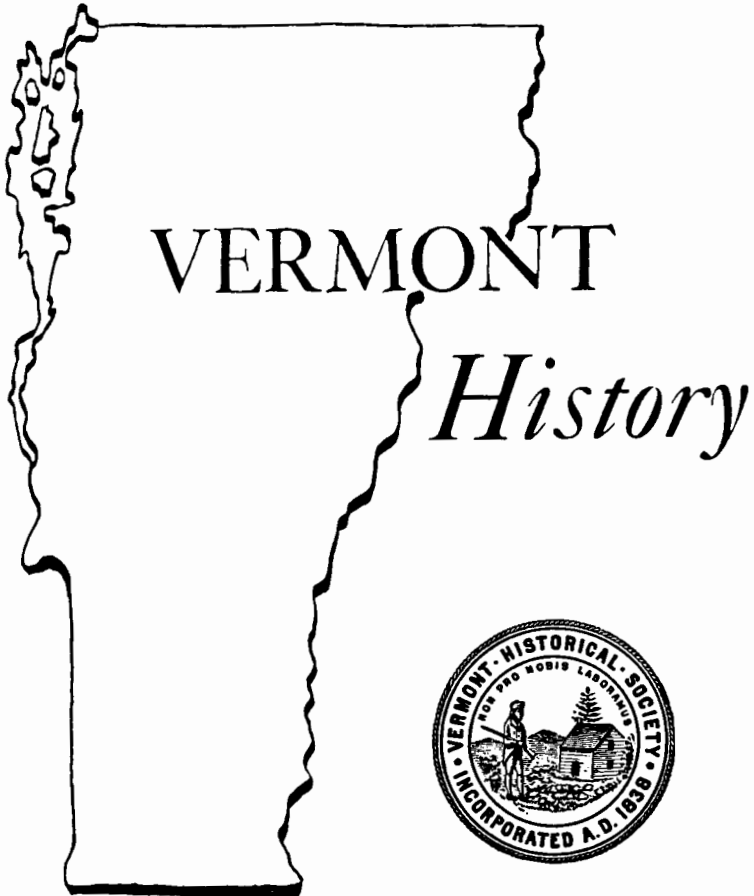


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The PROCEEDINGS of the
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



. . . the University of Vermont—all six faculty members and eighty-five students of it—was determined in the 1830s not to be left behind in the race to build good libraries in the young United States.

From Britain to America: British Books on Vermont Shelves

By BETTY BANDEL

In a throwaway era replete with terms like *biodegradable* and *self-destruct*, to find printed on the reverse of a book's title page the words "to be perpetually preserved in the library of" the University of Vermont, is little short of arresting.

The book in question, on the shelves of the University of Vermont's Bailey-Howe Library in Burlington, Vermont, is volume one of *A General Introduction to Domesday Book*, written by Sir Henry Ellis, and published in 1833 in the halcyon day of acid-free paper. It was printed "by command of His Majesty King William IV under the direction of the Commissioners of the Public Records of the Kingdom." On the verso of the title page appears: "Record Commission, March 1831. This Book is to be perpetually preserved in the library of the University of the state of Vermont. January 1835. C. P. Cooper, Sec. Com. Pub. Rec."

Inquiry into the history of this optimistic behest reveals generosity on the part of the British government and cooperation between Britain and America less than twenty years after a war between the two countries. It also reveals the fact that the University of Vermont—all six faculty members and eighty-five students of it—was determined in the 1830s not to be left behind in the race to build good libraries in the young United States. Thirty-five American institutions benefited from the generosity of the British government in the dissemination of recently published public documents during the 1830s; but it may be that UVM (*Universitas Viridi*

RECORD COMMISSION,

12th March 1831.

THIS BOOK

IS TO BE

PERPETUALLY PRESERVED

IN

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF
VERMONT.

C. P. COOPER,

Sec. Com. Pub. Rec.

January 1853.

Opposite the title pages of the eighty-one volumes it donated to the University of Vermont, the Record Commission of Great Britain made clear its commitment to preserving the public record. Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Vermont.

Montis) needed these valuable books even more than larger colleges with long established libraries.

The printed catalogue of the University of Vermont library, issued in 1836,¹ lists under "British state papers" thirty-one works in eighty-one volumes. An examination of these volumes indicates that all except one bear the "to be perpetually preserved" admonition. All but three works, in seven volumes, are still on the shelves of the Vermont library. Most of these volumes, sixty-one of which are folios, are now sequestered in Special Collections and catalogued as "Treasures."

