

Martin Harris and Three Wise Men

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The history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a “marvelous work and a wonder,” an unfolding story of revelation, sacrifice, and faith. As a Church historian, I am continually amazed at why it is that some toss and tangle with our past to discredit their faith and that of those around them while others find solace, cheer, and comfort from our past. I am of the latter persuasion and have chosen to see the hand of the Lord not only in our history but also in the discovery of new understandings of His handiwork in the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in these latter days. If my bias is showing, it is only because of my firm testimony that in all its ups and downs, comings and goings, this is the Lord’s doing and His hand figures carefully, if not always prominently, in this great work. And as for Church history, we learn patiently “line upon line,” or, as the scripture says: “But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Romans 8:25). I wish to discuss one example of this today.

My purpose is to share with you new light on a very important episode in our history. In 1970 the late Stanley B. Kimball published an article in *BYU Studies* in which he examined the significance of the so-called “Anthon Transcript,” the identity of the leading schol-

ars who Martin Harris consulted in February 1828, and why Harris returned so committed to financing the printing of the Book of Mormon.¹ My specific purpose in delivering this much abridged version of a longer study I have recently published is to reveal the identity of the three “wise men” Harris visited—Luther Bradish, Charles Anthon, and Samuel L. Mitchill—and what in their background, training, and personalities uniquely prepared them for Harris’s visit and why Harris left New York so resolved to pay for the Book of Mormon’s printing.²

The outlines of this story are well known. In late 1827, working with the gold plates and the Urim and Thummim, Joseph Smith began translating the “reformed Egyptian” characters found in the book of Lehi on the large plates of Nephi. As part of this early work, he transcribed some of the characters as a sort of alphabet or reference guide. His primary scribe was then Martin Harris—a well-known and respected Palmyra farmer, an early and keen supporter of Joseph Smith’s work, and later one of the Three Witnesses. For a variety of

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reasons, not the least of which was the resentment of his wife, Lucy, at his growing involvement, Harris persuaded Joseph to let him take a transcription to New York City, as historian B. H. Roberts wrote, “to submit them to men of learning for their inspection.”³ Roberts says Harris submitted “two papers containing different transcripts, to Professors Anthon and Mitchell [*sic*], of New York, one that was translated and one not translated.”⁴

According to Anthon’s own accounts, Harris first visited Mitchill, who wrote him a letter referring him to Anthon,⁵ who in turn “stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian” and that the characters “were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyric, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters . . . and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct.”⁶ However, when Harris said that an angel had given Joseph the book, Anthon tore up his certificate, vehemently denied the possibility of heavenly manifestations, and told Harris to bring him the plates, which he would translate. When Harris replied he could not do so and that parts of the plates were sealed, Anthon brusquely responded, “I cannot read a sealed book.”⁷ Harris promptly returned to Mitchill, “who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation.”⁸ Sometime later this entire episode came to be interpreted as fulfilling Isaiah 29:11, which speaks of “the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed.”⁹ Whatever else Harris gleaned from these leading scholars, they confirmed his beliefs and encouraged him to devote his time, energy, and resources to the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon. If he left Palmyra wondering and inquiring, Harris returned supporting and defending.

Luther Bradish

William W. Phelps recalled that Harris went to New York City by way of Albany, the state capital.¹⁰ Pomeroy Tucker mentioned that “he sought . . . the interpretation and bibliographical scrutiny of such scholars as Hon. Luther Bradish, Dr. Mitchell, Professor Anthon, and others.”¹¹ Why was Harris interested in this man Bradish?

In 1828 Luther Bradish (1788–1863) was a newly elected member of the New York State Assembly who would later run for governor. Born and raised in Massachusetts, Bradish had lived for a considerable period of time in Palmyra, where his parents had moved in 1798. Bradish remained in Massachusetts to attend Williams College, graduating with a BA in 1804. After graduation he rejoined his parents in Palmyra before accepting a teaching post in 1806 at Union Hall Academy in Jamaica, Long Island. By 1810 Bradish had opted for a law career, and he became a very successful, relatively wealthy lawyer whose clients included such well-known literary figures as Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. On several occasions, certainly in 1815 and again in 1819, he had made extensive visits to Palmyra.

