

The Battle of Massacre Canyon
The Unfortunate Ending of the
Last Buffalo Hunt of the Pawnees

An Account of the Last Battle by Indians

By J. W. Williamson



The Golden Rod Hi-Way Crosses the Canyon

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J. W. WILLIAMSON

Genoa, Nebraska

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A score or more of times I have been requested to write my personal recollections and experiences with the Pawnees on their last buffalo hunt, which ended in a battle with their old enemy, the Sioux.

So many stories have been written, all claiming to be authentic, that I have hesitated to pen for publication a true account of the battle which ended so disastrously for the Pawnees, knowing that it will differ, in many respects, from accounts which have been published heretofore.

In the spring of 1873, the Pawnees at the Genoa agency numbered 2,460. Of this number 600 were fighting men, or warriors. I had come to the agency three years previous and was working for the government at the time the Pawnees left on their last buffalo hunt. At that time buffalo were feeding in the valleys of the Platte, Loup, Niobrara and Republican rivers and their tributaries. The nearest buffalo to Genoa were as far west as Plum Creek Station (now Lexington,) and a place consisting of a few house where Arapahoe now stands.

It was the custom of the Pawnees to hunt buffalo twice a year. The summer hunt was for meat, tent material and moccasin leather, and the winter hunt was for meat and robes. The government, in order to avoid clashes between the Pawnees and Sioux, had divided the

hunting grounds. The Sioux were confined to that part of the country north of the Niobrara river, and the Pawnees to the country south of the Niobrara to the Kansas line.

Named Trail Agents.

To keep the Indians confined to the territory assigned them and to prevent them from molesting the homesteaders, who were pouring into the state and filing on land, trail agents were appointed to accompany the Indians.

In May, 1873, the Pawnees held a council meeting and decided to leave the agency on the summer hunt in July. Major Burgess, a Quaker, was agent at Genoa, and thru him the Indians made their request for permission to hunt, and also for the appointment of a trail agent to accompany them. Texas Jack (John Omahander) had acted as trail agent the previous year and made application for reappointment. George Clothier, of Columbus, also applied for the position. I did not apply for the place and was surprised when one of the chiefs came to me and informed me that they had decided to request the government to appoint me to accompany them.

The Pawnees were made up of four different bands: The Skeedes, the Kitkahas, the Chowees, and the Petahowerats. Each band had its head and sub chiefs, but Petah La Shauró was the supreme head of the Pawnee nation, and, if I am not

mistaken, was the last chief to have that distinction, the position ending with the death of this noted Indian, who had always been friendly with white people. It was the custom to allow each band to send an equal number on the buffalo hunts.

A few days before starting a young man by the name of Platt, who was visiting his uncle, an Indian trader near Genoa, came to me and asked to go along and of course I had no objection as he would be company for me. He was about my age and a fine fellow although not accustomed to western life and rather what we called a tenderfoot.

Start of the Hunt.

On the second day of July, 1873, the Pawnees, to the number of 700 left Genoa for the hunting grounds. Of this number 350 were men, the balance women and children. Most of the men were armed with bows and arrows, old fashioned muzzle loading rifles; a few had seven shot Spencer carbines, and some carried Colt's powder and ball revolvers. All were mounted, and in addition took with them 800 extra ponies to pack home the meats and hides.

Two hours before we started for the hunting grounds, Chief Petah La Shauro sent for me. As I entered the council hall the old man extended his hand and addressed me in his language, which was interpreted for me, altho I understood Pawnee to some extent and

later could speak the language fluently. In substance the chief said: "You are a young man. You have never hunted buffalo. I have instructed my people to take good care of you, and obey you. I want you to feel at home on this trip. You will be the guest of my son, "Sun Chief."

A Splendid Specimen.

The chief was about 60 years old at the time, a magnificent specimen of physical manhood for his years. I consider him, intellectually, the greatest Indian I ever met. Had he been an educated white man he would have taken his place as a leader in state and national affairs. He was kind, considerate, sympathetic, but firm and just in his position as head of the tribe. *Start*

Their way of traveling was on horseback, with extra horses to pack what they needed while on the hunt and to carry back the meat and hides to the reservation. An average of 10 to 15 miles a day was all they could cover. They would get up at break of day and be on their way to the next camping place by the time it was daylight without taking time to get anything to eat.

