

**Joseph Smith and the
Manchester (New York)
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In a recent work on Mormon origins, it was again suggested that Joseph Smith may have derived some of his religious and theological ideas from the old Manchester Rental Library, a circulating library located within five miles of the Smith family farm.¹ This claim has received wide circulation, but it has never really received the serious critical consideration it merits. This paper attempts to assess the Manchester Library—its origin, content, current disposition, and possible usefulness to Joseph Smith and others prior to the organization of the Church in 1830.

The Manchester Library was organized around 1812 and was originally called the “Farmington Library,” since at this early time the village of Manchester, as an unincorporated entity, had not been formed. (Thus, in 1820 the Smith farm was located in Farmington Township, not Manchester, a minor point which occasionally still causes some confusion.) The actual date of the library’s formation, however, has been obscured by conflicting information. In 1964 Vivian Pratt, wife of Dr. John H. Pratt, the last private owner of the library, believed that the library had been formed “about 1812.” Much earlier, in 1911, Dr. Pratt had written that the library was started in 1814. However, in an interview with Brigham Young University Professor M. Wilford Poulson in August 1932, Dr. Pratt indicated that the founding date was 1815. Surviving court records of Ontario County establish that the formal organization occurred on January 1817. The earliest entry in the “Secretary’s Record Book” of the library for the year 1817 suggests an even earlier formation date. Subsequent entries substantiate this view. Most likely, therefore, the Manchester Library was organized—at least loosely—as a lending institution no earlier than 1812, but more probably around 1815 or 1816.²

As initially conceived, the Manchester Library was intended to be a self-sustaining enterprise: a thousand shares of stock were authorized to be issued at two dollars each, allowing full membership in one of the region’s first circulating libraries.³ In addition, yearly membership dues of twenty-five cents and fines for damaged or overdue books provided revenues from which additional books were purchased. The Manchester Library eventually gained a wide reputation as a good circulating library. In 1832, for instance, nearly twenty years after its founding, a separate “Librarian’s Record

Book” was started for those patrons who lived in Canandaigua, the county seat, eight miles south of Manchester.

As stated in the Preamble of the “Constitution of the Farmington Library kept on Manchester,” the purpose of the library was strictly literary.⁴ The constitution stipulated the nature of the society, election of officers, qualifications for membership, convening of meetings to conduct business (annually on the second Tuesday in January), and book lending practices and fines. The articles were followed by a list of names, which eventually grew to include seventy-six members, many of whom were prominent in the development of Ontario County.⁵ The most important institutional member of the society was the librarian, whose duty it was to insure the regular and orderly use of the library, collect fines, and supervise the de facto purchasing of books. Except for the first years of the library’s existence, when Addison N. Buck was installed by ballot as librarian, John Pratt from 1818 until his death in 1865 served continuously as the society’s librarian. The library itself was kept in Pratt’s Manchester home, and it remained in the hands of the Pratt family for four generations. In 1943–44, upon the death of John H. Pratt, M.D., 222 of the original Manchester Library books were donated by his widow to the Ontario County Historical Society in Canandaigua, New York.⁶

Eventually the library grew to at least 421 books, of which 275 were actually purchased in, or before, 1830. An examination of these reveals much concerning the kinds of books available to the expanding region of western New York as well as those which were found to be particularly popular and useful among library patrons. The library contained a wide range of books readily available in the area: literature (58), history (42), religion (33), biography (24), adventure and exploration (16), science (natural philosophy and natural history) (15), philosophy (moral and political) (11), reference (“how-to” books and advice) (11), military events (10), anthropology (9), and geography (7).⁷

While most of the books were not directly relevant to emerging themes within either the new church or its growing literature, it has been suggested that several of the books dealt with material which directly, or at the least implicitly, formed the intellectual material from which Joseph borrowed his doctrines.⁸ Themes discussed in some of these books and those developed by Joseph Smith (which eventually were expressed in the religion and theology of the new church) include American antiquities, the Hebraic origin of the Indians, the plurality of worlds, South American geography, missionary efforts among the American Indians, and early Christian developments.

For example, Josiah Priest’s *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed* (1825) contains a potpourri of topics ranging from natural history and philosophy to religion and literature. This work includes a verbatim

extract of all the salient arguments of Ethan Smith's thesis of the Hebraic origin of the American Indians presented in the first edition of his *View of the Hebrews* (1823).⁹ The Priest volume had already begun to circulate among Manchester Library patrons by late 1836.

The concept of multiple world systems and of inhabitants in celestial orbs, in both time and space, was thoroughly discussed on two Manchester Library volumes by Thomas Dick, one of the most prolific advocates of the pluralist doctrine. His *Philosophy of a Future State* (1829) and *The Christian Philosopher* (1823) deal extensively with the notion that the universe is fully peopled both for the glory of God and for the pleasure of man. These volumes did not begin to circulate, however, until early 1830. Brief extracts from Dick's *Future State* later appeared in the *Latter-day Saint Messenger and Advocate* of December 1836.

