Jules Robinet "Mr. Sandwich" 1858-1942 a Study of the Entrepreneurship of a French Immigrant Living in Sandwich, Ontario

Michael G. Moosberger
University of Windsor

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JULES ROBINET
"MR. SANDWICH"
1858 - 1942

A STUDY OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF A FRENCH IMMIGRANT LIVING IN SANDWICH, ONTARIO.

Submitted to the Department of History of the University of Windsor in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

by
Michael G. Moosberger

Faculty of Graduate Studies
1983
APPROVED:

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R. G. HOSKINS

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I would like to acknowledge the generosity of Mrs. Lucille Becigneul of Sandwich who allowed me the use of Jules Robinet's diaries and other family papers for over two years in order to complete this work. Her patience and that of the entire Robinet family is gratefully acknowledged.

I would also like to thank those persons who responded to several enquiries that I made throughout my research on the different facets of Robinet's life. They include Tom Ritchie, formerly of the National Research Council; Nancy Plumridge of the Canadian Wine Institute; author William F. Rannie and Senator David A. Croll. I am grateful for the material and the ideas that they provided.
A special thank you must also go to my sister Ellen who gave of her free time to type this paper. Her devotion will never be forgotten.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Larry L. Kulisek for his guidance and help throughout this paper. His enthusiasm and friendship will always be remembered. Any shortcomings and failings are, of course, mine alone.

Michael G. Moosberger,
January, 1983.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick Manufacturing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and Religious Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Immigration of French speaking Canadians and French citizens into Essex County during the nineteenth century forms an important chapter in the history of the area. Building on a base population of French settlers extending back into the middle of the eighteenth century, and augmented by natural increase and continued immigration from Lower Canada, these French speaking citizens of Essex County formed a significant segment of the population. Although dispersed throughout the county, the Township of Sandwich contained a greater concentration of them than any other. In 1850 there were 2,766 French speaking residents in Sandwich and Sandwich Township as compared to 925 in Amherstburg and Malden Township which was the next highest total.\textsuperscript{1}
The immigration of the French into the Sandwich area continued at an increased rate for the next twenty years and resulted in the French population almost doubling during this period. The 1871 census indicated that there were more than 10,000 French speaking citizens in the County of Essex and that they were distributed in the following ways:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>INCREASE SINCE 1850</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Amberstburg</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderdon</td>
<td>815</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colchester</td>
<td>379</td>
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<td>Gosfield</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>493</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malden</td>
<td>729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mersea</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich West</td>
<td>1,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich (Town)</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich East</td>
<td>1,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor (Town)</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilbury West</td>
<td>1,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>10,539</td>
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</table>

The continuing influx of French speaking immigrants showed that the Town and Townships of Sandwich continued to be chosen as a popular area for colonization, with the parishes of Tecumseh and LaSalle in the Township and nearby River Canard and Belle River being especially attractive. It also showed that news of this area was being transmitted to would-be immigrants who were contemplating resettlement in Essex County.
One such family, may have been the Robinet family of Rougemont, France. Pierre Antoine Robinet, a merchant at Rougemont, and his wife, Josephine Pheulpin decided to emigrate to Canada as a matter of survival. The area in which they lived had suffered greatly as a result of the Franco-Prussian War. The area had been invaded by the French army in order to drive out the Prussian forces which had advanced over the French frontier. The French army requisitioned everything: horses, carts, fodder, wine and food, thereby leaving the economy of Rougemont in ruins.  

With no customers able to afford his wares, Pierre knew that he had no choice but to move his family and start a new life somewhere else. How Robinet came to his decision to emigrate to Canada and specifically to Sandwich is only speculation, but the steady increase of French into the Sandwich area over the previous twenty years may have had some influence upon his decision. In September 1874 Pierre and Josephine arrived in Sandwich with four of their seven children; Louise, Victor, Lucie and Louis. Joseph, Auguste and Jules remained behind in France as Pierre could not afford to bring his entire family over at once.

Jules, who had been born 1 January 1858, worked for M. Stouc at the Crown Hotel in Rougemont in order to earn enough money to pay for his passage to Canada. This job lasted for four months and with the money he had saved and with some money lent him by his brother Joseph, Jules bought a horse.
and wagon and became a sort of travelling salesman in
the area, just as his father had been. This first
business experience only lasted about four months as in
April 1875, Jules and his brother Auguste received a letter
from Pierre requesting them to join their parents in Sandwich.

On 6 April 1875 Jules, now 17 years of age, and August
15, began their long, arduous trip to Sandwich. The trip
included a slow train from Rougemont to the railway centre
at Montbozon; then the voyage across the English Channel from
Le Havre and finally boarding the S. S. Polynesian which sailed
from Liverpool on 19 April 1875.

Jules and Auguste were housed along with fifty-four
other people in the No. 1 steerage compartment of the ship.
Most of the other people in the compartment were Norwegian
immigrants whose destinations were Redwing and Minneapolis,
Minnesota. The ship itself carried five hundred and
eighty-six passengers, mostly immigrants, but with about
forty-five British subjects, most of whom classified in the
leisure or gentlemanly class, and who were housed in
individual cabins.

The voyage from Liverpool to Quebec took a total of
twenty days with the Polynesian arriving on 9 May 1875.
Jules and Auguste then boarded a train for Toronto.

Once in Toronto, Jules and Auguste boarded another train
for Sandwich, but both brothers fell asleep and when they
awoke they had missed the stop in Windsor. The car
they were riding in had been ferried across the Detroit
River and they found themselves in Wayne, Michigan. To make
matters worse, Jules' hat which contained their train tickets had been stolen while they slept. Unable to communicate clearly and without tickets the pair were considered stowaways and were thrown off the train, leaving them stranded.

At six in the morning, the brothers were finally able to relate their experience to an understanding citizen who explained how to return to Windsor. They took another train from Wayne to Detroit and then were ferried across the river by Captain Jenkins of Walkerville, who landed them at the Ferry Street dock in Windsor. From there they took a carriage to Sandwich and finally arrived at the Pequegnot warehouse where they were met by Francis Girardot who took Jules and Auguste to their parent's new home.

Jules Robinet had always had a keen interest in commerce and a desire to serve. Throughout his boyhood he travelled with his father, helping him sell his merchandise, rather than attending school. Robinet's desire for an enterprise of his own was not diminished by his immigration to Canada, although he did have to postpone his plans and work for Dr. Charles Casgrain of Windsor because his family needed another steady income. His tenure with Dr. Casgrain lasted approximately two years until April 1877. After this, Jules undertook the job of tinsmith and travelled around the county on foot repairing and selling tin and tin plate. Jules' business prospered and he was
able to buy a horse, thus enabling him to expand his territory. In the fall of 1877, Jules began to exchange groceries for chickens and eggs which he subsequently sold in Detroit.\textsuperscript{18} This trade and the money he made from it contributed to his next business enterprise which was a Tecumseh-based grocer store. The store was run by Jules and Fernette Seguin of Tecumseh. This business, however, was not successful enough to support both men and eventually Fernette gave up his interest in the business and moved to Detroit.

Although their business enterprise failed to be as successful as they had hoped, Jules' marriage to Fernette Seguin's sister, Marie on 17 August 1880\textsuperscript{19} promised to be a more significant and lasting relationship.

The marriage of Jules and Marie Robinet will serve as the starting point for this paper, for it was soon after their union that Robinet began one of the major enterprises for which he became one of the leading citizens in the community. As well as his business enterprises, which will be studied at length in individual chapters, one chapter will deal with his public service, especially his work in the church and his role in the political life of the Border Cities.
Before discussing Robinet's business acumen, it may be beneficial to review the entrepreneurial record of French Canadian businessmen generally. There is a common perception that French Canadians have been less successful than their English speaking counterparts and that this discrepancy can be explained by the unnatural economic development of French Canadian society since the Conquest. Although Robinet was neither French Canadian nor did he reside within the confines of Quebec, it may prove enlightening to ask whether Robinet was different from his French Canadian cousins or whether he was motivated by the same attitudes and customs which governed—and limited—their entrepreneurial activities.

In several articles Norman W. Taylor of Laurence College has tried to show in what respects the motivation and behaviour of French Canadians as industrial entrepreneurs differ from those of their English-speaking counterparts. In brief, these influences have combined to produce several facets of French Canadian behaviour which limited their economic achievements in Canadian society.

During the period of colonization, feudalism was certainly operated with fewer abuses in North America than in France itself and the possibility of social mobility was much greater. Nevertheless, life for most French Canadians was circumscribed. They became a people conquered by an empire alien in language, institutions and traditions.
This resulted in a remolding of their society with an emphasis on separateness from the English; their language and their church became important defenses against cultural absorption. 22

These circumstances have shaped the values and aspirations of those who form French Canadian society and have been highly significant determinants of their economic performance. 23 Taylor believes that these influences have resulted in the following shortcomings of French Canadian entrepreneurs:

First, that because of the relatively low status accorded to business as a profession by French-Canadian society, entrepreneurs have tended to come from the less privileged, less educated ranks of society.

Second, that the direction of French Canadian manufacturing undertakings tends to be family-oriented, and that the emphasis on security of the family results in conservative and limiting business polices.

Third, that French Canadian entrepreneurs tend to keep financial and administrative control in their own hands, a practice that tends to restrict growth in size.

Fourth, that relationships with competitors, employees and other economic performers, are based on more particularistic criteria than are typical of highly industrialized societies, resulting in rigidities and barriers to efficiency and growth.

Fifth, that many French Canadian manufacturers display a low degree of market orientation and that non-rational patterns of behaviour stem from this. 24
An examination of Robinet's life will serve as an important control in testing Taylor's thesis. There is little doubt that Robinet shared many of the cultural and religious attitudes of his French Canadian colleagues. But freed from the stifling inwardness and defensiveness of French Canadian society in Quebec and established in a community bordering the world's most dynamic entrepreneurial country during a period of unprecedented boom, Robinet seems to have overcome the handicaps of his Quebec cousins. While honouring and maintaining his customary ties with church, family and community, he felt free to indulge in the pursuit of wealth so characteristic to the new world with its unlimited opportunities.
CHAPTER I

BRICK MANUFACTURING

The acquisition of twelve acres of land behind the cemetery of St. John's Church in Sandwich represented Robinet's initial investment in brickmaking. This land was to be the location of Robinet's first brickyard, which was built during the spring and summer of 1882 and began production in the fall of that year. Robinet's first major contract was to supply the bricks for the construction of Assumption College, Sandwich.

Jules continued to operate his brickyard independently until 1887 when William and John Curry, influential developers and bankers, offered him a partnership. Jules accepted the Curry Brother's offer and they soon combined their assets and consolidated their holdings. Total property holdings of the newly established company included all land within the borders of Peter, Bloomfield, Tournier and Chippewa Streets, subsequently known as Block D. The company's holdings increased
in 1892 to include the east half of Block L, an area of about a half an acre, valued in 1892 at $50.00.\textsuperscript{5}

In 1893, Curry and Robinet Brickyards acquired more property with the purchase of Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 on West Russell Street. These riverfront lots totalled 450 acres and were valued in the 1893 assessment of the Town of Sandwich at $2200.00.\textsuperscript{6} The company also acquired land on North Felix Avenue and West Bedford Street both of which were rented out for various purposes.\textsuperscript{7}

The type of clay that Robinet and Curry mined is widespread in Ontario and is known as Erie Clay. In the \textit{Geology of Canada}, 1893, there is a note on Erie Clay as follows: "The Erie clay with few interruptions, runs along the north shore of Lake Erie from Long Point westward to the Detroit River and appears to underlie the whole country between this part of the lake and the main body of Lake Huron."\textsuperscript{8} When worked properly by the stiff-mud\textsuperscript{9} or even by the soft-mud process\textsuperscript{10}, it yielded a quality class of brick.

For Curry and Robinet their brickmaking season lasted approximately 8 months, starting in mid-April when the ground had sufficiently thawed for digging, and ending in early November or later depending on ground frost.\textsuperscript{11}
On 6 March 1895 the Curry-Robinet Co. purchased Walker's brickyard in Kingsville for $250.00. It is unlikely that the Kingsville location was ever used as a brickyard by Curry and Robinet, as Mr. Robinet states in his diary for 7 March 1895 that he went to Kingsville to dismantle and load the brickmaking operation into wagons and that 75 wagon loads were needed to carry the equipment back to Sandwich.

The partnership between the Curry brothers and Robinet continued from 1895 to October 1902 with the firm averaging between 8,000 and 11,000 bricks output per day. However, on 12 November 1902 Robinet met with the Curry Brothers and expressed a desire to dissolve the partnership. Discussions continued throughout 1902 and into early 1903. On 19 February 1903 Robinet met with the Curry brothers once again, this time at the law offices of Maxfield Sheppard and contracts were signed for the sale of the brickyard. Perhaps it is coincidental, but the agreement for dissolution occurred just 10 days after a fire destroyed the brickyard's engine room on 9 February 1903. About $1,000.00 worth of damage was caused to the brickyard facilities but insurance covered only $200.00 worth of the damage.

There was a great deal of confusion over the final sales transaction between Curry and Robinet. The 25 February 1903 edition of The Windsor Record inaccurately reported that Curry had bought his partner's shares in the brick business and that Robinet would devote his full attention to his wine business.
Perhaps Robinet was confused as well and had misunderstood much of what was discussed during the negotiations for the sale as he refused to sell his share. A short time later, The Windsor Record reported that the sale of the brick business to Curry had been cancelled and that the business would be offered for sale by tender. Jules Robinet made the highest bid for the brick business and thereby became its sole proprietor.20

The Curry Brothers received $2,800.00 for their share of the brickyard.21 In addition, Robinet agreed to pay $50.00 a year for the land that the partnership had acquired, as well as to pay the taxes on Block D.22 Jules also agreed to pay $500.00 in damages to the Curry Brothers, to cover any lost profit from ongoing contracts between the brickyard and its clients. In return Robinet obtained a 5 year lease to make bricks on the current brickyard site, paid 15 cents per 1,000 bricks made on Block D and 10 cents per 1,000 bricks from Block F.23 The bricks that had already been made were to be counted and then sold with the profits being divided equally between the partners.

The dissolution of the Company did not deter either partner, as within a year William Curry had opened his own brickyard on the north side of Chippewa Street and was operating in direct competition with Robinet, who had the old brickyard running in the desired manner within 30 days of its purchase.
Railroad tracks were laid with the intention of moving the drying sheds, and a farm gate railing was built enclosing Block D. Rails were also laid to the clay bank which would make the moving of the clay to the processing point much simpler.  

Robinet's renovation of his brickyards aroused the curiosity of several members of the brickmaking community. On 20 January 1904 Robinet spoke of his experiences at the Ontario Brickmaker's Association in London and later in February drafted a circular on his brickmaking operation to be sent to the Association.  

As well, on 11 March 1904 H. C. Baird and Jervis asked Jules if they could make a model of his brickyard. The reason for their request is not explained by Robinet in his diaries, but it could be assumed that the model would be used for either an educational tool as an example of a typical brickyard or for construction of a similar operation by Baird and Jervis or their associates on another site.  

