

# ‘COTTON IS KING!’ Sarah Parker Remond, Manchester and the abolitionist movement in Britain and America, 1859-1861

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*In 1859, abolitionist Sarah Parker Remond arrived in Liverpool to commence a series of lectures throughout Britain and Ireland, the first free African American woman to do so. Her address in Manchester in September 1859 encapsulates the tensions of an industrial city dependent on slave-grown products in post-abolition Britain. Remond draws on the connections between the textile industry, plantation slavery and Britain’s abolitionist past in an attempt to stimulate support for emancipation in America. Conversely, Union Patriotic Envelope No. 2: Cotton is King!, a North American Union propaganda envelope, satirises the hypocrisy of Manchester’s trade with the slaveholding South to rally support for the Union on the eve of the American Civil War. This article will interrogate both artefacts to provide insight into the complex and conflicting role of Manchester’s cotton industry within British-American transatlantic trade and transatlantic abolitionist discourse. Abolitionists, such as Remond, needed to navigate and intersect shifting economic, political and moral interests to incite support for their cause in an industrialised post-abolition Britain dependent on slave labour.*

Sarah Parker Remond was the first African-American female to embark on a lecture tour in the UK. Her abolitionist campaign in the mid-nineteenth century spoke to the horrors of slavery in the American South, aiming to elicit public support for abolition among her British audiences. Between 1859 and 1861, she delivered more than 45 speeches across the UK and Ireland.<sup>1</sup> This article will focus on a written account of a lecture given in Manchester in 1859, recorded by the *Manchester Weekly Times*.<sup>2</sup> Alongside this speech, this article will consider a pre-war, pro-Union propaganda envelope from 1861, entitled *Union Patriotic Envelope No.2, Cotton Is King!*, printed by New York-based manufacturer ‘Stimpson & Company’. *Patriotic Envelope...* was part of a surge of ten thousand propaganda envelopes printed by the Union and, to a lesser extent, the Confederate States.<sup>3</sup> ‘Cotton’ is central within both sources and through it, this article will consider Manchester’s relationship with the American South and cotton’s role in transatlantic trade between America and Great Britain. It will also consider the significance of the textile industry in transatlantic abolitionist discourse.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Burnett Porter, ‘The Remonds of Salem, Massachusetts: A Nineteenth-Century Family Revisited’ *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 95.2 (1986), 259- 295 <<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1305090274?accountid=13042>> [accessed 3 January 2020] (p. 287).

<sup>2</sup> ‘Remond, [Sarah Parker]’ *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: September 17, 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048 <[https://libraries.udmercy.edu/archives/special-collections/index.php?collectionCode=baa&record\\_id=1488](https://libraries.udmercy.edu/archives/special-collections/index.php?collectionCode=baa&record_id=1488)> [accessed 12 December 2019].

<sup>3</sup> Veronique Greenwood, ‘Civil War Envelopes Are Works of Art—And Propaganda’, *National Geographic* (2015) <<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/12/151210-civil-war-envelopes-art-propaganda-artifacts/>> [accessed 3 January 2020] (para 2).

