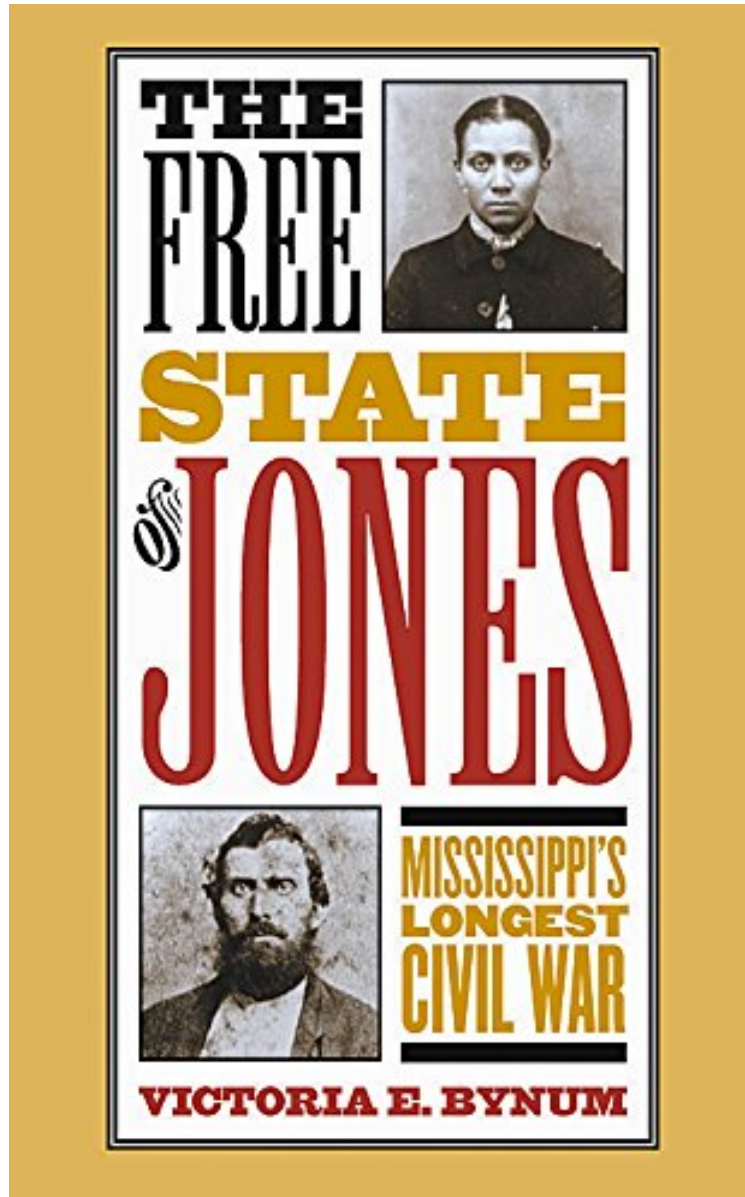


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The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War

Victoria E. Bynum

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Victoria E. Bynum : The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War before purchasing it in order to
gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil
War:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I am still amazed that these stories of the Civil War are not ...By Eleonora TurnageI couldn't put the book down. It was a page turner for sure. There was so much information given, that I think I will have to read it again, just to make sure I understood it completely. I am still amazed that these stories of the Civil War are not included in our history books for our students in high school and/or college. Thank you, Vicki, for writing such a interesting and truthful history of the Civil War, before, during and after, which took place in Mississippi and the South. I feel that my husbands family, living in Leake County, Mississippi at the time, were part of this movement because his great great grandfather also deserted the Confederate army, moving through Madison County and eventually into the piney woods of Louisiana. There was a marriage with a Choctaw girl on my husband's mother's side. I am doing Genealogy and am digging deeper into his family's history. This book is bringing many things clearer to me about my husband's family.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Scholarly work, educationalBy Bill MatthewsIt has been a while since I bought an physical book. I found that the background material was highly interesting since it explained why many people were migrating across the United States prior to the civil war. In addition, a couple of people in one branch of my family were involved, So, I fely=t compelled to buy a "hard copy". I was not disappointed.Ms Bynum also presents an uncommon view of what happened in some areas both during and after the conflict. I gained an appreciation for the trials and tribulations of the period of reconstruction in the South. Something I never really understood in High School or college.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy Andy of MinnesotaReads like a PhD thesis, not for a general audience.

