



Table of contents

A virtual exhibit: Ottawa becomes the capital.....	3
Ottawa becomes Canada's capital	3
The build-up to 1857	3
The Queen makes her choice.....	4
Let it be done!	4
The Queen's decision	9
Reluctance.....	9
Political forum.....	9
The choice arrives - as did political turmoil!	11
Newspaper representation	13
The final result - Ottawa	16
Building the physical reality	16
Building a seat of government.....	16
Construction begins: conditions and wages of the workers.....	20
The visit of the Prince of Wales.....	26
Construction is halted and an inquiry is held	27
City strata	31
Infrastructure	32
Expansion	33
Housing	36
Education	37
Architecture	38
Byward Market expansion	44

Roads.....	46
Police	50
Superstructure.....	52
And they did it!	55
Educational resources	58
Opportunity	59
Celebration.....	60
Expansion	62
Daily life	64
Primary sources.....	66
Ottawa City Council	66
City Hall, April 6, 1857.....	66
City Hall, May 18, 1857	67
1857 officials	68
Ottawa City memorial	69
Newspapers.....	73
1860	73
1861	79
1863	80
1864	82
1866	82
1867	84
Project synopsis.....	95
What are archives?	97
City of Ottawa Archives	97

A virtual exhibit: Ottawa becomes the capital

Ottawa becomes Canada's capital



One hundred and fifty years ago Queen Victoria chose Ottawa as the capital of the United Province of Canada. As one of the oldest and the fourth largest municipality in Canada, the City of Ottawa has a story to tell that encompasses but is also distinct from its role as the national capital. The stories of the many communities that comprise Ottawa have been overshadowed by its identity as the nation's capital. At the same time, this is very much a national story, relevant to all Canadians.

The build-up to 1857

Locating the seat of government in Canada was a 17-year process. Canadian politicians asked the queen not once but three times since 1840 to choose the location of the capital.

The pre-existing capitals of Toronto and Quebec had initially moved to Kingston in 1841, to Montreal in 1844, and to Toronto at the start of the perambulating system of Government in 1849. Toronto was the capital in 1849-1851, and 1855-1859; Quebec was the capital in 1851-1855, and 1859-1865. Ottawa became the functional legislative

capital in 1866 and was officially made the Capital of the Dominion of Canada with Confederation in 1867.

By 1857, the Province of Canada was in political upheaval - the question of where to locate the political capital was paramount. Local regional and sectional divisions lead to a political deadlock. The political machine could not function efficiently with a perambulating system - the choice of a capital was both a political, commercial and sectionalist choice, fraught with tension.

By resolution accepted by the Legislative Assembly on March 24, 1857, the Queen was requested to "exercise the Royal Prerogative by the selection of some one place" to become the seat of Government.

1. **Resolved**, That the interests of Canada require that the Seat of Provincial Government should be fixed at some certain place.
2. **Resolved**, That a sum, not exceeding the sum of Two hundred and twenty five thousand pounds, be appropriated for the purpose of providing for the necessary Buildings and accommodation for the Government and the Legislature at that certain place [Yeas 64, Nays 48]
3. **Resolved**, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She may be graciously pleased to exercise the Royal Prerogative by the selection of some one place as the permanent Seat-of-government in Canada [Yeas 61, Nays 50]

On that same day, the Legislative Assembly also accepted that a sum of money should be appropriated for providing buildings for the Government at that place chosen. The initial steps to resolve the question of where to locate a permanent Seat of Government had been taken.

The Queen makes her choice

Let it be done!

Ottawa, by 1857, had potential to be the Capital of the Province of Canada. The Bytown and Prescott railway first crossed into Bytown in April 1855 - Ottawa experienced economic progress and expanding transportation routes. The railway was a bold achievement, and Sir Richard Scott believed in Ottawa's progress and potential to become the Capital, but "...without the railway the hope was only a dream".

The City of Ottawa, although it had grown, expanded its services slowly and looked towards the benefit of becoming the seat of government in Canada.



Title/description: Bytown in 1853, Looking east along Wellington St. Wellington Street near Bank Street, Ottawa, 1853.

Sedley's watercolour was painted from a room in Mr. Doran's hotel along Wellington street. The buildings shown on the Hill, were the Military Barracks, occupied by "A" Company of the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, commanded by Major Clements. This information is taken from a declaration that Major Clement's grandson, George Baker, wrote in Dec. 1906

Creator: C. Sedley, Artist

Date: 1853

Credit: Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1992-675-2

Copyright: Expired

The majority of the population, around 7,700 people, depended on an unsteady lumbering income. Ottawa's property value was low and uncertain in 1850 - for example, property in Sandy Hill sold against a lean on Mr. Besserer for an average cost of \$20, according to Sir Richard Scott, and "was not easily sold at that".

Becoming the capital brought prosperity to other cities - why not to Ottawa?

As Sir Richard wrote,

" the location of the [Seat of Government] at the central point would tend to develop equally the growth of the two Canadas in the very region where a stimulus is required..."
Memorial to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Sir Richard Scott, 1857

In 1856, politicians from around Ottawa and Montreal united to end the perambulating system of capitals. The Legislative Council voted to consider the claims of five rival cities - Quebec, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal and Ottawa - to be the permanent capital.

A huge number of votes on the subject - 48 in a single year - brought politicians to conflict in 1856. No city had won or maintained the support of a clear majority. In March 1857, government leaders convinced the legislature to approve the process to refer the question to London, and to appeal to Queen Victoria to break the political deadlock.

Resolutions accepted by the Legislative Assembly, March 24, 1857

1. Resolved, That the interests of Canada require that the Seat of the Provincial Government should be fixed at some certain place.
2. Resolved, That a sum, not exceeding Two hundred and twenty five thousand pounds be appropriated for the purpose of providing for the necessary Buildings and accommodation for the Government and the Legislature at that certain place [Yeas 64, Nays 48]
3. Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She may be graciously pleased to exercise the Royal Prerogative by the selection of some one place as the permanent Seat of government in Canada [Yeas 61, Nays 50]

Address from Legislative Assembly to Queen Victoria, March 24, 1857

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty
May it please Your Majesty,

We, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, humbly approach Your Majesty for the purpose of representing:

That the interests of Canada require that the Seat of the Provincial Government should be fixed at some certain place.

That we have resolved to appropriate the sums requisite for providing the necessary Buildings and accommodation for the Government and the Legislature at such place as Your Majesty may see fit to select.

And we therefore humbly pray Your Majesty to be graciously pleased to exercise the Royal prerogative by the selection of some one place as the permanent Seat of government in Canada.

Sir Edmund Head wrote a private dispatch to the Queen, transmitted through Labouchere, to consider particular merits for the choice of the seat of government through a submission process of Memorials from each city in consideration.

Head's letter to the Queen, March 28, 1857 through Labouchere, Colonial Secretary

... In order to lay fully before the Queen the claims of the several places which may be said to consider themselves entitled to selection as the seat of government, I have caused a circular (of which a copy is annexed to this despatch) to be addressed by my Secretary to the mayor of each of these cities. I have asked each Corporation to set forth the reasons in favour of their own city; and to forward the statement of such reasons to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, before the 1st of July.

On April 6, 1857, the Ottawa Town Council passed a resolution to set aside funds to create plans and documents to support its petition to the Queen to make Ottawa the Seat of Government.

May 18, 1857 saw the Ottawa Town Council approve the Memorial produced and submitted by Sir Richard Scott, an Ottawa businessman and politician. Chosen from a number of submissions, Scott's memorial of Ottawa, along with the map showing Ottawa in a centralized position in the Province of Canada, was key to portraying to the Queen Ottawa's strengths in transportation and geographical centrality.

Scott's Memorial was unique within the submission process - it was positive about Ottawa's potential to be a Capital and did not rely on bringing attention to other cities' negatives to bring positive reflection to its own borders.



Title/description: "Canada and Adjacent Provinces Showing the Central Position of the City of Ottawa..." 1857

Creator: unknown

Date: 1857

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / 81D77

Copyright: Expired

Local residents like Richard Scott had powerful support from other political figures in their bid to make Ottawa the Capital. The Queen received advice from the Prince Consort, Prince Albert, who wrote a memorandum favouring Ottawa. Colonel Grey, Prince Albert's private secretary, was supportive of Ottawa. Sir Edmund Head, the Governor General from 1854 to 1861, travelled to all the contending cities and quietly concluded that Ottawa was the only acceptable compromise. Richard Scott was in close communication with the Governor General, and so received support for his submission for Ottawa to be the seat of Government.

Sir Edmund Head, the Colonial Secretary Henry Labouchere, and Sir Richard Scott were instrumental leaders for Ottawa to be chosen as the Seat of Government in Canada. Sir Edmund Head wrote to Labouchere in a confidential memorandum to support Ottawa, and outlined the reasons that Ottawa was, in his opinion, the best choice for the seat of Government - Ottawa was a fair compromise, defensible, central to Canada as a whole, and economically viable as a large city.

Letters written in 1856 to the editor of the Ottawa Tribune, for example, offered similar reasons for Ottawa to be selected, and supported the ideas later submitted to the Queen in 1857.

Ottawa Tribune, November 14, 1856

Seat of Government, letter to the editor of the Tribune

Six reasons why the Seat of Government should be in Ottawa:

- on the boundary line between upper and lower Canada
- strongest military position in the Canadas
- safe distance from the frontier
- Rideau Canal and Railroads - easily accessible from all parts of Canada
- more central than any other town in the Canadas
- numerous population would be planted in the heart of the country, "far removed from Republican's contamination"
- vastly increase the revenue of Rideau Canal and Railroads and reimburse the money expended in these works
- Montreal would at once derive the benefit of the commercial influence

The Queen's decision

The Colonial Office recommended choices for the Canadian seat of government to the Queen in October of 1857 and, after reviewing the matter with her advisers and the Cabinet, the Queen's decision was reached - Ottawa would be the Capital!

Prince Albert to Henry Labouchere, Colonial Secretary, December 18, 1857.

I return the enclosed papers with very best thanks.

Ottawa must indeed be a beautiful situation and all the detached descriptions must tend to confirm the impressions that the choice is the right one. We must now trust that the Province will look upon it in the same light, when it becomes known.

Henry Labouchere, Colonial Secretary to Sir Edmund Head, Governor-General, December 31, 1857. From Legislative Assembly, journals, XVI, 1858, part I, p.139

By my despatch of the 17th April last, I informed you that Her majesty had been graciously pleased to comply with the prayer of the Addresses presented to Her by the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada, namely - that she would exercise the Royal Prerogative by the selection of some place for the permanent Seat of government in Canada. This question has now been considered by Her Majesty and by Her Government, with that attention which its great importance demanded. The statements and arguments contained in the various memorials laid before them, in consequence of your invitation to the Mayors of the several Cities chiefly interested, have been fully weighed. I am commanded by the Queen to inform you that in the judgment of Her Majesty, the City of Ottawa combines greater advantages than any other place in Canada for the permanent Seat of the future Government of the Province and is selected by Her Majesty accordingly.

The Queen's decision was supposed to put a stop to the rivalries and settle the question of where to locate the capital of Canada, but it did not. Politicians rejected the Queen's choice for capital, and the perambulating system of parliament continued amongst sectional jealousies.

Reluctance

Political forum

The Queen's choice for the Capital of Canada was not met with unanimous approval or jubilation. The Queen's Royal Prerogative was set aside, and Quebec and Toronto each held parliament for four years. Although chosen in 1857, Ottawa did not hold its first session of parliament for another nine years.

Political tensions and factional movements in the government created an uneasy situation for the MacDonald-Cartier leadership both before and after the Memorials were submitted to Queen Victoria in 1857.



Title/description: View of Ottawa City of Ottawa, Canada West. This version of the Stent and Laver print depicts Ottawa before the Parliament Buildings were built. A later version of the print (C-002812) has the Parliament Buildings represented. (C-002812)

Creator: Artist Stent and Laver

Date: [ca.1860]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada, C-002813

Copyright: Expired

Canada West Conservative leader John A. Macdonald and Canada East Liberal Reformer leader George-Étienne Cartier became joint premiers of the Province of Canada from 1857 to 1862. By 1864, forming a coalition government to include Upper Canadian Reformers (Canada West) to help dissolve sectionalist tensions against Confederation.

The political movement to combine the provinces of Canada into a unified province was based on Lord Durham's report that advocated a common commercial system and the concept of a Responsible Government. But the practice of equal representation had created dualism - Upper and Lower Canada, each with its separate history, society and culture, remained equal and distinct inside one political framework. They were Canada West and Canada East geographically, and the Union Act had embedded dualism in the very constitution, resulting in dual parties, double ministries and sectional politics.

Sectionalist forces remained especially powerful in Canada East, where an eastern sectionalist conservative group and the Catholic Conservative Bleus under Cartier gained more seats than the Rouge Liberals. A coalition government for the Province of Canada was formed to support the Confederation movement.

Macdonald's position as leader of the Canada West political alliance was weak- they would fall from power if a group of its Canada West supporters ever detached from their normal alignment. Macdonald therefore had to act carefully and not appear partisan in his political dealings.

The choice arrives - as did political turmoil!

The announcement in Canada that Ottawa had been selected as the capital of the country was met with a mixture of joy, surprise, anger and shock. Delight was expressed in Ottawa, but city-centered and sectional jealousies led to resentment being expressed elsewhere when the news was released.

Official notification from Colonial Secretary Henry Labouchere regarding the Queen's choice arrived in Toronto. The government came under attack because the Colonial Secretary's dispatch had not been released. Macdonald asked Sir Edmund Head to release the document on February 13, 1858, for then its contents could no longer be misrepresented.

The Governor-General and Macdonald released the information to the publisher of the Toronto *Colonist*, and suggested that the announcement should be placed in the paper "at the *last* moment, to prevent the Globe having it... ." Sectionalists and political voices aligned themselves with newspapers of supportive opinions to release information for their own purposes. Macdonald sought to be the first to release the potentially inflammatory Queen's choice to the public, and in a manner, which suited the Government.

MacDonald wrote to the Queen to inform her of the political dissention and its effects on her Selection of a Capital.

[...] That this house is duly grateful to Her Majesty for complying with the Address of Her Canadian Parliament, praying Her Majesty to select a permanent Seat of Government, but that this House deeply regrets that the City which Her Majesty has been advised to select is not acceptable to a large majority of the Canadian people [Yeas 45, Nays 63]

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, July 31, 1858, copy no. 97 LAC MG 26 A

...] How stands the case? Both branches of the Legislature had during the last Session in effect declared that in consequence of local interests and sectional jealousies, it was impossible for us in this country to agree upon any place as the permanent seat of Government [...]

Speech of the Attorney General MacDonald, LAC MG 26 A, volume 158

Clearly Macdonald and Cartier faced a serious dilemma.

A public debate began over whether the Queen's decision was an award or a recommendation. There was also concern expressed about whether the decision was the Queen's (as claimed by conservatives) or Colonial Secretary's (as claimed by reformers).

A letter from Prince Albert to Colonial Secretary Henry Labouchere and given to Sir John A. MacDonal was received after the elections had taken place. This suggested that Macdonald could not have officially known of the Queen's decision for Ottawa months prior to the election, although Macdonald did delay its official release until February 1858.

My Dear Mr. Labouchere,

I return the enclosed papers [with the very best remarks] Ottawa must indeed be a beautiful situation and all the detailed descriptions [] tend to confirm the [impression] that the choice is the right one. We must now trust that the Province must look upon it in the same light, [once it becomes known]

Ever

Yours Truly,

Albert

Dec 18, 1857

[ashorne]



Title/description: Bird's eye view of the City of Ottawa, Province, Ontario, Canada / drawn by Herman Brosius. Chicago Litho. Co., 1876.

Creator: Herman Brosius

Date: 1876

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada

Copyright: Expired

Newspaper representation

Sectional divisions of each city also played a role in the dissatisfaction of the Queen's choice. Dissatisfaction was not allayed until late in the process of building the capital in Ottawa - the final political decision to make Ottawa the National Capital once Confederation was achieved, was not officially in place until 1865. National Newspapers continued griping and throwing political mud well into the 1860s.

From an editorial in the Ottawa Citizen June 11, 1861 entitled 'The New Capital' a transcription exists of a "Quebec correspondent of an Upper Canada journal' who stated:

"It is becoming a confident assertion among well informed persons here, that the disturbed state of the neighbouring Republic added to the blunders and jobberies in connection with the Public Building at Ottawa, the works upon which are reported to have been altogether stopped, cannot fail to give the quietus to Sir Edmund Head's pet scheme of fixing the seat of government at that city. Indeed in view of an invasion from the United States, an event quite likely enough to grow out of the rebellion in that country, it would be

sheer madness to remove the government, with its valuable archives, beyond the security of this fortified city and the mother country; a communication for the supply of troops and materials of war, could in such a contingency be uninterruptedly kept up"

To this allegation and rumour of immanent war, the Citizen responded

"we give the most unqualified contradictions to the above concoction of falsehood and slander. Interference with Queen's decision has never been heard of except in mutterings of faction and disloyalty. Nor has there been, except in the midnight maunderings of hungry and disappointed place-hunters, any mention of blundering or jobbing in regard to our Public Buildings. Those works were never at anytime so vigorously proceeded with as they are at the present moment. "

Ottawa Citizen, May 24, 1864

"At the present moment the condition of Ottawa is, to say the least, peculiar. Perhaps never in the history of any country has the fate of the city been so placed. Years ago it was declared to be the Capital of Canada by no less authority than that of the SOVEREIGN. Since that declaration was made, interests that are influential and powerful have been employed against it. Time and again we have heard that the carrying out the Royal decision was doubtful; and these rumours have been regarded as truthful. At present, however, we have every prospect of a realization our long-deferred hopes. We have every reason now to ____ upon the removal of the Seat of Government here as certainty. No later then Saturday week, it was declared by the Executive Council that the removal would take place next autumn, under any circumstances."

Ottawa Citizen, December 28, 1866 [editorial]

[Two reasons for Ottawa NOT to become the seat of Government]

"...the people of the eastern provinces may require as a guarantee against the, by them, justly dreaded influence of Upper Canada, that the Seat of their and our common government shall not be so far from their frontiers as the line of Ottawa. "...If Ottawa is not secure enough for the future capital what must Montreal be? The American Union almost holds it the hollow of its hand. The opinion of sir John Michel as reinforced the opinion of General Scott, who said a competent commander could go into Montreal in a coach and four."

