

Military Medicine and the Making of Race

This book demonstrates how Britain's black soldiers helped shape attitudes towards race throughout the nineteenth century. Part of the British military establishment for 132 years, the West India Regiments generated vast records, with details about every one of their more than 100,000 recruits, making them the best-documented group of black men in the Atlantic World. Tim Lockley shows how, in the late eighteenth century, surgeons established in medical literature that white and black bodies were radically different, forging a notion of the 'superhuman' black soldier able to undertake physical challenges far beyond the abilities of white soldiers. By the late 1830s, however, military statisticians would contest these ideas and instead highlight the vulnerabilities of black soldiers. The popularity and pervasiveness of these publications spread far beyond British military or medical circles and had a significant international impact, particularly in the United States, both reflecting and reinforcing changing notions about blackness.

Tim Lockley is Professor of North American history at the University of Warwick and the author of *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750–1860* (2001), *Welfare and Charity in the Antebellum South* (2007) and *Maroon Communities in South Carolina* (2009).

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*Life and Death in the West India
Regiments, 1795–1874*

Tim Lockley
University of Warwick

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For Emma, who was not even born
when I wrote my last book

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