

Prepared

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History has many accounts of people not being prepared. Pearl Harbor is an example. Stonewall Jackson's flank attack at Chancellorsville in the Civil War caught a Union army corps unready.

One of the most striking examples of not being vigilant, and ready, is the mostly unknown story of Fort Mims.

It was August 30, 1813, in what is now Baldwin County, Alabama. A log fort had been built for the protection of settlers. When word came that there could be trouble with the Creek Indians, about 500 people moved into the fort. The large gates to the fort had remained open too long and piles of dirt had drifted against the doors, and they could no longer be closed quickly.

This proved to be deadly for many people.

The folks inside the fort had a casual attitude, feeling safe from danger. No one really expected an attack. The people sang, danced, played cards, and enjoyed their noon meal.

Without warning, hundreds of yelling, painted warriors ran from the forest and through the open gates. Accounts say between 750-1,000 Creeks attacked. Several hundred settlers died under the tomahawks of the group known as Red Sticks. A few escaped the wild scene of fire and death to bring the story to other settlers.

Eventually the Creeks were defeated. But Fort Mims had been a tough lesson. We often learn lessons which cost us dearly. Sometimes we lose time or money or freedom or health.

An early American hero, Zachary Taylor, was known as Rough and Ready. Not a bad nickname.

In the Book of Proverbs, we are told that our choices have consequences. In Chapter 30, verse 25, we read, "Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer;"

And in the Book of Matthew we read about 10 virgins, five foolish and five wise. The foolish ones were not prepared, taking no oil for their lamps when they went out to meet the bridegroom. Unprepared.

When the sand piles up against the gates, it is time to wake up.