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**Ben Ames Williams, Litt.D. (Colby 1942)**

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Harrison wrote an essay on Tennyson, published in *Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill, and Other Literary Estimates* (1900). Ten years later, on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of Tennyson's birth, Harrison wrote another critical essay, "The Tennyson Centenary," published in the *Nineteenth Century* (66: 226-233), August 1909, in which he remarked:

"Ten years have passed since I made bold to claim for Tennyson a special rank of his own among our English poets. . . . Again I make bold to insist that Tennyson still reigns in our hearts as alone the peer of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth. No others since Wordsworth's death in 1850 . . . can pretend to stand beside these four in the first half of the nineteenth century; and, in the second half of the century, Tennyson alone is of their rank."

The manuscript now in the Colby Library seems to be a further critical examination of Tennyson by Harrison — one which, as far as is now known, has remained unpublished.



BEN AMES WILLIAMS, Litt.D. (Colby 1942)

By KENNETH ROBERTS, Litt.D. (Colby 1935)

**B**EN Ames Williams is a Mississippian by birth; by adoption, however, he is a State of Mainer, and casts a trout fly and stops the most swiftly moving partridge as adeptly as the most skilful product of the Great North Woods.

My first glimpse of Ben Ames Williams was in a court room in Cambridge, Massachusetts. My view was obstructed by an extremely large young man who not only sat high in his chair but bulged widely on either side. Consequently I was prepared to dislike him; but when I got to know him as Ben Williams, I liked him as well as everyone must.

State of Mainers, as a rule, control themselves admirably when reading about themselves; but they seem to feel dif-

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ferently about the writings of Ben Williams from the way they feel about those of other authors who write about Maine. Some years ago he published a story about an old friend of his — Burt McCarrison — who fished, farmed, ranged the alder swales and lived contentedly on next to nothing in Searsmont, a little town on a Maine hill. Copies of that story were passed from hand to hand in my section of Maine until they were limp and tattered.

“That Ben Williams,” State of Mainers say, “he knows what he’s writing about.”



### MORE ABOUT “THAT BEN WILLIAMS”

**M**ANY of our readers will be reading or will have read *Time of Peace* — some because they like to read anything by Ben Ames Williams, some because they are members of the Literary Guild, the December “selection” of which was this latest Williams novel, and some because they have read reviews praising the vivid and dramatic way in which Mr. Williams has caught the spirit of our times in this work. All these readers will be specially interested to learn that the manuscript of this story is now in the Colby Library — a gift of the author. It shows in a most instructive way how the story grew from its first conception as a short novel, or long short-story, until it evolved into the present full-length account of “the decade that ended with Pearl Harbor.” The author explains the origin of *Time of Peace* thus: “In September 1939, on the outbreak of war, I decided to write a book about a father and son who were close to one another and to make that story run from the son’s boyhood up to our participation in the war.” On the last page, the son’s wife turns on the radio, that famous Sunday afternoon of December 7, 1941: the news flash about Pearl Harbor was just coming over the air.

The manuscript of this novel was placed on exhibition