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MEMOIR OF HON. JAS. W. LYND.

BY REV. S. R. RIGGS.

In compliance with a request from the Executive Council of the Minnesota Historical Society, I have arranged the following imperfect sketch of Mr. LYND.

A letter from his father, Rev. S. W. LYND, now of Cincinnati, Ohio, together with what appears to be an editorial "In Memoriam," which appeared in the *Louisville Journal* of October, 1862, contains all the information concerning Mr. LYND's early life that I have been able to obtain.

JAMES W. LYND was born on the 29th of November, 1830. His father was Rev. S. W. LYND, D. D., an eminent Baptist clergyman. His birthplace was Baltimore, Maryland; but afterwards the family removed to Kentucky; for the next we hear of him he is a youth in Covington.

"There was nothing peculiar in him in his boyhood, except an obvious love of the beautiful in nature and art, and a mind of more than ordinary delicacy and taste. But he was not fond of school, and was at an early age, having acquired a tolerable English education, placed in a store, where he obtained a knowledge of business, and subsequently became a clerk in the office of an insurance company, with quite a large salary for a young man not twenty years of age, and with the promise of an annual increase."

Another chronicle says, "Inheriting equally from his learned and now venerable father, and his noble and accomplished mother, a *physique* at once vigorous and refined, and a native spirit correspondingly dauntless and susceptible, he was constitutionally a pioneer, a scholar, and a poet."

The following is given as a sample of his poetical abilities as developed during his school life :

HERODOTUS.

The graces on a summer day
Were sporting merrily at play,
When thus, the sporting o'er, did say
 The fair Euphrosyne :
" Sisters mine, sisters mine,
 By brook and bower, dale and dell,
Sisters mine, sisters mine,
 I have a pleasant tale to tell :
As o'er the fields I chanced to stray,
Singing of our frolics gay,
And tripping softly on my way,
 As light as light could be,
Sisters mine, sisters mine,
What think you that I saw,
Beneath the creeping eglantine,
 And stately dahlia?—
A youth of golden locks, and brow
Whiter than purest crystal snow,
The shady trees and vines below,
 Smiling in slumber lay ;
His locks strayed o'er his glowing cheek,
His lips apart seemed most to speak ;
What did I to the blooming Greek?
 Fair sisters shall I say?
I crowned his brows with myrtles green,
His parted lips my rod between
I placed, and well endowed I ween,
 The youth with eloquence ;
I touched the bosom of the youth,
And in his inmost heart, forsooth,
Arose that burning love of truth
 That burns without pretence ;
I kissed his brow as he reclined,
And made him, as the gods designed,
A mighty and immortal mind !
 Say, sisters, did I well?"

Of Mr. LYND's education it is said he received it "under his father's excellent auspices." From his father's statement it appears that, although "not fond of school when a boy," after being engaged as clerk in the insurance office for a year or more, he woke up to the importance of learning, and "resolved

to educate himself." He now commenced his studies under the supervision of the professors in the Western Baptist Institute in Covington, Kentucky. "Here he made himself quite a good Latin scholar and a mathematician." He excelled especially in geometry. "His professor in geometry regarded him as the best geometrician he had ever met with in his teaching." This was not unmeaning praise.

In the spring of 1857, I think it was, I first met with Mr. LYNDE, under somewhat singular circumstances. I was returning home to Hazlewood from Saint Peter, in the month of April, in company with Mr. W. W. ELLISON and his sister. We found the Redwood stream so swollen by recent rains that it was impossible to effect a crossing that afternoon. It was still raining and we had a fine prospect for a wet night. We sought shelter from the storm at the government mill then at the falls of the Redwood. Sometime after night "WE-CHA-HA-NA-PIN,"—*Raccoon Collar*,—as the Dakotas called Mr. LYNDE, sought the same shelter. And as he and others slept in the loft above, we heard him discussing mathematical questions until a late hour of the night.

