

DEATH COMES RUNNING

“Hey, Jim Boy wake up!” calls his Mom up to the loft . Jim rolls out of his straw mattress and climbs down the ladder . Mom says, “ Better get with it Jim if you’re gonna try for a riding job with that Pony Express Bunch! They’re meeting at Henchie’s Store! Jim headed out to wash up and get the sleep out of his eyes. Later, his Mom said, “Jim, I saw the Poster and they’re saying that they prefer Orphans ! Seems like it might be pretty dangerous! You need to find some work, but you don’t have to go off and take some job that’ll get you killed! I’d a whole lot sooner have you find something around town!” Jim said , “ Mom we’ve already been all over that. There ain’t no kinda work around here for more than a dollar a week! You know that, and besides, they’re paying one hundred a month for riders! Where have we ever seen that kinda money ? Even when Pa was alive , forty a month was the best he could get! We could sure live high off the hog !” Mom says, “ I still don’t like it, but I know you! If I said No, you’d still sneak down there and try out !! Wouldn’t you?” Jim said, “ Mom you know if you really said No, I wouldn’t go. They might not take me anyway!” His Mom said , “ If they take anyone, they’ll take you! I’ve never seen anyone ride a horse running all out doing the crazy things you do! Grab a couple of eggs and some of that corn pone and molasses. It ain’t much for breakfast, but we’ re outta side pork and you ought to eat something before you leave!”

Jim didn't have a horse, so he ran, trotted, and walked the four miles to Hinchies. His Mom had sold all the livestock over the last two years to live on. When he arrived at the store, there were twenty or more young fellers there kinda standing in line waiting their turn to tell what they could do. Some that he knew, made some slighting remarks about him still being a kid and "This job required a man! Russell, Majors and Waddell were not hiring from the cradle!" A Mister Roberts was writing down names and eliminating some as riders because they weighed over one hundred and twenty five pounds. Some of these would be hired as Station Keepers ! Jim was thinking, " I sure hope I get a chance, even a job as a stable hand will help Mom and me get by. It's been awful tough since Dad got killed ." Jim was getting closer to Mister Roberts and he could read almost everything on the poster. There was a fancy drawing of a horse and rider and under it was printed, "PONY EXPRESS St. Joseph Missouri to California in 10 days or less WANTED , YOUNG, SKINNY , WIRY, FELLOWS not over eighteen. Must be expert riders willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred Wages \$25 per week"

Jim was looking at the sign and day dreaming when Mister Roberts said " Hey Boy! Wake up! What's your name?" Jim blurted out , " Boston Sir, Jim Boston!" then thinking about the poster he said , " I'm under eighteen , a good rider and my Dad was killed by Indians two years ago!" Mister Roberts smiled and said , " You really want this job don't you?" Jim said " Yes sir! If I can't ride good enough for you, I'll take a stable hand job!" Roberts looked at him closely and said , " When can you go to work?" Jim replied , " I'm here Sir, I'll go to work today!!" Roberts said , " We're putting up remount way stations and need some help. I'll put

you on Jake's crew over there building corrals , sheds and the like. If you can ride like you say , we might put you on a relay, but for now it's two dollars a week!" Jim blurted out, "I'll take it Sir!" Roberts pointed to Jake and Jim practically ran over to where they were loading a wagon and reported ready for work.

Jake was not someone that appreciated skinny teenage boys! His comments were not nice and Jim was not used to hard language. By the end of his first day of work, he'd been called everything but his name and wasn't sure that the glamour of being a Pony Express Rider was all it was cracked up to be! Of course, he wasn't a rider yet, but Roberts seemed to like him and he was mighty proud to have a job. They worked almost till dark and Jim was getting quite hungry. Going into Hinchie's , Jim asked if he could buy something on credit since he now had a job. Hinchie was OK with that and Jim took some groceries home for his Mom.

Weeks later, Jim was a changed kid. He had got on with Jake and though he got cussed at a lot; Jake wanted him along till they finished the job. The local Way Stations were finally all in and the constant day long hard labor had toughened him. Association with Jake and his crew had made a hard working young man out of a fifteen year old boy. Jack Slade had been hired as the Station Superintendant and he was ready to select his section riders. Prior to any selection, though Jack indicated; that it was necessary for Jim and every potential rider to take the oath. "I Jim Boston while in the employ of the Pony Express agree not to use profane language, not to get drunk, not to gamble, not to treat animals cruelly and not to do anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman. I agree that if I violate any of these conditions, to accept my discharge without any pay for my services!" Jim felt

pretty good about taking an oath, it kinda made him feel like he was now part of the Pony Express!

Jack then gathered all of the local hires together and said, “ Today, we’re selecting riders for the Western Nevada link. Each relay will run outgoing mail about seventy five miles and after lay over return to their assigned station with return mail. Every ten to fifteen miles is a Swing Station where you change horses. Station holsters will have a horse ready for the next leg of your run. Two minutes at each Station is all you get and less if possible! All of the equipment you need will be provided. The Mochila with the four mail cantina’s fits over the thirteen pound saddle. You will blow the Carrier Horn and pull the Mochila from your saddle as you approach each station, slap it over the fresh horse and saddle, and be on your way. Food , and personal relief, you gotta learn to fit in this schedule. Loss of the Mochila will mean loss of your job. You and your horse are expendable! The mail goes through at whatever cost! Another thing, you’ll find a saddle gun and a Spencer Rifle on your saddle. These are provided in the event you encounter Indian problems. Management prefers that you try to out run any engagement and avoid fighting them. You will be provided with horses far superior to those of the Indians. Personally, I’d shoot first; and then run. You can use your own judgment! Now , you young fellers get over here and let’s see if you can ride a horse!”

