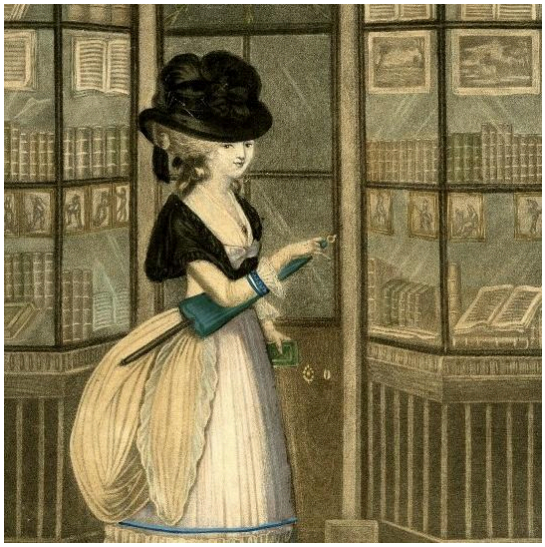


The Women's Print History Project

Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series [Spotlight Introduction]

Authored by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren
Edited by Kate Moffatt

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Levy, Michelle, and Kandice Sharren. "Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series." *The Women's Print History Project*, 19 June 2020, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/18.

PDF Edited: 5 January 2024

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada | Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada | Canada | DHIL

Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series

Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.

Figure 1. Agostino Brunias, *Free Women of Color with their Children and Servants*, c. 1770–1796.

To honour the Black Lives Matter movement, and in solidarity with the protests that have erupted across the globe, WPHP has planned a series of Spotlights that call attention to how our project can participate in the process of discovering and celebrating Black lives of the past. Our spotlights focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors. We launch this series today, on June 19, 2020, or Juneteenth, which commemorates the day that enslaved people in Texas learned that they had been freed, two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation. We will launch a new spotlight every Friday throughout July, each written by a different member of our team. This collection of spotlights will be discussed in the third installment of *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*, to be broadcast on August 19.

The first Spotlight in this series is written by Kandice Sharren, and examines the anonymous novel *The Woman of Colour*, published in London in 1808, the year after the English Parliament formally abolished the slave trade (though it would continue illegally for many years). The novel offers a sensitive representation of a mixed-race heiress named Olivia Fairfield. Her white father, who has died when the novel begins, uses the device of the "dead hand" to condition her inheritance upon her marrying a white man, thus launching the story and propelling the racism she faces when she travels from Jamaica to England. As Sharren shows, the novel was published anonymously, and the author remains unknown, though the title page of this novel, as well as various others, offers tantalizing though ultimately inconclusive clues about the identity of the author.

On June 26, Kate Moffatt will feature the Black bookseller Ann Sancho. Most of the information we have about Sancho survives because of her marriage to Ignatius Sancho, who corresponded with Laurence Sterne and who was the first Black man to have an obituary in a London newspaper, and because her son was William Sancho, well-known as the "negro bookseller" in the Mews. As Moffatt explains, most of what we know about Ann Sancho is a result of information that survives about her male relatives. Discovering women in the book trades poses special problems, as Ann Sancho's case exemplifies. These issues will be discussed in our second podcast, which uses Ann Sancho as a case study. This podcast will be available to stream on July 16.

On July 3, Sara Penn will highlight Mary Prince. Prince was the first black woman to publish an account of her enslavement, in *A History of Mary Prince, as related by herself* (London, 1831). Enslaved in Bermuda, Turks Island and Antigua and brought to London by her enslaver, Mr. Wood, Prince's powerful account of the brutality of slavery systematically demolishes the justifications commonly advanced in Britain in defence of slavery. Through her direct and affecting narration, Prince addresses her audience: "I tell it, to let the English people know the truth." The *History* was reprinted three times in 1831, and has become one of the best known of all slave narratives. Prince was the first enslaved woman to petition Parliament for her freedom, so she could return a free woman to her husband in Antigua. Her petition was denied, however, and little is known of Prince's life after 1833.

On July 10, Amanda Law's Spotlight will consider the London publication of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on various subjects, religious and moral* in 1773. Wheatley, pictured in the image below, is described on the title page as "Negro servant to Mr. John Wheatley of Boston, in New England" and the book, though "Printed for A. Bell, Bookseller, Aldgate" was to be "sold by Messrs. Cox and Berry, King-Street, Boston." Law's discussion will address, among other things, the popularity of this volume of poetry, and how a book by a formerly enslaved American woman living in Boston came to be printed and published in London, and sold in Boston.

Figure 2. Frontispiece to Phyllis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects*, 1773.

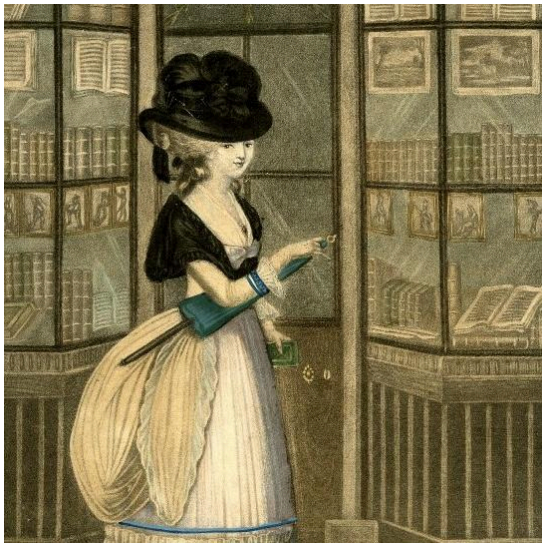
On July 17, Victoria DeHart will feature a pamphlet written in 1824 by the uncompromising abolitionist Elizabeth Heyrick. In *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition; or an Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery*, Heyrick insists that slavery must be brought to an immediate end: "The perpetuation of slavery in our West India colonies is not an abstract question, to be settled between the government and the planters; it is one in which we are all implicated, we are all guilty of supporting and perpetuating slavery" (4). In 1830 she spearheaded the motion by the Female Society for Birmingham to the Anti-Slavery Society calling for it to campaign for the immediate end to colonial British slavery.

On July 24, Michelle Levy will spotlight Maria W. Stewart, who was the first African American woman to lecture publicly on political, religious and racial issues, and the first to leave a record of her thoughts and speeches. Her lectures were reprinted in William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, before being collected in the *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart: presented to the First African Baptist Church & Society of the city of Boston* (1835), along with recollections of her early life.

On July 31, Hanieh Ghaderi and Kandice Sharren will explore abolitionist Lydia Maria Child's *Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, which was the first book by a white woman written in support of the immediate emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. The product of three years of research and writing, Child's *Appeal* offers a detailed and systemic analysis of slavery, and racism more generally, in America.

In addition to the new spotlights written as part of this series, we invite you to read one of our first spotlights, on the abolitionist bookseller Martha Gurney. An innovative bookseller who operated a shop in High Holborn, London, Gurney was committed to circulating cheap or free print to bring about the abolition of the slave trade and colonial slavery. She was named as the bookseller of *An Address to the People of Great Britain, on the Utility of Abstaining from the use of West India Sugar and Rum*, first printed in 1791. This was the first and most influential essay to advocate for a boycott of West Indian products, especially sugar and rum, and the pamphlet became hugely popular, with twenty-six editions in one year. It became one of if not the most widely circulated pamphlet of the century; it is estimated that approximately 200,000 copies of the pamphlet were sold or given away in an attempt to undermine the commercial viability of slavery.

We hope to add to our records to document and celebrate the lives of Black women and their allies. If you know of a title, person or firm that is not in WPHP, or you would like us to feature a title, person or firm in a spotlight, please reach out to us at wphp1750.1830@gmail.com or add a comment below.



The Women's Print History Project

The Woman of Colour: Don't Break the (Attribution) Chain [Spotlight]

Authored by Kandice Sharren
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kate Moffatt

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Sharren, Kandice. "The Woman of Colour: Don't Break the (Attribution) Chain." *The Women's Print History Project*, 19 June 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/17.

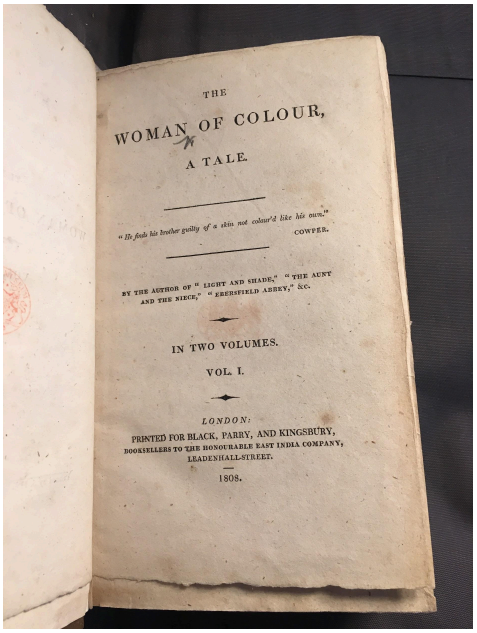
PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

The Woman of Colour: Don't Break the (Attribution) Chain

Kandice Sharren

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.


THE

WOMAN OF COLOUR,

A TALE.

"He feels his brother guilty of a skin not colour'd like his own."

COWPER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIGHT AND SHADE," "THE AUNT AND THE NIECE," "EERSFIELD ABBEY," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BLACK, PARRY, AND KINGSBURY, BOOKSELLERS TO THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY, LEADENHALL-STREET.

1808.

Figure 1. Original title page of *The Woman of Colour*, courtesy of the British Library.

Published in the year following Britain's abolition of the slave trade, the anonymous novel *The Woman of Colour* (1808) is exceptional for a number of reasons, not the least its heroine: a mixed-race heiress, Olivia Fairfield, who is the daughter of an enslaved woman and a white Jamaican planter. The novel opens with Olivia on board a ship en route to London following the death of her father; we soon learn that her inheritance is contingent on marriage to her white cousin whom she has never met. Fortunately for Olivia, her cousin, Augustus Merton proves to be kind and sensitive to her plight, if strangely melancholic; his brother and sister-in-law, on the other hand, are openly racist schemers seeking to gain control over Olivia's fortune by preventing her marriage to Augustus. The villainy of Augustus' sister-in-law is confirmed when we learn that she has been hiding Augustus' first wife, Angelina Forrester, whom he believes to be dead. Angelina's reappearance late in the novel invalidates Olivia and Augustus' marriage; since she has technically fulfilled the requirements of her father's will, she turns down a subsequent marriage proposal and returns to Jamaica, fortune intact.

The contemporary reception of *The Woman of Colour* was generally positive; it received substantial reviews in three significant periodicals, the *British Critic,* the *Monthly Review*, and the *Critical Review*, all of which commented favourably on the virtue and fortitude of the novel's heroine. However, despite the attention the work received on publication, it was largely forgotten until the early 2000s and its author remains a mystery. In the introduction to the Broadview edition of the novel, Lyndon J. Dominique "weigh[s] the facts that this text was probably written by a woman, but not a British one," concluding, "it seems most plausible that a woman of color wrote *The Woman of Colour*" (32). However, facts about who this woman might have been are thin on the ground. Dominique notes the similarities of the novel's plot to the lives of two mixed-race heiresses, Ann and Rebecca Wright, whose their father's will contained a provision similar to that of Olivia's, stating that they had to marry in England. Like Olivia, Ann Wright sidestepped the provision through a technicality: she married a free Black man in England shortly after her father's death. The possibility that Ann Wright authored *The Woman of Colour* is, in Dominique's words, "an intriguing speculation" (33).

But it is not just the author's identity that is elusive. This author's anonymity is compounded by a complex chain of twenty titles linked by what we would now call the byline, which is represented by the "Signed Author" field in our title records. We use the "Signed Author" field to capture precisely how an author is described on the title page and elsewhere in the work, allowing us to understand how authors presented themselves to the public. Authors in this period often identified themselves not by name but by associating themselves as the authors of previously published titles. The byline on the title page of *The Woman of Colour* reads, "By the author of 'Light and Shade,' 'The Aunt and the Niece,' 'Ebersfield [sic] Abbey,' &c." Of the three titles listed, only one has a definitive attribution: the 1803 novel *Light and Shade*, described as, "By the Author of Federetta; Rebecca; Miriam; and Concealment, or the Cascade of Lantwarrybn," which Garside, Raven and Schöwerling identify as Mrs. E.M. Foster, about whom nothing beyond her name is known. The other two novels have no explicit connection to Foster beyond the title page of *The Woman of Colour*: *The Aunt and Niece* was published anonymously by the Minerva Press in 1804 and *Eversfield Abbey* by Benjamin Crosby and Co. in 1806, listed as "By the Authoress of The Aunt and Niece." No information except that on the title pages is known about the author(s) of these works.

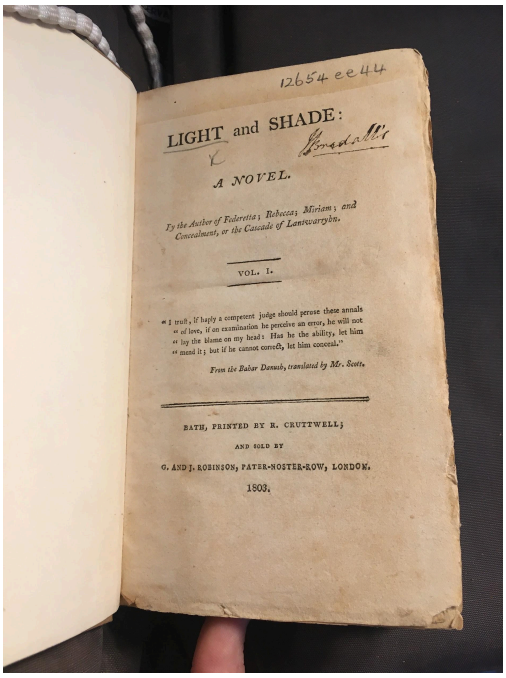


Figure 2. *Light and Shade*: the last novel to be definitively attributed to Mrs. E.M. Foster (image of the copy held by the British Library).

Between 1809 and 1811, three novels directly reference *The Woman of Colour* in their bylines: *The Corinna of England* (1809), *Black Rock House* (1810), *The Dead Letter Office* (1811). Three further novels also reference titles in this chain of attribution, although not *The Woman of Colour* specifically: the title page of *Substance and Shadow* (1812) indicates that it is "By the author of Light and Shade; Eversfield Abbey; Banks of the Wye; Aunt and Niece, &c. &c."; *The Splendour of Adversity* (1814) "By the author of Black Rock House, Winter in Bath, Corinna of England, The Dead Letter Office, &c. &c."; and *The Revealer of Secrets* (1817), which was identified as "By the author of Eversfield Abbey, Banks of the Wye, Aunt and Niece, Substance and Shadow, &c. &c." In addition to the three novels named on the title page of *The Woman of Colour*, these later novels identify two further novels from the first decade of the nineteenth century that may have been written by the same author: *A Winter in Bath* (1807), which was unhelpfully attributed to "the author of two popular novels," and *The Banks of the Wye* (1808).

(If you're confused by the above, you aren't alone; I drafted the following flowchart to keep track of all of the attributions. I'm not sure it helped.)

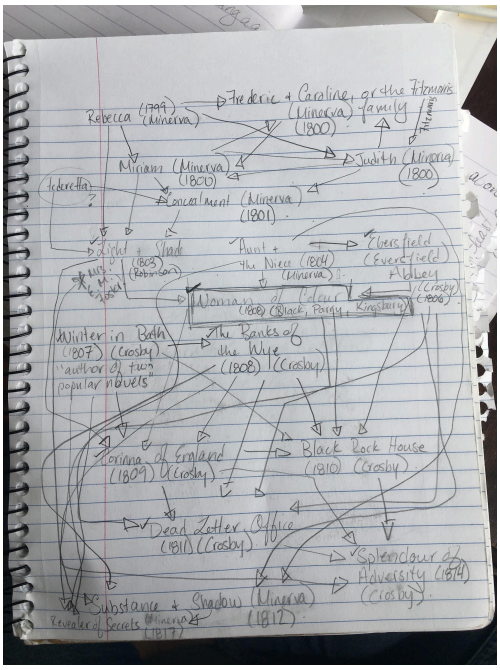
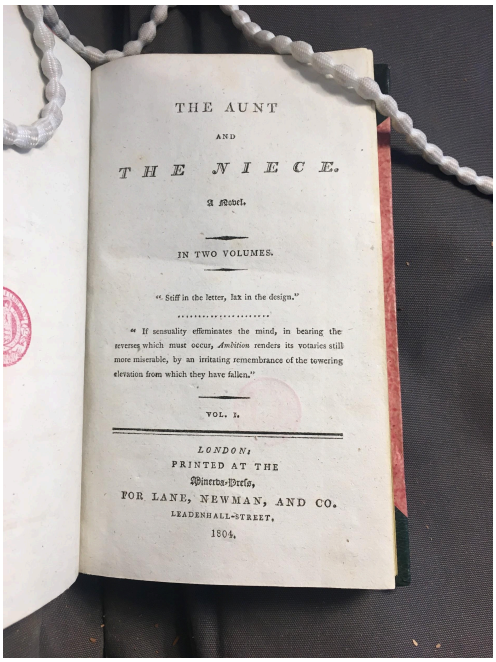


Figure 3. The Attribution Chain in Question: A Chart.

Why is this attribution chain so convoluted? Peter Garside has suggested that some publishers were driven "to boost a novel's credentials . . . [by] extending the list of titles 'by the author' beyond the bounds of veracity" (69). Following Garside's lead, scholars have generally been skeptical that the same author was responsible for all twenty titles. If Mrs. E.M. Foster was responsible for writing all of these novels, she would have been unusually prolific, but not outside of the bounds of possibility; given that the titles were published between 1795 and 1817, she would have averaged less than one title per year, four of which were published in 1800 alone. Some of the complexities of the chain can be explained by the movement of authors between different publishers. While publishers were eager to market a book based on the author's previous successes, they were aware that listing titles published by another bookseller was offering the competition free publicity.

Although tracing the publishers in this attribution chain cannot definitively identify the author of *The Woman of Colour*, it does offer insight into why some works were listed more frequently than others on later title pages. Mrs. E.M. Forster began her career with William Lane's Minerva Press, a publisher best known for writing popular, light fiction. She stayed with this publisher until 1801; *Light and Shade*, which is the last novel that was definitively attributed to her, was published in 1803 by the more prestigious George and John Robinson. The next novel in the chain, *The Aunt and the Niece*, which contains no reference to Foster's previous works on its title page, was published the following year by the Minerva Press; after that, most of the works in the attribution chain were published by Benjamin Crosby and Co. (another publisher known for light fiction), with the exception of *Substance and Shadow* and *The Revealer of Secrets*, which were published by the Minerva Press (now run by Lane's successor, A.K. Newman, who had become a partner in the firm in 1802) . . . and *The Woman of Colour*, which was published by Black, Parry, and Kingsbury, a firm that existed in various incarnations between 1799 and 1835. Unlike the other firms in this

attribution chain, Black, Parry, and Kingsbury published some fiction but, based on a cursory search of the British Library catalogue, seem to have specialized in political, ethnographic and travel writing about India—which makes sense, given their designation as "Booksellers to the East India Company."


THE AUNT

AND

THE NIECE.

