

ABCFM Companies

“Go into all the world, and preach the Good News to the whole creation.” (Mark 16:15)

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), based in Boston, was founded in 1810, the first organized missionary society in the US ... “and was incorporated, by the Legislature of Massachusetts, June 20, 1812. Its beginnings, as is well known, were small, and the anticipations of its supporters not remarkably sanguine.”

“but its resources and operations have regularly increased, till, in respect to the number of its patron - the amount of its funds - and the extent of its influence, it is entitled to a place among the principal benevolent institutions of the earth.”

“The American Board of Foreign Missions, however, can neither claim, nor does it desire exclusive patronage. There are other Foreign Missionary Societies, for whom there is room, for whom there is work enough, and for whose separate existence there are, doubtless, conclusive reasons.”

“Christian charity is not a blind impulse but, is characterized in Scripture, as ‘the wisdom from above’, such wis - as is in heaven, - which is ‘pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.’”

“The system of operation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions may be considered under two divisions, - its Home Department, and its Foreign Missions. ... The Board has established missions, in the order of time in which they are now named at Bombay, and Ceylon; among the Cherokees, Choctaws, and the Cherokees of the Arkansas (and later) Asia.”

Then, they decided to send a Company of missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands. The Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in giving instructions to the pioneers of 1819 said:

“Your mission is a mission of mercy, and your work is to be wholly a labor of love. ... Your views are not to be limited to a low, narrow scale, but you are to open your hearts wide, and set your marks high. You are to aim at nothing short of covering these islands with fruitful fields, and pleasant dwellings and schools and churches, and of Christian civilization.” (The Friend)

Over the course of a little over 40-years (1820-1863 - the “Missionary Period”), about 184-men and women in twelve Companies served in Hawai‘i to carry out the mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in the Hawaiian Islands.

Collaboration between Native Hawaiians and American Protestant missionaries resulted in, among other things, the

- Introduction of Christianity;
- Development of a written Hawaiian language and establishment of schools that resulted in widespread literacy;
- Promulgation of the concept of constitutional government;
- Combination of Hawaiian with Western medicine; and
- Evolution of a new and distinctive musical tradition (with harmony and choral singing)

The following is a listing of each of the Companies (information is from the 'Missionary Album', 1969:)

Pioneer Company

Left Boston, MA October 23, 1819; arrived at Kailua-Kona April 4, 1820 aboard the 'Thaddeus'

The Reverend Hiram Bingham and Mrs. Bingham
Mr. Daniel Chamberlain, Mrs. Chamberlain and Five Children
Dr. Thomas Holman and Mrs. Holman
Mr. Elisha Loomis and Mrs. Loomis
Mr. Samuel Ruggles and Mrs. Ruggles
The Reverend Asa Thurston and Mrs. Thurston
Mr. Samuel Whitney and Mrs. Whitney
Thomas Hopu (Hawaiian)
William Kanui (Hawaiian)
John Honoli'i (Hawaiian)
Humehume (George Prince) (Hawaiian)

Brig "Thaddeus", (85 feet 51/2 inches long, 24 feet 71/2 inches wide, 13 feet 2 inches deep, 241-23/95 tons) Captain Blanchard, First Officer James Hunnewell; sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, October 23, 1819; sighted Mauna Kea, March 30, 1820; sailed around the north side of Hawaii; at Kawaihae, heard of the overthrow of idolatry, and received a number of chiefs as passengers for Kailua; anchored at Kailua, Hawaii, April 4, 1820, a voyage of 164 days.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions paid \$2500 for the passage of the missionaries, besides provisioning them for the long voyage. King Kaumuali'i of Kauai, during May, 1820, handsomely repaid Captain Blanchard for bringing his son, George, who also was a passenger from Boston-free provisions for the brig, and sandalwood valued at \$1000.

