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DELAND, FLORIDA

[Welch, Andrew G.] — 'Written by His Guardian'

A Narrative of the Early Days and Remembrances of Oceola Nikkanoochee, Prince of Econchatti; A Young Seminole Indian; Son of Econchatti-Mico, King of the Red Hills, in Florida; with A Brief History of His Nation, and His Renowned Uncle, Oceola, and His Parents: and Amusing Tales, Illustrative of Indian Life in Florida

London: Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly, 1841. First Edition.

#22554 \$850

AN EARLY NARRATIVE OF THE SEMINOLES, OSCEOLA & THE SECOND SEMINOLE WAR.

The first edition of Andrew G. Welch's account of Oceola Nikkanoochee, a young Seminole captured by United States troops during the Second Seminole War and subsequently taken into Welch's care. Published in London in 1841, the narrative combines an account of the boy and his family with a history of the Seminoles, material concerning his celebrated uncle Osceola, descriptions of Native life in Florida, and the text of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek. Contemporary bibliographical records identify Welch as the otherwise unnamed 'guardian' of the title page.

The volume retains the full suite of three lithographic plates recorded by both Sabin and Howes: the frontispiece portrait of Nikkanoochee, a portrait of Osceola, and the dramatic scene depicting 'Oceola's Mode of Signing the Treaty.'

This copy carries an additional association of considerable relevance: it is inscribed '**W. S. Wyman, Univ. of Ala. 1874**', identifying its nineteenth-century owner as William Stokes Wyman, University of Alabama professor and later president, whose scholarship included the Indigenous peoples of Alabama and the Southeast.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS — FEATURES

+++ Sympathetically rebound, retaining the original cloth boards.

Rebound using the original blind-stamped brown cloth boards, with repaired corners and a later brown leather spine incorporating five raised bands, blind ornaments, and gilt titles OCEOLA and London 1841. New endpapers supplied. The original endpaper material was preserved and is laid into the volume.

+++ Illustrated with three lithographic plates,

+++ Octavo; 8.75 inches. [6], 2–228 pages.

+++ The text incorporates historical and biographical material relating to the Seminoles and Osceola and includes the Treaty of Moultrie Creek. Modern bibliographical records likewise describe the 1841 edition as containing the treaty.

CONDITION: VERY GOOD — COMPLETE AND SOUND.

+++ Original blind-stamped cloth boards show rubbing, fading, and age-related surface wear; corners repaired. Later leather spine clean and sound, with bright gilt lettering. Original endpaper material has been removed during rebinding but retained and laid in.

+++ Binding firm and usable. Text generally clean with scattered foxing and occasional spotting consistent with age. The three lithographic plates are present, including the frontispiece, with occasional light spotting and toning.

+++ Nine pages contain contemporary manuscript annotations and underlining by William Stokes Wyman, described below; these are retained as an important copy-specific scholarly feature.

COPY-SPECIFIC FEATURES / NOTES

THE WILLIAM STOKES WYMAN COPY — OWNED AND ANNOTATED IN 1874.

Inscribed on the title page: 'W. S. Wyman, Univ. of Ala. 1874.' The ownership inscription is preserved on the original endpaper now laid into the volume.

William Stokes Wyman (1830–1915), was a longtime professor at the University of Alabama and later president of the institution.

Inscribed on the title page 'W. S. Wyman, Univ. of Ala. 1874', with the same ownership inscription preserved on the original endpaper now laid into the volume. The handwriting has been compared with Wyman's known signature and with the annotations throughout this copy.

WYMAN'S WORKING ANNOTATIONS.

Nine pages contain manuscript annotations and underlining in Wyman's hand, demonstrating active engagement with the text rather than simple ownership. His notes are concentrated principally on Seminole words, names, and terminology, frequently supplying definitions or equivalents alongside the printed text.

Among them are annotations to the discussion of Seminole naming on pp. 18–19; vocabulary and terminology associated with dress and material culture on pp. 54–58; and additional linguistic notes elsewhere in the text. Wyman also supplies a manuscript cross-reference to another work, evidence that he was reading Welch comparatively rather than merely marking passages of interest.

The annotations are particularly relevant in light of Wyman's later scholarship on the Indigenous peoples of Alabama and the Southeast. They preserve evidence of a nineteenth-century scholar actively using an early Seminole narrative as a source.

Additional early pencil notation on the retained original endpaper records 'Old Book from Hamilton / Value 3/6.'

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: A SEMINOLE NARRATIVE PUBLISHED WHILE THE WAR WAS STILL WITHIN LIVING MEMORY.

