tenants of the mill.

Metal Industries

G. M. Cossitt and Brother, Agricultural Implements

The years following 1859 were years of expansion for the agricultural implement factory of the Cossitt brothers. In 1861, their company used 200 tons of iron, 200 tons of pig iron and 80 tons of wrought iron worth \$ 6,000. With their workforce of twelve men, the factory was able to turn out 500 stoves, 200 fanning mills, 200 plows, 20 mowers and reapers and 30 straw cutters worth \$ 16,000. Ten years later, the Cossitt brothers employed sixty-five men, used 600 tons of iron and turned out agricultural implements and grist and saw mill machinery worth \$ 107,000.⁷⁰

Cossitt Brothers were known for their Buckeye mowers and reapers, threshing machines, besides all type of mill work such as gang mills, circular mills, grist mill machinery with improved horizontal central discharge water wheels and turbine water wheels. In addition to making mill machinery, the Cossitt Brothers, who changed their company's name to the Rideau Foundry and Agricultural Works in the early 1860's, installed this machinery as well. In 1868, they furnished the new grist mill of J. and J.H. Gould. The saw mills of Messrs. Caldwell in Lanark and Messrs. Gillies and McLaren of Carleton Place were also equipped with Cossitt machinery. The brothers also ran a saw mill of their own in Montague Township about five miles from Smiths Falls. This allowed them to saw all the lumber they needed for their business.⁷¹ At least until 1866, the Cossitts also ran the saw mill built by John T. Beckwith and much of this lumber was sold to the American market.⁷²

There were three main buildings in which the Cossitts conducted their business. The "Rideau Foundry" was the main building built in 1858. It was a substantial stone structure two and a half stories high, 40 ft. by 100 ft. (see Figure 28). The lower floor was used as a machine shop, the upper as a wood working shop. The second building was a two storey wooden structure 40 ft. by 60 ft. which housed a second machine shop and a planing mill. Across the street from these two was a blacksmith shop, 40 ft. square. Off the main building, there was a 40 ft. by 60 ft. wing used as the moulding shop. In town, the Cossitts had a storehouse 40 ft. by 120 ft. which was probably two storeys high.⁷³

Despite their financial success, the Cossitts could not escape the troubles which continued to plague the local industries in relation to land claims. As a tenant of the Goulds who had built their factory with the help of John Beckwith, the Cossitts had strong reason for supporting the local millers' claim. In this instance, however, the Ordnance Department won a temporary victory by getting the Cossitts to recognize their title to the land. When the Provincial government and the local millers decided to settle the dispute in the 1860's, the Cossitts were caught in the middle. As German M. Cossitt wrote in August 1866:

About twenty years ago, John T. Beckwith a nephew of the late

Wm. Simpson with his consent entered into possession of certain water lots in this village of Smiths Falls, then understood to be Ordnance property. About seven years ago, we applied in conjunction with Mr. Beckwith to Mr. Simpson for a lease of the premise in question and was informed that owing to the position of the property he could give no lease to us and told us to take possession. We accordingly did so and erected a Foundry and other Works at the outlay of ten thousand dollars. Mr. Beckwith died before the completion of the building and furnished us part of the funds used in its erection. The Ordnance department forbade us to recognize any but themselves as the owners of this site on which we erected our building etc.

We now learn that the property in question is likely to be released to the Messrs. Gould and we trust that in view of our heavy outlay, the department will protect us.⁷⁴

If the Cossitts were slightly uneasy about their fate at the hands of the new owners, lockmaster Joshua Richey seemed to follow the footsteps of Alexander Matheson. On learning of the impending settlement, Richey wrote that the Cossitts "would think it a great hardship to be turned over to the mercy of Ward & Co. I am sure the Provincial Government would not knowingly commit such an act of injustice!"⁷⁵ The production figures for 1871 showed that Richey's fears were largely imaginary, because their business increased after the land settlement.

