

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Dade Massacre

The Dade Massacre
(Will McLean)

Lawless men, they were to blame.
From the Georgia line they came.
Burning, killing, stealing slaves,
From the Seminole Indian braves.
Major Dade and his hundred
Were marching along,
By the edge of a thick swamp.
It was shortly past dawn.
Through scrub and palmetto
Their harnesses did ring.
They were marching from Tampa
On the way to Fort King.
Oh, the sun's rays were burning,
Dade's temper was short
His scout had deserted
Somewhere to the north.
The men had a feeling,
The land was too quiet.
They held their guns tightly
Their eyes showed their fright
Well, it came of a sudden,
That wild cry of craze,
From the screaming throats
Of the Seminole braves.
Black smoke, thudding bullets
From Indian guns.
I'll tell you, the Dade
Massacre had begun.
Major Dade, he fell first
With a deep mortal wound.
'Twas from Jumper's rifle
That he met his doom.
His men were all killed
Without mercy or plea.
This legend lives ever
In our history.
Now the land is all serene,
There's a marker at the scene.
Where Major Dade sleeps
Among his hundred men.

(Will McLean)

From Cross The Shadows Of My Face, McLean

12/28/1835: Bushnell FL: during the second Seminole War, Maj. Francis L. Dade, 7 officers, 100 men killed by Seminole soldiers under sub-chief John Jumper (Otee-Emathla)

The citizens used this event to fire their prejudice and outrage, eventually leading to the destruction of the Seminoles. On 2/4/1836 they created & named Dade county (basically, the city of Miami) as a memorial to the Major.

AJS