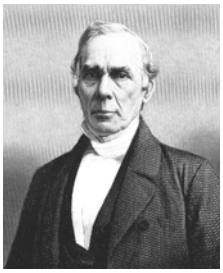
## William and Abigail Goodell



1792-1867 1800-1871

**Pioneers in Syria and Turkey**

**The first five years in Syria** (present day Lebanon)

William was born in Templeton Massachusetts. He was the youngest of eight children. He grew up in a godly home. He was educated at Phillips Academy in Andover, at Dartmouth College and at Andover Theological Seminary. He was never sure when his interest in missions was first awakened. Throughout his secondary education he had no clear goal in mind. But during his time at Phillips Academy his faith grew and ripened to a humble consecration and a willingness to do God's will whatever it might be.

At this time the first workers of the ABCFM (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) to India (Messrs Newell, Judson, Hall, Nott and Rice) were ordained and commissioned at Salem, Massachusetts about 20 miles from Andover. William attended the service.

The first indication that William was considering missions came in his freshman year in college. He wrote on May 20, 1814, "**Brother Nealy called on me today. He is expecting to go to the missionary establishment in Gosport, England to prepare himself to be a missionary. 'Lord, hast thou called him by Thy grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to millions who are perishing for lack of vision. Wilt Thou prepare him for it? But what shall I do? Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Here I am! Send me. I desire to labour where Thou wouldst have me. I am ready to follow Thee wherever thou leadest**'."

His college course finished in 1817. He returned to Andover and entered the Andover Theological Seminary. His interest in foreign missions grew. In February 1818 he wrote to his father his views on where he should serve Christ and his conviction that the claims of the Eastern World far outweighed those of his own country.

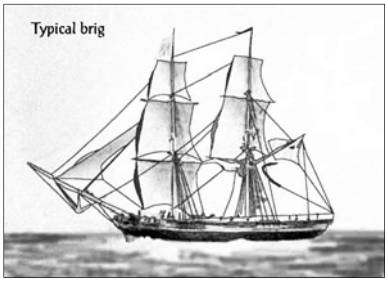
On February 12 he wrote in his journal, "**This evening I had an important interview with missionary brethren. And now it is done! 'I am Thine. O Thou who didst die for the world! Send me where Thou wilt. Arm me with Christian courage and most cheerfully I go to the ends of the earth to publish Thy salvation**' ".

He longed for a wife! He had prayed earnestly about this. While taking a meeting in Holden, Massachusetts he met Abigail Davies, "**a lady of singularly sweet disposition, modest appearance and dignified demeanour**". Their friendship grew over the next four years and they were married on November 19, 1822. They were perfectly suited to support one another. They had nine children. It was later written of Abigail that, "**She was the beloved wife of his youth, companion of his whole subsequent life and faithful and efficient helper in all his labours**".

William was in touch with Pliny Fisk who was already in Smyrna. He was hoping to join him, but the Missions Committee was short of funds for sending new workers. As he contemplated joining Fisk, William wrote, "**O Brother Fisk! I would never go among the Turks were they not embraced in those blessed promises that relate to the universal extension of the Gospel. I should not dare to take one step forward had not the Saviour said, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!**' ".

On 12 September 1822 the Annual Meeting of the ABCFM took place. It included an ordination service where William was consecrated to the work of the mission in Palestine. The sermon text was Is. 61:4, ***"And they will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated. They will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations."***

Early on the morning of December 9, 1822 William and Abigail sailed from New York on the brig **"Shepherdess"**. They arrived in Malta on January 21, 1823. They stayed there several months in language study and helping with the work of translating and printing materials. All ABCFM missionaries bound for the East first spent some time in preparation in Malta.




October 24, 1823 they left Malta on a Maltese brig, "La Divina Providenza" bound for Cyprus and Beirut. They arrived on Monday, November 17 and although William was commissioned for work in Jerusalem, they stayed in Beirut instead of pressing on to Jerusalem as things there were very unsettled. In fact, despite several attempts, they were never able to go to Jerusalem.

