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Crazy Water: The Story of Mineral Wells and Other Texas Health Resorts (Chisholm Trail Series)

Gene Fowler

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In 1863 Sam Houston, physically and emotionally scarred by a lifetime of battles, tried the soothing mineral water baths at Sour Lake, TX. Almost a century later, Dallas billionaire H.L. Hunt heard of miraculous cures at Indian Hot Springs, on the Mexican border, and bought the fading resort. His improvements and the famed springs which could restore all kinds of powers attracted such celebrities as boxing champ Gene Tunney and Texas congressman Olin Teague.

“Crazy Water: The Story of Mineral Wells and Other Texas Health Resorts” documents the mineral water boom, taking readers from one end of the state to the other, listening to testimonials, reading amazing descriptions, marveling at the gullibility of the afflicted and the inventiveness of the healers who attracted the rich and the poor.

Mineral Wells, Marlin, Glen Rose, Sour Lake, Indian Hot Springs, Wizard Wells —there were dozens of places all over the state where heavily mineralized water lay beneath the soil. Before the discovery of antibiotics —and sometimes afterward— drinking and bathing in mineral waters were important parts of health care for many Texans. They even used mineralized mud salves and sat in radio-active dirt. Taking the waters was a fashionable as it was restorative, and health resorts turned into vacation playlands.

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