

PUBLICATION NOTICES/ NOTES DE LECTURE

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS (MONTREAL): INDEX TO ILLUSTRATION

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The first three of a projected twenty-eight volume index to illustrations in the *Canadian Illustrated News* has recently been published. The index volumes correspond in numbering with those of the original which was bound in two volumes each year. Each volume of the index is made up of three sections. The first is an index to engravings as given in the original publication, the second a comprehensive list of engravings in order of appearance, and the third section is made up of topical indices to section two. Some of the topical categories are: "Artists," "Current Events," "Fashions," "Photographers," "Portraits" and "Topography." Also in the comprehensive list of engravings (section two) the dimensions, the date of the issue with pagination and, whenever possible, the name of the artist, are given.

This index should occupy shelf space in the reference section of all Canadian Libraries, and would be a useful purchase for individuals with special interests in the history of Canadian art and illustration, the history of costume, as well as political and social historians interested in representations of important events and the political and military leaders who helped shape those events. The index represents a proper tribute to one of Canada's first, but unfortunately, relatively short-lived illustrated periodicals.

The Canadian Illustrated News, first published in 1869, appeared every Saturday, and was published by the Burland-Desbarats Lithographic and

Publishing Co. in Montreal. The format as well as the content of the periodical is closer to the English illustrated magazines, particularly *The London Illustrated News* and *Graphic Magazine*, rather than the American examples, such as *Century Magazine* and *Harper's*. Unlike the American periodicals, which also gave considerably more credit to the artist-illustrator, the *Canadian Illustrated News* was primarily a source of visual information complemented by short notices rather than lengthy articles. These short notices seldom yield a great deal of useful information on the state of the arts. For example, a regular feature bearing the deceptive title "artistic" is little more than a gossip column.

Some of the subjects covered by the illustrators and photographers, both of whose works were transcribed by the wood-engraver, range from International Exhibitions, domestic, commercial and industrial architecture, to portraits of illustrious politicians, cartoons and caricatures, as well as sports events, topography, exploration, western expansion and picturesque landscape.

A large portion of the illustrations is more important as straight-forward representation of current events, rather than as outstanding examples of the graphic art of the artist-illustrator and wood-engraver. At times the shortage of talented artists is made evident by editorial announcements soliciting "artists and amateurs" to submit work suitable for the nature and character of the periodical. In these advertisements the prospective contributors were assured that payment for the chosen works would be competitive and that submitted illustrations would be promptly returned to the sender. Previous to these announcements Henry Sandham, one of the more gifted artists associated with the periodical in the 1870's, had moved to Boston and begun working for American illustrated magazines. It is obvious that

Canada, with its relatively small population and limited readership, could not offer the kind of support found in both England and the United States. The rapid growth of urban centers like New York and London offered an ever-expanding readership to support this type of periodical.

In 1882 several announcements appeared in the *Canadian Illustrated News* appealing to subscribers to pay their dues. Both the advertisements for artists to submit work and the appeals to subscribers seem to point toward some of the critical problems that finally caused the periodical to go out of business in 1883.

Hardy George
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