Write to
Maj J. F. Galbraith
Helena Montana
Boulder Valley

Head Quarters Cullen Frontier Guards.
Fort Ridgley Sept 4. 1862

To Maj J. R Brown
Commanding Expedition
to Sioux Agency

Sir

I have the honor to report that on the morning of September 2nd at about half past four o'clock my company consisting of fifty one officers and men constituting a part of your command were aroused by a report of one of the sentinels guns, instantly followed by a most deadly volley of musketry from the enemy. The officers and men with but three exceptions rallied with the coolness and bravery of veterans and immediately formed in position for battle upon their faces under the wagons in front of the encampment, and in less than five minutes from the first alarm returned

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equally as deadly a fire as we received from him. The officers and men all remained in position for battle except when sent on special duty for 33 hours when we were most agreeably reinforced by Cols Sibley & McPhail. To attempt to designate any one of the officers or men for coolness or courage, would be but doing injustice to the balance, for never was there men who fought with more coolness and bravery than those under my command, with the exception to the three above alluded to whose names are as follows, Peter Boyer a half breed who deserted and fled to the enemy in the night carrying his arms with him; and Fred Skulks ~~who deserted and fled for the fort~~, and Martin Nelson who was panic stricken at the commencement of the engagement and remained so through out the whole action. I will further mention that Mr. Grant of Saint Paul and Mr Carruthers of Beaver Creek fought with my

company as independent volunteers with great coolness and bravery. We assisted Mr. Carruthers the evening previous to bury his little son who had been massacred some fifteen days previously by the Indians.

During the battle there was killed in my command Sergeant Robert Baxter and private Jacob Freeman. Those who were wounded are as follows, R Gibbons, Thos Barton & Jas Cunningham dangerously. David Smith John Mattin, A. H. Bunker Geo Dashley Henry Fandle severely but not dangerously. There are three others slightly wounded but reported fit for duty. I received two slight flesh wounds which will disable me for a short time. All of our horses both Cavalry and transportation horses were either killed or so badly wounded as to make them unfit for service. Quite a number of our arms, saddles & camp equipments were rendered useless by the destructive fire of

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the enemy

I am very respectfully
Your obedient servant
Jos Anderson
Cap Co A
Cavalry Regiment

P.S. The men fought throughout the whole engagement without water and provisions except ¼ of a hard cracker to each man and about 1 ounce of raw cabbage to a man, and joked each other freely in regard to their heavy diet

Jas Anderson
Capt.

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Oklahoma City, O. T, Aug. 15th, 1894.

Dr. J. K. Daniels,
Faribault, Minn.

Dear Sir; In writing my father's communication, dated Aug. 9th, 1894, addressed to you, I made the mistake, while listening to his dictation, of writing Mr. Richard Gibbens name as "Richard Givens" where it speaks of his performing the burial service of the dead etc. Will you please do me the favor of correcting the name in both places where I have mis-written it before it is published, and oblige?

My father, since answering your letter, has received other letters from Minnesota pertaining to the same subjects contained in your letter, but owing to feeble health he is unable to answer them in detail, wherefore he would be very glad if you would have his lengthy statement published as it would tend to prove that Major Joseph R. Brown was the actual commanding officer of the reconnoitering party that left Fort Ridgley, August

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31st 1862, for the purpose of finding and burying the dead that were slain by the Indians batwixt Fort Ridgley, Redwood River and Beaver Creek, and about Birch Coulie, in the Massacre of 1862; and that Maj. Brown was also in command at the battle of Birch Coulie as father thinks said publication would tend to stop all further contention on said subjects.

Very respectfully,

Anne C. Anderson

No. 513 Harvey St.

Oklahoma City,

O. T.

Oklahoma City, O. T. Aug. 9th 1894.

Dr. J. W. Daniels,

Faribault, Minnesota.

Dear Comrade and Friend;

Your welcome letter of the 19th inst. has been received and contents carefully considered;

Since old age has over-taken me, it affords me great pleasure to occasionally hear, by letter or otherwise, from my old comrades and friends as it assures me that they are still spared from the final "Muster Out" that will ere long summons all of us to our last earthly roll call.

