

# Basic Detail Report

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**00037904**

**Title**

Certificate of stock share for the MORNING STAR

**Date**

1866

**Primary Maker**

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

**Medium**

Ink on paper

**Dimensions**

Overall: 96 x 150 mm, 0.01 kg

**Name**

Certificate

**History**

The American Board for the Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) began informally with the 1806 "Haystack Prayer Meeting" of THE BRETHREN, a group of Congregational ministers and students at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. In 1810 Samuel Mills, one of the students spoke with the General Association of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts about missionary work in India and with Native Americans in the western United States. Commissioners were appointed to look into the matter, a method of operation common at that time. The Board was officially chartered on 20 June 1812 as the Commonwealth of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Board's purpose was to "devise, adopt, and prosecute, ways and means for propagating the gospel among those who are destitute of the knowledge of Christianity." The first missionaries of the American Board sailed for Calcutta in 1812. Missions opened in Sri Lanka in 1816, in Madura in 1834, and in Madras in 1836. In 1853 the American Board for the Commissioners of Foreign Missions established a mission on one of the southern Marquesas Islands in the Pacific. As communication between the missions in the Marquesas's and the main mission in Hawaii was expensive and fraught with difficulty the American Board launched a public appeal to purchase a suitable vessel for its missionary activities in the Pacific. Inspired by the London Missionary Society who had built their own ship the JOHN WILLIAMS the American Board proposed that they invite the children of America to purchase ten cent shares of joint ownership in a missionary vessel, to be called MORNING STAR (I). The appeal commenced in August 1856 and within three months enough money had been collected for work to begin on the construction of the ship at Chelsea, Boston, Massachusetts. The vessel was a wooden hulled, two-masted hermaphrodite brig (square-rigged foremast and fore-and-aft mainmast), of 156 tons. The MORNING STAR (I) remained in use until 1865 when it was sold out off service and replaced by a second

vessel also called MORNING STAR (II), which was built by public subscription. MORNING STAR (II) also a hermaphrodite brig, was built at East Boston. It cost \$23,406, and was launched on September 22, 1866. It sailed from Boston under Capt. Rev. Hiram Bingham, Jr., on 13 November 1866 and reached Honolulu on 15 March 1867, after 122 days. Some sources state (Baker, 1945) that over "2,000 Hawaiian Sunday School children marched to the wharf to see 'their ship.' " It sailed from Honolulu 28 March 1867, the plan for its yearly trips being that it should go first to the Gilbert Islands to take advantage of prevailing winds and currents, and then 1,000 miles northwest to Ponape, visiting other mission islands on the way. Hiram Bingham Jr was the son of Hiram Bingham and Sybil Moseley (1792 - 1848) who were sent by the American Board of Missions to found the first Protestant mission in the Hawaiian Islands. He was ordained as a Minister at New Haven on November 9, 1856. Nine days later he married Minerva Brewster, and two weeks later they sailed from Boston as missionaries to Micronesia on the MORNING STAR (1). In 1866 Hiram Bingham Jr. was put made captain of a second missionary brig also called MORNING STAR (II). In 1867 and 1868 they sailed to the Marquesas Islands, the Gilberts, and sixteen different islands in Micronesia, before returning to Honolulu. Capt. Bingham sums up the first voyage of the second MORNING STAR to Micronesia. "During this cruise of the MORNING STAR we have visited sixteen different islands, seven of them a second time, two a third time, and one five times. We have carried supplies and mails to twelve missionary families, have had as passengers all the families but one, have had occasion to accommodate at different times nearly one hundred different individuals in all, have found our little vessel none too large for the work to which she has been called. She has proved herself well adapted to the work, and gives good proof of thoroughness on the part of the builders. Long may she be spared to be sent on many similar errands of mercy." (Bingham in Baker, 1945) In October 1869 the vessel was returning to Honolulu from Kusaie when it encountered very strong currents offshore from Kusaie and became wrecked on the reef. When news of the wreck of MORNING STAR (II) reached the United States a third share subscription commenced and a third vessel called MORNING STAR (III) was eventually built.