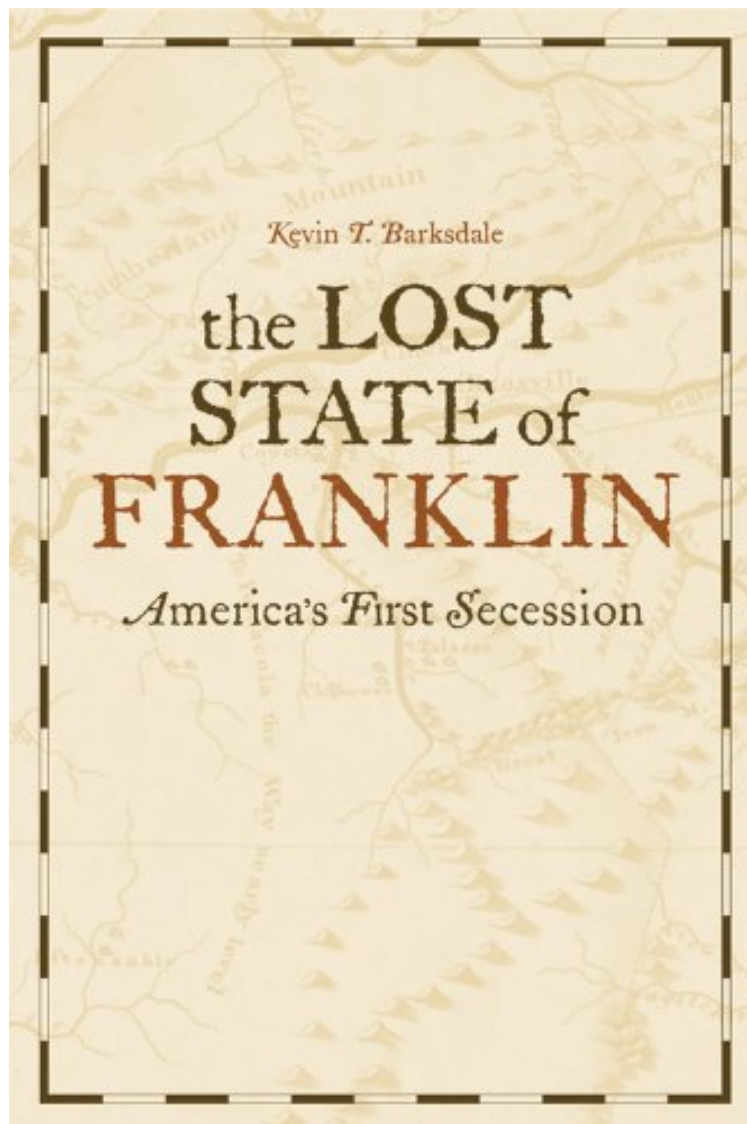


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The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession (New Directions In Southern History)

Kevin T. Barksdale

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Kevin T. Barksdale : The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession (New Directions In Southern History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession (New Directions In Southern History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Lori Rae DeVotiI bought this for my son's college

course. It came very quickly and was exactly what I expected. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars By C. Benefield Comprehensive and fair account of a complex history. 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A capable study By Historian This has been a long-neglected part of NC history, so it is good to see a serious study of this separatist movement. Research looks good, and the last chapter about how Franklin was used to justify other separatist movements (incl 1861) is very good. Unfort., the author tried to make the story overly dramatic by hinting throughout the text that the end of the movement would be a big, bloody battle. It wasn't. Some details are off too: there were no minie balls in 1786; Gen. Rutherford's first name was Griffith, not Henry; etc. These don't detract from what I would call a "capable" study, but other parts of the book are overly confusing.

In the years following the Revolutionary War, the young American nation was in a state of chaos. Citizens pleaded with government leaders to reorganize local infrastructures and heighten regulations, but economic turmoil, Native American warfare, and political unrest persisted. By 1784, one group of North Carolina frontiersmen could no longer stand the unresponsiveness of state leaders to their growing demands. This ambitious coalition of Tennessee Valley citizens declared their region independent from North Carolina, forming the state of Franklin. *The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession* chronicles the history of this ill-fated movement from its origins in the early settlement of East Tennessee to its eventual violent demise. Author Kevin T. Barksdale investigates how this lost state failed so ruinously, examining its history and tracing the development of its modern mythology. The Franklin independence movement emerged from the shared desires of a powerful group of landed elite, yeoman farmers, and country merchants. Over the course of four years they managed to develop a functioning state government, court system, and backcountry bureaucracy. Cloaking their motives in the rhetoric of the American Revolution, the Franklinites aimed to defend their land claims, expand their economy, and eradicate the area's Native American population. They sought admission into the union as America's fourteenth state, but their secession never garnered support from outside the Tennessee Valley. Confronted by Native American resistance and the opposition of the North Carolina government, the state of Franklin incited a firestorm of partisan and Indian violence. Despite a brief diplomatic flirtation with the nation of Spain during the state's final days, the state was never able to recover from the warfare, and Franklin collapsed in 1788. East Tennesseans now regard the lost state of Franklin as a symbol of rugged individualism and regional exceptionalism, but outside the region the movement has been largely forgotten. *The Lost State of Franklin* presents the complete history of this defiant secession and examines the formation of its romanticized local legacy. In reevaluating this complex political movement, Barksdale sheds light on a remarkable Appalachian insurrection and reminds readers of the extraordinary, fragile nature of America's young independence.