STATUTES
OF
THE REALM.

PRINTED BY COMMAND
OF HIS MAJESTY
KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

IN PURSUANCE OF AN ADDRESS OF
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

From Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

MDCCLXXIX

Included in Britain's gift to the university's library were the twelve large volumes of The Statutes of the Realm. Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Vermont.

Among the works donated to the university, and quite as valuable to historians today as they were to students of the 1830s, are a twelve-volume collection of *The Statutes of the Realm*—the series having been published between 1810 and 1828; ten volumes setting forth all the Acts of the Scottish Parliament up to 1824; and a 1783 two-volume edition of the Domesday Book, that unique survey of the lands and valuables of all of England, ordered by William the Conqueror just twenty years after the Norman Conquest in 1066.

Trustees' *Minutes of the University* reveal that on 3 September 1835 "the President [the Reverend John Wheeler], in behalf of the executive committee, introduced the following resolutions, to wit: 'Resolved, that the thanks of the Corporation of the University of Vermont be presented to his Britannic Majesty's Government for the valuable donation to the Library of the University of copies of the books published by the Commission of Public Records. . . . Resolved, that the thanks of the University of Vermont be presented to Sir Charles E. Vaughan for his personal kindness in presenting the wants of the Library of the University to the consideration of His Britannic Majesty's government.'" The resolutions were "unanimously adopted."² *The University Ledger* for 4 August 1835 includes the following item: "To stock for seventy-two folio and sundry octavo vols. from the English Govt—valued \$850.00."³

The first thought of anyone familiar with the history of the Vermont library would be that Joseph Torrey, professor of Latin and Greek languages, librarian, and sometime president, must have been instrumental in calling the attention of the British government to the needs of the university. Anne Torrey Frueh's "Joseph Torrey and the Early Development of the University of Vermont Library" reveals, however, that although Torrey went to England and the continent in 1828, and did some book-buying for the university at that time, it was not until 1835 that he made the trip to Europe that contributed materially to establishing the UVM library as worthy of special recognition among college libraries of that day.⁴ Some idea of the reputation, at least among enthusiasts, of the University of Vermont's library after the Torrey purchase may be gathered from the comment of Representative George Perkins Marsh, himself a distinguished bibliophile, when he spoke before Congress on the "Bill to Establish the Smithsonian Institution" in 1846. Pleading with typical Yankee frugality that books be "economically purchased," he remarked, "The best public library in America, for its extent (10,000 volumes), which I am happy to say is that of the university of my native state, Vermont, cost but \$1.50 per volume."

The library catalogue of 1836 reveals that only some two or three thousand books had thus far been secured for the library; Professor Torrey had not yet had time to land his treasured books on the doorstep of his university. All the more welcome, therefore, were the eighty-one volumes from England.

It is to the British Public Record Office that one must turn to discover the full story of the gift of books from Britain to America, and in fact to all corners of the world. Ann Morton, Assistant Keeper, Search Department of the Public Record Office, has graciously provided much information gleaned from the records, and has made it possible to secure photocopies of relevant documents.⁵

Mrs. Morton points out that in 1831 the Record Commissioners were considering the best means of disposing of their stock of publications, when "the Library of the United States of America" asked for copies of the Commission's publications.⁶ The Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, approved sending copies of the publications to the "Library of the U.S.A." (Library of Congress); and C. Purton Cooper, secretary of the Record Commission, "took the issue further" by suggesting in 1833 that "certain public libraries abroad" be furnished with copies of the records of the kingdom.⁷

The Foreign Office approved this plan, but apparently the University of Vermont was not included in the initial distribution list. There were, however, alert people at the University of Vermont, and two alert Vermont senators in Congress. Sir Charles Vaughan, minister-plenipotentiary to the United States, sent a dispatch to the Foreign Secretary dated 12 October 1834 in which he enclosed a letter from President Wheeler of UVM, and letters from Senators Samuel Prentiss and Benjamin Swift,⁸ together with one from James Baxter, member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada. All these letters asked that the University of Vermont be included "in the munificent donation to the libraries and universities of this country" of "such books as the collection of the Statutes of the Realm."⁹

Senator Prentiss's letter comments that Great Britain's donation of books to American libraries "has been made known to the people of this State through the medium of the public journals."¹⁰ He mentions the fact that the gift includes "the Statutes of the Realms, Doomesday [*sic*] Book, Rymer's Collection" and other "rare and ancient public documents which must form a valuable acquisition to the seminaries of learning, and cannot fail to be justly appreciated, in the different states, where they may be received."