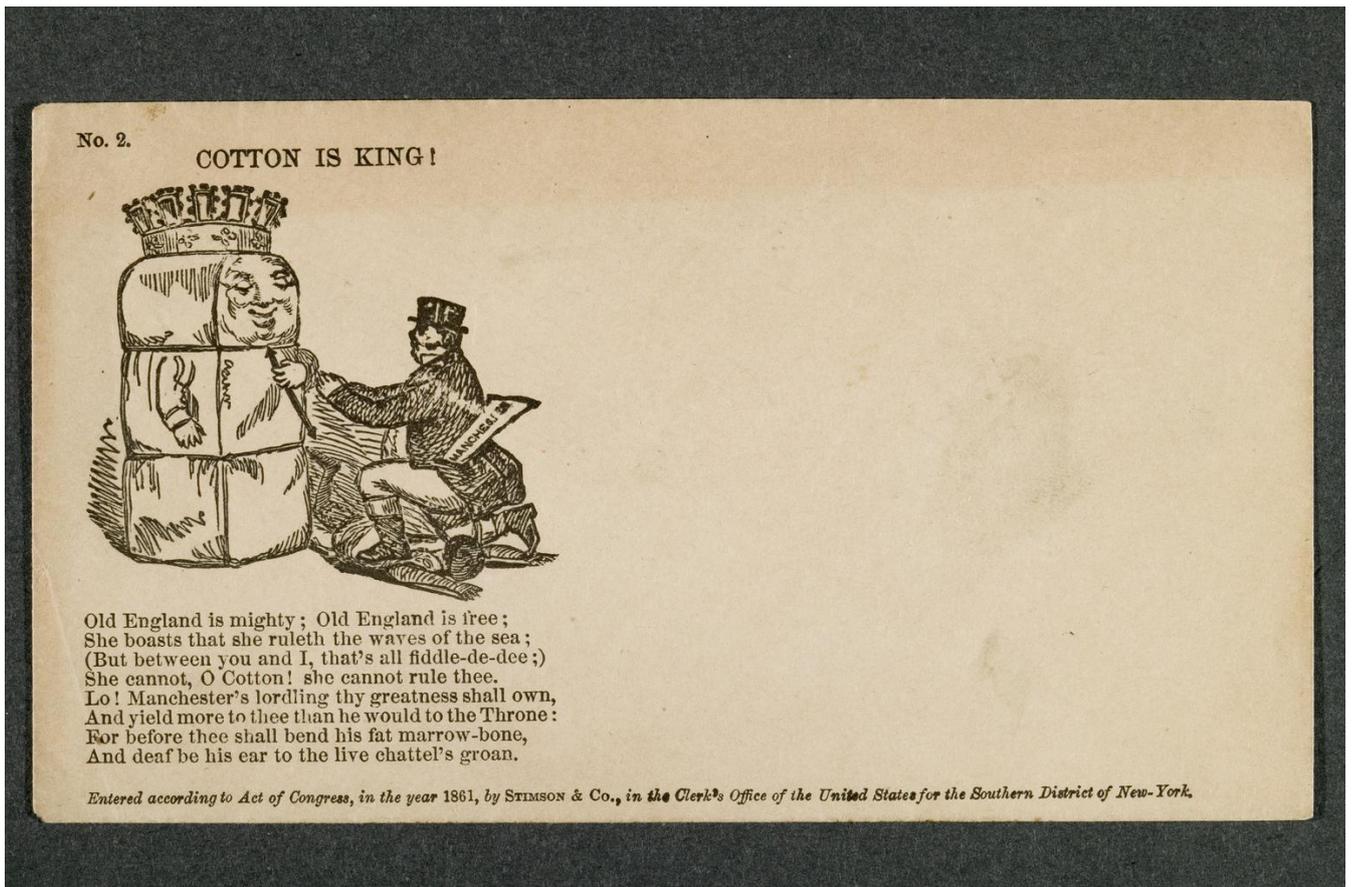


Figure 1: Stimson & Company, *Union Patriotic Envelope No. 2: Cotton Is King!*, (1861), Envelope, 14.1 × 7.8 cm (Textiles Gallery; Creative Commons 4.0, Manchester Science and Industry Museum)

## KING COTTON AND MANCHESTER

To understand why both sources focus on cotton, we must first consider briefly the significance of the industry to mid-nineteenth century Britain. Across England in 1860, 460,000 textile workers were involved in the trade and between twenty to twenty five per cent of the country were in some way dependent on the industry it provided.<sup>4</sup> By 1861, eleven per cent of England's national income was related to cotton.<sup>5</sup> Despite efforts to increase exports from India, by 1860, eighty eight per cent of textiles produced by British factories were made with US slave-grown cotton.<sup>6</sup> Cotton was grown by enslaved workers on American plantations, woven and spun by Lancashire workers, and in turn, workers used their wages to buy slave-grown cotton products.<sup>7</sup> At the start of the Civil War, the South initiated a voluntary embargo before the Union blockade was implemented, in an attempt to force Britain into intervening on behalf of the

<sup>4</sup> Sven Beckert, 'Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War', *American Historical Review*, 109.5 (2004), p. 1408.

<sup>5</sup> Marika Sherwood, *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade since 1807* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Harvey, 'Slavery, Indenture and the Development of British Industrial Capitalism', *History Workshop Journal*, 88 (2019), 66-88 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbz027>> (p. 79). Frenise A. Logan, 'India--Britain's Substitute for American Cotton, 1861-1865', *The Journal of Southern History*, 24.4 (1958), 472-480 <[www.jstor.org/stable/2954674](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2954674)> [accessed 2 January 2020].

