

Frederick G. Todd and the Origins of the Park System in Canada's Capital

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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 Gréber (1950).

Keywords: Capital city, Ottawa, parks, Frederick Todd.

This article examines an early episode in the formal planning history of Canada's capital city. Frederick G. Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report to the Ottawa Improvement Commission* is sometimes included as the first of a series of plans for the capital prepared by federal agencies.¹ The article describes how the young landscape architect was caught in the politics of planning for the capital at an early stage in his successful career as a planning consultant. The analysis of the 1903 report demonstrates that it was a preliminary design for a park and open space system rather than a comprehensive plan. However, it will also demonstrate that Todd's *Preliminary Report* had influence well beyond its modest size and cost, shaping the future approach to open space planning for the Canadian capital for the next seventy years.

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The Ottawa Improvement Commission (OIC)

Ottawa was a poor excuse for a national capital in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It was a one-industry town, and that industry was lumber, not government.² The considerable natural beauty of the site was marred by the wood-based industries during this period. Beyond the ugly appearance of its wooden buildings, Canada's seat of government had no paved streets, no sewers, no gaslights, and no piped water supply. Smallpox broke out in 1871 and 1874, and Ottawa suffered through a deadly typhoid epidemic in 1911.³

The politicians and 350 civil servants occupied only the picturesque triptych of gothic buildings on Parliament Hill.⁴ The legislators were short-term boarders in hotels, and the civil servants barely made a dent in the society of "one of the roughest, booziest, least law-abiding towns in North America."⁵ The governors general and their wives toured the country constantly, filling their diaries with accounts of Canada's natural wonders and spending as much time as possible in the more civilized confines of Montréal and Québec.

Ottawa was considered a hardship post for these British vice-regal diplomats, some of whom were familiar with more ambitious efforts to plan European capitals.⁶ As new countries were created during the early twentieth century, a trend emerged to plan new capitals (Canberra, New Delhi) or replan existing cities (Washington, Rome, Berlin) as more complex expressions of national power and identity.⁷ Other capitals were often the location of early experiments in urban design, parks, public health, and social reform, as a broad movement to establish urban planning emerged in Europe and North America.⁸

The official neglect of Canada's capital began to change in the 1890s, under Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier. Laurier did not have a good early impression of the capital,⁹ but in 1893 he promised "to make the city of Ottawa as attractive as possibly could be; to make it the centre of the intellectual development of this country and above all the Washington of the north."¹⁰ "Washington of the North" became the slogan for Ottawa's improvement as a national capital, establishing an image with some inappropriate consequences. After some prompting by the governor general's wife, Lady Aberdeen,¹¹ Laurier established the OIC in 1899.¹² The OIC was granted \$60,000 per year and reported directly to the minister of finance, W. S. Fielding.

A board of volunteer commissioners appointed by the federal government governed the OIC. It had no legislative mandate to plan the capital city and no authority over the local government, although the mayor of Ottawa was an *ex officio* commissioner. Its initial agenda was to beautify the city. The OIC had a small staff for park maintenance and construction supervision. Its first chairman was Sir Henry Bate, a local businessman who



Figure 1: Frederick G. Todd as a Young Man, ca. 1909

Source: Norman Photographic Archives (II-175018), McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montréal.

had welcomed Laurier to Ottawa on the day he made his “Washington of the North” promise.¹³ Both Laurier and Finance Minister Fielding took personal interest in the work of the commission. It was clear that the commission had the direct personal support of Prime Minister Laurier and a special place in his heart:

If that I should relinquish my present position, I shall simply go in to private life. There is only one position that I could accept, and it would be to become a member of the Improvement Commission of Ottawa.¹⁴

At first, there was general acclaim for its work. The OIC cleared the west bank of the Rideau Canal and built a parkway that was both popular and improved the view when entering the capital by train. The OIC started these improvements without professional design assistance, relying on their superintendent, former Ottawa city engineer Robert Surtees, and construction foreman Alex Stuart.

However, the OIC’s ambitions exceeded its \$60,000 annual budget.¹⁵ They had an additional \$15,000 under construction in early 1903 and plans for \$271,500 more in the short term. The OIC decided to prepare a general plan of all the improvements and a detailed cost estimate. Most important, the OIC sought permission to borrow money to carry out the plan.¹⁶ Chair-

man Bate and Senator F. Frost were detailed to approach the minister of finance with this plan. By 11 June 1903, they could report success: the minister was supportive. The OIC requested permission to issue bonds to the extent of \$250,000 and to secure the services “of a first class landscape architect.” The OIC’s superintendent, Robert Surtees, was authorized to approach Montréal consultant Frederick Todd in July 1903.¹⁷

Frederick G. Todd, Landscape Architect and Planner

The OIC had few choices when it decided to seek the advice of a landscape architect in 1903 because the profession was in its infancy in Canada. Frederick Gage Todd (1876-1948) became Canada’s first resident landscape architect when he established an office in Montréal in 1900 (Figure 1). A native of Concord, New Hampshire, Todd studied at the Agricultural College of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst from 1893-97, where he completed the two-year undergraduate program and two years of graduate study.¹⁸ From 1896-1900, Todd worked in the famous Olmsted office in Brookline, Massachusetts. Although Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., retired due to health problems in 1895, Todd was exposed to outstanding landscape architects during his apprenticeship, including John C. Olmsted, Charles Eliot, and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.¹⁹ The office was then implementing the remarkable “Emerald Necklace” regional parks system for Boston and had ongoing work with Mount Royal Park in Montréal, first planned by Olmsted Sr. in 1871.²⁰

When Todd opened the Montréal office, he started with a variety of local clients from the Olmsted Bros. firm, completing design and construction work for private gardens, Westmount Park, Mount Royal Park, and the grounds for the Royal Victoria Hospital and Trinity College, Toronto.²¹ His scope of services and normal working technique was described in a 1900 “Circular as to Professional Methods and Charges”:

My business is the supplying of advice with respect to the arrangement of land for use and the accompanying landscape for pleasure, to the owners of country and suburban estates, park commissions, hotel proprietors and persons or corporations desiring to lay out suburban neighborhoods or summer resorts. I consult with owners, architects, engineers and gardeners respecting the placing of buildings, the laying out of roads, the grading of surfaces, the treatment of existing woods and shrubbery, and the placing and arrangement of new plantations . . .

Todd noted that the first step in any project is a preliminary site visit and report, to be followed by proper plans drawn on topographic mapping:

. . . A preliminary visit and consultation on the ground is first necessary to enable me to acquaint myself with the client’s wishes, and with the physical and financial condition of the problem that I may suggest the most suitable methods of procedure. . . . The

most satisfactory result in any but the smallest places will be obtained by having plans made. These plans are based on a topographical map furnished by the client.²²

Todd's rates were from \$25 to \$100 plus expenses for a preliminary visit and thereafter \$25 per day and 5 percent of the cost of work constructed.²³

Further clues to Todd's approach to parks planning can be found in his 1905 article "Character in Park Design":

After a thorough examination of the property, we shall probably find that it has some dominant natural characteristic features. Sometimes this character may be especially strong, as is the case with our own Mount Royal Park, while other parks may seem to possess no very strong character . . . yet there is just as much care necessary in treating this park to bring out its magnificent possibilities, as would be required to lay out a park on level ground. Indeed, greater care is required, for there is always the temptation to make a show so that people will see that something is being done, whereas the most pleasing way would be to have everything done in such a way that one would suppose that nature herself was responsible.²⁴

By seeking landscapes that reflected "nature herself," Todd clearly embraced the design philosophy of the Olmsted office.²⁵

Although substantial commissions from the Olmsted office helped establish Todd's Canadian reputation, the young landscape architect appears to have landed the Ottawa job without the assistance of his former mentors. Todd approached the OIC in March 1903, supported by recommendations from his clients and letters of introduction from two Montréal liberal politicians.²⁶ Todd's timing was excellent since the newly created commission needed a consultant to formulate a plan. Three months later, he was retained and agreed to start work within two weeks.²⁷

Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report*

In retaining Todd, the OIC obtained the services of a sole practitioner with excellent training but little experience in the robust politics of capital city planning. He delivered a thirty-nine-page report (11,300 words) to the OIC on 28 August 1903, approximately six weeks after commencing work. The report was a preliminary plan for a regional parks system for a 120 square mile (300 square kilometer) area on both sides of the Ottawa River. It was supported by five maps (now lost) and thirty-nine photographs, of which seventeen were included in the printed version.²⁸

The six-page introduction contains some of the most compelling justifications for planning written in the era:

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 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. (P. 2)

Todd's report was based on two principles that ran against the OIC's self-perceived agenda: (1) the plan was not just for Ottawa, and (2) the Canadian capital should not emulate Washington. His vision was grander, not limited

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. (P. 1)

His regional view incorporated both sides of the Ottawa River, including lands that were outside the boundaries of the city.

