

# AUM

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# Letter from the Editor

Dear readers,

It is my pleasure to present to you the ninth issue of the *AUM Historical Review*! It really is amazing to see how far we've come with this little student project of ours, and we are truly blown away by the support we've received from the AUM history department, students, and readers like you.

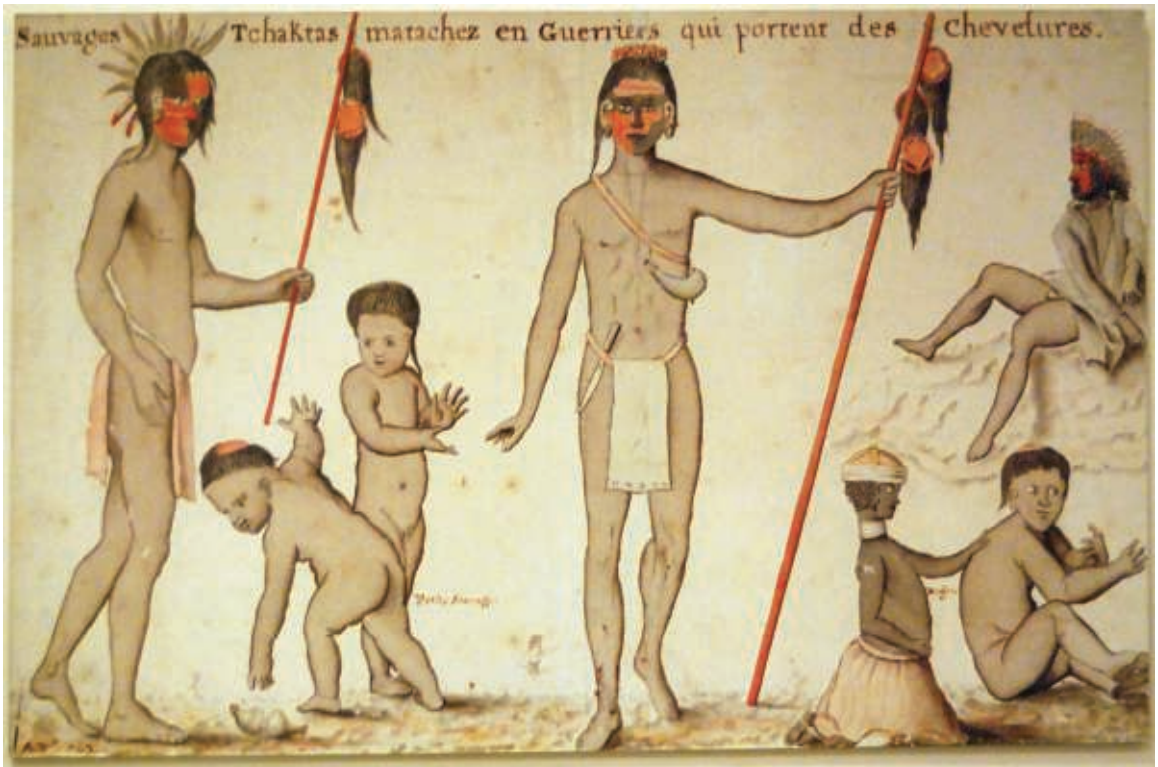
As always, we have several articles about the history of Alabama, and our first article discusses one of the many groups that inhabited this land long before the United States even existed. Cole Hamric takes us through the daily lives and societal structure of Alabama's Creek Indians, exploring the ways in which the Creek men expressed their masculinity compared to the settlers who would challenge them in later years. We follow Lee Rives's take on the tale of their downfall at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, where Andrew Jackson effectively drove the Creeks out of their ancestral home. Next Jessica Sweatt guides us through Montgomery's own Legacy Museum, where she explains its significance and why the fight to conquer racism in Alabama is not over yet. Kelley Pierce then takes us on a trip to the town of Opp, Alabama to see how the textile mills built there helped to grow the community—and then caused its decline. A book review of Christo Brand's *Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend* follows, wherein Brandon Walker details the story of South African hero and revolutionary Nelson Mandela's twenty-seven years of imprisonment and the ways in which he charmed his captors to his side. Finally, we conclude with William Ellis's look into the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006, an ill-fated military excursion against the forces of Hezbollah that changed the power dynamics in the Levant up to the present day.

I'd like to extend my sincerest gratitude to our wonderful associate editors: Todesia Flavors, Cole Hamric, Alanna Hathcock, Lee Rives, Jessica Sweatt, and Steven Tuchfarber, as well as our advertising manager Kelley Pierce. This issue simply would not be possible without their efforts, and I can't thank them enough. I would also like to thank Dr. Steven Gish for sponsoring and continuing to provide the much-needed support to the *Review*, as well as Professor Breuna Baine for always helping find the most talented graphic artists. Speaking of which, I cannot thank Amy LaPointe enough for her wonderful cover and internal design that really bring this issue to life. And of course, we are incredibly grateful for the generous support of all the businesses and donors that helped provide the funding to make this issue happen.

I really feel that we're printing something special this time around. Our last issue was the very first we ever printed in color, and with issue #9, we hope to turn that into a tradition for the *Review*. I think I speak for all of us on the editorial board when I say we're proud to be a part of this, and the experience of working on it has been truly unforgettable. From the bottom of all our hearts, we thank each and every one of you reading this now, and hope you'll stick around until the end! Until next time...

Enjoy!

*Robert Ashurst*  
Editor



For Indians of the Southeast, such as the Choctaws depicted above, scalps and other prestige goods provided a means for men to distinguish themselves. (Alexandre de Batz / Wikimedia Commons)

## “By Man Shall His Blood Be Shed”

### Masculinity and Violence Amongst the Creek Indians of Alabama

by Cole Hamric

Tenskwatawa was a broken man, a miserable drunk, and a failed warrior who constantly lived in his brother Tecumseh’s shadow. His most distinguishing feature was a missing eye which he had lost not in combat, but in a childhood accident of his own making. Then, suddenly, he was transformed from the miserable Tenskwatawa into the Prophet, the leader of a pan-Indian crusade against the intrusion of whites onto native lands and the decline of native cultures. While in a drunken coma, he claimed to have received a vision from the Master of Breath of an afterlife full of bliss and game for those who returned to traditional lifestyles free

of white vices, such as the alcohol that no longer consumed his entire existence. Regardless of the veracity of these claims, the Prophet’s personal transformation and his message resonated deeply with the native peoples of North America. This was especially the case for young men, such as those who made up the Red Stick faction of the Creek War, who found their attempts to enter the upper echelons of Creek society constantly stifled by tribal restrictions on traditional warfare and the fossilization of power in the hands of wealthy Creek planters. For them, the Prophet symbolized the restoration of traditional manhood and a path forward.

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Cole Hamric is a senior history major. In the future, he hopes to pursue a career in academia or teaching. This is his third year working for the *Review*. His article won the Dodd prize in 2019.

A Creek or Muscogee man's masculinity was not something that could be defined in isolation. It was something that had to be actively defined through one's personal actions. However, masculinity was founded on the relation of men to women, whether relatives, neighbors, or foreigners. For instance, a man's life was inextricably tied to the matrilineal clan he was born into, for better or worse. Men only defined themselves in their external relations to one another, whether in warfare, socializing, or politics. This was the same in many ways for land-hungry, often Indian-hating white settlers who came to settle Alabama, both genteel planters and those of poor Scotch-Irish/Celtic origins whom Europeans and Northerners contemptibly called "Crackers." Alabama proved to be an often violent and brutal proving ground for rival masculinities, both Creek and white men, who often failed to recognize the commonalities of their circumstances.

In the twentieth century, historians began a more concerted effort to write the histories of marginalized identities, both racial and gendered. Feminist studies thus began to gain serious prominence in the rewriting of historical narratives. Though feminism's most apparent concern is feminine identity, it is equally concerned with re-examining masculine identities and how they are formed. This allows for a more interesting and nuanced examination of men as historical agents rather than taking typical assumptions about masculinity as the default. This is particularly interesting for the study of indigenous masculine identities such as those of the Creek Indians, who themselves lived in a matriarchal society. Furthermore, it allows for a cross-comparison with white American masculinities. What follows is an attempt to explain violence as a gendered and culturally informed phenomenon as it was experienced on the Alabama frontier.

Neither side of this contest was without

precedence for their customs, violent or otherwise. The Creeks, like many Southeastern tribes, were cultural descendants of the Mississippian chiefdoms which existed from roughly 800 C.E. to 1600 C.E. Mississippian men, especially those of elite status, constantly vied for position amongst each other and against their enemies through military endeavors. Battles mostly consisted of sneak attacks and raids in a manner reminiscent of hunting, which their cultural descendants would retain. The victorious side would indulge in trophies taken from their fallen enemies, and it was not uncommon for a warrior to take his enemy's whole head. Sometimes heads would be taken to be displayed on spikes outside of temples in a display of total domination. Those captured during war were transported back to the victorious town to be ritually tortured, enslaved, or adopted into new clans, which were matriarchal and matrilocal.<sup>1</sup>

White settlers from the Southern states bordering Creek lands also had formidable ancestors. Many of these men and women were descended from the patriarchal clans of Irish, Scottish, and Welsh immigrants. These were peoples historically tempered by the constant threat of outside invaders, whether they were the ancient Romans, Vikings, or the neighboring English. They did not lightly suffer threats or insults from those within their own cultures either. To show any sign of weakness might undermine chances for survival in societies where the theft of important herd animals, such as sheep and pigs, posed a considerable danger. One can see a similar penchant for trophy-taking, as existed in Mississippian societies, including severed heads, such as in the legends of Celtic heroes like Cu Chulainn, whose examples were exalted by men and women alike.<sup>2</sup>

Following the decline of the Mississippian chiefdoms from the introduction of foreign

disease, exacerbation of intertribal conflict, and raids by the Spanish after their arrival in 1540, the Creek Confederacy eventually formed across what would become the states of Alabama and Georgia. It consisted of various tribal groups such as the Cowetas, the Hillabees, Yuchis, and the Alabamas. Some members of the Confederacy joined of their own volition or were subjugated by the martially superior Creeks. Resistance to and participation in the Indian slave trade also shaped the Confederacy as tribal groups sought to maintain their numbers and expand their own power relative to that of others.<sup>3</sup> As they encountered new challenges, the Creeks proved adept at adopting cultural practices they deemed useful for surviving a tumultuous and changing world.

The Creeks are best understood in how they were organized into loosely allied and sometimes antagonistic townships and satellite towns. These could be divided between Upper Creeks and Lower Creeks, a division which became more pronounced over time as the Creeks struggled to develop a more concrete identity in the face of external political realities. Most of the Creek towns in what would become Alabama made up the Upper Creeks, such as Little Tallassee, Okfuskee, and Tuckabatchee. These towns consisted of different households representing the various clans (e.g. the Wolf Clan, Bear Clan, Wind Clan, etc.). Households, and a townhouse where the town leaders gathered, were situated around a central square ground where the annual Corn Busk (or Buskita) ritual was held. The Corn Busk celebrated the harvest of the mainstay crop, corn, which was originally thought to be a gift from a goddess or other feminine supernatural figure. During the Corn Busk, men would commune around a great fire, and, near the ceremony's end, would bring a portion of the fire back to their respective clans.<sup>4</sup> This symbolized, at the spiritual level, the role of men as

intermediaries for the interactions of these matriarchal clans. One can already see in such rituals the central importance of women to Creek society. Towns also had Chunky Yards where Chunky was played, with poles at one end used for ritual torture and hanging scalps. These scalp poles were "usually crowned with the white dry skull of an enemy."<sup>5</sup> Though towns varied from one another in cultural practices, and it would not be accurate to assume a totally coherent Creek identity as might be expressed by Creek Indians today, they shared many similarities. This allows for some broader cultural interpretations.

Another distinction which is not completely clear to scholars, but warrants mention, is the division of towns into White and Red moieties, which were based on pathways the Creeks conceived the world through, the White Path of peace and the Red Path of war respectively. White Towns were theoretically concerned with dictating peace and upholding custom. Red Towns, in turn, were concerned with waging warfare when violence appeared to be the only viable solution. Still, White Towns were also expected to engage in warfare, at times, as participation in war was crucial for social advancement among Creek men.<sup>6</sup> If warfare could be avoided by peaceful means, then the Creeks preferred not to risk unnecessary bloodshed which could jeopardize the overall stability of Creek society and, as they perceived it, the balance of the world.

Each town had a respective leader, or Micco, who was a senior warrior responsible for guiding the town's council of warriors in making decisions. The Micco's authority was not absolute, however, and could easily be overruled by the consensus of others, including women through informal kinship channels if they saw fit.<sup>7</sup> Another important leader was the Tustenuggee, who led in times of war.<sup>8</sup>

Though the most visible leadership of Creek towns was found in their men, men's power was essentially based on their relation to women. This is because Creek clans, whether of high or low status, were matrilineal and matriarchal. Membership in the greater social and political realm was solely dependent on having a Creek mother, and women controlled the ways in which clans and their constituent households grew and were organized. Marriages were exogamous (another hold over from the Mississippians), meaning one married outside of their clan. To attain a wife, a warrior who had proven himself worthy through martial exploits would ask his female relatives to propose the idea of marriage to a chosen woman and her matrilineal relatives, both male and female. A woman's father might be asked for his opinion, but this was only a polite formality, as fathers were always from a different clan. However, this did not exclude the father's clan from due respect. Once the proposal was given proper consideration, and the proper gifts were exchanged, the marriage was official, often without ceremony. Until they could form a fully functioning household of their own, the warrior lived with his wife in her mother's house.<sup>9</sup> All children born of this marriage would become members of the woman's clan. All property was at the woman's full disposal as well, and she had the right to take everything in the case of divorce.<sup>10</sup> A warrior could take on multiple wives simultaneously, but only if his first wife approved. If all parties were willing, a warrior could even take his wife's sisters in marriage.<sup>11</sup> William Bartram, a naturalist who traveled amongst the Southeastern Indians, noted that it was even common for Creek men of renown to marry "a child of eight or nine years of age, who pleases him, [if] he can [come to an agreement] with her parents or guardians."<sup>12</sup> If a wife considered her husband to be an adulterer, she would confer with her relatives about how to punish her husband and the woman

with whom he had been unfaithful. Options typically included beatings, dry scratching with a utensil, cutting off portions or the entirety of both ears, or cutting off the nose. Husbands and wives had equal right and means in punishing their spouses for infidelity. If the offenders eluded their punishers, their next of kin often took their place.<sup>13</sup> The Creeks, believing in the necessity of retaliation for wrongs done, which they thought helped to restore balance to the world, dictated that someone had to pay the price for transgressions.

Though the Creeks did value some degree of modesty and procreation, sexual relations between men and women were not simply limited to marriage. If an unmarried man sought a sexual liaison with an unmarried woman, and she was accepting of the idea, there was no stigma about premarital sex. It was considered the right of a woman, so long as she was not bound in marriage or lived in a state of slavery, to do with her body as she pleased.<sup>14</sup> How much emotional stock Creek men placed in their casual sexual encounters is not readily apparent, and neither are beliefs about non-heteronormative behavior and sexual violence. This gap in knowledge of individual and collective beliefs about these matters stems from a lack of sources written by Creeks themselves, who were illiterate for most of their history before their removal in the early nineteenth century. First-hand accounts of Creeks and other tribes in the Southeast that do exist predominantly come from white men of various backgrounds and degrees of familiarity with Creek customs. The extent of the cultural investigation of Creek Indians is thus limited to the interests of said men and whatever avenues they thought to explore. For example, if homosexual relationships were in any way commonplace, or if the pre-removal Creeks had any concept of non-binary gender identities, it is not apparent in their writings.



