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National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center

Thomas Henry Tibbles papers - Bright Eyes, Susette La Flesche: Speeches, 1880

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DEATH WAS ON HIM IN THAT LAND. IT SOUNDS LIKE SOME STRANGE STORY TO THINK OF THIS POWERFUL GOVERNMENT SENDING OUT ITS ARMED FORCES AGAINST A MISERABLE LITTLE BAND COMPOSED OF EIGHT MEN, TWENTY-TWO WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ALL OF THEM HALF STARVED, AND HALF OF THEM SICK WITH THE MALARIAL DISEASES CAUGHT IN THE STRANGE CLIMATE. WHY DID THE GOVERNMENT DO THIS? BECAUSE THE INDIAN, BEING A CHILD, THING OR WARD, FLED FROM THAT STRANGE LAND, WHICH MEANT DEATH TO HIM, WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM HIS MASTER, FATHER OR GUARDIAN, WHICHEVER YOU WILL. WHEN HE WENT INTO COURT TO HAVE HIS RIGHTS TRIED, THE GREAT REFORMER, CARL SCHURTZ, THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, SAID HE WAS NOT A PERSON, AND THEREFORE COULD NOT COME INTO COURT.

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(Carl Schurz)

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