For some undiscovered reason, the Cossitt Brothers moved the factory out of Smiths Falls to Brockville. Between 1874 and 1876, the Rideau Foundry was occupied by Seeber, Landon & Co. The company was directed by Orville Seeber and Henry Landon.⁷⁶ Nothing is known of this foundry. The company did not remain in town for long, since by 1882, James Henry Gould had taken over Rideau Foundry and manufactured mill machinery, horse powers and agricultural implements.⁷⁷ Despite these subsequent industries, the loss of the Cossitts must have been a heavy blow to the local economy.

Frost and Wood Agricultural Implements

The years between 1859 and 1885 were a period of rapid expansion for this agricultural implement factory during which it was transformed from a local industry to one of international scale.

With the death of Ebenezer Frost in 1863, most of this expansion was under the supervision of Ebenezer's two sons, Charles B. Frost and Francis T. Frost in partnership with Alexander Wood. Charles was born in Smiths Falls on 26 August 1840 and educated in the local school until at the age of eighteen he entered his father's company as a clerk.⁷⁸ Francis was born on 21 December 1843, and after attending the local schools was sent at the age of thirteen to a select school in Vermont for one year. Three years later, he spent another year at the St. Lawrence Academy, Potsdam, New York. Following his brother's example, Francis entered his father's factory at the age of seventeen where he worked as a clerk.⁷⁹

On 1 January 1867, Charles and Francis entered into a formal partnership with Alexander Wood.⁸⁰ Charles' interest in the firm centered around modernization of the factory itself. As the Record News later described, When his father died, the business of manufacturing farm machinery was still in its infancy and hand work was largely depended upon in the small foundry.

Charles B. Frost was a chief factor in the growth which followed with the years. The periods of costly experiment, of crop failures, of financial panics and through serious losses by fire, he aided in guiding the company until steady progress made it one of Canada's greatest concerns of its kind. From the beginning, he knew every detail; he gave all his time, his energy, his thought. He was proud of it, proud of its name, its growth, and what it had done and was doing for his native town.⁸¹

His brother Francis concentrated mainly upon the financial and promotional aspects of the business. With this type of role, Francis became actively involved in local and national politics. He was a Reeve of Smiths Falls from 1867 to 1883, the first Mayor of Smiths Falls in 1883; Warden of Lanark County from 1879 to 1880, and an unsuccessful candidate for the federal

elections of 1878 and 1882.⁸² When Alexander Wood retired at the end of 1885, the two brothers were in complete control of the company.

With all the expansion during these years, new buildings were required. In October 1868, the firm erected a 34 ft. by 60 ft. store house across the street from their main factory. The two and a half storey building cost one thousand dollars to erect and had a capacity to hold five hundred mowing and reaping machines.⁸³ In August 1873, Frost and Wood received a fixed assessment of \$ 30,000 for ten years for the erection of unspecified buildings which would expand their factory to employ two hundred men.⁸⁴ In March 1880, a new brick moulding shop, 50 ft. by 100 ft. was erected.⁸⁵ This continued expansion was aided in 1883 when the town extended the company's fixed assessment at \$ 35,000. Political influence coincided with financial power because the bylaw was signed by the Mayor, Francis T. Frost.⁸⁶

The range of Frost & Wood's business grew dramatically during this period. In the early 1850's, distribution of the goods was a problem. The Rideau Canal provided transportation to only a few towns, and most of the goods were transported by wagon and team. Wagons or sleighs would be loaded with seasonable goods and a trip made to the St. Lawrence (known as "the front") one week, to Bytown the following week, and then up the Ottawa Valley the next. In this way their goods became known, and no doubt such bargaining "off the wagon" was a fertile training ground for both Charles and Francis Frost.⁸⁷

In 1865, they opened a Montreal agency to handle the increased business due in a large part to improved rail communication. By 1868, the company had a network of agents from Belleville to Quebec City. A few shipments went much further. In May 1864, William McGillivray wrote to the Review,

It is seldom indeed that a more favorable opportunity has presented itself for showing forth the laudable enterprise of one of our village manufacturing concerns than that which met my eye at Smiths Falls Railway Depot a few days since...Commercial enterprise and energy in a good cause are at all times deserving of praise and should not merely be looked at and then for-

gotten.

