

future. Ten years were spent in sporadic investigation and consideration of a route by the Rideau and Cataraqui River systems and finally, in 1826, Lieutenant-Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers was sent to the Chaudière to build a canal from that point to Kingston. The next year two companies of Royal Sappers and Miners, numbering 162 men, began the construction. To Colonel By also goes the credit of planning the original townsite which was, in 1827, named Bytown in his honour. Where Ottawa's central area is today, the Earl of Dalhousie, the then Governor-in-Chief, had wisely secured commanding ground for the Crown in 1823 and, adjacent to this, Colonel By laid out two settlements called Upper Town and Lower Town, separated by part of the Government lands called Barrack Hill. The canal was finished in 1832 and the town that sprouted around Colonel By's military camp began to grow and prosper. Stores and banks were set up, churches and schools were built and a little manufacturing community was started in New Edinburgh near Rideau Falls.

Bytown was now the inland centre of the squared timber trade and by 1850 could boast of some fine stone buildings, among them the home of Thomas MacKay which today forms the central part of the residence of the Governor General of Canada. A change then occurred in the timber industry, the British system of preferential import duties on squared white and red pine logs was abandoned and trade began to decline. However, by this time the accessible forest stands of the eastern United States were depleted and sawn lumber was needed to house a growing population. Also, the American railway and canal network had extended to the Canadian border, making transportation easy. Encouraged by these favourable conditions and the newly recognized availability of hydro-electric power, a group of American and other lumbermen came to Bytown, beginning in 1853, and established sawmills by the Chaudière Falls. Soon the islands about the falls and the flats on both shores were covered with lumber piles and loaded barges were on their way to the American market. The sawmill industry began its rise to dominating importance.

At the beginning of 1855, Bytown became a city and took the name Ottawa, just in time to receive a great honour and to assume a great responsibility. The United Province of Canada, since its formation in 1841, had shuttled its capital between Kingston, Toronto, Montreal and Quebec and was now trying to agree on a permanent site. At the end of 1857 Queen Victoria settled the dispute by choosing Ottawa. Government buildings for the new capital were designed and contracts were let in 1859 for their construction. However, the task was hard and the cost much greater than expected and it was not until 1866 that the government of the Province of Canada actually moved to Ottawa. The next year the first Parliament of the new Dominion of Canada met in an incomplete Parliament Building, situated on the former Barrack Hill.

The nation enjoyed a brief prosperity during most of the next decade. Ottawa grew and the government expanded as the Dominion extended its authority over more and more of British North America. In 1871, shortly after Confederation, the city had a population of about 22,000. Many fine homes and stores in stone and brick were built. The Departmental Buildings, flanking the Parliament Building on the Hill, were enlarged. An old wooden City Hall near the Canal was replaced in 1876 by a fine stone building and a large post office was erected at the city's centre. By the end of the nineteenth century, Ottawa was a flourishing industrial centre with a population of 59,000. It remained the hub of the lumbering industry of Eastern Canada, had the largest paper mills in the country and the leading match factory in the world. However, little effort had been made to preserve or enhance its natural beauty until the Ottawa Improvement Commission was set up in 1899 and the Driveway along the Rideau Canal was begun. Even so, progress was slow in this direction but in the years up to the beginning of the First World War the city centre began to take on a new face. Many new government buildings were erected—laboratories, the Dominion Observatory and the Geodetic Building at the Experimental Farm, the Archives Building, the Victoria Memorial Museum, the Royal Canadian Mint and the Connaught Building. In 1912, the Grand Trunk Railway completed construction of the Union Station and of the French renaissance-style Chateau Laurier whose turrets