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**A Caribbean Coupling Beyond Black and White:
The Interracial Marriage of Catherine and Edward Marcus
Despard and its Implications for British Views on Race, Class, and
Gender during the Age of Reform**

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Abstract

British Army colonel, Edward Marcus Despard, and Catherine Despard, a woman from the Caribbean and most likely of African descent, were married some time during the late eighteenth century. Their marriage was quite unusual for its time, yet their union appears to have been successful and went unchallenged by the government and many individuals they encountered. This project explores the social and political environment that made their unlikely union possible and demonstrates how their interracial marriage serves as a marker of the more fluid and tolerant character of racial attitudes in the Age of Reform. An examination of the Despard's political activity in London also offers insight into multiple social and political issues affecting Great Britain and its colonies during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, including race, class, gender, freedom, and human rights.

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Introduction

In the introduction of *For the Cause of Truth*, an exploration of London radicals who fought for political reform during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, author J. Ann Hone is quite clear on whose stories her research entails and which ones are glaringly missing. “This is a book about men,” she declares, adding, “As a woman, I write about these men conscious of the absence of important protagonists” (Hone 5). By “important protagonists,” Hone means women. She admits there is a considerable amount of pamphlet literature written by the more articulate and affluent of the English radicals in addition to official records assembled by the government that are readily available to provide historians with rich, extensive resources. Still there are not enough manuscripts and other first-hand accounts in existence to offer a fuller picture of the motives and experiences of radical men “of humble origins and status” (Hone 5). Therefore, it stands to reason there would be even fewer sources available to provide clues on the experiences of female radicals and the extent of their involvement in shaping the course of political reform. Hone reveals, “Throughout my work I have caught glimpses of the girlfriends, wives, mothers, daughters, and occasionally of women of a more independent mien, about whom we should know more” (5-6). Hone does not make an explicit case for *why* we should learn more about these women and further explore and challenge the “silence which usually surrounds women and their role in the past” as some historians have done (5). Nevertheless, her argument implies that, just as the lack of sources on the experiences of lower-class male radicals can present problems, the exclusion of female

voices presents its own set of problems as well. Essentially, without the stories of the women involved, the story of British radicalism — or any major movement or event in history for that matter — is incomplete.

The life of Catherine Despard, a woman living during the time leading up to and during Britain's Age of Reform, offers a case study that manages to affirm yet challenge the idea that behind every great or notorious man in history has stood a woman, or "silent partner," whose influence went unnoticed or was underestimated. Clues left behind in documents detailing her husband's rise to become a respected British military hero and his eventual fall as a disgraced radical executed by the government for treason suggest that Catherine's story is one that is difficult to construct in the context of historical events yet is practically necessary in our efforts to better understand the past. Described by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker in *The Many-Headed Hydra* as "a shadow (a woman) within a shadow (a *black* woman) within a shadow (a *revolutionary* black woman)," Catherine was a mostly invisible yet ever-present shadow in her husband's life (254). Absolutely no mention of Catherine is made in documents detailing the early life of her husband, Irish-born Edward Marcus Despard, as he served as a high-ranking military official appointed to protect the interests of Great Britain in the Caribbean in the late 1770s and throughout the 1780s. Yet in the years leading up to his execution in 1803, Catherine's voice suddenly emerges in the midst of significant political debates on issues including prison reform and government suspension of habeas corpus.

To further complicate my attempt to demonstrate that female partners often played an important yet overlooked role in shaping history, it must be noted that Catherine was of African descent. Also, she was most likely born in a British colony in

the Caribbean, where, at the time, the majority of blacks in that region were enslaved. Despite the life of oppression that her background might suggest, at some point while in the Caribbean, she met and married this British gentleman and later moved to London. Though not respected by all, she managed to live the latter part of her life as a lady, a member of London's aristocracy while also living the life of a revolutionary.

Indeed, Catherine's story offers a glimpse into the radical activity that occurred in England in the 1790s; however, more importantly, her story shines a light on the complexities of race, class, and gender during that time. Catherine's world was one that was quite different than the one that would exist later in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, particularly considering that many of us today, especially in America, assume that white racism sprung from a generic past and that the power of this racism has lessened gradually over time. We usually juxtapose the present with a past that mostly focuses on the century after the American Civil War: Jim Crow's defeat of Reconstruction in the United States and the new imperial era in Great Britain. On both these shores of the North Atlantic, segregation was the norm, enforced by violence when law proved inadequate to the task. The publically uncontested interracial marriage of Edward and Catherine does not make sense in this limited view of the racist pasts of the United States and Great Britain. Nevertheless, Catherine and Edward lived at a time when a very different understanding of race prevailed. Race certainly divided people, and there is no denying that much of the world's oppressed and marginalized population was made up of people color; however, class played an even greater role in separating groups than it would a century later. Undoubtedly, interracial marriage was the exception during

the Despard's time, but their marriage still serves as a marker of the more fluid and tolerant character of racial attitudes in this earlier period.

Catherine Despard can easily be grouped with the girlfriends, wives, and other silenced women in history that Hone caught only glimpses of in her research.

Nevertheless, using such glimpses of Catherine, we can piece together a picture of what life was like for her and Edward, both before they met and while they were married. By carefully examining their lives, we can gain not only a better understanding of how such an exceptional union was possible in the eighteenth century, but we can also glean a clearer understanding of multiple social and political issues of the day, including race, class, gender, freedom, and human rights.

Chapter I: A Convergence of Worlds in the New World

An Unlikely Couple

At its heart, I consider the following work to be the story of a particular woman, Catherine Despard, and by extension, other women of her time; however, as is typical with such stories, we must begin with the at times larger-than-life man who cast the shadow in which she lived.

Edward Marcus Despard was born in Queen's County, Ireland, on March 6, 1751 (Chase). The youngest of six brothers, he was born into a family with a long-standing tradition of military service. All of his brothers except the oldest served in the military, including John, who rose to the rank of army general and fought for Great Britain in the Seven Years War and the American Revolutionary War. His brother Andrew, who rose to the rank of army major, also fought in the Revolutionary War in addition to serving with Edward during Britain's invasion of Nicaragua in 1780. Edward himself first joined the army at the age of 15 (Conner 26-29).

Edward's education prior to joining the military included attending the Quaker School in Ballitore (Conner 25). At age eight, he was placed as a page to Countess Hertford whose husband was lord lieutenant of Ireland. In the biography, *Colonel Despard: The Life and Times of an Anglo-Irish Rebel*, Clifford Conner reports that a niece of Edward later wrote that while under the tutelage of the Hertfords, Edward "acquired the character, the manner, and the habits of a gentleman, and a soldier" (26). The Despard family was fairly prosperous; their estate included many servants and

tenants (Conner 24). Being landowners and of the Protestant faith likely put the family at odds with the area's dispossessed peasantry and poorer Catholic majority by default.

Having come from a family devoted to serving the British Crown obviously influenced Edward's own devotion to Great Britain throughout most of his distinguished career. Yet his Irish roots and having witnessed class struggles as a youngster — albeit from an upper-class perspective — mostly likely influenced his decision to champion for working-class Brits and Irishmen later in life, after he had lost faith in government. As Linebaugh and Rediker observe in *Hydra*: Edward's "formative years in his native land had been passed in a period of renewed and violent class struggle over the common lands and their associated culture. Any seeds of sympathy that may have been sown in him would lie dormant for decades" (258).

Early in his career, Edward was sent with his regiment to Jamaica, where while serving as an engineer, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. He later was made quartermaster and given command of a company known as the "Liverpool Blues" (Conner 27-28). Other notable highlights of Edward's career included distinguishing himself during a British expedition to capture Fort San Juan from Spain in 1779. After being promoted to captain in 1780, he continued to work as an engineer until being appointed a year later as commandant, first of the island of Roatan, and then of British possessions in the Gulf of Honduras. He went on to lead an expedition to recapture the Spanish-occupied Black River territory in southwestern Jamaica, an accomplishment for which he received royal commendation and was made a colonel. In 1786 he was appointed as superintendent of British Honduras (Chase).

As will be discussed in later chapters, disillusionment with the government's handling of disputes that arose while serving in British Honduras led Edward to eventually become involved with British and Irish radicals intent on changing a corrupt and unrepresentative parliamentary system in England. Due to his suspicious activity with radical groups such as the London Corresponding Society and the United Irishmen, Edward was arrested and imprisoned several times before finally being accused by the government of meeting with thirty men "of the lowest order of society" at the Oakley Arms tavern on November 16, 1802 ("The Trial of Edward" 45). In 1803, Edward and six of his associates were tried for high treason in London and subsequently hanged and beheaded ("The Trial of Edward" 269).

Very little is known about Catherine's background and how she may have come in contact with this Irish-born gentleman, army officer, and revolutionary. Some have described her as the daughter of a Jamaican preacher or as an educated Spanish Creole (Jay 172). We do know that Catherine met Edward some time during his more than 20 years of military service in the Caribbean. Edward was a single man when he arrived in Jamaica in 1766, but when he returned to London in 1790, he brought with him a wife and son (Jay 171-172). While it was common for English officers to return home with black or Creole mistresses, it was rare for them to return with black or Creole *wives* (Gerzina 73).

There are no documents to support when and where Catherine and Edward met and who married them, but a closer look at Edward's time in Jamaica, Nicaragua, and British Honduras (now Belize) and the diverse groups he interacted with offer clues into what could have led a British officer born in Ireland and committed to serve the

colonizing country of Britain to marry and form a lasting partnership with one the Crown's colonized individuals.

