

Transcription of Lee's Letter

This letter was written by General Robert E. Lee at his Dabbs House Headquarters on June 21, 1862, just four days before the start of the Seven Days Campaign.

The letter is intended for Confederate Secretary of War George Randolph, former President Thomas Jefferson's youngest grandson. The letter questions the continued tenure of one of Lee's Divisional Commanders, General John B. Magruder in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

Magruder was originally ordered to the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Theatre in Texas, Arkansas and Missouri. The order was suspended by the Confederate War Department without the knowledge of the commanding general, Robert E. Lee.

H^q - gen. Dabbs House
21 June '62
Hon^{ble} G. W. Randolph
Sec^y of War
Richmond Va:

Sir

I was informed last ev^g by Gen Magruder that he understood he was finally relieved from the order assigning him to duty in the Transmississippi Dept. If this is the decision of the Dept. I request to be informed, that I may make some arrangements in reference to his Command in this Army. I have the honor to be
your obtst Serv^t
R E Lee
Gen

*Hd qrs: Dabbs House
21 June '62*

*Honble G.W. Randolph
Secretary of War
Richmond VA:*

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Historical Significance-

Generations of Lee scholars have left the impression that Robert E. Lee transferred poor or inept officers out of his Army of Northern Virginia to the detriment of the rest of the Confederacy. One of the most noted examples of this is the eventual transfer of John B. Magruder after the Seven Days Campaign. Scholars, noting Magruder's poor performance during the Campaign, assume that Lee transferred the General to cleanse his army and punish Magruder. In fact, the Dabbs House Letter written on June 21, illustrates that Magruder's transfer was ordered well before the Seven Days Campaign took place from June 25 through July 1.

Letter is courtesy of Dr. Paul Whyte