

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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**From the Selected Works of Amilcar Shabazz**

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Amilcar Shabazz



Available at: [https://works.bepress.com/shabazz\\_a/19/](https://works.bepress.com/shabazz_a/19/)

but Wright's diligent research has not revealed a man by that name. He rejects the possibility that the leader may have been David Taitt and settles on an obscure North Carolina revolutionary named Adam Tate.

In a 1989 publication this reviewer did not question the assumption that the British deputy was named John Tate but concluded in a subsequent publication in 1992 that the man was actually David Taitt, John Stuart's deputy who lived in Little Tallassee. We know that David Taitt and Alexander McGillivray led a Creek war party that attempted to join Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell's thrust into the interior in 1779 in an effort to execute the British "southern strategy." According to Wright, the last recorded mention of David Taitt puts him in England in 1793; Kathryn Braund, however, has shown that Taitt went to Nova Scotia in 1794 as provost marshal and had a distinguished career, dying at the age of 94.

Such are some of the loose ends that invite further investigation and may never be completely resolved. A few minor inaccuracies also appear. The John Bartram quote about "lazy" Scottish Highlanders referred to the Darien people, not anyone at Galphin's Silver Bluff (p. 79). William Bartram was not in West Florida in 1777 (p. 121). Lachlan McGillivray helped survey the lower boundary line in 1768, not the line "above Augusta" (p. 97).

Loose ends and minor inaccuracies aside, this is a necessary reference work for historians and genealogists generally and those of Alabama in particular. But a recently discovered document challenges an important assumption on which this book is based. Jane McGillivray of Frome, England, has discovered a document that lists a different set of siblings of Lachlan McGillivray, among them a brother named Alexander. We hope that Amos Wright will extend his research beyond twenty years.

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*They Too Call Alabama Home: African American Profiles, 1800-1999.* By Richard Bailey. Montgomery: Pyramid Publishing, 1999. xvi, 503 pp. \$55.00. ISBN 0-967-1883-0-X.

This book is a valuable reference work that has no parallel in the historical resources on Alabama. It contains more than four hundred entries on African Americans who at one time called the state of Alabama home, from baseball great Henry Louis "Hammerin'" Hank Aaron to Black Belt community organizer, poet, and newspaper publisher Carol Prejean Zippert. The selection criterion was based on a mix of the author's research interests and the subjects' historical significance at a

national, state, or local level in the course of the past two centuries. Almost three-fourths of the profiles are of people born in the twentieth century. Readers who know Bailey's first book on black officeholders in Reconstruction-era Alabama, *Neither Carpetbaggers Nor Scalawags* (Montgomery, 1991), may find his bias toward twentieth-century figures in this work somewhat odd. Nonetheless, the essays are carefully and clearly written and documented with source citations.

The two lists that follow the profiles, a breakdown of individuals by occupation and another arranged by geography (where the person was born or lived), are very useful. An example of its usefulness arose recently when I began to write a short essay on the African American entrepreneurial legacy in Alabama and found the names listed under the category "business executive." The forty-six men and women entrepreneurs Bailey profiled gave me an excellent starting point for comparative and longitudinal analysis. Others no doubt will find similar uses.

But relative to the overall design of the book, the thirteen appendices seem comparable to the appendix in the human body—having no general purpose. Half are sports related, including the baseball records of Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, and Willie McCovey, and the state championship records of Alabama Interscholastic Athletic Association basketball teams from 1938 to 1968. Another lengthy appendix offers the names and vital information of more than two hundred black musicians with ties to Alabama, but little more than a tenth of these are to be found among the profiles. Perhaps Bailey's protean interests explain the inclusion of such a range of material, but the result is the burying of two important appendices. The roster of Alabama's black state legislators and U.S. congressional representatives (1868–1999) and the catalog of African American sites on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage and National Register of Historic Places are valuable sets of information with pertinence to his project of historical recovery and preservation.

Bailey's book should be on the shelf of every library in the state and in the homes of students of Alabama history. With the Texas State Historical Association's *Handbook of Texas Online* (<<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online>>) as a model, Bailey's work should be expanded and placed on the World Wide Web for the Information-Age generation to learn about people who called Alabama home, many of whom are not well known despite their great contributions to the history of the state and nation.

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