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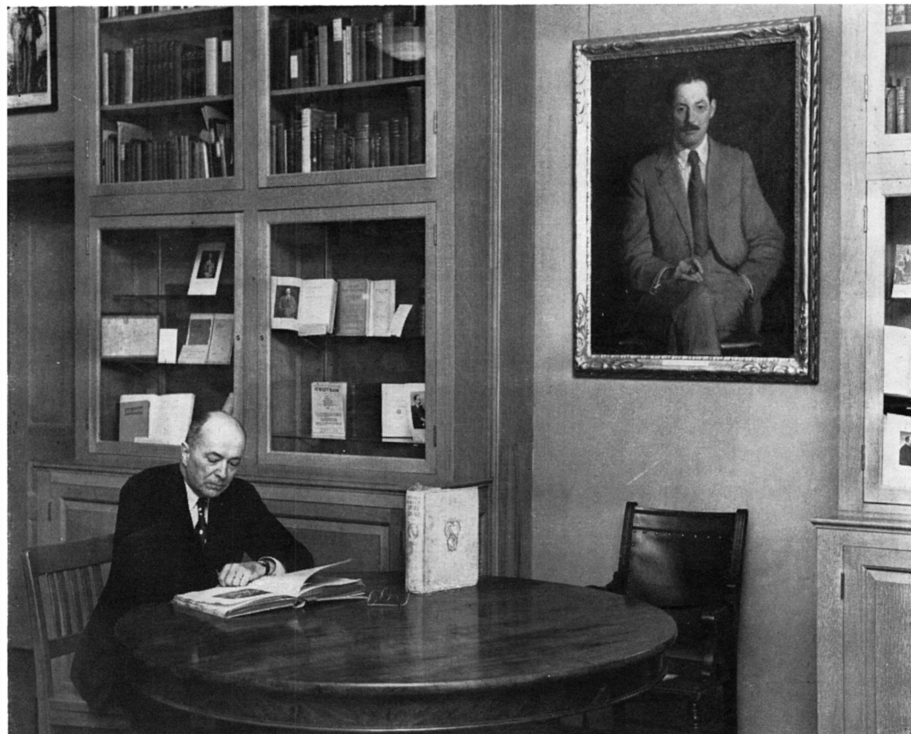
Alfred K. Chapman

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CARL J. WEBER

at work in the Treasure Room of the Colby College Library. The picture on the wall is a portrait of Edwin Arlington Robinson painted by Lilla Cabot Perry (niece of James Russell Lowell and wife of Thomas Sergeant Perry).

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IN HONOR OF CARL J. WEBER

After four decades of unfaltering service, Professor Carl Jefferson Weber retires from his several positions at Colby College. This issue of the QUARTERLY is in the nature of a Festschrift, a gala of reviews and tributes written by colleagues closely associated with his long, productive career.

By J. SEELYE BIXLER:

Professor Weber's work is so widely and favorably known outside the Colby campus that it seems not too much to say that many people are aware of the college's existence only because it is his home and working headquarters. Some of his admirers are librarians who watch for each issue of the COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY and feel that under his editorship it has set a high standard for publications of its type. Others are booklovers who have kept an eye on the growth of the many noteworthy collections that have come to the Edwin Arlington Robinson Treasure Room during his period as curator. Others have observed with respect the work done by the Colby College Press under his direction. Still others, including both trained scholars and general readers, have read with appreciation his studies of Thomas Hardy, and have been introduced to new fields of interest, such as fore-edge paintings, through his enterprising investigations.

In addition to these groups which know him from afar, a large number of former students at Colby are indebted

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to him for the taste for great literature acquired in his classroom. All of these, and his Colby colleagues, join in hoping that his retirement from active service with the college will free his pen for creative work he has long had in mind and will enable him to give unhampered attention to the scholarly studies he is so well equipped to carry on.



By HERBERT ROSS BROWN:

[This Resolution was adopted in honor of Professor Weber by his colleagues in the Faculties of English at Bates College, Bowdoin College, Colby College, and the University of Maine, on April 19, 1958.]

Although I am uneasily aware that there are at least a dozen degree-granting institutions in our State, and that any one who refers to what used to be called "the four Maine colleges" will only confirm the impression that he dwells in an ivory tower, inwardly mossy, I should like to put a motion in behalf of the Faculties of English of those four Maine colleges—we few, we happy few, we band of brothers. . . .

Few enough, certainly, to enable us to know one another fairly intimately as colleagues or as fellow warders of the gate, rather than as one-line entries in six-point type in the annual roster of card-carrying members of the Modern Language Association of America.

Through the years, we have rejoiced in each other's triumphs and nursed each other's wounds, we have viewed with alarm the rise of drum-majorettes and the fall of literacy, and—at these annual meetings—we have cheered each other as we returned to the endless patrol of the comma beat where we hold the dyke against the floods of mediocrity and vulgarity.

