Photographing growth: Canada’s cities, politics and the visual economy

Canada’s cities were both the subject and the site of photographic work through the period covered by the Colonial Copyright Collection. Images of the urban landscape were designed to associate particular historical events or sites of local significance with something more general, for example civic progress, modernity or commercial society. These photographs are thus not simply depictions of places and events: they are active constructions and interventions in the sociopolitical landscape. As Trachtenberg has argued of North American photography in general, ‘the history they show is inseparable from the history they enact’.1

The rate of photographic production and circulation within the empire and the world at large had increased dramatically by 1895, as had the public taste for photography, whether consumed in exhibits, newspapers or the home. This created opportunities within the urban economy for commercial photographers. In the Colonial Copyright Collection this is exemplified by the location of depositing photographers; individuals and businesses deposit photographs from urban locations across Canada between 1895 and 1924. Importantly, the major urban centres of Canada form a focus for the collection, with a significant proportion of deposits and the greatest range of photographers being based in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and so on. These photographers turned their cameras on the landscape, people and surrounding areas that were part of the sphere of influence of the urban centre – often bound up with a visual economy in discourse with wider political, economic and social dynamics of the city.

Photographs of Canada’s urban areas, where the town or city itself is the subject of the image, comprise almost one-quarter of the collection, making it by far the most significant photographic subject in the collection. This is reflected in the prevalence of photographers based in
Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia who deposited to the collection; almost three-quarters of deposits come from photographers in those provinces. These photographers tended to be based in urban areas with strong communications links (a point considered in detail in Chapter 3), and this goes some way to explain why over one-fifth of deposits come from Ontario’s urban areas.

While it is important to note that the location of photographers creates a certain inevitability that they would photograph the urban areas around them, since few of us are creatively disinterested in our immediate surroundings, it is just as notable that Canada’s urban areas provided a source of inspiration and a market for photographers. There are a significant number of images deposited around the turn of the century, reflecting urban booms and a corresponding growth in urban photographers. Cities as photographic subjects also reflect their general economic, political and social trends, with Winnipeg being a good example of this. The city is thus a noteworthy presence in early twentieth-century deposits, its boom attracting photographic interest. However, deposits noticeably slacken from the First World War onwards as changing demographic and economic conditions began to dampen the city’s growth. The lack of images of the 1919 General Strike, for instance, also reminds us that this collection’s view of Canada’s cities is predominantly positive, designed to sell interesting views on postcards or other consumable media rather than provide a repository of, say, grittier reportage. However, one can only go so far in considering an absence from such a collection.

Such notable absences invite this book to consider what messages this collection does articulate about Canada’s booming cities. The positive images provided depict building openings, the expansion of civic infrastructure, royal visits, the growing empires of Canadian merchants and other such topics; these are the dominant views of Canada’s growing cities. In many ways such a focus correlates with the growth of photographic interest in the city detailed in Peter Hales’s *Silver Cities*. Hales asserts that in America the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw an increased desire to depict the urban landscape as a bustling, dynamic space underpinned by development, commerce and the activities of the populous. The same turn can also be seen in Canadian photography through the Colonial Copyright Collection. With this in mind the chapter focuses on two different sorts of civic view, produced in this period at opposite sides of the country and depicting two drivers crucial to the visual economy of urban photography in this collection: the developing city and its growing businesses.
The relationship between photography and Canadian cities can be exemplified by two very different individuals and their photographic legacies. The first is J. W. Jones and his photographs of the opening of the British Columbia parliament buildings, taken in Victoria in 1898. The second is ‘Timothy Eaton’s’ display book of views of Toronto, produced for the T. Eaton Co. in 1901 by an unknown photographer (or photographers). Between 1895 and 1924 the economic, social and political trajectories of Victoria and Toronto were impacted by markedly different dynamics, and it is in this complex situation that the photographs discussed have agency. The work of J. W. Jones forms part of the performance of statecraft in a city and province undergoing profound changes and asserting its identity in the Canadian, North American and colonial worlds surrounding British Columbia at this time. Meanwhile the ‘Timothy Eaton’s’ photobook is an intervention in the Toronto (and even Canadian) landscape, increasingly influenced and shaped by the economic activity of the Timothy Eaton Co.

