

## A Death at Deer Lake Catalyst of a Forgotten Newfoundland Work Stoppage, 1924

Malcolm MacLeod

Volume 16, 1985

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/llt16dc02>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

ISSN

0700-3862 (print)

1911-4842 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this document

MacLeod, M. (1985). A Death at Deer Lake: Catalyst of a Forgotten Newfoundland Work Stoppage, 1924. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 16, 179–192.

# A Death at Deer Lake:

## Catalyst of a Forgotten Newfoundland Work Stoppage, 1924

Malcolm MacLeod

GREAT DEVELOPMENTS WERE UNDERWAY in Western Newfoundland during 1923-5. A giant paper mill being erected at Corner Brook required a vastly expanded assault upon the island's forests and massive constructions, dam and powerhouse, at Deer Lake. Outside contractors — Canadian and British firms, sometimes bringing their own cadres of experienced workers — undertook to accomplish all the various projects. The operations attracted many Newfoundlanders away from traditional and family-oriented work in the fishery, to impersonal wage labour in camps far from home. They learned new skills, laboured, and achieved. All the pieces fitted together. Power came on-stream; loggers created a stockpile which has been kept topped up in the 60 years intervening; the mill made pulp and paper, while Newfoundland's second city grew up around it. The west coast workers also became an important part of the island's twentieth-century proletariat. In those chaotic, pioneer, expanding times, before the mill ever opened, workers exposed to this large-scale industrialism recognized their common interests and took united action for bargaining leverage with employers. Impulses to unity arose spontaneously and swiftly.

One of the workers who congregated on Newfoundland's west coast from every corner of the island was young Thomas Hartery. A native of Portugal Cove, Trepassey — which at 300 miles from Deer Lake is as far as one could travel while staying on the island — Hartery was only eighteen when he died in a quarantine hut at the Deer Lake construction camp, in the early morning 12 March 1924. A noisy protest arose over the way the dead body was handled, and discontent continued to swell during the days that followed. Muttering jelled into plans for mass action. Magistrate W.J. Scott of Curling was appointed to hold an inquiry into Hartery's death and subsequent events. On the day before the hearing was to take place, there were suddenly a thousand workers on strike against Fraser, Brace Ltd. at Deer Lake.

Malcolm MacLeod, "A Death at Deer Lake: Catalyst of a Forgotten Newfoundland Work Stoppage, 1924," *Labour/Le Travail*, 16 (Fall 1985), 179-191.

Fraser, Brace was a Montreal-based engineering firm which built the powerhouse and some other parts of the western Newfoundland hydroelectric complex.<sup>1</sup> The solid but brief strike of its Deer Lake work force is a little-remembered episode in the evolution of Atlantic regional labour struggles.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the strike — a one and one-half day work stoppage on March 26 and 27 — was to seek redress for several common grievances: low wages, high board, bad accommodation, an unsatisfactory method of paying wages, and poor hospital facilities.<sup>3</sup> Not mentioned in their official statement of demands, but circulating in rumours strong enough to reach the ears of newspaper editors, were also feeling that “for doing equal work our men are not receiving as much pay as the outsiders” and “dissatisfaction . . . experienced by the local workmen with the bosses from outside.”<sup>4</sup>

Some features of the incident were quite unusual. These workers groped their way towards collective action with no established framework of unionization or recognized workplace leadership to assist them. They therefore looked to the colonial government to defend their interests, and called upon Premier W.R. Warren not to mediate but actually to negotiate with the company on their behalf. They went back to work when he agreed to do so, then sent a delegate to St. John's who met with Warren on at least three occasions during April 2-4, explaining the workers' demands.<sup>5</sup> Besides first-party gov-

<sup>1</sup> Four other firms also had big projects underway at Deer Lake in 1923-5. Armstrong Whitworth Company, the British firm which was general contractor for the entire Corner Brook development, built the penstocks channelling water into the powerhouse, and transmission lines. Northern Construction and W.I. Bishop Limited, both Canadian firms, were responsible respectively for excavation and building the main dam. J. Hollett, “History of Deer Lake,” History 321 paper, 1970 (Maritime History Group collection), 5. Thomson-Houston Company (British) did all electrical work and installed the powerhouse machinery. Babs Green, “40 Years of Progress” (Corner Brook *Western Star*, 13 September 1965), 13.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, it was overlooked in R.G. Hattenhauer's *Brief Labour History of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Labour legislation, 1970). Hattenhauer does notice the work stoppage by 2,700 Corner Brook construction workers in July of that year, which was probably encouraged by the example of the strike at Deer Lake four months earlier (see 168-72).