The geography of South America was first chronicled in full detail for European and American readers by the naturalist Alexander von Humboldt in his *Personal Narrative of Travels to the . . . New Continent* (1815). This (and later editions) became one of the two most popular and widely read accounts of the New World in the nineteenth century. (The other account which readers found captivating was *The Voyage of the Beagle* [1839] by Charles Darwin.) The Humboldt volume began circulation among Manchester Library patrons in January 1827. American archaeological evidences were discussed briefly in Humboldt but were extensively examined in Josiah Priest's *American Antiquities*, which the Manchester Library held in the third edition. This edition, however, was not published until 1833, becoming a widely discussed book in various editions. Again brief extracts from *American Antiquities* eventually were reprinted in the Church publication *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star* of 1846 as evidence of Book of Mormon archaeology. One is left with the distinct impression, though, that the Priest book, even at this relatively late date in early Church developments, was considered novel among Church members.¹⁰

Other books found in the Manchester Library dealing with significant themes reminiscent of a variety of Book of Mormon and Church occurrences include John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1811), giving accounts of Christian heroes and martyrs and appearing in numerous editions as perhaps one of the most widely displayed, if not read, volumes on the American frontier; John Heckewelder's *Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren among the . . . Indians* (1820); and David Hudson's *History of Jemima Wilkinson, a Preacheress of the Eighteenth Century* (1821), a biography of one of the three lasting religious innovators to appear in eighteenth century America.¹¹

The first serious, sustained treatment of the question whether the Manchester Library might have provided significant literary material to Joseph Smith was made by M. Wilford Poulson, professor of psychology at Brigham Young University from 1910 to 1966 and a major Mormon and

Western Americana book and manuscript collector and dealer.¹² Poulsen's own interest in Mormon Americana was stimulated by a variety of factors, but particularly by the publication of a psychological study of Joseph Smith and the origins of the Book of Mormon undertaken by Dr. Walter F. Prince, executive research officer of the Psychic Research society in Boston.¹³ Beginning about 1929, Poulsen embarked upon a tireless search for published and unpublished materials relating to Mormon origins. Except for a very small circle of confidants, few knew at the time what Poulsen had undertaken, and still fewer realized that by 1942 Poulsen had managed to reconstruct the entire Manchester Library as it probably existed in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Among his many prized possessions were two of the original Manchester Library volumes, William Jay's *Short Discourses* (1812) and the *Memoirs of Stephen Burroughs* (1811), both of which he acquired from Dr. John Pratt during a 1932 trip to eastern libraries and Church sites.¹⁵

Poulsen's interest was to use his collection eventually as a basis from which he might examine critically the influences of secular sources on the origins of the Church. "As a student of the psychology of religion," he wrote to Walter Prince in 1933, "I am interested in whatever sheds light on the origin of Mormonism." Poulsen hoped to "make a real contribution in relation to our thinking on early Mormonism and its background."¹⁶ Unfortunately, he did not live to complete this work and left no critical assessment of the Manchester Library or any hint of its possible usefulness to the rise of Mormonism.

Poulsen's work on the Manchester Library and Mormon origins generally, however, did not go unnoticed. It eventually provided materials used by other scholars to examine the contents of the library. In May 1966, the J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Library (since renamed the Harold B. Lee Library) at Brigham Young University obtained photocopies from the Ontario County Historical Society of the reproducible materials relating to the Manchester Library.¹⁷

Recently it has been intimated by various writers that the Manchester Library provided useful, if not substantive, material from which Joseph Smith borrowed to develop a variety of themes important to the Restoration. Samuel Taylor, for instance, following his intellectual mentor Professor Poulsen, has suggested that "Joseph Smith had had access [to the Manchester Library] during the prophet's formative years."¹⁸ Although it is likely that Taylor is only suggesting the possibility rather than making the stronger claim of actual use, his assertion, even in the weaker sense, should be explored. Did Joseph, in fact, have access to the Manchester Library? If so, did he explore its resources? If he did, to what extent did he make use of the available materials? Affirmative responses to some of these queries, especially with respect to the Manchester Library, have recently been advanced by Robert N. Hullinger.¹⁹

Even though Joseph Smith and others involved in the early years of the Restoration could have had access to the Manchester Library (insofar as anyone who paid the necessary membership fees could participate fully in the activities of the library), none of the principal individuals—including Joseph—became a member nor made direct use of its resources. None of the library's secretary books, of which there are three extant at the Ontario County Historical Society, lists any patron who affiliated himself with the new church.²⁰ Moreover, if Joseph had wished to explore the literary materials of the day, it would have been unnecessary to travel the five miles to Manchester when in Palmyra, only two miles distant, there were several book-stores and at least one library, the contents of which he would have been free to peruse.