Thus Martin Harris was calling on a man with whom he was already well acquainted. The Harris and Bradish families had both come to Palmyra in the 1790s. In 1804 both Martin’s and Luther Bradish’s fathers were together elected as overseers of roads. By 1811 Martin Harris and Calvin Bradish, Luther’s older brother, had replaced their fathers as overseers and worked together for a year.

In April 1816 Bradish’s wife, Helen, died in giving birth to their son, who also perished. Bradish sought consolation or at least distraction by traveling abroad. A Whig like John Quincy Adams (then secretary of state and later U.S. president), Bradish applied for a special passport in 1820 offering to serve his

country if it cared to take advantage of his whereabouts.

Adams was particularly interested in promoting American commercial interests with the Ottoman Empire at a time when acute tensions were developing between Turkey and the Muslim countries on the one side and Greece, Russia, and Great Britain on the other. England was especially wary about American interference in this volatile Mediterranean region. Thus Bradish went to Turkey as a private citizen but in a secret, quasi-official capacity. His assigned objectives were to discover whether American interests could be furthered by a treaty of amity and commerce with the Ottoman Empire; to determine the best way of accomplishing this objective; and, finally, to obtain free passage for American ships to Russian ports on the Black Sea. Secretly transported by American naval ships, young Bradish traveled to Constantinople, capital of the Ottoman Empire, which then held loose control over Egypt, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. With a special passport from the sultan's government, Bradish secretly embarked for Egypt in February 1821. He stayed there for five months and held several meetings with the Egyptian ruler Mohammed Ali Pasha.

His visit to Egypt coincided with the "war of the consuls" between England and France over the archaeological spoils of Egypt, then being plundered by European excavators. Since Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, an intense European interest in Egyptian antiquities had developed, highlighted by the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in 1799 and its eventual decipherment in 1822 by the brilliant French linguist Jean-François Champollion. Interest in all things Egyptian was at a fever pitch when Bradish, the only known American in Egypt at the time, sailed up the Nile to the Second Cataract. As his biographer stated, "His curiosity led him into areas few other Americans of his day even knew existed."¹² He was at Dendera at precisely the same time

the French excavator Jean Baptiste LeLorraine was removing the famed Circular or Dendera Zodiac from the roof of the Hathor Temple for transport to Paris. Bradish was consequently well versed in the excavations and archaeological intrigues of his time. He finally returned home to America in December 1825.

Thus Bradish was more conversant with contemporary American interests in the Middle East and with Egyptian archaeological excavations and the emerging field of biblical archaeology than any other contemporary American. Though not a linguist by training or profession, he knew firsthand of the rising interest in Egyptian hieroglyphics and antiquities. This fact coupled with the strong likelihood that Martin Harris and Luther Bradish were acquainted and that Bradish knew men in New York City renowned for their learning may explain why Harris visited Bradish in Albany before continuing on down the Hudson to New York City.

"A Man to Be Obeyed": Dr. Charles Anthon

Our second wise man of the east was the young and coming scholar of linguistics, thirty-one-year-old Professor Charles Anthon (1797–1867), who had become a professor of languages at Columbia in 1820. While he later achieved fame for his 1825 edition of Lempriere's *Classical Dictionary*, at the time of Harris's visit in 1828 Anthon was but an adjunct professor of Greek and Latin—more an accomplished grammarian than a prestigious scholar.

His first love was the classics, especially the works of Homer and Herodotus. While he had superb mastery of Greek, Latin, German, and French, there is little indication that he knew much about Egyptian, Hebrew, or any other Middle Eastern language. But because of his love of languages, he was probably aware of emerging research interests in Egyptian hieroglyphics and knew that Champollion had

recently deciphered the ancient Egyptian writings on the Rosetta Stone.