The production of bricks by Robinet in Sandwich inadvertently moved Jules into another profitable business enterprise. Erie Clay, which was predominant in the areas which Robinet mined, has only two or three characteristics which are constant throughout the province: "namely the blue colour of the clay, its highly calcerous nature, and the presence in it of a greater or smaller proportion of stones."
These stones required removal from the clay before bricks were produced and opened a whole new business to Robinet— that of selling gravel. Much of this new trade occurred between Sandwich and Walkerville where Robinet received as much as $4.00 for a wagonload of gravel.28

From 1904 to 1907, the brickyard continued its production on a regular basis and Jules continued to receive recognition for producing high quality bricks. His business thrived and he received many large orders including one for 50,000 bricks which were used for the new Sandwich Post Office on the Southwest corner of Mill and Bedford Streets in July, 1905.29

In 1906, M. G. Baker's survey of Ontario brick-making plants was published in the Ontario Bureau of Mines Annual Report. Baker's report on Robinet's brickyard states that:

the plant has two feet of Red top clay, underlaid by two feet of red and blue Erie clay, followed by typical blue clay below. The whole section is dug about seven feet deep, and is mixed with some red sand, the whole burning to red brick. The clay is hauled about two hundred yards by mule and railroad car which dumps to a hopper, feeding a plunger machine. The mould holding six bricks is dumped on pallets, thirty-two of which are piled on a car, which is run to the rack yard and allowed to stand till dry. The cars are then run on to the kiln yard, so that the bricks are not touched from the time they leave the machine till they are piled in the kiln, but this system required over one hundred cars. The rails used throughout the yard are old gas pipe, which serves
admirably, and have the advantage of being easily handled. The output is about eighteen thousand per day and the clay for this is dug by two men and is all hauled by one mule, the men filling one car while another is being taken to the machine. The burning is done by coke and coal, as in Curry's yard except that Mr. Robinet used a grate four feet long in each end of his fire arches. 30

By late 1906 however, Robinet began to seek outside investment capital to help him realize future growth for the brickyard. This need for investors took on a more pressing note after one of the large sheds at the brickyard was destroyed by fire on 4 November 1906 and Robinet used much of his own resources to pay for its replacement. On 16 January 1907 Jules went to see Henry Allen, a customs inspector and Arthur Healy, the solicitor for the Town of Sandwich, to ask them to join him in a brick manufacturing partnership. Both Healy and Allen agreed. Allen put up $6,000.00, while Healy contributed $1,000.00 in cash. Jules put in his material for $7,500.00 and Healy and Allen agreed to leave control of the company in Jules' hands. In return Jules guaranteed each of his partners a 10% profit. Where dividends were less than 10%, Robinet was obliged to pay the difference out of his own pocket. Jules managed this clause by putting a mortgage on his warehouse on the corner of Mill and Bedford Streets for three years. 32 The company would retain its name; The Robinet Brick Co. Limited. On 19 January 1907 the new company commenced operation and on 6 February 1907 was officially incorporated with capital in excess of $40,000.00. 34
One of the first acts of the new company was to fulfill an idea that Jules had put off for almost a year. In February 1906 Robinet had gone out to Malden Road to examine a parcel of land for a future brickyard. It was this land that was the new Robinet Brick Co. Limited's first acquisition on 28 January 1907. An article in the Windsor Evening Record for 8 March 1907 described the operations taking place on the Malden Road property. The paper writes:

Jules Robinet of the firm of Robinet & Co. had a large gang of men and teams removing sheds and other fixtures in connection with his brick plant here to Malden Road, where the new brickyard will be started this summer. The new location has a fine bed of clay and the company expects to turn over a superior class of building brick.

For the next two years, Robinet Brick Co. continued to produce and sell high quality bricks throughout the area. But in early 1909, Robinet once again felt that the control of his own business was restricted by his partners. By late May 1909, Robinet began discussions with Allen and Healy to re-purchase their shares in the company. This procedure was accomplished on 4 June 1909 when Healy conceded a majority of his shares and Allen sold all but two of his shares to Robinet. Although the cost of this re-purchase of stock is not detailed in his diaries, Jules does make mention of one payment to Allen of $1024.74 on 4 June 1910. Allen and Healy remained board members of the company after the sale of their stock.
The remainder of Robinet's brickmaking career was relatively uneventful. He continued to make bricks at both the Malden Road and Sandwich locations and had some very productive seasons as in 1910 and 1912 when his brickyards produced 1,970,000 and 1,500,000 bricks respectively. One of his largest customers during this period was Assumption Church which purchased 500,000 bricks in November 1911.

In 1912, however, Robinet felt the need to expand again and he purchased the Curry Brothers brickyard for $400.00. This purchase must have been for the sole purpose of obtaining a good bed of clay as none of the Curry's machinery or buildings were included in the sale. As well, Robinet did not pay for the sale in cash but instead gave the Curry's $400.00 worth of bricks as payment.

The summer of 1915 marked the end of Robinet's brickmaking enterprises. Whether the business had lost its profitability or whether other interests had taken precedence over his brickyards, Robinet succeeded in selling both brickyards within two months. One was sold to Charles Cole for $25,000.00 and the other was sold to a man named Smith from Youngstown, Ohio for $20,000.00 cash. Although the brickyards were sold, Robinet spent the rest of 1915 and the early part of 1916 trying to sell brickyard equipment which had not been included in the transactions. This
included the rails and the wagons which transported the clay from the bed to the processing area. By March 1916 all of his equipment had been purchased and Jules Robinet had ended another phase in his entrepreneurial career. For almost 35 years Robinet had supplied the area of Sandwich and Windsor with a good quality building material which can still be found in some of the city's turn of the century structures.
CHAPTER II
WINEMAKING

The making of wine commercially in Ontario, advanced hand in hand with the influx of immigrants who showed a genuine desire to improve the product. With their experience and knowledge of the grape, many established their own wineries. One such immigrant was Jules' father Pierre Antoine Robinet. Of all the Essex County wineries that were established in the 19th century, the one founded by Pierre Robinet was the only one to survive prohibition and the enactment of the Ontario Temperance Act.

Beginning as a partnership in 1879, the elder Robinet and Ernest Girardot established a successful wine business. A ton of Concord grapes yielded 100-125 gallons of wine which they sold for $1.00 a gallon. Girardot's father, Theodule, was owner of the only other commercial winery in Sandwich.
This first partnership lasted several years, but in 1883 Jules purchased the shares of his father and Ernest Girardot and became sole owner. He would eventually absorb the Girardot Wine Co. as well and become Sandwich's premier vintner.

In *L'Histoire de la Famille Robinet*, Jules tells of his early wine business:

Each year our grape harvest achieved production of up to 25,000 gallons of wine. I was also buying most of the grapes in Essex County and shipping up to 35 carloads (2,500 baskets of 10 pounds each per car) to wholesale merchants in Montreal, Quebec and Winnipeg.

Robinet was only one of many Essex County residents involved in the harvesting of grapes and the making of wine. With these numbers growing throughout the 1880's and early 1890's the growers felt a need for representation of their interests in government circles. Therefore, on 5 April 1893 the Essex County Grape Growers Association was established. Robinet was elected to a committee to draw up a constitution and by-laws for the association. As well, Robinet was part of a contingent to Ottawa who met with Agriculture Minister Foster and other M. P.'s in an attempt to enlist support for the objectives of their association.

Although Robinet's role in the association was a significant one it did not keep him from getting into trouble with provincial authorities. Less than four months after the association's inception, this headline ran in the
25 July 1893 edition of the Windsor Record: "A Wine Selling Case. Jules Robinet up before judge for selling wine contrary to license law." The story indicated that Robinet was fined $50.00 and court costs for breaking two sections of the Liquor License Act. The first count concerned the selling of more than the maximum of two one pint and a half bottles per person at a time. Robinet explained that many people bought one bottle per day but paid their bill at the end of the week thereby paying for four or five bottles at once. The judge accepted this argument and dropped the first charge. The second charge, however, stated that the wine sold in Curry & Robinet's brick office in Sandwich was being consumed on Robinet's adjoining farm and this violated the section of the license law which stated that the wine must be removed from the premises after it is sold. Mr. Robinet claimed that the brick office and his farm were not the same premises, but the judge rejected this argument and levied the $50.00 fine. Robinet stated that he would appeal but there is no record of his every doing so.

On 10 May 1895 Jules Robinet initiated Jules Robinet and Company, a winemaking company run by Robinet but with financial support from partners John Curry and Alex Cameron. For the next two years the company flourished making wine as well as shipping grapes to wineries in Montreal and Quebec City. In 1896, for instance, Jules Robinet and Company was responsible for shipping nearly 355 tons of Essex County grapes to the Province of Quebec for their
One of the companies' largest clients became the renowned Montreal firm of Laporte Martin & Company.

28 January 1897 marked another change in Robinet's winemaking enterprises with the establishment of La Cie Robinet et Freres de Sandwich (Robinet Brothers of Sandwich). This new company brought several of Jules Robinet's brothers into the winemaking business and continued the family tradition of winemaking which had been started by Jules' father years before. Robinet told a Windsor Record reporter that this company was necessary to more effectually handle the grapes of the small growers in the area.

Along with handling the small growers crops, as well as his own, the new company's administrative organization was radically different than its predecessor. It was incorporated with capital in excess of $50,000.00 and a slate of officers and a board of directors and with statutes which the company would follow in its operation.

The company's first election of officers saw Jules Robinet elected president and manager; Victor Robinet as vice president; Denis Rocheleau as treasurer and Stephane Robinet as secretary. The board of directors included John Dugal, Gilbert Bedelle, Hte. Girardot, Eugene Dupuis and G. H. Benett as well as the operating officers. The company's offices were located in the St. Antoine Block,
Robinet's own building on the corner of Sandwich and Mill. It is apparent that this building was designed for such an operation as one of its main characteristics was as Robinet stated, "a spacious cellar for my winemaking."  

Robinet Freres continued to expand and cultivate new clients for his wines as well as his grapes. In 1897, for instance, the company shipped grapes and wine in excess of 350 tons to Montreal, Quebec and Winnipeg. This was an important part of their business, but much of their wine was still consumed in the Essex County region.  

Although Robinet's business was a successful one, every business must contend with problems. The problems which seemed most prevalent to Robinet's winemaking enterprise were the loss of shipments between Sandwich and their final destination and securing a price for his product which made the transaction profitable.  

Another problem which Robinet frequently faced was that of supply - of not having enough inventory to fill orders he accepted. One of these incidents occurred in September 1904. Jules accepted an order from McPherson on the United Fruit Co. of Winnipeg for 3 carloads of grapes. Robinet ordered 6,000 baskets from his Leamington agent and started his men loading the first carload which he had agreed to sell for 20 cents a basket. The first carload was sent and the loading of the second car began
when Robinet realized that he had not harvested enough of his own grapes to fill the order. As a result, Jules had to buy the remainder of the grapes from Raymond, a Campbell Avenue produce broker, who charged Robinet 18 cents a basket. 17

This oversight reduced Robinet's profit on the second car to 1 cent a basket and his profit on the third carload to nothing at all.

These problems, however, were just minor setbacks for Robinet and Company. By the end of November 1904, Robinet had applied to Minister Latchford of the Provincial Government for permission to sell his wine in groceries. On 6 December Robinet's request was affirmed by Latchford in a letter to Robinet's lawyer, Mr. Sutherland. 18

During this period, Robinet decided to expand his winemaking enterprise. On 7 December Robinet visited Maxfield Sheppard, a lawyer, and asked him to draw up an agreement between Robinet Freres and individuals who wished to serve as depots for grapes for the wine companies' Essex County operation. 19 Robinet Freres set up several of these depositories throughout the county with Giroux in Tilbury; Beuglet in St. Joachim; Henry Gignac in Stoney Point; Israel Aubin in Belle River and J. L. Dufour in McGregor. 20 This system of depots was established by the end of 1904 but only became productive with the following year's harvest, when it provided Robinet Freres with a faster and more economical way to collect grapes needed by the company.
These depots were established against the direct orders of Gaspard Pacaud, the inspector of licenses. Pacaud may have interpreted these depots as a violation of Section 109 of the Liquor Act which stated that a license is only valid for the premises named upon it. In any case, some sort of agreement must have been negotiated between Pacaud and Robinet as no action was ever taken by the government against these depots.

17 January 1905 marked another change in the company's structure as Victor Robinet asked his brother Jules to buy his 303 shares in Robinet Freres. A price of $4.50 a share or $1,363.50 was discussed but not agreed upon. It seems likely that Jules was hoping that Victor would have a change of heart, as the matter was not resolved until 23 September when Jules agreed to buy Victor's share for a 10 year annuity of $200.00 per year.

The loss of his brother's partnership did not deter Jules from expanding his winemaking enterprise. On 20 November Jules bid at auction for one of the wine cellars of the Girardot Wine Co. His initial bid was $1,500.00 which included 9 barrels with a capacity of 3,500 gallons to be left as part of the purchase price. Negotiations over the particulars of the sale continued for almost a year. It was not until 25 September 1906 that Jules actually obtained title to the building for $1,250.00. Jules did not receive the 9 barrels that he wanted, but he did purchase two large barrels of 1,500
gallons and another of 1,200 gallons for an additional $136.00.²⁷

For the next seven years, Robinet Freres continued their winemaking operation with no major changes through expansion or managerial change. The company became known as one of the premier wineries in southwestern Ontario and realized adequate and sometimes excellent profits. At only one time during this period was expansion attempted. This occurred between 17 November and 4 December 1908 when Robinet tried unsuccessfully to purchase the remainder of the Girardot Wine Co. He offered $10,000.00 but William C. Kennedy,²⁸ who then owned the company, refused to budge from his asking price of $15,000.00.²⁹

Failing to acquire the Girardot Wine Co. it was not until 15 December 1913 that the next major change in the Robinet winemaking operation occurred. As he had in his brickmaking enterprises, Jules Robinet felt that now that his winery was on firm financial ground he would be better off as sole proprietor of the company. Jules began buying out his brothers' shares in the company and on 15 December took complete control of Robinet Freres.³⁰ Although Jules took over in December it was not until 28 April 1914 that the official papers dissolving the company were drawn up and delivered for registration with the government.³¹
Once again, there were several years of quiet existence for Robinet's winemaking operation although his sons, Clovis and Joseph entered into partnership with Jules in 1915. By the fall of 1917, Robinet was once again searching for ways to expand and improve his operation. On 15 September Jules rented F. A. Hough's Amherstburg vineyards for $150.00 a year. Robinet also bought 10,000 Concord plants for this property for $50.00. As well, Jules finally succeeded in purchasing the wine house of the Girardot Wine Co. for $500.00. The reason for the purchase of this house was unclear as Robinet had the house demolished early in 1918.

Robinet's winery, as most other wineries, was dependent on many other companies to supply them with those materials required in the making and bottling of their product. Robinet seemed to have a good relationship with those companies which supplied his operation. He dealt with the same companies for sugar (Robert Crooks of Montreal) and jugs (Toronto Pottery Co.) for a large part of his wineries' existence. This sense of good relations was also apparent between Robinet and those he supplied with grapes and wine, as E. D. Smith and La Porte Martin were both long standing customers.