Timothy C. Strong, owner and editor of the *Palmyra Register* (1817–21), announced the opening of a bookstore in December 1817 located in his Palmyra printing office. In May 1818, he announced he had received a new selection of books. And in September 1818, about 250 volumes were advertised by title in his weekly.²¹ (Numerous books included in this last shipment were later to be found in the Manchester Library, suggesting that the Manchester Library Society may have acquired many of its early volumes from Strong's Palmyra Bookstore.)

In December 1820, and later in October 1822, other bookstores were opened in Palmyra, one by Leonard Wescott and another by E. F. Marshall, respectively, offering works on science, history, religion, philosophy, medicine, and travel.²² After Pomeroy Tucker and E. B. Grandin purchased Strong's newspaper in 1823, changing its name to the *Wayne Sentinel*, they opened the Wayne County Bookstore, stocking "a general and well selected assortment of books."²³ (Tucker and Grandin changed the name of their bookstore back to Palmyra Bookstore in 1826.) Shipments of a wide variety of books seemed to arrive regularly about every year or so from 1818 on.²⁴

Bookstores were also located in Canandaigua, eight miles south of the Smith farm. Here J. D. Bemis, owner and editor of the *Ontario Repository* as well as local book printer and publisher, operated the Canandaigua Bookstore, while a rival, H. Tyler, operated the Ontario Bookstore.²⁵

As early as 1819, and occasionally thereafter, book auctions were held in Palmyra. In one case, "scores" of books were received from New York City "comprising history, divinity, medicine, law, travels."²⁶ During the winter of 1822–23, a library was established in Palmyra. Later, in 1828, E. B. Grandin, publisher of the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, established a circulating library for the public in Palmyra.²⁷ The availability of bookstores and libraries in Palmyra, together with the fact that the Smith family regularly obtained the *Palmyra Register* and later the *Wayne Sentinel* from the newspaper office which doubled as a bookstore, would have mitigated the need to travel nearly three times the distance to acquire literary materials from the Manchester area.²⁸

Clearly Joseph Smith had access to a wide range of books in that he lived in proximity to libraries and bookstores. The larger question as to whether he actually made use of these materials, either from libraries and bookstores or from privately owned sources, remains an issue which continues to elude definitive treatment. We can be reasonably certain, however, that young Joseph did not exploit the resources of the Manchester Library. It may be that Joseph's own educational training, both formal and informal, had not prepared him at this early age to deal with libraries and bookstores generally. It is known, for instance, that Joseph briefly attended schools in Palmyra in 1818 and that he used several elementary textbooks in arithmetic and reading.²⁹ There is little direct evidence that his literary skills extended much beyond a cursory acquaintance with a few books. As Joseph's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, wrote in her biography of the Prophet, Joseph was a "remarkably quiet, well-disposed child." He "seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of the rest of our children, but far more given to meditation and deep study."³⁰

Joseph Smith eventually did acquire a modest personal library and supported the formation of the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, to which he donated many of his own books in 1844. Given his unlettered background, however, it is likely that during the 1820s he simply was not a part of the literary culture, that portion of the population for which books provided a substantial part of its intellectual experiences.³¹ If Joseph in fact did not avail himself of published books at this early date, however, there still remains a wide range of literary sources to which he may have had access, such as newspapers, lectures and tracts (both religious and political), and almanacs. Such sources would certainly be more in keeping with his informal educational background, and that of his frontier neighbors. The existence of these other sources may, in fact, account more directly for Joseph's probable noninvolvement with the Manchester Library and perhaps most other libraries and bookstores of his region.

Appendix: The Manchester (New York) Library Holdings, 1812–45

The number scheme employed in the following list corresponds to the accession numbers originally assigned to the Manchester Library books as they were purchased and made available to library patrons. Those volumes marked with an asterisk (*), of which there are 222, are currently in the Rare Book Collection of the Ontario County Historical Society (OCHS), Canandaigua, New York. By 1830, 275 books had been purchased (accession number 275), while the collection stood at around 421 volumes by 1845.³²

Two complementary listings of the Manchester holdings are available. One identifies each of the 421 volumes with one or two words and occasionally the author's last name; the other list, compiled when the library

was donated to the OCHS on 1943–44, lists reasonably complete bibliographic information on about half of these volumes.³³ Since numerous entries in these lists are either incomplete or missing altogether, a careful perusal of the extant volumes at the OCHS itself was needed to supply much of the missing bibliographic information.³⁴ In some cases, of course, it is nearly impossible to identify unambiguously the bibliographic data. For instance, in the case where books are missing from the selection altogether (nearly half of the volumes), often only the scantiest of information is available from either of the lists, such as a single word from the book's title. Also some of the entries are not sufficiently precise to identify which book is meant. Where data is thus altogether lacking from primary sources or these secondary listings, no editorial note is provided; rather the entry is left as it appears on these lists.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Don Muller, director of the Ontario County Historical Society, for his help in using the Society's resources.