The modern Creek Nation in Oklahoma, whose members are very Christianized and separated in many ways from past traditions, does not offer a simple answer either, even though its refusal to recognize same-sex marriages might tempt one to suspect that they were always opposed to non-heterosexual relations. Furthermore, without any criminal records, it is difficult to ascertain the prevalence and frequency of rape, or any other offense for that matter, in the daily life of pre-removal Creek Indians. The early codification of laws at the conception of a "Creek Nation" around the turn of the eighteenth century suggests that rape, and even potentially gang rape, was an issue to be dealt with at times.<sup>15</sup> How exactly it was dealt with is not certain, but it was more than likely punished by a procedure of retaliation as were other offenses. One might easily overlook the fact that the law only speaks of persons using force on women, which implies that the pre-removal Creeks, or at least those mainly responsible for writing the first laws, may not have believed that men, or even young boys, could be considered as victims of sexual violence.

Though some questions about the sexual tendencies of pre-removal Creek men are difficult to answer due to the nature of the sources, contemporary white men's own concerns about sex are more readily apparent, since many of them were literate. Many men's sense of self-worth was attached to their ability to have multiple sexual affairs, even if it was with another man's spouse. Simultaneously, men sought to uphold the reputation of their female relations, whether it was their mother, sister, or daughter. A woman who was sexually licentious was something to be ashamed of, and a high priority was placed on women remaining chaste virgins until marriage. To allow another man to cuckold oneself or to call into question a female relative's virtue was unthinkable and required restitution for the offense.<sup>16</sup> White

men thus conceived of themselves as guardians of sexual propriety while at the same time enthusiastically seeking sex for their own pleasure and sense of self-worth. Though intercourse requires a partner, and one would hope a free and willing one, white men likely took for granted the role of women in their own sense of personal satisfaction.

When a sexual encounter, regardless of circumstance, resulted in a pregnancy that was carried to term, a Creek child's upbringing was the responsibility of their mother and her clan. Fathers had virtually no say in the matter and did little to try and involve themselves, though that does not mean they did not love their children. Observers such as Benjamin Hawkins, a United States Indian Agent, would go so far as to complain that "the Indians make slaves of [their women]" in regards to the number of tasks they were responsible for, but women preferred and insisted on being primary caretakers.<sup>17</sup> A mother would see to it that her children were raised properly in the ways of the world. Mothers taught their daughters how to properly run the household and farm the staple crops their family subsisted on, namely corn. When it came time for boys to learn men's ways, their oldest maternal uncle would instruct them in matters such as hunting and warfare. Uncles, in effect, were more of a father figure than the actual father of their nephew.

How white boys were raised was largely dependent on the class into which they were born. Though mothers were responsible for the earliest stages of life, there came a point at which fathers began to take much more active roles in their sons' lives, whether instructing them about proper behavior, providing for an education, or overseeing some other concern about their development into men. This was especially the case for upper class families, from whom the son

would inherit the paternal surname and would be expected to continue expanding, or at least maintain, the family's prestige and good standing. Young men would be taught the importance of asserting their place in the world. Though parents could be loving, mothers and fathers encouraged their sons to be physically and emotionally tough so as not to be easily manipulated or taken advantage of by others. Though some certainly benefited from their family's connections and wealth as they set out on their own, there inevitably came a point at which men of all classes had to prove the content of their character and their courage to confront a world that could be indifferent if not outright hostile.<sup>18</sup>

For the Creeks, young children became adults when they successfully passed through respective rites of passage. Girls were generally considered women when they had their first menstrual blood. They were then isolated from their town in an outside dwelling for a short period to reflect on their new connection with fertility and procreation. In some cases, boys would spend a short period in the wilderness, imbibing various mind-altering herbal concoctions and reflecting on the spiritual world around them. The only other persons they were allowed contact with were other boys going through the ritual and female virgins who would prepare their meals. From these rituals, one can surmise that the Creeks, however sexually liberated they might appear to modern eyes, still placed some emphasis on a conservative notion of sexual purity. Amongst some Creek tribal groups, such as the Alabamas, boys did not become men until they came into direct contact with blood. This might mean killing a game animal or acquiring a scalp. Sometimes, the elders of the boy's clan might gather around him afterwards to beat him, which taught him the importance of retaliation and the consequences of his actions.<sup>19</sup> As they grew into their own personality and role, males would acquire

a unique name, having not had a distinct name of their own up to this point.

For a young man who had been successfully initiated into tribal practices, it was necessary for him to begin participating in warfare if he wanted to advance socially. Warfare amongst the post-Mississippian Southeastern Indians was generally non-aggrandizing (though tribes might still enjoy the plunder and expansion of power resulting from victory) and was instead focused on retaliation. A clan or town only went to war when they felt as though they had been legitimately wronged, such as a member of their clan being killed or enslaved by a rival clan or tribe. Native peoples understood that the warfare they were engaging in could devolve into a long-running cycle of violence if each party considered the repayment of violence to be disproportionate to what they had dealt. The Creeks had little value for large quantities of personal property, and its loss was no point of lasting contention. The death of a family member, though, was a profoundly tragic experience. This was especially the case if a woman was killed or enslaved, as this was perceived no longer as a personal vendetta but an attack on the entire clan itself. Such an offense demanded greater retaliation. In any case, the women of a clan would call the men to action, and clans that failed to retaliate (meaning their men had failed to perform their role as the agents of violence in service to women's familial authority) risked disgrace in the eyes of their peers.<sup>20</sup>

When war was necessary, warriors were expected to be relentless and vigorous, and to endure the horrors of battle with a stoic calm. The ability of a warrior to cast aside any concern for his own life was a point of great admiration. Conduct in warfare earned a warrior a new name for wartime. For example, one warrior might be called Harjo, typically translated as "mad" or "crazy" but meaning more specifically

someone who seemed to have abandoned all caution for their own life. Another name they might be given was Fikisiko, meaning "heartless" and indicating that a warrior was merciless.<sup>21</sup> Young men were particularly eager to earn war names. Men who failed to become full-fledged warriors were forced to take subordinate positions in council meetings and to perform menial tasks for the senior warriors, and they could not expect to get a wife.<sup>22</sup> As physical proof of the warrior fulfilling his role as avenger, the warrior would take a physical trophy from his fallen enemy. This typically consisted of body parts, such as appendages or the scalp. The scalp, with the hair attached to it, was the most sought after as it was thought to bare the soul of the slain.<sup>23</sup> However, not all scalps were of equal worth, and they were valued by the amount of risk the warrior had taken in acquiring one. At the conclusion of a fight, a warrior supervising the war party would evaluate the worth of individual scalps.<sup>24</sup> Scalps from women and children were particularly valuable, since women were so highly-valued in terms of their matriarchal status. Possession of such scalps indicated that a warrior had been able to penetrate a settlement. This was quite difficult given that fighting primarily took place in the surrounding wilderness.<sup>25</sup> This constituted the most gruesome way in which women of any sort defined Creek men's masculinity – as a literal bloody trophy. Having completed an expedition, a warrior would bring the scalps he earned back to his household and would display them outside for his neighbors to admire.<sup>26</sup>

Just as for Creek men, violence was a stark reality for white men of the Old South, particularly those of Celtic descent, with its own emotional content. Men of low social standing adhered to standards of primal honor. Whether it was a slight insult or a more serious offense, physical violence proved to other men that one was not to be trifled with. Before firearms were widely

available, lower class men often engaged in physical brawls. Before a brawl, the men might agree before those witnessing the fight to adhere to a set of rules or to fight no-holds-barred, otherwise called "rough and tumble" fighting or "gouging." In a rough and tumble fight, the men would seek to harm each other by any means (such as biting, kicking, punching, and scratching) until one of them surrendered. The objective in many of these fights was to gouge out one of the opponent's eyes. Gouged eyes could be kept as trophies afterwards, and a missing eye proved that a man had at least attempted to defend his sense of honor. Though some fights might involve knives, the use and carrying of weapons was generally regarded as pusillanimous until firearms became more available to poor men. Upper class men more often settled disputes of personal honor through dueling, and they valued one's ability to calmly take aim and fire at their opponent with coldblooded seriousness.<sup>27</sup> White women, like Creek women, could be equally encouraging of male violence, as it upheld familial honor. Some women might memorialize their husband's or other male relative's bloody engagements by inscribing on their graves that they had died in a duel. A white Scotch-Irish man's ability to express himself violently was a source of pride that was not solely personal.

When the fighting was over, Creek brutality was not limited to warfare. Warriors would sometimes take captives, whether men, women, or children, from their engagements back to their town if transporting them was not too cumbersome. Having done this, the warriors would bring forward the elder women of the offended clan to decide the captive's fate. Early in their history, before the eighteenth century, the Creeks, like other native tribes in the region, were known to torture enemy warriors. Creek women had the honor of choosing the

torture method. Though they might die a gruesome death this way, such as being burned alive (the most popular choice), this gave warriors a final chance to prove that they were brave and could not be shaken. Those who failed to keep a straight face or who cried out during the process were subjected to the mockery of the onlooking crowd. In this way, the whole town, especially women and children (who did not participate in warfare), could find emotional satisfaction for their losses.<sup>28</sup> Still, they might otherwise decide to make a captive warrior a slave of the clan, and he would be expected to do agricultural work alongside women. For some men, being forced to do women's work rather than being allowed a warrior's death was a source of great humiliation.<sup>29</sup> Enslaved warriors were thus symbolically castrated.

On the other hand, captive women and children were never tortured, at least among the Creeks, and instead were more often adopted into the clan if not enslaved. This made up for the losses resulting from warfare, which were unsustainable if clans and towns expected to survive.<sup>30</sup> Children born from adopted women became full members of the clan and Creek society, fully capable of social advancement. The children of slaves did not inherit the status of slave and could also be adopted. It should also be noted that, before increasing contact with Anglo and Celtic-Americans, slaves did not make up the majority of the agricultural labor force. This was primarily the role of a clan's matrilineage. Slavery had no profit motive as it did amongst European slave-owners, and at worst was only meant to disgrace the enslaved. However, that does not detract from the psychological harm that many suffered as they witnessed the killing of those they knew and were ripped away from their own communities and families. William Bartram noted a Choctaw slave girl at one Creek festival who wept, with some sympathetic tears from those around her, at the memory of

her fallen father and brothers during the recital of a song.<sup>31</sup> However, this and other aspects of Creek life would change and adapt as it was continually confronted by the advent of American civilization making its way onto the southwestern frontier zone of Alabama, led largely by the descendants of Scotsmen and Irishmen seeking prosperity.

Creeks had already been interacting with Europeans and African peoples long before the United States was ever conceived. The Creeks had slowly increased their prominence in the southeastern region through warfare from which Europeans had also profited. During such events as the Yamasee War (1715-1717), the Creeks were involved in defeating nearby tribes and trafficking captured women and children northward into the Southern colonies for enslavement in return for payment, often in the form of firearms. Over time, the Indian slave trade slowed and dissipated as Europeans found the importation of African slaves to be more cost effective. Sometimes Creek warriors served as trackers who hunted down escaped slaves and returned them to their masters. If they happened to have already killed an escaped or stolen slave, they could cut the head off and bring it back as proof for payment. Early on, Creeks had been mostly opposed if not outright hostile to prospects of European encroachment and infiltration into Creek society. Over time, as they formed mutually beneficial associations as described above, they became used to these outsiders, both European and African, living on their borders. They became generally more accepting and adaptive, if only to stem the tide.<sup>32</sup>

The most prominent trailblazers in expanding relations with Creek Indians were traders. These traders, from various backgrounds (often Scotch-Irishmen), came seeking the fortunes that could be reaped from the trade in deerskins.

Creek warriors, who were responsible for providing game meat and other animal byproducts to their respective clans and towns, were adept at acquiring deerskins, and they proved to be the most reliable partners in this promising franchise.

However, opening trade with the Creeks was not as simple as striking up a deal with a warrior. Traders depended on enmeshing themselves to some degree within Creek society, and to do this they first had to marry a Creek woman. Without any clan association, foreigners in a Creek town would be unable to acquire the basic means of survival on their own without difficulty. Creek women were the ones responsible for the redistribution of goods amongst their kinsmen. By taking a Creek woman as their wife, white traders could connect themselves to these familial distribution networks. This was not the only benefit to marrying a Creek woman, though. Creek women also helped their white husbands to conduct business and learn the Creek language, or even serve as translators if husbands proved too incapable of learning Muscogee. Foregoing practical considerations, Creek women were often seen by some as simply being very beautiful and desirable "she-bedfellows."<sup>33</sup> Just like Creek men, white traders could and did take on multiple Creek wives.<sup>34</sup> However, a Creek wife could just as easily be a bane to her husband's business as well as a boon. A woman's role as redistributor could lead to her redistributing her husband's goods, which she and her clan considered to be her property anyways, to the rest of her kin and eviscerating all prospects for profit. An Indian wife could make or break a trader's hopes for economic gain. Acquiring a Creek wife had not always been a simple process either. Before the American Revolution, Creek men were sometimes violently opposed to white men and blacks taking Creek wives. This did not stop them from taking black and white wives for

themselves, however, whether they were women they had captured or escaped slaves seeking refuge in Creek country.<sup>35</sup> They also subjected foreign men who seduced married Creek women to the same forms of retaliation required for adultery. Nonetheless, clans grew to appreciate the benefits and goods derived from their women taking white husbands.

One of the most disruptive forces to come from these marriages were mixed-race children, often derogatorily called "half-breeds." In modern scholarship they are often referred to as "Mestizos" or "Scots-Indians." Before the arrival of Europeans and Africans, and for a long time afterwards, native peoples of the Americas did not have a conception of race. Thus, so long as their mother, regardless of race, was a member of a Creek clan by virtue of birth or adoption, all children born to these mixed-race couplings were considered fully Creek and subject to the same customs as "full-blooded" Creeks. There was nothing in place to bar mixed-race boys from going through the proper course of enculturation and engaging in warfare to become fully participating warriors. In fact, many Creek men of mixed-race would come to prominence in affairs between the Creeks, other tribes, and Europeans. Notable examples include Alexander McGillivray, William McIntosh, and William Weatherford, whose fathers were Scotsmen and who became wealthy planters with many slaves.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of men such as Alexander McGillivray, mixed-race Creeks provided a focal point for Creek towns to deal with European powers and eventually the United States government as it asserted greater dominance in the Southeast after the American Revolution. Alexander McGillivray was himself one of the "Medal Chiefs," a Micco selected by the United States government for recognition with a medal. By singling out these men with prestige

goods, the United States hoped to create a political connection with an individual they thought would be more likely to hold their interests by virtue of having a white father. Men like McGillivray would push, however successfully, to unite the Creek Confederacy into a more coherent Creek Nation which could resist the intrusion of whites onto their lands. With the creation of the Creek National Council around the turn of the eighteenth century, influential men within Creek society began to speak for Creek Indians as a whole. The existence of a Creek National Council might mislead some to believe that the Creeks of the early nineteenth century had a totally unified identity. However, there were many opposed to the idea of a select few speaking for the entirety of the confederation. To ease tensions among towns and neighboring whites, the National Council began replacing personal retaliation with police forces of warriors. Anyone killed by a police force was deemed to be killed by the nation, not by an individual.<sup>37</sup> Personal violence was beginning to be replaced by a precursory state violence, and this upset the traditional means by which a man proved his worth.

At the same time, men such as Benjamin Hawkins were trying to change the very fabric of Creek society through a project of civilization. The plan of the United States was to turn the Creeks into a fully agrarian society. To accomplish this, "Indian agents," as the white government officials were referred to, encouraged Creek men to give up hunting and take up farming in place of women. Women might be convinced to accept technological innovations that made farming easier, but they refused to allow men to take their place in the fields. Men, likewise, refused to give up hunting. Even though the decline of the deerskin trade over the course of the eighteenth century had deprived hunting of any economic incentive, the active use of land for hunting allowed Creek men to patrol their territory

and keep whites from invading their lands.<sup>38</sup> Though the Treaty of New York, signed by Alexander McGillivray in 1790, allowed for the Creeks to repel intruders, this did not stop white settlers from disregarding the treaty and settling as they pleased, much to the chagrin of local Indians. Some, like the later William McIntosh, were also actively betraying the Creek confederacy by selling off land, and many were becoming destitute as their resources diminished. Young men were becoming increasingly reliant on horse-theft, stealing slaves for an illicit slave trade, and raiding white settlements to make names for themselves and to gain a measure of economic prosperity.<sup>39</sup> They were also becoming increasingly rebellious, violently so, towards the changing social order. The Creek way of life was slowly slipping away, and the future looked bleak. Some young men were so eager to restore Creek tradition that they broke it further by dancing a Shawnee war dance at Tuckabatchee before commencing more organized hostilities against whites and the Creeks who did business with them in the Creek War of 1813, whereas before Creeks only danced after war was over.<sup>40</sup> For many, this would be their last war dance.

