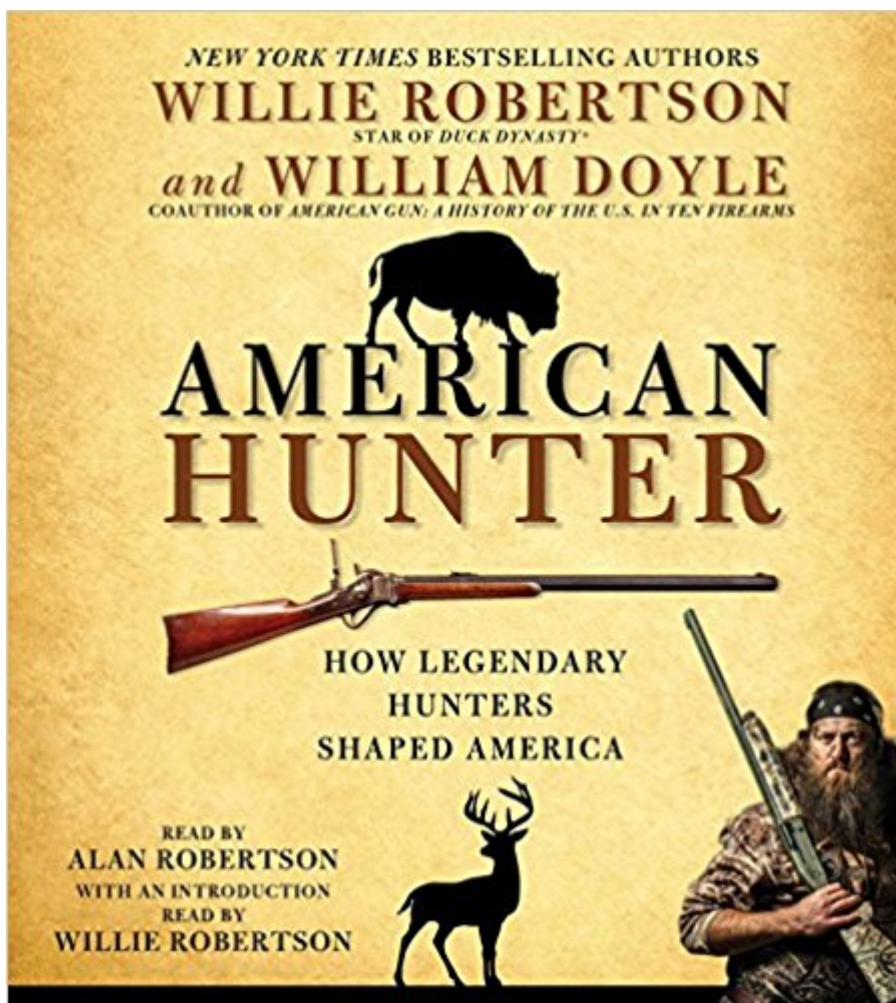




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American Hunter



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author and star of A&E's *Duck Dynasty*, Willie Robertson, teams up with William Doyle, the bestselling author of *American Gun*, to share the history of America's most well known hunters. America was created by hunters, trappers, and mountain men. As Teddy Roosevelt put it: "The virility, clear-sighted common sense, and resourcefulness of the American people is due to the fact that we have been a nation of hunters and frequenters of the forest, plains, and waters." And Willie Robertson and William Doyle think it's about time we honor American hunters by telling their incredible stories of skill, courage, survival, and downright bodaciousness. Perfect for anyone who loves hunting, sport shooting, wide-open spaces, and is interested in the amazing tales that are part of the history of America, this rip-roaring collection of true stories is perfect for sharing around the campfire after a long day's hunt. Chronicling the great hunters of America beginning with the Plains Indians and moving through legendary hunters like Daniel Boone, Davey Crockett, Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill, Teddy Roosevelt, Ernest Hemingway, Lyndon Johnson, and more American Hunter honors the heroes and traditions that have built America.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio; Unabridged edition (November 3, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1442388234

