



OTTAWA RIVER TIMELINE

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- 13 000 BC Continental glacier begins to melt.
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- 11 000 BC Ottawa Valley is covered by an inland sea called the Champlain Sea.
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- 8 000 BC Inland sea has receded.
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- 6 500 BC Earliest evidence of human presence along the Ottawa River watershed. Palaeo-Indian Period named for the people who made distinctive long and slender stone lance points.
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- 4 500 BC Known as Archaic Period, development of culture referred to as the eastern Laurentian Culture that coincides with first appearance of polished stone and copper tools. Ottawa River gradually drops to traditional level and forests of white pine become mixed forests of hemlock, pine and hardwoods.
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- 500 BC A new period in the Ottawa Valley begins with the appearance of modified tempered clay used to produce durable cooking and storage vessels. Known as the Woodland Period, it lasts until the arrival of Europeans, circa 1600 AD.
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- 1535 AD Jacques Cartier climbs Mount Royal and sees a great river extending towards the western horizon.
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- 1608 Etienne Brulé is the first European to explore Ottawa River.
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- 1613 Samuel de Champlain travels up-river to vicinity of present-day Pembroke. Champlain meets Tessouat, Chief of the “Algonmequins” (Algonquins) on today’s Morrison Island.
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- 1615 Ottawa River is known as “Kit-chi’sippi” or Great River; later called “La Grande Rivière du Nord” by French explorers.
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- 1647 Compagnie des Habitants allows 40 young men to trade privately with Native peoples provided they sell furs back to company.
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- 1652 The Compagnie des Habitants trade policy is ignored; goods are traded where most profitable by men known as “les coureurs de bois”.
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- 1659 Radisson and Des Groseilliers travel up Ottawa River in search of new fur-trading territories.
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- 1670 Francois de Laval, Bishop of Petra becomes seigneur of 25-league area called La Petite-Nation seigneurie. (near present-day Montebello QC)
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- 1674 First seigneurie in what is now Ontario, granted to Francois Provost at Pointe L’Original.
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- 1686 Chevalier de Troyes and party of 100 men heads north from Mattawa into unexplored region of Lake Temiskaming.
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1694	Sieur de Coulonge spends winter of 1694-95 near mouth of Coulonge River; establishes first European settlement in area.
1700	Only evidence of civilization along river and tributaries were French forts for traders as protection from Iroquois.
1701	Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac took Ottawa River route on expedition to establish fort and trading post at Detroit.
1713	France signed the Treaty d'Utrecht, thus ceding the vast fur-rich territory of Rupert's Land to Britain.
1720	Fort Temiscamisque constructed by French merchant.
1728	Last important military expedition sent up the Ottawa River by Government of New France. (Sent to stop harassment of French fur trading posts in Lake Michigan region)
1761	Alexander Henry reached Lac des Chats as one of the first persons given permission by British army to explore the fur trade.
1763	English trading companies of Montreal take over fur trade and operate French posts including Des Chats Rapids, Allumette Island, mouth of Dumoine and Mattawa Rivers.
1784	Mattawa House built by Nor'Westers at junction of Mattawa and Ottawa Rivers.
1793	Alexander Mackenzie, accompanied by Native guides and French Canadian voyageurs, completes the first recorded crossing of continental America by a European. Route from Old Port of Quebec, Quebec to Bella Coola, British Columbia includes travel up Ottawa River to Mattawa River.
1800	Wrights Town established on north side of River below Chaudieres Falls. (present-day Gatineau)
1803	Joseph Papineau becomes new seigneur of LaPetite-Nation seigneurie. Manor House now part of Chateau Montebello property.
1806	Philemon Wright builds square-timber raft; floats it down Ottawa River to Quebec City.
1816	Private companies build lock in western section of Vaudreuil canal providing controlled access to Ottawa River.
1818	Pointe Fortune Canal built opposite Carillon QC.
1821	Hudson Bay Company establishes Fort William Lac des Allumettes. Nicholas Garry, Deputy Governor of Hudson Bay Company, travels up Ottawa River on way to Rupert's Land.
1825	Archibald McNab creates settlement near junction of Madawaska and Ottawa Rivers. Kinnell Lodge forms center of development for present-day Arnprior.
1826	Lieutenant-Colonial John By ordered to build navigable waterway between the Ottawa River and Kingston.
1828	Col. Peter White brought his family to Allumette Island area, cleared land and built cabin at present site of Pembroke. He became principal lumber merchant, and operated a general store.