But to return to his school days:—His father says, "During this time he gave much of his attention to literary acquirements, intending to devote his life to literary pursuits. He became, through his own untiring industry, and almost entirely self-taught, a very fine performer on the piano." While the *Louisville Journal* says, he was "deeply and naturally imbued with an unpretending, but soul-absorbing love of all that is romantic and beautiful in life; he was a worshipper of art, a proficient in music, and not only a *connoisseur* of polite letters, but himself, although he had published little, a gifted and industrious producer."

He is said to have taken "peculiar pleasure in studying the character" of the Indians. With an enthusiasm for the wild and picturesque that knew no bounds, he became, long before his removal to Minnesota, singularly interested in the Indian character, and constantly availed himself of every opportunity and resource to acquaint himself with the legends, traditions, languages and ethnology of the aborigines. He covered the walls of his apartments in college with Indian words." The

writer goes on to say; "and learned to speak the language, or rather languages of the Dakotas, with the fluency and idiomatic intonations of the natives themselves."

This seems to refer to the time previous to his coming to Minnesota; but even referring it to his attainments in after years, it must be regarded as the judgment of a friend who had never learned to speak an Indian language. I have heard a great many white men talk Dakota, but I have yet to hear one, in all respects, talk it "with the fluency and idiomatic intonations of the natives." Mr. LYND, previous to his death, spoke the language too well to have made such a claim for himself. But it is proper for me to say, that he did speak the Dakota language very fluently, and doubtless understood its grammatical construction better than most white men in the country.

"He was always of a retiring disposition, keeping his own counsel, and tender and kind in all his intercourse with others." This is the father's testimony. It seems that he did not keep his friends very well informed of his circumstances after he left home.

There is some difficulty in determining the exact time when Mr. LYND came to Minnesota. His father gives 1850. But that must be a mistake, as he was then only twenty years old, and it was in his twentieth year he commenced to obtain his education. The writer in the *Louisville Journal*, says: "With all the enthusiasm of a voyageur, and the indefatigableness of an antiquary, he removed nine years ago directly into the midst of those whom he so much loved to study." This would place his arrival in Minnesota in the year 1853, which better agrees with the statements made in regard to his education.

"Settling at *Traverse des Sioux*," says the *Journal*, "he renewed his investigations with more ardor than ever, mingling constantly with the Indians. Systematically gathering and arranging the varied and abundant materials thus accumulated, he at length condensed his laborious researches into a most interesting and carefully-prepared manuscript volume, which we have had the pleasure of examining, and which, if published, would, we have no doubt, prove a very valuable contribution to

our obscure knowledge of this disinherited and vanishing race."

As the Indians were removed from the Traverse des Sioux country about this time of 1853, Mr. LYND probably did not remain long there. For several years he was, to some extent, engaged in the fur trade, and was connected with the BROWNS. My understanding was that he was a partner with NATHANIEL BROWN. While in this business he resided at various points, but chiefly at the Lower Sioux Agency and at Henderson.

Following the example of others in the trade, and especially of those with whom he was more especially connected, Mr. LYND, soon after he came into the country, took MARY NAPAYSHUE, a very respectable and educated Indian girl. She had been raised in one of the mission families, and could read and speak English quite well. By this connection she has two beautiful, light-haired, fair-skinned girls, the eldest of which must be now eight or nine years old. Mr. LYND was frequently urged to marry this woman, and at times he expressed his wish and determination to do so, but he did not do it. It is believed that this course commended itself to his better nature, but the influence of others was against it. Some time before the outbreak, he abandoned MARY and attached himself to another woman, by whom also he had a child. This boy betrayed his paternity, and the mother was proud of it. While the Indian camp was at Fort Snelling, during the winter after the outbreak, this boy was baptized JAMES LYND.

I need hardly say that this custom of taking Indian girls by white men never received our countenance; and if I could conscientiously have done it, it would have been more pleasant for me to ignore these facts rather than record them. But however censurable this course was, it certainly gave him advantages of learning the Dakota inner and outer life superior, in some respect, to those enjoyed by us missionaries.

