AAWW Biographies

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|  | **Biographies**  **by Tonya Bolden**      1. **Octavia V. Rogers Albert** (1853-c.1890) was born Octavia Victoria Rogers in Oglethorpe, Georgia, where she lived in slavery until the Emancipation. Like millions of freed men, women, and children, she had a deep yearning for learning, and eventually, at Atlanta University, she studied to be a teacher .  This steady young woman was as serious about being a stalwart Christian as she was about being a sterling teacher. While still living in Oglethorpe, she had joined the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was led by the legendary Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. Not unlike many of her contemporaries, Octavia Victoria Rogers saw teaching as a form of worship and Christian service. Her first teaching job was in Montezuma, Georgia. There, in 1874, when she was about twenty-one years old, she married another teacher at this school: A.E.P. Albert, who later became an ordained minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, which Octavia was later to join. Soon after their marriage, the Alberts moved to Houma, Louisiana, where Octavia began conducting interviews with men and women once enslaved. These interviews were the raw material for what became her intelligent collection of narratives, ***The House of Bondage, or Charlotte Brooks and Others Slaves***. "Never forget" could have been this work's second subtitle. As scholar Frances Smith Foster has observed, "the hymn that concludes Albert's volume summarizes her theme that abolition was the triumph of God's will over evil and that those who have been delivered must return to tell the story."  Octavia Victoria Rogers Albert did not live to see *The House of Bondage* reach the public. It was shortly after her death that the New Orleans-based Methodist Episcopal Church newspaper the *South-western Christian Advocate* serialized the work from January to December 1890. In 1891, owing to the efforts of the author's husband and their only child, Laura T. F. Albert, *The House of Bondage* was published in book form.  2. **Anonymous** (1766-?), who was born in Maryland and lived in bondage until about age thirty, brought her memoir to a close with these words: "When I went forth, it was without purse or scrip, and I have come through great tribulation and temptation not by any might of my own, for I feel that I am but as dust and ashes before my almighty Helper, who has, according to His promise, been with me and sustained me through all, and gives me now firm faith that he will be with me to the end, and, in his own good time, receive me into His everlasting rest."  We do not know precisely when this saintly soul passed away. All we know is that at the age of ninety-seven, this unordained and frequently 'buked and scorned itinerant preacher, dictated her tender story to someone who thought her dear. This brief narrative, ***Memoir of Old Elizabeth, A Coloured Woman***, was published in 1863 in Philadelphia, where "Old Elizabeth" had been living since she was eighty-seven years old.  3. **Eloise Bibb** (1878-1928?), the daughter of Catherine Adele and Charles H. Bibb, had prosperous beginnings because of her father's job as customs inspector in New Orleans, Louisiana, where Eloise Albert Veronica Bibb was born.  Eloise Bibb was seventeen when she made her literary debut with ***Poems*** (1895), published by Monthly Review Press in Boston. This delicate collection includes "To the Sweet Bard of the Women's Club," a tribute to another native of New Orleans, **Alice Dunbar-Nelson**, whose ***Violets and Other Tales*** was published by the same publisher and in the same year as Bibb's *Poems.*  Eloise Bibb never expected to live off her writing, but plotted a course to be a teacher. After attending Oberlin College's Preparatory Academy (1899-1901), she taught in the New Orleans public school system. In 1903, she left home again: this time for Washington, D.C., where she enrolled in Howard University's Teacher's College. Bibb graduated from Howard in the winter of 1908, and a few months later became head resident of the university's Colored Social Settlement House.  Bibb left this job in 1911. This was the year she married Noah Davis Thompson, a widower and father of a young son. (Thompson's first wife was Lillian B. Murphy, daughter of the founder of the *Baltimore Afro-American* and sister of Carl Murphy, who turned the *Afro* into one of the finest new era newspapers.) Soon after their marriage, the Thompsons moved to Los Angeles. There, in and around various enterprises (including real estate), Noah contributed articles to various periodicals as did Eloise, with *Los Angeles Tribune*, *Out West*, and *Morning Sun* among her outlets.  In 1927, when Noah was hired as business manager of the National Urban League's journal *Opportunity*, the Thompsons moved to New York City, which is where Eloise Bibb Thompson died.  4. **Virginia W. Broughton** (?-?) was one of several children born to a couple once enslaved in Virginia, after which she was named. Virginia's parents had attained their freedom through purchase: her father had worked diligently doing the work of three men, saving every dime he could to buy himself and his wife out of slavery. Their daughter inherited this can-do spirit, and became equally successful.  Virginia Broughton received her early education at a private school in her home state. When time came for more schooling, she journeyed to Nashville, Tennessee, where she was among the first students at the preparatory school at Fisk College, remaining there to continue her undergraduate studies. When she graduated in 1875, she was qualified to be a schoolteacher, a position which suited her talents.  The school room was not the only place Broughton made a positive impact. This devout Baptist was also a missionary. Her primary area of ministry was to women, and she emerged as a leading advocate of women's rights. Whereas some saw gender equality as somewhat unorthodox and in conflict with the Scripture, Broughton found total support for it in the Bible. Among the ways she disseminated her ideas was with her 1904 book, *Women's Work, as Gleaned from the Women of the Bible*. This book was a handy synthesis of what she shared in her lectures and Bible studies and what she hoped would be shared in the Bible bands she seeded throughout Tennessee. Those inspired and uplifted by the life and works of Virginia Broughton very much appreciated her autobiography, ***Twenty Years' Experience of a Missionary*** (1907).  5. **Hallie Q. Brown** (c. 1845-1949) made the most of her roughly one hundred years on earth, lifting as she climbed. This dynamo was born, along with her five siblings, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to former slaves Frances Jane Scroggins and Thomas Brown. Hallie's father was reportedly the first black express agent in the nation and had been a worker on the Underground Railroad.  In 1864, the Brown family moved to Chatham, in Ontario, Canada. A few years later, they returned to the United States, settling in Wilberforce, Ohio, where Hallie enrolled in Wilberforce University, which was then under the leadership of a Brown family friend: renowned A.M.E. bishop Daniel Alexander Payne who was to become one of Hallie's major mentors.  After graduating from Wilberforce in 1873, Hallie Quinn Brown embarked on what was to be an illustrious career in education. For about a dozen years, she taught at several schools in the South. From 1885 to 1887 she served as dean of Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina. From 1887 to 1892 she taught in the public schools of Dayton, Ohio, where she opened a night school for migrants from the South. During her days in Dayton, Brown assiduously studied oratory, and launched into another career: public speaking.  