



The Long, Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians (Hill and Wang Critical Issues)

By Anthony F. C. Wallace



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The Hill and Wang Critical Issues Series: concise, affordable works on pivotal topics in American history, society, and politics.

This account of Congress's Indian Removal Act of 1830 focuses on the plight of the Indians of the Southeast--Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles--who were forced to leave their ancestral lands and relocate to what is now the state of Oklahoma. Revealing Andrew Jackson's central role in the government's policies, Wallace examines the racist attitudes toward Native Americans that led to their removal and, ultimately, their tragic fate.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Wallace, who won a Bancroft Prize in 1978 for *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village*, turns to Native American history in this retelling of the story of the Trail of Tears. This refers to the forced removal in the 1830s of thousands of Indians, particularly the Cherokee and the Choctaw, from the American east to west of the Mississippi River. The author expands his focus to examine the relocation of numerous Indian groups. Central to the story is Andrew Jackson, who assumed the presidency confronted with a government divided over the question of Indian removal and who soon became one of its major proponents. Responses of the Natives ranged from legal action and ultimate resignation on the part of some to warfare on the part of the Seminole. In a concluding chapter, Wallace shows how the effects of removal continue to the present day. All of this is told in a straightforward manner. Although he points to certain well-known white historians who give short shrift to this history, he overstates the uniqueness of his study. While it is a good introduction to the topic, this volume is far from the only modern historical treatment. Two documentary appendixes will be helpful to readers new to the subject.

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From School Library Journal

YA-The Indian Removal Act of 1830 summarily dismissed the rights of Native Americans to their homelands east of the Mississippi and mandated their relocation to the wilds of the Oklahoma plains. The infamous Trail of Tears is indeed a riveting tale of political expediency, greed, and sorrow. In this book, Wallace recounts in a balanced and clear manner the influences that gave rise to a governmental policy that regulated the disenfranchisement of Native peoples within American boundaries. The author carefully traces the movement and activities of the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles through the Trail of Tears to their eventual destinations and fortunes. While almost scholarly in tone, the calm and precise narrative remains arresting because of the strength of its subject matter.

Carol Beall, Immanuel Christian School, Springfield, VA

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From Library Journal

The Indians, not Jackson, are the chief focus of this excellent account of the five "civilized tribes" being forced west with the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Wallace succinctly traces the evolution of the government's Indian policies from colonial days to this removal. It was Jackson's actions--or lack of them--that forced the westward migration. Wallace paints an uncomplimentary picture of a man driven by politics, land hunger, and profit who justified his ambitions as a desire to save the Indians from extinction. Wallace's work compares favorably with Ronald N. Satz's critical study, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (1975), and contrasts sharply with Francis Paul Prucha's favorable treatment in *The Great Father: The United States and the American Indian* (Univ. of Nebraska Pr., 1984. 2 vols). This sobering study is essential for people wanting a terse description of the Indians' trek over the "Long, Bitter Trail."--Richard Hedlund, Ashland Community Coll., Ky.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lawrence Weatherby:

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