

JOSEPH NICHOLAS NICOLLET

From P. 122-Vol. I-Fowell's History of Minnesota.

Joseph Nicholas Nicollet, was born in 1790 in a small town in Savoy, in the extreme northwest of Italy (near the border of France). At the age of ten he was apprenticed to a watchmaker, with whom he served eight years, however French encyclopedias state that he did nothing but herd cows till he was twelve, when he learned to read and was sent to school. A few years were spent in the capitol of his province, where he supported himself by watchmaking while engaged in study. He won a mathematical prize of some importance, then returned to his native village where he taught mathematics and studied Latin and other languages, English being probably one of them. Later we find him in Paris, first a student in the Ecole Normale and not long after, an instructor in the College Louis-le-Grande. His first publication, which appeared in 1818, was on the mathematics of life insurance. It brought him into notice and opened the doors of society. He next turned his attention to astronomy, in which he soon distinguished himself; he was employed in important investigations, advanced to a professorship, and decorated with the medal, of the Legion of Honor. About the year 1830 this career of prosperity and distinction was rudely checked. The slender biographical materials available indicate that Nicollet, who has been successful in a financial way and had saved up a little fortune, entered upon certain speculative enterprises in which he not only lost his all but involved his friends as well. This disaster did not involve his honesty in the least. However he was bitterly reproached by those who had been his friends. Stung by their revilements he was suddenly abandoned all his engagements. Turned his back on Paris and sailed for New Orleans in the year 1832.

In 1833 he secured war department letters to commanding officers and Indian agents on the upper Mississippi and loan of astronomical instruments to be used in a proposed exploration. This project was delayed three years for some unknow<sup>n</sup> reason. It was not till the summer of 1836 that he arrived at Fort Snelling, where his charming manners rendered him a welcome guest. He spent the fall exploring the upper Mississippi to its source, returning to Fort Snelling on the 27th of September where he spent the winter with Major Tellaferro (Tolliver) and Henry Sibley who later became General.

In 1837 Nicollet went to Baltimore where he was enabled to lay his maps and reports before the Secretary of War, who recognized their value and employed Nicollet<sup>a</sup> as a surveyor and explorer for the next three years in making an examination of the upper Northwest Between the Missouri, Devils Lake and the Mississippi, with Lt. John C. Fremont as his assistant.

Nicollet was senior and in charge of the party of surveyor-explorers, he prepared a classic report on his findings which was printed in Senate document 238. The accompanying map was the earliest and most accurate map of the Northwest up to that time, but the authors health was failing he did not complete the work, he died in September 1843.

The party of explorers as they left Fort Pierre, South Dakota consisted of nineteen people, thirty three horses and ten carts, in addition to Nicollet and Fremont, there were two half breed guides, William Dixon, and Louisian Frontier: a Mr. May and a man from Pembina enroute home:

## Nicollet-3

thousands of miles with samll parties in the Indian country with little friction. His reports were incomplete when he died but the map and part of the text was published. A copy of the originals are in the hands of Dana Wright.



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Several years the Nicollet-Fremont party explored the Northwest, reestablishing landmarks, correcting maps and accumulating a mass of information about geology botiny and natural history, he traveled

General John Charles Fremont

Born of French parentage January 20, 1813 in Savannah, Georgia, his boyhood was rather turbulent, and his earlier attempts to settle down in a profession unsatisfactory. After acting successively as tutor on a private family, professor of mathematics on the United States Frigate Independence, and engineer on surveys in the southern states he accompanied Nicollet's expedition in its explorations between the Missouri and the British line. While thus engaged he received in July 7, 1838, a commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the corps of topographical engineers. While in Washington in 1840, engaged in a report of these expeditions, he met and became engaged to Jessie Benton, the daughter of Senator Benton of St. Louis, and this lady then only sixteen, he secretly married in October 19, 1841. In 1842 he started upon the famous "first expedition" to the Wind river mountains, ascending Fremont's peak now known as Pike's peak, on August 15th. On his return to Washington the report of his expedition was laid before Congress, which brevetted him 1st lieutenant. The report attracted great attention, both at home and abroad, and young Fremont had the honor of high complimentary <sup>letter</sup> from Humbolt.

In 1843, he began his explorations beyond the Rockies. He returned to Kansas in 1844 and after preparing his reports was brevetted captain in 1845, and sent out on his third expedition to explore the great basin and the maritime region of Oregon and California. This was the most eventful of all his journeys. Threatened at Monterey by the Mexican government for his refusal to leave California, Fremont withdrew into Oregon, but meeting in 1846 despatches directing him to watch over the interests of the United States, in California, there being reasons to apprehend that that province would be transferred to Great Britain, he promptly retraced his steps. The American settlers, whom the Mexican government threatened to destroy, flocked to Fremont's camp and in a



W. W. WRIGHT  
1846-1847

month, northern California was free. On July 4th, 1846, Fremont was elected its governor. In conjunction with Commodore Stocton<sup>m</sup> he undertook to reduce the entire state, but the Mexican war interfered and at its close the territory was ceded<sup>e</sup> to the U. S. by Mexico.

He was court martialed in 1848 for some trouble in relation to the governorship and resigned from the service, refusing to accept pardon from President Polk. He was afterward elected senator from California. In 1856 he became "free soil" candidate for President. Soon after the outbreak of the Civil War he was made a major general: there were differences between him and the administration and he resigned. In 1870 he was made governor of Arizona.

General Fremont was outstanding as an explorer in the western areas of the United States and was commonly called in his later life the "Pathfinder." He was active in politics but less successful and had decided views on various matters which involved him in unpleasant situations and disputes.

He has been described as a slightly built man about 5-9, very active and carried a himself lightly till in upper years when peritonitus attacked him about five days before his death which occurred in New York, July 14 (?) 1890. Funeral at the Episcopal church, of which he was a member.

