



John S. Jacobs, Harriet's brother, who had escaped from slavery in 1838 to become a noted antislavery lecturer, writes to the journalist and abolitionist Sydney Howard Gay about the efforts of the Norcom family to recapture Harriet Jacobs. "He says that he dont wish to sell her at any price he wants to get her to make ensample [example] of her for the good of the institution."

Chelsea Mass June 4th 1846

Friend Gay

they have let the cat out of the bag and I thort that I would tell you that it proved to be a devel in disguise my sister received a very affectionate letter lass *week* from her young mistress— *Mrs* Mesmore she writes of her having married and also of having heared that my sister had gone to England she has been waiting the arrival of Mr W[illis] and now reminds my sister of her former love and in that affectionat manner so peculiar to this no soul Nation she want to know if she wont COME HOME that she had never consented for her Father to sell her becaus she did not wish her to be the slave of any one but her self who had *alwais* [?] loved her and been kind to her— It in deed it seemes to me that the old Dr letter to the New York blood hounds and the young Dr letter to my sister with one received lass week would pusel [puzzle] all of the pill makers in the city to get them in *to* a shape sutable to our taste let me give you an extract from all of them

the old Dr writes his to New York to be put in to the hands of the smartest polease [police] officer in the city offering \$100 reward for her and after having discribed her as monutely as posable he sais that he dont wish to sell her at any price he wants to get her to make ensample [example] of her for the good of the institution — ~~now for the younger~~ the young Dr writes as if he had Just come from A camp meeting his hole head is full of love the purst [purest] of the Delilah kind he is a fraid that she is n*o*t happy and comfortable away from all of her friends and relatives and after assuring her that the family still entertain the most friendly feelings to wards her he then begs her to write him where she is that he might restore her to her former happiness (hell)

the letter that was written by Mesmore as you know was a comepleat forgery and in addition to that it was as black er *falshood* as ever escaped the bottomless pit he said that a northern gentleman wished to buy her and that the Norcom family would have nothing to do with her when in fait he then intended and since has married in the Norcom family the newly made Mrs Mesmore wants her to return home or buy her self but as my sister has not the means of buy her self and finds these cold regons more healthy than the suny South they will have to love *each other* at a distance the sweetest love that can exist between master and Slave I dont know this mr—Mesmore the New York men ketchers has run him in to Edenton since the baby stealers run me out but to Judge *him* by his letters I should say that he was equil to 15 grains of epecuaner [ipecacuanha] mixed in a like warm water but poor fellow he has paid dear for his wife he has been chot [shot] mobed and emprisoned but for the want of time I must leave his interesting family may the Lord have mursey up on them Yours in behalf of the oppressed the world over

John S Jacobs

Citation:

Autograph letter, signed; Sydney Howard Gay Papers, Columbia University Libraries.