Ottawa Citizen, December 29, 1866 [editorial]

[Ottawa's indefensibility, political rhetoric]

"The re-opening of the Seat of Government question by the Quebec press has brought another question of great importance prominently before the public, namely, the question as to the defensibility of Montreal and Ottawa against the attacks of an invading army. The theory started by our Quebec contemporary is, that the seat of Government is to be removed from Ottawa, that Montreal being indefensible in a military point of view, is unworthy to become the capital of the Confederate Provinces. Our contemporaries, conscious of the great national advantage of position, and the assumed impregnability of the ancient capital, see in that reason why Quebec should become the metropolis of the

confederation. We have no doubt, whatever, about the sincerity of our contemporaries in believing that their city presents [many] attractions and advantages as a location for the seat of Government; we think however, that all their arguments will be lost, as the question of the Seat of Government now appears to be a closed one. But if the question were an open one, and the adaptedness of this place, or the other places, for the seat of Government was to be judged solely upon consideration of military defensibility, we could not look at matters in the same way that our contemporaries do. Military science has undergone great revolutions since the days of when engineers and artillerists looked upon Gibraltar, Quebec, and Malta as impregnable fortresses. Modern engineers and artillerists express themselves with some confidence to the practicability of reducing Gibraltar, as at present defended and fortified, by means of the large siege ordnance constructed under the superintendence of several European Governments and by the United States Government. It has been shown repeatedly, within the last few years, by a series of practical experiments made in England and the United States, that the most solid blocks of masonry can offer but very slight resistance to the Armstrong, Palisser and Parrott guns. The British Government has recognized its sense of the danger in which its strongest fortifications are now placed by ordering from the Messrs. Cammell, of Sheffield, a large number of heavy steel plates for the fortresses of Gibraltar and Malta. We do not know whether similar plates will be ordered for the fortifications at Quebec, but it seems to us that, if they are needed at Gibraltar and Malta, they are required to put the ancient capital in a fit state to repel the assaults of the American monitors and iron-clads. The late American and Dano-German wars have exploded many of the old theories entertained by military men respecting fortifications. The history of the defence of Vicksburgh and Richmond of the latter place in particular, has taught that earthwork fortifications can be rapidly constructed, that they are capable of conversion into the strongest of fortresses, and that they offer many advantages not possessed by masonry. Such works could very easily be erected in the neighbourhood of Montreal or Ottawa, and any invading army could be kept at respectful distance from the cities. It is more nonsense to say, as our Quebec contemporaries do, that neither Montreal nor Ottawa could be put in a state of defence. It is true that our contemporaries allege that Sir John Michel has, at some time and in some place, said that Montreal was indefensible. With all respect to Sir John Michel's experience and ability in military matters, we must say that any such expression coming from him would be treated disrespectfully. We are inclined to think that the Commander of the forces has been misrepresented. In the first place, we think that if his opinion had been as stated, he would not have given expression to it; and in the second place, we are sure that he holds an opinion exactly opposite to that alleged. Our Quebec contemporaries would do well to use diligence in looking up the latest opinion with respect to fortresses and the art of fortifying"

Ottawa Citizen, January 1, 1867 [editorial, year end review]

" [...] The Parliament of Canada met for the first time in Ottawa. By this meeting the choice of her Majesty of a permanent metropolis for Canada was fully carried out. The matter is, therefore, now settled beyond all peradventure that Ottawa will be the Capital of Confederated British America. It is true that some dissatisfaction exists at the

arrangement and many journals are endeavouring to unseat "Ottawa must be the Seat of Government subject to the Royal Prerogative" according to the provisions of the Quebec scheme of Confederation, there is but small reason to calculate that the present arrangement will be disturbed."

The final result - Ottawa

The reasons for Ottawa finally being selected were many, but there was not a sincere acceptance by all politicians of the day for the several "logical," "rational," "positive" factors in favour of Ottawa, as laid out in either the several governors-general reports or, more especially, in the booster newspaper articles, politician's speeches, or the 1857 city memorials to the queen.

To many it was the "best" second choice. It was also the home of newly built Parliamentary Buildings, to be used as the Capital of the Province of Canada - a waste of money if they were not used. Canada would have a capital in the City originally chosen by the Queen, with buildings purposefully built and utilized for the Dominion's Capital.

While politicians were fully aware of the symbolism and perceived prestige that would be drawn to the chosen city and surrounding region, they also fully appreciated that there would be more tangible rewards for the chosen city.

Building the physical reality

Building a seat of government

The political climate in Ontario and Quebec was often volatile, sectarian and divisive - public demonstrations frequently turned violent. Government buildings were favourite targets of demonstrations - Quebec parliament buildings were arson targets twice before 1867. The location of the permanent seat of Government had to be settled, and reinforced by this violence, permanent Parliamentary buildings needed to be built.

In March 1857, the Legislative Assembly passed an appropriation of ? 225,000 for the erection of permanent Government buildings. On May 7, 1859, a call to architects to submit designs for the new Government buildings was issued by the Department of Public Works. In total, 16 designs by 14 competitors were received. The winning architects would receive ?250, and the second-place competitors received ?100.



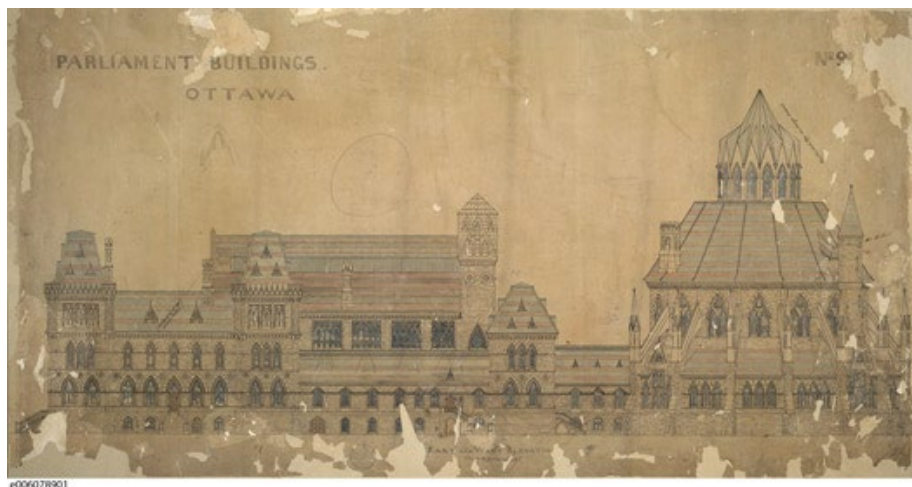
Title/description: Proposed design for the Parliament Buildings

Creator: Artist unknown

Date: [ca.1860]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada

Copyright: Government of Canada



Title/description: Old Centre Block, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa. East and West elevation.

Creator: Fuller and Jones, architects

Date: ca.1860

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada / RG11M

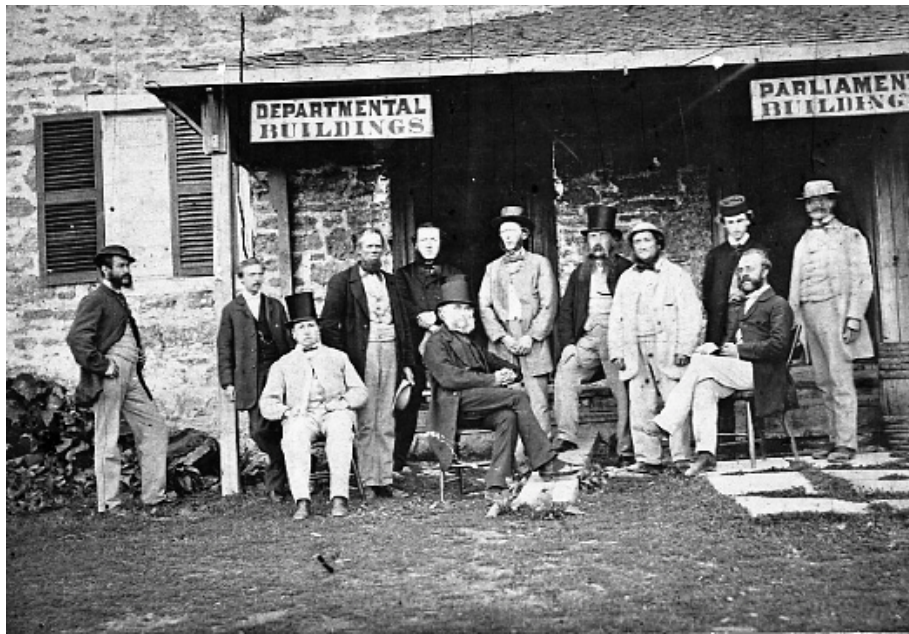
Copyright: The Crown

The designs received were varied and creative. Ten were of classic or Italian style, the remaining six consisted of the Norman or Gothic styles. The designs were judged on a set of requirements including:

1. Fitness of plan and interior arrangements
2. Economy of construction - cost
3. Adaptation to specific local materials
4. Adaptation to site or position
5. Adaptation to climate
6. Economy of warming and ventilation
7. Lighting
8. Beauty of design
9. Conformity with conditions in regard to information
10. Safety against fire

The judges chose Gothic Revival, which has been termed Canada's first national style. Linked with Westminster, the home of British parliament completed in 1852, a contemporary named Wilfred Egleston described it as a "romantic and picturesque type of architecture generally thought most suitable for the incomparable setting".

The new Parliament buildings were constructed out of local sandstone, quarried at the property of Mr. Augustus Keefer in Nepean Township, the arches over the windows and door lintels were red sandstone from Potsdam, New York, and the dressings were of gray, Ohio freestone. The roofing was dark slate from Vermont, decorated with a band of light green slate from the same place. The Ottawa Citizen reported the arrival of the first cargo of stone for the Government buildings at Prescott from Ohio on April 17, 1860.



Title/description: Staff - Parliament Buildings Construction Site. L-R: J. Lebreton (Lebrett?) Ross(?), Engineer; René Steckel; Charles Baillargé; William Hutchison; G.B. Pelham; F.P. Rubidge, Assistant Chief Engineer; John Bowes; J.H. Pattison (Patterson?); J. Larose; Arnoldi; T. Fuller; Kelly(?)

Creator: unknown

Date: [ca. 1865]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives

Copyright: Expired

The Architects Fuller and Jones were selected to build the centre block; Architects Stent and Laver were selected for the east and west blocks. The remaining link was a contractor for construction. The Ottawa Citizen reported on November 15, 1859 that the deadline for receiving tenders for the construction of the building expired at noon that day. By November 18 the Citizen announced Ottawa Mayor McGillivray's decision: "McGreevy of Quebec has the contract. He is a first-rate contractor." Construction could begin.

Construction begins: conditions and wages of the workers



Title/description: View towards east from Parliament Hill, Parliament Buildings - Construction, 1861. On mount. S. McLaughlin Photo: / (Verso:) Lower Town / (Stamp:) D.A. McLaughlin, Photographer to Dept. of Public Works and Railways & Canals

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, Photographer

Date: 1861

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-000610

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Centre Block, Parliament Buildings under construction.

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, Photographer

Date: [ca.1865]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-003039

Copyright: Expired

The Public Works commissioner appointed Samuel McLaughlin (1826-1914), as the official photographer for the construction process. He was mandated to capture the official construction process.

The construction process began in 1860. The Ottawa Citizen reported on January 17, 1860 that excavation of the chosen site was ongoing and that labourers were "carting down the old [...] remains of some of the buildings formerly occupied by the military as barracks." The Citizen also reported the presence of the architects and the contractor within the city, and the effects of the rapid increase in population

In [a] few days - stone-cutters, masons, carpenters and host of other tradesmen in addition to the force already employed - increase rent of dwelling houses - which are becoming scarce. Ottawa Citizen, April 17, 1860 (Tuesday)

To complete such a monumental project required the efforts of hundreds of labourers. The Ottawa Citizen reported on February 17, 1860, that the site was a mess of "excavations, carpenters, blacksmiths and stonecutter's shops; the old barrack buildings had been turned into offices for the contractors." There were 400 to 500 men working in

200 teams. The schedule of prices submitted by Thomas McGreevy in his original tender shows the extensive cost of materials and labour.

Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Canada West. Messrs. Fuller & Jones, Architects

"Schedule of fixed Rates and Prices for Labour and Material supplied on the ground and required in the erection of the New Parliament Buildings, City of Ottawa, forming the basis of the accompanying Estimate and Tender. The scale of rates here following to be allowed in valuing work progress estimates, as well as for alterations, additions, or works dispensed with, and also for extras - to be measured and calculated solely by the Architects or the Clerk of Works."

[Partial Transcription]

Table 1 - Schedule of prices

Excavator-labourer	1.00 dollar/day
Wagon, team and Driver	2.50 dollars/day
Mason -labourer	1.00 dollar/day
Bricklayer	1.50 dollars/day
Stone Cutter	
Native sandstone	.20 to .75 dollar/cubic foot, cutting and fixing
Ohio stone	.20 to .50 dollar/cubic foot, cutting and fixing
Arnprior marble?	1.00 dollar/cubic foot, cutting and fixing
Carpenter and Joiner	
Framing concealed roofs, timber rough	4.00 dollars/1000 feet, B.M.
Framing in open roofs, timber wrought	4.00 dollars/1000 feet, B.M.
Framing in floor joisting	3.00 dollars/1000 feet B.M.
Carpenter, general	1.00 dollar/day

Wood-Carver	3.00 dollars/day
Tin Smith	1.25 dollars/day
Smith	1.25 dollars/day
Plasterer	1.50 dollars/day
Painter	1.25 dollars/day
Glazier	1.25 dollars/day
Plumber	2.00 dollars/day

*This schedule of prices was submitted by Thomas McGreevy, contractor of the Parliament buildings, in November 1859, however it was not accepted at that time. It was submitted as evidence, exhibit 18, during the commission of Enquiry on August 26, 1862 by S. Keefer.

In comparison, the pay rate for the Government workers and Ministers

Pay rate per annum:

- Deputy Minister and technical branch's chief engineer - \$4000
- Architect - \$3200
- Mechanical engineer and chief clerk- \$2000
- Clerks - \$4000 to \$1300
- Messengers - \$300 to \$500

The wages for parliament site workers were fair. The Ottawa Citizen reports in its year-end summary for 1860,

All applicants connected in any way with stone trade were employed-at Parliament for fair wages [and] Not a single man was discharged from these works. Ottawa Citizen, January 4, 1861



Title/description: [Lunch on the Hill: A Parliament construction worker enjoys the view.]
Parliament Buildings - construction. Centre Block showing north-west section and the buttresses of the Library.

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, Photographer

Date: 1868

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-10005

Copyright: Expired



Title: Construction of Parliament Buildings, Centre Block.

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin

Date: [186-?]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-18016

Copyright: Expired

The demand on workers was sometimes high when managers demanded deadlines:

roofing of the right wing of Departmental Buildings was commenced on Wed and is now progressing rapidly - in 5 weeks Parliament Buildings will be undergoing the same operation. Artisans and others engaged on Library Building- now work 5 am to 8 pm- so determined are the contractors that the work shall not delay. This energy on their part has a withering effect on the faint hopes of some but pleasing for the friends of the new capital. Ottawa Citizen August 2, 1861

Conditions on the building site could also be dangerous. There were multiple reports of men falling off walls, sometimes from as high up as 30 feet. In August of 1861, mason Charles Devlin died when he fell 24 feet from the scaffolding of the West Block and suffered severe internal injuries.



Title/description: Mason's Scaffold on the centre Block. East Block of the Parliament Buildings during construction.

Creator: Elihu Spencer, photographer; Department of Public Works

Date: [between 1860 and 1870]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Elihu Spencer, Department of Public Works /LAC PA-126920

Copyright: Expired

The visit of the Prince of Wales

The construction of Canada's first permanent Seat of Government was heralded by the Prince of Wales, who was invited to lay the cornerstone of the centre block in September of 1860. His visit was accompanied by much pomp and ceremony - efforts were made to beautify the city because, as the Ottawa Citizen stated on August 18, 1860 "The laying of the foundation stone of the capital of United Canada by the Crown Prince is an event such as has never been witnessed on this continent." It was also hoped that a warm welcome from Ottawa would foster support to Canadian grievances to Britain in the future.

[I]t will be the first occasion on which he will be publicly recognized as the Heir-Apparent and he will see in the demonstrations of the Canadians something of a political rather than of a personal and individual character[...] in after, when he occupies a more elevated [?] he will gratefully remember that his 'first appearance' as the representative of sovereign power and the warmth of feeling evinced towards him will make him more disposed to redress any grievances of the Canadians and more anxious to give his support to

measures calculated to promote the prosperity of that country. Ottawa Citizen June 6, 1860.

Welcoming events included the erection of 'triumphant arches', speeches, musical concerts, parades etc. When the Prince arrived in Ottawa, he was to be greeted by 150 birch bark canoes, with crews in uniform, with the intent to

"bid him welcome and forming a semi-oval in front of the steamer and escort Her to the landing." (Ottawa Citizen June 16, 1860)

On the day of the ceremony, September 1, 1860, the Prince laid the foundation stone, a block of white marble from the Arnprior quarries (Ottawa Citizen). A lunch was held on the lawns for the workers and their families. Various parties were held across the city to mark the historic event. Having the heir-apparent officially sanction the construction of Canada's Parliament Buildings strengthened Ottawa's emerging identity as the capital city.

Construction is halted and an inquiry is held

By the fall of 1861, construction of the buildings was halted - the cost of construction had far exceeded expectations and the halt brought about an economic upheaval. Suddenly hundreds of artisans and labourers were without work. In 1860, the Ottawa Citizen had listed Trade as 'exceedingly good' with store keepers' stock low due to high demand, and 'Customs revenue for the year will exceed ? 16,000'. The abrupt change in employment meant that jobs available for the artisans and workers were not easily available. The Citizen reported in the Fall of 1861 that the 'approach of winter causes a suspension of the work and nearly 3,000 men must suffer temporary inconvenience'. Outside observers reported however, that Ottawa grew and increased in size, and more importantly the perception that '*Upper, Lower and Middle Town- the latter portion - erected within a year - shape[d]... an important city which was previously scattered*' Ottawa Citizen, January 11, 1862. It was during the halt of construction at the Parliament Buildings that those same artisans and workers constructed many of the social structures, such as churches and schools, hotels and residences.

