

# RAIC JOURNAL

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## EDITORIAL

INCREDIBLE AS IT MAY SEEM to our readers who know we live in Toronto, we have always had a longing to live in Ottawa. Proud as we are to be able to say "*civis Torontonensis sum*", we must admit to virtues in the Capital that have a powerful attraction for us. Ottawa has not yet reached that position in the minds of Canadians, young and old, that Washington has for Americans or Mecca for the Moslem world, but in eighty-eight years that, perhaps, can hardly be expected. We are always hearing of quite serious people who want to add subjects like architecture to the already creaking curriculum of the schools of Canada, and we have little patience with them, but "Ottawa, the Capital of Canada" in three or four talks — perhaps with a movie — does seem like a reasonable and proper addition. We have, in Ottawa, something of which we should be intensely proud, both physically and spiritually, and it is little known to adult Canadians — let alone to the youth of this country.

Before we knew Ottawa, we knew Col. By through the work of his engineers at Jones' Locks on the Rideau. Nowhere in America are there finer examples of masonry, and, in England, they would be classed and preserved as national treasures. Perhaps they are here, though we are always distrustful of federal committees that preserve things like battlefields. We once applied to such a committee for \$5,000 to buy and rehabilitate a beautiful and historic house. We were refused, and our chagrin was not lessened when we read of the same committee spending over a hundred thousand dollars on a comfort station on the Plains of Abraham. Col. By was a very great man, and, while we regret Col. Simcoe's tendency to name townships after his spaniels (Tiny, Tay and Floss) and rivers after those he knew in England (the Don and the Humber), we shall always regret that the name Bytown was not perpetuated. It would give a homely touch to the councils of the world if Mr Pearson's address could be given as Bytown, Canada. Even for a Russian who had never heard the word before, the impression would be left that democracy had its birth or rebirth in Bytown on the Ottawa.

Another great man who comes to light for many Canadian architects in this issue is Fuller who designed the older part of the Parliament Buildings. A year ago, we took an eminent American art critic for a walk round the Houses of Parliament. He was entranced by the sight of the circular library, and was quite obviously moved by the spectacle of John Pearson's tower and the buildings flanking it. As a matter of fact, we walked back to the Chateau in silence before he said, "There is nothing to equal what we have seen in the whole of the United States. The Gothic Revival reaches its climax in Ottawa". Even Pugin's Westminster pales before Fuller's sketch of the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa in Dr Hubbard's article in this issue.

In our opinion, Ottawa has in the Chateau Laurier one of the best hotels in the world. It may not be the most luxurious, but it is the most generous in public space of any we know from Wellington, N.Z. to Madrid. An English friend complained recently to us that she had to hold a cocktail in her hand in order even to sit in a public space in a Toronto hotel. We sighed, and told her to look forward to Ottawa which was her next port of call.

We praise Ottawa also for getting things done in town planning. In doing so, we pray that the false god of monumentality that so dominated the Beaux Arts conception of Ottawa in the early plans has been proved to have feet of clay. Plans in this issue are convincing enough that our planners no longer go vista mongering just for the heck of it. More than that, they have added enormously to the attraction of Ottawa by making it so easy to get out of, and to what superb country do they lead us. To what scenery and to what trout! It cannot be denied that there is nothing comparable until one reaches the Rockies.

Finally, we should like to pay our respects to a contributor to this issue, the Mayor of Ottawa. Firstly, she is an educated lady which can be said of so few of our Canadian mayors, and she has courage. If we were not discussing a lady, we would use a shorter word to describe her courage, and one she would probably not hesitate to use herself. She is so obviously proud to be a citizen of Ottawa, and we, on the outside, watch how she discharges her responsibilities as its first citizen with admiration and even with affection. That she seems to like architects has nothing to do with the case. We do ourself.



Water Colour (1923)  
by David Milne



## Ottawa on the Ottawa

Charlotte Whitton

OTTAWA IS A "COMFORTABLE" CITY in that the reasonably even tenor of her ways does tend to promote a sense of content. Ottawa's very setting conduces to pleasurable-ness.

Here the Rideau River, having wound its beauteous course through the waterways of its hundreds of lakes and tributary streams, drops precipitously from the great "Rock Cliffe" escarpment to the Ottawa, though both the Rideau and the Rideau Canal move almost languidly through the former swamp and woodlands of the City proper. High above the mighty Ottawa itself the precipitous south shore is crowned with the public buildings of the Dominion, noblest of the promontories, old "Barracks Hill", bearing the majestic Parliament Buildings and graceful Peace Tower.

On the Ottawa's north shore, so enticing to earlier settlement, lie the fertile, flatter lands of Hull enclosed within the shimmering blue-green Gatineau Hills of the Laurentian Range. The vigorous Gatineau sweeps the waters of its thousand mile course into the Ottawa at kindly Kettle Island, almost opposite the Rideau Falls.

Of Ottawa's 30,481 acres, no less than 3,256 acres are water, — the Ottawa, the Rideau and the Canal affording forty-five miles of shore line within the City's boundaries. The foresight of Col. John By, the City's founder, the love of a timber town for its woods and waterways, and the faith of a buoyant generation in Canada and its Capital

combined to preserve and adorn this natural beauty when the day had come for the people and government of the country to turn with pride to the effective execution by the Dominion authorities, particularly the Federal District Commission, of the loving and competent planning of the succession of able men and commissions, who, from the late eighteen nineties, had dreamed of a city as beautiful as this Ottawa, and destined to be more beautiful.

Of course there are shoddy streets, poor housing, old frame "shacks", but these are not the concentrated slums of larger cities and rapid progress is being made in demolitions. The well-treed streets, the driveways, gracious in foliage and gleaming with the flowers of spring, gaudy in summer bloom, dazzling in autumn colouring, a glistening silence in winter's deep and chilling snow, the imperturbability of the winding waterways, — all these are so a part of Ottawa that it is difficult to assess whether they flow from the character of old Ottawa or have profoundly influenced the Ottawa of today.

On January 1, 1950, in loyal partnership with the people of Canada in their Capital, the people of Ottawa assumed the heavy burden of adding 24,472.4 acres, with some 25,000 people therein, to their small city of 6,009.2 acres, with 162,000 population, to assure preservation and development of the "National Capital Area" of Greater Ottawa. The taxable assessment thereby added was less than \$25 millions though fine lands were acquired for later de-



velopment.

In the same immediate post-war period, the City purchased both the privately owned transport system and the privately owned Ottawa Light, Heat and Power Company.

The "post annexation" problems in extending services and schools would have proven overwhelming had not the Municipal Grants Act assumed more realistic payments to the City in lieu of taxes on all Dominion property. Prior to 1950, the City never received more than \$400,000 per annum, though services provided to the Dominion and its people, on a tax basis in 1954, would have netted more than \$3 millions. The 1955 payments will probably exceed \$2,250,000.

The Dominion has also placed all Embassy and Legation properties (now assessed at over \$2 millions) on a tax basis and, through the Federal District Commission, has adopted the "Sellar formula", evolved by the present Auditor General of Canada, whereby, on specified works projects constructed "in advance of need" of the City as part of the National Capital Plan, interest will be paid at the rate of borrowing for the number of years of "works acceleration".

Moreover, when projects are of such a nature that a city of Ottawa's size and needs would not so construct them, special agreements as to works and costs may be concluded with aid from the National Capital funds of the FDC, the Province being a partner also in the City's share of any "subsidy earning" projects.

These are typical of a fuller partnership of Canada and the City in the Capital's development, assuring an economic stability which the municipality hitherto lacked and for which her greatest Mayor, Harold Fisher, first battled in 1918.

With these new fiscal and geographical bases the City equalized assessment from 1952 to 1954. Today Ottawa, with 215,000 people, enjoys an assessment of almost \$540 millions, — roughly \$357 millions taxable, and \$182 millions exempt. Of this latter no less than \$113,662,010 (or 21% of the total assessment) is Dominion Government property. Municipally owned exempt property runs just about \$37 millions; charitable, educational and religious exemptions close to \$31 millions. Ontario Government property totals less than one million dollars.

Physically, of Ottawa's 27,225 acres of land area, 16,352 acres are taxable, 8,010 acres exempt (plus 2,862 acres of streets, roads, etc.). They present a graphic contrast in the problems of development and services, through lands being held for national purposes, for parks, driveways and future beautification, and covered only partially by tax-lieu payments. On the other hand, with 13,515 acres built upon, and 458 unbuilt acres in use, annexation has made some 2,379 acres available and construction has been at record highs in the last thirty months, predominantly residential but including also substantial public buildings, commercial, service and some industrial enterprises.

But the City is not industrial, though both municipality and private enterprise have sought to encourage servicing of sites since annexation. Contrasted with Hamilton, sister city of comparable size, Ottawa's assessment is 57.6% residential, Hamilton's 50.64%; Ottawa's 38% commercial, Hamilton's 21.23%; Ottawa's industrial 3.84%, Hamilton's 27.7%!

Hull, sister city across the Ottawa, is today, as in pioneer days, closely knit in the area economy. It has the larger industrial population, proportionately; Ottawa the professional, civil service and commercial.

Manufacturing, in the whole area, largely of the indigenous pulp and paper and timber trades, with a few heavy and many servicing industries, grosses about \$100 millions annually in some 275 to 300 plants, and gives employment to some 16,000 to 17,000 people.

Construction is sustained, both heavy and light building, in the present buoyancy of Canada's own growth and developing government expansion. Regularly some 6,000 workers find their work in these services; another 4,000 in rail, water and road transport; some 4,600 in the banking, finance and insurance which serves the population, and nearly 10,000 in the retail and wholesale trade that services our day-to-day living.

In all, some 45,000 or 46,000 men and women would be found in all these pursuits with annual earnings of some \$135 millions, whereas the payroll of the Dominion in the immediate Ottawa area runs about \$114,000,000 to \$115,000,000 to some 35,000 "civil servants proper".

The Crown Companies — those new emanations which give to Ottawa the strange hybrid of the "civil servant who is a business executive" — have some 14,000 to 15,000 on the annual payrolls, now aggregating some \$36 to \$37 millions.

Peace, preserved by armed strength, has accustomed Ottawa to the presence of uniformed men and women familiar to most other communities only in days of war. Personnel, posted or training in the Capital, now average 5,000 to 6,000 the year round, with pay and allowances of perhaps \$18 millions.

The stability of employment and income in "the Service" is undoubtedly reflected in a stability and sense of security in the economy of the City and particularly in the high percentage of home owners, and the large investments in residential property.

The annual income of Ottawa's taxpayers exceeds \$210,000,000, about 5% of personal taxable income in the Province. While a lower percentage of Ottawa's workers (23%-24%) are liable to income tax than in any other major city of Ontario (which ranges from London 31% to Niagara Falls 63%), the City's 56,000 homes are predominantly single family dwellings (36,000 or 65%), of which nearly 60% are owner-occupied. Another 10% of the homes are duplexes and triplexes. The 13,500 apartments (a quarter of the dwelling units) are of high average, — again in response to the demand of a stable civil service personnel, particularly of dual and single 'bachelor' girl households. Government employment, too, means a heavily feminine predominance in the City, possibly contributing to its fine record as a responsible law-abiding community unusually well served with churches, community activities and welfare services.

Taxable assessment at \$1602 per cap. compares well with Toronto \$2102 and Hamilton \$1740, indicating the high type of average home in a city without their balancing industrial wealth. Debenture debt at \$170 per head appears high until resolved into \$82 for the public utilities so recently acquired and \$88 against taxation, which is thus but 5.5% of the assessment — a very solvent com-



munity.

And at 37.25 mills the tax rate (P.S.) is substantially better than that of any comparable city, again reflecting the intelligent partnership in planning and spending of a reasonably well-informed electorate close to municipal needs and resources.

Though median earnings are low (about \$2070) compared with Toronto (\$2430), Windsor (\$2380) and Hamilton (\$2210) so are comparable costs, and again the steadiness of a civil service population comes out in the splendid givings of the population. For four years now Ottawa has been first of all Canadian community chests to make its total and each time has exceeded it by the highest percentage.

"Government" is indeed the City's major industry, Ottawa a "civil service city" but perhaps more accurately a "public service city" in the multiplicity and variety of its living.

Governmental undertakings today require a range of personnel as wide as life. Gone is the concept of a black-coated, white-collared clerk, dutifully discharging a dull administrative routine. Some fourteen hundred different occupations are represented in the public service of Canada, from the heavy gangs of unskilled workers on the Public Works to some of the outstanding brains of the modern world in the research, financial and statistical undertakings of a modern democracy.

"Government" is also our main tourist attraction.

Arising from Canada's significance in international relations is the extensive growth in the diplomatic corps in the Capital, the maintenance and operations of the various embassies, legations and consulates, a factor in the business and commercial no less than the social and cultural life of the City.

Ottawa needs to plan few of her own diversions. His Excellency, the Governor General, Viceroy of the Sovereign, is the focus of ceremonial observance, the detached and dignified centre of national and community undertakings and events of historical and cultural significance. Parliament annually opens with pageantry and closes with the country's eyes upon us. Members of the Commons and Senate and their families assure a freshening interest each session, as they bring to the Capital close contact with life in all the ridings of the Dominion. So with the delega-

tions and personnel continuously waiting upon the Government from all parts of Canada, while scarcely a week now passes without official distinguished visitors from other lands.

The Supreme and Exchequer Courts locate the highest jurists here and record the arguments before them of the outstanding counsel of every province. The Defence forces naturally centre in the Capital with the ever-thrilling spectacles of their special exercises, Parliament Hill the scene of the picturesque Trooping the Colour. Ottawa is a vital, colourful city, no less than a comfortable one.

But Ottawa has been something of a "government city" from the beginning. For colourful and truthful as the saga of its timber trade, and dominant as wood and wood products are in its industrial and commercial life today, the original Bytown was founded as the terminus and headquarters of the Rideau Canal, the greatest engineering feat of the early nineteenth century in this country. Here both the civil and military administration, and the services attendant thereon, were set up and remained, while the Canal was a vital factor in the incredible development of the Ottawa as the heart of the white pine trade, southward by the Rideau system to the USA market, and eastward by the Ottawa, overseas.

About By and the Canal works, about the chutes and rafting grounds, and later about the mills of the "sawn trade", the Crown officials, the lumbermen and the workmen built their homes and the trades and shops, the churches and schools, and services of their community living.

The Parliament and public buildings of the new Capital rose in the fortuitously unoccupied heights and extended over cleared sites of centre town. As the Government has wisely decentralized expanding services, home and community development cluster about the new foci, tending to preserve this comfortable neighborliness of Ottawa as a pleasant pattern of distinct but closely knit communities within a greater city, and with few sharply marked-off sectors of industrial and commercial development.

Ottawa may not be the usual gay, Bohemian city of a nation's capital, but she has the qualities in which Canadians take pride: — she is stable, happy, honourable, a good community in which to live, — a comfortable city.



## How Ottawa became the Capital

Walter Bowker

UNLIKE WASHINGTON, CANBERRA or other relatively modern world capitals, Ottawa was neither established nor designed as the seat of national government. Its founding was incidental to the requirements of military security after the war of 1812 with the United States. It grew to boisterous prosperity with the opening of communications and the development of the lumber trade of the Ottawa Valley. Queen Victoria, to the consternation of the older communities along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, chose it to be the permanent capital of the United Canadas in 1857, after our legislators of a century ago failed to agree among themselves on the selection of a city for the honour.

Although settlement in the area dates back only about one hundred and fifty years, the site of the future Capital had been well known since the beginning of the 17th century, for it lay at a strategic location on the great river which was the highway of the explorers, the missionaries and the voyageurs between the early French settlements on the St. Lawrence and the fur country of the hinterland. Champlain, in the journal of his first voyage up the Ottawa in 1613, described the great natural beauty of the scene where the broad eastward sweep of the river is broken by rapids culminating in the spectacular Chaudière Falls, while a short distance downstream two tributaries join, the Gatineau from the north, and the Rideau, with its curtain-like twin falls, from the south.

The Capital did not represent the first settlement in the area. In 1800 Philomen Wright from Woburn, Mass., established the pioneer village at the north side of the Chaudière Falls, which has since grown into the industrial city of Hull. A few years later soldier settlers founded Richmond, twenty miles to the south, and military land grants were being taken up elsewhere throughout the region by veterans of the Napoleonic and United States wars.

It was Wright who first exploited the rich timber resources of the valley and laid the foundation for what is still the largest industry of the Ottawa and its tributaries. In 1806 he found a way to get large rafts of white pine down the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence to Quebec. From there it went to England and a ready market with the British Navy, then hard-pressed to find timber for ship building due to Napoleon's blockade of the Baltic, and the elimination of New England as a source of supply after the American Revolutionary War.

Known originally as Bytown, the Capital had its origin in the military and construction camp established on the south shore of the Ottawa for the building of the Rideau Canal, a military project designed to link the communities of the Lower St. Lawrence and the Lakes by an inland waterway. During the War of 1812, lack of access roads to the American shore of the St. Lawrence between Montreal and Kingston had prevented United States forces from cutting the British and Canadian line of communication to Lake Ontario and the Niagara Peninsula. Although Canada twice had been saved for the British Crown, few in the years following the war felt that the United States would rest long content with the result of 1776

and 1814, and the British and colonial governments looked to their defences.

One of the most important projects was the devising of a safe interior military communication route which bypassed the vulnerable international section of the St. Lawrence. Surveys indicated the practicability of using the Ottawa River westward to Wright's village of Hull at the Chaudière, with a canal utilizing the Rideau and Catarqui Rivers and the chain of lakes to connect this point with Lake Ontario at Kingston. In 1826 Lt.-Col. John By of the Royal Engineers was sent out to construct the Rideau Military Canal — the first St. Lawrence Seaway.