<sup>3</sup> Statement of grievances addressed to Hon. W.R. Warren (24 March 1924), Provincial Archives of Newfoundland & Labrador (PANL), GN 8/4, file 4.

<sup>4</sup> St. John's, *Evening Telegram*, 27 March 1924, 6.

<sup>5</sup> The understanding with Warren is contained in the summary of a message from P. Maloney, chairman of workers' committee, St. John's *Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1924, 6. The delegate who journeyed to St. John's was Jas. Thompson, *Telegram*, 3 and 5 April 1924, both page 6. Later that year Warren, now no longer premier, also served as a one-man commission of inquiry into the logging industry. His report, 29 December 1924, is quite sympathetic to the workers, although several features of his background — St. John's élite, English education, city lawyer — are not the usual prerequisites for reputation as a liberal reformer. PANL, GN 8/4, file 8; R. Hibbs, editor, *Who's Who In & From Newfoundland 1927* (St. John's 1927), 231-2.

ernment involvement, another feature of this labour unrest that was out of the ordinary was the catalyst that first triggered mass action. What apparently gave the workers gathered at Deer Lake the first-felt satisfactions of unity and direct action was no great issue of collective bargaining or recognition, but the homely, tragic case of young Tom Hartery's corpse.

Magistrate Scott, inquiring into circumstances surrounding the death, took sworn testimony from eleven witnesses on 27 March. The workers' unofficial leader, Patrick Hayward of St. Mary's Bay, was permitted a limited right of cross-examination. He then declared the mass of workers just as dissatisfied with the doctors' treatment of the body as they were on the day Hartery died. It seems, however, that the mere fact that an inquiry was held may have calmed passions and given some satisfaction. The following day, when additional reinforcements arriving at Deer Lake brought constabulary strength in the area up to nine men, St. John's was telegraphing to ask if all these police were really necessary in view of the fact that the workers had returned to work.<sup>6</sup>

The inquiry's record of proceedings is a fascinating document of fourteen typed pages, about 6,000 words.<sup>7</sup> The following excerpts amount to about one-half of the whole. A good deal of repetition has been eliminated, while the most pertinent, telling, and poignant testimony is preserved. The hearing revealed that a gulf of misunderstandings separated management from the work force. Resentments spawned in ignorance — since the company took no steps to broadcast reliable information — grew into muscular insistence that the doctors should do what they were about to do anyway. Magistrate Scott's report exonerated the doctors, although one expects that after going through this they were chastened for the future to be more careful about people who checked themselves out of hospital without medical authority, about protecting dead bodies from public view, and collecting personal effects quickly. It is not clear whether the protesters achieved their purpose of having the doctors fired.<sup>8</sup> Some interesting features brought out in testimony include the operation of group dynamics among a newly-gathered work force with no regularly recognized leadership; the absence of superstitions as the men grappled with the fact of sudden, indiscriminate death (no wakes or other ceremonies were

<sup>6</sup> Telegram from W.R. Warren to Major Butler, 28 March 1924. PANL, GN 8/4, file 4.

<sup>7</sup> PANL, Warren papers, GN 8/4, file 4.

<sup>8</sup> Both physicians were very recent arrivals at Deer Lake, like almost everybody else there. Dr. Weekes had graduated in medicine from University of Western Ontario in 1920 and was licensed to practise in Canada the following year. The Newfoundland Medical Board granted him permission to practise on 10 September 1923; his location was "Humber." Dr. McDonald received his Newfoundland licence on 1 May 1924, having qualified at University of Toronto the previous year. Register of the Newfoundland Medical Board, numbers 254 and 260. Weekes may have disappeared from the scene soon after the Hartery inquiry, but McDonald stayed at least long enough to be inscribed in western Newfoundland folklore as "Deer Lake's first doctor. It has been said of him that he was a brilliant man and a clever surgeon." Green, "40 Years of Progress," 13.

demanded); and the influx of workers from all across the colony, evident in witnesses' home addresses. Health care arrangements made for them — a 22-bed hospital and quarantine provisions — seem surprisingly well-developed for a rough-and-ready construction camp 60 years ago. Progress in medicine and public health since that time makes us blink to notice that among contagious diseases it was measles and scarlet fever, now quite tamed and conquered, they found most necessary to be ready for. For poor Hartery, more fatal than any contagion was the vulnerability of his employment. "He said he was afraid of losing his job on account of being away from work." The main oppression Hartery suffered was not that the doctors allowed his dead body to rest all day on public display, but that the definition of health care in the work camp, too narrow to include job security while recuperating, tempted him to run the risk of leaving the measles shack the first time before he was medically fit to do so. The second time he was in his coffin.