Second Company

Left New Haven, CT November 20, 1822; arrived at Honolulu April 27, 1823 aboard the 'Thames'

The Reverend Artemas Bishop and Mrs. Bishop
Dr. Abraham Blatchley and Mrs. Blatchley
Mr. Levi Chamberlain
Mr. James Ely and Mrs. Ely
Mr. Joseph Goodrich and Mrs. Goodrich
The Reverend William Richards and Mrs. Richards
The Reverend Charles S. Stewart and Mrs. Stewart
Miss Betsey Stockton
Stephen Popohe (Tahitian)
William Kamooula (Hawaiian)
Richard Kalaouiulu (Hawaiian)
Kupeli'i (Hawaiian)

Ship "Thames", (101 feet 8 inches long, 28 feet wide, 14 feet deep, 350-17/95 tons) Captain Reuben Clasby, sailed from New Haven, Connecticut, November 20, 1822; sighted Hawaii, April 24, 3 P.M. and arrived at Honolulu, April 27, 1823, a voyage of 158 days. The passengers testified to "Great harmony-many unsolicited favors from the Captain.

Third Company

Left Boston, MA November 27, 1827; arrived at Honolulu March 30, 1828 aboard the 'Parthian'

The Reverend Lorrin Andrews and Mrs. Andrews
The Reverend Ephraim W. Clark and Mrs. Clark
The Reverend Jonathan S. Green and Mrs. Green
The Reverend Peter J. Gulick and Mrs. Gulick
Dr. Gerrit P. Judd and Mrs. Judd
Miss Maria Ogden
Miss Maria Patton (later Mrs. Levi Chamberlain)
Mr. Stephen Shepard and Mrs. Shepard
Miss Delia Stone (later Mrs. Artemas Bishop)
Miss Mary Ward (later Mrs. Edmund H. Rogers)
Henry Tahiti, who became assistant to Mr. Shepard (Tahitian)
George Tyler "Kielaa" a shoemaker (Hawaiian)
Samuel J. Mills "Paloo" a teacher (Hawaiian)
John E. Phelps "Kalaaauluna" became assistant to Dr. Judd (Hawaiian)

Ship "Parthian", (103 feet long, 30 feet wide, 19 feet deep, 327 tons) Captain Richard D. Blinn, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, November 3, 1827, and arrived at Honolulu, March 30, 1828, a voyage of 148 days.

For this company, the American Board paid for the passage of sixteen missionaries, \$100. each; of four Polynesians., \$50. each; freightage, \$700.-total \$2500. and furnished all of their provisions and one-half the cost of water casks.

Material for two frame houses was carried on this voyage; printing press, types, paper, etc. Also 40,000 copies of the elementary Bible Tract in the Hawaiian language, printed in Utica, New York, under inspection of Mr. Loomis.

Fourth Company

Left New Bedford, MA December 28, 1830; arrived at Honolulu June 7, 1831 aboard the 'New England'

The Reverend Dwight Baldwin and Mrs. Baldwin
The Reverend Sheldon Dibble and Mrs. Dibble
Mr. Andrew Johnstone and Mrs. Johnstone
The Reverend Reuben Tinker and Mrs. Tinker

Ship "New England", (107 feet long, 376 tons) Captain Avery F. Parker, sailed from New Bedford, Massachusetts, December 28, 1830, and arrived at Honolulu, June 7, 1831, a very comfortable voyage of 161 days.

Fifth Company

Left New Bedford, MA November 26, 1831; arrived at Honolulu May 17, 1832 aboard the 'Averick'

The Reverend William P. Alexander and Mrs. Alexander
The Reverend Richard Armstrong and Mrs. Armstrong
Dr. Alonzo Chapin and Mrs. Chapin
The Reverend John S. Emerson and Mrs. Emerson
The Reverend Cochran Forbes and Mrs. Forbes
The Reverend Harvey R. Hitchcock and Mrs. Hitchcock
The Reverend David B. Lyman and Mrs. Lyman
The Reverend Lorenzo Lyons and Mrs. Lyons
Mr. Edmund H. Rogers
The Reverend Ephraim Spaulding and Mrs. Spaulding

Whaleship "Averick", (110 feet long, 27 feet wide, 13 feet deep, 384 tons) Captain Swain, sailed from New Bedford, Massachusetts, November 26, 1831, and arrived at Honolulu, May 17, 1832, a voyage of 173 days. "Great kindness shown to passengers by Captain and officers."