Although his relationships were good with his suppliers, Robinet's relations with those who would place restrictions in the path of his business operations - license inspectors - were tenuous. Jules had no patience with these
bureaucrats and wrote very unfavourably of them in his diaries. Even when these inspectors made recommendations that would have helped Robinet in the administration of his business, he reacted distrustfully. One such incident occurred on 8 July 1918 when officers Mousseau and Stoues arrived at the Robinet winery to inspect the financial records. Although everything was in order, they recommended that Jules sign the sale stubs for the wines that he sold; thereby ensuring a better control on the winery's inventory. 38 Robinet took affront to their suggestion and ordered the inspectors off his property. 39 This was only one of Robinet's many clashes with agents of the Provincial Government. The confrontations grew more heated and more frequent as the government sought to take a more active role in controlling wineries in Ontario.

One of the new controls on wineries resulted by the end of March 1918 in the disallowance of any newspaper advertisements, something Robinet had done frequently in the past. 40 Of more concern and a growing threat was the increasing activity of the prohibitionists during this period. There were active campaigns to enact laws that would put liquor under lock and key and eradicate its effects. 41
WINE

Only a few days remain before the government closes all liquor business. I would advise you to make your provision for Wine at once—not wait till the last day, as you may be disappointed.

Port, 5 gals. ............... $ 7.50
Port, 1 doz. bottles ......... $ 4.50
Sweet Catawba, 5 gals. $10.00
1 doz. bottles ............. $ 5.00

Jules Robinet
SANDWICH. PHONE 597 or 1840.

WINDSOR RECORD - March 15, 1918

WINE

For Holidays
You can get a good sweet wine at Jules Robinet's cellars, opposite postoffice, in Sandwich, for 60c and 75c per gallon. This wine is sold only at cellars for this price.

JULES ROBINET

Advertisements

WINDSOR RECORD - December 17, 1913

Robinet Wine Co.

WINE

I will deliver at your door—
Port at $1 per gallon.
Sweet Catawba at $1 per gallon.
Sweet Catawba, $1 for 4 bottles.
Port, $1 for 4 bottles.
Eau de Vicky, $1 for 4 bottles.
Phone orders at 597. Cellars—
Home Bank Bldg.

JULES ROBINET, Phone 1840.
There have been many explanations on what caused the institution of prohibition at this particular time in history, but the five causes referred to most often were:

1) The First World War;
2) The new authority of Women;
3) A half-century of campaigning by church leaders, politicians, evangelists and women's groups;
4) The existing moral climate of the time; and
5) Rural paranoia about urban intrusion.42

Most blame the First World War which allowed laws to be enacted such as the Ontario Temperance Act of 1916, which closed down all bars, clubs and liquor shops for the duration of the war. These pieces of legislation set the groundwork for other laws which would ban liquor and beer entirely.43

Another war time condition which led to prohibition was the new authority of women. Women acquired more responsibility during the war. They had to support their families while their husbands were in military service. This promoted more independence among women and when they were given the right to vote in 1917, suddenly made them a force to be reckoned with.44

The culmination of the temperance movement's efforts in Ontario came with the enactment of the Temperance Referendum Act in 1919. This legislation allowed the Ontario government to place on the electoral ballot the question of whether or not the Ontario Temperance Act should be repealed.
The act also allowed the government to determine the electorate's opinion on such questions as the sale of light beer through hotels or through government agencies and whether liquor should be sold through government agencies also.\(^{45}\)

On 20 October 1919 the prohibitionists of Ontario won a decisive victory against opponents of the Ontario Temperance Act as the repeal of prohibition was soundly rejected. Despite the sweeping nature of the 'dry' victory, however, there were some major areas of the province which had gone completely 'wet'. The Border Cities, with its large French-Canadian element, was one of the areas which voted 'yes' on all four of the referendum questions.\(^{46}\)

Although the Ontario Temperance Act had been re-enacted, there were some very obvious loopholes in the law - one of which affected Robinet and his wine operation directly. This loophole dealt with the exemption of native wines from the restrictions of temperance legislation. "Section 44 permitted wines made from grapes grown in Ontario to be sold by those manufacturers who had permits from the Board of Licence Commissioners."\(^{47}\) There was no limit either to the quantity allowed to be sold, or to the strength of the wine.\(^{48}\) In Robinet's case, those years under the constraints of prohibition proved to be many of the most productive and profitable years in his winemaking career.\(^{49}\)
Robinet Wine Co.
Annual Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>$35,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>$57,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>$4,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>$5,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>$4,507.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>$5,470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One attempt was made to try to close the loophole regarding native wines. In the 1921 session of the legislature Hartley Dewart offered a bill which would prohibit the sale of native wines. The Evening Telegram summed up the government's predicament on 21 April 1921 best. There may be political reasons for protecting wine and banning beer. But there is no moral or social reason. There is no inherent vice in barley which does not also lodge in grapes. The bill was sent to the Legal Committee but never received much further consideration. One of the most probable reasons for the bill's failure was the effect it would have on the grape growing industry of Ontario.

Whatever the reasons were, the production and sale of wines remained excluded from the restrictions of the Ontario Temperance Act and Robinet was able to maintain and even increased the production in his wineries. By October 1920, Robinet was unable to obtain sufficient supplies of grapes from Essex County growers to keep up with the demand for his wine. As a result, on 8 October Jules telegraphed the E. D. Smith Co. of Winnipeg for an additional six tons of grapes. These grapes arrived at Robinet's winery on 26 October and allowed Jules to produce another 14,600 gallons of wine. This became a common practice of Robinet's during the prohibition era as purchases from E. D. Smith increased from one in 1920 to four such purchases in 1922.
Early 1920 brought administrative changes in the Robinet winery as Jules' son Frank joined the firm. This was followed later that year by the addition of two of Jules' other sons, Paul and Emile, as partners in the firm. With the addition of these three, Jules now had five sons who were part of the wine business. This family unity did not last for long, however, as Clovis withdrew from the firm in May 1920. Whether Clovis' resignation was the result of the influx of his brothers into the business is unknown, but a resignation so close to his brothers joining the firm cannot be considered as a mere coincidence.

By 1924, Frank and Paul Robinet had withdrawn from the firm, leaving only Jules and two sons, Joseph and Emile to run the business, which was then located at 17 1/2 Sandwich Street East, Windsor, as well as at the old Robinet cellars at 177 Sandwich Street West. The Robinet Wine Co. continued to prosper after the end of prohibition although sales did slip upon the introduction of the Ontario Liquor Control Act. With the Act came more regulations and inspections by the province and as a result more complaints about interference from Robinet. Such controls as a closer examination of a manufacturer's books, the establishment of specifications for winery construction and remodelling and government inspection of samples were set down in the new legislation. The Act also provided
for the establishment of government liquor stores in the province which would control the sale of most alcoholic beverages. Those businesses that still preferred to sell their own product rather than have the government sell it for them were required to apply for a special vendors license and were subject to the directions of the Liquor Control Board and the Act. Guidelines were set up for the sale of liquor to individuals and were strictly enforced. Under the Act, no liquor could be sold to an individual unless a written order was given to the vendor by the purchaser and the purchaser paid in cash and produced a valid purchase permit for inspection. The vendor then had to endorse the purchaser's permit with the quantity of the liquor sold and the sale date. The first meeting between Robinet and the new regulatory system came on 3 October 1927 when Jules travelled to Toronto to meet with Birmingham, the chairman of the licensing commission, to discuss the question of Robinet's wine sales as well as the price of his new licences. The new board restricted Jules' sale of wine privately until he received a special wine selling permit and resulted on October 18 in Robinet's first sale of his wine to government liquor stores, which were established as part of the new legislation.
Robinet, not satisfied with just being a supplier for government liquor stores applied for a special vendors licence which would allow him to sell his wine privately. According to the Directory of Commercial Wineries of Ontario, Jules Robinet failed to receive his permit even though he had received considerable support from political allies such as Sir Harry Gignac and Mayor David Croll. Mayor Croll, now a Senator, remembers the incident. "I have a faint recollection of his seeing me when the authorities in the City attempted to limit his winemaking facilities... He may have wanted a license to sell wine but I remember him coming to me about something along these lines." Not to be dissuaded by government bureaucracy Jules came up with a scheme which would allow him to get around the new government restrictions.

One way Jules got around his problems with the licensing inspectors was to set up his sons Clovis and Frank in a winery of their own. This new winery was located at R. R. #1, Oldcastle. This new winery which would be known as Robinet Freres was opened in July 1928. The licenses of Clovis and Frank Robinet were amalgamated by order of the license board and a retail store was opened in Windsor. Although the winery was in his sons' name, it was Jules who had purchased the property and it was Jules who continued to order additional grapes, sugar and other supplies for the new winery. In this way, Jules controlled the Oldcastle winery as well as his Sandwich winery. The reason for this
new operation is only speculation, but a logical assumption is that the new winery could be used as a front if Jules was caught selling wine without a permit. If this occurred, he could ship his wine to Oldcastle and have it bottled and sold in his sons' legitimate retail outlet.

For the next five years, Robinet's winemaking enterprise operated without much controversy. On 16 February 1933, however, Jules once again attempted to improve his organization. On that date, Robinet and his son Emile went to see Frank Wilson, their local M. P. P., in order to enlist his aid in acquiring a retail sales office for Jules' wine within the City of Windsor. Over the next year, Robinet met with many different individuals concerning his new plan. On 9 March 1933 Jules met with Birmingham and Robins of the Liquor Control Board and on 10 March he received a visit from the president of the Wine Association of Toronto. By March 1934 Robinet had fulfilled all the requirements, and a license was issued to him for a Branch Retail Sales Office in Windsor. The new office would be located at 1715 Ottawa Street, which was the corner structure at the intersection of Moy and Ottawa.

The license that Jules had worked since 1928 to obtain was used by the company for less than a year.
En Compéte AVEC

JULES ROBINET

Vin Clairet, Port, Sauterne et Catawba

An invoice heading from the 1930's. The Jules Robinet winery catered to the tastes of the Windsor area's French population.

SAMPLES OF WINE BILL AND INVOICE HEADING FROM THE ROBINET WINE CELLARS.
In January 1935, Jules met with Fred Marsh who asked him whether he would be interested in selling Robinet and Sons. On 9 January the price and the financing were discussed and the next day Jules accepted Marsh's offer. The purchase was completed on 4 February 1935 when Marsh paid Jules $14,000.00 for the wine cellars, the wine barrels, the champagne machine and the bottles of Jules Robinet and Sons. On 14 February 1935, Fred Marsh Winery Limited received the comptroller's letter which stated that the Liquor Control Board approved of Marsh's purchasing assets of Jules Robinet and Sons and establishing a Branch Retail Sales Office at 73 Bank Street, Ottawa upon surrender of the Robinet license. This license was surrendered on 18 February 1935. The Oldcastle winery under Clovis and Frank Robinet's name continued production for several more months until purchased by T. G. Bright and Co. in 1935 as well.

Those who expected these sales transactions to end Robinet's winemaking enterprises, seriously underestimated his resourcefulness. For Jules the production and sale of wine continued for four more years. Robinet began operating on a smaller scale directly from his home. Although sales figures were not what they were during prohibition, he managed quite well considering that the depression still affected many area residents.
The final chapter of Robinet's winemaking enterprise occurred on 16 November 1939 when 3,000 gallons of wine were confiscated at his home on 559 St. Antoine in Sandwich. The raid was conducted by Constables Dave Duncan, Alex Mason, and Frank Scott. Authorities refused to give out any details regarding the raid but the officers are reported to have made no effort to remove the huge vat of spirits found in the basement. Five gallon jugs and bottles of the wine were picked up by the squad for evidence. The remainder was held under seizure in Robinet's home.

Instructions for the raid were reported to have been given the local provincial police from Toronto headquarters. Although the raid was conducted within city limits, Windsor police were not called in and knew nothing of the seizure. This failure to notify local authorities concerning the raid supports the theory that Robinet, because of his stature in the community and also because of the acceptance of the bootlegging in the area might have been tipped off concerning the raid if local authorities had been cognizent of the upcoming seizure.

This lack of trust by provincial authorities of Windsor officials may have been well justified as Robinet had operated his basement winemaking facility for four years without even a license.
The seizure also coincided with an announcement made the previous day by A. St. Clair Gordon, Commissioner of the Ontario Liquor Board, that the board was determined to check the spread of bootlegging in homemade wine. 85

This new regulation stated that anyone manufacturing more than 100 gallons of wine would be compelled to first obtain a permit from the board. "This new regulation will not to any extent affect or inconvenience anyone legitimately making wine for personal consumption," but Mr. Gordon said, "It will by the regulation system, materially aid police in suppressing bootlegging." 86

Robinet was not arrested during the raid, but he was charged in City Police Court with keeping liquor for sale, for selling wine without a permit, and for producing wine in excess of the legal limit stated by the Province for personal consumption.

Robinet called upon his political friends for their help. These men included Edmund Girardot, Sir Harry Gignac and Mayor David Croll of Windsor. 87 But they were of little help.

The confiscation of Robinet's wine received great attention in the Windsor area. On 22 November 1939 Jules received a summons from provincial police to appear. 88 The case was heard on 3 January 1940 and Robinet was fined $200.00 plus the confiscation of the 4,000 gallons of wine. 89
The Court's decision marked the end of Robinet's production of wine on a commercial scale. It also ended a career in winemaking that had lasted more than 50 years, and which had thrived as a result of the temperate sentiment of the community and the large market for native wines in the area.90
CHAPTER III

LAND TRANSACTIONS

Wealth can be determined in many forms, but one of the oldest and most recognized ideals of wealth is the amount of land or property that an individual owned or controlled. Although this attitude has probably weakened today it was still a very strong driving force during Jules Robinet's lifetime. Robinet, being a European immigrant, understood the power of owning property and felt that he must obtain it to become a respected and influential member of the community.

Robinet's first major holdings were those properties which were directly involved in his brick manufacturing operation. These included the twelve acres of land behind St. John's Church cemetery; the property known as Block D; and the east half of Block L and the riverfront lots on West Russell Street.
While these properties were purchased mostly for use as a source of clay for the Robinet--Curry brickmaking operation, Jules on 24 February 1894 purchased a piece of property for his own private enterprise. This property, approximately one-eighth of an acre, was located on the northwest corner of Mill and Bedford Streets in Sandwich. Robinet purchased the land from Claude F. Pequegnot for $1,000.00 and within two years had started construction of a three storey 50' x 50' brick building on the site.

This property would serve as the cornerstone of Robinet's business interests. It would be used to house the offices and cellars of his wine business, as well as organizations such as the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association in which Robinet was deeply involved. The rest of the building was rented to various businesses and resulted in a steady flow of income for Robinet.

