

1861
July 25

PERSONAL LETTER from M. L. Gay, the mother of friends of
Paul Declouet, to Paul Declouet, in Virginia.
Staunton, July 25, 1861

My dear Friend,

I received a letter and package from your father (Alexander Declouet) last evening. In the package was a likeness of your mother (Marie Louise Benoit) and of your sister, and a revolver. I now enclose the likeness of your mother, it being small I thought it best to send it by mail. Your father thinks it best for me to keep your sisters likeness for you, as you might find it inconvenient to have about you, it being in quite a large case. If you prefer to have it let me know and I will send it to you. I have just made up a package for you, Charley and Erskine, of very nice haversack oil cloth which I have fixed for you to use as wrapping and will answer also for sleeping on. I also send some flannel bands which I hope you will all use. They are fastened around the waist. I also enclose your revolver, etc. I will sent them by William Mathews who goes to Lewisburg today and from there they will be sent on to you. If you find after getting what I have sent that you will have more than you can manage, I expect some of your friends will relieve you of the old oil cloth, etc.

Your father wrote that until he heard from you he could not know what you needed and in the meantime he enclosed me \$20 to procure any thing you might stand in need of. If there is any thing you want let me know and I will attend to it. I can send things almost any time to Lewisburg and my friends will send them on. I think you Charley and Erskine will need a good thick overcoat. Mr. Phillips has had made a very nice one for his cloth made near Staunton. Tom Opie and others have had the same kind made, our

1861
July 25
(con't.)

nights are getting so cool I think you had all better have them. If you want one or any thing else it will give me great pleasure to attend to any thing for you.

Your father said as he did not have time to write I would please let you know he was well and had good news from home dated the 13th.

I trust the war will soon be over and that you all can return to your homes, another such victory as Manapas will close it. God is surely on our side. May God shield you all from harm is the prayer of your devoted friend,

M. L. Gay