“ God!” exclaimed Jim, “ This is what I dreamed of!” There were some pretty good riders there and Jim waited his turn hoping that he’d be good enough. Jack was a hard task master and wanted to see flying mounts and dismounts with Mochila in hand. Dismounts with the mail were pretty easy , but most of the riders had little experience with the flying mount. Jim

sent a silent prayer “Thank You Dad “for teaching him this little trick. Fifteen years old and weighing ninety five pounds, he grabbed the saddle horn and slapped that horse into a dead run while hanging on it’s left side; then spanking the ground with both feet and springing up as the horses left front foot hit the ground. This action throwing him up and in the saddle at a dead run! It was daring, wild and colorful. Done out of stride, this action could fall the horse! Jack was impressed , but it appeared that he was more interested in a number of older riders.

Finally, the trials were over and Jim had not been asked to demonstrate any additional riding skills. He was disappointed, but figured that at least he still had a job as a stable hand and his Mom would be proud of him working anyway! Jack was talking to all of those that he had selected for Way Stations and came over to Jim saying, “ Jim , can you shoot a pistol?” Jim said “ Yes Sir, I can handle one ! I used my Dad’s when he was killed by Indians but I’ve not practiced a lot because powder and shot cost too much! ” Jack said, “ You’re Dwight Boston’s son, is that right?” At Jim’s nod , Jack continued, “ I saw him do some fancy pistol work at a Town Party in Bingham about four years ago. Boy, if you’re anything like him, you’ll do to take along! Look, I’m giving you one of the Ruby Valley to Robert’s Creek runs. There’s possible Indian trouble out there , but we’re finding that all along the line. I know you’re a little young but if you want the run, it’s yours!”

Jim was speechless ! He had been selected! He couldn’t believe it! A Rider for the Pony Express! His dream had come true! His Mom would sure be proud ! He couldn’t wait to get home and tell her the good news. Jack wanted him ready the following day and told him to catch up a Company horse and take another along as a pack animal. Get settled in that Ruby

Station and take a run over that seventy five mile trail so he wouldn't get lost. The first run was just days away and everything had to be in order . They were about to make history! St. Louis to Sacramento in ten days!! 80 Riders, 154 Way stations, hundreds of personnel and 400 of the best horses available! An organization of enormous proportion and an undertaking that every boy in America would dream to someday be a part of.

Happy was no way to describe Jim's pride and excitement when he saw his Mom! He was talking a mile a minute and his Mom could only make out that " He had been selected as a Pony Express Rider!" Jim grabbed his Mother's hand and practically dragged her out of the cabin to see his riding and pack horses. She became as excited as Jim was, but didn't want him to see the sadness in her eyes; because he would be leaving her! Jack Slade had selected a run near the Boston Homestead for Jim's benefit. He would be able to see his Mom on occasion, but she knew that those occasions would be weeks apart and would be affected by changes to his job !

The following morning it was necessary to let Jim know that she might have to move into Town. Mister Burroughs , at the Bank had told her that with Civil War imminent in the East; all outstanding notes were being called in and she was six months overdue on the \$1200 Homestead Note! She had promised Burroughs that she would vacate the homestead as soon as the bank had a buyer. Until then she would stay on as a caretaker keeping her chicken egg sales going and raising her two half grown pigs. Jim had already spaded up her garden and

most had been seeded. Jim's pay as a hired hand had stocked her pantry with groceries and she assured him that she would be fine at the Homestead. She had Dwight's rifle and knew how to use it. Helping Jim to pack for leaving, she handed him his Dad's Colt pistol and gun belt saying, "Jim, I want you to take this! I know Dwight would want you to have it!" She hugged him "Good Bye!", as he mounted and rode from the yard. She was still wiping tears from her eyes as her only child rode out of sight!

Jim was assigned to the Ruby Valley Station and his first ride would be west 70 miles to Robert's Creek which was another Home Station. There, he was to lay over until the east bound mail came in, probably three days. The Swing stations of Sulfur Springs, Diamond Springs and Jacobs Well lay in between. The accommodations weren't the best, but Jim was too excited to even care. Waco Barnes was another Ruby Station rider, and he rode the west loop with Jim learning the trail and meeting the Station Managers. They made a half speed run and it was sundown when they arrived at Robert's Creek. Jim had practiced his horn blowing and Mochila change at each Station. He was tired and sore after that seventy mile ride but Jim was ready for the Mail!!

The following morning, it was necessary to return to Ruby Valley and this time, he and Waco rode a little harder getting in under eight hours. After an Overnight rest, Joe Neese, the Station Manager sent them on an east run to Spring Valley and told them to return after night fall. They would have to make a lot of night runs along with daylight. The mail went through all hours and all week. They would have plenty of time off, because the mail was only gonna run once a week and that meant each Rider would probably make two runs per

week. One run west and one east if the schedule could be met! At Spring Valley , Jim briefly met Jose' Zowgalt and Will Dennis, of that Home Station assignment; then he and Waco were off in the dark!

Back in Ruby Station , everything was ready to go. Jim had checked over all his gear and selected his horse for the first run. April 10, 1860 finally came up a beautiful morning and Jim was all nerves, ready to go and biting his nails waiting for the sound of that horn from the east! Waco had grabbed that Mochila coming in from the west and gone scooting east two days ago! Jim was pacing the Station yard and had checked his horse out half a dozen times when he heard it! YEEiiiHooo, YEEiiiHooo!! And here come Jose' in a cloud of dust, sliding to a stop dismounting and handing Jim the Mochila. Jim was off and away on his first great run carrying the Mail! Seven hours and three horses later , he slid to a stop at Robert's Creek Station and handed off the Mail to "Pony Bob Balsam"! Jim had completed his first run for the Pony Express!

