

April 2013

Letters

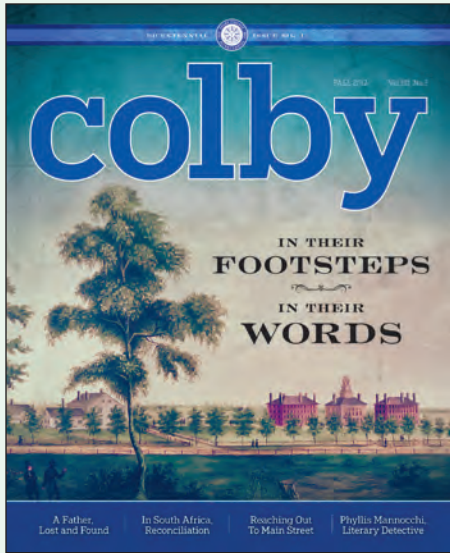
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In Their Words Indeed

Congratulations on your fall bicentennial issue. As the title indicated, you reported “In Their Footsteps, In Their Words.” You did not editorialize or add any “politically correct” comments. You let these pioneers of the Baptist faith speak for themselves about this new but remote place of higher learning in Maine, still part of the mother state of Massachusetts.

History major that I was, I looked up the year 1813 in my *Time Tables of History*, published by Simon & Schuster. It indicated that the War of 1812 was still raging. Buffalo was burned by the British but Detroit was retaken. Byron and Shelley were in their heyday in England, and the waltz conquered the European ballrooms. But under the heading of religion, philosophy, and learning, I read “Colby College Maine founded.”

Rev. Charles L. Smith Jr. '50
Providence, R.I.

Finding More Memories of the late Bill Holland

I was very moved to read the wonderful article about my classmate Bill Holland by his daughter, Laurel (“Finding a Life on the Edge,” fall 2012 *Colby*). She is a beautiful writer and her story of growing up without her dad, coping with the accident that claimed his life, and not knowing the whereabouts of his body for 21 years was beyond moving. When she described the trip she and her mother

took to the 40th reunion of our class to learn more about their father/husband, I began remembering Bill fondly. He and I had a natural connection through our four Colby years, which I just revisited in my memorabilia.

As Holland and Holm we entered Colby side by side in *Faces and Places*, the booklet of classmates’ photos we received as incoming freshman. At graduation we were paired for the processional and sat through the ceremony together. In the years between, we were not close friends but were friendly. I knew him well enough to want Laurel to know what a kind, deeply thoughtful person I found him to be. And I also want to thank Laurel for writing about her remarkable father for all of his friends and classmates.

Janet Holm Gerber '72
Rockville, Md.

I enjoyed, but not without both a smirk and a tinge of sadness, Laurel Holland’s moving story about her dad, who was my fraternity brother at KDR.

If Colby had prepared a time capsule during our years on the Hill, one of the objects finding its way into that box would have been a fraternity paddle. Yes, Modern Readers, there was such a thing as a fraternity paddle. And yes, we were whacked on the backside with them during, *miserabile dictu et auditu*, Hell Week. In addition to these histori-

cal facts, add the concept of fraternity fathers and sons—older members acting as mentors for younger members. (Not much mentoring was ever done.) Bill was my fraternity son and presented me with a beautifully carved and hand-stenciled paddle, which in correspondence subsequent to her article, Laurel has agreed to accept as a memento of her father’s years at Colby.

To close on a personal note, Bill Holland was a loyal friend and a gentleman, but also someone with a fierce and sometimes wild independent streak (think a motorcycle racing up the Hill by Lovejoy to Johnson Pond when there was a road there).

Tony Maramarco '71
Los Angeles, Calif.

Some Praise, Not Criticism

In today’s society it seems it’s easier to criticize than to praise, but I do think the fall issue of *Colby* was superb. I found the articles interesting and informative.

I was particularly moved by Laurel Holland’s article about her father, Bill Holland ’72. He was diagnosed with severe manic depression. My family has been exposed to this type of behavior, so we are aware of the difficulties of this horrible illness and can sympathize with the struggles placed on Laurel’s father.

Ron Rasmussen '57
Ramona, Calif.



Over a year my mother, Arnie, flew out from her home in Maine, Wash., to spend 10 days with me in New York. Her arrival did not become what she intended to be in 2007, and because if it was only contemplated that happened every year, but she gives mostly unattended until she arrives. It isn't vacation if you have to spend it there.

But when she made her way out this time shortly after my 25th birthday, her trip had another purpose. It was my father's 40th Colby reunion, and she had to be attending in his stead to connect with the Class of 1972 and to announce the location.

In April 1988 my father, Bill Holland, was killed in an ice-creaming accident in Ontario, Canada. While attempting an unusual descent of the treacherous peak face of Mt. Snow Dome in Jasper National Park, he fell through a cornice of ice and, it was believed, into a crevasse. A five-day search party failed to locate his remains, and by the time a search party could enter the area, the search had been so rigorous that Arnie, Canada was eventually forced to abandon recovery efforts.

