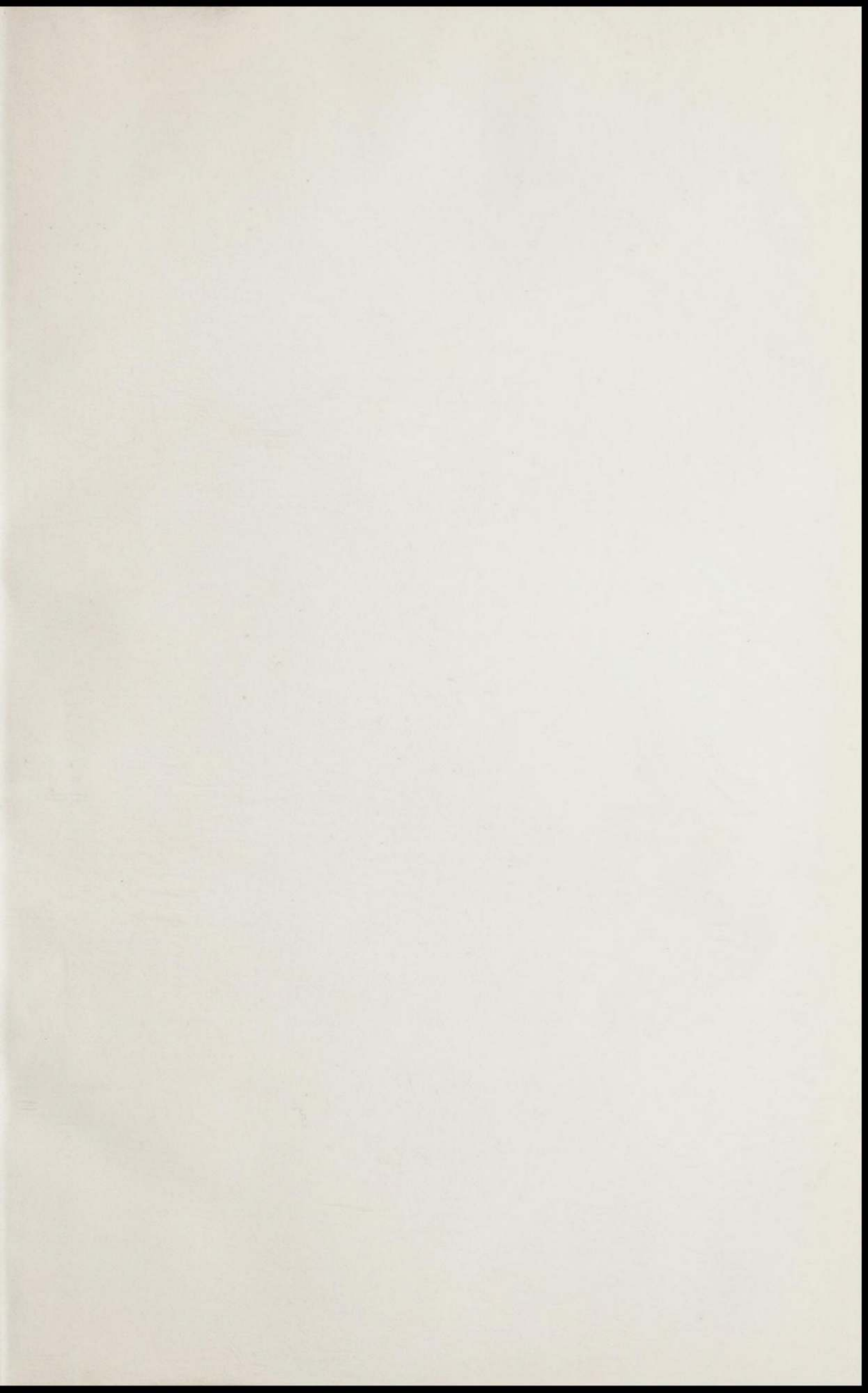
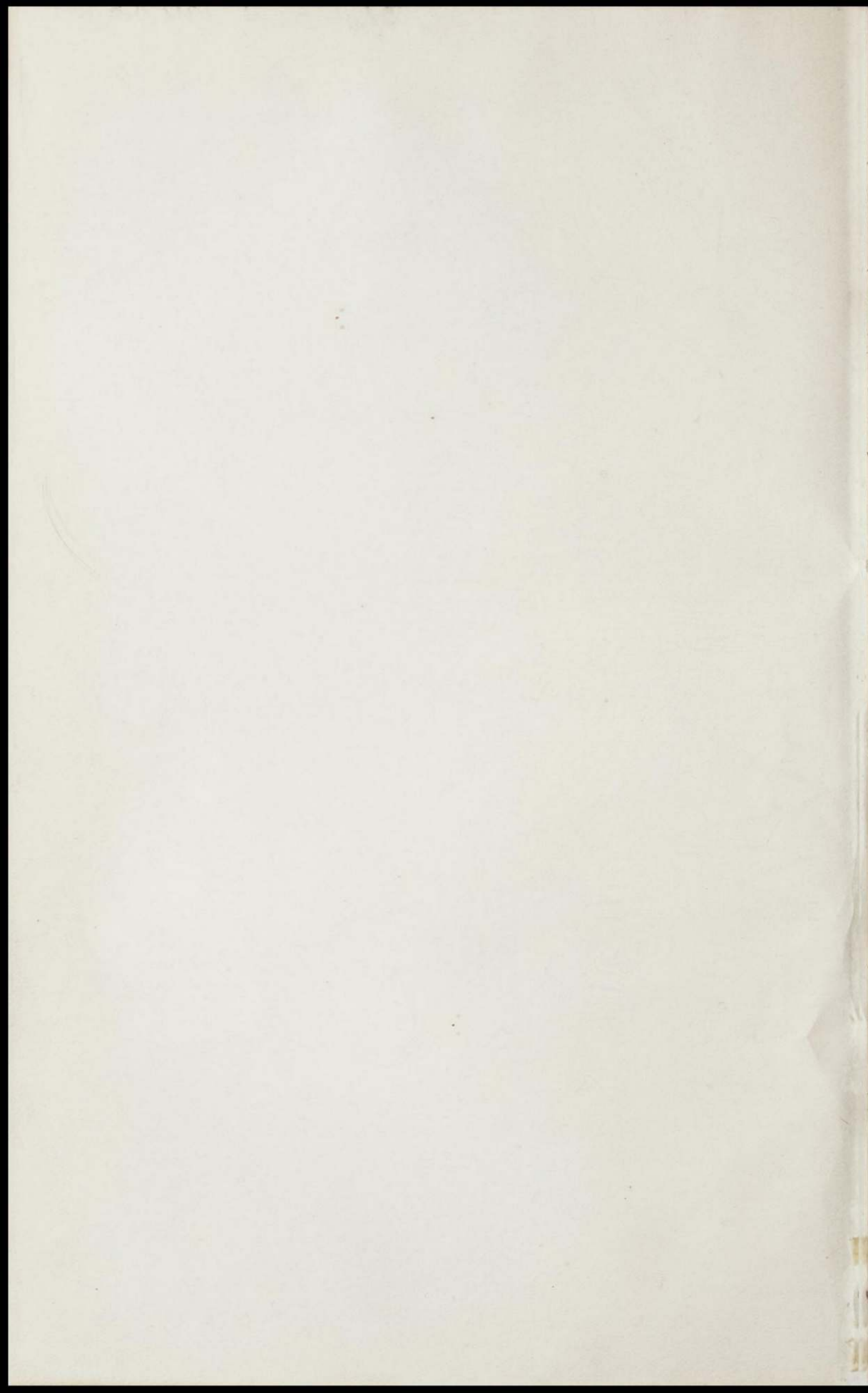




