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PHILLIS WHEATLEY
Heartman's Historical Series No. 7
PHILLIS WHEATLEY
(PHILLIS PETERS)
A CRITICAL ATTEMPT
AND A
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HER WRITINGS

By CHAS. FRED. HEARTMAN

Ninety-nine Copies printed
for the Author. New York, 1915
Number 28 of 91 copies printed.
The following Essay was written by me originally in German. Somebody suggested that I should not re-write it, but have it translated. To satisfy the curious, I have done so, but little satisfaction resulted from this experiment. So little in fact, that my inclination was not to have it printed. My words, as I see them now translated by another person, sound so much different. Little insignificant phrases, to me important and full of thought and so weighty in their meaning, appear to me have lost their value in the translation. The reason that this essay is published, notwithstanding these difficulties, is because friends see benefit in this memoir about the Negro poetess, written by a man who knows little about the Negro as a race and who looked at the subject of this essay from an entirely different point of view, than would a writer who was entangled in arguments resulting from questions which up till the writing of this little essay did not interest me seriously.

In reference to the bibliography I have made every effort to make it complete and exact. Nothing has been spared to arrive at this result and I would feel deep regret if any error appears, even if it were only an insignificant de-
Effort has been made to locate as many copies as possible in order that anybody who may be interested in Phillis Wheatley may investigate further.

The reproductions of title pages and broadsides are all in the size of the original.

Two titles*, here and there attributed to Phillis Wheatley, had to be omitted, as there is nothing to prove that they were written by her, and with every presumption of their having been written by another author.


June 20, 1915.

*An elegiac poem; sacred to the memory of the Rev. George Whitefield, who departed this life, September 30, 1770, at Newbury-Port in America, ætatis 56. Boston, Printed: Sold by Zechariah Fowle, in Lack-street, near the Mill-Bridge. MDCCLXX.

A. A. S. B. P.
Sp. 12°.

*An Elegiac Poem; Sacred to the Memory of the Rev. George Whitefield, Who departed this Life, September 30, 1770, at Newbury-Port in America, Ætatis 56. Boston: Printed and sold by Isaiah Thomas, at the New Printing-Office, in Union Street, near the Market. MDCCLXX.

8 pp.
To the Rev. Mr. Pitkin, on the Death of his Lady.

WHERE Contemplation finds her sacred Spring;
Where heavenly Music makes the Centre ring;
Where Virtue reigns unfolded, and divine;
Where Wisdom thron'd, and all the Graces shine;
There sits thy Spouse, amid the glittering Throng;
There central Beauty feeds the raving'd Tongue;
With recent Powers, with recent glories crown'd,
The Chorus angelic paid her Welcome round.

The virtuous Dead, demand a grateful Tear—
But cease thy Grief awhile, thy Tears forbear;
Not thine alone, the Sorrow I relate,
Thy blooming Offspring feel the mighty Weight;
Thus, from the Bolom of the tender Vine,
The Branches torn, fall, wither, sink supine.

Now flies the Soul, thro' other unconfined, 
Thrice happy State of the immortal Mind!
Still in thy Breast two wistful Pulsions rise,
And urge the lucent Torrent from thine Eyes.
Amidst the Seats of Heaven, a Place is free
Among those bright angelic Ranks for thee.
For thee, they wait—thou with expectant Eye,
Thy Spouse leans forward from th' ethereal Sky,
Thus in my Hearing, "Come away," the cry;
Partake the sacred Captures of the Skies!

Our Bliss divine, to Mortals is unknown,
And endless Scenes of Happinesse our own;
May the de
glory of the sky
Observe them, in the Spheres above,
Attune the Harp to more than mortal Lays,
And play with us, the Tribute of their Praise.
To Him, who died, dread Justice to appease,
Which reconcile'd, holds Mercy in Embrace.
Creation too, her Maker's Blessings own'd,
Rest'd the Sun, and deep the Centre ground.
In his Death, He averted evil, and as he rose,
He eras'd the Empire of our Rebellious Sires.
How vain their Hopes to put the God to flight,
And render Vengeance to the Sons of Light!

Thus having spoke, the turn'd away her Eyes,
Which beam'd celestial Radiance o'er the Skies.
Let Grief no longer damp the sacred Fire,
But rise sublime, to equal Bliss aspire;
Thy Sighs no more be wafted by the Wind,
Complain no more, but be to Heaven resigned;
'Twas thine to shew those Treasures all divine,
To soothe our Woes, the Task was also thine.
Now Sorrow is recumbent on thy Heart,
Pour the Mists of thee a Healing to impart,
Nor can the World, a pitying tear refuse,
They weep, and with them, every heavenly Muse

Phillis Wheatley.

Boston, June 16th, 1772.

The above Phillis Wheatley, is a Negro Girl, about 18 Years
old, who has been in this Country 11 Years.
It is at least curious to note that one of the greatest artistic talents which the Negroes have ever produced, was not born in America. Still, it became the task of this country, where, comparatively speaking, the Negroes came in touch with a higher culture, to give this talent the possibility of development.

The exact date of Phillis Wheatley’s birth is not known. Probably 1753, but in no case later than 1754. Somewhere in Africa. Robbed by slave-dealers and taken from home and parents at the age of seven or eight years, she was transported to America on one of their vessels and offered for sale in the streets of Boston in 1761. The sensitiveness, the warmth of feeling which so clearly shows itself in her letters and is easily traced in her poems, was probably brought forth by these tragic circumstances. Taken from home and parents, from a culture, or better, a civilization the last depths of which we doubtless do not understand, degraded to a merchandise which to feel, to appraise and to buy was a public right, and seeing the same sorrowful fate in hundreds of companions, must have brought this sensitive soul a premature ripeness, must have given it serious impressions, and a certain austereness of tone.

Phillis Wheatley was lucky. Her modest, demure manner, the chaste humbleness of her ap-
pearance prompted the wife of a well-to-do tailor—John Wheatley—to buy her.