Second, Todd debunked the notion that the planning of Ottawa should make it the "Washington of the North," citing the considerable differences in the sites of the two cities but also reflecting his naturalistic design style:

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. (Pp. 2-3)

Todd writes approvingly of L'Enfant's 1791 plan and the recommendations of the 1902 McMillan Commission plan released only a few months before Todd received his commission.²⁹ It is not surprising that Todd was familiar with the McMillan Commission plan since it was widely publicized and Todd's colleague F. L. Olmsted Jr. (1870-1957) was a principal consultant.

The remainder of Todd's introduction contains much unsupported optimism about Ottawa's future growth and prospects, a characteristic that was typical of City Beautiful planning and in tune with his clients' interests.³⁰ He correctly identified that planning for Ottawa the capital differs from a purely commercial city. However, Todd was completely wrong on one major assumption: that Ottawa was destined to become a great manufacturing city as a result of its "immense water power." Hull and Ottawa were indeed primarily industrial cities in 1903, with enormous piles of lumber adjacent to Parliament and the rivers that were both unattractive and a serious fire hazard (p. 5).³¹ The woods-based economy of the Ottawa valley in 1903 was

based on rapacious exploitation of its hinterland using nonsustainable development practices. The lumber, pulp, and paper industries declined in the mid-twentieth century, leaving only a single toilet paper factory as a backdrop to Parliament Hill.

The remaining thirty-two pages of Todd's *Preliminary Report* present a general scheme for a regional parks system containing the following elements, ranging from large-scale to small-scale improvements (p. 7):

- large natural parks or reserves,
- suburban parks,
- boulevards and parkways,
- waterway parks—bathing,
- city parks and squares and playgrounds.

The OIC was probably not expecting a recommendation that they should acquire thousands of acres of woods, but Todd incorporated original forests to “provide a place where nature may still be enjoyed, unmarred by contact with humanity.” He recommended acquiring blocks with “picturesque and diversified scenery” including two thousand acres in the Gatineau Valley and the lands surrounding Meach Lake (Figure 2).³²

Perhaps sensing that the OIC would be hostile to the wilderness parks proposal, Todd stressed the low maintenance required for these reserves, citing London's Epping Forest to prove his point. He exhorted the commission to provide the large future population of Ottawa with

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? (Pp. 9-10)

Todd cites the “mental, physical and moral” benefits of access to these reserves as a change from the “exacting cares of business and the impure air of crowded streets” (p. 10) using the rationale frequently employed by proponents of the Parks Movement, with its roots in Olmstedian planning.³³

Todd supported the OIC's proposal to extend Rockcliffe Park as its first suburban park project. He recommended that the OIC purchase the adjacent land and undertake minimal improvements to its natural condition, which is illustrated with several photographs (see Figure 3). A second suburban park of one hundred to two hundred acres west of the built-up area of Ottawa should be established and the Experimental Farm south of the city should be maintained as public open space. The southern area would also be complemented by forty to seventy acres of woods on either side of the Rideau River. In keeping with the regional scope of his report, Todd also recommended a park adjacent to neighboring Hull, outside the jurisdiction of the OIC. These parks would create a balanced ring of intermediate-sized suburban parks on all four edges of the 1903 built-up area (Figure 2).

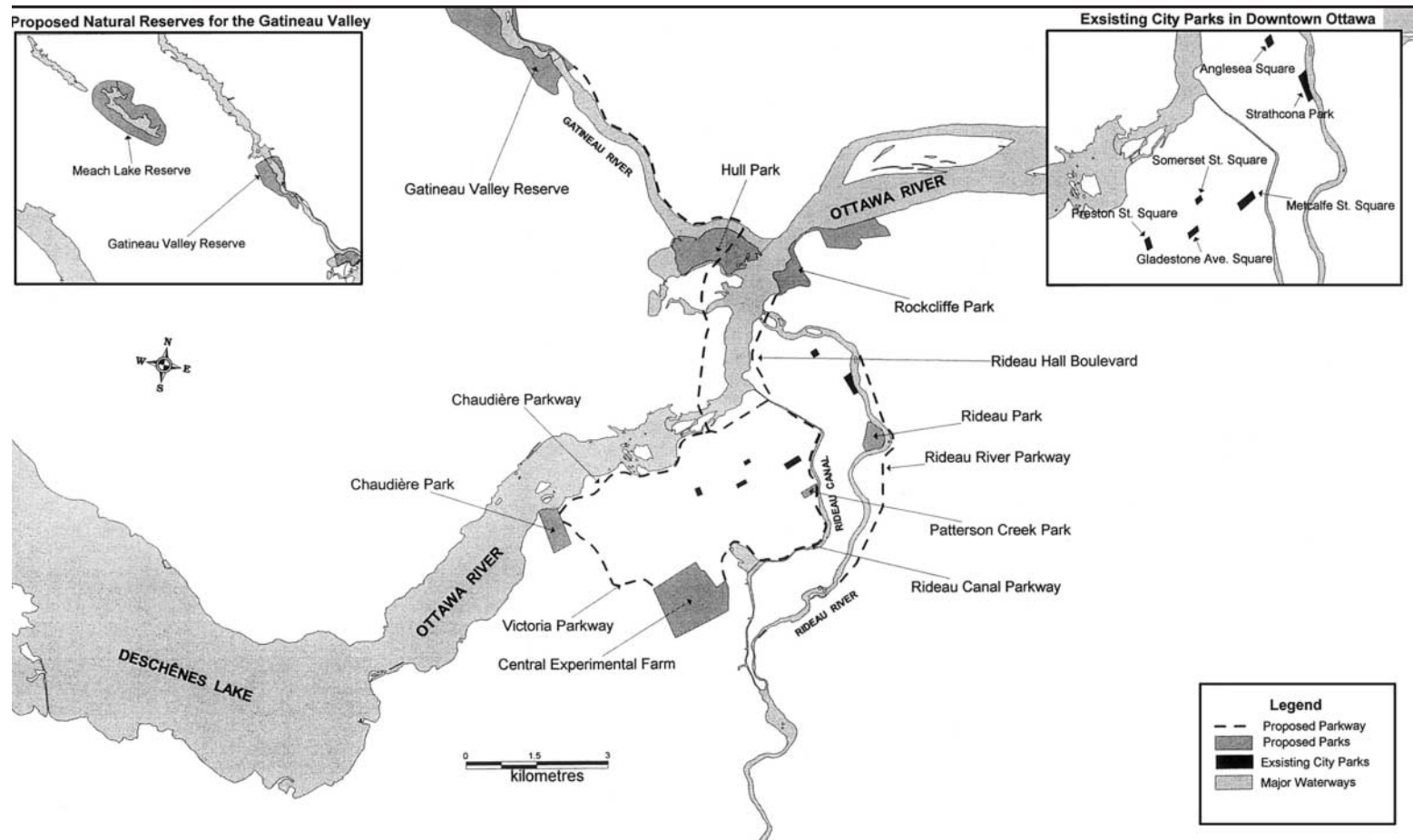


Figure 2: Parks and Pathways Proposed by Todd in 1903 for the Ottawa-Hull Region

Source: Todd, *Preliminary Report to the Ottawa Improvement Commission*, National Archives of Canada file 6885 T-56. Based on National Capital Commission 2000 Ottawa base map. Drawing by Jeffrey O'Neill.



Figure 3: Todd's Photograph Illustrating the Need for Minimum Improvements
Source: Todd (1903), "View in Proposed Extension to Rockcliffe Park" (p. 8).

Todd recommended interconnecting these parks and forest reserves with a system of parkways and boulevards. The OIC had already begun street improvements along the west bank of the Rideau Canal and built King Edward Avenue as a connection to the governor general's residence in

Rideau Hall, adjacent to Rockcliffe Park. Although this new boulevard provided a cheap and safe passage to Parliament,³⁴ it ignored the scenic possibilities of a route along the cliffs on the edge of the Ottawa River. Todd provided a preliminary description and photographs for the river route. He also recommended parkways along the Ottawa and Rideau Rivers to connect the other elements of the preferred parks system (see Figure 2).

Within the city, he called for landscaping a number of small parks and squares for rest and relaxation. He warned against attempts to display the gardener's "ability to design curious and fantastically shaped flower beds, which unfortunately, cannot always be classed as artistic" (p. 23). Instead, he recommended small playgrounds and natural treatment of open spaces. The city already had several unlandscaped parcels for these purposes. However, Todd recommended immediate purchase of the Patterson's Creek lands adjacent to the Rideau Canal (see Figure 2). He concluded with general advice and suggestions for the future design for parks, boulevards, and driveways, citing its beautiful natural shores and fine woods adjacent to the center of the city (see Figure 4).

Todd appeared to be gently critical of the OIC's initial work to date, stating,

Real landscape art is nothing if it is not conservative of natural beauty, and does not consist 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. (Pp. 26-27)

For parkways, Todd suggested that "if the road seems to wiggle on ahead without apparent reason, like a gigantic serpent, the curves will appear unnatural, meaningless and annoying" (p. 35). Todd issued a plea for the park improvement to be carried out on a systematic basis "in strict accordance to a pre-arranged plan" (p. 39).