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AN  
AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
**SEMINOLE WAR;**  
AND OF THE  
**MIRACULOUS ESCAPE**  
OF  
**MRS. MARY GODFREY,**  
AND HER FOUR FEMALE CHILDREN.



ANNEXED IS A MINUTE DETAIL OF THE  
**HORRID MASSACRES**  
Of the *Whites*, by the *Indians* and *Negroes*, in Florida,  
in the months of December, January and February.

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NEW-YORK :  
Printed for D. F. Blanchard and others, Publishers.  
1836.

Ayer

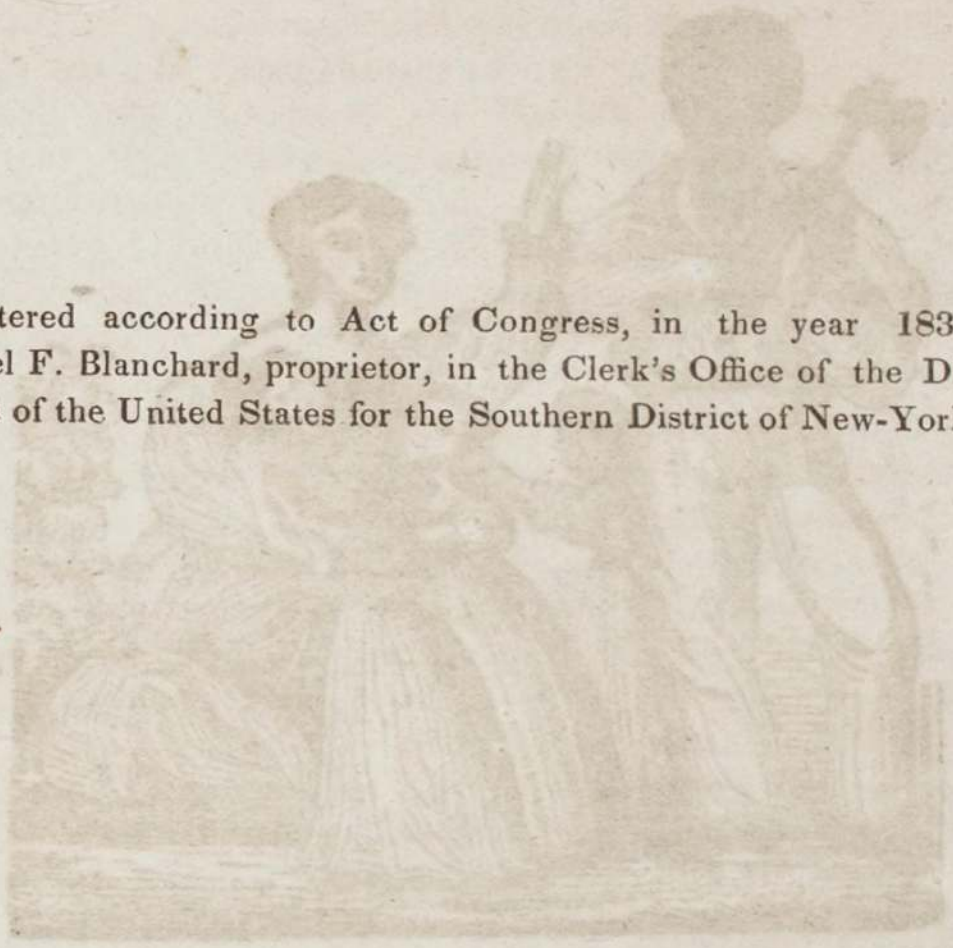
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1836

WARRIORS  
OF THE  
MAY GODFREY  
AND HER FOUR FEMALE CHILDREN

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836, by Daniel F. Blanchard, proprietor, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New-York.



OF THE  
HARRIS MASSACHUSETTS  
in the month of December, January and February  
of the Winter by the Indians and Negroes in Florida

NEW-YORK  
Printed for D. F. Blanchard and others, Publishers  
1836

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## SEMINOLE WAR.