ISBN-13: 978-1442388239

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.7 x 5.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 59 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #839,529 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #65 in Books > Books on CD > Sports & Outdoors #246 in Books > Books on CD > History > United States #568 in Books > Books on CD > Biographies & Memoirs

Customer Reviews

Willie Robertson stars in A&E's hit show *Duck Dynasty* and is the CEO of Duck Commander, a family operated business that creates products for duck hunters including duck calls, clothes, and videos. Willie, along with his wife and business partner Korie Robertson, also owns and operates Buck Commander where they create products for deer hunters. Willie took the

family duck call making company from a living room operation to a multi-million dollar business. Willie lives with his wife, Korie, and their four children, John Luke, Sadie, Will, and Bella, in West Monroe, Louisiana. William Doyle is the coauthor, with former US Navy SEAL Chris Kyle, of *American Gun: A History of the US in Ten Firearms*. His other books include *A Soldier's Dream: Captain Travis Patriquin and the Awakening of Iraq*, *An American Insurrection*, *Inside the Oval Office*, and *A Mission from God* (with James Meredith). He served as director of original programming for HBO, and he is co-producer of the PBS special *Navy SEALs: Their Untold Story*. Willie Robertson stars in A&E's hit show *A Duck Dynasty* and is the CEO of Duck Commander, a family operated business that creates products for duck hunters including duck calls, clothes, and videos. Willie, along with his wife and business partner Korie Robertson, also owns and operates Buck Commander where they create products for deer hunters. Willie took the family duck call making company from a living room operation to a multi-million dollar business. Willie lives with his wife, Korie, and their four children, John Luke, Sadie, Will, and Bella, in West Monroe, Louisiana. Alan Robertson grew up hunting, fishing, and helping build the family business in the 1970s and 80s. Alan left Duck Commander when he received the call for ministry in 1988 and served as a senior pastor in West Monroe, Louisiana, until 2012 when he rejoined the Duck Commander clan. Alan received an associate's degree from White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies and a bachelor in ministry from Sunset International Bible Institute. He lives in West Monroe, Louisiana, with his wife, Lisa, their two grown daughters, and two grandchildren.

American Hunter 2> 2> Be still! Phil whispers the command as he looks to the sky, gripping a twenty-gauge shotgun loaded with birdshot. My brother Jase, Uncle Si, and I are crouched beside him, along with three of our buddies. We're hidden in a duck blind on our property in Northeast Louisiana near the Ouachita River. A duck flying overhead would never spot us. We're toting shotguns and wearing full duck-hunting camo. Our faces are smeared with black face paint and our ears are protected by plugs. It's a good morning for duck hunting. The sun is burning off the mist and all is quiet except for the buzzing insects and the random sounds of the woods. It's nature in its purest form. Waiting, waiting, waiting •we do a lot of that. We've had our morning coffee and biscuits that we cooked up in a little stove we keep in the back of the blind. Peggy Sue, our black Labrador retriever, stands inside the edge of the blind, every muscle straining to pounce into action. My brother Jase blows on a duck call we made in our shop. Most people would just hear your basic "quack, quack, quack." But the call

