

# \*Men stand off Indians with axe handle and stick

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beef remaining after we had eaten breakfast, was loaded into a wagon and taken along. The man with the wagon had a span of bronchos that were goers. I was riding along with him, and he kept right up with the horsemen.

When on the north side of the North Sappa, about two or three miles from the creek and near the line between Decatur and Rawlins counties, when looking back, three Indians were discovered following us. The man immediately wheeled and chased them back to the creek, near the Laing place, on Mud Draw. There they made a stand among some plum brush and grape vines. They opened fire on us, firing at least 20 or 30 shots. We could hear the bullets whistling around us, but we could not locate the Indians.

Finally, a party of about eight or 10, well-mounted men, among whom was Bill Robinson, Jack Brooks, Lew Caley, Sol Rees, Ben Ingalls and others, concluded to charge the brush and route them out. After several attempts, they failed to find the warriors and gave it up.

When charging the Indians, the man driving the span of Bronchos stood up and bracing his feet against the front of the wagon box, 'turned them loose'; he would jump them off banks three or four feet high on the dead run. He said he was going to be in time to see the fun. I had charge of the beef, the commissary department. When in full chase, the meat would bound up from the wagon several feet; it kept me busy at such times to save the beef.

Turning north again, out about a mile and a half, the Indians were seen making north and the chase was renewed. This time several of the men mounted on the fleetest horses and prevented them from getting into the same place as before. They ran them west across the line into Rawlins County and at the creek afterward, taken by Albert Hemming, another fight occurred.

"The man again charged them, killing one and wounding another. The others made their escape for the time. Later, however, a young Indian, about 18 years old, was killed by Arthur Abbot, and another young man, on the Beaver was wounded and was living from the meat on the carcass of an animal that had been killed. He was discovered at the carcass but ran into a slight cavern or crevice in a nearby cliff or rock. Here he made a stand, pointing what later was found to be part of a rib bone, at the boys. He kept off for awhile until one of the men rode around behind the bluff and while the Indian was watching the others, he succeeded in shooting him. I think he was probably one of the two that made their escape on the North Sappa.

"From where the Indian was killed, we came back down the creek, picking up the dead bodies

of Ed Miskelley and the two Laing boys. We captured a mule and the Indian pony in our chase after the Indians. The mule belonged to Mr. Westfall, a brother of the one killed, that the Indians had taken from his place, which is now a part of our ranch and my old homestead. They made their escape by hiding in the timber until the Indians left. The pony and Indian saddle, a bow and sheath, a quiver full of arrows and many other articles belonging to an Indian outfit, were auctioned off to the highest bidder and the money used to reimburse the man who had paid for the beef at Keefer place.

"The incident of the escape of Eddie Race and Elwin Judkins as told to me by them, follows: The boys were on their way from the Judkins' cattle ranch to Oberlin. They were riding into Bridle's place for dinner. Seeing Indians, they thought them a bunch of cowboys in camp, and did not discover their mistake until too late to get away.

Several Indians rode out to meet them, jerked the bridle reins out of their hands and took them into camp on the run. They took the horses, saddles, bridles, blankets and everything of value, even taking their cowboy hats. They were then turned over to the squaws, who threatened their lives by brandishing butcher knives around their heads as if to cut their throats or scalp them, and persecuted them in various ways. Finally old chief Dull Knife took them by their hands and led them down from the creek about 50 yards and said, 'Go east.' They made their way to Keefer's ranch that afternoon and later to Oberlin.

In the vicinity of the Laing place, where Mr. Laing took his homestead, were great numbers of tepee poles that the Indians had at some previous time abandoned. These had been gathered and hauled up to the house, where they were piled up and used for firewood. The sight of these poles seemed to irritate and madden the Indians, who after abusing Mrs. Laing, threw her and the two little girls into the house and piled tepee poles on them, setting them on fire. Mrs. Laing, dazed and suffering from abuse, finally dragged herself and the two little girls out of the house, hiding for a time in the brush along the creek. She finally made her way to the Keefer ranch, arriving about 2 a.m. I have been told that Mrs. Laing became demented from her terrible experience and great loss — husband, three sons and all of their worldly possessions, killed and destroyed in a few hours' time. In the morning, all had been bright and happy; at night fall, all was death and sadness. Their property loss was estimated at \$2,663.56, which was one of the heaviest losses among the settlers. Some of the cattlemen met greater loss, which included seven head of horses, harness, saddles and everything in the house including

\$400 in cash.

