

11<sup>th</sup> January 1809

To Mr G Van Crombrughe in Grammont, Department of the Escaut

Very dear Father and Mother

It has been a long time since I heard your news, and three or four of my letters have been without answer. However I suspect that it is the delay of Mrs Byl's journey that is the reason for it; at least I hope that there is not another reason. It has been a long time, however, since I have heard anything definite, and I am not without a certain worry. Firstly, how are you? Is Rosalie entirely recovered; will she soon go to School? Charlotte very much wants to know; she is greatly benefiting from the sacrifice you have made. About three weeks ago when I went to see her, Sister Beaudemont made me say to Mrs Sambucy in front of a certain number of strangers in the reception room, that my sister was very good and very happy. Eight days ago whilst returning from Mass she stopped me and told that she could wish for nothing better, she is cheerful, devout and clever; without decrying Rosalie, this one surpasses her in everything. This must give you pleasure, dear Parents, but what will astonish you even more is that she would have won several prizes if she had been longer at the school. To win a prize it is necessary to have been at the School at least two months before the end of the term when the prizes are distributed.

I have a thing to ask you; I do not like luxury, but I do like cleanliness, and my green coat is less than clean. I will say more, it is nearly unwearable. I cannot wear my light brown coat every day as I would have nothing left for the summer. I ask you therefore to send me via Mrs Byl a coat of my brother's if he has any that he does not wear any more. I am obliged to dress reasonably well because we often receive His Eminence the Bishop, Vicars General or Canons, and it is not right to appear before them with a dirty and stained coat like mine.

Please answer me as soon as possible and very sincerely believe me, my very dear Father and Mother,

Your very submissive son

Amiens, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1809

*C Van Crombrughe*

PS: Please present my respects to all the family and assure my brother Jean, Rosalie and Cecile of my love. I commend myself to your prayers and ask you to give me your blessing.