- *1 De Voltaire, Marie Francois. *The History of Charles XII, King of Sweden*. Otsego, N.Y.: H. & E. Phinney, Jr., 1811.
- *2 [Nares, Edward.] *I says, says I: a novel by Thinks-I-to-Myself*. Boston: Bradford and Read, 1812.
- *3 Gass, Patrick. *Journal of the voyages and travels of Capt. Lewis and Capt. Clarke, of the Army of the United States from the mouth of the river Missouri through the interior parts of North America to the Pacific Ocean during the years 1804, 1805, and 1806*. Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1811.
- *4–5 Cowper, William, *Poems*. 2 vols. New York: Whiting and Watson, 1812.
- *6–7 Silliman, Benjamin. *A journal of travels in England, Holland, and Scotland, and of two passages over the Atlantic, in the years 1805 and 1806*. 2 vols. 2d ed. Boston: T. B. Wait and Co., 1812.
- *8 Junius [pseud.]. *Letters*. 2d Am. ed. Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1807.
- *9 Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Philadelphia: M. Carey 1803.
- 10 Weld, H. H. *Life of Benjamin Franklin*. Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1786.
- 11–12 Knickerbocker, Diedrich. *A history of New York, from the beginning of the world to the end of the Dutch dynasty*. 2 vols. 2d ed. New York, 1812.
- *13–14 Ramsay, David. *The history of the American Revolution*. 2 vols. Trenton: J. J. Wilson, 1811.
- 15 Goldsmith, Oliver. *History of Greece* [abridged]. London, 1787.

- *16 _____. *An abridgement of the history of England; from the invasion of Julius Caesar to the death of George the Second*. From the 12th ed. Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1808.
- 17 _____. *A history of Rome from the earliest times* [abridged]. London, 1772.
- *18 Morse, Jedidiah, and Parish, Elijah. *A compendious history of New England*. 2d ed. Newburyport: Thomas and Whipple, 1809.
- *19 Ramsay, David. *The Life of George Washington*. New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1807.
- 20 Mackenzie, Sir Alexander. *Voyages from Montreal, through the Continent of North America*. London: T. Cadell, Jr., and W. Davies, 1802.
- 21 *Natural History*.
- *22 More, Hannah. *Practical piety; or the influence of the religion of the heart on the conduct of the life*. Baltimore: J. Kingston, 1812.
- 23–24 Roche, Regina M.D. *Children of the Abbey; a tale*. 2 vols. London: W. Mason, 182?.
- 25 [Anon.] *Laughable budget of wit; a selection of choice bon mots, repartees, anecdotes, etc*. Kilmarnock, Scotland: H. Crawford, 1820.
- *26–33 Addison et al. *The Spectator*. 8 vols. Philadelphia: Johnson and Warner, 1810. [Only volumes 6, 7, and 8 are found at OCHS.]
- *34 Foxe, John. *The book of martyrs, an abridgment*. New York: S. Wood, 1811.
- 35–36 Jay, William. *Short discourses to be read in families*. 2 vols. Hartford, 1812.
- *37 Smellie, William. *The philosophy of natural history*. Dover, N. H.: Thomas and Tappan, and S. Bragg, Jr., 1808.
- *38 Fessenden, Thomas Green. *Original Poems*. Philadelphia: L. Press, 1806.
- 39–40 Johnson, Samuel. *The Idler*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Tesson and Lee, 1803.
- *41 Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Vicar of Wakefield, a tale*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1823.
- *42–43 Morse, Jedidiah. *The American Universal Geography; or a view of the present state of all the kingdoms, states, and colonies in the known world*. 2 vols. 6th ed. Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1812.
- *44 Arrowsmith, Aaron. *A new and elegant general atlas, comprising all the new discoveries, to the present time*. Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1812.