You ask me to state who was in command of the reconnoitering and burial detachment of troops that left Fort Ridgley, Minnesota, August the 31st, 1862, for to find and bury the dead who had fallen at the Lower Sioux Agency and elsewhere along the route as far northwest

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as Redwood River and Beaver Creek, in the great Sioux Massacre that was then raging, and also to state who was in command at the battle of Birch Coulie, Minnesota.

I will say, that ever since the autumn of 1862 I have been aware that some feeling existed in the mind and breast of Captain now Colonel, H. P. Grant pertainning to the result of that expedition which has kept my voice and pen ~~very still ever since~~ Silent on that subject, and only for two or three statements made in Captain Grant's letter, published July 16th, 1894, in the Pioneer Press of Saint Paul, Minnesota, I would not now consent to become a witness in a controversy of such long standing.

I do not know to whom Colonel Grant alludes as being the "Bold Charger of the Prairies" and the probable author of some communication which the Colonel states was published in the Pioneer Press on June the

4th (which I suppose means the 4th of last June), but I do know that I never heard of said communication until I read of it in Captain Grant's letter above named.

Thanks to you for having sent me the clipping containing it.

I will here do Colonel Grant what I think to be justice by saying that I do not think he meant me, notwithstanding nearly the whole of my life since 1845, when I was nineteen years old, has been spent wandering over the prairies and rivers of the west nearly everywhere betwixt the Republic of Mexico and British North America.

I object to Colonel Grant's statements, or rather insinuations and innuendoes, published in his said letter pertaining to General Sibley having, on the morning of September the 4th, 1862, at Fort Ridgley, Minnesota, or anywhere else, conspired with other members of an Indian Ring, - no doubt meaning

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Major Joseph R. Brown, Lieutenant-Colonel H. J. Cullen and others ~~who were known~~ to be three, — as being too ungenerous and out of the course of true history and soldierly candor toward those gentlemen and pioneers of Minnesota, to go unanswered.

It is impossible that General H. H. Sibley, a man whom even opponents always respected, could have lent himself to conduct so unbecoming an officer and gentleman, and that, too, when there was no great object to be gained by such dastardly falsehood.

I can best answer your inquiries by writing you, briefly, a statement of events as they occurred to me preparatory to and during said expedition and at the battle of Birch Coulie.

I was in command of that brave band of men known as the "Cullen Frontier Guards" and designated on our muster roll as "Company A, First Minnesota Mounted Regiment of

Irregular ~~Volunteer~~ Militia."

I remember well that the word "irregular" was, at that time, inserted to distinguish the temporary militia organizations then made for temporary use in the suppression of the Sioux raid and massacre, from the regularly organized state militia. I still have our muster roll and my commissions as first lieutenant and captain of said company, and am drawing my pension for the gunshot wounds that I received at Birch Coulie, and from which wounds yourself and Dr. H. J. Seigneuret, of Henderson, Minnesota, extracted two Indian bullets, one from the upper part of my left arm and the other from my left foot soon after General Sibley relieved us from the position the Indians had us surrounded in.

In answer to the remarks made in Colonel Grant's said letter pertaining to Major Brown's not being even a militia man, it

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will be observed that General Sibley was then a Colonel appointed by Governor Ramsey and placed in absolute and unconditional command of all of Minnesota's frontier forces sent out to suppress said Sioux Raid and Massacre, and with the power to organize forces for said purpose, and that he may have and probably did temporarily appoint Major Brown to the position he held on account of the Major having been for a long time United States Agent for some bands of the Sioux Indians and because of his great knowledge of Indian character and the country we were then in.

I will now proceed to further answer the question you ask me by continuing to give a statement of facts.

Late in the afternoon of the 30th, or early in the morning of the 31st, days of August, 1862, I was directed by an orderly to report, without delay, at Colonel Sibley's headquarters; which order I promptly obeyed and was ordered by Colonel Sibley to immediately put my company in condition to march as part of a detachment that would be commanded by Major Joseph R. Brown, to whom I was to report early in the forenoon of August the 31st, 1862, fully equipped with such ammunition, rations, etc, as I could procure at said post and outside encampment. I saluted and withdrew; and reported said matter to Sam McPhail, Colonel of said irregular militia regiment who directed me to obey said order promptly, which I proceeded to do by directing my subordinate officers to assist me in getting ready for said march. I reported my company in marching condition to Major Brown at the appointed time and was directed by him to await his further orders, which I received about two hours later when the whole detachment started in the direction of the Redwood Agency. When we had

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advanced about four miles we halted at the farm house where a doctor and several others had been killed; there the duty of finding and burying the dead was commenced with energy. We perseverd in the performance of our solemn duties along the route, on both sides of the road, until we were within less than a mile of the mouth of Birch Coulie, when Major Joseph R. Brown very pleasantly ordered me to accompany him to the top of the high bluff, that was immediately on our right, for the purpose of finding a safe place for the command to camp for the night.

