

1861

LETTER from M. L. Gay in Staunton, Virginia, to Alexander
Aug. 27 Declouet, Sr. in Richmond, Virginia.

Near Staunton, August 27, 1861

Mr. Alexander Declouet

Dear Sir,

Your highly esteemed letter of the 20th was received and as I had anticipated your anxiety and had written you on the same day giving you all the information I had received of our dear sons, I have deferred writing again hoping to receive more news from them. But nothing has come to me except a letter to my mother from my son, Charles and which she forwarded me. Being written on the 17th the day after he wrote to me it contained nearly the same. His letter to me was written at the foot of Big Suel Mountain, has from the top, a few miles further on and five miles from Gen. Floyd, he said they had learned that the enemy was retreating to Ganby. He did not anticipate a fight for some days. I suppose nothing has occurred there yet or we would have heard of it. Charles says I must not believe one half the reports we hear from that quarter but I have great fears and begin to dread to hear from these. Oh! How earnestly and deeply do I sympathize with the mother of Paul (your son), so far removed from him under such circumstances is almost too much for human endurance. I trust in a merciful God he may be restored to her. It was my eldest son Charles who I heard was sick. He assured me it was only fatigue. We have always had great anxiety about his health and feared he could not stand the hardship of soldiers life. I wrote to my mother to know what she thought of his health. She wrote that on the retreat he did not look as well as when he went on but he did not complain. She thought Paul stood it

1861 better than any of them, that he was looking very well. His friend Sparrow
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(con't.) told me the same.

We hope you will be able to come up in a few days. I long to welcome you to our house and hold converse with one whose feelings and sympathies are so in union with mine. Mr. Gay desires his kind regards to you.

I am yours truly,

M. L. Gay