

WEBSTER CANADIAN  
JOURNAL

**DIARY OF JOHN THOMAS,**  
**SURGEON IN WINSLOW'S EXPEDITION OF 1755 AGAINST THE**  
**ACADIANS.**

Communicated by FRANK MOORE, Esq., of New York city, to the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for October, 1879.

[At the request of the editor of the REGISTER, Francis S. Drake, Esq., author of the "Dictionary of American Biography," has furnished the following sketch of the life of the author of this diary :

"John Thomas, a major general in the revolutionary army, son of John and Lydia (Watson) Thomas, was born in 1724, and was a gr.-grandson of John (an orphan of 14, who came to New England in the Hopewell in 1635), and Sarah (Pitney) Thomas. He studied medicine with Dr. Simon Tufts, of Medford, and began practice at Green Harbor, a precinct of Marshfield, Mass., his native place, but afterwards removed to Kingston, where he successfully pursued his profession during the remainder of his life, when not engaged in military service.

"In 1746 he accompanied the troops sent to Annapolis Royal as second surgeon, and as surgeon's mate accompanied Gen. Winslow's regiment in April, 1755, in the expedition for the expulsion of the Acadians, of which the following Journal is the record, and to which Longfellow's poem of "Evangeline" has given such a sad celebrity. Receiving the appointment of lieutenant in Shirley's regiment, he left the medical staff for more active service. In 1759 we find him colonel of a provincial regiment in Nova Scotia, and in the campaign of 1760 he served under Amherst in the reduction of Canada.

"A delegate to the Provincial Congress in 1774, and colonel of a militia regiment, he was soon (Feb. 9, 1775) appointed a brigadier general, to which grade he was also appointed by the Continental Congress, June 22, and received the commission of major-general from the latter body in recognition of his eminent services at Dorchester Heights, March 6, 1776. During the siege of Boston he commanded the right wing of the army at Roxbury, and by the orderliness of his camp, by his vigilance, and his other military qualities, gained general commendation and the high encomiums of Washington. He heightened his reputation by the skill and success with which he executed the brilliant strategic movement which compelled the British to hastily evacuate Boston. Immediately promoted and given the command of the forces invading Canada, he joined them before Quebec, May 1, 1776, but finding his effective force less than 1000 men, the small-pox raging among them and the enemy constantly receiving reinforcements, he retreated on the 8th, and while awaiting reinforcements at Chamblée on the Sorel, was seized with small-pox and died June 5, 1776.