With the purchase and the construction of what came to be known as the "St. Antoine Block", Robinet restrained himself from any other major land deals until after the turn of the century. He did, however, purchase a lot here and there, on which a small cottage would be constructed and which would be rented out. Most of these properties were in close proximity to the Curry-Robinet brickyard and were rented out to labourers, some of whom worked for Robinet at the brickyard.
In 1903, however, Jules picked up where he had left off in the early 1890's. The purchase of the Curry brother's share of the brickyard brought most of the company's land holdings under Robinet's direct control. As well, Robinet acquired property in other parts of Sandwich, including twelve acres on South Centre Road, a half an acre on West Peter Street and three and seven-eighths of an acre on East Baby Street.

It is uncertain whether the purchase of many of these properties was indiscriminate on Robinet's part or whether they all had some purpose in Jules' overall entrepreneurship. Many of these lands were never mentioned in Jules' diaries once the purchase had been completed and Registry Office documents only reveal the date of purchase and the subsequent date of sale to another party. It is therefore difficult to state precisely what Robinet did with these properties, or if he did anything at all. As well, it is interesting to note the pattern which will become evident concerning Robinet's real estate transactions. While Robinet was always in the market to pick up a choice piece of property here and there, there were years such as 1903, when the amount of property he purchased increased substantially. Jules would buy and sell and at a hurried pace and then after a period of time he would refrain and sit back and administer the properties he had just acquired. A possible explanation for this type of behaviour could be
that Robinet would save enough capital from his other business interests to go on a 'shopping spree' for properties. Once he had exhausted his resources, he would curtail his purchases until additional capital could be tapped from his other business interests or land holdings. If this is an acceptable interpretation of Jules' buying pattern it also may signify the first weakness in Robinet's finances, as a dependence on the continuing prosperity of his other businesses was vital to maintain his large property holdings.

As well as handling his own land dealings, Robinet served as a real estate agent in the Sandwich area. One of his first commissions came in September 1903 as a result of the sale of 11 3/4 acres of Block E on Back Street for the Girardot family. Jules received $25.00 on account and a 10% commission on the sale.13

Land speculation also became an important part of Robinet's real estate dealings in 1904. On 16 July Jules gambled on the advise of his lawyer and Liberal M. P. R. F. Sutherland, and took out a 60 day option to buy two lots on Bedford Street owned by A. F. Healy.14 Robinet had been led to believe by Sutherland, who probably received inside information from fellow Liberal members of the House, that these lots were among the leading candidates to be selected for the future site of the new Sandwich Post Office, which was to be constructed at a cost of over $10,000.00.
Sutherland advised Robinet that a decision on the proposed site was shortcoming and urged him to act. Robinet took out the option for an undisclosed price and then sat back and waited to see if his gamble would pay off. Unfortunately, no decision on the post office site came within 60 days and Robinet had to renew his option. For 58 days Jules waited. Then on 12 October 1904, the decision was announced: the Healy lot directly on the southwest corner of Bedford and Mill Streets would serve as the site of the new Sandwich post office. Robinet took up his option on the property and purchased the lot for $1,700.00. He then negotiated a deal with the government for the sale of the lot for $2,800.00, as well as becoming a supplier of bricks for the building's construction.

The construction of the post office and Robinet's other business and personal interests, occupied his attention for the next two years. By the end of 1906, however, a major change of emphasis in Robinet's property holdings occurred when Block D which Jules had maintained almost entirely for his brick operation was subdivided into 230 smaller lots. It would take several years, however, for the entire block to be divided with new roads intersecting it and as a result Robinet continued to use the property almost exclusively for brickmaking.
Robinet's Major Land
Holdings in Sandwich
1892—1920
That same year, Robinet purchased the brickyard and land of Alex Pare on 12 November for $1,700.00 and sold the land he had purchased on Lloyd Avenue in 1902 to a Dr. Newman for $6,000.00. By the close of 1906 Jules Robinet had acquired a substantial amount of property, having a total assessed value of $3,915.00 for the land and $1,400.00 for the buildings, which were interspersed among these holdings.

It was not until 1909 that Robinet became involved in another major land transaction. On 11 June, Jules and Marie Robinet granted a mortgage of $8,600.00 to Henry W. Allan, a Windsor Customs Inspector for the purchase of parts of Blocks G and C in Sandwich. This sale of property reduced the assessed value of Robinet's holdings in 1909 in just the Town of Sandwich to $8,155.00.

Although the deal for Block G and C was a major coup for Robinet in 1909, another deal would become just as important, but unfortunately for Robinet, not nearly as successful and would result in his character and his integrity as a competent real estate agent being put on trial.

On 9 September 1909 Robinet met with William Parker, Arthur Healy and David Clark at Healy's law offices. The meeting was called to discuss the formation of a land syndicate for the division of Clark's 107 acres farm on Malden Road. Clark was to be paid $10,000.00 for his land by the syndicate and then the syndicate would divide up
the farm and sell pieces of the property individually, with each member of the syndicate receiving an equal share after expenses. 27

The idea of the syndicate was again one of speculation. Since 1907 when large pieces of property were purchased, just west of the Town of Sandwich, by the United States Steel Corporation rumors had spread that this would be the site of a large new steel plant. 28 Those people with inside information attempted to purchase prime land before the official announcement was made and land prices skyrocketed. Robinet and his associates were privy to these plans and thus their purchase of Clark's farm. 29 They felt assured that once the official announcement was made by U. S. Steel, they could name their price for all or part of the Clark property.

The U. S. Steel Corporation selected Ojibway for the site of their Canadian operation for several reasons. U. S. Steel decided that a plant in Canada would take advantage of the preferential trade with the British Empire. There was also the proximity of Ojibway to its ore mines on the Upper Lakes and its coal mines in Pennsylvania. At Ojibway the corporation could build their own city on the basis of their development at Gary, Indiana and still be outside the control of larger cities but within reach of their markets. Finally, transportation costs could be
kept at a minimum with the hauling of ore to Ojibway by water and the short link up of the Essex Terminal Railroad at Ojibway with the Grand Trunk, Canadian Pacific, Wabash, Michigan Central and the future Canadian Northern Line in Sandwich Windsor and Detroit.

For over three and a half years the syndicate waited and held on to the Clark property. Finally on 1 January 1913 the announcement they had patiently awaited arrived; Ojibway had been selected as the site of the United States Steel Corporation's Canadian plant. From the moment the announcement was made, a mad rush for property in Sandwich West Township and in Ojibway took place. Large ads appeared in the Evening Record for the sale of prime land in the area. Real estate companies began to promote their lands as solid 'sure-thing' investments. Many of them issued promotion literature and soon thousands of people all across North America were caught up in the fever of land speculation.

One of these promotion ads appearing on 18 April 1913 advertised "three subdivisions ready for the market." It is almost certain that Subdivision No. 3 (See Map No. 2) is the Clark farm which had been purchased by the land syndicate in 1909 and which was now under the title of Healy-Page-Chappus Ltd. Their advertisement indicated that these subdivision lots would go on sale starting 28 April 1913 with prices ranging from $200.00 to $500.00 per lot.
Clark's reaction to the advertisement was one of anger and disbelief and his response predictable. The men that he had trusted had misled him in an apparent attempt to cheat him out of the fair market value of his property. The resulting legal action resulted in the following article being published in the May 30, 1913 edition of the Evening Record; "Announcement of Steel Trust Cause of Many Law Suits" "Sandwich West Farmer Declares Real Estate Men Deceived Him" - "Wants to Rid Himself of Claims of Syndicate"

An action by David Clark, a Sandwich West farmer, against Jules Robinet of Sandwich and Albert F. Healy of Sandwich was instituted and is being heard by Mr. Justice Lennox to get rid of the claims of Healy, Robinet and William Parker concerning an agreement entered into September 1909 whereby Healy, Robinet and Parker were to financially assist Clark in the sale of his farm.

The farm is situated on Malden Road in close proximity to Ojibway and the project was to have the farm laid out into lots which was expected to sell for something over $10,000.00. The project was launched when rumors of the expected coming of the steel plant was being circulated. $10,000.00 was to go to Clark and after payment of all expenses the balance was to be equally divided between Robinet, Healy and Parker.

After some years of endeavour to sell the property the three men became discouraged and agreed to withdraw upon the payment of what they had expended in connection with the speculation. Healy and Parker were each to receive $404.00 and Robinet $47.00.

Clark agreed to pay these sums but before he could do so Robinet assigned his claim to Adhelme Jacques who turned out afterwards to be acting for Leo Page who in turn was acting for the steel trust.
Healy then refused the $404.00 until Clark would convey the property in question to Jacques or Page. Clark refused to do this under any conditions and brought the action to free himself of the claims. Judgment in this action was reserved.

Page and Jacques then brought action against Clark to compel him to carry out an agreement dated October, 1912, by which Clark agreed to sell Jacques the land for $13,000, still acting for Page. $200.00 was paid to Clark by Jacques on the sale. Last January, when the announcement was made by the steel trust that property had been actually bought for their plant, Clark claimed that he had been deceived by Jacques and Page and refused to carry out the contract. Judgment also reserved in this action.

It is apparent, just by reading the newspaper coverage of these cases, that each party involved had used, to say the least, some questionable, if not unethical and illegal business practices. With Healy and Robinet making sure that no bids for the property were high enough to satisfy the syndicate and with Healy's partner Page negotiating behind the scenes with the steel trust, the syndicate could foresee huge profits for themselves when this property was sold.

Unfortunately, for the syndicate however, this was not to be the case. With the different legal actions dragging their way through the Canadian judicial system, it was almost two years before the entire matter was resolved. The Evening Record covered the story on May 12, 1915. "Clark-Robinet Case Settled"
Well known real estate man came to terms in action to set aside syndicate agreement." The case of Clark vs. Robinet which was on the docket for the Supreme Court sittings at Sandwich before Mr. Justice Sutherland was settled by consent; each party paying its own costs. The case was settled by Leo Page and A. F. Healy taking the Clark farm of 107 acres, paying $50,000.00 and re-selling 22 acres to the Canadian Steel Cor. for $22,000.00.

To backtrack for a moment, Robinet remained relatively quite in real estate circles for a couple of years once the syndicate's deal for the Clark farm had been completed. For much of 1909, 1910 and even 1911, Jules only recorded dealings are those of giving out 60 or 90 day options on property that he owned in an attempt to sell said property. The increase in this type of transaction may lead one to speculate that people were hearing rumors of the U. S. Steel Company's plans and were trying to get in on the main floor without tying up all their capital by buying the property outright before an announcement was made. Such a strategy had worked for Robinet with regards to the Sandwich post office property.

By October 1911, however, Robinet was in negotiations for the sale of the cornerstone of his business empire for twenty years. The St. Antoine Block, Robinet's most prized land holding, was up for sale. On 29 October H. W. Allan of the Home Bank offered Jules $9,000.00 for the building and property. The next day, Jules made a counter offer of $10,700.00 for the block.
Sandwich Property
Some Good Bargains
10 houses for sale all within two blocks from postoffice ranging from $500 to $2,500; sewer connection.
Vacant town lots from $100 to $200, on easy terms all within one block from courthouse.
Black loam for lawn or flower beds at $2.50 per load.
Good building bricks.

Jules Robinet,
Phone 597, Office Opposite Postoffice, SANDWICH.

SPECIAL
Six lots on Giles ave. Davis subdivision, at $825, long terms.
In Sandwich 600 feet from Post Office on Hill st., corner lot, 70x120, suitable for business or terrace $2,680.
4-room cottage, 900 feet from post office, $150 down, $10 a month until paid.
298 feet on Bedford st at $2250 per acre.
Home Bank Building Phone 597 Sec.

Jules Robinet

Robinet Land Advertisements
On 31 October the officials of the Home Bank accepted Robinet's counter offer. Although the deal was agreed upon on the 31st, the news of the sale was not made official until early December. On 6 December 1911, the Evening Record published the following article concerning the sale.

"Large Real Estate Deal in Sandwich". "Home Bank Purchases the Robinet Block and other movements on foot in town."

The Home Bank for $10,700.00 has purchased the large Robinet Block located at the corner of Mill and Bedford streets. The block is about 52 square feet in dimension and contains the grocery store of Arthur Page, the Acme Co. hardware store under the management of Mr. A. R. Marantette and the Robinet Wine Co. store on the first floor, a dwelling flat and the C. M. B. A. hall on the second and an assembly hall of considerable size on the third.

It is the intention of the bank to vacate their present premises in the McKee block on Bedford west and locate in the corner store now being occupied by Page, the grocer. The corner store will be completely remodelled into a modern bank. Notice to be given to Mr. Page to vacate on January 31. The transaction is evidence in the confidence of the management of the bank in the rapid increase in the prosperity of Sandwich.

As well, by the end of the year, the subdivision of Block D was totally completed and many of the lots were put up for rent or sale. Even with the sale of the St. Antoine Block, Robinet's holdings in Sandwich were still quite considerable.
1912 proved to be a profitable year for Robinet although only one piece of property purchased was still a part of his holdings in 1914. Most of the properties which Robinet purchased during this period were bought for the sole purpose of being resold quickly and for a handsome profit. One such transaction involved lot 183 on Wyandotte Street which Robinet purchased from Chappus on 16 December 1912 for $850.00. One month later Robinet sold this property to Howard of the Sandwich Real Estate Company for $1,000.00. Jules had made a tidy $150.00 profit for keeping the land a mere 39 days.

The announcement on 1 January 1913 of U. S. Steel's intentions in Ojibway allowed Robinet to handle some of the largest deals in his realty career. During the next two years land prices soared as everyone with a little money tried to cash in on the Ojibway expansion. Robinet's role is very complicated as regards these land transactions. He was not only buying and selling his own property, but was acting as an agent for others as well as being part of a syndicate purchasing properties to be sold directly to the steel trust, such as the Clark farm.

Under these boom conditions, Robinet began to advertise his properties in the *Evening Record*, something he had never done in previous years. An ad which ran on 1 May 1913 and several times subsequently, showed that Robinet was handling in excess of one quarter of a million dollars in property.
Steel Plant and
Other Property

One 1-4 of a Million Dollars Worth of Property for Sale In
Ojibway, Sandwich, Windsor, Tecumseh and Amherstburg

In Ojibway

On Matchett Road 130 Lots at $250 ............ $32,500
On Boufford Road, 93 Lots, at $200 ............ $18,000
17 acres joining Corporation Brick plant .... 30,000
6 acres on Matchett Road $300.00 ............. 18,000
30 acres ........................................ 5,000
30 acres ........................................ 7,500
22 acres ........................................ 3,300

IN SANDWICH.

130 town lots at $350 ......................... $66,550
48 feet Bedford, business lot .................. 3,800
24 feet ........................................... 2,000
164 feet Mill street .............................. 7,500
R. R. Siding, 3 1/2 acres ....................... 4,000
Felix avenue, one Brick house ............... 2,300
Felix avenue, 4 dwelling terrace ............. 5,000
Huron street, one brick house ............... 2,500
Huron street, one brick house ............... 3,500
Touriner avenue, 1 cottage ................... 1,300
Peter street, one cottage ...................... 1,700

IN WINDSOR.

