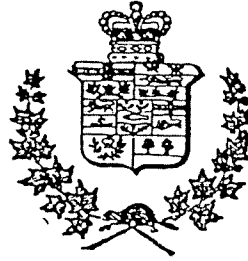


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PRELIMINARY REPORT

TO

The Ottawa Improvement  
Commission

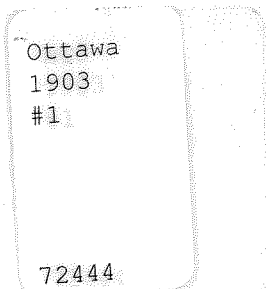
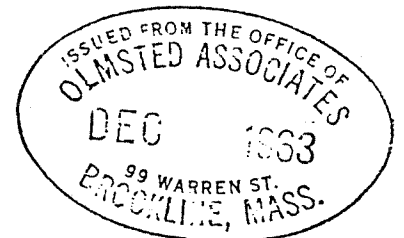
BY

FREDERICK G. TODD

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

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PRELIMINARY REPORT

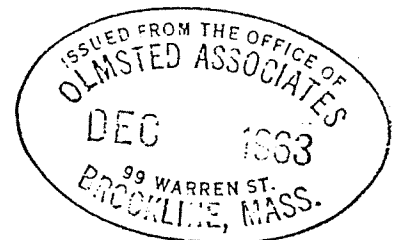
TO

The Ottawa Improvement  
Commission

BY

FREDERICK G. TODD

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
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*The Hon. J. P. B. Casgrain, Civil Engineer, a member of your Commission, has kindly allowed me to consult with him professionally during the preparation of this report, and I should like to express my appreciation of his kindness, and also for the assistance given me by the other members of your Commission, your Engineer, and several citizens of Ottawa, whose kindness in showing me over land with which they were familiar, rendered my work easier than it might otherwise have been.*

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THE OTTAWA IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION,  
OTTAWA,  
ONTARIO :—

*Gentlemen,*

In compliance with your request, I have examined the City of Ottawa and its vicinity, with a view to considering the adaptability of certain portions of it for park purposes, and also with the idea of outlining a general comprehensive scheme for the systematic improvement of the city, having due regard to the future health and happiness of its inhabitants, and to the fact that Ottawa is the Capital of the Dominion of Canada, whose population, wealth and importance is rapidly increasing. I have given my best attention to this problem, and I now have the honor to submit to you the following report :—

INTRODUCTION.

Your Commission being appointed by the Dominion Government, the scheme for parks and general improvements for the Capital must be of a national character, and I have therefore paid but little attention to the purely arbitrary boundaries of City, Town or Province, but have been guided alone by what would seem to be a wise provision for future parks and boulevards, commensurate with the importance of the Capital City of the Dominion. In my examination of Ottawa, nothing has impressed me more than the fact that it has a great future before it. The Capital

of an extensive country, rapidly growing in population and wealth, possessed of almost unlimited water power for manufacturing purposes, and with a location admirably adapted not only for the building of a great city, but a city of unusual beauty and attractiveness. It does not require an unreasonable amount of faith to believe that the Ottawa of to-day is but the infant Ottawa of fifty years hence, and that the end of the present century will see Ottawa grown to such proportion, that we of to-day would hardly recognize it. You may ask, Is it reasonable to look so far ahead as one hundred years or more, and to make plans for generations in the distant future? We have only to study the history of the older cities, and note at what enormous cost they have overcome the lack of provision for their growth, to realize that the future prosperity and beauty of the city depends in a great measure upon the ability to look ahead, and the power to grasp the needs and requirements of the great population it is destined to have. Not only is Ottawa sure to become the centre of a large and populous district, but the fact that it is the Capital of an immense country whose future greatness is only beginning to unfold, renders it necessary that it shall also be the centre of all those things which are an index of man's highest intellectual attainments, and that it be a city which will reflect the character of the nation, and the dignity, stability, and good taste of its citizens.

Considerable has been said recently about Ottawa being made the "Washington of the North." Many of the beauties of Washington are certainly well worthy of imitation, but it would be a mistake to copy too closely, even if it were possible, the plans which have proved so

successful there, for the location of the two cities is so absolutely different, that what has made the beauty of one, might mar the beauty of the other. Washington stretches over a gently undulating country, Ottawa is broken by steep terraces and picturesque cliffs. The Potomac winds its way quietly through the city of Washington, while the Ottawa and Rideau Rivers rush through Ottawa by leaps and bounds. The Government buildings of Washington are of the Colonial type of architecture, as best suited to long stretches of comparatively level ground. Your Government buildings are pure Gothic, the style which is perhaps better suited than any other to a picturesque site. Thus it is absolutely impossible to treat these two cities in the same manner, for a plan which would be ideal for Washington would be ill adapted for Ottawa, whose picturesque situation must obviously form the foundation and key-note of any proposed plans for the future. With a natural location which cannot be compared with that of Ottawa, the original plan of Washington took advantage of every natural feature which the location possessed, and made the most of it, and from this plan has evolved a beautiful city. When we consider what a very ordinary city Washington might have been if allowed simply to grow up as so many other cities have, and when we think of the beauties which Ottawa might have possessed had its growth been directed by the same wise forethought, we must realize the benefits of a well conceived plan not only from an æsthetic, but also from a purely business standpoint.

Some of the greatest items of expense in our large cities of to-day have been such as could have been reduced or

avoided altogether, if the people in the early history of these cities had had sufficient foresight and faith to realize how rapid would be their growth. Washington stands almost alone as a remarkable exception, for when the plan was made by Peter Charles L'Enfant, over one hundred years ago, it was designed for a city which would accommodate between five and eight hundred thousand people, and this when there was not a single house built, and only about four millions of people in the United States. Unfortunately, some fifty years ago, the plan was discarded, and since then buildings and streets have been located without regard to it, until last year the Government appointed a commission of experts to plan for the future of the city. They went abroad, and after studying the chief cities of the old world, recommended practically a return to the principles of L'Enfant's original plan, which can now be accomplished only, by the expenditure of several millions of dollars. I merely cite these facts to show the importance of planning well for the future of the city, and if we examine carefully the records and statistics of the larger cities of the world we will find that they prove nothing more clearly than that crowded populations, if they would live in health and happiness, must have space for the enjoyment of that peaceful beauty of nature which, because it is the opposite of all that is sordid and artificial in our city life, is so wonderfully refreshing to the tired souls of towns-people. Most of the larger cities have now provided themselves with parks, and open spaces to be used as such when necessity requires. The older cities have only accomplished this at enormous expense, while many of the newer cities, especially in the west, are setting aside land for future parks while it is

yet cheap. For the past fifteen years New York has appropriated one million dollars each year for the purchase of playgrounds in the crowded parts of the city, and this aside from the immense sums she has spent on her large parks. For comparison I have prepared diagrams showing the park areas about Boston, London and Paris, as compared with those of Ottawa, all plans being drawn to the same scale. It may perhaps be said such comparison is unfair, Ottawa being so much smaller, and I admit that this would be true were we considering the question in its relation to the present day alone, but if we have faith in the future of the city, if we have faith in the Dominion, then surely it is not too much to plan in accordance with our faith.

If then, it be determined that the City of Ottawa shall provide itself with ample open spaces while it may yet do so at small expense, it is necessary to study carefully the considerations which should determine, to a greater or less extent, the selection of lands for such purposes.

#### CONSIDERATIONS INFLUENCING GENERAL SCHEME.

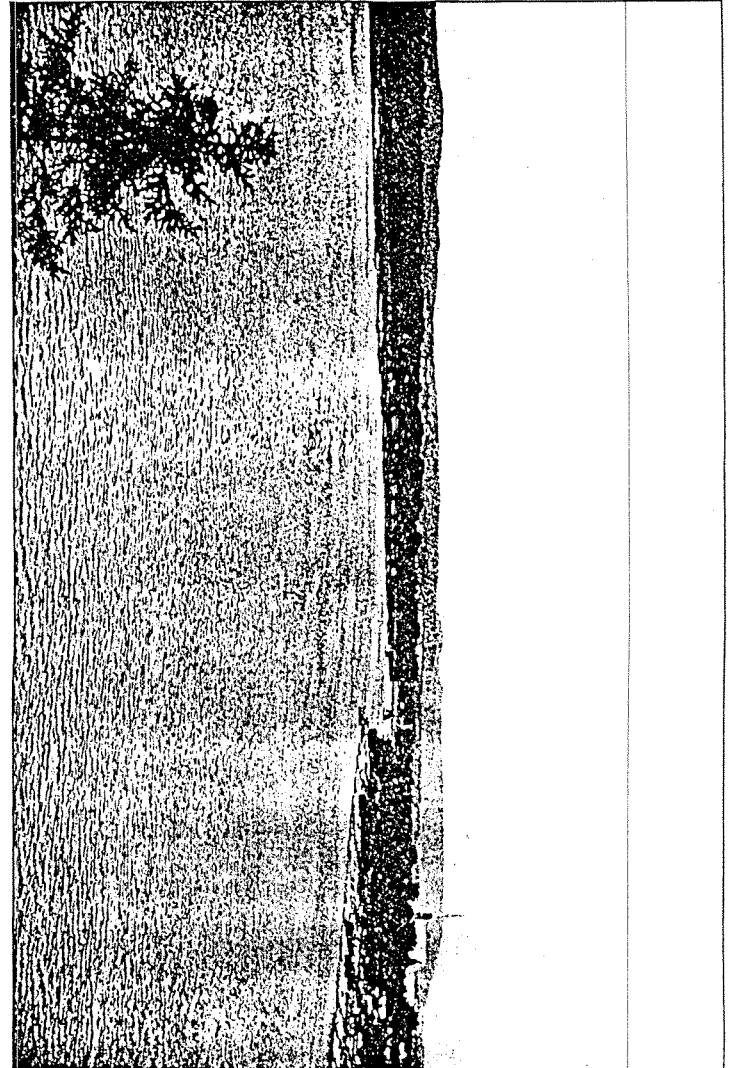
Of first importance is the fact that Ottawa is the Capital of the Dominion, and as such, it differs largely from a purely commercial city. Ottawa is at present a manufacturing city of considerable importance, and is destined to become great in this respect owing to its immense water-power. The industries, however, should be so regulated that they will interfere as little as possible with the beauty of the city, for a Capital city belongs to a certain extent to the whole country, and should not be placed in such a position that any one man, or company of men, can have it in their power to seriously mar its

beauty, and thus throw discredit on the Nation. As a Capital city, the parks and open spaces should be numerous, and ample boulevards and parkways should skirt the different waterways, as well as connect the principal parks and the different public buildings.