I left my company in charge of my lieutenants and accompanied him. We proceeded along the brow of said bluff until we thought that to go any further would expose the encampment to the enemy's fire from Birch Coulie, in the event of an attack.

We selected a safe, pretty place and then

advanced to where the Major knew of a trail or wagon way that led down to Birch Creek, at the mouth of Birch Coulie, north or north-westward of a log house.

By the time we had fairly reached there the advance guard also reached there, when I directed the men to water their horses in the creek, and for some of them to return to where the wagons were and to bring up all of the buckets and kettles belonging to our company to be filled with water to be carried to our selected camp-ground, and for the further purpose of directing all of the troopers and teamsters to water their horses in the creek before ascending the hill. My order was partly obeyed when I noticed that Major Brown had left me and gone to the main command, which had halted or turned into a field some distance in front of said log house and immediately below the high bluff just described. I sent a sergeant and three or four

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other men as quickly as possible to ascertain what the movement meant.

In due time I received the answer that the command would camp there for the night. The thought to me was terrible as, in that position, a hundred Indians, armed as they then were, could have shot the life out of every one of us from the top of said bluff; from said log house near the creek; the tall grass and rail fence along the south-west line of said field; and the thick woods just east or south east of said field; unless we could have charged them straight up the bluff, for we never could have escaped in any other direction on account of the sale cover the Indians would have had and the exposed routes that we would have been compelled to have gone. I returned in company with the men to the camp when I assure you I felt more alarmed than I ever did at any other time or place since I reached

my manhood.

That night Major Joseph R. Brown and Major Galbraith were my invited guests and took supper with me, and slept in my tent; and complimented my boys the next morning very highly at breakfast on our ability to entertain, at the same time very well knowing that the abandoned farms and farm houses had been drawn upon by our commissary sergeant for the luxuries and excellent vegetables we were enjoying.

That night I was detailed for officer of the day and an excellent lieutenant from Captain Grant's company was detailed as officer of the guard. Neither of us slept a moment that night, but constantly kept on the move for the purpose of seeing that every sentinel was awake and on the alert, and for the further purpose of discovering, at the earliest moment, anything that would indicate the approach of an enemy.

At early dawn the whole command was aroused and preparation was made, as early

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as possible, for the duties of the day.
The first duty attended to was the burying of the dead that lay in the vicinity of said log house, after which we divided, part proceeding under the command of Captain Grant up the north east side of the Minnesota River, while Major Brown myself and the rest of the command went directly to the ferry on the road leading to the Redwood Agency where the remains of many of Captain March's men and some citizens, who had been killed thereabouts, were found lying along the road and in the tall grass and bushes. While the dead were being interred by the burial party two or three infantry men, if my memory serves me correctly, were directed to swim across the river to the ferry-boat, and we cavalrymen forded the river which was about swimming deep for the small horses. Good old Major Brown took off his shoes and socks to keep them from getting wet and carried them, as best he could, across the river while he was perched upon the back of his good sized gray horse in crossing. The ferry boat was bailed out and sent across to convey over

the teams and remaining infantrymen, to where we cavalrymen were waiting for them, as soon as all the dead on the north side were buried.
When the command was all safely over and the skirmishers that had been sent out had reported all safe in front, we advanced up the hill to the agency, or rather to where it had stood as it was then all in ruins.
The men persevered in the performance of their duties until they became weary and hungry, when I ordered the horsemen and teamsters to feed all their animals all they needed from a field of sheaf oats that were standing in shock in the direction of Little Crow's village.
After a great many people had been buried and the men had refreshed themselves and the animals, Major Brown ordered me to accompany him up the road in a north-westerly or

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westerly direction which I did as soon as I had given my lieutenant proper orders and instructions pertaining to further duties and to his bringing the command on in the direction that he saw the Major and myself departing in.