The building of the canal is a story in itself. Military craftsmen and immigrant laborers, including skilful stonemasons, working with only picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, overcame every difficulty that disease, the wilderness and the Canadian climate could provide, and constructed the 123-mile waterway in the five years between 1826 and 1832. With its 47 locks and more than 50 dams, two of them higher than any similar dams previously constructed anywhere, the canal represented one of the greatest engineering feats of any age. Today the waterway carries more traffic than any other Canadian canal — all pleasure traffic — and much of it, appropriately enough, American craft visiting the Capital via one of its most beautiful tourist routes.

Prior to and during construction of the canal, property held under private land patents was purchased by the Crown for canal requirements and fortifications, as well as for a small townsite, all planned by Col. By. Barracks were constructed on what is now Parliament Hill, and on this commanding height was to be erected a fortress to protect the entrance to the canal, somewhat similar to Fort Henry, which guards the southern end of the waterway at Kingston. Wellington Street, "Government Row" today, was to be a moat.

Manufacture, trade and commerce developed with the opening of the canal and Bytown became the centre of the rich lumber trade of the Ottawa Valley. Its founder, meantime, had been recalled to England, where instead of the honours and rewards his great work merited, he was charged with exceeding without authority the estimates for the canal's construction. He cleared himself, but retired and died shortly afterwards in obscurity of a broken heart.

In 1834 Bytown's population was 2,400. By 1850 it had reached 10,000, was incorporated as a city, and in 1855 changed its name to Ottawa. In 1858 the unprepossessing backwoods industrial community leaped into prominence with the announcement that Queen Victoria, on the last day of 1857, had chosen it to be the permanent Capital of the United Canadas. The news was received with consternation in the older, more settled communities along the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, where, since the reunion of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, there had been keen rivalry for the honour. So keen had been the rivalry, in fact, that for sixteen years contending factions within and without the legislature had pre-



vented the selection of a permanent Capital. The government sat first in Kingston, then in Montreal (where mobs burned the legislative buildings) and then alternatively, every four years, in Toronto and Quebec City. Tired of its wanderings, but still unable to agree, the legislature asked Queen Victoria to make the decision. All the cities sent memorials to persuade the Queen of their suitability for the honour. Ottawa sent one, but in Canada its claims were not taken much more seriously than those of Montreal, where, it was felt, the ashes of the destroyed legislative building were still warm.

The uproar which followed announcement of the Queen's choice was not, in all the circumstances, entirely unreasonable, for Ottawa, lately Bytown, had for some time enjoyed the reputation of being the toughest town in Canada. Life had been hard for the Irish immigrants brought in to build the canal; most lived under appalling conditions in huts and caves along the canal works, in the section known as Corktown. They

subsided.

While the town, by degrees achieved law and order, its reputation lingered. It was far from an attractive community, and the Toronto comment "a sub-Arctic lumber village converted by royal mandate into a political cockpit" was harsh, but hardly disputable.

Stories abound of the events leading up to the Queen's choice, but regardless of other factors, three principal reasons are evident. One is the great natural beauty of the location. Undoubtedly Ottawa's site is one of the most impressive and attractive among world capitals. Also, the choice did solve the political and regional problem, for inasmuch as Upper Canada was unwilling to see the honour go to a city in Lower Canada, and vice versa, Ottawa, on the boundary midway between the two, and racially and culturally, as it is today, a mixture of both, was a compromise acceptable once the storm had quietened down. Lastly, and equally important in a day when



Ottawa City, Canada West

*Lithograph by E. Whitefield, 1855. Photo: Public Archives of Canada*

were a hard lot, and equally toughened by the rough life of the lumber camps, were the shantymen. The town had its respectable elements, of course, but it was known far and wide for the amusements of the "shiners", as the Irish labourers were known, and the shantymen. Of necessity, these pleasures were few and simple—chiefly drinking and fighting. The recognized locale for the evening and weekend diversions was not far from where the National War Memorial now stands. Each side had its champions, but private fights seem to have been the exception rather than the rule. Anyone was free to join in, and usually they did. Horse racing (in the streets) was a favourite pastime, the winner not necessarily being the rider whose horse came in first, but rather the one, together with the friends who had bet on him, left standing after the customary riot had

people still living had known the War of 1812, there was the matter of military security. Ottawa, one hundred and twenty miles inland from the St. Lawrence was reasonably secure. As a New York newspaper said of the Queen's choice: "Canadians need never worry over the safety of their new Capital, because the American army would never be able to find it in that wilderness".

In 1860 the Prince of Wales laid the cornerstone of the new Parliament Buildings, and four years later the civil service moved from Quebec to Ottawa. Its membership, for all departments of government, was about three hundred. In 1866 the legislature of the United Canadas first sat in its new, permanent home. A year later it became the home of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada.



AS IN OUR SPEECH, the variations in architectural idiom between city and city in Canada have never been very apparent or particularly cherished; and as in language, none but the most ingrained localisms have survived to the present day. Yet in spite of this, one need not be the keenest observer to sense the special character of Ottawa. Here the older streets preserve their Victorian air of gentility and circumspection to a remarkable degree, whilst the newer ones are rare which do not enshrine a battlemented ministry or pinnacled convent somewhere among their thick foliage of maple or elm. The many old churches are redolent of the Confederation era — one is almost tempted to say of the Fathers themselves, the Macdonalds in one sort of edifice and the Cartiers in another — but perhaps it is only the coeval hassocks or the odour of spent incense which produce the effect.

What gives architecture anywhere a distinctive flavour is the character of the place and its people, and in Ottawa this finds striking expression in a series of co-existences: of dignified government and basic industry (as symbolized in the confrontation across the Ottawa of the Parliament buildings and the Eddy Company's lumber mill); of magnificent airy distances and acute congestion; of natural picturesqueness of the highest order and man's defilement of it; of French and English; of Ontario and Quebec.

Several factors in Ottawa's history seem to have been of special importance in moulding the man-made, visual environment which we may broadly term architecture. The remoteness of early Bytown (in spite of the fame of the Chaudière and Rideau falls) made the appearance of successive new styles in architecture painfully slow. For its part the logging industry established the persistent tradition of shanty building. The romanticism of the mid-nineteenth century was enshrined by the all-important accident of Ottawa's choice as capital in 1854. At a somewhat later date, officialdom as the corollary of capitalism brought political expediency, compromise and bureaucratic inertia to bear upon the art of building. All these elements survive in local tradition. The miracle is that the mixture has not proved fatal but productive of very considerable charm. At the same time one must admit that our peculiar mixture of traditions has made the development of twentieth-century architecture very difficult in Ottawa.

The earliest buildings of Ottawa are adequately dealt with elsewhere in these pages. Little has escaped destruction and what is left is under constant threat; for among all nations we seem to have the least reverence for the past. In view of these facts I cannot resist giving the briefest account on my own of the phases through which pre-Confederation architecture went. The first settlers in the region brought from New England the familiar American wooden vernacular, a blending of Georgian and Classic Revival elements. Examples of this are to be found in a number of clapboard houses still surviving. A rather unusual one in Rideau Street, now alas all but enveloped in advertisements, exhibits the pediment gable and the wooden

quoins and ashlar sometimes met with in New England. Then in turn the French Canadian settlers brought with them their traditional ways of building: the casement window and a characteristic smooth, flat type of stonework seen in the Hôpital-Général (c.1850), along with a rather stiff but unmistakably French grace of design.

Meanwhile, a strictly functional version of the Regency style was introduced by the Royal Engineers who between 1826 and 1832 built the Rideau Canal and its auxiliary buildings. The simplicity and severity of this military style was taken up by the Scottish stonemasons who played an important part in the development of more than one Ontario town and established our preference for lasting materials. Their masonry, in which large stones are generously 'battered' with mortar, is the most felicitous handling of our cold grey stone imaginable. It is to be seen in a number of very solid houses of the 1840's and later, including a few larger dwellings in Rockcliffe Park and elsewhere on the outskirts, in several old terraces of houses and in one or two larger buildings such as the Rideau Street Convent (originally a hotel).

It was natural that these various elements should have appeared in combination. The results are most interesting and amount almost to a local idiom. The Louis Besserer house at the corner of Daly and King Edward avenues successfully unites the masterful Scottish stonework with Regency proportions and French casement windows.

But the development of architecture in Ottawa as we know it today began with the Gothic Revival. I have already noted that Ottawa became the capital at a time when romanticism was dominant in the arts. Romantic architecture was also found to be highly congenial with the enthusiastic traditionalism of the Confederation period. Contemporary observers saw in the Gothic a symbol of the transplantation of the ancient heritages of England and France to a new land, and mid-century visitors to Ottawa like Anthony Trollope professed to be struck afresh by the familiar romantic parallel of the Gothic with the trees of the forest. It is worth noting that the Gothic Revival left its stamp on Canada's first great buildings, as the Classic Revival had done on those of the American capital. Canadian cities, and Ottawa in particular, received at this time their basic romantic character, a character which was later to reassert itself in the twentieth-century 'château style'.

The earlier phase of the Gothic Revival is represented in Ottawa by one interesting larger building, the Basilique Notre-Dame (1841-6). This building, with its essentially eighteenth-century proportions and papery stonework, is 'Gothick' mainly by its twin western spires which are spindly timber versions of medieval ones. A good stone house in MacKay Street is also entirely Georgian in design except for its verge-boards, pierced in Gothic patterns, which indicate a growing romanticism. In the environs of Ottawa are to be found a number of handsome villas which have a more solid, 'Tudor' character, their mulioned windows attractively picked out in white against the



grey stone. Sir John Macdonald's Earncliffe (c.1855), built by Thomas MacKay on a magnificent site by the Ottawa, is also of this period.

The three original Parliament buildings, designed in 1859, together formed the greatest High Victorian Gothic monument of the country as a whole. The central or Parliament block, which was burnt in 1916 and is now replaced by a modern structure, was one of the most ambitious examples of the style anywhere. Its architect, Thomas Fuller (1822-1898) profited by the example of the University Museum, Oxford, with its concoction of Ruskin's favourite 'chromatic' or 'Venetic' stonework, German towers, and an English chapter house; but he added several more stops to achieve full-organ tone: French mansard roofs and the elevation of the Cloth Hall at Ypres. This total effect, incidentally, Fuller once described as Early English. The contemporaneous east and west 'departmental' blocks, designed by Frederick Stent, were grouped in such a

Church Cathedral (K. Arnoldi, 1872) which resemble nothing so much as the caps of skyrockets.

Awkwardness of design was characteristic of much of late nineteenth-century building here as elsewhere, its sparseness and cheapness no doubt attributable to the recurrent economic depressions of these decades. Everyone knows the gaunt, thin-walled red-brick buildings with their high, narrow, round-arched windows—the plain and homely style which accustomed people to expect drabness in architecture and which, in its small town manifestations, only a David Milne could have made us look upon with indulgence. Ottawa got more than its share of this style, probably because of the large number of buildings needed in the years following Confederation. Against this monotonous background a few buildings of elegance stood out in the seventies. Chief among them was the still lamented and still unreplaced city hall (Horsey and Sheard, 1875), its richly encrusted mansard tower representing the extreme of



Thomas Fuller's design of 1859 for the Houses of Parliament overlooking the river

Public Archives of Canada

way as to form an open rectangle—a Baroque and most un-Gothic arrangement. These lateral buildings, which today are threatened with destruction or 'faithful reconstruction', are highly complex agglomerations of sandstone walls, slate roofs with iron crestings, and carvings of a fiercely medieval sort, creating an all-over effect of ultimate elaboration. Some unintentionally humorous touches crept into the design: the 'random work' above the windows, the tip of the west block tower (which Sir John Macdonald once compared to a cowbell) and above all the great lowering faces on the east block tower, formed of masonry arches for eyebrows and scowling mouths, and bull's-eye windows for eyes. Involuntarily they remind one of Indian masks or the *t'ao t'ieh* which decorate the surfaces of early Chinese bronzes.

Later Gothic work includes several sizeable villas and churches such as St. Alban's (1867-77), a tiny Victorian *châsse* still intact in all its details. But with these examples we are already into the seventies, a period marked by a growing coarseness of design. This is apparent in such clumsy designs as the Normal School tower of 1875 (the very incarnation of a romantic wood-engraving of the period, when the moon shines through its arches) or the insensitive pinnacles of Christ

elaboration to which the style could attain. The dignified Langevin Block (Fuller, 1882) stands for the better work of the period, whilst the Hull city hall, post office and court house are comic examples on a miniature scale. The tower of Notre-Dame, Hull, has a narrow 'waist' strongly suggesting the silhouette of Victorian costume.

Ottawa is, I am sure, unrivalled in the amount of amusing late Victorian detail it can still show. An hour's walk round the centre of town is much more rewarding in this respect than the same time which I recently spent looking through the 1884 volume of *The Decorator and Furnisher*. The ornamental panels of red terra cotta set into brick walls are the best of all: I recall one on which a game of noughts and crosses has been fixed for all time—and won diagonally across the board. Iron fences and roof crestings proliferated in countless designs which should some day provide subjects for doctoral dissertations. Wooden porches and balconies rich in lathe-turned wood awake visions of the opportunities missed by a thousand bustling Juliets too modest to use them. They run the gamut of styles, but I am most addicted to those of Moorish design. Many houses are adorned with those familiar over-window scarves and bell-pushes which I have decided were meant to be



Egyptian. And I was saddened a year or two ago to find the roof of a house in fabulous Moorish-cum-Romanesque shorn of its three bronze griffins. Kiosks, gazebos and bandstands formed a galaxy and in them the designer abandoned himself to sheer fancy. These, along with the various parks, lookouts and lovers' walks (such as that around the cliff of Parliament Hill) have fallen into disuse as relics of a genteel outdoor life in an age which could linger over fine prospects. They are now replaced by ribbon parks along the driveways, offering the speeding motorist a momentary view of massed flower beds. From the late nineteenth century come also those sedate streets along which the Lauriers and Bordens returned by tram or on foot to their rambling russet-coloured mansard houses under the elms. There is no better way of sampling the flavour of Ottawa before 1900 than to walk the length of a street such as Daly Avenue.

This post-Confederation architecture lasted in Ottawa until the end of the century, for the sturdy Richardsonian of the eighties had but little effect here. The twentieth century brought a new wave of building in its early decades and with it a change towards greater scale and solidity of design and a lightening of the sombre late Victorian colours. It also brought the battle of the styles, familiar everywhere but in Ottawa unnaturally prolonged. According to the concept of architecture then current, different styles were held to be suitable for different purposes. The Classic was for banks and railway stations. Here the examples are too well known for specific mention, and later examples such as the Bank of Canada (Marani, 1938) in which 'monumental modern' is carried out on an insufficient scale, are evidence of its survival into the thirties. It is more interesting to call attention to some of the less noticed manifestations of the Edwardian period: the roomy, prosperous mansions with their white-columned porches (how unfortunate they are in any other colour) and the elegant statuary on Parliament Hill, where I like to visit in turn George William Hill's *Thomas D'Arcy McGee* monument (1918) on the base of which sits a draped female figure representing a hearkening and sorrowing Canada; the *George Brown* (1912), also by Hill, with its young workman waving a grateful floppy hat at the statesman; and the *Baldwin and Lafontaine* (1908) whose partnership has been immortalized by Walter Allward. The Laurier tomb by Laliberté in Notre-Dame cemetery, with its supporting bronze figures, is an example of Beaux-Arts elegance.

The Gothic, 'suitable' for churches and parliaments, has an impressive monument in Pearson's new Parliament of 1919 with its soaring Peace Tower. Sproatt and Rolph's Knox Church (1932) in Perpendicular Gothic is the best of the churches which still multiply—though one wonders how much longer architects will know Gothic. Of greater consequence for Ottawa and indeed the rest of Canada was the closely related 'château-baronial' style, a combination of French and Scottish features deliberately adopted early in the century as a distinctive Canadian style for use in government buildings and railway hotels.<sup>1</sup> The baronial bugles sounded for the first time in the Victoria Museum (1908), the sire of a whole ungainly progeny of ministries in Ottawa. A more elegant French garb was chosen to clothe the Château Laurier (MacFarlane, 1910), the mother of a dowdy brood of hotels across the country. That this style is far from being defunct today is appreciated in the recent 'modern' adaptations of it made for the Post Office (1938), the Supreme Court (Cormier, 1938) and the Veterans Buildings now under construction.<sup>2</sup>

Yet in this period a few forward-looking buildings had appeared quietly, *hors de combat* in the battle of the styles and ignored precisely because of their disregard of 'style'. Ottawa, which of all eastern cities was least affected by the mannerisms of Art Nouveau, is alone in possessing a group of buildings inspired by another and more significant phenomenon of the period, the work of the Chicago school. The largest of these is the Daly Building (Moses Edey<sup>3</sup>, c. 1900), its broad horizontal 'Chicago windows' forming almost a wall of glass.

Of equal interest in a series of buildings by Francis Sullivan, a pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright in the 1910's. With Wright's collaboration he designed a public library at Pembroke and a recreational pavilion at Banff in 1913 and in 1916 exhibited plans for a post office and a double house in Ottawa.<sup>3</sup> For a time he worked for the chief architect of the Department of Public Works, and several post offices including those at Shawville, Quebec, and Stonewall, Manitoba, bear the unmistakable stamp of the Wright style. The Sullivan houses reflect Wright's prairie style but are seldom unqualified successes. Some are elaborate, but the most effective are the simplest, as for example, a small house on the Driveway composed of only three horizontal members corresponding to basement, first floor and roof respectively (*cf.* Wright's 'abstract' Gale House, Oak Park, 1909). A larger house on Acacia Avenue is also noteworthy for its simplicity. The Cambridge Street fire station exhibits the typical Japanese-inspired horizontal strips of the Wright idiom in 1910, which in Sullivan rather tend to assume the character of applied decoration. Another rather Japanese design in Ottawa is found in the lamp standards used by the Federal District Commission; here the horizontal and vertical system of iron strips connecting the lamp globe with the concrete pole suggest Sullivan as designer.

