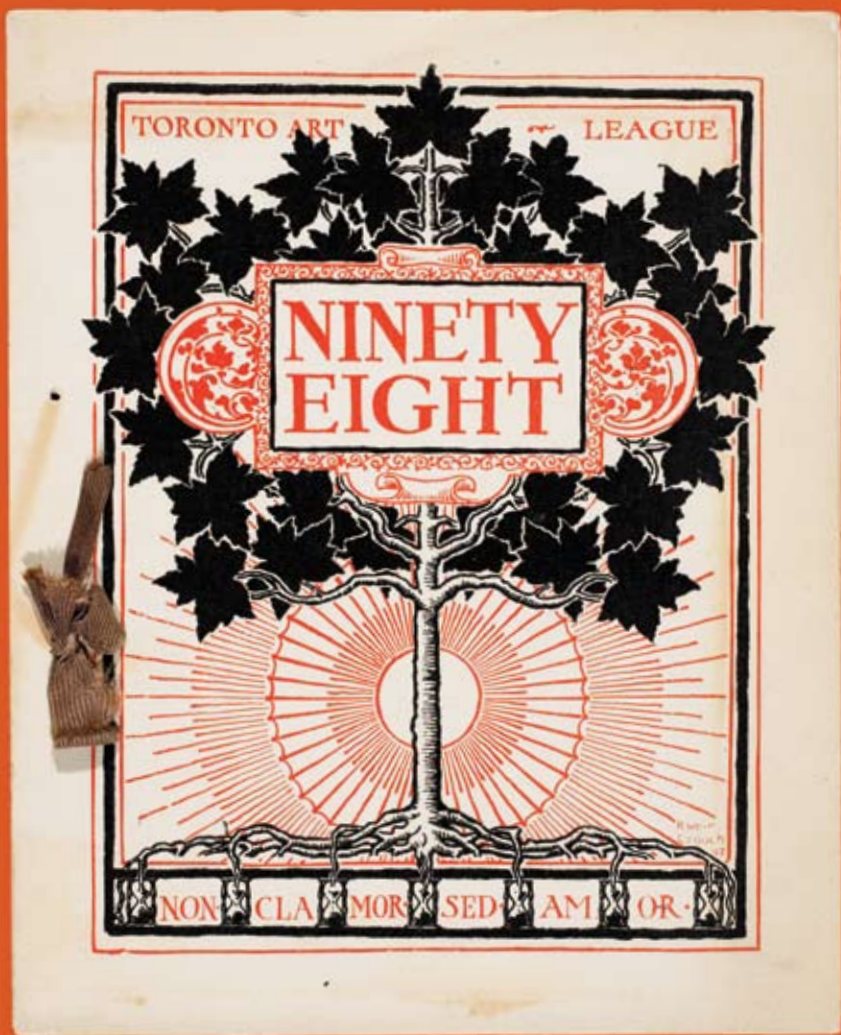




*Non
Clamor Sed
Amor*

The Toronto Art Students' League Calendars 1893–1904
National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives
16 January – 25 April 2008



R. Weir Crouch, front cover of the 1898 calendar [7]

*T*he annual calendars published by the Toronto Art Students' League from 1893 to 1904 mark a high point in the history of the graphic arts in Canada. Produced co-operatively by artist members of the League, the calendars promoted themes that reflected the changing nature of Canadian society and graphic design for just over a decade.

The Toronto Art Students' League was organized in 1886 to provide artists with opportunities to draw from the live model. Drawing was the basis of all the League's activities, the motto of the more committed being *Nulla dies sine linea* (No day without a line). Monthly compositional themes supplemented the evening life-drawing sessions, and in the summer, members,

both men and women, sketched around Toronto, in the surrounding villages, and as far afield as Niagara and Quebec City. As most of the members worked in commercial design or publishing, the annual exhibitions of the year's work included drawings contributed to publications as well as negatives, printing blocks, and proofs illustrating the various processes of graphic reproduction.