It is certainly, therefore, well deserving of notice that on Wednesday last at our Depot could be seen one of those splendid mowing machines made up in shipping order "FOR ENGLAND" from the extensive and well-known establishment of the enterprising firm of Messrs. Frost and Wood.

Fancy a mowing machine bearing the manufacturing names of Frost & Wood, Smiths Falls, Canada, arriving at the princely estate of some of the English nobility. I believe, this is the first instance of the kind in these countries on record. Canada manufacturing mowing machines for England!⁸⁸

By 1877, Frost and Wood were exporting machines to Australia and in that year were awarded a medal by the Agricultural Society of New South Wales for their equipment. Shortly after the company shipped eighteen reapers from Boston for that country.⁸⁹ By 1879, they were exporting to South Africa.

The volume of business increased with the range of their market. In 1861, Ebenezer Frost estimated he had \$ 16,000 invested in the firm and gave employment to twenty-seven men. The raw material, 200 tons of iron, was worth \$ 5,200 and with these he produced nineteen threshers worth \$ 4,500; nine saw machines worth \$ 2,000; five shingle machines worth \$ 450; sixty-six cultivators worth \$ 800; five hundred plows worth \$ 4,000; five hundred stoves worth \$ 8,600; and four thousand plow parts valued at \$ 1,600. With the \$ 2,000 in job work, the company produced \$ 23,950 worth of product. Ten years later, the work force had grown to sixty-five men, and the raw materials of pig iron, wood, steel, bar iron, coal, paints and oils and 675 tons of iron and steel worth \$ 55,000 more than quadrupled his business. In 1871, Frost and Wood made 750 agricultural implements worth \$ 60,000 and \$ 55,000 worth of mill machinery.⁹⁰

By 1880, the business had grown even larger. As one observer wrote, They employ usually from 150 to 170 men, and average \$ 150,000 a year in the manufacture of mowers and reapers, threshing machines, horserakes, steel plows, and farm machinery generally. Their threshers and reapers and other machines go from end to

end of the Dominion. Their prairie plows are sent by the thousand to Manitoba, to turn the virgin soil of that young Province. All their agricultural implements are among the most popular in the market, and they find a prompt sale for everything they make.⁹¹

The agricultural implement business was one which demanded a constant refinement of the machines in order to stay competitive. The sales of the company illustrated their success at manufacturing a reliable product.

The Frost and Wood company's first stoves were of the Box type designed to handle four foot lengths, and these were gradually followed by a cook stove and a smaller type of box stove, many of which were still in use during the 1930's. The factory also manufactured horse plows, and two sizes of threshing machines. The smaller one was operated with a tread power and the larger one with a sweep power. Sometime prior to 1862, mowers were built, the first one known under the brand name of "No. 1 Buckeye". This had a wooden frame and an attachment could convert the machine into a reaper.

The "No. 2 Buckeye" was introduced in 1862 and discontinued in 1869. The firm, however, continued to stock parts for this mower until 1880 when it reported, "It is our purpose to keep a full stock of extras belonging to our machines on hand here, and a good assortment at our principal agencies, so as to promptly execute orders on the day of their receipt if possible".⁹² The dependability of farm machinery counted as much upon the availability of spare parts as the original design. Machinery was a large investment for the average farmer, and most machinery would only be used for a few weeks at most. A delay of several days due to an unavailability of spare parts could prove expensive to the farmer. So, a reliable service organization was as crucial as original cost and design. Following the "No. 2 Buckeye", a third model was brought out in 1870 or 1871 which was built until 1891.

In 1867, the No. 1 and No. 2 "Buckeye" self-rake reaper was built and continued until 1870. Prior to this, a reaping attachment operated with a hand rake had been made by Frost & Wood. This was followed by the Buckeye Harvester Self-Rake Reaper built from 1871 to 1876, the combined Reaper

and Mower in 1875, and the Daisy Reaper in 1884.⁹³ This latest model received some unsolicited publicity in the 2 August 1884 issue of the Perth Courier. John Jackman, of Bathurst, wrote that he bought one of the new Daisy Reapers.