He left two sons and a daughter, besides the widow.

Fremont was a brown haired man; he never shaved, tho he trimmed his beard neatly when and where he could. His eyes were large and blue, nose aquiline, his forehead high and capacious. He was a very modest man about his own accomplishments or plans. Such was the man who named Lake Jessie in 1839.

Indian battle (?) on Sheyenne River, Griggs County, N.D.

(Story told to Dana Wright, April 18, 1925)

"In 1879 two men, Omund Opheim and his son-in-law, Gustav Olson, had driven up from Iowa looking for land, they had got as far as Valley City where they received information about the upper Sheyenne Valley which induced them to drive up in that country to look the land over. There were a few settlers along the river for a distance out of Valley City but for a long distance they found none at all above the mouth of Bald Hill Creek. These men got to a place on the Sheyenne about east of where Cooperstown is now located and were living in their covered wagon, preparing to locate. They were cutting some hay and piling up some wood for winter when a party of half breeds came along from Stump Lake en route to Valley City. They stopped to talk.

Peter Grant was one of the breeds and he told about a battle which they said had been fought between two bands of Indians in 1855. Grant said he had been present as a boy 15 years old, he had been holding horses for the men in his band (Chippewa). He stated that a good many men had been killed in this affair and later buried on the site, which he said was on N.  $\frac{1}{2}$ -Sec. 12-T. 146-R. 58. This is about four miles north of the present highway No. 7 which runs east from Cooperstown. This battle site(?) would have been north of the site of Mardell (1882) which was on the southwest quarter of Section 13.

According to Grant the ground was dug up where bodies had been buried on the battle site but as the place has been under cultivation since 1881, no remains can be located."

Peter Grant was for many years a policeman in Fargo(?) The battle story was told me with some variations by other people on the Sheyenne about 1925, when interviewing pioneers. If there was a battle it was probably between Sioux and Chippewa.



C.C. 4, RR +  
Frosty Hilland

ALBERT R. FIELD\* Ag 26 mustered into Co. G. 1st Minn. Mounted Rangers Nov. 24 1862, Served on Sibley expedition, mustered out of service November 28, 1863.

Reentered service as Captain of Company A. 2d Minnesota cavalry at age of 27, November 27th 1863, served to February 11th, 1866 when several of his men froze to death on the march from Fort Wadsworth to Abercrombie. Their bodies were not recovered till spring.

Joseph Robinette enlisted in Company K, 1st Minn. Mounted Rangers on December 30, 1862 at the age of 28, mustered out with regiment December 10, 1863, served on Sibley expedition, wounded by Lt Fields at Camp Atchison, July 18, 1863.

Reentered service ~~December~~ January 24th 1864, ~~served with Sibley~~ in Company M, 2d Minnesota Cavalry, veteran, discharged for disability April 15th, 1864

Robinett was a mixed blood Indian, his disability may have been caused by the wound in side from pistol ball fired by Lt Field.

Lt Field had shot and wounded Robinette on arrival of the expedition at Camp Atchison on July 18th, 1863. It was supposed that Robinette had threatened the office. A court of enquiry was called for but there is no record of any action taken.

Notes on Griggs county.

May 12th- Visited Mardell on Sheyenne river also

Norman Opheim lives where his grandfather had his cabin on east side of Sheyenne, just south of school house. on SW 12-146-58, there is a neglected cemetery pasture SW of the farm buildings, large stone for the Opheims and a tumbled over one, for some old minister buried there. The original log cabin now stands in the court house yard at Cooper

Three Indian mounds on bluff east of the Sheyenne NE 12-146-58

Horse Hill, bulk on SW 34-147-59

Romness on NE 16- 147-58-Oscar Idsoog, now on site his mother formerly ran the PO. he had the old pigeon hole mail rack with cash slide at bottom.

Ole Balkan, old times, now living in Cooper

Durham was an old settler & trapper who lived west of Romness

Eidsvaag says there were mounds on NW 15-147-58 cattle herders were idle and dug the mounds open but did not find much but crumbling bones.

Examination was made for any sign of the rock pile set up in 1845 by Peter Garriosh of Winnipeg nothing noted that would fit.

Horse Hill- SW 24-144

Mardell SW 13-146-58

Franklin NW 32-147-54

Chamberl<sup>in</sup> SE 13-147.

Nicolette & Fremont 1

Capt Fisk NE 22-147-6

Butte Michand, Center

Red Willow Lake SW 7,

Camp Atchison SE-NW 2

Brents Gra<sup>VE</sup> SE 29-147

Camp Burt NW 35-145-

Lake Jessie spgs- NW 1

Camp Pope NW 4-145-5

Camp Corning SW 7-14

Johnston Lake-13-23-2

Jct, Sibley Trail 3

Jct. Sibley Trail sho

Double line of Stones

George T. Johnston, Co G. 3d Ill drowned At Johnston lake Aug 11, 1865, en route to Devils Lake, under Col. Carnahan, buried by lake south of Sheppard, N.D.

Rudolph Helland on Fisk's Camp Site-Lake Jessie

Small unspoiled Ind. m<sup>o</sup>und west of Binford on Stevens trial (15x 1) 23-147-61.

Henry Nyust-near Camp Pope-Stone ax- SW 4-145-59, Says Battle at Camp Pope.

Carsten Newland-owns outpost SE 5 Camp Pope.

Stone circles on high rough hills, NW of Binford on Sec 30-T. 148-R. 60 NE $\frac{1}{4}$  shown to DW by Rudy Helland.