Of secondary consideration are the manufacturing interests. If Ottawa is destined to become a great manufacturing city, of which there is no doubt, then, although not considered as important as the beauty of the city, we must face the fact that these interests are still very important and require large and careful consideration. We should not wish to take land for parks which will be needed for manufacturing purposes, nor should we wish to build a boulevard through land, be it ever so attractive now, which is certain to be built up with factories at some later date. To preserve the great natural beauty of the city as a heritage for the Dominion of the future, and at the same time to allow of the development to the greatest possible extent of the magnificent industrial opportunities of Ottawa, presents a problem of such magnitude that to attempt to discuss it in this report would be practically impossible. It seems to me, however, that this question must be faced sooner or later, and these two important considerations, which often conflict so seriously, made to work together for the future beauty and prosperity of the city, otherwise the industrial development of the city will be sacrificed to its aesthetic development, or what is probably of greater present danger, that much of the natural beauty of the city will be sacrificed to its industrial growth.

In this report I have only attempted to present a general outline of those lands which it seems to me are

VIEW FROM ROCKCLIFFE PARK.



desirable to give Ottawa a good park system, for although I have been over the land with some thoroughness, it has been mainly with the idea of evolving a general scheme rather than with any attempt to go into details. I have, however, examined some of the property which has already been acquired by your Commission with considerable care, and suggestions regarding its future treatment will be taken up later in the report. For convenience, the park system may be considered in the following order:—

Large Natural Parks or Reserves.

Suburban Parks.

Boulevards and Parkways.

Waterway Parks—Bathing.

City Parks and Squares.—Playgrounds.

#### LARGE NATURAL PARKS OR RESERVES.

The Dominion of Canada is famous the world over for the extent and beauty of her forests, and for this reason it would seem appropriate that there should be reserved in close proximity to the Capital, good examples of the forests which once covered a great portion of the country. Not only will those reserves be of inestimable value to future generations as an example of the original forest, but they will also provide a place where nature may still be enjoyed, unmarred by contact with humanity. For these reasons I think there should be set aside within comparatively easy driving distance, two or three large reserves of the best forest land still available. These reserves should be selected after a careful study, so that they may contain as nearly as possible a typical Canadian forest, due consideration being given to the fact that it is



desirable that such a reserve should contain as picturesque and as diversified scenery as possible. It would not answer to select a block of level timberland, although the reserve should certainly contain such, but there should also be included the rugged mountain and the pastoral valley.

*Gatineau Valley Reserve.*

The valley of the Gatineau River offers perhaps the best location for one of these reserves, and although I have not had an opportunity of making a careful examination of the land, I should think that between Wright's Bridge and Chelsea, could perhaps be found a forest which would make an ideal reserve. It is within easy driving distance of the city, and I should suppose it would be possible to obtain a reserve of some two thousand acres without interfering with land which would be required for other purposes.

*Meach Lake Reserve.*

Another reserve which suggests itself is about Meach Lake, where a large reserve could be made of the land surrounding the whole of the first lake. This has the disadvantage of being at a slightly greater distance from the city, but it makes up for this in added picturesqueness and all those qualities which constitute a beautiful natural park. There is also another reason worthy of consideration why the land around Meach Lake would be desirable, and this is the possibility that at some future time it may be utilized as a great natural reservoir from which will be drawn the water supply for greater Ottawa.

The land for these reserves once acquired by your Commission there will need to be little, if any, money spent,



VIEW IN PROPOSED EXTENSION TO  
ROCKCLIFFE PARK.

either in clearing them up or keeping them in order, although it might be well if a fire ranger could be kept there during the driest part of each year, and a belt cleared about the boundary of the reserve, as a protection against fire. Whenever the use of the reservations demand it, bridle paths and drives could be built, but before this is done, their location should be carefully and systematically studied out, in order that the scenery may be viewed to the best advantage, and at the same time preserve the natural wildness and beauty of the reserve. These drives, however, will not be needed for years to come, and therefore need not occupy our attention at present.

It may be asked: Why should we of to-day go to the expense of acquiring all this land which may only be needed in twenty-five or even fifty years? In fifty years from now, if the city grows at the same rate at which other cities have grown, it will contain, including Hull, at least 300,000 inhabitants. Fifty years ago the population of Washington was 40,000, it is now 280,000. The population of Boston was 125,000, it is now 560,000. Montreal's population was 57,000, while to-day it is, including the suburbs, about 360,000. If then Ottawa is to have a population of 300,000 within fifty years, the city will be about five times its present size, and large areas of land now under cultivation, or still covered with forest, will then be occupied by buildings and streets. Will it at that time be possible to secure within reasonable distance of the city large areas of untamed forest which can be set aside forever for the enjoyment of people who wish to get away for a day from the crowded city, who wish to wander in the woods where the wildest birds are at home, and where

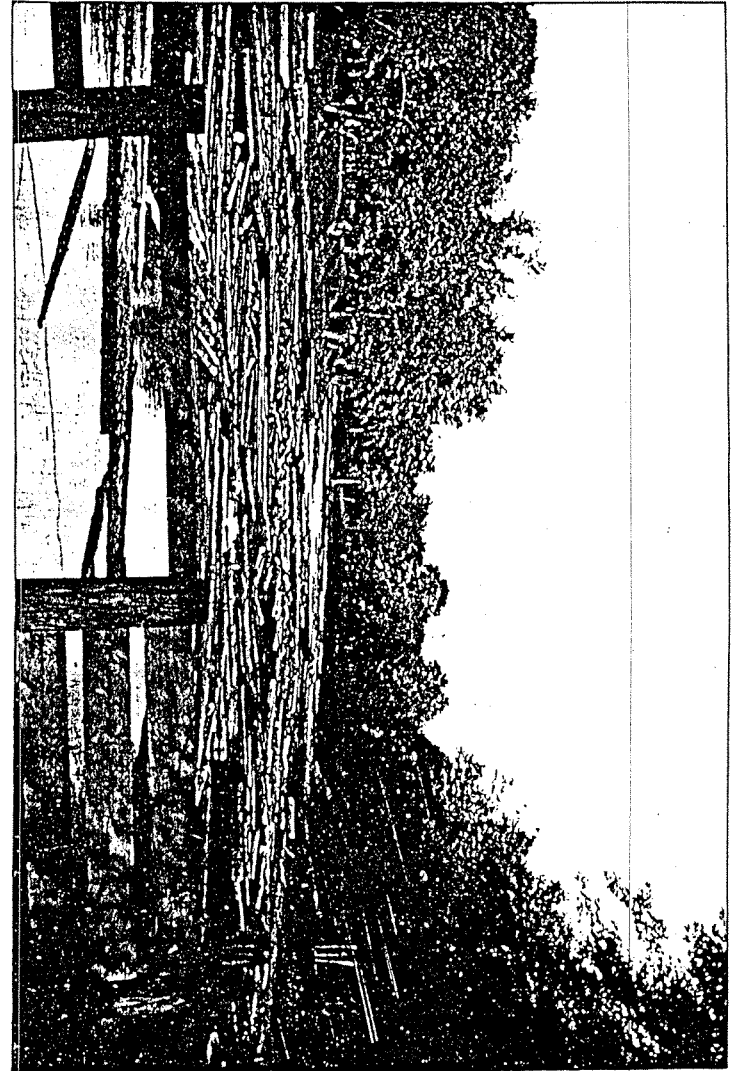
nature's mossy carpet is still luxuriant and unworn? Would these future generations, could they be consulted, object to bearing, if need be, the whole expense of making such reserves? The experience of older cities can be the only answer. Look at London's Epping Forest, with its 6,000 acres of wood and meadow, distance only sixteen miles from the centre of the city, and note how it is used by the public. Boston within the last eight years has spent about ten millions of dollars in creating just such parks and reserves, which, if purchased fifty years ago, could have been acquired for about one-twentieth of this amount.