The Federal District Commission driveways constitute probably the greatest achievement of the first part of the present century. These are the first and finest fruits of planning in the capital, which began soon after 1900. The driveways, lined with some of the most pleasant and comfortable houses in the region, exploit the natural contours of the land, and in particular those of the waterways, in a most informal, charming and successful way. They fortunately came too early to be affected by the formalism of the later 'urbanism' with its strong European accent. A fuller account of the FDC and the National Capital Plan is given elsewhere in this issue.

How to describe the architecture of Ottawa today? To do it fairly and thoroughly would require more space than is here available, and I am therefore limiting myself to a few personal reactions. Tradition still looms larger here as an obstacle in the path of the new architecture than in almost any other place in Canada. A combination of factors inherited from the region's early history have also, as already noted, made the development of contemporary architecture extremely difficult here. The conflict between 'the styles' and the contemporary mode continues in full force, long after the teaching of past styles has been abandoned by the schools. In the official sphere the 'château style' is still securely enthroned, as is town planning of the rigid, monumental sort which deals in great avenues, noble vistas and monumental buildings. In the non-official sphere, planning of any sort seems absent. Since the Second World War new suburbs have grown up helter-skelter, gobbling up even such green spaces as one might have expected to have been preserved, such as the McKellar golf course. Even the green belt set down in the National Capital Plan is under constant threat from land speculation. Here as elsewhere the countryside has broken out in a rash of small boxes. Row-housing (in the Georgian style) has been tried in Manor Park with occasionally pleasing results, but most large-scale apartment housing is rather dismal in its total effect. Even the large shopping centres recently built on the edges of town have shown little success in controlling either their immediate grounds or the advertising signs of their tenants.

In the heart of the city, meanwhile, zoning arrangements are in little evidence. Few are the streets, except in the village

<sup>1</sup> Actually, this was done first for the Canadian Pacific Railway by Bruce Price, a Boston architect who designed a French castle (the Château Frontenac) in 1889 for a town which was surely French but too young to have known the Gothic style.

<sup>2</sup> See *Canadian Art*, VIII, No. 2 (1950), pp. 72-4.

<sup>3</sup> Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *In the Nature of Materials* (1942), p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *R.A.I.C. Journal*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4 (April, 1954), pp. 104-17.



of Rockcliffe Park, which do not house both palaces and hovels, both domestic and commercial structures. As in most of our cities the aesthetics of street furniture are quite ignored—the FDC driveways are a notable exception — and the streets are still cluttered with a forest of poles and archaic tangle of wires. Each year the maintenance of the wires necessitates a cruel mutilation of the trees which, as someone has said, are the finest architecture of Ottawa. In average building, without benefit of architect, a jaundiced eye may detect a greater use here than elsewhere of various unpleasant *ersatz* materials such as brick and stone simulated in paper. Thus the shanty tradition is still operative; it is also amusingly illustrated in the use of log-ends, curiously mortared like stone, for garages and other small buildings on the outskirts of Hull and Ottawa.

If one wished to paint a gloomier picture, more material is at hand. Even some of the designed buildings show very little



*Detail of Hollywood Parade (1892)*

evidence of an understanding of materials. A recent office building provides a comic illustration of this by compounding no less than five contrasting materials into one elevation. Street lettering is uniformly poor: good lettering would do much to redeem the architecture it adorns. Finally, government building has not yet freed itself from the net of official conservatism, mediocrity, confusion of aim and the employment of too many hands in any one design.

But though it is difficult for me to speak with unqualified admiration of much contemporary building here, the picture is by no means wholly dark. Granted (to cite a few government buildings), the gleaming white buildings of the National Research Council on the Montreal Road may turn out on close examination to be a sort of plaster modern of the thirties, a concretion of an earlier phase of science fiction; and the new Printing Bureau in Hull, impressive as it may appear at first sight, seems to make a great symmetrical monument of a purely functional building, trying as it does to unite the two incompatible elements of the severe stone central mass and the glass-walled wings at the sides. But on the other side of the ledger, a few of the more recent official designs stand out patently as the work of one person who has been allowed to carry an idea through to its logical conclusion. This applies to the design of Green, Blankstein, Russell and Associates which won the



*Short log construction, Hull*

National Gallery Competition.<sup>4</sup> (Are time-consuming competitions the only solution?) At the other end of the scale of size, the small refreshment stand so charmingly sited by Abra and Balharrie in the Hog's Back recreational park is an equally consistent, personal and informal contemporary solution, free from rhetoric or compromise.

A number of interesting schools have been built during the past few years. Among these are good examples by several firms including Hazelgrove and Lithwick and Jean-Serge LeFort (who, with Gilleland designed the large Hôpital Saint-Louis-de-Montfort on the Montreal Road). Prominent among other non-government jobs are an interesting small church, St. Mark's Carleton Heights, by Gilleland and Strutt, and a small office building and several Wrightian houses by the same firm; and a house for L. Voyvodic by Massey and Dirassar.

The majority of successful non-official buildings in the contemporary style have come from the firm of Abra and Balharrie. These include a number of private houses (the Dunton, Aitken and Lawrence houses come most readily to mind); the George Street Health Centre; the new railway yard office, Walkley Road; the Canadian Construction Company's elegant building of granite and glass; and the Metcalfe Building. The new Commonwealth Building is a steel-and-glass box of great simplicity and considerable beauty. In spite of the limitations imposed on it by an ungenerous site and the growing congestion of downtown Ottawa, it is one of the most hopeful signs of the transformation of the Ottawa scene for the better.

*Baldwin and Lafontaine (1908)*  
*Sculptor, Walter Allward*







*Gorman House, Woodroffe*  
*Architect, Francis Sullivan*



*Sussex street after removal of street car tracks and overhead wiring. View is from in front of Mint and shows Ottawa General Hospital, left, with spires of the Basilica in the distance.*

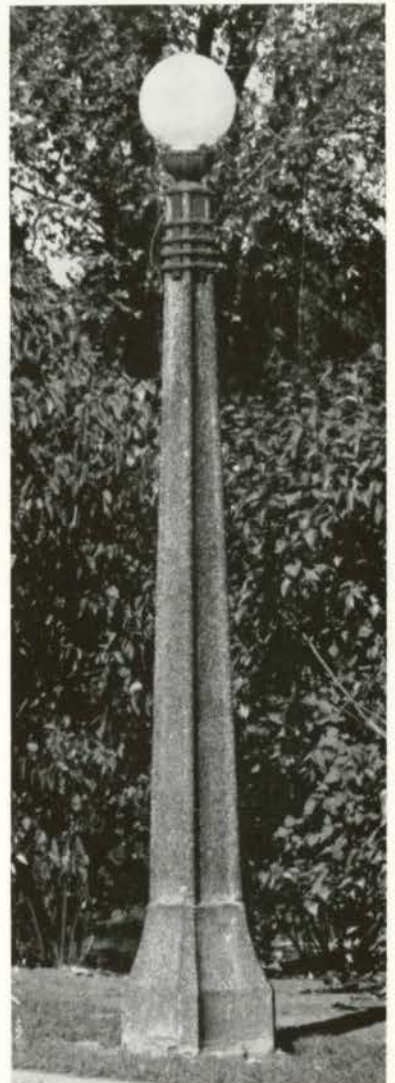




*Daly Building (lower parts 1900)*



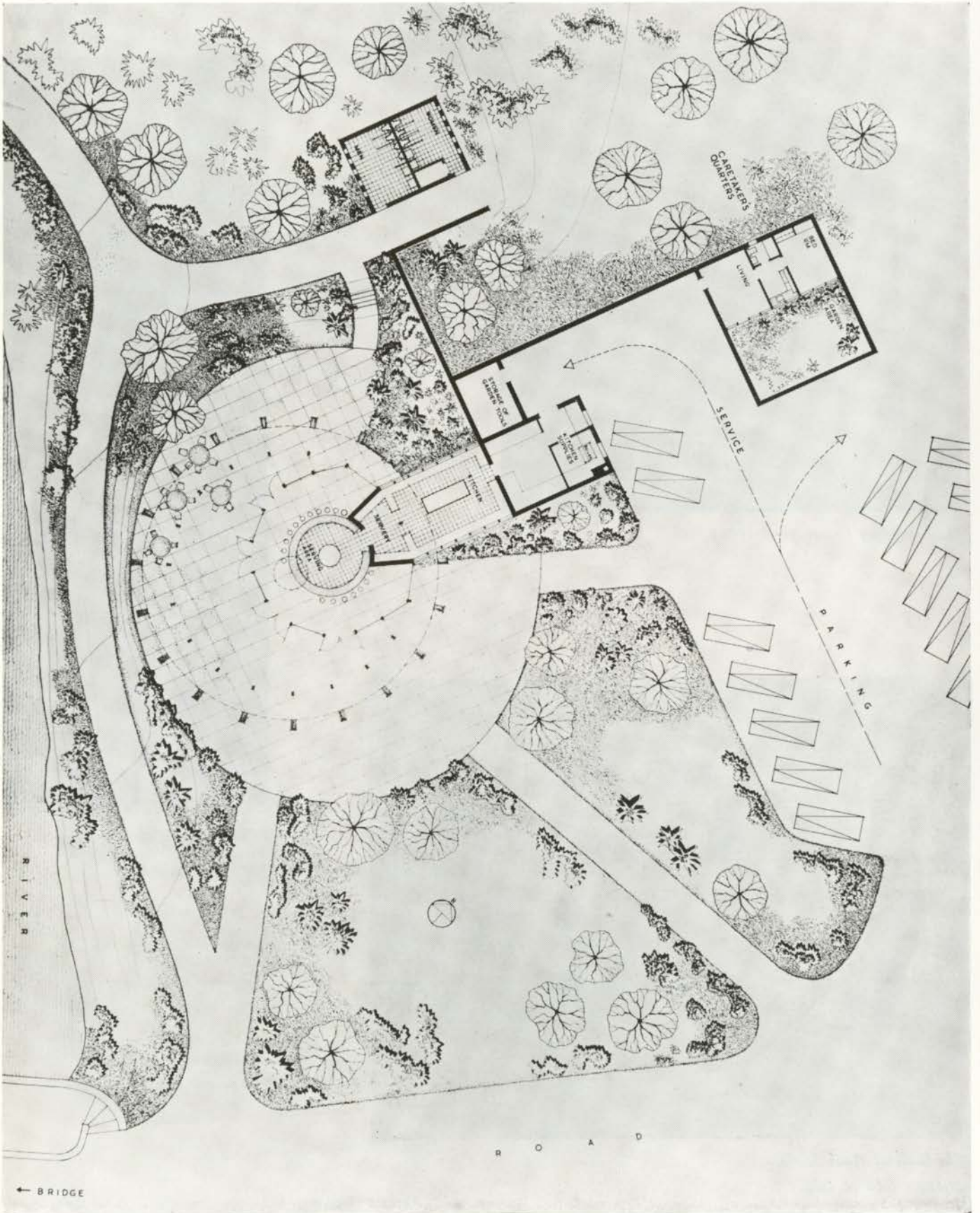
*The Bank of Nova Scotia  
Architect, John M. Lyle*



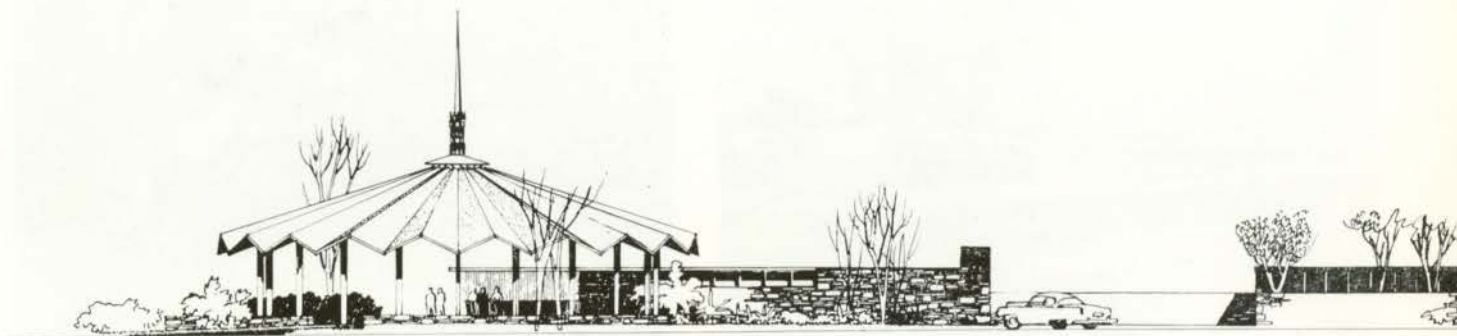
*FDC Lamp Standard  
Designed before the first World  
War by Alexander Stuart.*

*The Canadian Bank of Commerce  
Architects, Darling and Pearson*









ELEVATION FROM ROAD



ELEVATION FROM RIVER



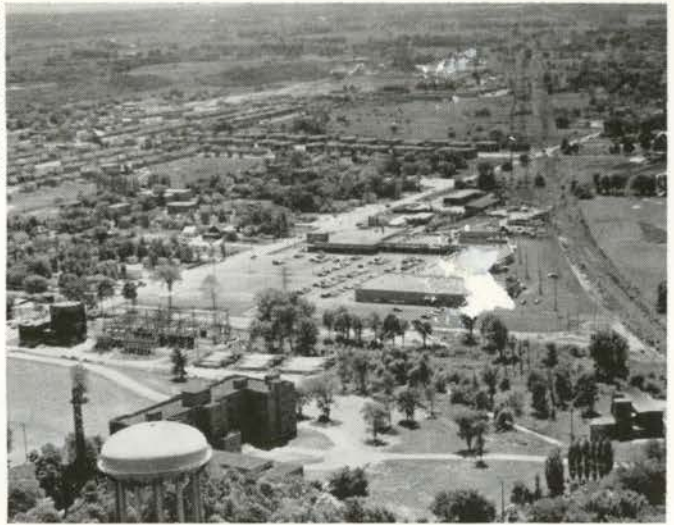
Refreshment Pavilion  
and Rest Rooms  
Hog's Back Park

*Architects and Engineers  
Abra and Balbarrie*



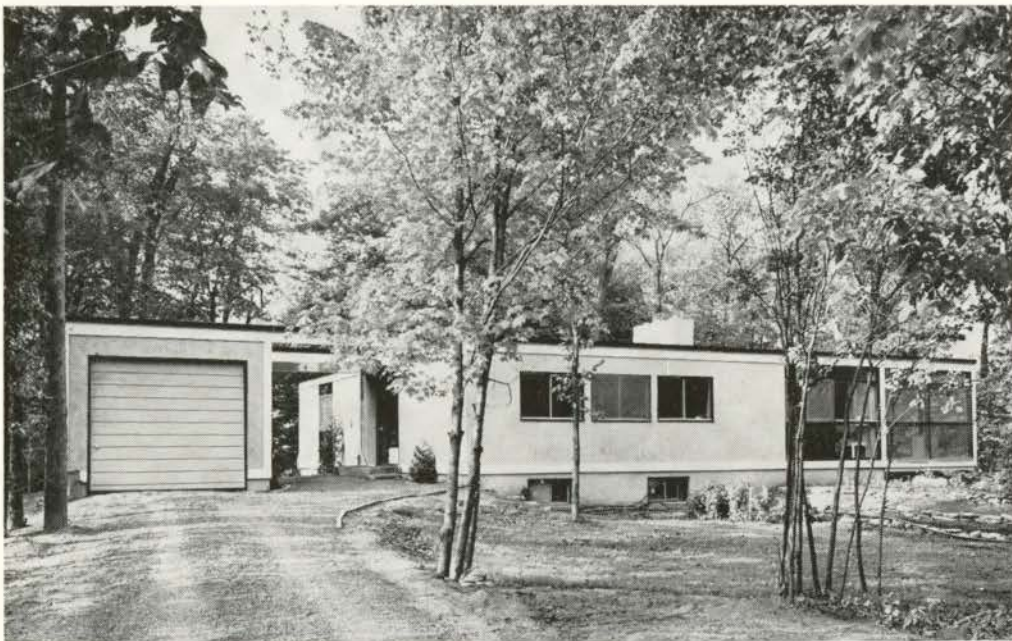


NATIONAL FILM BOARD



Westgate Shopping Centre

*Architects, Eliasoph and Berkowitz*



House of Mr L. Voyvodic

*Architects, Massey & Dirassar*



House of Mr S. S. Reisman

*Architect, Charles Greenberg*





Manor Park Housing Development, East Ottawa



House of Mr A. Palmer

*Architects, Gilleland & Strutt*





Ground floor interior

## Veterans' Memorial Buildings

*Architects, Allward & Gouinlock*





Geological-Geographical Surveys Building  
Department of Mines and Technical Surveys