The first calendar for 1893, issued in December 1892, comprised a twenty-four page booklet with a lithographed cover by A.H. Howard in pale blue and gold, twelve pages of drawings with four calendars of three months each [1], and illustrations of the Canadian seasons with verses by Canadian writers on the opposite page. The small, chapbook format (16.7 × 14.8 cm) was meant to be read rather than hung on the wall, and included a calendar of Christian feast days and festivals of the patron saints of the British Isles [4]. League members Fred Brigden and W.W. Alexander provided the engraving and lithography through their respective firms, the Toronto Engraving Co. and Alexander & Cable Co. There was no remuneration for any of the contributors, consistent with the League's motto, *Non clamor sed amor* (Not for fame but for love), that graced the covers of all the calendars.

The calendars from 1894 to 1897 followed a similar format, with Howard's decorative, coloured wraparound covers [3], title pages, and a centre spread for the summer months [2]. Black-and-white illustrations on Canadian themes were combined with verses by Canadian authors [5, 6]. The pen-and-ink drawings of stump fields, snake fences, lakes, and canals of old Ontario and the markets and ramparts of Quebec City are the most effective and immediate, whereas the wash drawings reproduced as muddy and grey.

Published by the newly renamed Toronto Art League, the calendars from 1898 to 1901 were more ambitious and more original in their designs. The covers by R. Weir Crouch [7] were printed in a variety of colours and the illustrations in a rich black or red and black. The 1898 and 1899 publications included two six-month calendars to be hung horizontally. Designed by C.W. Jefferys [8], the six-month calendars for 1898 were ornamented with antique military, agricultural, and domestic objects and those for 1899, by Robert Holmes and Jefferys, with agricultural activities. The monthly calendars for 1898 were paired with illustrations of historic themes [9] and those for 1899, with depictions of farm life [10], emphasizing the settlement of the land and rural life.

The 1900 calendar contrasted the past and present, with "Notes and pictured things suggesting the impress of the century on the land and its people," the historic information derived from George Johnson's *Alphabet of First Things in Canada: A Ready Reference Book of Canadian Events*. Historic dates, a snow-covered pine bough, and an aurora borealis of 1800 decorate Jefferys' calendar for January, while on the opposite page linemen string wires on the electricity and telephone poles leading to a northern Ontario mine in 1900 [11].

The 1901 and 1902 calendars were published as horizontal albums with vertical covers by R. Weir Crouch. While the monthly calendars for 1901 were superbly framed by seasonal rural landscapes and paired with drawings of village life in Ontario and Quebec [12, 13], the calendar for the following year, “Canadian Sports & Pastimes,” consisted of only twenty pages with the largely figurative illustrations, framed with arboreal and floral decorative motifs, poorly lithographed in blue and brown [14]. The mediocre illustrations confirm the strength of the League artists in landscape and decorative design rather than figurative work.

A new format was adopted for the 1903 and 1904 calendars, which were published for the League by the Musson Book Company: larger, vertical card covers by R. Weir Crouch in a somewhat art nouveau design (as was the cover for 1902) protected the inside leaves, which, save for the title pages, were intended to be displayed horizontally and hung by a recently patented device. Each monthly calendar was paired with an appropriate illustration below. A.A. Martin’s February 1903 calendar on “some pictured aspects of Canadian cities” is framed by potted plants on a windowsill with a prairie landscape dotted with grazing cattle visible through the windowpanes – all printed in black and orange. Below is a view of Calgary’s Stephen Avenue by C.W. Jefferys [17]. Martin’s 1904 November–December calendar on “some of the characteristic landscape features of Canada” depicts snow-covered branches and logs printed in black and pale yellow and is paired with a winter logging scene in David F. Thomson’s *The New North* [19].