Large reservations of forest land have already been made by the Dominion and Provincial Governments, which may be reached by a journey of a day or more by rail, but they will not serve the public to the same extent as will these smaller reserves near the city, for it will be impossible in fifty or one hundred years to place a value on such reserves, or to calculate the good which they have accomplished, or the people who have been benefited mentally, physically and morally by having access to such a complete change from the exacting cares of business and the impure air of crowded streets.

#### SUBURBAN PARKS.

Perhaps of most vital importance to any city are those medium sized parks, which I shall here call suburban parks. Situated at some little distance from the centre, they should still be sufficiently convenient to all parts of the city, so that they can easily be reached by the great masses of people. Upon these parks, and upon their convenience and adaptability to the use of the public of a

POND CREEK, PROPOSED HULL PARK.



large city, depend to a greater extent than is generally realized, the health and happiness of a great majority of the people, especially of those who are not fortunate enough to get away, or to send their children away from the city during the hot days of summer.

We have only to look at the present use made of Rockcliffe Park to realize the great good that is being accomplished, for these children who grow stronger and brighter as they romp over the grass and through the woods, must soon take their places among the men and women of the country; and upon the foundation laid in youth, for future health and strength, depends to a great extent the future of the Nation.

The need of acquiring lands for these parks before it is too late to plan for a system which shall be of the greatest public benefit, is so obvious that I will proceed at once to a discussion of lands which suggest themselves to me as being desirable for such purposes.

*Rockcliffe Park and its Extension.*

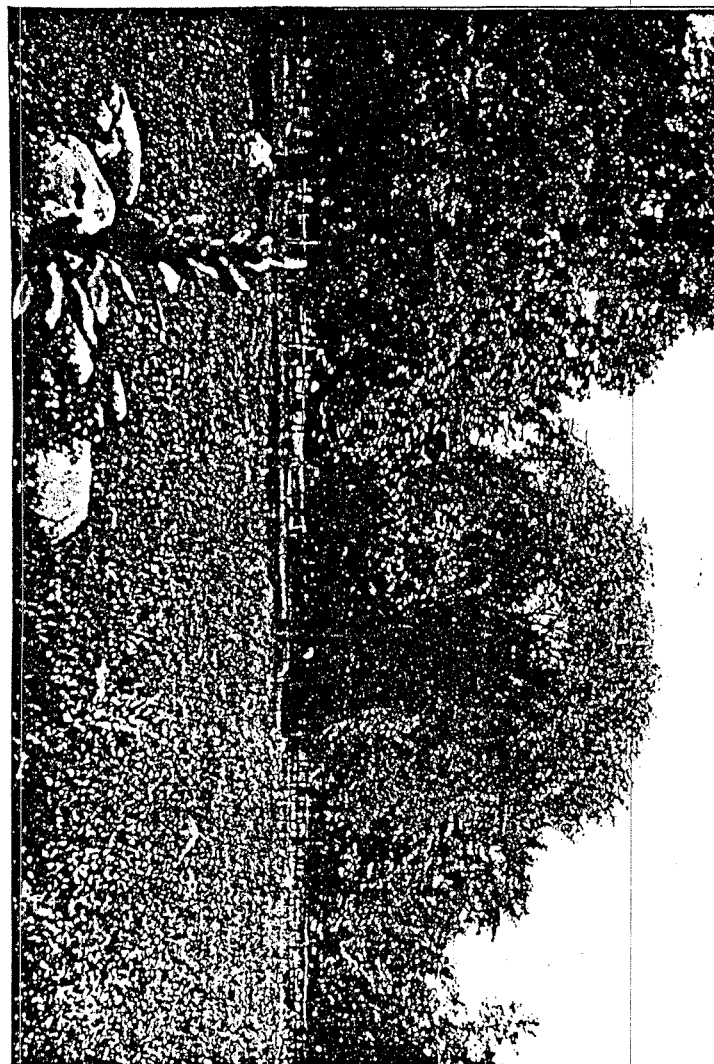
You asked me particularly to examine about one hundred acres of land adjacent to Rockcliffe Park, which you have considered taking, and to give my opinion as to its desirability for a park. I have examined this land carefully, and I congratulate you upon your ability to secure such a perfect natural park so happily situated near the city. The general topography of the ground, the views, the artistic grouping of the trees, and the varied interesting woods all conspire to produce ideal conditions for a park. If we include Rockcliffe Park—and the two must be treated together in a comprehensive manner to

produce a harmonious whole—we have combined such picturesqueness, such magnificent views, such variety of landscape and waterscape as to make a park of very unusual beauty.

There seems little to suggest regarding this land which you propose taking, but I would go further and suggest a park reserve of even grander proportions than that already under consideration by your Commission. Hemlock Lake seems naturally to belong to this park, and it would seem desirable that the whole of its shores should be included. I would also suggest that your Commission acquire the land east of Rockcliffe Park, along the Ottawa River, as far as the rifle ranges, making it possible to extend this magnificent scenic drive to a point as near the ranges as desirable. I have but little knowledge of the military requirements of Ottawa, whether or not they are at present sufficiently provided for, nor is it the purpose of this report to take up such questions, but it is impossible to look over the land between Rockcliffe Park and the rifle ranges without being impressed by the fact that it is unusually well suited for military manoeuvres. If this land were taken by the military authorities, and that along the Ottawa River by your Commission, a fine scheme would be possible, if the two problems could be developed harmoniously.

Regarding the boulevard which you propose to build across Mr. Keefer's property to connect the new park with the east end of Rockcliffe Park, I think that instead of following the present road it should be carried east to the edge of the natural terrace, and that your Commission should also secure control of the slopes of this terrace. If the present road is taken as the location

VIEW IN PROPOSED EXTENSION TO ROCKCLIFFE PARK.



of the boulevard it would be possible to build between it and the edge of the terrace (Photo. No. 22), thus destroying the magnificent views down the Ottawa River (Photos. Nos. 1 and 2) also if the slope is not under your control trees may grow up (Photo. No. 23) and shut out the views, as is already the case in some instances. I have taken a few photographs to illustrate this, as well as to show the great natural beauty of the park (Photos. Nos. 3, 4 and 5), and I submit them as a part of this report. There are some suggestions regarding the treatment of this park which might be made, but as we are at present considering rather the creation of the system I will reserve details until later.

#### *Chaudiere Park.*

That your park system shall be logical and well balanced there should also be a suburban park at the west end of the city, preferably near the river; for this purpose I have examined quite carefully the land between the Little Chaudiere Rapids and the Remous Rapids, and for some little distance above. The land which seems to be most suitable in this vicinity is just below the Remous Rapids, and here could be taken a block of land hardly less beautiful than the park at the east end of the city, but its character is so entirely different that the two can hardly be compared. Here are the beautiful pastoral scenes and views of an English park, sunny open spaces of turf melting away among the shadows of broad spreading trees in well arranged groups; with gently undulating and beautifully modelled topography sloping gradually to the river's edge. To many people these scenes will appeal even more strongly than those of the more picturesque

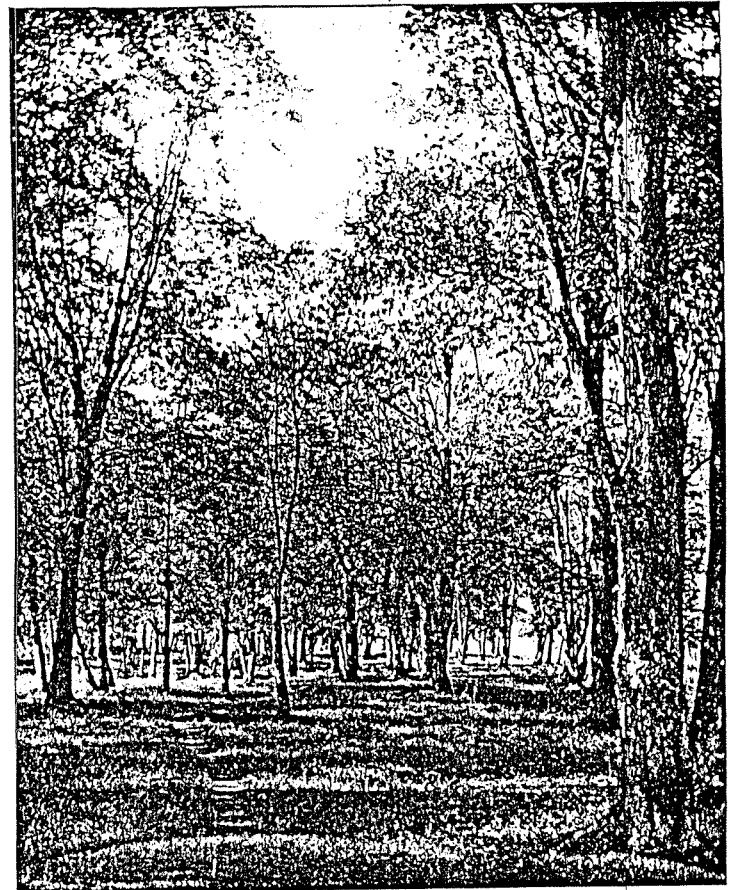
Rockcliffe. Indeed, man is so subject to varying moods that while on one day he may enjoy most the rugged animated scenes and impressive views of Rockcliffe, on another day the quiet peace and restful views, the play of light and shadow among the groups of trees and over the sunny green sward will appeal to him more strongly. (Photos. Nos. 6, 7, 24 and 25.) Therefore it is fortunate that this park—which I will for convenience call Chaudiere Park—even though situated at the opposite end of the city is of such different character. I have not considered any definite boundary for Chaudiere Park, but from my inspection it would seem that there could be easily set aside here a park of from one hundred to two hundred acres, and in addition to this there are the two groups of islands, which would make a very valuable adjunct to the park.

