

Provincetown Abolition Society

The Provincetown Abolition Society began in November of 1837 as the Anti Slavery Society in Provincetown, meeting formally usually once a year in December, until 1842. The name changed in 1839, when the group became an auxiliary of the Massachusetts Abolition Society. Proponents of emancipation, they met in the vestry of the Methodist Meetinghouse to take into consideration the subject of slavery." John Adams, John Atkins, and Ebenezer Atkins drafted a constitution "signed by the following gentlemen" :

Ira M. Bidwell	Samuel Atwood
John Adams, President	Joseph Baker
Ebenezer Atkins, Vice President	James [Dye? Bye? Dyer?]
John Atkins, Secretary	Robert Lavender
Joceman[?] Atkins	Isaiah Turner
[Parker? Paskin?] Cook, Vice President	Nathaniel Holmes
John Dyer	Reubin Rider
Freeman[?] Atkins, Vice President	Nathaniel Lewis
Josiah Cutter	George Lewis
Zacken Atkins, Manager	Caleb Cook
Isaac Small 2 nd	Abraham Small
Jesse Cook	Nathan Small
Will M. [Sked? Shed], Manager	Leonard Small
Reubin Goodspeed	Taylor Small
Lewis Nickerson[?], Manager	Joshua Paine
James Cook, Manager	Benjamin Laney
Solomon Rich	Rufus Conant
Isaiah Okitneg[?]	Joseph Mayo
Synilda Higginson	Albert Lavender
Samuel Lopes, Manager	Stephen Chapman
Ste. A. Maya [Stephen A. Mayer, Manager]	Philip S. Rich
Abraham Chapman, Manager	Henry Atkins
Joseph Freeman	John Snow
John Knowles	Robert [Thronks? Fronks? Knowles?]
Jonathan Ogen[?]	Thomas Hillyard
Wm[?] Paine 2 nd	E.W. Stickney

The constitution set out that the object of the society was to "petition congress to put an end to the domestic slave trade and abolish slavery in all those portions of our common country." They later voted to petition congress specifically "to stop traffic in human beings," and requested "the Ladyes of this town", in their separate "female Anti Slavery Society" to petition congress as well.

At their meeting held in December of 1838, they voted to take up quarterly collections and to have monthly lectures on subject of slavery. They also established plans for a library to house "Anti Slavery publications" and chose the first librarian, Rufus Conant. A total of \$10 was raised at the meeting to help pay for the library.

In February of 1839, the Society met in the Church Room of the Methodist Meeting House with S. [Rich or Rick] as President. Dr. J. Whitney, Wm. M. [Ahearn?], and John Snow were voted to be the committee to raise money to purchase Anti Slavery material.

New librarians were elected each year. Robert Lavender, 1839 and 1840; Z. Atkins, 1841; Nathaniel Freeman, 1842.

Members in leadership positions over the years included:

[Ahearn?], Wm. M.

[Rich? Rick? also Thick?], Solomon

Adams, John

Atkins, Freeman

Atkins, John

Atkins, Z.

Chapman, Abraham [also Abram]

Cogshall, Rev. S.W.

Conant, Rufus

Cutter[s], Josiah

Dyer, John

Freeman, Nathan

Higginson [also Higgins], Aguilla [also Aguillar, Egrula]

Hillyard, Thomas

Holmes, Nathaniel

Lavender, Robert

Manuel, Alexander [also Alexannons?]

Shed, W.M.

Snow, Enoch

Snow, John

Swift, Reuben

Whitney, Dr. J.

Notes from "minute book" volume held in the archives at Boston Athenaeum

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