

### The Missing Mailman

Last week we spoke of the apprehensions entertained by our citizens that the mail carrier and his escort had been murdered by Indians, some where between Fort Gaston and Weaver. On Saturday last a messenger arrived from Gaston, bringing a confirmation of the rumor. We also received a copy of the Trinity Journal of the 19th, which has the following particulars of the tragedy:

Van Aernam, accompanied by Privates Orion Washington and Wm. S. Terry as escort, left Hoopa Valley on Monday night last. At 8 o'clock on Tuesday morning, when near Sandy Bar, 5 miles below Taylor's Flat, they were fired upon by fifteen Indians, as near as Washington could count. Terry was shot through the body, the ball fracturing the spine in its passage. He fell from his mule, and Wash., who was not hit, unwilling to leave his comrade to the mercy of the savages, if it was possible to remove him, dismounted and went to his assistance. Another volley was fired, Wash. receiving two shots, one through the fleshy part of the thigh, and one through the side. Finding it was certain death to remain, and that Terry could live but a short time, he managed to remount and arrived at Little Prairie, from which place he was carried to Cox' Bar, where he now lies in a critical condition. Van Aernam, after the first volley was fired rode on, and it was supposed had escaped. Washington had proceeded about a mile and a half, when he overtook Van Aernam's mule. He halloed, but could get no reply, and came on as before stated.

On Wednesday morning a party left Cox' Bar to search for Van Aernam, and to take Terry's body in charge. A short distance from where his mule was found a slip of paper was discovered under the root of a projecting stump containing a few lines written by Van Aernam in haste, saying that he was shot and mortally wounded on Tuesday—the rest could not be deciphered. The party found the mail bags all right, but the private saddle bags had been taken by the Indians. Terry's body was found where Wash. had left it, but most horribly mutilated, the nose and flesh having been cut from the face, while a large knife, run directly through the neck pinned the head to the ground. Mr. Martin tells us it was a most horrible sight. The neighborhood was scoured for miles, but no trace of Van Aernam's body could be found. Terry was buried by the party; has a brother living at Hay Fork, we are told. Van Aernam's strange disappearance is involved in mystery. Washington is

A distance from where his mail was found a slip of paper was discovered under the foot of a projecting stump containing a few lines written by Van Aernam in haste, saying that he was shot and mortally wounded on Tuesday—the rest could not be deciphered. The party found the mail bags all right, but the private saddle bags had been taken by the Indians. Terry's body was found where Wash had left it, but most horribly mutilated, the nose and flesh having been cut from the face, while a large knife run directly through the neck pinned the head to the ground. Mr. Martin tells us it was a most horrible sight. The neighborhood was scoured for miles, but no trace of Van Aernam's body could be found. Terry was buried by the party, has a brother living at Hay Fork, we are told. Van Aernam's strange disappearance is involved in mystery. Washington is laying at Smith's Cox Bar, where he receives every necessary attention.

As soon as the news reached here of the result of the search, Col. Whipple ordered an escort of fifteen men, accompanied by J. F. Denny, mail contractor, to go and search for Van Aernam's body. There is scarcely a ray of hope that he is alive, and no time nor fatigue will prevent a thorough and scrutinizing search for his remains. Every circumstance goes to show that he received a mortal wound at the first fire, but forced his way through the Indians afterwards. His leggings, spurs and mail bag were found in different places along the trail, and the sad note found by the party is only an evidence of his unflinching nerve, which proved to be strong in death. If his body should not be recovered we shall always be of the opinion that he reached the boisterous waters of Trinity river and made a noble sacrifice of the few remaining hours of his existence, rather than be mutilated as was his companion, Terry, and as it is the custom of the savages to do. We expect to have full particulars to-day, and will lay them before our readers next week.

