

George Prince Tamoree: Heir Apparent of Kauai and Niihau

Anne Harding Spoehr

One positive statement can be made of George Prince Tamoree: No one knows much detail of his strange life. Factual material is scarce and fragmentary, although he caused a flurry in New England in the early years of the 19th Century. He was the pride of his father, the concern of his peers, and in many respects, the hope of the missionaries. In the end, he failed them all.

He was a prince, a pauper, and a casualty of cultural change. For the first six years of his life he was treated as the prince of Kauai. During the following sixteen years, unable to forget the status of his boyhood, he attempted to adjust, often in penurious circumstances, to a foreign world. In his final six years in Hawaii he became a victim of the cultural changes that had occurred in Hawaii during his absence.¹

In research on this young man there is one solid starting point. It is a pamphlet printed in New York in 1816: *A Narrative of Five Youth from the Sandwich Islands, viz. Obookiah, Hopoo, Tennooe, Honooree, and Prince Tamoree, Now Receiving an Education in This Country.*² The two longest accounts in this pamphlet are those of Obookiah and Prince Tamoree—Obookiah because he was well known in New England, had been provided with the best education of the five, and had recently been baptized and received into the Congregational Church at Torrington, Connecticut; and Tamoree because he perhaps had the most varied history and because he was a prince.

This small leaflet was published by order of the Agents appointed to establish a school for heathen youth by the American Board of Com-

Anne Harding Spoehr, retired museum exhibit designer in anthropology and history, has been working since the 1960s on the subject of Hawaiians in New England during the early 19th Century.

missioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). The seven Agents for the proposed school were appointed at the 7th Annual Meeting of the ABCFM at Hartford, Connecticut in late September 1816. They were men of some note: Honorable John Treadwell, governor of Connecticut; Reverend Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College; James Morris, Esq.; Reverend Dr. D. Chapin; and the Reverend Messrs. Lyman Beecher, Charles Prentice, and Joseph Harvey, all of Connecticut. These Agents lost no time in getting to work and had their first meeting at the home of President Timothy Dwight in New Haven on October 29, 1816. Here the constitution of a school to be named the Foreign Mission School was adopted.³

Future student Prince Tamoree was born on Kauai about 1798. For the first six years of his life he was known as Humehume. He was the son of Kaumualii, King of Kauai and Niihau, and an unknown mother. At the time of Prince Tamoree's birth his father, the young king, is believed to have been about eighteen years of age. During his short life, this son of King Kaumualii was known by at least five names: Humehume, Kumoree, George Prince, George Prince Tamoree, and George Prince Kaumualii. In this paper he will be called simply George for convenience sake.

George was about six years old when an American ship, the *Hazard*,⁴ under the command of Captain James Rowan, anchored at Waimea, Kauai. King Kaumualii had early in his reign established friendly relationships with British and American sea captains. He was a genial and helpful ruler when ships called at Kauai for supplies. Kaumualii knew Captain Rowan from previous port calls and entrusted George to Rowan's care for the long voyage to America via the Orient. The *Hazard* sailed from Kauai in January 1804. The purpose of sending George to America was either to enable George to receive a formal education, or as some believe, to avoid tensions on Kauai concerning succession to the kingship. King Kaumualii provided Captain Rowan with several thousand dollars, an amount the king felt sufficient to cover the cost of his son's passage and the expenses of his education. Later, the mate of the vessel reported the amount to be seven or eight thousand dollars.⁵

On the voyage George must have made a major personal adjustment. He left behind his boyhood experience of island life, its customs, food, religion, and sunshine. He survived the emotional departure from his father and his native home, as well as the rigors of a long voyage with unknown sailor companions and their customs.

The *Hazard* sailed into Providence, Rhode Island on June 30, 1805 after a year and a half at sea. George was now about eight years old and

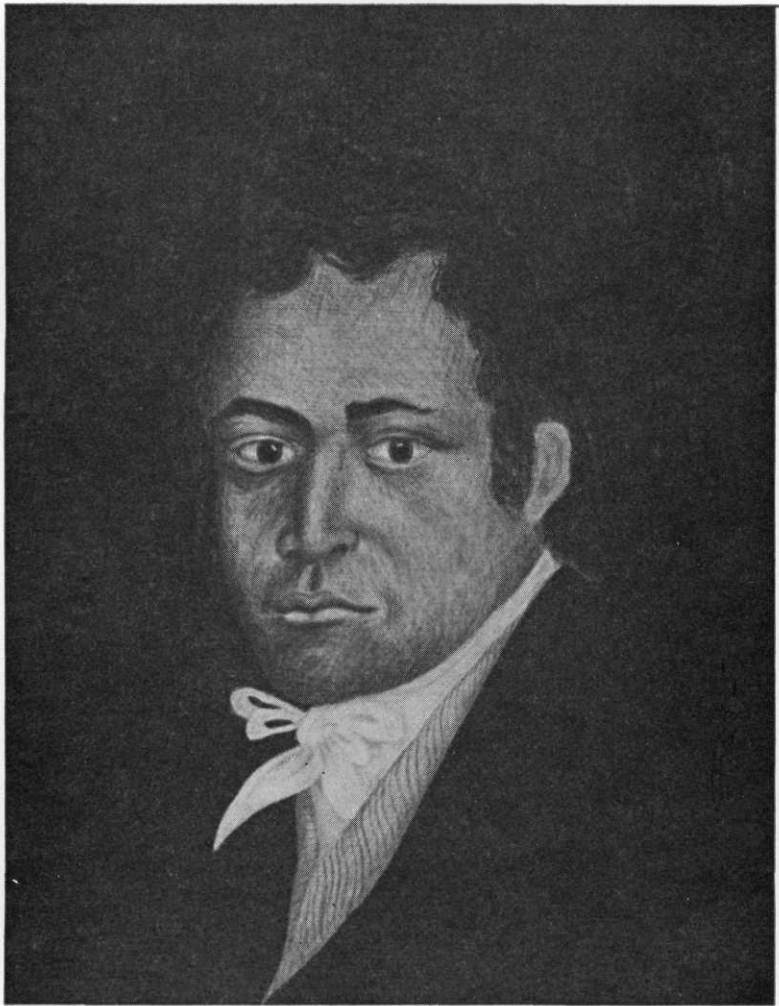


FIG. 1. George Prince Tamoree. Egg tempera painting by Helene Spoehr, 1980. After Samuel F. B. Morse's portrait engraved by N. and S. S. Joceyln, New Haven, Connecticut, 1822.