Selected from a broad spectrum of urban photography contained in the Colonial Copyright Collection, the images discussed in this chapter are not just illustrative of urban change; they were actively engaged with it. The case studies highlight political and economic aspects of urban change respectively: on the one hand, the official, ceremonial spaces of performance and display; on the other, the commercial modernity of modern urban life. While distinctive, these visions are part of wider traditions in the representation of the modern city which are not limited to political and economic spheres. In other chapters the book illustrates how Canadian photographers were involved in the wider economy of consumable image-making (Chapter 1, ‘Circulations’) and in documenting the broad social changes in Canada between 1895 and 1924 (Chapter 5, ‘A collection of people’).

Making places: photographers and urban identity

John Wallace Jones was a professional photographer and the primary partner of Jones and Co. and Jones Bros., which had photographic studios in Victoria and Esquimalt, British Columbia. Jones photographed the city of Victoria and the naval base at Esquimalt between 1888\(^3\) and his death in 1938.\(^4\) Arriving in 1888, Jones was cresting the wave of migrants entering Victoria who would increase its population from 6,000 in 1880 to 20,219 in 1900 (see Chapter 5 for more on migration in and to Canada).\(^5\) Jones therefore witnessed the development of Victoria from
post-gold rush colony to proud provincial capital. He was also one of a number of photographers arriving in British Columbia between 1860 and the 1880s, seeking to profit from the photographic market generated by the gold rush.

During his professional career Jones was commissioned to photograph many of the civic and ceremonial events in Victoria, as well as the development of its urban and naval infrastructure. Between 1898 and 1902 he submitted a series of images from around the city and the province of British Columbia for copyright in Canada; these therefore became part of the Colonial Copyright Collection. The images Jones submitted for copyright cover many subjects, including political events, social occasions, major news and also an extensive portfolio of the naval vessels and infrastructure at Esquimalt on the western edge of Victoria. However, there is evidence that Jones did not subject all of his photographs of Victoria for copyright, so those that are part of the Colonial Copyright Collection provide an interesting insight into how Jones decided on the varying values of his portfolio. This in turn tells us something about the urban photographic economy at the time, and also intersects with recent work on the relationship between visual technology and national and provincial identities in Canada. Druick’s work on the Canadian National Film Board and its precursors, for example, explores official interest in the production of new images of the Canadian landscape and identity from the late nineteenth century onwards.

Since its founding in 1843 as Fort Victoria (a trading outpost of the Hudson’s Bay Company), the colony was protected by the Esquimalt naval base. The base was also situated to enforce the British claim over the area and to provide a staging post for naval operations on the west coast of the Americas, with easy access to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) and Asian colonies. With Victoria’s growth as a free port towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the continued interest of the Crown in what was now one of its most prolific new cities, the naval base across the bay was of great and increasing significance in the area when Jones arrived in 1888. Jones submitted an extensive portfolio of naval photography for copyright, with Figs 2.1 and 2.2 providing good examples of his approach to photographing the base.

What stands out in particular is the way in which Jones composes the shot to draw out the technical sophistication and beauty of the subject, be it a dry dock or warship. In these images the photographer is very much in control of the conditions; images seem to be painted on to the film of the camera. This delicacy comes across especially from the smoke in Fig.2.2; sharp and focused, it still retains its wispy quality. Jones also
Fig. 2.1 ‘The Esquimalt Dry Dock’. Copyright J. W. Jones, 1900 (copyright number 12103).

Fig. 2.2 ‘H.M.S. “Virago” Firing in Honour of the King’. Copyright J. W. Jones, 1901 (copyright number 11979).
captures the water delicately in both photographs, picking it out rather than blurring it. The composition of these images, in contrast to some of his other work, is considered and poised. In Fig. 2.1, for example, the curved lines of the dry dock swoop down to meet with the swirling water pooling in its bottom, and the image depicts a grace that masks its utilitarian functions. Moreover, many of Jones’s ships have a metallic, industrial feel that pervades the picture as a whole, generated by the effect on the water and the background light as well as the subject of the image itself (see Fig. 2.2 in particular).

