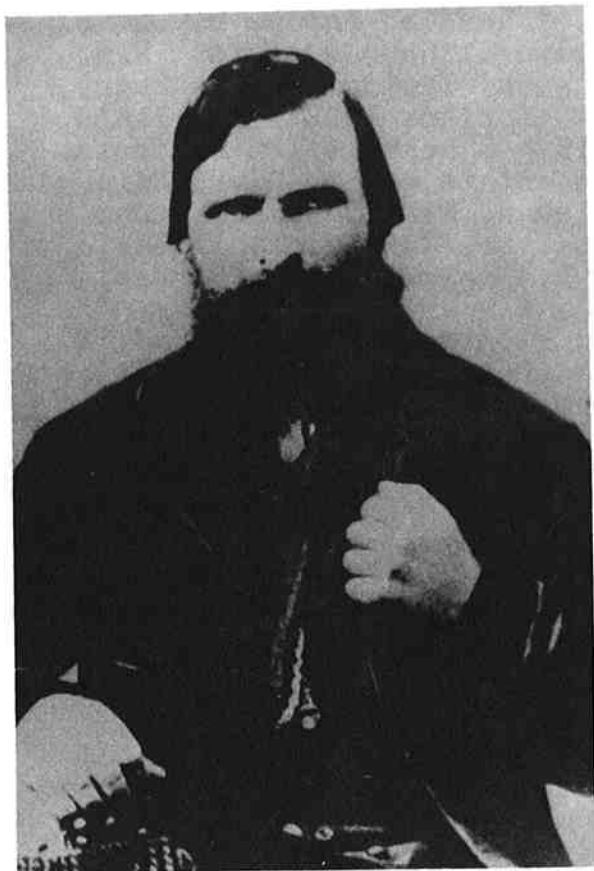


By 1856, most of the settlers in the Fort Meade area realized that their lives were more important than the protection of their homesteads from the Indians and had moved into the fort for safety. But there were others who refused - and insisted that they could protect their own homes.



LT. ALDERMAN CARLTON

Photo contributed by Mrs. Barbara Welles Probasco, Sarasota, Fla.

shouted, "How many men have you, Lieutenant?". "Only seven", was the reply. Father cried out warningly, "You are outnumbered more than two to one!"

"Lt. Carlton whirled to give his command, but at that moment William Parker sighted the Indians moving cautiously in the field, and calling, "Come on boys, we'll charge them!" wheeled his horse and tore for the field. Behind him followed the other six.

"Three raced down one side of the field and four down the other, closing in on the Indians in a cloud of dust. But the crouching Seminoles had the advantage. They were stationary. Their brave attackers were mounted and moving rapidly. The Indians fired. Lt. Carlton, William Parker & Lot Whidden fell dead. John Henry Hollingsworth was badly wounded.

"McCullough, infuriated at the deaths of his comrades, dismounted and ran towards an Indian whom he spied secreted behind a pine tree. Pulling him out, he grappled with him, man to man. Daniel Carlton ran to his aid. Between them they beat the Indian to the ground and cut his throat with his own hunting knife."

Early on the morning of June 14th, Mrs. Celia Durrance Tillis, wife of Willoughby Tillis, who remained at their homestead several miles south of Fort Meade, went out to milk the cows. As she squatted to her task, she saw the copper colored face of an Indian peering through the rail fence a few feet from her. She ran screaming to the house while Indians sprang up around the cowpen and advanced toward the house. Mr. Tillis and Mr. Underhill, who was sharing accommodations, with the Tillis family, grabbed their guns and began firing on the Indians.

The sound of the firing was heard at Fort Meade & Lt. Alderman Carlton hurriedly mounted six men: Daniel Carlton, John C. Oates, William Parker, William McCullough, John Henry Hollingsworth & Lot Whidden.

Mr. James Dallas Tillis, son of Willoughby Tillis, told what happened next:

"The galloping hoofbeats of their approaching horses warned our enemies, who crawled from their position behind our cattlepen and fortified themselves in the south end of a ten acre field to the south end of our house. Lt. Carlton was the first to round our house in a cloud of dust. He called out, "Where are the Indians?". My father indicated their direction, but