William and Abigail travelled together with Isaac and Ann Bird. Abigail and Ann were the first two missionary wives to be sent to the Field.

On the evening of November 25, 1823 William and Abigail consecrated their rented house to the Lord. William wrote in his journal, **"We consecrated our house and ourselves to the Redeemer. We prayed that He would take up His abode with us and that He might never witness anything in our rooms that would grieve Him."**

The winter of 1823 was spent in the study of the Turkish, Arabic and Armenian languages. God gave them gifted native speakers of these languages as tutors. The house was a Bible depot and many came to read or hear the Bible. William records, **"Almost daily we read the Scriptures in ancient Greek, modern Greek, ancient Armenian, modern Armenian, Turkish Armenian, Arabic, Italian and English. We frequently hear the Scriptures read in Syriac, Hebrew and French!"**

It soon became clear that it was not wise to continue on to Jerusalem and so Beirut became the headquarters of missionary operations in Syria. It was the only place that missionary homes were established. For a while the work continued without hindrance, but by the end of the first year an order from the Maronite Patriarch was read in the churches in Beirut forbidding people to receive the Holy Scriptures circulated by the missionaries and requiring all received so far to be returned or burned.

In 1820 an attempt had been made by Greece to throw off Turkish rule. This escalated into war and on March 19, 1826 Greek troops landed about 2 miles east of Beirut and stormed the city. They were repelled so their attempt was unsuccessful. Instead of Beirut they took possession of the area where the Goodells lived. They plundered every house, but on learning that the Goodells were English they left them alone since the English had protection through a treaty with the Ottoman Turks. Many people escaped to the mountains taking all the possessions they could carry. Many also crowded into the Goodell's house.

A short while later the Greeks retired to a fort halfway between the city and the anchorage at the river. Some of them took Greek tracts away with them.

William read the Bible daily with the many crowded into his house and encouraged them to put their trust in God. The gates of Beirut remain sealed and food was in short supply. William wrote in his journal, **"To the west of us are the Turks fortifying the city and castles and beginning to rage like so many bears whom it is better to avoid than to meet. On the east are the Greeks who must pass by us whether they attack the city by land or by sea. The Emir Beshir, head of the mountain tribes, has come down from the mountains with his troops and encamped about half an hour's distance to the south of us. Whether he will assist the Greeks or the Turks or attempt to become master of the city himself in opposition to both is a perfect secret. To the north is the Bay of Beirut. We are therefore hedged in on all sides. We have no protection, but that of the Almighty. We wait with anxiety for the result as it respects the fate of the city and the interests of this mission."**

On Thursday the 23rd March, the Greek vessels spread their sales and moved out of the river. Just as the Greeks were leaving, a large number of troops arrived from the Pasha of St. John d'Acre consisting mainly of Albanians and Bedouin. Since the Greeks had left, they focused on the area where the Greeks had been and began plundering every house. The Goodell's house was in the middle of this area. Different groups came demanding entrance, but on being told the house was English they left.

Eventually a party of Bedouin came. It wasn't possible to reason with them. As they couldn't break down the door they cut it with hatchets. A group of four or five respectable Turks were passing by

and tried to help the Goodells by stationing themselves in front of Mrs Goodell's door and preventing any Bedouin from entering her room. The intruders seized whatever they could and when William tried to retrieve his goods from them they became very angry. William then took a severe tone saying that the Pasha would certainly behead them when he heard what was happening! This was enough to scare them and they left.

The city gates were now open again and William and Abigail, with their family, accepted an invitation to stay in the house of the English Consul. William records, **"We took joyfully the spoiling of our goods and passed safely through the streets of armed robbers to the city where we were graciously received by Mr Abbott and his family."** All the remaining workers were now in Isaac Bird's house with him and his wife Ann.

