LECTURE FIVE – HISTORY 1900 - 1950

MAKING PLANS

Frederick G. Todd (1876-1948) trained in Frederick Law Olmsted’s office, was a founder of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, and was perhaps Canada’s first professional landscape architect. In 1903, Todd prepared a preliminary parks plan for the Canadian capital, which considered both Ottawa and its sister city Hull, located across the river in the province of Québec. However, the Ottawa Improvement Commission declined to retain him as a regular consultant and relied on its technical staff for design and construction. Many of Todd’s recommended parks and parkways were incorporated in the future plans of Edward H. Bennett (1915), Noulan Cauchon (1923), and Jacques Greber (1950).

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.

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? 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.

**EARL GREY 1911- Future Ottawa**

His Excellency Earl Grey - the retiring Governor-General - said to the civic delegation of the citizens of Ottawa who went to Government House on October and, 1911, to present him with an address and to bid him farewell.

"I beseech you all most earnestly-I beseech you all to plan not only for the Ottawa of the present but for the federal capital of the future.

"Whenever I pass the Parliament Buildings, I take off my hat to the men of 1860, who planned so well in spite of their meagre resources, and my only regret is that they did not acquire the south side of Wellington Street also. I hope that the men of 1950 in the same way will praise the men of 1911 for planning the city's growth. I believe in the future greatness of this federal capital and believe that Ottawa should become the standard, not only for Canada, but for the cities of the English speaking world.

"Ottawa has a great responsibility imposed upon her to strive for in the future. The city is destined not only to become a great, beautiful federal capital of a country of 100 million
people, but it will also become an industrial city of note, with 500,000 horse power within 30 miles of the city, and its transportation facilities which will be unrivalled when the Georgian Bay canal is completed. The future of Ottawa seems to be one of certain greatness. The citizens of today must plan to add dignity to the city of the future which will be the capital of the greatest portion of the British Empire."

**Chateau Laurier / Union Station**

Château Laurier was commissioned by Grand Trunk Railway president Charles Melville Hays, and was constructed for $2 million, between 1909 and 1912 in tandem with Ottawa's downtown Union Station (now the Government Conference Centre) across the street. The two buildings were connected with a tunnel. When the hotel first opened, private rooms cost $2 a night; 155 of the 350 bedrooms featured a private bath while the other 104 rooms had washstands with hot and cold water connections. In addition dormitories and common bathrooms were available as were rooms for travelling salesmen with sample tables to display goods.

The hotel features original Tiffany stained-glass windows and hand-moulded plaster decorations dating back to 1912. The walls were constructed of Indiana limestone. There are conical turrets and dormer windows and the roof is copper. The gables are carved with flowers, scrolls and crests. The lobby floors were constructed of Belgian marble.

The plans for the hotel initially generated some controversy, as the Château was to be constructed on what was then a portion of Major's Hill Park. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then the Prime Minister of Canada, helped secure the important site for the construction, and the hotel was eventually named in his
honour. Laurier's government was also subsidizing the Grand Trunk Railway's Pacific Line. Further conflict ensued when the original architect, Bradford Gilbert, from New York was dismissed due to disagreements with Grand Trunk executives, and the Montreal firm of Ross and Macfarlane was hired to complete the design.

Château Laurier seen from across the Ottawa river
The hotel was to be opened on 26 April 1912, but Hays, who was returning to Canada for the hotel opening, perished aboard the RMS Titanic when it sank on 15 April. A subdued opening ceremony was held on 12 June 1912, with Sir Wilfrid Laurier in attendance. The sub-basement housed laundry, repair shops, engineering and electrical departments. A barber shop was added in 1918.

In August 1914, Major Raymond Brutinel enrolled the first recruits for the Canadian Automobile Machine Gun Brigade at the hotel. A memorial plaque with a circular "bas relief" of Brigadier-General Brutinel bust, and a "bas relief" of machine gunners on Vimy ridge are dedicated to the memory of Brigadier-General R. Brutinel, C.B. C.M.G. D.S.O. who commanded the Canadian Automobile Machine Gun Brigade and the members of the Canadian Machine Gun Brigade who died on active service and in honour of those who served.