"Dr. Barksdale writes with admirable clarity, explaining convoluted events with engaging and accessible prose, a straight-forward organizational structure, and a rare sense of passion." David C. Hsiung, Juniata College, author of *Two Worlds in the Tennessee Mountains: Exploring the Origins of Appalachian Stereotypes* "The *Lost State of Franklin* speaks to a range of important issues in Southern history, issues that transcend narrow debates about North Carolina and Tennessee history. No scholar has done more to delineate the myths surrounding Franklin's statehood from the bitter political battles that animated southern frontier society." Peter S. Carmichael, Eberly Professor of Civil War Studies, West Virginia University, author of *The Last Generation: Young Virginias in Peace, War, and Reunion* "A riveting and complex story of settlers and leaders who struggled to establish and maintain an independent government. Although short-lived and often forgotten, Franklin rightly deserves Barksdale's engaging account." Paul H. Bergeron, Professor of History Emeritus, University of Tennessee "Kevin Barksdale's painstakingly researched and elegantly written study of America's first secession is required reading for everyone interested in early America, the frontier, and Appalachia." Ronald L. Lewis, Professor of History Emeritus, West Virginia University "The State of Franklin's ill-fated quest for statehood is among the most intriguing episodes on the early American frontier and a pivotal movement in the nation's political history. In Kevin Barksdale's very able hands, this struggle transcends its Tennessee and Appalachian setting to become an even more significant reflection on the meanings of democracy and independence in the tenuous and tumultuous postrevolutionary era of westward expansion and nation-building." John C. Inscoe, author of *Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South* "The *Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession* belongs in the reference collection of any local history buff." *Bristol Herald Courier* "Deeply researched and painstakingly annotated, this work will be of particular interest to scholars studying the antebellum South. Recommended for Southern history collections in academic libraries." *Library Journal* "[Barksdale] provides a balanced and accessible account that would interest anyone curious about our regional history." *Chattanooga Free Press* "I was glad to see a study like this in print, and I recommend it to everyone interested in the eighteenth century or the southern frontier. Thanks to Barksdale's work, we now have a much clearer picture of this brief but fascinating episode in Tennessee history than we've ever had before. The "Lost State of Franklin" didn't endure, but in terms of scholarship, it isn't lost anymore." *Past in the Present* "Barksdale has provided a nuanced and insightful examination of the state of Franklin. The book will serve as a must-read for students of the "lost" state and of the frontier experience more broadly." *Ohio Valley History* "Kevin Barksdale presents the first scholarly study of the so-called "lost state" of

Franklin since Samuel Cole Williams took up the subject in 1933. "North Carolina Historical Review" "In this welcome contribution to the problems of governance in the early republic, Kevin Barksdale presents a history of the failed State of Franklin. Franklin's rise and fall remains an important counterpoint to much of American history because it is a story of failed possibilities." "Tennessee Historical Quarterly" "The Lost State of Franklin has a quality of déjà vu, which gives the reader the impression that the story has played out elsewhere. That is because the book is a microlevel reflection of the American experience. Perhaps that explains why it is so captivating and, more importantly, why it is so relevant." "Journal of American History" "Barksdale's careful deconstruction of both the myths and realities of the 'lost' state of Franklin should make this book a standard reference for future scholars." "American Historical Review" "The book will be valuable for regional specialists and students interested in frontier politics, as well as Appalachian history and memory more broadly." "West Virginia History" "In the twentieth century, the story of Franklin appeared in memorials and exhibits and even inspired an outdoor drama and two romance novels. The story of Franklin deserves to be explored for its legacy in all three centuries." "Register of the Kentucky Historical Society" "His book is an important study of community growth on the trans-Appalachian frontier at a time when the guidelines for future expansion were being shaped." "Journal of Southern History" About the Author Kevin T. Barksdale is assistant professor of history at Marshall University.