



Literary “Firsts”

Halifax Literary Walking Tour

First Printing Press in English Canada

Bartholomew Green Jr., Halifax, in 1751.

First Newspaper in English Canada

John Bushell publishes “The Halifax Gazette” on March 23, 1752.

First Bilingual Government Document

“A Cartel For the Exchange of Deserters” printed by John Bushell, in 1752.

First Booklet in English Canada

Six page pamphlet called “An Act For the Relief of Debtors” printed by John Bushell in 1752.

First Bookseller in English Canada

James Rivington, Halifax, in 1761.

First Printed English Book in Canada

“Universal Prayer” for lawyer William Doyle, in 1770.

First Original English Canada Play Written and Performed in Halifax

“Acadius; or Love in a Calm,” in 1774.

First Female Printer

Margaret Draper, arriving with printer John Howe, in 1776.

Earliest Known English Theatre

The Grand Theatre, on Argyle St, Halifax, in 1789.

First Canadian Periodical

The “Nova Scotia Magazine and Comprehensive Review of Literature, Politics, and News,” published in Halifax, by John Howe, in 1789.

First Canadian Author to Receive International Attention

Thomas Chandler Haliburton, with “The Clockmaker; or the saying and doing of Sam Slick of Slickville”, published by Joseph Howe in 1836.

First Trade Bookstore

The Wesleyan Book Room, Halifax, in 1839.

First Printer to Apply Steam Power to All-Metal Washington Press

William Cunnabell, Halifax, in 1840.

First Paper from Pulpwood

Charles Fenerty, Inventor, Lower Sackville, in 1841.

First Canadian Office of “Associated Press”

D.H Craig, Halifax, in 1849.

First Provincial Archivist in Canada

Thomas Beamish Akins, Halifax, in 1857.

First Public Library in Canada

Citizens Free Library, Halifax, in 1864.

First and Longest Running College Newspaper

“Dalhousie University Gazette”, Halifax, in 1869.

First Literary Society

Haliburton Literary Society, Halifax, in 1884.

First Canadian Children’s Author to Receive International Attention

Margaret Saunders, for “Beautiful Joe”, written in 1894.

Sources:

A Collection of Nova Scotia Firsts by Ruth A. Macdonald. 2002.

First Things in Acadia by John Quinpool. 1936.

Maritime Firsts by Dan Soucoup. 1996.

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