G R I G G S

Horse Hill- SW 24-147-58

Mardell SW 13-146-58

Franklin NW 32-147-58

Chamberl<sup>in</sup> SE 13-147-59

Nicolette & Fremont NE $\frac{1}{4}$  22-147-60-1839-Also Gov. Stevens 1853

Capt Fisk NE 22-147-60-1862-63 in Lot 1

Butte Michand, Center 35-148-59-59

Red Willow Lake SW 7, NW 18-148-60 Indian Mounds

Camp Atchison SE-NW 29-147-60 South of Binford (Chester Ethan)

Brents Gra<sup>ve</sup> SE 29-147-60 Co. D. 1st Minn. Mtd Rangers, Died July 20.

Camp Burt NW 35-145-59- (Aug 12-13-1863) Petterson Grave.

Lake Jessie spgs- NW 15-147-60

Camp Pope NW 4-145-59 (July 17-18-1863)

Camp Corning SW 7-143-58 (July 16-17-1863) Barnes Co.

Johnston Lake-13-23-24-145-59 Fisk & Carnahan Camps-Johnson Grave

Jct, Sibley Trail 3 ~~184-59~~ <sup>144-59</sup> to Ft Ransom

Jct. Sibley Trail showson 32-145-59

Double line of Stones, NW 2-148-59

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Griggs county

Norman Ophein, on Sheyenne river NE of Cooper. grandson of the 1st settler in that area (1881) an old cemetery in pasture SW of Normans farm buildings, neglected, stones upset some Opheims buried there also and old minister. SW 12- 146- 58. (old church burned in fall of 1961.

east

Horse hill west of Sheyenne on the common corner of sect. 23-24 -25-26- 146-58.

Idsvold Peterson- Oscar Peterson lives on Romnes (?) place-



G R I G G S  
C O U N T Y N. D.

"Lac des Bois"

Lake Jessie spring on Nw 15-147-60

"Lake with Timber on one side"  
Oct. 14, 1845-visit by P. Garrioch

Gov I.I. Stevens camped at the N. & F site on July-10-11-1853-  
SW 14-147-60

Fisk on Rudy Helland farm between lakes. July 1862-3 NE 22-  
147-60

Sibley's Camp Douglas Pope Se of NW-4-145-59-On July 17-18-1863.

Camp Atchison on Ne 29-147-60-July 18, 1863 Aug. 12.

Junction of Ft Ransom with Ft Totten trails, almost due east of  
Hannaford on Sec 3-144-59, south of Johnsons Lake.

Johnsons lake, S of Sheppard, camp site of 3d Ill. Cav. 1865  
Johnson drowned Aug 8 (Co. G) Aug 11 ? 23-145-59

Horse Hill, SW 24-147-58 on the Sheyenne.

Small Indian mound<sup>d</sup> SW of Binford, 23-147-61 west side of Bald Hill  
Creek.

Mound NW of Cooperstown SE ~~21~~<sup>11</sup>-146-59.

Butte Michaud center of 35-148-59. Elev 1386 (Map shows 1586-  
Error?)

Chamberlin Hill SE 13-147-59.

Franklin Hill NW 32-147-58.

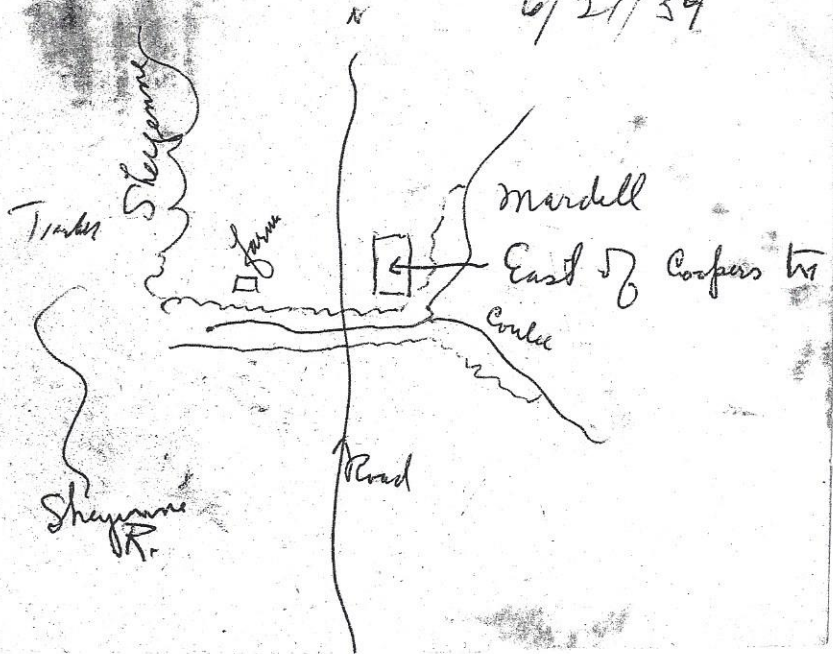
Sibley's camp Burt (return trip) was on NE 35 -145-59 Aug. 12-13-1863  
Kristen Petterson grave.

Good  
But of Pottery from Holland.  
came from Ill

1913  
57  
46

Mardell - pits all cult. lies just N  
of a little timbered ravine - which has a bridge  
over river

6/21/59





G R I G G S

- 2 -

Chester Ethen lives on old Thune place, he is a grandson.

And Mound NW Cooperstown on SE 11-146-59, on long range of hill

And Mound SE of Cooperstown Center 22-145-58, W side of Sheyenne

Grave of Samuel Wannamaker, Co E, 10th Minn. on hill NNW Camp  
Atchison; died August 9, 1863.

Freegaard Hill N of Coopertown-2 mi. says Agent Dahl  
Indian Mound

Griggs County-

Fugelstad lives on SW- 10- 145- 59. Two miles west of Shappard.

One of the family is an instructor at college in Moorehead, Minn  
He visits the Dishruds of Rolla. In 1962 DW gave him a fossil  
bone that came from South Dakota.



