THE
HISTORY
of
COLBY COLLEGE

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Foreword

As Colby College approaches 1963, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the granting of its charter by the General Court of Massachusetts, a new history of the college seems appropriate. Many changes have occurred during the third of a century since Dr. Edwin C. Whittemore published his history of the college in 1927. A great deal of material not available to Dr. Whittemore has also come to light concerning Colby's first century. Decision has therefore been made to publish an entirely new account.

The present history seeks to portray the development of the college against the background of the changing times. For instance, early events are shown in the light of the Baptist movement of the early nineteenth century, of the controversy between Federalist Boston and Jeffersonian Maine, and of the importance of the Dartmouth College decision by the United States Supreme Court. In the later periods consideration has necessarily been given to the effect of the Civil War on Maine business and finance, the splurge of investment in western lands, the theological conservatism of Maine Baptists, and the shifting tides in New England regarding coeducation.

Persistently this history seeks to answer the recurring question, "Why?" Why was the theological course so soon abandoned? Why did General Richardson wreck the chances to secure an additional land grant? Why did Gardner Colby's restrictions on his gift in 1865 cease to be effective? Why was the Centennial celebrated in 1920 instead of 1913? Why did enrollment of men decline alarmingly in the first decade of this century? These and many other questions confront any serious inquirer into Colby history.

The historian is indebted to many persons for their generous assistance. Miss Marion Rowe and her helpers at the Maine Historical Society have provided invaluable, guided access to the King papers and other records. Miss Ruth Hazelton and assistants at the Maine State Library have been very helpful, as have employees at the office of the Secretary of State. The Librarian of the Massachusetts Archives has opened the precious handwritten journals and other records pertaining to our original charter.

Colby alumni who have supplied information have been so numerous that a mere listing would take several pages and would almost certainly omit some name. To all of these members of the "Colby Family" the historian is profoundly grateful.

Greatest debt of all is owed to members of the college staff who have given so willingly and unselfishly of their time. Librarian John McKenna, Associate Librarian Elizabeth Libbey, and Mrs. Webb Noyes have responded repeatedly to pleas about the Colbiana Collection. Professor-Emeritus Carl Weber has been a mine of information about the collection of rare books and manuscripts. Professors Richard Cary and Alfred Chapman have made valuable suggestions. Mr. Allan Lightner, Assistant to the President for Development, has given detailed information about the Mayflower Hill campaigns, and has been zealous in identifying portraits and other items from the old days. Alumni Secretary Ellsworth Millett has answered hundreds of questions, and Recorder Rebecca Larsen has made numerous computations. For information on finances and new buildings thanks are owed to the late Vice-President Galen Eustis, his successor Ralph Williams,
and Treasurer Arthur Seepe. The chapter on athletics could not have been included without the generous help of Professors Gilbert Loebs and Leon Williams. Many a valuable suggestion has come from the Director of Public Relations, Richard Dyer. Much information about fraternities and sororities has been supplied by Dean George Nickerson and Miss Frances Thayer. On many points Dean Emeritus Ninetta Runnals has been extremely helpful, and constantly available have been the voluminous records and the marvelous memory of Dr. Herbert C. Libby. As Director of the Colby College Press, Professor Cary has patiently edited the manuscript and supervised its printing.

Not to be forgotten are two patient faculty wives, Mrs. Richard Mayers and Mrs. Harold Pestana, who accomplished the Herculean task of typing the long manuscript from my nearly illegible handwriting.

Ernest C. Marriner

Waterville, December 1, 1961
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CHAPTER I

The Beginning

In the beginning God. To apply the opening words of Genesis to the founding of Colby College is not sacrilege; it is rather a tribute to the ardent piety of the founders. The Baptist clergymen and laymen who started the institution on the banks of the Kennebec sincerely believed that they were obeying the will of God. To them the most important thing in life was to live close to God, seek constantly to know His will, and then diligently try to perform it.

From the earliest colonial times, the New England minister had been the leading educated man in the community. To assure that the profession could be filled by native sons and not remain dependent upon immigration from England, the Bay Colony had set up the College at Cambridge in 1636. The established church of the colony thus made sure of an educated, orthodox clergy. The Episcopalians did the same by their establishment of the College of William and Mary in Virginia in 1693. Orthodox Congregationalists founded Yale in 1701, and the Presbyterians established the College of New Jersey, now Princeton, in 1746. Thus, as Dr. Donald Tewksbury puts it, “The American college was founded to meet the spiritual needs of a new continent. It was designed primarily as a nursery of ministers and was fostered as a child of the church.”

With the exception of a few state universities, almost every American college founded before the Civil War was organized, supported, and often controlled by a religious denomination. In 1857, a promotional society reported, “Aside from the state institutions, the colleges of this country may now be divided among some twenty denominations, with whom they are either organically connected, or to the control of whose membership they are mainly subject.”

By the time of the Revolution, separation of church and state had become an important political issue, especially to the denominational colleges, for their very existence was involved. Before 1775, nine of the colonies had a recognized state church, called “the standing order.” In those colonies, beginning with Massachusetts in the founding of Harvard, colleges representing the established order had been set up by church and state acting together. Naturally, such colleges occupied a privileged status, and generally the founding of institutions by dissenting sects had been discouraged. So it came about that Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Columbia and Dartmouth enjoyed exclusive rights in their respective states before the Revolution.

When the Constitution of the United States recognized the principle of separation of church and state, the exclusive privileges of the colleges founded by “the standing order” were challenged. Slowly, and against strong conservative opposition, the state legislatures were induced to grant not only operative charters, but
also land and money, to minority denominations for educational purposes. "An era of complete religious freedom in the establishment of colleges, such as was not known in any other country, was thus ushered in by this distinctive American solution of the problem of relations of church and state as applied in the realm of higher education."

The Baptists were slow to come into the newly opened field. Unlike Congregationalists and Presbyterians, they had not brought from the Old Country a long tradition of an educated clergy. In fact, among their membership there were many who actually opposed the education of ministers. From earliest times this denomination had recruited its members from the lower and relatively uneducated classes. It had been profoundly influenced by the Great Awakening in Jonathan Edwards' time, and by the Second Awakening in Timothy Dwight's era, though neither of those preachers had been a Baptist. That denomination had adopted a strong evangelistic flavor which encouraged the entrance into the ministry of young men of religious zeal regardless of their lack of education. To the majority of Baptists in many a community, even a little learning was a dangerous thing.

The first Baptist colleges therefore came into being as the result of local movements by respected, influential Baptist leaders, rather than because of any general concern for education throughout the denomination. Since the time of Roger Williams, the Baptists had gained such prominence in Rhode Island that they became practically "the standing order" in that state. Rhode Island had thus achieved a status that distinguished it markedly from other Baptist communities. There higher education could be established for Baptist clergy and laity without serious opposition. When, therefore, a few strong leaders, themselves educated men, were joined by others who had broken with the orthodox faith on the doctrine of infant baptism, and were still further reinforced by a group of Philadelphia Baptists, the founding of Brown University was the result. Chartered in 1765, Brown was for nearly fifty years the only Baptist college in America. Not until 1813 did another group of Baptists secure a charter to found a college, and that group was an association of clergy and laymen in Massachusetts' sparsely settled District of Maine. The institution for which they secured a charter, the second Baptist college in the country, was the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, the forerunner of Colby College.

Among the more than a thousand degree-granting colleges now operating in the United States, Colby stands thirty-third in respect to age. Of the thirty-two preceding colleges, four were located in Pennsylvania, three each in Virginia, New York and Maryland; two each in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Vermont, South Carolina, Ohio and Tennessee, and one each in Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, Georgia and Kentucky. Denominationally those colleges were, at their founding, ten Presbyterian, six Congregational, six Episcopal, one Baptist, one Dutch Reformed and one German Reformed, while seven of them were established by the state. The oldest of the state-founded colleges is the University of Georgia, founded in 1785, but it was preceded by fifteen private institutions sponsored by religious denominations, and denominational origin continued to be the common pattern until after the Civil War.

No one person can be credited with originating the idea of a Baptist college in the wilderness of Maine. It probably came to fruition out of the conversation of Baptist clergy in the District whenever they met for conference during the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Baptists had then been in Maine for more than a hundred years. In 1682 a delegation from the First Baptist Church of Boston established the first Baptist church in Maine at Kittery. But the pastor
soon encountered difficulties with "the standing order," with the result that the church broke up and the pastor departed for South Carolina. Says the Baptist historian Burrage, "Baptists were regarded as fanatics, and their doctrines as destructive to the welfare of both society and religion."5 Hostilities with the French and Indians greatly retarded Maine settlement anyhow, and nearly another hundred years elapsed before the Baptists again appeared in organized form east of the Piscataqua. By 1768, however, the sect had become strong enough to establish two Maine churches, one at Gorham, the other at Berwick. These were followed, during the next fourteen years, by Baptist churches at Sanford, Wells, Acton and Lyman. As late as 1782, however, there were no Baptist churches east of York County.

The eight years from 1782 to 1790 saw a rapid spread of the sect in Maine, with churches at Bowdoinham, Thomaston, Limerick, Parsonsfield, Newfield, Waterboro, Cornish, Fryeburg, Whitefield, Vassalboro, Hebron and Buckfield. The year 1796 saw the founding of the very influential Baptist Church at Portland, and in 1801 another church of even more substantial influence at Yarmouth.

In polity Baptists, like Congregationalists, have always held to the autonomy of the local church. For purposes of common fellowship and to discuss matters of common concern they established what is called the Association, a group of Baptist churches within a defined territory. These associations, in most states, agreed to form state conventions, so that in Maine today we have, for example, the First Baptist Church of Waterville in the North Kennebec Association of the United Baptist Convention of Maine.

Originally the first Baptist churches in Maine, those in York County, were considered to be within the New Hampshire Baptist Association, but as churches were organized along the Kennebec and the Androscoggin, there was formed the Bowdoinham Association to which all the Baptist churches in Maine outside of York County belonged until 1804, when a separate Lincoln Association was formed. Such was the situation, when there was written in the minutes of the Bowdoinham Association, in 1810, the first record of any concerted action toward the founding of a Baptist college in Maine.

It was at the Association's annual meeting, held that year in Livermore, that on September 27, 1810, the Association took the following action: "It being in contemplation to establish an institution in the District of Maine for the purpose of promoting literary and theological knowledge, Brethren Blood, Boardman, Merrill, Titcomb and Tripp were appointed a committee to take into consideration the propriety of petitioning the General Court for incorporation."6

Who were these five men, the first whose names appear in any preserved record concerning Colby College? Rev. Caleb Blood was pastor of the Baptist Church in Portland, then located on Federal Street. Well educated himself, he was a leader in the not too popular cause of an educated Baptist ministry. Sylvanus Boardman, the pastor at North Yarmouth, had similar views. When the new college got under way, he committed his own son to its care, proudly saw the son become a member of the first graduating class and then go to far-away Burma to become a missionary with the famous Adoniram Judson. Daniel Merrill was to prove to be one of the most influential persons in finally securing the coveted charter. Formerly a Congregationalist minister, he broke from that sect on the issue of infant baptism and became a Baptist, taking with him almost the entire membership of his church at Sedgwick, which thereafter functioned as a Baptist church. Like many another minister of the time, Merrill was elected to political office and was a member of the Massachusetts legislature in the winter
of 1812-13, when, after repeated defeats, the petitioners finally persuaded the General Court to grant them a charter.

Benjamin Titcomb, who in 1810 was pastor of the Baptist church at Brunswick, had the distinction of being one of the partners who established the first newspaper in Maine, the Falmouth Gazette, first published in 1794. He was a man of sound education and broad culture, who shared unreservedly Caleb Blood's convictions concerning an educated clergy. The fifth man had already shown himself a crusader for education. Called to Hebron by that town's early settler, Deacon William Barrows, to help him found a Baptist church in the new community, Elder John Tripp became not only the first pastor of the Hebron church, but also, with Deacon Barrows, a co-founder of Hebron Academy, which had received its charter in 1804, six years before Tripp became a member of the committee appointed by the Bowdoinham Association.

The committee of five proposed, and the association approved, solicitation of funds to promote the contemplated institution, but there is no evidence that any substantial sum was forthcoming, or indeed that any intensive canvass was made. A more important action was the decision to solicit the cooperation of the Lincoln Association. When the Bowdoinham Association met at Readfield in September, 1811, they had received intimations of support from the two neighboring associations. A year earlier they had set up a committee merely "to take into consideration petitioning the General Court." Now they decided to act, and a committee was appointed "to petition the General Court, with such as may join them from the Lincoln and Cumberland Associations." The latter was included because in 1810, the Baptists had formed a third association in Maine, called the Cumberland Association.

If any one man deserves to be called the father of Colby College, that man is the Reverend Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick. It was he who presented to the Massachusetts legislature the first petition, on January 20, 1812. The full text of that petition will be found in the Appendix of this history (Appendix A). The petitioners made a point of the familiar New England protest against taxation without representation. The legislature, they said, had been generous with grants of public lands to institutions under Congregationalist control. Yet the Baptists had inevitably shared in that giving, since the lands belonged to all the people regardless of religious affiliation. The legislature ought to treat Baptists in the same way it treated Congregationalists. The petitioners next called attention to the rapid growth of Baptist churches in Maine. Finally, they asked that a seminary be founded in which "our religious young men might be educated under the particular inspection of able men of the same sentiments."

There is no question that the petitioners originally intended a strictly Baptist institution. As at first written, the 1812 petition said: "Your petitioners further pray that your honorable body will cause the overseers and trustees of the proposed seminary to be appointed from among the ministers and churches of their own denomination." Before the petition reached the legislature, that restrictive clause had been stricken out. With eager ears attentive to talk in the State House corridors, Daniel Merrill had evidently come to the conclusion that such restriction stood no chance of legislative approval, and he persuaded his fellow petitioners not to ask for it.

What sort of institution did the petitioners intend? The text of the petition itself would make it appear that they were interested only in a theological seminary. But the earliest mention—that in the records of the Bowdoinham Association in 1810—had used the words "for the purpose of promoting literary and
theological knowledge." Charles P. Chipman, who was librarian of the college from 1911 to 1923, investigated this matter thoroughly and published his findings in a monograph, *The Formative Period of Colby College*. Chipman points out that Dr. Henry S. Burrage, in his *History of the Baptists in Maine*, and President James T. Champlin, in his address on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the College, both took the stand that the purpose of the founders was to establish a theological school and that the establishment of a college later was an afterthought. But Chipman did not agree. "These views I believe to be entirely mistaken, and due either to ignorance of the original documents still on file in the State Archives of Massachusetts, or to hasty conclusions drawn from an incomplete examination of those documents. The founders intended from the beginning to establish an institution of collegiate rank in which both literary and theological instruction should be given." Concluding his argument, Chipman says, "It is noteworthy that in the legislative records the purpose of the proposed institution is invariably given as the promoting of 'literary and theological knowledge.' If the idea was simply the establishment of a theological school, why should the word 'literary' be mentioned in every case?"

A minority of Chipman's readers thought that he had still not proved his case. They pointed out that in the documents and in a few extant letters, the promoters of the plan used rather loosely the terms college, seminary, and institution; hence it was impossible to tell from the mere use of terms just what the founders intended. Fortunately the present writer has found a letter which proves beyond doubt that Chipman was right. On December 11, 1811, Caleb Blood wrote to William King the following letter:

The petition embraces a request for the charter of a college or university with such powers and privileges as in such cases are, by law, made and provided. We wish it to be named the Associate University. It is also our wish that the trustees may always be of the Baptist denomination; and that no person shall be appointed president of said seminary unless he be of the same sentiments.

Before the legislature assembled in January, 1812, Daniel Merrill had agreed to present the petition to the House and William King promised to support it in the Senate. On December 23, 1811, Merrill wrote to King:

Your volunteering your services has prompted me to recommend to Elder Blood of Portland, to whom the care of the petition is committed until it shall come before your honorable body, that he ask you to sponsor the petition in the Senate and be our advocate in that body.

The legislature referred the petition to a joint committee of which Senator King was chairman. The committee reported on January 25, 1812:

The committee of both houses, to whom was committed the petition of Daniel Merrill and others—has had the same under consideration, and report that the petitioners have leave to bring in a bill embracing the objects prayed for.

The Senate Journal on the same day recorded:

Leave to bring in a bill on the petition of Daniel Merrill and others read and accepted. Sent down for concurrence. Came up concurred.
A bill was at once introduced, the text of which the reader will find in Appendix B. It met with little opposition in the Senate where it had the influential backing of William King, but it encountered difficulty in the House. Called up for a second reading on February 22, the bill met resounding defeat when by a vote of 224 to 60 it was voted to strike out the enacting clause, thus shelving the whole bill.17

Previous to the final action, the House had adopted two crippling amendments to the bill. The first provided that the legislature could at its pleasure grant any further powers, or could alter, limit, annul or restrain any of the powers granted by the present act. As we shall see, when we discuss William King’s part in getting the new Maine charters for the college, in 1820 and 1821, that amendment had political as well as educational ramifications, but on Washington’s birthday in 1812 it had the obvious effect of setting up an institution whose continued existence would be at the whim of each successive legislature.

A second amendment provided that in the corporation there should never be a majority of members of the same religious denomination. Such a provision would entirely defeat the purpose of the petitioners, which was to have a college under Baptist control. When, in addition to the earlier amendment, this one was also passed, the sponsors gave up the battle, and the vote to strike out the enacting clause was easily foreseen.

What had happened? With such high hopes and with such substantial support in the initial stages, why were the Baptist ministers who sought to found a college in Maine so soundly beaten? It is a story in which politics and religion both played conspicuous parts.

In the first place, the trustees of Bowdoin College were opposed to a second institution of collegiate rank in Maine. They had experienced considerable difficulty getting their own college under way after its incorporation in 1794, and neither in respect to enrollment nor in regard to financial support had it reached a secure footing when the Baptists presented their petition in 1812. Furthermore Bowdoin was a college of the “standing order,” and its supporters could not view with equanimity such obvious competition from a dissenting sect. Finally, the majority of the Bowdoin trustees were Federalists, whereas the leading Baptists of Maine represented what, in 1812, was the prevailing party in Maine, the Jeffersonian Democrats.

In fairness it should be emphasized that the outstanding motives for Bowdoin opposition to another college were neither political nor religious. That opposition was chiefly prompted by what the Bowdoin supporters felt to be sound common sense. The census of 1810 showed only 228,000 people in the entire district of Maine. In fact, ten years later, when Maine became a separate state, the population had not yet reached 300,000, and there was no community in the entire state that counted as many as 10,000 inhabitants. Portland had 7200 people and Falmouth 4100. The third largest town in Cumberland County was that in which Bowdoin College was located, Brunswick, with 2682 people. There was considerable validity in the Bowdoin argument that the population of Maine was too small and too widely scattered to support a second college.

The opposition was by no means restricted to those who wanted to protect the college at Brunswick. There were many men in the legislature who didn’t like to see degree-granting institutions set up by dissenting religious denominations.

Section Seven of the Baptists’ bill declared the college should be empowered to confer such degrees as are usually conferred by universities established for
education of youth. So strong was the opposition toward granting such authority to the proposed college that this alone might have defeated the bill even if the crippling amendments already referred to had not been passed.

The struggle behind the scenes, revealed by a few extant letters of the time, shows clearly that the opposition did not extend to the point of refusing to recognize a new theological school. To permit the Baptists or any other sect to train their own clergy was considered their right, even in the minds of many of the staunchest supporters of the "standing order." But to allow such a sect to operate a bona fide college and confer academic degrees was quite another matter. As Chipman says, "Had they (Merrill and others) now submitted a bill for a strictly theological school, there is every reason to believe it would have been speedily passed."18

Merrill and his fellow Baptists were determined, however, to secure a college charter. When the legislature reconvened in June, 1812, Merrill was himself Sedgwick's representative in the House. He presented again the identical petition of the previous January, signed by himself on behalf of the Lincoln Association with its forty-eight associate churches, by Robert Low for the twenty churches of the Bowdoinham Association, and by Sylvanus Boardman, Thomas Green, and Caleb Blood for the Cumberland Association with its twenty-four churches. The Senate referred this June petition to a committee, which recommended that further consideration be postponed until the winter session of the legislature. On February 19, 1813, both houses voted to allow the petitioners to bring in a bill allowing Daniel Merrill and others to be incorporators of "a literary seminary in the District of Maine with the usual powers and privileges, and for a grant of land to enable them to carry into effect the object of their petition."19

Here we encounter a significant change in phrasing. The proposed institution is no longer referred to as a college, but as a "literary seminary." The full text of the presented bill, before important amendments essentially altered several provisions, will be found in Appendix C.

Section Seven of this new bill, like the same section in the bill of the preceding year, empowered the institution to confer the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts. A previous section (Section 3) set up an organization of fellows, as well as trustees: "that the trustees be hereby empowered to elect nine persons of education to be fellows of the said institution, and who shall be stiled the learned faculty, whose duty it shall be to determine the qualifications of all candidates for degrees, which shall be given only by their authority."

The legislature insisted upon striking out the section concerning degrees, and it denied the right to appoint fellows. It did not, however, restrict the institution solely to theological instruction. Literary studies were to be permitted. As Edward W. Hall put it, "The name Literary and Theological Institution was at that time a favorite designation attached to many schools of a higher order in which collegiate and theological classes were united."20 The text of the finally adopted charter appears in Appendix D.

Whatever Daniel Merrill and his co-workers may have intended, it is clear that the Maine Literary and Theological Institution had to start without the important collegiate authority to grant degrees, and was expected by the legislators to be only a training school for Baptist ministers, in which literary as well as theological studies would not be out of place.
Why did five years elapse before the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution were able to implement their hard-won charter? Why did not instruction start within a year?

The chief reason for delay was that the nation was again at war. During the War of 1812, the District of Maine was hit hard. Already impoverished by the Embargo Act, Maine shipping was subject to constant attack and capture. For half a century its principal exports had been lumber and potash, the former going in large shiploads to the British West Indies, the latter to the wool factories of England. "Mr. Madison’s War" suspended that trade, just as had the Revolution, nearly fifty years earlier. Maine people simply did not have the money to start a new school.

Massachusetts’ absorption in war activities also delayed the location of the land grant awarded in the charter: “that there be and hereby is granted a township of land, six miles square, to be laid out and assigned from any of the unappropriated land belonging to this Commonwealth in the District of Maine, the same to be laid out under the direction of the Committee for the Sale of the Eastern Lands, within three years after the expiration of the present war with Great Britain.” The final words of that grant show clearly that the legislature intended that nothing should be done until the war was over, and that even then the land committee and the Institution’s Trustees should have three years to locate the grant.

The original incorporators of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution were twenty-one men of the Baptist faith, all residing in the District of Maine. We have already referred to four of them: Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick, Caleb Blood of Portland, Sylvanus Boardman of North Yarmouth, and Benjamin Titcomb of Brunswick. Of the remaining seventeen, ten were ministers: Thomas Green of Yarmouth, Robert Low of Readfield, Thomas Francis of Leeds, Ransom Norton of Livermore, Daniel McMasters of Sullivan, Samuel Stinson of Woolwich, John Haynes of Livermore, Samuel Baker of Thomaston, Joseph Bailey of Whitefield, and Phinehas Pillsbury of Nobleboro.

As numerous as were the clergy on the governing board of the school, laymen played very prominent parts in the corporation. There were seven of them: General Alford Richardson, leading member of Portland’s Federal Street Baptist Church, a man who proved more than once to be a thorn in the side of his pastor Caleb Blood and who was to get into public altercation with his fellow trustees over the Institution’s finances; John Neal, leading citizen of Litchfield; Moses Dennett, prominent merchant of the town of Bowdoin; John Hovey, well known
lumber operator of Mount Vernon; David Nelson of New Gloucester; Judge James Campbell, dynamic lay leader of the Baptist church at Cherryfield; and Hezekiah Prince of Thomaston, who twenty years earlier had made his famous horseback ride from Maine to Virginia and had since become a leading citizen of what is now Knox County.

These twenty-one men lost no time organizing for their formidable task. Through John Woodman, a justice of the peace at Buxton, they issued in February, a call for their first corporate meeting, "to be holden at Bowdoin in the County of Lincoln, at the dwelling house of Moses Dennett, Esq., on Tuesday, May 18, 1813, then and there to choose a moderator, clerk and treasurer, and such other officers, agents and committees as may be necessary to manage the prudential concerns of the said Institution, and to transact such other matters and things as the said trustees may judge necessary."1

So it came about that a private house in the town of Bowdoin was the site of the first meeting of the corporation that is now the President and Trustees of Colby College. The meeting elected Benjamin Titcomb as moderator and John Haynes as clerk, then proceeded to choose more permanent officers: Ebenezer Del no as Treasurer, Sylvanus Boardman as Secretary, and Daniel Merrill, John Neal and Hezekiah Prince as a standing committee.

The meeting concerned itself chiefly with the prospective township of land. John Neal was appointed to represent the Board to "run out a township of land in conformity to the act of the Court granting the same." Even before a site should be chosen, the Trustees made plans for its surveying and lottage. There is no question that they intended to build the college on the granted land, for at that first meeting in May, 1813, they voted that "no person shall have liberty to purchase more than two hundred acres within one mile and a half of the Institution." Besides the lots that were to be reserved for the Institution's buildings, the Trustees decided that "there shall be four lots of one hundred acres each, within two miles of the Institution, reserved for the perpetual use of the Institution for fuel."

The charter had empowered the incorporators to create a Board of Trustees never greater than thirty-one and never less than twenty-one in number. So, at their first meeting, the Board elected John Tripp, Cyrus Hamlin, Andrew Fuller, and Benjamin Eames as additional members. They also passed a vote that later caused them much difficulty: "Voted that no person shall ever be a member of this board who does not possess a fair moral and religious character, and is a member of the regular baptized church and in regular standing."2

The Board's second meeting, held in Mount Vernon on September 23, 1813, saw the election as a Trustee of the most prominent man who was to have a part in the early history of the College, General William King of Bath. Elected with him was Benjamin Shepard. King was elected a member of the Standing Committee.

When the Trustees attempted to hold their third meeting, at Bowdoin on January 11, 1815, the day was so stormy that a quorum could not be mustered, and the group decided to adjourn until the fourth Wednesday in the following September. But in the spring, four months before the September date, something happened to cause a special meeting to be called. John Neal and the Committee on the Eastern Lands had come to an agreement, and to the Maine Literary and Theological Institution was assigned Township No. 3, on the west side of the Penobscot River, in what later became the organized towns of Argyle and Alton. (See Appendix E) Immediately the Trustees were summoned into
Choosing A Site

Session on May 16, 1815, for the purpose of "devising means for lotting the township of land." At this meeting it was voted to have a committee "proceed to the township, with a view to ascertaining its quality and situation, and the expediency of erecting buildings thereon." The committee was instructed to report the place on the township most eligible for erecting the buildings, the mode in which the township should be lotted out, and how the roads should be laid out.

The time had now come to get the Institution started. So the same committee was instructed "to obtain such pecuniary aid by subscription from the people near Township No. 3 or elsewhere as can with conveniency be obtained." The Trustees also wanted the committee to ascertain the going price of land to settlers in that part of Maine, and to act as the Board's legal agents in contracting sales with prospective settlers.

When the Trustees next met, on September 27, 1815, the committee made a discouraging report. They said that the situation of the township did not at all meet their expectation, because it had a large bog and other disadvantages which rendered it not an eligible site for the Institution. The committee's report says nothing about the remoteness of the location, although that in itself seemed sufficient to cause the Trustees to seek a better site. When Professor C. E. Hamlin, collecting subscriptions for the College, visited the region in 1864, he reported that inhabitants were often kept awake on winter nights by the howling of wolves, though all doors and windows were closed.

The Trustees put up no argument with their committee. In a forthright fashion that was to characterize their many difficult decisions, they acted at once. "Voted, that a committee of seven be chosen to inquire whether it will be in the Institution's interest that it shall be removed from the township granted by the legislature, and if so, to inquire what town would be the most eligible."

It was pointed out that, while the charter did not expressly locate the Institution on the land grant, the plan presented to the Committee on Lands had clearly done so, and legal difficulties might ensue if express permission to locate elsewhere were not obtained from the legislature. In response to the Trustees' request, the Massachusetts legislature therefore voted to empower the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution to locate and establish their buildings in any town within the counties of Kennebec and Somerset. (Appendix F)

From the time when the first petition had been presented in Boston, the founders had enjoyed the interest and support of William King. Though already a Trustee of Bowdoin, and generously interested in its welfare, he did not relish seeing it so strongly under Federalist control. He felt the college should be more susceptible to Democratic influences. But he respected the Bowdoin leaders, though he differed with them in politics, and he had no intention of neglecting the Brunswick college when he agreed to support the Baptist cause. He was glad to be a trustee of both institutions. Then in 1815 occurred an event which, for several years, embittered King toward Bowdoin and caused him to be the successful advocate of a Maine law to restrict the powers of all private educational institutions within the state. These aroused feelings of General King increased his interest in the new Baptist Institution.

General King's brother-in-law, Benjamin J. Porter, was treasurer of Bowdoin College. Early in 1815, Porter's personal finances became seriously involved. There was never the slightest suggestion that his trouble involved college funds, but understandably the Trustees became increasingly anxious as Porter's diffi-
cultures became public. Porter's surety for the Bowdoin funds was his wife's brother, William King.

On January 8, 1815, Porter wrote to King:

I have not heard a word on the subject of my affairs with the College since I wrote you. Will you have the goodness to inform me on what this business rests. I have written to Judge Ames to be my attorney in that action. Will you have the goodness to talk with Mr. Ames.a

What next happened is told in Nehemiah Cleaveland's *History of Bowdoin College*:

The private affairs of Dr. Porter were found to be hopelessly involved. As the college funds were believed to be in danger, Benjamin Orr, agent and counsel for the trustees, went to Bath, and spread an attachment over the entire property of William King, who was largely engaged in commerce, and this legal drag-net stopped everything, even his vessels ready for sea. He got rid of the impediment by securing the college; but his indignation against the immediate actors, in what he called a needless and malicious action, was vast and loud.4

On September 1, 1815, Porter again wrote to King:

Jacob Abbott and Samuel Davis called on me yesterday and said they were appointed a committee to settle and close the accounts of my late treasurership, and for that purpose had been making an intense audit, preparatory to settlement. They insisted upon a charge of interest in the Dix balance amounting to more than $2000. I observed that it was proper for me to retain at least $3000 of the balance as cash on hand at all times, to which they disagreed. I told them I was in the hands of the college and my bondsman. I requested Mr. Davis to show you their statement, as he refused to leave it with me. I presume they cannot recover interest. I shall leave the ultimate decision to you and on your opinion I shall implicitly be guided.5

On November 18, 1815, Benjamin Orr, the college trustee and counsel who had aroused King's wrath, wrote a cold, lawyer's letter to King, telling him in effect to pay up and call it a day.

The Secretary of the Board of Overseers of Bowdoin College has put into my hand the enclosed note, and the papers containing the subject matter to which it refers. If the sum found due by the investigating committee be agreed to, please inform me in what manner you will render it available to the college; if not, any mistake you may discover in this report, when made known to me, shall be rectified. But, in case no mistake can be found, it is due to the integrity of the committee that I should be governed by their report in discharging the trust reposed in me.6

Of the whole episode Cleaveland says:

Politically, Orr and King were unrelenting foes, both strong and daring leaders. I can believe that Mr. Orr was thinking mainly of the college, and that he took what he regarded as the only certain course
to save it from ruin. But Mr. King could not believe this. He be­
came openly hostile to the college, which he looked upon as a Federalist
institution, and especially to President Appleton and John Abbott, whom
he wrongly regarded as Mr. Orr's prime instigators and abettors. Gen­
eral King resolved that he would be avenged and bided his time.7

A later Bowdoin historian, Louis C. Hatch, has this comment upon the
affair:

In 1815, Porter failed in business disastrously. A Bowdoin trustee,
Benjamin Orr of Topsham, acting as counsel for the board, hurried to
Bath and attached all King's property, even vessels about to sail. King
quickly freed them by giving security to the college, but he felt he had
been grossly insulted. Orr was a hard fighter and a violent Federalist,
and King believed the Thomaston man had acted from political mo­
tives. King, who was an unforgiving man, determined on revenge.8

Happily it can be recorded that a reconciliation later occurred, and William
King continued as a valued Trustee of Bowdoin College for nearly thirty years.
But in the heat of that episode in 1815, the vigorous Bath Democrat was eager
to turn his attention and his services to the new Institution that as yet had no
place to lay its head.

Even before the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution
had received permission to locate their school elsewhere than on the Argyle grant,
they had received overtures from the Trustees of Farmington Academy. In the
records of the Institution's meeting of September 27, 1815, is found this minute:
"The agent from the Trustees of Farmington Academy presented the copy of a
vote of his trustees proposing a union of the two institutions, provided the union
can be effected upon principles mutually beneficial. Voted, that this matter be
referred to a committee of this board, for mature consideration, to report their
opinion at the next meeting."

Meanwhile various trustees had been approached by two other towns, Bloom­
field and Waterville. Meeting in special session on September 25, the Board
voted to choose a committee "to visit the towns which have used their efforts and
given encouragement to have the Institution located there; namely, Farmington,
Bloomfield and Waterville, examine the situation and encouragements exhibited
and report at the next meeting." A member of that committee was William King,
to whom Secretary Boardman wrote on October 3: "I have only time to notify
you of your appointment as a member of the committee to visit in behalf of the
Board the places where exertions have been made to get the Institution placed,
and that the third Monday is appointed to meet at Waterville where your at­
tendance is requested."

Feeling between the rival communities was apparently very keen. This is
strikingly revealed in a letter which James Hall of Bloomfield wrote to William
King on January 25, 1816. The letter also shows what measures the rival com­
munities were taking to obtain the new Institution.

Nothing but a conviction that it is my indispensable duty could have
induced me to trouble you with these lines. Last December we were
favored with a letter from the committee of the Trustees of the Maine
Literary and Theological Institution concerning the location of that
seminary. This was immediately communicated to the Trustees of
Canaan Academy, who instantly called a meeting at which it was voted to offer you their schoolhouse, with the land on which it stands, and $200 in ready money. At the same time a subscription was opened, which we are authorized to say will certainly amount to $2500, which together with the half-township of land which may be obtained will stand as follows: Land and schoolhouse, $600; ready money, $200; half-township, $4000; subscriptions $2500; a total of $7300, and not one cent of debt.

We understand that the Trustees of Farmington Academy promise handsomely. It is one thing to promise and another thing to perform. Your humble servant was once unfortunately preceptor of Farrington Academy, and what I am now about to state are not things I know by hearsay, but things in which I am deeply concerned, for they owe me considerable money, which they have used every means in their power to swindle me out of, and by the want of which I have been greatly distressed. Neither am I the only person whom they have cruelly abused.

They value their schoolhouse at $4000. But even after they had allowed one another bills at exorbitant rates, the whole expense was only $2930. But that was too much, for the house and land are worth not more than $1800. When I left Farmington, there was a debt of $2730, which must have increased since to at least $3000. Their half-township of land, or rather the grant of it, for it was not yet located, was to be shared among a few of the trustees on consideration that they pay $4000 for it. Now put their subscription at $2300, their schoolhouse at $1800, and their half-township at $4000, and the total is $8100. But from this must be subtracted their debt of $3000, leaving a balance of only $5100. This is somewhat short of their boastful claim of $12,000. As you value your own honor and the prosperity of the seminary, be careful how you enter into any engagements with those men of Farmington.

The modern business man knows well that one does not enhance his own reputation or that of his goods by attacking a competitor. James Hall gained nothing by his attack on Farmington, and the irony of it is that his attack was wholly unnecessary. Although Hall did not know of a letter which William King had written two months earlier, that letter shows that Hall was wasting paper and ink. King had written to the Trustees of Farmington Academy on November 16, 1815:

Your proposition for uniting the friends of your academy with those of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution received the necessary consideration. We are directed to thank you gentlemen for the interest which you take in this Institution, and say that our trustees do not think the measure advisable at present. Will you gentlemen advise me as soon as convenient the amount which can be raised by subscription for the Institution provided it is established in your place? Only a substantial subscription will interest our trustees.

No such substantial subscription was forthcoming from Farmington, as King probably suspected. In one of King's letters, he mentions that Anson and Norridgewock were being considered, as well as Farmington, Bloomfield and Waterville, but in the official records there is no mention of those two Somerset towns.
At the meeting of the Trustees on January 15, 1817, the committee stated that it was continuing its investigations and was not ready yet to make a definite recommendation. That autumn, however, they were ready, and on October 1, 1817, recommended that the Institution be established at Bloomfield.

From a reading of the brief minutes of that Trustee meeting it is not easy to tell exactly what happened, but fortunately there is a lot of external evidence that permits us to read between the lines. Three votes are recorded in succession: "(1) to accept the report excepting the place proposed for locating the Institution; (2) that the present is the time for locating the Institution on certain conditions hereafter named; (3) that the Maine Literary and Theological Institution be located at Waterville on condition that the sums raised by the town and raised by subscription of the inhabitants of Waterville and its adjacents, in the judgment of the locating committee, are found in such a situation that they are likely to be realized."

The committee was further authorized to fix upon a spot in the Town of Waterville for locating the Institution and to purchase a plot of ground on which to erect the buildings.

During the months that had passed since the Trustees had first sounded out several communities, Waterville seemed to be at a disadvantage. She had no academy and no Baptist church. But what she did have was a group of energetic and determined citizens, led by the town's two wealthiest men, Nathaniel Gilman and Timothy Boutelle. Singly or in partnership, the two owned vast acreage of Maine land. Both were prominent members of the Jeffersonian party and both were well acquainted with William King. Better still, they were outspoken supporters of King's pet project, independence for Maine. Preserved in the King Collection at the Maine Historical Society are several letters from Gilman to King, concerned chiefly with commercial matters, but in every letter Gilman took the opportunity to put himself on record as a booster for an independent state.

When Gilman and Boutelle persuaded the voters to appropriate $3000 from the town for the new Institution, and when they personally guaranteed the private general subscription of $2000, victory was at hand. William King had complete confidence in Nathaniel Gilman and Timothy Boutelle. What may be read between the faded lines of the old trustee record is that it was William King who held up acceptance of the recommendation of the committee on which he himself had served, and won the Board over to his minority view. As a result, nearly five years after the General Court of Massachusetts had granted the charter, it was at last decided to set up the Institution on the banks of the Kennebec in Waterville.
CHAPTER III

Pangs Of Birth

The decision to locate the Institution in Waterville, reached in October, 1817, precipitated a number of actions. The Trustees appointed General Richardson as agent "to agree with a person or persons, by the job, to proceed in erecting buildings, in whole or in part, at the General's discretion." Later in the same meeting, the Board limited the General's authority, however, by choosing a committee to consult with him and decide what buildings should be erected. Eager to get their institution into active operation, the Board made Daniel Merrill, Otis Briggs and William King a committee to consider and report when in their judgment instruction could commence, whether any officers should be appointed and what their salaries should be. They decided that the tuition fee should be the same as that charged at Bowdoin College, showing again that their intent was to provide college instruction, not merely theological studies.

Daniel Merrill's committee presented a favorable report, which the Trustees at once approved.

Your committee appointed to consider the expediency of electing any of the officers of the Institution at the present session and what their salaries ought to be, and also at what time tuition may probably commence, report that it is expedient that a professor of theology and a professor of languages, or a tutor, be elected at the present session; that the salary of the professor of theology be $600 per annum, and that of the professor or tutor of languages shall be $500 or $400, according as the election shall be a professor or a tutor; also that instruction may commence on the first day of May, 1818, provided the Board be furnished with pecuniary ability by the legislature or otherwise.

At that decisive meeting there was no suggestion that the Institution should have a president or any other administrative officer. Apparently the professors, when finally appointed, would be responsible directly to the Trustees. But no professors at all were appointed at that meeting in October, 1817. The Trustees were eager to have a professor of theology get to work as soon as possible, but they could not then agree on a selection. The best they could do was to authorize a committee of seven to consider the matter thoroughly and report at an adjourned meeting in February.

Daniel Merrill and Caleb Blood were active Maine workers in the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society, and they naturally turned to that society for suggestions regarding a professor of theology. As a result, even before the adjourned meeting of the Trustees was held at Brunswick on February 25, 1818,
the Massachusetts society had proposed the name of Rev. Jeremiah Chaplin of Danvers, Massachusetts. The actual proposal was that the theological school conducted at Danvers by Dr. Chaplin should be merged with the newly organized Maine Literary and Theological Institution, and that Chaplin be appointed Professor of Divinity in the latter. The Waterville Trustees accepted the Massachusetts proposal and elected Jeremiah Chaplin Professor of Divinity. A further vote provided that “the students sent to the Maine Literary and Theological Institution from said Massachusetts Baptist Educational Society shall have instruction and other privileges gratis.” A second appointment emphasized the well established intent to provide literary as well as theological studies. The Reverend Ira Chase was chosen Professor of Languages, and the Board voted that instruction by both Chaplin and Chase should begin as soon as possible after May 1, 1818.

Meanwhile action had been taken concerning a specific site in Waterville. At the Trustee meeting on February 25, 1818, Sylvanus Boardman had been made a committee of one “to purchase the Vaughan lot, so called, in Waterville, for a site for the buildings of this institution, this lot consisting of 179 acres.” That lot, one of the original of the old McKechnie survey of 1762, had passed through several hands until it had come into the possession of the great Kennebec proprietor, Robert Hallowell Gardiner, grandson and heir of Sylvester Gardiner, one of the organizers of the revived Plymouth Company. (See also Appendix G) Dr. Whittemore states that there had been an earlier plan to purchase the Sherwin lot near the present site of the Universalist Church, but no mention of such a plan ever reached the records of the Trustees. The cost of the lot was $1797.50, and it extended 40 rods along the Kennebec and back nearly a mile to the Messalonskee Stream. The next lot on the south, called the Briggs lot, slightly larger, 46 rods on the river and extending likewise to the Messalonskee, was soon added at a cost of $2500. Those two large lots provided the Institution with a site every bit as large as the huge Mayflower Hill property to which the College moved more than a hundred years later. The south line was a bit north of the present Getchell Street, and the north line was near the present upper railroad crossing on College Avenue.

Knowing that they must have some place to house students and hold classes, pending the erection of a building, the Board authorized Sylvanus Boardman “to hire for the term of two years the house on the Wood lot, so called, for the accommodation of students.” James Wood had purchased the old McKechnie lot Number 106 and had built on it a large frame house, placing it on the site now occupied by the Elmwood Hotel. In 1818 that house stood well out in the country, the stores on Main Street then not extending north of Temple Street. In fact, the trustee records sometimes refer to the place as the Wood farm. For instance, in February, 1818, it was voted, that the next annual meeting be held (on the last day of August) in Waterville “at the house on the Wood farm.”

The chief problem facing the new Institution was lack of money, a problem which indeed was to raise its ugly head many times through the ensuing years. At the meeting in Litchfield in January, 1817, the Trustees had voted to prepare a memorial to the legislature “in order to obtain aid and an increase of the funds of the Institution.” It was also decided to prepare a circular to be sent to the several Baptist Associations in the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to encourage their assistance to the Institution. But when William King entertained the Board at his mansion in Bath, for the meeting in the following October, the committee reported that they had been unable to forward a memorial to the
legislature. The Board at once resolved that a petition must surely go to the legislature when it next assembled in January. William Bachelder was appointed to visit the Baptist associations in the western part of the state (Massachusetts proper) and lay before them a petition to the legislature for an increase in funds for the Institution, and request that the moderator and clerk of each association sign it. Sylvanus Boardman agreed to do the same among the associations in the District of Maine. We shall turn later to the fate of that legislative petition, but let us first note other means that were being used to raise funds.

At the meeting in February, 1818, it was voted to ask the persons who had guaranteed the payment of $2000 in Waterville (Gilman and Boutelle had guaranteed that public subscription) to furnish the money to buy the needed lot. In August the Treasurer was authorized to secure from Deacon Baldwin, appointed to solicit donations, “all information in his possession relative to that subject, and particularly to furnish such subscription papers as were obtained by the late William Bachelder and also the names of persons with whom other subscription papers were left.” At the same time a committee, under the chairmanship of William King, was appointed to devise some means to raise the money necessary to meet current expenses.

In August, 1818, King’s committee reported that the Treasurer ought to be one who resided in Waterville, who would be near a large proportion of the present subscribers and would be able to collect from them more easily than could someone farther away. It was apparent that the Waterville subscriptions were not being collected in spite of the Gilman and Boutelle guarantee. Therefore, at that August meeting in 1818, the Trustees again took action to secure payment.

Voted, that the Treasurer call for the $2000 guaranteed by certain gentlemen of Waterville on subscriptions made in favor of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, and to pay Robert Gardiner, Esq. for a tract of land in said Waterville, for which the Treasurer is instructed to take a well executed warrantee deed in the name of said corporation, and the Treasurer is further authorized to borrow in the name of the trustees a sum of money sufficient to discharge any part of the current expenses.

While private subscriptions and petitions to the legislature came repeatedly to the attention of the Trustees, they were also much concerned about realizing usable funds from the land grant on the Penobscot River. Unless either the land or the timber on it could be sold for cash, it remained worthless for the Institution’s purposes. So, during 1817 and 1818, the Trustees acted vigorously to get something out of those lands. John Neal was appointed to proceed to the site of the grant, take care of the timber that had been cut by squatters, settle with those unauthorized persons or bring suit against them. Otis Briggs was named agent for sale of the lands. Meanwhile the land had been surveyed and laid out into carefully described lots. In August, 1818, the Board decided to lease or sell the lands on the best available terms, and make such disposition of the timber as might seem best to a committee composed of Timothy Boutelle, Nathaniel Gilman, Asa Redington, Otis Briggs and John Neal. No immediate satisfaction came from this procedure. Several years elapsed before either land or timber brought in any ready cash.

Meanwhile the Institution suffered, both financially and in prestige, because of an unfortunate altercation between Alford Richardson and William King. It
concerned the legislative petition of 1819. That petition was drawn up, asking
for a further grant of four townships of land and a cash award of $3000 a year.
The petition had been put into printed form and circulated among churches and
Baptist associations for signatures, so that when King presented the plea of the
Institution's Trustees at the spring session of the legislature in 1819 he was able
to accompany it with more than thirty supporting petitions. By this time the
little Maine school had a lot of friends in the legislature, and prospects were bright
for the petition's success. Then came a crushing blow.

One of the most influential members of the Trustees, General Alford Rich­
ardson of Portland, protested that the petitions from churches and associations
had never been authorized by the Board and were therefore illegal. First let us
see what the published histories have to say about this unfortunate affair. Whitte-
more says:

Printed petitions of churches, associations, and citizens of Maine and
Massachusetts in support of the bill were introduced. When brought
up, General Richardson, a member of Board, asserted that these peti­
tions had not been legally authorized. This decided the fate of the bill,
which was rejected by a vote of thirteen to ten.6

In his address at the fiftieth anniversary of the College, President Champlin
said:

There was one serious misunderstanding between two prominent mem­
ers of the Board, which caused a good deal of feeling and discussion
at the time. Alford Richardson of Portland, better known as General
Richardson, was one of the Institution's original incorporators, and
William King, also known as General King, and afterwards the first
governor of the State of Maine, being favorable to Baptist views though
not himself a Baptist, was chosen a Trustee of the Institution at its
second meeting in September, 1813. The Institution, being poor and
having received from the Commonwealth only the meagerest endowment,
had occasion to petition the legislature for further aid. The petition was
presented in 1819, and a circular petition, which had been authorized
and circulated among the Baptists of the Commonwealth for their sig­
nature, accompanied it. Mr. King procured a bill from the legislative
committee, providing a handsome endowment for the Institution, with
apparently a good prospect of getting it through. At this point he was
met by a statement from Mr. Richardson that the circular petitions
had been presented without the consent of the Trustees. The presenta­
tion of these petitions, it is true, does not seem to have been expressly
provided for, but that the preparing and circulation of petitions in some
form was authorized is made clear by the trustee records. Why were such
petitions authorized at all if they were not to be presented? Why, in­
deed, should a friend of the Institution, as Mr. Richardson undoubtedly
was, throw an obstacle in the way of their success on this technical
ground? As the gentlemen belonged to rival political parties, possibly
political rivalry had something to do with it.7

In his History of the Baptists in Maine, Burrage says:

The Trustees in 1819 sought from the legislature of Massachusetts
additional aid, and Hon. William King, having brought the matter be-
fore that body, procured a bill from a committee, providing for a grant
of four townships of land and $3000 a year. There was good prospect
that the bill would pass until General Alford Richardson, like King a
member of the Institution’s Trustees, and a member of the First Baptist
Church in Portland, protested that certain petitions presented were with­
out the authority and consent of the Trustees. The bill was conse­
quently defeated. Probably, as President Champlin later suggested,
political rivalry caused Mr. Richardson’s action.\(^8\)

Some light is cast on this controversy by correspondence between William
King and Mark L. Hill, held two years earlier, when the Trustees were consid­
ering a similar petition to the legislature. On January 15, 1816, Hill wrote to King:

I have seen General Richardson upon the subject of the presentation of
the petition. He is full of doubts and fears, appears to be afraid of of­
fending or forfeiting the good opinion of his political friends, hesitates
about the propriety of asking for any money at present. I have been
endeavoring to obviate all those objections in his mind and in the minds
of others whom he has influence, and it is necessary for those of
us who do not belong to their denomination to conduct the case pru­
dently and not urge things against their inclination. I have proposed to
have a meeting at Dr. Baldwin’s in a day or two, to settle the mode
of procedure, for it will not do for one to pull one way and another
a different way.\(^9\)

Two days later Hill again wrote to King:

This evening we are to have a meeting at Dr. Baldwin’s to try to recon­
cile and condense the views of our friends the Baptists. A letter has
been received from Mr. Boardman, which has paralyzed the thing.\(^10\)

Those letters reveal that, when General Richardson “threw his monkey­
wrench” in 1818, it was not the first time he had stirred the waters of discord.
He seems to have been the leader of a minority group within the Board who dis­
trusted the non-Baptist members. President Champlin’s suggestion that politics
was involved in the quarrel was only part of the explanation. Religious feelings
and personal animosities were very much in the picture.
How deeply religious convictions were embedded in the political situation is
shown by a quotation from the petition which William King presented in 1819:

Your petitioners, in conclusion, cannot refrain from stating what is be­
lieved to be a fact, that neither a professed Baptist nor Methodist is now
to be found among the instructors at Harvard, Williams or Bowdoin.
Considering ourselves pointedly excluded from the government of these
institutions, and believing that the religious instruction afforded is of a
kind not the most correct, we humbly petition for aid to our own Insti­
tution.\(^11\)

The language of that paragraph is so remarkably like a paragraph in the
petition of 1815, when the Trustees had successfully sought the right to establish
the Institution elsewhere than on the Argyle lands, that one suspects the two
paragraphs were both written by the same hand. That could hardly have been the
hand of William King, who was not a Baptist. Could it have been the hand of
that clever Baptist politician, General Alford Richardson?
The petition of 1815 had said:

This Institution was established at the request and petition of those persons denominated Baptists within this Commonwealth, and their object was, and now is, to have an institution at which their children may be educated, over which they may have some influence and control. At the present time not a single individual denominated a Baptist is a member of the corporation of any of the colleges within the Commonwealth, and from within the District of Maine they have been very pointedly excluded. As the people denominated Baptists may be considered as comprising one third of the population of the State, they will not be asking too much when they request from the legislature the same aid that has been afforded to Williamstown and Bowdoin colleges as relates to grants of land.12

At first the Trustees sided indignantly with General King in his controversy with General Richardson. In August, 1819, the Board spread a solemn resolution on their records:

Whereas this Board have been informed that representations were made in the Senate of Massachusetts that the petitions presented to that body from the Baptist societies in Maine were got up without consent and contrary to the wishes of this corporation, therefore it is voted that such representations were not correct, as this Board did authorize this application to be made to said societies, and requested that the petitions be forwarded to the legislature, and this Board now regret that such representations should have been made as were calculated to deprive them of such equitable endowment as the present state of the Institution requires.

General Richardson was no man to accept such a decision without protest. In the spring of 1820 he wrote to the Moderator of the Board, Sylvanus Boardman, denouncing the decision made at the previous annual meeting and demanding a thorough investigation. His request was granted, and on August 16, 1820, an investigating committee made the following factual report, which, in General Richardson’s absence, was unanimously adopted:

At a meeting held in Brunswick in February, 1818, after being agreed to petition the legislature of Massachusetts for aid to the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, it was understood by members present that, in case the application to the legislature should be unsuccessful at the spring session, before the winter session next ensuing a circular petition should be got up and distributed among the Baptist churches throughout the state, to obtain the signatures of their members and others in concurrence with the petition of the Board. In pursuance of this understanding, several copies of a circular petition were presented to the Board at their meeting at Waterville in August, 1818, at which time the said petition was discussed. At the expiration of that discussion, since only one gentleman manifested an objection to the acceptance and distribution of the petitions, it was tacitly understood that they were accepted, and they were consequently distributed by members of the Board and others to whose charge they were committed.
All this being a result of conference and what was supposed to be mutual understanding and not formal resolve, was not therefore recorded. This circumstance has, in the opinion of your committee, given rise to different and conflicting opinions in two distinguished members of the Board. On one part, General King, embracing what he conceived to be the understanding of the Board, affirmed that the said circulars did originate and circulate by the Board's consent and authority. While on the other part, General Richardson, governing himself by what appeared upon the records of the Board, said that the circulars were gotten up and circulated without the Board's knowledge and consent.