Two weeks later and Jim was becoming an old hand at racing between the Stations . He was tired and sore for the first few runs ,but time and calluses had a way of giving relief. Three good completes and Jim figured that he was a top Pony Express Rider! At one point ,he was becoming a little too proud of his work and during his anxiety to make up some lost time, he made a sobering mistake!

Jim rode into Mountain Spring Station almost thirty minutes late and made a flying dismount and remount to a standing Mustang! He was off in less than a minute flying towards Butte Station when looking back he was being chased by a lone

horseman! Recalling the many stories he had heard of Indian attacks and outlaw holdups, Jim lay down on the back of his mount and rode hell for leather towards Butte! Coming into a narrow valley , he was gaining on his pursuer when he heard the sound of a Carrier's horn tooting away! It was coming from behind him ! Looking back, he recognized that it was Jim McNauton chasing him! Pulling to a stop ; then McNauton pulled up sayings, " Jim Boy that was a hell of a change and I've never seen anyone perform a better flying mount, but you left the Mochila with all the mail on the other horse!! Jim was really dismayed! Here he'd thought too much about making up time and dropped the mail! He started to say he was sorry for the mistake, but McNauton said, " Don't let it happen again! Get outta here!" He did!

The Pony Express was dealt an almost death blow after only a month in operation! Critically bad and depressing news came in from the west! Indian's were on the War Path! Reports were that two young Indian girls had been abducted and molested at the William's House and Saloon on the Carson River. The girl's Father and a dozen Paiute Braves attacked the station freeing the girls and taking vengeance on everyone there. They killed and scalped the owner's that were hiding the two girls. Word spread quickly and a hundred plus volunteers from the surrounding settlements formed an undisciplined group of vigilantes bent on taking vengeance on the Paiutes! Most did not know the circumstances and thought that it was an Indian uprising which would threaten everyone. Major William Ormsby, owner of Ormsby House in Carson; was elected to lead the Vengeance Militia. Paiute Chief Namuga had long advocated peaceful settlement of disputes, but when the owner's of William's

Station committed this criminal debasement to two innocents, he had reached the end of his tolerance! Namuga was a great tactician and lured the one hundred plus untrained Militia into a suicide trap and massacred the group; killing Ormsby. A major Indian uprising had begun. Unfortunately, the month old Pony Express Stations and Riders became easy targets of Indians all across Nevada Territory!

Word had been passed down of the possibility for Station attacks, but central Nevada had not yet seen any. Jim was on his fifth run and was to hand off to Billy James at Cold Springs. He sent out his YEEiiiHooo, YEEiiiHooo !! three or four times before coming in sight of the Station! He topped the hill at a dead run because his yell and blowing of his Carrier's horn had spurred his horse to it's best efforts. Seeing scattered Indians, surrounding the Station; he attempted to pull in his horse to a sliding stop outta range of rifle fire! The bridal came apart in his hands and that flying grey Mustang was headed all out for the Barn! Some of the Indians began shooting at him! Jim was scared like he had been when his Dad was killed, but he had no choice! He had to fight ! Pulling out his saddle gun and Colt pistol, he stormed off that hill and into the compound blazing away with both guns and yelling for all he was worth. He didn't even remember being scared! Two Indians fell from gunfire and as most of them were armed only with Bows and hand weapons; they were routed, running for their horses! Jim's Mustang came to a sliding stop at the Barn corral! Jim executed a flying dismount pulling the Mochila, and ducking into the Barn. He reloaded his pistol and yelled at the Station hands for all clear!

The downed Indians had been killed either by Jim or gunfire from the Station portholes when they jumped from cover to get away from Jim's guns. J. McNauton was Station Manager and came running out to help in case there were still Indians around! Jim was shaking like a leaf and tried to tell McNauton that he couldn't stop his horse and really hadn't wanted to fight the Indians! McNauton said, "That was the bravest run, I've ever seen and don't make little of it! You could have dumped that horse anywhere on that ridge! That took real guts, Boy! You saved our Station horses!" Jim said, "Mister McNauton, I never thought about jumping off the horse! I'd a lost the Mail" "Exactly!" said McNauton, "the Pony Express needs more like you!" He credited the fifteen year old Jim Boston with exceptional heroism and two Indian kills in his report!

Billy James had not made it in and with no relief rider available, Jim took a thirty minute lay off and took Billy's run west to the nearest Home Station Fort Churchill, another sixty miles away. He was in a high state of excitement and didn't settle down until another ten miles down the trail. He'd had enough Indian excitement and hoped that this would be his last experience with them. Unfortunately, when he arrived at Sand Springs ; he was horrified to find the place burning and the handler 's mutilated body thrown on a burning woodpile. Shaking and sick to his stomach, he had to push his horse to the next Swing Station Carson Sink. It had been raided and all the livestock was gone. Jim seeing no one, he pushed on to the Coats Wells Station. Five miles to go and his horse fell under him. This Mustang could go no further! Jim pulled the saddle , stashing it in the brush and grabbing the Mochila ; he took off on foot to get to Coats!

Thankfully, Coats had not been hit and two of the Handler's from Carson Sink had escaped the Indian attack. They were fortified up ready for War when Jim walked in. They couldn't understand how the Indians had missed him. Jim passed on what he had seen, then saddled up and ran out headed for Fort Churchill. The Mail must go through!

At Churchill station, things were bad! Indians had hit there and the Manager Simpson had brought the horses into the Stockade area next to the building. One handler had been killed and two Riders had quit, heading south ! There was no relief rider for Pony Bob who was already overdue! Jim was about dead on his feet and hit the nearest bunk immediately falling asleep!

