

**The Writings of Ladies' Abolitionist Societies in Britain,
1825–1833
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"In taking a view of the means which may be employed with advantage to effect the mitigation and ultimate extinction of NEGRO SLAVERY, it would be unpardonable to overlook THE LADIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, of all classes, and especially of the upper ranks, who have now an opportunity of exerting themselves beneficially in behalf of the most deeply injured of the human race."¹

On April 8, 1825, in the home of Lucy Townsend, the wife of an Anglican clergyman, forty four women gathered to establish the first women's anti-slavery society in Britain. Its initial name was the Ladies Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves, but later adopted the name Female Society for Birmingham. This society was committed to the "Amelioration of the Condition of the Unhappy Children of Africa, and especially of Female Negro Slaves."² This formation preceded that of the first abolition society in the United States, the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, by seven years.³

The Birmingham society actively helped other societies form through various religious network connections. They "acted more like a national than a local society, actively promoting the foundation of local women's societies throughout England, and in Wales and Ireland,

¹ *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, London, 1824, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103700186).

² Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992), 43–44.

³ Wendy Hamand Venet, *Neither Ballots nor Bullets: Women Abolitionists and the Civil War* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 4.

and supplying them with information and advice."⁴ The network of these societies created throughout the 1820s and 1830s moved the women's abolitionist movement from individual convictions to a concerted group effort. National anti-slavery activist George Thompson said concerning women's abolitionist organizations: "Where they existed, they did everything. . . . In a word they formed the cement of the whole Antislavery building -- without their aid we never should have been united."⁵ Between 1825 and 1833, seventy-three women's organizations were formed throughout the British Isles.⁶

These women's organizations had one main purpose: to diffuse information so as to arouse public sentiment. Some of the men's auxiliaries thought that women would be ideal for this task: "The peculiar texture of her mind, her strong feelings and quick sensibilities, especially qualify her, not only to sympathize with suffering, but also to plead for the oppressed, and there is no calculating the extent and importance of the moral reformations which might be effected through the combined exertion of her gentle influence and steady resolution."⁷ Women, it was believed, could feel the pain of the slave, and could help to share that feeling with others to aid their cause.

Women were also seen as good candidates to focus on arousing public pressure for abolition because they were not allowed in the political arena of the time. They could not directly influence Parliamentary decisions. It was only after the debate left Parliament

⁴ Midgley, *Women Against Slavery*, 46.

⁵ George Thompson's letter to Anne Knight as quoted in *ibid.*, 44.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷ *Appeal to the Hearts and Consciences of British Women* (Leicester, 1828) *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS4103708542).

and appealed to the public that women could share their voice and "could help swell the chorus of public support for emancipation."⁸

In the United States, fairs and petitions were most popular because the issue of emancipation had more immediacy for the American abolitionists than their British counterparts as the issue was local rather than abroad. Most of the British women writers had never actually seen a black person, slave or free, whereas American abolitionists had interactions and even varying degrees of relationships with both slave and free blacks. Women in the United States were not just fighting slavery as a moral cause, but also for practical daily purposes. For example, they fought the legality of interracial marriage. This particular point brought some ridicule on these women as they were often accused of being unable to secure a white husband, and so looking for a husband of another color. Women in the United States also had to decide whether or not to allow free blacks to join their abolitionist societies. Some were reluctant to do so and it was pointed out to them that their actions were counterintuitive to their cause. The British women did not have to deal with issues such as interracial marriage and inclusion of blacks in their societies.⁹

While American women's abolitionist societies held fairs and focused on petitions, the disbursement of information in Britain was largely made in the form of pamphlets or tracts, as well as societies' annual reports, many of which were lent to numerous people, one

⁸ Karen I. Halberleben, *Women's Participation in the British Anti-Slavery Movement: 1824-1825*, (New York, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), 18-19.

