

Civil War Pharmacy: A History of Drugs, Drug Supply and Provision, and Therapeutics for the Union and Confederacy

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Review

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Flannery, Michael A. *Civil War Pharmacy: A History of Drugs, Drug Supply and Provision, and Therapeutics for the Union and Confederacy*. Pharmaceutical Products Press, \$59.95 ISBN 789015013

Drug traffic

Book explores medical aspect of war

Michl Flannery's in-depth study of pharmacy and the pharmaceutical industry during the Civil War will fast become *the* definitive work on this subject. It is an invaluable book for those interested in medicine of the Civil War era or for anyone interested in the history of medicine.

This work begins with a comparison of Civil War medicine and pharmacy, and where they stood at the beginning of the conflict. Flannery explores the education of the pharmacists, manufacturing, and the status of Southern medicine and pharmacy. He also examines how various drugs were used, who provided and prepared the drugs, and how the drugs got from the manufacturers to doctors in the field and hospitals.

Civil War Pharmacy describes the people--purveyors, stewards, storekeepers, doctors, and nurses--involved in the distribution and use of pharmaceuticals of the Civil War, both in the North and the South. The author then discusses the official duties and responsibilities of the military men and devotes a chapter to women.

Part II continues with a description of drug distribution and manufacturing, the various medicines and how they were prescribed, and ends with a discourse on calomel and quinine. The next section deals with pharmaceutical conditions in the Confederacy as Flannery describes the administration of the Confederate Medical Service, how they were forced to do more with less, and the Southern *Materia Medica* (literally the Material of Medicine, i.e. the ingredients that make

up the various medicinal preparations.)

The tables, figures, and six appendices allow the reader to access hard-to-find information, such as the Standard Supply Table of Indigenous Remedies, the U.S. Surgeon General's Circular No. 6 which removed calomel from the Supply Table, instructions on reading and filling a 19th Century prescription, a circular from the Confederate Medical Purveyor's Office, a *Materia Medica* for the South, and common prescriptions of the Civil War period.

This book is jam-packed with information for anyone interested in Civil War medical history or pharmacy history. It is extremely reader-friendly and is a must for your book collection. On a scale of one to ten, this reviewer rates the volume at 9 scalpels.

Peter J. D'Onofrio is the President of the Society of Civil War Surgeons, Inc., the largest non-profit organization devoted to the study of Civil War era medicine. He received his doctorate degree in American History in 1998. In addition, Dr. D'Onofrio is the editor and publisher of the Society's quarterly Journal of Civil War Medicine. He can be contacted at pjdsocws@aol.com or by visiting the Society's website at www.civilwarsurgeons.org.