Pony Bob came flying in wounded! Indians had ambushed him and he had taken an arrow in the jaw knocking out some teeth! His face and shirt were a bloody mess, but he seemed to be taking the pain OK. Simpson got out the horse medicine and wrapped up the side of his face. Bob told Simpson that this wasn't supposed to be his run, but Richardson back at Friday's Station was afraid to make the trip! Bob said, "My missing teeth are trying to tell me that I should have stayed with Rich!" Simpson then told Bob, that his two Home Station Riders had quit after the Indian's hit there and that there was no relief to carry the east or west bound Mail. "Jim Boston" he told Bob, " has just got in from a double run coming west because Indians are raiding and killing everywhere! This Mail will just have to sit here until you feller's lay off a bit!" Bob said , "No Sim, my jaws hurt'n like fury, but it ain't gonna get no better sittin here and I know I won't sleep. Gimme that west bound Mochila and saddle me a horse!! I'm gittin outta here!" Bloody clothes and all, Pony Bob then made one of the

most famous and longest runs of the newborn Pony Express! Two stages back to back, over 20 hours on quickly moving horses and himself suffering from an arrow wound!.

Jim woke up three hours later and after hearing the story of Pony Bob, he decided to grab a meal and hit the east run back to Cold Creek Station. Waco Barnes should be there to finish the run to Robert's Creek and Jim could take a lay over and get a couple days rest! Jim was still dead tired, but the high tension and excitement of his Indian encounter wouldn't permit him to sleep! His best choice was to give the Mail his attention and try to make a run back with the east bound! Things were really bad at Sands Spring and Middle Gate Stations. Handlers had been murdered and all of the livestock stolen. Jim had to nurse his horse along and walk a lot or take the chance of losing his ride and walking in on foot! He already had a good set of blisters and didn't need anymore!

Cold Creek Station was fortified up when he rode in four hours late! They had been under attack when he came through going west and the Indians had scattered. Then, Paiute Chief Leatherhead had returned with a larger band of Warrior's demanding all of the Station supplies and horses! Mc Nauton and his crew had fought them off , luckily killing Chief Leatherhead! This ended the attack and the Indians withdrew. Two days later , this same bunch under sub chief Pocotillo tried an attack at the Shell Creek Station further east and were hit by two Companies of newly arrived Calvary. The Indians were routed in that attack losing eighteen warriors!

Waco Barnes was at Cold Creek when Jim rode in and was afraid to take the Mail east that evening. McNauton urged him to make the run in the dark as he could out run any Indian pony and the darkness would help give him cover from the Indians. Waco wasn't having any part of that reasoning and wanted to wait for daylight! The next morning at daybreak he scooted outta the station yard headed east and was horribly cut down by rifle fire and arrows as he neared the trees! Indians swarmed over him! The whole crew rushed out to shoot Indians and try to rescue Waco! The range was too great! It was too late! They buried him on a nearby knoll that afternoon! Jim was heartbroken with grief. Waco had been his best friend. Jim was developing a strong and all consuming hatred for Indians.

Later that evening , McNauton told Jim that Waco's horse had been killed in the Indian attack . He had recovered the Mochila, but that east bound mail still needed to get to Robert's Creek. McNauton said; " Jim I won't blame you if you want to layover a day or two. We can't go on with these Indian raids. We'll lose every rider we've got! Maybe if we hold off, the Indians will settle down some and we can get back to running the Mail service!" Jim said, "No Mac, I think you had it figured right! A night run would work if you just didn't run into a bunch accidentally. I'm gonna lay down till after midnight and then try a night run all the way to Robert's Creek! They can't see me any better than I can see them, but I'm gonna shoot at any Indian I can see or think I can see! I know Management don't want us to fight, but Waco never had a chance! I'm not gonna carry that Spencer rifle, but I will take an extra saddle gun!" McNauton said, "Jim , I think that'll work and I'll have a horse saddled and ready for you at midnight!"

Jim got away with a good horse and a "Good Luck!" ringing in his ears! His first run was easy to Edwards Creek and he made a good change getting one of the Mustangs he favored for doing all of his riding. One more change at Smith's creek and it was coming daylight. The haze and fog was laying on the hillside. As he approached Dry Wells Station , he saw a group of Indians sitting their horses under a group of hanging Desert Willows, they were not in his immediate path, but close enough to shoot at him. Remembering Waco, he let his anger rule his better thinking and pulling out one of the saddle guns, he gave the Indians no chance to direct an attack at him! He charged right at the group throwing lead right into the middle of them! They scattered as he emptied one gun and pulled the other. Still firing at their running forms as he passed where they had been gathered; he emptied the second gun. He thought that he may have put a bullet in one of them. It had been a crazy thing to do , but it worked! They didn't chase after him and he rode unmolested into Dry Wells!

The Station looked deserted when he rode in, but a horse was ready in the stockade compound. One handler had been shot the evening before and all of the horses had been brought in to protect them from Indian theft. Jim related the bad news from the west, told of his morning run-in with a group in the Willow Draw ,reloaded both of his saddle guns and scooted on east to Robert's Creek without further trouble.

It was now well into May and the Indian atrocities were increasing! Jim was hardened by the experiences he had just been through and he was a far cry from the young fifteen year old boy that hired on with the Pony Express! He had completed a number of runs both east and west, and he was taking on extra runs when it was necessary. Indians were making

trouble at almost every station and more riders had quit. Every run involved some kind of Indian incident. Things were getting very dangerous and everyone was overworked in a state of high suspense. Bad news came in everyday from settlers , wagons , and stations being hit by Indians all across the Territory! Ruby Station was barricaded for possible attack and everyone was on alert.