On May 15, 1826 William recorded in his journal, **"It is impossible to describe the system of injustice, oppression and robbery that has been in operation here for the last two months. Human beings are condemned without a trial, their flesh trembling for fear, their religion blasphemed, their Saviour insulted, their comforts destroyed, their lives threatened and their bodies filled with pain and deeply marked with blows. Some were so badly beaten that they couldn't walk."**

Again on May 19 he records, **"This is the first week in two months that I have opened a book for study!"**

Finally once again they could calmly pursue the work. The schools on the mountain were prospering and more Scriptures had been sold in the last three months than in the twenty preceding months. With hindsight, the mission community came to the conclusion that the political traumas of the preceding years had been allowed by God to avert the targeted persecution from the Maronites and also from the Greek Orthodox.

By January 1827 this persecution began once again. Speaking of this period William wrote in his journal, **"During the last two years of our stay in Beirut I seldom closed my eyes in sleep without first thinking over ways and means of escape if our slumbers should be disturbed by our enemies."** In the midst of these troubles there was an outbreak of plague in Beirut in May 1827. This brought a temporary end to the persecution.

In the autumn of 1827 fresh troubles arose. The Greek Revolution was still in progress. It became known that the European powers were to take the side of Greece against Turkey. This caused great embarrassment to all who enjoyed English protection.

On the advice of Mr Abbott, the English Consul, William sent his family to Der Kalaat – formerly a Roman Castle but by this time a Maronite Convent on the mountain about three hours from Beirut. William remained behind in Beirut to continue the work of the mission. From time to time he was able to visit his family. This had to be done secretly not to incur reprisals against the convent for sheltering them.

At the end of November 1827 William and family had to flee once again to Mansourieh where they stayed with the Abbott family in a large house that they had rented. At the end of December William and family returned to Beirut as did Isaac Bird and his family. This proved difficult as the plague struck once again. It was decided that all the mission families should leave to Malta, but this proved difficult to arrange. They were finally able to leave on May 2, 1828.

The journey was difficult. There were 21 people, besides the ship's company, crowded together in a little Austrian trabaccolo of 100 tons. After 30 days at sea they reached port. They were obliged to go into quarantine for 30 days.

Nearly all the missionaries of the ABCFM were now in Malta. Since it was under English control, they were sure of protection in all circumstances. This was also the reason it had been selected as the location for the mission printing press. William took over as superintendent of the press. He also devoted himself to translation.

Life was calm and pleasant for William and his family. In October 1828 he wrote in his journal, **"This is the first time I have lived alone with my family since my marriage. We have been alone for a whole month**

**and we bless God for this retirement and relief from care and anxiety. The society of my wife and children is indeed a comfort that my circumstances have never before permitted me to enjoy."**

On April 26, 1831 William received instructions from the ABCFM to move to Constantinople (Istanbul) and begin a new mission there. On May 21, William and his family left Malta on the ship "Banian" bound for the Turkish capital. They reached their destination on June 9, 1831.

They were soon at home in the rented house in Pera, a suburb of Constantinople. They were just beginning to feel settled and make a plan for the future work when a tragic circumstance occurred. On August 2, 1831 a disastrous fire started about a mile from their house. William went to see if he could help. He records in his diary on August 12, **"About 9 am when the alarm of fire was first given, I saw the smoke ascending a mile from my house. As I approached, I saw men and boys running, children crying, women screaming or beating their bosoms. ... I was not at all aware of the danger which those around me seemed to apprehend and I did what I could to calm their fears and inspire confidence."**

The wind freshened and the fire spread rapidly. The Goodell's house was a stone building and for a while they believed it could withstand the flames. In the end it was burned to the ground and all their goods were lost including William's grammars and dictionaries. His commentaries, translations and private papers were all gone! He wrote, **"Though cast down, we are not destroyed. We have been afflicted, but not given over to death."** The extent of the fire was two miles long and a mile wide.

