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# CAHABA PRISON AND THE SULTANA DISASTER

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Special Bibliography Series Hachette Books

The steamship Sultana explosion remains the worst maritime disaster for the loss of life in US history. Most casualties were paroled prisoners of the war recently released from the notorious Confederate prisons in Andersonville, Georgia, and Cahaba, Alabama. After surviving the horrors of the Civil War and the atrocities of Southern prisoner camps, our American heroes were

"Almost Home" when disaster struck the Sultana. Based on true events, we follow the journeys of Commander of Camp Sumter Prison - Henry Wirz, Sultana Steamship Captain - Cass Mason, and two young Ohio soldiers - Richard White and Thad Lewis through the war and explore their struggles, accomplishments, and growth as human beings. Each man is "Almost Home" when the tumultuous events of the war forever alter their lives.

**Sultana** University of Alabama Press  
On a cold night in late April 1865, on the mighty Mississippi River just north of Memphis, Tennessee, scores of unsuspecting souls suddenly found themselves desperately struggling for their lives after the boilers exploded on the riverboat steamer Sultana. Although more lives were lost in this

incident than would be lost on the Titanic in 1912, these homeward bound veterans of war have been nearly forgotten by the country they served so bravely. The author rectifies this oversight with his book-length treatment of the tragedy. Most of the men served in cavalry or infantry units from Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio, or cavalry units from Tennessee and Virginia. J2358HB - \$18.00  
*Rivers of History* Routledge  
One of the most intriguing and storied episodes of the Civil War, the 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign has heretofore been related only from the Confederate point of view. Moving seamlessly between

tactical details and analysis of strategic significance, Peter Cozzens presents a balanced, comprehensive account of a campaign that has long been romanticized but little understood. He offers new interpretations of the campaign and the reasons for Stonewall Jackson's success, demonstrates instances in which the mythology that has come to shroud the campaign has masked errors on Jackson's part, and provides the first detailed appraisal of Union leadership in the Valley Campaign, with some surprising conclusions.

### History of Lawrence and Monroe Counties, Indiana Smashwords

While large armies engaged in epic battles in the eastern theater of the Civil War, a largely unchronicled story was unfolding along the Mississippi River. Thirty "Special Scouts" under the command of Lieutenant Isaac Newton Earl patrolled the river, gathering information about Confederate troop activity, arresting Rebel smugglers and guerillas, and opposing anti-Union

insurrection. Gordon Olson gives this special unit full book-length treatment for the first time in *The Notorious Isaac Earl and His Scouts*. Olson uses new research in assembling his detailed yet very readable account of Earl, a dynamic leader who rose quickly through Union Army ranks to command this elite group. He himself was captured by the Confederates three times and escaped three times, and he developed a strategic -- and later romantic -- relationship with a Southern woman, Jane O'Neal, who became one of his spies. In keeping the river open for Union Army movement of men and supplies to New Orleans, Earl's Scouts played an important, heretofore unheralded, role in the Union's war effort.

*Cahaba Prison and the Sultana Disaster* Naval Institute Press

"One of the most riveting war stories I have ever read.... Huffman's smooth, intimate prose ushers you through this nightmare as if you were living it yourself." —Sebastian Junger, author of *The Perfect Storm* The dramatic true story of the worst maritime disaster in U.S. history, Alan Huffman's *Sultana* brings to breathtaking life a tragic, long forgotten event in America's Civil War—the sinking of the steamship *Sultana* and the loss of 1,700 lives, mostly Union soldiers returning home from Confederate

prison camps. A gripping account that reads like a nonfiction *Cold Mountain*, *Sultana* is powerful, moving, rich in irony and fascinating historical detail—a story no history aficionado or Civil War buff will want to miss.