Jones’s shots of the naval ships and yard of Esquimalt bay convey a distinctly modern technological aesthetic; rather than just tools, he portrays them as achievements of science and skill. In their emphasis on scale and majesty, these images convey an effect akin to the technological sublime. The celebration of modern technology in such terms reflects a common theme in contemporary narratives of development in British Columbia, connecting to its maritime history while celebrating a new imperial era through emphasis on technological progress.

It would be simple to assume that Jones and the other photographers who submitted work for copyright to the Canadian government between 1895 and 1924 were simply seeking to protect the financial value of their images by regulating their circulation within society. Evidently this was a key consideration, but it was not the whole of the story. Given the selectivity Jones displayed in applying for copyright and the distinctions between his naval images and the rest of his work, the copyrighting of his naval images appears to have been motivated more specifically by a desire to distinguish their artistic significance. In short, the photographer sought to elevate his work’s aesthetic qualities and to assert his creativity as a professional. This was important in a period when photographic professionalism was still developing, especially in a part of Canada which had only recently begun to urbanise and which supported a developing and competitive photographic economy.

While copyrighting a photograph protected the financial viability of an image by tying it to the producer (or copyrighter), it also asserted ownership of the skills and perspective that went into producing a potentially unique photographic view, composition or style. This was a potentially significant claim in a field where many professionals were trying to establish a reputation, and also carve a niche that would support further development of their practice. Given that Jones was remembered after his death as a well-known photographer whose reputation was founded in his naval work, it is likely that the copyrighting of such images contributed to expanding his reputation as an accomplished naval (and
therefore military) photographer. This is a reputation that would, no doubt, also carry a considerable amount of social cachet – and that would in turn improve the photographer’s professional standing in the city as a whole.

It seems that Jones’s reputation as a skilled professional photographer enabled him to secure further official commissions, giving rise to another significant body of copyrighted work held in the Colonial Copyright Collection. In the same period as Figs 2.1 and 2.2 were produced, Jones photographed the arrival of the Chinese Viceroy on his first official visit to the province (1896)\textsuperscript{17} (see Figs 2.3–2.4) and the opening of the British Columbia legislature buildings (1898).\textsuperscript{18}

The images shown in Figs 2.5 and 2.6 appear to have been produced by Jones under the commission of the Victoria legislature, with the images commemorating the opening of the new parliament building on 10 February 1898. The perspective suggests that Jones had privileged views of the scene and, given the time constraints and logistics involved in creating these images from multiple sites, it is possible he had other photographers working for him. This being the case, it is notable that the copyright is attributed to J. W. Jones; the next part of this chapter deals with such potential absences at more length. The privileged views, something generally only conferred to the professional and official photographer, indicate that Jones was the authorised photographer on this occasion. His role was to document the event as clearly as possible in a way which could be used in subsequent publicity. The images also served to highlight its status as an historic occasion. It would appear Jones was remarkably successful in this respect, given that his photograph of the opening of parliament has still been used by the legislature in the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{19}

Despite the jubilant scenes portrayed in these photographs, the British Columbia legislature buildings were built under a cloud of public controversy and political turmoil. Completed late in 1897, the building cost over $9 million to build, $3 million more than its original budgeted estimate of $6 million, which was already controversial. This provoked criticism both within Victoria and from outside, especially from representatives of those cities which had competed against Victoria to be capital of the province. These controversies were not solely about the parliament building itself; rather the parliament building had become a symbol of a wider power struggle to maintain Victoria’s primacy in a rapidly growing province.\textsuperscript{20} Furthermore, the character of the province was being challenged from without, as the Dominion of Canada attempted to articulate its identity in the face of cultural, political and economic
encroachments from the United States. The British Columbia legislature buildings and the photographs of its opening were, therefore, significant components in these attempts to express an identity to the wider world.