At the inquiry, the facts were not really in dispute. Two weeks earlier, however, when Hartery died, very few people knew what had happened or what was intended next. In the absence of information, workers rose up to protest an attitude on the part of medical management that appeared to consider it unnecessary to insure dignity in death for the body of a mere labourer. Although this view was not articulated at the inquiry, the mass protest on the night in question ("... crowd led by Hayward were shouting to put the doctors on the train, some shouting in the crowd to put them into the lake") may be interpreted as an expression of class consciousness. It soon became apparent that there was a multitude of grievances festering among the workers. The Hartery death and inquiry shows how a relatively small event, one of the ordinary hazards of life, can nevertheless become the catalyst which brings large numbers together in collective action concerning a wide spectrum of other issues.

Enquiry Office, Deer Lake, March 27th, 1924.

Held by Magistrate Scott, by order of Justice Department. Re death and subsequent happenings of Thomas Hartery, single, age 18. R.C. of Portugal Cove. Who died at Deer Lake, in Measles shack March 1924.

[First witness, Patrick Hayward, married, age 42, of St. Vincent, St. Mary's Bay.]

*I have been working here a month on March 24th. with Fraser, Brace Ltd. as labourer. I did not know Thos. Hartery didn't know there was such a man here, about 10 AM of the day he died, not sure but I think the 11th March. Ed. White and other men reported a man dead in the measles shack<sup>9</sup> of the Hospi-*

<sup>9</sup> The word "shack" requires some understanding. It did not denote a derelict, disreputable hovel, merely a building for intermittent rather than continuous occupation. In this respect, Newfoundland English agrees with usage common in many other places. *Dic-*

tal, and that the body was in the shack with one stocking on and one off. After dinner I went myself, I saw by looking in the window, I saw the body as reported, lying on a bunk across a window. . . . I worked until 6 PM at supper about 150 or 200 men, all seemed very interested about the man being all day in the shack and not moved. I asked the Company what was to be done in such a case. They proposed to march every man after supper to the Hospital and to Major Butler's Residence and then to Mr. Murray's (Gen. Supt.) which we did as we came along, our crowd advanced and when we arrived at Hospital about 300 and 400 men, I went up and knocked at the door of Hospital, the Doctor came out. . . . I demanded an explanation from the Doctor, he asked who started this, I said I did, he said the dead went to Hospital The evening before and was a sick man, and had 'pneumonua' . . . then went to Major Butler's Residence and met him and he asked me what was wrong, and I told him, and we wanted the Doctors put out, and he said 'leave it to me' I said we will go and see Mr. Murray. . . . I knocked, a Woman came out and said see Mr. Murray at his office, which we did . . . spoke to Mr. Murray and he said it was the first he heard of the man being dead, he asked what we demanded, I told him we wanted the Doctors put out and men placed in their stead who would mind their business . . . he told me the case of putting out the Doctors, to get a letter wrote and the names of the men and bring it to him. I came out on the platform of the Office and told the men what happened between me and Mr. Murray and they seemed to be satisfied (at least the majority). . . . I got the letter written by Ed. French and went around after work and got the names of between 300 and 400 men some by writing some by mark and some by me by consent, and handed it to Mr. Murray. . . . the men said the thing should be reported to the Government authorities and I said as I did the rest I would report too, they consented and I did so, and reported it by letter to Member W.J. Walsh MHA for Placentia and St. Mary's districts, and he wired he would investigate immediately. . . . The men were not aware of anyone was with the man when he died or heard his last words, I did not ask the Doctors or any of the hands there, if there was any one with him.

[Second witness, Matthew O'Leary, single, age 25, of Portugal Cove, Trepassey. Labourer working at Deer Lake.]