<sup>7</sup> Harvey, p. 69.

Confederacy, illustrating the belief within the American South of British dependence on their exports.<sup>8</sup> Stockpiles of cotton in Manchester and wider Britain eliminated the immediate threat, but as the war progressed, the devastating consequence of the interruption of trade can be found in the cotton famine.<sup>9</sup> American cotton was so pivotal to the Lancashire textiles industry that without it, the majority of mills were closed and their employees out of work.<sup>10</sup> In 1863, more than 500,000 inhabitants in Lancashire received poor relief, provided with cheap cotton clothing that they had helped produce.<sup>11</sup> Cotton, then, was hugely significant in this period to both the booming industry and subsequent poverty.

Both artefacts speak to the specific significance of cotton to Manchester. In *Patriotic Envelope...*, cotton is anthropomorphised as a monarch, adored by John Bull. The printed poem is titled *King Cotton*, a phrase first coined by James Hammond in his speech to Senate on 4th March 1856.<sup>12</sup> John Bull carries a newspaper marked 'Manchester', signalling the city's role as intrinsically linked with plantation slavery, rebuking any perception of distance. It scorns that through dependence on the industry, Britain does 'yield' more to cotton than 'the throne'.<sup>13</sup> This envelope was printed in early 1861 and encapsulates the centrality of the cotton trade to the South, as well as what will become a fundamental element of the foreign policy for the Confederate government under Jefferson Davis.<sup>14</sup> The aim of the 'King Cotton' policy was to withhold cotton, starve Britain's textile industries of resources and force intervention on behalf of the Confederacy. In this cartoon, Britain and Manchester are presented as subservient to both cotton and the American South. With the Revolutionary War in recent memory, kneeling to a crowned monarch, a remote ruling 'Lordling', has inescapable connotations of weakness. Kneeling to monarchs also evokes the complications in the period with regards to the concepts of 'freedom' and 'slavery'. Slave-owning Americans fought for liberation from the perceived 'slavery' of British Rule, so too did the Confederacy now seek to free itself from the perceived 'enslavement' of Union rule. As John Bull kneels on the body of an enslaved figure, it can be argued that the cartoon presents England as hypocritical and 'deaf' towards actual slavery.<sup>15</sup> Cotton's sceptre is arrowed at both ends, evoking the violence of the industry. This can be considered abolitionist in intention, implying that the moral superiority of Britain's 'perfectly virtuous' abolitionist 'crusade' was hollow in the face of profit.<sup>16</sup> It was printed by New York printer company

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<sup>8</sup> Annalise L. Policicchio, 'Propaganda use by the Union and Confederacy in Great Britain during the American Civil War, 1861-1862' (unpublished master's thesis, Duquesne University, 2012) <<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1016135130?accountid=13042>> (p. 43.) [accessed 5 January 2020].

<sup>9</sup> Frank Lawrence Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy: Foreign Relations of the Confederate States of America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 549, cited in Policicchio, 2012, p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Ellison, *Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Beckert, p. 1418.

<sup>12</sup> James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (London: Penguin in association with Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 196.

<sup>13</sup> *Union Patriotic Envelope No. 2: Cotton Is King!*, I.5.

<sup>14</sup> Policicchio, p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> *Union Patriotic Envelope No. 2: Cotton Is King!*, I.8.

<sup>16</sup> W. E. H. Lecky cited in Harvey, p. 71.

‘Stimpson & Co’, ‘in the clerk’s office of the United States for the Southern District of New York’. As this envelope was printed on behalf of a government body, it suggests official approval of its message.