has been handcrafted with precision and sounds more like a duck than most ducks do. In duck language, it sounds like “Hey, how’re you doing? Come on down here! This pond is a great place for ducks to hang out with other ducks and do fun duck things. Our hand-painted decoy ducks are bobbing in the pond, a friendly party invitation. Beauty of the hunt, 2008 (PAT HAGAN, US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE) One good ol’ boy a poet named Ogden Nash said this about us duck-hunter types: “The hunter crouches in his blind, / Neath camouflage of every kind. That’s us six men versus a couple hundred juicy little birds. Our guns are Mossbergs, made to our own specifications and under our own name. They’re made in America, just the way we like. I prefer hunting with a twenty-gauge shotgun. It’s lighter and you can swing it out a little more. It’s not as powerful as some other guns and doesn’t have as much range, but it’s good for ducks and quail, even doves. It’s easier to handle and gentler on my shoulder than the impact of ten-gauges and twelve-gauges, the really powerful guns. When you’re ready to fire, your brain makes complex calculations based on years of shooting and muscle memory. It’s always different. You never know exactly where the animal will come from or how it will move. You’ve got to get out in front of those ducks and shoot ahead of their flight path so your shot hits them. Once you pull the trigger and fire, after your load travels thirty to forty yards, the bird drops. That’s with a twenty-gauge. The whole idea with a twenty-gauge is to get the ducks to come in as close as possible so you can get a good clean shot. A twelve-gauge will reach out farther and you can take perhaps a sixty- or seventy-yard shot; you’ve got the power and the load to make it there. With a smaller-caliber gun, you’d never take that shot; it wouldn’t have enough range to reach its target. I see a couple of big bass flipping around the pond and want to throw out a line and reel them in. But it would be risky to start fishing; I could totally lose the ducks. It’s September, early teal season in Louisiana, the time of year when enormous flocks of blue-winged ducks migrate during the Grand Passage from breeding grounds in Canada to below the border, as far south as Peru. Lots of them stop to take a break on our property. Like many other people, we are folks who look at ducks as a great food source. Ducks are eaten by many creatures, and we’re just another one in line. It’s the time of year when Phil busts out nuggets of backwoods wisdom, like “The Grand Passage, it comes and then they go back. Most humans are totally unaware of it; they’re oblivious to it. It’s happening right above their head. But they never look up to see it. They miss a lot. He says this kind of thing at the beginning of every season. “The blue-wing’s on the move, the Grand Passage has begun. Brush your blinds. Grab your gun. Let’s go kill some ducks,

boys. We're an old-school "farm to table" family, or, in this case, "sky to table." The duck blind we're hiding in is one of nearly seventy duck blinds on our thousand-acre property. Ducks are a lot like airplanes; they're going to "light" (land) into the wind. So we position our blinds to capitalize on whatever direction the wind is blowing to get the ducks when they're coming down. We have blinds where you can only hunt well on a south wind or a north wind, and we have one big open water blind where you can only hunt well when it rains. Pintail duck in flight at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon (US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE) Ducks are all about vision and what they can see from the air. The approach they make will change based on the wind. Right at daylight is when you get big flurries of ducks flying around, and you've got to remember that not far away are other hunters pushing the ducks around. The ducks are just looking for safe water to settle in where no one's shooting at them! Wood ducks are usually the first thing you see in the morning •they fly around like crazy. Teals are the same way. In fact, a teal hunt is typically over and done by eight a.m.; then the ducks quit flying. When he wakes up, the first thing a typical duck wants to do is eat, and he might go to a rice field. A lot of hunters will hunt in rice fields and do what you call "pass shooting," firing at the ducks as they pass over, from about fifty or sixty yards. On the Robertson property we don't have rice fields, so we get ducks around nine a.m. who have already enjoyed their breakfast. They just want to find a spot to sit around all day and relax. We Robertsons have always liked to hunt ducks who have already eaten. When ducks are coming straight down into a patch of water, right before they land, they practically hover, or "break down." They sort of look like a falling balloon. That's when you want to hit them, when they're slow and close. You're hidden, so they can't see you. But once you start firing, the ducks will reverse course, turn up the energy, and try to back out. They'll try to push right back up, which is difficult to do at any speed, so even though they're reacting to our gunfire, we still have a good chance to get them. This is God's Grocery Store. The bounty of Earth is all around us. It's peaceful and beautiful out here; the fall foliage is green, orange, and gold against a blue sky. Willie Robertson hunting (COPYRIGHT © WILLIE ROBERTSON) You don't have to be crazy to be a duck hunter, but it does help. It's usually hot, sweaty, and humid during duck season, and you're constantly swatting at swarms of buzzing mosquitoes. Though the weather and mosquitoes are a nuisance, there's just one thing we Robertsons really fear out in the woods •snakes. Our biggest fear is the cottonmouth water moccasin. We always figure that they're probably slithering around not far off. There are a lot of snakes down