When the Grand Trunk became part of the Canadian National Railway in 1923, the Château Laurier became one of CN's most important hotels. In addition to hotel guests, the Château Laurier has also served over the years as the home of two important Ottawa institutions. From July 1924 to October 2004, the seventh and eight floors at the top were home to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's local
English and French language radio stations. Photographer Yousuf Karsh maintained his studio and residence at the Château Laurier for many years.[2]

In 1929, a $6-million east wing addition by Montreal architect John Archibald and CN’s architect John Schofield along Mackenzie Avenue added 240 rooms. Although the exterior of the addition was French-inspired, the interior lobby resembled an English or Scottish baronial hall with dark-oak panelling, a railed gallery overlooking the double-height space and trophies of the hunt. The lobby led to a convention hall, music room and gentlemen’s lounge. The ballroom featured vaulted ceiling, columns and rich drapes. The ultra-modern kitchen was designed to cater to up to 5,000 people. The Jasper Tea Room designed by Edwin Holgate in 1929, featured Pacific Coast aboriginal art, columns carved into totem poles surrounding a dance floor, and lamps decorated with motifs of bears, eagles and crows. From 1929–1991, the Canadian Grill was a softly-lit and dark-panelled below-ground restaurant where diners ate the specialty, roast prime rib of beef au jus and danced to live music.[2]

In 1930, the hotel added a 60-foot indoor pool in Art Deco style. In the 1930s and 1940s, the “therapeutic” spas offered electric therapy, ultra-violet ray lamps and alternate streams of hot and cold water to clients with nervous afflictions, polio or back problems.[2]

For years, the hotel thrived, playing host to royalty, heads of state, political figures, celebrities and members of Canada's elite. R. B. Bennett lived in a suite in the hotel during his term as Canadian prime minister, from 1930 to 1935.[6]

During the 1960s and 1970s, the construction of numerous
competing hotels in the capital, as well as the closure of Union Station, led to a slow decline in the Château's fortunes.

In 1965, the Jasper Lounge, was redecorated into a mock English tavern called the Cock and Lion with oak and old brick walls. The union went to court to protest management's decision to replace waiters with young women in low-cut tops to serve in the new pub, but lost.[2]

In 1981, the hotel was designated a National Historic Site of Canada.[7] The Westin Hotel opened across the street in 1983. A $21-million renovation was undertaken in the 1980s to refurbish and renovate the Château Laurier, however, thus restoring its position as Ottawa's pre-eminent hotel. A new canopied front entrance was added. The lobby’s dark wood was lightened and the animal trophies were removed. The barber shop was removed. The fourth floor featured a separate lounge and concierge desk. The smoke shop became the Reading Room. The Cock and Lion lounge was replaced a skylit boutique mall. In 1985, Zoe’s Lounge opened in a new glassed-in area overlooking Rideau Street.

By 1991, Peacock Alley, which was broad corridor on the main level that extended along the west side of hotel was replaced by Wilfrid’s, featuring views of the Parliament Buildings, the Rideau Canal locks and the Ottawa River.[2]

The hotel was operated by Canadian National Hotels until the chain was purchased by Canadian Pacific Hotels in 1988.

The building was opened by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1912 as Ottawa's central railway station, and the hotel was built across the street to serve travellers. Over the course of
the following years, passenger services of other railways moved to this station, thereby clarifying and unifying passenger travel in the city.[6] When the last Canadian Pacific trains moved from the old Union Station on Booth Street to Grand Trunk Central station on January 4, 1920, the old station was closed and the Grand Trunk station became Ottawa Union Station.[7]

Interestingly, the June 1912 opening of the Union Station and the Chateau Laurier was not met with much fanfare, since Grand Trunk Railway general manager Charles Melville Hays had just perished in the Titanic disaster two months previously.[1]

The Doric Roman Revival multi pillar Union station[8] was originally designed by New York-based architect Bradford Lee Gilbert who was eventually dismissed due to concerns of mismanagement. The Montreal firm of Ross and MacFarlane took over the project, making many design changes to the station.[9] Ross and MacFarlane also took over the design of the Château Laurier and later built Toronto's Union Station.