A Novel.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

"Stiff in the letter, lax in the design."

.....

"If sensuality effeminates the mind, in bearing the reverses which must occur, *Ambition* renders its votaries still more miserable, by an irritating remembrance of the towering elevation from which they have fallen."

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR LANE, NEWMAN, AND CO.
LEADENHALL-STREET.
1804.

Figure 4. Title page for The Aunt and the Niece, which contains no information about the author.

As a general rule, each publisher's title pages emphasize the works published by that publisher, which is likely why the title page of *A Winter in Bath* vaguely references "two popular novels" in its attribution, rather than naming them. This makes the absence of any information about the author on the title page of *The Aunt and the Niece* worth noticing; if it *was* authored by Foster, who had already published several novels with the Minerva Press, it is unclear why the title page would not advertise the fact. *The Aunt and the Niece* is the weak link that casts doubt on the attributions of subsequent titles, including *The Woman of Colour.* As the only work in this chain published by Black, Parry, and Kingsbury, it is a marker of *The Woman of Colour*'s initial success that it continued to be listed on the title pages of works published by Crosby—and a hint that perhaps at least some of these works were the product of the same pen, after all.

WPHP Records Referenced

Woman of Colour (title)
Light and Shade (title)
Foster, Mrs. E.M. (person, author)
The Aunt and Niece (title)
Eversfield Abbey (title)
The Corinna of England (title)

Black Rock House (title)
Substance and Shadow (title)
The Splendour of Adversity (title)
The Revealer of Secrets (title)
A Winter in Bath (title)
The Banks of the Wye (title)
Minerva Press (William Lane) (firm, publisher)
George and John Robinson (firm, publisher)
Benjamin Crosby and Co. (firm, publisher)
Minerva Press (A.K. Newman) (firm, publisher)
Minerva Press (Lane, Newman) (firm, publisher)
Black, Parry, and Kingsbury (firm, publisher)

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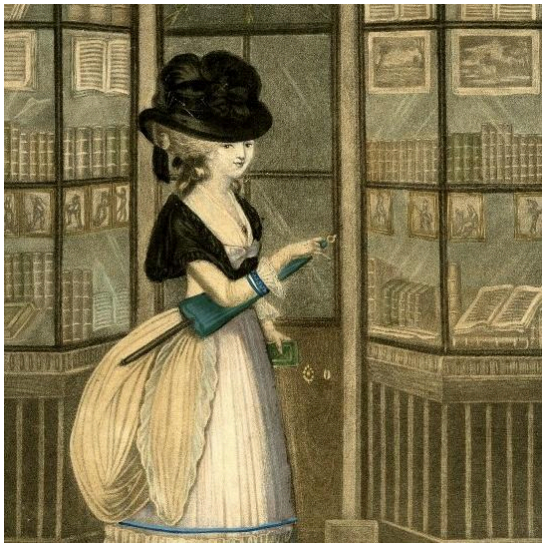


The Women's Print History Project

A Search for Firm Evidence: Uncovering Ann Sancho, Bookseller [Spotlight]

Authored by Kate Moffatt
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Moffatt, Kate. "The Search for Firm Evidence: Uncovering Ann Sancho, Bookseller." *The Women's Print History Project*, 25 June 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/20.

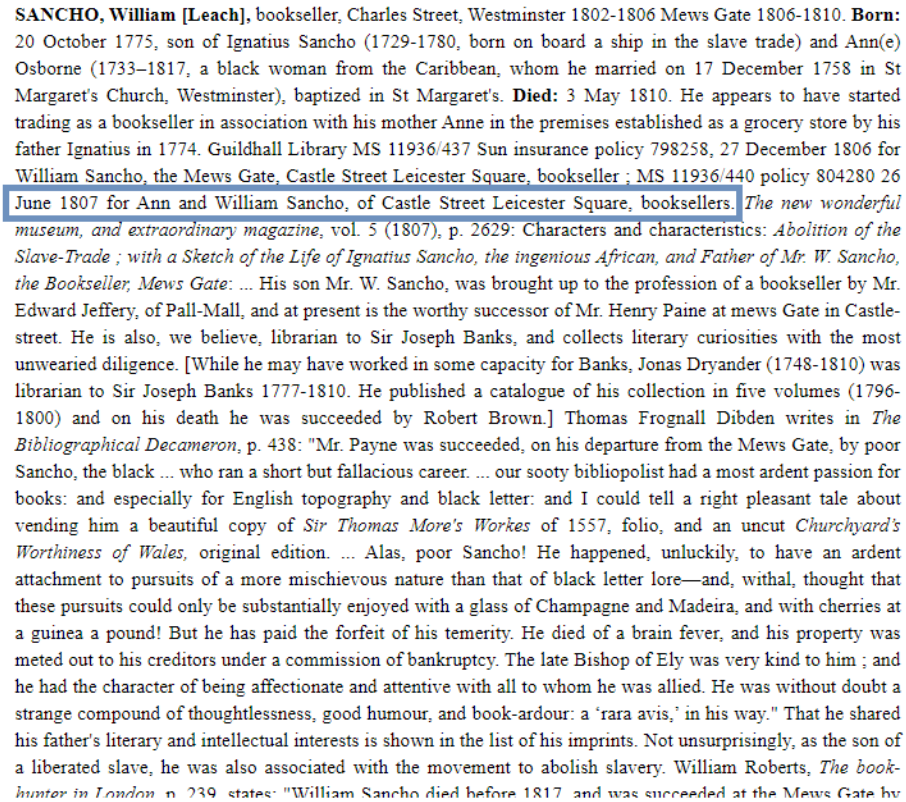
PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

A Search for Firm Evidence: Uncovering Ann Sancho, Bookseller

Kate Moffatt

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.



SANCHO, William [Leach], bookseller, Charles Street, Westminster 1802-1806 Mews Gate 1806-1810. **Born:** 20 October 1775, son of Ignatius Sancho (1729-1780, born on board a ship in the slave trade) and Ann(e) Osborne (1733–1817, a black woman from the Caribbean, whom he married on 17 December 1758 in St Margaret's Church, Westminster), baptized in St Margaret's. **Died:** 3 May 1810. He appears to have started trading as a bookseller in association with his mother Anne in the premises established as a grocery store by his father Ignatius in 1774. Guildhall Library MS 11936/437 Sun insurance policy 798258, 27 December 1806 for William Sancho, the Mews Gate, Castle Street Leicester Square, bookseller ; MS 11936/440 policy 804280 26 June 1807 for Ann and William Sancho, of Castle Street Leicester Square, booksellers. *The new wonderful museum, and extraordinary magazine*, vol. 5 (1807), p. 2629: Characters and characteristics: *Abolition of the Slave-Trade ; with a Sketch of the Life of Ignatius Sancho, the ingenious African, and Father of Mr. W. Sancho, the Bookseller, Mews Gate*: ... His son Mr. W. Sancho, was brought up to the profession of a bookseller by Mr. Edward Jeffery, of Pall-Mall, and at present is the worthy successor of Mr. Henry Paine at mews Gate in Castle-street. He is also, we believe, librarian to Sir Joseph Banks, and collects literary curiosities with the most unwearied diligence. [While he may have worked in some capacity for Banks, Jonas Dryander (1748-1810) was librarian to Sir Joseph Banks 1777-1810. He published a catalogue of his collection in five volumes (1796-1800) and on his death he was succeeded by Robert Brown.] Thomas Frognall Dibden writes in *The Bibliographical Decameron*, p. 438: "Mr. Payne was succeeded, on his departure from the Mews Gate, by poor Sancho, the black ... who ran a short but fallacious career. ... our sooty bibliopolist had a most ardent passion for books: and especially for English topography and black letter: and I could tell a right pleasant tale about vending him a beautiful copy of *Sir Thomas More's Workes* of 1557, folio, and an uncut *Churchyard's Worthiness of Wales,* original edition. ... Alas, poor Sancho! He happened, unluckily, to have an ardent attachment to pursuits of a more mischievous nature than that of black letter lore—and, withal, thought that these pursuits could only be substantially enjoyed with a glass of Champagne and Madeira, and with cherries at a guinea a pound! But he has paid the forfeit of his temerity. He died of a brain fever, and his property was meted out to his creditors under a commission of bankruptcy. The late Bishop of Ely was very kind to him ; and he had the character of being affectionate and attentive with all to whom he was allied. He was without doubt a strange compound of thoughtlessness, good humour, and book-ardour: a 'rara avis,' in his way." That he shared his father's literary and intellectual interests is shown in the list of his imprints. Not unsurprisingly, as the son of a liberated slave, he was also associated with the movement to abolish slavery. William Roberts, *The book-hunter in London*, p. 239, states: "William Sancho died before 1817, and was succeeded at the Mews Gate by

Figure 1. Screenshot of William Sancho's entry in Ian Maxted's *The Exeter Working Papers* website (my emphasis).

While combing through Ian Maxted's *Exeter Working Papers in Book History* website early last year, I came across an entry for a Mr. William Sancho. The entry for "SANCHO, William [Leach]" is in no way suggestive of a woman's involvement in the book trades, but the rather hefty paragraph of information within it seemed promising. I was looking specifically for references to women publishers, printers, and booksellers, a task made difficult by the fact that none of our firm resources include gender data in their records. Finding women involved in the book trades requires us to read systematically through every entry of our various resources in an effort to find traces of women's involvement

in the business of books—a task that is, as of the writing of this spotlight in June 2020, still ongoing. Women occasionally have their own entries, but many do not, and we must search for the evidence of women's involvement that is buried in the entries for their husbands, business partners, or relatives.

Such was the case with Mrs. Ann Sancho, née Osborne, a Black woman born in the Caribbean in 1733, who married Ignatius Sancho on 17 December 1758. Tucked a few sentences deep into William Sancho's entry, we learn that "[William] appears to have started trading as a bookseller in association with his mother Anne in the premises established as a grocery store by his father Ignatius in 1774." The entry also includes their joint insurance policy, listed as "MS 11936/440 policy 804280 26 June 1807 for Ann and William Sancho, of Castle Street Leicester Square, booksellers."

Although Ann Sancho does not have her own entry in the *Exeter Working Papers*, these passing mentions of her involvement in the book trades merit the inclusion of Firm and Person Records for her in the WPHP, even before ascertaining the titles she sold or published. We make a point of creating records for any and all women publishers, booksellers, and printers we come across from our period, regardless of how many titles, if any, are attached to their names. Ann Sancho, as it turns out, is yet to have any titles associated with her records, as we have not yet been able to find any with her name in the imprint. Including these women, however, works two-fold for our efforts to uncover evidence of women's involvement in the book trades: it allows us to paint a fuller picture of the women involved, and provides a record from which we can direct further research.

Figure 2. Portrait of Ignatius Sancho by Thomas Gainsborough, 1768, held by the National Gallery of Canada.

In the case of Ann Sancho, wife of the famous Ignatius Sancho and mother to William Sancho, who was known as the "negro bookseller" in the Mews (William Roberts, *The Book-Hunter in London* 1895) and is thought to be "the first

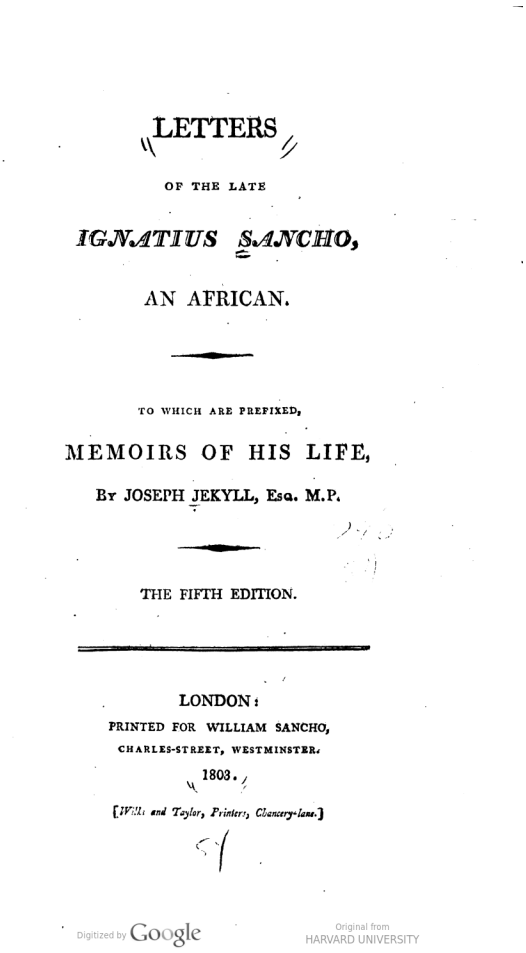
Black publisher in the Western world" (British Library), we have more information than for many of the other tradeswomen in the database. We not only have the address of her place of business in the Mews, but also her birth and death dates, her place of birth and death, her full married and maiden names, and at least one year where we know she was active in the bookselling business: 1807, the year the insurance policy was created with her name on it. Our access to this information is visible in part because Ignatius Sancho was, and is, widely known as an educated Black 'man of letters'. He was well-connected in London, with the visitors to his grocer's shop being, as Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina points out, "astonishing for a grocer and his family, let alone a black one. The Montagues and their friends visited Sancho's store. David Garrick, the most famous actor of the century, was a close friend . . . Gainsborough painted Sancho's portrait. Samuel Johnson, widely considered the greatest mind of the century, planned to write his biography" (106). He occupied an exceptional position. Gerzina argues that, "as quite possibly the only middle-class, well-connected, and highly literate black man in all of Britain, his very visible existence could and did affect how thousands of people in that country viewed Africans and slavery" (107). In the first edition of his posthumously-published letters, *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho* (1782), the anonymous editor—who, we discovered in the writing of this spotlight, was Lady Frances Anne Crewe—prefaced the edition with,

> [The Editor's] motives for laying [these letters] before the publick were, the desire of shewing that an untutored African may possess abilities equal to an European, and the still superior motive, of wishing to serve his worthy family. And she is happy in thus publicly acknowledging she has not found the world inattentive to the voice of obscure merit. (i–ii).

Ignatius Sancho's exceptional status and resulting visibility, both during his time and now as a subject of recent scholarship, must be acknowledged for the access we have to data regarding Ann Sancho, including her race. Like gender, most resources do not account for racial data. Indeed, Ann and William Sancho are the only Black booksellers we know about in the WPHP. The limited visibility of racial data makes the recovery of Black tradeswomen difficult—even when, as Ann Sancho shows us, they are attached to visible men.

As a result, information about Ann Sancho's bookselling business with her son is limited. The *British Book Trade Index* lists an entry only for "Sancho, ---", and the entry notes, "A 'negro'. Son of Ignatius Sancho, grocer and oilman. Briefly a bookseller in Thomas Payne's shop. Died by 1814," a description clearly marking it as about William. Neither William nor Ann Sancho appear in Philip A.H. Brown's *London Publishers and Printers c. 1800—1870* (1982). She is mentioned briefly in several accounts of Ignatius Sancho's life, where they reference her marriage to Ignatius and their seven children (*Wikipedia*; *The Grub Street Project*; *Westminster Abbey*); the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the British Library both mention that "the couple opened a grocery store in Westminster" (BL)—which would later become the first premises of William Sancho's bookselling business—but there is no mention of the bookselling business itself. In *Joseph Jekyll's 1782 Life of Ignatius Sancho*, Jekyll writes that Ann Sancho (named only as Ignatius's "matrimonial connexion") was "a very deserving young woman of West-Indian origin," even though, as Brycchan Carey points out, it appears "unlikely that Jekyll had any more than a passing acquaintance with the Sancho family"

(4). Some letters in *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho* do provide more information about Ann Sancho, but none about her work in the book trades, as the business began after Ignatius Sancho's death.



LETTERS

OF THE LATE

IGNATIUS SANCHO,

AN AFRICAN.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE,

By JOSEPH JEKYLL, Esq. M.P.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM SANCHO,

CHARLES-STREET, WESTMINSTER.

1803.

[Wilks and Taylor, Printers, Chancery-lane.]

Figure 3. Title page of the fifth edition of *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho* (1803), published by William Sancho. Courtesy of *HathiTrust Digital Library*.

When scholarship and existing resources fail to produce the information we collect for the database, we turn to imprints, searching for the names of publishers, printers, or booksellers in sources such as the *Nineteenth Century Collections Online* database, the *Hathi Trust Digital Library*, or the British Library online catalogue. In Ann Sancho's case, however, even a search for imprints with the name "Sancho" in them reveals little that is useful. Multiple books have imprints that name "Wm. Sancho", "W. Sancho", or "William Sancho," cementing her son's involvement in the book trades—he even published the fifth edition of *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho*, pictured above—but there are no results for "Ann Sancho", "Anne Sancho", "A. Sancho", or "Mrs. Sancho." The *Exeter Working Papers* entry for Williams Sancho lists a single imprint containing only the surname "Sancho", *Am I not a friend and a brother? : a sermon preached at the Free Chapel, West Street, St. Giles's, on Wednesday evening June 15th, 1808 : for the benefit of the African and Asiatic Society and published at the request of the committee for the benefit of the institution by William Gurney*, but a digitized version is unavailable. According to the entry, the imprint reads, "London: Printed by W. Nicholson, for Hatchard, Ogle, Williams and Smith, Button, and Sancho, 1808." This single book could potentially

be attributed to Ann or William Sancho, as it does not indicate a first name or initial, and was printed the year after the 1807 joint insurance policy was created. Given the lack of concrete evidence, however, this title cannot be attributed with any certainty to Ann Sancho. There are a few possible explanations for why Ann Sancho does not appear in imprints: one possibility is that she was one of the many women involved in book production, particularly in family businesses, but not necessarily included in imprints (Hannah Barker). It is also possible, of course, that Ann Sancho was working with her son and that imprints with his name mask her involvement, a situation that likely holds true for many women. However, without more evidence of her involvement, we do not attribute those particular titles to her. As a result, although Ann Sancho has a record as a female firm and very well may have been involved in the production of the titles listed above, we have no titles associated with her in the WPHP.

Our unsuccessful search for imprints naming Ann Sancho, which would provide us with concrete evidence of her involvement as well as offering some indication of her years of activity, is not atypical. Alice Murray, a Dublin bookseller, is similarly unaccounted for in our usual resources. Listed in *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade 1550-1800*, we have her place of business and years of active trading, but imprints including her name have eluded us, leaving her record similarly unassociated with any titles. Finding biographical information about her has also proved difficult, which is also typical for women whose businesses are not well-documented (and sometimes even for those who are). Alice Murray's Person Record will remain skeletal until further information about her can be found. Similar circumstances surround many other women-run firms in the database: the stationer Mrs. Vertue, first name unknown, was found buried and unnamed in the entry for Mr. Samuel Goadby in the *Exeter Working Papers in Book History*. While she is listed in the British Book Trade Index as trading under the name "Vertue and Goadby," allowing us to associate two titles in the database with her firm (*A letter from...; To the memory...*), we have very little further biographical information for her Person Record than what is offered in the Samuel Goadby entry in the *Exeter Working Papers*, and no further business details than what the BBTI entry contains. (If you're interested in reading further about the elusive Mrs. Vertue, see the book chapter by Kandice Sharren and myself about discovering women in the book trades.)