From 1892 to 1893, Brown served as Lady Principal at Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. She spent the majority of her career - some three decades - as professor of elocution at Wilberforce University. Besides teaching, she lectured and produced the handbooks *Bits and Odds: A Choice Selection of Recitations* (1900) and *First Lessons in Public Speaking* (1920). She played major roles in various civic organizations, including the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Ohio State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, where she was president from 1905 to 1912; and the National Association of Colored Women, which she co-founded and for which she served as president from 1920 to 1924. Brown was also involved in the Ohio Council of Republican Women, the National League of Women Voters, and the Negro Women's National Republican League.  Health problems compelled Brown to retire from Wilberforce in 1923. She did not retire from all activity, however. She continued to lecture, and she also continued to write. In 1925 her *Tales My Father Told* was published. In 1926, when Brown was in her late seventies or early eighties, her best known book came out: ***Homespun Heroines and Other Women of Distinction***, a collection of sixty biographies (one-third written by Brown) of black women born in the United States or Canada between the mid-1740s and 1900. As scholar Randall K. Burkett observed, the sketches in *Homespun Heroines*  "offer indispensable starting points for biographical research on a substantial number of extraordinary women." Included in that number are several women in *The Schomburg* *Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers*. Among them are **Frances E.W. Harper**, **Elizabeth Keckley**, **C. Henrietta Ray, Amanda Smith**, and **Phillis Wheatley**.  6. **Josephine Brown** (1839-?), the youngest child of the abolitionist and author William Wells Brown and his wife Elizabeth, was born in Buffalo, New York, five years after her father made his famous escape from slavery. In 1845, the Browns moved to Farmington, New York. When William and Elizabeth separated two years later, it was William who got custody of Josephine and her sister Clarissa; however, the girls never lived with him continuously. With Boston as his new home base and his daughters in the care of some friends (and attending a school in New Bedford), William Wells Brown was on the road with antislavery work. Then, in 1849, he moved to London.  At some point in 1852, after attending a seminary in Calais, France, for about a year, Josephine and Clarissa Brown arrived in London, where they continued their education. After about a year and a half, both girls were qualified to teach. Josephine, not quite fifteen, found a position at a school in Woolwich, where several of her pupils were older than she was. During these days, Josephine also kept quite busy as an assistant to her father's extensive antislavery activities.  In 1854, Josephine was again in France for additional schooling. At some point in 1855, she returned to the United States, where she completed the biography of her father she had begun in France: ***Biography of an AmericanBondman, by His Daughter***. As Josephine Brown explained in her preface to the book, she was moved to finish the book when she discovered that her father's autobiography *Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave* (1847) was out of print.  During the first few weeks of the release of *Biography of An American Bondman*, father and daughter were quite busy with speaking engagements, and a time or two Josephine, nearing seventeen, lectured independently. In the winter of 1856, Josephine Brown sailed for England. Virtually nothing is known of her life after that point.  7. **Annie L. Burton** (c.1850-c. 1910), who spent her childhood enslaved in Alabama, was the daughter of a woman named Nancy, the cook of Mr. and Mrs. William Farrin whose plantation was near Clayton. Annie Louise's father, a white man born in Liverpool, England, owned a plantation that was a long walk from the Farrins.  Annie Louise was a teenager when Union troops liberated her, her mother and siblings, and others in the area; and she remained in the South during the Civil War and for a good many years after it. She left the South in 1879, living in Boston and then in New York City. In both cities, she supported herself as a domestic worker (cook, maid, housekeeper, laundress).  In the early 1880s, Annie Louise returned South because her sister died, leaving behind a son who would have become an orphan were it not for his aunt Annie. Aunt Annie boasted that she was able to support her nephew all the way through his studies at Hampton Institute in Virginia. She was able to do this largely because of her success as a restaurateur, first in Jacksonville, Florida, and later in Boston. It was in Boston that this small-business owner married Samuel Burton.  Always intent on bettering herself, in 1900 Annie Louise Burton started attending a night school in Boston. She took classes at this school for about six years, and at the same time, she began work on the two autobiographical essays in her book ***Memories of Childhood's Slavery*** (1909). The book also contains a composition on Abraham Lincoln along with Burton's favorite poems and hymns.  8. **Olivia Ward Bush** (1869-1944), born in Sag Harbor, Long Island, New York, was the daughter of Eliza Draper and Abraham Ward, both of whom were of African and Montauk descent. Olivia was not yet a year old when her mother died. Shortly thereafter, her father moved to Providence, Rhode Island, where he married again, and handed Olivia over to her mother's sister, Maria Draper, who reared Olivia as her own child.  In 1889, Olivia Ward married Frank Bush, and the couple became parents to two children, Rosamund and Maria. The Bushes divorced at some point between 1895 and 1910, whereupon Olivia and her daughters went to live with Aunt Maria. By now, Olivia's interest in the arts was quite apparent. In 1899 her slim volume of verse, *Original Poems*, was published and received kudos from Paul Laurence Dunbar. In 1914, a more substantial collection of prose and poetry was published: ***Driftwood***.  Marriage to Anthony Banks in the early 1920s resulted in a move to Chicago. There, Olivia continued her artistic endeavors, focusing on drama, which she had dabbled in years before. For a time, she worked as a drama instructor in the Chicago public school system and ran the Bush-Banks School of Expression. In the 1930s, Olivia Ward Bush Banks returned to the East, where she lived in New Rochelle and in New York City. The woman who counted W.E.B. Du Bois, Countee Cullen, and Paul Robeson among her friends, and who in various ways boosted emerging lights (including Richmond Barthé and Langston Hughes) exercised her creativity in a number of ways: she had an arts column in the *Westchester Record-Courier*, she was a drama coach for Abyssinian Baptist Church's Community Center; and she wrote several plays, pageants, and short stories, most of which were never published.  9. **Lucy A. Delaney** (c. 1830-c.1890s), who was born in slavery in St. Louis, Missouri, was fiercely determined to be free, just like her older sister Nancy who had escaped to Canada, and their mother, Polly Berry, who had escaped and then secured her freedom in court, on the grounds that she was a freeborn who had been kidnapped as a child.  Lucy Ann was twelve years old when she escaped to Chicago, Illinois, where her mother was living. Polly Berry promptly set about suing for her daughter's freedom on the grounds that she was the daughter of a freeborn and hence could not be enslaved. Although mother and daughter were eventually victorious, their case was not dealt with swiftly: Lucy Ann was forced to spend more than a year in jail pending its resolution.  Once Lucy Ann Berry was freed at the age of fourteen, she and her mother made a tolerable life in Chicago, plying their trades: Lucy, a seamstress; Polly, a laundress. When, in 1845, Lucy married Frederick Turner, Polly moved with the couple to Quincy, Illinois. Lucy's marriage was short-lived: Frederick died in an explosion aboard the steamer on which he worked. Soon after Frederick's death, mother and daughter returned to St. Louis, where in 1849 Lucy married Zachariah Delaney. This marriage lasted for more than four decades, and the couple had four children, all of whom died young.  