Early History and Influence of Harvard College’s Hollis Professorship of Divinity (the First Endowed Professorial Chair in America)

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EARLY HISTORY AND INFLUENCE
OF HARVARD COLLEGE'S
HOLLIS PROFESSORSHIP OF DIVINITY
(THE FIRST ENDOWED PROFESSORIAL CHAIR IN AMERICA)

by

Russell Vernon Kohr

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Western Michigan University
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EARLY HISTORY AND INFLUENCE
OF HARVARD COLLEGE'S
HOLLIS PROFESSORSHIP OF DIVINITY
(THE FIRST ENDOWED PROFESSORIAL CHAIR IN AMERICA)

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The creation by Thomas Hollis of London of the Hollis Professorship of Divinity at Harvard College in 1721, the first endowed professorial chair in America, had three effects. First, it elevated to the chair a series of distinguished minister-professors from whose classroom came most of the clergy of eighteenth century Massachusetts, to say nothing of those of the remainder of New England. Secondly, the establishment of the chair broke the lockstep of the practice inherited by Harvard College from Oxford and Cambridge Universities, by which a tutor taught all members of a class all subjects. Henceforth the divinity professor taught only divinity, and thus the vertical, or departmental, system of curricular organization was begun at the College. Thirdly, Harvard's gaining an endowed chair caused other colonial colleges to accelerate their quest to replicate Harvard and gain similar endowed professorships.
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Russell Vernon Kohr

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### ABBREVIATIONS OR SHORT REFERENCES

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<td>DAB</td>
<td><em>Dictionary of American Biography.</em> (New York: Scribner, 1928--).</td>
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<td>NEH&amp;GR</td>
<td><em>New England Historical and Genealogical Register.</em> (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1847--).</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCSM</td>
<td><em>Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts.</em> 51 vols. (Boston: by the Society, 1895--). Vols. 15, 16, 31, 49 and 50 contain the Harvard College Records from 1636 to 1750, including, in the last two volumes, the correspondence of Thomas Hollis with officials of Harvard College.</td>
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The term "professorial chair" is derived from the procedures used at the University of Azhar, Cairo, when that Moslem institution was founded in the tenth century. There, students sat on mats and heard teachers lecture from a low chair. As each teacher specialized in his own branch of religious learning, his seat became known as the "chair" of that subject.

When a student could answer difficult questions put to him by his mentor, he was "passed"; there were no written examinations. If he was able to successfully answer the most difficult ones, he could form a circle of his own and occupy a professorial chair in his own right.¹

THE CREATION OF THE HOLLIS PROFESSORSHIP
IN DIVINITY AT HARVARD COLLEGE

It was with considerable embarrassment to its conservative Congregational administration that Harvard College secured its first endowed professorship (and one in divinity at that) from the Baptist, Thomas Hollis of London. Baptists, along with Quakers, were looked upon by New England Congregationalists as radicals; this attitude especially was true of the Congregationalists who governed Harvard. Furthermore, some of the early laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony were designed to keep Baptists and other minority sects considered to be "heretical" from forming churches in the colony. Additionally, while Harvard College was founded in 1636 theoretically to provide an educated citizenry, in practice it educated men chiefly for the Congregational ministry or for the professions. The stipulation that only church members could vote resulted in the control of the government by members of the established Congregational churches. Control was, in effect, self-perpetuating. Even when the requirement for the franchise was changed in 1691 from a religious to a property qualification, the conservative Congregational populace, which by 1721 included the principal landowners and capitalists, was able to exercise control of the Colony. This was the situation at the time that Thomas Hollis established, at
Harvard College, the divinity professorship which bears his name and which is the first endowed chair in America.\(^1\)

Although Hollis indicated in his letters to Harvard College officials that he was well-known in London and that therefore one need only to address him as "Thomas Hollis, Marchand,"\(^2\) little is recorded about him. What can be learned comes from his letters to Harvard administrators, from references in other documents, and from the memoirs of his grand-nephew, Thomas Hollis IV. From these it soon becomes apparent that Hollis's philanthropic bent can be attributed to his devotion to Baptist causes, his love of liberty, and the examples of charity set by his father.


\(^2\)Wrote Hollis to Harvard's Treasurer, John White: "You need only to direct your letters for Tho. Hollis Senior Marchent London. My name is wel known at the post offices." Thomas Hollis to John White, London August 4, 1721, PCSM, 49: 366.
Thomas Hollis was the third of that name in as many generations. His grandfather, Thomas I, had been a prosperous whitesmith (tinsmith) at Rotherham, England. His father, Thomas II, had been a cutler. After moving to London during the English Civil War to manage a relative's cutlery business, Thomas II had leased Pinner's Hall, an auditorium which was a meeting place for dissenters from the Church of England, for use by Congregationalists. He then had attended their services, even though he was of the Baptist persuasion. Thomas II had given liberally to Baptist causes to help build up that denomination which, although it had grown under Oliver Cromwell, had been suppressed upon the Restoration of the Stuarts in 1660. He had founded two churches, one at Doncaster and the other at Rotherham, each with schools attached to them. At Sheffield he had established almshouses and also a hospital for Cutters' widows.

Thomas III was the first of three sons of Thomas II, the others were Nathaniel and John. As he later told the Reverend Benjamin Colman,


4Hunter, Halamshire, 320.
the Harvard College overseer who was to be his intermediary in his dealings with the college, Thomas III (who from here on will be referred to simply as Thomas Hollis, or Hollis) was affected by two events in his life: a bout with smallpox when he was ten, and an escape from drowning when he was thirteen. The first caused him to make "promises of greater care and amendment, if I recovered," and the second, "to return with many pious resolutions in my mind." He was also influenced by the Reverend Anthony Palmer, a London Baptist. At the age of fifteen, he publicly confessed his faults and was baptized; a year later he was voted into the Baptist church in London and ultimately became a deacon.5

After a period of travelling widely in Europe for his father, Hollis served as an independent trader and a merchant for forty years, after which he devoted time and attention to "Reading and some services of goodness and charity."6

"I make the Bible," he said, "the Rule of my Life and practice and ground of my future hopes, though I am very Imperfect in Works, and weak in Faith."7

5Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 28, 1721, PCSM, 49: 345-47; see also Alexander Gordon in DNB s.v. "Palmer, Anthony."

6Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 28, 1721, PCSM 49: 345-47.

7Ibid. That Hollis was well versed in the Bible is demonstrated by his frequent use of scriptural citations in his letters. See, for example, his letter to Emphraim Wheaton, March 13, 1723, (PCSM, 50: 453) in which he refers to Eph. 4:3 and Acts 22:32. Frequently he paraphrased a Biblical admonition. For example, he paraphrased Matt. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven," in this letter to Wheaton, in which he said of himself and his fellow Baptists, "Let our light so shine before men, in all holy conversation, that such whose inclinations may be ready to speak evil of our way may be ashamed." (PCSM, 50: 584.) Again, he paraphrased Mark 2:25, "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand," in references to the altercation with Harvard over his request for a statement of obligation for his professorship. See Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, Feb. 2, 1722, in which he wrote, "Cittys or Societys
Following the footsteps of his father, Hollis supported Baptist ministers in England and helped to fund building projects for Baptist churches. He dedicated the Wirlow Hall estate and other lands for the upkeep of the Hollis Hospital at Sheffield, Rotherham, and Doncaster, and was elected governor of St. Thomas' Hospital, London. In 1720 he became a member of the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and the Parts Adjacent in America, the organization established in 1649 by the Long Parliament to preach the Gospel to American Indians in their native language. (The Company granted Harvard College a yearly sum of £45 to pay the salaries of the ministers for this mission.) He supported the building of a Baptist church in Boston. Although a treasurer of the Baptist Association, he was also a member of the Congregational Church at Pinner's Hall, and worshipped there for fifty years.

divided among themselves can't stand." (PCSM, 49: 387.) See also Thomas Hollis to President Leverett, September 28, 1723, in which he remarked, "A City divided against itself can't stand, where Love and mutual confidence, the cement of Society, is once wanting." (PCSM, 50: 487.)

Hollis and other non-conformists to the practices of the established Church of England witnessed a Tory reaction to the limited freedom of worship they had received by virtue of the Toleration Act of 1689. While he and other Independents (Congregationalists and Baptists) were grateful for the opportunity granted by the Toleration Act to choose their own pastors, establish their own academies, and be protected by law from any disturbances, they felt oppressed by the regulation that their congregations' meeting places were always to be unlocked and clearly identified. Furthermore, they resisted the continuation of the requirement that they pay a head tax for the support of the local, Anglican, church. They were concerned that they as dissenters (along with Roman Catholics) were frequently barred from holding public office or from being elected to a directorship in a business corporation. They resented being excluded from attending Oxford or Cambridge unless they received communion in accordance with the prevailing Anglican practice. While they were temporarily relieved when Viscount Bolingbroke's Schism Act of 1714, which would have abolished their academies, was not promulgated because of Queen Anne's death that year, they worried that other and renewed discrimination would come with increasing rapidity.9

In view of this trend, Hollis, although he continued to support Baptists and other independent sects in England, turned his prime attention to New England, a land which he felt presented the best hope for the advancement of the cause of freedom. He

expressed the desire "that New England may still be famous for Primitive purity in Doctrine and Discipline to late Ages," and cautioned, in view of developments in England such as the Schism Act, "I pray God preserve your valuable libertys, you have as a People or Body politic need to act with great caution and prudence both in Civil and Religious matters."

Harvard College was to be his principle agent to advance the cause of religious freedom, although he defined this in terms of freedom only for Presbyterians, Congregationalists, or Baptists. He felt that the New England Puritans were fortunate because they were the establishment and the Episcopalians the dissenters. He was much concerned, therefore, when he heard that King George II had granted Episcopal Bishop George Berkeley a charter to establish a college in Bermuda to educate priests for the New World.  

Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, January 5, 1723, PCSM, 50: 437; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 3, 1724, PCSM, 50:513; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett, January 18, 1723, PCSM, 50: 446-47; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 7, 1725, PCSM, 50: 556; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 9, 1727, PCSM, 50: 594. In spite of the fact that The College of William and Mary in Virginia was related to the Anglican Church and that Bishop Berkeley "is a candidate for the laurel-wreath as the greatest visitor from Britain ever to come to William and Mary," never once, says J.E. Morpurgo, did the Bishop mention the existence of the Virginia institution in his arguments on behalf of his projected Bermuda college. This upset the officials of The College of William and Mary who, of course, did not want an institution in North America competing with them for church and crown funds. See Morpurgo, Their Majesties' Royall Colledge (Williamsburg, Va., 1976), 92. The proposed Bermuda college, which was to be known as St. Paul's College, and which was to educate American Indians, was never established because the English government defaulted on its intended grant. Bishop Berkeley, who in 1728 had sailed to Newport Rhode Island, and who with his own resources had established a farm there, awaiting the subvention from England for the college, at one time apparently had given thought to establishing the institution in that community. When the Crown's funds never came, he gave the farm and his personal library to Yale College and returned to England. See William L. Kingsley, Yale College, A Sketch of its History, 2 vols., (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1879), 1: 57-62. See also

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Hollis prized the liberties the Baptists in New England enjoyed even though Baptists there were taxed in support of the Congregational ministry. "As we profes our selfs Disciples of Christs," he wrote to Ephraim Wheaton, pastor of the Sansea Baptist Church, "it is our duty to take up our cross with patience and pay parochial duty where we live, and voluntarily maintain our owne charge, and thankful for our Liberty as men and Christians . . . ." Hollis observed that a more cordial spirit among magistrates and ministers existed than did formerly. In support of liberty, however, Hollis never spoke against King George II; he desired no revolution against the existing order, but rather, peaceful evolution. Hollis even went so far as to criticize New Englanders for their slighting Massachusetts Governor Samuel Shute because of the Governor's support of the King. **

Thomas Hollis first became acquainted with Harvard College while in the process of administering the estate of his maternal uncle, Robert Thorner. Thorner had met Harvard's president, Increase Mather, when the latter was in England in the late 1680s to negotiate a new charter for the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Having become impressed by what he heard of Harvard, Thorner had bequeathed £500 to the College. 12

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11. Thomas Hollis to Ephraim Wheaton, March 13, 1723, PCLM, 50: 454. See also Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 3, 1724, PCLM, 50: 513; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, September 5, 1723, PCLM, 50: 485; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, May 10, 1723, MSS.

