



DELPHI
CLASSICS

Slave Narratives

Collected Works



Series Fifteen

The Collected Works of
SLAVE NARRATIVES

(18th-20th century)



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Version 1

The Collected Works of
SLAVE NARRATIVES



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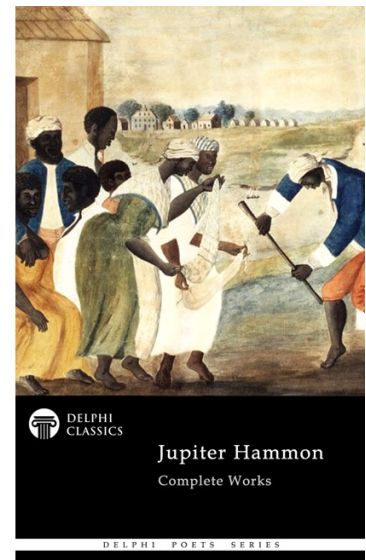
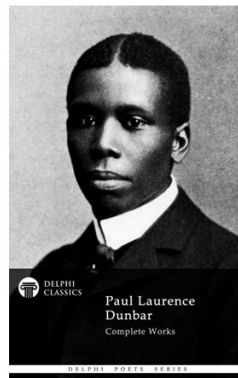
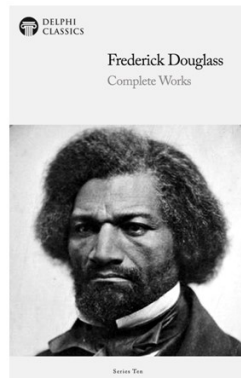
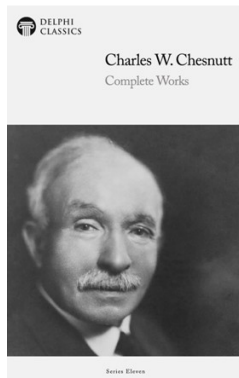
