

The Ottawa District.



THE OTTAWA RIVER AND PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, SHOWING PLACE WHERE CRIBS OF TIMBER ARE RAFTED AFTER PASSING THROUGH THE SLIDE.



THE Ottawa valley is the centre of the pine lumber trade, and is a thriving district. It includes the country on both banks of the River Ottawa (or Grand River as it was formerly called), that on the north shore being in the province of Quebec, and that on the south in the province of Ontario. The Ottawa is a tributary of the St. Lawrence, into which river it falls at the western extremity of the Island of Montreal. Its length is about 600 miles. On its course the River Gatineau, which is about 300 miles in length, separates the valley towards its centre, in a line nearly perpendicular running from north to south. It is estimated that over 30,000 square miles of territory are drained by the Ottawa and its tributaries.

The district of the Ottawa valley (as may be seen on reference to our map) may be said to commence about Grenville and Hawkesbury on the east, and to extend to Des Joachim in the west, comprising on the north shore the counties of Ottawa and Pontiac, which are subdivided into townships of about ten miles square, of Prescott, Russell, Grenville, Carleton, Lanark, and Renfrew. It is intersected throughout, on both sides of the Ottawa river, with numerous large tributary streams, many of them surpassing the largest rivers of Great Britain. Of those flowing from the north the principal are the Nation, the du Lievre, the Gatineau, the Coulonge, and the du Moine. On the south side are the Madawaska, the Bonaventure, and the Petawawa. The southern side of the Ottawa is a good agricultural country, being less mountainous than the north shore, but the valleys and rivers traversing the latter, and the tract lying between the Laurentian Hills and the Ottawa is also good for farming.

Ottawa is now a handsome and well-built city, and is the seat of the Dominion Government. The streets are broad and well paved, and the public buildings and private residences are a credit to a community which can only boast of sixty years' existence. The glory of the city, however, is the Government buildings, which are a conspicuous object from whatever quarter the town is approached. In speaking of them, Lovell says, "their splendour, their fine commanding site, together with the beauty of the surrounding scenery,

place them in a very enviable position compared with other structures used for similar purposes, and must ever be objects of interest to the tourist and stranger, and pride to the people of Canada." In the above illustration a view of these buildings appears.

Like all other progressive Canadian cities, Ottawa is provided with a perfect system of electric street railways, and prosperity and comfort pervades the place.

The city was founded by Colonel By, and was known by the name of Bytown for many years. The site on which the greater part of the town now stands was given in payment as a debt for wages to a settler named Sparks, some sixty years ago, who benefited largely by the rise in value of the land, and the principal street bears his name.

Ottawa owes its existence, undoubtedly, to the Chaudière Falls, which made it the metropolis of the Canadian lumber trade, but it has benefited largely by the transference of the seat of Government there.

On the north bank of the river Ottawa, and separated only by the Chaudière Falls, lies the town of Hull, also an important lumber centre. This town was established in the last century, and the story of the first settlement made here by Philemon Wright, the difficulties he surmounted, and his dealings with the Indians, is very romantic.

Philemon Wright was the first lumberman on the Ottawa river. He came from Woburn, in the United States, arriving at the Chaudière Falls—or the Asticon, as called by the Indians—as early as the year 1796. It was not till 1797 that he finally decided to make his home in Canada, and on October 20th, 1799, he and two companions pitched upon the site of the future city of Hull. He finally quitted Woburn for Canada on February 2nd, 1800. He was accompanied by five families, and had in his train 14 horses, eight oxen, and seven sleighs. The first tree was felled on the site of the homestead on March 7th of the same year. He brought the first square timber from the Ottawa to Quebec in the year 1807. He built the first slide on the Hull side of the river in 1829, and was elected the first member to represent the County of Ottawa in 1830.

About 18 years prior to this the first saw-mill on the Ottawa had been built at Point Fortune, by a Mr. Story. It boasted one upright saw, and it is recorded that when the man in charge gighed back the carriage for a fresh cut he