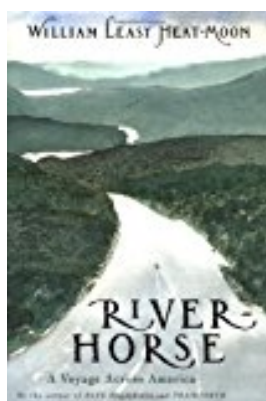


[PDF] River-Horse: A Voyage Across America

William Least Heat-Moon - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: River-Horse: A Voyage Across
Author: William Least Heat-Moon
Released: 1999-10-19
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Description:

Since hitting the American roads in *Blue Highways* nearly 20 years ago, William Least Heat-Moon has been following another calling--to traverse America by its rivers. "I wanted to see those secret parts hidden from road travelers," he writes. And from the waterways of his 5,000-mile voyage, Least Heat-Moon shares a sharp and stirring vision of America. Filling a small bottle with brine from the Atlantic Ocean, Least Heat-Moon and his wise companion, whom he calls "Pilotis," start up the Hudson River in a 22-foot C-Dory that Least Heat-Moon has named *Nikawa*--from the Osage words *ni* for river and *kawa* for horse. The voyage--from New York harbor to the Pacific Ocean--packs surprises, wisdom, regrets, mishaps, candor, and conversations that readers who savored *Blue*

Highways and *PrairyErth* will delight in.

The impetus for *River Horse* is one of intrigue--less urgent than the departure in *Blue Highways*--and the narrative possesses a captivating pull as it courses westward through the strongest currents and pauses in the back eddies of contemporary American life. Least Heat-Moon is in his element. Written in short thematic chapters, *River Horse* plies canals, greets the Missouri's many moods, and challenges chaotic waves. Indeed, the turbulent and placid waters of America flow throughout this well-told story. When *Nikawa* finally reaches the Pacific Ocean, Least Heat-Moon has discovered a new America in the country he knows so well. He ponders the command that rivers hold on him and celebrates the national treasures that they are. Exceeding 500 pages, *River Horse* may be a long journey, but when traveling by rivers, America is a larger country. A triumphant book all the way to the salty Pacific. --Byron Ricks

From Publishers Weekly Writing under the name Heat-Moon (*Blue Highways*), William Trogdon once again sets out across America, this time propelled chiefly by a dual-outboard boat dubbed *Nikawa*, "River Horse" in Osage. In this hardy craft, he and a small crew attempt to travel more than 5000 miles by inland waterways from the Atlantic to the Pacific in a single season. Citing 19th-century travelogues and dredging odd bits of the rivers' past, Heat-Moon conveys the significance of passing "beneath a bridge that has looked down on the stovepipe hat of Abraham Lincoln, the mustache of Mark Twain, the sooty funnels of a hundred thousand steamboats." Though at first he is struck by how river travel is "so primordial, so unchanged in its path," he later notes that the only thing Lewis and Clark would recognize on a dammed and severely altered stretch of the Missouri River is the bedeviling prairie wind. But what remains constant for him is "the greatest theme in our history: the journey." It is an American theme, though by "westering" and persistently believing that the voyage is destined to succeed, Heat-Moon seems to be on dangerous waters for someone who is part Native American. But his romantic attachment to the nature of exploration doesn't occlude his indictments of pollution, overzealous river management and aboriginal displacement. The book, though largely engaging, is not without its slow spots, which Heat-Moon avers are true to the trip's nature: "the river is no blue highway because the river removes reverie." Heat-Moon has written a rich chronicle of a massive and meaningful undertaking. Unlike *Blue Highways*, however, the focus is not so much on people and places as on the trials of a journey that bypasses them in favor of reaching its destination. Illus. 250,000 first printing; \$250,000 ad/promo; 13-city author tour. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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