

BEAR ISLAND FIGHT

GALLANT STRUGGLE MADE BY THE TROOPS AGAINST HEAVY ODDS

HEROES OF BATTLE HONORED

Bodies of Those Who Fell Brought Back to Walker and Received by Almost the Entire Population of the Town With Uncovered Heads—Men of the Third Ford Infantry to Retire.

Staff Special to The St. Paul Globe.

WALKER, Minn., Oct. 6 (via Brainerd, Oct. 7).—Deputy Marshal Timothy Sheehan arrived this noon on the steamer Vera, bringing the first authentic news of the battle since Wednesday noon. Fighting at that time still continued, and it was fast and furious. For troops have gained a signal victory in forcing the back forty feet. Gen. Bacon was in command, and rifle in hand, was cheering on his command.

The Indian force is estimated by Maj. Sheehan at from fifty to one hundred possibly more. Fighting continued until Wednesday night, when the Indians were resumed by the Indians at daylight this morning. The troops held their original position and extended their line toward the center of the position. The bodies of the killed, including Maj. Wilkinson, were laid out on a barge at the landing. The strength of the Indians had been augmented by volunteers from several tribes in the reservation, seven from Leech Lake agency joining the hostiles last night. It is estimated by those who posted in Indian affairs that from the various tribes of Chippewas about 600 or 700 renegades can be secured to join in the fight against the troops.

The steamer Vera left Walker at 1 o'clock this morning with rations, supplies and 1,000 rounds of ammunition. She did not get away until 2 o'clock, and light this morning, when the medical supplies, rations and ammunition were landed in a small rowboat by Capt. Rivers, of the steamer, and the wounded and the rations were welcomed by the troops, the wounded being thankful for the dressing of their wounds and the others for the food to eat, none of the officers or men having had food since Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock. A lunch for ten had been put up by Gen. Bacon Wednesday, and was distributed among the officers and men Wednesday night, but it was far from satisfying, as may be imagined.

The supplies having been landed, it was decided to take back to Walker five of the wounded. As the boat put off from shore it was discovered by the Indians, this being the first notice they had of the arrival of the steamer. A rapid fire was kept up, having for its target the boat containing the wounded soldiers. The captain of the Vera and Marshal Sheehan proceeded with the work at hand without heeding the rifle balls which were spattering around them. The Indians then devoted their fire with telling effect on the steamer, and to prevent the killing or wounding of those aboard the boat, the vessel was headed for Walker, making the distance, something over twenty-five miles, against a strong wind in a little over three hours.

On the way to Walker the Vera passed the steamer Clara, which was on its second trip in search of the fighting parties, with plenty of supplies, tents and additional ammunition. Beside the supplies there was on board a party of sixteen deputies sworn in by Marshal O'Connor, all armed with Winchester rifles and each determined to make short work of the Indians, if the opportunity offered. The party, headed by Dr. Camp, of Brainerd, included the following deputies: Dr. Camp, Jack Burns, Mose Derush, J. H. Koop, A. F. Ferris, Sam Parker, D. Willard, Jerome Keeler, Sam Adair, A. E. Veon, J. A. Young, W. Martin, of Brainerd; Indian Chief of Police Martin, from the reservation; Corporal Nevenotek and Assistant Hospital Steward Ott, of the Third regiment. The reinforcements will be a great help to Gen. Bacon and will tide him over until the arrival of the detachment of the Third regiment.

Deputy Sheehan says the men fought well and bravely and forced the reds to retire from a piece of ground, which, if not taken by the troops, would have resulted in the Indians being in a position where they could cross-fire the soldiers and annihilate them.

When the soldiers were opened on by the Indians in ambush, a volley was fired in company formation, and the order was given to deploy as skirmishers. Marshal Sheehan took charge of the extreme right of the line, Gen. Bacon the center, Maj. Wilkinson the left and Lieut. Ross the extreme left.

When the firing was poured in on the extreme left of the line by the Indians, who had been able to flank the troops on the left, would have had the company at their mercy. Those who are familiar with Indian warfare know what that is.

