British Illustrated Newspapers and Magazines (British Periodicals Collection III): A Resource Guide

Compiled by Dawn Kaczmar, Ph.D. in English Language and Literature
Introduction

British Illustrated Newspapers and Magazines, Collection III in ProQuest’s British Periodicals program, comprises more than one million pages of content from nine leading illustrated papers and magazines from the first half of the twentieth century. Among the foremost popular periodicals of the period, their content spanned myriad aspects of British (and world) history, culture and society, offering a mix of news/politics, miscellany, art, photography, literature, and comedy/satire. They were highly influential in innovating the use of extensive illustration, photography, and colour content, and launched the careers of several major artists/illustrators of the age.

This is a versatile resource that can be used for research in a number of different fields, such as gender studies, politics, World War I and World War II, aviation, technology, British international relations, empire/decolonization, history of medicine, economics, food history, history of health and fitness, and sports history. This resource guide is meant to provide a non-exhaustive sampling of some of the topics one can find in this database. Additionally, some of the documents listed are also historical advertisements that can be studied from a communications or marketing perspective. Each topic includes a few keywords to help scholars target their searches in this database.

Topic 1: British Women’s Suffrage Movement

The British Women’s Suffrage Movement affected not only women’s participation in politics, but also how British people thought about gender and relationships. These documents cover the different issues connected to the political debates around suffrage, such as tax-paying status and marriage. They also reveal changing attitudes toward women who participated in the suffrage movement: anti-suffragists often accused the suffragists as appearing “too manly” or participating in “unwomanly” behavior at suffrage demonstrations. The suffrage movement responded to this criticism by developing suffragette fashions and emphasizing their connections with high-status women who participated in the movement.

Keywords: suffrage, suffragettes, voting

Readings:
**Topic 2:** Zeppelins in World War One

A zeppelin is a type of airship that was first developed in the nineteenth century by German inventor Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin. Zeppelins were first flown commercially in 1910, and they were used extensively through World War One as bombers and scouts. Zeppelins killed over 500 people in Britain, and they are portrayed in these publications as inspiring both awe and terror. Articles document different places that experienced bombings from zeppelin raids, and discuss strategies on how to bring zeppelins down, such as the French elaborate system of sky patrols. Before and after the war, zeppelins were used primarily for commercial travel and tours.

**Keywords:** zeppelin, airship, raids

**Readings:**


• “German Zeppelin Raids over Great Britain.” The Sphere. Vol. 62, Iss. 817 (Sep 18, 1915): 296. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1618608683/C5BFEA92F7DC41E2PQ/8


Topic 3: 
**British Relations with Egypt**

The Anglo-Egyptian war took place in 1882 and established British influence over Egypt. British troops occupied Egypt until the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1922 and the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which gradually gave control back to the government of Egypt. Although historians debate the reasons that the British decided to invade Egypt, many agree that it was part of an effort to protect British control over the Suez Canal, which provides a shipping route to the Indian Ocean. The documents listed below cover news reporting on the war, occupation, and general interest in Egypt’s foreign relations through the beginning of the twentieth century. Additionally, these documents cover the reporting on the 1898 Battle of Omdurman between the British, led by General Sir Herbert Kitchener, versus Egyptian and Sudanese troops.

**Keywords:** Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian War, Battle of Omdurman, Sir Herbert Kitchener

**Readings:**


• “A Cause of Contention Between Egypt and the Soudan—The Huge Sennar Dam at Makwar: A New Series of Pictures Showing the Final Stages in the Construction of the Sennar Dam on the
Blue Nile, which is to Irrigate 300,000 Acres in the Gezira, and Will Not Diminish Egypt’s Supply in Any Way." The Sphere. Vol. 99, Iss. 1299 (Dec 13, 1924): 316–317. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1693028649/F2780582323842A6PQ/14


Topic 4: Medicine and War

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed several important medical breakthroughs and inventions that changed the shape of healthcare: ambulances, antiseptic, anesthesia, and penicillin—to name a few. At the beginning of World War I, and in previous wars, soldiers often needed amputations or died not from the initial wounds they suffered, but from the subsequent infections. As a result, periodicals emphasized the need for cleanliness on the battlefield. Additionally, war surgeons began using what became known as the “Carrel-Dakin Method” created by French physician, Alexis Carrel, and British biochemist, Henry Dakin. Dakin had developed a solution of sodium hypochlorite that could be used to clean wounds without harming the surrounding flesh, which was used as an antiseptic for surgery.

Alexander Fleming is credited with discovering the medical properties of penicillin in 1928, and large-scale production of penicillin began in the 1940s. This development played a crucial role for wartime medicine in World War II, as physicians were better able to treat infections on the field. Preserving penicillin also became easier as refrigerators became more common in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Women are depicted as part of the workforce involved in the production of penicillin in many of the images from the documents below.


