

NOTE TO READER: *The information contained in these texts is as accurate as possible. It has been compiled from various sources that are difficult to cite. We hope that the reader will forgive us for any discrepancies. Check back periodically, more history to follow...*

CHAPTER 8: THE YEAR 2025 COMMEMORATES THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST IMPORTANT EXPROPRIATION IN SHANNON.

Shannon has withstood a number of expropriations in its history. They were all undertaken by the Minister of National Defense. The first expropriation took place in 1914 and the last expropriation in 1965.

First Expropriation (1914): At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, it became necessary for the Federal Government to acquire additional properties to organize the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The military base, Camp Valcartier, required land where they could train the soldiers preparing for war. Government officials informed the public that this land would be provided by the neighboring villages. These included part of what is now Shannon (then Ste. Catherine) and St. Gabriel-de-Valcartier.

This expropriation impacted Ste-Catherine (Shannon) and some 1,153 acres and ten farmers and their families were expropriated in Shannon alone. As for St.-Gabriel-de-Valcartier, this expropriation affected them much more; approximately 100 farms and proprietors were involved. Some of those who were expropriated settled here in Shannon.

Despite the fact that the residents involved would be awarded compensation, many of these people were hesitant to leave. In their opinion, no compensation would be great enough to replace everything they had. All the land they had cultivated and the houses they had constructed would be seized – everything but the memories.

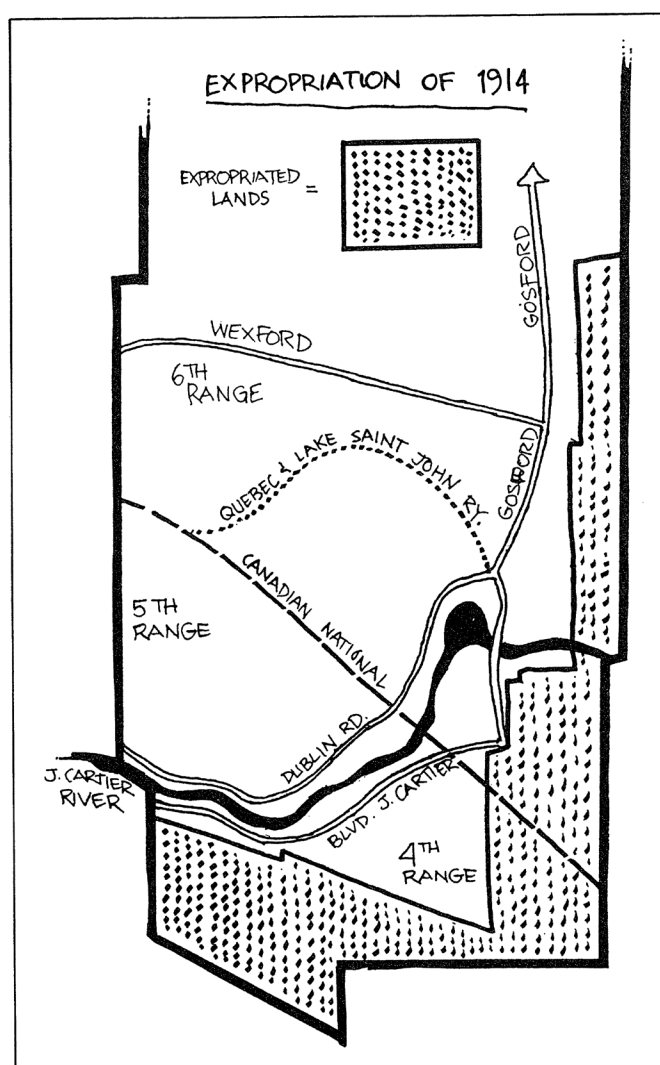
This was all quite a shock to the people of this area. They progressively felt the presence of the army base, as the population of the soldiers swelled to 33,000.

During this period, guards were posted on the bank of the Jacques-Cartier River, near the present Shannon Bridge. Many of these guards had little respect for the people and their farms.

The following is a list provided by Mr. Gerry Neville of Shannon families whose homesteads were expropriated in 1914. The government valuations of the land and buildings do not accurately represent the compensation the families received, which was often significantly less.