I know Hartery who died in the measles shack. I was a patient in the measles hospital when Hartery came in for treatment. I went out that same evening. I

---

*tionary of Newfoundland English* (Toronto 1982), 463-4. Towards the end of his testimony, Dr. Weekes said the measles shack was much more comfortable than the "shacks" which provided regular accommodation for the men. The St. John's newspaper was quite misleading and emotive when — in its first mention of the Hartery death and disturbances eight days after they occurred — it titled the item "Died in a Shack" and described the building as being "but a few yards distant from the hospital," as if Hartery had been abandoned just out of reach of the help he needed. *Evening Telegram*, 20 March 1924, 6.

could not complain of the treatment while there, and I was there 11 days. Hartery went in the morning I came out, but did not appear to be very sick. I know nothing at all about him coming out, and I knew nothing at all about him dying there. . . . Major Butler sent for me the same evening to go to St. John's with the body, and I went to St. John's that same evening, and on arrival in St. John's I turned the body over to Undertaker Murphy, and there my service ended.

The coffin was a plain rough board coffin and as far as I could see the body was in good condition when I transferred it to the Undertaker. The coffin was the usual plain coffin made under these circumstances. I know nothing of the commotion which was caused at Deer Lake, by the men. I cannot complain of the treatment received while in the measles shack, Mr. Beck attended to me like a nurse, and I have nothing whatever to complain about.

[Third witness. Edward French, single, age 22, of Coley's Point, Conception Bay. Labourer.]

I remember there was a man called Hartery died in what they call the measles shack. I cannot remember the date. There was some feeling of dissatisfaction among the crowd on account of his death, this was after he died. He died at 4.00 o'clock in the morning and I saw the body in the evening about 7.00 PM I saw the body from the door lying in a bunk, that is through the door, the hands crossed on the breast, and he seemed like as if he was in a very bad condition; it did not seem like as if he was washed or anything, I saw the body, of course, from the outside, I stayed outside the door. The body was stretched out in one of the bunks, one sock was off and one sock was partly off. The body had on a pair of Khaki pants. It seemed like a white shirt he had on, it was at least a fairly decent shirt, one that I would wear to work. There was a bandage around his head to keep the jaws in position, I should think that is what it was put there for. I am positive I saw the bandage around the head. . . . at 7.00 PM in the evening. . . .

[Fourth witness. Richard Mercer, married, age 30, labourer of Bryants' Cove, Conception Bay.]

[Fifth witness. Theophilus Turner, single, age 22, of Happy Adventure, Bonavista Bay.]

[Sixth witness. Major Bertram Butler, married, age 34, of St. John's, Nfld. Employment Agent for Sir W.G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. Ltd.]

I have nothing to do with the hospitals. There is one hospital here and two shacks situated on the south side of the track, one for scarlet fever and one for measles. . . . About 7.00 PM the crowd of men came down to my house, about 400 I should think, and they told me they wanted the express hung up to put the corpse on board, there appeared to be a general rebel. I could not get any real information, but no one appeared to be able to give it. There was hesitation for a minute, they said it was a Fraser Brace man, and they wanted to know what

was going to be done about it, and I said that I would see what could be done. It was my intention to hold up the express to get the corpse off.

I put on my hat and coat and got in touch with the Manager, and I came up to my office to see if anything could be done about it. Coming up to my office I first dropped into the hospital to see the doctors and was informed that they were at the measles shack, and they were just coming out of the shack door when I got over, the body had been coffined, I did not enter the shack. . . . I made arrangements at the station and made out a ticket for the body, and also the escort Matthew O'Leary, then I wired the Armstrong agent at St. John's, Mr. Angel, I could not get the message off that night but it went the next morning. I also wired Mr. Cashin MHA Fairyland District to make any arrangements should transshipping be required. I had a wire back from Mr. Angel that it was not likely that the boat would go to Portugal Cove for weeks, and asking what arrangement he would make and if the company would bear the expense and I said that the company could not be held responsible for delay from St. John's to Portugal Cove, to make the best arrangements possible.<sup>10</sup>

I have no reason to believe that patients in these hospitals get other than proper treatment.

[Seventh witness. Collin Beck, married, age 57. Occupation labourer of Deer Lake, Nfld.]