Mail was a day late , when without warning ; a horse raced into the Station yard carrying a badly wounded Jose'. Jim and Neese ran out to help him from the saddle. Jim was horrified to see the arrows in Jose's back and the gunshot wound in his neck. His horse wasn't much better! Jose' was barely able to talk briefly , but told Neese that he'd been ambushed in Quaking Aspen Bottom. Jim knew that In the Smokey Valley just west of Mountain Spring Station, there were large groves of Quaking Aspen trees that was a perfect Indian set up for ambush. The trees were dense in a number of places admitting only horse and rider with visibility limited to thirty or forty feet. It required slowing down and picking your way through. The other alternative was blazing away at a run and riding hell bent for leather hoping that you were a good enough rider and your horse could maneuver you through without losing a knee against a tree. He helped Neese bandage up Jose', but Neese shook his head! Jose' was sinking fast and there wasn't anything they could do for him!

Billie James came flying in from the west with more bad Indian news. Smith's Creek Station had been hit and two handlers killed! Billie was gonna take a one hour lay off and then take Jose's west bound back to the Simpson Park Station because there was no return rider available. Jose' died that afternoon! Once again Jim happened to be in the wrong place. He

was the only rider available to make the east run. It was suicide to go east through Quaking Aspen. Fear came over him as he witnessed Jose's last shuttering breathes. This could easily be himself lying there! Putting panic out of his mind, he checked the loads in his belt and saddle guns, filled his canteen , mounted a good mustang and left the station in a cloud of dust.

Thinking about it he thought, " I looked a whole lot braver than I felt! The mail has to go through and I hope I can run through that Aspen grove with just my toes in the stirrups so I can jerk a leg up, if I have to!" The Aspen grove was dead ahead and Jim thought that he had seen movement in the brush. Pulling his pistol, he fired one shot in the direction of that movement! He had to holster the gun then, because he needed both hands to rein the horse through the switch back maze of trees at a hard run! Approaching a thicket dead ahead Indians stepped out on both sides with drawn Bows. Jim ducked low and spurred ahead cutting quickly to the right side pulling his right leg over his horse; ducking down as low as he could using the saddle as a shield! Arrows came from both sides and he was running clear! " They had missed!" he thought! " But No! No !" His horse had taken an arrow in the neck! He was clear of the grove and still running , but his good horse was faltering ! They had just about killed him and his horse was a goner. The Mustang couldn't possibly last the way he was losing blood! The Indians , three of them; mounted and came after him on horseback. They had Bows and one had a rifle! Within a half mile he would be at their mercy, he couldn't get away! The ground was clear all around , no place to make a stand! No help and they would surround and kill him like they did his Dad! Jim had never been taken with hate for

anyone, but a blinding and desperate rage came over him . He remembered the downhill charge that he made at Cold Springs Station and the fight he'd given them at Willow Draw!

Stopping and pulling in his dying Mustang, he whirled him around grabbing his saddle and belt guns and ran straight back at the Indians! This was his only chance ! Jim was amazed that his horse would still give his all even in this dying effort! Ol' Mustang was still running and closing on those savages for all he was worth. Jim held his fire till he was close and sure of a hit. If these Indians split and ran like they did at the Station, he had a chance to get away! At least back to the Station he'd just .left! Storming down on three Indians intent on killing him, Jim hunkered low over his Mustang and blazed away with both guns . One Indian went down and one slumped over his horses neck. Jim continued to fire! At close range, those pistols were deadly! The third Indian was hit, but turned his horse running back towards the Aspen Grove! The Indian, that had slumped over his horses neck; was badly wounded and Jim dismounted watching him fall to the ground , then went over and grabbed the reins of his horse. Going back to his Mustang, Jim figured that he would go down anytime; but not this Mustang, he was a fighter! The arrow was embedded in the muscle of his neck and had stopped bleeding as furiously, as it had been. Jim broke off the arrow shaft and put his saddle on the Indian's horse.

Leading ol' Mustang and riding the Indian pony; he made it to the Butte Swing Station where he related his story and asked them to doctor that Mustang! He was a mighty brave horse! Jim continued on his run without incident! Later that afternoon, Charlie Goshute, the Swing Station manager went to the Aspen Grove finding two dead Indians. Jim Boston's

reputation was growing and Charlie was sure glad to have this young Indian fighter riding both legs outta his Station! At Spring Valley Station , two days later ; Jim heard the sad news, that seventeen employees had been murdered. Management had called in the Army for protection and was shutting down the Pony Express Mail service until the Indians were subdued. He had one more run to make back to Ruby Valley, his home Station! Maybe during this layoff, he could see his Mom!

Two days later , the last west bound came through and Jim grabbed a Mustang taking the Mochila and scooted out for Shell Creek Station. He made good time through Butte and Mountain Spring Station and was scooting past a small wagon train when he was met with a surprise volley of rifle fire from the wagons. One bullet caught him high in the right side knocking him from his horse! He hit the ground hard rolling and his horse continued on with the Mail. Jim was shaken and confused when the folks from the wagon came out, It appeared that they were gonna shoot him again! Some had their rifles pointed at him and he yelled, “ What the Hell are you shooting me for!!” One big blond man said, “ I yelled at these idiot’s that you were no Indian! Where are you hit Boy?”

Pain was swamping over Jim and he was bleeding down his right side above his gun belt. He passed out! The big man removing Jim’s gun belt pulled his shirt up and exposed a ripped side and bullet hole. The ball had caught him at the bottom of his ribs tearing out flesh and bone. He was bleeding bad and the big man pulled his bandanna and a couple others that were offered to make a compress bandage. Talking to the wagon group, He said, “ You

Damned Fools done killed this Boy! He's got a bullet hole right through his side! Probably won't live through the day! We gotta see if we can find a Doctor!"