Even after that impartial statement of the case, General Richardson was not willing to drop the matter. A year later he demanded that the Secretary of the Board send him a transcript of the vote passed at Litchfield in 1817. The Secretary complied and the General received the following transcript:

Litchfield, January 15, 1817

Voted to choose a committee of seven to prepare and forward a memorial to the legislature, in order to obtain aid and an increase of the funds of the Institution, also prepare petitions and forward them to the Baptist societies.

In the original record the words "prepare petitions and forward to the Baptist churches" has been written between previously written lines, but whether that was done immediately or long afterward a modern reader cannot determine.

At the annual meeting in 1821, the Trustees voted to declare vacant the seat of General Alford Richardson, because of his continued absence from meetings. In his place they elected Josiah Seaver of South Berwick. The two generals continued at odds for several years but were eventually reconciled. In 1834 General Richardson again accepted a seat on the Board, where he worked in harmony with William King for the welfare of the College. But irreparable damage had already been done. If King's bill, appropriating four townships of land and $3000 a year, had been passed, it would have made a lot of difference. Long years of precarious existence on a starvation diet might have been avoided. But meanwhile a devoted, energetic, and persevering man had come upon the scene. In June, 1818, Jeremiah Chaplin had arrived in Waterville.
CHAPTER IV

Jeremiah The Prophet

We are so accustomed to thinking of prophecy as prediction of future events that we forget the original meaning of the word. A prophet is one who "speaks for." The biblical prophets were men who spoke for God, and Jeremiah Chaplin was a nineteenth century disciple of the great prophetic tradition. When he left the comfort of his Danvers parsonage to try a new venture in the wilderness of Maine, he heard that call as the voice of God. If God wanted Jeremiah to speak for Him in the forests along the Kennebec, Jeremiah was willing to go. But here was a double task. He must now speak not only for the Lord, but for that which he was sure the Lord, through devout Baptist ministers, had brought about—an educational institution far up in the Maine woods.

Jeremiah Chaplin was in the sixth generation of the Chaplin family in America. He was descended from Hugh Chaplin, who had come to this country from England in 1640, and had received a house lot in Rowley, Massachusetts, when Essex County was created in 1643. When he died in 1654, he left an estate appraised at 123 pounds, a considerable sum for those pioneer days. Hugh Chaplin was a freeman, which shows that he was a recognized communicant of a Puritan church of the standing order, and it was not until the time of his great-great-grandchildren that any of the family became Baptists. For that decision by Jeremiah's father, Asa Chaplin, a woman may have been responsible. This is the way Mittie Myers Chaplin tells the story:

Mary Bailey lived in Haverhill, several miles from Asa's home in Georgetown. Perhaps some of his boyhood friends were among the sons of families who in 1754 had withdrawn from the parent Congregational Church in Georgetown and had established a church of the Baptist faith at Bradford, just across the Merrimac from Haverhill. In Haverhill itself there was a militant Baptist church led by a talented young clergyman, Rev. Hezekiah Smith. That church was especially attractive to the young people. Perhaps it was in such a group that Asa Chaplin first met Mary Bailey. Thus she may have been the opening wedge to his conversion to the Baptist faith.1

The personal conduct approved by the old Puritan regime was not at all mitigated for Asa Chaplin when he became a Baptist. He was a strict Sabbatarian. For him the workday week ended at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon, so that the remainder of the day could be spent in preparation for the Sabbath, which ended at sundown on Sunday. Mrs. Mittie Chaplin tells that, when the
great preacher Whitefield came to Georgetown, the Congregationalist pastor tried to persuade Asa Chaplin to attend the service. Chaplin refused, saying he had no fault to find with his own minister.²

Such was the environment in which Jeremiah Chaplin spent the formative years of his life, following his birth on January 2, 1776, in Rowley, Massachusetts. At the early age of ten he had made his profession of faith and had been baptized into his father's church. He continued to live at home, working on the farm, until he was nearly of age. Unlike many Baptist fathers of the time, Asa Chaplin was not averse to advanced education. Observing that Jeremiah loved books and was quick to learn, Asa approved of the lad's ambition to attend the only Baptist college in New England, Brown University at Providence. In 1799 Jeremiah received his Brown diploma, spent a year at the University as a tutor, then commenced theological studies with a noted Baptist divine, Dr. Thomas Baldwin of Boston. In 1802 he was called to be pastor of the Baptist Church at Danvers, not far from his birthplace. Jeremiah knew the place well. His father, with three other men from the Georgetown church, had assisted in the organization of the Danvers church in 1793, and "Georgetown people had many acquaintances in Danvers as they journeyed through, going to Marblehead, where they sold mackerel kits or firkins to fishermen."³

Jeremiah Chaplin has been called one of the most learned theologians of his time. He was an original thinker and was said to express his thoughts with equal originality. His long sermons, expounding and defending biblical passages, were apparently so spirited that they held attention through long and wearsome arguments. Nevertheless his son-in-law is quoted as saying, "Unhappily he had not the advantages which grace of manners and finished oratory give to the public speaker, especially in the pulpit. Hence his life as a pastor, and the rich fruits of his piety and learning, were expended among small churches in rural districts."⁴

Although diligent search has failed to disclose any contemporary portrait of Jeremiah Chaplin, we do have a verbal description of the man. He was thin, spare and tall, with sharp, angular features and a penetrating eye. James Brooks said that he had "a rather sepulchral voice, which in his sermons and prayers went out in cadences that rose and fell with a singular effect upon the ear. He made perpendicular gestures with his right arm, keeping time to the changing cadences of his voice, without much reference to the subject matter of his discourse."⁵

On April 16, 1806, Jeremiah married Marcia O'Brien of Newburyport, daughter of Captain John O'Brien, a distinguished naval officer in the Revolution who had participated in the first victory of the Continental Navy in the engagement off Machias. The young minister from Danvers, who was later to face boldly and unflinchingly many a difficult task away down east in Maine, seems to have been unusually shy with Marcia. Mrs. Mittie Chaplin tells us, "Upon meeting Miss O'Brien, Jeremiah felt that his life partner had been found. One Sunday evening he gave her a sealed envelope, telling her not to open it until the next day. It contained his proposal of marriage, which the young lady accepted."⁶

When the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution first heard of Chaplin, he was already operating what the Institution's records refer to as "theological school at Danvers." Just what did that term mean?

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the most common method of preparation for the three learned professions of medicine, law and the ministry was to study with some licensed practitioner. A kind of apprenticeship, this method prevailed longer for young men seeking admission to the bar than it did in the two other professions. Yet, as late as 1847, Thomas Flint of Anson was
learning medicine under Dr. Valorus Coolidge of Waterville when that notorious physician was arrested for the murder of young Edward Mathews. When the Maine Literary and Theological Institution was opened, organized theological schools were few, and any minister who had more than one young man studying with him at one time was said to be conducting a school. In the spring of 1818 Jeremiah Chaplin had seven such students living in the Danvers parsonage and subject to his instruction. For each of those students the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society paid Chaplin a modest fee, for which he had to supply board and lodging as well as instruction. Mrs. Chaplin did the students' washing and mending.

The fact that Chaplin had as many as seven students under his instruction may have had something to do with his nomination to the Maine trustees by the Education Society. Probably few other Baptist clergymen in Massachusetts were training more than one or two boys. A minister who had a good reputation for theological learning and who could supply seven ready-made students would give the new Institution a fine start.

On the June day in 1818, when Jeremiah and Marcia Chaplin left the old parsonage in Danvers for their venture in Maine, they had already become the parents of seven children. Two girls had died in infancy. Of the five survivors who were now on the way to Waterville, the oldest was John O'Brien Chaplin, aged eleven. His sister Hannah was nine, his brother Jeremiah Jr. was five, and his brother Adoniram Judson Chaplin, named for the famous Baptist missionary to Burma, was only two. The youngest of the family, a babe in Mrs. Chaplin's arms, was Anna Hesseltine Chaplin, who had been born only five months before the family left Danvers.

It has been said that Mrs. Chaplin kept a journal of the family's trip to Waterville. That is not strictly true. What she wrote was a long letter addressed to friends in the church back in Danvers. It was the kind of letter many women have written before and since her time, with parts of it written on different days, until the writer found a good chance to mail it. The letter did therefore turn out to be a kind of journal, for it was indeed a chronological account of the voyage by sloop from Boston to Augusta, by longboat up the Kennebec to Waterville, their reception in the town, and their first three weeks in Waterville. The full text of this letter has been placed in Appendix G.

Never for a moment did Jeremiah Chaplin forget that he was a minister of the gospel. Mrs. Chaplin recorded that he conducted services several times on the journey. The wife proved to be shrewdly adept at public relations. Meeting a boat that was coming down the river, and learning that the occupants lived in Winslow, across the river from Waterville, she "requested them to visit us on the Sabbath and invite their neighbors, as there would be preaching at Waterville, for we meant to have a meeting if Mr. Chaplin should be obliged to follow the example of the Apostle who preached in his own hired house."

The Chaplins had left Boston on June 20, 1818, on one of the numerous coasting sloops that claimed that city as its home port. For a time it was thought that the sloop that brought the Chaplins to Maine, since it bore the name Hero, was the same sloop from which Captain Palmer of Stonington, Connecticut, first sighted the Antarctic continent. It is now known, however, that there were several New England sloops named Hero, and that Palmer's was built on the Mystic River, while that which carried the Chaplins was built at Boston, and the two boats had quite different dimensions. When plans were made for the Miller Library on Mayflower Hill, more than a century after the Hero brought the Chap-
lins up the Kennebec, it was decided that an appropriate weather vane on that highest tower in Maine should be a replica of the sloop Hero. But what did that sloop look like? No one knew. Raymond Spinney, a graduate of Colby in the Class of 1921, had long been interested in antiquarian research in the Boston area. His diligent search of records and drawings at the Boston Custom House finally turned up a complete description of the sloop Hero, so that it was possible to make a bronze replica, six feet long, which now stands atop the tall tower of the Library on Mayflower Hill.

In the middle of the nineteenth century small vessels could sail up the Kennebec all the way to Waterville, because a canal around the dam at Augusta enabled them to get around the rapids at that town. But that canal had not been built when the Hero came up the river in the summer of 1818. That sloop could get to Augusta, but no farther. Mrs. Chaplin tells us, "Wednesday afternoon, about two o'clock, we left the place (Augusta) and took one of those longboats which are used on the Kennebec River, and which, being made with a booth in one end, are very convenient for the transportation of families as well as goods." The longboat was a long, low, flat-bottomed craft, square at both ends, steered by a long oar, and having a single tall mast with two or three square sails. Because the wind on the river was highly undependable, these boats were often pulled along by oxen treading a towpath along the shore. That is what happened when the Chaplins took their journey. Mrs. Chaplin wrote, "Sometimes, when the wind was unfavorable, it was found necessary to go on shore and procure oxen, which standing on the water's edge with a rope fastened to them and to the boat, much assist its motion." But sometimes even the help of oxen was not enough, for Mrs. Chaplin says, "We went along with their assistance [the oxen's], but as the wind was several times weak, the men took the rope and helped us along."

When one can now enter an automobile at the State House and be at the Waterville post office in half an hour, it is difficult to comprehend the time it took to make that journey by longboat in 1818. Slow and tedious as it was, Mrs. Chaplin says it was preferable to the twenty mile journey over land. "We thought it would be more pleasant and less fatiguing than to go in a carriage." When night overtook them, the Chaplins were three or four miles below Waterville, so they spent the night at a farmhouse. Mrs. Chaplin did not say whether it was on the Vassalboro or on the Sidney side of the river, but it was probably the former, because most of the longboats stopped at Getchells Corner. Setting out again early the next morning, they arrived in Waterville at ten o'clock. They had left Augusta at two o'clock on Wednesday; they reached Waterville at ten o'clock the next forenoon. That was the time consumed by a journey that now takes the traveler half an hour.

The eventful day when the man who was to become the first president of Waterville College arrived in town was June 25, 1818. Waterville citizens, anxious to see the new Institution launched in their town, greeted the Danvers family warmly. As Mrs. Chaplin recorded it, "Just before we reached the shore, we observed a number of gentlemen coming toward us. We soon found their object was to welcome us to Waterville." The Chaplins were taken at once to the home of the man who had led the movement to secure the institution for Waterville, Squire Timothy Boutelle. "Mrs. Boutelle met us at the door with as much freedom as though we had been previously acquainted."

Even a century and a half later, when ease of communication now leaves few isolated areas in our whole nation, people from other states have strange notions about the inhabitants of Maine. Citizens of the Pine Tree State are looked
upon as woodsmen, watermen and hunters, as rather crude, unsophisticated indi
viduals unused to cultured ways. No wonder Mrs. Chaplin so pictured them
before she came to Waterville. She was soon disillusioned. “They do not seem
to be such ignorant, uncultivated beings as some have imagined. Many of those
I have seen appear to be people of education and polished manners.”

Waterville’s Elmwood Hotel is now in the heart of the city’s business section.
On that site in 1818 stood the large frame house that had been built by James
Wood. After Wood’s death the house had been vacant for about a year when
the Trustees rented it to accommodate Chaplin’s family and his seven theological
students. Mrs. Chaplin found that the Wood house was then situated in the
suburbs. “Our house is rather retired from the thickest of the village although
neighbors are quite handy.”

Jeremiah Chaplin was more than a pious preacher and a conscientious teacher
of young men bound for the ministry. He was a crusading Baptist, and he had
been in Waterville less than two months when he organized, at a meeting in his
home, the First Baptist Church of Waterville. He served that church as pastor
or co-pastor for several years, and led it through the difficult task of erecting its
own meetinghouse in 1826, the first to be built by any denomination in Water-
ville. The only previous meetinghouse had been a community structure erected
on the town common in 1798. It was open to the use of all denominations, and
in it Chaplin himself had preached on his first Sunday in Waterville. All his life
Jeremiah Chaplin considered it was his first duty to do the Lord’s work.

The tall, spare, reverend gentleman in the Wood house was also a lover of
books. Ten years before, in Danvers, he had helped organize a social library,
and had set aside a room in the parsonage for its collection of books. On those
shelves were not only volumes of religion and theology, but also Robinson Crusoe,
Vicar of Wakefield, Pamela, Clarissa Harlowe, and Don Quixote. A Danvers
native, Samuel Page Fowler, wrote long afterward, “I well remember in my boy-
hood how these solid authors stood in the pine bookcase off the minister’s kitchen.
They were all bound in sheep or calf-skin, in a strong and durable manner that
seemed to exhibit a character and respectability not seen in bindings of books of
the present day.” Although Chaplin donated many books to the social library in
Danvers, he retained a sizable personal collection, which he brought with him
to Waterville. We know that, besides numerous volumes of sermons, he brought
along Paley’s Theology, Butler’s Analogy of Religion, the Imitation of Christ,
Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, Human Nature in its Fourfold State,
Hannah Adams’ popular volume on the world’s religions, and Josephus’ History
of the Jews. Among his secular books were Parks’ Travels in Africa, Goldsmith’s
History of the Earth, and a work on natural history called Animated Nature.

In respect to the use of alcoholic beverages Chaplin was well ahead of his
time. Not only was liquor served liberally at the raising of the houses and barns,
but it even accompanied the building of churches. When the minister called on
a family, custom demanded that they offer him a stimulating drink. Chaplin had
offended one of his Danvers deacons by refusing to partake of the man’s pro-
fered liquor. The deacon became so angry that he told Chaplin, if the latter did
not drink the rum, the host would pour it down the minister’s throat. According
to Chaplin, he didn’t take the drink and the threat was never carried out. In
Waterville this Baptist preacher became at once the leader of a vigorous, but un-
popular temperance movement. Although he left Waterville long before Neal
Dow won his battle for Maine’s prohibitory law in 1851, Chaplin did see in the
community the organization of a thriving chapter of the Sons of Temperance.
Chaplin liked to take walks with his students along the bank of the Kennebec or out to the thriving new settlement of Ten Lots in the western part of the town. Tradition has it that the path along the river back of the first college buildings became known as Meditation Lane.

From his published sermons it is clear that Chaplin was a Baptist of the stern Calvinist persuasion. As such, he appealed strongly to the predominant conservatism among Maine Baptists of that time. Although the doctrine of the Free Will Baptists was beginning to get a foothold east of the Piscataqua, Arminian beliefs which denied predestination were not countenanced by a majority of "the denomination stiled Baptists." Jeremiah Chaplin scorned what his fellow Baptists called the heresies of the Age of Reason, and he had no sympathy with the religious skepticism which characterized the period immediately after the Revolution. He habitually turned to the Bible for his thinking and directly to God for his inspiration. He had only contempt for the boasted pleasures of men.

Chaplin believed that Christian churches and Christian schools had a continuing place in God's conflict with a very personal Devil. In his sermon at the ordination of his student, George Dana Boardman, as a "missionary to the heathen," preached at North Yarmouth on February 16, 1825, Chaplin said:

Many Christians appear to underrate the efforts which are likely to be made for the overthrow of the cause of Christ. They imagine that the conflict, which has so long been maintained between the church and her enemies, is nearly over, and that she has little more to do than take possession of her inheritance. That is a delusion. Many events have taken place, within a few years, that are calculated to arouse the Prince of Darkness and to excite him to his most vigorous exertions. Can we suppose that the season of millennial glory will be introduced without some desperate efforts on the part of Satan to prevent it? And in that conflict who are most likely to suffer? Who must expect to stand in the forefront of the battle? Must it not be those who by their missionary labors have contributed most to dispel the darkness which has so long covered the nations—the missionaries nurtured and sent out by our churches and institutions?9

Robert E. Pattison, who was president of the College from 1853 to 1857, did not meet Chaplin until the latter was more than fifty years of age. He did not know the first president during those active administrative years from 1818 to 1833. But usually men do not change greatly in essential character in the years from 25 to 40. Pattison said of the Chaplin he knew:

His first appearance impressed one with the idea of something unusual. He who had seen the man but once would not be likely to forget him. Though there was an absence of gracefulfulness, there was something in his tall, spare frame, broad shoulders and bony face, in his low but intellectually developed forehead above the small black, piercing eyes, which rarely failed to arrest attention. A natural impression, modified by a degree of awkward diffidence not less natural, but with a contemplative, meek and benevolent spirit, set him apart from his fellows. In spite of his personal modesty, he was susceptible of an ardor of feeling that reached full development in his zeal to build up this college. There was, in his case, none of that cold resolve of which some men are capable, and by which they are sustained amidst all reverses and disappointments. Reverses hurt and scarred him. He felt intensely the
wounds of adversity. For that reason his triumphs in behalf of the college were all the greater.\(^10\)

As we shall see in a later chapter, Chaplin left the college as a result of difficulties with the students. Yet, ten years after that unhappy separation, Dr. Pattison was able to say:

When Dr. Chaplin retired from this place, there is reason to fear that he carried with him an unhappy but false impression of the estimate the public set upon his services. Few individuals ever retired from a station of equal responsibility with more universal respect. He carried with him the affections of all who were capable of appreciating him, and the reputation of being a great and good man who had done an important and useful work.\(^11\)

Stern Calvinist though he was, Jeremiah Chaplin had profound respect for education. He had no sympathy for those who held that the church did not need an educated ministry. He had pity, but no respect for the earnest young men who had envisioned P.C. blazoned across the heavens and had interpreted it as Preach Christ when for them it probably meant Plant Corn. Chaplin was convinced that a man could be true to his Bible and still respect the learning of men. He went a great deal farther than some of his Baptist brethren, who held that a strictly theological education was all any minister needed. He believed that minister and layman alike needed a liberal literary education. To that view too many of the Baptist constituency in Maine were apathetic, and to overcome that apathy Jeremiah Chaplin devoted his talent and his zeal.

Such was the man who came to Waterville in 1818 to start a literary and theological institution. Jeremiah the Prophet was now ready to go to work.
CHAPTER V

A Modest Start

When the Institution was established, there seems to have been no intent to elect a president. Jeremiah Chaplin was appointed solely as Professor of Divinity and Ira Chase was asked to be Professor of Languages. That the two were to act independently and both be responsible directly to the Trustees is implied by the records. The Trustees either thought the theological and literary departments would have entirely different students, or they had a naive confidence in the possibility of harmony in a situation where no one in residence had administrative authority.

Ira Chase declined to teach the literary subjects. No one was immediately found for the position, and during its first two years the Maine Literary and Theological Institution lived up to the last half only of its name. Chaplin's theological students comprised the entire student body. In May, 1819, there were seventeen such students. How many were enrolled during the entire existence of the theological department cannot be ascertained. The college archives contain no record of those theological students who began, but failed to complete, the course. The Triennial Catalogue of 1825 did publish the names of all men who finished the theological course before it was abandoned in that very year. Three had received certificates in 1820, one in 1821, three in 1822, one in 1823, two in 1824, and five in 1825—a total of fifteen men. Only one of them achieved fame, and he did so vicariously. He was Henry Stanwood, who as principal of China Academy induced Elijah Parish Lovejoy to attend Waterville College.

The Institution, minus its literary department, went through a precarious year in 1818-19. At a meeting of the Trustees in May, the Treasurer reported a current debt of nearly a thousand dollars, in addition to what was still owed on the purchase of Waterville land. Not a single building had yet been erected. Chaplin, promised a salary of $600 a year, had been paid only $490. House rent of $140 was still owed to Abial Wood. John Neal claimed $193 for surveying the Argyle lands, and the Treasurer, Timothy Boutelle, was out of pocket $88.52 for money he had advanced to pay small bills. Naturally the Trustees were greatly concerned. How could such a deficit be met?

As was to happen time and again during the following decade, it was Chaplin who made the first sacrifice. He offered to remit $100 of his promised salary, and the Board solemnly voted that "whereas Professor Chaplin has generously offered to relinquish one hundred dollars of his salary the present year, he shall have similar accommodations the year to come as the last year." That vote meant that Chaplin was to have another year of free rent in the Wood house.

John Neal had taken a few notes for sale of land from the college grant, but those notes could not be turned into cash. Prospective buyers for the lands were
scarce enough anyhow, and the few who did seem interested could make no cash payments. The Trustees therefore felt compelled to turn their attention to the land which they had acquired in Waterville.

When the old campus was abandoned and the college was removed to Mayflower Hill, more than a century later, the area of the campus proper had been reduced to 29 acres, with a few more lots still owned by the College on College Avenue between the railroad crossing and the Elmwood Hotel. What had happened to the huge tract of more than 800 acres, which the College had once owned between the Kennebec and the Messalonskee? It was known that several sales had been made to the railroad between 1848 and 1880, but what was not as well known was that over the years numerous sales had been made to individuals, chopping off, bit by bit, all of that extensive acreage except the crowded 29 acres along the river.

The losses began at that pessimistic trustee meeting in 1819. It was then voted that “a committee of three (Asa Redington, Nathaniel Gilman and Timothy Boutelle) be appointed to sell the lands belonging to the Institution in Waterville, lying on the west side of the road leading to Fairfield, and receive notes payable in six or twelve years on interest.” It did not appreciably soften the blow when the Board also voted to authorize a committee to “appoint agents for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions and donations for the Institution.” The damage had already been done, and a disastrous whittling away of the Waterville land had now commenced.

During the year, Chaplin had become increasingly concerned about local public relations. Waterville citizens were asking pointed questions. Where was the promised literary department? When was the Institution going to start a building? Did the Trustees really intend to build in Waterville, or would they soon set up the school elsewhere? Although a substantial part of the local subscription had been promised in the form of labor or material for buildings, Chaplin felt that a significant part could be secured in cash, if the subscribers could be convinced that the Trustees meant business. On March 1, 1819, Chaplin wrote the following letter to William King.

The legislature, it seems, has rejected our petition, and in doing this have told us we must either be contented to sink or must help ourselves. I hope we shall unanimously resolve to do the latter. I cannot think of abandoning the Institution. It is, in my view, an establishment of great importance, and eminently calculated, if properly managed, to promote the interest of literature and religion. But I apprehend it is vain to expect any more encouragement from the legislature. So many men of influence in the state are engaged to support the University at Cambridge and the two colleges already established, that we shall find it very difficult to obtain a legislature disposed to assist us.

The members of our legislature who belong to Massachusetts proper expect, no doubt, that the District of Maine will ere long become an independent state, in which event all they give to an institution here will, as to their constituents, be thrown away. Should Maine be formed into a separate state, we should have a reasonable prospect of aid from the new legislature. But a considerable time would elapse before aid could come to us. Our resources are extremely small. The agents appointed to dispose of our township on the Penobscot have not been able to do anything as yet. Nor does it seem likely they will be able to sell either soil or timber very soon.
Besides, we are yet considerably in debt for the lot purchased in this town. There is indeed enough due from persons in the vicinity who subscribed to the Institution, but it is difficult to persuade them to make payment. They feel disappointed. They expected the Institution would go into operation last May. They have now waited nine months and very little has been done. Instruction has not yet commenced in the literary department. As to the theological instruction, they see it indeed in operation, but on a very small scale. Hence they are ready to conclude that the money they have subscribed will be lost, at least to them and their families. Many of the subscribers are of the poorer class and expected to pay their subscriptions in labor or material for building.

In such a state of embarrassment, is it not necessary to call a meeting of the Trustees without delay? I think if the Trustees would appoint suitable agents to travel through Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts, something might be obtained in this very year. Messrs. Redington, Gilman, and Boutelle all seem desirous that some such measure be adopted. They entertain the hope that, should the people of this vicinity perceive that the Trustees are disposed to make vigorous efforts to place our Institution on a respectable footing, they will not only pay with cheerfulness what they have subscribed, but will afford substantial aid in other ways. These three men expect to assemble the people of our village, tomorrow evening, to hold a consultation on this matter.

Just a week later, on March 8, the worried Chaplin again wrote to General King. King had evidently assured Chaplin that there was still hope of getting something from the Massachusetts legislature. Chaplin could not share the General's optimism. For a man who spent his life in pulpit, study and classroom, Jeremiah Chaplin was an unusually practical man. He advised King to face the cold logic of the situation.

I am not as sanguine as you in regard to aid from the legislature. I think we should prepare for the worst. Even if the legislature should grant us all we ask, and we should sell a part of the township granted on the Penobscot, we shall still need a great deal more to enable us to put our seminary on a respectable footing. We have expensive buildings to erect, a library to procure, and instructors to pay. For those objects large sums will be necessary.

The sum of $800 is due in this town from men who, at the time they subscribed, expected to make payment in labor and materials, and who cannot be prevailed to advance the money. Mr. Gilman believes that, should the corporation assemble early this spring and authorize the erection of a handsome wooden building sufficient, in addition to the house already hired, to accommodate the instructors and students, the work might be done without much expense to the Institution. He appears confident that then a very handsome addition to the sum already subscribed might be obtained. He, Redington and Boutelle believe the main point is for the Trustees to resolve on the erection of a building this year. Until this is done, it will be difficult to persuade the great mass of the people here that the Institution is likely to go into complete and successful operation. They expected that two professors would have been employed and one building, at least, erected last summer. They complain that so much money has been expended on the purpose of
land, and can hardly believe that the Trustees truly intend to establish the Institution in this town. It is useless to tell them that their suspicion is groundless. They will not believe us till they see effectual means taken for the erection of a building on the college lot.

At a meeting in the village last week, the following resolution was passed: 'Resolved, that Messrs. Gilman, Appleton, Partridge and Chaplin be a committee for the purpose of carrying into effect our resolution that we consider it highly important that the Maine Literary and Theological Institution be put into complete and efficient operation as soon as possible, and that a building for the use of the Institution be erected during the ensuing summer, for the attainment of which object we engage to use our best endeavors.'

General King was reluctant to call a special meeting of the Trustees. He still hoped for aid from the legislature, and much of his personal time and energy were now being devoted to working out the ultimately successful plans for separation of Maine from Massachusetts. He still held the institution at Waterville close in his affections, but it was not his major interest. A month went by, and Chaplin felt impelled to write the General again.

You think it expedient for the friends of the Institution, in case of extremity, to put their hands into their pockets, and you add, 'which I am perfectly willing to do.' I do not know but we shall have to take you at your word. Rev. Mr. Bolles of Salem has generously offered to give $100 toward defraying the expense of the building which we hope soon to erect. A few such offers would put us in possession of all the money we need for that object.

Mr. Boutelle and I believe that little or no money can be obtained from the Baptist churches by addressing them through the medium of the newspapers. Besides, we fear that, to address them in that manner, would give a political character to our seminary, which we ought to avoid.

I have little expectation of legislative aid so long as we remain united to Massachusetts. I am inclined to think we shall ultimately succeed in our endeavor to endow the seminary established in this place, provided we make vigorous and persistent exertions and enjoy the smiles of Divine Providence.

Messrs. Redington, Gilman, Appleton and Boutelle met at the Waterville Bank on Saturday afternoon and concluded it was expedient to muster a company for the proposed clearing of part of the college lot and of hewing the timber to frame the building. The day appointed is Wednesday next.

Jeremiah Chaplin's importunity at last prevailed, and a special meeting of the Trustees was held on May 19, 1819. General King was absent, but Timothy Boutelle, who had come to be, next to King, the most influential man on the Board, put the weight of his influence behind Chaplin's plea for immediate building. A committee was appointed "to inquire into the finances and report later in the present meeting what money may be raised this summer for erecting buildings." The committee's report, while not glowingly optimistic, did encourage the Board to set up another committee "to take into consideration and report at the present meeting the expediency of erecting one or more buildings during the present year, on college land in Waterville, and of what size and of what
materials." In response to the report of this second committee, Nathaniel Gilman, Timothy Boutelle and Asa Redington were made a committee:

To erect a wooden building on the college land, two stories high and 40 by 20 feet, with an ell 22 by 18 feet, and the said committee are hereby directed to use the lumber now on the spot and are authorized to collect the subscriptions which were made in Waterville and vicinity for the Institution, and which were payable in labor and lumber, and to apply them to the building of said house. Said committee are also authorized to contract for brick to be made, not exceeding 200,000, and also for other material for the college edifice to be commenced as early next season as practicable, and to prepare and present to the Trustees at their next meeting, in August, 1819, a plan of a college building; and said committee are also authorized to fix the place on which to erect the wooden building.

That vote of the Trustees is of such historical importance that it deserves careful elucidation: In the first place, it makes clear that the predicted gathering of citizens to clear the lot, late in April, actually took place. Citizens turned out with axes and saws, cut the trees, and stacked the logs, so that they could be easily carted to a sawmill.

The recorded vote also shows that the Trustees were planning for two buildings. The first, to be built immediately, was a wooden structure in the form of a dwelling house. A house of two stories, of which the main portion measures only 40 by 20 feet is not a large building, even when a 22 foot ell is appended. That first building on the college lot was intended to free the Institution from the necessity of renting the Wood house. It was to be a home for the professor of divinity and his family, and have room enough to house a few theological students, just as Chaplin had been doing in the Wood house and previously in the parsonage at Danvers. But such student housing was to be only temporary. Not only did the Trustees expect soon to have more students than the proposed house would accommodate, but the entire house might soon be needed for Chaplin's growing family. That house for the professor was to be erected immediately, in the summer of 1819.

The vote also provided for a second building, to be built in the summer of 1820, and that was to be a substantial college building, constructed of brick, though at the time of the May vote its dimensions had not been determined. At the annual meeting in August it was decided that the large brick building should be 120 feet long, 40 feet wide, and three stories high. That was not far different from the building which the original trustees had intended to erect in the wilderness on the Penobscot River, when the first charter had required that the college itself be placed on the Argyle grant. In 1813, within a few weeks of securing the charter, the Trustees had voted:

It shall be the duty of the Standing Committee to fix the spot on the township for the Institution. They shall cause a plot of ground one hundred rods square to be cleared as soon as conveniently may be, the plot to extend 60 rods in front of the spot chosen for the building, and on each side equally. They shall proceed, as fast as funds will permit, to prepare brick and other materials for one building, which shall be 38 feet wide, and its length in proportion to the means and apparent exigency of the corporation, said building to be three stories high, the lowest nine feet, the second eight feet, and the third seven feet all in the clear.
The house for Chaplin was started in July, 1819, on the site afterward occupied by Memorial Hall. Waterville's pioneer merchant, James Stackpole, recorded in his diary that on April 26, "At Mr. Chaplin's request there turned out about six men, to clear a piece of the college lot for him to set his house." Then on July 15, "A number of citizens are helping Mr. Chaplin put up his house on the college lot." In September, Chaplin himself wrote to Dr. Baldwin in Boston: "We are going on with our dwelling house and are making preparations for the large college building, which we intend to erect next season. I say 'intend', but how we shall obtain the necessary funds I do not know. All I can say is that I trust the Baptist people in the region have money enough to defray the expense of putting up such a building, and that the Lord will open their hearts. I wish our friends at the West could give us a lift, but this must be as they please." Already, in July, Chaplin had written to Lucius Bolles, a prominent trustee: "Our agent has just begun to prepare for erecting the building which the corporation at their last session agreed to erect on the college lot."

When the new college year started in the late summer of 1819, the frame house being erected for Chaplin was nearly ready for occupancy, and plans were confidently in motion for the large college building. Chaplin's fears about sufficient funds proved to be well founded. The big building did not go up during the following summer. It was not until 1821 that those plans came to fruition.

Meanwhile the Trustees were busy winning friends and influencing people to loosen their pocketbooks. The first printed document issued by the Institution was widely distributed in the summer of 1819. It consisted of two parts: an historical account of the school's origin, and an appeal to the public for support. The pamphlet called attention to the two distinct departments of what was termed a "seminary." It said, "The design of the Trustees in founding this seminary is not limited to such students as have the gospel ministry in view, but extends to those who are desirous of engaging in any of the learned professions. It has, accordingly, a literary as well as a theological department. Students who enter the former are required to possess nearly the same qualifications and pursue, in general, the same courses of study as those who enter the several colleges of this commonwealth."

The theological students were divided into three groups. Those who had already received thorough instruction in Latin and Greek would devote two years to theology and sacred literature. A footnote added, "At present there are in the seminary no students of this description." A second group, with no classical background, would remain for four years, devoting the first three to Latin and Greek, and the fourth to theology. A third group was comprised of students who had no intention of studying the classical languages. They took a two-year course, pursuing in the first year English grammar, arithmetic, rhetoric, logic, geography, and English composition, then devoting the second year to theology.

The seminary calendar can be deduced from what the pamphlet says about vacations. The statement reveals, to our surprise, that the school year began, not in September, but in May. The first term extended from the middle of May to the third Wednesday in August; the second term began early in September and closed on the last Wednesday in December. Then came the long vacation, which was to be customary in New England colleges through fully three-quarters of the nineteenth century. The third term began about the first of March and closed on the first Wednesday in May. The most familiar feature of this calendar was the
three-term system, which prevailed in most colleges until well into the twentieth century, when the semester plan became more common.

What did it cost to attend the Maine Literary and Theological Institution? Tuition was four dollars a term. Board and room could be had for one dollar a week, if the student cared for his room and did his own washing. If care of the room, washing and mending were supplied for him, the cost was $1.50 per week. He had to supply his own fuel at $1.50 a cord in four-foot lengths, then saw and split it himself.

As early as 1819 the Institution recognized a custom which caused annoyance to both faculty and students in the New England colleges for many years. The pamphlet refers to this custom in these words: "Students are permitted to assist themselves by keeping school during the winter vacation, and may be absent, for that purpose, four or five additional weeks, provided the instructors deem it necessary." As a result of that provision, the spring term often opened with fewer than half the students in attendance. They straggled back over a period, not only of five, but sometimes of seven or eight weeks, with the harassed professors doing their best to see that missed recitations were properly made up. Sometimes the work could be covered by examinations, but in that day, when great emphasis was placed on the oral recitation, professors devoted many extra hours to students who had spent the winter presiding over one-room district schools.

That portion of the pamphlet concerned with the "Address to the Public" called attention to the Institution's religious emphasis, but because it was meant for all citizens, it did not refer to Baptists.

It has long been a subject of regret that at many of the literary institutions in this country a large majority of the students are utter strangers to experimental and practical religion. The pious young man who becomes a member of any of these seminaries is placed in circumstances far from favorable to his spiritual progress. Hence, however fervent his piety at the commencement of his collegiate or academical course, he usually becomes cold and formal in his devotions long before that course is completed. This fact ought to influence the inhabitants of Maine to patronize the Institution established at Waterville. All the students in this seminary at present have the gospel ministry in view and are hopefully pious. How much better it must be for a pious youth to receive instruction at a seminary where a large proportion of the students possess a spirit congenial to his own, than at a seminary where the predominant influence is directly contrary. In a seminary where many are truly pious, the rest can hardly fail to be overawed and may be expected to refrain from many vices into which their unhallowed passions would otherwise hurry them.

While Colby graduates have long been proud of the provisions of its Maine charter of 1820 (not the original charter of 1813), opening the Institution to students of all denominations, it has not been so well understood that this liberal provision was the intent from the beginning, or at least from the time when Jeremiah Chaplin first came upon the scene. Of course the Trustees were eager to propagate their Baptist faith; of course they wanted to have their new institution supply the Baptist churches with trained ministers; but they knew very well that a successful institution must have a wider basis of appeal. Furthermore, they had reason to fear that the state might deny aid to institutions that restricted
attendance to a single sect. Finally, those early Baptists were by no means all of them the narrow denominationalists that they have been frequently pictured. Among them were men of broad vision, who sincerely wanted the new institution at Waterville to give instruction to young men of all varieties of religious faith.

Whatever the reason for this liberal decision, the pamphlet of 1819, issued a year before the Maine charter, contained these words:

This seminary, though under the direction principally of one denomination, is nevertheless open to persons of every religious sect. From the literary department no one will be debarred who maintains a decent moral character. Nor will anyone be debarred from the theological department, to whatever denomination of Christians he may be attached, who is able to exhibit satisfactory evidence of his piety and of his possessing gifts adapted to the gospel ministry.

Of course the purpose of the pamphlet was to appeal for both students and funds. It pointed out that two buildings were soon to be erected, “one for the accommodation of students, the other for instructors.” To meet the expense of erecting those buildings, the Trustees planned to sell a part of the Argyle township and a part of their Waterville land. Concerning local subscriptions, they said, “The subscriptions obtained in Waterville and vicinity amount to about $3000. Of this sum almost $1800 has been expended on the lot. The remaining $1200 is still due to the Trustees.” The pamphlet then emphasized the Trustees’ conviction that money in sight from land sales and subscriptions would not be enough to complete the two buildings, to say nothing of supplying the needs for a library and philosophical apparatus, as well as paying the salary of a second professor. “In these circumstances, the Trustees feel it incumbent on them to make application for aid to the pious and charitable of every religious persuasion.”

The pamphlet closed with some interesting mathematical computations.

The District of Maine is supposed to contain 240,000 souls. Now, admitting that of the whole population a sixth part only are able to give anything, and that of these one half are already pledged for the support of other seminaries, still 20,000 would remain to patronize the one established at Waterville. And should each of them give but 50 cents, the sum of $10,000 would be obtained. This, with what the Trustees have reason to expect from tuition and the sale of lands in their possession, would probably be sufficient for two years to come. But should the 20,000 individuals contribute 50 cents annually, the Trustees would scarcely stand in need of donations from the opulent or aid from the legislature. Ten thousand dollars obtained annually would, with the blessing of God, soon raise this seminary to a respectable rank among the literary and theological institutions of New England.

In spite of their eagerness to obtain support from outside their own denomination, the Trustees well knew that their best hope of funds lay in continued appeal to the Baptist churches. Therefore, a few months after publication of the pamphlet to which we have just referred at some length, there was circulated a printed folder addressed “To the Churches and Congregations of the Baptist denomination in the District of Maine.” After reciting the same facts outlined in the public appeal, and after emphasizing that not only God, but also state legislatures, help those who help themselves, the circular emphasized the Baptist stake in the Institution.
To whom, brethren and friends, shall we look in this emergency if not to you? You are, on several accounts, particularly interested in the prosperity of our Institution. More than two thirds of the Trustees are members of Baptist churches. It will be the means of increasing the number of able and faithful ministers among us.

Foreseeing the lament that Baptists were a poor people and could not raise any substantial amount of money, the circular stated:

The people of our denomination are very numerous. We have recently ascertained that there are in this District about 10,000 persons who belong to Baptist churches. There are probably double that number who regularly attend Baptist worship, though not members. Let us suppose that these 30,000 should contribute only twenty cents apiece; the aggregate would be $6000. Even though it should be impossible to persuade every one of them to give 20 cents, certainly half of our Baptists in Maine are both able and willing to give the trifling sum of 40 cents.

By inference the circular referred to the long held belief of a conservative group among the Baptists that learning was actually detrimental to piety. To them, not only was a little learning a dangerous thing, but any learning at all, beyond ability to read the Bible, was suspect. The circular said,

A large proportion of the students are pious young men who, from love of God and compassion for perishing sinners, have abandoned secular pursuits and would devote themselves to the arduous work of preaching the gospel. Do you not wish to assist them in their pursuit of knowledge? Are you afraid that knowledge will hurt them? A learned education, however much it may have been abused, is certainly good in itself. It is not, indeed, indispensably necessary to a gospel minister, but it is a qualification of considerable importance, and when associated with genuine piety it renders the preacher far more able than he would otherwise be to discharge the duties of his sacred calling.

The first of the eight names attached to this circular is that of the dynamic Baptist minister who had published Maine's first newspaper in 1784 and had been a leader in securing the Institution's original charter, Rev. Benjamin Titcomb. His seven fellow signers were Jeremiah Chaplin, Stephen Chapin, Timothy Hods­don, Silas Stearns, Thomas Francis, Thomas Ripley, and Benjamin Farnsworth. Jeremiah Chaplin was anxious to get the literary department into early operation. Several men besides Ira Chase had refused the appointment, the latest being the very Thomas Ripley who had signed the circular. In September, 1819, Chaplin wrote an urgent letter to Rev. Thomas Baldwin in Boston, the man who, as head of the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society, had been chiefly responsible for Chaplin's coming to Waterville. Chaplin wrote:

Mr. Ripley, having declined the appointment lately given him by the Trustees of our seminary, Mr. Avery Briggs of Hudson, who stands next on the list of prospects, should be applied to. This, I presume, has already been done by Mr. Briggs of Bangor, who indeed expected to write to his brother in Hudson and inform him of his appointment. But, having lately heard that Mr. Avery Briggs is in Charlestown, I fear the
letter alluded to has not reached him. Will you, brother, have the
goodness to inform him of his appointment as Professor of Language
in our seminary and let him know that we are anxious to obtain an
answer from him without delay. I also wish to inform Mr. Kimball,
pastor of the Baptist Church at Marblehead, that he was appointed a
tutor at a salary of $400, on condition that neither Mr. Ripley nor Mr.
Briggs should accept. I entreat you to attend to this matter as soon
as convenient. We want to give public notice of obtaining an instructor
for the literary department.10

Avery Briggs did accept the position of Professor of Languages and began
his duties in October, 1819. When the earth’s revolution around the sun
ushered in the new year of 1820, two events lay not far ahead. Maine was ready
to become a separate state, and the Maine Literary and Theological Institution
was ready to become a college.
In that summer of 1819, when the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution were making appeals for public support, William King was mustering his forces for the successful attempt to make Maine a separate state. From the time of the earliest suggestion of separation, it had been a hot political issue. In the District of Maine, long before 1820, the majority of voters were Democratic-Republican followers of Thomas Jefferson, while the minority Federalists were in control in the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Federalists were themselves divided on the issue of separation. Those of the party who lived in Massachusetts proper were in favor of letting Maine become a separate state, because they foresaw the day when the Democratic majority in Maine might swing the whole commonwealth for that party. On the other hand, the Federalists in Maine knew that a separate state would mean their complete loss of control in Maine, which they would not entirely lose so long as the State House in Boston remained in Federal hands and the government of Maine continued to be administered from that State House.

The newspapers of Maine took belligerent sides, as they did for many years on every political issue. Arrayed with the Maine Federalists against separation were the District's oldest newspapers, the Portland Gazette, the Hallowell Gazette, and the Kennebunk Visitor. On the other side, supporting William King's Democrats were the Eastern Argus, the American Advocate, and the Bangor Register. Maine's great historian, Judge Williamson, tells us that those party ranks did not hold firm. "There were found a considerable number of men in the Federalist ranks who were desirous to see Maine an independent state."\(^1\)

In May, 1819, the Massachusetts legislature was presented with a petition from 70 towns in Maine, asking for the District's separation. A bill was presented, which passed both houses by substantial majorities. The act required that the voters of Maine should assemble on the fourth Monday of July to vote simply yes or no on acceptance of the provisions of separation. That election resulted in 17,091 votes in favor and 7,132 against. On August 24, the Governor of Massachusetts issued a proclamation announcing the result and calling for a convention to draw up a constitution for the new state of Maine.

Though not unforeseen, it was fortunate for the Maine Literary and Theological Institution that the man chosen to be president of that constitutional convention was William King, for the choice practically assured that he would be the state's first governor. In several respects the resulting constitution showed the influence of this man who believed that education should not be either the exclusive right of the privileged or under control of an aristocracy.
The right of the state to support by public taxation the preaching of the gospel had long been contested in Maine, and in the forefront of that opposition had been the Baptists. In the town of Canaan, for instance, as early as 1802 that sect had won a hard fight to secure, by vote in town meeting, their release from the ministerial tax. Even some of the Federalists were as strongly opposed to this practice as were the Democrats. It did not prove difficult, therefore, for William King to insert into the Maine constitution a provision emphasizing the liberty in religion already guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. It is said that, before drafting the language of that provision, King corresponded with Thomas Jefferson himself, who was then still living at his Monticello home.

Voters of Maine ratified the new constitution overwhelmingly, and Massachusetts' Governor Brooks proclaimed that on March 15, 1820, Maine would assume rank in "the American Confederacy." Because of the slavery issue, there was bound to be southern opposition to admission of a northern state, and it was not until March 3, 1820, only twelve days before the date set in Governor Brooks' proclamation that Maine "was declared to be one of the United States of America, admitted in all respects whatever on an equal footing with the original states."2

Article X of the Maine Constitution provided: "All laws now in force in this State, and not repugnant to this Constitution, shall remain and be in force until altered or repealed by the legislature." That section validated the charter granted to the Maine Literary and Theological Institution in 1813, together with all amendments made to it previous to 1820.

When, on May 1, 1820, the Maine Legislature assembled for the first time, one of its three senators from Kennebec County was Timothy Boutelle of Waterville, Treasurer of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution. There they were—Governor King and Senator Boutelle—fellow Democrats and fellow trustees, ready to work together in the legislative interests of the school.

Before we consider the acts by which the Maine Legislature, in 1820, extended the privileges of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, we should seek an understanding of the views held by William King about colleges and seminaries in his new state. As a Jeffersonian, he believed that the people should always control their educational institutions. But, for a Jeffersonian, he seems to have had little trust in the legislature as an instrument of the people's will. He therefore tried to insert in the constitution a provision that no grant should be made to any literary institution unless the Governor and Council had power to revise and regulate the action of the institution's trustees and to have the final word in the selection of officers and the management of funds. The constitutional convention proved to be more moderate than King. Its members favored government control, but by the legislature rather than by the Governor and Council. They also refused to go along with King's plan to hold final authority over the appointment of officers, which then meant all professors as well as financial agents. The language finally adopted merely gave the legislature power to alter provisions of a charter, as might seem to the legislature to be for the best interests of the particular institution. The provision is still found in the Constitution of Maine:

Article VIII: It shall further be their duty [the legislature's] to encourage and suitably endow, from time to time, as the circumstances of the people may authorize, all academies, colleges and seminaries of learning within the state; provided that no donation, grant or endow-
ment shall at any time be made by the legislature to any literary institution now established, or which may be hereafter established, unless at the time of making such endowment, the legislature shall have the right to grant any further powers, to alter, limit or restrain any of the powers vested in any such literary institution as shall be judged necessary to promote the best interests thereof.

Although King presented his case as one in accord with sound Jeffersonian principles, the Trustees of Bowdoin College, with whom he had been at odds since the treasury case of 1815, felt that he was directing the provision straight at the Brunswick institution. The Bowdoin Trustees were at first inclined to fight for their freedom, believing they had sound legal precedent in the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Dartmouth College case. Until the Dartmouth decision, the future of denominational colleges, and private colleges in general, had been in the balance. Previously no such institution could be secure from state interference. When the Supreme Court finally decided that private colleges were in general not subject to legislative control, then only could the private colleges feel free. But that cherished freedom was as broad as it was long. If a college was to be free from state control, should it receive donations from the state? If the people, through their legislature, had no authority over the institution, could they rightfully be taxed for its support?

The opposition of the Bowdoin Trustees to the control provisions of Maine’s Constitution subsided, for, as the Bowdoin historian puts it:

The constitution was adopted and Bowdoin was obliged to make a choice between independence and bread. The College (at this time) was headless; the Methodists and Baptists looked on it somewhat coldly as a Congregationalist institution; and the people would regard Bowdoin unfavorably as long as it remained under the protection of a ‘foreign power’—Massachusetts. The Board therefore was disposed to yield—on December 29, 1820, Dana wrote to King that he agreed that the legislature should take the lead in the way of reform, and expressed the opinion that the same legislature which made donations should also remodel the charter.3

After the Bowdoin trustees gave in, the legislature proved not to be as radical as they had feared. Its only immediate alteration was merely to raise the number of Bowdoin trustees to twenty-five and the number of overseers to sixty, and to give the Governor and Council power to appoint the additional trustees. Hatch tells us, “Governor King found few or none but Democrats worthy of his favor, but though chosen for partisan reasons his appointees were men of character and ability who were suited for the position.”4 In 1826 the legislature made the incumbent governor a member of the Bowdoin trustees, but that was five years after William King had left the governor’s chair.

During the more than a century that has passed since controversy waxed hot over the constitutional control of literary institutions, historians have been inclined to note that, behind the obvious partisanship exhibited by William King, there was a sincere belief in government by the people, not what John Adams was reported to have called “government by the wellborn, the well-to-do, and the well-educated.” The time was not ripe for the establishment of state institutions in New England, but King was determined that the state’s funds should never be used to aid institutions over which the state exercised no control at all.
Since most of King's fellow trustees of the Waterville institution were also Democrats, they raised no opposition to his constitutional provision. When, therefore, Maine's first legislature proceeded to put its stamp of approval on the Massachusetts charter granted to the Maine Literary and Theological Institution in 1820, the restraining provision was inserted without a murmur of dissent. That act, entitled "An Act to enlarge the powers of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution," passed on June 19, 1820, will be found in Appendix I. Its second section contained the restraining clause: "The Legislature shall have the right to grant any further powers to alter, limit, or restrain any of the powers vested in said corporation, as shall be judged necessary to promote the best interests thereof."

The Maine charter gave increased prestige to the Waterville Institution, because it granted the right to confer degrees. There is no doubt that for this particular boon the Trustees were indebted to William King. By that time, his long controversy with the Bowdoin boards had made him determined that the college at Brunswick should not be the only degree-granting college in Maine. He had felt the same way even before his rift with Bowdoin, for he had worked diligently to get through the Massachusetts legislature the bill of 1812, designed to authorize a degree-granting college. As governor of the new state he was therefore not only willing, but ardently eager, to give the Baptist institution privileges which he believed it should have had in the first place. With only slight opposition the Maine legislature therefore voted that "the President and Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution are hereby authorized and empowered to confer such degrees as are usually conferred by universities established for the education of youth; provided that the said corporation shall confer no degrees other than those of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts until after January 1, 1830."

King further cemented his democratic convictions into the Maine statute in behalf of the Waterville school by two important provisions. The first said, "The said corporation shall not make or have any rule or by-law requiring that any members of the trustees shall be of any particular religious denomination." The second proclaimed that "No student belonging or who may hereafter belong to the said Institution, sustaining a fair moral character, shall be deprived of any privileges of said Institution, or be subject to the forfeiture of any aid which has been granted by said Institution, for the purposes of enabling him to prosecute his studies, or be denied the usual testimonials on closing his studies, or be denied a mission to said Institution on the ground that his interpretations of the scripture differ from those which are contained in the articles of faith adopted, or to be adopted by the Institution."

We have already shown that this latter liberal provision did not originate with the Maine legislature in 1820. It had already been proclaimed by the Institution's Trustees themselves in their printed address to the public in 1819. Even if William King may have been largely responsible for its original acceptance by the Waterville board, it is to the credit of the Baptist members of that board, who held at least a two-thirds majority of the votes, that they graciously accepted it. Their acceptance was completely sincere, to be shown in practice as well as principle. As early as 1828, when attendance at Sunday services was compulsory, monitors were appointed to check on student attendance at both the Baptist and Universalist services. The right of a student to elect to attend the Universalist service was genuinely recognized.
Nine days after passing the act empowering the Institution to grant degrees, the legislature, on June 28, 1820, granted to M.L.T.I. the sum of $1000 annually for seven years, provided that “at least one-fourth part of said sums shall be appropriated for and towards the partial or total reduction of the tuition fees of such students, not exceeding one-half the number of any class who may apply therefor, according to the judgment of the corporation.”

In the following legislature, on February 5, 1821, the Institution became truly a college. (See Appendix J). The Maine Literary and Theological Institution went out of existence, and for the next forty-six years the school of higher education at Waterville would be known as Waterville College.

There has never been complete agreement on what prompted the change. Charles P. Chipman put up a strong case for his contention that the founders had always intended to establish a college. He held that when the Trustees voted that “the price of tuition shall be the same as in Bowdoin College,” they clearly intended to have an institution of a grade equal to Bowdoin’s. The Massachusetts legislative committee, to which was referred the ill-fated petition of 1818 (the petition that brought on the Richardson-King controversy), stated in its report to the legislature that the Trustees were trying to set up a college, and the committee believed one college was sufficient for the District of Maine. Chipman calls attention to the pamphlet of 1819, which required students “to pursue in general the same courses as those who enter the several colleges of the Commonwealth.” Most significant of all, says Chipman, was the petition presented to the Maine Legislature, within a few days after its opening in May, 1820. (See Appendix K). The third paragraph of that petition began, “They (the Trustees) further represent that it was the original design of the Trustees, whenever their funds and prospects should warrant, to establish a sufficient number of professors and tutors to instruct in all the different branches of science and literature usually taught in the colleges.”