In a word—since we are members one of another—the retirement of one of our colleagues is always a poignant occasion of envy and regret. In 1939 we said our hail and

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farewell to the stalwart Wilmot Brookings Mitchell of Bowdoin. Last year we said our good-byes to Edwin Miner Wright of Bates, and to Morton Turner of Maine. This afternoon it is our turn to salute our senior member, Professor Carl Jefferson Weber, Litt.D., of Colby College. His appointment at Colby, trailing clouds of glory from Oxford, was made by President Arthur J. Roberts in March, 1919; his permanent tenure at Colby began in 1922, after an interlude at his Alma Mater, the Johns Hopkins University, and at the United States Naval Academy. Since that time, he has measured out his life, not in coffee spoons, but in Hardy Perennials. His bibliography already rivals that of Cotton Mather, and it is fearful to contemplate what will happen in the comparative leisure of emeritus-hood, the slippered pantaloons, and social security.

Years ago, things had reached such a pass that more than one College Board examination paper disclosed the prevailing impression that Thomas Hardy was a Colby classmate of Sarah Orne Jewett and Edwin Arlington Robinson, and that Diggory Venn finally disappeared in his wagon in an aura of red glory over the brow of Mayflower Hill.

Professor Weber is not only a Keeper of Rare Books but a Garnerer of them, as well as an Onlie Begetter of choice collector's items. We recall his notable venture in guiding his honors students in their co-operative edition of *Far from the Madding Crowd*; we remember his stout insistence upon decent standards in the secondary schools; we are flooded with grateful memories of his many contributions to our annual sessions, the first of which he organized in 1929; of his pride in his Department, which he served as chairman for thirty years (1923-1953); of his solicitude for the future careers of his young instructors; of his generous interest in all our enterprises; of his founding of the COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY in 1943 and his editing of its volumes for the next sixteen years; of his

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visiting lectureships at the Universities of North Carolina, West Virginia, New York, Colorado, Southern California, and Maine.

We have all been beneficiaries of his industrious scholarship. And now we want him to know that we shall miss him at our annual meetings, and that it has been fun living in the same State and in the same decades with him. In return, we expect him to make things a trifle easier for us by showing a slight diminution of his notes, queries, articles, prefaces, and books. We pray that he will not take shameless advantage of his new freedom to be deliberately unfair to our organized indolence by doubling his output. We also cherish the hope that he will continue to drop in on us at our sessions as an elder statesman with the latest news from Stonehenge.

In the name of this company of scholars, I move the adoption of this Resolution, heavily freighted with our admiration and affection, and—in behalf of all his colleagues—wish him Godspeed.



By FREDERICK A. POTTLE:

Carl J. Weber, who founded the COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY in 1943 and has carried it on single-handed ever since, has just retired from the Colby faculty at the end of forty years in the academic world. A condensed account of his many services to Colby follows and will bear close reading; what concerns us in this notice are merely his services to scholarship and to the Library. To put the matter briefly and soberly, he has brought into national and international notice a collection of books that in 1919, when he came to Waterville, was not only small but totally undistinguished. Collaborating closely with a series of able librarians whose main endeavor was to build up a sound and representative undergraduate library, he

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amassed a series of special research collections that any university would be proud to own. Few small colleges in America can show anything like the Treasure Room at Colby. The Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson Collections of books and manuscripts are known to scholars everywhere; dissertations for the doctorate in front-rank universities have been and are being based on Colby materials. That Professor Weber himself has been an indefatigable researcher and writer of books and articles, the bibliography in this issue of the *QUARTERLY* testifies. His acquaintance with dealers and collectors is as wide and intimate as his acquaintance within his own profession, and that must be one of the most extensive in the Modern Language Association.

The COLBY LIBRARY *QUARTERLY* has been admired not only for its contents but also for the unpretentious elegance of its format; what seems equally admirable to me as President of the Colby Library Associates is that not one penny of the Associates' contributions has ever gone into it.

As Director of the Colby College Press, another of his foundations, Professor Weber has produced many volumes advertising the resources of the Library, and by lavish contribution of his own time has made these volumes pay their own way. I am happy to adopt as my own summary of his work the opening sentence of the dedication of the Colby *Oracle* for 1956: "Carl Jefferson Weber has perhaps done more than any other person to establish Colby College in the world of scholarship."

For two years (1927-1929) Professor Weber served as a member of the Executive Committee which directed all the activities of the presidential office of the College during the interregnum between the administrations of President Arthur J. Roberts and President Franklin W. Johnson.

For three years (1926-1929) he was College Marshall, and for four years (1924-1928) he was Director of the College Extension Courses which he first proposed and inaugurated in 1924.

For five years (1925-1930) he was editor of the college catalogue and

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for thirteen years (1929-1942) he was Editor of *The Colby Mercury*. For another period of thirteen years (1946-1959) he has been Director of the Colby College Press.

For sixteen years (1943-1959) he served as Editor of the COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY, and for seventeen years (1923-1940) he was secretary-treasurer of the Colby Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. For the past nineteen years he has been Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts in the Colby College Library.

For thirty years (1923-1953) he served as Head of the Department of English, and was relieved of the responsibilities of this office six years ago at his own request. For thirty-seven years he has held the professorial title, for one year as assistant professor, for two years as associate professor, for two years as Professor of English, and for the past thirty-two years as Roberts Professor of English Literature.