"Rymer's Collection" is listed in UVM's 1836 catalogue as *Foedora*, 6 parts in 3 vols., London, 1816-1830. This new edition of *Foedora*, prepared by Dr. Adam Clark, continued the project begun by Thomas Rhymer, Historiographer Royal. It was Rhymer's ambitious plan to publish "all records of alliances and other transactions in which England was concerned with foreign powers from 1101 to the time of publication." The full title of this work, the first volume of which appeared in 1704, is *Foedora, Conventiones, Litterae et Cujuscumque generis Acta Publica inter reges Angliae et alios quosnis imperatore, reges, etc., ab A.D. 1101 ad nostra usque tempore habita aut tractata*. By 1735 the work had progressed to fifteen volumes and the year 1383.

Senator Prentiss's letter reveals how the Record Commission selected the colleges and libraries in the United States to which its publications were sent. Prentiss states that the catalogue of libraries provided to the



Samuel Prentiss served in the United States Senate from 1831 to 1842 when he resigned to accept a federal judgeship. Although he was perhaps best known for his advocacy of a law to suppress duelling in the District of Columbia, Prentiss was also a warm supporter of education.

British government by "Mr. P. Rich of London and designated as proper objects of its munificence," does not include the University of Vermont. P. Rich was a son of Obadiah Rich (1783-1850), who was born in Truro, Mass., became American consul at Valencia, Spain, and moved to London in 1829 to become a bookseller. He took his sons into partnership with him; joined both the Massachusetts Historical Society and the American Antiquarian Society; and became an agent for a number of American libraries and book collectors.¹¹

In view of the fact that in 1834 the University of Vermont had only

six faculty members and eighty-five students, it is perhaps not surprising that the institution was overlooked. There is even, in Sir Charles Vaughan's letter to Lord Palmerston, a hint of an ancient rivalry. Sir Charles says that he understands that a set of the works has been presented to Middlebury College in Vermont, "the library of which consists of a greater collection of books than that of the University at Burlington." He gives it as his opinion that if Middlebury has indeed received the books, "it is probable that the donation of more than one copy of this expensive publication to any one state cannot reasonably be expected." He points out, however, that the University of Vermont is "the oldest literary institution in the state," adding that it was founded in 1791. Middlebury would have been quick to point out that, although UVM was founded first, Middlebury was first to graduate a class (in 1802, with UVM trailing in 1804). There is no evidence that Middlebury received any of the donated works, and it is apparent both from Sir Charles's letter and from the list of libraries that did receive donations¹² that the intent was to provide one set of books to one college library in each state, and that institutions were favored if they bore the names of states. Thus the University of Virginia received a set of books, while William and Mary did not. Although Columbia was too prominent to be passed over, a set of books was also sent to "the University of the State of New York" (New York University). Three states received two donations each: New York, Massachusetts (Harvard and Amherst), and Maine (Bowdoin and Waterville College, now Colby). Of the nineteen college libraries listed, nine bear the names of states (Ohio, Alabama, Georgia, etc.), and two those of cities (St. Louis University, Waterville College).¹³

Both Senator Prentiss and Senator Swift stressed the importance of the University of Vermont, and they joined with Mr. Baxter in pointing out that the donated books might be of service not only to Vermonters but also to Canadians who lived across the border in "Lower Canada" (Quebec). Prentiss called UVM "a college of much reputation and usefulness," and described its condition as "flourishing." Swift declared that the institution, "though young, is highly respectable."¹⁴ Baxter, writing from Stanstead, Lower Canada, spoke of the fact that books donated to the University of Vermont "may be of service to His Majesty's subjects in this province." He added that the university is the "most northern of the kind in the Union." Prentiss declared that the donation "may aid . . . in keeping up a friendly intercourse between the people of this state and the Canada." Swift went so far as to say that the university "promises to be of more service to the Subjects of the British Government in Lower Canada, than any other institution of the kind in the States."