Sixth Company

Left New London, CT November 21, 1832; arrived at Honolulu May 1, 1833 aboard the 'Mentor'

The Reverend John Diell (Chaplain, American Seamen's Friend Society) and Mrs. Diell
Mr. Lemuel Fuller
The Reverend Benjamin W. Parker and Mrs. Parker
The Reverend Lowell Smith and Mrs. Smith
John Toohane (Hawaiian)

Ship "Mentor", (460 tons) Captain Rice, sailed from New London, Connecticut, November 21, 1832, and arrived at Honolulu, May 1, 1833, a voyage of 161 days.

Seventh Company

Left Boston, MA December 5, 1834; arrived at Honolulu June 6, 1835 aboard the 'Hellespont'

Miss Lydia Brown
The Reverend Titus Coan and Mrs. Coan
Mr. Henry Dimond and Mrs. Dimond
Mr. Edwin O. Hall and Mrs. Hall
Miss Elizabeth M. Hitchcock (later Mrs. E. H. Rogers)

Ship "Hellespont", (108 feet long, 28 feet wide, 18 feet deep, 344 tons) Captain Henry, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, December 5, 1834 and arrived at Honolulu, June 6, 1835, a voyage of 183 days.

Eighth Company

Left Boston, MA December 14, 1836; arrived at Honolulu April 9, 1837 aboard the 'Mary Frazier'

Dr. Seth L. Andrews and Mrs. Andrews
Mr. Edward Bailey and Mrs. Bailey
The Reverend Isaac Bliss and Mrs. Bliss
Mr. Samuel N. Castle and Mrs. Castle
The Reverend Daniel T. Conde and Mrs. Conde
Mr. Amos S. Cooke and Mrs. Cooke
The Reverend Mark Ives and Mrs. Ives
Mr. Edward Johnson and Mrs. Johnson
Mr. Horton O. Knapp and Mrs. Knapp
The Reverend Thomas Lafon, M.D., and Mrs. Lafon
Mr. Edwin Locke and Mrs. Locke
Mr. Charles Mcdonald and Mrs. Mcdonald
Mr. Bethuel Munn and Mrs. Munn
Miss Marcia M. Smith
Miss Lucia G. Smith (Later Mrs. Lorenzo Lyons)
Mr. William S. Van Duzee and Mrs. Van Duzee
Mr. Abner Wilcox and Mrs. Wilcox

Barque "Mary Frazier", (108 feet long, 23 feet wide, 288 tons) Captain Charles Sumner, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, December 14, 1836, and arrived at Honolulu, the largest company ever sent out by the ABCFM to any of its missions, April 9, 1837, a voyage of 116 days.

Two Hawaiian seamen, Joseph and Levi, were permitted by the Captain to help the missionaries in their daily language lessons. In giving an account of the voyage one of the Company remarks:- "Our voyage was one of almost uninterrupted happiness and prosperity. Our accommodations were excellent, the treatment of the Captain was kind, the officers were obliging and all the crew highly respectful when in our presence. Permission was obtained to have morning and evening prayers in the passengers' cabin, (the Captain taking the lead during the latter part of the voyage), and to have public worship on the Sabbath. A deeply interesting state of religious feeling prevailed among the ship's company and about half of them gave encouraging evidence of having entered on the Christian life. After their arrival at Honolulu, six of the ship's company, including two of the officers, made a public profession of religion at the mission church."

Ninth Company

Left Boston, MA November 14, 1840; arrived at Honolulu May 21, 1841 aboard the 'Gloucester'

The Reverend Elias Bond and Mrs. Bond
The Reverend Daniel Dole and Mrs. Dole
The Reverend John D. Paris and Mrs. Paris
Mr. William H. Rice and Mrs. Rice

Ship "Gloucester", (107 feet long, 26 feet wide, 13 feet deep, 388 tons) Captain Easterbrook, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, November 14, 1840, and arrived at Honolulu, May 21, 1841, a voyage of 188 days. In April, 1841, while the ship was detained at Rio de Janeiro, the Company was hospitably entertained by The Reverend Mr. Spaulding, Methodist missionary. They touched also at Valparaiso.