I have been working around the hospital since 14th of November, attending on the sick. I have been working on the measles shack since the sixth day of January. I remember Thomas Hartery who had measles, I did not take notice of how long he was in the measles shack. He went out of the hospital feeling fit to go to work on Monday, I do not think he went to work on Monday. He came back on Tuesday evening, about three days afterwards and had a second relapse of measles. . . . He passed away three minutes to four AM the next day, I was with him when he died, and he spoke to me before he died; I did not know whether he thought he was dying or not, he was conscious to a very few minutes before he died. He got out of one berth into another, and knowing the man was going to die I did what I could for him. The last words he said to me were "Mr. Beck help me over to my own berth." I put my arm in under him and helped him over to the berth and he died with my arm under him. I went over for Dr. Weekes who came over, this was about fourteen minutes after the patient had died. There was only the two of us, the patient and myself in the hospital. Dr. Weekes and I laid him out and put a bandage around his mouth and tied his hands. This would not be more than fifteen or twenty minutes after 4.00 AM. . . . I do not know of anything else the doctors could do for him and I could not have done anything more for my own brother. I have known about the confusion among the men, and it seems as if this was spread from one to

<sup>10</sup> Tom Hartery finally arrived home again from the west coast on 21 March, the ninth day after he died, on the *SS Walker* from St. John's. *Evening Telegram*, 20 March 1924, 6.



another. . . . When Dr. Weekes was up we just laid him out and then locked the door, and went back. Dr. Weekes said as soon as the coffin comes we will go up and wash him and put him in the coffin. I have never seen any rats or mice in the measles shack.

I administered strychnine every two hours according to the Doctor's orders, which was left with me when they visited me the evening before.

[Eighth witness. Arthur Laing, married, age 38. Cook, of Deer Lake.]

I heard his conversation in the Dispensary with the doctor, this was about 5.00 PM and he died the next morning. The doctor asked him who he was and he said "I am back I am the man from the measles shack." He said "Doctor I do not feel very well." The doctor lifted the sleeve of his coat and looked at his wrist, and said "For God's sake what did you leave the measles shack for, you should have stayed there until we said you could go." Hartery said that he was not very sick, but had a pain in his back and side, he said he left Sunday.

He went to the Measle shack and the Doctor called Mr. Beck, and told him to see that the bed was made. After tea both Doctors went over and when they came back I asked him how the man was, and he said he was not very good, he said he would not be surprised if he was to pass out as he had a very bad heart, and I believe the man is a suspect of pneumonia. I believe it was late when they came back, and was close to 2.00 o'clock when Doctor McDonald went to bed, Dr. Weekes stayed up. Mr. Beck came over about 4.00 AM and said he was dead, and Dr. Weekes went over to the measles shack.

In the morning he . . . ordered the coffin. He went out to the Telegraph office and he said he sent a message to his parents and also to the priest. He came back and I heard him ring up for Mr. Murdock of the Northern Construction and told him that the man was dead, and could he get a suit of clothes to put on this man, or would he send down his trunk or belongings. . . . It was about 5.30 PM when the trunk came. At 6.00 PM we were having tea in the dining room, shortly after Mr. Beck came in and said the trunk was there, and to come over to dress him. A man came to the door and said a man died in the measles shack. The Doctor told him he knew all about this, . . . Dr. McDonald went to the door, and there was a number of men there.

[Ninth witness. Gordon Locke, single, age 23. Orderly of Deer Lake Hospital.]

[Tenth witness. William E. Weekes, MD, age 29, doctor at Deer Lake Hospital.]

I saw the man Hartery first on the sixth of March in the Measle hut, . . . I told him I would tell him on Sunday when he could go out. He said he was afraid of losing his job on account of being away from work, he was a fireman for the Northern Construction Co., and had a good job and did not want to lose it. I did not see him on Friday or Saturday because he was not seriously ill, he was an isolation case there was another man there at the time and they did not require a Doctor's daily attention. On Sunday I enquired of Mr. Beck if these two men

were waiting for me to go over to see them, . . . I was told they had both gone, . . . On Tuesday afternoon Hartery returned, he was brought down on a sleigh or conveyance of some sort from the Northern Construction Company at the Forebay camp, and was brought to the office. . . . Dr. McDonald had gone to South Brook, but had seen the man in the dispensary before he went. . . . I immediately went over to see him. I found him to be not particularly ill, his temperature was not high nor was his pulse high, and beyond the fact that his body was covered with an atypical rash, but had no appearances of a sick man. I examined the man's chest and found very familiar early signs of bronchial pneumonia, which might or might not become definite, I gave him medication at that time myself.

