

ELIZA ANN WARD



1824-1900

Born: Jan. 22, 1824 in Monson, Hampden, MA

Died: Sep. 6, 1900 in Monson, Hampden, MA

Appointment(s):

American Missionary Association (AMA)
Beach Institute – Savannah, GA
1867

Shipyard Plantation – Hilton Head, SC
Fall 1867

Seabrook Plantation – Hilton Head, SC
1869

Homestead School – Liberty County, GA
Fall 1870

Eliza was born January 22, 1824 on the Ward farm near Palmer Road in Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts to Samuel Nichols Ward (1795 - 1866) and Betsey Pepper (1798 - 1870). Eliza Ann joined the Congregational Church of Monson in June 1836 as a twelve year old.¹ Eliza's first appointment by the American Missionary Association as a teacher was to the Beach Institute in Savannah, Georgia in 1867, but she was sent home in the summer to recover from exhaustion and illness. The Principal at Beach Institute, A. N. Niles, showed his prejudice against older women working outside the home when he commented on Eliza's departure: "Dames so *ancient* and honorable ought not to go so far from home in midwinter".² Eliza was disappointed to be transferred in the fall of 1867 to Shiprock Plantation on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina.³ Miss Ward transferred to Seabrook Plantation on Hilton Head about March

¹ Rogers, George A. and R. Frank Saunders, Jr. "Eliza Ann Ward, Teacher and Missionary to the Freedmen". Congregational Library and Archives. Boston, Mass: Bulletin of the Congregational Library First Series, Vol 31 (Fall 1979):7-9, p 303, n9. <http://www.congregationallibrary.org/periodicals/bulletin-articles2>.

² Richardson, Joe M. Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Blacks, 1861-1890. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986, p 177.

³ Rogers, George A and Frank R Saunders, Jr. Swamp Water and Wiregrass: Historical Sketches of Coastal Georgia. Google Books, pp 144-146., p 144

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1869 but departed for home in April of the same year for summer break.⁴ She was still located in Seabrook Plantation in the fall of 1869 since her Teacher's Monthly Reports [TMRs] are in the AMA Archives for November and December 1869 as well as for Jan-March 1870.⁵ Eliza Ann described Seabrook Plantation and her classroom in letters to E.P. Smith of the AMA.⁶

They arrived at Port Royal Sound at night and there was no one to greet her. Her belongings were "dumped at the landing". There was no place for her to live yet. She found a dilapidated building with no doors or windows, little furniture and no stove. She had to walk 12 miles to obtain kerosene and depended on the meager supplies she had brought with her from Monson. She was assigned one white assistant teacher from a neighboring plantation to help her get her classroom started.

Eliza Ann's Teacher's Monthly Report showed that she had 39 students in November and December but attendance fell off in March when her students were needed to work in the fields. Eliza went back north for the summer, but returned south in the fall of 1870, to a new position near Midway, Liberty County, Georgia. The record for Liberty County states that Eliza had already taught at Beach Institute in Savannah and at Saybrook School in Hilton Head when she arrived.⁷ Eliza Ann was a 45-year old 'spinster' when she was appointed to the Homestead School in Goldings Grove for 1870-1871.⁸ The Homestead School was originally a Freedmen's Bureau school but the AMA took over the school in April 1870 after the FB closed. The average attendance in her day school was 18-22 male and 17 female students and fifty in the Sabbath school.⁹ Eliza Ann returned for a second term in 1871 where she described her role as

⁴ Rogers, George A and Frank R Saunders, Jr. "The American Missionary Association in Liberty County, Georgia: An Invasion of Light and Love" in *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol 62, No4 (Winter 1978), p 306.

⁵ Ward, E.A. American Missionary Association Archives. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University, Amistad Research Center. *Teacher's Monthly Report*. Nov-Dec 1869 & Jan-Mar 1870, Seabrook Plantation, Hilton Head

⁶ Ward, Eliza Ann. American Missionary Association Archives. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University, Amistad Research Center. [Letters 3 Apr, 30 Aug. 15 Nov 1869 and Apr 1870 from Seabrook Plantation, Hilton Head to E.P Smith.

⁷ Rogers & Saunders. Swamp Water, p 146

⁸ Ibid. p 144.

⁹ Ward, E.A. American Missionary Association Archives. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University, Amistad Research Center. *Teacher's Monthly Report* Jan-Mar 1871. Homestead School, Liberty County, GA.

- Ward, Eliza Ann. American Missionary Association Archives. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University, Amistad Research Center. [Letters from Liberty County, GA to E.M. Cravath 30 Mar, 21 Nov,

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a teacher, preacher and physician, but retired early due to poor health.¹⁰ Georgia State Senator William Golden, attempted to persuade the AMA to send Miss Ward back to the school in 1874, but she declined. However, Eliza Ann continued to remain in contact with people from the community and continued to collect clothing and school supplies for them.

Eliza died September 6, 1900 in Monson, Hampden Co, Massachusetts and was buried in the Hillside Cemetery, Section 4, Lot #58 in Monson,¹¹ Her obituary was published in the *Springfield Republican* newspaper of Springfield, Massachusetts on August 9, 1900.¹²

30 Nov. 23 Dec and 31 Dec 1871].

¹⁰ Rogers & Saunders, "The AMA", Ibid, p 306.

- Rogers & Saunders. "Eliza Ann Ward", p 303.

¹¹ Findagrave.com Memorial ID 58970770 Eliza Ann Ward. Created 20 Sep 2010 by Mark Wing with photo of tombstone added by Sue on 20 Jun 2016.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/58970770>.

¹² *Springfield Republican*. Springfield, Massachusetts. "Obituary". August 9, 1900.

<https://www.newspapers.com>