208 feet on Bedford street in Windsor ........ 5,000
100x145 on London street, 3 houses .......... 10,000

IN TECUMSEH

4 acres fronting S. W. & A. Roy W. ............ 4,000
40 acres on Tecumseh road .................... 5,000

IN AMHERSTBURG.

50 acre farm with river front ................ 10,000
180 feet overlooking river, at $10 a foot ................ 1,800
15 town lots at $200.00 ...................... 3,000
60 acres best fruit land, $150 per acre ........ 9,000

$263,000

See

Jules Robinet
Home Bank Bldg. — — — Sandwich
Phone 597 or 1840
Property Bought and Sold
This was only property up for sale, however, and does not reveal the amount of land he was holding for himself, individually or as a member of the land syndicate. One of Robinet's largest deals during this period was concluded on 31 October 1913 when Howard of the Sandwich Realty Company purchased 60 acres of land on Matchett Road for over $17,000.00.42

This transaction and other major deals took place soon after news of the law suit against Robinet appeared in the newspaper. The lack of panic or concern by those investors dealing with Robinet showed that the publicity of the law suit did not have much of an affect on Robinet's credibility as a fair and honest realtor.

With the law suit pending Robinet continued throughout 1914 and most of 1915 with business as usual. After the suit was settled on 12 May 1915, the amount of land transactions in which Robinet was involved did drop off somewhat. But it is difficult to say whether this was a result of the judgment against Robinet or whether Robinet had just decided to take a break from the real estate game which had kept him going almost non-stop for 4 years.

Another possibility and one that must be examined is that the economy of Sandwich was feeling the first effects of the war in Europe. This would explain a great deal during this period and would also explain the continuing decline of Robinet's activity in the real estate market.
There was some activity on Robinet's part but most of these transactions resulted in the sale of portions of Robinet's holdings at considerably less than their previous market value. Two such deals took place between September 1916 and May 1917. On 14 September 1916 Robinet sold his entire land holdings in Amherstburg to F. A. Hough, a lawyer and land speculator, for $13,600.00. Only two years previous to the sale, the property had been advertised for prices totalling $23,800.00. The other bargain deal was completed on 14 May 1917 when Robinet sold his interest (22%) in the Washington Park subdivision to Boucher for $40,000.00, which was about the value of the property when he became involved with it through Arthur Page in April 1914.

Robinet continued to sell much of his property in 1918 and 1919. By the end of 1919 the consolidation of Robinet's holdings was completed with Robinet having received in excess of $60,000.00 for properties sold.

With this money, Robinet held the mortgage for an entire subdivision in Sandwich West Township. This subdivision would be known as Plan Number 1020 and consisted of a substantial number of lots along Spring Garden Road. In return for providing the mortgage Robinet was given twenty-nine choice lots in the subdivision and $1.00 in cash.
This major deal provided Robinet with a new drive into the 1920's. He still continued to sell more than he bought, and those purchases that he did make were for properties which he could turn over for a quick profit.

In spite of the Clark case and Robinet's success in the rough and tumble world of boomtime land speculation, Jules remained a generous benefactor to family and friends. On 27 December 1920 Robinet instructed a lawyer named Grecu to transfer the titles of several pieces of property to some of his older children. To Francois, Robinet gave the lot on which his son's house stood and a small house on St. Joseph. To Joseph, he gave the property on which his house was situated as well as the lots on each side. To Paul, he gave a lot on Baby Street which had a stucco house constructed upon it and to Emile he gave houses on Huron and Baby Streets, as well as Lots 157 and 158 on Huron Street. The total value of these gifts is unknown, but they reveal Robinet's devotion and love for his family.

Throughout Robinet's career as a land speculator and real estate agent he not only purchased or sold properties, but in many instances was responsible for the structures situated on these lands. Many of the properties Robinet sold had houses or small cottages constructed upon them, and Robinet was responsible at least in part for their construction. In his diaries Robinet detailed many
construction jobs. For the most part, Robinet was directly responsible for digging the building's foundation and sometimes for the sewer hookup.\textsuperscript{48} After that, Robinet would usually ask for tenders from different tradesmen in the area to handle the masonry, wood, plumbing and electrical work. Robinet hired different men but some names occur more often than others. Armand Baillargeon was hired frequently to build the wooden frames for the building and was paid $500.00 for each job.\textsuperscript{49} A man named Ross was Robinet's frequent choice as a plumber and for his work on some duplex houses Robinet was building on Lot 25 on Peter Street he was paid $650.00;\textsuperscript{50} for the same job, Mantion the plasterer was paid $128.00.\textsuperscript{51} As Robinet grew older, this phase of his land interests faded, although he did hire some Polish workers to dig foundations for a time.\textsuperscript{52}

During the 1920's Robinet's activity in the real estate markets remained fairly active and he became involved as an agent as well as a speculator in many large transactions. Although there are too many to discuss individually, several important deals included the handling of the sale of 20 lots in the Spring Garden Road subdivision to John McRobert for $6,800.00,\textsuperscript{53} and the sale of 84 lots in the Washington Park subdivision for $15,000.00 to an undisclosed buyer.\textsuperscript{54}
In 1926, Robinet financed another entire subdivision. Robinet and Mrs. Virginia Girard, a widow from Sandwich West Township, granted a $3,600.00 mortgage to Emile Isabey, a Sandwich resident, to finance the purchase of all of the lots which composed Plan 1209. Robinet also became increasingly involved in another major deal involving the sale of 80 acres of land to John F. Gundy through Marentette Realties for $180,000.00. In his diaries Robinet claims the property as his own, but repeated searches through the abstract indexes of the Essex County Registry Office revealed no evidence of his claim. It is therefore likely that Robinet was the agent involved in the transactions and that his use of the word "my" was just figurative.

Robinet's involvement in these major land transactions during the 1920's showed a spirit of optimism and prosperity in which Robinet along with other speculators believed. As a result of this optimistic spirit, the need to acquire more land and the desire to expand outweighed most men's frugality and conservative thinking. Robinet, along with others failed to anticipate the end of the boom before it was too late and overextended his financial resources.

The stock market crash of 1929 and its subsequent repercussions nearly destroyed the business empire that Robinet had spent most of his adult life trying to build. Only the diversity of his business interests allowed him to ride out the economic upheaval which destroyed many a man.
Robinet did not, however, escape unscathed. Lots that he purchased in Oldcastle on August 2, 1928 for $11,000 were sold for $1,800.00 on April 29, 1929. By the beginning of 1930, the real estate market had collapsed and Robinet was left with many pieces of property on which he had put a small deposit and had expected to pay for through their rent or resale. Some of the rented properties became vacant as people lost their jobs and could not afford to pay their rent. This left Robinet holding several properties which provided him with no income but still required taxes and mortgage payments to be paid. By 14 July 1931, Robinet found himself $10,488.00 in arrears to the Imperial Bank and finally declared bankruptcy.

Robinet was ordered to liquidate his assets, and as a result lost a substantial number of properties. By February 1934 Robinet was on the verge of losing even more of his holdings as the Township of Sandwich West issued a Tax Arrears Certificate against the lots he held in Plan 1209.

It is impossible to calculate the financial losses which Robinet suffered during the depression, but estimates of losses between $300,000 and $400,000 seem quite feasible. Despite these figures, Robinet was luckier that most. The expansion of his wine business allowed him an adequate income to support his family and to attempt to rebuild his property holdings.
From the end of the depression to the last months of his life, Robinet remained active in real estate. He continued to buy and sell property, but on a much smaller scale than in the boom years. His last recorded transaction had Robinet selling 8 lots and a house to John Snook for $6,000.00, on 8 June 1942, just six months before his death. 63

Robinet's involvement in the Sandwich and Windsor real estate markets for over fifty years and to within six months of his death shows not only his obvious ability and intelligence in land speculation but also his inbred fear that without property holdings he would not be considered a respected and powerful member of the community; a position he had desired and one which he had achieved within his lifetime.
CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Any study of Jules Robinet's life would be incomplete without a discussion of his involvement in local political and religious affairs. This chapter will not attempt to cover every year or event in his political career but will concentrate on those controversies which best illustrate Robinet's basic beliefs. As regards his religious activities, the main emphasis will focus on his involvement in numerous religious organizations and a discussion of his relationship with the church and church officials.

Robinet's political career began in late December 1896 when Jules was nominated for water commissioner for the Town of Sandwich. No details are available concerning the campaign other than to say that Robinet was elected
along with C. F. Pequegnot on 5 January 1897.\textsuperscript{1} The election results showed Robinet winning the second water commissioner seat from his nearest rival by a margin of 177 to 151.\textsuperscript{2}

Robinet held the post of water commissioner for two years.\textsuperscript{3} During this period he played a role in the construction of sewers in the Town of Sandwich, especially in those areas that were just being developed. This interest in sewer construction continued with Robinet even after his political career had ended, probably as a result of his major land interests within the town.\textsuperscript{4}

In 1899, Robinet gave up his position of water commissioner to serve his first term as Sandwich town councillor. Within two months of his election, however, he was embroiled in the first major controversy of his political career. On 9 March 1899, The Windsor Record reported that Auguste Robinet, Jules' brother, had been awarded the contract to extend the Mill Street sewer system. Publication of all bids revealed that Auguste's successful bid was second highest of those submitted.\textsuperscript{5} Cries went up from the other bidders as well as many citizens that Auguste Robinet had been awarded the contract because his brother Jules was a councillor and because of the close relationship between the Robinets and Mayor Ernest Girardot.
For four days the question of whether Jules Robinet had used his influence to assure his brother a municipal contract hung over the Town of Sandwich. On 12 March 1899, the explanation for the town council's decision was made and published in the next day's edition of The Windsor Record. Town council explained that the contract had been awarded to Robinet because he was only one of two persons bidding for the contract who had submitted their tenders ahead of the 28 February 1899 closing date and that his was the lowest of the two bids. As well, Robinet was only one of two tenders who mentioned that they would use high quality Portland cement and corking in the sewer construction. As a result, council upheld its decision to award Robinet the contract. Mayor Girardot responded to the allegations that he used his personal influence to get the contract awarded to Auguste Robinet, and flatly denied any wrongdoing.

Robinet continued to serve as a Sandwich councillor for several years, but did not distinguish himself above his fellow councillors. In December 1902, some controversy did occur which directly involved Robinet, not in any political issue, but in his very election. On 18 December 1902, Robinet was asked by a group of citizens to run for the post of deputy-reeve for Sandwich West Township in the upcoming election. Robinet felt that such a move would certainly advance his political career and he accepted the call and their support. In order to run for the post of
deputy-reeve however, Robinet had to abandon his career as a councillor for Sandwich. This he did on 25 December 1902 by withdrawing his name from the upcoming municipal election. He sent his letter of resignation to C. E. Mason and sent two bills of "generous acquaintance" to his supporters.9

The controversy arose on 28 December 1902 when Robinet was nominated for councillor at the nomination meetings by H. Morand and W. Hill,10 although he had already withdrawn his name from contention. Three days later, on 31 December 1902, Robinet was confronted by a delegation at his wine warehouse. They argued that his letter of resignation was illegal on the grounds that it was not witnessed and also that his resignation came too close to election day. The fact that he had raised support for his re-election to Sandwich council and not for the post of deputy-reeve of Sandwich West Township was perhaps the crucial argument. At an electors meeting on 2 January 1903 Robinet let his name stand for election to Sandwich council,12 and he withdrew from the deputy-reeve race. The next day Robinet was elected to Sandwich council with the fourth highest total among his fellow councillors. Robinet received 148 votes while Hill 171, Haggart 164, Jackson 150, Ouellette 121, and Hill 121 were also elected.
1902 also marked the beginning of another area of public service for Robinet with the establishment of a separate school board in Sandwich. Although there had been a French-Catholic common public school in Sandwich since 1857\textsuperscript{14} there had never been any provision made for the allocation of other than property taxes for the support of these schools and no provision for extending them to the secondary level.\textsuperscript{15}

Robinet became one of the driving forces of the new board, serving as a member for ten years.\textsuperscript{16} He participated in the establishment of the first Sandwich separate school, under the elected board's control on 25 July 1902\textsuperscript{17} and fought a continuous struggle with the public school board to gain the redistribution of educational resources necessary to support this school and the efforts of the new separate school board.\textsuperscript{18}

The rapid urbanization and industrialization of Canada after 1900 placed greater demands on local educational systems. The public schools with their superior resources were able to meet these demands while the limitations on separate school financing prevented Catholics from meeting these challenges within their own system.\textsuperscript{19}

One incident in Sandwich which reflected the struggle over public and separate resources was the battle over control of the No. 2 school on Bedford street. In early
1900 the Catholic diocese determined that separate schools under a separate school board should be established in Sandwich. Previously public schools had been erected with both Catholic and Protestant ratepayer's money and now a solution had to be found to the question of what property should be given to the separate schools. Until a decision could be reached the public board had granted the separate board the use of No. 2 school for one year, while a new separate school was built.

The problem arose when the public board wanted the separate board to pay a rent of $200.00 for the use of the building. In a meeting of the public board on 6 February 1902 Mayor Girardot, who attended the meeting as a representative of the separate board, stated that the Catholic portion of the community had no intention of paying rent on the school because they had already paid for its construction. He also hoped the public board would grant the Catholics free access to the building. The public board objected, but on 11 March 1902 a letter from Deputy Attorney General J.G. Cartwright advised it that the separate school board should be allowed to use the school until the matter of title could be resolved.

The reaction of the public board to Cartwright's letter was best summed up by Trustee W.B. Haggart who felt that a satisfactory solution could be found only
through reference to the courts. For two months, the case was fought through the judicial system. On 5 May 1902 Mr. Justice Horne handed his decision. In his opinion the No. 2 school was the sole property of the public board and should be vacated by the separate board immediately. The judge's order was executed by Deputy-Sheriff Rumball on 9 May 1902, but only after the use of force was threatened by the sheriff.

For about the next month the separate board conducted classes in the church buildings at Assumption. But this was, at best, a temporary solution to the problem. In early June 1902 a proposition was submitted to purchase the No. 2 school. A committee was selected by the separate board to submit their proposal. For almost two weeks Trustees Robinet, Allan, Tournier, and Janet of the separate board negotiated with Trustees Haggart, Grey, and Sparks of the public board over a suitable price. On 11 June 1902 an agreement was reached between the committees. The separate board agreed to pay the public board $2500.00 for the school. The money the public board received was used for improvements to the Mill Street No. 1 school. The proud new owners of the No. 2 school announced plans to raise the roof and a second floor in order to accommodate all of their students.
Although the buying of the No. 2 school was not the most satisfactory solution to the problems in the minds of the separate board members it was an action that had to be taken in order to establish their independence from the public board and maintain the education of their students.