We all know of brutal and heartless handling of slaves, of the whippings and starvings they were subjected to, we speak less of those who became servants in a higher sense of the word, these who had but light duties to perform, who were more a companion than a servant. This fortunate fate was Phillis’. We can well understand her joyous amazement when, her rags taken from her, she was newly clad and fed, can comprehend her later gratefulness, her intense religious devotion.

Phillis was made the special servant of Mrs. Wheatley’s children, Nathaniel and Mary, twins who were her seniors by about ten years. It appears that Mary especially quickly took an almost motherly interest in the little Negro girl and, whatever became of Phillis, Mary Wheatley is the person to whom the world owes its thanks. She once saw Phillis trying to form letters with a piece of chalk on a wall. Slight attempts to teach her were followed by most remarkable results, and a systematic course of education surpassed all expectations. In sixteen months Phillis learned the English tongue and could write letters. We hear that she wrote her first poem at the age of thirteen, according to some even earlier. Her education as a whole
must have been very much advanced, for her
talent of expression caused considerable aston-
ishment in the educated circles of New England.
Her poem on Harvard was written in 1767.
In 1768 she composed verses addressed to "The
Kings Most Excellent Majesty." In 1770, lit-
tle older than sixteen years, she published "An
Elegiac Poem on the Death of George White-
field," a poem that has been reprinted quite a
number of times, oftener perhaps than we know
of. A little later her mistress became the wife
of the Rev. John Latrop, Pastor of the Second
Church in Boston.

Soon after this Phillis was received into the
bosom of the Holy Church. Rev. Samuel Sewall
christened her and as Phillis, the servant of Mr.
Wheatley, she became a member of the Old
South Church in Boston. Her religious life and
her life as a member of the Church are truly re-
markable. The sublimity of her thoughts, her
comprehension of the subllest ideas of the Chris-
tian Church are clearly shown in her poems and
letters. I cite a poem:

"T was Mercy brought me from a pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too;
Once I redemption neither sought or knew,
Some view our race with scornful eye—
"Their colors is a diabolic dye"
Remember, Christians, Negroes black as Cain,
May be refined and join th' angelic train."
We know of a few letters written by Phillis to a colored lady friend who was a servant in Newport and who probably had much the same fate, perhaps had even been transported on the same ship. I must cite from these letters. In 1772 Phillis writes:

"I greatly rejoice with you in that realizing view, and I hope experience, of the saving change which you so emphatically describe. Happy were it for us if we could arrive to that evangelical Repentance, and the true holiness of heart which you mention. Inexpressibly happy should we be could we have a due sense of the beauties and excellence of the crucified Saviour. In his crucifixion may be seen marvellous displays of Grace and Love, sufficient to draw and invite us to the rich and endless treasures of his mercy; let us rejoice in and adore the wonders of God’s infinite Love in bringing us from a land semblant of darkness itself, and where the divine light of revelation (being obscured) is as darkness. Here the knowledge of the true God and eternal life are made manifest; but there, profound ignorance overshadows the land. Your observation is true, namely, that there was nothing in us to recommend us to God. Many of our
LIBERTY AND PEACE,  
A POEM.  

BY PHILLIS PETERS.  

BOSTON: PRINTED BY WARDEN AND RUSSELL, AT THEIR OFFICE IN MARLBOROUGH-STREET. M,DOC,LXXXIV.
fellow creatures are passed by, when the bowls of divine love expanded to us. May this goodness and long suffering of God lead us to unfeign'd repentance," etc.

That is not an unthinking repetition of memorized phrases, that is a thoughtful probing of problems. I could easily cite many more instances of Phillis' deep and understanding religiousness, but I let this be sufficient.

In the meantime Phillis had become an esteemed member of the social order. She who had never been kept together with the other servants, excited more and more the attention of the most educated circles of New England who gave her all help in their power and doubtlessly did much to make her life happier and brighter. Phillis learnt Latin with wonderful facility. Several of her verses show how deeply she understood the classics and how independently she made use of them.

Whether or no an exaggerated studiousness and intense mental work undermined her health we do not know; but we do know that it was never very robust, and it is quite possible to construe cause and effect. In any case, her health in 1772 was very precarious. Sea-air and a change of climate was urged by well meaning friends and so it came about that, when Nathaniel Wheatley left for London on busi-
ness matters, Phillis accompanied him. In her collection there is a poem entitled “A Farewell to America” * which I cite:

I.
Adieu, New England’s smiling meads
Adieu, the flow’ry plain;
I leave thine op’ning charms, O spring,
And tempt the roaring main.

II.
In vain for me the flow’rets rise,
And boast their gaudy pride,
While here beneath the northern skies
I mourn for health deny’d.

III.
Celestial maid of rosy hue,
O let me feel thy reign!
I languish till thy face I view,
Thy vanish’d joys regain.

IV.
Susannah mourns, nor can I bear
To see the crystal show’r,
Or mark the tender falling tear
At sad departure’s hour;

V.
Nor unregarding can I see
Her soul with grief opprest:
But let no sighs, no groans for me,
Steal from her pensive breast.

*This poem is, according to Duycking, addressed to Mrs. Susanna Wright, others think to her Mistress Susannah Wheatley. As Duycking proved very faulty, I agree with the others.
VI.
In vain the feathered warblers sing,
   In vain the garden blooms,
And on the bosom of the spring
   Breathes out her sweet perfumes.

VII.
While for Britannia's distant shore
   We sweep the liquid plain,
And with astonish'd eyes explore
   The wide extended main.

VIII.
Lo, Health appears! celestial dame;
   Complacent and serene,
With Hebe's mantle o'er her frame,
   With soul-delighting mien.

IX.
To mark the vale where London lies
   With misty vapours crown'd,
Which cloud Aurora's thousand dyes,
   And veil her charms around.

X.
Why, Phœbus, moves thy car so slow?
   So slow thy rising ray?
Give us the famous town to view
   Thou glorious king of day!