Victoria was a late entrant in the field of colonial settlements in Canada and its subsequent expansion had been marked by the booms and busts of the gold rushes that occurred around the colony between 1858 and the Klondike gold rush of 1896. As a result, the town grew in a haphazard and fractured way, leading one historian to assert that, ‘[t]he visitor to Victoria in 1862 would have found not a city but a shacktown’.  

By the 1870s Victoria was struggling to keep up with the rest of the province in terms of attracting new settlers and economic investment. Therefore, despite winning the status of legislative capital in 1868, Victoria’s reputation needed to be improved to secure its role in the eyes of the mainlanders.

These pressures led to a significant effort to tidy up the capital and create a downtown architecturally worthy of being the province’s legislative centre, of which the parliament buildings were to be a cornerstone. The *Victoria Colonist*’s stern criticism of the Victoria legislature’s existing

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*Fig. 2.3* ‘Arrival of Li Hung Chang’. Copyright J. W. Jones, 1896 (copyright number 8782).
architecture, called ‘the Birdcages’, sums up the sentiment that led to the creation of the spectacular new parliament. As the paper observed:

Mean and insignificant public buildings are outward and visible signs of a narrow minded, sordid and uncultivated state or province. Visitors are sure to judge the whole people by the buildings they erect for public uses. Those buildings ought to be handsome as well as commodious.  

The paper’s views mirrored many within the city. They connected to wider calls to spruce up the image of Victoria, endowing it with all
The appearances of a proud provincial and colonial city. Such a vision was also underpinned by the colony’s pride in being founded by British interests, and largely settled by them too.

The city’s redevelopment was therefore inspired both by the architectural style of the British metropole and by British Columbia’s history of maritime exploration and expansion. This led to significant architectural and civic projects, such as the construction of an electric street lighting network that was to be, “the first place in the far west” to follow the example of such progressive English cities as Godalming in Surrey. The parliament buildings were to underpin all of this, and were designed to articulate Victoria’s goals and ambitions visually and spatially. The buildings also served as a marker of the city’s achievements to the province, nation and empire around it.

Regardless of the problems with the construction of the new parliament buildings, they were successful in the rapid promotion of Victoria’s new reputation as a beautiful and inspiring legislative city. The city emerged as a stately and stable capital, increasingly composed of
refined architecture and inspired by its British heritage. Jones’s images were instrumental within this context, and Victoria’s new imperial aesthetic is displayed in Figs 2.5 and 2.6: the crowd gathered to celebrate the opening is well dressed in hats and black suits, sheltering from the rain under black umbrellas, while the guards lining the steps to the front door are formally dressed in colonial military uniforms, emphasising the city’s British heritage. Jones’s images also capture the ornate sculpture on the facade of the building itself, the grand curve of the main entrance and the quality of the masonry. Despite neglecting the building’s tower, a key imperial reference, in capturing these features Jones illustrates the British imperial influences placed in the design of the building by the architect Francis Rattenbury (a recent British migrant). Jones’s photography highlights the similarities between the British parliament and the new British Columbia legislature; in so doing he underscores the ‘Britishness’ of this Canadian colony.

It is significant that the parliament buildings of Victoria were opened at a very particular moment in a broader imperial history. They
helped to define British Columbia’s heritage as distinctly British, at the height of the period of invented tradition in Victorian Britain and Europe at large. These links were important too in the context of resistance to increasing political dominance by the neighbouring United States and continued influxes of migrants from San Francisco during the gold rushes. The building also opened at a point where the driving technologies of the age were in flux, as the historically dominant maritime influences on the area were being overwritten by the geopolitical influence of the railway.

Jones’s photographs of the new parliament articulate what the building was intended to become, defining both its heritage and its future. That this was still a work in progress is suggested by some of the detail, such as the unmade ground at the forefront of Fig. 2.5. These are reminders that Jones is codifying and visually defining an institution, and a set of relationships, that are still in the process of development. The government of the time was keen to stress Victoria’s credentials as a grand legislative city, part of the empire and proud of its heritage as a purely British colony. In undertaking the project of building the parliament, the government announced their vision for the province, its values and destiny. The decision to memorialise the opening of the building also demonstrated an enthusiasm for the publicity potential of photography – an important consideration given the 70,000 visitors attracted to the parliament in the first two years of its opening.