Between late 1863 and mid-1864, an armed band of Confederate deserters battled Confederate cavalry in the Piney Woods region of Jones County, Mississippi. Calling themselves the Knight Company after their captain, Newton Knight, they set up headquarters in the swamps of the Leaf River, where, legend has it, they declared the Free State of Jones. The story of the Jones County rebellion is well known among Mississippians, and debate over whether the county actually seceded from the state during the war has smoldered for more than a century. Adding further controversy to the legend is the story of Newt Knight's interracial romance with his wartime accomplice, Rachel, a slave. From their relationship there developed a mixed-race community that endured long after the Civil War had ended, and the ambiguous racial identity of their descendants confounded the rules of segregated Mississippi well into the twentieth century. Victoria Bynum traces the origins and legacy of the Jones County uprising from the American Revolution to the modern civil rights movement. In bridging the gap between the legendary and the real Free State of Jones, she shows how the legend--what was told, what was embellished, and what was left out--reveals a great deal about the South's transition from slavery to segregation; the racial, gender, and class politics of the period; and the contingent nature of history and memory.

Bynum is to be saluted not only for her profound scholarship but for her evenhanded accounts of matters that remain volatile and controversial. . . . [This] book should be praised as an original and cogent piece of scholarship on a devilishly complicated and demanding subject.--Washington TimesThis is an excellent book and Bynum deserves much praise for her ability to negotiate the minefield of myth and legend to produce a study that not only makes a tremendous contribution to scholarship but is a compelling read as well. Thoroughly researched, thoughtfully argued, well-written, and unfailingly interesting, Bynum's work further demonstrates the potential of local studies to shed light on broader forces that have shaped the American past. It deserves attention from those interested in the Free State of Jones, the Civil War in history and memory, and the enduring impact of race, class, and gender on Southern history.--H-NetBynum shows how future historians might convincingly knit together the all too-often disparate fields of political, ideological, gender, and racial histories.--Virginia Quarterly Bynum's deeply researched and well-written book unravels the historical and sociological significance of the Piney Woods region of southeastern Mississippi. . . . Powerful, revisionist, and timely, Bynum's book combines superb history with poignant analysis of historical memory and southern racial mores.--ChoiceAn ambitious piece of work spanning three centuries that presents a lively and intricate portrait of some fascinating and idiosyncratic characters. . . . Prodigious research in genealogical material, census files, church records, official documents, and oral histories provides as full a picture of Jones County and its people as we are ever likely to have.--American Historical Well researched.--New York Times Book Bynum has fashioned frustratingly disparate material into an important book that may cause historians who are skeptical about putting too much stress on an 'inner' Civil War to rethink their position.--American Historical The Free State of Jones is clearly a story that needs to be told, and Bynum has done impressive research to bring it to a modern audience. She uses a wide range of social history sources to trace the long history not only of Newt Knight and his gang but also of their ancestors. She is interested in social structure, economic patterns, migration, religious revivals, family formation, and community relations--in short, a genealogy of the entire Jones County community before they became famous during and after the Civil War. This is an ambitious project that brings the Jones County community to life for scholars, students, and lay readers.--Altina L. Waller, author of *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900* Local studies have made us increasingly aware of the many different ways in which southerners experienced the Civil War. Few communities fought as much of the war on their own terms or generated

as distorted yet profound a legacy afterward as did the men and women of this renegade county in Mississippi's Piney Woods. It's a fascinating story, and Victoria Bynum tells it remarkably well.--John C. Inscoe, coauthor of *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War* About the Author Victoria E. Bynum is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of history at Texas State University, San Marcos. She is author of *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and Its Legacies* and *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South*.