1832	Rideau Canal complete.
1833	Lady Colborne is first steamboat on Upper Ottawa, servicing between Aylmer and Chats Falls.
1835	George Bryson began lumbering operations with brother-in-law Herman Coulton on Coulonge River.
1836	First canal system along Ottawa consists of Grenville Canal, Chute a Blondeau Canal and Carillon Canal featuring 11 locks.
1838	Henry Bartlett, an English artist travelled up Ottawa River. He sketched the famous "Lac des Allumettes".
1840	Construction of public lock at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue allows boats to by-pass natural obstacles and proceeds up into Ottawa River.
1847	Trade at Fort Coulonge declined to such an extent that HBC decided to close the post.
1848	University of Ottawa established.
1852	H.F. Bronson established firm at Falls of Chaudière in 1852 – first one in region to bring down logs from the Ottawa River above Pembroke and Des Joachims Rapids.
1853	Alexander Murray reported potential land adjoining the Bonnechere River from Golden Lake to Ottawa River.
1855	Bytown incorporated and becomes City of Ottawa.
1856	Minister of Agriculture began advertising campaign in Europe to attract immigrants to areas opened up by new roads.
1857	Queen Victoria chooses Ottawa as capital city of United Province of Canada.
1858	Pembroke was incorporated as a village; German immigrants begin to arrive in Eastern Upper Canada.
1859	Peak of the square timber trade in Ontario. First group of Polish immigrants to Canada.
1860s	Peak of square timber rafting on Ottawa River. Cribs consisting of 20 to 40 square timber pieces are assembled into rafts; each raft contains up to 200 cribs.
1860	J.R. Booth commissioned to supply lumber for roof of new Parliament buildings. Acquired timber reserves on Upper Ottawa River and tributaries.
1862	A Pembroke industrialist, McAllister, used water wheel in his mills to generate electrical current for sale.
1863	Timiskaming mission re-located to Ontario shore.
1866	Parliament Buildings completed.
1867	Canada's Confederation.

1868	Limestone structure built at 24 Sussex Drive by local lumber baron. Property purchased in 1949 to become the official residence for Canadian Prime Ministers.
1870	The majority of family farms along the river had lost their main markets – the lumber camps.
1882	First steamer, “Mattawan” appears on Lake Temiskaming.
1885	Saw log production peaks along Ottawa River.
1888	E.B. Eddy constructs first pulp mill in eastern Canada at Gatineau.
1889	Charles Farr establishes “Humphrey’s Depot” on the shores of Lake Temiskaming. (Present day – Haileybury)
1896	Notre-Dame-du-Nord founded with the arrival of first resident missionary.
1900	Great fire starts in Hull lumberyards and spreads to Ottawa, burning over 2000 buildings.
1904	Petawawa Military reserve established.
1910	Butter factory opened in Notre-Dame-du-Nord.
1916	Fire destroys Centre Block of Parliament Hill; only Library of Parliament remains standing.
1922	Fire destroys ninety per cent of the Town of Haileybury.
1930	Chats Falls hydroelectric generating station developed.
1943	Provinces of Ontario and Quebec sign agreement allocating undeveloped water power sites.
1945	First self-contained nuclear reaction in Canada initiated at Chalk River Laboratories.
1956	First nuclear power station established near Des Joachims.
1965	Mills along Ottawa River produce more than 80 million board feet of lumber.
2003	Committee formed to designate Ottawa River as part of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.
2005	City of Ottawa celebrates 150th anniversary.