

half way where running water could be secured. Lyon, Osceola, Plymouth and O'Brien counties were then devoid of settlements, except a few in and around Melbourne, and four or five farmers near the mouth of the Broken Kettle. It was afterward demonstrated that this area was used by the Indians from the north as a hunting ground, uninterrupted. It seemed that the object of the Indians in approaching the settlements was to steal horses, and if need be, kill the owners to get them. The object of the organization before mentioned was to patrol the country in the vicinity of Sioux City and forestall the approach of hostile Indians, if any gave notice of their appearance. In addition, a party of twenty in charge of Dr. Wm. Smith chose to make a more extended expedition. They were not authorized by the state or government and were obliged to provide their own mounts, equipment and sustenance, except such as were contributed by the citizens. Enough was collected for a ten day trip, which was made covering the divide between the Floyd and the Big Sioux Rivers in Plymouth county, terminating at Beloit, and return. Nothing out of the ordinary occurred during this outing.

As winter approached, the Indians, as was their wonted custom, returned to their winter quarters and were inactive during the cold winter. In the early spring of '61 renewed efforts were made with the government and state authorities for more substantial protection, with the result that orders were received from the Governor and through the Adjutant General of the State of Iowa to recruit a company of militia for that purpose. The same officers who had charge of the militia were selected, to wit: Wm. Tripp, Captain; Dr. Wm. H. Smith, First Lieutenant; and A. J.