Unable to stay in Pera, the Goodells found quarters in a more distant suburb of Constantinople, Buyuk-Dèrè, on the Bosporus about 15 miles from the city and 4 or 5 miles from the Black Sea.

On August 6 William wrote, **"We are now occupying part of a house belonging to two Greek princesses whose father was beheaded at the start of the Greek Revolution. Besides ourselves and these princesses, there are several other families and individuals in the house. Indeed we form a community by ourselves of "many nations and kindreds and tongues" being from 10 different nations belonging to 8 different religious communions and understanding 16 different languages. May we all dwell together that 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!' "**

To add to all the other troubles, cholera and plague were once again increasing in the villages and quarantine was necessary to afford some protection.

On August 27, 1831 a son was born to William and Abigail. This brought great joy to the family. They named him Constantine Washington in deference to the fact that as William records, **"He is the first American child to be born in Constantinople or its suburbs. May he be born again and seek 'a better country even a heavenly'."**

An old acquaintance of William's, Commodore Porter, arrived at the end of August as Chargé d'Affaires. In October he was settled in his residence and invited the Goodell family to move in with him for the winter. They were very grateful for his generosity. He gave them four rooms and they settled in happily.

The population of Constantinople in 1831 was about 1,000.000 of various nationalities and religions. Turks and other Muslims comprised about half. Greeks and Armenians were about 150,000 each and there were about 50,000 Jews. In addition there were Francs and people from every part of the world. Most congregated in their own 'quarters' of the city.

Goodell's mission was initially to the Armenians who were nominally Christian but given over to idolatry and superstition. Due to lack of materials in Armenian and a loss of earlier contacts as a result of the fire and the epidemics, the Goodells worked more with the Greek community.

In addition to the general work of the mission they established a number of schools believing education to be key in opening hearts and minds. Within a year they had established more than twenty schools for Greeks with around 1000 pupils of whom about a hundred were girls. William helped with the setup and the curriculum but then encouraged the local teachers to take full responsibility.

At the end of March 1832 the Goodells moved from Commodore Porter's house. William continued to try to convince the Armenian church officials to give permission for schools to be established for Armenian children. The sticking point was the differing views of William and the evangelicals over transubstantiation (the actual, physical change they believed took place in the bread and the wine at communion). They responded, **"Whoever sends their children to the school let them be excommunicated!"**

In the midst of this controversy between the Armenians and the Greeks over schools, the Turks came forward seeking schools for their children. They were determined to have a school for Muslims. They selected and equipped a house at Beshik-Tash with the full approval of the Sultan.

Azim Bey, the son of a former ambassador to England and a highly educated man was foremost in promoting this enterprise. He addressed the scholars as follows, **"His most sublime Majesty, Sultan Mahmoud, desires your good. These schools are no benefit to him, but he desires them for your benefit. You have come from different parts of the Empire. You are in the morning of life and it is now in your power to become learned and wise. In the old Mussulman schools nothing of any value was learned. Men were asses! But here asses may become men. This badge of rank which you see on my breast was given me by my sovereign as a token of his regard. Tomorrow he can take it away and then I shall be as undistinguished as any other man. But what knowledge I acquire, he cannot take away from me. The terrible fires you see consuming almost everything else, cannot burn it nor can the floods overwhelm it or the tempests sweep it away. Knowledge therefore is the best property you can possess."**

William saw the Call to Prayer as a challenge to him to pray earnestly. He wrote in November 1832, **"Our house was next to the Turkish mosque and five times a day a white-turbaned muezzin ascended the minaret and proclaimed the hour of prayer. The infidel Greek, whenever he could put his head out of sight, never failed to burst forth into contemptuous merriment. But it seemed to me to be a call to come boldly to the throne of grace by a new and living way of which the Muslim knows nothing and thus to lift up my heart with my voice unto God."**

Plague broke out again in the summer of 1832 in the immediate neighbourhood of the Goodells' house. This was followed by an outbreak of cholera. The Viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Ali, had wiped out the mamelukes (slave armies) and extended his conquests in Arabia. He sent an army into Syria under his adopted son – Ibrahim Pasha. On December 20, 1832 he gained victory over the Turkish forces and took the grand vizier prisoner.