I first tested its cutting powers in a thick heavy meadow and found it out equal to a Buckeye Mower. I next tried it in a field of fall wheat, said to be the heaviest in the township, and here it excelled any other reaper I ever saw used. It delivers [sic] the most perfect bundles, and appears to be nearer perfection than any other reaper used here.⁹⁴

This personal testimony backed up the claims made by the Frost & Wood Company.

These continued improvements in agricultural machinery were not made by Frost and Wood. Like many Canadian implement manufacturers, Frost and Wood obtained their designs from American manufacturers. Before the 1876 Select Committee on the Causes of the Present Depression, Francis T. Frost testified that no royalties were paid upon these American patents. This arrangement had been going on since the 1860's when the Canadian market was too small for American firms to take out a Canadian patent on their improvements. Frost and Wood obtained the plans for the Buckeye reaper and other machines through personal connections with a United States firm, but they did not have exclusive rights to these designs. Cossitt Brothers, among others, also manufactured this line of machinery.⁹⁵

There can be no question of the success of the company or its growing dominance of the town. While increased business provided more jobs for local workers, it also shifted the nature of local industry. By 1885, Smiths Falls, like much of Canada, was entering an era of rapid industrial expansion. Though Frost and Wood served the agricultural interests in the county, the effects of the factory upon the town separated it from Lanark County. Not only was Smiths Falls becoming more urban, but the farming population in the area was declining. Elsewhere this report indicated the decline in the relative importance of the milling interests in town. It would be difficult to imagine the Frost and Wood firm continuing a policy revealed in an 1859 advertisement in which they stated "All kinds of pro-

duce taken in Exchange for manufactures".⁹⁶ Local produce was no longer an acceptable currency by the 1880's. This change was also exhibited in the role of the Rideau Canal trade. The only economic connection between expansion of Frost and Wood and the canal was that the foundry continued to buy scrap iron from the canal authorities. In 1873, this amounted to over 60,000 lbs.⁹⁷

The social effects of this industrial development are difficult to document and outside the scope of the report. This increasing industrialization of the town, however, paralleled the growth of the recreational development of the Rideau Canal and surrounding lakes. Nineteenth century industrial conditions were grim. James F. Delaney recalled the work life of his father:

There were no moulding machines to do the heavy work in Frost & Wood's shop in the 1880's. My father came home every night exactly like a man pulled out of a river - a mass of steaming sweat. In winter, he would arrive at his door encased in a cake of ice. Moulders in the pre-machine days were used up at the age of 45.⁹⁸

In the later sections of this report, it should be kept in mind that while the canal became a recreational area, the town itself became closely tied with heavy industrial factories.

Smiths Falls Malleable Iron Works

The Smiths Falls Malleable Iron Works was formed in 1878 under the name of Frost & Jones. The two founding members of the company were William H. Frost and Charles Jones. William Frost was the youngest son of Ebenezer Frost and was born on 10 November 1847. After attending local schools, William was sent to the Potsdam Academy in Potsdam, New York, and Commercial College, Montreal. In 1871, he went to Chicago and was engaged as a cashier in the hardware store of Edwin Hunt and Sons. He remained there until 1876 when he returned to Smiths Falls. After working as a cashier in his father's company, Frost & Wood, he formed a partnership with Charles Jones. Jones was the son of John Jones, the lockmaster at the detached lock, and was

born in 1846.⁹⁹

As one of the largest industries in town, Frost & Wood bought a large proportion of the malleable iron produced by Frost and Jones but some of their product was sold outside the town. The exact size of the original buildings are not known. In 1884, however, William Frost made some expansions to the factory. An engraving of this enlarged plant from 1884 showed an office and three large buildings which would indicate a large volume of business (see Figure 31).