When we had advanced some distance we crossed a little run-let that flowed in the direction of the river, after which we advanced to the top of a slight elevation or ridge that over looked Little Crow's village.

The Major halted and used his field glasses and said that everything indicated that the information we had received pertaining to the Indians having all removed to Yellow Medicine was true, and he directed me to proceed and count all of the lodge or tipee foundations on the east side of the road as far as they extended up to and beyond Little Crow's house, while he would count all that were west of the road. Having been in

the cattle business a great many years and accustomed to counting objects on the move, I put my noble horse, which was the property of Hon. James Smith, Jr. of Saint Paul and loaned to me for use during the emergency, into a sharp run and very soon accomplished the duty, when I noticed that the Major was moving carefully, but not half as rapidly as I had. At Crow's village I found hundreds of hoop skirts and many other articles of female apparel that the white women and little girls had been compelled by their savage and brutal captors to abandon. After looking around two or three minutes I went to the burial ground where I found several newly made graves. I then returned to where I could see just what the Major was doing. He finally finished counting and moved on in a westerly direction to the top of an elevation where he stopped and again commenced making observations through his field glasses for a very short time, after which he turned his

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horse and started toward me. Tying my horse I went into Crow's house, — where a cooking stove stood intact for use, — and picked up a small purse which I still have as a trophy.

I went up stairs but saw nothing worth mentioning. On returning to the yard I gave vent to my indignant feelings by carrying into Crow's house and the adjoining buildings two or three armfuls of dry grass and other rubbish, when the Major arrived and asked me what I was doing.

I answered him as calmly and respectfully as I could, under my then agitated feelings, that "I was going to burn that d — d Indian's house." The Major kindly but firmly ordered me to stop acting so foolish, saying that that house and all other Indian property would be confiscated, and that it was as much my duty to protect it from destruction as it was to protect any other government property.

Instantly seeing the Major was right I

answered him to that effect. He ordered me to mount and accompany him.

We started back in an easterly direction, not exactly parallel with but about forming a V upon the route we had just come over.

After we had returned somewhere from thirty to forty rods we could plainly see the advance guard of our little command following on up the course we had come over, when my company trumpeter, seeing us, reined his horse toward the Major and myself and approached us rapidly, while we awaited his arrival. He asked which way we wished to have the command move. The Major directed me to have the the trumpeter gallop back to the command and have it change its course and follow us rapidly, after which we silently rode on together, passing two nice Indian farms with brick houses.

We finally came to the brow of a beautiful bluff where a dim road extended down the hill.

We halted until the teams and most of the

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men had arrived when the Major again directed me to accompany him, which I did after giving orders to my lieutenant to have the men all get out of the wagons and help hold them steady and back, while going down that very steep bluff. I then ordered a few men on horseback to accompany the Major and myself.

We arrived at the foot of the bluff several minutes before the wagons could be safely gotten down.

The Major ordered me to take a man or two and go up the river along a path or dim road leading in that direction in search of a ford, while he would look for one down the river; the other men, who had come with us, were, in the meantime, refreshing themselves on the most delicious wild plums which were there in abundance.

A recklessly brave young fellow by the name of George Brown volunteered to accompany me and we galloped away until we found a good ford, about half a mile distant, that was marked with a great many fresh horse-tracks

that did not look to be much over a day old.

We crossed the river, which was only about hub deep, and examined the opposite bank and approach, when we again saw dozens of different sized horse-tracks, some showing the mark of horse-shoes. We crossed back and started bravely to make our report, but seeing thousands of fresh, ripe plums and being somewhat hungry, we could not resist the temptation of stopping a few minutes and refreshing ourselves upon some of Minnesotas delicious wild fruit, after which we galloped rapidly back to where we had left the Major, and found him and the whole of our part of the command safely assembled. The Major asked us what luck we had had. We reported very favorably and he said we had done better than he had as he had ridden a long distance without finding any place where we could cross the river.

He then said that we were evidently in a very dangerous place and that he wished me to

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personally take command of the rear guard while he would command the front and that the lieutenant should see that the wagons moved along rapidly, all of which was done very promptly and a safe crossing of the river was made.