When a good camping place was located the squaws would do all the work, and the men would hunt and lie around the balance of the time. The men were the first to eat, the squaws and children got whatever was left, and often there would be very little left.



SKY CHIEF
Who was killed by the Sioux at Massacre Canyon

At that time the county of Nance was their reservation and Genca was the seat of the Pawnee Agency

We started on our journey by crossing the Loup river two and one half miles south of the Agency and camped on Prairie creek about five miles from Silver Creek, went to the Platte river and followed up as far as Grand Island. We crossed the river near here and followed up on the south side to near where Lowell now stands. There we had our first excitement. I went to the town to get a square meal and some of the Indians went along. At that time a bunch of cowboys were in town for what they called a good time, drinking and shooting. I was standing in front of the hotel watching the excitement when I saw a cowboy ride out in the street and grab the rope from an Indian who was leading his pony. He jerked it away from the Indian and started across the prairie with the pony. I got on my horse and took after him and when I overtook him I rode between him and the pony, cut the rope and took the pony back to the Indian and told him to go down to the camp and tell the chiefs to send some of his men up for I could see that there was going to be a rough time as the cowboys were riding up and down the street shooting and raising Ned in general. I remember of them scaring a fourhorse immigrant team so that they got into such a mix-up that the wagon was upset

and the women and children were spilled out. It was not long before about 150 of the Pawnee warriors came riding into town and the handful of cowboys must have seen them for in a short time there was not a cowboy to be seen anywhere.

There might be someone yet living there who remember how the cowboys used to shoot up and down the streets and raise Cain in general.

The next day we moved on up the Platte to Plum Creek station, now Lexington, and from there crossed to the Republican river.

The first buffalo that we saw and got was about 5 to 8 miles from Plum Creek station. It was on a Sunday afternoon and the scouts located a lone buffalo bull that had been evidently driven out of a herd by the younger bulls. He was in a small canyon and the Indians lined up on each side of the canyon and shot their arrows into him until he looked like a porcupine. He was finally put out of his misery and died from loss of blood. After cutting him open the men would take their knives and cut off a piece of liver and sop it in the blood and eat it raw. That was considered to be a brave act. They dared me to do the same. I did not intend to be outdone by them and looked upon as a coward, so I did likewise. They were surely a happy people after having killed a buffalo.

The country was not settled between Plum Creek station and Arapahoe. The only habitation was a sod house on the divide. As soon as the Indians saw it, some of the young men made for it. The first thing I knew was that the young devils were riding around the sod house as fast as their ponies could carry them. I started for the place, and I found a young woman standing in the door almost scared to death. Some of the Indians were grinding their knives on a sandstone and others were riding around the house. I made them stop and they went away. The woman was alone, her husband had gone somewhere. She told me they came and begged for some thing to eat, and on being refused, grew angry and began to tantalize her in that way. She surely was glad when they went away. I assured her that they would not bother her any more. I often have wondered what would have happened had they been without anyone to keep them from molesting anyone.

We then went on to the Republican river and crossed the same at a place called Burton's Bend and headed for Beaver creek.

Before we reached the Beaver, signs indicated that buffalo had been in that vicinity recently, and scouts were thrown out, a suitable location for a camp selected and preparations made for the anticipated slaughter. No sooner had a half made than the scouts came

riding in and reported that a herd of three or four hundred buffalo were feeding on the south slope of the divide between the Beaver and the Prairie Dog creeks.

No Confusion.

Among white men the announcement that buffalo had been sighted would have created excitement and confusion. If the Pawnees were excited, it was not apparent from any outward signs. There was no confusion, no haste. At the command of the chief presiding that day the hunters formed in the shape of the letter V. At the point rode one the scouts with a spear decorated with colored feathers. There was no noise, no disorder, as the procession moved over the prairie. The eye of every hunter was on the bunch of feathers on the end of the spear carried by the scout. Suddenly the feathers disappear. It is the signal that the hunt is on. With military precision that V-shaped formation straightens out, and 350 Indians and one white man sweep down the valley into that herd of buffalo. Each hunter selects a buffalo for his legitimate prey, and cuts it out, and riding up by the side of the fleeing animal, shoots it down. Jumping from his pony, the hunter plunges his knife into the heart of the buffalo. In a short time the animal is skinned, the meat out from around the bones, rolled into strips and bound together with thongs cut from the

hide and placed on the pony, brot into camp and turned over to to the squaws who cure the meat and tan the hides. For drying the meat, the squaws erect willow poles where the meat is placed in strips and in a few days is cured, and when ready for transportation on the backs of ponies, resembles dried lute fish, used by Swedes and Norwegians as a Christmas delicacy.