At the termination of the Indian War, in 1833, when, after much bloodshed, a treaty of peace was happily effected, and as was believed, firmly established between the American Government and Black Hawk and his followers, it was then the opinion of many, that in consequence of the severe chastisement received by the latter, that neither they or any of their red brethren would be found so soon manifesting (by offensive operations) a disposition to disturb the repose of the white inhabitants of any of our frontier settlements—but, in this opinion, we have recently found ourselves mistaken, as, at an early period of the present year, tidings of an unpleasant nature were received by the inhabitants of the north, from their brethren at the south, that the *war-whoop* had been sounded by a tribe of Indians denominated *Seminoles*; and in addition to the immense property destroyed by them, many of the defenceless inhabitants (male and female) of the Floridas, had fallen victims to the tomahawk and scalping knife! Since the commencement of offensive operations, by the savages, (which may be viewed as a war of extermination, as they appear disposed neither to give or take quarter) pains have been taken to collect every fact of an important and interesting nature, relative to the cause and progress of the alarming and bloody conflict, with which to present the public.

The name "*Seminole*" (*i. e. wild*) is applied by the Creeks, to all vagabonds of that nation, and as a tribe, their history justifies the application. It was the towns belonging to this tribe that were burnt by General JACKSON, in 1817, when *Francis*, and some others of their principal chiefs were slain; there are, however, numbers of the tribe still remaining, and it is represented that they are not now what they were at that period; they were then, indeed, *Savages*, with but little or no knowledge of civilized warfare—they are now a different race, being a mixture of Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Cherokees, Mickasookees, and

**Blacks.** Their intercourse with the whites has not only rendered them more sagacious and adroit in eluding their enemies, more capable of defending themselves, and more provident as to the contingencies against which they ought to guard, and are amply supplied with munitions of war, and with provisions; having, as they have represented, driven nearly 3000 head of cattle into the swamps in the interior, for their subsistence while contending with the whites; and boasting of a force of 2000 warriors fit to take the field, and of an additional force of about 800 captured or runaway negroes from the South, who have united with them in the present contest; and are all well acquainted with every fastness, pass or morass in the territory. The Mickasooky tribe is considered the leading band of the Seminoles; they have always been noted as the most determined and ruthless of the savage race; their head chief is *Micanopy*, a man far advanced in years, and who has never performed much to distinguish himself as a very great warrior; the next in command, is *Jumper*, who bears a truly savage countenance, and possesses a disposition corresponding therewith—his influence is great with Micanopy, and by whom he is altogether dictated. The third in rank, is *Oscala*, alias *Powell*, a chief as cunning as he is brave; he is about 35 years of age, is a half breed, and of slender form, but active and muscular; he possesses unbounded influence over the Indians, which he has acquired by no unbecoming artifices, but by the great superiority of his intellectual powers, his daring courage, and admirable military turn of character. The skill with which he has for a long time managed to frustrate the measures of our government, for the removal of the Indians beyond the Mississippi, agreeable to treaty, entitle him to be superior to Black Hawk.

In so destitute a situation were the Seminoles left after the destruction of their villages by Gen. Jackson, that Congress soon after voted them a very considerable sum of money (\$40,000) to keep them from the starvation with which they were threatened—and in consideration therefor, they, agreeable to a treaty con-



cluded with them in May, 1832, agreed to relinquish their present territory (which has been the scene of their present depredations) and at the end of three years, to retire to the prairies of Arkansas; and it appears that the hostility of a very considerable proportion of them, originated in a reluctance to adhere to said treaty, so far as it required of them to quit the land of their forefathers. The three years expired in May last, but as the Indians manifested an unwillingness to move, it was judged expedient by the officers entrusted with their removal, to give them six months longer to prepare for their journey. By the treaty, their cattle and horses were to be surrendered and paid for, and accordingly the Indian Agent advertised the Indians to bring them in to be sold on the first and fifteenth of December last; to this *Charles* (who was then their head chief) assented, but others strongly objected, and expressed their determination to die, arms in hand, on the soil of their forefathers; and in manifestation of this determination, at one of their councils held in December last, nine warriors entered and discharged nine bullets in the heart of Charles for his too great subserviency to the whites!—the Agent (General Thomson, of Georgia, formerly a member of Congress) soon after shared a similar fate near Camp King, by the hands of Powell, who, it afterwards appeared, had borne him inveterate hatred, but until this moment had concealed his antipathies so skillfully, that the general supposed him personally friendly! These murders, together with that of two or three other friendly chiefs, was the signal for a general rise of the Seminoles, and for a preparation to commence offensive operations; which was done by first sending their women and children South, in their canoes, near Cape Sable and Ten Keys, for the purpose of preparing the County Root, (so called) of which flour is made, and upon which in time of scarcity, they live. They next commenced an attack on the plantations of the whites in the interior, and upon their settlements at New River and Cape Florida, and plundered, destroyed and laid waste every thing of value that came

in their way. Not content with firing the dwelling-houses, barns and cribs of grain of the whites, herds of cattle, horses, hogs and poultry were shot down, and even the legs of the latter were cut off, and their mangled bodies stuck full of light wood splinters!—Families widely separated from one another, had no other means of safety than flight afforded them, and that in a way which prevented their providing themselves with the most necessary articles of clothing, bedding, &c.—their furniture, cattle, grain, agricultural implements, &c. &c. were all left to the mercy of the savage foe, and years of toil may not enable them to recover the pecuniary comforts of which they have been deprived. Several families had got but recently settled, and had just got themselves comfortably situated, when they were obliged to fly for their lives!—It was estimated that in the month of January, 500 families were thus driven from their homes, and in almost a state of starvation, sought protection under the walls of St. Augustine and other fortified places, from the ravages of the enemy!—nor were all so fortunate as to escape with their lives; many were barbarously butchered by the merciless wretches, regardless of age or sex! among these was the unfortunate family of Mr. William Cooley, an old and respected inhabitant of New River; Mr. C. was from home—they murdered his wife, three children, and Mr. Joseph Flinton, a teacher in the family, in the most barbarous manner! shot several hogs, plundered his house, and carried away with them all his horses and two negro slaves. The cold blooded massacre of this unfortunate family was attended with many aggravations, as Cooley had always been on the most intimate terms with the Indians; his wife was taken captive by them several years since, and was as such retained by them a sufficient length of time to become acquainted with their language, customs, &c. and has ever since been considered a favorite with them; his son was a particular pet of theirs, whose language he also spoke, and whose skill in shooting, &c. he emulated with a spirit remarkable for a boy of his years.