The Major then had the teams carrying the infantry move along very rapidly for about a mile, out through the Minnesota valley land, until he reached the route that Captain Grant had just gone over. I was a little more deliberate and could not resist the temptation of having part of the rear guard gather up about thirty head of fat cattle that we found feeding in some fields of corn and sheafoots.

When we arrived where the Major was waiting for us he told me that he had found it necessary to place one of the men under arrest and to disarm him on account of his having fired or let his gun go off; and that he wanted me to continue in charge of the rear guard while he with a few men, would dash ahead until he could see

that Captain Grant was carrying out the orders he had given him in the morning.

I ordered the teams to move on and up the hill as fast as they could without injuring the animals, and in course of half an hour or possibly longer, we arrived at the brow of a bluff that bordered the valleys of both the Minnesota River and Beaver Creek where we found the Earl boys, whose brother was lying dead not far from there, - Richard ~~Gowitz~~ Gibbens, and some other members of my company and Mr. Henderson, - a refugee citizen who had his wounded arm in a sling on account of gunshot wounds received in the massacre and whose wife had been killed near there — and David Carruthers, another refugee citizen whose little boy had also been massacred three.

~~Gibbens~~ Gibbens was holding prayer over the graves of some of the dead who were just being buried.

About that time Major Brown came riding back to us and told me that Grant was well

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over toward the head of Birch Coulie some two or three miles distant, and as it was getting late he wanted to go over as quickly as possible for the purpose of seeing what kind of an encampment Grant would make for the night, and that he wanted me to send a lieutenant and a few of the men with him, and directed me to remain in command of the rear until all of the dead that could be found thereabouts were buried, and then to bring the rear guard on over to the encampment.

I told the Major his order should be faithfully obeyed, but that I would like to send our captured cattle on with him, and to have the privilege of accompanying him up to the top of the slope so that I could see and know just where to find the encampment, providing we should be detained until night would overtake us.

My request was granted and I took one or two extra men with me in order that they should also see what direction the head of the command or encampment

was in. We soon reached the summit when the Major and his party went on and I returned, with the extra men I had taken with me, to where Dr. ~~Givens~~ Gibbens was still engaged in the performance of his solemn duties.

Mrs. Henderson,— whom the savages had killed on account of her being sick and tried to burn by throwing her on a filled tick and setting fire to it,— and the rest of the dead were soon buried, when I had the rear guard and men of the burial party and the citizens furnished with riding accommodations, either on horse-back or in the wagons. We then moved rapidly forward until we reached the encampment just as the sun was setting.

On arriving there we cavalrymen rode around to the cavalry's encampment, which was on the east side and next to Birch Coulie and the timber. I hesitated, for possibly a minute, to order the men to dismount when Lieutenant Turnbull, who had been in camp for some time, came toward us and joyously called

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out for us to alight. I answered saying to him that this was a beautiful place but another very dangerous encampment. He laughed and said for us all to get off and that after having been to grub, or words like those, we would all feel a great deal better. We took his counsel and soon had our horses tied and our faces and hands washed and were ready for supper, when I sent word over to Major Joseph R. Brown that our duties had been performed as directed and that we would be pleased to have him and Major Galbraith come over and take supper and spend the night with us. Major Galbraith came but Major Brown sent his compliments and answer that he had agreed to spend that night with Captain Grant, so I did not see the Major again to converse with him until several months after the battle of Birch Coulie, and I certainly did not see Captain Grant or make any report to him that night, as stated by him,

for the reason that it never entered my mind for a moment that he had command of the united or whole detachment when Major Brown was present.

I hope that all who may read this lengthy statement will notice carefully how many times I received orders from Major Brown and how faithfully I executed them, (except when I stopped to refresh myself on Minnesota plums) knowing it to be my duty to do so.

