

copy all except Postscript

Wilmington Decr 25th 1863

Genl J. L. Hodgeson,

Sir,

I notice that Joseph L. Shuman, Ammanuel E. Ludwig, & Emerson Overlock, all of this town, members of the 4th Regt are reported as deserters. I am fully satisfied that they were not deserters, Shuman and Ludwig are now confined in the Penitentiary at Richmond for alleged "negro stealing". They were tried at the Oct. Term 1862 at Botetourt County Court, convicted and sentenced to three years in the State Prison, Overlock is probably dead, Shuman has a wife & family living here, and I would be glad to see justice done them, Dr. Buxton, when a prisoner, saw Shuman & Ludwig on their way to Richmond, with a large number of other prisoners, Dr. B. says that he had no doubt of their being prisoners, as they represented, a soldier of a New York Regt after being released from prison at Richmond.

Copy sent to Col. Elijah Walker for explanation. New mentioned. Copy sent to Col. Elijah Walker for explanation. New mentioned. Copy sent to Col. Elijah Walker for explanation. New mentioned.

caused a letter to be published in
a New York paper, out of the city;
in which he says Shuman & Ludwig
attempted to escape, were retaken and
confined in Prison. The communication
was cut from the paper & sent by a
young woman who formerly resided
here & married in New York to a friend
here. I have now before me two items,
varying months in date, from different
papers giving the same facts. Isaac
S. Wade writes Mrs Shuman from Annapolis
Md, under date of July 8th 1862 that he
has just been discharged from prison &
by request of Shuman, tells her that he
is a prisoner. He represents that he
& Shuman & others were very badly treated &c.
I cut from Boston Journal of Nov 21 - an
item which I enclose. From all I can
learn I am fully satisfied that Shuman
Ludwig & Overlock were taken prisoners
and that they attempted to escape.
were found in company with a negro
(Shuman represents that they merely
inquired of the contractor ~~the help~~ ^{the help} to the
road to be taken) were retaken, tried &
convicted of "negro stealing", and sentenced

To three years at hard labor in the
Penitentiary & are serving out that sentence.
I had a correspondence with Genl Berry
relative to these men, & he wrote me
soon as they were reported missing.
His supposition was that they had deserted
& that they would come home, and
desired me to see them & induce them
to return. I become convinced that they
had been taken prisoner & so wrote Genl Berry.
I hope some course can be taken to relieve
the unfortunate men from unjust im-
putations -

Yours respectfully
Abner Steed

A member of the Legislature of 1861, is
reported ^{to have} Sewall of Old Town, said that this town
had furnished but 16 men & 12 of them
had deserted. Many of our people
appeared to feel like presenting this
as slander, but had they known
the person ~~as~~ well as I did, they
would have ^{expected} very little of truth or
honesty from him -

State!"
Joseph Shuman and Edward Ludwick, privates in the
4th Maine Infantry, who were captured beyond Alex-
andria, have been tried and convicted in Richmond,
on the charge of "nigger stealing," and sentenced to
three years' imprisonment in the penitentiary, where
they are now confined at hard labor. The charge was
without foundation, and the sentence unwarranted.
Three Quakers or other non-resistant citizens