XI.
For thee, Britannia, I resign,
   New England's smiling fields;
To view again her charms divine,
   What joy the prospect yields!
XII.
But thou, *temptation*, hence away,
With all thy fatal train;
Nor once seduce my soul away,
By thine enchanting strain.

XIII.
Thrice happy they, whose heav’nly shield
Secures their souls from harms,
And fell *Temptation* on the field
Of all its pow’r disarms!

This London visit must have been the most glorious and happy period of Phillis’ life, the time when she found herself petted and honored by the Society of London.

Lady Huntingdon, Lord Dartmouth, the Lord Mayor of London received her, and it was at this time that her collection of poems were published. This collection was entitled: “Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, By Phillis Wheatley, Negro Servant to Mr. Wheatley of Boston” and was dedicated to Lady Huntingdon.

In the preface the authoress says that “the following poems were written originally for the amusement of the author, as they were the products of her leisure moments. She had no intention ever to have published them; nor would they now have made their appearance, but at the importunity of many of her best friends.”
To Mrs. Leonard, on the Death of her Husband.

Grim Monarch! see depriv'd of vital breath,
A young Physician in the dust of death!
Dost thou go on incessant to destroy:
The grief to double, and impair the joy?
Enough thou never yet wast known to say,
Tho' millions die thy mandate to obey.
Nor youth, nor science nor the charms of love,
Nor aught on earth thy rocky heart can move.
The friend, the spouse, from his dark realm to save,
In vain we ask the tyrant of the grave.

Fair mourner, there see thy own Leonard spread,
Lies undistinguish'd from the vulgar dead;
Clos'd are his eyes, eternal slumbers keep,
His senses bound in never-waking sleep,
Till time shall cease; till many a shining world,
Shall fall from Heav'n, in dire confusion hurl'd:
Till dying Nature in wild torture lies;
Till her last groans shall rend the brazen skies!
And not till then, his active Soul shall claim,
His body, now, of more than mortal frame.
But ah! methinks the rolling tears apace,
Pursue each other down the alter'd face.
Ah! cease ye sighs, nor rend the mourner's heart:
Cease thy complaints, no more thy griefs impart.
From the cold shell of his great soul arise!
And look above, thou native of the skies!
There fix thy view, where fleeter than the wind
Thy Leonard flies, and leaves the earth behind.

Thyself prepare to pass the gloomy night,
To join forever in the fields of light;
To thy embrace, his joyful spirit moves,
To thee the partner of his earthly loves;
He welcomes thee to pleasures more rein'd
And better suited to the deathless mind.

Phillis Wheatley.
Either because there were apprehensions as to the belief of the public in the genuinity of these poems of a Negress, or because of some other unknown reason, a letter by the author's master to the publisher was inserted, dated Boston, Nov. 14th, 1772. This letter reads as follows:

"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 read the Latin tongue and has made some progress in it." But even this appeared to be an insufficient proof, and a special certificate which deserves to be published here, was given.

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 Hon. John Erving,
The Hon. James Pitts,
The Hon. Harrison Gray,
The Hon. James Bowdoin,
John Hancock, Esq.
Joseph Green, Esq.
Richard Carey, Esq.
The Rev. Charles Chauncy, D.D.
The Rev. Mather Byles, D.D.
The Rev. Ed. Pemberton, D.D.
The Rev. Andrew Elliot, D.D.
The Rev. Samuel Cooper, D.D.
The Rev. Mr. Samuel Mather,
The Rev. Mr. John Moorhead,
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.
GEORGE WHITFIELD

ON THE DEATH OF THAT EXCELLENT DIVINE, AND EMINENT SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, THE LATE GEORGE, AND JOHN, POM.

AN ELEGY.
The book which was embellished by a portrait of the author must have been printed in a large edition, for it is by no means scarce. It was announced in the Boston Gazette of Jany. 24th. 1774. On the 6th. of May of the same year Phillis writes to her friend "I have received by some of the last ships 300 more of my poems".

During this visit to London she was to have been introduced to the king, but unfavorable reports of her mistress' health induced her to hurriedly leave London, and what would have been an interesting event, did not take place. Susanna Wheatley died shortly after Phillis' return.

I deplored the fact of her not meeting the king of England from the view point that it would have been interesting to note whether such a meeting would have to any extent affected her ideas and feelings, for, although she reaped the highest honors in England, she remained true to the colonies. Her poem "To the Kings Most Excellent Majesty" which contains a slight allusion to the Stamp Act, is not by any means a noteworthy one. On the other hand her poem to George Washington reveals great strength and feeling. This poem which for a long while was thought lost, (an opinion which has been endorsed by several historians) is to be found in the "Pennsylvania Magazine or
American Monthly Museum” for April 1776. This poem Phillis Wheatley sent to George Washington, enclosing the following letter.

Sir:

I have taken the freedom to address your Excellency in the enclosed Poem, and entreat your acceptance, though I am not insensible of its inaccuracies. Your being appointed by the Grand Continental Congress to be Generalissimo of the armies of North America, together with the fame of your virtues, excite sensations not easy to suppress. Your generosity, therefore, I presume, will pardon the attempt. Wishing your Excellency all possible success in the great cause you are so generously engaged in, I am Your Excellency’s most obedient humble servant,

Phillis Wheatley.

Providence, Oct. 26, 1775.

I also cite the poem which runs as follows:

HIS EXCELLENCY GEN. WASHINGTON.