*Architects, Allward & Gouinlock*



Veterans' Memorial Buildings — The finished project



Canadian Government Printing Bureau  
Blvd. Sacré Coeur, Hull

Architect, Ernest Cormier



NATIONAL FILM BOARD



NATIONAL FILM BOARD

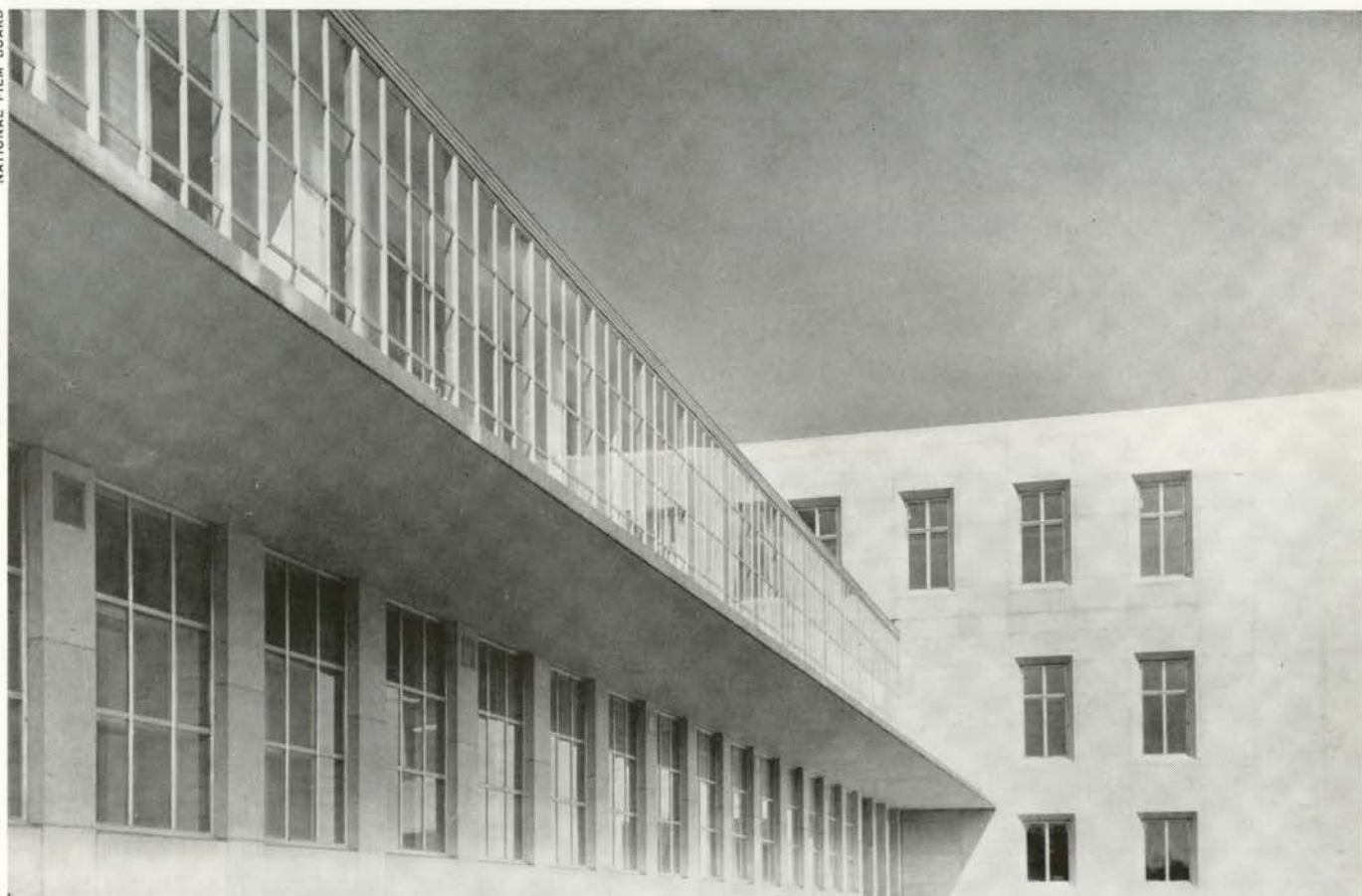


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One of the two wings flanking the central building





NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation

*Architects, Marani & Morris*



NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Headquarters

*Architect, A. Martineau*

*Building was designed as a seminary, purchased by the Federal Government before completion, and converted to office use.*



NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Tunney's Pasture

*Architects and Engineers, Ross, Patterson, Townsend & Fish*



Caisse Populaire Notre Dame de Hull, Hull

Architect, René Richard



STUDIO ALAIN



STUDIO ALAIN



J. POTVIN



## Hall Fuel Limited

*Architects, Gilleland & Strutt*



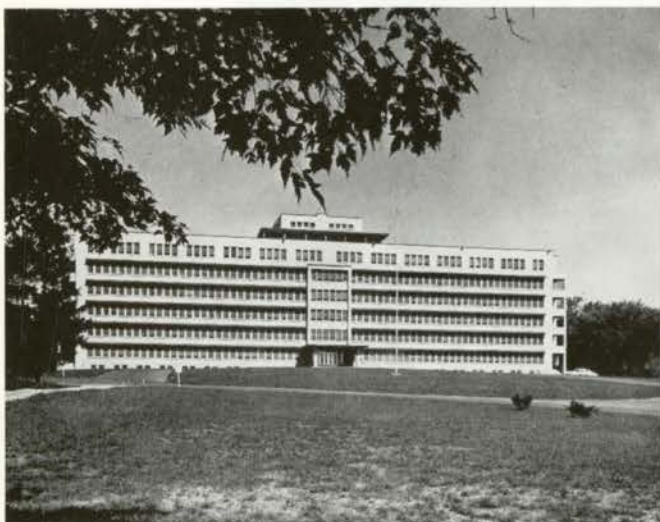
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## University of Ottawa Medical Building

*Architect, Jean-Serge LeFort*



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## St. Louis de Montford Hospital

*Architects, Jean-Serge LeFort and Wm. H. Gilleland*

## Walkley Road Railway Yard Office

*Architects and Engineers, Abra and Balbarrie*



## Commonwealth Building

*Architects and Engineers, Abra and Balharrie*



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## Health Centre

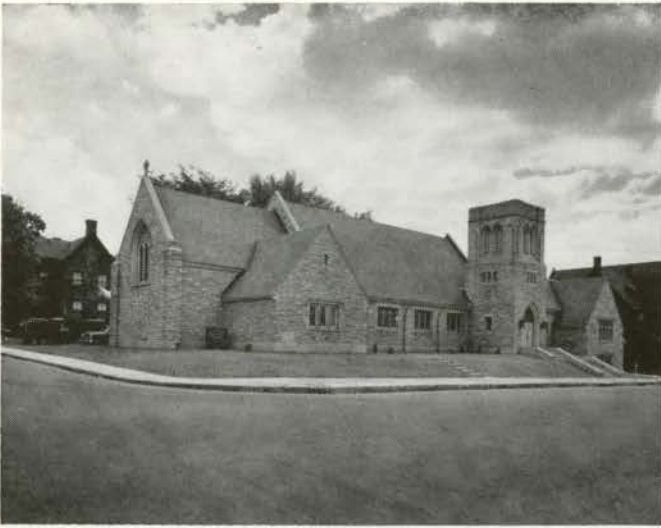
*Architects and Engineers  
Abra and Balharrie*



## Canadian General Electric Company Ltd.

*Architects and Engineers, Abra and Balharrie*





RAPID GRIP AND BATTEN LIMITED

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

*Architects, Burgess and McLean*



NATIONAL FILM BOARD

St. Mark's Anglican Church, Carleton Heights

*Architects, Gilleland & Strutt*



NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Kingsway United Church

*Architects and Engineers, Abra Balharrie*



Howard Kennedy

IMPORTANT CHANGES in the organization, powers and terms of reference of the half century old Federal District Commission followed its selection by Parliament in 1946 as the federal agency responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of the long range Master Plan for the suitable development of the National Capital, then in the early stages of preparation by the eminent French consultant retained by the government, Jacques Gréber and his Canadian associates.

The membership, hitherto composed of Ottawa and Hull residents, was increased from ten to twenty to permit the appointment of a commissioner resident in each of the provinces — this with a view to bringing to bear upon the Master Plan the points of view of all sections of the country. The members serve without remuneration.

The need for an advisory body representative of the professions concerned in an undertaking of this nature, and to give expression to the views of the thirty municipalities within the 900-square-mile National Capital District, was met with the creation in 1946 of the National Capital Planning Committee. It functions as the permanent, honorary advisory group to the Commission on the preparation and implementation of the Master Plan. The membership includes two members of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada; two of the Engineering Institute of Canada; one representing the Canadian Association of Landscape Architects and Town Planners; the Minister of the federal Department of Public Works; representatives of the cities of Ottawa and Hull and the counties of Carleton and Gatineau; and a number of prominent local residents.

The financial basis of such a large scale and long range undertaking as the National Capital Plan is one of its most important features. To assure the Commission that sufficient funds would be available over a period to permit the initiation of long-term projects, such as relocation of the railways within the District, Parliament in 1948 established the National Capital Fund. This provides a total of \$25 million, payable in annual grants of \$2½ million until 1958.

Equally important were revisions to the Federal District Commission Act, which outlined new terms of reference and granted the powers necessary to carry out the work.

The Commission was made responsible for co-ordinating federal construction and development within the National Capital District, and became the recognized federal

agency for negotiating and co-operating financially and otherwise with the municipal and provincial authorities involved in the preparation and implementation of the Master Plan. It should be noted that, although considerable progress has since been made, in the beginning the municipalities in the District, with few exceptions, had no comprehensive official town plans, and were only partially or inadequately zoned. Although an Ottawa Planning Area Board was established under Ontario Legislation in 1947, Ottawa itself still has no official town plan, nor have the Planning Area Board or the City legally adopted the National Capital Plan.

Apart from the above, and other special powers granted in connection with the railway relocations, the most important new legislation concerned the Commission's control over development or construction by, or on behalf of, federal departments or agencies. The Act now specifies that: (a) Proposals for the location, erection, alteration or extension of a building or other work by or on behalf of the Government of Canada or by any person on lands owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the Government of Canada in the National Capital District shall be referred to the Commission prior to the commencement of the work. (b) No building or other work shall be erected, altered or extended by or on behalf of the Government of Canada in the National Capital District unless the site, location and plans thereof have first been approved by the Commission. (c) No person shall erect, alter or extend a building or other work on land in the National Capital District owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the Government of Canada unless the site, location and plans thereof have first been approved by the Commission. (This section has teeth: contravention or failure to comply renders the offender liable, upon summary conviction, to a fine of up to \$500. No one has yet been fined, however).

The controls outlined do not apply to interior alterations in a work or building; and the Governor-in-Council may approve a proposal where the Commission does not.

The provisions of the Act do not apply to private construction on non-government property, although a recent municipal by-law requires Commission approval of private construction on certain streets where important government buildings or developments are located.

Proposals and plans received by the Commission from the Department of Public Works, crown companies or other branches of government are submitted for detailed



examination and report to the Architectural Sub-Committee of the National Capital Planning Committee, now the hardest working of all its sub-committees, whose duties include advising upon and co-ordinating the location and design of large building sites, and examining and recommending upon the general location, site on location, the exterior design, materials and architectural detail of all government buildings and their landscaping, parking and traffic plans. The recommendations of the sub-committee are then submitted to the Commission for approval. The members of this important sub-committee are architects of national reputation.

In a vast undertaking such as the National Capital Plan, conflicting ideas and private considerations inevitably intrude. The Commission's task is to further the Plan, which is a good one, in the best national and local interest.

A good start has been made towards the realization of what has been described as "A Capital reflecting the cultural and material progress of our country, and an inspiration and source of pride for future generations of Canadians yet to come".

Posterity will decide whether or not the work has been well done.

## Federal District Commission Architectural Committee

A. S. Mathers

BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT the Federal District Commission has been given wide powers regarding the locating, siting and architectural design of government buildings to be built within the Federal District. The agency by which the Commission carries out its duties in this respect is the Architect Committee which is composed of four architects and one landscape architect, all of whom are private practitioners serving without remuneration, and are also members of either the National Capital Planning Committee or the Commission. At present its members are A. S. Mathers (Chairman), Charles David, Gaston Amyot, J. A. Ewart and Gordon Culham. Consultants to the Committee are M. Jacques Gréber and Mr Edouard Fiset. At its disposal is also the permanent staff and other facilities of the Commission.

The Committee meets regularly in Ottawa once a month, and oftener if necessary, to receive and deal with projects submitted for review by various government departments and agencies.

The objects of the Committee are threefold: first, to ensure that new government buildings are properly located in the Federal District in accordance with the principles and policies of the National Capital Plan; second, to ensure that such buildings are arranged on their sites in proper architectural relation with other buildings either existing or projected, and, third, to ensure that the architectural design of each building is not only good in itself, but in harmonious relationship with its surroundings. Thus it is mainly with respect to the third objective that the Committee has to deal with architects commissioned for the various undertakings and it is in this field of its work that the Committee meets its greatest difficulties. It is therefore of interest to the members of the architectural profession to learn something of the policy of the Committee.

The Architectural Committee does not at any time, or under any circumstance exert any influence on any department or agency of the Government respecting the selection of architects for any given project. It has, however, at times suggested that in the case of compact groups of buildings that there would be an architectural virtue in having the entire group designed by one architect, or at least, that the men selected be compatible and cooperative in their approach to the project.

While it is necessary at times for the Committee to reject entire designs or to require modifications and changes in part, it does not design any building or part thereof. The policy of the Committee is to advise and recommend those things which because of its larger conception of the overall development of the National Capital Plan it feels are proper and necessary. Throughout its dealings with members of the architectural profession the Committee endeavours to present to the designer its conception of the place that the building involved must take in the general picture and to leave to that designer the utmost artistic freedom in his efforts to solve his problem.

In the early days of its existence and operation the Committee was criticized by certain elements in the profession for its approval of certain projects which had not been designed in accordance with the aesthetic theories of those critics.

The Committee is well aware of the sharp and sincere difference of opinion on matters of design which exist within the profession and it has no intention of taking sides in any controversy. Within the framework of the National Capital Plan there is a place for everything, and the Committee's policy is to ensure that the Master Plan for Canada's Capital be implemented in an orderly way.

Where new areas are allocated for new groups of government buildings, and thus no prior occupancy of the area by important structures exerts any influence, the Committee expects and requires only that the architects involved produce buildings that are aesthetically satisfying and in harmony with each other. If the architect chosen is a Georgian or classicist on one hand or a free wheeling disciple of Corbusier on the other, the Committee merely requires that he will give his best in his own metier.

The Committee is convinced that a reluctant submission by the architect to any dictation by it on matters of style, would result in architectural disaster, but that by granting complete freedom to the architect, not only will his best be done and the architecture of Canada's Capital will one day emerge to delight and interest its beholders.

The exercise of artistic freedom, however, does not mean artistic license, but rather submission to the discipline of the Master Plan.



## Is the National Capital Plan Succeeding?

Charles J. Woodsworth

TIME WAS WHEN A SCEPTICAL OTTAWA used to ask an embarrassed Federal District Commission, "When is this National Capital Plan going to start?"

Nowadays the question is more likely to be, "How long is it going to take?"

Or again, the inquiry is no longer, "Are you going to build a new Art Gallery?" It's, "When is it going to be built?"

The change sums up the remarkable advance that has taken place in the past ten years in regard both to the attitude of the people of Ottawa and the actual physical achievements made under the National Capital Plan. Both are wholesome evidences of the real progress that is being made toward the long-held dream of transforming Canada's Capital District into a centre worthy of this young and developing nation.

It has not all been plain sailing. There have been obstacles, plenty of them, and there still are.

Critics in the formative years could complain that the Commission's approach was not sufficiently positive, that it lacked adequate drive and leadership. That complaint was fairly based. Indeed it may be said that shortcomings on both these scores have always represented a more serious impediment to the Plan's progress than any technical difficulties involved.

Another early obstacle, already alluded to, was the scepticism of the people of Ottawa — a frank disbelief that anything more concrete would emerge from the postwar capital planning than had resulted from three or four previous efforts. The park and parkway plans in the Todd Report of 1903, in the main, have been carried out, but the recommendations for comprehensive planning were disregarded; the Holt Report of 1915 was pigeonholed; Noulan Cauchon's unofficial plan of 1922 was passed by; and Jacques Gréber's original and limited report of 1937 was stopped by the Second World War after the completion of one project.

Combined with scepticism were other factors: inertia — Ottawa's Bytown village mentality; and the lack of respect for planning as a profession, an old story in a country too young to take architecture and the arts seriously.

Ottawa, of its own accord, has never thought big in terms of municipal projects. For three-quarters of a century it has operated on the principle that if things get bad enough the federal government will step in to rescue it. A resultant example of this "Let George do it" attitude is the fact that Ottawa has the worst-paved streets of any major city in Canada.

Contributing to this lack of civic spirit is the transient element which since the last war especially has made up so large a part of Ottawa's population. Numerous civil servants from other parts of Canada have had no roots in the Capital, little interest in its development.

In sharp contrast is a still strong local political division — a legacy from Bytown days — between French speaking Lower Town east of the Rideau Canal and English speaking Upper Town west of the Canal. This influence is reflected in city council, and accounts, in part, for the lack of harmonious, constructive and efficient municipal leadership, particularly in the

field of planning. A classic example here was council's inability (until this year) to agree on a site for a new city hall after the old one burned down in 1931. It has now been decided to build on the former site in Confederation Park, contrary to a quarter century old understanding with the federal government and in the face of strong opposition from the National Capital Planning Committee. Canadian architects have been invited to compete for the design of the new building, but the terms of the competition specify that the site is subject to change.

The upshot of these various factors is that Ottawa has never adopted the Plan prepared by the federal government as its own, never given it the whole-hearted co-operation that in the beginning it was generally assumed would be extended it by the City.

In contrast, it should be noted that Ottawa's neighbouring city of Hull has shown itself progressive and civic-minded. Standing on its own feet the smaller Quebec municipality has co-operated extensively in the planning and its achievement — this despite periodic frustrations attempted by Premier Duplessis and certain local politicians. An example is the Fairy Lake Parkway: Hull supplied the land and the Commission is building the parkway.

Much of the wrangling that has marked development on the Ontario side has undoubtedly had a good deal to do with present personalities in Ottawa's civic administration. Typical of the City's capricious attitude is the difference of opinion between City and Commission over the width of traffic lanes on Carling Avenue, a major thoroughfare long in need of rebuilding and widening. For some obscure reason the City has been insisting on ten-foot traffic lanes for vehicles, while the Commission feels that under modern traffic conditions, and in line with the best accepted practice governing traffic regulation elsewhere, the lanes should be a minimum of 11 feet and preferably 12.