Keywords: ambulance, health and war, medicine and war, penicillin

Readings:


• “Frigidaire.” Britannia and Eve. Vol. 29, Iss. 3 (Sep 1944): 55. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1666623505/2AD6226865FF4A3PQ/3


• “These Are Your War Gains.” Britannia and Eve. Vol. 31, Iss. 3 (Sep 1945): 44. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1689235592/B0117C1FAC144E4EPQ/45


Topic 5: Women and Work in World War II

The articles below depict women in many different types of employment. Women remembered how World War I had catalyzed women’s suffrage, and were conscious of how war had the potential to permanently change women’s position in society. Many wondered how their skills would translate to other work after the war ended, and how more women joining the workforce might affect gender roles. Britannia and Eve, whose primary readership was women, also features articles that focus on issues that were coming up for women new to the workforce— for instance, issues related to work-life balance, stress, eye strain, and navigating finances.

Keywords: women and employment, women and work
Readings:


- "From Home, Shop, and Counter--The Women Have Gone to It!" The Sketch. Vol. 196, Iss. 2549 (Jun 3, 1942): 308. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1689102674/1417BE4C0ED54E2APQ/9


- "War Law at Home." Britannia and Eve. Vol. 20, Iss. 2 (Feb 1940): 60. https://www.proquest.com/britishperiodicals/docview/1666623276/B0117C1FAC144E4EPQ/24

- "We Take Off Our Hat to: The Organizations Represented by These Uniformed Women, for so Gallantly "Going to It" to Repair Air-raid Damage." The Sketch. Vol. 191, Iss. 2486 (Sep 18, 1940): 364. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1689085374/1417BE4C0ED54E2APQ/22


**Topic 6:**

**Life at Home During World War II**

Life at home during World War II has many parallels with life at home during the Covid-19 pandemic: people experienced fatigue, anxiousness, and the physical symptoms associated with stress. Some periodicals focused on healthy habits to help combat war fatigue, and The Sketch began running a “To Cheer You Up” section around the beginning of the war. This section often features images associated with the war, but through a more light-hearted lens. Periodicals often offered advice on how to manage wartime shortages in manufacturing and food imports. Some articles also made an effort to establish a sense of normalcy through the war: updates on marriages, baby booms, and social events focused on the importance of continuing life events through wartime hardship.

**Keywords:** children, health, home, home and war, women

**Readings:**

- Chrysis. “Aimlessness: Malady of the War.” *Britannia and Eve*. Vol. 19, Iss. 6 (Dec 1939): 44. https://www.proquest.com/britishperiodicals/docview/1666628557/B0117C1FAC144E4EPQ/64


**Topic 7: Early-Mid 20th Century Food History**

England introduced meat rationing at various points throughout the twentieth century due to meat shortages, often during or after wars. In the articles listed below, you will find reporting on the Ministry of Health, concerns about how to stay healthy during the rationing, and musings about vegetarianism. Additionally, many periodicals printed recipes for creating meals from smaller cuts of meat, and tips on types of meat to make the most out of the rations.

**Keywords:** meat, meat ration, vegetarian

**Readings:**


Topic 8: History of Figure Skating

British figure skater Madge Syers was the first female skater to compete in an international event at the 1902 World Championships. The competition had previously been regarded as an all-male event, although there was no formal rule barring women from participating. Syers won second place behind Ulrich Salchow. After the event, the International Skating Union prohibited women from competing against men, and created a separate category for Ladies Singles.

The 1908 Olympics were originally scheduled to take place in Rome; however, due to the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 1906, they were moved to London. In 1908, figure skating became the first winter sport to be contested at the Olympics. Syers came in first in Compulsory Figures, and came in third in the Pairs skate, where she competed with her husband, Edgar Syers, as her partner.

Keywords: figure skating, ice skating, Syers, Olympics, winter sports

Readings:
- “Figure Skating.” Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News. Vol. 46, Iss. 1221 (Feb 6, 1897): 886. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1689194751/1C5DE24787AE4FDEPNQ/4
- “Games and Pastimes: Champion Figure Skaters at Vienna.” The Bystander. Vol. 13, Iss. 166 (Feb 6, 1907): 303–304. https://www.proquest.com/docview/166650778/A1333BE4049E476DPQ/2
- “International Figure Skating.” Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News. Vol. 74, Iss. 1946 (Dec 31, 1910): 782. https://www.proquest.com/docview/168923672/1C5DE24787AE4FDEPNQ/2
- “The National Skating Association: At the Championship Meeting, which Was Graced by the Presence of the King and Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales, Last Week.” The Sketch. Vol. 37, Iss. 473 (Feb 19, 1902): 162. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1638123738/5223058BDD5E564B13PQ/2
Eugen Sandow was a Prussian bodybuilder who gained international fame from strongman competitions and shows. He also inspired an influential health and fitness movement. Sandow might be thought of as one of the first “influencers”; although social media did not yet exist, he utilized his fame to launch products—including his monthly periodical Physical Culture. Sandow marketed and sponsored products ranging from fitness regimes, a health program that claimed to cure diseases and deformities called the “Sandow Method,” to corsets, oats, cocoa, and baking powder. “The Dairymaids,” a travelling act consisting of women performing fitness routines, also known as “Sandow Girls,” was inspired by Sandow as well.

Keywords: Eugen Sandow, fitness, Sandow Girls

Readings:


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