Celestial choir! enthron’d in realms of light.
Columbia’s scenes of glorious toils I write.
While freedom’s cause her anxious breast alarms,
She flashes dreadful in refulgent arms.
See mother earth her offspring’s fate bemoan,
And nations gaze at scenes before unknown!
See the bright beams of heaven’s revolving light
Involved in sorrows and the veil of night!
The goddess comes, she moves divinely fair,
Olive and laurel binds her golden hair:
Wherever shines this native of the skies,
Unnumber’d charms and recent graces rise.
Muse! bow propitious while my pen relates
How pour her armies through a thousand gates,  
As when Eolus heaven's fair face deforms,  
Enwrapp'd in tempest and a night of storms;  
Astonish'd ocean feels the wild uproar,  
The refluent surges beat the sounding shore;  
Or thick as leaves in Autumn's golden reign,  
Such, and so many, moves the warrior's train.  
In bright array they seek the work of war,  
Where high unfurl'd the ensign waves in air.  
Shall I to Washington their praise recite?  
Enough thou know'st them in the fields of fight.  
Thee, first in place and honours,—we demand  
The grace and glory of thy martial band.  
Fam'd for thy valour, for thy virtues more,  
Hear every tongue thy guardian aid implore!  
One century scarce perform'd its destined round,  
When Gallic powers Columbia's fury found;  
And so may you, whoever dares disgrace  
The land of freedom's heaven-defended race!  
Fix'd are the eyes of nations on the scales,  
For in their hopes Columbia's arm prevails.  
Anon Britannia droops the pensive head,  
While round increase the rising hills of dead.  
Ah! cruel blindness to Columbia's state!  
Lament thy thirst of boundless power too late.  
Proceed, great chief, with virtue on thy side,  
Thy ev'ry action let the goddess guide.  
A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine,  
With gold unfading, Washington! be thine.

To this George Washington replied with the following lines:
Miss Phillis:

Your favour of the 26th October did not reach my hands till the middle of December. Time enough, you will say, to have given an answer ere this. Granted. But a variety of important occurrences continually interposing to distract the mind and withdraw the attention, I hope will apologize for the delay, and plead my excuse for the seeming but not real neglect. I thank you most sincerely for your polite notice of me, in the elegant lines you enclosed; and however undeserving I may be of such encomium and panegyric, the style and manner exhibit a striking proof of your poetical talents; in honour of which, and as a tribute justly due to you, I would have published the poem, had I not been apprehensive that, while I only meant to give the world this new instance of your genius, I might have incurred the imputation of vanity. This, and nothing else, determined me not to give it place in the public prints. If you should ever come to Cambridge, or near headquarters, I shall be happy to see a person so favoured by the muses, and to whom Nature has been so liberal and beneficent in her dispensations. I am, with great respect, your obedient humble servant.

George Washington.

During this time Phillis Wheatley's life appears to have been less happy than in the preceding years. Her patroness was married and had little time for her. Mrs. Wheatley had died, and when after the death of John Wheatley the family to which she owed all was dissolved, she gave her hand in wedlock to John Peters. That
this marriage was unhappy we feel. There is no poem in which she sings of Love and happiness. Love, the greatest urger for poets, the most intensive creator of poetical expression was not her inspirer and this tells us more about her marriage than anything else. The few letters which we know, have a different tone after her marriage.

Her husband, like herself, a Negro who "kept a shop, wore a wig, carried a cane, and felt himself superior to all kinds of labor." The most contradictory rumors circulate about this husband of Phillis Wheatley. He is said to have been a grocery keeper, according to others a baker journeyman, a man of all jobs. It is, however, a proven fact that he was at some time of his life a lawyer, and that he tried his hand at being physician. During the Revolution he lost all his property and the family became very poor. Phillis' friend, Mary Latrop, had died and no helping hand was near. Her husband did nothing to provide for the family, and when Nathaniel Wheatley died also and her husband had been imprisoned for debt, Phillis Wheatley, who had (probably through the death of her mistress) become a free Negro, was forced to earn her daily bread in a common Negro boarding house. It appears that she was too proud to apply for help to any of her old friends, for
when on the 5th of December, 1784, she died at the age of thirty years it was alone and little noticed. She deserved a better and less tragic fate. In how far her husband is guilty we are, lacking the necessary details, not able to determine. Doubtlessly John Peters had talents and qualities which induced Phillis to marry him, but unhappily he had, besides these qualities, an overwhelming self-confidence and self-love, ingredients of character which, finding no counterpoise, justify us in calling him absolutely unprincipled. Intelligence and gifts in Phillis the soil from which a beautiful and ethically great character sprang, remained in John Peters a barren wilderness.

In the year of her death she published an "Elegy to the Memory of that great Divine, the Reverend and learned Dr. Samuel Cooper." She also published during this year a poem of about four pages "Liberty and Peace" which has become very scarce and which I therefore cite.

**LIBERTY AND PEACE.**

Lo freedom comes. Th' prescient must foretold, 
All eyes th' accomplish’d prophecy behold: 
Her port describ’d, "She moves divinely fair, 
Olive and laurel bind her golden hair."
She, the bright progeny of Heaven, descends, 
And every grace her sovereign step attends;
For now kind Heaven, indulgent to our prayer,
In smiling peace resolves the din of war.
Fix'd in Columbia her illustrious line,
And bids in thee her future council shine.
To every realm her portals open'd wide,
Receives from each the full commercial tide.
Each art and science now with rising charms,
Th' expanding heart with emulation warms.
E'en great Britannia sees with dread surprise,
And from the dazzling splendors turns her eyes.
Britain, whose navies swept th' Atlantic o'er,
And thunder sent to every distant shore;
E'en thou, in manners cruel as thou art,
The sword resign'd, resume the friendly part.
For Gallia's power espous'd Columbia's cause,
And new-born Rome shall give Britannia laws,
Nor unremember'd in the grateful strain,
Shall princely Louis' friendly deeds remain;
The generous prince th' impeding vengeance eyes,
Sees the fierce wrong and to the rescue flies.
Perish that thirst of boundless power, that drew
On Albion's head the curse to tyrants due.
But thou appeas'd submit to Heaven's decree,
That bids this realm of freedom rival thee.
Now sheathe the sword that bade the brave atone
With guiltless blood for madness not their own.
Sent from th' enjoyment of their native shore,
Ill-fated—never to behold her more.
From every kingdom on Europe's coast
Throng'd various troops, their glory, strength, and boast.
With heart-felt pity fair Hibernia saw
Columbia menac'd by the Tyrant's law:
On hostile fields fraternal arms engage,
And mutual deaths, all dealt with mutual rage:
The muse's ear hears mother earth deplore
Her ample surface smoke with kindred gore:
The hostile field destroys the social ties,
And everlasting slumber seals their eyes.
Columbia mourns, the haughty foes deride,
Her treasures plunder'd and her towns destroy'd:
Witness how Charlestown's curling smokes arise,
In sable columns to the clouded skies.
The ample dome, high-wrought with curious toil,
In one sad hour the savage troops despoil.
Descending peace the power of war confounds;
From every tongue celestial peace resounds:
As from the east th' illustrious king of day,
With rising radiance drives the shades away,
So freedom comes array'd with charms divine,
And in her train commerce and plenty shine.
Britannia owns her independent reign,
Hibernia, Scotia and the realms of Spain;
And great Germania's ample coast admires
The generous spirit that Columbia fires.
Auspicious Heaven shall fill with fav'ring gales,
Where e'er Columbia spreads her swelling sails:
To every realm shall peace her charms display,
And heavenly freedom spread her golden ray.

