

# Colby



Colby Quarterly

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Volume 4  
Issue 5 *February*

Article 6

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February 1956

## A Centennial Reminder of Macaulay

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### Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 4, no.5, February 1956, p.97-98

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## Colby Library Quarterly 97

I can speak from experience when I say that he was kindness, sympathy, and patience itself.<sup>2</sup>



### A CENTENNIAL REMINDER OF MACAULAY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY'S *History of England* was planned on so elaborate a scale as to require twelve years for the publication of the five volumes in which the work first appeared. Volumes I and II were published in 1849, Volumes III and IV in 1855; Macaulay himself died in 1859, and Volume V, "edited by his sister, Lady Trevelyan," was not published until 1861.

When the last volume which Macaulay himself saw through the press appeared (i.e., Vol. IV in 1855), it contained an account of an episode that took place in 1695 at Royston—near Barnsley in the West Riding of Yorkshire. An infantry regiment quartered there levied "contributions" on the people of that town. Macaulay describes how "a petition was sent up to the Commons . . . and . . . a representation . . . [by] the Commons [was subsequently] laid before William [the Third with the result that he] promised ample redress . . . and established a military board for . . . detecting and punishing such malpractices as had taken place at Royston."

After the publication of this volume of Macaulay's work, he received from an unknown reader of the book an inquiry regarding Royston as a publication center; could the author tell him anything about that? Macaulay replied as follows:

Albany London  
November 23, 1855

Sir,

I am in possession of no particular information about Royston. It is very probable that there may have been a press there in the days of

<sup>2</sup> In 1919 Robinson acquired a copy of Conrad Aiken's *Scepticisms: Notes on Contemporary Poetry* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1919), in which Mr. Aiken's comments on Amy Lowell and Louis Untermeyer are elaborated. This book stands at the head of James Humphry's alphabetically-arranged check-list of Robinson's library (see page 17 in *The Library of Edwin Arlington Robinson*, compiled by James Humphry, III: Waterville, Colby College Press, 1950). The book is now in the Robinson Room of the Colby College Library.—*Editor*.

## 98 Colby Library Quarterly

the Commonwealth. At that time no Episcopalian divine would have been able to get his writings printed at the University of Cambridge. It was therefore very natural that some friends of the oppressed Church should establish in the neighbourhood of the University a press to which such a man as Jeremy Taylor might have recourse. But I should be much surprised to find that, after the Restoration, a press at Royston had been licensed; and I observe that all the works, which, as you inform me, bear the date of Royston, were printed before the passing of the Licensing Act.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant

T B MACAULAY

The original autograph of this letter has recently come to light in a copy of Macaulay's *History* once owned by Henry William Vincent (and later owned by Leo Terry), but it is impossible to say whether Vincent was the "Sir" whom Macaulay addressed.

In any case, the five volumes of the *History* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849, 1855, 1861) in their original blind-stamped plum-brown cloth, each volume enclosed in a half-leather light-brown protective case, were recently purchased by Mr. and Mrs. H. Ridgely Bullock, Jr., of New York City, and by them presented to the Colby College Library—their purchase being made just one hundred years, almost to the day, after Macaulay had written his letter about Royston.



### SOME OTHER RECENT ACQUISITIONS

THE COLBY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES have given the Library a copy of the seventh edition of Timothy Dwight's *Theology, Explained and Defended* (New York, G. & C. & H. Carvill, 1830), and in this case we are happier to have the seventh edition than we might have been with the first, for this copy is *Ex Libris* Elijah Parish Lovejoy (Colby 1826). Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) was one of the popular American theologians of Lovejoy's day.