



A Tour on the Prairies: An Account of Thirty Days in Deep Indian Country

Washington Irving

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In 1832, Washington Irving, recently returned from seventeen years' residence abroad and eager to explore his own country, embarked on an expedition to the country west of Arkansas set aside for the Indians. *A Tour on the Prairies* is his absorbing account of that journey, which extended from Fort Gibson to the Cross Timbers in what is now Oklahoma. First published in 1835, it has remained a perennial favorite, retaining its original freshness, vigor, and vividness to this day.

A Tour on the Prairies: An Account of Thirty Days in Deep Indian Country Details

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From Reader Review A Tour on the Prairies: An Account of Thirty Days in Deep Indian Country for online ebook

Matt says

The Adventure of the German Student... a ghost story to lose your head over.

Sydney Young says

This is excellent. Maybe I am interested in it because it is the first written exploration of the Oklahoma area that is so close to where I live. But I also love it because the language is not so different than what we use today, its not so tongue in cheek as Mark Twain's travelogues, and it explores the beauty of the areas with the creatures and inhabitants that occupied it at the time. I do think that this book set the tone for most of our Western cliches. Interesting to learn that they aren't just Hollywood melodrama, but based in fact.

Kathryn says

only the second story, which i found intriguing and entertaining. Irving doesn't leave much room for logic...

Scott Gilbert says

White people on the loose in Arkansas and Oklahoma, killing everything they see. MAGA! And Irving was there.

Rich Boyett says

Simply put, I loved this book.

Irene says

This month-long diary by Washington Irving of his time with a recreational hunting party is filled with derogative comments about those of other races, wanton slaughter of big game and lovely descriptions of the landscape. The attitudes of these early Americans were appalling. Honestly, I was hoping that the buffalo would trample them, the Pawnee that they feared would slaughter them or the circling wolves would devour them. I only read this to fulfill a GR challenge.

Ross says

Travelogue by early American writer Washington Irving, who accompanied a month-long hunting expedition across the Arkansas river into the middle plains and published this chronicle for his contemporary readers.

Ignacio Senao f says

Durante un mes nuestro creador de Sleppy hollow hizo una incursión de un mes por los bosques americanos. Este diario no tiene nada emocionante tal como los valoramos: no acción, no intriga, no sospechas, etcétera. Encontraremos múltiples descripciones que disfrutaran los amantes de “El señor de los anillos”. Me ha gustado bastante por su simpleza.

David says

Read this as part of group discussion of the history of Oklahoma. More titles to be read over the next 4 months.

Some of the "tour" takes place near where I live so the descriptions of the frontier lands was very interesting. The tone of Mr Irving's writing does indicate the adventuring nature of the trip. It took some time to get used early 19th century style and vocabulary but I was soon carried away with the troop.

Oklee says

I read this as part of a discussion group and am so glad this book was selected. I am usually not very excited about non-fiction but this book was absolutely fascinating!! The descriptions of the landscape and the experience was very well done. I felt like I was actually there with the group as a time-traveler. The content was very thought provoking. I learned a lot and got a feel for this area that I live in as it was almost 200 years ago. I currently reside south of the route taken by the group but am familiar with several of the places that were described.

Cindy says

I knew Irving's tales about old New England -- Rip Van Winkle and so forth -- but his travel writing has been a revelation. His journalist's eye and lyrical pen apply here to an 1832 trip into the Pawnee hunting grounds that later became Oklahoma. What fine writing and keen observation. He opens with an aw-shucks, nothing-much-happens apology, but as the back cover promises, it is indeed a "fabulously entertaining and groundbreaking work."

Alicia says

Enjoyable - Irving's always funny writing with an up-close look at the prairies of Oklahoma and Kansas in 1832. The construct of the tour is odd from a modern perspective, a bit exploitative, but he certainly seemed to enjoy a month of gallivanting and hunting with soldiers that don't seem to have much better to do.

Fabian says

Yet another travel narrative of the frontier. While I really do prefer Ruxton's "Life in the Far West" (Hey! There are, like, tons of cannibals!) this is a more literary read. He, of Ichabod and Rip Van Winkle fame, actually took a trip to the prairies of present-day Oklahoma, following a crew composed of a Commissioner, a Captain, a ruffian Creole, and a bunch of other crazy, insatiable rascals. They eat so much meat out in the wild they start turning mad, aimless. Irving is wonderful at painting the picturesque, landscapes, bee-trees, and sometimes delves into the supernatural (he speaks of ghosts and the superstitions of the Pawnees, the bleached skulls of deer marking uncertain roads...) and quickly transports the reader from his fat ass on the couch to his fat ass on a horse and saddle.

That being said, I should also mention that although the paranoia of Indian attack is prevalent among the men, not a single (and the Introductory Essay forewarns us of this) Indian is seen throughout the entire tour. Prairie dogs, buffalo, deer, bear... they are all here. Absent is the important mythical figure that has so decidedly marked other interesting narratives of the American prairie.

Sherrill Watson says

I had not read anything by Washington Irving before this. My bad.

"Our march this day was animating and delightful. We were in a region of adventure; breaking our way through a country hitherto untrodden by white men, excepting perchance by some solitary trapper. The weather was in its perfection--temperate, genial, and enlivening; a deep blue sky, with a few light feather clouds; an atmosphere of perfect transparency; an air pure and bland; and a glorious country spreading out far and wide in the golden sunshine of an autumnal day; but all silent, lifeless,--without a human habitation, and apparently without a human inhabitant. It was as if a ban hung over this fair but fated region. The very Indians dared not abide here, but made it a mere scene of perilous enterprise, to hunt for a few days, and then away."

There is a reason why Washington Irving is considered one of the best American writers.

Janis says

I was thrilled by Irving's descriptive account of a journey he took on the western plains in 1832. He made it all come to life again – night skies, earth-rattling thunderstorms, bee-trees, bears and elk and deer and buffalo. And I was surprised and delighted by his wit and insight, having only known Irving from my childhood experience of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. On the last page, after his return, he writes of how he misses the glorious companionship of the stars. Now that I've closed the book, I'm missing them...and Irving, too.