Jefferys later wrote about the calendars: “Our venture was a sort of forlorn hope, it passed almost unnoticed, it stirred no controversy. Perhaps we were but mildly revolutionary, perhaps our public was too apathetic or indifferent. We had not the stimulus of opposition. We might have lived through a storm of denunciation, might even have thrived on it; as it was we died of asphyxiation.” It would be a subsequent generation, formed within the context of the League, that would carry on the interest in “outdoor sketching ... among the artists employed in the commercial studios,” as Brigden later asserted. J.E.H. MacDonald contributed one design to the 1904 League calendar [18], and he in turn encouraged the strong native outlook and interest in the north evident in the future work of Tom Thomson and his colleagues at Grip Ltd. The history of the nascent Group of Seven that thrived in opposition found its roots in the calendars of the Toronto Art Students’ League.

Charles C. Hill

Curator of Canadian Art



A.H. Howard, back and front covers of the 1896 calendar [3]



A.A. Martin, *February*, and C.W. Jefferys, *Stephen Avenue Calgary* [17]

Checklist

I

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
October November December 1893, 1892
For *A Calendar for the Year of Our Lord MDCCCXCIII* Designed & published by the Toronto Art Students' League. Pen and black ink over graphite with white gouache on wove paper
27.8 × 32.4 cm
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (41442)
Purchased 2004

2

C.M. Manly (1855–1924)
April May June and July August
September 1894
In *A Calendar for the Year of Our Lord MDCCCXCIV with Verses by Some of the Canadian Writers of Verse and Drawings by Members of the Toronto Art Students' League*
Toronto Engraving Co., J.E. Bryant Co. Ltd., Alexander & Cable Co. for the Toronto Art Students' League [1893]
32 pages, 21.6 × 17.3 cm

3

A.H. Howard (1854–1916)
Back and front covers
A Calendar for the Year MDCCCXCVI with Verses by Charles G.D. Roberts and Bliss Carman, and Wayside notes of Wandering over Canadian Roads by members of the Toronto Art Students' League
Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press, Alexander & Cable Co. for the Toronto Art Students' League [1895]
24 pages, 20 × 16 cm

4

Robert H. Holmes (1861–1930)
Sundays and Holydays 1896
In *A Calendar for the Year MDCCCXCVI with Verses by Charles G.D. Roberts and Bliss Carman, and Wayside notes of Wandering over Canadian Roads by members of the Toronto Art Students' League*
Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press, Alexander & Cable Co. for the Toronto Art Students' League [1895]
24 pages, 20 × 16 cm

5

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
Title page
A Calendar for the Year 1897 with Sketches of Some Canadian Water-Ways and Appropriate Selections from Canadian Writers

Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press, Alexander & Cable Co. for the Toronto Art Students' League [1896]
22 pages, 20 × 16 cm

6

David F. Thomson (1872–c. 1952)
January February March 1897
In *A Calendar for the Year 1897 with Sketches of Some Canadian Water-Ways and Appropriate Selections from Canadian Writers*
Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press, Alexander & Cable Co. for the Toronto Art Students' League [1896]
22 pages, 20 × 16 cm

7

R. Weir Crouch (c. 1866–1943)
Front cover
A Calendar for the Year 1898 with some Drawings Suggestive of the Every-day Life of the Past in Canada
The Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press for the Toronto Art League [1897]
24 pages, 25.6 × 20.4 cm

8

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
January February March April May June 1898
In *A Calendar for the Year 1898 with some Drawings Suggestive of the Every-day Life of the Past in Canada*
The Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press for the Toronto Art League [1897]
24 pages, 20.4 × 25.6 cm

9

David F. Thomson (1872–c. 1952)
January 1898 and Survey Party 1793
In *A Calendar for the Year 1898 with some Drawings Suggestive of the Every-day Life of the Past in Canada*
The Toronto Engraving Co., The Bryant Press for the Toronto Art League [1897]
24 pages, 25.6 × 20.4 cm