During his time in the Caribbean, Edward encountered and formed relationships with people from varied backgrounds, including Mosquito Indians, free blacks, and people of mixed-ancestry. In Jamaica his work required him to lead crews made up of men of various nationalities (Linebaugh and Rediker 258). Edward was revered for his work in Jamaica, which Linebaugh and Rediker assert was responsible for helping to save the island from Spanish attack during the American War of Independence. Yet they point out that Edward's success would not have been possible without the "the polyglot motley crews" he organized, and because of these interactions, he likely "developed some sympathy, intellect, and lucidity in forming and coordinating the gangs of workers whose labor was his triumph. In that way he was creolized" (261). Such experiences likely had a major influence on this creolized lieutenant's views on fairness and the importance of unity regardless of race. These experiences also could have contributed to his being open to the possibility of an interracial marriage.

Because so few references to Catherine's race can be found, it is possible that Catherine belonged to any one of the many groups Edward encountered in his travels, including the Mosquito Indians who were made up of both native Mosquitoes and those mixed with African ancestry, the so-called "Samboes" (Bonnycastle 172). In 1779, Edward was appointed to lead an expedition against the Spanish Main. The goal was to split North and South America by sending an expedition across Nicaragua. While there, he encountered the Mosquito Indians and became attached this group of people whose "origins among buccaneers were held in pride, and whose ideas of freedom were lofty"

(Linebaugh and Rediker 267). Biographer Clifford Conner claims the Mosquitos played a significant role in aiding the British invasion of Nicaragua in 1780, serving as guides and intermediaries with Indians in the Spanish-held regions of the country (Conner 40).

Edward interacted with the Mosquitos while leading reconnoitering missions (Conner 47-48). Linebaugh and Rediker suggest that the Mosquito Indians' ideals on equality (265) influenced Edward's social and political views and that Catherine herself may have been of Mosquito ancestry (267). The Mosquito people likely had a lasting influence on Edward not only in terms of solidifying his convictions on racial equality but also in possibly providing him with a passionate defender and devoted life partner in Catherine.

Conversely, if Catherine was not one of the Mosquito people, it is possible she was instead black or mixed race, also known at the time as "of color." In either case, whether she was ever a slave or had always been a free woman is not clear. Though their relationship developed before the British government abolished the slave trade in 1808 and long before slavery was legally abolished in its colonies in 1834 (Knight 167), there is no proof that Catherine was a slave or that she was free when she first met Edward. Either remains a possibility.

Though rare, marriages between free women of color and white men were not unheard of in the Caribbean prior to the abolition of slavery. There is evidence of such legal unions in the British colonies St. Kitts and Grenada (Shepherd 77). A comparable environment existed in British Jamaica, where a marriage similar to Edward and Catherine's certainly would have been rare and even frowned upon, but where interracial relationships founded at times on love and other times on violence and hatred were fairly common occurrences.

The Status of Interracial Unions during Edward and Catherine's Time

How was interracial love viewed during the time of Edward and Catherine's union, and how might have these popular views influenced how they were received by others, particularly in London? It is useful to examine several areas of society, politics, and the law to get a better picture of popular opinions on interracial marriage and sexual relationships in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

There does not appear to have been any laws barring marriage between blacks and whites in Britain, whereas in North America, specifically, the American colonies, there were clear laws that forbade such unions, over time making a distinct connection between race and slavery. In 1664, the colony of Maryland was the first to enact a law forbidding unions between English women and black slaves. In the 1660s, Virginia passed laws stating that slave status is passed from mother to child, which essentially prohibited any chance of freedom for children born as a result of unions between slave women and white men. In 1691 Virginia completely outlawed the possibility of marriage or having children out of wedlock between white colonists and any nonwhites in the colony ("Black-White Intermarriage" 295).

Clearly, Edward and Catherine lived in a world far removed from Maryland, Virginia, and other parts of the United States. In the Caribbean, island life proved to be too fluid for such stark lines to be drawn between races. There certainly was a different attitude regarding interracial unions in this part of the world, where "colonialism fostered interracial cohabitation and sometimes marriage between European men and women of African descent" ("Black-White Intermarriage" 295). In his analysis of life for mixed-

race individuals in British Caribbean colonies, Winthrop D. Jordan, found that English men openly had mistresses of color. For most islands, there were no laws prohibiting interracial relationships; in his research, Jordan found only one island, Montserrat, to have legally prohibited intermarriage (647). Jordan goes so far as to assert that sex between the races was so common it would have “ludicrous” to try to legislate, adding: “Concubinage was such an integral part of island life that one might as well attempt to abolish the sugar cane” (647). While parts of Jordan’s analysis seem to feed into commonly held negative stereotypes of black and mixed-race women, his central point is clear: interracial unions, at least those of a sexual nature, were little cause for alarm for the inhabitants of the Caribbean islands.

Although it is not known for certain whether Catherine was ever enslaved, the majority of black and mixed-race women living in the Caribbean during this time were living in bondage, and attitudes regarding unions between women of African descent — both enslaved and free — with white men were formed within the context of slavery. Therefore, prevailing perceptions of slave women, which included the contradictory images of them as promiscuous or asexual (Bush, “Sable Venus” 762), may have been projected onto Catherine by Edward’s colleagues and others.

Based on the 1765 poem, “The ‘Sable Venus’: an ode,” by Isaac Teale, the “Sable Venus” was a stereotype that existed during Catherine’s time. According to scholar Barbara Bush, the Sable Venus “represented male erotic fantasies, but also the widespread practice of concubinage and sexual exploitation of black women” (“Sable Venus” 762). She further describes it as “one of the most powerful eighteenth-century constructs of African womanhood, which reflected white male obsessions with sexual

otherness and exoticism” (“Sable Venus” 770). The eighteenth-century black woman came to represent “the delights of forbidden sex,” and eventually, this and other exaggerated images became commonly accepted (Bush, *Slave Women* 13-14). If similar negative images were ever projected onto Catherine while she and Edward lived in the Caribbean, there is no evidence of it. Still, because such images were prevalent at the time, it seems likely that those who encountered the Despardes may have questioned Catherine’s sexual mores or the legitimacy of their marriage. Even considering the relaxed attitudes of the region, a British gentleman carrying on with his black mistress was likely an image much easier to accept than that of a British gentleman having a long-term, legal union with a black woman.

More specifically, in the British colony of Jamaica, where Edward was tasked with helping to design shore batteries and fortifications, casual sexual relations between married or single white men and enslaved women were accepted by most White Jamaicans. As historian Henrice Altink points out, “The Jamaican House of Assembly never issued a law that banned interracial marriage: White Jamaicans could marry Free Blacks and Coloureds; nor did it, in contrast to the North American colonies and the Leeward Islands, adopt a law that fined White men for having sex with enslaved women.” Based on these observations, it is unlikely that Catherine and Edward’s relationship caused much concern for those working with Edward and living near the couple in Jamaica, assuming that they were indeed together prior to Edward’s time in British Honduras. Still, there was a close connection between the inhabitants living in British Honduras, including both the European settlers and the Mosquito Indians, and inhabitants in Jamaica. For example, the Mosquito Indians of British Honduras often

traveled to and traded with nearby Jamaica (Bonnycastle 172). Therefore, the laid-back attitude toward interracial unions by Jamaicans was likely shared by those in British Honduras as well.

That relaxed attitude regarding cohabitation and marriages between races had more to do with practicality in many ways than with social or racial consciousness. The threat of tropical illnesses was an occupational hazard for European men living in the Caribbean during Edward's time, and local women were responsible for nursing many of them back to health. Establishing a relationship with these women could make the difference between death and survival. Edward's close friend and fellow military hero, Admiral Horatio Nelson, owed his recuperation from illness while in Jamaica to a freed black slave woman named Cuba Cornwallis (Jay 95). At times the line between the role of nurse and lover became blurred, and romantic relationships formed between the Jamaican caretakers and their military patients (Linebaugh and Rediker 259). Edward was surrounded by illness and death while serving in Jamaica, Nicaragua, and British Honduras, but he managed to remain in the healthy minority (Jay 95). Whether a local woman like Catherine, who would have been familiar with the local climate and practices necessary to avoid or treat life-threatening illnesses, was responsible for Edward's survival is unknown. Yet, it is not a stretch to imagine a situation where illness may have brought the two together.

Catherine's Contemporaries: Joanna and Phibbah

It is difficult to find examples of other marriages that existed between white men and black women living in the Caribbean and Central America during the eighteenth

century. Yet it still is worth examining comparable long-term relationships to gain further insight into what life may have been like for Catherine and Edward, as neither left behind love letters or other manuscripts describing their relationship. Two of Catherine's contemporaries living in other colonized parts of the Caribbean and Central America can give us an idea of what Catherine's romantic relationship and personal life may have been like: Joanna of Suriname and Phibbah of Jamaica. These two women, both born into slavery, in many ways lived lives that were quite different from Catherine's, but similar to Catherine they developed long-lasting, complicated relationships with European men that seemed to be rooted in love and went beyond the stereotypical perceptions of the "Sable Venus" or of the colonized woman of African descent whose relationships with white men rarely amounted to anything more than concubinage.

