



Execution in Mankato

Of the hundreds of Dakota who surrendered or were captured during the U.S.-Dakota War, 303 men were convicted in a military court. At the urging of Bishop Henry Whipple, President Abraham Lincoln reviewed the convictions and commuted the sentences of 264 to prison terms. Lincoln then signed the order condemning 39 men to death by hanging.

“There are descendants there, still living in Mankato from 1862. I met a woman there who is the granddaughter of the man that cut that rope, and she met us there at the hanging site and we just held each other and cried. It was very healing for her, and for me also.”

Pamela Halverson, Lower Sioux, Oral History Project Participant

One prisoner was granted a reprieve just before the sentencing was carried out. The remaining 38 men were hanged at Mankato on December 26, 1862—the largest mass execution in U.S. history.

Learn More

- Visit Reconciliation Park. Located at 100 N. Riverfront Dr. On the site of the execution, this park was built through a collaboration of the Dakota and Mankato communities.
- Visit Blue Earth County Heritage Center. Operated by the Blue Earth County Historical Society in Mankato, the center preserves, displays and celebrates Dakota culture. www.bechshistory.com

Above: Execution of the Thirty-Eight Sioux Indians, lithograph by W. H. Childs, 1862.



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Learn about the legacy of the Mankato hangings and how their effects are still felt today.