

About thirty or forty years ago, Father Felix Martin, S.J., sought to glean some additional particulars of the massacre, and the result of his researches is summed up in the following note—found among his papers after his death:—<sup>1</sup>

"We are not in possession of the details relating to Father Aulneau's family, education and vocation to the religious life.

"He came to Canada in 1730, and six years subsequent to his arrival, he was chosen to accompany an important expedition of discovery westward, undertaken by Monsieur de la Véranderie. The latter commanded a party of twenty determined men, one of his own sons being among the number.

"The explorers had reached the Lake of the Woods, and had landed on an island for their morning meal. Their camping fires, however, betrayed their presence to a band of Sioux warriors who were prowling about in the neighbourhood.

"These Indians, notorious for their cruelty and for the implacable war they waged on all those who gave them umbrage, resolved to attack the French. They stealthily landed on the island without attracting notice, and rushed upon the explorers who were off their guard. Many were pierced with arrows or were felled with the tomahawk. Some sought safety in flight, only to perish in the waves. Father Aulneau, wounded by an arrow, fell upon his knees, when an Indian coming up behind him dealt him the death blow with his tomahawk.

"All the baggage was pillaged, but the Indians dared not touch the body of the missionary. Three weeks after the occurrence, a party of Indians of the Sault (*Sauteux*), passing by the spot, found his body un mutilated. Not being able to dig a grave for it, as the island was all rock, they raised over the body a cairn one or two *metres* in height.

"Mr. Belcourt,<sup>2</sup> a missionary stationed at Pembino, in 1843, visited the place and saw the tumulus. He gathered on the very spot the tradition of the massacre from the lips of an Indian, whose father had helped to prepare a sepulchre for the missionary."<sup>3</sup>

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Father Aulneau, and intended to bring him to the French settlements to make him undergo the penalties he so well deserved; but God reserved to Himself the punishment of his crime. . . . Other heathen tribes rescued the Sioux prisoners from the hands of the French and sent them back to their homes."

<sup>1</sup> *The Aulneau Collection*, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. G. A. Belcourt was a well-known missionary in the North-west. He was a relative of the present Member of Parliament for Ottawa, of the same name.

<sup>3</sup> I fear we cannot put much credence in this explanation of Father Martin's. From the very beginning he is inaccurate. Father Aulneau did not come to Canada in 1730. He landed on the 12th August, 1734. Father