Joanna was born in the Dutch colony of Suriname to a black female slave and a "highly respectable" white gentleman (Stedman, *Narrative of Joanna*). In the 1770s at the age of 15, she entered into a "Suriname marriage" with an army officer from the Netherlands named John Gabriel Stedman. He first arrived in Suriname in 1773, after responding to a call for volunteers to stop a slave rebellion in the colony (Price). According to Susan B. Iwanisziw, slaves in Suriname were not allowed to marry but were permitted to enter into long-term arrangements of concubinage with Dutchmen living and working in the colony (70). Stedman left a detailed account of his marriage to Joanna in a diary that was later made into a manuscript before eventually being published as *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition against the revolted Negroes of Surinam* in 1796 (Iwanisziw 70).

Promoted by the colony as way for slave women to support themselves, “Suriname marriages” most likely existed primarily as a source of comfort and as a means for European men to survive in an unfamiliar land rather than serving as a way for white men and black women to demonstrate their love for and commitment to one another. This reasoning seemed to be supported by Stedman, who admitted in his manuscript (but was omitted from his final version of *Narrative*): “I must describe this custom, which I am convinced will be highly censured by the sedate European matrons but which is, nevertheless, as common as it is almost necessary to the bachelors who live in this climate” (Iwanisziw 72). Much in the way Edward was likely cared for by Catherine during illnesses while traveling, Stedman owed his survival to Joanna. He wrote of her nursing him back to health after being “suddenly seized with a dreadful fever” (Stedman).

While Stedman certainly benefited from his marriage to Joanna, his writings portray their union as one based purely on love, unlike most Suriname marriages. He was smitten with her from the day he met her. His lengthy description of his first impression of her could have been pulled directly from a romance novel, from his commenting on how she had “the most elegant shape nature can exhibit” and reporting that her face was “full of native modesty, and the most distinguished sweetness” (Stedman). Although such descriptions probably only perpetuated the stereotypes and exoticism of black women, throughout his *Narrative*, Stedman manages to convey a deep love for Joanna. The two had a wedding that was attended by many of their “respectable friends,” and Stedman wrote of how on more than one occasion Joanna refused his offer to buy her freedom and take her to Europe to be educated (Stedman). Her refusal left him heartbroken, but he was

happy that he was able to purchase the freedom of their son Johnny before leaving Suriname in 1777 (Price).

Writing of Joanna's refusal to leave Suriname with him Stedman reveals:

She felt that it was her duty to remain in Surinam. First, from a consciousness that she had no right to dispose of herself; secondly, because she had rather be among the first of her own class in America, than a disgrace to me in Europe. (Stedman)

Apparently Joanna was reluctant to move to Europe because she feared how she would be received by others, but Stedman does not reveal why she felt this way.

Assuming that Stedman's depiction of her response is accurate, Joanna's reluctance demonstrates how difficult Catherine's decision to leave her home and move London with Edward and their son must have been. Did she too have fears about how she would be perceived there? If so, she obviously felt she and Edward could endure any difficulties they may have faced. She also apparently had few doubts about whether Edward would be ashamed of having her as a wife.

As previously mentioned, no evidence exists to suggest whether Catherine had ever been a slave. Had she spent time enslaved, she must have gained her freedom prior to 1790 because there appeared to have been no question of whether she and her son James were free by the time they arrived that year in London. The London newspapers and court documents that make reference to her in the 1790s and up until Edward's execution in 1803 never call her status into question. If she had been a slave at some point in time, how might Catherine have gone about gaining her freedom? There were a limited number of paths a female slave could take to gain freedom. One was by forming relationships with powerful white men. Bush explains, "As a survival strategy,

concubinage offered not only material favours but also better treatment and manumission for slave women and their mulatto children” (“Sable Venus” 770). Even if it was not Edward who granted Catherine her freedom, her connection with a slave master or another powerful white man could have been her route to freedom. The story of Phibbah, a native-born Jamaican slave, provides such an example.

Phibbah and Thomas Thistlewood, a white English immigrant to western Jamaica and an overseer, had a relationship that began in the mid-eighteenth century and lasted for thirty-four years (Burnard 82). In comparison with Catherine, a great deal of information exists on Phibbah primarily because Thistlewood recorded his daily activities in a detailed diary. Yet, as was the case with most of Catherine’s life and that of Joanna of Suriname, our view of Phibbah’s life is limited to the views and recordings of white males. It is clear, however, that Phibbah’s relationship with Thistlewood was her ticket to freedom, despite the fact that she was not freed until near the end of the eighteenth century in 1792, six years after Thistlewood’s death. According to scholar Trevor Burnard, Phibbah’s experience was typical in Jamaica, “where slaves were most often freed because they were either the child or, like Phibbah, the mistress of a white man” (83).

Although Phibbah was Thistlewood’s slave, Burnard describes the relationship as a marriage, “or at least the closest approximation of a marriage that was possible between a white man and a slave in eighteenth-century Jamaica” (83). Throughout the marriage, Thistlewood had sex with more than 100 slave women and brutally beat his slaves, both male and female. His first contact with Phibbah was a violent one, which occurred when he punished her with 70 lashes (85). Though bizarre when viewed through a

contemporary lens, this concept of marriage was not at all unusual in a colonial society that offered very few options for women. Long before she was manumitted in Thistlewood's will (83), Phibbah managed to work within the confines of slavery to gain a certain level of freedom, not only for herself but for her children as well.

Being a mistress allowed women like Phibbah to take on "a distinct leadership role within the internal hierarchy of the enslaved," and gave her "authority and prestige through her special access to the master" (Burnard 87). A slave mistress's ability to achieve and maintain her leadership role also depended heavily on the silent approval of the other slaves. A mistress such as Phibbah had to maneuver her way through two worlds, negotiating on behalf of slaves while remaining loyal to her master (Burnard 87-88). Had Catherine lived a life similar to Phibbah's she too probably learned to straddle two worlds, a quality that would have proved useful not only in her presumed quest for freedom but perhaps also later in aiding Edward's efforts to effectively and fairly lead diverse groups under his command.

Burnard recognizes that Jamaican slavery was brutal and not every slave woman had the luxury of entering into sexual relationships by choice; however, he maintains that Phibbah achieved her own degree of power within a male-dominated society. His argument is that scholars who only view relationships between white men and black women in the eighteenth-century within the context of sexual exploitation minimizes Phibbah's experience, "making her not the agent of her own destiny but merely a victim, or, even worse, a collaborator in the oppression of slaves." He believes "Phibbah was able to transcend the powerlessness of slaves through her privileged position as the mistress of a white man." Burnard's argument serves as a reminder that there were black

women during that time, whether free or enslaved, whose personal agency allowed them to defy the perceived norms of women in slave society. Catherine defied perceptions while living in London, and more than likely she did the same while in the Caribbean.

Edward was neither a slave owner nor an overseer, and using his liberal views on racial equality as a guide, it is not likely his relationship with Catherine was ever as violent as the one between Phibbah and Thistlewood. Also, because the stories of Phibbah and Joanna were told solely from the perspective of white men, it becomes difficult for us today to construct a complete and balanced image of the motives of women like them, let alone understand what their lives were truly like. Still, even with our limited view of these women and regardless of the differences between the couples illustrated here, Phibbah's marriage illustrates two telling points about Catherine and her relationship with Edward. First, successful long-term relationships between white men and black women in the Caribbean were possible, despite existing in a world built on exploitation and violence. As Bush explains in *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*: "A more balanced appraisal of the *modus vivendi* of both black and white reveals a subtle and complex framework of sexual relations. Although without a doubt sexual exploitation did exist, many white men from all social ranks had fond and enduring relations with black and coloured women" (114). Secondly, Phibbah's journey helps us understand how freedom, both in the legal sense and a theoretical sense, was possible for women even under the most oppressive circumstances.

If Catherine had ever spent time as a slave in Jamaica, perhaps her path to freedom was similar to Phibbah's, but I hesitate to suggest that Catherine was motivated by finances and stability as much as Phibbah was. Perhaps Catherine's attraction to

Edward was motivated and inspired by Edward's beliefs on equality, which was reflected in her being quite vocal about her husband's rights as a prisoner in London and perhaps in those last conversations they had before Edward's execution.

Chapter II: Planting the Seeds of Radicalization in Belize

The time Edward spent in Belize is of particular interest. Not only was it a location where he may have met Catherine, but his tenure there as superintendent put him right in the middle of heated disputes over labor and land that were largely motivated by classism and racism. The events that occurred in Belize and Edward's inability to fully resolve the conflicts that arose while he was there most likely served as the impetus for his eventual decision to become involved with Britain's radicals.

On the surface, how he handled the disputes reveal a great deal about his character as a military leader and politician. Yet upon further examination, his successes and failures in dealing with the Baymen and the other diverse inhabitants of the settlement also offer a glimpse into the marriage between him and his "silent" partner, Catherine. Although Catherine's "voice" is never heard in any of Edward's writings of his time in Belize (Conner 137), she may have been privy to Edward's feelings about the disputes and perhaps served as his consultant and confidante during his decision-making processes. Through his experiences in Belize, we also are able to get a better understanding of the complexities of living in an eighteenth-century world where diverse groups of people were quickly becoming more connected globally and where creating divisions between groups of people was not as simple as white versus black.