I spent the greater part of my childhood wondering what had become of my father. The story was not mentioned to friends on the playground at school but one I could neither prove nor understand. I couldn't fathom the geometry of the mountains that took him, couldn't grasp the idea of "crevasse" or "cornice." Because there was no body, there was, for me, no proof my father had perished. It was an impossible reality.

To the Colby Community, a Marine Says Thank You

The whole of my Marine Corps career involves positions of mentorship if not outright instruction. Rewarding as the teaching aspect of leadership is, it can come with a side effect; you can find yourself seeking opportunities to impart knowledge, which may narrow your vision. Such was the case during my last meeting with *Colby* Managing Editor Gerry Boyle '78 (see P. 46).

While interviewing me on camera at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio in December, Mr. Boyle asked, "Is there anything you would like to tell the Colby community?" Immediately my mind went to the current student body and my inner instructor came out. As the cameraman packed his gear, that sinking feeling of a forgotten commitment began to develop. I heard my father's voice, "Perhaps you'd consider taking a moment to reflect and thank those who have selflessly supported you." Shame on me; please allow me to adjust course.

Mr. Joe Boulos '68. Mr. Boulos was the first Colby alumnus to reach out to me, within days of my injury. Marines are always inspired by those who went before them, and I can only be humbled by his experiences as a Marine aviator in Vietnam. Early on he provided both an "Emblem Injection" (Marine-speak for a rush of pride despite the trials of Marine life; references the Marine Corps emblem) and a Mayflower Hill injection. He religiously checks in on and provides support to me and my wife, Liz Czernicki Quist '98. *Semper Fidelis*, Mr. Boulos.

Professor Jim Meehan was the first person I thought of to provide a non-military recommendation when I was applying to the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School. His standards were high and he was appropriately unforgiving to those who did not meet them. There was no Colby professor whose work ethic paralleled the Marine Corps ethos more, and I knew if he felt I was unprepared for the challenge, he would rightfully refuse to write the recommendation. He wrote that recommendation and was bedside

in the military hospital at Bethesda, on multiple occasions, nine years later.

Annie '98 and Craig '97 Lundsten. Annie and Craig were first on the scene at the hospital bearing magazines, food, and support for Liz in particular. They have always been close friends, and even in the midst of a household move to New England, they were there for us.



PHOTO BY BRETT BUCHANAN

Nancy Nasse was my recovery care coordinator at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda. She spent more than her fair share of time bedside offering guidance and humor. She is married to Dave Nasse '99, a Marine logistician. It cannot be easy providing care, assistance, and levity to injured Marines while your own husband is serving in Afghanistan.

Adam Davis '99 and Heather Hilton '99. Both were frequently seen bedside as my recovery progressed; all visits came complete with comfort food. Heather was preparing for a deployment to Iraq at the time. Adam was in the midst of a total home renovation. Thank you guys.

Tony Pasquariello '99. I read his letter in the fall 2012 issue of *Colby*. Thank you, Tony, for adding awareness of those classmates serving, and as you stated, thank you for your service, John Ginn '97 and Ben Lester '99.

John Maddox '99. I ran into John

Maddox, a Naval lieutenant and surgeon, at Bethesda just days into my stay there. I remembered John's involvement with the woodsmen's team, but that was about it. It didn't matter; he was in my hospital room multiple times to see how I was doing.

Whit Bond '63 and Marian Leerbarger '84 both heard of my injury through the grapevine. They reached out immediately, offering support and help at any point I needed it. Brent and Jill Stasz Harris, both '86, met Liz at a lecture Professor Meehan gave in Washington, D.C. They have kept in touch with us, offering any needed support.

President William "Bro" Adams took time to visit Liz and me early on after surgery. He offered multiple times to help in any way possible. Liz and I could not be more thankful.

To the family of Elizabeth Hanson '02, the CIA agent who died in Afghanistan. I knew of, but little about, your daughter while at Colby. I can only thank you for creating the hero we have come to know in Elizabeth. She, among others, remains an inspiration and driving force behind recovery and the desire to get back into the fight. God Bless.

To my family. To not consider all of you part of the Colby community would be criminal. I do not know how you remained bedside and sane, and I will hold eternal guilt for putting you through all of it. I am truly lucky to have such a family; one that finds and forever holds the additional strength from such adversity.

I know I have missed some of the Colby community, but to the whole, thank you.

Marines love the camaraderie and "smallness" of the Corps. It builds lifelong relationships and a huge supporting community. I have experienced nothing like it—with the exception of that of the Colby students, staff, and alumni. I should have said thank you on camera. I hope this communicates my gratitude as well, if not better.

*Capt. Erik Quist '99, U.S.M.C.
Occoquan, Virginia*