During the remainder of her life, Lucy Ann Berry Turner Delaney, who joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in the mid-1850s, worked for the uplift of her people through various organizations, including the Female Union and the Daughters of Zion. Her desire to inspire her people to make the most of freedom was behind her decision to put into print her dramatic life story, which was published around 1891: ***From Darkness Cometh the Light; or, Struggles for Freedom***.  10. **Alice Dunbar-Nelson** (1875-1935) was born Alice Ruth Moore, in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she attended high school and then completed a teacher-training program at Straight College (now Dillard University). Over the years she taught at various institutions, but teaching was far from her only talent. She knew bookkeeping and stenography which she used occasionally to support herself. She was also an above average student of the piano and cello and could act. Her finest gift and reigning passion, however, was writing.  Alice Ruth Moore's debut as a serious writer came in 1895 with the publication of ***Violets and Other Tales*** , a collection of poetry, short stories, essays, reviews and other prose pieces. This little book brought Alice to the attention of the most celebrated poet of the day Paul Laurence Dunbar. A friendship that began with correspondence blossomed into a romance, and Alice and Paul married in 1898, setting up house in Washington, D.C.  This marriage boosted Alice's literary career. Although she was a good writer, had she not been Mrs. Dunbar, Paul's publisher (Dodd, Mead and Company) probably never would have simultaneously published in 1899 Paul's *Poems of Cabin and Field* and Alice's ***The Goodness of St. Rocque and Other Stories***. Alice and Paul seemed the ideal couple, but their marriage was fraught with troubles. The Dunbars separated in 1901 (Paul died in 1906). Alice Ruth Moore Dunbar married again: in 1910, to Henry Arthur Callis, a teacher at the time; and in 1916, to journalist Robert J. Nelson, with whom she published the Wilmington *Advocate*.  Over the years this multi-talented woman continued to write. She contributed poetry and prose to the *Journal of Negro History*, the *Messenger*, the Pittsburgh *Courier*, and other periodicals. She also published two more books: *Masterpieces of Negro Eloquence* (1914) and *The Dunbar Speaker and Entertainer* (1920).  11. **Julia A. J. Foote** (1823-1900), the daughter of former slaves, was born in Schenectady, New York. Her parents were devout Christians, and she embraced their faith at an early age, joining the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church when she was fifteen years old, by which time she was living in Albany with her adopted family.  Marriage in 1841 to a seafarer, George Foote, took eighteen-year-old Julia to Boston, where she joined this city's African Methodist Episcopal Zion church. Julia Foote's ever-increasing hunger for knowledge of the Holy was applauded; however, her insistence that God had called her to preach put a strain on her relationships with those who believed it absolutely inappropriate and downright wrong for a woman to be a preacher. Julia's parents did not support her call. Her husband did not support her call. Her pastor, Reverend Jeheiel C. Beman, not only did not think she should preach, but he also censured her for engaging in ministry in her home.  Convinced that she had to answer to a higher power, Foote persevered, finding pulpits, homes, revival camps and other venues where her gifts of the Spirit were welcomed. Julia A. Foote preached up a storm: early on in New York, New England and the Mid-Atlantic states, and later, in Michigan, Ohio and Canada. Eventually, she settled in Cleveland, Ohio, where in 1879, she published her autobiography: ***A Brand Plucked From the Fire***.  We do not know how or where this evangelist spent the 1880s and early 1890s, but we know that in 1894 Julia A. Foote became the A.M.E. Zion Church's first woman deacon. In 1900, shortly before her death, she became this denomination's second ordained female elder.  12. **Mary Weston Fordham** (c. 1862-?) may have been born in Charleston, South Carolina, where her only known book was published in 1897: ***Magnolia Leaves***, a collection of sixty-six poems, for which Booker T. Washington wrote an introduction. Except for the names of a handful of relatives (Westons, Byrds, and Fordhams) nothing more is known about Mary Fordham.  13. **Frances E. W. Harper** (1825-1911), born free in Baltimore, Maryland, was not yet three years old when her mother, the only parent she ever knew, died. Frances Ellen was raised for a time by an aunt, and then sent to live with an uncle, Reverend William Watkins, who ran a school in Baltimore. She stayed in Uncle William's charge until she was about thirteen, at which point she was sent out to earn a living.  Young Frances found work as a servant and babysitter, and sewing for the Armstrongs, a white family in Baltimore. Much to Frances's delight, Mr. Armstrong owned a bookstore. Better still, he allowed her free access to books and encouraged her in her love for writing. Around 1846, when she was in her early thirties, Frances became active as an anti-slavery lecturer and published her first collection of poetry, *Forest Leaves*, now extant. Writing remained a passion and she became a most celebrated writer, "the Bronze Muse." In 1860, she married Fenton Harper. The couple had a daughter but Fenton died in 1864. Harper subsequently became the most widely published and recognized writer before and after slavery.  Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's body of work includes several collections of poetry. Among them are the following, published between 1872 and 1900: *Sketches of Southern Life*, *Moses: A Story of the Nile*, *Light Beyond Darkness*, *The Sparrow's Fall*, *Martyr of Alabama*, *Atlanta Offerings*, and *Poems*. "The Slave Mother," "The Slave Auction," "The Fugitive's Wife," and "Bury Me in a Free Land," are among her best known poems.  Harper was also a gifted writer of prose. One of her best known essays is "Christianity" (1853). Her most famous short story is "The Two Offers," which first appeared in the *Anglo-African* in 1859. Known as the first African American woman novelist until recently, Harper's first three novels were serialized in the African Methodist Episcopal Church's *Christian Recorder*: *Minnie's Sacrifice* (1869); *Sowing and Reaping: A Temperance Story* (1876-1877), and *Trial and Triumph* (1888-1889). In 1892, Harper's best known novel was published: ***Iola Leroy: or, Shadows Uplifted***, the story of a young woman striving to overcome racism during Civil War/Reconstruction America, who commits herself to the cause of racial uplift.  Harper managed her writing life in and around other important work. She was a teacher, an anti-slavery lecturer, a member of the Free Produce and, according to William Still, one of the "ablest" workers on the Underground Railroad. After the Civil War, Harper continued a life of activism as a social reformer-especially promoting civil and women's rights. She advanced these causes through her writing, through countless speaking engagements, and through her work with several organizations, including the American Equal Rights Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the YMCA, the National Congress of Colored Women, and the National Association of Colored Women, of which she was a founding member.  14. **Josephine D. Heard** (1861-1921?) was born Josephine Delphine Henderson in Salisbury, North Carolina, several months after the outbreak of the Civil War. She was the daughter of Lafayette and Annie M. Henderson who knew a modicum of "freedom" during their days in slavery: they were allowed to hire themselves out and live in Charlotte.  