*The American Civil War* Mercer University Press  
George Washington Gayle is not a name known to history. But it soon will be. Forget what you thought you knew about why Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. No, it was not mere sectional hatred, Booth's desire to become famous, Lincoln's advocacy of black suffrage, or a plot masterminded by Jefferson Davis to win the war by crippling the Federal government. Christopher Lyle McIlwain, Sr.'s *Untried and Unpunished: George Washington Gayle and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* exposes the fallacies regarding each of those theories and reveals both the mastermind behind the plot, and its true motivation. The deadly scheme to kill Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Secretary of State William Seward was Gayle's brainchild. The assassins were motivated by money Gayle raised. Lots of money. \$20,000,000 in today's value. Gayle, a prominent South Carolina-born Alabama lawyer, had been a Unionist and Jacksonian Democrat before walking the road of radicalization following the admission of California as a free state in 1850. Thereafter, he became Alabama's most earnest secessionist, though he would never hold any position within the Confederate government or serve in its military. After the slaying of the president Gayle was arrested and taken to Washington, DC in chains to be tried

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by a military tribunal for conspiracy in connection with the horrendous crimes. The Northern press was satisfied Gayle was behind the deed—especially when it was discovered he had placed an advertisement in a newspaper the previous December soliciting donations to pay the assassins. There is little doubt that if Gayle had been tried, he would have been convicted and executed. However, he not only avoided trial, but ultimately escaped punishment of any kind for reasons that will surprise readers. Rather than rehashing what scores of books have already alleged, *Untried and Unpunished* offers a completely fresh premise, meticulous analysis, and stunning conclusions based upon years of firsthand research by an experienced attorney. This original, thought-provoking study will forever change the way you think of Lincoln's assassination.

Destruction of the Steamboat Sultana University Press of Florida

At two o'clock in the morning on 27 April 1865, seven miles north of Memphis on the Mississippi, the sidewheel steamboat *Sultana's* boilers suddenly exploded. Legally registered to carry 376 people, the boat was packed with 2,100 recently released Union prisoners-of-war. Over 1,700 people died, making it the worst marine disaster in U.S. history. This book looks at the disaster through the eyes of the victims themselves. It offers a concise, minute-by-minute account on the cause of the explosion and its effect on different parts of the boat. To

focus on the personal stories of the victims, both civilian and soldier, Gene Eric Salecker patiently collected material from hundreds of letters, period newspaper stories, and other sources. Readers are first introduced to victims while they are languishing in Confederate prisons and follow their release to an exchange camp outside of Vicksburg to their eventual crowding onto the *Sultana*. His knowledgeable narrative is interwoven with individual reminiscences, including those of the heroic rescuers. He offers unprecedented details about the captain's handling of the steamboat and corrects some long-held myths about the placement of the soldiers on the *Sultana* and newspaper coverage of the disaster. A large portion of the book covers rescue attempts, both successful and failed, and the aftermath of the disaster as it affected those involved. With its emphasis on the human-interest aspect of the *Sultana*, this book brings to the literature a critical point of view and much new information.

The American P.O.W. experience  
Candlewick Press

It is the worst Civil War POW camp you've probably never heard of. A larger percentage of those who left Cahaba died once back in Union lines than of those who left Andersonville. it was five times more

crowded than Andersonville. Jesse Hawes was an 18-year-old enlistee in the 9th Illinois Cavalry who was captured and imprisoned at Cahaba. In one of the most articulate, unique, and moving accounts of prison life in the south, the Colorado physician looks back more than thirty years to the desperate days filled with starvation, death, and disease. Not only did he rely on his memory but he researched the Union and Confederate records to bring incredible detail to this comprehensive work. After the war, Hawes became a respected Colorado surgeon. He attended many reunions of the 9th Illinois and never forgot the friendships born of unspeakable hardships. Every memoir of the American Civil War provides us with another view of the catastrophe that changed the country forever. For the first time, this long out-of-print volume is available as an affordable, well-formatted book for e-readers and smartphones. Be sure to LOOK INSIDE by clicking the cover above or download a sample.

