

# Colby



Colby Quarterly

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Volume 3  
Issue 5 *February*

Article 6

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February 1952

## Charles Ricketts'"Hero and Leander"

Benton L. Hatch

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### Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 3, no.05, February 1952, p.77-79

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Jane was sitting on the window-seat of the breakfast room at Galeshead Hall. With a book which she had chosen for its pictures, she was as happy as she could be in her friendless state." Well, what was the book? Jane's "imagination thrilled" to the illustrations in one of Thomas Bewick's books. And for those modern Jane Eyres who can still take delight in Bewick's wood blocks, we here present another example of the work of his skillful hand. As readers of this



quarterly already know, Colby owes its possession of the original wood block of this "cut" to the generosity of T. Raymond Pierce, '98. Previous reproductions from the Bewick blocks now at Colby have appeared in our issues for May 1949, August 1949, November 1949, August 1950, and August 1951.



CHARLES RICKETTS' "HERO AND LEANDER"

By BENTON L. HATCH

**B**E means of generous help provided by Dr. Frederic E. Camp, the Colby Library Associates have recently acquired and have presented to the college library a copy

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of Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman's *Hero and Leander*, printed by the Ballantyne Press of London and Edinburgh in 1894 with decorations designed and cut on the wood by Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon. This is one of two items mentioned in the desiderata note appended to "Books from the Vale Press," by James Humphry, III, published in the last issue of this QUARTERLY.\* It is the first pre-Vale item of Charles Ricketts to be acquired by the library.

From the colophon of the volume, we learn that the book was begun at the Vale (a cul-de-sac off the King's Road, for which the later-designed Vale type was named) in November of 1893 and was finished in February of the following year. In this present work there are quite a few points which tie in with the later Vale Press volumes. The ornamental border which surrounds the title-page of this book was used again in at least two instances, in Blake's *The Book of Thel*, and in his *Poetical Sketches*. On the last leaf of the volume appears, under the caption "Inter folia renata rosa," a design which, with minor changes, became the first firm-mark of the Vale Press, and as such was used in the first volume published, in 1896, *The Early Poems of John Milton*. In some later titles it appears in a recut version.

Our copy of *Hero and Leander* is bound in white vellum over boards and stamped in gilt. The spine reads: HERO | AND | LEAN- | DER, with the design mentioned above at the bottom, in simplified form, a capital letter P centered in a capital letter V. Both covers are stamped in the same arrangement of rules and devices, including a leaf device used later in some of the Vale Press volumes. Centered towards the lower margin are two interlocking capital letter

\* [Note by the editor:] In looking over Major Humphry's list, I notice that there are three titles to be found "only at Colby": Matthew Arnold's *Empedocles* (No. 8 on the list), Shelley's *Lyrical Poems* (No. 19, certainly one of the rarest of all Vale Press books), and the three-volume set of Shelley's *Poems* (No. 34). This "only at Colby" trio takes its place alongside of some of our unique Kelmscotts.

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C's, one reversed, and the date, 1894, in Roman numerals. At the bottom are two monograms: the one in the left-hand corner that of Charles Ricketts; the other in the right-hand corner appears to be made up of an H and an L probably drawn from the title of the book.

In *A Bibliography of the Books Issued by Hacon and Ricketts, 1896-1903*, Ricketts gives evidence of the use, in the Vale Press items, of designs conceived and executed in the pre-Vale period. Examination of this copy of his *Hero and Leander* makes his use of those early designs more specific. When and if the Colby Library acquires *Daphnis and Chloë*, translated by George Thornley (the other title listed in the desiderata note cited above), the picture will be more complete.



A DESIDERATUM: "THE CHRISTIAN  
HISTORY," FOR 1744

**W**ILL some kind friend assist the Library in completing its set of *The Christian History, containing Accounts of the Revival and Propagation of Religion in Great-Britain & America. For the Year 1743* [-1744]. Boston, N. E. Printed by S. Kneeland and T. Green, for T. Prince, junr. 1744 [-45]? Colby lacks the volume "For the Year 1744," containing the issues, No. 53-104, from Saturday, March 3, 1744, through Saturday, February 23, 1744.5.

According to Sabin, this weekly is one of the earliest American periodicals, and the *Union List of Serials* states that it is the first religious one. It was started at the instigation of the Rev. Thomas Prince, Pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, who was a frequent contributor, and was edited by his son, Thomas Prince, Jr. Our copy of the first volume, "For the Year 1743," bound in contemporary calf, and with the bookplate of Mary Bradford, of Boston, carries, on the verso of the blank leaf at the end, a contempo-