In the course of the correspondence concerning the bequest, the Reverend Antipas Newman, Harvard's librarian who also was attorney for the College, learned that one of the executors (who was Hollis) had suggested that the College "inquire as to his own will upon his death." Subsequently, Increase Mather, as any astute college president would do, visited Hollis on his next trip to England. These personal contacts apparently were responsible for Hollis's reconfirmation of the fact that the College was named in his will, for in 1719 he informed Mather that he was "willing of my own substance to make a present to ye same purpose."

Thereupon, Hollis sent to Harvard twelve casks of nails and one cask of cutlery valued at £104 sterling which the College sold for £300 New England money (about $338 at 1970 levels). These gifts were designated by Hollis "for the assistance of pious young men who were destined for the ministry."


14 Murdock, Increase Mather, 278; Cotton Mather, Parentator (Boston: B. Green, 1724), 170; Thomas Hollis to Increase Mather, August 25, 1719, NEHGR, 2: 265. The Thorner bequest was not to be realized by Harvard until fifty years later. PCSM, 49: 235; NEHGR, 25: 52. When Mather wrote to Hollis upon the death of Hollis' father, he apparently neglected to thank Hollis for providing Mather with (1) the clause of Hollis' uncle's will, and (2) the notice of his own intent to make a bequest to Harvard, for Hollis had to remind Mather of these facts. Mather later (1723) sent Hollis a portrait of his father, Richard, which Hollis hung in his parlor. (Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, September 12, 1729, MSS., Hollis Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.)

15 "An Account of Mrs. Thomas Hollis's Benefactions to Harvard College in New-England," Frances Blackburne, Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, (London: privately printed, 1780), 593-94; Benjamin Peirce, A History of Harvard University, from its foundation, in the year 1636, to the Period of the American Revolution, (Cambridge, Mass., 1833), 97-98; Quincy, 1: 232, 235. Over a period of eight years, Hollis was to give Harvard bills of exchange and hardward with an aggregate total value of £2,880 sterling (£4,065 New England money). Such a large amount had never previously been given to the
In doing so, Hollis wrote (March 2, 1719):

I confess to bear affection towards the people of North America, those of Massachusetts and Boston, in particular, believing them to be a good and brave people... and the spirit of luxury now consuming us to the very marrow here at home, kept out of them. One likeliest means to that end will be, to watch well over their youth, by bestowing on them a reason­able manly education; and selecting thereto the wisest, ablest, most accomplished of men... .


^Quoted in Harris, Economics of Harvard, 269.

^Ebenezer Turell, The Life and Character of the Reverend Benjamin Colman, D.D., (Boston: n.p., 1749), (rep. ed., Delmar, N.Y., 1972), 53-55. A word about the government of Harvard is appropriate in connection with the difficulty of establishing the Hollis Professor­ship of Divinity. When the Massachusetts General Court voted in 1636, but six years after the great migration to the Bay Colony had begun, £400 to establish a "schoole or colledge," it also created the institution's official governing body—the Board of Overseers. This Board was placed on permanent basis by an act of 1642. The Board consisted of the Governor, the Deputy Governor, the magistrates of the jurisdiction and the teaching elders of the six adjoining towns (Cambridge, Watertown, Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury and Dorchester), and the President. It was discovered, however, that this body was too cumbersome to have immediate direction of the College, and thus an act was passed in 1650 incorporating the College under the name of the "President and Fellows of Harvard College," with the Corporation consisting of the President, five Fellows, and a treasurer or bursar. The Board was to have perpetual succession by election of members to supply vacancies. This is basically the general arrangement under which Harvard operates to this day. While at first the orders and by-laws of the Corporation had to have the approval of the Overseers before they became operative, later, in 1677, it was ruled that the acts of the Corporation were to have immediate force and effect, and were merely "alterable" by the Overseers, to which the Corporation was to be "responsible." For further details, see
with John Hollis, Thomas's brother, concerning two orphaned daughters of a minister. Assuming that John Hollis might be related to Thomas, Colman praised Thomas's gift to Harvard, and verified that students from all evangelical faiths, including Baptists, were welcome at the College. John Hollis gave Colman's letter to Thomas, who was so pleased with the statement about Baptist students that in 1720 he sent to the College a chest of books, eleven chests of nails, "one hogshead of Locks, Hinges and Iron Wares," and sundry other hardware. Thomas, verifying his philanthropic interests, later told Colman that "after forty years' diligent application to mercantile business, My God, whom I revered, inclined my heart to a proportionate distribution. I have credited by promise, 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord,' and have found it verified in this life." 18

Initially Hollis had no thought of establishing a professorship. His sole early interest in Harvard College was to aid needy young divinity students. Furthermore, the idea of establishing a professorship did not originate with him but rather was proposed to him by Harvard's President, John Leverett, and by Colman. Hollis, in fact, was amazed that the College did not already have an endowed

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18 Turell, Benjamin Colman, 115; "Thomas Hollis Obituary", NEHGR, 2: 266-68; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 28, 1721, Quincy, 1: 232; Blackburne, Hollis Memoirs, 693-94; "Grants and Donations," 147.
professorship, and inquired what an "honorable stipend" might be. When this inquiry brought no response, he wrote again on February 24, 1721, indicating that he was sending books by two ships, the sole proceeds to be added to the funds already given by him to Harvard, and that it was his plan, subject to the advice of the Harvard authorities, to provide from these monies a professorship of divinity with an annual salary of £40, and scholarships for 10 students at £10 each.\(^{19}\) The prevailing faculty salary at Harvard was then but £26, and so Hollis's plan was to provide, indeed, an "honorable stipend."\(^{20}\) So astute and understanding was Hollis of the expenses of college overhead that he suggested that the Harvard treasurer be provided with £5 a year to cover the cost of administering the endowment. He wanted the income from his fund to bear the entire charge of the professorship.\(^{21}\)

With this letter Hollis sent formal orders that his previous gifts to Harvard, and any he subsequently would make or bequeath, be used to endow the professorship and the scholarships. The purpose of the gifts, he said, was subject to such alterations as he might make during his lifetime or by his will. (It was this particular clause which was subsequently to be of concern to the Harvard authorities.) He then sent another gift which amounted to £1,500,

\(^{19}\)Quincy, 1: 238-39; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, September 23, 1720, Quincy, 1: 529-30; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, February 24, 1721, PCSM, 49: 354-57; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, August 31, 1721, PCSM, 49: 374.

