

1858
Apr. 21
(con't.)

the Castille brothers, the one you knew at Grand Coteau and afterward at Mr. Renaudet. The latter takes care of a college in New Iberia. He has been doing it for several months. The house where he had his college in St. Martinville has been changed into a hotel and stables, managed at the present time by the Babin brothers.

A week ago, I had news from Ninise (Blanche, your sister). She is better, I believe, from her stomach troubles and still wishes to take a trip home but at her age, we do not want her to lose any time. She sent me a letter that my dear Clouet (Alexander, your brother) wrote to her and I saw with sorrow that your dear brother is still very sad to be away from us. Tell him for me that he has not enough courage as a man and that we have more than he has, however your vacations are so close that it seems to me that he ought to make an effort and not to let himself fall as he does into boredom and depression. For over a week, they have been wrecking down the poor old house and in a few days nothing will be left of it. You would not believe, my dear Paul, how sad it is to see this poor cabin torn down because it was lived in for so long, above all by myself as I lived there when I was six or seven years old. Except for the time I spent in the convent I always remained in that same house so I had a heavy heart often when seeing it being demolished and it will be hard to forget about it. It had so many memories for us, sad or cheerful, after all you have to accept bravely and think that it will be replaced by another one finer and more comfortable for all of us. It is especially missed by a swarm of beautiful pigeons who had taken possession of the attic since it remained open. They also entered through the roof. They feel lost and at night you see them hiding and nesting on all the debris still standing up. I am afraid all of them are destined to be the

1858
Apr. 21
(con't.)

to be the victims of white owls as they sleep outside and spend their nights, I think, deploring the loss of their old castle. And to tell the truth, those gentlemen (the pigeons) used to be perfectly and grandly located.

Your gun is at your uncle's who takes good care of it. Your horses are big and fat and eat, doing nothing while waiting for you. Farceur (your dog) is still the same. I find he is getting younger, he is more of a fighter than ever as he constantly has a battle with Rolan who is victorious sometime now, although Farceur beats him. Each one is victorious in turn but Farceur is always the first one to attack even when he is sure to be beaten. He is always the first to start. He cannot stand Tom nor William. All the servants, and Francis also send their regards. They are anxious to see you. Fanie Thrurbert had a little bay filly with black mane who is very pretty. Georgette also had one. Gabi (Gabrielle, your sister) pretends that it is for her and Titine (Christine, your sister) to ride like amazons. That is to say, there will be their own horses when they are as tall as Ninise. Gabi asked me yesterday if the little fillies will always remain as small as they are now. I told her "no". Then, she said she will give them to you when they are big because she would be too afraid should they get as big and bad as George who frightens them. Both of them just brought me wreaths made by them that I must put in my letter for both of you.

I want to hope, my dear Paul, that your next bulletin will please us more than the previous one. Your Papa (Alexander Declouet) was supposed to answer you about it. He delayed answering because he is so busy. You have been neglecting us much lately, especially Clouet who has no trouble writing but he does it so seldom now. We feel well and kiss you a thousand times. The Allison family is well and sends you greetings.

1858
Apr. 21
(con't.)

Goodbye, my dear children. Write more often. With this letter, I shall mail you a Democrat of St. Martinville. Your friend, the young Bienvenu, has just been very ill but I heard that he is better. Goodbye, my dear Paul, embrace Caite (Alexander, your brother) for Mama and both of you be good.

Your mother,

Louise Declouet