

# Lawrence Johnstone Burpee



b. March 5, 1873, Halifax, NS; d. October 13, 1946, Oxford, England

## Education:

Lawrence Burpee was educated partly at home and at public and private schools

## Positions:

1890 - 1905 Private Secretary to three federal Ministers of Justice

1905 - 1912 Chief Librarian of the first Carnegie Library of Ottawa (Ottawa Public Library)

1918 (May - November) Lieutenant 2d Depot Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Forces (Served in Canada)

1912 - 1946 Canadian Secretary of the International Joint Commission

## Publications (selected):

### Articles

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1899). "Recent Canadian Fiction." *Forum* 27, no. 6 (Aug.): 752-760.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1902). "Modern Public Libraries and Their Methods." *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada 2nd Series*, 8): 3-47

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1904). "The Library of Parliament." *Public Libraries; A Monthly Review of Library Matters and Methods* 9, no. 5 (May): 285.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1904). "Modern Methods in Small Libraries." *Public Libraries; A Monthly Review of Library Matters and Methods* 9, no. 5 (May): 217-121.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1904). "The Library Outlook in Canada." *Public Libraries; A Monthly Review of Library Matters and Methods* 9, no. 5 (May): 195-197.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1905). "Canadian Libraries and Mr. Carnegie." *Public Libraries; A Monthly Review*

of *Library Matters and Methods* 10, no. 2: 87.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1907). "How We Purchase Our Books." In *Proceedings of the Ontario Library Association Annual Meeting, 1907*.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1908). "Canadian Libraries of Long Ago." *American Library Association Bulletin* 2, no. 5 (May): 136-143.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1908). "What the Canadian Government Is Doing for Canadian Libraries." *Library Journal* 33 (Jan.): 17-18.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1910). "The Aberdeen Association." *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 4, no. 4 (April): 680-683.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1911). "A Plea for a National Library." *University Magazine* 10, no. 1: 152-63.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1912). "As Others See Us." *Proceedings of the Ontario Library Association Annual Meeting*, 50-62.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1912). "Canada's National Library." *Library Journal* 37, no. 3 (March): 123-124.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1912). "Library Cooperation in Ontario." *Library Journal* 37, no. 2 (Feb.): 85-86.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1920). "A Plea for a Canadian National Library." *Canadian Historical Review* 1, no. 1: 191-94.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1934). "A Plea for a National Library." *Library Journal* 59, no. 12 (Dec.): 499-502.

#### Monographs:

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1901) *Charles Heavyside*. Ottawa: J. Hope & Sons.

Burpee, Lawrence J. and Lewis Emerson Horning (1904). *A bibliography of Canadian fiction*. Toronto: Victoria University.

Burpee, Lawrence J (1906). *Preliminary report of the Carnegie Library*. Ottawa: The Public Library.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1908). *The Search for the Western Sea; The Story of the Exploration of North-Western America*. Toronto: Musson Book Co.

Burpee, Lawrence J. and Cocking, Matthew, Campbell (1909). *An adventurer from Hudson Bay: journal of Matthew Cocking, from York Factory to the Blackfoot country, 1772-1773*. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada.

Murray, Alexander Hunter and Burpee, Lawrence J. (1910). *Journal of the Yukon 1847-48*. Ottawa: Government printing bureau.

Burpee, Lawrence J.(1910) *Canadian eloquence*. Toronto: Musson Book Co.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1912) *Humour of the North*. Toronto: Musson Book Co.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1914). *Highways of the Fur Trade*. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1914). *Pathfinders of the Great Plains: A Chronicle of La Vérendrye and his Sons*. Toronto: Glasgow, Brook.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1914). *Highways of the fur trade*. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1915) *Sandford Fleming, Empire Builder*. London: Oxford University Press.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1917) *Joseph Howe and the Anti-Confederation League*. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1918). *Among the Canadian Alps*. Toronto: McClelland.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1927). *Historical Atlas of Canada*. New York: Nelson.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1927). *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Canadian History*. London: Oxford University Press.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1929). *Jungling in Jasper*. Ottawa: Graphic Publishers.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1931). *The History of Emily Montague*. Ottawa: Graphic Publishers.

Burpee, Lawrence J. (1944). *The Discovery of Canada*. Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada.

#### Multi-edition works:

Burpee, Lawrence J, Obadiah Gardner, Roy S MacElwee, Alfred H Ritter, William H Smith. (1920–21) Hearings of the International Joint Commission on the reference by the United States and Canada in re: the beneficial use of the waters of the St. Lawrence River between Montreal and Lake Ontario. Ottawa: International Joint Commission.

## **Associations/Committees (major positions):**

1911-12 Ontario Library Association, President  
1931 Founding member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Writers' Foundation.  
1922 Founding member of the Canadian Historical Association. First President, 1922–25.  
1925–26 President of the Canadian Authors Association  
1930 Founding Editor of the Canadian Geographical Journal.  
1936–37 President of the Royal Society of Canada.  
1943–44 President of the Canadian Authors Association.

## **Accomplishments/Comments:**

1931 Royal Society of Canada J. B. Tyrrell Historical Medal  
1931 Medaille de vermeil award from the Académie française

Lawrence J. Burpee Medal Royal Society of Canada. Awarded to recognize an outstanding contribution or other achievement that greatly enhances the ability of the Society to fulfill its mission of making Canada better known on a national or international level, and/or contributes to the general advancement of geography.

Lawrence Burpee was a fervent supporter of many causes, from the need for a National Library in Ottawa to the independence of Poland. On the latter, he published a 1939 wartime article, "Poland's fight for freedom," in the Canadian Geographical Journal. On his way to Warsaw in 1946, he died in Oxford, England and is buried there. There is a memorial stone in Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa where his wife, Maude Hanington Burpee, is buried.

"His literary output in books, pamphlets, and contributions to learned publications was extensive. His material was largely historical and geographical, and he wrote with special authority on all matters connected with the early exploration of Canada. Of a score of books he produced special mention may be made of his last work 'The Discovery of Canada,' the translation of which into French he was supervising in the last year of his life. His most widely read book is his 'Search for the Western Sea.'" — Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, vol. 51, 1947

## **Sources:**

University of Toronto Library special collections (fonds 4) Lawrence Johnstone Burpee  
Wikipedia -[Lawrence J. Burpee](#)  
Library and Archives Canada - First World War Personnel Records  
Lawrence Johnstone Burpee fonds at Dalhousie University Archives, MS-2-175  
Digital works by Lawrence Johnstone Burpee at [Canadiana.org](#)  
Canadian Encyclopedia

## Canadian Who's Who

From:

<https://www.exlibris.ca/> - **EX LIBRIS ASSOCIATION**

Permanent link:

<https://www.exlibris.ca/biographies/lawrence-johnstone-burpee?rev=1779654495>

Last update: **2026/05/24 20:28**