\(^{20}\)Peirce, Harvard, 98.

\(^{21}\)Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, February 24, 1721, PCSM, 49: 357.
New England money.  

In establishing the professorship, Thomas Hollis was influenced by the fact that both Increase Mather and his son, Cotton, in 1718, had helped to install in the pulpit of the Baptist meeting house in Boston the Reverend Elisha Callender, a Baptist and a graduate of Harvard (class of 1710). This installation had been an act of ecumenism by the Mathers, for earlier Increase had delivered a tirade against the Baptists, in which he said that those who disbelieved in child baptism were in "blasted error." Callender sent news of the circumstances of his installation to Hollis, who then requested his friend, Edwin Wallin, a London dissenting minister, write Callender that he, Hollis, "shall be well pleased, if you can find a proper person of the Baptist persuasion, for him to recommend to the governors of the College . . . he may be prevailed upon to allow ten pounds per annum, of your money, towards defraying the charges of the college; which will be of some encouragement to one, ego, with promising natural parts, is desirous to devote himself to study, in order to fit himself for public usefulness, but is not well enabled to go through the charge."  


23 Sprague, 6: 35; Backus, History of New England, 2: 418-19. Backus attributes the ecumenical tone of the installation of Callender to be one of the prime factors which motivated Hollis to create the professorship. While this may have been a contributing factor, it is clear that the gift of the chair came about because a creditable representative of Harvard—in this case, the Reverend Benjamin Colman—asked for it. Hollis thought Harvard already had an endowed chair and was surprised to learn that it did not.  

24 Increase Mather, The Divine Right of Infant Baptisme asserted and proved from scriptures and Antiquity (Boston, Printed by John Foster, 1680).  

Hollis's orders to Harvard also instructed the President and the Fellows to nominate and appoint from time to time the professor, subject to his (Hollis's) approval. With respect to the incumbent's religious convictions, Hollis suggested that the professor be "one of the three denominational Independent Presbyterian or Baptist" and added that "no candidate should be refused on account of his beliefs and practice of Adult Baptism." Hollis realized that Baptists were not popular in Massachusetts, and desired to provide opportunity for a person of that religious persuasion to be considered for the chair on the same basis as any other. Earlier, he had encouraged the consideration of Baptist students among those to be reviewed for scholarships he had established at Harvard and was pleased when one of the first awardees was John Callender, Elisha's nephew, a Baptist.

Prior to 1722 the faculty of Harvard College consisted of the President and the Tutors or the Fellows. The term "Fellow," at Harvard, was a legal one, inasmuch as the internal governing body of the College consisted of the President and five Fellows, to which, in 1650, the Treasurer was added. A Fellow was not always a teacher; occasionally he was an older man who did not instruct. For the most part, the number of teachers (Tutors or those Tutors who were elected Fellows) in any one year, in addition to the President, did not exceed three. See PCSM, 50: cxxvii-cxxxv; Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century, 2 vols., (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), 1: 50-53; "Harvard College Records," PCSM, 15: cliv, clvi.

"Orders," PCSM, 49: 350-51; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, February 24, 1721, PCSM, 49: 356.

Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 2, 1727, PCSM, 50: 602; Richard Hofstadter and Walter F. Metzger, The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 110n. While the clause about baptism refers specifically to selection for the Hollis Scholarships, the February 24, 1721, and subsequent letters from Hollis make it clear that he meant the substance of the clause to apply to the selection of the Hollis Professor as well. The first three occupants of the chair (Edward Wigglesworth, Edward Wigglesworth II, and David Tappan) were Calvinist Congregationalists, but the fourth, Henry Ware (1805-1840), was a Unitarian Congregationalist. It was not until 1882
In his orders, Hollis left to the College the determination of the length of the term of the divinity professor from his options of three, five, or seven years; President Leverett and the Fellows voted for five. Hollis told the President and the Reverend Mr. Colman, however, that it would be entirely possible for a person to be re-elected for a second five year term, and added, "I choose to note this here, and now, to prevent any further discouragement that might rise in the Gentlemans mind, who might be chosen."  

The Harvard Overseers, in gratitude for the grant, ordered that the professorship of divinity "be known ... by the name and style of the Hollisian Professor," However, two years passed from the time of Hollis's initial orders before rules and regulations for the professorship were finally agreed upon by Hollis and Harvard; the intervening time was occupied by negotiations for compromises. Hollis's letter awarding the professorship told the Overseers that the "Orders and Statutes" he enclosed were but his present thoughts and were subject to the College's suggestions; if there were none, then the orders were to be the "general Direction." The Overseers of Harvard, although that a Baptist was appointed (David G. Lyon) who served until 1910; he was followed in turn by a Trinitarian Congregationalist, James Harry Ropes (1910-33), by a Quaker (Henry J. Cadbury, 1934-1956), and by a Congregationalist, Amos Wilder (1956-1963). The present incumbent, George H. Williams, is an ordained minister in both the Congregational and Unitarian churches. Thus, the chair has come full circle, and the interpretation of Hollis' rules have changed with the times. (The chair was vacant from 1840-1882 because the income from the Hollis endowment was low during that period.) See Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 68n; Peter Olivier, Archivist, Andover-Harvard Theological Library, to Russell V. Kohr, July 12, 1976; Christopher Reed, "New England education's first Maecenas," Harvard Magazine, October, 1973, 32.  

