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Guide to the A. J. Macdonald Writings on American Utopian Communities

GEN MSS 1394



by Sandra Markham

2016

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 1394

CREATOR: Macdonald, A. J., -1854

TITLE: A. J. Macdonald writings on American utopian communities

DATES: 1843-1865

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4.25 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection contains writings and research material on seventy utopian associations compiled by A. J. MacDonal for his proposed volume "The Communities of the United States." The contents range from notes and brief sketches of communities to more extensive profiles based on Macdonald's personal visits, his interviews with residents and colleagues, and transcriptions from contemporary publications. Also included are the printed materials such as prospectuses, constitutions and by-laws, and stock certificates that he collected in his travels, and visual material from published wood engravings to the graphite and watercolor sketches Macdonald made on site. Utopian communities particularly well represented are the Brook Farm Phalanx, the Clermont Phalanx, New Harmony, the Icarian Community, the North American Phalanx, the Oneida Community, the Prairie Home Community, the Skaneateles Community, the Sylvania Association, the Wisconsin Phalanx, and several Shaker settlements. Macdonald also wrote about two communities outside the United States, the Brazilian Experiment and the Venezuelan Experiment of the Tropical Emigration Society, and about the utopian leaders A. J. Davis, Charles Fourier, Orson S. Murray, Robert Owen, Jemima Wilkinson, and Frances Wright.

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of John Humphrey Noyes, 1870.

Custodial History

The material was organized into its present arrangement by John Humphrey Noyes and his son Victor Cragin Noyes in the 1860s. John Humphrey Noyes, a founder of the Oneida Community, acquired the manuscripts in the mid-1860s from one of Macdonald's relatives, and wrote about the collection in a column titled "Our Muck-Heap," published in the Oneida Community's weekly paper *The Circular* (vol. 5, no. 30, October 12, 1868, page 236): "When it came into our hands it was in the loosest state of disorder; but we have strung the leaves together, paged them, and made an index of their contents."

The leaves were numbered in pencil straight through the collection, whether the contents were manuscript, printed, or graphic material. The binding strips affixed by Victor Noyes are still attached to Macdonald's papers from leaf 229 to the end, and the album's front and back covers are in Box 3, folders 90-91. The index prepared by Victor Cragin Noyes and copied over by George Washington Noyes is in Box 3, folder 89. A "Catalogue of the McDonald Materials," a precis of Macdonald's writings prepared by Victor Noyes, is in the Oneida Community Collection at the Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries, Syracuse, New York.

John Humphrey Noyes provided an overall description of Macdonald's papers in a second column, "Our Muck-Heap, No. II" (vol. 5, no. 31, October 19, 1868, page 244), and wrote articles on each community in forty subsequent columns appearing in *The Circular* through July 19, 1869 (vol. 6, no. 18); the second half of his columns were titled "American Socialisms." In a column published on February 7, 1870 (vol. 6, no. 47, page 372), Noyes addressed the critics of his book and mentioned that anyone may "consult the original manuscripts in the library of Yale College."

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The A. J. Macdonald Writings on American Utopian Communities is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

A. J. Macdonald Writings on American Utopian Communities. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

Available on microfilm from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Related Materials

Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries,
Syracuse, New York.

Biographical / Historical

The first biographical sketch of A. J. Macdonald was written by John Humphrey Noyes, the collection's donor and the founder of the Oneida Community in central New York State. Noyes acquired Macdonald's manuscripts sometime in the mid-1860s, and introduced him in a column he titled "Our Muck-Heap," published in the October 12, 1868, issue of *The Circular*, the Oneida Community's weekly paper:

"The writer and compiler of this mass was A. J. Macdonald, of whom we must give a respectful account. When we lived in Brooklyn some seventeen years ago, this man called on us several times on his business of collecting these observations on socialist experiments, and finally he seemed to take a really friendly interest in our Community, and we became acquainted with him. Our memory of him is imperfect; but an outline of his person remains in our imagination. He was a short, small man, with black hair and sharp eyes. He had a good-natured look, but seemed a little sad. We imagined that the sad scenes he met with while looking after the history of so many short-lived Communities, had given him a tinge of melancholy. He was indeed the 'Old Mortality' of Socialism, wandering about the country from grave to grave, patiently deciphering the epitaphs of defunct 'Phalanxes.' We learned from himself that he was a Scotchman by birth, and a printer by trade; that he was an admirer and disciple of [the Welsh industrialist and social reformer Robert] Owen, and came from the 'old country' partly to see and follow the fortunes of his master's experiments in Socialism: but finding Owenism in ruins and Fourierism going to ruin, he took upon himself the task of making a book, that should give future generations the benefit of the lessons taught by these attempts and failures. His own attempt was a failure. He gathered a huge mass of materials, wrote his preface, and then died of the cholera. Our record of his last visit is dated February, 1854."