The visibility of women in the book trades is complex: they were involved at all levels and in all roles, including those that the WPHP does not account for, such as papermakers, bookbinders, and typesetters, given that we focus our data collection on the information that is recoverable through imprints and colophons, which is usually limited to the roles of printer, publisher and bookseller. Even for those women in these roles, visibility in existing resources can be severely limited and affected by a number of outside influences—Ann Sancho's race, made obvious by existing scholarship about her husband, for example, actually rendered her more visible. As illustrated in this spotlight, women can be hidden within entries for their husbands, relatives, or business partners—and women would sometimes continue to publish under their husband's name following his death, or publish with their surname and no first name or initial to hint at their identity. By creating person and firm records for these women, we hope to make possible a future and fuller recovery of women like Ann Sancho, Alice Murray, and Mrs. Vertue.

We will be chatting about the process of discovering and uncovering women-run firms, the challenges we face, and how we are working to overcome them in Episode 2 of *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*. Tune in next month, on July 15, 2020, to hear more about Mrs. Ann Sancho and the adventures of the firm records in *The Women's Print History Project*.

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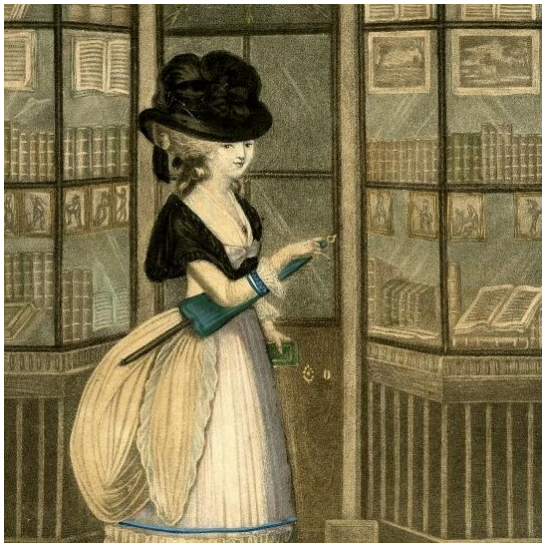


The Women's Print History Project

The First Slave Narrative by a Woman: *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave* [Spotlight]

Authored by Sara Penn
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Penn, Sara. "The First Slave Narrative by a Woman: *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave*." *The Women's Print History Project*, 3 July 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/22.

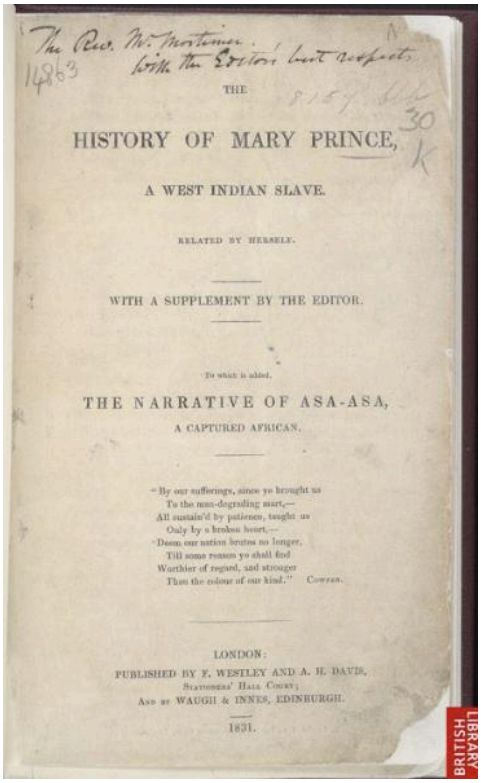
PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

The First Slave Narrative by a Woman: *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave*

Sara Penn

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.


THE

HISTORY OF MARY PRINCE,

A WEST INDIAN SLAVE.

RELATED BY HERSELF.

WITH A SUPPLEMENT BY THE EDITOR.

To which is added,

THE NARRATIVE OF ASA-ASA,

A CAPTURED AFRICAN.

"By our sufferings, since ye brought us
To the man-degrading mart,—
All sustain'd by patience, taught us
Only by a broken heart,—
Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find
Worthier of regard, and stronger
Than the colour of our kind." Cowper.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY F. WESTLEY AND A. H. DAVIS,
Stationers' Hall Court;
And by WAUGH & INNES, EDINBURGH.

1831.

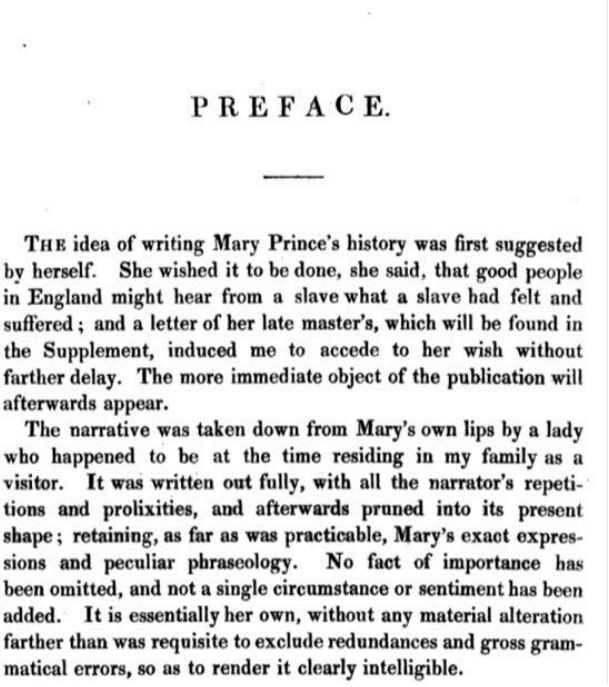
Figure 1. First edition. British Library, 8157.bbb.30.

Mary Prince was born into slavery c. 1788 in Bermuda and is best known for her book, *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave. Related by Herself. With a Supplement by the Editor. To which is added, The Narrative of Asa-Asa, A Captured African.* Prince played a vital role in Britain's abolitionist movement as the first Black woman whose narrative of her enslavement was recorded.

In creating data for the title records of Prince's *History* interpretative decisions were necessary. According to James Olney, slave narratives should not necessarily be classified as "autobiography" or even "literature" due to the cumulative objective reality of the African experience, or "*sameness*," that they record (46). The purpose of these narratives are political, as they were used to document the horrors of slavery and convince the public (the English public, in Prince's case) to abolish colonial slavery. For these reasons, Prince's testimony is included in our database as Political Writing to prioritize its chief aim of bringing about the immediate and total abolition of slavery. This designation of genres is one of the most interpretative acts in the process of data creation—many of the works in our database satisfy multiple categories (indeed, the *History* could be classified as a Memoir, History, or Legal) and it is up to us to decide which of these categories best depict the work.

Prince's narrative also raises issues of collaboration and how to assess and define contributions to a title. The title page to the *History* is described as having been "related by herself." What this means is that the narrative was told to Thomas Pringle, a white abolitionist and secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, and Susanna Strickland (who in 1832 emigrated to Canada and is now known as Susanna Moodie). Pringle included supplementary materials such as testimonies, footnotes, and an appendix, all of which sought to establish the veracity of Prince's account and her credibility as a witness to slavery's crimes. As Sara Salih points out, the *History* is "by no means self-authenticating" and is "best described as a concatenation of mutually validating and interlinked documents" rather than a single-authored narrative (132).

Pringle and Strickland refuted any claim that they may have altered the narrative, admitting only to changes to "exclude redundancies and gross grammatical errors" (ii; Black 702). Indeed, Margôt Maddison-MacFadyen claims that most proper pronouns are written incorrectly because Strickland and Pringle "were unfamiliar with Bermudian and Antiguan place names and surnames" (Introduction). In the preface, Pringle makes sure to note that the narrative is written in Prince's own words:



PREFACE.

THE idea of writing Mary Prince's history was first suggested by herself. She wished it to be done, she said, that good people in England might hear from a slave what a slave had felt and suffered; and a letter of her late master's, which will be found in the Supplement, induced me to accede to her wish without farther delay. The more immediate object of the publication will afterwards appear.

The narrative was taken down from Mary's own lips by a lady who happened to be at the time residing in my family as a visitor. It was written out fully, with all the narrator's repetitions and prolixities, and afterwards pruned into its present shape; retaining, as far as was practicable, Mary's exact expressions and peculiar phraseology. No fact of importance has been omitted, and not a single circumstance or sentiment has been added. It is essentially her own, without any material alteration farther than was requisite to exclude redundances and gross grammatical errors, so as to render it clearly intelligible.

Figure 2. First edition. *Google Books*.

By asserting that Strickland had omitted "no fact of importance" and that "not a single circumstance or sentiment has been added," Pringle sought to establish Prince's account as first-hand testimony of the evils of slavery. Prince also rarely reports any event or action she has not witnessed herself. Although, as we will see, aspects of Prince's narrative were contested by proponents of slavery and her enslaver, John Wood, there is no evidence to challenge Pringle's claim that the narrative was "taken down" by Strickland as described. In this way, although Prince, it seems, never put pen to paper, we can assert her as author of the title. Pringle, by including various paratexts, is the editor of the title, as, to use our definition from this contributor role, he "selected, revised, and arranged the work for print." Strickland was also an editor, as she revised, however sparingly, the narrative she took down from Prince. We do not have amanuensis as a category in our Contributor Roles, but we indicate this in our notes field.

Recovering basic biographical data about enslaved persons is another challenge that we, as researchers, seek to navigate. Prince's Person Record does not reveal the date or place of death, and the date of birth is an estimate. This unidentifiable data is an aspect of slavery itself, where the process of dehumanization meant that birthdays were neither known or celebrated by enslaved peoples. Due to her untraceable record, most of what we know about Prince derives from her *History*. Born in Brackish Pond, Bermuda, Prince was born the property of planter Charles Myners. After his death, when Prince was an infant, she and her family were sold to Captain Williams. After the death of his wife, when Prince was twelve, she was sent with her siblings to the slave market, where she was sold for £38 to Captain and Mrs. Ingham (they are referred to as Captain and Mrs. I in the *History*, an attempt by her editors to protect Prince—and them—from libel suits). The Inghams took Prince to Spanish Point, Bermuda, and abused her mentally and physically for five years. Prince was then sent to Turks Island to work for her new owner, Mr. D—, in the saltwater

ponds. This was excruciating work as it required the workers to stand working for up to seventeen hours in shallow saltwater. Mr. D—returned to Bermuda, in 1801, with Prince, where she completed domestic chores and worked in the fields. After complaining to Mr. D—about his indecent treatment, she was hired out to work at Cedar Hills—"two dollars and a quarter a week, which is twenty pence a day" (14)—all of which was paid to her planter. Seeking to remove herself from Mr. D—'s sexual abuse, she had herself bought by Mr. Wood, her fifth enslaver, who was travelling to Antigua.

Once in Antigua, she became seriously impaired by rheumatism, possibly brought about by her work in the salt ponds. Nursed back to health by neighbours and enslaved friends, she was determined to buy her emancipation by selling coffee and yams. At the Moravian church, which welcomed Prince, teaching her to read and admitting her to holy communion. She met Daniel James, a previously enslaved person who had purchased his freedom, at church, and they were married in the Moravian chapel in Antigua in 1826. Mr. D—was enraged by her marriage, as slaves were not free to marry. Prince states that she "had not much happiness in my marriage, owing to my being a slave" (18). In 1828, Wood was travelling to England to place his children in school; Prince was willing to travel with him to London as she believed it would cure her rheumatism, and also because she and her husband thought it might be the means of her obtaining her freedom.

As a result of the legal decision in *Somerset v. Stewart*, in 1772, slavery was deemed illegal in Britain. On English soil, therefore, Prince was liberated but could not support herself due to the fact that the only work she could find involved washing, which caused severe suffering given her rheumatism. She continued to work to purchase her freedom, which would allow her to return to her husband a free woman. She found employment as a domestic servant to Thomas Pringle in 1829, and in that same year she petitioned in Parliament for her human right to freedom, being the first woman to do so. In this same year, a bill was proposed that any enslaved person brought to England from the West Indies must be freed. Prince and the bill were both declined. As a result, she could not return to Antigua, and be reunited with her husband, without being re-enslaved.

Figure 3. Prince lived with Thomas and Margaret Pringle in Claremont Square, London. Margôt Maddison-MacFadyen, https://www.maryprince.org/.

In 1831, Pringle offered to publish her record of enslavement. The narrative, however, was not without controversy. James MacQueen, pro-slavery editor of *Blackwood's Magazine* (1817–1980), declared that it was fraudulent. Pringle responded by successfully suing the magazine's publisher, Thomas Cadell, and received £5 in damages. Wood additionally sued Pringle for defamation of character in the *History*, and Pringle responded with a countersuit. Records indicate that Prince testified at both cases and lost. Wood was compensated £25. News of the case had circulated and only increased the popularity of the book to its British readership, resulting in three editions within its first year of publication (although a preface to the second edition was reprinted in the third, not a single copy of the second edition has been found, possibly, this is because it was a very inexpensive edition; it was advertised as a "Cheap Edition, price 1s. for single copies, and 6d. each, if 25 or more are ordered"). After these trials, Prince's history is unknown: there was no trace of her after she testified in the two libel trials—she may have stayed in London or returned to her husband in Bermuda.

POSTSCRIPT.—Second Edition.

Since the First Edition of this Tract was published, Mary Prince has been afflicted with a disease in the eyes, which, it is feared, may terminate in total blindness: such, at least, is the apprehension of some skilful medical gentlemen who have been consulted on the case. Should this unfortunately be the result, the condition of the poor negro woman, thus cruelly and hopelessly severed from her husband and her home, will be one peculiarly deserving of commiseration; and I mention the circumstance at present on purpose to induce the friends of humanity to promote the more zealously the sale of this publication, with a view to provide a little fund for her future benefit. Whatever be the subsequent lot that Providence may have in reserve for her, the seasonable sympathy thus manifested in her behalf, will neither be fruitlessly expended nor unthankfully received; while, in accordance with the benign Scripture mandate, it will serve to mitigate and relieve, as far as human kindness can, the afflictions of "the stranger and the exile who is in our land within our gates."

T. P.

March 22, 1831.

*** *The present Cheap Edition, price* 1s. *for single copies, and* 6d. *each, if* 25 *or more are ordered, is printed expressly to facilitate the circulation of this Tract by Anti-Slavery Societies.*

Figures 4 and 5. Postscript and plaque, from the London Senate House, dedicated a plaque to Prince on Malet St. *London Remembers.*

In 1833, two years after the first three editions were published, Great Britain's Slavery Abolition Act was passed by parliament, and approximately 800 000 enslaved peoples in British colonies were liberated. In 2012, Bermuda recognized Prince as a National Hero, for which a holiday is observed in her honour on June 18th. In 2018, *Google* celebrated Prince's 230th birthday with a Doodle.

Figure 6. Google Doodle.

We are grateful to P. Gabrielle Foreman at the University of Delaware for her helpful document outlining the semantics of discourse about slavery.

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Genre (field)
Memoir (genre)
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Legal (genre)
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Author (contributor role)
Editor (contributor role)
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Person Record (field)
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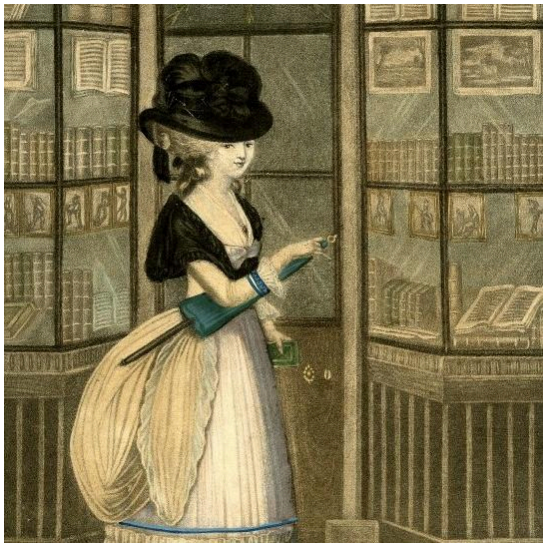


The Women's Print History Project

The Transatlantic Publication of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* [Spotlight]

Authored by Amanda Law
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Law, Amanda. "The Transatlantic Publication of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*." *The Women's Print History Project*, 10 July 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/25.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

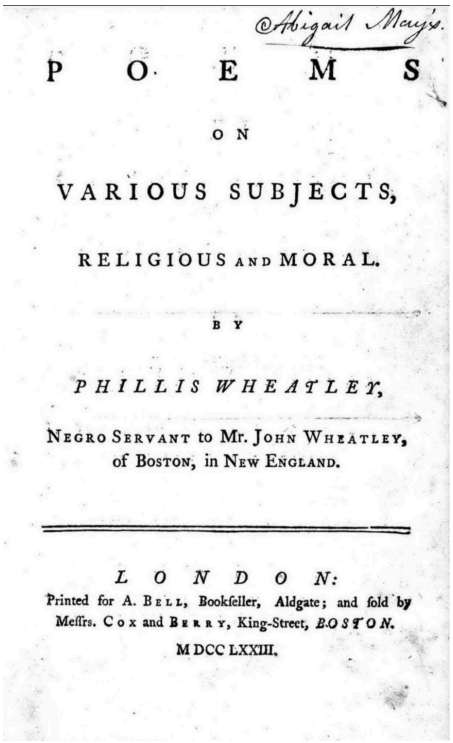
The Transatlantic Publication of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*

Amanda Law

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.

Figure 1. *Portrait of Phillis Wheatley*, attributed by some scholars to Scipio Moorhead, *British Library*, 992.a.34.

Phillis Wheatley is perhaps best known as the first African-American to publish a book of poems. Born in West Africa *c*. 1753, Wheatley was sold into slavery in 1761 and brought to Boston, Massachusetts where she was purchased by the merchant John Wheatley for his wife, Susanna, who sought to "secure herself a faithful domestic in her old age" (Wheatley et al. 11). Phillis Wheatley learned to read and write under the instruction of Susanna and her daughter Mary. She published her first poem in 1767 ("On Messrs Hussey and Coffin") in the December 21st issue of the *Newport, Rhode Island, Mercury*.


Abigail Mays.

POEMS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS,

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL.

BY

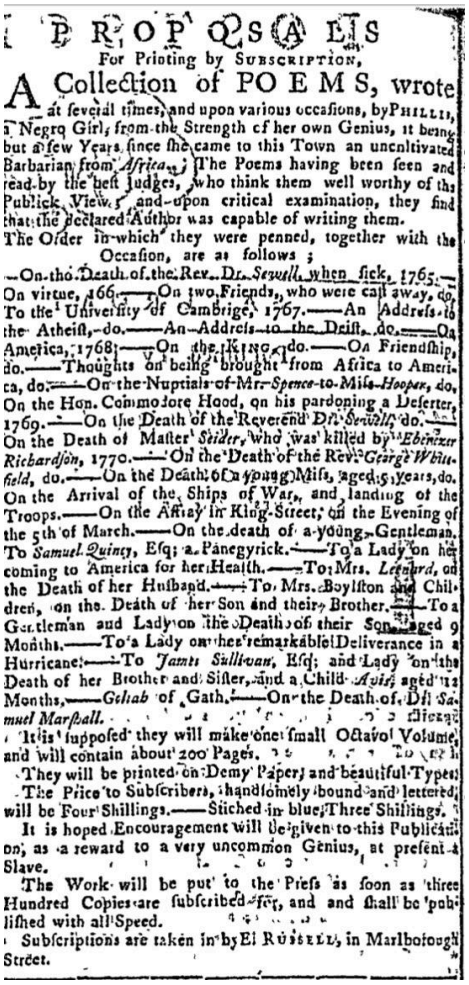
PHILLIS WHEATLEY,

NEGRO SERVANT to Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY,
of BOSTON, in NEW ENGLAND.

