



Westmount places
Tupper Street

Description

The Story Behind the Familiar: Tupper street, made unattractive by Dorchester's widening

By **Michael Walsh**

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The yule-log sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept,
The quiet sense of something lost.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Continuing our walks through streets radically altered by the widening of Dorchester in the 1960s, one comes across **Tupper Street**. Basically, a visually unappealing street – lined with concrete parking lots, a repurposed hospital and a non-descript medical building. The latter unappealingly attached to one of two extant houses on Gladstone.

Looking at Tupper Street, from a historical perspective, I was astonished to discover that the area from Atwater Avenue to Gladstone contained 40 homes in the early 1900s – today, none of these buildings have survived the area's "urbanization".



We will

revisit these homes, and their residents, in due course. First, let's take a stroll down Tupper and discover the area's current residents.

'... the area from Atwater Avenue to Gladstone contained 40 homes in the early 1900s – today, none of these buildings have survived the area's "urbanization.'

Walking eastward, from Gladstone, the first building is the former **Reddy Memorial Hospital** (closed in 1997) now repurposed as a **YMCA residence**. Few area residents are aware that this building is in partnership with the Ministère de l'immigration, de la diversité et de l'inclusion and PRAIDA (Programme régional d'accueil et d'intégration des demandeurs d'asile) and provides accommodation and integration services for individuals and families seeking asylum status in Canada.



Atwater Library and Computer Centre – Image: Patricia Dumais

The second building is the southern portion of **Atwater Library** that lines the intersection of Tupper and Atwater Avenue.

The Atwater Library traces its origins back to 1828 when the first Mechanics' Institute established in continental British North America was formed in Montreal. Today, with its official name, Atwater Library and Computer Centre, it is the sole survivor of the many mechanics' institutes established in Canada in the 19th century. The rest were either closed or merged into public library systems.

The Atwater Library and Computing Centre, History & Archives

That ends today's walk – and it took us less than 20 minutes! Before we stroll down the street in the 1890s let's become acquainted with the origin of the name. Interestingly, the street had a hybrid name in the 1890s. Specifically, Municipal Council referred to it as "Quibler or Tupper". Specifically:

A petition from the Heirs of the Durnford Estate asking a street be opened from Atwater Avenue in a southwesterly direction between their property and the Gentlemen of the Seminary to Gladstone Avenue. Moved... that Quibler or Tupper Street be homologated... to a width of 66 feet from Atwater Avenue westward through the property of the Durnford Estate and of the Seminary – one half of the width to be taken from each... carried.

Municipal Council of the Town of St. Antoine, December 14, 1891



Tupper Street looking east

It wasn't until 1897 that the street was named Tupper:

Submitted and read petition of Dr. George Wilkins and 21 others, residents and proprietors on Quibler Street requesting that the name of the street be changed to Tupper. On motion it was resolved that the prayer of the petition be granted and that the necessary notice be sent to the registrar of the County of Hochelaga.

Municipal Council of the City of Westmount , February 1, 1897

Who exactly were Quibler and Tupper? Quibley (quite possibly) honours [Joseph-Vincent Quiblier](#) (1796-1852), a Roman Catholic Priest and a Superior in the Society of the Priests of St. Sulpice.

'Tupper honours Sir Charles Tupper... Canada's sixth prime minister. One of the Canadian fathers of Confederation, his term as Prime Minister was 69 days and is the shortest in Canadian history.'

Amongst his most notable achievement was the authorization of the construction of St. Patrick's Church for Montreal's English-speaking Roman Catholics.



Sir Charles Tupper – Image: Public Domain

Tupper honours [Sir Charles Tupper](#) (July 2, 1821 – October 30, 1915) Canada's sixth prime minister. One of the Canadian fathers of Confederation, his term as Prime Minister was 69 days and is the shortest in Canadian history.

At this point, let's take a leisurely walk down Tupper Avenue, in the year 1899, and re-discover the area's lost neighbourhood.

