

1876

July 13 PERSONAL LETTER from Jane Roman Declouet on board the Josephine bound for Galveston, Texas, to her husband, Paul, in St. Martinville, La.

On board the Josephine, July 13, 1876

Dear Paul,

I believe that I have left because I am on the steamer. We were very comfortable on board the Mary Lewis and the latter arrived just on time for us to board the steamer. The boat had to take some calves during the night. This is what delayed it. We met neither Joe nor Macready while rushing to the Josephine but the purser of the ship, Mr. Allen, led us on board and took care of embarking our trunks; at the time the steamer left the wharf I saw some handkerchiefs on the Mary Lewis' deck. It was probably Joe. We saw Marie and her children in Paterson, we could only speak briefly. The ship took very little coal, it was late. The children were good. Charley (our oldest son) was sad when going to bed, but knew how to get over this and go to sleep. Since that time, everything is all right. They seem happy.

Our crossing costs in all \$18.00 from New Iberia to the Bay and \$31.00 from there to Galveston. We had dinner, and following George Simon's advice, we took care not to eat too much. Here, again, the children were very reasonable. They accepted to eat at the second service with Ernestine, it is the rule, otherwise you have to pay for them. When we were on board the Mary Lewis, we had a little rain and a heavy thunder. Luckily the storm did not follow us and the weather is calm. Blanche (your sister) is not afraid any longer, but we must admit the sea sickness has not arrived yet. Some people seem well. Now that I made the effort to leave and have the assurance that you would spare you some fatigue my mind is more at ease and I think less often of you. As to my dear

1876      George (our youngest son), I know that Gabie (Gabrielle, your sister) will be  
July 13      his slave but for you, there is no one to help you, except the memory but you  
(con't.)      know how uneasy I am.

I shall close my letter only when I arrive in Galveston and if I add  
nothing to it, it will be for lack of time.

Friendly greetings to all, kiss the ones who have the right to be kissed.  
First, my dear little George. Ernestine is all right.

For ever yours,

Jane

P. S. On the 14, nine o'clock in the morning - Galveston

We are arriving safe and sound. The crossing has been magnificent.  
Blanche has been sick all the time, Charlie only since he got up. Lizzie (our  
daughter) had a little fever during last night but feel well this morning. I was  
upset only for a moment and Edwige (our daughter) did not suffer at all, but  
she complains that the steamer's stewarts made funny faces at her and mocked  
her.

(Lauve)\*

Ernestine has not been sick at all. Edwige and Nemours/are well and  
all of us are kissing you.

Yours forever,

Jane

\*(NOTE: Edwige and Nemours Lauve were either very good friends or relatives  
of Paul and Jane Declouet. Jane Declouet was staying at their home while she  
was in Galveston, Texas.)

Handwritten in French. Original on file in Dupre Library at the University of  
Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, La.