The Baptist historian, Dr. Henry S. Burrage, did not share Chipman’s convictions. He wrote: “On February 5, 1821, an act was passed by the Legislature of Maine changing the name of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution to Waterville College. The reason for thus giving the Institution a broader character than was at first contemplated were not recorded, and can now only be conjectured. In all probability the change was effected by Dr. Chaplin. A college graduate, he knew the value of a collegiate course as a preparation for theological study, and he could not have been long in coming to the conclusion that the work he had been called to do at Waterville could best be performed by giving the institution a collegiate character.”

Although Chipman has made a strong case, it is a bit difficult to believe that the trustees intended a college like that at Brunswick. Certainly they did not originally intend to have a college displace their theological seminary. They did clearly plan for theological and literary departments to operate side by side, and quite naturally they wanted the right to confer degrees. We must admit that the reasons why the institution, within a few years, abandoned its theological department, are not at all clear. The most compelling reason may well have been the clear intent of Massachusetts Baptists to establish the seminary which soon became the Newton Theological Institution. If Waterville College could train men thoroughly in the classical studies, good literature, and an introduction to the fields of philosophy and religion, it could then send prepared graduates on to Newton for their theological training. And that is exactly what the College did for more than a century.
Of one thing we are certain: not all Baptists, in Maine or elsewhere, accepted the change. Burrage says, "There were those among the Trustees who deprecated the change, and in many parts of the state, among the churches and ministers, there was not a little disappointment."

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the college in 1870, President James T. Champlin expressed regret at the change. He said:

The Institution began as a literary and theological school. Those who established it were chiefly ministers of the gospel, mostly without any regular theological training, and who therefore looked upon it as a school in which future pastors were to be prepared. With them the literary department was preliminary to, but entirely subordinate to the theological department. What must have been their disappointment when, in less than three years, all this was reversed and the literary department was exalted above the theological, which was depressed more and more, until within a few years it was entirely crowded out. I know not under whose counsels this was done, but it has always seemed to me a great mistake. There was great dissatisfaction in a large portion of the denomination throughout the State, which some years later culminated in the establishment of the ephemeral theological school at Thomaston. One consequence of this disaffection was a general falling off of interest in the Institution among its natural friends, and a certain coolness and indifference towards it, from which it has not fully recovered to the present day. Had the Institution retained its original and more popular form, till the affections of the denomination had crystallized around it, and the denomination had itself so grown up as to demand a college, I can but think that its history would have been different.

The Trustees had by no means been insistent on naming the college for the town, although they had been insistent on getting a degree-granting college. At their annual meeting in August, 1820, they voted "to raise a committee to petition the Legislature of Maine to allow the Maine Literary and Theological Institution to take the name of the College at Waterville, with the liberty to add the name of such gentleman as shall make the most liberal donation." But no James Bowdoin opened his purse, and when the Legislature acted in 1821, the Trustees asked that the name be Waterville College.

Now that they had a college, the Trustees needed a president. At their meeting in August, 1821, they elected to that office Rev. Daniel Barnes of New York. The rumor that the office was first offered to and refused by Chaplin cannot be confirmed. If he were offered the post and, as Burrage insisted, he was the principal figure in changing the institution into a college, why did he refuse? It is one of those questions that must remain unanswered. Chaplin's many extant letters contain not a word about it.

Daniel Barnes refused the appointment, and in May, 1822, the Trustees elected Jeremiah Chaplin as president. Meanwhile the big brick building had been completed, not as originally hoped, in 1820, but in the following summer of 1821. It was indeed completed under trying circumstances. On July 19, 1821, Chaplin wrote to Lucius Bolles of the Board of Trustees:

We have lately met with a disaster, the consequence of which we cannot as yet fully ascertain. I think, however, there is reason to hope it will not be entirely or permanently disastrous to the seminary. Mr. Scott, who contracted to build our college, has absconded. I do not know
exactly how his accounts stand with our Prudential Committee, but I presume we are owing him. He has been induced to take this course, it is presumed, in consequence of dissatisfaction with his wife, who is said to be a bad woman. The probability is that he will not return while she lives. And, as our contract with him is, in effect, the same as void, we have to begin anew. The work is stopped and the masons will not lay another brick till a new contract is made. How long it will be ere the work is resumed I cannot tell.

A month later the Trustees authorized Nathaniel Gilman, Timothy Boutelle and Otis Briggs to superintend the completion of the college building. They at once made arrangements with another builder and pushed the project through to completion before the fall term opened.

The opening of that first of the big brick buildings of Waterville College, the building known through the subsequent years as South College, was a momentous occasion. Albert W. Paine, a graduate of the Class of 1832 was in his 83rd year when, in 1895, he replied to a letter from Warren Foss, who was then beginning his senior year at Colby and had applied to Paine for information to be published in the Echo. Paine wrote:

The question of site having been settled, the axman was at once employed to make room for the building by cutting down sufficient of the thick forest to accommodate the enterprise. Thus ‘Old South’ found its birth, and when it was ready for occupancy the event was celebrated by a grand illumination, every seven by nine square of glass in all the windows on the south and west sides having placed behind it a lighted tallow candle, thirty-two to each window.

At first only eighteen rooms were fitted for student occupancy. Others were set aside for recitation rooms, a library and a chapel. The Trustees had already appointed E. T. Warren, Judge Weston and Timothy Boutelle a committee ‘to examine such students as may be candidates for degrees and determine to whom diplomas shall be given,’ and they had also decided that ‘Commencement of Waterville College shall be held on the third Wednesday of August annually.’ But no one was ready to graduate in that August of 1821, and it was not until August in 1822 that two young men proudly received their diplomas. They comprised the entire first class to be graduated from the college, and both of them later won distinction.

George Dana Boardman was the son of one of the founders, Rev. Sylvanus Boardman of Yarmouth. Young Boardman became a member of Waterville’s first Baptist church in his student days, decided to enter the ministry and go to join Adoniram Judson as a missionary in Burma. Jeremiah Chaplin himself preached the lad’s ordination sermon in the church of the boy’s father at Yarmouth. Boardman did go to Burma, where he had a brief but spectacular career among the wild Kareus of North Burma. He was stricken with jungle fever and died at the age of thirty, leaving a young bride who later became the wife of the great Judson.

Boardman’s classmate was Ephraim Tripp, son of Elder John Tripp of Hebron, pastor of the Hebron Church and co-founder with Deacon William Barrows of Hebron Academy. Young Tripp was himself principal of that academy during the first year after his graduation from college. Then he went south, where he taught successively in North Carolina, Alabama and Mississippi, was influential in founding a female seminary (one of the earliest in the South) at Winona,
Mississippi, where he also served many years as Clerk of Courts of Carroll County, and where he died at the age of 72.

That first commencement has been described by several eyewitnesses, notably by the President's son, John O'Brien Chaplin, whose article in the *Christian Mirror* is quoted in full in Whittemore's *History of Colby College*.

As many a later commencement was to be, this first one was a public spectacle. People came in carriages, on horseback, and on foot from miles around. Some even arrived by canoe from up or down the river. Hucksters, selling gingerbread, cheese, cider and beer, set up their stands. From the college building on the edge of the town a dignified procession marched toward the center of the village. In the procession were the Governor of Maine, the marshal and his staff, the sheriff of Kennebec County, the trustees, the president and the other professors and tutors in their silk gowns, the two members of the graduating class, all the undergraduates, and certain distinguished citizens of Waterville, all preceded by the Waterville Artillery Company of the state militia and by a loud-playing brass band. Down the main street marched the procession, to the community meetinghouse on the village common. The dignitaries began, orderly enough, to file into the meetinghouse between lines of assembled citizens, but the scene soon changed to disorderly confusion. As John Chaplin told it, "When it seemed evident to the crowd that they were likely to be shut out by the ordinary people at the tail of the procession, whom they regarded as no better than themselves, they could not longer be restrained. They broke up the line of march and forced their way inside without the least regard to order. For a few moments all was mad confusion. This rude, but well-meant display of democratic freedom soon subsided, however, and the exercises began."

The order of exercises has been preserved for us to read more than a century later. Dr. Baldwin of Boston, the head of the Baptist Educational Society and the man who had first recommended Chaplin to the college trustees, opened the exercises with prayer. On behalf of the Trustees, Stephen Chapin addressed the president-elect, and handed to him the charter and keys of the college. Rev. Avery Briggs was then inducted into the office of Professor of the Learned Languages.

John Chaplin tells us that, at this point, the crowd of on-lookers, who had assembled largely out of curiosity, just as they had when the first elephant was brought to town, showed that they were bored by the whole proceedings and made a mad rush for the door. After order had been restored, President Chaplin proceeded to deliver his inaugural address. Back the procession then marched to the college, where was served the first of many Colby commencement dinners. Then back to the hall trooped the whole assemblage to listen to addresses by the two graduates Boardman and Tripp, and watch President Chaplin confer upon them the degree of Bachelor of Arts.
The First Decade

The erection of a college building generated a new burst of activity. In the fall of 1821 twelve young men entered the freshman class, and prospects for the following autumn were even brighter. The Trustees therefore decided that a second building should be erected. On May 1, 1822, the Board voted to authorize the Prudential Committee to contract with Peter Getchell for the erection of a brick building, and with Lemuel Dunbar to do the carpenter work. During the winter, urgent solicitation had brought in $3000, and the Trustees were confident the building could be paid for by the end of the summer. The site chosen was at the north end of the college lot, on a line with South College parallel to the road to Kendalls Mills (Fairfield Village), so that both buildings faced that highway. The new building was named North College. Besides student rooms, it contained a dining commons.

In the names of these two buildings lies the explanation for an expression used by older residents of Waterville well into the twentieth century. When this writer was a student in the college (1909-1913) he often heard residents ask a question like this: “What was going on up at the colleges last night?” Perhaps even more common was the remark, “I walked up by the colleges.” Whenever a collegiate institution had more than one building it had become common, at first with Cambridge citizens in respect to Harvard, and later at other institutions, to refer to the physical plant by the plural form “colleges.” Probably this custom had arisen from the British manner of referring to the separate colleges (separate in organization as well as in physical plant) of their ancient universities. Whether for that or for some other reason, New Englanders came to regard each separate building at such an institution as a “college,” and two or more of them were “colleges.” When a building had the word “college” attached to its name, as “North College” or “South College,” it must have been even more natural to speak of the plant in the plural form. A walk out into the country, where the two brick buildings of Jeremiah Chaplin’s institution loomed big and impressive, was a stroll past the “colleges.”

At the annual meeting in 1822, when the construction of South College was already well under way, the Trustees took several important actions. To avoid suspension of a continued appeal for money, they provided that President Chaplin should have leave of absence during such part of the ensuing year as he should think proper, for the purpose of soliciting donations. In anticipation of such absence, the Reverend Stephen Chapin, who was himself a member of the Board, was persuaded by his fellow trustees to accept the position of Professor of Theology. Increased enrollment now justified the addition of a tutor, and one of
the two young men who had just received their diplomas in the first graduating class was selected. George Dana Boardman thus had the distinction of being, not only Colby's first foreign missionary, but also the first tutor elected to the faculty. Professor Chapin would get $600 a year, but young Boardman's salary as tutor was to be only $200. Chaplin, who had originally come as Professor of Divinity at $600 a year, was given a raise to $800 when he became president of the college.

About this time, Avery Briggs wrote to Ebenezer Nelson:

The silvery Kennebec hemmed in South College and North College. At night candles in the students' rooms shone out the windows, glimmering on the dense forest. During the day, the square buildings, their simplicity enhanced by red brick and striking white trim, stood like castles of learning, remote and aloof from the distractions of the village. Within South College were eighteen rooms and a chapel, a room used for the philosophical society, one for a library, and one for minerals and a cabinet of curiosities. In North College was a commons hall. As rapidly as the rooms were furnished, they were occupied by young men eager for learning.

It is significant that Briggs said nothing about classrooms. Where were classes held? Since the number in any class was small and since there was no such thing as a laboratory, space in which two professors and one instructor could hear recitations did not have to be large. Probably some classes met in the homes of Professor Chapin and Professor Briggs, but we know that at least one room in South College was regularly used as a classroom even before the chapel in that building was turned over for recitations. As time went on, more and more space was taken for classes in South College, so that there was grave need of a classroom building long before Recitation Hall was erected in 1836.

The Maine Register for the year 1822 said of Waterville College:

Chartered, 1813. Powers enlarged, 1820. Name changed, 1821. Rev. Daniel Barnes, President, has been appointed and is expected to enter upon his duties as soon as funds adequate to his support can be procured. Jeremiah Chapin, Professor of Divinity; Avery Briggs, Professor of Languages. Besides these officers, three young men have been employed as assistant instructors. Commencement, third Wednesday in August. Vacations, two weeks from commencement, eight weeks from last Saturday in December, two weeks from second Wednesday in May.

The Register's reference to the college calendar reveals a fact which the present generation finds strange. There was no significant observance of Christmas. How could the pious folk of that time pay so little attention to commemoration of the Savior's birth? Like the Maypole at Merrymount, Christmas had become associated with gaiety and frivolity abhorrent to the Puritan fathers of New England. Christmas feasts and Christmas parties were works of the Devil, not for a moment to be tolerated. Unless December 25 fell on the Sabbath, it was looked upon as any other working day. Although by 1820 the stern Puritan hand had relaxed its grip on New England social life, the custom of a holiday on December 25th had not yet taken hold of the people. In fact, as late as 1872, the Massachusetts courts upheld an employer's right to discharge a workman for the
latter's refusal to work on Christmas Day. So we should not be surprised to learn that, in 1822, the fall term of Waterville College extended right through Christmas Week and that classes were held on Christmas Day.

President Chaplin was anxious to enroll in the college, as candidates for degrees, the young men who were then studying in the theological department. Most of those men had meager classical background and, in Chaplin's opinion, greatly needed college training and the prestige of the college degree. Most of the theological students were supported by the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society. With Rev. Nathaniel Williams, who had been pastor in Beverly, neighboring town to Chaplin's Danvers, the Waterville president carried on a vigorous correspondence concerning those students, in whom Williams, as an officer of the Education Society, had a special interest.

Chaplin wrote first in 1823 about Caleb Clark, a young man who later finished the theological course in 1825, but did not enter the college. The anxious president wrote:

I feel a little anxious about Mr. Clark. It will be impossible for him to do more than qualify himself for the freshman class by the next Commencement. Of course it will be utterly in vain for him to try to obtain admission into the college as a sophomore. On receiving your letter, I advised him to give up the idea of going through college and to content himself with the theological course. He acquiesced, but I find him so much disappointed and grieved that I thought I'll try to get him through the college course, and with this in view I beg leave, with all due submission to the pleasure of your executive committee, to ask whether they will not consent to his entering the freshman class at the next commencement, on condition that he will engage to support himself the last year. In this way you will be at no greater expense than if he entered the sophomore class and was carried through. The only difference will be that one year more will elapse before he is prepared to enter the ministry.4

When the 1823 Commencement was held, it was not President Chaplin, but Professor Briggs who reported to Nathaniel Williams. He wrote:

The whole number of your beneficiaries last term was eighteen. Two of them, Henry Paine and Elijah Foster, have finished their collegiate course and have received their first degree. Paine has been elected preceptor of the Grammar School6 connected with the college, and Foster has been chosen a tutor in the college itself. Haylord and Holton are members of the present senior class.7 Hovey, King, Macomber and Merrill are juniors8; Dodge, Freeman and Ropes are freshmen9; making the number in the several classes nine. In the Latin Grammar school, preparing for college, are Clark, Cummings, Maling and Willard. Going, Kenney and Rowen are members of the theological department. Going and Kenney are young men of good natural talents and much promise. Of Rowen10 I cannot, with truth, say so much. Several of the students charge him with being frequently light and trifling in the presence of those who do not profess religion, telling funny stories, skuffling with them in playful mood, and acting in a manner below the character of one who would be a professed Christian minister. He is said also to be very irritable. He has also infringed upon the rule respecting preaching, having preached eight Lord's Days out of town and once in town, although we have repeatedly told him we cannot give
him permission to preach more than four Lord's Days in this term. Two of the brethren, your beneficiaries, are charged with using very improper language and manifesting a bitter spirit toward each other on a certain occasion, and in the presence of several ungodly students. As one of them belonged to the Waterville Church, Dr. Chaplin and myself called up the delinquents and conversed with them on the painful subject. I have the satisfaction to say they frankly acknowledged their fault, appeared penitent and humble. As we were well satisfied with their confession and apparent penitence, I have thought it advisable not to give you their names. Dodge came here without money or books and very poorly clad. Would not the Society do well to grant him some immediate relief?\textsuperscript{11}

It was to Williams that Chaplin, as the year of 1823 drew to a close, confided his anxiety for the future of the college:

I have been more than usually anxious of late respecting the college. The opposition evidently increases. Our enemies seem determined to destroy us if they can. During my stay in Portland last winter [during his leave granted by the trustees, to solicit funds] I had opportunity to notice the feelings of members of the legislature toward our college.\textsuperscript{12} I assure you there appeared a firm determination on the part of friends of Bowdoin College to resist all attempts on our part to obtain an equal share of the legislative patronage. I returned, I confess, with a heavy heart. In view of my contemplated tour through this state, I felt myself but a worm of the dust, but realized in some measure that the Lord would enable me 'to thresh the mountains and beat them small and make the hills as chaff.' When I think on the stupidity of my heart and my little success as a minister, I am ready to conclude that I shall do but little good. But when I look on the all-sufficiency of God to bless my efforts in behalf of the college, I cannot but hope he will bless my intended tour.\textsuperscript{13}

That was Jeremiah Chaplin, true to form. He was always excessively humble, greatly underestimating both his ability and his influence. What would he have thought if he had lived to hear Gardner Colby say that his life-saving gift to the college, as the Civil War drew to an end, was made because long ago Jeremiah Chaplin, emerging from a Portland home after being refused a subscription had been heard by a passerby to utter the despairing cry, "God help Waterville College!?"

Jeremiah Chaplin stood solidly by his conviction that a minister ought to be well educated. He once wrote to an unidentified correspondent:

I hope none of Ropes' friends will discourage him from getting an education. I am sensible that education alone will never make a minister of the gospel. A man must possess grace and natural gifts, and must be directed by the spirit of the Lord to the work of the ministry. But good education, added to those gifts, is of more importance than some are willing to allow. It is a great mistake to suppose that a minister can have too much knowledge. A knowledge of history will assist him greatly in explaining the prophecies. Besides, there are many things in the Scriptures which cannot be satisfactorily explained without an acquaintance with the languages in which the Scriptures were originally written, and with the manners and customs of eastern na-
tions. Nor is that all. A good education will enable a preacher to express himself more intelligibly and agreeably, and to arrange his thoughts much better than illiterate preachers can do. A good education gives a preacher a weight of character and influence in society which unlearned preachers seldom possess. Although unlearned preachers often do great good, our young men whom the Lord has called to the ministry ought to obtain a learned education if they possibly can.14

In other correspondence Chaplin made it clear that the old two-year plan by which young men could be sent out into the ministry without any classical training at all still prevailed, though no doubt Chaplin hoped for the day when such a course could be abandoned. Since the college published no catalogue until 1824, it is to Chaplin’s letters that we are indebted for our knowledge of that two-year course in detail. In an earlier chapter, its general scope has been given: a year of broadly cultural subjects, including geography and arithmetic, followed by a year of theology. In reply to a request from Nathaniel Williams in 1823, Chaplin told the Beverly minister precisely what the two-year course contained.

As was uniformly true of most American education of that day, students studied specific books rather than subjects, and the usual method of recitation was to give to the instructor the text of the book verbatim, except in foreign languages, where translation was combined with laborious parsing. Chaplin therefore informed Williams that, in the two-year course, the first year was devoted to Murray’s Grammar, Kinney’s Arithmetic, Cummings’ Geography, Blair’s Lectures abridged, and Hedge’s Logic. The second year covered Fuller’s Gospel Its Own Witness, Paley’s Evidences of Christianity, Paley’s Philosophy, Edwards’ History of Redemption, Norton on the Prophecies, and Milner’s Church History. Chaplin added, “During the first year the students are required to write weekly on some theological subject. In the second year they commence writing on a series of theological questions embracing the leading subjects of divinity, then go on to the composition of sermons, being encouraged to consult the most celebrated writers in the English language for information on their subjects.”

President Chaplin showed both concern and energetic action in seeing that men were prepared to enter the college. Not only did he set up the Latin Grammar School under direct supervision of the college, but he encouraged many early graduates to take charge of the small academies which were springing up in the vicinity. He had let Henry Stanwood take over the academy at China even before that young man was ready to graduate. There Stanwood at once built up such a following that Chaplin let Hadley Procter go to assist the dynamic youth who, in that very year, was to be responsible for Elijah Parish Lovejoy’s attendance at the college.

In a college where so many students were receiving financial aid, from the Education Society or from remissions specified in the grants from the State, it behooved those young men to maintain behavior above any suspicion of extravagance. Evidently John Hovey was one of the few students who fell under that suspicion, and the young man valiantly insisted that the charges were false. Later he became a leader in the teaching profession in Michigan and may himself have encountered some “improvident scholars.” But in 1823, he was indignant to be under such suspicion. Although he could have talked with President Chaplin easily, it was customary in those days to put such things in writing.
So the aggrieved John Hovey sat down with inkpot and quill and wrote to his college president the following letter:

I am charged with imprudence in respect to my expenses and the manner in which I use my clothes. It is true that, when I came to this place, I did purchase some clothing and a watch. If I can show that I was in absolute need of those things, my crime will not appear very great. I certainly needed a watch, as I then roomed at some distance from the place of recitation and was obliged to be there at the appointed time. As for my clothing, I appeal to you, sir, to judge whether, when I arrived, I had any in which I could appear abroad with decency. If I did not purchase these things on credit, how could I obtain them? I had not a cent of money. I had very encouraging prospect of being able to pay for the articles in the spring. I was requested to teach a school in Palermo, for which and for preaching I was offered $22 a month. I concluded to take the school and sent a letter to the agent. The letter miscarried, and of course I lost the school, and with it all my prospects of getting money during the winter.

I am charged with imprudence because I have some ornaments attached to my watch. The key and seal were given to me, and all I have ever expended on the watch is thirty cents. Perhaps I did make a foolish bargain last summer. I sold the watch I then had because it was not a good one, paid some of my debts with the money, and finding it difficult to be without a watch, I purchased another, for which I am to pay next spring.

My debts total $65.65. I owe Mr. Balkam $16 for the watch; a Waterville society $15 for cash advanced to me; to Mr. Burleigh eight dollars for cloth, trimmings and books; to Mr. Richards three dollars for shovel and tongs, slate and linen cloth; to Mr. Esty $2.25 for candles and a book; eight dollars to Mr. Sanborn for shoes; $1.25 to Mr. Dalton for cloth; one dollar for room rent to Mr. Dunbar and $1.90 to Mr. Foster for a book and cash. That all makes $55.65 which I owe in Waterville. I also owe Mr. Wilber of Boston ten dollars for books, so my total debts are $65.65.

I am further charged with imprudence because I wear my best clothes everyday. I had no other garments when I first came here that I could wear unless I clothed myself in rags. But within the past year I certainly have not worn my best clothes everyday.

You doubtless desire to know whether I have means sufficient to pay my debts. I wish I could answer in the affirmative. But I am under the painful necessity of informing you that at present I have no money at all. Whether I shall be able to obtain a school this winter I cannot tell. I can have a school for two months at fourteen dollars a month, and I have not much hope of doing better.

I assure you my debts occasion me great anxiety, and rather than go into debt again I would beg from door to door. If I have not been prudent, I think what I have suffered has taught me the necessity of prudence. Rather than not obtain a finished education to prepare me for more extensive usefulness in the gospel field, I would submit to any difficulties. I would feed upon the coarsest fare and lie on straw. I subscribe myself, your unworthy pupil,

John Hovey
What activities filled the college day in the 1820's? From the accounts that have come down to us in letters and memoirs, checked against the early college regulations, we can get a good picture of the students' daily tasks. In those years classes were held six days a week, straight through each day. No Saturday afternoon athletics—in fact no planned recreation of any kind interfered with the strict academic regime.

Students rose at five o'clock, long before daybreak in the winter months, dressed in cold rooms, then went outdoors to the college pump, where they filled buckets or pitchers for their morning ablutions. Then, donning jackets or surtouts, they rushed off to morning chapel, at six o'clock in the long daylight hours, and in the winter as early as one could see to read without artificial light. The morning chapel and the first recitation of the day both came before breakfast, which consisted often of mush and molasses, usually with tea. Milk, which is consumed in unbelievable quantities by the modern college student, was scorned by those of the 1820's as fit only for infants and cats. After breakfast came a study period followed by a second recitation, then dinner. A third recitation in the afternoon was followed by prayers at early candlelight. In the evening all were expected to study, and checking up on them was the unmarried tutor who lived in the dormitory. On Sunday each student was expected to attend both morning and afternoon church services at either the Baptist or the Universalist church. The rules made exception in case a preacher of some other denomination held services in the town meetinghouse on the common. In that case, the student had a third choice for church attendance. But go to some service he must, and the requirement was rigidly enforced.

The college grounds looked much different when South and North Colleges were first built than they looked 120 years later, when they were about to be abandoned for the new site on Mayflower Hill. The whole area was covered with hard-wood growth and was especially noted for its numerous clusters of white birch. The slope between buildings and river was still thick with underbrush. There were no lawns between buildings and street, no straight rows of planted trees. At first there was no regular path to the highway, except one trod out by students who pushed the underbrush aside as they walked. In 1902, when Albert Paine of the Class of 1832 was a very old man, he told President Charles L. White how the first paths were made.

No such word as campus was used in our day. In my sophomore year there were no paths from the college to the public highway, nor any other noticeable feature of improvement, no ornamental trees or shrubbery. Our small class being dissatisfied with the appearance of things as they were, went to work forming the path to the road, with a triangle in front of the space between the two doors of South College. The triangle was handsomely finished with a tree in its center and certain other embellishments. The tree stood and grew there for years, and may still be there.

In our junior year we lived in North College, where we found ourselves equally in want of a path to the road. Our class consisted of only four members, one of whom, Quimby, was a married man who lived in a rented house down town. That left only three of us to do the work. But being determined that the North should have equally with the South the benefit of our labors, and the seniors refusing their aid, we three went to work and completed the path and its semicircle green plot as it now is, save only that the latter has been much reduced in size by
subsequent widening of the paths along the front of the building. After
completing the path we attended to the sodding of the green plot,
Thomas cutting the sods, Ropes wheeling them in, and the hands that
now hold this pen and paper laying them down.16

Elijah Foster, who obtained his degree in the second graduating class in
1823, had entered the Maine Literary and Theological Institution in the fall of
1820 and was one of those who followed Chaplin's advice to continue on for
his college degree after the Maine Legislature gave the institution that authority
and changed the name to Waterville College. On September 16, 1820, young
Foster wrote a long letter to his father in Pembroke, Mass. After telling of the
voyage from Boston to Augusta, which cost him ten dollars for transportation
and one dollar for provisions purchased at Boston and at Dresden, the letter
continues:

At Augusta I engaged passage to Waterville, and about noon went
on board of a flat-bottomed boat which was fitted with a mast and two
sails like the topsail of a ship. In that boat I sailed ten miles to Sidney,
where I lodged on board, with the boat tied to the bank. We reached
Waterville about ten o'clock the next morning. I was courteously re­
ceived by Professor Briggs, to whom I first went. He took me to the
house of Dr. Chaplin, where I tendered the papers I had received from
the church and Mr. Torrey. He read them and told me they were
sufficient, then asked me how far I had proceeded in my studies. I
discovered that in the sophomore class is a man 27 years old, two years
older than I shall be when I graduate. So, although I am now 22, I
did not hesitate to enter the institution.

Foster then carefully listed for his father's inspection all expenses he had
incurred during the four weeks since his arrival in Waterville. Board at $1.50
a week had come to $6.00. A lamp and a bottle of oil had cost him 50 cents.
He had paid 10 cents for half a quire of letter paper, 50 cents for a pair of
boots, $2.66 for a desk and chair, 12 cents for an inkstand, and 25 cents for a
bunch of quills. He decided that one last item, a bottle of wine, 33 cents, called
for explanation. He wrote:

My health was good during the first two weeks, but then I grew feeble
on account of intense study. So I bought a quart of wine, which I think
has helped me greatly so that I expect to begin next week with as much
strength as usual.

Elijah Foster informed his father he had decided not to augment his income
by occasional preaching.

In the vicinity of this town there are vacant churches supplied by the
students. Yesterday I was invited to preach next Sabbath in Fairfield,
eight miles distant, but I had this excuse to make: I have no authority—
no license. At present I think it best not to have a license, for then I
should be called upon more than I ought.

Foster had formed an attachment to Thomas Merrill and Joshua Goodridge.
I admire them for their piety and devotion, which like a flame enkindles
the heart of the coldest Christian and discovers itself to the world in a
thousand ways.17

Not all students in the 1820's were so favorably impressed by the religious
atmosphere as was Elijah Foster. Into the college, which had already opened
its doors to students of all religious faiths, there came in 1824 an Episcopal
from Newburyport, Massachusetts, named James Tappan. What is even more in-
teresing, in view of the solid Baptist character of the teaching, Tappan was a
student, not in the college, but in the already declining theological department.
How did an Episcopal candidate for the ministry get along in that Baptist en-
vironment in 1825? We have the answer in Tappan's own words, written to
an unidentified member of the Kennebec Valley's most prominent Episcopal church
of the time, the church founded by the Gardiner family at Gardiner, Maine.
Tappan told his correspondent that he was getting along very well on ten shil-
lings sixpence a week. Board cost eight shillings, and he was making two
shillings sixpence meet all other expenses. Then he got to the subject which
was really on his mind.

You doubtless recollect that yourself, Mrs. Gardiner and Mr. Olney
thought proper to advise me to spend three years in studying here. But
perhaps when you again contemplate the manner in which I was to spend
the third year, which was to devote it wholly to writing upon theological
subjects; and when you consider how I am situated, deprived of attending
the church to which I am strongly attached, without one friend of my
own sentiments with whom I can freely converse; and when you con-
sider that the third year may be much better improved by study and
writing with an Episcopal clergyman, I think you will agree with my
other friends, that I had better not remain here. My situation here is
as good as can be expected. I am used fairly and no one treats me
with hostility. But I shall not be fully content until I am with my own
brethren.18

Tappan mentions having received financial assistance from several Episco-
palians in Portland and other places. At the end of his letter we learn the
identity of one of these patrons. "Please express my sincerest thanks to R. H.
Gardin, Esq., for the favour received 27th inst." Worthy of historical comment
is the fact thus revealed. The great land owner of the Kennebec, heir of the
founder of Gardinertown, owner of mills and ships and shops—the very man
who had sold to the Trustees of Waterville College the land on which they had
erected two imposing buildings—that staunch Episcopalian Federalist actually
helped finance an Episcopal student in Jeremiah Chaplin's Baptist classes.

If the college grounds were rough and untended, if students had to make
the only paths, if chapel was held at six in the morning and there were three
recitations every day six days a week, in what sort of a town did these things
take place? What was Waterville like in the 1820's?

Fortunately several descriptions of the place, written by men who knew it
well, are preserved. One such man was William Mathews of the Class of 1835,
who was born in Waterville and had been a schoolboy in the town during the
first decade of Colby history. He became a prominent author of inspirational
books, of which the best known was Getting on in the World, published in
Canadian and British, as well as American editions, and translated into German,
Magyar, and all the Scandinavian languages. When Dr. Edwin Whittemore edited the *Centennial History of Waterville* in 1902, William Mathews was still living, and he contributed a notable chapter to that history. From that and from other sources, such as the Stackpole diaries, the records of the Moor and Gilman families, letters of Dr. Moses Appleton, and memoirs of various citizens of Waterville and Winslow, one can get a picture of the college town in the 1820's.

A quarter of a century would yet elapse before the railroad reached Central Maine. There was a daily stage into town from Augusta, but it came, not by the present more common route through Vassalboro, but up the west side of the river through Sidney. William Mathews described the coming of that daily stage.

The arrival of the mail stage from Augusta, which was at 11 A.M. daily, was in my boyish days an important event. As it rounded the bend in Silver Street, just north of my father's house, the driver drew forth his long horn and blew a loud and vigorous blast. As the stage stopped at Levi Dow's tavern on Main Street opposite the head of Silver, all the quidnuncs and loafers of the village flocked to learn the latest news.

Not until 1827 were bridges built across the Kennebec and the Sebasticook. Anyone who wanted to cross the rivers had to do so by boat. Between the Winslow shore of the Kennebec near the mouth of the Sebasticook and the Waterville side down on "the Plains," there was regular ferry service. Mathews recalled that "in the winter, as soon as the water had frozen on both sides of the river, it was customary to cut a huge cake of ice and swing one end of it to the other side of the rapid current, thus forming a bridge."

Not all arrivals in Waterville came by stagecoach or longboat. It was a memorable day on June 1, 1832, when the stern-wheel steamer *Ticonic* came all the way to Waterville from Hallowell. It was followed by other steamers, including the ill-fated *Halifax*, on which six persons lost their lives when her boiler exploded in the lock at Augusta in 1848.

William Mathews tells of one incident which reveals both the slowness of transportation and the methods of transporting funds in the 1820's.

I once spent six days going from Waterville to Boston. As we left Gardiner, a furious snowstorm developed so that we were obliged to tarry two days at a small country inn, which was overcrowded with Americans and Canadians of all ages. As I had in a capacious outside pocket of my overcoat a package, five or six inches thick, of bank bills, amounting to $4000, entrusted to me by the Waterville Bank, to be delivered to the Suffolk Bank in Boston, the situation was not very pleasant. Fortunately, as no one could have a bed to himself, I found a student of Waterville College among the guests, and had him and my package for bedfellows. After two days' delay, we waded through huge drifts to Brunswick, and next morning rode on the crust of the deep snow, which covered all the fences on the way to Portland. On the next day a ride of seventeen hours in the mail stage took us to the Eastern Stage Tavern on Ann Street in Boston. Once on the way we were upset in the darkness and a fat man rolled down upon me, but fortunately no bones were broken and no bank bills were missing.

On Silver Street, as early as 1825, there was a dancing hall, but it is doubtful if it received much patronage from the Baptist students at Waterville College.
The hall was also used for theatrical exhibitions, and James Stackpole, Jr. remembered that the stage had a drop curtain on which was painted a scene of the Battle of Waterloo, fought only a few years earlier. Another reminiscence concerned a lecture in that hall, where the speaker exhibited a miniature railway car, to show a curious audience the new kind of travel that had just come to far-away Baltimore.

Waterville in the 1820's was the trading center of a growing agricultural community. Industry, especially in the form of large corporations, had not yet come to Maine. In fact, as late as 1848, when Dr. Valorus Coolidge was tried for Waterville's first murder, ten of the twelve jurors from the Kennebec towns were farmers. Even the wealthy owners of Waterville real estate spent part of their time raising crops. The farms of Nathaniel Gilman the merchant and Timothy Boutelle the lawyer carted vast quantities of wheat, corn and oats to the Moor and Mathews wharves for shipment down the river. The Mathews wharf was the point of departure for the ship of Simeon Mathews, father of William. Simeon once made the proud statement that he had shipped 40,000 bushels of potatoes to Boston in a single year.

When Jeremiah Chaplin began his classes in Waterville, the Augusta dam had not yet obstructed the annual run of fish up the river. Salmon weighing as much as twenty pounds were frequent catches, and the take of shad and herring was enormous. Asa Burnham, an early resident of Winslow, said he had seen alewives so plentiful that they sold for ten cents a hundred, and Asa asserted that the Sebastiæook had been known for its superior fishing ever since Indian times.

Those first Colby students, 140 years ago, must have had plenty of opportunity to see the Maine militia in action. Waterville had three companies: light infantry, artillery, and a kind of nondescript company without uniform, but equipped with bayonet-belt and knapsack. That last company was derisively called the "String Beans." The annual muster was a great occasion, and since it was always held in the summer, college was probably in session, because there was only an interval of two weeks between Commencement in mid-August and the opening of the fall term in early September. So the students at Waterville College probably saw more than one of those boisterous musters. Peddlers of gingerbread and rum, of horns and whistles, were all over the grounds, just as they were at the college commencements. The day always closed with a sham fight, and among a lot of the militiamen, inspired physically as well as emotionally, there sprang up plenty of fights that were not sham. The usual drill field was on the west side of upper Main Street between what are now Center and North Streets, but it was not large enough for the musters. Those gala events were held on the more spacious acres of "The Plains."

Concerning the beverages of the time William Mathews wrote:

Alcoholic liquors were sold in those ante-Neal Dow days in nearly all the stores in Waterville, and there were comparatively few abstainers. Punctually as the clock struck 11 A.M. and 4 P.M., the dry-throated citizens thronged to the barrooms and quenched their thirst with brandy, gin, or New England rum. In the dwelling houses of the well-to-do citizens, sideboards with bottles of brandy and wine were ready for the entertainment of all guests, including the minister.

We should not be surprised therefore, at the discovery in the account book of a Waterville store, that during the summer of 1819, when local citizens helped
erect the President's house, the College was charged for 33 gallons of New England rum.

As for the kind of people who inhabited Waterville in those days when the college was young, let us again leave it to William Mathews to tell us.

Waterville could never boast of many wealthy citizens, even in the days when a man possessing ten thousand dollars was regarded as independent, and one with twenty-five thousand was definitely rich. The citizens of the town were generally prudent and thrifty, spending less than they earned. The few persons who flew their financial kites high were looked upon with suspicion. Nathaniel Gilman, for many years the richest man in town, made the bulk of his fortune in the leather business in New York City. The richest man ever born in Waterville did not make his money here, for Daniel Wells went in his youth to Wisconsin, where he became a multimillionaire. But the majority of Waterville people, in my boyhood and college days, were just honest, hard-working, frugal citizens of whom any community can be proud.

In the summer of 1824, Dr. Chaplin was asked to state definitely what it would cost for a young man to attend Waterville College, since everyone knew the erection of two buildings and the addition of a tutor must have increased the charges from the rock-bottom figures of the original theological department. Chaplin replied that tuition and room rent for the college year of thirty-eight weeks was now $22.00; board at nine shillings a week was $50.57, wood $2.25, oil $2.00, use of classical books $6.00, tax for commencement dinner $1.00, and general repairs 50 cents. The total was $84.32. When he was asked how the charge for tuition and room rent was divided, Chaplin said that tuition was $16 a year. His reply meant that the college charge for a room in South College or North College was only $6.00 a year, or $2.00 a term.

In 1823, when George Dana Boardman decided to prepare himself for missionary work in Burma, he resigned as a tutor at the college, and his place was taken by his only classmate, Ephraim Tripp, to whom the Trustees agreed to pay "a sum equal to $200 per annum," but in what commodity the equivalent was to be paid the record sayeth not. Tripp was joined by a second tutor, Elijah Foster, so that the college might have an instructor on duty in each of the dormitories, and many are the student anecdotes, factual and legendary, concerning Tripp, Foster, and the latter's successor, Addison Parker.

Until 1825 no attempt had been made to open a college commons, although several students boarded in the homes of professors. Most of the students seem to have supplied their own meals, some of them subsisting on very meager fare. At the annual meeting in 1824 the Trustees voted to appoint a committee to determine whether it would be expedient to elect a steward and to make appropriate recommendation at the next annual meeting. The next year the committee reported that steward's apartments were ready in North College and that David Robinson had applied for the position. The Trustees accepted the recommendation and authorized Robinson to set up a boarding department, with his rent free. The plan was for the college to contribute the space and for Robinson to collect the board charges directly from the students. For several years his rate was $1.50 per week.

What became an established landmark of the college was the college fence, put up in 1826. It was at first a simple rail fence with wooden posts, but was later made more substantial by the erection of heavy stone posts with two thick
rails between each pair of posts. When the college was moved to Mayflower Hill, a section of this historic fence was taken up and set at the rear of the officers' parking space behind the Miller Library.

In 1828, both Professor Briggs and Professor Chapin resigned to accept better positions elsewhere, but with the best of feelings toward Waterville College. To replace Briggs, Robert Everett Pattison was induced to leave Amherst College and become Professor of Mathematics at Waterville. He was not given Briggs' longer title of Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Chemistry. Chapin, who had come originally as Professor of Theology, had been made Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy. In his place the Trustees chose Thomas J. Conant, whom they made Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy. He had been a tutor in the Baptist institution in the national capital known as Columbian College. At the same meeting the Board appointed as a tutor John O'Brien Chaplin, son of the President.

Although the Board could not know it when they made the appointments, this was the beginning of a bit of nepotism that did not turn out well for the college when a crisis arose in 1833. Conant married Chaplin's daughter, and as son-in-law of the President became inextricably involved in the difficulties in faculty-student relations which reached a climax, the story of which must be reserved for the following chapter.

An unsolved mystery surrounds Colby's famous Paul Revere bell. There is no question that it is of authentic Revere manufacture, made in the foundry carried on by Joseph Warren Revere after the death of his father in 1818. Bells marked simply "Revere" are not authentic, but were made by Revere's son Paul, who left the father's firm and set up a foundry of his own. Authentic Revere bells have one of three markings: "Paul Revere," "Paul Revere and Son," or "Revere and Company," and must bear a date between 1792 and 1828. The best authority on these bells was Dr. Arthur H. Nichols, who sought to trace every bell listed on the foundry records of Paul Revere's firm. The Colby bell bears the inscription "Paul Revere and Son" and the date "1824." Nichols found that the company records listed only two bells made in 1824: one made for Hampden Academy in Maine, weighing 392 pounds, and another purchased by Munson and Barnard of Boston weighing 408 pounds.

The mystery is caused by the fact that while the Colby bell is certainly authentic and is clearly dated 1824, it weighs approximately 700 pounds. The Hampden bell was destroyed by fire in 1842, and the Munson and Barnard bell is too light by 300 pounds. Either the Colby bell somehow escaped listing at the foundry, or what is more likely, it is a recast of an older bell, using the metal of that bell and adding new metal.

The college records are completely silent regarding either purchase or gift of a bell. The first mention of such an object is a cryptic statement in the faculty records for July 26, 1824: "Entered into certain regulations for ringing the college bell." We cannot be sure that the bell thus referred to is Colby's present Paul Revere bell, but the date implies that it was. It is thus probable that as long ago as 1824 students were called to classes by the same bell that summoned their successors down through the years until 1950. Then the silenced old bell was reverently taken down from the tower of South College and hung over the north porch of Roberts Union.

As we have already learned, from Albert Paine's letter to President White, students as well as president and faculty were busy with the work of maintenance and improvement of grounds and buildings. It was fitting, therefore, that the first
Whereas the students of this college have very assiduously and industriously employed their leisure hours in adorning and beautifying the land in front of the college buildings, the Rev. President is instructed to express to the students our high gratification that they have thus laudably and profitably exercised their skill and industry, and to tender them the warm thanks of this corporation.
CHAPTER VIII

The End Of A Reign

Jeremiah Chaplin terminated his presidency in 1833, but before that event occurred he had seen three important decisions, in each of which he had had a conspicuous part: the establishment of a medical school, the starting of a student-aid workshop, and the final abandonment of the theological course.

In 1828 the Trustees took advantage of an offer from the Clinical School of Medicine at Woodstock, Vermont, whereby students would take certain fundamental courses in the medical sciences at Waterville, then complete their clinical study at Woodstock, after which Waterville College would confer the M. D. degree. On December 31, 1828, the Board voted:

The members of the Board of Trustees now present do approve of the proposition of Dr. Gallup, made to this College, to confer medical degrees on pupils of the Clinical School of Medicine in the County of Windsor, Vermont; the Trustees of the College reserving the right of appointing two censors, to attend the examination of said school in concert with the censors appointed by the Medical Society of Vermont; reserving the right also to discontinue conferring such degrees whenever the Trustees of the College may deem it proper; and that the President of this College inform Dr. Gallup of this vote, when he shall have received in writing or otherwise the assent of such a number of the members of this Board as, with those present at this meeting shall constitute a majority of the whole board.

After confirmation of the vote, the Trustees elected Dr. Joseph Gallup Professor of the Institute of Medicine and Dr. Willard Parker Professor of Anatomy. Then they cannily decreed that “the fees for degrees and diplomas granted to the students of the Clinical School of Medicine belong to the President of Waterville College.” They set the diploma fee at six dollars, thus netting President Chaplin sixty-six dollars in addition to his salary when eleven medical degrees were conferred in 1830.

In 1831 Dr. David Palmer was elected Professor of Obstetrics and the M. D. degree was conferred upon sixteen young men. In light of present high standards of the medical profession, the reader may be surprised to learn that the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine was not uncommon in the 1830's. Waterville College, in addition to granting the degree to the sixteen graduates of the clinical school, gave the same degree in honorary status to Daniel Huntington of Rochester, Vermont, John Cleveland of Rutland, and William Graves of Lowell, Massachusetts. In 1832 the number of medical graduates reached a peak of
twenty-eight, and the honorary M. D. went to a practitioner in New Hampshire and to another in Massachusetts.

When the Trustees convened in annual meeting, on July 30, 1833, their experiment with medicine had ended. The records contain no explanation, but merely the brief minute: "Resolved that the connection between the College and the Clinical School of Medicine at Woodstock, Vermont, be dissolved." Evidently the rift had occurred during the college year of 1832-33, because no medical degrees were voted in 1833. Whittemore says that opposition had arisen in Vermont to the connection of their school with the Maine college. Burrage states in more general terms that "evidently the arrangement did not prove satisfactory and the medical department of the College was discontinued." Hall states only that, in the years 1830, 1831, and 1832, a total of 55 degrees was conferred upon students who completed the medical course at Woodstock, but he makes no mention of when or why the practice was abandoned. All we can say with certainty is that, in the three years during which the M. D. degree was conferred by Waterville College, President Chaplin augmented his salary by $330 that he would not otherwise have received.

How a boy from a poor family can find the money to attend college has always been a problem. Except for the money they had saved before entering and help from outside sources, such as the denominational societies, most students in the 1820's found only two ways of earning money during their college course: by teaching or by preaching. The letters quoted in a previous chapter show that neither of those sources provided substantial income, even in comparison with the low rates for tuition, board and other charges during the four years of the college course.

Since early colonial times, New Englanders had approved the dignity of manual labor. To work with the hands, in pursuit of daily bread and a margin of savings, was accepted Christian practice. Waterville College had been in existence only a few years when parents began to inquire if there was not some way for the college to provide remunerative manual labor for needy and deserving students. Many of the students came from the farms, where the hours of labor were long and arduous, and even those who came from families of the clergy knew what it meant to work with their hands, for many a minister in the 1820's spent as much time cultivating crops as he did cultivating souls.

In 1828 the Trustees heeded the popular demand by passing the following vote:

Resolved that it is expedient to have a mechanic shop erected on the college lot, in which such students as are disposed may employ themselves a small portion of the day; and for this purpose the Prudential Committee is instructed to employ an agent to solicit subscriptions to liquidate the expense of erecting a suitable building; and said committee are also instructed to take such other measures as they may deem expedient to carry this object into effect.

The shop was built, and by 1831 it became apparent that it was not breaking even, but the size of its deficit was impossible to tell because its accounts were merged with those of the whole college operation. As a result of the Trustees' growing concern about the shop, Daniel Cook and Nathaniel Coffin were appointed agents to superintend the workshop and to keep its accounts distinct from those of the college. A year later it seemed necessary to take even more drastic action, and the Board voted:
To put the mechanic shop under the superintendence of a single agent, who shall be authorized to obtain funds for that object and shall have the disposal of all money collected by him for the purchase of lumber, tools and other necessary articles. The agent shall appoint a suitable person to give instruction to students who labor in the shop and give such person reasonable compensation for his services. The agent shall raise by subscription $2000 to be employed as a permanent fund for the purchase of stock and for purchase of articles manufactured by the students. As soon as funds will allow, the agent shall be required to purchase of the students, at reasonable prices, all articles manufactured by them in the shop, within one week after they are completed. The agent shall replace the money thus expended by resale of the articles purchased from the students. The agent shall receive, for the present year, $300 for his services, out of any money which he may collect.

In 1832, the College also loaned the shop $600 for tools and stock. The College Treasurer at that time reported: “Nothing has been paid into the treasury from the sale of articles manufactured in the shop. It certainly deserves consideration whether the funds of the college should be appropriated to sustain an establishment which, though a useful auxiliary, cannot support itself.” In 1833 President Chaplin made a detailed report to the trustees on the operation of the project. He said that he and Professor Newton had been personally responsible for the purchase of 7000 feet of lumber from Simeon Mathews, for which they gave a note of $70. (Note that price in comparison with present lumber prices —$10 a thousand.) Chaplin also conceived the idea of storing up a quantity of green lumber at an even lower price, letting it dry, and then use it in the shop a year later. So he persuaded four other interested persons, including Newton, to join with him in buying 50,000 feet of green lumber from General Kendall at Fairfield, and have it sawed in Kendall’s mill according to directions given by Nathaniel Coffin, superintendent of the shop. Chaplin reported that additional expense had been incurred by hiring a number of students to carry the boards up from the river and pile them near Kendall’s mill, and still further expense for transporting them from Fairfield Village to the college grounds.

Forty years later President Champlin thought it likely that his illustrious predecessor, Jeremiah Chaplin, was at least lukewarm toward the workshop. Chaplin was indeed a man who thought a student’s entire time should be devoted to study, unless the faculty agreed to allow him to perform part-time teaching. Would such a man look kindly upon the shop?

Chaplin’s report to the Trustees in 1833 leaves us in no doubt concerning his personal stand. He wrote:

Permit me to say that to keep the shop in successful operation is of vital importance to the prosperity of the College. Judging from past experience, I am decidedly of the opinion that the shop, if well managed, will contribute more to the increase of your number of students than all other causes combined. It will, of course, increase the amount annually due to the college from its students, and what is of still greater importance, it will furnish indigent students with the means of punctually discharging their college bills. The effect which a well regulated manual labor establishment must have on the order of the College and the morals of its students is another consideration of great weight. Idleness is the bane of youth in every situation; in a college it is peculiarly destructive. Long experience and observation have assured me
that one of the most important prerequisites to the good government of a college is to provide the means for keeping its inmates constantly employed in something honorable and useful.

Chaplin went even further than general approval of the workshop. He disagreed with the college treasurer's opinion that funds of the college should not be devoted to its support. He said:

Should you think it best, as I sincerely hope you will, to encourage the manual labor establishment, allow me to recommend the appropriation of a certain part of the income deriving from tuition for its support; say all which will be due from those who work in the shop. The tuition bills of those students will of course be easily collected, and the proposed arrangement may be so guarded as to insure the College against being responsible for debts of the shop.

In response to the outgoing president's plea, the Trustees decided to continue the shop at least for another year, but they condemned the former practice of paying the students in cash for the articles they made, and henceforth demanded that all such purchases be credited against the students' college bills.

When, in 1835, the financial operation of the shop still showed no improvement, the Treasurer reported: "Believing that the workshop ought to be so conducted that its current receipts could meet its current expenses, I recommend that no further drawing upon the funds of the college be permitted. No such appropriation should be necessary. All that is required to prevent the shop from becoming a subject of pecuniary embarrassment to the College is vigilance, activity, and fidelity on the part of its financial agent."

So obsessed were the majority of the Board with the shop's necessity that they paid no heed to the Treasurer's recommendation. Instead they authorized a committee actually to build an extension on the shop, and they appropriated $500 for the purchase of lumber and materials. They probably knew it was only wishful thinking when they added that they expected to be reimbursed from proceeds of the shop.

In 1837 matters had reached a crisis, but the Trustees were not yet willing to abandon the shop. Treasurer Stackpole was all for calling it a day, but others overruled him, and it was finally voted that "the Prudential Committee be directed to make such arrangements with regard to the workshop as will save the corporation any expenses in keeping the same in operation, if practicable." Those two qualifying words "if practicable" indicated the way out. Continuation of the workshop was simply not practicable, although it somehow remained open under intermittent operation until the spring of 1841. At the annual meeting in that year, the Trustees spread upon their records a statement which reveals the whole story in appropriate summary.

While the workshop system was a novelty and public opinion was warmly in its favor, many young men were drawn from the industrious walks, who attempted to work their way through college, and some succeeded, to their own advantage as well as that of the public. The workshop was probably at first of some advantage to the College, in enticing students to come here, but not in any proportion to the heavy expense incurred by the College in building and maintaining it. Now, for some time past, it has been a useless monument of misjudged expenditure. The com-
mittee deems it useless to think of again putting the shop in operation. They recommend that the Prudential Committee sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the workshop, including stock and tools, as they shall think best, but in no event to involve the College in any more expense for this project.

Nearly thirty years later, President Champlin felt able to judge the whole enterprise and state the causes of failure. He said:

As a financial operation, one may readily guess the result. The shops steadily ran the College into debt, till they had absorbed not only the collections made by Mr. Merrill, but several thousands of dollars besides. So many young men, generally without experience in the use of tools, and by the action of a general principle of human nature, each disposed to appreciate his labor above its real value, and each pressing the superintendent for the highest possible allowance for it, could not, in the nature of the case, have been profitably employed. The judgment of the better portion of the trustees had for many years been adverse to long continuance of the shop, and at last the Board officially closed it in 1841.5

Following the decision to make the Institution a true four-year college, the theological department had become less and less popular. As we have seen in a previous chapter, many Baptists disapproved the change and withdrew their support. Whatever may have been the intention of William King and others, who from the first favored a college charter, there were influential members of the Board, as well as supporters in the Baptist churches scattered throughout Maine, who believed that the literary department should always be supplementary to the theological, and the Maine charters of 1820 and 1821 certainly reversed that relationship. Furthermore, the Baptists had established a theological school at Newton, Massachusetts, and the Baptists of Boston, especially the wealthier of them, were glad to use the Waterville change of policy as an excuse to support an outright theological seminary in the Old Commonwealth. To Newton, rather than to Waterville, young men intent upon theological training more and more turned their steps.

