Hard Way Out of Hell: The Confessions of Cole Younger

By Johnny D. Boggs

Reviewed by Connie Bennett, Vinton Public Library Clerk

Historical Western – large print

Pseudo-Biography

Attention all history buffs, Civil War afficionados, lovers of Westerns, and anyone who loves a great story about a true legend!

I have mixed feelings about this book; I’m not sure whether to like it or hate it. It definitely gives a sympathetic slant to the self-proclaimed “wicked man”.

Not a brand-new book (2016), it nonetheless offers a lot of new, different, and surprising information on a man who is almost universally thought of as a cold-hearted outlaw. Of all the stories told about this man, the other side has bene ignored, or perhaps just unknown. One of fourteen children born to a rather wealthy family, the infamous Cole Younger wanted nothing more than to be known as a good Christian, a peaceful family man, even a preacher! But then, the Civil War intervened, and Younger’s world changed.

Whether the outcome was totally unavoidable is rather an opinion of the reader. As I said, I’m still unsure of how I feel about the man, but I loved the author, Johnny D. Boggs!

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