Through ‘cotton! cotton!’, Remond directly acknowledges the potential opposition of her audience towards abolition.<sup>17</sup> Cotton was the lens through which Remond was able to expose the links between England’s industrialisation and the violence behind the commodity. Remond refers to the ‘load after load’ of cotton she witnessed within Manchester, reminding her audience of the origins of imported textiles, and that for the goods which employ Manchester’s workers ‘no money ever reached the hands of the labourers.’<sup>18</sup> Eric Williams’ *Capitalism and Slavery* famously first posited the thesis that Britain’s industrial revolution was intrinsically linked with the infrastructure, profits and resources of plantation slavery.<sup>19</sup> Yet, Mark Harvey contends that Williams’ argument, which focuses primarily on the West Indies, underplays the role of cotton and the American South. Harvey expands to claim that England was more dependent on slavery after 1833 than ever, in terms of the number of people enslaved to provide for British industry.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the interweaving of Britain and the slaveholding South goes beyond the conventional narrative of a reluctant trading relationship. Britain manufactured guns and weapons used as deterrents on cotton plantations, and munitions exports rapidly increased. Increased industrialisation, it can be argued, fed and supported plantation slavery, alongside plantation slavery providing materials for Manchester and Britain’s manufacturing.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: September 17, 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Eustace Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery*, (London: Deutsch, 1964).

<sup>20</sup> Harvey, pp. 70-80.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72 and pp. 83-84.

## SARAH PARKER REMOND, MANCHESTER AND TRANS-ATLANTIC ABOLITIONISM



Figure 2: Artist in the United States, *Sarah Parker Remond* (1865), Albumen print, 6.985 × 5.493 cm (Peabody Essex Museum; Gift of Miss Cecelia R. Babcock, PH322; Courtesy Peabody Essex Museum. Photography by Kathy Tarantola.)

After having discussed why cotton is pivotal within each source, it's vital to now consider both artefacts in light of abolitionism. To do so, it is important to assess the context in which Remond delivered this speech. Sibyl Brownlee argues that interest in abolition had begun to dwindle by the 1850s. However, lectures remained a popular source of entertainment. Remond was the first free African-American female lecturer in the UK, notably giving lectures to mixed-gender audiences. As such, Brownlee contends that this unique position made her lectures 'a novelty'.<sup>22</sup> Evidence for this can be found in that Remond's addresses in Warrington were so popular that eventually seat reservations were charged at 6d.<sup>23</sup> Through lectures, Black female abolitionists, such as Remond, asserted their right to speak and engage politically both as women and as Black people. Her lectures followed the tours of Black abolitionist lectures from

<sup>22</sup> Sibyl Brownlee. *Out of the Abundance of the Heart: Sarah Ann Parker Remond's Quest for Freedom* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 1997), pp. 119-192 <<https://search.proquest.com/docview/304354571?pq-origsite=primopp>> [accessed 10 January 2020], (p. 125).

<sup>23</sup> Burnett Porter, p. 286.

the 1830s onwards, such as her brother, Charles Lennox Remond, Frederick Douglas and Ellen Craft. Teresa Zackodnik contends that Ellen Craft ‘effectively opened up’ areas of the North to engage in conversations with Black female abolitionists.<sup>24</sup> In addition, links established by previous abolitionists within Britain meant that a network of transatlantic connections already existed.<sup>25</sup> The Dredd Scott ruling in 1857, which said that African-Americans could not be American citizens, also increased the number of abolitionist lectures within Britain.<sup>26</sup> Before her arrival in Britain, Remond had lectured within America. In 1858, she expressed ‘an intense desire to visit England, that I might for a time enjoy freedom’.<sup>27</sup> This suggests Remond’s perception of England as harbouring more rights for free Black citizens than America, including the North.

Remond introduces herself as an ‘agent of no society’.<sup>28</sup> However, it is worth noting that Remond considered herself aligned with the more radical Garrisonian branch of the American abolitionist movement, in favour of immediate abolition.<sup>29</sup> She also became a founding member of the Women’s Emancipation Society, so she was connected and engaged with British and transatlantic abolitionist networks, yet outside the confines of a group which controls the content of her lectures. Her work intersects both the abolitionist movement and the emerging women’s rights movement, exemplified by her founding involvement with the Women’s Emancipation Society and her signature on John Stuart Mill’s petition for female suffrage in 1866, alongside her lecturing.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Remond’s nationality as an American placed her outside of class divides within Britain.<sup>31</sup>

This speech provides insight into Remond’s abolitionist strategies. It is crucial to understand that Remond was operating within a complex system with conflicting moral, economic and political interests and that racism was ‘well-engendered’ within nineteenth century Britain.<sup>32</sup> Remond positions Southern slaveowners as enemies of the working-class, a sentiment appealing directly to working-class industrial Manchester. This is particularly pertinent as within Britain, ‘slavery’ had additional connotations of describing working-class conditions.<sup>33</sup> Remond implies understanding of this dynamic in how she describes that ‘poor whites’

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p59.