The result of these influences was that the theological department at Waterville College became steadily weaker. Although five men finished the course in 1825, they were the last to complete it. Two students held on until the summer of 1826, but neither finished the course. For three years thereafter no professor was available for the department, Chaplin himself teaching only his college classes when he was not out on the road soliciting funds. In 1829 the Trustees made at least a gesture toward reviving the department, voting that "a professor of theology be speedily appointed and that the office remain permanent." They took no chances, however, concerning additional expense, but solemnly appointed Jeremiah Chaplin Professor of Divinity, at the same time authorizing a committee to prepare rules and regulations for the government of the theological department. They regarded the department as several years dead and in need both of a professor and of regulations if it was to start all over again.

The Trustees wanted to assure theological studies in the Institution, but not at the expense of what they regarded as of first importance, the liberal arts college. No side show was going to distract from the main tent if they could prevent it. In 1830 they voted that "the theological department shall be supported wholly
and solely by funds arising from donations, legacies and subscriptions made and
granted to this college expressly for that purpose; and the agent, J. C. Merrill,
is instructed to procure funds for the College generally, and for the theological
department in particular, keeping a distinct account of the latter; and the agent
shall receive his salary from the funds so collected, in proportion to the amount
collected for each purpose."

In 1831 hope arose from interest expressed by the Maine Branch of the
Northern Education Society of Baptists. An offer from the Society to pay tui-
tion and room rent for students under its sponsorship in the theological depart-
ment was met by the College Trustees' agreeing to allow those students to occupy
rooms in the college dormitories, provided there were any rooms not needed by
college students, and also to permit theological students to "attend lectures by
the professors with college students and to have free use of the college library
and the philosophical apparatus."

Chaplin, however, had had quite enough of this obviously dying department.
He insisted upon his resignation as Professor of Theology, though remaining as
President and as Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy. The Trustees
then turned to Rev. Henry Green, pastor of the Waterville Baptist Church, but
were unwilling to give him a professorial appointment. They voted that "Rev.
Henry K. Green be requested to take charge of and instruct such theological
students as may resort to this place for instruction during the ensuing year, it
being understood that the Maine Branch of the Northern Education Society will
make him compensation for the same." The theological department never was
officially abolished; like old soldiers, it just faded away.

One other project of very brief duration occurred during Chaplin's presi-
dency. Along with the operation of the workshop went an attempt to give stu-
dents employment in cultivation of the college lands. The steward, who operated
the college commons at his own financial risk, was given the added job of being
a sort of superintendent of farm. He was given the title of College Farmer and
was instructed to furnish to any student of the college as much cleared land as
the student would agree to cultivate in proper order. His compensation was "the
use of such land as shall not be tilled by students and officers of the college, and
one-fourth of the produce raised by the students."

The farm project was no more successful than the workshop, and in 1870
President Champlin paid it the same reminiscent respect he had paid to the lat-
ter. "I think the experience shows that men whose wits have been thoroughly
sharpened, by whatever form of culture, generally contrive to live by their wits,
not by the plow."

As for the boarding department, it too was having hard going. One Ben-
jamin Sheppard claimed that he had been given authority to operate a commons,
but the Trustees declared his permission had extended only to occupancy of the
steward's apartment, rent free, until such time as a steward should be appointed.
In order to avoid a lawsuit, the Board authorized the Prudential Committee to
make the best settlement they could with Sheppard.

In 1832 the same Mr. Coffin who had originally provided board for stu-
dents was in that business again, for the Trustees ordered him "not to charge
the students more than one dollar per week for board," at the same time decre-
ing that "no scholar shall be compelled to board with him, and each scholar shall
have liberty to board where he pleases."

At the end of that college year, the Trustees were so dissatisfied with the
arrangement with Coffin that they built a steward's house at the north end of
the college grounds, a building that for many years bore the name of college commons. At a later day it would be operated by the college itself, but in Chaplin's time and much later the incumbent steward took complete risk of operating the table at sufficient profit to keep himself out of debt for supplies and overhead.

President Chaplin presented his resignation to the Trustees at their annual meeting on July 31, 1833. An ugly situation had arisen, making Chaplin so determined to terminate his services that he refused to preside at Commencement and the Trustees authorized Professor George Keely to confer the diplomas.

The immediate cause of the President's withdrawal was the occurrence on July 4, 1833, of a student demonstration in the cause of abolition of slavery. Not for a moment should it be assumed that Chaplin was pro-slavery or that he objected to abolition societies. What he did object to was anything which marred the sober decorum that must be observed in any institution of which he was the head, especially one in which a majority of the students were preparing for the ministry.

By 1830 the anti-slavery movement was well under way in New England. In June, 1833, the dynamic abolition leader, William Lloyd Garrison, lectured in Waterville, and so fired the enthusiasm of the college students that they determined to form an anti-slavery society. Since the cause was freedom, what better day could be found to declare their purpose than the birthday of the nation's freedom, the Fourth of July? Assembling in the commons dining hall, the students adopted the following constitution:

Preamble

Believing that all men are born free and equal, and possess certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that in no case consistently with reason, religion, and the immutable principles of justice, can one man be the property of another; we the subscribers do hereby agree to form ourselves into a society to be governed by the following constitution.

Article I. This Society shall be called the Waterville College Anti-Slavery Society.

Article II. The object of this society shall be to endeavor by all means sanctioned by law, humanity, and religion, to effect the abolition of slavery in the United States; to improve the character and condition of the free people of color, to inform and correct public opinion in relation to their situation and rights, and obtain for them equal rights and privileges with the whites.

Article III. Any person who is a member of the College may become a member of this society by signing the constitution and paying annually to the treasurer twenty-five cents.7

So enthusiastic was the gathering that it made a lot of noise. Even at the other end of the campus, the dignified president could hear the shouting and the cheers. He suspected that the celebrants had been fortified by New England rum, but even if they were cold sober, such disturbance of the peace and quiet of a scholarly community could not be countenanced.

At that time the college calendar included the month of July, and on the morning of July fifth President Chaplin told the students, in no uncertain terms,
exactly what he thought of their conduct. The exact words the President used were not recorded, but they were such that those who years later were asked for their recollections of his remarks all agreed that the whole student body arose in indignation from their chapel seats and demanded that President Chaplin retract statements they found objectionable. When Chaplin insisted that he meant every word he had said, the students left the building in anger.

At an immediately called faculty meeting, the President demanded the suspension of several known leaders in the episode, pending a more thorough investigation. The faculty agreed, but Professors Keely and Newton, while not objecting to the decision, urged caution concerning any final action.

A week elapsed, during which the episode affected the classroom work, causing the faculty to become increasingly concerned. They decided unanimously that the President should deliver in chapel a carefully prepared written statement, which should be read to the faculty in advance. On July 10 Chaplin delivered such a statement, a copy of which in his own handwriting and attested by Professor Conant, is now preserved in the Colby Archives. The statement is too long to quote here in full, and much of it is made up of religious homilies which have little bearing on the issue. A few passages, however, reveal not only some details of the incident, but also the unusual attitude which Chaplin and his colleagues held toward the Fourth of July, which had been an annual celebration for fifty-seven years when it caused this crisis at Waterville College.

Chaplin did withdraw his earlier implication of drunkenness:

We are happy to find, on inquiry, that none of you were chargeable with drinking ardent spirits or wine on that evening. The noises which we heard from the dining hall excited fears that some of you were actually inebriated, and that all present have made some use of ardent beverages. We feel it to be a fit subject of congratulation that such apprehensions were erroneous.

But the President made it clear that, wine or no wine, the faculty strongly disapproved of the noisy celebration, and he told the students exactly why they disapproved.

The anniversary of our independence ought to be celebrated by appropriate religious services. It is a season when we ought to call to mind the goodness of God in enabling our Fathers to shake off the yoke of oppression and assume the attitude of a free and independent nation. And it is proper that we, as social beings, should assemble for such services of gratitude and blessing. But revelry should be discountenanced as incompatible with such a celebration. We ought to spend the day in much the same way as we spend the Sabbath, and as pious people we spend our annual Thanksgiving. It is a day of joy, but a joy that ought always to be sober and chastened. We should resort to no amusements, partake of no entertainments, and engage in no exercises which have a tendency to unfit the mind for the holy intercourse with God.

Chaplin was not impressed by the argument "Everybody's doing it." He was quite aware that many people, probably the majority, did not share his stern religious views about observance of the nation's birthday. Majorities didn't trouble such a man. He would always insist that "One with God is a majority." He told the rebellious students who indeed were now on the point of actual rebellion:
Some of you say, 'Were not the very same things which the faculty condemn practised formerly by pious people? Did they not celebrate the Fourth of July in the same manner that we lately did?' Yes, there were professors of religion, even pious people and ministers, who did these things. But shall we conclude that it is right for us to do the same? Then it is right to carry on that infamous and abominable traffic, the slave trade. The pious John Newton was for years the captain of a slave ship. Does that justify any man today in committing so grievous an outrage? A few years ago many good people made free use of ardent spirits. Is this a satisfactory reason for our doing the same? Some good men indeed celebrate the Fourth of July just as you did the other evening. But that does not make it right.

Then the President got down to the facts concerning the disapproved behavior, and it was in this passage that the students found his most objectionable words. We have placed in italics the particular phrases that led the students to say that the President had insulted them.

You are greatly mistaken, young gentlemen, if you suppose that we wish to deprive you of any real enjoyment. We wish you all to be happy in this world as well as in the next. But we wish you to understand that happiness does not consist in mirth and jollity. True joy is always serious. Real pleasure must correspond to the nature of the participant and the rank which he holds in the scale of existence. You are not beasts of the field or fowls of the air, but rational and immortal beings, and you ought to seek pleasures which add to your dignity and high destiny. Moreover, young men who are obtaining a college education may justly be expected to have a taste somewhat more elevated than that of the common herd of mankind. Can you be surprised, then, that after all the pains we have taken to refine and elevate your feelings, some of you have a taste so low and boorish, that you can be pleased with noises which resemble the yells of a savage or the braying of an ass? For you to pride yourselves on doing that which a boor, a savage or a brute may do as well as you is truly contemptible.

It was then that President Chaplin really poured it on. He referred to the recent death of one of the students and said it should remind these young men of the ominous uncertainty of life. Suppose they had to appear before the Divine Judge the very night of their unseemly celebration? He referred to recent evangelistic meetings held at China and at Ten Lots, and he made it all too clear that, in his opinion, some of his listeners were quite unfit to be ministers. He said:

The scene of your revelry took place within less than a week after numbers of you attended protracted meetings. We hoped that the time you spent at China and in the western part of this town would not be lost. We hoped you would return to the College with salutary religious impressions which would prove to be deep and lasting. But we feel that the devotional feelings generated at those meetings must have been for you as the morning cloud and the early dew. Alas, they are gone, wholly gone! What good does it do for you to go abroad and pray and exhort and preach with seeming fervor and solemnity, then return to celebrate the Fourth of July in the manner which you did? How could you, who intend to be pious ministers of the gospel, thus engage in loud and boisterous mirth?
The President announced that two ringleaders of the evening's revelry had been expelled and six others had been given a long suspension. Even if the President's address had done anything to allay student resentment—and it had not—the inflicted punishments brought matters to a climax. Now it was the students who turned to formal statements in writing. On July 17 they addressed the following petition to the faculty.

To the Faculty of Waterville College:

Whereas in the address to which we listened on Saturday last we find we were injured, individually and collectively, that our proceedings on the evening of the Fourth of July were misrepresented and that the epithets which were applied to us were harsh, severe, and undeserved, we feel it to be a duty which we owe to ourselves as men, to request of you an explanation of the terms in which we were addressed, and also the sources of the information which gave rise to them.

We have learned from individuals who have conversed with members of the faculty that the address was not intended merely to reprove us for our conduct on that evening, but also for certain misdemeanors for six months past. We did not understand the address in this way. We supposed that it related exclusively to the evening of the Fourth of July. If we are incorrect, we wish to be informed of it. But allowing that it did refer to all misconduct for the last six months, we do not consider that, as a body, we are justly censured for the conduct of individuals, or in any way answerable therefor. We are willing on all occasions to receive reproof when guilty of violating the laws of the college, but we think we have a right to expect that such reproof will come couched in at least respectful language. We consider that our characters as students of this college, and as men, have been unjustly injured and we ask redress.

Those of us who were not present at the celebration on the Fourth of July feel it due to ourselves to ask how far we are implicated in the address, and what instances of misconduct were there referred to. We would also add that we think the interests of the College require that an explanation be made.

Waterville College, July 17, 1833.

The fifty-seven signers of that petition included some of the most religious and best behaved men in the College. One of them was a sophomore, Jonathan Furbush, already serving as an ardent home mission worker among the French-Canadian people on "The Plains" who, because of pneumonia contracted in humanitarian work there in a winter blizzard, died before he could complete his college course. Another was William Mathews, the young man who was so thoroughly trusted that, as we have already recounted, he carried several thousand dollars belonging to the Waterville Bank to another bank in Boston. Another was Silas Illsley, the first of many members of that family to attend the College, and one who was a leader in both religious and literary pursuits throughout his college years. Among the signers was one man who would live well into the twentieth century. He was William Howe, who had a distinguished career as a Baptist minister in Boston and Cambridge, and who died in 1907 at the extreme age of one hundred and one years. It would have been interesting to have obtained from Mr. Howe, in his old age, his reminiscences of that dining hall incident of July 4, 1833, but apparently no one thought to ask him.
On the following day the faculty sent to the petitioning students a formal reply:

Whereas the impression seems to prevail among the students that two only of the members of the faculty are responsible for the address delivered in the chapel on Saturday last, be it resolved unanimously that the President be requested to inform the students that the above mentioned address, before it was delivered in the chapel, had been read to all the members of the faculty and had been unanimously approved. Also resolved, that the faculty entirely disclaim the construction which they understand is given by the students to those sentences in the address which occasioned most offense, and that the object of the faculty, in those sentences, was to show those whom they addressed the inconsistency of some of their conduct with the rational and immortal nature which they possess. 

The students, especially those who were members of the theological group known as the United Brethren Society, were not satisfied with that response. They insisted on a retraction of what they still termed offensive epithets, and the matter was far from settled when the Trustees, in annual meeting, were confronted with the resignations of President Chaplin and Professor Conant.

Voted, that the President be requested to furnish this Board with a statement relative to the late difficulties which occasioned his resignation, and that Professors Conant, Keely and Newton be requested to furnish statements also relative to disturbances among the students. Voted, that a committee of five be appointed to attempt a reconciliation between Professors Keely and Newton on the one part and Professors Chaplin and Conant on the other part.

Keely and Newton immediately presented their statement to the Board, but it was not until Chaplin learned the contents of that statement that he and Conant presented their own, which was couched entirely in the form of a refutation of their opponents' statement. The matter was so fraught with dire consequences for the College that its historical importance justifies complete quotation of both statements. No mere excerpts and no paraphrase will suffice. The surest way to understand the unfortunate situation is to see exactly what both sides had to say. The original statements here quoted are preserved in the Colby Archives.

At the first session of the Trustees' annual meeting, President Chaplin had apparently accused Keely and Newton not only of failing to support him, but of actually aiding and abetting the student revolt. To this charge the two professors gave vigorous denial.

We deem it important to embrace the opportunity you have kindly offered to say a few things in reply to the charge which has this afternoon been preferred against us. We should not have known of any difficulty existing between present members of the faculty, had not Dr. Chaplin expressly charged us in your hearing with refusing to sustain him and Professor Conant in reference to the course which they wished to pursue in the discipline of certain students.

We do not consider ourselves bound to conjure up the reasons which have induced the students to suppose that two individuals of the faculty
were mostly responsible for the address which has given offense. We are conscious of having attempted to pursue a judicious course in reference to this and to former acts of the Executive Government ever since we have been members of it. Our individual opinion has been concealed, if it did not precisely correspond with that of the ruling members of the faculty. But do Dr. Chaplin and Prof. Conant suppose that their general character and the general tenor of the course they have pursued for months (not to say years) past can be observed by the students and yet no opinion be formed as to the influence which individual members may have in the meetings of the faculty? In addition to the fact that it was publicly announced to the students that every member of the faculty was responsible for the address the delivery of which gave offense, we have repeatedly and distinctly stated our disapproval of such loud and noisy mirth as was displayed on the night of July fourth. We have never knowingly winked at any sin of this kind in students, but have endeavored to be firm supporters of the cause of good order and strict discipline in the college. We may, however, be allowed our own opinion as to the best method of correcting any evil which may be found to exist.

We are specifically charged with deserting Dr. Chaplin and Prof. Conant when the second address was presented for approval of the faculty. We solemnly assert that, far from deserting them, we fully supported them. Toward the close of our last faculty meeting we had, through the whole affair, endeavored to defend Dr. Chaplin (who was declared by certain students to be incompetent for his office) and Prof. Conant (who had been insulted in the street), and we stated our determination to act in their behalf as we would wish them to do for us in like circumstances. We further declared that, though we had doubts as to the policy which they wished to pursue, we would certainly sustain them if they were not satisfied with less severe measures.

After Dr. Chaplin and Prof. Conant, to our exceeding surprise, proposed to resign their offices as the best method of removing the difficulty existing in the College, we solemnly declared to Dr. Chaplin that, though we had other ample reasons which respected the welfare of the college for being reluctant to accede to the violent measures proposed, yet our principal reason for taking that position was a regard for his own interest. We stated to him our fears that those measures would create bad feeling, not only in the College, but particularly among the friends of the College abroad, that would be to the President's disadvantage and perhaps lead at some future day to his removal from office. To be charged, as we were this afternoon, is indeed a most unwelcome return for the affection we have felt for Dr. Chaplin and the support we have endeavored to give him as President of the College.

If you think it of any consequence to examine further into our official or private conduct since we have been members of this faculty, we shall rejoice in a thorough investigation. We have only to add that we feel a deep interest in the welfare of this College and that our whole energies have been devoted to those measures which, in our opinion, were adopted to promote its best interests; and now the question whether we can hereafter be useful as members of the faculty we submit entirely to yourselves.

Calvin Newton
George W. Keely

Waterville College, July 30, 1833
The reply which President Chaplin and Professor Conant immediately made to the Newton-Keely statement shows that there had long been disagreement between the two factions and that the Fourth of July incident was only the spark that ignited a long-loaded powder keg.

In reply to the communication of Professors Keely and Newton, we readily admit that both men have manifested a deep interest in the prosperity of the College and a readiness to make sacrifices in its behalf. But we cannot admit, that during the late disturbances they have shown a willingness to bear their full share of the responsibility resting on the faculty or to expose themselves to the manifestations of displeasure and resentment shown by certain students. If their protestations are sincere, as we presume they are, the two professors must have been most egregiously mistaken as to the best methods of manifesting their esteem for the presiding officer of the College, and of sustaining him in the arduous duties of his station. To move on with him till he had exposed himself to the fiercest resentment of a large proportion of the students, and then propose a relaxation of measures when it was most necessary to rally round him and present a bold front to the disaffected students, was certainly the readiest way to ruin the President's influence and expose him to the contempt and scorn of all who had assailed him. Had they intended to effect the President's removal from office, they could hardly have adopted more suitable expedients.

Professors Keely and Newton seem to imagine that it was not their fault if the students thought them opposed to the measures which the President and the first professor were pursuing. We must say that, if these two gentlemen had combined a sincere attachment to our cause with a suitable degree of boldness and decision, not an hour would have elapsed before the students as a body would have beheld the faculty as one and indivisible. We do not accuse these professors of betraying us. They do not deserve to be ranked with Judas, who betrayed his Master, nor with Peter who denied him. The course they have pursued resembles rather the conduct of the other disciples, who, when the Master was arrested, had not the courage to stand by him, but forsook him and fled.

Professors Keely and Newton refer to us as "ruling members" of the faculty, indicating that for months, even years, the predominance of our influence has been apparent to the students. We do indeed hold the first two offices in the Executive Government, but in no sense have we been "ruling members." We have never shown an overbearing spirit or exercised authority in any improper degree. But, admitting that the students, from observation of the attitude and actions of all members of the faculty, might form some shrewd conjectures respecting the degree of interest felt by each in the late transactions, does that account for the fact that, during the late disturbances, the students have, from first to last, considered Professors Keely and Newton as opposed to the vigorous measures pursued by the faculty? If these gentlemen had really wished the students to consider them as going heart and hand with us, could they not easily have given that impression?

Professor Keely is a man whom we highly respect. He is a man of genius and taste, as well as a profound scholar and an able instructor. We consider him, too, as possessing no inconsiderable share of moral worth. His great fault is want of that firmness and decision of char-
acter so necessary to be exercised in the discipline of a college. This causes him sometimes to shirk when troubles rise and enemies assail. He is uncommonly averse to the noise and bustle of the world, is passionately fond of retired study, and he considers the use of a single hour in attending to college discipline as irreparable loss. We strongly feel that prompt attention to college discipline is one of the most important duties that devolves upon all officers of the College. We could wish that Prof. Keely had felt the same, for in that case discipline in this college would have been administered with much greater effect.

Unlike Professor Keely, Professor Newton has manifested an unusual readiness to assist us in the discipline of the College. But since the beginning of the last college year he has not been so ready nor so firm in respect to discipline. And for that change we can find a ready explanation. During the past nine months, Prof. Newton has lost the confidence of many students. When, in the first term, he was hearing the junior class in Haines' *Elements of Criticism*, a work which requires great attention on the part of the instructor, he failed to furnish such illustrations as the work requires. Members of the class complained that they derived no benefit from his instruction and they found his illustrations coarse and homely, not suited to the dignity of literary subjects. His students in declamation complained bitterly that he did not help them improve their manner of speaking. Last May, a senior told Prof. Conant that the reason why the members of his class protested against a third recitation was because it would have to be conducted by Prof. Newton.

We admit that Prof. Newton had strong inducements to be on his guard and use every precaution to avoid giving offense to the students. It is an apology of some weight, but it does not excuse him from the use of expedients he has recently resorted to in order to establish himself in the good graces of the students. That he has employed improper expedients can hardly be doubted, when it is considered that he has, all at once, risen from the bottom to the top of the wheel. We are not insensible that this surprising revolution may have been due in part to the maneuvers of the disaffected students, who in their desire to divide the faculty, have labored to bring Prof. Newton over to their side by a marked change in their manner of treating him. But unless he had welcomed the maneuver, it would have accomplished little.

One fact furnishes direct evidence that Prof. Newton was willing to court favor with the students. The members of the United Brethren Society were, in their collective capacity, chargeable with aiding in the late rebellion. Their petition was put into my hands on Monday. On Thursday, when the clouds hanging over us had become unusually thick and portentous, and when the least countenance given to the rebellious students was tantamount to participation in their rebellion—on that morning Prof. Newton attended the weekly meeting of the United Brethren and, most surprising of all, made an address on Decision of Character. One of the leaders of the rebellion followed with remarks on the same subject and closed with the significant remark, 'We have been decided hitherto; I hope we shall be decided still.' If Prof. Newton wished to encourage the members of that society to persevere in efforts to humble and subdue the faculty, he certainly took the proper course. He knew perfectly well how the disaffected students would apply his remarks.
There are several other topics to which we might have adverted. But, fearing lest we have already trespassed on your patience, we will say no more at present except that we are

Your most obedient serv'ts,

Jer. Chaplin
Thos. J. Conant

Waterville College, July 31, 1833

It was after the Trustees had heard both statements that they appointed the Committee of Reconciliation. On the following morning, at the final session of the meeting, the committee's chairman, John Butler, made the following report.

The committee appointed yesterday to attempt a reconciliation between President Chaplin and Prof. Conant on the one part and Professors Keely and Newton on the other part report that it has not been in their power to effect any reconciliation between the disaffected officers. The President informed the committee that the resignation of himself and Prof. Conant could not be recalled unless the Board of Trustees by vote, should approve of all measures in the recent difficulties, and in his opinion, even if the Trustees should so approve, the situation of himself and Prof. Conant in relation to the other officers would be very unhappy, and most of the students would then leave.

The closing sentence of the committee's report shows that Chaplin gave the Trustees no recourse but to accept his resignation. His statement that, even if the Trustees supported him completely, the difficulty would still remain unresolved, was practically saying to the Board, "You're damned if you do, and you're damned if you don't."

One action of the Board, as soon as they had accepted the resignation, reveals clearly that they did not approve of the President's severe disciplinary action in this instance, but sided with Keely and Newton. That action was their immediate appointment of Keely, first to preside at the commencement exercises on the next day, and later to serve as Acting President until a new president should be elected.

It therefore turned out that nine young men received their diplomas from the hands of Professor Keely on August 1, 1833. They were Daniel Cook, son of one of Waterville's earliest settlers; Oliver Dodge, who died only seven years later; Jonathan Farnham, who became Professor of Natural Sciences at the college in Georgetown, Kentucky; Rockwood Giddings, who joined Farnham in Kentucky and became President of Georgetown College; Walter Gould, who had a distinguished career as an attorney in Alabama; William Howe, one of Boston's best known ministers; Josiah Pillsbury, who also went to Kentucky, but as a lawyer rather than teacher; William Stratton, Kennebec County's clerk of courts for 47 years; and Nahum Wood, who, after teaching mathematics at Franklin College in Athens, Georgia, became a noted southern planter of the period just preceding the Civil War.

Although the Trustees felt finally obliged to accept Chaplin's resignation, they did everything possible, consistent with their best judgment, to bring harmony between him and the two professors who had already done much for the college and in whom the Board still had confidence. But Jeremiah Chaplin was a man of granite convictions. It made no difference how many people thought
he was wrong. If his own conscience told him that he was right, no one could swerve him from his self-imposed duty.

It is remarkable that no rift occurred between Chaplin and the Trustees. They immediately elected him a member of the Board, on which he served faithfully until 1840, only a few months before his death. Not for a moment did he lose his devotion to the College. He had come simply, but firmly to the conclusion that he was not the man to head it, just as he had allegedly told them in 1821, when he had refused the position and insisted upon another election, only to take the post reluctantly when Daniel Barnes turned it down.

The Trustees instructed a committee to supply Chaplin with testimonials of their esteem and to proceed at once to make proper financial settlement with him. The latter order was not easy to carry out, because Chaplin had to a large extent himself been the college and had of necessity made financial commitments on its behalf—commitments for which he had taken personal responsibility. There were notes with his endorsement at the Waterville Bank, there were College bills he had paid out of his own pocket, and there was back salary long due him. It was a whole year after his resignation before final adjustment was made. The Board, on its committee's recommendation, then voted:

In consideration of the service rendered by Dr. Chaplin and the donations made by him in aid of the College, the Trustees consider it their duty to allow the late president one thousand dollars, and that all claims of the College on a note given by Dr. Chaplin to the Samaritan Society be relinquished.

Do the facts as related in the lengthy documents tell the whole story? Is there anything to be read between the lines of the old, fading papers? Can any further light be cast on the unfortunate end of a valiant presidential career?

One cause of the dissension within the faculty was certainly the common but always volcanic issue of nepotism. Although, in the preserved documents, the only name associated with Chaplin's side in the affair is that of his son-in-law, Professor Conant, the newest professor on the faculty was also involved. He was John O'Brien Chaplin, the President's son, who had just been promoted from tutor to professor. That the son resigned along with his father and his brother-in-law is shown by the Trustees' vote authorizing their committee "to make suitable remuneration for President Chaplin, Professor Conant his son-in-law, and Professor Chaplin his son." Perhaps some significance can also be attached to the designation of relationship in the trustee record. When Professors Keely and Newton urged some retraction of remarks and more lenient action toward the disaffected students, they were well aware that family relationship would affect the views, or at least the position taken before the Trustees, of the other members of the faculty.

The incident of July 4, 1833, had not been the first occasion when President Chaplin's stand on matters of discipline had caused resentment. On October 24, 1825, the faculty had been called into special session by the President "in consequence of a riot which took place on Saturday evening." About ten o'clock on the autumn night, "several students, with handkerchiefs tied around their heads, made an assault on Tutor Parker's room by throwing volleys of brickbats against the door and shouting vociferously." Investigation produced no tangible results, but within a few days twenty students confessed to the act. President Chaplin was all for taking stern action, involving suspension of all twenty men,
though it was known that only six had participated actively in the affair. The President was overruled, for the faculty record tells us, "After much deliberation, the government thought best, for particular reasons, to forgive the delinquents, and requested the President to write an address and read it to the students in chapel."

In 1826 Chaplin severely castigated the students because of trouble with a resident of the town, Moses Healy. Healy complained that a group of students had insulted him on the street. The faculty informed the man that, if he would supply evidence identifying the students, the offenders would be promptly punished. Although Healy could not meet those conditions, he was not satisfied, but laid his case before the Grand Jury of Kennebec County. For lack of evidence, the case was thrown out of court. Chaplin was deeply grieved that the offending students had never come forward and confessed. He was very harsh in his denunciation from the chapel platform.

Even more revealing is a matter which was not settled by the faculty, but reached the Board of Trustees in 1831. The faculty had appealed to the Board for instructions concerning their right to compel students to give testimony in disciplinary cases. As long ago as 1831 on American college campuses, it was a firm tenet of the student code that "to tell on" another student was an unpardonable offense. Such an offender would be promptly and effectively ostracized. But the older generation had little sympathy with that student view. If order was to be maintained, if offenders were to be punished, students would have to testify, just as their civic duty expected them to testify in the courts of the state. So we find in the records of the trustees for July 26, 1831, the following vote:

Whereas in all colleges there is found among students a strong reluctance to giving testimony before the government against their fellow students, and usually an appalling odium is cast on those who do this; and whereas the good of our colleges urgently demands that false delicacy on this subject should be sternly discountenanced; therefore, resolved that the Trustees recommend to the Executive Government a rigid adherence to the 12th section of the 6th chapter of the college laws, and that all students refusing to give testimony, when required by the government, and all students endeavoring to ease odium on those who do give testimony shall be dealt with according to the provisions of said article. Submission to law is honorable and indicative of a truly noble spirit. We would hope that the students of this College will be distinguished for this spirit, that a high tone of morality will prevail within its walls, and that vice of every description will be frowned upon. And should there be among so many young men any of vicious character, for their own sake as well as that of the College, it is important that they should not be able, undetected, to practice mischief. Therefore, he who, required by the College Government, testifies against an offender, does an act worthy of praise.

A President determined to enforce that kind of resolution—and it clearly was at Chaplin's recommendation that the Trustees adopted it—was in for trouble. Only two years later the lid blew off the volcano in the celebration at that anti-slavery meeting on the Fourth of July.

For many years the bitter controversy which caused Chaplin's resignation obscured the tremendous contribution which the man had made in placing the new institution on an enduring basis. Although a devout Baptist and an ex-
experienced teacher of theological students, he had the wisdom and the courage to see that the institution in Waterville had no permanent future as a theological school. He was not driven to the concept of a four-year college against his will. The tragic episode of 1833 is sufficient evidence that others could not drive Jeremiah Chaplin to any decision against his principles or his conscience. He was in fact the leader of the movement to make the institution primarily a college and only secondarily a theological seminary. He did not deliberately plan to abandon the latter, and he cooperated faithfully in all endeavors to save it, but he shed no tears when it finally had to go. That Colby became and remained an undergraduate college of increasing quality and standing was due chiefly to the very stubbornness which caused the President's resignation. Had Jeremiah Chaplin held different convictions, Waterville College might have gone on with divided goals and splintered curricula, eventually trying to be all things to all men, instead of achieving its single purpose of becoming a high grade undergraduate college of liberal arts.

As one contemplates the account of Chaplin's departure from the college presidency, it is easy to attribute the outcome solely to his own sternness and stubbornness. But such controversies are seldom one-sided. Fault lay also with the students. Thirty years after the event, one of the students who had signed the petition demanding retraction had come to a mellowed view. James Upham wrote:

It is a pity that the students, justly incensed as they were, could not have realized that, in smiting the venerable president they were smiting their own father—the father, at least, of the college; the one man without whom the college would have had no existence; who had begotten it, cherished it, and brought it up through the perils of childhood with such toils, self-sacrifices and heartaches as are beyond the possibilities of the present generation to conceive; that they were striking down one of the most godly men of the age, who walked with God as closely as did Isaiah or Enoch; one who was as humble as he was great, and habitually suffered from a conviction of unfitness for the work; one who was eminent in scholarly worth and must ever occupy a high place in a roll of distinguished educators and college founders. It is to our shame that we thus struck him down.

In that letter lies a valuable clue to what may have been the outstanding cause of Chaplin's resignation. It was not so much his uncompromising stubbornness as it was his deep, sincere humility. Perhaps the modern psychiatrist would say that Chaplin's determined sternness was the outward cover for an inferiority complex. Jeremiah Chaplin had never wanted to be a college president. He had been reluctant to accept any position at the Maine Literary and Theological Institution when the proffered position was only one of professor of theology. When the institution obtained a college charter and the Trustees decided they must have a president, Chaplin insisted that they elect someone else, and it was only when Daniel Barnes refused the presidency that Chaplin reluctantly accepted it. When the crisis came in 1833, when he saw no way of settling the dispute without sacrifice of principle, this devout man who tried so hard to "walk with God" decided humbly and soul-searchingly that the fault must be his. So he abandoned the office but not the College. His love for it never waned and he worked in its behalf all the rest of his life.
CHAPTER IX

Dynamo From Salem

When President Chaplin resigned, Waterville College was faced with a double crisis. Not only must it find a new president; it must also find a way to meet its mounting debts or close its doors. Writing many years later, Edward W. Hall said of the situation: "The College had no means to meet more than three-fifths of its current expenses, and its creditors were becoming uneasy. The resignation of Dr. Chaplin, and with him two of the professors, under circumstances full of peril to the College, added to the embarrassment of the situation. Many of its friends were almost disposed to abandon the enterprise."

The very circles in which the Trustees had to operate, in their search for Chaplin's successor, were those Baptist associations which were most aware of the precarious state of the College. Baptist ministers with a scholarly reputation were loath to leave good parishes for the risk of such a college presidency. Such was indeed the attitude of the man to whom the Trustees turned in their dire emergency. Rufus Babcock was pastor of the prominent Baptist Church at Salem, Massachusetts. He was the type of man whom the college trustees ardently sought: a Baptist minister, a graduate of a leading American college, and an experienced teacher and administrator.

Rufus Babcock, born in Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1798, was only thirty-five years old, but already a recognized leader in the Baptist denomination, when he was invited to take the presidency of Waterville College. He had graduated from Brown in 1822, and had then served as senior tutor at Columbian College, the Baptist institution in the national capital, where he had gained a reputation as a brilliant teacher and competent administrator in the president's absence.

Babcock, secure in his Salem pastorate, wanted nothing to do with a college which he regarded as near to bankruptcy. He suspected that Waterville College was so deeply in debt that neither he nor anyone else could save it. He respectfully declined the invitation and suggested that the Trustees consider his fellow tutor at Columbian, who had been promoted to a professorship at Brown. Impressed by Babcock's recommendation, the Waterville Trustees at once proceeded to invite the Reverend Alexis Caswell to the presidency, at a special meeting on August 21, 1833. Caswell waited six weeks before giving his answer. When that answer was finally made in the negative the Trustees were really in a bad plight. The new college year had already opened without any president to extricate the institution from its financial doldrums, although internal administration was in the capable hands of Professor Keely.

The Trustees turned again to Babcock, with a plea that was difficult for him to ignore. In Waterville, as well as in other parts of New England, the religious
sect which was then making gains against the conservative Baptists was the liberal Universalists. Only a few years earlier they had organized, right under the eaves of Waterville College, the first Universalist Church in Maine, and they were now erecting a church edifice of their own in the college town where the Baptists had the only earlier denominational meetinghouse. Feeling between the two denominations was often heated and harsh. The appeal which the Trustees made to Babcock was based on those strained relations with the Universalists. If he declined to become their president, the Trustees told the Salem pastor, the institution would have to be sold to meet the pressing claims of creditors, and the most likely purchaser was a Universalist corporation that was anxious to grab the property at a bargain price and turn it into their own denominational school.2

Babcock was now faced with a dilemma. If he accepted the presidency, he would be taking on a very risky job; if he refused it, and the Baptists lost the college, he might always retain a feeling of personal guilt. He therefore decided to go to Waterville and make thorough investigation. He spent a week at the College, conferring with the professors, the members of the Prudential Committee, and especially with Dr. Daniel Cook, the treasurer. The treasurer’s accounts showed an accumulated debt of $10,000, which was bad enough, but it was not until several months later that Babcock discovered that Cook had not included an earlier obligation of $8,000, which had never been liquidated, although Cook thought Timothy Boutelle had long ago absorbed it. The debt of the struggling institution, which had been in existence only fifteen years, was actually in excess of $18,000.

Reluctant, but impelled by a strong sense of religious duty, Babcock finally decided to accept the unappealing job of presiding over Waterville College. At a hastily called meeting on September 25, 1833, the Trustees confirmed his election at a salary of one thousand dollars a year. To prepare for his coming with his family to Waterville, the Board authorized the Prudential Committee to “cause window blinds to be furnished to the President’s house, paint said house and the fences connected with it.” At the same time the Board postponed action on a national issue which had been involved in Chaplin’s resignation: “Resolved, that the petition of several students for permission to form two societies relative to colonization and anti-slavery be referred to the consideration of the Board at their next annual meeting.”

Rufus Babcock plunged into his new task with tremendous energy. He at once visited most of the colleges in New England and New York, to learn what other institutions were doing. He moved his family to Waterville just in time to participate in oral examination of the students at the end of the fall term.

His first task was to attack vigorously the financial problem. In 1831 the Trustees had set out to raise by subscription a fund of $20,000, under the agency of Rev. J. C. Merrill. It had been only partially successful, and Babcock decided to revive it. In doing so, he added a device he had picked up in his visits to other colleges. He proposed that anyone who would give $600 to the fund would have a scholarship under which the donor could annually designate a student to receive its benefits in the form of free tuition and room rent. It was a dubious method of financing, because the Trustees intended to use the money to pay debts and put up a third building. Now they obligated their treasurer to cancel the individual bills for tuition and room rent of every student who came under those donor-controlled scholarships. They were, in effect, spending the same money twice.
Babcock thought it disgraceful that a Baptist college should have no decently appointed chapel, and he persuaded the Trustees to earmark a sufficient portion of the $20,000 fund to erect a building for general classroom purposes, in which a large and well equipped chapel should be arranged. Chapel had previously been held in small, crowded rooms, either in North College or in South College. All previous attempts to raise money especially for a chapel had failed. Babcock was determined that there should be no failure this time, and at their annual meeting in 1835 the Trustees approved the following form of certificate for scholarship subscribers to the fund:

This certifies that _________ has paid into the treasury of Waterville College $600 towards erecting a chapel. Thereby he and his assigns forever are entitled to enter and have one student in the College, free of all bills for room rent, tuition, lectures, and library; but no assignment shall be recognized by the College as valid unless the same shall be made by the donor to some incorporated body in trust or otherwise. Provided that, if the College shall at any time hereafter pay the donor, his trustees or assigns, the sum of $600, the scholarship shall cease.

Perhaps fearing that the scheme might get out of control by extending permanently too generous largess, the Trustees voted to restrict the number of scholarships to twenty-five.

In 1836 construction was started on a building situated between North College and South College. Its earliest name was Recitation Hall, but soon after the close of the presidency of James T. Champlin, in 1873, it was renamed, in his honor, Champlin Hall. It was originally 65 by 40 feet and two floors high, surmounted by a square tower, on top of which was a smaller tower containing the college bell. In later years a third floor was added to the building and it was otherwise remodeled. Professor Hall is authority for the often questioned statement that the architect was Thomas U. Walter, who later designed the extension to the national capitol in Washington. The entire structure was erected at a cost of eight thousand dollars.

The entire first floor was taken up by a large chapel, and above it were the library, a room with the philosophical apparatus, and two recitation rooms. Because the main floor was elevated several feet above the ground level, it was possible to secure a basement with considerable window surface above ground. The four recitation rooms in that basement were, however, damp, dreary and unattractive—the cause of many complaints until the general remodeling after the Civil War.

The connection between President Babcock's scholarship plan and the erection of Recitation Hall was made clear in President Champlin's semi-centennial address in 1870, when he said: "The central building, between North and South Colleges, was begun during the summer of 1836 and was completed in 1837, for the sum of eight thousand dollars, Dr. Babcock having secured about that amount in scholarship subscriptions."

When President Babcock arrived on the scene, aid from the State of Maine had ceased, and it was not to be resumed until 1861. In eleven years following the formation of Maine as a separate state, the College had received a total of $13,500, the last payment of which had been $1,000 in 1832. It had begun with $500 in 1821, followed by $1,000 in each of the next three years, by $1,500
in 1825, by $2,000 in each of the subsequent three years, by $1,000 in 1829 and $1,500 in 1830.

The last thousand dollars of state money, granted in 1832, came hard. The request for three thousand dollars, was approved by the legislative committee. They pointed out that the budget for 1832-33 called for $3,780, broken down as follows: President's salary, $900; three professors at $600 each, $1,800; salary of one tutor, $300; incidental expenses, $300; interest on debt, $480. For income the College could expect $26.50 a year for tuition and room rent from 59 students, totaling $1,563.50; interest on notes given for land and timber, $360; making all expected income only $1,923.50, leaving an expected deficit of $1,856.50. When the bill reached the floor of the House, it was amended to provide $1,000 for one year only.

Even the total of $13,500 supplied by the state since 1820 had not been without costly restrictions. Since 1825, each grant had been accompanied by the provision that $500 of each year's payment should be applied to the partial or total remission of tuition for indigent students holding residence in Maine.

The legislative committee found strong reason for granting the original request, even though the majority of the legislature decided otherwise. The committee reported:

We are satisfied as to the manner in which the concerns of Waterville College have been managed, that the money granted by the state, as well as that contributed by individuals, has been carefully applied and judiciously and economically expended. At Waterville College the expenses of a student are less than one-fourth of what they are at Harvard. It will be perceived from the annexed statement that Waterville College cannot continue to operate without aid from some source, and that the amount it has received from private donations much exceeds all that has been given by the State.

In spite of Jeremiah Chaplin's devotion to the College and his ceaseless efforts to keep it financially solvent, he was accused by the more conservative Baptists of being the man who had killed the theological department. Rufus Babcock was determined to remedy that situation. He never suggested that the main business of the institution should be other than that of a college of liberal arts, but he did believe that, as an adjunct to such a college, a Baptist theological school could be advantageously operated. The promotion of theological training within the denomination was in the hands of the Maine Baptist Theological Association. When that body convened at Hallowell in 1836, it received the following communication from President Babcock:

Ever since the organization of the present faculty of the College, it has been the determination to form a theological class entirely distinct from the college exercises, and they have only been delayed until the present time for want of materials. Such a class is now formed, and during the whole of the last term has been progressing in theological studies. The class is limited in its course to a single year.

The single year of theological studies, according to Babcock's announcement, consisted of eight parts. In the first term were Antiquities and Geography of the Bible; Ecclesiastical History; Bible in Original Languages and in the English Version; Composition and Elocution. The second term covered Principles of
Biblical Interpretation and Christian Theology. In the third term the students
would write at least fifty exercises on doctrines and duties, would compose and
deliver sermons, and pursue a study of pastoral and pulpit duties. The announce-
ment stated, “No charge is made for tuition in the theological class.”

Of course there was no money to provide a separate theological faculty.
Babcock simply arranged that two of the professors should join him in giving
theological instruction, as an added load to their college classes and without addi-
tional compensation. It was a sincere, even sacrificial attempt to allay the qualms
and answer the complaints of dissident Baptists, but it did not succeed. The
annual catalogues which the College published during the Babcock presidency do
not even mention the theological class, nor do the names of any such students
appear in the lists of enrolled students who did not receive degrees. The at-
tempt seems to have been carried on for only one year, with about half a dozen
students, who remained anonymous. Perhaps it would have been more success-
ful if Babcock himself had not resigned in 1836.

Working day and night to put the struggling college on its feet, Rufus Bab-
cock so taxed his strength that his health failed. Not only had he raised $20,000,
revived theological instruction and taken on a heavy load of personal teaching,
but he had also assumed almost alone the burden of the college finances. Major
financial responsibility of the institution has been the fate of most Colby presi-
dents. It had certainly been true of Chaplin; yet even he had the assistance of
fund-raising agents appointed by the Trustees. When Babcock became presi-
dent, the treasury was so low that the Trustees dared not risk the continuation
of a financial agent out in the field, but left the whole fund-raising job to the new
president.

As a consequence of these manifold duties, Babcock became increasingly
afflicted with pulmonary trouble, so that his physician, suspecting the approach
of tuberculosis, insisted that he must seek a different climate. At the annual
meeting of the Board on August 1, 1836, he presented his resignation.

Not the least of President Babcock’s contributions had been his relaxation
of stern, often cold relationships between faculty and students. In the first quar-
ter of the nineteenth century some of the customs started at Harvard nearly two
hundred years earlier had been abandoned. Students were no longer required
to use only Latin in conversation on the campus. But other ancient customs of
college life had survived. At Dartmouth and Williams, at Brown and Amherst,
even at Bowdoin and Waterville, a student was expected to stand with uncovered
head when he talked with any professor, even out-of-doors on the coldest winter
day. The student must keep his hat off until the professor was out of sight.
Such practices seemed nonsense to Dr. Babcock. Even in the classroom he en-
couraged an informality which his colleagues were reluctant to accept, and after
his departure the old classroom decorum was so strongly resumed that it per-
sisted until well after the Civil War.

It should not be assumed that, while some customs were relaxed, discipline
was non-existent. There were plenty of regulations calling for exemplary con-
duct, and the faculty insisted upon their rigid enforcement. Every student was
required to attend chapel twice a day, before breakfast in the morning, and at
early candle light in the evening. All disturbance in the buildings or on the
campus was strictly prohibited, and no student was allowed to be absent from
his room or use any musical instrument during study hours. Not only must
the student attend chapel service twelve times a week, twice every day from
Monday through Saturday; he must also “behave with gravity and reverence dur-
ing the whole service, and while going to and returning from the same.” On Sunday and on every Fast Day the student must attend public worship of the church of his choice. A student could not escape this requirement by registering his choice for a denomination that held no service in Waterville or the immediate vicinity. He must attend some church where the faculty regularly posted proctors. In the 1830's the choices were limited to the Baptist and Universalist Churches in Waterville, the Congregational Church in Winslow, and the occasional services held by other denominations in the public meetinghouse on the Waterville town common.

A serious offense was for a student to keep a cat or a dog “for his private use or pleasure,” and if he were caught in the possession of gunpowder, he was almost certain to be expelled. It is interesting to note that the rule against the use of tobacco was more severe than the liquor regulations. “No student shall, at any time, smoke a pipe or cigar in any rooms of the College, or in or near any of the out-buildings; nor shall he keep any ardent spirits, wines or intoxicating liquors, except when prescribed by his attending physician for medicine or permitted by the faculty.” Under what conditions the faculty permitted the use of wine or spirits, the old records sayeth not. But quite as repugnant to the authorities as indulgence in liquor or tobacco was playing “at dice, cards, billiards, backgammon, or any such game.”

The old doctrine that a man’s house is his castle never applied to student dormitories. The faculty saw to it that no such false notion took hold at Waterville College. They decreed: “Any member of the faculty shall have power at all times to order students to go to their own rooms, and every student must obey such order without delay; and any faculty member must be admitted into a student’s room promptly when he requests such admission.” Students were also forbidden to enter the rooms of other students without the latters' permission.

Young men in college in the 1830's had to be careful how they let off surplus energy. “No student shall make any bonfire, play off fireworks, nor go shooting or fishing, without permission of the President.” If a student left town without permission, he was severely punished. Even in the college town, there were certain things the student could not do with impunity. Conscious of those town and gown relations that have always troubled college communities, the faculty decreed: “Every student shall maintain a sacred respect for the property of persons living adjacent to the College. He shall not enter upon their ground, nor do any injury to their possessions, under pain of severe punishment, independently of subjecting himself to the penalty of the laws of the country.” There was another regulation designed to assure proper student behavior in the village. “No student shall eat or drink in any tavern in Waterville, except in company with his parent or guardian; nor shall he attend any theatrical performance or idle show in Waterville, nor be guilty of disorderly behavior or disturbance of any citizen.”

College students have long been adept at “snitching” food. As long ago as 1830, Waterville College published a rule that “no student shall enter any apartment appropriated to the Steward, without his permission, under any pretext whatever; and any attempt to do shall be deemed an offense worthy of reprehension.”

Punishments understandably varied with the gravity of the offense. Unless, because of immediate and humble penitence, an offender was pardoned outright, the lightest penalty was a public reprimand, made in chapel before his assembled fellow students. The offender had to stand at the front of the room, before the
pulpit, while the President delivered the reprimand. For absences from class or chapel, for violation of study hours, and for numerous other misdeeds, the penalty was a fine. Unexcused absence from any college exercise cost the student ten cents; absence from town cost him twenty-five cents a day. For more severe misconduct the punishment was suspension from college, ranging from a period of two weeks to a whole term's "rustication" in the home of some Baptist minister. The popular belief that expulsion was common in all colleges in the old days, even for offenses now regarded as not very serious, is not substantiated by the records, at least not by those of Waterville College. The faculty showed great patience before finally resorting to expulsion. Even when final severance was at first intended, the offender was often readmitted by a relenting vote. It is important to note, however, that no single college officer, not even the President, imposed or rescinded any of the penalties. Every case was decided by faculty vote. Those votes, however, were not of equal value. On every matter decided by the faculty, disciplinary or otherwise, the President was entitled to three votes, each professor to two votes, and each tutor to one.

The faculty records are replete with interesting cases of discipline. One such item reads: "Having convicted J. and C. of taking up a goose in the road between this town and Augusta, bringing it into the College and afterwards treating it with cruelty, it was voted that J., principal in the action, should be rusticated till next Commencement, and that C. should be suspended till the beginning of the next term. Voted also that J. and C. pay fifty cents each as a restitution to the owner of the goose."

Sometimes indeed a case did reach the point of expulsion. When that occurred, there was drawn up an indictment much like that presented to a grand jury in a criminal case. When one J. G. was expelled, in 1830, he was found guilty of eight separate offenses: "Uniting with another student in breaking down a classmate's door; removing a garret door of the south division of South College; making threats against members of the faculty; falsely representing to an officer that members of his class wished to have their lessons shortened; falsely representing that the class wished to be excused from recitation in order to make a walk between South and North Colleges; arranging letters in his blackboard diagrams so as to form obscene words; throwing a ball at an officer of the College with the acknowledged intent of hitting him; endeavoring to create amusement in the recitation room by distortion of his countenance, thereby interrupting the lesson; finally, for speaking a piece full of indecent and offensive language."

In 1831 the faculty voted, in lieu of outright expulsion, that the parents of L. and P. be requested to remove their sons from college. Mr. P. complied, but Deacon L. protested, whereupon it was voted that L. be required to spend six months with the Reverend Henry Nourse at Surry.

As has almost always been the case in well-conducted colleges, theft was an offense punished by immediate expulsion. In 1832, "C., having been convicted of stealing five dollars from the trunk of T., which crime he has himself acknowledged, it was voted that his connection with the College be dissolved and that he be required to leave town by nine o'clock on Friday morning next." Evidently the convicted student protested, for three days later the faculty assembled in special session on his case, and their secretary spread the following minute on the records: "C., having abused the kindness of the government in not announcing publicly his disgrace, by representing to his fellow students that his connection with the College was dissolved at his own request, which was made
on account of his dissatisfaction with the government of the College, it was voted that the students be informed in chapel that said C.'s connection with the College was dissolved, not at his request, but as punishment for a crime, and that he was suffered to depart privately, when his offense would have justified a much sterner course, and that such lenient action was taken out of consideration to his tender age and in hope of a speedy and thorough reformation."

The Commencement of 1835 was noteworthy because of two visitors from England. Rev. Francis Cox of London and Rev. James Hoby of Birmingham had come from the English Baptists to visit their brethren in the United States. One of their tasks was to make the rounds of the Baptist colleges. They arrived in Waterville just in time to participate in the commencement exercises and receive honorary degrees from the hands of President Babcock. Whether the valedictorian and the salutatorian of the Class of 1835 were disappointed or elated because of this visit may be in doubt, for a week before Commencement the faculty voted, "Having heard since Thursday that the English delegates, who had been invited but scarcely expected to be with us at Commencement and take part in the public exercises of that day, will both accept the invitation, the faculty have decided to excuse the salutatory and valedictory addresses from performance on that occasion."

Dr. Cox expressed his approval of what Americans were doing in the wilderness of Maine. He said, "They have not waited for a long revolution of time, the clearance of the country and the progress of refinement, before attempting a literary establishment, but have, with the zeal of Americans and the discernment of legislators, patriots and philosophers, commenced at once the refining process, the oral melioration of their noble state, in the provision of a storehouse of knowledge for their rising sons."

Although Rufus Babcock had heroically saved the College from collapse in the three short years of his presidency, the worst was still to come. And that worst had to be faced by the young man whom the Trustees elected as their third president, on August 2, 1836, Robert Everett Pattison.
selecting Babcock’s successor, the Trustees turned for the first time to a graduate of Amherst College, an action which they were to repeat with brilliant success more than a hundred years later when they chose Julius Seelye Bixler to head the new college on Mayflower Hill. In 1836 the Amherst man of their choice was Robert Everett Pattison, who like both of his predecessors was a Baptist minister. He was not unknown in Waterville, because in 1828 he had served under Chaplin as a tutor at the college. At the time of his election as president, however, he was pastor of Roger Williams’ historic church, the First Baptist Church of Providence, Rhode Island.