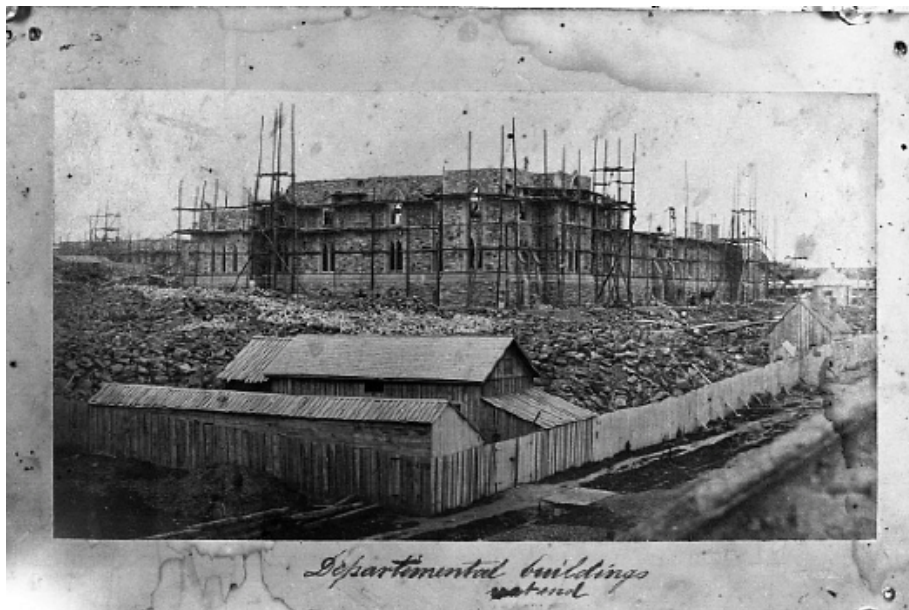
On June 7, 1862, a special Commission of Inquiry was initiated to investigate. The Commission sat from August 4 to September 19, 1862 with further sittings in December 1862 and January 1863. The report was transferred to the Attorney-General of Canada West for consideration and report.

The Report of the Commission of Enquiry, 29 January 1863, found that:

- The proposed site for the new buildings had never been properly examined by the Government to determine the depth of the bedrock, and construction was approved based on incorrect information. As the bedrock was in fact much thicker than anticipated, the construction of the building foundation required more time and more money to complete.
- McGreevy, for unknown reasons, was improperly awarded a contract to construct the buildings, despite that his original tender did not follow regulations (such as proper schedules of cost).

The design of the buildings did not adequately factor in the cost of heating and ventilation systems. As well, any work completed for the heating and ventilation was allowed by the Deputy Commissioner

"to be undertaken proceeded with and paid for, without estimates being made or called for, without contract, without any check, any schedule of prices or any arrangement whatever as to the terms or prices of the work."



Title/description: Construction of Parliament Buildings, Western Block ca 1861.

Inscriptions:(recto) 3./Departmental Buildings./Western Block.

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, Photographer

Date: [ca.1861]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / C-018354 / Samuel McLaughlin

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Construction of Parliament Buildings, Centre Block, from the roof of the West Block. Main tower in the course of construction.

Creator:

Date: [ca.1865]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-018353

Copyright: Expired

The architects did not adequately supervise the progress of the works. For example, they did not check or measure the foundation walls until the walls had reached the level of the basement floors - many of them were out of place, useless or too thick. New foundation walls had to be constructed. The reported stated "*much of the mismanagement and many of the errors are directly or indirectly attributed to them [the architects].*" They had allowed extra work to be completed without the permission of the government, performed superfluous work, and allowed a Mr. Morris to assume an authority he did not possess on the job site.

Despite these findings, the architects were permitted to complete the work. The Commission justified this decision based upon two arguments:

- Great inconveniences would arise if new architects were hired to complete the work.
- "The hardship is felt too of depriving them of credit of carrying out the buildings to completion. It is therefore Respectfully recommended that they continue - but their duties and allowance be distinctly defined before anything further is done. This [Commission] respectfully suggests that in allowing 5% on the whole expenditure, the expense of the present measurement of work shall be deducted

for proper measurement as was intended to be made by them under the original arrangement but that no allowance be made for them for the superfluous and unnecessary work."

Construction resumed in 1863 and the buildings were occupied for the first time in 1866.

The final cost:

Center Block - \$1,373,633.

East Block - \$699,775.

West Block - \$518,352.

for a total of \$2,591,760.

The library, finished in 1877, cost an additional \$301,812. The original allotment for construction of all the Parliamentary Buildings was \$1,093,500 - the project exceeded that budget by \$1,498,260, and with the library factored in, the true over-expenditure reached just over \$1.8 million.



Title/description: Parliament Buildings

Creator: Alexander Henderson, 1831-1913 Photographer

Date: [ca.1866]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / Alexander Henderson / PA-185230

Copyright: Expired

The work on the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa was completed because the Province of Canada needed solidarity. As taken from the Quebec correspondent of the Citizen on an '*Order of the Day*' from the House of Commons, May 19, 1861:

"that whereas the circumstances of the country had very much changed since the Queen's decision, and whereas, a confederation of all the British North American Provinces had been proposed by the Government, it was inexpedient to proceed with the erection of the Public Buildings at Ottawa until that question was decided or some other constitutional change rendered necessary by the state of the Province had been made."

City strata

The Superstructure made up of the Government body and the Infrastructure of support services and workers changed Ottawa from 'The Lumbering City' into Ottawa 'The Seat of Government'.

Large amounts of people, families, documents and information were transported to Ottawa, and required space and safe transport. City buildings had to be created or altered to suit the newcomers, and the City's look and feel also changed, as services increased, architecture changed and the density increased into a metropolis. Some civil servants boarded for the winter, and brought families in the Spring - and some families did not join their husbands in Ottawa at all. How often did a personal family decision affect the public political decision, such as the vote process to make Ottawa the Capital?

Infrastructure



Title/description: Metcalfe Street, looking north to Sparks Street, Ottawa. ca.1890.

Creator: Rorwick Accession

Date: ca.1890

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-002942

Copyright: Expired

The Infrastructure of Ottawa was altered in many ways when it became the Capital of the Dominion of Canada, a process of change that was felt by many participants of society. Change took place in the physical structures such as the architectural feel of Ottawa, the social structures such as police and education, and the economic structures such as housing and produce markets. Political tensions factored into decisions regarding schooling for children and availability of housing, as Ottawa had to be regarded worthy to be the Capital of Canada.

Expansion

The City expanded geographically, economically, and physically as workers and government employees increased.

Populations in Bytown and other cities were expanding, although Bytown had one of the larger expansion rates between 1841 and 1851 census takings, with an overall increase of 149 percent. Toronto increased during the same period by 116 percent, and Hamilton increased by the largest margin - 315 percent! Bytown had the largest population increase between 1851 and 1861, with an increase from 7760 residents to 14,669, an increase of 189 percent.

With the increasing population, the types of workers and artisans were also diversifying. From the City Directories of Ottawa, 1861-1871, the types and numbers of advertisements increase and show change and diversity of services available.

Necessary to build and support a growing city, the trades and services in the early 1860s supported the expansion of the Parliament buildings, and other structures. Such trades include:

Stone cutters, carpenters, lock masters, insurance, lumber merchants, shoemakers, labourers, cabinet makers, blacksmiths, gas fitters and plumbers, tavern owners, clerks, land surveyor, civil engineers, grocers, a postmaster, Banks, goldsmiths, butchers, coopers, pump makers, gun smiths, harness makers, lawyers, booksellers, a homeopathic physician, pharmaceutical chemist, tinsmith, teachers, contractor, bookkeeper and printers, hair dressers, hotels, dentists, insurance companies, watchmakers, mills, the Prescott railway, tailors, a music store, photographers and carpenters.



PA-012584

Title/description: Her Majesty's Theatre, before 1867.

Creator: William James Topley, photographer

Date: [before 1867]

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada / Topley Studio Fonds / PA-012584

Copyright: Expired

The contemporary perspective of the change in Ottawa by the year 1861 was focused on the many new private and public buildings erected, and improvements made, such as:

- New wing of St. Joseph's College; the church of England Schoolhouse and the new goal buildings
- New buildings in Spark's Street replaced those destroyed by fire in Spring
- Dr. Grant's residence on Rideau Street
- Building and launch of a new steamboat, the *Victoria*

Government buildings' progress was noted as 'satisfactory' and 'not a single man was discharged from work; all 'applicants connected with the stone trade were employed and for fair wages.

The City Directories for 1864 and 1865 show the lumber trade and masonry made up a large portion of Ottawa's businesses.

Within this set of years, there was an increase in advertisements for merchants, hotel owners, bookkeepers, clerks etc. Therefore, more hotels to be constructed, which supported the building tradesmen. Ottawa also had many social clubs, such as literary societies, natural history societies, temperance societies, sporting clubs, Masonic groups, horticultural societies, and a museum.



Title/description: Victoria Hotel, sketch from Frank Leslie's Illustrated News

Creator: unknown

Date: [ca.1860]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / CA-000141

Copyright: Expired

While Ottawa was still in many respects a rough lumber town, the construction of public buildings, such as the jail and Post Office, and the emergence of cultural and academic societies, illustrate that the city was becoming a more "refined" urban area.

Housing

Housing and markets - social change

As early as 1860, the editors of the Ottawa Citizen note that rental prices were increasing with the influx of workers and trades people to work on the Parliament buildings.

In few days - stone-cutters, masons, carpenters and host of other tradesmen in addition to the force already employed - increase rent of dwelling houses - which are becoming scarce. Ottawa Citizen April 17, 1860 (Tuesday)

The concern of housing and real estate markets were also used to propagate the perceived beauty and benefit of one city over another, and supported sectarian divisions. An article from the Quebec Journal in November 1860, related high prices of building plots within the limits of Ottawa and suggested "the city has more to dread from the conduct of its own citizens..." when real property of Ottawa was not improved or built on,

and [was] occupied by a person who has neither the sense nor magnanimity to make it available for the public... [an] evil genius of the place [when a] naked lot in 2nd class st. 25 to 30 per foot frontage and even at this price the owner is not anxious to sell. Quebec Journal in Ottawa Citizen, November 2 1860

In an effort to refute the position that Ottawa was overpriced and untenable for prospective landowners, the Citizen published an editorial on, and stated "land held at such high prices as to deter people from purchasing" is an assumption 'almost' wholly without cause - there may have been 'one or two owners' who held their property at high prices, but there are eligible city lots for sale on terms that were reasonable and easy. The Citizen continued on to note:

Mr. Chas. Sparrow jr.- a land agent in Ottawa- advertised building lots a 5 min walk of the Parliament buildings from 50 to 100 each, Size 1/5 to 1/6 of an acre

These prices are small compare to lots in Western towns and cities during speculative mania of 1855-56

Previous six months- Sparrow disposed of some \$50,000 worth and they are still in demand

Now it's a good time to purchase. The Price of Land in Ottawa, Ottawa Citizen August 2, 1861

Ottawa's housing markets were stretched with the sudden increase of population and may have created housing shortages and rent increases for the locals already living in Ottawa.

Education

Educationally, Ottawa was well supplied by 1864. Listed in the City Directories are: College of Ottawa (est. 1848) Ottawa Senior Grammar school, the Ottawa Academy and Young Ladies Seminary. The junior/elementary institutions were either classified as common or private schools.

Perhaps the most important of these educational institutions was the College of (Bytown) Ottawa, given a charter as the University of Ottawa in 1866. Established by Bishop Guigues in 1848, the College was the first higher education institution to offer classes in both French and English. The sectarian division was bridged because the Catholic College would appeal to both French and Irish Catholic residents when the question of the location of the Seat of Government was considered. Initially located on Sussex Street, in 1855 the College received six lots in sandy Hill, its current location.



Title/description: University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 9 June 1959.

Creator: Andrews Newton

Date: 9 June 1959

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-002737-12

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: University of Ottawa, 55 Wilbrod, between Cumberland and Waller, Ottawa, 1898.

Creator: unknown

Date: 1898

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-001494

Copyright: Expired

Between 1866 and 1868 the estimated increase in population was 5,540 people.

Social needs and deficiencies led to the creation of social support organizations. The Health Department was established in a basic form in 1847 and the Ottawa General Hospital was established by 1849, which only served the very basic needs of the population. But by the 1860s other institutions had been incorporated out of necessity, such as St. Joseph's Orphanage in 1865, and the St. Charles' Home for the Aged in 1871. The St. Vincent de Paul Society was established in 1865 to support the Roman Catholic population in need of support. The Young Men's Christian Association was Incorporated in 1867 "to foster the growth and development of boys and young men". The growing population created pressure and need for expanded social services.

Architecture

Ottawa changed significantly in look and feel during the 10 years prior to becoming the capital of the Dominion of Canada. Architecture changed as politicians and wealthy businessmen demanded certain architectural aesthetics. Since Gothic was the chosen style of the Parliaments, effectively becoming the National style, construction often reflected these visual elements.

Common styles of Heritage buildings in Ottawa consist of Gothic, Neo-Gothic, Lowertown cottage, Gothic, Second empire, and Italianate.

Examples of City expansion:



Title/description: "View across Ottawa looking West from Court House to Parliament Hill". This view possibly taken from the old Court House on Nicholas St. Ottawa, indicates that the new buildings on The Hill constituted Ottawa's only skyline at the time 1866.

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, photographer

Date: ca.1866

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada / Samuel McLaughlin / C-001185

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Basilica of Notre Dame Roman Catholic Church, Ottawa. The cornerstone was laid in 1841 and completed in 1853. It was the first church to welcome both Anglophone and Francophone worshippers.

Creator:

Date: 1931

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-002204

Copyright: Expired

Notre Dame Cathedral - cornerstone 1841- completed in 1853- basilica in 1879 CA-019900, **CA-002204**, CA-001612



Title/description: University of Ottawa, 55 Wilbrod, between Cumberland and Waller, Ottawa, 1898.

Creator: unknown

Date: 1898

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-001494

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Rideau Hall, Government House, Ottawa, rear of building. Built by Thomas MacKay, the building was later purchased as the Governor General's residence.

Creator: unknown

Date: [19--]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-000116

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Old St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, situated on the corner of Kent and Wellington Streets, Ottawa. The original building was constructed by Thomas MacKay's masons in 1828, enlarged in 1854 and replaced by the current structure in 1872.

Creator:

Date: [before 1872]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-002202

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa. Originally built in 1833, the cathedral was enlarged in 1841, rebuilt in 1873, and elevated in 1896.

Creator: Andrews-Newton, Photographers.

Date: December 2, 1954

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-006731

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: Courthouse and jail ca.1870.

Creator: William James Topley, Photographer

Date: ca.1870

Identifier:

Credit: Library and Archives Canada / PA-012371

Copyright: Expired

Byward Market expansion

With the influx of carpenters, stone masons and labourers into Lower Town to work on the new Parliament and Departmental Buildings, the Byward Market became the economic and social centre of life in Lower Town.

Merchants and business owners recognized the market potential of the expanding Ottawa and attempted to sway the profits in their own direction. To attract shoppers and increase land values, Old City Hall was originally built in 1848 as the West Ward Market by Nicholas Sparks, which stands at the site of the National Arts Centre in 2008.



Title/description: City Hall, demolished in 1874.

Creator: unknown

Date: [before 1874]

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada / C-002185

Copyright: Expired

Market areas in Upper town were attempted but the incorporation of Bytown in 1847, which created North, South and West wards with representatives for each, put the political favour to Lower town.

Lower town contained two of these wards and accordingly was entitled to two members from each. The Upper Town had only three councillors thus revealing that Lower Town held the higher proportion of electors and consequently the political balance was in its favour.

Lower town as a market centre proved far more attractive to both retailers and shoppers. A market building had been constructed in the middle of George Street near Sussex Drive in 1846. It was destroyed by fire in 1857, and quickly replaced by another structure on the north side of York Street. The movement to expand the ancient wooden market building began in autumn of 1861.



Title/description: Byward Market, Sussex Drive between George and Rideau Streets, Ottawa.

Creator: unknown

Date: [ca.1860]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-000231

Copyright: Expired

It was to these Lower town markets that the area's mixed farmers and market growers brought their wares, along the macadamized River Road and Bank Street. Ottawa Markets demanded produce suitable for politician's tables, to entertain and sway political favour. Produce types expanded, 'exotics' such as strawberries and cucumbers were introduced, orchard fruits were cultivated, all in response to the demands of the moneyed politicians.

Roads

Ottawa did not have many paved roadways and streets until 1895, and travel within the city difficult and weather dependent. It was not until 1916 that the Government created the Department of Public Highways-the precursor to today's Ministry of Transportation. This department took over duties that had previously fallen under county, municipal, or township jurisdiction. Bank Street, or Metcalf Rd., was macadamised when many main Ottawa Roads were still in a rough dirt format. A private company, Gloucester Road Company, undertook the task. The process began in 1854, and the company had completed macadamization as far as Billings Bridge by 1867.

The impending visit of the Prince of Wales in 1860 was a focus for the Ottawa Citizen and business owners to rally behind, as they encouraged the City to:

Use your influence with your councillors to get our great thoroughfares macadamized and beautified by planting young trees not peddling and patching.

Ottawa Citizen, April 1860.

The concern remained in vocal public well into the establishment of Ottawa as the Nation's Capital.



Title/description: Horse-drawn omnibus on Sparks St. between Elgin and Metcalfe St.

Creator: unknown

Date: [ca.1877]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives / CA-001504

Copyright: Expired

Local intelligence - man-traps and pitfalls

Besides the dangerous hole at Pooley's Bridge, to which we directed attention in Yesterday's issue, there are in various parts of the city dangerous holes in the sidewalk. We would mention in particular that dangerous place on Dalhousie street, where the

slightest misstep would precipitate an unwary passenger into a large open drain on one side, or into a smaller hole on the other side, where in either case a broken leg would be almost certain result. The sidewalk at the place is narrow and in slippery weather it would require an acrobat to traverse it in safety. Ottawa Citizen February 14, 1867

Correspondence

To the editor of the Ottawa Citizen Sir -While the City Council takes time to deliberate on the best location for the hack-sleighs, whose present stand is at the junction of George and Sussex streets, I would suggest one most desirable improvement in the existing state of things and one to which (without offending the susceptibilities of the too-sensitive Jehu's) immediate effect might be given. It is simply this : Let the horses' heads be turned the other way, up George street instead of facing Sussex street. Those of your readers who may ever have been so unfortunate as to pass down Sussex street about five p.m. - when the evening train is due, and an hour when the street is thronged with passengers - cannot be ignorant of the whooping and yelling, and lashing of horses, with which on the first sound of the whistle, the carters dash into their vehicles, and totally regardless of the poor pedestrians who may be crossing George street at the moment, tear away down to the station like demons just let loose. George street is wide, and a person, particularly a lady, cannot gain the sidewalk in a moment. Almost the same scene was enacted the moment the cabbies espy any person beckoning for a sleigh. They rush, with one accord to their respective sleighs, then follows a scrimmage and a brief scramble until the most expeditious of the number distances his rivals. Were the horses heads turned up the street, pedestrians would at least, have time to reach a place of safety before the rush comes, and ladies would suffer fewer alarms from the "shying and starting" of horses at other times, on snow falling from the neighbouring roofs, or on the bugle surrounding the barracks &c. If you can succeed, Mr. Editor, in effecting this experiment, you will be entitled to the thanks of every one who is in this slippery season. -A Walker Ottawa Citizen February 20th, 1867



Title/description: Elgin Street at the intersection with Sparks Street, Ottawa.

