

1861
Oct. 29

PERSONAL LETTER from Alexander Declouet, Jr. in St. Martinville,
to his brother, Paul Declouet in West Virginia.

St. Martinville, October 29, 1861

My dear Paul,

You would not believe how pleasantly surprised we were to see Papa (Alexander Declouet) arriving here. We were not expecting him any longer which gave us even more joy when we saw him. We regret he will be obliged to leave so quickly. Mama (Louise Benoit Declouet) was satisfied to find out clearly that you were getting along well and did not lack anything. She is even happier to know that the Yankees went farther away from you and that you would not run as much risk.

For three days, the refinery had been working when Papa arrived. He found everything in full swim, both plants were running. We have almost a hundred barrels ready. If the weather does not make us lose canes and if we save everything in the field, grinding will last until January 10 and we will gather from 750 to 800 barrels. Up to now, the canes being rather green, we cannot know exactly what each arpent will give. We cut them in half and save the tops to be replanted.

Everything is going on smoothly in the refinery. Milton and Edouard run the engine as well if not better than a white engineer would do. The sugar is very beautiful and if the works continue as now we, we won't have cause to complain. Papa went to the upper section the day after his arrival and he found everyone in good health.

Catiche (Declouet Lastrapes, our great-aunt) was here yesterday. She asked Papa a great deal about you. When you return, I promise you that many people will be happy.

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(con't.)

Well, goodbye, dear Paul, I have no time to keep writing. Let us hear from you as often as it is possible. All the members of the family join me to kiss you with all our love.

Your brother and best friend,

Alexander Declouet, Jr.