There were two other children besides this boy, one an infant at the mother's breast. If any family could rely on past friendship for present forbearance from the savage foe, it was this—but all calculations of this sort were horribly disappointed by the awful result.—While the father was absent in a vessel along the coast, his premises were assailed with a brutality unsurpassed even in savage war! His wife and three children were mercilessly butchered! When the disconsolate parent returned to his desolate home, to bury the remains of his murdered household, he found the body of Flinton, (a native of Cecil county, Maryland,) who acted as instructor to his children, shockingly mangled, evidently with an axe—his two eldest children were found near by shot through the heart; one holding yet the book in her hand from which she had been learning, and the book of the other lay by his side; about a hundred yards from thence he found the bodies of his wife and infant—his wife had been shot through the heart, and to appearance, the same shot had broken the infant's arm.

About ten days after the massacre of Cooley's family, the Indians paid a second visit to his house, and took away every thing which they had in the late attack left behind, and ransacked a house but a short distance therefrom, destroyed the furniture, ripped open the beds, &c. One of the negroes belonging to Cooley, who was supposed to have been carried off, afterwards returned, and reported that at the time of the massacre, he succeeded in making his escape by means of a boat; that the outrage was committed by Indians well known to him and the other inhabitants of that part of the peninsula, and who had oftentimes had intercourse with his master's family; they were about fifteen in number.

A family who dwelt but a short distance from the house of Cooley, and were witnesses of the awful butchery of his wife and children, had a very narrow escape from sharing a similar fate—such were their fears and precipitate flight, that a daughter (an interesting girl of 17) fled in dishabille, having sprung with

terror from the bed to which she had been confined many weeks by severe sickness! Not far distant dwelt another family—the widow Rigley, her two daughters and an only son—they were closely pursued by the savages, and were compelled to run twelve miles thro' the wood, and when they reached Cape Florida, they had scarcely a garment remaining to their backs, they having been torn off by the bushes; and almost the whole distance they ran without shoes, having lost them at the commencement of their flight, and so completely were they exhausted, that they were unable to walk for several days! All of those who were thus compelled to fly, and were not overtaken by the pursuing savages, took refuge at Cape Florida light, Key Biscayne, being about sixty in number, men, women and children, where, with the keeper of the light, Mr. Deblois, they, for their better safety, resorted to and took up their abode in the Light-House; not having a sufficient supply of provisions and water for so many persons, they were compelled to hoist a signal of distress, which was fortunately discovered by a vessel passing in sight, and which received them on board and conveyed them to St. Augustine.

Among the many unfortunate families who were compelled to leave their late peaceful homes, in quest of aid, or for some place where they would be less exposed, and in less danger of falling victims to the fatal tomahawk and scalping knife of the savages, there was no one instance in which a providential interposition was so remarkable, as that of the miraculous preservation and deliverance of Mrs. Mary Godfrey, the wife of Mr. Thomas Godfrey, and her four female children, one an infant at the breast. The husband of this unfortunate woman had been, with others, drafted and compelled to leave his family unprotected, for the purpose of endeavoring to check the enemy in their murderous career; it was not until she heard the frightful yells of the approaching savages, and saw the dwellings of her nearest neighbors in flames, and the inmates flying in every direction to escape from the awful death with which they were threatened, that she

was induced to follow their example ; but being impeded in her flight by the burden of her infant, but six months old, she (as the only alternative left her by which she could escape from her pursuers) was obliged to penetrate into a thick and miry swamp ! In this dreary and uncomfortable retreat, the unfortunate mother found means to conceal herself and helpless children for the space of four days, with nothing to subsist on but a few wild roots and berries ! As she concluded by the almost constant whooping of the Indians, that they had full possession of all the adjacent country, and that it would be impossible to escape discovery should she attempt to seek a more comfortable situation, she came to the conclusion that it would be preferable there to remain, and with her poor children to fall victims to hunger and thirst, than to subject themselves to the tortures, which in all probability, would be inflicted on them were they to fall into the hands of the enemy. As the savages appeared by their yells to approach very near, to prevent a discovery she was obliged to use every exertion to induce her suffering little ones to stifle their cries and lamentations, though driven to it by pinching hunger and burning thirst ! On the fourth day, finding that in consequence of her extreme suffering and deprivations, that she could no longer afford the nourishment to her babe that it required, she, with becoming fortitude, endeavored to prepare her mind to part with her precious charge, and to submit, without a murmur, to whatever might be the will of Him to whom alone she could now look for protection. Toward the close of the day, the pitiful moans of her tender babe (produced by its sufferings) were such as to be heard by and to attract the attention of a straggling black, who had enlisted in the cause of the enemy ; guided by its cries, and the bitter lamentations of its poor mother and sisters, he was brought full in view of them, and at whose sudden and unexpected appearance, the poor sufferers manifested their terrors by a united shriek of horror and despair ! the little girls in the mean time clinging to their parent,

