



Pat Garrett: The Story of a Western Lawman

Leon C. Metz

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In the history of the Southwest, Pat Garrett stood tall, both physically and in legend. He was more than just a famous western sheriff, more than the slayer of the legendary Billy the Kid. While on occasion his gun was for hire, and while he was sometimes known to protect special interests-particularly those of the cattle barons-more often than not Pat Garrett combined in his six-foot five-inch frame the good, honest, and honorable qualities that went to make up the lawman of the Old West.

Garrett is, of course, immortal for his successful efforts to end the career of the Kid, but, as the author amply demonstrates, Garrett's career by no means ended on that hot evening in July, 1881, in Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Within days Garrett had established a reputation as an implacable foe of western criminals, a reputation that was to follow (and sometimes haunt) him for the rest of his life. He was an important figure in the frontier politics of Texas and New Mexico, and he rubbed shoulders with the great and the near great of the region.

Through the story of Patrick Floyd Jarvis Garrett the panorama of the Southwest unfolds: its dreams, its courage, its explorations, its mistakes, its violence, its conquests, and ultimately its emergence as a settled society. No other character in southwestern history is more closely identified with the land and the people of America's last frontier.



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