

Collection ID: WCT004

Collection Name: *Liberty Bell* Collection

Dates: 1839-1858

Size: 1 records storage box, 22 volumes, 1 li. ft.

Creator: Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society

Biographical / historical note: In 1834 Maria Weston Chapman and her sisters Caroline, Anne, Debora Weston, and eight other women formed the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. The Boston Anti-Slavery Bazaar, started by Lydia Maria Child and Louisa Loring, was the Society's major fundraising event. In 1835, Weston Chapman assumed the leadership of the Boston Anti-Slavery Bazaar which she directed until 1858. As described by historian Benjamin Quarles, through these years Weston Chapman and other abolitionists became experienced in using "all the refined techniques of solicitation" in their fundraising for the cause of abolitionism. Weston Chapman and her sister Anne were chief organizers of the fairs, a popular social event.

Weston Chapman was in Paris between 1848 and 1855 but continued her involvement and solicited support and contributions for the Boston fairs from elite members of British and European society, such as Lady Byron, Alexis de Touqville, Victor Hugo and Alphonse de Lamartine.

In 1839 Weston Chapman added *The Liberty Bell*, modeled after the fashionable and popular gift books of the time. It was sold to fair attendees and given without cost to the fair workers as an acknowledgement of contribution to the abolitionist cause and token of the occasion.

The book included unpaid contributions from various notable figures: Longfellow, Emerson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Harriet Martineau, and Weston Chapman herself. Publication continued every year until 1846, and intermittently until the 1859 edition, produced in 1858. (1840, 1850, 1854-1855, and 1857 were missed). As with many gift books, publication actually occurred late in the year prior to the date of the book, except for the very first (1839) edition. The next edition was thus dated 1841.

In 1858 Weston Chapman decided to replace the bazaar with the Anti-Slavery Subscription Anniversary. She said that the fair had become *passé*; and argued that the Anniversary—an exclusive, invitation-only *soirée* featuring music, food and speeches—was more *au courant* and would raise more funds than the bazaar.

Reference sources: Lee V. Chambers, *The Weston Sisters: An American Abolitionist Family* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 2014; Wikipedia entries for Fair, Liberty Bell, Boston Female Anti-slavery Society; Bucknell University index and table of contents of all Liberty Bell books.

Scope and Contents: The books are sorted in chronological order and are stored in a records storage box, spine down. An acid-free strip notes the collection ID, the date of each volume and, where applicable in parentheses, the copy number. The container list indicates where there are multiples and provides the inscriptions found in some volumes. Note that the collection does not include the 1842 book. All others are present.

See a chronological list of table of contents for all Liberty Bell books at Carr, Glynis. "Index to The Liberty Bell." The Online Archive of Nineteenth-Century U.S. Women's Writings. Ed. Glynis Carr. Online. Internet. Posted: Fall 1997.

<http://www.facstaff.bucknell.edu/gcarr/19cUSWW/LB/LBindex.html>

Note that the subsequent indexing projects do not seem to have been completed.

The books also are available online at the Internet Archive

<https://archive.org/details/libertybell00amer>

Conditions governing access: Open for researchers but some damaged. Use online at Internet Archives if feasible.

Language: English

Source: Mary Fifield King, Emma Hunt, Alla W. Foster are named in some books.

Subjects:

Anti-Slavery - Gift books

Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society

Chapman, Maria Weston (1806-1885)

Gift books

Location: Tufts Library, Weymouth, ma

Related archival materials: See WCT001 Fifield Family Collection, WCT003 Bates/Weston/Chapman Collection, WCT014 Newspaper Collection

Preparer: C.G. Swank March 2016

Contents of box

Date	Notes
1839	Missing spine cover
1841	Two; one missing spine cover
1843	Inscribed M.S. Fifield from C. Weston Jan 1, 1843; stamped Fifield Collection; the second inscribed The Misses Kingman with the ?? and thanks of Caroline Weston Summer Street Feb. 2, 1843, and stamped Fifield Collection, deposition 1922
1844	
1845	Two. Both stamped Fifield Collection; one inscribed Susan H. Cowing from her friend MW Chapman
1846	Two. Softcover. One inscribed George F. Fifield with best ?? of Caroline Weston and pasted embossed card with seals and in manuscript "Onward! England, Nov 23, 1836 Geo. Thompson"; the second (detached cover) inscribed Maria T. Cowing from her affectionate cousin M.W. Chapman; also stamped Fifield Collection and donated by Mary Fifield King
1847	Three; one donated by Mrs. Emma Hunt in 1932 has detached spine cover; second inscribed A.K. Foster; third stamped Fifield Collection
1849	Inscribed Abby Kelly Foster with the love of A.W. Weston Jan 1, 1849.
1851	
1852	Two. One inscribed Abby Kelly Foster
1853	Two. One inscribed Mrs. H.C. Fifield with the best wishes of A.W. Weston Jan 1, 1853, stamped Fifield Collection, and pasted on inside front cover clipping <i>Invocation to the New Year</i> by Alfred Tennyson.
1856	Two. One inscribed To William Penniman from his obliged friend M.W. Chapman Weymouth May 19th 1856 and stamped Fifield Collection; second inscribed Abby Kelly Foster from her old friend M.W. Chapman Hall? 15 Winter? Street 22nd A.S. Bazaar 1855
1858	Pasted inside front cover Joseph Lupton book plate, typed note "Obtained from England by Mary Fifield King through Henry Brown, Bookseller 46 Lansdown Gardens London S.W. Dec 1916", and stamped Fifield Collection