

timber between their farm and the place they secured water. The Indians must have known it was their custom to cross this ravine at noon, for it was there that they intercepted and shot them to death. Nothing special was thought because they did not return that evening, but next morning members of their families made search without avail, so a posse was formed and finally found the bodies at the place heretofore mentioned. Their death came like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. The population was greatly frightened and alarmed. There was no thought that hostile Indians were in the vicinity, much less that they would commit such a crime under the very shadow of the regiments still on the frontier. The question arose of what to do. A party was made up to follow the Indians' trail over which they had disappeared with the horses. The thought was that such a crime could be committed with impunity at such a place, that safety was imperiled for any one near.

A requisition was made on the government and state authorities for protection without avail. So a company was formed and officers appointed to take charge. Wm. R. Tripp was first, Dr. Wm. R. Smith second, and Millard third in command. This company embraced about all the able bodied men then residing in the city. At this time there was no settlement from the Des Moines River on the east to the Little Sioux River on the west and north in Sac and Ida counties except Emmetsburg, Estherville, Spirit Lake, Spencer, and a few settlers on the east side of the Little Sioux River between the two last named towns. There was a trail across the prairies from Cherokee to Melbourne stretching forty miles. There were no houses and only one place about