

1892 Travel Journal of Henry Josiah DeForest¹ (1855-1924)

Transcribed and Published by Graham M. Segger in September 2019²

Covers period September 30, 1892 through January 7, 1893 with many references to prior periods

Written in: Providence R.I.

Date: Dec 23rd, 1892

After a full year of quiet retired life, in a quiet country village isolated, almost exiled - for to enjoy the society of that enchanting locality (Taylor Village³) one must be thoroughly conversant with the cultivation of grain, cows, pigs, geese and cabbage – no Church of England (and life is scarce worth living beyond its pale) no musical entertainment – no lectures – no society.

It is an old saying and in this instance proves a true one, that familiarity breeds contempt. During this year of quietude I devoted myself religiously to the study of the art I love so much. Upon my pictures I labored with a loving hand and succeeded at last in getting together a dozen interesting canvases⁴, with which and a collection of sketches, I decided to introduce myself and work to my countrymen.

Accordingly I had temporary frames made, rough, strong and canvases sent for packing and about the 30th Sept. opened up my first exhibition of pictures in the courthouse at Dorchester NB. The show was fairly well patronized and pictures much admired. After three days run there, I shipped them next to Sackville NB where through the kindness and hospitality of Principal Borden⁵ and Professor Mack of the Ladies Academy I was granted the free use of their magnificent Hall of Music. For three days more the intellectual element of Sackville wandered in and out admiring and remarking the beauty of my humble efforts.

On Oct. 8th I shipped again, this time to Moncton, while I returned to our temporary home in Taylor Village for a week.

Meantime we packed and arranged for our final departure to other lands. On 17th Oct I went to Moncton to open up an exhibition there, in the YMCA Hall. For three days my work occupied those walls and the Moncton Times gave me a very favourable notice thereof⁶. On the 22nd I arranged by telegram for an exhibition in Petitcodiac and thither I once more shipped my treasures and YF⁷ and self returned

¹ For more articles about the life and ancestors of H.J. DeForest visit <http://grahamsegger.com/henry-j-deforest-and-ephraim-deforest/>

² This hand written journal was found in the H.J. DeForest artist file at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. In the same folder was a letter from George Burnett (1866-1958, H.J. DeForest's half brother) to Harold DeForest (1890-1970, one of H.J. DeForest's nephews and son of James F. DeForest). The speculation is that the journal and letter were given to the museum by someone in Harold DeForest's family. Footnotes and Appendices have been prepared by Graham Segger (graham {dot} segger {at} gmail {dot} com), who transcribed the Journal, with assistance from Susan Derkoch, a DeForest family member and researcher. See Appendix F for an image of page 1 and sample of the handwriting.

³ Ruth (Newcomb) DeForest's brother Joseph R. Newcomb lived in Taylor Village which is just south of Moncton.

⁴ The 12 paintings are listed in Appendices A & B

⁵ Rev. Dr. Byron C. Borden, M.A., D.D., principal of the Ladies' College beginning in 1885. The Ladies College was eventually incorporated into Mount Allison College (later University) and Rev. Borden was its 4th President.

⁶ Moncton Times, Oct 17-21, 1892 – See Appendix B. Transcribed from fiche copy in Moncton Library

⁷ Used by Henry throughout to describe his wife Ruth (Newcomb) DeForest

as far as Painsec Junction⁸ to spend our last Sunday for some time with dear old mother and father⁹. The 25th Oct found us in Petitcodiac and instead of going to an hotel as usual, we were invited by Mr. and Mrs. Webster to spend a week in their cozy home and in their society we were very much at home. Our stay in this once prosperous town, for tis now at low watermark, brought me in contact with many old acquaintances, for sixteen years earlier in life I was a hard working citizen there, a regular attendant at dear Parson Willis' church and was frequently called upon to assist in musical entertainments. On 29 Oct I packed and shipped everything to St John, we then paid a few days visit to my uncle John Fowler¹⁰ at Butternut Ridge, whose family with their customary hospitality gave us the run of their home while we were there and we enjoyed it much. Returning to Petitcodiac where we spent one day more. Cousin Alice Clough¹¹ accompanies us and continued her journey to Lewiston Maine whither she has gone to make her home for a time with her brother and sister.