Published in 1841, only three years after Osceola's death, Welch's narrative belongs to the earliest book-length literature through which British and American readers encountered the Seminole struggle in Florida. Its importance lies not only in the story of Nikkanochee but in its combination of biography, Seminole history, treaty material, descriptions of Indigenous life, and representations of Osceola. The work continues to be classified in institutional collections under Seminole biography, government relations, and treaties.

CAPTIVITY, GUARDIANSHIP & ASSIMILATION.

Howes summarizes the central circumstances succinctly: Nikkanochee, described as a nephew of Osceola, was captured by United States troops and adopted by the author. Welch subsequently took the boy to England and constructed the narrative around his recollections and the history of his Seminole family.

The work must also be understood within its distinctly nineteenth-century missionary and assimilationist framework. Welch explicitly presents Christianization as the means by which Indigenous peoples might escape what he believed would otherwise be their extinction. The book therefore documents not simply Seminole history but the attitudes through which Native displacement, education, conversion, and assimilation were interpreted by the attitudes through which Native displacement, education, conversion, and assimilation were interpreted by a paternalistic nineteenth-century British observer.

OSCEOLA IN WORD AND IMAGE.

The illustrations considerably strengthen the book as a historical object. Nikkanoochee is presented in Seminole dress in the frontispiece; Osceola receives a separate full-length portrait; and the treaty plate visualizes one of the most dramatic episodes in the book's representation of Seminole resistance.

The volume thus belongs simultaneously to early Florida history, Seminole biography, nineteenth-century representations of Native Americans, and the extensive contemporary literature surrounding Osceola and the Second Seminole War.

A SCHOLAR'S WORKING COPY.

Wyman's ownership gives this copy a significant second historical layer. His scholarship on the Indigenous peoples of Alabama and the Southeast included his later work on George Stiggins's *Creek Indian History*, placing him within the developing nineteenth-century effort to preserve and interpret documentary accounts of southeastern Indigenous history.

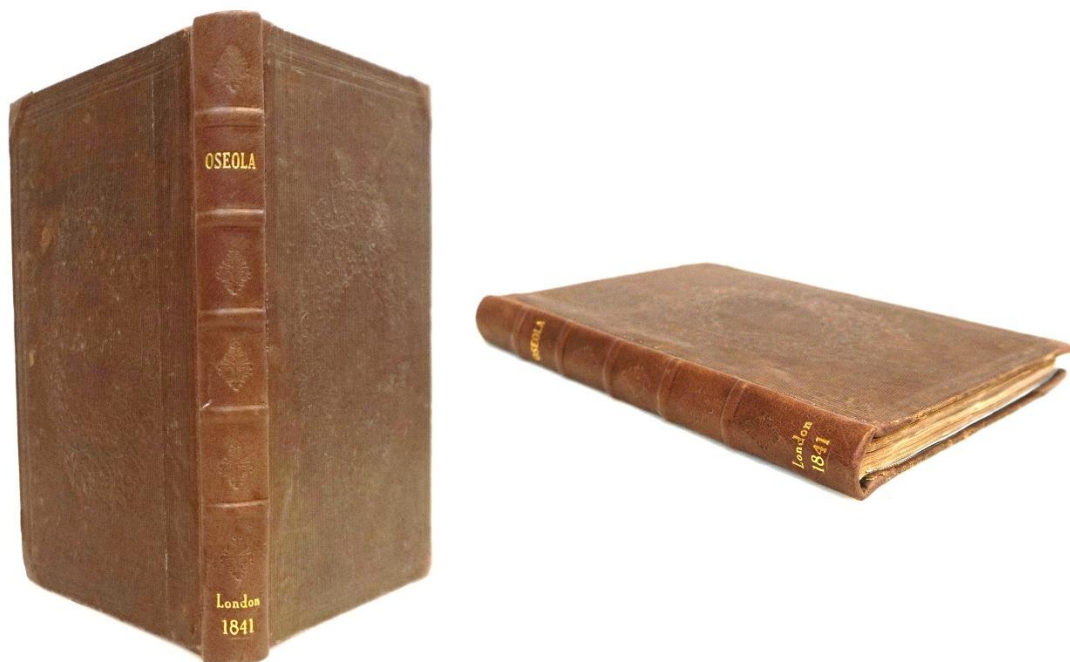
His 1874 ownership inscription and manuscript annotations transform the association from ownership into documented use. Across nine pages, Wyman supplies definitions, linguistic notes, underlining, and a cross-reference to another source, with particular attention to Seminole language and material culture. The copy thus preserves tangible evidence of an early scholar of southeastern Native American history actively working with Welch's Seminole narrative.

