H 286 Fr Donnelson Feb 18th 1863 1863

Harding Col A O

Comdy Post : 3822

Changes position for defense — & reports union men murdered & taken prisoners

Headquarters Department Cumberland

Citizens

Letter

File

Recd Hd Qrs (DC) Feb 20th 1863

Hd Qrs U. S. Forces Fort Donelson Feby 18th 1862

General.

Yesterday I moved the troops under my command into a new position.

I submitted to Col W H Lowe, a plan of the new defences, by whom it was approved; and by working the infantry and some colored persons whom I pressed into service. I have almost completed proposed works

We have now in position two thirty two pounder Seige guns (which we brot from the original fort) also 1 Sixty four pounder Mountain howitzer, and these with our field guns, with our position and defences, gives us confidence that we can continue to hold this Post

Four respectable citizens were murdered about fifteen miles from here, at three different dates since September last. They were old Men of Union Sentiments, and were at home, and Non-Combatants Two others, a Mr Atchison and Mr Bell were taken from their homes and are still unheard of, untill this morning; a citizen represents that Mrs Bell has been informed that the Rebel Commander will deliver them in Exchange for two Rebel Prisoners of War taken here on the 3rd inst. I declined any Exchange, except for ~~prisoners~~ citizens. I think a selection of prominent "Secesh" should be made and held as hostages for those two old Union Men

I am Very truly Your obedient Servt

A. C. Harding Col Comdg

Tr Maj Gen Rosecrans

Comdg Deptmt of the Cumberland