

OTHER BOOKS BY GLORIA JAHODA

NONFICTION

River of the Golden Ibis

The Other Florida

The Road to Samarkand:

Frederick Delius and His Music

FICTION

Annie

Delilah's Mountain

The
TRAIL
OF
TEARS

GLORIA JAHODA

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To the memory of my Great-Grandfather, Anders Larsson,
of Torstuna and Österunda, Västmanland, Sweden, and Chi-
cago, Illinois: historian of the new world in the language of the
old.

And to the Creek Nation East of the Mississippi, Inc.,
especially Sakim.

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IN 1950, WHEN I WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT IN ANTHROPOLOGY AT the University of Wisconsin, I was awarded an academic fellowship which (I was told) demanded a keen research mind. I soon found out just what sort of keenness was required. Universities were innocent of copying machines in those days. I was given sets of historical documents; whenever I saw the word "Potawatomi" I was to copy it down in its context. The professor for whom I was working was trying to plot out the villages in Illinois and Wisconsin and Michigan and Indiana where the Potawatomis had once lived; he was establishing an ethnohistorical file on midwestern Indians. Somehow I kept my sanity, for I was only transcribing the word "Potawatomi" in its context for four hours a day. Others were doing it for eight. "At night I forget with ouzo," confided a fellow student with a taste for Greek liquor.

The Potawatomi project taught me how America had forcibly removed her Indian tribes originally located east of the Mississippi. These were, for the most part, people already advanced in their accommodation to whites. They were set down in a western wilderness surrounded by hostile warriors, where they were given a pittance and turned loose to fend for themselves. The Potawatomis had called their journey the "Trail of Death." But the term used by southeastern tribes wrenched from farms and plantations became the general one. Because the Creeks and Cherokees and Choctaws had wept, they called it the "Trail of Tears." *

Today, some members of the removed tribes have returned. The ancestors of others never left because they were mixed-bloods who looked white and could pass. Where I now live in north Florida, the Muskogee Creek Nation East of the Mississippi, Inc., is an active member tribe of the Coalition of Eastern Native Americans. Once more the Creeks are dancing in the pinewoods; their strong voices reverberate in southern groves as they sing old songs; many of their children are attending classes in the language spoken by their forebears. The Creeks are gathering together the surviving fragments of their ancient civilization and building it anew. My own journey into

American Indian civilization began in the University of Wisconsin library, where in autumn from the window of my carrel I could see the rain of golden maple leaves falling to wood-smoke-scented earth. It was—and is—beautiful country, and another race before mine loved it. My journey has continued, especially among the Creeks of Florida. This is not an impartial book. Historians stronger than I will have to resist the temptation of passing judgment on an enormity.

It seemed neither necessary nor desirable to burden the reader with a quantity of footnotes. However, principal sources have been cited, and a bibliography is appended. All dialogue is fact; the words quoted were spoken by the persons named. In the case of several well-known figures whose words appear in a variety of sources, I have not named a specific reference; this applies to Osceola, John Ross, Tenskwatawa, Black Hawk, Keokuk, Neamathla, and Opothleyaholo.

No study of Indian removal is possible without a great debt to the University of Oklahoma's Civilization of the American Indian series, in particular Grant Foreman's *Indian Removal*. His *Last Trek of the Indians*, published by the University of Chicago Press, has also been valuable. I am, in addition, under obligation to the following: Pace Barnes, who suggested the idea; the Creek Indian Nation East of the Mississippi, Inc., in particular to Sakim, medicine man to the Creeks; to Margaret Coit for material on Andrew Jackson; to Henry M. Althoen for the gift of several tribal histories; to Charles Miller, director, for his staunch support at the Florida State University library; to the State Library of Florida, under the direction of Cecil Beach; and especially to my husband, Gerald Jahoda, Professor of Library Science at Florida State University, for his expertise in the use of government documents, which made *The Trail of Tears* possible in the first place.

GLORIA JAHODA
Tallahassee, Fla.

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7. *Ibid.*, pp. 271-72.
8. This is traditional in the author's family.
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12. Foreman, *Indian Removal*, pp. 286-87.
13. James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees*, Bureau of American Ethnology, 19th Annual Report (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), p. 131.
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