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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Jr. in St. Martinville,  
Sept. 28 to his brother, Paul Declouet at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia.  
St. Martinville, September 28, 1859

My dear Paul,

I have received (already ten days ago) with a great pleasure, your letter of the sixth of this month. I did not answer sooner because Mama (Louise Benoit Declouet) and Ninise (Blanche, our sister) had written to you.

I had the pleasure to receive within the last few days, a letter from (W. C.) Schaumberg, which I answered and one from Alex Frere which I will answer another time.

Aunt Coralie (Mrs. St. Marc) dined here the day before yesterday with Coralie and Constance. They will leave for the city on the 8th of next month. The young ladies are very anxious to go to town. They say they are very tired of the country. Mr. Tremoulet will arrive in New Iberia next Saturday. He will bring back Louise Frere who had been at the Ursulines convent for eighteen months. At the end of the vacations, Aimee and Marie will be sent with her to the Ursulines.

Probably Mr. Tremoulet will dine here next Sunday with Uncle St. Marc. Mr. Frederick Francois Coulon Jumonville de Villiers and his wife (Eulalie LeBreton) are presently at Little Uncle's (Jean Baptist Benoit). They slept here last Saturday. They expect to spend two or three weeks in the upper section.

Cousin (Louis Erasmi?) Nee left yesterday to go back to the Railroad. He spent part of his vacations here. He took a short trip to Tonton's (Josephine Declouet de l'Homme) at Lafayette and to Aunt Catiche's (Declouet Lastrapes). It was hard for him to leave. He found his vacation too short.

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They have finished bringing the wood for the grinding. It has been in place and tied up for several days. Mr. John is busy now gathering corn, cutting hay, picking up beans. We will be ready for the grinding early this year, yet, we will not be able to start soon because of the canes probably delayed by the dry weather.

It is said everywhere that Judge Simon has a splendid crop and boasts about this as he does every year. I should tell you ~~that~~ <sup>at</sup> Jefferson College, at St. James, will open on November 1st. Mr. C. Oscar Dugue will be its President, it was announced in the Picayune yesterday. I wish them plenty of luck but I would not like to go to this college. George Ferry and Michel Fortier probably will go there. They will not have as good a time they would have at Brookland. I have not heard from Albert for a long time. I am unable to tell you what he is doing at the present time.

In order to change the subject a little, I shall tell you that yesterday Thomas and I went to the Grand Bois (Big Wood) and we were lucky enough to kill two enormous racoons; one weighed 12 pounds and the other eight. Thomas saw the first one I killed and as to the second, I was alone with Cairo when I murdered it. I gave the smaller one to Thomas and kept the other that Mila is preparing for a gumbo. The bigger one, after I shot it, fell from the tree being wounded but he still could run. Finally when he was running, Cairo who was back of him, would catch his hind legs. After I laughed so much to see this koon running pursued by Cairo, I got off my horse and struck him dead with blows from a stick. We were so proud of our hunt, we intend to do that again. Farceur (our dog) is still the same. He loves to see pigs entering the yard, he takes care of them.

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A few days ago I sent you a catalog from Louisiana University, a "Democrat" from St. Martin and the "Attakapas Register". Governor Wickliffe came to order the Committee of Vigilance to stop acting violently as they did at Queue Tortue. It is not likely that the Governor's visit broke up the committee, a great deal is heard about them. Time for the election is getting nearer and there is a great deal of rumor about it. It seems there is an intention to dismiss Laloire if he is elected sheriff, the Democrats have that intention. I cannot guarantee it is true, I heard it. It is said also that Captain Creig has many chances to be elected.

All of us are in good health here. Ninise (Blanche, our sister) wrote to you yesterday. Gabi (Gabrielle, our sister) still recites her Holy History in negro patois. Christine (our sister) is often stubborn at school but I believe she was better this week than last week. Lutetia still comes to school regularly. She had fever lately and did not come for two weeks. Fish still bite at Catahoulou. I intend to go fishing with Thomas soon. Workmen have started to prepare and organize the refinery in view of the grinding. The saw mill worked yesterday. One sawed wood for Mr. John to cover the canes.

Goodbye, write more often. Papa (Alexander Declouet) expects to write to Mr. Dinwiddie (principal of Brookland School) and to you also. Greetings to all my friends, remember me to Mr. and Mrs. D. Has Mrs. D. been satisfied with a bolt of canvas Miss Betsy sent?

We are anxious to hear from you. Goodbye again. Believe in your brother's affection,

Alexander Declouet, Jr.

P. S. Felix Voorhies is getting married on the 17th of next month to a Miss Pothier.

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