

1861
May 6

PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, in Montgomery,
Alabama, to his son, Paul Declouet, somewhere in Virginia.
Montgomery, May 6th, 1861

Dear Paul,

I have just received your letter of the 30th April. Well done and well said my dear son! A fathers' heart is weak! but as a man my bosom is full of emotions of gratification and pride at the perusal of your manly and spirited letter. I cannot just now write to you at any length and moreover I want a little more time for reflection and consultation with my friends here as to the best course for you to pursue.

You will on this have received my letter written a few days hence informing you of an application made by my colleagues for a commission for you in the army. My first impression for the moment is to wait the developments of events which may modify our determination. Pursue your studies - apply your devoted attention to drilling tactics - put on your armour - nerve and strengthen your arm and body by proper exercise and be ready when the time comes! In my opinion you have a better opportunity for all that where you are than you would have at home. I repeat that this is my first impression and my views may change according to circumstances. Be absolute but not hasty! to wait is my present advice! but as you may be placed in a situation to be compelled to judge for yourself as a matter of course my confidence in you impels me say to you: do for the best fait ce que doit. On the other hand time and circumstances permitting, consult with me and wait for my advise or instructions.

Have you received a check for \$150 on N. Y. and have you been able to negotiate it? It was forwarded by D. & T. (Darby & Tremoulet) before I

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left home. It is my duty, my dear Paul, to repeat to you what you probably already know - that I am in the most straitened position of pecuniary embarrassment and in these times where ruin stares us in the face, strict economy becomes an imperious study. You must be free however with your father and let me know your wants in time.

Were you one of those who marched over that covered bridge at Harper's ferry? I regret exceedingly not having received your previous letters, but I suppose that Clouet (Alexander Declouet, Jr.) will have sent them on and that I will soon receive them.

Farewell, be prudent as well as determined - true bravery is not rashness. I am to say again farewell, but I must close. Write often.

Your friend and father,

Alexander Declouet