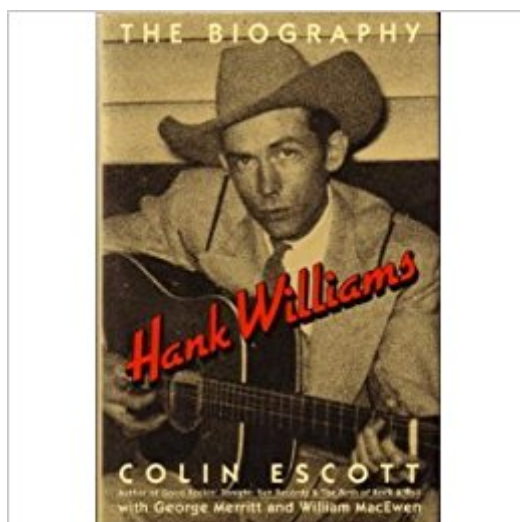


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Hank Williams: The Biography



Synopsis

A biography of Hank Williams, country and western singer of such hits as Hey Good Looking, I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry, and Jambalaya. He drank and drugged his way through two marriages and off the stage of the Grand Ole Opry. When he died aged 29, he was country music's biggest star.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Escott traces the triumphant and tragic career of the legendary country star, who died at 29 from a drug overdose. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

The man who gave us Good Rockin' Tonight (LJ 3/15/91) brings us the man who gave us country music. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I give the book 4 stars, very well done and appreciated for we need more information on the greatest songwriter that ever lived, I do have a few small gripes. It would help if Mr. Escott was a Hank Williams fan, or at least listened to his music some more than he did, for the poor guy only half knows what he is talking about. He says that "Audrey wrote a mawkish poem that scans about as well as she sang", on Hanks grave on the concrete. Well Mr. Colin Escott, writer extraordinaire, that dear Sir is not an Audrey poem, but one of my favorite Hank Williams songs named "Singing Waterfall". I did enjoy the book, but here is my problem if this guy does not even know simple little tid bit like this, just imagine what a other facts he could of gotten wrong. He had to have had some

Hank fans read his script before he printed it, am I nitpicking I don't think so, its like the one thing write on the guys grave, if this guy does not have the curiosity to find out what lies behind that poem, he ain't doing his job. But if you are like me, a true Hank Williams fan who can use anything that comes down the pike relating to Hank, its a good read.

After a recent trip to Nashville and listening to a lot of country music, I decided to download a book on Hank - one of my all time favorite artists. Checked the reviews and chose this one... and was very disappointed. The authors make it clear that the book has gone thru a couple of updates over the last few years, and it shows. While I enjoyed the information, I found it was presented in an almost unreadable and completely disjointed format. The authors skip around from year to year, town to town and back again - there is no linear progression that would make the information so much more enjoyable. I felt like I had to take notes to figure out where we were in the timeline. Maybe they can clean it all up on the next re-write!

I enjoyed getting the backstory of Hank Williams. Does anyone know where you can hear the entire radio shows he did for Johnnie Fair?

Hank left little documented about his personal self, outside of what he projected in his songs. Few to none can claim to actually "know" the man in his thoughts and emotions. It is clear to fans of Hank this is where they want to know the real story. I give Escott credit for digging for all the fine detailed facts he could find on Williams. That is what the book reads like, listing rare facts, but leaves a mental picture of Hank only as a simple alcoholic. It lacks the soul or emotion that drove Hank. Nothing was said about his performing magic he had with his audiences. Little is said about the sex appeal body movements that set the stage for the modern performers in the electronic age. Nothing about that revoluntary precise driving forerunning Nashville music sound. Also, not much about Hank being the original hell raiser that few of the following rock stars could keep up with. Little is wrote about his complexity, from rockabilly to gospel, and from honkytonk idolizing to Luke the Drifter moralizing. These stories are missing. Stories that give life to the man. Escott downplayed the impact of Williams had he lived. His death created an instant legend, but trying to predict the what if's is anyones guess. I believe Hank would have continued impacting the modern music age. Not in the role that we know him from 1949 to 53, but I don't believe he would have met the fate of others during the rock and roll era. He had far to much special talent. Especially songwriting with the ability to connect with what people wanted, and not afraid to experiment with new ideas. Escott

missed the fact Hank was a folk writer/singer and that they endure. I'll give Escott credit in digging into Hank's death, but a lot was left unsaid, and remains a mystery. From the day Hank died to this day, generations of his fans by past me down word of mouth, feel that Hank was driven to death by the establishment. The establishment he hated. He fought them in a dysfunctional and destructive way. It is the age old story of a poor boy with exceptional God given talent used by the greedy until there is nothing physically left, then left to die. What could have caused the biggest superstar of the time to travel hundreds of miles alone with just a teenage driver? One can see a mental picture of a dead man being driven to a series of concerts come hell or high water in the hopes of the high mighty dollar. No one cared take him to a hospital when it would have counted. Hank most-likely would not have wanted that anyways. That is the part of the story that should read like a greek tragedy, but doesn't. It is the least credit to Escott to miss the following; the real bond between Hank's fans- past, present and no doubt the future. Escott did not feel the man who pronounced invitation for invitation could survive. He missed the fact. Hank did survive and greatly. This down to earth- direct in your face- realness of Hank is his soul and what is loved about him then and now from Alabama to New York City and from London to Tokyo. His death was just the physical end of the man. The emotion in songs and performances never died. It is yet to be captured in a book. The real Hank is still a mystery.

I really enjoyed the book as I've been a Hank Williams fan for a very long time. His peak years pretty much coincide with my high school years. 1949-1952. Yet as much as I enjoyed the book and anything connected to Hank Williams, I have to say it is not a happy book. I would still rate it 5 stars but the life story of my friend Hank Williams is really a depressing story. How a man of such genius could get dragged down is difficult to try to understand. His life seemed to start out quite well and seems his family was hard working and functioned well. Then what happened ? His mother seems to deteriorate morally right along with him. His wife Audrey was no help either she's more like a witch. Hank had the genius to put all his trouble into words and music. But who can understand who Hank Williams really was ? He definitely knew right from wrong as you can tell by his music and the many gospel songs he wrote and sang. His music told his story and yet according to the account in this book no one "really" knew him. I especially enjoyed the stories related to how some of his songs came to be. And the book has some great photos. Anyway, a great book with much detail of those he knew and worked and lived with. If only his life had turned out better.

Great book on the legend of Hank Williams. It will make you realize that Hank was surrounded by

people that only cared about his money, and not him.

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