Understandably focused on utopianism in his sketch, Noyes overlooked many other facets of A. J. Macdonald's decade of accomplishments in America. His peripatetic life left only a few clues in published sources such as newspapers and city directories, though others can be found in his writings in the collection; many of his personal details were edited out by Noyes when he was preparing Macdonald's manuscripts for use in his volume *The History of American Socialisms* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1870).

A. J. Macdonald's first and middle names are not known, nor is the place and date of his departure from Great Britain and arrival in the United States. He wrote of visiting Robert Owen's New Harmony experiment in 1841 (leaf 460, Venezuelan Experiment) and titled his essay about the community "New Harmony in 1842" (leaves 578–614). Noyes, in his November 9, 1868, column in *The Circular* stated that for Macdonald, New Harmony was "the very Mecca of his devotion" and that "Here he spent his first eighteen months in this country." By 1844 Macdonald was living in Cincinnati, then one of the publishing centers in the United States, and participated in the founding of the Clermont Phalanx in March of that year; he revisited the settlement in July and took a view in watercolors (leaf 242). Macdonald's essays reveal that in 1844 he visited communities around the state of Ohio, including the Prairie Home Community, D. A. Brooke's Experiment, and the Union Village Shaker settlement, but in March 1845 he was in New York City and attended Robert Owen's lectures at the Minerva Rooms (leaf 507). By that fall he was living in Albany, New York, where on October 26th he encountered Owen on the street (leaf 508) and enjoyed a visit with him at the home of the artist and abolitionist Julius R. Ames. Macdonald remained in Albany for at least three years, and visited the Shaker community in nearby Watervliet in September 1847 (leaves 671–676).

While he may also have been a printer as Noyes recalled, Macdonald was by his own admission a bookbinder, according to his report on his visit to Union Village in September 1844 (leaf 678). During his time in Albany he edited a gift book, *The Rainbow for 1847* (Albany: A. L. Harrison, and New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846), for which he contributed essays on honesty and on the village of Port Huron, Ohio. Immediately distinctive for being the first gift book ever issued in Albany, *The Rainbow* has remained an exemplar for its unusual "patent stereographic binding" signed by the book's publisher, Albany bookbinder

Anthony L. Harrison. Macdonald worked in Harrison's shop, as evidenced in the advertisement he placed in the March 31, 1848, issue of the *Albany Evening Journal* announcing that he, "of London, (Late Foreman to Mr. A. L. Harrison)," had just opened his own bookbindery. His single appearance in any Albany city directory was at that same time (*Hoffman's Albany Directory and City Register for the Years 1848/1849*) where he was listed as a bookbinder. Also in 1848, Macdonald's philosophical essay *Monuments, Grave Stones, Burying Grounds, Cemeteries, Temples, Etc.*, was issued in pamphlet form by Albany's great printer/publisher Joel Munsell; in it he made an argument against raising monuments, including tombstones, to the dead or to the living.

By January 1851, A. J. Macdonald was settled in New York City and employed as a finisher at E. Walker and Son's New York Book-bindery, where he contributed his skills to a grand paneled binding on a Bible bound for display at the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in London (*New York Spectator*, January 30, 1851; see also the verso of leaf 302). At the same time he was steadily compiling material for his proposed volume "The Communities of the United States," and in March 1851 prepared a circular letter of inquiry (leaf 1) sent from his address at 75 Nassau St. to those who might be able assist him. The letter also outlined his publication plans, suggesting as models works by P. Douglass Gorrie and Sir Charles Lyell that had recently been issued in New York and London. Macdonald continued to visit communities outside the city including Modern Times in Brentwood, New York (June 1852), the Raritan Bay Community in Perth Amboy, New Jersey (September 1853), and the North American Phalanx in Monmouth County, New Jersey (three times between 1851 and 1853), as he continued to work on his manuscript; many of the leaves have his editorial markings such as "Complete" or "wants reading once more." In the four narratives based on personal visits to Ohio communities and his essay on New Harmony, Macdonald notes that the contents were extracted from his "Travels in search of employment," a manuscript not present in the collection, and one whose title suggests that his emigration from Great Britain may have been driven by economics, with his research on utopians a valuable but ancillary project.

Macdonald's name appeared as "McDonald" in the Albany city directory and his newspaper advertisement, as well as on the printed title page, table of contents, and essay bylines in *The Rainbow*; the volume was issued with a second, engraved, title page on which his name was spelled correctly. On his Munsell title page, his printed circular letter, and in every instance of an autograph signature on his manuscripts, it was always spelled "A. J. Macdonald."

