



# McGillivray of the Creeks (Southern Classics (Univ of South Carolina))

*John Walton Caughey*

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First published in 1939, *McGillivray of the Creeks* is a unique mix of primary and secondary sources for the study of American Indian history in the Southeast. The historian John Walton Caughey's brief but definitive biography of Creek leader Alexander McGillivray (1750-1793) is coupled with 214 letters between McGillivray and Spanish and American political officials. The volume offers distinctive firsthand insights into Creek and Euroamerican diplomacy in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi in the aftermath of the American Revolution as well as a glimpse into how historians have viewed the controversial Creek leader. McGillivray, the son of a famous Scottish Indian trader and a Muskogee Creek woman, was educated in Charleston, South Carolina, and, with his father's guidance, took up the mantle of negotiator for the Creek people during and after the Revolution. While much of eighteenth-century American Indian history relies on accounts written by non-Indians, the letters reprinted in this volume provide a valuable Indian perspective into Creek diplomatic negotiations with the Americans and the Spanish in the American South. Crafty and literate, McGillivray's letters reveal his willingness to play American and Spanish interests against one another. Whether he was motivated solely by a devotion to his native people or by the advancement of his own ambitions is the subject of much historical debate.

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