

Lexington VA: 9 Sept 1870

My dear Miss Maggie

I have turned from a pile of letters, tired & weary to yours of the 6t Inst: which I have just recd. It is refreshing to think of you, your father, mother, aunt & sisters & to have your faces all before me to contemplate, instead of replying to uninteresting questions. I am glad to hear that some of your household have been to the mountains & hope that they brought home sufficient health for all. I did not hear of you & your Aunt at the Raleigh as I had expected. As you denied yourself the Picnic for the Clifton Church, I concluded that you would have indulged yourself in a visit to the Springs. I went to the Hotwhere though sad to see so many sufferers assembled, it is cheering to witness the signs of their improvement & their joy at its realization. I could not remain but a little over a fortnight & only perceived the benefit of the waters (Page 2) a few days before my departure. But I am much better than when I was in Alexd & hope to continue to improve this Fall. My pains are less & my strength greater. I have all my children with me but Mary, who has been on a visit to the Turners in Missouri & accompanied them up the Mississippi to Lake Pepin & the Falls of St Anthony. I wish you were here that they might see you & share the pleasure that I enjoy at your presence. Mrs Albert Sidney Johnston, her daughter & Miss Belle Harrison are also with us. I am much obliged to you for the map of the Seat of War. I read all the accounts such as they were, that came to us, & am greatly surprised at the speedy result of events. Unless the people of France were untrue to their country, I cannot understand how a million of her soldiers should be soon beaten. I hope that a kind Providence may avert from the afflicted the calamities of war & bring them good out of evil. I have more sympathy for Napoleon than I feel for the distressed, yet must acknowledge that he has administered the government of France wisely & given to her people order & prosperity for 25 years. I shall certainly see you whenever I visit Alexd -

In left margin: Miss Maggie Smith

On margin of Page 1: If I can, though cannot promise to inflict a visit upon you every time. Please give my love to all your household, in which I am joined by every member of mine, & believe me most truly & affty

your friend & --?--

R E Lee