This man, Lynch, who held the fort at Keefer's and shot the Indian, had been an old section foreman on the Kansas Pacific Railroad in the days when the Cheyenne Indians were raiding the builders of that line. Indian troubles were not unknown to him.

After the Indian was shot, they held a pow wow about a half mile west of the Keefer place on a claim later occupied by J.J. Jackson, now of Oberlin. Lynch, seeing five loose ponies near them, mounted

his remaining horse and rode out, rounded them up, and drove them back to Keefer's and held them.

At Ferdinand Westfall's place, the Indians came up and (they) gave them food and attempted to treat them kindly. Finally they became arrogant and mean and told them to hitch up the team and leave, which they started to do. But when Mrs. Westfall got in, the Indians killed her husband and son. The mules took fright and ran away with Mrs. Westfall. The Indians, in attempting to stop the mules, shot her with

an arrow in the back, making a very painful, but not dangerous, wound.

They finally caught the mules and cut them from the wagon, instead of unhitching them, leaving Mrs. Westfall to make her escape without further injury.

Bill Robinson was coming down the South Sappa, from his cattle ranch, when he met John Humphrey after he was wounded. He immediately turned and rode back up the valley, spreading the alarm that the Indians were killing the settlers

down below, thus saving a number of families from falling into the hands of the Indians."

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## Mount Pleasant News

By Dianne Bremer

Among those with 4-H entries in the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson were Elizabeth and Hunter Nedland, Hannah and Zach May, and Ryan May with results as follows: Elizabeth - 12th in the State in her age group in Family and Consumer Science judging, Purples - Geology and Lapidary, White - foods; Hunter - Blue on his talk "How to Take Great Photographs", Blue - black and white photography, Purple - foods; Hannah - Purple in foods, Blue - Dog Showmanship/Junior division, Reds - clothing and demo/illustrated talk; Zach - Purple in Dog Intermediate Showmanship, Blues - foods and demo/illustrated talk, White - woodworking; Ryan - Blue in color photography, 4-H Foundation Selection - Color photography, Purple - demo/illustrated talk. Hunter, Hannah, Zach, and Ryan also participated in Family and Consumer Science judging in

their age divisions.

Rhonda May, Dan Nedland, Hunter and Elizabeth attended the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson from Sept. 12 to 14 and were met there by Cameron Nedland and Becky Helm since she was serving on a judging team.

Lester Wurm, Overland Park, was a weekend visitor of his sister, Wilma May, brother, Eugene and Betty Wurm, and other family and friends.

Mike and Nancy Shields, Omaha, Neb., were weekend guests of Gaylor and Shirley Shields. Additional Saturday dinner guests were Paul and Kelly Shields, Tyler, Cassidy, and Caitlin.

Butch and Colleen Rittmann, Christian and Rielly, Shawnee, were weekend guests of Ralph and Norma Unger and also visited with Ryan and Darci Unger, St. Francis.

## Midway News

By MaryLou Olson

Orrin and Beth Holle, Henry and Eli will host a bonfire at 7 p.m. on Saturday for the Herndon Covenant Church congregation and friends. Those attending are asked to bring hot dogs, buns, marshmallows, a side dish, lawn chairs or blankets. Table service will be furnished.

Weekend guests of Mark and Barbara Olson and Mary were Brandon and Sarah White, Leawood, and Kurt Olson, Manhattan. They came to help Mary celebrate her 17th birthday, which was on Wednesday, and Mark, who will be 50 on Sept. 24.

Weekend guests of Frank and Margaret McEvoy were their grandchildren, Ethan and Jordan Beckman, of Grinnell.

Stu Lindell is hospitalized in Kansas City. His wife is the former Barbara Bergling, daughter of Verol and Rosemary Bergling. Mail will reach them at 9517 Chadwick, Overland Park, Kan., 66206.

Orrin and Beth Holle and boys spent the weekend in Wichita attending a Young Farmers and Ranchers meeting. They were accompanied by her mother, Suzanne Wehrman, of Sylvan Grove.