here in Louisiana. If one gets in the duck blind, Uncle Si has a loaded pistol in his pants, ready to blow its head off. It's a little frightening when you're in a duck blind near the water and it's getting dark, because you know those cottonmouths are out there. So we keep flashlights on hand to make sure there aren't any snakes. We typically go in and try to clean the blinds out before the season starts. One year we went in a blind and killed nine cottonmouths. In the winter it's not as bad, although we've seen them all the way to December. Most of the guys in the duck blind wear our trademark thick beards, myself included. The beard's original purpose was to protect us from the wind blowing in our faces. When you're out there in the woods hunting, facial hair helps keep you warm. That's why we first started with the beards, but now it's morphed into our signature look. Somebody once asked my dad, "How long have you been growing that beard?" He said, "I ain't growing it. It's doing that on its own." I think 1988 was the last time Phil shaved his off. He lost a bet to a preacher, shaved his beard, and put on a suit. He said he'd never do it again. When Jase and I were younger and running the business, we thought we had to clean it up and put suits on to have business meetings with big companies. But about ten or twelve years ago I told Jase, "Forget that. Let's just go like we normally are." Sometimes in the heart of the summer, I look at people with their faces shaved and think it'd be nice, but once you get used to it, it's not as hot. Most guys say it gets itchy, but once you grow it out into a big man beard, the itching is gone. My wife, Korie, actually likes my beard. In fact, the last time I shaved, she said, "I think you should grow it back." My youngest child has never seen me without it, and the last time I shaved, my older son started crying because he was used to the beard (that was a lot of years back • I don't think he'd cry about it now). I haven't found a hat or sunglasses that'll cover up this look, so I get recognized quite often. It comes with the terrain, so I've gotten used to that too. I love it when little kids come up to me. I try to get down and hear what they have to say and ask them who their favorite person on the show is. Sometimes at the airport, if I'm trying to get through security and about to miss my flight, or I'm just running out to buy groceries, it gets a little old. But I tell everybody, when I quit being recognized, it means our show is probably not good anymore. As far back as I can remember, we were always out there hunting as a family. Hunting and fishing were always part of the family business. Our family feels the same way about hunting that the baroness Ann Mallalieu felt: "Hunting is our heritage, it is our poetry, it is our art, it is our pleasure. It is where many of our best friendships are made, it is our community. It is our whole way of life." Phil was a

