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## The Paddington Prophet: Richard Brothers's journey to Jerusalem

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Madden, Deborah (2010) *The Paddington Prophet: Richard Brothers's journey to Jerusalem* Manchester University Press, Manchester. ISBN 9780719082382

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### Abstract

As an educated gentleman and naval officer, Richard Brothers dramatically altered eighteenth-century expectations and perceptions of what prophets were and the nature of prophecy itself. The messianic messages delivered to Londoners by



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the self-styled prophet are central to the religious politics and culture of the 1790s, mockingly referred to by one contemporary critic as the age of prophecy. Brothers s prophetic utterances came to the attention of the British Government, which culminated in his arrest for treason in March 1795 when he became a cause célèbre, before being confined to an asylum for eleven years. The Paddington Prophet is the first book-length study which probes deep under the skin of Brothers s apparently idiosyncratic writings and religious enthusiasm . A close textual analysis of Brothers's writings show the extent to which his Biblical, prophetic imagination arose out of the same rich theological, political and cultural context that spurred radicals like Tom Paine whilst inspiring poets and artists such as William Blake. Brothers s claim to literally restore the Jews to their homeland and his visionary hopes for a renewed Jerusalem formed part of an effective riposte to the London of William Pitt's administration. This Mosaic vision and Hebraic rhetoric permeates all of his work and was channelled into perfecting an alternative plan of the estate: God's own city, Jerusalem. Tracing the contours of his visionary experiences, this book exposes the intensity and vibrancy of Brothers s faith, the power of his prophetic imagination and the internal logic of his theology.

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