Both Canadian National Railways (successor to the Grand Trunk) and Canadian Pacific Railway operated regularly scheduled passenger trains through the facility until it ceased operations on July 31, 1966.[8]

**BENNETT**

The 1915 *Report of the Federal Plan Commission on a General Plan for the Cities of Ottawa and Hull* was one of Canada’s first comprehensive plans. It was prepared by Edward Bennett, a leading City Beautiful architect, who
combined both technical and aesthetic planning. Bennett employed some of the most advanced techniques of the day, similar to the 1909 Plan of Chicago. The 1915 Ottawa–Hull plan is almost unknown today, since it was shelved shortly after it was released. The plan was dogged by a fire in the Parliament Buildings, a European war, poor implementation provisions and reaction against its City Beautiful urban design recommendations. Nevertheless, many of its technical recommendations were implemented by the National Capital Commission over forty years later.

PARLIAMENTARY FIRE

On February 3, 1916, a fire destroyed the Centre Block of the parliament buildings. The original Centre Block was three stories with a frontage of 472 feet and a depth of 247 feet. The Centre Block was constructed of stone and concrete, with water tanks in some areas. For this reason, it was thought to be fireproof. However, the fire started quickly, and spread even faster. Eventually, after all fire officials were present, the fire was brought under control. Seven people lost their lives in the terrible fire. The following afternoon, the House of Commons convened in the auditorium of the Victoria Memorial Museum. This was to be their permanent home until the Parliament buildings were rebuilt in 1920.

By 1920, construction was far enough along that the new Centre Block could accommodate sessions at Parliament. Still, it was not until 1927 that the Centre Block and Peace Tower were finally completed. The new Centre Block
retained the Gothic style of the original, but was much larger and grander. The most notable difference was the Peace Tower. The central tower of the original block was much lower and modeled after the Cloth Hall at Ypres in Belgium. The Peace Tower is now higher and commemorates the armistice of peace in 1918 that ended World War I.

**Lillian Freeman**
The population of Ottawa declined due to World War I, the depression of 1913 and the departure of numerous English in 1914. She was nicknamed the “poppy lady” for bringing the red-flowered campaign to Ottawa and founded the precursor to the Royal Canadian Legion, but Lillian Freiman’s real name is not widely recognized today. The First World War-era philanthropist and pioneer does not seem to have any plaques dedicated in her name in the capital – something some local historians feel is a shame considering all she’s done for the city and Canada. It would take a big plaque to list all her accomplishments. Freiman is perhaps best known for her work in assisting veterans of the First World War. Not even 30 years old when the war broke out, Freiman set up 30 sewing machines in her home and organized Red Cross sewing circles to send blankets and clothing to the soldiers overseas. She helped found The Great War Veterans Association – the precursor to the Royal Canadian Legion. Inspired by poppy campaigns in the United States and France, she adopted the fundraiser, through the Legion, in 1921. Also in that year, Freiman worked to bring 150 Jewish war orphans from the Ukraine to Canada. In 1934, she was the first Jewish Canadian to be awarded the Order of the British Empire for her work with the war veterans. Born in 1885 in Mattawa
Ont., Freiman was the eldest daughter of Moses Bilsky and Pauline Reich – Ottawa’s earliest Jewish settlers.

According to the Ottawa Jewish Archives, she “grew up to be very spirited and highly intelligent; almost unusual traits at the time” and was dedicated to serving her community. At 18-years-old, she married prominent businessman Archibald J. Freiman, who owned a major department store on Rideau Street of the same last name. When she died in 1940, her coffin was covered in bright red poppies. But in the 74 years since then, “she really has been forgotten” in the general public, said Hagit Hadaya, an architectural historian.

World War I helped the growth of the Civil Service and thus helped boost the fortunes of some of Ottawa’s businesses like the Ottawa Car Manufacturing Company. In 1920, they obtained the patent to make Brill gas, mechanical gas and electrical cars - which they did until the late 1930s. It was in the 1920s that the automobile industry soared.

SPANISH FLU
During WWI, Spanish flu. By the end of its run, the Spanish Flu had infected 10,000 Ottawa residents. In an attempt to reduce the spread of the virus, Mayor Harold Fisher closed down schools, pool halls, churches, laundries, theatres and any area of public gathering. By November 11, 1918, these restrictions on public activity had been lifted, just in time for Ottawa to be the first city in Canada to receive the news that the Armistice had been signed and the First World War was over.
In 1921, the population of Ottawa reached 107,843.

PM King insisted on improving the urban landscape of Ottawa. In 1927, King established the planning supremacy of the federal authority known as the Federal District Commission (FDC). It replaced the Ottawa Improvement Commission (OIC) in 1899 to improve the aesthetic of Ottawa. Like the OIC, the FDC concentrated its efforts on parks and driveway developments. In the same year PM King asserted federal presence at Ottawa through the $3 million development of Confederate Square and Park. PM King envisioned the Confederate Square area would assume a new role as the heart of the Capital.

