

THE SHEFFIELD IRIS 1794-1796.

13. 'Picture of African Distress, *The Iris*, Issue 67,
09/10/1795

-From the American Museum

Help! Oh Help! Thou God of Christians!
Save a mother from despair,
Cruel white men steal my children;
God of christians! Hear my prayer.

From my arms by force they're rended,
Sailors drag them to the sea;
Yonder ship at anchor riding,
Swift will carry them away.

There my son lies, pale and bleeding,
Fast with thongs, his hands are bound;
See the tyrants, how they scourge him!
See his sides a reeking wound.

See his little sister by him,
Quaking, trembling, how she lies,
Drops of blood her face besprinkle;
Tears of anguish fill her eyes.

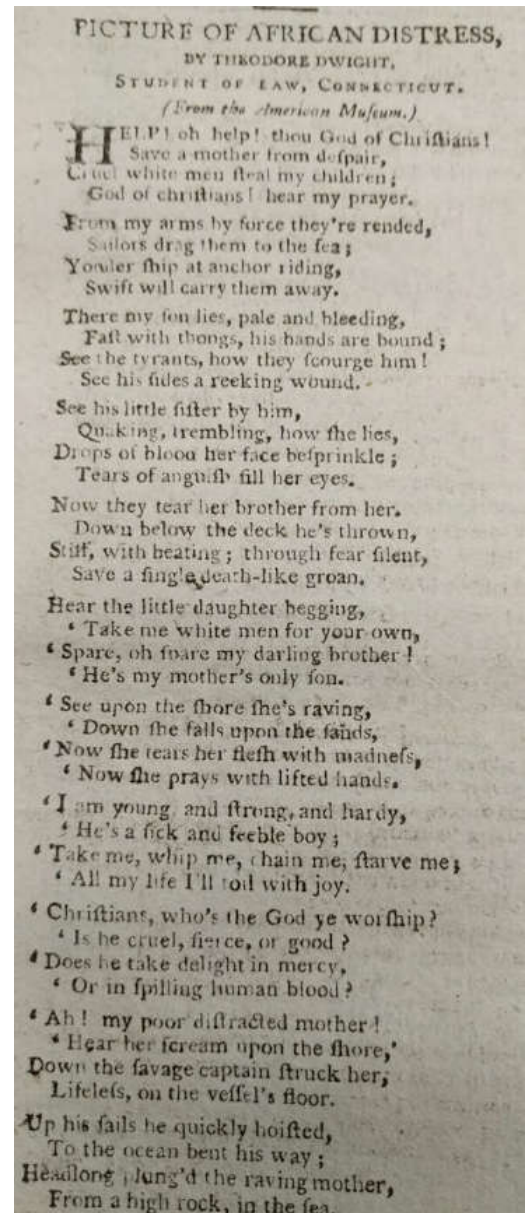
Now they tear her brother from her.
Down below the deck he's thrown,
Stiff, with heating; through fear silent,
Save a single death-like groan.

Hear the little daughter begging,
'Take me white men for your own,
'Spare, oh spare my darling brother!
'He's my mother's only son.

'See upon the shore she's raving,
'Down she falls upon the sands,
'Now she tears her flesh with madness,
'Now she prays with lifted hands.

I am young and strong and hardy,

Transcriptions by James Earley.



THE SHEFFIELD IRIS 1794-1796.

'He's a sick and feeble boy;
'Take me, whip me, chain me, starve me;
'All my life I'll toil with joy.

'Christians, who's the God ye worship?
'Is he cruel, fierce, or good?
'Does he take delight in mercy,
'Or in spilling human blood?

'Ah! My poor distracted mother!
'Hear her scream upon the shore,
Down the savage captain struck her,
Lifeless on the vessel's floor.

Up his sails he quickly hoisted,
To the ocean bent his way;
Headlong plung'd the raving mother,
From a high rock, in the sea.

Theodore Dwight.