⁹ Louis Ruchames "Race, Marriage, and Abolition in Massachusetts," *The Journal of Negro History* 40, no. 3 (Jul., 1955): 257.

after the other, to gain more readers.¹⁰ In these documents, five main themes that play to the readers' senses emerge: the horrid conditions of the slave, the family, religion, the need for immediacy, and a call to practical action such as abstaining from purchasing slave-produced goods. This paper will discuss these five tactics British women writers used to appeal to the emotions of their readers.

The pamphlets often would begin with a description of the horrid conditions of the slaves in the West Indies. Attempts at describing the enormity of the situation were used by showing numbers of those enslaved: "In the Colonies of Great Britain there are, at this moment, upwards of 830,000 human beings in a state of degrading personal slavery; the absolute property of their master, who may sell or transfer them at his discretion, and who may brand them, if he pleases, by means of a hot iron, as cattle are branded in this country."¹¹

Sometimes the opening descriptions discussed the working conditions of the slaves: The slaves were, "during crop time, which lasts between four and five months in the year, *to labor half of every night at the mill, or the whole of every other night, as well as all the day*"¹² In addition, "To make sugar the poor slaves in crop-time,

¹⁰ Beverly Gordon, "Playing at Being Powerless: New England Ladies Fairs, 1830-1930," *The Massachusetts Review* 27, no. 1 (Spring, 1986): 48; Anti-Slavery Society (Great Britain), *Anti-Slavery Ladies Association*, (London, 182-?), pg 2, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103700364).

¹¹ *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, 1.

¹² Elizabeth Heyrick, *No British Slavery, or, An Invitation to the People to Put a Speedy End to it*, Bradford, 1825, 5, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103713867).

work both night and day . . ."13 The middle class women authoring the information knew that people, especially those of the working class, would be able to identify with the long toiling hours, and feel pity for their fellow humans who worked even longer hours and with no pay.

Descriptions of treatments and tortures were also commonly used: "The colonial laws arm the master . . . with a power to punish his slaves to a certain extent (generally that of thirty-nine lashes,) for any offence, or for no offence."¹⁴ Others reported: "Some had received, others, were yet to receive--ONE THOUSAND LASHES,--AND WERE CONDEMNED TO BE WORKED IN CHAINS DURING THE RESIDUE OF THEIR LIVES!"¹⁵

These awful descriptions of the conditions under which slaves were forced to work, were used to heighten the sympathies of the reader, and try to regain their interests, especially if they had been appealed to for the abolitionist cause many times before.

Since many of the women writers were addressing other women in their writings (although some writings were intended for both sexes to read), descriptions of family life for slaves was frequently used to draw out sympathies. Many told stories of marriages being torn apart by slave auctions. One such example read: "The slaves, being in the eye of the law mere chattels, are liable

¹³ "What Does Your Sugar Cost?" *A Cottage Conversation on the Subject of British Negro Slavery*, London, 1826, 9, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103704193).

¹⁴ *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, 1.

¹⁵ Elizabeth Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition, or , An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest and Most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery*, London, 1824, 43, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103691627).

to be seized and sold for their master's debts, without any regard to the family ties which may be broken. . . . Marriage is protected, in the case of slaves, by no legal sanction, and cannot therefore be said to exist among them . . ."16

Some even went as far as to tell dramatic stories of a slave dying due to heartache after the sale of his family: "Moreover, these defenseless creatures, (who have feelings as tender and affectionate as any of ourselves) are often separated and sold from their wives and children, which they take so deeply to heart as sometimes to pine away and die in consequence."17

Another told the story of a slave woman named Rosa, who, being pregnant, was forced to work anyway. She was beaten day after day, and finally, when the child was born, it was born dead with injuries to its head. It is assumed from the story that these injuries were because of the beatings forced upon the mother.18

Pamphlets contained many such stories. The same one that told the story of Rosa also described a slave auction: "They are sold to pay their master's debts; if he wants money he may take the children, and even the mother, and sell them before the eyes of the agonized father. If the late recommendations of our Government should even take place, the daughter at sixteen in Trinidad, and at fourteen in the thirteen chartered colonies, may, if her master pleases, be sold away from her parents when *she most needs them to protect her*, and when the vilest of men may choose to buy her."19

16 *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, " 1.