12  
12

10

10

N.P. Ry

Binford

Spring x

Lake Jessie

16

17

18

Stage station 1867-1872

Camp site Nicolle & Fremont July 25 and 26, 1839 and Gov I.I. Stevens July 10-11-1853

Camp site of Capt James Fisk, July 15-16-1862 and July 20-1863 and in July 1866. Capt Wm. J. Twining, July 18-1869.

21

20

22 Lake Addie

23

24

Wanamaker grave

Sibley's Camp Atchison July 18 - Aug. 12-1863.

28

Brents grave.

27

26

25

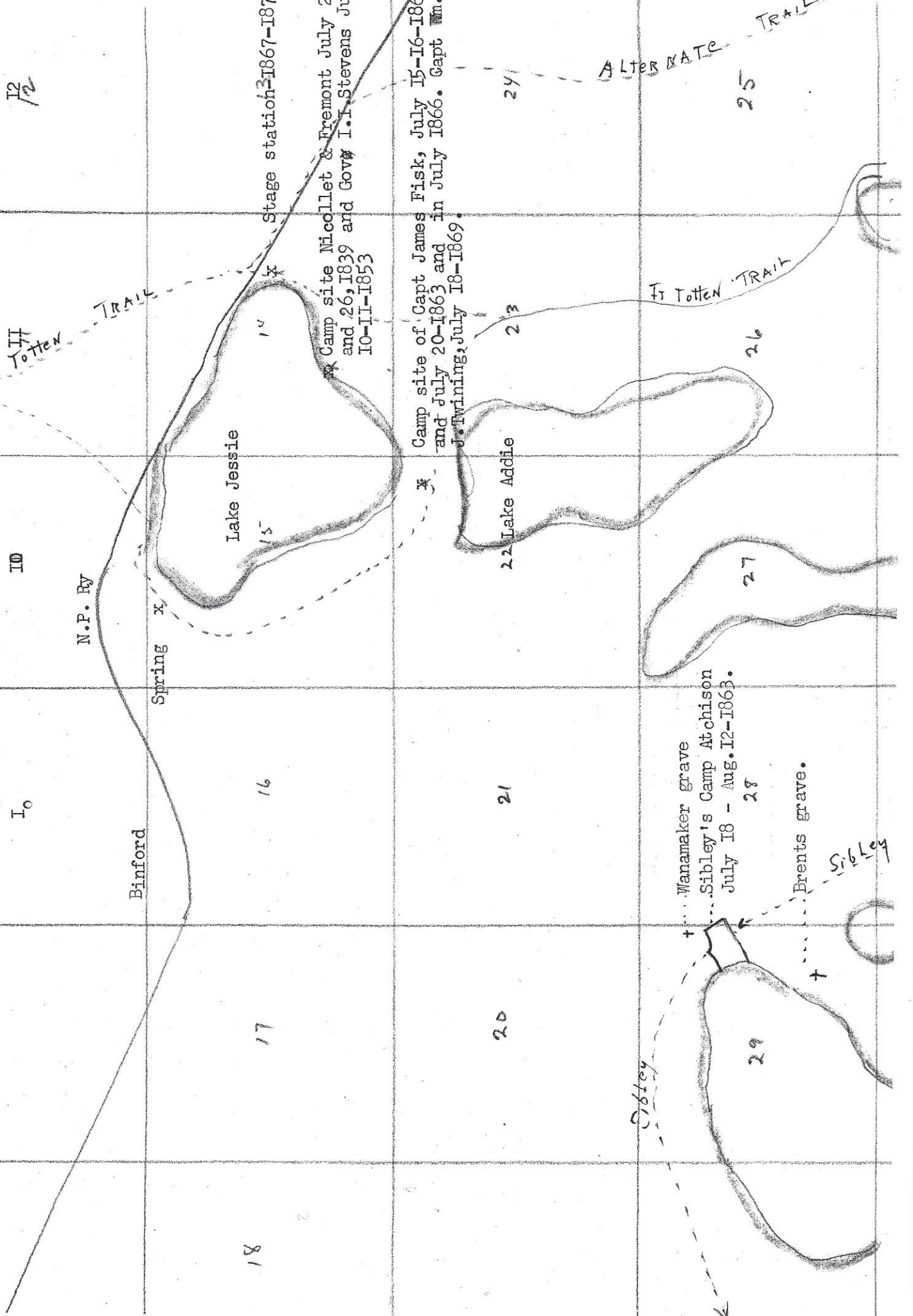
7 Totten TRAIL

ALTERATE TRAIL

7 Totten TRAIL

Sibley

Sibley



10

John Charles Fremont

B. Jan 21, 1813

Lake Jessie- Griggs County, N.D.

2d Lt. Corp of Engineers

Named by the "Pathfinder" J.C. Fremont / who with J.N. Nicollet visited the lake in 1838, their camp was on a high bluff at the east side of near what is now the McCulloch farm, the traces were seen and mentioned by Gov Stevens who passed there in 1853.

Jessie was the name of the lady who became Mrs Fremont, she was the daughter of Senator Thos Benton of Missouri.

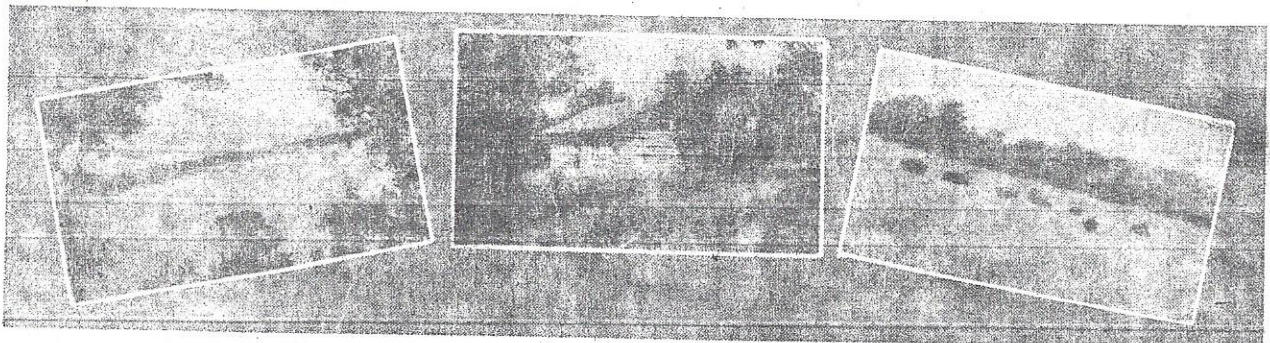
H.