and imploring that protection, which she, poor woman, was unable to afford them. The negro, grinning a ghastly smile, as if elated with the discovery, approached them with an uplifted axe, apparently intent on their destruction ! The distracted mother at the moment, begged for the lives of her children ; and on her pointing to her almost expiring infant, the negro dropped his axe, and after contemplating the sad spectacle for a few moments, appeared much affected, and broke silence by assuring Mrs. G. that she had nothing to fear, that neither herself or her children should be hurt—that he had two children who were held in bondage by the whites, that to enjoy his own liberty he had left them to their fate, and something now seemed to whisper him, that if he should destroy the lives of her innocent children, God would be angry, and might doom his little ones to a similar fate by the hands of the white men in whose power they were ! Such, in substance, were the remarks of the relenting African, and who further manifested his pity, by requesting Mrs. G. and her children to remain concealed where they were, and at night he would bring them food and water, and as soon as a favorable opportunity should present, would conduct them to a path which would lead them to the plantation of some of their friends. He then left them, and in proof of his fidelity, he early in the evening returned, bringing with him two blankets and a quantity of wholesome provision ; which as he represented, he had succeeded in saving from the house of a planter which had been that afternoon set on fire ; having thus provided for their immediate want, he again retired, but early the next morning, once more made his appearance, and apparently much agitated, informing Mrs. G. that a company of mounted volunteers (whites) had just made their appearance in the neighborhood, and had dispersed the Indians, who had been there embodied, and as some of them in their flight might seek shelter in the swamp in which she was concealed, he thought it unsafe for her to remain there any longer, and proposed to her that she now improve the favorable opportunity which present-

ed, to escape to her friends, and that he would accompany her to within view of them, which the friendly negro did, although at the risk of his own life!

The following particulars were received from the lips of Mrs. Godfrey, of the manner in which she passed the four days in her dreary abode:—"The first day, my apprehensions that we should be traced by our tracks, discovered and butchered by the savages, were too great to think for a moment to what extremities we might be driven by hunger, and other privations. Their frightful yells were heard without a moment's cessation during the whole day, at the close of which, I selected as dry a place as could be found, which I overspread with a few pine twigs, on which with my poor helpless children to repose the night, which to me proved a sleepless one; and from the sobs and sighs and bitter moans of my affrighted little ones, I had reason to believe it proved equally so to them. Miserable, however, as was our situation, it might have been still more so. Had an equal quantity of rain fallen that night as the night previous, it is not probable that my tender babe would have survived until morning.

The sun arose bright and cheering on the morning of the second day, but the frightful whoopings of the Indians had not ceased; nor were our prospects of escaping with our lives any better, should we attempt leaving our hiding place. Before the close of the day my youngest children began to complain of hunger and thirst; a few wild berries and a little stagnant water was all that could be procured with which to appease either. My oldest daughter bore her sufferings and privations with remarkable fortitude; when not engaged in conversing (in a low tone of voice) with her two younger sisters, to pacify and to avert their dreadful forebodings of being seized and murdered by the cruel Indians, her time was employed in relieving me of the burden of my helpless babe. We passed the night of this day much as the first, with but little if any sleep; indeed, exposed as we were to the heavy dew and unwholesome night air, and com-

pelled either to sit or lie upon the damp ground, it was not possible for either my children or myself to obtain that repose which nature required; and if more comfortably situated, our fearful apprehensions of being discovered and put to death by the merciless savages, would have prevented it.

The morning of the third day, although clear and pleasant, found us, if possible, in a still more wretched condition, having all contracted bad colds by reason of our thin apparel and exposure; and for the want of proper exercise, our limbs were so benumbed and cramped as to be hardly able to stand erect! and what added still more to my afflictions, I found that in consequence of my long fasting, in addition to other sufferings, I could but a little while longer afford that nourishment to my babe so necessary to support life; and in addition to which, the lamentations of my other children (with the exception of the oldest) it is impossible to describe correctly what were my feelings at this melancholy moment! mothers can best judge, and they can have but a faint conception of them unless similarly situated! But, in this hour of severe affliction, I did not fail to look to and call on One who had power to save and to deliver us, and as He "tempers the storm to the shorn lamb," to revive and protract the life of my tender infant! By the assistance of kind Providence, we were enabled to pass another night, and our lives were spared to witness the rising of another sun, although with a great depression of spirits and relaxation of bodily strength, in consequence of being so long deprived of wholesome nourishment; and, indeed, so visible was it as regarded my infant, as to render it almost certain, that before the close of the day, I should be compelled to part with my precious charge! Although, apparently with insufficient strength to raise its little hands, yet its constant cries were still more shrill and distressing, nor could they be hushed; and fortunate it proved for us that they could not be, for thereby the attention of the humane African (our deliverer) was attracted, and by them brought to our relief."



There were other instances in which parents were less fortunate—who were not only doomed to witness the total destruction of their property, the fruits of many years labor, but, if not so fortunate as to escape, were treated with most savage barbarity; and in some instances, where, in consequence of the absence of the husband, it was suspected that he had been either draughted or had volunteered his services to assist in repelling the assaults of the savages, but little mercy was shown their wives and children if left behind. In one instance, as was represented to the writer, a house (the only inmates of which were a mother and her two young children) was visited by an Indian and his squaw, and after demanding liquor, and refreshing themselves with whatever they pleased that the house contained, and about to depart, the Indian seized and bound one of the children, a lad about seven years of age, while the other, an infant, was seized by the squaw, and notwithstanding the entreaties and lamentations of the poor distracted mother, would no doubt have carried both off had it not been for two armed white men, who fortunately were discovered, although at some distance, approaching, as the two savages were about leaving the house with their captives.

In addition to the foregoing, many horrid murders have been perpetrated; a great number of the most valuable plantations have been totally destroyed, and whole families missing; and as the Indians have been frequently discovered dancing to and fro around their burning dwellings, there can be but little doubt but some of the missing were consumed in them—and as places have been noticed where fires have been enkindled, with burned stakes erected in the centre; they are doubtless those to which a portion of those who have fallen into their hands, have been inhumanly sacrificed, agreeably to their savage mode of torture.