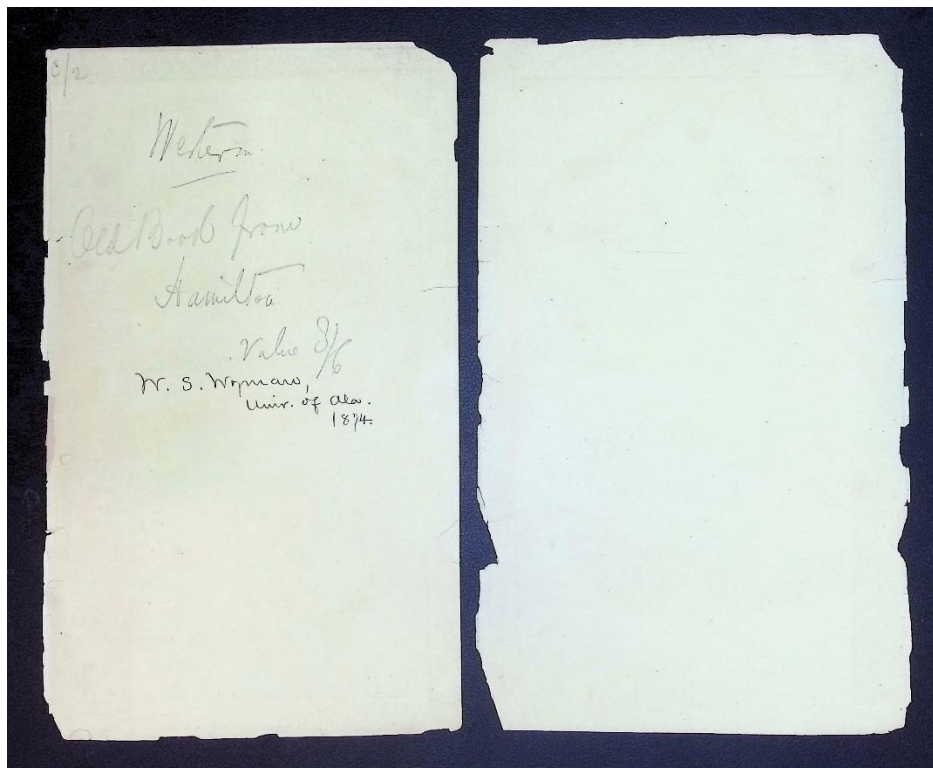
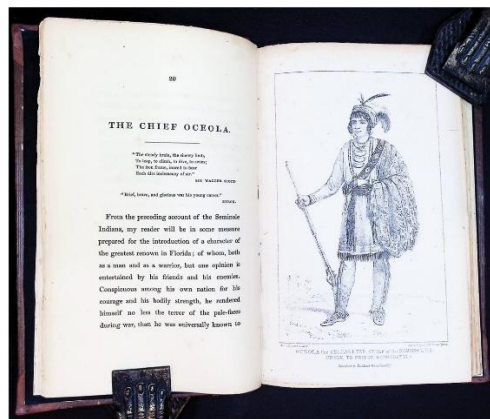
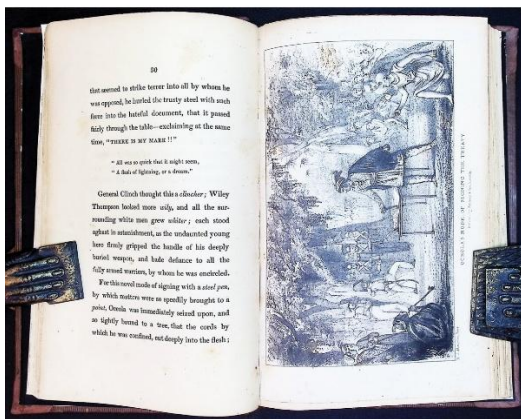
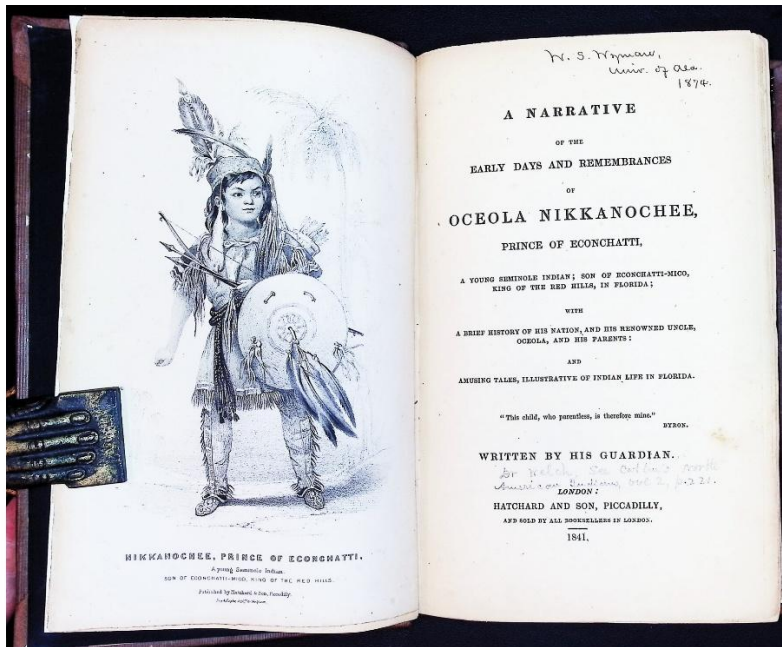
GENRES: Americana, Floridiana, Native American History, Seminole History, Biography, Indigenous Studies, Military History, Indian Captivity and Adoption Narratives, Treaty Literature, Association Copies

