Early American English, with Special Reference to the English Spoken in Pre-Confederation Canada

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The study of the history of the English language in the Northern half of the American continent has become one of the most vivid fields of linguistic research in recent years. The recent publication of two volumes (by J.L. Dillard and R. Lass) that, for the first time, try to give a complete view of the origins and development of what has come to be known as early American and Canadian English, has permitted a systematization of the abundant, but extremely scattered and heterogeneous, bibliography published by scholars from the field of diachronic linguistics and, much more frequently, dialectology.

Further, another consequence of the growing interest in the study of early American English among European scholars is the compilation of the future "Helsinki Corpus of early American English", a continuation of the famous "Helsinki Corpus of English texts", which focuses on English texts written in the North-American colonies in the period between 1607 and 1700.

The following is a list of publications on the history of early American English, with special reference to the varieties of English used in Canada before 1860 (Constitutional Law). I have tried to exclude those books and articles that deal exclusively with dialectal aspects of American English, to concentrate on mainly diachronic approaches to this variety of English.


Gregg, R.J. “Canadian English Lexicography.” *Focus on Canada*. Ed. S. Clarke, 1993. 27-44.