It is interesting to note that, prior to the founding in 1821 of McGill University in Montreal, and for some time thereafter, the University of

Vermont drew a number of its students from "Lower Canada." As early as 1809 the first Canadian to enter the university, Charles Gove Lester of Montreal, was enrolled. By 1838 there were seven Canadians among the eighty-four students. Something of the freedom with which settlers moved back and forth across the border is indicated by the fact that several students who gave their residences as Canada were born in the United States. Thus John Alden Spooner, who took part of his college course



Benjamin Swift practiced law many years in St. Albans and served both in the House of Representatives (1827-1831) and the United States Senate (1833-1839). He supported the university in its acquisition of these volumes.

in UVM, was born in Charlestown, Mass., "fitted for college" in Montreal, was graduated from General Theological Seminary in New York City in 1838, and served as an Episcopal clergyman in the United States until his death in 1890 in New Jersey. Similarly Jason Niles, born in Vermont, entered UVM from Hatley, Quebec, was graduated in 1837, and between 1872 and 1875 was a member of Congress from Mississippi.

Among Canadian students at the University of Vermont who returned to Canada were three Robertson brothers whose family had immigrated from Stuartsfield, Scotland, to Sherbrooke, Quebec. Andrew Robertson, class of 1838, became a Queen's Councillor, and established a law firm in Montreal with his brother, William Robertson, class of 1849. Andrew also became a governor of McGill University. William became a Q.C. in 1880, and received an LL.D. degree from UVM in 1884. The third brother, George Russell Robertson, class of 1839, was also a lawyer. Lucius Doolittle, born in Lyndon, Vermont, in 1800, was living in Hatley, Quebec, when he attended UVM. An Episcopal clergyman, Doolittle was the originator of the University of Bishops College in Lennoxville, Quebec.¹⁵

The letter to Sir Charles Vaughan from President Wheeler, dated 2 October 1834, which enclosed the supporting letters from Baxter, Prentiss, and Swift, made the graceful assertion that "the liberal spirit manifested by His Britannic Majesty's Government in the offer they have made, is reciprocated, by none with more cordiality, than by the Corporation and the Academical Faculty of the University of Vermont."

Things moved rapidly after Sir Charles received the Wheeler packet of letters. His separate dispatch to the Foreign Secretary, enclosing his own and the other letters, was dated 12 October 1834. On 16 November the Foreign Office, in a letter signed by G. Shee,¹⁶ and directed to C. Purton Cooper, secretary of the Record Commission, expressed Viscount Palmerston's belief that it would be "desirable" to send a set of the books in question to the library of the university of the State of Vermont, "which is understood to be the oldest literary institution in that State."¹⁷ Three days later, 19 November, Cooper had "the honor to state" to Sir George Shee that the Commissioners of Public Records had directed the King's Printers to forward a set of their publications to the University of Vermont. By 4 December the Foreign Office was informing Sir Charles Vaughan that the books were on the way. Less than a year later, 29 October 1835, Charles Bankhead, who took Sir Charles Vaughan's place in the embassy at Washington during the latter's absence, transmitted to Lord Palmerston a letter from President Wheeler, dated 29 September 1835, that conveyed to Sir Charles the thanks of the university for the gift. The letter quoted the two resolutions of thanks, one to His Britannic Majesty's government and the other to the Right Honorable Sir Charles R. Vaughan, that have been described above. In the day of handwritten directives, sailing ships, and the forwarding of mail by horseback, it took just one year to carry this complicated transaction from start to finish. It is interesting to speculate on how long it would take modern technology to complete a similar undertaking.

Of the several American university libraries that benefited from this generosity on the part of the British government, most report that a large



John Wheeler, sixth president of the University of Vermont, was also determined that the university's library should benefit from Britain's largesse.

part or all of the gift is still intact.¹⁸ Even a university in the path of the Civil War—Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky—has “the bulk of the collection,” although during the war it was necessary to disperse the entire library “throughout the town” in order to preserve it. The University of Georgia reports that sixty-three folio volumes are in the Special

Collections division, many of them gold-stamped on the spine "Presented / to the Univ. / by Brit. / Government." The collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill seems intact. Farther north the weather rather than war created something of a problem. Minutes of the board of trustees of Ohio University at Athens report on 16 September 1834 the "royal donation" from the British government, announce that the books have safely arrived in New York, and add that "the low state of the water in the Ohio" is causing some delay in getting the books out to Athens. Today's library staff believes that "the whole of the gift is intact." Saint Louis University reports that the "bulk of the public documents" donated by "His Britannic Majesty's Government" are now in the rare book collection, after having been on open stacks for many years.