The following day, we came down the ICR¹² as far as Hampton where we spent a few days with my dear Aunt Mrs. E. Lyon¹³. From there we made our way to St John. Calling at Rothsay to visit Miss Davidson an aged and much respected friend. Mrs. DeForest was persuaded to remain in her amiable society until I secured quarters in St John for my pictures and ourselves. Accordingly, on the 9th of Nov I secured a room in Berryman's Hall for exhibition purposes and for ourselves we accepted quarters with Mrs. Luc Misol (?) in Uncle J. Whiting's residence at 68 Queen Street.

For two weeks I ran my exhibition, with a fair amount of success, and the three leading papers, Globe, Sun and Telegraph¹⁴ gave me very flattering notices of the quality and extent of my exhibition. Our stay enabled us to renew our acquaintance with many old friends as well as relatives. On the 24th Nov I closed my exhibition and on the 25th shipped paintings and sketches to Montreal where about the middle of Feb next they are to be placed on view again¹⁵. On the 26 Nov, we left for Boston where we arrived on the evening of the 27th.

We were met at the Boston and Main depot by cousin Cella Wood¹⁶ who piloted us to the Fitchburg Depot where we took train for Mount Auburn and there for two weeks made it our home at the residence of my Uncle and Aunt (Mr. and Mrs. James Wood¹⁷)

Those two weeks were divided in visits to relatives, picture collections and artists' studios. Of the latter I visited W.F. Laudette and Alfred Ordley in studio building, Tremont Street and W.H. Landsil animal

⁸ Located close to the current Moncton Airport

⁹ This would have been his mother (H)anah Jane Fowler (1824-1906) and step-father George Harding Burnett (1805-1898)

¹⁰ John Humbert Fowler, brother of Henry's mother's Anah Jane Fowler

¹¹ Alice Clough is the daughter of John Humbert Fowler

¹² Intercolonial Railway (ICR), aka Intercolonial Railway of Canada (IRC)

¹³ Mrs. E Lyon is Maria Arabella DeForest the daughter of Henry DeForest and Mary Fowler. She married Edward Jarvis Lyon.

¹⁴ Fiche copies of two of these articles courtesy of the Saint John Free Public Library – see Appendix C

¹⁵ Royal Canadian Academy of Arts Exhibition at the Art Association Gallery – Appendix D

¹⁶ Cella Wood (Ella Beatrice Wood) is the daughter of Esther Matilda Fowler and James Allen Wood

¹⁷ James Allen Wood and Esther Matilda Fowler (sister of Anah Jane Fowler)

painter, Dorchester. Also the art museum to which we were accompanied by intimate friends Mrs J King and son and cousin Clara Wood¹⁸.

Our social visits were confined to a small circle of relatives. Their homes were as follows – cousin Carrie Yettin¹⁹ and the Carlton's in Waltham, Mass. While in that vicinity we visited the Waltham Watch factory, a little world of industry, peculiarly its own. By special permission we were granted a visit to these world famed works and enjoyed it very much.

In Boston proper we visited cousin Mrs. G.F.Walker²⁰ and cousin Lidia Lyon.

We also visited the State House, New Old South Church and Trinity – two magnificent sanctuaries. After spending two pleasant weeks and finding my health beginning to break we left "The Hub" on the 10th of Nov for RI. Whither we came to visit our friends the Dinsmore's, formerly New Brunswick people. We are now on our second and last week with them. Though the weather has been unusually cold, we have enjoyed our stay very much. I have met several artists here – viz. Mr. G Whiticker²¹, a man fond of somber tones and who paints in a broad bold style. Mr. Banister²², a colored man and the first one I have ever met in my life with any artistic ability. His style is also broad and vigorous. Mr. Arnold²³, a portrait painter. His reputation as such is already established. He paints solidly and carefully and his subjects impress one with the feeling that they are faithfully portrayed. There are several others, but these I consider are doing the best work at present.

