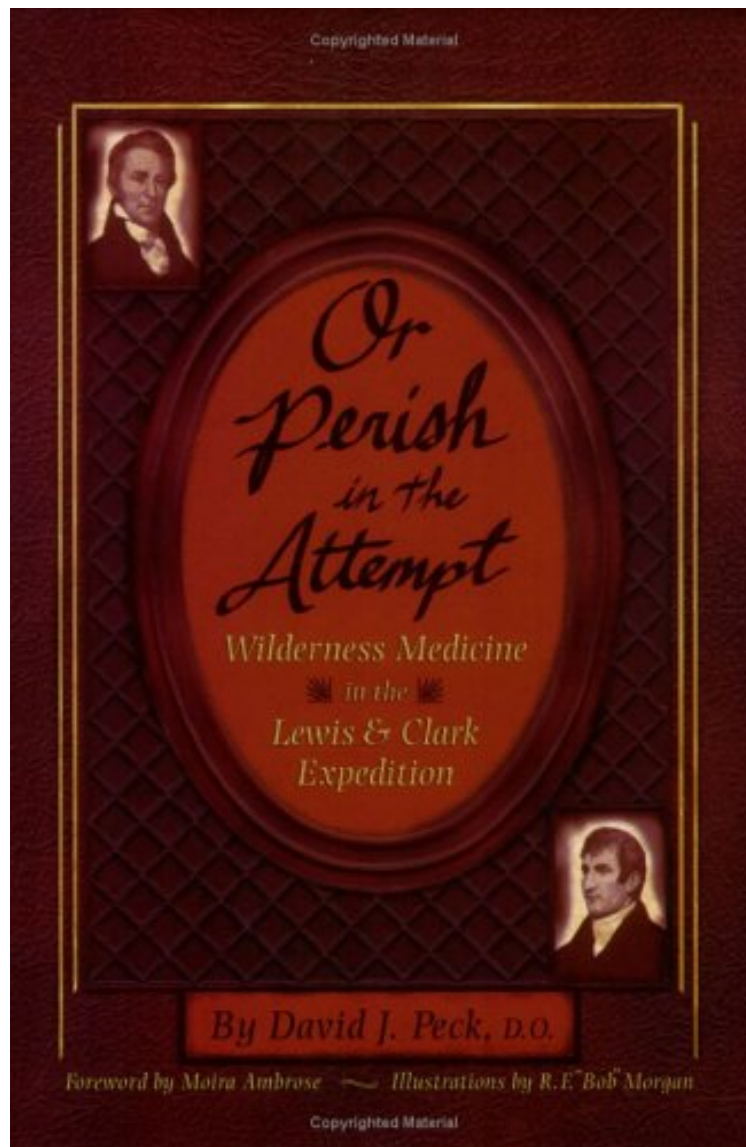


(Read now) Or Perish in the Attempt: Wilderness Medicine in the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Lewis Clark Expedition)

Or Perish in the Attempt: Wilderness Medicine in the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Lewis Clark Expedition)