went with Captain Rowan to Boston and then to Worcester, Massachusetts. After about four years, Rowan was unable to care for George any longer and turned him over to Captain Samuel Cotting, a school keeper in Worcester. Cotting was George's preceptor for the next four years. When Cotting moved from Worcester to neighboring Fitchburg, he took George with him. Here Cotting worked as a joiner, or carpenter, and he employed George at this trade. In the spring of 1813, becoming discontented, George left Cotting to work on farms in the area, and then made his way to Boston with the desire to obtain passage home.

Instead of returning to Hawaii, George enlisted in the U. S. Navy and as "George Prince" boarded the ship *Enterprise* on June 21, 1815, sailing from Boston on July 3rd. George was discharged from the *Enterprise* and transferred to the *Guerriere* at New York on December 12, 1815. In less than three months, on February 24, 1816, he was discharged from the *Guerriere* at the Boston Navy Yard, located in Charlestown, Massachusetts. On the same day he appeared on the muster table of the Boston Navy Yard and answered the weekly muster roll until he was discharged on March 25, 1816.⁶

George was now about 18 years old. By this time there were several Hawaiian youths in New England who had arrived out of curiosity or a thirst for adventure and knowledge. They were all a few years older than George and had fared better in terms of care and education. Obookiah was the spiritual leader of this Hawaiian group. He knew of George and had been attempting to locate him without success. In the spring of 1816, Obookiah, who was then with Reverend Charles Prentice in Canaan, Connecticut, received a letter from a fellow Hawaiian, Benjamin Carhooa. Benjamin was living in Boston, where he was a member of a Baptist church composed of "people of color." He wrote Obookiah that he thought he had found the young prince, living as a servant of Mr. Lewis Deblois, purser of the Boston Navy Yard.⁷ Benjamin's letter to Obookiah confirmed that George was considered a prince by his countrymen. George's use of "Prince" as a surname in the Navy indicated his knowledge of his inherited status. So George was found. His life since arriving in Providence eleven years previous was constant only in its many changes. He had proved himself a survivor.

Before the autumn of 1816, George found himself in the good hands and excellent home of the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, minister of the Congregational Church in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Morse was not only a pastor, a graduate of Yale, and a former teacher of young girls in

New Haven, but author of America's first geography textbook. George spent a short time in the home of the Reverend and Mrs. Morse, who provided love and intelligent care and who were to prove his life-long friends.

In early September George was on his way to New Haven with Reverend Morse to be in the home of President Timothy Dwight during the 1816 Yale commencement exercises. Dwight was then 64 years old and had been Yale's president since 1795. Morse wrote his wife two letters from New Haven during their week's visit:

The young Owheyan Prince and I (a great part of the way alone in the stage) had a very pleasant ride, without accident, to N.H. [New Haven] where we arrived at 3 oc. of yesterday—found Dr. D. [Dwight] better than I expected, & able to go through the exercises of this day in his best manner. . . . I never attended a commencement when I was more gratified . . . & am much refreshed already. I have not experienced the slightest inconvenience from riding all night. . . . Upwards of 60 took their degrees. It is thought that more than that no. will enter. I shall have much to say, *good things*, when I return. . . .⁸

* * * * *

. . . George, (the Owheyan Prince who came with me) is much noticed here—is put into good clothing & looks like a new man—his countenance is brightened—& his dejection gone. He will go back with me to Hartford where the 4 other Owheyan youths are to meet him, we think it is important to see them all together. Mrs. Dwight has been very kind in clothing him, & giving him his food. . . .⁹

The four Hawaiians that Morse expected George to meet in Hartford were undoubtedly Henry Obookiah, Thomas Hopoo, William Tennooe, and John Honooree, all living at this time in Connecticut—Obookiah and Hopoo in Canaan, Tennooe and Honooree in North Guilford. Whether these five actually met at Hartford can not as yet be documented, but the ABCFM resolved to take George under their patronage and in the following words, “. . . to give him such an education as shall qualify him for usefulness when we send him home to his father in Hawaii.”¹⁰ The matter settled, George joined Tennooe and Honooree in North Guilford to begin his education.

The three young Hawaiians lived in the home of the Reverend William F. Vaill, pastor of the North Guilford Congregational Church. Vaill and his family resided in the parsonage adjacent to the church. Although additions have been made to both the church and the parsonage since 1816, they still stand today and serve the scattered residents of North Guilford. There is no town center and no evidence of one in 1816. The handsome church dominates the area from the top of a high ridge, some twelve miles east of New Haven. The ridge commands a magnificent panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. To arrive

in the season of autumn coloring, in its full New England glory, must have added to George's pleasure.

Here George wrote his first letter on October 1, 1816 to a lady in New Haven, thanking her for her kindness to him. One can only assume that the recipient was Mrs. Timothy Dwight. George also wrote a letter to his father on Kauai, telling him of his adventures during the twelve years since they had seen each other. As George was writing these first letters, Reverend Vaill penned the following to the *Religious Intelligencer*, enclosing a copy of George's letter of October 1st to show the progress of his student:

Astonished myself at the production of young Kummooree, I thought it proper to give you a testimonial of its genuiness. I have corrected nothing except the spelling. I need not remark to you the ingenuity of his pen, it is self-apparent. In mildness of temper, and of manners, he comes not behind his brethren. Should his life be spared, and should he become pious, he will be a bright acquisition to the school, and the proposed mission to his countrymen at home. My two heathen scholars [William Tennooe and John Honooree] are devoted to their studies, and I see nothing in the way of their becoming at a future time instruments of usefulness."