Sultana Awaits Naval Institute Press

The *Sultana* was a sidewheel Mississippi steamboat carrying almost two thousand recently-released Union prisoners-of-war

back north at the end of the Civil War. At 2:00 a.m. on April 27, 1865, when the boat was seven miles above Memphis, her boilers exploded. Almost 1,200 people perished in the worst maritime disaster in United States history. Gene Eric Salecker covers this disaster in detail and dispels the many myths that have been connected to the Sultana for too long. Almost every author who has written about the Sultana has relied on the words of a few survivors or referred to the works of previous authors to get their story. Advancing the scholarship, the author has visited the National Archives in Washington, DC, to comb through the handwritten transcripts of the three investigative bodies that looked into the disaster or poured over the handwritten testimony from the court-martial trial of Capt. Frederic Speed, the only person tried for the overcrowding of the vessel. In 1996, after extensive research and using the most current sources available at that time, Salecker wrote *Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865*. Still, there were inevitable omissions. After almost twenty-five years of continued research on the Sultana, and all those involved in the disaster, Salecker has gleaned unparalleled knowledge into

every aspect of the disaster. His research, covering the National Archives, and thousands of pages of newspapers from around the world and government documents, including pension records and service records, has allowed Gene to tell the story of the Sultana as completely as possible. By bringing his research back to primary sources, Salecker dispels myths and adds to the story of the Sultana. In *Destruction of the Steamboat Sultana: The Worst Maritime Disaster in American History* paroled prisoners, civilian passengers, guards, crew members, rescuers, and eyewitnesses tell their stories in their own words. The true, and complete, story about the Sultana and the disaster has finally, and fully, been told. *History of Hancock County [Ohio] from Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time* Sleeping Bear Press During the Civil War, 410,000 people were held as prisoners of war on both sides. With resources strained by the unprecedented number of prisoners, conditions in overcrowded prison camps were dismal, and the death toll across Confederate and Union prisons reached 56,000 by the end of the war. In an attempt to improve prison conditions, President Lincoln issued General Orders 100, which would become the basis for future attempts to define the rights of prisoners, including the Geneva conventions. Meanwhile, stories of horrific prison

experiences fueled political agendas on both sides, and would define the memory of the war, as each region worked aggressively to defend its prison record and to honor its own POWs. Robins and Springer examine the experience, culture, and politics of captivity, including war crimes, disease, and the use of former prison sites as locations of historical memory. *Transforming Civil War Prisons* introduces students to an underappreciated yet crucial aspect of waging war and shows how the legacy of Civil War prisons remains with us today.

Special Bibliography Series Harper Collins Transcribed, edited, and anotated Civil War journal written by Mary Jane Chaduck during the years of Federal invasion, 1862-1865.

SULTANA TRAGEDY, THE Univ. Press of Mississippi

A detailed history of a vitally important year in Alabama history The year 1865 is critically important to an accurate understanding of Alabama ' s present. In *1865 Alabama: From Civil War to Uncivil Peace* Christopher Lyle McIlwain Sr. examines the end of the Civil War and the early days of Reconstruction in the state and details what he interprets as strategic failures of Alabama ' s political leadership. The actions, and inactions, of Alabamians during those twelve months caused many self-inflicted wounds that haunted them for the next century. McIlwain recounts a history of missed opportunities that had substantial and reverberating consequences.

He focuses on four factors: the immediate and unconditional emancipation of the slaves, the destruction of Alabama's remaining industrial economy, significant broadening of northern support for suffrage rights for the freedmen, and an acute and lengthy postwar shortage of investment capital. Each element proves critically important in understanding how present-day Alabama was forged. Relevant events outside Alabama are woven into the narrative, including McIlwain's controversial argument regarding the effect of Lincoln's assassination. Most historians assume that Lincoln favored black suffrage and that he would have led the fight to impose that on the South. But he made it clear to his cabinet members that granting suffrage rights was a matter to be decided by the southern states, not the federal government. Thus, according to McIlwain, if Lincoln had lived, black suffrage would not have been the issue it became in Alabama. McIlwain provides a sifting analysis of what really happened in Alabama in 1865 and why it happened—debunking in the process the myth that Alabama's problems were unnecessarily brought on by the North. The overarching theme demonstrates that Alabama's postwar problems were of its own making. They would have been quite avoidable, he argues, if Alabama's political leadership had been savvy.

