

60. Original (Not in General Lee's handwriting but signed by him).

Headqrs Richmond VA
8 May 1862

General

I have had the honor of seeing your letter of the ___ inst: reporting the movements of the enemy down the Valley, & the condition of affairs east of the Blue Ridge. ___ I telegraphed you on the same day as the date of your letter, I see no necessity for retaining your division at Swift Run Gap, if it is ascertained that the intention of the enemy is to retire from the Valley and that he no longer meditates an advance toward Staunton. From present indications it is thought that the column under Genl Banks will attempt to form a junction with that opposite Fredricksburg under Genl McDowell. If you ascertain this to be the fact, an opportunity might be presented for intercepting Bank's march & striking him a blow while enroute for Fredburg; & with this view it is suggested that you move the bulk of your command to Gordonsville on the line of the

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Rappahannock, so as to have it available for this purpose, & moreover to enable you to more readily form a junction with the force this side of Fredericks'g under Genl Anderson, if necessary. A small force could be left to watch the pass through Swift Run Gap if the above course is adopted - I have today written to Genl Jackson advising him of the contents of this letter - Shd you move you will report the fact to him.

In addition to the brigade of General Branch, that of Genl Malone, from the Dept. Of Norfolk, has been ordered to Gordonsville to report to you for duty: Two regiments of the latter have already left this city for that place -

I am very respecty
Your obt servt
R E Lee
Genl

Maj Genl R.S. Ewell
Commanding NO
Beyond Gordonsville VA

Note on a fold on page 2:

Richmond, May 8th/62
Genl Lee
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