

TESTIMONY OF OTTAWA CLAYS AND GRAVELS TO THE  
EXPANSION OF THE GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE  
AND CANADIAN LAKES WITHIN THE  
HUMAN PERIOD.

---

BY AMOS BOWMAN.

---

*(Read 5th January, 1888.)*

It was my good fortune during the past summer to participate in many of the delightful excursions of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. The publication of some maps of mining operations in the Cariboo District, B.C., kept me out of the field of the gold-bearing gravels but not entirely out of the larger field of surface geology, and of the ancient rivers, which had a history in this country, as in most countries, before the present streams began their work of shaping the hills and valleys as we now know them.

Our first excursion to which I will make reference, was that to the Hogs Back, on the Rideau River, four miles south of Ottawa. Boulder clays were seen on the right bank above the falls; and next overlying them the leda clays along the canal, continuing to Ottawa City. There prepared us by laying a foundation for a section of the post tertiary or pleistocene tertiary, sometimes also called quaternary, of the neighbourhood, all these terms having nearly the same meaning.

The meaning of this pleistocene history of the country which is most significant to us is that of which we have a faint glimmering in tradition. It has been handed down by different races both savage and civilized; and is recorded in the sacred writings; dating from the most remote history of mankind, when writing was first invented to record the ancient traditions. It is that of the great flood, or sin flood, of which Noah was the hero, according to our version. In making allusion here to the myth of Noah I do so simply to remind you of a most notable feature of the pleistocene epoch, the record of which is so well marked in our surface geology that it is capable of being read with ease by any one; the memory of which has so impressed itself upon aboriginal mankind.