They were married Oct, 19, 1841 She was about 17

Fremont died 1890 D. Robinsons encyclopedia of SD.

Joseph Nicolas Nicollet-1789-1843

ST. JOHN CHAPTER INAAK WATSON LEAGUE





ENCLOSED IN WRIGHT TO REID, 21 DEC 1954

Suggested inscription for marker at Lake Jessie,

Lake Jessie, named for Jessie Benton, daughter of Senator Benton of Missouri, this lady who later became the wife of Lt John C. Fremont, the "Pathfinder". The explorer J.N. Nicollet and Lt Fremont and party camped on the high bluff half a mile to the northeast on 25-26, 1839 when enroute to Devils Lake. On July 10-11 the survey party under I.I. Stevens camped on the same spot, when enroute to the Pacific coast.

1853. Captain J.L. Fisk and his party of goldseekers camped between Lakes Jessie and Lake Addie on July 15-16 1862 and again on July 20, 1863 and also in 1866. The reconnaissance party under Captain Wm. Twining camped here July 18, 1869.

The ~~stage~~ mailcarriers station on the Totten-Ft Abercrombie trail was at the east end of Lake Jessie 1867 to 1872.

Suggested inscription for marker at Lake Jessie.

Lake Jessie was named for Jessie Benton, daughter of Senator Benton of St Louis Mo. This lady later became the wife of Lt. John C. Fremont, who with J.N. Nicollet exploring party camped a half mile northeast of here on the bluff, on July 25-26, 1839, when enroute to Devils Lake. On July 10-11, 1853, the survey party under Governor I.I. Stevens camped on the same spot, when enroute to the Pacific coast. On July 15-16 1862 Captain J.L. Fisk and his party of gold seekers camped between Lake Jessie and lake Addie, and again on July 20 1863 and also in 1866 when enroute to Montana. The reconnaissance party under Capt Wm Twining camped here July 18, 1869. The mail carriers had a shelter on the east end of lake Jessie from 1867 to 1872.

Ed Lohnes' mail station on east side of Red Willow lake in late Sixties.

Willow store and Post office, west edge sect. 16-T.148-R.60, prior to 1884. 1884.

Mail station on Ft Totten-Abercrombie trail 1876. Located at east edge of Lake Jessie. The Nicolette-Fremont party camped on the southwest edge of Sect 14-T.147-R.60 in a bare bluff overlooking Lake Jessie, where Governor Stevens camped in 1853.

Captain Fisk camped in 1862 and 1863 on the south side of Lake Jessie, when enroute to the gold fields of Montana.

Camp Pope of Sibleys north bound <sup>h</sup>trip (1863) was near the center of Sect. 14-T.145-R.59, southwest of Cooperstown. Near here but not identified was the night camp of Col. McPhail who commanded a detachment of Sibleys cavalry on the return trip from Camp Atchison to Minnesota in August, 1863. His records state that the camp was 10 miles from Atchison, which would be in the vicinity of Camp Pope. The main column of Sibley's was camped more to the south, at Camp Burt on the east edge of Sect. 35-T.145-R.59 at the west edge of Stai lake. Here Christen Peterson was buried.

Lake Johnson is located on the east edge of Sect. 23-T.145-R.59, south of Shepard four miles, it was named for George T Johnson Co. G. 3d Ill. Cav who was drowned in the lake Aug 11, 1865. The regiment was camped on the lake, while enroute to Devils Lake to meet General ~~Sibley~~ Sully enroute from Ft. Rice.

The camping area was west of the south end of the lake on the southeast quarter of Sect. 23-T.145-R.59, a few miles south of the Shepard siding. The Sibley trail of 1863 as well as the Fort Totten trail of 1867, passed over the southwest corner of the section. A government marker has been placed for George Johnson and placed in the school house yard in the southeast corner of the section, as the exact spot where the body lies cannot be determined.

On July 15th Captain Fisk and his gold miners camped at the south end of the lake on his 1862 expedition. During the years when mail carriers used the trail past the lake an emergency shelter was provided for storm weather ~~xxxxxx~~.

About a mile south of the Sibley Camp Burt was a junction of trails, where the Colonel McPhail detachment turned south to scout the west side of the Sheyenne river, later (1867) the same trail was used to travel to and from Fort Ransom at Bear Den Hill.

All the above were on or near the Sibley trail, later used by travelers between Fort Abercrombie and Fort Totten. Capt Fisk used it in 1862 and 3, + Capt Timings reconnaissance party in 1867. Herds of beef cattle, mail carriers, soldiers changing station, contractors and heavy freighters cut deep ruts in the sod, a few can still be seen, well on towards a hundred years old.



In 1839 Nicolette and Fremont with their little party of explorers arrived at Lake Jessie on the 25th day of July and camped over night. Their camp seems to have been on a high bare hill on the old McCulloch farm on the southwest quarter of Sect. 14-T. 147-R. 60. They had been traveling north from Bear Den Hill, later the site of Fort Ransom, along the west side of the Sheyenne. From Lake Jessie their course was to the northwest to the Devils Lake region. Pierre Bottineau was the guide and as he was also the Guide for General Terry in 1867 over the same area, it is quite likely that they traveled the same course from Lake Jessie north.