There must have been some white hunters watching the same herd for we could see three or four covered wagons going for dear life down the valley ahead of the buffalo. Whoever they were must have been pretty badly frightened when they saw all of a sudden three or four hundred Indian warriors heave in sight. I do not suppose that they thought that there was an Indian anywhere in that section of the country. I can see those fellows yet putting the bud to their horses and making their getaway as fast as their horses could carry them.

In this hunt one of the chiefs took charge of me and showed me how to cut out and kill my first buffalo. So expert were the Pawnees in killing buffalo, that not one animal escaped death out of the several herds attacked.

That night there was a great feast in camp. What Christian people call a prayer meeting was held, and the Great Spirit thanked for his kindness in sending His red

children a bountiful supply of meat.

While the feast was going on, a long pole was placed in the center of the camp, and on this was hanging a large piece of cooked meat as a burnt offering to God.

Made a Killing

After leaving the south slope of the Beaver, we moved up the valley of the Prairie Dog, then down that stream to the Kansas line where another herd of buffalo was killed and the meat cured. Retracing our steps, we went up the valley of the Prairie Dog for fifty miles, killing several small herd of buffalo enroute.

While hunting on the divide between the Beaver and Prairie Dog I saw some of the Indian men riding around in a peculiar manner and I rode up to where they were and found that they had a white hunter corralled at the head of a canyon. The poor fellow was almost frightened to death and was standing up in his spring wagon swinging his arms and yelling at the top of his voice. I talked to the Indians and succeeded in getting them to quit. I think that fellow got out of that part of the country as quick as he could. I don't think the Indians would have hurt him as long as he didn' show fight. They might have robbed him and probably would have taken his horses had they not been made to quit.

On the fourth day of August we

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reached the north bank of the Republican river and went into camp. At 9 o'clock that evening three white men came into camp and reported to me that a large band of Sioux warriors were camped twenty five miles northwest, waiting for an opportunity to attack the Pawnees. They said the Sioux had had scouts out spying on the Pawnees for several days, anticipating that we would move up the river where buffalo were feeding. Previous to this white men had visited us and warned us to be on our guard against Sioux attacks, and I was a little skeptical as to the truth of the story told by our white visitors. But one of the men a young fellow about my age at the time, appeared to be so sincere in his efforts to impress upon me that the warning should be heeded, that I took him to Sky Chief who was in command that day for a conference. Sky Chief said the men were liars; that they wanted to scare the Pawnees away from the hunting grounds so that white men could kill buffalo for hides. He told me I was a squaw and a coward. I took exception to his remarks, and retorted: "I will go as far as you dare go. Don't forget that."

Now I will refer to the young man, Platt, who accompanied us on this hunt. When it was discovered that the Sioux were going to attack us he rode up to me and asked me what

I was going to do and I told him I was going to stay and see it through. He said that he was going to leave us, which he did, and I did not blame him. I think I would have done the same thing had I been in his place, as he was only going along for the pleasure he could get out of it, but it was different with me, and I could not think of leaving them and be branded as a coward and also be taken to task for shirking my duty by the Indian office. The man who had charge of the Sioux did not stay with his Indians and was discharged from the service.

Chief Died Fighting

The following morning August 5, we broke camp and started north up the divide between the Republican and the Frenchman rivers. Soon after leaving camp, Sky Chief rode up to me and extending his hand said: "Shake, brother." He recalled our little unpleasantness the night previous and said, he did not believe there was cause for alarm, and was so impressed with the belief that he had not taken the precaution to throw outscouts in the direction the Sioux were reported to be. A few minutes later a buffalo scout signaled that buffalo had been sighted in the distance, and Sky Chief rode out to engage in the hunt. I never saw him again. He had killed a buffalo and was skinning it when the advance guard of the Sioux

shot and wounded him. The chief attempted to reach his horse, but before he was able to mount, several of the enemy surrounded him. He died fighting. A Pawnee, who was skinning a buffalo a short distance away, but managed to escape, told me how Sky Chief died. - A young Indian who was riding near me when buffalo were reported in sight, borrowed my gun and rode off to engage in the hunt. He, too, was killed and I never saw him or the gun again.