Todd's plan truly was a preliminary report of the type described in his professional curriculum. He visited the city, took photographs, prepared one map and four diagrams, and wrote the report and printed it within six weeks. Todd was paid \$489.93 for his time, expenses, and printing, indicating that he probably did not charge more than fifteen to sixteen days to the project at his standard \$25 rate.³⁵ There is no possibility that Todd could have prepared anything more detailed than a preliminary study in six weeks, given that he worked without even the most basic contour mapping for Ottawa.³⁶

Implementation of Todd's Plan

The OIC had the potential to become the young landscape architect's long-term client. The Olmsted office, where he apprenticed, was often



Figure 4: Patterson Creek Lands Recommended for Immediate Purchase
 Source: Todd (1903), "Proposed Patterson Creek Park," (p. 24).

retained for years to implement a park system plan—preparing detailed design and tender documents, supervising construction, planting, and follow-up. An appointment as the consulting landscape architect to the OIC, based on Todd's rates, could mean fees of \$12,500 (5 percent of \$250,000) from the commission's proposed capital program. In addition to the professional fees, the prestige attached to such a high profile appointment would likely have established his reputation in central Canada.

At first, everything went well. The press coverage of the *Preliminary Report* in both Ottawa papers was positive—a rare feat—and the OIC scheduled a special meeting to discuss Todd's report.³⁷ It took two meetings for the good news to arrive. On 21 October 1903, the OIC agreed

to express the pleasure of the Commission at the general comprehensiveness of the scheme, and to say that, while the Commission is not able to accept it in its entirety, they are prepared to receive it in regard to such features as meet their general approval, and to further inform Todd that as soon as certain lands intended for parks are secured, the Commission would be prepared to make arrangements with him to obtain his services as Consulting Landscape Architect, if such terms can be obtained satisfactorily.³⁸

It appeared that Todd would design the parks system for Canada's capital. Unfortunately, the relationship began to unravel almost at once. It began

with a dispute over Todd's fees for the report and the cost of printing extra copies. He was not paid until February 1904, and he initially refused to accept his cheque as full payment for his services.³⁹

Todd got some indirect support from the press. The *Ottawa Citizen* criticized the OIC's procedures, engineering, and design of the previous parks. These articles landed on the prime minister's desk in May 1904. Within three weeks, the OIC retained Todd to design their next two parks: Strathcona Park along the Rideau River and Somerset Square in a downtown neighborhood (see Figure 2).⁴⁰ The OIC applied to the government for permission to issue debentures to construct the work, estimated at \$10,000.

Todd's plans for the two parks were scheduled for approval at the same 23 September 1904 meeting that the Department of Finance's approval of the construction funding was reported. Todd must have been outraged to hear that OIC engineer Robert Surtees prepared his own plan for Strathcona Park, which was adopted at the closed meeting.⁴¹ Todd sent letters of protest to no avail, and the OIC even tried to have its solicitor wriggle out of paying the landscape architect's account. He was finally paid \$803.30 in March 1905.⁴²

It appears that the OIC was simply not prepared to pay for landscape architectural services when the design and construction supervision was available from their own staff. Todd must have seemed both young (age 27) and expensive (8½ percent of construction) compared to their in-house engineer. The planning and aesthetic arguments in favor of professional design assistance only appeared to hold sway when the commission sought financial or political approvals. In practice, the OIC designed their own work, completing the two urban parks and extending the Rideau Canal Driveway. It carried out over \$1.2 million in capital improvements between 1900 and 1912, with all the work designed and supervised by Surtees (1900-1906) and later by construction superintendent Stuart.⁴³ Between 1905 and 1912, Todd was not involved in any OIC work, and his 1903 report was seemingly forgotten.

Some cracks began to appear in the OIC's political support following the appointment of the fourth Earl Grey (1857-1917) as Canada's governor general in 1904. The earl was a patron of several English town-planning movements: he inaugurated Letchworth, the first Garden City, and served as a member of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust for more than a decade.⁴⁴ Both Lady Grey and her husband closely followed Ottawa planning issues and personally designed some of the vistas in Rockcliffe Park. The Greys succeeded in pushing the OIC to build an improved parkway connecting the vice regal residence along the crest of the embankment on the Ottawa River along the line generally suggested by Todd. The new road was named Lady Grey Drive when it opened in 1914.⁴⁵ The governor general also lobbied for the extension of Rockcliffe Park, which the OIC finally purchased in 1912.⁴⁶

Governor General Earl Grey was dismayed by the absence of a comprehensive plan for the improvements to the national capital. He built support for better planning by inviting British advocates Raymond Unwin, Thomas Mawson, and Henry Vivian to speak in Ottawa as a part of North American tours.⁴⁷ Mawson was complimentary about Ottawa's splendid natural setting but was more critical than Todd about the design of the OIC's projects: "rustic work, curly walks, sprawling patterns or specimen trees and shrubs."⁴⁸

Remarkably, Colborne P. Meredith (1874-1967), an OIC commissioner, coached Mawson's criticism.⁴⁹ In 1910, Meredith was young, aggressive, and well connected.⁵⁰ The commission had become a bit stodgy by 1910, and there was a whiff of scandal concerning their operations.⁵¹ If Prime Minister Laurier wanted the young Meredith to stir things up, he got more than he bargained for. After the OIC ignored his suggestions that they hire design consultants, Meredith started a well-coordinated lobby to destroy its reputation and take control of a new plan for the nation's capital.⁵² He formed a loose affiliation with Ottawa engineer Noulon Cauchon and Mawson to pursue the commission himself.

At first, Meredith did not seem to be aware of Todd's 1903 report and suggested that the Olmsted firm be retained to prepare a plan.⁵³ Meredith visited the Olmsted office on an unofficial basis in 1910 to sound them out but took no further action.⁵⁴ He finally wrote Todd, requesting a copy of his *Preliminary Report* in October 1911, following the victory of Robert Borden's Conservative Party in federal elections.⁵⁵ Todd realized that the new regime might offer some possibilities and offered to meet with Meredith. Todd also wrote to Mawson offering his services, perhaps not realizing that the English landscape architect was working with Meredith. Meredith tried to coax Todd into publicly criticizing the OIC, but without success.

Meredith's objective was an elite commission of technical experts to supervise preparation of a comprehensive plan. His model was based on Washington's successful experience with the 1902 Senate Parks Commission (McMillan Commission).⁵⁶ The new prime minister turned Meredith's lobbying to his political advantage. After Mawson's attacks, Sir Wilfrid Laurier defended the OIC in Parliament, claiming that Todd's long-forgotten 1903 *Preliminary Report* had guided the commission.⁵⁷ Meredith responded by sending Borden a detailed and confidential memo that not only critiqued the implementation of the Todd report section by section but also attacked the OIC in the severest terms:

The Commission has, from the first, carried on its work in a most unbusinesslike way, and persists to continue doing so notwithstanding all the criticisms that have been made, and are content to have the general park scheme, the engineering work and the designing of structures requiring artistic training done by a so-called superintendent, who is nothing more than a bricklayer.⁵⁸

The prime minister asked for permission to include Meredith's analysis of the 1903 report in a government policy paper on Ottawa planning. Meredith

agreed, either not understanding the furor his remarks would cause or perhaps relishing it. The policy paper included the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada memoranda, the criticism of Unwin and Mawson, the entire text of the Todd report, and Meredith's critique.⁵⁹ It was front-page news in the Ottawa newspapers, with headlines such as "Merciless Analysis of Commission's Work."⁶⁰

The OIC responded by co-opting Todd and mounting a public relations campaign. The commission issued a beautifully printed report, lavishly illustrated with pictures of its new parks and driveways.⁶¹

Todd was offered the design and supervision of park improvements for a seven-acre site on abandoned cemeteries in downtown Ottawa. Not coincidentally, the lands were directly across the street from Prime Minister Borden's new house. Meredith had been keeping Todd in the dark while secretly trying to force the OIC into giving the commission to Mawson and his Canadian associate, Horace Dunnington-Grubb.⁶² The OIC contacted Todd in September 1912. Having learned from previous experience with the OIC, Todd prepared a detailed cost estimate and contract before commencing the design.⁶³ Meredith had enough gall to write Todd congratulating him on the commission.⁶⁴

Todd designed a charming urban park, with a shelter on the highest point and a view to Parliament Hill (see Figure 5). Without blushing, Laurier's liberal OIC appointees named it Macdonald Gardens after the famous leader of the Conservative Party and Canada's first prime minister. The commission also sent their workmen to improve the grounds of Borden's home. These political gestures and low-level bribery did not work. The prime minister may have been flattered, but he continued to cut the OIC out of future planning initiatives.⁶⁵

Meredith, Mawson, and Noulon Cauchon intensified lobbying for an expert commission to prepare the new Ottawa plan on the 1902 Washington model. Borden wanted a process that was under his direct political control rather than an independent panel of expert professionals. Senior staff members discreetly assembled a group of prominent conservative businessmen in a new Federal Plan Commission (FPC) chaired by Herbert Holt, a railroad engineer and president of the Royal Bank.⁶⁶ Adding Hull to the FPC's mandate followed Todd's recommendation. It was also an astute political move, since the Québec side of the Ottawa River had realized few benefits from Ottawa's designation as the seat of government and received little attention from the OIC.

