

[McAlmond]
This is a copy of a diary kept by Rebecca Almond (mother of Izella Benson, Mrs. Wm. R. Benson, Sr.,) during the autumn of 1862, when the Indians under the leadership of Little Crow attacked several towns and villages in central Minnesota. Among these was the town of Hutchinson, where Rebecca lived with her parents, Hugh and Rebecca Eaton McAlmond.

This diary was written with a lead pencil in a small memorandum book, some of the pages of which had been removed. This book was carefully covered with newspapers and was hardly noticeable in the collection of old letters among which we found it.

Monday, August 18, 1862. The news came today of the murder of the Jones family at Acton. Great excitement on account of it.

Tuesday, August 19. Mr. Caruthers came and brought an account of the massacre at Redwood. Preparations were made for all to go to Mr. Chessly's to stay over night, as it was thought it would be safer than to remain at our homes.

Wednesday, August 20. Returned home this morning feeling quite safe, as nothing was heard from the Indians during the night. Wednesday evening Mrs. Galbraith and a few others came to Hutchinson bringing an account of the massacre at Yellow Medicine. The rest of the party were expected here tonight but did not come.

Thursday, August 21. Mr. Sinks and Mr. Boardman came this morning in advance of the main party. About two o'clock this afternoon the rest of the party arrived in town. Ten of the party came and spent the night with us, among whom was Another Day, the Indian who led the whites out of danger.

Friday, August 22. Our guests left this morning for Henderson, Shakopee and St. Paul. At the request of Mr. Fadden, Capt. and I went to Cedar to bring Mr. Garvy down and take care of him till his friends returned, but before we reached Cedar we heard that he was dead. Had died that morning. We brought the corpse down and brother saw about making preparations for the funeral. Quite an excitement in regard to leaving town.

Saturday, August 23. Commenced this morning to erect a fort as a protection from the Indians. About noon Mr. Garvy was buried. This evening a number of families came in to stay with us. During the night an alarm was given, which caused a great excitement amongst many of the people. The alarm proved to be a false one.

Sunday, August 24. Preparations still going on at the fort. Scouts were out today, but no Indians were seen. All is as calm as could be expected.

Monday, August 25. Returned home this morning from the fort, where I spent a miserable night. Today about noon John Livingstone, William Maxwell, John Wood, and Nelson came up here as scouts.

Tuesday, August 26. Spent last night at the fort - nothing of importance going on today, scouts were out but saw nothing of Indians. Preparations still going on at the fort. I spent part of the day at Mr. Chessly's, after returning helped erect the tent, and make preparations for the night.

Wednesday, August 27. We all went into the fort again last night. All was still with the exception of a little alarm given by Mr. Sumner, which reached the ears of only a few in the fort. It also proved to be a false alarm. News came today of the supposed murder of Mr. Foote's family at Eagle Lake.

Thursday, August 28. Nothing of importance going on today. Mr. Livingstone and John came from Glencoe today but brought no news. This evening a party of 13 horsemen came in town. They had been scouting up around Forest City and through

the woods. They neither saw nor heard any Indians while out scouting.

Friday, August 29. Nothing of importance going on today, scouts out as usual but nothing seen of Indians.

Saturday, August 30. All is quite calm. Things going on as usual in the fort.

Sunday, August 31. Stayed at home and wrote letters. Scouts were out but nothing heard of Indians.

Monday, September 1. 100 troops came in town this afternoon from Glencoe, the same company who passed through here the other day from up country. The company was raised in Minneapolis.

Tuesday, September 2. The troops left this morning in high spirits for Acton and the country above there. They gave three cheers to the Hutchinson ladies, and three groans for Glencoe. All is still here as yet.

Wednesday, September 3. Word came in this morning that the Indians were upon us, and that they had killed many of the soldiers who passed through here yesterday morning. About twenty of our men, brother amongst the rest, started for Cedar where they heard they were, but met them on the road. They had lost four men killed, and brought in about 15 wounded. Some of the men are wounded very badly. I spent all the afternoon in helping take care of them. Two of the men it is thought will not recover.

Thursday, September 4. Just after breakfast this morning, we were startled by the news that the Indians were in town. I looked out of the post-holes and saw a number running around on the hill. One German came in wounded by them, but fortunately it is only a flesh wound. They have ransacked and burnt our houses, killed some horses, one for us and one for Sivwright. But a number of Indians have been made to bite the dust. They are skulking all around us. The wounded men have been brought in the fort, and made as comfortable as circumstances will permit. There is firing going on all around us. One ball struck the guard house where many of the wounded lay. Some of the Indians are parading around with a yoke of oxen and covered wagon, supposed to be Mr. Tucker's. They have burnt Mr. Chessly's house and also brother's threshing machine. There is considerable excitement and confusion going on. The Indians fired on Sumner (who the author later married) and the ball just brushed his clothes. Mr. Cook killed the Indian who fired the shot. This evening 150 of cavalry and infantry came in to reinforce us. Mr. Adams has come in. He has just escaped from the Indians. He and his wife were attacked by 25 Indians. They killed his wife, and he killed the Indian who shot her. Her family are mourning bitterly. They are in the fort. A little later this evening word came in that a woman and two children were lying dead on the prairie near Mr. Chubb's place. About 100 men went out and brought them in. They are shot up horribly.

Friday, September 5. There have been no Indians seen today. This evening they brought in the infant child of Mrs. Adams. He is dead. Killed by the Indians. It was a beautiful babe, about six months old. It looks lovely now, for, with its little arms thrown above its head, and its eyes partly open, he looks as though he was but just awakening from a peaceful slumber. It is thought that there is no doubt but that Mrs. Adams is taken prisoner, instead of being killed, as at first supposed. A worse fate than death probably awaits her.

Sunday, September 21. All is calm today so far as Indians are concerned. This morning Mr. Herrick preached a sermon to the soldiers and people out on the prairie. It was an imposing scene. The people and some of the soldiers seated themselves on the ground, but most of the soldiers stood with uncovered heads to listen to the remarks made.

Tuesday, September 23. This evening the news was brought in that Mr. Cross was killed by the Indians at Cedar today. The rest of the party barely made their escape. Mr. Sanborn is supposed to be killed.

Wednesday, September 24. Part of the cavalry company went to Cedar this morning to ascertain if possible what had become of Mr. Sanborn, and to bring down the body of Mr. Cross if it could be found. They returned this evening bringing the bodies of both Cross and Sanborn whom they found murdered on his place.

The bodies of both are horribly mutilated. Mr. Cross was shot eight times. His entire scalp is taken off, besides his face is horribly mangled. Mr. Sanborn was shot a number of times. His face is all cut up with a grub hoe. The Indians took part of his scalp. A round spot on the side of his head. They have also cut little pieces of flesh out of different parts of his person.

This lady who wrote this diary is the mother of Mrs. Izella Benson, wife of W. R. Benson who lived on a farm 2 miles southwest of Long Lake for 30 years. She is now living at the Minnesota Masonic Home at Bloomington. She is also the great grandmother of Robert Benson, Long Lake; Richard Benson, Crystal Bay, and James Benson, with the Army in Germany.