In the northeast most libraries have in their collections substantially the whole series of public documents that were given to them in the 1830s. Indeed, detailed searches by several of the librarians consulted indicate that gifts from the British government continued for several years after the initial donations of 1834-1835. *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*, published in 1841, and therefore by command not of King William but of "Her Majesty Queen Victoria," is reported in the libraries of Colby College (Waterville) and New York University. This volume is also at the University of Vermont. Georgia finds a volume published in 1840, and Amherst has a book published in 1845 among its 114 volumes (in 53 works) identified as gifts from Great Britain.

A number of librarians responding to queries about their collections provided interesting sidelights. Thus New York University indicated how aware its former Director of the Library, Dr. John Frost (now retired), had been of the collection when some twenty years ago "he installed a special exhibit of His Majesty's gift" at the University Heights campus. Amherst points out that the initial gift volumes had separate printed gift slips in each book, but that later volumes had the gift statement printed on the verso of each title page. Columbia reports a vote of thanks to the Record Commissioners, recorded in the *Columbia College Trustees Minutes* of 4 February 1835. Bowdoin's gift books have been kept in the regular circulating collection, but some thought is now being given to transferring certain of the volumes to Special Collections. Brown reports that the library's accession record indicates that its books were sent "through O. Rich, Esq., of London." Dartmouth's donated books were kept in that library's document collection for many years, and were not accessioned in the regular collection until early in the twentieth century. An inspection of the individual volumes, however, showed that they were "to be perpetually preserved in the library of Dartmouth College," and had been signed by the secretary of the Record Commission in 1834 and subsequent years.

In the century and a half that have elapsed since the gifts were made, some of the books distributed by the Public Record Commission have reached American university libraries by roundabout routes. In the University of Texas's Perry-Castaneda Library, for instance, is a copy of *Calendar of the Proceedings in Chancery in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, volume two, published by the Record Commission in 1830. On the verso of the title page is printed: "The Wolverhampton Subscription Library. To be returned, in the event of dissolution, to the office of the Secretary of State, Home Department, London." This statement was signed by C. P. Cooper, secretary, in July of 1834. The University of Arizona Library has a copy of *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, published in 1808, which indicates that before the day of the gift to foreign libraries the Record Commission urged perpetual preservation upon recipients of its bounty. The verso of the title page reads, "This book is to be perpetually preserved in and for the use of the Signet Office. 1809." The Arizona library also has the two-volume *Domesday Book* of 1783, with *Index* and *Additamenta* volumes, which was mentioned as a special prize by those who wrote asking for books for the Vermont library. In the Arizona copies all four title pages are now photocopied versions. From what library the books were extracted, and by what miscreant the title pages were cut out, will doubtless never be known.

It was unfortunately not possible to follow the trail of the Record Commission books to every library in the land; but it seems evident that many university and other libraries in the United States are enjoying in 1986 the generosity of His (and Her) Britannic Majesty's government as manifested in the gifts of valuable publications made in the 1830s and 1840s. The optimism of the Record Commissioners, in stipulating that their books should be perpetually preserved in the teeth of fire, flood, financial disaster, and other natural and unnatural problems that beset libraries, was apparently justified.

In a foreword to *The Library of Congress*, by Gene Gurney and Nick Apple (rev. ed., New York, 1981), Daniel J. Boorstin, Librarian of Congress, describes the United States as "perhaps the first nation in history to be consciously based on the literacy of its people." He calls the country a place of "endless internal migrations of knowledge and of ideas, a catalyst and an energizer, an opener of new openings." To this endless migration of knowledge His Britannic Majesty's government made a not inconsiderable contribution.

¹ University of Vermont Library, *Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the Library of the University of Vermont* (Burlington, Vt.: 1836).

² University of Vermont Archives. Records of the University of Vermont. Trustees' Minutes, 1829-1865.

³ University of Vermont Archives. Ledger, 8/8/1834-1/24/1844, pp. 45 and 46. John Buechler, director of the Special Collections department of the University's Bailey-Howe Library, has informed the writer that one work on the list, *The Statutes of the Realm*, sold at auction in 1967 for \$900. The two-volume *Domesday Book*, with its *Index* and *Addimenta*, went for three hundred pounds in 1979.