I will now state what I have always known to be true; that if Major Joseph R. Brown was not in command at the Battle of Birch Coulie no other one officer was, for I never received an order that I have any recollection of at any time during the whole of said campaign, from Saint Paul, Minnesota, to Birch Coulie, Minnesota, from Captain Grant or any other officer excepting, first; from Captain W. J. Cullen, second; from Colonel H. H. Sibley, third; from Colonel

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Sam. McPhail, and Fourth; from Major Joseph R. Brown. If Colonel Grant continues to insist that he was in command of said reconnoitering party and at the battle of Birch Coulie, would it not be proper for him to explain why he allowed me to turn over to him on the morning of September the 1st, 1862, at our encampment near said log house, a lieutenant and about twenty of my cavalry men, all mounted and equipped ready for duty during said day, and then allowed me and the remainder of my company and about twenty or twenty five infantry men to wander off, without orders from him, and to go where we pleased, even up to within one or two miles, at farthest, of where from three hundred and fifty to five hundred of hostile Sioux Indians were encamped, resting themselves or on their way to sack and burn the town of New Ulm and whose scouts discovered us just about

the time we were recrossing the Minnesota River, or just about the time we struck Captain Grant's trail and were trying to overtake him before he would go into camp for the night, — as such conduct on his part and mine, too, would have been inexcusable and should have been followed with the punishment it would have deserved, but thanks to obedience and fidelity to orders such was not the case, for myself and the men who went with me were ordered to do as we did on the morning of September the 1st, 1862, by Major Joseph R. Brown, the commander of said expedition, and from whom we continued to receive orders during the whole of said day. My duty as officer of the day expired on September the 1st, 1862, consequently I was free to take a rest that night and was determined to have one regardless of the situation. Soon after dark I sent for Corporal Dunn of my company, with whom I was in the habit

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& joking freely, and said to him that if he ever had been asleep during the twelve or thirteen days we had been out I did not know when it was, and that I did not think any other man knew when it was, and I told him that I was very tired and must have rest and sleep and that I wanted to leave him in charge of the position so far as I was personally concerned. He laughed and said all Right.

I then gave him the reasons why I thought our encampment was a very dangerous one, and told him that if he heard any unusual sounds or disturbances before morning to come to my tent and quietly untie the door and find me by striking a match or otherwise, and to quietly wake me up without disturbing the camp even if he had to pull me out by my feet.

He promised me that he would and he faithfully kept his word for just before the dawn of day he woke me up by pulling at my feet and

saying "Get up, Cap, the camp is surrounded by Indians." I asked him what made him think so when he answered saying that the cattle we had brought up with us were up and on the move, and that the horses were holding up their heads and looking toward the prairie in every direction, and that some of them were snorting. I said to him that that did sound as if Indians were approaching and told him to go and quietly wake up the men of our company, which he started to do, when just then one of the sentinels fired and they all ran in. The sentinel's fire was followed by a heavy volley from the enemy that riddled our tents and killed and wounded several of our men.

Grabbing my sabre and revolver, and with my head and feet bare, I sprang out of the tent on to my hands and knees, and at the top of my voice, that was then very strong, called out to the men to keep low and to grab

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their arms and make their way to the front line of our encampment, and to hold the Indians back and not let them enter the camp. The men obeyed with a promptness that would have been creditable to veterans who had been under fire a score of times.

Just then our sentinels began to reach camp and commenced taking shelter behind the wagons and horses. In less than two minutes from the time we were fired upon I had reached the front line where I found brave, old, private Connelly, an Irishman whose beard was white from age and who was so badly ruptured that he could not ride a horse and had to fill the place of a teamster, with his musket in his hands. He was taking shelter behind a horse that was already shot down, but still kicking. I told him to level his gun across the horse and fire, when he quizzingly, in good old Irish style, asked me "what he should fire at when he couldn't see anything at all, at all."

I told him it would let the Indians know we were ready for them and would help to keep them out of camp. He coolly and deliberately fired, when just then brave Johnny Hooper, who had been book-keeper at the good old Winslow Hotel in Saint Paul, came running on all fours and took position about four or five feet to my right and leveled his gun and fired.

It was still dark but I strained my sight both to my right and to my left and discovered as far as I could see in the dark that the line in both directions was being rapidly filled by the brave boys I had the honor to command.

I knew then that the Indians could not run in upon us. It surely did not take more than three or four minutes for the company to rally from soundly slumbering militiamen to fighting heroes, who continued to do their duty without water, food or rest, as you well know, from that time on until noon of the following day when we were relieved by

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Colonel Sibley and his command coming to our rescue.

During the whole of said engagement I did not receive an order from any superior officer but I will say that about noon of the first day of the engagement Captain Grant did generously extend his right line under the command of that princely soldier, Lieutenant Harry Gilham, around north-east to where it came in touch with my extreme north-west line.