LONDON:
Printed for A. BELL, Bookſeller, Aldgate; and ſold by
Meſſrs. COX and BERRY, King-Street, BOSTON.
MDCC LXXIII.

Figure 2. 1773 Edition with all prefatory material. NCCO.

When Wheatley published *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* in London in 1773, she had to navigate a complicated publication process that required her to traverse the Atlantic to see her work come to fruition. Wheatley originally intended to publish her collection in Boston, and in 1772, with the help of Susanna, she advertised a collection of twenty-eight poems "by Phillis, a Negro Girl, from the strength of her own Genius" in the Boston Censor, a short-lived periodical that only ran from 1771–1772. They intended for the volume to be an octavo of about two hundred pages and priced the "handsomely bound and lettered" edition at four shillings while the edition "stitched in blue" would cost three.



PROPOSALS
For Printing by SUBSCRIPTION,
A Collection of POEMS, wrote at several times, and upon various occasions, by PHILLIS, a Negro Girl, from the Strength of her own Genius, it being but a few Years since she came to this Town an uncultivated Barbarian from *Africa*. The Poems having been seen and read by the best Judges, who think them well worthy of the Publick View, and upon critical examination, they find that the declared Author was capable of writing them.
The Order in which they were penned, together with the Occasion, are as follows;
—On the Death of the Rev. Dr. *Sewall*, when sick, 1765.—On virtue, 1766.—On two Friends, who were cast away, do.—To the University of Cambrige, 1767.—An Address to the Atheist, do.—An Address to the Deist, do.—On America, 1768.—On the KING, do.—On Friendship, do.—Thoughts on being brought from Africa to America, do.—On the Nuptials of Mr. *Spence* to Miss *Hooper*, do.—On the Hon. Commodore Hood, on his pardoning a Deserter, 1769.—On the Death of the Reverend Dr. *Sewall*, do.—On the Death of Master *Seider*, who was killed by *Ebenezer Richardson*, 1770.—On the Death of the Rev. *George Whitefield*, do.—On the Death of a young Miss, aged 5 years, do.—On the Arrival of the Ships of War, and landing of the Troops.—On the Affray in King-Street, on the Evening of the 5th of March.—On the death of a young Gentleman.—To *Samuel Quincy*, Esq; a Panegyrick.—To a Lady on her coming to America for her Health.—To Mrs. *Leonard*, on the Death of her Husband.—To Mrs. Boylston and Children, on the Death of her Son and their Brother.—To a Gentleman and Lady on the Death of their Son, aged 9 Months.—To a Lady on her remarkable Deliverance in a Hurricane.—To *James Sullivan*, Esq; and Lady on the Death of her Brother and Sister, and a Child *Avis*, aged 12 Months.—*Goliah* of Gath.—On the Death of Dr. *Samuel Marshall*.

It is supposed they will make one small Octavo Volume, and will contain about 200 Pages.

They will be printed on Demy Paper, and beautiful Types.

The Price to Subscribers, handsomely bound and lettered, will be Four Shillings.—Stitched in blue, Three Shillings.

It is hoped Encouragement will be given to this Publication, as a reward to a very uncommon Genius, at present a Slave.

The Work will be put to the Press as soon as three Hundred Copies are subscribed for, and and shall be published with all Speed.

Subscriptions are taken in by EZ. RUSSELL, in Marlborough Street.

Figure 3. 1772 *Boston Censor* advertisement. *The Open Anthology of Literatures in English.*

Wheatley and Ezekiel Russell, the owner of the *Boston Censor*, planned to publish her book by subscription, intending to begin printing copies once 300 subscribers committed to purchasing the book. The advertisement ran three times that year, in February, March, and April (Shields 193), but it seems they were unable to amass enough subscribers. Robinson suggests that the lack of enthusiasm for Wheatley's collection was due to "early Boston racist refusal" (187) to believe she had authored the poems, gesturing to a letter written by Boston merchant John Andrews, who had subscribed for the book, to his brother William Barrell on 24 February 1773.

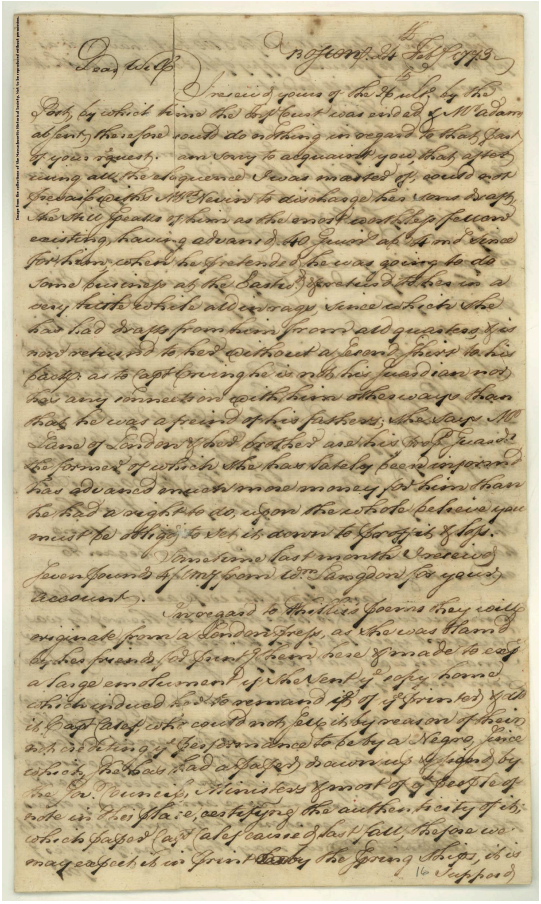


Figure 4. Letter from John Andrews to William Barrell, 24 February 1773. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

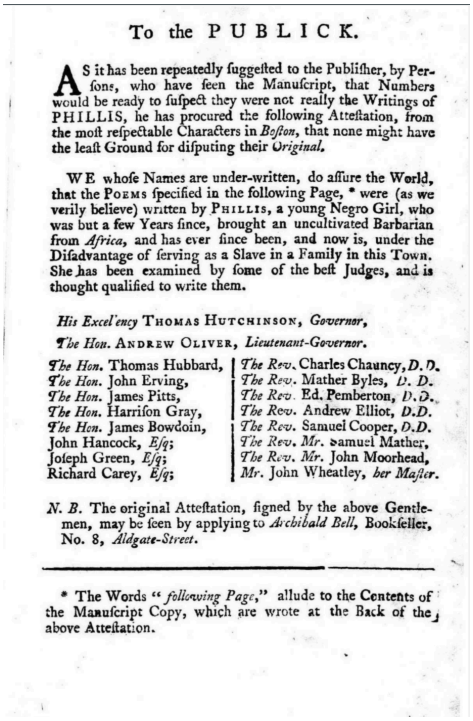
The Massachusetts Historical Society transcribes the section referring to Wheatley's collection as follows:

> In regard to Phillis's poems they will originate from a London press, as she was blamd by her friends for printg them here & made to expd a large emolument if she sent ye copy home, which induced her to remand yt of ye printer & dld [delivered] it Capt Calef, who could not sell it by reason of their not crediting ye performance to be by a Negro, since which, she has had a paper drawn up & signd by the Govr. Council, Ministers & most of ye people of note in this place, certifying the authenticity of it; which paper Capt Calef carried last fall, thefore [therefore] we may expect it in print las by the spring ships, it is supposed the Coppy will sell for £ 100 sterlg: have not as yet been able to procure a coppy of her dialogue with Mr Murry, if I do, will send it.

Captain Robert Calef worked for the Wheatley family and, as implied by this excerpt, presented Wheatley's manuscript to different prospective publishers and financiers when her call for subscribers in the *Boston Censor* yielded less than promising results. As Andrews indicates in his letter, people held suspicions about the veracity of Wheatley's authorship.

Unable to amass her desired audience in Boston, Wheatley turned to London at the prompting of Susanna, who had many contacts in England. In Boston in 1770, Wheatley published, as a broadside, a widely celebrated eulogy on the English evangelist George Whitefield (*An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that Celebrated Divine, and Eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, the Late Reverend, and Pious George Whitefield*), from which she had garnered most of her fame. She mailed a manuscript of this poem to Selina Hastings, the Countess of Huntingdon on 2 October 1770. Whitefield had been the Countess's personal and much respected chaplain and Susanna knew the Countess through their dissenting evangelical Methodist organization. Wheatley had maintained this connection to the Countess since 1770 and, when she turned to her in 1772 after her disappointment in Boston, the Countess agreed to finance the publication of Wheatley's poems by London bookseller Archibald Bell. In an effort to garner more attention for Wheatley's collection, the Countess allowed the book to be dedicated to her, which is advertised in the title of the 1802 American edition. In addition, the Countess interrupted the production of the book until a portrait of Wheatley could be commissioned for the preface (see the top of the page).

Although the abolition movement was much stronger in London than Boston in the 1770s, distrust of Wheatley's poetic ability due to her race still persisted. When Captain Calef traveled to London on behalf of the Wheatleys to meet with the Countess and Bell, he brought the attestation which can be found in the preface of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. This is a document signed by prominent figures in Boston including reverend Charles Chauncey, John Hancock, Thomas Hutchison, the governor of Massachusetts, and his Lieutenant Governor, Andrew Oliver, verifying that they had examined Wheatley in court and deemed she was capable of the work she claimed as her own. Similar to *The History of Mary Prince* (read Sara Penn's spotlight on this title here), which included supplementary material that "sought to establish the veracity of Prince's account and her credibility" (Penn), Wheatley's book required this material to dispel racist disbelief of her abilities.



To the PUBLICK.

AS it has been repeatedly ſuggeſted to the Publiſher, by Perſons, who have ſeen the Manuſcript, that Numbers would be ready to ſuſpect they were not really the Writings of PHILLIS, he has procured the following Atteſtation, from the moſt reſpectable Characters in *Boſton*, that none might have the leaſt Ground for diſputing their *Original*.

WE whoſe Names are under-written, do aſſure the World, that the POEMS ſpecified in the following Page, * were (as we verily believe) written by PHILLIS, a young Negro Girl, who was but a few Years ſince, brought an uncultivated Barbarian from *Africa*, and has ever ſince been, and now is, under the Diſadvantage of ſerving as a Slave in a Family in this Town. She has been examined by ſome of the beſt Judges, and is thought qualified to write them.

His Excel'ency THOMAS HUTCHINSON, *Governor*,
The Hon. ANDREW OLIVER, *Lieutenant-Governor*.

The Hon. Thomas Hubbard,	*The Rev.* Charles Chauncy, *D. D.*
The Hon. John Erving,	*The Rev.* Mather Byles, *D. D.*
The Hon. James Pitts,	*The Rev.* Ed. Pemberton, *D. D.*
The Hon. Harriſon Gray,	*The Rev.* Andrew Elliot, *D.D.*
The Hon. James Bowdoin,	*The Rev.* Samuel Cooper, *D.D.*
John Hancock, *Eſq;*	*The Rev. Mr.* Samuel Mather,
Joſeph Green, *Eſq;*	*The Rev. Mr.* John Moorhead,
Richard Carey, *Eſq;*	*Mr.* John Wheatley, *her Maſter*.

N. B. The original Atteſtation, ſigned by the above Gentlemen, may be ſeen by applying to *Archibald Bell*, Bookſeller, No. 8, *Aldgate-Street*.

* The Words "*following Page*," allude to the Contents of the Manuſcript Copy, which are wrote at the Back of the above Atteſtation.

Figure 5. Attestation from 1773 edition with all prefatory material. NCCO.

Wheatley arrived in London from Boston on June 17, 1773 accompanied by Nathaniel Wheatley, John Wheatley's son, to oversee the publication of her book. During her time in London, she was kept busy revising the poems for her book and visiting English nobility and dignitaries. She was hosted by Granville Sharp and met with Ignatius Sancho, who dubbed her 'Genius in bondage' (British Library) (read Kate Moffatt's spotlight on his wife, bookseller Ann Sancho, here!). Wheatley's trip was cut short as Susanna fell ill, forcing Wheatley to return to Boston before she could meet the Countess of Huntingdon in person, before her scheduled audience with King George III, and before her book was even published.

On 16 September 1773, the collection was finally ready, and the *London Chronicle* announced its appearance in a full-page spread:

POEMS *on* VARIOUS SUBJECTS, RELIGIOUS *and* MORAL. *By* PHILLIS WHEATLEY, *Negro Servant to Mr.* JOHN WHEATLEY, *of Boston in New-England.* Octavo, pp. 124.

AN attestation is prefixed to these Poems, figned by the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of Boston; alfo by feveral Gentlemen of the Council, many of the Clergy, &c. of the Province, that they were really written by Phillis, a young Negro girl.

The following letter, from the girl's maſter to the publiſher, is likewiſe prefixed to theſe pieces, two of which are inſerted after the letter:

"PHILLIS was brought from Africa to America, in the year 1761, between ſeven and eight years of age. Without any aſſiſtance from ſchool education, and by only what ſhe was taught in the family, ſhe, in ſixteen months time from her arrival, attained the Engliſh language, to which ſhe was an utter ſtranger before, to ſuch a degree, as to read any, the moſt difficult parts of the ſacred writings, to the great aſtoniſhment of all who heard her.

"As to her WRITING, her own curioſity led her to it; and this ſhe learnt in ſo ſhort a time, that in the year 1765, ſhe wrote a letter to the Rev. Mr. Occom, the Indian Miniſter, while in England.

"She has a great inclination to learn the Latin tongue, and has made ſome progreſs in it. This relation is given by her Maſter who bought her, and with whom ſhe now lives.

Boſton, Nov. 14, 1772. JOHN WHEATLEY.

On being brought from AFRICA to AMERICA.

'TWAS mercy brought me from my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted ſoul to underſtand
That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:
Once I redemption neither ſought nor knew.
Some view our ſable race with ſcornful eye,
"Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, *Chriſtians, Negroes*, black as Cain,
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

Thoughts on the WORKS of PROVIDENCE.

ARISE, my ſoul, on wings enraptur'd, riſe
To praiſe the Monarch of the earth and ſkies,
Whoſe goodneſs and beneficence appear
As round its centre moves the rolling year,
Or when the morning glows with roſy charms,
Or the ſun ſlumbers in the ocean's arms:
Of light divine be a rich portion lent
To guide my ſoul, and favour my intent.
Celeſtial muſe, my arduous flight ſuſtain,
And raiſe my mind to a ſeraphic ſtrain!
A lor'd for ever be the God unſeen,
Which round the ſun revolves this vaſt machine,
Though to his eye its maſs a point appears:
Ador'd the God that whirls ſurrounding ſpheres,
Which firſt ordain'd that mighty *Sol* ſhould reign
The peerleſs monarch of th' ethereal train:
Of miles twice forty millions is his height,
And yet his radiance dazzles mortal ſight
So far beneath—from him th'extended earth
Vigour derives, and ev'ry flow'ry birth:
Vaſt through her orb ſhe moves with eaſy grace
Around her Phœbus in unbounded ſpace;
True to her courſe th' impetuous ſtorm derides,
Triumphant o'er the winds, and ſurging tides.
Almighty, in theſe wond'rous works of thine,
What *Pow'r*, what *Wiſdom*, and what *Goodneſs* ſhine?
And are thy wonders, Lord, by men explor'd,
And yet creating glory unador'd!
Creation ſmiles in various beauty gay,
While day to night, and night ſucceeds to day:
That *Wiſdom*, which attends *Jehovah*'s ways,
Shines moſt conſpicuous in the ſolar rays:
Without them, deſtitute of heat and light,
This world would be the reign of endleſs night:
In their exceſs how would our race complain,
Abhorring life! how hate its length'ned chain!
From air adult what num'rous ills would riſe?
What dire contagion taint the burning ſkies?
What peſtilential vapours, fraught with death,
Would riſe, and overſpread the lands beneath?
Hail, ſmiling morn, that from the orient main
Aſcending doſt adorn the heav'nly plain!
So rich, ſo various are thy beauteous dies,
That ſpread through all the circuit of the ſkies,
That, full of thee, my ſoul in rapture ſoars,
And thy great God, the cauſe of all adores.
O'er beings infinite his love extends,
His *Wiſdom* rules them, and his *Pow'r* defends.
When taſks diurnal tire the human frame,
The ſpirits faint, and dim the vital flame,
Then too that ever active bounty ſhines,
Which not infinity of ſpace confines.
The ſable veil, that *Night* in ſilence draws,
Conceals effects, but ſhews th' *Almighty Cauſe*;
Night ſeals in ſleep the wide creation fair,
And all is peaceful but the brow of care.
Again, gay Phœbus, as the day before,
Wakes ev'ry eye, but what ſhall wake no more;
Again the face of nature is renew'd,
Which ſtill appears harmonious, fair, and good.
May grateful ſtrains ſalute the ſmiling morn,
Before its beams the eaſtern hills adorn!
Shall day to day and night to night conſpire
To ſhow the goodneſs of the Almighty Sire?
This mental voice ſhall man regardleſs hear,
And never, never raiſe the filial pray'r?
To-day, O hearken, nor your folly mourn
For time miſpent, that never will return.
But ſee the ſons of vegetation riſe,
And ſpread their leafy banners to the ſkies.
All-wiſe Almighty Providence we trace
In trees, and plants, and all the flow'ry race;
As clear as in the nobler frame of man,
All lovely copies of the Maker's plan.
The pow'r the ſame that forms a ray of light,
That call'd creation from eternal night.
"Let there be light;" he ſaid: from his profound
Old Chaos heard, and trembled at the ſound:
Swift as the word, inſpir'd by pow'r divine,
Behold the light around its Maker ſhine,
The firſt fair product of th' omnific God,
And now through all his works diffus'd abroad.
As real as his pow'rs by day our God diſcloſe,
So we may trace him in the night's repoſe:
Say what is ſleep? and dreams how paſſing ſtrange!
When action ceaſes, and ideas range
Licentious and unbounded o'er the plains,
Where *Fancy*'s queen in giddy triumph reigns.
Hear in ſoft ſtrains the dreaming lover ſigh
To a kind fair, or rave in jealouſy;
On pleaſure now, and now on vengeance bent,
The lab'ring paſſions ſtruggle for a vent.
What pow'r, O man! thy *reaſon* then reſtores,
So long ſuſpended in nocturnal hours?
What ſecret hand returns the mental train,
And gives improv'd thine active pow'rs again?
From thee, O man, what gratitude ſhould riſe!
And, when from balmy ſleep thou op'ſt thine eyes,
Let thy firſt thoughts be praiſes to the ſkies.
How merciful our God who thus imparts
O'erflowing tides of joy to human hearts.
When wants and woes might be our righteous lot,
Our God forgetting, by our God forgot!
Among the mental pow'rs a queſtion roſe,
"What moſt the image of th' Eternal ſhows?"
When thus to *Reaſon* (ſo let *Fancy* rove)
Her great companion ſpoke immortal *Love*.
"Say, mighty pow'r, how long ſhall ſtrife
"prevail,
"And with its murmurs load the whiſp'ring gale?
"Refer the cauſe to *Recollection*'s ſhrine,
"Who loud proclaims my origin divine,
"The cauſe whence heav'n and earth began to be,
"And is not man immortaliz'd by me?
"*Reaſon* let this moſt cauſeleſs ſtrife ſubſide."
Thus *Love* pronounc'd, and *Reaſon* thus reply'd:
"Thy birth, celeſtial queen! 'tis mine to own,
"In thee reſplendent is the Godhead ſhown;
"Thy words perſuade, my ſoul enraptur'd feels
"Reſiſtleſs beauty which thy ſmile reveals."
Ardent the ſpoke, and, kindling at her charms,
She claſp'd the blooming goddeſs in her arms.
Infinite *Love* where'er we turn our eyes
Appears: this ev'ry creature's wants ſupplies;
This moſt is heard in *Nature*'s conſtant voice,
This makes the morn, and this the eve rejoice;
This bids the ſoft'ning rains and dews deſcend
To nouriſh all, to ſerve one gen'ral end,
The good of man: yet man ungrateful pays
But little homage, and but little praiſe.
To Him, whoſe works array'd with mercy ſhine,
What ſongs ſhould riſe! how conſtant! how divine!

