

### **THE GREAT SIOUX UPRISING**

As the summer of 2012 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862, I would like to use this column to recall the intriguing events of this war, as documented in the [History of McLeod County Minnesota](#), published by H.C. Cooper Jr. & Co. in 1917—a mere fifty-five years after these events took place.

“The summer of 1862 passed pleasantly enough in McLeod county. The season was very favorable. Crops were good and promising. The health of the people was excellent. There were no grasshoppers, cyclones, or other calamitous visitations. There was of course some inconvenience and a little distress on account of the war, but upon the whole the situation was satisfactory.

July 4 President Lincoln issued a call for 300,000 more volunteers to serve in the army for three years unless sooner discharged. Lieut. Gov. Ignatius Donnelly, acting governor in place of Alex Ramsey, who was down South visiting the soldiers, instantly passed the word that Minnesota must raise at least one regiment in response to the President's call; whereupon Minnesota set to work and raised not one regiment alone, but five regiments, the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Regiments of Infantry. Later in the year three regiments of cavalry and a battery of artillery were formed out of the sparse population, and in both cases McLeod county furnished its full quota. A little later Congress enacted a conscript law to be enforced if necessary to fill the requisitions upon the several states. In Minnesota special officers were appointed in each county to carry out the provisions of the law; in McLeod these officers were John H. Stevens, commissioner; Robert Fraser, agent, and Dr. McWright, the examining surgeon. Nobody was drafted from the county this year, and the officers earned their salaries easily. It was fine that McLeod county in spite of its straitened circumstances and the adverse conditions generally, should have done its duty so loyally that her proportion of Union volunteers was full and running over, with everybody "shouting the battle-cry of Freedom !"

In the early part of 1862 Congress enacted the Homestead Bill, which was of incalculable benefit in the settlement and development of Minnesota and McLeod county. The act provided that any citizen of the United States or any applicant for citizenship, who was the head of a family, or was 21 years of age (or if younger had served not less than fourteen days in the army or navy of the United States during actual war) might apply for 160 acres or less of unappropriated public lands, and might acquire title to this amount of land by residing upon and cultivating it for five years immediately following, and paying such fees as were necessary to cover the cost of administration; a homestead acquired in this manner was exempted from seizure for any debt contracted prior to the date of issuing the patent. A commutation clause of the act permitted title to the homestead to be acquired after only six months' residence thereon, by paying \$1.25 per acre, as provided in the Pre-emption Act of 1841, under which land claims had theretofore been made. The Homestead Act did not go into effect until Jan. 1, 1863, a year after it was passed; but when it did become effective there was a boom in Western

land investment even though a great war was in progress in the country. The offices established nearest to McLeod were Forest City, in Meeker, and Henderson, in Sibley county. It is hardly to be believed now that only 50 years ago the best lands in McLeod county could be bought for \$1.25 per acre. Thus busy improving their claims, planning for the future, and watching with anxious hearts the progress of the great conflict in the South, the people of McLeod county had no premonition of the awful holocaust which was to break loose at their very doors.

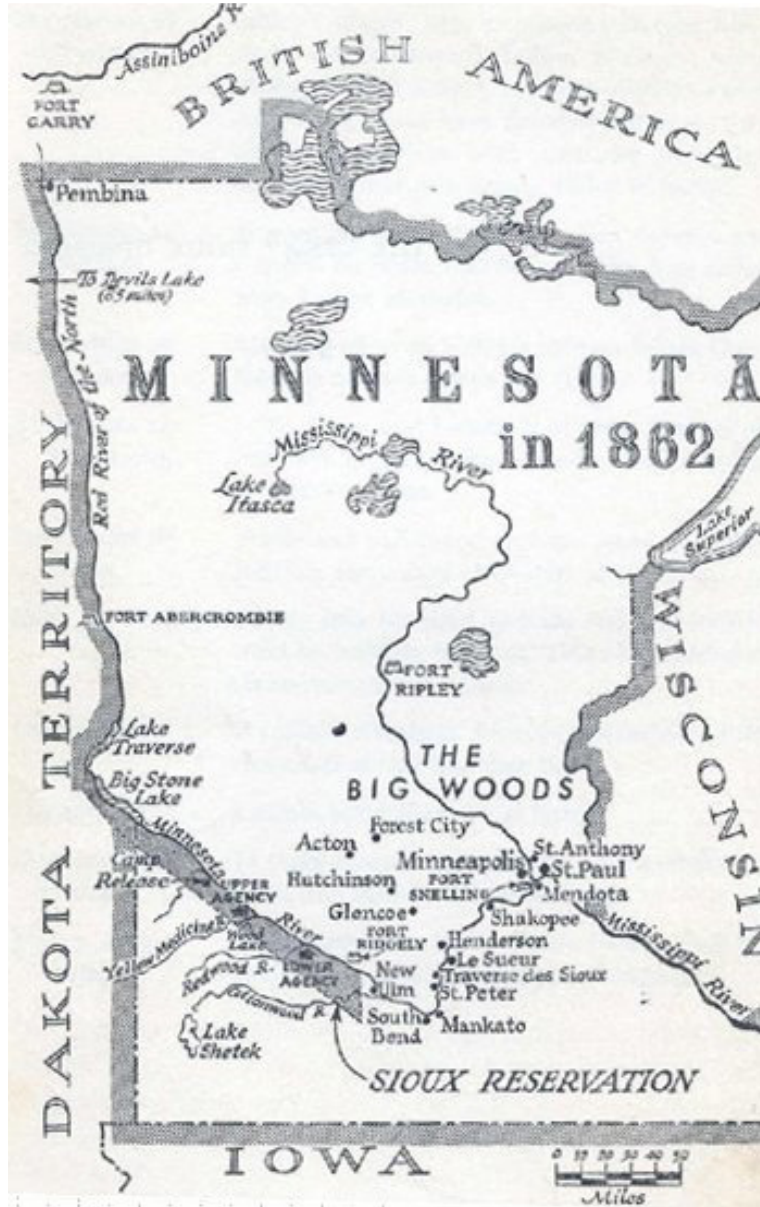
About the latter part of June in each year it was the custom of the government agents to pay the Sioux Indians of Minnesota their annuities—amounting to about \$30 each—for the lands they had sold to the United States in 1851. These annuities were paid in specie, gold and silver U. S. coin, which, in the summer of 1862, was scarce and daily becoming scarcer because of the Civil War. This year the payments (partly by a blunder of a clerk,) were delayed; the money did not reach Fort Ridgely until August 18.

In the latter part of July the Upper Sioux (the Sissetons and Wahpaytons) came down to their agency at the mouth of the Yellow Medicine river, and encamped, expecting to receive their "payment." But days passed and no payment came; the Indians ran out of provisions and were very hungry; the delay in the payment exasperated them, and at last, on the 4th of August, they broke into the agency warehouse and carried out considerable quantities of flour and pork, and were very threatening. Agent Galbraith had a company of soldiers (C, Fifth Minnesota) and two pieces of cannon; displaying these and promising to give them three days' rations at once, Agent Galbraith succeeded in quieting the Indians for a time. On the 10th he gave them some more rations and sent them home, promising to let them know when the money for the payment arrived. On the 12th they were back in the Dakotas and soon a great many of them went out in the James river country on a buffalo hunt.

The Lower Indians, as those were called whose agency was in Redwood county, opposite Morton, were quiet and well-nigh contented. The most of them were in civilization, living and dressing like white people, cultivating and raising good crops, working for wages for the government and for white men, and some of them had become converts to Christianity and were church attendants. Their cabins were neat and comfortable, they had enough to eat and made no murmurings regarding the whites, against whom they had no grievances. It was some of these Lower Indians that were wont to visit McLeod county, and slightly annoy the people by their begging and thievish propensities.

There was a small village of the Lower Indians on the railroad side of the Minnesota, at the mouth of a little rivulet called Rice creek. These Indians were of the nature of refugees and renegades, for they had left their several bands and formed a band of their own; some of them were Upper Indians and some belonged to the Lower bands. A few were mixed bloods and most of them dressed like white men and quite a few spoke broken English. None of them were Christians and all were lazy and did little else for a livelihood except to hunt and fish. All

told, they numbered about fifty persons, and they had a chief with the hardly understandable name of Red Middle Voice, who was a half brother (or cousin) of Chief Shakopee. They frequently made incursions into the Big Woods country, on the north side of the Minnesota, to hunt and traffic with the white settlers.



On Sunday morning, August 17, four Rice Creek Indians, who were of a hunting party, were passing along the road from Henderson to Pembina in Acton township, Meeker county. They were near Acton Postoffice, which was in the house of Robinson Jones, who was the postmaster and who also kept for sale a little general merchandise with a barrel of whiskey. In a fence corner they found some hens' eggs which one of the Indians took intending to eat them for his breakfast. Another Indian forbade him, saying that the eggs belonged to a white man and their appropriation by an Indian might make trouble. In a quarrel which resulted the egg taker called the peace maker a coward, "afraid of a white man." A tumult resulted, during which the egg taker, whose Indian name in translation was One Who Kills Ghosts, vaunted his courage and the peace maker, Brown Wing, hotly asserted that he was ready to demonstrate that he was not a coward, and the other two, Breaks Up and Scatters, and Crawls Against an Obstacle, said they would be glad to show that they were brave too. To test one another's valor and contempt of danger it was finally agreed to go up to Jones's house and shoot him and others if necessary.

Pursuant to the agreement the Indians went to Acton post-office, (Jones's house) and, seeking an excuse to kill him, acted so menacingly that he left and went half a mile to the house of his step-son, Howard Baker, where Mrs. Jones, his wife, then was. The Indians followed him and,

---

after simulating friendship, suddenly and treacherously shot and killed Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Howard Baker, and Viranus Webster; the last named was a newly-arrived immigrant, who, with his wife, was encamped in his wagon in Baker's dooryard. Mrs. Webster and Mrs. Baker and her baby were not harmed. A little time before the killing two other Indians belonging to another hunting party, of Shakopee's band, came to Baker's, got some water and went back to their party; they were not participants in or accessories to the murders. The members of the hunting party to which they belonged were all mounted and the party was headed by a prominent warrior named Island Cloud. The four murderers were on foot.

After the killing of the people at the Baker house, the Ghost Killer and his comrades returned to the Jones house, shot and killed Clara D. Wilson, a girl of 15 (a relative of Jones,) but spared her baby brother of 18 months. They did not take a pin from the house although there was a barrel of whisky and many other articles of their liking. After killing Miss Wilson they hastened eastward to the house of Peter Wicklund, near Lake Elizabeth. Here one of them held a gun toward Wicklund, his wife, his daughter, and his son-in-law, A. M. Ecklund, while the three others went to the stable and seized Ecklund's span of horses. Mounting them, two to a horse, they rode away toward their village at the mouth of Rice creek. Some miles out they secured two other horses, and then readily trotted to their home village about 8 o'clock, having ridden 40 miles in about six hours. According to the sworn statement of Jere Campbell, a mixed-blood member of the Rice Creekers, when the four rode into the village they sprang from their horses and cried out: "Get your guns! There is war with the whites and we have commenced it!" Then they related the details.

The other Lower Indians seemed to smell the blood which had been shed and by midnight, from Shakopee's village, above the Redwood, eastward to Mankato's and Wacouta's, ten miles below Redwood, all the Indians were mustering for war.