John Humphrey Noyes, in his introduction to *The History of American Socialisms*, again wrote that Macdonald died of cholera in New York in 1854. Noyes provided no specific place or date, but it is certainly likely that the "sombre pilgrim" was one of the city's 2,509 victims of the great epidemic that year. In April 1854, A. J. Macdonald signed and dated the manuscript of his preface (leaves 2-5), making it his final known contribution to his unfinished work.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains writings and research material on seventy utopian associations compiled by A. J. MacDONald for his proposed volume "The Communities of the United States." The contents range from notes and brief sketches of communities to more extensive profiles based on Macdonald's personal visits, his interviews with residents and colleagues, and transcriptions from contemporary publications. Utopian communities particularly well represented are the Brook Farm Phalanx, the Clermont Phalanx, New Harmony, the Icarian Community, the North American Phalanx, the Oneida Community, the Prairie Home Community, the Skaneateles Community, the Sylvania Association, the Wisconsin Phalanx, and several Shaker settlements. Macdonald also wrote about two communities outside the United States, the Brazilian Experiment and the Venezuelan Experiment of the Tropical Emigration Society, and about the utopian leaders A. J. Davis, Charles Fourier, Orson S. Murray, Robert Owen, Jemima Wilkinson, and Frances Wright.

Macdonald's research primarily covered communities founded in New York (16), Ohio (14), and Pennsylvania (7), with five each in Indiana, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin, four in Illinois, two in Connecticut, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, and New Jersey, and one each in Kansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. The collection contains autograph notes, transcriptions, or narratives by Macdonald, based either on his personal visits or on information provided (or originally written) by community members. As a bookbinder, it is not surprising that several of the local contacts he identified in his writings were printers

or editors, and several cases the facts may have been attained through responses to his 1851 questionnaire. One example of the latter could be his essay for the Spring Farm Association (leaves 382–384) in which he wrote, “One of the members thus answered some of my queries...” and “My informant says....” Some of the essays/sections, such as Society of the United Germans (leaf 499), have only a few lines of introduction followed by citations for printed sources from which Macdonald intended to quote or transcribe. Others, such as the Venezuelan Experiment (leaves 460–484), have a full historical essay that he signed and dated. While nearly all of the manuscripts are in Macdonald’s hand, there are manuscripts written or transcribed by others, in particular, those on the Shaker communities. Also present in the files is a range of contemporary printed material gathered by Macdonald, including newspaper clippings, prospectuses, constitutions and by-laws, acts of incorporation, and articles of association, as well as the specimens of association stock certificates found in the files for the Leraysville Phalanx and the Sylvania Association. Visual material, from published wood engravings to the graphite and watercolor sketches he made on site, is included in the collection and noted in the box and folder list.

Macdonald wrote most of his notes and essays on sheets of blue-tinted lined paper, and pasted many of the clippings and other pieces of ephemera he had gathered onto scrap pages from books issued by the New York printer George Virtue, as well as two publications of John Tallis and Company, *Tallis’s Illustrated Atlas, and Modern History of the World* (1851) and *The American in Europe* by Henry Clay Crockett (circa 1854). These sheets were likely discards picked up in the shop of Edward Walker and Son, the bindery that employed Macdonald. After the collection was acquired by John Humphrey Noyes, Macdonald’s sheets were attached to white paper binding strips by Victor Cragin Noyes (1847–1905), and the pages stabbed sewn into paperboard covers (Box 3, folders 90–91). A letter from Victor Noyes to his father, dated October 10, 1865, is affixed to the back cover; in it he tells of his work on the collection, adding “From what I read of the manuscript as I was making out the catalogue, I should judge it would make a very interesting and useful book, and I anticipate a pleasant time by and by in helping you edit it.” Throughout Macdonald’s texts there are changes, comments, and additions made in pencil by John Humphrey Noyes as he was editing the manuscripts for his volume *The History of American Socialisms*. One example can be seen on leaf 632 of Macdonald’s essay on the Nashoba community, where Noyes has penciled the lead-in phrase “After further explanation of her plans she goes on to say:” just before Macdonald’s quotation from Frances Wright; this edit appears on page 70 of Noyes’s published book.

The alphabetical index to Macdonald’s manuscripts in Box 3, Folder 89, was transcribed by George Washington Noyes after one prepared by Victor Noyes. George Washington Noyes (1823–1870) was the youngest brother of John Humphrey Noyes, and was one of the leaders of the Oneida Community’s branch in Wallingford, Connecticut.

