

# 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Creek Attire: Searching Museum Collections

Kim Meinholz with Dr. Charlotte M. Porter, Ph. D

3. Metal gorget worn by Creek warriors.



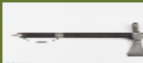
Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian

5. Headband as worn by Hotatke Yohola (The Rising Wind) in Partial Native Dress with Gorget and Pistol 1903.



Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian

6. Pipe tomahawk created with iron blade and wooden shaft.



Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian



William Bartram's drawing of Mico-Chlucco (Long Warrior) published in 1791.

In 1774, the naturalist William Bartram explored the Alachua Savanna, present-day Paynes Prairie in Alachua Co., FL. (See plaque in front of Bartram Hall.) Traveling with traders, Bartram was greeted by the local residents, Creek Indians friendly to the British cause. Many of Bartram's illustrations and records attest to his encounters, but few 18th-century Creek artifacts are extant. Using Bartram's illustration of the Mico Long Warrior as a guide, I am searching museum collections online to locate artifacts similar to those noted by the arrows. My goal is to provide a third dimension to a two-dimensional historical narrative of the Creeks at the time of the American Revolution. The focus is two-fold: (1) to find artifacts indicated by arrows in Bartram's drawing and (2) to determine Creek names for these objects, some of them European trade items. The image to the right identifies some trade artifacts that interest me because they are described in the historical record. Because the museum community, at present, does not use standard nomenclature for Creek artifacts, online search for them has been difficult. I have been successful in locating some artifacts through the National Museum of the American Indian, the Muscgo Nation and the Sam Noble Museum at Oklahoma University. I am grateful for support from the University of Florida History Department and earlier research efforts by Shawna Pies of the UF Museum Studies Program.

Selected sources:

Bartram, William, and Francis Harper. *The Travels of William Bartram*. Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 1998.

Braund, Kathryn E. Holland. *Deerskins & Duffels The Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815*. Indians of the Southeast. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Ethridge, Robbie Franklyn. *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Numbered Items: 1. Feathers used with headband (made of ostrich plumes or white cranes) 2. Scalp lock (hairstyle worn by Creek warriors) 3. Gorget (collected by warriors for protection and as trophies) 4. Feather standard (seen in later images without wand) 5. Headband (fashioned with either metal or cloth) 6. Tomahawk (created by Europeans as trade objects) 7. Feathered cape or mantel made of whole skin from a large animal.

Numbered items identifications supplied by staff at Muscgo Nation.



Photograph negative of modern Creek with fan. Image courtesy of the National Museum of Native American

William Bartram identified images 4A and 4B as a ceremonial standard. Current Creek (Muscgo) sources identify 4A as a fan. Museum curators refer to 4B as a wand. Did Bartram make a mistake? Do the two items belong together?



Wand, as noted by museum curators. Image courtesy of Gilcrease Museum