Almost Home MacMillan Publishing Company  
Tells the dramatic story of the infamous Confederate prisoner-of-war camp where 5,000 Union soldiers were interned during the latter part of the Civil War and of the ensuing maritime disaster. With a death rate of 5 percent, Alabama's Cahaba Federal Prison boasted a better survival rate than the notorious Confederate prisoner-of-war camps of Andersonville, Libby Prison, Elmira, Rock Island, Johnson's Island, and Camp Douglas. Yet it was a ghastly facility, a hastily converted agricultural warehouse so overcrowded that each man barely had space to lie down to sleep. At the war's conclusion in 1865, however, in a harrowing reversal of the inmates' fates, captured Union soldiers were sent on a grueling overland march to the Mississippi River. Held there in camps at Vicksburg along with other prisoners of war, the soldiers embarked on the steamship Sultana for transportation north. Traveling first to New Orleans and then heading north, the vessel held by some estimates six times more passengers than its safe limit, many of them ill, injured, or malnourished. The flow of the swollen Mississippi that April was wide, swift, and cold, and the Sultana struggled to make the journey. Then, on April 27, 1865, seven miles north of Memphis, a series of three boilers exploded within seconds of one another. The lucky passengers were flung into the water as chunks of the Sultana blasted apart. The remaining wooden structure caught fire and the upper deck collapsed. Only an estimated one third of the passengers survived, hundreds of whom later died from their wounds. First published in 1988,

Bryant's account weaves together the many strands of the Cahaba story. Combining masterful storytelling and insightful analysis, he describes Civil War prisons, the history of the Cahaba Federal Prison and its construction, as well as the prison's commanders, prisoners, and local women who provided medical care and food to the prisoners. He tells of the violent struggles among Union inmates, a mutiny and flood that occurred during the final days of the camp, and the harrowing deaths of the liberated soldiers aboard the Sultana. Bryant's Cahaba Prison and the Sultana Disaster remains a vital part of any library of Civil War history.

The Sultana Saga Univ of North Carolina Press

"The name Andersonville has come to be synonymous with "American death camp." Its horrors have been portrayed in histories, art, television, and movies. The trial of its most famous figure, Captain Henry Wirz, still raises questions about American justice. This work unlocks the secret history of America's deadliest prison camp in ways that will spur debate for many years to come."--BOOK JACKET.

Disaster on the Mississippi Bloomsbury Publishing USA

Searching for your Alabama ancestors? Looking for historical facts? Dates? Events? This book will lead you to the places where you'll find answers.

Here are hundreds of direct sources--governmental, archival, agency, online--that will help you access information vital to your investigation. Tracing Your Alabama Past sets out to identify the means and the methods for finding information on people, places, subjects, and events in the long and colorful history of this state known as the crossroads of Dixie. It takes researchers directly to the sources that deliver answers and information. This comprehensive reference book leads to the wide array of essential facts and data--public records, census figures, military statistics, geography, studies of African American and Native American communities, local and biographical history, internet sites, archives, and more. For the first time Alabama researchers are offered a how-to book that is not just a bibliography. Such complex sources as Alabama's biographical/genealogical materials, federal land records, Civil War Â-era resources, and Native American sources are discussed in detail, along with many other topics of interest to researchers seeking information on this diverse Deep South state. Much of the book focuses on national sources that are covered elsewhere only in passing, if at all. Other books only touch on one subject area, but here, for the first time, are directions to the Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

