

The General and the Jaguar: Pershing's Hunt for Pancho Villa: A True Story of Revolution and Revenge

Eileen Welsome



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On the cold, dark night of March 9, 1916, Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa—*el jaguar*—and his band of marauders crossed the border and raided the tiny town of Columbus, New Mexico. It was a vicious surprise attack, ending with corpses piled in the streets and psychological wounds that would last a lifetime. Suspects were rounded up, trials were held, and a virulent backlash against persons of Mexican origin erupted. General John "Black Jack" Pershing was told to assemble a small army, head into Mexico, and get Villa, dead or alive. The last hurrah for the U.S. cavalry, the "Punitive Expedition" marked America's first use of armored tanks, airplanes, and trucks against an enemy. One of the deputies Pershing would choose was a recent West Point graduate named George Patton.

The expedition brought the United States and Mexico to the brink of war, but it also restored greatness to both prey and predator. More than a classic account of the war for control of the West, *The General and the Jaguar* is a brilliant chronicle of obsession and revenge and a dual portrait of John Pershing and Pancho Villa, two of the greatest military minds of all time.

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