Before Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet Tenskwatawa, came to Tuckabatchee in 1811 to preach a war that would come in 1813 (the First Creek War), whites had already developed a fear and hatred of natives in the Southeast who sometimes raided their settlements. The sight of Creek warriors, tall and athletic, only partially clothed if not completely naked, covered in warpaint and tattoos, and clamoring in a strange tongue, could cut imposing if not terrifying figures. When civil war broke out in the Creek Nation, whites were both shocked and appalled by the carnage that Red Stick warriors left in their wake. One soldier during the Creek War, Lemuel Snow, described coming across the bodies of women and children "horribly mutilated and scalped."<sup>41</sup> Neal Smith,

a doctor accompanying the American army, described a post at the middle of Holy Ground from which hung the scalps of "infant[s] [and] the grey headed."<sup>42</sup> For those involved, the killing of women and children, and the subsequent defilement of their bodies (as whites conceived it), was an unmatched atrocity. Unlike the Creeks, whites before the war had responded to attacks with undiscerning retaliation, deeming one Indian the same as any other with no consideration of tribal, township, or clan affiliation. As a way of getting back at the Indians, some whites even took to scalping their dead bodies. Though some of what whites witnessed certainly would have been gruesome, there is still a sense from some of their claims that they were exaggerating the degree of violence, and this only further fueled the intensity of their response. Easily overlooked, as Robert Thrower points out, is that many victims of Creek violence were themselves mostly mixed-race Creeks, many of whom could probably pass for white. And one must not forget the atrocities committed by whites

against the rebellious Creeks, such as the massacre of the peace-seeking Hillabees and cruelty towards Creek women and children in general, which often appalled their own comrades in arms.<sup>43</sup> Despite the sense of abhorrence white men felt, they could still find a sense of mutual respect with some of the Creeks, both Red Stick and White Stick.

One Creek warrior stood out from the rest as a man of great integrity and honor: William Weatherford. Weatherford, a Scots-Indian, had been a leader of the dreaded Red Stick faction fighting for the restoration of the traditional Creek lifestyle. Yet, as Weatherford claimed, he was only fighting out of a basic sense of obligation to his people and to not appear as a coward. Weatherford further claimed that he had only hoped to prevent his fellow warriors from committing unnecessary grievances. He also apparently regretted the turn of events at Fort Mims near modern day Mobile, Alabama, a massacre which had inflamed white sentiment to



Pictured are Andrew Jackson (left) and William Weatherford (right), paragons of Scotch-Irish and Creek Indian masculinity respectively. (John Reuben Chapin / Library of Congress / Wikimedia Commons)

take up arms against the Red Sticks.<sup>44</sup> The noble character of Weatherford that many whites perceived endeared him to them so much that he has become, in many ways, a legendary figure when discussing the Creek War of 1813. He was even given a moniker in succeeding generations, “the Red Eagle,” which he never had at any point during his life. In 1855, long after the war was over and the Southeastern tribes had been relocated to the West, Alexander Meek presented Weatherford as a heroic and romantic figure in his long poem *The Red Eagle*. The dreaded enemy had become an ideal. One might even look at the juxtaposition of Andrew Jackson (whom the Creeks called Jacksa Chula Harjo, with the honorific Harjo), in many ways a man emblematic of the rugged ideal of Scotch-Irish masculinity, and Weatherford as a Richard the Lionheart and Saladin dynamic. In other words, the mysterious and hostile other became a familiar figure of admiration.<sup>45</sup>

Some white men even found a sense of comradery with the White Sticks who fought alongside them against the Red Sticks, representing the Creek National Council. Davy Crockett, another legendary figure of American history, claimed in his own biography that he had been put off by the notion of war until word of the Fort Mims massacre, particularly the slaughter of women and children, had steeled his resolve to fight. When he joined the war, he found himself fighting alongside a contingency of White Sticks. Crockett and these warriors connected over jokes, some about the violence they would be engaging in and attempts by Crockett to emulate the Creeks. Crockett noted one occasion in which the White Sticks had placed the heads of some defeated Red Sticks on spikes to ceremonially beat with clubs. When Crockett repeated their example and placed a few blows on the severed heads, the White Sticks clapped him on the shoulder and proclaimed “Warrior, warrior.”

Elsewhere in his book, Crockett describes his commanding officer’s donning of warpaint at the request of their White Stick allies.<sup>46</sup> The violence that whites and Creeks engaged in during the war was not always alienating, but could highlight their shared identity, however divided by cultural nuance, as men. Unfortunately, for all it was worth, this did not stop whites from further encroaching on diminished Creek lands after the war and attempting to do away with them entirely upon the passing of the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Those Creeks who did not migrate voluntarily gave considerable resistance, even to the point of violently punishing Creeks who cooperated or dealt with whites, such as a group of women in 1828 who were brutally whipped till their breasts were “cut to pieces” for living with white men. Such punishment was carried out by Creek warriors.<sup>47</sup>

On the American frontier that became Alabama, men’s sense of worth and dignity, whether they were Scotch-Irish whites or Creek Indians (in the pre-modern, racially ambiguous sense), was intertwined with the use of violence. Despite the physical and emotional harm of violence for men and their loved ones, they continued to be violent. Before white European values had even become ingrained in parts of Creek culture, Creek men were already incentivized to be violent in order to find a place in their society and find women with whom they could have families. Matriarchy in this case had done no better than patriarchy to decrease the incentive to be violent. The Creeks desired and loved peace, but a young man could not find the respect of his fellow men or even women without a willingness to pursue bloody trophies and prove himself as a warrior. Much the same could be said of white men, especially those of Scotch-Irish origin. Still today, Alabama and the rest of the South is haunted by a legacy of violence, especially racial violence, that colors the rest of



the nation's perception about Southern character. Recent years have seen a spate of violent shootings committed by resentful young men across the nation who think that violence can provide them emotional satisfaction, and there is an increasing awareness of sexual violence and coercion committed by men in positions of power. As the experience of Creek men and white men on the Alabama frontier demonstrates, violence is a problem that can transcend cultural divides. Yet, men could and still can look past these differences and connect with one another as men in meaningful ways. It is perhaps all too easy to forget as well that those who could speak well and give a voice to men's hopes and fears, such as the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa had done for the Red Sticks, were as worthy of admiration as the most accomplished warriors. Hopefully, a mutual understanding of the struggle to craft masculine identities will one day fully dissuade men from violence as the means of proving honor and self-worth. ■

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A map of the Horseshoe Bend peninsula that was the site of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. (*The Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812* / Wikimedia Commons)

# When the Tallapoosa Ran Red

## Andrew Jackson, the Red Stick Creeks, and the Battle of Horseshoe Bend

by Lee Rives

Like many aspects of American history, the early settling of the United States is subject to a great deal of contention. For a long time, Americans have tried to push away memories of the bloody and ferocious hatred that simmered between Native Americans and European American settlers in the Southeast. While it is popular to remember Native American resistance in the West, in the context of the Western film genre and memorialization of the bravery of the Western tribes, the same is not seen with the Creek resistance to European

American settlers in the Southeast. This conflict was caused by competition for land and resources, as well as mutual distrust between settlers and Natives, eventually leading to civil war within the Creek Nation that spilled into a wider conflict with settlers. A prime example of this strife is the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, fought along the banks of the Tallapoosa River on March 27, 1814. At Horseshoe Bend, a force of Tennessean and allied Creek and Cherokee troops led by Major General Andrew Jackson attacked a Native

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American encampment to devastating effect. Coming after several major victories for Jackson, the Creek presence in the Southeast as both an ethnic group and as a fighting force was in a tenuous position at the time. During the lead up to the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, Jackson was in a position that promised to quickly end the conflict and open the Southeast for settlement by European Americans. As the culmination of Jackson's campaign against the Red Sticks alongside his Native American allies, the Battle of Horseshoe Bend was the breaking point of large-scale Native American military resistance in the Southeast.

As European American settlers migrated southward into Native American lands, many complications arose. The presence of the settlers and a choice made by some Native Americans to adapt to European ways caused "a growing rift between the progressive and nativist Creeks."<sup>1</sup> While some progressive-minded Creeks saw opportunity in the presence of the European American settlers, the nativist branch perceived only a growing encroachment on their way of life. These dissimilar views drove the Creeks to what started as a largely self-contained civil war, with the progressives siding with European American settlers and the nativists fighting the loss of their culture and sometimes resorting to violence.

Some European elements of civilization, such as roads large enough for wagons, reliance on trade for metal items, and the introduction of livestock all had devastating effects on various sectors of Creek life. The introduction of the American Federal Road, which linked New Orleans to Washington, D.C., led "to increasing non-Indian traffic through Creek territory," and raised tensions between settlers and Creeks. Another factor adding to tensions was the growing Creek reliance on trading deer hide for European goods. Overhunting of white-tailed deer depleted a traditional Native American food

source and this shortage was compounded by the introduction of European livestock that "[disturbed the Creeks'] corn fields... [and] also competed with deer for cane and other foods."<sup>2</sup> Tensions increased between settlers and Native Americans along the Federal Road and conditions rapidly deteriorated into open, often bloody conflict. The Native Americans took "increasingly drastic measures to effectively halt the encroachment" and it was not long before "several Upper Creeks murdered two families in present-day Tennessee as well as two men along the Federal Road."<sup>3</sup>

This, combined with rapid expansion of European American settlements and a widespread effort by these settlers to change Native American culture, proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back. In response to the murders, "Federal Indian Agent Benjamin Hawkins... demand[ed] the execution of those responsible and threatened federal intervention if these demands were not met." The Creek National Council agreed to Hawkins's demands, which led to discord within the Native American community.<sup>4</sup> As time went on, the situation stabilized, but the point of no return had been reached in Native American and European American relations. Some Native American groups had simply had enough of European American advancement and decided to fight back against the loss of their cultural identity and ancestral lands. One muggy August afternoon, a group of Creek nativists known as the Red Sticks attacked an American outpost called Fort Mims. They were led by a man of mixed Creek-European ancestry named William Weatherford, who some say was also known as "Red Eagle" and was one of the influential leaders of the Red Stick movement. Fort Mims was populated by European American settlers, friendly Native Americans, and soldiers from the Orleans Territory. The resulting massacre led to the "[slaughter] of every white person [the Red Sticks] could reach," and even the

burning of those who had sought shelter in the houses within the fort.<sup>5</sup> In the wake of the massacre, tales were spread of the horrors committed by the Red Sticks from the scalping of all the white women and children, to pregnant women killed and their unborn children cut from their wombs. In hindsight, the truth and propaganda of the day are likely heavily mingled. Whether or not the stories of extreme savagery are to be believed in full, it is clear that the Red Stick warriors spared no one in their path at Fort Mims, killing men, women, and children without distinction. A small number of settlers and soldiers managed to escape and flee back to the more populated regions, taking with them the story of the massacre at Fort Mims.

As the news spread throughout the Southeast, the settlers grew anxious. Many worried about similar attacks across the American frontier, and panic spread along with the news. By the time the news reached Nashville, Tennessee, the public was terrified and sought a decisive leader. Major General Andrew Jackson, itching for glory and having been a longtime advocate for military intervention against the Natives, reacted before national leadership, or even the Governor of Tennessee. He quickly gave "general orders to his militia to rendezvous at Fayetteville for immediate action." Jackson sprang into service even though he was recovering from a recent bullet wound from a duel and severe blood loss.<sup>6</sup> From the outset, Jackson's objective for the campaign was clear: the subjugation of the Creeks to the European American agenda and revenge for the slaughter at Fort Mims. After a hasty assembly and failing to meet a vital supplier, Jackson's "2,500 volunteers and militia" set out to meet a second force of roughly the same size and begin the campaign that would lead to the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.<sup>7</sup> Undersupplied and ill-fitted for the coming winter, Jackson's forces nevertheless took the offensive and managed several strong

victories which ended in brutal defeat for their Native American foes. Jackson and his Tennesseans "unleashed a widespread assault of savagery against the Indians" in all the battles leading up to the battle of Horseshoe Bend.<sup>8</sup> The Tennesseans saw major success in almost all of their battles, largely due to better armament and the employment of European tactics against the Native Americans. Jackson's men were trained as a united fighting force, well armored and versed in the use of muskets, as they were outdoorsmen and farmers. The Native Americans, on the other hand, did not often fight as a cohesive force and while some had muskets, they did little to make up for their numerical disadvantage.

This is not to say that the Tennesseans saw only victory during their campaign in present-day Alabama. One troublesome setback occurred near what would later become the site of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend when the Red Sticks "attacked... at Enotachopco Creek" causing much confusion among the militiamen, who "panicked and were about to flee when Jackson rode up and implored them to turn around and fight."<sup>9</sup> After a lengthy but indecisive chase through the woods, the Tennesseans retreated to lick their wounds while the Native Americans did likewise, waiting for another opportunity to attack. Incidents of confusion and breaking of ranks under pressure both in battle and in the face of steadily dwindling supplies occurred throughout the campaign. This was also related to the less than professional caliber of Jackson's militiamen, who were weekend warriors at best. Throughout the campaign, Jackson struggled to keep his troops disciplined as the weather cooled and their supplies were exhausted until he was forced to "quietly [discharge] the most malcontented... and [allow the] others... to take a few weeks to refresh, restock, and prepare."<sup>10</sup> When Jackson's newly restocked troops advanced deeper into Alabama, the rebels



An artist's depiction of Jackson's Tennesseans climbing the Red Sticks' breastwork at Tohopeka. (New York Public Library / Wikimedia Commons)

found their hopes dwindling, and "Red Sticks from towns on the Coosa and upper Tallapoosa Rivers retreated to [a settlement the Native Americans called Tohopeka]," a Native American village, whose name translates to Horseshoe Bend.<sup>11</sup> The village owed its name to a curve of the Tallapoosa River, which enclosed the land of the village in a horseshoe shape.

Early on the morning of March 27, 1814, Jackson sent General John Coffee, a personal friend and longtime Indian fighter, to hold a position across the Tallapoosa from the main part of the village with "700 mounted gunmen and 600 allied Indians." Coffee's sole objective was to prevent "any escape of the... Red Sticks... [and] cut off any reinforcements."<sup>12</sup> Unknown to Jackson and Coffee, the Red Stick warriors had no plans of escape and any reinforcements from neighboring villages were already assembled at Tohopeka in solidarity with the Red Stick warriors and their families. To the Red Sticks, this would be the deciding

battle of the campaign, and they "were determined to be victorious or die in the process." Jackson also saw the outcome of this battle as a vital issue, writing "to his military superior, Thomas Pinckney ... that [the Red Sticks] are determined to hold [Tohopeka] to the last," but he did not realize just how vital its impact would be.<sup>13</sup> A natural fortress, the Red Sticks chose Tohopeka for its strategic value as well as the existing Native American settlement there. Surrounded on three sides by the Tallapoosa River, the only easy point of approach to the roughly one hundred acre peninsula was a narrow corridor of land guarded by "a stout breastwork... [that] ran five to eight feet high and had a double row of port holes," which easily allowed the defenders to put up a withering crossfire on advancing troops.<sup>14</sup> The breastwork provided a great deal of security to the Red Stick warriors and their families, as well as giving Jackson's troops, who had not anticipated such an impressive fortification, a nasty surprise. The "zigzagging

breastwork" spanned "four hundred and fifty yards in length" to cut off the peninsula of Horseshoe Bend. The Creeks had also "fringed [the banks of the Tallapoosa] with canoes," thinking they would provide escape for the women and children present if needed.<sup>15</sup> As the battle began, Jackson had a "3-to-1 advantage over the Creeks" as well as two cannons to support his troops.<sup>16</sup> He made quick use of both of these, by firing on the breastwork, though this proved ineffective. The Red Stick warriors, "feeling safe inside [the breastwork] ... whooped their derision," which only served to spur the Tennessean militia and irritate Jackson.<sup>17</sup> General Coffee's troops waited in position across from the village "while the main army led by Jackson was having difficulty destroying the barricade with [the] cannons."<sup>18</sup> After waiting for a time, Coffee's impatient allied Creek and Cherokee forces "crossed the river and attacked the enemy village," causing a vital distraction that allowed Jackson's main force to storm the breastwork.<sup>19</sup> Caught between Jackson's forces, the Red Stick warriors could not last much longer. They did, however, put up a valiant effort and manage to more or less hold their ground even under attack from two fronts. Regardless of their determination, it was clear that the Battle of Horseshoe Bend would soon be over. The remaining Red Sticks retreated to "a part of the secondary breastworks built over a ravine in the form of a roof with narrow portholes from which musket fire could be kept up" in a desperate fight to avoid capture, for fear of how they would be treated as prisoners. Nevertheless, it was not long before even these men were driven from cover and killed by Jackson's troops. The first Tennesseans over the breastwork were led by a young Sam Houston, until he was wounded in his right shoulder by two musket balls and forced to retreat.<sup>20</sup> Both sides "fought fiercely," but the numbers were simply against the Red Sticks and after a bloody struggle "at the rampart ... [Jackson's troops] finally scaled"

and overcame the Red Sticks' final line of defense.<sup>21</sup> Once over the breastwork, the Tennessee militiamen decimated their adversaries.

