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Robinson Books and Periodicals: II

Richard Cary

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There was a road, a railroad, and a river;  
Then there were hills behind it, and more trees.

Anyone familiar with the town of Gardiner would recognize the salient features of this description—house, hillside, road, railroad, and river. The amazing thing, in view of the fact that this last theme discussed represents a sizable fraction of Robinson's output, is that one does not have an overwhelming sense of dismay and bleakness after reading his poetry.

To sum up, there are a number of Maine influences in Robinson's poetry. His imagery owes much to the sea, streams, towns, farms, and forests of Maine; the weather also had its impact. Robinson's chief interest was in character, and there were a number of recognizable "Maine" types that he presented: the tall-tale artist, the eccentric individualist, the ne'er-do-well, the strong-willed stoic, and the gossip. His themes were frequently related to Maine character and times. The Protestant Ethic in both its positive and negative aspects played its role. The theme of decay and dissolution was probably most prominent and revealed itself in his characters and in the images that pervade much of the poetry. As a final word, however, I repeat my introductory suggestion that Robinson is a poet who transcends the regional and reveals the universal.

ROBINSON BOOKS AND PERIODICALS: II
By Richard Cary

Installment I of this annotated registry (see preceding issue of CLQ), presents all published materials in the Colby College Library written by Edwin Arlington Robinson and inscribed by him. This segment lists all publications written by others and inscribed by EAR.

It is a misfortune to latter-day biographers and critics that his overweening respect for the printed word deterred him almost totally from marking texts, even those he used in classes at Gardiner High School and Harvard College.
Many additional titles in the Colby collection which EAR read and commented upon in his letters, but which he did not inscribe, are not included here.

IV. BOOKS BY OTHERS: INSCRIBED BY E.A.R.


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of male from knees up, with caption “S O. / Ki Klux Klan” and “Silas Taylor” on verso of back flyleaf. “Mowe / Moveo-ere-ui-” on back endleaf.


Ludwig, Emil. Goethe, translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1928. “Lilla Cabot Perry / from E.A. Robinson / November 2, 1928” on front endleaf. On flyleaf Mrs. Perry has written an account of “Goethe as a person” told to her by the mother of her German teacher.


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Milton, John. The Poetical Works, 2 vols. New York: John B. Alden, 1885. “E.A. Robinson / May 27, 1887. / E.A. Robinson / G.H.S., P.G., Oct. 1888 / E.A. Robinson” on front endleaf of vol. I; also “Given to me April 17, 1893 / James L. Tryon / Enter into the spirit” in his hand; also “Sylvia Tryon / Vassar College” in her hand. “E.A. Robinson / June, 1887” on front endleaf of vol. II; also “Given to me April 17, 1893 / James L. Tryon / Enter into the spirit” in his hand.


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Whitall, William Van R. *The Notable Library of Major W. Van R. Whitall.* New York: American Art Association, [1927]. EAR recorded in the margins of this catalogue the selling price of items 988-1013, which are books, proof sheets, and manuscripts of his work sold at the Fourth Session.


V. PERIODICALS: INSCRIBED BY E. A. R.


New York Times (December 29, 1929), Rotogravure Picture Section 7, p. [3]. “N.Y. Times. He should have pulled up / his coat” below photograph and caption noting his 60th birthday, recipient unknown.

Vanity Fair, XXVIII (August 1927), 56. “I don’t know just what all this means, / but it fills space” below photograph and twenty-line critique of “The Man Against the Sky,” given to Mabel Daniels.

Woodlock, Thomas F. “The New Deal: Is It Revolution?” *Spectator* (London), No. 5539 (August 24, 1934), 248-249. “This may interest you. I shall see you / and Ruth next week. I’m glad to / hear about the room.—R” in margin left of title, presumably to George Burnham.