

Charles S. Preuss (- 2 Sep 1854)

The Evening Star, Sept. 2, 1854

Melancholy Event

We have to record today the most melancholy event that has occurred in our midst for years. Mr. Charles Preuss, surveyor and companion of Col. Fremont in the discovery of the best route to California, is no more. Some four years ago he was sun-struck in California, which more or less afflicted his mind ever since. About a week ago the malady became worse, derangement fully appearing when he was kept at home, and carefully attended to. Day before yesterday he walked out, and went to the penitentiary, where he asked the keeper to furnish him with a room. The keeper put him off in a kind manner, when he left the building, and no trace of him could be found until last evening, when his dead body was found back of the farm of Clark Mills, Esq., near Bladensburg. In his insanity he wandered away from home and perished there. Mr. Preuss was one of the most scientific men in his profession, and bore a most excellent character. His last trip was with Capt. Williamson, surveying a route for the Pacific railroad, during which he was afflicted with an attack consequent upon the first injuries received. He was a Prussian by birth, we understand, and leaves a deeply-afflicted wife and family and numerous warm friends to mourn the melancholy event.

McMahan, Virgil E. The Artists of Washington, DC, 1796-1996. The Artists of Washington, Washington, DC, 1995.

PREUSS, CHARLES

Artist and map maker on several early western surveys, including one of Fremont's expeditions. His sketch of Ft. Laramie, WY, and other western scenes are in Fremont's 1845, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-1844, published in Washington, DC. He lived in DC from the 1840's to the early 1850's and is said to have committed suicide near Washington, probably around 1853.