"Orders," PCSM, 49: 350-51; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett and Benjamin Colman, August 31, 1721, PCSM, 49: 357.
pleased to have the bulk of Hollis's gifts to the College converted to
the professorship, were nevertheless concerned that the donor reserved
the right to approve the nominee and to alter the chair during his
lifetime or by his will. The fact that the donor was a Baptist was
an additional worry to them. Therefore, while the President and the
Fellows of Harvard accepted Hollis's conditions, the Overseers, acting
in their capacity as governors of the College, developed their own
"rules and orders" for the professorship.

Although Hollis's instructions were general and embraced but
three clauses (the first, to give the power of investment; the second,
to establish the professorship of divinity with a stipend of £40 a year
to be paid from the income of the endowment; and the third, to use the
balance of the funds for scholarships for students of divinity),

30 "Orders," PCSM, 49: 350-51; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman,
August 1, 1724, PCSM, 50: 525; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, January 5, 1725, PCSM, 50: 532; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, August 10, 1725, PCSM, 50: 560. Hollis anticipated the twentieth century feeling by some college administrators and boards of trustees, as well as by some modern-day faculty members, that appointment to an endowed professorship should be for a term, or, if for life, should nevertheless be re-examined at a stated interval. That Hollis felt free to reserve these privileges was probably in perfect harmony with the charitable gift laws of his day. This was the time before income taxes, and hence no law was on the books which would deny a donor the right to name a recipient to a professorship or a scholarship, to have ultimate approval of the nominee, or to change the specifications after the endowment was established, and still receive tax credit for a charitable gift. Hollis probably merely thought that as the donor of the professorship, the privileges of some control were his natural right.

31 "Papers Relating to Mr. Hollis's Orders Without Date," M7227,

32 Hollis, "Orders," PCSM, 49: 351. An additional five pounds was
to be paid to the treasurer of Harvard for "his pains in receiving and
paying my bounty and making up an annual account." See also Thomas Hollis
the regulations proposed by the Overseers were specific and consisted of eleven articles. These regulations called for the professor (1) to be a Master of Arts who was a Congregationalist, Presbyterian or Baptist; (2) to instruct students in both "positive" and "controversial" theology; (3) to lecture the number of times a week so as to finish the courses within one year; (4) to give public readings; (5) to establish office hours for the purpose of meeting individually with students to answer their questions; (6) to instruct only in divinity; (7) to teach only those who already had two years of college (this was to insure that students had a broad preparation before undertaking studies in theology); and (8) to collect no fee from students because he was now to receive an "honorable stipend." Furthermore, (9) he was to be chosen every five years by the President and the Fellows, and approved by the Overseers, and (10) he was to be at all times "under the inspections" of the President and the Fellows. Finally, the regulations read, (11) "it be recommended to the electors, that at every choice they prefer a man of solid learning in Divinity, of sound and orthodox principles, one who is well gifted to teach, of a sober and pious life, and of grave conversation." 33

33 "Rules and Orders Proposed Relating to the Divinity Professorship in Harvard College in New England," Quincy, 1: 534-537. (The rules reproduced here contain comments from the board of advisers to which Hollis submitted the regulations for their comments.)
Thus the Overseers, although inserting a provision which allowed a Baptist to hold the chair, at the same time provided themselves with clauses to enable them to exercise surveillance of the professor and to insure his orthodoxy. These clauses, in effect, would enable them to circumvent the election of a Baptist. This is far from what Hollis intended. Hollis simply wished that any Baptist candidate for the chair would be given the same consideration as any other. The Overseers, in presenting their own, strict, regulations, were treading a delicate line.

Dissatisfied with what he called the "scheme," Hollis wrote to Colman, "I think it requires some amendments." No doubt he was concerned with the words "sound and orthodox" as a rationale by which those who governed Harvard could control the professorship in a way to make certain that a Baptist would be excluded. Not willing to affront the Overseers by flatly refusing their plan, Hollis sought the advice of seven London dissenting ministers, all friends of his, so that, if they agreed with his views, he could present a united front.34

Most of these ministers were graduates of European universities and were thus acquainted with theological writings; indeed, this was the reason Hollis turned to them. One of the group, the Reverend Daniel Neal, was a cousin by marriage to Hollis. The Reverend Mr. Neal had studied at the University of Utrecht and the University of Leyden, and was the author of a history of New England as well as a

34 Thomas Hollis to President Leverett and Benjamin Colman, September 23, 1720, Quincy, 1: 247-48; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 8, 1721, PCSM, 49: 369; Thomas Hollis to John White, August 15, 1721, PCSM, 49: 370.
history of Puritanism. The others were the Reverend William Harris, who had been awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the Universities of Edinborough and Aberdeen; the Reverend Jeremiah Hunt, minister at Pinner's Hall; the Reverend Joshua Oldfield who had studied at both Oxford and Cambridge and who was a friend of Locke and Newton; the Reverend Moses Lowman, a graduate of Leyden University; the Reverend Edwin Wallin, a friend of the Reverend Elisha Callender of New England; and the Reverend Arthur Shallet.  

These divines made minor changes in the wording of the rules, but retained the language of the eleventh article, including the use of the word, "orthodox." Apparently not wishing to edit the work of his friends, but still concerned that the orders reflect his ecumenism, Hollis then added a form for the professor to agree to at his inauguration, of which a clause read, "that he declare it his belief that the Bible is the only and most perfect Rule of Faith and Manners and that he Promis to explain and open the Scriptures to his Pupils with integrity and faithfulness according to the best that God shall give him." Thus, Hollis wrote into the regulations his broad, ecumenical policy, one not closely bound by sectarian strictures. Another clause stated that he "religiously observe the statues of his Founder."  


