Two Friends of Robinson

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Guatemalan Indian converts to Christianity are in the main Catholic, because of the centuries of Spanish domination and influence. Their knowledge of Christianity is therefore likely to be confined to Spanish texts. The translations into Mam and Quiché consequently mark not only new additions to the Bible Collection in the Colby College Library, but mark also a new chapter in the history of missionary work among the Indians of Guatemala.

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TWO FRIENDS OF ROBINSON

EDWIN Arlington Robinson has told in *The Colophon* (December 1930) his own story of the hardships of his “First Seven Years.” This period of neglect was followed by a happier time, when, with the helpful influence of a president of the United States, Robinson began to gain a hearing for his poems. After Theodore Roosevelt left the White House, Robinson found many a door, previously closed, now open to him. And when he began spending his summers at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire, Robinson embarked upon a smooth voyage that ended only with his death.

Shortly after beginning his annual visits to Peterborough, Robinson made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Sergeant Perry of near-by Hancock. He found them both to be delightful characters—well read, widely travelled, ardent in friendship, and keen of intellect. Mrs. Perry was the niece of James Russell Lowell, and a poet as well as a painter of unusual ability. In 1916 she painted the portrait of Robinson that now hangs in the Robinson Treasure Room of the Colby College Library. Her husband’s long service to the Boston Public Library is commemorated on a bronze tablet that hangs upon the courtyard wall of that library. It reads: “In Memoriam Thomas Sergeant Perry 1845-1928. He enriched this Li-
"The

John Hall Wheelock

Marguerite Wilkinson

Leonora Speyer

Harold Trowbridge

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Library by his wise counsel and his rare learning during half a century. 'If thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him and let thy foot wear the steps of his door.' In 1929 Edwin Arlington Robinson edited, with an introduction, *Selections from the Letters of Thomas Sergeant Perry*. Since then twenty years have passed, and we now add another link to the strong chain that binds Perry and Robinson in affectionate association and friendship. By the gift of Miss Margaret Perry, her father's entire library comes to Colby College, where it will eventually be housed in a room appropriately near the Robinson Treasure Room. The announcement of this gift was made at the November meeting of the Library Associates. Since that time, two of the exhibition cases in the Treasure Room have been filled with copies of books by, or about, Thomas Sergeant Perry, together with several portraits of this friend of the poet.

Just about the time when Robinson began summering in New Hampshire, he found the pages of *The Outlook* opened to him—pages that had been previously closed. This New York magazine had acquired a new poetry editor, Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer, among whose many services to the periodical was his recognition of the high qualities of Robinson's verse. No doubt one reason why Pulsifer was able to do what other editors had not been able to do was that Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer was himself a poet. During his editorship of *The Outlook*, he published *Mothers and Men* (1916); and after he had given up his editorial chair and had retired to Maine, he found creative activity easier, with the result that four volumes of verse flowed from his pen in the thirties: *Harvest of Time* (1932), *First Symphony* (1935), *Elegy for a House* (1935), and *Rowen* (1937). Mr. Pulsifer died in April 1948; if he had lived until the following November 18 he would have been sixty-two years old. On the day after that birthday it was announced, at the meeting of the Library Associates already referred to, that Mrs. Pulsi-
fer had given the Poetry Library of her husband to the Colby Library. It too will, in time, be housed in an appropriate memorial room. On Mr. Pulsifer's birthday, an exhibition of his books, together with portraits, manuscripts, and other mementoes, was opened in the Robinson Treasure Room.

The Perry and Pulsifer gifts, together, mark not only a most appropriate and welcome addition to the library's equipment in books that provide a further record of Edwin Arlington Robinson's background, but they constitute, even apart from any association with Robinson, a splendid accession in which all friends of the Colby Library can take pride and for which their thanks will go out to Miss Margaret Perry and to Mrs. Harold T. Pulsifer.

In the early nineteen-twenties, Harold Pulsifer was president of a little group of leading American poets. Elinor Wylie seems to have been the central figure around whom "the Poets" revolved, but according to Muna Lee, "the group was in many ways his creation. Harold Pulsifer wisely felt that what poetry needed was more real interchange of ideas and a greater solidarity of friendship among poets." They rented a room at the old Hopkinson Smith house in New York, and there smoked the clay pipes which have now been deposited with the Pulsifer Poetry Collection in the Colby Library. On these pipes are sketched the names and the faces of a number of the poets themselves. Here is Edwin Arlington Robinson, "as he never looked before and as he never expects to look again"; Bernice Lesbia Kenyon, "posing for her picture but not getting it"; Norma Dean, the "lily of the valley"; Elinor Wylie, "the Eagle of the Rock"; and Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer himself.

On pages 148 and 149 we reproduce Wyncie King's sketch of some of these poets. Seated at the table, with his hand on the wine glass, is Harold Pulsifer. Seated next to him is Marguerite Wilkinson, and next to her is Leonora
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Speyer, with bristling John Hall Wheelock standing behind her. Behind Harold Pulsifer stands Elinor Wylie, in the black dress, and standing behind her is William Rose Benét. Seated at the table and holding a book of "Poems" is Charles W. Stork, and next to him stands Maxwell Bodenheim. David Morton, with the bow tie, is seen behind Bodenheim.

Mr. Pulsifer's poetry library includes books by a number of these poets; many of the volumes are inscribed presentation copies. As the books now stand on the shelves of the Colby Library, it is easy to pick out those that Harold Pulsifer himself regarded as the most important. His "ordinary" books he left unmarked; on special ones he marked the spine of the book with a red star; and "extra-special" books he marked with a gold star. This Poetry Collection therefore has a distinctly personal flavor.

TWO MORE KELMSCOTTS

THANKS to the generous action of the Boston Colby Club, we have added two more products of the Kelmscott Press to our file of those famous books. In 1892 Morris printed 300 copies of his own poem, The Defence of Guenevere. This was the first book that he bound in limp vellum. Three of the 300 copies had previously reached New England libraries: at Brown, Dartmouth, and Harvard. The Colby Library now has a fourth copy.

Morris's socialistic Dream of John Ball was also printed by the Kelmscott Press in 1892, and again 300 copies were manufactured. Of these Dartmouth and Harvard had acquired two, and the Boston Colby Club has now brought us the third copy of John Ball to come to New England.