“The steerage was fitted up to accommodate the passengers, eight missionaries and about five others. The cabin was a little place, only big enough for the Captain. No one wanted to go there.”

“Soon after leaving Boston we encountered a terrible gale in the Gulf Stream, lost 18 out of our 20 pigs; and the third day out, nearly all the vegetables were washed overboard, together with all the chickens, salt pork and beef. And altho we were driven into Rio de Janeiro for repairs, the Captain professed to be unable to replace our livestock and other fresh provisions on the score of economy!!”

“He would not let the steward touch the cask of cheeses and they all spoiled, as also a keg of souse. Twice only we had a taste of fresh fish. We were fed on 'salt junk' all the way, and thus it came out that the very sight of salt beef was like a dose of Ipecac to us. We went to the table only as the cravings of hunger forced us to after fasting till Nature would endure the strain no longer.”

Tenth Company

Left Boston, MA May 2, 1842; arrived at Honolulu September 21, 1842 aboard 'Sarah Abigail'

The Reverend George B. Rowell and Mrs. Rowell

Dr. James W. Smith and Mrs. Smith

Brig "Sarah Abigail", (96 feet long, 22 feet wide, 11 feet deep, 210 tons) Captain Doane, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, May 2, 1842, stopped at Valparaiso, and arrived at Honolulu, September 21, 1842, a voyage of 143 days.

Eleventh Company

Left Boston, MA December 4, 1843; arrived at Honolulu (via Tahiti) July 15, 1844 aboard the 'Globe'

The Reverend Claudius B. Andrews

The Reverend Timothy Dwight Hunt and Mrs. Hunt

The Reverend John F. Pogue

Miss Maria K. Whitney (Later Mrs. John F. Pogue)

The Reverend Euphalet Whittlesey and Mrs. Whittlesey

Brig "Globe", (92 feet long, 24 feet wide, 12 feet deep, 239 tons) Captain Doane, sailed from Boston, December 4, 1843; arrived at Honolulu, via Tahiti, July 15, 1844, a voyage of 224 days.

"Among the articles carried out by the 'Globe' are the former pulpit and communion table of the Centre Church, New Haven, Connecticut. The congregation to which they have hitherto belonged has presented them to the First Church of Honolulu, and they are to be placed, if they reach the Islands, in the substantial and costly edifice which has been recently erected in that place, and the expense of which has principally been defrayed by the King.”

“Only four days out of Boston, the 'Globe' encountered a very severe gale and the lives of all on board were in great peril. The vessel was badly damaged, and after riding out the storm, was forced to undergo extensive repairs off Fayal, Western Islands, in the latitude of Philadelphia, which resulted in considerable delay and a very long voyage. The owners of the 'Globe' granted free passage to this Company.”

Twelfth Company

Left Boston, MA October 23, 1847; arrived at Honolulu February 26, 1848 aboard the 'Samoset'

The Reverend Samuel G. Dwight
The Reverend Henry Kinney and Mrs. Kinney

Barque "Samoset", (150 feet long, 32 feet wide, 21 feet deep, 734 tons) Captain Hollis, sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, October 23, 1847, and arrived at Honolulu, February 26, 1848, a voyage of 126 days.

List of Individual Arrivals at Honolulu

The Rev. William Ellis and Mrs. Ellis sailed from Tahiti, December 31, 1822, schooner "Active", Captain Richard Charlton; arrived at Honolulu, February 5, 1823.

The Rev. Asa Bowen Smith and Mrs. Smith sailed from the Columbia River, Oregon, barque "Columbia"; arrived at Honolulu, January 25, 1842, a voyage of 35 days.

The Rev. Samuel Chenery Damon, Chaplain, American Seamen's Friend Society and Mrs. Damon sailed from New York, March 10, 1842, ship "Victoria", Captain Spring; arrived at Honolulu, October 19, 1842. They were delayed nearly two months in Valparaiso and Callao.

The Rev. Townsend E. Taylor, Chaplain, American Seamen's Friend Society and Mrs. Taylor sailed from New York, ship "Matilda", Captain Lewis; arrived at Honolulu, June 28, 1848, a voyage of eight months via Valparaiso, Callao, and Monterey.