17 Elizabeth Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 4.

18 "*What Does Your Sugar Cost?*", 11.

19 *Ibid.*, 8-9.

These stories, though perhaps exaggerated, held some truth and were used to play on the emotions of the good English woman, who loved and upheld her family. How could she live in such peace with her family and not feel guilt and the tragedies faced by slave families at the hands of her British countrymen? The call was then issued by the writers to not rest until all slave women could "press a *free-born infant* to her bosom."²⁰

Along with family, religion was a major motivator. In fact, the abolitionist movement overall was predominantly supported by the Evangelicals and the Quakers, although there were other denominations involved as well.²¹ It only makes sense, therefore, to use religion to pull at the reader's heartstrings.

The issue of religion was divided into three arguments: abuse of the Sabbath, religion being withheld from the slaves, and that the institution of slavery itself was against Christian principles.

It was reported by the pamphleteers that slaves were forced to work on the Sabbath day. "[The slaves] are usually obligated to labor for their maintenance on the Sunday; and as that day is also their market-day, it is of necessity a day of worldly occupation, and much exertion."²² The Christian population was outraged by this because of the commandment to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. The Female Society of Birmingham, West-Bromwich, Wednesbury and Walsall declared in one of their writings: "The Divine commandment

²⁰ *Ladies' Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves*, Wednesbury, 1825, 2, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries, (DS103718105); *Ladies' Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves*, Birmingham, 1825, 1, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103718025).

²¹ Halberleben, *Women's Participation in the British Anti-Slavery Movement*, 9.

²² *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, 1.

says, Keep holy the Sabbath-day.--Our Colonial system *insists*, that the slave shall not keep holy the Sabbath-day. The commandment says again, six days shalt thou labor;--the Colonial system declares, seven days shalt thou labor, in ceaseless uninterrupted succession . . ." ²³ These women declared that the slave was denied the Sabbath because their masters believed that they would not make proper use of it. They questioned this by asking if God's laws were to change to match the desires of humans.²⁴

"Should they, by great exertion and management, procure on [the Sabbath] some little interval of leisure, they are not suffered to attend a place of worship, or even to engage in religious duties in their own miserable habitations, without a special license from their task-masters, which is often refused--*and they may be severely flogged if they dare to worship God without their masters' permission!*" ²⁵ The authors insisted that slaves were denied any form of Christian education, or even the freedom to worship.

Religion was also used as one of the abolitionists' main arguments against the institution of slavery itself. Claims occurred frequently that it was in opposition to nature, reason and religion.²⁶ "We are surely called upon alike by sound policy and Christian

²³ Female Society, for Birmingham, West-Bromwich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, *Ladies' Society, for the Relief of Negro Slaves: Card Explanatory of the Contents of the Society's Work Bags*, London, 1826, 2, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103712705).

²⁴ Ladies' Association for Calne, Melksham, Devizes, and Their Respective Neighborhoods in Aid of the Cause of Emancipation, *The Third Annual Report of the Ladies' Association for Salisbury, Calne, Melksham, Devizes, &c., in Cause of Negro Emancipation: With a List of Subscribers*, Vol. 1, Calne, 1828, 10-11, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103715283).

²⁵ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 4.

²⁶ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 30.

principle, to do all in our power to remove this stain from our national character, and to free ourselves from the awful responsibility that must attach to us, if, by our supine-ness, we permit an evil to exist which, by our active interference, we may have it in our power to mitigate or remove."²⁷ How could good Christians, supposedly like those in Britain, allow this horrid practice to continue? They called on the public to "raise one united, determined and solemn protest against the repetition of these barbarities, which blaspheme the sacred name of justice,--and seem to imprecate Almighty vengeance."²⁸