The particulars of the killing of the five persons at Acton were soon published throughout the neighborhood and the country by Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Webster and that night a party of citizens, mainly from Forest City, went to the scenes of the murders, both at Baker's house and Acton postoffice, Jones's house. At the latter they found the beautiful corpse of Clara Wilson, lying in her virgin blood, and the living body of her two-year-old baby brother who prattled that Clara was "hurt" and that he wanted his supper. These children were the daughter and son of a relative of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, who had adopted them as their own. The little boy was taken to Forest City and finally adopted by Charles H. Ellis, of Otsego, Wright county.

On Monday, August 18, about 60 citizens assembled at Acton and an inquest was held by Probate Judge A. C. Smith, of Forest City, over the remains of Jones, Webster, Baker, and Mrs. Jones, and Clara Wilson. Mrs. Webster and Mrs. Baker both testified at this inquest and their testimony is of record. (See Judge Smith's valuable little history of Meeker county.)

While this inquest was in progress the eleven mounted Indians of the party of Island Cloud came in sight. The two members of this party that called at Baker's just before the murders (and got a drink of water) returned to the party and reported that they heard gun-firing after they had gotten half a mile from the house, and believed that there had been a fight between the four Indians and the three white men. So the next morning the eleven rode down to investigate. They rode slowly, keeping their eyes and ears open and in great suspense as to what had actually happened. Nearing the Baker house they saw the crowd at the inquest and rode still more slowly and warily. Suddenly the whites discovered them and at once twenty men grabbed their guns, sprang upon their horses, and galloped out to meet the supposed enemy. The Indians turned and fled precipitately and the whites chased them well up into Kandiyohi county. Of this affair Judge Smith in his History of Meeker County says: "Subsequent development rendered it certain that those Indians had no hand in the Acton tragedy, and in fact knew nothing about it at the time." The statements made by Island Cloud and others of the party to Wm. L. Quinn, in 1867, are corroborative of Judge Smith's assertions that the murder of the five persons at Acton was not planned or concocted by any other Indians than the four that did the deed, and that they had no accessories before or after the fact. This murder was not committed because of dissatisfaction with what the white traders had done, nor on account of delay in the annual payment. The murderers were all Lower Indians and the Lower Indians were all satisfied at least they did not complain at conditions—for they were at peace and in comfort. The Upper Indians, a few days previously, had been discontented and turbulent, but at the time of the murder they were entirely peaceful, and it was not the discontented Upper Indians but the contented Lower bands that began the great outbreak. There was but one cause for killing the first white victims—a very trivial cause, but a sufficient one for Indian warriors. One of these warriors had his courage impeached because he found that the taking of a few eggs would bring trouble. To prove that he was brave and maintain his reputation he declared that he would kill a white man; his comrades then said they were as brave as he and if he shot a white man they would do likewise. What terrible conditions resulted from a quarrel, over a few poultry eggs! Volume 3 of "Minnesota in Three Centuries," Smith's History of Meeker County, "Big Eagle's Sioux Story of the War," Lawson and Lew's History of Kandiyohi, and other recent publications establish the facts as here stated.

Behold, what a torrent of carnage and rapine and what a flood of tears and sorrow a little bloodshed may cause. The next day after the murders at Acton the Lower Indians, almost to a warrior, fell upon the whites, massacring indiscriminately men, women and children. They were crazed by the taint of blood in the air. It was the peculiarity of the old-time American Indian to become roused by the smell of a few drops of blood which had been shed in anger as if they had been so many bolts of electricity. Their long-lasting and always sincere friendship for the whites availed nothing in the resultant wild riot of blood and fire. The whites at the Indian agencies were assaulted, slain, and their bodies horribly mutilated by Indians who had long been their neighbors, their associates, and their friends.

---

This is not the place to write the history of the great Sioux Outbreak of 1862, only so far as it pertains to McLeod county. It must suffice to say that the next day after the murders at Acton the Indians fell upon the defenseless whites as panthers leap upon helpless sheep and lambs, and with the same bloody result. They attacked first the whites at the Lower Agency, killed many, and drove the rest away. Then they spread out over the country, on both sides of the Minnesota, murdering, lavishing, burning and depopulating every settlement by torch, tomahawk, and terror. That bloody Monday, that dies irae, the savages, at the Lower Agency Ferry, ambushed Capt. John S. Marsh and 40 odd soldiers of Company B, Fifth Minnesota, and in fifteen minutes the captain and 23 of his men had been swallowed up in death as suddenly as by the yawn of an earthquake. The same afternoon some irregular Indian forces attacked New Ulm, but were driven away.

Tuesday, August 19, the Sioux scouts approached Fort Ridgely, and the next day attacked it ineffectually. Friday, August 22, they made a formidable and protracted attack, but were again repulsed, this time by the heavy artillery of the Fort. Saturday they again made a concerted attack on New Ulm which lasted from 9:30 that morning until Sunday noon. In both battles the whites had 24 killed in the town, 10 on the outskirts, and about 60 wounded, some of whom died.

At Fort Ridgely there were four white fighting men killed. Both Fort Ridgely and New Ulm were crowded with refugees, men, women, and children, some wounded. The Fort was commanded during seven days of savage investment by Lieut. T. J. Sheehan, of Company C, Fifth Minnesota. Sunday morning August 17, he had marched with his company from this fort for Fort Ripley, on the Mississippi, in Morrison county. Monday night, at the close of a hot day's march, the company went into camp on Buffalo creek, a few miles southeast of Glencoe, on the New Auburn road, (sec. 15, twp. 115, range 27,) and some of the boys were bathing in the creek, when Sergeant McLean, a messenger from Fort Ridgely rode in with the frightful news of the outbreak and orders for Lieutenant Sheehan to bring his company back to Fort Ridgely. The return march was begun instantly, and the distance to Ridgely, 42 miles, was encompassed by 9 o'clock the following morning, Hon. Chas. E. Flandrau, an ex-Judge of the Supreme Court, commanded the whites at New Ulm, and right well did he serve. He disposed his forces so as to beat off the Indians, but during the fighting there were many losses. Monday, after the fighting had ended at noon the previous day, and New Ulm lay fire-blackened, blood-stained, and demoralized, Flandrau led his forces and fugitives from New Ulm to a city of refuge at Mankato, and for a few days the former town did not have a single human occupant.

After the Indians were so thoroughly driven back at New Ulm and Fort Ridgely, the greater part of them, carrying with them nearly 200 white prisoners and a lot of captured plunder, fell back up the Minnesota to the Yellow Medicine. The backward movement began August 27 and three

days later they reached the country of the Upper Indians at the Yellow Medicine and found their brethren not in favor of war and forbidding them to trespass on the Upper Indian lands.

A few scouts were left back to watch Fort Ridgely and report the movement of the white forces generally. In a few days they reported that New Ulm had been abandoned, and on the 28th announced that Ex-Governor Sibley had arrived at Fort Ridgely "with a large reinforcement of men and wagons, and also about a thousand men on horseback."

Col. Sibley (afterward brigadier-general) arrived at Fort Ridgely, Aug. 28. A company of his cavalry had arrived at the fort the day previous, to the great joy of the garrison and the refugee settlers. The force at the fort under Col. Sibley now consisted of perhaps 2,000 men, newly recruited United States volunteers, thirty day and ten day militia, and a few private citizens.

August 31 General Sibley, then encamped at Fort Ridgely with his entire command, dispatched a force of some 150 men, under the command of Maj. Joseph R. Brown, to the Lower Agency, with instructions to bury the dead of Captain Marsh's command and the remains of all settlers found. No signs of Indians were seen at the agency, which they visited on September 1. That evening they encamped near Birch Coulie, about 200 yards from the timber. This was a fatal mistake, as subsequent events proved. At early dawn the Sioux, who had surrounded the camp, were discovered by a sentinel, who fired. Instantly there came a deadly roar from hundreds of Indian guns all around the camp. The soldiers sprang to their feet, and in a few minutes thirty were shot down. Thereafter all hugged the ground. The horses to the number of 87 were soon killed, and furnished a slight protection to the men, who dug pits with spades and bayonets. General Sibley sent a force of 240 men to their relief, and on the same day followed with his entire command. On the forenoon of September 3 they reached the Coulie and the Indians retreated. Twenty-eight whites were killed and sixty wounded. The condition of the wounded and indeed the entire force was terrible. They had been some forty hours without water, under a hot sun, surrounded by bloodthirsty, howling savages. The dead were buried and the wounded taken to Fort Ridgely.

After the battle of Birch Coulie many small war parties of Indians started for the settlements to the Northwest, burning houses, killing settlers and spreading terror throughout that region. There were minor battles at Forest City, Acton, Hutchinson and other places. Stockades were built at various points. The wife and two children of a settler, a mile from Richmond, were killed on September 22. Paynesville was abandoned and all but two houses burned. The most severe fighting with the Indians in the northwestern settlements was at Forest City, Acton and Hutchinson, on September 3 and 4. Prior to the battle at Birch Coulie, Little Crow, with 110 warriors, started on a raid to the Big Woods country. They encountered a company of some sixty whites under Captain Strout, between Glencoe and Acton, and a furious fight ensued, Strout's forces finally reaching Hutchinson, with a loss of five killed and seventeen wounded. Next day Hutchinson and Forest City, where stockades had been erected, were attacked, but

the Indians finally retired without much loss on either side, the Indians, however, burning many houses, driving off horses and cattle, and carrying away a great deal of personal property.

Twenty-two whites were killed in Kandiyohi and Swift counties by war parties of Sioux. Unimportant attacks were made upon Fort Abercrombie on September 3, 6, 26 and 29, in which a few whites were killed.

There was great anxiety as to the Chippewas. Rumors were rife that Hole-in-the-Day, the head chief, had smoked the pipe of peace with his hereditary enemies, the Sioux, and would join them in a war against the whites. There was good ground for these apprehensions, but by wise counsel and advice, Hole in-the-Day and his Chippewas remained passive. General Sibley was greatly delayed in his movements against the Indians by insufficiency of supplies, want of cavalry and proper supply trains. Early in September he moved forward and on September 23, at Wood Lake, engaged in a spirited battle with 500 Indians, defeating them with considerable loss. On the twenty-sixth, General Sibley moved forward to the Indian camps. Little Crow and his followers had hastily retreated after the battle at Wood Lake and left the state. Several bands of friendly Indians remained, and through their action in guarding the captives they were saved and released, in all ninety-one whites and 150 half-breeds. The women of the latter had been subjected to the same indignities as the white women.

General Sibley proceeded to arrest all Indians suspected of murder, abuse of women and other outrages. Eventually 425 were tried by a military commission, 303 being sentenced to death and eighteen to imprisonment. President Lincoln commuted the sentence of all but forty. He was greatly censured for doing this, and much resentment was felt against him by those whose relatives had suffered. Of the forty, one died before the day fixed for execution, and one, Henry Milord, a half-breed, had his sentence commuted to imprisonment for life in the penitentiary; so that thirty-eight only were hung. The execution took place at Mankato, December 26, 1862.

