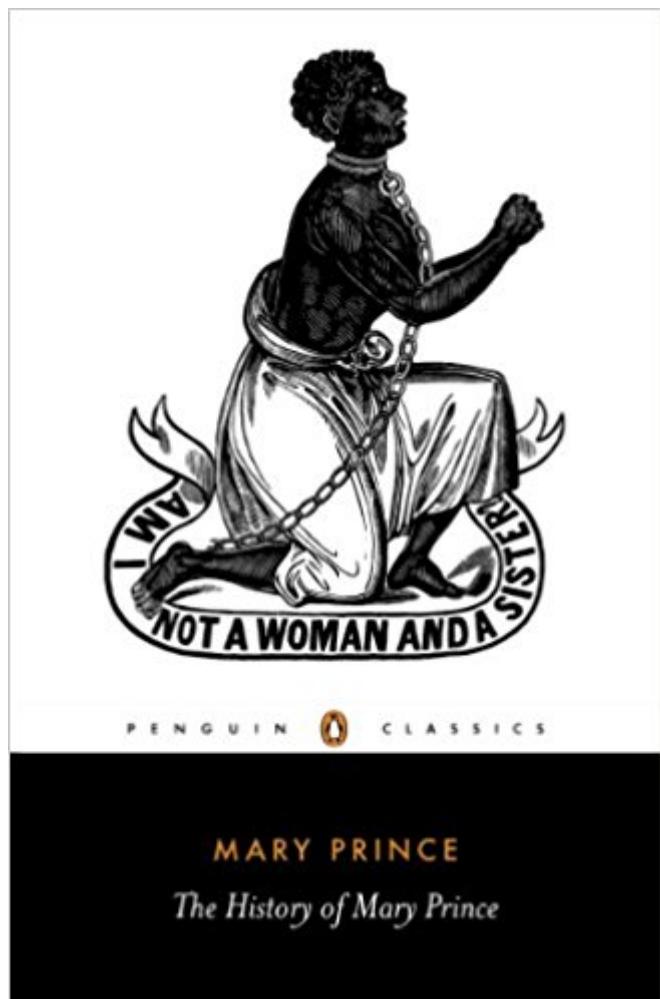


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The History Of Mary Prince (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

The History of Mary Prince (1831) was the first narrative of a black woman to be published in Britain. It describes Prince's sufferings as a slave in Bermuda, Turks Island and Antigua, and her eventual arrival in London with her brutal owner Mr Wood in 1828. Prince escaped from him and sought assistance from the Anti-Slavery Society, where she dictated her remarkable story to Susanna Strickland (later Moodie). A moving and graphic document, The History drew attention to the continuation of slavery in the Caribbean, despite an 1807 Act of Parliament officially ending the slave trade. It inspired two libel actions and ran into three editions in the year of its publication. This powerful rallying cry for emancipation remains an extraordinary testament to Prince's ill-treatment, suffering and survival. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

"I was born in Brackish-Pond, in Bermuda, on a farm belonging to Mr. Charles Myners. My mother was a household slave; and my father, whose name was Prince, was a sawyer belonging to Mr.

Trimmingham, a ship-builder at Crow-Lane." In this brief straight-forward, and often poetic narrative, Mary Prince describes her life of labor as a household and field slave was made heavier by illness and pain brought on the abject cruelty of her "masters." The text of this autobiography, the first by a female slave to be published, is prefaced and followed by letters written by British people attesting to the honor of her character and the truth of her testimony. Mary's heartfelt and unselfpitying life story, often so wrenching she cannot bring herself to remember or describe the details, contrasts sharply with the polite words of her white protectors' proclamations about the truth of her words. Moira Ferguson's excellent introduction and a critical afterword by Ziggi Alexander give a historical perspective to this lucid and powerful life-story. -- For great reviews of books for girls, check out Let's Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14. -- From 500 Great Books by Women; review by Jesse Larsen

Mary Prince (1788-1826) was born a slave in Bermuda. In 1815 she was sold to John Wood and taken to Antigua. Here she met Daniel James, a freeman, whom she married in 1826. In 1828, Prince was taken to England and claiming that the Woods had mistreated her she was allowed, under English law, to exercise her right to freedom and found employment as a domestic servant. Her story was published in 1831 and led to two libel trials. Sara Salih is Assistant Professor in English at the University of Toronto. She is the author of Judith Butler (Routledge 2002), and the editor, with Judith Butler, of The Judith Butler Reader (Blackwell, 2004). She is currently working on a book about representations of 'brown' women in England and Jamaica from the eighteenth century to the present day. Sara Salih is lecturer in English at Wadham College, Oxford. Sara Salih is Assistant Professor in English at the University of Toronto. She is the author of Judith Butler (Routledge 2002), and the editor, with Judith Butler, of The Judith Butler Reader (Blackwell, 2004). She is currently working on a book about representations of 'brown' women in England and Jamaica from the eighteenth century to the present day.

this is a good read but one must keep in mind the agenda of anti-slavery zealots.the new intro is informative and even admits the main problem with mary prince's narrative.namely, that her account may have been embellished by anti-slavery society activists in england.this is another narrative, like the early narrative of venture smith that was "related by" the enslaved person.those types of narratives are always suspect of having been embellished. even so, it is an important part of the historical record - especially regarding enslaved women in british held islands in the caribbean.i will use in university level african diaspora history courses that i teach. i am interested in how

students would compare prince's narrative with linda brent's (harriet jacobs) "incidents in the life of a slave girl".

Interesting cultural history but not much happens, and not written as well as some other personal histories of slavery. Still, worth reading to expand your understanding of how terrible the institution of slavery really was, and yet how people on both sides rose above it.

This is an excellent memoir, albeit painful to read in certain parts. This is a must-read for history buffs--particularly those interested in the Caribbean and the system of slavery in the British colonies.

Mary Prince dictated her history to a white woman in England, where she finally claimed her freedom after a life of horrendous abuse under several masters. Her narration is part of an anti-slavery pamphlet that contains other fascinating documents as well: a letter from her last master viciously defaming her character and a presentation of evidence to refute this calumny by Thomas Pringle, Secretary of Britain's Anti-Slavery Society. Among other events, Mary's history includes daily beatings by sadistic masters who, while entrusting her with considerable responsibility, punished the tiniest fault with insane cruelty. It describes her ten-year stint working long hours in the salt ponds of Turk's Island, labor that broke her health. It shows her growing attraction to religion and her attempts to receive spiritual instruction. I found this book compelling on two levels: as a detailed personal account of the appalling oppression of black slaves in the West Indies - and as a look at the compassionate work of anti-slavery activists. Those who opposed slavery had to have their wits about them, for the slave owners were greatly debased by their unholy power over other humans and would stoop to any chicanery to defend their position. Mary Prince's history triggered a lawsuit and countersuit when it was published in 1831. It was instantly in great demand by the public and was of great value to the Anti-Slavery Society in their campaign against the slave trade. I recommend this book both as a classic of Black history and an unforgettable story.

This story should be mandatory for high school students (or even Jr High). First person true story of a slave.

An amazing read.

This book is a great primary source read that gives an in-depth image of the life of Mary Prince.

From the transporting between colonies and England, to the violence endured, and being passed from family to family - Mary Prince remains hopeful of her situation and also for her future as a wife. The book directly engages the reader and provides not only information about the life of a Black female slave, but also humanizes Mary as a woman rather than just a slave as many accounts and even history tends to classify them as.

Lets say the story of Mary Prince reflects the woman's personality perfectly. I like the book.

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