<sup>25</sup> Clare Midgely, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870*, (London: Routledge, 1992) pp. 119-151, (p. 126).

<sup>26</sup> Zackodnik, p. 59.

<sup>27</sup> Willi Coleman “‘Like Hot Lead to Pour on the Americans...’: Sarah Parker Remond: From Salem, Mass., to the British Isles.’ in *Women’s Rights and Transatlantic Anti-Slavery in the Era of Emancipation*, ed. by Kathryn Kish Sklar and James Stewart (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 173-188, (p. 177).

<sup>28</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: September 17, 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Clare Midgely. ‘Anti-Slavery and Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Gender & History*, 5.3 (1993), 343-362 (p. 347).

<sup>30</sup> Tara Morton, ‘Miss Sarah Parker Remond’, in *Suffrage Resources* <<https://www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database/1107/miss-sarah-parker-remond>> [accessed 12 January 2020].

<sup>31</sup> Midgely, *Women Against Slavery*, p. 141.

<sup>32</sup> Sherwood, p. 144.

<sup>33</sup> Zackodnik, p. 58.

suffer as a result of slavery. Here, she argues that slavery as an institution causes suffering beyond the enslaved. In doing so, she presents different forms of oppression as linked.<sup>34</sup> This may suggest that Remond felt her audience needed to identify themselves within slavery to be sympathetic. She builds on this alignment through enslaved persons within whose cheeks ‘the lily and the rose vie for predominance’.<sup>35</sup> This tactic could be considered as undermining the specific suffering of Black enslaved persons, yet in 1859, Remond is deliberately challenging the prejudices of her audience and denying them the position of hero.<sup>36</sup> She does so by subverting her listener’s expectations of what a victim looks like, as a Black woman lamenting the suffering of ‘pale’ slaves. This confronts her audience with the reality in that enslaved people are people, like themselves, and not a distant or separate entity. In contrast, the enslaved man depicted on *Patriotic Envelope...* is stereotyped as a caricature, which serves the purpose of satire, rather than acknowledged as representing a real person.

Remond demonstrates a further nuanced understanding of her audiences by tailoring her speeches to each location. In Ireland, her speeches include references to sufferings under the Poor Laws, and in Manchester, drawing on the city’s cotton.<sup>37</sup> In doing so, she demonstrates an understanding of her audience and their potential objections to abolition (‘cotton! cotton!’), as well as employing emotional methods of persuasion such as guilt. For example, ‘With the exception of the Abolitionists, you will find people of all cla[ss]es thus contaminated’ invites the listener to seek to become abolitionists or else be held responsible.<sup>38</sup> Her explicit linking of cotton in Manchester and suffering on American plantations removes any pretence or degrees of separation and confronts a manufacturing city with their role in the suffering of enslaved people in the South. Remond understands how Britain considers its morally righteous stance, despite the previous two hundred years of slave trading, as she asks ‘Give us the power of your public opinion, it has great weight in America’.<sup>39</sup> Her intention is not simply to educate, but to incite action, and as such presents a tailored emotionally driven argument aiming to entice the listener into involvement with abolition. *Patriotic Envelope...*, in contrast, seeks not to provoke change, but instead to amuse Northern readers and satirize the South.

The impassioned and descriptive rhetoric of Remond’s lecture must be considered in the context of oral delivery. This is not an address to be read quietly, it was instead articulated to command the attention of a busy room, such as through the impassioned repetition within ‘for the slave there is no home, no love,

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<sup>34</sup> Harvey, p. 68.

<sup>35</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: 17 September 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Zackodnik, p. 88.

<sup>37</sup> Zackodnik, p. 75.

