

1-12
1860
May 14

PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Jr., in Naples,
Italy, to his brother, Paul Declouet, at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot,
Virginia.

Naples, May 14th, 1860

My dear Paul,

We arrived here this morning all well and safe. This is the place you used to talk so much about when you were reading *Corinne*, don't you recollect? We left Paris on the 4th inst. and went as far as Marseilles in the cars (railroads). At Marseilles we took a large carriage and rode to Nice which is situated at a small distance from the line between France and Sardinia. We took three days to go from one city to the other. We did not travel at all at night. Nice is a small town right on the shore of the Mediterianean. It is a most lovely place. We took a Neopolitan boat there, which took us to Genoa, the birth place of Columbus; nothing much to be seen there but the King's palace and the Cathedral. We changed boats at that place and took a French steamer, the *Carneel*, which took us here, and stopping good many hours at Leghorn and Civita-Vecchia. Leghorn is a very nasty and low-life looking place, with crowds and multitudes of beggars who bother you to death. We did not get down the boat at all at Civita-Vecchia. We have not seen any thing here but several coral works, which are very beautiful; we also saw in those shops some very fine breast pins, cravat pins, bracelets and good many other things made out of lava. I will take some of them home. They are very cheap. I have seen some beautiful pictures of different views of the Vesuvius, in same style as those in the dining room at home but much larger. I intend to get several of them to take home.

We intend to begin our explorations tomorrow. We'll go up the

1860
May 14
(con't.)

Vesuvius, and visit Pompei by all means before we leave here. We shall remain here for a week or two and then go to Rome by sea as there is nothing of much importance to be seen from here there by land. After we leave Rome we will not go at sea again for a good while, just when we'll go to England. We intend to travel through Germany, Switzerland, Prussia, Austria, Holland, Belgium and England and Ireland. After that it will be almost time for Schaumburg to leave for the Yankee side of Jordon, and I'll retire to Paris which will be my head quarters for all next winter. I am decided not to return to America for a year, that is from the time I left home, for every body said that I would be back home after 8 months.

Schaumburg has fatten up pretty considerably. He walks with difficulty, on account of his fatness. He had his hair cut today and he looks exactly like a young bull. He is so wild that he wanted to run off to join Garibaldi who left Genoa the other day with an army of 4000 men to go down to Sicily. He thinks that Garibaldi is going there to fight the Indians and he wants to fight those poor people in spite of any thing. He talks every day about the plains and about indians, buffalo and shainghai drill. We have much fun talking to those Italians in English, thousands of them come to us every day to tell or ask us something and the only answer they get is, "We don't understand you gents", and off they go. The beggars though, are the greatest things in the world. You can't make five steps out doors if you don't meet hundreds of them who stop you and make the most pityful faces you ever saw. They are the greatest botheration going. I just feel like knocking them head over heels when they come to me. When you come over to Italy you will see if they are not exactly as I described them. Well so far for tonight, will

1860
May 14
(con't.)

finish my letter another day in order to tell you a little more about this place.

May 15th - Today, right after breakfast we started off in a carriage to go over to visit the old ruins of Pompei. It is at a pretty good distance from here. We arrived at last at the old city which was buried centuries ago by the burning lava of the Vesuvius. It took us about 2 or 3 hours to walk all over those old ruins. Schaumburg found an old button in the house Solluss used to live in and he swears that it comes from his coat; he picked up about a barrel full of old rocks and shells. Tomorrow we intend to visit the museum and day after we shall undertake the going up of Mount Vesuvius, which is not going to be a small job. We have not yet decided when we shall leave here to go to Rome. Some time before the end of your session we will send you a letter that you will read to the I.V.A. on the night of your final supper. Don't tell any thing about it to any of the members until the letter is read; we will try to give you all a fine curl. Good night now dear Paul, we are just about going to write a partnership letter to Clark and Bryant. Next time I write to you I'll be in Rome. If some of you were along with us we would enjoy it so much more, but never mind, your turn will come one of these days. Our best love to all the I.V.A. fellows and our respects to Mr. and Mrs. Dinwiddie (Brookland School principal).

Your affectionate brother,

Alexander Declouet, Jr.