Upon the first notice of the disturbances, a force of about 500 mounted men were raised, who volunteered for one month, furnishing their own provisions, arms, &c. and supposing that in this short time all would be completed. Between the volunteers and the Indians,

there were two slight engagements—in the first the whites lost their baggage and several men, and evidently were worsted; in the second, every Indian was killed who was engaged; the number was 7 or 8—but this proved but a momentary check to the fearless ferocity of the savages; they were dispersed in small parties, and when pursued took refuge in the thickets, and fought with desperation, apparently with the determination, either to kill or be killed without paying any regard to the numbers by whom they were assailed.

The first severe engagement with the savages was on the 28th of December last, when Major Dade having started with a detachment of the fifth regiment of Infantry of United States troops, from Tampa Bay to Camp King, to join Gen. Clinch; at about 8 o'clock in the morning, they were surrounded by a large body of Indians, supposed to number from 800 to 1000, and were cut to pieces!—only three men of the one hundred and twelve of which the detachment was composed, escaped, badly wounded, to recount the lamentable history of the butchery of their fellow-soldiers. Major Dade was shot off his horse on the commencement of the attack; Captains Gardner and Frazer soon after fell, mortally wounded, and their scalps were taken by the savages. Lieutenant Bassinger was wounded on the onset, and was discovered by a negro in the party of savages, crawling off to a place of concealment, and tomahawked! History does not furnish us with an instance, since the defeat of Gen. St. Clair, of a butchery more horrid, and, with the above exception, it stands without an example in the annals of Indian warfare! For a more particular account of the severe engagement we are indebted to Major Belton, being an extract from his official report to the Adjutant General—which is as follows:

“It becomes my melancholy duty to proceed to the catastrophe of this fated band, an elite of energy, patriotism, military skill and constant courage. On the 29th, in the afternoon, a man of my company, John Thomas, and temporarily transferred to C. company, 2d artillery, came in, and yesterday Pr. Ransom Clark,

of the same company, with four wounds, very severe, and stated that an action took place on the 28th, commencing about ten o'clock; in which every officer fell, and nearly every man. The command entrenched every night, and about four miles from the halt were attacked, and received at least fifteen rounds before an Indian was seen.—Major Dade and his horse were both killed on the first onset, and the interpreter "Louis." Lt. Mudge, 3d Artillery, received his mortal wounds. Lt. Bassenger, 3d Artillery was not wounded till after the second attack; and at the latter part of that, he was wounded several times before he was tomahawked. Capt. Gardner, 2d Artillery, was not wounded until the second attack, and at the last part of it. Mr. Bassenger, after Capt. Gardner was killed, remarked, "I am the only officer left, and, boys, we will do the best we can." Lt. Keays, 3d Artillery, had both arms broken the first shot, was unable to act, and was tomahawked, the latter part of the second attack, by a negro. Lieut. Henderson had his left arm broken the first fire, and after that with a musket fired at least thirty or forty shots. Dr. Catlin was not killed until after the second attack, nor was he wounded; he placed himself behind the breast work, and with two double barrelled guns, said, "he had four barrels for them." Captain Fraser fell early in the action with the advanced guard; as a man of his company, (B 3d Artillery,) who came in this morning, reports.

On the attack they were in column of route; and after receiving a heavy fire from the unseen enemy, they then rose up in such a swarm, that the ground, covered, as was thought, by Light Infantry extension, showed the Indians between the files. Muskets were clubbed, knives and bayonets used, and parties clinched. In the second attack, our own men's muskets, from the dead and wounded, were used against them; a cross fire cut down a succession of artillerists at the fence, from which 49 rounds were fired—the gun carriages were burnt, and the guns sunk in a pond. A war dance was held on the ground; many negroes

were in the field, but no scalps were taken by the Indians, but the negroes, with hellish cruelty, pierced the throats of all, whose loud cries and groans showed the power of life to be yet strong. The survivors were preserved by imitating death, except Thomas, who was partly stifled, and bought his life for six dollars, and in his enemy recognised an Indian whose axe he had helved a few days before at his post. About 100 Indians were well mounted, naked, and painted. The last man who came in brought a note from Capt. Frazer, addressed to Major Mountford, which was fastened in a cleft stick, and stuck in a creek, dated, as is supposed, on the 27th, stating that they were beset every night and pushing on.

By the dreadful massacre, as described in Col. Belton's report, many widows and orphans were made. A few days after the battle, they were to the number of forty or fifty, put on board a vessel bound to New-Orleans, where they arrived in the most forlorn and pitiful condition; but, we are happy since to learn, that, much to the honor of the humane and hospitable inhabitants of that city, seventeen hundred and forty-one dollars have been there subscribed to their relief.

The next important engagement with the Savages, was three days after the fatal defeat of Major Dade's detachment, by a party of regulars and volunteers, under the command of Gen. Clinch—he having assumed the command—and relying on the courage and intrepidity of his men, formed the determination to penetrate into the heart of the enemy's country. His force consisted of two hundred regulars and three hundred and fifty volunteers—they had three or four Indian guides, the relations of the Chief Charles, who was, as before mentioned, killed by the war party of the nation; and under their guidance, it was determined not to take the usual route to Tampa Bay, but to follow a more westerly track, in hopes of taking the enemy by surprise. The Withlacooshe, or, as it is called on most maps, the Amaxura, is a considerable river which runs westerly along the northern border of the Seminole territories, and empties into the Gulf.

