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PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Jr. in St.
Martinville, La., to his brother, Paul Declouet, in West Virginia.
St. Martinville October 17th, 1861

My dear Paul,

We received yesterday with utmost pleasure your letter of the 2nd inst. directed to Father (Alexander Declouet); we were sorry at the same time to hear that you were having so many hardships. When Father left you he went to Richmond and tried to get a place for you some where else than in Western Virginia so as we may get your letters more easily than we do now. We all hope you will consent to the transfer. We expected Father to arrive here between the 15th and 20th of this month, but in his last letter he tells us that he had changed notion and was about to leave to go back where you are.

If you are still with Charley Gay tell him I received his letter yesterday and am going to answer him right off. You will receive both letters at the same time.

I send you in this some accounts which I cut in the Delta, of the brilliant naval victory we gained over the Lincoln Blockaders at the mouth of the river below New Orleans. The news of that succesful attack were received all over the country with the greatest joy. In St. Martinville all the flags were hoisted up and the famous "Turtle" which sunk the Preble was the only and sole topic of conversation. I have not time to say more of that affair, the details in the extracts I send you are more complete than those I could give you.

We are about commencing grinding. We have only a little corn to take in, a few cart loads of hay; the potatoes to dig and several arpents of cane to put in mats. After those little jobs are done we will raise up steam

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(con't.)

and blow the whistle. I wish Father was here for the beginning of sugar making. You know well that every thing gets along much better when the old cat is present, the rats dance and frolic more when he is away.

I would give any thing in the world to see you. I often get very lonesome when I think of you. Mother (Marie Louise Benoit) and Aunt Tonton (Josephine Declouet de.) are very anxious about you. They can't help it and they all the time dread to hear bad news from you. Mother tells you to let us know when you write how Jessy is getting on. How does he stand that hard and rough life? Do you know where Schaumburg is? The only thing I could hear from him was that he had gone to Western Va.

Our cavalry company now numbers over one hundred members. The Governor issued a proclamation for the organization of the militia and good many fellows rushed into our company so as to be saved from militia drills, which they are feared of, like the devil.

Well goodbye dear Paul. Write to us whenever you get a chance. We all look for news from you with the greatest anxiety.

We are all doing very well. Miss Laurent has been sick with the fever several days, but has recovered considerably for the last three or four days. Our dear little Corinne (their sister) is very well. She does not grow very much, but she gets more and more cunning every day.

I would like to write a longer letter but I must stop. It is time to send Gaspard to the post office. My best respects to all the friends I know who are in your company and believe me to be your true and devoted brother,

Alexander Declouet, Jr.