Dedicated, by permiſſion, to the Right Hon. the Counteſs of Huntingdon.

This Day was publiſhed,

Price 5s. ſewed, or 6s. 6d. neatly bound, adorned with an elegant engraved likeneſs of the Author,

A Volume of POEMS, on various Subjects, RELIGIOUS and MORAL.

By PHILLIS WHEATLEY, Negro Servant to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boſton.

London, printed for A. Bell, Bookſeller, Aldgate; and at Boſton, for Meſſ. Cox and Berry, in King-ſtreet.

To the PRINTER.

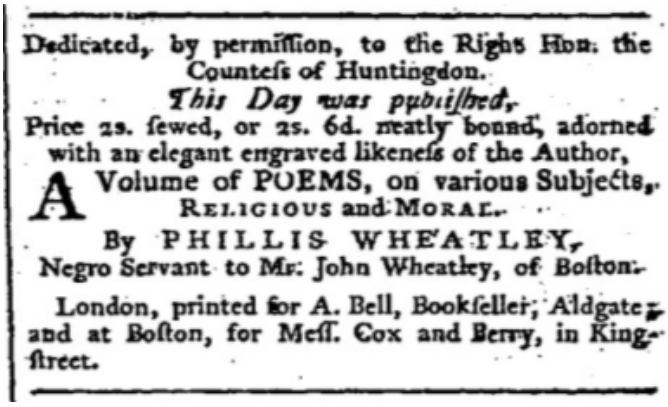
SIR,

IT would have been impertinent if not unjuſt to have anticipated the verdict of the Jury, and urged the abſolute neceſſity of their acquitting Major General Ganſell, *previous* to the trial.—But ſince he has been juſtified by the laws of his country, and obtained the approbation of twelve of his fellow citizens, on whom his life depended, it may not be unſeaſonable to ſay a few words upon a ſubject more important in its conſequences perhaps than is generally imagined.

I ſhall not have occaſion, Sir, to examine into the *policy* and *juſtice* of impriſonment for debt; it has already been ſufficiently expoſed and condemned: I ſhall confine myſelf entirely to the abuſes committed by Sheriffs Officers, and the particular circumſtances attending the arreſt of General Ganſell.

The General, from the unhappy embarraſſment of his affairs, ſuſpected an arreſt; and to avoid the inconveniences of it, as well as the inſolent brutality of thoſe men, whoſe duty it is to execute this very *reſpectable* buſineſs, confined himſelf to his chamber. The Bailiff by ſome means gets admittance into the houſe, with two bravoes as aſſiſtants; the firſt outrage is offered to the Lady of the houſe, from whom they abſolutely ſtral a double barrelled piſtol, forgetting perhaps that they are officers of the *civil* law, and under no circumſtances whatever have a right to offenſive weapons.

Having in the firſt inſtance been guilty of violence and injuſtice, they proceed up ſtairs, and finding the room door ſhut, threaten to "*blow out the brains*" of the perſon they are in ſearch after, unleſs he immediately admits them. This is as peremptorily refuſed, and the General, in defence of himſelf, as well as in ſupport of the law, which aſcertains a man's houſe to be his caſtle, oppoſes them. The Bailiff, with his gang of deſperadoes (who are rewarded in proportion to the danger they run) attempt a paſſage *vi et armis*.—A ſcuffle enſues, the Generals diſcharges his piſtol; a ſecond goes off by accident, and behold the beſiegers enter, and after ſeizing the unhappy captive, lead him inſultingly along in triumph to the infernal dungeon of one of their confederates.—No miſchief is done to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Negro Servant to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boſton.

London, printed for A. Bell, Bookſeller, Aldgate; and at Boſton, for Meſſ. Cox and Berry, in King-ſtreet.

Figure 6. 16–18 September 1773 *London Chronicle* advertisement for Wheatley's collection, sold by Archibald Bell in London and Cox and Berry in Boston. *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection*.

Mukhtar Ali Isani argues that the prefatory material that accompanied the text diverted attention away from Wheatley's poems themselves towards her race and enslavement. While this may have detracted from her work, this attention may have also contributed to her emancipation soon after the publication of her collection. London reviews of the book gestured to the hypocrisy of the attestation verifying her abilities even while she was still enslaved. A review in the September 1773 issue of *Gentleman's Magazine* condemned the fact that so many prominent figures signed the attestation and yet "[y]outh, innocence, and piety, united with genius, have not yet been able to restore [Wheatley] to the condition and character with which she was invested by the Great Author of her being" (qtd. in Isani 146). Perhaps as a result of this sort of criticism, the Wheatleys freed Phillis Wheatley in November 1773.

Robinson notes that there was a first London edition of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* that did not contain all of the prefatory material because Bell withheld this material to release it in newspapers as promotional content (196). He also states that "English concern" (199) with Wheatley would continue well beyond her death in Boston in 1784, even leading to a "second edition" in 1787, retitled *Poems on Comic, Serious, and Moral Subjects* and published by John French. Our database contains several American editions with the original title published after 1784 (1786, 1787, 1789, 1793, 1801, 1802, 1804, 1816), but we are still searching for further London editions and any other American editions we may be missing. If you have any information or find an edition we do not have, please contact us.

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"The First Slave Narrative by a Woman: The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave" (spotlight by Sara Penn)
Sancho, Ignatius (person, author)
"A Search for Firm Evidence: Uncovering Ann Sancho, Bookseller" (spotlight by Kate Moffatt)
Messrs. Cox and Berry (firm, bookseller)
Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral (title, first London edition)
Poems on Comic, Serious, and Moral Subjects (title)
John French (firm, publisher)
Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral (title, 1786 American edition)
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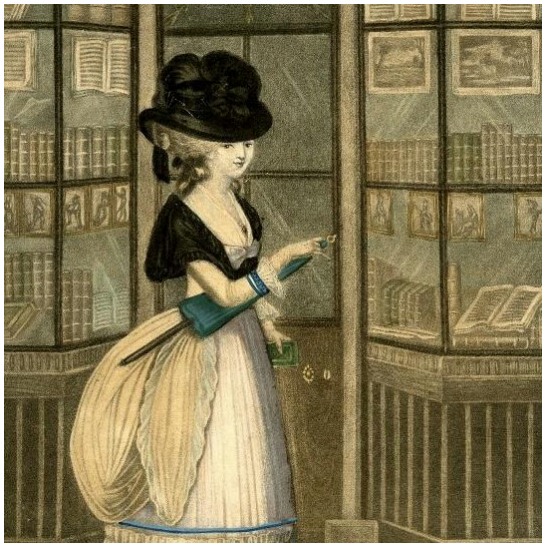


The Women's Print History Project

Maria W. Stewart, Activist for "African rights and liberty" [Spotlight]

Authored by Michelle Levy
Edited by Amanda Law and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Levy, Michelle. "Maria W. Stewart, Activist for 'African rights and liberty'." *The Women's Print History Project*. 24 July, 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/29.

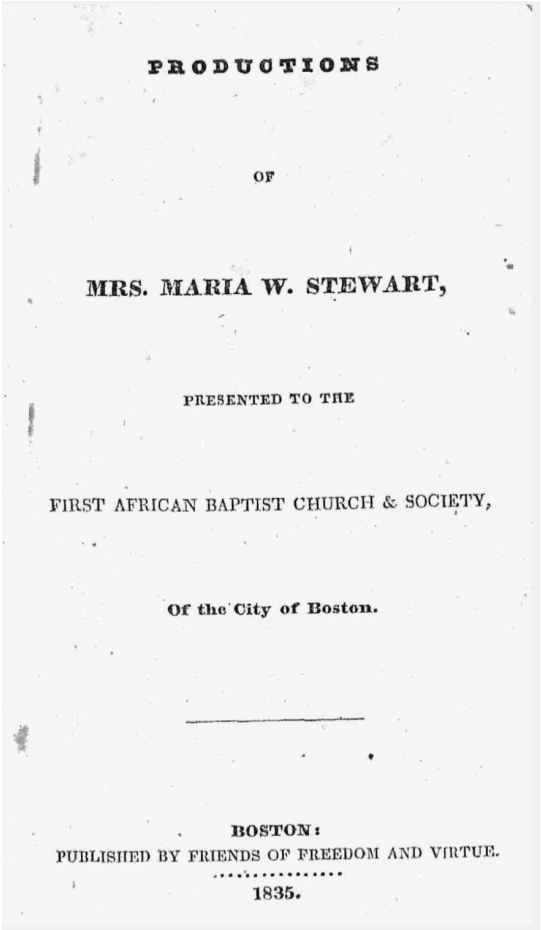
PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

Maria W. Stewart, Activist for "African rights and liberty"

Michelle Levy

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.



PRODUCTIONS

OF

MRS. MARIA W. STEWART,

PRESENTED TO THE

FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH & SOCIETY,

Of the City of Boston.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY FRIENDS OF FREEDOM AND VIRTUE.
1835.

Figure 1. *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart* title page. *Sabin Americana*, Gale.

Maria W. Stewart (née Miller; 1803–1879), born a free woman in Hartford, Connecticut, was the first African American woman to lecture publicly on political, religious and racial issues, and the first to leave a record of her thoughts and speeches. Her publications provide important access to the voice of an African-American woman in the early 1830s, at the birth of the Abolitionist movement in Boston. A taste for the forceful and uncompromising nature of Stewart's speeches may be gleaned in this excerpt from her third address of 27 February 1833, where she offers a

devastating account of the exploitation of Native and Black Americans at the hands of white colonists and slave owners:

> The unfriendly whites first drove the native American from his much loved home. Then they stole our fathers from their peaceful and quiet dwellings, and brought them hither, and made bond-men and bond-women of them and their little ones; they have obliged our brethren to labor, kept them in utter ignorance, nourished them in vice, and raised them in degradation; and now that we have enriched their soil, and filled their coffers, they say that we are not capable of becoming like white men, and that we never can rise to respectability in this country. They would drive us to a strange land. But before I go, the bayonet shall pierce me through. African rights and liberty is a subject that ought to fire the breast of every free man of color in these United States, and excite in his bosom a lively, deep, decided and heart-felt interest. (71–72)

Here Stewart denounces the calls to forcibly deport African-Americans to Africa, schemes for which survived well beyond the end of the Civil War. She further insists, some 35 years before they were granted citizenship, that Blacks are Americans and entitled to the civil and political rights afforded to whites.

Stewart recounts her early life in her twelve-page pamphlet, *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality, the Sure Foundation on Which We Must Build*, first printed in 1831 and reprinted in 1835 as part of the *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart: presented to the First African Baptist Church & Society of the city of Boston*:

> I was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1803; was left an orphan at five years of age; was bound out in a clergyman's family; had the seeds of piety and virtue early sown in my mind; but was deprived of the advantages of education, though my soul thirsted for knowledge. Left them at 15 years of age; attended Sabbath Schools until I was 20; in 1826, was married to James W.Stewart; was left a widow in 1829; was, as I humbly hope and trust, brought to the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus, in 1830; in 1831, made a public profession of my faith in Christ. (3–4)

What Stewart does not relate is that, after the death of her husband, the young widow was cheated out of her inheritance by unscrupulous white businessmen (Richardson, "Stewart, Maria W."). In need of resources, and inspired by her recent conversion as well as the emerging African American and abolitionist movements in Boston, Stewart began to address the public, both in written and oral forms.

In her first pamphlet, Stewart directly asserts equality between Blacks and whites, reminding her readers that "according to the Constitution of these United States, he hath made all men free and equal" (*Productions* 5). She demands both religious piety and solidarity: "Never, no, never will the chains of slavery and ignorance burst, till we become united as one, and cultivate among ourselves the pure principles of piety, morality and virtue" (6).

Furthermore, she directly addresses Black women, insisting that they will not be able to rise up until they "begin to promote and patronize each other" (16), and exhorting them to fulfill their potential:

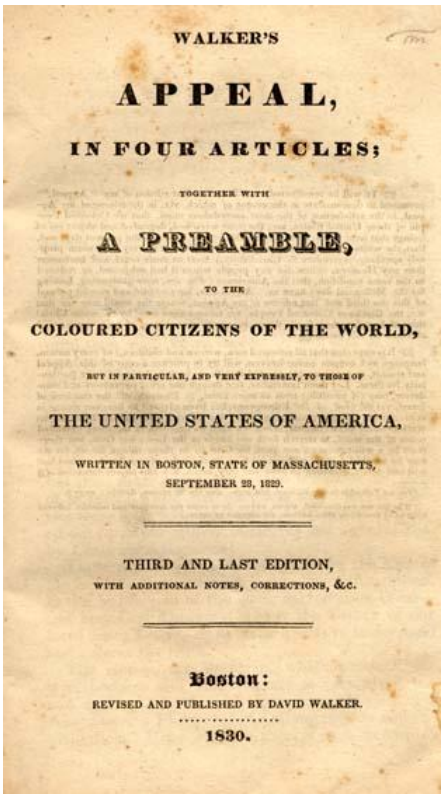
> O, ye daughters of Africa, awake! awake! arise! no longer sleep nor slumber, but distinguish yourselves. Show forth to the world that ye are endowed with noble and exalted faculties. O, ye daughters of Africa! what have ye done to immortalize your names beyond the grave? What examples have ye set before the rising generation? What foundation have ye laid for generation yet unborn? (6)

She speaks to the responsibility that rests on mothers, who "must create in the minds of your little girls and boys a thirst for knowledge, the love of virtue, the abhorrence of vice, and the cultivation of a pure heart" (13). She urges women to raise funds such that, "at the end of the one year and a half, we might be able to lay the corner-stone for the building of a High School" (16). And, through an understanding of the oppression caused by the intersection of race, gender and class, she asks why Black women should always be doing the drudge work for others: "How long shall the fair daughters of Africa be compelled to bury their minds and talents beneath a load of iron pots and kettles?" (16). In a remarkable passage, she presses Black women to be more like (white) American men, to rise above menial labour, to fight for their rights and "get what we can":

> Do you ask the disposition I would have you possess? Possess the spirit of independence. The Americans do, and why should not you? Possess the spirit of men, bold and enterprising, fearless and undaunted. Sue for your rights and privileges. Know the reason that you can attain them. Weary them with your importunities. You can but die, if you make the attempt; and we shall certainly die if you do not. The Americans have practiced nothing but head-work these 200 years, and we have done their drudgery. And is it not high time for us to imitate their examples, and practise head-work too, and keep what we have got, and get what we can? We need never to think that any body is going to feel interested for us, if we do not feel interested for ourselves. (17)

Stewart's decision to speak publicly, through print and then through lectures, was motivated by the earlier publication of David Walker's *Appeal,* on 28 September 1829. David Walker, a free man of a free-born woman and an enslaved man, used his manifesto to describe the terrible suffering inflicted by slavery and racism against freed and enslaved Blacks, to challenge white supremacy (including a refutation of Thomas Jefferson's published assertions of Black inferiority), and to repudiate plans to forcibly deport free Blacks to African colonies. Most significantly, he called upon Black men and women to actively take part in their liberation from slavery and fight for equal rights. These views were deemed too radical by most white abolitionists, and Southern whites took extreme measures to prevent the distribution of the pamphlet in the South, including labelling the *Appeal* seditious and harshly penalizing anyone found circulating it; the state of Georgia even laid a bounty on Walker's head, $10,000 if delivered alive, $1,000 if dead (Zinn 180). Walker's death, in the summer of 1830, was further inspiration for Stewart to take up the cause of the "most noble, fearless, and undaunted David Walker" (*Productions* 5). Stewart did so by adapting Walker's *Appeal*, in

speaking on numerous occasions directly to Black women, and by extending Walker's arguments in demanding that Blacks actively seek out both emancipation and religious, education and moral improvement.


WALKER'S

APPEAL,

IN FOUR ARTICLES;

TOGETHER WITH

A PREAMBLE,

TO THE

COLOURED CITIZENS OF THE WORLD,

BUT IN PARTICULAR, AND VERY EXPRESSLY, TO THOSE OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

WRITTEN IN BOSTON, STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS,
SEPTEMBER 28, 1829.

THIRD AND LAST EDITION,
WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, CORRECTIONS, &c.

Boston:
REVISED AND PUBLISHED BY DAVID WALKER.
1830.

Figure 2. *Walker's Appeal, in Four Articles*, 3rd ed. *Doc South*.