The usual road to Tampa, crosses the river by a bridge, but the guides promised to take the troops across by a ford lower down. On the morning of the 31st of December, they began to approach the Withlacooshee, and as it was apprehended that the Seminoles, if they had received information of the route which the General had chosen, might dispute the passage of the river, the baggage was left at a point some five miles from the river bank, under a guard, and the spies were ordered to keep a good look out. No signs of the enemy were discovered, except a single track, in the loose sand, which here composed the surface of the country, apparently of a man on a full run, which one of the guides undertook to identify—(such is the nicety of Indian science on matters of this sort)—as the footstep of a certain negro, who had belonged to the Chief Charles. The river on the north side, the direction in which the troops approached it, was lined by a thick hammock, a quarter of a mile in width.—The scouts beat through this without discovering any signs of the enemy. On approaching the river bank, it was found to be a bold and rapid stream, some twenty yards across, and too deep to be forded. An old canoe was found, and after stopping the seams with moss, it served to ferry over the regulars in parties of four and five. After crossing, the trail led obliquely some two hundred yards through a narrow hammock which lined the south side of the river, and then ascended a steep sandy bluff or barren, on the top of which was a clear, open space. Having stationed their sentinels, the regulars stacked their arms on this open space, and laid down to rest and refresh themselves, while the volunteers were crossing. Some were asleep, and others, with true soldier-like nonchalance, were improving this moment of leisure in the enjoyment of a game of cards. A small party of the volunteers had swam their horses across, and were engaged in constructing a bridge for the passage of the others, when the sentinels came running in with the news that the Indians were coming. At first it was

believed to be a false alarm, but in a moment after they came rushing down the hammock, along the river bank; they even ventured out of their cover into the open space occupied by the regulars, all the time pouring in a heavy fire. It seemed to be their object, by pushing down the hammock along the river bank, to get possession of the landing place, and cut off the communication between the regulars and the volunteers; but a party of the volunteers plunged into the river, some on horseback and some on foot, and others extending themselves along the river bank and firing across, beat back the Indians, and kept open the communication. The enemy were very shy of the rifles of the volunteers, but seemed to have no great fear of the regulars, for whose markship they entertain a good deal of contempt.

The regulars were taken entirely by surprise, but they behaved with great gallantry, forming into platoons and returning the enemy's fire with as much regularity and exactness as if they had been on parade. The Indians, however, had greatly the advantage, as they were posted among the trees at the bottom of the bluff, while the regulars were exposed in the open space at the top of it. The Indians seemed to be coming in during the whole time of the engagement, and those who came in last were observed to have packs on their backs as though they were just off a journey—it was conjectured that they were waiting the approach of the whites at the bridge above, and were obliged to make a rapid movement in order to intercept them at the ford. Osciola, otherwise called Powell, the leader in the war, was observed the foremost of the assailants—he wore a red belt, and three long feathers, and would step boldly out from behind his tree, take a deliberate aim, and bring down his man at every fire!—whole platoons levelled their muskets at him, and the tree behind which he stood was completely riddled by the balls, while he repeatedly called on his followers to stand by him and not to run from “the pale faces.” At the beginning of

the disturbances, he gave out that there were three men whose lives he would have, viz. Charles, the Chief, who was in favor of a removal, General Thompson, the Indian Agent, and General Clinch—the deaths of the two former he has already effected.

The heat of the engagement lasted about an hour; but the Indians kept up a continual whooping and occasional firing until near dark; the troops had upwards of sixty killed and wounded, principally wounded—the loss fell almost entirely on the regulars, not more than six or seven volunteers having been hurt. It was impossible to ascertain how great was the loss of the Indians; it was conjectured that there were upwards of 400 in the engagement; as soon as they retired the troops fell back beyond the hammock on the north side, carrying with them their wounded, and slept upon their arms through fear of being again surprised.

Throughout the engagement it is represented that Gen. Clinch was in the hottest of the fight—his horse was shot under him in two places, neck and hip—a ball passed through his cap, entering the front and passing out of the back part of the top, and another ball passed through the sleeve of the bridle arm of his coat! At one moment a little confusion occurred among the troops, in consequence of some soldiers giving the word "Retire!" whereupon the General immediately threw himself in front of the men, and his horse staggering under him, he dismounted, advanced to the front, and amidst a shower of bullets from the Indians, exclaimed, that "before he would show his back to the enemy he would die upon the field!"—a gallant charge followed, which routed and drove the enemy from the field!

During the action, the yelling of the savages was incessant, and somewhat appalling; ten times their number of civilized enemies in an open field would not have been so formidable—the regulars were compelled to watch their opportunity, and fire by volleys, as did the volunteers whenever they saw a flash from the thicket; the killed of the whites were interred and fires

built over their graves, so that the Indians obtained no scalps

The following remarkable incident occurred at the battle just mentioned; one of the Jacksonville volunteers who was among the number that remained on the east side of the river, during the fight that remained on the other, on seeing an Indian aim his rifle at one of our men, levelled his own at him from across the stream, about one hundred yards, felled him on the spot, swam over, got his scalp, and with the trophy in his hand, returned to the place he had left! The savage was left on the ground by his comrades, as it is a custom with them never to bury, or even to touch or approach a scalped Indian, for the loss of his scalp renders him in their eyes an unclean thing!

After the engagement on the Withlacoochee, the main body of the enemy moved South, destroying almost every thing of value in their course, burning every house and destroying every plantation between St. Augustine and Cape Florida, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles. The amount of property destroyed is immense. Whenever they set fire to a dwelling house they would dance around it until it was reduced to ashes! In most instances they found the dwellings deserted by the whites, who, on receiving information of the approach of the enemy, had fled for their lives, leaving their most valuable effects behind. In one instance, an aged grand parent, who was too infirm to attempt an escape by flight, and an affectionate little grand-daughter, who was much attached to her grandfather, were left behind. The savages entered and secured both, and having conveyed them to a little distance from the house, set it on fire, after which they returned, and while consulting together in what manner they should dispose of their captives, the poor old man (who entreated only for the life of his grand-child) was fortunately recognised by one of the savages, as one from whom his family had received relief when driven to the greatest extremities by the war of 1818—in consequence, by his kind in-



terposition, they were left uninjured and with sufficient food for their subsistence for several days—an instance in proof of what has been frequently said to be one of the most noble characteristics of a savage, that whether at peace or war, “he never forgets an injury or a favor done him!”

