

Ry Cooder, JESSE JAMES (Another Version)

(Neil Morris)

I'll tell you about Jesse and Frank James
My grandfather was personally acquainted with them
My grandfather lived in the southern edge of Baxter County, Arkansas
And they stayed all night with him lots of nights
And my grandfather told me there was a lot of those robberies that was layed to Jesse and Frank J
And he knew they didn't do it 'cause they was at his place when it happened
But you couldn't tell the public that
When they get their minds made up that somebody's done something
Why the public's gonna stick to it anyway
My grandfather, he knew them as boys
And they could come to his place and go without anybody paying attention 'cause nobody expected
Down in Arkansas, see, 'cause they was from Missouri
Now that's the story that my grandfather told me when I was just a boy
And he said that Frank James, at that World's Fair,
I think it was 1901 in St. Louis him and Jesse were both there
My grandfather and Frank James were together there
And that Frank James offered to bring Jesse there alive
He said that the man that the Ford boys killed wasn't Jesse James at all
But the fellow they killed was just about the size of Jesse and he was red headed
And he wasn't any relation to the Fords
See, Jesse James was a known cousin to Charles and Bob Ford
That's what my grandfather said
He said Jesse and Frank were not even in that part of the country when that fellow was killed
And the Ford boys, why, they collected a thousand dollars for killing Jesse James!
Now the song says that the Ford boys killed Jesse
None of us up here in the mountains believe that, no sir!