



# **Bleed, Blister, And Purge: A History Of Medicine On The American Frontier**

*Volney Steele*

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## **Bleed, Blister, And Purge: A History Of Medicine On The American Frontier** Volney Steele

Bleed, Blister, and Purge traces the fits and starts of medical progress on the western frontier. With the authority of a scholar and the sparkle of an old-time storyteller, Dr. Volney Steele takes the reader from rotgut whiskey to modern anesthetics, from castor oil to antibiotics, and from barroom surgery to modern hospital operations. Dr. Steele wrote Bleed, Blister, and Purge to shed light on and celebrate the dedication and humanitarianism of those many physicians, nurses, shamans, and people of sound practical sense who saw their patients often friends and family through the adversities that bedeviled them. Citing everything from government reports to first-person remembrances, combined with his own sensitive interpretation, the author creates a full, clear, and colorful picture of illness and the healing art in the old West. The reader will find fascinating descriptions of the mysterious rituals of Indian medicine men; the spread of venereal disease among gold camp hurdy-gurdy girls; how military surgeons grew vegetables to combat scurvy; pioneer home remedies such as applying fresh cow manure to wounds; the cure-all tonics of traveling medicine-show quacks; the horse-and-buggy house calls of homestead doctors; and much more. Nearly one hundred historical photographs and a glossary of medical terms enhance the text.

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