As federal property is involved in the Carling Avenue issue, the Commission, by law, must approve the plans.

In another facet of the same project — a controversy involving overhead versus underground wiring — difference became so acute that the Commission not long ago felt compelled to take out quarter-page advertisements in the local newspapers designed to offset misunderstandings resulting from policy statements by municipal authorities that were not only unauthorized, but in the Commission's view, wholly incorrect.

Difficulties have not been confined to differences with the Ottawa administration. Affected by the Capital planning are a number of neighbouring municipalities which, along with Ottawa, have failed to carry out protective zoning in keeping with the spirit and objectives of the plan.

A glaring example has been the failure to implement the Plan's proposal for the creation of a green belt. A start was made on it by the municipalities in 1947, then dropped. Not long ago Prime Minister St. Laurent announced that restrictions on building loans in the green belt area would in future



be imposed by the government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

This and many other federal-municipal problems are to be examined by a joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons to be set up at the next session of Parliament.

One issue certain to be canvassed is whether the federal government should have a greater measure of control over the National Capital Plan and the area in which it is being developed, with the object of making the Plan's achievement easier and more efficient.

For over half a century there has been periodic talk of a move of this kind. The Holt Report in 1915 made federal control a pre-requisite, on grounds that full co-operation of the autonomous municipalities, with their purely local outlooks and interests, could not be hoped for.

The political problem involved is a delicate one. One beneficial outcome of the Parliamentary committee's inquiry might be a recommendation to investigate the experience of other capitals where varying degrees of federal control prevail. Washington, D.C., though most often cited in this connection, is not considered by planning experts the best example for comparative purposes. Canberra, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Caracas are all situated in countries that operate on the federal principle constitutionally, and all have extensive city plans.

Actually Ottawa is the only world capital where the city as such is entirely self-governing. Yet it has failed in the past to plan itself either as a city or as a capital; hence the federal government's action in stepping in with a new Master Plan on a foundation that, as matters stand now, may be somewhat shaky.

Undoubtedly the joint committee will also examine federal-municipal relations in the light of financial circumstances that have changed with revision of the Municipal Grants Act this year. As a result of the revision, Ottawa's federal grant has been increased to approximately \$2,500,000 annually. In past years the City had a justifiable claim on the federal purse for financial assistance in carrying out municipal projects — this because crown property did not pay its way in regard to municipal taxation. Today it does. The government is now a taxpayer like anyone else. In fact, based on the City's population and the annual municipal budget, the federal grant of \$2,500,000 represents in effect the tax yield from 25,000 average taxpayers. As the grant is unconditional, a reverse twist is thus given the old protest, "No taxation without representation". Hence once again a case can be made out for greater federal control over the plan if lack of municipal co-operation continues to hamper its progress.

There are extremists in both camps — those who reject the idea entirely, and those who would stop at nothing less than full federal control. Suggestions range from a metropolitan administration, which theoretically would follow the present Toronto pattern, to an out-and-out federally-administered area.

In view of this wide divergence of opinion, a practical step would seem to be to set up a Royal Commission to bring in a recommendation as to the best form of administering the capital area. Indications are that such a move would be widely approved, nationally as well as locally.

A word may be in order regarding architectural development of the Capital. There is no control over private construction, but the FDC Act requires Commission approval of the location and exterior design of new federal construction. This is exercised, in effect, through a sub-committee composed of architect members of the organization. Gréber, in his Report, recommends that non-member architects, engineers, landscape architects, art critics, etc., be added to make a national committee on aesthetics, somewhat similar to the Fine Arts Commission of Washington.

What criticism there has been of architecture under the Plan has come, as might be expected, mainly from architects. In other words, it has been a case of one professional against another. The field of comment might be enlarged if Gréber's recommendation for a committee on aesthetics was carried out, and certainly this would be all to the good. There would be difficulties (such as the inconvenience of getting such a committee together as often as might be required) just as there are disadvantages to other solutions that have been offered with the object of securing universally satisfactory building designs. Architectural competitions, one of the most popular cure-alls proposed, are not always altogether fortunate in their results.

Touched on here have been some of the birth pains without which no large scale project of this kind could come into being.

Whatever the impatience caused the planners by the lack of legal and administrative aids to their work, these things seem certain to iron themselves out in time. And the more the problems involved are placed in a light where they can be seen and assessed by those who in the final analysis must pay for the Plan — the people of Canada — the sooner will the scheme be set up on a sound and efficient basis.

Finally, as the Plan proceeds it behooves the Government of Canada, as the biggest builder in the country, to bear in mind that from the architectural standpoint it is, so to speak, under the gun; that the Capital and its structures will be forever on display to visitors not only from Canada but all lands; and that it ought not therefore, feel too attached to the conventional but give free rein to the new.

If experiments are to be made in architectural design, the Capital area is the place to make them. If mistakes are to be made, this is the place to make them too. In carrying out this great project, let us not be so borne down by a sense of responsibility to create a beautiful Capital that we are unwilling to take any risks whatever in departing from the traditional and ordinary. Let us remember that tradition itself is something that must always change, but that good taste never does; given that, we may rest assured that what is created will stand firm in the public mind for all ages to come.



# THE NATIONAL CAPITAL OTTAWA & ENVIRONS LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

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**FEDERAL DISTRICT COMMISSION  
OTTAWA**

Publiée par le Service d'Information  
Comité d'Aménagement de la Capitale  
nationale  
**COMMISSION DU DISTRICT FEDERAL  
CANADA**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Federal and municipal parks, recreation areas and grounds of public buildings. | Parcs fédéraux et municipaux, terrains de jeux et parterres des édifices publics. |
| Airports and other federal properties.   | Aéroports et autres emplacements fédéraux.  |
| Universities, schools, hospitals, etc.   | Universités, écoles, hôpitaux, etc.   |
| Future federal park and parkway projects.                                      | Parcs et parkways fédéraux projetés.  |
| Lands reserved for railway and industrial development.                         | Sites réservés aux futurs développements ferroviaires et industriels.             |
| Highway and parkway extensions.  | Prolongements des routes et des parkways.   |
| Secondary road extensions.   | Prolongements des routes secondaires.   |

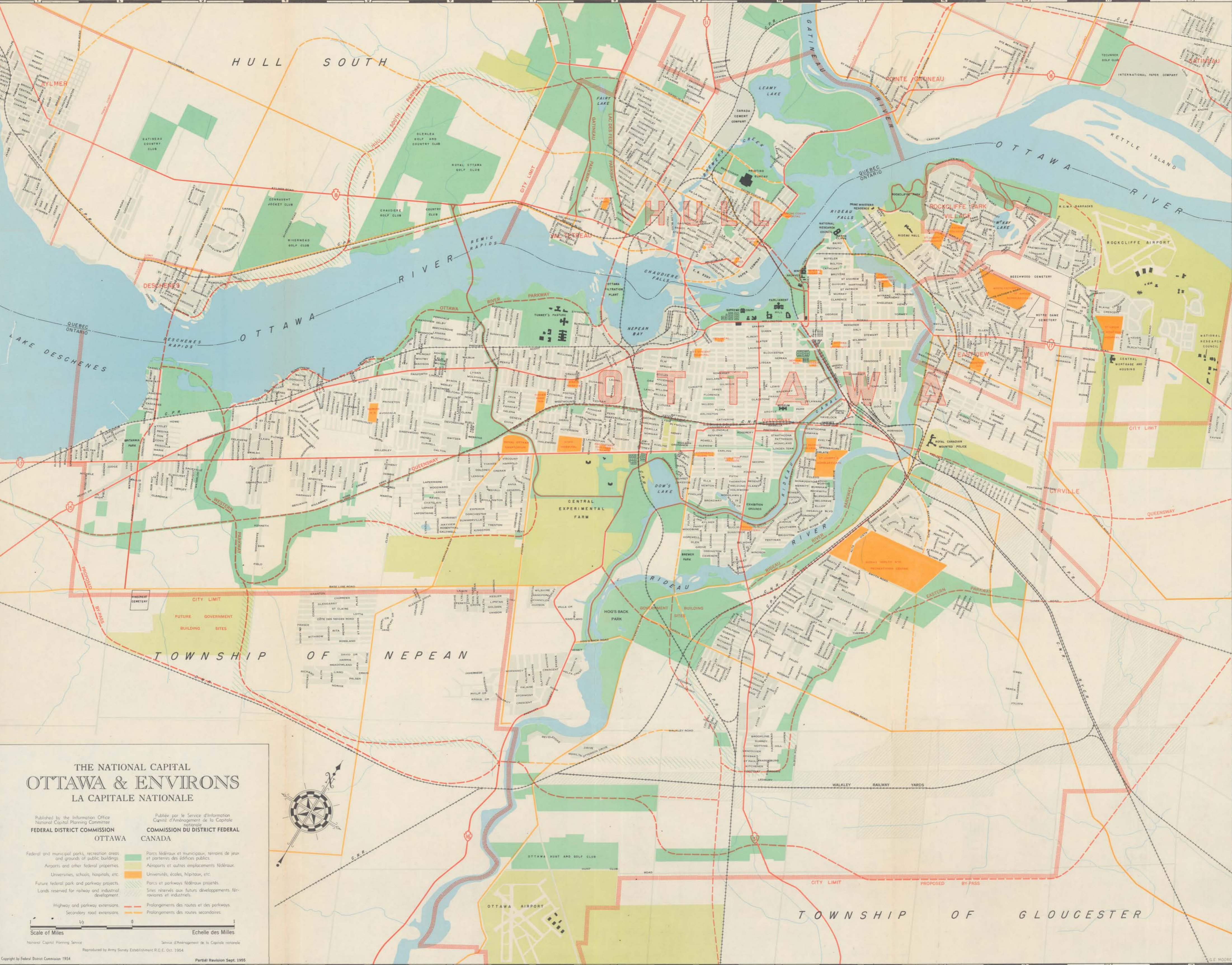
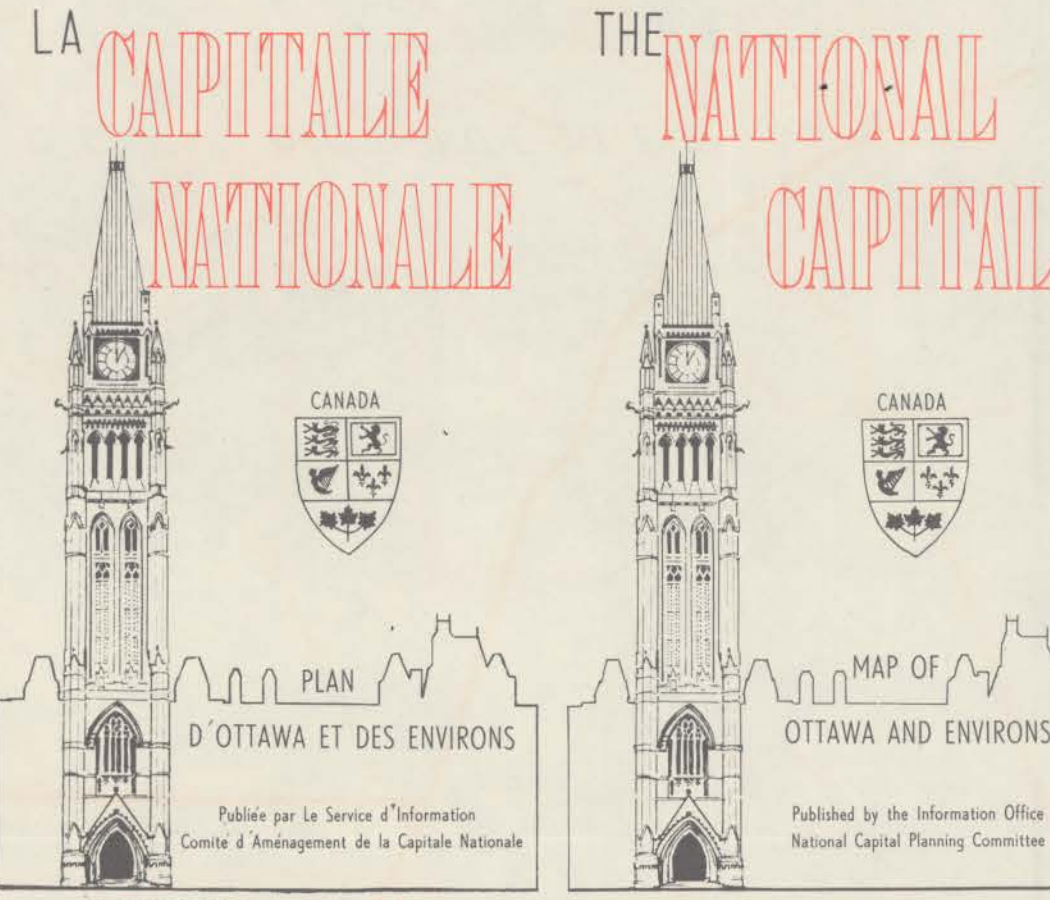




Table listing street names and numbers for Aylmer, Hull, and Ottawa. Columns include street names, numbers, and sometimes street names in French. The table is organized into sections for different areas like Hull South, Pointe Gatineau, and Ottawa - Eastview.



LA COMMISSION DU DISTRICT FÉDÉRAL FEDERAL DISTRICT COMMISSION

Prix 25 Sous Price 25 Cents



Re-development of the Central area and Wellington Street. Right centre is Confederation Park, much of which already has been cleared. The large building lower right centre represents the permanent National Gallery in Cartier Square (the design is only for the purpose of the model). Upper left, at the west end of Wellington Street is a proposed National Auditorium, above it the Veterans' Memorial group, the east building of which is completed and the west under construction; and across the street, on the north side of Wellington above the cliff, is seen the new National Library building. A proposed new bridge to Hull at the Chaudière Falls is seen extreme left.



Major's Hill Park, Confederation Park and Approaches

CITY OF OTTAWA  
 PLAN OF PARLIAMENT HILL  
 MAJOR'S HILL PARK, CONFEDERATION PARK  
 AND APPROACHES







*The old Bank Street Yards of the CNR on the cross-town tracks are shown left to right foreground. At the bend of the Rideau Canal is a large new apartment building; the National Museum and National Gallery building is shown left centre, with Parliament Hill in the background. The railway right of way is being converted to a limited access roadway, the Queensway. (see below)*

*Queensway is the east-west limited access roadway shown left to right centre.*





*The extensive building site in the west end known as Tunney's Pasture is the location for many government buildings. Projected are an administration building and industrial laboratory for the Department of National Health and Welfare.*



*The Hull-Ottawa waterfront today, showing industrial development in the Chaudière Falls area.*

SPARTAN AIR PHOTO



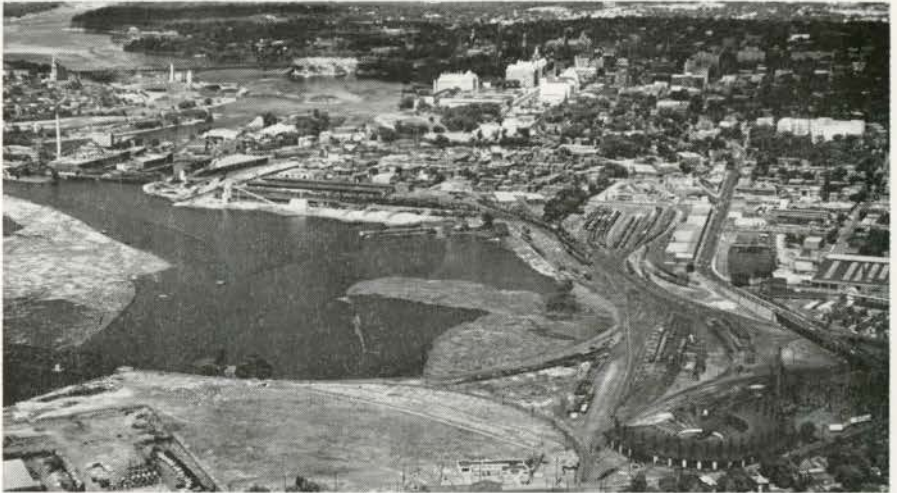
*Proposed restoration of the Hull-Ottawa waterfront and the Chaudière Falls area.*



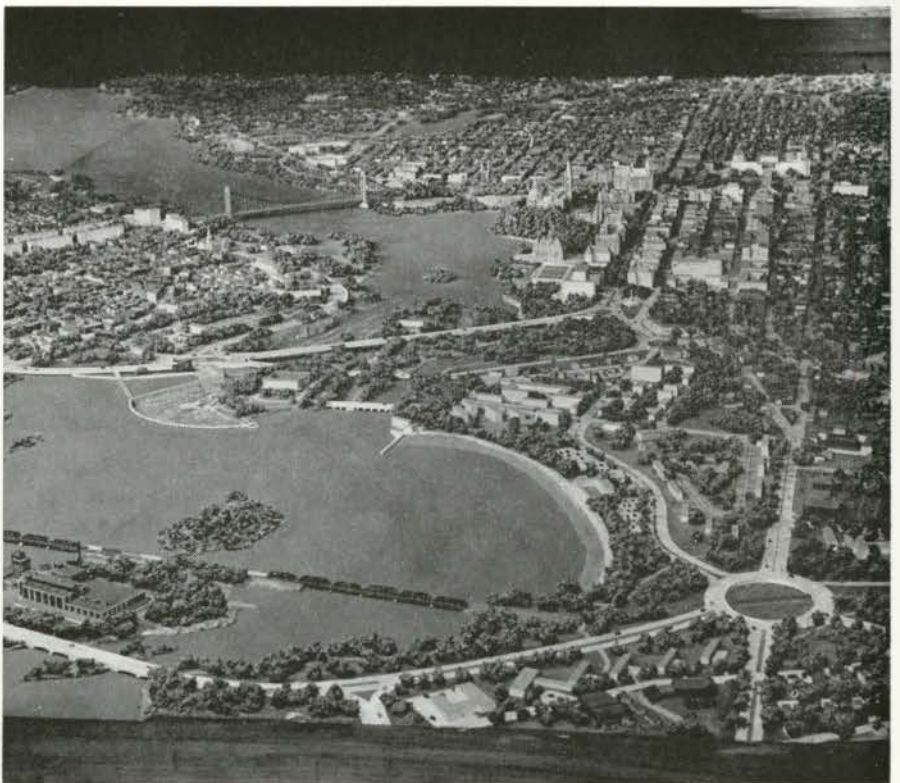




*The eastern section of Hull with the Capital across the Ottawa River to the south. The new Government Printing Bureau is seen left centre. The boulevard running from the bottom of the picture to the bridge will be constructed on what is now the CPR right of way.*