When freedom came, the Hendersons committed themselves to providing their daughter with educational opportunities. So it was that their Josie, who was reading by age five, attended a school in Charlotte, and then Scotia Seminary in nearby Concord and Bethany Institute in New York, all of this, to prepare her for teaching. Her first post was at a school in tiny Mayesville, South Carolina, where the epic Mary McLeod Bethune was born in 1875. In 1882, twenty-one-year-old Josephine Henderson married the Georgia-born William Henry Heard (1850-1937). Heard had emerged from slavery to be a teacher, a worker for the Republican party, a railway postal clerk, and then a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. William Henry Heard entered the ministry in 1882, the same year he and Josie married. The couple subsequently relocated to Philadelphia, where in 1890, Josephine published ***Morning Glories***, a collection of seventy-two poems, about love and death, about religion and race, and other subjects, verse that sprang, as she wrote in her preface, "from a heart that desires to encourage and inspire the youth of the Race." This book, expanded and re-released in 1891, carried an introduction from the eminent A.M.E. bishop Benjamin Tucker Tanner, father of one the first black female physician's Hallie Tanner Dillon and the acclaimed artist Henry Ossawa Tanner.  Josephine Heard moved frequently in the remaining years of her life, assisting her husband's work. In 1895 President Grover Cleveland appointed William Heard minister resident and consul general to Liberia, where Heard helped start the first A.M.E. Church in Monrovia. In 1908, the year William was made a bishop and sent to West Africa again, Josephine accompanied him. The couple lived there until the onset of World War I. After that, William's job assignments took the couple to Louisiana, Mississippi, and finally, to Philadelphia, where Josephine died. In his autobiography, *From Slavery to the Bishopric in the A.M.E. Church*, published in the early 1920s, William Henry Heard paid tribute to his wife: "She is scholarly and poetic, and her use of the English language, as well as the criticism of my sermons, have done much in making me the preacher they say I am."  15. **Pauline E. Hopkins** (1859-1930), the daughter of Sarah A. Allen and Northrup Hopkins, was born in Portland Maine, and raised in Boston. This child of promise, whose family tree included Boston's famous Paul family (Reverends Nathaniel, Thomas, and activist Susan) and poet James Whitfield, committed herself a life of writing when she was young. At age fifteen, Pauline won a ten dollar gold prize for her essay "Evils of Intemperance and Their Remedies" in a contest sponsored by William Wells Brown, father of **Josephine Brown**. After graduating from Boston's Girls High School, Pauline was even more intent on making it as writer. Her early efforts include a musical drama *Slaves' Escape; or the Underground Railroad*, which drew applause during its brief run in Boston in 1880. Aware of what a precarious passage a writing life could be, Hopkins made sure she had a skill that would allow her to support herself: stenography. Indeed, it was as a stenographer, for individuals and for the government, that she supported herself from 1892 to 1899. Nevertheless, throughout this period she continued to write. In 1900 her novel, *Contending Forces: A Romance Illustrative of Negro Life in the North and South*, was published by the Colored Co-Operative Publishing Company. This firm owned the *Colored American* magazine, which hired Hopkins as literary editor following the publication of *Contending Forces*.  A fair amount of Hopkins's prose appeared in the pages of *Colored American*: more than twenty biographies of eminent black Americans; over half a dozen short stories; and three novels, *Hagar's Daughter: A Story of Southern Caste Prejudice*, *Winona: A Tale of Negro Life in the South and Southwest*; and *Of One Blood; or, The Hidden Self* Ball serialized between 1901 and 1903, and written under the pseudonym Sarah Allen. In 1904, Hopkins left the *Colored American*, after a Booker T. Washington proxy took over the magazine.  Hopkins went on to write for a few other publications, including J. Max Barber's militant *Voice of the Negro.* She also started a publishing company, P.E. Hopkins, which in 1905 put out her booklet *A Primer of Facts Pertaining to the Early Greatness of the African Race and the Possibility of Restoration by Its Descendants, With Epilogue*. In 1916, Hopkins became editor of the short-lived *New Era* magazine. After the magazine folded Hopkins withdrew from a literary life, eventually dying in obscurity. It was not until scholar Ann Allen Shockley rediscovered her work and shared the first fruits of her research in the article "Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins: A Biographical Excursion into Obscurity," (*Phylon* 1972) that Pauline E. Hopkins began to receive the attention she deserves.  16. **Harriet A. Jacobs** (1813-1897), born in slavery in Edenton, North Carolina, and until she was around eleven years old, was owned by Margaret Horniblow, who taught her to read and sew. When Horniblow died, Harriet and her brother came under the control of Mrs. Horniblow's brother, Dr. James Norcom, who proved to be a lecherous fiend.  Subsequent events in the life of Harriet Jacobs include her decision to have two children with a single white man who was not her owner; escape from Dr. Norcom in 1835; and, after nearly seven years of hiding out in a crawlspace in her grandmother's house, escape to New York City, where she was a domestic worker for the family of Nathaniel Parker Willis. All of this is fleshed out in Jacobs's autobiographical narrative ***Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*** (1861), in which Jacobs's did not use peoples' real names and claimed the pseudonym Linda Brent for herself.  For most of the twentieth century, Linda Brent was thought to be a white woman, and *Incidents in the Life of A Slave Girl*, a work of pure fiction. It was not until the 1980s that Harriet A. Jacobs's authorship was reestablished. Today, it is regarded as the most in-depth and textured pre-Civil War slave narrative written by a black woman in America.  The rediscovery of Jacobs led to the uncovering of events in her life after 1861. These include serving as a relief worker during the Civil War, working as a clerk for the New England Women's Club, operating a boardinghouse that catered to students and faculty at Harvard University, and doing social work among the needy freedpeople in Washington, D.C., where she died.  17. **A. E. Johnson** (1858-1922) was born Amelia Etta Hall in Toronto, Canada, to parents who were originally from Maryland. Amelia became a Marylander herself in 1874, when she moved to Baltimore. There, in 1877, she married an activist, author, and pastor of Union Baptist Church, Reverend Dr. Harvey Johnson.  Amelia Johnson became a minister of sorts herself. Her medium was writing. With a deep burden for the young and Proverbs 22:6 undoubtedly in the forefront of her mind ("Train up a child in the way that he should go. . .") Johnson produced literature for children. In 1888, a year after she launched the small monthly newspaper *Joy*, she started *Ivy*, a publication for children that had black history as its focus. Johnson also contributed poems and short stories for children to *National Baptist*, *American Baptist*, and *Sower and Reaper* among other periodicals. She wrote three little novels as well. All three are about following the correct moral path, and feature protagonists who are whiteBor, as some scholars prefer "racially indeterminate." Published by the American Baptist Publication Society these novels are: *Clarence and Corrine; or, God's Way* (1890); ***The Hazeley Family*** (1894); and *Martina Meriden; or What Is My Motive?* (1901).  18. **Maggie Pogue Johnson** (?-?), a native of Virginia, produced one volume of poetry that we know of: ***Virginia Dreams: Lyrics for the Idle Hour*** (1910). This collection features dialect poems that remember the everyday life of the folk of Virginia, as well as verse in standard American English, many of which rally folks ever onward in doing good works and having high hopes. The good works and high hopes of Maggie Pogue Johnson, along with the elementary details of her life have yet to be uncovered.  19. **Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley** (c.1824-1907), born in Dinwiddie Court-House, Virginia, was the product of a foul union between an enslaved woman and her owner. Little Elizabeth knew a succession of owners and abuses during her young life. Her last place of enslavement was in St. Louis, Missouri, where in the early 1850s, her owner (the daughter of her original owner) hired her out as seamstress.  