The Harvard Overseers, however, while writing in 1722 a letter of appreciation to Hollis for his suggestions, at the same time declared resolutely that they felt that the qualifications and regulations of the professorship were "a matter of very great importance to the religion of New England." They therefore proceeded to debate the proposals. Judge Samuel Sewall, a strict Calvinist and a spokesman for the conservative majority of the Harvard Overseers, strenuously objected to the clause which included a Baptist as being eligible for the chair, saying that because of that article, he chose "rather to lose the donation than accept it." He added, "One great end for which the planters came over into New England was to fly from the cross in baptism. For my part, I had rather have baptism administered with the incumbrance of the cross, than not to have it administered at all. This qualification of the Divinity Professor is to me a bribe to give my sentence in disparagement of infant baptism, and I will endeavor to shake my hands from holding it." 37

37 Quincy, 1, 350-51; Samuel Sewall, The Diary of Samuel Sewall, M. Halsey Thomas, ed., 2 vols., (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1973), 2: 988. Sewall was reflecting on the fact that one of the original purposes for which Harvard was founded was that of educating ministers for the commonwealth which then meant primarily educating ministerial candidates for the Congregational churches, the established religious bodies in Massachusetts. A reflection of this purpose is found in the fact that in the College's Charter of 1699, The Board of Overseers was to be composed of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. However, Governor Richard Bellemont refused to approve the charter with this clause. Hollis was glad when Sewall declined election to the Harvard presidency, "Having been informed how strait he is in Principles, and narrow in his Charity to the poor despised Baptists." See "Harvard College Records," PCSM, 15: 1, xlix; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 6, 1725, PCSM, 50: 534; Backus, History of New England, 1: 445. Earlier Judge Sewall had denied the seating of Elisha Callender, the Baptist minister, to the Harvard Board of Overseers.
Ultimately the Overseers edited out a wording that the nominee was to be "recommended to the Electors," and substituted instead the words, "That the person chosen from time to time to be a Professor, be a man of solid learning, etc." They also changed that part of the inaugural pledge concerning the candidate's belief in the Bible to read "that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only perfect rule of faith and manners," and, desiring that the control of the professor should remain with them, stipulated also that the professor should observe not only the rules of the founder, but also "such other statues and orders as shall be made by the College and not repugnant thereto."38

While the Corporation proceeded to nominate Edward Wigglesworth, Harvard College graduate (Bachelor of Arts, 1710; Master of Arts, 1713) to the chair, the Overseers took it upon themselves to question him until they were satisfied by his assent to the doctrine of the trinity, of the Godhead, of predestination, of "efficacious grace," and of the divine right of baptism, each a tenet of the strict Calvinist credo. Such grilling of a candidate about his specific views on certain theological subjects was far from Hollis's desires. That Hollis vigorously disapproved of this interrogation is indicated when he wrote that "the Speeches of some on that head at reading my orders have come to the knowledge

38 "Proceedings of the Overseers Respecting Hollis's Rules and Orders," "Records of the Overseers," 1, 21; Quincy, 1: 538-39. The Overseers also said that they were "much obliged" for the suggestions of the board of advisers, and discussed the sending of a letter of appreciation to each member. See "Papers Relating to Mr. Hollis's Orders Without Date."
of many Ministers and Gentlemen at London, which have occasioned many
hard Speeches against your College in my hearing to my sorrow." 39

The reports reaching his ears of the interrogation of Wigglesworth
led Hollis to express concern that his orders would not be carried out
fully; he told Benjamin Colman that he had "confidence in the present
Corporation, that they will not alter my intended purposes (which are
sacred to me) without my leave, while I live." Accordingly, Hollis
requested a statement from the Corporation that it would uphold his
trust, apparently suspecting again that all were not agreeable to
giving consideration to a Baptist candidate for the chair. "The late
uncharitable reflections of some upon Baptists as not Orthodox . . . ,"
he wrote, "makes me think it [The statement of obligation to the trust]
to be needful, and I hope they will grant it to me." 40

Hollis also warned, "it will not be prudent for you to delay it,
yet more was designed as I hinted in my Will, but that is as yet in
my power to alter if I may not be gratified in this . . . . I also
live in hopes there that sometime or other the Corporation will
gratify me so far as to send me their Obligation to fill my trusts,

39 Quincy, 1: 255, 257-58. It is interesting to note that Cotton
Mather felt that the Corporation should have first sought his advice,
and that of some other senior ministers, before nominating Wigglesworth
for the Hollis Chair. Mather seemed to agree with the concepts of the
Overseers as to the examination of the candidate, as he wrote to Peter
Thacher and John Webb [Ca. January 10 1721/227, suggesting "that there
be from time to time a Committee at least of the Overseers and Corpora-
tion to examine the Qualifications of the Candidate for the professor-
ship, as well as those prescribed by Mr. Hollis, as what may also be
further judged necessary to recommend him unto the services of Religion
in our Churches." See Cotton Mather to Peter Thacher and John Webb
[Ca. January 10 17227, PCSM, 1: 385; Cotton Mather, Selected Letters of
Cotton Mather, Kenneth Silverman, compiler (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana

40 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 14, 1723, PCSM, 50: 441.
since last year to gratify the Scrupulos I give leave to them, to work it to their own likeing."^{41}

Furthermore, during this period (1722–1724), when asked to provide a portrait of himself for a Harvard hall, Hollis declared:

I doubt not but that they are pleased with my moneys; but I have some reason to think, that some among you will not be well pleased to see the shade of a Baptist hung there, unless you get a previous order to admit it, and forbidding any indecency to it; which, if they do, though I am at a distance, the birds of the air will tell it, and I shall be grieved; as I have been already.\(^{42}\)

Hollis's request for a statement of trust was of concern to the Harvard Overseers. In spite of his generosity, they resisted the thought of binding themselves over to his reserving the right to approve a candidate for the professorship (although he had willingly agreed to the nomination of Edward Wigglesworth and had repeatedly informed the Corporation that he meant no difficulty.) When Hollis continued to demand the statement, Harvard College's President John Leverett reported to him that the Corporation could not find how to bind itself faster than it was already. It was only after the Corporation learned that Hollis had discussed the matter with Massachusetts Governor Samuel Shute when Shute was in England that the Corporation, in 1723, acquiesced.\(^{43}\)

In returning the orders to President Leverett, Hollis did not designate a successor trustee of his foundation; he was willing to

\(^{41}\)"Extract of a letter of Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman," March 18, 1723, Quincy, 1: 540; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 1 1724, PCSM, 50: 525.

\(^{42}\)Quincy, 1: 258–59.

