“Oh that we had a dozen men to enter this vast region, where souls are perishing for the want of the bread of life!”

— William Buck Bagby

Although the Bagbys weren’t the first to bring the gospel to Brazil, their endeavors were certainly not easy. Their approach, however, was simple and followed the order of worship commonly practiced on the Texas frontier—an evangelistic approach without unnecessary formalities. They preached Jesus in straightforward, accessible terms, and closed each service with an invitation for sinners to accept Christ as personal Savior.

When Brazil declared itself a republic in 1889 with a coup d’état, William Bagby had a unique opportunity to influence the country’s constitution. Before the revolution began, Aristides Lobo (who would later become Brazil’s Secretary of Interior) met with Bagby to ask questions about the U.S. Constitution, particularly about the separation of church and state, and other domestic issues. Lobo even handwrote a copy of the U.S. Constitution. Ultimately, Brazil’s constitution mirrored that of the U.S. in many ways and the establishment of a republic facilitated Southern Baptist efforts in Brazil.

Anne Bagby’s passion and devotion was to education, particularly when it became clear that illiteracy was a prime obstacle in their effort to