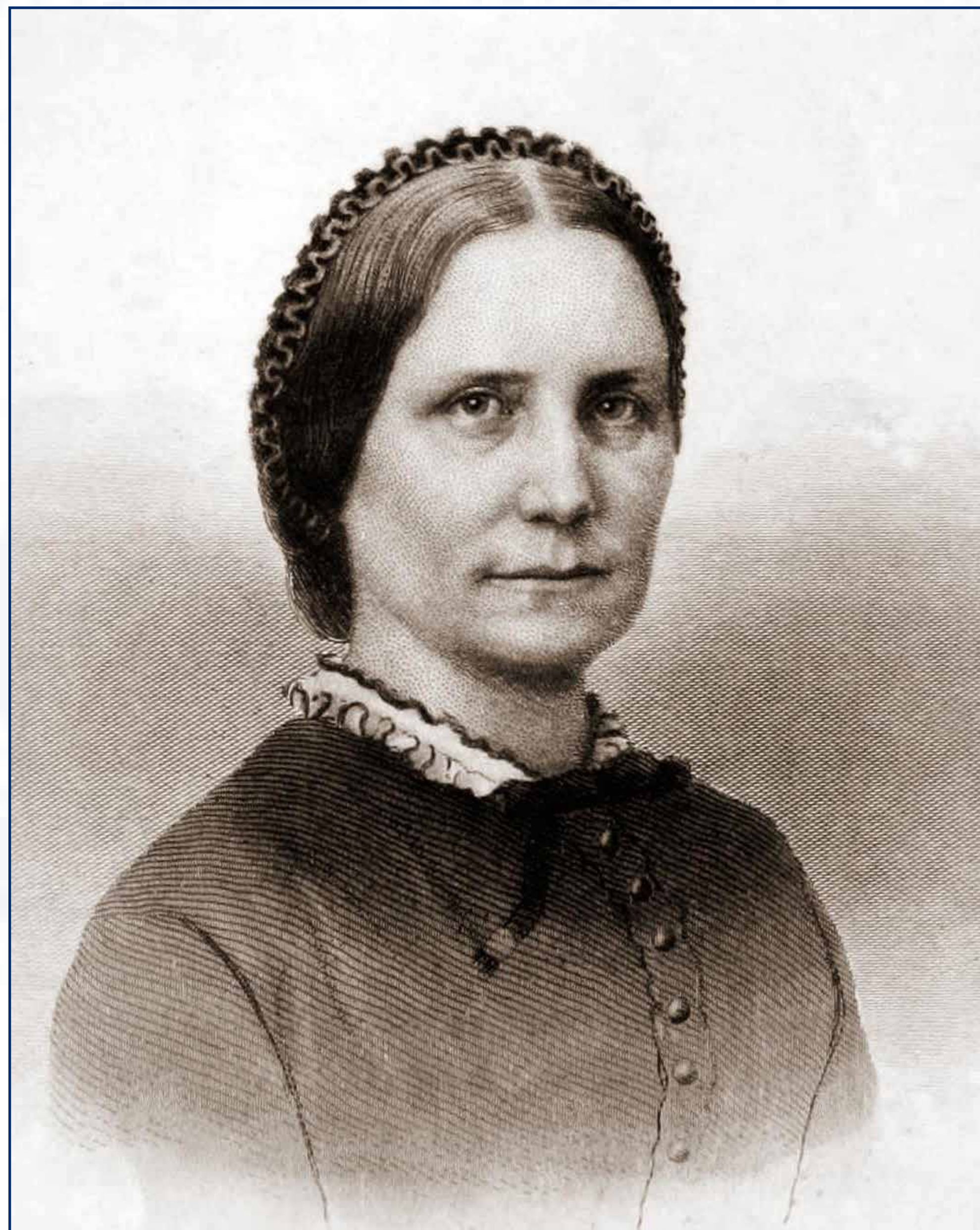


# Mary A. Livermore

1820 – 1905



Prominent in the 19th century, Mary Livermore's many reform activities are gaining renewed recognition. A. H. RITCHIE, 1867

Mary A. Livermore was a writer, editor, and popular platform speaker promoting women's suffrage and temperance.