Prohibition hit Ottawa in 1918. This caused a lot of people to cross the Ottawa River to Hull and purchase alcohol, which was illegal on the Ontario side.

During 1928, after being in the planning stage for years, the Champlain Bridge was built across the Ottawa River to link Island Park Drive and Aylmer Road. At this time Honourable Thomas Ahearn donated his own money to support a huge portion of the construction costs. The Federal District Commission, only a year after being formed, then completed the bridge.

The late 1920s saw the incorporation of The Valley of Rockcliffe Park to Ottawa. This most prestigious residential district of 460 acres originally belonged to Thomas MacKay who was a canal contractor. His widow lived in a stone mansion called Rockcliffe Manor at the north of the village.
First airport
In the 1920s, Ottawa opened its very first airport in Rockcliffe. The government removed the firing range that was there and erected a few hangars for bi-planes. Two years later, the base was turned over to the military, which was at the time creating the Royal Canadian Air Force. Rockcliffe Air Station was mostly used as a transport terminal for aerial photography and government experimentation projects.

Civic Hospital
The 1920s also saw the establishment of the $3.5 million Ottawa Civic Hospital. The Civic Hospital merged the Protestant General and the Ottawa Maternity Hospital. A few months earlier, St. Vincent Home opened upon King Edward Avenue.

By the mid-1920s, the city realized a need to provide social support to its constituents. It organized the Social Service Department (SSD). This body carried out the city’s statutory obligations with respect to pensions and provided limited outdoor relief. The private sector Ottawa Welfare Bureau (OWB) handled unemployment, issues related to providing the city with food and fuel, desertion, non-resident indigents, temporary disability, and severe family tension. The SSD provided assistance to widows, the aged, and the imprisonment of the male wage earner, the permanently handicapped, or those unable to cope for extended periods of time. In addition, the city had, depending on the need, provided relief workers. The 1930s was the era of the Great Depression. Ottawa struggled to administer massive social
relief while at the same time maintaining existing city services. The growing number of civil servants in the city helped offset city revenues lost from unemployment as did federal government building projects from 1935 onward.

The effects of the Depression on individuals and families tended to be more severe among skilled and unskilled wage labourers than professional and government employees. In Ottawa, this meant that economic disparities tended to appear along cultural lines, with the heaviest blow falling on the French-Catholic residents of Lowertown and in the Chaudière ward. The worst of the Depression in 1933 was also the coldest Canadian winter on record up to that time. In Ottawa, the thermometer hit an all-time low of -38 degrees Fahrenheit on December 29th. The average temperature for the month of February was 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit. In that year, as much as 32% of the available workforce in Canada was unemployed and 1.5 million Canadians (15% of the total population) were receiving direct relief from different levels of government, mainly municipal.

Like most other Canadian cities, Ottawa found itself unprepared for the demands on social services brought on by the depression. Prior to the 1930s, municipal social services were limited to providing assistance to the aged, the ill, and to administering the police force. Unemployment was considered a private sector matter administered by volunteer organizations such as the Ottawa Welfare Bureau which quickly collapsed under the rapidly increasing demand. In order to address the issue of unemployment, the city created the Public Welfare Department to administer relief to affected families.
Direct social assistance in the form of food, clothing and cash was handled by the Public Welfare Department under Bessie Touzel. While doubtless a valuable support mechanism for many residents impoverished by the Depression, it was also strictly controlled by managers in a council whose concerns too often tended to be with the efficient administration of resources rather than the welfare of the city’s poorer residents. In his opening address of the 1921 session of council, Mayor John J. Allen announced that on the one hand direct assistance was a more effective means of offsetting the effects of the depression, while on the other, promising to strictly control how this assistance was dispensed through the acquisition of more fraud investigators. In practice, social assistance was an adversarial process and Touzel was often criticized for being too soft in her duties. When she resigned in the mid-1930s, the Public Welfare Department was closed down for good.

The Depression had a harsh effect on retailers who were hit by poor sales due to the economic climate. In order to drum up some business, Frieman’s Department Store invited professional stripper and international sensation Sally Rand to perform at the store during business hours. Apparently the idea was that of the owner’s son, Lawrence Frieman, while his father was away. The stunt nearly caused a stampede at the doors and the police had to come to disperse the crowds.

