Camillus Onondaga Co. N.Y.
Nov. 17. 1852

Dear Mr May

You can scarcely imagine my delight at greeting once more my good friend Peter, and under circumstances so unlike those which attended my first acquaintance with him.

When I first entered the Pinckneyville Fem. Seminary as a teacher — Jan. 15. 1849 — there was Peter — a slave! Morning, noon, and night found him there. For a year I met him every day, and every day saw more cause to admire his character.

I did not then know that he panted for freedom — the fact that he was saving every penny to "buy himself" was a secret. I knew that he worked hard — that he bought no fine clothes, though his garments were always scrupulously clean — I knew at one time of his having $10 in five cent pieces changed for gold, and that all these little earnings were carefully hoarded, but if I had guessed the object of his industry and economy, I should have deemed it ~~wisest~~ most prudent to ask no questions and to make no remarks.

Peter at that time belonged to the Gist estate, & an heir of which — Mrs. John Hogan —

Judge Boudinot
&
Mrs Bradford

How eloquent is his simple story! Who can listen to it with unmoistened eyes?

But his poor wife and their three children are still slaves, and the only way that seems open for their exit from the land of bondage is through the gate of money.

Some conscientious persons object to paying the man-stealer for his prey, but poor Peter's anxious heart cannot by such scruples be guided. He longs for the presence of those so dear to him — and they — how do their heart yearn for the society of husband and father! When at night they stretch themselves upon their rude pallets in their lowly cabin, and when the dawn of morning calls them to their weary tasks, do they not pray for deliverance? O let us save them if we can! The giver shall be blessed, and Maj. McKiernan, the owner of their bodies will be little benefited, even though he should receive the whole of his exorbitant demand,

I think however, that if some generous neighbor of Maj. McKiernan can be induced to lend his aid, that price may be abated. They could not, I should think be reduced, according to market prices, higher than $3000. It would at least, be well to make the effort. I have a friend there, an honest and influential

man, who may I think be persuaded to exert himself in his behalf— I will try.

Peter's cause commends itself to every human heart— and O if human hearts will but overcome the dictates of cold selfishness, how soon will his anxious suspense be ended! May the Friend of the Poor speedily reward his patience by the realization of his fondest hopes!

I hope Sir, to see you when I go to Syracuse, which will probably be before many days, and to learn of the success of your efforts. We will do all we can for him in Camillus.

Yours very truly

Nate C. R. Pickard.