It appears that George had all the attributes his religious friends were looking for. Gentle and tractable in temper, he could read and write well, had a good mind, and was fond of study. He appeared inclined to listen to religious instruction, and at times to have an anxiety concerning his future welfare. With engaging features, of middling stature, light complexion, and brown hair, he was an interesting and active youth.

In late November 1816, George and his companions moved from North Guilford to South Farms, now named Morris, in western Connecticut. Here they joined Obookiah, who previously had spent the winter of 1813-1814 at South Farms with the family of James Morris, Esq. Obookiah was well acquainted with the Litchfield area, and came from Goshen with Thomas Hopoo to meet their three countrymen arriving from North Guilford. At the close of the year, Obookiah then went to Amherst, Massachusetts to aid Reverend Nathan Perkins in soliciting funds for the Foreign Mission School.¹² This small nucleus of Hawaiian youths was to form the initial core of the school.

The year 1816 witnessed a volcanic-like eruption of religious spirit in New England. The flow of feeling to advance missionary causes spread out in every direction from its point of origin at Williams College. Here during a summer storm in 1806, ten years previous, a group of five college students sheltered under a haystack "dedicated their lives to the service of the Church around the globe."¹³ By 1816 this deeply-felt support of the missionary cause had become established at Yale, and the

enthusiasm for the salvation of the five youths from Hawaii had germinated the seed for the founding of the Foreign Mission School.

The seed itself was planted at the Haystack Meeting at Williams. The leader of the Haystack group was Samuel Mills, Jr., an undergraduate. Later, in 1809, he visited Yale to ascertain the temperature of missionary thought there. At Yale, Mills found an understanding companion in a resident student, Edwin Welles Dwight (no close relation to President Dwight), with whom he roomed for a short time. Dwight had found and befriended Hopoo and Obookiah after their arrival in New Haven from Hawaii earlier that year. At the time of Mills's visit to New Haven, only Obookiah remained as a student with Dwight.

Young Dwight spared no effort in the instruction of his foreign pupil and Mills became deeply interested in Obookiah at their first meeting. Mills conceived a plan for educating Obookiah as a missionary to his native islands. Obookiah was then living with President and Mrs. Timothy Dwight while under the tutelage of Edwin Dwight. With the consent of President Dwight, Mills took Obookiah to live with his father, Reverend Samuel J. Mills of Torrington, Connecticut. The senior Mills was pastor of the Torrington Congregational Church and imbued with the missionary spirit.

Obookiah remained with the Mills family through the winter, only to leave when young Samuel Mills took him to Andover, Massachusetts, where Samuel was attending the Theological Seminary. At the seminary, Samuel Mills's interest was not only in domestic but in foreign missions; he was later to become known in the United States as the "father of foreign missions." It was young Mills's commitment at the Haystack Meeting and his stewardship of Obookiah that in due course inspired the first ABCFM mission to Hawaii.

Let us return to the Hawaiian youths gathered at South Farms. Here they were put into the care of Reverend Amos Pettingill. They lived with the Pettingill family and were taught by Pettingill. They were also closely allied to the Morris Academy, whose founder, James Morris, assisted in their instruction. Morris, who had established his academy in 1803, was a prominent citizen and one of the Agents of the Foreign Mission School.¹⁴

Pettingill and Morris were hard-pressed to carry out a program of instruction for the Hawaiians and still fulfill their other obligations. Pettingill was often called away on pastoral duties, while Morris had the responsibility for the correspondence and records of the Agents. Fortunately they were joined, although on a temporary basis, by Reverend Elias Cornelius, who had been traveling about New England raising

funds for the ABCFM. He brought with him a boy from Maui, William Edes Kummoo-olah. Cornelius decided to remain at South Farms, for the Hawaiians, lacking a regular instructional schedule, had begun to act and live as they wished and their daily affairs were confused. In a week's time Cornelius instituted rules of conduct for the scholars, establishing six hours of study a day, as well as giving them useful jobs to do. On his arrival the students had no desks, so with the help of Mr. Morris, Cornelius had five good desks made at a cost of two dollars each. At this time Cornelius wrote:

Wm Edes Kum, mo, oo, ó, lah is a fine boy, as good natured as you can imagine and does well. He learns very well, is jabbering English very often & to some effect. He talks with great ease and fluency with his countrymen and appears very happy and content. . . . The boys talk with him often on religious subjects, but he is not usually serious. Neither is George, though he had about 10 days ago quite a severe convulsion fit. He is well now, has received Doct. Morse's letter, which I think has done him good. . . . One thing more. I am certain it is very important to the Foreign M. School to have Obookiah return soon. All here have but one opinion about it.¹⁵

Obookiah returned briefly to South Farms from his rounds of soliciting contributions for the ABCFM and the Foreign Mission School with Reverend Perkins. Obookiah's talks to local groups met with astonishing success and opened the hearts and hands of all who heard him speak.