By force of his own brusque personality, he laid claim to much greater knowledge in this area than he actually possessed. A bachelor, crotchety recluse, and strict disciplinarian with an iron constitution, Anthon rose early and retired late. A personal interview might elicit an unpleasant experience, as Anthon hated interruptions, whether from college administrators or lowly students. He shunned faculty parties and all forms of social life. His life was his books and the halls of academia. A man of decisive mannerisms, authoritarian bearing, ready wit, and “sometimes biting sarcasm,” Anthon was clearly a “man to be obeyed.”¹³

Samuel L. Mitchill: “A Chaos of Knowledge”

The third man in our story was the leading natural scientist in America: Professor Samuel Latham Mitchill, formerly of Columbia College and, at the time of Harris’s visit, vice president of Rutgers Medical College in New York City. A Quaker from birth who was “rather short and inclining to corpulency,” full faced with a “large double chin and a pleasant open countenance,” Mitchill in 1828 was sixty-four and nearing the end of an illustrious career. He was regarded by presidents and paupers, farmers and fishermen, as one of America’s greatest minds and scholars, a man of the many and a friend of every class. He possessed a voracious curiosity and a “taste for . . . new discoveries.”¹⁴ Eager to learn from everyone, no matter what their station in life, he was as gracious as Anthon was abrupt.

Born in Long Island, New York, in 1764, Mitchill graduated in medicine from the University of Edinburgh in 1786. Upon returning to America, he joined the faculty of Columbia College (formerly King’s College under the recently terminated British rule) as professor of chemistry, natural history, and agriculture. Here he taught for eleven years. In 1797 Mitchill launched America’s first medi-

cal/scientific journal, the *Medical Repository*, and he remained its chief editor for eighteen years. He also founded and edited the *American Chemist* and was a pioneer in the study of hydrogen and evaporation.

In 1799 he married Catharine (“Kate”) Ackerly; from their voluminous correspondence they enjoyed a most felicitous relationship. A popular public figure, Mitchill served as an assemblyman in the New York Legislature (1797–1800), then resigned from Columbia in 1801 to serve until 1805 in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was then elected U.S. senator, a post he held until 1809. He was an ardent supporter of Robert Fulton’s efforts to build the first steamboat, which churned up the Hudson River in 1808, and was also an enthusiastic proponent of the Erie Canal, a major project of his friend Governor De Witt Clinton. As senator, Mitchill had supported President Jefferson’s efforts to explore “certain remote and unknown parts of Louisiana” and worked hard to gain funding for the Louisiana Purchase.¹⁵ Jefferson sent Mitchill and the American Philosophical Society several new specimens of flora and fauna forwarded to him by Lewis and Clark during their famous explorations westward.

A member of forty-nine different learned societies in eleven countries, he lectured widely and published papers on geography, earthquakes, hurricanes, hydrography, botany, and zoology. Author of several books and scores of articles on topics ranging from his groundbreaking study of the importance of sanitation in fighting pestilential disease to his massive report on the state’s ichthyology and fish species,¹⁶ by the time he died on September 7, 1831, he had earned the plaudits of the great and the small. Benjamin Moore called him “a chaos of knowledge.”¹⁷ He was known among his colleagues as “the Nestor of American science,”¹⁸ also the “Stalking Library,”¹⁹ and “the Delphic Oracle of New York.”²⁰ And even President Thomas Jefferson referred to him as

the "Congressional Dictionary."²¹ At his burial in Greenwood Cemetery in New York City, the sexton described Mitchill with the following: "A great character. One who knew all things on earth, and in the waters of the great deep."²²

"A Nation Now Extinct Which He Named"

In addition, Mitchill possessed special interests and experiences that may have prompted Bradish and Anthon to send Harris to see him: his intimate knowledge of the American Indian and New York State's geology and mineralogy; a marked familiarity with western New York, including Ontario County, as well as with American antiquities; a knowledge of ancient languages and hieroglyphics; and finally, his genuine love of people.