The Battle of Wood Lake ended the campaign against the Sioux for that year. Small war parties occasionally raided the settlements, creating "scares" and excitement, but the main body of Indians left the state for Dakota. Little Crow and a son returned in 1863, and on July 3 was killed near Hutchinson by a farmer named Nathan Lamson. In 1863 and 1864 expeditions against the Indians drove them across the Missouri river, defeating them in several battles. Thus Minnesota was forever freed from danger from the Sioux.'

In November, 1862, three months after the outbreak, Indian Agent Thomas J. Galbraith prepared a statement giving the number of whites killed as 738. Historians Heard and Flandrau placed the killed at over 1,000.

On February 16, 1863, the treaties before that time existing between the United States and the Sioux Indians were abrogated and annulled, and all lands and rights of occupancy within the

---



State of Minnesota, and all annuities and claims then existing in favor of said Indians were declared forfeited to the United States.

These Indians, in the language of the act, had, in the year 1862, "made unprovoked aggression and most savage war upon the United States, and massacred a large number of men, women and children within the State of Minnesota"; and as in this war the massacre they had "destroyed and damaged a large amount of property, and thereby forfeited all just claims" to their "monies and annuities to the United States," the act provides that "two-thirds of the balance remaining unexpended" of their annuities for the fiscal year, not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars, and the further sum of one hundred thousand dollars, being two-thirds of the annuities becoming due, and payable during the next fiscal year, should be appropriated and paid over to three commissioners appointed by the President, to be by them apportioned among the heads of families, or their survivors, who suffered damage by the depredations of said Indians, or the troops of the United States in the war against them, not exceeding the sum of two hundred dollars to any one family, nor more than actual damage sustained. All claims for damages were required, by the act, to be presented at certain times, and according to the rules prescribed by the commissioners, who should hold their first session at St. Peter, in the State of Minnesota, on or before the first Monday of April, and make and return their finding, and all the papers relating thereto, on or before the first Monday in December, 1863.

The President appointed for this duty, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, Albert S. White, of Indiana; Eli R. Chase, of Wisconsin, and Cyrus Aldrich, of Minnesota. The duties of this board were so vigorously prosecuted, that, by November 1 following their appointment, some twenty thousand sheets of legal cap paper had been consumed in reducing to writing the testimony under the law requiring the commissioners to report the testimony in writing, and proper decisions made requisite to the payment of the two hundred dollars to that class of sufferers designated by the act of Congress.

On February 21 following the annulling of the treaty with the Sioux above named, Congress passed an act for the removal of the Winnebago Indians, and the sale of their reservation in Minnesota for their benefit. "The money arising from the sale of their lands, after paying their indebtedness, is to be paid into the treasury of the United States, and expended, as the same is received, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, in necessary improvements upon their new reservation. The lands in the new reservation are to be allotted in severalty, not exceeding eighty acres to each head of a family, except to the chiefs, to whom larger allotments may be made, to be vested by patent in the Indian and his heirs, without the right of alienation."

The several acts of the general government moderated to some extent the demand of the people for the execution of the condemned Sioux yet in the military prison at Mankato awaiting

---

the final decision of the President. The removal of the Indians from the borders of Minnesota, and the opening up for settlement of over a million of acres of superior land, was a prospective benefit to the State of immense value, both in its domestic quiet and its rapid advancement in material wealth.

In pursuance of the acts of Congress, on April 22, and for the purpose of carrying them into execution, the condemned Indians were first taken from the State, on board the steamboat Favorite, carried down the Mississippi, and confined at Davenport, in the State of Iowa, where they remained, with only such privileges as are allowed to convicts in the penitentiary. Many of them died as the result of the confinement.

On May 4, 1863, at six o'clock in the afternoon, certain others of the Sioux Indians, squaws and papooses, in all about seventeen hundred, left Fort Snelling, on board the steamboat Davenport, for their new reservation on the Upper Missouri, above Fort Randall, accompanied by a strong guard of soldiers, and attended by certain of the missionaries and employees, the whole being under the general direction of Superintendent Clark W. Thompson.

The path of the Massacre in McLeod county was marked by an heroic defense, and by several murders. Although menaced by the Indians to the south and westward, and with an open road of escape to the eastward, many of the plucky settlers of Meeker and McLeod counties determined to stand their ground, and defend their homes and families.

The news of the murders at Acton reached Hutchinson the next day, but few people realized that there was an immediate danger. But rumors of further trouble being heard, scouts were sent west and northwest on the prairies, on the afternoon of the nineteenth. Nearly everyone in Hutchinson spent the night of the nineteenth at the Chesley place, on the hill east of town. John Other Day, on the twentieth, brought in a party of more than twenty men, women and children from the Upper Agency at Yellow Medicine, whom he had conducted through the Indian lines with great difficulty.

**Wakefield's Account.** Dr. Kee Wakefield, at the Anniversary Celebration held at Hutchinson, Oct. 4, 1905, gave the following interesting account of the Indian Massacre in McLeod county:

"Every day Hutchinson sent out scouts, watching the Redwood trail. On the 23rd, after some of the more timid had left for Minneapolis, there was a gathering of all the people of Hutchinson in front of the hotel, discussing the situation. A paper was circulated among the little band of pioneers, but with the exception of those who had drafted it, none could be prevailed upon to sign. In this emergency three ladies volunteered to circulate the paper, with the understanding that if a company was formed they would become members of it and perform all the military duties involved by their action, except firing the musket. These ladies were Mrs. Sarah Harrington, Mrs. David Ells and Mrs. Ellen M. Harrington. Thus through the influence of strong men

and the help of a few brave women, it was decided to remain, organize, build a stockade, and defend the place if the Indians came. A company was organized then and there. Many old men and some young boys were its chief makeup. Lewis Harrington was elected captain, Oliver Pierce first lieutenant and Andrew Hopper second lieutenant. So complete was the organization that no one could leave town without a pass, and then only on positive assurance that they would return. Work was commenced on the fort. It was built in the public square. A trench was dug, 100 feet square, and timbers set on end, standing about eight feet above ground. Bastions were at each corner, and port-holes every four feet. Three hewed-log houses were utilized as far as they would reach, then plank and timber from other sources. All who were not out scouting worked on the fort, and by the night of the 27th a good stockade was completed such as only a siege could take from its defenders. A messenger had been sent to Governor Ramsey, and guns and ammunition arrived that day. Farm produce was being cared for by squads of armed men, and the stockade strengthened and made bullet-proof by eager workers, the women always doing their full share. On the west, in the interior of the fort, the roofs of houses were raised to afford shelter, and tents made from sheets, quilts and carpets were set up nearby. A small board structure south of the center of the stockade was used as an arsenal and commissary.

September 3, Captain Strout's company of about sixty men were attacked and defeated by a force of three hundred Indians at Acton. Jesse Branham, of Forest City, and two companions, knowing of the presence of Indians in that vicinity, had come through the Indian lines at night and warned Capt. Strout. Had it not been for this warning, Strout's little force would undoubtedly have been slaughtered, as their guns were almost worthless and ammunition in bad condition. After the excitement of the first attack had worn off, Strout's men made a good defensive retreat toward Hutchinson, leaving three dead and bringing along eighteen wounded. Lieut. Hopper, who was with them as a guide, broke through the line of Indians and rode with all speed to Hutchinson, warning the few settlers on the road. He reported the defeat of Capt. Strout, and Capt. Harrington, with thirty men, started out to relieve him. They met the force a few miles out. The Indians had given up the pursuit and disappeared. Arriving in Hutchinson, the wounded were placed in the hotel. Every person who could be reached was warned of the situation, and the stockade's garrison prepared for trouble. Cattle and horses were corralled east of the fort and all made ready for a fight.

The next morning September 4, the Indians appeared on the hills across the river, north of town. Then Al DeLong and William Ensign were dispatched to Glencoe for reinforcements from the soldiers who had been stationed there. The wounded men were hastily carried inside the fort and cared for by Dr. Benjamin and some of the pluckiest women that ever graced a home or a fort.

Soon the fine school building, the home of W. W. Pendergast, all the homes north and east of the river, were in flames. Later in the day buildings to the west were fired. The Indians re-

mained here all day. Those in sight were usually out of reach of bullets from the fort, but sneaking in the grass and bushes west of town, continued firing at the stockade. The town's defenders were busy all this time. Leaving the fort and securing a shelter, several watched and shot—when their shots might tell. There were evidences that more than one of these shots took effect. Many individual instances of heroism were witnessed on this eventful day, but as every member of the party in defense was a hero, I will call none by name. The women took no second place. All were brave, all of strong nerve. Efforts were made by the Indians to draw our men out from the fort, small parties of Sioux showing themselves along the north side of the river, but the fort's defenders were of too good judgment to be caught by such a ruse. Attempts were made to stampede the livestock east of the fort, and many animals were killed or wounded. Our fatalities were all outside the fort. Mr. Spowde [sic; correct spelling of the name is 'Spaude'] was killed in the river west of town. His wife and two children, escaping into the grove west of town, came out south of town and were killed on the edge of the townsite. Jack Adams' child was killed on the prairie southwest of town. His wife was carried away a prisoner, while he escaped. Old Mr. Heller was wounded in the shoulder. These comprised the casualties of the day.



**Historical marker commemorating the members of the Spaude family who lost their life on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1862 on the grounds where the 3M plant is presently located, in Hutchinson, MN. The marker is located on the northeast corner of Jefferson Avenue SE and Oakland Avenue SE. Photo by Marata Kadlec.**

Reinforcements came on the Glencoe road about sundown, and the Indians departed for the west. Nor did they return. But on August 23, Lieut. Oliver Pierce, in company with Daniel Cross and a small party out in search of Caleb Sanborn, who had gone out to his farm east of Cedar Mills, came upon a party of Indians who attempted to ambush them. Cross was killed, but the

others escaped. Sanborn's body was found the next day by a party of soldiers, who brought in both bodies to the fort. This was the only other encounter of the year.

Especial credit is due the people of Hutchinson in that year of massacre, for this was the only town on the frontier that did not stampede. Every town and farm either way, to the west and even between here and Minneapolis, was deserted. The people were kept together, the crop mostly saved, and the stockade's defenders proved themselves worthy of a record in history.

A party under Capt. Harrington went to Redwood in November and brought back stock identified as property of the settlers recaptured from the Indians. For the next few months Hutchinson was a military post. But few of the citizens remained that winter, for there were few houses left for shelter. Homes had been broken up, and many who left never returned. Capt. Strout's company left Hutchinson in April, and Lieut. Keyser, with thirty men, were here during the summer of 1863.

**Pendergast's Account.** The story told by W. W. Pendergast from a somewhat different viewpoint is also interesting. On Saturday, the 16th of August, 1862, nine men, including myself, set out for Fort Snelling to enlist. Their names were G. T. Belden, William Gosnell, W. H. Harrington, John Hartwig, J. T. Higgins, Andrew A. Hopper, Charles M. Horton, Charles Stahl and W. W. Pendergast. The next Monday Capt. George C. Whitcomb, of Forest City, told us the startling news that the Indians were "on the rampage," that Robinson Jones and Howard Baker and their families had been killed at Acton the day before, and that all the settlers west of us were likely to be massacred. Tuesday morning the captain was in conference with Governor Ramsey and Adjutant General Malmros, both of whom went at once to Fort Snelling. The governor inquired of me about the danger of an Indian outbreak, but I could not confirm the report from Acton, and in fact did not believe it. Soon, however, a courier from the upper Minnesota river came in with the news that Capt. John S. Marsh and more than half his company had been killed while crossing the river. There was no longer room for doubt.