Jones’s photography and wider body of work therefore offer important insights into the visual articulation of these city and provincial identities. His work was to become, and continues to be, part of the visual economy of British Columbia – in so doing becoming an agent in the broader sociopolitical currents of British Columbia and Canada at the time. Jones’s work also shows where the paper empire and the empire of steam, ships and geopolitics interconnect. It makes a geopolitical statement on the part of Victoria while using the legislation of the paper empire to protect the value of the photograph.

Making names: photographs and brand identity

Whereas Jones presented an official, often imperial view of the city of Victoria, other visions of Canadian cities represented in the collection were more decidedly commercial. This demonstrates the multiple agendas and actors working to build Canada’s new urban areas, variations captured and manipulated through photography. A primary
example of commercial interests is a collection of views published by the Dominion Publishing Co. in 1901 and titled *Toronto: Album of Views.* This photobook was produced under the commission of T. Eaton and Co., the largest and most profitable Canadian department store of the time – and, indeed, for most of the twentieth century. Eaton’s played a highly significant role in the development of the Toronto retail economy. The photobook situates Eaton and his business at the heart of a city aspiring to be a hub of both North American commerce and the British Empire, effectively in competition with better-established rivals such as New York and London.

The city on display here is very much the Victorian ‘Queen City’ and the ‘city that works’, as described by Richard Dennis. In combination, the book’s photographs create a visual framework through which the values of the new commercial elite could be communicated to the wider public. There are potential comparisons here with other studies of the visual representation of commercial power, in particular Schein’s work on nineteenth-century representations of urban North America and Domosh’s work on the iconography of skyscrapers in the early twentieth century.

The focus of this discussion of *Toronto: Album of Views* is not so much on the agency of the individual photographer (compared to the discussion of J. W. Jones above) as on the effect of a particular form of urban view. Indeed, while the book is dominated by a very notable presence in Eaton, there is also an absent presence at its heart: the contributing photographer (or photographers) receives no mention, raising further questions about the photographer’s role in contemporary print culture as well as the operation of the urban photographic economy of the time. Indeed, *Toronto: Album of Views* is suggestive of how, in a heated market for photographers and their products, the role of the photographer as a brand in the visual economy was fluid; it was not always directly linked to the end circulation of the photographic work. At the same time, as with Jones’s photographs of Victoria, the Toronto album was designed to promote urban development. Here, though, it was commerce, not politics, that was on view.

Timothy Eaton’s impact on the landscape, history and development of Toronto is notable and, as those who have written some of the many biographies about him attest, attributable in part to his force of personality. Starting from almost nothing after his arrival in Canada as an immigrant from Ireland, he constructed a business empire and negotiated access to the previously closed ranks of Toronto society. Eaton had a particular vision of how people should work, live
and, most significantly, shop which affected not just the development of Toronto, but the development of Confederate Canada as a whole.\textsuperscript{36} Timothy Eaton used all the technologies, forums and opportunities of the day to assert the primacy of his company. Underpinning all of this was a constant attempt to define Toronto as ‘Eaton’s City’, a place in which the identity of the man, family and company were writ large onto the urban fabric.\textsuperscript{37} The photobook discussed here is part of this articulation of the urban landscape, and of Timothy Eaton’s wider strategy of promotion.

Eaton used philanthropy, event sponsorship, an affinity for spectacle and a willingness to embrace the latest technologies and social developments as means to assert the significance of the T. Eaton Co. as a retailer and social influence in Toronto and Canada. Advertising was a key tool here, and Timothy Eaton proved a master craftsman in utilising the new techniques and opportunities provided by a rapidly changing media and social landscape.\textsuperscript{38} ‘Eaton’s Empire’ was underpinned by Timothy Eaton’s use of this constantly developing and changing tool of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{39} In setting up his Yonge Street store, Eaton used swathes of on-site and window-based advertising to sway consumer choice away from his Queen’s Street rival Simpsons and other competitors. His panache for window displays made them tourist attractions within the city in their own right, especially at Christmas time.\textsuperscript{40}

However, what set Eaton and his company apart was his adept use of the printed advertisement in order both to draw in customers and extend the reach of his company and its client base. During his stewardship of the company Eaton introduced the Eaton’s catalogue, launched at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition in 1884; this became the market leading mail-order catalogue in Canada during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Eaton also was the first newspaper advertiser to pay for a ‘red band’ (colour) back page advertisement.