His interest in America's native peoples grew directly out of his careful observations and prodigious knowledge as perhaps the leading mineralogist and geologist of his time. A frequent visitor to Niagara, Ontario, Genesee, Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga counties, he had found and catalogued a great many salt-based sea fossils from this region.

Mitchill's many expeditions significantly contributed to his massive collection or "museum" of geological specimens, which formed the basis of his "Mitchillian Cabinet" packed with fossils, rocks, skeletons, ancient artifacts, and specimens. His research interests had led him to discover several ancient Indian burial mounds and fortifications stretching across upstate New York from Sacketts Harbor to Boughton Hill in Ontario County and from Canandaigua to Onondaga. His lifelong friend and fervent admirer De Witt Clinton likewise came to consider such constructions to be of ancient origin, the places of great battles between ancient Indian tribes long before the arrival of the European races.

Trusted and highly respected, Mitchill had been adopted into the Mohawk fraternity, had learned their language, and had translated into English many of their Indian war

songs. The Oneidas and the Onondagas had even bestowed personal names on him.²³ He sustained an abiding interest in Indian languages and later concluded that all tribal languages were derived from the same linguistic root. A longtime member of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia; the Natural History Society of New York City; the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts; and many other contemporary centers of research; he shared his findings freely with contemporary colleagues and students of the American Indian at a time when much discussion focused on their origins and culture.

Stemming from his work with the Indian nations and from his years in the U.S. Senate as chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Mitchill had developed his own theory on the origin of the ancient American Indians. He had come to the conviction that "three races of Malays, Tartars, and Scandinavians, contribute to make up the American population."²⁴ Mitchill believed that the "Tartars" (as he called the originating stock) were primarily from northeastern Russia and China.²⁵

After visiting various caves in Kentucky and carefully examining mummies and bones found there and elsewhere, he originated the idea that another "more delicate race" had once co-inhabited ancient America. He believed that this delicate race, whom he termed "Australasians" or "Malays," had originated in the Polynesian Islands. Their physical size and physiognomy "all have a perfect resemblance" to those of "the Sandwich, the Caroline, and the Feejee [Fiji] Islands," he asserted.²⁶ These tribes of "the lower latitudes" had "greater proficients [*sic*] in the arts" than their northern enemies, "particularly of making cloths, clearing the ground, and erecting works of defence."²⁷ They began with

colonies of Australasians, or Malays, [who] landed in North America, and penetrated across the

continent, to the region lying between the Great Lakes and the Gulph of Mexico. There they resided, and constructed the fortifications, mounds, and other ancient structures, which every person who beholds them admires.

*What has become of them? They have probably been overcome by the more warlike and ferocious hordes that entered our hemisphere from the north-east of Asia. These Tartars of the higher latitudes have issued from the great hive of nations, and desolated, in the course of their migrations, the southern tribes of America, as they have done to those of Asia and Europe. The greater part of the present American natives are of the Tartar stock, the descendants of the hardy warriors who destroyed the weaker Malays that preceded them.*²⁸

Mitchill had advanced his theory to the point that the Iroquois of New York were of “Tartar descent, who expelled or destroyed the former possessors of the fertile tracts reaching from Lake Ontario south westwardly to the River Ohio.”²⁹

Stanley Kimball argued that Mitchill knew little or nothing about ancient languages or hieroglyphics and therefore could not have substantiated much of what Anthon was saying.³⁰ That description may not be entirely accurate. When Martin Harris brought the characters to Mitchill, it was not the first time that Mitchill had received or had been shown hieroglyphics and transcriptions from other languages. He had already received hand-drawn hieroglyphics with possible translations from various regions of the globe. And he had on hand writings that he could compare to the characters Harris showed him. For instance, he had studied many such “Indian hieroglyphics” from the Mohawk languages.³¹ Furthermore, along with his ability to read and translate classical Greek and Latin, he had also studied Oriental tongues and Hebrew. As early as 1817 American explorers to the Middle East had been sending to him writings and hieroglyph-

ics from ancient Babylonian tombs and temples for his review, if not verification.