\(^{43}\)Shute's brother-in-law. John, Lord Barrington, was a member of Hollis's church.
await a document from the Overseers outlining how they would keep his trust inviolable.44

It was not until the year following Leverett's death in 1724 that Benjamin Wadsworth, the new President, and the Harvard Fellows signed and sent the requested statement of trust. In doing so they recognized Hollis's gifts, and declared that the Corporation was bound to observe "the work of ye Donors & Benefactors to ye said College in all disposals of their donations. Furthermore, the Corporation ruled that the successors of the President and the Fellows were bound over to the same trust "in all time coming, to manage, order and dispose of all ye moneys that have been hitherto sent over by ye said Mr. Thomas Hollis . . . or yet shall & will faithfully perform the trust reposed in them." The obligation went on to say that should the Hollis funds be misapplied, it should then be lawful for Hollis or his executors to seek redress.45

Hollis, although he had received the requested statement of obligation, informed Harvard in 1726 that he had named his nephew, Thomas Hollis IV, to supervise his trusts upon his death.46

44 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 15, 1723, PCSM, 50: 467; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, March 18, 1723, PCSM, 50: 455; Quincy, 1: 261; PCSM, 50: 457n; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett January 18, 1723, PCSM, 50: 446.

45 "The Corporation and Hollis's States and Orders," PCSM, 16: 527. Although Hollis had hoped that President Leverett would live long, he had no great admiration for him and described him as an "Infamous Drone." See Thomas Hollis to John Leverett, August 16, 1723, PCSM, 50: 468. See also Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, Feb. 2 1726, PCSM, 50: 566.)

46 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, March 8, 1726, PCSM, 50: 570.
In spite of the anxiety that Hollis felt about the administration of his professorship, he was pleased with the appointment of Edward Wigglesworth as the first incumbent. In addition to a heavy correspondence with Benjamin Colman, Hollis also wrote frequently to the professor. Hollis told him on June 6, 1722: "From the first account sent to me of your Person and abilities about a yeare since, to fille the Chaire of a Professor of Divinity, which I mediated to settle in Harvard College in N.E. for the glory of God and promoting knowledge of true Religion and practical Piety, I conceived of a good affection for you and opinion of you. The now reported recommendation of you by the Corporation and superadded testimony from the honorable and Reverend the Board of Overseers had confirmed me at it, that I do most reddily come into the approving and confirmation of the nomination of you and do hereby declare my acceptance of you . . . ."

Earlier, he had wanted to make certain that the appointee was "in actual Comunion with some Christian Church . . ." and thus was glad to hear that Wigglesworth was a Congregationalist.47

Hollis added that "if any students who are called Baptists do not or shall hereafter come under your instruction, I expect that you will be so far from discouraging them, of suffer their fellow students to reproach them . . . ." "I profes myself a Christian and indevor to live in love and peace with all Christians, though in some

47 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 6, 1722, PCSM, 50: 398; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, June 6, 1722, PCSM, 49: 396; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, September 28, 1723, PCSM, 50: 489; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, June 6, 1722, PCSM 49: 396-97; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman August 8, 1721, PCSM, 49: 369; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, Feb. 2, 1722, PCSM, 49: 387-88; "Papers Relating to Mr. Hollis's Orders Without Date."
perticulars they differ from me, if they hold the Head and live Godly in Christ Jesus." Hollis went on to say that he believed in adult baptism but added, "but my practice shews, by the Society I walk with I think not the mode an essential to Salvation, nor do I judg others, but cordially love all who live Godly and declare they love as Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity."48

Hollis sent Wigglesworth books and copies of sermons, and occasionally discussed with him by correspondence the merits of various texts. He expressed to him his delight that the Overseers had made the professor a Fellow of the Harvard Corporation. So pleased was Hollis with him that he revoked the five year rule for re-election to the chair, even though earlier he had seen no reason to have the professor chosen for life. When he learned that Wigglesworth was a full-time professor and not one who, as others did, supplemented his income by having a church, he ordered the salary paid from the endowment to be doubled to £80. Upon being informed of the professor's forthcoming marriage, he sent a letter of congratulations coupled with a prayer that the bride's health, which was poor, would be restored, so "that both of you may be comforted and enjoy the fruit of the institution, a hold seed to serve the Lord."49

48 Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, June 6, 1722, PSCM, 49: 396-97.

49 On discussion of books, see the following letters of Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth: January 5, 1723, PSCM, 50: 437; March 1, 1723, PSCM, 50: 448; February 18, 1724, PSCM, 50: 496; July 14, 1724, PSCM, 50: 517; January 5, 1725, PSCM, 50: 532; January 6, 1725, PSCM, 50: 533; August 10, 1725, PSCM, 50: 560; February 10, 1726, PSCM, 50: 568. See also "The Harvard College Library, 1723-1735," PSCM, 25: 1-13. On the appointment of Edward Wigglesworth as a fellow and the...
Hollis also took great interest in the general affairs at Harvard. He wanted to know the amount of the President's salary and was interested in learning the location of the buildings on campus. He felt that the College was "ill managed" and recommended that it print and send to him a catalog of its book holdings so that he and his friends could help fill in the gaps. Of the theological works, copies of sermons, histories, or other volumes he and his friends provided for the library, he suggested that duplicates be given to the professors and students of divinity. He also purchased for the College fonts of Greek and Hebrew type.\footnote{50}

\footnotesize
revoking of the five-year rule, see Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London January 14, 1723, PSM, 50: 439; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, July 1, 1724, PSM, 50: 515; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 1 /1724/, PSM, 50: 525; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, January 5, 1725, PSM, 50: 532; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London January 6, 1725, PSM, 50: 534; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, August 10, 1725, PSM, 50: 560. On the doubling of Wigglesworth's salary, see Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London, August 8, 1721, PSM, 50: 367-68; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London February 4, 1724, PSM, 50: 494. On Edward Wigglesworth's marriage, see Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, January 26, 1725, PSM, 50: 537; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, July 17, 1727, PSM, 50: 108. (Wigglesworth married Sarah Leverett, daughter of President John Leverett, on June 15, 1726. See PSM, 50: 568, n8.)

