

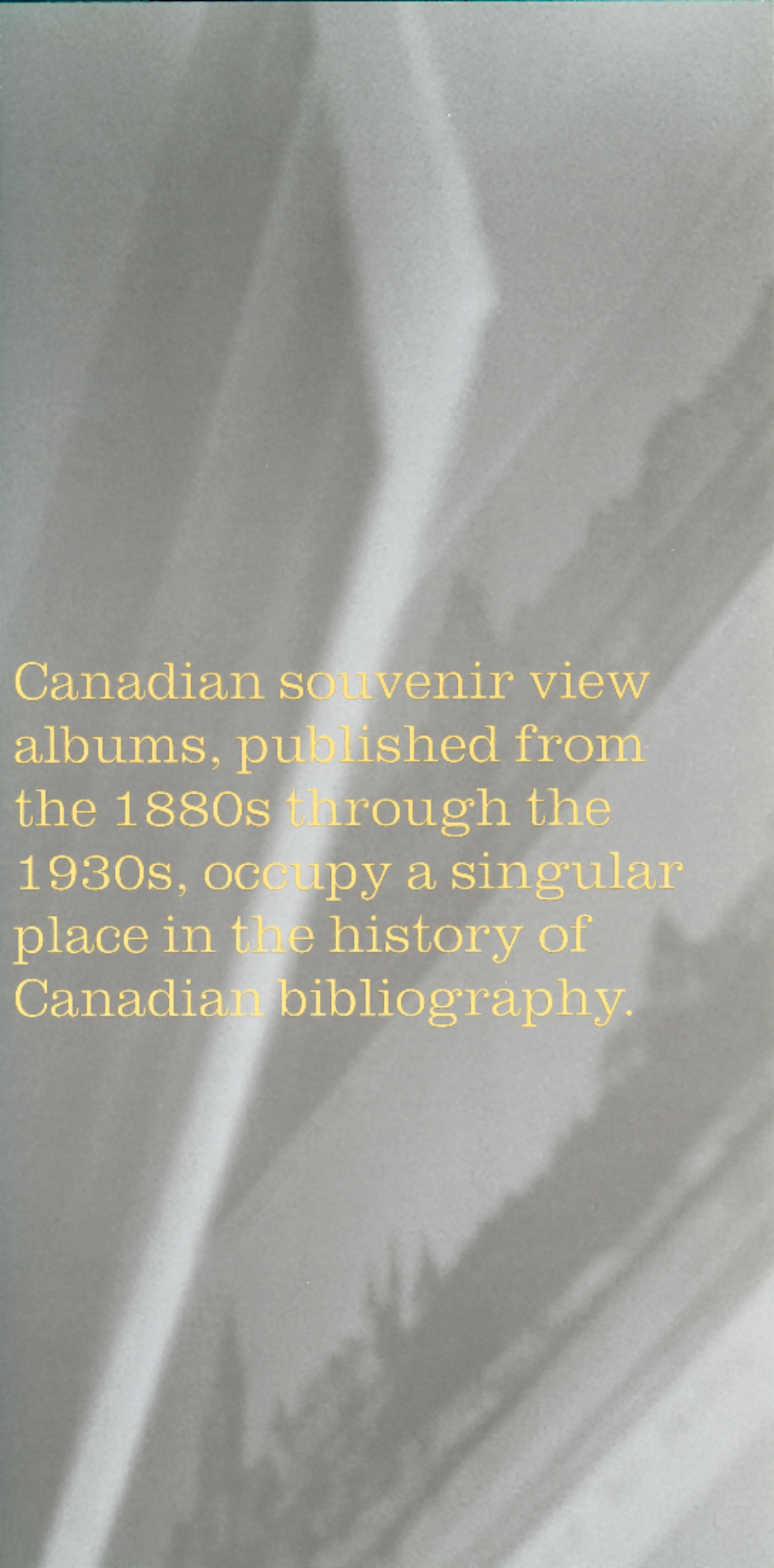


ALBUMS

Canadian Souvenir View

National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives

9 May – 31 August 2001



Canadian souvenir view albums, published from the 1880s through the 1930s, occupy a singular place in the history of Canadian bibliography.



