

C. W. JEFFERYS, O.S.A., R.C.A., LL.D.

A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

For almost sixty years C. W. Jefferys has been a spokesman for, and an interpreter of, his adopted country Canada. In the books he has written and edited, in articles, reviews, and foot-notes to history, he has earned a place among the important historians of this country. In the hundreds of illustrations of characters and events in our past he has become the outstanding biographer and historian of the Dominion in line and colour. In the reconstruction of early habitations and fortifications, the design of monuments in stone recording heroic days, the design of medals and postage stamps, and many another service, he has consolidated his position as artist-historian to the nation. Dr. Jefferys was one of the founders of the first consciously Canadian art movement, one of the first illustrators of Canadian historical events, and the first to discover the Canadian prairies as an inexhaustible theme for the artist. Highly skilled both as writer and artist, his chief passion was for truth, and because he was able to combine a tireless zest for facts with an unflagging joy in life, both past and present, his work "exists", is instinct with life, and will endure, both as a source of authentic data and as a continuing inspiration.

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Charles William Jefferys was born in Rochester, England, August 25, 1869. His family were neighbours of Charles Dickens. When Jefferys was a small boy his family settled in Philadelphia, then in Hamilton, and finally moved to Toronto about 1880. Here Jefferys attended school, and when still very young was apprenticed to the Toronto Lithographing Company. This training was of value to him in later years, when so much of his work was destined for reproduction in printed form. The soundness of his composition, the integrity of his emotional and intellectual insights, the clean, firm, simple rightness of his lines during his apprentice days—these became a living part of him and never forsook him.