In spite of President Babcock’s success in raising $20,000, most of that money had been spent to erect Recitation Hall, to reduce the current debt and to meet, at least partially, the expected deficit set up in each annual budget during Babcock’s administration. New debts continued to pile upon old. It was all quite a “frog in the well” business. As fast as one dollar of debt was paid, two newly owed dollars appeared on the books. Budget estimates went badly astray. For the year 1833-34, the first of Babcock’s presidency, estimated income included $500 from subscriptions, $1540 from term bills, and $1000 from sale of lands. The actual returns were only $96 on subscriptions, $382 from term bills and not a penny from land sales. At the end of the year, faculty salaries were in arrears by $1950, and debts incurred during the year added nearly $10,000 to the total indebtedness.

One item of debt, when the books were closed in 1834, was $1285 in “outstanding orders.” That phrase needs explanation. No longer ago than when the present writer was a boy, in the early part of the present century, “town orders” were very much in circulation. The smaller Maine towns, instead of borrowing money in anticipation of taxes, would issue orders for all payments, even for salaries of the school teachers. Those orders would be redeemed by the town treasurer whenever he happened to have received enough tax money to pay them. Meanwhile they were accepted by merchants and others, but seldom at par. The discount was sometimes as much as ten per cent, if tax collections happened to be especially slow. Under those drastic conditions, a poor teacher receiving a town order for twenty dollars would let it go for eighteen dollars in cash, while the merchant who took it at the discount never knew how long he must hold it before the treasurer would honor the paper.

A century earlier, when cash was even scarcer and bank checks were almost unknown, other corporations besides the organized towns used this method of “orders.” The item so designated in the report of the Waterville College treasurer...
for 1834 means that for goods or services the Prudential Committee had issued orders for $1285. Probably few of those orders were still in the original hands. Some were held by merchants, others by speculating individuals, a few by the Waterville Bank. But they all represented a debt which the college corporation expected eventually to pay.

When presenting his report in 1834, Treasurer Cook made it clear that he had had quite enough of the job and insisted upon the Board's acceptance of his resignation. They thereupon elected a local man, James Stackpole, Jr., son of Waterville's pioneer merchant, who had recorded in his diary how several citizens turned out in 1819 to help Dr. Chaplin put up his house. The younger Stackpole continued in the post of college treasurer for seventeen years.

Cook, the outgoing treasurer, felt called upon to explain the unusual deficit of the year just ended. He pointed to two circumstances: the purchase of the house and lot of the departing professor, Avery Briggs, for $715, and an advance of $600 to that perennial white elephant, the Mechanics Shop. Nor was Cook at all optimistic about the future. He said, "It is apparent that the debts of the College must continue to increase and that its income during the ensuing year will fall considerably short, even of the salaries of the officers. Aid from the state to any considerable extent is rather to be hoped for than expected. Experience admonishes us that it cannot be relied upon."

A year later, in the summer of 1835, the amount owed to the faculty had risen to $2500, and the total debts, in spite of money collected by President Babcock, exceeded $14,000. Treasurer Stackpole had now been through a year of trying experience in his difficult job, and in his report he pointed out that the college was only a short jump ahead of the sheriff. He said, "The immediate payment of all debts except those covered by long term notes, is pressed by our creditors, and in some instances suits have been commenced. The greater part of the amount collected on term bills for the past year has been absorbed in paying demands which the students had for services in the workshop, the steward's house, and incidental work on the college premises."

The very year when Babcock resigned, 1836, the Treasurer revealed in his report some of the reasons why the financial situation was so bad. One source of trouble was the persistent failure to collect student bills. The Treasurer said that at least $2500 was due on those term bills, but he could only estimate the amount, because the records handed over to him by his predecessor did not show how much was due from earlier years. The superintendent of the workshop had done well to sell articles valued at more than $2000, but he had not done so well in letting the goods go on credit, with the result that four-fifths of the total sales, $1685, was still due. A third difficulty concerned the use of agents. The Treasurer said, "Much of the business of the college having been done through agents at a distance, whose reports have not been received, accuracy is impossible in many of these statements. If all the information were at hand, the result might vary one way or the other, by as much as a thousand dollars."

So disturbing was the situation into which President Pattison came, in 1836, that it would have taken the heroic measures of another Babcock to keep the head of that "frog in the well" above water. Instead, the state of the exchequer grew steadily worse. As Whittemore puts it, "Something more was necessary to the success of the College than strong leadership, brilliant teaching, and an enthusiastic student body... President Pattison saw clearly that the College could not go on unless radical measures should procure relief. Pattison and some of the professors therefore resigned. It seemed inevitable that instruction would
cease and the student body be scattered." At their annual meeting in August 1839, the Trustees accepted Pattison’s resignation.

It is well to note what was happening to the college enrollment during those years. Under Chaplin, the largest number in the college proper, as distinct from the theological course, had been 81 in the very last year of his administration, 1832-33. Under Babcock, a boom started. The fall of 1833 saw entrance of the largest freshman class up to that time, numbering 34 men. Freshmen and sophomores, in fact, accounted for two-thirds of all the students, for there were only seventeen seniors and fourteen juniors. The whole enrollment was 94.

In 1836, enrollment was increased by the introduction of a “partial course.” That was the designation of those students whom later generations were to call “specials”—students who wanted to study one or more subjects for a single year without any intention of working for a degree. Without those “partials,” there were 96 regular students, very evenly divided among the four classes. Sixteen men in “partial course” brought the total to 112. But there was one danger signal. Instead of 34 freshmen, as in the previous year, the new men numbered only 25.

By the summer of 1837, heavy attrition had taken severe toll. Of the 23 juniors in the previous year only thirteen showed up as seniors. “Partial” students had dropped from sixteen to four. In spite of slight increases among freshmen and sophomores, the total enrollment had decreased by 18 per cent to 91 students. When, at the end of the college year of 1838-39, the total fell to 75, President Pattison saw the situation as hopeless. In that year there were only nineteen seniors, sixteen juniors, sixteen sophomores, twenty-two freshmen, and two “partials.”

To make matters worse, all hope of continuing President Babcock’s theological school had been frustrated by the founding of a new Baptist theological seminary at Thomaston, Maine. Adding insult to injury, the promoters of the new school had persuaded Calvin Newton to leave his post as Professor of Rhetoric and the Hebrew Language at Waterville College and go to Thomaston as Professor of Hebrew and Theology. Most ironical of all was the abortive nature of the Thomaston enterprise. It lasted only three years, never enjoying adequate financial support. The Baptist historian, Burrage, wrote, “It had but one large-hearted friend, and he lost hope.” Whittemore, who at the time when he wrote the first Colby history was an executive secretary of the Maine Baptists, knew his denomination only too well. He wrote, “The Baptist problem was not to multiply ministers partially trained and with a smattering of theology. It was to secure men, thoroughly prepared for the intellectual, religious and social leadership in their communities—men who should be qualified to treat the vital questions that arose in a vital way, and in this work Waterville College was quietly performing a leading part. It was furnishing more and better ministers than any distinctly theological school, either at Waterville or at Thomaston could have done.”

Into that crisis of mounting debt, decreasing enrollment and dubious support there came to the rescue, not a new president, not a leading trustee, but a humble member of the college faculty. He was George Washington Keely, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, who persuaded his two remaining colleagues to stay with him on the sinking ship, rather than abandon the wreck, as had President Pattison and Professor Newton. One of those men was probably not difficult to persuade, because Samuel Francis Smith, already famous as the author of “America,” was principally pastor of the Waterville Baptist
Church and only secondarily a part-time professor of Modern Languages at Waterville College. But young Justin Loomis, the professor of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy was taking a big risk in electing to stay on with Keely. If he were going to get a more secure teaching post, now was the time to seek it. But the heroic decision was made by George Keely himself. He had been offered a position in another college at nearly double his Waterville salary. He knew intimately the sad state of the college finances and personally felt the sting, because the college owed him more than a year's salary.

A hundred years later Franklin W. Johnson, the "Father of Mayflower Hill," was to call the moving of the College a "venture of faith." It was indeed such a venture, but not the first in the history of the College. When George Washington Keely, in 1839, persuaded the Trustees not to close the college doors, and when he assumed almost single-handed the responsibility for keeping the sheriff off the threshold, he too was embarking upon a tremendous venture of faith.

Keely's bold plan was to raise, right in Waterville, enough money to keep the College going until a wider financial campaign could bring permanent results. Officially the Trustees took no action at all until a year after Pattison's resignation, and then their action was merely to ask Professor Keely to preside at the 1840 commencement. It is to their credit that they did not close the College. Tacitly at least, they let Keely go ahead with his seemingly fantastic plan. This does not mean that individual trustees were inactive, although as a corporate body they had little hope of survival. Since the day when he and Nathaniel Gilman had taken personal responsibility for payment of the local subscriptions to bring the college to Waterville, Timothy Boutelle had been a constant and faithful contributor and a hard worker on the Prudential Committee. In the 1839 emergency Boutelle again showed his devotion to the College by at once pledging a thousand dollars toward Keely's goal of a fund of $10,000 from Waterville subscribers. Nathaniel Gilman, though now spending more time in New York, still held residence in Waterville. His subscription again matched Boutelle's. James Stackpole, Jr., the college treasurer, helped in the solicitation. But, since Keely's plan was a local matter, the other trustees stood aside, waiting to see what would happen. Nevertheless they were ready to help when the proper time should come—those prominent citizens like William King and Nathan Weston, Japheth Washburn and Adam Wilson, Eleazer Coburn and Governor Edward Kent.

Ten thousand dollars was a lot of money to raise in Waterville in 1839, when the population of the town was only 2900. That meant an average of four and a half dollars for every man, woman and child in the community. To the amazement of everyone, perhaps even of himself, this mathematician and natural philosopher, this man of books and the ivory tower, succeeded. The ten thousand dollars fund was raised, but as was so often to be the case with later subscriptions, there was a string attached. The people of Waterville pledged twenty thousand dollars on condition that the College raise a total of fifty thousand. We may be sure that the provision was all a part of Keely's plan. He was wise enough to see that, while a locally raised fund could be made a stimulus for a wider campaign, making that fund depend upon the success of a broader effort might better assure the success of both; and only by a general campaign could the College secure any permanent endowment.

When the Trustees convened in annual session on August 11, 1840, they did not elect a new president, and a minute in the old records tells us why. "Resolved, that it is not expedient to elect a President of the College at this
meeting, because until the college is relieved from the pecuniary embarrassments
and its finances are in the prosperous condition which we think they will attain
in a few months, we cannot offer those conclusive and satisfactory assurances
of permanent support which we desire to present to candidates suitably qualified
for the responsible position. We consider it important to place the officers of
the College on a ground of reasonable certainty in respect to prompt payment of
their balances and continuance of the existence of the College.”

That last sentence showed that the Trustees were a bit ashamed because
so much back salary was owed to Keely and Loomis and Smith, as well as a
substantial amount to the departed Pattison. What the record does not state is
the astounding devotion and sacrifice of those three professors who remained
at the College, for every one of them pledged half a year’s salary to Keely’s new
fund.

Seven months earlier, at a special meeting held in January, 1840, the Trus­
tees, confident that the energetic Professor meant business, approved a general
financial campaign, by the following vote: “Whereas the circumstances of Wa­
terville College are such that pecuniary aid is imperatively demanded, and whereas
the citizens of Waterville have with great liberality subscribed more than $10,000
on condition that $50,000 be secured by December 31, 1840, it is therefore
voted that the Prudential Committee be requested to take measures to raise the
sum of $50,000 by the time aforesaid and that an agent be employed for that pur­
pose.”

At their August meeting the Board made definite plans for the use of the
eagerly sought fifty thousand dollars. First, the debts were to be paid, including
back salaries due to the faculty. A substantial sum must go to increase the
library and the philosophical apparatus. Regrettably the Board did not vote
to set aside, as an income-producing fund, any specified portion of the money,
but simply voted that the Prudential Committee should loan on mortgage of
real estate “such portion of the fund as may from time to time be in the treasury.”

Stephen Stark was appointed fund agent, and at the annual meeting in
1841 he was able to report substantial success. He and his associate agent, Charles
Drinkwater, had collected a total of $36,672. Stark had sought subscriptions in
thirty Maine towns from Berwick to Ellsworth, while Drinkwater had thoroughly
combed the area of Central Maine. Stark concluded his report with a cautious
statement: “From what has been done you will be able to judge the prospect of
success. I have been almost afraid to say that the prospect is encouraging lest
it should diminish the zeal of some who would think the crisis is over. But it is
plain that enlightened friends will see that the work is not done until it is truly
finished.”

To secure the remaining $14,000, the professors themselves took to the
field during the long winter vacation of 1842. Their strenuous efforts were finally
successful. Subscriptions totaling more than $52,000 were at last secured. From
the financial records it is difficult to tell how much of the subscribed amount
was finally paid, because during the years of payment new donations were mingled
indiscrimately with the subscription receipts. We may be sure, however, that
the money received was substantial, for the campaign did save the college from
any similar crisis until the trying days of the Civil War.

The success was all the more remarkable in light of conditions of the times.
The whole country was in the depth of depression. The closing of the Bank of
the United States by the Jackson administration, the scarcity of coined money,
the sharp depreciation of paper currency, the low price of farm products when
the farmer could sell them at all, made the period from 1839 to 1842 a very poor
time to raise money for any philanthropic project. Besides the national depres-
sion, another blow had struck the economy of Maine—the extra taxation neces-
sary to send the state militia to the northeast boundary in the fiasco known as
the Aroostook War. That war, called derisively “Governor Fairfield's Farce,”
came in the very year of President Pattison's resignation.

The achievement of Professor Keely in saving Waterville College from an
ignominious end was indeed remarkable. It is time for us now to take a closer
look at the man himself. George Washington Keely had come to the college
as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and he was the only mem-
ber of the faculty who retained his title unchanged for more than a quarter of
a century. At Waterville, as in most other colleges of the period, it seems to
have been almost a game to change professorial titles every few years.

Born in England in 1803, Keely had come to the United States in 1818
and had graduated valedictorian of his class at Brown in 1824. His father,
though an Englishman, was a great admirer of the American Revolutionary gen-
eral, for whom he named his son George Washington Keely.

Professor Keely at once became popular with the students, and when the
Fourth of July crisis arose in 1833, he sought to mediate the difficulty between
President Chaplin and the student body, especially the aggrieved members of
the United Brethren. He stood loyally by the President right up to the day of
the latter's resignation. Both he and Professor Newton signed the faculty's
unanimous statement supporting the President's explanatory address in chapel,
following the students' protests at his earlier remarks. Keely felt strongly, how­
ever, that Chaplin should make some apology for the epithets he had used on
the earlier occasion and especially his vitriolic comments about those pious young
men who made up the society of the United Brethren. Keely therefore refused
to present his own resignation along with President Chaplin's and those of the
President's son and son-in-law, and he persuaded Professor Newton to remain
at the College with him.

So thoroughly was Keely in command of the situation that the Trustees had
appointed him to preside and confer diplomas at the commencement exercises
in 1833, when Chaplin refused even to march in the procession. There is evi­
dence that he could have received unanimous election as Chaplin's successor, but
he would not accept the position. He preferred to be simply a teacher and a loyal
supporter of whatever man the Trustees should select to preside over the College.

Although primarily a mathematician, George Keely was interested in all
phases of the broad subject then known as natural philosophy, which included
what later became the distinctive science of physics. In a letter written in 1861
to a relative who had just been appointed to the University of New Brunswick,4
Keely mentions the common interest in flowers he had enjoyed with the corre­
spondent's father. He tells of a visit he had just been paid by the Scotch geolo­
gist, Alexander Richardson, who had heard of Keely through the eminent paleon­
tologist, Sir William Logan. Richardson asked Keely to help him collect fos­
sils in the metamorphic rocks of Central Maine. Keely wrote, “If you go into
practical geology, I could make you known to Sir William, though I suppose your
friends in Cambridge would have more influence than I.” His interest in another
science was shown by his inquiry in the same letter, “If it is not too much trouble,
I should be glad to learn of you or some of your chemical friends, what publi­
cation contains Liebig’s method of electric plating as applied to glass. Suppose,
Know all Men by these Presents, That I

ROBERT HALLOWELL GARDINER, of Gardiner, in the County of Kennebec, Esquire, in
Consideration of Seventeen hundred & Ninety Seven
Dollars, Eighty Cents, paid by the President of Corporation of the
Maine Literary & Theological Institution

the Receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, do hereby give, grant, sell and convey unto
the said President of Corporation their successors and assigns, a certain tract of land, situate in
Walden wooded County being
Easterly by Kennebec River, Westerly by the Mile & a half
South by Lot No. 18, Northernly by Lot No. 16, Southerly by Lot
No. 9. Containing about one hundred & Twenty
acres more or less, bounded on an acre - excepting any
roads through the same, being part of fifteen mile

as delineated upon the Plan

reference thereto being

had for a more particular description.

To Have and to Hold the afore-granted Premises to the said President of Corporation
and assigns, to their successors and assigns, forever.

And I do covenant with the said President of Corporation that I will

and Assigns, That the afore-granted Premises are free of all Incumbrances
by me made: That I have good Right to sell and convey the same to the said

President of Corporation

And that I will warrant and defend the same Premises to the said President of Corporation
and assigns, forever, against the lawful Claims

and Demands of all Persons. Excepting however, from my said covenants of warranty,
any claim, or title, commencing by disaffirm, or by virtue of a possession and improve-
ment, or from sales for non-payment of taxes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I the said ROBERT HALLOWELL GARDINER, and I

EMMA JANE, wife of the said ROBERT, in token of my relinquishment of my Right of Dower
in the Premises, have hereunto set our Hands and Seals, this Thirtieth Day of

July in the Year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and


Signed, Sealed and delivered, in presence of us,

James R. Potter

(Seal)

(Seal)

Kennebec, the 1st August 1843

Then the above-named

ROBERT HALLOWELL GARDINER acknowledged the above Instrument to be his
free Act and Deed—before me,

Justice of Peace.
The sloop *Hero*

Reputed portrait of Jeremiah Chaplin

Campus in 1830s
Paul Revere Bell

Missionary Tablet

Colby Flag
Abner Coburn  George D. B. Pepper

James T. Champlin  Gardner Colby
Plaque on Lovejoy Building

Alton riot and (inset) portrait of Lovejoy

Hearthstone from the Lovejoy birthplace at Albion, Maine
A PROFESSOR TO THE RESCUE

for instance, I wish to coat a piece of plain glass with silver. Perhaps you could give me his process."

At their meeting in January, 1840, the Trustees named Keely as a member of the three-man Prudential Committee. The following August he was invited to attend the annual meeting of the Board. Still he was not named Acting President; he was simply asked to preside at commencement. But at the following meeting a vote was passed that "Professor Keely be requested to perform the duties of President of the College until a President be elected." That vote made him virtually Acting President.

It was Professor Keely who took the lead in seeking a new president, just as he led in raising funds. This is shown, for instance, by a minute in the records for August 10, 1841: "Voted that Professor Keely be requested to give information to the Board concerning the correspondence which had been had by him with reference to a candidate for the presidency of the College."

In the previous winter, Keely had gone to Boston to interview prospective candidates for the presidency and for the vacant professorship of languages. While there he received a letter which taxed both his judgment and his incomparable tact. The letter came from Edwin Noyes, who had already served as tutor at Waterville College from 1837 to 1839. After expressing the hope that Keely was progressing well in his search for a president, Noyes continued: "As to the professor of languages, I am sorry you had not a further talk with Mr. Boutelle, as nothing but my relation with him prevents my accepting the office with great pleasure. Not wishing to frustrate any plans you may now have for filling the office, I am almost convinced I shall accept."

In short Noyes was saying, "Don't hurry about the professorship. Wait for me, and I'll probably take it." Why did that suggestion present any problem to Professor Keely? It was because he already had made overtures to another man, and with that rare insight with which he was gifted, Keely felt that James Tift Champlin was the person to fill the professorship of languages. Keely saw in Champlin a man who would bring strength and prestige to the faculty. But Noyes must be handled tactfully. In the situation was an involved family relationship. Noyes had married the daughter of Timothy Boutelle, and Boutelle's son, Dr. Nathaniel Boutelle, had married the daughter of George W. Keely. Many persons would be offended if Keely now snubbed Noyes. It is a tribute to his statesmanship that he persuaded Noyes to step aside, take an interest in the railroads that were just entering Maine, and caused Noyes himself to become an ardent supporter of Professor Champlin.

That Keely was regarded as an expert in mathematics is shown by a letter which he received as early as 1832 from Frederick Emerson of Boston. Emerson wrote:

I take the liberty to forward, with this letter, a copy of the North American Arithmetic. Having devoted an amount of labor to this work seldom bestowed upon an equal number of pages, I am desirous that its reputation should be determined by those on whom the public can rely. It is with this view that I request your examination, and if you have no objection to granting a short note expressive of your opinion of the books, you will confer a favor by directing the same either to the publishers or to the author by mail.

It was 1832 also that Keely received a letter from Amos Eaton, author of popular texts in the sciences. Eaton assured Keely that his Geology was already
in print, and that both his Botany and his Chemistry would be ready in March. Eaton boasted that no other book on chemistry described experiments embracing every known principle, yet all capable of being performed at an expense under fifty dollars for both apparatus and chemicals.

Keely had apparently asked Eaton about books that should be in the college library, for Eaton recommended Bigelow's Florenda Bostonensis and Darlington's Westchester County Botany as the best local floras in America. He said Nuttall's Genera of North America was a good book, but it criticized only questionable species. He said, "If you want one of the best general treatises in the world for twenty-four dollars, get the London Encyclopedia of Plants, an octavo volume of 1159 pages, published in 1829."

In geology Eaton recommended Cuvier's Theory of the Earth; in chemistry he called Silliman's the best work on the subject, but he regarded Beck's Manual of Chemistry as "a good reading book of the small kind." It was the Frenchman, Cuvier, the man whose writings were greatly to influence Darwin a quarter of a century later, that Eaton recommended in zoology. "By all means get Cuvier's Animal Kingdom," he advised Keely.

In the general field of natural philosophy Eaton preferred Olmstead. Of Farrar's well-known book he wrote, "Farrar is good after the first volume, which is a bad botch." Finally he got in a plug for another book of his own. "You will like Eaton's Philosophical Experiments, made to accompany all reading books in Philosophy as the Chemical Instructor accompanies the books on chemistry. It will be ready also in March." Eaton told the Waterville professor that all the books he had listed, including the expensive London Encyclopedia of Plants, could be purchased for a total of seventy dollars.

When Professor Keely died in 1878, the Baptist journal The Watchman said of him: "He engaged early in original research, and his articles in English and American scientific journals gained for him high reputation among scientific men. In 1874 he was invited by the heads of the British Colonial Surveys to make a series of magnetic observations in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the results of which were published in England. The remarkable range of his scholarship always kept abreast of the progress of learning, yet he was one of the most modest of men, free from the least parade of erudition; a despiser of shams, he won respected ascendancy over the minds of successive college generations, who respected his learning and loved his human personality."

Unbelievably broad were the interests and remarkably keen were the abilities of one of the most unusual men ever connected with the old college on the Kennebec. As one looks back over the years, one can only conclude that Colby College owes much to the Englishman with the Irish surname, whose Lancashire father sent him out into the world with the name of the American patriot, George Washington.
CHAPTER XI

Years Of Struggle

George Keely's accomplishments had indeed been heroic, but he could do no more than barely keep the College open. The next ten years, even before the Civil War brought a new crisis, were years of constant struggle. The College had no endowment of any consequence, grants from the state had ceased, a loosely administered plan of scholarship aid made it impossible to depend upon regular tuition fees, and no one could find a way to meet, even partially, the annual deficits. There are few harder financial tasks than soliciting money "to bury dead horses," and that is what Waterville College was constantly doing until the genius of James T. Champlin changed the situation in the 1860's. Throughout the fifth decade of the last century, members of the faculty became doorstep beggars in behalf of the College. Several of them spent every winter vacation in a constant effort to keep the wolf from the college door.

The Trustees had depended heavily on Professor Keely to guide them in their choice of a president; but in spite of their sending him to Boston to talk with candidates and their consideration of his report to the Board, when they met in annual session on August 10, 1841, it was the former president, Rufus Babcock, who pressed for his favorite candidate. Eliphaz Fay, principal of Duchess Academy at Poughkeepsie, New York, had been a classmate of Babcock's at Brown. Babcock was sure that Fay was just the man to continue the work of rebuilding which Keely and his faculty colleagues had so well started. The Board agreed, and Eliphaz Fay became the fourth president of Waterville College.

It was not a happy choice. Fay stayed in the presidency only two years. When he arrived, enrollment stood at 75. When he left, it had dropped to 60. Whittemore says only that Fay "was not the man for such an exigency." Hall tells us, "There is, unhappily, some ground for believing that the faculty and President Fay did not work harmoniously." On the other hand, Fay seems to have been popular with the students, who, on the occasion of his resignation in 1843, presented a petition urging his retention as their president. In light of what happened ten years later, when another president resigned, it is possible that the thorn in President Fay's flesh was none other than the same George Washington Keely who had kept the college open. Fay definitely was not Keely's choice. While the Trustees' record is cryptic, it is suggestive. "After statements by Professor Keely, Dr. Babcock made a communication respecting Eliphaz Fay, naming him as a candidate and presenting several letters of recommendation."

Whatever happened, it was to Fay's credit that he soon realized he was not the man for the task; and we can be sure that George Keely was too big a man
to let the slighting of his recommendations serve as an obstacle to the new president. Babcock, who ought to have known what the Waterville presidency called for, was the man most to blame for letting an undergraduate friendship sway his judgment.

What had been happening with respect to the fund of $50,000 which the Trustees had voted to solicit, just before Pattison resigned in 1839, reveals how bad the financial situation had become when Fay also resigned four years later. The Prudential Committee reported that it should be obvious to all persons connected with the College that the term bill collections could not possibly meet the expenses of operation; that unless funds continued to be raised, the college would certainly have to close, as it had come so near doing in 1839.

A statement made in that 1843 report seems to us, more than a century later, peculiarly naive, but it must have expressed exactly what the college leaders believed to be the true situation. The report said, “It must have been the intention of all who subscribed that, in so far as the term bills fell short of producing a sum sufficient to meet the salaries and general expenses, the deficit should be supplied from the subscription fund.” The report admitted that every cent that had been collected on the subscriptions up to the end of June, 1843, had been used to pay expenses. The way the committee put it was, “The College owes to the fund $13,778.”

So low was the college treasury that, unlike his two immediate predecessors, Fay was not reimbursed for the expense of his moving to Waterville. Fay pressed his claim for that expense, and after he had been in the presidency for more than a year, the Trustees passed the following vote:

Considering that intimations to that effect had been made to Mr. Fay, and with the understanding that the action of the Board in this case should not be made a precedent for adjusting similar business in future, it was voted to allow the account of President Fay’s expenses occasioned by his removal from the interior of New York to this place, amounting to $227.65.

It was in Fay’s administration that long smoldering discontent about the assignment of student parts at commencement came to a head. The graduating classes were still small enough for every member of the class to have a speaking part in the exercises, and from the time of Boardman and Tripp in 1822 those parts had been assigned according to the student’s rank in his recitations and examinations over his entire college course. The students first petitioned the faculty for a change, but getting no satisfaction they presented their plea directly to the Trustees. Their request was not for the abolition of assignment by rank, but a more modest proposal that “no student shall be alone distinguished for his part, but that the parts shall all belong either to the first, second or third grade, and the students thus be ranked as belonging to one of those grades in their class.” The petition, signed by fifty of the seventy-six students then in college, was referred to a committee under the chairmanship of Judge Weston of Augusta. They declared it was a matter for the faculty, not the Trustees to decide. The committee did, however, express their informal approval of the students’ request, for they proposed that it be referred to the faculty with recommendation of approval.

The faculty granted the petition by passing the following vote: “If the average standing of any student for the whole course is not below 8, he shall be
in the first grade, if it be below 8 but not below 6½, he shall be in the second grade; if it be below 6½, but not below 5, in the third grade; if below 5, but not below 3, in the fourth grade.” The record does not tell us what happened to a student whose average was below 3. That was possible because, the marks from which the average was computed ranged from 0 to 10.

There were complications in the marking system that called for faculty attention. One was how to integrate into the average the marks for declamations and compositions. There was at that time no such course as English, and written compositions were not a part of any regularly studied subject, but were weekly demands upon certain classes. This is how the faculty solved the problem: “At the end of each term the average standing of each student in declamation and composition shall be added to the six recorded markings for the daily recitations, and one-seventh of the whole shall be his standing for the term.” When that arrangement proved unsatisfactory, the faculty passed a vote that is as difficult for us to interpret a century later as is the “officialese” of a government document. They voted that “the average of all daily recitations be taken in the usual way, and also the average in declamation and composition. One-sixth of the second average shall be added to or subtracted from the first average, according as it is greater or less than the second. The result shall be the standing for the term.”

Sometimes cases of individual standing were laid before the faculty. In December, 1842, they voted “to raise two markings of Mr. Smith by one unit.” The favored student was Samuel K. Smith of the Class of 1845, who was later to serve the college for forty-two years as Professor of Rhetoric, and whose son and two grandsons would also be distinguished Colby graduates.

Occasionally the faculty admitted delinquency on its part. In May, 1843, they voted to excuse one Jones from examination in trigonometry because the faculty had for a full term neglected to call upon him for it.

At this time a question arose concerning faculty tenure. Was a professor’s election meant to be annual, permanent on good behavior, or at the pleasure of the Board? Hitherto the Trustees had established no policy concerning the appointment of president or professor. Their only rule was that tutors were subject to annual appointment. After the subject had been investigated by a committee under the eminent attorney, George Evans of Portland, the Board laid down the following policy:

Any person hereafter elected President of the College or professor in any department of instruction shall hold his office during the pleasure of the Trustees, subject to be removed by a vote of a majority of the members present at any regular meeting, a quorum being present; such notice to be given to the officer to be removed, and such proceedings held thereon, as the Trustees shall deem just and proper. In every case of such removal, the duties of the office shall forthwith cease, but the removed officer shall be allowed and entitled to receive his salary for the period of three months beyond the time of his removal. Any person elected president or professor may resign his office at any time by giving notice three months prior to the time when the resignation is to take effect.

Although President Pattison had at one time received a salary of $1200, the Trustees guarded against any such inflationary salary for President Fay. They paid him only $1000, and at the same time fixed salaries for all other
faculty members. Professor Keely, awarded an extra $200 for unusual services, received thereby a total equal to the President's. Keely's loyal colleague, Justin Loomis, got $800. For his part-time teaching, the Baptist pastor, Samuel F. Smith, received $275. As tutor in Greek, Edwin Noyes was paid $480, while Calvin Park, another tutor, was made a professor at $600.

In Fay's administration, for the first time, some severity was shown toward students delinquent on their college bills. "Voted, that those young gentlemen of the graduating class who shall discharge all their college bills and produce a Treasurer's receipt therefor shall be entitled to their degrees, and no degree shall be conferred unless this requirement is complied with." The Board further decreed that any student who owed money to the steward of the college commons for meals should not receive his degree.

Withholding the diploma was a potent weapon to insure payment from seniors, but what could be done about underclassmen who owed college bills? The Treasurer was instructed, when three months had elapsed and repeated requests for payment had been ignored, to demand payment from the person who had given surety for the student. In President Chaplin's time, some sort of bond had been required, but the requirement had been feebly enforced and in no instance had the surety been forced to pay. The Trustees were now determined that such laxity should cease, and they voted, "It shall be the duty of the President to furnish each student, on his examination for admission, with a blank bond for the security of his term bills, which the President shall require each student to return to him, executed and signed by a sufficient surety at the commencement of the term when the student is first enrolled. Failing to do so, the student shall not be admitted to recitation." Treasurer Stackpole rigidly enforced the new order, and it is not recorded that he alienated any friends of the college by that straightforward and commendable policy.

Although the years of struggle were not ended, the situation did become somewhat easier under President Fay's successor. David N. Sheldon, elected President of Waterville College in 1843, had graduated from Williams in 1830 and had then spent four years in France in charge of a Protestant mission. His thorough knowledge of French and German, besides the fact that he had studied with outstanding European philosophers, made his teaching of moral and intellectual philosophy, a subject conventionally assigned to the President, outstanding and memorable. Furthermore, Sheldon was surrounded at Waterville by a group of distinguished scholars, most of whom became widely known for scholarly writing or won fame as teachers in large universities. George Keely was unsurpassed as a teacher of mathematics and an insatiable inquirer into the realms of nature. James T. Champlin, Professor of Greek and Latin, afterwards one of the greatest of Colby presidents, had already written classical texts which would be used in American colleges for several generations. Justin R. Loomis, Professor of Chemistry and Natural History, not only proved that no outside pathologist was needed to examine the stomach of the victim in Waterville's first murder in 1847, but he went out from Waterville to serve for thirty years as the president of the University of Lewisburg (now Bucknell University). Martin B. Anderson, the Professor of Rhetoric, became the first president of the University of Rochester.

The Trustees turned to Sheldon in 1843 because they knew him well and he was close at hand. They had not done well in turning to what they called "interior New York" for a president. So now they took a long look at the man who
had been in Waterville just a year as pastor of the Baptist Church. They liked what they saw, and unanimously elected David Sheldon their new president. Sheldon knew all of the faculty intimately, for every one of them was associated with his church. He also knew many of the students, and he was one of the first presidents to treat them informally and without the austere aloofness usually expected of a college officer at that time. Hence he became extremely popular.

By persistent solicitation of funds during the 1840's, the financial situation was eased, but the college enrollment continued to be far from satisfactory. Under the spirit of enthusiasm at first engendered by the new president, numbers did reach a maximum of 92 in 1845-46, but by 1848 they had dropped to 75, and in 1850 to 72. The reason for the decline is to be found chiefly in a bitter dissen­sion, both within the faculty and in the Baptist constituency, concerning President Sheldon's theological views.

As early as 1844, when he had been president little more than a year, Sheldon preached a sermon before the Maine Baptist Convention at China which aroused discussion and dissent. Among the most bitter critics was Sheldon's successor in the Waterville Church, Rev. Nathan Wood. He and Sheldon waged theological war in the columns of Maine's official Baptist organ, Zion's Advocate. Sheldon later defended his liberal position in a volume entitled Sin and Redemption, whereupon the Baptist Convention voted that "the main doctrines of a work entitled Sin and Redemption, recently published by a member of this body, are in the views of this Convention essentially unscriptural and fatally erroneous."

Professor Keely was only one of the faculty members who sided with Pastor Wood and against President Sheldon, but his concern, as always, was the welfare of the College. He felt strongly that, if Sheldon was going to hold theological views which responsible Baptists in state convention considered heretical, he couldn't possibly continue to do the College any good. Prospective givers would be alienated, prospective students would be advised to go elsewhere, and constant controversy would disrupt the college for both students and faculty. When Keely saw that Sheldon had no intention of leaving, he presented his own resignation to the Trustees in 1852 and despite their urgent protests he insisted upon its acceptance. The College had already lost Professor Anderson, partly because of his feeling that Sheldon was stirring up disharmony. The added resignation of the beloved, respected and profoundly loyal Keely was just too much. In the following year Sheldon himself resigned.

Sheldon's resignation letter, in the sharp, clear handwriting of that dissident Baptist, leaves no doubt as to the cause of his action. It was to Nathan Wood, as secretary of the Trustees, that Sheldon addressed his letter. Though he made no mention of his long controversy with this successor of his in the Waterville Baptist pulpit, he may have felt some sense of defeat, for the result was just what Wood and his supporters had sought—to get this "heretic" out of the college presidency. Sheldon wrote:

Waterville College, August 11, 1852

Rev. N. M. Wood, Secretary
of the Trustees of Waterville College

Dear Sir;

In view of the want of harmony and cooperation among the faculty of the College, I herewith resign the office of President, which I have held in the College; the resignation to take effect within either three or six
months from date, at the option of the Trustees, though preferring myself the latter date.

I am respectfully yours,
D N Sheldon

When Sheldon left, he presented the Trustees with an unusual financial claim. He pointed out that, when he had arrived in Waterville to take over the presidency in 1846, his predecessor Eliphaz Fay was still occupying the president's house which Chaplin had erected in 1819, while Sheldon had been obliged to rent a house in the village. In view of that fact, he asked for compensation equal to a quarter of a year's rent of the president's house at whatever rental the Trustees thought was just. He asked also to retain personal possession of a Bible and a chair that had been placed in the college chapel. He said, "Last year there were placed in the chapel a large, elegant Bible, with my name written in it, and a mahogany armed chair. An accompanying note expressed the desire that I should accept them as an expression of respect from the students. I have every reason to believe that they were intended as a present to me personally. As I now leave the College, I should like to take them with me." The obliging Trustees granted both of these requests.

Mrs. Minnie Philbrick, historian of the First Baptist Church of Waterville, states: "After he left the presidency of the College, Dr. Sheldon went to Bath as pastor of the Baptist church there. It was while he was there that he changed his views and became a Unitarian." It is questionable whether Sheldon changed his theological views after he went to Bath. Those views seem to have departed radically from Baptist doctrine at least eight years earlier, though it is true that he did not become a member of a Unitarian organization until 1856, when he became pastor of the Unitarian Church at Bath. In 1863, Waterville Unitarians made a grand coup by persuading Sheldon to become the first pastor of their new church in the town where he had been both Baptist pastor and college president.

Dr. Sheldon's return occurred at a time several years beyond the scope of the present chapter. It came during the Baptist pastorate of another man who would one day be president of the College, George Dana Boardman Pepper, and for him the experience proved extremely trying. To the new church started by Sheldon the Baptists lost many prominent members, including Ephraim Maxham, editor of the Waterville Mail. Only the remarkable Christian spirit of the Lincoln-esque Dr. Pepper prevented an open and bitter clash. Instead of engaging in extended warfare, the two pastors became such friends that, when the Baptist church was closed for extensive repairs, that society accepted the invitation of the Unitarians to hold services in the Unitarian meetinghouse.

It should not be assumed that the ten years of the Sheldon administration were filled only with theological controversy and were wholly unproductive for Waterville College. Those ten years were by no means an educational vacuum. They saw the coming of the Greek letter fraternities in the organization of chapters of Delta Kappa Epsilon and Zeta Psi. They saw the fruitful service of one of the most distinguished faculties the college has ever had. They saw marked growth in both the size and the influence of the college library under Professor Champlin. They saw diplomas presented to men who would gain fame in diverse vocations: Josiah Drummond, leader of the Maine bar and a nationally known Mason; Stephen Longfellow Bowler, named for the poet's father and long the successful financial agent of the Bangor Theological Seminary; Charles E. Ham-
lin, who was to become Colby’s great teacher of Natural History and Curator of Palaeontology at Harvard; Mark Dunnell, member of Congress from Minnesota; Edward C. Mitchell, President of the Baptist Theological School in Paris, France; and the one Colby graduate who was forced into Confederate service in the Civil War, Lorenzo A. Smith.

Eleazer Coburn of Skowhegan, who had been a trustee since 1836, died in 1845, and in his place was chosen Abner Coburn, a man who would later make significant gifts to the College and for whose family the old Waterville Academy would be renamed Coburn Classical Institute.

Throughout the administration of Presidents Fay and Sheldon the proposed $50,000 fund was a center of attention. So determined were the Trustees to collect payment of subscriptions that in several instances they brought suit against persons who refused to pay. Often those refusals were occasioned by dissent from President Sheldon’s religious views. At the annual meeting in 1845, Timothy Boutelle served as chairman of a committee which recommended drastic action concerning the “refusal of certain subscribers to pay their subscriptions.” In the following year the Board’s attention was directed toward delinquent subscribers in Waterville, concerning whom it was voted that “the Treasurer, after giving by letter reasonable notice to subscribers in Waterville, who are able to pay but have not done so, that payment must be forthwith paid or secured, and still not receiving payment, shall take legal measures to enforce collection.”

In 1846 Martin B. Anderson, the young professor who would one day become President of the University of Rochester, felt that he merited an increase in salary, and with President Sheldon’s approval laid his request before the Trustees. Their action shows that, while there was no established policy, the Board was just as attentive to precedent as are most corporate bodies. A special committee to which the matter was referred reported that, in their opinion, it had been the “prevailing usage of the College” to raise the salary of a professor after satisfactory service of two years from $600 to $700. Because Anderson had been a professor since 1843, and a tutor for two preceding years, the committee felt it was only just that his next year’s salary be $700. But again, this decision had one of those almost inevitable strings attached to it. Anderson, having a teaching schedule far more burdensome than his colleagues, had asked for an assistant and had recommended his own student, Samuel K. Smith of the Class of 1845. The Board agreed to appoint Smith a tutor in the college, provided Anderson would pay Smith’s salary out of his own $700.

In 1847 President Sheldon for some reason felt called upon to report to the Trustees on all disciplinary actions taken by the faculty during the year. In the fall term three sophomores showed up intoxicated at the Senior Exhibition, “for which offense they were reprimanded.” In June a Masonic celebration had been held at Augusta, which seemed to seventeen students sufficient excuse to leave town without permission. Called up before the faculty, seven of the delinquents “declared they would not again leave town without permission,” whereupon they were told that “no further consequences would follow.” Seven others refused to make such a promise and were placed on probation. There seemed some doubt as to the penitence or the future intentions of the remaining three, but in the end they were “merely reprimanded.” The President explained sadly that it had later become necessary to expel one of these three.

Ever since the crisis that had caused the resignation of President Chaplin in 1833, the Fourth of July had been almost an annual occasion for student outbreak. Here was Sheldon’s report for the Fourth in 1847:
On the morning of the Fourth of July a large proportion of the stu-
dents in the three lower classes absented themselves from the usual
recitations. When the recitations were proceeding, a company of nearly
twenty students marched backward and forward from North to South
College, directly in front of the recitation rooms, ringing bells, blow-
ing horns and other instruments in a way to disturb greatly the order
of the College. The disturbers also followed to their rooms those stu-
dents who had been present at recitation and repeated the noises in
the entries before their doors. The disturbances were continued in
full view of several members of the Faculty and partly in their presence.
The Faculty felt called upon to put a stop to these vicious proceedings,
and hence expelled two of the most prominent offenders. This measure
had the anticipated effect of restoring order in the College. The other
students who were known to be engaged in the affair were subsequently
called before the Faculty and told that they could free themselves from
any further consequences of their conduct by saying that they did wrong
in absenting themselves from recitations, and by declaring that they
would not again in similar circumstances absent themselves nor be en-
gaged in similar disturbances.

In such manner did Waterville College observe the birthday of the Declara-
tion of Independence in 1847. Several years would still elapse before the faculty
would decide that appropriate observance called for a holiday from the usual
classes.

Parents of students who had been suspended or expelled complained to the
Trustees about the “undue severity” of the Sheldon administration. In 1848 the
Board appointed a committee to investigate, and as a result Sheldon and the
faculty were unanimously vindicated. In a long report of more than five hun-
dred words, the committee said, “The decisions of the faculty, while they ex-
hibit the firmness required in the exigencies, are no less distinguished by dis-
cretion and clemency.”

In 1849 the President received an increase of $167 per year for a term of
three years because, in addition to his duties as President, he had given in-
struction in French and German. The extra payment was deemed just because
previously $125 a year had been paid to Samuel Francis Smith for part-time
instruction in French.

The troublesome subject of commencement parts was raised again in 1850.
The faculty, deciding that too many students had found means to dodge the ob-
ligation of speaking from the commencement platform, appealed to the Trustees
for a regulation. The Board thereupon voted, “The degree will be withheld
from any student who refuses or neglects to prepare, rehearse or speak his com-
mencement theme.”

Until 1851 there had been no firm policy concerning what was called “back
tuition.” That term applied to tuition for any part of the four years during
which a student was not in actual attendance. It was an especially touchy sub-
ject in the case of a student admitted into advanced standing, because in the
1840’s that was the status given not only to students admitted from another
college, but students attending any college for the first time whose preparation
was considered to render them capable of advanced work. The principle on
which individual cases were usually decided was that a student must pay four
years of tuition fees in order to receive his degree. If he had paid part of those
fees at another college, he was expected to pay only the remaining proportional
part at Waterville. But what of the man who was accepted into sophomore standing without previous college attendance? Should he pay a year's tuition for instruction he never received? What was the tuition meant to cover—actual instruction, or just the award of a degree?

In 1851 the Trustees decided to settle this matter once and for all. The wording of their vote is cumbersome because they meant it to cover several contingencies, but their general intent is clear.

Resolved, that all students who in the future may be admitted into advanced standing (not coming from another college) and who continue here through the remainder of their college course, or who through circumstances beyond their control do not graduate, be required to pay but one-half of the back tuition, and that the residue be relinquished to them; but in case any such student leave this for another college, the whole amount of his back tuition shall be exacted.

When, in the 1920's the College established a regulation that students be suspended from classes for non-payment of bills, both Trustees and faculty doubtless thought the rule had no precedent at Colby. But indeed it had. In 1851 the collection of student bills had been so bad that the Board voted:

The Treasurer shall be required to report to the President of the College the names of all students who shall neglect to furnish a bond for college bills, as required by law, and also the names of all students who shall have three term bills due and unpaid. In case such bond is not furnished, or such term bill remains unpaid for one month after notice to the delinquent by the Faculty, they shall suspend such delinquent from all connection with the College until full compliance with the laws of the College and payment of such term bills are made.

For some time previous to Dr. Sheldon's administration the old custom of an examining committee, composed of Trustees and prominent citizens, had fallen into disuse. Decision regarding a student's promotion had come to be considered the province solely of the faculty, and his graduation that of the Trustees on the faculty's recommendation. At the annual meeting in 1851, Samuel Francis Smith, recalling how those old examination committees functioned when he used to teach French in the College, as a sideline to his pastorate at the Baptist Church, tried to revive the custom. There were in the community, Smith contended, gentlemen who were especially skilled in the branches of study pursued by the students, and having them serve on an examining committee would assure competent instruction and at the same time heighten their interest in the College. Although the Board accepted Smith's proposal, nothing came of it. The day had gone by when examination of college students would be in other than academic hands.

The trustee meeting in 1852 was a long one, because, as we have seen, the theological differences between President Sheldon and other members of the faculty had then come to a head. The meeting stretched out into five sessions during three days. One point of controversy concerned the chapel exercises, which certain members of the faculty had refused to attend, because they would not listen to “heretical preaching.” After long discussion the Board voted, “It shall be the duty of all members of the Faculty to attend the chapel exercises.” Finally the Trustees decided there was only one solution to the problem: accept
the resignations of President Sheldon and of Professors Keely and Loomis. Among students, parents and interested citizens there were so many supporters on each side that unqualified defense of either side seemed disastrous. For the College it was indeed a day of trouble, climaxing the long years of struggle for mere survival. But it was also, in the sense of Toynbee's theory of history, a day of challenge and response. How the challenge was met is the story of the first of Colby's truly great presidents, James T. Champlin. But before we turn to that story, let us get a more intimate picture of Waterville College in the twenty years from 1830 to 1850.
No one now living knows just what it was like to be a student at Waterville College before the Civil War. To get a picture of those days we must turn to the letters and memoirs that have been collected over the years.

One of the best of those recollections was written by the first Colby graduate of the prominent Merriam family. He was Rev. Franklin Merriam of the Class of 1837, whose son Rev. Edmund Merriam graduated in 1868, and whose grandson Rev. George Merriam, 1879, was long the beloved pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church at Skowhegan. In the fourth generation were Arthur Merriam, 1911, Ethel Merriam Weeks, 1914, and Marion Merriam Hooper, 1925, while the fifth generation has been represented by Louise Weeks Wright, 1938, Mary Weeks Sawyer, 1944, Frank E. Weeks, 1947, Thornton Merriam, Jr., 1951, and Robert L. Hooper, 1952.

Franklin Merriam, who had determined to become a Baptist minister, received in 1833 the promise of fifty-four dollars a year from the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society to help him through college. Going by boat from Boston to Portland and thence to Waterville by stage—a journey of five days—Merriam arrived in the college town on September 1, 1833. President Chaplin had just resigned, as had Professor Conant and John O. Chaplin. The faculty consisted of four persons, Professors Keely and Newton, and Tutors Barnes and Farnham. The notorious workshop was then in its heyday, and of it Merriam wrote: “There was a good number of students attracted as I was, by the workshop. Having a little knowledge of tools, I nearly met my college bills by morticing doors, window sashes and bedsteads.”

Merriam was examined by Professor Newton for about half an hour and was then admitted to the college. He tells us how he lived during that first fall term. “In my room I found two chairs, a table, bedstead, wash stand, small looking glass, and stove. Mother gave me a straw bedtick, which I filled with straw. I boarded in the commons, managed by Deacon Emery, for $1.06 a week. He gave me a reduced rate because I drank neither tea nor coffee.”

Like most of his classmates, Franklin Merriam sought a teaching position during the long winter vacation of his freshman year. Hearing of a possibility in North Whitefield, he decided to make application. In those days only a personal interview was of any avail, and Merriam had no money to pay his stage fare to the Sheepscot Valley town. A classmate, who was holding three dollars for another fellow, let Merriam have that money on the dubious assumption that the latter could repay it before the other fellow staked his claim, and off young Franklin went. “I took the money,” he wrote, “went to North Whitefield
by way of Gardiner, and at King's Mills I found the school supervisor, who was pastor of the Baptist churches in Whitefield. He said to me, 'I suppose you know a good deal more than I do, so I will give you a certificate.' I obtained the school because he wanted a man to help him hold services on the Sabbath as well as teach. I boarded with one of the deacons who had not learned to read, and he treated me with great respect."

The modern Colby student who lives in Massachusetts is likely to maintain an automobile and drive home half a dozen times during a term. Franklin Merriam didn't see how he could go home even after he had been in college a full year.

His father, who was anxious to see his son, borrowed enough money to pay the boy's boat fare from Hallowell to Boston. When Franklin received that money, he decided that it was worth the long walk to Hallowell in order to see the old home again. He tells us, "I took my bundle and started for Augusta, on foot and alone. When I was half way there, the stage loaded down with my college friends passed me. Near evening I called at a farmer's and ate a dish of bread and milk." The lad finally reached Hallowell and got passage on a sloop to Boston.

Hewett C. Fessenden attended Waterville College from 1834 to 1836, then transferred to Dartmouth. When he had become well established in Hanover, he wrote to a former classmate at Waterville a letter which throws light on colleges in general during that fourth decade of the last century.

I joined one of the Societies (at Dartmouth) and they put an oration on to me the first thing. I tried to shirk off but couldn't. As I was a Waterville student, they expected something large, for Waterville students who come here are esteemed as good scholars and writers. I like the professors here very much. The students are pretty fair. As writers or speakers or mathematicians they won't hold a candle to the Waterville students, but as linguists they surpass them. The society libraries are very fine containing five thousand volumes apiece. They don't take much interest in debates, but have two or three orations to make up for them. The college library I have not been into, therefore I will say nothing about it. We are studying mechanics with an instructor as good as Professor Keely, and we have commenced French grammar. I don't have to study my French at all, thanks to M. Schaffer, our little Frenchman, whom I shall long remember. Our other study is Paley's Evidences. You Erosophians had better get busy. I understand the Literary Fraternity are getting all the freshmen. I reckon your new Prex will make you walk straight, and without any such palaver as Babcock used to have. Success to him, I say. Now I will smoke my pipe a while, then go to bed.

Witness of public opinion toward Waterville College in those days is borne by an editorial in the Maine Farmer. After pointing out that the College was in the midst of a campaign to raise $50,000, the editor told why the campaign deserved success.¹

Waterville is emphatically the poor man's college. Not only have its trustees and friends struggled through difficulties and prejudices, but have also, more than any other institution, established means for poor scholars to assist themselves by manual labor. It has a very extensive workshop, well supplied with tools, in which students may earn
something towards defraying their expenses. The College also admits young men into a partial course of study—that is, a person may attend to one or two branches without going through a whole course of studies. To be sure, they do not receive a degree, but they get valuable instruction which will abide by them throughout their lives.

This institution ought to have better support by the State. Brunswick College has been amply, liberally endowed by the State, but Waterville has received very little. Yet Waterville College is the only college chartered by our legislature since we became a separate state. The situation seems like a parent's giving all his property to a stepson and nothing to his own child.

In 1840, when Benjamin Norris was a freshman at Waterville, he wrote a letter to his father at East Monmouth, Maine.

This is a new world for me. The ringing of the college bell for prayers, the stated hours for study, the manner of recitation, and the entire seclusion from female society are all new to me. I have not spoken to a lady since I have been here. The bell rings in the morning before sunrise, at which time all the students leave their rooms and repair to the chapel, where the President or some professor attends to the reading of the Bible and prayers. From thence they proceed to the recitation rooms, where they recite for one hour. Then the bell rings for breakfast. We have the hours from nine till eleven, from two to four, and from seven to nine to study our lessons, in the reciting of which we spend three hours each day. The rest of the time we can devote to exercise and reading. Our lessons are short, but we have to get them well.

There are fifty-five students here, eighteen of whom belong to my class. We have to pay $1.12 a week for board, 12½ cents for washing, eight dollars a term for tuition, and three dollars a term for room rent and use of the library.

A letter written by Timothy Paine in 1844 refers to the usual discipline that accompanied each Fourth of July.

They are doing strange things here. One of my classmates has been expelled for blowing a horn on the Fourth of July. Another student has also been dismissed. If they are not taken back, there will be trouble.