Our Hutchinson boys had not enlisted, so we all determined to go back and defend our own hearthstones. Captain Whitcomb came with us, having succeeded in getting seventy-five Springfield muskets and three boxes of cartridges, amounting to 3,000 rounds of ammunition. We reached Glencoe the second night, having impressed three teams and two men at Shakopee to haul us and the ammunition. It was seventeen miles from Glencoe to Hutchinson. I determined to walk home that night and Mr. Gosnell offered to come with me. The offer was gladly accepted.

Arriving at home at two o'clock in the morning, we found at our house twenty-six refugees who had escaped from the Upper Sioux agency under the guidance of John Other Day, a Sioux married to a white woman and who remained loyal to the whites throughout the uprising; and we learned that other refugees were at Harrington's, Belden's, Putnam's, and one or two other

---

places, the whole number being about fifty. All of them left that morning, on Friday, August 22, for the more eastern settlements.

Captain Whitcomb, with the teams and military supplies, arrived the same day. A company of Home Guards was soon organized, Lewis Harrington being the captain, Oliver Pierce and Andrew Hopper, lieutenants, and W. W. Pendergast, orderly sergeant. A stockade 100 feet square was constructed in twelve days. Then came the battle on the road from Acton to Hutchinson, where Captain Richard Strout's company was beset by 300 Sioux who had been lying in ambush for them. Captain Strout managed to get away and come to Hutchinson, with twenty-three men wounded, and leaving three dead on the field.

That night these Indians attempted to surprise us; but they were halted at the bridge by our sentinels. Instantly all was bustle and activity at the garrison. Officers and men were on the alert. In every direction shadowy forms might be seen moving about in the darkness, peering to catch, if possible, a glimpse of the approaching foe. After half an hour's bootless search, no further cause of alarm being discovered, the camp once more relapsed to silence, which was not disturbed.

The fourth of September opened bright and beautiful. No sign of Indians was anywhere visible, yet most of the men determined not to leave the fort. A few Germans, however, thinking the enemy had gone off in some other direction, concluded to go out to their farms and try to save some of their wheat, which during these troublesome times had been sadly neglected. Six or seven of them started about seven o'clock for their homes in Acoma and had just reached the point where the road turns to the right to ascend the bluff near Peter Geoghegan's field. Old Mr. Heller was walking a few rods in advance of the team, when a volley was fired from the brow of the hill and Heller was severely wounded in the hip. The horses were quickly wheeled about, the wounded man was helped into the wagon, and the half mile that lay between them and the fort was made in less time than ever before or since.

When the Germans were leaving for their farms, Howard McEwen volunteered to go to the house of W. W. Pendergast, on the bluff at the edge of the woods, east of Albert Langbecker's residence, to get some delicacies for the wounded soldiers of Strout's company. He had found the articles and started back, but in passing through one of the rooms he noticed a book on the mantel-piece and stopped to look it through. While thus engaged he was startled by the firing at Mr. Heller and, in looking out of the window, saw the hill to the west covered with Indians. Though he knew that his safety depended upon reaching the bridge in advance of the Indians, who were following the Germans up as fast as they could, still he did not forget his errand. Gathering up his jellies and preserves, he hastened down the hill and got into the town safely.

Soon the Indians were seen circling around the town in all directions except to the south. From the point where they were first seen to Chesley's, at the southeast corner of the town, there

was a continuous line of them, while through the woods at the west their dark forms were occasionally seen gliding from one tree or thicket to another.

At the commencement of the attack, about eight o'clock, William H. Ensign mounted "Old Selim" and, with hat in hand and hair streaming in the wind dashed away toward Glencoe for reinforcements. Levi Chesley and a boy by the name of William Wright (son of E. G. Wright who married Eliza Chesley) were at the farm (now marked by a grove on the hill southwest of Great Northern railway bridge) taking care of the stock, having left us an hour before for that purpose. Warned of approaching danger by the sound of the guns, they looked out of the barn and saw retreat to the town was already cut off, and that Indians were close upon them. To bridle the best two horses and jump upon their backs was the work of a moment. In another moment they were scouring across the prairie at breakneck speed, with half a dozen Indians at their heels. Soon all but two who had the swiftest ponies were distanced. These two followed nearly half way to Glencoe, when, finding themselves gradually losing ground, they suddenly faced about and returned to Hutchinson to join their companions. Seeing the preparations that had been made for their reception in the center of the town, the Indians amused themselves for a while by setting fire to the buildings on the outskirts. The torch was first applied to the house of Dr. Benjamin, as that stood farthest out of town to the northwest. The next one fired was that of W. W. Pendergast. Next was the academy, and while the flames were slowly creeping up the southwest corner of this building its bell was vigorously rung as an alarm. Then followed other houses on the bluff, Kittredge's, Welton's, Pierce's and Chesley's. On the south side Solomon Pendergast's, J. H. Chubb's and several smaller ones, shared the same fate.

During this time the twenty-three wounded men of Captain Strout's company were carried from the hotel to a place of greater safety, but less comfort, within the fort. It was interesting to note the altered behavior of the Indians when they come in sight of the stockade. As soon as the first volley was fired upon the German farmers, they set up a fearful war cry and came over the bluff whooping and yelling as only wild Indians can; but when their eyes caught sight of the fort, the trench around it, and armed men prepared to defend it, they stood for a moment dumbfounded. But relying upon their superior numbers, and remembering how the whites had so far fled from them, they commenced to put their preconcerted plan into execution. This was to make a vigorous attack from the north, at which all the inhabitants were expected to retreat toward St. Paul. To make their victory more complete, about a third of their number were placed in ambush along the border of the grove that skirts the road to Glencoe all the way ( from town to the Hutchinson hill. It was thought that while the victorious Indians were pressing the fugitives from behind and driving them like a flock of frightened sheep, those in ambuscade would pour in a deadly fire upon them, soon make clean work of it, and carry off, with little trouble or danger to themselves an abundant harvest of scalps.

But the people here, as the Indians soon found, had no notion of retreating and were determined to give them ball for ball. The Hutchinson Guards, without consulting Captain

Strout, took the places previously assigned to them, Captain Harrington and his 15 men on the west of the fort, Lieutenant Hopper and his men on the east, Pierce at the south, and Pendergast at the north. We were thus advancing upon the Indians in four different directions, for the purpose of protecting the buildings and saving the cattle and horses, which were being stolen by dozens before our eyes, when Captain Strout, seeing what was going on and fearing for the safety of the fort, assumed command of the Hutchinson company and the entire fort, and issued a pre-emptory order that all should return to the stockade, which most of the men obeyed. A few refused to recognize Strout's authority, notably Captain Harrington, Lieutenants Pierce and Hopper, Orderly Pendergast, Andrew Hopper, H. McEwen, W. Putnam, G. T. Belden, D. Sivright, William Cook, S. Dearborn, D. Cross, Amos James, H. Harrington, and perhaps one or two others, and these fought through the day each on his own hook, as indeed all did after a short time. Lieutenant Hopper got near enough to an Indian near the saw mill to make him "bite the dust;" and Cross was equally fortunate east of the fort. He and one lone Indian had a regular duel, firing three shots apiece, until the last shot killed his antagonist. In each case the other Indians near at hand caught up the body and carried it off the field. Andrew A. Hopper, H. Harrington, G. T. Belden, and H. McEwen, firing from the chamber of Sumner's hotel (the Hartmann house) repelled the enemy from that direction.

Earlier in the day S. Dearborn, Andrew Hopper and W. W. Pendergast went down nearly to the river, because many of the redskins were on the other bank, dividing their time between stealing horses and firing at the men on the south side. Taking their stations behind some logs that were scattered along the riverside, and behind ginseng frames that Sumner had piled up there, they popped away for half an hour. The effect was not known as the grass was tall there, and as it was a custom of the Indians to fall whenever a shot was fired in their direction, whether it hit or not. At any rate they retired to a respectful distance, and the three sought other fields of usefulness. Howard McEwen distinguished himself by going from the fort over to Sumner's barn when the balls were flying thickest, and bringing back Sivright's double harness. When asked what he did that for he said the barn was likely to be burned, that they wanted Sivright's mules to take the women out with after the fight, and that this was the only harness he knew of that could be saved.

About noon when the fort was surrounded by a circle of fire from the smouldering buildings, the Sioux made a desperate effort to advance from the grove on the west to set fire to the buildings that remained between them and the stockade. Sumner then offered a pair of boots to every man who would go to his store, on the west side of Main street, and bring over a back load of goods. Several of the younger men volunteered, and a dozen loads were safely stored in the fort within as many minutes. No one was hurt but a bullet hit the pack which C. M. Horton was carrying and was picked out of one of the boots that composed his load. There were several "close calls" during the day's fight, but no one in or about the fort actually received any injury. The shooting was mostly at long range. Amos James was wounded by a spent ball splintering the stock of the gun which he held in his hand. Bullets perforated the buildings



inside the stockade, as well as those that were occupied and defended; but on the part of the garrison it was a bloodless fight.

Some of the Indians who fought here were afterwards taken prisoners by General Sibley, and they acknowledged a loss of four killed and fifteen wounded at Hutchinson on that 4th of September.

About four o'clock in the afternoon the firing began to grow weaker, and it was soon noticed that the enemy were disappearing from the north, east and south, and were retreating toward the west. Soon after a company of about forty soldiers were seen approaching from the direction of Glencoe. These were reinforcements that Ensign had succeeded in obtaining. He went first to Glencoe, but found so few men left there that none could be spared. He heard, however, that a small company of infantry and cavalry was stationed at Lake Addie, twelve miles distance to the west. Proceeding at once to that place, he found the soldiers and prevailed on them to march to the relief of Hutchinson, and they were the men who arrived just after the close of the battle. It is very possible that the Indians observed them long before they were seen from the garrison, and that they withdrew for that reason. They had already sent back a dozen teams, more or less, loaded with household goods and other valuables plundered from the houses which they burned in the morning.

Many persons who had come into the fort had left their wagons and harnesses at home, and their horses and cattle on the prairie. The Indians gathered all the horses and oxen they could lay their hands to, and hitched them to the wagons which they found, so that there was no lack of teams to transport their plunder. They shot other horses and cattle that came within range, to the number of about a hundred. On reaching Otter Lake they stopped and held a council of war. Some were in favor of resting there a few hours, and then, under cover of the night, to come back and take the people by surprise. They argued that our men, thinking they had fled and that our victory was complete, would set no pickets, that the fort might be fired in a dozen places before the alarm could be sounded, and that amid the darkness and confusion they could make short work of massacring the entire garrison.

But wiser councils prevailed. The older men said that, as they failed to surprise us on the night before, so they would fail again; that the preparations we had made to receive them, the painstaking and skill manifested in the fortifications and the good judgment shown in their location, where they could not come up from any direction without exposing themselves to almost certain death, all went to prove that the Hutchinson men were wary and cautious, and not to be easily caught napping. They thought the best way for them was to leave with the plunder they had obtained, and to try their luck somewhere else at surprises. So the proposed night attack was given up. This matter of the consultation at Otter Lake was learned from the Indian prisoners at Beaver Falls. In point of fact there would have been no chance for a successful night attack. A double guard was kept up around the fort all night long; and with the

additional forty men and the extra ammunition they brought with them, the fort could have been held, and would have been held, against a thousand such assailants.

