

Horrible Indian Massacre.

A correspondent of the *Alta*, furnished an account of a horrid massacre of Indians by a party of twenty-one men known as the "Pitt River Rangers," near Rolf's Ranch, on Pitt river. Rolf and his two men had been engaged in cutting hay under a contract to supply the government station; the Indians had been working on the ranch, and were encamped about three hundred yards from the house. The attacking party surrounded the camp during the night, and the attack was made about daylight.

The party rushed upon the Indians, blowing out their brains and splitting open their skulls with tomahawks. Little children, in baskets, and even babes, had their heads smashed to pieces or cut open. Mothers and infants shared the common fate. The screams and cries of the victims were frightful to hear, but no supplications could avail to avert the work of devilish butchery. It will scarcely be credited that this horrible scene occurred in Christian California—within a few days' travel from the State Capital. Humanity sickens at the thought. Many of the fugitives were chased and shot as they ran. Where whole families had been butchered, was indicated by heaps of bodies composed of the mother and her little ones. The children, scarcely able to run, toddled toward the squaws for protection, crying with fright, but were overtaken and slaughtered like wild animals, and thrown into piles. From under the haycocks, where some of them had taken refuge, they were dragged out and slain. One woman got into a pond hole, where she hid herself under the grass, with her head above water, and concealed her pappoose on the bank in a basket. She was discovered, and her head blown to pieces—the muzzle of the gun being placed against her skull, and the child was drowned in the pond. The ground was covered with blood, and the brushwood ranches, of which there were fifty or sixty, were filled with the dead bodies. Old decrepid squaws, young girls and infants, none were spared. Guns, knives and hatchets were used, but the favorite method appears to have been staying in the head with tomahawks. The blush of dawn shone upon this fearful spectacle, and still the massacre went on.

When the slaughter was over, the shambles were examined, and more than sixty squaws and children, and ten Indian men, were found dead on the field. The murderers then returned to Rolf's house, and remained there a week within a few hundred yards of the charnel house, upon which the corpses were allowed to fester and rot in the blaze of day.

After the last squaw and child had been killed the brushwood ranches or butts were set on fire and the bodies burnt. The smell of burning flesh, the crackling of the flames, and the black smoke soaring up, was the closing scene of this tragedy, of which we cannot recall any parallel in our country's annals.

