

directed fire from our line soon drove them back to their original ground. I would now have ordered the charge, but being under the necessity, from the extension of the enemy's line, of detaching nearly one-half of my force to protect our camp and wounded, the assailing of which is a great object with Indians, I was left to contend with a force three times as numerous as my own. The action lasted until eight o'clock (in the evening), when the enemy was completely repulsed in every attempt whether made upon our centre or flanks. We had two men killed and one wounded; the enemy carried off several of their men before it was dark—after which all firing, of course random, was at the spot from whence the flash arose.

After fighting and fasting the whole day, we had to work throughout the night, and at daylight had a tolerable breastwork of logs and earth, with port holes, on the ground on which the battle was fought. We were reduced to this necessity, for in dispatching Capt. Whitaker about dark to the St. Johns for a reinforcement, six more men took the liberty to accompany him, taking with them our best horses; our pilot and surgeon, who was sick, was among the number.

The two days succeeding the battle, we neither saw nor heard anything of the enemy, but on the evening of the third day they commenced firing at our work at a long distance, and renewed it every day for five or six days, but without killing or wounding any of our men. After killing two or three of them through our port holes they seldom came within gunshot. Seven or eight days had now elapsed since our express had left us, hunger was staring us in the face, and we were now reduced to the necessity of eating one of our horses; we had no surgeon to dress the wounded, and apprehensions were entertained that the enemy would receive reinforcements from Augustine or the Mamasukie Indians. Expecting relief every hour, I was unwilling to leave our breastworks while we had a horse to eat, but I understood from some of my officers that a certain captain was determined to leave us with his company, and that many of the men, giving up all hopes of relief, talked of deserting in the night rather than perish, or fall a sacrifice to the merciless Negroes and Indians, whom they were taught to believe would surround us in great numbers in a few days. In this trying situation, when our few remaining horses were shot down by them (the Indians), and the number of our sick daily increasing, I reluctantly assented to leave our works that night, and directed the litters to be prepared to carry the wounded.

About 9 o'clock we commenced our distressing march, carrying five wounded men in litters and supporting two or three more. We had not proceeded more than eight miles, when the men became perfectly exhausted from hunger and fatigue, and were unable to carry the wounded any farther. About two hours after we left our breastworks, 25 horsemen, with provisions, arrived to our relief, on a different road from the one we had taken, but, from motives best known to themselves, instead of following us, returned to the St. Johns, and we