FAMOUS FRIENDS

During her life, Emily Edmonson was associated with a number of the most well-known Americans of the 19th century.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, the bestselling novel of the 19th century, based two of her novel’s characters on Emily and Mary Edmonson. After they were freed, she helped raise money for the sisters’ education so that they could become teachers.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER
Rev. Henry Ward Beecher helped to raise $2,250 to “ransom” Emily and Mary Edmonson from slavery. His experience with the Edmonson sisters was a turning point in his life, and he went on to become an outspoken abolitionist.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
Emily and Mary Edmonson attended abolitionist events with Frederick Douglass after they were freed. He and Emily became lifelong friends—like “brother and sister,” Emily’s granddaughter recalled.

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by Winifred Conkling

hardcover • $17.95 • 6.75” x 9” • 176 pages

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