Elizabeth became a top-notch seamstress and a much sought-after dressmaker. Though she had to give some of her wages to her owner, she managed to put some money away for her high hope: freedom, not just for herself but also for her son born of a rape. With loans from some of her customers and her savings, Elizabeth came up with the $1,200 she needed to purchase freedom for herself and her son.  Following two terrible marriages (to a Mr. Hobbs and a Mr. James Keckley) and a short residence in Baltimore, Maryland, Elizabeth settled in Washington, D.C. There, she opened a dressmaking shop, which employed some twenty people at one point. As word of her talent spread, Elizabeth Keckley attracted more and more customers from Washington society, this at a time when talk of a civil war was very much in the air. One of Keckley's customer's was Varina Howell Davis, whose husband, Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis, was to become President of the Confederacy. Another was Mrs. McClean, the daughter of General Sumner. It was she who brought Keckley to the attention of Mary Todd Lincoln.  Keckley became not only the First Lady's modiste, but a confidante as well: through the days of the Civil War, through the loss of the Lincoln's son, through the assassination of the President. Keckley recounted all this and more in ***Behind the Scenes, Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House*** (1868), a book which made Keckley quite a sensation; however, it wasn't the kind of attention she had hoped for. The backlash was severe. She lost friends and her once-thriving business. Keckley did not spend the rest of her life in Washington, D.C., but it was where she died, having spent her last feeble days in the Home for Destitute Women and Children, ironically an institution she had co-founded.  21. **Jarena Lee** (1783-c.1850), born free in Cape May, New Jersey, became a devout Christian when she was about twenty-one and felt herself called to preach seven years later. Though filled with fear and trembling over something so rare, a woman preacher, she obeyed the Holy Spirit and set about heeding the call in decency and order. This meant getting the blessing of the senior minister of her church, Richard Allen, co-founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and pastor of its first church, Philadelphia's Mother Bethel. Reverend Allen did not sanction Lee's call, claiming that the Methodist church "did not call for women preachers."  A few years later, Lee, even more intent on preaching, again sought Allen's blessing. This time Allen, now Bishop Allen (with the A.M.E. Church now an independent denomination), granted Lee permission to hold prayer meetings in her home and then to be ordained a preacher.  In the years to come, Jarena Lee preached not only in Philadelphia and its environs, but also all around the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states. Ohio was the farthest West she journeyed. In her travels, she sometimes teamed up with other evangelists. One of them was Zilpha Elaw (c.1790-1846), whose autobiography *Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, and Ministerial Travels and Labors of Mrs. Zilpha Elaw* was published in 1846. Jarena Lee had published her testimony a decade earlier: ***The Life and Religious Experiences of Jarena Lee, a Coloured Lady, Giving an Account of Her Call to Preach the Gospel***, an expanded edition of which Lee put out in 1849, a year before her death.  22. **Hiram Mattison** (?-?), abolitionist and pastor of a Methodist church in New York, was searching for hard data on the horrors of slavery to shore up his indictment of the "peculiar institution" when in 1860, in Buffalo, New York, he happened upon a former slave in her early thirties. This woman, an octoroon born in Columbia, South Carolina, who had suffered heavy physical and sexual abuse during her days of bondage, agreed to talk with Reverend Mattison about her life in captivity. Mattison's interview with her evolved into the book he self-published in 1861, ***Louisa Piquet: A Tale of Southern Slave Life*.**  23. **Adah Isaacs Menken** (c. 1839-1868), who was born near or in New Orleans, remains an enigma in death just as she was in life. In speaking to the puzzlements and confusions that surround this daughter of a free mulatto and a Frenchwoman Louisiana, scholar Joan R. Sherman has noted the following:  The name on her death certificate was "Menken Adele Isaac Barclay" and her tombstone read, "Adah Isaacs Menken." She was, perhaps, born Philomène Croi Théodore but assumed half a dozen pseudonyms over the years, identified five different men as her father, and claimed to have had six husbands in sixteen years. It is no wonder that since her death in 1868, "La Belle Menken" has been examined in ten full-length biographies (plus dozens of articles and parts of books); and even her latest and most reliable biographer [Wolf Mankowtiz] admits, "I haven't found out who she was."  Menken, who never regarded herself as black and at one point fabled herself Jewish, gained fame as a singer, dancer and actress prone to the risque (a sort of proto-La Baker). This dazzling, brash and beguiling star of stage traveled lushly, and had a host of famous friends (among them, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain and Georges Sand) and famous lovers (among them, Swinburne and Alexander Dumas *pere*).  In and around her performances, her stormy private life, and her lively social life, "The Naked Lady," as she was also called, wrote poems. A selection of Menken's verse was published in 1868, shortly after her death at around the age of twenty-nine. The small volume (dedicated to Charles Dickens) is entitled ***Infelicia***. In her analysis of this poetry Joan R. Sherman summed it up as "remarkably dramatic, intensely self-aware and confessional," and unsparing in its condemnation of a male-dominated world that restricts woman's freedom, mocks her expressions of >genius,' and dooms her, body and soul, to unhappiness."  24. **Mrs. N. F. Mossell** (1855-1948) was Gertrude Bustill Mossell. This native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was a great-granddaughter of Cyrus Bustill who served George Washington's troops as a baker and after the War of Independence, started what became a successful bakery in Philadelphia. The elder Bustill also co-founded the first black mutual aid society in America, the Free African Society. Among the many other Bustills of distinction are Gertrude's great-aunt, abolitionist and educator Grace Bustill Douglass and her daughter Sarah Mapp Douglass, who followed in her mother's footsteps. Gertrude's most famous descendant was her nephew Paul Bustill Robeson.  Gertrude Bustill was a typical Bustill, a striver, a doer, an achiever. After graduating from Robert Vaux Grammar School, she taught school for several years in Philadelphia and elsewhere. However, it was as a journalist that Gertrude Bustill really distinguished herself, this at a time when women journalists were extremely rare.  Gertrude Bustill's potential as writer-thinker was evident when she was young. There was, for example, "Influence," the speech she delivered at her high-school commencement. This speech was deemed so fine by Bishop Henry McNeal Turner that he published it in his *Christian Recorder*. Years later, Bustill's articles on political and social issues, with a heavy emphasis on women's rights and responsibilities, were being read in a number of periodicals, including the *AME Church Review*, the *Philadelphia Times*, the *Philadelphia Echo*, and the *Independent*. For a time, she edited the Woman's Department of the *New York Freeman*, the *Indianapolis World*, and the *New York Age*.  There came a day when Gertrude Bustill was juggling a career and a family life: in 1893 she married a leading Philadelphia physician, Nathan Frances Mossell, with whom she was to have two daughters. Around the time of her wedding, Mossell was no doubt at work on what was to be an important little book: ***The Work of the Afro-American Woman*** (1894) ,a collection of essays and poems bearing witness to the achievements of black women in a range of fields. As scholar Joanne Braxton has pointed out, this book was for the black woman of the 1890s what Paula Giddings's *When and Where I Enter* was for the black woman of the 1980s.  