I have quite recently attended a meeting of St John Lodge of AF&AM, in the Masonic Temple. The formation of this Lodge dates from 1767 if I remember right and is a strong well worked popular lodge. Their room is beautifully furnished with lofty ceiling and large. The brethren were very attentive and genial and they worked the Third Degree with that discipline, reverence and order, which at all times commands respect and admiration²⁴.

Date: December 25

Of necessity, a quiet Christmas, being Sunday I attended early Communion Services at St James Epis. YF and I attended the regular morning service at St John. Being crippled with rheumatics and the weather cold, remained with our friend the rest of the day.

¹⁸ Clara Wood is also a daughter of Esther Matilda Fowler and James Allen Wood

¹⁹ Carrie Yetten is Caroline Rebecca Carlton who married Jasper Hosea Yetten. Caroline is the granddaughter of Caroline DeForest and Linus Seely through their daughter Julia Emmeline Seely.

²⁰ Gustavus Freedom Walker was married to Mary S. DeForest, daughter of Charles DeForest who is the son of Nathan DeForest

²¹ George William Whitaker (1841-1916) has been referred to as the Dean of Rhode Island artists.

²² Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901) was born in St. Andrews, New Brunswick to a father from Barbados and a mother who was believed to be of Scottish descent. After the death of his mother, who had encouraged his early artistic interest, he worked several years at sea in Canada before moving to Boston, Massachusetts in 1848.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/edward-mitchell-bannister-226>

²³ John Russell Bartlett (1805-1886) is well represented in the Brown University Portrait Collection

²⁴ Henry had joined the masons five years earlier while living in Melbourne, Australia in 1887

Date: Monday, Dec 26 1892

Public Holiday AM - painting PM - we accompanied Miss Annie Dinsmore to Roger Williams Park for skating. The several small lakes were a sea of flitting humanity – but the weather was very cold. We remained till nearly sunset and departed for home. Our outward trip was by electric car, and homeward by steam cars.

Written in: New London, Conn

Date: Tuesday Dec 27 1892

One year and four months ago on our return from Australia²⁵ the brother who greeted and made us so warmly welcome at Bloomfield, Kings County, NB²⁶ was today at the depot at this town to welcome us to his American home. We left Providence at 11:10 am. Our journey hither was over moderately level country, settled of course and when adorned with dame nature's summer attire, must look very pretty, and we had an occasional peep of the distant sea. We arrived here one pm and brother piloted us to his cozy home on Mountain Avenue, where we found a well cooked dinner, sizzling hot, awaiting our sincere attention and which in due time it received.

I have spent a part of the afternoon in the telegraph office with brother James and this evening we have had some music – such as we used to have when we were boys together in our New Brunswick home.

Written in: New York City

Date: New Year's Eve 1892

This 28th, 29th and 30th December were very pleasantly spent with brother James and family in New London. His wife joined us in trips about town – they had genial friends to meet us and we had lots of music and a good time generally. Yesterday 31st we bade them adieu and missing the ten am train took the next 11:50 which being a through express got us over the ground at a much more rapid pace and landed us in New York 20 minutes to four pm. We then made our way at once to cousin George A DeForest²⁷ in Jersey Heights whose guests we were eight years ago

The disposition of things in general had changed some. They have all grown a little older and they do not live in quite the same place but we are here and welcome too. We have spent a pleasant evening and anticipate a happy New Year Day

²⁵ He had actually been in New Zealand for the immediate two and a half years before returning to North America

²⁶ Henry's brother James Fowler DeForest was the railway depot manager in Bloomfield before taking a similar post in New London

²⁷ George A. DeForest (1834-) was a son of Charles DeForest (1808-1854) and grandson of Nathan DeForest and therefore a first cousin once removed from Henry J. DeForest. George was born in New Brunswick but immigrated to the USA in 1864.

