

head-quarters of the great lumbering business of the Ottawa, doing an extensive retail and a considerable wholesale trade, and the seat of several extensive and rapidly-increasing manufactures, for which its unlimited water-power is peculiarly fitted; containing a population lately estimated at fourteen thousand, and even entering its claim to be the future capital of Canada. Looking at its central and secure position, it has undoubtedly strong claims to this distinction. Equi-distant from Quebec and Toronto, as well as from Montreal and Kingston, representing fairly the two races that compose the great mass of our population; of easy access at all seasons of the year; possessing scenery unsurpassed by any city in America (Quebec, perhaps, excepted), and capable of being rendered as impregnable as that city, it must be admitted, whatever may be our personal feelings in the matter, that, on broad and patriotic grounds, the City of Ottawa may well compete for the honour of becoming the future capital of the country.

Ottawa City is situated on the river of the same name, at its junction with the Rideau Canal, 120 miles above Montreal. Although deriving little of its prosperity from the canal, it yet owes its origin to that enterprise. It is well known that this canal—terminating at Kingston—was constructed by the Imperial Government, principally as a means of communication between the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, in the event of the frontier communication being interrupted.

The first permanent settlement on the Ottawa River, near the site of the present city, appears to have been made by the late Philemon Wright, a native of Woburn, Massachusetts, who emigrated from that State in the year 1800, and settled at Hull, now a village on the Lower-Canada side, and nearly opposite Ottawa. Mr. Wright may thus be called the father of the Ottawa country. It is a singular fact that a female relation of Mr. Wright's landed from the canoe, when the adventurous settlers brought their long voyage to a close, cut down the first tree in order to boil the kettle for the evening meal, and lived to be present at the launch of the first steamboat built to ply on the Upper Ottawa. The Wright family received large grants of land from the Government, and were the pioneers of the lumber trade,—having taken the first raft to Quebec, in the year 1805.

While the increasing lumber trade had caused a few villages to spring up at various points on the Ottawa River, the site of the present city, in 1826 was in a state of nature. Not a house was standing within its present limits, except an old log-house, where the Upper Town has since been erected, and three houses on what was then known as Nepean Point, near the Suspension Bridge. The Canal Basin was a beaver-meadow, finding its outlet through the natural chasm, where the first eight locks of the canal have been constructed. A dense cedar-swamp covered part of the Lower City, although the ground is much elevated above the Ottawa. To this place the late Colonel By, who designed the canal, proceeded, in 1827, to superintend its construction, and it was in compliment to this gentleman that the future city was called Bytown, a name which many think should never have been changed. For ourselves, we love these Indian names, and, while willing to immortalize those who have been founders of cities, we rejoice to see established in our midst some memorials of that once proud race who possessed our country long before Columbus dreamed of a Western world! If the Colonel's friends, or even his enemies (if such he had), have any qualms of