In 1845 a party of half breed hunters from the Red river area were operating south and east of Devils Lake and mention being at Lac du Bois, the term Fremont had used for the place until he named it Jessie for the lady whom he later married. One of the half breed hunters was Peter Garriosh, who kept a diary and makes mention of certain land marks mentioned by Nicolette; Horse Hill, Butte Michaud and Red Willow Lake.

On July 10th 1853 Governor Stevens arrived at Lake Jessie enroute to the Pacific coast. His small party had crossed the Sheyenne river southeast of Cooperstown and made its way through thousands of buffalo to Lake Jessie, from which point he turned nearly west near the course ~~to~~ that Captain Fisk was to take ten years later. The governor left an excellent map and tables of milage and day by day descriptions of his travels.

The Col Carnahan trip of 1865 from his Devils Lake visit, was along the north or east side of the Sheyenne, to Georgetown, Minn. He probably passed over the northeast corner of Griggs county perhaps as far as Horse hill area.

Joseph R. Brown, famous Minnesota pioneer and trader is said to have spent a winter on Bald Hill Creek in the fifties, but details are lacking.

The prehistoric peoples of the prairie have left remains that tell of their long occupation of the country. Indian "mounds" are located along the Sheyenne river in center Sect. 22-T. 145-58, on west side of the Sheyenne, this is south of the locally called Indian Mounds or Badd lands, which are some large hillocks of Pierre shale in the Sheyenne valley.

There is an artificial earthwork on the top of Butte Michaud, and others nearby on the east side of the Sheyenne, some in the vicinity of old Romness site. Also a small one on the west side of Bald Hill creek southwest of Binford. Others in the vicinity of Red Willow Lake (south end) and one on Freegaard Hill, a few miles southwest of Cooperstown. This is on Sect II-T. 146-R. 59. It is unusual to find one so far from wood or water, as this one is.

On the west side of Lake Jessie a large mound on NW - 15\* T. 147-R. 60. not far from the spring..

Griggs County Buttes- Dana Wright, Oct. 31st, 1952

Dana Wright

Michaude-Mashue-Michaux some of the names of the most prominent hill on the west bank of the Sheyenne in Griggs county. It is northeast of Lake Jessie on the east half of Section 35-T.148-R.59. It is said to have been named for some Indian chief buried on the summit.

It carried that name in 1839 when Fremont and Micallet were at Lake Jessie on their trip to Devils Lake region. There is a deep ravine running north near the west base of the hill, with some scattered timber, to the north and east, the land drops away steeply and, not so rapidly to the south. One of the flanking hills to the southwest carries a double line of stones set in the sod on the summit.

a Chamberlin hill- is a bare prairie butte on the southeast quarter of Sec. 13-T.147-R.59; Tyrol township. It was named for a settler in the early days who had a home on the southeast side. The hill is almost directly east of Lake Jessie lies north of a country road running to the Sheyenne river.

b Horse butte a bare island rising up in the valley of the Sheyenne on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 25-T.147-R.58. It is about a mile east of the church on Sec 23 and a little more, east of the river bridge over the Sheyenne. The hill is grass covered and nothing remarkable to look at except that it is odd to be standing isolated like an island in the valley of the river. It may be a hundred feet higher than the flat which surrounds it and covers several acres.

c As long ago as 1845 a party of half breed hunters from the Red river settlements passed by there and a diarist name Peter Garriosh noted that the name had been applied by the Indians, who claimed that a wild horse had roamed the area long before, so large that the birds made nests in his mane and tail and was so fleet that no hunter could get close.



Historic Sites in Griggs County, North Dakota

Dana Wright  
St John, N.D. 11/9/52

Sibleys northbound trail, camp Pope July 17-18-1863, on NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ -Sec. 4-T. 145-R. 59 about five miles southwest of Cooperstown. Camp by a shallow lake or slough, a small grove of cottonwood trees nearby.

Sibley trail shows on Sec. 32.

Camp Atcheson-base camp of Sibleys-July 18 to Aug 12, located on the Thune farm south of Binford on NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec 29-T. 147-R. 60. Grave of Geo E. Brent on hill SW of Thune buildings on SE of 29.

Sibleys return camp (Burt) occupied Aug. 12-13, north- east of Hannford about three miles on NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ -Sec 35-T. 145-R. 59. Grave of Christ Peterson: Is Minn. Mtd rangers.

A mile north is a shallow lake originally called Johnson lake for a private soldier of 3d Ill. Cav. He was drowned there in 1865 as his regt. was moving to Devils Lake. Fisk with his gold seekers camped here in 1862-3 on his way to Lake Jessie, he called it pike lake. Johnson is probably buried on the west bank of the lake, on Sec. 23-T. 145-R. 59.

In the late sixties and early seventies the Sibley trail was used by travelers between Ft Abercrombie and Ft Totten. A junction at Sec. 3-T. 144-R. 59 about a mile south of Camp Burt is where a side road led south on the west side of the Shyenne, to Ft Ransom.

In 1839 the Nicollet and Fremont party camped on the SE side of Lake Jessie on the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 14-147-60, west of the McCulloch buildings. Gov. Stevens camped there in 1853 and Capt Fisk was there in 1862-3 and camped on NW of 23. They all seemed to have used water from the spring at NW corner of lake, on NW of 15. This is just south of the road running between Binford and Jessie. There is a double line of stones on the hills south of the spring and an Indian mound on the lake bank on west side.

Indian mounds on Red Willow lake on SW of 7 and Lohnes mail carrier shack was on east side of lake, exact spot unknown.

Gov Stevens camped on a lake at west edge of Griggs county, almost straight west of Lake Jessie, in 1853

Butte Michaud on Shyenne river on east half of Sec. 35-T. 148-R. 59. Double line of stones on one of the hills to southwest.