<sup>38</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: 17 September 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

no hope, no help; and what is life without hope?'<sup>40</sup> As such, the audience in Manchester is implored to generate hope through their actions, causing bondage to 'melt away like dew'.<sup>41</sup> Her emotive argument is built upon but her statement that 'men and women are reared, like cattle', a stance Stanley L. Engleman and Robert Fogel argue is unsupported by historical evidence but instead was effectively used by abolitionists to illustrate the horrors of slavery.<sup>42</sup> This imagery is echoed in the dehumanising description of 'live chattel's groan' within *Patriotic Envelope*.... She appeals to the 'British abhorrence' of the destruction of the family, presenting slavery as a force that splits families apart.<sup>43</sup> Fogle and Engleman note that abolitionist rhetoric, such as Remond's in this instance, simultaneously presents slavery as rendering the construct of families as obsolete and argues that families are torn apart, both humanising and dehumanising in relation to what serves the particular argument best. Again, this demonstrates Remond's intention to deliver the most powerful and persuasive address as possible.

Remond seeks 'especial help' from women concerning sexual violence.<sup>44</sup> She describes 'eight hundred thousand mulatto slaves' as evidence of the sexual exploitation of enslaved women.<sup>45</sup> It is noticeable that she appeals to women for action, as in the 1850s the majority of men's abolitionist societies were in decline, yet female societies remained active, many with strong transatlantic links.<sup>46</sup> Women, though denied a political voice in nineteenth-century Britain, are appealed to for their political influence, which was demonstrated in the 1830s through petitioning, boycotts and embroidery efforts.<sup>47</sup> As such, women are addressed beyond the domestic sphere of the home, and instead as an emerging political force. Remond asks her audience to 'raise the moral public opinion until its voice reaches the American shores'.<sup>48</sup> Here, she demonstrates the prevalence of transatlantic connections, in which female abolitionist societies were central. Remond, an American, travelled to Britain in the hope of inciting change within Britain, which will in turn impact on America. *Patriotic Envelope*...., in contrast, addresses this transatlantic relationship with satire, as though Britain's great ships are powerless in the face of their dependency on slave-grown cotton. Remond pertains that the question of cotton is an 'unanswerable one', yet she asks her audience to put morals above commerce, something that *Patriotic Envelope*... scorns as impossible.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (London: Wildwood House, 1974), pp. 78-79.

<sup>43</sup> Brownlee, p. 130.

<sup>44</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: 17 September 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Midgely, *Women Against Slavery* pp. 125-127.

<sup>47</sup> See Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: a History of Slavery and Antislavery*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 245-266.

<sup>48</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: 17 September 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

As opposed to an emotive oral delivery to a crowd, *Patriotic Envelope...* would have been printed to send to an associate or family member, or to collect. The lack of stamp and address suggest that this envelope was never sent and was instead saved as part of a collection. It was printed within a boom in propaganda envelopes triggered by new developments in printing techniques.<sup>50</sup> Berry argues that the expansion of the ‘mail’ service made possible the debate around slavery to extend beyond political forums and into homes, highlighting and deepening tensions.<sup>51</sup> Propaganda postal envelopes made the ‘mass manipulation of emotion’ easier than ever before, reaching readers at their homes and workplaces.<sup>52</sup> Here, a comparison can be drawn with Remond’s strategy of appealing to her audience’s emotions to sway their opinions. Most pro-Union envelopes are explicitly anti-south, not abolitionist. Racist stereotypes are common, and largely the intention was to mock Southerners for their dependence on slavery, as opposed to protesting the institution in itself.<sup>53</sup> This is reflected in Union policy at the time, as in 1861 Abraham Lincoln remarked ‘I have not purpose...to interfere with slavery’.<sup>54</sup> The enslaved person depicted in the envelope’s cartoon is stereotyped, with the intention of rousing humour as opposed to Remond’s emotional address. *Patriotic envelope...*, despite depicting the horrors of slavery as Remond’s speech does, does not do so out of abolitionist sympathy, but rather to mock England. John Bull’s kneeling on the slave directly contrasts with the noble British opinion Remond appeals to, the British national identity entwined with ‘your Clarkson and your Wilberforce’, and instead presents Britain as bloated and foolish.<sup>55</sup> This demonstrates a lack of concern for the enslaved person depicted, who is used as a ‘symbol’.<sup>56</sup> The figure is portrayed in a humiliating and degrading position, a victim with no agency, intended to highlight John Bull’s callousness and as such, Britain’s hypocrisy. The Southern states and their relationship with Britain are being mocked, and the intention is not to incite sympathy and abolitionist action, but instead to fan distrust of the South on the eve of Civil War.