Belize in Black and White and Every Shade in Between

British Honduras, and in particular, the territory around the Belize River where Edward served as superintendent and the surrounding regions from where many of the

British settlers under his supervision hailed, had a long history of being home to Africans, Indians, and Europeans, including many British buccaneers. In his writings to Colonel J. Carmichael-Smyth in 1818, Sir Richard Bonnycastle described the climate of Honduras as “pure and wholesome” except on the eastern shore (169-170). He described the Mosquito Shore as “an unhealthy, hot country” (171). Among the country’s chief products was mahogany wood, which Bonnycastle described as requiring great labor to procure (170). In the seventeenth century small English logging communities began to appear on the Atlantic side “in response to growing demand in Europe for logwood, mahogany, and other products of the Atlantic coast’s tropical rainforests” (Conner 36). Logwood is a dyewood that yielded colors that were highly sought after in Britain in the eighteenth century for the production of textiles (Campbell 172). The cutting of logwood trees was a flourishing trade for the settlers.

In his 1883 account of the time during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when Great Britain began its efforts to colonize Honduras, Archibald Robertson Gibbs describes life in British Honduras as “an arduous, adventurous and precarious one” due to its “primeval forests” with vegetation “dense beyond conception” (32). The early settlers known as the Baymen were “hardy” and “resolute,” displaying “indomitable courage whenever the enemy (Spain) attempted to drive them away,” according to Gibbs (33). It was likely that the Baymen’s long-held pride in their ruggedness and ability to overcome the land’s conditions along with their love of freedom and independence contributed greatly to their conflicts with Edward.

Even with their ability to conquer the arduous conditions of British Honduras, the formidable settlers still did not choose to go it alone. It appears that many of the men had

slaves and families. The slaves seemed to be vital to the settlers' economic enterprise of woodcutting and in protecting their land (Gibbs 37), and though there is little evidence, their families, particularly their wives, were likely important to maintaining the settlement as well. Women and slaves were present with the settlers as early as 1730, as described in an "old Guatemala gazette" from that year. Gibbs cites the gazette, which details the capture of "sixteen Englishmen and an Englishwoman with her daughter, sixteen negroes and four negresses" by the Spanish (34). Gibbs also makes mention of the settlers being forced to evacuate the Mosquito Shore "with their *families* and slaves" after the treaty of 1783 (47, emphasis mine).

Edward took a census of the Bay of Honduras settlement in January and February 1790, which he summarized in his *Narrative* in 1791. Slaves made up the majority of the population, totaling 2,177. White women, free women of color, and free black women made up 216 of the total 2,915 inhabitants of the settlement, with their children numbering 138 (Conner 290-291). Edward made no mention of whether his wife Catherine and their son James were among those free persons.

A widow named Dorothy Taylor may have been among the white women included in Edward's census. On November 10, 1777, she signed her will, which was recorded by the clerk of the court office in the Bay of Honduras. Upon her death in 1788, she left various pieces of property to her heirs as well as her "Negro Man James" and her "Negro Silvia." The existence of a will written by a woman proves that women, their children, and their slaves were fully integrated into society in the settlement in British Honduras and that the settlement was not sustained by men alone. As viable contributors to the society, widows such as Dorothy Taylor had property and land to bequeath to their

heirs. Although their exact contributions and place in society can only be speculated upon, they had a presence nonetheless. And as the mostly undocumented, “silent partners” of the men of British Honduras, the extent of their contributions to society can only be inferred using small clues, such as Dorothy Taylor’s will. Catherine could easily have been among the “silent partners” of Belize.

Edward versus the Baymen

No actual government existed in the Bay of Honduras Settlement because of the conflicting claims to the territory by Great Britain and Spain (Conner 88); the disputes between the Baymen and Shoremen were primarily over land. The Baymen were woodcutters who had occupied the territory around the mouth of the Belize River for many generations, and the Shoremen were recent immigrants from the Mosquito Shore (88). The Shoremen had been forced to evacuate the Mosquito Shore as a result of the peace agreement between Great Britain and Spain that was originally signed in 1783 and later revised and signed in London in 1786 (Conner 78-79). The Baymen hoped Edward would be an ally in the struggle over the division of the new territories made available by the Convention of 1786, but Lord Sydney instructed Despard to attend to the Shoremen’s needs first; they were the ones who should get the new land over the Baymen. Lord Sydney’s specific instructions were:

His Majesty feels an equal concern for all his subjects, & is disposed at all times to listen to their reasonable applications; but in the present instance His Majesty conceives that the Mosquito Settlers who have been obliged to relinquish their possessions ought first to be attended to, especially in the disposal of those lands which may in some degree be looked upon as a consideration for their Settlements upon the Mosquito Shore. Upon this ground His Majesty has commanded me to instruct you that the late inhabitants of the Mosquito Shore who may arrive at the

Honduras Settlement are to be accommodated in preference to all other persons whatsoever. (qtd. in Conner 88-89)

According to Conner, “There was also a significant element of class and racial antagonism involved in the conflict between the Baymen and Shoremen,” of which Edward was well aware (89). In the settlement, wealth was determined by the acres of land and the number of slaves a person possessed, which conflicted with how land was to be distributed according to the Convention of 1786. Regardless of Edward’s presence and role as superintendent, the Baymen acted under their own set of rules, creating their own resolutions. In response to one of the Baymen’s resolutions, Edward wrote of the “partiality of this law to rich people” (qtd. in Conner 93), revealing his affinity for championing for equality and for the rights of the “little guy” long before his days as a revolutionary in London.

Edward felt the British settlers had unfairly monopolized the land by denying property rights to poor whites and people of color. This unfair treatment did not sit well with Edward, so as noted by Mavis C. Campbell, he made changes, “with his usual energy and hatred of injustice” (188), instituting a lottery system to allocate land without regard to race, class, or gender. According to Campbell, “a *nouveau riche* group had emerged from the profits that the timber industry generated” in British Honduras and “a form of government based on wealth, race, class and, of course, gender” emerged (188). Thus, the Baymen fought back hard and communicated their grievances to the British government.

One noteworthy dispute that erupted in 1787 as a result of Edward’s lottery system was between Joshua Jones, a free black man, and a Bayman named Aaron

Younger over land that had been allotted to Jones (Conner 99). Younger claimed the land was his, but with the new distribution plan, Younger no longer had any claim to the land, at least according to Edward's interpretation of the Convention of 1786, and Edward had every intention to follow the letter of the "law," i.e., the Convention of 1786.

The conflict culminated in a showdown between an unarmed Edward and an armed mob of Baymen who had taken Jones into custody and imprisoned him in the courthouse. According to Conner, the Baymen's response to the Joshua Jones/Aaron Younger dispute was stimulated by stories of slave revolts in other parts of the Caribbean (101), and the Baymen accused Edward of "stirring up the Black people and encouraging them to rebel" (102). They used race to justify their actions in the Jones/Younger dispute. The Baymen came up with racist and classist excuses to explain their opposition to the lottery Edward used to distribute land. In a letter to Lord Sydney, Robert White, an attorney hired by the settlement's magistrates to lobby against Edward's conduct as superintendent, argued that free Blacks made "good Servants" and were happy with their low rank in society (Conner 102). Yet according to White, with the lottery, Edward was going against that with his "wild and Levelling principle of Universal Equality" (qtd. in Conner 103), essentially turning the basis of society and government on its head.

Even Lord Sydney, who had supported many of Edward's decisions regarding the Baymen, "was vulnerable to this kind of sociological argument" presented by the Baymen, suggesting that Edward may have gone too far and cautioned that some discrimination might be necessary in easing tensions among the settlement's inhabitants. In a letter, Lord Sydney told Edward:

It could have been wished that you had made some Distinction in the Extent of Lots so as to be disposed of, between affluent Settlers and Persons of a different description, particularly people of Colour, or Free Negroes, who, from the natural Prejudices of the Inhabitants of the Colonies, are not, however valuable in point of character, considered upon an equal footing with People of a different Complexion. (qtd. in Conner 103)

Though he was following his interpretation of the Convention of 1786 in the land disputes, Edward disregarded or seemed to forget the importance of class in British and colonial society at the time. For Lord Sydney, it was expected that as a leader Edward would distinguish between the “affluent” and those “of a different description,” especially when considering the “natural prejudices” of whites living in the colonies.

Essentially, in his statement, Sydney acknowledged that the settlers’ prejudices were off base; the blacks and people of color who lived and worked in the settlement may indeed have been of good character. Yet prejudices by whites against blacks, mixed-race people, and others, were simply a part of colonial life that Edward had to accept. Therefore, it was best for him to play along with the unwritten rules of society and race in the colonial world in which he lived.

Of course, Edward was not oblivious to race and class differences while serving in Belize, and did not appear to be rattled by the concept of human beings owning other human beings. He was well aware that some of the free blacks themselves were slave owners. He mentioned two “people of colour” who owned slaves, and Joshua Jones himself owned 17 slaves (Conner 104). There is no evidence to show whether Edward and Catherine owned slaves, but it does not appear that he publically opposed the institution of slavery. According to Conner, Edward mentioned in a letter to his friend Evan Nepean “an incident in which three men accused of piracy were apprehended ‘by

the assistance of my own negroes” (138). It is not clear whether Edward owned these slaves or whether they were lent to him by someone. Conner also found evidence of Edward’s granting manumission to a slave in 1788 as a reward for the slave’s “good services” during a battle led by Edward in 1782 (138). Taking into consideration her husband’s actions in Belize and the climate of politics, class, and race in Great Britain and its colonies at the time, it may not be too far of a stretch to assume that Catherine herself was not opposed to slavery or at least was comfortable with existing in a community where not all men (and women) were free.

