substantial endowment, without declaring his hand for Baltimore until the end, previously adopting a detached attitude regarding the site.

In 1916, Welch and William Howell (Professor of Physiology in the Medical School) started planning the new School, determining not to limit it to pathological investigation but to give equal emphasis to the promotion of health through nutrition, sanitation, better planning and administration. The first decade saw the planning and organization of departments, almost all focused on laboratory research. The School building was opened in 1926, with an address by Sir Andrew Balfour (Director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) declaring, rather optimistically, that "the pursuit of wealth and the pursuit of pleasure are but evanescent compared with the pursuit of hygiene as a world force". Financial crisis and re-evaluation characterized the early 1930s, and emphasis changed towards more applied subjects such as mental hygiene, child health, venereal disease, and community-based studies in public health administration. The early students were attracted mainly by scientific research and aimed at careers in research or teaching, rather than in public health practice where positions of authority were normally reserved for physicians. In 1927, the Rockefeller Foundation expressed concern at the failure to attract recent medical graduates. However, in 1935, the Social Security Act expanded the Public Health Service and provided federal grants for training; and, with the depression, young physicians were often unable to establish themselves in private practice because the under- and unemployed were unable to pay for medical care. Thus, in 1938, the Dean (Lowell Reed) said: "Plenty of [medical] recruits are now coming from the Social Security program, the quality has come up abruptly in the last 5 years".

We can look forward with pleasure to the promised second volume of this readable history, covering the post-war period.

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J. WORTH ESTES and DAVID M. GOODMAN, *The changing humors of Portsmouth. The medical biography of an American town, 1623-1983*, Boston, Mass., Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, 1986, 8vo, pp. xv, 363, illus., $19.95.

Having studied the history of American medicine for the past forty-five years, I can report that this "medical biography of Portsmouth" is a mini-history of American medicine. The first chapter details the careers and practices of the town's physicians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The second presents brief biographical sketches of the lives of Portsmouth's nineteenth-century practitioners. In the process, the authors describe the daily lives of physicians, including their medical practice and the number of patients attended, their political and social activities, their role in society, and their reaction to the growth of proprietary drugs and the emergence of irregular medical sects.

A third chapter traces the history of the Portsmouth Medical Association from its founding in 1879 to 1976. The main preoccupation of the members appears to have been with their economic position. Orthodox physicians faced keen competition from pharmacists, homoeopaths, eclectics, and other irregulars. In addition, the rapid expansion of medical schools in the late-nineteenth century, many of which were simply diploma-mills, meant that the ratio of physicians to population was rapidly increasing, further increasing competition for patients. Consequently, as had been the case with early nineteenth-century medical societies in the United States, the Association's first major efforts were directed towards instituting fee bills and attempting to drive out the irregulars. In the twentieth century, it concentrated on preserving the fee system by fighting the contract practice, medical insurance, and other forms of "socialism".

Chapter 4 briefly surveys Portsmouth's efforts to promote community health. The early centuries saw the town attempting to deal with sanitary matters, the periodic epidemic diseases, and providing care for war veterans. As with most other American towns until well into the twentieth century, a large share of community health work was privately financed. The last three

chapters chronicle the emergence of the town's hospital, and the long struggle by local nurses to improve their status and economic position.

The author's detailed studies of physician records and the town's vital statistics give us an insight into medical practice and the general health of the townspeople. They also depict the daily lives of physicians, the number of patients attended, their social activities, and their economic position. Interestingly, while the medical society fought against homoeopaths and other irregulars, the lines were never too sharply drawn. Individual homoeopaths or eclectics were often on friendly terms with the local orthodox practitioners, a fact that tended to blur distinctions. These studies demonstrate, too, that until the twentieth century, surgery in small towns and rural areas consisted largely of dealing with ulcers and abscesses, tooth problems, and fractures, abrasions, and other injuries.

The history of Portsmouth's hospital, showing how it evolved from a charitable institution under lay control in the nineteenth century to becoming part of a proprietary for-profit corporation in 1983, reflects general developments in American hospital history. A series of excellent charts show the steady rise in hospital costs. The resultant budgetary problems forced the hospital to turn first to private patients, later to the Blue Cross and the federal government, and finally to private management.

The combination of topical and chronological organization presents minor problems, and some periods appear to have been treated lightly. Nonetheless, Estes and Goodman have made a fine contribution to American medical history.

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ROBERT H. SHIKES, *Rocky Mountain medicine: doctors, drugs, and disease in early Colorado*, Boulder, Colorado, Johnson Books, 1987, 4to, pp. x, 261, illus., $34.95.

This volume provides an overview of the health-related problems and medical experience on the Western frontier of the United States, specifically in the geographic area which became the state of Colorado. The author begins his coverage in the early-nineteenth century with early explorations and the fur trade, and concludes his narration in the 1920s. The twenty-two chapters encompass such varied topics as medical problems and practice among the native American population, the frontier army, the Colorado gold rush, the mining communities, and the development of railroad medicine. Colorado's role in the evolution of the field of climatology and the importance of tuberculosis in the economic and medical history of the State are also discussed. The ethical, economic, and social aspects of medical practice and the evolution of organized medicine and medical education, as well as alternative modes of medical practice, are included in the overview.

Because of the all-encompassing nature of this text, none of the topics is covered in great depth; however, the author, who is a professor and vice-chairman of the Department of Pathology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, has made good use of the primary sources to develop an authoritative narration which certainly hits the high points (and the low points!) of this regional medical history and places it within the context of the transitions and evolution of medicine in the United States during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The text is profusely illustrated and is rich in relevant quotations, which clearly give the flavour of the times. As an example, when the editor of the *Denver Medical Times* in 1884 received an enquiry from a Denver physician who specialized in the treatment of venereal disease requesting guidance in the type and content of a sign advertising his speciality, he responded as follows: "Procure from Paris a large wax model, flesh colored, representing the organ of choice, about five or six feet long, and protrude this from his [office] window. Have painted on either side of this—'Diseases of . . .' and on a flag floated from the end of this modest little sign, have printed—'A Speciality'."

Dr Shikes has provided a substantial amount of information in a style both understandable to the layman and informative to the physician and historian of medicine. He has used an