

OTTAWA'S DECISION REVEALED BY HON. C. W. G. GIBSON TO-DAY; TO UTILIZE LARGE PROPERTY

Water Front Between James and Catharine Streets Site of Proposed Development

City Becomes Scene of One of Finest Inland Centres in Dominion—Work Starts Soon

Hamilton is to become one of the finest inland naval training centres in all Canada by a tremendous development, involving large expenditure on the part of federal authorities, it was disclosed this morning when announcement of the selection of this city for the expansion program was announced in Ottawa by Col. Hon. C. W. G. Gibson, minister of national revenue, after a conference with Hon. Angus Macdonald, minister of defence for naval services. Ten acres of property north of Guise street, between James street and Catharine street, now controlled by the harbour commission, will be acquired and the warehouses will be renovated for use as barracks. With hundreds of men in training the accommodation at the present R.C.N.V.R. barracks is totally inadequate. The new development will permit officers to enlarge the training program and hundreds more young men will be quartered here, with the city as a naval centre for a wide area surrounding Hamilton.

Most Important Project

The scheme, details of which are not fully completed, is regarded as one of the most important projects for Hamilton since the outbreak of war, and it is predicted that its importance to the city will not end with the war, for authorities are hopeful that Hamilton will become a permanent training base. Negotiations have been under way for a considerable time, and authorities have been investigating the possibilities of other centres, but Hamilton was chosen because of its outstanding advantages, it was stated.

In addition to the buildings owned by the harbour commission, the Leander club's quarters stand on the site, on ground rented from the harbour commission and the Russell Construction Co., of Toronto, has storage space and an office. These structures will be razed.

Renovate Buildings

Complete renovation of the large brick warehouses of the harbour commission, to convert them into living quarters, is an important part of the general scheme. There is one building 180 x 115 feet, another 120

by 35 feet, and another 90 x 35 feet, giving in all a floor space of 28,000 square feet. All these buildings will be used to house the men in training, and heavy expenditure will be involved in fitting these quarters, it was stated. Whether any additional construction is to be proceeded with for barracks has not as yet been stated, but it is anticipated that additional buildings will be necessary to provide for the great army of young men who will come here.

No Dredging Needed

The dock at Catharine street, 439 feet in length, will provide adequate facilities and no dredging or other development work will be neces-

sary to accommodate the ships to be used in training, it was learned.

To the east of the land which is being acquired lies Eastwood park, and it is proposed that this be used as an athletic ground for the volunteers. There will be sufficient land in the block being taken over to provide for drill requirements.

While the whole matter has been under consideration for many weeks, definite action was indicated a week ago when officials from the capital again returned to give the final investigation before making the important decision as to selection of a site. Engineers have been on the ground and complete reports of the project are available to the Ottawa authorities.

Rapid Development

The federal officials anticipate rapid expansion of the naval service under the new set up and have taken care of future requirements in a way that will enable the new centre to meet all demands, it was stated. For some time the officials of H.M.S. Star have been handicapped because the training strength overtaxed the facilities. Volunteers have been coming to Hamilton from outside points for some time past and now the area to be served is to be widely extended.

It is expected that development will be rapid now that a decision has been reached, and while there was no announcement from the capital as to when work would be actually started, it was believed that because of the pressing need, no time would be lost. The landlocked harbour is considered a great advantage, and the marine railway to the west is also available.