

1859  
Apr. 16

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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Sr. in St. Martinville,  
to his son, Paul Declouet at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia.  
St. Martinville, April 16, 1859

My dear Paul,

I have just received your letters and a letter from Mr. Dinwiddie (principal of Brookland School) and I must tell you it broke my heart! I cannot sleep any longer. I saw in your bulletin "English composition entirely omitted" yet, you take only two other classes! Is it possible, my dear son, that you abandon thus your education? What can you be doing? How do you employ your time? So, you have no consideration, no regard for the ideas and principles of your parents? So, you don't pay any attention to the sacrifices we are making for your education? You don't think of what you will have to suffer in your pride and your future if an humiliating ignorance is the result of neglected studies for several years! What happened, my dear son, to the fine and strong resolutions about which you so often talked to me? Well, you see, I do not have the courage now to discuss this at length with you. As I was telling you, my heart is broken. Soon, you will be a man and if this continues you will know neither greek nor latin and not even french nor english. I cannot believe your energy will fail to such an extent! Why did you not answer my letter in English?

Goodbye! Blanche (your sister) and your little sisters study with zeal. Your portrait which shows a good ressemblance and Clouet's (Alexander, your brother) letter have been received. But if my advices and remarks do not produce any effect, what is the good of it all?

Your father and friend,

Alexander Declouet

P. S. Three or four days ago, I wrote to Darby and Tremoulet to send you \$50.

Handwritten in French. Original on file in Dupre Library at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, La.