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Date: Jan 1st 1893

Sure enough, although the weather has been extremely disagreeable, pouring rain and blowing a gale of wind, we have, through the hospitality of my genial cousin George, Emma²⁸ and daughter Bessie²⁹ been very agreeably entertained.

Through his store of knowledge, I have gathered for the first time, some satisfactory information about my ancestry, at least as far back as 1600 AD. It appears there were three brothers that were exiled from Normandy (France) some 300 years ago to England, from there made their way to Holland and four or five generations later, Ephraim DeForest came to New Amsterdam now New York City³⁰. From New A Ephraim DeForest who dating from myself which would be six generations back, immigrated as a loyalist to New Brunswick 1783.

Then I am the son of James who was the son of Henry who was the son of Nathan, who was the son of Ephraim.

Date: Monday Jan 2 1893

A public holiday made ourselves comfortable with our relatives when accompanied by cousin Bess, we visited, my Aunt, Mrs. David (Dan'l?) Fowler³¹ now quite ill at Mrs. Olives, 115 W. 96th Street. Returning from there, we walked a short distance through Central Park took cars and boat and cars again for Arlington Avenue and 91 Clerk Street. Weather fine and cool.

Date: Tuesday Jan 3 1893

Joined by cousin Bessie DeForest we visited New York City, first an exhibition of art by the architectural league. In this we found a very interesting collection of modern architectural design for ceilings, walls, landscape gardens, mantle pieces, an estate house for RI and one or more of the exhibition buildings at Chicago. From here we went to see the world famed Gustave Doré³² collection. My own words can never convey to any reader an adequate idea of the artistic beauty and grandeur of those massive canvases. Four of them are twenty by thirty feet in size. There were about twenty or more pictures in the collection but my own little knowledge of art limited my admiration to five or six³³ viz – first the Vale of Tears (20 x 18 feet) beautiful beyond description and to my mind the most powerful of the collection. Christ leaving the Praetorium and Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, the Dream of Pilot's Wife and Soldier's of the Cross. After spending the most of the afternoon feasting our eyes upon the most famous modern paintings of bible history the world has ever seen we made our way back to Jersey City weather frosty and dry.

²⁸ Emma W. (Roop) DeForest (1837-)

²⁹ Bessie DeForest is George A DeForest's daughter Sarah Elizabeth DeForest

³⁰ A history of the more ancient DeForest family can be found in J.W. DeForest, [*The DeForests of Avesnes \(and of New Netherland\): A Huquenot Thread in American Colonial History, 1494 to the Present Time*](#) (New Haven, CT: The Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Co., 1900) and Emily Johnston DeForest, [*A Walloon Family in America*](#) (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1914).

³¹ Possibly Barbara wife of David Hatfield Fowler (1823-1900)

³² Paul Gustave Louis Christophe Doré (1832-1883)

³³ See Appendix E for illustrations of some of these paintings

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Date: Wednesday Jan 4 1893

Today we visited in the City – three more art collections. First a water color exhibit in the 5th Ave Studio Buildings. Then a small collection of oil paintings just near there and from that to the Metropolitan Art Museum in Central Park. Here we found a little world of art, consisting of ancient and modern paintings, sculpture, tapestry and various kinds of mechanical art and skill. Among the modern paintings, there was much there which was not only constructive but delightful to look at. We spent the whole afternoon here and enjoyed it much then made our way back home. The weather was clear and cold.

Date: Thursday Jan 5 1893

This time, YF and I paid a visit to Capt. David Taylor's in Brooklyn. To reach there we crossed the famous Brooklyn Bridge by cars and once over we took the elevated cars to friends where we arrived for dinner. At 4 pm we bade them adieu and returned to Jersey City, calling at the NY central depot to recheck baggage for Montreal. The day has been snowy and cold.

