

**“ The Celebrated Paulson Case ” \***  
**IN**  
**HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**Douglas and Grant Counties**  
**Minnesota**

**THEIR PEOPLE INDUSTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS**

**CONSTANT LARSON**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

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**With Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and  
Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families**

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**1916**  
**B. F. BOWEN & COMPANY, Inc.**  
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**\* MLHP editor: This story appeared on pages 345 and 346 of the first volume of this joint history of Douglas and Grant counties. It has been reformatted. The author's spelling and punctuation have not been changed.**

## THE CELEBRATED PAULSON CASE.

In as well ordered and quiet a neighborhood as this there naturally have been very few notable criminal cases to attract the attention of the court and a chapter devoted to crimes and misdemeanors in a work of this character would be short indeed, but there is one case that for years provided a mystery for the people of Douglas county to talk over and which was not cleared for years after the commission of the crime. It was in the early days of the settlement of this region, back in the old stage coach days, long before the coming of the railroad to this section, and the scene of the crime was at the old log inn and stage station at the stop which later became the thriving village of Evansville. Five Scandinavians, one of whom was named Paulson and who were not long from the old country, arrived at the inn one day and while renewing old acquaintances drank quite liberally of frontier whisky, served at the inn, a quarrel presently being started and some scuffling or wrestling, which was not altogether good natured in character, but which ended apparently without serious ill-feeling on the part of any and late in the evening the men started for the home of one of the party who lived nearby where they expected to remain the rest of the night. On the shore of a small lake in the vicinity the quarrel was known to have been renewed. That evening was the last Paulson was seen alive and although the neighborhood was searched no trace of him could be found. The four men last seen in his company were arrested, but as there was no evidence against them they presently were released. Three Indians, skilled in the lore of the woods and of the lakes, were called in to assist in the search for the body, the theory of the community being that Paulson had been killed as an outcome of the quarrel and his body thrown into the lake, but the most careful search of the lake failed to reveal the body. In the meantime the county commissioners had offered a reward of five hundred dollars for the recovery of the body and not long thereafter, shortly after the Indians had made their ineffectual search, the wife of the landlord of the inn in which the initial quarrel between the Scandinavians had occurred, volunteered to find the body in the lake and pointing out a certain spot in the water told the searchers to look there, even though the ground had been gone over carefully before. The body was found, even as she had declared it would be, and she collected the reward money. The four suspects again were arrested and the one with whom Paulson had quarrelled was placed on

trial, but there being no direct evidence against him, he was acquitted and all four were again set at liberty. Not long afterward the landlord the inn and his wife left the county, with the five hundred dollars that had been paid the wife, and went up into Canada, where they settled. On his deathbed the landlord cleared the mystery of the Paulson case, declaring that Paulson had returned to the inn about midnight of the night he had left with his four compatriots and had demanded more whisky. This the landlord refused and a quarrel ensued in which the landlord killed Paulson. He hid the body in a haystack until the night after the Indians had searched the lake, when, with the assistance of his wife, he carried the body to the lake and cast it in, it therefore having been an easy matter for the wife later to locate the body for the searching party and claim the reward that had been offered by the county. No suspicion was attached to them and after going to Canada they kept their secret well, until remorse compelled the deathbed divulgence of the same.



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