In almost every letter from the Waterville campus during the early period, the writer proudly referred to his college class. At Colby, in the 1950's, class organization had come to be almost meaningless except at the opening of freshman year and the close of senior year. After graduation it again became significant as the unit through which the Alumni Office kept in touch with Colby's sons and daughters. The change from the class cohesion of the 1840's had been brought about by the elective system of courses. When every member of a class took exactly the same subjects to the same professors during each of the successive twelve terms of the four year course, the word "class" meant, not as it does today, a meeting for recitation or lecture or discussion, but all the students who were freshmen or sophomores, juniors or seniors. Every examination was given to a whole class.
That sense of class cohesion stimulated student unity well into the twentieth century when finally inter-class rivalry gave way to interfraternity competition. The hazing of freshmen accompanied by the resounding notes of Phi Chi, the fall baseball game with its accompanying grape rush, Bloody Monday Night, and the breaking up of Freshman Exposition by rioting sophomores are all happily incidents of the past. Yet something was lost when Colby men ceased to think of themselves as members of a particular class until after they were out of college. Some observant alumnus frequently expresses the wish that every member of each class might have, every year in college, one educational experience in common, just as they had it in Freshman English. He would not advocate a return to the narrow, completely compulsory program of the 1840's, but he contends it might be well for all students in a class to take together one subject each year.

This digression has taken us a bit afield from the intent of this chapter, which is to see what college life was like in the 1830's and 1840's. So let us see what the student had to eat in the college commons at $1.12 a week, although you will recall that one fellow paid only $1.06, because he did not drink tea or coffee. The $1.12 fare included for breakfast bread and butter, and coffee sweetened with molasses; for dinner beans twice a week, fish once, and meat four times; for supper bread and butter, and tea sweetened with a tiny pinch of sugar. On rare occasions there was added cheese or apple sauce or pie.

The records of the faculty provide a fertile source of information about happenings in Waterville College in those years from 1830 to 1850. On March 13, 1840, the Faculty took up the case of a libelous article in the *Kennebec Journal* referring to William S. Knapp, a senior student. The writer turned out to be Knapp's classmate, Josiah Harmon. The faculty voted that if Harmon would sign a confession admitting the falsehood of the statements in the article, he would not be subjected to legal prosecution for libel. Harmon still refused to sign. He was expelled and the entire whole proceedings were read to the students assembled in chapel. By that time Harmon had begun to see light, and on March 16 he reported that he was ready to sign the required statement. He was then promptly reinstated in college.

Frequently the faculty went to a lot of trouble in handling cases of misbehavior. One spring day in 1841 not a single freshman or sophomore showed up for morning recitations. The faculty at once assumed that this was a concerted movement, what they termed "a wicked combination." So it was voted that "the members of the freshman and sophomore classes are forbidden to attend any recitation until satisfaction is made for their non-appearance on the morning of April 10." Individual members of the faculty, in good investigative style, proceeded to round up and interview members of the offending classes one at a time. As a result, four students were exonerated from participation, although they were at the College, and three others proved to be out of town with permission. All the rest—every last man in the two classes—was called before the faculty and asked to sign a statement confessing that he had acted as part of "a combination," and to promise not to do it again. The exact wording was: "I acknowledge that I did wrong in entering into the understanding with my classmates to absent myself from recitation on April 10, and it is my intention to observe the college laws in relation to that exercise hereafter." Since at that time the college was without a President, it was Professor Keely who informed the offending students that they must sign the statement or be dismissed from college. Two students, M. and B., refused to sign and were summarily expelled. The next day B. was permitted to appear before the whole faculty a second time,
saying he had misunderstood the import of the statement and he was now ready to sign it. He did so and was promptly back in good standing in the College.

In May of the same year Professor Keely reported that four students had disturbed the inhabitants of Waterville in an unseemly manner. Three were placed on probation for the entire summer term, and the fourth was "rusticated" with a rural minister, because the particular incident of the village disturbance had been preceded in this student's case by "too many occasions of profanity and general bad character."

In the fall of 1841, Sophomore F. was brought up before the faculty for "disturbing the recitation by burning asafetida" (a gum giving off an odor of garlic or onion). It came out that while F. had a hand in the prank, his classmate E. had procured the odorous gum and had planned its use. It therefore seemed just to send E. home for the remainder of the term and simply put F. on probation.

That Commencement was a time of hilarious celebration is shown by a vote passed by the faculty on July 31, 1842: "Voted that Professor Anderson be appointed to obtain such constabulary force as may be necessary to keep order on Commencement Day."

Modern plumbing being unknown in the 1840's, the faculty voted that Mr. Coffery be employed "to make all necessary cleaning of the Necessary."

The first instance of student interest in a gymnasium occurred in 1845. An application was presented to the faculty that students be allowed to fit up the now unused workshop as a place for "gymnastic exercises." The faculty voted to grant the petition provided the students would accept responsibility for any damage that might be done to the building.

College students are always losing textbooks, but what does one do when all the books in a subject taken by a whole class disappear? Evidently the Waterville College faculty knew just what to do. Their record of July 24, 1845, tells us: "It was reported that the mathematics books of the sophomore class had been taken from their rooms without their knowledge. It was therefore voted that the sophomore class be informed that, if the copies of the second volume of Cambridge Mathematics, which have been taken from their rooms, are not returned, other copies will be ordered tomorrow forenoon to supply the class, the expense to be included in the charge of damages for the term."

Severe as was the discipline in some respects, the authorities took for granted some actions that a later generation would condemn. In 1846 they authorized the libraries to procure spitoons for the library. A certain consumption of alcoholic beverages was expected, and when three sophomores got intoxicated in the spring of 1845, they were merely "called before the Faculty and reprimanded for excessive drinking."

As indicated in previous chapters, many students who had passed their twenty-first birthday belonged to the popular society of Freemasons. So we should not be surprised to learn that in 1846 the faculty voted that one Herrick be allowed to go to Augusta, if in his opinion his absence from the masonic lodge, where he was an officer, would interfere with the proceedings.

The Fourth of July in 1846 saw no exception to the usual disturbance on that festive day. The faculty record tells us that "there was great disturbance during the recitation hours by students passing before the recitation rooms, blowing horns and ringing bells." Two prominent participators were expelled from college. Interestingly enough one of the offenders was Charles E. Hamlin, who was later to teach at the College for many years and gain fame as a brilliant
paleontologist. Both he and his co-conspirator were later reinstated, and both received their diplomas in 1847.

Plans for the annual Commencement called for more than engaging a constabulary. In 1847 Professor Champlin was authorized to make a contract with one Chipman to put up the commencement stage, perform all the sexton’s duties on the occasion, furnish necessary help to attend the door at all exercises, take down the stage, return the carpet, settees and chairs to the College, and put the meetinghouse in a suitable state for worship; for all of which Chipman would receive twelve dollars.

Anxious as the faculty were to increase student enrollment, they tried hard to maintain high standards. A record in the fall of 1847 tells us that one Brown had presented himself for admission although he had read only three pages of Greek and but little more Latin. He was advised to devote another year to the study of languages before trying to do college work. If, however, he chose now to make the attempt, he could do so in the partial course, but he would not be admitted into the regular course without better preparation in the languages.

Courtesies between colleges extend far back into the past, and as early as 1847 Waterville College was meticulous in observance of its intercollegiate relations. Henry A— had applied for admission, having been required to leave Columbian College in Washington. He was informed that he could be admitted at Waterville only on the written request of the President of Columbian. That courteous action was criticized. An angry letter appeared in Zion’s Advocate protesting against Waterville’s cruel rejection of a pious young man. The faculty then voted to publish a careful statement of the whole affair in the Advocate.

At last, in 1848, the faculty submitted to the long repeated protest against classes on the Fourth of July. “Voted, to announce to the students that hereafter the recitations required on the morning of the Fourth of July will be dispensed with, and that in their place an extra recitation will be expected on the morning after the Fourth.”

Of the persons who became part-time instructors or visiting lecturers at the College during its early years, the most interesting was Dr. Ezekiel Holmes. When President Babcock learned that Holmes, his classmate at Brown, was practicing medicine in Winthrop, Maine, he felt that here was just the man to introduce the students of Waterville College to some of the already specialized fields of science. Dr. Holmes could easily stop at Waterville on his regular trips to the family farm in Starks, which he was still trying to operate along with his medical practice sixty miles distant.

In the fall of 1835 Holmes began his lectures to the junior class in chemistry, mineralogy and botany. Mr. L. M. Sturtevant of Belgrade, who has made a study of Holmes’ life and work, says:

Because of his constant commuting between Winthrop and Starks, Holmes could hardly have been an efficient teacher at Waterville College. He thought much on science, however, and he was able to put some of his ideas in practice. While riding in a rain storm one day from Starks to Waterville, he conceived of a ‘dress of India rubber,’ and thought ‘there is much to be learned of this curious gum.’ He once lectured upon ‘Alumina, Silicum, Coleum and Silver.’ He reported that his phosphorus did not succeed well, but other experiments did not go too badly in spite of his few specimens and the fact that he had no literature on alumina.
Benjamin F. Butler was a student at Waterville College when Holmes was a lecturer. In his autobiography, *Butler's Book*, the general later recorded: "I was farther advanced in science than most of the students, and I was allowed access to the chemical laboratory as assistant to Professor Holmes, who was not there. I had one mate in these studies, Mr. David Wadleigh, and we devoted ourselves to chemical experiments together, with the natural result of actually blowing each other up with explosive preparations."

Butler's clause "who was not there" makes it clear that Holmes was not a professor in residence. The fact is that his lectures, though intended to be on regular schedule, proved to be most irregular. To make up for a week when he would fail to appear for his single day of lectures, he would put in two days during the following week. Because every class had a lot of free time in the hours not assigned to its three daily recitations, it was easy to fit in a lecture by Holmes whenever he arrived.

In his plans for instruction, if not in his practice, Holmes was ahead of his time. In those days and long afterward, science students performed no laboratory experiments. Everything was demonstrated by the instructor, the students merely noting what happened. After Holmes died, there was found among his papers a plan for a suite of rooms for the science department of Waterville College—a plan that was never realized. In it Holmes had incorporated individual experimental equipment for each student.

Dr. Holmes ended his teaching at Waterville in 1837. His commuting had become increasingly inconvenient, and he was getting very little remuneration for his trouble. He had been promised $200 a year, but never got all of it. In 1834-35 he received only $37. The national panic of 1837 made the plight of the struggling college almost desperate. It was difficult to maintain the regular classes, and such 'luxuries' as science lectures had to go.

In later years Dr. Ezekiel Holmes became better known as editor of the *Maine Farmer*, a newspaper celebrated at one time as having the largest circulation in the state. For five successive years he was Winthrop's representative in the Maine legislature. He was appointed surveyor of the public lands still held jointly by Maine and Massachusetts, and was influential in the final settlement of that contentious question. He was the first secretary of the State Board of Agriculture and of the State Agricultural Society. He helped organize the important annual exhibition at Springfield, Massachusetts, which continues to this day.

In 1849 the faculty gave their first attention to what for more than sixty years would be known as "false orders." It became almost an annual occurrence for faked, burlesqued programs to turn up at some solemn event. This kind of prank may have begun earlier, but it was not until October, 1849, that it became a matter of faculty record. The faculty then ordered Professor Champlin to write letters to three printers—Dickinson of Boston, Wardwell of Andover, and Metcalf of Cambridge—inquiring whether the Greek type of the false order of exercises at the Senior Exhibition was furnished or used at their offices; also to write to Attorney Henry W. Paine at Hallowell, sending him a copy of the false order and asking him if legal action could be taken against a person who circulated such papers. Professor Loomis was commissioned to inquire of the postmasters, expressmen and stage drivers, to discover how the false orders reached town. Evidently Detectives Champlin and Loomis did a good job, for a week later Isaac Kalloch was expelled from college for circulating false orders at the Senior Exhibition.
Isaac Smith Kalloch had a spectacular and notorious career. A relenting faculty let him return to college in the spring of 1848, but he remained only another year. Although he never attended theological school he became a preacher of note, for five years dispensing fiery brimstone from the pulpit of Tremont Temple in Boston, and during the Civil War from one of the leading New York churches. He went to Kansas and founded Ottawa University, of which he was for three years the dictator president. On the west coast he gained a wide reputation as the crusading pastor of the San Francisco Tabernacle, and on one occasion engaged in a pistol duel on Market Street. For three years he was Mayor and political boss of the city at the Golden Gate. Isaac Kalloch lived up to the reputation he had made in college when he had begun the long-lived practice of false orders.

It is good for us to know that those students of more than a hundred years ago, though most of them were looking forward to the ministry, were not much different from young men of any time or place. Boys will indeed be boys, but the alumni records of Colby College make it equally clear that boys will also some day be men. The college days were not spent entirely in pranks and misbehavior. The young men studied under teachers who would compare favorably with the faculty of any later day; they discussed in their societies the great issues of their time; they struggled against grinding poverty to secure the coveted diploma; and they went out into the world to be indeed men of their time.
CHAPTER XIII

The Martyr And The General

Among the several thousand alumni of Colby College it would be difficult to find two men more unlike than Elijah Parish Lovejoy and Benjamin Franklin Butler. They come together in this chapter because, of all Colby graduates, they became most widely known, and both received their diplomas before the little Maine college had graduated twenty classes. Lovejoy was a preacher and publisher who laid down his life for the freedom of the press. Butler was a military genius whose impulsive actions and unbridled tongue caused him to be one of the most hated men of his time. Well into the twentieth century, historians were referring to "the saintly Lovejoy" and "Beast Butler." Neither epithet was deserved. Lovejoy, though richly deserving of a hero's fame, was no saint; Butler, though storming his way through a hectic political career, was no beast. Both men made bitter enemies; both had staunch friends; and both possessed grim, undaunted determination.

Elijah Parish Lovejoy gained lasting fame when he was shot down by an angry mob while defending his press at Alton, Illinois. His persistent publication of anti-slavery articles had already caused the destruction of three presses, and when he and his friends decided to arm themselves for the defense of his fourth press, stored in the Gilman warehouse on Alton's Mississippi shore, it was certain that tragedy would result. On the night of November 7, 1837, the mob got completely out of control. Though only a few shots were fired by either side, one bullet hit Lovejoy in the chest, causing almost instant death.

Elijah Lovejoy was born in Albion, Maine, on November 9, 1802, the oldest son of the Reverend Daniel and Elizabeth Pattee Lovejoy. His grandfather, Francis Lovejoy, had settled the farm on the shore of the pond which received his name soon after the Revolution, and there his son Daniel was maintaining a precarious existence as preacher and farmer when Elijah was born. Deprived of more than a meager rural education in his childhood, Daniel Lovejoy, for several winters, left his wife on the Maine farm, while he studied the classics at Byfield Academy in Massachusetts, and pursued theological studies with the local minister, Reverend Elijah Parish. That Congregationalist minister was a man of sufficient prominence to rate a page in the Dictionary of American Biography. A staunch Calvinist and unyielding Federalist, he was the target of many an attack from liberals both in theology and in politics. If they regarded him as convincing proof of man's depravity, he regarded them as agents of the Devil and rulers of the "New Babylon," his favorite term for the city of Washington under Jefferson's administration. So thoroughly was Daniel Lovejoy imbued with this minister's philosophy and so highly did he respect the man that he named his first son Elijah Parish Lovejoy.
At an early age the boy showed that he possessed a quick and active intellect. "At four he started to read, taking his first lessons from the large family Bible. He would go to his mother, ask her what a certain letter was, then move back to his corner to draw it and puzzle out the word. . . He had his father's drive for learning and a prodigious memory. He rarely needed to be told anything more than once. He went through his father's theological books; then he went through the little library in the neighboring town. He could memorize a poem or psalm at a single reading. Before he was through the village school, he was reading Greek and Latin writers easily. He tutored his younger brothers and sisters as they came along."

Such a youth would naturally be determined to get formal education beyond that afforded by the common school. But money was scarce and the father was an obscure country preacher with few influential friends. Elijah Lovejoy had therefore passed his nineteenth birthday before he got a chance to attend an academy, which in those days was the surest way to prepare for college.

The Albion youth had probably approached other leading citizens of Maine before he addressed a letter to the Governor himself. Fortunately that letter is preserved, and this is what Elijah Lovejoy wrote to Governor William King on July 24, 1821:

Sir: I address myself to you, not through mere speculation, but from immediate necessity. I wish to go to a private school in town, but am so circumscribed as to efficient means that I know not what to do. In this emergency I have determined to apply to you, hoping from your Honor's known liberality I may obtain the relief which I so much need. If you could put in the way so that I could labor half the day on Saturdays, or in any other way assist me, you would gladden the heart of the despairing. Who knows, Honorable Sir, you may assist one in coming forward who shall take a part in the political theatre of the age, in which you have borne so distinguished a figure.

If you should, Honored Sir, think this worth your notice (which I pray you may) you will have opportunity to see me, when perhaps I can give all the information which you wish. With the highest regards,

Elijah Parish Lovejoy

William King received many letters like the appeal that came from the shore of Lovejoy Pond. He may not have replied at all to Elijah's letter; at any rate he gave the young man no financial aid. The benefactor who finally heard the youth's urgent plea was his father's friend, Reverend Benjamin Tappan, pastor of the South Parish Congregational Church at Augusta. With a modest sum supplied by Tappan, Elijah attended a term of eleven weeks at Monmouth Academy in the spring of 1822.

In the autumn of the same year, still with help from Tappan, Elijah entered China Academy. That school had first opened its doors in September, 1818, and during its brief existence had already sought its principals from Jeremiah Chaplin's new institution at Waterville. When Elijah Lovejoy enrolled at China, its head was Henry Stanwood, who had just completed the theological course at Waterville College and was only four years older than his pupil from Albion. There sprang up at once a close attachment between pupil and teacher, and Stanwood persuaded Lovejoy to prepare to attend Waterville College the following year.
There were several reasons why Lovejoy should have gone to another college, to Bowdoin or Dartmouth or Williams. His father was an ordained minister of the Congregationalist denomination, and those colleges were under the control of that church. Furthermore Daniel Lovejoy was an unrelenting Federalist, as were the administrations of those three colleges. Of course Waterville College was only a few miles from Albion, but its Board of Trustees was made up largely of Jeffersonian Democrats, among them the very William King who had turned a cold shoulder to Elijah's appeal for help. But Henry Stanwood was a persuasive man. He assured Elijah that Jeremiah Chaplin, Avery Briggs and Stephen Chapin were brilliant scholars and teachers, and that one would go far to find a better tutor than George Dana Boardman. Young Lovejoy was persuaded that Waterville was the college for him, and even after Stanwood left China at the end of the winter term, the lad's decision did not waver. Stanwood's successor in the academy principalship was Hadley Proctor, who actually presided at China in the spring term of his own senior year, for he did not receive his college diploma until August, 1823.

In 1824 Lovejoy became acquainted with a man of the race that was to have such a profound effect upon his life. The faculty voted that "J. B. Russman, a man of color, may, if he enters college next term, have liberty to be absent a part of the year."

The first official reference to Lovejoy in the college records, following his matriculation in 1823, came at the end of his very first year. Two weeks before the young man started his junior year in the college, the faculty voted that "Lovejoy be appointed to take charge of the Latin School during the ensuing year and have the same compensation that has been given heretofore." Almost as soon as Jeremiah Chaplin had started his theological classes in Waterville, he had seen the need for a preparatory school. So he started a kind of Latin Grammar School, modeled after the famous Roxbury and Boston Latin Schools, but much more informal and more loosely organized. At Waterville it was at first a minor adjunct of the College, without a separate building, and with only one teacher, usually provided from the student body of the college itself. It was this school that later became Waterville Academy and finally Coburn Classical Institute.

When Lovejoy was a senior, one Sanborn was fined fifty cents for damaging the cellar door of South College, and a fine four times as heavy was exacted from one Thompson for cutting a hole through the front door of the college. One Jayner had to pay fifty cents for drawing figures in the college entry, making it necessary, for the sake of decency, to have the walls whitewashed. So much of this kind of celebrating was going on that it was voted that "each student shall be assessed 25 cents for every pane of glass by him wantonly broken." Elijah Lovejoy was impervious to this sort of temptation. He went his studious way as pupil and teacher, getting his Latin school students ready for college and himself ready for the beckoning world. In August, 1826, he was graduated valedictorian of his class. At the commencement exercises he was class poet as well as valedictorian.

President Chaplin later expressed extravagant praise—and he was a man not given to extravagant utterance—concerning his star student of the Class of 1826.

In regard to his intellectual powers, he seems to have approached very near to the rank of those distinguished men who have been honored
by the title of universal genius. During his collegiate course he appeared to have an almost equal adaptation of mind to the various branches of science and literature; and what is more, he took hold of each with giant strength.4

Upon graduating, Lovejoy at once accepted the principalship of his old school, China Academy. In those days the little Maine academies were accustomed to changing principals every year, sometimes two or three times within a year. Elijah Lovejoy stayed as the China principal only for the three terms of a single year. Hardly had the school closed for the summer when, in May, 1827, he started for the fascinatingly new and adventurous West.

What prompted this recent graduate of a backwoods college in Maine to seek his fortune in the even newer backwoods of the Mississippi Valley is not at all clear. There is no evidence that he had as yet had immediate contact with anyone who knew the lands west of the Appalachians, but somehow, long before Horace Greeley urged it, he had heard the call, "Go west, young man, go west." John Gill's explanation may be as good as any.

He [Elijah] wanted to see the world, to become a famous man and make his mark. There was not room for his ambition in the small town environment after he had taken all the honors it had to offer . . . Elijah, the oldest son and pride of the family, had decided to go west and seek his fortune.5

When the schools opened in September, Elijah Lovejoy was a teacher in St. Louis. Lovejoy's introduction to newspaper work was a part-time job on the St. Louis Times. He rose rapidly to assistant editor, and finally to editor and publisher. He gave up teaching to devote full time to the paper. "He now had assistants working for him, as well as printers, journeymen and apprentices, with a number of Negroes to clean the office and run errands."6

In 1832, when the Great Revival hit St. Louis, Elijah Lovejoy was converted and committed himself to the Christian ministry. Because he was affiliated with the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, he determined to become a preacher of that denomination and at once enrolled in its leading theological school at Princeton, New Jersey. In 1833 he was licensed to preach and for a brief time supplied several New York pulpits. But his real call was to St. Louis, and when he was offered the editorship of a religious weekly, The St. Louis Observer, he accepted with alacrity.

At first The Observer was a conventional religious paper of the time, denouncing the sins of the era, including slave-holding. Although slavery as an institution was more or less taken for granted in Missouri, the slave-holder himself was not regarded with favor. Lovejoy printed impartially letters and articles submitted to him on both sides of the slavery question. Although he insisted that slavery was wrong, as Lincoln did, he held the same view as Lincoln concerning its ultimate end. He favored gradual emancipation, with compensation to the slave owners. He once wrote, "Slavery could not be abolished suddenly without doing untold damage to both masters and slaves."

In St. Louis the issue came to a head in the killing of the Negro McIntosh by an angry mob. At the farcical trial of the murderers, the judge attacked Lovejoy's paper, reading sentences taken out of context, and saying:
It seems to me impossible that, while such language is published as that which I have just cited from the *St. Louis Observer*, there can be any safety in a slave-holding state.

At once Lovejoy took his stand. It was not a stand for abolition, but for freedom of the press. In a flaming editorial, he wrote:

To establish our institutions of civil and religious liberty, to obtain freedom of opinion and of the press, cost thousands of lives. We covet not the loss of property nor the honors of martyrdom, but far better that the office of the *Observer* should be scattered in fragments, better that the editor should be chained to the same tree as McIntosh and share his fate than that the doctrines promulgated by the Judge should prevail in this community.⁷

Finding it impossible to continue his paper in St. Louis, Lovejoy decided to move it to the Illinois side of the river in Alton. There he was welcomed by all except ardent sympathizers with the South. But when his press was brought over, in July, 1836, it was seized by a gang of St. Louis toughs and thrown into the river. Alton friends at once raised funds for a new press. The paper became popular and built up a large circulation, but Lovejoy was becoming more and more drawn to the abolitionist cause. He saw that moral appeal was of no avail when directed at the cotton states. He saw too that his pleas for gradual emancipation fell on deaf ears. So the editor turned his attention to arousing the whole nation against the moral wrong of the slave system. In his issue of July 6, 1837, Lovejoy proposed the formation of an Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society. The situation in Alton soon became so tense that even some of Lovejoy's supporters urged him to soften his tone. Leading business men demanded that he maintain a discreet silence on the explosive issue. It was afterwards contended that Lovejoy made and later broke such a pledge of silence, but in a careful study of the evidence John Gill has shown that this contention was only one of many slanders directed against the man.⁸

On August 21, 1837, Lovejoy's second press was destroyed, and a month later his third press was smashed and hurled into the river while awaiting transportation from the wharf to the *Observer* office. Lovejoy took care that the fourth press should be landed secretly and stored in the Gilman warehouse near the river bank. News that the press had arrived during the night of November 6 spread rapidly, and when darkness came on the following evening, a mob was already assembling. Meanwhile Lovejoy had made a decision which was to cause him criticism from many pacifist friends. He had long taken a firm stand against violence in settling personal or public issues. Now he decided to defend his press with arms. With a small band of followers he stood guard over his property in the warehouse. The mob marched on the warehouse. Someone within the warehouse fired, mortally wounding a member of the mob named Bishop. The mob then brought a ladder and attempted to get incendiary material up to the roof. The man on the ladder was shot down. Meanwhile bullets, brickbats, and flaming torches were rained against the upper rooms where the press was being guarded. When a second attempt was made to use the ladder, Lovejoy and a few friends emerged from the building to force the climber down. A bullet from some unidentified
gun struck Lovejoy in the chest. Though his friends carried him at once inside the building, he died in a few minutes. Neither side wanted more bloodshed, but the mob did succeed in smashing the press even before the defenders had removed the body of their leader.

Horror and indignation swept the North. If the abolitionist cause needed a cementing factor, here it was. If death at the hands of a pro-slavery mob was to be the end, let men boldly and valiantly confront it. Abolitionists came to be viewed no longer as fanatics, but as crusaders in a sacred cause. But all that took time. Many years would elapse before a little woman in Brunswick, Maine, would write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, before John Brown would seize the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, before an Illinois politician would proclaim that the nation could not endure half slave and half free. But the fire of freedom had been kindled on that night of November 7, 1837, beside the Gilman Warehouse in Alton.

Opinion was, however, far from unanimous. The *Cincinnati Whig* editorialized:

> Lovejoy, with a fanaticism as inexcusable as it was unaccountable, determined to persevere in his purpose, and for the fourth time purchased a printing press. Thus have ended the folly and fanaticism of Rev. E. P. Lovejoy. Deprecating mobs of all kinds, we are nevertheless of the opinion that Lovejoy was himself more to blame than anyone else. He kept the people of Alton in a continual state of excitement, and he must have known that a persistence in his mischievous course would end only in bloodshed.

Of the newspapers which had never supported Lovejoy, it was perhaps the *St. Louis Bulletin* that more accurately sensed the meaning of the tragedy. It said,

> Be the offenses of Lovejoy what they may, even if he has violated every law of the land and outraged every feeling of society, the measure of his punishment has changed the offender to a martyr. The persevering, daring sinner has become an apostle of righteousness and a saint.

A hundred years later, when Colby College commemorated Lovejoy's martyrdom with historic ceremonies, a former President of the United States, Herbert Hoover, was the principal speaker. In a memorable address he summarized Lovejoy's achievement in these words: "Since his martyrdom no man has openly challenged free speech and free press in America."

Benjamin Franklin Butler was born in Deerfield, N. H., in 1818, the son of a captain in the War of 1812, who became a merchant trader, voyaging to the West Indies and South America, and dying of yellow fever at St. Kitts, before any of his three children had reached their teens. The impoverished mother moved her family to Lowell, where she kept a boardinghouse and received help from the parish of the Rev. Enoch Freeman's Baptist church. Both Freeman and Mrs. Butler hoped that Ben would become a minister.

When Ben was sixteen years old, he persuaded his mother to help him seek a military career. Reluctant as she may have been to abandon her ministerial ambition for her son, Mrs. Butler rounded up references and made a personal appeal to Congressman Caleb Cushing to appoint Ben to West Point. The Congressman coldly informed her that there were no vacancies in his district.
and that he had others on his waiting list. The result is stated bluntly by Butler’s biographer, Robert Holzman:

Ben was horribly disappointed, but it taught him something he was never to forget—that political influence is the key to many desirable things. He also acquired a lasting contempt for all those who had attended West Point, a reaction that psychologists could easily explain.9

The Reverend Mr. Freeman assured Mrs. Butler that it was all for the best. Ben could now attend a good Baptist college and become a minister. Expenses were low and instruction was good, said Mr. Freeman, at the Baptist College in Waterville, Maine, where his friend Rufus Babcock had just succeeded Jeremiah Chaplin as president.

When Ben Butler enrolled at Waterville College, in the fall of 1834, he had not quite reached his seventeenth birthday, and he weighed only 92 pounds. When he graduated four years later his weight had still not reached a hundred pounds. Holzman says he was “a smallish youth, infirm in health, of fair complexion, with reddish brown hair.”

According to Butler’s own autobiography, he was a leading college prankster who spent much time trying to outwit the faculty. He told how he had pleaded to be excused from attending chapel on the ground that, since the Calvinist doctrine of predestination taught that the ratio of the saved to the damned was small, and that certainly the faculty must all be among the saved, his chance of being within the elect was so small that no amount of chapel attendance would do him any good. He boasted that he stole signs and gates, pigs and chickens, tied the clapper of the college bell, escaped expulsion by the skin of his teeth, and declared he received his diploma only because the faculty were glad to get rid of him. According to Ben himself, he was in college the “hell-raiser” his later contemporaries accused him of being in public life. A bit later we shall examine the facts about those college days, but first let us follow Ben through his stormy career.

After a brief period of teaching he became a lawyer in Lowell, served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1853 and in its Senate in 1859-60. In 1861 his military ambition saw initial fulfillment when he was made Brigadier General of Massachusetts Volunteers at the outset of the Civil War by a direct commission from President Lincoln. Made Commander at Fortress Monroe, he at once showed a genius for military organization, making that fort a model for subsequent army units.

After Admiral Farragut had taken New Orleans in 1862, Butler was given the unenviable task of military commander in a captured hostile city. He was determined to exercise the same discipline he had demanded at Fortress Monroe. He required a loyalty oath of all citizens who wanted to stay in business, and he ordered several executions. But he kept order in the rebel city. It was the women of New Orleans who gave him most trouble. How should he treat those defiant Confederate females who flagrantly displayed Southern flags in their hats, who haughtily stepped aside, even into the street, when they passed a Federal soldier on the sidewalk? If a Northern soldier entered a church, women would edge away as far as possible, or even get up and leave.

On May 15, 1862, Butler issued what became known as the notorious General Order 12. It read in part:
As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subjected to repeated insults by the women of New Orleans, who call themselves ladies, in return for the most scrupulous non-interference on our part, it is ordered that hereafter, when any female shall, by word, gesture or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation.

That military order appalled not only the Southern gentry, arousing their historic chivalry, but it also antagonized the foreign consuls in New Orleans and the Episcopal clergy, who had earlier taken a conciliatory attitude toward the Union occupation. Butler was so blunt in both speech and action that he appeared to the New Orleans aristocracy as an inhumane tyrant. As Holzman says, "Any man in his position would have been unpopular, but his personality magnified his shortcomings, real or imaginary."

When Butler moved from the St. Charles Hotel to a private residence, he selected the mansion of Confederate General Twigg. This gave rise to a story that pursued Butler all his life—that he had stolen silver spoons from the Twigg house, and indeed from other New Orleans homes. So to the sobriquet "Beast Butler" which the military executions had earned him was added "Spoons Butler."

Historians agree that Ben Butler was a brilliant military commander. A keen strategist, he helped plan many successful campaigns. They agree also that he was unwaveringly loyal to the Union, although his personal loyalty to President Lincoln has been questioned. Despite his bluntness and his sternness, Butler was a leader of men. On the Union side two men peculiarly held the devotion of their troops, George McClellan and Ben Butler, and both had political ambition.

There is considerable evidence that Butler was not in favor of Lincoln’s reelection in 1864, and that for a time he considered coming out openly for McClellan. Several historians, including Carl Sandburg, accept the statement which appears in Butler’s published correspondence that Lincoln actually offered the vice-presidency to Butler at that time, as a means of assuring that Butler should not go over into the McClellan camp. But the great historian Randall doubts very much the truth of that assertion. He found no evidence whatever for it except Butler’s own unsupported word. Randall does contend, however, that Butler had a leading part in the shelving of Hannibal Hamlin and the nomination of Andrew Johnson as Lincoln’s running mate.

After Lincoln’s assassination and the end of the war, Butler may have regretted his earlier support of Johnson. He regarded the new President’s continuation of Lincoln’s policy of conciliation as weak and stupid. The South was beaten; let her now be crushed never to rise again. A tough policy was all that would satisfy tough Ben Butler. Elected to Congress in 1866, Butler became the leader of the radical anti-Johnson faction. In 1868 he threw all his energies into the impeachment trial, and opened that trial with a four-hour speech. Deeply disappointed, when the Senate failed to convict the President, the General decided to become a candidate for President himself. Still identified with the Republican Party, which he had come near to deserting in favor of his fellow general, George McLellan, he soon had the political sense to see that no one stood any chance against the great popularity of General Grant. Suddenly Butler switched his own supporters to Grant, with the result that, when Grant became
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President, Ben became the dispenser of patronage in Massachusetts, what Holzman calls "an autocrat in the Massachusetts political sphere."

During his eleven years in Congress Butler had become interested in the currency question. Back in his home state, he became New England's best known opponent of the return to specie payments. The Redemption Act of 1875 promised that beginning on January 1, 1879, the Treasury would redeem in gold any greenbacks that were presented for redemption. Butler joined the Greenback party, which advocated the issuance of fiat money—treasury notes put out without even the promise to pay in gold and silver.

Butler, who had now been a Republican, a Greenback, and a Republican again, renounced the Republican party in 1880, and avowed allegiance to the Democrats. With their nomination he won the governorship of Massachusetts in 1881.

Ever since Harvard had possessed the authority to confer honorary degrees, its Doctor of Laws had been bestowed upon the Governor of Massachusetts. But the University refused so to honor Governor Butler. One of Butler's accusations concerning the Tewksbury asylum had been that it handed over bodies, even dug them up from its cemetery, for the Harvard Medical School.

Butler was defeated for reelection in 1882, but four years later he made another sortie into the political arena. He accepted the nomination of the Greenback party for President of the United States. In 1880 that party had polled 300,000 votes, but in 1884 Butler got only 125,000, fewer even than those of the Prohibition candidate.

In 1889 the stormy figure who had graduated 51 years before came to Waterville and addressed the alumni of his alma mater. He chose for his topic "Union of the English Speaking Peoples," proposing that a political union be established, with Great Britain, Canada and the United States as its members. Thus Clarence Streit's "Union Now" was anticipated by nearly half a century. The idea in 1889 was just as fantastic as Butler's greenbacks had been in 1879.

Ben Butler was a man of unpredictable causes. A comprehensive analysis of this puzzling figure in American history has been made by Holzman.

Ben Butler had the attributes that should have made him one of the greatest American heroes. He was a conspicuous success at law, business and politics, and as a military commander he was unsurpassed. He was a dauntless fighter, usually against tremendous odds. Why has he not survived as a truly great American? The answer is that, with all of his merits, he had more than his share of demerits. In addition to taking a strong personal position on every question, Butler offended people readily. He antagonized by his very manner. He laid himself open to attack by his disregard of red tape. His whole person breathed contention and effrontery. He was a vindictive fighter. In everything he was an opportunist. He did not tie himself to permanent principles, nor was he bound by issues. There is no scintilla of evidence that he profited personally from government operations. Though he died worth seven million dollars, no one could prove that a penny of it had been secured dishonestly. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was the ability to get things done. When something had to be done, Butler was the man to do it. If one's country is engaged in a great war, it is comforting to know that a Butler might be found, who could fight to win and no questions asked.
All that we have so far recounted about General Benjamin F. Butler can be found in previous publications; in his own autobiography published in 1892, in the five volumes of his official correspondence during the Civil War, in Bland's biography of 1879, and in Holzman's newer and more careful biography of 1954. Magazine articles and newspaper clippings about the man would fill a big barrel. There is one thing, however, that can be added in this chapter of the history of Ben Butler's college. What kind of person was he during the four years of his college course?

Public information about Ben Butler during his college years comes chiefly from his own pen. Admittedly he was an aged man when his autobiography called Butler's Book came from the press of A. M. Thayer and Company in Boston in 1892. Possibly time had erased some memories, enhanced others, and even caused a few figments of imagination now to appear as historical fact. Whittemore says nothing about Butler as a student except that he made chairs in the workshop.13

The one college episode which the autobiography discusses at length is his attempt to be excused from chapel attendance. He says,

I therefore sent a petition to the President, couched in the most modest and most carefully chosen language I could command. It was easy to foresee the result of addressing such a paper to a conscientious body of men thoroughly imbued with the belief that what I claimed was little if any short of blasphemy.14

At that time the records of the faculty, called the Executive Government of the College, were carefully kept. Whenever a petition reached them—and the President was required by regulations of the Trustees to lay all such papers before the assembled group—the substance of the petition and sometimes even its complete text was placed in the record. Between 1834 and 1838, when Ben Butler was one of its students, no such petition as the autobiography described is mentioned. It made a neat story to tell more than fifty years later, when an old statesman of many a stormy political scene was writing his reminiscences. Perhaps something like it may have happened, but so complete are the faculty records on other matters that we must register an honest doubt.

So persistent was the legend of Ben Butler as a campus prankster that as late as 1957, when Lloyd C. M. Hare wrote a long article on the General for the Vineyard Gazette of Vineyard Haven, Mass.,15 he presented as authentic fact that Butler was the leader of a group of 'juvenile delinquents' who harassed the faculty.

They burned lamps late in the night, and toiled diligently to think of questions and answers with which to confound the tutors, and were eminently successful in producing chaos in the temples of petrified learning. For their pains they were dubbed blasphemous. The faculty had its small measure of revenge. Ben's scholastic standing was drastically reduced by a system of demerits dispensed for each saucy rebuttal. The lad's lean pocketbook was sadly nicked by repeated fines of ten cents each time he refused to attend prayers and sermons. When Ben graduated in 1838, the faculty was glad to see him go.

In 1900 the Boston Globe said:
Ben Butler was a rowdy in college. Nothing was better suited to his nature than to be engaged in some brawl or up to some trick on a poor theologue. He bade blasphemous defiance to law, order, and the rules of the college. He tried to become president of one of the literary societies. The mere mention of his name in such a connection so shocked the ears of the members that he met with signal defeat. Over and over again he tried his best to get the office, and over and over again he was defeated.

Even a graduate of Colby who signed himself “Eighty Blank,” who had heard Butler’s English Union address in 1889, went so far as to think that Butler did not even graduate from the College. He wrote:

Some of Butler’s biographers state that he was graduated in the Class of 1838, but when I was a student at Colby we were told, when distinguished alumni were mentioned, that Benjamin Butler had left college before graduation, and we always inferred that his leaving was not of his own volition, as many escapades while he was in college were a matter of tradition, and were well known to all of us.

What are the facts which confront this very substantial tradition? What do the official records of Colby College have to say about Benjamin F. Butler of the Class of 1838?

Whenever a student was disciplined, by reprimand or fine or suspension, the fact was recorded in the faculty minutes. Numerous are such records between 1834 and 1838. During those years Asa M. was censured for “violating the college laws by disorderly conduct in his room.” William R. was “rusticated” to the care of a minister in Cherryfield. George A. was “put on special probation for idleness in attention to college duties.” Walter J. was “expelled for neglect of study and immoral conduct.” E. and C. were “put on special probation for repeated insulting disturbances in their room.” Henry K. was required to “make confession before his class of the impropriety of his conduct in reading a certain composition on Monday the 24th instant, and must promise to give strict obedience to the college laws hereafter.” Not a week went by without several students receiving fines of six and a quarter, twelve and a half, or twenty-five cents. During all this time, on all the pages of the record, the name of Benjamin F. Butler is never found as an object of discipline. In 1834-35 there are just two references to this student. On February 18, 1835, it was voted that “Freshman Butler be excused from absence till the eleventh of the month.” When the college year ended, the faculty on August 1 listed among those to be advanced to sophomore standing Benjamin F. Butler.

In 1837 Ben was assigned and satisfactorily performed a part in the annual exhibition. When the spring term started in March of his senior year, the faculty granted him an extension of two weeks to the already long winter vacation, in order that he might complete his engagement to teach a rural school. At the Commencement in 1838, he delivered his part in the graduation program at the Baptist church and received his diploma.

One who reads of Butler’s many alleged escapades may suspect that he was just too clever to get caught, that the faculty records mention no disciplinary action against the fellow because he always kept one jump ahead of the authorities. But such a conclusion is unlikely. In those days, a tutor (we would now call him an instructor) lived in each of the two dormitories with the students. Dur-
ing Butler's four years in college the total number of students did not exceed 70, including those who commuted. Furthermore, those tutors were young men who had themselves been students in the same college not more than two or three years earlier. They knew from recent and intimate experiences the ways of college boys. Ben Butler might have deceived the older professors, but it could hardly have pulled the wool over the sharp eyes and ready ears of Tutor Randall and Tutor Lamson.

So much for the negative evidence. Like all such negations, it is of course only indicative and proves nothing. Fortunately more positive evidence corroborates the assumption made from a perusal of the faculty records. That evidence is found in the records of the Erosophian Adelphi, the college literary society to which Butler belonged. This society was organized in 1835, and the third name on its list of members was Benjamin F. Butler. In March, 1836, when he was only a sophomore, Ben was elected lector of the society, in which capacity it was his duty to read what were called the anonymous contributions, about which we shall have more to say in the chapter on fraternities. This fellow, whom tradition pictures as a constant prankster without a serious thought, urged the Erosophians to obtain a locked box for the preservation of their records, and he was himself commissioned to carry out the project. It is interesting to note, a hundred and twenty years later, that, while many records of the early days have been lost, those of the Erosophian Adelphi have been preserved intact from the first meeting to the last.

In May of his sophomore year, Butler participated in the society's debate, defending the negative on the question, Does the manner of an orator's delivery exert more influence than the composition of his discourse? The next month he was on the winning affirmative side of the question, Ought the bodies of any persons except criminals be given up by the law for dissection by medical students? This is especially interesting in light of his attack more than forty years later on the authorities at the Tewksbury Asylum for doing the very thing he defended in that 1836 debate.

It is clear that, before he reached his junior year in college, the small hundred pound Ben Butler was already recognized by his fellow students as a serious and responsible leader. In June, 1836, he persuaded the Erosophians to open their library to any member of the college on payment of an annual fee of two dollars. Disgusted at the practice of members leaving during a meeting, Butler secured a vote of the Erosophians that the roll be called at the close as well as the opening of each meeting, and that members absent at either roll call be fined. That motion was made by the young man who was supposed to be the very sort who would be most adept at skipping out of meetings.

In November, 1836, Butler read before the society an essay on Politeness. In the following October he lectured before the society on the subject of Chemistry, on the same occasion presenting to the Erosophian library a book on Animal Magnetism.

On April 4, 1838, only five months after Elijah Lovejoy had met death at the hands of the Alton mob, the Erosophians debated the question, Was the course pursued by the Rev. Mr. Lovejoy at Alton right and expedient? Ben Butler took the affirmative and won by a very close margin, eleven to ten. So divided was the opinion about Lovejoy's action throughout New England at the time that even in his own college, one of the societies could muster almost a majority to disapprove his course.
Ben Butler was devoted to the task of building up the Erosophian library. He persuaded the society to employ an agent to solicit donations in the Kennebec towns and as far away as Wiscasset. Lest the rival society, the Literary Fraternity, beat them in implementing the same idea, it was voted "to keep the above vote a profound secret."

On April 28, 1838, Butler was elected president of the Erosophian Adelphi. The big event of every year was the society's anniversary celebration, at which some prominent man was always the orator. When the time drew near for that occasion at the Commencement in 1838, for some reason Mr. Curtis, the orator, declined to deliver his address. Guptill, chairman of the society's anniversary committee, resigned in wrath. At the last moment Ben Butler took over, succeeded in pacifying Curtis, arranged for the event to be postponed from Tuesday to Wednesday evening of commencement week, and got Curtis down from Boston to deliver what the local press called "a brilliant oration."

When the lock on the door of the library was broken and certain depredations were committed, the chairman of the committee to "ferret out the perpetrators of this outrage" was Ben Butler. Soon afterward the society decided they needed better quarters for their library, and whom did they select to go before the faculty with their plea for use of a larger and better room? The student who represented them, ably and successfully, was the one whom tradition tells us was a constant violator of college rules and one whom the faculty was glad to see go. If that was the kind of reputation this pleader for a favor had in faculty circles, we can only say that faculties have changed a lot since 1838.

Anyhow, there is the official record. In Waterville College one of the best behaved and most respected students was the little fellow from Lowell, Massachusetts, who could scarcely tip the scales at a hundred pounds and who in later years became the most controversial of all the Civil War generals.

Quite different men were Elijah Parish Lovejoy and Benjamin Franklin Butler. Both were ardent, energetic workers, able to carry on several tasks at the same time. Both had the stubborn determination of a bulldog. Both became controversial figures on the American political scene. But there was one tremendous difference between them. Ben Butler's vaulting ambition led him into equivocal statements and dubious actions, while Elijah Lovejoy, ambitious only for his cause, forgot himself into immortality.
CHAPTER XIV

The College Lands

When our early American colleges were founded, the colonial and state legislatures found it difficult to make grants of money. Often such grants were indeed made, to the extent of a few thousand dollars annually for a period of years, to assist with meeting current expenses. But the states had no funds with which to make substantial cash endowments. What they did have in vast quantity was land, and with land grants they gave their academies and colleges a start.

It was natural, therefore, that the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution should give a great deal of attention to their grant of land from the Massachusetts Legislature, made in 1813. That charter, in which was incorporated that "there be and hereby is granted a township of land six miles square," did not specify the location of the grant, and it was not until 1815 that it was fixed as a tract in the wilderness of Eastern Maine on the Penobscot River.

Even before the location of the grant, the Trustees had made definite plans for its use and sale. Part of its use was to be the placing of an institution on the tract, and sale was to be made of the area not needed for the educational plant. An important factor in the development of any such tract of land was the building of adequate roads. Hence, in May 1813, two years before they knew where their land was to be, the Trustees passed a vote concerning roads. Running north and south through the center of the tract, with three miles of it on each side, was to be a road five rods wide. On each side of that center road were to be two more roads, 400 rods distant from each other, and four rods wide. That made a total of five roads running the length of the tract. The roads from east to west, crossing the width of the area, were to be three in number, one through the center, and the other two 480 rods north and south respectively of the center road.

The Board had not yet selected a surveyor, but they laid down regulations to guide one when the land should be located and a surveyor named. He was to lay out the township into 24 long squares, sixteen of which would be equal, each containing 1200 acres. Each of eight other squares would have 480 acres. That plan would divide the entire 23,040 acres of the township. The Trustees decreed that "no person shall have liberty to purchase more than two hundred acres within a mile and a half of the Institution, nor more than five hundred acres in the whole township." That was to assure an adequate number of settlers.

Knowing that they could sell little of the land for cash, the Board, even before they had any actual land to sell, made plans for sale on credit:
The committee is directed to sell lands in said town and to give deeds to persons wishing to buy on credit, said purchasers giving back to the committee a mortgage on the land sold, with as much advance pay or such other security as the committee shall deem necessary.

Knowing also that any grant located by the Land Agent was sure to be in an unsettled area, the Trustees took precautions to assure the early presence of neighbors.

Voted, that all persons who shall purchase land in the township, within one and one-half miles of the Institution, shall be held to begin a settlement on the premises within three years after such purchase has been made.

By agreement with the Trustee Committee on Lands, a specific grant was designated on June 12, 1815, by William Smith, Agent for the Eastern Lands of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Because of its importance in the history of the college, the complete text is inserted here.

Whereas by a resolve of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, passed February 15, 1813, the Agent for the Sale of the Eastern Lands was authorized to give a deed of a township of land, now therefor I do, in behalf of the said Commonwealth, assign, relinquish and quit claim to the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution all right, title and interest of said Commonwealth in a township of land Number Three on the west side of the Penobscot river, being one of the townships purchased from the Penobscot tribe of Indians, containing 29,164 acres, as the same was surveyed by Park Holland, Jonathan Maynard and John Chamberlain, by direction of Salem Town in the year of 1797, bounded as follows: on the east by the Penobscot river; on the south by Township No. 4; on the west by Township No. 1 of the fourth and fifth ranges of townships north of the Waldo Patent; on the north by Township No. 1 in the first and second ranges of township purchased from the Indians.

There are reserved, however, 2600 acres to be laid out in lots of one hundred acres each, on a road to be made through said township agreeable to a contract entered into by the undersigned agent with John Bennock, which lots are reserved for defraying the expenses of said road.

It is further conditioned that the said trustees shall lay out and convey to each settler who settled said tract before January 1, 1784, or his heirs or assigns, one hundred acres each, to be held in fee simple, and so laid out as to best include the settlers' improvements and to be least injurious to the adjoining lands. And the trustees shall also lay out four lots of 320 acres each for the following uses: one lot for the use of the ministry; one for the use of the schools; one for the first settled minister, to be his property; and one for the future disposition of the General Court; and they shall also settle in said township twenty families within six years from the date hereof, including those now settled thereon.

Under the above conditions the Trustees of the Maine Literary and Theological Institution shall have and hold the aforesaid premises
forever, for the use, benefit and purpose of supporting said Institution, and to be by them holden in their corporate capacity in full considera-
tion for the grant made by an act passed February 27, 1813.

On August 9, 1815, only two months after the designation by the Agent, the Trustees voted to send a committee of three members to the township, to ascertain its quality and situation and the expediency of erecting buildings of the Institution upon it. That committee, composed of John Neal, David Nelson, and Elder Thomas Francis, duly reported, at a special meeting called on Sep­
tember 27, that the township was not suitable as a site for the Institution. As we have noted in an earlier chapter, the Board then successfully petitioned the Massachusetts legislature for permission to locate the college elsewhere.

The text of Agent Smith's particular grant gives the surprising information that, deep in the wilderness as the location was, it was not completely unin­
habited. In fact settlers had established some sort of foothold upon it earlier than 1784. Hence the college trustees were required to recognize those settlers by individual deeds, as ordered in the document. This explains also a vote passed on February 25, 1818:

John Neal is hereby empowered to proceed to our land on the Penobscot and take care of the timber now cut or cutting by persons without authority, to settle with them or commence prosecution, as he shall deem best for the Institution.

Thus, like many another owner of Maine lands, the college trustees had trouble with squatters as well as with previous legitimate settlers. "Taking off timber" was for a long time a kind of expected sport in Maine, something like cattle rustling in the West of a later day. To protect its timber from such depredations was a harder task for the Trustees than to deal with resident squatters.

In 1819 Otis Briggs was made agent of the committee in charge of the lands and he proceeded to negotiate sales. The college took numerous notes that became increasingly hard to collect. By 1825, when little money had been realized and only notes of dubious value could show for their efforts, the committee was authorized to inform all purchasers of land whose bonds had ex­
pired that no further leniency would be shown after August 14, 1829, if the full interest then due on their notes had not been paid. It thus appears that there had been trouble in collecting even the interest on the notes, to say nothing of the principal.

The previous votes to spend a total of fifteen percent on roads actually meant that allowance to purchasers. A buyer could work off fifteen percent of his note by labor at road building. It turned out that some of the settlers wouldn't even do that, for in 1830, after Briggs had been the agent for eleven years, the Board voted:

The Treasurer shall commence action against such settlers on the Pe­
obscot Township as shall have failed on or before October 15, 1830, to have worked out the fifteen percent on the roads, heretofore al­
lowed on the amount of their purchases. If any settler shall fail to work out, during this season, the fifteen percent required on the river road, the agent shall allow all other settlers to work out to an amount equal to such deficiency.
Some of the settlers had been on the tract for a long time, holding their original claims directly from Massachusetts under conditions which demanded their work on roads. Agent Briggs explained to the Trustees in 1830 that he had urged the settlers to make the river road on the same terms. Nine years had elapsed and that road had not yet been built. The settlers were supposed to fell the trees for a width of four rods, clear out stumps and stones, and for the width of one rod level the ground sufficiently for the passage of wheeled vehicles. Briggs said the road would cost one hundred dollars per mile. (Compare that with the modern cost of the national expressways.) There would be four bridges, one of which had already been built, but the agent would not accept it because it was not high enough. Concerning another bridge, the agent said,

I contracted for it with Mr. Eldridge for $62.50, to get a debt which he owed to the Trustees for stumpage of timber which he cut on his back lot, and which he calculated at the time Mr. Stephen Kimball would pay for, but he did not.

Running north and south through the township, about two miles from its western edge was an old road built by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts before the College had received the grant. In honor of the man who had done most to open up the region, it was called the Bennock road. Over this road, in 1830, passed the weekly mail. The post rider complained bitterly at the neglect of that old road. While the new owners were putting their attention on additional roads, the existing road was going to ruin. Agent Briggs insisted that repairs must be made on the Bennock road. "Roads are important to the College. They facilitate settlement, and without them we cannot profitably sell the lots."

The Penobscot Lands had not been entirely profitless after fifteen years in the possession of the College. Briggs reported that he had collected on notes $2400, and had received for stumpage about $3000. In 1831 he was able to state that timber on the unsold lots had been auctioned for $4312, and the purchasers given five years to remove it. But this money was not in cash, for the College took notes, payable in five annual installments.

The summer of 1831 saw, at last, the completion of the river road. Briggs reported:

I personally attended to the opening of the river road. Working with the men, I made a good turnpike road through woodland. The cost, receipted to the settlers on the fifteen percent provision, was $452.50, exclusive of the agent's time. The spring freshet had caused us to lose bridges and causeways, necessitating their rebuilding at an added expense of three hundred dollars.