He told me that he had become cold on going away from the shack on Sunday, and that on Sunday night he had suffered a chill, Monday night he suffered another, and that he had taken no nourishment from the time that he had left the measles shack Sunday morning until the time that he was speaking to me, and that he had no inclination to eat then, that he was at that time being purged by a dose of salts that he had taken that morning, he had taken no nourishment but a dose of Epson salts. He asked me was he very ill. I told him that I would see him again before I went to bed, when he had recovered from the effects of his journey back to the hospital. I saw him again with Dr. McDonald sometime between 10 and 11 o'clock that same night, at that time his complaints were no more than they had been that is to say a pain in the back, a slight sore throat and a headache. He was examined by Dr. McDonald and myself independent of each other, and we found pneumonia in the left lung at the lower angle of the shoulder blade behind. . . . We agreed that pneumonia was imminent, and that he would no doubt be much more ill in the morning than he was at time. Medication was prescribed and the attendant Mr. Beck returned to the hospital with us for the medication, and he was instructed as to how and when to give it, the first dose was due at 11.00 PM. . . . He returned at about 4.00 AM in the morning of the twelfth. He said he has gone. I returned to the shack with him and found the patient had died as Mr. Beck has described, finding signs of death, being those of death due to heart failure, which might easily have been the result of his weakened condition, and attack of pneumonia. He had been dead no more than ten or fifteen minutes yet the rash was entirely faded from the anterior surface of his body, and he was not cyanotic. We lifted him up and as we did so I noticed, and held my attention so called to the fact that his arms were already stiff. We placed him on the bunk dressed up, we closed his eyes, folded his hands, blocked orifices, as is customary after death, and as there were not other patients in the building, and as his clothing was considerably slight I considered it wise to leave him there until I could find out whether he had better clothing in which to dress him for shipping. He only had one sock that I saw. We put out the light closed off the fire, locked the door, leaving the body there as this was an infectious disease, and the body could not be removed to a place where there were other patients.

and no other place was available. I did not go to bed until after breakfast, which would be about 8.30 AM. . . . I endeavoured to get into communication with the Northern Construction Co. with regards to his clothing or box or trunk, but was unable to do so. I tried on two accounts but there was apparently no one to answer the phone. I tried again about 3.00 or 3.30 PM and I was told that they would look up and see what clothing he had. . . . About 5.30 I asked Mr. Beck to put water on to heat in the measles shack, as I was going over to prepare the body for being placed in the coffin, when the clothing arrived, this was I suppose about 5.30, . . . The coffin had not arrived until after I went over followed quickly by a man named White and the rest of the crowd. With the coffin came two carpenters and they had to go to make a rough box. Meanwhile Mr. Beck and I removed the clothing that he had on consisting of any outer garments, trousers, shirt and underwear, by using a pair of scissors on account of the stiffness of the parts. I myself washed him, redressing him in the best clothes that I could find in his trunk. We placed him in the coffin, which I at the time considered to be unfinished, it looked to me as if it had been taken from the carpenter bench before being completed. . . . The body had a round bag containing money, which I opened and counted in the presence of Major Butler, and the amount was verified by him and this was transmitted to his father by Registered Mail on the next mail.

The measles shack is far more comfortable than the shacks that the men live in around the camps, there is an extra lining in it, and a large stove with plenty of coal, blankets and mattresses. I treated Measles there more or less, as many as 8 at a time and this was the only fatal case and the only case which went out against our advice.

I emphasize the fact that the body was placed in the coffin as soon as the necessary facilities were available.

[Eleventh witness. Joseph J. McDonald, MD, single, age 29, of Deer Lake hospital.]