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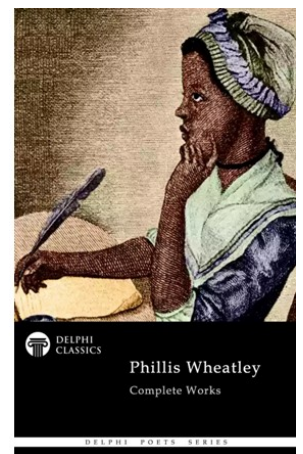
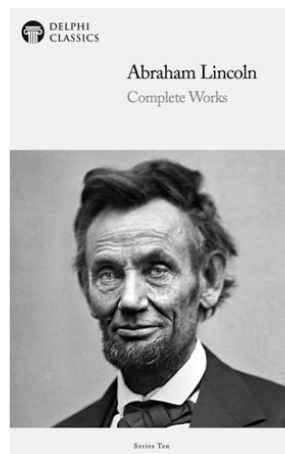
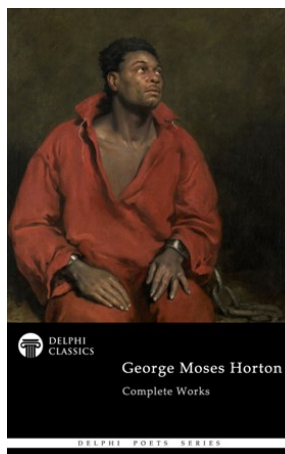
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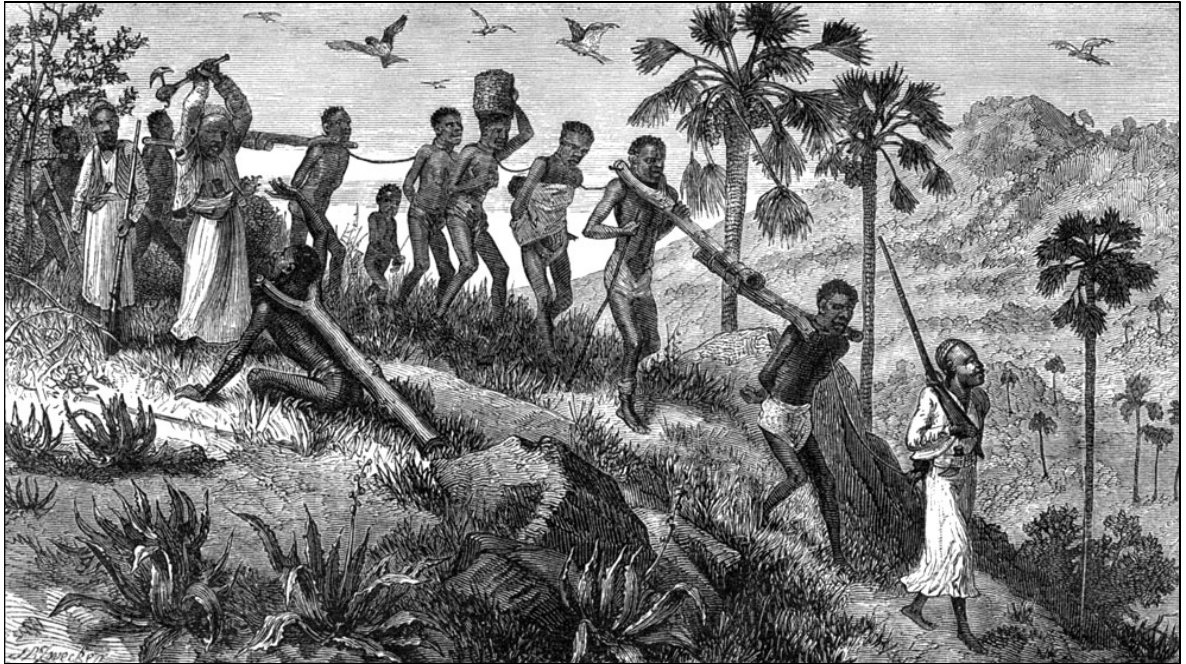
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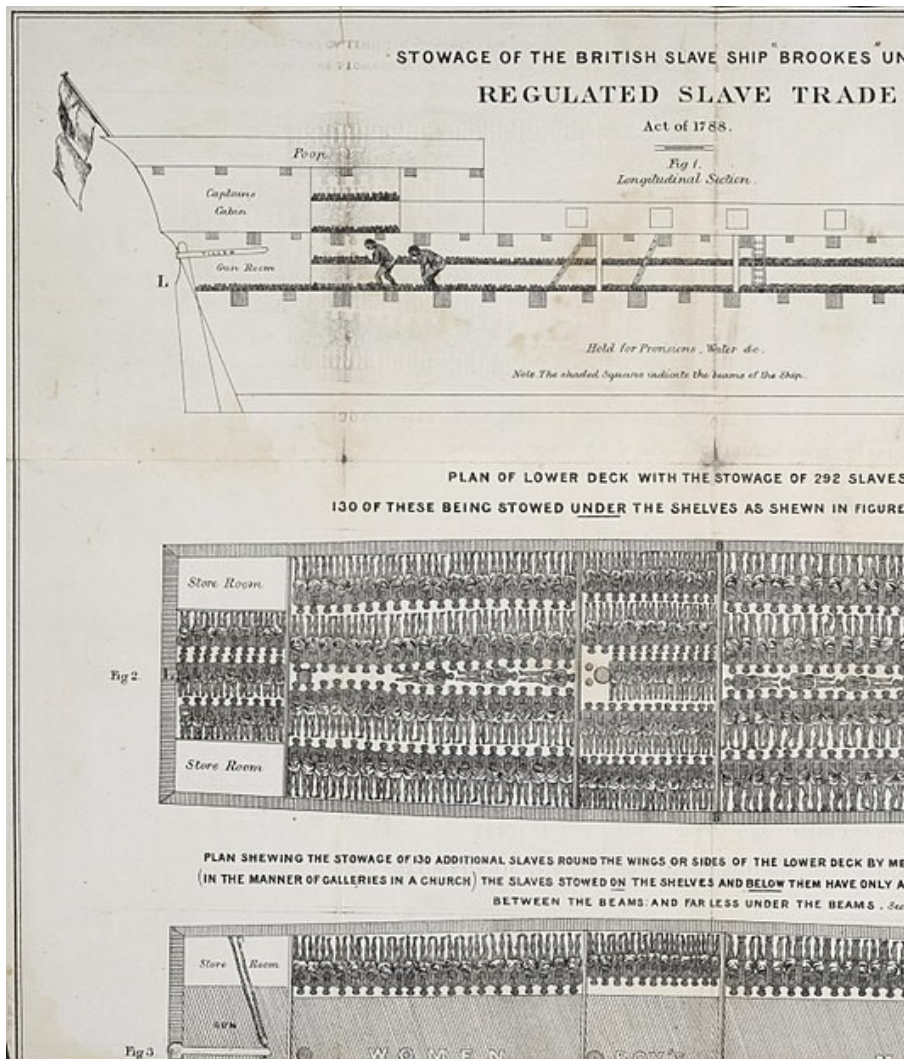
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The Narratives