Her death was announced in the "Independent Chronicle" as follows:

"Last Lord's day, died Mrs. Phillis Peters (formerly Phillis Wheatley), aged thirty-one, known to the literary world by her celebrated miscellaneous poems. Her funeral is to be this afternoon, at four o'clock, from the house lately improved by Mr. Todd, nearly
opposite Dr. Bulfinch's at West Boston, where her friends and acquaintances are desired to attend."

For several reasons we regret her early death and the last, miserable years of her life, the sorrows of which clearly left their mark on her work of this period. The literary work of her life is small, far too small. I feel that much original talent lay hidden in the soul of this poet, and that the best work she was capable of, has been denied us. What we have must not be too strictly criticised. An amiable talent of a slightly imitative nature, with here and there a flash of strong originality—an unusual expression—a heroic gesture, worthy of the greatest genius. That is why I regret the early death which destroyed so many possibilities, and left us in possession of only poems "for Occasions", verses written on occasions of family affliction and other simple occurrences. Verses which, bound to an occasion and to local interest lose much of the possibilities of pure poetical expression.

We must, however, consent to take things as they are, and in the meanwhile be satisfied with this "Negro Sappho" as the greatest exponent of literary genius which the Negro race has brought forth.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF

PHILLIS WHEATLEY
(PHILLIS PETERS)
ABBREVIATIONS

A. A. S.  .  .  .  .  American Antiquarian Society
B. A.  .  .  .  .  .  .  .  Boston Athenaeum
B. P.  .  .  .  .  .  .  .  Boston Public Library
J. C. B.  .  .  .  .  John Carter Brown Library
L. C. P.  .  .  .  Library Company, Philadelphia
L. O. C.  .  .  .  .  .  Library of Congress
M. H. S.  .  .  .  Massachusetts Historical Society
N. Y. H. S.  .  .  New York Historical Society
N. Y. P. L.  .  .  .  New York Public Library
N. L.  .  .  .  .  .  Newberry Library
P. H. S.  .  .  .  Pennsylvania Historical Society
P. U.  .  .  .  .  .  Princeton University
W. L.  .  .  .  .  .  Watkinson Library
Y. U.  .  .  .  .  .  Yale University Library
BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF
PHILLIS WHEATLEY

I

An elegiac poem, on the Death of that celebrated Divine, and eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, the Reverend and learned George Whitefield, Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon, &c. &c. Who made his Exit from this transitory State, to dwell in the celestial Realms of Bliss on Lord's-Day 30th of September, 1770, when he was seiz'd with a Fit of the Asthma, at Newbury-Port, near Boston, New England. In which is a Condolatory Address to His truly noble Benefactress the worthy and pious Lady Huntingdon; and the Orphan-Children in Georgia, who, with many Thousands are left, by the Death of this great Man, to lament the Loss of a Father, Friend, and Benefactor. By Phillis, A Servant Girl, of 17 years of Age, belonging to Mr. J. Wheatley, of Boston:—She has been but 9 Years in this Country from Africa. Boston: Printed and Sold by Ezekiel Russell, in Queen-street, And John Boyles, in Marlboro'-street (1770).

Advertised as "This Day was published" in Massachusetts Spy of Oct. 11, 1770.
II.

(WOODCUT)

An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that celebrated Divine, and Eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, The Late Reverend, And pious George Whitefield, Chaplain to the right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon, &c. &c. Who made his Exit from this transitory State, to dwell in the Celestial Realms of bliss, on Lord’s-day, 30th of September, 1770, when he was seiz’d with a fit of the asthma, at Newbury-Port, near Boston, in New-England. In which is a condolatory address to his truly noble benefactress the worthy and pious Lady Huntingdon,—and the orphan-children in Georgia; who, with many thousands, are left, by the death of this great man, to lament the Loss of a father, friend, and benefactor. By Phillis, a servant girl of 17 years of age, belonging to Mr. J. Wheatley, of Boston:—and has been but 9 years in this country from Africa. (Boston:) Sold by Ezekiel Russel, in Queen-Street, and John Boyles, in Marlboro’-Street (1770).

1 leaf folio.
III.

An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, wrote by Phillis, a servant girl of 17 years of age, belonging to Mr. Wheatley, of Boston. New-York. Printed and sold by Samuel Inslee and Anthony Car, 1770.

No copy could be located, but it is advertised as "just published" in the New York Gazette and Weekly Post Boy of October 30, 1770.

IV.

Phillis's Poem on the Death of Mr. Whitefield. (Boston 1770.)

1 page. Folio. A.A.S.

Contains also: "Bedlam Garland. Together with The Spinning Wheel."

V.


Copied from Hildeburn and Evans. No copy located.

VI.


1 leaf. Folio.

