

# Colby



Colby Quarterly

---

Volume 7  
Issue 5 *March*

Article 5

---

March 1966

## Epilogue

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq>

---

### Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 7, no.5, March 1966

This Back Matter is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

256 ◆ *Editor's Epilogue* ◆

**Strong Words:** Elizabeth Akers Allen, symbolically born in Strong, Maine, was unshakeably a lady of strong opinions. Her paternal great-grandfather shipped with John Paul Jones and fought on the *Bonhomme Richard* in its epic battle against the *Serapis*. Presumably from his personal reminiscences, Elizabeth wrote an account of Jones' career which, before the heyday of the muckrakers, was meat too strong for the contemporary magazines. Instantly dubbing the editor who turned it down "an old fuddy-duddy as ever lived," Elizabeth laid her cards out to a friend: "I confess to a great admiration for Jones—but I believe in calling things by their right names, and I don't call him a patriot, or a "devoted lover of America." He was a despot by nature—he hated all authority. He wanted to *rule* everything, and as soon as he came to see that there is no tyrant on earth so absolute as a captain of a ship at sea, he aimed for just that position, and he got it. The reason why he left the Russian navy was because he couldn't manage it to his own mind. His life was headlong and ungoverned, and he carried out the same spirit after he left seagoing, and with the money paid him by Catherine of Russia, he soon killed himself among the vices and excesses of the French capital. The character as defined by his own admissions, and by every known act of his life, is thoroughly consistent; while the fairy-stories told about his having been the 'son of a poor Scottish gardener,' at one time a mild domestic man, dutifully taking care of his brother's widow in Virginia, at another, a devoted patriot leading an infant nation to freedom, and at another, a 'courtly and accomplished gentleman in Paris,' are completely and self-evidently contradictory."

**Who's Who:** Dr. William B. Miller is an associate professor of fine arts at Colby, having earned degrees at Harvard and Columbia universities, and taught at Amherst. Like the sculptor he writes about, Miller has studied in Rome (on a Fulbright Fellowship), and enjoys carving wood figures in relief. He is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome and a trustee of the Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums. His current concern is directing members of the Friends of Art at Colby in research on Maine art and architecture.