Picking up Jim, he was amazed at how little he weighed and easily carried him to his wagon. Checking with the Wagon Train Leader, he found that Ruby Valley was just ahead and a little north. They were planning on making camp near there, that evening. The big man was Jessie Evans moving west with his ten year old daughter, Sally; to try for a new life in the gold fields of California. He had lost his wife to cholera and wanted to get Sally clear of anything to do with the War talk and unrest in Missouri. The Wagon Train Leader was Sam Crawford and didn't want Jessie to pull out of the train and go on his own. Jessie said, "These idiots shot this boy and he'll die if we don't get to a doctor! I'll take my chances with the Indians! I'm, gonna pull out and make a run to Ruby Valley! There's a Stage station there and maybe we can get some help! I'll try to catch up with you later!" He told Sally to try and make Jim as comfortable as possible, but it was gonna be a rough ride. Sally said, "Dad , there's an awful lot of blood !" "I know, Honey!" he said, "But there's little we can do! I just hope we can get him some help!"

Somewhere, Jim had a guardian angel. The Army Calvary Dragoons sent to subdue the Indians, had set up Head Quarters in Ruby Valley and the encampment was a bee hive of activity setting up tents and Officer quarters .Jessie , after asking the Perimeter Guards for help; was directed to the Medical Shelter. There, a Medic and an assistant; immediately took Jim to a table and checked his wound!

Jessie moved his wagon out of the Shelter Yard and found that the heavy run he'd made getting to Ruby, had loosened the rim on one of his wagon wheels. He was gonna have to soak the wheel and shim a couple of spokes to make a repair. It would be days before he could catch up with the Wagon Train. Jessie said to Sally, " Honey you stay here at the shelter and I'm gonna walk over to that Stage Station and see if there's a Smith around that might tighten this rim for me. It would save me a days delay." Sally went inside to watch the Doctor.

Jessie was in luck , the Stage Station was well setup to repair a wheel. While he was there, he overheard the news that a Pony Express rider less horse had come in with blood on the saddle! The Station handler's figured that the rider ; Jim Boston had been killed by Indians! Jessie , immediately corrected them and told the story of his Wagon Train members panicky shooting at what they thought was an Indian. He told them that he had brought the boy in and taken him to the Army Medic! Station Manager Neese, thanked Jessie and said, "I'll get right over there! Take your wheel off and give it to Jeff here. He'll fix it right up for you!" Jessie walked back over with Neese and once again Jessie went over the events of the shooting and how sorry he was that his Wagon folk's had acted so carelessly. Neese said, "We've had all kinds of Indian trouble and this is not the first time our Riders were shot at . Most of the boys are long haired and so brown , they'd easily pass for Indians! Jim , though is one of our best and he's already survived two Indian attacks!"

At the shelter, the Medic Doctor gave them his view of the injury. He said, " The boy was hit hard, but the bullet took part of two ribs ripping a large tare in his side and exiting. He lost a lot of blood, but he's a very healthy and strong young man. If he heals without infection, he

should be up in a few days.” When Neese and Jessie went into the shelter their concerns were put aside. Sally was standing by Jim still lying on the table, and talking up a storm. Sally spun around excitedly saying, “Dad, his name’s Jim Boston and he’s a Pony Express Rider! He’s gonna be OK!” Jessie was a happy man, he thought, “Leave it to Sally! She could cure anyone with her chatter!” He said, “Thank God! Jim, I’m sure sorry about this but them folk’s on the wagons thought you were an Indian and started shooting even with me and Sam yellin for them to stop! Sally probably already told you, but I’m Jessie Evans and Sally here, is my daughter.” Jim was still in some pain, but the morphine and whiskey that the doctor had administered had a numbing sleepy effect. Jim replied saying slowly, “Thanks for bringing me. Thought I was a goner. Seen a lot of killing! Been expectin it! Thought it would be Indians! Awful tired right now!”

Neese said, “We best get out and let him rest a bit. We’ll have to move him over to the Station to one of the rider bunks where he’ll have to stay till he’s healed.” Jessie said, “Isn’t there some where else we could take him that would be a little cleaner. Neese, I’m not knocking your Station, but Jim’s a very badly wounded boy and needs care and a clean place to recover. Neese said, “Look, things here are bad and we’ll do the best we can! I’m sorry, but right now a bunk is it!”

Later Jessie was replacing his wagon wheel when Neese came to see him. Neese said, “The handler, Jeff; tells me that Jim’s home is about twelve miles north of here near a small settlement called Trails Crossing. Maybe we could get him there where his folk’s could take care of him.” Jessie said, “That’s great! We’ll put him in the wagon overnight and take him to

his home tomorrow! And by the way, thanks for the help on this wheel!" Neese nodded and asked , "Where's your little girl? She sure is a little woman! How old is she?" " Well" Jessie replied, "she's ten years old and thinks she's twenty! She's developed a hero worship for Jim and wants to stay near him in case he needs anything. Jim's out cold and likely to be that way for ten hours, but I can't tell her nothing!" Neese said, " It'll be great if you can do that Jessie. Oh! and tell Jim that we got his Mochila with the mail and sent it on west. There was very little delay because his wounded horse came on into the station. Jim has been a stickler for making sure that the Mail went through!" Jessie was amazed to hear that Jim was quite a known Indian fighter and he'd never heard of a coming sixteen year old credited with killing four or five Indians in face to face fighting! Maybe the fact that Indians had killed his Dad had a lot to do with his willingness to fight them. There was a whole lot more to this boy than met the eye!

The following morning , Jim was awake ,but wished that he wasn't! The pain in his side was almost unbearable! Jessie and Sally made him as comfortable as they could, but that ol'wagon hit every hole and rock in the road for the whole twelve miles to Hinchie's Store! Hinchie and some of the local folks were there and welcomed Jim with quite a bit of excitement and pleasure at seeing him! Jim's Indian fighting encounters had been blown outta reason and he was looked upon as a local hero! Jessie was surprised, but Sally was silly with pleasure by the attention he was getting. Jim was truly glad when he could thank everyone for their good wishes and get on the road to home!