Marshal Sheehan, who is an old Indian fighter, realized the importance of holding his line and encouraged the men in gallant style. The result was that the left of the line was not only held but the Indians forced from the position they had taken, driven back about 200 feet. Maj. Wilkinson, when the second volley was fired by the Indians, was wounded in the right leg.

The firing on the ground for a few moments a heavy fog of smoke, dressed, again appeared on the firing line. He ordered Deputy Sheehan to address the company said: "Keep your heads low, men, and we have got them." Those were his last words, as at the instant he was struck by a rifle ball which inflicted a wound that proved fatal an hour and a half later.

SPURRED TO REVENGE. Instead of having a disheartening effect on the men, the death of Maj. Wilkinson seemed to spur them on to renewed efforts, and the line of battle was extended up the slope of the hill and the Indians forced to drop back about 100 feet, this gave the troops the advantage of the small log hut, which was the home of Chief Boghmaynigh before the ambushade.

From this line which gave the soldiers a half moon-shaped territory with the lake on the left, the fighting was kept up until it was too dark to see and nightfall stopped the engagement.

Gen. Bacon made the Indian's home his headquarters and hospital, and the wounded were carried to the hut and attended by Dr. Harris, who, before the detachment left Fort Snelling, was appointed surgeon of the expedition. The remains of Maj. Wilkinson, Sergeant Ben Butler and three privates were taken to the barge at the bank of the lake and laid out, the rifle being used as a dead house. Orders from Gen. Bacon were that no lights must be shown, no fires lighted, and even the light of a match was strictly forbidden.

There was not much supper to be eaten, the lunch prepared for Gen. Bacon and the men without blankets threw themselves on the ground and endeavored to sleep.

The excitement of seven hours' hard and constant fighting and the possibility of a night attack from the Indians, made sleep out of the question. The Indians resumed their attack early this morning, but before the first shot was fired the supplies of ammunition had been landed and the work of transporting the wounded from the row boat to the steamer, by means of a row boat, was started. Deputy Sheehan states that when he left the shore with Sergeant Jack Daley there was a perfect shower of bullets, and as the Indians seemed determined to prevent the continuance of the work of removing the wounded, the steamer was headed for Walker.

A crowd of three hundred gathered at the dock as the boat arrived, and a ringing cheer went up when it was announced that the detachment were doing as well as could be expected, and had commenced on the second day of their fight.

Private Jack Daley, who was brought here and taken to the hospital, has a bullet wound in his left thigh.

Private Ross, who is at the camp hospital, is suffering from a bullet wound and his chances for recovery are slim.

Sergeant Ayers, who is also at the camp hospital, has a bullet wound in his right thigh.

The most pleasing news brought out by Marshal Sheehan was that Brill, Beaton and Knappen, the newspaper correspondents, were as calm and collected as possible under the circumstances. They were ready to leave the command on the steamer Vera, but Gen. Bacon's order that none but the wounded should be taken, resulted in the reporters deciding to postpone their departure from camp for a few days.

They went out word that they were feeling quite well, but did not care to enjoy camp life in an Indian country during an outbreak.

Platt B. Walker, discussing the Indian troubles, said the grand mistake made was in not putting the soldiers in this part of the country. There are thousands of Indians here on Leech Lake reservation, none too friendly, and some devilish ugly. It was just as cheap to keep the troops here as at Snelling, where they were not of much use.

DEAD BROUGHT BACK. The Bodies of the Heroes of Bear Island Honored at Walker. Staff Special to The St. Paul Globe.

WALKER, Minn., Oct. 6 (via Brainerd, Oct. 7).—The steamer Vera, which left here at 8 o'clock this evening, returned at 6 o'clock this evening. The party did not leave the boat, although each one was well armed. The remains of those of the detachment who were killed in the fighting from Wednesday to Thursday noon were brought here, as well as the ten wounded left at the camp when Private Daley was taken aboard the Vera this morning.

There was a large crowd at the dock to meet the boat, and heads were bared as the Indians, about 9 o'clock Wednesday morning, with the troops and United States Marshal O'Connor and his deputies.

