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Alex Stewart: Portrait of a Pioneer

John Rice Irwin

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John Rice Irwin : Alex Stewart: Portrait of a Pioneer before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Alex Stewart: Portrait of a Pioneer:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A true un-spoken American hero By SS An absolute masterpiece! I loaned out my book a week ago and I just ordered another copy because I "must" read it again right away! I have mountain property just a few miles away from Newman's Ridge and had never heard of Alex before a friend recently told me about this book. It's great to read about the past - in places I'm very familiar with in rural N.E. Tennessee! The

other comments written here are dead-on - Alex was a true American who lived a life of extreme hardships, yet celebrated even the smallest accomplishments with true humility. He inspires me and is now one of my personal hero's - even though decades have passed since he died.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Common Sense in AbundanceBy ggmommaMr. Stewart's responses to Mr. Rice in this interview format reveal a man of great sympathy, a strong work ethic, and a head full of plain old common sense, a rarity in this world today because too many of us are too spoiled and too entitled to survive the hardships described in this book. Reminded me of my dad and his brothers, all skilled craftsmen in their own right.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must readBy CustomerThis fabulous gem is a wonderful addition to have insight of the past. A lot of valuable info.

Alex Stewart was a recipient of a National Heritage Fellowship Award in 1983 by the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington which recognized him as a living national treasure. Over a twenty year period of friendship the author developed a profound respect and great love for Alex Stewart, a truly remarkable Tennessee mountain character whose life epitomizes the pioneer development in America. The best of hundreds of hours of recorded conversations with Stewart are compiled into a moving portrait of this cooper, father of 13, farmer, logger, railroad man, and do-it-yourself interpreter of his rugged homeland. Because the ways Stewart tells his own stories are as important as the stories themselves, he is allowed to do most of the "talking" throughout the book. Through his own account of the people around him, Alex describes his rural life in the late 19th and 20th centuries through stories such as when he was bit by a rabid dog, when neighbor children begged for food, or how people gathered honey, made marbles, moonshine or furniture. Throughout his 94 years, Alex, who died in 1985, depended upon his own good sense to direct him and it led him through a rich and fascinating life. This book is a genuine labor of love.

About the AuthorJohn Irwin is an educator-historian and one of the area's leading authorities on the pioneer-frontier culture. He is the founder and director of the nationally-known Museum of Appalachia in Norris, Tennessee.