Date: [ca.1875]

Identifier: City of Ottawa Archives /MG11/ CA-019070

Copyright: Expired

Correspondence

Sir - In this climate there is at this season of year a great deal of unnecessary non-intercourse between the city and country-and that does exist is carried with much loss and great cruelty to animals. The condition of the main streets are such that sleighing is almost impossible - while from the depth of snow on every country and side road wheeling is on them equally impossible. Even in mid-winter, after a heavy thaw followed by a hard frost, the streets of Ottawa are covered with a coating of frozen manure, which makes them almost impassable for those heavy loads of wood or produce so easily then brought in from the country. For this there is at present no remedy but a fresh fall of snow. But at this season there may be weeks what at least half of every load which reaches the suburbs should there thrown off, when country people leave their vehicles outside and walk in, to save themselves and horses from becoming objects of comment and commiseration while creeping along the gutter and hunting up every detached piece of clean snow or ice. Now this is just the season of the year when there is little else but teaming to be done, when the price of wood can be kept down by good roads inside and when manure is wanted outside, when supplies are being hurried off to the shanties before the ice falls, and when everyone is hurrying up to prepare for the opening of spring. To have, therefore, the transportation of the city and country at this season shorn of at least one half of its efficiency is a great public loss - an intolerable nuisance-and so far as it can be remedied a great public scandal. There is under the accumulation of filth in the streets a foot or more of solid snow and ice which if it can be got at would maintain the streets in passable

order for a long time. The road thus cleaned would, among other benefits, set free those turn-outs, maintained at great expense in the city, which are now useless and will be for weeks, and enable their owners to enjoy the beautiful sky, the sleighing and scenery in the country. Can nothing be done? A few horses and scrapers at the proper time could rake the manure to the sides, from where it could be carted (and worth the cartage) and I am confident there is nothing in which a small outlay, scarcely worth considering, would produce such important economical results. -Outsider Ottawa Citizen March 25, 1867

Police

The first organized non-partisan Board of Commissioners of Police was organized on January 29, 1863, to supervise the activity of the police. Councillor Scott introduced By-law number 192 on January 19, 1863, regarding the appointment of Police Magistrate Hammett Hill as 'Commissioner of Police'

However, it wasn't until By-law 235 was passed May 29, 1866 that a permanent, salaried, and accountable police force was established. The board demanded that the constables receive a salary, be employed on a full-time basis, be answerable to the Police Chief and be identified by a proper uniform

Previously, there was a heavy reliance upon the civilian population to maintain order. There was also a civilian militia, which would be called to duty when dangerous situations, such as riots, occurred.

On April 11, 1859, by-law 159A was passed defining the duties of the chief Constable and his constables: to preserve the public peace; prevent robberies and other felonies and misdemeanours; apprehend offenders; enforce all the laws and By-laws; and produce evidence for the prosecution of offenders.

From 1859, Bytown was policed by nine constables, three in each ward, under the direction of a head constable. This small Force headed by High Constable Berichon was the grand-father of the Ottawa Police."

After Ottawa was chosen as the capital city, the population began a dramatic increase, especially between the years 1860-1865. The previous law enforcement system of nine constables had worked adequately with a smaller population. But as the number of residents grew to eighteen thousand people, the older system was no longer sufficient.

Local intelligence - An Orderly City

Ottawa always has been - since the last of the Shiners - and is, the most orderly and best conducted city in Canada- intending the latter word in its fullest significance. Heavy crime is rarely committed here, and even petty ones are as scarce as blackberries in January. Our police force, including the detective, are the most vigilant that any city need desire to

be blessed with, and yet three and sometimes four days elapse without their being able to drum up the smallest case for the Police Magistrate to exercise his judgement upon. Such has been the case this week. Since Friday morning the Police Court has not been graced with an offender. If there is any other city in the Provinces with a population over 17,000, which can say as much for its morals, let it speak. -Ottawa Citizen March 12, 1867

Local intelligence - A new vocation

Few cities in the province have been more free from professional beggars than has this hitherto, with the exception of one or two old fellows who were fond of a drop and who solicited a charity to obtain it. Mendicants were strangers on our streets. Too much cannot be said at the present time of the [scarcity?] of that class of citizens in Ottawa. Quite a number of young urchins - boys and girls between the age of eight and ten- now make their regular rounds, soliciting 'a copper' and representing themselves as orphans or the children of disabled parents. Every one of these young beggars should be picked up, and if they should prove to be orphans-which is very doubtful- they should be put into the institution in this city for the reception of such. To permit them to continue to ply the avocation is only exposing them to temptation, and in a measure preparing them for the gaol.

[The City Council] adopted the motion to carefully monitor the number of times the constables were called for duty, the number of days of employment and the necessity that existed for them to be called out. -Ottawa Citizen March 12, 1867.

Constables were paid according to work carried out, and not by a set salary and were also responsible for collecting fees which helped pay for the Police Force. For example, Constable John Brown was paid one dollar for the arrest of an offender for fighting, a further dollar for his attendance in court and seven cents for taking the offender to and from jail, a total of \$2.07 he received for his services.

In 1865 the Board of Commissioners argued that "It is absolutely required that a police force be established within this City to consist, for the present, of a Chief Constable or Chief of Police, a detective, a market Constable, a sergeant and six privates".



Title/description: City Hall, Ottawa, demolished 1874.

Creator:

Date: [ca. 1840 - 1874]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada /C-002185

Copyright: Expired

Nicholas Sparks had donated a two-storey wooden structure to Town Council in 1849. Previously the West ward market Building, it became the town hall building. In 1865, the police station, with two initial cells and later five cells, was established in its wings.

Superstructure

The political environment was not confined to the visible public - politics permeated the homes and lives of ordinary people, as well as political personalities.

July 1867.
 Friday 5th. My beautiful new Diary Book!
 I am so pleased with it and have been examining
 & adapting it for full two months! It looks so
 my dear to Miss Bernard did not need such
 precautions but then I was an insignificant young
 spinster & what I might write did not matter. Now
 I am a great prominent wife & Lady Macdonald
 & "Cabinet Secrets & Mysteries" might drop on
 my off. Unwillingly I give the risk of my pen.
 That is - they might do so - if my pen had any
 life or if I knew any Cabinet Secrets, which I
 certainly do not - but then I looked at my
 book - so frequent at & just now, I am rather
 in that line myself. I mean the consequential
 kind of course - My husband's new title is
 just five days old. So - for a short time longer
 I may be accused for some little bombast.
 It has been a hot busy day, but there are
 busy times. This new Dominion of ours
 came noisily into existence on the 1st & the very
 newspapers look hot & tired under the weight
 of announcements & Cabinet lists.
 Here - in this house - the atmosphere is so
 awfully political - that sometimes I think
 the very flies hold Parliaments on the
 kitchen tablecloth! I am ~~happy~~ ^{glad} to record
 my husband with much awe - in practice
 I treat the life out of him, by talking of
 his & compliments - then he comes home to
 rest - I say he rebelled - poor man, &
 indeed me but of the very I went at once

Title/description: Diary of Lady Macdonald, 5 July 1867.

Creator: Susan Agnes Macdonald, Baroness of Earncliffe

Date: 5 July 1867

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada / MG 26 A, v. 559A

Copyright: Expired

5 July This new Dominion of ours came noisily into existence on the 1st and the very newspapers look hot and tired under the weight of announcements and Cabinet lists. In this house, the atmosphere so awfully political that sometimes I think the very flies hold Parliament on the kitchen tablecloth. -Baroness Macdonald diaries, 5 July to 7 December 1867. C-1447

Transporting families, households and documents to Ottawa were of major concern in the decision for Ottawa as the Seat of Government.

The Parliament Buildings in Ottawa were finished enough to permit civil servants to move to Ottawa when session of legislature closed in Quebec in Sept. 1865.

Government workers came by boat and some by train, with 350 government workers who brought large families and servants.

The perambulating system of parliament had seriously hindered their ability to enact legislation. Records were lost or damaged during the moving process, staff were disrupted and displaced and had to find new schools for children and new homes to live in. The cost to move a family of 8 from the Executive Council in 1855, from Quebec to Toronto was allocated approximately £56, although the allowances made to each member of Government was calculated based on the number in each family, the rate of salaries; and the sums which have been paid to them, respectively, on the last removal.

The Government sought to conserve finances early in the decision process of the Seat of Government - the residence for governor general was not built new to suit but was retrofitted from an existing structure. Thomas MacKay's Rideau Hall was purchased and modified in 1863.

In practice, Government workers were given allowances to move themselves and their families, including hired help and servants, according to household size and rank within the government. The overall cost of moving the Government to Toronto from Quebec in 1856, for example, was stated to the Governor General by the Commissioner of Public Works as such:

To His Excellency the Governor General

The undersigned have the honour to report for the information of your Excellency that the expenses connected with the removal of the Seat of Government from Quebec to Toronto, alterations and repair of Buildings etc. to the present date amounts to the sum of £ 55,

856.17.5. - as follows Government House - £15,543.11.3

Parliament Houses - £5,356.14.9

Mechanics' Institute - £7,451.19.1

Old Hospital - £4,807.4.4

Military Chambers - £669.7.11

Temporary Hospital & [?] Office - £1,689.10.3

[Subsidies? Sundries?] - £451.0.9

Removal, including furniture for Offices - £19,897.9.1

Total - £ 55, 856.17.5 To meet outstanding liabilities, the following sums, so are as the Comm. of Public Works have been able to ascertain, will be required. Government House - £650

Parliament Houses - £ 8050

Mechanics' Institute - £770

Old Hospital - £1500

Military Chambers - £330

University - £550

Public Works - £60

Removal - £2600.

Total - £ 14,510.0.0 The above information is supplied for the consideration of Your Excellency as to whether the amount - £ 70, 366.17.5 should be placed on the estimate to

be laid before the Legislature at the approaching session.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Lemieux.

Chief Head

Moving Government was costly and challenging, but also benefited the City who received Parliament because the process increased population, increased market demands, supported housing real estate prices, and improved the infrastructure.

The removal to Ottawa

Within a day or two, for what reason we cannot well say, there has been some flutter among the Civil Service men and their families anent the removal to Ottawa, which was fixed by the late Government for the coming fall. By some means a rumour has got afloat that the removal at so early a day is an actual impossibility, and that all the available labour which could be forced upon the public buildings would not change the prospect. As a Quebecer, sharing in the general benefits accruing from the presence of the Departments and the meetings of Parliament in the city, we might be excused for encouraging the hope that the rumour was likely to turn out correct; but we very much fear there is no such good luck in store for us.

From the Quebec Gazette, May 2. Ottawa Citizen reprint 6 May 1864.

And they did it!

By 1867, the perception of Ottawa in its publications and advertising can be summarised by the editors of the Ottawa City Directory:

Since the appointment of Ottawa, by her Majesty the Queen, as the Capital of these provinces, it and the neighbouring districts have commanded increased attention at the hands of the moneyed men of the country. The consequence is that Ottawa, during the past few years has increased in size, wealth, population and importance at an almost unprecedented rate, and now possesses some of the finest public and private buildings, the largest and most important manufactories and the most extensive mills to be found in any portion of her majesty's dominions of British North America.

"The magnificent pile of buildings lately erected as Government and Departmental buildings will always make Ottawa rank high among the cities of America in point of architectural objects of interest."

For travelling and Forwarding facilities, the Capital is tolerably well supplied, **though such is the increase in population and general business that other and more extensive means must soon be provided."**

The city now contains fourteen churches, a college (St. Joseph), Grammar school, three collegiate schools, a commercial college, four Young Ladies' Academies and excellent public schools [...]"

there are four fire companies, two hook and ladder companies [...] "



C-084734

Title/description: Official ceremony on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, of the proroguing of the fifth and final session of the Eight Parliament of the Province of Canada opened June 8 and terminated August 15, 1866.

Creator: Ralph Greenhill

Date: ca. August 1866

Identifier: Credit: Library and Archives Canada Greenhill, Ralph

Copyright: Expired

To build a Capital City not only required the physical structures to house the government, but also required the citizens and workers to build an Infrastructure to support and maintain the Government. Prior to 1857, Ottawa was a rough and dirty town, with no bylaws for sewage and garbage removal, few social services and a small and varied population.



Title/description: Barracks Hill

View of Barracks Hill and the Ottawa River at Bytown (Ottawa) ca 1843-1859.

Creator: Edmund Willoughby Sewell, 1800-1890

Date: [ca.1843]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / C-011047

Copyright: Expired



Title/description: View towards east from Parliament Hill, Parliament Buildings Construction, 1861. Inscription: S. McLaughlin Photo: / (Verso:) Lower Town / (Stamp:) D.A. McLaughlin, Photographer to Dept. of Public Works and Railways & Canals

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, photographer

Date: 1861

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / C-000610

Copyright: Expired

But within 10 years and because of the building of the National Capital, Ottawa became more sophisticated, with social structures and new buildings and architecture that gave Ottawa a unique look and feel, and an economy that could support its growing population's needs.



Title/description: View across Ottawa Looking West from Court House to Parliament Hill

Creator: Samuel McLaughlin, photographer

Date: [ca.1865]

Identifier: Library and Archives Canada / C-001185

Copyright: Expired

Educational resources

The topic of Ottawa being named the Capital of Canada provides a great many opportunities for students to study the forces that can change a city over time. This change contributed to Ottawa's transformation from a backwoods lumber town to a world-class city. In order for this transformation to occur, the local landscape, infrastructure and, perhaps most importantly, the attitudes of the people all needed to undergo their own fundamental transformations.

A series of lesson plans have been created to assist students in their exploration of four different themes related to Ottawa's transformation: Opportunity, Celebration, Expansion and Daily Life. The following lessons appeal to the Ontario Curriculum, particularly students in Grades 7, 8 and 12.

Opportunity

The thought of Ottawa being named the capital city generated a lot of fodder for newspapers editors around Canada at the time. Those newspapers based outside of Ottawa could not believe that Ottawa might receive this honour while editors in Ottawa recognized the opportunities that this status would bring to the city. Read some of the editorials that were published in Ottawa newspapers and reflect on Ottawa today.

Discussion

To what extent were some of these opportunities realised? Was Ottawa as successful as the authors anticipated?

Were any predictions made about the city that struck you as greatly exaggerated? Did some of the opportunities not come true?

Who was ultimately going to benefit from Ottawa becoming the capital city? Do you think this was in fact the case? Why or why not?

What kind of language do the authors use to reinforce their arguments?

Extension

Consider a major issue that faces Ottawa today and write your own editorial about it. The editorial should present a strong opinion on the topic with the intention of convincing your readers of your argument.

Curriculum objectives

History: Grade 7 - British North America

Overall expectations:

- Use a variety of resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate information about the beginnings and development of the new British colonies.
- Identify some themes and personalities from the period and explain their relevance to contemporary Canada.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and understanding

- Explain key characteristics of life in English Canada from a variety of perspectives (e.g., family life, economic and social life, the growth and development of early institutions, transportation, relationships with First Nation peoples and French settlers).
- Inquire/research and communication skills
- Formulate questions to facilitate research on specific topics.
- Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to locate relevant information about how early settlers met the challenges of the new land.
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information.
- Application
- Illustrate the historical development of their local, using a variety of formats.

History: Grade 8 - Canada: a changing society

Overall expectations:

- Describe key characteristics of Canada between 1885 and 1914, including social and economic conditions, the roles and contributions of various people and groups, internal and external pressures for change, and the political responses to these pressures.

Specific expectations:

- Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills
- Describe and analyze conflicting points of view about a historical issue.

Celebration

After reading the diary that was kept by Isabelle Clark, the wife of Sir John A. MacDonald, consider what life would have been like during the period leading up to the selection of the national capital. What are we able to learn about her life and her feelings about the selection process? Does she provide any insight into what life was like for the people living in Ottawa? What does it tell us about her husband's life at this time?

Using blogging software, resources that are available in this online exhibit and your own personal research, create your own journal to celebrate the choice of Ottawa as Canada's capital. Imagine that you are writing this in 1857 and try to capture the spirit of the city at the time. Don't limit yourself to words to convey these feelings, but also consider using images as well. Make regular updates to your blog to track how feelings changed over the course of the process.

For discussion

- Why were Ottawans excited about the prospect of their city being selected as the national capital? Was this a common sentiment or were there dissenters in Ottawa who felt the capital should have been located elsewhere?
- What do you think about the decision-making process? How do you think that Canadians would feel today if the decision of selecting a capital were left up to the Queen? What other methods or processes can you think of for deciding on a national capital?
- What do Isabelle Clark's journal, the letter from the Queen and the decision-making process tell us about the role of women in Canadian politics?

Curriculum objectives

History: Grade 7 - British North America

Overall expectations:

- Identify some themes and personalities from the period and explain their relevance to contemporary Canada.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and understanding
 - Explain key characteristics of life in English Canada from a variety of perspectives e.g., family life, economic and social life, the growth and development of early institutions, transportation, relationships with First Nation peoples and French settlers).
 - Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills
 - Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to locate relevant information about how early settlers met the challenges of the new land.
 - Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information;
 - Communicate the results of inquiries for specific purposes and audiences, using media works, oral presentations, written notes and reports, drawings, tables, charts, and graphs.

History: Grade 8 - Confederation

Overall expectations:

- Compare Canada as it was in 1867 to the Canada of today, including political, social, and other issues facing the country in both periods.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and understanding
 - Identify the roles of key individuals, the main events leading to the signing of the British North America Act, and the reasons for the exclusion of certain groups from the political process.

History: Grade 8 - Canada: a changing society

Overall expectations:

- Compare living and working conditions, technological developments, and social roles near the beginning of the twentieth century with similar aspects of life in present-day Canada.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and understanding
 - Describe the social and working conditions of Canadians around the beginning of the twentieth century.
 - Describe how specific individuals and events helped change the position of women and children in Canada.

History: Grade 12 - Canada: history, identity, and culture - social, economic, and political structures

Overall expectations:

- Analyze the changing roles and contributions of women in Canada.

Specific expectations:

- Women in Canada
 - Analyze the extent to which women's traditional roles as wives and mothers and their status in Canadian society have changed since Victorian times.
 - Analyze the contributions of women to the Canadian identity.

Expansion

Rural-agricultural areas have long existed in the area surrounding Ottawa though at the time when Ottawa was selected as the capital it was more of an industrial town, with lumber being the dominant industry. Compare the historical map that is provided with a modern map to study how the city has changed over the past 150 years. Consider things like the size of the city, the types of land use, infrastructure, and the political segmentation of the city. In what ways does the modern city differ from its former self, and in what ways is it the same?

For discussion

- Ottawa has annexed neighbouring communities and undergone amalgamations at various points in the past. Why has it done so? What have been the benefits and the drawbacks?
- Based on what is indicated by the maps, what types of services does the city now offer that it didn't offer in the past? Do you think that it is the city's responsibility to offer these services? If not, should they be offered at all and, if so, who should provide them?
- Is the modern City of Ottawa more urban or more rural than it was in the past?
- Is the modern City of Ottawa more industrial than it was in the past? What are the dominant types of employment in the city and the surrounding area?