*Experimental Farm.*

Aside from this proposed Chaudiere Park there is also west of the city, but at some considerable distance from this park, the Experimental Farm, some portions of which may be considered as a public park. The pleasures to be derived from its use by the public, while every bit as important, are nevertheless of an entirely different character, and do not compete in the least with those of the ordinary suburban park, which should be a piece of real country, with country views and scenes preserved for the public and made adaptable to their use and enjoyment.

*Rideau Park.*

South of the city, it would seem desirable, in connection with a parkway along the Rideau River, to reserve



WOODS IN PROPOSED HULL PARK.

a block of land west of Hurdman's Bridge, extending possibly on both sides of the river, and taking in an area of from forty to seventy-five acres.

*Hull Park.*

Hull will be very much in need of a public park as the city grows, for here are almost certain to be located the homes of many of the people working in the various factories, who, perhaps more than any others, will need a place for rest and recreation, when the city absorbs its present park-like surroundings. There is a most beautiful piece of land covered with a fine park-like growth of trees west of the mouth of the Gatineau River (Photos. Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11), extending to Pond Creek, which would make a splendid park, and it has the added advantage that a portion of it is quite level and open, thus being readily available as a playground.

It will be seen that with Rockcliffe Park and its large addition east of the city, Chaudiere Park and the Experimental Farm west of the city, Rideau River Park south of the city, and Hull Park north of the city, Ottawa will be surrounded by a well balanced park system, and I believe that if these lands are carefully selected, and due consideration given to their approaches while there is yet an opportunity to do so, the interference with the future business of the city will be practically nothing, while the beauty of the city will be preserved and enhanced, and so be worthy of the Capital of the country. Ottawa will benefit by such planning not only from an æsthetic standpoint, but it will prevent that disturbance of business interests which always happens if there is no provision for



future parks made until vast business interests have to be expropriated, as was the case with Central Park, New York.

#### BOULEVARDS AND PARKWAYS.

To avoid confusion I have adopted the recognized use of the word boulevard as meaning either a straight or curving avenue adapted for pleasure driving, usually planted on each side and often down the centre with rows of shade trees. King Edward Avenue affords a good example. The term Parkway I have taken to mean a winding pleasure drive laid out with a narrow strip of land reserved on either side, and treated in a park-like manner; an excellent example is your new drive along the Rideau Canal.

With the principal parks decided upon, the location of the connecting boulevards and parkways become largely a question of detail; but it is evident that there is a great difference as to the desirability of the various possible routes between the different parks and the centre of the city. Your Commission has already realized the great value of preserving the river banks, and has accomplished a splendid work in building the parkway along the Rideau Canal. Ottawa is particularly fortunate in having so many rivers and canals, for if properly treated they may be made to produce a city of unrivalled beauty.

#### *Rideau Hall Boulevard.*

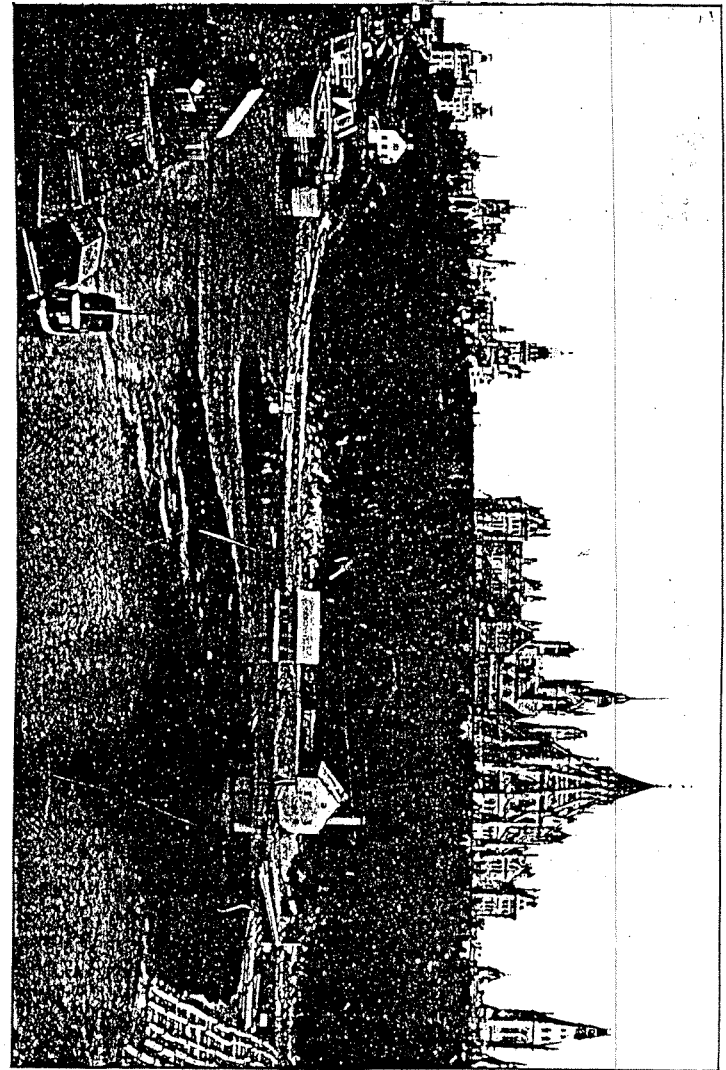
Of first importance is a boulevard connecting Rideau Hall with the Parliament Buildings, which will also act as a main artery for pleasure travel to and from the centre of the city, and Rockcliffe Park. Your Commission has

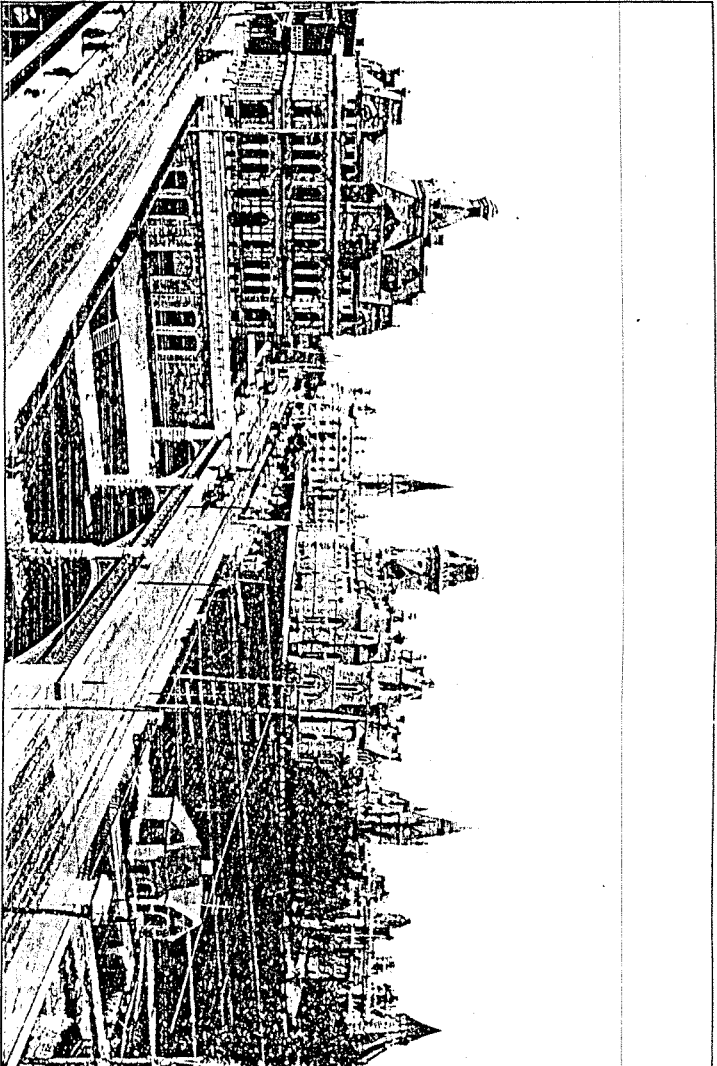
already built King Edward Avenue, a fine boulevard connecting the eastern portion of the city with Rockcliffe Park, and which will, when it is extended, form a means of almost direct communication between Rideau Hall and the Canal Drive, and hence to the Experimental Farm. It is obvious, however, that King Edward Avenue can never be considered the best route between Rideau Hall and the Parliament Buildings, for this route is over one third of a mile longer than by Sussex Street, and while Sussex Street has the disadvantage of having electric railway tracks on it, King Edward Avenue has the greater disadvantage of ending at Rideau Street, over one half mile from Dufferin Bridge, thus necessitating a long drive over one of Ottawa's most crowded thoroughfares. King Edward Avenue also differs but little from an avenue which would be possible in any prairie city, while Ottawa has the opportunity of making a drive between Rideau Hall and the Parliament Buildings, grandly characteristic of the city, and I believe that if properly carried out such a boulevard would become famous the world over for its picturesque beauty and the magnificence and extent of its views. (Photos. Nos. 12, 13.) I have given considerable thought and study to the location of this boulevard, and I am surprised that it is still possible to construct, at comparatively small expense, a drive so typical of the beauty of the city. The views which may be obtained are magnificent. The Parliament Buildings, rising above the cedar clad Nepean Point, dominate the view cityward, while the views up and down the Ottawa River and over the City of Hull to the Laurentian Mountains are so grand and so diversified that it is impossible we should ever tire

of them. They change with every turn of the road, with every whim of the elements; they change with the time and the seasons, and though changed in detail, in light and shade, and in coloring, they remain still the same impressive views. Paris may spend a fortune on her grand avenues, Washington and Chicago may spend millions in constructing boulevards, but none of them can equal in grandness or impressive scenery, a boulevard constructed along this bank of the Ottawa River.