Our establishment consists of a large hospital of about 22 beds capacity with two other huts for isolation purposes one for the isolation of measles and the other for the isolation of scarlet fever. These huts are in a straight line about 150 yards from the general hospital. . . . These places are small temporary buildings looking towards the establishment of a permanent general hospital according to the company's plans at Corner Brook, and as far as possible they are fairly warm and comfortable. The larger hospital is lighted with electricity and the smaller two isolation huts are lighted by lamps. . . . Thomas Hartery a patient from the Northern Construction company at the Forebay, was admitted by me on March 5th. suffering from measles with the rash already out on him. . . . The next I knew of the late patient he came to the admitting office of the larger hospital in a very exhausted condition, breathing quite rapidly, lips and face somewhat cyanosed, and on lifting up his sleeves, and on bearing his chest, there were still marks of a raw ham colour on his forearms and chest. I

asked him why he was away from the measles shack, then I got the admitting book and discovered he had left the hospital on the 9th, . . . when he had only received five days treatment. Due to these marks on his body and having been in isolation previously I at once sent him back to the measles hut with the attendant Mr. Beck. . . . About 10.00 PM went over with Dr. Weekes to the measles hut and we each examined the man separately and formed the opinion the man had pneumonia. . . . Breathing was quite rapid. I would say around 30 per minute. The man was very restless and rolling about in his bunk, and would not keep the covers on him. . . . The pulse of the patient was very rapid and of poor volume, I do not exactly remember the rate but think it was about 140 per minute. The myocardial sounds were of poor quality, and indicated failing of heart. I stated to Dr. Weekes, who was present, my findings and said it was a case of pneumonia, and told Mr. Beck his condition was very poor. We told Mr. Beck to stay with him all night, and intended moving him to the main hospital in the morning where he could get more expert treatment from the trained nurse in attendance than by the orderly. We both returned to the hospital with Mr. Beck and I gave Mr. Beck strychnine tablets Grains 1/40 to give him at least every two hours and also gave him the clock so he could be sure the patient got these at the appointed time. . . . On wakening in the morning I heard that the patient had died at 4.00 AM Dr. Weekes was busy looking after telegrams and getting the coffin made etc., and I looked after the office calls, while he attended to the disposal of the body.

I did not see the body during the day. . . . I am aware that the door of the hut was locked and the fire put out, and that the place was visited occasionally throughout the day by Mr. Beck to see that everything was alright. The one thing we could not do was to cover the windows as there are no blinds on the huts, which left the body in view for anyone who might look in. At noon I answered the door to a call, when Mr. Hayward was at the door, and asked me about this man. I asked him if he was any relation and he said he was not, and I said I could not give him any information other than that we were making all arrangements possible for the disposal of the body.

That evening I went to the door in answer to a knock and was greeted by this man Hayward, and I would judge 400 men. Hayward said come outside. I spoke to the men . . . said that telegrams had been sent to his people and also to the priest at Curling. Hayward asked why no telegram had been sent to his own Parish Priest and I told him we always sent for the nearest Priest, which in this case was Curling. I told the crowd that the coffin had been ordered at the Fraser, Brace Co. in the morning and that we had just got his personal effects from the Northern Construction Co. camp at the Forebay and we were now about to take these up and wash the body and put them on. There was no use of cutting the clothes the man already had on off him until we were sure the man had any better clothes to put on from his trunk. This accounts for the clothes being left on the body, during the day, as we did not want to leave the body exposed. . . . Hayward disappeared from the crowd and man named White, I

think, came and said to make it snappy. Dr. Weekes and I took the clothes from his trunk and he went on ahead, I following after I had got my hat and flash light. We went up to the hut, Dr. Weekes washing the body and I assisted in putting the clothes on, and putting him in the coffin. Before we started I covered the windows by means of blankets. . . . The coffin arrived at the measles hut only about 7.45 PM I think. Dr. Weekes filled out the Death Certificate and made all arrangements to get the body away on the train. Hayward was apparently the leader of the gang or crowd and was the one responsible I think for the above disturbance. . . . As a professional man I am perfectly satisfied that everything that could possibly be done, both before and after death was done, outside of the fact that the windows were not covered owing to the fact we did not have any blinds on them. . . . I would say that there was a breach of the peace for the crowd led by Hayward were shouting to put the doctors on the train, some shouting in the crowd to put them into the lake.

*Magistrate Scott to Mr. Hayward:* Having had the opportunity of hearing a very full enquiry . . . have you any questions perfectly bearing on any of this knowledge that you would like to suggest?

Hayward asks Dr. McDonald why did it take 14 hours to get the man's clothes from the Northern Construction Co., a distance of about two miles.

*Dr. McDonald:* I ask Mr. Hayward to see Mr. Arthur Murdock of the Northern Construction Co. . . . We sent a request for the clothes and . . . we used them about 15 minutes after their arrival. I cannot say why the clothes did not arrive sooner, and refer you to Arthur Murdock at the Forebay.