Previous to these conflicts the Catholic Church had been the spokesman for Catholic education, but now the laity assumed a more active decision-making role and formed the Catholic Ratepayers Association which lobbied government officials to secure additional revenue for separate schools. 28

Petitions from many Catholic parishes were sent to the provincial premier and his ministers. Robinet was twice sent to Toronto, representing the Sandwich separate board, in an attempt to secure equity with the Sandwich public board. 29 These petitions although courteously received by government officials had not much effect until the issue was raised by both sides during the 1933 provincial election. Eventually in 1936 Catholic claims were recognized through increases in departmental grants to separate schools. 30

Robinet had long retired from the separate board when this final victory was won, but his contribution to it was as important as any other citizen in Sandwich. He remained a concerned and active member of the community and continued to attend school board meetings and offer his services throughout his life.
As had occurred in 1899, the question of sewer construction led to the next controversy in Robinet's political career. At a 5 February 1904 council meeting the question of the size of the proposed Mill Street sewer was discussed. The council overwhelmingly decided that a two foot wide sewer would adequately handle the drainage of the Mill Street residents. However, Robinet believed that a two foot sewer would not do the job and proposed that the sewer be increased to four feet. Robinet's proposal was not even voted on as he could not even find a seconder among those on council.31

Such a lack of support for one's proposal may have detered other men, but not Robinet. At a 8 March 1904 council meeting, the width of the Mill Street sewer was again discussed and again Robinet's proposal was defeated.32 As a result, Robinet decided to take the question to the people. Jules went to see A.F Healy and had him draw up a petition for a four sewer on Mill Street. Jules then proceeded to campaign for signatures throughout Sandwich, seeking as many signatures as possible but especially those of influential Sandwich residents. These signatures included such notables as Ernest Girardot, Richard McKee, Leo Page and John Cadarette.33 By the next council meeting, Robinet had collected fifty signatures from people who were in favour of a wider Mill Street sewer.
Armed with his petition, Robinet attended the 16 March 1904 council meeting and presented his petition. The *Windsor Record* covered the meeting and reported the following:

"Alderman Robinet hands in his resignation"

A petition from the ratepayers on Mill Street asking for a four foot sewer, said sewer not to exceed nine cents per foot in cost, was presented by Councillor Jules Robinet. Councillors Hill and Ouellette moved that Robinet's motion not be entertained at all. Mr. Robinet moved in amendment that the petition be entertained. There was no seconder to Robinet's motion and Ouellette and Hill's motion was carried. Robinet spoke at some length on the beneficial results to the residents on Mill Street if a four foot sewer were built in such a manner as suggested by the petition. After the vote was taken it was apparent to Robinet that council did not agree with him. A lively debate took place and Robinet withdrew as a member of the council and took a seat among the audience....

The original motion was put and carried. 34

Although his proposal had been defeated, the treatment he received from his fellow councillors was more of a defeat to Robinet than anything else. Although he withdrew his resignation and continued as a councillor for the rest of 1904 he refused to have his name placed in nomination for the 1905 election.

In 1906 Robinet once again became a member of Sandwich council running on a platform which included a plan to consolidate the town's debts and continue the construction of sewers and sidewalks. 35 On 16 January 1906 Sandwich council had its first regular meeting of the year and a slate of standing committees were organized.
Robinet was placed on four different committees: finance, sidewalks, pound, light and fire department and sewers and drainage. Robinet was also elected as chairman of the sidewalks committee. 36

Jules served as a member of Sandwich council through 1906 but did not run again in 1907. Instead, at the urging of his supporters, Robinet set his sights on a higher political office and was nominated for reeve of Sandwich West Township. Robinet's opponent was Eugene Breault, a former member of the Sandwich fire department. 37 On 7 January 1907 Robinet was soundly defeated 174 votes to 129. 38 This defeat hurt Robinet badly and he did not re-enter public life again until 1909 when he was re-elected to the Sandwich separate school board.

After serving on the school board exclusively for two years, Robinet felt it was time to return to the political arena and run for Sandwich council once again. A Windsor Record article on 29 December 1910 described one of the election meetings at which Robinet spoke.

"Sandwich Politicians Get Read for the Fray."

"Jules Robinet, one of the heaviest ratepayers of the town and an old member of the Sandwich town council made a stirring speech. He excited applause when he announced that if he were elected he would be out for procuring a ferry from Sandwich to Detroit. He reprimanded the present members of council for increasing taxes and suggests that they should have issued debentures covering a period of several years and thus the people of years to come would aid in the payment of improvements made by the present
citizens, which they will then enjoy. The increase of three mills on the dollar which was made last year was accounted for in the making of necessary improvements including the water extension, fire department, and equipment purchase of a lot for a town hall site, etc."

Robinet was once again elected to Sandwich council for what would be his last term. He served on several of the council's standing committees and was elected chairman of the fire committee. It was as chairman of the fire committee that Robinet became involved in the events of 5 October 1911. On that night Robinet was punched by one of the town's firefighters, James Pilon. The story was covered in the next day's edition of the Windsor Record in this manner:

"Sandwich Firefighter hits the Chairman of the Fire Committee"

"James Pilon lands blow on Jules Robinet's mouth."

"Two men lay claim to chieftainship of fire department"

A joint meeting of the members of the fire department and town council has been called, as members of council learned how bad things were when a call was sent for the department to answer a blaze at the residence of Edward Curtis on Peter Street and only three firemen turned out. They were James Pilon, Harry Gignac, and Gerry Charbonneau. Other members of the department refused to turn out because Pilon was acting as chief. Following the fire Pilon and Robinet fell into an altercation which ended in Pilon striking a blow over the mouth of Mr. Robinet with his fist....
The Record article went on to say that a petition had been presented to council by the members of the fire department calling for the resignation of Chief Pilon or the acceptance of the resignations of all those who had signed the petition. Council accepted the petition and asked for Pilon's resignation while placing Assistant Chief William Piche in charge. However, when the fire at Mr. Curtis' broke out, both Pilon and Piche responded, but Pilon arrived first and took charge. When the other firemen arrived they refused to act under Pilon's orders. Pilon said that he still considered himself chief as he never submitted his resignation. Only three firefighters stood by the old chief and one of those was his brother-in-law, another a nephew, and the third a neighbour. Robinet said that Pilon was annoyed at him because he introduced the motion calling for Pilon's resignation.³⁹

No immediate resolution to the incident was found and Robinet never mentioned the incident in his diaries. As well, no follow-up story can be found in the Windsor Record so a solution to the problem probably took place behind closed doors. Robinet did not suffer from any lasting effects of the blow either as he attended the very next council meeting and was deeply involved in a debate concerning the construction of the new Sandwich Town Hall.⁴⁰
Robinet continued to serve as a town councillor until the end of 1911. In December he was again approached by his supporters who persuaded him to run for reeve of Sandwich West Township. Robinet's opponent in the 2 January 1912 election was Alex McKee, member of a prominent family which had been associated with Sandwich politics for over fifty years. In a closely contested election Robinet was narrowly defeated 212 votes to 199.41

For Robinet, this defeat marked the end of his political career. Although he still served on the Sandwich separate school board until 1915 he would never again enter the political arena or campaign for any major political office.

Although Robinet's political career was unremarkable he served to the best of his ability and concerned himself with issues he was familiar with such as sewer and building construction. He worked for the benefit of his Sandwich constituents and thought of their well being ahead of his own political career. This concern for the well being of Sandwich residents remained after Robinet's political career was long forgotten; he continued to attend council meetings as a spectator and often spoke out on various issues which ranged from sewer projects 42 to the removal of the post office from Sandwich.43
When one discusses Robinet's religious activities the first and most important point that must be made is that Robinet above all else was a devout Catholic. His relationship with the church was one of the most important things in his life and that of his family. Robinet attended mass at Assumption Church every day for most of his adult life and it is this devotion that brought about his participation in the various organizations of the church.

Robinet was responsible for organizing an ushers group at Assumption which became known as the "Gardes-Suisses" and was elected its first president in August 1905. He remained a member throughout his life and served in many of the group's executive offices.

Jules joined other church organizations as well. They included the Holy Name and Bonne Morte Societies. The Kind Death or "Bonne Morte" Society was an organization responsible for the maintenance of Assumption Church cemetery and again Robinet was elected to various high ranking positions in which he served with diligence and devotion.

Robinet also became involved with The Catholic Mutual Benefit Association which was not directly affiliated with the Catholic church but was organized to devote itself to the assistance of Catholic interests. With the organization's inception in 1878 it conducted social welfare work, handled death and sick claims and invested in municipal bonds and real estate mortgages.
Robinet's involvement with this association was extensive. As well as being elected as president in 1894 and to other executive posts in later years, Robinet provided space for the organization's offices at a minimal cost for over twenty years. Robinet's work with the C. M. B. A. was recognized by the association on 21 April 1914. The Windsor Record covered the event and recorded it this way:

"Sandwich C. M. B. A. Welcomes Jules Robinet"

Members of the C. M. B. A. No. 122 killed the fatted calf and gave Mr. Robinet a banquet upon his return from his tour of Europe. Mr. Robinet was presented with a gold-headed umbrella by the president of the association, in appreciation for his many years of service.

Robinet carried on very close relationships with the clergy who served at Assumption Church. Robinet always opened his home to the priests, whether to give them dinner or to house a special guest of theirs, such as Henri Bourassa. It is strange, however, that when these celebrities were entertained at Robinet's no mention of his generosity appeared in news accounts; even the clergy seemed to be taking advantage of Robinet's devotion and kindness to the church. Robinet gives no indication, in his diaries, that he felt slighted or was emotionally upset by this lack of recognition. It must be said in conclusion that Robinet's sense of duty to the church was one of his foremost priorities and must be considered an area in which he did not adapt to a more modern and moderate approach but instead retained strong traditionalist feelings.
CONCLUSION

Jules Robinet died on 5 December 1942 at the age of 84. Though he had been ill for a lengthy period of time he kept abreast of events that were taking place in Sandwich and with the activities of his family. He continued to make entries in his journals until late August 1942 and never seemed to despair about his illness.

In Jules Robinet we have seen a classic story of an immigrant's struggle to adapt to a new environment. For Robinet, this adaptation to a new country and a new way of life was successful and took him far beyond the entrepreneurial activities of Taylor's French Canadian sample. While Robinet held tightly to the cultural and religious values of his Quebec cousins, he does not seem to have suffered their entrepreneurial limitations. He was progressive and demonstrated a sensitivity to market conditions and a willingness to expand more
commonly found in Anglo-American entrepreneurs. Although he started with little capital or formal business education, Robinet was able to build an entrepreneurial empire which included brickmaking, grape growing and wine manufacturing and extensive real estate holdings in the Sandwich area.

In most French Canadian business enterprises, business and family affairs of the entrepreneurs have been linked in a far more intimate way than one is accustomed to find in any other European or North American business community. In the case of Robinet this was seen in many areas of his entrepreneurship, but never more clearly than his winemaking operation where first the Robinet Brothers and later Jules' sons shared in the development and expansion of the business. Family involvement seems to have been sought less for needed capital accumulation or labour than for more intimate family reasons. Rather than a limiting factor, as Taylor's study suggests, Robinet's family ties may well have provided the motive for expansion as he attempted to launch family members into successful business careers.

Another limiting characteristic of French Canadian entrepreneurship which restricted the size of their businesses was their adamancy about retaining financial and administrative control of their companies. They were reluctant to take out bank loans and disliked taking advice or suggestions on how to run their business.
Robinet does in fact demonstrate a similar reluctance to accept advice and share administrative control as found in Taylor's sample. His reluctance to accept advice or controls of any kind was best demonstrated in his beligerent relationship with liquor license inspectors and was a manifestation of his determination to control his own business. In his brickmaking enterprise his need for administrative control resulted in his buying out partners on two separate occasions in order to keep complete control. His need to personally administer every detail of the business was perhaps an entrepreneurial weakness and a limiting factor in its growth.

Although Robinet fits Taylor's sample in the matter of administrative control, he hardly demonstrated the financial conservatism of his Quebec counterparts. Robinet raised capital by private loans, established joint stock companies and used existing properties for leverage and collateral for bank loans. As a result, he suffered from the same effects of overextension and over optimism as his Anglo-American colleagues when the Depression struck in 1929.

Many French Canadian businessmen who had the capabilities to expand their operations were reluctant to. Instead they showed a marked preference for converting their business earnings into donations for municipal and religious institutions and investment in real estate rather than ploughing their profits back into their companies.
Though less reluctant to reinvest and expand his businesses, Robinet shared their traditional preference. Being a devote Catholic he laboured unselfishly for his church and presented many expensive gifts along with his regular tithe. Robinet also became involved in municipal affairs leading petition drives and being a booster for the community along with sitting for various terms on town council, the separate school board and the housing commission.

Although his involvement with the church and politics were important aspects of his life, his association with land speculation and the real estate market had a greater role in his entrepreneurship and the factors which affected it. It would also prove to be his downfall. Like most entrepreneurs, Robinet used the profits from his other business ventures to buy land. For quite some time he was very successful and was involved in the purchasing or financing of several subdivisions; the buying and selling of some major properties in Sandwich as well as some of the finest tracts of land in the Town of Ojibway. But like many others, Robinet bought much of his real estate on speculation and when the Depression hit he was unable to pay for his properties and lost most of them for tax arrears. The subsequent repercussions left Robinet with very little as compared to what he had acquired previous to the economic collapse. He would never regain this economic stature, although several attempts were made late in his life.
In this paper, the different entrepreneurial ventures of Jules Robinet have discussed and the factors that affected them have been shown. It is obvious that Robinet shared many of the values and preferences which influenced and limited French Canadian entrepreneurs. When it came to matters of church, family and culture, it did not matter that Robinet was a French immigrant and not French Canadian or that he lived in Sandwich, Ontario and not in Quebec.

In business matters, however, Robinet benefited from the freer and less encumbered entrepreneurial milieu of the Anglo-American community in which he was a participant. Robinet was a success, and although he lost much of his fortune during the Depression, others did also. But Robinet survived and survival, especially in business is one of the marks of success. He had created a business empire from virtually nothing and had become a respected member of the community. His efforts on behalf of the town and its citizens made Sandwich a better place to live and warrants him the honourary appellation of "Mr. Sandwich."
APPENDIX I

Excerpts from the Assessment Rolls for the Town of Sandwich 1903

Bishop, J. H. - Sandwich furrier
- West Bedford Street. N 1/4 Lot 5, 3rd Floor, $500.00
- Tenant of Jules Robinet.

Page, Arthur - Sandwich merchant
- West Bedford St. North part Lot 5, $1,000.00
- Tenant of Jules Robinet.

Robinet, Francois 59.
- South Centre Road. East part, Lot 6, 12 acres - $800.00
- Tenant of Jules Robinet.

Robinet, Jules - brick manufacturer
- West Back Street. East 1/2 of Block D - $1,500.00 - 11 3/4 acres.
- West Bedford Street. Southeast part Lot 5, $2,020.00 - 1/8 acre.
- West Peter Street. N 1/2 Lot 7, $400.00 - 1/4 acre.
- East Peter Street. W. 1/2 Block D, $1,800.00 - 12 acres.
- West Baby Street, sub. G, E 1/2 Block L, $50.00.
- East Baby Street, part G, $400.00 - 3 7/8 acres.