In the end, "some [700 to] 800 of approximately 1,000 Red Sticks lay dead," and though Jackson and the "hostile Creeks remained in a state of war for several months, in August 1814 they surrendered and signed the Treaty of Fort Jackson."<sup>22</sup> It is important to remember that it was not just a clash between European Americans and Native Americans, but also a clash between independent and American-allied Native Americans. In the case of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, this was represented by the "five hundred Cherokee and one hundred 'friendly' Creeks" who fought against the Red Sticks.<sup>23</sup> These Native American allies are responsible for some of the decisive points of the battle, such as the initial scouting of the area and the vital diversion that led to the militiamen taking the breastwork.

Few, if any, of the participants of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend realized the gravity of the militia and allied Native American victory and the taking of Tohopeka. In the immediate aftermath of the battle, the main concern of the Tennesseans was the care of their wounded and the burial of their dead. All but one of the Tennessean soldiers were given a burial "in the Tallapoosa River to prevent any Creeks from mutilating the bodies." The same river was also the final resting place for many of their Red Stick foes as well.<sup>24</sup> According to local legend, because of this mass burial, the Tallapoosa River was said to have turned red from the blood of both Creeks and Tennesseans.

Jackson destroyed the Red Stick alliance by crushing the heart of their resistance, as Tohopeka proved to be. When the dead were counted "the next day, 557 lifeless Indians were counted on the ground, but

many others died in the woods... Another two hundred corpses were spotted floating in the river." The number of Indians who later died of wounds received here is unknown, leaving the total death toll uncertain, but well above seven hundred Native Americans slain.<sup>25</sup> This massive bloodletting left the Red Stick resistance severely weakened and on the verge of collapse, while settlers and militiamen felt that Fort Mims was avenged by Jackson and their safety assured. Of course, it is not entirely Jackson or his decisions that should be credited for this victory. Jackson's numerical advantage would have likely brought about triumph no matter what, though it might have considerably increased the death toll of his troops. It was only thanks to a lack of discipline within General Coffee's detachment and sheer luck that the flanking maneuver which cemented the battle even occurred. In the end, though, the results cannot be argued.

After the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, the Red Stick alliance fractured, and all the major leaders either surrendered shortly afterward or were killed. William Weatherford surrendered personally to Jackson not long after the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. Impressed by Weatherford's bravery, Jackson "allowed himself to be talked into extending mercy to the Creek women and children" in exchange for Weatherford's agreement to "convince the Indians to leave the warpath and return to peace." In this deal, Weatherford also avoided punishment for his involvement in the Fort Mims massacre for the rest of his life.<sup>26</sup> Other Native American leaders, such as "Chief Menawa [the Red Stick leader at Horseshoe Bend,] and other hostile Creeks remained in a state of war for several months," until the signing of the Treaty of Fort Jackson.<sup>27</sup> At the treaty's signing, "the Creeks ceded [twenty-three] million acres of land to the American government, opening up Alabama to settlement and statehood" and the push for forced resettlement

of Native Americans began.<sup>28</sup> As more European American settlers entered Alabama, the Native Americans of the Southeast were steadily resettled in the west or forced to integrate into European American culture. Without Jackson and his victory at Horseshoe Bend, this probably would not have happened so rapidly. Fragmentation of cultural unity within the Native American tribes played a major role in aiding resettlement and integration, as those allied with the European Americans thought themselves more likely to be able to stay in their ancestral homeland. The Creeks, Cherokee, Choctaw and Seminoles led these efforts to integrate and earned the name the Civilized Tribes from their European counterparts. Sadly, Jackson's Creek and Cherokee allies were to be severely disappointed in the years following the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. Only small groups of Native Americans were allowed to remain in the Southeast as more European American settlers arrived, all hungry for land and safety from threats both real and imagined. The alienation of allied Native Americans by settlers, even after these Creeks and Cherokees had proved invaluable in clearing the hostile Natives from the Southeast, is perhaps the most heart-wrenching aspect of the whole ordeal the Civilized Tribes endured. No matter how hard they fought for their ancestral lands, be it with spear and musket or through adoption of the plow and European societal norms, they were still not allowed to stay.

The Battle of Horseshoe Bend was a major event that shaped the foundation of the state of Alabama. It can even be argued that it served as a blueprint of the way that Native Americans were treated throughout the westward expansion of the United States. Today, those that have heard of this battle probably only recall its name, not the great significance of it. After this point, Native American culture and ancestral lands were systemically and painstakingly



stripped from those Native Americans who managed to peacefully co-exist with European American settlers. The Red Sticks had emerged to fight back against this, attempting to preserve their culture and their traditional domain, but failed. In the wake of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, the Native Americans of the Southeast were forced to either integrate into a hostile society in small, scattered groups or migrate west to new, inhospitable lands on pain of death. The horrors of forced resettlement and the decline of Native American civilization in the Southeast can be traced back to the 1814 Battle of Horseshoe Bend. ■

## Notes

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26. Remini, *Andrew Jackson*, 57-62.
27. Updike, "Here We May Rest," 48.
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This visual timeline is one of the main exhibits in the Legacy Museum and traces the progression from slavery to mass incarceration. (Soniakapadia/ Wikimedia Commons)

## A Painful Past

### Reflections on the Legacy Museum and Unite Alabama

by Jessica Sweatt

Montgomery, Alabama is a city overflowing with historical significance. It was an epicenter for the slave trade during the early to mid-1800s, chosen as the capital of the Confederacy, bore witness to the ravages of the Civil War, and emerged as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement. If you take a stroll downtown, you will find the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, the First White House of the Confederacy, and museums honoring Rosa Parks and the Freedom Riders. Montgomery is also home to the Equal Justice Initiative, or EJI, led by Bryan Stevenson. Stevenson has committed his entire life to fighting

against racial injustice within the criminal justice system. The EJI represents children tried as adults and individuals facing the death penalty, many of whom it has helped exonerate on the grounds that they were wrongfully accused. In April 2018, the EJI opened the Legacy Museum – a memorial dedicated to illuminating the truth of racial injustice within the United States both in the past and present day.

A quote from Maya Angelou is displayed on the side of the Legacy Museum, acting as a precursor to what lies within its walls. As you approach the entrance, it looms

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above you in black cursive writing against white painted bricks: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." The museum itself was built inside a warehouse where slaves were kept before being sold at auction. The beautiful fountain that adorns the downtown area was once the location of the auction block. Since the museum is overflowing with information, I would suggest bringing a pen and paper to write down what captivates your attention since photography and video are not permitted.

The beginning of the self-guided, interactive tour addresses the history of the slave trade in Montgomery. Alabama held one of the largest slave populations within the South. By 1860, approximately 440,000 slaves lived within Alabama; 24,000, or two-thirds, of the residents in Montgomery County were slaves. As you continue through the museum, the information is displayed in categories showing the evolution of racial injustice within the United States. It begins with information on the slave trade, provides examples of the terror attacks inflicted on African-American citizens after emancipation, moves into the history of segregation, and ends by showing the viewer how mass incarceration is a legalized form and continuation of slavery.

My favorite part of my Legacy Museum experience was hearing the stories of Anthony Ray Hinton and Monica Washington. After being convicted of two capital murder charges, Mr. Hinton was sentenced to death in Alabama. He sat on death row for thirty years before he was exonerated and released from prison. After telling his story, Mr. Hinton asks the viewer to take a moment of self-reflection and ponder three important questions: What would you do if you were accused of a crime you did not commit, how would you act if you were sentenced to death for this crime, and how would you survive

on death row? He reminds each person of a statistic concerning individuals on death row in the United States – out of every nine people, one is innocent. Monica Washington was raped and impregnated by a prison guard at the Tutwiler Prison for Women in Wetumpka, Alabama. She gave birth to her daughter in prison, and the baby was taken from her after only twenty-four hours. She continues to educate people on the inhumane living conditions at Tutwiler, including sexual assault by prison guards, overcrowding, exposure to mold, and inadequate nutrition.

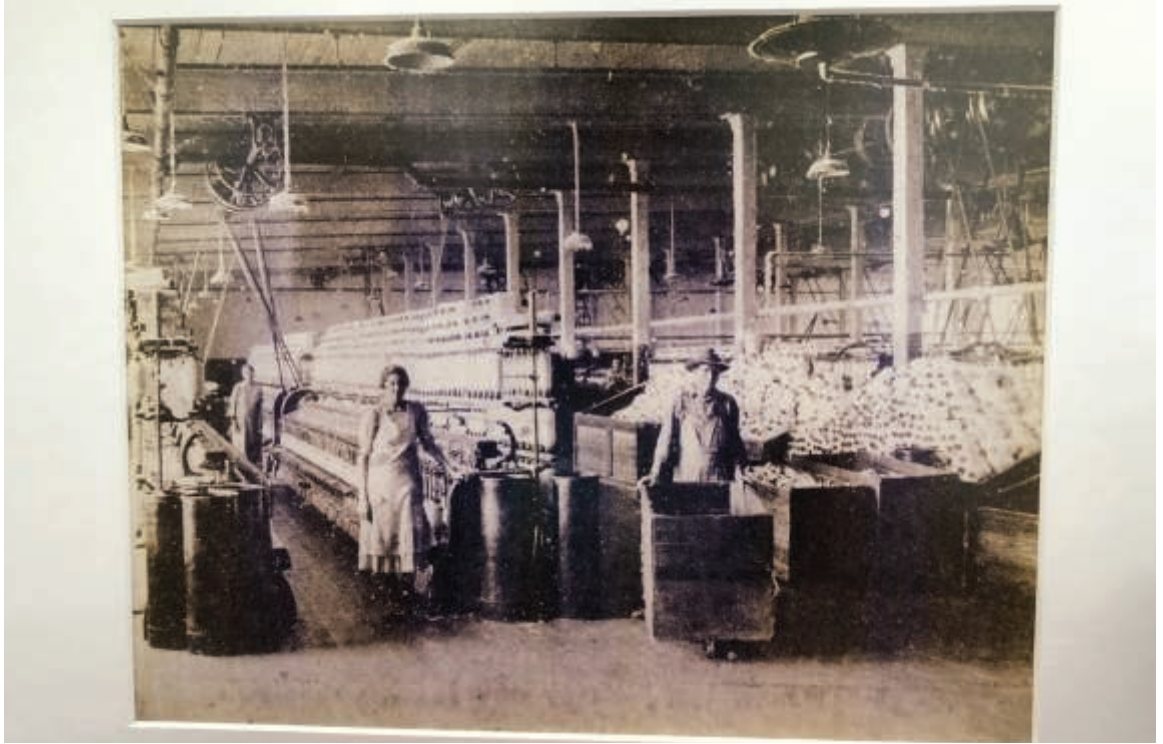
The final hallway is dedicated to educating guests on ongoing issues they could potentially help to alleviate. One significant problem brought to my attention was the racist language still found within the Alabama Constitution. The Alabama Constitution of 1901 was written with the specific intent to establish white supremacy and disenfranchise people of color and impoverished communities. Several amendments were included legalizing poll taxes that severely restricted the voting rights of African Americans and poor whites. When poll taxes were implemented in 1903, the number of eligible black male voters was reduced from 181,000 to less than 5,000. Over 40,000 lower-income white men became ineligible as well.<sup>1</sup> Although deemed unconstitutional by federal rulings long ago, the amendments that legalized poll taxes are still included in our current state constitution. In Section 256 and Amendment 111 concerning public school education, the Alabama Constitution still calls for racially segregated schools. Section 256 reads, "Separate schools shall be provided for white and colored children, and no child of either race shall be permitted to attend a school of the other race." The Alabama Constitution is the longest in the world, was written 118 years ago, and contains over nine hundred amendments.

In response to learning this information, several concerned citizens and I created Unite Alabama. This organization is dedicated to modernizing the Alabama Constitution to reflect the values of our democracy, including equality and opportunity for all. Unite Alabama's first goal is to pass a bill through the legislature that removes all references to poll taxes and racially segregated public schools. There have been two previous attempts to remove the racist language from the constitution; the 2004 initiative failed by less than two thousand votes. By educating as many people as possible concerning this issue, it is our hope the next time this initiative makes it to the ballot we can remove this antiquated language forever.

Reforming the Alabama Constitution is a small step towards implementing racial equality within our state and the country. Each of us has a responsibility as American citizens to protect and uphold the foundational values of our democracy. I highly recommend a visit to the Legacy Museum, as it will introduce many ways you can use your voice and your vote. ■

## Notes

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The inside of the Opp Cotton Mill in the early 1920s. (Southern Independent Bank, Opp, AL)

# Weaving the Threads of a Community

The Textile Mills of Opp, Alabama

by Kelley Pierce

The textile industry has been a driving force in the United States economy for generations, especially in the South. The Southern states have been a leading grower of cotton for 150 years. Up until the Civil War, there was not much need for other economic enterprises due to the profitability of cotton production with the use of slaves. However, after the emancipation of slaves in 1865 and the tremendous debt of Southern states following the war, there was a dire need for new industries. To many proponents pushing for a "New South," textile mills seemed to be the answer to the region's poverty and unstable one-crop

economy. The years following the Civil War showed a rapid increase in the number of textile mills across the South, including Alabama. Textile mills contributed to the growth of small communities such as Opp, Alabama, which had two mills by 1923. These mills provided jobs for local residents and a source of revenue for the state as a whole. The city of Opp and the surrounding community benefited in many ways from the two mills. However, the closing of the two mills devastated the city and Covington County as a whole. In the end, the two textile mills in Opp perhaps did more harm than good.

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The American textile industry did not originate in the South. It was imported from New England, which had a flourishing textile industry dating back to the early 1800s, when the region suffered from economic decline following the Revolutionary War. The development of the textile industry in the New England area afforded an opportunity for growth and revenue. "Had it not been for the vigorous development of the cotton textile industry," argues historian Stuart Bruchey, "the eight decades following the close of the American Revolution might have come down in history as the era of the great decline in the New England states."<sup>1</sup>

The inhabitants of the New England area looked to a few different options for employment, including farming, but rocky and sandy areas near the shores in New England were not suitable for growing good crops. Small gatherings of farming families settled further inland and brought with them skills and knowledge of weaving and spinning threads into fabrics. Since the farms were scattered and villages secluded, families had to provide for their own basic needs, which included cloth and tapestries. According to historian Nancy Bogdonoff, "the homegrown, handwoven textiles were a melding of homeland tradition, toil of the new land, sheepraising, spinning, dyeing, and weaving – literally a woven heritage of New England perseverance and ingenuity."<sup>2</sup> With rapid population growth and soil unusable for commercial farming, New Englanders' search for an alternative economic base took them to a young Francis Cabot Lowell, who created the first complete American textile mill in Waltham, Massachusetts in 1814. In building this mill, Lowell used knowledge gained from his trips to textile factories in England. Lowell chose to locate his mill along the Charles River, as it could provide both power and easy access to shipping lanes. This location also allowed Lowell to take advantage of failing local farmers and their family members as a source of labor. His decision

to start a new factory has affected the lives of people from its inception to present day.<sup>3</sup> In the 1830s, at least sixty-seven towns in New England were prominent cotton cloth producers.<sup>4</sup> Lowell's textile mills offered new opportunities for area farmers who saw declining economic returns for their backbreaking labor. "Due to Lowell's success, many new mill towns just like it began to sprout up along rivers across Massachusetts and New England. Around forty-five mill towns were established during the industrial revolution in Massachusetts alone."<sup>5</sup>

Following the Civil War, the New England textile industry moved to the South, enticed by cheap land, cheap taxes, and cheap labor. Locating the textile mills close to where the cotton was produced would not only provide easy access to the raw product, but it would provide jobs for the many poor Southerners and much-needed revenue for the region. Some areas of the South did not have direct access to water, like some others did, for powering the plant or for moving the finished product. However, the South did have the railroad system.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, the areas in the South that already had railcar traveling routes could aid in transporting both the raw cotton and finished textiles elsewhere in the country.