Why did Gertrude Bustill Mossell, with such strong feminist leanings, publish her book under her husband's initials? Braxton offers the following explanation: "By this strategy of public modesty, the author signaled her intention to defend and celebrate black womanhood without disrupting the delicate balance of black male-female relations or challenging masculine authority."  The year after *The Work of the Afro-American Woman* came out, Gertrude Bustill Mossell was busy helping her husband with the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and Training School, which opened in 1895: she headed up the fundraising drive, raising $30,000, and went on to serve as president of its Social Service Auxiliary. Her other civic activities included organizing the Philadelphia branch of the National Afro-American Council. The only other book Gertrude Bustill Mossell wrote was a children's book, *Little Dansie's One Day at Sabbath School* (1902).  25. **Ann Plato** (1820?-?), who picked up the pen to exhort others to live a holy life, was apparently someone who practiced what she preached. Plato's piety and sterling character were much in evidence according to abolitionist, author, and minister James W.C. Pennington, pastor of the Colored Congregational Church of Hartford, Connecticut, where Ann Plato worshiped. Reverend Pennington's words of commendation are found in the introduction he contributed to Plato's ***Essays; Including Biographies and Miscellaneous Pieces, in Prose and Poetry*** (1841), the second book by a black woman to be published in America.  26. **Mary Prince** (c.1788-?), who was born in slavery in Bermuda, endured an extremely savage enslavement on that island and in Antigua. After she secured her freedom in England in 1828, Prince was adamant about recounting the miseries inflicted upon her mind, body and soul as a way to convert others to the antislavery movement. She dictated the story of her life in bondage and her early days of freedom to a Mrs. S. and the material was edited slightly by Mr. Pringle for whom Mary Prince worked as a domestic, for the making of the small yet vigorous ***The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave*** (1831), the first known autobiography by a black woman enslaved in the Americas.  27. **Nancy Prince** (1799-?), who was born Nancy Gardner (or Gardener) in Newburysport, Massachusetts, had an extremely difficult childhood: it was marked and twisted by poverty, and by what we today call a dysfunctional family. Despite her bleak beginnings, young Nancy remained hopeful and spirited, enabling her to rise above the pain, and to help others as well.  In February 1824, this twenty-three-year-old berry-picker turned domestic, married a sea captain, known today only by his surname, Prince. Nancy's husband, a native of Massachusetts, had lived for a time in Russia, where he served in the royal court. In the summer of 1824, he returned to Russia and his wife went with him.  While her husband served in the court of Czar Alexander I, Nancy Prince made the most of her days in St. Petersburg by starting a business: children's clothing and linens and things for infants. She also started an orphanage. Unprepared for the difficult Russian winters, Nancy's health began to decline and in 1833 she returned to America. Her husband was to follow after the conclusion of his duty, but sadly, Mr. Prince died in Russia.  Meanwhile, Nancy had settled in Boston, where she became involved with abolitionist efforts. With a strong interest in homeless children, she also established an orphanage here, and struggled in vain to maintain it. An encounter with a minister from Jamaica where slavery had been abolished in 1833 prompted Nancy Prince to journey to that island in 1840. As she later recalled, "I hoped that I might aid, in some small degree, to raise up and encourage the emancipated inhabitants, and teach the young children to read and work, to fear God, and put their trust in the Saviour."  To establish a school for destitute children in Jamaica, Nancy Prince went on fundraising missions in the United States. She also self-published the pamphlet *The West Indies: Being a Description of the Islands, Progress of Christianity, Education, and Liberty Among the Colored Population Generally*. All of Prince's hard work for what became the Free Labor School in Kingston, Jamaica, was sabotaged by corrupt co-workers.  In 1843, Prince, whose health continued its steady decline, returned to Boston for good. She fell on hard times, and at one point lived on the kindness of friends. Not wanting to be a total charity case, she decided to write her memoirs, hoping she would be able to support herself at least in part from the sales. This book, ***A Narrative of the Life of and Travels of Mrs. Nancy Prince***, which contained her 1841 pamphlet, came out in 1850. A second edition was published in 1853, followed by a third in 1856. To date, nothing is known of Nancy Prince's later life or the circumstances of her death.  28. **H. Cordelia Ray** (1852?-1916) was "well-born, well bred and enjoyed all the advantages accruing to her position in a family where birth, breeding and culture were regarded as important assets," wrote **Hallie Q. Brown** in ***Homespun Heroines and Other Women of Distinction***.  Considered a cultivated, virtuous woman, Ray was born in New York City, one of seven children of Charlotte Augusta Burrough and Charles B. Ray, a blacksmith turned Congregational minister and leading abolitionist. Henrietta Cordelia Ray was named after a dynamo: her father's first wife, Henrietta Green Regulus Ray, co-founder of the African Dorcas Association, a support group for the Free African Schools, and first president of the New York Female Literary Society (also known as the Colored Ladies Literary Society). Henrietta's aspirations were noble: she grew up to be a teacher. After graduating from the University of the City of New York (1891) and the Sauvener School of Languages, she taught for many years in the New York City public school system.  Ray hoped to also make her mark in literature. She gained some major notice as a writer in April 1876. The occasion was the unveiling of the Freedmen's Monument in Washington, D.C. for which Frederick Douglass delivered the keynote address and where William E. Matthews read Ray's ode, "Lincoln." The second in a series of important family events, the occasion followed the celebration of Henrietta's older sister Charlotte's graduation from Howard University, making her the first black woman to earn a law degree from that University in 1872.  Years later, H. Cordelia Ray received praise for the biography of her father which she co-authored with her sister Florence: *Sketch of the Life of Rev. Charles B. Ray*, published in 1887. By then, Ray's poetry had appeared in several periodicals, which encouraged her efforts to publish a complete collection. *Sonnets* was published in 1893 and ***Poems,*** which contains *Sonnets,* came out in 1910. About Ray's poetry, Hallie Q. Brown wrote that it "may be likened to the quaint, touching music a shell murmuring of the sea, a faint yet clear note sounding all the pathos and beauty of undying life."  29. **Frank Rollin** (1847-1901), was born Frances Anne Rollin; "Frank" was her nickname. She was the oldest of the five famous Rollin sisters: daughters of Margaretta and William Rollin, a successful lumber merchant. The Rollin sisters grew up in a mansion in Charleston, South Carolina, where all received excellent educations and had a presence in the social and political life of black Charleston. But it was in Boston that Frank made history.  Frances Rollin was living in Boston in 1868 where she associated with historian William Cooper Nell, activist Lewis Hayden, educator and diarist Charlotte Forten, and Richard T. Greener, first black graduate of Harvard College. Rollin's social life included attending readings by Ralph Waldo Emerson and other famous figures. She also was an avid reader and writer. In her diary - one of the oldest by a southern black woman, she noted the books she read which included: ***Behind the Scenes; or, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House*** by **Elizabeth** **Keckley**.  