

The diary shows her growing sophistication as she traveled across the nation gaining competence working in a man's world. It also offers unique insights into the postwar experience of wartime workers. Prior to the war, Shelton lost a teaching position to a male candidate. After the war, she was hired as a clerk in a mental institution, just the sort of positions increasingly available to women in the war's wake. Her accounts of the patients in the hospital are intriguing.

The diary was transcribed and annotated by Kathleen Hanson, an associate professor of nursing at Iowa College of Nursing. Her detailed notes help readers understand the diary. Appendixes include letters sent to Annie Wittenmyer relating to charges of immoral behavior leveled at Amanda and a postwar address written by Shelton in the early part of the twentieth century. Offering a window to the personal experience of a woman who worked closely with Iowa's Annie Wittenmyer as a "lady manager" in the U.S. Christian Commission diet kitchen program, this volume adds greatly to the few published materials that exist to document this fascinating chapter in the history of the Civil War.

Historians, women's studies scholars, and those interested in the history of nursing and the Civil War will welcome both of these volumes. They increase access to primary source material not readily available to modern readers, with the added value of background information and modern scholarly comment.

*Bleed, Blister, and Purge: A History of Medicine on the American Frontier*, by Volney Steele, M.D. Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 2005. xxiii, 300 pp. Illustrations, notes, glossary, index, bibliography. \$15.00 paper.

Reviewer Lee Anderson is co-principal of A & P Historical Resources, Coralville. He is the author of several books and articles about Iowa medical history.

Professional historians might be inclined to give this book and its author short shrift. After all, the author is not a trained historian; nor does this work offer much in the way of new scholarship. Still, the book has much to offer. Its subject matter—life and death on the frontier—is important, and a good bit of the story applies to Iowa and the Midwest. Moreover, one can well imagine the years of patient reading and research that preceded the writing of this book; just as important, one can appreciate and applaud the author's straightforward writing style and his obvious enthusiasm for history.

Born in Arkansas in 1922, Volney Steele enrolled in the U.S. Navy V-12 Program in 1942 and graduated from the University of Arkansas

School of Medicine in 1945. Significantly, Steele describes both his father and grandfather as “frontier physicians,” although theirs was the frontier of rural northwest Arkansas, not the high plains and Mountain West described in the book. The author, however, spent the greater part of his professional life (1959–1986) as a pathologist in Bozeman, Montana, where his professional career, his community activities, and his passion for history earned him significant local notice. Strictly speaking, then, this is not “A History of Medicine on the American Frontier,” but a history of medicine and health care on one of America’s several frontiers.

The work is divided into two parts. The first, titled “Old West Healers and Healing,” presents a series of ten short topical—and roughly chronological—chapters. Topics include illness and healing in Native American cultures and in the gold camps, wagon trains, army outposts, and isolated homesteads of the newly opened West. The message—not new, yet worth reiteration—is that the American West was, at times at least, an appallingly dangerous and unhealthy place. Disease, physical injury, and poor nutrition exacted a heavy toll on white adventurers and settlers and, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, even more so on Native Americans, whose suffering was exacerbated by outright abuse and neglect.

The second and much shorter part of the book, “Public Health and Health Education on the Frontier,” includes chapters on hospitals, nursing, sanitation, and epidemic diseases. To historians, this may be the more interesting of the book’s two parts. Although the experience of health and illness in the nineteenth-century Mountain West diverged in many ways from that in the Midwest or in the burgeoning cities of the East, the story of public health bore far more similarities. That was so in large part because modern scientific medicine, modern sanitation, and the modern hospital, with its professional nursing staff, were inventions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and spread quickly across geographic, socioeconomic, and cultural frontiers.

By and large, *Bleed, Blister, and Purge* is a quick and engaging read, unencumbered by medical or other jargon, making it an interesting and instructive volume for a general audience and possibly a useful adjunct in an American history survey course. Along the way, the author offers a good many insightful observations, such as his note that the oft-admired mountain men—whose lives necessarily tended toward the nasty, brutish, and short—originated a careless pattern of resource exploitation that handicapped the West for generations. To be sure, there are also deficiencies in the book. Its abundant illustrative anecdotes are both a principal strength and a principal weakness,

most of them apt, many of them colorful and entertaining, but some a bit off the mark and, to a historian's ear, less than convincing. Also, the "Overview" and "Introduction" are thin stuff, the most useful parts of which are repeated later in the text. Likewise, some might object that the author is inclined to romanticize Native American life prior to the incursion of whites, with their technologies, their diseases, and their hunger for land and other resources. In the end, though, the positives—not least the author's enthusiasm for the story at hand—substantially outweigh the negatives.

*The Tootin' Louie: A History of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway*, by Don L. Hofsommer. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. xiii, 374 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, index. \$73.95 cloth, \$39.95 paper.

Reviewer Jamie Beranek is an independent researcher living in Cedar Rapids. He is engaged in a study of railroad structures along the Rock Island line.

With memories of its small-railroad charm, friendly employees, genteel poverty, and flashes of big-time mainline operation, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway (M&StL) remains a favorite of rail fans and residents of the upper Midwest nearly 50 years after it was absorbed into the Chicago & North Western Railroad. Don Hofsommer, author of several recent books on Iowa and Minnesota railroading, now offers an informative and detailed history of this colorful railroad. Prior to Hofsommer's book, the only full-length treatment of the M&StL was Frank Donovan's folksy *Mileposts on the Prairie* (1950). Both books cover the railroad's first 80 years—*The Tootin' Louie* in much more detail than Donovan's corporate-sponsored account—and Hofsommer updates the story to the present.

The M&StL was chartered in 1870 by Minneapolis millers and lumbermen to transport wheat, timber, and coal to Minneapolis and to carry flour and finished lumber out to the surrounding territory. To that end, the road first extended to White Bear Lake, Minnesota, in 1871, with a connection to the Great Lakes port of Duluth. In 1877 it reached Albert Lea to the south, where it met the Iowa-managed Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern (BCR&N), becoming an integral part with the BCR&N and the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy in the operation of through train service between Minneapolis and St. Louis.

From the beginning, however, the M&StL's ultimately fatal flaws were obvious—its routes were too short and the territory it served too honeycombed with other railroad competition. As Hofsommer traces the company's shifting fortunes, salvation always appears