The FPC ignored Meredith and Mawson's lobby and retained Edward H. Bennett of Chicago as its consulting architect and planner.⁶⁷ After the appointment of Bennett, Todd was on the outside again, but at least he had designed one park. It was his last commission in Ottawa.



Figure 5: Macdonald Park Belvedere, Ottawa
 Source: Photograph by David L. A. Gordon, 1999.

Influence of Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report* on Future Plans for Canada's Capital

Only twelve years separate Todd's *Preliminary Report* and the 1915 *Report of the Federal Plan Commission*, prepared by Edward H. Bennett. Both documents take a regionwide approach, but Bennett's report is perhaps Canada's first comprehensive plan and a national landmark of City Beautiful planning. It addressed the railway, streetcar, road, and canal systems, based on detailed population and traffic forecasts prepared by engineering teams. The 1915 plan included land use controls, zoning controls, and urban design guidelines and proposed a federal district to implement the scheme.⁶⁸

The Holt Commission acknowledged the "highly commendable work of the Ottawa Improvement Commission," especially in building parks in Ottawa: "but the time came when this method was inadequate" (pp. 13, 23). Todd's plan is briefly mentioned (p. 126), but the FPC consultants combined planning methods from the City Scientific and the Parks Movement schools of planning. Parks planning began with population projections showing an increase from 100,000 to 250,000 by 1950, and "since it is necessary now to plan park areas within the city for all time, [the FPC] have provided parks for a city of 350,000" (p. 27). As it happens, the FPC plan-

ners were exactly right about growth to 250,000 by 1950, more by good luck than good projection.⁶⁹ Bennett's team established a performance standard that all residents should be within a half mile of a major park (eight to ten acres). The planners compared existing and future residential areas using population density maps (see Figure 6). Thirteen new parks and forty-one playgrounds were planned using this projection (see Figure 7). They were sited according to field surveys of natural conditions of the type Todd used. Several of the locations were similar (see Table 1), but Bennett also proposed a major park at Dow's Lake. The major parks were connected by a system of eleven new parkways along the rivers and Rideau Canal, in the manner advocated by the 1903 report.⁷⁰

The 1915 FPC appropriated Todd's advocacy of large forest reserves without acknowledging its source. However, they expanded his proposals by an order of magnitude, recommending a great green wedge in the Gatineau Hills, extending from the Laurentian mountains almost to Parliament Hill:

Since it has little commercial value, it could be acquired at slight cost and a great tract of it, consisting of 75,000 or 100,000 acres, should be secured as a national park. Here, at the very door of the capital, should be preserved, for all time, a great area in the state of nature.⁷¹

This wedge of forested hills included Todd's proposal for a two-thousand-acre reserve in the Gatineau River valley. However, the idea of acquiring the entire wedge of hills appears to have originated in Bennett's office. It was featured in the frontispiece to the 1915 plan as a bird's-eye view of the capital. The drawing was originally executed as a 3' x 6' watercolor rendering by Jules Guérin, who also illustrated the 1903 McMillan Commission report on Washington and the 1909 Plan of Chicago.⁷²

Despite its elaborate presentation, the 1915 FPC report also sat on the shelf. The commission was established in late 1913, less than a year before Canada entered World War I, and the nation soon had other priorities. Unfortunately, the report was finally tabled in Parliament only a few weeks after the Centre Block of Parliament Buildings burned in February 1916. Rebuilding the Parliament Buildings diverted any interest in improving the capital in the immediate postwar period. Finally, some Canadian planning advocates, led by Thomas Adams and Noulan Cauchon, attacked the 1915 report as an impractical City Beautiful plan and advocated a City Scientific approach.⁷³

The OIC struggled during the 1920s under a new political master, gradually extending the parkways. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King dominated planning in Canada's capital from 1921 until his retirement in 1948. He replaced the OIC with a new Federal District Commission in 1927. King was sympathetic to Todd's approach to natural design in open space planning. The prime minister assembled a five-hundred-acre estate in the Gatineau Hills that he landscaped in an eccentric but largely rural manner.⁷⁴



Figure 6: City Scientific Analysis Comparing Population Density to Proposed Park Sites
Source: Federal Plan Commission, 1915, Drawing 21.

While in opposition in 1931-35, he supported the Woodlands Preservation League proposals to acquire Gatineau Park and implemented them soon



Figure 7: Edward Bennett's 1915 Parks System Plan for Canada's Capital
Source: Federal Plan Commission 1915, drawing 20.

after upon returning to power.⁷⁵ However, most of King's planning energies in the interwar years were absorbed in building Confederation Square, the City Beautiful style plaza in central Ottawa first advocated by Edward Bennett.⁷⁶

King retained French urbanist Jacques Gréber to prepare the 1937-39 plan for Confederation Square. Gréber was France's leading urban planner and president of its society of landscape architects.⁷⁷ Todd wrote the prime minister in 1937, requesting work as Gréber's local associate. Although the request was seriously considered, he was left out once more.⁷⁸ Todd now seemed resigned to his exclusion from the comprehensive plan he advocated thirty years before, but he appears to have taken Gréber's participation with good grace. Todd was elected president of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners (CSLA) in 1945, at the twilight of his career. The CSLA did not object to Gréber's 1945 appointment to prepare a new comprehensive plan for the capital, but it would have preferred a worldwide competition. The society made Gréber an honorary member along with his patron, Prime Minister Mackenzie King.⁷⁹

Regrettably, Todd did not live to see Gréber's acknowledgment of his role in planning Canada's seat of government. The 1950 *Plan for the National*

TABLE 1
Comparison of 1903 Todd Proposals with Future Plans

	<i>Todd (1903)</i>	<i>Federal Plan Commission (1915)</i>	<i>Cauchon (1922)</i>	<i>Gréber (1950)</i>	<i>Date Area Built</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Large natural reserves						
2,000 acre Gatineau River	Recommended	Recommended	X	X		Cottage development
Meach Lake	Recommended	Recommended	?	Recommended	1945-48	Park built
Gatineau Hills	—	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1935+	Large reserve bought
Suburban parks						
Rockcliffe Park extension	Recommended	Expanded	NA	Expanded	1912	Parks built
Hemlock Lake	Recommended	Partial	NA	Partial	—	Housing development built
Ottawa River Park	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Partial	—	Housing
Hurdman's Bridge	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	—	Infrastructure
Dow's Lake	—	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1940s+	NCC
Hull-Brewery Creek	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1940s	Park built
Boulevards/parkways						
Sussex/Lady Grey Drive	Recommended	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1914	Later modified
Island Park Drive	Recommended	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1920s	Badly built by OIC
Ottawa River Parkway West	Recommended	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1950s	Built by NCC
Rideau Canal Parkway West	Recommended	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1900+	Built by OIC
Rideau Canal Parkway East	X	X	X	Recommended	1960s	Rail relocation
Rideau River Parkway	Recommended	Recommended	NA	—	—	Urban development
Gatineau River Parkway	Recommended	Recommended	NA	—	—	
Gatineau Hills Parkway	—	Recommended	Rec	Recommended	1950s	Gatineau Parkway
City parks						
Strathcona Park	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1912	Landscaped by OIC
Somerset Park	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1912	Landscaped by OIC
MacDonald Gardens	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1914	Todd landscaped for OIC
Patterson Creek	Recommended	Recommended	NA	Recommended	1912	Landscaped by OIC

Note: X = not present; NA = not applicable; NCC = National Capital Commission; OIC = Ottawa Improvement Commission.

Capital contains an extensive discussion of Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report*, praising his support for a long-range, comprehensive plan and criticizing the actions of the OIC:

In many instances his recommendations were not followed or received such an interpretation that the Federal District Commission had afterwards to devote much time and energy in rectifying the mistakes of its predecessor. Flower beds had to be removed from the driveways, concrete ponds demolished in Strathcona Park, and other similar works had to be undertaken throughout the city. Time has aided in obliterating such scars by the weather of concrete and the growth of trees and shrubs. Had Mr. Todd's recommendations been followed, all such duplications of costs would have been avoided.