The thing that most occupied Rollin's time during her days in Boston was her research on South Carolina. She worked tirelessly on an authorized biography of the physician, abolitionist, emigrationist, military officer, and politician Martin Delany, who had been of help to her in a successful discrimination suit she filed against a South Carolina steamer. Initially, Delany was going to subsidize the book, but when he hit upon financial troubles, he was unable to send Rollin the expected monies. Supporting herself with bits and pieces of work (including sewing), Rollin pressed on with the project, and was successful in securing a publisher. This book, ***The Life and Services of Martin R. Delany***, was published in 1868, was the first biography of a freeborn African-American man. Because Frances used her nickname Frank, for a time people thought the author was a man.  Shortly after *The Life and Services of Martin R. Delany* came out, Rollin returned to Columbia, South Carolina, where her family had moved after the Civil War. There, she took a job as a clerk in the law office of Union Army veteran and politician William James Whipper, nephew of the Philadelphia activist William Whipper.  Frances and William married soon after she started working for him and the couple had five children, only three of whom lived into adulthood: Leigh Whipper, who became an actor of note; Winifred who became a teacher in Washington, D.C.; and Ionia who graduated from Howard Medical School in 1903, and in 1931 founded the Whipper Home for Unwed Mothers.  30. **Amanda Smith** (1837-1915) Abecame known as one of the most remarkable preachers of any race or any age." These words are from a sketch of the woman born Amanda Berry by **Hallie Q. Brown** in her book ***Homespun Heroines and Other Women of Distinction*** (1926). This woman whom Brown so admired was born in slavery in Long Green, Maryland. Her liberator was her father, Samuel Berry: after having purchased himself, he purchased this wife, Mariam, and their five children. Eventually, the Berry family expanded to include eight more children, and moved to a farm in York County, Pennsylvania, where their home became an Underground Railroad station.  In 1854, at the age of seventeen, Amanda Berry married Calvin Devine. The couple lived in New York City, where Amanda worked as a domestic servant, and had two children, one of whom died in infancy. Life with Calvin, a drunkard, was fraught with misery, but Amanda was not crushed. This was largely due to the spiritual conversion she experienced during the Great Awakening in 1856.  Not long after the outbreak of the Civil War, Calvin Devine joined the Union Army, and was killed in battle in 1863. Amanda's next husband was a coachman named James Smith. Philadelphia became Amanda's new home, and she continued to earn a living at the only trade she knew: domestic service. The African Methodist Episcopal Church became the denomination she embraced, and she worshiped at Mother Bethel, the denomination's cornerstone church where her husband was a deacon.  Amanda knew more sorrow during her second marriage. The three children she had with James died very young. Moreover, James Smith proved to be a disappointment as a husband and as a Christian. Ironically, it was during her husband's falling away from the church that Amanda was called to preach. After James' death, Amanda Smith's decision to obey the call in 1869 initially met with much resistance from the A.M.E. clergy.  When she began, Amanda Smith preached primarily in New York City and New Jersey, steadily amassing a strong following. By 1870, evangelism was her only "job." By the end of the decade, she was known as far north as Maine and as far south as Tennessee. By 1890, Smith had brought souls to Christ and strengthened fellow believers in England, India, Liberia and Sierra Leone, emerging as one of the A.M.E. Church's most effective missionaries, and widening the way for more black women to answer the call to preach.  In 1892, Smith settled near Chicago, Illinois, in the temperance community of Harvey. There, she began writing her life story, which was published in 1893: ***An Autobiography: The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith, the Colored Evangelist***. Smith was motivated, in large part, to produce her autobiography to raise money for her new mission: the care of homeless black children. With the proceeds from her book and donations from supporters, Smith was able to open a small orphanage in Harvey in 1899: the Amanda Smith Industrial Home.  After so many years of toil, in 1912, when she was in her mid-seventies, Amanda Berry Smith moved to Florida. She did so at the urging of a wealthy white businessman, George Sebring, who had long admired her work. This man provided Smith with a lovely home and saw to it that she had no want or worries for the remainder of her days.  31. **Effie Waller Smith** (1879-1960) was the third of four children born to Frank Waller and Sibbie Ratliff, both former slaves. Home was a farm in Chloe Creek, Kentucky, a few miles away from Pikeville, and the Waller household was one in which God was heavily praised and education highly prized.  After completing the eighth grade at a local school, like her older siblings Alfred and Rosa, Effie attended Kentucky Normal School for Colored Persons in Frankfort, where between 1900 and 1902 she trained to be a teacher. Little is known about her teaching career except that she taught school off and on for more than a dozen years, sometimes in Kentucky and sometimes in Tennessee. Of Effie Waller's writing life, we know a little bit more.  Several of Smith's poems had been published in local papers by 1902 so that in 1904, her club of admirers and well-wishers celebrated her first volume of verse, ***Songs of the Months***, released by a vanity press in New York City. The 110 poems in this collection touched a range of subjects, including nature, romantic love, patriotism, and not least of all, the months.  The same year that *Songs of the Months* came out, Effie Waller married a man named Lyss Cockrell who quit the marriage when it was very young, and whom Effie divorced soon after he made his exit. In 1908, she tried matrimony again with former classmate, Charles Smith. This marriage, which produced one child who died in infancy, was also brief, with Effie filing for divorce before the year was out.  During all the personal trials of her life, Effie Waller Smith kept at her writing, even getting three short stories published in *Putnam's*. In 1909, two more volumes of her verse appeared. The first was ***Rhymes from the Cumberland***, which offers meditations and remembrances of the Kentucky-Virginia Cumberland Mountains area and musings on religion and romance. In the second volume, *Rosemary and Pansies*, "many of the poems are somber and subdued yet definite and conclusive as they examine issues and situations in life. There is a mood maintained throughout that sometimes delves into the mystical." These are the words of David Deskins, who has assiduously searched for information and provided insights into the life and mind of this rather unknown bard.  In 1917, when she was thirty-eight, Effie Waller Smith appeared in print for the last time: the publication was the prestigious magazine *Harper's*, and the work was a sonnet, "Autumn Winds." After this, the Effie Waller Smith the writer apparently disappeared, though the woman lived another forty years, the bulk of which she spent in Wisconsin where she relocated in the mid-1920s and where she raised Ruth, the daughter of a deceased friend whom she adopted in the late 1920s.  32. **Maria W. Stewart (1803-1879)**, neé Maria Miller, was born free in Hartford, Connecticut. Orphaned by age five, she was the indentured servant of a cleric until the age of fifteen. At the end of her indenture, she supported herself as a domestic servant, and at some point moved to Boston. There, in 1826, she married James W. Stewart, a veteran of the War of 1812, who was an independent shipping agent. Maria and James were married by Reverend Thomas Paul, founder of the African Baptist Church. Among the couple's other notable acquaintances in Boston's black middle class, was the activist David Walker; and it is believed that James Stewart played a part in the smuggling into the South of Walker's famous *Appeal*, which was published in 1829. This was the year that James W. Stewart died.  