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EVENTS: battles, deaths, injuries.

Traverse County, with an area of 568 square miles, is located in the west central part of Minnesota on the North and South Dakota borders. The State and County line runs through Lake Traverse and its outlet, the Bois de Sioux. As a part of the continental divide, the stretch of land between the two lakes is of special interest. From it, waters flow northward through Lake Traverse, the Bois de Sioux, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson River to Hudson Bay; and southward through Big Stone Lake, the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. As a part of the continental divide, the stretch of land between the two lakes is of special interest. From it, waters flow northward through Lake Traverse, the Bois de Sioux, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson River to Hudson Bay; and southward through Big Stone Lake, the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. As a part of the continental divide, the stretch of land between the two lakes is of special interest. From it, waters flow northward through Lake Traverse, the Bois de Sioux, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson River to Hudson Bay; and southward through Big Stone Lake, the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. As a part of the continental divide, the stretch of land between the two lakes is of special interest. From it, waters flow northward through Lake Traverse, the Bois de Sioux, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson River to Hudson Bay; and southward through Big Stone Lake, the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. Traverse County lies in the old bed of the glacial Lake Agassiz. The waters of this lake cut the channel which is now Browns Valley and found an outlet along the present course of the Minnesota River. <http://www.co.traverse.mn.us/history/>

Joseph R. Brown had a trading post there in 1835.

pre-conflict: There were several Indian villages along Lake Traverse, including those of Sweet Corn and Wanata. Scarlet Plume, a leading Sisseton chief, had a camp at the head of Lake Traverse. His people had planting grounds there, went on the plains northwest of there to hunt buffalo. TDE 173

Matopa was listed as the chief at Lake Traverse, by Samuel Pond in [The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834](#).

Traverse County was not settled until the early 1870's.

during the conflict:

No attacks or battles occurred in Traverse County during the U.S. Dakota War of 1862.

Because of its western border being on the Minnesota River, there would have been travelers along the river trail, Dakota tribes, traders, etc.

Fort Abercrombie and Fort Pomme de Terre were the nearest forts to Traverse County. No information has been found that people in Traverse County utilized the forts.

Post conflict:

1863: Colonel Sibley's scouts passed through Traverse County on their way to Dakota Territory as part of Sibley's expedition, per accounts of Victor Renville and Gabriel Renville.

By 1866 some Dakota had returned and were living at Lake Traverse. Roy Meyer, [History of the Santee Sioux](#).

HISTORIC PEOPLE CONNECTED TO CONFLICT

Joseph R. Brown was located in Traverse County in 1835 as an agent of the Northwest Fur Company. He settled in what is now called Browns Valley; his family owned about one thousand acres of land, per E.D. Neill.

Susan Freniere Brown, wife of Joseph R. Brown, lived for a time with Joseph at Browns Valley. DU,DW, TDE, HHS

Standing Buffalo: Sisseton chief whose village in 1862 was just south of Browns Valley. Peace Party. Known by Samuel Brown, who said of Standing Buffalo at the time of his death, "He was always a friend of the whites." TDE

Charles Crawford: born in Browns Valley, his life reflects major elements of the US Dakota War, from his parents, siblings, schooling in Dakota Missions, work at Upper Agency, treaty delegations and negotiations, part of the US Dakota War, at Ft. Snelling interment camp, scout, pastor in South Dakota. Biography at findagrave.com, TDE

Wanata: came in from the plains with Standing Buffalo to a council asking for peace and to stop Little Crow from camping on the lake. TDE 168

Samuel Brown Jr. spent his last years in Traverse County, where he wrote several accounts of the war, including his captivity. DU 203, DWUSArmy, TDE 70.

Gabriel Renville thought of Brown's Valley as a refuge for his family. Renville died at Samuel Brown's home in 1892. He never learned to speak English. TDE 107

RESOURCES**Books (see attached bibliography for titles)**

DU, DW HHH TDE, TDU

See Resource section for Book titles and Codes, Journal titles and Codes

Articles**Narratives**

E.L. Spencer, TDU 157

W.P. Hills TDU 159

Photos**Paintings, sketches, & murals****MONUMENTS & HISTORIC SITES**

Samuel J. Brown State Monument-near Browns Valley

INTERPRETIVE CENTERS**CEMETERIES WITH GRAVESTONES OF PARTICIPANTS**

Browns Valley: Plateau Cemetery: Samuel J. Brown

WEBSITES

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Traverse_County,_Minnesota#Military

WEB CONTENT

TRAVERSE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Traverse County Historical Society

1201 Broadway

601 - 1st Avenue S (mailing)

Corner of Broadway Ave. & Trail Street (museum)

Wheaton, MN 56296-1712

Contact: Clarence Juelich

320-563-8520

Hours: Memorial Day through Labor Day, 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday

Local Historical Organization

Browns Valley Historical Society

PO Box 13

Browns Valley, MN 56219

320-695-2312