



Walking the Trail: One Man's Journey along the Cherokee Trail of Tears

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One fall morning Jerry Ellis donned a backpack and began a long, lonely walk: retracing the Cherokee Trail of Tears, the nine hundred miles his ancestors had walked in 1838. The trail was the agonizing path of exile the Cherokees had been forced to take when they were torn from their southeastern homeland and relocated to Indian Territory. Following in their footsteps, Ellis traveled through small southern towns, along winding roads, and amid quiet forests, encountering a memorable array of people who live along the trail today. Along the way he also came to glimpse the pain his ancestors endured and to learn about the true beauty of modern rural life and the worth of a man's character.

Walking the Trail: One Man's Journey along the Cherokee Trail of Tears Details

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Author : Jerry Ellis

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From Reader Review Walking the Trail: One Man's Journey along the Cherokee Trail of Tears for online ebook

marcus miller says

Oddly enjoyable account of his walk along the Cherokee Trail of Tears, starting in Oklahoma and returning to his home near the center of the Cherokee nation in northeastern Alabama before their forced removal.

Laura says

I wanted this book to be better than it was, though I have a difficult time explaining just what is was I didn't like about it. I thought the subject fascinating and really wanted to get a lot out of reading it. I definitely wasn't impressed by the author's writing style which seemed very simplistic and, at times, almost boring. And while I have no doubt that the author's walk was a very spiritual experience, his descriptions of that aspect of it never struck the chord in me I was expecting. Maybe I wanted him to be more humble, I don't know. I'm going to ponder this for a while and see if I can pinpoint why I didn't like this as much as I wanted

Sooziemac McLaughlin says

Great book! What an amazing thing to even THINK about! Much less get up and DO!

Mila says

A very accessible account of a journey backwards along the Trail of Tears. His writing style is lovely, and the people he meets along the way are the stars of the stories. It's a beautiful commentary on US society in the south.

Frances says

I thought this would be interesting. Man walks the Trail of Tears in reverse. I thought it would be a somewhat historical Indian informative book. Not an over abundance of Indian facts. It was a lot about how Jerry was starved for a woman to slake his sexual needs upon. He hit on every available woman from Oklahoma to Alabama. One whom had suffered a terrible head injury and still had headaches. It was not about connecting with someone. It took away from the spiritual part of his journey. Twenty pages from the end he was still in Nashville. All of a sudden he was in Alabama at his mama house. I could not wait to finish this and only got through it by adhering to my two chapters-a-day rule.

Scott says

This book gives a social commentary on the current times as well as in the time when the Trail of Tears occurred. It is also a travel narrative from a Cherokee's perspective, which is very interesting.

Jenny says

"I had a hard time deciding how to rate this book. Mainly because I would not recommend it for everyone but if you are a very spiritual soul and identify with the same need to connect with your Cherokee or Native American roots as the author did then I would more highly recommend it, thus the reason I read it and for myself would have given it a higher rating. However, from a literature standpoint it is not all that well written. I would have also liked to have had more details from the history of the Cherokee along the trail itself.

Susan says

I was moved by the author's journey on the Trail of Tears. As a Chattanooga native I was disappointed that he spent more time talking about the beginning of his journey in Oklahoma. By the time he reached TN he was so happy to be almost home he just glossed over this part of the trip. The tales of the people he met along the way will make you laugh and some stories will make you cry.

Angelina says

I am a hunter seeking new depths of the soul along a Trail marked with telephone poles.

This book is about the spiritual experience of walking the Trail, and not an actual historical account. He sprinkles historical facts on the Cherokees here and there, as it relates to his journey; however, it's not a book about the Trail of Tears. It was well-written (and very personal), and I appreciated his vulnerability, as well as his love for humanity and nature. At times, I felt he was a bit desperate for love, but I think he's a very passionate, spiritual person, and he chose to share it all. I have a little Cherokee heritage (my great grandmother was full Cherokee), so many of his beliefs - most notably, the significance of birds and the spirits in all of Nature - were familiar to me. His encounters with strangers along the way are heart warming, and attest to the overall good in people - a truth that is muddled by the sensationalism of television and entertainment. His walk took place before the onslaught of the internet and social media, but he seemed to know what was coming:

I become sad because we are not looking at each other. Our eyes have become prisoners of the screen, the Great Eye. It, like the TV screen, has replaced the fire in the cave. Men are no longer gathering in the cold night to stay warm and release their spirits through stories. We no longer look into each other's souls. Maybe we're afraid of what we might see.