After the Civil War, the South reeled from the financial losses of the war and looked to various industries to induce economic growth in the area. Beginning in the mid-1870s, more progressive-minded Southern leaders seeking to diversify the South's economy started the Cotton Mill Campaign, calling for a "New South" based solidly upon factories and agriculture. Henry Grady, editor of the Alabama Constitution, led the New South movement. The movement pushed the South towards industrialization and modernization, instead of relying solely on large farming plantations for economic stability. The New South movement did,

however, support small family farms. Attempts to sway Southern plantation owners saw only limited success. In a compromise of sorts, they did agree to the less invasive option of limited industrialization. The 1875 Alabama state constitution contained provisions to prevent state monies from being applied to the promotion of industry. Despite such restrictions, the textile industry continued to grow in the South, which became the nation's leading textile producer by the 1900s. "From 1880 to 1900 the number of cotton mills in the South grew from 161 to 400. Alabama had 83 mills by 1929, and 85 by 1942."<sup>7</sup> Overall, Southerners welcomed the mill industry because it would give men an option to get out of sharecropping and escape debt. Even women and children could work in the mills, adding to the family economy.

Not many acknowledged the female workforce during that time, but George Makepeace, a Northern mill owner, recognized the potential for a stable labor force to be found amongst the women and children of the South.<sup>8</sup> Some of these women and children were trying to survive in the agricultural arena without the aid of a male family member, who might have been crippled or killed during the Civil War. Makepeace also believed this workforce would be less volatile than their male counterparts, who might be more aggressive in forming labor unions and fighting for higher wages and shorter workweeks. Meanwhile, the women were happy to be out of the fields. As for the children, Makepeace argued, many families had children who were regular workers in the farm fields, and if the children could handle the hard labor of the farm, they could handle work in the mills. Perhaps most advantageous, at least to mill owners, were increased profits from employing lower waged women and children. In some cases, families kept their land and continued farming on a limited basis. Men,

in particular, chose to work in the mills in the winter months, and would go back to their farms during the summertime and harvest seasons.<sup>9</sup> In addition, whites made up the majority of the workforce in the mills after the Civil War. Perhaps some of this can be attributed to the mix of genders in the mill. Mills employed women and children along with the men, and white workers were not expected to work side by side with black workers. Having black laborers on staff affected the ability of a manager to hire white workers. Even though the emancipation of slaves brought freedom, racism was evident in the lack of diversification within Southern textile mills.<sup>10</sup>

Even though the textile industry offered men, women, and children a new way of making a living, the exploitive nature of capitalism made working and living in the mill villages less than ideal for workers. Many of the workers needing a place to live were offered housing by the owners and, as a result, "mill villages" popped up around the textile mills. At times, these were assembled somewhat like barracks or dormitories, but were most commonly built to be smaller single-family dwellings. The homes provided basic necessities, and most of the poor workforce felt very fortunate to have them. Having a place to live with running water and a toilet was a luxury for most compared to their past living situations.<sup>11</sup> These small dwellings housed the working family and, in some cases, grandparents or other relatives. The homes could be purchased or rented, both of which sometimes led to debt that the family could not overcome.

The mill company provided many facilities to its poor workforce, such as churches, schools, and stores. All of the facilities provided to the workforce could benefit the workers, but they also kept them segregated from the rest of society. They had no need to leave the village, and most

did not have the monetary means to do anything outside what the mill village provided. This is particularly true since many mill owners paid their workers in company scrip, which could only be used at the company store where workers were forced to buy over-priced necessities. The mill was their source of income and the complete focus of their lives. In a sense, workers had traded the freedom of the farm for total commitment to a mill job and lifestyle. They had become slaves to this industrial paternalism. "It was a psychological hardship to exchange farm or mountain isolation for village living," argues historian Mildred Andrews. Moreover, "it was hardship to exchange a 'do-as-one-pleases' living style for that of the mill bell, which said 'come and do it now' and until the bell rings to quit."<sup>12</sup> Even though the people appreciated and liked their job within the walls of the mill, there were adjustments to be made to this new way of earning a wage, which workers often referred to as "wage slavery."

Although in many cases mill villages provided improved living standards for mill employees, workers found the jobs to be difficult and dangerous. In addition, some still had a problem giving up their freedom to work by their own schedule, instead having to adhere to the established hours of the mill. Many times workers at these mills were required to work 11-12 hour days with minimal breaks. These men, women, and children spent their days around deafening and dangerous equipment, and were exposed to chemicals and cotton lint from the production process. Children worked around looms where they could easily lose fingers while doing their jobs. Machinery was especially dangerous for women and girls with long hair. The machines' moving parts sometimes caught the long hair of the women and girls, scalping them in the process. The dust and chemicals affected the long-term health of many. Diseases such as Brown Lung were

always a possibility after exposure to the mill environment. Many jobs in the mills required workers to constantly stand on their feet for the entire workday. Many were so poor they could not afford shoes, and thus were forced to endure long workdays barefoot.

One Southern city that shared the characteristics of a textile mill village is Opp, Alabama. Opp is a small community formed in 1901 when the L&N Railroad laid track through the town. It was like many communities at the time – a farming town surrounded by cotton fields that drove the town's economy. To compliment its agricultural base, cotton was grown in the surrounding areas of Opp, and was even ginned in town. Opp's leaders began thinking of ways to use the raw and ginned cotton to create more jobs in this small community. Angus Smith Douglas, a prominent businessman and citizen of Opp, led the campaign to bring in a textile mill to the town. Douglas found a site located along the railroad and began planning for what would come to be one of two textile mills located in Opp. The first mill opened in 1920 and was known as the Opp Cotton Mill; it quickly became the largest industry in the city.<sup>13</sup> The Opp Mill was so successful that Angus Smith Douglas, along with C. H. Cole and C. W. Mizell, two men who worked for the Opp Mill, began plans to build a second mill in town. However, Douglas died before the mill was completed in 1923. Cole and Mizell suggested naming the mill in memory of Douglas, but his widow refused this suggestion. Instead, she came up with something better: Micolas. The "M-I" stood for Mizell, the "C-O-L" for Cole, and the "A-S" for Angus Smith (Douglas).<sup>14</sup> According to Coleman Moseley, a past employee of the mill, the two mills were so successful that there were even plans to build a third.<sup>15</sup> The owners purchased a lot for the construction of the proposed mill, but a labor survey indicated that the plant should be located in another area.<sup>16</sup> The survey paved the way



for the new mill to be located in Phenix City, Alabama rather than Opp.<sup>17</sup>

Before the Opp and Micolás Mills opened, anyone in Opp wanting a job outside of farming would have to travel extensively for work. Once the mills opened, hundreds of industrial jobs were created for those in the community and the surrounding area. In 1928, the mills employed approximately five hundred people.<sup>18</sup> By 1973, this number grew to over 1,150 persons.<sup>19</sup> The two mills manufactured over sixty-three million yards of fabrics, with gross sales exceeding thirty million dollars.<sup>20</sup> The annual payroll for 1974 exceeded \$7,750,000. Assuming the mill staff remained at 1,150 people, the average income for mill workers was approximately \$6,739.13 in 1974. The average wage in the United States in 1973 was \$7,580.<sup>21</sup> However, in Alabama, Covington County ranked thirty-second out of sixty-seven Alabama counties in per capita income in 1969. In 1999, thirty years later, Covington County's per capita income ranking had dropped to forty-second out of sixty-seven counties.<sup>22</sup> This suggests that the Opp and Micolás Mills did not bring prosperity to the county. Even as the country and the textile industry entered a recession in the latter part of 1974, the employees of Opp and Micolás were paid "for every normal working day throughout the entire year," according to a report in the local newspaper.<sup>23</sup>

The Opp and Micolás Mills would often employ multiple members of a family. One such case is Corey Boothe and his father Kenneth Boothe. Kenneth began working in the mills in 1964.<sup>24</sup> He began his career at one of the lower paying jobs in the mill and retired forty-three years later as a member of the management staff.<sup>25</sup> His son, Corey, joined the staff of the Opp and Micolás Mills in 1987 at the age of sixteen. The mill provided him a means of employment after school, on weekends, and full-time during summers.<sup>26</sup> Both Kenneth and Corey recount that the

work in the mill was, at times, difficult and dangerous. "The slashing department was one of the most dangerous departments in the mill," explains Corey. "Employees in this department were exposed to extreme climate changes due to extreme heat or cold. There was no heating or cooling in the department."<sup>27</sup> In addition, Corey stated that employees in this department also worked with extremely large and dangerous pieces of moving machinery, including a hoist system that maneuvered thousands of pounds of product. Other dangers included high electrical voltage, high pressurized steam reaching temperatures of 300 degrees, and highly flammable cornstarch.<sup>28</sup> Because of the dangerous nature of millwork, Corey received several severe injuries during his tenure in the mill. These included cuts that required stitches, burns from the steam, hyperextension of his knee, smoke inhalation, electrical shock, and a chemical burn to his eyes that caused a loss of vision for two weeks. While not all areas were considered dangerous, there were definitely hazards. Mill hands especially recalled the noise and dust. "The machinery was literally deafening," writes historian Wayne Flynt, "leaving many operatives with impaired hearing. And the dust was so bad in the carding room that one worker remembered when cylinders were being cleaned that he could not see men on the other side of the machine."<sup>29</sup> Workers knew the risks and were willing to take them for the wages they earned.

Mill managers tried to minimize risks to employees by sectioning the more dangerous work areas from other departments. Chris Jacobs, who was employed at the mill for over twenty-four years, stated that there was an "Opening Room at the beginning with a Cloth Room at the other end, and in between, it had the Card Room, Spinning Room, Slashing Room, and the Weave Room."<sup>30</sup> In addition to these various rooms, electricians and maintenance crews occupied spaces in



The Opp Cotton Mill, built in 1920. (Southern Independent Bank, Opp, AL)

another area of the mill. These areas were sectioned off, either by curtain or wall, to prevent contamination of the product. For example, in the Opening Room, employees opened the baled cotton or polyester, and the process of blending the fibers began. In most cases, the workers in this section of the mill were male. The opening of the bales required the use of large, sharp tools and a good deal of physical strength. As workers of each section of the mill completed their work, the product moved along until it reached the Cloth Room, where workers packed the product for shipping. The sections were thoughtfully laid out to make the manufacturing process flow as safely and efficiently as possible.

The employees of the mill worked on one of three shifts: 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., or 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Some departments ran seven days a week when production was at its peak, and some employees worked twelve-hour shifts. Most employees did not mind the extra hours, as they allowed them to make overtime pay. According to those interviewed, the pay rate at the mill was better than minimum wage. For example, Juanita Jacobs, who worked

in various areas on an as-needed basis, earned \$10.00 per hour by the time she left the mill in 2007.<sup>31</sup> That was nearly double the federal minimum wage at the time.<sup>32</sup> In fact, most employees felt very good about their pay and benefits, such as vacation, health insurance, and access to additional facilities, such as the preschool offered by the mill. However, employees did comment that the extra hours intruded upon the time spent with their families. Surprisingly, employees in managerial positions had a more difficult time finding time to be with their families. Kenneth Boothe remembers that his change from an employee to manager made a big difference in his workday. As an employee, he had scheduled eight hour days and, at times, worked overtime. However, as a manager, his workdays got longer and the stress greater.<sup>33</sup> "On the Department Managers job, regular hours were from 5 a.m. until 5 p.m. with one hour for breakfast and one hour for lunch. Of course, if there were problems or disruptions in production, I was on call twenty-four/seven unless I was on vacation or out of town."<sup>34</sup> Kenneth worked in the Department Manager's position for about eighteen years, during which time he

believes he spent more time with the “mill family” than with his own family. Chris and Juanita Jacobs, a husband and wife who both worked in the mill, missed out on time with their children. Indeed, they set their schedules such that one of them was home with their children so they did not have to send their children to daycare.<sup>35</sup> Although Chris Jacobs may have missed some time with his children, he was thankful that either he or his wife was always available to care for them. Juanita was often able to get overtime hours, as the company needed her, which benefited her family’s economic situation. She truly enjoyed her position, which allowed the family some flexibility for taking care of the children.<sup>36</sup>

According to Jimmy Donaldson, Personnel Director for the Opp and Micolos Mills, the mills not only paid a good wage to their employees, they also provided some benefits, which are not common among other employers.<sup>37</sup> He remembers employees receiving “paid holidays, health insurance, life insurance, a credit union with payroll deduction available, a kindergarten for pre-school children, a swimming pool, tennis courts and hand ball courts, a scholarship program for employees’ children, and a recognition program for employees with twenty-five years of service.”<sup>38</sup> In addition, Donaldson states that the lowest paid wages were above the federal minimum wage. According to Coleman Moseley, former Purchasing Director and Accountant for the mill, the insurance program was good. He indicates that the mill negotiated contracts with Blue Cross Blue Shield and paid a portion of the insurance premium for the employees.<sup>39</sup> “Many of our employees were shocked when they finally lost their jobs and had to purchase insurance independently,” according to Moseley.<sup>40</sup> The retirement program provided a means for employees to contribute and save for a time when they no longer chose to work. Additionally, the credit union, which bears the name

Opp and Micolos Credit Union, and is still in operation today, afforded a way to save money and a means of extending credit. Employees could choose to have amounts deducted from their pay and placed on deposit with the credit union. This method made saving easier in that the money was deposited directly into the employee’s account, mitigating the temptation to immediately spend it. Employees who had loans through the credit union might have funds deducted and applied to the debt, helping them stay current on payments. In addition to this, the mill offered a pre-school program to the children of employees, as well as a swimming pool and a clubhouse that the children could visit after school to study or participate in the many games offered there. The mill even hired an adult to run the clubhouse and monitor the children as they played; it was almost a babysitting service for the families employed in the mills. The community, not just the employees and families living and working in the mills, used the pool and clubhouse.<sup>41</sup> All of the services were provided completely free to any employee of the mill, no matter their job rank.

Even though the mill provided jobs with good benefits, some in the city saw the work in the mill as demeaning. In the book *The Last Generation*, Harry Dickenson, a loom fixer, tells of the expectation of children to follow their parents into the mill workforce.<sup>42</sup> His story documents his family’s expectations to become nothing but mill workers.<sup>43</sup> Even after his service in the army, his family pressured him to return to the mill, and he did.<sup>44</sup> Dickenson’s story indicates regret at never pursuing another source of work. Coleman Moseley remembers times when some within the city who held jobs considered to be more prestigious looked down upon those who worked in the mill. The history of textile mills proves this to be true. Workers were often looked at as being somewhat clannish and a part of the lower class of

the city. They were commonly referred to as mill rats or lintheads. Despite the social stigma attached to millwork, Moseley also remembers that the city, not just workers, benefited greatly from the generosity of the mill management.<sup>45</sup> "The Mills were always contributing to Opp and its people through donations and contributions to different organizations," he remarks. "They encouraged membership in civic clubs such as the Lions and Rotary. They were huge investors in Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and were very active in the baseball program. Our people held positions on the school board, city of Opp, Covington Electric, and other organizations."<sup>46</sup> Additionally, the city would often use the resources of the machine and maintenance shop to work on various pieces of equipment as needed. This was a great benefit to the city. The mill did more than just help the employees and their families; they also helped the community around them. The Opp and Micolás Mills had a special scholarship program mainly for the children of mill workers, but also for the other children in the community. The mills each had numerous vending machines that were used to raise the money for the scholarships given to high school seniors. The scholarship amounts were not large, but they were enough to help mill family children achieve their educational goals.<sup>47</sup> Illustrative is Calvin Smith, who worked in the mill for thirty-four years. After graduating from Opp High School, Smith received one of these scholarships, which he used to pay for his education at Auburn University.<sup>48</sup> After graduating, he came back to the mill to work in the design department.

