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Sam Houston – I

Lead: In the course of a remarkable career, Sam Houston was a war hero, a Governor, President of a sovereign nation, and member of the U.S. House and Senate. He was hated and loved – a true American original.

Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts

Content: Born of prosperous planters in Rockbridge County, Virginia in 1793, at the death of his father, Houston migrated with his mother and siblings to Tennessee. He

was ill-suited for farm life and after a brief turn at business, escaped into the woods where he began a life-long fascination with Native Americans and their culture. He spent three years with the Cherokee, was adopted by a highly respected clan chief and received the Indian name, The Raven. This sojourn with the Indians affected Houston profoundly in that for the rest of his life, despite his service in the Creek Campaigns of Andrew Jackson, his sympathies and concern would lie with the Indians in their losing battle against the onslaught of white civilization.

Houston served with distinction in Jackson's forces, he and the General became close friends, and Jackson

became something of a political mentor to the younger man. While in the Army, Houston hired on as a government agent to the Cherokees, but his advocacy of their cause brought a rebuke from then Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, one of Jackson's great enemies. Houston resigned his commission and agency in protest and, debt-ridden and depressed, moved to Nashville and read for the Tennessee bar.

He was a quick study and seemingly found his calling and renewed vigor. By 1819 he was serving as Attorney General of Tennessee. Two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives were followed by election as governor.

Houston's 1829 marriage to Eliza Allen, daughter of a politically prominent family, ended under bitter and mysterious circumstances, and, hounded by malicious gossip, he resigned and departed for points west. Next time: the resurrection of Sam Houston.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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