Leaving Rideau Hall this proposed boulevard could follow for a short distance either one of two routes. Providing an entrance is made to Rideau Hall grounds opposite Union Street, it could follow Union Street across the Minto Bridges, and up Baird Street; but as long as the entrance to Rideau Hall is at Pine Street, it would seem that the best and most direct route is along Sussex Street, which could easily be widened, until Mackay Street is reached. Mackay Street is at present but little used, and could be widened to the width of eighty feet without interfering with any houses, and from this point the drive would continue along the very brow of the precipice above the river. Any feeling of danger which might result from the location of the drive could easily be overcome by a low parapet of field boulders on its outer side covered with climbers. West of McTaggart Street as far as Cathcart Street, it would be desirable to include all of the land between Sussex Street and the river in your taking. There would be a few small houses near Queen's Wharf to be removed, but the most of this land belongs at present to the Government, and only requires the removal of some small lumber piles. From Cathcart

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS FROM NEPEAN POINT.





PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS FROM PROPOSED CIRCLE.



Street the boulevard would continue on Government property until Mackenzie Avenue is reached, then along Mackenzie Avenue, which could easily be widened. The termination of this boulevard I would propose be an imposing monumental circle, which could be made to form, in connection with Dufferin Bridge, a dignified approach to the Parliament Buildings. Such a circle could easily be made by taking portions of the unsightly block between Mackenzie Avenue and Sussex Street, filling a corner of the vacant land opposite the end of Mackenzie Avenue, and taking a small corner of Major Hill's Park. Dufferin Bridge should receive such embellishment as will make it form a part of the circle and appear the most important egress.

If this drive could have been built some years ago along the river bank beyond Mackay Street, past the Rideau Falls to Rideau Hall entrance, an exceedingly beautiful drive could have been obtained throughout the entire distance, and it is not unreasonable to believe that at some future time the Government will awake to the fact that the Rideau Falls, as well as the magnificent Chaudiere Falls, belong to the Nation rather than to individuals, and that the greatest good of the greatest number demands that these sublime creations of nature be restored to somewhat of their natural beauty.

*Rideau Canal Parkway.*

This parkway along the bank of the Rideau Canal is sure to be largely patronized by the present and future citizens of Ottawa, and you are to be congratulated upon the building of such a drive. After crossing Dow's Lake,

which is as far as you have commenced active operations, I believe it is your intention to connect the parkway with the arboretum of the Experimental Farm.

*Victoria Parkway.*

Should your Commission decide to take the land for Chaudiere Park it would seem desirable that the parkway be extended beyond the Experimental Farm to this park. I have been over the land between the Experimental Farm and the proposed park quite carefully in order that I might be able to suggest a location for this parkway, and it seems to me that a desirable route would continue within the Experimental Farm almost to the toll-gate. From this point unoccupied land could be taken for the entire distance, crossing near the head of Merivale Avenue and hence for some distance through beautiful woods (Photo. No. 26) in the rear of Victoria Park, across the Canadian Pacific Railway, and through more fine woods (Photo. No. 14), over a high elevation where the Parliament Buildings are in full view (Photo. No. 15), and where a view is obtained of the distant Laurentian Mountains, across Richmond Road, a little west of the toll-gate, and hence by the nearest route to the proposed park. Land could easily be taken for this parkway now before being developed, and while for the greater part of the distance the taking might be of a uniform width of eighty feet, there are two or three places where the woods are particularly beautiful that the width might be increased, so as to provide a little park between the two roads, as is done in two or three places along the Rideau Canal Parkway.

*Chaudiere Parkway.*

From Chaudiere Park there should be a drive along the river to the Lemieux Islands, and from there a boulevard should be arranged to connect with the centre of the city. The one thing desirable would be a boulevard connecting these islands by the most direct route with the Parliament Buildings, but I presume that such a drive will be out of the question for many years at least, although I firmly believe that at some future date these grand Chaudiere Falls will be restored to somewhat of their former beauty, even though still utilized for their valuable water power.

*Rideau River Parkway.*

In considering connecting boulevards, I have examined the shores of the Rideau River from Cummings Bridge to the Railway Bridge near the Experimental Farm, for as the city extends it will be most desirable that there should be reserved lands for a parkway along the banks of the Rideau River. From the south end of Strathcona Park a parkway could extend along the river to the vicinity of Billings Bridge, where it might be carried through Rideauville and connected with the Experimental Farm and the Canal Drive. I understand that there is the possibility of the banks of the river being flooded in the spring, but I think this should not influence you against taking sufficient land for parkways along this river, for with the growth of the city this land will become so valuable that means will be taken to prevent this flooding. This land can be obtained at a reasonable price at the present time, and the beauty of the shores (Photos. Nos. 27, 28, 29) forever preserved. These shores are already

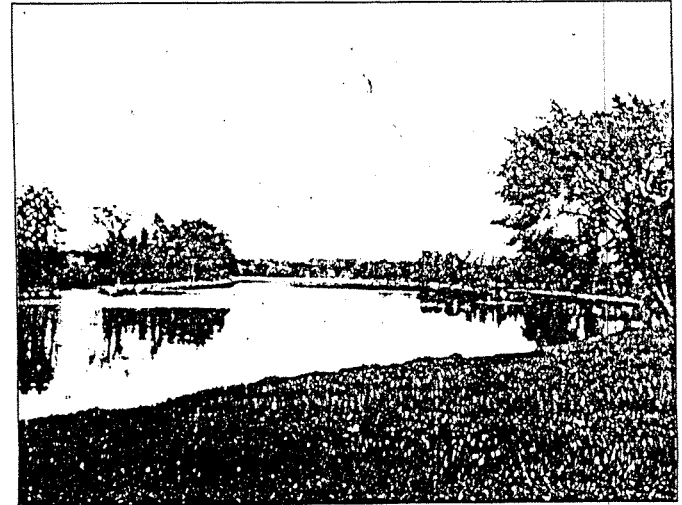
seriously defaced in several places by the building of inferior houses and barns with their backs to the river (Photo. No. 30), and if this is allowed to continue the beauty of the shores will be greatly injured and at the same time the price of the land so much advanced that it will be vastly more difficult to acquire than at the present time. Once the land is acquired the construction of the drive need only be undertaken as the growth of the city makes it necessary or desirable. Ample space should be taken for this parkway, so that the drive will not interfere with facilities for boating and bathing, and also that the fringe of trees and natural shrubbery along the river bank may be preserved.

*Gatineau Parkway.*

Should your Commission decide to take a forest reserve either at Meach Lake or above Wright's Bridge, the present roads on either side of the Gatineau River are sufficient to connect these reserves with the city. But there should be a boulevard constructed through Hull so that this first part of the drive from the Parliament Buildings, or from the centre of the city, to these reserves may be more agreeable than it is at present.

**WATERWAY PARKS—BATHING.**

In connection with the waterway parks and parkways located along the banks of the different rivers, provision should be made for bathing; for while these reserves are taken to preserve the beauty of the city they are made primarily for the enjoyment of the public, and therefore anything which tends to give pleasure to a large number of people should be provided for, if it does not injure the



RIDEAU RIVER.



RIDEAU RIVER.

park, for the enjoyment of the majority. Bathing is not only a great pleasure, especially to young people, but a necessity, and a city well provided with public baths has less cause to fear disease than one not so well supplied, providing always that the baths themselves are sanitary. Cities are coming more and more to realize the great value of well distributed public baths. Boston has an especially good system, and for the sake of showing the use made of them I have prepared a diagram showing the location of the baths and the number of bathers in the year 1898. The use of these baths has increased since that time, but I have not been able to obtain the necessary statistics to make a more recent compilation. The location of public baths is very important, and should, if possible, be studied in connection with the arrangements of your general scheme.

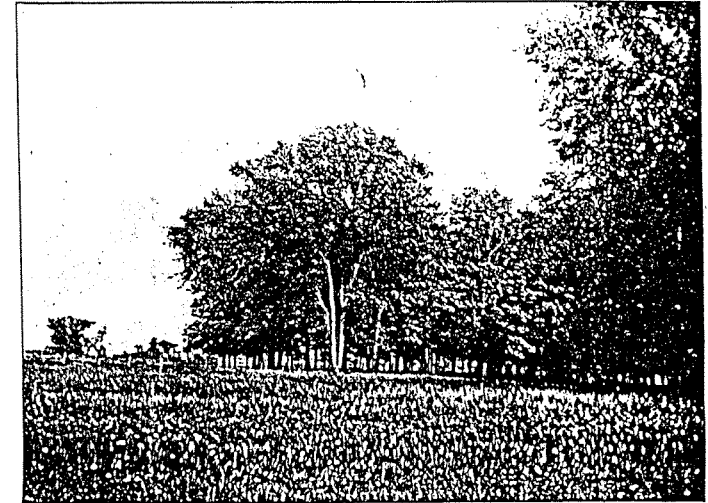
#### CITY PARKS AND SQUARES.