In 1884, William Frost bought out Charles Jones interest in the business for \$ 6,000. Rather than put up with the pressures of industrial management, Jones seemed to prefer the outdoor life. James F. Delaney remembered Jones' lifestyle after his retirement.

Charles Jones was a property owner and lived at the corner of McGill and East Main. After retiring from the foundry business, he lived exclusively on his capital and spent his whole time hunting and fishing. As I lived one block from his house, he was a frequent sight, carrying a hunting gun.¹⁰⁰

After 1885, William Frost was the sole owner of the factory which was renamed the Smiths Falls Malleable Iron Works.

Ballantyne and Cook Foundry

The Ballantyne and Cook foundry was located at the foot of Centre Street, close to Mr. Clark's wharf. The foundry must have been quite small for it is not marked on any map, and the only indication that the foundry existed at all came from two advertisements. The first advertisement appeared in December 1858 and credited the foundry as the makers of "the Great Western Cooking Stove" along with other cooking and box stoves, plows and cultivators, especially iron beam plows and simple and double cultivators.¹⁰¹ The second advertisement in March 1859 made a similar list of goods as well as giving the foundry's location.¹⁰² Since Ballantyne and Cook did not appear in the 1861 census, they must have closed their foundry before that date.

Lumber Industries

Richard Locke's Planing Mill

This factory was located at the foot of Bay Street at the same site as Alexander Clark's wharf. Since this spot was the site of the Ballantyne and Cook foundry, Locke's factory must post-date that business. The earliest reference to Richard Locke was in 1863 when he was described as a carpenter and joiner.¹⁰³

By 1871, however, Locke had established a sash and blind factory with a fixed capital of \$ 5,000 and operating capital of \$ 500. The steam powered factory employed six men year round paying annual wages of \$ 2,000. Using \$ 1,000 worth of lumber, the factory produced sashes, blinds and home furnishings valued at \$ 4,500.¹⁰⁴

In 1877, Locke's factory was destroyed by fire, but with the help of a \$ 2,000 bonus from the Town Council, he was able to rebuild his plant.¹⁰⁵ The plant continued in operation until Locke's death in March 1882.¹⁰⁶ Eventually, the Frost and Wood Plant and the Smiths Falls Malleable Works took over the land upon which the factory was located.

Williamson's Stave Factory

William Williamson's stave factory was located at the foot of the canal locks on the south side of the Rideau River. The earliest reference to this factory was in 1857 when Williamson was described as an owner of a "stave cutting machine".¹⁰⁷ In September 1858, Williamson's first factory caught fire. The Brockville Recorder reported,

On Thursday night last, about 11 o'clock, the buildings occupied by Mr. Wm. Williamson, Jr., as a heading and Stave Factory were discovered to be on fire, and we regret to have to add that owing to the great length of time which elapsed before the fire engine was brought to the spot, and still longer time to get it into working order, the flames had made such rapid headway as to render fruitless all efforts to save anything. Mr. Williamson had a very nice establishment, containing steam engine, circular saw, planing and heading machines and other machinery necessary for the carrying on of his business; all

of which, excepting steam engine, were totally destroyed. He had a quantity of leading ready for shipping which was also burnt. Cause of fire unknown. Loss about \$ 2,800. No insurance.¹⁰⁸

Although the loss was uninsured, Williamson was soon back in business. The loss, however, made it necessary to take in a partner for in 1864, the factory was under the ownership of Williamson and Ballantyne.¹⁰⁹

By 1867, Williamson was in sole possession of his factory again, advertising the manufacture of flour barrels, staves and headings, rakes, and broom handles.¹¹⁰ Production figures for this factory indicated the extent of this business. In 1861, Williamson had \$ 5,900 invested in his factory and three quarters of an acre ground. The factory employed seven men and operated by steam. In that year, Williamson used 1350 cords of wood for stoves and 130 cords for shingles. With these, the plant turned out 750,000 shingles worth \$ 32,000, 80,000 heads worth \$ 18,000 and 300,000 shingles worth \$ 5,050.¹¹¹ By 1868, Williamson was producing 1,600,000 shingles (requiring 3,000 cords of wood), 5,000 rakes, 6,000 cheese boxes, 120,000 broom handles and 100,000 barrel heads annually. Williamson employed thirty men and installed a great amount of labour saving machinery. Power was provided by a 35 horse-power engine.¹¹² Three years later, Williamson was using 3,000 cords of wood annually to make \$ 13,000 worth of staves and headings, and \$ 3,000 worth of rakes. His investment in the factory had grown to \$ 5,000 fixed capital and \$ 8,000 floating capital.¹¹³