There remain two other significant reasons why Mitchill showed such interest in his Palmyra visitor. The first was the simple matter of timing. Harris could not have caught the good professor at a more propitious moment. For the previous eight years Mitchill had been busily propounding and publishing one aspect or another of his “two-races” theory of ancient America.³² His interest in the history of the ancient American Indians was at a peak when Harris arrived. The second was Mitchill’s boundless curiosity, kindness, and open and engaging personality. As important as anything the two men said to one another was the simple matter of personality, for Mitchill was a man who delighted in listening to, and learning from, all kinds of people. As one put it, he was “an interpreter to all their queries.”³³ People from every walk or station of life felt comfortable talking with him about their discoveries and found in him a warm and receptive audience. Unlike Anthon, he was

*never disconcerted by intruders, however ignorant, or idle, or indiscreet—and managed to send each away contented. . . . No man was ever more universally accessible than he—holding so high a place in society, yet he condescended to the lowest without ostentation—descending even to the capacity of a child, to instruct, to encourage the love of study, or to amuse.*³⁴

Finally, there remains the intriguing possibility that historians for all these many years have viewed the whole story in reverse. In what might be the very first written record of Harris’ visit—predating Joseph Smith’s 1832 history, E. D. Howe’s 1834 account, Lucy Mack Smith’s 1844 story, and certainly B. H. Roberts’s version in the *History of the Church*—the celebrated Scottish-born New York journalist James Gordon Bennett, then associate editor of the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*,

wrote in 1831 that Harris carried the engravings from the plates to New York and

showed them to Professor Anthon who said that he did not know what language they were—told him to carry them to Dr. Mitchell [sic]. Dr. Mitchell examined them—and compared them with other hieroglyphics—thought them very curious—and [said] they were the characters of a nation now extinct which he named—Harris returned to Anthon who put some questions to him and got angry with Harris.³⁵

This account is elaborated upon in James Gordon Bennett’s article, published in September 1831:

They attempted to get the Book printed, but could not raise the means till Harris stept [sic] forward, and raised money on his farm for that purpose. Harris with several manuscripts in his pocket, went to the city of New York, and called upon one of the Professors of Columbia College for the purpose of shewing them to him. Harris says that the Professor thought them very curious, but admitted that he could not decypher them. Said he to Harris, “Mr. Harris you had better go to the celebrated Doct. Mitchell and shew them to him. He is very learned in these ancient languages, and I have no doubt will be able to give you some satisfaction.” “Where does he live,” asked Harris. He was told, and off he posted with the engravings from the Golden Plates to submit to Doc. Mitchell—Harris says that the Doctor received him very “purlitely,” looked at his engravings—made a learned dissertation on them—compared them with the hieroglyphics discovered by Champollion in Egypt—and set them down as the language of a people formerly in existence in the East, but now no more.³⁶

Four elements in Bennett’s account demand serious study. First, written in 1831, it is the earliest known record of Harris’ visit to New York City. Second, Bennett states that Anthon “did not know what language they were.” This

we now understand is correct, since Anthon was a grammarian, a promising but youthful scholar who knew virtually nothing about Egyptian, reformed Egyptian, or whatever kind of writings or characters were on the “Anthon Transcript.” Third, the statement that Mitchell “compared” the transcript that Harris brought him with “other hieroglyphics” conforms to what we now know of Mitchell. He not only had many such writings on hand in his cabinets of antiquities, but he had also translated ancient writings for others. Whether he tried to translate Harris’ characters on the spot is not known, but he certainly seems to have studied them carefully enough to deliver a “learned dissertation” on them and to identify them as those of “a nation now extinct which he named.” Finally, and almost certainly, he saw in these characters additional evidence for his own richly developed theories on the extinct “delicate” Australasian race that had been destroyed by the more ferocious Tartars somewhere in upstate New York not far from where Harris lived in Palmyra.