We had not proceeded more than a mile after the departure of Sky Chief, when I noticed a commotion at the head of the procession, which had suddenly stopped. I started to ride up where three of the chiefs were talking, when a boy of sixteen rode up and stopped me. Dismounting, he tied a strip of red flannel on the bridle of my horse, and after remounting, told me that the Sioux were coming. What significance was attached to the red flannel on the bridle I was never able to learn.

Sioux Were Coming.

We were only about a hundred yards from the head of a canyon or draw that extended down to the river when the Sioux were reported coming, and orders were shouted down the line for the squaws, children and pack ponies to take refuge in the canyon. The warriors were preparing to ride forth to meet the enemy. Coming to Chief Terra

Recekons, who was surrounded by several leading men of the Steele band, I suggested that we fall back down the canyon about two miles where there was a small grove of timber, and make a stand. The chief was in favor of the suggestion, but Fighting Bear, of the Kitahos, rebelled. He had fought the Sioux before and said we could whip them in an open fight, and it was finally decided to adopt his suggestion and make a stand on the ground we were on.

It seemed but a short time after the squaws and pack horses had disappeared over the edge of the canyon when the first Sioux appeared in the distance. Down the canyon arose a chant. It was the war song of the Pawnee nation, sung by the squaws as they stood side by side and rocked back and forth. Louder and louder grew the song as the enemy approached. I had loaded my revolvers and made up my mind to do my share of the fighting. As the Sioux came over the hill, it became apparent that they outnumbered the fighting men of the Pawnees four to one.

I afterwards learned there was between twelve and fifteen hundred in the band under the command of Chief Snow Flake, a Brule Sioux, and that most of his warriors belonged to that band. The Sioux were about a mile and a half away when the Pawnees noted they were greatly outnumbered and suggested to me

that I go out and parley with them with a view of warding off the threatened attack. I rode out about three hundred yards accompanied by Ralph Weeks, a half breed interpreter, who afterwards studied law and was admitted to the bar in Ok'ahoma. He died a few years ago. Waving a handkerchief as a token of peace, I attempted to stop the Sioux, but on they came—the whole bunch of them. Suddenly the war whoop of the Sioux, sounded, and several puffs of smoke from as many guns, and the whistle of bullets warned me that it was time to beat a retreat. The battle cry of the Sioux was answered with a cry of defiance from the Pawnee warriors, which denoted that a warm reception awaited the enemy. All the Indians were mounted, and as I reached the canyon the 350 Pawnees hurled themselves against the enemy. At the edge of the canyon my horse, which had been struck by one or more bullets, stumbled and fell. It took less than a minute to strip off the saddle and bridle and place them on my buffalo pony a squaw was holding for me. Mounting my horse, I rode up from the canyon. The Pawnees were putting up a splendid fight, but the odds were against them. I blazed away with my revolvers and had fired several shots at the Sioux, when the Pawnee chiefs noticed that the enemy was surrounding the head of the canyon and gave orders to retreat. I did

not understand the command, but when I noticed the squaws cutting the thongs that bound the packs of meat on the ponies and mounting with the children, I concluded it was about time to make a dash myself.

Chiefs In A Duel.

A moment before the retreat commenced, I saw Fighting Bear engaged in a duel with a Sioux chief. I presumed he was a chief from the war bonnet he wore. Both chiefs were fighting with tomahawks. Take deliberate aim, at close range, I fired at the Sioux. The bullet struck the mark and evidently wounded the chief which gave Fighting Bear an opportunity to finish him. Jumping from his horse, the Pawnee chief scalped his enemy, remounted and grabbing the dead Sioux's horse by the bridle joined in the retreat down the canyon.

One thing, I remember, passed thru my mind as we were fleeing down the canyon. An old lady friend of mine had often asked me why I wore my hair so long, and had told me that it would be a very attractive scalp if I ever got mixed up in an Indian battle. When I saw the Sioux coming I thought of what the old lady had said and I did not lose any time intertwisting my hair up and tucking it under my hat so it would not be so noticeable.