commercial fisherman before we started our hunting business. When I was a boy I helped sell his freshly caught fish at the market with my mom, Miss Kay. Even then I always tried to negotiate the price. But Phil always saved the best of the catch for our family and we ate a lot of fish growing up! WeÃ¢â¬â also share our fish with our church. WeÃ¢â¬â have a big fish fry at the church for people we were trying to convert. WeÃ¢â¬â feed forty or fifty people. Growing up in a family of hunters, we had a lot of shotguns on the property. We had .410 shotguns as kids, then moved up to twelve-gauge shotguns. I was about six when I learned to shoot a gun. Ã¢â¬â“Hey, weÃ¢â¬âre going hunting,Ã¢â¬â Phil would say, and off weÃ¢â¬â go. It was a normal childhood thing, not a big deal. We hunted every day we werenÃ¢â¬ât in school. Phil didnÃ¢â¬ât really treat us like children; he treated us more like little adults. We were good kids. Phil was definitely old-school when it came to his sons hunting; it was an automatic thing. He always told us, Ã¢â¬â“Hunting and being outdoors will keep a bunch of young men out of trouble. ItÃ¢â¬âs hard to do a lot of bad things when youÃ¢â¬âre out sitting in a tree stand or a duck blind. It keeps you off the streets and youÃ¢â¬âre doing something entertaining.Ã¢â¬â The great South Carolina hunter and poet Archibald Rutledge sounded a little like Phil when he said: If more fathers were woodsmen, and would teach their sons to be likewise, most of the so-called father-and-son problems would vanish.Ã¢â¬â .Ã¢â¬â .Ã¢â¬â . If a man brings up his sons to be hunters, they will never grow away from him. Rather the passing years will only bring them closer, with a thousand happy memories of the woods and fields. That perfectly describes our family. Hunting is a huge reason why weÃ¢â¬âre so close as a family. Phil and my brothers Al and Jase taught me how to carry and handle guns, and they taught me firearms safety, too, so nobody accidentally got shot. We didnÃ¢â¬ât shoot at targets, we shot at something real. I have one particular memory of a dove hunt when I was about eight. Phil was not the kind of father who laid all of your gear out for you. He said, Ã¢â¬â“YouÃ¢â¬âre in charge of getting your stuff together.Ã¢â¬â I took along my little .410 single-barrel shotgun, one of the smallest-caliber shotguns there is. I realized I only had one shell. I said, Ã¢â¬â“Dad, I only have one shell.Ã¢â¬â He said, Ã¢â¬â“Well, son, youÃ¢â¬âve only got one shot. Better make it count.Ã¢â¬â I thought, Oh, crap! ThereÃ¢â¬âs nothing like an all-day dove hunt when youÃ¢â¬âve only got one shot! I spent most of the day trailing Phil and picking up his birds; I was fascinated by the way he twirled their heads off. Finally, about three or four hours into the hunt, I had my best chance at a shot. I took the shot. The dove fell. I was so proud. I looked over and Phil had shot at the same exact time that I had. ItÃ¢â¬âs a little unclear who exactly shot that bird, but IÃ¢â¬âm going to claim it. That one shot was successful! Phil can remember the first time his father took him hunting. He was about

eleven years old. He remembers aiming his shotgun and whispering to his dad, "What do I have?" The reply: "You got a green-winged teal and a pintail." He never forgot it. Today, he can take you to the very spot they were standing in and say, "Look, they were right there." He's been chasing ducks ever since. BUT BACK TO THE DUCK blind, where the boys and I are waiting for the ducks. We wait and wait and wait. Jase blows away on the duck call. I peer across the horizon. Suddenly, a flock of dozens of teals swoops in from the north, circling in a wide arc over the water. It's game time. In the blind, Jase and Willie (COPYRIGHT © DUCK COMMANDER) "Big bunch, big bunch," whispers Phil, "right over there!" We tighten our grips on our guns and wait for the final word. "Coming down the lane, coming toward us. Here they come." They come closer, closer, then level off in a horizontal pass right in front of the blind as they prepare to light on the water. There are so many of them and they're so close, it sounds like a jumbo jet passing. "Kill 'em," says Phil firmly. In an instant, six men and six guns pop out of the brush and open fire. "Shoot low," says Phil. The roar of blasting gunfire echoes hard and loud off the water. It's a war zone. It looks like a wartime guerilla ambush. Bursts of shot catch ducks in midflight, one after the other, instantly killing most of them and sending them down in hard splashes to the water. Some spin, others drop straight down, motionless. The dog is so excited she can barely stand it, but she knows to stay put until the shooting stops. I knock down two ducks escaping overhead who are flying close together, and one even slams into the duck blind, within arm's reach. We're shooting real good, each man bringing down different ducks. The sky is filled with floating feathers and it looks kind of like a ticker-tape parade. "Cut him, Jase," says Phil, gesturing toward an escaping bird. "Hit that drake!" Jase knocks him down with one shot. Food falls from the sky. One of our buddies chuckles, "It's raining feathers, it's raining ducks!" Ten, twenty birds drop to the ground and the count keeps going. Spent shotgun shell casings drift in the water. "Now we're cooking with peanut oil!" shouts Uncle Si after a while. "We've done killed more than twenty ducks in twenty minutes!" Eventually, the shots subside. There's a lot of paranoia in a duck blind if things go wrong. On those days, Uncle Si will grumble, "You've got to use more face paint! The light reflected off your face and the ducks flared off! Gotta put face paint on the beards. Put more brush in the back of the blind. The dog's wagging her tail too much and bumping the blind!" But this is not one of those days. This is one of the best days a duck hunter can have. When everything lines up and practically all of the shootable ducks fall from our