*“A large portion of the nation's work was badly done, or not done at all, because woman was not recognized as a factor in the political world.”*

*Mary A. Livermore*

## Religious Anxieties

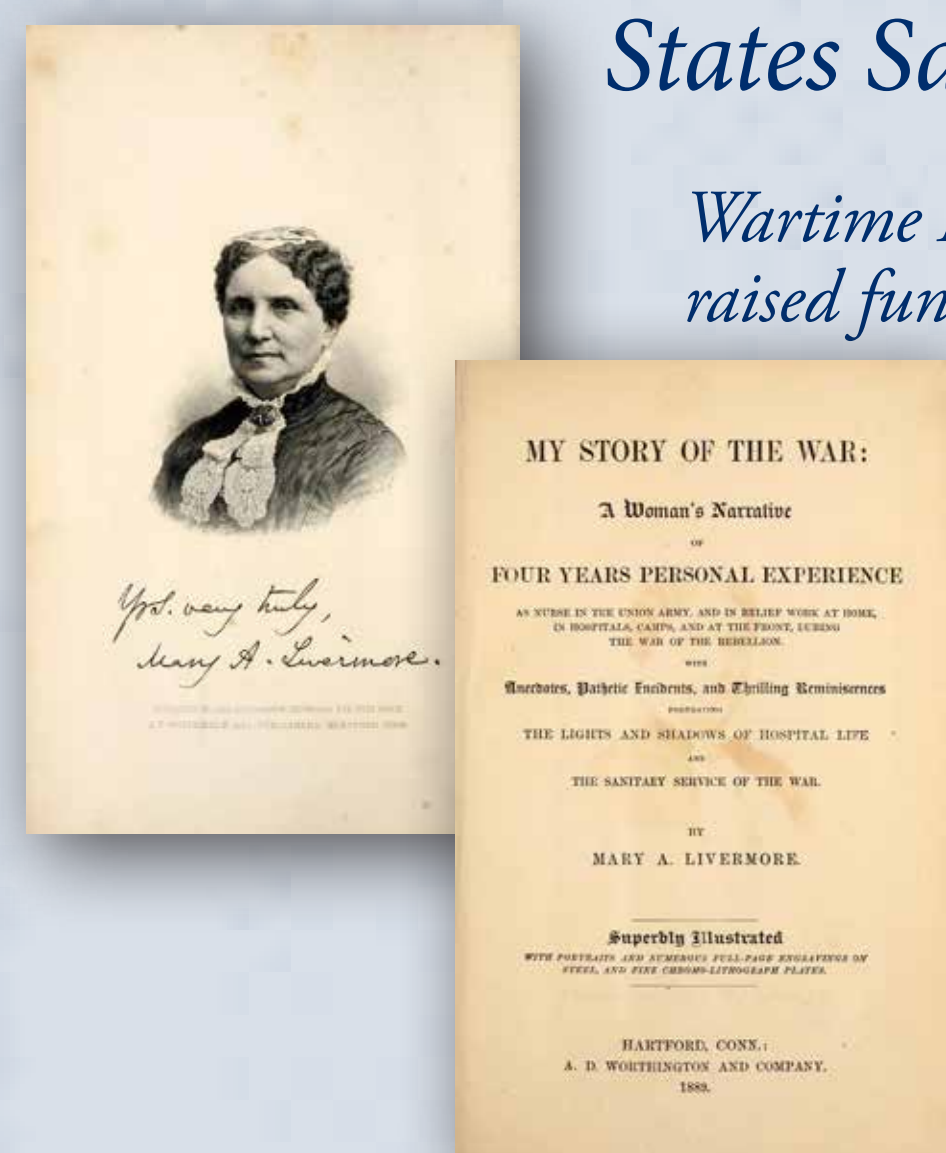
Born in Boston, Mary Ashton Rice enjoyed warm family relationships but was troubled by a strict religious upbringing. At one point her father threw a prized copy of Robinson Crusoe into the fireplace because she was reading on a Sunday.

## A Marriage of Equals

Returning to Massachusetts she became a teacher in Duxbury. One Christmas Eve she stopped by a Universalist church and was impressed by the young minister, Daniel Livermore, and the positive tone of his sermon, emphasizing salvation rather than damnation. They married in 1845. Growing up on a farm, Daniel Livermore's parents had assigned chores to their children equally, not establishing gender roles. He would be supportive of Mary's ambitions (and often did the cooking).

## Civil War Activist

After moving to Chicago, Livermore stepped into the public realm during the Civil War organizing medical care for the United States Sanitary Commission.