ILLUSTRATED SOUVENIR OF WINNIPEG

By the turn of the century, a range of new photomechanical processes had been introduced to the view book, including the photogravure, half-tone and artotype; many of the publications assume the format of the photograph album. Text is usually limited to an introduction and captions for the images. The quality of design, reproductions and printing ranges from the modest to the elegant. Although the local or itinerant photographers often remain anonymous, in the early years of the century, they begin to be identified. Accomplished photographers such as the Livernois Family of Quebec City and William Notman of Montréal are among them. The albums can provide unique evidence of the growth of the photography profession across the country, and occasionally serve to identify little-known regional photographers and their work.

THE view albums from the early twentieth century were made to appeal not only to tourism, but to settlement and investment as well. The albums from Western Canada in particular contain high-spirited statistics on such factors as population growth, the number of build-

ing permits issued, and the number of miles of paved sidewalks and streets, along with inventories of urban amenities: schools, banks, hospitals, churches, hotels, abattoirs, hydrants, newspapers; and “gents’ clubs.” The covers and title pages of the publications reflect this civic pride and boosterism, proclaiming: *The City Phenomenal; The Wonder City; The Celestial City; The Electric City; Steady Growth Means Solid Prosperity; Its Present Greatness, Its Future Splendor; and Has Never Known a Set Back.*

ARTISTS’ utopian views of the potential and progress of the new cities grace the covers of many of the albums. A flurry of superlatives announces that there is not a city in the Dominion that is not matchless, glorious, irresistible, majestic, delightful, picturesque, sublime, unsurpassed, prosperous, marvellous, prominent, handsome or busy – a mecca, hub, gem, bull’s eye, metropolis, queen, gateway, or doorway – well-situated, well-lighted or well-drained. Ottawa is saluted: *Fair City, Crown of Towers*, and Victoria is hailed: *The Empire’s City of Pacific Destiny.*

EDEN, European Kingdoms, Babylon, Switzerland, Naples, the Rhine, Gibraltar, and the Tropics are evoked by way of comparison. Cities vie in claiming the most churchgoers, the most ambitious youth, the fewest uncouth individuals, the most fire alarm systems, and the most right-angled intersections. One urban centre asserts that it is the most “airminded” (in reference to aeroplanes); another, that its climate is the most praised, although its summers are impossible to describe.

THE twentieth century titles were issued by both Canadian and American firms that specialized in the publication of view albums: Valentine & Sons, Montréal; W. G. MacFarlane, Toronto; the Photogelatine Engraving Company, Ottawa; and the Canadian Promotion Company, Winnipeg. Printing for the Canadian firms was frequently executed in the United States, Great Britain or Germany. One of the most prolific publishers of Canadian view books was the James Bayne Company of Grand Rapids, Michigan, its volumes invariably displaying the photographs in collages of elaborate cartouches. Few of the Quebec albums were issued in the French language, which reminds us of English dominance of commerce in the province at the time.

AS can be seen from the checklist for the exhibition, many of the albums are undated (a probable decade of publication has been supplied). Further research into the construction dates of buildings and monuments (or their destruction), and details such as the mode of transportation depicted (horse-drawn vehicles, the horseless carriage, the automobile), or the style of clothing of the figures, can lead to more precise dating.

ALBUMS were sent to friends and family as gifts or souvenirs, as is testified by the inscriptions they bear: *To Margaret from Flossie; With Best Xmas Wishes; A Merry Christmas to May from Addie; Harold, with love, Myra; With Kind Regards; En souvenir des bonnes causeries.* The popularity of the souvenir album had waned by the late 1930s, perhaps because the Depression affected the mobility of the population, and a period of immigration and prosperity was concluded.

THESE publications are of great interest to the historian of Canadian art, architecture, urban development, and photography. They have immense appeal as witness to a period in a young country’s history that was characterized by rapid growth and grand ambition.



