

By M. P. Lathrop

Memorial

A Faithful Servant

In a grave in the Mpls Pioneers & Soldiers Cemetery lies one who did his duty to the death. This is Philander Prescott, the interpreter at the Redwood Agency, where he met his death in the outbreak of 1862.

According to Rev. S. D. Hinman, Little Crow and several others passed Prescott's and his homes at the Agency while the murders at the trading stores were going on. Prescott was ordered to "stay in his house," while Hinman was given a "savage" look and no reply to his queries as to what was the trouble. Realizing the seriousness of the outbreak, ~~even~~ he went out his back door and crept through the garden and brush and escaped to the ferry. He was seen and fired on but the shot missed him. Farther on he met a party who told him "all white people must be killed" and they shot him down despite his pleas. His body was buried at Minnehaha falls but later removed to the ^{then} Layman's Cemetery.

Prescott came to Minn., as an Indian trader in 1819 and shortly after as was the custom bought an Indian wife. Later he became dissatisfied with his financial affairs and deserted his family and went to Texas. While wandering about there he went to a camp-meeting

2 Prescott

and was converted, and his first act of penitence was to return to his family in Minnesota. Contrary to so many cases his conversion and reform lasted and in 1854 we find him a member of a Bible Society. He was also one of the organizers of the State Agricultural Society. The town of Prescott, Wis., was named for him, and the annals of Minneapolis, Stillwater, and other localities show his activity. He built a small mill for grinding at Minnehaha falls and later a much larger one where Tyndale Avenue crosses the creek in ~~Minneapolis~~ Minneapolis. Despite all this he sleeps in an almost unknown grave, and was never honored by the nation he served. He should be given a monument.

A most interesting episode, recorded by Mrs. John^P Williamson, and discovered by Dr. W.W. Folsell, is of great interest in massacre history ~~is~~ as follows:

Agent Galbraith was a political appointee and, as a chief declared about another agent "did not know and Indian from a calf." On the 4th of August the Sioux Indians ^{to the upper agency} several thousand, came down from the plains for their annuity money which was overdue since the latter part of May. They were in desperate need and several died of starvation. Finally they became so desperate that they broke into the warehouse and took ^{some} ~~much~~ of the goods which were stored there and which Galbraith

3 Prescott

was withholding till the annuity came. Capt Timothy Sheehan's Co., finally stopped the raid. But Galbraith was compelled to issue rations to them and also promised to do likewise at the lower, or Redwood Agency, of the lower bands several of whom were present. This he failed to do.

On or about August 14th a council was held at this agency at which Galbraith, ~~Synd~~ traders Synd, Ja Bathe and Myrick were present and many Indians. Galbraith instead of issuing the provisions already stored there was endeavoring to have the traders extend some credit to the Indians pending the coming of their over-due annuities. "These Indian's must have supplies" he pleaded, but the traders said nothing. After he had re-asserted ^{this} several times the ~~traders~~ ^{traders} went aside together and conferred. Coming back they sat down in silence again. "Well, what are you going to do?" Galbraith inquired and after short silence Andrew Myrick rose and said "So far as I am concerned they can eat grass or their own dirt." All was still and tense for a time then Little rose and said in deep feeling "When men get hungry they find a way to get what they want." Prescott knowing the meaning of this remark avoided its interpretation. Galbraith then turned to Williamson a young man who could jabber Indian talk as well ~~and~~ as any of them, who

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Translated what Little Crow had said. In a moment
the council was broken up in yells of derision.

Four days later ^{James} Synd was shot down at his store
door, the first victim, Andrew Myrick was killed and
his mouth stuffed with grass and dirt. Francois
LaBathe was also killed at his store. Before nightfall
more than 200 Corpses answered the defiance
of men who were suffering from hunger and
need. Before the end 413 settlers, 77 enlisted soldiers,
71 Indians were death's harvest. Imprisoned 277 Indians,
some 4000 removed from the state to a wilderness where
great numbers died. Such was the holocaust of the
Massacre by Dakota Indians in 1862

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