These small squares and breathing places situated at various intervals throughout the crowded portions of the city, are of great importance. They do not remind one of the country to the same extent as do the suburban parks, for they are intended to fulfil an entirely different mission, their object being rather to provide a place of rest and recreation for the people in their immediate neighborhood, and to make the city as a whole more beautiful and attractive.

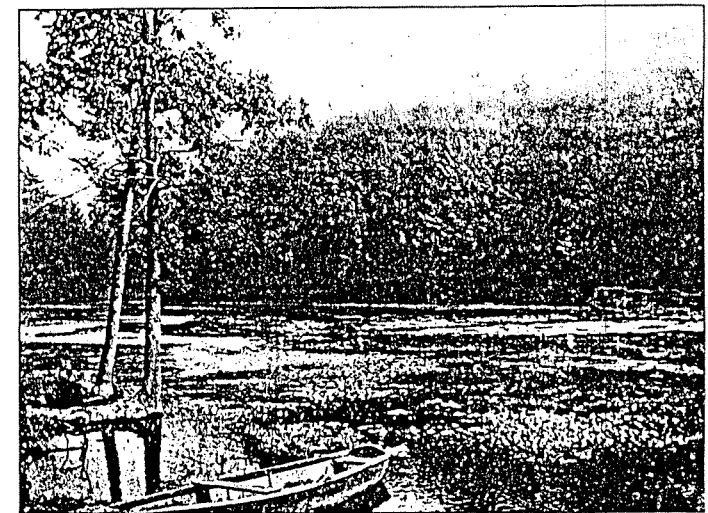
In many cities the chief and only aim of these squares seems to be to display the gardener's art, or perhaps more often his ability to design curious and fantastically shaped flower beds, which, unfortunately, cannot always be classed as artistic. To accomplish this the public,

and especially the children, are forbidden to walk or play on the grass. This sacrifice of utility to questionable beauty is now recognized to be a mistake in almost all of the larger cities, those of the old world being the first to discard the "Keep off the Grass" sign. In Paris the open spaces are maintained for the use and enjoyment of the people, and are not merely show places, for there the people claim they help to pay for the open spaces and have a perfect right to use them, and no one ever thinks of denying them this right. Other cities are now opening small play grounds or open spaces in the midst of densely populated neighborhoods, where the children are allowed to play their games on the gravel or soft turf, often under the direction of a skilled and kindly instructor. It has been proven in many instances that these play grounds are a great prevention of crime, and at an expense not to be compared to the expense of arrest, conviction, and a term in penitentiary later, while added to this, is the vastly more important consideration, the saving of a life which might have been worse than wasted, to accomplish a useful work in the world.

In considering the open spaces in the crowded parts of your city, and in what will become the crowded parts, it will be seen that the city is fortunate in already having reserved small plots of ground, well distributed throughout the city. The question of reserving additional lands for playgrounds and public squares is one, however, which should receive careful and systematic study in any plan for the future of your city.



PROPOSED PATTERSON CREEK PARK.



PATTERSON CREEK.



*Patterson Creek Park.*

That there should be so near the centre of a city as large as Ottawa a stream with such beautiful natural shores (Photos. Nos. 16, 31), and with such fine woods adjacent (Photos. Nos. 17, 32) seems almost incredible, and it is difficult to understand why this land has remained unoccupied to the present time. That it will remain so long is impossible, therefore the taking of the land on either side of Patterson Creek for a small public park is perhaps more important than the taking of any other piece of land which I have examined, because it is likely to be sooner lost forever to the purpose for which it is so happily suited. Already preparations are being made to extend O'Connor Street across Patterson Creek, thus cutting it in halves and rendering it much less desirable for a park.

*Small Parks and Squares Owned by the City.*

Among the small parks and squares already owned by the city are: Strathcona Park, Anglesea Square, Somerset Street Square, Metcalfe Square, Gladstone Avenue Square, Preston Street Square, Bingham Playground and Minto Square; but as these have not any particular bearing upon the design of your park system they will only be taken up later when considering their future treatment.

THE FUTURE TREATMENT AND ADORNMENT OF PARKS  
BOULEVARDS AND SQUARES.

For convenience it is advisable to consider the treatment of the different public parks and boulevards in the same order as taken up earlier in this report, but it

is obvious that only those controlled or about to be controlled by your Commission, can be given any amount of detail consideration.

The best results in park development are only obtainable when plans are adopted, the design of which is the result of a thorough knowledge of the problem and a careful study of the present and future requirements of the people for whom it is intended. It is therefore of the utmost importance that your Commission should have prepared as soon as possible a general outline plan for your park system, and also carefully studied plans for the suburban and city parks. Once plans are prepared the work can be proceeded with as rapidly as your Commission desires, but all work undertaken will have a definite end in view: the carrying out of a carefully considered design which will also constitute a particular link in an organized system. In no other way can an extensive work, extending over a number of years, be carried on without a waste of time and money, and a sacrifice of that breadth and unity which should characterize a comprehensive scheme.

It is far from my intention to suppose that I have given your parks sufficient thought or study to enable me to prepare plans or even suggest the best method of treatment for each park, but I have, during my preliminary examination, made note of a few suggestions, and partially formulated certain general lines of development along which it seems desirable that your Commission should proceed, in order that your park system may be developed in an economical and artistic manner, and still preserve the natural character of the different parks. Real landscape art is nothing if it is not conservative of natural beauty, and does not consist



DRIVE IN ROCKCLIFFE PARK.

alone in building rustic bridges, or in arranging plants or trees, but is rather the fitting of landscape for human use and enjoyment in such a manner as will be most appropriate and beautiful. There is a woeful tendency to reduce all the landscape in our parks to one level. We do not consider whether the plans for the development of the parks are appropriate or not, but allow all sorts of monstrosities of buildings, of grading, and of planting to creep into our parks and then wonder why the result is not pleasing. If there are buildings to be erected in a park, they should be of a character which will harmonize with the surrounding landscape. The grading and planting should also preserve and accentuate the general character of the park and not mar it with discordant and unrelated patches.

*Rockcliffe Park and its Proposed Extension.*

Rockcliffe Park, as I have already stated in this report, is exceedingly beautiful in its natural state, and is daily providing much pleasure, health and strength for those people who resort to it, and I firmly believe it would be far better to allow it to remain exactly as it is at present—unsatisfying as this is in many respects—than to proceed to its development in a careless and haphazard manner, or with plans which did not first convince you that its present picturesque beauty would be preserved and enhanced, and the park made more capable of fulfilling its true purpose, that of a safe and beautiful pleasure ground for the people.

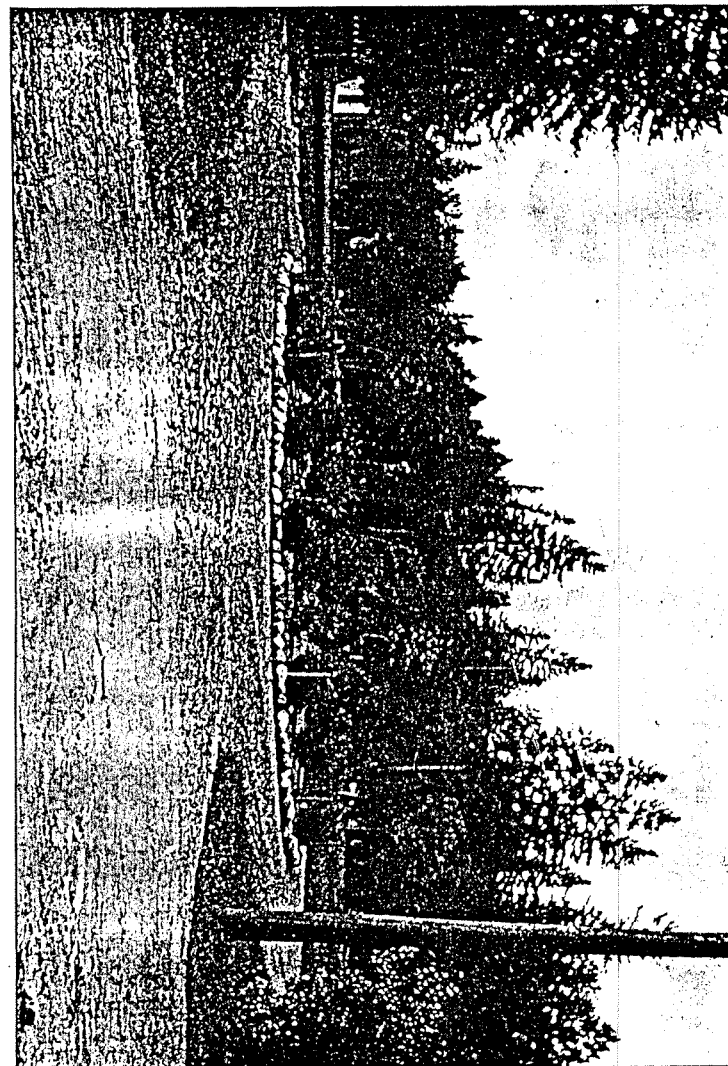
The term "improve" is so constantly misused that it means to many people almost the opposite of what it should, for the improvement of many parks has been

accompanied by such a process of cleaning up and cutting away of natural shrubberies that much of their beauty has been "improved" out of existence, and there probably remains not a corner that an artist would think of reproducing on his canvas. Rockcliffe Park needs very little to make it a perfect park, but the fact that it is naturally so beautiful makes it all the more necessary that the little that is required be done with the greatest care, in order that it may harmonize with the existing conditions.

