

OTTAWA

Ottawa, the capital city of Canada, has a population of about 280,000. Located in Ontario at the confluence of the Ottawa River and its tributaries, the Gatineau and the Rideau, it looks to Quebec across the Ottawa River which here forms the boundary between the two provinces. Opposite the capital lies in the industrial city of Hull, Quebec, with the picturesque Gatineau Hills forming its background.

The series of locks directly below Parliament Hill mark the Ottawa terminus of the Rideau Canal. Here, in 1826, Colonel John By, a British engineer, began construction of a canal designed to provide a water route from the Ottawa River to Kingston. Using this canal, boats could travel from Montreal to Kingston, safe from any threat of American attack.

For many years, the small settlement was known as Bytown, in honour of the builder of the Rideau Canal, but changed its name in 1855 to Ottawa, and was incorporated as a city. In 1857, Queen Victoria chose Ottawa as the seat of the government of Canada, because of its central location between English and French Canada; and at Confederation in 1867, Ottawa became the capital of the new nation.

The City's face has changed much in recent years; and the construction of new government buildings, parks and driveways in the Ottawa area is being continued in accordance with the National Capital Plan. This master plan was prepared by Canadian architects and engineers under the direction of the late, eminent French city planner, Jacques Greber.

One of the most beautiful areas near Ottawa is Gatineau Park on the Quebec side, a restricted region of hills and lakes, with many miles of scenic driveways. Two lookouts, named in honour of the French explorer Champlain, provide panoramic views of the whole national capital region.