

Good afternoon. My name is Martha Terry. I was the wife Silas C. Terry, daughter-in-law of William Terry and Mary Carmen Terry and the mother of my beautiful young daughter Amanda Terry. We are all buried here at St. John's along with several of my husband's siblings and their spouses. I lie here with my husband and our only child.

In the late 1700s my husband was a yeoman in the Town of Islip which meant he owned a modest farm in which we were able to sustain ourselves. In the 19th century many, if not most, on Long Island were farmers. Land ownership gave status and privilege. My husband Silas involved himself in local politics as a representative. As a member of the National Republican Electors of Smithtown Silas was publicly unhappy with Andrew Jackson and would support Henry Clay for president in 1832. I assume Silas's adversity to President Jackson had something to do with Jackson's attempt to close the National Bank. At the time this would have directly affected our profits and investments. But as I said I can only assume this since as a wife in the early 1800s my husband did not speak to me about about politics. I had a very clear role in society. I, as was my child, was the property of my husband. I was responsible for the care of my household and had a limited education in order to take care of our household finances.

I was born in 1786, ten years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It was an interesting time for women in America as this period was known as the Second Awakening. The country was experiencing a progressive religious movement. Amongst Protestants there was a push to join congregations and bring the country to a higher moral plain. This is important because during my lifetime upper class women began to come together for religious purposes, but ultimately found strength in numbers. Women within the century, especially in the North East, would be committed to gaining the right to vote and ending slavery.

As I mentioned earlier my daughter Amanda was born in 1808. Our only child was the center of my world. She would help her mama feed the chickens and the other animals on the farm. She would run to the coop each morning before daybreak, like she was searching for treasure, to gather the eggs. Her pure joy and excitement as she reached for each one was priceless. She would play with her favorite doll on the rocking chair by the stove while I cooked her those eggs for breakfast. She loved to sing the alphabet to her little doll repeating the letters as if her baby was singing the sounds of the letters back to her. After breakfast, and before the rest of the morning chores, we would read together in the rocking chair. Her favorite book was A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, written by **John Newbery**. It is widely considered the first modern children's book, published in 1744. She knew the rhymes, and stories by heart. There was no doubt in my mind she would be reading by five.

Just six months after her fourth birthday she was struck with fever. As a first time mother I simply thought if I could just get her fever down she would be fine. But as it was almost March, the bay had already begun to thaw from the winter and we did not have access to ice. No matter how many times we covered her in cold wet cloths, brought her to sit outside, or placed her directly in the bay the fever would not subside. The closest hospitals to our home in 1812

were Bellevue and New York City Hospital both at least six hours away by carriage. The local physician visited our home several times but to no avail. On March 2nd 1812 our beautiful and vivacious Amanda went to our holy father.

We buried her here with her grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins close by. Her tombstone needed to be as special as she was. What you cannot see on this unique headstone is the English alphabet painstakingly engraved at the bottom. It was not to be seen by anyone else but her. She would learn to read by her fifth birthday. But instead of reading to me she would be sharing her stories with the angels.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God" is written here for all to see for eternity.

I would not have another child. I sometimes wonder if the pain and guilt I had after Amanda's death caused my own sickness. I never felt well again. I didn't have a cold or a fever. I didn't remain bedridden, there were chores to be done. But the light in my soul was gone. I would live another 22 years and die at the age of 48. Silas, my husband would survive another four years without us. He was 54 at his death.

We are now once again together and I am at peace.

If time allows I will sing a verse and a chorus-

It debuted in print in 1779 in John Newton and William Cowper's [Olney Hymns](#) but settled into relative obscurity in England. In the United States, however, "Amazing Grace" was used extensively during the [Second Great Awakening](#) in the early 19th century. It has been associated with more than 20 melodies, but in 1835 it was joined to a tune named "New Britain" to which it is most frequently sung today.