shots, it's called a rainout. The Robertsons have made an art form of the rainout. My brother Jase, an excellent shot, is jubilant and says, "I made a hundred-yard shot, I know that! I really think there's something to those hand-painted decoys." Phil, in the far left spot in the blind, is satisfied and says, "I was knocking them down over here." Uncle Si, as usual, claims incredible feats of marksmanship: "Well, I don't know about you boys, but I was four for four! What can I say? It was just like jungle fighting in Vietnam. You see how tight my pattern was?" Soon, we're snacking on ducks we've cooked on our little stove in the duck blind, flavored with Italian dressing.

"That tastes pretty dang good," someone says. "That's a gumbo duck there, boys! If you've never tasted fresh killed-and-grilled duck right under an open sky, you haven't lived. At the end of the day, we pile the ducks into a boat and go back home. Everybody in the family pitches in to prepare the food for the dinner table. It's like an assembly line; everyone has a job to do. After Jase and I pick off the feathers, someone lightly singes the hair and excess feathers off the duck over a fire. Then Miss Kay takes over the cooking and dressing, and she's helped by whichever family members are at hand. If she's making gumbo, we'll help her with the chopping. After we clean and cook the birds, we all sit down to eat at the dinner table after saying a prayer. Then we tell stories about the hunt. When I was growing up we only had three channels on the TV and no video games, so being out in the woods and telling stories about our adventures was what we did. We were very poor, so we were our own entertainment, and it was at the dinner table that we learned to tell stories. If you were a kid at our house and were telling a story, it had better be a good one, because you were holding the audience's attention. I really think that's how our charismatic personalities were shaped. I also think that practice helped us with storytelling in our TV shows. If you had a story to tell, you had to make it big or it would be overshadowed by someone else's! We spent the whole day with family and friends, and we succeeded in doing what we went out to do - get a dozen ducks on the dinner table so we'd have the food we needed and sit down together with our family. For me, that's a good day at the office. I AM AN AMERICAN HUNTER. Hunting is my heritage, my business, and my life. It is my passion, my exercise, my relaxation, my profession, and my destiny. It is the foundation of my family's life together. I hunt to eat. I hunt to enjoy life with my family and friends. And I hunt to honor God. I will be a hunter until the day the Good Lord takes me home. In my life, I focus on four main things: faith, family, ducks, and deer. As with all good things in life, it begins with God. I consider America to be one of the greatest gifts God ever gave mankind. Since the days of Native American dominion,

and in the centuries since the arrival of European settlers through today, America has been a rich natural paradise of wild game and fish, forests and mountains teeming with life, rushing waters, natural crops, wide-open spaces, and indescribable beauty. I have spent many years roaming the Lord's American fields, hunting His game, stalking through His forests and wetlands, forging through His hills and streams. Barely a moment goes by when I am not totally in awe of what an incredible gift from God America is. Few other lands in the world are as blessed as we are. Like most of the people in my family, I love pretty much anything to do with the outdoors. I love walking in the woods; sucking in fresh, clean air; camping out under the stars (all right, I'll confess, sometimes I've been known to camp in an RV instead of a tent), or tearing around my backyard in an ATV. I love playing a round of golf or waterskiing with my wife and kids. But hunting brings me so close to nature in its purest form that it really becomes a passion for me. God put us on Earth for many reasons—to help our fellow man, to love one another, and to raise our children on the path of righteousness. And God put us on Earth to hunt. I truly believe it. On this, the Bible is clear. In a number of biblical passages, we are encouraged to hunt and fish, to enjoy the bountiful gifts of Creation and be nourished by them. In Genesis 9:1, God commands Noah and his sons: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. Are you as moved and inspired by this gift as I am? Whenever I read these words, I am struck with a sense of responsibility, humility, and wonder. Like so much in the Bible, the more you think about it, the more the verses reach you on multiple, deep, meaningful levels. God commands us to "be fruitful and multiply," but He adds the instruction to "replenish the earth." Besides telling us to replenish the earth, I believe He also wants us to renew our world by treating it with love and care, out of obedience and respect for Him and for the benefit of future generations. He is telling us to be responsible stewards of Earth, which is something all good hunters take very seriously as a covenant to be cherished. After all, hunters were among the first and strongest American conservationists, and remain so today. The former president of the Boone and Crockett Club Lowell Baier said that the ones "who know well the game they hunt . . . yearn for the opportunity to find peace, tranquility, and solitude in nature and fellowship in camp. They become conservationists as a natural outgrowth of their appreciation for their sport." And finally, God tells us to establish provenance over "every moving thing on the planet, all the beasts, birds, and fish, because "into your hand are they