Written in: Troy NY

Date: Friday Jan 6 1893


Last night it snowed and blowed a gale of wind and was doing its best in that direction when we left Jersey City this morning. We reached the NY Central in good time and at 9:10 were away for Montreal. Very shortly after leaving NY City we were flying along close to the right bank of the Hudson River now all frozen over. We continued in sight of it nearly all the way to Albany and were surprised to see how many large buildings there are for the storing of ice. Our train being a half hour late we missed our connection with the 1:00 p.m. train at Troy to Montreal and here we are til 11:50 tonight. We gradually ran out of the snow storm into fine weather and for many miles midway of Troy and New York no snow at all. It is clear tonight and very frosty.

Written in: Montreal


Date: Saturday Jan 7 1893

St James Hotel – this morning at 7:45 after crossing the Grand Trunk tubular bridge we were soon within the precincts of this GTRR Depot and from there to our hotel is a very short distance. Being provided with comfortable quarters we took a short walk in town but the zero weather remaining prevented us from being out long. The merry tingle of bells and guiding lights is certainly an agreeable change from the rumble and clatter of elevated trains and heavy wagons on the great New York.

Appendix A – Twelve Large Paintings Created in 1891-92 in Taylor Village³⁴

Painting Title	Notes	Image (if available)
Moonlight Scene in George Sound, N.Z.	George Sound is in the South Island Fiordland area.	
North Arm of Inlet, Vancouver		
Night Scene in the Volcano of Kilauea, Hawaii	Collection of the Museum of Vancouver, PA33 https://openmov.museumofvancouver.ca/object/history/pa-33	To view image please follow link to the left.
General view of Volcano of Kilauea, Hawaii	Collection of the Museum of Vancouver, PA32. An image of this painting was included in the 1908 Guide and Handbook to the Museum, Vancouver, B.C. on page 41. https://openmov.museumofvancouver.ca/object/history/pa-32	To view image please follow link to the left.
Mount Egmont, N.Z.	(now extinct) 8000 feet	
Hilo Falls, Hawaii	Rainbow Falls, Hilo, Big Island, Hawaii. This is an image from the Museum of Vancouver collection. https://openmov.museumofvancouver.ca/object/history/pa-31	To view image please follow link to the left.
The Three Brothers, Yosemite Valley	Two Yosemite paintings were purchased by a Mr. J.A. Allan in Ottawa in April 1894, as was a New Zealand river scene.	
Yosemite Falls	Lot 2120, Clars Auction, California, Oct 15, 2017	
Lake Marrispora, N.Z.	Likely Lake Manapouri	

³⁴ Names of paintings obtained from newspaper articles in Appendices B & C

Painting Title	Notes	Image (if available)
Columbia River, Washington Territory		
<p>At even ere the sun was set (scene laid on the Wauganni River, N.Z.)</p> <p>A painting titled Valley of the Wauganni River, at Evening was exhibited in 1893 at the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts Exhibition in Montreal and the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.</p>	<p>Likely the Whanganui River.</p> <p>Sold in an Art Union lottery in 1894 in Vancouver.</p> <p>Butterfield & Butterfield San Francisco auction of Nov 09, 1988, Lot 2865 titled View of Waugauus River with a provenance note that it was exhibited in Chicago.</p> <p>The same painting was auctioned by the same auctioneer in 1992 under the title View of Washington River in the Evening.</p>	
Waugauni River, New Zealand	Likely the Whanganui River as above	

Appendix B - Moncton Times, October 18, 1892

A Splendid Collection of Oil Paintings

On Exhibition in the Y.M.C.A. Hall: Work of a New Brunswick artist to be sent to World's Fair

Lovers of pictures should not miss the opportunity to see the collection now being shown in the Y.M.C.A. hall by Mr. H.J. DeForest. Mr. DeForest is a New Brunswicker, who has travelled extensively on several continents, and the pictures are from sketches made by himself during his travels. About a dozen large paintings and a large number of smaller ones are shown. The large paintings are:

Waugauni River, New Zealand
Moonlight Scene in George Sound, N.Z.
North Arm of Inlet, Vancouver
Night Scene in the Volcano of Kilauea, Hawaii
General view of above crater
Mount Egmont, N.Z. (now extinct) 8000 feet
Hilo Falls, Hawaii
The Three Brothers, Yosemite Valley
Yosemite Falls
Lake Marrisipoura, N.Z.
Columbia River, Washington Territory
At even ere the sun was set (scene laid on the Waugauni River, N.Z.)

