

# CONSTRUCTION OF MAISON ALPHONSE-DESJARDINS

Lévis, January 1882: Alphonse Desjardins, age 27, editor of Legislative Assembly of Québec proceedings, and his wife, Dorimène, age 23, had 2 young children. Their dream of owning their own home, in which they could raise their family and make plans for the future, would soon become a reality.

In a notary act dated January 24, 1882, Dorimène Desjardins's aunt and uncle, Jean-Baptiste Thériault and Louise-Clarisse Mailhot, donated to Alphonse Desjardins a lot on the corner of Guenette and Saint-Joseph streets, today Mont-Marie Street, along with the sum of \$500 toward building a home on the lot. In return, Alphonse Desjardins promised to pay them the sum of \$76 annually based on assets of \$1,100.

Work probably began once summer arrived, based on house plans no doubt purchased out of a U.S. catalogue.

Based on testimony from Alphonse's brother Napoléon Desjardins (1870-1953), writer George Boyle, in a biographical novel about Alphonse Desjardins entitled *The Poor Man's Prayer* and published in 1951, revealed that the entrepreneur entrusted by Alphonse Desjardins to build the house quit before getting the job done. The future founder of Caisse populaire de Lévis had to roll up his sleeves to help finish the house himself.

According to Boyle, young Napoléon also took part in building the house and seriously injured a finger. Troubles that would be well rewarded by the home's future vocation!

