

several canoes, and descended the river. Arriving near the spot where they knew their intended victims would encamp, they drew their canoes on land, and carefully hid them in the thick woods, and then selected a spot covered with a dense growth of bushes, and within a short gun-shot of the landing-place on the camping ground. Here, with true Indian cunning, they lay in ambush, awaiting the arrival of the unsuspecting Sacs and Foxes. No fire was made, and the stillness of death reigned in the forest. Nor had they long to wait for the arrival of their foes.

Between sunset and dark the party, in three or four canoes, arrived at the fatal landing-place, and disembarked. It consisted of eighteen persons—one old chief, one squaw, one boy about fourteen years old, and fifteen warriors. Upon landing, the party commenced unloading the canoes. The concealed war party remained perfectly quiet, scarcely breathing, so that their victims might be completely surprised. After all had landed, and while carrying their effects on shore, leaving their guns and war-clubs in the canoes, the party in ambush bounded to their feet, with a horrible yell, and fired a murderous volley at the surprised party, by which all fell except one man and the boy. The former reached a canoe, seized a loaded gun, and discharged it, mortally wounding one of the Sioux; but the poor Sac was soon despatched, and the only one of the eighteen who survived was the boy, who happened to be in a canoe. He seized a paddle, pushed into the stream, and made his escape down the swift current of the river.

After the massacre, all who yet breathed were despatched, and horribly mutilated. Hands, feet, fingers, ears, and scalps were cut off, and more horrible still, the heart of the aged chief was cut from his breast, and all taken by the victors as trophies of the bloody conflict.

On the day succeeding the murder, the victorious party assembled, and accompanied by a few squaws, paraded the streets of Prairie du Chien, with the monotonous sounding drum and rattle, and displaying on poles the scalps and dismembered human fragments taken from the bodies of their victims. The whole party was painted with various colors, wore feathers, and carried their tomahawks, war-clubs and scalping-knives. Stopping in front of