"We had little trouble in effecting a landing. There was only one Indian sight, and he was one of those wanted and was arrested by Deputy Marshal Sheehan.

"After that a tour was made of the territory. Gen. Bacon and Maj. Wilkinson taking the lead, and Maj. Wilkinson being in command of the troops. It was a very disagreeable walk, as we had to go through several sloughs, and every one of us was wet when we returned.

"I only one point did we see any ducks. They were in the woods on the water on the mainland from a point we reached when we had covered about half of the distance. We could see them running through the woods, but lost sight of them in a few moments. We arrived at the point of landing, the place at which Boghmaynigh lives, shortly after 11 o'clock, having made a thorough search of the main point of land.

"As there were no indications of trouble, Brill, Knappen and myself made up our minds to go back to Walker on the boat to get our rations. Bacon for the tents and rations for another day. We were down at the landing awaiting for the row boats to be dispatched when a volley was heard. Immediately we ran back to the rest on the hill when a volley came from the woods to the front of us. The soldiers were just about to be dispatched when a volley was heard. A second volley came and the bullets whistled past my head.

"Run to cover," someone cried, and as the soldiers grabbed their guns and ran to the left I hurried down to the beach, where I was soon safely housed behind big boulders everywhere. A volley ran down, however, more bullets chased me, and it was a wonder that myself and those with me were not killed.

WALKER, Minn., Oct. 7.—The following is the story of the thirty-six-hour fight on Bear Island told by K. C. Beaton, who was one of the newspaper correspondents under fire.

"I arrived at Sugar Point, or the point of the mainland, as it is known by the Indians, about 9 o'clock Wednesday morning, with the troops and United States Marshal O'Connor and his deputies.

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"Steady men, steady," was the first sound of a voice we heard, and as I raised my head I could see Gen. Bacon running about with his troops.

"Get up in the firing line," was the next order, and the men of the fighting Third were seen to run through the grass and weeds in the direction from which the shots had been fired.

"Another peep above the stone behind which I lay, and a deep and a great chance of death, and I saw Maj. Wilkinson and Lieut. Ross calling to their men to advance. All the time the shots were flying about our heads as we lay on the beach.

"The men continued to advance. The three officers were ever with Gen. Wilkinson in charge of the left flank, Gen. Bacon in charge of the center and Lieut. Ross in charge of the right flank. The soldiers were running along, it appeared to me, on their hands and knees, dropping every moment to fire a volley into the ranks of the enemy.

"The officers, however, stood up in the open, but although it is the first battle I ever witnessed, I doubt if anywhere such brave officers were ever seen. They were brave almost to recklessness, and seemed only to consider the safety of their men, for they advised them what to do in tones that could be heard all over the point, if it had not been for the reports of their rifles.

"For thirty minutes there was a ceaseless roar and every little while we could hear cries of the men who had been shot. I looked up once and saw that Maj. Wilkinson had been injured but that I did not know. I heard him cry, 'Ross, I've been wounded, but don't give up, boys, you've got to get them whipped. Give it to them, give it to them,' the colonel was yelling at the top of his voice.

"GALLANT ATTACK. "He was a few yards to the right of us and we could hear him quite plainly. Every time his voice was heard a volley rang out, and every time it was further away from us. Afterward we learned that we had the colonel to thank for our lives. Some Indians had attempted to turn our right flank and attack the civilians on the beach, but the officers saw us in a moment and realized our danger, and his gallant attack had undoubtedly saved our lives.

"When we realized the position in which the colonel was in we called to him to get under cover, for God's sake! but he paid no attention to us. He stayed with the men until he had accomplished his purpose, and when we had about made up our minds that he was dead we were startled by a man in one word, 'I've been wounded, boys. I've been wounded,' was the remark we heard as the weeds parted and the gallant colonel walked toward us. We did not know how badly he was hurt, but saw at a glance that he had been shot in the arm, for two holes were distinctly seen in his coat sleeve.