It was at South Farms that George attracted the attention of his former preceptors, the Navy, and the United States government. Apparently he had not been properly discharged from the Navy when he was found living with purser Deblois at Charlestown. Deblois wanted to be reimbursed by the United States government for the cost of his care of George. Because of George's incomplete or improper discharge from the Navy, the government in turn proposed that George be sent to West Point and communicated this course of action to both the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM and to the Agents of the Foreign Mission School. According to Morris, George felt it his duty to put himself in the hands of the government, feeling a responsibility to the government in these circumstances. The Agents wrote the Honorable Timothy Pitkin in Congress accepting the government's proposal in their name.¹⁶ However, the answer of the Prudential Committee was negative, leaving the Prudential Committee and the Agents at odds. The Agents felt that the Prudential Committee had over-ruled them without their knowledge and that their own authority and responsibility had been questioned. The Agents felt that the acceptance of the government's offer to send George to West Point would enhance the attitude of the government toward the school and would excite the country-wide attention of the

public, whom the Agents and the ABCFM could not otherwise reach. The Agents stated:

It is probable that our Government may wish to make an establishment on some of the Islands of the Pacific Ocean for commercial purposes and if we do not go forward according to their views, they will go without us, and in that case, the circumstances of our Mission to these Islands may be peculiarly unfavourable.¹⁷

George did not go to West Point. He remained at South Farms, and Morris noted that George, with his sudden transition from a state of servitude and hardship to one of public attention, became important in his own view.

A short time previous to this event, Captain Samuel Cotting emerged from George's past. As early as the winter of 1811, Cotting had petitioned the Massachusetts legislature to be refunded for his expenses in the care of George when George had been handed over to him by Captain Rowan. In December 1816, after George's letter to his father, written from North Guilford, appeared in New England papers, Cotting wrote to the editor of the *Massachusetts Spy*, declaring that his petition had been permitted to lie under the table. He expounded on the good care given George by Captain Rowan and himself, and stated that George's letter to his father was a falsehood. Cotting's letter was published in the *Massachusetts Spy* and thereafter probably in other New England papers.¹⁸ The letter caught George's eye and he was furious and unrestrained. He wrote a blistering letter to Cotting:

A few days since, I have heard that you have made a report that I was treated with the most tenderest and affectionate care. It is contrary to any of what you have reported. Sir, I am now going to give you a piece of my mind. . . . I have always said . . . that if you ever came in my reach I would level you to the face of the earth. . . . The last winter I lived with you, you treated me most shamefully. . . . You are a base, dirty, mean, low . . . avaricious Rascal. You not only abused me but . . . even your dear beloved mother. . . . You tried to enlist me in the Army, that was a mean dirty trick. . . . You did not let me attend the schools as I ought. . . . You use me like a dog more than a human being. . . . You audacious villian for trying to run down my carrecter. If I am worthy of the title of a Prince I am not agoing to be trodden under foot by such a dirty scoundrel as you are. . . . I may yet have the opportunity of letting you have a few solid dry knocks before I leave this part of the world. . . .

I your enemy
[signed with a flourish]¹⁹

During his five months at South Farms, George began to show the mercurial character which he carried with him through life. His self-esteem bloomed with the attention he received in religious publications, the offer of the government to send him to West Point, the demands of Cotting and Deblois, and the interest in his welfare by religious leaders.

His status as an Hawaiian prince seemed established. When he left South Farms to enter the Foreign Mission School on May 1, 1817, he considered the other Hawaiian students to be under his authority.

Cornwall, Connecticut was the site for the permanent location of the school. It was the choice of the Agents, in which the ABCFM concurred. Cornwall was chosen because of its healthy climate and mountain scenery; the excellent character of the townspeople and their donations; the town's remoteness from city allurements; and the persuasion of its pastor, Reverend Timothy Stone, who considered Cornwall the Switzerland of America.

The ABCFM gave \$3,300 toward the founding of the school. The people of Cornwall contributed \$1,400 in work, land, and money. They provided an old public school building that had been moved to the town green, an adjacent boarding house known as the "Commons," and 14 acres of land surrounding this center, as well as about 86 acres on a nearby mountainside.²⁰

Reverend Edwin Welles Dwight, Yale student teacher of Obookiah, was the school's principal for its first year. The school brought Cornwall prominently before the public. It was stated at the time that there were three institutions in Connecticut worth visiting by the tourist: Yale College in New Haven, the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, and the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall.

When the school opened in May 1817, nine male students were enrolled: the five Hawaiians from South Farms; two Hawaiians who were yet to come—Obookiah, again soliciting funds, and George Sandwich, a native of the island of Hawaii who had not arrived from Boston—and two Indian students, one from Bengal and the other from Calcutta. By the summer of 1817 there were twelve students: the original nine, plus one American Indian and two natives of Connecticut, Samuel Ruggles of Brookfield and James Ely of Lyme, who came to be educated as foreign mission teachers.

The subjects of study at the school included English grammar, geography, and arithmetic, as well as reading, writing, and spelling. Most of the students found spelling the most difficult. Study hours were from 9 a.m. to noon, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., and from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the evening. Rules were also established. The students should not go to any house or visit any family in town, nor go to a store, unless they were given the liberty. Visitors and friends should not call at study time. No student should enter another student's room until study hours were over. Every student should take part in laboring two and one-half days a week.²¹

George's record under this strict routine varied from performing well to complete non-compliance. At one time he was brought before the visiting committee to the school, as they considered dismissing him. Yet not long after, in September 1817 after the school's first public examinations, he was awarded first prize for his behavior and deportment (Obookiah was not eligible, as he was not present on the school's opening day). In their report on the examination, the ABCFM Managers of the Foreign Mission, who were present, noted: "Tamoree . . . has been obedient and respectful, and has nearly effaced the impression made by his conduct last winter. He has uncommon talents. . . ." ²²

The Foreign Mission School suffered its greatest loss with the tragic death of Obookiah on February 17, 1818. He died after a short illness, possibly typhus fever, ²³ in the home of the Reverend and Mrs Timothy Stone. Dr. Calhoun was the attending physician and the funeral sermon was given by Reverend Lyman Beecher of Litchfield. Obookiah was placed in an above-ground stone grave in the Cornwall cemetery. During his illness, Thomas Hopoo was his most frequent visitor.

In spite of the loss of Obookiah, the school continued to operate normally. In May 1818 Reverend Herman Daggett took over as principal from Edwin Dwight. Daggett remained as head of the school for the next six years, giving the school continuity and growth. Dwight had performed nobly in seeing the school through its first difficult year. He retained his interest and prepared the *Memoirs of Henry Obookiah*, which aroused much attention when published in 1819.

