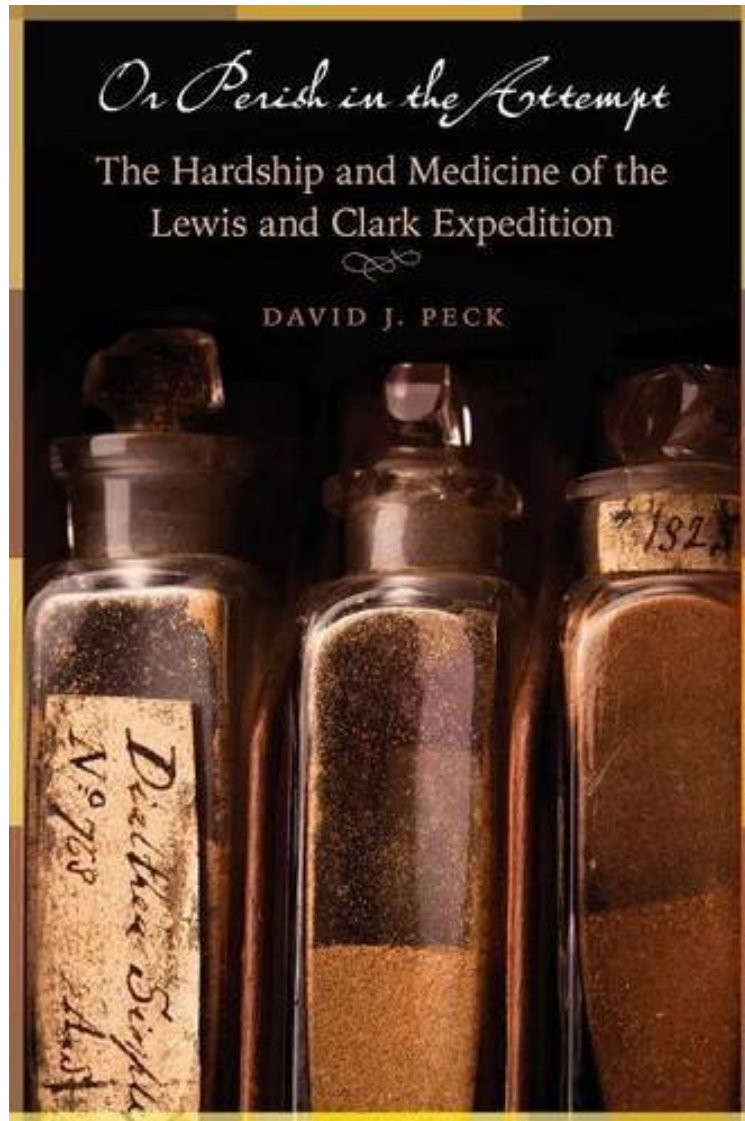


[Library ebook] Or Perish in the Attempt: The Hardship and Medicine of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Or Perish in the Attempt: The Hardship and Medicine of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

David J. Peck

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David J. Peck : Or Perish in the Attempt: The Hardship and Medicine of the Lewis and Clark Expedition
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interesting from the perspective of a modern doctor0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy john butlerGreat book especially since my cousin wrote it2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Or Perish in the AttemptBy Ichabod"Or Perish in the Attempt" is a marvelously entertaining account of the Lewis Clark "Corps of Discovery" journey. Like so many Americans, I have heard recounted superficial descriptions of the Lewis Clark Expedition and its attempt to find a Northwest Passage. In truth, until reading "Or Perish in the Attempt", that was all that I really knew of the expedition. Dr. Peck's narrative of the travails of the expedition details the "Gestalt" of that harrowing journey in a candidly humane consideration of the hardships that faced the band assembled by Lewis Clark for the purpose of their intended explorations. Though Dr. Peck's focus is upon the "Wilderness Medicine" used to treat the multitude of afflictions and injuries suffered by the members of the Corps, it is by no means limiting to the reader who wishes to understand the purpose and multiple aspects of the expedition in general. With humor, warmth and an empathy that reverberates throughout the book, Dr. Peck brings to life the personalities of the Captains, Meriwether Lewis William Clark, and the soldiers, outdoorsmen and the lone woman and her child that made the incredible journey of discovery into what had been the uncharted wilderness of the territories of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase. One becomes immersed in the story telling ability of this author; as you read you can imagine yourself a child at the knee of a grandfather as he spins a tale of courage and adventure from a time long past. Adventure comes to life, high and humorous, as Dr. Peck relates incidents that occur as the Corps struggles outward to the Oregon Coast, only to engage a new set of dangers and obstacles on their return to St. Louis. As the story unfolds the physician in Dr. Peck steps forward to enlighten the reader as to the diseases, afflictions and injuries that plagued this heroic band and what the Captains used to try to maintain the health of their Corps; laden with the interesting twist of non-judgmental comparison to "modern Medicine". After reading this book one is forced to contemplate the tremendous amount of information that Dr. Peck had to have assembled and reviewed before its distillation into the 351 pages that he presents to the reader. From each chapter's opening quote through the book's terminal index, one must surely be impressed by the scope of the author's readings and intelligence. Doubly impressive is Dr. Peck's ability to present this information in a form that is understandable and entertaining for all. Lastly, every serious student of Medicine should read this book to gain the equally valuable advantage of "perspective". While we may guffaw at the concept of "bloodletting" and "leeching" as it was therapeutically practiced for disease; how far distant are we from that concept when we prescribe the "new age" anti-coagulants, the first of which was derived from the saliva of the leech? This class of drugs allows for patients' "auto-bloodletting" without the knife, as any practitioner with experience with these drugs can attest. The future will surely look back on our attempts to chop, radiate and poison cancer patients back to health with the same incredulity with which we now disdain the methods of our 19th century counterparts. Read this book and take from it humility, then believe nothing, question everything and study constantly! Stewart R. Gorney, M.D. Director, Integrative Scientific, LLC McAllen, TX

David J. Peck's *Or Perish in the Attempt* ingeniously combines the remarkable adventures of Lewis and Clark with an examination of the health problems their expedition faced. Formidable problems indeed, but the author patiently, expertly and humorously guides us through the medical travails of the famous journey, juxtaposing treatment then against remedy now. The result is a fascinating book that sheds new light not only on Lewis and Clark and the men and one remarkable woman (and her infant) who accompanied them along an eight-thousand-mile wilderness path but also on the practice of medicine in their time and place.

Altogether revealing, instructive, and entertaining. Dave Walter, research historian, Montana Historical Society