Curriculum objectives

Geography: Grade 7 - The themes of geographic inquiry

Overall expectations:

- Identify and explain the themes of geographic inquiry: location/place, environment, region, interaction, and movement.
- Use a variety of geographic resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate geographic information.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and understanding
 - Explain the geographic concept of interaction.
 - Explain the geographic concept of movement.
- Map and Graphic Skills
 - Create and use maps for a variety of purposes.

History: Grade 8 - Canada: a changing society

Overall expectations:

- Describe key characteristics of Canada between 1885 and 1914, including social and economic conditions, the roles and contributions of various people and groups, internal and external pressures for change, and the political responses to these pressures.
- Use a variety of resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate information about the factors that shaped Canada as it was entering the twentieth century.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and Understanding
 - Describe the factors contributing to change in Canadian society.
- Inquiry/research and communication skills
 - Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to locate relevant information.

History: Grade 12 - Canada: history, identity, and culture - change and continuity

Overall expectations:

- Assess changes in Canada's rural-agricultural and urban-industrial communities.

Specific expectations:

- Rural and urban communities
 - Assess the effects of industrialization on various regions and peoples of Canada.
- Technology and society
 - Analyze how changes in transportation and communications technology have influenced Canadian society and identity.

Daily life

Browse through the photographs in the exhibition and select one that appeals to you. Print it off to complete the following steps or complete the steps on a computer with the photo at hand. This activity can be done in groups of students using the same photograph.

Describe

Study the photography closely. What is your first thought or reaction to the photo? Share your responses with your group.

Question

Make a list of any questions that you have about the photograph. Consider the setting, the people in the photograph and what they are doing, etc. Make a master list of questions if working as a group.

Predict

Who do you think took the photograph? Why did they choose to photograph this particular scene and what do you think the photograph was originally used for? Write a summary of your ideas.

Read

Read any information that accompanies the photograph, including what is found in the exhibition itself.

Analyse

What have you learned about the information contained within this photograph? Revisit the questions that you answered previously. Have you been able to answer any of the questions that you asked in the second step? What does the photograph tell you about what life was like in Ottawa at the time that the photo was taken? What would you say has changed about life in the city since then?

Try to find a photograph of the same location today or visit the location itself. What are the most important changes that have taken place?

Research

Make a list of any questions arising from the photograph that have not yet been answered. Research these questions and present your findings to the class.

Curriculum objectives

History: Grade 8 - Canada: a changing society

Overall expectations:

- Compare living and working conditions, technological developments, and social roles near the beginning of the twentieth century with similar aspects of life in present-day Canada.

Specific expectations:

- Knowledge and Understanding
 - Describe the social and working conditions of Canadians around the beginning of the twentieth century.
 - Describe how specific individuals and events helped change the position of women and children in Canada.

History: Grade 12 - Canada: history, identity, and culture - change and continuity

Overall expectations:

- Assess changes in Canada's rural-agricultural and urban-industrial communities.

Specific expectations:

- Rural and urban communities
 - Assess the effects of industrialization on various regions and peoples of Canada.
 - Evaluate the changing economic and cultural contributions of Canadian cities.
- Technology and society
 - Analyze how changes in transportation and communications technology have influenced Canadian society and identity.

Primary sources

So how did we put this web site together? Research, research and more research. In this section you will find scanned original documents, including government records, that help tell Ottawa's story of becoming Canada's Capital. All of these documents are in their original language and provide context and colour to this important time in Ottawa's history.

Ottawa City Council

City Hall, April 6, 1857

Present. His Worship the Mayor [John Bower Lewis], Aldermen Langrell, Sparks, Clegg, Friel, Heney, Laporte, Varin – Councillors Rochester, Scott, Hay, Loux, Perkins, Berichon, Kennedy, Leamy, Montgomery.

His Worship the Mayor presented a Circular from the Office of the Governor's Secretary, in relation to the Seat of Government.

1. - Moved by Alderman Friel, seconded by Councillor Hay, That a special Committee be appointed to prepare a Statement in Compliance with the suggestion of the Government in reference to the selection of a Provincial Capital - Said Committee to consist of Messrs. Smith, McGillivray, Varin, Sparks, Hay, Clegg, and the Mover [Friel].

That the Said Committee be instructed to invite the Cooperation and assistance of the Editors of the City papers, Mr Sheriff Fraser, Mr Instance Armstrong, the Members for

the City and Counties of Russell, Carleton, Renfrew, Pontiac, Ottawa, and Prescott. Messrs Stevenson, A.I. Russell, Au- monde, Monkman, R.W. Scott, H.V. Noel, Dr Beaulieu, R.S Cassells, D. O'Connor. Luir, Galivey, I. Brough. P.P.I. Harrip, and Dr Hill and Such other parties as they may deem advisable in their deliberations on this important subject.

That as soon as the Said Committee shall be prepared to Report, His Worship the Mayor be requested to call a Special Meeting of this Council to receive the same.

That the Committee be empowered to expend such Sum of money as may be absolutely necessary in the preparation of Plans and other documents to accompany the said Statement. - Carried.

City Hall, May 18, 1857

Present. His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen McGillivray, Langrell, Heney, Clegg, Smith, Friel, Laporte, Councillors Rochester, Montgomery, Scott, Hay, Loux, Perkins, Bérichon, Kennedy and Leamey.

10. - Moved by Coun Loux, seconded by Ald Clegg That the copies of Hinten's Views and Whitefields Pictures of the City of Ottawa ** Sc, be placed at the disposal of the Select Committee, named to draft Memorial to the Queen, for distribution as they may deem expedient. - Carried

14. - Alderman Friel presented the Report of the Special Committee on the Seat of Government question.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Ottawa. The Committee appointed to prepare a Statement in compliance with the request of the Provincial Government setting forth the claims of Ottawa to be the Seat of Government, beg leave to Report. That in concert with the Gentlemen named by resolution of the Council, and those chosen by a meeting of the Citizens, the Committee entered upon its duties.

That a Memorial has been prepared and approved of by the Committee, which Memorial is herewith submitted for the approval of the Council.

Your Committee would recommend the adoption of the Memorial; and that the Mayor be empowered to Sign it and the Clerk affix the Seal.

That your Committee be directed to transmit the Memorial for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen.

The whole submitted.

Ottawa May 2nd 1857

H.I. Friel,
George Hay,
E. McGillivray,
Edward Smith
W. Clegg Jr.

15. - Moved by Ald. Friel, Seconded by Ald. Smith That the Report of the Committee on the Memorial to Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, in reference to the Seat of Government be received and adopted. Carried

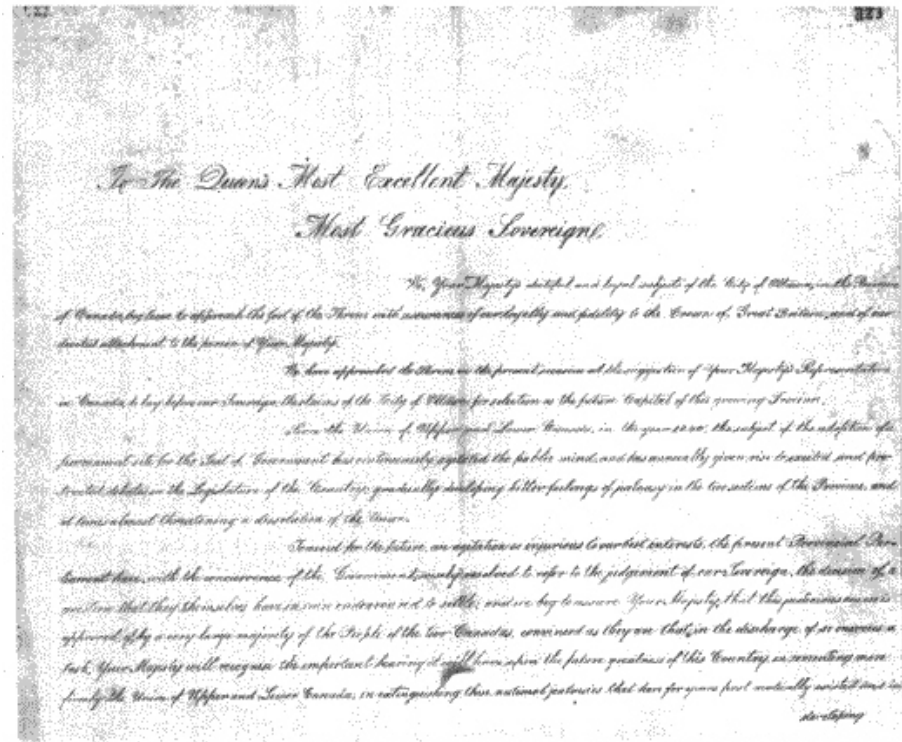
1857 officials

John Bower Lewis, MAYOR
Issac Berichon, Councillor
William Clegg, Alderman
Henry James Friel, Alderman
George Hay, Councillor
John B. Heney, Alderman
W. Kennedy, Councillor
Charles Laporte, Alderman
James Leamy, Councillor
John W. Loux, Councillor
Edward McGillivray, Controller
Robert S. Montgomery, Councillor
J.B. Richard, Councillor
Alexander Scott, Councillor
Edward Sherwood, Alderman
Nicholas Sparks, Alderman

Others

Thomas Langrell (1855-56), Councillor
Euzebe Varin (1856), Alderman

Ottawa City memorial



Title/description: Ottawa City Memorial, 1857. Memorial written by Sir Richard Scott.

Creator:

Date: 1857

Identifier: 81 D 77

Copyright: belongs to the Crown

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty,
Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects of the City of Ottawa, in the Province of Canada, beg leave to approach the foot of the Throne with assurances of our loyalty and fidelity to the Crown of Great Britain, and of our devoted attachment to the person of Your Majesty.

We have approached the Throne on the present occasion at the suggestion of Your Majesty's Representative in Canada, to lay before our Sovereign, the claims of the City of Ottawa for selection as the future Capital of this growing Province. Since the union of Upper and Lower Canada, in the year 1840, the subject of the adoption of a permanent site for the Seat of Government has continuously agitated the public mind, and has annually given rise to excited and protracted debates in the Legislature of the Country; gradually developing bitter feelings of jealousy in the two sections of the Province, and at times, almost threatening a dissolution of the Union.

To avoid, for the future, an agitation so injurious to our best interests, the present

Provincial Parliament have, with the concurrent of the Government, wisely resolved to refer to the judgment of our Sovereign, the decision of a question that they themselves have in vain endeavoured to settle; and we beg to assure Your Majesty that this judicious course is approved of by a very large majority of the People of the two Canadas, convinced as they are that, in the discharge of so onerous a task, Your Majesty will recognise the important bearing it will have upon the future greatness of this Country, in cementing more firmly the union of Upper and Lower Canada, in extinguishing those national jealousies that have for years past mutually existed, and in developing the illimitable resources of both sections of the Province That, without desiring to prejudice the claims of other cities in the mind of Your Majesty, we may nevertheless be permitted succinctly to set forth reasons demonstrative of the superiority of Ottawa to every other place, for selection as a Capital

Consisting as Canada does of an extended line of territory, lying opposite the frontier of a powerful and rapidly increasing Republic; it is of the highest importance to its protection, that the Seat of Government should be at some point far removed from the possibility of hostile attack in time of war, and of foreign influences on the minds of its people in time of peace, and so situated that its connection with the rest of the Country could never be cut off or intercepted by an invading enemy; an argument forming an insuperable objection to Toronto and Kingston, lying as they do in an exposed position immediately opposite American territory, and in the event of Foreign invasion liable as they are, to be, at any time dissevered from the other parts of the Province. A similar objection may also be urged against Montreal, and with nearly equal force, for it must be conceded that Montreal itself fell an easy prey to an American army during the Revolutionary war and from the present navigability of the Saint Lawrence the descent by water from foreign territory to that city is a task of little difficulty, and one that would require but a few hours in its accomplishment. Quebec lying also on the St. Lawrence is undoubtedly a point of great strength but from its extreme eastern situation and exclusive population, it is rather adapted to protect the approaches to the Province by sea, than suited for the Capital of United Canada, and the connection of both Quebec and Montreal, with the rest of the Country might at any time be readily severed by an invading army. Similar objections cannot be urged against this City which lies in the heart of Canada, far removed from the American frontier, surrounded by a loyal population, composed equally of French and British origin, who have ever remained free from the stain of disaffection to the Crown of England; and which is situated on the banks of the Ottawa, one of the largest and most beautiful rivers in your Majesty's widely extended dominions, running entirely through British territory and forming in its course the boundary line of the Upper and Lower Provinces

As a central Military position it stands unrivalled, its natural capabilities for defence not being even second to Quebec; and with but a moderate expenditure its fortifications could easily be made equal to that city; a knowledge of which, we believe, Your Majesty already possesses from the plans and reports furnished at various times, by the late Colonel By, its founder, and by other scientific military authorities, and in the once projected construction of which, that distinguished soldier, the late Duke of Wellington is said to have taken a warm interest.

The city is connected with Montreal on the east by the Ottawa river - with Kingston on the south west by that great military work, the Rideau Canal, and when the improvements on the upper portions of the Ottawa river shall have been completed and the connection with Lake Huron on the extreme west made navigable, a project that in a few years will doubtless be executed- the City of Ottawa will be the radiating centre from which will diverge to the distant sections of Canada, the great arteries of the Country bearing on their waters Trade and Commerce during Peace and affording a constant communication with the natural Capital of the Province, during War. Moreover it is now united by rail with every other city in the two Canadas; a railway from Ottawa, intersecting the Grand Trunk and the river St. Lawrence at the town of Prescott thus, bringing this City within seven hours of Montreal, and twelve of Toronto; as a centre it is equally distant from Kingston and Montreal, from Quebec and Toronto, and when in the future that already seems to shadow forth the destinies of this Country, the Red River valley shall be united on the one side and the Lower British Provinces on the other, it will still form the centre of the extensive empire Were the seat of Government permanently located in Toronto, Kingston, Montreal or Quebec, its effect would not be felt beyond the immediate limits of the metropolis, while it must be obvious that the location of it, at this central point, would tend to develop equally, the growth of the two Canadas in the very region where a stimulus is imperatively required by attracting emigration and capital to the Ottawa Valley, now the only part of Canada where any large and valuable tracts of land suitable for cultivation are still held by the Crown, and thus, by settling the interior giving to the Province that depth and solidity so essential to its strength; and creating for Kingston and Montreal that back country so indispensable to their prosperity.

The Ottawa valley, already containing over one hundred thousand souls is capable of sustaining a population of eight millions while it is rich in mineral wealth and possesses unlimited water power on the various tributaries of the Ottawa river. So far back as the year 1843 the Committee of the Executive Council when recommending the removal of the Seat of Government from Kingston to Montreal, thus alluded to the claims of this city "Of Bytown," it may be said that it is comparatively safe from attack in the interior; that when the country of the Ottawa comes to be "settled, it promises to rise into importance, and that it is situated on the Provincial boundary but then its position makes it "inconvenient for both Upper and Lower Canadians." The argument of inconvenience cannot now be urged since the introduction of our Railways which render it easy of access from all parts of the Province. And, though a matter of minor importance it may still not be unworthy of consideration that the City of Ottawa stands unrivalled on the continent of America, for the beautiful and romantic scenery of its rivers, cascades and mountains, yielding not only pleasure to the eye but keeping the atmosphere in so healthy a state that, Ottawa has hitherto been comparatively free from those epidemics, cholera and fever, that have so fearfully devastated other cities of Canada The city contains also ample grounds, in its very centre, belonging to the Crown admirably suited for the requirements of the Government, with abundance of the best building material at hand, and a productive country around it, to furnish the wants of the place. It may not be out of place. Your Memorialists conceive, to explain the apparent minority of votes which this City received during the debate in the present Parliament, on the

reference of the selection of, a Capital, to Your Majesty. The amendment to the original motion for the reference of the question, naming Ottawa as the permanent site, was introduced solely with a view of embarrassing the Government and did not receive the support of those members of the House, favorable to the selection of Ottawa, since they had previously expressed their approbation of the Government measure and they felt that the amendment was capriciously brought forward

In fine, we conceive, that situated as Ottawa is, within the territory of Upper Canada but connected with the Lower Province by the "Union" Suspension bridge, with a population of French and British origin equally balanced; the political and social effect of its selection would be to forever set at rest any feelings of jealousy on the part of either section, and would tend more firmly to cement a Union, which has already been productive of the happiest results; a conclusion Your Memorialists are warranted in asserting from the frequently expressed opinions of the Lower Canadians that, next to the place they felt immediately interested in, they preferred Ottawa, and to which, moreover, they have never urged any objection in Parliament. And Upper Canada would have no cause to complaint, since the pledge that the seat of Government should be permanently placed within the territory of Upper Canada, said to have been tacitly given by the late Lord Sydenham when carrying out the Union, would be fulfilled.

