

The Bear Creek Massacre: The Brutal Murder of Lucas Schmidt and His Family



Bear Creek Massacre by Lucas Schmidt

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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In the annals of American history, the Bear Creek Massacre stands as a chilling reminder of the horrors that can befall innocent settlers in the unforgiving wilderness. The story of Lucas Schmidt and his family is a tragic tale of westward expansion, betrayal, and unspeakable violence.

The Schmidt Family

Lucas Schmidt was born in Germany in 1820. In 1848, he immigrated to the United States with his wife, Anna, and their young son, John. The family settled in Ohio, where Lucas worked as a farmer.

In 1862, the Schmidts decided to move west to Montana, which had recently been opened to settlement. They hoped to start a new life on the

frontier, where they could own their own land and raise a family.

The Journey to Montana

The Schmidt family's journey to Montana was long and arduous. They traveled by wagon train, braving the elements, disease, and attacks by hostile Indians. Along the way, they met other settlers who were also seeking a new life in the West.

In the fall of 1862, the Schmidts finally reached Montana. They settled in the Gallatin Valley, near the present-day town of Bozeman. Lucas Schmidt purchased a homestead and began to build a log cabin for his family.

The Crow Tribe

The Gallatin Valley was home to the Crow tribe, a powerful and warlike people. The Crows had been displaced from their traditional lands by white settlers, and they were determined to resist any further encroachment on their territory.

The Crows were suspicious of the new settlers, and they often raided their homesteads and stole their livestock. Lucas Schmidt was aware of the danger, but he was determined to stay on his land.

The Massacre

On January 23, 1863, a band of Crow warriors attacked the Schmidt homestead. Lucas Schmidt was working in the barn when the Crows attacked. He tried to defend his family, but he was outnumbered and outgunned.

Lucas Schmidt was shot and killed, along with his wife, Anna, and their two sons, John and Henry. The only survivor was the family's youngest daughter, Mary, who was just two years old.

The Crows scalped their victims and mutilated their bodies. They then set fire to the cabin and left the bodies to be discovered by the next settlers to pass by.

The Aftermath

The Bear Creek Massacre shocked the Montana Territory. The news of the murders spread quickly, and it caused widespread fear and outrage among the settlers.

The US government sent troops to the Gallatin Valley to apprehend the killers, but the Crow warriors were never apprehended. The massacre went unpunished, and it remains a dark chapter in Montana history.

Mary Schmidt

The only survivor of the Bear Creek Massacre was Mary Schmidt, who was just two years old at the time of the attack. She was taken in by a neighboring family, and she eventually married and had children of her own.

Mary Schmidt never forgot the horrors that she had witnessed as a child. She often spoke about the massacre, and she vowed to never let her father's memory be forgotten.

The Legacy

The Bear Creek Massacre is a reminder of the violence and brutality that was often associated with the settlement of the American West. It is a story of tragedy and loss, but it is also a story of resilience and hope.

The memory of Lucas Schmidt and his family lives on in Montana. The site of the massacre is now a state historical park, and it is a place where visitors can learn about the history of the West and the sacrifices that were made by the early settlers.

Additional Resources

- The Bear Creek Massacre (Montana Historical Society)
- The American Frontier (National Park Service)
- The Crow Tribe (History.com)



Bear Creek Massacre by Lucas Schmidt

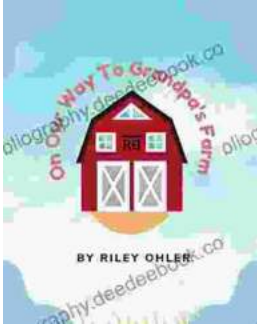
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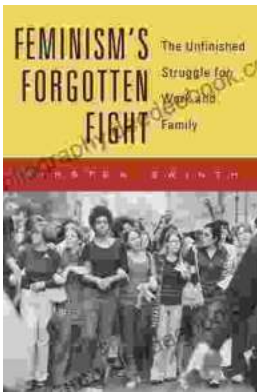
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