It is a matter of regret that financial limitations, as well as the lack of a comprehensive plan, have precluded the implementation of many desirable and important specific recommendations contained within the report, the execution of which has now become more difficult.⁸⁰

Gréber reviewed the four major areas of Todd's planned parks system (large natural parks, suburban parks, boulevard and parkways, and city parks) in some detail, drawing precedents for his team's proposals and expressing regret where inaction precluded carrying out the 1903 report.⁸¹

The 1950 *Plan for the National Capital* is a landmark in Canadian planning history. It includes extensive background research, regional land use and transportation plans, urban design schemes for the core, and extensive infrastructure plans.⁸² The parks and open space provisions of the 1950 plan drew heavily from both Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report* and Bennett's 1915 *Federal Plan Commission Report* (see Table 1 and Figure 8). Gréber's team carried the quasi-scientific approach further, starting with population projections, detailed density analyses, parks inventories, and calculations of park space per one thousand people.⁸³

Gréber's parks system was oriented to active recreation and began with proposals for a national stadium, playgrounds, and local parks. Its major open space proposal was a greenbelt (see Figure 9), similar to the one proposed in Patrick Abercrombie's 1945 *Greater London Plan* and Ebenezer Howard's "Social Cities" scheme.⁸⁴ Todd's proposals for riverside parkways were adopted, except for the Rideau River, where it was already too late in 1948. Gréber went further, proposing the relocation of the Ottawa Union Station and replacement of the rail yards on the west side of the Rideau Canal with another parkway.

Gréber's large western park was proposed for the LeBreton Flats area, rather than Todd's proposal for the Little Chaudière. Although the Flats were cleared in 1960 as part of an urban renewal scheme, the park has yet to be built.⁸⁵ Finally, Gréber's team noted that it was too late to implement Todd's proposal for a forest reserve in the Gatineau River valley and pushed for major additions to the park in Gatineau Hills, which were assembled in the 1950s and 1960s. These vast land purchases were supported for tourism

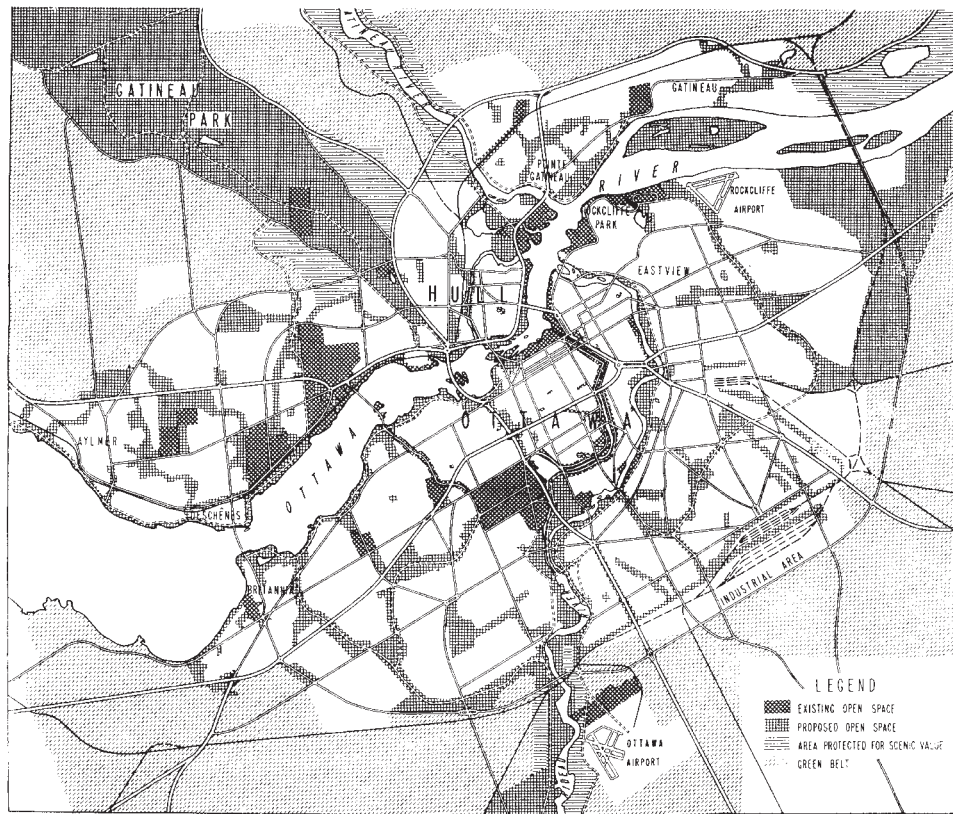


Figure 8: Jacques Gréber's 1950 Parks System Plan for Canada's Capital
 Source: Gréber (1950), Figure 162, p. 225.

but also to preserve examples of the national landscape in line with Todd's prescription a half century previously.⁸⁶

Conclusion

Frederick G. Todd was poorly treated by the OIC. The OIC engaged Todd to create the appearance of comprehensive planning in conjunction with funding requests in 1903 and 1904. The commission then used the landscape architect as a political cover in 1912, when it was attacked in Parliament for shoddy design and lack of planning. The OIC strung Todd along in both instances, purchasing his cooperation by delaying payment of his fees.⁸⁷

The OIC's behavior during Todd's design of Strathcona and Somerset Parks continued the pattern of using the consultant for other political objectives. Todd was ambushed by the OIC engineer and never had a chance to defend his plan before the commissioners in person. Then the

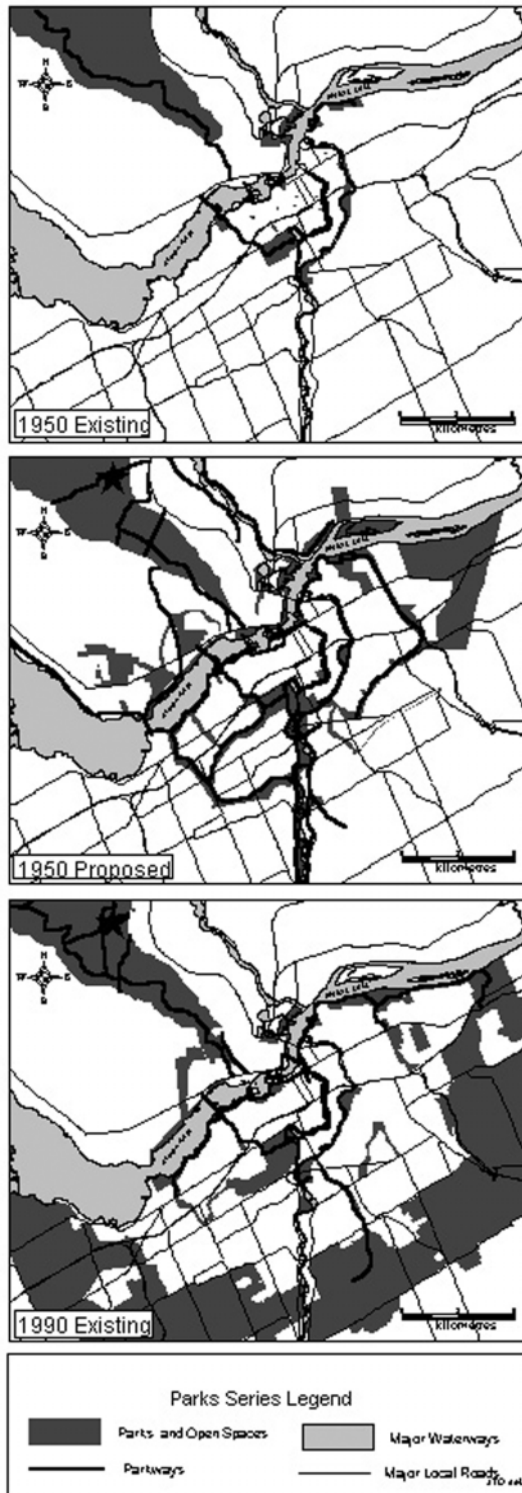


Figure 9: Development of Ottawa-Hull Parks System from 1950-90
 Source: Gréber 1950; NCC 1992 base map. Prepared by Jeffrey O'Neill.

OIC tried to deny him fees for completed work it had commissioned. It was remarkable that Todd did not publicly condemn his former clients then, or later, when Meredith gave him ample opportunity and encouragement.⁸⁸

Todd's tact and discretion stand in distinct contrast to Meredith's actions. He used the landscape architect for his own political agenda, while confidentially promoting the Olmsted office, Dunnington-Grubb, and Mawson as landscape consultants to the commission. Meredith also misled Todd about Mawson, perhaps concealing his attempts to obtain the Ottawa-Hull planning commission with Cauchon and Mawson. It is not clear whether Todd was naïve or simply poorly informed of Ottawa politics from his base in Montréal. It appears that he finally figured out that Meredith was not his ally in early 1913 and limited further contact to showing Meredith his plans before OIC meetings.⁸⁹

It is tempting to overestimate the importance of Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report*, given its stirring prose and the OIC's refusal to implement it, which was so thoroughly documented by Meredith. Later observers treat Todd's role in the planning of the capital quite sympathetically, although they perhaps exaggerate his contribution somewhat.⁹⁰ Meredith was right: Todd's 1903 report was not a comprehensive plan. It was a preliminary study, based on several weeks of fieldwork. Todd did not initiate Ottawa's parkway system since the OIC had already commenced the Rideau Canal driveway before he was retained. He was not the originator of Gatineau Park: Todd suggested a much smaller reserve in the Gatineau River valley, which was never implemented. Other planners did not steal his ideas without attribution: Gréber wrote a thorough and complimentary review, Cauchon cited Todd's work, and even the FPC grudgingly acknowledged some of Todd's proposals.