Lot Number	Owner	Area in Arpents	Gov't Valuation
277	Jerry Fogarty	135	\$3,500
277 pt	Walter Buchanan	1	\$ 125
278-284	N.A. Kingsland	459	\$9,000
286	Curtis Billing	75	\$1,000
286 (part)	F. Racine	45	\$2,500
287	Joseph Matte	83	\$2,200
413, 414, 415	William Thompson	270	\$2,500
416-417	Maurice Conway	90	\$1,000
418	Edmund Landers	90	\$1,110
419-420	John Griffin	120	\$1,400

*Many owners were awarded damages for crops and short notice of eviction not to exceed 15% of the valuation.



Expropriation of 1914

From the book *"Where Green is Worn"*, Lisa Deveau et al, Legal deposit Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, 4th trimestre 1983

Second Important Expropriation (1965): This expropriation was one of the greatest human tragedies that occurred in this area. The areas affected were the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th ranges representing approximately 10,000 acres of land with its rivers, lakes, forest, bushes and hills.

The expansion of the camp would permit training of units in the use of new weapons having greater ranges and large safety areas and in the deployment of modern vehicles and other equipment under operational conditions.

The government claimed that the residents affected by the expropriation would receive adequate financial compensation for their losses. However, the residents were well aware that the sums being proposed did not truly reflect the value of what they were losing. They recognized that the compensation was insufficient and did not account for the full extent of their losses, both in terms of property value and the disruption to their lives. This disparity between what the government considered "adequate" and what the residents knew to be fair contributed to a widespread sense of injustice and dissatisfaction within the community.

One example was Mrs. Gerald White who was offered \$13,000. for her 180-acre farm, including her house and farm buildings. The average price of a single home was \$18,500 in 1965 so they couldn't even buy or build another house with the compensation.



Picture of Mrs. Gerald White's home, and the one-room
8th range schoolhouse on the left.
From the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville.



Moving day for Mrs. White
From the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville.



Mrs. White's home after the expropriation
From the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville.

Those with wood lots also felt they were being treated unfairly. Like other residents facing expropriation, they believed that the compensation offered did not reflect the true value of their property or account for their loss of livelihood. The wood lots had provided both income and resources for their families, and the prospect of losing them meant a significant upheaval to their way of life. This sense of injustice added to the anger and anxiety experienced by the community as they faced the forced loss of their land and security.

The compensation offered to the residents for their expropriated land was far below its actual market value. Individuals were presented with offers of \$59.00 per acre, despite the fact that the land was realistically worth at least \$150.00 per acre at the time. This significant discrepancy in valuation was common among many of the compensation offers extended to those affected by the expropriation.

In addition to the undervalued compensation for private property, the municipality received no financial reimbursement for the roads and bridges that were taken during the process. Not a single penny was provided to offset the loss of these essential public infrastructures, further exacerbating the impact on the community.



John and Margaret Campbell's homestead on the 8th Range
From the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville

Many of the people, besides being angry, were now quite worried. They were not only losing their homes, but also the security of knowing where their next meal was coming from. Since most of them were farmers, food had been no problem to them. Now they would have to buy their food. For these people, the cost of living would triple. These local people were now faced with the task of finding a new home, a new job and possibly, a completely different style of life.



Expropriated homestead of Mr. John Neville
From the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville.

Eventually, after a lot of pressure and lobbying, the government reviewed the situation and one-quarter of the municipality was saved from the expropriation. The announcement was made by Associate Defence Minister Cadieux, following a visit to the Shannon area. This meant that about 2,500 acres would be left untouched. This was extremely good news to those it exempted from the expropriation. The relentless protesting and writing of letters had finally accomplished something. Associate Defence Minister Cadieux announced that lots 419 to 433 inclusively, on the 6th Range; lots 604 to 610 on the 7th Range and lots 677 and 692 on the 8th Range would be left untouched. Since most of the 8th Range was expropriated, the houses situated on lots 677 and 692 were left with no access from Shannon roads. The residents were obliged to follow roads through two separate municipalities in order to get to their homes, a detour of over 30 minutes. This was quite an inconvenience for them and their families as well as for the municipal council. This situation remains today, with this area now renamed as Kilkenny Road.

By December 15th, 1967, all the families had moved out, Eddy Conway, being the last.

