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Jamestown, N. D.  
July 20, 1927.

Hon. Solon J. Buck,  
Minn. State Hist. Society

Dear Sir:- I wonder if this letter would be of any  
interest to your society.

A. Gervais, son of Isiah Gervais, was a Montana  
pioneer in the Great Falls vicinity.

His son Harry L. Gervais, a great grandson of  
Benjamin Gervais, lived in Jamestown for several  
years and is now a resident of Billings, Montana.

He has been a railway postal Clerk for 20  
years and now runs on the G. N. between Billings and  
Great Falls.

He is author of the enclosed letter.

Yours Truly,

(Signed) Walter E. Spokesfield,  
Jamestown, N. D.  
Box 255.

*[Original in general office file]*

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INTENTIONAL DUPLICATE EXPOSURE

DAKOTA CONFLICT OF 1862 MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTIONS  
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY. ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

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2905-6th Ave No.

Billings, Mont.

April 1st. 1927.

H. E. Spoonfield.

Dear Walter:

Replying to yours  
of March 28th. I am sorry  
But I am unable to give  
you a great deal of information  
with reference to what you  
asked. However I can tell  
you this much. My  
grandfather's name was  
Dish Gervais, and he was  
a Government Scout during  
the Indian war in Minnesota  
and North Dakota. I cannot  
state the exact date or year.  
But he went to Fort Abbeville,  
and managed to enter, although  
it was pretty well surrounded

with Indians. They were  
threatening to burn the Fort.  
Captain Vandenberg I think  
his name was, assumed  
that he was very anxious  
to have some one venture  
out, and go to St Paul to  
have reinforcements sent out.  
No one seemed to be anxious  
for the job. My grandfather  
volunteered to go of course  
he had to ride horseback,  
and was accompanied by  
a man named Delmar.  
They could not take a direct  
route to St Paul. But had  
to make many detours. Because  
the whole country was thick  
with Indians. Whenever they  
managed to get something to  
eat it was raw skunk meat.

ENCLOSURE



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They finally reached  
St Paul, and reinforcements  
were sent out to Ft Abercrombie.  
On the way an indian  
shot the hair off the top  
of Grandfather's head, and  
told him he would dance  
his scalp before sundown. But  
he didn't.

After they had reached  
St Paul, that Mr Demarest  
was exhausted, and said  
that he would not survive.  
He died three days afterwards.  
Benjamin Lewis was my  
great grandfather, and he built  
the first house in St Paul.  
At <sup>first</sup> they held large tracts  
of land where the city now  
stands. My father was born  
on a farm 6 miles out from

the City. There is now  
a summer resort on the farm.  
The name of the place is  
Lake Lewis.

If my grandfather was  
still living, I possibly could  
give you more information.

Mrs Lewis joins with  
me in sending you and  
your family, our very  
best wishes.

I am sincerely yours,  
Harvey L. Lewis

ENCLOSURE