We beg to accompany this, our Memorial; with the tracing of a comprehensive map of British North America compiled from authentic sources. And again renewing our assurances of loyalty and attachment to Your Majesty and expressing our confidence in the exercise of Your wise judgement, we remain Your Majesty's devoted subjects

Council Chamber 18th May 1857

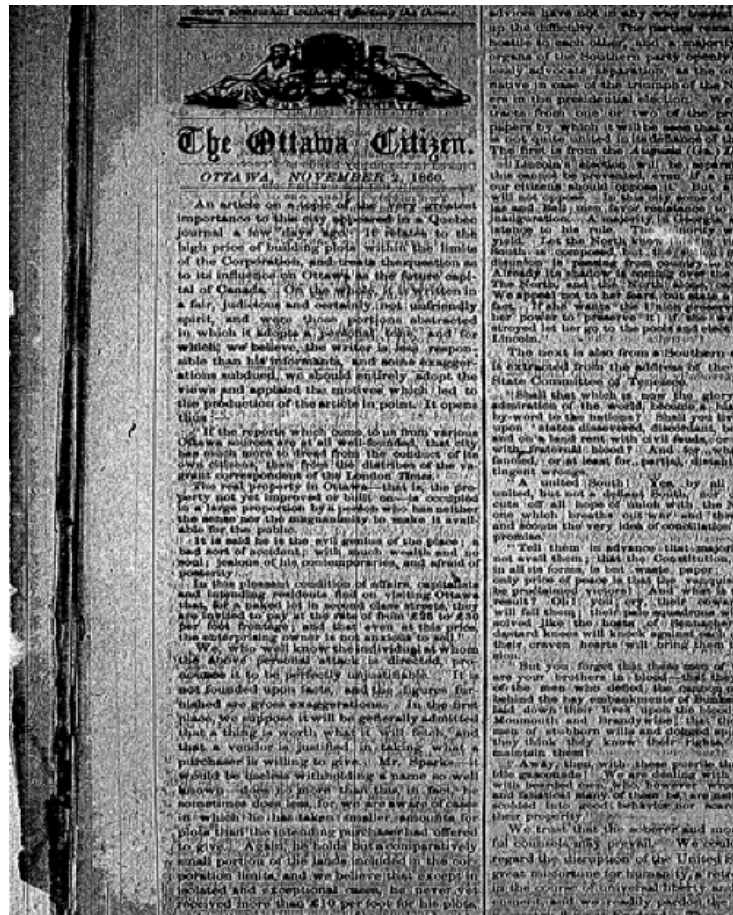
Signed on behalf of the Citizens of Ottawa

J.B Lewis, Mayor

William P. Lett, City Clerk

Newspapers

1860



Title/description: The Rising Prices of Land in Ottawa

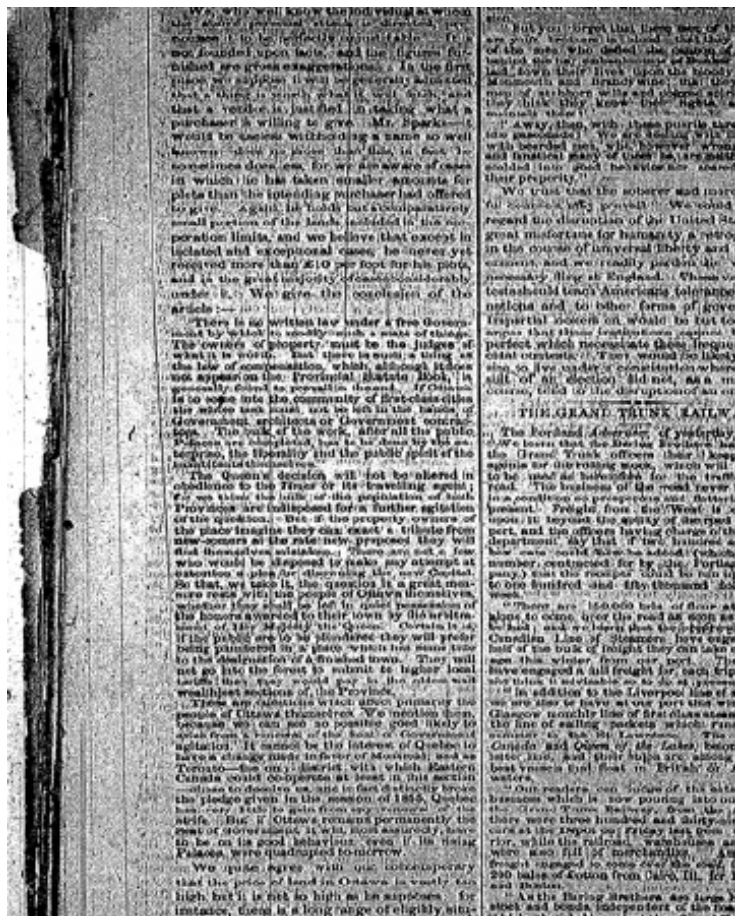
Creator: The Ottawa Citizen

Date: 2 November, 1860

Language: English

Identifier: Microfilm, Reel # 3

Source: City of Ottawa Archives



Title/description: The Rising Prices of Land in Ottawa

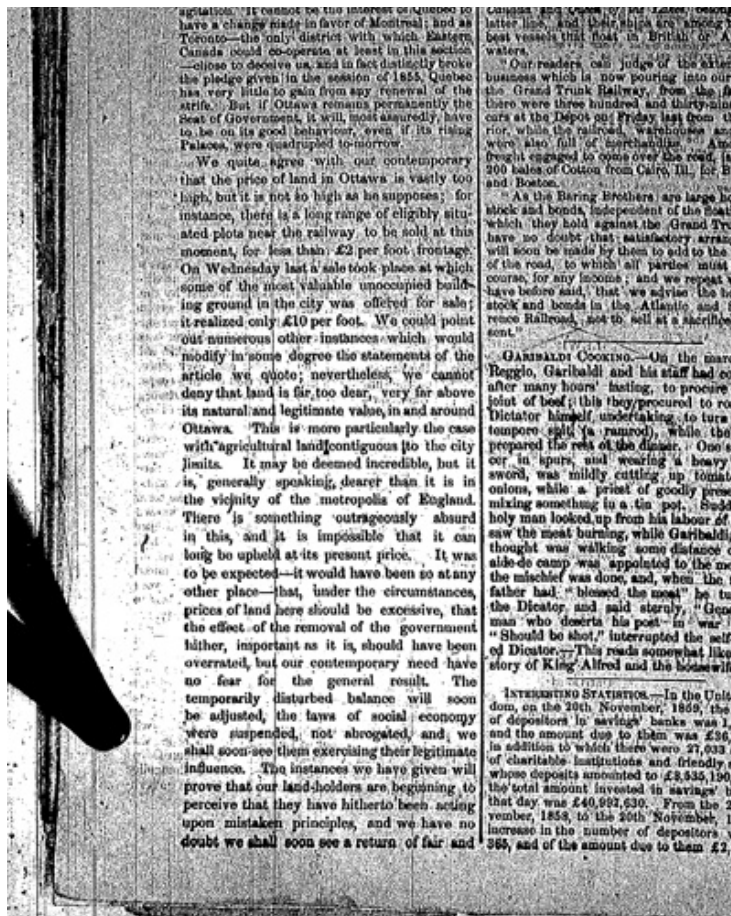
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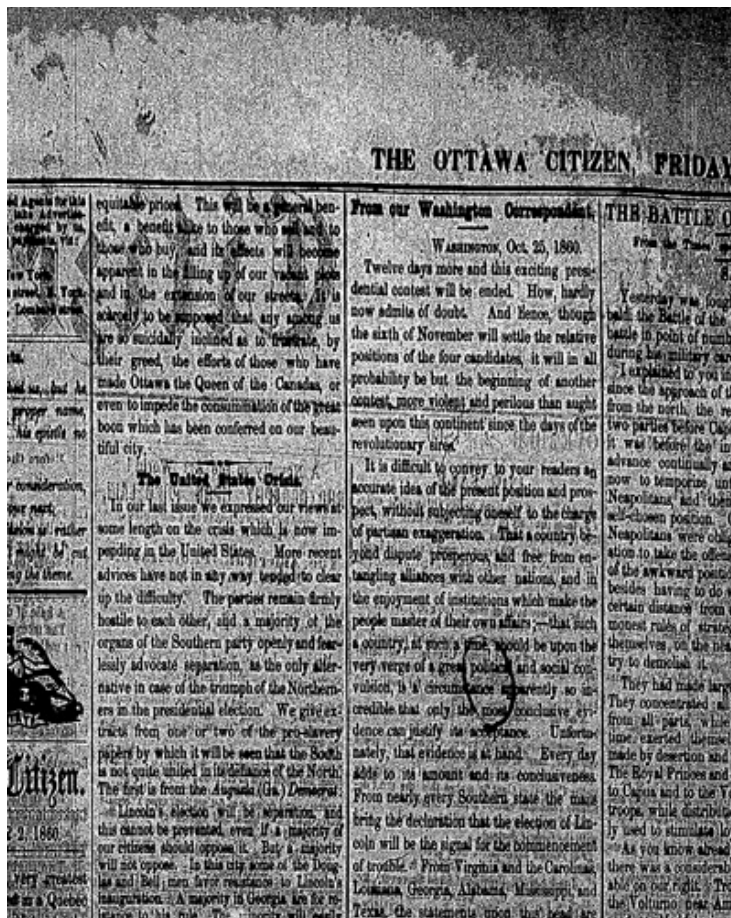
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2 November 1860, Ottawa Citizen

An article on a topic of the very greatest importance to this city appeared in a Quebec journal a few days ago. It relates to the high price of building plots within the limits of the Corporation and treats the question as to its influence on Ottawa as the future capital Canada. On the whole, it is written in a fair, judicious and certainly not unfriendly spirit, and were those portions abstracted in which it adopts a personal tone, and for which, we believe, the writer is less responsible than his informants, and some exaggerations subdued, we should entirely adopt the views and applaud the motives which led to the production of the article in point. It opens thus: --

"If the reports which come to us from various Ottawa sources are at all well-founded, that city has much more to dread from the conduct of its own citizens, than from the diatribes

of the vagrant correspondent of the London Times. The real property in Ottawa - that is, the property not yet improved or built on-is occupied in large proportion by a person who has neither the sense nor the magnanimity to make it available for the public. It is said he is the evil genius of the place; a bad sort of accident; with much wealth and no soul; jealous of his contemporaries, and afraid of posterity. In this pleasant condition of affairs, capitalists and intending residents find on visiting Ottawa that, for a naked lot in second class streets, they are invited to pay at the rate of from £25 to £30 per foot frontage; and that even at this price, the enterprising owner is not anxious to sell." We, who well know the individual at whom the above personal attack is directed, pronounce it to be perfectly unjustifiable. It is not founded upon facts, and the figures furnished are gross exaggerations. In the first place, we suppose it will be generally admitted that a thing is worth what it will fetch, and that a vendor is justified in taking what a purchaser is willing to give. Mr. Sparks-it would be useless withholding a name so well known- does no more than this, in fact, he sometimes does less, for we are aware of cases in which he has taken smaller amounts for plots than the intending purchaser had offered to give. Again, he holds but a comparatively small portion of the lands included in the corporation limits, and we believe that except in isolated and exceptional cases, he never yet received more than £10 per foot for his plots, and in the great majority of cases considerably under it. We give the conclusion of the article:-- "There is no written law under a free Government by which to modify such a state of things. The owners of property must be the judges of what it is worth. But there is such a thing as the law of compensation, which, although it does not appear on the Provincial Statute Book, is generally found to prevail in the end. If Ottawa is to come into the community of first-class cities the whole task must not be left in the hands of Government architects or Government contractors. The bulk of the work, after all the public Palaces are completed, has to be done by the enterprise, the liberality and the public spirit of the inhabitants themselves. The Queen's decision will not be altered in obedience to the Times or its travelling agent; for we think the bulk of the population of both Provinces are indisposed for a further agitation of the question. But if the property owners of the place imagine they can exact a tribute from new-comers at the rate now proposed they will find themselves mistaken. There are not a few who would be disposed to make any attempt at extortion a plea for disowning the new Capital. So that, we take it, the question in a great measure rests with the people of Ottawa themselves, whether they shall be left in quiet possession of the honours awarded to their town by the arbitrament of her Majesty the Queen. Certain, it is, if the public are to be plundered they will prefer being plundered in a place which has some title to the designation of a finished town. They will not go into the forest to submit to higher local tariffs than they would pay in the oldest and wealthiest sections of the Province. These are questions which affect primarily the people of Ottawa themselves. We mention them, because we can see no possible good likely to arise from a renewal of the Seat of Government agitation. It cannot be the interest of Quebec to have a change made in favour of Montreal; and as Toronto-the only district with which Eastern Canada could co-operate at least in this section-chose to deceive us, and in fact distinctly broke the pledge given in the session of 1855, Quebec has very little from any renewal of the strife. But if Ottawa remains permanently the Seat of Government, it will most assuredly, have to be on its good behaviour, even if its rising

Palaces, were quadrupled to-morrow. We quite agree with our contemporary that the price of land in Ottawa is vastly too high, but it is not so high as he supposes; for instance, there is a long range in eligibly situated plots near the railway to be sold at this moment, for less than £2 per foot frontage. On Wednesday last a sale took place at which some of the most valuable unoccupied building ground in the city was offered for sale; it realized only £10 per foot. We could point out numerous other instances which would modify in some degree the statements of the article we quote; nevertheless, we cannot deny that land is far too dear, very far above its natural and legitimate value, in around Ottawa. This is more particularly the case with agricultural and contiguous to the city limits. It may be deemed incredible, but it is, generally speaking, dearer than it is in the vicinity of the metropolis of England. There is something outrageously absurd in this, and it is impossible that it can long be upheld at its present price. It was to be expected—it would have been so at any other place—that, under the circumstances, prices of land here should be excessive, that the effect of the removal of the Government hither, important as it is, should have been overrated, but our contemporary need have no fear for the general result. The temporarily distributed balance will soon be adjusted, the laws of social economy were suspended, not abrogated, and we shall soon see them exercising their legitimate influence. The instances we have given will prove that our land-holders are beginning to perceive that they have hitherto been acting upon mistaken principals, and we have no doubt we shall soon see a return of fair and equitable prices. This will be a general benefit, a benefit alike to those who sell and to those who buy and its effects will become apparent in the filling up of our vacant plots and in the extension of our streets. It is scarcely to be supposed that any among us are so suicidally inclined as to frustrate, by their greed, the efforts of those who have made Ottawa the Queen of the Canadas, or even to impede the consummation of the great boon which has been conferred on our beautiful city.

1861



Title/description: The price of land in Ottawa

Creator: The Ottawa Citizen

Date: 2 August 1861

Language: English

Identifier: Microfilm, Reel #4

Source: City of Ottawa Archives

2 August 1861

The price of land in Ottawa

The Quebec Chronicle, a newspaper generally well informed, and by no means inimical to Ottawa interests, has in some of its late issues been very severe on the land-holders of this city; and we are free to confess, not altogether without some show of reason. The complaint of the Chronicle is, that land in Ottawa at present is held by its owners at such very high prices as to deter people desirous of settling here from purchasing. Now, this assumption on the part of our Quebec contemporary is almost wholly without cause; for, while one or two large land-holders hold their property at high prices, there really is a very large number of eligible city lots for sale on terms which we look upon as reasonable and

easy. For instance—Mr. Chas. Sparrow, jr., a land agent here, advertises building lots in a very pleasant and healthy part of the city, and within five minutes walk of the Parliament Buildings, at from fifty to one hundred pounds each. These lots are in size, from one-fifth to one-sixth of an acre; and surely these prices are small in comparison with what was paid for similar lots in Western towns and cities during the speculative mania of 1855-6? Within six months past the gentleman in question has disposed of \$50,000 worth of them, and they are still in demand. 'Tis true, that in choice localities property is held, in some instances, at sensation prices, and its owners are likely to keep it on hand, unless they moderate their demands. But this need not deter our Quebec contemporaries from sending along those of his friends who are desirous of investing in real estate here. Now is the time to purchase, for we are apprehensive that land in Ottawa will not have a downward tendency for some years yet to come.

1863

25 August 1863

Provincial Parliament

The Seat of Government

"....That we think it our duty to take the earliest opportunity of expressing our opinion that the public interests will be best served by the completion with all the necessary speed of the Government Buildings at the City of Ottawa, which her Majesty has been graciously pleased to select as the Metropolis of Canada, and that until those Buildings are rendered fit for completion, a due regard to economy renders it expedient that the Seat of Government should be continued at Quebec."

8 September 1863

The Seat of Government

"It is not likely that Mr. Brown's motion for the appointment of a committee to enquire into the state of the Ottawa Buildings will be carried should it again come up. Yesterday, when the item was called on the Order of the Day, the mover was absent and there were loud cries of "drop" from different parts of the House, but some one objecting to its being struck off the paper it was allowed to stand. It is questionable whether it will again be brought up. It can accomplish no good, and from the beginning was intended only to please the people of Toronto with the shadow while the substance was held from them. The head of Government says he is confident- "as sure as I stand here" was the phrase he used- that the buildings at Ottawa can be made fit for occupation next fall, and his information, he asserts, is official and reliable. Does Mr. Brown doubt the word of the Premier whom he keeps in office?"

15 September 1863

"It cannot be denied that for four weeks past the proceedings in Parliament, and especially the course taken by our members from this section of the Province, have received more

than ordinary attention and been regarded with unusual interest. In this we see nothing extraordinary...Of the measures of the Session, only three of importance could be named. The Seat of Government matter was urged forward by the friends of the Ministry,- not to carry out HER MAJESTY'S decision in favour of Ottawa-not to regard the decision as a finality, or to deal with it as a great question that involved the national honor-but as a gambling operation, through which it was hoped to open the whole subject from its beginning, and discuss and decide upon the correctness of the decision made. So strongly was all this manifested that it very soon became the great question, and the one of the three that was foremost."

18 Sept. 1863

Provincial Parliament

The Public Buildings at Ottawa

"The Speaker then put the question on the next Order of the Day, viz: the further consideration of the Hon. Mr. Brown's proposed motion for the Committee on the subject of the Public Buildings at Ottawa, and of Mr. Morris' proposed motion for an address in amendment thereto. Mr. Dunkin said, if he was not mistaken regarding this subject, the Government had announced a distinct, definite and unmistakable policy. The Government had declared their intention to carry out Her Majesty's decision and make Ottawa the permanent Seat of Government for Canada; and also announced their determination to expedite the works at Ottawa. The Government had stated it as their belief that the Ottawa Buildings could be put in a proper state to receive the Parliament at an early day, and that it was their conclusion, come what may, to remove from Quebec to Ottawa. Of this was he was sure, that if the Government were sincerely determined to go to Ottawa, it was quite possible for us to go there at an early date; because it was only a question as to the amount of accommodation which Parliament could put up with. It was quite possible to go there, even though the accommodation be somewhat defective. It was not necessary as immense amount of money should be spent, or an immense amount of work done, to enable Parliament to remove to Ottawa."

29 September 1863

"If the Seat of Government question has become unduly prominent, and if it has been a standing subject of dispute during this Session of Parliament, the blame does not rest with the members from this section of Canada. Up to this moment they have simply stood together in self-defence(sic). On their part, no aggressive act, or any attempt of such a character, can be shown. And even when deceived by Ministry, and abused, lied upon and slandered by the mercenary supporters of the Ministry in Ottawa and elsewhere, they pursued the "even tenor of their way," and neither listened to promises, nor bowed to threatening. We feel assured that we can safely affirm that, on the Seat of Government question, the Government stood pledged to carry out the Queen's decision in favour in Ottawa; and, at the same time they were quite as fully pledged to the people of Toronto and other Western constituencies to the very opposite."

1864

6 May 1864

The Removal to Ottawa

From the Quebec Gazette, May 2.

“Within a day or two, for what reason we cannot well say, there has been some flutter among the Civil Service men and their families anent the removal to Ottawa, which was fixed by the late Government for the coming fall. By some means a rumour has got afloat that the removal at so early a day is an actual impossibility, and that all the available labour which could be forced upon the public buildings would not change the prospect. As a Quebecker, sharing in the general benefits accruing from the presence of the Departments and the meetings of Parliament in the city, we might be excused for encouraging the hope that the rumour was likely to turn out correct; but we very much fear there is no such good luck in store for us.”

24 May 1864

“At the present moment the condition of Ottawa is, to say the least, peculiar. Perhaps never in the history of any country has the fate of the city been so placed. Years ago it was declared to be the Capital of Canada by no less authority than that of the SOVEREIGN. Since that declaration was made, interests that are influential and powerful have been employed against it. Time and again we have heard that the carrying out the Royal decision was doubtful; and these rumours have been regarded as truthful. At present, however, we have every prospect of a realization our long-deferred hopes. We have every reason now to ____ upon the removal of the Seat of Government here as certainty. No later than Saturday week, it was declared by the Executive Council that the removal would take place next autumn, under any circumstances.

