

A translation of Mr. Belcourt's narrative will be found in the Minnesota Historical Collections. It is as follows:—

"A tradition of the savages near the Lake of the Woods reports that the French travellers in passing were invariably accompanied by a missionary; and that one of them was killed on this same lake, and his companions all either killed or drowned. The following is the manner in which they relate this occurrence: Early one morning, a French canoe manned with eight men left a trading house which the French had built about the middle of the Lake of the Woods, and stopped upon an island near to the last pass, to enter the river of Rainy Lake. The atmosphere was so still that the wind could hardly be felt. Having built a fire to take their repast, the smoke rose up and was perceived by a party of Sioux warriors who were approaching the same island by a branch of the river of Rainy Lake called *the Road of War*. These having landed on the opposite side of the isle unperceived by the French, fell upon them unawares and massacred the missionary and some of his companions; the others throwing themselves into the water in order to cross over to some other islands were drowned. This event took place, according to the report of the savages, about the year 1750."¹

In a long memoir, written at Quebec, and dated 31st October 1744,² Lavérendrye once more refers to the Lake of the Woods tragedy, and this is the last bit of evidence which I have been able to gather:—

"I had many people in the fort and no provisions, and this determined me to send at once three canoes to bring us supplies and merchandise. The Reverend Father decided, on the spot, to go to Missilimakinak. He asked for my eldest son, as he hoped that his journey would be quick. It was not possible for me to oppose him. His resolution was absolutely taken. They embarked the 8th June, and were all massacred by the Sioux, seven leagues from the fort, by the

Martin confuses Vêrandrye's general expedition to the west with the particular journey on which the tragedy occurred at the Lake of the Woods. This particular journey was not in any sense exploratory. It was simply an expedition to Kamanistigoïa and Missilimakinac for supplies. It was not commanded by Vêrandrye the elder, who did not accompany it at all. The graphic account of the massacre which follows would be extremely valuable and interesting if it were based upon a more substantial foundation. The remaining particulars are more probably correct.

¹ "Department of Hudson's Bay," by Rev. G. A. Belcourt. Minnesota Historical Collections, Vol. II., 1850-1856, p. 212.

² "Mémoire du Sieur de la Verendrye au sujet des Etablissements pour parvenir à la découverte de la mer de l'ouest, dont il a été chargé par M. le marquis de Beauharnois, Gouverneur général de la Nouvelle-France en 1731." This document is published in Margry's Collection. It is also in the *Canadian Archives*.