

After a visit to Ottawa in 1861, the British novelist Anthony Trollope gave glowing approval to the site chosen four years earlier by Queen Victoria as Canada's seat of government.

"I know," he wrote, "of no site so happy as regards beauty and grandeur."

"I take it upon myself to say that for purity of art and manliness of conception, the work is entitled to the highest praise."

Trollope's testimonial, extolling the "truthful nobility of detail" of Ottawa's Parliament building, would be widely echoed today.

For the imposing cluster of neo-Gothic buildings, set on limestone cliffs high above the Ottawa river, over which in early days Algonquin Indians glided with their birch-bark canoes, is the true centrepiece of Canada's capital city, the core and symbol of Canadian unity.

And Ottawa itself, apart from its physical attractiveness, with its many amenities and outdoor sporting facilities within easy reach, is growing fast, spreading out to join with its sister community Hull across the river in a wider capital area.

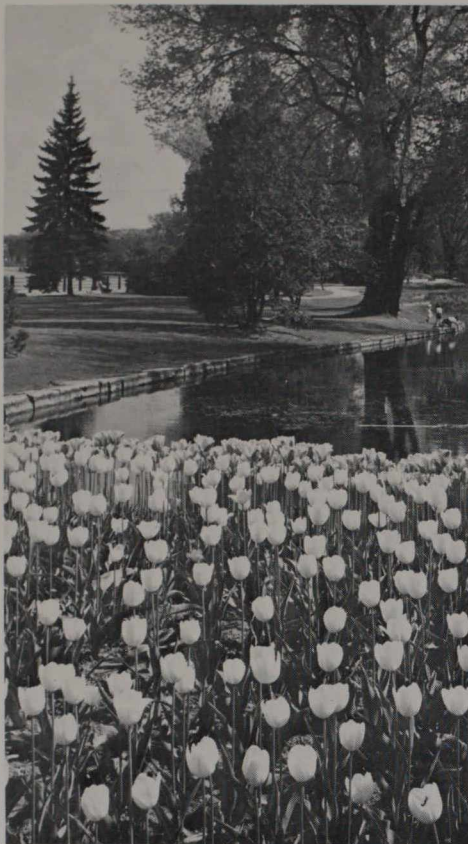
In its beginnings, Ottawa was a sawmill centre and valley market town, a place of lumber barons, merchants and farmers including many veterans of the Napoleonic wars. Here the explorer Samuel de Champlain had paused on his way west in 1613, here war parties of Iroquois gathered and fur traders passed by.

Here settlement began in the early 19th century. The community that became Ottawa was first called Bytown, a corruption of Colonel By's Town. Generally regarded as the founder of the city, Colonel By came from Frant near Tunbridge Wells; he was a member of the Royal Engineers posted to build the Rideau Canal which was opened in 1832 between Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River.

### An Indian name

Ottawa is the anglicised form of Outaouac or Outaouais, an Indian tribe which did a thriving fur trade with the French in the 17th century, carrying the skins over the river that bears their name. Parliament Hill today overlooks a network of waterways which the Indians called a grand "meeting place of the waters" — the Ottawa, Gatineau and the Rideau.

"Colonel By's Town" was not an easy choice as capital. In a vast country of nearly 4,000,000 square miles, extending



### Urban Profile: OTTAWA

## Canadian capital area has many amenities

3,223 miles from east to west, the question of siting a permanent capital was a burning issue for two decades, then in 1857 Queen Victoria in England, after considering the claims of Montreal, Quebec, Kingston and Toronto, chose Ottawa. She acted on the advice of her Governor-General, Sir Edmund Head, who recommended in a memorandum that he believed the "least objectionable" place was Ottawa.

Even then, the question was not settled. Further argument raged in the Canadian legislature before the Queen's decision was confirmed and plans made for the building on Parliament Hill that excited Trollope's admiration.

With a population today of 602,510, the Ottawa-Hull area is still growing as Canada is and striving to acquire the stature of a world capital.

Douglas H. Fullerton, chairman of Canada's National Capital Commission charged with developing amenities worthy of a national capital, has noted that some visitors in the past have been struck by the disparity between the two sides of the Ottawa river, between Hull in Quebec on the

north side and Ottawa in Ontario on the south.

"We must never again be placed in a position where a French Canadian or any other Canadian can come to the National Capital and feel like a stranger in a foreign country", he said.

Ottawa, he added, must be a national capital for French Canadians, for English Canadians and for all Canadians. The population of the national capital region, he added, exactly reflects the population of Canada, with Anglo-Saxon, French Canadians and people of other ethnic groups present in the same proportions as the population as a whole.

"I feel that the battle of Canada is really being fought in the National Capital," said Mr. Fullerton. "If we do not succeed in building a truly National Capital, we will fail in building a Canada."

### Scenery everywhere

The Ottawa-Hull area has many living amenities to offer its residents, some of them the work of the Commission and others the work of nature. There are miles of scenic driveways along the Rideau canal and the rivers that come together in Ottawa near the official residence of Canadian Prime ministers, 24 Sussex Drive. There are many acres of neatly-cultivated parks within the twin cities themselves and hundreds of acres more in the Gatineau Hills to the north. In the countryside around the national capital area there are hundreds of clear-water lakes for swimming, fishing and canoeing. The Ottawa River is wide enough above the city for sailing races on summer weekends.

In winter several miles of Rideau canal ice surface are kept clear for open-air skating, a pastime the residents have begun to take up in the hundreds. The Gatineau Hills provide miles of ski trails within a half-hour drive. In summer the area has the most ambitious system of bicycle paths in the country. Begun in May 1971 the bicycle paths now wind through nearly 30 miles of city and countryside, all within easy reach of major residential areas.

For the sports-minded, the Ottawa Civic Centre, a \$10 million recreational complex, was built in the heart of the Capital in 1967. It includes a 27,000-seat stadium, home of Ottawa Rough Riders in the Canadian (Rugby) Football League, and an ice hockey arena. The other sports in the Centre are occasionally interrupted for the "sport" of politics when political parties hold conventions there.