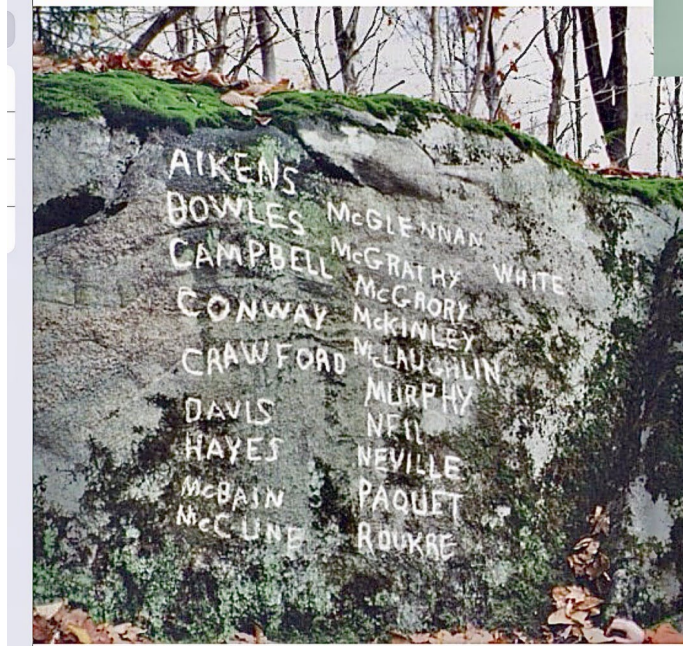


Mr. Eddy Conway's farm – from the collection of Mr. Daniel Neville

Wanting to leave a lasting memory, he went back to carve out all the names of those who were expropriated on a large rock on top of the mountain, Mont Sorrel, along with the inscription *"On this rock is inscribed the family names of the people who lived in the valley to the south and the east from 1820 to 1965 when they were scattered by the expropriation of their land"*.



Carving enhanced with chalk. Photo source: M. Todd Crawford



An enhanced image of the complete list of engraved names inscribed on what is now known locally as “Conway’s Rock” on Mont Sorrel. Photo source: M. Todd Crawford

Following is the list of names engraved on this rock:

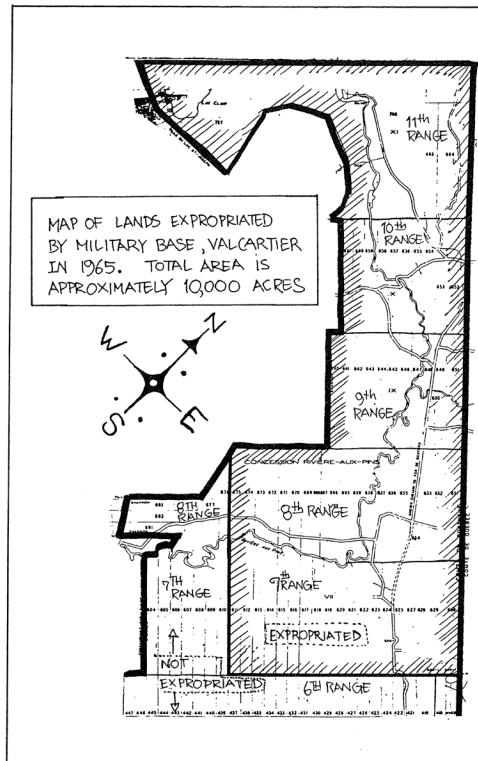
- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| • Aikens | • Bowles | • Campbell | • Conway | • Crawford |
| • Davis | • Hayes | • McBain | • McCune | • McGlennan |
| • McGrathy | • McGrory | • McKinley | • McLaughlin | • Murphy |
| • Neil | • Neville | • Paquet | • Rourke | • White |

N.B.: More information on Eddy Conway can be found on the site of the Registre du patrimoine culturel du Québec, where he has been listed as a person of historical interest for the City of Shannon since 2024.

Many of the residents moved to other parts of Shannon, or to neighbouring towns like Loretteville, etc. They tried to establish a new life for themselves, and it was probably the Irish in them, which spurred their determination and helped them to succeed as well as they did. However, they found that although they had recovered from the tragic event, they would never forget the emotional setback of having to pull up roots put down generations ago. The fondness and love they had for their land would never escape their memories.