As for George, he now added three more subjects to his curriculum: natural philosophy, navigation, and astronomy. In the latter two he excelled. His free time was devoted to writing a memoir of his life.

During the summer of 1818, George learned of a plan to send a mission to the Sandwich Islands in the fall. He was greatly excited and believed he would be returning home. This made him very restless. Principal Daggett had to prepare George for disappointment, for the ABCFM had decided to delay the mission, thinking it premature. Distressed, George wrote his father that he would be returning in "about 20 moons." He sent his father a Bible and in his letter said, "I have nothing to support me but the kindness of the good Christian people, who are instructing me at their own expense, and preparing me, as fast as they can, to return home and make you happy." ²⁴

In November 1818, Daggett wrote to the ABCFM, "Tamoree has had his expectations much raised, & we were fearing that he would be almost ready to break away if he was not sent this fall." ²⁵ By December 1818, Daggett became deeply concerned and wrote the Board again:

. . . Tamoree appears to have lost his seriousness, & to have found associates to his mind. His behavior has of late been quite exceptionable. . . .

When heathen youths are cast upon our shores, & are taken up to be instructed, we may hope for a blessing upon our labors. . . . But perhaps we are not really warranted to select or receive youths who are not pious, or even serious, from places where they can enjoy the privilege of a common education, & of religious instruction, & place them in a mission school in the hope that they may be converted. . . . Tamoree is now calculating the Eclipses for the ensuing year, etc. He is capable of making a useful character, but his habits are such as to give little promise. The other five from the Sandwich Islands give us great satisfaction. . . .²⁶

The following month, in January 1819, Daggett wrote Jedidiah Morse:

. . . the conduct of Tamoree has been much less satisfactory of late, so that I almost despair of his ever being a blessing to his countrymen. . . . He has been much worse since the arrival of the last scholars, finding in some of them congenial minds. . . .²⁷

One of these students was dismissed by the Agents. A set of Jedidiah Morse's geographies disappeared with him. George claimed the other set at the school as his, which led to his writing the following letter to Morse:

I avail myself of the opportunity of addressing a few lines respecting those books you sent me. I thot you sent them to me but—I find you did not—I feel quite sorry because I wished to have them to carry to my own country—They have taken them from me & I have none—I wish therefore you would either let me have them or some other ones—I need them very much especially when I return to my *native land*—As you have given so many of your abridgements I thought you could let me have those to myself.—There is a great assortment of Geo. belonging to the school—I mean to carry as many books home as I can—I have a great many given me by my friends—But I prize yours the most—I consider them the best I have ever seen on the subject—I hope, dear Sir, you will use such measures as you think proper, but I hope you will not deny me these books. I have not anything to pay for the postage of letters. I shall have to go & labor to get me some money. I have written to my Father for some money, but it will be some time before it may arrive.²⁸

Four days later, George wrote Morse again, his thoughts constantly dwelling on his return to his homeland:

. . . I think it is very necessary that I should go. . . . I feel . . . I should have a companion. . . . He is a person which I love & which I have been acquainted with for some time. . . . This most excellent man is Mr Ruggles Gold who graduated from Yale 12 years ago²⁹. . . . Mr. Stone is writing on the same subject. . . . I wish to get the consent of the Board. . . . Let him [Gold] now enter the School. . . . I will either work or pay his passage. The Captain will carry me, and wait till I arrive there for his pay.³⁰

Reverend Stone did write Morse on George's behalf and advised that Ruggles Gold enter the school and learn the Hawaiian language. In writing to Morse, Stone transcribed a letter written to him by Gold, who stated:

. . . Finally, after much excitement on the question by day and by night, I will submit this proposal that if the Agents think it advisable . . . I may be admitted into the School on probation to await the determination of the Board as to the final result.³¹

Stone concluded his letter to Morse with the following:

Now sir, is it not expedient that this young gentleman be encouraged to prepare to attend Tamoree. . . . I believe that Tamoree will be influenced more by this amiable man than by any other person. . . . P. S. George is greatly agitated on the proposed subject of his return and his anxiety respecting Mr. Gold seems now to disqualify him wholly from any study. . . .³²

Despite the support of Reverend Stone and the desire of Ruggles Gold, the proposal was rejected by the Agents and the ABCFM. Principal Daggett was not happy. He predicted that George would avail himself of the first opportunity to return home. He felt that without a suitable missionary companion and the patronage of the ABCFM, the labor and expense of George's education would be wholly lost.

In 1819 the school enrollment grew to 33 students. Of these, 11 were starred as "professors of religion"—that is, those who had professed their belief in the form of Christianity which the school espoused. Of the 11, four were Hawaiians—Thomas Hopoo, John Honooree, George Sandwich, and William Tenooee.³³ The list did not include George Prince Tamoree. He did not entirely neglect religious participation, receiving recognition for taking part in a service entitled "Great effects from little causes" during the annual spring examination. Also, during the examination, attended by the Agents, George presented his projection of a lunar eclipse which should be visible on Kauai in September 1820. Astronomy seems to have been much more compatible with George's interests than theology.