SUBJECTS: Seminole Indians, Osceola, Osceola Nikkanoochee, Andrew G. Welch, William Stokes Wyman, Second Seminole War, Florida History, Native Americans, Indigenous Peoples of Florida, Treaty of Moultrie Creek, Seminole Biography, Indian Removal, Native American Assimilation, Southeastern Indians, Creek Indians.

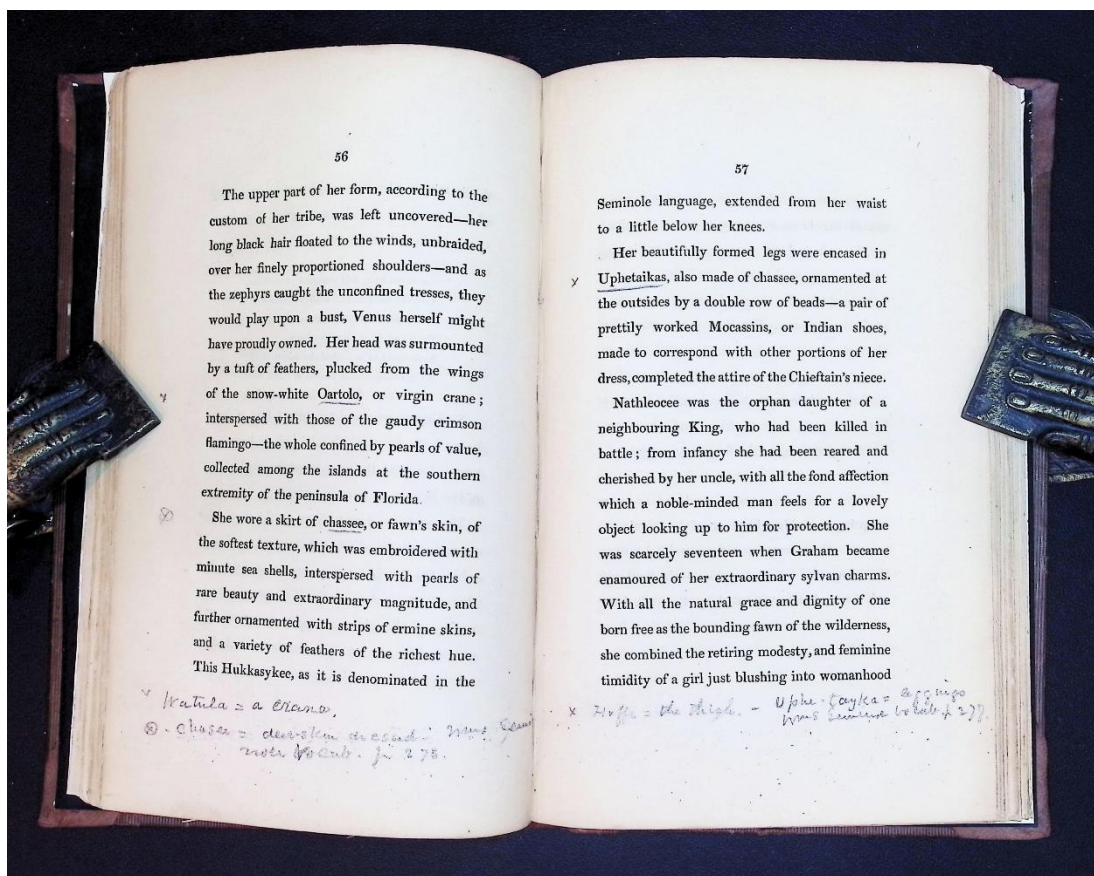
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES: Sabin 56642. Howes W230.

Images:





WYMAN'S MANUSCRIPT ANNOTATIONS — SEMINOLE LANGUAGE & MATERIAL CULTURE



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