David J. Peck

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David J. Peck : Or Perish in the Attempt: Wilderness Medicine in the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Lewis Clark Expedition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Or Perish in the Attempt: Wilderness Medicine in the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Lewis Clark Expedition):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Lively Well Written Account of the Medical Practices of the Captains
By Daniel Hurley
Physician Peck writes a well-written lively account, in an almost conversational method wrought with humor, of the adventures of the Corps of Discovery and the medical obstacles they encountered along with the medical practices utilized by the good captains. Peck provides a background of medical practices that were practiced in that day as well as a brief summation of how medicine was practiced from the ages up through the early 1800s, that latter being in an appendix. As Peck states quite clearly, Lewis is armed with limited medical knowledge from a two-week crash-training course from the eminent physician at that time, Dr. Rush. As Peck points out, limited knowledge may have been the best since such familiar practices of bleed and purging the stomach were thought as primary cures at that time. Peck provides an excellent detailed history of the adventure while analyzing in friendly to the reader detail, the symptoms of the members and Native American injuries and illnesses that Lewis and Clark treated along their journey. Everything from stomach illnesses caused by under cooked game to bacteria and protozoa that may inhabit the water they drank from. What is truly amazing, with exposure to mosquitoes and possible yellow fever, frostbite, hypothermia, snake bites, back ailments, eye injuries and ghastly wounds including Lewis' shot in the buttocks by their near sighted fiddler, they all survive. They suffer only one casualty and that is in the early goings, Sergeant Floyd who appears to have died from an appendicitis that may have been connected to complications caused by parasites. With the use of opiates for pain, the Captains may have provided comfort while treating patients who fortunately survive treatments that may actually have made them worse. However, a lot of the Captains commonsense treatments were successful, particularly among the Indians where Captain Clark's reputation as a man of great medicine helped the corps survive as they received rations that helped them exist while on their return journey. Peck's humor is evident as he describes an illness that pursues the corps along their journey as an unwelcomed guest and while using the term of that period for the illness, it takes one a few paragraphs to catch on. In addition, young Shannon seems to be always getting lost or losing something and Peck notes that he may have been a good candidate for riddlin. Peck also offers a chapter that discusses what became of the members after their return with an excellent analysis of the arguments surrounding Lewis' death. Many argue that it was syphilis related or depression, Peck offers the latter noting that physicians that treat themselves make gross errors. Peck also includes an anatomy diagram of Lewis' possible wounds and a glossary of 1800 medical terms and treatments. I would have liked a little more detail on Lewis' state of mind as he performed at high levels but during periods of stress seemed to possess a mercurial temperament that could explode at times. As Peck notes, one Indian that was teasing the corps about their dog preference eating habits picked the wrong guy to throw a puppy at almost resulting in his death. All the explanation of medical ailments and treatments are compared to today's standards in layman's terms. After reading this book, I will always order my meat well done and even more fervently wash my hands after handling anything.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic Read!
By Johnny Felty
OR PERISH IN THE ATTEMPT, authored by Dr. David J. Peck
In 1803 American President Thomas Jefferson successfully brokered a deal with Napoleon Bonaparte of France to acquire Frances entire American land holdings, consisting of approximately 827,000 square miles, for \$15,000,000 or \$18.14 per square mile. President Jefferson realized that it was imperative that this acquisition, the Louisiana Purchase, be explored, mapped and evaluated to determine the value of its resources, and to find a direct and practical route to the Pacific Ocean for commerce purposes. The President also felt it was necessary to assert sovereignty over the newly acquired territory, establish favorable relations and trade with indigenous people, and study the flora, fauna and geology of the area. Jefferson subsequently commissioned the Corps of Discovery Expedition, consisting of a group of U.S. Army volunteers led by Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to fulfill his objectives. Most students of American history are familiar with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but in his book, OR PERISH IN THE ATTEMPT, Dr. David Peck makes this historic event come alive! This book is a fascinating, enjoyable and edifying read. Pecks treatise of the Lewis and Clark, Corps of Discovery Expedition is an exciting, captivating, and intriguing saga of suspense, adventure and sacrifice that tested the limits of human ingenuity and endurance. Dr. Peck has a skillful writing style, blended with extensive knowledge of medical procedures used in the 1800s as well as those of today. This, in addition to a thorough knowledge of the history of the Expedition, enables the author to vicariously take the reader on an intrepid journey of adventure through a vast, wild and uncharted wilderness territory. In reality, it took the Corp of Discovery Expedition 28 months to complete this venture. I can without reservation highly recommend this unique book! It is a must read for those who enjoy adventure and the monumental events that have shaped American history.
Johnny Felty--Tempe, AZ
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good read
By James
Good read. Unfortunately it appears that most books about their journey are editorialized. In this case, if interested in wilderness or historical medicine, it was done well.

An urgent-care physician with a passion for the Lewis and Clark Expedition describes its medical aspects in this popular book. The two captains had to act as doctors for their own men, Sacagawea, and baby Pomp, and also treated many Indian nations met along the way. But they used the primitive medicines and theories of 1803, which often called for doing just what shouldn't be done, or what had no effect. Dr. Peck describes the trip from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean and back, emphasizing the illnesses and accidents, and how the captains dealt with frostbite, severe cuts,

appendicitis, venereal disease, pelvic inflammatory disease, mental illness, parasites, skin infections, snowblindness, gunshot wound, dislocated joints, muscle spasm, and more. Anecdotes from his own practice enrich the information Peck gathered from current medical publications. He also presents medical and anecdotal evidence supporting the theory that Meriwether Lewis died from suicide rather than murder.

In *Or Perish in the Attempt* Dr. Peck, an avowed devotee of Lewis and Clark, takes a new look at the myriad dangers faced by the explorers on a daily basis on their trek into the Western wilderness. What he finds is altogether revealing, instructive, and entertaining. One of the most rewarding reads of the Bicentennial! ---Dave Walter, research historian, Montana Historical Society
Or Perish in the Attempt is a distinctly unique literary approach to the account of the Expedition of Lewis and Clark. Dr. Peck has created a vivid, amusing, and informative narrative spiked with sardonic wit that underscores his enthusiasm for the Corps of Discovery. Medical practice in the wilderness is always challenging and sometimes terrifying! You will become privy to an insider's perspective of bold men attempting to apply their primitive healing arts in the inhospitable and challenging wilderness of early America. ---Desmond Kidd, M.D., former medical director, Yosemite National Park
Dr. David Peck's *Or Perish in the Attempt* ingeniously combines the remarkable adventures of Lewis and Clark with the problems of health faced by their expedition. 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 on not only Lewis and Clark and the men they led along an 8,000-mile wilderness path, but the practice of medicine in the world they lived in. -- Howard Berk, distinguished writer in residence, and director of the Creative Development Unit at the University of Georgia
About the Author
Dr. David J. Peck, retired physician, was born in Santa Barbara, California. His book, *Or Perish in The Attempt; Wilderness Medicine in the Lewis and Clark Expedition* has gained widespread recognition as a hallmark piece of Lewis and Clark Literature. He participated in the 11 part series, 'Unfinished Journey-The Lewis and Clark Expedition', narrated by Peter Coyote and produced by Oregon PBS for PRI. He is a nationally recognized speaker about Lewis Clark, having presented the annual Barlow Lecture, for the George Dock Society of the HIstory of Medicine in 2005. JAMA