I think this statement, if carefully considered will show beyond a reasonable doubt that Major Joseph R. Brown was the rightful and only commander of that reconnoitering expedition and of the battle of Birch Coulie, and I also believe that Major Brown's authority should not be questioned at this late day, as I know positively from Colonel Sibley's own words, spoken to me on the morning that he ordered me to proceed from Saint Peter to New Ulm in charge of a detachment, that he had appointed

Sam McPhail, Colonel of one of the new militia regiments that was just then being organized out of some of the many militia companies that were then springing into existence under the commands of Captains St. Julien Cox, Todd (who was killed at New Ulm), and some of the men from about Mankato and the Southwest side of the Minnesota River, all of whom were then at New Ulm under the command of Colonel Flandreau, or from the companies commanded by Captains M. J. Cullen, Anse Northrup, Dyke, Oscar Taylor of Saint Cloud, Whitcomb of Main Prairie, and others who were organizing and heading for the frontier; and that he had appointed Captain M. J. Cullen Lieutenant Colonel of said regiment and that he had appointed me to a captaincy in Captain Cullen's place, when I begged him to let me remain as a lieutenant until the men could have a chance to see and know more of me when, if elected

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by them, I would accept the position, and he generously granted my request and I remained a first lieutenant until after we returned from New Ulm to Saint Peter and went from there to Fort Ridgley, when the company was more thoroughly organized by the men electing me captain and Jasper Brown first lieutenant in my place, and then proceeding to fill, by election, all vacancies among our non-commissioned officers, occasioned by some having left.

While I do not know positively yet I have every reason to believe that Colonel Sibley did, two or three days thereafter, at Fort Ridgley, Minnesota, appoint Joseph R. Brown Major of said regiment, which clearly accounts for Major Brown's having signed himself as Major of the Third Minnesota Militia Regiment as said regiment actually would have been Minnesota's Third Militia Regiment only that it was concluded about that time more

proper to designate it as Minnesota's First Irregular Mounted Militia Regiment; and in support of this theory I will say that I remember well that my orderly sergeant, H.S. Atchley (who received a leave of absence and went home to Saint Paul before we started on said reconnoitering expedition of August the 31st, 1862,) came to me in great haste very early one morning at Fort Ridgley and informed me that he had just learned at head-quarters that our regiment was to be known as Minnesota's First Irregular Mounted Militia Regiment and that he wanted to have our morning report made up and signed as "Company A" of such regiment, and to get it approved and accepted as soon as possible, as Captain Northrup's and Captain Dyke's companies were there and he wanted to get our report in ahead of theirs; and we hustled lively and won the position.

I do not think that Governor Ramsey,

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Colonel Sibley, Colonel St. J. Cullen, Colonel Sam McPhail and Major Joseph R. Brown, who gave authority and life to that whole expedition, should, at this late day, be accused of having been Indian Ring tricksters, either directly or indirectly.

Personally I have always been satisfied with the consideration bestowed by my superior officers, the public press of Minnesota and the historians of that time upon me and the brave men I had the honor to then command, but since I have become old and feeble I would be glad, on account of the information and pleasure it would afford my children and my personal friends and their children to have the fact recorded that I actually was the first white man who entered, as an armed enemy, the villa and home of the Sioux leader, "Little Crow"; after the commencement of hostilities in that unprovoked and merciless massacre perpetrated by said savages; and I would furthermore,

in view of my feeble health, be glad to furnish to the press a few recollections of my brave comrades of that expedition.

I will first say that I believe that Major Brown Captain Grant and every other officer present at the Birch Coulie engagement, including yourself, Lieutenant Swan of the Third Minnesota Volunteer Regiment and Major Galbraith, the Sioux Agent, who did not have commands of your own, did their full duty that day, and of the enlisted and enrolled men I will say that their acts of bravery could not have been surpassed.

I will name a few of them whom I remember as having been very conspicuously brave;

Sergeant Robert Baxter.
Sergeant John Hooper.
Sergeant I. S. Elliott.
Corporal A. B. Dunn.
Corporal Joseph Coursole.
Corporal F. C. Griswold.

