

ond edition. The major drawback of the book may indeed be that there is so much of value here that it is difficult for the average researcher to grasp it all at once, although the well-crafted introductory essay is a more enjoyable “read” than most archival guides of this sort. Considering this excellent book, and the plans to put RG 15’s archivist Jeff Murray’s recently completed study of Métis scrip records on a forthcoming Government Archives CD-ROM, the student of Western Canadian History is in a truly enviable position regarding recent archival output.

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Surgeons, Smallpox and the Poor. A History of Medicine and Social Conditions in Nova Scotia, 1749-1799. ALLEN EVERETT MARBLE. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993. xv, pp. 356, index.

This is an unusual book. Its subject is esoteric, yet its overall importance to the history of the Maritimes and to medicine is high. The sources used are wide-ranging, yet at the same time they are eclectic and appear to be spotty. The text itself is developed logically, but the structure seems frequently to defy logic. Archivists with a special interest in medicine will find this book an invaluable addition to their personal libraries. But as befitting this volume’s peculiar qualities, all archivists will find in it something of interest because the focus on sources makes them equal partners to the narrative. The author, Associate Professor and Director of Research at the Department of Surgery at Dalhousie University, devoted fourteen years of research to gathering data for this book, which he conceives as a social history of medicine, but one in which the medicine is very definitely left in. While the volume does not explore the new territory of the cultural study of science, *Surgeons, Smallpox and the Poor* still has lots to tell us about public health and medical practices in eighteenth-century Nova Scotia and particularly in Halifax.

Two interwoven narratives are developed within the broad framework of the politics of colonial settlement and the American Revolution covering the period 1749 to 1799. The first deals with the public health of the colonists and the military; the second concentrates on specific medical personnel, their training, practices, and professional associations. The volume is divided into five major chapters, each dealing with health, health care, and health policy in roughly ten year periods beginning in 1749. A substantial introduction gives us background on settlement, medical practices, diseases, and their nomenclature in the early eighteenth century. The author pays particular attention to the education of surgeons, the division of professional turf among physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries, and a very useful review of smallpox and the practice of inoculation before Jenner. Chapter One covers the early years of arrival, settlement, and health from 1749 to 1753. Chapter Two examines the decade 1753 to 1763, which the author characterizes as one dominated by the interests and work of military and naval surgeons. Chapter Three extends to 1775, a period in which the needs of poor relief overshadowed early interest by officials in providing health care for the population taken as a whole. The arrival of the loyalists and the new order of medical men is discussed in Chap-

ter Four and in a final chapter, the author chronicles health care and poor relief from 1784 until 1799.

The narrative history occupies only one-half of the book's 356 pages. The remainder is devoted to substantial appendices, chapter notes, and an index. These textual supports are as important as the narrative itself, each appendix providing important and detailed information about subjects in the text. Appendix One lists the passengers in the Cornwallis mess lists along with their health care occupations. Appendix Two is a succinct explanation of medications and treatments administered by surgeons in Halifax at mid-century. Appendices Three and Four provide the text of early disease prevention and immigration laws of Nova Scotia. Loyalist physicians and surgeons who settled in Nova Scotia and their claims for compensation are presented in Appendices Five and Six. Appendix Seven reproduces the indenture of apprenticeship to a surgeon. Appendix Eight provides a list of physicians and surgeons in charge of hospitals in Halifax and its environs during the last half of the eighteenth century, while Appendix Nine is a list of causes of death of Nova Scotians in the second half of the eighteenth century. The notes are extensive and need to be consulted as you read the text. McGill-Queen's press has not done the author any service by placing these at the back of the volume. The predominance of endnotes, encouraged by word processors and science citation styles, are not suited to the support and elaboration of a historical text dependent on sources that need explanation and often offer additional insights. I, for one, eagerly await the return of footnotes to publishing favour. They are, after all, the pre-computer version of the now popular "hypertext"-style, linking main ideas to supplementary explanations and elaborations printed below the page.

The scope of sources is immense, extending from newspapers, to personal papers, to British government classes at the Public Record Office to court, church, and assembly records in Nova Scotia. The book could only have been written after a thorough review of all documentation to sift out and put together material and evidence relevant to health, medical practice, and diseases. From an archival point of view the book and its extensive notes show the amount of information that can be extracted from records created for purposes other than those by the author. Claims for payment in the court records yield information about medical treatment, drug specifics, and professional fees. Advertisements are shown to be a great value to historical investigation. The very scope of the sources, however, demands a compass to help us navigate their profusion, connections, and meaning. I had hoped that the author would provide us with an assessment of the values of his sources to his research and an explanation of the relationship each type of source had with the others, particularly how those cited are related to the whole and how they are related to gaps in the records. The mosaic of sources is not drawn together by either the narrative or by an explanation of the sources and method used by the author.

There are many new pieces of knowledge in this book, particularly about the Nova Scotia medical profession, the impact of the army and its train on civilian society just underway in a new land, and the widespread use of inoculation for smallpox. Smallpox appears as an occasional actor, but one with an enormous historical importance, forcing a postponement of the siege of Louisburg in 1757 and again being responsible for the aborted attack on Halifax by the Americans in

1775-6. The effect of the indigent poor on the new colony is clearly documented. However, it is questionable that their presence diverted money that could have been spent on medical services. Such a concept of universal service does not seem to have been applicable to either the metropolis or the colony of the mid-eighteenth century. The author also fails to put the period into the context of Whitehall politics. He is much better at locating issues in the context of Nova Scotia, whose economy was dependent on the military and reflected the ups and downs of imperial ventures. He is unable to link the medical professions' activities successfully to the needs of the professions as distinct occupational groups. The author's definition of professionalization as a movement to official regulation directed by improving standards of professional services, is prescriptive and questionable in the context he develops. The author argues that the profession in Nova Scotia was so well accepted by the public that regulation was not needed. However, the question of professional aims is generally sketched and is a useful beginning. The many tables and charts, especially the bar chart on the death rates and causes of death during the period, are important contributions to our understanding of life in eighteenth-century Nova Scotia.

The book also shows how difficult it is to integrate such information in a way that conveys meaning above the lists, the names, and the numbers. The style of presentation, while direct at times, is engorged with quotations, names, and numbers: these are often difficult to place in context because the conclusions come at the end of the chapter rather than being the organizing principle for the evidence developed in the body. The great detail and careful spadework shows the importance of archival records. They continue to meet information needs they were never created consciously to serve. The sources, their variety and archival spread, from Britain, to the Pennsylvania Hospital, to PANS, and their skilful use in building a picture of health and death, is the great strength of this book. It is less successful at weaving illness, emigration, poor relief, health and hospital provisions, medical politics, and the economy into a seamless fabric covering the early history of Nova Scotia and its new towns.

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