Plans for the Sandwich Island mission were now crystallizing. This led Principal Daggett to write to Samuel Worcester, secretary of the ABCFM, in May 1819:

. . . As you will probably make arrangements for a mission establishment at Atooi [Kauai] as well as Owhyee, I think it might have a happy effect on Tamoree, for you, Sir, to write to him, giving him such assurances as you think proper respecting what you intend doing for him and his Island, & such advice as would be likely to attach him to the Missionary Cause, to keep him quiet, and to prevent him from going home with ambitious views & projects which may be productive of mischief to himself & the Cause. . . .³⁴

There is no record of a reply from Worcester to this letter. Daggett's concern was well founded, for George was now immersed in his own personal arrangements. In September 1819, less than a month before

George was to sail out of Boston harbor on the *Thaddeus*, Daggett wrote again to Worcester:

... Mr. Tisdell of Hartford is ... preparing to strike a likeness of Tamoree, & Tamoree has been very much engaged to have his Memoir to sell to Mr. Tisdell to publish with the plate. He supposes Mr. T. will give him a large sum for it. I have told him that the Memoir is not in a state to publish, & that with the other memoirs, it is the property of the Institution. ... I think if the features of Thomas [Hopoo] & Tamoree could be delineated at Boston before their departure, the Memoirs might hereafter be published with the plates, and bring a handsome sum to the Board. I have procured a copy of Tamoree's Memoir. The original he is to take with him. I told him I would leave it with you: & I think it would be well for you not to deliver it to him till he comes to Boston lest he should make improper use of it. ...³⁵

Just before George was to leave Cornwall for Boston, he was sent by the school to New York to fetch two Hawaiian lads who had been brought to the United States by Captain Ebbets. The three arrived at the school on October 5, 1819. George was elated by the experience, Principal Daggett was not. He wrote to the Board two days after the three had arrived:

... No one who has not been much with him [George] can form an estimate of his character. ... He appears very irritable, & self important, & can brook no opposition or restraint. On his arrival at Mr. Stone's, he called for spirits & was supplied. The next morning he fell into a rage with Tennooe ... and when expostulated with by Mr. Stone, he said that Tennooe was a subject of his father, & ought to comply with his wishes. ... Tennooe conducted towards him in a very mild & Christian manner: & finally went into another room with [George] Sandwich & wept bitterly. After this Tamoree sent to the store & purchased a pint of brandy, on which he drank throughout the day.

Capt. Ebbets presented him with a brace of pistols. For these he was yesterday casting balls, & said that he was doing it to shoot his mother when he got home. Could you, Sir, prevail on him to exchange these arms for other property, before he embarks. ... I am in fearful expectation of his doing some fatal mischief, or coming to a dreadful end.

Before he went to New York, he talked very improperly at times, & said that no missionaries should come to Atooi, since he was not gratified in his choice. At other times he talked differently. ... I write to you ... that you may communicate ... to the principal missionaries, who are now to take charge of the youth ... there is hope concerning Tamoree; in any other view, the prospect is gloomy indeed. P. S. Capt. E. I understand gave him some information to the disadvantage of his mother.³⁶

It was during these last few days of preparing for the voyage to Hawaii that the son of Jedidiah Morse, Samuel Finley Breese Morse,³⁷ sketched the departing missionaries and the four Hawaiian youths, their painted portraits to be executed after their departure.

The *Thaddeus*, Captain Blanchard commanding, sailed out of Boston harbor on October 23, 1819 carrying the Pioneer Company of missionaries. On board were seven missionaries and their wives, five children,

three Hawaiian missionary assistants, and one lone, independent passenger, not a member of the missionary company—George Prince Tamoree.

After the *Thaddeus* had been two weeks at sea, Principal Daggett was still coping with problems George had left behind. Ruggles Gold had gone to Boston to bid George farewell, and after he returned to Cornwall, Daggett wrote the Board:

Tamoree carried away with him \$15 belonging to the Owheyan boys whom he brought from New York. He acknowledged to me that this sum was due to them, after deducting their expenses, but said that he must have the money to carry him to Boston, as he had no other; & promised that he would send it back to them by Mr. Gold. But I fear he has been generous at the expense of justice. He purchased a watch in Boston, and sent it as a present to a younger brother of Mr. Gold; but we have heard nothing of the boys' money.³⁸

The voyage of the *Thaddeus* is well documented in the journals of the missionaries and their wives. In these journals, George is seldom referred to, except that it is noted that he accompanied religious singing on board with his bass viol. In what circumstances he acquired this large instrument and learned to play it is not documented. As the voyage was nearing its end, Lucy Thurston did make the following entry concerning George:

The circumstances which appeared so auspicious of the king's returning . . . now appears in the following light; that George Kaumualii is the illegitimate son of a chief. One reason why he sent him abroad, was to save him from falling victim to the malice and jealousy of his wife. On his return, he [George] has serious apprehensions that his life will be sought.³⁹

When the *Thaddeus* reached Hawaii at Kailua, Kona, Daniel Chamberlain's journal contains an entry that on April 6, 1820 Captain Blanchard obtained permission of the king (Liholiho) to send a landing party to the mountains to kill some cattle, in company with five of the king's men. The party included Samuel Whitney, Daniel Chamberlain, and George Tamoree. Possibly it was at this time that George learned that his father, Kaumualii, ruled Kauai only as a tributary chief. Yet according to Catherine Stauder, his sunken spirits did not hinder his romantic talents. After the *Thaddeus* departed, George remained in Kailua, Kona and took Betty Davis, the half-Hawaiian daughter of Isaac Davis, as his wife, or his "rib" as he described her. In a short time they rejoined the missionary party in Honolulu, having obtained passage on the ship *Neo*.⁴⁰

George, his "rib," and his bass viol then embarked on the *Thaddeus* for Kauai. Samuel Ruggles and Samuel Whitney escorted him home to his father. The *Thaddeus* anchored at Waimea, Kauai, opposite the fort

on May 3, 1820. George kept himself concealed in the cabin until he was sure of his welcome. The affecting, tender reunion with his father has been amply recorded. Kaumualii rewarded the missionaries and Captain Blanchard well. He supplied the *Thaddeus* with 50 large hogs and generous amounts of yams, coconuts, sugar cane, and other items. To the mission in Honolulu he sent mats, oranges, pineapples, and one pig to Bingham and one to Chamberlain. For George's passage, he gave Captain Blanchard sandalwood to the value of \$1,000.⁴¹ In late July, Ruggles and Whitney with their wives and young Nathan Chamberlain returned to Kauai to establish the mission.