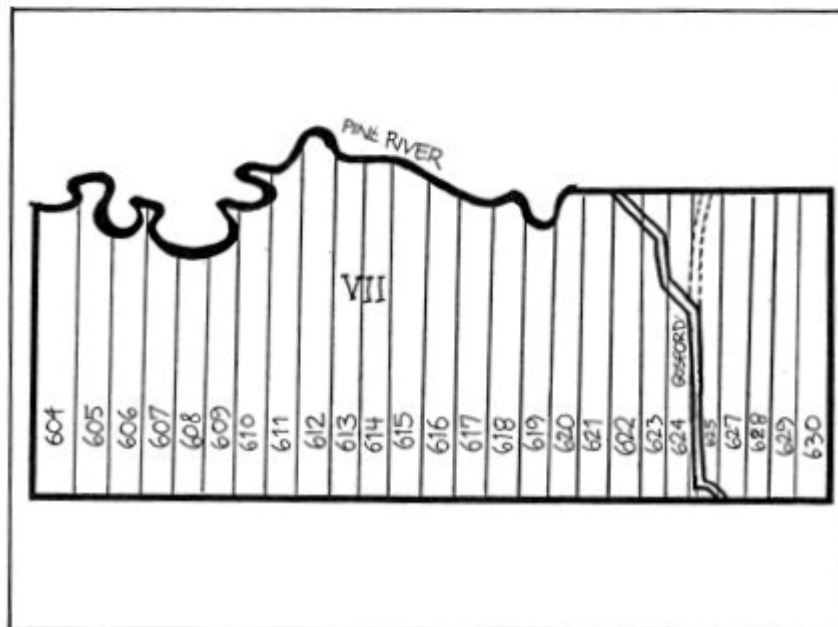
Although many individuals experienced bitterness regarding the expropriation, the presence of the military base has had a significant influence on the community in the years since. Today, the Valcartier Base stands as the largest employer in Shannon, providing work and economic stability to many local residents. This development has shaped the town’s character and has become a central facet of daily life for those living in the area.

Presented below is a map depicting the lands expropriated in 1965, which initially encompassed the territory stretching from the 6th Range to the 11th Range. Ultimately, the 6th Range, known today as Wexford Road, was spared from expropriation. Prior to this event, Gosford Road reached all the way to the 11th Range through an area known as Pine River.



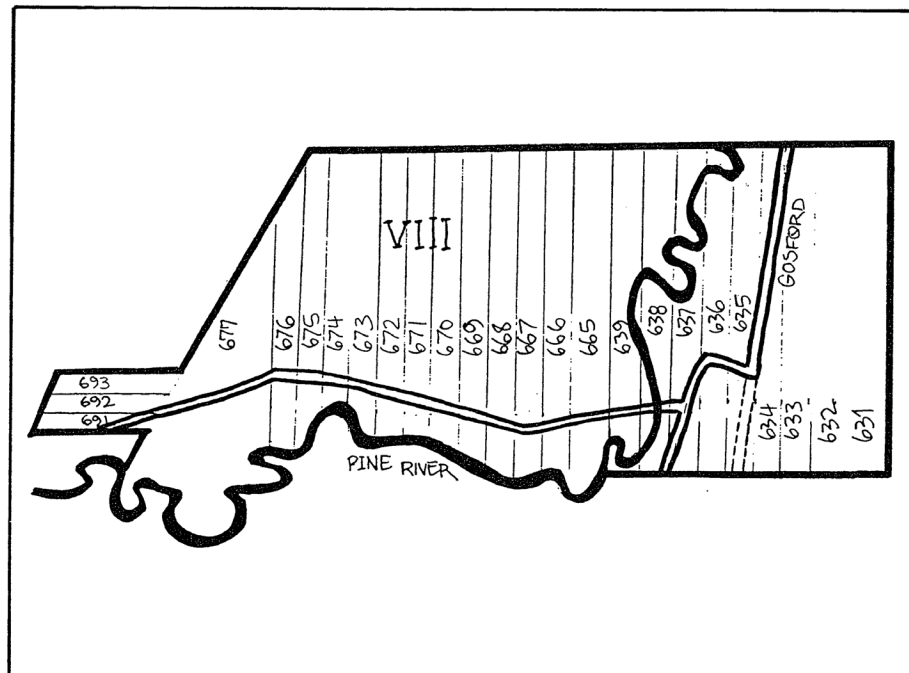
Map of lands expropriated in 1965
From the book *"Where Green is Worn"*