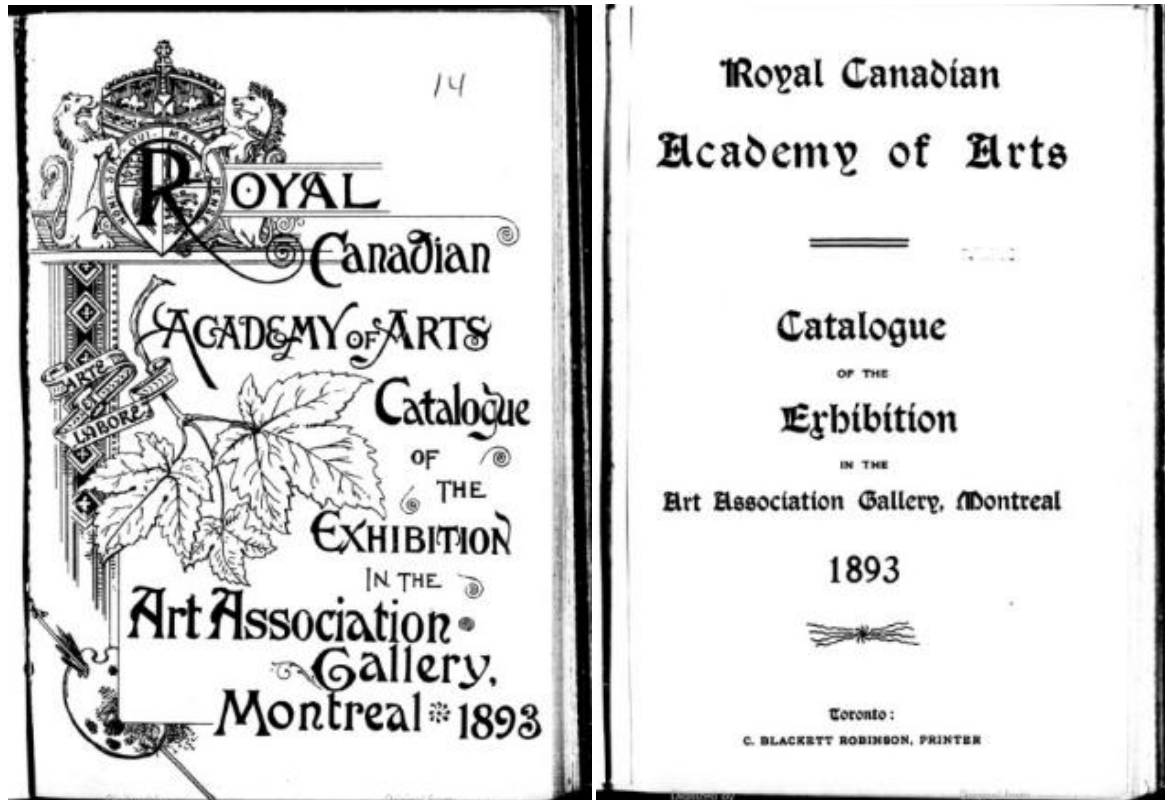
Mr. DeForest is taking his collection of pictures, the hard work of a year, to Montreal, where they will be placed in the art exhibition preparatory to be sent to the World's Fair³⁵. It is hard for an unprofessional to criticize Mr. DeForest's work and perhaps would not be highly edifying. Of course different visitors will be impressed with different pictures, but of the whole selection it may be said that dame nature is faithfully portrayed. The scenes laid in Hawaii, especially the night scene in the volcano of Kilauea, has many admirers. This volcano suddenly disappeared from view a short time after Mr. DeForest's visit to Hawaii and is now a great body of water. Another beautiful picture is the moonlight scene on George Sound, New Zealand. Mr. DeForest appears to have made an excellent choice of subjects and good judges of oil paintings say that for attention to detail, style, arrangement of lights and shadows, etc., his work will take a high class. The pictures will remain on exhibition today and t-morrow up to 5:00 p.m.