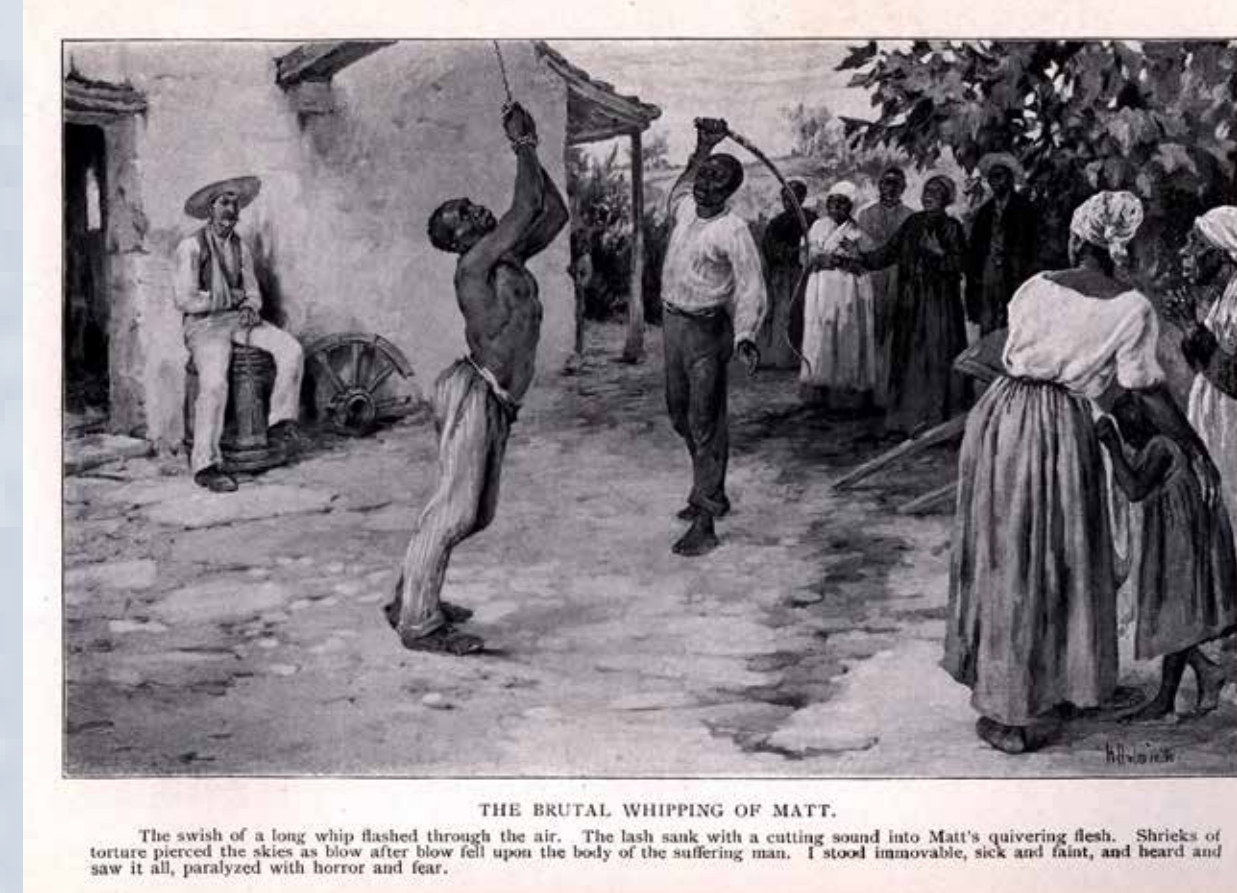


*Wartime Memoirs: Livermore raised funds to provide supplies and volunteers for the care of wounded Union soldiers. Her activities brought prominence and contact with national figures including Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.*

INTERNET ARCHIVE

## Abolitionism

After graduating from the Charlestown Female Seminary (sometimes called the “rib factory” because so many graduates married ministers) she accepted a position tutoring children of a Virginia plantation owner. Despite a positive relationship with the family she saw that slavery was harsh and immoral, even where owners appeared to be cultured and moderate.



*In her autobiography, Mary A. Livermore described her revulsion at the whipping of “Matt” on the Virginia plantation where she was a tutor. Years later she learned that two of the boys she taught had died fighting for the Confederacy.*

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*Mary A. Livermore taught school in this Duxbury house. During this period declining employment in the building of wooden ships led to increased alcoholism in the town and Livermore's lifelong advocacy of temperance.* DUXBURY RURAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Suffragist

Mary A. Livermore concluded that women must be active in improving society and organized the 1868 Woman's Rights Convention in Chicago. She also founded a suffrage publication, *The Agitator*. Although the Fifteenth Amendment granted suffrage to black men, but not women, she agreed with Lucy Stone that women should support the amendment despite disappointment. She returned to Massachusetts and became associate editor of the influential *Woman's Journal*, founded by Stone. She also served as President of the American Woman Suffrage Association.

*Mary A. Livermore's name appears next to Julia Ward Howe, Lucy Stone, William Lloyd Garrison, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson as editors of The Woman's Journal.*

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