

Walking the Trail, One Man's Journey Along the Cherokee Trail of Tears

Jerry Ellis



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The Cherokee author walks in reverse the 900 mile route of the Cherokee Trail of Tears to honor his ancestors and tell the world about their tragedy: In 1838, 7,000 US soldiers imprisoned 16,000 Indians in the Southeast and marched them to Indian Territory, present day Oklahoma, in the heart of winter. Many of the Cherokee were barefooted and 4,000 died along the Trail. They were buried in shallow unmarked graves. The author slept in fields, woods and kind strangers' homes to record their own thoughts and feelings about modern America and what happened to the Cherokee. The trek, one that proved deeply spiritual for the author, was life-altering. The book is interwoven with nuggets of crucial Cherokee history and myths. When the book was first published by Delacorte Press in 1991, the publisher nominated it for a Pulitzer Prize. The book has been in print ever since and the author has lectured about the book and the Trail of Tears in Europe, Asia, Africa and throughout the USA. In 2011, the book went on display in the National Teachers Hall of Fame.

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