7th RANGE		
<i>Lot number</i>	<i>Former owner</i>	<i>Area in arpents</i>
611	Russell Paquet	109
612	Mrs. John H. Campbell	110
613	J. A. Griffin	106
614	Michael Neville	102
615	Michael Neville	103
616	Michael Neville	97
617	Michael Neville	94
618	Leo Tope and others	90
619	John G. Bowles and others	90
620	Raymond McGrory	90
621	Raymond McGrory	90
622	James McGlennan	90
623	James McGlennan	90
624	Edward J. Bowles and others	90
625-626	John G. Bowles	90
627	Charles Bowles	90
628	Michael Neville	60
629	A. P. Conway & Franciscan Fathers	130
630	A. P. Conway & Franciscan Fathers	120



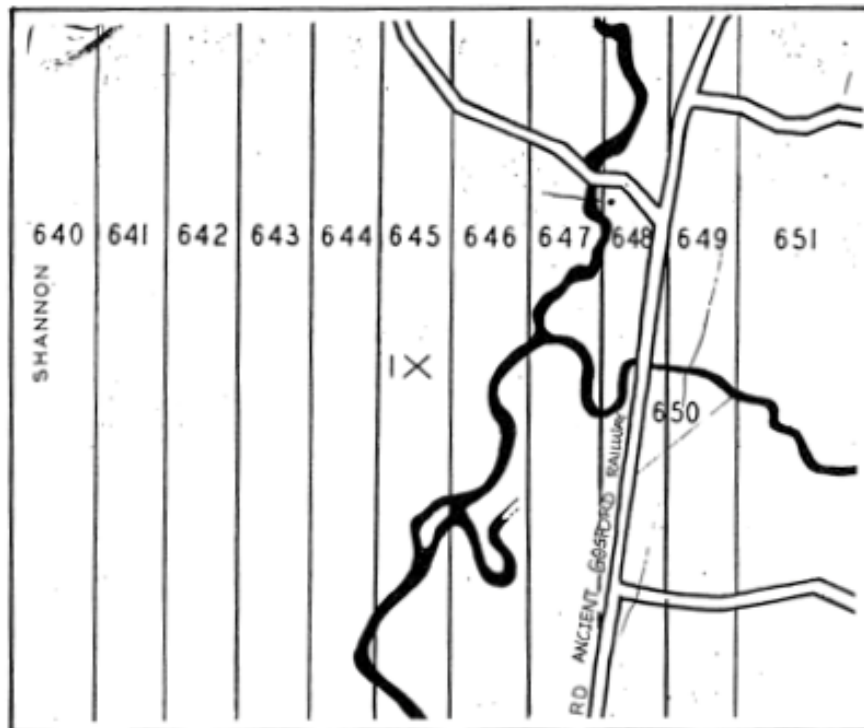
List of expropriated families on the 7th Range
From the book "*Where Green is Worn*"

<i>8th RANGE</i>		
<i>Lot number</i>	<i>Former owner</i>	<i>Area in arpents</i>
631	Miss Edna McCune	147
632	Charles Bowles	90
633	Charles Bowles	90
634	Thomas Neville	90
635	John G. Bowles	90
636	Mrs. Margaret (John H.) Campbell	90
637	Mrs. Margaret (John H.) Campbell	90
638	Mrs. Margaret (John H.) Campbell	90
639	Mrs. Theresa White and others	90
665	Mrs. Theresa White and others	90
666	James Aikens	88
667	James Aikens	55
668	Eddy Conway	45
669	Eddy Conway	88
670	Eddy Conway	66
671	Eddy Conway	63
672	Eddy Conway	73
673	Eddy Conway	66
674	Michael M. McLaughlin	95
675	Michael M. McLaughlin	95