The Opp and Micolás Mills prided themselves in the fact that they were able to remain ahead financially while still providing all employees with a decent salary, new equipment for the mills, the homes in the mill villages, and any benefits for the employees. According to Jimmy

Donaldson, the mills, like any industry, saw good and bad times in their years of service. There was a time during the 1970s in which the mills had to cut back on their employees' hours, but there were very few employees that lost their jobs.<sup>49</sup> He also stated that during the times when the mills prospered they went to four shifts while working seven days a week.<sup>50</sup> Former employees of the Opp and Micolás Mills feel that the mills were an asset to the city of Opp over their years of service to the community. Wages are an important consideration for anyone seeking employment in any industry. Comments from former employees revealed that the mills paid above minimum wage even for the lowest paying jobs. The sample employee group that provided information about the Opp and Micolás Mills held jobs that ranged from floor sweeper to upper management positions. Corey Booth stated that he began working in the mills as a slasher making \$6.24 an hour in 1991, a time when the federal minimum wage was \$4.25 an hour.<sup>51</sup> He left in 2006 as a senior lead-man making \$18.20 per hour. Chris Jacobs started working at the mill for \$6.25 an hour in 1978 as a card room cleaner, and left in 2003 making \$11.50 per hour as a card technician, more than twice the minimum wage.<sup>52</sup> Also, the mill provided education benefits for employees with up to 80 percent reimbursement.<sup>53</sup> Employees who chose to further their education had the perfect opportunity to do so with the help of the mill. The level of benefits available to employees is a good indicator of the value the mill placed upon its workforce.

Like many textile mills in the South, the Opp and Micolás Mills provided housing for their employees and their families if they wanted or needed it. Housing was created in the area around the mill and was well known as the "Mill Village." The area was made up of small wooden frame homes that mill workers could rent or buy. Often

times, the families who wanted to live in the mill village would rent the homes for a while until they could raise the money to buy the homes they lived in.<sup>54</sup> Homes were not lavish, but they were big enough to house the family comfortably. Many of the homes of the Opp and Micolás mill village are still standing today, and there are still people who live in them. Jane Wallace, who worked over thirty-one years in the mill, remembers living in the Mill Village as a child. She recalled with fondness the days spent playing with other children of mill employees along the streets of the neighborhood.<sup>55</sup> She stated that, “although we weren’t rich, we didn’t know it. We were as happy as could be.”<sup>56</sup> According to her, there were many lasting friendships made during those days of play.

The mills enjoyed many years of success. However, after President Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) into law in 1993, the Opp and Micolás Mills were forever devastated. This trade agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico was signed on December 17, 1992 by President George H. W. Bush, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and Mexican President Carlos Salinas, and went into effect on January 1, 1994. The law promoted free trade among the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and gave tariff-free access to the markets in the United States. As critics of NAFTA predicted, millions of jobs were moved from the United States to Mexico where labor costs are cheaper. The law affected many industries across the United States much as it did the mills in Opp. The Opp and Micolás mills managed to hang on for a few years, but eventually filed for bankruptcy and were forced to cease operation in 2003.<sup>57</sup> Jimmy Donaldson was working at the mill at the time of the NAFTA signing. He believes that this trade agreement placed the textile industry in direct competition with foreign countries, which were paying much lower wages to factory workers.<sup>58</sup>

However, he also believes that the sale of the mill to Johnston Industries, and the resulting change in management staff and their philosophy, was detrimental to the mill.<sup>59</sup> Prior to the sale, the local management staff handled day-to-day operations and always had the mill, its employees, and the city of Opp in mind. Once Johnston Industries took over, owners with different priorities and goals managed the mill from New York. In the past, for example, the local staff had adopted a plan of reinvesting a portion of the profits each year in the company to keep it modernized and competitive. These kinds of decisions were not a part of the philosophy of the new management staff in New York, and contributed to the demise of the Opp mills.<sup>60</sup>

Kenneth Boothe felt burdened by the closing of the mill.<sup>61</sup> As a Department Manager, Kenneth was a part of one of the later groups to be terminated during the closing of the mill.<sup>62</sup> It was difficult for him to hear the stories of various employees soon to be without jobs who were trying to get a grasp on how their family could continue to live.<sup>63</sup> For a lot of the employees, it was a total loss of income, as many members of the household were employed at the mill. In addition to the loss of income, families also faced the loss of their medical insurance. No longer on the employee health insurance programs, former mill workers had to find new coverage, and bear the full cost until they could find other employment. To many, the loss of health insurance was as detrimental as the lack of income. The mill was the largest employer for the city of Opp, and also employed people from surrounding areas. The devastation was immense and weighed heavily upon both the employees and management staff.

With the prosperity the mills brought to the city of Opp and the positive effects they had on the lives of their employees, one is hard-

pressed to find a resident who has anything negative to relay in regard to the mill operation. The typical negative comments are in relation to the mills' adverse actions toward other industries within the city. Otherwise, most citizens realize the impact of the jobs and the extra benefits the mills provided to shape the city of Opp. People in this city still discuss how they miss hearing the mill whistle blow at each shift change. What was originally a sign for workers to rise and ready themselves for the day became an iconic part of the city. "Hearing the whistle in the mornings was as good as any alarm clock. As a child, I remember it signaled the start of the school day for me."<sup>64</sup> The workers in the mills took great pride in the product they produced and the job opportunities afforded to them. Many families grew up in the mills with fathers, mothers, and children who began working there as teenagers. They made a living and raised their families, teaching them not only the value of the dollar, but also the value of a good job and hard work.

Despite all the good that the mills brought to Opp, they also perhaps hindered further industrial development of the city. At the mills' peaks, Opp was home to more than 7,000 people. The most recent census of 2010 indicates a population of 6,659, and the 2000 census shows a population of 6,771. Those numbers have consistently dropped since the closing of the mills. Some people believe that the mills prevented other businesses and industries from coming to the city for fear of competition for labor. As a result, the mills were the only economic "game" in town for residents. Once the mills ceased operation, there were no other major contributors to the job market to fall back on. Some people moved to seek other employment. Those who remained were required to travel for work. Either way, the city lost enormous tax revenues from the loss of jobs and citizens. Not surprisingly, the downtown area of Opp closed up shortly after the closing of

the mills. There continued to be fewer and fewer dollars spent within the city itself. Some of the businesses lost after the mills closed are two jewelry stores, two furniture stores, one grocery store, one building supply, and several retail shops such as the Kenwin Shop and B. C. Moore's.

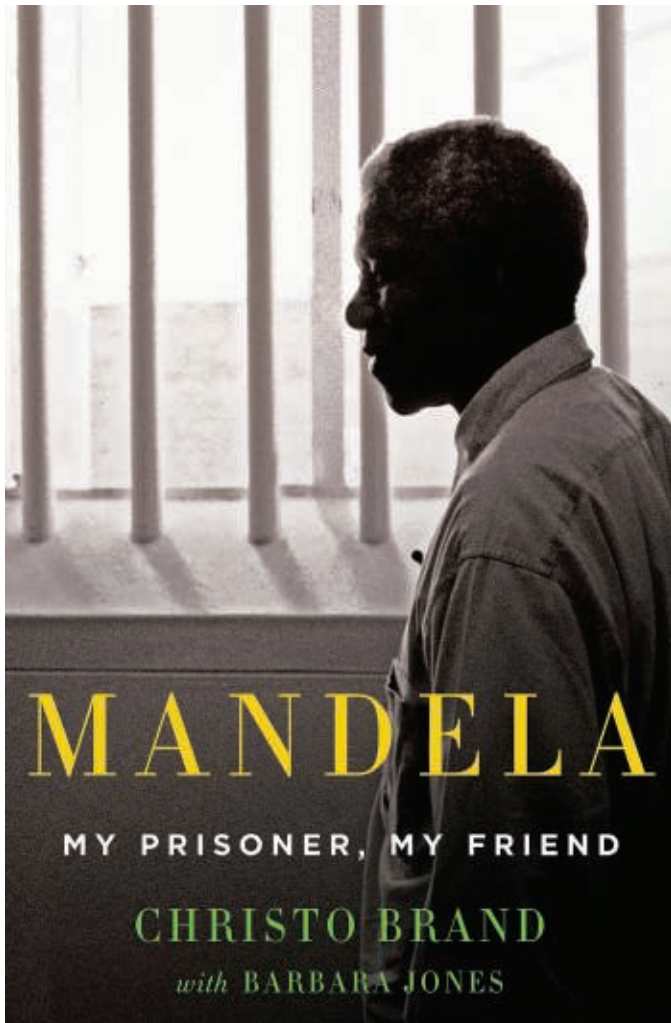
The city of Opp still bears the scars from the closing of the Opp and Micolos Mills. Not only has the downtown area seen business after business close, but the old mill building itself was eventually torn down, with the exception of a smaller office building, a small warehouse section that has been repurposed for a retail business, the kindergarten, and the clubhouse. The pool once owned by the mill was donated to the city, and has since closed completely due to a lack of funds for upkeep. The pool and clubhouse both sit quiet, missing the laughs of the children who once played within their confines. The site of the old mill has piles of rubble and weeds where buildings once stood that housed workers and products. The old mill whistle is forever silent. The city has truly suffered from the loss of this employer, which not only cared for its employees, but also cared for the city. A large majority of its citizens still have a connection to what was once a thriving mill operation. As the city seeks other sources of jobs and economic growth, the workers, the business owners, and the citizens of Opp fondly remember the Opp and Micolos Mills as a driving force in the success achieved by this small town. ■

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## Book Review

### Mandela

My Prisoner, My Friend  
by Brandon Walker

In *Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend*, Christo Brand conveys a first-hand perspective on the prison years of Nelson Mandela, which lasted from 1962 to 1990. These years are often recognized as a critical time period for the future South African president, as he would make great leaps in his leadership style, international image, and outlook for what his country would later become – a nonracial democracy. After briefly describing Mandela's early years, Brand inserts himself into the story and discusses

how he became a prison warder in order to evade perilous military service. He then moves onward to his frequent interactions with Nelson Mandela and his fellow prisoners on Robben Island, Pollsmoor, and Victor Verster, the prisons Mandela was held in during his twenty-seven years in custody. As time passes, Brand begins to see the prisoners more as close friends rather than prisoners. He develops a sense of comradeship with these political prisoners and, in the wake of national division,

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becomes one of the first Afrikaners to be converted to their cause. Brand ends his book by describing his continued relationship and admiration for Mandela, which seems to be mutual. His account offers a truly mesmerizing point of view and portrays a most unlikely alliance.

Christo Brand is uniquely qualified to produce this detailed work describing the prison years of Mandela. For the majority of the time, Brand was a warder specifically assigned to the "Rivonians," the key anti-apartheid political leaders who were sent to prison after the historic Rivonia trial in 1964. He would use this unique position to learn more about them, specifically Mandela, and eventually become extremely knowledgeable about their ideologies, routines, and struggles throughout their years in prison. However, the fact that Mandela had befriended the warder in his early years on Robben Island gives Brand a more unique perspective as a witness. His and Mandela's friendship would pave the way for Brand to see the events from two exclusive perspectives: one being that of a friend of the struggle, and the other as a warder put in charge of Mandela while in prison. In his special circumstance, Brand had the knowledge to tell the story from a warder's perspective which the prisoners would know nothing about, and from the prisoners' perspective which most white warders would know nothing about. Christo Brand is more than equipped in knowledge, experience, and personal relationships with the Rivonians (especially Mandela) to write a detailed account of Mandela's experiences while he was imprisoned at Robben Island, Pollsmoor, and Victor Verster.

Brand's book successfully depicts the severity of apartheid in South Africa during this time. He uses examples to depict the harshness of racial separation in describing how the prisoners were treated, the chaos outside of the prison walls, and the drastic

separation of black and whites through legalized segregation. In doing so, Brand accurately describes the circumstances that gave birth to a revolutionary figure of the caliber of Nelson Mandela – one who would recognize the need for national unity, not only for the people of his own race, but for the entirety of the South African population. Another positive aspect of Brand's book that enlightens the evolution of Nelson Mandela is in the way Brand portrays Mandela's relationship with his second wife, Winnie Mandela. Although she is not given a large portion of context chronologically, Brand's comments on her significance to Mandela in his prison years are substantial. In one instance, Brand recalled seeing in one of Mandela's letters to Winnie (as it was one of his many jobs to monitor letters on Robben Island) how he wrote that her love was "literally keeping him alive."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, it shows how Brand's unique perspective of being Mandela's warder gives him the ability to share insight that may have been otherwise absent. Lastly, through his book Brand accurately demonstrates the sheer relatability of Nelson Mandela, which would prove to be one of Mandela's greatest attributes. Through the recollection of his time with Mandela, Brand is able to fully display the way in which Mandela would win over his captors, opposing forces, and many in the outside world, thus giving him the international support needed to pressure the white minority government into agreeing to negotiations. Brand first recognized Mandela's ability to relate to the most narrow-minded individuals on Robben Island. Mandela won over many warders there, including Brand himself, by being respectful, speaking in Afrikaans, and always conducting himself in a dignified manner. Brand portrays this in detail, which gives readers insight into the methods Mandela would use to initiate and sustain a positive relationship with his captors. Mandela would prove to be an expert in finding common ground and allowing it to

grow into friendship. Ironically, Mandela began the process of disarming apartheid in prison, with Brand serving as a direct result of such efforts.

*Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend* does contain some shortcomings. Although it gives some detail into how other prisoners followed Mandela willingly and how he was the undisputed leader, the book does not thoroughly explain why that was. Surely outside of block B on Robben Island, where Mandela's influence was not as dominant, there must have been some resistance towards his leadership – there is seemingly always resistance for any leader. For instance, Brand speaks very little about the younger generation of activists (influenced by the Black Consciousness Movement) which would come to Robben Island and, for a short time, resist Mandela's influence. Brand also fails to elaborate much on the opposing leaders of competing organizations, like Mbeki and his South African Communist Party. For Mandela's influence and leadership to be fully grasped, Brand could have incorporated how he still emerged as the undeniable leader even in the face of adversity in prison.