La Group - Robinet & Freres - Sandwich West Bedford Street.
Pt. N. E. Part 5 - $600.00.
APPENDIX 2

Excerpts from the Assessment Rolls of the Town of Sandwich 1906

Robinet, Frank, 23, Clerk.
- S. Felix Avenue, Part G, 8 1/2 acres
- land - $600.00, building - $700.00
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Maitre, Cyrille, 60, Sandwich labourer
- N. Chippawa Street - S. W. corner - East 1/2 of Lot D, 1/8 acre
- land - $50.00 - building - $300.00
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Durocher, Henry, 32, Sandwich labourer
- N. Chippawa Street - S. W. Corner - East 1/2 of Lot D - 1/8 acre
- land - $50.00, building - $150.00.

Robinet, Jules, brick manufacturer.
- East Peter Street - part Block D - 19 1/2 acres
- land $1560.00 - buildings - $600.00

- West Peter Street - N. 1/2 Lot 7 - 1/2 acre
- vacant - $400.00.

- East Baby Street - sub. G - 3 1/2 acres
- vacant - $355.00.

- West Baby Street - sub G. East 1/2 Lot L
- vacant - $50.00.

- East Back Street - part of Block E - west part of south 1/2
- 4 3/8 acres
- vacant - $350.00.

- East Peter - Brick Plant - Northwest corner of Block D - 4 acres
- land $400.00 - buildings - $800.00.

- North Centre Rd. - part N 1/2 Lot 4, 10 acres
- vacant - $600.00.

- South Felix - part G - 2 1/4 acres
- vacant - $200.00.

- East Bedford - E 1/2, N. 1/4 of Lot 5, 1/8 acre
- vacant - $275.00.

La Cie Robinet et Freres
- West Bedford - East 1/2, Lot 5, 26 feet
- land - $200.00, buildings - $800.00.

C. M. B. A. Society - tenant to Jules Robinet
- West Bedford Street - Northeast corner of Lot 5, $200.00.

- West Bedford Street - Northeast corner of Lot 5, 26 feet.
- land - $300.00 - buildings - $1200.00.
APPENDIX 3

Excerpts from the Assessment Rolls for the Town of Sandwich 1909

Breault, Eugene, 39, Sandwich coal dealer,
- East Bedford Street - East 1/2 of North 1/2 of Lot 5 - 1/8 acre.
- land $275.00 - buildings - $25.00.
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

C. M. B. A. Society
- West Bedford Street - East 1/2 of north 1/8 of Lot 5 - 2nd floor
- building - $200.00

Maycock, William, 34, Sandwich brick mason.
- West Bedford Street - Northeast corner Lot 5 - 2nd floor
- Building - $400.00.

Morency, Henry, 25, Sandwich labourer.
- North Chippawa - Southeast corner, East 1/2 of Lot D - 1/8 acre
- land $50.00 - buildings - $150.00.
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Emery, Zephire, 30, Sandwich labourer.
- South Felix Avenue - part of Block G - 8 1/2 acres
- land $600.00 - buildings - $700.00.

Becigneul, Eugene, 51 - Winemaker and his son Eugene Jr. 21 - clerk
- South Felix Avenue - subdivision G
- buildings - $600.00 - office and rooms
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Durocher, Henry, 38, Engineer.
- North Huron Street - sub block D, north of lots 185 & 186
- 33 1/2 feet
- land - $50.00 - buildings - $250.00.
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Robinet, Jules, brick manufacturer.
- East Peter - 23 1/4 acres
- land - $1880.00 - buildings - $1,000.00.

East Baby - part block C - 3 acres - land - $325.00.
North Centre - south part, west 1/2 of Lot 4, land - $400.00.
South Felix - part G - 2 1/4 acres - vacant - $200.00.
West Bedford - part east 1/2, north 1/2 of Lot 5, 26 feet, land - $300.00, buildings - $1,000.00.
South Felix - part G, land - $100, buildings - $600.00.
East Back - west part of south 1/2 of Block E, land - $350.00.
APPENDIX 4

Excerpts from the Assessment Rolls for the Town of Sandwich 1911

- West Bedford - Northeast corner of Lot 5
Page - land - $465.00 - buildings - $900.00.
Marentette - buildings - $400.00.
- tenants of Jules Robinet.

Robinet, Emille, 25, Sandwich mail carrier -
- North Chippawa - Plan 548, Lot 61,
- land $30.00.
- tenant of Jules Robinet.

Robinet, Jules, brick manufacturer.
- East Peter - Plan 548, Lots 118-136.
- East Peter - Plan 548, Lots 1-5 - $300.00.
- East Peter - Plan 548, Lots 6 - 16 - $750.00.
- East Peter - Plan 548, Lots 17-28 - $75.00.
- West Baby - Plan 548, Lots 31-39 - $360.00.
- West Baby - Plan 548, Lots 40-46 - $175.00.
- West Baby - Plan 548, Lots 47-53 - $35.00.
- South St. Joseph - Plan 548, Lots 81-98 - $100.00.
- North St. Joseph - Plan 548, Lots 99-117 - $100.00.
- South St. Antoine - Plan 548, Lots 137-155 - $100.00.
- South Huron - Plan 548, Lots 156-174 - $95.00.
- North Huron - Plan 548, Lot 175 - $40.00.
- North Huron - Plan 548, Lots 176-184 - $100.00.
- North Huron - Plan 548 - Lots 187 - 193 - $100.00.
- South Tournier - Plan 548, Lots 194-212 - $220.00.
- West Bedford - S 1/4, N 1/4, E 1/2 of Lot 5, $1065.00.
- West Bedford - Southeast corner of Lot 5, - building, $750.00.
- South Felix - part sub block G. - land $100.00 - buildings - $600.00.
- West Girardot - North part - Lot 4, 1/2 acre - $40.00.
- East Back Street - North part, S 1/2 Block E - $430.00.
County of Essex  

J. Albert Y. Healy

of the City of Windsor

in the County of Essex, Esquire

TO WIT:

make oath and say:

1. That I was personally present, and did see the within Instrument and Duplicate thereof duly signed, sealed and executed by Jules Robinet and Marie Robinet two of the parties thereto.

2. That the said Instrument and Duplicate were executed at the said City of Windsor.

3. That I know the said parties

4. That I am a subscribing witness to the said Instrument and Duplicate

Sworn before me at the City of Windsor

in the County of Essex

this 18th day of June

in the year of our Lord 1909.

A Commissioner for taking Affidavits in H.C. J. &c.

Registrar of Deeds Office

Essex County, Ontario
This Indenture

made (in duplicate) the first day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and Nine

In Pursuance of the Act Respecting Short Forms of Mortgages:

between

Julie Robinet of the Town of Sandwich, in the County of Essex, Brick Manufacturer, hereinafter called the Mortgagor of the first Part

Henry W. Allen of the City of Windsor, in the County of Essex, Inspector of Customs, hereinafter called the Mortgagor of the second Part

Marie Robinet, wife of the said party of the first Part of the third Part

witnesseth that in consideration of eight thousand six hundred Dollars of lawful money of Canada now paid by the said Mortgagor to the said Mortgagor (the receipt whereof is hereby by acknowledged) the said Mortgagor does grant and mortgage unto the said Mortgagor his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever

All and singular those certain parcels of land and premises situate, lying and being in the town of Sandwich, in the County of Essex, and being composed of first part of Block "G" described as follows; commencing on the westerly limit of Felix Avenue distant 1141 feet 6 inches from the easterly limit of said Block "G" measuring along said westerly limit thence North 28 degrees 4 feet following said westerly limit 246 feet 6 inches thence South 62 degrees West 396 feet to the westerly limit of said Block "G" thence South 28 degrees East following said westerly Limit of said Block "G" 246 feet 6 inches thence North 62 degrees East 396 feet more or less to the place of beginning. Second
Part of Lot number five (5) on the West side of Bedford Street described as follows: Commencing at the intersection of Mill Street and Bedford Street at the corner of said lot thence westerly along Mill Street 104 feet thence southerly and parallel to Bedford Street 52 feet thence easterly and parallel to Mill Street 104 feet thence northerly along Bedford Street 52 feet to the place of beginning.

Fourth Part of Block "C" described as follows: Commencing at the South West angle of said Block "C" thence North 62 degrees East 6 chains to Felix Avenue, thence North 28 degrees West along Felix Avenue 14 chains 78 links thence South 62 degrees West 6 chains to the westerly limit of said Block "C" thence South 28 degrees East following said limit 14 chains and 78 links to the place of beginning except from out a parcel frontage of a parallelogram having for one side 52 feet on Felix Avenue and for the other side 208 feet of the Northern Boundary of the land above described. The parcel to hereby conveyed together with the said parallelogram of 208 ft x 52 feet have an area of 6 and 87 7/100 of an acre.

Fifth Part of Block "C" Plan Number Four containing 2 77 7/100 acres described as follows commencing at the South East angle of lot "U" in the southerly limit of Block "C" thence South 68 degrees East following said southerly limit 7 chains 23 links thence North 22 degrees East, 83 links to the eastern limit of Block "C", thence North 28 degrees West following said easterly limit 2 chains 50 links more or less to the southerly limit of a lane on said Plan Number 43 thence North 68 degrees West, following said southerly limit of said lane 4 chains 95 links more or less to the north east angle of lot Letter "G" thence South 22 degrees West 2 chains 93 links more or less to the place of beginning.

Sixth Part of Block "G" described as follows commencing on the westerly limit of Felix Avenue 902 feet South from the South East Angle of lot 18 on Plan 44 commencing in said westerly limit thence South 28 degrees East following said westerly limit of said Felix Avenue distance of 100 feet thence south 62 degrees West a distance of 300 feet thence north 28 degrees West and parallel with said westerly limit of said Felix Avenue a distance of 100 feet thence north 62 degrees East 300 feet to the place of beginning, said last
mentioned limit being distant 3 feet measured on a course of North 28 degrees West from the Northerly limit of a building known at present as Gibbard Wine Factory.

Seventh Part of lot five (5) on the East side of Bedford Street described as follows commencing in the Southerly Limit of Mill Street 105 feet from the rear of said lot number five (5) thence South 22 degrees West 54 feet 5 1/4 inches thence South 67 degrees East to the rear of said lot 105 feet thence North 22 degrees West along the rear of said lot 56 feet 5 inches to Mill Street, thence North 88 degrees West following Mill street 105 feet to the place of Beginning.

Eighth two hundred and twenty three (223) lots according to registrated plan number 549 prepared by Owen M., Ray P., L. S., and dated July 16th, 1908 described as follows— Lots "A" and "B" and Lots One to two hundred and twelve (212) inclusive and lots two hundred and nineteen (219) to two and twenty seven (27) inclusive.
Province of Ontario
County of Essex

To the Registrar of the Registry Division of Essex

Do Certify that Charles A. Aaron of the City of Detroit in the State of Michigan has satisfied the sum of two thousand dollars

Titled: Robert of the Town of Sandwich in the County of Essex

which Mortgage bears date the 10th day of February 1920

established by the person entitled by law to receive the money, and that such part of the land as is herein particularly described, that

is therefore discharged.

Witnesst

[Signature]
This Indenture

Know all Men by these Presents

That Whereas, the said Mortgagor, John Doe, of the City of Toronto, in the Province of Ontario, for and in consideration of Six Thousand Dollars, being the full and entire consideration of the premises, has this day Mortgaged unto the said Mortgagee, Jane Smith, of the said City and Province, the premises described as follows:

The real property situated in the City of Toronto, in the Province of Ontario, comprising

All and every part and parcel of the said premises,

for the term of years forever and for all the interest of the said Mortgagor in the same, to the use and benefit of the said Mortgagee, to-wit:

In pursuance of the said Mortgage, the said Mortgagor has executed this instrument of mortgage, this 1st day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.

Witnesseeth:

the said Mortgagor, John Doe, and the said Mortgagee, Jane Smith.

In Witness whereof, the said Mortgagor and Mortgagee have hereunto set their hands and seals this 1st day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.

Done and signed by the said Mortgagor and Mortgagee in the presence of the following witnesses:

A. Brown
B. Jones
C. Smith

In Witness Whereof, the said witnesses have hereunto set their hands and seals this 1st day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.

Done and signed by the said witnesses in the presence of the said Mortgagor and Mortgagee.

This 1st day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.


[Seal]
APPENDIX 3

Property lost by Robinet in 1931.

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<th>Lot</th>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
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<td>409 Baby</td>
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Township of Sandwich West Tax Arrears Certificate
February 20, 1934
F. E. Gignac, Treasurer.

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</table>
FOOTNOTES - INTRODUCTION


6. The Robinets were welcomed to Sandwich and stayed at the homes of Theodule Girardot and the Tournier family until they were settled. Robinet, Histoire de la Famille Robinet, p. 7.


15. Robinet, Histoire de la Famille Robinet, p. 11.

16. Dr. Charles Casgrain, later to be Senator Casgrain was born at Quebec on August 3, 1825, and devoted his life to public service and to helping those in the French community. He died on Friday, March 8, 1907, at 1:30 p. m. at Hotel Dieu Hospital. The funeral was held on Monday, March 11, 1907, at St. Alphonse's Church. The Evening Record, Friday, March 8, 1907, "Senator Casgrain Passes Peacefully; Death Ends Long and Eventful Career."


19 Jules Robinet and Marie Seguin were married at St. Anne's Parish in Tecumseh by Father Andrieux. Jules was 22 years old and Marie, the daughter of Joseph Seguin and Marcelline Cusson was 19 years old.


24 Taylor, French Canadian Society, p. 273.


3 John Curry was born in Windsor on 4 September 1854. Curry was President of Essex County Savings and Loan Co., The Essex Land Loan and Improvement Co. and The Windsor and Walkerville Land Co. Founded the Curry Brother's Bank in 1874 and worked with Brother James until his death in 1877, and William's withdrawal to take charge of the extensive lumber and charcoal business of the firm in 1887. John Curry then joined with Alex Cameron to form The Essex County Bank. This association lasted until Cameron's death in 1893. Curry remained in banking until 1907 when he sold out to The Dominion Bank. John Curry died 11 May 1912. William G. Curry was born 1 April 1856 and died 12 January 1935. Along with his banking interests with his brother, Curry also was heavily involved in real estate and brick manufacturing.


5 Town of Sandwich, *Assessment Rolls*, 1892.

6 Town of Sandwich, *Assessment Rolls*, 1893.

7 The North Felix Avenue property was 9 1/2 acres and was assessed in 1893 at $750.00. The Bedford Street property was 1 acre in size and was assessed at $600.00 in 1893.


9 The stiff-mud process of brickmaking has clay cut into the required shape by a cylinder type machine. This process requires less tempering of the clay with water and does not require the use of individual brick moulds.

10 The soft-mud process brickmaking process requires clay to be mixed with sand and sufficient water to make a soft mud. This mud is then forced into individual moulds. This is the process Robinet used in his brickmaking operation.
Robinet's diaries have entries for several years on the beginning and ending of brick production and these entries are always in late March - early April for the beginning of brick production and mid to late November for the close of these operations.


Robinet, *Resume of Major Events*, March 7, 1895.


Robinet, *Journals*, November 12, 1902.

Maxfield Sheppard's office was at 10 Sandwich Street West in Sandwich. He had no partners at the time.


Robinet, *Journals*, February 9, 1903.