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Bugler D. M. Smith.
Farrier Thomas Barton.
Private George H. Brown.
" Peter Burkman.
" James Cunningham.
" Edward Connelly.
" George Dashney.
" James Egan
" E. H. Earle
" C. A. Earle,
" Jacob Freeman,
" John Galbraith.
" Richard Gibbins.
" H. L. Hart.
" Charles Holms,

and I will further say that nearly all the balance of the men were equally brave with their above named comrades, but on account of my limited acquaintance with them and my advanced age I cannot remember their individual acts of gallantry.

Of citizens J. H. DeCamp, William H. Grant and David Carruthers, I will say their acts of valor could not have been surpassed; and of some of Captain Grant's men I could mention many acts that I saw them perform that their children and children's children would be proud to rehearse in the years to come, but I think that their acts of valor should be left for their Captain and Lieutenants to report.

Providing this communication is published, I sincerely hope the reading public will notice a few prominent facts: First, That the cavalry encampment was on the side next to Birch Coulie, a deep ravine filled with a beautiful growth of tall timber and supplied with good water, which made it the strongest and best sheltered point from which the enemy could and did pour his deadly fire into our camp from the first to the last of that memorable engagement.

Second; That Jacob Freeman who was impre-

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dently brave and would persist in exposing himself to the enemy's fire, was the only cavalry man killed after we reached the front line of our encampment, which really constituted our line of battle, and that the severe wounds that some of the boys received might have been escaped could those brave fellows have been persuaded to have sheltered themselves a little closer than they did, but their great anxiety to get good and full shots at our enemies too often stimulated them to unnecessarily expose themselves.

At one time I was compelled to scold and threaten to tie down, a beardless but well educated young man, whom I fairly loved from first sight, on account of the tears that ran down his youthful cheeks and the affectionate words he used while speaking of his mother on the morning of the 31st of August when we were preparing to start on that dangerous reconnoissance, in order to keep him from unnecessardy sacrificing his young and promising life.

He was subsequently an officer in the Union Army and has been a member of the Minnesota legislature.

I also had to scold Private Dashney for his imprudence, but when I was not watching him he sprang to his feet and fired at an Indian that showed himself, and unfortunately received in return a ball through his own thigh, but he did not leave the line, and under direct orders fired about the last shot from our line at an Indian who showed himself on horseback away over in a south-westerly direction, and either wounded or scared the brave buck so badly that he dropped off and behind his horse.

Corporal Frank Griswold, now Captain Griswold of Minneapolis, also had to be scolded on account of exposing himself unnecessarily nearly every time he wanted to get a good shot, and you no doubt remember well that from nine o'clock in the morning of the first day until the close of the engagement on the second day jokes passed as freely among us every time.

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the enemy's lead caused any dodging to be done among us, as are common to be heard during the excitement of a good foot race or a game of ball.

I think our miraculous escape from greater harm was due to a great extent to the three whole nights of skirmish drilling and careful watching we had among ourselves while en route; one betwixt Saint Peter and New Ulm, caused by Major Flandreau's retreating or exoding multitude from New Ulm discharging guns within our hearing; another while on our march from Saint Peter to Fort Ridgley at Swan Lake where we were surrounded by a lot of Indian scouts, the approach of which we were lucky enough to discover; and the third and last at Fort Ridgley where we were ordered out by Colonel Sam McPhaid and had to lie in the grass all night on account of some sort of an alarm that we never did fully understand; but thanks to obedience to orders we finally received the benefits of the sharp discipline

then imposed upon us.

Please find enclosed herewith a true copy of my official report made to Major Joseph R. Brown the next day after our return to Fort Ridgley, and which was made without my having consulted with any person other than the man who was Johnny Hooper or some other member of my company, who wrote it at my dictation in a room upstairs in Dr. Muller's house where I was lying wounded.

I am feeble from a paralysis of my left side and limbs which may prevent me from being present on the 2nd day of September, next, at the dedication of the Birch Coulie monument notwithstanding my long hoped for pleasure of being at a re-union with my old comrades of that campaign.

Sincerely hoping that this article will be received by you as a satisfactory answer to the inquiries made in your letter and that, if published, it will assist in settling forever

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the contention of who was the commander of said expedition and battle, I remain,

Your friend and comrade,

Joseph Anderson,

No. 513 Harvey St.,

Oklahoma City,

O. T.

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