Community founding or span dates appearing in the folder list were assigned by Macdonald and taken from his manuscripts.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Circular letter Leaf 1 Printed sheet which explains that Macdonald has been "for some time engaged in collecting the necessary materials for a book to be entitled 'The Communities of the United States,'" list twenty-one questions, and asks for names and addresses of people who would be willing to assist him.	1851 March
b. 1, f. 2	Preface Leaves 2-5 Preface essay, signed and dated "April 1854" on the cover sheet (leaf 2) and "A. J. Macdonald / N.Y.C. 1854" (leaf 5).	1854 April
b. 1, f. 3	Brook Farm Phalanx (West Roxbury, Massachusetts), 1841 Leaves 6-18 Includes printed <i>Constitution</i> (1845) and John Finch's letter clipped from <i>The Communitist</i> 2, no. 19 (1844).	1844-1854
b. 1, f. 4-5	North American Phalanx (Monmouth County, New Jersey), 1843 Leaves 19-57 Contains notes from Macdonald's three visits (October 1851, July 1852, 1853), with newspaper clippings; the verso of leaf 49 is inscribed: "My visits to the N.A.P / 28 pages / complete March 1854." Also present are three illustrations of the Phalanx buildings: one wood engraving cut from <i>Barnum's Illustrated News</i> (April 1853) and two graphite drawings, one signed "AJMC Oct 12 1851 N.A.P." along with a short list of citations for articles on the community. Some of the information was provided by Charles Sears. The newspaper clippings are mounted on colored proof sheets from Fletcher's <i>Devotional Family Bible</i> (New York: George Virtue), and two works published in New York by John Tallis and Co., <i>Tallis's Illustrated Atlas and Modern History of the World</i> , and <i>The American in Europe</i> by Henry Clay Crockett.	1851-1869
b. 1, f. 6	Hopedale Community (Worcester County, Massachusetts), 1842 Leaves 58-66 Notes, description clipped from <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> (1853), and printed pamphlet <i>A Concise Exposition of the Hopedale Community</i> by Adin Ballou (1853).	1853
b. 1, f. 7	Northampton Association of Education and Industry (Northampton, Massachusetts), 1842 Leaves 67-72 Includes an autograph history written for Macdonald by "Mrs. Judson," with printed constitution and articles of association.	1843-1853

b. 1, f. 8	Oneida Community (Oneida County, New York), 1848 Leaves 73–98 Macdonald based his report on community publications and interviews with Mr. J. H. Noyes and his friends in Brooklyn"; inscribed on leaf 73: "Read by Noyes / Dec 1852." Manuscript sections are: Location (from leaf 76), Origin and History (77), Religious Belief (79), Social Basis (80), Free Love (81), Government (83), Education/ The Children (84), Organization of Labor (86), Peculiarities (88), Statistical (89), and Financial/Branches (91). Two wood-engraved views and newspaper clippings (92-98) fill out the file, one of which is a profile of the community by Leon Rymarkiewiez.	1851–1852
b. 1, f. 9	Skaneateles Community (Onondaga County, New York), 1843–1846 Leaves 99–113 Notes and clippings, writings by John Finch, John A. Collins, and Maria Loomis.	undated
b. 1, f. 10	Josiah Warren, Modern Times, and Equitable Commerce Leaves 116–140 Notes on Warren and Equitable Commerce, graphite sketches of the Modern Times settlement in Brentwood, New York, newspaper clipping from the <i>Sunday Dispatch</i> (1853), and an issue of <i>The Peaceful Revolutionist</i> 2, no. 1 (May 1848).	1848–1853
b. 1, f. 11	Icarian Community (Nauvoo, Illinois), 1849 Leaves 141–187 Includes notes on an interview with founder Etienne Cabet in New York on February 10, 1852, newspaper clippings, and publications of the Icarian Printing Establishment including the community's history (1852), <i>Conditions of Admission</i> (1854) and <i>Constitution</i> (1854).	1852–1859
b. 1, f. 12	Wisconsin Phalanx (Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin), 1844–1850 Leaves 188–207 A history of the community, a transcription of an extract from the writings of O. H. Capron (a resident at the Phalanx in 1847), and printed <i>Act of Incorporation</i> (undated).	1845–1850
b. 1, f. 13	Trumbull Phalanx (Braceville, Ohio), 1845–1847 Leaves 208–217 Includes printed <i>Constitution</i> (1846) and report by N. C. Meeker clipped from unidentified newspaper (1845); Macdonald based his report on information he received from "JW (member of the Trumbull Phalanx, Nov 2nd 1846)" and signed his manuscript "New York City Dec 1853"; he annotated his notes "com: Feb 1854."	1845–1854
b. 1, f. 14	Ohio Phalanx (Belmont County, Ohio), 1844–1845 Leaves 218–228 Includes printed <i>Articles of Association of the American Phalanx</i> clipped from a Canton newspaper (1843).	1843–1854

