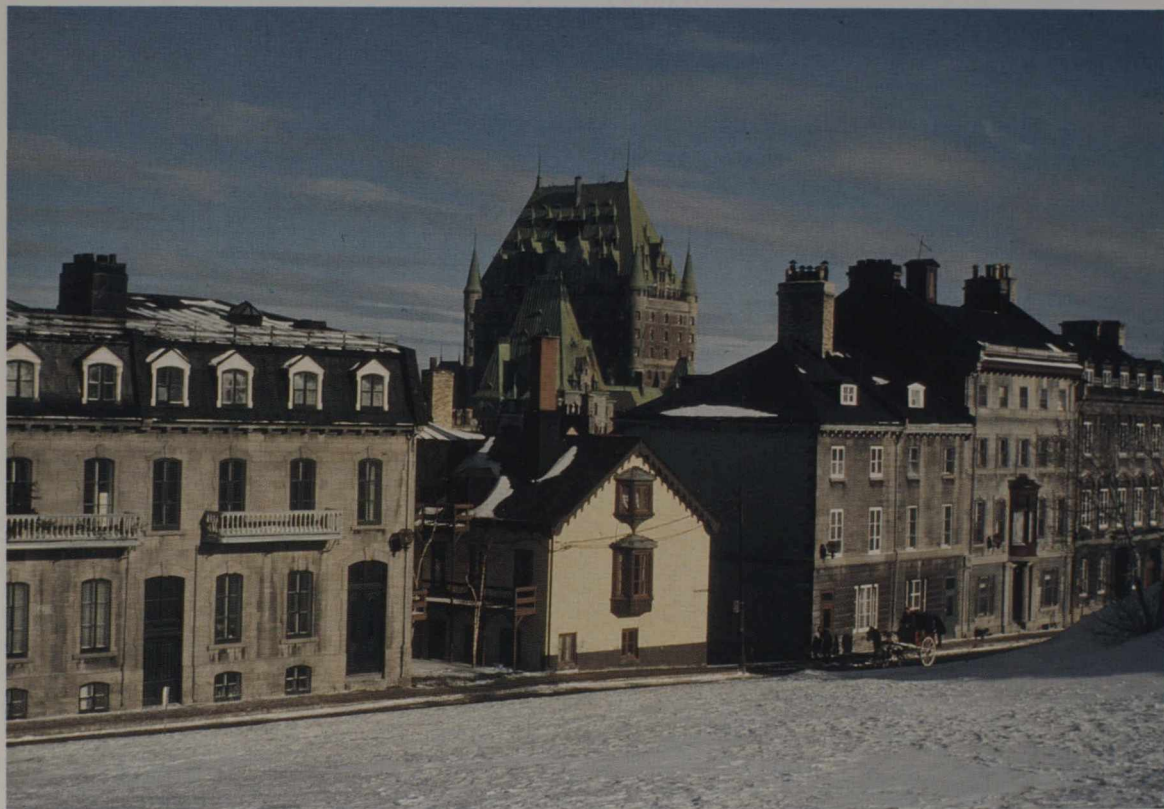


Old Towns



Quebec City

Quebec City is the heart of old French Canada. In 1842 Charles Dickens wrote, "The impression made upon the visitor by this Gibraltar of America. . . is at once unique and lasting. It is a place not to be forgotten or mixed up in the mind with other places, or altered for a moment in the crowd of scenes a traveler can recall."

Today the city flourishes. The seventeenth century facades within the old city walls have been restored by the provincial government. In 1979 Parks Canada, taking advantage of a project to reinforce the 1,400-foot boardwalk, began digging anew, and in the summer of 1981 fieldworkers unearthed the foundations of two houses in the shadow of the Château Frontenac. The larger of the two was identified as the home of Major George Augustus Elliott, who lived there in the early nineteenth century.

The Ile d'Orléans

In 1683, when Montreal had only 1,700 inhabitants, the Ile d'Orléans had 1,149. They were, perhaps, the wealthiest farmers in New France, growing crops on land that was richer in a climate that was milder.

The island has remained farmland for 400 years, and today its market gardens furnish fruits

and vegetables for Quebec City, nearby.

There have been a few passing changes over the years.

In 1855 a ferry service was established and the village of Ste. Pétronille became a fashionable summer resort with a large Victorian hotel, the Château Belair. By 1860 the island had 6,000 year-round inhabitants.

As the nineteenth century got underway the tourists found other places, and the summer cottages became year-round houses. In 1935 a bridge was built to the mainland, and many felt that the old island life would rapidly fade away. It did not.



Ile d'Orléans.