

Recent Historical Literature and the New England-Atlantic Provinces Region

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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Reviews

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Any assessment of books published in recent years which have relevance to the history of both New England and the Atlantic Provinces should be made with certain assumptions in mind. First, local historians tend to concentrate exclusively on that section of the region, Canadian or American, in which they themselves live and work. Then more general or interpretative writers draw most of their examples from and spend much of their time discussing events in metropolitan centers and more central geographic regions, leaving Northern New England and the Atlantic Provinces to become part of a dimly seen periphery. Also, as students and teachers of Northeastern regional history have long been aware, both earlier historians and those writing in the 1960's have done most of their research and publication on the pre-Confederation period for Canada or the pre-Civil War period for the United States. In addition, as George Rawlyk of Queen's pointed out in his perceptive essay "A New Golden Age of Maritime Historiography?" (*Queen's Quarterly*, 76 (1969), pp. 55-65), there has been too much emphasis on political and military questions and too little exploration of social, economic, ideological and cultural themes. This is somewhat less true of New England, but is applicable to the region as a whole. Finally, published works which deal with the neglected subject of regional interchange are few indeed.

Among the regional publications of the last five or six years are a number which have what might be called "local vision". An example is Charles E. Clark's *The Eastern Frontier: The Settlement of Northern New England, 1610-1763* (New York, 1970). A valuable study of colonial land policy and of Northern economic development, the book gives almost no recognition to the presence of Acadia on New England's Eastern frontier. And few of the authors of the considerable number of recent works on New England puritanism in the 17th century or of the occasional analysis of the New England economy in the 19th or 20th century show any awareness of influences on or interconnections with the Atlantic Provinces.

That useful if uneven series the "Histories of the American Frontier" will serve to illustrate the tendency to reduce the Atlantic Provinces and Northern New England to "fringelands". Douglas Leach in his *Northern Colonial Frontier, 1607-1763* (New York, 1966) handles competently the story of the developing colonies and French and Indian warfare but, as in his earlier *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York, 1958), the reader looking for the details of events in the "Eastern settlements" and for inter-relations with Acadia is often left with the impression that "there was also fighting in the Northeast". W. J. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760* (New York, 1969) approaches the whole frontier thesis as applied to Canada with new insights, but still concentrates, perhaps understandably, on New France. Jack M. Sosin's *The Revolutionary Frontier, 1763-1783* (New York, 1967) goes further; he drops the "fringe". His map (p. 113) of "The Revolutionary War in the Northern Back Country", extends on the Northeast only to an unlabeled Penobscot Bay, and his text reflects this limitation.

There are, however, a number of recent studies, still on pre-19th century periods, which consider common regional problems or historical developments. While most new work on the region's Indians has been anthropological rather than historical, historians have welcomed the second edition of A. G. Bailey's *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures, 1504-1700* (Toronto, 1969). With its new chapter of reappraisal, this remains the best study of its topic. A quite different book on Indians, *Someone Before Us: Our Maritime Indians* (Fredericton, 1968) by George Frederick Clarke, prolific New Brunswick author, champion of environmental causes, and long-time amateur of Indian archaeology and history, has material which is also of interest to historians of early Northeastern New England. On exploration and discovery, there is Samuel Eliot Morison's *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, A.D. 500-1600* (New York, 1971). Already a historical best-seller, this book's brisk judgements on tangled questions to which more timid historians have devoted learned tomes reflect Admiral Morison's lifetime of research not only in dusty archives and libraries but also at sea and, this time, in the air. Since some of the early history of Newfoundland involves men who, like Sir Ferdinando Gorges, were later to play a role on the New England colonial scene, Gillian Cell's monograph, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 1577-1660* (Toronto, 1969), important also for the fisheries, belongs on the reading list of New England historians. And of major importance for the history of the North Atlantic fisheries, though slow to reach regional libraries, is Charles De La Morandière's *Histoire de la pêche française de la morue dans l'Amérique septentrionale des origines à 1789* (3 vols: Paris, 1962-1966).

Most books on Acadia or the Acadians have material applicable to New England. Andrew Clark has brought to his admirable *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison, 1968) the techniques of the geographer and an objectivity rare in the often emotional literature on the Acadians.

A more traditional approach is that of Bona Arsenault in his *Histoire et généalogie des Acadiens* (Quebec, 1966). A new collection of documents on early Acadian missionaries, *La première mission d'Acadie (1602-1616)* (Quebec, 1967), edited by Lucien Campeau, contains descriptions of the effort to establish a mission at Saint Sauveur on Mount Desert Island in Maine.

The French and Indian Wars of the 18th century, the American Revolution and the Loyalist movement have all been the subject of recent reinterpretation or monographic works. Of special regional interest is George Rawlyk's *Yankees at Louisburg* (Orono, Me., 1967). This is a lively and carefully researched account of the 1745 capture of this key French fort; it is also an examination of a phase of New England imperialism in the Maritimes. John Ahlin's *Maine Rubicon: Downeast Settlers During the American Revolution* (Calais, Me., 1966) carries out more broadly and in more detail the earlier studies of Harold Davis (*An International Community on the St. Croix* [Orono, Me., 1950]). One of the few regional economic monographs is Joseph F. Malone's *Pine Trees and Politics: The Naval Stores and Forest Policy in Colonial New England, 1691-1776* (Seattle, 1964). Wallace Brown's *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York, 1969) is broader in scope, but has considerable regional material.

For the later part of this period there is nothing on the New England side to compare with W. S. MacNutt's *The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto, 1965). While Professor MacNutt's book is somewhat British-oriented, he gives attention to the influence of New England on Acadia and the developing Maritimes.

One type of publication on regional themes which should be mentioned is the considerable list of journal articles and learned society and conference papers. Some of these are beginning to appear in such collections as *Historical Essays on the Atlantic Provinces* (Toronto, 1967) edited by George Rawlyk or *A History of Maine: A Collection of Readings on the History of Maine* (Dubuque, Iowa, 1969) edited by Ronald Banks. There are now also several problems books on aspects of regional history. Among them are Naomi Griffiths' *The Acadian Deportation: Deliberate Perfidy or Cruel Necessity?* (Toronto, 1969); George Rawlyk, *Revolution Rejected, 1775-1776* (Scarborough, Ontario, 1968); L. F. S. Upton, *The United Empire Loyalists: Men and Myths* (Toronto, 1967) and G. D. N. Evans, *The Loyalists* (Toronto, 1968).

The next decade should remedy the scarcity of books and articles dealing with the social, economic and cultural interrelations of New England and the Atlantic Provinces. Such scholars as Mason Wade, Wallace Brown, George Rawlyk, Jack Bumsted and Leslie Upton are doing research on or related to the region. Perhaps even more important, their students and others at such centers as Dalhousie, the University of New Brunswick, Queen's, Michigan State, Duke, and the University of Maine at Orono are writing theses and dissertations on immigration, transportation, the fisheries, reciprocity, religi-

ous influences, and other subjects many of which, added to the existing body of published and unpublished works, should provide future students of this region with a much more varied view of its history than is available now.

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