A renewed interest in Scottish migration has led authors such as Lucille H. Campey and the editorial team of Scott A McLean and Michael E. Vance to re-examine the Scottish-Canadian experience. Their respective works, though different in approach, both reveal important clues to the underlying networks that gave Scottish immigrants to Canada a unique story. In addition, the growing popularity of global history forces us to reinterpret the history of the Scots in Canada and to search for new evidence in order to unveil the hidden networks linking families and communities in a trans-Atlantic setting.

Through both an analytical and statistical approach, Campey has written an in-depth study of trans-Atlantic Scottish emigration. It is a study of emigration that begins in a land riddled with economic woes and diverse exclusionary forces and ends in one of opportunity and continued communal networking. Specifically, Campey explores the longevity and success of Scottish emigration to Canada. In contrast to what some historians have maintained were the
main causes of Scottish emigration, such as John Bodnar’s view of the immigrant as the ignorant child of capitalism, Campey has explored the myths and facts and drawn fresh conclusions revealing a dualistic nature comprised of Highland and Lowland migration. Both domestic and foreign forces drew forth several hundred thousand Scots from their homes in an attempt to better their social standing, through emigration to Canada, between the years 1767 and 1941.

The author has organized this work both chronologically and topically. Campey begins with the first Scottish emigrant arrivals, which attracted successive waves, and moves on to the more specific regional migratory patterns of eastern Canada, which propelled immigrants to Western Canada’s Red River region and British Columbia. Campey’s smooth narrative style, coupled with her extensive use of primary documents, makes this an informative work – an easy read for anyone interested in emigration history and the Scottish Diaspora. The author incorporates an appropriate amount of illustrations from reproductions of eighteenth and nineteenth century paintings to modern photographs. This work is further strengthened through the author’s use of charts and appendices to display statistical information on emigrant numbers and trans-Atlantic passenger details.

Campey sets the stage for the ‘emigration fever’ of the late eighteenth century through her description of ‘the spirit of emigration’ (p. 28). It was this spirit, not solely the threat of imminent starvation, that drove Scots to relocate entire families in order to better their social standing. Utilising the Lord Justice Clerk’s report, dating to 1774, the author introduces a group of early Scottish emigrants which helped make up the striking sum of 15,500 Scottish emigrants who, between 1770 and 1815, left for British America – 79 per cent of which were Western Highlanders and Islanders. To further demonstrate the multitude of forces driving Scottish emigration, the author describes in full detail the emigration of handloom weavers, who were displaced by mechanised production or Irish migrant workers earning far lower wages; the various schemes created by either landlords or Scottish Emigration Societies in an effort to stimulate emigration; and the drawing force of the Canadian timber trade. It was the latter, which for a time, continually drew Scottish emigrants to Canada, working in the logging industry supplying European markets.
Once overseas, Scottish emigrants were unique, as Campey points out, settling in Gaelic-speaking populations, but more importantly, by establishing local Scottish communal organisations, such as the Highland Society of Canada, the Montreal Caledonian Society and Saint Andrew’s Societies. These groups functioned as a network of support for Scottish emigrants, a system capable of continually assisting Scottish immigrants and enticing future Scottish emigrants. The author refers to the active role these social networks played in creating a Canadian identity, as these organisations helped new arrivals ‘transition from Scottish immigrants to Canadian settlers’ (p. 203).

Campey also addresses the common myths concerning Scottish emigration. She contests ‘emigration folklore’ by dismissing the predominance of coffin ships and using supportive evidence to reveal agency as a greater force behind the mass Scottish exodus of the nineteenth century – an idea in contrast with the belief that Highland clearances and forced removals alone prevailed as the driving force behind emigration. The coffin ships, believed to have arrived at Canadian ports, are treated as misconceptions. The author clarifies this point by stressing that the high mortality rates associated with the Irish Famine years has distorted facts and fuelled folklore. Campey states that the Atlantic crossing was not as challenging a task for Scottish emigrants when compared to the rigorous labour associated with ‘clearing the vast wilderness that lay around them’ (p. 164).

Campey has succeeded in writing an interesting and thought-provoking history of Scottish emigration. With reference to her Canadian content, the author has provided an in-depth analysis of the complexities involved in early settlement patterns, specifically on Canada’s eastern coast with settlements such as Picton – the ‘Highland success story’ (p. 8). If there is one main idea that Campey would like to instil in her readers, it is that ‘emigration was the rational response of all free-thinking Scots who were caught up in dire economic circumstances’ (p. 203).

In contrast to Campey’s macro study of Scottish emigration from the late 1700s through to the mid 1900s, McLean and Vance have collaborated on an informative micro history singularly derived from the previously unpublished manuscript of Reverend William Wye Smith. Smith, a Scottish-born
writer of both poetry and observations, collected numerous short anecdotal stories of pioneer life. He later organized this into a settler narrative he entitled *Canadian Reminiscences*. Smith’s stories provide an interesting base from which to analyze Canada’s developing notions of national identity and of the growing ‘racial’ categorization that ordered much of Ontario’s nineteenth century society.