**Brown's Account.** The account of Capt. A. L. Brown, in "Brownton Illustrated," published in 1893, differs somewhat from that of Mr. Pendergast as to the arrival of reinforcements. He wrote:

There were in the fort 447 people, of whom about 300 were women and children. Before the Indians surrounded Hutchinson William Ensign made his escape on horseback, and went to Glencoe for help. Capt. David L. Davis was stationed there with a company of mounted men, of the Goodhue County Rangers. About twenty of them started at once for Lake Addie, and on arriving there found that First Lieutenant Joseph Weinmann had already marched for Hutchinson with his sixty men of Captain William R. Baxter's Co. H, Ninth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. Weinmann had discovered smoke from the burning buildings, and being satisfied that a battle was in progress, marched at once to aid the garrison. Davis' mounted men soon overtook them. To avoid being ambushed, they left the main road, crossed Crow river, and entered the town on open ground. After the relieving troops entered, the Indians withdrew from the attack at 4 o'clock in the afternoon to the vicinity of Otter Lake, and the next morning left the vicinity.

Capt. Strout's company remained at Hutchinson until the spring of 1863. After the battle Capt. Baxter's company proceeded to Glencoe, where it wintered. Three companies of the Sixth Regiment under command of Lieut. Col. John T. Averill, also remained at Glencoe that winter.

In 1863, a stockade was erected on the farm of John Dresser, near New Auburn, and defended by Company 1, of the Tenth Regiment. During the spring of 1863, a small log fort, loopholed for musketry, was built on a high point of land on the southwest quarter of section 18 (then occupied by Miles Moyer as a homestead claim,) between Lakes Marion and Addie. The oak logs for its construction were cut from the land of James B. Newcomb. John Ford subsequently converted the logs into a barn on his farm.

**Stockade Defenders.** The Hutchinson Leader of Sept. 27, 1912, says: The Leader is indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Pierce for the most complete list yet published of men, women and children who found shelter in the 100x100 foot stockade which stood on the ground now occupied by Hutchinson's beautiful public square and library building.

The list below repeats in a few instances the names of some enlisted in the Home Guards, this being necessary owing to the fact that they were the heads of families. Probably the exact number in the stockade will never be known but those whose memory of events of those days is still good agree on the figures 300 to 350. The list is as follows: H. H. Ranney, wife and one child; Geo. Wills and wife; Lucy Fenn; Winslow Putnam; Amos James, wife and one child; August

Pagels and wife; Wm. Tews, wife and two children; Lasher, wife and four children; Geo. Nichols, wife and three children; Mr. Amy and wife; Mary Lewis; "Doe" Hugse; Rhoda Harrington; Charlotte Jones; Harriet Jones, (Mrs. O. Pierce); Grandma Tucker and daughter, Luda; Henry Tucker, wife and three children; Wm. Cooke and wife; D. A. Adams; Chas. McEwen, wife and three children; Sam'l Ross, wife and three children; Wm. Ensign, wife and two children; G. R. Jewett, wife and four children; D. A. Cross, wife and four children; Hugh McAlmond, wife and one child; D. S. Sivright, wife and one child; Thaddeus Webb; Caleb Sanborn, wife and one child; Patrick Fallon, wife and three children; John Lester, wife and four children; Henry Putnam and wife; William Jones; David Jones, wife and two children; Eli Stocking, wife and three children; James Giddings, wife and one child; Geo. Folsom; Ellen Folsom; C. A. Andrews; David Ells, wife and two children; Lewis Harrington, wife and two children; Mrs. Sarah Harrington and three children; Thos. French; Mrs. Patrick O'Fallon and two children; W. W. Pendergast, wife and two children; Enoch Wright, wife and two children. To the above should be added the names of several Home Guards members.

**Service of the Hutchinson Guards.** On the 22nd of September the Hutchinson Guards, having been already reorganized by the state as a regular military organization, were sworn into the service, their time commencing August 23, 1862. They were on duty 70 days, to the 1st of November. Lieut. Oliver Pierce, Frank G. Jewett and David Cross, left Hutchinson on September 23d to look up a man named Sanborn, who had not been seen for several days. They first visited Mr. Webb's house, eight miles distant to the northwest, which they found to have been ransacked. The next stop was at Dr. Kennedy's, where all was topsy-turvy. Surgical instruments, bottles of medicine, pills, plasters and portions, lay scattered in inextricable confusion. Tincture bottles were found empty. Jars of specimens preserved in alcohol had been drained to the last drop, and all the Doctor's collections of rare and interesting entomological, vermiculous and batrachoid curiosities were in the last stages of decay. The Indians have a warm and abiding faith in fire-water, and look upon the wasting of the smallest quantity as a calamity. They doubtless got some doses this time that were long remembered.

From Kennedy's the men were walking along slowly and carefully examining the ground, when suddenly three guns were fired, almost at the same instant, and Cross fell to the ground, pierced by a bullet through the heart. He died immediately. The others thought to bring the body back with them, but the Indians were upon them and they had to fight their way to the team, which they made good use of. It did not take their foes more than a minute or two to mount and give chase, and never had that region witnessed such a race. The driver, Pierce, urged the horses to the top of their speed, and 13 Sioux on their ponies, were crowding them closely with Cross's scalp hoisted on a pole for a battle flag. Jewett sat in the rear of the wagon, with his legs dangling down, loading and firing as fast as the jolting permitted; and the leaders of the chase gave back shot for shot. Three or four at last gave up and turned back. One got to the front and a well-directed shot unhorsed him. This ended the pursuit. The next day another party went out and brought in the bodies of both Gates and Sanborn, the latter having been

---

brained with a grub hoe and left where he fell. No other stirring event occurred till the following July, when Little Crow was killed about six miles north of Hutchinson.

Following is the roster of the guards:

Lewis Harrington, Captain; Oliver Pierce, 1st Lieutenant; Andrew Hopper, 2nd Lieutenant; Wm. W. Pendergast, 1st Sergeant; Benj. G. Lee, 2nd Sergeant; Silas J. Green, 3rd Sergeant; Prentiss Chubb, 4th Sergeant; Chas. H. Mohr, 5th Sergeant; James E. Chesley, 1st Corporal; Barnabas Welton, 2nd Corporal; Chas. McAlmond, 3rd Corporal; Wm. H. Harrington, 4th Corporal; Enoch E. Wright, 5th Corporal; Chas. Retzlaff, 6th Corporal; Chas Stahl, 7th Corporal; John Hartwig, 8th Corporal; Geo. Belden, Drummer. Privates: William Albrecht, Geo. T. Belden, John Benjamin, William Bilke, Norman Campbell, Vincent Coombs, Albert H. Delong, Charles A. Dewing, Thomas A. Dennis, C. William Dewing, Fergus Dewing, Samuel Dewing, David H. Ells, Frederic Ehler, John G. Estes, John Fallon, William Fallon, James Fallon Michael Fallon, William Froemming, Charles Granger, William Gosnell, Allen Green, William G. Green, John Hahn, Andrew A. Hopper, Henry Harmoning, Frank Harrington, William B. Harrington, Frederic Hartwig, William Heller, Holmes B. Higgins, E. J. Higgins, Charles M. Horton, Actor Hunter, Frank G. Jewett, David Jones, John Kuester, Joseph LeMaitre, Birney Lamson, Chauncey Lamson, Nathan Lamson, Charles Lestico, Frank Lestico, William Lestico, William McKenzie, William Naas, Charles Nisse, Joshua M. Pitman, John Retz, Edward Rusch, James Sharp, John Schultz, Frederic Smeltzer, Ferdinand Spaude, Louis South-worth, Jacob Stahl, Eli W. Stocking, Wm. Tillman, Chas. Tews.

**Children in the Stockade.** A feature of the experience of the Hutchinson stockade that has received, for some reason, scant attention at the hands of those who have told the story of those grim days is the awful scourge of disease visited upon the children cooped up within the walls of the stockade during and for weeks after the attack by the Sioux, says the Hutchinson Leader of Sept. 27, 1912.

The situation as described by Mrs. Ellen M. Hutchinson, then a young wife with two little children, Wm. E. and Martha Harrington, the last named now Mrs. H. L. Merrill, at her knee, was one involving peril, suffering, anxiety and bereavement such as would have strained to the breaking point women of less heroic mould than those who shared with husband and brothers the hardships and dangers incident to that historic defense of the hamlet of Hutchinson.

Mrs. Harrington declares that fully forty children of varying ages from the infant of a few days up to those in their 'teens fell victims to disease that fall and winter, several dying in the crowded stockade at the time of or shortly after the attack. Diphtheria was the common foe of the little sufferers, I and not one in ten stricken down by the disease ever recovered. There was no anti-toxin in those days; there was no known treatment for diphtheria of the slightest value in a therapeutic sense and when a child was attacked there was nothing for the shuddering parents to do but to look on and see their loved one strangle and gasp until the deadly toxin of the malady mercifully ended the sufferings of the victim.

Huddled together as were the stockaders in the small enclosure without comfortable beds or even secure shelter for the sick, with, in fact, no comforts, medicine or physician for the too sick—the scenes as the stricken children breathed their last may well be imagined. From some families two or three were taken and nearly all were buried on the highest point of land in the plat that is now Hutchinson's beautiful cemetery. Often the graves were unmarked, the relatives left the country and as time went by all trace of them became lost until in later years grave diggers have many times struck with their spades fragments of the durable oak boards of the rude coffins, or a portion of a skeleton was laid bare, showing that there rested, unknown and forgotten, the pathetic last remains of some child too frail to withstand the shock of disease and exposure that was their portion in those dark days of hardship and suffering.

Nearly all, as written above, but not all of the children dying in Hutchinson were buried in the partially cleared spot in the southern part of the town. For there was one exception and the grave of that child may still be seen in a tiny enclosure on the "Uncle Charley" McEwen place some two miles south of the city. The first rendezvous, before the stockade was built, of the citizens in and around Hutchinson as the news reached them that the Reservation Sioux to the west were devastating the country with fire and rifle and tomahawk and scalping knife, was the Thos. E. Chesley home. The grove still remains, just across the river and south of the Great Northern railway track. It commanded a view of the country in all directions and an approaching enemy would be at once discovered.

Among the families gathered there was that of Charles E. McEwen and the pet of the family was the only daughter, little Charlene, on whose fair head but nine summers had fallen. She was one of the first victims of the scourge of diphtheria and eye witnesses still living recall that of all the sad scenes of those sad days there was no more complete and pathetic picture of suffering on the frontier than that of the little procession that hastened across the prairie with the little body in a rude coffin to lay it in a hurriedly made grave near the home of the heart-broken parents. There was danger in the trip for the Indians were known to be within striking distance. But the father and mother chose to face the danger rather than the thought of their little darling sleeping in any other spot than at the home in which for nine short years she had shed the radiance of her sweet face and loving little heart.

