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PERSONAL LETTER from Blanche Declouet in St. Martinville, to  
her father, Alexander Declouet.

St. Martinville, November 1, 1862

Dear Papa,

Mama (Marie Louise Benoit Declouet) has received your two letters dated October 20 and 25, one yesterday and the other this morning. I could not express to you the feeling of sorrow I experienced in thinking of the well deserved reproaches you sent us and the worries which overwhelmed you since your departure. Now, that I know the letters can be brought by the mail, I promise you to write regularly each week. I rely on your usual kindness to forgive my long silence.

From here, news are not too good. The Yankees occupy Thibodeauxville. After a fight lasting one or two days, our troops, that is to say the 18th regiment, the Crescent and the new recruits, have been forced to withdraw and are now at the Bay. As usual, the 18th and the Crescent acted nobly but unfortunately the recruits did not follow their good example. The report of their behavior is not very clear. General Mouton, being ill at that time has not been able to take part in the fight. Colonel Leopold Armand behaved like a hero. General Taylor was not there, no one knows where he is and one is not too satisfied about this.

It has been reported that we had 9 men killed, 25 wounded and 150 prisoners free on parole. Such are the only details up to now and they are not very positive. Mr. Victorin Roman arrived yesterday in the evening with what was left to him. He had only time to run away quickly. Jeanne, his daughter, is a charming person. We are already very friendly. The whole (William) Reynaud family is here. The young ladies prefer to remain here than anywhere

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else and I am delighted of this as they oblige me to be a little more cheerful than usual. Miss Mort has started her classes for two weeks. Up to now, she is satisfied with the children. I study one or two hours also, she gives me English lessons and talks much with me. I do my best when I speak with her. She is a very good person. For the last few days, she suffered with fever. There are many negroes in the hospital, about twenty.

Mr. John expected to start grinding about the 5th of this month but I am afraid he may not be able to do it because of the great number of sick people. The canes have been somewhat damaged by the freeze. They are no longer eatable. We had the pleasure to see Clouet (Alexander, our brother) once since he has been at the Salines. He is delighted with his new position. We were told yesterday that a part of Cornay's company had been sent to the Bay, but we do not believe this at all. We will find out the truth tonight through Mr. Victorin and Mr. Reynaud who are going today to New Iberia. We are expecting Little Uncle (Jean Baptist Benoit) any day. He has not found yet a supervisor for the grinding. We are happy to see that you intend to give up your occupation, come back as soon as possible. I hope that Paul (our brother) will make up his mind to enter the service here. Goodbye, dear Papa, all of us kiss you. Our dear little Corinne (our sister) is more amusing than ever. She is crazy about Mr. Victorin R.

Your daughter who cherishes you,

Blanche Declouet