

Moses Ashley Curtis diary, September 1831 (page 3 of 7)

"Oh! the express has come from W. saying that 200 blacks are within 20 miles of W. & advising us to be on our guard." — "Poh! you had better go to bed. If they are as far off as that you may sleep easy to night." — At last the elder mistress gets the story, & a young Miss in the family. I packed 8 children off to bed to save them & fidgets, & heard the women express their concern & the young Miss wail most bitterly, while I sat by & tried to console by reason & ridicule. "Why, the story is false in the face. Two hundred men so fool hardy as to march on such a place as W. in open day? And if they should, the volunteer company of twice their number will annihilate them before they are within 10 miles of the town, & 50 whites could disperse 200 blacks. What are you frightened about?" — I at last concluded to go out & learn the truth of the case. — Fear & despair, what confusion! The women were all flying or fled with their trinkets & mattresses to the garrison. I overtook one with two children with whom I walked on; & when I reached the garrison there were 120 women packed in a small dwelling half dead with fear. One was stretched out on a mattress in the hysterics, a number faint, & one was jabbering nonsense in a fit of derangement. A few men too I noticed with tremulous voices, & solemn visages, pacing back & forth in fearful anxiety. Hang 'em!

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