During her period of mourning, Maria Stewart had to contend with white businessmen, allegedly executors of her husband's estate, who swindled her out of her inheritance. In the wake of this loss, Maria Stewart returned to the job market, and to the work she knew best: domestic servant.  Maria Stewart's life broadened and intensified following a religious experience which filled her with a desire to be, as she put it, a "warrior" for her people. So it was that when in 1831, William Lloyd Garrison issued a call for black women to contribute items to his newspaper the *Liberator*, Stewart responded with the essay "Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality, the Sure Foundation on Which We Must Build." Other meditations from Stewart's pen flowed in the pages of the *Liberator*, and soon her voice was heard not only in print, but also from the podium.  Stewart's first public speaking engagement was on April 28, 1832, before the African-American Female Intelligence Society of America. A few months later, on September 21, 1832, at a New England Anti-Slavery Society meeting in Boston's Franklin Hall, Stewart spoke on the evils of slavery and the oppression of free blacks. With this speech, Maria W. Stewart made history: the first woman to speak on political issues before an audience composed of men and women and blacks and whites. In subsequent addresses, Stewart spoke about not only race matters but also about women's rights.  Stewart's ideas and her eloquence have been preserved in *Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart* (1832), an enlarged edition of which Stewart self-published in 1879. In 1835 she published ***Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart***.  In the mid-1830s Maria W. Stewart left Boston and began what was to be a long career as a schoolteacher, first in New York City, then in Baltimore, Maryland, and finally, in Washington, D.C., where her history-making friends and acquaintances included **Elizabeth Keckley**.  33. **Susie King Taylor** (1848-1912), who was born in slavery, spent her early days in Savannah, Georgia, with a grandmother, while her mother and siblings, also enslaved, lived roughly thirty-five miles away on the Isle of Wight in Liberty County.  Susie's grandmother saw to it that she received some schooling, arranging for her to take lessons with a free woman. Susie's grandmother also saw to it that the child got some "freedom lessons," for Susie often went to secret "freedom meetings" with her grandmother.  When the Union troops raided Fort Pulaski in April 1862, fourteen-year-old Susie was among the dozens of blacks the Union soldiers moved to Georgia's St. Simon's Island. There, a school was set up at Gaston Bluff, and Susie was found sufficiently literate to serve as its teacher.  It was on St. Simon's Island that Susie met her first husband. He was a former slave, named Edward King, who was a sergeant in the first black regiment formed in the South, the First South Carolina Volunteers, later known as the 33rd regiment.  When the Union forces evacuated St. Simon's, Susie King followed the army to Camp Saxton in Beaufort, offering her services as a laundress. Soon, she was assigned other duties. For a time she did clerical work. When she showed herself a capable assistant to camp doctors, she found herself serving as a nurse. In the course of her nursing duties, she worked with Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross.  After the war, the Kings settled in Savannah, Georgia, where Edward worked as a longshoreman and Susie opened a school in their home. Soon, tragedy struck: Edward died from wounds suffered in a job-related accident. Susie, pregnant at the time, returned to Liberty County. Twice she tried to operate a school, but in the end, she turned to domestic work to support herself. A job as a laundress to a family that spent summers in the New England opened the way for Susie to move North.  In the mid-1870s, Susie King settled in Boston, Massachusetts, where she met and married Russell L. Taylor, and where she wrote and self-published ***Reminiscences of My Life in Camp: With the U.S. 33rd Colored United States Troops*** (1902).  34. **Clara Ann Thompson** (1869-1949) was one of John Henry and Clara Jane Gray Thompson's three children who had a passion for poetry. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, once enslaved in Virginia, raised their children (five in all) in Rossmoyne, Ohio, not far from Cincinnati. Except for a bit of teaching away from her hometown, Clara Ann Thompson spent the entirety of her adult life in Rossmoyne, living, along with her sister **Priscilla Jane Thompson**, with an older brother, Garland Yancey Thompson. Clara's major avocation and only vocation was writing poetry and holding readings. In 1908, several years after Priscilla self-published her first collection of poems, ***Ethiope Lays*** (1900) and brother Aaron self-published his two volumes, *Morning Sun* (1899) and *Echoes of Spring*(1901), Clara self-published her book of close to forty significantly religious poems, ***Songs from the Wayside***. In 1926, her second collection, ***A Garland of Poems***, was published by a company in Boston.  **35. Priscilla Jane Thompson** (1871-1942), like her older sister, **Clara Ann Thompson**, lived her entire life in Rossmoyne, Ohio, and never married. Also like Clara, and their brother Aaron, Priscilla Jane wrote poetry. She self-published two volumes of verse. The first ***Ethiope Lays*** (1900) was an attempt she said, "to picture the real side of my race . . . their patience, fortitude and forbearance." Her second volume ***Gleanings of Quiet Hours*** (1907) contained many poems from the first.  36. **Bethany Veney** (?-?), born in slavery in Virginia, never knew her father and lost her mother when she was about nine years old. The rest of her childhood was a river of sadness, and as a young woman she lost the man she dearly loved and with whom she had a child.  In 1858, a Mr. G.J. Adams of Providence, Rhode Island, purchased Veney for the sole purpose of freeing her, and she began a fruitful life in the North. Known as "Aunt Betty," Veney was in her seventies when she dictated her life story, probably to the M.W.G. who wrote the preface to ***The Narrative of Bethany Veney: A Slave Woman*** (1889).  37. **Phillis Wheatley** (c. 1753-1784), who is believed to have been a Fulani of Gambia, was named after the slave schooner *Phillis* that hauled her to Boston Harbor in 1761. At age seven or eight, she became the property of a local tailor, John Wheatley, who later claimed that, "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 of Parts of the Sacred Writings." What's more, having mastered English, Phillis Wheatley was keen to learn Latin.  John Wheatley's statement on his servant's brilliance is dated November 14, 1772. This statement was part of the front matter to Phillis Wheatley's small collection of verse: ***Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*** , which was published in England in September 1773. With the book's publication, Phillis Wheatley became the first African living in the British colonies to have a book published, and the second American woman to have a book of verse published. Phillis Wheatley became quite a sensation, especially in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and she was eventually freed, but the rest of her life was not full of ease.  In 1778, Phillis married John Peters and entered a troubled existence. Early in their marriage the couple had two children, both of whom were dead by 1784. At that point, Phillis Wheatley Peters, around age thirty-one, was doing domestic work at a low rate boarding house, and was pregnant again. The delivery was difficult; Phillis Wheatley died in the process and her baby died a few hours later. All that was left of this young genius's presence on this planet was her verse: her famous book, and poems she had once hoped to include in a second book of verse. |