The sale contract indicated that Curry bought Robinet's stock and the machinery but not his share in the land. The sale also bound Robinet from conducting a similar business in Essex County for a period of five years. *Windsor Evening Record*, February 25, 1903.

The *Windsor Record*, March 25, 1903.


This $50.00 rental fee did not include the 450 acres on West Russell Street which were never in Robinet's or the Company's name and which reverted to the Curry's upon dissolution of the partnership.


Robinet, *Journals*, April 8 - May 7, 1903.


28. The entries on June 22, July 1, and July 5, 1904 in Robinet's diary show the amount of traffic and the amount of money Jules earned in this new business.


32. Robinet, Journals, January 16, 1907.

33. Robinet, Journals, January 19, 1907.


36. The Windsor Evening Record - "Sandwich News" - March 8, 1907.


38. A shareholders meeting of the Robinet Brick Co. was held on June 11, 1910 and Healy was elected vice-president and Allen was elected secretary-treasurer.


40. Robinet, Journals, October 20, 1910.

41. Robinet, Journals, 1912.

42. Robinet, Journals, November 10, 1911.

43. Robinet, Journals, June 15-29, 1912.

44. Robinet, Journals, June 15-29, 1912.
45 Robinet, Journals, June 26, 1915.

46 Robinet, Journals, August 24, 1915.

FOOTNOTES - WINEMARKING


2. The Ontario Temperance Act was enacted in 1916 as a wartime measure to promote economy and Ontario's fighting ability. In 1919 a referendum was held and a majority voted to retain the act on a peacetime basis. By 1925 Ontario remained the only province west of the Maritimes that had not repealed its prohibition laws. Gerald A. Hallowell, Prohibition in Ontario. (Ottawa, Ontario: Ontario Historical Society, 1972), p. ix.


7. In 1893 a Royal Commission was set up to investigate Liquor Traffic in Ontario. Although Robinet was not interviewed, other area residents were and stated similar sentiments. They stated that in this area there is an increasing production of wine and that most of the farmers are cultivating grapes and making their own wine. They also expressed their views that the sale of these light wines would not make the citizens of this area more temperate towards stronger liquors because wine is drunk on a regular basis and in the family circle while beer and strong liquors are a luxury and served only at special times. They also expressed their belief that if a prohibitory law covered the manufacture of wine that it would injuriously affect Essex County. They also expressed the government is going to far by prying into what they eat and drink and they are under no obligation to obey such laws. Ontario Royal Commission on Liquor Traffic, 1893, p. 288-329.

8. Windsor Evening Record, April 5, 1893.


11 Robinet, Resume of Robinet's Life, January 27, 1897.

12 Status de la Cie. Robinet Freres de Sandwich Ltd., 1897.

13 Status de la Robinet Freres, p. 57.


15 Robinet, Resume of Jules Robinet's Life., 1897.

16 Jules Robinet, Journals de Jules Robinet, Volume 1, September 12, 1904.

17 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, September 19, 1904.

18 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 30-December 6, 1904.

19 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 7, 1904.

20 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 13 - December 16, 1904.


22 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 31, 1904.

23 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, January 17, 1905.

24 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 18, 1905.

25 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 20, 1905.

26 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, September 25, 1906.

27 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, September 25, 1906.

28 William C. Kennedy was born 1868. His career in business includes positions as secretary-treasurer and then president of the Walker Oil and Gas Co., president of the Windsor Board of Trade. Also served on Windsor Board of Education, the Council of Chibway and member of Parliament for Essex North in 1918. Kennedy died 17 January 1923.
According to the Windsor directory, which listed every business in the Border Cities area the Girardot Wine Co. was operational until 1911. Windsor Directory including Walkerville and Sandwich. Union Publishing Co. of Ingersoll, 1911.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 15, 1913.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, April 28, 1914.


Robinet, Journals de Robinet, September 15, 1917.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 6, 1917.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, January - April, 1918.

Most of the jugs that Robinet purchased were of the 5 gallon variety and which he paid 95 cents a piece for in 1918.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, July - August, 1918.

Statutes, Government of Ontario. "The Ontario Temperance Act". April 24, 1919, Section 3(2) p. 10. Ontario Temperance Act, 1919. 3(2). "Each of the said vendors shall upon request in writing deliver to the Board a correct inventory or statement of the stock of liquors on hand held by him including any liquor purchased prior to the delivery of such request together with a statement of the prices paid for each item of liquor mentioned in such statement."

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, July 8, 1918.

Ontario Temperance Act, Section 22, March 26, 1918. No person shall within Ontario print publish or distribute either publicly or privately any circular or any newspaper containing a price list of intoxicating liquor used for beverage purposes however described or any announcement however expressed having for its object the solicitation within Ontario of orders for such liquor and no person within Ontario shall by any other means whatever solicit such orders.


46 Hallowell, Prohibition in Ontario, p. 70-71.

47 Hallowell, Prohibition in Ontario, p. 103.

48 The strength of wines ordinarily ran from 15 to 25 per cent proof spirits of alcohol during this period.

49 See Robinet Annual Sales Chart.

50 Hallowell, Prohibition in Ontario, p. 104.

51 Hallowell, Prohibition in Ontario, p. 103.

52 Although the demand for his wine increased Robinet did not increase the price of the wine accordingly. In 1918 12 bottles of red cost $5.00 while 12 bottles of white cost $6.00. Two years later, during the height of prohibition, Robinet increased his price only minimally to $6.00 for 12 bottles of red and $7.00 for 12 bottles of white.

53 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 8, 1920.

54 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 26, 1920.

55 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, September 27, 1922.


57 Plumridge to Moosberger, Canadian Wine Institute Files.

58 The Ontario Liquor Control Act was introduced in June 1927 replacing the Ontario Temperance Act and thereby ending prohibition in Ontario.


Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 3, 1927.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 18, 1927.


Robinet's diaries indicate the step-by-step construction of the Oldcastle winery through late July and early August, 1928.


Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 2-6, 1928.

One incident of minor importance occurred on December 11, 1928 when Jules received a new report from Thillipsay, the tax inspector on wine imports, which indicated that Jules owed $780.00 more in taxes than the $3200.00 that he had already paid. Jules paid the additional tax, but his dislike for government officials grew. Journals de Robinet, December 11, 1928.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, February 16, 1933.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, March 9, 1933.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, March 10, 1933.

Plumridge to Moosberger, Canadian Wine Institute Files.

Rannie, Journals de Robinet, January 10, 1935.
The Marsh Family, which for more than six decades was engaged in winemaking in Ontario had its beginnings in 1890, incorporating in 1906 as the Stamford Park Wine Co. Ltd. which operated until 1953, under various names, when it was sold to T. G. Bright & Co. Limited.

Jules received $9,500.00 for the sale with the rest being split among Marie, Emile, and Joseph.

Plumridge to Moosberger, Canadian Wine Institute Files.


See Appendix I, Robinet Wine Co. Annual Sales.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 16, 1939.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Windsor Evening Star, November 16, 1939, p. 3.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 18-19, 1939.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 22, 1939.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, January 3, 1940.

FOOTNOTES – LAND TRANSACTIONS

1 This property was purchased in the spring of 1882.

2 Block D was the land within the borders of Peter, Bloomfield, Tournier and Chippewa Streets.

3 Block L was purchased in 1892 and had an assessed value during that year of $50.00.

4 These lots totalled 4,500 acres and were assessed in 1893 at $2,200.00.

5 Robinet, Journals de Robinet, February 24, 1894.

6 The property would be subsequently known as the St. Antoine Block.

7 The tenants which occupied Robinet's building included J. H. Bishop, the furrier; Arthur Page, a merchant; and William Maycock, a brick mason.

8 The tenants of Robinet's assorted holdings included such names as Roger Ludger, Cyrille Maitre, Henry Durocher, and Peter Seguin all of whom were labourers.

9 One group of properties which did not fall into Robinet's hands as a result of the dissolution of his brick partnership with the Curry Brothers were the five riverfront lots on West Russell Street.

10 See Appendix I.

11 See Appendix I.

12 See Appendix I.

13 The sale of the Girardot property took more than a year to complete. On September 16, 1904 the final papers were signed. John Curry bought 4 1/2 acres for $876.00, while his brother William Curry purchased the remainder of the 11 3/4 acres for $200.00 an acre, payable at $25.00 down and $25.00 every six months at 5% interest per annum. Robinet received $230.00 commission.
The lots which Robinet was concerned with were two adjoining lots on the southwest corner of Mill and Bedford streets. One lot was 104' x 52' and had an asking price of $1800.00 while the other lot was 208' x 52' and had an asking price of $2800.00.

Robinet, Journals, October 12, 1904.

The final approval for Robinet's plan of subdividing Block D was given by council on November 2, 1908.

The streets that would cut through Block D were Laforet, Tournier, Brock, St. Antoine and St. Joseph.

Although Block D was used basically for brickmaking Robinet did rent out pieces of property on the outlying areas of the block. These tenants included in 1906 Cyrille Maitre, a 60 year old Sandwich labourer and Henry Durocher, a 32 year old labourer, also from Sandwich.

This property was probably located on Malden Road. This belief is based on a March 8, 1907 article in the Evening Record which stated that "Jules Robinet of the firm of Robinet & Co. had a large gange of men and teams removing sheds and other fixtures in connection with his brick plant's move to Malden Road where a new brickyard will be started this summer."

Robinet, Journals, May 19 and November 12, 1906.

See Appendix 2.

See Appendix 5.

See Appendix 3.

See Map 2.

Robinet, Journals, September 9, 1909.

The real estate company which acted as the agent of U. S. Steel in its purchase of the plant and town sites was Healy, Page and Chappus. Both Arthur Healy and Leo Page were part of the land syndicate in which Robinet was involved and were responsible for supplying the syndicate with information concerning the steel corporation's decisions as well as advising them on prime land that would be adjoining the new steel plant.

The Detroit River was from twenty to thirty feet deep along the edge of the property making it very accessible to the large Great Lakes freighters.


Morrison, Garden Gateway, p. 236.


Robinet, Journals de Robinet, April 20, 1910 - July 10, 1911.

This is the same H. W. Allan that received a mortgage from Robinet for parts of Block G and C in 1909.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 30, 1911.

Jules retained his warehouse in the St. Antoine Block for 3 years with 2 wine cellars at $12.00 a month, as well as a shed on the perimeter of the lot; a right-of-way and the offices of the C. M. B. A. for 3 years at $5.00 a month. Robinet, Journals de Robinet, October 29, 1911.

See Appendix 4.

The one piece of property which Robinet held on to during his 1912 dealings was a 24 foot wide lot near the McKee Block on East Bedford Street. Robinet purchased the land for $600.00 from Chappus. The 1914 Town of Sandwich assessments has the property assessed at $1,050.00.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, November 12, 1912.

Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 16, 1912.
41 Robinet, *Journals de Robinet*, January 24, 1913.


46 The individual numbers for the lots Robinet received can be found on the Discharge of Mortgage (Appendix Number 6).


53 Robinet, *Journals de Robinet*, November 21, 1925.

54 Robinet, *Journals de Robinet*, February 20, 1926.

55 See Appendix 7.

56 John Fletcher Gundy was one of the major figures in Windsor real estate development during the 1910's and 20's. He was a charter member and President (1929) of the Border Cities Real Estate Board. In 1907 he joined with H. W. Gundy to form the partnership of Gundy and Gundy. In 1913 he opened his Windsor and Detroit offices and started to acquire considerable real estate holdings in the Border Cities, particularly in the southeastern section of Windsor and in the area surrounding the Roseland Golf and Country Club.

57 The first discussion of this property's sale took place on September 4, 1926 and negotiations continued well into August of 1927. This property was located on Dougall Road and might possibly have been part of the Roseland Park Development which Gundy was involved with.
As well, Jules lost a substantial commission from the sale of 80 acres on Dougall Road to Gundy for $180,000.00 when Gundy went bankrupt on April 24, 1930.
FOOTNOTES - POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

1. The Windsor Record, January 5, 1897.

2. The Windsor Record, January 5, 1897.

3. In the 1898 election Jules was nominated by Ernest Girardot and George Jessop, while Robinet and Ernest Girardot nominated C. F. Pequegnot. Both candidates were elected by acclamation. The Windsor Record, December 27, 1897.

4. Throughout his life Robinet was involved in petition drives for sewer construction in Sandwich. On September 24, 1903 Robinet went to see Leo Page to obtain signatures to get a sewer for Mill Street and again on June 26, 1908. Robinet travelled to a Detroit hospital to get Raymond Gaynet's signature on another sewer construction petition.

5. The bids for the Mill Street sewer extension were as follows:

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<th>Contractor</th>
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<td>Auguste Robinet</td>
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<td>C. F. Babcock</td>
<td>$699.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Wegg Mason</td>
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7. The Windsor Record, March 13, 1899.

8. Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 18, 1902.


10. The Windsor Record, December 29, 1902.

11. Robinet, Journals de Robinet, December 31, 1902.

12. Robinet, Journals de Robinet, January 2, 1903.

13. The Windsor Record, January 6, 1903.

Robinet served as a member of the Separate School Board from 1902 to 1906, when he resigned because he felt that he could not do an adequate job while also serving as a member of Sandwich council. In 1909 Robinet once again was elected to the board and remained a member for the next six years.

St. Francis School was located on the west side of Peter Street near Mill.

The struggle to gain Catholic taxpayer support in Sandwich continued from 1902 to 1936. This struggle took two stages, the first being the fight to gain equity with the public school board and the second stage being the fight to defend the Separate School Board's right of taxation.

Robinet made these trips to Toronto in 1905 and 1909 respectively. On the second trip Robinet was accompanied by Albert Healy and Dr. Reaume in an attempt to add some political clout to the separate board's petition.
The debate over the town hall construction concerned whether construction should begin immediately or wait until spring. Robinet felt that a better job could be done if construction was put off until the spring but he received no support for his proposal and plans were put forward to start construction at once.

The Windsor Record, October 17, 1911.


These offices were located in Robinet's St. Antoine Block on the corner of Mill and Bedford. Even after Robinet sold the block to the Home Bank, Robinet made arrangements which allowed the C. M. B. A. to retain its offices in the building.
FOOTNOTES - CONCLUSION

1. The Windsor Record, December 5, 1942.


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Volume 6 - September 28, 1929 - December 31, 1937.
Volume 7 - January 1, 1938 - August 28, 1942.

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March 9, 1899
March 13, 1899
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January 6, 1903
February 25, 1903
March 25, 1903
March 17, 1904
November 14, 1904
January 16, 1906
January 4, 1907
January 8, 1907
January 16, 1907
April 6, 1909
December 29, 1910
October 6, 1911
October 17, 1911
December 6, 1911
January 2, 1912
December 16, 1912
December 17, 1912
April 18, 1913
April 30, 1913
May 1, 1913
May 30, 1913
April 22, 1914
May 12, 1915
November 30, 1916
March 15, 1918
The Border Cities Star. September, 1918.

August 28, 1928
January 28, 1930


August 13, 1935
August 19, 1935
November 16, 1939
August 21, 1940
December 5, 1942