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## Review of Indians of North America: The Chickasaw

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*Indians of North America: The Chickasaw.* By Duane K. Hale and Arrell M. Gibson. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1991. Photos, bibliography, glossary, index. 111pp. \$18.95.

Chicsa's People, or the Chickasaw, for centuries farmed and hunted in their traditional homeland that encompassed portions of present-day Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. The harvest of animal furs and skins encouraged British traders early in the eighteenth century to court favor among the Chickasaw to the exclusion of the Spanish and the French. Once established, tribal allegiance to the British continued until, at the close of the American revolution, the Chickasaw finally and reluctantly allied themselves to the United States. Despite repeated promises to respect the Chickasaw's right to their homeland, U.S. officials in the mid-1830s pressured tribal leaders to sell out and relocate to Indian Territory. Although the people suffered greatly, their removal to Indian Territory was not as gruesome as that experienced by the Cherokee and Creek. Nevertheless, once in the territory their difficulties multiplied. Slowly, the tribe revitalized its culture in the West. In the early twentieth century, however, the Chickasaw's lives were again disrupted by the United States when it dissolved the Chickasaw government and divided the tribal territory into individually owned tracts, many of which were soon fraudulently acquired by non-Indians. Relief did not come to the dispossessed and impoverished Chickasaw until the 1970s, when the tribal government was reestablished. Today, Chickasaw officials are using federal money (established by treaties or awarded through the Indian Claims Commission and the U.S. Court of Claims) and tribal businesses to improve the education, health care, income, and housing of members of the Chickasaw Nation.

This work, one in a series of (to date) fifty-three titles that examine the Indians of North America, has been written especially for young adults; but more mature readers should find

many features that make this a valuable addition to the literature. Duane K. Hale, of Creek descent, completed the partial manuscript left by the late Arrell Gibson (to whom Hale has dedicated the book). Following a general introduction by series editor Frank W. Porter, III that examines the ethnohistorical theme of "encounter," the book follows a predictable chronological treatment of Chickasaw relations with non-Indians. Although laden with the familiar language of Indian policy, nevertheless the authors have incorporated large amounts of material drawn from oral tradition. A photographic essay on Chickasaw culture compliments the text and a glossary provides the reader with an easy reference to key words not only in Chickasaw ethnohistory but also the history of federal Indian relations.

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