In the use of these two iconic advertising strategies, Eaton demonstrated a grasp of not just the printed form, but how to deploy it to the greatest effect. By taking risks, in that both media were untried and the costs significant, Eaton made these marketing devices almost synonymous with his brand. Monopolising forms of engagement in this way was a tactic deployed by Timothy Eaton in many forms: his philanthropy (sponsoring Toronto’s most significant hospital) and even his sporting engagements (owning the most successful buggy racer of the time, Dan Patch, see Fig.2.7) operated in the same way.

Eaton’s use of the photobook is a prime example of the way in which he brought together print, image and the whole package to create and
promote his brand. Published in 1901 but copyrighted in 1900, Toronto: Album of Views was presented in the format of an increasingly popular consumer commodity. The book was well bound and printed on high quality paper, bearing title pages and the mark of the publisher in highly stylised characters. The contents and materiality of the photobook are significant, with both the medium and its presentation understood to be displaying photographs in order to memorialise particular subjects. The publication feels impressive and provides a pleasing backdrop to the images themselves, over which the shadow of Timothy Eaton looms large when it comes to their selection and composition. Therefore the object itself gives the impression of turning the Toronto that Timothy Eaton has made into a form of urban, indeed national, heritage.

After the introductory page (Fig. 2.8), the book begins with photographs of the government infrastructure of Toronto. On the first page it depicts the Ontario government buildings and on the second the city hall, completed only two years before. The photobook therefore follows the trend of its genre in portraying the legislative infrastructure of the city, and asserting its beauty and taste by drawing out its neoclassical parallels with British and European architecture.
In depicting the legislative centre of the city, the photobook also provides an opportunity to place the Eaton brand, and Timothy Eaton, at its heart. Eaton used a number of tools to achieve this. Fig. 2.9, for example, is an interesting departure from the overall format of the book. The image is not a photograph, but instead an architectural rendering from a semi-bird’s eye view, depicting a hypothetical vista. As a result, it is able to show the city hall, with completed and landscaped gardens, and the area of Queen and James Streets in the background. This angle draws attention to the proximity of Eaton’s store to the legislative centre of town. At the time Eaton’s store, factory and mail-order depot took up most of the city block framed by James, Queen and Yonge Streets, with shopfronts on all three streets. These are the only identifiable shopfronts in Fig. 2.9 and are picked out by the flags above them.

When Eaton set up his business in Toronto, many thought he was doomed to fail, located as he was on the lower quality road of Yonge Street. Yonge Street was considered to be much less fashionable and more peripheral than Queen Street and, more prominently, King Street, the sites of most of Eaton’s competitors. Despite this, Eaton’s prospered, and by the beginning of the twentieth century the area of Yonge, James and Queen Streets had become far more influential in the city’s consumer culture. However, Eaton did not drop his guard. Despite his success, he constantly sought new ways to reaffirm the status of his store and himself within the city. As a result, the location of the new city hall was too

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**Fig. 2.8** Title page of *Toronto: Album of Views*, 1901. Copyright Dominion Publishing Co., 1900.
good a promotional opportunity to be missed. The image in Fig. 2.9 dramatically emphasises the centrality of Eaton’s, both through its compositional alignment of the two areas and its manipulation of the engraved image, in order to emphasise this spatial proximity of city hall and department store.

