

# WASHINGTON WOMAN REVEALED AS FAMOUS SLAVE, "PINKY"

Was "Sold for Freedom" by  
Beecher From Pulpit 67  
Years Ago.

Will Be Guest of Honor in  
Same Church at Cele-  
bration Sunday.

After shunning publicity for more than half a century, Mrs. James Hunt, 411 Florida avenue, today admitted she was the tiny negro slave girl, called "Pinky" who, in 1860 was "sold for freedom," by Henry Ward Beecher, in the pulpit of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn.

Saturday, Mrs. Hunt, accompanied by her daughter, Miss Eva Hunt, Patent Office employe, will go to New York, as the guest of Dr. J. Stanley Durkee, present pastor of Plymouth Church. She will sit on the same Plymouth Church rostrum where as a girl of 9, 67 years ago, her freedom was pledged by an enthusiastic congregation, which subscribed \$1,100, or \$200 more than the purchase price, which had been set upon her head. Her presence beside Dr. Durkee, who will tell for the first time the complete story of her remarkable life, will be a dramatic feature of the Plymouth Church's eightieth anniversary.

## Name Was By-word.

Friendship for Dr. Durkee, under whom she was a student while he was president of Howard University here, caused Mrs. Hunt to throw aside the cloak of secrecy with which she had shielded her identity, it was stated today.

Mrs. Hunt confided to Dr. Durkee that she was the famous "Pinky," whose name was a by-word of the Civil War days, shortly after it became known that he was considering accepting the call to the historic Plymouth church.

After he had resigned from Howard University to fill the Plymouth church pulpit, Dr. Durkee, looking forward to the celebration of the church's eightieth anniversary, persuaded Mrs. Hunt to permit him to make public her identity and to come to Brooklyn as his guest on the anniversary occasion. Reluctantly, Mrs. Hunt agreed.

## Born in Charles County.

Neighbors of Mrs. Hunt who have known her during the 35 years she has lived at 411 Florida avenue with her husband, James E. Hunt, colored attorney, marveled today when they learned of the illustrious historical background of their lifelong friend. Most of them declared they were very familiar with the story of "Pinky," but had no idea that Mrs. Hunt was that character.

While Mrs. Hunt steadfastly refuses to tell the intimate facts which she has supplied Dr. Durkee for his sermon on Sunday, the salient outlines of her life were sketched today as follows:

Mrs. Hunt's real name was Sally Maria Diggs. She was born in Port Tobacco, Charles County, Md., 75 years ago. Her father was a white man and her mother a negro. She was separated at the age of 7 from her mother by the latter's sale to a slave trader in Alexandria, Va. Soon afterward she and her grandmother were sold to a trader in Baltimore. The grandparent, however, had saved



MRS. JAMES HUNT ("Pinky").

enough money to buy her own freedom and to lease "Pinky."

Attracted by the reputation gained by Henry Ward Beecher as a champion of freedom for the negro, and of his stirring revelations made before congregations in the Plymouth Church, the grandmother reached him through a friend and prevailed upon him to aid her in securing "Pinky's" freedom.

Mr. Beecher, seeing the possibilities of having his congregation buy Pinky's freedom, visited the little girl's owner, who set a price of \$900 on her head. Beecher then began to prepare his famous address, which resulted in \$1,100 being raised. "Pinky," quivering with terror, sat on the stage. Beecher eloquence was such that women became hysterical and men recklessly tossed money in the offering.

After the bill of sale had been signed, following the raising of the money for Pinky's purchase, the girl was taken to live with the family of a brother of John Falkner Blake, who had executed the sale in Alexandria. The child was given the name of Rose Ward, after Rose Terry, the author, and Henry Ward Beecher. Today, Mrs. Hunt treasures this original bill of sale which authorized her freedom.

## Will be Honored Guest.

Washingtonians are expected to journey to New York Sunday to hear Dr. Durkee's sermon. On this dramatic occasion, Mrs. Hunt will sit, not in the improvised "slave pen" put up on the pulpit rostrum 67 years ago, but as a honored guest of the occasion.

Mrs. Hunt was married here 45 years ago. After her graduation from Howard University she taught school at Annapolis, Md. While she has had five daughters, only one of them survive.

Mrs. Hunt is a well-preserved woman and does not show her years. She admitted today that she had only this morning received another letter from Dr. Durkee and it was hinted that she might make quite a stay in New York as the guest of the former Howard University president.

Mr. Hunt, husband of "Pinky," recalled today that Henry Ward Beecher had kept in touch with "Pinky" and that when he made an address here during the administration of President Grover Cleveland that he sent his wife tickets and she attended.