In a letter, William Lloyd Garrison describes his first meeting with Stewart shortly after Walker's death, and how her first pamphlet, *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality*, came to be published in 1831:

> Soon after I started the publication of *The Liberator* you made yourself known to me by coming into my office and putting into my hands, for criticism and friendly advice, a manuscript embodying your devotional thoughts and aspirations, and also various essays pertaining to the condition of that class with which you were complexionally identified – a class "peeled, meeted out, and trodden under foot." You will recollect, if not the surprise, at least the satisfaction I expressed on examining what you had written – far more remarkable in those early days than it would be now, when there are so many educated persons of color who are able to write with ability. I not only gave you words of encouragement, but in my printing office put your manuscript into type, an edition of which was struck off, in tract form, subject to your order. (Stewart, *Meditations* 6)

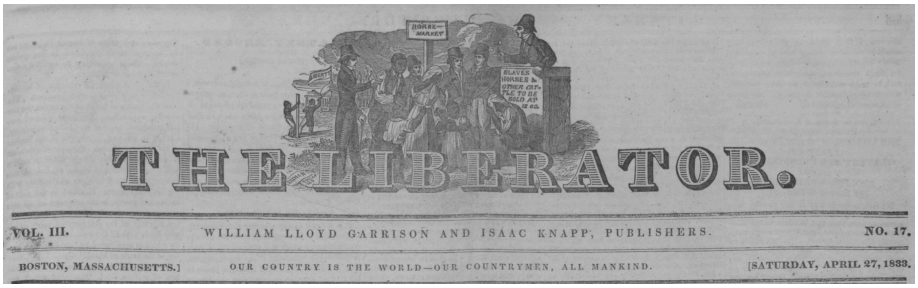
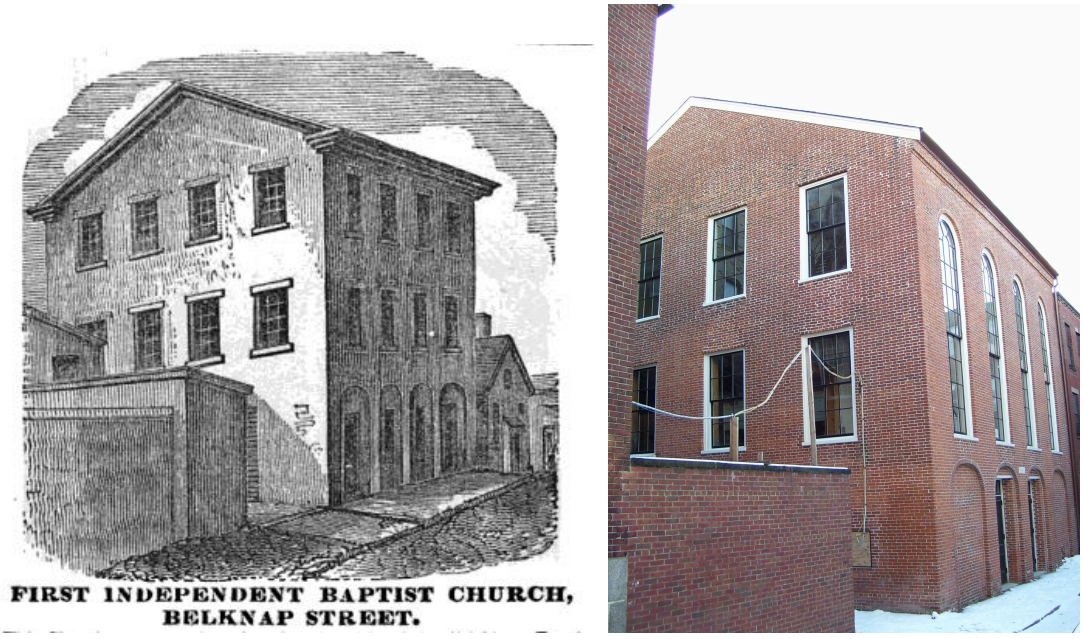


Figure 3. *The Liberator* masthead, vol. 3, no. 17, 27 Apr. 1833. American Historical Periodicals from the American Antiquarian Society.

Print was not the only way that Stewart sought to reach an audience. Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart: presented to the First African Baptist Church and Society, in the city of Boston (1832), a 28-page pamphlet, includes a series of short meditations and prayers that she may have delivered orally at her church. Built in 1806, the First African Baptist Church is the oldest extant African American Church. It is the site of the first meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society (on 1 January 1831), and also where Stewart gave her farewell address (the last of her four known lectures) on 21 September 1833. Stewart's meditations specifically address an African American audience, with prayers "for the whole race of mankind; especially for the benighted sons and daughters of Africa. Do thou loose their bonds, and let the oppressed go free" (*Productions* 37).



Figures 4 and 5. *First Independent Baptist Church, Belknap St.*, Boston, from Isaac Smith Homans' Sketches of Boston, Past and Present. *Wikipedia* (left); African Meeting House. *Wikipedia* (right).

Between September 1832 and September 1833, Stewart delivered four lectures at various venues in Boston, where she addressed male, female and mixed-gender and -race audiences. Accounts of three of these speeches were first published by William Lloyd Garrison in the pages of his *Liberator*, then collected and printed by Garrison and Isaac Knapp in the 1835 collection, *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart: presented to the First African Baptist Church & Society of the*

city of Boston. The following table provides information about her lectures and their publication history. Her lectures were usually reprinted in *The Liberator* a few months after they were delivered. Marilyn Richardson has also found one further essay by Stewart, "Causes for Encouragement," published in *The Liberator* on 14 July 1832 (110).

Table 1.

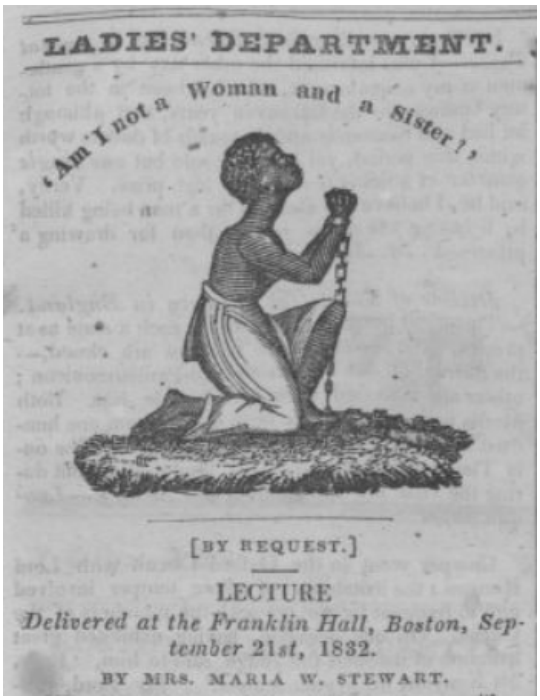
Date / Title	**Venue**	**Audience**	***The Liberator***	***Productions***
September 21, 1832 Lecture ["Why sit ye here and die?]	Franklin Hall, Boston	New England Anti-Slavery Society	17 November 1832, p. 183	52–56
No date, probably spring 1832 (see Richardson, *Maria W. Stewart* xix) An Address	Boston	Afric-American Female Intelligence Society	28 April 1832, p. 66-67	57–63
February 27, 1833 An Address	African Masonic Hall, Boston	African American Masons	27 Apr. 1833, p. 68 and 4 May 1833, p. 72	64–72
September 21, 1833 Mrs Stewart's Farewell Address	First African Baptist Church, Boston	Friends in the City of Boston	This lecture was not printed in *The Liberator*.	73–84

In her lectures, Stewart continued in the same fiery vein as *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality*, though, perhaps because her lectures were delivered in person, they were highly controversial; the negative reaction to them resulted in her ending her speaking career after only four engagements, all of which occurred within one year (Hine; Roberts). It is highly unusual to have a record of a woman's lectures; in the whole of our thousands of title records in the *WPHP*, the only records described as oral accounts are the final confessions of condemned women (for example, "The last speech, confession and dying words, of Mary Sanders" and "The last dying speech, of Miss Mary Laws"). We are also fortunate that Stewart's speeches were reprinted from *The Liberator*, as the WPHP's data model can only record periodicals published as annuals. As a result of the uniqueness of Stewart's publications, this spotlight takes the opportunity to quote from her lectures, at length, as they provide direct access to a woman's speaking voice, rarely afforded in a work written for print. Marilyn Richardson has called to our attention the distinctive patterns and power of Stewart's voice:

> As with Walker, much of the force of Stewart's message was borne by a rhetorical power that appealed to the ear as well as to the intellect. Not only did she master the Afro-American idiom of thundering exhortation uniting spiritual and secular concerns, she was able early on to exercise that skill with equal

> success on the printed page and at the podium. Her command of such sophisticated techniques as the implied call-and-response cadence set in motion by sequential rhetorical questions; of anaphora, parataxis, and the shaping of imperative and periodic sentences; along with the powerful and affecting rhythms of her discourse, all show Stewart to be a predecessor to Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Henry Highland Garnet, Frances Harper, and other black nineteenth-century masters of language deployed to change society. (30)

Stewart's lectures continue to speak to us today.


LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

'Am I not a Woman and a Sister!'

[BY REQUEST.]

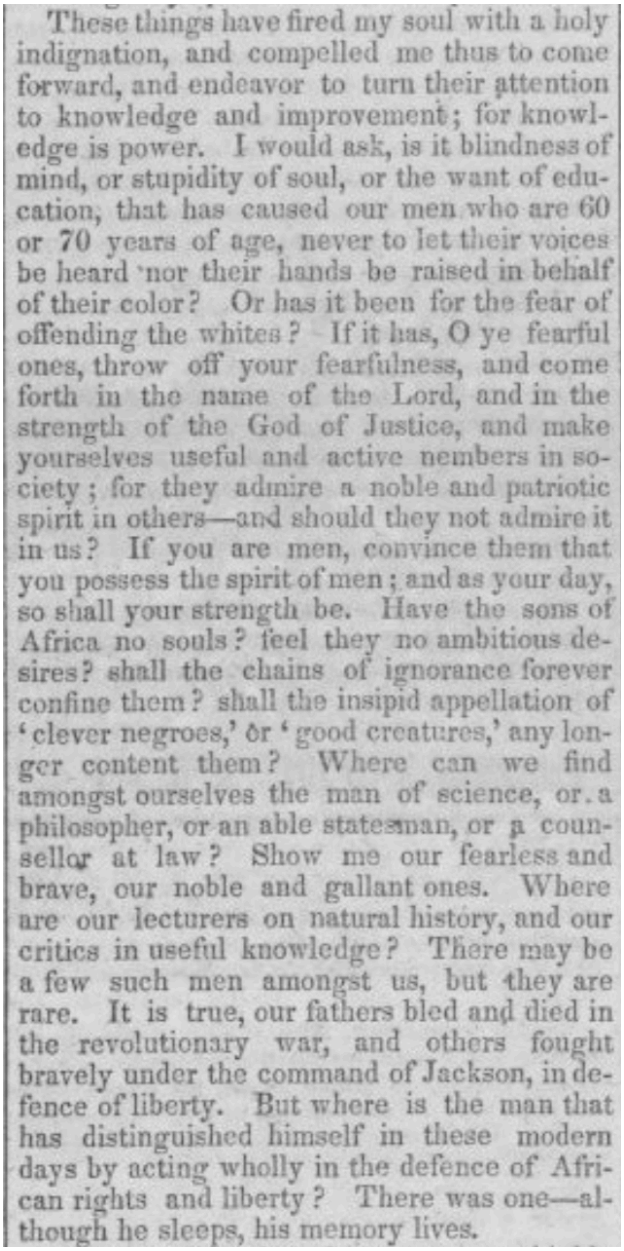
LECTURE

Delivered at the Franklin Hall, Boston, September 21st, 1832.

BY MRS. MARIA W. STEWART.

Figure 6. "Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall, Boston, September 21st, 1832." *The Liberator*, vol. 2, no. 46, 17 Nov. 1832. American Historical Periodicals from the American Antiquarian Society.

In her first speech to the New England Anti-Slavery Society, on 21 September 1832, Stewart echoes her previous complaints about the stultifying effects of "a life of servitude," declaring "that if I conceived of there being no possibility of my rising above the condition of a servant, I would gladly hail death as a welcome messenger" (*Productions* 53). In addressing the Afric-American Female Intelligence Society, she again calls for solidarity: "It appears to me that there are no people under the heavens, so unkind and so unfeeling towards their own, as are the descendants of fallen Africa. I have been something of a traveller in my day; and the general cry among the people is, 'Our own color are our greatest opposers;' and even the whites say that we are greater enemies towards each other, than they are towards us" (*Productions* 60). Her third speech, however, was the most controversial. Delivered at the African Masonic Hall, in an address exclusively directed to men, she calls upon them to rise beyond ignorance and fear (implying that they had been weak by not doing so). This is how one part of her speech appeared in *The Liberator* for 27 April 1833:



These things have fired my soul with a holy indignation, and compelled me thus to come forward, and endeavor to turn their attention to knowledge and improvement; for knowledge is power. I would ask, is it blindness of mind, or stupidity of soul, or the want of education, that has caused our men who are 60 or 70 years of age, never to let their voices be heard nor their hands be raised in behalf of their color? Or has it been for the fear of offending the whites? If it has, O ye fearful ones, throw off your fearfulness, and come forth in the name of the Lord, and in the strength of the God of Justice, and make yourselves useful and active members in society; for they admire a noble and patriotic spirit in others—and should they not admire it in us? If you are men, convince them that you possess the spirit of men; and as your day, so shall your strength be. Have the sons of Africa no souls? feel they no ambitious desires? shall the chains of ignorance forever confine them? shall the insipid appellation of 'clever negroes,' or 'good creatures,' any longer content them? Where can we find amongst ourselves the man of science, or a philosopher, or an able statesman, or a counsellor at law? Show me our fearless and brave, our noble and gallant ones. Where are our lecturers on natural history, and our critics in useful knowledge? There may be a few such men amongst us, but they are rare. It is true, our fathers bled and died in the revolutionary war, and others fought bravely under the command of Jackson, in defence of liberty. But where is the man that has distinguished himself in these modern days by acting wholly in the defence of African rights and liberty? There was one—although he sleeps, his memory lives.

Figure 7. "An Address, Delivered at the African Masonic Hall in Boston, Feb. 27, 1833." *The Liberator*, vol. 3, no. 17, 27 Apr. 1833. American Historical Periodicals from the American Antiquarian Society.

It was this speech that turned the tide against her; her next and final public lecture was the "Farewell Address to her Friends in the City of Boston," wherein she alludes to the biting criticism that had been directed at her. This final speech is remarkable as it offers a wide-ranging account of the high status of many women throughout history. Here is her discussion of women in the late middle ages, drawn, according to Richardson (40), from Stewart's reading of John Adams' *Woman, Sketches Of The History, Genius, Disposition, Accomplishments, Employments, Customs And Importance Of The Fair Sex In All Parts Of The World* (London, 1790):

> In the 15th century, the general spirit of this period is worthy of observation. We might then have seen women preaching and mixing themselves in controversies. Women occupying the chairs of Philosophy

> and Justice; women harangueing in Latin before the Pope; women writing in Greek, and studying in Hebrew; Nuns were Poetesses, and women of quality Divines; and young girls who had studied Eloquence, would with the sweetest countenances, and the most plaintive voices, pathetically exhort the Pope and the Christian Princes, to declare war against the Turks. Women in those days devoted their leisure hours to contemplation and study. The religious spirit which has animated women in all ages, showed itself at this time. It has made them, by turns, martyrs, apostles, warriors, and concluded in making them divines and scholars. Why cannot a religious spirit animate us now? Why cannot we become divines and scholars? (*Productions* 77)

This published lecture, in which she pleads for a place for women in public debate and religious life by referencing the powerful influence of women throughout history, would be her last. In 1834, Stewart moved to New York City, then Baltimore and finally to Washington, DC, where she worked as a teacher and then as head matron at the Freedmen's Hospital, where she taught and treated formerly enslaved people. Through education, nursing and other forms of activism she continued to fight for the liberty of her people. She died in 1879, the year in which she collected and published her writing as *Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart,* with additional reminiscences supplied by others who knew her. In her 1987 edition of Stewart's writing, the first republication of her work since 1897, Marilyn Richardson observes that Stewart is "a significant historical figure, hidden in plain sight" (xv); with the recovery work of Richardson and other scholars, her important legacy is finally coming into view.

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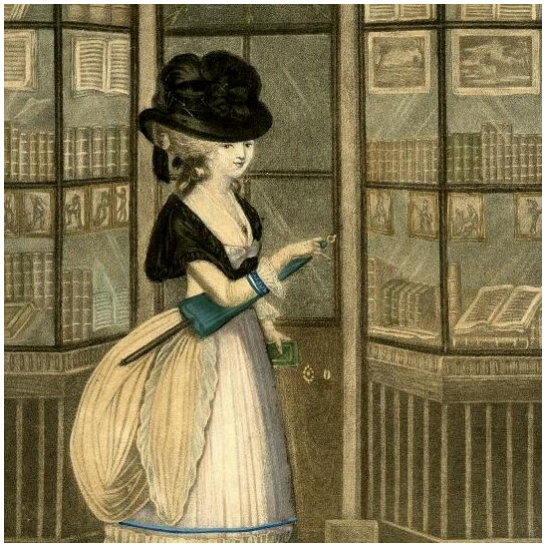


The Women's Print History Project

Lydia Maria Child's *Radical Appeal* [Spotlight]

Authored by Hanieh Ghaderi and Kandice Sharren
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kate Moffatt

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Ghaderi, Hanieh, and Kandice Sharren. "Lydia Maria Child's Radical Appeal." *The Women's Print History Project*, 31 July, 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/31.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada | Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada | Canada | DHIL

Lydia Maria Child's *Radical Appeal*

Hanieh Ghaderi and Kandice Sharren

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.

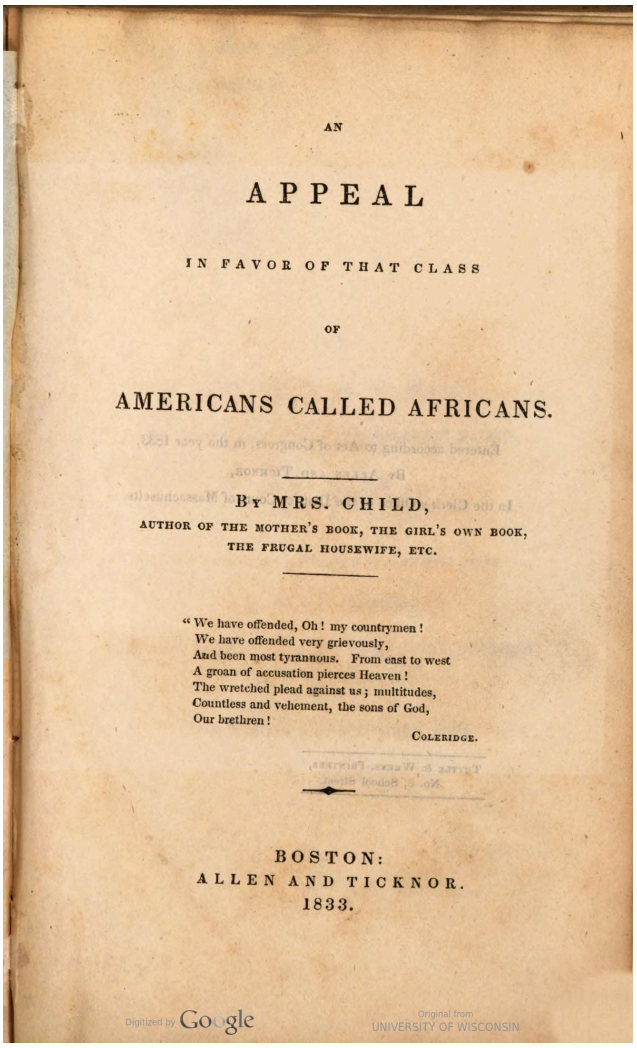
Figure 1. Lydia Maria Child in 1870. *Wikipedia*.

Lydia Maria Child's *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* (Boston 1833) was "the foundational text of the American abolition movement" (Fanuzzi 78). According to Carolyn Karcher, the Appeal was the first book by a white woman written in support of the immediate emancipation of enslaved people in the United States (175). It was published at Child's expense, as Allen & Ticknor, the book's publishers, were generally unwilling to publish books solely at their own risk (Winship 16). Published in the same year that the 1833 Emancipation Act was passed in Britain, Child's work was the product of three years of research and writing (Karcher 178) and provides one of the first full-scale analyses of race and slavery in America, developing "a coherent argument addressing all aspects of the slavery controversy – moral, legal, economic, political, and racial" (Karcher 176). In this wide-ranging analysis, Child represents slavery as a system rather than a personal history, part of a range of racist practices, which also included miscegenation laws, limited opportunities for work and schooling, and discrimination in the northern states.

