

“Charge with every man!”

The battle of Micanopy June 9, 1836 by Jackson Walker



A recent work from the studio is the commissioned oil painting for the Micanopy Historical Society in Micanopy, Florida. This historic rural community has endured in the central region of Florida since the early nineteenth century. From a Seminole Village to a trading post, from a fortified cluster of dwellings to a productive agricultural community, the town exist today as an example of old Florida.

The history of this community took a perilous turn in the 1830's when the Seminole Indian unrest broke out into full scale war. The conflict was widespread throughout the Florida Territory and the settlement Micanopy, was central in the contested region. As the war continued, Micanopy, like other communities and plantations nearby, became fortified as homes and outbuildings were enjoined with log stockade walls. By 1836 the Army had moved into the area and a proper military fort was constructed. It was during this time that an incident took place that the Historical Society wished to document in the commissioned work.

In June of 1836, “Fort Micanopy” was manned by companies of soldiers from the US Army's Third Artillery and troopers from the Second United States Dragoons.

Ever growing bands of armed Seminole Warriors were observed surrounding the fort and community, presenting a real and constant threat. On the ninth of June, a combined force of riflemen and Dragoons advanced from the fort, across the open “kill zone” and into the shoreline woodlands of nearby Lake Tusawilla and the large concentration of Seminole warriors within. In a two sided assault, the soldiers set fully upon the warriors resulting in a hand to hand brawl of clubs blades and musketry.

During the heat of the battle, one of the field officers, Capt. Richard Lee, (cousin of Robert E. Lee) was wounded by rifle fire. Refusing to be carried from the battlefield, he commanded “Charge with every man!” A gun crew with a six pound cannon was eventually brought into position and fired into the Seminoles. The shot from canister shell cutting through grass and shredding tree branches was enough to compel the Indians to break away and escape to the opposite shore of the lake.

The project was aided by the research provided by Mr. Tom Brady of the Micanopy Historical Society and Mr. Gary Ellis of Gulf Archeological Institute.