CAHABA: Captive Boys in Blue (Expanded, Annotated) University of Alabama Press

It is the worst Civil War POW camp you've probably never heard of. A larger percentage of those who left Cahaba died once back in Union lines than of those who left Andersonville. it was five times more crowded than Andersonville. Jesse Hawes was an 18-year-old enlistee in the 9th Illinois Cavalry who was captured and imprisoned at Cahaba. In one of the most articulate, unique, and moving accounts of prison life in the south, the Colorado physician looks back more than thirty years to the desperate days filled with starvation, death, and disease. Not only did he rely on his memory but he researched the Union and Confederate records to bring incredible detail to this comprehensive work. After the war, Hawes became a respected Colorado surgeon. He attended many reunions of the 9th Illinois and never forgot the friendships born of unspeakable hardships. Every memoir of the American Civil War provides us with another view of the catastrophe that changed the country forever.

1865 Alabama University Alabama Press  
Choose a stroke and get paddling through the human history of swimming! From man's first recorded dip into what's now the driest spot on earth to the splashing, sparkling pool party in your backyard, humans have been getting wet for 10,000 years. And for most of modern history, swimming has caused a ripple that touches us all--the heroes and the

ordinary folk; the real and the mythic. Splash! dives into Egypt, winds through ancient Greece and Rome, flows mostly underground through the Dark and Middle Ages (at least in Europe), and then reemerges in the wake of the Renaissance before taking its final lap at today's Olympic games. Along the way, it kicks away the idea that swimming is just about moving through water, about speed or great feats of aquatic endurance, and shows you how much more it can be. Its history offers a multi-tiered tour through religion, fashion, architecture, sanitation and public health, colonialism, segregation and integration, sexism, sexiness, guts, glory, and much, much more. Unique and compelling, Splash! sweeps across the whole of humankind's swimming history--and just like jumping into a pool on a hot summer's day, it has fun along the way.

The Smoked Yank U of Nebraska Press

In February 1864, five hundred Union prisoners of war arrived at the Confederate stockade at Anderson Station, Georgia. Andersonville, as it was later known, would become legendary for its brutality and mistreatment, with the highest mortality rate--over 30 percent--of any Civil War

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prison. Fourteen months later, 32,000 men were imprisoned there. Most of the prisoners suffered greatly because of poor organization, meager supplies, the Federal government's refusal to exchange prisoners, and the cruelty of men supporting a government engaged in a losing battle for survival. Who was responsible for allowing so much squalor, mismanagement, and waste at Andersonville? Looking for an answer, Ovid Futch cuts through charges and countercharges that have made the camp a subject of bitter controversy. He examines diaries and firsthand accounts of prisoners, guards, and officers, and both Confederate and Federal government records (including the transcript of the trial of Capt. Henry Wirz, the alleged "fiend of Andersonville"). First published in 1968, this groundbreaking volume has never gone out of print.

Incidents of the War Casemate Publishers  
"Jackson weaves a seamless tale stretching from the Native-American river settlements ... to the paper mills and hydroelectric plants of the late twentieth century". -- Southern Historian

The Notorious Isaac Earl and His Scouts  
Harper Collins

Erastus Winters not only survived disease, battle, and the Confederate prison camp at Cahaba, on the way home he survived what is still the worst maritime disaster in U.S. history--the sinking of the steamboat Sultana. His sometimes humorous, sometimes thrilling, and sometimes poignant true tale of a young man at war is one of the best by a private soldier in the Union army. He fought in Sherman's Atlanta Campaign and describes his feelings when under fire for the first time. He became a seasoned combat soldier but was not afraid to admit when he felt terrified. During the battle of Franklin, he was captured and sent to Cahaba, where he endured months of mud, filth, starvation, and vermin. As if that was not enough, when finally released and on his way home, he was nearly killed in the explosion on the Sultana, which claimed over 1,700 lives. Every memoir of the American Civil War provides us with another view of the catastrophe that changed the country forever. Be sure to **LOOK INSIDE** by clicking the cover above or download a sample.