The book wasn't what I expected; however, it was a quick, worthwhile read, and it left me feeling inspired to

honor my Cherokee ancestors.

Marsha says

OK. I was interested in the topic, having made a journey (by plane and rental car!) to Talequah myself, to explore my Cherokee heritage. And I often love books about long walks...but this guy was a bit annoying, and I didn't love this book.

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

My family purchased this edition for me at the Red Clay State Park here in TN when they were out just looking at Native stuff and the Trails etc. I already had this book, but didn't want to tell them that as I cherish anything my family gives to me. I was lucky enough to get an autographed copy from the author back in 1994 when he was here in Chattanooga at the Books-A-Million we used to have here.

The thing I regret the most is I wish I could have read this book before meeting the author. I would have loved to have talked to him about his journey on the Trail of Tears and the people he met. I found this memoir to be touching and very spiritual. Many years ago I thought about trying to walk the Trail of Tears but knew I would not have had the strength for it. Now, as I'm only 42 with mental disabilities that keep me inside the house I am left wondering all of the things I should have done if I would have known this to happen to me. The outdoors was my place, the place of peace and love for me. I want to tell anyone that has any kind of dream to not give up. If it's something simple like taking time off to walk something or whatever, just do it!!! You never know when you can't. I had a lot of dreams, some not so realistic but still, the ones that are, please people, go out like this man and do them. Even if it's just a little marathon. Something close to your heart you may never get to do again.

I would love to thank the author for walking the trail and taking pieces of people back to bury in honor of all of those that lost their lives. This book I recommend to anyone. It will touch you, make you cry, and at times make you laugh.

Katie says

You can't help but feel you have traveled each and every blister inducing step with Mr. Ellis as he brings you along with him on this soul bearing adventure. You will feel as though you are by his side as he meets the people (and animals!) that are peppered throughout his journey and their stories will touch your heart and stay with your mind. This book is filled with history, passion for that history and is absolutely brimming with human spirit at it's finest. Thank you, Jerry Ellis, for taking that walk, for realizing your dream, and for bringing it to us so eloquently and passionately

April says

Honest and thought provoking

I enjoyed this account of Jerry Ellis walking the Trail of Tears. His story is as real as the blisters on his feet, as poignant as the stories of the lonely souls on the way, as sensual as a woman and as soulful as the spirits of the Cherokee children who joined him on his way back to the Cherokee Nation. I appreciate where he was in life and want to learn more about these ancestors of ours.

Marc Broner says

this a fantastic book,I read in in 2 days .once you start reading you can't stop.my husband also read it.I've read it more than once.never tired of reading it.the story is well told and it does at times make you cry,typical can feel his resolve to feel what our elders and the Cherokee people must have gone through,the cold,the pain of watching loved ones die for no good reason.and being treated less than the human beings that they were. I to wish I could make the same journey,if only to say a prayer for their spirits to be at some peace if that is even possible .

Boreal Elizabeth says

this was a quick light read

there were a couple of good and or interesting passages but it was too personal, not great writing and the good passages weren't often enough or long enough

ok for a bit of history

it was about ellis' walk from oklahoma to georgia (the trail of tears in reverse) to honor the cherokee nation who were forced by the u.s. gov't to relocate from their ancestral home in the southeastern mountains of georgia, alabama, tenn and north carolina in 1838

4 thousand died on the trail

great concept but the book is sort of...uh..not great...not terrible...but almost not good to sort of bad
too personal? not such great writing, not such great insight