*The Ottawa River waterfront today, showing railway and industrial development at the Chaudière Falls and Nepean Bay west of Parliament Hill.*

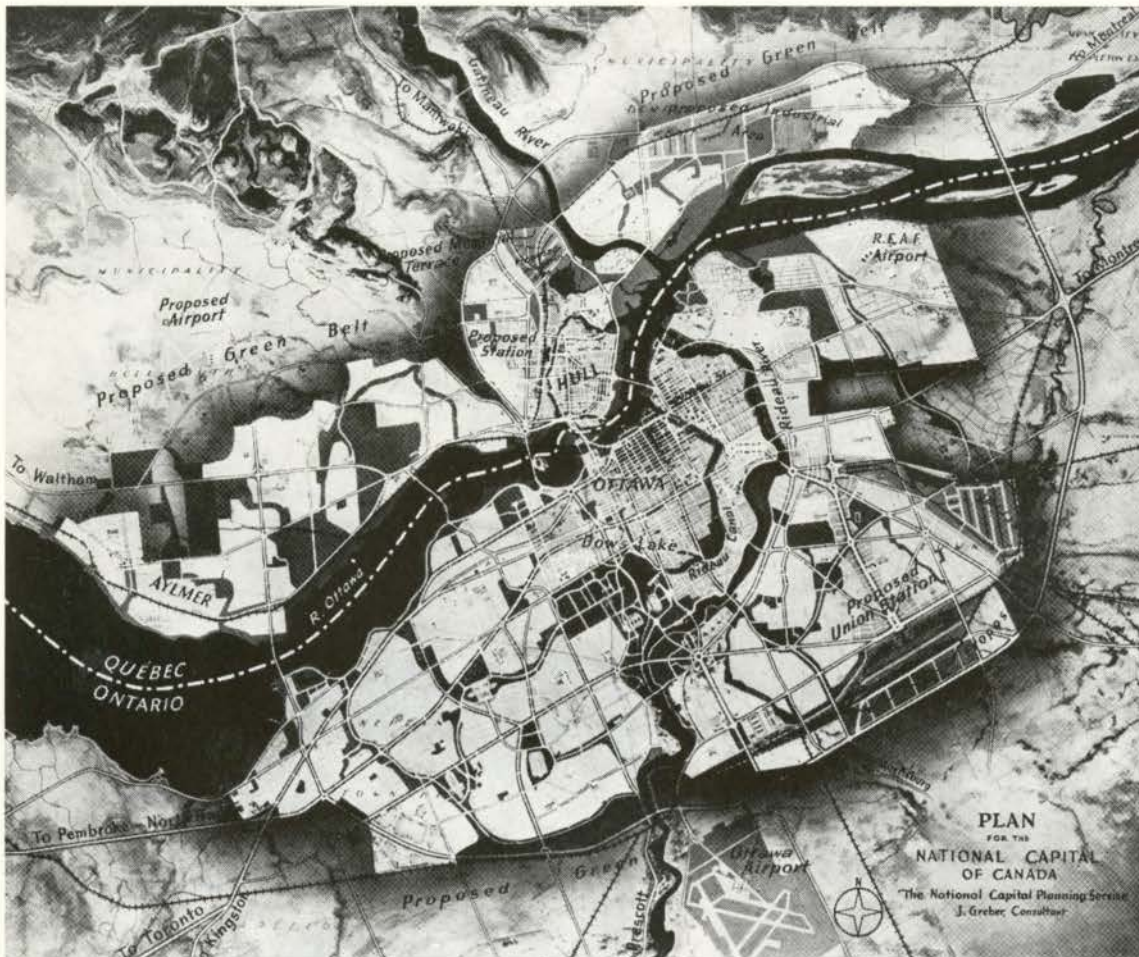


*Scale models shows the proposed long range re-development of the Chaudière Falls and Nepean Bay areas, west of Parliament Hill. The traffic circle lower right is on the approximate site of the round house in the matching air photo above.*









The Master Plan  
overprinted - 1950

## The Progress of the National Capital Plan

Walter Bowker

A REVIEW OF THE FIRST DECADE of the National Capital Plan shows notable progress in all phases of planning and construction. Most apparent, of course, is the physical development which has so greatly altered the appearance of nearly every section of the Capital. While the urban area has shared in the general residential, commercial and, to a limited extent, industrial expansion of the postwar years, the federal building program, because of its scale and nature, has caused the most noticeable changes in the local scene.

Less apparent, but equally important, has been the progress in detailed planning of long-range projects in the Master Plan. The preliminary stages of some of these long-range projects, such as the railway relocations, have been completed. Practically all the land required for the successful implementation of the park and parkway proposals, the railway and industrial relocations and for future government building sites has been acquired. Working relationships between the Federal District Commission, the responsible federal planning agency; the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and Ottawa, Hull and the twenty-eight other municipalities within the 900-square mile National Capital District are well established. A comprehensive information program begun in the early years has resulted in the understanding and sympathetic support of residents of the area and of the people of Canada as a whole.

While the fate of earlier plans for the development of the Capital might have given rise to quite justifiable doubts about the new Master Plan when it was first presented, the achieve-

ments of the first ten years are best evidence of the firm foundation upon which the comprehensive, long-range undertaking now rests.

A synopsis of the official report of the plans prepared by Jacques Gréber, the eminent French city planner who is consultant-in-chief, and his Canadian associates, appeared in the December, 1949 issue of the *Journal*, but a brief recapitulation of some of the important proposals and planning considerations may be of use.

In brief, the Master Plan is designed to guide the development of the Capital's urban area over the next half century. It is not an inflexible block-by-block detailed city plan, but rather a chart, or skeleton outline to guide development along desired lines. Within its framework it is capable of adjustment to meet new requirements and changing conditions. Railway, highway and arterial roadway proposals are treated in detail, as are proposals for governmental development of parks, parkways, sites for departmental buildings and national institutions, etc. The report predicts and provides for an ultimate population of about half a million within a five-mile radius of Parliament Hill, and recommends that development, on a regional basis, follow the nuclear system of neighbourhoods and communities. It encourages this last by the planned decentralization of government departmental buildings throughout the urban area. It would limit the population to the above figure (contained within an urban area of about 44,000 acres); and to achieve this, recommends surrounding the urban area with



a controlled rural fringe, or green belt. The belt, three to five miles wide, is designed to mark the limit of extension of municipal services, and therefore, dense housing development within it should be prohibited. Excess population would reside in towns and villages beyond the green belt, but within easy commuting distance on the highway network. Surrounding the urban area, and designed to protect the attractive natural setting and other amenities is the 900-square-mile National Capital District, defined by Parliament in 1944.

The Ottawa-Hull area is treated as one physical, social and economic whole. Comprehensive zoning — a municipal responsibility — is strongly recommended to control industrial, commercial and residential development in the best interests of each, to preserve the amenities of the area, and to protect the large and growing national investment in public buildings, national institutions and parks and parkways.

As there is no single authority in control of planning and development, rural or urban, within the District, the importance of full federal-provincial-municipal co-operation in the implementation of the Master Plan will be appreciated.

Apart from private construction, developments under the Master Plan fall into four categories:

1. Federal District Commission responsibilities, such as the relocation of the railways, development of the park and parkway system and some bridges.
2. Federal building projects, for which the Department of Public Works, crown companies or certain departments of government are responsible for construction.
3. Federal-provincial-municipal projects, mainly roads and bridges and municipal services, in which the Federal District Commission is the federal planning and financial agent.
4. Purely municipal works in planning and development, in which the Commission and its planning staff are available for technical assistance.

#### FDC Projects

The most important long-range project, and the key to the whole Master Plan, is the removal of the existing railways from the central parts of the urban area to the southern and eastern boundaries of Ottawa and the northern and western sections of Hull. The rights-of-way thus made available are to be used for parkways and arterial roadways and the adjacent property, now used for industrial or railway facilities, will become available for more desirable (and higher tax-yield) development. Although it is expected to take another twenty-five years to complete, the project is now about two years ahead of schedule.

The first step was the acquisition of about 3,000 acres of land along the Walkley Road at Ottawa's southern boundary for future rail use and for new industrial areas. Next was construction of a railway cut-off line. This was brought into use two years ago, and enabled CNR Montreal-Winnipeg manifest freights to bypass the urban area instead of going through it on the CNR crosstown tracks. Construction of what are eventually to be joint railway terminal freight yards and yard facilities on the new cut-off was then begun. Upon their completion this summer the CNR was able to transfer its freight-marshalling and maintenance operations from the crosstown tracks to the new Walkley yards.

For some time negotiations have been under way with the CNR and CPR for the establishment of a terminal company to operate all rail facilities within the National Capital District. The new Walkley yards, at present used only by the CNR, are designed with this end in view. Terminal rail facilities would remove the need for duplicate rail lines and yards within the area, and greatly expedite the railway relocation project. Abandonment of the CPR main line along the Capital's Ottawa River waterfront, the Sussex street spur along the east bank of the Rideau, and the connection to Hull via the Interprovincial Bridge could follow within the next ten years.

In the meantime, the present Union Station facilities, which

have far outgrown present needs, are to be redesigned so as to serve until the time, now well in the future, when a new Union Station will be constructed as part of the Walkley Road rail development.

The first of the railway relocations — the CNR move from the crosstown tracks, has made possible the first conversion of rail right-of-way to highway. The "Queensway", a limited-access roadway, will run nineteen miles across the Capital and its fringes from east to west, using the abandoned CNR crosstown tracks right-of-way for most of its length. It will link with Highway 17 east and west of Ottawa, and actually will be a diversion of that highway, bypassing the congested governmental and commercial heart of the Capital. The new roadway is a joint project, shared in by the Federal District Commission, which is contributing most of the right-of-way; the Ontario Department of Highways; the City of Ottawa; and, because the new road has been declared a part of the Trans-Canada Highway, the Federal Department of Public Works. The project is in the design stage now, and is expected to be completed in about four years.

#### Parks and Parkways

While a start has been made on additions to the twenty-two miles of scenic driveways constructed throughout the Capital over the past half century, the extensive program proposed will not be realized for many years. Practically all the necessary properties have been obtained, however, as the result of a vigorous land-acquisition program begun in the early years before extensive suburban development greatly increased land values. Today it would be almost financially impossible to acquire these properties for park and parkway purposes.

The approximately forty miles of new parkways will restore much of the beauty of the Ottawa and Rideau River waterfronts and add about 4,000 acres of open space to the Capital's urban area. The projects include a six-mile Ottawa River Parkway from Nepean Bay to Britannia; a ten-mile Rideau River Parkway between Rideau Falls and Mooney's Bay; and an Eastern-Western Parkway running in a twenty-mile arc around the urban area from Rockcliffe Airport to Britannia. The western section will include a link with the existing driveway system in the Experimental Farm.

A start has been made on two new parkways in Hull. The first two miles of what will eventually be a forty-five-mile scenic drive in the form of a loop through Gatineau Park have been constructed between the Aylmer Road at Val Tetreau and Blvd. Gamelin (the Mountain Road); and a short distance eastwards the first two miles of a local parkway for Hull, the Lac des Fées Parkway, have been opened to traffic. This last is an FDC-City of Hull joint project, with the city providing most of the land. Eventually it will be extended around the east and north sections of Hull to the Gatineau Highway. A future parkway will be constructed from Deschênes easterly along the waterfront to the Champlain Bridges, with a branch to Fairy Lake Parkway near Blvd. Gamelin.

On the Hull waterfront, practically all the land between the Interprovincial Bridge and the mouth of the Gatineau River has been acquired. Jacques Cartier Park, which forms part of the area, has been in existence for some years, and considerable landscape work has been done on the recently acquired sections.

The newest and largest park project in the Capital itself, the Hog's Back development, adds about 170 acres to the 900 acres of the present federal urban parks system. Situated in the beautiful area of the Hog's Back Falls and canal locks on the Rideau four miles south of Parliament Hill, the new park and its facilities are designed to meet growing tourist requirements and the needs of the increasing urban population. The facilities include a refreshment stand of novel design which has attracted wide attention. It is a Commission concession, and, financially, promises to be a most successful one.

Separate from the urban park system, but an integral part of the National Capital Plan is Gatineau Park, situated in the



beautiful hill and lake country of the Laurentians north and west of Hull. At its suburban approaches it actually forms part of the green belt. Land acquisition for the park began in 1937, and to date over 50,000 acres of the planned 75,000 acre area has been purchased. With its bathing beaches, hiking trails, camping and trailer sites, large and small scale picnic facilities, fishing and boating, and excellent winter skiing, the park has long been recognized as the summer and winter playground of the Capital district. Completion of the forty-five-mile scenic parkway will greatly improve the park as a recreation area and tourist attraction. In the Kingsmere section of the park is located the Mackenzie King Estate, the 600-acre area bequeathed to the nation by the late Prime Minister and noted for its picturesque "ruins". This year also saw the establishment of the Kingsmere Festival of the Arts, with plays, ballet and small orchestral performances presented in the attractive setting of Moorside, one of the estate's former summer houses.

### The Federal Building Program

The war effort and the tremendous industrial, commercial and cultural development of Canada as a nation which followed, resulted in great expansion in federal activities, affecting Ottawa both as a city and as a seat of government. The large increase in population and extensive residential development of the past decade has resulted in the integration into a metropolitan area of the former urban cores of Ottawa and Hull with their loosely-connected suburbs. At the same time, the Capital's development towards a more cosmopolitan community is reflected in the fact that in 1939 representation from abroad consisted of three High Commissioners' offices and five legations: today there are thirty embassies, nine legations and six High Commissioners' offices.

Wartime accommodation needs were met by an extensive building rental program and by the erection in parks and other available space of temporary wooden office buildings.

Despite the large federal building program over the past decade the need for new office accommodation is still far from being met. Urgent need, or expediency, however, has not been permitted to lower standards or overrule the Master Plan.

Where possible, the policy has been to decentralize the new departmental buildings while at the same time complete the desired development of the central area and Wellington Street. Decentralization was recommended as a means of avoiding increased downtown congestion and of permitting civil servants to live in residential areas near their offices, as well as for obvious civil defence reasons. As a result large building sites have been acquired or designated in all parts of the Capital area and space is now available to meet federal building needs for the foreseeable future. The Federal District Commission, as required by law, has approved, and in some cases co-ordinated, development of a dozen major site plans, and approved architects' plans for about one hundred and fifty federally-constructed buildings. Some of the projects, such as head office of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation in the east end, have been completed. Farther east on the Montreal Road there has been extensive construction by the National Research Council. In Hull the new Government Printing Bureau is nearly completed. In the west end of Ottawa progress continues on the development of the Tunney's Pasture site. The \$16 million expenditure here to date has been for a new Bureau of Statistics, Department of Public Works testing laboratories, a records building, laboratories for the Department of National Health and Welfare, and for Atomic Energy of Canada. More are projected. The Department of Mines and Technical Surveys plans extensive development adjacent to the present Bureau of Mines on Booth Street, with a Geological Survey building and chemical laboratory to be constructed immediately. Other buildings for Surveys and Mapping branches will complete development of the site.

A large tri-service hospital is to be located on Department of Veterans' Affairs property in the rapidly expanding area of the city south of the Rideau River. The Department of Public

Works and the Post Office Department, both now in the central area, will move to a large site on the Bowesville Road in the southern section of the city. Architects for both buildings are A. J. Hazelgrove, Ottawa, in association with Shore and Moffat, Toronto. Much of the Carling Avenue frontage of the Dominion Experimental Farm is coming into use as building sites for the Department of Agriculture.

RCAF operational flying is now centered at Ottawa Airport, and the FDC has co-ordinated development plans here for the Department of National Defence, the Department of Transport and the National Aeronautical Establishment. A new terminal building adequate for an international airport (Ottawa now is a trans-Atlantic alternative for Dorval) is being designed. Architects are Gilleland and Strutt, Ottawa.

West of the city at Shirley's Bay is the Defence Research Board establishment, already developed and capable of further expansion.

Among the last of the large government departments yet to move is the Department of National Defence. The site recommended in the Master Plan, on the Baseline Road near Pinecrest Cemetery at the southwestern boundary of the city, has been acquired by the Department of Public Works, but considerations of military security may compel the Department to locate still farther from the built-up area.

When the Defence Department's new headquarters are finally constructed, the temporary wartime buildings it now occupies in Cartier Square at the southern edge of Confederation Park will be torn down and the site will be used for the National Art Gallery. Because of the urgent need for new accommodation for the National Gallery (now housed in the east wing of the National Museum, where a fire hazard exists and there is room to hang only a quarter of the national art collection) a building which can be used as a temporary gallery and afterwards for government offices, is to be erected as soon as possible on the site of the Laurentian Building on Elgin Street, at the western access to the Mackenzie King Bridge.

