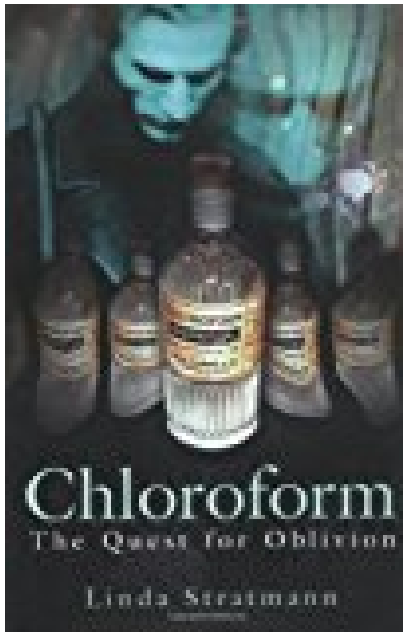


Chloroform The Quest for Oblivion



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Linda Stratmann
- Pages : 256 Pages
- Publisher : The History Press
- Language : English
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BOOK SYNOPSIS

Right up until the 19th century, physicians and philosophers regarded sleep as a state of near-oblivion in which there was no mental activity, a kind of halfway stage between wakefulness and death. For the Victorians, therefore, when anaesthesia was first practised, it was commonly seen as traumatic—for doctors were being asked to induce a condition looked upon as partial death. Viewed with suspicion, many feared that they would never wake again, or that they would lose their faculties on a permanent basis, even become insane. Yet, especially after Queen Victoria allowed its administration to her during childbirth, its use to block out pain became widespread. This engaging and entertaining book traces the social, medical and criminal history of chloroform, from early medical practices to create oblivion through the discovery of chloroform and its discovery, its use and misuse in the 19th century, to the present. Today chloroform is no longer used as an anaesthetic, but has a multitude of uses in industry and medical research, including a role in DNA profiling. A by-product of the chlorination of water, we inhale infinitesimal amounts of chloroform every time we have a shower.

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