**Sports**
In 1923, Ottawa opened a Hockey Auditorium at the corner of O'Connor and Argyle, launching a 44 year life span of screaming fans and hockey heroes.

In 1925, the Ottawa Football Club’s team, the Rough Riders, won their first ever Grey Cup against the Winnipeg Tammary Tigers with a score of 24 to 1. Played at Landsdowne Park on December 5, the huge puddles and freezing temperatures placed a damper on the game, but the fans had a great time.

**Growth of Cars**
Private automobiles were becoming more popular. By 1931, there were 23,000 privately-owned automobiles and 3,200 trucks in the city. The Esso station presently at Wellington and Island Park is the original structure with the same art deco architecture as when it was built in 1931. In 1931, the city approved the installation of over 30 in-ground gasoline tanks for filling stations and other purposes.

1936-1948 - **J.E. Stanley Lewis**
(February 29, 1888-August 18, 1970) was Ottawa's longest serving mayor, to date, from 1936 to 1948. He was born in Ottawa in 1888. He owned and operated an electrical store in the city. He was first elected to City Council as an alderman in 1930. It was during Lewis' term as mayor, in September 1946, that 25 veterans of World War II and their families took over the abandoned Kildare Barracks at Rideau and Chapel to protest the lack of housing. When Barbara
Ann Scott won the World Figure Skating Championships in 1947, she was presented with a car by Lewis on her triumphant return; however, she was not able to accept the gift from the city because she wished to retain amateur status.

DIRECT DIAL SERVICE
With the development of automated switching in the field of telecommunications, it became possible to dial parties directly over the telephone. Prior to that, all switching was manual and connections had to be requested from the operator. In 1935 direct dial telephone service was introduced in Ottawa.

WAR MEMORIAL
The redevelopment of Elgin Street and the installation of the war memorial were completed in 1938. The memorial was designed by British sculptor Vernon March who won an international competition for the design in 1926. Although March died in 1930, his brothers and sisters completed the work in 1932. Figures were put on display in England until being moved to Canada in 1937. The base and archway were completed in 1938. The landscaping was completed at the last minute in 1939 in time for the Royal Visit of King George and Queen Elizabeth in May.

WORLD WAR II
On September 10th, 1939, Canada joined Britain in declaring war on Germany and the Second World War began. Forty thousand residents of the city of Ottawa volunteered for military service over the course of the war,
as well as a similar number from the surrounding region. Ottawa was also one of the first cities to set up volunteer blood donor clinics, which received over 100,000 participants during their operation. In July of 1940, Ottawa became the top-secret repository of much of Europe’s wealth during the war. In an action known as Operation Fish, gold and securities were transferred from Europe by unmarked ship to Canada, where the securities were held in storage in Montreal, and a total of 60,000,000 ounces of gold were held in the vaults of the Bank of Canada in Ottawa on Wellington Street. The actual handling of the gold was conducted by military and RCMP personnel dressed as normal workmen. Crews were unable to keep up with the shipments, and the amount of gold was too great for the bank to store. As a result, many crates of gold ended up lining the hallways of the Bank under round-the-clock supervision of the RCMP.

On May 17, 1939, King George and Queen Elizabeth arrived in Ottawa for four days for the first Royal visit since 1927, and the first visit by reigning British monarchs ever (During their visit, the King and Queen laid the cornerstone for the Supreme Court Building and were present at the unveiling of the War Memorial in Confederation Square. The Royal visit was, in the opinion of many residents, the grandest occasion in the city’s history to that point. It is estimated that over 500,000 residents came out to see the Royal Couple during their visit.

On December 30, 1941, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill addressed the Canadian Parliament, exercising his legendary oratory skills in a stirring speech. After his visit to
Parliament, he was taken to the studio of Yousef Karsh, an Ottawa portrait photographer who came to be internationally recognized for his pictures.

**END OF WAR**
A city-wide party broke out on May 9, 1945 with the surrender of Germany to the Allies. Three months later, the celebration began all over again with the surrender of Japan. In total, the War lasted 5 years, 8 months, and 6 days. The population of the city swelled to 149,831 by the end of the War.