I often have thought of a little Indian girl, who evidently had fallen from her mother's back, in our retreat down the canyon. She was

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sitting on the ground with her little arms raised as if pleading for someone to pick her up. As I passed I tried to pick her up but only succeeded in touching one of her hands. I couldn't return so she was left behind to suffer a horrible death by the bloodthirsty Sioux. Just imagine, dear reader, six or seven hundred Indians, men women and children, and as many ponies, all huddled together and going for dear life down this canyon, with over a thousand blood thirsty savages shooting down on them. In some places the canyon was quite narrow, and caused them to almost stop, then was when the most of the lives were lost.

It was in the retreat down the canyon that the greatest loss of life occurred among the squaws and children, the Sioux riding down each side and firing down on them.

As the Pawnees reached the river and crossed to the opposite bank, the Sioux succeeded in cutting off 700 ponies, and had started down the stream to cross at another point to pursue the Pawnees when the sound of a bugle stopped them. Looking across the river, I noticed a company of U. S. cavalry emerge from the timber. When the Sioux saw the soldiers approaching, they beat a hasty retreat. In company with Fighting Bear and two other chiefs I crossed the river and conferred with the officer in command, who suggested that the Pawnees return

and gather up the meat left behind and bury the dead. But the Pawnees could not be induced to comply with the suggestion. They were firm in the belief that the meat had already been poisoned and the wounded put to death.

Indians Showed Emotion.

We camped that night on the banks of Red Willow creek. There was nothing to eat. All our supplies had been left behind on the battlefield. I had always understood that an Indian was devoid of emotion, but that night I was convinced that at times an Indian gives vent to his feelings the same as a white man. Seated on the ground rocking back and forth the warriors, who had talked so valiantly a few hours previous, pulled hair from their heads while the tears rolled down their cheeks. While the demonstrations took place, the squaws kept up an incessant wail for the dead.

Now that night after the battle, we camped on Red Willow creek in a demoralized condition. Men, women and children were frantic with grief, moaning and crying for their missing ones so that it was impossible to sleep. I got on my pony and rode a mile or so from camp in order to get away from the horrible noise. I put in a good night's rest and on waking the next morning, I thought of my eastern friend, Mr. Platt, so I rode down to where the Indians were camped, and inquired of them if they knew anything of

him. Some of them told me that the last time they saw him he was riding down the bluffs on the south side of the river in the same direction we were going, so I told them to stay where they were until I came back as I was going to see if I could find him as I did not want to go away without making some effort to find him. I had not ridden more than ten miles before I discovered horse shoe tracks in a buffalo trail leading down a canyon and on looking around, I saw his white horse feeding at the side of the canyon with the bridle and saddle on. I went up to him and taking him by the bridle rein, started down the canyon. I had not gone far before I saw Mr. Platt sitting on the side of a washout with his face buried in his hands. I went up to him and shook him. He looked up in a dazed condition, and in a short time recognized me and exclaimed, "for God's sake, John, is that you? I had given up all hopes of getting out of here alive." I then returned to our camp with him, and got our breakfast at Byfield's store on Red Willow creek. He had not had anything to eat for thirty-six hours. That day we started down the valley for home.

A mile from where we camped lived a man named Frank Byfield. He kept a few groceries, flour, and other supplies for buffalo hunters. He freighted all his goods from Plum Creek station, a distance of seventy

or eighty miles. I bought from Byfield thirty sacks of flour and signed a receipt for the same and the government later reimbursed him.

Shortly after leaving Red Willow creek we killed a herd of twelve buffalo and then moved on to Arapahoe, which at that time consisted of a few log houses. Here I hired a homesteader for five dollars to haul twelve of the wounded to Plum Creek station.

At Plum Creek station a company of soldiers were stationed. Here the wounds of the injured were dressed by an army surgeon.

Barclay White, superintendent of Northwestern Indian Agencies, had his headquarters at Omaha at that time and to him I wired what had occurred, and he made arrangements with the Union Pacific Railroad Company to provide box cars for bringing the Pawnees to Silver Creek. From Silver Creek the Pawnees walked across the country to Genoa, a sorrowful return from the last buffalo hunt in a country that had been their home for so many years.

The loss of the Pawnees in the battle on the Republican was 156 including men, women and children.

Cost Sioux About \$10,000.