One of the defining characteristics of William was his practical wisdom that was much needed in all the crises that occurred one after the other. In response to the Turks' request for schools, he gave advice and then wisely left them to do the work themselves. He followed the same pattern in evangelism.

He had not come to proselytise. He never attacked the theology or practices of the Greek or Armenian churches. His goal was to share the Gospel all its simplicity. He believed that as people embraced the truth this would be 'leaven' in the existing church organisations. It would do its work by the power of the Holy Spirit. Those who could no longer endure the teaching of the Greek and Armenian churches would start a movement for a purer church.

This is exactly what happened in the course of a few years. He delicately urged his views on his fellow workers in the mission. In 1834 the Mission Board asked him to write them out in full. He did this in a series of papers entitled, ''**Hints and Cautions to a Missionary**''.

About the same time he wrote, **"We must follow Christ. That is a general proposition. When we are in circumstances that call for the exercise of patience or of a forgiving spirit, we must follow Christ in that particular. When we are in circumstances that call for bold and fearless declarations of divine truth, as is the case with our brethren in America, we must follow Christ in that respect. And when great caution and consummate prudence are required may we not also follow Him in this? Christ always adapted His instructions to the circumstances of the people. May we not do the same here?"**

In the spring of 1836 there was a General Assembly of missionaries in Smyrna to look over the past, identify mistakes or deficiencies and enquire of the Lord and one another what could be done to give free course to the Gospel and secure its influence in the hearts of the people. All present received new encouragement to go forward.

There was much encouragement in the work. On January 14, 1837 William wrote to a colleague in another mission station, **"Light is kindling up here and there. Truth is prevailing. Priests and people in some cases sit up all night to talk about the glorious Gospel. I am sometimes quite feverish with excitement. I want to jump. I want to fly. I want 1000 tongues to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are unable to do the 10,000th part of what we want to do. We do little more than stand and see the salvation of God."**

The year 1838 brought many hardships to the community and the mission – not least many deaths from the plague including a number of mission workers and their children. William's letters home give clear evidence that they didn't know if they would live from one day to the next.

The dawn of 1839 brought a new situation in Constantinople. It was the beginning of the first severe persecution of evangelical Armenians. To understand how the leaders of a Christian community could carry on a systematic persecution of their former brethren under the government of a Muslim power, it is important to understand the constitution under which the various communities were living in Turkey.

The system of government was established when the Ottoman Turks took Constantinople. It was adopted as a way to relieve the Sultan of the details of caring for the different communities. Only Turks and other Muslims were subject to the Sultan's authority. Each other community had its own head and its own government and attended to its own affairs independent of the Sultan's authority. Every person was required to have papers showing the community to which they belonged. It was forbidden to change community and any who were thrown out by their leaders were deprived of all means of livelihood.

In February 1939 arrests began. Some evangelical Armenians were thrown in jail and later exiled to ~400 miles from Constantinople. Others were thrown into lunatic asylums.

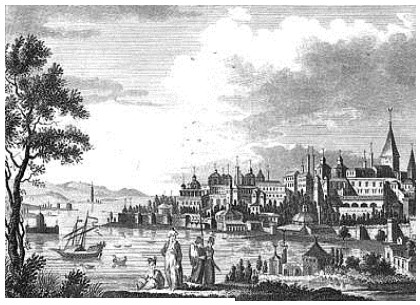
In the spring of 1839 a 3rd son (7th child) was born to William and Abigail. The persecution continued. The Armenian administration brought cases before the Sultan saying the missionaries had made proselytes from the Armenians and in so doing had insulted the Turkish authorities.

When the storm broke many missionaries were out of the country. William was expecting to be deported and had safely secured his papers in different locations. All of a sudden God intervened. Events took a new turn and the persecution came to an end.

