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Feb. 21 PERSONAL LETTER from Gabrielle Declouet in St. Martinville to her father, Alexander Declouet in Montgomery, Alabama, with a note from his daughter Blanche Declouet.

St. Martinville, February 21, 1861

My dear Papa,

I would have answered you sooner but I had to write to Paul (my brother). I have a cold. We received a letter from Quait (Alexander, my brother) this morning. Tell Guassy that Ta tells him that all his children are well and that Sosthene is calling for him all the time. Lutetia and Alice came to inquire about Miss Laurent. I would love to see Montgomery. Mama (Louise Benoit Declouet) gave Christine (my sister) and me ornemants for my bonnets. Christine found a hen's egg as big as a goose's egg. Maroque escaped. Every time he sees me he brings me a stick. I abstained from meat during the whole Lenten season, but at noon, I ate meat. The woodshed is almost finished. Miss Laurent asked me to tell you that she often thinks of you. When she was very ill it hurt her to think that perhaps she would not see you again.

Goodbye, my dear Papa. Your little daughter who loves you,

Gabrielle Declouet

(In the handwriting of Blanche Declouet)

Dear Papa,

Only a few words to let you know that yesterday I received your letter of the 14th with the greatest pleasure. Mama also received your letter of the 13th. Miss Laurent had a little fever yesterday but Mr. Sabatier attributes this to a small amount of food she took yesterday for the first time since her illness. Goodbye, dear Papa, everything is getting along well on the plantation. All of us kiss you with our hearts and minds. Your daughter who loves you, Blanche.

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