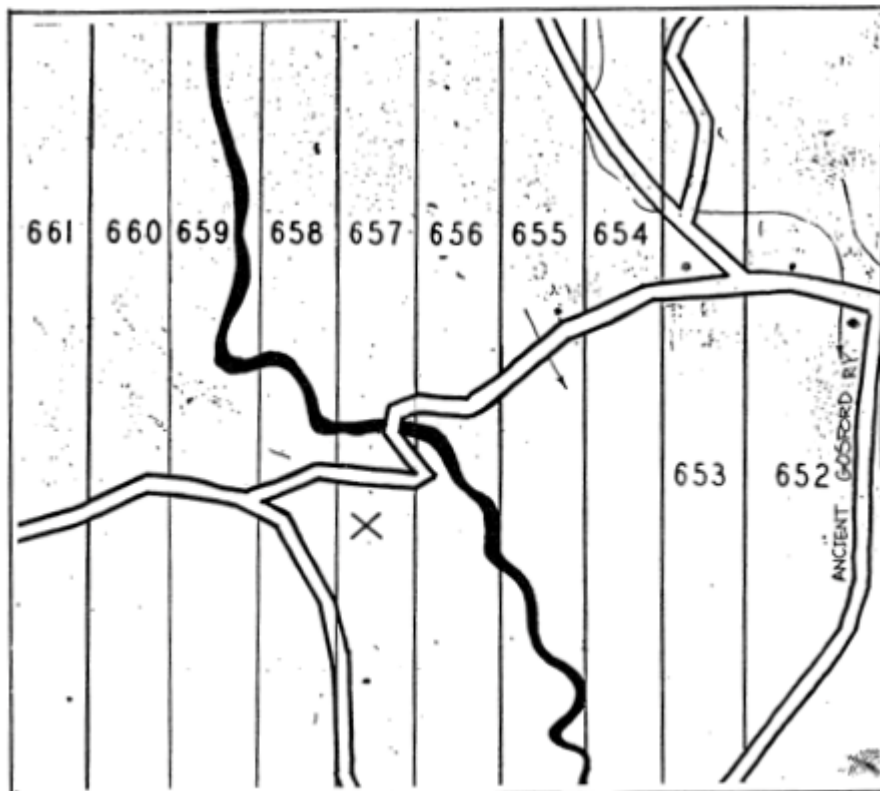
List of expropriated families on the 8th Range
From the book "Where Green is Worn"

<i>9th RANGE</i>		
<i>Lot number</i>	<i>Former owner</i>	<i>Area in arpents</i>
640	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
641	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
642	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
643	Joseph Bastien	90
644	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
645	Mrs. Maurice Conway	90
646	Mrs. Maurice Conway	90
647	Mrs. Maurice Conway	90
648	Mrs. Maurice Conway and others	90
649	Mrs. Maurice Conway and others	90
650-651	Thomas McCune and others	150



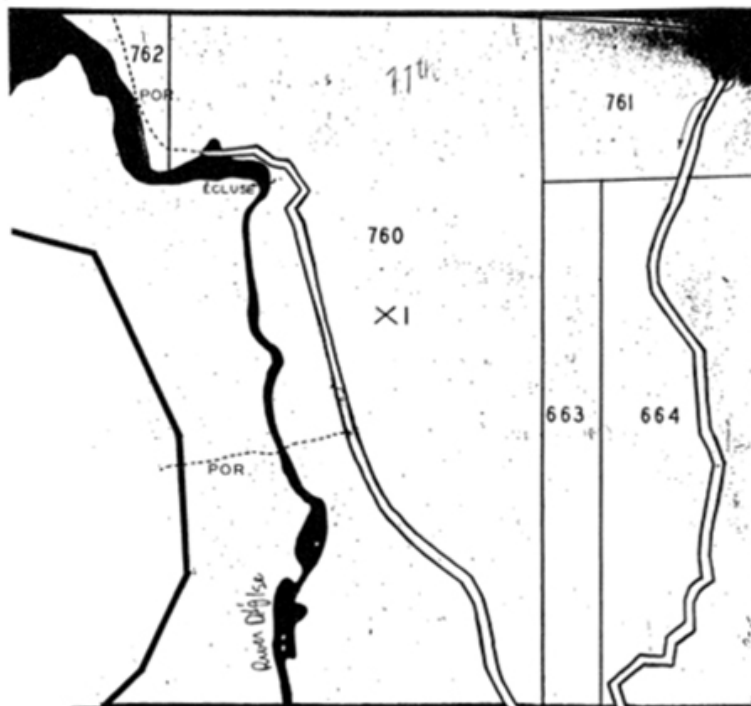
List of expropriated families on 9th Range
From the book "*Where Green is Worn*"

