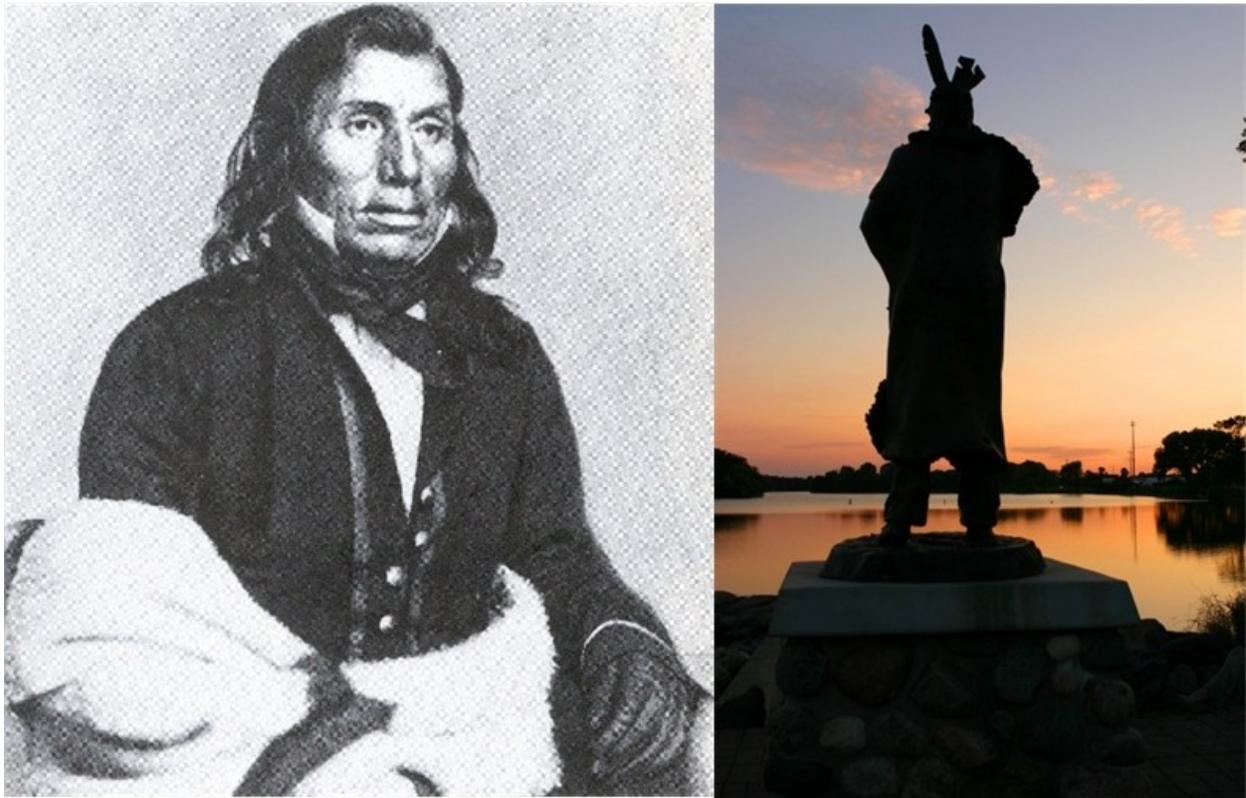


### **THE GREAT SIOUX UPRISING – The Killing of Chief Little Crow**

Here is the final installment of the series on the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862, as documented in the [History of McLeod County Minnesota](#), published by H.C. Cooper Jr. & Co. in 1917:

"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."



**At left, illustrated portrait of Chief Little Crow, whose previous name was 'Taoyatiduta', which translates as 'his people are red'. On the right, is a photo of the monument to Chief Little Crow, by artist Les Kouba, which overlooks the falls of the Crow River, in Hutchinson, Minnesota. Photo copyright Vicki Lantto, source: [www.captureminnesota.com/photos/759414](http://www.captureminnesota.com/photos/759414).**

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

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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

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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."

**Editor's NOTE:**

The full series of articles on the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862 may be found in the Pavučina Corner Archive ([www.kadlecovi.com](http://www.kadlecovi.com)), where you can find some additional 100+ articles that have been published in this column. Additionally, the Glencoe Enterprise will be publishing a special limited edition booklet on the Great Sioux Uprising. Please stay tuned to this column for ordering details.

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Děkuji! Tony Kadlec