³⁵ In fact only one painting, the last one listed above and the same one listed in Appendix D, was exhibited in Chicago

Appendix C – Saint John Newspaper Reports

St. John Daily Telegraph Nov 12, 1892	St. John Globe Nov 17, 1892
<p style="text-align: center;">Exhibition of Fine Paintings.</p> <p>Mr. H. J. DeForest, one of New Brunswick's most talented landscape painters, has an excellent and novel exhibition of his work on view at Berryman's hall. Mr. DeForest has traveled extensively on the American continent and among the islands of the Pacific, and the result, from an artistic standpoint is embodied in the paintings, etc., which the people of this city and province will take pleasure in studying.</p> <p>The exhibition comprises oil representations of the volcano of Kilavea on the island of Hawaii; Mount Egmont, an extinct volcano in New Zealand; a waterfall at Hilo; the valley of the Wanganui in New England; the falls of the Yosemite, California, and British Columbian and general New Zealand and Sandwich Island scenery. The treatment of these subjects is magnificent, the richness of nature's coloring being tastefully reproduced, and the instincts of the artist having gained for him the best possible situations from which to view his studies. The subject, The Valley of the Yosemite, is one in which few painters have secured a proper showing proportions in its features, and Mr. DeForest has dealt with it in a manner which estimates truly the vastness of the hills above the surrounding country.</p> <p>Among the collection are several views, done in photography, of the eruptions which took place about five years ago on the north island of New Zealand, and which attracted thousands of sightseers from Europe. These views are the only ones in this country and Mr. DeForest intends shortly to work them in oils.</p> <p>Besides the large paintings there are numerous smaller one of the same and adjacent subjects, all masterly treated and forming a most interesting and instructive exhibition.</p> <p>As advertised, the paintings will be on view for one week only, from 10 a. m. to 9.30 p. m.</p>	<p>ARTISTIC.—Mr. H. J. DeForest, whose splendid collection of paintings has been attracting much attention during the past week, instead of closing this (Thursday) evening as advertised, has, at the request of numerous friends, decided to continue his exhibition up to and including Saturday evening, 19th. On Saturday the teachers and children of the various schools of the city will be admitted at the reduced rate of five cents, boys in the morning, girls in the afternoon. Hours 10 a. m. to 10 p. m.</p>

Appendix D – Montreal Exhibition



EXHIBITION, MONTREAL, 1893.

CRUIKSHANK, (W.)	Toronto
26—Drawing the Mast	
27—A free Grant in Algoma.....	
CULLEN (Maurice G.)	Paris
28—On the River at Grey	150.00
29—A Washhouse in Provence.....	100.00
30—A Study	40.00
DAY, (Forshaw) R. C. A.	Kingston
31—The Heart of the Selkirks	150.00
32—Musquodobit Falls, Nova Scotia.....	60.00
De FOREST, (H. J.)	St. John, N.B.
33—Valley of the Wauganni River, at Evening, New Zealand	175.00

Appendix E – Selection of Gustave Doré paintings viewed and admired by H.J. DeForest in New York

Vale of Tears



Christ leaving the Praetorium



Christ's Entry to Jerusalem



The Dream of Pilot's Wife



Appendix F – First Page of Handwritten Journal

Providence R. I.
Dec 33rd 1892

After a full year of quiet-retired life, in a quiet country village, isolated almost entirely - for (to enjoy the society of that enchanting locality of Taylor Village) you must be thoroughly conversant with the art of the cultivation of grain, cows, pigs, geese & cabbage - no church of England (& life is scarce worth living beyond its pale) no musical entertainments - no lectures - no society.

It is an old saying & in this instance proves a true one that familiarity breeds contempt. During this year of quietude I devoted myself religiously to the study of the art of drawing. Upon my pictures I labored with a loving hand & succeeded at last in getting together a dozen interesting canvasses, with which & a collection of sketches, I decided to introduce myself to work to my