The Dutch royal family was in exile in Ottawa during the war years. On January 19, 1943, Princess Margariet was born to Dutch Princess Julianna and Prince Bernhard at the Ottawa Civic Hospital. In order to comply with the rites of succession for the Dutch crown, Princess Margariet had to be born on Dutch soil to acquire royal status. To overcome this problem, the Ottawa Civic Hospital ceded the maternity room to the Netherlands for a day, thus making succession possible. By way of thanks for this action, since the war the Dutch throne has sent an annual gift of tulip bulbs to Ottawa.

During the Depression, sports became a major part of the culture of the city. Hockey was a favourite pastime and between 1894 and 1934 when the team retired, the Ottawa Silver Seven won the Stanley Cup once. Football was also a major activity in the city.
In the fall of 1942, Carleton College was founded by Dr. Herbert Marshall Tory, then 78. College was born of the perceived need within the city for a non-Catholic university, since the University of Ottawa was both Catholic and predominantly French. Tory was the head of the local Association for the Advancement of Learning, which ultimately founded the college. It initially offered evening classes in the Glebe Collegiate secondary school. The faculty of Arts and Sciences was established at Carleton College which moved to its First Avenue campus and started awarding degrees.

Across town, at Lansdowne Park, the military has set up a manning depot, where soldiers are being prepped for their training. No one was using the sports field anyway. On the grounds of the Experimental Farm, inside one of a number of temporary buildings, a team works day and night to intercept coded German messages and send them back to Britain.

The last recorded population, in 1921, hovered slightly above 107,800. By 1941, the population had grown by 43% and reached more than 154,500.
THE INDUSTRY

One area that saw a major change was LeBreton Flats and along the Ottawa River, where the E.B. Eddy plant operated.

The building of rail cars, airplanes and building parts for airplanes, the bureaucracy, all of that contributed to a very, very busy city at that time.

Ottawa also had a strong industrial sector, especially with the Ottawa Car Company. They produced bomb bay doors, wing tips and machinery for the Lancaster Bombers, Also built the Avro Anson, which is a smaller training aircraft. This was all done in LeBreton Flats."

WORKING WOMEN

Women took over many of the jobs that were considered the purview of men. That meant working in Ottawa's industrial sector alongside the men who stayed behind, making machine parts and doing heavy labour.

Because women weren't allowed to be fighting on the front lines, women in the armed forces often worked as secretaries.

Women flooded into Ottawa from all over Canada. To house them, the government erected army barracks, one of them being where the American Embassy stands today along Sussex Dr. Rows upon rows of the barebone barracks were used to house 360 single women -- all of them part of the public servant boom that saw the sector triple to 36,000 during the war.
Women paid $8 a week in rent, the equivalent of $105.53 today.

IMMIGRANTS

Life became very difficult for Italian and German immigrants in Ottawa during this time. Fearing that they were supporting or sympathizing with the Axis, Italian and German workers who were employed by the city were fired; many of them worked at the fire department.

THE EXPERIMENTAL FARM

Nestled among the temporary buildings on Experimental Farm property was a particular building staffed with forces members -- many of them women -- who helped to intercept German messages. The messages were then sent over to Britain for decoding, the effort by a man named Alan Turing, as depicted in the 2014 movie The Imitation Game starring Benedict Cumberbatch.

ENDING THE WAR

As the war ended, it was apparent that a huge weight had been lifted off the city's shoulders. A massive parade erupted in Ottawa on May 8, 1945 -- also known as V-E (Victory in Europe) Day Celebrations.

WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING -- PRIME MINISTER

However, conscription was an issue.
Before the war started, the Liberals and Conservatives agreed to not instate conscription. But when recruitment began to slow down in 1942, King held a plebiscite -- a referendum -- to ask Canadians to release the government from its promise not to impose conscription for overseas service.

With the exception of Quebec, Canada voted in favour, which apparently upset King.

Charlotte Elizabeth Whitton, OC, CBE (March 8, 1896 – January 25, 1975) was a Canadian feminist and mayor of Ottawa. She was the first female mayor of a major city in Canada, serving from 1951 to 1956 and again from 1960 to 1964. (Whitton is sometimes mistakenly credited as the first woman ever to serve as a mayor in Canada, but this distinction is in fact held by Barbara Hanley, who became mayor of the small town of Webbwood in 1936.)