Chamberlins hill on SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Sec. 13-T. 147-R. 59, Directly east of Jessie.  
Franklin on Sec. 35, west of Horse butte. on S.E. Sec. 24-T 147-R. 58 near the Steele Co. Lin

Memo. in Re. Camp Atcheson and Brent's grave- July 22d, 1953- Dana Wright

The camp Atcheson site is covered with heavy vegetation, grass and weeds, there is quite a growth of chokecherry bushes in the angle of the original trench.

The tract is fenced in on the east side, away from the highway with a woven wire fence hung on steel posts, it is in good condition except that the wire is loose. The side toward the highway is open, there is no facilities for turning out.

The wooden marker furnished by the state is intact but should be repainted, one of the American Legion boys from Binford started to repaint it, but was taken sick and has not resumed the work.

The American Legion post at Binford is quite active and agreed to look after the historic sites in their area; the Brent grave on the Thune hill, Camp Atcheson and now have agreed to set the marker for the grave of Samuel Wanamaker, aged 42 who died of sickness at Camp Atcheson, while Sibley was on the trip to the Missouri.

Mrs Agnes Thune, the site owner has given permission to have the marker set up along the highway just opposite the grave, which is in a cultivated field. Dr J.L. Truscott of Binford knows the exact site and will assist the Legion in setting the stone. As soon as Mrs Thune signed the government request giving permission to have it placed on her land, I forwarded it to the Army people in Washington, it will be shipped direct to the American Legion at Binford.

The Brent grave on the hill on the Thune farm is in shabby condition and should be refenced, a substantial fence of iron pipe like the one at the Beaver grave on Apple creek, would be advisable, if not too expensive. The same type should be placed at Wannamaker grave which is in a different location.

Mrs Thune says there are numerous visitors to the Brent grave and they enquire who was buried there and why, small explanatory signs would be very helpful.

These ~~six~~ sites are close to Highway No 1 which is well traveled, and people pass frequently and need to be briefed.

While in this area I examined the Gov Stevens camp site on Lake Jessie (1853) and followed his trail, west to the county line, there is nothing to show where he traveled; I worked from his map and table of distances. The place where the buffalo herd stampeded the four mules and a horse, is about 3 miles southwest of Binford and a little east of the slough crossing he mentions. The animals were not recovered.

The Stevens camp the night after leaving Lake Jessie was about west of Binford on the west Griggs county line somewhere south of Mose.



Excuse, Wright to Reilly, 25 July 1953

Grave of George T. Johnson, Co G. 3d Ill, Vol Cav.  
on Lake Johnson, southwest of Cooperstown, N.D.

Dana Wright  
July 24th, 1953

On August 11th, 1865 the 3d Ill. Cav was passing the lake enroute to Devils Lake to meet Gen. Sully. They probably camped on the west side as the Ft Totten trail is on that side. Some of the men went swimming in the lake and Johnson was drowned.

From the lay of the ground it would seem that he must have been buried on the south or west bank of the lake, exact spot unknown. Owners of the land live at a distance except Ed Krogsgard who is willing to have the stone set on his land on the NE of Sec. 23- T45-R. 59. which is close to what must be the actual grave site. Another possible place for the stone would be in the abandoned school house yard on the SE corner of 32, at the south end of the lake. I am writing the school board for their reaction, in the meantime I am holding back the application for the stone, as it is necessary to have permission from some one (land owner) to set the stone on their property.

This lake was evidently named for the man who was drowned there, as the territorial maps use his name, in more recent years it was sometimes called Pike lake. Camp Fisk camped on its shores; the Sibley, Ft Totten trail passed along the west edge of the lake. As a body of water it does not amount to much, being merely a big slough, though covering quite a large area in sections 13-T4-23-24 of the township.

In dry years it has been used as farm land, but at present is water covered.

Mr Krogsgard is the son of a pioneer and much interested in historical matters and it may be best to set the stone on his land.

The American Legion in Hannaford is the nearest patriotic organization and their officers were contacted. They state that they will accept the stone and have it set up, when the proper time comes, also give it care as they do the Peterson stone of the Sibley expedition, which is only a mile or two distant nearer to Hannaford, the Johnson and Peterson sites are in the general area of the fork of the Totten trail separates the Abercrombie branch from the Ft Mansom one.

18" x 20"

Township 147- range 60 in Griggs county.

147- 60

Spring

+

Lake Jessie

15

14

x Ft Totten-Abercrombie stage station  
1867- 1872

x Nicollet-Fremont July 25-26-1839  
gov. J. N. Stevens July 10-11-1858

Captain J.L.Fisk  
1862-3 and 6

~~K] o R. N. ...~~

21

22

Lake Addie

23

Fisk- July 15-16-1862  
20 1863

Foot path to Fort Abercrombie

Ft Totten TRAIL

27

26

Dana Wright, 10/14/54

Capt Fisk named lake Addie; Lydia for his wife.

cc to RR



ENCLOSURE, WRIGHT TO REID, 1 AUG 1957

Indian Mounds along Sheyenne river, near Butte Michaude  
Griggs county, N.D.

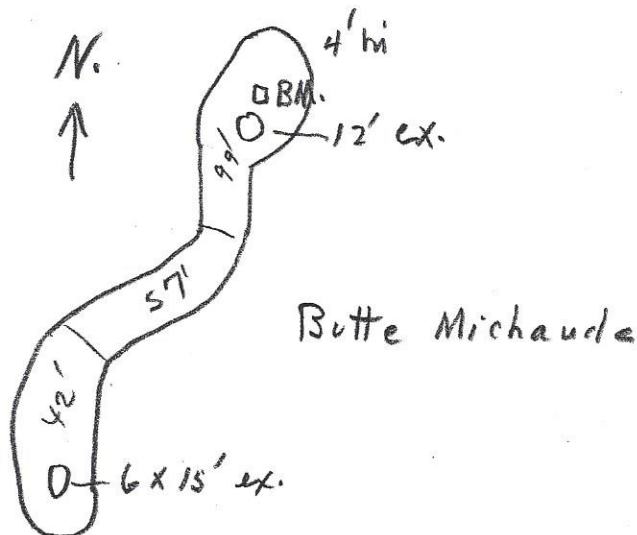
Dana Wright  
July 25, 1957

Butte Michaude said to have been named for an Indian buried in the mound on the summit, is located on Sec. 35-148-59, near the center. The hill is probably the highest in Griggs county and affords a beautiful view along the Sheyenne from Horse hill up to the vicinity of McVillie. Copperstown and the town of Jessie can be identified. The hill has been a land mark for early travelers from the early white invasions.