**Strout and His Men.** On the first of September, 1862, Captain Richard Strout of the Eighth Minnesota Volunteers was marching with his company of 35 men from Glencoe, McLeod county, by way of Hutchinson and Cedar Mills, to Acton in Meeker county. Captain George O. Whitcomb was encamped with another company of volunteers at Forest City. On that day his company was attacked by about 100 Indians and they were forced to take refuge in the village.

With the aid of a field glass Capt. Whitcomb saw the Indians hurrying toward Acton and he surmised that an attack would be made on Captain Strout's men that night. Calling his men

together he told them of the danger to Captain Strout's company and asked for volunteers. Three men stepped forward. "I asked them," said Captain Whitcomb, "if they knew the danger attending the midnight ride. They said they did.

"J. V. Branham was the first. He was a man about 25 years old and with a family. Thomas H. Holmes and Albert H. Sperry were the other two. They were young men and not married. Branham knew every foot of the ground to be traveled. I gave the package to him and placed the party in his charge, feeling as I took their hands for a heart-felt good-bye that there were forty-nine chances of their being killed to one of their getting through." Branham takes up the story there. "Just as the sun was setting on Sept. 2, 1862, my companions and I who were serving as scouts, left Forest City and galloped south and westward. We went south to avoid the timber for the first eight miles.

"Gradually it darkened. The sky was clear but there was no moon. We followed the prairie road and were guided by the groves and lakes. We passed Round Lake to the right, Minnebelle on the left and Evans to the right. Then the timber standing outlined against the sky and the outlet of the lake told us we were near the Green road which would take us northwest and directly into Acton. It was cloudy now but we dismounted to examine the road tracks and saw where Strout and his men had passed. I whispered to Holmes, 'Can you see your hand before your face?' Holmes whispered back, 'Not a bit of it.' While on the prairie our horses hoofs had made no sound but now there was no grass and the beat of feet was painful to hear for we knew that we were followed by a merciless foe who never sleeps when on the warpath. On we went, trusting to the instinct of the horses to keep the road. We passed landmark after landmark, faintly discernible against the horizon.

"At last we reached Old Kelly's bluff and had covered 20 miles. Now there were no signs of Strout. We wondered, each man to himself, for no word was spoken, if we would be able to find the camp, and if not where could we go for cover when day broke. As we passed the Howard Baker house, where the August massacre had occurred, the baying of dogs was heard and we knew the Indians were encamped there. We kept on and reached the Robert Jones hamlet and then white tents were visible through the darkness.

" 'Strout is here,' we exclaimed as one man. In a whisper I told the men to halt. We were close enough to hit the tents with a stone but we had not been halted. We hailed the guard and received the answer and then went forward. Unmindful of their danger the camp was sleeping. We delivered our message to Captain Strout, and then a council was held. It was decided to await day break and then fight our way back to Forest City. A guard was set and the men slept once more. At dawn we fell in and began the march. The Indians soon made their appearance, coming from every direction. The all-day's fight began. We would march for a ways and then fire a volley at the Indians and then march again. Men began to fall everywhere."

In the fight Branham was shot through the left lung and Sperry accompanied him and the other wounded men to Hutchinson where they could obtain medical treatment. The survivors of the fight finally reached Forest City where they joined Captain Whitcomb's troops.

Years later Captain Whitcomb met Mac-an-pan-e-ta, a brother of Little Sioux, in Canada. The Indian chief told of the battle from the red men's side. He said that it had been planned to attack Strout's camp about three in the morning. The Indians had surrounded the spot and at the signal were to swoop down from every side. Red Dog was to lead the attack on the north, Mac-an-pan-e-ta on the east, Little Sioux on the south and Bald Eagle, a renegade chief from Standing Buffalo's band, on the west, while Little Crow was commander in chief.

When Branham, Holmes and Sperry rode up to the camp 21 or 22 Indians were standing in the road not 20 yards away. When they heard the horses they fell back into the under-growth and watched the riders pass. Little Crow then abandoned the attack that night.

**Cross and Sanborn Murdered.** Sam Dewing, who was one of the defenders of Hutchinson from the Indians, and scouted the country looking out for Indians, with Al DeLong, Vincent Coombs, and Winslow Putnam, during the fall of 1862, related to the Hutchinson Leader the story of the killing of Daniel Cross and Hiram Sanborn by the Indians, in September of that year.

It was after the battle at the stockade, in the latter part of the month of September, I think. It could not have been later for the leaves were yet on the trees. I was engaged with a detail, ordered by Capt. Harrington to guard the mill at Cedar, which was the only place this side of Minneapolis where the refugees in the fort could get any flour. Daniel Cross, Oliver Pierce, Frank Jewett, William Green, T. R. Webb and Charles Stinchkeld, and I believe Al DeLong and Daniel Nichols were running the mill. Sanborn's family was at the fort, in Hutchinson, but he insisted on going out to his claim north of Cedar lake, alone, and working, insisting that the Indians would not hurt him, and that he was able to defend himself anyway. Nothing had been heard from him for several days, and it was thought best to go and look for him. Accordingly the men on guard at the Cedar mill went over to the north of Cedar lake one day to find him. They had a wagon which they left on a hill on Webb's farm, in charge of part of the party, while others went on afoot toward Sanborn's house. Frank Jewett, Oliver Pierce and Daniel Cross were walking ahead, the three single file, Cross ahead, fully expecting to be ambushed, and just as they turned around a corner of the brush they were met by a volley of shots from the woods ahead of them. Cross fell, probably instantly killed, for when his body was found the next day it contained nine bullet holes and a ghastly wound from a charge of buckshot.

After Cross fell, the others turned and fled to their wagon, into which all got except Webb, who ran to the lake and took his boat and spent the night on the open lake. The others had a running fight with three Indians, who followed them on ponies to the Cedar bridge, when one of the ponies of the Indians was shot under him, and the rest fell back. The party went on to Cedar and then to Hutchinson.

Early next morning about twenty men went out to look for the bodies of Cross and Sanborn, for we now felt sure that Sanborn must be dead, too. I was with this party. We found Cross shot as I described, and scalped. Going on further, to Sanborn's house, and then to some low ground nearby, we found Sanborn also, shot through the hips and frightfully mutilated with a grub-hoe. There were evidences that he had put up a terrible fight for his life. He was not scalped, however, probably because his hair was red.

W. C. Whiteman, writing from Ortonville, Minn., Sept. 25, 1905, says of this event: The Sioux Indian Outbreak and Massacre of 1862 developed many startling and dangerous situations from which even a child of seven years would naturally receive some impressions that remain clear after the lapse of forty-three years. These impressions and recollections are no doubt refreshed and clarified by hearing those stirring times discussed and recalled by my father and possibly the older members of our family, and it is probable that in anything I might write descriptive of those days my own memory would be considerably and materially reinforced by what others have told me.

Our family doctor, Russell Whitman, lived on the shores of Cedar lake, some three miles from Greenleaf postoffice and about twenty miles from Kingstone. Across the lake was Cedar mills, where resided the Jewett family. Our first neighbor on the west was a man by the name of Dunn, and on the east the Webb family. Further east lived Mr. Sanborn, a rugged, fearless man, who, after sending his family to some place of safety, persisted in remaining on his farm. It is of his death and the death of Daniel Cross, that the editor of the Leader kindly requested me to write. Of the latter I have no distinct recollection as to details, but do remember very well how Mr. Sanborn met his death, as I accompanied my father to the Sanborn home, and was with him when the horribly mutilated remains of that gentleman were found. Mr. Sanborn had evidently been at work grubbing out the hazel brush in front of his house when the Indians crept upon him while at work. He fell, evidently badly wounded, or possibly killed outright, when the Indians took the heavy grub-hoe, with which he was at work, and horribly hacked and mutilated his body, including his face and head, which were so badly disfigured that father was only able to identify the body by means of Mr. Sanborn's clothes and heavy black beard.

My father, with his family, was at that time secreted on a small island in Cedar lake, where we lay hidden during the day and whence we made visits to the main land at night in search of food. I distinctly remember one such visit when we visited the farm of Charles McEwen and secured a cheese, of his own make, and which had been overlooked when the family left. After six weeks on this island, living under a partial shelter formed by an up-turned boat and a piece of carpet, we ventured to return to our home one night late in September, only to be warned by a scout, Capt. Waymouth, to leave for the fort at Hutchinson at once, which we did, arriving in a day or two after the engagement with the Indians in front of the village. I remember seeing dead horses and cattle on the open ground just across Crow river, with the fort in plain sight.

---



Arriving at the fort we found many wounded soldiers still suffering for want of surgical and medical attention and my father gave freely of his professional services.

Sometime later when Chauncey Lampson and his father killed Little Crow my father was present when the scalp was brought in and was able to definitely identify it by reason of a scar inflicted by a wounded deer some years previous and which he had dressed and cared for.

Little Crow and his son were frequent visitors at her house, the son often remaining several days at a time as the guest of my older brother, George. This boy and an Indian named "Charley," who lived with us about six months, frequently warned us that the Sioux were going on the warpath to kill all the white men and take the white women for their squaws. This "Charley" left us a few days before the outbreak and was the first Indian to fire a shot at a white man in the neighborhood. He was afterwards, I believe, one of the thirty-eight Indians to be hung at Mankato.

**Murder of the White Family.** On the afternoon of Sept. 22, 1862, according to the late Capt. A. L. Brown, as published in the notable anniversary number of the Hutchinson Leader, Oct. 6, 1905, thirteen Indians came to Lake Addie, and seven of them went to the west side of it to Samuel White's farm, the others to the fording place on Buffalo creek, on the farm of W. J. White, east of the lake, and started up the road toward the Grimshaw house, occupied by a Scotchman named Davis. In passing down the road from his hay field Davis saw the six Indians. They saw him and leisurely followed him. As soon as he was out of their sight he ran to a slough and buried himself in the water and mud, remaining until the Indians passed on to the White place. He reached Glencoe the next day, having remained out all night, lost on the prairie.

Samuel Harris, who was a widower, and boarded at White's, heard shots while working on his homestead claim nearby. When he went to his supper he found the body of Mrs. White lying near their house and, after covering it with a blanket, started for New Auburn, nine miles away. The Indians chased him, but he escaped, after spending the night on the prairie. Soon after daylight W. J. White saw Harris making his way toward New Auburn and heard of what he had seen. This was at Savage's, east of Brownton, where White had stayed with Jeremiah and Daniel Nobles, John Walker and several others, the house in which they spent the night being a part of the present house of R. C. Dwinnell's farm.

On the morning of the 23rd, as soon as they heard Davis' story, W. J. White and the two Nobles brothers started for Samuel White's. They rode carefully on the high ground, and, arriving at the place discovered the body of Mrs. White, and then immediately started back to Glencoe.

A party from New Auburn came soon afterwards. The body of Mrs. White was found lying just outside the door, terribly mutilated, and covered with a blanket. The body of Otis could not at first be found, but was afterwards found in a well. He had been shot while on the path from the house to the lake. Several balls had passed through his body, which had been dragged to the

well and thrown in. The daughter, Susan, could not be found. At the haystacks, a few rods back of the house, was discovered the headless body of Mr. White, and nearby was the head scalped. From appearances it was thought that Mrs. White had been shot through the window, and the body afterwards dragged out of doors.

