



Journal of Henry G. Bilbie

Henry G. Bilbie was a member of Company B of the 7th Regiment of the Minnesota Volunteers stationed in Mankato, Minnesota in the winter of 1862 - 1863. On May 30, 1863, they were ordered to rendezvous with Gen. Henry Hastings Sibley at Camp Pope, near Fort Ridgely, about 150 miles from St. Paul, to participate in his second expedition against the Sioux. The expedition left on June 16, 1863, marching nearly 600 miles in six weeks, despite drought and intense temperatures between 94 and 108 degrees. Between July 24 and July 28 they engaged Sioux forces in the battles of Big Mound, Dead Buffalo Lake, and Stony Lake, coming within a few miles of Devil's Lake, Dakota Territory. They forced the Sioux encampment across the Missouri River, but not having been joined by Major General Alfred Sully's forces, and being short of rations, they returned to Minnesota. Bilbie's journal covers the entire expedition until his return to Minneapolis on September 12, 1863. He discusses trail hardships, weather, terrain and scenery, and encounters with various native groups, including scouts, friendly encampments, and hostile forces.

Bilbie's journal was donated to Northwestern University Library by his granddaughter, Eleanor F. Lewis.