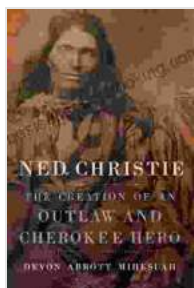


The Creation of an Outlaw and Cherokee Hero: The Story of Jesse James and his Native American Heritage

Jesse James, the notorious outlaw of the Wild West, has captivated the American imagination for generations. His daring exploits and tragic end have been immortalized in countless books, movies, and legends. However, what many people don't know is that Jesse James had a Cherokee heritage, a fact that played a significant role in shaping his life and legacy.



Ned Christie: The Creation of an Outlaw and Cherokee Hero by Devon A. Mihesuah

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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File size : 9684 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 279 pages



In this article, we will explore the fascinating and largely unknown story of Jesse James's Cherokee heritage. We will examine the historical context, cultural influences, and the impact of his Cherokee ancestry on his actions and motivations. By uncovering the truth behind the myth, we can gain a deeper understanding of this enigmatic figure and his place in American history.

Jesse James's Cherokee Heritage

Jesse Woodson James was born in 1847 in Clay County, Missouri. His father, Robert James, was a Baptist minister and farmer of Scottish descent. His mother, Zerelda Cole, was of Welsh and Cherokee ancestry. Although Jesse's Cherokee heritage was not widely known during his lifetime, it is well documented in historical records.

Jesse's great-grandmother, Elizabeth "Betsy" Brown, was a full-blooded Cherokee woman. She married William Cole, a white trader, and together they had several children, including Zerelda. Zerelda inherited her mother's Cherokee features and cultural traditions, which she passed on to her son, Jesse.

The Impact of Cherokee Culture on Jesse James

Growing up in a Cherokee household, Jesse James was exposed to the language, customs, and beliefs of his Native American ancestors. Cherokee culture placed a high value on family, loyalty, and courage, all of which would become defining characteristics of Jesse James's personality.

Cherokee society was also matriarchal, with women holding positions of power and influence. This may have influenced Jesse's relationship with his mother, Zerelda, who was a strong and independent woman.

In addition, the Cherokee people had a long history of resistance to oppression. They had fought against the United States government in the Cherokee War of 1838-1839, and many Cherokees were forced to relocate to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). This legacy of resistance may have contributed to Jesse James's own rebellious nature.

The Outcast and the Hero

Jesse James's Cherokee heritage had a profound impact on his life and legend. It made him an outcast in some circles, but it also gave him a sense of identity and belonging. He embraced his Cherokee heritage and used it to justify his actions, claiming that he was fighting for the rights of his people.

As Jesse James's notoriety grew, he became a symbol for both white and Native American communities. White people saw him as a dangerous outlaw, while Native Americans saw him as a hero who was fighting against the oppression of their people.

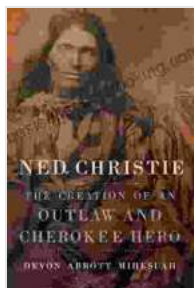
The Myth and the Man

The story of Jesse James is a complex and fascinating one. He was a ruthless outlaw who killed innocent people, but he was also a product of his time and circumstances. His Cherokee heritage played a significant role in shaping his identity and motivations, and it is an important part of his legacy.

In the years since his death, Jesse James has become an American icon. He has been the subject of countless books, movies, and television shows. However, the true story of Jesse James is often overshadowed by the myth. By uncovering the truth behind the legend, we can gain a deeper understanding of this enigmatic figure and his place in American history.

Jesse James was a complex and contradictory figure who left a lasting legacy on American history. His Cherokee heritage was a significant part of his identity and motivations, and it played a role in shaping both his life and his legend. By understanding the historical context, cultural influences, and

the impact of his Cherokee ancestry, we can gain a deeper appreciation for this enigmatic figure and his place in American history.

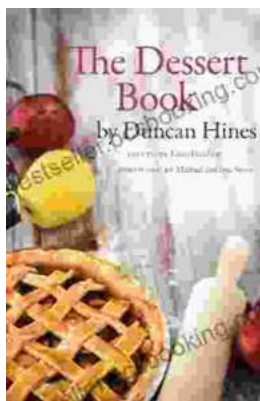


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