⁴ Anne Torrey Frueh's master's essay on Torrey was presented to the McGill University Graduate School of Library Science in 1970. The story of Professor Torrey's spending of ten thousand dollars to acquire seven thousand books is told in detail by Anne Frueh.

⁵ Considerable information in subsequent paragraphs is drawn from Mrs. Morton's letter to Betty Bandel, dated 13 December 1983, from the Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey.

⁶ In a letter to the writer dated 13 June 1984 James H. Hutson, Chief, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, states that there are no letter-books of the Librarian of Congress before 1843. Mr. Hutson calls attention, however, to a letter dated 8 March 1831 from John Silva Meehan, Librarian of Congress, to Edward Everett, chairman of Congress's Joint Committee on the Library, which discusses books being purchased in London for the Library of Congress. The London bookseller, "Mr. Rich," who is providing these books, is the person whose firm in 1834 advised the Commissioners of the Public Records as to which American libraries should receive gifts of works published by the Commission. Mr. Hutson suggests that the letter specifically requesting copies of the Commission's publications may have been written by Mr. Everett, who manifested great interest in the library. This letter was written nine years before the Twenty-sixth Congress in 1840 took action to encourage the exchange of public documents between the Library of Congress and foreign libraries. See U.S. Government Publications. Serial Set. Nos. 353-369: 26th Congress, 1st Session, 2 December 1839-21 July 1840.

⁷ *The General Report to the King in Council from the Honourable Board of Commissioners on the Public Records*, published by the Record Commission in 1838, says in part: "We have also thought it highly expedient to present copies to foreign states. A few sets had been sent to the Hanoverian dominions of Your Majesty. . . . The present Commission . . . has enlarged the continental distribution to the extent of seventy-one sets. . . . There have been also sent thirty-four sets to the United States of America; and we have the satisfaction to report that they have been received, everywhere, with demonstrations of gratitude and esteem." The first signature at the close of the report is that of William, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

The record of the accomplishments of the commission, from its establishment in 1800 to 1812, appears in *British Sessional Papers. House of Commons*. 1819, Vol. 20: "First General Report from the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty to execute the measures recommended by the select committee of the House of Commons respecting the Public Records of the Kingdom." When the commission began its work, it found some of the public records "unarranged, undescribed, and unascertained." Some were "exposed to erasure, alteration, and embezzlement." Others were "lodged in places where they are daily perishing by Damp. . . ." The commission, which included such members as the "three principal Secretaries of State," the Speaker of the House, and the Master of the Rolls, was established to provide for "the better arrangement, preservation, and more convenient use" of the records.

⁸ Samuel Prentiss, United States senator from Vermont from 1831 to 1842, is described in the *Dictionary of American Biography* as "excessively modest and unassertive," but as having the reputation of being "the most learned lawyer in Vermont." He early acquired "a taste for literature which he never lost." In Congress he sponsored the law that forbade duelling in the District of Columbia. Both his love of learning and his desire for cooperation are apparent in his letter urging that UVM be included among the libraries to receive the Public Records publications.

Benjamin Swift, United States senator from Vermont from 1833 to 1839, is described in terms similar to those applied to Senator Prentiss. His biographer speaks of his "timid reserve" and "clearness and depth of judgment." Like Prentiss in Montpelier, Swift, a resident of St. Albans, conducted a successful law practice. (Abby Maria Hemenway, *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, 2 (1871), 328.)

⁹ Excerpts from Crown-copyright records in the Public Record Office appear by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationary Office. All letters discussed here were included by Sir Charles Vaughan in his separate dispatch to the Foreign Office of 12 October 1834, FO 5/292, pp. 179-194.

¹⁰ See, for example, *Niles' Register* for 2 August 1834: "Magnificent Donation. It is remembered, no doubt, by our readers, that Mr. Rich, formerly American consul at Malaga, and now proprietor of a large book establishment in London, was some time since applied to for a list of the principal public libraries in each state of the union. The object was to present to each, on the part of the British government, a splendid collection of volumes from the Record Commission at London. These works, valued at £300, and all in folio and bound, have arrived. We have been highly gratified with the inspection of those received by the New York Society Library. . . ." (*New York Conn. Ad.*)

Stephen Ferguson, curator of rare books at Princeton, has called my attention to a notice regarding the British books that appeared in the December 1834 issue of *American Annals of Education*, p. 579. The brief article speaks of the British government's "liberal donation of 80 folio volumes to each of the fifteen principal college libraries in the United States. . . ." The figures are slightly awry, but the article must have helped to spread word of the gift among American educators.