CALGARY, THE CITY PHENOMENAL

CHECKLIST

- 1** *Souvenir Albums of Canadian Scenery, from Winnipeg through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast.* Calgary: Boorne & May, 1890.
- 2** *Canada from Ocean to Ocean.* Toronto: McLeod & Allen, 1908.
- 3** *The "Ancient Colony" and Its Many and Varied Attractions: Bold and Picturesque Headlands, Deep and Delightful Bays, Broad and Majestic Rivers, Teeming with Salmon and Trout, Great Natural Deer Park through which Roam at Will Thousands of the Finest Caribou in the World, Charming Scenery Unsurpassed Even in Switzerland.* Second Edition Improved. Grand Rapids, Michigan: The James Bayne Company, [190-].
- 4** *Halifax Album.* Montréal: Published for the Canada Railway News Co. Limited by Leighton & Frey Souvenir View Co., Portland, Maine, [188-].
- 5** *Picturesque Halifax, N. S.: Photo-gravures.* Halifax: Smith's Bookstore, [189-].
- 6** *Album of Cape Breton.* Montréal: Published for the Canada Railway News Co. Limited by Leighton & Frey Souvenir View Co., Portland, Maine, [1891?].
- 7** *Photographic View Album of Annapolis Valley and Land of Evangeline (Yarmouth to Halifax).* Montréal: The Valentine & Sons Publishing Co., Ltd., [190-].
- 8** *Annapolis Valley, N. S., Land of Evangeline: Souvenir.* Montréal: Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., [191-].
- 9** *Saint John, 1604-1904.* Toronto: W. G. MacFarlane, [1904].
- 10** *Album of St. [sic] John, N. B.* Montréal: Published for the Canada Railway News Co. Limited by Leighton & Frey Souvenir View Co., Portland, Maine, [189-].
- 11** *The Celestial City: Fredericton, New Brunswick and the St. [sic] John River, for the Tourist and Sportsman.* Fredericton: The Fredericton Tourist Association, [191-].
- 12** *Charlottetown, the Beautiful City of Prince Edward Island, the Capital of the Garden of the Gulf.* Charlottetown: Published for Carter & Co. Ltd. by the James Bayne Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., [190-].
- 13** *The Garden of the Gulf, Prince Edward Island, and Its Handsome and Delightful Capital, Charlottetown: Being Pictures and Description of the Charms of City and Seashore as Summer Resorts.* Toronto: W. G. MacFarlane, [1900?].
- 14** *Souvenir of Quebec, the Lower St. Lawrence, the Saguenay River, Roberval and Lake St. John.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: The James Bayne Co., [191-].
- 15** *Quebec, the Gibraltar of America: A Series of Views.* Quebec City: Ant. Langlois, [191-].
- 16** *Saint-Roch de Québec: Album souvenir.* Québec: J. E. Livernois, [1917].
- 17** *New Album of Montreal Views.* [188-].
- 18** *New Album Views of Montreal.* Montréal: G. W. Clarke, [188-].
- 19** *Montreal: Book of Artotype Views.* Toronto: Atkinson Bros., [190-].
- 20** *Ottawa and Vicinity.* Montréal: The Valentine & Sons United Publishing Coy. Limited, [191-].
- 21** *Views of Ottawa.* Montréal: G. & W. Clarke, [188-].
- 22** *Photographs of Ottawa.* [190-].
- 23** *The Thousand Islands and the River St. Lawrence: Views Representative of the Wonderful Beauty and Picturesque Scenery to be Found in the Thousand Island District.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: The James Bayne Company, [191-].
- 24** *Thousand Islands: Indelible Photographs.* New York: A. Wittemann, 1891.
- 25** *A Souvenir of Brockville: the Beautiful City of the Thousand Islands.* Brockville: Robert Wright & Co., [190-].
- 26** *Toronto.* Toronto: S. H. Knox & Company, [190-].