The hill is now a sheep pasture and cleaned off of all grass, so every stone can be seen but no stone patterns were noted. On the north and west sides are groves of oak and smaller brush. By opening a gate at farm house on south slope one can drive to the summit where an earth mound is found nearly ~~in~~ 200 feet in length, the northeast end is a nearly circular mound 50' x 40' about 4 feet high, with a trail leading off to the southwest in a double curve. It has been dug into as usual.

About a mile to the east<sup>+</sup> on the bluff of the Sheyenne is an earthen mound about 60 feet across at the base and about 5 feet in height, it has an old excavation in the top. The field has been under cultivation at some time in the past but is now in pasture. A heavy belt of timber lines the bluff to the north & east, this probably is situated on SE 1/4 - Sec 36.

About a mile north of Butte Michaude is a group of mounds on a ridge on the east bluff of the Sheyenne, on the south edge of Sect 24-148-59. These mounds are in sod and evidently never have never been disturbed a small low mound one the south end of the row, then a larger one about 55 feet in length; 4 feet high and to the north another smaller one.



Camp Atchison Historic Site  
On highway No 1. South of Binford, N.D.

Dana Wright  
May 28th, 1959

This site gets little care, the highway people usually mow the grass in the ditches, and the American Legion usually place a flag on the headstone on the site, on Memorial day.

This stone was furnished by the Government for Samuel Wannamaker of Co. E-10th Minn Vol. Inf, who died of sickness and was buried on an outpost hill the the northwest of the camp about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. The actual site has been cultivated and cannot be identified but the homesteader who broke the land said it was on the high point of the hill at a little half moon rifle pit.

The wooden sign board marking the site of the camp, has rotted off and is lying face down in the grass, it should be replaced with a more substantial sign board. A farmer who cultivated the land just east of the site has dumped a stone pile on the state land, where they are available for a backing for a sign if one can be secured.

This sign should carry information about the camp, <sup>was</sup> which an important point on the Sibley trail?.

#### Camp Atchison

Named for Captain Charles B. Atchison, ordnance officer of the staff of General H.H. Sibley, during the Indian campaign of 1863.

This camp site occupied several acres between here and the lake shore; a portion of the original earthworks are here preserved.

Co. E, 10 Minn. Inf.

The grave of Samuel Wannamaker lies on the hilltop to the north west he died of sickness August 9th, 1863, while the main expedition was in pursuit of the Indians to the Missouri river.

Co. D. 1st Minn. Mounted Rangers

On the hill top half a mile to the southwest lies the body of George E. Brent, who died from an accidental gun shot, July 20th 1863. This camp was abandoned August 12th and the army returned to Minnesota.

(The above is too long a text but what should be eliminated?)

Or-

Sibley's Camp Atchison  
July 18th to August 12th, 1863.

This base camp was named for Captain Charles B. Atchison, ordnance officer on Gen Sibley's staff. It occupied the ground west to the lake, and was garrisoned by the invalids of the expedition while the more active made the campaign to the Missouri river and return. On the hill to the Northwest lies - (D. Aug 9th) the body of Samuel Wannamaker, Co E. 10 Minn Inf and to the southwest on the highest point is the grave of George E. Brent, Co. D. 1st Minn. Mounted Rangers, who was accidentally shot July 20th.



ENCLOSED, Wright to Reig, 9 July 1960

Historical Activity in Griggs County, N.D.

Dana Wright  
July 7th, 1960

Mr & Mrs Rudy Helland of Jessie N.D. are the people who donated the site for the Lake Jessie marker.

A brother, Fritz Helland of Cooperstown, had a trailer house at the dedication, it was filled with Indian and pioneer pictures, artifacts and specimens, which attracted wide attention.

This exhibit still stands at or near the Lake Jessie marker and is visited by many visitors, evenings and Sundays.

Mr F. Helland and others are asking how to organize a county historical society and I will be glad to help them but at present I do not find the little booklet which the historical society had out several years ago, giving a guide in the organizing movement. If you have an extra one in the office he would be glad to use it. I think there was a picture of the Memorial building on the cover.

Mr Helland, says the local 4-H leader thinks it would be a nice project for his group to care for some of the graves in the county; Johnson at Shepard, Brent and others at Camp Atchison. It would be a very helpful arrangement.

The Camp Atchison site is badly in need of a permanent marker, all we have there at present is the old wooden WPA affair, leaning against some choke cherry bushes. Mr Helland offered to keep the place cleaned up if the state would get it into a little better condition. The little bunch of brush on the state tract is composed of some scraggly boxelders and a snarl of choke cherries, they should be cleaned out of old tumble weeds and dead branches, grass mowed and beer cans picked up.

It could be made into an attractive place, but would require some work. The farmer who wor the land to the east of the state tract, has dumped a row of field stones at the back; these could be used in case a permanent marker is built, over sized ones could be placed under the fence at the back.

I might add that Mr Fritz Helland has been at Lake Jessie site and mowed the state area several times this summer. There are few people like Hellands, who are so capable and ~~will~~ willing to help with historical projects, I am happy to work with them when there is an opportunity.