

M. B. Johnson, President

W. G. Laumann, Vice President

H. J. Essler, Secretary

C. A. Benson, Treasurer

Nicollet County Telephone & Telegraph Co.

Capital Stock \$125,000

OFFICE of THE GENERAL MANAGER

C. C. NELSON

DIRECTORS

M. B. Johnson, St. Peter
W. G. Laumann, St. Peter
H. J. Essler, St. Peter
C. A. Benson, St. Peter
Henry Knipple, Gibbon
C. C. Nelson, New Sweden
Andrew Anderson, Winthrop
G. E. Larson, Winthrop
John J. Clark, Cleveland

EXCHANGES AT

St. Peter
Gaylord
Gibbon
Kasota
Nicollet
New Sweden
Lafayette
Cleveland

TOTAL NO. OF PHONES

St. Peter	770
Kasota	117
Cleveland	146
New Sweden	168
Nicollet	194
Lafayette	208
Gibbon	266
Gaylord	317
Total	2,186

Lafayette, Minnesota, Apr 13th 1924

Mr. H. O. Johnson Hebron, N. Dak

Dear Sir: I send herewith a History of the Indian massacre in town of New Sweden Aug 23rd 1862. This history is as nearly correct as to my knowledge and memory. It differs a little in some parts to what your Aunt Ingas has stated to you in her letter but that is immaterial as it was the same morning, she stated that the Indians dragged her across the pasture, but there was no pasture at that time.

The cattle were running at large on the prairie, but we had fences around the cultivated land to protect the grain, it was the cornfield where the Indians overtook them that she refers to that was fenced in. In regard to as she stated that mother and the boy Peter was buried in the same grave, I am not sure, but think she was mistaken as I think it was the little baby boy that Ingas took care of that died when they stood at the church and was buried with his mother in the same grave, and the boy Peter that was killed by the Indians was buried aside of them a few days later as he was not found till about a week after he was killed. [See statement in my possession]

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INTENTIONAL DUPLICATE EXPOSURE

DAKOTA CONFLICT OF 1862 MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTIONS

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY. ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

0062

History of the Early Pioneers of this Neighborhood in the Western part of the Town of New Sweden, Nicollet County, Minnesota, and of the Indian Massacre in this Neighborhood in 1862.

Written by C. C. Nelson of New Sweden, address Route #1, Lafayette, Minnesota, in 1926.

In the years of 1856 and 1857 several families of Scandinavians came to Minnesota from Illinois and settled in and around in what is now known as Scandinavia Grove and Norwegian Grove. During the year 1858 ^{all that came here} there were four families from Batavia ~~here~~, namely; Carl Nelson, Pehr Carlson, Erick Johnson and Andrew Paulson. Three families drove up with teams of oxen and one with a team of horses. The land having been taken up ^{by} those who came here the year before, we were obliged to go further west and also cross Rush River. We located on Section eight, Township One hundred eleven, Range twenty-eight, and now called the Town of New Sweden. We arrived on the 10th day of July, 1858, and found the country a complete wilderness, with the exception of ~~some~~ Indians who were the only human beings ^{around here}. There were some white people making their homes along the Minnesota River up to New Ulm and around Fort Ridgley and Swan Lake. Later that summer and fall a few more families came here and settled down in our neighborhood which made nine families all told at that time. We built temporary sod houses to live in. The next spring three more families ventured here making the number of twelve altogether, respectively, Carl Nelson and family, Pehr Carlson and family, Erick Johnson and family, Andrew Paulson and family, L.J. Larson and family, Lars Solomonson and family, ^{Swan} P. M. Fritjoff and family, Pehr Benson and family, Johannes Eklund, ^{Benson and family} and family, S. A. Herbert and John Johnson single. In the fall of 1858 Mr. Paulson died and ^{Sam. Linn} ~~after~~ ^{Joran} Johnson married Mrs. Paulson.

We lived among the Indians four years. They made their living by hunting, fishing, and trapping muskrats. They visited us frequently and occasionally stayed all night and we accommodated them the best we could, although we didn't find them very pleasant or agreeable, however, we tried not to cross them for fear they would attack us at any time.

During the year 1860 when the Civil war was declared, three of our members enlisted in the army, namely S. A. Herbert, John Johnson and P. M. Fritjoff, the latter's family lived on the homestead.