Another aspect of Brand's book that could be improved is its limited scope. Surely he had some white Afrikaner prison guard friends that shared a different opinion about Mandela and how the future of the country needed to be. Incorporating quotes or instances in which the opposite side of the spectrum was represented could bring more insight into why Afrikaners feared Mandela and the African National Congress. Brand seemingly represents one side of the struggle in this book, that being the side of African prisoners and their struggle. By adding more white perspectives into this work, Brand could have helped readers recognize the white mentality that led to much of the black oppression. This could ultimately bring about a clearer understanding as to why Mandela knew

that white acceptance was a necessity to a successful South African democracy. Despite these issues, Christo Brand's *Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend* is highly recommended. This book creates an easy-to-follow timeline about Mandela and Brand's interactions in prison and gives the reader insight into how Mandela coped with being in prison for almost three decades. Whether it be motivating young activists at Robben Island, playing table tennis on the top floor at Pollsmoor, or hosting personal visits at the house at Victor Verster, Mandela proved to be a survivor; Brand, likewise, proved a dedicated friend throughout much of that time. Personal memories throughout the book keep the reader intrigued to learn more about this unorthodox friendship. Brand creates a unique way to not only share his testament to the greatness of Nelson Mandela, but to also vividly describe what Mandela overcame for the sake of his country. This book would be great for anyone wanting to learn more about Mandela's prison years, particularly on the way he was able to convert individuals to share his ideologies, as he did with Brand. Through his book, Brand accomplished the unthinkable in grasping the events that created the Nelson Mandela that was respected, loved, and celebrated throughout South Africa and the world. ■

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Hezbollah banners among destroyed infrastructure in Tayibe Lebanon, about five kilometers from the Israeli border. (Taybeh / Wikimedia Commons)

# Ghosts of Galilee

## Why Israel's 2006 Invasion of Lebanon Failed

by William Ellis

In July 2006, a thirty-four day long war between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah altered the balance of power in the Levant and increased tensions between Israel and Iran, Hezbollah's benefactor. It was the first conflict between Israel and an Arab military force in which Israel was denied strategic objectives, and the first war they are widely considered to have lost. This conflict, in the same vein as the Vietnam War, proved that victory could not be secured merely with technological and air superiority. Hezbollah was better organized and trained than most had anticipated, adapting its strategy from experience in the previous

Israeli occupation and integrating Viet Cong inspired tunnel networks and North Korean designed bunker construction. Hezbollah also understood a "weakness" in Israeli society at large – that the general public would not be willing to stomach high casualties and that this would constrain the Israeli Defense Force's (IDF) strategy. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the defense establishment misread the public's perception of their actions both in Lebanon and on the world stage, failing not only in the physical conflict but also in controlling the narrative. Instead, the conflagration propelled Hezbollah to short

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William Ellis is a junior history major and intends to minor in religious studies. He has a passion for near eastern history from ancient Babylon to the modern day and hopes to become a writer of popular and accessible histories of the diverse peoples and faiths of the region.

term political gains and lingering favor in the hearts of a significant plurality of both Lebanon and Syria. The group remains enigmatic to the West and impenetrable by intelligence agencies in a way that other militant groups are not.<sup>1</sup> The lack of military intelligence and the toll of domestic politics proved costly for Israel. The IDF struggled to accurately estimate the size or tenacity of the force they were up against or the complexity of the defense systems that Hezbollah had set up in preparation. The war revealed that technological superiority did not necessarily translate to tactical advantages and that quality of training was a more important factor in victory. It exposed the weaknesses of the IDF on the ground as well as the ineffectiveness of air power in suppressing a surprisingly popular resistance.

It is difficult to analyze a single conflict outside the context of the events that preceded it. Through the 1980s, Israel's chief military concern was from Palestinian militias in the occupied territories and attacks launched from Palestinian factions in refugee camps in neighboring states. IDF units were pulled from their primary roles to operate as patrols in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, weakening their combat readiness and leaving them ill-prepared to fight an enemy more sophisticated than the rag-tag insurgency in Palestine. In Hezbollah, the IDF found a foe many times more ferocious and better armed. Hezbollah is a Lebanese Shia political party with a paramilitary wing and a firm commitment to liberate Palestine. Amal Saad's book *Hizbu'llah Politics and Religion* provides a detailed explanation of Hezbollah's political theorem and regional priorities. Founded in 1985, it has often been called a state within a state that rejects the formulaic and sectarian structure of the Lebanese government. The party did not partake in electoral politics until 1992, feeling as though the organization of state power

by sect threatened national unity. It is a product of Iran exporting the Islamic Revolution, birthed from the same ideological commitment to *valiyet-e-faqih* (Guardianship of Islamic Jurists). Hezbollah has also maintained ties with and shows strong support for Palestinian factions and expressed a sense of Lebanese nationalism and political independence from Tehran. Indeed, the name Hezbollah (Party of God) was suggested by Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, referencing verse fifty-six of Surah al Ma'ida.<sup>2</sup> The group initially drew from the pious Shia in Lebanon's south who split with mainstream Shia parties feeling they were insufficiently supportive of the Palestinian cause.<sup>3</sup> This issue over Palestinian refugees was at the root of the War of the Camps, a subject well documented in interviews collected by Rosemary Sayigh in her book *Too Many Enemies*, which can be summed up in saying that the Lebanese Civil War was a very complicated, multi-phase, multi-sided conflict. In the early 1980s, Lebanon was dominated by its Maronite population, backed by Israel. Hezbollah was not then considered the threat it is today, and only began to grow into the organization as it exists today after the South Lebanon Army collapsed and the subsequent hasty Israeli withdrawal in 2000. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) took over south of the Litani River and oversaw the ceasefire. After the withdrawal, and in contravention of the ceasefire's terms, Hezbollah began arming itself for the next conflict, importing military equipment from Syria and beginning construction on vast networks of defensive structures.

The turning point in Israel's perception of Hezbollah as an existential threat came with the victory of Hamas in the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections. Both Hezbollah and Hamas seemed willing to work within democratic constructs while pursuing similar strategies of armed resistance and refusal to

recognize Israel. After winning a majority of seats, some Hamas party legislators were detained without charges, and patrols in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were greatly stepped up. The use of tanks in some of these patrols created the unpleasant juxtaposition of young men throwing rocks at modern armor, and the IDF's heavy-handedness proved both ineffective and aggravating. Asking under-trained tank drivers to operate in densely populated urban areas also put immense stress on the crews, and contributed to a degradation of combat readiness. In February 2002, in what was then the Israeli settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip, a 120kg mine was detonated under a Merkava III, blowing the turret off and cutting the tank in half.<sup>4</sup> This incident shocked Israeli military brass, and inspired the tactics deployed very effectively by Hezbollah during the July War.

The crackdown in Palestine was the impetus for the Hamas capture of Gilad Shalit, the IDF soldier caught during a raid in Gaza seventeen days before the 2006 Lebanon War began. During the previous year, Hezbollah had reached out to Hamas, a largely Sunni group, hoping for a sectarian détente to further solidify an axis of resistance against Israeli aggression. The legitimization of Hamas in the PLC and the shifting power dynamics caused by an alignment of Hamas and Hezbollah were unacceptable to Israel's military establishment. Tensions seemed as high as at the beginning of the second *intifada* (uprising). The IDF, Hamas, and Hezbollah were all engaging in clandestine, cross-border raids. These, when successful on the Israeli side, neutralized key political and organizational figures within Hamas or Hezbollah, and from the Arab side, tended to be massive blows to Israeli morale and the conscience of a country that prides itself on never leaving a soldier behind. The strategy of kidnapping IDF soldiers and negotiating for prisoner exchanges

was proven to be effective. Hezbollah had allegedly tried and failed at four such attempts previously.<sup>5</sup> One raid near Zarit in Israel's far north, however, went as planned, but the blowback it caused spiraled into the July War and changed the way observers understand the region. On the morning of July 12, 2006, Hezbollah operatives, under the cover of a Katyusha rocket barrage, infiltrated Israeli territory and ambushed a border patrol unit.<sup>6</sup> Three Israeli servicemen were killed, and Eldad Regev and Ehud "Udi" Goldwasser were taken back into Southern Lebanon as hostages. Hezbollah intended to use the captured soldiers as bargaining chips in prisoner swap negotiations, but Israel wanted none of it and, despite initial confusion, pursued Hezbollah positions inside Lebanon that afternoon.

On that same day, a Merkava IV tank hit a mine inside Lebanese territory, killing all four operators. IDF soldiers tasked with retrieving the bodies were also hit, killing an additional man. The Chief of Staff of the Defense Ministry, Dan Halutz, advocated a strong response aimed at destroying the attackers' possible escape routes deeper into Lebanon and punishing the Lebanese government for its inability to disarm Hezbollah. What developed over the next few weeks was the Dahiya Doctrine, named after a sector of Beirut especially damaged during the war. The strategy called for a heavy bombardment of civilian infrastructure like roads and bridges to limit Hezbollah's mobility. A product of the Israeli Air Force (IAF), Halutz was a strong believer in the power of air superiority; the responsibility for Israel's aerial-centric strategy lies with him.<sup>7</sup> Instead of sapping popular support, aerial bombardment in southern Lebanon and suburban Beirut only increased the resolve of the local population. Frustratingly, despite the heavy bombing, Hezbollah's television station al Manar was never taken off the air and it continued to counter the Israeli narrative. The campaign of

aerial bombardment proved not only ineffective, but counterproductive, drawing condemnation and shifting the concern away from the Hezbollah attacks and kidnapping towards the collateral damage of the resulting response. Both the human and political cost of the Dahiya Doctrine was very high, and one is hard-pressed to find the strategic benefit. Undoing the Israeli government's message, al Manar was able to be picked up across the border, beaming the horrors of the frontline directly into Israeli homes.

In charismatic fashion, Hezbollah's Secretary-General, Hassan Nasrallah, utilized Shia religious traditions in his televised political speeches, drawing upon historical and religious references to embolden party members and sympathizers in the face of a superior fighting force. It is commonly believed that religious fighters and factions, for better or worse, tend to fare better than their secular counterparts. Some have contested that Shiism lends itself particularly well to a war of resistance because the faith is predicated on the righteous protest against unjust authority, even against overwhelming odds and in the face of death. Israel had defeated better armed Arab militaries in 1973 but had not faced an Arab force both as organized and committed as Hezbollah. The war being fought on Lebanese soil further solidified popular resolve and fed into the sense of martyrdom among the most loyal partisan fighters.

Maintaining a constant broadcast of the party's official line was vital for morale. The IDF's inability to force the broadcasts from the air while simultaneously causing terrible collateral damage in densely populated areas was the central failure of the aerial campaign. The premature IDF claim to have pacified the village of Maroun al Ras and the Hezbollah repudiation of this claim from blocks away is a particularly embarrassing example.<sup>8</sup> Even the famous IDF Maglan unit

that specializes in combat behind enemy lines found themselves outmatched. The IDF started operations in the area on July 19 and continued fighting until July 29, but was never able to completely capture Maroun al Ras or Bint Jbeil just a few kilometers inside Lebanon. This failure handed Hezbollah a huge morale boost and seeded doubt about whether the IDF was deserving of the reputation of competence it had earned in previous conflicts.

The aerial campaign achieved little in the way of softening up the resistance. Hezbollah prepared for precision airstrikes by building advanced, fortified bunkers, some as deep as forty meters and constructed under the guidance and expertise of North Korean advisors.<sup>9</sup> Hezbollah responded to the aerial campaign by unleashing hundreds of highly mobile, truck-mounted Katyusha rockets. These weapons, while aged and inaccurate, had ranges of up to forty-five kilometers.<sup>10</sup> Such a range was capable of reaching Haifa, one of Israel's most important economic centers, terrifying upper Galilee during the thirty-four day ordeal. Over the course of the war, Hezbollah fired hundreds of rockets per day into Israel, totaling some four thousand by the end of the conflict. The inability of the aerial campaign to stop the rockets fired into northern Israel led to increased pressure to send in ground troops. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was reluctant to commit to a full scale invasion, choosing to defer to Halutz, who continued pursuing his doctrine of aerial bombardment and smaller scale infantry incursions. They would find that decision insufficient. Most IDF casualties occurred during this last push, especially in the final few weeks of the war, and Hezbollah's capacity to fire rockets was never really diminished.

The IDF also made the error of punishing the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Lebanese people more broadly, hitting

Hariri International Airport with civilians boarded and present on the runway, bringing widespread international condemnation.<sup>11</sup> On July 13, IAF jets struck the power station in Jieh, a coastal city twenty-three kilometers south of Beirut, causing a 16,500 ton oil leak, the largest in the history of the Mediterranean.<sup>12</sup> Such peripheral damage contributed to the misery of the local population and aided Hezbollah's public relations campaign to portray Israel's actions as reckless and malevolent. In the southern Beirut suburb of Dahiya, more than seven hundred buildings were struck, prompting the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and overseer of the prosecution of Slobodan Milosevic, Louise Arbour, to characterize the scale of destruction and indiscriminate nature of the targeting as a possible war crime.<sup>13</sup> Some seventy-one bridges, including all those over the Litani River, were destroyed. Most had only been built in the previous decade, after a protracted civil war. Almost every road south of Beirut was similarly subjected to this total war strategy, and the highway between Beirut and Damascus was decimated. Altogether damage to civilian and state infrastructure totaled about two billion dollars and displaced seven hundred thousand people in Lebanon by the end of the war, about one in six Lebanese citizens.<sup>14</sup>

Support for Hezbollah surged during the war and continued immediately after. Gallup polls reveal that over half of the country saw Hezbollah more favorably after the Israeli invasion, including 56 percent favorable among Christians and 57 percent favorable among Sunnis.<sup>15</sup> The war was also deeply divisive within these communities, as another third of Lebanese Christians said that this conflict worsened their opinion of Hezbollah. Despite the polarizing effects of the war, Hezbollah emerged more popular than before. The key was that Hezbollah is widely perceived in Lebanese society as being very committed

to religious pluralism. This made them much more sympathetic in the eyes of a Lebanese public which felt violated by the intensity of Israel's response to the initial provocation. Sixty-four percent of Lebanese respondents felt Hezbollah's political position was stronger after the conflict than before.<sup>16</sup> This was a political wind provided by the overzealous swatting of a frustrated IAF. Failing to achieve strategic objectives from the air, the solution for many in the upper echelons of the Israeli military and political establishment was to launch a wider ground invasion to push Hezbollah north of the Litani River. By July 27, Israel had dedicated around thirty thousand ground soldiers, the majority of whom were reservists, to the operations in Southern Lebanon. Even this number, however, represents a moderate route, as Prime Minister Olmert was wary about the political toll of an unpopular war and did not want to expand the occupation of Lebanon into a redo of 1982.<sup>17</sup> It was clear the aerial campaign did not work and that more would need to be done to dislodge Hezbollah fighters from their perches mere kilometers from the Israeli border.

The ground war did not go swimmingly either. The most important factor was the disparity between the IDF and Hezbollah in training and familiarity with their respective weapon systems. Unnamed "senior military officials" appeared in reporting about the war's heavy toll on Israeli armor, citing budget cuts for equipment like smoke screens and inadequate training for tank crews. One commented, "In the battles in Lebanon, the tanks did not move and shoot. They remained static. Instead of taking advantages of the tank's many capabilities, they underscored the tank's weakness, leading to heavy damages."<sup>18</sup> Tank drivers were poorly supplied and in constant need of spare parts. Disproportionate numbers of reservists called up for action meant more soldiers in the field with inadequate training.<sup>19</sup> Some 80 percent of the IDF's



ground forces were reservists. Halutz's tenure in the Defense Ministry had been marked by a shift away from a focus on armor and infantry and toward aerial dominance and precision airstrikes. The cost of focusing on the air force came at the expense of combat training for ground forces. Constant patrol duty in the occupied territories sapped combat readiness. The armored corps' budget was cut by 25 percent.<sup>20</sup> Training for active IDF tank operators was greatly reduced and training for reservist tank crews was, in practice, so little as to have been worth nothing at all.<sup>21</sup> Crews found themselves struggling to get used to the feel of the Merkava before and during deployment, and many of the fifty tanks that were damaged were purposefully hit in vulnerable spots exposed by poor maneuvering. In more fatal incidents, tanks would roll over massive improvised explosive devices (IEDs) placed in routes used during the previous occupation.

Hezbollah fighters, by contrast, were well versed in operating Russian-made and Syrian-supplied laser guided and wire guided anti-tank missiles. Though numbers are virtually unknown outside of Hezbollah's command structure, as the organization is notoriously opaque, the IDF estimates the total size of the force fielded ranged between two thousand and four thousand men, with thousands more in reserve. These fighters were broken into small units capable of moving with minimal attention. Using small but sophisticated weapons like the American TOW (tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided) and Russian Kornet anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM), which only require two to operate, Hezbollah was able to inflict heavy damage and then quickly disappear. Hezbollah also had an advantage in its organizational structure which, according to the best available external analysis, was split into three separate sub commands able to act with autonomy. Only the firing of rockets was directly controlled by party leadership.