- 45 Baldwin, Edward [William Godwin]. *Fables ancient and modern*. 5th ed. London: Thomas Hodgkins. 1812.
- 46 Baker, Charles. *Manual*. London: Varty, 1800.
- *47 Fuller, Andrew. *The gospel its own witness: or, the Holy Nature, and Divine Harmony of the Christian religion, contrasted with the immorality and absurdity of deism*. Boston: Manning and Loring, 1803.
- *48 Arndt Rev. Johann. *True Christianity; or, the whole economy of God towards man, and the whole duty of man towards God*. Translated by A. W. Boehm. 2 vols. Boston: Lincoln and Edmands, 1809. [Only one volume is found at OCHS.]
- *49 Bunyan, John. *The pilgrim's progress from this world to that which world to that which is to come*. New York: John Tiebout and L. Nichols, 1804.
- *50 Butler, Frederick. *Sketches of universal history, sacred and profane, from the creation of the world to the year 1818 of the Christian era*. Hartford: O. D. Cooke, 1822.
- *51 [Anon.] *The guide to domestic happiness*. 2d Am. ed. New Haven: Sidney, 1807.
- *52–59 Rollin, Charles. *The ancient history of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and Grecians*. 8 vols. New York: E. Duyokinck, and M. and W. Ward, 1812.
- 60 No title listed.
- *61 Murray, Lindley. *Sequel to the English reader: or, elegant selections in prose and poetry*. From the 3d English ed. New York: Collins and Perkins, 1810.
- *62 _____. *The power of religion on the mind, in retirement, affliction, and at the approach of death*. 10th ed. New York: I. Collins and Son, 1802.
- *63 Backus, Charles. *The scripture doctrine of regeneration considered, in six discourses*. Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1800.
- *64 Baxter, Richard. *The Saints' Everlasting Rest; or, a treatise on the blessed state of the saints in their enjoyment of God in Glory*. Portsmouth, N. H.: C. Peirce and W. Treadwell and Co., 1802.
- *65 Mason, John. *Self knowledge: A treatise, shewing the nature and benefit of that important science, and the way to attain it*. Boston: I. Thomas and E. T. Andrews, 1793.
- 66–69 No titles listed.
- 70 L'Estrange, Sir Roger. *Seneca's Morals; by way of abstract to which is added, a discourse under the title of An after thought*. 3d Am. ed. Boston: J. Bumstead, 1800.

- *71 Park, Munge. *Travels in the interior districts of Africa*. New York: E. Duyokinck, 1813.
- *72 Spafford, Horatio G. *A gazetteer of the State of New York*. Albany: H. C. Southwick. 1813.
- 73 Felton, Cornelius C. *Life of William Eaton*. Brookfield, 1813.
- *74–79 Pope, Alexander. *Works, with his last corrections, additions, and improvements; with the life of the author*. 6 vols. London: D. Buchanan, 1804.
- *80–81 Curran, John P. *Speeches of John Philpot Curran, esq. with a brief sketch of the history of Ireland, and a biographical account of Mr. Curran*. 2 vols. New York: I. Riley, 1811. [Only volume 1 is found at OCHS.]
- 82 Temple, John. *The Irish Rebellion*. London: R. Wilks, 1812.
- *83–84 Cook, James. *A voyage towards the South Pole, and round the world*. 2 vols. Dublin: J. Williams et al., 1784.
- *85 Goldsmith, Oliver. *Goldsmith's Natural History: abridged, for the use of Schools*. Philadelphia: Johnson and Warner, 1810.
- *86 de Laverne, Leger M. P. T. *The life of Field Marshal Souvarof*. Baltimore: E. J. Coule, 1814.
- *87 Svin'in, Pavel P. *Some details concerning General Moreau, and his last moments*. Baltimore: E. J. Coule and Harrod and Buel, 1814.
- *88–89 Clark, Edward D. *Travels in various countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*. 2 vols. New York: Fay and Co., 1813–14. [Only volume 2 is found at OCHS.]
- *90 Porter, Sir Robert K. *A narrative of the campaign in Russia, during the year 1812*. Hartford: G. Sheldon and Co., 1814.
- *91–92 Locke, John. *An essay concerning human understanding, With a life of the author*. 2 vols. Boston: Combings and Halyard and J. T. Buckingham, 1813.
- *93 Clark, Thomas. *Sketches of the naval history of the United States*. Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1813.
- *94 Ramsay, Andrew M. *The travels of Cyrus: to which is annexed, a discourse upon the theology and mythology of the pagans*. Albany: Pratt and Doubleday, 1814.
- *95 Clarke, Hewson. *The History of the War*. London: T. Kinnersley, 1817.
- *96–97 Clarkson, Thomas. *Memoirs of the private and public life of William Penn*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1814.
- *98–100 _____. *Portraiture of Quakerism; taken from a view of the education and discipline, social manners, civil and political economy,*

