



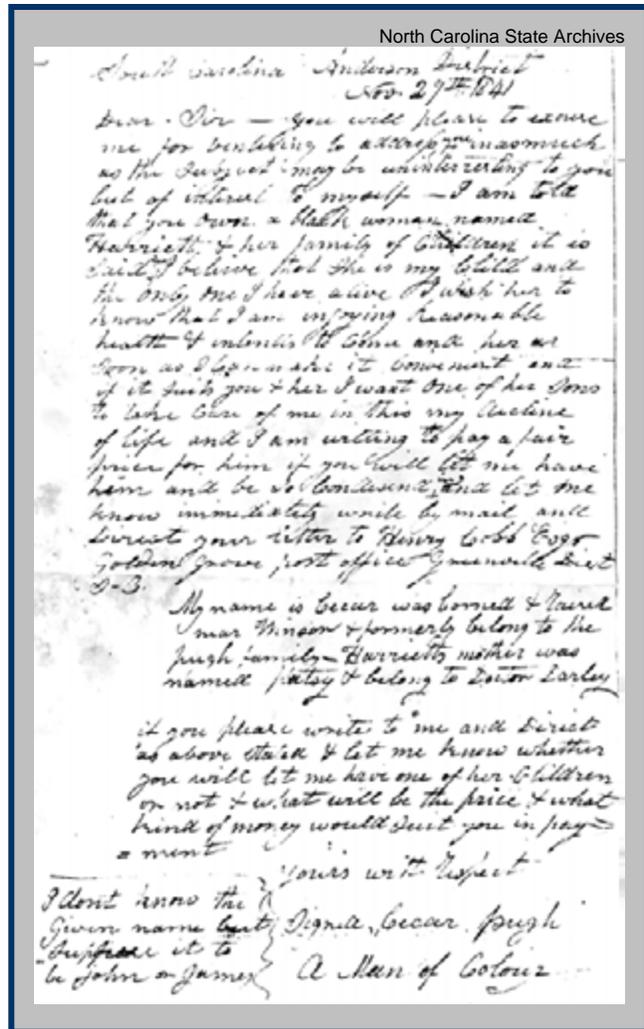
“I believe that she is my child and the only one I have alive”

In 1841 Cecar Pugh, a free “man of colour” in South Carolina, wrote to a slaveholder in North Carolina where Pugh had earlier been enslaved. He asks if his daughter is enslaved on the man’s plantation and requests to buy one of her sons to care for him in his advanced age.

South Carolina Anderson District
Nov. 29th 1841

Dear Sir¹ — you will please to excuse me for venturing to address you inasmuch as the subject may be uninteresting to you but of interest to myself — I am told that you own a black woman named Harriett & her family of children it is said & I believe that she is my child and the only one I have alive I wish her to know that I am enjoying reasonable health & intends to come and [see] her as soon as I can make it convenient and if it suits you & her I want one of her sons to take care of me in this my decline of life and I am willing to pay a fair price for him if you will let me have him and be so condesending and let me know immediately write by mail and dirict your letter to Henry Cobb Esqr. Golden Grove post office Greenville Dist S-C.

My name is Cecar was borned & raised near Winsor² & formerly belong to the Pugh family — Harrietts mother was named Patsy & belong to Doctor Darby



if you please write to me and Dirict as above stated & let me know whether you will let me have one of her children or not & what will be the price & what kind of money would suit you in pay=
=ment

Yours with respect

I dont know the given name but suppose it to be john or James

Signed, Cecar Pugh

A Man of Colour

National Humanities Center, 2007: nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/. Letter in Heckstall Papers (P.C. 582), North Carolina State Archives. Image: photocopy of original. Complete image credits at nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai/imagecredits.htm.

¹ “G. Egstall,” probably a Heckstall in northeastern North Carolina, where the Heckstall, Pugh, and Darby families lived (1860 census).

² Perhaps the town of Windsor in Bertie County, North Carolina.