Of other new development in the central area, Wellington Street is the most important. The east building of the Veterans' Memorial group is now completed and occupied and the west building is under construction. Old buildings west of the latter to the junction of Sparks and Wellington Streets will be demolished, and the block-long triangle will become a park. Across the street on the north side, overlooking the Ottawa River, is the site for the new National Library building, the design of which has been approved and a start is expected next year. No. 1 Temporary Building, one of three west of the Supreme Court building, is to be demolished to make room for the library. It will be the first of the temporary wartime wooden office buildings to go.

The whole postwar building construction program represents an expenditure of approximately \$73 million, not including the National Library and National Gallery or the new Post Office Administration Building, the Department of Public Works buildings and the Department of Agriculture Administration building.

In addition, the Federal District Commission has expended approximately \$11 million on railway relocations, land acquisitions for railway, industrial and park and parkway use, and some park and parkway development.

### Joint Projects

Since it was founded in 1899, the Federal District Commission has worked in co-operation with the City of Ottawa. Some of the federal parks are actually city property leased for nominal sums and developed and maintained by the Commission. The development of Confederation Square in 1939 as the site for the National War Memorial was a federal-municipal project, with the Department of Public Works expending \$3 million to clear the central section for the Memorial, and the city widening and boulevarding Elgin Street south to Laurier Avenue at a cost of \$1 million.

The broadening of the Commission's terms of reference and



the establishment of the National Capital Fund with the advent of the National Capital Plan led to a broader basis of financial co-operation. In 1950 the city annexed the urban parts of the adjoining townships of Nepean and Gloucester, permitting a unification of services throughout the urban area. The decentralization of federal departmental buildings led to the extension of municipal services into these areas considerably in advance of purely municipal need.

Some \$2½ millions of the National Capital Fund is being used to pay the interest on the debentures over the first eight to ten years of such "advance of need" projects.

The amount of federal contribution to a municipal project, or municipal contribution to a federal project is calculated on the basis of which authority initiates a project, and the "degree of interest" of the other party. The Mackenzie King Bridge, first completed federal project under the National Capital Plan, was constructed with a view to opening up a new east-west route through the centre of the city and enabling heavy commercial traffic to bypass Wellington Street in front of Parliament Hill. The city contributed ten percent of the cost. The Commission, on the other hand, is contributing 16.6 percent to the Dunbar Bridge, being constructed by the city to extend Bronson Avenue southerly over the Rideau River. The reconstruction of Sussex Street and the new "Bytown Bridges" over the Rideau River were city projects, but in view of the number of federal buildings and institutions along its route, and the fact that it is a connecting link in the Driveway system, the Commission contributed approximately \$1,010,000 towards the work.

Present improvements to the Chaudière crossing of the Ottawa River are being carried out entirely by the Commission, with the technical assistance of the Department of Public Works.

The Queensway, the east-west limited-access roadway being constructed on the former CNR crosstown tracks right-of-way, has become a joint federal-provincial-municipal project, the Federal District Commission contribution being most of the right-of-way, including land acquisitions for widening and intersections. Because it is to be a part of the Trans-Canada Highway, the Department of Public Works also will share in the construction costs. Total estimated cost is about \$15 million, including about \$5½ million representing the value of the Commission's contribution. Like all projects in which federal funds or property are contributed, detailed plans must be submitted to the Commission for approval.

Another current municipal project is the widening of Carling Avenue, which involves a federal contribution of land valued at about half a million dollars.

The importance of comprehensive and up-to-date zoning by-laws in the municipalities within the National Capital District will be understood. Ottawa has begun to re-zone; Hull and several other municipalities in the Quebec section of the District are being re-zoned. To encourage zoning, the Federal District Commission has offered to provide staff or funds to any municipality within the District for the preparation of zoning plans. Several Quebec municipalities already have applied, but, as yet, none in the Ontario section of the District.

In the fourth category of purely municipal projects, Ottawa, like most Canadian municipalities in the postwar years, has had its hands full meeting the demands for very costly services,

schools and roads for new residential areas rapidly developing under the pressure of increasing population. The largest single municipal project is the extension of the sewage and waterworks system to service the 21,000 acres annexed in 1950. Although the work is being partly subsidized by the Commission, most of the estimated cost of about \$23 million falls upon the city.

A Planning Area Board was established under Ontario legislation in 1937, with Ottawa as the designated municipality under the Act, and the other members the seven remaining municipalities within the Ontario section of the National Capital District. The Federal District Commission is represented on this Board as well as on its technical advisory committee. An area of sub-division control, largely conforming to Ottawa's municipal boundary, controls sub-division of land within its limits, but so far, attempts to establish the "green belt" around the urban area as recommended in the Master Plan have not been successful due to failure by the adjacent rural municipalities, within whose boundaries most of the belt lies, to do the necessary zoning. The result has been extensive ribbon development and some sub-dividing within the belt area. The problem is recognized however. Recently the Prime Minister announced that certain restrictions would be placed on Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation housing loans in the green belt area, and discussions with a view to finding a satisfactory solution to the complicated problem are now taking place.

While this article has not dealt to any great extent with housing, the work of CMHC within the National Capital area is worthy of note. The Corporation's direct account house-building program has been extensive. It includes a veterans development of 275 houses in Hull; another of 423 houses in the Merivale Road-Carling Avenue area of Ottawa; the Strathcona Heights Apartment development of 418 units for veterans at Mann avenue, Ottawa; 214 detached houses for members of RCAF stationed at Uplands airport; and another 500 houses for RCAF personnel at Rockcliffe airport.

Federal assistance has also been provided under Section 36 of the National Housing Act for development of serviced lots and house building in the Hurdman's Bridge area along the Rideau River. Here a federal-provincial land assembly project known as Riverview Park is providing 634 serviced lots with municipal co-operation.

An excellent example of a large-scale combined single and multiple dwelling project carried out by a single private firm with assistance under the National Housing Act is the Manor Park project in Ottawa's east end.

Like any large-scale co-operative enterprise the National Capital Plan has had its growing pains. Of some of them it has not yet been relieved, but solutions to problems and procedures gradually are being worked out in the light of experience gained. The most urgent and basic problems having been dealt with, the various planning authorities are now in a position to give full consideration to other aspects of the work. For example, the great need for urban re-development, particularly in the central area, is recognized. This is a problem common to all Canadian cities, and a practical solution must be found. It is hoped that the second decade of the Plan will see a good start on this much-needed aspect of the Capital's re-development.





## The Architecture of Early Ottawa

Philip Shackleton

FROM THE FIRST HUMBLE SHANTIES built close by the Chaudière Falls to the business blocks and public buildings of the sixties and seventies, Ottawa has seen examples of most of the architectural adoptions and developments characteristic of Upper Canada's first hundred years. There are in the province earlier Georgian homes whose fine detail evidently had no duplication in the Capital. But, judging from surviving examples and from illustrations of many old buildings that have fallen to the wrecker, the lumber village that became Canada's Capital has an architectural tradition equal to that of most Ontario communities.

Excellent proportion and detail have been known in churches, cottages, city houses, mills, hotels and shops. The solid tradition of Scottish workmanship in stone is yet to be seen on every street which dates to the mid-nineteenth century. A foundation of Georgian design was built upon by the advocates of Greek Revival ideas, and the economic development of the community was reflected in three main styles of buildings produced in the town's first fifty years.

A late settlement, Ottawa proper dates from 1826 when Col. By's Royal Engineers arrived to begin construction of the Rideau Canal from Ottawa to Kingston. Across the Ottawa River, Philomen Wright's Massachusetts migrants had built a village of seven hundred people while the future capital was the site of a couple of lonely bush farms. The judicial centre of Perth and the military settlement of Richmond were established communities some years before Bytown had been conceived.

But Bytown was a boomtown from the start. Prosperity came ready made as money poured in to build the Rideau Canal, the Seaway project of its day. Close on the heels of the Royal Engineers came gangs of workmen, civilian builders, settlers and speculators. Among them came Thomas MacKay, the community's first master builder and one of the many contributors to the Scottish-Canadian architecture of early Ontario.

MacKay was the contractor who built the flight of eight locks which raise the Rideau Canal from the Ottawa River to the cliff top where the Chateau Laurier now stands. During a lull in canal construction, his workmen took a week to build the old Scotch Church, the forerunner of today's St. Andrew's Presbyterian and the first really lasting church in the village.



CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE



*Bingham House, Richmond Road*

CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE



*City House, Murray Street*

*The former British Hotel, George and Sussex Streets*

CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE





*Commissary store and warehouse—a Rideau Canal project built by the Royal Engineers in 1826. This is thought to be the earliest surviving building in Ottawa.*



CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE



CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE

*House on Sussex and Bruyère Streets (circa 1860)*



CAPITAL PRESS SERVICE

*Thomson-Rochester House on the Richmond Road*



His second residence, MacKay's Castle, has been all but completely hidden by wings and porches added to what has become the official residence of the Governor-General. Local ways of the time referred to its Presbyterian style, and although they survive today only as the lower foundation of an unprepossessing government building, MacKay's huge flour and woollen mills at the mouth of the Rideau River were in their day the finest, most modern of any in Ontario.

While the earliest buildings were of frame or square timber construction, the best and most lasting examples were and are in stone. One of the finest frame structures and certainly the most interesting church building of the early period was the Free Church of Scotland, the first Knox Church.

Since destroyed, the Free Church was built in the forties on Daly avenue in the Lower Town. It was 40 by 60 feet. An aged photo reveals a simple gabled building with four fluted wooden pilasters across the façade, one at each corner and a pair flanking the central doorway. A large spacious window set to each side of the doorway and a generous rectangular light above it, together with an oval sunburst in the gable, complete a classical simplicity which made the Free Church a humble country relative to St. Andrew's, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Bytown settlers were quick to use the square timber, so much of which was floated down the river. And while many small houses of square timber lie today hidden beneath a blanket of insulbric, artificial stone or tin signs of the late Cola period, probably the most interesting example was a large hotel, probably built in the forties, by a settler named McGriffen. It had twenty rooms, each 9 by 12 feet, and stood on St. Andrew Street until 1912.

But it is in the stone work of early Ottawa that here economic growth is best reflected. A mushroom town grew from the first boom, for which the Rideau Canal construction was responsible. The best house of this 1830 decade was essentially Georgian. The majority, small homes, were of one and a half floors with a well proportioned centre door and fanlight, flanked by an equally well proportioned window on each side. The usually low pitched roof was sometimes gabled, sometimes hipped. The low pitched front centre gable was common to most.

The most handsome examples of the period, however, were two larger houses. The Nicholas Sparks house, which was sacrificed just a year ago to make way for the second DVA block, was a two and a half storey town house which in proportion and refinement of detail left little to be desired.

Sparks' rubble-walled house had two fanlight doors and two low-pitched centre gables, one each at front and rear. With flanking stone wings added before 1845, it was without doubt a mansion among the early homes of Bytown.

A second example from the 1830 decade and fit to be ranked among the classic houses of Canada is the Thomson-Rochester house on the Richmond Road. Now owned by the Federal District Commission, possibly to become a museum in future, it has much in common with the late lamented Sparks house, even to a single dormer projecting from each end of the hip roof. Its generous proportions, fine dressed stone work and simple fanlight door make it a worthy provincial version of the gentleman's country seat.

A feature found seldom in Ontario outside the Ottawa Valley is the casement window of the Thomson-Rochester house and of many other houses, mills and shops. The double hung sash, of course, is characteristic of most early Ontario build-

ings. But the casement window was popular in early Quebec and it is very likely that Quebec workmen were responsible for the introduction of the casement to so many Ottawa Valley buildings.

Ottawa's second boom grew out of the square timber trade which reached its peak in the forties. In the same period, Ottawa became the major town on the Rideau Canal route, the major shipping route between Upper and Lower Canada. It was the period too when grain was shipped from as far away as the Detroit River to MacKay's modern mill at Rideau Falls.

New styles came with the new prosperity and for a decade or more Greek Revival was the major influence on Ottawa builders. Rubble gave way to a degree to dressed stone work. Buildings grew in size and the square light and side lights appeared about a plainer doorway. Window area increased and Renaissance quoins stepped up the four corners, or at least the front corners, of each stone building. Purely decorative quoins, in fact, appear as applied wooden plaques to some frame houses in the Lower Town.

Among interesting buildings of the period is the City House on Murray Street, a hotel in continuous service since its establishment. Only within the last year was it closed. A dressed stone front no doubt gave the rubble building a façade of some sophistication in the 1840's. Although the balcony today is a ramshackle one, it may be the original balcony which overlooked the old steamboat wharf on the Ottawa. Like the main entrance below, the balcony doorway is dressed with square top and side lights.

An imposing home from the end of this period is the Bingham House on Richmond Road which now serves as broadcasting studios for a local radio station. Windows are large and those at the front ground level extend to the floor. The house is pleasing by itself but suffers by comparison with its near neighbour, the Thomson-Rochester house. Its portico supported by four heavy Ionic pillars is, of course, a much later addition.

Into decline, Ottawa emerged for a third boom in the late fifties after the first railway linked the town to Prescott on the St. Lawrence River. Another factor in the boom was the choice of Ottawa as capital of the United Canadas and the consequent influx of civil servants.

The buildings of the period grew to three and a half storeys. Doorways were still simpler. Some fancies in mildly arched window frames were attempted, but the general effect was one of a town donning a more sober business suit.

A typical sample of the builders' work of the time stands at the corner of Sussex and Bruyère streets. Window and floor arrangement are still symmetrical, not only in the façade but in the street corner gable end.

But the old styles were on the decline. The revival schools were more and more influential, bringing weird and wonderful fancies to humble homes and public buildings alike. For another decade the older conservative Scottish builders continued to erect a few simple, unsophisticated buildings of stone. But their age was done and their honest tradition, while it remained solid, grew a little stolid.

*The writer gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Mr A. J. H. Richardson, Superintendent of Historic Parks and Sites, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, who also supplied some of the photographs.*



# VIEWPOINT

*Flexibility is a highly overrated commodity in today's architecture.*

For the most part, I feel that flexibility is not a highly overrated commodity in today's architecture. Indeed it would be sheer folly to plan such buildings as schools, offices, hospitals, shops and factories as static structures to be left unaltered during their life span.

We live in an age of speed and rapid technical advancement — therefore, it is the duty of the architect to plan to the best of his ability, buildings which may be readily altered to meet changing conditions. The success of the buildings initially and in the future depends, of course, on the enlightened teamwork of architect, consultant and client.

G. S. Abram, Toronto

Frankly I don't see much evidence to support the idea that flexibility is overrated. What are you worried about?

For many years we have had the single-storey factory with fairly large bays, and the office building with its demountable partitions. Both of these building types are sensible solutions to the problem of providing flexibility for changing requirements.

Perhaps you are thinking of the multiple-purpose room, such as the combined auditorium-gymnasium. It seems to me that this type of planning has been forced upon us by economic necessity, and not because flexibility, as such, is highly regarded.

We should note that in residential planning there is a trend in the opposite direction. The currently popular idea of a "family room" is obviously intended to reduce the stress and strain of excess "flexibility" in the living room.

Kent Barker, Toronto

I agree entirely. The movable partition costs more to build than the stationary partition. The challenge thrown to the architect by the client is to produce an economical as well as a functional building. To be truly functional the plan must be tailor-made to the client's individual needs and this cannot be

economically done by a broad omission of partitions which the architect knows in his heart must be provided later to make the plan work. An honest and time consuming analysis of the client's requirements will provide the key.

The provision of an under the floor power distribution system in any single general office is only commensurate and cannot be called "flexibility" (between rooms) within the accepted meaning of the term.

In this day of high building costs the client looks to the architect to keep the plan economical. Long spans and column spacings and movable partitions result in complications in the plumbing, heating, ventilation and electrical trades that inevitably make them more expensive.

In short, anyone can make a plan more flexible. Only the architect can provide that delicate balance between flexibility, economy and functionalism which is inherent in a good design.

J. Philip Dumaresq, Halifax

I really wouldn't know. I don't see much of it. There are certainly other overrated commodities that are far more harmful, i.e., public appeal.

If first things come first, then let us talk of constant things, people, the sun, green grass, and space. Then look up, and see the mess about us. And file away this thing called flexibility until we are ready for it. Many years from now.

Irving Grossman, Toronto

Flexibility is not as much of a problem for an architect practising in a small city as it is for a large city architect designing complex buildings whose tenants change from time to time.

It is a fact that many clients desire a great deal of flexibility in their buildings but are not willing to pay the high cost of obtaining it. They are not ready to gamble the greater cost just because they feel that the nature of business carried on in a certain building will change in the future. If that future is in, say twenty years, the added cost would seem a waste, and the purpose of flexibility would be defeated.

Arthur Lacoursière, Shawinigan Falls

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## NEWS FROM THE INSTITUTE

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*1956 Annual Assembly of the RAIC, Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta, June 6th to 10th.*

### MANITOBA

The possibility of low cost housing has once more reared its head in Winnipeg. This is a subject that is calculated to stir up hearty discussion at any time in this City — and has been a political football for the past twenty-five years and apparently still is. As recently as two years ago, a by-law was presented to the Winnipeg rate-payers asking for a million dollars for the construction of low rental and subsidized housing units to be built under Section 36 of the National Housing Act. This by-law was defeated and the whole subject again dropped. With this refusal on the part

of the citizens of Winnipeg to cope with the needs for low cost housing, the City Council Housing Committee asked the Welfare Council for their help.

The first step was a survey of one of the most crowded areas of the City, conducted by the Housing Committee of the City. Next, the School of Architecture of the University of Manitoba was asked to conduct a research project into the design and cost of living units conforming with the minimum standards of the City and CMHC. A grant was obtained from CMHC to cover this work and the Housing Committee Survey material was used.