b. 1, f. 15	Clermont Phalanx (Clermont County, Ohio), 1844–1847 Leaves 229–242 Extracted from "Travels in search of employment." Reports on the organizational meetings in Cincinnati, and on his two trips to the Phalanx: the May 9, 1844, founders excursion to see the property and another in July 1844; includes watercolor drawing titled "Fourier Domain Clermont Co Ohio July 1844."	1844
b. 1, f. 16	Ontario Phalanx (Ontario County, New York), 1844 Leaf 243	undated
b. 1, f. 17	Sangamon Phalanx (Sangamon County, Illinois), 1845 Leaf 244	undated
b. 1, f. 18	Bureau County Phalanx (Illinois) and Washtenaw Phalanx (Ann Arbor, Michigan) Leaf 245	undated
b. 1, f. 19	Columbian Phalanx (Ohio), 1845 Leaf 246	undated
b. 1, f. 20	Sodus Bay Phalanx (Wayne County, New York), 1844 Leaves 247–249	undated
b. 1, f. 21	Integral Phalanx (Sangamon County, Illinois), 1845–1847 Leaves 250–252 See also verso of leaf 625 in "Sketch of the Life of Frances Wright."	undated
b. 4, f. 92	Integral Phalanx (Sangamon County, Illinois), 1845–1847 Leaves 253–254 Printed report by the association secretary clipped from the <i>New York Herald Tribune</i> (1845).	1845
b. 1, f. 22	Leraysville Phalanx (Bradford County, Pennsylvania), 1844 Leaves 255–259 Includes printed stock certificate for one share in the Phalanx sold to John Joseph Lang, May 1844.	1844–1852
b. 1, f. 23	Clarkson Industrial Association (Monroe County, New York), 1844 Leaves 260–270 History of the association provided by John Greig of Rochester, New York.	undated
b. 1, f. 24	Prairie Home Community (West Liberty, Ohio), 1844 Leaves 271–292 Extracted from "Travels in search of employment." Notes from Macdonald's visits to "Prairie Home" from August to October 1844.	1844

b. 1, f. 25	<p>Grand Prairie Harmonial Institute (Tippecanoe County, Indiana), 1853 Leaves 293–300</p> <p>Includes notes from Cincinnati printer Mr. William McDiarmid, printed <i>Constitution of the Grand Prairie Harmonial Institute</i> (1853), and a newspaper clipping.</p>	1853
b. 1, f. 26	<p>Grand Prairie Home Community (Indiana) Leaves 301–302</p> <p>Newspaper clipping affixed to a postal wrapper addressed to Edward Walker & Sons, New York.</p>	undated
b. 1, f. 27	<p>Yellow Springs Community (Greene County, Ohio), 1825 Leaves 303–305</p> <p>Notes and newspaper clipping with unsigned "Reminiscences of the Community at Yellow Springs, Ohio."</p>	undated
b. 2, f. 28	<p>Guatemala Experiment (Fourier), 1843 Leaf 306</p> <p>Newspaper clipping from Owen's <i>New Moral World</i> (1845).</p>	undated
b. 2, f. 29	<p>Marlborough Association (Clinton County, Ohio), 1841 Leaves 307–315</p> <p>Transcriptions of a history by Esther Ann Lukens of New Garden, Ohio, and "Causes of Failure" by Thomas Moore.</p>	undated
b. 2, f. 30	<p>Colony of Bethel (Shelby County, Missouri), 1852 Leaves 316–325</p> <p>Transcription of a narrative by "my friend Wilhelm Weitling, editor of the <i>Republik Arbeiter</i> who visited the place in 1852."</p>	1852
b. 2, f. 31	<p>Raritan Bay Union (Perth Amboy, New Jersey), 1853 Leaves 326–331</p> <p>Report of Macdonald's September 1853 visit, unsigned newspaper clipping from the <i>New York Herald</i> (1853); printed preamble and by-laws for the community (1853).</p>	1853
b. 2, f. 32	<p>One-Mention Community (Monroe County, Pennsylvania), 1844 Leaves 332–337</p> <p>A history "compiled from various sources" with John Hooper's letter to the editor of the <i>Regenerator</i> clipped from an unidentified newspaper.</p>	undated
b. 2, f. 33	<p>Moorhouse Union (Hamilton County, New York), 1843–1844 Leaves 338–343</p>	undated
b. 2, f. 34	<p>Alphadelphia Phalanx (Kalamazoo County, Michigan), 1846–1847 Leaves 344–350</p> <p>Information obtained from Dr. H. R. Schetterly of Ann Arbor; noted at end: "written Aug 30th 1852."</p>	1852 August 30