There is a small piece of land in the centre of this park, controlled by the Ottawa Electric Company, on which is located an exceedingly ugly, although useful refreshment stand and lookout. This piece of ground, with the buildings, should be controlled by your Commission, in order that it may be subject to the regulations of the park, and also that more appropriate shelters may be erected. The Ottawa Electric Company also owns a piece of land near the entrance, on which it has built a car barn, that is such a blot on the surroundings that your Commission would certainly be justified in taking this land, when the buildings could be screened out with quick growing trees or removed.

A simple, dignified entrance to the Park, designed in a manner that will harmonize with, and appropriately express its character, is very much needed. The present entrance is as poor as one could well imagine, and is without shape or dignity. The most conspicuous object is the barn for horses and tools, which is located in the worst conceivable position, just inside the entrance and between the drive and the view (Photo. No. 18), while to the right is the hideous car barn. A simple yet dignified stone

ENTRANCE TO ROCKCLIFFE PARK.

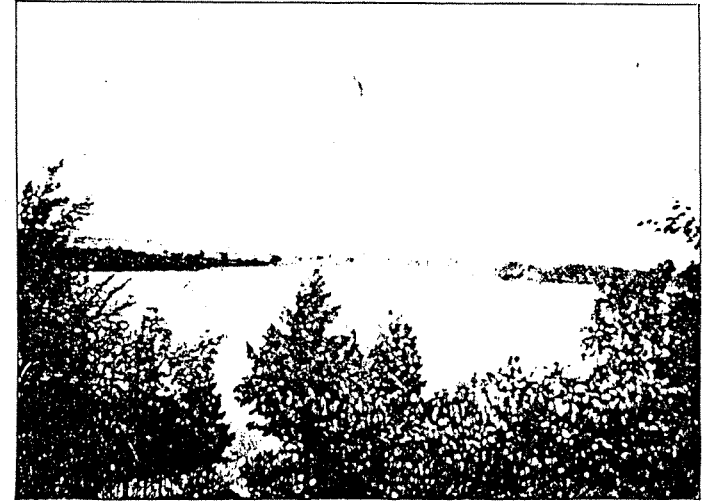


entrance would be most appropriate, with the words "Rockcliffe Park" cut in the entrance piers. Native climbers such as grape, clematis and Virginia creeper, should be trained over the wall and piers. Inside the entrance, evergreens such as spruce and pine should be planted in well arranged groups, care being taken not to shut out the views over the river. The ultimate effect would be that of passing through the entrance directly into the typical forest growth of the park. I believe that the whole effect of the park will be more artistic and dignified if you avoid the use of shrubs and trees which are conspicuously gardenesque, such as the Hydrangea, Syringa, Horse Chestnut, etc. Such plants do not harmonize well with the natural scenes of Rockcliffe Park, but are more appropriate for use in the smaller parks and squares, where they can often be arranged to produce a desirable gardenesque effect.

The present park drives are well laid out (Photo. No. 19), with the exception of one or two of those most recently built, which are, both as regards line and grade, rather an example of what should not be done, than of good park roads well located. The old roads, although laid out with excellent taste and judgment, were located to serve proposed building lots rather than as drives of a public park, and this fact makes necessary a few changes. The roadway between the entrance and the first point requires only to be widened and properly graded, but when the point is reached the road instead of keeping its present location should be carried well out on the point, so that it may command the magnificent views up and down the Ottawa River. (Photos. Nos. 20, 21.) At its outermost

point, the drive should be widened to form a "concourse" bounded on its outer side by a low parapet of field boulders. Farther along the road there are also one or two points where it would seem desirable to make slight changes in the line and grade of the drives, but the changes required are so slight that it is rather impracticable to note them here. There are several places throughout the Park, where the building of the roads has left ugly scars and banks of raw earth or stone. These interfere seriously with the beauty of the park, and could easily be effaced by planting native shrubs and vines.

The great beauty of Rockcliffe Park cannot at present be fully comprehended, owing to the fact that it has never had that careful development which alone can bring out its fine possibilities. This is particularly noticeable in driving through it. This drive, from which should be possible beautiful vistas (Photos. Nos. 20, 21, 33, 35), affording a series of land and water views in never ending variety, is positively monotonous in places, and for the greater part of its distance has the typical view shown in Photo. No. 34. This fringe of trees, often so thin as to show that there must be grand views beyond, is so annoying to any one driving, as often to destroy the pleasure of the drive. One feels constantly irritated that such views are shut out, thereby creating a feeling of disappointment which would not be felt in a park naturally much less beautiful, but where there would be the pleasing sensation that everything had been made the most of. This is a common fault with many of our large parks. Mount Royal Park, Montreal, is one of the most conspicuous examples. I have heard visitors say that the drive about the top of Mount Royal



POSSIBLE VIEW FROM ROCKCLIFFE PARK DRIVE.



TYPICAL FRINGE OF TREES CONCEALING VIEW FROM  
ROCKCLIFFE PARK DRIVE.

was one of the most disappointing they had ever taken. The knowledge that views of more than ordinary grandeur are obtainable if one climbs a tree, or goes to a "look-out," makes the fact that it is possible to drive for a half mile or so without catching more than a suggestion of this view, one of the keenest disappointments. In opening up vistas in Rockcliffe Park, care will need to be exercised, or the result will be an open scar, through whose ugly sides will be obtained the view. The method to be adopted should be to make a thorough examination of the park, and select the places from which can be obtained the best views. After this is done an examination of the trees should be made, so that if possible, only the poorest need be cut, leaving on each side good trees to frame the vista. The opening should not be cut straight through, but the sides left irregular, and allowed to taper off in such a manner as to appear as natural as possible. Indeed, by careful selection, it is often possible to get a good opening with there remaining but little semblance of a scar. During this cutting, there should remain constantly in mind the fact, that a tree once cut can never be put back, whereas a tree left standing can always be removed. If the ground where the openings are made is left bare and unsightly, I would suggest planting it thickly with native shrubs and vines, as they make a much better foreground for the view than would grass, even if this latter were possible.

I have taken several photographs to show the present views obtainable from the drive, and by going to the other side of the fringe of trees, have photographed the view which might be had. I could have secured almost endless examples of such views, but these are, I think, sufficient for the purpose.

There should be a systematic effort made to rid Rockcliffe Park of the poison ivy, which is at present so abundant, and which must be a source of constant danger to children, and anxiety to their parents.

Rockcliffe Park extension may in some cases need slightly different treatment owing to its different character, but I feel sure that the most pleasing effects here, as well as at Rockcliffe Park, will be produced by the utter exclusion of any treatment approaching the gardenesque. Trees which will harmonize with those already existing might be planted in groups, or as single specimens in order to give more shade, but straight rows of trees along the sides of the roads should be carefully avoided, as they will tend to break up that effect of continuity (Photo. No. 37) which is at present such a pleasant feature. The roads on this property are pleasingly laid out (Photos. Nos. 38, 39), although the fact that they were planned for a land scheme instead of for a park may make some slight changes desirable.

#### *Chaudiere Park.*

It is perhaps unwise for me at present to consider to any great extent the future of this park, but as the proposed land is rather flat the need for greater care in locating the roads is apparent. In Rockcliffe Park the location of the roads was practically determined by the topography of the land, while in this proposed park their construction is practicable anywhere, and it will be possible either to exhibit the various landscape pictures included within the park to the best advantage or to destroy them by a poor location of the drives. The dignified landscape

which is such a feature of Hyde Park, London, might well furnish some suggestions for the treatment of this park.