Early in March, Gen. Gaines, with a very considerable body of Carolina and Georgia troops under his command, penetrated as far as the Withlacoochie, where he met with the main body of the Indians encamped on the opposite bank of the river, and by whom during the night he was attacked, (he having by stratagem in concealing a part of his force decoyed them over;) after a short but severe contest, he succeeded in driving them back with loss; but early the succeeding day the attack was renewed by the savages, and continued for three days successively, when finding their number of slain and wounded very considerable, they retired and sought a covert in a neighboring swamp. Gen. Gaines' loss was but four killed and twenty wounded; among the former was Gen. Izard, and among the latter Gen. G. Gen. Gaines having been disappointed in receiving a supply of ammunition and stores, as well as a reinforcement, which, under the command of Generals Clinch and Scott, were to be sent him, was now placed in a very critical situation—entrenched and surrounded by the enemy, his communications cut off, and almost destitute of provisions as well as ammunition. Supplies had been sent him by Gen. Clinch, but the detachment after proceeding within six miles of Gen. Gaines' encampment, found the signs of the Indians so frequent, that they thought it unsafe to proceed further, and therefore returned to Fort Drane. In this alarming condition Gen. Gaines held a council with his officers, by whom it was determined that it would be preferable to kill and eat their horses than to trust to the mercy of the savages; and not only on their horses were they compelled to depend for subsistence, but to such extremities were they finally driven, that even their dogs (with one excep-

tion) were butchered, cooked, and distributed sparingly among the men! and the solitary one reserved (although contrary to the positive orders of Gen. Gaines) soon shared a similar fate. This animal for his remarkable attachment to the commanding officer being a favorite, was highly valued; but notwithstanding, the temptation was too great to be resisted by a soldier nearly famished with hunger. Watching a favorable opportunity, he seized the dog, conveyed him a short distance from the camp, and strangled him; and was soon after detected by disposing of one of the quarters to one of his comrades for five dollars! and was severely punished for the act. But at this melancholy period the powers of hunger were too great to be resisted, whatever the consequences might be. One soldier gave six dollars for a piece of horse's entrails of about a foot in length!—five dollars were given for a biscuit, and the same amount for a quart of corn! a soldier was offered one dollar by another for an ounce of tobacco, and refused it. Many other similar instances could be mentioned relative to the woful condition of these unfortunate men, surrounded and suffering beyond the power of conception, in a savage wilderness. In this deplorable condition were they found, when Gen. Clinch happily succeeded in reaching them with supplies and a reinforcement of Alachua militia. They met, as might be supposed, with a joyful reception. The Alachua volunteers cheerfully distributed their biscuits and corn, reserving none for themselves. It was affecting to witness the greediness and thankfulness with which they received a whole or a half biscuit from their deliverers.

The day previous to the arrival of General Clinch, Oseola sent an negro to the camp of General Gaines, requesting an interview, and promising to stop killing white men if he would stop killing Indians.—This proposition was agreed to, and Oseola was told to come next day with a white flag, when they would have a talk with him. The next day, in company with another chief, he came to within about one

hundred yards of the fort, waved his white flag around three times, and sat down upon a log. Three officers from the camp went to meet him.

Oseola informed them that Gen. Clinch was on his way to join them with a large number of horsemen.— He expressed his willingness that hostilities cease, and to give up his arms. The officers required him to sign articles of agreement by which he bound himself to proceed immediately to Tampa Bay, and thence embark for the Mississippi. Some say that Oseola objected to this way of removing, and wished to go by land. Others that he would not promise to go at all, but wished to live on the other side of the Withlatchooche, and to have that river for the boundary line between them and the whites. Their discussion was interrupted by the arrival of Gen. Clinch. During the course of it, Oseola inquired how they were off for provisions. They told him they had a plenty. He said, he knew they had not, and if they would come over the river, he would give them two beeves and a bottle of brandy.

The evening of the day on which their interview was interrupted by the arrival of Gen. Clinch, Oseola sent word to Gen. Gaines, that if he would send away the horsemen (Alachua militia,) they would come and surrender their arms. We know not whether from suspicion or otherwise, the horsemen were not sent away. After waiting three days to hear more of Oseola, and not having provisions to remain longer, Gen. Gaines returned to Fort Drane, at which place Oseola was to have met him.

Oseola's request for an interview with Gen. Gaines was no doubt an artifice of that cunning chief, on learning the approach of a re-inforcement, either to give time to make a safe retreat, or a stratagem by which, after introducing five hundred Indians within the breast-work under the pretence of surrendering their arms, to make an attack with his main force, and taking advantage of the confusion, to massacre the whole before Gen. Clinch could render them any as-

sistance. Every recent engagement with his followers affords additional evidence of the daring character of this chieftain. He seems to be unacquainted with fear, and no reliance can be placed on his declaration that he was "tired killing white men." Deep-rooted hatred to the "pale faces," and despair of pardon for his unparalleled atrocities, have possession of his heart, and he will no doubt continue to manifest his hatred to the whites, until he is placed where he can no longer raise his murderous arm against the innocent! and yet, he may be supposed almost bullet-proof, as forty balls were taken from the trunk of the tree which sheltered him during the battle of Withlicoche!—in that battle the Indians have acknowledged that they lost 138 men. Micanopy, the head chief, they say, had fired but one gun during the war. He had his choice, either to fight or die; he chose the former, raised his rifle and shot Major Dade, and immediately thereafter retired to his town, where he has remained ever since.

After the arrival of Gen. Clinch, the Indians separated into straggling parties, and so far from having been beaten and compelled to sue for peace, the small parties which have been since met with, have fiercely resisted, until put in danger of the bayonet. The face of the country, interspersed with hammocks, cyprus swamps and marshes, almost impenetrable to the white man, presents serious obstacles to the prosecution of a campaign in Florida; and while these fastnesses constitute the natural defence of the Indians, they present difficulties almost insurmountable to their pursuers. As the approaching warm and unhealthy weather, will prevent further operations on the part of the whites, the regular forces have retired into summer quarters at St. Augustine; and thus has ended this unfortunate campaign. The savages, unsubdued, continue fearlessly to stalk over the graves of Major Dade and his brave companions.





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