- religious principles and character of the Society of Friends.* 3 vols. New York: S. Stansbury, 1806.
- *101 Foster, John. *Essays in a series of letters to a friend.* 1st Am. ed. From 3d English ed. Hartford: Lincoln and Gleason, 1807.
- *102 Low, Samuel. *Poems.* Vol. 2 of 2 vols. New York: T. and J. Swords, 1800.
- 103 Honeywood, St. John. *Poems.* New York: T. and J. Swords, 1801.
- *104 Duncan, William. *The elements of logic.* Albany: Whiting, Backus, Whiting, 1804.
- *105 Taylor, Samuel. *An essay intended to establish a standard for an universal system of stenography.* Albany: Websters and Skinner, 1810.
- *106 Hofland, Barbara W. H. *The Son of a genius; a tale for the use of youth.* New York: Eastburn, Kirk and Co., 1814.
- *107 Scott, Sir Walter. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel, a Poem.* Savannah: Seymour and Williams, 1811.
- 108–109 Porter, Jane. *Thaddeus of Warsaw; a historical novel.* 2 vols. 2d Am. ed. New York: I. Riley, 1810.
- 110 Montolieu, Isabelle. *Caroline of Lichtfield.* Translated by T. Holcroft. New York: R. Scott, 1815.
- 111 Westerhouse, Benjamin. *A journal of a young man of Massachusetts, late a surgeon on board an American privateer, who was captured at sea by the British.* Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1816.
- *112–113 *History of Montalbert.* 2 vols. [Only volume 1 is found at OCHS.]
- 114 Riley, James. *An authentic narrative of the loss of the American brig Commerce.* Hartford, 1817.
- *115 Hall, Basil. *Extracts from a journal.* Vol. 1 of 2 vols. 2d ed. Edinburgh, 1824.
- *116 Labaume, Eugene. *A Circumstantial Narrative of the campaign in Russia, embellished with plans of the battles of the Moskwa and Malo-Jaroslavits.* Hartford: S. Andrus and P. Peck and Co., 1817.
- *117–118 Porter, Jane. *The Scottish Chiefs, a Romance.* 5 vols. 3d ed. London, 1816.
- *119 von Humboldt, Alexander. *The travels and researches of Alexander von Humboldt, being a condensed narrative of his journeys in the equinoctial regions of America, and in Asiatic Russia.* New York: J. and J. Harper, 1833. [This is a later edition than the original Manchester Library holding.]
- 120 Adams, John. *Flowers of Ancient History.* 3d ed. London: G. Kearsley, 1796.

- *121 Kimball, Horace. *The Naval Temple: containing a complete history of the battles fought by the navy of the United States, from its establishment in 1794 to the present time*. Boston: B. Badger, 1816.
- 122 Burroughs, Stephen. *Memoirs of Stephen Burroughs*. Albany: B. C. Packard, 1811.
- 123 Brown, Samuel R. *The Western Gazetteer; or, emigrant's directory*. n.p., 1817.
- *124 Morse, Jedidiah. *The history of America*. Philadelphia: J. Webster, 1819.
- 125 Robinson.
- *126 Salzmann, Christian G. *Elements of Morality*. Baltimore: J. Robinson, 1811.
- *127–128 [Anon.] *Sketches of modern life*. 2 vols. London: W. Miller, 1799.
- *129 Fletcher, Rev. Dr. *Reflections on the Spirit, etc., of religious controversy*. New York: B. Dornin, 1808.
- 130 Riley, James. *An authentic narrative of the loss of the American brig Commerce*. Hartford, 1817.
- 131 Adams, Hannah. *Dictionary of all religions*. Boston, 1817.
- 132 Haddock's Narratives.
- 133 Took, Andrew. *The Pantheon, representing the fabulous histories of the heathen gods*. 31st ed. London: J. Johnson, 1803.
- 134 Boyle's Voyages.
- *135 Ezekiel, Terry, comp. *Narrative of the adventures and sufferings of Samuel Patterson*. Palmer, Mass., 1817.
- 136 Radcliffe, Ann Ward. *Romance of the Forest*. Walpole, N.H.: Thomas and Thomas, 1806.
- *137–138 Woodworth, Samuel. *The Champions of freedom, or the mysterious chief*. 2 vols. New York: C. N. Baldwin, 1816. [Only volume 2 is found at OCHS.]
- 139 [Anon.] *Beauty of Poetry*. Albany: Churchill and M'Glashan, 1814.
- 140 Sampson, Ezra. *The brief remarks on the ways of man: or, compendious dissertations, respecting social and domestic relations and concerns*. 2d ed. Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, 1823.
- *141 Nelson, Robert. *The practice of true devotion, in relation to the end, as well as the means, of religion*. Boston: B. Watt and Co., 1812.
- *142 Tuke, Henry. *Memoirs of the life of George Foxe*. Philadelphia: B. and T. Kite, 1815.