#### *Rideau Canal Parkway.*

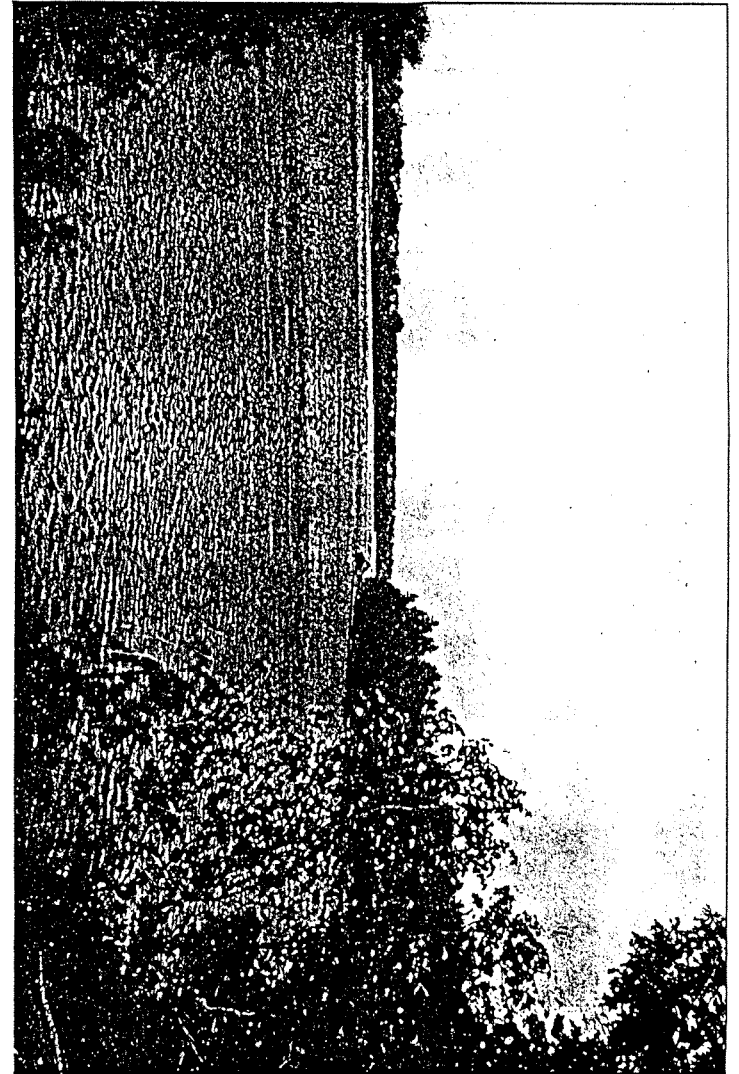
The parkway along Rideau Canal has already been given such careful thought and attention by your engineer that there seems little to suggest, with the exception of a few details, but as these will tend in the future towards making either an exceedingly beautiful drive, or one of rather indifferent beauty, I have given them considerable thought. In connection with that portion of the drive which has already been built, I would suggest that when more than one reverse curve is visible, the more distant should be screened out by the planting of thick masses of trees or shrubs near the edge of the drive. A curved roadway is much more beautiful than a straight one provided there is sufficient reason for the curve, such as a group of trees or the slope of the ground. But if the road seems to wiggle on ahead without apparent reason, like a gigantic serpent, the curves will appear unnatural, meaningless and annoying.

The subject of planting along this parkway is one which has already been given a good deal of consideration by your Commission, but it seems to me that that portion of the parkway yet unplanted should receive even more careful thought, and that your Commission should consider whether it would not be wise to change somewhat the style of planting for the remainder of the distance. A drive through the country, such as the drive up the Gatineau River, never lacks interest. The variety of scene is infinite, yet the composition is simple. A continuous



drive over the prairie is monotonous, a long drive through a field of corn would be equally or more so, while a continuous drive with nothing to be seen on either side but flower beds, no matter how fine, would be incomparably more monotonous than either. Careful study of natural scenery, or of good landscape paintings, will show how important is the arrangement of trees and shrubs. Few people realize that the same elements which combine to produce a beautiful landscape may also produce a landscape flat and uninteresting. They do not realize that the lights and shadows, and the sky-line of the trees, are responsible for much of the beauty of the view, nor do they consider that these elements give the most beautiful results only when produced by a proper grouping of the trees in proportion to the varying expanses of green sward and other elements in the composition. In a parkway, such as this, where the strip of land on either side is comparatively narrow, the interest and pleasure of the drive depends to a great extent on the agreeable scenes which have been created by the use of grass, foliage and flowers, and the shaping of the surface of the earth. It is possible to make these narrow strips seem very much wider and more interesting if the trees and shrubs are planted in masses along the boundaries and broad open spaces of turf left unoccupied. Here and there bold groups of trees can be brought directly to the drive in endless variety of shape and form, sometimes across the drive, so that the ultimate effect will be that of passing through a grove of trees, sometimes stopping short of the drive so that the full contour of the trees may be seen. Between these groups of trees, and often

VIEW FROM ROCKCLIFFE PARK.



behind them, would be vistas extending as far as possible, and which would also form a continuous series of little landscapes, thereby increasing greatly the interest and apparent extent of the parkway.

Rideau Canal Parkway should have variety of grading as well as of planting, and if the two can be planned together so as to assist each other in producing the effect wished for, the result is certain to be more pleasing. Care will need to be taken when aiming at variety that the whole effect is not patchy. With a curving drive such as the one you have built, the grading does not lend itself at all happily to straight lines and level surfaces. In fact it is practically impossible to make the straight lines of a terrace unite pleasingly with the lines of a curving roadway. I think that the formal terraces about the pines west of Brown's Inlet should be regraded so as to appear more natural, and more in harmony with the drive, and surrounding natural features. Whenever there are to be extensive changes in grade in places where it will be as conspicuous as in the case which I have just pointed out beyond Brown's Inlet, and also in one or two other instances farther along, I would suggest that contours be taken of one foot elevation, and a careful grading plan studied out in order that the best results may be obtained. When this is done, it should be borne in mind, that one of the greatest beauties of having a park area between two drives, is to have one screened from the other, either by planting or grading, or a combination of both, thus giving an entirely different view both going and returning.

#### CLEWOW BOULEVARD.

This boulevard as now planned, extends from Bank Street to Concession Street, and is to be of a uniform width of eighty feet. If Patterson Creek Park is taken, this boulevard should be connected with Rideau Canal Parkway by a drive on each side of the creek. Clewov Boulevard should also be extended in a westerly direction beyond Concession Street to St. Louis Dam, and I would urge the desirability of making this connection of good width, with a single, long sweeping curve, having a slight reverse in order to unite pleasingly with the end of St. Louis Dam.

There is but little doubt that Clewov Boulevard will become one of finest residential streets in Ottawa, and for this reason certain restrictions should be made in taking this land. I understand it is your intention to establish a building limit of twenty-five feet outside the street line. It would also be desirable to provide for a uniform row of trees to be planted three or four feet from the street line on the several properties, these trees to remain under the care of your Commission. There might also be a restriction regarding the height of fences within the twenty-five foot building limit; and a provision forbidding the display of bill boards and advertising signs above a certain size.

The eighty foot boulevard might well have a wide grass plot in the centre with a roadway, a narrow grass strip of four feet, and a sidewalk on each side. The roadways should be made continuous from St. Louis Dam to Rideau Canal Parkway.

#### PATTERSON CREEK PARK.

Patterson Creek and its surroundings are naturally so beautiful, that if it is taken for park purposes, its

present natural character should determine to a great extent its future treatment, and while it might be treated in a somewhat more ornamental style than the suburban parks, it seems to me this object should be gained by the use of trees and shrubs, rather than with flowers or plants of exotic character. In making a preliminary examination for the outline of the park, I should suppose it would best be bounded on the north by Monkland Avenue, as far as O'Connor Street, where it could extend as far north as Patterson's Avenue, and hence to Bank Street. The boundary could extend south along Bank Street as far as Carleton Street, then east along Carleton for half a block, when it could extend south again to First Avenue and along First Avenue until your present Rideau Canal Parkway is reached. In connection with the future treatment of this park, I would suggest that groups of trees be arranged in an artistic manner, over the north-eastern portion of this park, so that they will unite harmoniously with the beautiful woods in the western portion, and thus preserve in what will practically be the centre of your city, a bit of natural woods. The existing woods should be gone over carefully, and many of the poor spindling trees taken out, so that those remaining will be enabled to spread out, and live longer than will be possible in their present condition.

#### STRATHCONA PARK.

This park will in time be one of the most valuable of your smaller city parks, and before work of any consequence is begun, surveys should be made, and a definite plan adopted, so that expensive piece-meal work will be avoided.

#### ANGLESEA SQUARE.

One half of this square has already been made attractive, while the other half remains untouched. I should recommend discontinuing the present road through the middle of the square and laying out the unimproved portion as a playground, with shade trees about the border and at a few other points.

#### SOMERSET STREET SQUARE.

This square, although presenting a much more difficult problem, has greater possibilities than any of your small squares. The expense involved would necessarily be greater, but the fact that it is far from being level, should make possible a square of more than ordinary interest. It is impossible to make any suggestions for such a problem until an accurate survey has been prepared.

#### GLADSTONE AVENUE SQUARE.

This square offers opportunities for making a playground at the west end, while the eastern portion could well be treated as a small ornamental park.

#### PRESTON STREET SQUARE.

A large square that will be valuable as this part of the city becomes more crowded. Part of it could be made into an excellent playground and out-door gymnasiums, the rest being kept for park purposes.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, it is my duty to impress on your Commission the fact that in a scheme of this nature, where the work must extend over a number of years, it is absolutely necessary that the improvements should be

carried out in a thoroughly systematic manner and in strict accordance with a pre-conceived plan, which once approved must on no account be subject to alterations to meet the wishes or whims of self-interested parties.

I cannot well conceive of anything more disastrous to such a scheme than that when once it has been sanctioned and partially carried out the general idea should be liable to alteration, and the general effect of the whole thereby destroyed.

It gives me much pleasure to extend my thanks to Hon. J. P. B. Casgrain, C.E., a member of your Commission, whose valuable professional advice has been freely placed at my disposal during the preparation of this report. My thanks is also due to Mr. Surtees, the engineer of your Commission, whose cheerful and ready assistance and thorough knowledge of Ottawa and its vicinity, I have much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

FREDERICK G. TODD.

MONTREAL, P.Q.,

August 28th, 1903.

NOTE.—Thirty-nine photographs, one colored sketch and five diagrams form a part of this report, but it has not been possible to reproduce them all in this copy.