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PERSONAL LETTER from Blanche Declouet at St. Martinville, La.,

to her brother, Paul Declouet, at Brookland School in Greenwood Depot, Virginia  
St. Martinville, March 14, 1861

Dear Paul,

You must have thought that I was taking a long time to answer your last two letters which gave me an extreme pleasure, but I assure you that it is not indifference but lack of time which deprived me from the pleasure to chat with you for a few moments. I barely could write a few words to Papa (Alexander Declouet) by the last mail. Mama (Marie Louise Benoit Declouet) received yesterday your letter of March 1 and she tells you that she will answer you within a few days.

Mrs. Comminy, Miss Laurent's sister, came to see her. She remained here four or five days with her little boy and her little daughter who had come before her with Mrs. Lassaline. Those two children had an extremely good time and it was hard for them to leave. The little boy is crazy about horses and he rode almost all the plantation's horses. His desire was to pen the cattle but his mother did not allow him to do it by fear of an accident.

He regretted a great deal that you or Clouet (Alexander, our brother) were not here in order to go hunting with one of you. Miss Laurent is still in bed, she is very weak, however, she feels a little better. She sends to you her friendly greetings and thanks you for your good wishes. We are expecting Clouet every day as in his last letter he announced to us his departure from Paris and told us that he thought of going to New York about February 28 and be here before the tenth of March. We are already on the 14th and he has not arrived yet but this does not worry us too much because we suppose that he spent a few days with you and then with Papa and that took a little time. I

1861 believe I already wrote to you that I was loosing my hair. I still had some but  
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(con't.) I had Mrs. Communy give me a hair cut and now I look like I don't know whom.  
I am sure that you will recognize me so ugly I became.

Goodbye, dear Paul, nothing new here. Our little Corine (our sister)  
is prettier than ever. She prattles all day long. All the family joins me to  
kiss you with our hearts and minds.

Your sister,

Blanche Declouet