

WAR CHIEF OF THE SEMINOLES

by MAY McNEER

A fearful cry rang through the air. Settlers, newly come to the Territory of Florida, turned pale, and soldiers trembled in the safety of their forts. The war whoop could belong to only one man — Osceola, the dreaded Seminole leader.

During the Seminole War, more than one hundred years ago, Osceola's cry was often heard in the woods and swamps of Florida. It was a warning that the Indian leader was once again on the warpath, perhaps to make another successful attack on the seasoned troops of the United States Army.

A just man himself, Osceola was fighting to win justice for his people, the tribes who had settled in Florida in the 17th century and whose land was being coveted by newcomers: penniless "borderers" and wealthy plantation owners. Skirmishes and attacks at last burst into a war that, because of Osceola's skillful leadership, became the most difficult campaign ever undertaken against the Indians.



MAY McNEER, a Floridian by birth and author of another Landmark, *The California Gold Rush*, is well equipped to give us this new book, for she is the great-granddaughter of Dr. Frederick Weedon, who cared for the famous Seminole chief in his last illness. Stories of Osceola filled Miss McNeer's childhood, and the family still preserves the chief's pipe, silver ornament, and a lock of his hair.