<i>10th RANGE</i>		
<i>Lot number</i>	<i>Former owner</i>	<i>Area in arpents</i>
652	Roy Dupuis and others	150
653	Ted McLaughlin	88
654	Joseph Bastien	89
655-656	Miss Anne Parent — Russell Paquet	88
657	Joseph Bastien	90
658	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
659	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
660	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
661	Murdock Lumber Co.	90
662	Murdock Lumber Co.	84

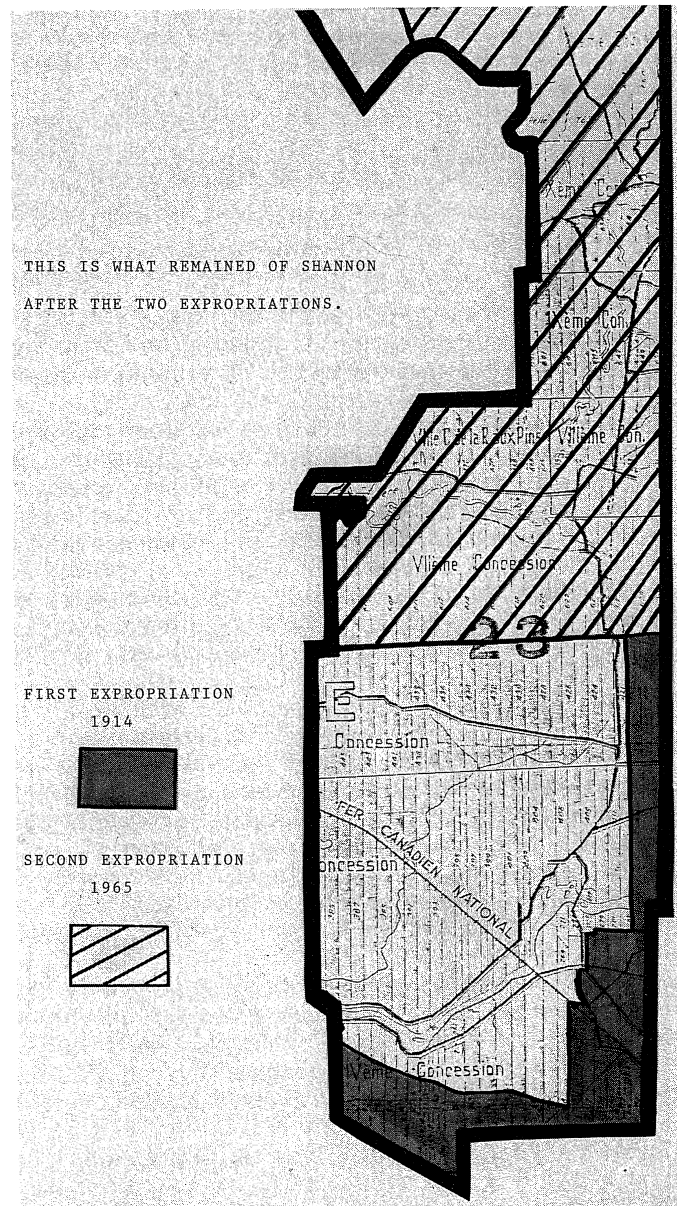


List of expropriated families on 10th Range
From the book "*Where Green is Worn*"

11th RANGE		
<i>Lot number</i>	<i>Former owner</i>	<i>Area in arpents</i>
663	Murdock Lumber Co.-Jos. Bastien	90
664-760-761-762-763	Murdock Lumber Co.	889.87
757	Murdock Lumber Co.-Jos. Bastien	720



List of expropriated families on 11th Range
 From the book "*Where Green is Worn*"



What remained of Shannon after the expropriations
From the book *"Where Green is Worn"*

Despite these expropriations, today, Shannon is a thriving city of some 7,000 residents who live in harmony with Base Valcartier. Actually, the PMQ (Permanent Married Quarters), situated on Shannon land, make up and are part of the population of the City of Shannon.