

# Introduction

Bernard Katz, born in New York City in 1901, had a long-standing interest in the history of black oppression and resistance. His writing served as a sideline to his career in the field of advertising, and his fondness for jazz resulted in *The Social Implication of Early Negro Music in the United States* (Arno Press, 1969). Katz had the research and part of the manuscript for the Prince biography when he died in 1970. His son, Jonathan Katz, revised and completed the manuscript, which was published by Pantheon in 1973.

Jonathan Katz was born in New York City in 1938 and attended Antioch College and the City College of New York. His interests lie in both black studies and in American women's history. Katz is the author of *Resistance at Christiana: The Fugitive Slave Rebellion, Christiana, Pennsylvania, September 11, 1851; A documentary account* (Crowell, 1974).

Lucy Terry Prince, black pioneer woman, was born in Africa in 1730 and died in 1821 at the age of ninety-one. When she was five she was brought to Newport, Rhode Island, by the Malbone brothers, who were slave traders and rum makers, and sold to Ebenezer Wells for £60. For the next twenty years she lived with the Wells family in Deerfield, Massachusetts, working as a domestic servant.

In 1756, Lucy Terry married Abijah Prince, a black soldier and former slave. Although the couple had met in 1746, it took ten years for Prince, freed upon his master's death in 1748, to earn the money to buy Lucy's freedom from Wells. For the next fourteen years, Lucy and her husband continued to live in Deerfield and raise their six children.

Prince had inherited land in Northfield, Massachusetts, from his master. Over a period of time he acquired additional land in Guilford, Massachusetts, and in Sunderland, then in New Hampshire territory. (He was one of the original founders of Sunderland.) In 1770 the Prince family moved to Guilford, where they lived until 1803 when they lost the Guilford land and moved to their Sunderland property. Abijah Prince had died in 1794.

Throughout her life, Lucy Terry Prince distinguished herself as a woman of intelligence and determination. In 1746, at the age of sixteen, she wrote a poetic ballad commemorating the Indian attack on a Deerfield haying party. As a result of this poem, she is considered the earliest black American poet, a sample of whose work still exists.

On two occasions she also fought and won legal battles over land disputes. In 1785 she went before the governor of New Hampshire's council to protest harassment of her property and family by the wealthy Noyes family. In the 1790s, Colonel Eli Brownson, the Princes' neighbor in Sunderland, claimed part of the Prince land in what had now become western Vermont. The case was tried before Supreme Court Justice Samuel Chase on circuit in Vermont. Although she had a lawyer, Isaac Tichenor, Lucy Prince presented her own argument before the judge and won the case. In the early 1770s, she also attempted, without success, to have her son admitted to Williams College.