b. 2, f. 35	Hunt's Experiment of Equality (Mukwonago Township, Waukesha County, Wisconsin), 1843-1845 Leaves 351-362 On verso of leaf 362: "This is complete save I have written again to Hunt about the property Sept 12 1852."	1852
b. 2, f. 36	Sylvania Association (Pike County, Pennsylvania), 1843-1845 Leaves 363-381 Contains notes, printed items including a prospectus, constitution, by-laws, and stock certificate (1843), and second manuscript titled "A Dialogue concerning the Sylvania Association" including "Sylvanians' Prayer" attributed to J. D. Pierson. Noted on verso of leaf 381: "Read by Mr. Kellogg / wants reading once / more."	undated
b. 2, f. 37	Spring Farm Association (Sheboygan County, Wisconsin), 1846-1848 Leaves 382-384 Noted on verso of leaf 384: "written May 6, 1852."	1852 May 6
b. 2, f. 38	Second Section of the Social Reformers Co-operative Emigration Society (Mukwonago, Wisconsin), 1843-1852 Leaves 385-387 Includes printed broadside <i>Prospectus and Plan of Operations of the Second Section of The Social Reformers Co-operative Emigration Society</i> (1843).	undated
b. 2, f. 39	Jefferson County Industrial Association (Jefferson County, New York), 1843 Leaves 388-390	undated
b. 2, f. 40	Haverstraw Community (Haverstraw, New York), 1826 Leaves 391-392 Same organization as the Franklin Community (leaf 417).	undated
b. 2, f. 41	Brotherhood of the Union (Ohio), 1850-1851 Leaf 393	undated
b. 2, f. 42	Blue Spring Community (Bloomington, Indiana), 1826-1827 Leaf 394	undated
b. 2, f. 43	D. A. Brooke's Experiment (Warren County, Ohio), 1844 Leaves 395-399 Account extracted from "Travels in search of employment." Visited in October 1844 after leaving the Prairie Home Community.	undated
b. 2, f. 44	Forestville Community (Greene County, New York), 1825 Leaf 400 Same organization as Coxsackie Community (leaves 418-419).	undated
b. 2, f. 45	LaGrange Phalanx (LaGrange County, Indiana), undated Leaves 401-401a Noted as "Mostly from Schettling / done / Aug 31 1852."	1852 August 31

b. 2, f. 46	Kendal Community (Stark County, Ohio), 1826–1828 Leaves 402–405	undated
b. 2, f. 47	Auxiliary Branch of the Association of all Classes of all Nations, 1836 Leaves 406–408	undated
b. 2, f. 48	Social Reform Unity (Pike County, Pennsylvania), 1842 Leaves 409–415 Includes information on Goose Pond Community (Pike County, Pennsylvania), 1843, and printed <i>Constitution and Laws of the Social Reform Unity</i> (1842).	undated
b. 2, f. 49	Garden Grove (Iowa), 1848 Leaf 416	undated
b. 2, f. 50	Franklin Community (New York), 1826 Leaf 417 Same as Haverstraw Community (leaves 391–392).	undated
b. 2, f. 51	Coxsackie Community (Greene County, New York), 1826 Leaves 418–419 Same as Forestville Community (leaf 400).	undated
b. 2, f. 52	St. Louis Reform Association (St. Louis, Missouri), 1851 Leaf 420 Includes information on Co-operating Society of Alleghany County (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 1825.	undated
b. 2, f. 53	Communia Working Men’s League (Clayton County, Iowa), 1850 Leaf 421 Holds printed constitution clipped from unidentified newspaper.	1850
b. 2, f. 54	Convention at Boston of the Friends of Association, 1843 Leaves 422–423	undated
b. 2, f. 55	National Reform Association, 1845, and Commonwealth Society (New York City), 1819 Leaf 424	undated
b. 2, f. 56	Orson S. Murray Leaves 425–427 Leaf 428 appears in Robert Owen’s folder (leaves 501–523).	undated
b. 2, f. 57	A Brief Sketch of the Life and Writings of Charles Fourier Leaves 429–431 Clipping from two undated issues of <i>The Morning Star</i> , and <i>People’s Economist: Advocate of the Tropical Emigration Society</i> .	undated

b. 2, f. 58	Ebenezer Community (Erie County, New York), 1853 Leaves 432–436 Contains notes from his visit on September 6, 1853.	1853 September
b. 2, f. 59	United Brethren or Moravians, 1745 Leaves 437–445 Historical essay using material copied from various sources.	undated
b. 2, f. 60	Jemima Wilkinson, 1780 Leaves 446–451 Compiled from John Warner Barber's <i>Historical Collections of New York</i> (1851).	1853 May
b. 2, f. 61	Cincinnati Brotherhood (Cincinnati, Ohio), 1845–1848 Leaves 452–455 Includes an undated clipping from <i>The Univercoelum and Spiritual Philosopher</i> .	undated
b. 2, f. 62	Spiritual Community (Mountain Cove, Virginia), 1853 Leaves 456–458	undated
b. 2, f. 63	Principles of Divine Revelations and Voice of Mankind by and through A. J. Davis Leaf 459	1853 March
b. 2, f. 64	Harmonial Brotherhood (Hartford, Connecticut), 1851 Leaf 459a Material quoted from Andrew Jackson Davis's <i>The Great Harmonia</i> .	undated
b. 2, f. 65	Venezuelan Experiment of the Tropical Emigration Society, 1844–1846 Leaves 460–484 Essay on John Adolphus Etzler and his followers. Noted on verso of leaf 483: "Read by John Maine / (formerly a member of / the association) / Feb 1853 / and pronounced by him a / very impartial, and so far as / he knows, correct account of / the affair. / AJM"	undated
b. 2, f. 66	Zoar German Community (Tuscarawas County, Ohio), 1819 Leaves 485–492 Notes from "Travels in search of employment" describing his visit in October 1844, an undated graphite drawing of the community, and clipping from an unidentified newspaper (1853).	undated
b. 2, f. 67	The Dunkers (German Baptists, Euphrates, Pennsylvania), 1725 Leaves 493–496	undated
b. 2, f. 68	McKean County German Association (Pennsylvania) and The Social Unity (Pike County, Pennsylvania), 1843 Leaf 497 Both short entries copied from <i>The Phalanx</i> (1843); verso of leaf has the start of a letter to "J. A. Paine."	undated