These figures, while impressive, did not indicate the significance of the industry upon the local area. The Perth Courier explained its effect,

These works are perhaps of more actual benefit to the local district of which Smith's Falls is the centre than any other institution of a manufacturing nature in the place. For here the rough material, to the value of about \$ 100,000 a year, is bought from the farmers living adjacent who always find a ready market for the species of timber, and get a price for it, which it would be impossible to realize were the source of demand not at their very doors. Part of the refuse of the factory is used to "fire up" the engine, the remainder is sold

very cheap to the villagers.¹¹⁴

Such a factory was no doubt a significant addition to the mills in Jason Island. Unlike those mills, however, Williamson did not have to rely on canal authorities for water power. In 1859, he had asked the Department to use the leakage stream on the south side of the Basin as a supply of power, but was turned down.¹¹⁵

Graham Brother's Stave Factory

In January 1873, William and Robert Graham formed a partnership and took over the operation of Williamson's factory. In June 1874, John Graham joined the company, which was registered under the name of Graham Brothers.¹¹⁶ The Grahams continued to run the factory at least until 1884, when William Graham was described as a cheese box manufacturer. Robert Graham was selling agricultural implements by that time.¹¹⁷

William Graham appeared to have had a long association with the local saw mills. The 1861 Census listed him as the operator of a water-powered saw mill worth \$4,000 in capital investment. That mill used 4,500 raw logs annually worth \$4,500 to make \$6,500 worth of lumber.¹¹⁸ The only two water-powered saw mills belonged to the Goulds and Ward. Graham must have operated one of these mills for a time before he started his own business. It is known that before Graham bought Williamson's factory, the two men formed a partnership. In January 1870, Williamson and Graham was formed to manufacture matches, and in 1871, the firm was described as "Manufacturers of the Dominion matches".¹¹⁹ The factory existed long enough for one resident to ask in 1925 who remembered, "When Billie Williamson had a match factory and all the boys and girls in town made paper boxes so much per hundred for the boxes and a little less for the covers".¹²⁰ This would suggest the factory probably lasted at least until 1885. The match factory was possibly part of the factory at the foot of the combined locks.

Whitson Shingle Mill

Located next to Williamson's Stave Factory was the shingle mill of Andrew Whitson. The earliest reference to this mill was in November 1859 when the mill was damaged by fire¹²¹ and so the mill must have been in operation during the 1850's. The 1861 Census valued the mill and three quarters of an acre property at \$ 2,000. The annual production of the steam powered mill was 600,000 shingles worth \$ 1,100.¹²² The last reference to Whitson's mill was in 1869.¹²³ Because of the proximity of Whitson's mill to the Williamson factory it was possible that the Graham Brothers took over Whitson's mill at the same time they purchased the stave factory.

Before the Grahams took over the factory it was operated by the firm Harris and Richey for a year or two. In the 1871 Census, Harris and Richey operated a shingle factory powered by steam, with \$ 5,000 fixed capital and \$ 1,000 operating capital; the factory employed three men. Using 600 cords of shingle blocks \$ 6,000 worth of shingles were produced.¹²⁴

Tanneries

Templeton's Tannery

Allan Templeton's tannery was located at the foot of George Street, having been previously occupied by George Gourlay. In February 1859, Templeton advertised that he had recently bought this tannery from Gourlay,

where he in future will carry on the Tannery and Currying business in all its branches, and hopes by strict attention to business, and the production of a good article to merit a share of public patronage.¹²⁵

Besides offering the highest price for hides and skins, Templeton stated he had a large stock of upper leather, kip morrocco and binding which he offered for sale.

