

1861
Aug. 30

PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet in Richmond, Virginia,
to his daughter, Blanche Declouet in St. Martinville.

Richmond, August 30, 1861

My dear daughter,

155 3/94
I have received at the same time your letter of the 20th of this month and Mrs. Gay's letter. As you can see through this excellent lady's letter, I am as you will see when reading it in the most cruel anxiety. But I do not want to hide anything from your mother (Marie Louise Benoit Declouet). If anything should happen to our beloved Paul (your brother), I prefer to have you prepared in advance. And to think I have not been able to leave from here yet! The Congress which was due to adjourn on the 24th will adjourn only tomorrow and the closing might even be postponed until next week. The President has been ill and our work necessarily has been delayed. I have just received a letter from Alcibiade. He has lost his servant, Lewis (because of fever) and seems to be much afflicted by his faithful servant's death. If the Congress adjourns tomorrow (Saturday) I shall leave for Staunton Monday or Tuesday at the latest. I shall spend a day at Mrs. Gay's and from September 4 to 6 I think I shall be with our dear Paul. How long I shall stay with him, it is impossible for me to say. It will depend entirely on the circumstances. Yesterday, I spent the evening at Mr. McFarlane's uncle (he was expecting his nephew but he did not come.). I already spoke to you about that. His daughter, Mrs. Barksdale (who went to the Attakapas) is a charming and very pretty woman. It is not possible to be more polite than Mr. McFarlane. He gave me some letters for Lewisberg, a few leagues from the Sewell Mountains where Wise's army is. He has a plantation where he urged me to come to spend some time with Paul for whom I shall probably be able to obtain

1861
Aug. 30
(con't.)

a few days furlough. He himself must go with his family to this plantation next week. He must also give me a letter for General Wise. At Lewisberg, I shall take a horse or a buggy to go to Big Sewell or to Garley Bridge where the Yankees were and are but where I hope to find our army, which, according to what I heard will succeed before long, either to drive them off on the other side of the Ohio, or to make them prisoners.

Goodbye, my dear daughter, I have not the time to write any longer. Friendly greetings to Miss Laurent, remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Battaran and the Allison family. Receive my tender caresses for you, your dear mother, Christine, Gabi (Gabrielle) and especially Corinne (all your sisters). Kiss all of them for me but don't make them cry. Don't fail to transmit my news to Tonton (Josephine Declouet de l'Homme), Catiche (Declouet Lastrapes) and St. Clair (Jean Baptiste, your uncle).

Your father who kisses you with all his love.

Alexander Declouet

1-15
P. S. My dear daughter, at the moment I was going to mail my letter, I received a long letter from Paul (your brother) dated the 24th, from Bergwood Gap. I shall send it to you tomorrow or the day after when I have read it. He had all sorts of troubles with marches and fatigues. His captain recommended him to General Wise as a guard to escort some prisoners to Richmond and he is quite hopeful to be sent. So, I shall be able to see him arriving at any moment. This moves me with a joy mixed with incertitude. I shall kiss him with all my heart for all of you.

Tell Mr. Voorhies that I have received a letter from Felix and that he is well, except for some homesickness. Kissing you again, I remain your affectionate father,

Alexander Declouet