b. 2, f. 69	Brazilian Experiment, 1841 Leaf 498	undated
b. 2, f. 70	Society of the United Germans (Teutonia, Ohio), 1827 Leaf 499	undated
b. 2, f. 71	German Catholic Community (near Milwaukee, Wisconsin) Leaf 500 Holds a newspaper clipping from the <i>New York Tribune</i> .	1853 June 18
Robert Owen		
b. 3, f. 72	Sketch of work and principles Leaves 428, 501-522 Memoir covering Owen's visits to New York and Albany and his interactions with Owen and Julius R. Ames. Also present is an outline of Owen's social principles, and an undated wood engraving of "Owen's model Phalanx" clipped from an unidentified publication.	undated
b. 4, f. 93	Biography clipped from <i>The New Moral World</i> (1840) Leaf 523	
b. 3, f. 73	New Lanark, Scotland, Robert Owen's experiment, 1799-1829 Leaves 524-534 Signed and dated: "A.J.M March 7th 1852 / 75 Nassau St. rear / Room 28."	1852 March 7
b. 3, f. 74	History of the Community Experiments at New Harmony (Posey County, Indiana), 1825-1827 Leaves 535-577	undated
b. 3, f. 75	New Harmony in 1842 Leaves 578-616 "Compiled from 'Travels in Search of Employment'"; signed and dated on the verso of leaf 614: "Harmony Complete / 82 leaves here / without printed extracts / Dec 18th 1853 / AJMc." Annotated below that: "leaves 615 & 616 wanting / Jan. 6 1870 / A.V.N." A section on Macluria begins on leaf 594.	1853 December 18
Frances Wright		
b. 3, f. 76	Sketch of the Life of Frances Wright Leaves 617-625 Verso of leaf 625 carries information on Integral Phalanx (Sangamon County, Illinois).	undated
b. 3, f. 77	Nashoba (Shelby County, Tennessee), 1825-1828 Leaves 626-638a	undated

The Shakers

The most extensive section of Macdonald's papers is devoted to the Shakers and covers all aspects of their life, community, and beliefs. Much of the material in this section is written in a script that is smaller and neat, suggesting that Macdonald may have had someone transcribing for him.

b. 3, f. 78	<p>"Millennial Church" or "United Society of Believers" / Outline of their History Leaves 639-663</p> <p>Includes sections on History (from leaf 639), Statistics (643), List of Communities (644), Beliefs (646), Worship (647), Government (649), Laws (652), Bibliography (654), Belief in Spirits (655), Sexual Intercourse (657), Morals (658), Economics (660), Buildings (662), and Benevolence (663). Macdonald attached a small paper to the first leaf with the note: "Complete except / page 6 / 19 / 23 / the Government must / be revised."</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 79	<p>Extract from Lamson's description of the Shaker community at Hancock, Berkshire Co., Mass. Leaves 664-667</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 80	<p>Extract from Colonel Maxwell's description of the Shaker Community at Enfield, Hartford Co., Conn. Leaves 668-669</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 81	<p>Extract from Stewart's description of the Shaker community at New Lebanon, Columbia Co., N.Y. Leaf 670</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 82	<p>Visit to Watervliet, 1847 Leaves 671-676</p> <p>Narrative of Macdonald's visit on September 1, 1847, with his friend "S," possibly Smith the author of "Narrative of Four Months residence among the Shakers at Watervliet" (leaves 685-724).</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 83	<p>Visit to "Union Village" near Lebanon, Ohio, 1844 Leaves 677-681, with one unnumbered leaf</p> <p>Narrative of Macdonald's visit on September 6, 1844. The unnumbered leaf contains a quotation in an unidentified hand from <i>Travels in America, Performed in 1806</i> by Thomas Ashe (London; Newburyport: reprinted for William Sawyer & Co., 1808), with an autograph note by Macdonald: "you must still see if the above really means 'Union Home' June 7th 1853."</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 84	<p>Shakers Settlement in Kentucky Leaves 682-684</p> <p>Copied from various sources.</p>	1852 November 6