- 27 *100 Views of Toronto, the Queen City of Canada*. Toronto: Published for McKenna's Book Store by Valentine & Sons United Publishing Coy., Limited, [191-].
- 28 *From the Atlantic to the Great Lakes. Series No. 2: Toronto, Canada to Port Huron, Mich.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: The James Bayne Company, [191-].
- 29 *30 Views of Niagara Falls and Toronto*. W. H. B. & Co., [188-].
- 30 P. E. Dunlap. *Geo. W. Hawley's Illustrated Guide to Niagara Falls and Points of Interest*. [189-].
- 31 *Views of Hamilton*. Toronto: Toronto News Company, [1887].
- 32 Græme Mercer Adam. *Muskoka Illustrated: With Descriptive Narrative of this Picturesque Region*. Toronto: Wm. Bryce, 1888.
- 33 *Winnipeg Canada*. Winnipeg: City Council, 1904.
- 34 *Winnipeg*. [189-].
- 35 *Winsome Views of Winnipeg, Hand Coloured: The Hub City of Canada*. Winnipeg: Published Exclusively for Russell, Lang & Co., Ltd. by the Albertype Co., Brooklyn, N.Y., [191-].
- 36 *Illustrated Souvenir of Winnipeg*. Winnipeg: Western Publicity Co., [191-].
- 37 *Winnipeg, the Marvelous [sic] Metropolis of the Wonderful West*. Toronto: The Hough Litho. Co., [191-].
- 38 *Souvenir of Regina, Sask.* Montréal: Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., [191-].
- 39 *Picturesque Regina, Sask.* Winnipeg: Bloom Bros., [191-].
- 40 *Souvenir of Saskatoon, Sask.* Montréal: Novelty Mfg. & Art Co. Ltd., [191-].
- 41 *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, the Most Prosperous City in Prairie Canada*. Ottawa: Photogelatine Engraving Co. Limited, [1926?].
- 42 *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Wonder City*. Winnipeg: Canadian Promotion Co., [1911].
- 43 *Prince Albert, Saskatchewan's Coming Manufacturing Centre*. [1911].
- 44 *Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Gateway to the Hudson Bay*. Winnipeg: Canadian Promotion Co., 1906.
- 45 *Western Canada*. Toronto: The Hough Litho. Co. Limited, [191-].
- 46 *Souvenir Views of Alberta, the Land of Sunshine*. Calgary: Published for J. A. Cockburn by The James Bayne Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., [190-].
- 47 *Souvenir of Edmonton, Alta.* Edmonton: Smith's Book Store, [191-].
- 48 *Edmonton*. Edmonton: The Board of Trade, 1909.
- 49 *Calgary, the City Phenomenal, the Continent's Fastest Growing City*. Winnipeg: Canadian Promotional Co., [1912].
- 50 *Through the Canadian Rockies: A Series of Views Illustrating the Chief Points of Interest and the Glorious Mountain Scenery Seen in a Journey through the Rocky and Selkirk Mountains*. Montréal: Published for Canadian Pacific Railway News Service by Southam Press Limited, [192-].
- 51 *Souvenir of British Columbia Views*. No. 1. Victoria: T. N. Hibben & Co., [189-].
- 52 *Vancouver, British Columbia, the Sunset Doorway of the Dominion*. Vancouver: The Vancouver Tourist Association, [1903?].
- 53 *Picturesque Glimpses of Victoria, Capitol of British Columbia*. Victoria: T. N. Hibben & Co., [190-].
- 54 *Victoria, the Capital of British Columbia: The Dominion's City of Sunshine; The Empire's City of Pacific Destiny*. Victoria: T. N. Hibben & Co., [191-].

Having antecedents in the travel narratives, topographical views and guidebooks that recorded and illustrated the early periods of European exploration and settlement of the country, souvenir view albums, with their distinctive formats, a proliferation of photomechanically reproduced images, and little or no text, are peculiar to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The albums from the 1880s and 1890s were published by Canadian stationers and booksellers, and by the railways for whose clientele they were destined. (Those travelling by steamer were another audience for the view books, as later would be those touring by automobile.) Most of the volumes from this period appear to have been printed in the United States for the Canadian publishers. *New Album Views of Montreal* (no. 18) shows the imposing facade of the Montréal publisher's establishment, *G. W. Clarke Books Stationery & Fancy Goods*. *30 Views of Niagara Falls and Toronto* (no. 29) advertises: "These Views are for sale on all trains and Stands on Grand Trunk R-R. by the agents of the Railroad News and Advertising Co. London..." The albums share common characteristics: The photomechanically reproduced drawings (which appear to have been based on photographic views), occasionally coloured, are printed on a single accordion-folded sheet, encased in blind stamped, sometimes gilded, cloth covers. The artists who produced the drawings for these publications are not credited.


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 National Gallery of Canada Musée des beaux-arts du Canada

380 Sussex Drive, P.O. Box 427, Station A
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