

## The Story of the Massacre

As told by Anna Stina Broberg Peterson, the only survivor of the Anders P. Broberg family. This story was dictated when she was eighty-one years old. She was born at Skofde, Vastergotland, Sweden, on July 29 1946, and died at St. Hilaire, Minn., Sept. 12, 1933.

### Anna Stina's Story

Shortly after the organization of the Territory of Minnesota in the Union a movement was made to place the Indians on a reservation maintained by the Government. By a treaty with the Indians the Government promised to pay them for the land but there was a long delay in security ratification of the treaty and payment of the money, and finally the value placed on the land was so low that the Indians became dissatisfied. This caused the Indians to revolt.

On Wednesday, August 20, 1862, the white settlers gathered at the A. Lundborg house where services were being held. About twelve o'clock Peter Broberg, seven years old, came and warned us that he had seen some very savage looking Indians coming from the D. Broberg cabin and going toward the meeting house but had done no harm to Andrew Peter Broberg. As my father returned home he and my cousin Alfred, five years old, were killed in the cook shanty by a gun and my brothers were killed in the woods by a tomahawk.

Louis Lundborg, after noticing the Indians wearing their war clothes, ran for home. As he jumped the fence on A. P. Broberg's farm he was shot dead. The rest of the Lundborg boys were killed near the Broberg place and also Uncle John Nelson. Old man Lundborg saw his son Louis fall and turned homeward while two Indians took after him and fired at him but didn't hit him. He had a gun and they didn't dare to come too close. He met D. P. Broberg with an ox team with him wife and baby and his son Peter, also Mrs. Andrew Broberg, Christina and myself went along. We women jumped out. The Indians overtook my mother and shook hands with her. She refused to go with them. Then they shot her down. They took after my sister and me, knocked my sister down with a gun and then turned back to my mother, but she was dead. My sister got up to run but was overtaken again and killed. The Indians went back to the wagon where Uncle D. P. Broberg was. As they killed uncle, Peter and his mother jumped out of the wagon. She wanted Peter to run to Lundborg's but he ran to Oman's instead. His mother and little baby brother were killed. The baby was cut up, pieces were cut from face and nose and legs, in sight of the mother. I caught up with old man Lundborg and went to his home.

Two Indians, being left, went to Swen Oman's house where the family had hid in the cellar. The Indians came through the window and knocked the dishes to pieces also taking a large chest, which had been brought over from Sweden, and accidentally

placed it over the cellar door, then left the house. Peter Broberg cried while in the cellar because he was afraid the Indians would find him. They stayed in the cellar until nearly dark. When they came out, seeing no Indians around, they went to the brush and camped overnight. Near morning a number of people set out for our place to look for living things. Mr. John Lundborg, two women, three children and myself went to hide in the grass near a small lake about two miles away. Seven Indians were heading our way. They happened to notice Mr. A. Lundborg and Ole Svenson and took after them. In all they shot sixteen shots at Mr. Lundborg and never touched him. They didn't dare to get too near him for he had a gun. This he couldn't use because the gun and ammunition were wet.

When the seven gave up the shooting at A. Lundborg they noticed other settlers stacking grain of hay and made for their home. Two pointed guns at the men settlers. Two others approached them and asked for white men's ponies, while the other three held their own ponies. They took the whites' horses and went away, not killing any of the settlers. They must have been out of ammunition. They proceeded to our homes and loaded up all our goods that they could steal and carry away.

We lay in the grass from twelve o'clock noon until sundown. We then made up our minds to go to Ole Knutson's. As we started to walk we noticed two men coming on horseback whom we feared were Indians. We went out in the lake again and hid in the grass. Finally they came so close that we could hear our names called. They were Mr. Lundborg and a neighbor who had been hunting for us.

We went to Ole Knutson's where we stayed overnight. During the evening John Lundborg went home to see if he could find anyone. He happened to see his brother, Sam, on the prairie who called to him, but thinking him an Indian, did not answer. He went to his cellar and slept. They found in the morning he had left for the woods and met Omans who were on their way to Norway Lake. We all made our camp on an island there.

On the morning of the twenty-first only the dead were found. No Indians were around. On Friday we buried the dead. Saturday we were to leave for Paynesville but got only off the island when we heard Mr. Osmundson call that seven Indians came from his cellar and shot at him. He called, "Hurry up, boys, here are seven savages. If you can't come, I can shoot them all." The Indians became frightened and ran. We returned to the island for refuge again. While chasing the Indians they found four white children whose father had been killed. Their mother had come the day before to the island with two small children but the Indians took one as a prize and left the mother and the other child unharmed. While they looked around they saw more people coming from the north but discovered they were white and friends to us all.