Dr. Charles Hinckley Wetmore and Mrs. Wetmore sailed from Boston, October 16, 1848, ship "Leland", Captain Eldridge; arrived at Honolulu, March 11, 1849, a voyage of 146 days.

The Rev. Luther Halsey Gulick, M.D., and Mrs. Gulick sailed from Boston, November 18, 1851, ship "Esther May", Captain Howes; arrived at Honolulu, March 28, 1852, a voyage of 131 days.

The Rev. Sereno Edwards Bishop, Chaplain, American Seamen's Friend Society and Mrs. Bishop sailed from New York to San Francisco, ship "Defiance"; from San Francisco, ship "Sovereign of the Seas", Captain McKay; arrived at Honolulu, January 15, 1853, a voyage of 23 days.

The Rev. William Cornelius Shipman and Mrs. Shipman sailed from Boston, ship "Chasca", Captain Merrill; arrived at Lahaina, October 19, 1854, a voyage of 137 days; arrived at Honolulu, November 8, 1854.

The Rev. William Otis Baldwin and Mrs. Baldwin sailed from Boston, November 28, 1854, ship "Ocean Pearl", Captain W. Sears; arrived at Honolulu, March 31, 1855, a voyage of 123 days.

The Rev. Hiram Bingham, 2nd, and Mrs. Bingham sailed from Boston, December 2, 1856, brig "Morning Star", Captain Moore; arrived at Honolulu, via Rio de Janeiro, April 24, 1857, a voyage of 143 days.

The Rev. Anderson Oliver Forbes sailed from New York, August 5, 1858, ship "Panama Steamer"; sailed from San Francisco, ship "Raduga"; arrived at Honolulu, September 16, 1858.

The Rev. Charles Mcewen Hyde and Mrs. Hyde sailed from San Francisco, ship "Zealandia", Captain Chevalier; arrived at Honolulu, May 31, 1877, a voyage of 7 days and 17 hours.

The Rev. Oliver Pomeroy Emerson sailed from San Francisco, ship "Zealandia"; arrived at Honolulu, January 22, 1889, a voyage of 7 days.

The Rev. Orramel Hinckley Gulick and Mrs. Gulick sailed from Japan via San Francisco, ship "Australia", Captain Houdlette; arrived at Honolulu, January 27, 1894.

The Rev. John Leadingham, Mrs. Leadingham and three children sailed from San Francisco, ship "Australia", Captain Houdlette; arrived at Honolulu, November 3, 1894.

The Missionaries included ordained ministers of the Gospel, physicians, teachers, secular agents, printers, a bookbinder and a farmer.

Most of them were young people, still in their twenties, full of life and enthusiasm. All were pious and accustomed to "lead meetings." Some were scholars able, when the native language had been mastered, to put into Hawaiian the Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek.

All were pioneers and versatile as pioneers are forced to be. The ministers had to carpenter, the doctors had to plow, the printers had to preach. The women of the mission taught school or rather classes of native adults and later of children, in all manner of subjects, besides managing their own households, entertaining guests, taking care of their children, and ministering to the sick.

They taught the native women hat weaving and the making of clothes and quilts. The doctors administered to all, both natives and foreigners, and charged no fee to either group.

A few left the mission because of health or incompatibility. Others left the mission to serve the chiefs and King in government service, giving to the young native government a stiffening of moral fibre and executive ability which enabled that ship of state to weather many grievous storms. (Missionary Album)

Extract from a letter from Richard H. Dana, Jr., Esq., of Boston, written at the Sandwich Islands, and first published in the New York Tribune, June 5, 1860.

"It is no small thing to say of the Missionaries of the American Board, that in less than forty years they have taught this whole people to read and to write, to cipher and to sew. They have given them an alphabet, grammar, and dictionary; preserved their language from extinction; given it a literature, and translated into it the Bible and works of devotion, science and entertainment, etc., etc."

"They have established schools, reared up native teachers, and so pressed their work that now the proportion of inhabitants who can read and write is greater than in New England; ... and the more elevated of them taking part in conducting the affairs of the constitutional monarchy under which they live, holding seats on the judicial bench and in the legislative chambers, and filling posts in the local magistracies."