Edward’s handling of the race and class issues that arose in Belize reflect his attitude about race and class beyond the Baymen’s land disputes. In his mind the law was the law. Despite the murkiness of the agreement between Great Britain and Spain regarding the territory, Edward clearly understood his orders. He was sent to the settlement to ensure that the Baymen and Shoremen lived and cut wood in the proper areas while respecting and adhering to the boundaries set forth in the Convention of 1786. The men were to live and work in the “British” territory and avoid the “Spanish” territory. Edward also knew it was his job to distribute the land equally. So on one level he was simply following the law — nothing revolutionary in that regard, especially considering he would eventually be executed for *not* following the law, i.e., attempting to overthrow the very government he was committed to serve.

Clifford Conner emphasizes these points in the biography, *Colonel Despard: The Life and Times of an Anglo-Irish Rebel*, arguing:

It is equally evident that Despard was not attempting to foment social revolution by backing the demands of the Shoremen for fair play. His experiences in the Bay Settlement undoubtedly contributed to the radicalism he would later exhibit in

England, but his actions as a superintendent reveal at most a *commitment to equality before the law, not social equality*. That is particularly evident in the lack of any challenge on his part to the institution of slavery. At this point in his life, Despard was no John Brown. In the heat of the Joshua Jones incident, rather than urging the free Blacks to make common cause with the slaves against the white elite, he counseled moderation. (104-105, *emphasis mine*)

Taking into consideration Conner's argument about Edward's lack of motivation to oppose the institution of slavery itself, it is easy to conclude that Edward was not aiming to make radical social change. The idea of free Blacks' owning slaves was not a major dilemma or contradiction for him. These Blacks were free, and as free people, they were free to own property, whether that property included land or slaves.

Edward did not appear to be a radical or social reformer in his personal life either, despite being in an interracial marriage. Whether he met Catherine in Belize or during his time in Jamaica, the two most likely lived as husband and wife while he served as superintendent of the Bay of Honduras. Despite Sydney's comments on the "natural" prejudices of the white settlers, it probably seemed quite reasonable to Edward that he could marry a woman like Catherine. He and Catherine were possibly of a similar social standing. It is apparent that Edward was born into aristocracy, but it is not clear if or at what point Catherine became part of a higher social class. She may have been born into higher social standing. Because some have described her as being the daughter of a Jamaican preacher (Jay 172) or "respectable clergyman of the Established Church" (Conner 137), it is possible that her father's occupation may have put her among the upper classes of Jamaican society. Or perhaps her likely being mixed race or "of colour" gave her the opportunity to reach high social status, as was the case for many free women of color living in the colonial Caribbean.

There is no way to know for certain whether Catherine became a lady of proper social standing either before meeting Edward or as a result of forming a relationship with him. If the latter were true, he may have made sure she learned to read and received a proper education, much in the way John Stedman had hoped for his “Suriname wife” Joanna. So even though Edward’s wife’s social status before meeting him is not clear, it does become clear once the Despard’s move to London that her social standing is that of a lady worthy to be married to a gentleman such as Edward. Yes, the Despard’s may have encountered many in London who found their union to be radical, and her social status was called into question by certain members of Parliament, but to others it was quite clear she belonged among the aristocracy. Although there is no evidence the couple encountered prejudice while in Belize like Joshua Jones did, to a man like Edward — a practical, rational man and stickler for following the law — marrying a woman like Catherine made perfect sense and was not at all radical.

The white settlers in Belize probably were quick to categorize Edward as a type of radical. It may have been difficult to categorize him as anything different. How else could they describe a man like Edward who had no problem distributing land equally regardless of race or class and was married to a woman of color? Yet to Edward there may have been very little about his relationship with Catherine that he considered to be controversial or radical. Race was not a factor for choosing a mate; class was. It was just as proper and suitable for Catherine as a free woman to marry Edward, a free man, as it was for two free white people to marry one another or for free Blacks to own other blacks.

In the end, Edward's response to the Baymen's grievances was a pragmatic one: no English laws explicitly denied people of color rights to property and the nonwhites were just as entitled to a place to live as the wealthy settlers (Linebaugh and Rediker 273). This response most likely led Lord Grenville, who had replaced Lord Sydney as Britain's secretary of state, to eventually announce in 1789 that Edward was suspended from office and ordered to return to London (Conner 130-131). Beyond Grenville's forcing Edward to essentially end his military career, Edward's stance against the Baymen spoke volumes about his belief in equal rights for all, regardless of class, race, or gender. It is hard to imagine that Catherine did not have any influence on Edward's egalitarian views and his apparent ease with ignoring the race and class consciousness of the rich white settlers. How could a man married to a woman of American Indian or African descent refuse to recognize the rights of men and women with similar backgrounds and (perhaps) a similar skin color as his wife and son? The New World may have been full of contradictions, as colonizers carried on sexual relationships with the very women they enslaved, but Edward had little patience for hypocrisy. Even up until moments before his execution, Edward maintained his hope for the human race and, by extension, for his interracial family as well.

Chapter III: Shattered Caribbean Dreams for an Emerging Revolutionary Couple

Life in (Black) London

By the time the Despard family left Belize and arrived in London in 1790, the world had become much more diverse and interconnected than when Edward first began his military career as a teenager. Assuming this was their first visit to England, for Catherine and son James, who it is assumed was born in the Caribbean (Conner 137), life was most likely quite different than it was in the Caribbean, where they had been surrounded by other blacks, Indians, and people of mixed race. In London they encountered a much different situation. Scholar Gretchen Gerzina asserts that the lives of most black people in London “were an odd mixture of isolation and assimilation, of separation from each other and the larger society while being connected to both” (29).

Though blacks were in the minority, they still had a presence that was on full display yet invisible at the same time. According to Gerzina, by the eighteenth century, the black population in London had become a structured community with its own churches, pubs, and meeting places (6). Nevertheless, their presence tacitly forced whites to confront the contradictions posed by Britons who expressed a growing interest in philosophical discussions on fairness and the natural rights of man while practically ignoring the plight of the individuals directly affected by the slave trade (Gerzina 6-7).

I suspect Catherine had little interaction with other blacks in London. A few documents make reference to a woman who was with Catherine during one of her visits to see Edward before his execution and then later at his funeral. The woman’s race is not mentioned; however, we can assume she was of color, as one newspaper described the

woman as a close relative (“Execution Col. Despard, &c.”). In *Black London*, Gerzina constructs a world where most black women served in domestic roles (75), and whose lives, much like Joanna in Suriname and Phibbah in Jamaica, were documented only from the perspectives of their owners or employers (29). Even in her thorough research, Gerzina could only cite a few well-documented examples of well-to-do blacks living in Britain prior to emancipation. Her short list of accomplished blacks who were able to live their lives outside the field of domestic service was mostly made up of men. One well-known aristocratic woman of color was Dido Elizabeth Belle, the illegitimate daughter of navy captain Sir John Lindsay and a black slave. Born c.1761 Dido was raised by Lindsay’s uncle, William Murray, first earl of Mansfield, who provided her with an allowance and an education (King). Unlike Catherine, however, Dido appears to have spent her entire adult life in Britain. Still, even within the presence of a burgeoning black population in Britain, far away from limitations of the colonial West Indies, Catherine was an anomaly, and a number of people who came into direct or indirect contact with her did not quite know what to make of her.

A Radical Climate

At the time of his arrival in 1790, Edward, now approaching his forties, had been back on British soil only twice over a twenty-year period (Conner 28, 79). Though he had spent most of his adult life abroad in the Caribbean, Edward was not out of touch with the changing political climate. Significant revolutionary movements had occurred or were occurring around the world, including the American and French revolutions. Such events were not only having an effect on the individuals within those countries, but ideals

regarding freedom and liberty had also begun to permeate national borders and crisscross the Atlantic Ocean. Though there had not been a full-blown revolution in England by the time Edward returned, radicals had begun to organize and form their own movements and societies, questioning and criticizing government in the hopes of opening the political process to individuals outside the aristocracy.

As H.T. Dickinson explains in “Popular Politics and Radical Ideas,” in eighteenth-century Britain, and by extension its colonies, it was “generally acknowledged that all Britons possessed a number of vital civil liberties,” yet who had the right to vote and make policy decisions was up for debate. He argues that when conservative commentators “referred to ‘free men,’ they invariably meant those who owned sufficient property to be economically independent” (Dickinson 105).

While the British radicals were not seeking freedoms for everyone in society, their demands for more equitable representation in the political process certainly posed a threat to a government that was run by the aristocratic elite. According to Dickinson, by the late eighteenth century, many radicals “insisted that parliament must be subordinated to the sovereign will of the people and political reforms needed to be enacted that would make government and parliament accountable to the people at large” (106). The radicals became increasingly critical of the aristocracy’s hold on government and “transformed some of their clubs and societies into vehicles for coordinating campaigns to challenge the political influence of their social superiors and to increase their own representation in parliament” (Dickinson 108).

Among the radicals were the English Jacobins, who according to Conner, did not “in the early 1790s aspire to overthrow their own monarchy or create a new constitution

or form of government. Their goal was simply to bring about changes that would render the electoral system more equitable” (148). It is not known when Edward became a part of the Jacobin movement, but he had been affiliated with the United Irish Society before joining the London Corresponding Society in the early 1790s (Conner 150). Ironically, it was men like Edward, who held high positions in society, upon whom many of these societies looked for leadership in their efforts to challenge the aristocratic-led government. As Conner explains, “The working men who formed the corresponding societies did not have an exaggerated conception of their own social power. They tended to perceive their political role as subordinate to that of traditional political leaders drawn from the middle class or from aristocratic circles” (149). Not only did Edward become a leader for these men, but also in the end, he paid the ultimate price for their cause: his life.