*Hayward:* Why did the body remain for 16 hours in the hut and was it your intention to remove the body that night?

*Dr. McDonald:* The body was left in the measles hut for the following reasons: (1) This being an infectious condition we could not move it from this hut to any other place. (2) We did not have any other place outside of the main hospital to move this body to and there is no morgue at this hospital.

It was our intentions as soon as we got the clothes and the coffin to put the body in the coffin and we were making all arrangements to get the body off that night, absolutely.

*Magistrate Scott to Hayward:* What is now your present opinion of the case of Hartery, in other words are you still of the same opinion in part or whole?

*Hayward:* I am still of the same opinion in part and so are 800 other fellows, that is that the complaint against the doctors was right. The public opinion is the same as it was when we marched down that night.

[Finding of Magistrate in the within Enquiry (March 28th, 1924).]

. . . Considering all the circumstances of Pioneer Hospital work carried on in rough temporary Buildings in a District that a year ago was practically unin-

habited, but now a centre of new development, in which men in large numbers are housed in shacks so called all doing the best possible.

There does not appear to be any good reason, for the complaints made informally to the Authorities. . . . I believe all was done before and after death and in the sending of the body to St. John's.

I visited the measles hut and found it comfortable, and heated by a large stove (coal) and possibly had a blind been on the window the public would not have been drawn to the view of the body only partly ready to be coffined for reasons stated.

# Social History

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Edited by Janet Blackman and Keith Nield

The October issue will be an enlarged American number containing:  
**Conflict and collaboration:** yeomen, slaveholders and politics in the antebellum South. *Harry L. Watson.*

**Beyond the search for sisterhood:** American women's history in the 1980s. *Nancy A. Hewitt.*

**The problem of the political in recent American urban history.** *Terrence J. McDonald.*

**The writing of social history in English Canada 1970-1984.** *Gregory S. Kealey.*

**Review Articles:** *Marcus Rediker, Fred Wacker.*

**Reviews and Short Notices.**

**Subscription rates for 1985:** Individuals (UK) £18.75 Institutions (UK) £27.60  
 Individuals (Overseas) £22.50 USA/Canada \$40.00 Institutions (Overseas) £30.50  
 USA/Canada \$53.50 Single copies £11.25 Three issues a year (January, May and October).

**METHUEN & CO LTD**

11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE.

## **CLIO** A Journal of Literature, History and the Philosophy of History

CLIO is now in its fourteenth year, with subscribers in almost 40 countries, and is the only English-language quarterly that deals with three interrelated topics:

- literature as informed by historical understandings
- historical writings considered as literature
- philosophy of history, speculative and analytic

Representative Contents (from Volumes 11-13, 1981-4)

Joseph Dial "Brecht's Dialectical Dramatics"

Jeffrey Smitten "Robertson's *History of Scotland*: Narrative Structure and Sense of Reality"

David Konstan "Narrative in White's *Metahistory*"

"Relations of Literature and History" (Bernard Benstock, Thos. G. Rosenmeyer, A. Owen Aldridge, Russell J. Linnemann, and Jos. H. Harrison)

Martin Donougho "The Semiotics of Hegel"

Toby Burrows "Jules Michelet and *Annales* School"

W.H. Dray "R. G. Collingwood on A Priori of History"

Curt Hartog "Time/Metaphor in Gibbon's *History*"

Virgil Nemoianu "Evelyn Waugh and Motley Society"

Paul N. Siegel "Political Implications of Solzhenitsyn's Novels"

Barton R. Friedman "Proving Nothing: History and Dramatic Strategy in *The Dynasts*"

John Halperin "Trollope and the American Civil War"

Virginia Hunter "Thucydides' *History*: Cause, Process"

Joseph M. Levine "Natural History and the History of the Scientific Revolution"

John Henry Raleigh "Strindberg in Andrew Jackson's America: O'Neill's *More Stately Mansions*"

Donald R. Wineke "Machiavelli and *I Henry VI*"

(Approx. forty books reviewed per volume)

We invite submission of such essays.

We also invite subscriptions: libraries at \$30 a year, and individuals at \$12 (add \$2 if outside the U.S.A.)

Write to: CLIO

Indiana University-Purdue University  
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805 U.S.A.