

ARTICLE FROM THE HUTCHINSON LEADER OF FRIDAY, JULY 25, 1930:

GAYLORD PIONEER WOMAN TELLS OF GOING TO SCHOOL IN HUTCHINSON STOCKADE

Sub-Heading of article:

"Mrs. Johanna Rose was pupil of "man named Pittman" during attack on Hutchinson on September 4, 1862 - was 11 years old at time."

Minnesota children have attended school in unusual circumstances as many instances since pioneer days reveal, but it is probable that Mrs. Johanna Rose of Gaylord holds the record in the state for school attendance under difficult and decidedly unusual conditions. Mrs. Rose was one of the refugees in the stockade at Hutchinson during the Sioux outbreak in 1862 and went to school within the stockade while bullets from the Indians plopped against the barricades and the din of battle, punctuated by the war-whoops of the braves, at times drowned the voice of the schoolmaster.

Mrs. Rose was Johanna Hahn then. She was 11 years old in 1862. Her father, John Hahn, was one of the six German immigrants who came to Minnesota with their families from Wisconsin in the early summer of 1862. One of these was the ill-fated Carl Spaude family, all the members of which excepting one child, were murdered by the Indians on the day Hutchinson was attacked. The others were the William Bielke, Ferdinand Spaude, Retz and Lemke families. All lived near the Crow River about six miles west of Hutchinson. As was revealed in a previous article, the Bielkes were close to death in their flight to the stockade as the Sioux moved on the town. Further details concerning the activities of the others and the causes of the plight of the Carl Spaudes and the Bielkes are furnished by Mrs. Rose.

"We lived near the Carl Spaude place," she recounted. "All our homes were small log cabins. We had not seen any Indians in the neighborhood and the first we knew of the trouble was when soldiers returning from an expedition to a point near Litchfield, on which they lost heavily by running into Indian ambushes, warned us to flee to the stockade. All the families but the Carl Spaudes and the Bielkes went at once. We went with oxen and reached the town without mishap. But Mr. Spaude, who was my uncle, and Mr. Bielke had laughed and told father that they could drive off any Indians that came around. The two families lived together in the Bielke cabin and remained there, busy with their farm work until that fateful day when they were forced to flee for their lives and the Spaudes were doomed to die.

"As I remember the stockade," Mrs. Rose said, "it covered nearly an entire block. The outside walls were of boards, hewn or sawed, and placed upright. About two and a half feet inside of the first wall there was another and the space between was filled with earth to stop bullets. I recall that there were loopholes to permit those inside to shoot through the walls. Inside there was a school house and a residence, both of which apparently were there when the stockade was built. There was no roof over the stockade itself, but

separate shelters were provided for the different families, with roofs that seemed to have been taken from other buildings.

"There were people of all ages in the fort and there was, of course, much excitement. I don't recall that there was any great confusion, however. Those in charge seem to have been able to keep the refugees pretty well in order. We cooked our meals in the fort and managed to get enough to eat most of the time, each family having brought some provisions and the rest being supplied by scouts and others who ventured out to stores and the fields.

"I guess they sent us to school more to keep us quiet and out of mischief than for any other reason," Mrs. rose chuckled. "I couldn't talk English very well and neither could my brothers and sisters. My brothers were Charles and William, now dead. My sisters are now Mrs. Frank Abrahams of Gaylord and Mrs. Henry Sylwester, who resides near that village. The teacher was a man named Pittman and he made us study and behave ourselves just as if everything was peaceful and we were in our own country school. Of course, when the fighting was at its height and it was feared that the Sioux might capture the stockade, school was dismissed and we were required to lie flat on the ground and keep quiet."

I was old enough to realize to some extent the seriousness of the situation," the pioneer woman added, "but I guess American ways were so new to me that I thought all the trouble was simply a part of the business of establishing a home in the new frontier country. Anyway, I don't recall that we children worried much about the situation. There were quite a few of us and we even found opportunity to play a great deal.

"Once, during a lull in the firing that followed an attack, I found the door in the stockade open and walked out. I was promptly sent back in, and didn't see much of what was going on outside."

Mrs. Rose said that there were no soldiers in the fort after the attack, but she is mistaken in this, as there were some of Captain Whitcomb's and Captain Strout's men in the stockade on the day of the battle - September 4. She also told of an incident not familiar to the writer.

"One woman," she said, "was stopped by an Indian while she was coming to this fort with her baby, about a year and a half old. She lived just outside of the town and her husband was already in the fort. She had determined to stay at home longer, evidently thinking the Indians wouldn't attack. Well, the Indians asked her how many soldiers were in the fort and she told him about 2,000. This brave informed the Sioux leaders and they did not attack in force then, although they could have captured us all if they had done so. But they killed the woman's baby and took her captive. She was released when the outbreak ended and returned to Hutchinson. I heard several say afterward that she really saved the fort and its occupants.

The Hahns remained in Hutchinson the rest of the fall and the following winter, Mr. Hahn, Mr. Bielke and Fred Spaude erected a cabin which the three families occupied. The Retz and Lemke families built and occupied another cabin. In the spring all but the Lemkes moved to the section between New Auburn and Gaylord where they took claims and once more began a pioneer existence. The Lemkes returned to Wisconsin. "Mr. Lemke said there were too many Indians here to suit him," Mrs. Rose explained.

Mrs. Rose, by the way, had lived in Hutchinson for a time before the outbreak, having been employed in the home of Carl Taevs (she is not sure of the spelling), taking care of the three small boys in the family. She married George Fredrick Rose in 1869. He was a veteran of the Battle of Birch Coulee and carried a bullet from that battle in his left leg until his death two years ago. Mrs. Rose has three children, Mrs. Herman Gildemeister, near Gaylord; Mrs. Charles Spaude, Gaylord, and Mrs. Charles Mattwig, near Gaylord.

"It all happened along time go," said the pioneer woman, who will be 79 years old December 17 next, "but the outbreak and our four weeks in the fort are still vivid in my memory. I cannot forget that summer."

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