His Mom was overjoyed to see him, but scared and distressed by the wound in his side and the nearness to death that he had experienced! Jim introduced his Mom “Emily” to Jessie and Sally. Emily couldn’t thank Jessie enough for helping Jim and bringing him home. She immediately set up a bunk for Jim in the front corner of the cabin and Jessie carried him in. Jessie wanted to leave and catch up with the Wagon Train, but Emily insisted they stay for supper. She said, “ I’ve got a young pullet out here that won’t lay and she’ll make a great dinner for all of us. Jessie, if you’ll see to getting her head taken care of(removed) Sally and I will do the rest! I’ve got all kinds of vegetables and we’ll cook up a mess of sourdough rolls!”

Jessie didn’t have a chance. He couldn’t turn down a supper like that and Sally was in heaven helping Emily with the cooking. This was the kind of home life he wanted for Sally. Maybe somewhere in California, he could put together a home like Emily’s where Sally could grow up. Gold mining country had to be the answer. He had been a miner in Georgia for two years before moving to Missouri and getting married. He was anxious to get into the gold fields and try his luck. His biggest concern was Sally! There would be no place for her around a Gold Camp.

Walking out after taking care of that pullet, Jessie was taken with the small farm area and the neatness of the barn and cabin. This was what he’d like to have and wished that he could make that happen right away. Now, though; he was dreaming and knew it. Better get on with his plans and see to his horses. As late as it was , he would have to lay over till morning. Checking with Emily, he unhitched and put them in the barn corral. That chicken was sure smelling awful good . Emily had outdone herself and their supper was something to be

remembered. Jessie and Sally bedded down in their wagon after seeing to Jim. He seemed to be much better since getting home.

Dawn was just breaking for another beautiful day, when they were all awakened by running horses! Indians ! They were stealing the horses! One of the old straw wheat stacks was on fire and the Indians were attacking the house! Jessie grabbed his rifle and started shooting Indians. They were surprised at being hit from behind in the wagon, when Emily opened ,up from inside with her Spencer rifle. The fight was over in less that a couple of minutes with wounded Indians running off south towards the brush covered washes. They were gone , but so were Jessie's horses! The straw wheat stack was a goner and Jessie let it burn out. He was thankful that it hadn't been worse! Jim had come outta bed , wound and all ready to kill Indians! Emily was scolding him and redressing the wound where it had started bleeding again. Sally was standing by the bed with Emily's rifle watching to see if the Indians returned.

A few hours later , Emily was telling Jessie that he was welcome to stay with them until he could get a couple of horses to replace those stolen. She also told him not to worry over the loss of the hay stack, because she had lost the Ranch over the mortgage and would have to leave as soon as the bank found a buyer anyway. In the meantime, they could all be thankful that no one was injured. Jessie was concerned to find that Emily was in such bad straits , but could understand the real reason now that Jim was willing to risk his life to earn the money to take care of his Mom! Once again it was apparent to Jessie, there was a lot more to this young man than met the eye!

Jessie had some thinking to do and decided to go into Town and try to locate a horse or two. His first stop was the bank where he spoke to Mister Burroughs and asked about the price of the Boston Homestead Ranch. Burroughs saw an opportunity to sell and asked \$2000 dollars for the Deed. Jessie countered with the fact that the pending Civil War almost made the place worthless, but he'd see his way clear to paying \$800 and that was all. Burrough's realized the futility of argument because Jessie was right. There were no buyer's anywhere! Jessie wrote him a draft on his account at the Stockman's Bank in St. Louis and Jessie owned the Boston Ranch!

Jessie had made up his mind to see if he could leave Sally with Emily, while he took a shot at Gold Mining in California. Regardless of what happened , the Ranch was a great place for his money and he still had enough for a horse ! He just had to convince Emily that this arrangement would work well for everyone!

Emily was shocked that Jessie had bought the Deed and wanted to leave Sally with her! She was even more shocked when she found that Sally loved the idea. Sally had been left in neighbors care off and on for the last two years since her Mom died and she only saw her Dad when he got in from different jobs. The idea of staying on the Ranch really pleased Emily, but she told Jessie that he was getting the bad end of the arrangement. Jessie told her that he had been worried sick about what he could do with Sally while he was mining and this arrangement was perfect for her. Jim was strongly for keeping the Ranch for his Mom and insisted that he be permitted to buy it from Jessie as soon as he could save the money necessary! Jessie was all for that and they struck the bargain. Everything was settled and

Jessie would leave the wagon at the Ranch, purchase a horse and be off to the Gold Field! All Jim had to do was get well and get back to running the Mail!

Two weeks later , Jessie was due to leave and Jim was itching to get back to Ruby Valley Station. The Calvary had mopped up most of the Paiute Indian trouble and the Pony Express was gonna start running the Mail in late July. Jim was healed up and running every day to get in shape. Sally and Emily were getting along great ! Emily had never had a daughter , and Sally was the very best of company. Jessie had picked up a yellow hound , “Booger”for Sally and this hound kept guard at night . He was sure to let them know if Indians came around! Jessie said, “He’s great on skunks , polecats and possum; should be better on Indians!”

The sad day finally arrived and Jessie rode out with Jim following on foot. Emily and Sally were both crying , but Emily knew that it had to be . They had to bring in some kinda wages to live on. Jim would have to be the provider until Jessie could put something together. There was nothing in the line of work around Trail’s Crossing. Jessie headed due west and Jim cut out for the Station at Ruby Valley! He was anxious to get back to work and was glad that his Mom now had Sally at home.