July 1820 was an auspicious time for letter-writing, as the ship *Ann*, Captain Hale commanding, was sailing for New England. The missionaries wrote a joint letter from Honolulu to the ABCFM, recommending that the Board immediately station on Kauai "an able preacher of the Gospel, a skillful & devoted physician, an industrious farmer & an accomplished Lancasterian schoolmaster."⁴² Kaumualii wrote the ABCFM:

I wish . . . to thank you for the good Book you was so kind as to send by my Son . . . I believe that my Idols are good for nothing . . . my gods I have hove away. . . . I thank you for giving my son learning . . . the man he go with bad man he fool me he tell me he take good care of my Son he speak lie. . . . I think my Son dead some man tell me no dead I tell him he lie I suppose he dead. . . . I thank all American people. . . . I hope you take good care of my people in your Country. . . .⁴³

George also wrote the ABCFM:

. . . My reward for your kindness can only be expressed by protecting these servants of yours now in our Kingdom. . . . I feel very happy myself to have their society, I feel almost in America. . . . My Father is much pleased of their being here. . . . I am requested by my Father to send to you for a minister and several Mecnack's house & ship carpenters, cabinet makers, brick makers . . . and a farmer, and a good Saw Mill. . . . The expenses I expect to pay myself and support those you send. I hope you will permit me to choose some particular friends; for the minister I choose Mr. Stone. The cabinet maker, Mr. Birdsey, [the] Farmer Col. Gold, all of Cornwall. . . .⁴⁴

To his friend, Principal Herman Daggett, George wrote:

I cannot help writing to one whom I esteem, and to inform him of my happy situation and reception. . . . I shall not write many particulars, as I shall send you my Journal. . . . I often take great pleasure in meditating on what you have taught me. . . . I thank you for what you have done for me, in cultivating my mind. I think of the one that instructed me often. . . . P. S. I send, with this letter, a particular family idol of my father.⁴⁵

George also wrote to another dear friend in Cornwall, Colonel Benjamin Gold:

. . . I have often thought of those hours I spent in your dwelling, those spent in your society; Yes dear Sir could you experience my thoughts you would know that the ties of affection were still fast, and not easily cast loose, and while the Sun, Moon, & Stars rool in their orbits let love, peace, harmony & friendship ever remain so. . . . I have much to do in fitting out several Vessels with Cargos of Sandalwood. Please give my love to all your family, to Ruggles in particular, and to all enquiring friends.⁴⁶

Finally, on August 2nd George hastily dispatched a brief note, hoping it would catch the *Ann*, to Samuel Worcester, secretary of the ABCFM:

After I had closed my letter to you, Father sent word to me to request you to send him a man that could make powder, if you will be so kind as to take notice of it, he will be much obliged to you. . . .⁴⁷

George's last years are outlined in Stauder's article, from which a few points are extracted. Within a short time it became evident that George was not the son for whom Kaumualii longed. Erratic in his behavior, the trappings of "heir apparent" vanished, and George retired with his wife to Wahiawa on Kauai, living in seclusion. The death of Kaumualii in 1824 may have been an incentive for George to dream once more of ruling. He joined a group of Kauai chiefs in an unsuccessful rebellion. The insurrection began at Fort Elizabeth and ended about ten days later in Wahiawa. George fled to the mountains and in two months was captured. According to Samuel Whitney:

Some days before my arrival Karaimoku left Waimea to go in search of G. P. Tamoree who was wandering about in the mountains on the Eastern part of the Island. On the morning of the 16th (September) he was found in the most wretched situation. In a dreary wilderness, alone, destitute of food, without the least vestige of clothing, half intoxicated and his only weapon a joint of bamboo filled with rum.⁴⁸

It seems probable that George expected death at capture.

The closing year and a half of George's life were spent in Honolulu under the custody of Kalanimoku, prime minster of the kingdom. A victim of influenza, George died on May 3, 1826, six years to the day of his return to Waimea, Kauai, His final resting place is not known.

Although I have not gone into the events George experienced after returning home, it is probable that George's princely dreams of filling the role of a high *ali'i* did not match with the many changes which took place in Hawaii during his absence. When he finally returned to Kauai, he found his father had ceded his two islands to the Kamehameha reign. George found the old religion and tabus had been challenged and broken. He no longer was a person possessing the royal power he considered his right. In this sense, George was a casualty of cultural change. He was stubbornly independent, imaginative, and erratic. In writing about

George, Samuel Whitney said, “. . . we cannot but weep over the folly of one, whose rank and talents might have secured to him the station to which he aspired. . . .”⁴⁹ In the words of the ABCFM report on his first public examination at Cornwall, George was “a man of uncommon talents.”

NOTES

¹ The Hawaiian Historical Society has published three articles directly related to George Prince Tamoree: John M. Lydgate, “Kaumualii, the Last King of Kauai,” HHS, *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report* (1915) pp. 21-43; Ethel M. Damon, ed., “George Prince Kaumualii,” HHS, *Fifty-Fifth Annual Report* (1946) pp. 7-12; Catherine Stauder, “George, Prince of Hawaii,” HJH, 6 (1972) pp. 28-44. The present article is centered on George Prince Tamoree’s New England experience between 1816 and 1819 and deals in particular with his relations to those individuals responsible for the founding of the Foreign Mission School and to others who were deeply concerned with its success. This phase of his life has not previously been accorded attention. This article is a revision of a paper presented at the annual meeting of the HHS, April 24, 1980.

² *Narrative* . . . (New York: J. Seymour, 1816).

³ *Ibid*, pp. 39-42.

⁴ “Captain James Rowan (the *Hazard*) for the Years 1802, 1803, and 1804,” Ships and Captains File, Bishop Museum Library.

⁵ *Religious Intelligencer*, 1 (1816), 446-447.