Under the auspices of Mr. J. R. BROWN, a weekly paper was, for several years, published at Henderson, Minn., called the *Henderson Democrat*. As its name indicates it was on the Democratic side in politics as opposed to the Republican. Of this paper Mr. LYND acted as editor for nearly a year I believe, and conducted it with more ability than ordinarily characterized

it. But in the preparation for the great struggle of 1860, which terminated in the ascendancy of the Republican party both in the State and nation, Mr. LYND changed his politics, and came out on the winning side. Soon after the declaration of this change in his political faith, he retired from the editor's chair, and being taken up by his new friends, he was elected to the State Senate, from the district in which are Sibley and Nicollet counties.

During his senatorial term of two years, Mr. LYND is understood to have applied himself to the interests of his constituents in such a manner as to give general satisfaction. In the first winter a law was enacted enfranchising educated Indians, which obtained Mr. LYND's cordial and energetic support. Of his labors during this period, some of Mr. LYND's co-legislators could give a much more worthy account than it is possible for me to do.

One of these winters he was invited to deliver the annual address before the Historical Society of Minnesota. On this occasion [Jan. 21, 1861] he entertained his audience with the substance of one of the chapters in his then nearly finished work on the "History, Legends, Traditions, Language, and Religion of the Dakotas."

This work, it appears, was projected by Mr. LYND before he came to Minnesota; and his coming among the Dakotas was for the purpose of carrying out this life-plan.

In our circle at Yellow Medicine, it was understood that it was finished and ready for the press, in the spring before the outbreak. But for some reasons not known to us, his mission to the East, as we supposed for the purpose of finding a publisher, was not then successful.

At the time of the outbreak, this manuscript appears to have been in the store of N. MYRICK & Co., where Mr. LYND was then stopping. Before the store was burned it was plundered by the Indians. These rolls of manuscript were probably carried out in some trunk, and then thrown away in the ravine, as being of no value to them. Many months afterwards they were found by some soldiers who were employed at the saw-mill in that neighborhood. Already greatly mutilated, and some of the chapters lost, they suffered still more in the hands

of the soldiers, who commenced using them for gun-wadding. This process of destruction was stopped by Captain SHEPHERD, then of Fort Ridgely, and after a correspondence with the writer of this notice, the remaining part of the manuscript, containing some chapters almost entire and also valuable portions of chapters, was placed in the keeping of the Historical Society.

On the morning of August the 18th, 1862, at the Lower Sioux Agency, was commenced that fearful burst of savage fury which swept over the border land of Minnesota, and depopulated for a time twenty counties. And JAMES W. LYNDE was the first man killed that morning. As we have already said, he was then making his headquarters at the store of N. MYRICK & Co., awaiting the payment. The sun had scarcely risen on the morning of that bloody day, when the Indians from LITTLE SIX's band on the Redwood, from LITTLE CROW's and the other villages between that and the agency, commenced gathering, all painted, and ready for their contemplated work. It was to commence at MYRICK's store. In front of that was the principal gathering.

To account to white men for their being *painted and armed*, they said there were Chippewas in the country, and they were going to hunt them. It is believed that the deception was perfect. Until the attack commenced the white men did not suspect it. Some Indians also were deceived in the same way.

According to testimony given before a military commission, the killing was commenced in this way: Mr. DIVOL, MYRICK's clerk, was out in the stable yard, coming towards the house. Mr. LYNDE was standing in the end door of the store, looking out towards the stables. Two Indians, with double-barrelled guns, entered the store by the front door, and shot Mr. LYNDE in the back. He fell out of the door, and is supposed to have died in a few minutes.

This was the end of his earthly life. Many others suffered more on that day than he did. The firing of these guns was the signal for commencing the work of death at all the stores and at the agency buildings.

Mr. LYNDE's being the first victim is not supposed to have been the result of any special hatred towards him on the part of the

Indians. According to the testimony of Indians and half-breeds, ANDREW MYRICK had recently made himself peculiarly obnoxious, and this was the reason why they had agreed to commence at that store. And as they had before determined to kill all white men, Mr. LYND was shot first because he presented the first and best mark.

As a gentlemanly man, as a kind and accommodating friend and neighbor, as an intelligent and interesting companion, and as one really enthusiastic in his interest in the Indians' present and future, JAMES W. LYND will be remembered by many in his adopted State of Minnesota.

St. Anthony, Jan. 27, 1865.