A few sheaves of grain had been placed against the side of the house and set on fire. The siding had been scorched, but for some reason, the fire had been put out. It was thought that the fire was started to frighten the people out of the house, so that they could be shot down more easily.

The bodies were buried in the garden, near the house, by the New Auburn men, but were exhumed a few days later and taken to Glencoe, where they were buried. The remains of the daughter, Susan, were found about a year afterward on the prairie, a mile southwest of her father's farm, and were identified by some family pictures, trinkets and the clothing. A company from Glencoe followed the Indians for twelve or fifteen miles to the west, after discovering them, but gave up the chase, fearing ambush. The Indians endeavored to take away with them a lot of horses, wagons, cattle and other property, but left it all strewn along the way, as they were chased by the men from Glencoe, under command of Baxter. A son of White, Samuel W. White, was away from home at the time of the massacre of his relatives, and escaped their fate.

**Shooting of Wiedewitsch and Emme.** The shooting of Charley Wiedewitsch and Julius Emme was an event with which I was somewhat familiar, writes C. A. Bennett, of Granite Falls, under date of Oct. 1, 1905, as I happened to be on the ground a short time after it happened.

All the summer of 1863 Sioux Indians in twos and threes were frequently seen along the frontier. The killing of Little Crow and the wounding of his son near Hutchinson in July of that year is one instance.

There was what was known as a patrol line running clear across the state from the Iowa line to Sauk Center, I think it was. This ground was covered every day. Two men would start from the end of the line at daylight and ride to the next post usually fifteen miles, at the rate of ten miles per hour, and when they reached their destination two other men would be all ready to take the dispatches and mail and make the next post in the same time. The longest distance that any of these couriers had to ride was between Fort Ridgely and the lower or south end of Lake Allie. The 'post stood under some large oak trees on the knoll between Preston and Allie, and the distance to Ridgely was some thirty-five miles, and in the winter time was a pretty cold ride, though the writer has made it and didn't freeze to death. In the summer time this line served to daily discover the presence of any Indians that might come prowling around. The line was kept up until 1865, when it was abandoned.

During the summer of 1863 about a dozen members of Company I, Minnesota Mounted Rangers, were stationed at Glencoe doing frontier guard duty. One Sunday about noon word was brought to town that three Indians had attacked a family by the name of Wiedewitsch, Germans, living some four miles northeast of town. Lieut. Farmer, (of Spring Valley), soon had a half dozen men in the saddle and we were away to the scene of the attack.

Charley Wiedewitsch lived in a small one-story log house in the edge of the Big Woods. There was a door on the east that led into the house from a lean-to, and on the south a half sash of 8x10 glass furnished all the light the one room had. Julius Emme was a brother of Mrs. Wiedewitsch and was there that day. The two men were on the north side of the house grinding an ax and Mrs. Wiedewitsch was with them, when suddenly two shots rang out and the whizz of an arrow was heard. A ball from one of the rifles passed through the right arm of Mr. Wiedewitsch while another struck Mrs. Wiedewitsch in the chin; the arrow went half way through the fleshy part of the left arm of Julius and stuck there. All three immediately ran for their lives, for they knew that it was Indians. Mr. and Mrs. Wiedewitsch and their little daughter ran around the house and continued on down the road toward home a half mile distant. Just before reaching the house he had to get through a pair of bars, and the arrow sticking through his arm, which had entered from the outside of his arm, was a hindrance to him in getting through quickly, so he grabbed the arrow by the hoop-iron head and pulled it through his arm, the last to pass through being the feathers on the other end, put there to make it shoot straight, and these feathers will have more to do with my story. Emme reached the house and told his story and the family were soon loaded into a wagon behind a yoke of oxen and were on their way to Glencoe which they reached in safety and gave the alarm.

Wiedewitsch and his wife got into the house and fastened the door, and the Indians soon after left the place and went over to the house where Emme had gone. Here they proceeded to make a general wreck of everything, and they did not forget to do what they always did at every house, rip open the feather beds and scatter the feathers and take the works out of the clock. The wheels from the clock served for ear rings. The three red fiends then entirely disappeared from the country. No more depredations were committed and they undoubtedly returned to their home in Dakota.

When the soldiers reached the Wiedewitsch home we witnessed the worst sight I ever saw either in the army or out of it. Much noise could be heard on the inside but we could not get the door open. Getting the half sash out we looked through the opening into the room at a sight I shall never forget. Wiedewitsch had fainted and lay against the door; he was covered with blood, as was the entire room and everything in it. The blood had run from the wound in Mrs. Wiedewitsch's chin until she was saturated. Overhead some loose slabs had been laid and the little girl had been thrust up there by the frantic mother, and the child had its head down through a crack and was crying the best it knew how and it, too, was all blood, having been covered with it before it's mother placed it overhead. It was a sight to make a stout heart quail.

---

The Wiedewitsch family were loaded into a wagon and taken to Glencoe, and the arm of Wiedewitsch was soon after amputated. Julius Emme's arm healed up from the arrow wound and got well apparently, but when he pulled the arrow through his arm a small piece of the feather caught in the wound and when the doctor probed it he failed to get out that piece of feather. A few months afterward the arm got sore again, a running sore started and the loss of the arm was the result.

**Bilke and Spaude Killed.** Two Germans, by the name of Bilke and Spaude, were at this time living on a farm a few miles up the river, in the town of Lynn. They refused to come into the fort because, they said, they had always treated the Indians well, and Indians were never forgetful of kindness shown them. They did not anticipate any injuries and could not be made to see their danger. But when on the morning of the fight at Hutchinson, a few Indians came to their house while the family were at breakfast and in a threatening manner demanded a meal, they began to think they would be safer in the fort. While their guests were causing their bread and meat and potatoes to disappear with marvelous rapidity, they hastened to yoke the oxen and hitch them to the wagon. This done both families got aboard and started across the river on the way to the town. They had gone but a few rods, however, when the Indians came out of the house and fired, wounding Spaude in the leg. He whipped up his team and set them to running at the top of their speed, the Indians yelling and pursuing. In this way they dashed down the bank into the river, and there Spaude was shot again, and fell into the middle of the stream, where the body was found the next day.

Bilke and the women and children now leaped from the wagon and took refuge in the tall grass on the north side of the river, at this place six or seven feet high. While the Indians who were following them stopped to scalp Spaude, the others managed to conceal themselves from view and were not discovered. It has always been a matter of wonder that they succeeded in escaping as they did; but doubtless the Indians thought that they had guns with them, and that if any one should happen to stumble upon their hiding-place it would be at the expense of his life. They could see the grass quiver where the Indians went along, but so far they were safe. Mrs. Spaude prevented her two-year old baby from betraying with its cries their place of concealment by pressing her hand upon its mouth.

As soon as they found the coast in a measure clear, the two families separated. Mrs. Spaude recrossed the river with the baby and a five-year old child, and, crouching and picking their way along in the tallest grass, they made their toilsome way around the south end of Otter lake, and along the edge of the woods, till they reached the corner of Hutchinson's field, in sight of the fort, a little after noon, when they were seen and killed by the attacking Indians.

When picked up at evening their faces were entirely shot away, the muzzles of the guns having been held but a few inches away when they were fired. Mrs. Bilke, with three children,

remained longer concealed in the grass, and at last made her way to a vacant log house near the river of the north side, where they stayed over night, and where they were found the next day and brought to the town. Mr. Bilke, clad only in a checked hickory shirt, after meeting innumerable troubles and dangers, finally divested himself of one piece of clothing after another, so as to run faster; had been all day surrounded by his enemies; had dodged this way and that to avoid them; and, unscratched, had got where he could take a long breath and feel safe.

**Killing of Little Crow.** Various stories have been told of the killing of Little Crow, various versions have been given of the disposition of the remains, and heated arguments have been carried on in the newspapers over the authenticity of the scalp and bones in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.



W. W. Pendergast wrote of the killing of Little Crow as follows:  
On the morning of July 3, 1863, Nathan Lamson and his son Chauncey left Hutchinson for their home in the north part of the town about five miles away, to look after their stock. All being

---

found as they left it a few weeks before, they started out near evening to hunt for a deer. While they were stealing carefully along a dim path or trail, leading northwestward, the old man's quick eye caught sight of something moving in the bushes a few rods beyond them. Peering through the thicket he saw two Indians, a middle-aged man (afterward ascertained to be Little Crow) and a boy (his son Wowinapa) of about 16 years, picking raspberries, which were abundant and ripe.

Mr. Lamson thought this too good a chance to lose. Creeping to a poplar tree which stood near, he rested his gun against the trunk and fired, wounding Little Crow in the side. He did not fall, but, looking around, saw his assailant, and in an instant sent a bullet through the fleshy part of Mr. Lamson's left shoulder. Chauncey then advanced toward Little Crow, following the rather blind trail around the raspberry patch toward the northwest, while his father dropped to the ground to reload. Little Crow, evidently thinking him killed, seized his son's rifle and moved along the bush-skirted path toward Chauncey.

They saw each other and fired at the same moment. Only one report was heard by either Chauncey or his father. Little Crow fell mortally wounded by a bullet through his breast, and Chauncey felt the wind on his cheek as the other ball passed harmlessly by. Supposing his father to have been killed, and fearing lest other Indians might be near, Chauncey hurried to give the alarm in Hutchinson, and reached there about ten o'clock that evening. His mother, nearly distracted, begged the men at the fort to go in search of her husband. William Gosnell was the first to volunteer. Birney Lamson, the old man's youngest son, a Frenchman by the name of LeMaitre, and two or three other citizens followed. They, with six mounted men of the Goodhue County Tigers, who were stationed at Hutchinson, set out immediately, and reached Lamson's house a little past midnight, where they rested about three hours. At the beginning of dawn they resumed their march. They went north one mile to the woods path before mentioned, and turning to the west followed it about half a mile, when they came to the body of Little Crow stretched out on the ground about six rods from the spot where young Lamson delivered the fatal shot.

Nathan Lamson's white shirt and his gun were found in a plum grove near by, but the owner was not to be seen. On the return of the party to Hutchinson, however, he was among the first to welcome them. He had thrown away his shirt, thinking its color might attract the notice of the foe, and his gun was left because he was not able, in reloading, to get the ball down more than nine inches from the muzzle, so that he feared it would burst if he attempted to fire it. In his trepidation he had filled the barrel nearly full in loading it direct from the powder-flask. He had lain concealed in the thicket until nightfall, and then, leaving his shirt and gun, had made his way to Hutchinson, arriving about two o'clock in the morning.

Wowinapa, escaping and returning to rejoin the Sioux in Dakota, was captured 26 days later by a party of our soldiers near Devil's lake. His statement, as published by Heard and by Bryant and

Murch in their books on the Sioux outbreak and war, proved that the Indian thus shot near Hutchinson was Little Crow, who had been the chief orator and plotter for the massacre of the frontier settlers less than a year before.

Dr. John Benjamin wrote of the disposition of the body in this manner: "When the body of Little Crow was brought in to town, it being the Fourth of July, the boys took advantage of the event by 'celebrating' upon the remains, filling the ears and nostrils with firecrackers, which I considered very inhuman, and I got Mr. Sharp to assist me to draw the wagon containing the body to an open grave, a little east or southeast of Charles Andrew's present home, and covered the body over with gravel. But it was not allowed to rest in peace. An officer of a company of cavalry dropped into our town soon after and took it upon himself to use his sabre to dig into the grave and separated the head entirely from the body.