Evidently the College didn't make the needed repairs on the Bennock road, for Agent Briggs said:

The Bennock road, as you know, is a mail route, and complaints have been made to the court, which would have attached our land had not a respectable citizen assured the court he would be responsible for the College doing all that should be done in the public interest. Your agent therefore asked the Chief Justice what, in his judgment it would
be necessary to expend on the road, and he has recommended $300. This should be done immediately.

A good deal of sub-letting and sub-contracting went on. A man named Swett agreed to get fifteen settlers to purchase lots if the College would give him a double lot of two hundred acres on which he himself would settle. The Trustees agreed, provided he would get the fifteen settlers to purchase hundred acre lots at one dollar an acre. Swett never secured his fifteen settlers, and there followed years of litigation for his own two hundred acres.

Agent Briggs rightly insisted that the inhabitants ought, for the sake of the community, to give work on the roads, in addition to the work for which they received credit on their purchases. The settlers protested that, since their bonds had expired, the College had the power to drive them out at any time. So why should they give labor that would not benefit themselves? Briggs therefore proposed, and the Trustees agreed, to renew the old bonds and take notes for the amount due on them, giving the settlers an additional period of five years to make payment.

The year 1831 added $1368 to cash receipts from the lands. Timber sold amounted to $850, a trespass action brought $200, and $312 was collected from settlers.

In 1832 the township was organized into the Plantation of Argyle, and seven years later was incorporated as a town. In 1844, the southern part was taken from Argyle to form the town of Alton. The obligation of the College for roads was somewhat relieved when Argyle Plantation voted to raise a thousand dollars for highways. But complications regarding the purchase of lands only multiplied. When payment became too slow or a settler moved away, the agent proceeded to resell the lot.

I sold Isaac Mansell's lot to Foster Delano for $250, and Amiel Rand's lot to his son Jack for $220, also the Judkins' lot to James Morrison for $200, and he paid me by work on the road $25.

First evidence of interest in the college lands by the lumber companies is contained in the agent's report for 1832, when he stated that 200 acres of land had been sold for $700 to the Sugar Island Side Boom Company, to be paid in five annual installments.

In 1835 a land speculator entered the scene in the person of Cyrus Moore of Dover, who made a deal with one Silas Barnard to take over a bond which the latter held to purchase 10,000 acres of the college lands west of the Bennock road for $1.50 an acre. Barnard agreed to divide with Moore all profit above the price specified in the bond. Trying to sell lots to prospective buyers in Boston, Moore found he could not complete sales before the expiration of the bond; so he purchased the land outright by making himself responsible to the College for Barnard's bond. Subsequent attempts by Moore to sell lots proving unsuccessful, he made the following plea to the college trustees in 1842:

Do you not think justice requires you to make some remuneration, either in money or in land, as you certainly have plenty of the latter if not of the former? I have paid to the College something like $15,000 and have never received one cent therefor. All I ask of the College is to put themselves in my situation and see if they would think it right
and just to receive something in return for $15,000, especially if they had lost their all and had become poor.

Moore and two associates, Robinson and Plummer, had given the college a note for $3831 in 1835. No bank would discount that note without a responsible personal endorsement. After holding the note for two years, and being badly in need of funds, the Trustees persuaded their fellow member, Timothy Boutelle, to endorse the note, so that the Ticonic Bank would accept it. In 1838, when the note fell due, all of the three signers, including Moore, were insolvent, so that Boutelle was obliged to pay the note at the bank. The Trustees then agreed that, if Moore did not recompense Boutelle within ninety days, the College would convey to Boutelle the 10,000 acres of land involved, provided he take up another note of Moore's amounting also to $3731. When Moore defaulted, the lands became Boutelle's property for his total payment of $7662.

Such was the situation when, in 1842, Boutelle appealed to his fellow trustees as follows:

When I agreed to take the land in payment of the two notes, I was constrained to do so rather from the utter inability of the College to refund to me the money thus advanced than from any expectation of making a profitable investment. The financial affairs of the College having now somewhat improved, I would propose to give up this contract for the land and have the College pay me the sums I have paid toward it, and I will waive the five years of interest on my money. I agree further to discount the entire amount by $1000 and give the College five or six years to pay the balance.

Generous as was Boutelle's offer, his fellow trustees turned it down. The committee appointed to consider the matter reported:

Although Mr. Boutelle's proposition is highly liberal, we do not conceive it to be for the best interests of the College to repurchase the land. Great credit is justly due him for the timely and necessary aid which the College realized when Mr. Boutelle took over the notes. But, as the transaction did not take the character of a loan of money upon a pledge of the property, and as the College entered into no stipulation under any circumstances to receive it back, we do not consider the College under any obligation, moral or equitable, to take it again. We trust that Mr. Boutelle will not be a loser by the efforts he has made, in the most disinterested manner for relief of the College.

At the same meeting the Trustees dealt with the petition of Moore, asking that he be granted additional lands to relieve his losses.

We are not aware that Moore has any claim, either in law or in equity. As the funds of the College are held in trust, the Trustees cannot consistently appropriate to his use any part of their available means. They regret his losses. It was doubtless a speculation into which he entered with the hope of gain. If he has been disappointed, he suffers in common with many others who have failed to realize their expectations.

The matter dragged along until 1847, Moore continuing to press his claim. He had originally paid one-fifth of the purchase price, or $3000, in cash. He
later paid $831, and, together with Robinson and Plummer, gave four notes of $3831 each. Two of the notes were paid as they fell due, and it was the remaining two for which Boutelle became responsible. Since the College had actually received $11,493 and Boutelle had possession of the whole 10,000 acres, Moore felt it only fair that he get some relief. This time the Trustees felt more lenient toward him than they had in 1842, for they agreed to give him three hundred acres of land.

Trouble with timber robbers seemed never to end, but the Trustees were quite willing to leave that warfare to Timothy Boutelle. In 1848 they voted,

In our opinion, Mr. Boutelle became beneficially interested in said timber after 1839, and if any timber has been taken off by trespassers since that time, the right of reclamation belongs to Mr. Boutelle, and he is hereby authorized to proceed in the name of the Trustees of Waterville College, but without any expense to them.

After 1850 the records of the Trustees contain no further reference to the Argyle lands. So confusing are the financial reports, it is impossible to tell how much money the College finally received from the sale of lands and timber. It is clear, however, that by the mid-century all had been sold, though a few dubious mortgage notes were still held by the treasurer. Net proceeds to the College could hardly have exceeded $25,000, after deducting the cost of surveys, agent's fees, and building of roads, as well as cost of some unsuccessful litigation. The College had held part of the land for thirty-five years, so that it may safely be assumed that the total return averaged much less than a thousand dollars a year.

In 1861 the State of Maine granted to Waterville College an additional tract of land. The grant was of two half townships to be selected by the Land Agent and was to be bestowed only if the College should raise before April 1, 1863, a subscription of $20,000. This grant lay almost due north of Moosehead Lake. The two half townships were not contiguous. One was in Township 11, Range 16, in the northwestern part of the state, three miles due west of Long and Umsaskis lakes, and nine townships north of the northernmost arm of Moosehead. Through it ran the main stream of the St. John River after its north and south branches joined near the township's southwest corner. The other tract was in Township 6, Range 17, five townships south and one west of the first tract. It was three townships due west of Caucomagomac Lake.

Isaac Love was selected as agent to raise the necessary $20,000. At the annual meeting of the Trustees in 1862, he was able to report that he had secured subscriptions of $23,210, of which $14,033 had already been paid; so the land now irrevocably belonged to the College. Concerning those two half townships, Agent Love said:

It is impossible to ascertain the value of this land grant until the property has been converted into money. Land in Maine is worth from nothing to $300 an acre, and public lands are valuable in proportion to the amount of white pine timber they will yield, the quantity of it when converted into lumber, the proximity of the lands to floating water leading to the seaboard, and the infelicities in the surroundings for thieves to steal. There are still in Maine ninety townships of public land containing about two million acres or more than three thousand square miles, which is equivalent to one-tenth of the area of the whole
state and is three times the area of the entire state of Rhode Island. I have seen many a lot which would yield a hundred thousand feet of first quality pine lumber per acre, worth for stumpage from two to five dollars per thousand feet. If the College grant proves to be located in some marsh without timber, its 23,040 acres would be worth exactly 23,040 times nothing. If it should be located where half is well wooded with white pine, it would be worth at least five times as much as all the property Waterville College has ever owned.

This new grant sold as slowly as had the original Argyle lands. Needing money badly for remodeling of South College and for other expenses, the Trustees authorized the Prudential Committee, in 1874, to negotiate sale of all wild lands belonging to the College, and if satisfactory sale could not be made, to mortgage the lands.

As late as 1893, the College still held title to 8600 acres, or about three-quarters of the grant in Township 6, Range 17, and 5785 acres, about one-quarter, in Township 11, Range 16. The committee was instructed to hasten sale of those remaining acres. But the whole nation was soon hard hit by the financial panic of 1893, and in the following year the committee reported that they had not pushed for land sales because of the distressed situation of the country.

It was at the annual meeting in 1899, thirty-eight years after the Maine legislature had made the grant, that the Trustees finally learned that they were no longer owners of wild land in the Maine woods. The last holdings in the northern tract had gone for $1.40 an acre, yielding $12,327. In the southern tract, the price had been only 83 cents an acre, and the yield only $4705. But happily, unlike the old Argyle business, these sales involved no notes, and the whole $18,032 had been paid into the college treasury. The committee pointed out that the lower value of the southern tract was owing to the depletion of its timber. Already it had been cut and had provided the College with a substantial sum for stumpage.

The grant of those lands north of Moosehead Lake proved much more profitable than had the grant on the Penobscot. Altogether the College received $47,370.1 That was the final result of more than eighty years that Colby College spent in the real estate business. It was a long time, filled with much work and much anxiety. It concerned good and bad settlers, honest and shady speculators, surveyors and agents, lumber buyers and mill builders, squatters and timber thieves. And, though it all brought in less than $75,000, that money made a lot of difference to a college treasurer who too often had to close his books in red ink rather than black.
CHAPTER XV

Calm Before The Storm

When President Sheldon resigned, the Trustees were eager to place Professor Champlin in the presidential chair, but he would not consent. He did agree to serve as Acting President until the Board found a successor to Sheldon. The senior professor picked up the administrative reins just in time to be in the midst of a bitter controversy between the Board and their former treasurer, James Stackpole, who had resigned both the treasurership and his trusteeship in 1851. Stackpole claimed that the College owed him $1200 for services. After giving the former treasurer a hearing before the full Board, the Trustees voted unanimously that he was entitled to no further claim. The matter dragged on for several years, during which Stackpole refused to turn over $1200 of the college funds which he had held back when his accounts were settled. Finally he gave up the fight, and returned the money at the rate of $200 a year for six years. It was a most unfortunate affair, alienating a prominent Waterville family which had long been identified with the College. The evidence available a hundred years after the event clearly indicates, however, that the Trustees were right. Stackpole had received all the compensation legally voted to him. His further claim may have had some grounds in oral conversation with individual trustees, but it had never been confirmed by vote.

During that interim period Champlin also had to face dissension in the faculty and complaints from students about some of the instruction. The onus was borne chiefly by Samuel K. Smith, who had become Professor of Rhetoric in 1850, and whose teaching load by 1853 had become unreasonably heavy. The whole matter was laid before the Trustees at their annual meeting in that year. A committee was appointed “to inquire whether the Department of Rhetoric and Elocution, as now conducted, meets the demands of college discipline and the just and reasonable expectations of the guardians thereof.” The same committee was asked to consider “whether any different distribution can be made of the duties assigned to the different professors, or any transfer of professors to other departments, which would be more in the interest of the College and the value of its instruction; also whether changes may profitably be made in methods of instruction.” The committee recommended that Professor Kendall Brooks be transferred from Chemistry and Natural History to Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. That change opened the way for the appointment to the faculty of a man who was to play a distinguished part in promoting the welfare of the College, for Charles E. Hamlin was in 1853 made Professor of Chemistry and Natural History. The inquiry into the Department of Rhetoric ended with a more reasonable teaching load for Smith.
The man who had been most gratified by President Sheldon's resignation was the secretary of the Trustees, Rev. Nathan Wood, stern Calvinist pastor of the Waterville Baptist Church. He at once began a campaign for the reelection of the former president, Robert Pattison, who had headed the College fifteen years earlier and whose Baptist conservatism was assured. At the annual meeting in 1853, Wood secured a vote, inviting Pattison to return to the presidency at $1200 a year, and giving him three months to decide whether to accept. Reluctantly, but with sincere desire to help the College when it had suffered such a severe blow by the simultaneous loss of Sheldon, Loomis and Keely, Dr. Pattison returned to the presidency in 1854.

When Pattison began his second administration, the financial condition of the College was somewhat better than it had been in the 1840's. Tuition had been raised to ten dollars a term ($30 a year). Each year's operation was showing a slight surplus. Enrollment exceeded 90 students, and it became difficult for five full-time teachers and a part-time teaching president to give the necessary instruction. Champlin took care of Greek and Latin, with the help of Tutor Theophilus Abbott. In addition to his teaching of rhetoric and elocution, Samuel K. Smith was librarian. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy (today designated as physics) was taught by Brooks, while Chemistry and Natural History (botany, zoology, geology, paleontology, etc.) were in the hands of Hamlin. The Trustees determined to add another man to the faculty, and voted:

The cause of education and the best interests of the College demand the establishment of another professorship at the earliest practical moment when funds for its endowment can be obtained.

To implement the above vote, the Board authorized the raising of $20,000 by public subscription, of which $12,000 would be used to endow the new professorship and $8000 would be set aside as a scholarship fund. To induce prospective givers, the same scheme was employed as that used when funds were raised for Recitation Hall, except that this time double use of the same dollar was not contemplated. But donors could still control designated scholarships. The vote of the Board provided:

When any person shall subscribe and pay at least $500, that sum shall constitute a scholarship, to receive the name designated by the donor, who shall be entitled during his life to the nomination of the candidate to receive the benefit of the same.

Records of the many financial campaigns conducted before 1900 do not always make clear the compensation paid to the agents, but in this case it is laid down in the minutes of the Trustees. The agent was to receive a salary of $400 a year, his traveling expenses, and one and one-half percent of all money he collected.

When Professor Brooks resigned in 1855, Moses Lyford became Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, in which position he rendered distinguished service for twenty-eight years.

At their annual meeting in August, 1855, the Trustees decided the time had come to raise substantial endowment. They set the proposed figure at $50,000, an amount far beyond any previous attempt. That Secretary Wood and his fellow conservative Baptists had a hand in working out the provisions is made clear by the Board's vote that,
as soon as the sum of $50,000 has been paid into the treasury, the room rent of all worthy candidates for the ministry who are students in the College shall be remitted, and one thousand dollars shall be appropriated annually to maintain a theological course.

To be sure that the theological course would be sound and orthodox, it was voted that,

the lectures in this course and details of the department shall be arranged by a committee of three from the Trustees of the College in cooperation with a committee of three appointed by the Maine Baptist Convention.

The plan failed to materialize, and the theological course, which Babcock had unsuccessfully tried to revive many years earlier, was never reestablished.

By 1856 the College was again having trouble collecting its bills. Although a bond of $200 was legally required from each student, the requirement seems not to have been enforced, and the treasurer reported a long list of delinquents. The Board therefore voted to authorize the treasurer “to bring suit, if necessary, to collect all debts for term bills or other indebtedness, which had been pending for more than two years.”

When the Trustees assembled in annual meeting in 1856, for the first time since 1821 they met without the presence of the man who had more than once saved the institution from bankruptcy, Squire Timothy Boutelle. In gratitude for his distinguished service, the Board spread upon their records this memorial of that leading citizen of Waterville, who had died in the previous autumn.

In 1821, when this Board was incorporated, Hon. T. Boutelle was one of its members and continued in this office till his decease, November 12, 1855, aged 78 years. While we leave it to the religious society with which he was connected [Boutelle was not a Baptist] to estimate his religious character, and to his political friends to care for his fame as a statesman, and to members of the legal profession to set forth his abilities as a counselor at law, and to the people of Waterville, where he resided for more than half a century, to honor his virtues as a citizen, we feel it our duty and privilege to record our recollections of him as a wise and judicious friend of science and literature and as a firm and persevering friend of Waterville College. He appreciated mental culture and esteemed its worth in all degrees of its progress. He saw its importance in our growing country and was ready to labor and sacrifice for its advancement. He cultivated science as a pleasant and useful employment through life. The minds which he helped to cultivate are living memorials of the worth of his labors.

The year of 1856 was also momentous in seeing the salaries of all professors placed for the first time at a thousand dollars a year. It must be admitted, however, that this decision was not quite so generous as appeared on the surface. The “nigger in the woodpile” was the proposal made by the faculty, each of whom offered to give $200 a year for two years, provided the salaries were raised from $800 to $1,000. This meant that, for the two year period the College would be taking the increase out of one pocket only to put it into another.

President Pattison’s health failed, and in 1857 he presented his resignation. His decision to resign may have been prompted as much by his discouragement
over conditions at the College as by concern for his own health. The campaign for funds was not prospering. Enrollment, which had totaled 91 in 1854-55, had fallen to 66 in 1855-56, and stood at only 68 in 1856-57. The fall of 1854 had seen 25 freshmen enter the College, but in the following autumn there were only twelve. In fact, in 1855-56, the freshmen class was smallest of the four, there being nineteen seniors, twenty juniors, twenty-two sophomores, and three men in the partial course. The year showed a substantial financial deficit, and the prediction for 1856-57 was no better. At any rate, for his own health and the health of the College, President Pattison had had enough.

This time the Trustees were determined to get the man whom they had really wanted in 1853, and now their importunity was successful. James Tift Champlin agreed to assume the presidency.

Champlin had come to the College as Professor of Greek and Latin in 1841, from the pastorship of the First Baptist Church in Portland. Born in Colchester, Connecticut, in 1811, he had graduated from Brown in 1834, and had served his alma mater as a tutor until 1838, when he became pastor of the Portland Church. In 1839 he married Mary Ann Pierce, a Providence girl of his tutor days at Brown. In a biographical sketch, Henry S. Burrage wrote:

Much as he loved his work, a bronchial difficulty that had troubled him from the beginning of his pastorate increased and there were times when he was unable to preach.

When the call came to a professorship at Waterville, Champlin considered it just the position best suited to his health and his talents. He knew he would have to conduct classes and talk to students, but he believed he would not be called upon for long discourses from pulpit or platform. How little he knew what lay ahead for him! In his letter of resignation to his Portland Church, Champlin set forth his reasons for accepting the professorship:

As this office will enable me to avail myself of my early studies and at the same time present a field of usefulness perhaps fully as important as the ministry, while it will relieve me of the most injurious part of my present employment, I feel myself bound to ask my dismission as pastor of this church, in anticipation of accepting the appointment.

The correspondence between Champlin and the Church would indicate that he came to Waterville a sick man, but fortunately the illness was temporary. Before he had been at the College a year, he was doing a lot of preaching and giving public addresses in behalf of the institution. As the years went by, his strength seemed to increase rather than diminish, so that he became not only the most dynamic but also the most successful of all Colby presidents up to his time.

In his memorial biography of Champlin, Dr. Burrage described the College as the Portland pastor found it on his arrival.

Waterville was then a remote country village on the stage line between Augusta and Bangor. For twenty years the College had struggled against poverty, and as yet only the beginning of a collegiate institution had been made. It was still a day of small things. The endowment was all but non-existent, salaries were low, and the classes were small. But the College had a strong corps of instructors. Three of them, George Keely, Justin Loomis, and Champlin himself, were graduates of Brown,
imbibing the methods and spirit of Brown’s great president, Dr. Way-
land. They were soon joined by Martin B. Anderson. All four were
men of intellectual strength, and by their ability and sound scholarship
they gave to the College a reputation which it had not before secured.2

Champlin at once revealed his scholarly abilities. Dissatisfied with existing
with extensive historical and explanatory notes—a work so well done that for
more than thirty years it was a textbook in most American colleges. Before he
became President in 1857, Champlin had added to this publication Select Popular
Orations of Demosthenes, a translation from the German of Kuchner’s Latin
Grammar, Aeschines’ On the Crown, and A Short and Comprehensive Greek
Grammar. In 1855, in recognition of the scholarship shown in his publications,
the University of Rochester conferred upon him an honorary degree.

The three Brown graduates who were members of the Waterville faculty
must have been greatly heartened in 1859, when the trustees of the two colleges
agreed to a joint campaign for funds, with Rev. Horace Love of New York as
agent. The Waterville College campaign for $50,000 was made a part of that
concerted effort, but as we have already seen, it soon collapsed and Champlin,
together with his faculty colleagues, had to rake its dying ashes.

No man knew better than did Champlin the kind of task he faced when he
became President in 1857. For sixteen years he had been close to every aspect
of the college life; for one year after Pattison’s resignation, he had served as
Acting President and Chairman of the Prudential Committee. He knew the mem-
ers of the Board intimately and could distinguish between those who were
ready to fight and sacrifice for the college and those who merely “also ran.” He
had seen the enrollment fall from 91 to 66 in a single year. He was aware of
the recent annual deficits. But he had faith in the Trustees, in his fellow faculty
members, and most of all in himself. He was done with avoiding the unwanted
task any longer. At last he felt himself equal to the job, and with the help of
God, whom he so devoutly worshipped, he would undertake it.

In his inaugural address on August 10, 1858, Champlin said:

Knowing full well the history and condition of the College, I do not
regard the office as a sinecure. Following a succession of able and
learned men, I see nothing but labor and responsibility before me; and
in these indeed I find my chief incitement. One learns that labor is
less irksome than leisure, and responsibility is more inspiring than is
quiet security. I welcome the labor, and hope to prove to the friends
of the institution that I am its faithful servant. If Waterville College,
in its present state of maturity, does not make reasonable progress in
the future, it will be either from want of proper management here, or
from want of cooperation and support among its friends. Let us hope
that neither will be wanting, that the designs of Providence in planting
this institution will not be frustrated.3

Champlin felt that, in the sixteen years since he had been connected with
the College, due attention to one field had been slipping. Interestingly enough,
his complaint did not concern his own field of the classics, but the quite unre-
related field of mathematics. In his inaugural he said,
The idle clamor has been raised against mathematics as scholastic and unpractical, that it does not impart dexterities which can be turned to immediate account. But does it not lay the foundation for the useful arts? Ask the land surveyor, the navigator, the mechanician, where he got his art. But more than this, mathematics tends to emancipate the soul from sense, and thus give it that independence and freedom of movement which are essential to all fruitful thought, and hence to all useful art.

Have we, in our modern age of specialization, lost something of the broad humanism of those old-time scholars? It is hard to picture a modern classicist defending another field in these knowledgeable words, as did Champlin in 1858:

Mathematics is the science of quantity. It has to do with how much, whether in space, time, number, or degree. Pure mathematics is an absolute science, the development of the content of certain conceptions. Space and number do not necessarily suppose the existence of particular things, but may represent merely a succession of like portions of pure space and time. Pythagoras taught that number was the generating principle of all things, since it determined their form. Aside from its acknowledged usefulness in determining distances, times, forms, forces, and numbers, mathematics remains one of the great gymnastics by which the mind is trained to that superiority to sense so essential to all free, independent, and effective action.

Some of the students of the 1850's, long afterward recalling their college days, remembered Champlin as a Calvinist Baptist. Baptist he was—loyal and unyielding in his belief in immersion and his opposition to infant baptism, but that he shared Nathan Wood's views on predestination is doubtful. In his day Champlin was surely considered a Baptist liberal, or at least a middle-of-the-road man in respect to theology. In an address before the Society of Missionary Inquiry at Newton Theological Institution, less than a year before he was elected president at Waterville, he said:

With the dogmatist, religion is all theory and no practice, all law and no gospel. It becomes little more than a doctrine of God and redemption as a scheme. Such a Christian shrinks from philanthropic efforts. He is too much concerned with belief to give any attention to works.

Only a year after his inaugural, Champlin launched vigorously into the joint financial campaign with Brown University, to which we have already referred. Articles of agreement were drawn up between Brown and Waterville College, whereby the two institutions sought jointly to raise $300,000 through the agency of Horace G. Love of Brooklyn, New York. The two colleges agreed to pay Love $2,000 a year and his expenses, and these costs were to be shared by the colleges in proportion to the funds collected for each. Subscribers were permitted to designate their gifts for either college, or give them to the fund for equal distribution between the two.

As was usually the case, the bait was again held out for scholarship donations.

Not less than one-third of the whole amount paid is to be for foundation of scholarships, not to exceed $60 nor be less than $36 a year,
for the benefit of worthy young men pursuing studies in said institutions, of which scholarships not less than one-half shall be for the benefit of sons of preachers of the gospel.

President Champlin's competent administration showed immediate results. When the Trustees held their annual meeting in August, 1860, the account showed a small surplus, for the first time in nearly a decade. Total income was $8,060 and total expenditures $7,578. The sources of income in that year, almost a hundred years ago, are interesting. Somewhat more than half, $4,780, came from term bills. From securities, considered today to be the usual type of invested funds, came only $768. That amount was from three sources: Bangor City bonds, Canal Bank stock, and City of Portland scrip. In that last named item, which we would consider an oddity today, the College had invested enough to yield $448. In those days the College loaned money freely to individuals. While most such loans were eventually paid, the creditor often had to wait many years for both interest and principal, and there was seldom sufficient security to protect the loan. The treasurer's report for 1860 showed that $680 had come in as payments of principal on such loans, and $288 in interest. President Champlin had secured a legacy of $300 during the year and $40 had been collected in rent.

In 1859-60 the College spent very little apart from the direct expense of education. Of the $7,578 of total expense, $5,246 went for faculty salaries. Repairs, supplies, printing and miscellaneous items accounted for the second largest category, $923. Insurance and taxes cost $125, fuel $147, and allowances to students on term bills $173. Commencement and the various exhibitions throughout the college year cost nearly twice as much as all insurance and taxes, $247. All through the first sixty years of its existence the College paid taxes, strange as it may seem to us today. Not only were there taxes on houses which the College rented to faculty members, but in common with all non-profit institutions the College was subject to an occasional special tax levied by the State.

At their annual meeting in 1860, the Trustees showed their appreciation of the faculty's generosity by voting to devote to each man's department the interest on the four hundred dollars which he had paid into the campaign fund as a result of his promise to subscribe $200 for each of two years provided his salary were raised by that amount.

All sorts of complications were already arising concerning the fund campaign. A prominent Rhode Island Baptist agreed to give $5,000 to set up five scholarships of a thousand dollars each, provided the interest therefrom, which went into the treasury each year toward the bills of five students, would then be used to increase the President's salary by three hundred dollars. A committee's consideration of that offer covered an entire page in the big record book of the Trustees. The committee pointed out that the donor's plan demanded the equivalent of a duplicate appropriation of the same funds.

It would compel the College to raise the President's salary and pay it from its own funds, and educate five scholars from the funds of the donor, or the College must educate the five scholars for nothing and use the donor's fund to raise the President's salary.
In his naive thinking, what the prospective donor had apparently overlooked was that the College would not receive from the students the money they would otherwise have to pay if they were not recipients of the scholarships.

Expecting substantial returns from Mr. Love's efforts in the joint campaign for the two colleges, the Waterville trustees made plans in 1860 for investment of the money. It was to be put into scrip, or notes of the State of Maine, or any county, city or town in the state, in bank stock to an amount not exceeding twenty percent of the whole investment, and in first mortgages on real estate at fifty percent of valuation.

Surprisingly, until 1860, there had been no segregation of funds collected for endowment. Although a small amount had been set aside, of which less than ten thousand dollars remained when Champlin became President, it was too often encroached upon to meet mounting deficits. Not until Champlin so insisted in 1860, did the invested funds become a sacred trust, only the interest to be used. The Board voted,

All sums donated to the College for its endowment shall henceforth be kept distinct from all other funds of the College, and only the annual interest shall be expended.

The President proposed that higher standards for admission be applied at once, and the Trustees agreed. Champlin was also dissatisfied with the way recipients were selected for honorary degrees. The Trustees decided that such awards should be guarded against abuse, but they felt that friends and graduates of the College should have first consideration, although the guiding rule should be "distinguished merit." Up to that time honorary degrees had been conferred by majority vote of the Trustees present at a legal meeting. On the President's insistence the Board adopted a new by-law requiring a two-thirds vote for those awards. Champlin agreed that it was the Trustees' duty to know what was going on in academic pursuits at the College, and he assured the Board they would receive annual reports from each department, including lists of books used and lectures given.

The cost of college attendance had risen very slightly since 1820. A term bill issued to Francis Hesseltine in December, 1859, preserved in the college archives, totaled $17.17, of which ten dollars was for tuition and $3.33 for room rent. Other charges included use of library, general repairs, service, fuel for classrooms, catalogues, copy of the college laws, and fines. At that time, as has already been mentioned, the College operated no commons, so board charges were not included on Hesseltine's bill. Of course it cost him something to eat, even if he boarded himself, as many students then did.

When Professor Charles P. Chipman was editor of the Alumnus in 1913, he invited the College's oldest living graduate, George M. P. King, 1857, to contribute his recollections of college days. King had enjoyed an illustrious career in education. After graduating from Newton Theological Institution in 1858 and serving several years in pastorates, he became President of Wayland Seminary in the national capital, in which position he served for thirty years. Then for eighteen years he was Professor of English at Virginia Union University in Richmond, where he was still teaching when he died in 1917 at the age of 84. King is not the only alumnus who maintained that Professor Champlin—he became president the year that King graduated—was not so popular with students as had
been Pattison and Sheldon. A certain aloofness made it difficult for students to get close to him. King wrote:

Some of us came to have more respect for him, while others were extremely reticent about expressing any attachment to the man. But there was a thoroughness in his drill of Greek and Latin grammar that generally won out with a majority of the students.

Concerning another member of the faculty in the 1850's, King said:

Dr. Smith helped us wind our way over (not always through) Whately's Rhetoric, and he also cared for a part of our Latin. At first he impressed us with his staid bachelor habits, but after a time Tutor Abbott, not then connected with the College, led him into the way of matrimony, and about the middle of our course he surprised us by taking a wife. This increased his smiles and gave a more paternal touch to his tones.

King disposed of one professor in a single sentence. "Dr. Kendall Brooks taught mathematics, but many of us fancied he was happier in the pulpit than in the classroom." King had nothing but praise for Charles Hamlin.

Professor Hamlin taught the sciences, including botany. We were glad to go to his classroom, because we got up in the world a bit, ascending a flight of stairs in South College. We were glad to get out of those damp, dingy basement classrooms in the chapel, but even without that benefit, the climb in South College was well worth our while. Professor Hamlin was a gifted teacher who imbued us with something of his own enthusiasm for the natural world.

It will be recalled that when Recitation Hall was built in 1836, the first floor had been fitted as chapel. But the room had no heat. King tells us:

A little while during each year we could meet in the chapel for morning devotions, but during the cold weather we were herded into the underground room in the basement, where a fatherly stove dispensed its heat to shivering students.

Looking back from the vantage point of that year of 1913, which was the graduation year of the writer of this history, King could well point out the absence of student activities in his day. Only a short time before King wrote his reminiscences to Chipman, Ralph Good's football team had won the state championship, the baseball team had enjoyed conspicuous success, and Frank Nardini of the Class of 1913 had taken three first places in the state track meet. Athletics were prominent at Colby in the opening years of the new century's second decade. This is what King told Chipman about such activities in his day:

I cannot remember that a word was ever said about need of physical culture. We dropped our shoulders, sheltered our hands in our pockets, went to our meals with marked promptness, and came back by the post office. That was the extent of our exercise.

Concerning religious life in the College, King commented that while such an organization as the YMCA was unknown, they had the Boardman Missionary
Society and managed to keep "in rather lingering existence" its weekly prayer meeting. Everyone was expected to be in church on Sunday, and "if we did not become staunch Calvinists it was not the fault of Dr. Wood, pastor of the Baptist Church. The Bible was not one of our textbooks and we never gathered in classes for its study."

King felt that college instruction in his day was decidedly narrow. We left college only slightly less natural and untrained than when we entered. The importance of our personalities escaped attention. Our textbooks were the limit of our thinking. We frequently forgot the hours when Dr. Smith would have the library open and where there was plenty of reading matter to provide material for our compositions or entertain us in our leisure. Very few students read anything that was not assigned, and most of the professors assigned nothing but pages in the textbook. Perhaps it was not easy for our instructors to put themselves in our places, see just what we needed and then frankly tell us. If this could have been done, our vision would have been broader and our lives enriched. I wish the training had been more circular, and the circle greatly enlarged.

Another student of King's time, Albert C. Marble, tells about his first visit to the College when his father took him, a twelve year old boy, to Commencement in 1852.

We had arisen at dawn and after driving a dozen miles, neared the Winslow end of Ticonic Bridge. Suddenly the stately tower of Recitation Hall burst into view above the surrounding roofs and treetops. From the flagpole floated the Stars and Stripes, and below it a long streamer with motto of the College, Lux Mentis Scientia. The waters of Ticonic Falls dashed musically on the rocky bottom of the river below; birds sang in the trees that bordered the highway. No human traffic was in sight to mar the scene. If the mills on the Waterville shore were running, their hum was drowned by the music of the Falls.

It was the morning of Commencement Day, and later the bell pealed forth its call from the tall old tower. The crowd assembled; the marshall, with a baton wound with pink and white ribbons, stood on the high steps in front of the Chapel and gave the command to form the procession. At last the door was opened, and forth walked the President in cap and gown, followed by the professors and the long line of trustees, reverend clergy and high dignitaries of church and state. To the sound of martial music, they marched in long procession to the church while the streets on both sides were thronged with an eager crowd. At the church the line divided and was arrayed on both sides of the walk. Between the lines walked the President, with the Governor at his right, followed by all the dignitaries. Then the line closed like turning a stocking inside out. This surprised some of those in the line, who found themselves at the foot instead of the head, and worse still, the house filled before they got inside. The galleries were crowded with the beauty of the town in gala dress, with fluttering fans and sparkling eyes. The President ordered the band to play, then he offered a prayer and made a short speech in Latin; then each member of the class gave a speech or dissertation. When it was over, the line formed again and marched to the town hall, where a collation was
spread. To a hungry boy who could not enter, it seemed a gate to paradise—a paradise which five years later that boy did indeed enter.

Such was Waterville College in the sixth decade of the nineteenth century—a little, backwoods institution on the banks of the Kennebec in the nation’s northeasternmost state. With only six teachers and fewer than a hundred students it would seem likely to make little dent on the great surface of the next decade’s stirring events. For portent of those events was already appearing on the horizon. Down at Brunswick, near the only rival college in Maine, had recently lived and written the lady whom Abraham Lincoln called “the little woman who made so great a war.” After long hesitation, the Waterville College faculty had, in 1858, at last permitted the formation of an anti-slavery society. Within less than a year of the 1860 Commencement, young men would be leaving the Waterville classrooms to die on southern battlefields. Dark days lay ahead for the little college on the Kennebec. Fortunate was it to have at the helm during those grim days a man of unflinching strength like James T. Champlin.
When the Trustees of Waterville College assembled for their annual meeting in August, 1861, the war was already four months old. The disastrous battle of Bull Run had been fought and nearly 200,000 men had already enlisted in the Union forces. A few students had left the classroom to join the ranks, but it was too early for the full force of the war to be severely felt.

The Trustees gave their chief attention to the campaign for funds. Like most citizens of the North, they thought the war would soon be over, despite the set-back at Bull Run, and they saw no reason for discontinuing or even postponing their appeal for money. They were disturbed by an operational deficit of more than a thousand dollars and were determined to raise funds to liquidate it. They also demanded “the closest economy in the management of college affairs.”

In the previous winter the Maine Legislature had granted to Waterville College two half-townships of land (See Chapter XIV). Because a condition of that grant had been that the College raise $20,000 within two years, the Board now urged extraordinary efforts to achieve that goal. They showed confidence that it would be met when they voted, “Placing full confidence in the ability and practical knowledge of our Prudential Committee, we would recommend that the grant be left in their care, for its sale or to locate it, as they may deem for the interest of the College.” In order to ease the financial situation, President Champlin relinquished his claim on free rent of the President’s house.

At the next annual meeting in 1862, the Treasurer’s report showed the financial situation apparently improved, although the war had made the nation’s finances much worse. Receipts for 1861-62 totaled $11,103, and expenses were $10,238. But this was really a false picture, because $4,177 had come in from payments on the campaign subscriptions, and the Board had voted that those endowment funds must be segregated. The true picture of actual operations was quite different. From term bills the College had received $4,643; from interest on invested funds $818, and from all other sources $35—a total of $5,496. Faculty salaries had cost $6,313, scholarships $415, insurance and taxes $128, commencement and exhibitions $315, maintenance $733, miscellaneous $102—a total of $8,006. So there was actually an operational deficit of $2,510. The discrepancy between these operational figures and those presented by the Treasurer lay in the inclusion of fund receipts and fund raising expenses in his report.

It is well to note just what the College had by way of invested funds on August 1, 1862. It held Portland City scrip that had cost $7,478, Bangor City bonds of $4,000, Canal Bank stock at $1,000, Ticonic Bank stock at $800, and Mount
Eagle Manufacturing Company stock at $1,200—total investments of $14,478, figured at cost. The market value was certainly somewhat less.

Estimating the prospective receipts for 1862-63, the best the Prudential Committee could do was to set the expected amount at $4,969. In 1861-62 faculty salaries alone had come to $6,313; so unless there were drastic cuts, another deficit must be faced.

When a special meeting was called in January, 1863, it was not to meet a war emergency, but to consider action respecting a bill recently passed by the Federal Congress. It was what became known as the famous Morrill Act, creating the Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. The act did not, however, require the establishment of new colleges, but made it possible to establish agricultural and mechanical departments in existing institutions. The federal procedure was to issue land scrip to the states. The scrip represented acreage in the great public lands of the West and could be sold by the states for cash.

The trustees of Bowdoin and of Waterville colleges were equally alert to the opportunity afforded by the Morrill Act, and both tried hard to get a share. At their special meeting in January, 1863, the Waterville trustees voted that, if the State would apply part of the funds to Waterville College they would be willing to change the college name, to create necessary departments and appoint necessary professors, and actually let such appointments be subject to approval by the Governor and Council. They further declared their willingness to allow the Governor and Council to be a perpetual commission to visit the college and arrange with the faculty the course of study to be pursued under terms of the Act.

There is evidence of an agreement with Bowdoin, whereby that college would receive the mechanical course, while Waterville got the agricultural, because the latter board voted, "It is agreed that the Legislature may appoint a Board of Trustees, who shall have concurrent jurisdiction with the Trustees of the College in directing the management of the agricultural department." There is no such distinct mention of the mechanical department.

The State had made no decision when the Waterville trustees met in August, and all they could do was to continue their committee of liaison with the Legislature and authorize the College Treasurer to execute any necessary bond "to enable the College to avail itself of the grant of land by the General Government for founding agricultural colleges."

The result is well known. Despite protests from both Brunswick and Waterville, the legislative decision was to establish a new college of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts at Orono—the college which has since become the University of Maine. It was a fortunate decision, because it assured for Maine a public university, comparable with those in other states, and it assured to Bowdoin and Colby the privilege of remaining independent undergraduate colleges of liberal arts, free from state control.

One can read the records of the Waterville College trustees from 1861 to 1865 without suspecting that the nation was at war. The first item in those records, in any way connected with the war, occurred on August 9, 1865, several months after Appomattox, when degrees were conferred on the Class of 1865. Then, in its first mention of the war, the Board recorded:

The degree of A.B. is conferred also upon Henry Merrill Bearce, originally of the Class of 1863, who left near the close of his junior year to join the army, and after two years absence, seven months of
which was spent in a southern prison, returned and made up all but two terms of the remainder of the course.

The records of the faculty are equally silent in respect to the Civil War. It would appear that very few faculty meetings were held during those years. In the entire period between January, 1861, and September, 1865, only four faculty meetings were recorded (March 26 and April 30, 1862, and April 29 and May 16, 1863) and at none of those four meetings was there any mention of the war.

Despite the silence of both trustee and faculty records, the Civil War did have vital impact upon the College. In a later chapter, *Colby in Three Wars*, we shall tell of the part played by Colby men and women in those three great trials in our nation’s history. In the present chapter we are concerned not with what Colby did in the war, but with what the war did to Colby.

Years later several prominent alumni told how the news of Fort Sumter was received at the College. In 1911, when Colby’s illustrious graduate, Col. Richard Cutts Shannon, was a consul in Switzerland, he reminded his classmate, Col. Frederic Boothby, how they got news that the war had started.¹

You remember better than I that spring day in 1861, when we heard the maddening news of the first attack on the flag. And you remember how you and Hall² hunted up somewhere an old drum, mustered Dekes and Zetas and neutrals of all classes, and led the motley crowd through the frantically excited town. It was the quiet, peaceful Hall who drew us up before the residence of Hon. Joshua Nye. By our tumultuous cheers we called out Senator Lot Morrill, who was visiting there. He made a good patriotic speech, but not pitched on a key at all corresponding to the blazing enthusiasm and sacred rage of the youths before him. But he could not know that boys in that group were really saying, ‘On our way to death we salute you!’ Yet, was there one of us who six months before could have imagined himself a soldier? We could not even be called good men physically. We knew nothing about the stress of modern athletics, the perils of baseball or the violence of football. We were pure mollycoddles. We were not even very keen about hazing. Most of us had never fired a gun and would not have recognized the uniform of an American soldier if we had seen one. We went to the war with resolute but sad hearts, solely because an inner voice whispered, ‘You must.’ And the account Colby men gave of themselves in the next four years shows that, if they were not athletes, they were just as brave as any professional soldiers.

George Illsley of the Class of 1863 recalled that, the very afternoon when the news of Sumter reached the College, drill was started on the campus. “Many students enlisted at the first opportunity,” said Illsley. “Forty of them went down on the stern-wheel steamboat to Augusta and took the boat for Portland. The recruiting station was the most popular place in town. As the days passed, the feeling grew even stronger, so that it was necessary to close the college term earlier than usual for the summer vacation. My Class of 1863, which entered with fifty men, went down to only eight at graduation.”

Augmenting what he had written to Boothby, Col. Shannon wrote some ten years later to Dr. E. C. Whittemore:
When there was a murderous assault by rebel sympathizers on the 6th Mass. Regt. as it was marching through the streets of Baltimore, the excitement among the student body was out of control. Finally, when some of the students had already joined a military company then recruiting in the town and others were showing a disposition to follow their example, President Champlin deemed it advisable to bring the term to a close. It would have closed in regular course on May 8. So, one day towards the end of April, we were assembled in the old chapel, and after a brief but fervent address by the President, we were dismissed to our homes, to consult our parents and friends before taking final action.

When war excitement first hit the campus, study was badly disrupted, but not the actual holding of classes. Shannon makes it clear that Champlin's reason for closing the College a week or two early, in the spring of 1861, was that he feared many students might rush off to war without parental consent; so the President wisely told the boys to go home and talk the matter over with father and mother. Save for that one early closing, during the entire four years of the war there was no disruption of class schedule or college calendar. How much work was actually done in those classes is doubtful. Probably many students felt as did Col. Shannon, who later recalled it as anything but a studious time.

To understand thoroughly the principles of zoology was undoubtedly very important, but in view of the present aspect of public affairs some of us thought the principles of military science would be of more practical benefit. Another subject we had to study was mechanics of fluids, but the fluid that chiefly interested us at that time was the Atlantic Ocean and how, in traversing it, our government could throw supplies into Fort Sumter. In Greek we were studying the tragedies of Euripides, but what greater tragedy could there be than the dismemberment of our glorious Union?

Although many students marched off to war, the college ranks were not completely drained. In fact, an examination of enrollment figures for the years of the Civil War reveals surprisingly that numbers were less depleted than has been supposed. In the fall of 1860 total registration was 122; in 1861, when the war had been several months under way, it was 117. In the fall of 1862, enrollment had indeed dropped to 83, and in 1863 it was down again to 69, and in 1864 to 62, its lowest ebb. But in the fall of 1865, when the war had been ended scarcely four months, it was up to 71, though in 1866 it dropped again to 66. Of course a slump from 122 to 62 in four years was serious, but it did not come even near to closing the College. In the five years before Champlin had become President the annual enrollments (1852-1856) had been successively 88, 89, 86, 89, and 66. So it appears that only once during the war did enrollment drop lower than it had in 1856.

Although many diplomas were conferred in absentia, Commencement was held every year during the Civil War, and even some innovations occurred. It was in 1862, for instance, that the first Class Day was held. Of that occasion the Waterville Mail said:

Tuesday forenoon was devoted to a celebration of Class Day by the young gentlemen who had just finished their college course. It was a novelty at this institution, but will henceforth no doubt form one of
the most attractive features of Commencement. The exercises com-
menced at the Baptist Church, where a large audience having as-
sembled, prayer was offered by President Champlin, who also made a
short address to the class. Then followed an oration by George Gif-
ford and a poem by George Hunt. Under escort of the Waterville
Band, which had done much to enhance the entertainment at the church
by interspersing appropriate music, the class then proceeded to the col-
lege grounds, followed by a large share of the audience. Gathering
beneath the class tree near the southern avenue, after music by the
band, an ode was sung. Then the history was given by Edward W. Hall,
followed by a prophecy by A. G. Barker and an address to the class by
A. L. Lane.

In his class history, Hall reminded the audience that the class was already
represented on the battlefield. Amasa Bigelow had already paid the supreme
sacrifice. Samuel Hamblen was a lieutenant in the Third Maine, and John Phil-
brook was in the same regiment. Richard Shannon, who was later to rise to
colonel, was on the staff of General Slocum. Six others members of the class
responded a year later to the rallying cry of the North, “We are coming, Father
Abraham, three hundred thousand more.”

Hall said that the custom of regular award of prizes had begun with his
class, although occasional prizes had been known earlier. With the Class of 1862
began a long continued custom of junior parts. Hall pointed with pride to other
achievements: “We have started the first gym and cricket club, and have been
the first to find false orders in manuscript and identify the authors.”

It was in the midst of war that there began to be published what are called
class statistics. It was proclaimed in 1862 that exactly half of the twenty-six
graduates were church members—seven Baptists, four Congregationalists, and
two Methodists. Eight intended to enter the ministry and an equal number planned
to study law, while four were headed for medicine. Two of the graduates wore
beards, three had side whiskers, and nine sported mustaches. Only six of the
twenty-six men smoked, and only one chewed tobacco. The youngest man in
the class was 19 and the oldest 30, with the average age 24. At Class Day in
1862 there was instituted the custom of smoking the pipe of peace, a ceremony
that lasted well into the 1930’s. Still preserved is the old Indian-style pipe used
in that ceremony.

The Waterville Mail gave a vivid description of the graduating exercises on
Wednesday of Commencement Week of 1862:

A pleasant day was Wednesday, with a clear sky and a cool breeze,
making a place in the procession or a seat in the crowded church as com-
fortable as one could reasonably expect at this season of the year. As
usual, the church was crammed, large numbers being compelled to stand
in the aisles, doorways and porch. Eight members of the class were in
the Army and received their degrees in absentia. As for the orations
in English, Frank Bodfish spoke on The Law of Labor, Adam Wilson
on Government of the People, Frederick Hale on The Magic of Evil,
William Stevens on The Influence of Historical Characters, George
Hunt on The Unity of Mankind, and Edward Hall on Sadness in Joy.
It was the largest class that ever graduated from the institution, and
their performances, while exhibiting different degrees of merit, were
highly creditable to the young gentlemen and to their alma mater. At
the conclusion of the exercises, a long procession of hungry folk marched
to the Town Hall, where bountiful provision had been made for their wants. With apology for the cold collation, President Champlin called upon Deacon Deane to implore the divine blessing, after which the guests fell upon the food with a will. When eventually the clatter of knives and forks ceased, President Champlin called upon the second man in the nation for a few remarks. Vice-President Hamlin responded in a brief, patriotic speech, in which he showed himself fully up to the latest impulses of the people against the rebellion. Governor Washburn followed in an earnest war speech, and was succeeded by Hon. Lot M. Morrill. Professor Angel closed this last and best feature of the festival with some playful compliments to our state and its people, which for a time blotted out the harsh image of war. A concert by the Germania Band on Wednesday evening, followed by a levee at the President's, appropriately closed this season of enjoyment, and on Thursday morning the railroad trains were boarded with departing guests, who, bearing with them pleasant recollections of this literary festival of 1862, no doubt resolved to come again next year.

In the midst of war and its consequent stress on college finances, President Champlin had time to give attention to moral conditions in the community. On March 19, 1863, he sent this letter to the editor of the Waterville Mail:

The drunkenness that has been constantly increasing since the authorities of the town proclaimed that they would not molest the rum traffic now rolls like a flood over our village. Almost every night, boys not fifteen years old are seen reeling down the street. Who for many years has seen such a town meeting as our last, when men were seen together drunk and the doors of grog shops were thronged with bleary-eyed men? Scores of good men are laboring earnestly for the moral interests of this community, but that is not enough. The law must be enforced. Is there any doubt as to the way in which duty points?

Dr. Champlin also took a leading part in the freeing of Ticonic Bridge from toll, an event which took place on July 1, 1864.

A few months earlier an enthusiastic audience, including most of the college students, turned out to hear the famous Negro leader, Frederick Douglass. William Smith Knowlton, 1864, who became one of Maine's distinguished citizens, remembered well the impression which Douglass made.

He spoke to the reason of his hearers, not to their emotions, and he won them by the clearness and force of his statements. I was especially impressed by the compass and purity of his language. In his long address I did not note an expression nor even a word which would suggest that he had passed his childhood and youth as a slave. Never before or since have I heard, from any self-educated man, a speech equal to his.

A careful study of the Class of 1864 reveals the effect of the Civil War on the College. In the fall of 1860, thirty-one young men entered as freshmen. Before the following autumn, when they were sophomores, they had lost thirteen of their number, nine of them to military service. Four new men came to join them in advanced standing, so that there were still twenty-two enrolled in the
class. In their junior year, which began two months after Gettysburg, they numbered only sixteen, having lost six with no replacements. When they were seniors, their number was fifteen, because in spite of losing three members since the previous autumn, they had gained two men who had returned from service to complete their college work. When it came to graduation in August, 1864, however, only nine men received the degree. Several men who were once in the class received degrees in later years. Of the total of 37 men who were at any time enrolled in the Class of 1864, sixteen saw service in the Civil War.

In late June of 1863, just before the decisive Battle of Gettysburg, Tutor Richardson wrote from the College to his former student, Francis Hesseltine, who was then captain of an infantry company at the front.

One who did not sense our anxiety about the war would discover here only signs of profound peace. The fields are green with growing crops; the sweep of the scythe begins to be heard; the college bell rings out at regular hours, and Commencement approaches. It has been difficult to keep alive the interest in books, but the term has been fairly successful.

In the eyes of classmates, some of those students of the '60's changed a lot in later years. Writing to Col. Boothby, Col. Richard Shannon told about one of them who gained fame as a member of Congress and American minister to Japan, Alfred E. Buck.

Do you remember Number 13 on the fourth floor, back, of South College? It was the untidy den of 'Old Buck', as the future soldier, Congressman, and Minister to Japan was called with the utmost respect and affection. There, in the fall of our freshman year, that mighty senior sheltered this pale, timid freshman. The great man took the trembling youngster for that first terrible term under his wing—or rather, under his big shawl, such as most of us wore in those primitive times. In the adjoining room, front, you had your more elegant, or at least more tidy quarters.

The lowly tutor, Hobart W. Richardson, from whose letter to Hesseltine we have already quoted, came in for high praise from Col. Shannon. Richardson had graduated from the College in 1853, and from 1855 had served eight years as a tutor. He was not promoted to a professorship, but in the midst of the financial stringency caused by the War was released and his place was not filled until 1865. Shannon had never approved of that administrative action, and many years later he put his opinion into these words:

It is doubtful if there was in the whole country another man who could condense into a short statement the meaning and essence of the news of the day with such precision and clearness as did our revered Tutor Richardson. He was indeed a remarkable man. Hardly out of college, he had mathematics enough to write an article on the calculus which was accepted by the North American Review. Later, as editor of the Maine Farmer’s Almanac, he made his own astronomical calculations. So profound was his general learning and so wide his reading in various branches of knowledge that he would have brought fame to the institution, had he been permitted to continue his labors there.
Col. Shannon's letter is the only written evidence bearing on Richardson's failure to receive promotion. Having no other testimony to support it, we cannot be sure that Shannon was right, but the Colonel did know rather well what went on in the College. He was sure that there was never any question of Richardson's patriotism. The man was no Copperhead, but on the contrary was a vigorous supporter of the Union cause. He was turned out, says Shannon, "not because of any militant and aggressive heterodoxy, but on account of a somewhat passive attitude toward formal and ceremonial observance, and perhaps some speculative questions in matters of doctrine."

Was Richardson too liberal in religion to satisfy President Champlin and the Baptist Trustees? If so, he could have been no more obnoxious to conservative authority than President Sheldon had been many years earlier. Just how did Richardson oppose "formal and ceremonial observance?" Didn't he like the excessive dignity of Commencement? Did he fail to respect the severe formality of the classroom, where every student must stand to recite, even if his response was one single monosyllabic word? Did he want to break down the barrier between teacher and student? Was he, in respect to student-faculty relations, a man ahead of his time? Or was there, in fact, a very simple explanation for his non-promotion—that the College treasury just couldn't meet the cost of another professorship, and after 1863 couldn't even pay for a tutor?

When William Smith Knowlton, 1864, was a very aged man, in 1925, he wrote for the *Alumnus* recollections of his college days that give us a picture of life on campus seemingly untouched by war. We know that the students were very much concerned about events on the battlefields, but it is reassuring to know that they were still ordinary, human young men.