Yet the citizens of Ottawa certainly got value for the \$489 the OIC spent on Todd's advice. An impartial overview from a skilled designer can sometimes help local residents see their home more clearly. Todd's 1903 *Preliminary Report* was influential because he captured the genius loci of Ottawa. His suggestions to respect the unique natural setting of the city and its gothic-revival parliament buildings, and to avoid any literal planning of a "Washington of the North," still resonate today. Todd's regional approach and admiration for natural systems reflect modern ecological planning principles. His plan for an interconnected parks system reflects the best of the Olmsted tradition and was adopted in every subsequent plan. This parks system was thoroughly implemented over a seven-decade period following the 1903 report. Finally, Todd's advocacy of long-term planning for the welfare of future generations inspired future generations of Ottawa planners.

The final evaluation of Todd's participation in the planning of Canada's capital must be tinged with regret over a lost opportunity because the naïve young consultant of 1903 evolved into a prominent landscape architect and town planner. He designed parks across Canada in St. Johns (Bowring

Park), Québec (Plains of Abraham), Montréal (St. Helen's Island and Mount Royal), Winnipeg (Assiniboine Park), and Regina (Wascana).⁹¹ Todd was a founding member of the Town Planning Institute of Canada and designed attractive garden suburbs, such as Montréal's Town of Mount Royal and Shaunessey Heights, Vancouver.⁹² One can only wonder how much better the OIC's parks system might have been had Todd been their consulting landscape architect and planner from 1903 until its successor, the Federal District Commission, hired its first designer in the mid-1930s.⁹³

Todd's only built legacy in Ottawa, Macdonald Gardens, is neglected and almost unknown today. For many years, it was known locally as Borden Park. Macdonald Gardens has no name sign on site, and it was not labeled on the National Capital Commission's latest city map.⁹⁴ The park has been run down over the years, its wading pool closed in the 1920s and 1930s, and the original light fixtures destroyed.⁹⁵ Fortunately, Todd's landscape and belvedere have survived (see Figure 5), and the hospital buildings that bordered the park have been renovated into apartments and townhouses. It is time that Macdonald Gardens was also restored to its former condition and Todd's contribution to the planning of Canada's capital properly acknowledged.

Appendix Abbreviations for Primary Sources

CPM	Colborne P. Meredith papers, National Archives of Canada, MG 29 E62
DHB	Daniel H. Burnham papers, Art Institute of Chicago, Burnham Library of Architecture Collection 1943.1
EHB	Edward H. Bennett papers, Art Institute of Chicago, Burnham Library of Architecture, Collection 1973.1
FIN	Department of Finance, Ottawa Improvement Commission papers, NAC, RG 19, vol. 551
<i>Hansard</i>	Parliamentary debates of the House of Commons, National Library of Canada, Ottawa
NAC	National Archives of Canada, Ottawa
NC	Noulan Cauchon papers, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 30 C105
NCC	National Capital Commission Reference Library, Ottawa, special collections
OA	Records of Olmsted Associates, Inc., Manuscript Division, U.S. Library of Congress, Washington D.C., Job file 5070, "Ottawa City Plan, Ottawa Canada 1913-1914"
OIC	Ottawa Improvement Commission papers, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, RG 34
OIC minutes	Ottawa Improvement Commission papers, NAC, Ottawa, RG 34, Series C-1-a
RLB	Sir Robert Laird Borden papers, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 26 H
WL	Sir Wilfrid Laurier papers and correspondence, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 26 G
WLMK	William Lyon Mackenzie King papers, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 26 J1, J2

William Lyon Mackenzie King diary, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa,
MG 26 J6

Notes

1. W. Eggleson, *The Queen's Choice: A Story of Canada's Capital* (Ottawa, Canada: National Capital Commission [NCC], 1961); W. DeGrace, "Canada's Capital 1900-1950: Five Town Planning Visions," *Environments* 17 (1985): 43-57; K. Hillis, "A History of Commissions: Threads of an Ottawa Planning History," *Urban History Review* 21, no. 1 (1993): 46-60; NCC, *A Capital in the Making* (Ottawa, Canada: NCC, 1998); Idem, *A Capital for Future Generations* (Ottawa, Canada: NCC, 1998).
2. J. Taylor, *Ottawa: An Illustrated History* (Toronto, Canada: J. Lorimer, 1986); C. Gaffield, *History of the Outaouais* (Montréal, Canada: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1997); D. Knight, *Choosing Canada's Conflict Resolution in a Parliamentary System* (Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 1991).
3. Canada Commission of Conservation, *Report of the Epidemic of Typhoid Fever Occurring in the City of Ottawa, January 1st to March 19, 1911* (Ottawa, Canada: Commission of Conservation, 1912); J. H. Taylor, "Fire, Disease and Water in the Nineteenth Century—An Introduction," *Urban History Review* 8, no. 1 (1979): 7-37.
4. For the design and construction of the Parliament buildings, see C. A. Young, *The Glory of Ottawa: Canada's First Parliament Buildings* (Montréal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995). For the role of the Department of Public works, see J. Wright, *Crown Assets—The Architecture of the Department of Public Works: 1867-1967* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1997); M. Archibald, *By Federal Design: The Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works, 1881-1914* (Ottawa, Canada: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1983); D. O'ram, *Building for Canadians—A History of the Department of Public Works, 1840-1960* (Ottawa, Canada: Public Relations and Information Services, 1979).
5. S. Gwyn, *The Private Capital: Ambition and Love in the Age of Macdonald and Laurier* (Toronto, Canada: McClelland and Stewart, 1984), 40.
6. T. Hall *Planning Europe's Capital Cities: Aspects of Nineteenth Century Urban Development* (London: E & F.N. Spon, 1997); M. Hebbert, *London: More by Fortune than Design* (New York: John Wiley, 1998).
7. L. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); J. Taylor, J. G. Lengelle, and C. Andrew, *Capital Cities: International Perspectives* (Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 1993).
8. P. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1996); idem, *Cities and Civilization* (New York: Pantheon, 1998).
9. W. Laurier, *Dearest Émilie: The Love Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Madame Émilie Lavergne* (Toronto, Canada: NC Press, 1989), letter dated 9 August 1891, p. 84.
10. "The Washington of the North," *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 19 June 1893, p. 3.
11. Lady I. Aberdeen, *The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen*, 19 November 1898 (Toronto, Canada: no publisher, 1960), 478-79.
12. Fielding speech to House of Commons, 2 August 1899, *Hansard*, p. 9186 and *An Act Respecting the City of Ottawa*, 62-63 Vict. Ch 10. 7 (e), assented 11 August 1899. The justification for the Ottawa Improvement Commission's (OIC's) budget was partly as provision of parks in lieu of payment for property taxes foregone and services provided by the federal government. The arrangement was never regarded as satisfactory by the city of Ottawa and was a constant source of political friction well into the 1950s. See J. H. Taylor, "City Form and Capital Culture: Remaking Ottawa," *Planning Perspectives* 4 (1989): 79-105.
13. "The Washington of the North," 3. For the mandate of the OIC, see the 1899 *Act Respecting the City of Ottawa*. Canada has no capital district; local government in the Canadian capital is completely independent and under the control of the provincial governments. See D. C. Rowat, ed., *The Government of Federal Capitals* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1973).
14. Laurier, quoted in M. O. Scott, "The Washington of the North," *The Canadian Magazine* 30, no. 4 (1908): 321-22. Future prime minister W. L. Mackenzie King sometimes repeated this story; see WLMK letter to T. Ahern, 29 December 1926, WLMK correspondence.