1866

28 December 1866 [editorial]

“The reports which have been constantly gaining ground as to the future seat of the government of British North America under Confederation are now louder than ever. There is however one spot in Canada which can have no possible claim upon the honour of being the metropolis of British North America, and that one spot is Montreal. Wherever it may go at least there it should not go, for placing the seat of Government at Montreal is inviting and courting attack, menace and incessant agitation from the South of the line 44. Sir John Michel has already told the Montrealer’s that their town is indefensible. Now the only two just reasons for removing the Seat of Government from Ottawa are that the people of the eastern provinces may require as a guarantee against the, by them, justly dreaded influence of Upper Canada, that the Seat of their and our common government shall not be so far from their frontiers as the line of Ottawa. This objection is as potent against Montreal as against Ottawa city. The other objection is a far more serious one. It

is that Ottawa is not secure from a sudden raid from the Americans. If Ottawa is not secure enough for the future capital what must Montreal be? The American Union almost holds it the hollow of its hand. The opinion of sir John Michel as reinforced the opinion of General Scott, who said a competent commander could go into Montreal in a coach and four."

29 December 1866 [editorial]

"The re-opening of the Seat of Government question by the Quebec press has brought another question of great importance prominently before the public, namely, the question as to the defensibility of Montreal and Ottawa against the attacks of an invading army. The theory started by our Quebec contemporaries is, that the seat of Government is to be removed from Ottawa, that Montreal being indefensible in a military point of view, is unworthy to become the capital of the Confederate Provinces. Our contemporaries, conscious of the great national advantage of position, and the assumed impregnability of the ancient capital, see in that reason why Quebec should become the metropolis of the confederation. We have no doubt, whatever, about the sincerity of our contemporaries in believing that their city presents [many] attractions and advantages as a location for the seat of Government; we think however, that all their arguments will be lost, as the question of the Seat of Government now appears to be a closed one. But if the question were an open one, and the adaptedness of this place, or the other places, for the seat of Government was to be judged solely upon consideration of military defensibility, we could not look at matters in the same way that our contemporaries do. Military science has undergone great revolutions since the days of when engineers and artillerists looked upon Gibraltar, Quebec, and Malta as impregnable fortresses. Modern engineers and artillerists express themselves with some confidence to the practicability of reducing Gibraltar, as at present defended and fortified, by means of the large siege ordnance constructed under the superintendence of several European Governments and by the United States Government. It has been shown repeatedly, within the last few years, by a series of practical experiments made in England and the United States, that the most solid blocks of masonry can offer but very slight resistance to the Armstrong, Palisser and Parrott guns. The British Government has recognized its sense of the danger in which its strongest fortifications are now placed by ordering from the Messrs. Cammell, of Sheffield, a large number of heavy steel plates for the fortresses of Gibraltar and Malta. We do not know whether similar plates will be ordered for the fortifications at Quebec, but it seems to us that, if they are needed at Gibraltar and Malta, they are required to put the ancient capital in a fit state to repel the assaults of the American monitors and iron-clads. The late American and Dano-German wards have exploded many of the old theories entertained by military men respecting fortifications. The history of the defence of Vicksburgh and Richmond of the latter place in particular, has taught that earthwork fortifications can be rapidly constructed, that they are capable of conversion into the strongest of fortresses, and that they offer many advantages not possessed by masonry. Such works could very easily be erected in the neighbourhood of Montreal or Ottawa, and any invading army could be kept at respectful distance from the cities. It is more nonsense to say, as our Quebec contemporaries do, that neither Montreal nor Ottawa could be put in a state of

defence. It is true that our contemporaries allege that Sir John Michel has, at some time and in some place, said that Montreal was indefensible. With all respect to Sir John Michel's experience and ability in military matters, we must say that any such expression coming from him would be treated disrespectfully. We are inclined to think that the Commander of the forces has been misrepresented. In the first place, we think that if his opinion had been as stated, he would not have given expression to it; and in the second place, we are sure that he holds an opinion exactly opposite to that alleged. Our Quebec contemporaries would do well to use diligence in looking up the latest opinion with respect to fortresses and the art of fortifying."

1867

1 January 1867 [editorial, year-end review]

"[...] The Parliament of Canada met for the first time in Ottawa. By this meeting the choice of her Majesty of a permanent metropolis for Canada was fully carried out. The matter is, therefore, now settled beyond all peradventure that Ottawa will be the Capital of Confederated British America. It is true that some dissatisfaction exists at the arrangement and many journals are endeavouring to unsettle the matter. But the same considerations which operated with her majesty in influencing her to make choice of Ottawa over all other competitors exist now with increased force; and as "Ottawa must be the Seat of Government subject to the Royal Prerogative" according to the provisions of the Quebec scheme of Confederation, there is but small reason to calculate that the present arrangement will be disturbed."

12 January 1867 [editorial]

"Our Quebec contemporaries have accepted, with a seriousness and good faith which is rather amusing, the rumour that the Colonial Delegation has come to a resolution to have the Seat of Government removed from Ottawa. The rumour alleged, it will be remembered, that the delegates had had the matter under consideration, and by a majority of four decided to recommend her Majesty to choose Montreal or Quebec as the Seat of Government for the Confederated Provinces. The rumour, we have no doubt originated among Civil Service employees, many of whom sigh for the salt breezes of the St. Lawrence, and long to abide beneath the shadow and within sound of the booming guns of the ancient Capital, and was begotten of these sympathetic desires. The imposition of the rumour was innocent enough so far as mischievous effects to the public interests was [concerned], but when judged by the effect it would have upon our Quebec contemporaries, it was somewhat thoughtless and ill-advised. Since the publication of the rumour the columns of contemporaries have contained abundant evidence of the credence with which it was received in the Ancient Capital. The Chronicle has supplemented the rumour by the allegation that the Government was in treaty for the purchase of the Laval University building, that a price - \$200,000- had been agreed upon, and that the property would be made over to the Government. At some previous time, it appears, from the statement of the Chronicle the Government had been in treaty for the

same property, and the authorities of the University had then asked ?300,000, a price which, it was assumed, was not greater than the value of the property. It is explained that the authorities of the University are not of the opinion that if the seat of Government were removed to Quebec other property which they own in the city would be greatly improved in value, and therefore, they are now willing to take ?200,000 for the same property which they refused to take less than ?300,000 on a former occasion. Or, in other words according to the Chronicle's statement these authorities were prepared to give a [...] of ?100,000 if ministers [would move?] the seat of Government to Quebec. [...] These statements were loaded [...] could not do otherwise than admit [...] of the proprietors, and [...] that the people of Quebec would have [...] greater reason to do so; but the statements of the Chronicle have met with something like a flat contradiction, for the authorities of the University declare that buildings of the institution have not been offered to the Government for ?200,000 and what is more, that the Government is not in treaty for their purchase. The Chronicle must, therefore, have been wrongly informed or else the lively imagination of its writer had got the better of a usually good judgement. The rumour respecting the action of the delegation and the expectations of Quebec becoming the capital of British North America seem also to have infected the veteran Gazette, and we find in a recent issue of our aged contemporary a most remarkable and exceedingly lengthy, if not conclusive, argument in favour of the ancient capital, from the pen of a writer who assumes the title of Britannicus Peregrinus. The essay, if such it may be termed, is quite as singular and mysterious as the name assumed by the writer. His object, we should presume, was to prove that Quebec contains within itself all the advantages and the elements of strength and position which the capital of a young nation should possess. It is presumed to have a harbour in communication with the sea from January to December, a climate equal to that of the Sunny South, a fortress second only to that of Gibraltar, besides other considerations. We should add that the essay is accompanied with a map, equally as remarkable as itself, which is intended to convey some idea of the extent of territory embraced in the proposal consideration, and the comparatively central position which Quebec would occupy. As to the merits of Quebec as a place for the seat of Government, we have nothing here to say. We were under the impression that the once troublesome question was forever settled that Ottawa had been affixed upon as a suitable place for the seat of Government, both on account of its central position and its adaptability in many other respects. We supposed that the decision of her Majesty had been accepted in good faith by Upper as well as Lower Canadians, and that nothing would be done to disturb the agreement come to. The course pursued by our Quebec contemporaries, however, has shown that so far as they are concerned the compromise was a false one, and their acquiescence in the Queen's choice nothing but a hollow pretence. By their alacrity in seizing upon a rumour which carried improbability upon its face, and holding to it in spite of repeated denials of its veracity, they have disclosed a feeling which it is not to be mistaken. Our contemporaries declare, in effect if not in words, in fixed determination to re-open the question. They perceive that, if the [question? Past?] been taken up again, the present is [...]sole opportunity while the [delegates?] engaged in their final deliberations [...] know that when the Imperial [...] the Royal sanction, and if the Quebec scheme is agreed upon in its [...]Features] there is but

small probability that the Provincial Parliament would ever seek a new location for the seat of Government. Before the terms are finally agreed upon they hope to influence the Colonial delegates to make choice of the ancient capital. We are far from conceiving that they will meet with any degree of success. We have seen no cause to doubt the sincerity of Messrs. Cartier and MacDonald as well as the other members of the delegation, and we believe that they are as solemnly pledged to respect Her Majesty's decisions as any public men could be to any question of Provincial importance."

18 January 1867

"The Mayor's Dinner to the Members of the Corporation and Officials."

[...] in proposing this toast, the Chairman said: Gentlemen I shall now propose the first toast of the evening. It requires no preface at my hands. Throughout all portions of Her Majesty's wide-spread dominions the name of our beloved Sovereign is a household word in the hearts of her people, and in no place throughout the same is our Gracious Queen and every member of the Royal family more highly esteemed and honoured than in this city which her Royal fist has made the Capital of United Canada, and the possible Seat of Government of Confederated British North America. [...]

9 February 1867 [poetry section]

The word of a Queen has come over the sea
Conferring the crown and the sceptre on the,-
An heir to a crown has placed with his own hand
The stone that attests thou shalt reign o'er this land
Oh, Ottawa! great glory has dawned on thy brow;
Thou'rt destined, no more sister to bow;
Thou'rt destined no longer to beg for thy right –
Thy glory is boundless, great is thy might.
Thy word shall be law and thy wish a command;
A queen has extended o'er thee her right hand,
And the God of justice will never allow
Those well deserved laurels to leave thy fair brow.
Thy buildings are there and forever shall stay
To show that thy right hand the sceptre doth sway;
They'll stay to prolong and to hand down to fame
The halo that clings and shall cling to thy name;
They'll stay that our children may praise of their sires
The honour and worth on their sweet sounding lyres!
How pleasant at night when the moon is on high,
To view those great towers which seem touching the sky;
Alone in the darkness they are to be seen,
And serve to enliven life's sorrowful scene,
When viewed from the river they seem to grow higher
New splendour and beauty they seem to acquire,
And, as the moon rises, the walls then display

Such beauties as ne'er could be seen in the day
For it is when silence reigns over the earth,
And hushes the sounds both of sorrow and mirth
When the night-owl leaving his wind-rocked retreat
Comes forth in the dark as if silence to greet;
'Tis then that those sombre walls appear so fine
That vanity their beauties I'd strive to define.
From the tops of the towers great beauties are seen
The mountains so woody, the valleys so green;
The torrent that's recklessly from the rock hurried
the waters in a whirlpool dizzily twirled
'tis here the sun's rays are seen often to play,
to dance and to gambol around with the spray.
Above the wild torrent a bridge is extended
As if by some magic hand it were suspended.
Oh, Ottawa! that bridge will remain as a crown
To add to thy beauty the gift of renown; -
That bridge will stay, and with thy towers will unite
To praise thee, fair city, when tyrants will smite!
The eyes rove with sorrow from this wild Affray,
But gladly that Gatineau mountains survey,
The pine and the hemlock are there to be seen
And clothe the high mountains in garments of green
The Gatineau valley extends from their base
And comes to present to the eye all its grace,
The clover and flowers are now in their bloom
And fling on the breeze most charming perfume.
These beauties, oh – Ott'wa shall likewise remain
The fame of thy splendour and grace to sustain! Thanatos January 31 1867
***This poem was written in July.**

11 February 1867 [editorial]

Canada, it is said, will be the name of British North America under confederation. The name is believed to be the choice of the Colonial delegates. It will be submitted to her Majesty, who will perform the service of baptism. We shall be glad if the difficulty which appeared to surround the choice of a Confederate name has been so easily removed, for many of our contemporaries were sorely perplexed to find a fitting name for the God-child. Canada would have done just as well, no doubt but, as the Maritime Provinces are somewhat jealous of the two St. Lawrence provinces, it is proper that the matter should be compromised. Nova Scotians, who seem to dread Canadian influence the most, may be flattered by the termination of the revised name and fancy that it is made in compliment to them. Canada, it is popularly supposed, is a derivation from the Indian word Kanata – a collection of huts – what Canada may be derived from we know not, unless from the necessity to get out of difficulty. "Necessity is the mother of invention" and to that we shall

apparently be indebted for our national name. It will be noted, however, as singular, that the new name will make no difference to us as a people. We have been known as Canadians, and we shall remain Canadians under Confederation.”

14 February 1867 [local intelligence]

Man-traps and Pitfalls

“Besides the dangerous hole at Pooley’s Bridge, to which we directed attention in Yesterday’s issue, there are in various parts of the city dangerous holes in the sidewalk. We would mention in particular that dangerous place on Dalhousie street, where the slightest misstep would precipitate an unwary passenger into a large open drain on one side, or into a smaller hole on the other side, where in either case a broken leg would be almost certain result. The sidewalk at the place is narrow and in slippery weather it would require an acrobat to traverse it in safety.”

20 February 1867 [editorial – general news]

“The last official statement of the standing of the Provincial Banks shows the following facts: Total authorized capital, \$30,466,666; paid up capital, \$28,433,348; liabilities, \$39,617,993. Against this there are total assets amounting to \$70,498,132. The coin, bullion and provincial notes held amount to the large sum of \$42,887,915. The notes of the Banks in circulation amount to \$9,867,486.”

20 February 1867 [correspondence]

“To the editor of “the Ottawa Citizen” Sir –While the City Council takes time to deliberate on the best location for the hack-sleighs, whose present stand is at the junction of George and Sussex streets, I would suggest one most desirable improvement in the existing state of things and one to which (without offending the susceptibilities of the too-sensitive Jehus) immediate effect might be given. It is simply this: Let the horses’ heads be turned the other way, up George street instead of facing Sussex street. Those of your readers who may ever have been so unfortunate as to pass down Sussex street about five p.m. – when the evening train is due, and an hour when the street is thronged with passengers – cannot be ignorant of the whooping and yelling, and lashing of horses, with which on the first sound of the whistle, the carters dash into their vehicles, and totally disregardless of the poor pedestrians who may be crossing George street at the moment, tear away down to the station like demons just let loose. George street is wide, and a person, particularly [this is how it was spelt in the article I swear!] a lady, cannot gain the sidewalk in a moment. Almost the same scene is enacted the moment the cabbies espy any person beckoning for a sleigh. They rush, with one accord to their respective sleighs, then follows a scrimmage and a brief scramble until the most expeditious of the number distances his rivals. Were the horses heads turned up the street, pedestrians would at least, have time to reach a place of safety before the rush comes, and ladies would suffer fewer alarms from the “shying and starting” of horses at other times, on snow falling from the neighbouring roofs, or on the bugle surrounding the barracks &c. If you can succeed, Mr.

Editor, in effecting this experiment, you will be entitled to the thanks of every one who is in this slippery season, A Walker.”

21 February 1867 [editorial – general news]

“The confederation bill is being pushed through the Commons with the utmost despatch. It has already passed the first reading, and the second reading has been. The telegram advises that it has passed two readings, but this is probably a misapprehension. According to parliamentary practice, opposition to the Bill must be made upon the second reading, and we presume that the ordinary usage will be followed. The third reading will be a mere matter of form. It is therefore, probable that the Bill will have passed through the Hoose by the end of the current month.”

12 March 1867 [local intelligence]

An Orderly City

“Ottawa always has been – since the last of the Shiners – and is, the most orderly and best conducted city in Canada- intending the latter word in its fullest significance. Heavy crime is rarely committed here, and even petty ones are as scarce as blackberries in January. Our police force, including the detective, are the most vigilant that any city need desire to be blessed with, and yet three and sometimes four days elapse without their being able to drum up the smallest case for the Police Magistrate to exercise his judgement upon. Such has been the case this week. Since Friday morning the Police Court has not been graced with an offender. If there is any other city in the Provinces with a population over 17,000, which can say as much for its morals, let it speak.”

12 March 1867 [local intelligence]

A New Vocation

“Few cities in the province have been more free from professional beggars than has this hitherto, with the exception of one or two old fellows who were fond of a drop and who solicited a charity to obtain it. Mendicants were strangers on our streets. Too much cannot be said at the present time of the [scarcity?] of that class of citizens in Ottawa. Quite a number of young urchins – boys and girls between the age of eight and ten- now make their regular rounds, soliciting ‘a copper’ and representing themselves as orphans or the children of disabled parents. Every one of these young beggars should be picked up, and if they should prove to be orphans-which is very doubtful- they should be put into the institution in this city for the reception of such. To permit them to continue to ply the avocation is only exposing them to temptation, and in a measure preparing them for the gaol.”

13 March 1867 [editorial]

“The bare proposition of designating the Confederate Provinces as the “Kingdom of Canada” appears to have threw our neighbours into an intense agony of alarm. The project of building up a monarchy north of the lakes and the St. Lawrence is declared, by

the more excitable of our neighbours to be a dangerous menace to the stability of their Republican Institutions. All kinds of frippery arguments are indulged in by them to show why the national government should protest, and interfere, if protestations were of no avail, against the establishment of the proposed Kingdom. The extent of the alarm into which some of our neighbours have been thrown, may have been seen in the introduction of Raymond's very silly resolutions into the House of Representatives. Many of the more rabid anti-British journals have out Raymond himself in their antagonism to the Confederation of the Provinces. The next ground of objection which Mr. Raymond and the anti-British peers have is not so much against the name which may have been chosen for the Confederation of the provinces as against Confederation itself. They understand that the union of the Provinces is synonymous with the consolidation of British interests in America. So long as the Provinces were politically, commercially and almost geographically isolated our neighbours saw some chance of the Provinces falling into the Union one by one, and they were contented to wait patiently the working of time. There can be but little doubt, we think, that the abrogation of the of the Reciprocity Treaty was secretly intended to work our commercial ruin, and to teach us that without the favours of the Washington Congress could bestow our national existence would not be worth a straw. "

25 March 1867 [correspondence]

"sir – In this climate there is at this season of year a great deal of unnecessary non-intercourse between the city and country—and that does exist is carried with much loss and great cruelty to animals. The condition of the main streets are such that sleighing is almost impossible – while from the depth of snow on every country and side road wheeling is on them equally impossible. Even in mid-winter , after a heavy thaw followed by a hard frost, the streets of Ottawa are covered with a coating of frozen manure , which makes them almost impassable for those heavy loads of wood or produce so easily then brought in from the country. For this there is at present no remedy but a fresh fall of snow. But at this season there may be weeks what at least half of every load which reaches the suburbs should there thrown off, when country people leave their vehicles outside and walk in, to save themselves and horses from becoming objects of comment and commiseration while creeping along the gutter and hunting up every detached piece of clean snow or ice. Now this is just the season of the year when there is little else but teaming to be done, when the price of wood can be kept down by good roads inside and when manure is wanted outside, when supplies are being hurried off to the shanties before the ice falls, and when everyone is hurrying up to prepare for the opening of spring. To have, therefore, the transportation of the city and country at this season shorn of at least one half of its efficiency is a great public loss – an intolerable nuisance-and so far as it can be remedied a great public scandal. There is under the accumulation of filth in the streets a foot or more of solid snow and ice which if it can be got at would maintain the streets in passable order for a long time. The road thus cleaned would, among other benefits, set free those turn-outs, maintained at great expense in the city, which are now useless and will be for weeks, and enable their owners to enjoy the beautiful sky, the sleighing and scenery in the country. Can nothing be done? A few horses and scrapers at

the proper time could rake the manure to the sides, from where it could be carted (and worth the cartage) and I am confident there is nothing in which a small outlay, scarcely worth considering, would produce such important economical results. Outsider.”