¹¹ George B. Utley, "Obadiah Rich," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1935 / 1963, Vol. 15, originally Vol. 8, p. 549. In 1832 Rich published *A Catalogue of Books, Relating Principally to America, Arranged upon the Years in Which They Were Printed*.

¹² "List of the Libraries to which the new works of the Record Commission have been presented," dated 9 February 1838, PRO 36 / 53.

¹³ The writer is indebted to Jonathan Piper, a graduate student at Yale University, for calling to her attention the fact that letters in the Yale University Library's manuscript collection shed light, in addition to that given in Senator Prentiss's letter, on how American colleges were selected to receive the donated books. In Records of the Librarian, Yale University Archives, Yale University Library, there is a letter to Reverend Jeremiah Day, president of Yale College, entitled "Record Commission Donation, Feb. 22, 1834." The letter, signed by "O. Rich, agent to the Library of Congress, and to the principal Library Institutions in the United States," lists six public and fifteen college libraries that are to receive the gift publications. The letter states, "Some of the latter . . . are inserted more on account of their *locality*, there being other Libraries of more importance, but situated in the immediate neighbourhood of the Institutions mentioned in the first part of the list." Apparently people other than Vermonters were active in promoting the interests of their institutions, since the final list of colleges receiving the books includes, in addition to the University of Vermont, three colleges not listed by O. Rich: Columbia, the University of the State of New York, and Waterville College. Mr. Rich took it upon himself to list the libraries, except for those favored because of their localities, "according to their relative importance." The six "public" libraries, in order, are the Philadelphia Library, the Boston Athenaeum, the New York Society Library, the Charleston Society Library, the Baltimore City Library, and the New York State Library in Albany. Harvard, Yale, and the University of Virginia head the college list, with Transylvania University and Bowdoin in the middle, and the University of Ohio and St. Louis University bringing up the rear.

The nineteen college libraries which, in the end, received the books are Alabama, Amherst, Bowdoin, Brown, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Georgia, Princeton, North Carolina, Ohio, Saint Louis University, South Carolina College, Transylvania, University of the State of New York, Vermont, University of Virginia, Waterville College, and Yale. Eventually sixteen sets of books were sent to other American institutions. The British government's generosity was by no means exhausted when it had supplied American libraries. The "List of Libraries" names 257 institutions that received the sets of books, 109 of them in Great Britain; and others in Zurich, Christiania, Venice, Bengal, Prince Edward Island, St. Petersburg, Corfu, "The island of the Mauritius," and about every other corner of the earth to which libraries had penetrated.

¹⁴ Despite its small size, the university under the leadership of President James Marsh had in the late 1820s undertaken an experiment in liberal and innovative higher education that had attracted considerable notice. Rev. John Wheeler, in *A Historical Discourse* (Burlington, 1854), p. 29, declared: "The [experiment] was received with great favor, by a large proportion of the public, and especially by the ripest scholars in the country."

¹⁵ Information on Canadian students at UVM is drawn from *General Catalogue of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, 1791-1900* (Burlington, Vt., 1901).

¹⁶ Sir George Shee, Bart.

¹⁷ FO 5 / 298.

¹⁸ The following librarians have graciously assisted in carrying out this study by examining the British government's gift books in their collections and reporting their findings: John Lancaster, head Special Collections and Archives, Amherst College; John B. Ladley, Reference Librarian, Bowdoin College; Jennifer S. Banks, Gifts and Collection Maintenance Librarian, Brown University; Virginia L. Close, Reference Librarian, Dartmouth College; Rita P. Bouchard, Colby College; Eileen McIlvaine, Reference Librarian, Columbia University; Robert M. Willingham Jr., curator Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Georgia; Frank Walker, Fales Librarian, New York University; Pat Langelier, International Documents Librarian, University of North Carolina; Sheppard Black, Special Collections Librarian, Ohio University at Athens; Stephen Ferguson, Curator of Rare Books, Princeton University; Brian Forney, Head Reference Librarian, Saint Louis University; Carolyn D. Palmgreen, acting Curator of Special Collections, Transylvania University; Judith A. Schiff, Chief Research Archivist, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.