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VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Researcher

Date

Item Requested:

T. Smith
1861 letter from R. S. Sewell

Mary Keen Papers

Not
with
THE VIRG

THIS MATTER
LAW (TITLE)

July 31. 61-

Wm. L. Lee

Dear Madam

Your letter & the two enclosed came to my quarters within the last hour. I assure you I feel deeply the gratitude due to an Overruling Providence for our deliverance. From the rumors & confused reports I gather that the sons of our noble old State had their full share in the actions of the 18th & 21st. As was ^{proper} ~~fitting~~ they seemed to be the chief instrumental^s have suffered severely -

You will gather more of the details than I can give you except that it is a fact that they brought a large number of handcuffs. I am told a box of them was marked for Officers. My brother told me he saw one numbered 660 or some next number but I am told there were thousands. A circular has been sent from ^{our} Head Qrs. inquiring into it.

I was not in the fight crossing the river twice with my Brigade to take the offensive we were recalled both times the last time to go to Stone Bridge the place of hardest contention but the tide had turned before our arrival. It is curious to read the spitting letters picked upon the field. Some of them disgraceful even to our enemies. Capt. Tellinghark was killed. Thumsey Co. Whistler is a prisoner. Orlando ^{D. Stone & Gray do} ~~Wells do~~ Andrew Porter Fitz John Porter, Salmon Stoneham, Miles. Heintzelman ^{wounded} were on the field. One Co of 2 Regt of Cavalry. Major Snyder commanded a Battalion of Infantry. I have not made many inquiries

as you may suppose it is painful to find our old Army friends
active against us - Capt Potter whom I left at Albany
P.M. professing never to take ~~up~~ arms against the South
is a prisoner & I hear, loud in his threats of what they
are going to do next - The general tone of the prisoners
is impudent in the extreme -

Mr. Proff wrote on the back of the letter enclosing that
from Mr. Fitzhugh that "he had made inquiries & Arlington
had not been much abused" The papers state however
that they were going to clear away the trees -

Gen. Lee was travelling but a few days since but has
without return it is likely probable not to take the
field - They are repairing the rail road bridges burned
when we fell back from Fairfax & it seems a general ad-
vance is contemplated - I think before very long you
can go to Petersburg & I hope to Arlington -

I have had quite a holiday since the battle as changes
in Brigades are being made - Fortunately they leave me my
regt. and the best Colonel I have seen (Hodges 5th Ala)
he is a Virginian & was a long time at the Institute -

- I have the same Cavalry as before the battle and the
horses are in fine condition - If Miss Lee wants to visit
the battle field or to go to Petersburg it can be
managed without difficulty - particularly as regards the
field - The other would require notice a day or two before
- but a horse could be sent to meet her at the station -

- I believe I have told you all I know
positively ~~as regards~~ as regards who were present

on the field & your other questions -

M^{rs} Thicketts has joined her husband since the fight & she or some other Northern woman has been so violent in their expressions that it was threatened to put her in prison if she would not stop

- I have heard no names of the other ladies who came to enjoy our humiliation - Indeed I don't know but M^{rs} Thicketts came after the fight -

- It is not likely that the women who came along to spend the winter in Richmond were the wives of old army officers - They were I expect of the new forces or of volunteers - I am sure M^{rs} Miles was not along or she would never have been able to return -

Some blame is attached to us for not advancing in the panic, but although Alexandria might have been easily taken, it would have been hard to hold it were so embarrased & wounded & prisoners that it would have been impossible to have supplied troops at that distance without the rail road -

With respects to Miss & Mary

Yours -

J. S.

J. S. Bull

I will send you a list of officers of the regular Army killed or captured when I see a correct one - J. S.