We may never know the full extent of the conversations Martin Harris had with Luther Bradish, Samuel Mitchell, or Charles Anthon that winter of 1828. While it is probably safe to say that the discussions between Harris and Anthon will ever prove more popular among Latter-day Saint readers as a fulfillment of prophecy, the fact remains that Harris found encouragement to pursue his sponsorship of the Book of Mormon not only from Anthon. It may well be that the secondary characters in this story—Luther Bradish and Samuel L. Mitchell—were far more important than we have previously supposed.

Notes

1. See Stanley B. Kimball, “The Anthon Transcript: People, Primary Sources, and Problems,” *BYU Studies* 10, no. 3 (spring 1970): 325–52.

2. For the unabridged article, see Richard E. Bennett, "'Read This, I Pray Thee': Martin Harris and the Three Wise Men of the East," *Journal of Mormon History* 36, no. 1 (winter 2010): 178–216.

3. B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One*, 6 vols. (1930; reprint, Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 1:99.

4. *Comprehensive History*, 1:100.

5. See Charles Anthon letter to E. D. Howe, 17 February 1834, in Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* [sic] (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 270–72; quoted in Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, 1:102–4.

6. Martin Harris, in *HC* 1:20; see also *Comprehensive History*, 1:101–2.

7. Martin Harris, quoting Charles Anthon, in *HC* 1:20.

8. Martin Harris, in *HC* 1:20.

9. Joseph Knight, "sometime" between 1833 and 1847, remembered the story this way: "[Joseph Smith] Began to be anxious to git them translated. He therefore with his wife Drew of[f] the Caricters exactley like the ancient and sent Martin Harris to see if he Could git them Translated. He went to Albeny and to Philadelpha and to new york and he found men that Could Translate some of the Carictors in all those places. Mitchel [Samuel L. Mitchill] and Anthony [Charles Anthon] of New York ware the most Larded [learned] But there were some Caricters they could not well understand. Therefore Anthony told him that he thot if he had the original he culd translate it. And he rote a very good piece to Joseph and said if he would send the original he would translate it. But at Last Martin Harris told him that he Could not have the original for it was Commanded not to be shone. And he was mad and said what Does this mean, and he tore the paper that he wrote all to pieces and stampid it under his feet and says Bring me the original or I will not translate it. Mr Harris, seeing he was in a passion, he said, 'well I will go home

and see, and if they can be had I will wright to you immeditely.' So he Came home and told how it was and they went to him no more. Then was fulfilled the 29th Chapter of Isiah." (In Dean Jessee, "Joseph Knight's Recollection of Early Mormon History," *BYU Studies* 17, no. 1 [autumn 1976]: 34–35.)

10. See William W. Phelps letter to E. D. Howe, 15 January 1831, in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 273. I am indebted to Susan Easton Black and Larry C. Porter for bringing this source to my attention. See their forthcoming biography tentatively entitled *Martin Harris: A Witness of the Book of Mormon*.

11. Pomeroy Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism, Biography of Its Founders and History of Its Church; Personal Remembrances and Historical Collections Hitherto Unwritten* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1867), 42. These "others" are not known.

12. Louis B. Gimelli, "Luther Bradish, 1783–1863" (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1964), 54.

13. Henry Drisler, *Charles Anthon, LL.D., Late Jay Professor of the Greek Language and Literature in Columbia College. A Commemorative Discourse, Prepared and Delivered at the Request of the Trustees and Alumni of the College* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1868), 36.

