

## Mrs. Eliza Husher (formerly Eliza Clark) searching for her mother Sallie Clark and siblings

Eliza Clark placed this short ad in *The Freeman* in 1891. *The Freeman*, published from 1884-1927, was the first illustrated African American newspaper in the United States—meaning that the paper employed a full staff of artists to create original illustrations for publication in the paper. The paper had a national audience and at its peak had a circulation of approximately 25,000 subscribers.

Husher's short ad contains important details—identifying her mother and siblings by name—and including how they were separated as her family was trafficked south during the Civil War.

**Wanted to know the whereabouts of Sallie Clark, if living, also her children, my brothers and sisters, Nancy, Caroline, Robert, Tip, Tobe, Frank, Samuel and Aaron Clark, all of whom were taken South by Negro-traders from this county in 1862 and 63. Address Mrs. Eliza Husher, (formerly Eliza Clark,)**

Wanted to know the whereabouts of Sallie Clark, if living, also her children, my brothers and sister, Nancy, Caroline, Robert, Tip, Tobe, Frank, Samuel and Aaron Clark, all of whom were taken South by Negro-traders from this county in 1862 and 63. Address Mrs. Eliza Husher, (formerly Eliza Clark,)

Lucy A. Johnson placed this ad in *The Freeman* in 1892, over a year after Eliza Husher placed her ad seeking information about her mother and siblings. Johnson's ad is remarkable in the details that it offers about Husher's family and her grandmother's participation in an onboard plot to resist being trafficked to New Orleans.

Slavery in the Bahamas, which was part of the British empire, officially ended in 1834. In 1841, the *Creole* left Virginia with 135 enslaved people, bound for the slave markets in New Orleans. A rebellion onboard the ship, which many historians call the most successful slave rebellion in United States history, led to 128 enslaved people gaining their freedom after landing in Nassau.

This remarkable act of resistance not only demonstrates enslaved people's quest for freedom, it also attests to their knowledge of the political landscape—they knew where they could be free—and they determined to go there.

I would like to know the whereabouts of Mrs. Eliza Clark, formerly Mrs. Eliza Husher. My history is a peculiar one. I saw in *The Freeman* that Mrs. Eliza Husher wanted to know the whereabouts of her sister, Mrs. Sallie Clark and her brothers Tip, Tobe and the rest of her brothers. Sister Sallie Clark is my grand-mother and I, Lucy Johnson, am the only grand-daughter surviving, and I have two brothers alive. Sallie Clark had nine children and they are all dead; the last of all died four years ago in May, an my grand-mother has been dead eight years. When she was alive she used to tell me about her relations in America. She told us that she was sold to a slave buyer with about two hundred more slaves, and they were bound to New Orleans. On board of the ship there were two white men who were ill treated and they agreed with the slave men that as soon as they reached the "hole in the wall" they would give a signal and they would take the captain and crew and put them in irons and make sail for Nassau. They did so and by so doing my grand-mother and many more were landed in Nassau. Many are dead but some who came over are still living. This is the way that we came to be in Nassau. I want to inform Mrs. Eliza Clark that she is Mrs. Eliza Husher and that I would be glad if she would write me or write to *The Freeman*. May God bless *The Freeman* and its undertakers. Address all letters to Mrs. Lucy A. Johnson, Nassau, Bahamas.

I would like to know the whereabouts of Mrs. Eliza Clark, formerly Mrs. Eliza Husher. My history is a peculiar one. I saw in *The Freeman* that Mrs. Eliza Husher wanted to know the whereabouts of her sister, Mrs. Sallie Clark and her brothers Tip, Tobe and the rest of her brothers. Sister Sallie Clark is my grand-mother and I, Lucy Johnson, am the only grand-daughter surviving, and I have two brothers alive. Sallie Clark had nine children and they are all dead; the last of all died four years ago in May, an my grand-mother has been dead eight years. When she was alive she used to tell me about her relations in America. She told us that she was sold to a slave buyer with about two hundred more slaves, and they were bound to New Orleans. On board of the ship there were two white men who were ill treated and they agreed with the slave men that as soon as they reached the "hole in the wall" they would give a signal and they would take the captain and crew and put them in irons and make sail for Nassua. They did so and by so doing my grand-mother and many more were landed in Nassau. Many are dead but some who came over are still living. This is the way that we came to be in Nassau. I want to inform Mrs. Eliza Clark that she is Mrs. Eliza Husher and that I would be glad if she would write me or write to *The Freeman*. May God bless *The Freeman* and its undertakers. Address all letters to Mrs. Lucy A. Johnson, Nassau, Bahamas.

**LAST SEEN:**  
Finding Family After Slavery

ELIZA HUSHER & LUCY A. JOHNSON

Sources: [First Ad] *The Freeman* (Indianapolis, IN) May 16, 1891. <https://informationwanted.org/items/show/3002>  
[Second Ad] *The Freeman* (Indianapolis, IN), July 16, 1892. <https://informationwanted.org/items/show/3039>