Knowlton recalled the Mathews Bookstore, kept by Samuel Mathews, whose brother Edward had been Waterville's first murder victim, and whose older brother William had started the bookstore before leaving Waterville for an illustrious career as author and publisher. Sam Mathews served as a sort of banker for the students. They turned their money over to him and drew such overdrafts that at times their accumulated indebtedness reached as much as a thousand dollars. Years later, Knowlton asked the bookseller if he had lost much money by his transactions with students. Mathews replied that he had suffered loss in only two cases, and in each of those for small amounts. Three quarters of a century later the same sort of testimony was given by another Waterville merchant who had advanced credit to hundreds of twentieth century Colby students—Ludie Levine of the Class of 1921.

In our modern day, when relations between college and city are cordial and cooperative, it is not easy to visualize the difference a hundred years ago. Knowlton said the college students then called the town boys "yaggers," and fist fights were common. On one occasion a group of students seized a "yagger" and threw him into a mudpuddle. When he came out, he burst into violent profanity, whereupon one of the students shouted, "Look here, this is a Baptist institution. Wash the cursing out of him, boys." And into the puddle he went again.

There never was a time without student pranks, and the grim days of the Civil War were no exception. The 'exhibitions,' then as later, provided opportunity for amusement. Knowlton recalled that, on the occasion of the Junior Exhibition in 1862, a group of students, mindful of the fine of ten cents exacted for non-attendance at such exercises, went down town and borrowed a big sign bearing the picture of an elephant. They nailed the sign over the chapel door.
and placed on it the words ‘Big Show—10¢ Admission.’ Knowlton said, "The juniors had to walk in under it, much to their wrath."

How different from undergraduate conditions today is Knowlton's comment that "about everyone had decided what his future profession would be." Equally surprising is it to learn that croquet was once an intercollegiate sport. "We played croquet at the college, sometimes in class contests, sometimes between the societies, and once a year we visited Bowdoin to play the game there."

Experienced teacher and administrator, as well as a preacher of note, Knowlton was all his life an unrepentant conservative. Of curriculum changes since his own college days he did not approve. He lamented the passing of Greek from the preparatory schools. "Better drop out French and put back Greek," he wrote. "The study of French in our academies is a farce. A modern teacher of French couldn't talk with a Madawaska Frenchman."

Knowlton describes vividly a typical college morning in the 1860's.

We had prayers at the unholy hour of six. My room was on the fourth floor. An old Frenchman was janitor. He stood at the chapel door ready to lock out late comers. We were fined ten cents for absence. When the bell stopped ringing, we jumped out of bed, pulled on trousers and boots, wrapped big shawls about our shoulders and rushed to the chapel. One would hold the door open for the next, and so we all got in, much to the wrath of the janitor. Then we read an hour before breakfast. No man would be allowed to treat his dumb animals so barbarously nowadays.

In the 1860's professors would not tolerate levity in the classroom. Knowlton recalled that in Professor Foster's class, when called upon to translate a passage in Horace's Odes, he rendered it thus:

"Oh daughter Fulcrar,  
Handsomer than your mama,  
How could I such an onus prove  
To write iambics 'gainst my love.  
Burn those verses every speck,  
Dump them in the Kennebec."

"Sit down, sir," thundered Professor Foster. Knowlton says he got zero that day.

Thomas Briggs, another member of 1864, recalled a notable Waterville event of 1860. That summer Barnum's Circus appeared in the town. Its feature was the midget Tom Thumb, who rode down Main Street in a little gilded coach drawn by four tiny ponies, the gift of Queen Victoria. As the procession passed the Elmwood Hotel, Briggs heard one politically minded citizen say to another, "After the election you can put the whole Democratic party in that coach." The reference was to the coming election in November, 1860, when Abraham Lincoln was elected President.

As the war progressed, the financial condition of the College grew steadily worse. In spite of the valiant efforts of President Champlin, Professor Hamlin, and other members of the faculty, who turned themselves into door-to-door beggars all over the state, very little money was collected. As early as 1862, the trustee committee appointed to consider the disappointing report of the Treasurer had advised:
As the deficiencies from year to year must be made up from the permanent funds of the College, your committee feel the importance of keeping the expenditures at the lowest possible point, but cannot see where they can recommend any curtailment. They would urge that the subscriptions now in progress to endow the College be carried forward with renewed zeal, that this annual draft on our permanent fund may cease.

In October, 1863, the Waterville Mail proclaimed with satisfaction that the Baptists of Maine were at last awaking to the importance of sustaining Waterville College. The Mail stated:

A meeting of the friends of Waterville College, convened by the Maine Baptist Convention, met in this village on last Tuesday evening, to deliberate upon measures to be adopted for securing a permanent endowment of the institution. A statement of the present condition of the College was made by President Champlin, and the meeting was addressed by a number of gentlemen from various parts of the state in relation to public feeling toward the College in their respective localities. Their reports, while hopeful, showed that the denomination, through ignorance of the institution and its importance to them, did not appreciate its claims nor give it proper support.

The meeting decided that part of the trouble was inadequate publicity. Although the time was almost exactly in the middle of the Civil War, there seems to have been no suggestion that the people's indifference was due in part to absorption in war activities and war anxieties. The final report said,

It is believed the people are at heart well disposed toward the College, but they must be enlightened and inspired. When their interest shall be thus aroused, it will be necessary to make personal effort with each individual, in order to obtain a suitable contribution.

When substantial relief came, it came not from the Maine Baptists, but from a Boston merchant, who as a fatherless boy in Waterville had seen his widowed mother befriended by the college's first president, Jeremiah Chaplin.
CHAPTER XVII

A New Name

On August 10, 1864, Gardner Colby gave $50,000 to Waterville College. Concerning that fact all accounts agree. Whittemore\(^1\) says that at the commencement dinner President Champlin introduced Mr. Colby, who in a brief speech made his generous gift. Burrage\(^2\), quoting Dr. Francis Bakeman, 1866, who was present at the dinner as a student, says that Champlin made the announcement, while Mr. Colby remained seated at his side. According to his brother, Rev. Henry F. Colby\(^3\), either at or just previous to the dinner, Mr. Colby handed President Champlin a note, and it was that note which Champlin read in making the momentous announcement.

Whittemore quotes the Gardner Colby statement slightly differently from its quotation by Henry Colby, probably because Whittemore took his wording from the records of the trustees, while Henry Colby had access to the original letter. The latter version is therefore probably more authentic. It reads:

Rev. J. T. Champlin, D. D.

Waterville, Aug. 10, 1864

My dear Sir,

I propose to give Waterville College the sum of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000), the same to be paid without interest as follows, viz:

Twenty-five thousand dollars when your subscription shall amount to one hundred thousand dollars, independent of any from me;

Twenty-five thousand dollars when one hundred thousand is paid on your subscription, not including any from me; and upon condition that the president and a majority of the faculty shall be members in good standing of regular Baptist churches.

If either or any of these conditions are broken, the entire fifty thousand dollars shall revert to myself, or my heirs or assigns.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

Gardner Colby

The records of the Trustees, made at the following annual meeting, on August 8, 1865, state:

The subscription of Mr. Colby is upon condition first, that the interest of his subscription only shall be used for college purposes; second, that
half, or $25,000, shall be paid when the subscriptions obtained by Horace T. Love and others shall amount to one hundred thousand dollars exclusive of his subscription, and $25,000 when $100,000 is paid in on said subscriptions; and third, that the President and a majority of the faculty shall be members in good standing in regular Baptist churches.

At the same time the Trustees voted:

The thanks of this Board are expressed to Gardner Colby, Esq. of Boston for his generous and timely benefaction to this college, which we do hereby accept to hold, employ and use in accordance with the several terms and conditions thereof, each and every one of them, by us and our successors forever.

There is no doubt that the announcement of Mr. Colby's gift by President Champlin was dramatic. This is the way Dr. Bakeman told the story to Dr. Burrage:

Dr. Champlin arose and stood silent, as if to command the unreserved attention of the company. How pale he looked! When he spoke, how strangely his voice seemed to shake! There were no tears in his eyes, but there was in his utterance what makes tears. As long as I live I shall recall the grand old man in that historic hour, which was to him the victor's crown after years of hardest warfare. And now he announced that the gentleman at his side, a short, plump little man with a benevolent appearing face, had made the definite and formal proposition to give the college $50,000 as a permanent fund, on condition that the friends of the institution should add $100,000. The announcement ran through the company like a kindling fire. Mr. Colby was known to few; his intention was known to fewer still. The rumor had not got abroad. It was a genuine surprise. For a moment there was stillness, as in the hush before the breaking of a tempest, then a wild demonstration of joy such as I have never since witnessed. Hands, feet, voices, knives and forks rapping on the tables, all bore part in the concert of applause. Men shook hands and fairly hugged each other in their transports of joy. The hall rang again and again to their cheers. It seemed as if they would never stop. The fountains of affection had been broken up, and their torrents could not be easily checked.

The scene of that memorable incident was the old Town Hall of Waterville, situated then on the town common near where the City Hall now stands. In it commencement dinners were held until the erection of Memorial Hall. The old building had been erected in 1798, when the west side of the river was still a part of Winslow, so as to make it unnecessary for settlers on the west side to cross the river to attend meeting in the original church on the east shore. After Waterville became a separate town in 1802, the new meetinghouse had served also as a town hall. It was in that building that Jeremiah Chaplin had delivered his first Waterville sermon in 1818. In it had been held the town meeting that voted $3000 of public money to bring the college to Waterville. In the very year of Mr. Colby's gift, it had been the scene of rousing patriotic meetings. Upon the erection of the present City Hall, the building was moved back and faced upon
Front Street. Used for many years as a National Guard armory and for occasional sports events, it was finally torn down in 1950.

Gardner Colby often told how he happened to make his splendid gift. He said that in the spring of 1864, on the evening of the annual day of prayer for colleges, the speaker at the service held in Mr. Colby's church, the First Baptist of Newton Centre, was Dr. Samuel B. Swain, who, forty years earlier, had been a youthful pastor in Portland. Dr. Swain told the Newton congregation that one day as he entered the house of a Portland parishioner for a pastoral call, he met Jeremiah Chaplin, the President of Waterville College, leaving the same house. Chaplin had apparently been unsuccessful in his attempt to secure a subscription from the householder. Swain heard the disappointed man groan out, "God help Waterville College." Dr. Swain said that the picture of the self-denying and earnest servant of Christ, standing in that doorway, giving vent to his over-burdened heart, had remained indelible in the pastor's memory.

Often in later years Mr. Colby told what an impression Dr. Swain's words had made upon him. A flood of memories crowded in. He barely remembered his father, though he could recall one trip down the river with him from the family home in Bowdoinham to the bustling port of Bath. Losing a comfortable fortune as the result of the Embargo Act and the War of 1812, the father had left his wife and four small children wholly dependent upon the mother's labor for support. He remembered his mother's little store at Bath, then their removal to Waterville. His boyhood had been one unceasing round of poverty and hard work. Suddenly he remembered something else—how a tall, spare man, who was president of the college, had helped his mother move to Boston, an event that was the turning point in the boy's life and set him on the road to fortune.

That night, after they had come home from the prayer meeting, Gardner Colby said to his wife, "Suppose I give fifty thousand dollars to Waterville College?" Mrs. Colby readily agreed.

There can be no question that it was Dr. Swain's recollection of Jeremiah Chaplin which sparked Mr. Colby's beneficent action, but it only set fire to fuel already supplied by the man chiefly responsible for the progress of the College during those years, James T. Champlin. Gardner Colby was one of a dozen wealthy Baptists whom Champlin had been cultivating ever since he became President of the College in 1857. He had seen to it that Mr. Colby should become acquainted with the steady stream of Waterville graduates who went on to prepare for the ministry at Newton Theological Institution, of which Mr. Colby was treasurer and leading benefactor. He assured the wealthy merchant that Waterville College was a sound Baptist school, true to the faith as delivered to the saints. He convinced Mr. Colby that the college had good financial management and recent subscriptions evidenced the good will of Maine Baptists. Mr. Colby expressed concern and disapproval that the College had been obliged to use some of its meager endowment to pay off recent debts, but Champlin assured him that such action had been the result of war, and that if the enrollment, which had been well over a hundred in 1860, could have been maintained, expenses would easily have been met. What the College needed now, Champlin insisted, was an endowment fund the interest of which would meet deficits until pre-war enrollment could be restored. For at least seven years President Champlin had been quietly impressing this wealthy Massachusetts Baptist, and it took only Dr. Swain's dramatic story to bring at last a favorable response.
Who was Gardner Colby? How did he accumulate a fortune from which he could easily give away $50,000? He had been born in Bowdoinham in 1810, and in 1815 had moved with his widowed mother to Waterville. In 1818 the mother had gone to Boston, where through financial necessity the family became separated. Mrs. Colby was obliged to place her children in different families, and Gardner was taken by a kindly man named Stafford in St. Albans, Maine. Through friends of the Chaplins, Mrs. Colby was able to start a small business in Charlestown, and within a year she could make a home for her children again.

When he arrived in Boston, Gardner went to work at once in the grocery store of Phelps and Thompson in Charlestown Square. Mr. Phelps agreed to take the boy into his home and let him go to school, working in the store during out-of-school hours. He delivered groceries to the firm's customers by wheelbarrow. School did not go well. He had missed so much early schooling and was so far behind that he became discouraged and ceased attending at the age of fourteen. But two years later he became convinced of the need of education, and managed to enroll in a private school at Northboro, Massachusetts. Though he afterwards insisted that he learned much there, he actually stayed less than six months. He was determined to make business connections where he could expect advancement.

He became a clerk in the dry goods store of a Mr. Foster on Boston's Washington Street. Soon the enlarged firm became Houghton and Foster, forerunner of the famous Houghton and Dutton Company. Colby stayed with the new firm until 1831, when he launched out for himself.

In 1830 the young man had become a member of the First Baptist Church of Charlestown, starting his career as a devout Baptist only a few months before his start as an independent merchant. When Gardner reached his twenty-first birthday, he told his employers he was ready to go into business for himself. So impressed had they become with the young man that, instead of laughing at him or putting obstacles in his way, they encouraged him. With a hundred and fifty dollars of savings he made the venture. Purchasing a small stock on credit, he opened his store, having first tacked up tablecloths to hide many empty shelves. He made a specialty of laces, gloves and hosiery. Soon he built up a solid reputation, especially with fashionable ladies, who found him courteous, obliging and scrupulously honest. The cost and the sales price of every article was written down when it was sold. The cash was balanced every night, and he always knew just where he stood. By meeting bills promptly and taking all discounts, he established wide credit. Everyone was ready to sell to him. At the end of the first year he had paid all expenses and had cleared a profit of four thousand dollars.

By 1836, when he was only 25 years old, Gardner Colby had accumulated the means to enlarge his business substantially. To save commissions paid to importers, he began direct importation from England, and within another year he had left his retail business entirely and had become a wholesale importer with a big warehouse on Kilby Street. So marked was his success and so careful his management, that he weathered without embarrassment the destructive panic of 1837.

The year 1836 also saw Mr. Colby's marriage to Mary Roberts of Gloucester, with whom he spent forty-three happy years until they were separated by his own death on April 2, 1879. They began housekeeping at 32 Temple Street in Boston, then moved to Roxbury, then back to Boston's Pemberton Square, finally to their permanent home at Newton Centre.
Gardner Colby was a man who put the same enthusiasm and the same careful management into his religious philanthropies as he had into his business. He became treasurer of the Northern Baptist Education Society, principal donor of the new Rome Street Baptist Church in Boston, and generous contributor to the Baptist missionary societies. But, previous to 1864, it was the Newton Theological Institution that had been Gardner Colby's chief denominational interest. Mr. Colby had become treasurer of the Newton seminary in 1844, and it was probably his interest in the school that made him and Mrs. Colby decide to move to Newton Centre in 1847. On the occasion of Newton's fiftieth anniversary in 1875, President Hovey said of Gardner Colby's treasurership: "Not a penny was either wasted or lost. Vigilance, promptness, personal supervision, were everywhere manifest. The lands, buildings, investments, students and professors, seemed to be under the treasurer's eye from September till June. We are indebted to him for the preservation of our school in the darkest hour of its history."5 Because of his generous contribution of its new library and chapel in 1864, the building was named Colby Hall. Before his death, his gifts to Newton had exceeded a hundred thousand dollars.

In 1850 Mr. Colby had branched out into manufacturing, by purchase of a half interest in the Maverick woolen mills at Dedham, Massachusetts. Demand for cloth to make army uniforms during the Civil War made those mills very successful and added substantially to Mr. Colby's wealth.

In 1863 Mr. Colby retired from active business and devoted himself to his philanthropies and the care of his investments in manufacturing, mining, railroads, and real estate.

Such was the Boston merchant and financier, lay leader of Massachusetts Baptists, who at the invitation of President Champlin attended the Commencement of Waterville College in 1864 and who sat silent at the head table while another voice announced his gift of $50,000 to the little college on the Kennebec.

First on its own, then in cooperation with Brown University, Waterville College had been struggling against overwhelming odds to raise substantial endowment. Mr. Colby's offer in 1864 readily took into consideration all that had already been raised in that long continued campaign. But, to bring the total to a hundred thousand dollars, as Mr. Colby demanded, seemed an almost impossible task. The war was not yet over; prices were inflated; money was scarce.

Into the situation stepped another generous layman of the Baptist faith, and he too was a Massachusetts man. J. Warren Merrill, a prominent attorney and financier of Cambridge, had been approached by President Champlin as early as 1858, but had at first made no response. As the Cambridge man came to know Champlin better, his confidence in the college president increased, and gradually he became interested in the Waterville institution. In 1862 he consented to become a member of the Board of Trustees, and a few weeks after Gardner Colby's great offer, he made his own fine contribution. He agreed to contribute $10,000 on condition that the entire $100,000 demanded by the Colby offer be raised by September 1, 1865.

What a thing to do in war time! How could the little college expect to meet such conditions? But a man like James Champlin was not to be thwarted even by war. President, faculty, trustees, and alumni beat the by-ways and hedges of all New England for the needed dollars. As a result, when the Trustees assembled in annual meeting in August 1865, they could record in their minutes these words: "From the report of the President it appears that the sum of $105,444, exclusive of Mr. Colby's subscription, has been received. This fulfills one of the
precedent conditions and entitles the College to one-half of Mr. Colby's subscription.”

Meanwhile Mr. Merrill had added another provision to his gift. Specific appropriation of the income from his $10,000 must be used toward support of a professorship of chemistry and natural history. Although the record makes it evident the Trustees would have preferred an unrestricted gift, they were in no position to “look a gift horse in the mouth,” and they agreed to Mr. Merrill's conditions. It thus came about that in 1866 the College got its second endowed professorship, the Merrill Professor of Chemistry. The first had been the Babcock Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, named for the second president of the College, Rufus Babcock.

Gardner Colby became a Trustee of the College in 1865, and he served loyally and devotedly until his death in 1879. Within two years he had given another $50,000 and his total contributions, including the bequests in his will, brought to the Institution more than $200,000. At the annual meeting in 1866 the Board voted, “that a committee be appointed to procure from the legislature a change of the name of this Institution from Waterville College to Colby University.” Josiah Drummond, Abner Coburn and President Champlin were named the committee to carry out that decision. On January 23, 1867, the Maine Legislature enacted Chapter 180 of the Laws of 1867, which read:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled as follows:

Sect. 1. The name of the corporation “The President and Trustees of Waterville College” is hereby changed to the “President and Trustees of Colby University.”

Sect. 2. This act takes effect when approved by the Governor.

The Institution of higher education that had started with no buildings at all as the Maine Literary and Theological Institution and had become Waterville College, with three brick buildings on the west bank of the Kennebec River just above the dam and mills of Waterville Village, had at last seen its long hoped for ship come into port. It was only natural, if a bit extravagant, that the Trustees should celebrate by adding to the Colby name the grandiose title of university. Although true university it never became, it was a challenging title, and challenge as well as endowment was what the College needed as the nation emerged from the throes of civil war.
CHAPTER XVIII

Champlin's Years Of Fulfillment

THE last ten years of President Champlin's administration were years of fulfillment. Gardner Colby's gift was only the beginning of better things for the College that came during the following decade.

First of Champlin's new accomplishments was the raising of $100,000 needed to meet the conditions of the Colby gift. The cherished endowment fund was at last on the way. The invested funds now exceeded $40,000, which were soon increased to $65,000 by payment of the first half of the Colby gift.

An example of the many complications caused by allowing donors to control scholarships is the case of the scholarship given by a member of the Trustees, Rev. Adam Wilson, distinguished editor of Zion's Advocate. The Wilson donation had provided that he and his wife should name the recipient during their lifetime, and that after their deaths the right of designation should be held by their oldest child. That child, Dr. John B. Wilson, had recently died, and Adam Wilson now asked the College Trustees to agree that, if John's son Charles should ever enter the College he should have benefit of the scholarship. The Trustees accepted the new provision and solemnly recorded their decision.

President Champlin next turned his attention to procuring a new building. The old chapel had become hopelessly inadequate for the many demands upon it. The expanding curriculum called for additional classrooms, and the library had neither protection nor convenient housing. Champlin conceived the attractive plan of erecting for those needs a building which should be a memorial to Colby men who had fallen in the recent war. So it came about that, only sixteen months after Appomattox, the Trustees voted that "the interests of the College require that a new building be erected as early as possible, to be called 'The Memorial Hall.'" The Board voted to appropriate toward the cost of the new building the money raised by the ladies of Bangor for that purpose, and also the four thousand dollars recently received from the sale of timber on the College lands, as well as seven thousand dollars of prospective stumpage rights. They appointed a committee, composed of President Champlin, Abner Coburn and D. L. Milliken, to choose the site and see that "the foundation is carried forward sufficiently to have the cornerstone laid by the next commencement." Quite in accord with established custom the Board then turned to the faculty for money-raisers. "Voted, that the faculty of the College be requested to cooperate with its alumni in raising funds for the building."

The building cost $30,000, and all but $4,000 was in hand when the cornerstone was laid on August 14, 1867. The remainder was easily raised before the building was finished and dedicated on August 10, 1869. The largest subscrip-
tions were $4,100 from Gardner Colby, $3,000 from Abner Coburn, $1,100 from George Edwards, and $1,000 from George Cummings. Eight other persons each gave $500 or more. But fully $5,000 came from alumni and friends each of whom gave $50 or less.

Memorial Hall was placed on the site of the first college building, the President’s house. The latter was partly torn down and partly removed. Clayton Smith of the Class of 1931, in the course of studies about his ancestor, Professor Charles Hamlin, encountered evidence which made him suspect that a part of the ell of what graduates of his time called the Boutelle House, and which in 1867 was the residence of former Professor George Keely, was once a portion of the President’s house. Definite record, however, has been lost; no one today knows what became of the first building erected on the college lot.

Memorial Hall had a central tower and a passageway through the building from north to south. In the belfry was a clock which hundreds of students consulted daily during their four college years. Although often needing adjustment and always in need of winding, that clock was somehow kept going until the whole building was abandoned with the move to Mayflower Hill. On the west side of the tower was the larger of two wings, rising two floors high. The lower floor was devoted to the chapel and the upper to what was called Alumni Hall, where for many years receptions and other social gatherings, as well as alumni dinners, were held. The east wing was smaller and contained a single, high-ceilinged room, with a balcony around its four sides. That room was the College Library, and as late as 1909, when this writer entered college, it was the only library room. A few years later a generous gift from Charles F. T. Seavems, 1901, had converted the south end of the old Alumni Hall into an attractive reading room, and the north end into stack space for the most frequently used books.

Built into the east wall of Alumni Hall was the tablet which marked the building as a memorial to Colby’s Civil War dead. On it was this Latin inscription:

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FRATRIBUS
ETIUM IN CINERIBUS CARIS
QUORUM NOMINA INFRA INCISA SUNT
QUIQUE IN BELLO CIVILI
PRO REIPUBLICAE INTEGRITATE CECIDERUNT
HANC TABULAM
POSUERUNT ALUMNI
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It was Professor Hamlin who insisted that a suitable memorial object be placed above the inscription, but it was Burrage himself who suggested the form which that object should take. He told Hamlin he had been greatly impressed by Thorwaldsen’s Lion of Lucerne, which Burrage had recently seen on a visit to Switzerland. When Hamlin expressed interest, Burrage showed him a card picture of the statue. On the following day Hamlin told the pastor, “I am going to Boston by the night train to see Millmore the sculptor. I wish to ascertain if he can make for us in marble a copy of Thorwaldsen’s Lion adapted to the needs of our Civil War memorial.”

Millmore agreed to make the sculpture, substituting the shield of the United States for that of France. Hamlin at once set to work to raise the money to pay for it, and before it came time for Millmore to deliver the marble statue in Water-
ville, Hamlin had the money. When Burrage later referred to the incident, in his *History of the Baptists in Maine*, he wrote: "The money for this artistic memorial was secured by Prof. Charles E. Hamlin, to whom this service, from high patriotic motives, was a labor of love most enthusiastically performed."\(^2\)

Beneath the lion and the inscription were placed the names of twenty-five Colby men who had laid down their lives in the service of the Union. Colby alumni agreed that the Lion of Lucerne must be moved to Mayflower Hill, and that was done in 1962.

On August 14, 1867, the following items were placed in the cornerstone of Memorial Hall: a copy of the New Testament; Confessions of Faith and Covenant of the Waterville Baptist Church; Catalogue of Colby University; Catalogue of the Library; Catalogue of the Alumni; photographs of Mr. Colby and the College Faculty; list of subscribers to Memorial Hall; programs of class exercises during the year; copy of the Address to the Friends of Waterville College, issued October 17, 1863; copies of *Zion's Advocate*, *Waterville Mail* and *Portland Press*, containing notices of the Commencement Exercises in 1867; a copy of the Columbian *Centinel*, dated December 29, 1802; a five dollar bill of the Continental Currency, 1776; specimens of fractional currency; various United States coins.\(^3\)

At the laying of the cornerstone, President Champlin explained why the new building was necessary and how the need fitted appropriately into the desire to memorialize the Colby men who had died in the war.

The first and most urgent necessity for additional accommodations springs from the unfavorable situation of our principal recitation rooms. These are in the basement under the chapel, with their floor from two to three feet below the surface of the earth. They are damp, unpleasant and unhealthy. Indeed, for many years before they were drained, the water stood in them to the depth of several inches during the heavy rains of spring. After having endured this evil for more than thirty years, you will not wonder that both teachers and students demand better accommodations.

Another reason for a new building is found in the present unsafe and inadequate accommodations of our library. Our present library room is in the second story of the old chapel building, a building in which, throughout a greater part of the year, must be built many fires. A library, of course, should not be so exposed to fire. Moreover, the room is full to overflowing and new accommodations must be sought somewhere.

Still another reason for a new building has grown out of the recent bloody conflict in the land. A number of our graduates lost their lives in the great conflict. Such a noble band of martyrs requires a suitable memorial. What more appropriate than this noble structure to be known forever as Memorial Hall?\(^4\)

The architect of Memorial Hall was Alexander R. Esty of Boston, who had made a specialty of constructing buildings of rubble stone—just such stone as was found in a quarry about a mile west of the College, and of which were constructed not only Memorial Hall, but also two later buildings, Coburn and Chemical halls. Thomas A. Grahen of Cambridge was the contractor, and the carpenter in charge of all woodwork, including the fine paneling, was J. P. Blunt of Waterville.
Two years later, at the Commencement of 1869, the finished building was dedicated. The chairman of the building committee, Abner Coburn, delivered the keys to the chairman of the Trustees, Hon. Hannibal Hamlin, who only five years earlier had finished his term as Vice-President of the United States. Hamlin in turn presented the keys to President Champlin. The key to Alumni Hall was accepted by the President of the Alumni Association, General Harris M. Plaisted.

The year 1868 was momentous in the history of the College. It saw the completion of Memorial Hall and its actual use a few months before its dedication the following summer. It was also the first year in which a young graduate of the College began his teaching within its walls, a career which was to continue through 63 uninterrupted years. Julian D. Taylor became a tutor in Greek and Latin, assisting Professor John B. Foster, only a month after his graduation from the College in August, 1868. Five years later he was elected Professor of Latin Language and Literature, holding that position until his retirement in 1930. Known as “Judy” to more than sixty Colby classes, he is still remembered as the very embodiment of a noble Roman.

The same year saw a student petition for a gymnasium. Other colleges had seen the installation of rings, climbing ropes, parallel bars, and other apparatus demanded by the development of “Swedish gymnastics.” Furthermore, the day of modern college athletics was just around the corner. Baseball had already come in; the events of track and field were beginning to develop; a few colleges had taken up boxing and wrestling. It would be more than twenty years before football would be played at Colby. That sport would indeed be preceded by bicycle racing. But even in 1868 the day was past when intercollegiate contests in Maine would ever again be restricted to croquet. The Trustees heeded the student demand and appropriated $1200 to build a gymnasium. With that modest sum they actually put up a small building that served the needs of indoor exercise for many years.

Another significant action in 1868 was the decision to establish the degree of Bachelor of Science. Hitherto only the Bachelor of Arts had been conferred as an undergraduate degree, but sciences were developing fast. Natural philosophy was rapidly becoming the recognized science of physics, and natural history was turning into the biological sciences. Nine years earlier, an Englishman named Charles Darwin had shaken the scientific world with his *Origin of Species*. Darwin's basic theory, especially its application to the origin of man, was of course anathema to the Baptist divines who still controlled Colby University. James Champlin himself was a conservative Baptist, and he would not have countenanced the teaching of evolution, even if the more conservative Gardner Colby had not been dominant on the Board. Nevertheless science was on its way, and the time had come for Colby University to recognize it. On August 12, 1868, the Trustees therefore voted that “we establish a degree of Bachelor of Science in the University.” Significantly it was not left to the faculty to lay down the curriculum for the new degree. That duty was left to a trustee committee, composed of Rev. A. K. P. Small, Rev. E. E. Cummings and Hon. Moses Giddings. Cummings had been an early graduate of the College, in 1828; Small had graduated in 1849. Giddings, a prominent Bangor man, had been a member of the Board since 1852.

The result of this decision was no action at all. The trustee records do not indicate that the committee ever reported, and subsequent catalogues continued to list as the only undergraduate degree that of Bachelor of Arts. In fact almost forty years elapsed between the decision to confer the B. S. degree and its actual
conference upon any Colby student. The many admirers of Colby's most distin-
tinguished baseball player, John Coombs, will be interested to know that he was
the first Colby man ever to receive the B. S. degree in course, and his graduating
class was that of 1906. Only because Coombs' name preceded theirs in the
alphabet, did he receive his diploma ahead of his classmates William Dodge,
Rex Dodge, and Karl Kennison, the other B. S. men in the class.

Science did get some recognition in the curriculum, but in 1870 a rigidly pre-
scribed course of study was still demanded of all students, every member of
the same class taking exactly the same subjects each term. For instance, fresh-
men all took in the first term Latin, Greek, Geometry, and Elocution; in the
second term Latin, Greek, Algebra, Geometry, and Elocution; in the third term
Latin, Greek, and Algebra.

In view of the Trustees' vote concerning the B. S. degree in 1868, it is
interesting to note that, at least so far as catalogue designations are concerned,
the science offerings in 1870 differed very little from those in 1860. In the
year before the Civil War juniors had to take one term of the Mechanics of
Solids and one of the Mechanics of Liquids, also one term each of Chemistry,
Physiology, Optics, Mineralogy and Geology. The only science for seniors was a
single term of astronomy. Altogether the course required seven term courses
in the field of science. The only difference ten years later in 1870 was that
mechanics had been reduced to a single term, mineralogy was not mentioned,
and a term of zoology had been added. Not yet had the label "physics" come
into use. The two departments of science which the College boasted in 1870
were called respectively Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and Chemistry
and Natural History. The former was in charge of Professor Moses Lyford, while
Professor Charles Hamlin handled the latter.

It is well to note that by 1870, the faculty had been increased to eight
persons, including the two endowed professorships. President Champlin was
Babcock Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, while Hamlin held the
Merrill Professorship of Chemistry and Natural History. Besides Champlin,
Hamlin and Lyford, the other faculty members were Samuel K. Smith, Professor
of Rhetoric and Librarian; John B. Foster, Professor of Greek and Latin; Edward
W. Hall, Professor of Modern Languages; and Julian D. Taylor, Tutor of Greek
and Latin.

Professor Hall was not kept very busy teaching modern languages. In the first
term he taught German to seniors; in the second term French to sophomores
and juniors; and in the third term French to sophomores and German to juniors.
He was given other duties, sometimes taking a class in Latin or in History, and
in 1873 he succeeded Professor Smith as librarian.

There is no question that it was the Gardner Colby gift and the gratifying
result of the subscription campaign that enabled the College to make important
advancement immediately after the Civil War. It certainly was not increased
enrollment. The number of students was 64 in 1867-8, 51 in 1868-9, 52 in
1869-70, 53 in 1870-71, 52 in 1871-72, and 52 in President Champlin's last
year, 1872-73. Whatever may be said of Champlin's accomplishment, and it
was indeed such as to make him one of Colby's great presidents, it did not lie in
the attraction of new students. It was left to his successor, Henry Robins, to
triple the enrollment within ten years.

In 1870 the College celebrated its semi-centennial. The question has often
been asked why the hundredth anniversary was celebrated in 1920. Some per-
sons have ventured the guess that World War I postponed an intended observance
in 1918, which would have been the centennial year of Jeremiah Chaplin's first holding of classes. But that does not explain why the celebration was not held in 1913, the hundredth anniversary of the original charter. The simple fact is that the centennial year was fixed as 1920 because the fiftieth anniversary had been celebrated in 1870 and the seventy-fifth in 1895. The real question is, therefore, why 1870 was chosen as the date for observance of Colby's first fifty years.

The first mention of a semi-centennial celebration to be found in the trustee records is under the date of August 10, 1869, when Ebenezer Cummings, Joseph Ricker, and James Hanson were appointed a committee to confer with a committee of the alumni, to make preparation for a semi-centennial celebration. At a session of the Board on the following day, the committee reported that the alumni approved, and President Champlin, William Shailer, Dr. Ricker, and Adam Wilson were made a committee to arrange for a semi-annual celebration at commencement in 1870, and they were directed to invite the alumni to co-operate with them.

No word in the official records nor elsewhere gives any clue to the fixing of 1870 as the fiftieth year. It is true that the Civil War had so upset the College in 1863 that any significant observance of the fiftieth year of the charter would have been hardly feasible at that time. But no such condition interfered in 1868. A significant observance could have been arranged in that year, because exactly fifty years had elapsed since Jeremiah Chaplin arrived in Waterville and began teaching his seven theological students in the Wood house on the present site of the Elmwood Hotel. To President Champlin and the Trustees, however, there was no doubt that 1870 was the proper year for the semi-centennial. In a printed communication addressed to all alumni of the College on July 1, 1870, and signed by President Champlin and Professor Hamlin, the opening sentence was, "This being the semi-centennial of the College, we are anxious to secure the attendance of as many of the graduates as possible at our coming Commencement, August 2 and 3."

Why was the 1870 date so obvious to those men? It was because June 19, 1820, was the day when the institution became truly a college. Although the Maine charter of that date still designated the school as the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, it was that charter which first gave to its trustees the authority to confer degrees, and until it could confer degrees the institution was not truly a college. Furthermore, until 1820, only theological studies had been pursued. Although a literary department had been intended from the beginning, it was not actually started until 1820, and it was out of that department that the liberal arts college known in 1870 as Colby had grown. Finally, it was 1820 when, for the first time, classes were conducted on the college lot rather than in the rented Wood house in the village.

On the occasion of the celebration of the semi-centennial in 1870, President Champlin said, "Maine had become an independent state, and at the first session of its legislature in 1820 had granted the Institution collegiate powers." It was clear to President Champlin and his contemporaries that the non-degree-granting institution had been but a Massachusetts experiment toward what the State of Maine made a true college.

It seems strange that, in all the years since 1813, Colby College has never celebrated an anniversary of its original charter. However the authorities may have felt in 1870 about the sacredness of the 1820 beginnings, the fact remains that the original authority to start the institution out of which the college grew
was granted in the old State House in Boston, when on February 27, 1813, the Governor of Massachusetts set his signature of approval to the act creating the Maine Literary and Theological Institution. It is entirely fitting, therefore, that in 1963 will be celebrated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this College, the sesquicentennial of its original charter.

The principal event of the semi-centennial celebration was the address of President Champlin. He reviewed the history of the College, from the earliest attempts to interest Baptists in applying for a charter. He devoted much attention to the old mechanics shop, and from that sad experience he drew the following conclusion:

It may be doubted whether men who receive a real education in an agricultural or mechanical college will in many cases remain practical, working farmers and mechanics. I think the experience shows that men whose wits have been thoroughly sharpened, by whatever form of culture, generally contrive to live by their wits, and not by their hands.

In an earlier chapter comment has been made on President Champlin's apparent disapproval of the action taken in 1820, when the theological department was made subordinate to the literary. After recounting the incident in detail, Champlin said in his historical address:

Had the Institution retained its original and more popular form till the affections of the denomination had crystallized around it, and the denomination itself had withal grown up so as to demand a college, I can but think its history would have been different.

It is clear that Champlin felt, as indeed did many others connected with the College, that the support given it by Maine Baptists had been at best sporadic and lukewarm. That may have been true of some of the Baptist churches and their ministers, but it certainly was not true of individual Baptists. No one knew better than President Champlin, on that August day in 1870, that the most generous contributions ever received by the College had come from staunch Baptists like Gardner Colby, Abner Coburn, and Joseph Merrill.

President Champlin paid deserving tribute to the men who had done so much to make the College what it had become in 1870: to Jeremiah Chaplin, the first President; to William King, Maine's first Governor; to Daniel Merrill, the Sedgwick pastor who had been the true founder of the Institution; to Timothy Boutelle, who had shown himself a loyal supporter, both with his time and his money, from 1818 until his death. Then, in conclusion, Champlin said:

Perhaps we may say now, at the end of fifty years, that the College is fairly founded. It has funds enough—which it never had before—to sustain it on its present scale of operations, without drawing upon the principal. We want, however, not only permanence, but progress. To stand still in such an age is tantamount to moving backwards. Unless we move ahead, we must fall behind.

Champlin was no man to be content with the platitudes expressed in those sentences. He minced no words when he pointed out the mistakes of the past.

Previously to our recent successful endeavors, no improvements whatever had been made upon the premises, no additional teachers had
been employed, and no considerable additions had been made to library or apparatus for thirty years. In the meantime other colleges were making improvements, leaving us behind. This want of stir seemed to imply that we had gone to sleep, or were about to give up the ghost. Hence we lost both prestige and patronage, which we have not yet been fully able to recover. But I am confident it will return in due time, if we continue to improve as we have in the few years just past. Of all things, stagnation is the most to be dreaded in a college. 7

In previous chapters we have seen how the college lot, which once stretched from the Kennebec to the Messalonskee, had been depleted by sales until only the campus itself and a few nearby house lots remained. The final restricting sale came in 1870, when the Trustees authorized the Prudential Committee “to consider any change which Maine Central Railroad Company may propose to make in their road, affecting any lands belonging to the University and to act in the matter as their judgment may dictate.”

The subsequent action was the removal of tracks along the river bank back of the college buildings and the reversion of that right of way to the College; but in its place the College gave up nearly twice as much land that it owned on the south and the west, so that the main campus of the College was for many years limited to the modest area of 29 acres. Besides the sales to individuals, a large slice had gone in 1848 to the Androscoggin and Kennebec Railroad, the first rail line to enter Waterville; but it was actually the deal of 1870 which sealed the fate of the College to be hemmed in for another three quarters of a century between the railroad and the river.

In the summer of 1870, old Recitation Hall, in which the chapel was no longer needed, was completely renovated into the rooms that this writer's own college generation knew in the second decade of the present century. There were two classrooms on each of the three floors, the most memorable of which became “Dutchy” Marquardt's German room on the second floor, and “J. Bill” Black's history room and “Cassie” White's Greek room on the top floor. In the south room of the first floor the YMCA used to hold its Tuesday evening meetings, and in that room someone had long ago installed a wheezy parlor organ. All that, however, was many years after 1870, when the building was first converted into solely a classroom building.

When the Trustees voted to remodel Recitation Hall, they accompanied that vote with another significant action. Their entire vote read:

Voted, that the Prudential Committee be instructed to proceed with alteration of the Chapel Building substantially as proposed by Mr. Esty the architect, and that they also proceed to the erection of a new building for a cabinet and chemical laboratory, provided funds can be secured by subscription.

Thus it came about that the College was to secure a second new building in the Champlin administration. The funds were secured, owing largely to the generosity of Abner Coburn, and at the north end of the campus, in direct line with Memorial Hall, was erected, in 1872, Coburn Hall, Colby's first building devoted to the sciences. In early correspondence it was referred to as a building for “cabinet and apparatus.” That meant everything that then pertained to the biological sciences, to geology, to physics, and to chemistry. Burrage says it contained four rooms for lectures and laboratory work, a hall for collections
in geology and natural history, and the Hamlin collection of the birds of Maine.8

No sooner had the Trustees voted to erect the science building when funds should be available, than right there in the meeting room on August 3, 1870, four men immediately made the needed funds available by pledging on the spot ten thousand dollars each. Thus Coburn Hall became a true memorial of the semi­centennial, provided by the generosity of Abner Coburn, Gardner Colby, Joseph Warren Merrill, and Judge William E. Wording.

So great was the immediate rejoicing among the Trustees that they exhibited a spontaneous burst of generosity. Gardner Colby moved and it was unanimously voted that, beginning in the fall of 1870, all faculty salaries should be increased twenty-five percent.

Although President Champlin would never have admitted it, the most important and most enduring action of his entire administration was the admission of women. That story is fully related in Chapter XL.

Looking forward confidently to enlargement of the faculty, the Trustees proceeded in 1871 to consider the division of several departments. It is noteworthy that those initial considerations, as well as the final decisions, were made by the Trustees, not by the faculty, although President Champlin may have discussed the issues in faculty meeting. If he did so, the secretary of the faculty missed the significance, for the faculty records are silent on the subject.

The first move in the direction of departmental division was made at the annual meeting in 1871, when the Board voted that,

at the earliest day practicable there be established, instead of a department of ancient languages, two departments, one of which shall be called the department of the Greek Language and Literature; the other the department of the Latin Language and Literature.

Dr. Sheldon, the former President who had become a member of the Trustees, then moved to consider dividing into two departments the present department of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. The matter was referred to a committee composed of Sheldon, Dr. Hanson, and Moses Giddings. The committee asked that the matter be tabled until the 1872 meeting, when the Board voted that the old department be made two, under the respective titles of the department of Mathematics and the department of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy. Thus began the linkage of two fields of science, physics and astronomy, which would later induce Col. Richard C. Shannon to erect a unique physics building topped by an astronomical observatory.

When the present writer entered the College in 1909, North and South College, Memorial Hall, Chemical Hall and Coburn Hall were heated by steam, but the rooms in Recitation Hall still had the big box stoves. Students of the writer’s generation can well remember the ritual with which Dr. J. William Black opened his classes on the top floor of that building. After the class had made its leisurely entrance, Dr. Black would emerge from his adjoining office, clad in a long linen duster and gloves. Going to the wood closet, he would pick up a few sticks of big two-foot logs, carry them to the stove, lift the cover and place them gently within. Picking up the poker, he would stir the fire, close the cover, brush his arms and breast with his gloved hands, look about the room, notice that the sun was pouring in one window, go to that window and adjust the shade, then walk with great dignity into his office, remove gloves and duster, step out again, stand behind the desk and say, “Good morning. I will now call the roll.”
Such stoking of fires by professors, common in Recitation Hall as late as 1910, was the everyday chore of all professors and of all students in their dormitory rooms prior to the winter of 1871-72, for it was in August, 1871, that the Trustees decided on their first venture into central heating. They voted “that $3750 be appropriated to be used this fall for repairs on North College and heating it with steam.”

It was in 1872 that, for the first time, two of the college buildings were renamed for persons. Hitherto the middle brick building had been known as Chapel or Recitation Hall. Immediately after the building of Memorial Hall, the most common name for the recitation building was Old Chapel. At the annual meeting in 1872, Dr. Ebenezer Cummings proposed that the remodeled building be named Chaplin Hall, after the first president. The motion was tabled until the adjourned session in the afternoon. Then Rev. Franklin Merriam, a Massachusetts member of the Board, proposed an amendment, naming the building for President Champlin. The result was a happy compromise honoring both presidents. The Old Chapel became Champlin Hall, and North College became Chaplin Hall. Ironically enough, the college generations between 1900 and 1920 had not the slightest idea that the two buildings officially had names that honored the two presidents. Neither presidential name was ever used when either students or faculty referred to the structures. The northern dormitory was always North College and the middle brick building was always Recitation Hall.

Every college can boast of incidents which faculty and townspeople regarded as serious or even criminal, but which after the lapse of many years appear more humorous than solemn. Such an incident at Colby occurred during the Champlin administration. When Joseph Coburn Smith was editor of the Colby Alumnus in 1940, he brought to light the story that he called “The Privy Arson Case.”

Back of the college buildings, on the site where Hedman Hall was later built, was a small, undecorated, but useful structure, which served as a common latrine for the dormitories. Interior plumbing was quite unknown in that day. Just as the single out-door pump supplied water for the students’ ablutions, the little building in the rear served the demands of nature.

The building was not just a wooden shack, but actually much more imposing. Its walls were of stone, of the same material of which Memorial Hall was later built, for the latrine had been erected shortly before the Civil War, replacing an older wooden structure. Once built, the stone building was left to take care of itself. By 1872 it had become sadly dilapidated, especially with respect to its internal appointments. The students repeatedly complained about it, but nothing was done.

On the night of May 14, 1872, the building caught fire and all except its stone walls was destroyed. In those days the town authorities were much more ready to interfere in college affairs than has since been the case. On the Mayflower Hill campus the city officers of the mid-twentieth century never stepped in until requested to do so by college officials. But, after that out-house fire in 1872, the selectmen of Waterville didn’t wait for college action, but proceeded directly to act on what they suspected was a case of arson. It was the old court record of the case which Joe Smith found, and which shows how seriously the incident was considered.

The inquiry resulted in the following court record signed by Justice Drummond:
 Whereas the municipal officers of the town of Waterville complained to me that a certain building, the privy owned by the President and Trustees of Colby University, situated on their grounds back of the college buildings, was on May 14, 1872, destroyed by fire, and that reasonable grounds exist for believing that the fire was not accidental in origin, but was caused by design, six good and lawful men were summoned before me to make due inquiry.

 Whereas, also, it appears that on June 18, 1872, a subpoena was duly issued by me, and Nathaniel Butler, Jr., was duly summoned to appear before me on June 22, 1872, to give evidence of what he knew relating to the origin of the burning of said building, and the said Nathaniel Butler, Jr. having failed to appear, he hath thereby committed a contempt of this court. The sheriff of Kennebec County, or either of his deputies, is commanded in the name of the State of Maine to take the body of him, the said Nathaniel Butler, Jr., and bring him forthwith before me to answer to said charge of contempt.

 Joe Smith naturally became curious to learn how the episode could be treated so seriously and then so suddenly dropped. Fortunately one of the students named in the court record was still living. Horace W. Stewart of the Class of 1874, himself a dignified, retired justice of the courts, though a very aged man in 1940, still resided at East Vassalboro, Maine. Joe at once called on Judge Stewart and from him got the remainder of the story.

 The Judge said he and Butler, disgusted at the faculty’s neglect of the structure, had decided to touch it off. “The walls were laid up in stone, just like Memorial Hall. In fact, by that time, it has received from students the name Memorial Hall Junior. It had two openings for windows, but no sash, and the door had long ago disappeared. The damage was confined to the interior appointments and was really minor. But it did make quite a blaze.”

 Judge Stewart then told how there gathered a group of eight students, who spent the night at Col. Heath’s lumber camp in the woods above Benton. “Heath’s men were tickled to see us and fed us with beans and doughnuts as big as a skillet. Because the next day was Sunday, we knew that no legal step could be taken; so we came back to town.”

 Stewart was at a loss to explain how suspicion became directed at himself and Butler. “It must have been the janitor. That was before Sam Osborne had the job. Sam would never have told on a student. He was close-mouthed; he was a darling.”

 Judge Stewart gave Butler credit for settling the affair to the satisfaction of both the college and the town authorities. “Nat was a very conscientious fellow, and after a while he confided in his father, a distinguished Baptist minister and a trustee of the College. Dr. Butler came to Waterville and talked with President Champlin. It was finally agreed that, if we would pay thirty dollars damage, the charge of arson would be dropped. So I sent home for the money to pay my half, and we heard no more about the matter.”

 Judge Stewart expressed surprise when Joe Smith told him that the official court records had been preserved for nearly seventy years. He had no idea the case had been treated with such ceremony. But, as Joe left the old gentleman, that co-arsonist of 1872 got in a last word: “Anyhow, the college ought to have rebuilt the structure long before that.”

 Who was the companion of Judge Stewart in that blazing episode? Who was Nathaniel Butler, Jr.? He was the son of Nathaniel Butler, Sr., of the Class
of 1842, who at the time of the incident had just become a Baptist pastor in Bangor after distinguished pastorates in Illinois and Kansas. Young Nathaniel graduated from the College in 1873, and at once began a notable career as an educator. In 1884 he was called by President Harper to the Chair of Rhetoric and English Literature at the new University of Chicago, then became the University's Director of Extension. In 1895 he was called by his alma mater to be its president, in which office he served with great distinction for six years. He then returned to the University of Chicago as Professor of Education and later Dean of its College of Education. So it becomes a matter of historical record that one of the presidents of Colby College did in his student days confess to "Privy Arson."

When the Trustees assembled for their annual meeting in 1872, with Coburn Hall about to be opened for the sciences, they were in an affluent mood. They appropriated $2550 to complete the renovation of North College, on which they had already spent $5750 in the previous year. They granted Professor Hamlin's request that he be released from all duties not directly connected with instruction in Chemistry and Natural History. They granted the first paid sabbatical leave known in Colby history. Hitherto any permitted leave had been at the faculty member's own expense. But, so sound was the treasury in 1872 that the Board voted that "the request of the Professor of the Department of Modern Languages (E. W. Hall) for leave till the summer term of next year, for the purpose of study in France and Germany, be granted, and that the Treasurer be instructed to pay him in advance two-thirds of his salary for the coming year." The Board then proceeded to make the hitherto unprecedented appropriations of $500 each to the departments of Mathematics and Natural History for the purchase of apparatus.

It had been some time since any attempt had been made to feed the students in a common dining hall. Meals were obtained at boarding houses operated at homes in the village, although in the 1870's a few students were still getting meals in their rooms, obtaining weekly supplies of cooked food from their homes. The Trustees, remembering well the financial losses and the constant complaints about the old dining service, had no intention of resuming the facility in Champlin's time. In 1872 they voted to sell the old Commons Hall. At the same time they decided "to retain the house on Front Street." That was a small dwelling house, south of Memorial Hall, which had been built in the 1830's for occupancy of a faculty family. It had served various purposes and by 1870 was not in good condition. But, with the recent division of two departments into four the Trustees looked forward to faculty additions, and the house might still be made useful.

The Trustees wisely decided that the recent renovations in living quarters for students justified more revenue. They voted that, effective with the fall term of 1872, room rent for double rooms should be raised from $6.66 to $8.00 per term, and in single rooms from $6.00 to $7.00. It is to be noted that the room charges at that time were not made per student, but per room. The fee of $8.00 was for the double room, each occupant paying only $4.00 per term.

The climax of the Board's annual meeting in 1872 was the resignation of President Champlin, to take effect on January 24, 1873. He had been connected with the College for thirty-two years and had been its president for exactly half of that time. The Board reluctantly accepted the resignation, expressing their gratitude for his diligent and devoted service. And what a service it had been! A comfortable endowment, three new buildings, plans for a larger faculty, sub-
A substantial increase in salaries, enthusiasm of alumni and friends—these things had all come since the summer day in 1857 when James T. Champlin, humbly and very reluctantly, agreed to change from his professorship of Ancient Languages to the greater burden of the presidency of an impoverished and all but doomed little college. His accomplishments had been indeed remarkable. Of all the money collected between 1857 and 1872, Champlin had personally secured nearly $200,000. When he left the presidency, the College had no debts. His colleague Samuel K. Smith said of him, "He came to Waterville as a professor when I entered as a student in 1841. I came to know him as a man of unswerving, invincible integrity. What particularly struck me was the complete subordination of his personal interests to the broader interests of the College."

James T. Champlin had steered the leaky ship through the wild waves of civil war, had stopped the leaks with new funds, and had at last brought the vessel into the port of financial stability.
The Executive Committee met on January 29, 1938. The meeting was held in the auditorium of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in New York City. The agenda included discussions of various topics related to the Academy's activities and future plans.

At the beginning of the meeting, the President, Dr. John Smith, welcomed the members and provided an update on the Academy's recent achievements. He highlighted the successful completion of the new research facility and the upcoming publication of the inaugural issue of the Academy's new journal.

The Executive Committee then reviewed the financial reports for the past year, which showed a steady increase in membership dues and contributions. They also discussed the budget for the upcoming fiscal year and decided to allocate additional funds for outreach programs to increase public awareness of the Academy's work.

The committee also considered several proposals for new initiatives, including a program to support young researchers and a partnership with a local university to enhance collaboration on interdisciplinary projects. After careful deliberation, the committee voted unanimously to approve these proposals.

The meeting concluded with a brief round of introductions and updates from individual members on their recent activities and contributions to the field. The President expressed gratitude for the hard work and dedication of all members and encouraged continued support for the Academy's mission.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 20, 1938, and will be held at a location to be announced shortly.