

See also UPA Microfilm 6061, Series B, Part 3, Reels 5-6

ALEXANDRE DECLOUET AND FAMILY PAPERS

Mss. 74, 258, 461, 756

Inventory

Compiled by

Sally C. Proshek

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Revised 2009

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SUMMARY

Size.	1.2 linear feet (150 items, 37 volumes)
Geographic location.	Louisiana.
Inclusive dates.	1787-1905.
Bulk dates.	1855-1888.
Languages.	English, French.
Summary.	Financial and legal papers, political writings, correspondence, personal papers, diaries, memorabilia, and time books of the sugar planter, Confederate congressman and state senator Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1812-1890) and his son, Paul L. DeClouet (born 1840). Included are 37 manuscript volumes of financial, legal, social, and political interest.
Related collections.	Alexandre Étienne DeClouet Letter, Mss. 2414 Alexandre DeClouet Letter, Mss. 4098 Charles E. A. Gayarre Papers, Grace King Collection, Mss. 1282 Simon G. Jerrard Papers, Mss. 1180, 1266, 1285 Estevan Miro Letters, Mss. 298 William T. Palfrey Papers, Mss. 1442
Access restrictions.	No restrictions.
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Citation.	Alexandre DeClouet and Family Papers, Mss. 74, 258, 461, 756, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Stack Location.	U:181, J:5 UPA Microfilm 6061, Series B, Part 3, Reels 5-6

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1812-1890) was a sugar planter, Confederate congressman, and state senator from St. Martin Parish, Louisiana. His parents, Étienne Chevalier DeClouet and Aspasia Fusilier, both died in 1813, leaving Alexandre and his sister Lezima to be raised by their aunts, Mrs. Charles Lastrapes and Mrs. Chevalier Delhomme, and their grandmother Mrs. Fusilier. Diaries in the collection refer to Mrs. Delhomme as "Tante Tonton" and record her death as occurring in November 1881. Alexandre's grandfather, Joseph Alexandre DeClouet, had been appointed his tutor but died in 1816, after which Alexandre's maternal grandfather, Agricole Fusilier, became his tutor. Following his formal education at Georgetown College (Washington, D.C.) and at St. Joseph's College (Bardstown, Kentucky), Alexandre traveled to France and Italy. Upon his return to St. Martinville, he studied law briefly with Judge Edward Simon but gave it up to manage the plantations. Alexandre married his first cousin, Louise St. Claire. Paul L. DeClouet was the eldest son of 13 children born of this marriage.

Beginning in the 1860s, Paul became increasingly involved with managing the plantations. In 1887, Alexandre E. DeClouet granted Paul legal authority to administer all plantation affairs. Paul married Jane Marie Roman (born 1841). Diaries mention the births of their daughter Edrige Marie (born 1869) and their sons Charlie (born 1868), and Robert E., called Bob (1866-1869).

Paul L. DeClouet sent frequent post office money orders to Anna St. Claire (1888-1893), who was probably Paul's cousin. Her non-resident tax returns indicate that she did not reside with family in St. Martinville during these years. One name mentioned frequently in Paul's diaries is "Petit Oncle," who met with co-editors in Lafayette (1868). Among the testamentary documents of Adrien Dumartrait are items which indicate that he was involved in publishing. It is possible that A. Dumartrait may be this "Petit Oncle". The testamentary documentation of Dr. Nue' Betournay (died circa 1880-1889) offers no suggestion of Betournay's relationship to the DeClouets.

In the 1870s, Alexandre E. DeClouet was active in local politics, making speeches and writing resolutions for the White League, which was a semi-military body, organized to oppose the development of political and economic power of the black freedmen.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Alexandre DeClouet and Family Papers include financial and legal documents, political papers, correspondence, personal papers, and newspaper clippings in addition to financial and legal manuscript volumes. The majority of items in the collection were created by Alexandre Étienne DeClouet and his son, Paul L. DeClouet. The processors of the collection have provided rough English translations for some items written in French.

The financial papers document the management activities and expenses incurred on the Magenta, St. Claire, and Lizima plantations. Ledger entries provide an itemized record of expenses (1880, 1886-1890). The accounts and receipt slips of Alexandre Étienne DeClouet and Paul L. DeClouet (1838-1889), of relative Anna St. Claire (1888-1893), and one document of Joseph Alexandre DeClouet (1794) record personal and business debts and credits. Also included are tallies of crops and livestock raised, and records of ginning cotton and grinding sugar cane.

Plantation management practices are documented by notes kept by Paul L. DeClouet. These notes include specifications of how ditches should be dug, at what cost in labor, a cost estimate for improving the sugar production facility (1881), records of deaths of plantation laborers from smallpox (1877), descriptions of cures for equine ailments, and a chart forecasting times of sunsets (18[?]4-1828).

The financial manuscript volumes include six diaries, one kept by Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1880-1888), the others kept by Paul L. DeClouet (1866-1870). The diaries record details of the management of the Magenta, St. Claire, and Lizima Plantations. Included are descriptions of work done in various seasons, of the quality of crops and livestock raised, and of problems with laborers. The diaries of Paul L. DeClouet provide lists of domestic servants and field hands. Included are occasional brief entries of social and political interest. Descriptions of visits by friends and relatives, of political gatherings, of notable events such as elections and African-American riots, of epidemics of cholera and smallpox, and of family illness are provided.

Other financial volumes include fourteen memorandum books, four kept by Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1810-1860), the others kept by Paul L. DeClouet (1866-1905), which record crop yields, prices of crops at market, lists of African-American men, women, and their rations, births and deaths among the laborers, and personal dates and accounts of the family. Sixteen time books kept by Paul L. DeClouet (1869, 1877-1884) record time worked by each laborer and the wages each received.