b. 3, f. 85	<p>Narrative of Four Months residence among the Shakers at Watervliet, 1842 Leaves 685–724</p> <p>Twenty-one numbered essays by "an intimate and esteemed Friend" of Macdonald who arrived in New York in August 1842 and, unable to find employment in that city or in Albany, took up residence with the Shakers. The author is partially identified by Macdonald's inscription on verso of leaf 724: "Smith's narrative / read to Smith Nov. 9 / 1851 at Troy." The narrative's opening line "My Friend, The following Account of my brief experience among the Shakers..." was annotated, likely by Smith, "To A. J. Macdonald."</p>	1851
b. 3, f. 86	<p>Extract from "The Great Harmonia" by A. J. Davis, 1852 Leaf 725</p> <p>On the verso in Macdonald's hand: "Ann Lee / A. J. Davis / to go with / Shaker article"; and "Leaves 726–9 / wanting Jan. 6. 1870 / A.V.N."</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 87	<p>Watervliet Leaf 730</p> <p>Graphite drawing of a dwelling house, not signed or dated but presumably made during his visit in 1847 (see leaves 671–676); inscribed along left edge: "Mrs W. Kellog - [Gray?]"</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 88	<p>Constitution of the Progressive Fraternity, Harmonia, Cherokee County, Kansas, 1865 Leaf 731</p> <p>Transcription of a constitution signed by F. T. Thomas, secretary, and W. Nicely, president. The community was located on the Spring River.</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 89	<p>Alphabetical index of communities, with leaf numbers</p> <p>Prepared by George Washington Noyes (1823–1870), brother of John Humphrey Noyes; see letter in Box 3, folder 91; accompanied by a twewntieth-century typed transcript.</p> <p>The index was published in <i>The Circular</i>, vol. 5, no. 31, October 19, 1868, page 244.</p>	circa 1865
b. 3, f. 90	<p>Front cover of album formerly holding Macdonald manuscripts</p>	1865
b. 3, f. 91	<p>Back cover of album formerly holding Macdonald manuscripts</p> <p>The inside of this cover holds a letter from Victor Cragin Noyes (1847–1905) to his father John Humphrey Noyes, dated October 10, 1865, in which he describes his work on indexing the manuscripts. Victor Noyes describes some of the drawings he isolated from the manuscripts; the line is followed by a note: "These pictures are retained at O.C. [Oneida Community] J.H.N."</p>	1865

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Christian communities -- United States
Collective settlements -- United States
Cooperative societies -- United States
Shakers -- United States
Utopias -- United States

Geographic Names

Modern Times (Collective settlement)

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works) -- United States -- 19th century
Sketches -- United States -- 19th century
Watercolors (paintings) -- United States -- 19th century

Names

Ballou, Adin, 1803-1890
Collins, John A. (John Anderson), 1810-1879
Davis, Andrew Jackson, 1826-1910
Finch, John, 1783-1857
Greig, John, 1779-1858
Macdonald, A. J., -1854
McDiarmid, William, 1792-1888
Murray, Orson S.
Noyes, George Washington, 1823-1870
Noyes, John Humphrey, 1811-1886
Noyes, John Humphrey, 1811-1886 -- Ownership
Noyes, Victor Cragin, 1847-1905
Owen, Robert, 1771-1858
Warren, Josiah, 1798-1874
Weitling, Wilhelm, 1808-1871
Wilkinson, Jemima, 1752-1819
Wright, Frances, 1795-1852

Corporate Bodies

Alphadelphia Association (Organization)
Brook Farm Phalanx (West Roxbury, Boston, Mass.)
Clarkson Industrial Association
Clermont Phalanx

Ebenezer Community
Harmony Society
Hopedale Community
Icarian Community
Integral Phalanx
Kendal Community
Marlborough Association
Moorhouse Union
Moravian Church
Nashoba Community
New Lanark Establishment
North American Phalanx (Phalanx, N.J.)
Northampton Association of Education and Industry
Ohio Phalanx
Oneida Community
Prairie Home Community
Raritan Bay Union (Eagleswood, N.J.)
Shakers
Skaneateles Community
Social Reform Unity
Society of Separatists of Zoar
Sylvania Association
Tropical Emigration Society (London, England)
Trumbull Phalanx
Wisconsin Phalanx

Contributors

Macdonald, A. J., -1854
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Greig, John, 1779-1858
McDiarmid, William, 1792-1888
Noyes, John Humphrey, 1811-1886
Weitling, Wilhelm, 1808-1871