"My children came into the house and informed me of the deed. I hastened out and met the interloper. I asked him his authority for doing what he did. He replied by saying that it was none of my 'G—d d—n business.'

"On reaching the grave I found the Indian's head lying on the ground. I took it home and put it in a solution of lime with the intention of presenting it to the State Historical Society, or leaving it in Hutchinson for all future time, according to the wishes of Mr. Lamson and son, this being the understanding between all parties interested.

"The body, minus the head, was left just one day too long, for on my being superseded in the hospital here by Dr. Twitchell, he coaxed or hired Mr. Dewing and Andrew Hopper to put the body in a box and sink it in the river, but during the night someone took it out and from that time on its whereabouts was a mystery.

"In the latter part of 1863, an officer named Farmer, in command of the commissary at Glencoe, came to me and asked the loan of the skull for a few days, to be used by Prof. Pond in a course of lectures. He pledged me his word and honor that it would be returned to me, but that was the last I ever saw of the highly prized skull of the leader of one of the most terrible massacres the annals of history record."

The following story is told by Dr. Powell, of La Crosse, Wis., who had it from his friend, Lieut. J. M. Farmer, one of the soldiers stationed at Hutchinson, or Glencoe:

"After the shooting of Little Crow, ignorant that their victim was the famous chief, the soldiers hitched a lariat to his legs and dragged him back to camp, seven miles off, to Hutchinson, where they cut off his head, and jamming a fence rail into the skull carried it about camp triumphantly at the head of a mock procession. The body was thrown into a refuse pit, where it was soon followed by the head, but in a few days a visitor to the camp who knew Little Crow, saw the

head and recognized it as that of the Sioux chief by the peculiar formation of the teeth, etc. Identification was still further strengthened when the stranger found that both wrists had been broken, which was known to be true of Little Crow.

"Dr. Twichell, of Chatfield, took the trunk, dismembered it, and lowered it into a stream to allow the flesh to disintegrate. In the meantime Lieut. Farmer secured the head. When the soldiers stopped at Glencoe he borrowed a wash boiler and boiled the flesh off the skull and placed it in a gunny sack, where he kept it until he arrived home, when he put it behind the plastering in his house and plastered over it. This was in 1862, and the skull remained there until 1875, when he gave it to Dr. Powell.

"Mrs. Farmer, widow of Lieut. Farmer, has verified the story in its main points. The skull is now in the possession of the Minnesota State Historical Society." The Hutchinson Leader says this of the scalp which has been preserved: The Minnesota State Historical Society is in possession of the scalp and some of the bones of Little Crow, the leader in the Sioux uprising. The circumstances in connection with the preserving of the scalp are related as follows:

Chauncey Lamson, who killed the Sioux chieftain in the brush north of Hutchinson, either took or sent the scalp to the adjutant general of the state, to claim the state bounty of \$75 which was offered at that time for every dead male Indian. Entry of payment of the bounty to Lamson is on the books of the adjutant general, Oscar Malmros being adjutant at that time. The adjutant general had the scalp tanned for preservation, on account of its being that of the famous chief, and it found its way into the hands of the State Historical Society."

Another interesting account is that prepared by Marion P. Satterlee for the Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society: After the crushing defeat at Wood Lake, by Gen. H. H. Sibley, Little Crow fled into Dakota, from whence he returned the following summer (1863) for the purpose of stealing horses and provisions from the Minnesota settlers.

His companions were his son, Wo-wi-napa (One who appeareth), Hi-u-ka, a son-in-law, and a number of others. They committed a number of depredations, among others killing James McGannon in Wright county. The story of the shooting here given is related by J. B. Lamson (called Birney), of Annandale, Minn., the brother of Chauncey, and son of Nathan, who jointly killed Little Crow on July 3, 1863.

In the early summer of 1863 (following the Massacre, which commenced Aug. 17, 1862), most of the neighboring settlers at Hutchinson were gathered at the village so as to be near the stockade, which was guarded by soldiers and civilians, in expectation of attack by the Indians who had been on the warpath since the outbreak, and who had previously attacked the town in September, 1862. Some of the settlers were trying to raise a little crop for food, on their farms, and the work was done by a part of the family while others were scouting for Indians. I had spent most of the spring on our homestead about six miles directly north of the village, caring



for the stock and crops, which though small, were valuable to the settlers who were defying the savages and holding to their homesteads.

On July 3, I had gone to the village to spend the Fourth, and father and my brother Chauncey were taking my place on the farm. That evening they were out hunting for deer. About an hour before sundown they were a strong two miles northwest from the farm, on a road running by a marsh lake (there were a number of such marshes or lakes called by the Indians "Scattered Lake"); and at the point described there was a low place where the water crossed the road in the spring, and just beyond, the ground rose again. Farther on was a bend where the road bore away to the right to pass around the lake, and at the opposite side from the marsh there was a blackberry patch of considerable size. Where the road ran out into the clearing, it was some distance of open brush to the dry run. Father and Chauncey walked into this open space for several rods in plain sight of the patch, when suddenly they observed an Indian jump on his pony, and then off, on the other side from them. Providentially the Indian had not observed them, and they immediately sought cover in the brush and laid their plans; for to see an Indian meant death to him or to his white enemy in those days.

Father was past sixty-three years old, but he was a true frontiersman, and brother Chauncey was not behind in frontier training. They had hurriedly noticed that there were two Indians. Kneeling on one knee, with his rifle cocked, he held his position while father crept forward and to the left till he got a poplar tree in the blackberry patch in the direct line between him and Indians. He went forward to the poplar, which was covered with vines, and from this vantage point, at a distance of about thirty-five feet, he shot the larger one of the two Indians (Little Crow), the ball entering the left groin. Both Indians and father went to the ground at the shot, and all was quiet as death, while each was trying to locate the other. Father was armed with a Colt revolver, and thought he would try another shot at them with this, but he was not expert in its use, and concluded to keep it for close quarters, if necessary.

The Indians seemed unable to locate the spot from which the shot had come, but father knew that the smoke from the black powder would rise from the tree, and he realized that he must get away from there. He had crawled back in his own path for about two rods when they riddled the tree with shot. It was afterwards found that one slug and thirteen buckshot had struck it. One buckshot struck father on the left shoulder, as he was crawling away on hands and knees, which made a slight flesh wound about four inches in length; this caused him to change his course and get out of the line of fire. He turned squarely to the right and went a few feet, and then he tried to load his rifle, but got a bullet several bores too large for the gun; it stuck about five inches from the muzzle, and he could not force it home. Being afraid that his white shirt would be seen by the Indians, he took it off and tucked it inside his trousers from whence he subsequently lost it. Crawling to the road, he crossed it, and concealed himself in a

clump of hazel brush about sixteen feet across. He determined to stay there and to use his revolver if discovered.

Little Crow skulked around the raspberry bush, following the road, and as he came in range Chauncey saw him and rose to his feet to shoot. Both fired, and so close were the reports together that the roar of Little Crow's shotgun drowned the crack of Chauncey's rifle to father. Little Crow was skulking in the Indian style, leaning far forward, his gun extended, with the butt almost at his shoulder, so as to get instant aim. He shot from the left shoulder, but evidently he did not get his gun to the shoulder before firing, as Chauncey's bullet struck the stock of his gun, and then entered the left breast. Passing well through his stooping body, it stopped, just inside the skin of his back, only a few inches from where father's bullet had come out. Both went to the ground, and Chauncey commenced to reload his rifle, when he discovered that he had no bullets, and then he remembered that on leaving the house, father had taken all the bullets from the table and slipped them into his locket. This also accounts for father getting a bullet too large for his gun, as the rifles were of different caliber or bore.

Being thus unarmed, and not daring to approach the brush where he had seen father go, Chauncey determined on a ruse to draw the Indians away from him if possible. He crept away a few rods, then rose boldly up in plain sight and started on a run for Hutchinson. Father could not see this from his place of concealment, nor did he know the effect of Little Crow's shot. He did know that the Indian had fallen not ten feet from where he lay, and he could hear his groans of anguish, so he laid perfectly still awaiting events. After a time, the son, Wo-wi-napa, came up to his father, and they talked for nearly an hour before the chief died. Father, not understanding the Sioux language, could not know what was said, but he heard the son mount the pony and ride away. He had placed a new pair of moccasins on his father's feet, and on leaving, threw away his own single-barreled shot gun and took the double-barreled gun of his father. The single barreled gun was afterward found by the scouts.

After all sounds had died out, father crept away, and he finally reached Hutchinson at 4 o'clock the next morning. In the meantime, Chauncey had reached town about 10 o'clock at night, and on hearing his news, a party of thirteen soldiers and five civilians was organized to go over to the scene of the trouble. I accompanied them out to our homestead, where we waited until nearly daybreak, and then went on to the place of the shooting. As I was familiar with every foot of the ground, from having hunted over it time and time again, I was slightly in advance, leading the party.

On arriving at the turn in the road, I saw a body lying at my feet in the dull light of the morning, and I was terror stricken with the thought that it was father, but it flashed through my mind that the bare breast was copper-colored, and not that of a white man, so without a second glance I shouted, "Here he is, boys." We soon found the shirt which father had lost, and some thought that he had been killed, but from the bullet holes in the shirt, I knew that the wound

had been a slight one, though I could not know but that he had been killed later. We could not find him, nor any more Indians, so we took up the trail of the pony. Before we had gone a great way, we were overtaken by a troop of soldiers scouting for Indians, and they kept on the trail while we returned to town. While we were gone, father had returned from town to the place of shooting, with a neighbor and his team to take the body into town. When he arrived at the body he found that the soldiers in passing had taken the pains to scalp the Indian, probably to get the reward offered by the state at that time for Indian scalps. They placed the body in a wagon and drove to Hutchinson, all unaware that the corpse had been that of the hated Little Crow.

The fact that there was one more "good Indian" was enough to add to the joy of the celebration of the Fourth. Among those in attendance was Hiram Cummins, a private of Co. E, Ninth Minnesota Volunteers, who at once declared that the body was that of Little Crow. Many treated his statement as a joke but he said, "There is no doubt about it. Here are marks that no man could mistake. He has a row of double teeth all around, and both his wrists are broken and ill set." On pulling up the skunk skins from the wrists, the truth was apparent, though hard to believe.

Little Crow's son, after leaving his father, went northwestward to Devil's lake, in Dakota, where he was captured later in a starving condition by General Sibley's troops. When killed, Little Crow had on a coat that the son said was given him by Hi-u-ka, the son-in-law. This coat was taken from James McGannon whom they murdered on the Kingston road in Wright county. The bones of one arm and the skull and scalp of Little Crow are in the Museum of the Minnesota Historical Society."

©2012 Anthony J. Kadlec. If you have any contributions or suggestions for topics for future columns, please contact me by email: [tkadlec@gmail.com](mailto:tkadlec@gmail.com) or call me: (651) 271-0422 or send your letters to my attention: 1136 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. See this article online at: [www.kadlecovi.com](http://www.kadlecovi.com)  
Děkuji! Tony Kadlec