Legal documents include items related to the sale of a slave, probably by Joseph Alexandre DeClouet, to Jacob Harman, who protests the non-deliverance of the slave (1795). A contract agreement (1886) signed by the laborer, Louis Maurin, which binds him to work on the Magenta Plantation, is included, along with a document which transfers legal authority to administer the

plantations from Alexandre Étienne DeClouet to Paul L. DeClouet (1887). Records of the Roman Family document the purchase of the Dryades Market in New Orleans from M. Aranstein and B. Matharan and include a document which grants Paul Roman power of attorney for his sisters, Jane and Edrige, regarding the purchase of the Market (1868).

Testamentary documents reflect the settlements of the estates of Dr. Nué Betournay [circa 1880-1889] and Adrien Dumartrait (1855-1856). These include an account of legal fees to the estate of Betournay, inventories of goods involved in the estates, and notes and receipts to Francois M. Dumartrait, heir of Adrien Dumartrait, many of which are signed by Pierre Gary, one of two executors of the estate.

The Italian and Peruvian visas of Alexandre Étienne DeClouet are among the legal documents; his passport book, with a French visa adhered to the front inside cover, further documents his travels through France and Italy (1831-1833).

The political papers include drafts of public addresses and resolutions drawn up for the White League by Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1872, 1874). These papers are primarily concerned with racial and economic issues. Election related materials such as voter registration documents, an order to Paul L. DeClouet to guard the polls at St. Martinville (1870), and printed election tickets are included.

The correspondence is primarily addressed to Alexandre Étienne DeClouet (1861-1884) and concerns personal, business, and political matters. One letter requests that Alexandre give a speech for the White League (1874). Included is one personal letter to Étienne Chevalier DeClouet from M. Calanno (1787).

Personal papers include recipes, possibly in the hand of Jane DeClouet, and a list of the birthdays of Jane Marie, Marguerite Edrige, and Paul Ernest Roman.

Newspaper clippings include an article relating the death of Paul Landry (called Alexander Landry), a political item, and clippings concerning Confederate military history.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Financial papers, 1794-1905 (87 items)

Ledger entries of plantation expenses along with receipts for goods and services and the accounts of Joseph Alexandre DeClouet, Alexandre E. DeClouet, Paul L. DeClouet, and Anna St. Claire. Also included are notes, charts, and other items pertaining to plantation management.

Series II. Legal documents, 1795-1887 (30 items)

Subseries 1. General legal documents, 1795-1887 (12 items)

Documents related to plantation operations including those pertaining to the sale of a slave, contract for plantation labor, and the transferal of legal authority from Alexandre E. DeClouet to Paul L. DeClouet. Visas of Alexandre E. DeClouet and documents of the Roman Family regarding the purchase of property in New Orleans are included.

Subseries 2. Testamentary documents, 1855-circa 1889 (18 items)

Accounts, receipts, and documents relating to the settlements of the estates of Adrien Dumartrait and Dr. N. Betournay.

Series III. Political papers, 1867-1878 (17 items)

Texts of public addresses and resolutions drawn up for the White League by Alexandre E. DeClouet. Also included are election related materials.

Series IV. Correspondence, 1787-1884 (7 items)

Personal, business, and political correspondence addressed to Etienne Chevalier DeClouet and to Alexandre E. DeClouet. Includes one telegraph to Alexandre E. DeClouet.

Series V. Personal papers, circa 1800-1899 (4 items)

Items pertaining to DeClouet family life, including recipes.

Series VI. Newspaper clippings, 1887 (5 items)

Death notice, articles of political and historical interest.

Series VII. Legal manuscript volume, 1831-1832 (1 volume)

Passport book of Alexandre E. DeClouet.

Series VIII. Financial manuscript volumes, 1810-1905 (36 volumes)

Includes 6 diaries (one kept by Alexandre E. DeClouet, the others kept by Paul L. DeClouet) which record details of plantation management as well as matters of social, political, and economic interest. Fourteen memorandum books (three kept by Alexandre DeClouet, the others kept by Paul L. DeClouet) record the family's financial and agricultural affairs. Sixteen time books kept by Paul L. DeClouet record hours worked and wages received by plantation laborers.

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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
U:181	1	1-7	Series I. Financial papers, 1794, [1828?], 1838-1839, 1862-1864, 1870-1871, 1877-1878, 1880-1886, 1888-1893, 1896-1898, 1900, 1905
		8-12	Series II. Legal documents, 1795, 1832-1833, 1855-1856, 1868, 1886-1887
		13-14	Series III. Political papers, 1867-1868, 1870, 1872, 1874, 1876, 1878
		15-16	Series IV. Correspondence, 1787, 1861, 1864, 1869, 1874, 1884
		17	Series V. Personal papers, circa 1800-1899
		18	Series VI. Newspaper clippings, 1887
<u>Volumes</u>			
J:5	2	--	Series VIII. Financial manuscript volumes, 1866-1870 (volumes 1-5), 1880-1888 (volume 6)
		3	Series VIII. Financial manuscript volumes, 1810-1812, 1848-1863, 1866-1884, 1888-1890, 1892-1897, 1900-1905 (volumes 7-20); Series VII. Legal manuscript volume, 1831-1832 (volume 21)
		4	Series VIII. Financial manuscript volumes, 1869, 1877-1880 (volumes 22-28)
		5	Series VIII. Financial manuscript volumes, 1880-1884 (volumes 29-37)

Also available on Microfilm 6061, Series B, Part 3, Reels 5-6