

# Colby



Colby Quarterly

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Volume 1  
Issue 12 *October*

Article 5

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10-1-1945

## Aldrich to Howells

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### Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 1, no.12, October 1945, p.189-190

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sterdam in 1684. Early American imprints include four Philadelphia items, dated 1747, 1754, 1792, and 1808; one New Haven, a Noah Webster, 1807; one Hartford, a Voltaire, 1828; and an American Wordsworth, New York, 1849. There are several English first editions, for example, Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson* (which sold in 1930 for \$140) and Byron's *English Bards*; and among early American imprints of English authors, we may name Charlotte Brontë, Mrs. Browning, and Thackeray. There is a first edition of an early Longfellow in two volumes and two autographed presentation copies of privately printed pamphlets of the late A. Edward Newton. These thirty-one books constitute as fine a gift as the Colby Library has been privileged to receive in some time, and Mr. Robinson joins the Library Associates with éclat. It is clear that he shares Montaigne's belief that "it is the enjoyment, not the possessing, that makes us happy."



## ALDRICH TO HOWELLS

AMONG the items mentioned in Mr. Rush's report above, there is an autograph Aldrich letter, for our possession of which we are indebted to Mr. Robert P. Bellows. This letter, written upon Aldrich's resignation as editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, was addressed to William Dean Howells, Aldrich's predecessor in the *Atlantic* editorial chair. The good-humored, boyish effervescence of the "Bad Boy" of Portsmouth, as he set off for a vacation in Europe, shines through the letter and makes it worth transcribing here, before it is deposited in our file of Autograph Letters of Famous Writers:

My dear Howells:

Ponkapog, June 20th/91

Your integrity reminds me of "the mills of the Gods."—

"The mills of the Gods grind slowly,  
But they get there all the same."

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If I lent you that book "some" twenty years ago, it is "some" nineteen years, eleven months, and twenty-eight days since I thought of it.

A horrible reflection strikes me. Perhaps you are giving me a realistic object lesson in honesty. *Have* I a book of yours which I have neglected or forgotten to return? Well, you won't get it!

This is a loving good-bye as well as a defiance. My wife & I go to New York to-morrow, to take Wednesday's steamer for England. The way the Prince of Wales has been carrying on recently makes our presence there absolutely necessary. I hope that *you* will be good while I am gone. I can't act as an example everywhere at once.

Ever yours,

T. B. ALDRICH

This letter was written from Ponkapog, Massachusetts. The name reminds us of the fact that Sarah Orne Jewett, of South Berwick, Maine, used to address Aldrich as the Duke of Ponkapog.



### A JEWETT MANUSCRIPT

ONE YEAR after Aldrich assumed the responsibility of the editorship of the *Atlantic*, Longfellow died. Aldrich at once appealed to Whittier for a memorial poem, but Whittier reported inability to comply. "It seems as if I could never write again." Yet within a few weeks he composed a poem "Godspeed," addressed to Sarah Orne Jewett and her friend, Mrs. Annie Fields, on the occasion of their going abroad for the summer of 1882.

A possible explanation of this sudden rebirth of creative activity in Whittier has just come to light. The Colby Library Associates recently purchased the manuscript of a poem entitled "The Eagle Trees," which Miss Jewett addressed to J[ohn] G[reenleaf] W[hittier], dating it April 1882. This was just one month before the date of Whittier's "Godspeed." The fact that Miss Jewett's poem had, apparently, never been published and that its existence was, until the recent discovery of the manuscript, unknown, led to reluctance to purchase the manuscript until all doubt