Above all, the women pamphleteers admonished their fellow countrymen and women to follow the Golden Rule: "...nothing can be more contrary to that DIVINE LAW, which commands us to LOVE OUR NEIGHBOUR AS OURSELVES, and to DO UNTO OTHERS WHATSOEVER WE WOULD THAT THEY SHOULD DO UNTO US."²⁹

The Evangelicals and the Quakers had won a bit of success in 1807 when Parliament passed the Abolition Act. This act ended the transport of slaves on British ships, and made it illegal to import new slaves into British colonies, at least on paper.³⁰ This partial abolition was not enough for the abolitionists. They desired total emancipation. "An *immediate* emancipation then, is the object to be aimed at;--it is more wise and rational,--more politic and safe, as well as more just and humane,--than gradual emancipation."³¹ The

²⁷ *A Picture of Colonial Slavery, in the year 1828, Addressed Especially to the Ladies of Great Britain*, London, 1828, 7, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103692807).

²⁸ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 44.

²⁹ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 8.

³⁰ Karen I. Halberleben, *Women's Participation in the British Anti-Slavery Movement*, 14.

³¹ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 39.

common idea amongst those in Parliament was the idea of "gradual" emancipation, where slowly slavery would be weeded out in small steps. The women's societies of Great Britain declared that this was not good enough. The most prominent woman pamphleteer, Elizabeth Heyrick, wrote in her pamphlet, "Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition, or, An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest and most effectual means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery,": "But must it therefore follow, by any inductions of common sense, that emancipation out of the gripe of a robber or an assassin,--out of the jaws of a shark or a tiger, must be gradual? Must it, therefore, follow, that the wretched victim of slavery must always remain in slavery?--that emancipation must be so gradual, that the blessings of freedom shall never be tasted by him who has endured all the curses of slavery, but be reserved for his posterity alone?"³² In the same pamphlet she also proclaims "The slave holder knew very well, that his prey would be secure, so long as the abolitionists could be cajoled into a demand for *gradual* instead of *immediate* abolition. He knew very well, that the contemplation of a *gradual* emancipation, would beget a *gradual indifference to emancipation itself*. He knew very well, that even the *wise* and the *good*, may, by habit and familiarity, be brought to endure and tolerate almost anything."³³

Those in favor of immediate emancipation believed that the gradual emancipation would do nothing but make the institution of slavery stronger. "The very able mover of the question in Parliament last year, proposed that our colonial slavery should be suffered--'to expire of itself,'--to die a natural death.--But a natural death, it will never die.--It must be crushed at once, or not at all. While the

³² Ibid., 20.

³³ Ibid., 15-16.

abolitionists are endeavoring *gradually* to enfeeble and kill it by inches, it will discover the means of reinforcing its strengths, and will soon defy all the puny attacks of its assailants."³⁴

Those with the gradualist approach believed that if the slaves were all immediately freed at once, there would be social unrest and perhaps uprisings against the slave owners. The women refuted this belief by saying: ". . . from the facts which have come to our knowledge of the peaceable demeanor of liberated Slaves, we should be inclined to believe, that by giving them their freedom, and paying them wages for their labor, their gratitude would ensure fidelity to their masters, whilst their own interest would continually urge them to work with more alacrity and cheerfulness."³⁵ They admitted that they did not know of any immediate danger, but that the circumstance above was what they imagined would happen from what they had read in the newspapers.

These women blamed those in Parliament who supported the gradual approach claiming that they were not gaining any ground, but rather losing it. "*Unsuccessful opposition, to crimes of every description, invariably increases their power and malignity.*"³⁶ Truth and justice, they said, would not be heard if not spoken boldly, and that the government and slave owners would have to concede to their demands if only they proclaimed them wholeheartedly. They also accused them of asking too little, out of fear of losing it all. Rather, Ms. Heyrick declared this sentiment had driven them into the danger of losing all of their requests because they started by asking too little

³⁴ Ibid., 38.

³⁵ *The Fourth Annual Report of the Sheffield Ladies Anti-Slavery Society for 1829*, Vol 2, Sheffield, 1829, 5, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS103715517).