Copied from the slips of Sabin in N.Y.P.L. No copy located and a doubtful title.
VII.

An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that celebrated Divine, George Whitefield. By Phillis, a servant Girl belonging to Mr. J. Wheatley of Boston. (Boston 1770.)

1 leaf. Folio. P.H.S.
The same as No. II without printer's name and therefore probably a different or second issue.

VIII


31 and 1 pp. advertisement. S°.
The Poem occupies pp. 29-31.
The Boston Edition of Pemberton's Sermon does not contain the Poem.
To the Hon'ble Thomas Hubbard, Esq:
On the Death of
Mrs. Thankfull Leonard.

While thus you mourn beneath the Cypress shade,
That hand of Death, a kind conductor made
To her whose flight commands your tears to flow
And wracks your bosom with a scene of woe:
Let Recollection bear a tender part
To soothe and calm the tortures of your heart;
To still the tempest of tumultuous grief;
To give the heavenly Nectar of relief;
Ah! cease, no more her unknown bliss bemoan!
Suspend the sigh, and check the rising groan.
Her virtues shine with rays divinely bright,
But ah! soon clouded with the shades of night.
Now free from tow'ring pride, that gentle mind!
Which ne'er the hapless indigent deign'd,
Expanding free, it sought the means to prove
Unfailing Charity, unbounded Love!

She unreluctant flies, to see no more
Her much lov'd Parents on Earth's dusty shore,
'Till dark mortality shall be with'rn;
And your blest eyes salute the op'ning morn.*}
{Meaning the impatient heav'n's repudient goal to gain
She with swift progress scours the azure plain,
Where grief fobides, where patience is no more
And life's tumultuous billows cease to roar,
She leaves her earthly mansions for the skies
Where new creations feast her wondering eyes.
To heav'n's high mandate cheerfully resign'd
She mounts, she flies, and leaves the rolling Globe behind.
She who late sigh'd for Leonard to return
His ease'd to languish, and forgot to mourn.
Since to the same divine dominions come
She joins her Snuffe, and smiles upon the Tomb:
And thus addresses;—(let Idea rove)—
Lo! this the Kingdom of celestial Love!
Could our fond Parents view our envious Joy,
Soon would the fountain of their sorrows dry;
Then would delightful retrospect inspire,
Their kindling bosoms with the sacred fire!
Amidst unutter'd pleasures, whilst I play,
In the far sunshine of celestial day:
As far as grief affects a deathless Soul,
So far doth grief my better mind controul;
To ice on Earth, my aged Parents mourn,
And secret, with for Thankfull to return!
Let not such thought their latest hours employ
But as advancing fall, prepare for equal Joy.

Boston, January 2.
1773.

 Phillis Wheatley.
IX.
To Miss Leonard on the Death of her Husband. By Phillis Wheatley. Boston (1771.)
1 leaf. Folio.
P.H.S.

X.
A Poem on Providence, written by a young female slave. (Boston 1772?)
105-110pp. 8°.
B.P.
In a bound volume of miscellaneous pamphlets in the Boston Public Library, contains 3 leaves of some old magazine, whose title has not been identified.

XI.
To the Rev. Mr. Pitkin, on the Death of his Lady. Poem by Phillis Wheatley. [Dated:] Boston, June 16, 1772. (Boston: 1772.)
1 page. Folio.
N.Y.H.S.

XII.
To the Hon'ble Thomas Hubbard; Esq., on the Death of Mrs. Thankfull Leonard. Boston 1773.
1 leaf. Folio.
P.H.S.

XIII.
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, Ald-
gate; and sold by Messrs. Cox and Berry, King-
Street, Boston. MDCCLXXIII.

Portrait. 124, (3) pp. and 1 page advertisement. 8°.


Some copies of this edition have authors autograph
on the back of the title page.

XIV.

Poems on Comic, Serious, and Moral Subjects. By Phillis Wheatley, Negro Servant to
Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston, in New-England. The Second Edition, Corrected. Lon-
don: Printed for J. French, Bookseller, No.
164, Fenchurch-street, and may be had of the
Booksellers in Town and Country. Price, one
shilling and sixpence sewed.

124 (3) pp. and 1 page advertisement. 8°. Privat.
The body of this edition is the same as the fore-
going with a new title page. Seems to be very rare.
The titlepage of the only copy I could locate shows an
impression mark, which leads to the conclusion, that
this edition had the same portrait as the preceding.

XV.

Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and
Moral. By Phillis Wheatley. Philadelphia:
W. and T. Bradford, 1774.

Taken from Hildeburn. No copy located and a
doubtful title.

XVI.

(Pennsylvania Magazine or American Monthly
Museum for April 1776 Page 193.) "The fol-
AN ELEGIACT POEM.

On the DEATH of that celebrated Divine, and eminent Servant of JESUS CHRIST, the Reverend and learned

George Whitefield,

Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon, &c. &c.

Who made his Exit from this transitory State, to dwell in the celestil Realms of Bliss, on LORD'S Day, 30th of September, 1770, when he was laid with a Fret the Ailthia, at Newbury Port, near Boston, New England.

In which is a Condolatory Address to His truly noble Benefactress, the worthy and pious Lady Huntingdon; and the Orphan Children of George — who, with many thousands are left, by the Death of this great Man, to lament the Loss of a Father, Friend, and Benefactor.

By Phillis.

A Servant Girl, 17 Years of Age, belonging to Mr. J. Wheatley, of Boston — She has been but 8 Years in the Country, from Africa.

BOSTON

Printed and Sold by Beccia Lacey, in Queen Street, And John Ryler, in Marlboro' Green.
lowing Letters and Verses were written by the famous Phillis Wheatley, the African Poetess, and presented to his Excellency Geo Washington.'

Sir:
I have taken the freedom.

Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

Phillis Wheatley.

Providence, Oct. 26, 1775.
His Excellency Gen. Washington.

(Poem follows).


XVII.

