

THE MORGAN MESSENGER

H. B. WEST, Editor

Morgan, Minn.

July 29, 1933

Minnesota Tourist Bureau,
Indian Massacre Story Contest,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

Gentlemen:

As a descendent of eyewitnesses of the Indian Massacre of 1862, I am submitting a story concerning an incident of the Massacre for the state wide contest to secure additional facts on the Indian Outbreak.

The narrative is entitled, "A Lad's Version of Chief Little Crow" and deals with the experiences of August Gluth, a 12 year old boy captured by the Indians. I knew Mr. Gluth for thirty years and often talked with him about his experiences and other incidents connected with the Massacre and believe this story fairly presents them. Also herewith is a statement from his brother, Henry Gluth of Morgan, Minnesota.

My grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. F. N. Gibbs, settled at New Auburn, Sibley county, before the Massacre. About 25 years later I was born in their log house, from which they had been frightened away temporarily by Indians in 1862.

Yours truly,

H. B. West

Morgan, Minnesota,

July 28, 1933

To Whom It May Concern:

The Indian Massacre narrative written by H. B. West entitled "A Lad's Version of Chief Little Crow" concerning the experiences of my brother, August Gluth, is substantially correct as I heard my brother and parents often tell.

I was six years old at the time of the Massacre and was wounded in the neck by an Indian during an attack on the settlement of New Ulm, where our family had gone for protection.

Yours sincerely,

Harry Gluth

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A LAD'S VERSION OF CHIEF LITTLE CROW

Taken captive by Indians during the Sioux Outbreak in 1862, wounded in the scalp by a tomahawk as a "brave" was about to scalp him but saved from this cruel fate by the command of Chief Little Crow, and forced into slavery by Chief Little Crow's band for about five weeks of the Massacre, was the terrifying experience of a twelve year old lad, August Gluth, who spent most of his adult life at Morgan, Minnesota, and died last November at the age of 82 years.

During those fateful weeks, while August served as a hostler for Chief Little Crow, he suffered great hardships and sometimes for days at a time was forced to live on wild berries.

Often he had cautiously crawled on his hands and knees through the grass and brush to reach some berries to eat, at the peril of his life, in case his absence from the camp had been noted, or the moving object in the grass been detected.

The lad tried to escape three times. The first time he was giving a warning. The second time was when he received a scalp injury as an Indian was about to scalp him, only to be deterred by Chief Little Crow, himself. He was, however, solemnly warned that he would be killed if he tried to escape again. It was near the close of the Massacre that August, with two other young boys, succeeded in getting away. Two Indians with ponies were close on their trail near a slough when a group of three or four soldiers on horseback came into view and saved them.

August Gluth was an immigrant boy from Germany. His parents settled on a farm in Milford township, Brown county, a few miles

ENCLOSURE

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

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A LAD'S VERSION OF CHIEF LITTLE CROW

west of New Ulm. There were several children. The family was in very poor circumstances and the winter of 1861 had been a severe one with them. The next summer an opportunity came for August to herd cattle forty miles up the Minnesota Valley, near Beaver Falls. Though such a young lad, he went to his cattle job courageously, never dreaming of the fate that soon awaited him.

In a few weeks the massacre started, without warning. One hot August day, as the lad rested lazily on his pony, half awake, half dreaming, there was a commotion which brought fear into his heart. A band of Sioux Indians swept up, took the herd by storm, and made the herdsboy their captive. Several others were taken in this raid.

Until that fateful day, Indians had been an object of curious interest to August Gluth. The boy was intrigued by their habits and customs and peculiar dress. He had learned some of their language, which he later acquired quite fully as a captive.

During the terrible weeks that followed the young captive slave heard glowing reports made to Chief Little Crow of the pitiful plight of the white settlers and of the mutilation of many score of them. Their shouts and dances of jubilation were horrible nightmares to him. He often saw captive women and children treated cruelly.

His experiences in Chief Little Crow's camp gave this alert young boy a closeup of the famous Indian Chief which belies the romantic mantles which some historians throw around his shoulders.

While he spared his life, August's version was that Chief Little Crow was a murderous killer and a cruel master. While he

A LAD'S VERSION OF CHIEF LITTLE CROW

urged his sub-chiefs into daring exploits, and cursed them for their failures, he had not the courage to endanger himself very much. He was also vain glorious and a great showman. He greatly enjoyed bedecking himself in the colorful regalia which only a chief could don, and he relished the obeisance which the sub-chiefs and his retinue showed him. He always had a string of ponies of striking appearance, and insisted upon having them well groomed.

It was this streak of vanity on the part of Chief Little Crow to which the herdsboy may have owed his life. The Indian boys were too lazy and indifferent as hostlers to satisfy the Chief.

However, shortly after being taken to Chief Little Crow's camp, which was moved a few times, August Gluth had some added duties which may have made him a valuable lad to have around. The Indians had trouble handling ox teams, which they took from white settlers. The oxen did not like their dress, nor shouts, nor "smell" and most of them did not behave well under their care but young Gluth and a couple of other young boys knew how to handle them. There were no white men in camp.

August Gluth had a 22 year old brother, John, shot to death by Indians near the Redwood Agency. His parents had their buildings burned and they escaped to New Ulm for protection. A building they were in was set on fire by Indians and as the Defenders sought safety in another building Henry Gluth, a six year old brother of August, was wounded. He is living at Morgan, Minnesota. Another brother, Fred, was killed in the Union army. An uncle and aunt of Mr. Gluth living at Fairfax are the only known survivors of the Battle of Fort Ridgely.

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A LAD'S VERSION OF CHIEF LITTLE CROW

After the Massacre August Gluth helped government soldiers identify many Sioux Leaders who had been associated with Chief Little Crow, that they might be courtmartialed.

Last summer while sitting in front of the general mercantile store at Morgan, owned by his son, John Gluth, August Gluth found his watch had stopped. He desired to set the time-piece and inquired the time. He found that the watches of his friends varied by several minutes. One of them remarked that a few minutes shouldn't make much difference to August, anyway. He replied that, "Five minutes don't mean much to me now, but a split second saved my life seventy years ago this summer."

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West

2nd Sunday June 1862 Sept. 11?

A LAD'S VERSION OF CHIEF LITTLE CROW

Submitted in contact conducted by T. A. R. R. R.

Taken captive by Indians during the Sioux Outbreak in 1862, wounded in the scalp by a tomahawk as a "brave" was about to scalp him but saved from this cruel fate by the command of Chief Little Crow, and forced into slavery by Chief Little Crow's band for about five weeks of the Massacre, was the terrifying experience of a twelve year old lad, August Gluth, who spent most of his adult life at Morgan, Minnesota, and died last November at the age of 82 years.

During those fateful weeks, while August served as a hostler for Chief Little Crow, he suffered great hardships and sometimes for days at a time was forced to live on wild berries.

Often he had cautiously crawled on his hands and knees through the grass and brush to reach some berries to eat, at the peril of his life, in case his absence from the camp had been noted, or the moving object in the grass been detected.

The lad tried to escape three times. The first time he was giving a warning. The second time was when he received a scalp injury as an Indian was about to scalp him, only to be deterred by Chief Little Crow, himself. He was, however, solemnly warned that he would be killed if he tried to escape again. It was near the close of the Massacre that August, with two other young boys, succeeded in getting away. Two Indians with ponies were close on their trail near a slough when a group of three or four soldiers on horseback came into view and saved them.

August Gluth was an immigrant boy from Germany. His parents settled on a farm in Milford township, Brown county, a few miles west of New Ulm. There were several children. The family was in very poor circumstances and the winter of 1861 had been a severe one with them. The next

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