³⁶ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 39.

and had no room at all for bargaining.³⁷ The women, however, were not interested in compromise. They wanted immediate emancipation, and nothing less.

They used the idea of immediate emancipation to call out the public: "This method of eradicating slavery will admonish governments that no force can resist the force of public principle, when vigorously exerted;--that neither fleets nor armies, nor protecting duties, can uphold oppression, when the people have virtue enough to resist it. It will afford to other tyrants, besides West-Indian, a most salutary warning of the weakness as well as wickedness of cruelty, by shewing them how suddenly the tyrant's rod may be converted into an instrument of punishing the tyrant . . ."38 The women were calling out their fellow citizens to pressure their government so that all could see that slavery would not be tolerated.

Perhaps the largest call of the women pamphleteers to the public was the call for abstinence. In 1791, a boycott began that lasted two years. This boycott was on slave grown sugar. Approximately 300,000 people participated in this boycott.³⁹ When the women's societies formed, they again called for a boycott. It was the one practical action that women could take against West Indian slavery, as they were not permitted to be in Parliament. However, they were admitted to their local shopkeeper's and could choose

³⁷ Ibid., 32-35.

³⁸ *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties is Best Entitled to Freedom?: The Slave or the Slave-Holder?: From an Impartial Examination of the Conduct of Each Party, at the Bar of Public Justice*, London, 1824, 26-27. *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University Libraries (DS100144690).

³⁹ Louis Taylor Merrill, "The English Campaign for Abolition of the Slave Trade," *The Journal of Negro History* 30, no. 4 (Oct., 1945): 394; Karen I. Halberleben, *Women's Participation in the British Anti-Slavery Movement*, 12.

where and how they spent their family's money. Ms. Heyrick encourages her readers saying:

Is there nothing to be *done*, as well as said? Are there no tests to prove our sincerity,--no sacrifices to be offered in confirmation of our zeal?--Yes, there is *one*,--(but it is in itself so small and insignificant that it seems almost burlesque to dignify it with the name of sacrifice)--it is ABSTINENCE FROM THE USE OF WEST INDIAN PRODUCTIONS, *sugar*, especially, in the cultivation of which slave labor is chiefly occupied. Small, however, and insignificant as the sacrifice may appear,--it would, at once, give the death blow to West Indian slavery. When there was no longer a market for the productions of *slave labor*, the, and *not till then*, will the slaves be emancipated.⁴⁰

The abstinence of sugar from the West Indies, they said, could in fact put an end to slavery. Charging their readers, they wrote: "Will you continue to purchase *West India sugar*, when told on good authority, that the refusing to purchase it is the *only means now in our power, of putting an end to BRITISH SLAVERY?*"⁴¹ They hoped that it would become the general approach to shopping to reject any sugar from the West Indies⁴² and claimed that if one tenth of people would

⁴⁰ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 6-7.

⁴¹ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 5.

⁴² Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 48.

abstain from the use of West India Sugar, there would be an end to slavery.⁴³ The women recognized that abstaining from sugar seemed but a simple way to fight for emancipation, but argued for its full implementation nonetheless. "Zeal and promptitude, harmonious combination, and determined resolution, will be requisite to give energy and efficacy to the measure. . . . They will never emancipate their slaves till they see us united and firm in the *rejection of their sugar*."⁴⁴

Whether this was actually possible, one cannot know, but the women's organizations believed it completely: "Think, but for a moment, at what a trifling sacrifice the redemption of *eight hundred thousand of our fellow creatures from the lowest condition of degradation and misery may be accomplished*. Abstinence from *one single article* of luxury would annihilate West Indian slavery!! But *abstinence*, it cannot be called;--we only need to substitute *East India*, for *West India sugar*,--and the British atmosphere would be purified at once, from the poisonous infection of slavery."⁴⁵ Substitution of East Indian sugar, produced by free laborers, was often suggested, however, if no substitute was available, women were encouraged to not purchase any sugar at all.⁴⁶

Even in regards to sugar, the women played to the emotions of women by giving testimonies of people who stated that they could not look on West India sugar without seeing it as "stained with human blood" from the slave labor.⁴⁷ By purchasing this "blood-stained"

⁴³ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 6.; *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties is Best Entitled to Freedom?*, 23.

