



## Tohopeka: Rethinking the Creek War and the War of 1812

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## **Tohopeka: Rethinking the Creek War and the War of 1812**

*Tohopeka* contains a variety of perspectives and uses a wide array of evidence and approaches, from scrutiny of cultural and religious practices to literary and linguistic analysis, to illuminate this troubled period.

Almost two hundred years ago, the territory that would become Alabama was both ancient homeland and new frontier where a complex network of allegiances and agendas was playing out. The fabric of that network stretched and frayed as the Creek Civil War of 1813-14 pitted a faction of the Creek nation known as Red Sticks against those Creeks who supported the Creek National Council. The war began in July 1813, when Red Stick rebels were attacked near Burnt Corn Creek by Mississippi militia and settlers from the Tensaw area in a vain attempt to keep the Red Sticks' ammunition from reaching the main body of disaffected warriors. A retaliatory strike against a fortified settlement owned by Samuel Mims, now called Fort Mims, was a Red Stick victory. The brutality of the assault, in which 250 people were killed, outraged the American public and "Remember Fort Mims" became a national rallying cry.

During the American-British War of 1812, Americans quickly joined the war against the Red Sticks, turning the civil war into a military campaign designed to destroy Creek power. The battles of the Red Sticks have become part of Alabama and American legend and include the famous Canoe Fight, the Battle of Holy Ground, and most significantly, the Battle of Tohopeka (also known as Horseshoe Bend)—the final great battle of the war. There, an American army crushed Creek resistance and made a national hero of Andrew Jackson.

New attention to material culture and documentary and archaeological records fills in details, adds new information, and helps disabuse the reader of outdated interpretations.

## **Contributors**

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