Whitton attended Queen's University, where she was the star of the women's hockey team and was known as the fastest skater in the league.\cite{citation needed} At Queen's, she also served as editor of the Queen's Journal newspaper in 1917; and was the newspaper's first female editor. From Queen's she became the founding director of the Canadian Council on Child Welfare from 1920-1941 (which became the Canadian Welfare Council, now the Canadian Council on Social Development) and helped bring about a wide array of new legislation to help children. Despite her strong views on women's equality, Whitton was a strong social conservative and did not support making divorce easier. Whitton was Ottawa's city controller in 1951. Upon the unexpected death
of mayor Grenville Goodwin that August, Whitton was immediately appointed acting Mayor and on 30 September 1951 was confirmed by city council to remain Mayor until the end of the normal three-year term. Whitton was a staunch defender of Canada's traditions, and condemned Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson's proposal in 1964 for new national flag to replace the traditional Canadian Red Ensign. Whitton dismissed Pearson's design as a 'white badge of surrender, waving three dying maple leaves' which might as well be 'three white feathers on a red background,' a symbol of cowardice. 'It is a poor observance of our first century as a nation if we run up a flag of surrender with three dying maple leaves on it,' she said. (Ottawa Citizen, 21 May 1964; Globe and Mail, May 22, 1964.) For Whitton, the Red Ensign, with its Union Jack and coat of arms containing symbols of England, Scotland, Ireland and France (or a similar flag with traditional symbols on it) would be a stronger embodiment of the Canadian achievement in peace and war. She became well known for her assertiveness and for her vicious wit with which many male colleagues, and once the Lord Mayor of London were attacked. She is famous for the quotation: "Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult."

In 1955 she appeared on the American game show and television series What's My Line. In 1967 she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. Whitton never married, but lived for years with her partner, Margaret Grier. Her relationship with Grier was not widespread public knowledge until 1999, 24 years after Whitton's death, when the National Archives of Canada publicly released the last of her personal papers, including many intimate personal letters between Whitton and Grier. The release of these papers sparked much debate in the Canadian media about whether Whitton and Grier's relationship could be characterized as lesbian, in
the modern sense, or merely as an emotionally intimate friendship between two unmarried women.

GREAT FIRE OF 1900

OTTAWA, APRIL 1900
FIRST SPRING OF THE CENTURY
SUNSHINE AND A SOUTH WIND BLOWING
LIVE SPARKS FROM A LOOSE CHIMNEY

FIRE SOON BEGAT FIRE
RUNNING HARD FROM ROOF TO ROOF
CROSS THE RIVER ON THE FLAT LAND
WIND IN THEIR FACES TELLS THE TRUTH

HELL’S A COMING IT’S COMIN THIS WAY
IT’S A DAY OF RECKONING RECKON WE BETTER PRAY

ONE PM THE FLATS CAUGHT FIRE
WILD EYED HORSES IN THE STREET
MORE FIRE THAN FIREMEN
AIR FULL OF ASHES AND DEFEAT

SO YOUR HOUSE AND HOME ABANDON
PUT YOUR BACK TO WHAT USED TO BE
AND HEAD FOR THE COOL HIGH GROUND
DOWN HERE THERE’S ONLY DESTINY
AND THE GREAT FIRE OF 1900 IT BURNED ON AND ON AND ON....

DOWN THE MAP TO THE OPEN FIELDS RICH AND POOR HOMES TOOK THE BLAZE TILL A LINE OF BLACKENED CITIZENS PUT A HALT TO THE FIRE’S RAGE

PAUPERS AND PRIME MINISTERS WATCHED THE BONFIRE FROM ON HIGH AS THE ORANGE DIED TO DESTRUCTION AND THE SCORCHED EARTH GAVE A SIGH

THREE MILES LONG HALF A MILE WIDE 3000 HOMELESS BUT SOMEHOW ONLY SEVEN DIED

AND THE GREAT FIRE OF 1900...INSTRUMENTAL

NEXT DAY IN THE NEARBY CHURCH THE HOMELESS PRAYED AGAIN EVEN AS THE FLATS BEGAN TO RISE FROM THE ASHES OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

JUST A PAGE NOW IN YOUR HISTORY BOOK AND AN INCH OF ASH BELOW GROUND BUT THE FLAME NEVER REALLY DIED THAT DAY IT JUST MOVED TO ANOTHER PART OF TOWN

AND THE GREAT FIRE OF 1900...