*Patriotic Envelope...* incorporates both a poem and a cartoon to depict Manchester as cruel in the face of plantation slavery in the 1850s. This conflicts with Lincoln’s later praise of the ‘sublime Christian heroism’ of Manchester in 1863.<sup>57</sup> The reality was far more mixed. The large city reflected many diverse interests, beliefs and political persuasions, and support for abolition, or even for the North during the civil war, did not adhere along set class or gendered lines. The image presented by Lincoln has been powerfully argued

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<sup>50</sup> William Fletcher Thompson, Jr., ‘Pictorial Propaganda and the Civil War’, *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 46.1 (1962), 21-31, <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4633807>> [accessed 8 January 2020] (p. 22).

<sup>51</sup> Stephen W. Berry ‘When Mail Was Armor: Envelopes of the Great Rebellion, 1861-1865’ *Southern Cultures*, 4.3 (1998), 63-83 <DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/scu.1998.0083>> (p. 63).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-74.

<sup>54</sup> McPherson, VII.

<sup>55</sup> *Manchester Weekly Times* (Manchester: 17 September 1859), Black Abolitionist Archives, Doc. No. 21048, p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> Thompson, Jr., pp 29-30.

<sup>57</sup> Jason Rodrigues, ‘Lincoln’s great debt to Manchester’, *Guardian*, 4 February 2013, <<https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/from-the-archive-blog/2013/feb/04/lincoln-oscar-manchester-cotton-abraham>> [accessed 3 January 2019].

by Mary Ellison to be a myth.<sup>58</sup> There were many pro-abolitionist meetings and lectures in Manchester, such as this one given by Remond, but there was also strong and widespread support for the American South and the Confederacy both before and during the Civil War. Ellison argues that pro-North, or anti-abolitionist meetings were infrequent and ‘contrived’ to present an image of working-class support for the Union.<sup>59</sup> Even among abolitionists, Douglas Lorimer notes that opposition to slavery did not equate to support for the north.<sup>60</sup> This tension between Manchester, the North and abolitionism is encapsulated within *Patriotic Envelope...*, which mocks the South’s slavery but does not advocate for abolition, and entwines Manchester with a slave-grown commodity. Abolitionists such as Remond had to operate within these conflicting and shifting stances. Midgely notes that many British papers became more pro-Confederate, and as such arguably more pro-slavery, after the outbreak of war in 1861. There is evidence of suspicion among British abolitionists that Lincoln would not instil emancipation; The Times commented that ‘where he has no power Mr Lincoln will set the negroes free; where he retains power he will consider the as slaves’.<sup>61</sup> This suggests that in Britain there was not a consensus aligning the North with the anti-slavery cause at the start of the Civil War. Remond, as she declared, was outside the spheres of North vs South and of the class divides within Britain, advocating entirely for abolition among a turbulent and transitional climate.

In conclusion, both artefacts speak to the critical and conflicting place of cotton within mid-century abolitionist discourse. They reflect the complex relationship of mid nineteenth-century Manchester with the cotton industry and the institution of slavery itself. Sarah Parker Remond broke boundaries in her abolitionist discourse as she confronted the stereotype of victimhood and carved for herself a role that bridged divides within British abolitionist discourse. She was a skilled orator who appealed directly to her audience. *Patriotic Envelope...* also seeks an emotional response, but its intention was to satirise and be collected, as opposed to inciting action. Despite both artefacts drawing attention to the cruelties of slavery, only Remond’s speech can be considered abolitionist. *Patriotic Envelope...* is anti-South, whereas Remond fights firmly against slavery. *Patriotic Envelope...* is part of the pro-Union movement, whereas Remond positions herself as outside both American and English politics. Both artefacts provide insight into the complex and intersecting systems of trade and transatlantic abolitionism that go beyond a one-way relationship and contribute to, transform and in turn are shaped by transatlantic movements. Each artefact signals the diversity of interests at play with regards to cotton, all of which had to be navigated by abolitionists such as Remond in her fight for emancipation.

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<sup>58</sup> Ellison.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>60</sup> Douglas Lorimer, ‘The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War’, *The Historical Journal*, 19.2 (1976), 405–420, <DOI: <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2095/10.1017/S0018246X00010220>> (p. 412).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 406.

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