The Baymen Dispute Revisited

Before taking on the cause of the United Irishmen and working-class Britons, however, Edward’s primary objective on arrival in London was to defend himself against the charges made against him by the Baymen in Belize. In addition to complaints over how Edward handled land distribution and the fallout from the Jones/Younger dispute, the Baymen attacked Edward’s annulment of their magistracy and the institution of a “system of police,” an action he believed was necessary to take as it was in accordance with his strict interpretation of the Convention of 1786 (Conner 127-130). Edward had intended for his return trip to Britain to be a short one; it was his hope to clear the Belize matter and regain his position as superintendent and restore his reputation.

It was no secret that Edward's primary intent was to settle the matter with the British government. On December 21, 1790, the London newspaper, *World*, reported: "Col. DESPARD, who was lately superceded in his command of the British forces on the Spanish main, owing to a dispute with some of the officers, is arrived in town to settle accounts with government."

He quickly discovered that the task was far more difficult than he had expected, despite his having the backing of the majority of the inhabitants of the settlement in Belize. Right after losing his superintendent position, he sought and won election to the Bay Settlement's magistracy, a move that was prompted by the realization "that the prompt, thorough, and impartial inquiry Grenville had promised was not forthcoming" (Conner 133). Also, in May 1790, the 213 other newly elected magistrates in Belize sent a petition to the Home Office in Edward's defense, expressing hope that "His Majesty will be graciously pleased to restore Colonel Edward Marcus Despard to the Superintendency of this Settlement" (qtd. in Conner 136). After his attempts to get the government to pay attention to his concerns regarding Belize, he set about writing a formal account of his time in the settlement, and submitted his 900-page *A Narrative of the Publick Transactions in the Bay of Honduras from 1784 to 1790* to the Home Office in March 1791 (Conner 149).

In October 1791, Edward's request for an inquiry was formally rejected, and he learned his superintendency in Honduras would not be reinstated (Chase). It was also around this time that he is believed to have joined the London Corresponding Society (Conner 151). Though there is little documentation of Edward's involvement with such groups, disappointment over the Home Office's lack of concern and inaction likely led to

his disillusionment with government and contributed to his decision to join the London Corresponding Society and the United Irishmen. As Conner eloquently asserts:

The fundamental hypocrisy of British colonial policy could hardly have been demonstrated more clearly to (Edward). In Belize he had scrupulously adhered to instructions given him in the name of the king to accord all of His Majesty's subjects equal treatment and to seize contraband, only to find that his career interests would have been better served by giving preference to wealthy elite and turning a blind eye to illicit trade. (145)

Thus, Edward had already proven in Belize that he had no problem challenging the status quo when it came to matters of equality among the classes, and now that he had lost his job and a stellar reputation that had taken decades to build, he set out to faithfully serve a new order: the uprising of Britain's working class.

The Movement Begins

Eventually Edward's involvement with revolutionary groups caught the attention of the British government. During the 1790s, the British government began to make efforts to control radical activity. In 1795, the Treasonable Practices Act made outspoken criticism of the government into a high misdemeanor. That year, the government also clamped down on public meetings and suspended habeas corpus ("Gagging Acts"), which protected an individual from unlawful custody by requiring an individual under arrest to be brought before a court to ensure a legal hearing ("Habeas Corpus"). These efforts had a major impact on Edward, and eventually, Catherine as well.

Of note, on July 15, 1795, the *True Briton* reported that Edward was arrested and questioned about his involvement in a riot at Charing Cross two days before. Giving the name "Citizen Edward Marcus Despard" when approached by a constable attempting to

disperse a crowd that was “huzzaing and making a noise,” Edward was reportedly the only one who refused to leave. Questioned by the magistrate on July 14, Edward cited the constable’s negligence in reading him the Riot Act — which Edward believed amounted to “very illegal and improper conduct” — as his reason for disobeying the constable’s demands to leave the area. He further added that he had merely gotten caught up in the crowd of rioters while on his way to his home located at No. 34, London Road, St. George’s Fields. The magistrate seemed astounded that a gentleman and high-ranking official such as Edward would dare use the “improper title” of “citizen” and noted that had Edward simply made his status known, he never would have had to endure lengthy questioning. It did not appear that Edward had been involved in the Charing Cross riot, so the magistrate was ready to dismiss him but not before clarifying another suspicious matter: he had received information that Edward had torn up and thrown several papers into the water while being held at St. Martin’s Watch-house just the night before. When asked what the papers were, Edward stated that they were “private letters, relative to his private affairs.”

Edward does not admit to any involvement in the riot, but his use of the word “citizen,” as the *True Briton* was all too eager to highlight, shows that Edward wanted to make the point that he was a citizen first and foremost with certain rights, as all Britons were. Challenging the constable was Edward’s way of drawing attention to the importance of the basic rights of citizens, including being read the Riot Act before being asked to disperse from a large gathering. The man who had been a champion for the lower class in British Honduras had now expanded his advocacy from protecting the land rights of average white settlers and free people of color to those of all the citizens of

Britain. He was well on his way to becoming the man who in the moments before being executed for treason eight years later would defend the rights of not only the poor and oppressed but for the entire human race. Was Catherine not too far behind, experiencing her own evolution as a revolutionary?

Edward's relationship with the United Irishmen grew stronger, and by 1797, he had become close with Irish nationalist William Duckett and reportedly had a major role in coordinating a rising in London that would coincide with one in Ireland and an invasion of Ireland by the French (Chase).

By 1798, government officials could no longer dismiss "Citizen" Edward's political activities. In that year he played a pivotal role in negotiations between the United Irishmen and the United Britons as the two groups planned to incite the simultaneous risings in London and Ireland. It was after the arrests of main leaders of the conspiracy, Arthur O'Connor and James O'Coighley, that lawmakers suspended habeas corpus, thus opening the door for the arrests of many others, including Edward (Chase).

Initially in March of 1798, Edward was arrested at the home he shared with Catherine in Meard's Court, Dean Street, in Soho, as was reported in several London newspapers. Among those reports: the March 13 issue of the *London Times* and the March 10-13 issue of the *Express and Evening Chronicle* mentioned that Edward had been apprehended by the king's messengers while in bed. Both newspapers reported that a woman was in bed with Edward during the arrest, but she was described differently by each paper. According to the *Express and Evening Chronicle*, "the Colonel and Mrs. Despard were both in bed, when the former was arrested by the Officers," yet the *Times* simply described her as a "black woman." The *Times* gave no indication that the woman

was married to Edward, yet it is obvious from the *Express*'s account of the arrest that it was well known that Edward had a wife. Why did the *Times* choose not to mention that the woman was Edward's wife or at least attempt to learn what his relationship was to her? It appears that the editors of the *Times* were hoping to create a sensation; not only had this renowned colonel been arrested for suspicious activities, but he also was sleeping with a black woman. Considering the stereotypes about women of color that were prevalent at the time, the use of one simple word, "black," paired with "woman" carried with it many negative connotations and likely brought to readers' minds the image of concubinage. The paper's choice to emphasize her race also suggests that perhaps there was some question as to whether she was truly his wife; she was a black woman, therefore it could not be possible.

In April of that year Edward was arrested and imprisoned on "suspicion of treasonable practices." He ended up remaining in prison for three years without ever being tried or convicted of a crime. There is no proof that Catherine played a role in Edward's radical activity in London from the time he first returned in 1790 until he was imprisoned in 1798, but there is evidence that she was aware of his activity and frightened for him. An unsigned report to the Duke of Portland dated February 13, 1798, details some of Edward's activities and the effect they had on Catherine, noting that Catherine shared with the wife of an informant named Hamilton Rowan "that she dreaded her husband's connection with Hamilton Rowan as she was sure he would bring her husband into trouble" (qtd. in Conner 180). Once Edward was imprisoned, his once-silent partner's voice begins to emerge well beyond the ears of informants' wives in the form of letters and in political debates among some of England's most powerful men. Her ability

to state her husband's case as a mistreated prisoner and her comfort with appealing to powerful political leaders suggest that Catherine was no stranger to confrontation and conflict, perhaps due to her knowledge of and participation in Edward's large and small efforts to effect change in government, including his possible involvement with the riot at Charing Cross.

During Edward's three-year imprisonment, Catherine became his staunchest advocate, garnering support from such political heavy-hitters as politician and prison reformer, Sir Francis Burdett. It did not take her long to begin a very public campaign to free her husband.

Catherine versus Parliament

After his arrest on April 22, Edward was sent to Coldbath Fields Prison in Clerkenwell (Conner 192). Catherine wrote letters to many British leaders, including the Duke of Portland, who was secretary of state. In one letter presumably written in her own hand in April or May of 1798, Catherine insisted that Edward was being treated "more like a Vagabond, than a gentleman or a State Prisoner," and pleaded for the Duke's help in alleviating the situation. She made her case by outlining the basic necessities Edward was being deprived of:

When he was first taken to that Prison, he had one of the upper apartments given him, which he found very airy; but since his commitment he has been removed to the ground floor, with not so much as a Chair to sit on or a Table to take his vitals of; where he finds the Mornings and Evenings very cooled and not so much as a Fire to warm himself; and where he is Deprived of Book, Pen ink; and not even allowed to see me but for a few moments, and that among felons and People of the worst of crimes. (National Archives [HO] 42/43/127)

The letter, which she closed with “I am Sir/Your Most Obedient Servant/Catherine Despard,” demonstrates that Catherine was a literate woman well-versed in the proper way to communicate with public officials.

