

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Chapter #4 INDIAN TROUBLE

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Before going further with the development of Calliope and Sioux County, I think we need to turn back the pages to the 1860's when Sioux County was still inhabited by only trappers, the four men who settled the county, and of course American Indians.

The four settlers of Sioux County were well aware of the original inhabitants of this land they laid claim to. The log cabin courthouse they built was constructed as a protection from Indian attacks as referenced by mention of portholes that had been drilled through the walls. Rumors of the Spirit Lake Massacre which took place around Okoboji in the winter of 1857 had reached Sioux County.

The year of 1862, as peaceful as it began, did make the history books with stories of war and rumors of Indian uprisings.

The stories tell us that a 60 year old Sioux Chief named Little Crow was living with his people on a reservation in Minnesota. Little Crow had signed a treaty that caused his band of tribesmen to give up a large portion of their land in Minnesota in exchange for money, food and supposedly peace. As with most treaties in those days, the money was slow in coming. The previous two years had produced much bad weather and poor crops. The Indians were out of food and starving and money from Washington had not arrived. In August of 1862 (*Calliope by Ken Hansen*) Little Crow and other Chiefs went to the Indian agent and begged for food for their people. The agent refused, even though the government warehouse was full. The Indians returned 500 strong and broke into the warehouse taking what they needed to survive. The Army officer in charge at the time of the raid sympathized with the Indians and convinced the agent to let the group have their supplies until the money came from Washington. The Indians quickly left with their goods without violence. Everyone left but Little Crow who refused to go until he was assured that his tribe at the lower agency would also have food. Again, the promises were not kept and Little Crow was forced to beg for food.

The situation was not over. Later that same month, some young braves stole some eggs from a farmer, and on a dare by their comrades, ended up killing the farmer and four other people. Little Crow knew what the outcome would be. Rather than wait for the inevitable, Little Crow led his people in war against the whites and started the Minnesota Massacre or Little Crow's War. The Sioux cut a wide and bloody path. Hardly any settlements were spared attack. Survivors quickly fled their new homes, leaving some settlements empty for several years.

It is not sure whether the Sioux traveled through Sioux County in their retreat to the Dakota Territory from Minnesota. The word of the battles traveled faster than the Indians themselves. Calliope was quickly deserted. It is thought that the news of the fighting was delivered to Calliope by the settlers who fled from Sioux Falls, after the Sioux attacked there.

Even though most of the Indians were captured, the remaining free Indians kept things unstable in the area. Hardly any white man ventured into Sioux or any of the adjoining counties for quite some time.

Calliope remained deserted until sometime in 1864. County business was conducted in Sioux City. No small matter like an Indian war could keep the officers of Sioux County from doing their duties and especially collecting their pay. When they did venture back to Sioux County, the log courthouse they had built was still

standing much to their surprise. Had it not been destroyed by the Indians, they had expected it to be burned by the many prairie fires that started up almost every year in the fall.

Whatever time the officers spent in Sioux County before the Sioux uprising, it is believed that they spent even less time there afterward.

While the original organizers of the county continued to spend their time in the safety of Sioux City, reports of new settlers braving the dangers to make the Calliope area their home began to appear,

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