The war between the Sultan and Muhammad Ali in Egypt was renewed and each community in Turkey had to provide several thousand troops for the army. This completely took their attention off ecclesiastical affairs. An army of 80,000 was raised and sent to meet the Egyptian army on June 24. The Turkish army was completely routed and the soldiers from Constantinople were scattered in all directions. News of this disaster never reached the Sultan. He died on July 1, 1839 before news of the defeat reached Constantinople. He was succeeded by his 16-year-old son Abdul Medjid.

In August 1839 once again fire swept through the Pera district of Constantinople where the Goodells lived. 3-4,000 houses were reduced to ashes. The wooden structures were like tinder after the prolonged drought. At least 50,000 people were without shelter. Many were reduced to poverty. The Armenian hierarchy feared this was God's judgement on them as a result of the persecution. They recalled those who had been banished and imprisoned. Once again these brothers and sisters could be in contact with the missionaries. The work of God seemed to be moving forward once more.

The year 1841 was difficult for the Goodell family. Their second son, the first American child born in Constantinople, died on April 8, aged 9, from typhoid. Abigail also contracted typhoid from which she only slowly recovered.



Constantinople

On November 6, 1841 William completed the translation of the Old Testament into Armeno-Turkish (Turkish using the Armenian alphabet). Many of the non-Armenian elite – including many Turkish intellectuals – could read these texts.

The New Testament had been completed before his arrival in Constantinople. This Old Testament translation was the first ever in Armeno-Turkish and was based completely on the Hebrew. It was printed in Smyrna.

During the year 1842 the Gospel made great progress among the Armenians. During the summer a group in whom the Holy Spirit had been working powerfully gathered in a remote hillside retreat. They determined to organise their own mission to take the Gospel that had brought life and joy to them to their fellow Armenians in all parts of the Empire.

By early 1843 an event occurred that was to have far-reaching consequences for the course of religious liberty in Turkey. The execution took place of an Armenian youth. Some years previously he had declared himself a Turk thus embracing Islam. For some time he had lived on the island of Syra. Returning to Constantinople, he resumed his former religion. When this came to the notice of the police he was thrown into prison. Despite many inducements to renounce Christ, he refused to do this a second time. He was executed despite strong pleas from Sir Stratford Canning the English ambassador. This led to a formal demand from the English, French, Russian and Prussian ambassadors for the abolition of the death penalty for a change of religion.

On March 21, 1844 the Sultan gave this assurance. In an audience with Sir Stratford Canning on March 23, he said, **"Henceforward neither shall Christianity be insulted in my dominions, nor shall Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion"**.

In May 1844 the Goodells' two oldest daughters returned to America for education. This was a hard separation for the whole family. In October 1844 there were reports of a work of the Holy Spirit in different parts of the interior. In 16 villages in the vicinity of Broosa reports said, **"The Holy Spirit is breathing on a few individuals and making them living men. They are waking up to a life and happiness that belongs exclusively to the children of light"**.

The year 1846 saw continuing spiritual growth but it also ushered in the most severe persecution the Armenian believers had ever known. William and his fellow workers had been strongly opposed to the setting up of any new denomination believing that Armenian evangelicals should remain as 'yeast' in their own church. However, it was evident that this had now become impossible. The missionaries helped them to establish a constitution as the first Evangelical Armenian Church of Constantinople.

This took place July 1, 1846. William wrote, **"There were 40 people including 3 women. They chose a pastor by ballot as well as 2 deacons and 3 others to hold office for one year. They expect to add 30-40 more as soon as they can examine them. The Lord has done great things. Even the Muslims say, 'This is the miracle of 1262 (1846)'. In this great work God has condescended to make use not so much of our wisdom as of our folly; not so much of our strength as of our weakness."**

In December 1846 revival broke out in the girls' boarding school. Some came asking how they could obtain new hearts. They had been praying about this for weeks and the more they prayed, the worse their hearts appeared to them! Prayer circles formed spontaneously and eventually all study throughout the school had to be suspended.