Catherine’s letter-writing campaign also included an additional letter to the Duke of Portland and letters to Sir Richard Ford, undersecretary of state William Wickham, and London newspapers. (Conner 193). Thanks in large part to Catherine’s efforts, Edward’s imprisonment became the focus of a three-week debate in the House of Commons over whether to extend the suspension of habeas corpus. Front and center was a letter that Catherine had reportedly sent to the newspapers. As reported in the December 27, 1798, issue of the *Oracle and Daily Advertiser* John Courtenay presented the letter to his fellow Members of Parliament. In the letter Catherine explained that her husband had been “confined near seven months in a damp cell, not seven feet square, without either fire or candle, chair, table, knife, fork, a glazed window, or even a book to read” and lamented that her previous pleas had gone unanswered by the Duke of Portland and others (“Parliamentary Intelligence”). Courtenay argued that Catherine’s accusations concerning the prison’s conditions were worth investigating.

Although Courtenay received support from Burdett, the authenticity of the letter and Catherine’s credibility were quickly called into question by other MPs. It appears MP Rowland Burdon assumed that since Edward chose to complain neither to the governor nor to the surgeon of Coldbath Fields, there was no mistreatment occurring at the prison and that Catherine, or whoever wrote it, had lied in the letter.

As reported by the *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, during the December 26, 1798, debate over the suspension of habeas corpus, Burdon disputed Courtenay’s claims that

prisoners were being mistreated at Coldbath Fields. Several months later on April 3, 1799, Burdon made a statement before the Parliamentary committee appointed to investigate the state of the prison in Coldbath Fields (“Report from the Committee”). Both the *Oracle* report and the statement Burdon made before the committee address his findings after a visit to the prison in December 1798. In both reports, Burdon discredits Catherine and the deplorable prison conditions she described in her letter, concluding that there had been no mistreatment occurring in the prison; however, upon closer examination of both reports, a few discrepancies in Burdon’s statements can be found.

The *Oracle and Daily Advertiser* reported that Burdon met with Edward as a result of reading Catherine’s letter. During Burdon’s conversation with Edward, “the Col. had flatly contradicted the assertions contained in the said letter, relative to harsh and rigid treatment” and “had expressly declared, that he had nothing whatever to alledge against Government, nor against the Gentleman who were appointed to visit and inspect the gaol” (“Parliamentary Intelligence”).

However, in his testimony to the committee on April 3, 1799, Burdon states that Edward “had no Complaint to make against the Governor (of the prison), or the Treatment he had experienced in the Prison; that his complaint was against the Duke of Portland, as Secretary of State, having sent and detained him there, without bringing him to his Trial under the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.” Burdon continued that Edward was “determined” to make no complaint “whatever Treatment he might have experienced, as he considered his Grievance to proceed entirely from the Treatment of the Secretary of State” (“Report from the Committee” 57). The *Oracle and Daily Advertiser* was correct in reporting that Edward had no complaints about his treatment in

the prison; however, based on Burdon's statement before the committee, it appears that Edward chose not to address those concerns because his greatest concern was that he had been imprisoned without being tried.

It is worth noting that the attorney general, Sir John Scott, not only questioned the authenticity of Catherine's accusations, but he also singled out the wives of all of the state prisoners. The *Oracle and Daily Advertiser* summarized the attorney general's comments: "But speaking of prisoner's (sic) *wives*, he ought to remark, that it was no small degree of indulgence in the Government that it had not imprisoned some of them also" ("Parliamentary Intelligence"). In the official Parliamentary report, the same remarks are a bit softened; the attorney general mentions that something had been said "about the wives and friends of some prisoners being refused access to them," adding "By the way, there were some wives who had met with much indulgence, in not being taken up and confined as well as their husbands" ("Parliamentary Debates" 26 December 1798, 416).

Biographer Conner contends that the attorney general's comments were not in reference to the wives of the other prisoners at all but instead were "a thinly veiled threat against" Catherine (Conner 195). Conner's assessment of these remarks seem to be well within reason, considering that immediately after commenting on the prisoners' wives, the attorney general goes on to discuss Catherine's letter and questions her ability to have written it.

The attorney general's doubts about the letter's true author are based on depositions that were taken in the prison. According to the official record from Parliament, the attorney general concluded from the deposition that "Colonel Despard

was surprised at what had been said on his behalf in the House of Commons” in previous debates “and that, if necessary, he was ready to contradict it himself” (“Parliamentary Debates” 26 December 1798, 417-418). Initially, it is not clear whether the attorney general meant that Edward was the one speaking in this deposition; however, that appears doubtful when the attorney general went on to “read some parts of a conversation between the person making this deposition and another person, by which he collected that the letter published in the papers was not of the writing of Mrs. Despard” (“Parliamentary Debates” 26 December 1798, 418). The attorney general chooses not to name the individuals making these statements about Edward, but only moments later in the same speech, he scolds Courtenay for using secondhand, unsubstantiated rumors from a newspaper to present his case before the House. Courtenay could have argued that the attorney general was basing his argument on unproven, secondhand information as well.

Despite the attorney general’s assertions in December 1798 that Edward would contradict the statements made about his treatment in prison, Edward did not choose to contradict the accusations made on his behalf by Catherine and his supporters in Parliament. He instead wrote a petition to the House of Commons declaring the opposite to be true. Courtenay presented the petition to the House of Commons on February 20, 1799, a little over a month after the attorney general’s comments.

Referring to himself in the third person, Edward states in the petition that he is well aware Catherine’s December 23, 1798, letter has caused much parliamentary debate and proclaims he owes an “important duty” to “this honourable House and his country at large, to guard this honourable House against all misrepresentation relative to your

petitioner, and to that letter” (“Parliamentary Debates” 20 February 1799, 113). He even recites Catherine’s letter verbatim.

The article from the *Oracle* reports that the attorney general further added “that all the vigilance of the gaolers was unable to prevent the wives and friends of the prisoners from introducing seditious works, such as O’Connor’s pamphlet about Ireland, to corrupt the principles of the other person confined” (“Parliamentary Intelligence”). There are some discrepancies between the *Oracle*’s account of the attorney general’s comments on O’Connor’s pamphlet and the account published in the official Parliamentary report. In the Parliamentary papers, the attorney general does not directly connect the prisoners’ wives with the O’Connor pamphlet. After questioning the ability of Catherine (or any woman for that matter) to have written such a letter, he goes on to comment on the “artful men in that prison,” some of whom had “ill deserved the lenity that was shewn to them.” Here he appears to imply that it was one of the prisoners and not Catherine who composed the letter. He continues his argument, asserting “some of them had a great number of *O’Connor*’s pamphlets.”

Why did the attorney general choose to single out the pamphlet of Irish nationalist Arthur O’Connor? Had the pamphlet actually been found in Edward’s possession, and if so, was Catherine the one who smuggled it into the prison? O’Connor, who had held secret meetings with Edward in 1798 (Conner 176), was no stranger to rebellious activity and imprisonment. He had been arrested and tried for treason alongside other United Irishmen in 1798 but was later acquitted. As previously noted, Edward had played a major role in the negotiations between the United Irishmen and the United Britons and O’Connor had been one of the primary organizers of the groups’ proposed uprising in

London in 1798 (Chase). Catherine was likely familiar with O'Connor's activities and his 1798 pamphlet, *The State of Ireland*. Described in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as "the most sophisticated political thinker" in the Irish nationalist movement, O'Connor "argued for an ideal of the nation as a productive community organized through an equality of political and civil rights" and "thought that the defects of the British constitutional order were most spectacularly evident in Ireland, but not confined to it" (Livesey). Even if she had not smuggled *The State of Ireland* into the prison, because of Edward's connection to O'Connor, it is quite possible that Catherine had read the pamphlet, which likely helped strengthened her belief in the cause of the United Irishmen and the British radicals. It probably is not a stretch to assume that O'Connor's view on the far-reaching implications of Britain's defective constitutional order appealed to Catherine, a woman whose origins were in Britain's colonized Caribbean.

It is also worth noting the things that were *not* said about Catherine during the Parliamentary debates. Throughout the debates no one mentioned Catherine's race, yet the MPs efforts to discredit her suggest that they were well aware of her background and were somewhat appalled at her insistence that her concerns be addressed. Burdon's comment that the letter could not have been written by a "Lady" implies sexism, classism, racism, or a combination of all three. Whether because of her gender or race (which in and of itself would put her in a lower class), it is apparent that some members of Parliament felt Catherine was out of line. In addition to revealing the public officials' discomfort with an outspoken woman of color, these debates also illustrate that Catherine had a place in British politics beyond just being the wife of a military official.

Catherine had an opportunity to defend herself and her husband in person before the House of Commons during the appointed committee's inquiry into the state of Cold Bath Fields Prison. Of the twenty-four witnesses questioned during the inquiry, she was the only woman to testify ("Report from the Committee" 236) and the length of time the committee spent questioning her was brief when compared to most of the other witnesses. Considering that her letters made up the majority of the material evidence presented during the inquiry (297-307), it would stand to reason that her testimony was of major importance, warranting more time with committee.

The Final Say

Despite Catherine's efforts, Edward spent a total of three years imprisoned without a trial and was not released from prison until May 1801. His political activity for the next several months is difficult for historians to trace (Conner 205), and Catherine disappeared from the newspapers during this time as well. Edward reappeared on the revolutionary scene in February 1802 (Conner 206) and was arrested at the Oakley Arms tavern on November 16, 1802.

