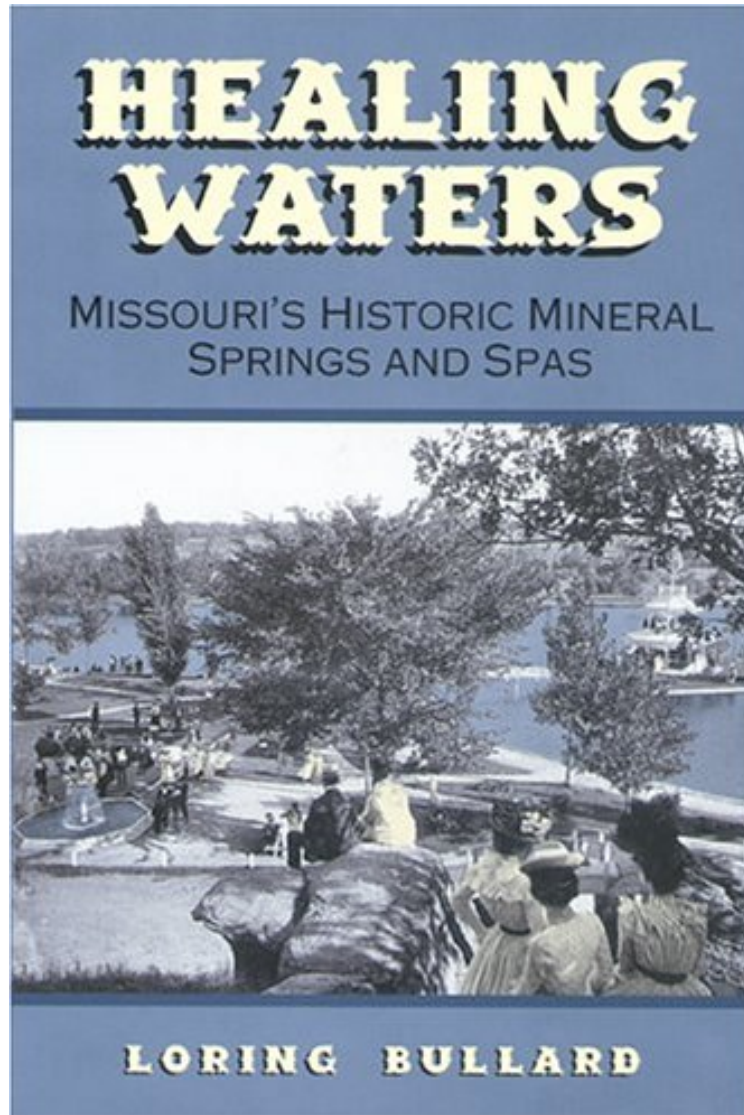


(Free pdf) Healing Waters: Missouri's Historic Mineral Springs and Spas

Healing Waters: Missouri's Historic Mineral Springs and Spas

Loring Bullard

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Spas is a straight forward history of the use and development of mineral springs in Missouri from 1800 to the 1930s. From the earliest spa traditions in America and Missouri's frontier spas to the businesses that flourished bottling mineral waters, the nature of mineralized groundwater resources, the repercussions of establishing saltworks at the state's saline springs, and more, *Healing Waters* offers a thoroughly researched, in-depth historical tour. *Healing Waters* concludes with a survey of why mineral springs fell into disuse, with a particular eye on how discoveries in microbiology and biochemistry led to a general repudiation of mineral water health benefits in favor of drug-related treatments. An excellent sourcebook, as approachable to the lay reader as to the historian.

Missouri's mineral springs and resorts played a vital role in the social and economic development of the state. In *Healing Waters*, Loring Bullard delves into the long history of these springs and spas, concentrating particularly on the use and development of the mineral springs from 1800 to about the 1930s. During this period, there were at least eighty sites in the state that could be described as resorts. Because so many people were drawn to the springs by their faith in the healing virtues of the springwater, towns were frequently founded at the mineral springs. These places fought hard to capture the attention of Missourians who were seeking better health, relaxation, or good times in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Bullard first examines the development of mineral water resorts in Europe from ancient times, early spa traditions in America, and Missouri's frontier spas. He then discusses the establishment of saltworks at the state's saline springs and the importance of the early salt trade; the brisk business that grew around the bottling of mineral waters; the use and development of mineralized groundwater resources; the geologic and biologic factors that create Missouri's mineral waters; and public and professional belief in the curative values of mineral waters. *Healing Waters* also traces the demise of Missouri's mineral water resorts and towns. Well into the twentieth century, when modern medicine had seemingly taken hold, many physicians and scientists continued to proclaim the medicinal virtues of mineral waters. However, by the second quarter of the twentieth century, medical science and popular opinion had discounted the immediate medical usefulness of mineral waters. As advances were made in microbiology and biochemistry, and with the inherent promise of drug cures, orthodox medicine began to turn a cold shoulder on mineral water treatments. Spa treatments, with their long regimens, also did not fit well with the increasingly fast-paced lifestyles of the public. By visiting the sites, gathering local historical accounts, interviewing local citizens, and photographing remaining artifacts, Bullard has done a masterful job in providing the answers to why these vibrant social centers came to be and why they faded.

A delightful read and an educational experience. The author sheds a great deal of light on the role that springs have played in the peopling, settlement, and development of Missouri."--H. Dwight Weaver