The growth of the Evangelical Armenian Church continued. In November 1847 the first marriage was conducted under the rites of the new church. Also in November Lord Cowley negotiated with the Turkish government that **"Christian subjects of the Ottoman government professing Protestantism should constitute a separate 'community' with all the rights and privileges belonging to other communities and that no interference should be permitted in their temporal or spiritual concerns on the part of the patriarchs,**

**monks or priests of other sects**". It was worded so that any Greeks or Jews joining the Protestants would be afforded the same privileges.

From the early days, William always exhorted the church leaders to be self-sufficient and not to depend on any outside finance. He gave them practical advice how to generate income along with examples of where others had succeeded in this. He was adamant that there must be no control of any sort from the mission.

Spiritual awakening and church growth continued in 1848 and 1849 despite devastating fires in different places as well as an earthquake in Constantinople in April 1850.

In November 1850 His Imperial Majesty Sultan Abdul Medjid granted a charter to the Protestants to confirm the Constitution granted in 1847. This meant their position was now secured permanently and could not be revoked by any change of administration.

In the spring of 1851 William and Abigail visited America with two of their daughters. They left Constantinople May 3, 1851 and returned in August 1853. On their return William had a strong impression that he had but a short work to do for His Master and it must be done quickly. He resumed work on a revision of the Armeno-Turkish Bible. To help him in this work he had a Greek, an Armenian and a Muslim.

In 1853 a new 'cloud' threatened the work of mission in Turkey – the war with Russia known as the Crimean War. The ostensible cause was an ancient dispute over holy places and the respective rights of the Greek and Latin churches. But the real cause was the designs of the Russian government on Turkish territory.

In early 1854 the missionaries in Constantinople set aside a day of prayer and fasting concerning this. Also in 1854 the governments of England, France and Sardinia linked with the Ottomans to check the ambitions of the Russians. They sent their armies to Turkey and Crimea. Constantinople and its suburbs was like one great army camp.

In the midst of all this God placed a 'shield' over His people and the work continued with much evidence of God's blessing. It was further helped by the fact that the Turkish government issued a new Magna Charta on the subject of religious liberty. It is known as the Hatti Sherif (sacred edict) of February 1856. It was issued on the authority of the Sultan as a complete guarantee of religious liberty to all his subjects together with the assurance that any Muslim who chose to become a Christian should not suffer on that account.

More deliberate efforts were now made to share the Gospel with the Muslim population but these were necessarily done more quietly. The circulation of the Scriptures among Muslims continued steadily. In October 1859 William wrote "**In the last 5 or 6 years hundreds of copies of the Scriptures each year have been sold to the Turks. The history of these we never knew, but we now begin to find among Turks those who really seem to be spiritually-minded Bible Christians, who, with no teacher other than the Bible, have become wise unto salvation. How many minds are thus awakened and how many hearts are thus affected is impossible to say. We are told of thousands, but if they be counted only by hundreds or even by scores it is still a great work. Facts are coming to our ears every day that fill us with astonishment. It really seems as though the heavens are about to drop down on us abundantly. A nephew of one of the Pashas here who lives with his uncle and was educated to be one of the 4 great mullahs of the Empire, is a candidate for Christian baptism**".

More than 20 Muslims had been baptised in Constantinople. One of these, Selim Effendi, took the name Edward Williams and was licensed to preach the Gospel. William continued this work quietly, but some from other missions were more overt and this resulted in 8-10 believers from a Muslim background being thrown into prison despite the Hatti Sherif.