Enslaved Africans in chains marched to the East coast of Africa by Arab slavers, 1860



Stowage of the British slave ship *Brookes* under the regulated slave trade act of 1788



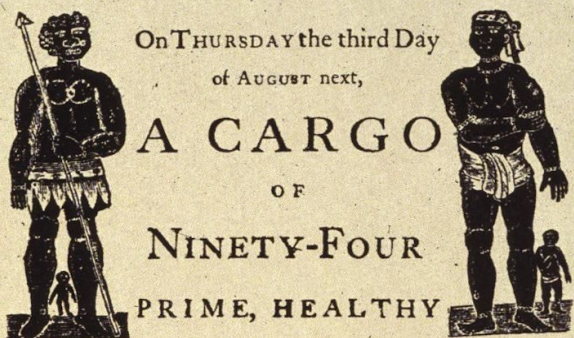
Slavers bringing captives on board a slave ship on Africa's west coast by Joseph Swain, c. 1860

Charlestown, July 24th, 1769.

TO BE SOLD,

On THURSDAY the third Day
of AUGUST next,

A CARGO
OF
NINETY-FOUR
PRIME, HEALTHY



NEGROES,

CONSISTING OF

Thirty-nine MEN, Fifteen BOYS,
Twenty-four WOMEN, and
Sixteen GIRLS.

JUST ARRIVED,
In the Brigantine DEMBIA, *Francis Bare*, Master, from SIERRA-
LEON, by
DAVID & JOHN DEAS.

Reproduction of a handbill advertising a slave auction in Charleston, British Province of South Carolina, 1769

A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw (1772)



Generally considered the first published African in Britain, Ukawsaw Gronniosaw (c. 1705-1775) was an enslaved African, whose autobiography recounted his early life in present-day Nigeria, his enslavement and his eventual emancipation. At the age of fifteen, he was kidnapped by a Gold Coast ivory merchant and sold to a Dutch captain for two yards of check cloth. An American bought him in Barbados, took him to New York and resold him for £50 to “Mr. Freelandhouse, a very gracious, good Minister.” Freelandhouse is presumed to be the Dutch Reformed Church minister, Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, who lived in New Jersey and pastored churches in Middlesex and Somerset counties in the Raritan Valley.

In New Jersey, Gronniosaw was taught to read and brought up as a Christian. Gronniosaw tells us in his autobiography that he wished to return to his family in Africa, but Frelinghuysen denied this request and told him to focus on the Christian faith. During his time with Frelinghuysen, Gronniosaw attempted suicide, being distressed by his perceived failings as a Christian. When the minister died, Gronniosaw was freed in his will. He then worked for the minister’s widow and, subsequently, their orphans, but all died within four years.

Planning to go to England, where he expected to meet other pious people like the Frelinghuysens, Gronniosaw travelled to the Caribbean, where he enlisted as a cook with a privateer, and later as a soldier in the 28th Regiment of Foot to earn money for the journey. He served in Martinique and Cuba, before obtaining his discharge and sailing to England.

In London he married a young English widow, Betty, a weaver. She already had a child and bore him at least two more. She lost her job because of the financial depression and industrial unrest and moved to Colchester. There, they were saved from starvation by Osgood Hanbury, a Quaker lawyer and grandfather of the abolitionist Fowell Buxton, who employed Gronniosaw in building work. Moving to Norwich, Gronniosaw and his family again fell on hard times, as the building trades were largely seasonal. After pawning all of their possessions, the family moved to Kidderminster, where Betty supported them by working again as a weaver. Shortly after arriving there, Gronniosaw began work on his life story with the help of an amanuensis from Leominster. Gronniosaw’s Narrative attracted wide attention, with multiple printings and editions.

Entitled *A Narrative of the Most remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, As related by himself* it believed to be the first published narrative by an enslaved African in the English language, a genre related to the literature of enslaved persons that later gained freedom. Published in Bath, Somerset, in December 1772, it provides a vivid account of Gronniosaw’s life, detailing his enslavement in Africa, travels around America and his struggles with poverty in England.