In Paynesville we stayed two or three weeks. A family wanted to adopt Peter but he would not leave me, nor would I want to leave him. We went to Cold Springs, where Peter took sick. We fixed a bed for him in a barn where I stayed and took care of him.

One day Reverend Jackson came and said that Peter had typhoid fever. I had to stay with him. I went from Cold Springs to St. Cloud and returned the same day with medicine which made Peter better. We started for Anoka. Peter became so weak during the trip that I had to hold him in my lap and drive the horses. One of the horses got colic and fell. Peter became worse in Anoka and had to be put to bed. He recovered slowly. He stayed with the Lundborg family until after Christmas. I took him along to Carver where he stayed for almost a year at the home of John Ahlin. Then his guardian, Lars Skoog, kept him until I was married. I married John Peterson at Carver who was also a survivor of this massacre. Three years after the massacre we moved back to live on a farm near Nest Lake, not far from our old homes.

Peter stayed with me until he was fourteen years of age after which he made his home with Louis Larson and attended school in New London. During the summer months Peter worked for Peter Larson and later with Harold Swenson bought out Mr. Adam's share of the store at New London and continued his connection until a few years before his death, December 1925.

Notes:

The Lundborg sons who were killed were Lars (Louis), Anders (Andrew) and Gustaf. Their father, Andreas Lundborg was a second cousin to Anders Petter Broberg and Daniel Petter Broberg.

A .P. Broberg refers to Anna Stina's father, Anders Peter. D. P Broberg, Peter Broberg's father, is Daniel Petter Broberg. Anna's mother, father, and her three siblings Johannes, age 13, Andreas, age 10, and Christina, age 7, were killed. Peter Broberg's mother, father and his two brothers Alfred, age 4, and Johan, 10 months, were killed.

This account was published in the West Central Daily Tribune, Willmar, Minnesota, date unknown.

Her obituary:

The obituary below was taken from the St. Hilaire Spectator newspaper dated September 14, 1933.

Survivor of Indian Massacre is Dead

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Mrs. Anna Stina Peterson, pioneer settler in this community and a resident here for fifty-three years died Tuesday afternoon, September 12th, at the hospital in Thief River Falls where she was operated upon last week for removal of a ruptured appendix. Although she withstood the

operation well, her advanced age, 87 years, was against her and death came to end a long and eventful career. Born in Sweden on July 29, 1846, to parents Anders Peter and Christina Broberg, she came to this country with her parents in 1861 to make their home in the little pioneer settlement of West Lake (now called Monson Lake) in western Kandiyohi County. It was at this place that 30 persons, including parents and other close relatives of Mrs. Peterson, lost their lives in the Indian uprising on August 20, 1862. Most of the settlers were attending church when the Indians swooped down on the little community to massacre its inhabitants. Mrs. Peterson, nee Broberg, managed to escape into a nearby corn field and save her life after witnessing the brutal killing of her kinfolks. Mrs. Peterson and her cousin, Peter Broberg, were the only members of their families to survive. In 1864 at Carver County she was united in marriage to John Peterson, another West Lake massacre survivor. They resided at Nest Lake, Kandiyohi County, not far from the massacre location, until 1880 when they came to this community, becoming some of the first settlers in this region.

Mr. and Mrs. Peterson endured the hardships of pioneer days in this locality, occupying different farms they acquired, until the death of Mr. Peterson many years ago. Since then, Mrs. Peterson has made her home in this village. Prompt to answer to call of need, she never found time to retire, as the term is commonly used, and hers was a busy life. Up to the time of her final illness, she had duties to perform and did them. Many families in the village held in grateful remembrance some service "Grandma" was able to perform for them in time of illness or other emergency.

Six years ago, when the Monson Lake Memorial Association was formed in Kandiyohi County in memory of those who lost their lives in the Indian Uprising, Mrs. Peterson was an honored guest at the first observance, and she has since attended several of the annual gatherings, the last being this year. She was one of the last living survivors of the Indian uprising of 1862.

Mrs. Peterson is survived by two sons and two daughters, Henry W. of Warren, Ed, Mrs. Aug. Swenson, and Mrs. James Kinney of this village. Her husband and two other children preceded her in death. She is also survived by nineteen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren, beside a host of friends throughout the community.

Funeral services will be conducted Friday at 2:00 P.M., from the Swedish Lutheran church of which she had been a lifelong member. Rev. H.A. Larson will officiate at the services, and interment will be at the St. Hilaire cemetery beside the remains of her husband.