-2-

In August 1862, we were notified that the Indians had prepared to attack us and also the settlers in the northwestern part of Brown County. We could see the homes of many of the settlers being burned down at night. About the 17th of August we received a message that the Indians had attacked New Ulm and Pehr Carlson, Johannes Eklund, and Joran Johnson went to New Ulm to help fight the Indians. Their families were left in our care and we as well had to keep watch for fear we might be attacked in our settlement. We loaded up provisions and bedding on our wagons so as to be ready to start for St. Peter. On the evening of the 22nd we noticed that the Indians were still burning the houses toward New Ulm and along the river. We hitched up our oxen and drove down to Scandinavia Grove Church, which was six miles east of our place, and stayed there over night. The next morning, the 23rd of August, we intended to drive to St. Peter, but some of ^{the settlers by the church had horses} ~~our men had horses~~ and they decided to ride ^{out west} ~~to~~ to find out if there were any Indians near by. They told us to drive back to our homes and look after our things and they would notify us the result of their search. Our spys consisted of Andrew Thorson, Andrew Webster, John Nelson, Martin Peterson, Erick Johnson and L. J. Larson and a few others, whose names I don't remember, making eight ^{all told}. We again loaded our wagons with the necessary things to go to St. Peter so as to have everything in readiness in case we would get word that the Indians were coming. ^{these men} ~~They~~ had just started out by our place, going west and which was about noon, and after riding about three miles they spied some people on the edge of a timber near a big slough. They couldn't distinguish them as to whether they were whites or Indians but they were beckoned ^{by the Indians} to come over. Our men rode a little further to make sure as to who they were and they discovered they were Indians. The Indians opened fire at them but were unsuccessful in ^{hunting} ~~killing~~ anybody. Our men turned back with full speed on their horses and the Indians in pursuit on their ponies but they lost out again. Our men didn't have time to notify ^{as they had to save their own lives} ~~as they had to~~ so they rode across the prairie ^{about 4 miles west of our place} with the exception of Erick Johnson and L. J. Larson who went to their homes to rescue their families.

Mr. Larson had promised to take care of Pehr Carlson's family

DEFECTIVE PAGE

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Bengtson 2583 21 Oct. 26
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0064

thought were Indians. We got down in the grass but noticed that they waived to us with a handkerchief and then discovered that it was our neighbors Lars Solomonson and family. We waited until dark and walked toward the Scandinavian Grove Church until we got to the timber ^{then} ~~which~~ which is now Norseland. We went into ~~the~~ house, that was on the edge of the timber to find something to eat but ^{the only thing} nothing ~~was~~ left. Mrs. Solomonson went into the cellar and found a pan of milk which we drank and then ^{we went} ~~finished our trip~~ through the timber until we came to the road. We heard ^{coming on the road} something going west and we hid in the bushes on the side of the road thinking that it was Indians. Upon approaching us we recognized by their talk that ~~they~~ ^{these} were white people so we left our hiding place. ^{and went to road} It was a company of soldiers that were sent up from St. Peter. They informed us that it was safe to follow the road to St. Peter and they continued on their way to Scandinavian Grove Church and stayed their over night. We arrived at St. Peter about two o'clock ^{in the} ~~the~~ morning and were taken over to a one story stone building on Third Street which was used for a temporary refuge for those who came from the country.

The next morning the soldiers and some other men, who spent the night at the Scandinavian Grove Church, went over to Erick Johnson's place and to where Mrs. Johnson and the boy had been killed the day before to take their bodies to the church. ^{found the bodies but not the day} (They were buried in the Scandinavian Grove Church Cemetery.

Carl Nelson, my father, having unhitched the oxen from the wagon, started across the prairie to Henderson. He was close by when the Solomonson boy John was shot through the wrist of his right hand by an Indian, but as the boy didn't ^{fall to the ground} ~~seem to be~~ hurt, my father thought he wasn't hurt. The boy started to run in a northerly direction ^{and} Father kept on running to Henderson, arriving there after dark. The boy who was shot in the wrist, was fourteen years old. He was sent out by his father to get the oxen that were grazing on the prairie, as they had intended to drive to St. Peter. He certainly was a brave boy for his age as after he was shot in the wrist he took his handkerchief and tied it around his wrist to stop it from bleeding and then started on his twenty mile hike

to Henderson and got his wrist dressed. He arrived there late in the evening. When my father got to Henderson he told them about the Indian Massacre out in his neighborhood. They got up a company of soldiers to go out with him the next morning which was on Sunday. They made a thorough search for the dead or those that were still living and came quite near the place where my mother was hiding in a slough ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ Norwegian Grove. They called and tried to get the attention of anyone that might be hiding, but Mother thought they were Indians so ^{she} didn't dare show up. They went around through the western part of New Sweden where the Indians had frightened the families the day before, but they failed to find anyone. They found most of the houses and grain stacks burned to the ground. The soldiers returned to Henderson and Father walked to St. Peter arriving there in the evening. He went to the stone building on Third Street to look for his family to see if all were there. He found my brother and I and some of the neighbors saved but Mother was not there. The next morning Father and some other men went out to New Sweden to look for those that were missing. They were about a mile north of the Church when they noticed somebody out on the prairie and discovered it was my Mother. She had been hiding in the slough from Saturday afternoon until Monday morning. ^{They} took her to St. Peter immediately in the lumber wagon but she was so exhausted that she could hardly move. We were all saved from the Indians.