An interim report on this research has just been presented and it outlines possible methods of construction and financing as well as the design of the dwelling units. The report recommended the use of two-storey row housing for low income families with children — and two-storey



apartment units containing efficiency and one bedroom units for families of one and two persons.

Two sites were examined — one in the over-crowded downtown area and one in the suburb of Elmwood on a city owned tract with no existing buildings. The latter site was chosen and recommended as a possibility for a pilot project which could be financed by a limited dividend corporation set up under Section 16 of the National Housing Act — the corporation to be formed by a group of private citizens.

*Roy Sellors, Winnipeg*

## ONTARIO

Mr Alan Jarvis, newly appointed Director of the National Gallery, was asked to speak to the last meeting of the Ottawa Chapter of the OAA. He selected as his subject "Architecture as the Mother of the Arts?". He chose to question the position of architecture today and its relation to the arts.

This question can be asked of architecture at any discussion on architectural criticism today. We have concerned ourselves with functionalism and its derived aesthetic, and function subordinated to the aesthetic. We have become more aware of the teamwork necessary between the architect and all branches of engineering and construction. We have yet to become fully aware of our relationship to the artist and the sculptor. Invariably their work is considered after the fact, if at all.

A greater awareness on our part of the assistance that can be afforded us by the artist and sculptor to marry our country's artistic endeavours is necessary. It is up to us.

The art that is put in and around our buildings could become a part of them if we gave more thought to working with our artists.

*James W. Strutt, Ottawa*

## CONFERENCES

Under the topic "**An Exploration of Architectural Ideals and New Contemporary Approaches**" a conference will be held under the direction of Richard J. Neutra at the Banff Springs School of Fine Arts, Banff, Alberta from January 12th through January 19th, 1956. This session will be under the joint sponsorship of the Alberta Association of Architects and the Department of Extension.

The aims of the session will be:

- a) To stimulate individual creativity.
- b) To rekindle and to rededicate architects to their ideals in architectural design.
- c) To promote an international understanding and exchange of ideas within the profession.

Under the leadership of Mr Neutra the conference will be composed of lectures, panel discussions and seminars, informally mixed with social activities, sports and sight-seeing in the winter beauty of the Canadian Rockies.

All inquiries should be directed to the Department of Extension, University of Alberta, Manitoba.

A conference on **Urban Design and the Role of Planners, Architects and Landscape Architects** in the design and development of cities will be held on April 9th and 10th, 1956 at Robinson Hall and Hunt Hall, Harvard University.

Further announcements on arrangements and other information may be received by writing to Dean Jose Sert, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Robinson Hall, Cambridge 38, Mass.

## EMPLOYMENT WANTED

Architect, ARIBA, arriving Toronto, December, 1955 offers his service where may be possibility of future partnership. Extensive and varied British and Canadian experience, Toronto references. Replies to the Secretary, Ontario Association of Architects, 50 Park Road, Toronto.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

**Walter S. Bowker**, Director of Information of the National Capital Planning Committee, Federal District Commission, was retained by the federal planning organization in 1947 to prepare and execute a comprehensive program of public information on the plans then being prepared for the development of the Capital. Since that time he has been responsible for the production of two films, an illustrated booklet and a large travelling exhibit of the plans which has been displayed in some thirteen Canadian cities. In recent years Mr Bowker has travelled extensively throughout Canada giving illustrated lectures on the National Capital Plan to Canadian Clubs, service clubs, schools and university groups, etc. Mr Bowker is a former Ottawa newspaperman, and prior to 1939 he specialized in town planning and related subjects. He served overseas with the Canadian Army, and prior to joining the FDC, was an executive with the National Film Board in Ottawa.

**R. H. Hubbard** See September 1955, *Journal*, page 356.

**Major General Howard Kennedy**, MC, CBE, MEIC, FE, chairman of the Federal District Commission since 1952, is well known as one of Canada's leading forestry consulting engineers. He was chairman of a Provincial Royal Commission on Ontario Forests in 1946-47 and has since been consulting forestry engineer for the Province. In 1954 he was chairman of a similar Royal Commission reporting on Newfoundland forests. He has served as chairman of the Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board since its inception in 1947. In 1950-51 he was in Palestine as Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. General Kennedy has a distinguished record in two world wars. He served with the Royal Canadian Engineers in the First World War, and again in 1939. In 1941, while commanding the Engineers of the First Canadian Division in England, he was recalled to Canada for duty at National Defence Headquarters, where from 1943 he was Quartermaster-General. In 1953 General Kennedy served as chairman of the Board of Inquiry into the Reserve Army of Canada.

**A. S. Mathers (F)** is a partner in the firm of Mathers & Haldenby whose work appears frequently on these pages. Their most recent work and perhaps the most important in the history of the firm is the new National Library in Ottawa (see August '55 issue). Mr Mathers writes on page 430 as chairman of the Federal District Commission Architectural Committee.

**Philip Shackleton** was born in Fort Erie, Ontario in 1923. He received his academic training in Toronto, graduating from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1945. After one year with the National Film



Board in Ottawa, Mr Shackleton went into partnership with his wife to operate the Capital Press Service. He is well-known as a television newsreel cameraman, but also finds time to write articles for periodicals as well as scripts for television and radio. He is a member of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and of the Ontario Historical Society.

Mr Shackleton makes his home on a farm near Spencerville, Ontario where he and his wife have a collection of early Canadian furniture, pottery, woodenware, etc. He is particularly interested in Canadian crafts of yesterday and has been photographing early Canadian buildings for the past five years.

**Dr Charlotte Whitton**, a native of Renfrew, Ontario, is a Master of Arts of Queen's University (English and History), and an honorary graduate LL.D. of the same university, and of the University of Rochester, N.Y., and of Smith College; a DCL of King's College and of Acadia. Leaving Queen's in 1918, she served with the Social Service Council of Canada in Toronto; three years as Secretary to the Minister of Trade and Commerce for Canada, and founded the Canadian Welfare Council of which she was Director from 1926 to 1942. Social work consultant, writer and lecturer, she was elected a Controller of the City of Ottawa, December 1950 and has been Mayor of the Capital since August 1951. She was created CBE in 1935.

**Charles J. Woodsworth** was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1909. He is a graduate of the University of Manitoba with the degree of Bachelor of Arts and later attended the London School of Economics where he received his PhD. (Econ.). Embarking on a newspaper career, he joined the editorial staff of the *Winnipeg Tribune* and later the *Vancouver Province*. During the Second World War he was attached to the British Ministry of Information, and stationed at New Delhi, India; Kandy, Ceylon; and Singapore. From 1946 to 1948 Mr Woodsworth was associate editor of the *Ottawa Citizen* and editor-in-chief from 1948 to 1955. It was during this period that the National Capital Plan came into being, and through the years he has given the project close study. He is currently Ottawa correspondent for the editorial page of the *Toronto Star* and is a CBC radio and television commentator. Mr Woodsworth has travelled widely in Europe and Asia. He is the author of a book "Canada and the Orient" and contributes articles on international affairs to a variety of publications.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Rarely has the Editorial Board had such cooperation as they have received in the organization of this issue. The lion's share of the work was done by **Mr Walter Bowker**, Director of Information, National Capital Planning Committee, Federal District Commission, Ottawa. Walter Bowker considered his services merely in the line of duty but the Editorial Board is under a deep debt of gratitude to him.

#### ERRATUM

Messrs Page & Steele point out that on the Workmen's Compensation Board building which was illustrated in the October issue of the *Journal*, they were associated with Thomas R. Wylie & Associates. The *Journal* takes the opportunity of making this correction.

## CANADA



*The hub of the Realm*

#### BOOK REVIEWS

**IDEA** — International Design Annual. Volume 2, 1954. Edited by Alvin Lustig. Published by George Wittenborn Inc., New York. Price \$8.50.

Idea 54 is the second annual report to be published, to illustrate progress in the field of international industrial design. It is largely pictorial, containing 127 pages of plates and showing some 400 examples of consumer goods and appliances. There is a brief text prepared by the three collaborators, Robert Gutmann, Gerd Hatje, and Karel Sanders, which explains the approach to industrial design in England, Germany and Holland respectively. Included also is a portfolio of student work carried out in the School of Design at Yale. The text is in English, German and French, and there is an index of designers and manufacturers.

The plates are divided into sections on china and pottery, plastics, glass, wood, textiles, metals, appliances, lamps, etc., and the examples shown represent the work of selected designers in Austria, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Holland, Italy, Japan, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

In an age abounding with illustrated publications familiar to most architects, it is perhaps naïve to make general comments on design. However, it seemed interesting to this reviewer that the designs of articles of china and pottery, glass, wood and textiles seldom show any marked characteristic which indicate their country of origin. This is surely a change from a decade ago, when products from opposite sides of the Atlantic were usually quite easily distinguished from each other. One cannot help wondering whether it is the ease of travel between countries since the war, coupled with frequent exchange of ideas through the medium of the press, and the migration of designers, that has brought about this condition?

In the field of incandescent electric fixtures, on the other hand, the most imaginative designs are restricted to one or two countries, and it would be interesting to learn whether this has arisen because lighting fixtures have not received the attention of designers so long as other articles; and if so, whether one may expect greater uniformity of approach in the future.

In some articles, which lend themselves to a sculptural approach, there remains a "hang-over" of handicrafts, which does not always seem to be in keeping with machine production. In others of a more utilitarian type (such as household appliances), where perhaps the practical requirements predominate, the designs do not seem yet to have attained the high standards achieved elsewhere.



The material throughout the book is well presented for easy reference, and the illustrations are good. For those who are interested in industrial design in a general way, or for those architects whose activities carry them beyond the sphere of designing only the shell of their clients' buildings, this volume should be a useful one.

W. E. Fleury

THE MODERN SHOP by Bryan and Norman Westwood. Published by the Architectural Press, London, England. Price 30s.

This is another book by the authors of "Small Retail Shops" which appeared in 1937. Some of the material in this earlier publication has been retained in the new book, but as can well be imagined, the years that have intervened have been so revolutionary in both merchandising and architecture that very little of the original book could be retained. For the Canadian this book can take an honoured place next to the American books: Ketchum's thorough "Shops and Stores", Fernandez's design-conscious "The Specialty Shop" and Parnes' business-like "Planning Stores that Pay". All three are comparable to the English book but with a greater emphasis on the technical aspects and illustrating American examples almost exclusively. Two other related books which should be on the shelves of anyone interested in this field might be mentioned: Lohse's glamorous "New Design in Exhibitions" and Baker and Funaro's statistical "Shopping Centres". These latter two books balance the offering of the others, which lack sufficient coverage of basic display design and of wider social and community planning implications.

"The Modern Shop" manages to cover all the principal aspects of shop design and planning. This is done in a pithy manner by which, with the help of clear diagrammatic drawings and well chosen illustrations, only salient information is presented. The book's general quality is reminiscent of the *Architectural Review* and other publications of the Architectural Press. It arouses the desire to own the book, to have it on the shelf, to enjoy browsing through it, but not to use it seriously.

The illustrations are generally well chosen. One does miss some American and Italian examples, though included are Frank Lloyd Wright's gift shop and a seed shop by Soriano. Also in a book which attempts to establish design values one regrets the absence of a historical section and one on display techniques.

It is possible to find many details which can be applied to Canada, especially in the chapter dealing with signs, lettering and the shop front. The more sober English approach to architectural design is also salutary. However, many other sections are out of date for us and we would not take seriously, for example, the proposal that heating by portable heaters has any advantage worthy of serious consideration.

As in many books dealing with building types, this book lacks a study of fundamental principles. These are touched upon, but do not form the foundation for the book. Kennedy Wood's book "The House" set a high standard in this respect and it is to be hoped that more books on building types will follow a similar though not so all-embracing formula. We certainly should expect a historical survey, followed by an analysis of the human and social service which the building is to render. The physiological and psychological consequences should then form the core study from which all further details of planning,

finishes, atmosphere, heating, acoustics and so on would emanate. I don't think there is a place in an architectural book for this type of professional irresponsibility: — "Provided the architect knows the intensity he requires, the electrical engineer can soon furnish him with the figures of lamp sizes and spacing to achieve this object." Surely more architectural factors are involved in the choice of lighting than foot-candles!

A greater concern for human goals might make these specialized books of more lasting value. This applies to a still greater degree when we deal with buildings which form a part of the competitive commercial life of our world. While "The Modern Shop" would be a nice addition to any architectural library, I am reasonably certain that it will be out of date as rapidly as its predecessor. It is doubtful if the historian or the research student of the future would ever refer to it. One might well ask whether such material should not have appeared in periodicals rather than in the formal shape of a book.

The authors start appropriately on an unhappy note in their first paragraph: — "Since it is almost a truism to say that in a competitive world there should be no room for the commonplace in successful shopkeeping, how is it that the general standard is quite so appallingly low? In other spheres of architecture — houses, flats, factories or schools — there is a fair sprinkling of good examples". They did not realize that a few pages later they succinctly gave the answer: "Corbusier's principle that 'the house is a machine to live in' can be applied with much greater force to the shop as a machine for selling things in". Note this "... for selling things in". Why not "... for buying things in", or "... a machine to supply human necessities"? Is it not here that the trouble lies? Why is it that the Swedish Co-operative Societies' Stores have led the world in store design?

It seems to this reviewer that as long as merchandising is in its present state of competitive chaos, and the emphasis is placed on sale rather than on purchase, on profit rather than meeting human needs, we shall continue to have stores which are sub-standard architecturally.

What the Westwoods have omitted from their book is any reference to the American solution to the visual squalor of the small individual shop. I am referring here to the placing of these shops in large architecturally integrated shopping centres, such as Detroit's remarkable "Northland". The individual shops are perhaps no better here than can be found elsewhere. They are however overwhelmed by the architectural order and charm which is imposed in such a way that the individual shop succeeds by virtue of its planned location and design conformity rather than by the blatancy of its competitive contrasts or the piquancy of its exclusiveness. We see in these centres a recognition of the purchaser's desire for quality and homogeneity in surroundings which tell him visually "This Centre is for your use, convenience and happiness — we hope that you will enjoy your shopping here". While this answer may not produce the ideal architectural solution to the problems of competitive merchandising, my thesis is that it will do much more to this end than any isolated efforts on the part of individual shops.

As long as we continue to have small shops, creating the jungles bordering our street, we must be grateful for books such as this one which tries bravely to do something with a socially complicated dilemma.

Fred Lasserre



## Glass Blocks in relation to Air-conditioning

While all light-transmitting materials transmit a greater percentage of solar heat than opaque materials, it has been found that the amount transmitted by glass blocks is much less than that of other fenestrations. You will note that each new light-controlling development in glass block has been to reduce solar heat gain. The new solar-selecting blocks provide an estimated reduction in solar heat transmission of approximately thirty per cent at time of maximum gain over the light-directing type. The chart below shows comparative figures throughout a 95° day. Use of glass block in industrial buildings means low maintenance, more constant temperatures in summer, greater comfort and lower air-conditioning costs.

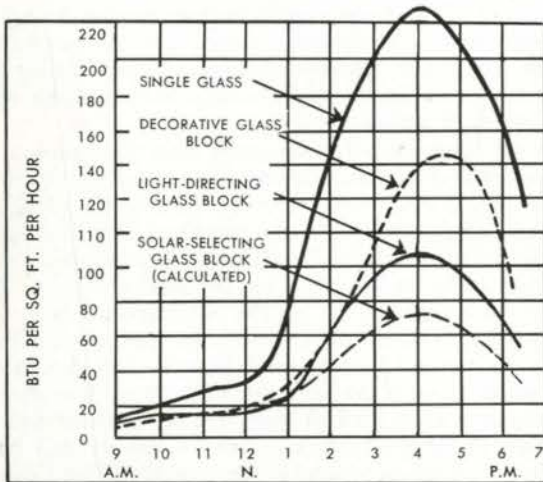


BANK OF MONTREAL

Decarie Boulevard and Cote St. Catherine Road, Montreal

J. C. Meadowcroft, F.R.A.I.C., A.R.C.A., Architect  
Robert Miller Construction Co. Limited, Contractor

Glass blocks illustrated are manufactured by Owens-Illinois Glass Company

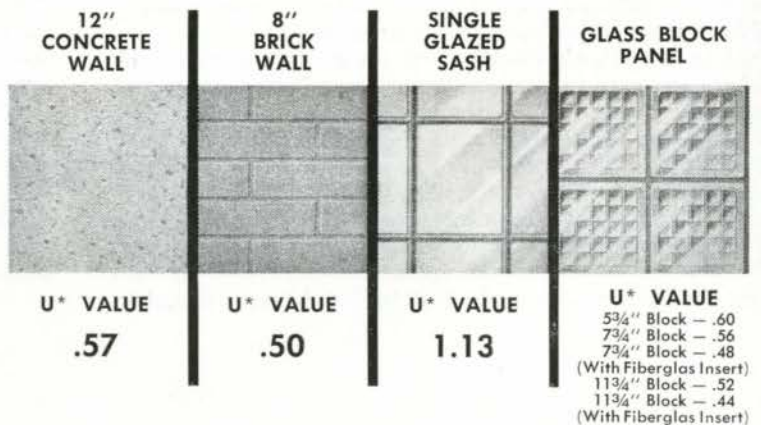


### Chart Illustrates Total Instantaneous Rates of Heat Gain

West Exposure, Aug. 1st  
40° North Latitude, 80°F. Indoor Temp.  
95°F. Day Exterior

## Thermal Insulation

The high thermal insulating value of glass block offers designers and owners of industrial buildings certain important advantages over the usual type of fenestration. Cost of heating equipment is less, fuel costs are lower and temperature throughout the operating area is more uniform. The diagram at right shows how a panel of Glass Block compares to other standard building materials, some of which are several times as thick as a glass block panel.



\*U\* Value — BTU/Sq. Ft./Hr./°F. Temperature difference

**P I L K I N G T O N   G L A S S   L I M I T E D**  
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