Two years later, Templeton was employing two hands, and had invested \$ 1,650 in the business. He treated 200 cow and 100 calf skins worth \$ 550

for an annual production worth \$ 1,100.¹²⁶ In 1871, Templeton valued his investment at \$ 2,500. His yearly business had increased to 934 leather pieces worth \$ 3,550. His tannery was powered by a 15 horse power steam engine.¹²⁷

Templeton continued to operate this tannery until at least 1884.¹²⁸

Ketchum's Tannery

This tannery was located on the north shore of the Rideau River just west of Frost and Wood's factory. Stephen Ketchum was operating a tannery in 1850 which one writer remarked had been in operation for fourteen years.¹²⁹ This would make the tannery date back to 1836. The tannery was always in the control of the Ketchum family, though in 1863 and 1864, Richard C. Ketchum was listed as a tanner and currier. The last reference for the business was for 1874 when John Ketchum was the operator of the business. Both John and Richard were sons of Stephen Ketchum.¹³⁰

In 1861, the tannery and the two adjacent lots were valued at \$ 5,070. The raw materials included 600 cow hides, 200 calf skins and 100 sheep skins and production was worth \$ 4240. Ten years later, the tannery was valued at \$ 800 with \$ 200 operating capital. Employing two men, the tannery processed 500 hides worth \$ 800 for an annual production of \$ 2,000 worth of leather. The factory was powered by a ten horse power steam engine.¹³¹

Although the tannery enjoyed a long history, the production figures suggest that it was never more than a family business.

Jacob's Tannery

The Jacob tannery was operated by Thomas Jacob and located at the foot of Fly Street. It was established before 1869.¹³² The 1871 Census reported that the tannery employed two men and had a fixed capital of \$ 1,000 and \$ 200 operating capital. Using 300 hides worth \$ 900, the tannery had an annual production worth \$ 2,000.¹³³ One resident of Smiths Falls clearly

remembered the tannery "constantly gave a pungent odour"¹³⁴ and this would be a quality shared by all the local tanneries.

Jacob continued to operate the tannery for a number of years, with the last recorded reference being in 1903.¹³⁵

Commercial Structures

During this period, all evidence indicated that the major wharves continued to operate. The two main wharves were owned by James Shaw and Alexander Clark at the foot of Bay Street. The 1863 Walling map of Lanark and Renfrew indicated both these wharves. By 1874, the Bay Street area had been built up with industry, especially by Richard Locke's planing mill, but the "Birds Eye View of Smiths Falls" for that year indicated that two warehouses and wharves continued to operate.¹³⁶

James Shaw continued to own the storehouse on the north side of the Basin. He had not paid any rent since 1859, and when the Town of Smiths Falls wanted the lot for a street allowance, the Department cancelled Shaw's account.¹³⁷ By 1882, however, Shaw had sold the storehouse to John McGillivray, an established general merchant. At that time, the storehouse was not in use, but shortly afterwards McGillivray repaired the structure.¹³⁸ The storehouse was a frame building approximately 50 ft. by 70 ft.¹³⁹

When the town opened the street allowance, they paid McGillivray \$ 250 for the building and in June 1887 offered the storehouse for sale. Alexander Wood moved the old storehouse to the north side of Basin Street in 1888 and built a stone foundation for the building.¹⁴⁰

Smiths Falls Detached

Standard Fertilizer and Chemical Company

Standard Fertilizer and Chemical Company was established in 1879 by Robert

J. Brodie. The factory was located on the Rideau River west of Abbott Street on the land given to the Gould family as part of the settlement with the canal authorities.

Brodie was the general manager of the company and graduated from the McGill School of Applied Science. He had a wide reputation as a specialist in fertilizers, as he had travelled to Europe and the United States to study the various methods of manufacturing fertilizer.

In 1883, the company was converted into a joint stock company with \$ 50,000 capital.¹⁴¹

Economic Development, 1859-1885

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