delivered. • In other words, the bounty of life is God's gift to us. As Phil once put it, "We've got orders from headquarters. If he walks, crawls, flies, or swims, whack him, stack him, and eat him." He added, "Where there's design, there is a designer. We were designed to kill ducks." The idea of hunting and fishing as ways of nourishing humanity echoes throughout the Bible. In Genesis 27:3-4, Isaac, the son of Abraham, believing he has not much longer to live, summons his own son Esau and commands him, "Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die." In Acts 10:10-16, Simon Peter prays so hard that he falls into a trance. Then, the Bible relates, he "saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven." It is a simple Bible principle that reflects the reality of human life and survival for thousands of years: rise, kill, and eat. Jesus Christ himself was a fishing enthusiast, and it wasn't just when he multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed the multitude. Two of Jesus' great miracles revolved around catching fish. In Luke 5:1-11, early in Jesus' ministry, after preaching the word of God to a crowd from a boat on the Sea of Galilee, he said to Simon Peter the fisherman, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Simon replied, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." In a flash, so many fish swarmed toward the boat that the net broke. Another fishing boat raced over to help out, and soon both boats were sinking from the weight of so many fish. The Bible says the fishermen were "astonished" at the quantity of fish they caught. Instantly, Simon Peter became a disciple of Jesus, along with two of his fisherman partners, James and John, sons of Zebedee. Jesus assured Simon Peter, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Years later, one evening after the Resurrection of Jesus, according to the Gospel of John 21:1-14, seven of his grieving disciples decided to go fishing and caught nothing. Early on the following morning, Jesus appeared on the shore and called out, "Children, have ye any meat?" The disciples, not recognizing their Lord, said no. Jesus called out, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall

find. “Sure enough, no less than 153 fish swam into their net and were hauled aboard. “It is the Lord,” exclaimed one of the disciples, who was shocked to recognize the face of Jesus, whom they had witnessed dying days before. At this, an ecstatic Simon Peter jumped into the water to greet Jesus on the shore. Again, the setting for this epic scene of Christianity was catching fish. At the same time, the Bible contains several passages forbidding cruelty to animals, which is a command all good hunters take most seriously. As Proverbs 12:10 says, “A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast,” which to me means two things: not allowing animals to suffer needlessly and eating what you kill. In my family, we make a point of bringing the results of our hunting to our dinner table, or to someone else’s dinner table. AMERICA WAS CREATED IN LARGE part by hunters, fishers, trappers, and mountain men. As Teddy Roosevelt put it, “The virility, clear-sighted common sense and resourcefulness of the American people is due to the fact that we have been a nation of hunters and frequenters of the forest, plains, and waters. It’s about time we thanked them, by telling their incredible stories of skill, courage, survival, and let’s face it downright bodaciousness. That’s why my friend William Doyle and I put together this book for you. We wrote it for folks who love hunting, sport shooting, and wide-open spaces, and for folks who love American history. It’s our history of hunting in America, but you can think of it as a collection of true stories you’ll tell around the campfire after a long day’s hunt. To gather these stories together, we took a trip into the collections of some of the most amazing places in America, some of which you may not have seen for yourself: The Smithsonian Gun Room, which is kind of like a secret temple of some of the rarest and most precious firearms in American history, including a musket belonging to Thomas Jefferson. It’s the ultimate “gun room” on Earth. The Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming, which is five museums in one: the Plains Indian Museum, the Whitney Western Art Museum, the Cody Firearms Museum, the Draper Natural History Museum, and, of course, a museum dedicated to old Buffalo Bill himself. The National Archives near Washington, DC, which is home to an incredible collection of historical hunting documents, diaries, and photos. The NRA’s National Firearms Museum in Virginia and Sporting Arms Museum in Missouri. The New York Public Library, whose treasures include an antique original copy of a biography of Daniel Boone published in 1859 and an edition of the autobiography of Davy Crockett from 1903, both discovered in the rare books collection of the library. So throw some meat on the grill, pop open a cold soda, and gather round the fire, boys and girls. Every word I’m about to tell you is true, as far as I can tell. Come with me on a trip back to our roots, to the days when America was young, when beasts roamed the

land, and mankind battled with nature and prayed to the Lord for deliverance. Come with me into the heart of the American hunter. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The book is a bit thin... It reads like a compilation of a 13 year old's school essays on various people and events, ie, they barely scratch the surface on one before moving on to the next. For example, during a weak description of Roosevelt's hunting and shooting background they mention he signed into law Pittman-Robertson but don't further explain how this important law has affected wildlife conservation. Hello, the sub-title is how legendary hunters shaped America. The chapters are organized by subject (though as I said they hardly scratch the surface of the subjects they do cover, let alone do the authors include a fraction of the history of hunting in the United States) but in doing so there is little following of chronological order. Randomly they include a very short schpiel on Hemingway at the end of the chapter on Presidents who hunt. Also of note, the authors' use of the word "elks", as in "shot four elks" and "he shot quails", etc... is distracting. Also a few inaccuracies and some grammar mistakes which should have been caught by such a publisher. The last chapter is just quotes from other hunters, outdoor writers, or persons already discussed in the book. Really, it does not appear much planning or effort went into this. Three stars instead of two only because I can read this to my kids or give it to them to read; the authors keep it clean, it has a positive message, and is a good intro to kids before they go off to read something else on the subject with more meat.

1. A fantastic book, a must read for anyone and everyone!!!! This book takes you through the dark times right into the light of conservation. The book has some very interesting details that I am sure everyone will find enlightening. Thank You Mr. Robertson for bringing this book to the shelves in these modern crazy times. Lord knows we need more books like these. This should be a must read for every child to read before graduation, hunter or not!!!!!!

This title offered a good look at some of the highlights of the history of hunting in North America. Mixed in with facts and historical stories the author provides his point of view and shares personal stories that relate to the overarching theme of each chapter. By far my personal favorite is the final chapter presenting quotes from various hunters and conservationists throughout history. I will absolutely be reading this book again and suggesting it to others.

I enjoyed the book

I'll be honest here. This book started out slow and seemed to go nowhere fast. Then by chapter 3 or 4 it got a lot better and I found it very interesting and a fun read. I may have to read a biography on Teddy Roosevelt now. I agree that being in the wild wooded land is the closest and easiest way to be with the Creator.

Great read, I read it in two days while i was on jury duty. Willie Robertson has written a book about how hunting and American history have been intertwined since the beginning. He starts with the Indians and goes from there all the way up to modern times and the different US Presidents that have enjoyed hunting and shooting.

Christmas gift for husband. He really likes it

An outstanding book every hunter should read. In addition to learning a great deal about the history of our nation, it is a fascinating read that will keep every outdoorsman, and woman, on the edge of their seat. We've all heard of the legendary men of the woods, but the section on woman hunters was most interesting.

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