1. Record Nr. UNINA9910452127603321 British military and naval medicine, 1600-1830 [[electronic resource] /] **Titolo** / edited by Geoffrey L. Hudson Pubbl/distr/stampa Amsterdam,: Rodopi, 2007 **ISBN** 94-012-0493-4 1-4356-1422-4 Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (297 pages): illustrations Collana Clio medica (New York, N.Y.);;81 Wellcome series in the history of medicine Altri autori (Persone) HudsonGeoffrey L (Geoffrey Lewis) Disciplina 616.98023 Soggetti Medicine, Naval - History - 16th century Medicine, Naval - History - 17th century Medicine, Military - History - 16th century Electronic books. Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese **Formato** Materiale a stampa Livello bibliografico Monografia Note generali Description based upon print version of record. Includes bibliographical references and index. Nota di bibliografia Nota di contenuto Preliminary material / Editors British Military and Naval Medicine, 1600-1830 -- List of Illustrations / Editors British Military and Naval Medicine, 1600-1830 -- List of Tables / Editors British Military and Naval Medicine, 1600-1830 -- Preface / Editors British Military and Naval Medicine, 1600-1830 -- Introduction: British Military and Naval Medicine, 1600-1830 / Geoffrey L. Hudson -- Warfare and the Creation of British Imperial Medicine, 1600–1800 / J.D. Alsop -- The British Army in North America and the West Indies, 1755–83: A Medical Perspective / Paul E. Kopperman -- Disease and Medicine in the Armies of British India, 1750-1830: The Treatment of Fevers and the Emergence of Tropical Therapeutics / Mark Harrison -- Who Cared? Military Nursing during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1642-60 / Eric Gruber von Arni -- Privates on Parade: Soldiers, Medicine and the Treatment of Inguinal Hernias in Georgian England / Philip R. Mills

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Standing armies and navies brought with them military medical establishments, shifting the focus of disease management from individuals to groups. Prevention, discipline, and surveillance produced results, and career opportunities for physicians and surgeons. All these developments had an impact on medicine and society, and were in turn influenced by them. The essays within examine these phenomena, exploring the imperial context, nursing and medicine in Britain, naval medicine, as well as the relationship between medicine, the state and society. British Military and Naval Medicine challenges the notion that military medicine was, in all respects, 'a good thing'. The so-called monopoly of military medicine and the authoritarian structures within the military were complex and, at times, successfully contested. Sometimes changes were imposed that cannot be characterised as improvements. British Military and Naval Medicine also points to opportunities for further research in this exciting field of study.