

**A Trip to the Mountains.  
Fight with the Indians—Twenty Killed, &c. &c.**

MCKEESTOWN, July 1st, 1851.

FRIEND MASSETT: Having nothing particular to occupy my time at present, I can think of no better way to pass an hour than in giving you a poor description of an Indian expedition to the mountains, of which I had the pleasure of being one of the party. The party consisted of about twenty whites and fifty-five Indians, of which latter your servant had the honor of commanding twenty-three naked warriors, armed with bows and arrows and spears; some, by the way, were, for lack of the arms above mentioned, supplied with "Allen's pepper boxes" and old U. S. pistols. We arrived at the rancho of Swift & Sears at about sundown on Saturday last, and after partaking of a splendid supper, started for the mountains. We were obliged to go rather slow, the Indians being tired, having walked some forty miles during the day; however, they knew they had a tramp of about thirty miles before sunrise to make in order to get among the wild Indians; and as they were very anxious to capture squaws and beads, they pushed on as fast as they could, and I was much surprised at the speed with which they travelled. At 3 1-2 A. M. we commenced seeing occasional fires, which were supposed by those acquainted with their mode of warfare to be made and occupied by the Indians. All of course were on the "qui vive" for the anticipated sport. They proved to be only the remains of fires from the burning timber, and not what we hoped.

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ed driving with our ramrods and running them down with our horses that we were enabled to get them along at all. Shortly after daylight we were surprised by a terrific yell, as though all hell and a part of earth had broken loose, and immediately we discovered the hills in our immediate vicinity to be covered with Indians. They were, however, out of our reach, and the yell was not only bidding us defiance, but also warning others of our approach. We therefore kept moving, and soon came on to a "rancheria," composed of about twenty-five men and women, and twelve or thirteen children. Then commenced the slaughter. The old mountaineers, Messrs. Swift & Sears, called on us to charge, which we did, killing all the men who did not escape, and taking captive the squaws and children. After killing all that remained below, we gave chase to those who had climbed the mountains to secrete themselves. Then commenced the hunt, the squaws and children being hidden in the rocks and underbrush. It would have surprised you to have seen the holes and rents in the rocks into which they crowded themselves. I saw in one rent of a large rock a woman and three children, and although I am not very large, as you know, I found after we had taken them out, that I could not possibly get into the same place which had contained the four.

There were about twenty killed and twelve taken prisoners. We took only the children and two squaws. Some of the party were lucky enough to get three boys and girls from 7 to 12 years of age. The poor devils had neither bows, arrows, nor other arms, and consequently could make no resistance;

and it appeared almost like murder to kill them. When, however, we thought of the barbarous manner in which they had murdered our countrymen, our consciences ceased to trouble us much. The immediate cause of this slaughter was this: Some two or three weeks since, a party consisting of three went to the head of a creek called Thomas' creek prospecting for gold. They met some of the Indians, when a young man of the party, named Sharp, tried to conciliate them and to make peace with them, and for this purpose left the others and approached much nearer, making signs of peace as well as he could, when one of them drew his arrow to the head and shot him through the body. The arrow was shot with such force that it passed entirely thro' his body. The Indians after this, sent by some friendly Indians word to Mr. Sears that they wished more white men would come amongst them and bring plenty of mules, as they (the mules) were excellent eating

This was the second party that had been among the same Indians. The first did much greater execution. They are decidedly hostile, and say they will not treat with the whites, but will kill all they can. They live in the coast range of mountains, about 30 miles from the rancho of Messrs. Swift & Sears, on the upper Sacramento river. More anon.

Yours truly,

G. R. S.

# MARBY SWILLER HERALD.

California, for the sake of California.

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