IO

Jean Adams Jefferys (c. 1872–1899)
December and Untitled sleighing scene
In *A Calendar for the Year 1899 with drawings illustrative of Country Life in Canada*
George N. Morang Publisher for the Toronto Art League [1898]
24 pages, 25.5 × 20.4 cm

II

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
January The Golden North 1800 and The Mines, 1900

In *1900 A Canadian calendar for the Year with Notes and pictured things suggesting the impress of the Century on the Land and its people*
George N. Morang & Company Limited
for the Toronto Art League [1899]
24 pages, 25.4 × 20.4 cm

I2

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
March, the Flood, 1900
For *The Toronto Art League Calendar 1901 with drawings illustrating some phases of Canadian Village Life*
Pen and black india ink with red watercolour, red and black chalk, and white gouache on card
39.1 × 53 cm
National Gallery of Canada (41447)
Purchased 2004

I3

W.W. Alexander (1869–1948)
May Chateau Richer Quebec and A French Canadian Village School
In *The Toronto Art League Calendar 1901 with drawings illustrating some phases of Canadian Village Life*
George N. Morang & Company Limited
for the Toronto Art League [1900]
24 pages, 26.4 × 20.9 cm

I4

C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
June July La Crosse
In *19 Hundred & 2 A Calendar with Drawings by the Toronto Art League Illustrating Some Canadian Sports & Pastimes*
George N. Morang & Company Limited
for the Toronto Art League [1901]
20 pages, 20.4 × 25.7 cm

I5

R. Weir Crouch (c. 1866–1943)
Cover
Nineteen Hundred & 3 A Calendar for the Year with Some Pictured Aspects of Canadian Cities
The Musson Book Co. Limited for the Toronto Art League [1902]
24 pages, cover 34.2 × 24.2 cm; pages 23 × 30.5 cm

I6

A.H. Howard (1854–1916)
Title page
Nineteen Hundred & 3 A Calendar for the Year with Some Pictured Aspects of Canadian Cities
The Musson Book Co. Limited for the Toronto Art League [1902]
24 pages, cover 34.2 × 24.2 cm; pages 23 × 30.5 cm

I7

A.A. Martin (c. 1876–1954)
February, 1902
C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
Stephen Avenue Calgary
In *Nineteen Hundred & 3 A Calendar for the Year with Some Pictured Aspects of Canadian Cities*
The Musson Book Co. Limited for the Toronto Art League [1902]
24 pages, cover 34.2 × 24.2 cm; pages 23 × 30.5 cm

I8

J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932)
February
C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951)
The Prairies
In *A Calendar for the Year Nineteen Hundred and Four with Drawings Illustrating Some of the Characteristic Landscape Features of Canada*
The Musson Book Co. Limited for the Toronto Art League [1903]
24 pages, cover 34.2 × 24.2 cm; pages 23 × 30.5 cm

I9

A.A. Martin (c. 1876–1954)
November December
David F. Thomson (1872–c. 1952).
The New North
In *A Calendar for the Year Nineteen Hundred and Four with Drawings Illustrating Some of the Characteristic Landscape Features of Canada*
The Musson Book Co. Limited for the Toronto Art League [1903]
24 pages, cover 34.2 × 24.2 cm; pages 23 × 30.5 cm

Bibliography

William Colgate. *The Toronto Art Students' League, 1886–1904*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954.

[R. Holmes]. "Toronto Art Students' League." *The Canadian Architect and Builder* 7, no. 1 (January 1894): 6–8.

R. Holmes. "Toronto Art Students' League." *Canadian Magazine* 4, no. 2 (December 1894): 171–88.

Robert Stacey. *Charles William Jefferys, 1869–1951*. Kingston, Ont.: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1976.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES EXHIBITION No. 28



ISSN 1481-2061

© National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 2008



National Gallery
of Canada

Musée des beaux-arts
du Canada

PRINTED IN CANADA

380 Sussex Drive, P.O. Box 427, Station A
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9N4

Canada