- *143 Savage, Richard. *Poetical Works, with the life of the author*. New York: Wm. A. Davis, 1805.
- 144 Montgomery, James. *The wanderer of Switzerland, and other poems*. London: Vesnor and Hood, 1806.
- 145 Bennett, John. *Letters to a young lady*. Philadelphia: J. Grigs, 1829.
- 146 Montolieu, Isabelle. *Caroline of Lichtfield*. Translated by T. Holcroft. New York: R. Scott, 1815.
- 147 Johnson, Samuel. *Rasselas, the Prince of Abyssinia*. 10th ed. London. 1798.
- *148 Sampson, Ezra. *The youth's companion, or an historical dictionary: consisting of articles chiefly selected from natural and civil history, geography, astronomy, zoology, botany, and mineralogy*. Hudson: N. Elliott, and Websters and Skinners, 1816.
- *149 Woods, Leonard. *A sermon, preached at Haverhill (Mass.) in remembrance of Mrs. Harriet Newell*. Utica, N. Y.: Wm. Williams, 1818.
- 150 *Other Poems*.
- *151 [Anon.] *The Christian companion in his field and garden*. Harrisonburg, Va.: Davidson and Bourne, 1814.
- 152 Meikle, James. *Solitude Sweetened; or, miscellaneous meditations*. Edinburgh, 1803.
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1. See, for example, Robert H. Hullinger, *Mormon Answer to Skepticism* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1980).

2. A brief description of the Farmington and Manchester townships may be found in Charles F. Milliken, *A History of Ontario County, New York and Its People*, 2 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1911), 1:406–7; and Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Joseph Smith's First Vision*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), pp. 10–17. For the origin of the Manchester Library, see, respectively, Mrs. M. R. Broman (Vivian Pratt) to Richard L. Anderson, 16 December 1964, Manchester Library Collection, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as BYU Special Collections); Milliken, *History of Ontario County*, p. 414; Statement by John H. Pratt, box 6, folder 4, [p.36], M. Wilford Poulson Collection, BYU Special Collections; and Miscellaneous Records, Book C, 178, Ontario County Court House, Canandaigua, N.Y.; and “Secretary’s Record Book, 1817–1854,” [p. 1], Manchester Library Collection File, Ontario County Historical Society (hereafter cited as OCHS Collections).

3. In contrast, the earliest circulating library in Rochester, a town about five times larger than the village of Manchester, was Marshall’s Circulating Library, in operation from 1823 to 1825. For information on the development of such libraries in America, see David Kaser, *A Book for a Sixpence. The Circulating Library in America* (Pittsburgh: Beta Phi Mu, 1980).

4. “Secretary’s Record Book, 1817–1854,” [p. 1], OCHS Collections.

5. Compare “Secretary’s Record Book, 1817–1854,” [pp. 5–7], OCHS Collections, with Milliken, *History of Ontario County*, pp. 407–14.

6. Included also in this gift were 86 volumes from Dr. John H. Pratt’s personal medical history library (“Accession Records,” OCHS Collections). Secondary records indicate that the Manchester Library at one time held in excess of 600 volumes (see Milliken, *History of Ontario County*, p. 414).

7. Assuming that the “accession” numbers were assigned in sequence as books were added to the library, by 1830 there appear to have been 275 books, since book no. 276 was published the year following. All books with accession numbers 1 through 275 have publication dates of 1830 or earlier. For purposes of this discussion, therefore, we will restrict ourselves to the first 275 books. Numbers in parentheses indicate how many items of each subject were represented.

8. To document this assertion fully, would, of course, be to provide a history of anti-Mormonism, a subject fraught with emotion and polemics. Some useful sources which may be consulted, however, include Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), passim; H. Hougey, “A Parallel”—*The Basis of the Book of Mormon* (Concord, Calif.: Pacific Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 3–6, 48–55; R. N. Hullinger, “The Lost Tribes of Israel and the Book of Mormon,” *The Lutheran Quarterly* 22 (August 1970): 327–28; L. S. Jonas, *Mormon Claims Examined* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1961), pp. 39, 42–44; W. M. Jones, *A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* (Detroit: Harlo Press, 1964), pp. 12–14, et passim; and Sidney B. Sperry, *Problems of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), pp. 172–79.

9. Ethan Smith’s principal evidences for the Hebraic thesis are presented in his chapter 3 and are reproduced as pages 290 to 325 in Priest. Smith’s considerably expanded 1825 edition, however, contained material unavailable to Priest. It was the second edition which B. H. Roberts used in his 1920s studies on Book of Mormon origins. For recent discussion of Roberts’s analysis, see M. U. Sowell, “Defending the

Keystone: The Comparative Method Reexamined," pp. 44, 50–54; and G. D. Smith, "Defending the Keystone: Book of Mormon Difficulties," pp. 45–50, both in *Sunstone* 6 (May–June 1981).

10. See, for instance, *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star* 7 (1846): 60, 67–71, 85–88; and 12 (1850): 265.

11. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* has been one of the most influential books of both religious and literary history. Originally written in Elizabethan times, the mid-Victorian edition ran to eight bulky volumes. Numerous abridgments and popular versions of Foxe have been published in order to give it greater currency.

12. After Poulson's death in 1969, his extensive collection, including 7,420 books, was donated to Brigham Young University (see *BYU Alumnus* 24 [June 1970]: [1]; and M. Wilford Poulson Collection Register, BYU Special Collections).