This approach, along with her arguments in favour of immediatism, aligned Child with William Lloyd Garrison, the editor of the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator*, which published women's abolitionist writing, including the speeches of Maria W. Stewart (the subject of last week's spotlight by Michelle Levy). In general, women were central to the Garrisonian movement, which "granted women, no matter how demure or subjugated they might be at home, a visible and powerful place in the political world" (Brown 67).

During her lifetime, Lydia Maria Child became famous as a writer and activist in favour of justice and equality for marginalized people, including Native Americans, Black people, and women (Karcher 41). By the time she published the *Appeal*, she was already a successful writer, whose published works included fiction, household management, education, and biography; she was also the editor of the *Juvenile Miscellany*. Her works often contained radical ideas challenging social injustice and documenting American history from a woman's perspective (Karcher 16–19). For instance, her first book, *Hobomok* (1824), included a representation of interracial marriage: the heroine Mary Conant rebels against her father by marrying a Native American. This plot shocked contemporary readers, even though, as Karcher observes, the novel ultimately offers a "reassuring negation of a threat to white supremacy and patriarchal authority" (21) when the heroine rejoins her community and marries a white man. Child's next novel, *The Rebels, or Boston Before the Revolution* (1825) also challenged patriarchy and power relations in society by representing historical events from a female perspective (Karcher 41). Child brought her interest in women's lives and experience to bear on non-fiction as well, publishing practical books about household management, including the popular *The Frugal Housewife, Dedicated to Those Who Are Not Ashamed of Economy* (1829), which went into over thirty editions by 1855 and which was later retitled *The American Frugal Housewife* to avoid confusion with Susannah Carter's earlier work, also titled *The Frugal Housewife*. She also wrote *The Mother's Book*, an educational manual widely reprinted in America and Britain. In 1832, she published *The Biographies of Madame de Staël, and Madame Roland* and *The Biographies of Lady Russell and Madame Guyon*, research-intensive works that required her "to consult many volumes, most of which contained but little" (*Biographies of Madame de Staël and Madame Roland* viii).

Child brought her experience as a successful writer in these different genres to *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, which combines detailed historical research with emotional appeal and economic arguments. The first two chapters outline the history of Black slavery, comparing it to the practice of slavery within different countries and different historical periods. Child's arguments were strongly influenced by British and French abolitionists, Thomas Clarkson and Abbé Reynal. She quotes extensively from Clarkson, whose *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (1787) and *History of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade* (1808) offer thorough historical studies of the eighteenth-century abolitionist movement in Britain. Like Reynal, Child presented a well-researched narrative that outlined the history of Europeans' enslavement of Africans, beginning in 1442; like Clarkson, she described, often in graphic detail, the experiences of countless individuals who suffered under slavery, a strategy designed to "excite our pity on the one hand, . . . [and] provoke our indignation and abhorrence on the other" (Clarkson 18–19).



AN

APPEAL

IN FAVOR OF THAT CLASS

OF

AMERICANS CALLED AFRICANS.

BY MRS. CHILD,

AUTHOR OF THE MOTHER'S BOOK, THE GIRL'S OWN BOOK,
THE FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE, ETC.

"We have offended, Oh! my countrymen!
We have offended very grievously,
And been most tyrannous. From east to west
A groan of accusation pierces Heaven!
The wretched plead against us; multitudes,
Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
Our brethren!

COLERIDGE.

BOSTON:
ALLEN AND TICKNOR.
1833.

Figure 2. Title Page of Child's *Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833). *Hathi Trust Digital Library*.

The *Appeal* relies on powerful imagery to present its arguments in visceral terms. Child's extensive research allows her to include descriptive passages that depict the horrible conditions that enslaved people had to work in, as well as the difficulties that they faced on a daily basis. She writes:

> Husbands are torn from their wives, children from their parents...sometimes they are brought from a remote country; obliged to wander over mountains and through deserts; chained together in herds; driven by the whip, scorched by a tropical sun, compelled to carry heavy bales of merchandize; suffering with hunger and thirst; worn down with fatigue, and often leaving their bones to whiten in the desert....in some places, travelers meet with fifty or sixty skeletons in a day. (6)

Child's use of novelistic detail to describe the horrors of slavery encourages readers to imagine the physical experiences of enslaved people. In addition to vivid description, Child illustrates her arguments with simple figurative language: "All living creatures, that can, by any process, be enabled to perceive moral and intellectual truths, are characterized by similar peculiarities of organization. They may differ from each other widely, but they still belong to the same class. An

eagle and a wren are very unlike each other, but no one would hesitate to pronounce that they were both birds" (155). This comparison of different bird species to different races emphasizes similarity over difference to support her argument in favour of racial equality. Child also literally illustrates her points by using various images, as she uses an engraving of shackles and instruments of torture to drive home the cruelty of slavery.

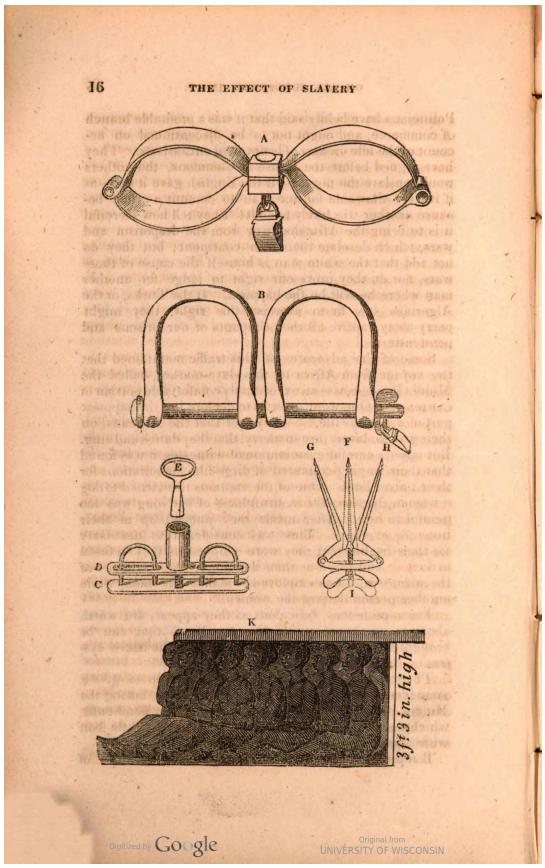


Figure 3. Illustration from Child's *Appeal*. *Hathi Trust Digital Library.*

In addition to documenting the suffering of enslaved people, Child speaks to enslavers in their own language, asking them to end slavery for their own economic and moral good. She contends that slaveholders can benefit from the work of free laborers, claiming that slavery is not actually an economic boon:

> The slave is bought, sometimes at a very high price . . . when the slave is ill, a physician must be paid by the owner . . . the slave is to be taken care of in his old age . . . the slave does not care how slowly or carelessly he works...the slave is indifferent how many tools he spoils . . . The free man will be honest for reputation's sake, but reputation will make the slave non the richer, nor invest him with any of the privileges of a human being . . . (77–78).

The negative impacts of slavery on enslavers were not only economic, but also moral, with consequences for the entire country; Child warns that "we cannot inflict an injury without suffering from it ourselves" (*Appeal* 11). She also seems to foresee the violence of the Civil War when, after outlining the divisions that debates about slavery have created

between Northern and Southern states, she asks: "Who does not see that the American people are walking over a subterranean fire, the flames of which are fed by slavery?" (128).

Although Child's emphasis is on bringing about an end to slavery, she recognizes that it is made possible by racism more generally. In the second half of her book, she argues against the hypocrisy of groups like the American Colonization Society that claimed to be in favour of emancipation, but were unwilling to antagonize white enslavers to achieve it. For example, the fifth chapter, "Colonization Society, and Anti-Slavery Society," sets the two approaches taken by leading abolitionist societies against each other. In it, Child objects to the aims of the American Colonization Society, which stated that it aimed to end slavery by "by gradually removing all the blacks to Africa" (*Appeal* 123) and challenges its refusal to antagonize the Southern states. According to Child, the policies of the Colonization Society are motivated by racism: "its members write and speak, both in public and private, as if the prejudice against skins darker colored than our own, was a fixed and unalterable law of our nature, which cannot possibly be changed" (133). By contrast, Child argues, the Anti-Slavery Society's calls for immediate emancipation seem inflammatory but "is the only way to *prevent* insurrections" (142)—that is, emancipation ends the danger of slave rebellions by ending slavery.

Child also rejects arguments about the intellectual and moral inferiority of Black people through examples of notable Black writers and intellectuals, including Phillis Wheatley (read Amanda Law's spotlight on Wheatley here), and Ignatius Sancho (his wife Ann was a bookseller profiled by Kate Moffatt here). Miscegenation, which Robert Fanuzzi identifies as "the abiding interest of her abolitionist career" (80–81), is addressed in the *Appeal*, which includes one of the first defences of interracial marriages (Karcher 176).

Following the publication of the *Appeal*, Child remained active in the abolition movement, publishing pamphlets such as *Authentic Anecdotes of Slavery* around 1835 and the *Anti-Slavery Catechism* in 1836. In the 1840s, she began using fiction to forward her abolitionist views, publishing stories such as "The Quadroons" (1842) and "Slavery's Pleasant Homes" (1843) in the abolitionist periodical *Liberty Bell* (Fanuzzi 77) and editing the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* between 1841 and 1843. She also edited the memoirs of Harriet A. Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), which was published under the pseudonym Linda Brent. As in earlier slave narratives such as Mary Prince's (featured in this spotlight by Sara Penn), Jacobs details the sexual violence inflicted on her by her enslaver; Child's introduction notes, "I am well aware that many will accuse me of indecorum for presenting these pages to the public . . . but the public ought to be made acquainted with its [slavery's] monstrous features" (Douglass and Jacobs 128).

Child's *Appeal*, published in 1833, provides one of the earliest comprehensive treatments of the evils of slavery and racism in the United States. It joins with other important works published in the 1820s and 1830s that witnessed the culmination of fifty years of abolitionist activities in Britain, including Elizabeth Heyrick's *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition* (1824; read Victoria DeHart's spotlight on Heyrick here) and Mary Prince's *History* (1831) and the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act by British Parliament in 1833, as well as the birth of the radical movement on the other site of the Atlantic, as is evident in Maria W. Stewart's publications of 1831, 1832, and 1835. As with these other

writers and activists, Child focused on the particular consequences of slavery and racism for women, making her one of the earliest feminist advocates for racial justice.

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Hobomok (title)
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The Frugal Housewife, Dedicated to Those Who Are Not Ashamed of Economy (title)
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Carter, Susannah (person, author)
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The Biographies of Madame de Staël, and Madame Roland (title)
The Biographies of Lady Russell and Madame Guyon (title)
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Prince, Mary (person, author)
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The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave (title)
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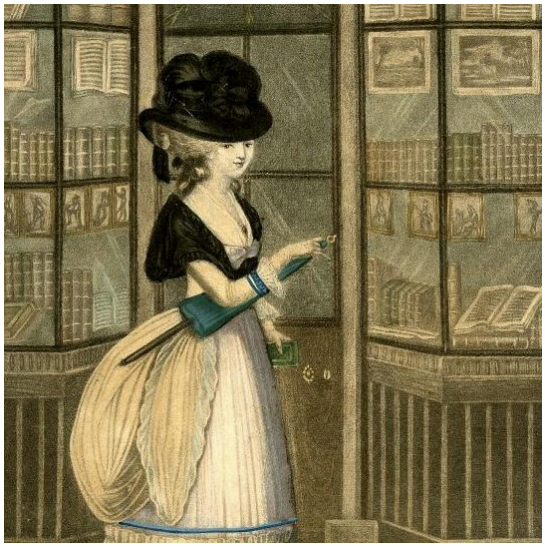


The Women's Print History Project

Martha Gurney: Abolitionist Bookseller of Holborn Hill [Spotlight]

Authored by Michelle Levy
Edited by Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Levy, Michelle. "Martha Gurney: Abolitionist Bookseller of Holborn Hill." *The Women's Print History Project*, 24 April 2019, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/2.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

Martha Gurney: Abolitionist Bookseller of Holborn Hill

Michelle Levy

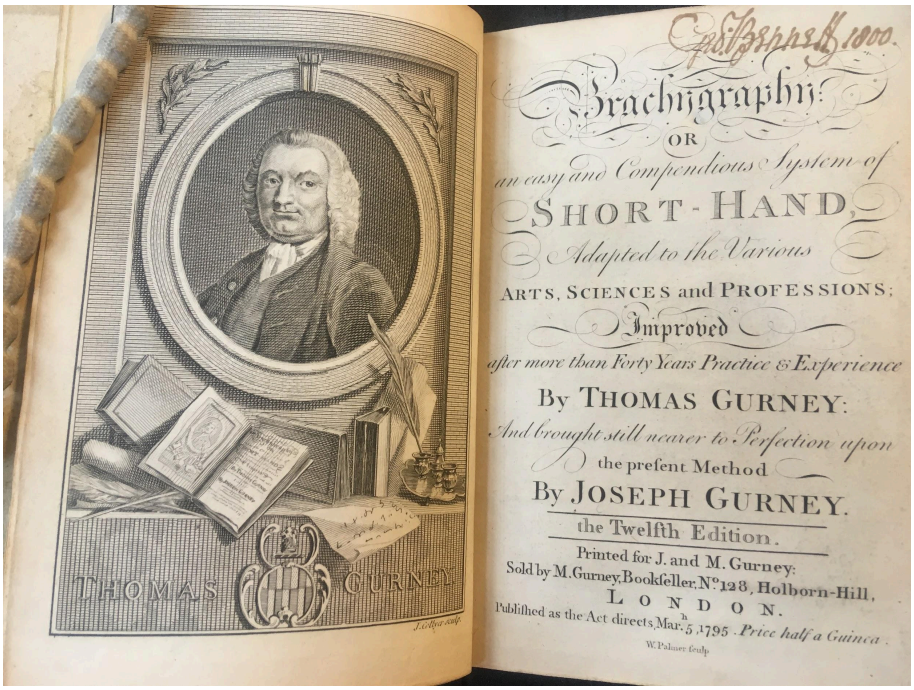
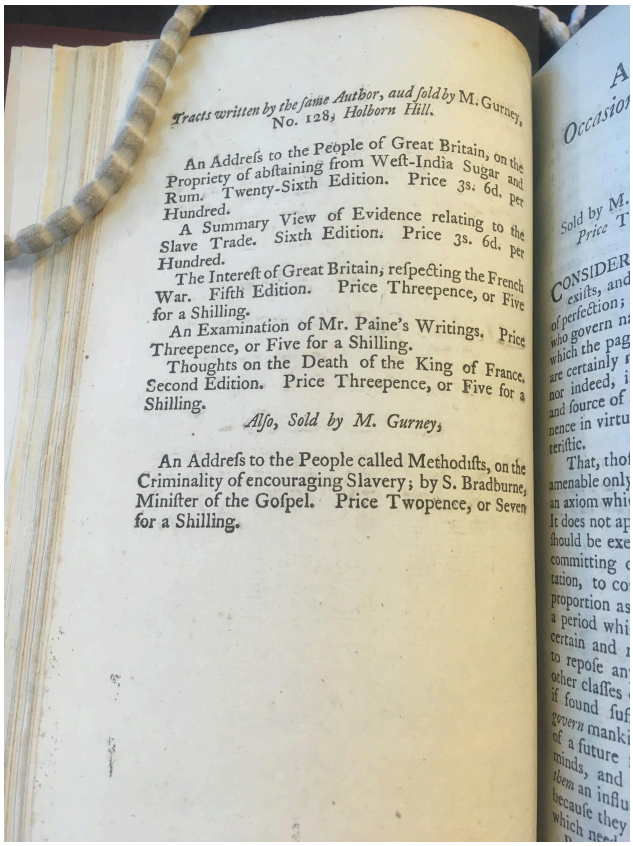


Figure 1. Joseph Gurney's Brachygraphy, 12th edition (1795), printed for J. and M. Gurney and sold by M. Gurney. British Library. 1606/1604.(1.)

Martha Gurney (1733–1816) was an abolitionist Baptist bookseller and printer, who operated a bookshop at No. 128 Holborn Hill (adjacent to Leather Lane and just opposite Fetter Lane, between Gray's Inn Road and Hatton Garden) from the late 1780s to her death in 1816 (Whelan, "William" 399). No. 128 Holborn had been the premises of another bookseller, William Fox, since 1777; he joined forces with Martha Gurney in 1782, after which they published many pamphlets together, usually with her listed as bookseller, him as author. From 1782 to 1816, Gurney's name appeared on over 100 imprints, chiefly as a seller but occasionally as printer of radical pamphlets, many focused on ending Britian's involvement in the Atlantic slave trade.

Gurney was the only daughter of Thomas Gurney, who had invented a system of shorthand, which he branded "Brachgraphy" and described in a book of that name, reprinted by Martha and her brother Joseph many times; Joseph learned shorthand from her father and became the leading shorthand court reporter of the day. Sister and brother published over 80 criminal trial reports, including some of the most controversial (such as *The whole proceedings on the trial of an information exhibited ex officio by the king's attorney-general against Thomas Paine*).

Gurney's shop at No. 128 Holborn Hill sold pamphlets on a range of political and religious topics. A typical catalogue may be seen below, where we see the sale of works written by dissenters on other topics, ranging from the war with France to the East India Charter. Gurney's bookshop was a center for the discussion and dissemination of radical writing in London at the turn of the century. However, as the first two titles make clear, Gurney chiefly was a publisher of anti-slavery literature, and her shop became a hub of anti-slavery activism; we know that she displayed a large fold-out woodcut of the slave ship Brookes, demonstrating the inhumane conditions in which slaves were transported across the Atlantic.



Tracts written by the same Author, and sold by M. Gurney, No. 128, *Holborn Hill.*

An Addreſs to the People of Great Britain, on the Propriety of abſtaining from Weſt-India Sugar and Rum. Twenty-Sixth Edition. Price 3s. 6d. per Hundred.

A Summary View of Evidence relating to the Slave Trade. Sixth Edition. Price 3s. 6d. per Hundred.

The Intereſt of Great Britain, reſpecting the French War. Fifth Edition. Price Threepence, or Five for a Shilling.

An Examination of Mr. Paine's Writings. Price Threepence, or Five for a Shilling.

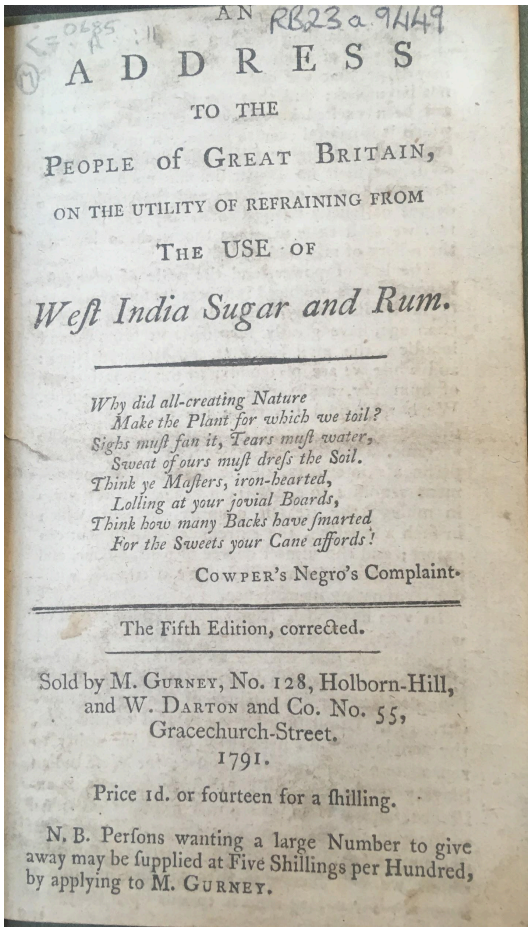
Thoughts on the Death of the King of France. Second Edition. Price Threepence, or Five for a Shilling.