In February 1863 William's work of translating and revising Scriptures came to an end. He completed his last revision. Conscious of the desire to leave behind the teaching the Lord had put on his heart over the years in Constantinople, in his last year in that city William prepared for the press 48 of his sermons in Turkish. The purpose he had in mind was, "**That they may more readily remember the words**

**that I spoke to them while I was with them**". These were published together with a farewell letter to the Protestant churches in the Turkish Empire. They were received eagerly. Some were translated into Bulgarian for the northern part of the Empire. They were also translated into Armenian.

In 1865, with their health failing, William and Abigail decided to return to America rather than burden their daughter Mary and son-in-law Herman (Barnum) who had a successful ministry in Kharpoot, Eastern Turkey. They left Constantinople June 27, 1865 travelling via Athens, Paris and London. They arrived in Boston on August 3.

After visiting a number of friends and attending mission gatherings the Goodells arrived at the home of their son William and daughter-in-law Caroline in Philadelphia. This was to be their home until they were called to that home prepared for them by the Lord Jesus.

They linked up with the central Congregational Church of Philadelphia and got involved in as much of the ministry as their health allowed. In February 1866 William fell on the ice and broke his arm as he was returning from the Bible class. He soon recovered and was out and about preaching in many locations. In October 1866 he was back in Philadelphia and began a work urged on him by his children of writing reminiscences of his life. He died peacefully February 17, 1867 after only two days illness. He is buried in Woodlands Cemetery, West Philadelphia.

Abigail continued to live with the family in Philadelphia. She died in the summer of 1871 after a short illness. She always spoke of heaven and her joy at the thought of dying. Her trust in her Redeemer never wavered. It was a great joy to her to be able to embrace one last time Mary and Herman from Kharpoot who had returned for a brief visit to America. She is buried beside her husband.

After his death a colleague wrote of William, "**One secret of his singleness of heart or one form of its expression was that he seemed always to feel and to act as if he were in the immediate presence of Christ and living under His personal reign. The Kingdom of Christ was to him a reality and the ground of his confidence, especially in regard to the success of the work in which he was engaged.**"

### A Tribute from William and Abigail's son-in-law, Edward Prime, who married their daughter Abbie

William was a man of almost singular simplicity of character. He had a rare combination of qualities which, in him, were in nowise inconsistent. With the utmost firmness in adhering to his convictions of truth and of duty which were of the most decided character, he had the gentleness of a child in his mode of expressing them.

While consecrated to the great work of advancing and establishing the Kingdom of his Divine Master among men, he pursued it with a singleness of aim and seriousness of heart that proved it to be his absorbing object in life. By his cheerful disposition and his affectionate bearing toward all with whom he came in contact, he made his presence a continual benediction. He exemplified the apostolic injunction, ***"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt."*** (Col. 4:6)

At the same time, the spice of wit and genuine humour added a charm to his conversation and left a fragrance on all that came from his pen. He kept no diary of his varying emotions. He was apparently so devoid of self-consciousness and so engrossed with his lifework that he seldom ever turned his thoughts in upon himself. The journal that he kept during the greater part of his life was simply a record of events.

### A Tribute to the character of the American workers in Turkey given in a public address in the city of London by the Earl of Shaftesbury in 1860

I do not believe that in the whole history of missions, in the history of diplomacy or in the history of any kind of negotiations carried on between man and man we can find anything to equal the wisdom, the soundness and the pure evangelical truth of the body of men who constitute The American Mission.

I have said it twenty times before and I will say it again and again that they are indeed a marvellous combination of common sense and piety. Every man who comes into contact with them speaks in praise of them. Whether persons in authority or persons in subjection, all speak in their favour. Travellers always speak well of them and I know of no man whatever who has ever been able to bring against that body of people a single valid objection.

There they stand. They are tested by the years, tried by their works and above all surely exemplified by their fruits. I truly believe that it will be found that they have done more towards upholding the truth and spreading the Gospel of Christ in the East than any other body of men in this age or in any other age.

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William and Abigail could say with Paul:

***"I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."*** (Acts 20:24)



Nusretye Mosque, Constantinople built ~1823-1826 by Sultan Mahmud II (1764-1839)