



Invitation from Lady Stanley to participate in winter activities at Rideau Hall (1891)



Beneath its covering of snow, Rideau Hall looks quite different in winter. For the first Governors General who came from Britain, winter was a new and major challenge since the snow was deeper and stayed longer than at home. Fortunately, they managed to adapt and soon discovered the pleasures of the season.

Winter at Rideau Hall

Skating parties were very popular with the citizens of Ottawa as seen in this picture taken in 1915. The tradition continues today. Once the temperature is low enough, Canadians are invited to lace up their skates and use the Rideau Hall skating rink in its charming and historic setting.





- 1 In the time of Lord Aberdeen (1893-1898), winter sports were very popular. To find out about the winter pastimes at Rideau Hall, fill in the following spaces with help from the photographs.

Lord Aberdeen was very fond of a) _____, which he could play on an indoor rink laid out 20 years earlier by Lord Dufferin. His wife, Lady Aberdeen, was a great b) _____ enthusiast. Wearing his c) _____, Archie, their youngest son, enjoyed this sport, which originally came from Norway. d) _____ were quite easy to manoeuvre through the trees in the wooded grounds. Then there was the e) _____ slide for those who liked a thrill, especially when the slope was covered with smooth ice.

- 2 In 1893, the Governor General of the time gave his name to a cup, which is still awarded every year to the National Hockey League champions. Name the Governor General and the trophy in question.

- 3 The following quotations describe some of the winter activities that took place at Rideau Hall at various times. Choose one quotation and assume the role of the person who wrote it or of a participant. Make up a story based on your chosen quotation.

WINTER ACTIVITIES



"...in their most picturesque costumes - blanket coats of different colours, some white, with bright borders, and caps or toques of red, and sashes or complete. After having tea or coffee, each one, or rather two, go off (having put on snowshoes), and follow the leader, who sometimes is most volatile, going now in one direction, then in another, over fences, down hills, sitting on the back portion of the snowshoe...."

January 29, 1887

"The new slide is most exciting, for, the natural hill not being considered sufficiently steep, a great addition has been made to it. A long flight of stairs now leads to the top of a high wooden slide, and, as this is almost perpendicular, the toboggan starts at a rapid rate down it - and its occupant has both the length and the excitement of his slide greatly increased."

Lady Dufferin, *Journal*,
December 15, 1874

"The rinks at Government House are in the open air, one beautifully situated in a grove of evergreens with an island in the centre, on which are a few trees. The skaters disappear as they round the island, but soon are again in sight. This rink was marked out by the hand of H.R.H. Princess Louise, ..."

January 29, 1887