13. See Walter F. Prince to M. Wilford Poulson, 15 December 1929, and M. Wilford Poulson to Walter F. Prince, 13 November 1932, box 1, folder 7, and additional documents and letters in this location and in box 5, folder 4, M. Wilford Poulson Collection, BYU Special Collections; Walter F. Prince, "Psychological Tests for the Authorship of the Book of Mormon," *American Journal of Psychology* 28 (1917): 373–95; and "A Footnote: Authorship of the Book of Mormon," *American Journal of Psychology* 30 (1919): 427–28.

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15. Of the 421 duplicated Manchester library volumes which Poulson had collected, only twenty-two, including one of the two original volumes [Jay's *Short Discourses*], remain intact, namely accession numbers 36, 49, 52–55, 64, 70, 72, 97, 115, 118, 122, 131, 140, 158, 167, 180, 193–95, and 208. They are currently housed in BYU Special Collections. Concerning his eastern jaunts, see box 1, folder 7, M. Wilford Poulson Collection, BYU Special Collections. Thanks are expressed to Wesley P. Walters for bringing to my attention that Poulson once owned the original Manchester library volume on Stephen Burroughs (accession no. 122).

16. M. Wilford Poulson to Walter F. Prince, 4 August 1933 and 10 June 1934, M. Wilford Poulson Collection, BYU Special Collections.

17. A brief description of the library is given in Backman, *First Vision*, pp. 32, 48. Also, see Mrs. M. R. Broman to Richard L. Anderson, 16 December 1964, Manchester library Collection, BYU Special Collections. The Manchester Library Collection at BYU, however, does not presently contain the first "Manchester Rental Library Withdrawal Record Book, 1826–1837" available at the Ontario County Historical Society.

18. Taylor, *Rocky Mountain Empire*, p. 231.

19. See Hullinger, *Mormon Answer to Skepticism*, pp. 36, 39, 44–47, 57, et passim.

20. The three books are (1) "Secretary's Record Book. 1817–1854," (2) "Manchester Rental Library Withdrawal Record Book, 1826–1837," and (3) "Manchester Rental Library Withdrawal Record Book, 1838–1857."

21. See *Palmyra Register*, 10 December 1817, 24 December 1817, 15 September 1818, and 27 October 1819. For a brief description of the contents of the September 1818 purchase, see Backman, *First Vision*, pp. 48–49. (Backman inadvertently misidentified the purchase date as October 1818).

22. *Palmyra Register*, 27 December 1820 and 2 October 1822.
23. *Wayne Sentinel*, 12 May 1824, 14 July 1824, and 1 December 1826.
24. *Palmyra Register*, 12 May 1818, 15 September 1818, and 27 October 1819; *Palmyra Herald*, 2 October 1822; *Wayne Sentinel*, 12 May 1824, 1 December 1826, 25 January 1828, 19 December 1828, and 11 December 1829.
25. *Palmyra Register*, 24 December 1817 and 30 October 1822; *Wayne Sentinel*, 14 July 1824, 20 October 1824, and 1 December 1826.
26. *Palmyra Register*, 16 June 1819; *Wayne Sentinel*, 30 August 1825.
27. *Wayne Sentinel*, 3 December 1823, 27 June 1828, 23 January 1829, and 10 September 1829.
28. See Milton V. Backman, Jr., "Awakenings in the Burned-over District: New Light on the Historical Setting of the First Vision," *Brigham Young University Studies* 9 (Spring 1969): 316; Joseph Smith, Jr., regularly purchased the *Wayne Sentinel*; see *Wayne Sentinel*, 11 October 1825 and 6 October 1826.
29. John H. Evans, *Joseph Smith. An American Prophet* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1933).. pp. 35, 94.
30. Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), pp. 73, 84. For a brief overview of educational practices and opportunities in western New York and Palmyra specifically, see Backman, *First Vision*, pp. 49–52.
31. See Kenneth W. Godfrey, "A Note on the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute," *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 386–89.
32. Although only 420 accession numbers were originally assigned, number 297 is a duplicate. There are some indications that the library eventually contained about 600 volumes, although there exists no catalogue record for this view. See Milliken, *History of Ontario County*, 1:414. When the Manchester Library was donated to the Historical Society in 1943, it contained, in addition to the 222 original volumes, 86 additional volumes from Dr. John Pratt's own medical history library.
33. See "Numbers of the Volumes in the Manchester Library" and "Books from the old Manchester Library," Manchester Library Collection File, Ontario County Historical Society. A copy of these partial listings is available also in BYU Special Collections.
34. Additional bibliographic information was obtained from *The National Union Catalog*, the *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books*, the *Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson*, and the OCLC computer-based library system.