"That's not it," he said, as we turned back his sleeve. "It's my stomach; look at that."

"And we did so. We tore open his clothes and found only a small wound, but the blood was trickling down. The old man was not frightened by any means.

"If you ever get out of here alive, boys, you will be in luck," he remarked a few moments afterwards, as he lay on the beach.

BATTLE RAGING. "Until 5 o'clock the battle raged, although the volleys did not come so frequently as during the first thirty minutes of fighting. The soldiers had formed a semi-circle about the blockhouse, and every time an Indian showed his head he was greeted with a volley of bullets. How many were killed it is impossible to say, but there is little doubt that as many red men bit the dust as soldiers. During the afternoon there came from the woods several times cries of agony, and they were issued by Indians. When they poured a volley into the soldiers, they could be distinctly heard uttering wailings. One yell would be heard, and then many would come, and the woods would ring with the awful battle cry, 'awful to us on the beach, because we believe for a time that the Indians were picking our men out rapidly, and would soon be down upon us.

"Darkness finally came, and it was welcomed. I suggested to Brill that we

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"For thirty minutes there was a ceaseless roar and every little while we could hear cries of the men who had been shot. I looked up once and saw that Maj. Wilkinson had been injured but that I did not know. I heard him cry, 'Ross, I've been wounded, but don't give up, boys, you've got to get them whipped. Give it to them, give it to them,' the colonel was yelling at the top of his voice.

"GALLANT ATTACK. "He was a few yards to the right of us and we could hear him quite plainly. Every time his voice was heard a volley rang out, and every time it was further away from us. Afterward we learned that we had the colonel to thank for our lives. Some Indians had attempted to turn our right flank and attack the civilians on the beach, but the officers saw us in a moment and realized our danger, and his gallant attack had undoubtedly saved our lives.

"When we realized the position in which the colonel was in we called to him to get under cover, for God's sake! but he paid no attention to us. He stayed with the men until he had accomplished his purpose, and when we had about made up our minds that he was dead we were startled by a man in one word, 'I've been wounded, boys. I've been wounded,' was the remark we heard as the weeds parted and the gallant colonel walked toward us. We did not know how badly he was hurt, but saw at a glance that he had been shot in the arm, for two holes were distinctly seen in his coat sleeve.

WALKER, Minn., Oct. 7.—The following is the story of the thirty-six-hour fight on Bear Island told by K. C. Beaton, who was one of the newspaper correspondents under fire.

"I arrived at Sugar Point, or the point of the mainland, as it is known by the Indians, about 9 o'clock Wednesday morning, with the troops and United States Marshal O'Connor and his deputies.

"We had little trouble in effecting a landing. There was only one Indian sight, and he was one of those wanted and was arrested by Deputy Marshal Sheehan.

"After that a tour was made of the territory. Gen. Bacon and Maj. Wilkinson taking the lead, and Maj. Wilkinson being in command of the troops. It was a very disagreeable walk, as we had to go through several sloughs, and every one of us was wet when we returned.

"I only one point did we see any ducks. They were in the woods on the water on the mainland from a point we reached when we had covered about half of the distance. We could see them running through the woods, but lost sight of them in a few moments. We arrived at the point of landing, the place at which Boghmaynigh lives, shortly after 11 o'clock, having made a thorough search of the main point of land.

"As there were no indications of trouble, Brill, Knappen and myself made up our minds to go back to Walker on the boat to get our rations. Bacon for the tents and rations for another day. We were down at the landing awaiting for the row boats to be dispatched when a volley was heard. Immediately we ran back to the rest on the hill when a volley came from the woods to the front of us. The soldiers were just about to be dispatched when a volley was heard. A second volley came and the bullets whistled past my head.

"Run to cover," someone cried, and as the soldiers grabbed their guns and ran to the left I hurried down to the beach, where I was soon safely housed behind big boulders everywhere. A volley ran down, however, more bullets chased me, and it was a wonder that myself and those with me were not killed.

"Steady men, steady," was the first sound of a voice we heard, and as I raised my head I could see Gen. Bacon running about with his troops.