An Elegy, Sacred to the Memory of that great Divine, the Reverend and Learned Dr. Samuel Cooper, Who departed this Life December 29, 1783, Ætatis 59. By Phillis Peters. Boston: Printed and Sold by E. Russell, in Essex-Street near Liberty-Pole. M,DCC,LXXXIV.

8pp. 4°. B. A. A. A. S. M. H. S. N. Y. H. S.

XVIII.


XIX.


68pp. 12°. P.H.S. N.Y.H.S.

XX.


55pp. 16°


XXI.


89 (3) pp. 16°. L.O.C. R.I.H.S. B.U.

XXII.

The Negro Equalled by few Europeans. Translated from the French [of l'Abbé La
Vallée]. To which are added, Poems on Various Subjects, Moral and Entertaining; by Phillis Wheatley, Negro Servant to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston, in New-England. In two volumes. Philadelphia: Printed by and for William W. Woodward, No. 17, Chestnut Street, 1801.

A. A. S. N. Y. P. B. P. L. O. C. M. H. S.

XXIII.


86 pp. 12°.
A. A. S. B. A. B. P. L. O. C. N. Y. H. S. M. H. S.
Harvard.

XXIV.

Poems, on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral. By Phillis Wheatley, negro servant to the late Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston (Mass.) Hartford: Printed by Oliver Steele, 1804.

92 (2) pp. 12°
A. A. S. Y. U. W. L.

XXV.

A Beautifull Poem on Providence; written by a young female slave. To which is subjoined A
short Account of this extraordinary Writer. Halifax, Printed by E. Gay 1805.

XXVI.

Equiano, Olaudah. The interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by himself . . . To which are added, Poems on various subjects by Phillis Wheatly, negro servant to Mr. John Wheatly of Boston in New England. Halifax, Printed at the office of J. Nicholason (!) and Co., 1813.


XXVII.


120pp. 16°. A.A.S. Y.U. B.P. N.Y.H.S.

XXVIII.


Portrait. 36pp. 24°. L.O.C. A.A.S. B.A. B.P.

XXIX.

Memoir of Phillis Wheatley, a Native African and a Slave. By B. B. Thatcher. Boston:
Memoir and Poems of Phillis Wheatley, a Native African and a Slave. Dedicated to the Friends of the Africans. (Quotation 4 line.)

Memoir and Poems of Phillis Wheatley, a Native African and a Slave. Dedicated to the
   Portrait. 110pp. 2 leaf advertisement. 16°.

XXXIII.

Memoir and Poems of Phillis Wheatley, a Native African and a Slave. Also, Poems by a Slave. (4 line Quotation.) Third edition. Boston, Published by Isaac Knapp, No. 25 Cornhill. 1838.
   Portrait. 155pp. 16°.
   N.L. A.A.S. B.A. B.P. L.O.C. M.H.S.
   N.Y.H.S. Harvard.

The poems by a slave are written by George M. Horton, the Memoir is the same as in the two foregoing editions by M. M. Odell. Allbone says: Of this edition about 200 copies, completed by reprinting a few missing pages, were placed on sale in 1864. No copy of this 1864 edition could be located.

XXXIV.

   Y. U. M. H. S.
Bedlam Garland
Together with the Spinning Wheel.

As through Moonfled I walked, o'er the green in the Spring,
I heard a Yule on Bedlam most sweetly for to sing;
Her Chairs she raised with her Hands, and thus replied she,
It is love my Love, my Love, because my Love loved me.

My Jewel was forced from me by Men that were wild,
And they set him beyond the Sea that I must call him My Child.
Alas! I am so much for his sake converted could I be
For it is Love, Love.

I'll wait it out with Patience
I'll bear my heavy chains,
Who knows but in process of Time
My Love may come again?

For That Day should ever come,
O happy should I be,
For it is Love, Love.

With Straw I'll make a Garland,
I'll make it very fine,
I'll deck the time with Roses and Lillies mixt with Thyme
I'll paint it to my true Love,
When he comes home from Sea,
For it is Love, Love.

I wish I was a Swallow,
I must the lofty air,
And if I love my Lord,
And cannot find him there,
Then quickly I'll become a fish,
And crook the morning sun,
For it is love, Love.

But supposing I were drowned
Within the mooring main,
Where'er the waves have carried him
To Turkey, France or Spain,
To sleep within his frozen arms
Commemorated could I be,
For it is love, Love.

O that I was a turkey
I'd build upon his head,
With blooming fringes of Pride
I'd make my lips and eyes,
To grace upon his pretty face,
Courted should I be,
For it is love, Love.

Just as she was converting
her true love came to land,
When he heard the she was in Bedlam,
He went there out of hand,
Just as he entered in the Gates,
He heard her cry, and say,
it is love my love, Love.

He brought her to her fenes,
And married promptly,
And now they live in happiness,
In joy and unity.
Come all you pretty maidens,
That have true lovers at sea,
O wait it out with patience,
Take pattern now by me.

And all you jolly sailors
That sail upon the main,
I earnestly desire you
That constant you remain,
Take pattern by my Billy,
Who proved true to me,
Then you may hope to prosper
When you sail on the sea.

The Spinning Wheel.

To save his heart and own his flame,
Young Jacky to my charge came,
But tho' I like him passing well,
I care not turn my Spinning Wheel.

My milk white lamb did eat corn,
And pricked my fingers long and small,
Unadorned was my heart and soul,
But still I turn my Spinning Wheel.

Then I run about my tender waist,
He clasp'd his Arms and me embrac'd,
To kiss my hand he then did kneel,
Yet still I turn my Spinning Wheel.

With gentle voice I did him reave,
He kiss'd both my lips and eyes,
My fond end I could scarce conceal,
Yet still I turn my Spinning Wheel.

Till bolder grown to clothe him prettly
His wanton thoughts, I quickly guess'd
I clutch'd him from my rock and seat
And angry turn'd my Spinning Wheel.

