

# HORRID CALAMITY.

## FEARFUL LOSS OF LIFE BY FIRE

### TWO WOMEN & FIVE CHILDREN BURNT TO DEATH.

As stated in our Extra of Thursday last one of the most appalling and heart-rending tragedies was enacted, on that morning, some three miles below this place, on the opposite bank of the river, that it has ever fallen to the lot of man to chronicle. How like a barbed arrow dipped in gall, the intelligence must have sped through the hearts of the bereaved, and what a thick cloud of gloom it has caused to hang like a pall over the entire community, we will not attempt to describe. Suffice it to say that on the morning of Thursday, the 12th inst., the dwelling house of Col. E. A. Stevenson of Antelope township, was entirely destroyed by fire, and with it, the lives of seven human beings, to wit: Mrs. Harriet E. Stevenson and her three children, Frank, aged 5 years, Emma, aged 3 years, and Wilmot, aged 4 months; and Mrs. Catherine Cook and her two children, Lurilla, aged 3 years, and Edward, aged 6 months.

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The reader will learn from the following digest of the testimony taken before the Coroner's jury of inquest held over the remains of the deceased, on the day of the disaster, all the circumstances immediately connected with the burning.

J. M. Marcy sworn: about daylight, Mr. Cronk came out of the house and came to where I was sleeping in the granary and cried, "O, our wives and children are gone!". I jumped up and attempted to go around the house, but the house was in flames, and drove me back. I went over the river to Wm. Myers to get him to come over. The dwelling was all in a flame. I think it was the Indian boy, Tom, that set it on fire. He had one horse saddled, and had left when I got up. The Indian boy was last seen by me about eight o'clock last night, when I went to bed. The boy is about ten years old.

JOHN MARCY.

Wm. Myers sworn: says that he lives opposite Col. Stevenson's rancho. About 5 o'clock this morning I was awakened by one of the Marcy boys calling us to come over

and that he had therein accomplished. The  
has been an Indian lurking about the prem-  
ises for several days.

WM. MYERS.

The Coroner's jury give as their verdict, that one Indian boy, of the Pitt river tribe of Indians, known by the name of Tom, heretofore living in the family of Col. E. A. Stevenson, assisted by other Pitt River Indians, unknown to the jury, did, on or about 4 o'clock, A. M. of said 12th day of May, A. D. 1859, at the County aforesaid, then and there, feloniously, violently, and with their malice aforethought, set fire to the dwelling house of said Col. E. A. Stevenson, and being the same building in which the deceased persons were sleeping, and that the said persons came to their death by burning in said building at the time, place and manner aforesaid.

The writer of this article arrived on the ground about eight o'clock in the morning, and there beheld a spectacle that beggars all description. No language could avail to portray the horror that harrowed up the hearts, and was depicted in the countenances of those who looked upon that terrible scene. There, upon the ground, within a few feet of each other, lay all that remained of the bodies of seven of our fellow beings that, a few hours before, were full of life and health and vigor; now blackened and charred and shapeless—the unfortunate victims to the treachery of a young fiend in human shape with scarcely feeling enough to realize the atrocity of the crime he has committed.

The house of Col. S. seems to have been divided into four or five rooms; two of which were occupied by the families of Messrs. Stevenson and Cronk (his overseer) respectively. From the position in which the remains were found, it is evident that Mrs. S. had escaped from her bed-room in-

divided into four or five rooms; two of which were occupied by the families of Messrs. Stevenson and Cronk (his overseer) respectively. From the position in which the remains were found, it is evident that Mrs. S. had escaped from her bed-room into a front parlor, which communicated with the kitchen by a door that was seldom locked, and through which it is believed the boy had entered the front room and taken the key from the lock of the front door, in order to prevent the unfortunate lady from escaping with her two children, the remains of whom were found near those of their mother. We are induced to this belief from the fact that the lock of the front door was found with the bolt sprung and no key in it, and that it was the habit of the family to leave the keys in the locks. Their oldest child, Frank, was sleeping alone in a crib, and from the position in which his remains were found, it is supposed that he did not awake in time to leave his bed before he fell a victim to the flames. Mrs. Cronk appears not to have had time to more than leave her bed a few feet, as her remains, together with those of her two children, were found near the spot designated as that where their bed stood. Mr. Cronk, who occupied the same apartment, did not awake until every room in the house was in a flame of fire. Mr. C. made his escape through the dining room, and, in so doing, was so badly burnt as to have been despaired of by his physicians; we understand, however, that he is in a fair way to recover. The boy, Tom, was pursued by R. B. Loomis, Esq., and captured a short distance beyond the Prairie House, some two or three miles north of this, on his way to Pittsburg, and has been lying in jail ever since awaiting the session of the



# Bluff Beacon.

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