Neese was sure glad to see Jim all healed up and anxious to get on a run! New handler’s had been hired and all of the Stations were up and ready to go. Some horses were due in and as soon as these were in place the Mail run would start up again! It couldn’t be too soon for Jim! He learned from Neese that the Mustang, named “Brandy” that took the arrow in his fight at Quaking Aspen was being transferred to Ruby Valley. Jim was pleased that the

handlers had made this exchange for his benefit. They all knew of his concern for Brandy and he would be reserved for Jim's runs.

Things were still a little tense with the Indians, but incidents were getting fewer and fewer! Everyone was happy with this state of affairs and Mister Roberts had put out notices to avoid fighting if at all possible. Jim took Brandy on an exercise run to Mountain Springs Station and was on a hard run through the Smokey Valley trees, when Bang!! Straight ahead ! Indians!! Six or better in the group. Big trouble! Jim jerked out both saddle guns and stared in their direction! A hundred yards maybe, and they were waving rifles! In his mind, the only good Indians were dead ones! He had seen too many atrocities , mutilations, scalping and deaths. If they were gonna attack and kill him, he wasn't going down alone! He couldn't go around them and if he turned around he would be taking a shot in the back. Kicking Brandy into a run, he prepared for what might be his last fight!

Running hard , Brandy was closing on the Indians rapidly and Jim cocked both pistols. He had set his mind to give them everything he had till they put him down! Holding his fire until he could get close enough for a kill, he let out his Station Warning Yell, "YEEiiiiiaaa Hoooo" and bore down on the group! Almost amazingly, the Indians scattered running; and didn't fire a shot! Jim couldn't believe it! Looking for a trick of some kind, he circled his horse around and took shelter in a small grove of Aspens. The Indians continued running banding together heading south. Jim was thinking, " Well Thank God!, maybe the War is over!" He cautiously rode back to Ruby Station and related his latest encounter. Neece was pleased to hear that

the Indians had not attacked . He said, “ Maybe you’re right Jim, maybe the War is over. I sure hope so!”

The Calvary Dragoons were still encamped at Ruby Valley and were bringing in all Field Company’s for a withdrawal and return to Fort Egan. The Indian uprising had been subdued. The Paiute and Shoshone Tribal leaders had sued for Peace. Lieutenant’s Weed and Perkins had led most of the fighting in and around Ruby Valley and were well known to Neese. They came to the Station wanting to know what Pony Rider had engaged the Indians in Smokey Valley the previous week. Neese pointed to Jim and said, “ Jim Boston is your man! He’s had three or four incidents with them, and had to kill a few!” The Lieutenant’s both looked in surprise and wonder at this teenage boy! Weed said, “ We have orders from Major Forsyth, our Commanding Officer; to bring this young man to the Indian Peace Settlement Meeting taking place at Camp Head Quarters this afternoon!” Neese was upset saying , “ Wait a minute! If this Major thinks for one minute that he’s gonna blame Jim for anything , he’s gonna have to deal with the whole Pony Express organization! We lost seventeen of our people to these murdering savages and I wouldn’t trust any of them anywhere in rifle range! Jim, I’ll go along to see what business they have, asking you over there!” Jim didn’t say anything , but he was glad to have Neese with him.

The Compound was full of Indians and Jim was a little hesitant when asked to take off his gun belt. There were a number of Soldier’s guarding the area so he handed over his side arms. He felt the eyes of every Indian there watching him and all looked away when he returned the look! He was definitely uncomfortable and wished to get out as soon as

possible! Something was about to happen and he quickly walked clear of the Indians and into the Head Quarter's tent!

Major Forsyth was seated among a group of Officer's and six well decorated Indians. Jim took these all to be Chief's .Major Forsyth directed his attention to Joe Neese and said, " Mister Neese these are the leaders of the Nevada Territory Paiute and Shoshone Tribes and have agreed to a peaceful cessation of this Indian War. They have had their sworn statements and names written in this Treaty and attested to by the Army Interpreter Walking Sun! The US Government agrees to these terms. The Tribes, however ; wish an additional condition! They wish to be at peace with the Great Spirit's Warrior!" Neese said, " Major, I don't know of any such Warrior! I brought Jim Boston over as Lieutenant Weed requested!" Forsyth looked at Jim and said, " Are you telling me that this boy is the Warrior these Indians are afraid of! I can't believe it!! He's just a boy!! " Looking at Jim , he said, "Jim have you had encounters with Indians where you felt it was necessary to kill ?" Jim said , " Yes Sir, I saw them kill my Dad, my best friend and number of good folk's working for the Pony Express. If they block or attack me in any way Sir, I have; and will shoot to kill!" Major Forsyth looked into the cold hard eyes of young Jim Boston and was glad that he wouldn't have to meet him in battle!

Walking Sun then spoke saying, " There is a legend among the ancient one's that the Great Spirit's Warrior cannot be killed and has many forms! It will sometimes take the form of the Badger or Wolf. There is no defense from this death! Among my people , this Pony Express Warrior(pointing to Jim) is now known as "Pau'guk O'nan Chu"! As a condition of this Treaty,

Chief's Namuga ,Buck and Pocotillo of the Paiute Tribe and Shoshone Chief's Washakie, Paulina and Two Bears wish to Sue for Peace with the Pony Express Warrior Pau'guk O'nan Chu! His agreement they wish in this document!"

Jim couldn't understand their concern, but signed the document hoping that it would put an end to the fighting. Each Chief came to look closely at him but refused to shake his hand or touch him in any way. Major Forsyth just shook his head, and said as the Chief's were leaving, " I guess if it takes Indian legend to end hostilities, then so be it! Walking Sun!, What does this Pau'guk O'nan Chu mean anyway?" Walking Sun said, " It's the name they give the Wolf or other Great Spirit Warrior. It means, Death Comes Running !!"

THE END