No mention of Catherine was made during Edward's treason trial, but she is mentioned multiple times in court documents and newspaper articles detailing how Edward spent his days between sentencing and execution. Catherine's documented actions during this time illustrate the immense passion she had for her husband and his political convictions, while the public's response to Catherine's actions reveals a great deal about eighteenth-century British views on race.

Scholars such as Linebaugh and Rediker have pondered the role Catherine may have played in helping Edward craft the final speech he made directly to spectators and indirectly to the government about his hopes for the human race. She certainly had a number of opportunities to do so. It was widely reported that she visited him several times in the days leading up to his execution, and much of his final days on earth were spent writing and reading with Catherine (Linebaugh and Rediker 253). Of course, as to what was actually said between the two, we can only speculate.

In eighteenth-century Britain and even centuries before that, the image of the black woman was portrayed in a variety of negative ways — including as sexual creatures or fashion accessories (Gerzina 4) — that were far from the reality of the black female experience in Britain and its colonies. Britons’ curiosity and fascination with black women permeated plays, novels, and other forms of entertainment (Gerzina 68-75). At times, the documents detailing Catherine’s response to her husband’s sentence read as if they were extracted from a popular novel. One newspaper reported:

Mrs. Despard had been less sanguine, and had almost sunk under the anticipated horror of his fate; she waited the whole of yesterday, in a state of expectation bordering on delirium; her feelings, when the dreadful order arrived, can scarcely be conceived — we cannot pretend to describe them. (“Colonel Despard, &c.”)

Another newspaper portrayed one of Catherine’s final visits with Edward as a “scene” that was “tender and affecting.” After parting from her husband “in a state of grief and despair... the composure she had hitherto preserved could no longer resist the conflict of her feelings.” Ultimately she “was at length carried to a coach, in a state of grief and agitation bordering on distraction” (“Execution Col. Despard, &c.”).

Yet, other portrayals of Catherine were less romantic and theatrical. One edition of the final court documents from Edward's trial and execution reported that on one visit she was not permitted into the prison where Edward was being held, and she "evinced some indignation at the refusal; and expressed a strong opinion with respect to the cause for which her husband was to suffer." The reason for keeping Catherine away from Edward was attributed to the authorities' desire to "spare the Colonel the pangs of a second parting" ("The Trial of Colonel Despard and his Associates" 51). A Portsmouth newspaper made the same report but added: "Half frantic with leaving the prison, a part of the mob laughed at her agitation. This again provoked her resentment" ("Execution of Colonel Despard, &c." *Hampshire Telegraph*). In these two reports Catherine comes across as not as the heroine of a romance novel, but as an opinionated and angry woman deserving of ridicule.

News reports on Edward's funeral and burial also convey varied and often contrasting images of Catherine. According to *Bell's Weekly Messenger* the funeral procession went as follows:

About a quarter past ten a hackney coach arrived, in which were the disconsolate widow of the deceased and two female friends. The wonted firmness of Mrs. Despard forsook her on this trying occasion. On approaching the house in which the body of her husband lay, she became exceedingly dejected, and being conveyed into the apartment, to take a last sad view of the corpse, she nearly fainted away in the arms of her companions. ("Colonel Despard's Funeral")

Once again, a writer appears to use Catherine's grief as a source of entertainment for readers. It is possible that this style of dramatic writing was used frequently when reporting on the funerals of public figures and cannot be attributed to a widely held view that the lives blacks served as entertainment or amusement for whites. However, other

newspaper reporters were a little more forthcoming with their discomfort with Catherine's presence, including a reporter from the *Ipswich Journal*, who, after mentioning the confusion surrounding Edward's burial, curiously mentioned Catherine's race. The publication states,

The ground for interring Colonel Despard was taken in the name of Hamilton. The burial would have been refused under these circumstances, by the City Officers, but from a fear of tumult, there being a considerable concourse of spectators. Mrs. Despard is a woman of colour, whom the Colonel married in the Bay of Honduras. ("Friday's Post")

This particular article raises more questions than answers regarding the newspaper reporter's and the funeral attendants' views on race. The article does not indicate whether Catherine attended the funeral, and it is not clear if the reference to her at the end was in any way related to the previous statement about the controversy surrounding Edward's burial. Was the initial hesitation to bury him at the church due to an administrative error, or was there more to it? Was the "fear of tumult" due to the large number of spectators who might have protested the refusal? Or did the fact that Edward had been married to a "woman of colour" contribute to the initial reluctance to bury Edward at the church? Perhaps it was seen as odd or frowned upon for blacks to attend the funeral of whites, especially blacks who had not served the deceased in a servant capacity.

The *Republican Watch-Tower* offered the most opinionated summary of Edward's funeral. In addition to criticizing Edward's "partizans" and co-conspirators for not bothering to show up for the funeral, the writer made a point to dispel a rumor regarding Catherine, stating:

It has been reported that Mrs. Despard, since the execution of her husband, has been taken under the protection of Lady Nelson. We have authority to state that

the circumstance is wholly untrue, and we much fear that the rumor has been propagated by the enemies of the virtuous and amiable viscountess. (“Burial of Col. Despard”)

Here, the writer implies that it is completely unlikely that a “virtuous and amiable” woman such as Lady Nelson would have any connection with Catherine; therefore, the idea of Catherine being taken under the Lady’s protection is ridiculous. From the writer’s point of view, it only stands to reason that the rumor was started by Lady Nelson’s enemies — despite the fact that her husband, Lord Nelson, was a key witness for Edward’s defense in the treason trial and spoke highly of Edward (Jay 19). I suspect the Lord and Lady held Edward’s wife in high regard as well. On the surface it appears that the writer thinks that the Lady would have nothing to do with anyone associated with Edward, who committed a contemptible crime; even Edward’s associates wanted to distance themselves from him so much that they did not show up for the funeral. Yet, considering the racial climate of the time and Catherine’s reported reputation for causing a stir at prisons and within government, it is easy to surmise that the writer’s horror at the idea of Lady Nelson helping Catherine had a great deal to do with her race and very little to do with her association with a condemned traitor.

The account of Edward’s execution on February 21, 1803, includes no reference to Catherine at all but is worthy of exploration because it offers a telling glimpse into her character and role in shaping her husband’s radical and ahead-of-their-time ideals. The account details Edward’s final words spoken from the scaffold before being hanged and beheaded. He never directly addressed Catherine in the speech, but his references to freedom, humanity, liberty, and truth suggest a greater, more personal motive for the acts

of treason of which he was accused. Describing himself as a “friend to truth, to liberty, and to justice,” Edward revealed to a crowd of twenty thousand the true reasons behind the government’s decision to “destroy” him:

Because he has been a friend to the poor and the oppressed. But, Citizens, I hope and trust, notwithstanding my fate, and the fate of those, who no doubt will soon follow me, that the principles of freedom, of humanity, and of justice, will finally triumph over falsehood, tyranny, and delusion, and every principle hostile to the interests of the human race. And now, having said this, I have little more to add.

Yet he did have more to add. After a short pause he concluded with:

“I have little more to add, except to wish you all health, happiness, and freedom, which I have endeavoured, as far as was in my power, to procure for you and for mankind in general.” (“The Trial of Colonel Despard”)

Indeed Edward, himself an Irishman, was addressing Irish rebels, working-class men, and the countless number of poor and oppressed people throughout the British Empire, evidenced in part by the fact that he had been accused of meeting with thirty men “of the lowest order of society” on the night of his arrest in 1802 (“The Trial of Edward Marcus Despard” 45). However, also included among those for whom he endeavored to procure freedom were his wife Catherine and their son James, who in those times were easily relegated by many to the lowest order of society, too. One newspaper reported that upon Edward’s use of the phrase “the human race,” the mob of spectators closest to him began to shout in response, and he was admonished for using “such inflammatory language” (“Execution Col. Despard, &c.”). The crowd’s reaction to a phrase that is used quite commonly today emphasizes how radical Edward’s concept of one human race — as opposed to several unequal ones — was for the time.

Conclusion

Catherine died in 1815. The announcement of her death was nestled among more than twenty other death notices in the September 16, 1815, issue of the English newspaper, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*. It simply stated, "Mrs. Despard, widow of the unfortunate Col. Despard" ("Deaths"). No age or exact date of death was listed. Readers only learned that Mrs. Despard met her fate at Somers Town. Across the Atlantic nearly five months later, readers of the *New-England Palladium*, in Boston, Massachusetts, may have nearly missed the same notice listed among the deaths of local men, widows, and babies and the drowning of three brothers aged twenty-two, twenty, and ten ("Died").

Catherine's death, much like her life, was recognized by the public only in connection to her husband, "the unfortunate" Colonel Edward Marcus Despard. Yet hers was a presence that could not be easily ignored by a number of influential figures in London who found it difficult to reconcile their notions of a British lady with the real-life, woman of color standing by the side of a gentleman and military officer.

In short, Catherine lived a life that defied commonly held perceptions of eighteenth-century black women in the Caribbean and Britain. The passion she and Edward shared for equality and human rights and her political actions both with and apart from him has earned her a place in British politics that extended well beyond the role of a devoted military wife. Her story may have been an exceptional one, but it still serves as a reflection of the struggle endured by countless individual women as they journeyed away from violence, slavery, and hatred and on toward health, happiness, and freedom.

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