By ERNEST C. MARRINER:

Carl Jefferson Weber would tell all inquirers that the collection of rare books and manuscripts at Colby College is the result of hundreds of individual contributions, and he would be speaking the truth. But the larger and more important truth is that, without Carl Weber, there would have been no collection at all. He has done much more than merely receive, arrange, and publicize the bountiful gifts. His thirty years of devoted service, his vast bibliographical knowledge, his dogged persistence, and his bursting enthusiasm have brought the Colby collection to the attention of libraries and scholars throughout the world.

Although Carl Weber joined the Colby faculty in 1919, it was not until 1929 that he began the assembling of rare books. For ten years he had diligently pressed for library accessions to fill serious gaps in the fields of English and American literature. He stimulated the purchase of such items as the *New English Dictionary* (Oxford) when it was still being published in parts, the *Variorum Shakespeare*, and sets of numerous writers in the best editions, as well as the definitive biographies.

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Returning from a summer in England in 1929, Weber was encouraged by President Franklin Johnson to continue his studies of Thomas Hardy and begin publication of his now famous series of books concerning that poet and novelist. In order to implement his researches, Weber patiently collected, with very little expense to the college, the Hardy items which by 1950 had made Colby's Hardy collection the most important in the world.

Although a leading authority on Thomas Hardy, Dr. Weber is much more than "Colby's Hardy perennial." In 1937 he made the acquaintance of H. Bacon Collamore, a founder and treasurer of the Edwin Arlington Robinson Memorial Association, and through him met the poet's sister-in-law, Mrs. Herman Robinson, and her daughter Mrs. Nivison, as well as Miss Margaret Perry, who owned many Robinson letters and whose father had known the poet intimately at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. Hearing that the Association intended to establish a Robinson collection at Head Tide, Maine, the poet's birthplace, Dr. Weber vigorously pointed out the inaccessibility of that tiny community, the hazard of fire, and other shortcomings. He persistently sought to persuade the Association that the collection should be deposited in an institutional library, where it would be available to scholars. The Association finally agreed, and it was not too difficult for the man who had already won their confidence to induce them to place the collection in a special room in the new library of Colby College, a room which the college trustees agreed to name the Edwin Arlington Robinson Treasure Room.

The Hardy and Robinson collections were but the beginning. Dr. Weber quickly saw the appropriateness of assembling at Colby the works of outstanding Maine writers. One such neglected writer had been Jacob Abbott of "Rollo" fame, of whose writing Colby now has a large collection. Through the efforts of Dr. and Mrs. Weber

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and those of Professor Richard Cary, there is now a notable collection of writings by and about Sarah Orne Jewett of South Berwick. Many Maine writers have donated manuscripts, among which are Kenneth Roberts' *The Lively Lady*, Mary Ellen Chase's "Wormwood—For Thoughts," and John Gould's *The Fastest Hound Dog in the State of Maine*.

Most of the thousands of items now among Colby's rare books and manuscripts have come to the college because Carl Weber developed a warm, respected, personal relationship with booklovers and book collectors on both sides of the Atlantic. Those generous benefactors decided that a college with such a curator was a place where their gifts would be protected, used, and appreciated.



By ALFRED K. CHAPMAN:

Despite the importance of his other functions at Colby College, Professor Weber will remain to me first of all the teacher. It was in his classes that I received my first real introduction to the study of literature, and through many years as a member of his teaching staff in the English Department I have been the recipient of his advice and assistance.

Like many Colby graduates, I remember him as a strict teacher in his demands for thorough and detailed mastery of the literature studied. Also his pilgrimages to numerous literary landmarks often enabled him to add side-lights which brought the reading closer to the students. However, like the New Critics, he insisted on the primary importance of the text itself. In days when Colby's intellectual demands were far from what they are now, he contended unremittingly for better standards. His courses were known as "hard" courses, but were respected as among the most interesting and very best in the college.

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As a young instructor I often had reason to be grateful for his suggestions and encouragement. He was never too busy to discuss classroom problems, ways of stirring student interest, or academic complexities of any sort. His stand on any academic question which came before the faculty was never in doubt, and it always looked toward the further improvement of the college.

From the outset, the library was one of the most important instruments of his teaching. When Professor Weber first came to Colby the library was small and hopelessly inadequate. To help provide the necessary books Professor Weber somehow persuaded the administration to allow him to assess every English student a fee of one dollar. For years most of these dollars went toward the purchase of English books for the library, and in this way he started to build up the fine English collection we now have.

He was always a builder, whether he was building a general library collection, the Treasure Room, a department, or the academic standards of the institution; or whether he was instilling into his students a love for and knowledge of literature, a training in clear thinking, or respect for standards of excellence. He is truly one of the builders of the new Colby, not merely in terms of the rare book collection which he created or of the reputation for scholarship his many publications have brought to the college, but, more fundamentally, in terms of the kind of education the college is now able to offer.



A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE PUBLICATIONS OF CARL J. WEBER

In his *Resolution in Honor of Carl J. Weber*, Professor Herbert Ross Brown alludes to the impressive length of Professor Weber's bibliography, adding humorously that it "already rivals that of Cotton Mather." At this point