15. \$60,000 in 1900 was equivalent to \$1.2 million in C\$ 1999. All prices in this article were adjusted using Statistics Canada, *CANSIM, P 10000 Consumer Price Index*; the pre-1914 consumer price index was adjusted using G. Bertram and M. B. Percy, "Real Wage Trends in Canada 1900-26: Some Provisional Estimates," *Canadian Journal of Economics* 12, no. 2 (1979): 299-312.
16. OIC minutes 1 May 1903; 9 June 1903, pp. 103-6.
17. OIC minutes 11 June 1903, p. 110; \$250,000 in 1903 was approximately \$4.75 million C\$ 1999.
18. Peter Jacobs, "Frederick Gage Todd—Biographic Notes" (n.d., unpublished). Based on University of Massachusetts calendars and interviews.
19. C. E. Beveridge and P. Rocheleau, *Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing the American Landscape* (New York: Universe, 1998). The firm was known as Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot from 1895 to 1898 and as Olmsted Bros. from 1898 to 1950.
20. C. Zaitzevsky, *Fredrick Law Olmsted and the Boston Park System* (Boston: Harvard/Belknap, 1982). Frederick L. Olmsted Sr. "Mount Royal," reprinted in S. B. Sutton, ed., *Civilizing American Cities: Writings on City Landscapes/Frederick Law Olmsted* (New York: Da Capo, 1997).
21. V. Asselin, "Frederick G. Todd Architecte Paysagiste: Une Pratique de l'aménagement ancrée dans son époque 1900-1948" (thesis presented at Université de Montréal, Faculté de l'aménagement, 1995); Appendix C.
22. F. G. Todd, "Circular as to Professional Methods and Charges" (1900), in Asselin; Annexe Todd-Ecrits, 1, Appendix—Todd articles.
23. Todd "Circular," 2. Twenty-five dollars per day is approximately \$475/day C\$ 1999.
24. F. G. Todd, "Character in Park Design," *Canadian Municipal Journal* 1: 321-22.
25. F. L. Olmsted, *Writings on Public Parks, Parkways, and Park Systems*, ed. C. E. Beveridge and C. F. Hoffman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), especially "Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns," 25 February 1870, pp. 171-205; "A Consideration of the Justifying Value of a Public Park," 28 January 1881, pp. 331-49; "Mount Royal: Montréal," 1881, pp. 350-418.
26. OIC minutes 22 April 1903, 101; the first mention in the minutes of Todd. The OIC received a letter from Todd on 28 March 1903, offering his services as a landscape architect and enclosing recommendations from some of his clients. The commission also received correspondence from A. E. Kemp, MP, dated 1 April 1903, and from Senator Forget, dated 2 April 1903, both recommending Todd. The OIC minute books for this period have no mention of approaching the Olmsted office, and Calvert Vaux (1824-95), who designed the grounds of the Parliament buildings, had also died.
27. Letter to Todd from O'Brien (OIC Sec.). 22 June 1903, OIC papers, Series A-2, vol. 23. Letterbook of Robert Surtees OIC Engineer, p. 308.
28. F. G. Todd, *Preliminary Report to the Ottawa Improvement Commission* (Ottawa, Canada: Outdoor Improvement Commission, 1903). At least three copies of the report survive in their original condition because Todd sent them to his mentors. The maps have not been found. The complete text and photos can be found at <http://www.queensu.ca/surp/Faculty/gordon/Todd/Report.html>.
29. "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 have evolved a beautiful city" (Todd, *Preliminary Report*, 3).
30. W. H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).
31. One quarter of Hull and Ottawa had burned in a spectacular fire only three years before. See J. C. Walsh, "Modern Citizens for a Modern City? Ottawa's Great Fire of 1900," in *Ottawa: Making a Capital*, ed. J. Keshen and N. St. Onge (Ottawa, Canada: University of Ottawa Press, 2001), 165-84; Taylor, *Ottawa: An Illustrated History*.
32. See F. G. Todd, *Esthetic Forestry* (Montréal, Canada: Witness, n.d. [1920s]; book in collection of National Archives of Canada).
33. D. Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).
34. Queen Victoria's daughter, Princess Louise, had nearly been killed when her carriage overturned in 1880. See Duke of Argyll (Marquis of Lorne), *Passages from the Past*, vol. 2 (London: no publisher), 444.
35. Todd submitted an invoice dated 28 October 1903, but the amount was not noted in the OIC minutes of 26 November 1903 (OIC vol. 1, p. 127). He wrote further on 4 February and 9 March 1904, refusing to accept the OIC's cheque for \$489.93 as full payment for his services (OIC vol. 1, pp. 130-31), but the OIC accounts show no further payments. Todd probably relented when offered further work designing Strathcona and Somerset St. Parks. In 1903, \$490 would be \$9,300 C\$ 1999, and \$10,000 would be a common fee for a preliminary consulting report today.

36. Ottawa planner and railway surveyor Noulan Cauchon was not retained to prepare the first contour mapping until 12 June 1913 (letter from the minister of finance to the governor general in council, NAC, RG19, vol. 3166, file 10623b). The contour plans were completed 21 April 1913 (letter from NC to Ottawa mayor J. Ellis, RG19, vol. 549, file 139, 1912-16).

37. "How Ottawa as Capital Can Be Made Most Beautiful," *Ottawa Journal*, 26 September 1903, p. 3; "Wants a Driveway," *Ottawa Citizen*, 26 September 1903, p. 12.

38. OIC minutes, vol. 1, 21 October 1903, p. 123.

39. OIC minutes, 26 November 1903; 31 March 1904.

40. Laurier papers, MF 214, 85188-85190; OIC minutes, 16 June 1904, pp. 147-49; 23 June 1904.

41. OIC minutes, 23 September 1904, pp. 163-66.

42. OIC minutes, 21 December 1904, pp. 167-80; 27 January 1905; 7 March 1905.

43. OIC, *Special Report of the Ottawa Improvement Commission, from Its Inception in 1899 to March 13, 1912* (Ottawa, Canada: OIC, 1913), 10. In 1909 (average date), \$1.2 million would be approximately \$22 million in C\$ 1999.

44. M. Miller, *Letchworth: The First Garden City* (Chichester, UK: Phillimore, 1989); M. Miller and A. S. Gray, *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (Chichester, UK: Phillimore, 1992).

45. OIC 1906 annual report, p. 4; OIC annual reports, 1912-15 NCC Library, Ottawa.

46. Letter from Lord Grey to Sir Henry Bate, 15 September 1911, RLB reel 3960, p. 607A; see also Gordon, "From Noblesse Oblige to Nationalism," *Journal of Urban History* 28 (2001): 3-34.

47. Unwin's address was reported in the local newspapers. "Ottawa Has Opportunities, for Obtaining Ideal City," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 22 May 1911, p. 1; "Movement for Garden City," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 23 May 1911.

48. T. H. Mawson, *The Ideal Capital City and How to Plan and Build It. Addresses Presented Before the Canadian Club of Ottawa, 1911-12* (Ottawa, Canada: Mortimer, 1911), 167. See also "Improvement Commission Gets Criticism from Landscape Artist," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 26 May 1911, p. 110; "The Planless Capital [editorial]," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 26 May 1911; "Opinions of Commission," *The Evening Citizen*, 26 May 1911, pp. 1, 10; "A Valuable Criticism," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 27 May 1911, p. 6.

49. Meredith papers, May 1911 correspondence file.

50. His mother was Fanny Jarvis, a member of a prominent Toronto family, and his father was Edmund Allen Meredith, first undersecretary of state for the Dominion of Canada. For an autobiographical essay, see CPM papers, vol. 9, "Rambling Recollections, 'T' and Gwyn," 219-20. Laurier appointed Meredith to the OIC despite his Conservative Party background, perhaps because he was active in the executive of the Ontario Architectural Association and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. See C. Murphy (OIC secretary) letter to H. McGiverin M.P., 3 August 1910, copy in WL correspondence, pp. 179663-64. It is not clear whether Meredith was also artistically talented. Only a few of his designs survived, including the former Murphy Gamble department store.

51. "The Glebe Streets: Infusion of a New Spirit into the Ottawa Improvement Commission," *Ottawa Citizen*, 20 April 1904; letter from C. Murphy to W. S. Fielding, Minister of Finance, 9 August 1910; Laurier papers, MF 214, 85188-85190; letter from T. C. Boville, Deputy Minister of Finance, to OIC, 24 August 1910, calling attention to the commission's overexpenditure of \$108,416.42 relating to public works and maintenance. Boville also made "some suggestions as to the carrying on of the Commission's business" (CPM files, vol. 11).

52. Meredith chaired the conference of the Ontario Association of Architects in Ottawa in 1911 and also headed the Ottawa chapter of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) that year. He arranged for the RAIC and the associations of Ontario, Québec, Manitoba, and Alberta to send briefs to the government attacking the policies of the Department of Public Works and the OIC. The RAIC report is included in a "blue paper" issued by the federal government: *Report and Correspondence of the Ottawa Improvement Commission*, 2 George V. Sessional Paper No. 51a (Ottawa, Canada: C. H. Parmelee, 1912). For Meredith's behind-the-scenes orchestration of events, see CPM, vol. 6, files 42-44.

53. OIC minutes, 3 October 1910.

54. Olmsted Bros. papers, file 5070, "Ottawa City Plan, Ottawa Canada 1913-1914."

55. Letter to W.B.S. Armstrong (civic guild, Toronto) from CPM, 25 September 1911; letters to CPM from Todd, 26 October 1911; to Todd from CPM, 27 October, 1911; CPM papers, vol. 5, file 36, OIC, 1911.