No single field commander knew of the location of all the stockpiles or launch sites. Hezbollah fighters were split into teams and largely acted with autonomy depending on the situation. With no need for a single, centralized chain of command, Hezbollah was able to avoid Israeli interception of their communications, and field commanders were able to react quicker and without direction from party authorities.<sup>22</sup>

The topography of Southern Lebanon is well-suited for a guerilla-style campaign of resistance, being semi-mountainous and dappled with light foliage. It is a decidedly poor theatre for mobile armor, with few open plains, winding *wadis* (seasonally dry valleys), and mountain roads that channel tanks into vulnerable positions. Guerillas utilized IEDs and roadside mines, snipers, and ATGMs to harass Israeli units and defend their mobile rocket launch sites.<sup>23</sup> Hezbollah fighters had the natural advantage of defenders in knowing the territory and likely routes of their invaders and in maintaining fortified positions now linked with networks of underground tunnels.<sup>24</sup> An unnamed senior IDF official spoke to the *Christian Science Monitor* to remark on the difficulties of the operation: "It's a very hilly area and it's not easy. You cannot identify their bunkers until you are right there."<sup>25</sup> Timur Goskel, a senior UNIFIL advisor until 2003 and now professor of political studies and public administration at the American University of Beirut, remarked on the evolution of Hezbollah into a formidable foe for Israel, saying, "They have done incredible staff work, learning the lessons of guerilla warfare down the ages and carrying out a very deep and accurate analysis of the Israeli army."<sup>26</sup> Goskel also commented to the *New York Times*, telling a reporter in a phone interview that, after careful study of patrol and convoy patterns, Hezbollah seemed no longer intimidated by the IDF and were in fact becoming knowledgeable of the IDF's vulnerabilities.<sup>27</sup> According to an

anonymous IDF official who spoke to Ynet, "It is possible to see from this [conflict] that Hezbollah operatives were familiar with the tanks, their characteristics, they knew when and where to shoot in order to inflict the most damage."<sup>28</sup> General Yossi Kuperwasser, head of research in the IDF's intelligence units, tried to assure the public that the IDF understood Hezbollah's capabilities, but also admitted to the *New York Times*, "We don't know where all the tunnels are. So they can achieve tactical surprise."<sup>29</sup> In the 1982 invasion, the IDF was able to drive from the border to Beirut in a matter of hours. In the 2006 invasion, IDF ground forces barely made it five kilometers after a month of intense fighting.

An underappreciated aspect of the July War was the questions it raised about the imbalance between anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) and missile defense systems. The vulnerabilities of large surface vessels are rarely addressed, as the prospect of conventional warfare between two qualitatively similar navies has diminished since the last century. The July War offered a shocking example of the results of maritime complacency and powerfully demonstrated the vulnerabilities of surface vessels. As the Israeli Navy moved into Lebanese waters and began to shell inland to enforce a naval blockade, Hezbollah responded by deploying sophisticated ASBM systems. Just two days into the conflict, on July 14, 2006, Hezbollah used Chinese-designed (and likely Iranian-supplied) C-802 anti-ship missiles to strike at an Israeli Navy corvette, the INS Hanit, delivering a near fatal blow. The 281 foot long vessel had its radar and Barak air defense systems turned off due to the heavy IAF presence.<sup>30</sup> Hezbollah used a double-tap approach, firing the first C-801 to get the Hanit to expose its defenses and the second to strike at the waterline. The first sailed just above the Hanit, but the second struck the rear portion, killing four sailors and crippling the ship. Again, poor

training and muddled intelligence cost the Israelis dearly. Brigadier General Noam Feig confirmed that the navy did not know of Hezbollah's reach and capabilities: "We were under the impression that we were operating beyond the range of missiles." The C-801 has a range of about forty kilometers, and the INS Hanit was only about sixteen kilometers off the coast of Beirut.<sup>31</sup> The incident eventually led to the resignation of Navy Commander David Ben-Ba'ashat as well as a series of reviews and changes in military intelligence evaluation processes.<sup>32</sup> The Israeli Navy is building a new class of corvettes and the next iteration of their Iron Dome missile defense system, though doubts still linger over the effectiveness of these systems, especially in light of even newer Russian and Chinese-made ASBMs. Hezbollah have proven more than capable of utilizing these weapons well to threaten important assets, both military and civilian. If they were to acquire ASBMs with a so-called "pop-up" feature, where the missile flies at sea level to avoid radar detection and then "pops-up" to strike the vessel from above, the Israeli Navy could be in deep trouble. After all, it was a Soviet made ASBM fired from small Egyptian missile boats that sunk the INS Eilat in 1967.<sup>33</sup> It does not seem any nation has developed a reliable ship-mounted missile defense system, and this glaring weakness has been glossed over in an age when conventional naval battles are rare, if not extinct.

The Israeli blockade, for which the stated objective was to stop weapons shipments, was more effective at disrupting passenger cruise ships and the flow of consumer goods than in affecting the combat readiness of Hezbollah or preventing resupply from Syria via sea routes. The blockade's costs, in optics and in economic terms, outweighed any supposed benefits, as the vast majority of Lebanon resented the fuel and power shortages, cementing their resolve to resist. The attack on the



Map of southern Lebanon. (Matt M. Matthews / Wikimedia Commons)

INS Hanit changed the way the Israeli Navy calculates risk and operates today. Since 2006, the navy has opted for nighttime operations and shifted the responsibility of area denial – keeping enemies out of a given location – onto unmanned vehicles.<sup>34</sup>

Like the self-defeating air campaign, the naval blockade employed in 2006 was counterproductive at its core. It failed because of a shortsightedness that misunderstood Hezbollah's relative popularity among the nation more broadly and an inability to effectively integrate and communicate real time combat intelligence. Whether it was complacency, ignorance, or malpractice, the IDF failed systemically in recognizing possible shortcomings and taking action to mitigate them. At the time of the war, the Israeli Navy operated no aircraft of its own, and since 2006, the IAF and the navy have attempted to better coordinate their actions.<sup>35</sup>

Judge Eliyahu Winograd oversaw a government review of military operations during the July War. On January 30, 2008, the Winograd Commission issued a public

version of the report which found that, "The Hanit episode colored to a large extent the whole performance of the navy, despite the fact that it made a critical contribution to the naval blockade, and provided the Northern Command with varied effective support of its fighting."<sup>36</sup> Much like the problems in integrating infantry and armor effectively, the inability to properly coordinate between the navy and air force cost the IDF dearly, eventually leading to a breakdown and failure of the overall strategy. Despite having the technological, numerical, and political advantage, the IDF prosecuted the war poorly and irresponsibly, contributing to its own defeat.

July 2006 was a geopolitical tectonic shift that proved the IDF was beatable and set the course for the increased Iran-Israel tensions through the following decade. Despite the disproportionate response, Israel was neither able to pressure the Lebanese government into serious action against Hezbollah nor terminate Hezbollah's capacity to rain rocket fire down on Northern Israel, which continued until the August 14 ceasefire. The IDF was

similarly unable to establish dominance on the ground against a well drilled force utilizing a mix of conventional and unconventional tactics. In short, Hezbollah knew their opponent better than Israel knew theirs. In Israel, the war was largely seen as a disaster despite Dan Halutz's spin that Hezbollah was degraded. Hezbollah casualties remain unclear, a side effect of the public relations war. Figures vary wildly from the low hundreds to upward of one thousand, depending on the source. Israel lost 121 soldiers by the end of the war. And what of Regev and Goldwasser, those two IDF soldiers whose kidnappings set this conflict in motion? Sadly, both were thought to have died in the initial ambush, though Hezbollah disputes this. Their bodies were not returned to Israel until two years later, on July 16, 2008, and only then in exchange for five captured Lebanese militants and the bodies of 199 more. The bulk of the suffering fell on the civilians. Amnesty International counted 1,191 civilian dead in Lebanon and forty-four in Israel with untold non-fatal casualties.<sup>37</sup>

The war was hellish and terrifying for Lebanon, but the Israeli withdrawal is celebrated by segments of the Lebanese Shia population and among the Lebanese left as a victorious resistance against a disproportionate and brutal Israeli invasion. The war infiltrated the culture, as almost everyone in Lebanon was affected. Even top-bill Lebanese pop stars voiced their support of the resistance generally, if not for Hezbollah outright. Entertainment icon Fairuz was embroiled in controversy after expressing her admiration for Hassan Nasrallah.<sup>38</sup> Another, a Maronite Christian named Julia Boutros, wrote "Mouqawem" (Resistance) and "Ahibaii" (My Beloved Ones), which are heartfelt pro-Hezbollah remembrances of the events, donating a portion of the record sales to the families of fallen Hezbollah fighters.<sup>39</sup> That is not to say the July War is remembered fondly. Over 1,100 people were killed in Lebanon,

most of them civilians. Nasrallah told al-Jadeed, a Lebanese cable news network, "We did not think, even one percent, that the capture would lead to a war at this time and of this magnitude. You ask me, if I had known on July 11... that the operation would lead to such a war, would I do it? I say no, absolutely not."<sup>40</sup> Yet despite the war's heavy toll, Hezbollah has not suffered politically and instead enjoys a kind of legitimization as a formidable fighting force. The war is still vividly remembered in the popular imagination of Israel, too. The conflict is still studied by American and Israeli military academics who attempt to glean insight about counter-insurgency and warfare in the age of non-state actors and hybrid use of conventional and unconventional tactics. Israel lost 119 soldiers and forty-three civilians, yet failed to achieve their stated objectives. Strategic bombing failed, a ground invasion failed, and the naval blockade was largely irrelevant, except for the Hanit incident. Perhaps the truest lesson from this war is that power projection is no substitute for diplomacy. Some conflicts simply cannot be won in the absence of a political solution. Punishing the Lebanese government for its unwillingness or inability to disarm Hezbollah backfired and pushed most Lebanese citizens toward the resistance. Hezbollah had important political alliances in the diverse and complicated network of Lebanese politics and an earned reputation for protecting religious and ethnic minorities. This gave them a significant base of support at the national level that Israel did not anticipate and found very difficult to disrupt. The IDF's decision to hold Lebanon collectively responsible proved disastrous, not only within the arena of Lebanese politics, but also on the international stage, where Israel's reputation was tarnished. Lebanon would not simply be beaten into submission, and as with the civil war before it, would only broil until a civilized arrangement between factions could be

even tenuously agreed to. The political dynamics that defined the occupation after 1982 had shifted away from the IDF's Lebanese allies and collaborators and toward the resistance axis. Lebanon sought an unconditional ceasefire at the UN, but efforts were blocked by American and British officials until it became apparent that Israel's efforts were badly flopping.<sup>41</sup> Israel could not afford another long term occupation, especially against a group as well armed and drilled as Hezbollah. Eventually, they cut their losses and withdrew under a UN-brokered ceasefire. If there are such things as unwinnable wars, Lebanon 2006 may well be among them. The conflict certainly provides plenty to think about in a very tense region, and understanding it will, hopefully, help us better navigate future crises. ■

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# Additional Contributors

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**Alanna Hathcock** is a senior majoring in secondary social sciences education and has been a student at AUM since 2015. In her free time she enjoys creative writing. After graduation she plans on teaching while studying in a graduate program in history or special education.

**Amy LaPointe** is currently a senior at AUM and has been a student since the summer semester of 2013. In that time, she has earned a bachelor of fine arts in graphic design and is currently pursuing a bachelor of interdisciplinary studies with a focus on the overlapping aspects of art and psychology. Her passion still lies in graphic design and art as a whole, and she hopes to make a career out of either by tutoring others in those fields or opening her own business.

**Steven Tuchfarber** is a senior double majoring in history and business management with a minor in finance and hopes to start a business after college. He has attended AUM since the fall of 2016 and is in his second year on the staff of the *AUM Historical Review*.

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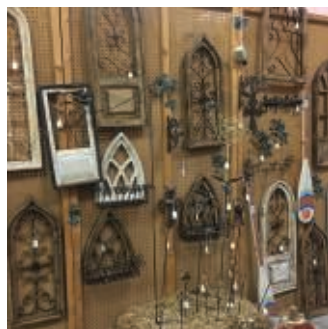
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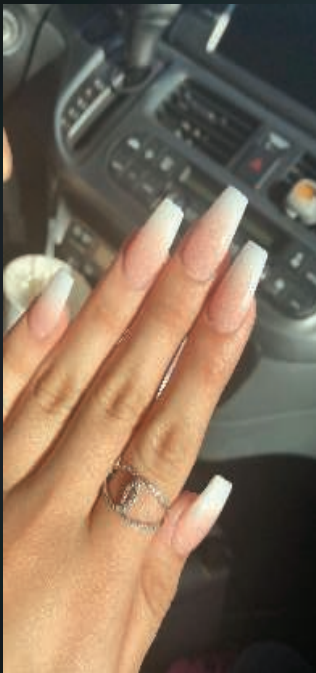
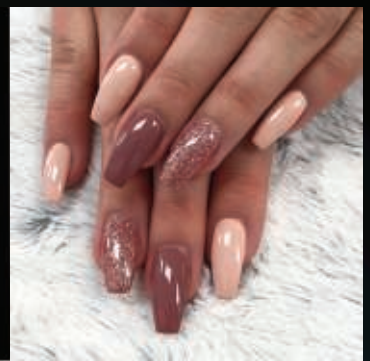
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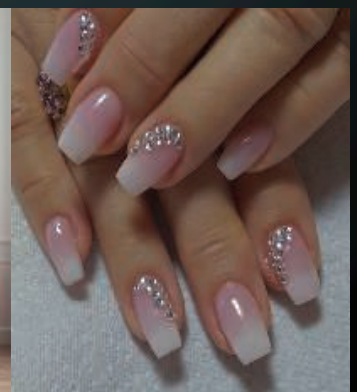
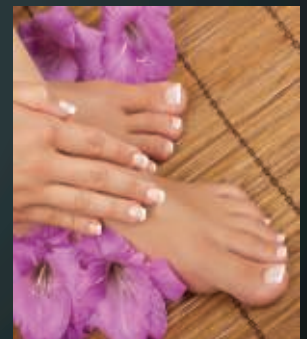


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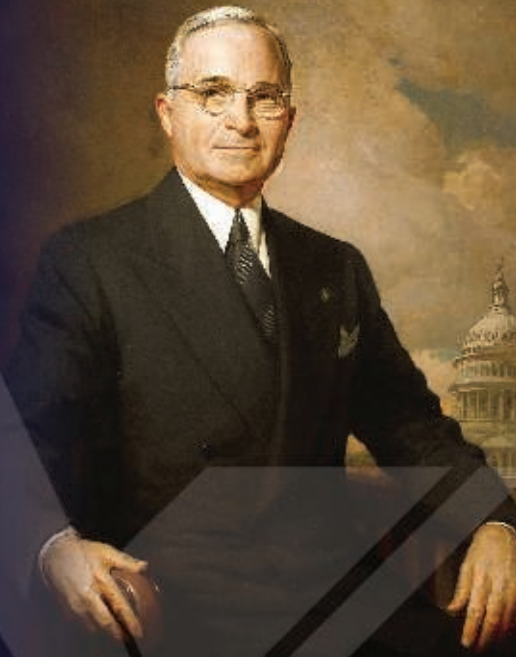
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*Founded: February 1969*

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The Tallapoose Historical Museum is owned and operated by the Tallapoose Historical Society. The museum is located in downtown Dadeville and maintains 3,600 square feet of donated memorabilia exhibits for local visitors and others from out-of-town and out-of-state.

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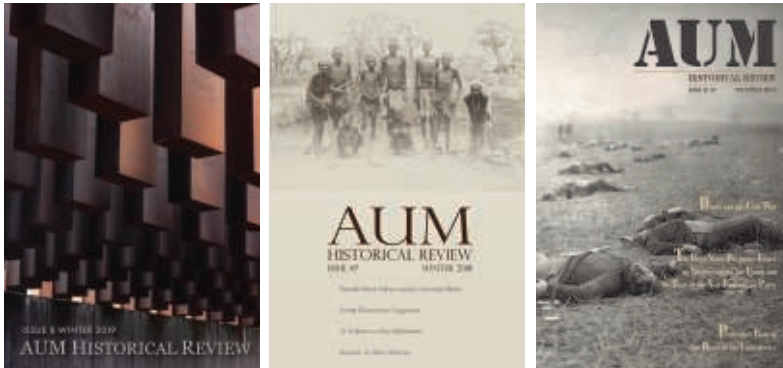
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