14. Samuel Griscom, diary, 24 May 1824 (photostat copy), New York Historical Society.

15. Samuel L. Mitchill, *A Discourse on the Character and Services of Thomas Jefferson, More Especially as a Promoter of Natural and Physical Science* (New York: G. and C. Carvill, 1826), 36.

16. See *Report, in Part, of Samuel L. Mitchill . . . on the Fishes of New-York* (New York: D. Carlisle, 1814).

17. In John W. Francis, *Reminiscences of Samuel Latham Mitchill* (New York: J. F. Trow, 1859), 26.

18. In Francis, *Reminiscences*, 25.

19. In "Dr. Mitchill's Letters from Washington: 1801–1813," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 58, no. 347 (April 1879): 740.

20. De Witt Clinton to Mitchill, 14 July 1817, De Witt Clinton Papers, Columbia University Library, New York, New York; quoted in Ronald E. Shaw, *Erie Water West: A History of the Erie Canal, 1792–1854* (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1966), 94.
21. In “Dr. Mitchill’s Letters,” *Harper’s*, 740.
22. Said to John W. Francis; in Francis, *Reminiscences*, 26.
23. See Francis, *Reminiscences*, 8–17; see also [Samuel L. Mitchill], *Some of the Memorable Events and Occurrences in the Life of Samuel L. Mitchill of New-York, from the Year 1786 to 1828* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society), 1828, 1.
24. Samuel L. Mitchill letter to Samuel M. Burnside (corresponding secretary of the American Antiquarian Society), 13 January 1817, in “Communications from Dr. Samuel L. Mitchill,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1 (1820): 315.
25. Samuel L. Mitchill letter to John W. Francis, 13 September 1816, Samuel L. Mitchill Collection, Rare Books Department, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts; see “Communications,” *Archaeologia Americana*, 324–25; see also Samuel L. Mitchill in a communication to De Witt Clinton, 31 March 1816, in “Communications,” *Archaeologia Americana*, 325–32.
26. Mitchill, in “Communications,” *Archaeologia Americana*, 323.
27. Mitchill to Clinton, in “Communications,” *Archaeologia Americana*, 326.
28. Mitchill, in “Communications,” *Archaeologia Americana*, 324–25. For further context, see Richard E. Bennett, *Colonies of Australasians, or Malays, Landed in North America: American Indian Origin Theories as of 1820 and the “New York” Theory of Professor Samuel L. Mitchill*, publication pending.
29. Mitchill to Francis, 13 September 1816.
30. See Kimball, “The Anthon Transcript,” *BYU Studies*, 336.
31. Francis, *Reminiscences*, 17.
32. See Mitchill, *Thomas Jefferson*, 15–16.
33. Francis, *Reminiscences*, 20.
34. Felix Pascalis, *Eulogy on the Life and Character of the Hon. Samuel Latham Mitchill* (New York: American Argus Press, 1831), 23; also included in “Literary Notices,” *New-York Mirror*, 17 December 1831, 190. Another said: “With all his official honors and scientific testimonials, foreign and native, he was ever accessible to everybody—the counsellor of the young, the dictionary of the learned” (Francis, *Reminiscences*, 24).
35. James Gordon Bennett, diary, 8 August 1831, as quoted in Leonard J. Arrington, “James Gordon Bennett’s 1831 Report on ‘The Mormonites,’” *BYU Studies* 10, no. 3 (spring 1970): 355. See also Francis H. Stoddard, *The Life and Letters of Charles Butler* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1903), 125–28.
36. James Gordon Bennett, “Mormon Religion—Clerical Ambition—Western New York—The Mormonites Gone to Ohio,” *Morning Courier and Enquirer*, 1 September 1831, reprinted in Arrington, “Bennett’s 1831 Report,” *BYU Studies*, 362. James Gordon Bennett’s reference to Mitchill’s awareness of Champollion may indicate that Mitchill, of all American scholars, knew best Champollion’s work.