56. C. Moore, ed., *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia*, 57th Congress, 1st sess. S. Rept. 166 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902). J. A. Peterson, "The Nation's First Comprehensive City Plan: A Political Analysis of the McMillan Plan for Washington, DC, 1900-1902," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 55, no. 2 (1985): 134-50; T. S. Hines, *Burnham of*

Chicago: Architect and Planner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), chap. 7. The District of Columbia political model was also popular in Ottawa at the time.

57. Laurier speech in House of Commons, 12 January 1912, *Hansard*, pp. 977-81.

58. CPM to RLB, 13 January 1912. Meredith also sent his memo to Laurier. CPM to WL, 13 June 1912, CPM papers, 1912 correspondence file.

59. OIC, *Report and Correspondance*.

60. "Merciless Analysis of Commission's Work," *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 23 February 1912.

61. OIC, *Special Report*.

62. Letters from CPM to Todd, 16 April 1912; Todd to CPM, 24 April 1912; CPM to Todd, 25 April 1912; CPM papers, vol. 6, file 42; OIC minutes, 4 April and 6 May 1912, show that Meredith introduced letters requesting the design commission from both Thomas Mawson and Horace Dunnington-Grubb, Mawson's former employee, then practicing in Toronto.

63. Letters to Todd from Kearns (OIC Sec.), 21 September 1912; to Kearns from Todd, 23 September 1912; memo and cost estimate to OIC from Todd, 28 September 1912; letter from Kearns/Bate to Todd, 30 September 1912; OIC papers, Series B-1, vol. 104, parts 1 and 2, Macdonald Gardens.

64. Letters to CPM from Todd, 30 September 1912; to Todd from CPM, 1 October 1912: "Mr. Kearns phoned me yesterday for authority to accept your conditions, and it gave me great pleasure in telling him to write to you and go ahead with the work at once." CPM papers, vol. 6, file 42, OIC 1912.

65. Meredith repeatedly tried to pull Todd into the fray, encouraging him to put his disappointment with the OIC on the public record. CPM to Todd, 18 January 1912, CPM papers. Todd gave Meredith copies of his report but refused to condemn the government, presumably hoping for future commissions. Todd to CPM, 19 January 1912, CPM papers.

66. The deputy minister of finance approached Sir William Van Horne, the well-known former president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but he declined. For the circumstances of the formation of the Federal Plan Commission, see the 1913 correspondence of the deputy minister of finance in the OIC papers. Herbert Holt (1856-1941), president of the Royal Bank and Canadian Northern Railway, was then recruited as the chair. Other commission members included Montréal lawyer Sir Alexandre Lacoste, Toronto developer Robert Home Smith, and architect Frank Darling. For Holt's background, see T. Regehr, "A Capitalist Plans the Capital," (unpublished paper to the Canadian Historical Society 1984 meeting).

67. D.L.A. Gordon, "A City Beautiful Plan for Canada's Capital: Edward Bennett and the 1915 Plan for Ottawa and Hull," *Planning Perspectives* 13 (1998): 275-300; J. Draper, *Edward Bennett: Architect and City Planner, 1874-1954* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1982).

68. H. S. Holt, *Report of the Federal Plan Commission in a General Plan for the Cities of Ottawa and Hull* (Ottawa, Canada: Federal Planning Commission, 1915).

69. The region passed the 350,000 "all time" mark in the late 1950s and was more than 1.1 million in the 1996 Statistics Canada Ottawa-Hull Census Metropolitan Area results.

70. Holt, *Report of the Federal Plan Commission*, 125-30; drawing 21 for residential density versus parks analysis; drawing 20 for the parks and parkway system plan.

71. Holt, *Report of the Federal Plan Commission*, 26.

72. J. Zukowsky, ed., *The Plan of Chicago: 1909-1979* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1979).

73. T. Adams, "Editorial: Town Planning Is a Science," *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada* 1, no. 3 (1921): 1-3; Idem, "Ottawa-Federal Plan," *Town Planning and the Conservation of Life* 1, no. 4 (1916): 88-89; Idem, "The Future of Ottawa," *Town Planning and the Conservation of Life* 6, no. 2 (1921): 33-36.

74. King diary, August-September 1894, September 1895, August 1896. E. von Baeyer, *Garden of Dreams: Kingsmere and Mackenzie King* (Toronto, Canada: Dundurn, 1990), 36-39, chaps. 4 and 5; R. Smythe, *King of Kingsmere* (Ottawa, Canada: NCC, 1981).

75. Prime Minister Bennett and Governor General Lord Bessborough were also enlisted as patrons, E. von Baeyer, *Garden of Dreams*, 210-14. King proposed the park in a speech to the House of Commons, WLMK debate in House of Commons, 27 May 1935, *Hansard*, pp. 3046-9. The speech was widely reported. See "Mr. King Takes the Lead," *Ottawa Journal*, 27 May 1935; "Ottawa's Wooded Background," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 27 May 1935; Department of the Interior, *Lower Gatineau Woodlands Survey: Interim Report* (Ottawa, Canada: King's Printer, 1935).

76. D.L.A. Gordon, "William Lyon Mackenzie King, Town Planning Advocate," *Planning Perspectives* 17 (2) (forthcoming, 2002).

77. Noted in a 1936 resume in King's files, "Mr. Jacques Gréber" dated 27 October 1936, WMLK papers, vol. 276, file O-303-1; and a promotional monograph for his consulting firm: *Jacques Gréber*,

Architecte SADG SC SFU Urbaniste et Architecte de Jardins (Strasbourg, France: EDARI, n.d., est. 1935).

78. Letter from Todd to Dr. M. Hershey, forwarded to King, 14 July 1937; briefing notes for King-Gréber meeting, 16 August 1937; WLMK papers, vol. 276, file O-303-1.

79. Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners, annual meeting minutes, 3 November 1945; "The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners, Members from 1940-1950," CSLA files, n.d. Thanks to Professor Peter Jacobs for providing these documents.

80. J. Gréber, *Plan for the National Capital* (Ottawa, Canada: King's Printer, 1950), 130.

81. *Ibid.*, 130-32.

82. The 1950 plan received the first Vision in Planning award presented by the Canadian Institute of Planners, July 2001; see D. Gordon, "Weaving a Modern Plan for Canada's Capital: Jacques Gréber and the 1950 Plan for the National Capital Region," *Urban History Review* 29, no. 2 (2001): 43-61.

83. Gréber, *Plan for the National Capital*, chaps. 11 and 12.

84. E. Howard, *Tomorrow! A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1898), diagram 7; P. Abercrombie, *Greater London Plan* (London: HMSO, 1945).

85. P. Jenkins, *An Acre of Time: The Enduring Value of Place* (Toronto, Canada: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1996); the latest NCC plans incorporate a major park in this location. See NCC, "A Capital in the Making"; NCC, "A Capital for Future Generations".

86. Gréber, *Plan for the National Capital*, chap. 8.

87. The OIC strung Todd along again in 1912, at the end of the Macdonald Gardens construction. OIC secretary Kearns hinted that the commission would consider his services as a consulting landscape architect. Todd eagerly took the bait, offering to advise on the gradual replanting of the parks and driveways to avoid embarrassment. Letters from Kearns to Todd, 9 September 1913; from Todd to Kearns, September 1913; OIC papers, file 104, Macdonald Gardens. At the 6 October 1913 OIC meeting, Todd's offer of services was "laid over for further consideration." OIC minutes, pp. 393-94. It was never mentioned again.

88. Todd confined his criticism to a confidential letter to the deputy minister of finance, written after he received the Macdonald Gardens commission. Letter from Todd to W. T. White, minister of finance, 8 November 1912. FIN papers, file 156. Enclosed was a five-page critique of the planting and character of the parks and driveway and a list of his most important commissions. Todd's discretion was rewarded when White retained him as a consultant on the layout of buildings for the westerly extension of the buildings in Parliament Hill. That commission also fell through. See Wright, *Crown Assets*.

89. Letters to Meredith from Todd, 26 October 1912, 28 May 1913; CPM papers, files 28 and 29.

90. Eggleston, *The Queen's Choice*, 154-66, Appendix 6; DeGrace, "Canada's Capital 1900-1950"; Hillis, "A History of Commissions"; NCC, *A Capital in the Making*.

91. P. Jacobs, "Frederick G. Todd and the Creation of Canada's Urban Landscape," *Association for Preservation Technology Bulletin* 15, no. 4 (1983): 27-34.

92. L. D. McCann, "Planning and Building the Corporate Suburb of Mount Royal, 1910-1923," *Planning Perspectives* 11 (1996): 259-301.

93. E. I. Wood, "Landscape Architecture in the National Capital," *Community Planning Review* 6 (March 1956): 13-25.

94. See letters to the federal district commission (FDC) secretary from Mr. O'Hara, 25 August, 1936; to J. T. Richard M.P. from H. Cram (FDC), 25 May 1949; OIC papers file 104; NCC, *Map of the National Capital Region*, 1996.

95. OIC minutes, 14 August 1925; *Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1938; OIC papers, "Citizens Petition to Close the Pool to FDC," 27 August 1938.

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