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Second Seminole War

(1835-1842)



Chief Osceola of the Seminoles

After the United States acquired Florida from Spain, and fought the First Seminole War with the Indians in

Florida, a treaty was signed in which most Florida Indians agreed (or at least the Indian leaders agreed), to move onto a reservation in the middle of Florida. Many of the Seminoles did not want to move onto the reservation, and many of those who did move, began to leave and return to their traditional lands. Conflicts with white settlers occurred, and by the end of 1835, a full-scale war was in place between the Florida government, the white settlers, on one side, and the Seminoles and escaped slaves living with the Seminoles on the other side.

One of the factors in both Seminole Wars was the existence and growth of slavery in Florida, and the natural desire of many of the enslaved blacks to escape their imprisonment. Many of the Florida slaves who did escape, migrated to the Seminole lands seeking refuge. When the slave owners attempted to recapture the escaped blacks, these encounters often led to conflict and violence with the Seminoles.

This war was the most expensive Indian War in U.S. history, and has the added distinction of also being an Indian War in which the Native Americans did not lose. In effect, the U.S. declared the war over in 1842, even though the Seminoles had not in fact been defeated.

Below are some facts and figures on the Second Seminole War.

The Second Seminole War Began: December 23, 1835

The Second Seminole War Ended: August 14, 1842

The Second Seminole War Was Fought Between:

United States vs. Seminole Indians of Florida

The Location of the Second Seminole War: South and Central Florida

The Second Seminole War Resulted In: Seminole Indians were allowed to remain in South Florida, though some were encouraged to move West. In effect, the Army could not defeat the Seminoles, and they were allowed to remain in place.

Major Battles and Campaigns of the Second Seminole War:

"Dade Massacre" (December 28, 1835)

Gaines' Expedition (1836)

Scott's Expedition (1836)

Battle of Hatchee-Lustee (1837)

Battle of Lake Okeechobee (December 25, 1837)

Battle of Loxahatchee (January 24, 1838)

"Harney Massacre" (July 23, 1839)

Second Seminole War Casualties:

Seminole Casualties: Unnknown (Seminoles usually carried away their dead and wounded)

U.S. Military Casualties: 1,600 (approximately)

Sources:

1. Kohn, George C. [Dictionary of Wars](#). New York: Facts On File Publications. 1999.
2. Dupuy, R. Ernest and Trevor N. Dupey. [The Harper Encyclopedia of Military History: From 3500 B.C. to the Present](#) New York, New York: Harper & Row. 1993.

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