

From yardage purchased the sisters also made dresses for themselves and children, and shirts for the brethren. Thus from the Lord's Storehouse and by His blessings the crises were met and solved.

It seems that President Grant had received "word" that he was to "immediately begin to state and restate those fundamental principles regarding the care of the poor which had been in the gospel from the beginning"; and as President Lee laid before the First Presidency what he had done and what we were doing, that President Grant and his counselors recognized in it an answer to their prayers and quandries as to how they should initiate the instruction which had come to him.

A NOTE ON THE NAUVOO LIBRARY AND LITERARY INSTITUTE

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Sometime in early January of 1844, at least seventy-four of Nauvoo's leading citizens met together for the expressed purpose of organizing a library and literary institute. A constitution, consisting of four articles and twenty-four by-laws, was unanimously adopted by those assembled. On 25 January 1844, Benjamin Winchester, Mormon publisher and pamphleteer, was chosen chairman of the institute and Charles A. Foster elected secretary.¹ Following this action seven trustees were elected and seven prominent Mormons selected to deliver lectures before the institute, including Sidney Rigdon, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, Orson Spencer and Benjamin Winchester, himself. We learn from subsequent minutes kept by Secretary Foster that Orson Hyde, Sidney Rigdon and Winchester did, on different occasions, deliver their lectures.

According to the by-laws, one method of obtaining stock in the institute was to donate books to the library. The secretary would then dutifully list under the name of each person the books contributed. Probably due to the lack of "hard cash"

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¹David J. Whittaker in his unpublished paper titled "To Further The Cause of Righteousness: The Life and Contributions of Benjamin Winchester, Early Mormon Missionary," referred to the minutes of The Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute in footnote 145, and first drew my attention to them.

Amount of Stock Rec'd. on the Library		
Lancet Universal History	1.00	
Worries of England	62½	
Blank Book	2.00	<u>\$ 13.00</u>
Joseph Smith		
Review of Edwards on the Will	+ 62½	
Life of Joscumek	+ 37½	
Wesley, Compend	+ 1.00	
Scott Poetical Works in 5 vols. per vole	2.00	
Silmon's Lectures	+ 50	
Merill Harmony	+ 50	
Chinese	25	
Humonachers Works	+ 62½	
Catholic Piety	+ 25	
Home Physician	+ 1.00	
Archibishop's Testament	+ 2.00	
Brun's Travels	+ 12½	
Relief Service Travels	+ 50	
Brown's Appeal. green	+ 75	
Proces English Gazette paper	75	
Praxis in Party & Peace	75	
Paused over		
		<u>0. \$ 12.00</u>
		545

The Joseph Smith donation list by courtesy of the Church Librarian.

in Nauvoo most of those who belonged to the institute procured shares of stock by such donations. Thus, from a perusal of the minutes we know the titles of over four hundred books held by the Nauvoo library. These titles provide the historian with an excellent source of studying and evaluating, to some extent at least, the intellectual climate of Nauvoo.

Of perhaps even greater importance is the fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a member of the institute, and the minutes provide for us a list of the books he contributed to the library. As far as this writer has been able to determine no historian or scholar has made a study of these books and the influence they may have had upon the Prophet's mind.

On 31 January 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith contributed the following books to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute:² *Review of Edwards On The Will*; *Life of Tecumseh*; *Whepleys Compend*; *Scotts Poetical Works*, in 5 vols; *Gillmores Lectures*; *Merrills Harmony*; *Epicureo*; *Krumanachers Works*; *Catholic Piety*; *Home Physician*; *Apochryphal Testament*; *Bruns' Travels*; *Reld & other Travels*; *Browns' Appeal*, gram; *Browns English Syntascope*; *Studies in Poetry & Prose*; *Old World & the New*, vol 1st; *Voyages & Travels of Ross Perry & others*; *Bennetts Book Keeping*, 2 copies; *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, by Stephens 2 Vo; *Stephens Travels in Central America*, 2 Vo; *Mosheims Church History*, 1 Vol; *Times & Seasons* 1 2 3 Vol also Vol 1 & 2; *Dicks Philosophy*; *Millenium & other Poems*; *Beaumonts Experiments*, *Dictionary of the Holy Bible*; *Parkers Lectures on Universalism*; *Landers Discourse*; *Metropolitan*; *Goodrich's History of the United States*; *Doddriges Sermons*; *Catholic Manual*; *Whelpleys Compend*; *Hervey's Meditations*; *Historie de Charles*; *Rollin*, 2 Vol; *Book of Mormon*.

Several questions could be asked regarding these and the other books donated to the library. For example, does the above list only represent the books Joseph Smith did not like to read and therefore gave them to the library? Are these books the source of some of the Prophet's intellectual ideas? If so which ones? Who was John Gray (the man who donated the largest number of books)? Who read such works as *Lectures on Witchcraft*; *Thomas Spencer's Memoirs*; *History*

²Authors, Book Titles, and the order in which the books appear are exactly as they are given in the minutes of the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute.

of France; John Locke, *On Understanding*; and the *Life of William Eaton*? Why were there so many grammar and foreign language books donated? Why were Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith the only leading ecclesiastical leaders who were members of the institute? What influence did this institute have on the cultural life of Nauvoo? How long did it last? (The last minutes are dated in March of 1844). These questions represent only a few of the queries raised by studying the minutes of the institute.

Thus this small but very important document found in the LDS Church Archives deserves the attention of Mormon scholars and hopefully this brief article will prove to be the catalyst which will motivate writers to devote some time to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute.

A LITTLE KNOWN ACCOUNT OF THE MURDERS OF JOSEPH AND HYRUM SMITH

Jan Shipps*

A little known contemporary account of the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith is contained in the following letter which was written by Mr. H. H. Bliss, a resident of La Harpe, Illinois, on the day following the murders at Carthage Jail. Bliss, whose name was included in an 1859 La Harpe business directory with the word "furniture" after it, was the town's postmaster from 1856 to 1865.¹ The letter was written to reassure his family back East that the situation in Hancock County was not as dangerous as published accounts might indicate. It was addressed to Mr. Franklin Bliss, Springfield, Massachusetts, and was mailed from La Harpe on 8 July 1844.

The letter was written in ink on both sides of a single sheet of inexpensive paper. It was folded as a quarto sheet would be, with one face used for the address. The letter is transcribed here exactly as it was written.

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¹Edwin C. Warren, "La Harpe Township," Chapter 32 in *History of Hancock County, Illinois*, Sesquicentennial Ed. (published by Board of Supervisors of Hancock County, 1968), pp. 354-355.