⁴⁴ *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties is Best Entitled to Freedom?*, 27-28.

⁴⁵ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 49.

⁴⁶ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 8.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

sugar, they claimed that all Britons were guilty of upholding the institution of slavery.⁴⁸ In fact, they went so far as to claim that eating West Indian sugar was equal to breaking the law and eating stolen goods, as the slaves who produced the sugar were indeed stolen from their homes for the purpose of making the sugar.⁴⁹ The cost of sugar, they wrote, was that of lives of men, women and children.⁵⁰

For those who professed to be abolitionists, abstinence of West Indian sugar was to be the "test of their sincerity."⁵¹ Sugar purchased from the slave owners was seen as supporting slavery itself, and could not be tolerated from an abolitionist. "If they who profess to wish for the termination of slavery would only give these proofs of their sincerity, that grievous scourge of humanity would reach the close of its existence at no very distant day."⁵² The women hoped that friends and neighbors, seeing the example set by and the persuasion of the abolitionist ladies, would too join in the boycott.⁵³

They would often end with the charge: "And now my . . . countrywomen, will you unfeelingly turn aside . . . and care not for these things? Will you not only do nothing to deliver the poor negro out of the hands of these merciless tyrants--but will you, also,

⁴⁸ *Negro Slavery, to the Ladies of the United Kingdom*, 2.

⁴⁹ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 8; "What Does Your Sugar Cost?", 7.

⁵⁰ "What Does Your Sugar Cost?", 10.

⁵¹ *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties is Best Entitled to Freedom?*, 24.

⁵² *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties is Best Entitled to Freedom?*, 24.

⁵² Ladies' Association for Calne, Melksham, Devizes, and Their Respective Neighborhoods in Aid of the Cause of Emancipation, *The Third Annual Report of the Ladies' Association for Salisbury, Calne, Melksham, Devizes, &c.*, 8-9.

⁵³ Heyrick, *No British Slavery*, 8.

encourage and *bribe* them to keep him in slavery? This, you are all now doing by *purchasing West India sugar*."⁵⁴

Women's abolitionist organizations used their writings to spread the word of emancipation and arouse the public. Through these writings by women such as Elizabeth Heyrick and other abolitionist leaders, public pressure mounted on Parliament. In 1833, Parliament finally passed the Emancipation Bill, although the gradualist approach was the one accepted.⁵⁵

The women abolitionists of Britain did not cease in their crusade when emancipation was won for the British colonies. They continued to write and responded to the requests for support from their fellow abolitionists in the United States. In these writings, they continued to focus on slave conditions, religion, family matters and the idea of immediate emancipation.⁵⁶ One such writing was the *Stafford House Address* which included a petition of 562,848 signatures comprised in twenty six volumes.⁵⁷ These supporting actions continued until the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865.

Although the women's societies of Britain could not directly vote on the Emancipation Bill or directly influence votes in the United States, they accomplished their contribution through arousing public pressure through their writings. They played to the emotions of their

⁵⁴ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁵ Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free and Empire's Slaves* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 47.

⁵⁶ Harriet Elizabeth (Beecher) Stowe, *A Reply to 'The Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, to their Sisters, the Women of the United States of America*, London, 1863, 5, *Slavery and Anti Slavery*, Gale, Wichita State University, DS 4102939844.

⁵⁷ Venet, *Neither Ballots nor Bullets*, 69.

audience through describing slave working and living conditions, religion, the urgent need for immediate emancipation. They called their audience to action by challenging them to abstain from slave produced sugar. By playing to the local citizens' emotions and by giving them a practical way to boycott slave-produced goods, the women of the British abolitionist societies played an important role in the demise of slavery.