At last when I began to chide,
He swore he meant me for his Bride,
It was then my love I did reveal,
And run away my Spinning Wheel.

Philiss's Poem

On the Death of Mr. Whitefield.

All happy Saint on thy immortal throne!
To thee compare of griefs are unknown,
We hear no more the music of thy tongue,
Thy noblesse made celestial thy song.
That is laid down in unending scenes of splendor,
While emulating thy each from whom, ounds,
Those dear as to the name of Jacob descendent,
Inflame the east and cast the world on
Unhappy we, the king from whom departs,
Which once so bright, but it flees no more.
He leaves us now, Heaven's wonderful bright,
And would to earth - his friends from us take fight.

Time WHITEFIELD with rapid course his way,
And in Heaven, the Sun and Moon of day.
When his AMERICANS were burden'd sore,
When France was counseled with their guiding ore.
Lest not another shall he tread on the earth,
The fruit the speed in thy true love Toward America, and him do more.

When love the reason to the Britisht first, there,
To crook the grace, the earth's true soul,
To see America's duties done,
Thy prayers, great Saint, and thy infant cries,
Have pleased the heart of every native face.
This moon have left and the bright stars of light
Have removed him from mortals by night.

He gave himself in every heart may dwell:
He loved the face of the race divine
And in the late he was given
He left the world to be heathenish,
A greater gift at GOD himself can give:

He urg'd the need of HIM to every one;
It was no less GOD'S co-equal son!
Take HIM ye stretched for your only good,
Take HIM ye warning fools to your good.
We truly come in the life saving beam.
Ye Preslars, take him for word of theme.
Take HIM, "my dear AMERICANS, he said,
Be your companion in all kind of need.
Take HIM ye Africans, he longed for you.
Impartial SAYOUR, is his title due.
If you will chuse to walk in grace and al,
You shall be free, and kings, and pray to GOD.

Great COUNTESS! we Americans were
The name, and thus console thy griefed heart.
We missen with thee, that Tomb, ther joyfully placed,
In which thy Chaplain undisturbed with holy
New England fare, doth tell the Spirit's smart.
Reveals the true sentiments of his heart.
Since this fair Son, with shadow's golden rays,
Nay more - to him that hath good days?
His lonely Talmud, fees no more.
A WHITEFIELD rising on the Britisht shore,
Then let us view him on yon azure skies.
Let every mind with this pious eye.
No more can he exert his laboring breath,
Sord by the cruel messenger of death.
What can his dear AMERICA return?
But drop a tear upon his happy urn,
Thou tomb, shall safe retain thy Jason's truth.
Till life divine reanimate his dust.
XXXV.


XXXVI.


19pp. 8°.

A.A.S. B.A. M.H.S. B.P. N.Y.P.L. L.O.C. N.Y.H.S.

Harvard.


XXXVII.

Poem on the capture of Gen. Charles Lee, by the British. "The following thoughts on his Excellency Major General Lee being betray’d into the hands of the Enemy by the treachery of a pretended friend; To the Honorable James Bowdoin, Esqr. are most respectfully Inscrib’d, By his most obedient and devoted humble servant, Phillis Wheatley." Printed from manuscript, Boston, Dec. 30, 1776, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings, 1863-1864.

XXXVIII.

Proposals for printing by subscription a volume of Poems & Letters on various sub-

XXXIX.


149pp. 8°. L.O.C. N.Y.P.L.
Contains also Sketches of Benjamin Bannecker, James Durham and Thomas Fuller.

XL.

The Poems of Phillis Wheatley. As they were originally published in London 1773. Philadelphia R. R. & C. C. Wright 1909.


XLI.

POEMS

ON

Comic, Serious, and Moral Subjects.

By PHILLIS WHEATLEY.

Negro-Ser vant to Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY,

Of BOSTON, in New-England.

The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.

LONDON:
Printed for. J. FRENCH, Bookseller,
No. 164, Fenchurch-Street, and
may be had of the Booksellers in
Town and Country.

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE NEWED.
Copies printed for the Author. New York, 1915.

Portrait and 10 Facsimiles. 47pp. 8°.
Y.U. L.O.C. B.A. B.P. St.L.M.L.A.
J.C.B. N.Y.P.L. A.A.S. P.H.S. N.L., etc.
Number seven of Heartman's Historical Series. 91 copies printed, also 8 on Japan Vellum.

XLII.


Portrait. 8°.
Y.U. L.O.C. B.P. St.L.M.L.A. A.A.S.
J.C.B. N.Y.P.L.
Number eight of Heartman's Historical Series. 340 copies printed, also 50 copies on Fabriano Hand-made Paper and 10 on Japan Vellum.

XLIII.


4 pages and 8 reproductions on 8 leaves. Folio. Boards.

P.H.S. A.A.S. N.Y.H.S. Conn.H.S. L.O.C.
Taken from the plates used in the Bibliography. Plates destroyed.
AN INTERESTING PHILLIS WHEATLEY ITEM.

By Jupiter Hammon.

Hartford, August 4, 1778. An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley, Ethiopian Poetess, in Boston, who came from Africa at eight years of age, and soon became acquainted with the gospel of Jesus Christ. [21 verses of four lines each, printed in two columns.] Composed by Jupiter Hammon, a Negro Man belonging to Mr. Joseph Lloyd, of Queen’s Village, on Long-Island, now in Hartford. *** The above lines were published by the Author, and a number of his friends, who desire to join with him in their best regards to Miss Wheatley. Broadside, folio, no doubt printed in Hartford. Conn. Historical Society.
A SHORT LIST OF BOOKS WITH CONTENTS RELATING TO PHILLIS WHEATLEY.

S. S. Smith, "An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species." New Brunswick, 1810.

Mrs. Child, "An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans." Boston, 1833

Spark's Life of Washington. Vol. III.
Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia."


J. E. Bruce, "Eminent Negro Men and Women." Yonkers, N. Y., 1910.


Etc., Etc.