^{we staid in St. Peter} ~~The next~~ ^{then} day we went out to Scandinavian Grove Church. The family ^{so and} stayed there for sometime and the men folks had to take care of the cattle and other things that were left. They found only five houses that were not burned by the Indians and they ^{were} ~~are~~ as follows; Carl Nelson, Pehr Carlson, Swan Benson, John Johnson and Lars Solomonson. Those that lost their homes and grain were Pehr Benson's house and grain, ~~Mr.~~ M. Fritjoff, house and grain, ^{John} ~~John~~ Johnson house and grain, Erick Johnson, house and grain, ~~Mr.~~ J. Larson, house and grain, Johannes Ecklund house, and Lars Solomonson's grain. The men helped each other build up temporary shelter so that their families could come back to the farm.

Pehr Carlson and Johannes Ecklund came back from New Ulm where they had been fighting the Indians. Pehr Carlson, Swan Benson and

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my father went to St. Peter to get some flour and groceries for the families that were still living in the Scandinavia Grove Church. When arriving at St. Peter they were drafted to haul provisions from St. Peter to New Ulm and Fort Ridgely. Swan Benson was exempted on account of sore feet and was permitted to return to the church with the provisions. My father, Mr. Carlson and others were sent to Fort Ridgely. When they arrived there and after unloading their provisions and ready to start for home, Mr. Carlson was again draft to go ^{with some others} ~~to~~ Birch Cooley but when they were ^{about half way} ~~about half way~~ of their destination, they were notified that the soldiers had succeeded in driving the Indians ^{into} ~~from~~ the reservation so Mr. Carlson got permission to return home, my father getting home a few days before Mr. Carlson. They then arranged to get the grain threshed of which they had only four small ^{stacks} ~~stacks~~ of wheat. They got Andrew Thorson from Scandinavian Grove, who had an old threshing rig to, come out and thresh the grain that was left. Some of the men were kept busy at the machine and others were laying on high places to watch out for the Indians. After the threshing was done and they had fixed up some temporary shacks to live, ⁱⁿ the families were all settled again on their farms with the exception of Pehr Benson's family who went back to Illinois. They thought they had all the experience with the Indians they cared for, ⁱⁿ ~~and~~ the wilderness.

Now, in order to be protected from further attacks, the settlers decided to erect a stockade where we could flee to and defend ourselves. This ^{they erected} ~~was~~ about forty rods west of Scandinavia Grove Church. All the settlers in that neighborhood, ^{and the western part} ~~except those west of~~ New Sweden, gathered to work on the stockade. They had no material on hand to build it with, so they decided to put up ~~a~~ sod walls. They all came with their oxen and wagons, some having horses, and got a few breaking plows and commenced to break up the sod around there, cut it into pieces with spades and loaded them on the wagons and hauled it over where ~~the~~ others were working putting up the wall by laying and packing the sod. The wall was built about six feet in

height, but the thickness I don't remember, but made strong enough that it would protect us from the Indians if they came. ^{low} ~~They~~ made ~~some~~ small square holes in the wall to look through and to shoot through to defend ourselves should we be attacked but the Indians did not come back any more so we did not have to use the stockade for our defense. The stockade stood there for many years until it rotted down and was leveled out.

During 1864 and 1865 more people came ~~and~~ and settled ^{west} in what is now called the town of Bernadotte. The survivors from the Indian Massacre in 1862 here ^{in 1862} ~~in~~ the western part of the Town of New Sweden that are still living are as follows; C. C. Nelson, Swen Carlson, New Sweden, Mrs. ^{Loren} ~~Loren~~, nee Ingar Carlson, Winthrop, Olaf ^L Johnson, St. Peter, Nels ^L Johnson, St. Paul, Mrs. Holmquist, nee Ingar Johnson, Faribault, Charles Wilson, formerly Solomonson, Bernadotte, Alfred Solomonson, Milaca, Louis Solomonson, Sibley County, Tanney Johnson, Le Sueur, John Carlson, ^{Anna Nelson} ~~Anna Nelson~~, Havannah, North Dakota. Frank Peterson formerly ^{First Gift, Kasota} ~~First Gift, Kasota~~, Mary Carlson formerly ^{Edmund, Minnesota} ~~Edmund, Minnesota~~, Johanah Larson, ^{Takam, Washington} ~~Takam, Washington~~. This is a correct history as to my knowledge and memory of the pioneer settlers and the Indian Massacre in the town of New Sweden in 1862.

C. C. Nelson

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