These spatial relationships and perceptions of the downtown geography of the city were very important to Eaton, and his attempts to place his business at its centre are not limited to this one image. The series of images which follows in the photobook is solely composed of Toronto’s retail districts, depicting Yonge Street and King Street from various angles. The main entrance of T. Eaton and Co. on Yonge Street is shown in Fig. 2.10. This image highlights the importance of Eaton’s to the street, capturing the flags and notices, as well as highlighting the grand architecture for which the store was famous.\(^4\) The next page depicts King Street (Fig. 2.11). That this street is photographed is not surprising, as King Street was still regarded as a major fashion centre in the city, especially by those in the upper classes who determined fashion trends of the time. However, the emphasis through this ordering of images is that Yonge Street and Eaton’s are the major engines of consumption in the city, and of primary importance to its structure. This point is driven home by the fact that the photograph of King Street is taken from Yonge Street, visually asserting the links between the two streets. Similarly, the next photograph in the book (Fig. 2.12) depicts the corner of these two great
streets and emphasises their importance to the city, again, strengthening the linking of King and Yonge Streets and asserting the primacy of Yonge Street. Such a development would have been considered unthinkable when Eaton set up his business in 1864.

Fig. 2.10 ‘Yonge Street, Viewed from Albert Street’, in Toronto: Album of Views, 1901. Copyright Dominion Publishing Co., 1900.

Fig. 2.11 ‘King Street, Viewed from Yonge Street’, in Toronto: Album of Views, 1901. Copyright Dominion Publishing Co., 1900.

streets and emphasises their importance to the city, again, strengthening the linking of King and Yonge Streets and asserting the primacy of Yonge Street. Such a development would have been considered unthinkable when Eaton set up his business in 1864.
Later pages of the book have a format common to photobooks produced in other Canadian cities: the next 15 pages are illustrations of Toronto’s educational and religious establishments, followed by its parks and well-maintained suburbs. However, even in these depictions, the shadow of Timothy Eaton and his family loom large. For example, of the two non-university seats of education depicted in the book, Upper Canada College, where Timothy Eaton’s son was educated, is at the front of the pack. The school is credited with furnishing Jack Eaton with the skills and knowledge to take over the Eaton Empire after his father had relinquished control. Similarly, in a montage of churches produced for the album, Eaton’s own central Methodist church takes precedence. In the wider trope of urban photobooks, images of churches were usually placed to illustrate the grandeur of their architecture. This makes the primacy of Eaton’s church in the photobook all the more interesting, given that it is far from the most architecturally significant. Its significance to the man is beyond doubt, however, given the centrality of church to his life and the sizeable donations he made to it.

Depictions of the parts of Toronto’s urban infrastructure that underpinned the Eaton family network highlight the role Toronto played as the seat of the Eaton Empire. Through these wider social and cultural connections to the city, the book illustrates that Toronto is not just a landscape the family and business act upon, but that Toronto and the family are bound together; they combine to make a better, more effective whole.
This is important as many great department stores of the era relied upon their ‘local’ geography to increase their significance, albeit in various ways. Harrods, London and the empire, for example, had a symbiotic relationship for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the empire supplied Harrods from all corners of the globe (a wealth of supply which underpins the store’s popularity to this day), and Harrods sold the empire to London and the rest of Britain.48

The conclusion of the photobook reverts to depicting the significant sites of Timothy Eaton and the T. Eaton Co. business more directly. In the preceding sections the significance of Eaton’s store and its relationship to Toronto’s urban geography is discernible by unpicking the composition of the image. The closing images of the photobook are more overt in their assertion of Timothy Eaton and his company’s centrality to the city of Toronto as they situate the business and the family within myriad landscapes of the city. For example, a whole page is dedicated to illustrating the impressive scale of the T. Eaton Co. in significant detail (see Fig.2.13). The illustration is engraved, again, and depicts a view of the block unattainable through photography. In showing the two main frontages of the store as well as the factory that lies behind them, the illustration highlights the impressive architectural achievement of a store and factory that takes up an entire city block and underscores this with the tag line, ‘Canada’s Greatest Store’, at the bottom.

Fig. 2.13 ‘The T. Eaton Co. Limited: Canada’s Greatest Store’, in Toronto: Album of Views, 1901. Copyright Dominion Publishing Co., 1900.
This image is featured in a section of other impressive private architectural achievements in Toronto that takes in its best hotels and private institutions; once again, Eaton’s buildings are set ahead of all architectural rivals. This places the Eaton buildings alongside hotels and private banks (the I.O.F. Temple Building is also depicted), blurring the line traditionally drawn between industry and finance and putting Eaton’s space of retail and industry at its head. Here Eaton disturbs the traditional, hierarchical perception of the urban geography of Toronto by creating new juxtapositions within an established photographic medium.