4028 Tupper

Mrs. A. Miller, widow

Captain Charles Miller, clerk – 1899

4030 Tupper

Allan B. Macpherson, manufacturer's agent – 1899

4032 Tupper

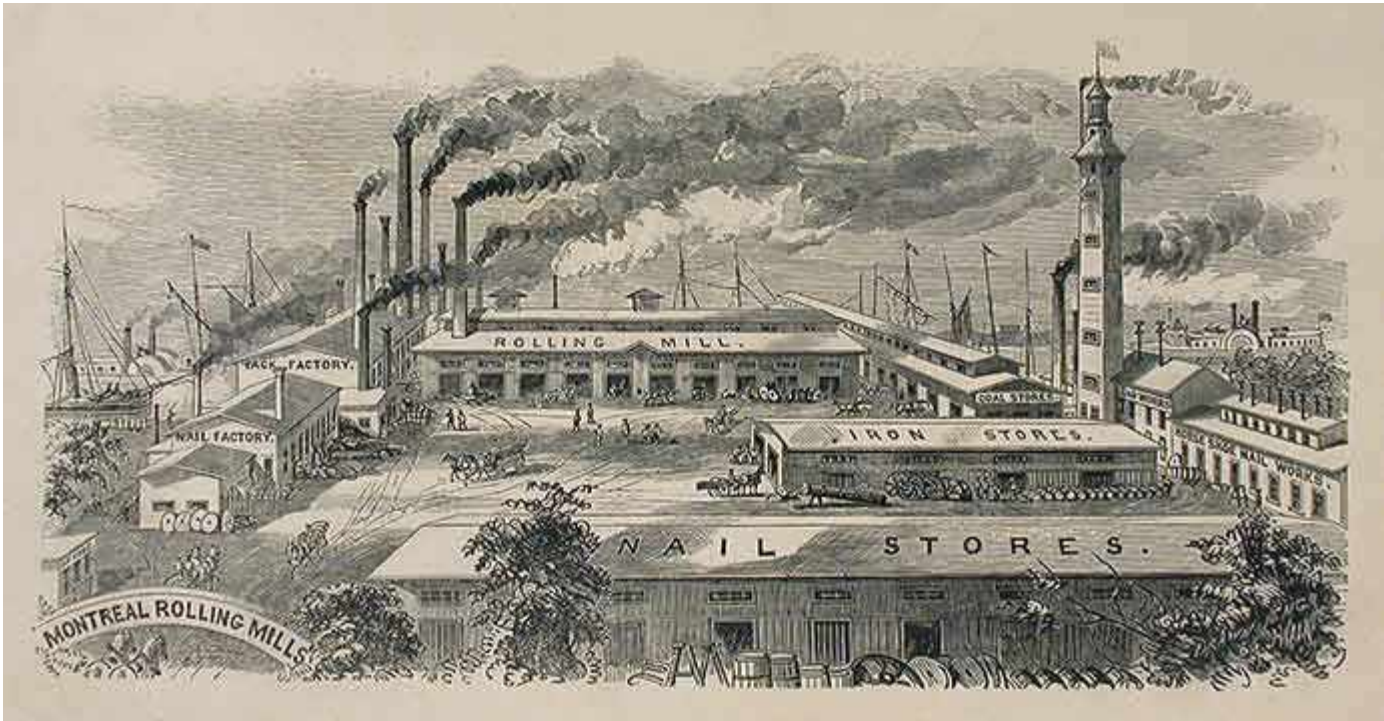
John Percival, commercial traveller – 1899

4034 Tupper (former civic number)

R. J. Jackson Stonewall, Chard, Jackson & Company – 1899

4036 Tupper (former civic number)

G. W. Badgley, Montreal Freehold Company – 1899



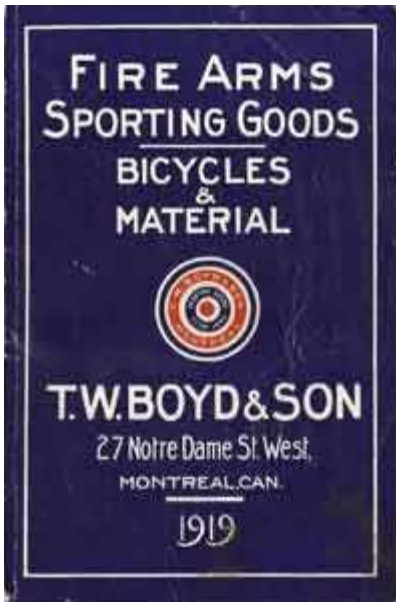
Montreal Rolling Mills – © McCord Museum M930.50.8.285

4058 Tupper

James Klinghorn, Montreal Rolling Mills – 1899

Rolling mills and factories producing such articles as nails, tools, boilers were established primarily in Montreal. The largest enterprise was the *Montreal Rolling Mills Company*, founded in 1869... Its rolling mills were modern installations with steam-driven machinery and employed 400 workers. Using pig iron from England, the company turned out a variety of productions; by 1881 it had become the largest producer of iron pipes.

