

engagement, proved that it answered its purpose-it being perforated by balls and shot fired from the train. Considerable blood was found behind this tree, and it is supposed Hatfield wounded one of them.

The trail was followed into a hammock where it was lost. The hammock was secured, but in vain.

The Indians were supposed to be 10 or 15 in number, and the same party that attacked Captain Bradley's house on the night of the 14th inst. Detachments from several companies are on the outlook for them, and the day of retribution may not be far distant.

Messrs. Hatfield and Hinson deserve great credit for their bravery. They fought gallantly as long as fighting would avail them; and had but one or two such men been there, the tide of battle might have changed. It will be consolation to the bereaved relatives of the deceased to know that they died like men with their faces to the foe.

Where is the boasted protection of the frontier? This question may well be asked after the depredations of last week.

Hon. Simeon E. Sparkman (1851-1939) lived with his parents, Elijah B. and Sarah (Mizell) Sparkman, three miles east of Simmons Hammock in the garrison at the Campground when the massacre occurred. Kelsey Blanton related that Simeon gave these further details:

As to the killed, Starling, a man named Roach, and Starling's son. Tom Hatfield and a man named Hinson were wounded. (Professor James W. Covington of the University of Tampa identified him as Albert Hinson.) As to the number and names of the persons who were traveling with the wagons in addition to the killed and wounded, there was a Negro and the well known Dow Townsend was along. In the affray the Negro shot and wounded an Indian. (Albert DeVane, late Lake Placid historian, identified the Negro as Jim, who was owned by the Seward family of the Bartow area.)

The Indians were believed to have been the same band who attacked the Willoughby Tillis homestead south of Fort Meade on June 14 and were pursued to the Peace River swamplands where another battle was fought June 16. On June 19, 1856, Capt. William B. Hooker reported that on June 17, near the scene of the battle fought June 16, there was found a dead Indian beneath a wagon cover which had been stolen from the Hatfield place in Simmons Hammock. Hooker further stated that in nine days of actions the Indians lost 20 killed and five or six wounded. Thus retribution had been exacted.

At the time of the ambush Jane Starling was visiting in the Fort Meade area. A wagon with an armed patrol was sent for her.