The penultimate photograph in the book is of the Industrial Exhibition pavilion, the site of Toronto’s famous annual exhibition where recent scientific and agricultural developments were displayed (Fig.2.14, and see Chapter 1 for more on national exhibitions). The pavilion was an impressive part of the Toronto landscape. Inspired by the Crystal Palace in London, it was designed to demonstrate Toronto’s ability to host a permanent scientific fair after the city had been denied Canada’s annual fair, which rotated between locations. The inclusion of the pavilion in Toronto: Album of Views is in line with displaying the best architecture Toronto has to offer – but also emphasises the special relationship the T. Eaton Co. has with the pavilion, the Industrial Exhibition itself and, at the heart of things, the city of Toronto itself.

Fig. 2.14 ‘Southern view of the Industrial Exhibition pavilion’, in Toronto: Album of Views, 1901. Copyright Dominion Publishing Co., 1900.
It was at the exhibition that Eaton launched the mail-order catalogue that would make his company a household name across Canada.\textsuperscript{50} The catalogue was such a success that within ten years of its first distribution the phenomenon of ‘Eaton’s catalogue English’, in which new arrivals to Canada would pick up the basics of their new language from the freely available publication, was well established.\textsuperscript{51} Since the distribution of the first catalogues Eaton’s and the Toronto Industrial Exhibition had a symbiotic relationship. The exhibition’s reputation for fashion and modernity underpinned the reputation of an Eaton’s still making its name, while the bombastic displays of an established Eaton’s (particularly in competition with Simpsons) in the markets of the southern pavilion provided a massive draw to the show year after year.\textsuperscript{52}

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Toronto: Album of Views illustrates the complexity of the visual economy within which photographs and photographers were operating at the time. The photobook shows images being drawn into a broad project to display the city through the vision of one man’s personality, while also asserting the links between this company and various commercial, industrial and government sites, all with a significant impact on the geography of Toronto and Canada at large. To accomplish this these photographs were commissioned to display particular and narrowly framed geographies; it is notable that when a broader perspective was needed, the bird’s-eye view engraving was deployed in preference to the camera. All of these images were directed and assembled to define the geographical imagination of the city in Eaton-centric terms. The process of copyrighting the images contained within the photobook, therefore, was not merely about protecting its potential as a source of income; it was also yet another way of claiming ownership of Toronto as ‘Eaton’s City’.

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Focusing on two exemplary bodies of work, this chapter has sought to situate urban imagery within the Colonial Copyright Collection in the wider context of the continually developing market for technologies of producing photographic views in Canadian cities. As a commercial practice, photography was commonly an urban phenomenon, reflected in the establishment of significant numbers of studios and the marketing of photographic products in towns and cities across Canada.\textsuperscript{53} The business of photographing the city itself, and its most notable landmarks, was potentially lucrative: indeed individual photographers and companies came to specialise in this branch of work.\textsuperscript{54} The two case studies examined here are, in this sense, representative of wider patterns and trends.
While the case studies are situated at opposite ends of Canada and in very different social and political contexts, they illustrate the significance of the photographer and the photograph as actors in the articulation of understandings of the urban landscape. These examples also illustrate that the relationships, technologies, geographies and exchanges involved in the creation of these understandings were complex. For example, the representation would sometimes be underpinned by the reputation of the photographer and their biography (as with Jones), while sometimes the photographer’s vision would be appropriated by another character (as with Eaton). Images were also produced for different markets and circulated in different material forms. These factors, in turn, required the photographer to deploy a variety of technical skills, with varying degrees of success. Fundamentally, this illustrates why the Colonial Copyright Law was an important tool for the photographer or entrepreneur in the Canadian urban context. Obtaining copyright was not just a means of securing legal rights to an image; it was also a way of enhancing the authority of particular views of the city.