Quebec: A History 1867-1929



T. W. Boyd & Son
advertisement

4060 Tupper

James Croil, commercial traveller – 1899

4062 Tupper (former civic number)

T. W. Boyd, T. W. Boyd & Son, sporting goods retailers – 1899

4064 Tupper

George Kent, S. Greenshields, Son & Company – 1899

4066 Tupper

W. T. Cumming, agent – 1899

4068 Tupper

Clarence F. Smith, wholesale boots & shoes – 1899

4071 Tupper

William Price, dealer in hides & wool – 1899

4073 Tupper

A. J. Williams, manager, Hunt & Company – 1899

4074 Tupper

E. G. Brooks, James, Scott & Company – 1899

4075 Tupper

Charles Notman, William Notman & Son – 1899



Charles Notman – © McCord Museum N-1975.41.40

William Notman (1826-1891) made his eldest son, **William McFarlane Notman** (1857-1913), a partner in his photography studio in about 1882. The name of the studio was then changed to Wm. Notman & Son, a name it retained until the company ceased operations in 1993.

Following the death of William in late 1891, **Charles Notman** (1870-1955), the youngest son of the photographer, who had been working in the studio in Boston, returned to the Montreal studio. In 1894 his brother offered to take him on as a junior partner in the firm. Over the next few years, his talent as a portrait photographer won increasing recognition, helping significantly to maintain the Notman studio's leading position in Montreal.

In 1913, following the death of his brother, Charles became the sole owner of the company, which he sold in 1935, along with a collection of 400,000 prints and negatives, to Associated Screen News.

McCord Museum

4077 Tupper

E. B. Morgan, government inspector, livestock shipments – 1899

4078 Tupper (former civic number)

J. S. Jellyman, R. Jellyman & Company – 1899



Established 1825 P. Jelliman Manufacturer of all kinds of paper offices – 582 Craig Street and Cote Street, Next



CLUB SAINT-JAMES **4082 Tupper**

Miss A. M. Morrogh – 1899

4083 Tupper

A. E. Morris, tobacconist – 1899

4084 Tupper

John Appleby, superintendent, St James Club – 1899

4085 Tupper

John J. Louson, commercial traveller – 1899

4086 Tupper

E. J. Howes, manager, Mason & Risch Piano Company – 1899



Mason & Risch advertisement (1935), antique Piano Shop

Thomas G. Mason, Vincent Risch and Octavius Newcombe entered into partnership in 1871 to form the firm of “Mason, Risch & Newcombe” in Toronto. The firm started out as retailers of pianos, organs and musical merchandise, initially importing their instruments from the United States.

Mason, Risch & Newcombe begin building their own instruments in Toronto in about 1877, and these instruments were met with great success. In 1878 the firm was reorganized as “**Mason & Risch**” when Newcombe left the partnership to open his own firm. Mason & Risch quickly became one of the largest music store chains in Canada. Mason & Risch built high quality pianos for decades, and enjoyed a very good reputation.

In 1900 Mason & Risch entered into a contact with Eaton’s Department Stores, Canada’s largest department store chain, to build pianos under the brand name of “T. Eaton”. Instruments labelled as “T. Eaton” were sold in Eaton’s Department Stores for decades, giving Mason & Risch the revenue needed to survive the economic downturns of the 20th Century. The firm also produced a successful line of organs under the “Vocalian” brand name.

– Antique Piano Shop

4087 Tupper

Mrs. C. M. Cooke, widower, M. W. Cooke – 1899

4088 Tupper

Charles R. Hardie, A. A. McDougall & Company – 1899

4089 Tupper



E. E. Starr, H. H. Wolff & Company – 1899

4091 Tupper

C. T. Hare, insurance agent – 1899

4092 Tupper

Mrs. M. McDougall, widow, James McDougall – 1899

4093 Tupper

R. S. Kelsch, electrical engineer, Lachine Rapids Hydraulic and Land Company – 1899

4094 Tupper

John Leslie, Hendery & Leslie – 1899

4095 Tupper

Alfred Collyer, electrical engineer – 1899

C. O. Palmer, accountant – 1899

4096 Tupper

W. E. Smith, commercial traveller – 1899

4097 Tupper

W. E. Smith, commercial traveller – 1899

4097 Tupper

George Gardner, bookkeeper – 1899

4098 Tupper

T. H. Bailey, superintendent, The Whitham Shoe Company

Feature image: the former Reddy Memorial Hospital – Michael Walsh

Images: Michael Walsh (unless indicated otherwise)

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Michael Walsh is a long-time Westmount resident. He is happily retired from nearly four decades in the field of higher education technology. A “professional student” by nature, his academic training, and publishing, include statistical methodology, mycology and animal psychology. During this period, he was also an officer in the Canadian Armed Forces. Prior to moving to Montreal, he was contracted by the Ontario Ministry of Education evaluating bilingual primary and secondary school programs. Today, he enjoys spending time with his (huge) Saint Bernard while discovering the city’s past and sharing stories of the majestic trees that grace the parks and streets. He can be contacted at michaelld2003@hotmail.com or through his blog [Westmount Overlooked](#)

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