McLean and Vance have organized their work into eleven topical chapters taken directly from Smith’s original sixteen-chapter manuscript. The editors have left out Smith’s original chapters six through ten in order to focus on a ‘broader history of pioneer settlement and community development’ (p. 11). McLean and Vance have included both an informative introduction and a concluding chapter, but the editors have given their work much more breadth through their inclusion of extensive commentary notes, in-depth analysis and contextualizing information separated from the main text and found within the endnotes.

Smith’s first five chapters describe the material culture and the environmental, geographic and social factors affecting the pioneers of Canada’s ‘heroic age’ during the formative years of frontier life predominantly in Upper Canada. The subsequent four chapters selected from Smith’s manuscript are topically organized as English and Scottish immigrants, Irish and German settlers, ‘the Indians’ and ‘the Negroes.’ Aside from the obvious ‘racial’ hierarchy present in this grouping, Smith’s adherence to his period’s socially-constructed ethnic categories sheds light on societal patterns and group dynamics evident among Canada’s pioneering peoples. With reference to European settlers, each apparent group is characterized by its desire for homogeneity as seen in a Scottish or Dutch settlement, yet Smith’s characterization of Aboriginals and African-Canadians is stereotypical in nature and results from his ethnocentric perspective.

Smith’s chapters on aboriginals and African-Canadian pioneers are short on content, but offer the reader a unique view of the ‘common sense’ approach of nineteenth century ‘racist’ attitudes. Aboriginal characters are usually depicted as substance abusers, this coupled with Smith’s failure to understand aboriginal customs and beliefs leads to Smith’s assumption that the ‘Indians’ are less intelligent and less civilized than their European neighbours. Stereotypical references to
booze-drinking ‘natives’ persist throughout this work and, defensively, Smith includes a chief’s dialogue to further support the ‘legitimacy’ of this claim as the latter describes a fellow aboriginal’s abusive use of alcohol. Smith’s general characterization of African-Canadians removes any notion of agency with reference to their involvement in both the ‘anti-slavery movement and in the creation and maintenance of their communities in Upper Canada’ (p. 21). Though the editors have added extensive editorial notes on African-Canadians, this work does nothing to correct the perpetuation of the ‘Underground Railroad’ myth which is inaccurately described as a singular entity with numerous termini in Canada instead of a broader pattern of separate and independent journeys. Smith’s chapter on African-Canadians oddly contains a larger proportion of stories based on ‘real’ people when compared to the chapters on aboriginals or Germans and Irish immigrants, which for the most part entertain stereotypical characterizations.

From an analytical approach, Smith’s writing reveals a few stylistic traits. First, his use of the vernacular is of particular interest as it serves to preserve the phonetic dialect patterns of some of Canada’s earliest pioneers. Reminiscent of the vernacular poetry made popular by the likes of Robert Burns and Robert Fergusson, Smith perhaps found a degree of poetic humour through his ethno-linguistic observations. Second, Smith’s paternalistic and patronizing style reflects his ‘Imperialist attitudes’ which securely placed him at the top of his perceived social experience (p. 249). Third, the dual nature of Smith’s identity as both a Scottish ‘pioneer poet’ and as a ‘devout clergyman’ is reflected in his various interactions and exchanges with others as evidenced through his preoccupation with the popular literature of the mid-nineteenth century as well as his own Scottish heritage.

Smith’s *Canadian Reminiscences* has been shown to highlight the perceived and socially constructed hierarchy used to categorize the early settlers and pioneers of Canada’s frontier environment. McLean and Vance draw a comparison between Smith’s work and John Murray Gibbon’s 1938 publication, entitled *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation*, as they argue that ‘contemporary notions of Canadian multiculturalism’ are rooted in the same ‘racial hierarchy’ (p. 250). This reader suggests that this comparison, while valid, ignores
an emerging trend which views ‘contemporary notions’ of Canadian identity as moving beyond the mosaic and into a post-multicultural age where Canadians associate themselves increasingly within a more global framework. One’s ethnic origin is still of importance to many Canadians, but notions of ‘racial’ hierarchies and ethno-centrism are largely characteristics of our shared past.

In conclusion, both Campey’s *An Unstoppable Force* and McLean and Vance’s *William Wye Smith* provide complimentary perspectives of a Scottish immigrant’s Canadian experience. Campey has seemingly explored every available avenue in her search for patterns and causes of Scottish emigration and observed that continual communal networking had afforded Scottish immigrants a substantial benefit. Similarly, McLean and Vance’s edited version of Smith’s original manuscript provides several clues to the existence of an underlying Scottish network within which Smith both participated in and benefited from. Perhaps the most intriguing comparison between both works rests in their subtle support of a trans-Atlantic Scottish-Canadian network of family and friends, which offered Scottish emigrants a rather unique experience in Canada’s frontier environment.

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