

Some Notes on the Rideau Canal, the Sources of its Water Supply, and its Early History.

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A somewhat careful investigation into the nature of the country bordering on the Rideau Canal, as well as of the lakes on its course and of its water powers—all inconection with a line of railway now being surveyed—has led to my ascertaining some facts of interest which I desire to here mention. It has further occurred to me that here also might be a fitting place for a short resumé of the facts—almost unknown now in this country—connected with the inception and construction of the canal. These facts I have abbreviated from the extensive manuscript notes—taken from the Dominion archives and other sources, as well as from personal recollection—of Mr. Andrew Drummond of Ottawa, whose association and close family connection with two of the leading builders of the canal and personal acquaintance, formed in 1832, with others who planned its construction, enables him to speak with not only some interest, but even some authority.

The canal may be divided into the river and the lake divisions, the former comprising the Rideau River which was the original outlet to the Ottawa of the Upper and Lower Rideau Lakes lying beyond Smith's Falls. The lake division, besides those two lakes, includes Mud, Clear, Indian, Opinicon, Sand, Whitefish and Cranberry Lakes, to which may be added the long artificial lake, known as the "drowned lands," created between Washburn and Kingston Mills, by the erection of the Kingston Mill's dam. The waters of Upper Rideau Lake form the summit level of the canal system, and are admitted by the locks on either side of the lake to the Ottawa River slope or to the St. Lawrence River slope as the traffic on the canal requires. The immense importance of keeping a sufficient supply of water in this lake is so obvious that every means should be taken to husband the waters of its feeders, Clear, Wolfe and Sand Lakes, which empty into it at Westport. The forest country around these outer lakes should be kept, as far as pos-