A
NARRATIVE
OF THE
Most Remarkable Part
IN THE
L I F E
O F

James Albert Ukawaw G

An African Pr

Written by HIMSE

I will bring the Blind by a Way that

The first edition's title page

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MOST REMARKABLE PARTICULARS
IN THE LIFE OF
JAMES ALBERT UKAWSAW GRONNIOSAW,
AN AFRICAN PRINCE,
As related by HIMSELF.

I will bring the Blind by a Way that they know not, I will lead them in Paths that they have not known: I will make Darkness Light before them and crooked Things straight. These Things will I do unto them and not forsake them. Isa. xlii. 16.

**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE COUNTESS OF
HUNTINGDON**



THIS

NARRATIVE

Of my *LIFE*,

And of God's wonderful Dealings with me, is,

(Through Her LADYSHIP'S Permission)

Most Humbly Dedicated,

By her LADYSHIP'S

Most obliged

And obedient Servant,

JAMES ALBERT.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.



THIS ACCOUNT OF the Life and spiritual Experience of James Albert was taken from his own Mouth and committed to Paper by the elegant Pen of a young Lady of the Town of Leominster, for her own private Satisfaction, and without any Intention at first that it should be made public. But she has now been prevail'd on to commit it to the Press, both with a view to serve Albert and his distressed Family, who have the sole Profits arising from the Sale of it; and likewise as it is apprehended, this little History contains Matter well worthy the Notice and Attention of every Christian Reader.

Perhaps we have here in some Degree a Solution of that Question that has perplex'd the Minds of so many serious Persons, viz. In what Manner will God deal with those benighted Parts of the World where the Gospel of Jesus Christ hath never reach'd? Now it appears from the Experience of this remarkable Person, that God does not save without the Knowledge of the Truth; but, with Respect to those whom he hath fore-known, though born under every outward Disadvantage, and in Regions of the grossest Darkness and Ignorance, he most amazingly acts upon and influences their Minds, and in the Course of wisely and most wonderfully appointed Providences, he brings them to the Means of spiritual Information, gradually opens to their View the Light of his Truth, and gives them full Possession and Enjoyment of the inestimable Blessings of his Gospel. Who can doubt but that the Suggestion so forcibly press'd upon the Mind of Albert (when a Boy) that there was a Being superior to the Sun, Moon, and Stars (the Objects of African Idolatry) came from the Father of Lights, and was, with Respect to him, the First-Fruit of the Display of Gospel-Glory? His long and perilous Journey to the Coast of Guinea, where he was sold for a Slave, and so brought into a Christian Land; shall we consider this as the alone Effect of a curious and inquisitive Disposition? Shall we in accounting for it refer to nothing higher than mere Chance and accidental Circumstances? Whatever Infidels and Deists may think; I trust the Christian Reader will easily discern an All-wise and Omnipotent Appointment and Direction in these Movements. He belong'd to the Redeemer of lost Sinners; he was the Purchase of his Cross; and therefore the Lord undertook to bring him by a Way that he knew not, out of Darkness into his marvellous Light, that he might lead him to a saving Heart-Acquaintance and Union with the triune God in Christ reconciling the World unto himself; and not imputing their Trespases. As his Call was very extraordinary, so there are certain Particulars exceedingly remarkable in his Experience. God has put singular Honour upon him in the Exercise of his Faith and Patience, which in the most distressing and pitiable Trials and Calamities have been found to the Praise and Glory of God. How deeply must it affect a tender Heart, not only to be reduc'd to the last Extremity himself, but to have his Wife and Children perishing for Want before his Eyes! Yet his Faith did not fail him; he put his Trust in the Lord, and he was delivered. And at this Instant, though born in an exalted Station of Life, and now under the Pressure of various afflicting Providences, I am persuaded (for I know the Man) he would rather embrace the Dung-hill, having Christ in his Heart, than give up his spiritual Possessions and Enjoyment, to fill the Throne of Princes. It perhaps may not be amiss to observe that James Albert left his native Country, (as near as I can guess from certain Circumstances) when he was about 15 Years old. He now appears to be turn'd of

Sixty; has a good natural Understanding; is well acquainted with the Scriptures, and the Things of God, has an amiable and tender Disposition, and his Character can be well attested not only at Kidderminster, the Place of his Residence but likewise by many creditable Persons in London and other Places. Reader, recommending this Narrative to your perusal, and him who is the Subject of it to your charitable Regard,

I am your faithful and obedient Servant,

For Christ's Sake,

W. Shirley.

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End of Sample