

1855
May 26

PERSONAL LETTER from Jean Baptiste St. Clair in St. Martinville
to his nephew, Alexander Declouet, Jr. at Louisiana College in Convent, La.
St. Martinville, May 26, 1855

My dear Clouet,

A long time ago, I received your letter of the 28th of April, last month. I did not answer right away for several reasons. The first one is the lack of time as you must understand that I have many occupations being quite alone to handle all my business. My good time is over now. When I received your letter I was beginning to fear that you had forgotten me. I assure you, my dear son, that your letter gave me the greatest pleasure. You asked me for some details about my plantation, I have not many to give you. My work on my establishment is going well but slowly. As I do not want to die of starvation, after having made a lodgement for my negroes, I hastened to have built a very neat kitchen, from which will come out, I think, only poor food. We do not have a good cook, but when you come during the vacations, Mimi will know how to put together some good dishes for you. I have employed a workman to work on my house with Milton that your father (Alexander Declouet) lent to me. I think I will be able to move in July. I wish I had done it already as I waste much time going and coming. So, I am doing the harvest this year in Nome's field, my maize and my cotton look well in spite of the dry weather.

Today, I heard from your father and your mother (Marie Louise Benoit Declouet), they are well. Gabi (Gabrielle, your sister) is nicer than ever and in spite of my frequent absences, she is still crazy about us. Tato is well although a little thin. He has not forgotten you and often talks about you. Tell Paul (your brother) that we think of him often and that I have a

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little creole horse who is worth all the horses put together.

Aunt Tonton (Josephine Declouet de l'Homme) is asking me to tell you that for a long time you have not written to her. I urge you to do it as soon as possible because your silence makes her feel sad. Nothing new here, not even rain, so the crops are beginning in some localities to suffer a great deal. I really don't know what will happen to them if this dry weather continues for 15 days.

Goodbye, my dear boy, kiss Paul (your brother) for all of us and believe in the friendly feelings of

Your uncle who loves you as his children

B. St. Clair