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Met His Every Goal?: James K. Polk and the Legends of Manifest Destiny (Paperback)

By Tom Chaffin

University of Tennessee Press, United States, 2014. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Soon after winning the presidency in 1845, according to the oft-repeated anecdote, James K. Polk slapped his thigh and predicted what would be the four great measures of his administration: the acquisition of some or all of the Oregon Country, the acquisition of California, a reduction in tariffs, and the establishment of a permanent independent treasury. Over the next four years, the Tennessee Democrat achieved all four goals. And those milestones--along with his purported enunciation of them--have come to define his presidency. Indeed, repeated ad infinitum in U.S. history textbooks, Polk's bold listing of goals has become U.S. political history's equivalent of Babe Ruth's called home run of the 1932 World Series, in which the slugger allegedly gestured toward the outfield and, on the next pitch, slammed a home run. But then again, as Tom Chaffin reveals in this lively tour de force of historiographic sleuthing, like Ruth's alleged called shot of 1932, the four measures anecdote hangs by the thinnest of evidentiary threads. Indeed, not until the late 1880s, four decades after Polk's presidency, did the story first appear...



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