4 April 1867 [local intelligence]

Sanitary – We would call the attention of the authorities to the scandalous state of the bill lading to the Rideau bridge. Since the late change in the weather the obnoxious effluvia arising from a large quantity of night soil recently deposited on the summit of the hill (on the foot-path) is most disgusting, as well as deleterious to the health of the surrounding neighbourhood. This nuisance is in such close proximity to the protestant Hospital that if not removed before the warm weather sets in, it cannot avoid producing an evil effect upon the inmates of that institution. We are surprised that this matter has not attracted the attention of the authorities before, and being now apprised through this medium of the real state of the case, we earnestly hope that immediate steps will be taken to remedy this evil. As it is, the state of facts as they now exist are a disgrace to any community, and especially to the capital of the Confederate Provinces.”

11 April 1867 [correspondence]

Sir – As your columns have recently been quite fruitful of complaints about snow and water and dirty crossings, all of which a fine day or two will remedy, I beg to lay before your readers a real grievance to which I have been subjected. The Corporation and the Police ought to be ashamed of themselves to treat a man that pays his taxes as I do, in the shameful way I have been used. I am sir, a married man, a man of family. I carry a neat cane to assist me when I walk abroad. A day or two ago I was walking along Sussex street and my cane went through a knot hole in the sidewalk, and in addition to falling and soiling my clothes, my cane – a cane sir for which I paid one dollar and fifty-seven cents – was broken in tow. Is this treatment for a British subject in the Capital of the country? Is this the way the Corporation looks after the comforts of the public? What are our police for if it is not their duty to see that there are no small holes in the sidewalk, laid as traps to break valuable canes in the hands of staid and sober citizens? I trust this matter will receive that attention at the hands of the authorities which its importance deserves.

Yours truly,

An Ill –Used man. Ottawa, April 9th 1867

P.S. – I shall consult my legal adviser, with the view of having an action instituted for damages, if justice is not done me forthwith.”

20 April 1867 [correspondence]

“Sir – In the Citizen of the 17th instant I observed a letter from a person signing himself ‘A Constant Reader’ requesting Colonel Campbell to allow the Band of the 100th to play on the terrace of the parliament buildings on some afternoon of each week, and in to-day’s issue I see the Colonel has acceded to the request. Now sir, I would respectfully suggest to Colonel Campbell that Major’s Hill besides being the regularly established place for the band to play, is in every respect better suited for such a purpose. There is nice grassy [ward?] on which seats are erected for the public, and every arrangement was made while

the P.C.'s O. were here for the Band to play in that place, and besides, it is in the most central part of the city. If the colonel could be induced to alter his decision and act on the suggestion here presented, and also make the hour of playing six o'clock instead of half past four, when everyone is too busy to enjoy the treat, he would oblige

Your truly,
The Public"

22 April 1867 [correspondence]

Dear Sir – I was much pleased at noticing in this morning's paper that some person had, through that medium, requested Col. Campbell to allow the Regimental Band to perform on Major's Hill. I confess that I, with others, felt disappointed to find that the Government Hill had been selected for that purpose. It is quite bare and uninteresting. Last year we used to have delightful times listening to the Prince Consort's own Rifles on Major's hill and walking under the spreading boughs which shade that green retreat, or its high wooded brow, and looking across the calm waters upon the pleasant fields and scenery beyond. May we not promise ourselves equally as much, if not more, pleasure in the same delightful spot listening, during the lingering twilight hours, to the sweet strains of the "Glorious Band" (as it is deservedly called) of our own "Gallant Hundredth?"

Yours Respectfully,
Ariel."

29 April 1867 [editorial]

"Our contemporary the Montreal Daily News, in referring to some remarks which appeared in the Citizen on the late supposed incendiary fires, says: 'The Seat of Government does not appear, from the following extract from the Ottawa Citizen to be exactly the locality where a quiet, easy going man would relish residing. It says little for municipal vigilance or police authority, that people should incur the peril of being roasted to death in their dwellings because the detectives are unable to trace out and arrest a few scoundrels. We suppose the citizens there have no alternative before them to escape outrage save by following the custom established in the Western States of vigilance Committee well supplied with ropes and an expert hangman.' One would suppose from the tone of our contemporary's commentary on the state of things at the Seat of Government that the utmost license is permitted to a gang of incendiaries; that our municipal and police authorities are indifferent to the public interests; that our detectives are incompetent, and, inferentially, that the state of things in Montreal is much better. Now the facts are that both municipal and police authorities and detectives are eminently prompt in the discharge of their respective duties, and life and property are quite as safe here as they are in Montreal or any city in the provinces. We may be permitted to assure our contemporary that the citizens of Ottawa are so well satisfied with their municipal and police authorities and their detectives that they have another alternative besides the custom established in the Western States, and that is to leave the guardianship of the city to the properly constituted authorities. We must be allowed, too, to question the correctness of our contemporary's inferential claim in respect to the efficiency of the municipal Corporation of late, reports of which have appeared in our contemporary's columns, say little for municipal purity. Our

contemporary has recently taken a prominent part in ventilating certain scandals affecting the reputation of the council. That Montreal journalists have no reason to boast of their city being 'exactly the locality where a quiet, easy going man would relish residing' the following, which we exact from the Witness will prove: Arson – How many houses have been set on fire, and how many persons burnt to death by incendiarism during the past ten years, we do not defiantly know; but we do know that in every one of the cases which has occurred (and which have not been as rare as angels' visits) the incendiary was a murderer in spirit if not in deed. That during the period named, there have been no convictions for arson in this city is a disgrace to our detective or judiciary system or both. The conviction of Castegnato on Friday last, of the crime which he committed in December last, by which the lives of some thirty persons hazarded and his sentence to the State Prison for life by Recorder Hackett are events worth special commendation for their novelty in the history of our Criminal courts. To Recorder Hackett especially, the thanks of the community are due for his prompt enforcement of a sentence so severe as to be an impressive warning to other desperadoes. The prevalence of crime is not so much due to defect of law as to the criminal laxity in the enforcement of the law – N.Y. Paper [We used to pity New York for its wretched administration of law, but it is getting better than Montreal. No incendiary, however clear the proof, can be convicted here, because of the character of our petty juries. All that is necessary here, we believe, is to get a few professional jurymen included in a petty jury, or to get it composed of a class who are accustomed to do just as their leaders bid them, in order to have a verdict of not guilty in any case where the defendant has the means of paying enough for his defence – Ed. Wit.] If the Witness be correct – and we are inclined to think it is- it is quite clear that not only Municipal authorities but the general public of Montreal are tainted with moral impurity. When our contemporary again feels an itching sensation to have a fling at the Seat of Government, we would advise him to bear in mind the old saying those who live in glass houses."

10 May 1867

"Three of the Canadian Delegates, Hon. John A. Macdonald, Attorney General ; Hon. W.P. Howland, Finance Minister; and Hon. Wm. McDougal, Provincial Secretary; arrived by the 'Persia' and after spending Friday in new York, left for their respective homes, accompanied by their ladies, last evening, in excellent health and spirits. We are glad to be able to state, that before the end of the present month, or so soon as the names of the Canadian legislative Councillors can be fixed upon and forwarded to the Home Government, which is made necessary by the act, we shall be in possession of the Queen's proclamation, giving effect to the Act of Confederation, and erecting the three principal Provinces, north of us into one Dominion, or in fact, Nation, as it will almost entirely control its own affairs hereafter. Opposition in Canada West, who would if they could, revive old party lines and issues, must find new men to aid them in their plans, for we are convinced that theses Western Canadian delegates are too well pleased with their work to lend a hand in undoing it just yet. -N.Y. Albion. "

10 May 1867 [local intelligence]

Arrival of Hon. J.A. MacDonald and Hon. Wm. McDougall - Enthusiastic Reception Over Two Thousand Persons Present

"A telegram was received Saturday morning stating that the Hon. J.A. MacDonald and the Hon. Mr. McDougall, would arrive in the city by special train at five o'clock in the afternoon a continual stream of people were wending their way to the railway station. The Civil Service Regiment, numbering 248 men, under the command of Lt.-Col. Wily, assembled on the square at the parliament Buildings, and before marching to the depot, executed some battalion movements. By the kind permission of Col. Campbell, the band of the 100 regiment was present, and their soul-inspiring music added much to the attractiveness of the arrangements. At half-past four the regiment, headed by the band, marched to the station, and were drawn up in line on the platform. A cold, chilling rain, accompanied by an east wind, began to fall, and numbers who were on their way to the station returned, preferring a shelter from the inclement weather to waiting the of the delegates; yet, after all, over two thousand persons were present. At half-past five the train arrived, and the appearance of the Hon. J.A. MacDonald and the Hon. Mr. McDougall was greeted with prolonged cheering from the immense crowd. Three more cheers were given for the Mrs. MacDonald, and those personally acquainted with the distinguished gentlemen shook with them and congratulated them on their successful trip and their safe return. His Worship the Mayor (Robert Lyon Esq.), in his robe of office, wearing the gold chain, and attended by the city council, presented the following address, which he read in a clear, effective manner: To the Hon. J.A. MacDonald, Attorney General and Minister for the Province of Canada: --

Sir – The Corporation of the City of Ottawa cannot allow your arrival home after so lengthy an absence to pass without some demonstration of our pleasure at seeing you again amongst us, safe from the perils of a sea voyage and in the enjoyment of improved health and vigour.

We rejoice in offering you our warmest felicitation on the success attendant upon the efforts of yourself and colleagues in securing the great measure for the Confederation of the British North American colonies. Your part in the achievements of the success of this triumph of statesmanship, crowns your career as a public man and attracts towards you the gratitude of your fellow colleagues and countrymen.

The announcement of your marriage since your departure impels us to offer of our warmest congratulations, and we cordially wish you and your estimable lady a long and happy life.

On behalf of the Corporation of the City of Ottawa,

R. Lyon, Mayor. The Hon. Mr. MacDonald, in the most feeling manner thanked them for the manner in which they had received him on his return after an absence of nearly six months. In leaving Ottawa on his important mission to England, he felt like leaving home, and returning he experience all the pleasures of re-visiting it. He went to Europe to advocate the principals of union, and he thought that he was only acting consistently up to those principals in his marriage; at least with what every inhabitant in Ottawa should do –

he brought home a settler. (Laughter). He spoke of the share which would Mr. McDougall had in bringing the Confederation scheme to completion, and he hoped that the future statesmen of Canada, would work as seriously, faithfully and successfully for the interests of the Dominion as had the delegates. But politics is a dry subject, and as he knew his audience were anything but dry subjects at that time – (Laughter) – he would take an early and more convenient opportunity to speak at length on the question. He had some doubts before going to England, as to whether the seat of Government would remain in the City of Ottawa, but he was happy to say there was no doubt about the matter, Ottawa was confirmed as the capital of the new Dominion, and those present, and their children would live to see it the metropolis of British North America. He thanked the citizens of Ottawa for the enthusiastic manner in which they had received himself and his wife. (Cheers) Mr. McDougall followed, returning thanks in brief but eloquent terms, for this token of their esteem. The Hon. Mr. MacDonald then presented his wife to the people, and she was received with the most enthusiastic cheering. They then entered a splendid carriage, drawn by four fine bay horses, furnished by Mr. Buckley and proceeded to the residence of the Hon. J.A. MacDonald, followed by a great procession of carriages, in which were seated members of the City Council, and numbers of our influential and prominent citizens. The Civil Service regiment was then marched to the parade-ground and dismissed, and the band of the 100th having returned to barracks, the crowds dispersed.”

7 June 1867

The Lumber Trade from the Quebec News

Mr. Stubbs informed the public a few days ago, that the quantity of White Pine got out last winter on the Ottawa was 12,745,000 feet and on the St. Lawrence 5,000,000. Since that statement appeared we have taken the best information in the trade and can safely assert that this year's manufacture will reach fully twenty millions, which, if not intercepted at Sorel, will come to this market. We find that the average stock for the ten years past was fourteen millions. The stock on hand on the 1st December last was two and one-half less than average. The supply for the last ten years, as per Supervisor's returns, and quantities shipped by parties not passed through the office, was twenty-one millions, so that the supply of the presently

Project synopsis

This project sought to create a bilingual virtual exhibit and educational resources for teachers and educators, designed to highlight the Greater Ottawa Story by telling the story of Ottawa's selection as the Capital of Canada.

The City of Ottawa Archives has a number of collections which contain records related to the choice of Ottawa as capital of Canada, records which tell the story from a uniquely Ottawa perspective, including official city records, but also records of the

community which tell the more personal story behind the choice, but also the impact of that choice on the City of Ottawa and its Citizens.

As one of the oldest and the fourth largest municipality in Canada, the City of Ottawa has a story to tell that encompasses but is also distinct from its role as the national capital. The stories of the many communities that comprise Ottawa have been overshadowed by its identity as the nation's capital. At the same time, this is very much a national story, relevant to all Canadians.

The small logging settlement of Bytown was formally incorporated as the City of Ottawa in 1855 and memorials by prominent citizens played a major role in Queen Victoria's choice of a capital in 1857. While controversial at the time, the selection of Ottawa is considered one of the first great Canadian compromises and proved to be the right decision.

The 150th anniversary of selecting Ottawa as the capital is a wonderful milestone to celebrate our heritage and to reflect on the many reasons why Ottawa is such a great place to live. 2007 is also the 175th anniversary of the Rideau Canal, a landmark that continues to define and represent Ottawa.

In terms of the Greater Ottawa Story, the collections held at the City of Ottawa Archives, speak to a variety of themes in the development of Ottawa.

The broad historical periods are:

- Natural history
- Early settlement (1783-1825)
- The Bytown era (1826-1854)
- Emerging city & national capital settlement (1855-1900)
- Focus on growth (1901-1945)
- Growth and transformation (1946-2005)

The web site meets the Ontario school curriculum guidelines, for grades 11 and 12. Teachers will find learning resources and an educational guide on the Educational Resources page.

For further information about the City of Ottawa Archives holdings, or to view, research, or obtain copies, please contact the Reference Desk (email archives@ottawa.ca) or visit the City of Ottawa Archives.

What are archives?

City of Ottawa Archives

The City Archives collects, preserves, and makes available Ottawa's documentary heritage, making it accessible while maintaining it for future generations.

Our records fall into two main categories:

Corporate records

This collection includes civic records created by the City of Ottawa and its antecedent municipalities. They also include records from the Ottawa Public Library, Police Services, and OC Transpo.

Community records

Collections relating to the people in the community and their activities as individuals, families, and organized groups. This category includes the Billings Family Collection, as well as records from churches, hospitals, clubs, and sports teams.

Researchers come to the City Archives for many reasons, but the top four research areas are:

- Civic records documenting policies and decisions made by the City and its antecedent municipalities.
- Genealogy—to learn more about their ancestors and fill in their family trees.
- Building History—to find out about their homes and property, and who lived in them before.
- Photography—to research, copy, or make prints of photographs from our collections.

Archival records exist in a variety of media: paper, photographs, microform, film, magnetic tape or disk, optical disk, video, or audiotape. They can include computer records, drawings, architectural plans, and sometimes artefacts, like plaques. The City Archives has a wide range of records and resources such as:

- **Old newspapers (microfilm)**—Bytown Gazette (1840-1845), Ottawa Citizen (1846-1886, 1980), Ottawa Journal (1885-1980), Le Droit (1913-1944).
- **Photographs**—Special collections include the Newton Collection (1940s-1980s) and Elvis Presley in Ottawa (April 1957). General categories include the Parliament Buildings, Streets, Houses, Churches, Schools, Hospitals,

Businesses, Merchants, Hotels, Aerials, Bridges, Rivers, Sports, Ceremonies, Events, Disasters, Military, Lumbering, Transportation, and Portraits.

- **Sports memorabilia**—photographs and artifacts relating to sports in Ottawa. Our collection includes Ottawa Senators and Ottawa Roughriders memorabilia.
- **Mayor's Gifts Collection**—gifts to the Mayor of Ottawa from people in the community, across the country, and around the world. Most of the collection comes from other countries.
- **C. Robert Craig Memorial Library**—books, magazines, photographs, slides, plans, and archival materials relating to railway and streetcar history in Canada with a focus on the Ottawa area.
- **Personal papers**—diaries, journals, letters, scrapbooks, postcards, etc.
- **Genealogy research materials**—the Archives has its own resources and is affiliated with five partner libraries.
- **Reference library**—a non-circulating collection of published and unpublished items relating to the history of Ottawa and Carleton County, and to the activities of the City of Ottawa and its former municipalities.
- **Corporate reports library**—accessible on request via a database at the Archives Reference Room, Main Branch, or at the Rideau Branch.
- **Assessment rolls**—tax ledgers that provide information about municipal properties and the people who owned and occupied them. Assessment rolls can list the names, occupations, salaries, and religions of people in the community, and they indicate when construction occurred on a given lot of land.
- **Minutes and bylaws**—for the City of Ottawa and the twelve former municipalities dating from their inception.
- **Maps and plans**
- **City directories**—annual listings of addresses and phone numbers for residents and businesses.

There are many types of archives, including business archives, government archives, religious archives, and school archives. The community group or club you belong to may even have an archivist and keep archives. Many archives are open to the public. To see a listing of the archives in your community, see the Directory of Archives on the [Canadian Council of Archives](#) web site.

To learn more about the work of archivists, see the [Association of Canadian Archivists](#) (ACA) or the [Association des archivistes du Québec](#) (AAQ).