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Epilogue

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◆ *Editor's Epilogue* ◆

Who's Who: A. Hamilton Gibbs and his brothers Sir Philip and Cosmo Hamilton constitute another family of consequential writers in the British tradition of the Huxleys, the Waughs, *et alii*. After World War I service with the Lancers and the Royal Field Artillery, he settled permanently in Massachusetts. His most highly regarded novels are the concisely titled *Soundings*, *Labels*, *Chances*.

Professor of Comparative Literature at Dartmouth College, Herbert Faulkner West is both bibliophile and bibliopole; he has tracked down and sold innumerable rare books. Among those he has written himself are *An Apology for Book Collecting*, *The Dreamer of Devon*, and *W. H. Hudson's Reading*.

Marjorie Mosser Ellis is Kenneth Roberts' niece. She served as his secretary for the two decades between 1937 and 1957. She and Mrs. Roberts came to the fore endlessly with needful data for this issue of *CLQ*.

Novel Friendships: J. D. Salinger, that lavish eremite, has written gloomily, "A writer's worst enemy is another writer." Not so with Kenneth Roberts, at least. Three of his bosom friends and most dependable recourses in difficulty were novelists. Roberts had none of the finicking vainglory or secrecy about a manuscript in progress which afflicts most of the world's practicing authors. He unhesitatingly called upon this trio to hoist him out of inevitable ruts or to hack away at his brushpile.

Booth Tarkington was not only "most encouraging about my aspirations" when Roberts was just getting started, but also had a hand in most of his major fiction. Although Tarkington was waging a losing battle against blindness, he ungrudgingly guided Roberts across rough terrain. His advices were invaluable in getting *Arundel* off the ground; he listened to and commented on every chapter and every revision of every chapter of *Captain Caution*; so acute was his aid on *Northwest Passage* that Roberts proposed adding his name to the title page.

When insuperably depressed by an impasse in his work, Roberts sought out Ben Ames Williams. They would go off to fish or hunt or just grouse at each other until the fog lifted. While immersed to the ears in his own monumental 1500-page *House Divided*, Williams stole time out to read and criticize the manuscript of *Lydia Bailey*.

A. Hamilton Gibbs was Roberts' favorite traveling companion and counterweight. He too hammered at the first unsatisfactory versions of *Lydia Bailey* and wrestled manfully with "the whole twenty pounds of *Northwest Passage*," to Roberts' inexpressible relief.

So it was with roguish irony that Roberts used to recall the story of the author who returned from abroad and was asked whether he had enjoyed the boat trip. "Hell, no," he responded. "There was another author aboard!"