Alſo, Sold by M. Gurney,

An Addreſs to the People called Methodiſts, on the Criminality of encouraging Slavery; by S. Bradburne, Miniſter of the Goſpel. Price Twopence, or Seven for a Shilling.

Figure 2. Catalogue of Tracts written by William Fox and sold by M. Gurney. British Library.

Martha Gurney's greatest influence was as a publisher of anti-abolition pamphlets. According to Timothy Whelan—the scholar who has done considerable research uncovering her legacy—Gurney sold, printed and/or published sixteen anti-slavery pamphlets, most of them written by Fox, during the height of the first wave of abolitionist activism, between 1788 and 1794. Although many female authors advocated for the abolition of the slave trade through their poems and pamphlets, Martha Gurney is the only female printer/bookseller that has come to light who printed/sold tracts in opposition to the slave trade. Furthermore, according to Whelan, her name appears in the imprint of more pamphlets than any other women in the second half of the eighteenth century ("Martha" 50). Nevertheless, as Whelan observes, notwithstanding her role as an activist bookseller, she remains "largely unknown today" ("Martha" 45).



AN RB23a.9449

ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE of GREAT BRITAIN,

ON THE UTILITY OF REFRAINING FROM

THE USE OF

West India Sugar and Rum.

Why did all-creating Nature
Make the Plant for which we toil?
Sighs muſt fan it, Tears muſt water,
Sweat of ours muſt dreſs the Soil.
Think ye Maſters, iron-hearted,
Lolling at your jovial Boards,
Think how many Backs have ſmarted
For the Sweets your Cane affords!

COWPER's Negro's Complaint.

The Fifth Edition, corrected.

Sold by M. GURNEY, No. 128, Holborn-Hill,
and W. DARTON and Co. No. 55,
Gracechurch-Street.
1791.

Price 1d. or fourteen for a ſhilling.

N. B. Perſons wanting a large Number to give away may be ſupplied at Five Shillings per Hundred, by applying to M. GURNEY.

Figure 3. *Address to the People of Great Britain*, fifth edition (Gurney, 1791). British Library. RB.23.a.9449.

Gurney usually signed herself as a bookseller, as we see in this pamphlet—the most significant of Gurney's abolition publications—Fox's 12-page pamphlet, *An Address to the People of Great Britain, on the Utility of Abstaining from the use of West India Sugar and Rum*, first printed in 1791. This was the first and most influential essay to advocate for a boycott of West Indian products, especially sugar and rum, and the pamphlet became hugely popular, going through twenty-six editions in one year to become one of if not "the most widely distributed pamphlet of the eighteenth century, with approximately 200,000 copies sold or given away" (Whelan, "Martha" 75). As may be seen on the title page to the fifth edition, Gurney sold these pamphlets so inexpensively that they approached free print: she advertised the very inexpensive price of one pence per copy and offered bulk discounts, advertising fourteen for a shilling or 100 for 5 shillings for "Persons wanting a large Number to give away." She attached a note to the tenth edition to the effect that 50,000 copies of the pamphlet had been printed in the first four months of circulation. A note in the thirteenth edition explains that to further the boycott—and speed the eradication of the slave trade—"a trivial price is affixed, that those who approve the Pamphlet may be more generally enabled to promote its circulation" (Whelan, "Martha" 57). By the twenty-fifth edition, the price had fallen to a half penny. The many reprintings of the *Address* were followed by other anti-slavery pamphlets written by Fox and sold by Gurney. Given the ephemerality of these pamphlets, *WPHP* has found (and recorded) only a few (the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, eleventh,

thirteenth, fourteenth, twenty-second, twenty-fourth, and twenty-fifth editions); we need to add many more editions to our database. If you find an edition we do not have, please contact us.

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Martha Gurney (firm, bookseller and printer)

Brachygraphy (title)

The whole proceedings on the trial of an information exhibited ex officio by the king's attorney-general against Thomas Paine (title)

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An Address to the People of Great Britain, on the propriety of abstaining from West India Sugar and Rum. The Fourteenth Edition, with Additions. (title)

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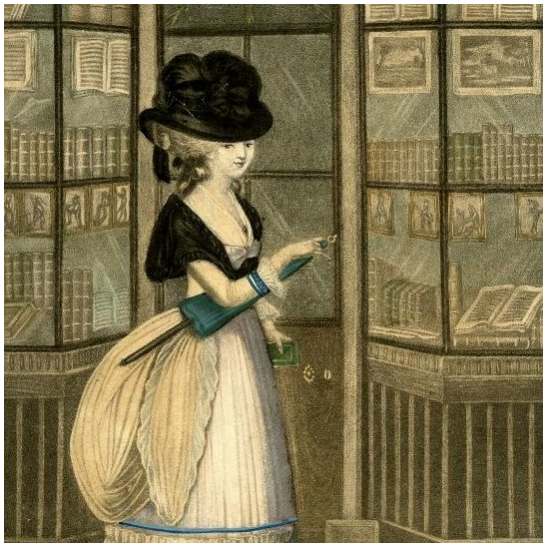


The Women's Print History Project

Elizabeth Heyrick, Mother of Immediatism [Spotlight]

Authored by Victoria DeHart
Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

DeHart, Victoria. "Elizabeth Heyrick, Mother of Immediatism." *The Women's Print History Project*, 16 July 2020, www.womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/27.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

This spotlight draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.

Elizabeth Heyrick, Mother of Immediatism

Victoria DeHart

This post is part of our Black Women's and Abolitionist Print History Spotlight Series, which will run between 19 June and 31 July 2020. Spotlights in this series focus on our work to find Black women who were active participants in the book trades during our period, to acknowledge the ways in which white female abolitionists exploited print's powerful potential for eliminating slavery, and to revisit the lives and books published by well-known Black female authors.

Figure 1. Silhouette Image of Elizabeth Heyrick. Courtesy of *The Abolition of Slavery Project*.

In 1824, Elizabeth Heyrick published her pamphlet, *Immediate, not Gradual Abolition; or, An Inquiry into the shortest, safest, and most effectual means of getting rid of West Indian Slavery*, criticizing the leading anti-slavery figures of the day, William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson, for being too "polite" and "accommodating" of enslavers (1824 14). Wilberforce and Clarkson believed that, after the abolition of the slave trade in 1808, slavery in the British Colonies would gradually come to an end, as enslaved people could no longer be replaced through the slave-trade. However, as colonial slavery continued to flourish into the 1820s, more than a decade after the eradication of the trade, Heyrick's position that colonial slavery too needed to be abolished gained traction. Her pamphlet became an important work in its opposition to the "gradualist abolitionists" and in influencing public opinion to support the cause of immediate abolition. It was widely distributed amongst Anti-Slavery societies and caused much discussion in public meetings in various parts of England and the United States.

Elizabeth Heyrick (1769–1831) was the daughter of John Coltman (*d*. 1808), a wealthy worsted manufacturer, and Elizabeth Cartwright (1737–1811), a book reviewer and poet. Her parents were dissenters and friends of writers and poets Robert Dodsley, William Shenstone, and John Wesley (Grundy 1). In 1787, Elizabeth Coltman married John

Heyrick, a practising lawyer and poet. The marriage was short, as John Heyrick died in 1795. After his death, Elizabeth Heyrick became a Quaker and dedicated herself to writing and activism (*The Abolition of Slavery Project*). Heyrick has long been confused with another author who shared her maiden name, Elizabeth "Eliza" Coltman (1761–1838), a children's author and writer of a pacifist polemic, *The Warning: Recommended to the Serious Attention of all Christians, and Lovers of their Country*. Until recently, Heyrick has been given credit for Eliza Coltman's work (Whelan 184).

Studies of Elizabeth Heyrick, particularly those by Clare Midgley and Jennifer Holcomb, have documented the impact she had during the fight for abolition. According to Isobel Grundy, Heyrick drafted at least twenty pamphlets, although many have either been lost or were never printed (Grundy 1); in a biography written on the Coltman family (1895), Catherine Beale references Heyrick's "mass" of unpublished material (215). So far, we have found 6 separate pamphlets, and six editions of *Immediate, not Gradual, Abolition*. Heyrick's pamphlets concern a wide variety of issues beyond abolition including animal cruelty (1809; 1823), corporal punishment (1827), and advocacy for higher wages and better working conditions for factory workers (1817) (Grundy 1). She is, however, best known for her uncompromising advocacy on behalf of immediate abolition during the 1820s.

Heyrick's activism was spurred by her involvement in The Anti-Slavery Society (1823–1839) an organization dedicated to the eradication of slavery throughout the British Empire (Holcomb 89). Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846) and William Wilberforce (1759–1833) were in leading positions, but the society was split into two groups, those in favour of gradual abolition and those in favour of immediate action. Heyrick joined the group in 1823 and fell into the latter category.

Elizabeth Heyrick was instrumental in the formation of the Female Society of Birmingham in 1825, as well as the Leicester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society (Rappaport 295). The Female Society of Birmingham sought to deliver direct support to enslaved women in the West Indies and boycott products produced from slave-labour (Holcomb 97). In Leicester, she organized a sugar boycott and urged grocers not to stock West Indian imports. Heyrick personally campaigned with the pamphlets in hand, visiting door to door, house to house. By 1825, roughly twenty-five per cent of Leicester's population had stopped buying sugar (Grundy 1).

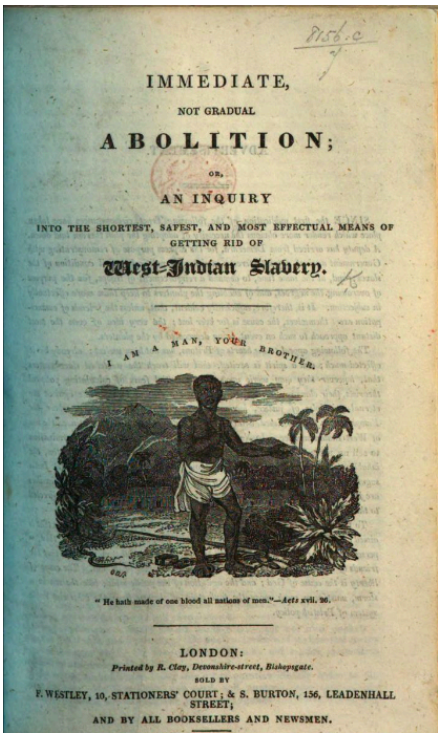
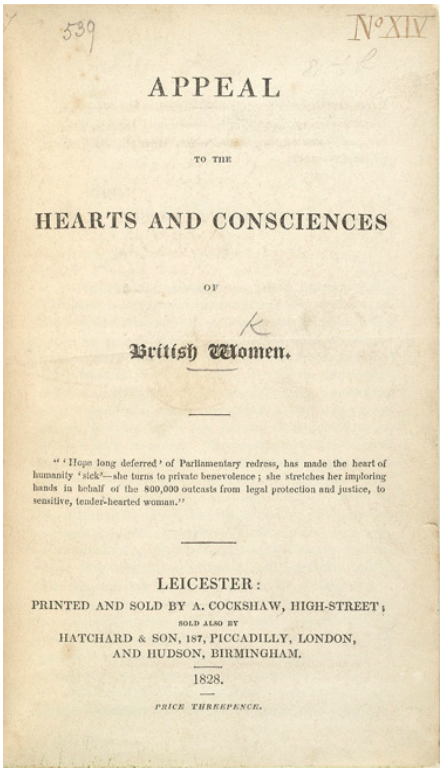


Figure 2. First Edition of *Immediate, not Gradual, Abolition* (1824). British Library.

In 1824, *Immediate, not Gradual Abolition* was “hurled like a bomb in the midst of battle” (Ware 71). Heyrick writes: “The perpetuation of slavery in our West India colonies, is not an abstract question, to be settled between the Government and the Planters, —it is a question in which we are all implicated;—we are all guilty” (1824, 4). She criticises Wilberforce and Clarkson for being too "slow and cautious” (1824, 14) and she denounces “the government for negotiating with slave-holders” (Ware 72). The pamphlet rattled the Anti-Slavery Society and caused much debate within it. Wilberforce and the other gradualists were stunned by Heyrick and tried to suppress the distribution of her pamphlet (Rappaport 296). So agitated was Wilberforce, he ordered the other leaders of the abolition to ignore women’s anti-slavery societies as many of them supported Heyrick’s ideas (*The Abolition of Slavery Project*). The pamphlet "signalled an important shift in the abstention movement as Heyrick linked the boycott of slave labour to the immediate abolition of slavery and the granting of civil rights to freed slaves" (Holcomb 90). Many of the women’s anti-slavery societies followed Heyrick’s lead and boycotted sugar in cities around the United Kingdom, including London, Edinburgh, Worcester, and Colchester (Rappaport 296).



APPEAL

TO THE

HEARTS AND CONSCIENCES

OF

British Women.

"'Hope long deferred' of Parliamentary redress, has made the heart of humanity 'sick'—she turns to private benevolence; she stretches her imploring hands in behalf of the 800,000 outcasts from legal protection and justice, to sensitive, tender-hearted woman."

LEICESTER:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY A. COCKSHAW, HIGH-STREET;
SOLD ALSO BY
HATCHARD & SON, 187, PICCADILLY, LONDON,
AND HUDSON, BIRMINGHAM.

1828.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

Figure 3. Title page of *Appeal to the Hearts and Consciences of British Women* (1828), courtesy of The British Library.

Heyrick published a second anti-slavery polemic, *Appeal to the Hearts and Consciences* of British Women in 1828, as a direct plea for women to join the cause. She writes that women are particularly qualified "not only [to] sympathize with suffering, but also to plead for the oppressed" (1828, 3). Heyrick's writing had a clear impact, as by 1830 over seventy women's anti-slavery societies were established across the United Kingdom, many of them calling for immediate action and putting further pressure on the gradualists (Holcomb 97). Other female leaders of these groups included Anne Knight in Chelmsford, Mary Lloyd in Birmingham, and Amelia Opie in Norwich; their works are found in the database.

The Anti-Slavery Society relied heavily on women's groups for financial support, with the largest donation coming from The Female Society of Birmingham (Rappaport 296). The Female Society of Birmingham became one of the most prominent women's anti-slavery groups in England and directed twenty other smaller anti-slavery factions (Holcomb 97). In 1830, Heyrick and The Female Society of Birmingham threatened to withdraw funds unless the Anti-Slavery Society agreed to immediate abolition. It was a successful endeavor, as by May, 1830 the Anti-Slavery Society became devoted to immediatism (Rappaport 296).

Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition was initially published anonymously in London, as were the second and third editions published later in the same year. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the pamphlet were sold and circulated across Britain (Hochschild), and it proved to be Heyrick's most influential work (Midgley 102). Through her Quaker connections, the pamphlet reached the United States and left a lasting impression (Rycenga 40). Jennifer Rycenga believes it was first published in 1825 in America, after it was picked up by fellow Quaker abolitionist Benjamin Lundy

and quickly circulated through Quaker communities (40). The earliest American edition we have in the database dates to 1836, but we know that it was circulating well before then.

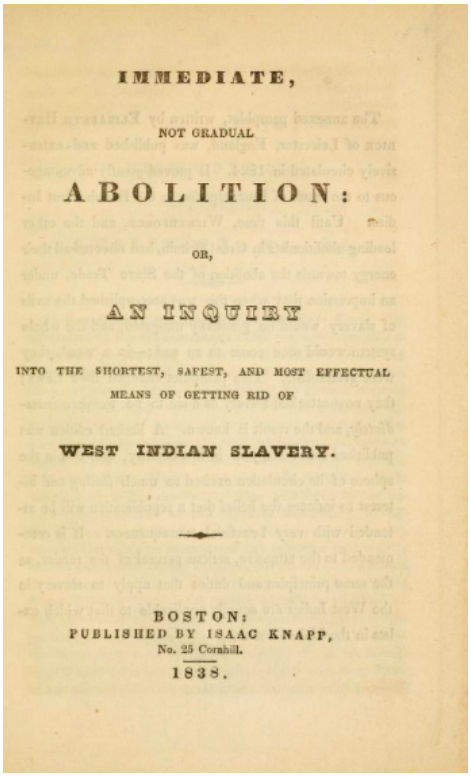


Figure 4. Title page of *Immediate, not Gradual, Abolition* (1838). *Internet Archive*.

Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition inspired activists on both sides of the Atlantic. The pamphlet became popular in the United States and several editions were published in the 1830s (1836, 1837, 1838). Prominent American abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison, Lucretia Mott, and Frederick Douglass admired her work (Rappaport 296). Interestingly, the American printers and publishers chose to attach Heyrick's name to the pamphlet and also added further information concerning its impact in Britain and on the leaders of the Anti-Slavery Society. Several American editions state in the preface to the pamphlet that it:

> proved greatly advantageous to the cause of Emancipation in the British West Indies. Until this time, Wilberforce, and the other leading abolitionists in Great Britain, had directed all their energy towards the Abolition of the Slave Trade . . . this pamphlet changed their views; they now attacked slavery as a sin to be forsaken immediately and the result is known . . .

Elizabeth Heyrick was one of the most prominent radical women activists of the 1820s yet she is little known today. She was instrumental in changing public opinion, in shifting the minds of abolitionists, as well as in spurring the end to colonial slavery. Rycenga writes that "before [Heyrick], most writers opposed to slavery were white men of education and privilege, as well as unabashed, self-acknowledged gradualists" (Rycenga 40). They lacked the persuasiveness and rhetoric Heyrick was able to conjure in her writing. Sadly, like Wilberforce—the abolitionist whose

mind she changed and who is far better known today—Elizabeth Heyrick died in 1831, two years before the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 which abolished slavery throughout the British empire.

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Wesley, John (person, author)
Coltman, Elizabeth "Eliza" (person, author)
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Bull-Baiting: a Village Dialogue, Between Tom Brown and John Sims (title)
Cursory Remarks on the Evil Tendency of Unrestrained Cruelty; Particularly on that Practised in Smithfield Market (title)
Observations on the Offensive and Injurious Effect of Corporal Punishment; on the Unequal Administration of Penal Justice; and on the Pre-Eminent Advantages of the Mild and Reformatory over the Vindictive System of Punishment (title)
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Appeal to the Hearts and Consciences of British Women (title)
Knight, Anne (person, author)
Lloyd, Mary (person, author)
Opie, Amelia (person, author)
Immediate, not Gradual, Abolition: or, An Inquiry into the shortest, safest, and most effectual means of getting rid of West Indian Slavery (title, second London edition)
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