Several weeks after returning with the Pawnees, I received a letter from Nick Gains, trail agent for the Sioux. He said that the Sioux lost fifty warriors in the battle. Gains was a Frenchman, who married a



EAGLE CHIEF, OF THE PAWNEES

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Sioux squaw and had been adopted into the tribe. He attempted to prevent the Sioux from leaving the Niobrara valley to attack the Pawnees, but they placed a guard over him and rode away on a raiding expedition, which cost the lives of fifty warriors and \$10,000 in cash for the government took that amount of money out of the annuity fund of the Sioux and turned it over to the Pawnees to pay for the meat lost and ponies captured. I had in my pack at the time of the battle a memorandum book containing \$7 in money and several letters. Gains sent the book and letters to me by express, but the buck who went thru my pack kept the money.

Sometime during the fall I was sent by the government to the battlefield to bury the dead. At Plum Creek station I hired a liveryman named Coles to help me. We drove to Arapahoe, where I hired four more men. I recall now the names of only two of them. One was the famous Wild Bill, who was murdered a few years later by Jack McCall at Deadwood. The other was Frank Martin.

We arrived on the battlefield early in the evening, commenced the gruesome work, finishing before dawn and hurrying back to Arapahoe, as the Sioux were reported to be on the war path. At one place on the battlefield were the charred remains of several children, who had evidently escaped injury and been left be-

hind in the retreat only to meet a horrible death by torture at the hands of the Sioux.

During this visit I stopped at Culbertson and the building there or shelter, as that is what it really was, had been made from the buffalo hides taken from the battlefield and stretched over some poles. It made a very warm place in which to live.

I have mentioned before the rules of hunting buffalo and will relate a little incident to explain how strict the Pawnees were in enforcing them and punishing any who disobeyed them.

In giving chase one day to a herd of buffalo, one young man disobeyed this law and dashed into the herd. That night, while in camp, they brought this young man to me wanting me to punish him. I refused to do so telling them that it wasn't any affair of mine and they would have to punish him as they saw fit. This they did as follows: About forty Indians formed a double row of twenty on a side each having in their hands an Indian whip or quirt as they called it. This whip was a piece of braided raw hide fitted on a wooden handle, and a raw hide loop formed on the handle and put around the wrist to make it convenient for carrying when riding. The culprit was stripped of all his clothes except his breech and was ordered to pass between the lines of Indians. This he did as fast

as he could and doubled up in such a manner as to expose as little of his body as possible, as each of the bystanders in the double row gave him a lash with their whips. He made this run in less time than it takes to tell it, but nevertheless his body bore marks of his punishment and blood was running from the cuts given him.

One forenoon while the Indian ponies of about a thousand in number were being herded on the south side of the Republican river on a side hill the ponies stampeded. I had just put a kettle of beans and buffalo meat over the fire to cook and the ponies made a dash over this spoiling all my prospects for dinner. Why I mention this stampede is that the Indians that same night held a council as they always believed a stampede of their ponies was an omen of some great disaster. Of course, the massacre followed in a few days and they often alluded to this to me afterward,

In concluding this little story, I feel that it would not be complete without saying something about the trip up the Republican Valley in October, 1921, in company with Mr.

A. E. Sheldon, secretary of the Nebraska Historical Society, Mr. E. E. Blackman, curator of the Nebraska Historical Society, and Captain Lute North.

I had not been there since the fall of 1873 and instead of seeing buffalo, deer, antelope and elk, I saw large herds of fine cattle and horses roaming in the pastures and contentment, happiness and prosperity on the hills and in the valleys. Instead of Indian trails and buffalo wallows, I found railroads up the valleys and improved highways to and from all of the towns and villages. Instead of the Indian tepees and the rough camps of the buffalo hunter, I found beautiful homes, well improved and highly cultivated farms and prosperous villages. Indeed I was very much surprised and pleased to see the new order of things in the once "wild west" as I had known it. The power and dread of the Indians is no longer felt and feared by the cultured white people. The Pawnees are now but orphans, driven from the land they loved so well to reservations distasteful to their wild and free nature.



Massacre Canyon, as it is now called in remembrance of this, the last battle ever fought between two Indian tribes, is located a few miles north and east of Trenton, Hitchcock county, Nebraska, and the Golden Rol Hi-Way crosses the canyon east of Trenton, and at this point

is proposed to erect a memorial to help keep this feature of the early history in the minds of our people and to draw its attention to all who travel through on this splendid thoroughfare which the state and federal government aided in constructing.

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