⁶ Muster Roll of the U. S. Brig *Enterprize*, Lawrence Kearney, Esq., Commander, p. 136; Muster Book of the U. S. Frigate *Guerriere*, Commodore John Rodgers, Commander, p. 37; Muster Table, Boston, Charlestown Station, p. 92, Naval Records, National Archives, Washington, D. C. There are a few discrepancies between the dates given in this paper and those given by Stauder in her article. The three muster records above list George Prince’s station as “Landsman.” On the muster table of Charlestown Station, George Prince reappears on May 14, 1816 as No. 449, with his station recorded as “Boy” (p. 94). At this point, he answers the weekly roll call from May 19 through June 16. There is no notation of his being discharged on June 16. One week later, again No. 449, George Prince, is entered into the muster table as a “Landsman” (p. 98). He is discharged on September 27, 1816. But this must be a different man, for George Prince Tamoree was already in Connecticut. According to Professor Gregory Dening of the University of Melbourne, an authority on naval records, it was not unusual in the U. S. Navy for a newly enlisted man to assume the name of one who had been previously discharged or separated from the service.

⁷ *Narrative*, pp. 32-33, 38.

⁸ Letter, Morse to wife, 11 September 1816. Sterling Library, Yale University (hereafter SLY).

⁹ Letter, Morse to wife, 14 September 1816. SLY.

¹⁰ *Religious Intelligencer*, 1 (1816), 446.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 365.

¹² Letter, Perkins to Worcester, 21 January 1817, American Board of Commissioners 1, vol. 1, Agencies, no. 87, Houghton Library, Harvard University (hereafter HLH).

- ¹³ Plaque at Haystack Monument, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts.
- ¹⁴ James Morris was born on January 19, 1752 and graduated from Yale College in 1775. He founded his own school for boys and girls at South Farms, Connecticut in 1790. This school became the Morris Academy with a permanent building in 1803. Morris died in Goshen, Connecticut on April 20, 1820 while returning home from the Foreign Mission School spring examinations.
- ¹⁵ Letter, Cornelius to Evarts, 17 March 1817, ABC 12.1, vol. 1, Agencies, no. 14, HLH.
- ¹⁶ Letter, Morris to Worcester, 27 February 1817, ABC, Ms. no. 43, HLH.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Stauder, "George," pp. 36–38.
- ¹⁹ Letter, Tamoree to Cotting, 2 January 1817, ABC 12.1, vol. 2, Agencies, sec. 2, FMS, HLH.
- ²⁰ Edward C. Starr, *A History of Cornwall, Connecticut: A Typical New England Town* (New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor, 1926) pp. 139–140.
- ²¹ Letter, Obookiah to Samuel Wells, Jr., 16 June 1817, Sattig Collection, SLY.
- ²² Letter, Morse to Elizabeth A. Morse, 19 September 1817, SLY.
- ²³ Whether Obookiah died of typhus, typhoid, or some other fever is uncertain.
- ²⁴ *Panoplist* (December 1818), pp. 291–292.
- ²⁵ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 14 November 1818, ABC 12.1, vol. 2, Agencies, sec. 2, no. 100, HLH.
- ²⁶ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 18 December 1818, ABCFM, no. 101, HLH.
- ²⁷ Letter, Daggett to Morse, 6 January 1819, SLY.
- ²⁸ Letter, Tamoree to Morse, 17 January 1819, SLY.
- ²⁹ Thomas Ruggles Gold, son of Benjamin Gold, was born in Cornwall on March 25, 1789 and graduated from Yale College in 1806. He died in Washington, D. C. on December 30, 1829.
- ³⁰ Letter, Tamoree to Morse, 21 January 1819, SLY.
- ³¹ Letter, Stone to Morse, 22 January 1819, SLY.
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ "Members of the Foreign Mission School," handwritten ms. by Leonard Hicks (a Cherokee student at the school), Connecticut Historical Society Library, Hartford, Connecticut.
- ³⁴ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 7 May 1819, ABC 1, vol. 1, Agencies, no. 104, HLH.
- ³⁵ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 27 September 1819, ABCFM, no. 108, HLH.
- ³⁶ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 7 October 1819, ABCFM, no. 111, HLH.
- ³⁷ Samuel Finley Breese Morse (1791–1872), eldest son of the three surviving children of Jedidiah Morse and Elizabeth Ann Breese Morse. Portrait painter, better known for his invention of the telegraph and the Morse Code.
- ³⁸ Letter, Daggett to Worcester, 6 November 1819, ABCFM, no. 113, HLH.
- ³⁹ Lucy G. Thurston, *Life and Times of Lucy G. Thurston* (Ann Arbor: S. C. Andrews, 1882) p. 23.
- ⁴⁰ Stauder, "George," p. 40.
- ⁴¹ Lydgate, "Kaumualii," p. 37.
- ⁴² Letter, Bingham, Chamberlain, Whitney, Ruggles, and Loomis to Worcester, 23 July 1820, ABC 19.1, vol. 1, no. 112, HLH.
- ⁴³ Letter, King Tamoree to Worcester, 28 July 1820, ABC 19.1, vol. 1, no. 282, HLH.
- ⁴⁴ Letter, Tamoree to Worcester, 27 July 1820, ABC 19.1, vol. 1, no. 280, HLH.

- ⁴⁵ Letter, Tamoree to Daggett, 28 July 1820, ABC 12.1, vol. 2, Agencies, sec. 2, FMS, no. 125, HLH.
- ⁴⁶ Letter, Tamoree to Gold, 29 July 1820, Torrington Historical Society Library, Torrington, Connecticut.
- ⁴⁷ Letter Tamoree to Worcester, 2 August 1820, ABC 19.1, vol. 1, no. 283, HLH.
- ⁴⁸ Letter, Whitney to Evarts, 30 September 1824, ABC 19.1, vol. 2, no. 31, HLH.
- ⁴⁹ Letter, Whitney to Evarts, 14 September 1824, ABC 19.1, vol. 2, no. 30, HLH.