50 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London, October 10, 1726, PSM, 50: 582; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London, February 10, 1726, PSM, 50: 568; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 7, 1725, PSM, 50: 556; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 2, 1722, PSM, 49: 388; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 6, 1725, PSM, 50: 535; "List of Books Sent by Thomas Hollis," (ca. February 1725) PSM, 50: 541-43; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 6, 1725, PSM, 50: 534-35; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, June 21, 1725, PSM, 50: 557-58; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 15, 1725, PSM, 50: 539; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 17, 1726, PSM, 50: 565; Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, February 10, 1726, PSM, 50: 568. One of the reasons advanced for Hollis's gift of types in these languages is that the Hollis professor and his students could then read scriptural texts in the language in which they were written. Dissenters claimed that these original texts contained no reference to bishops in the first centuries of the Christian Church, a point which, they held, supported their demands for religious freedom and for recognition of their faiths as legitimate. See Blackburne, \textit{Hollis Memoirs}, 2: 598n.
Many of the books Hollis sent to Harvard were what he would describe as constituting the more liberal view: works, for example, by his friend, Isaac Watts, the minister; Isaac Barrows, the teacher; Richard Baxter and John Milton, the Puritans; and William Wollaston, the moral philosopher. Hollis was concerned that both sides of a theological question be presented, and had faith that students would invariably "see for themselves, believe upon Argument and Just reasoning is of the Scripture."  

Hollis was not without some vanity, for he suggested that a "Hollis Day" be declared at Harvard so that the professor and the students holding the Hollis scholarships could pay tribute to the founder of their endowments. He even offered to cover the expenses of refreshments for the festivities. President Leverett, however, apparently did not think much of the idea, and so, it seems, it was dropped.

For the most part, however, Hollis was self-effacing and appreciative of the kindness of others. Mindful of the assistance given him by his friends who advised him on the regulations for the professorship, he requested of Wigglesworth copies of the inaugural address for the chair to be printed for distribution to these ministers. He closed his many letters to Colman and the other college officials with warm solicitations, usually with a plea to the effect that he


was "praying God to succeed in all your labors for his glory by the
mighty workings of his Holy Spirit." He was a bit embarrassed when
friends in London, hearing of his philanthropy to Harvard, praised
him, but he acquiesced in their laudations, feeling that word of
his grants would encourage others to follow his example. He hoped
that the College would receive professorship endowments "in every
science over and above you President Fellowes or Tutors," and
suggested that London ministers encourage candidates for divinity
degrees to attend Harvard, rather than the Universities of Leyden
or Utrecht. "Notwithstanding the change of the voyage, £Lt/ would
be as easy an expense, as there are now at Holland," he remarked.53

With his gift in 1726 to create a second endowed professorship
at Harvard (one in mathematics and natural philosophy), Hollis
apparently had decided then that he had achieved all for the College
that he had planned. While as early as 1721 he had indicated in his
correspondence that he had included a bequest to the College in his
will, if indeed he had inserted such a clause, he had apparently
changed his mind and had written a new instrument. His testament,
dated January 6, 1729, a year before his death, contained no mention
of Harvard. It did, however, list bequests to two English hospitals,
three London churches (Huguenot, Dutch Reformed, and British),
several charities organized for the benefit of workingmen, and several

53 Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, London, January 5, 1723,
PCSM 50: 437; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London January 14,
1723, PCSM 50: 439-40; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London January
28, 1721, PCSM 50: 348; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London Feb.
2, 1722, PCSM 50: 388; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London June
9, 1722, PCSM 50: 405-7.
ministers of free or Baptist Churches. With respect to his role as executor of his uncle's bequest to Harvard as well as his foundations there, he appointed his nephew, Thomas Hollis IV, as successor executor and trustee, giving him the same power to nominate and confirm the professor and the students on the scholarship endowments that he reserved for himself, and also giving him the power to appoint his own successor. Thomas IV was also named executor of the balance of the estate. The only codicil, dated July 6, 1730, one half year before his death on January 21, 1731, provided bequests to certain individuals.54

"Distant and remote countries, as well as Britain, will miss him, and lament his death." These were the words of the Reverend Jeremiah Hunt, the London dissenting minister, at the eulogy to Hollis delivered at Pinners Hall, London, on January 31, 1730. "The communities to which he stood related," he added, "received instances of his distinguished bounty; and what makes this part of his character the most shining is, that his goodness was not confined or restrained entirely to a party."55

54 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London March 9, 1726, PCSM, 50: 570; "Grants and Donations," 147; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London January 28, 1720/21, PCSM, 49, 343; "Thomas Hollis, senior of St. Mary, Whitechapel, Middlesex, and citizen and draper of London 6 January 1729, proved 26 January, 1730", NEHGR, 15: 56-7. For references by Hollis to his intentions by his will after 1721, see Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, January 14, 1723, PCSM, 440; Thomas Hollis to John Leverett /London, January 18, 1723/ PCSM, 446; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, London, Feb. 8 /1726/, PCSM, 50: 567; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman /Ca. April 1726/, PCSM, 50: 573.

55 Quoted in Blackburne, Hollis Memoirs, 2: 599.
And Watts, the dissenting minister, hymn writer, and friend of Hollis, added, "Alas, ye Hollis's are all dead, whose praise is great in both Englands for their extensive charity! There are 2 young men of those families surviving. May divine grace give them ye spirit of their fathers & a part in those honors which spread over their tombs." 56

Indeed, the Thomas Hollis grant was the largest Harvard had ever received up to that time (1721). By the gift for the divinity professorship, not to mention the grant for the professorship in mathematics five years later, Hollis donated more to the College than John Harvard did by his famous bequest. Harvard's gift amounted to slightly over £779 sterling (equivalent to about $2,595 today); Hollis's gifts in four installments (1719-1725) aggregated in value to £1,676 sterling (worth about $5,656 today). Hollis's subsequent gift for the professorship in mathematics was valued at £390 sterling ($1,316 today).

These were handsome sums for those days. Hollis's gifts were considered so magnanimous that President John Leverett appeared in 1721 before the Massachusetts General Court in person to present a formal account of them, and a committee of both houses of the Court voted to send a letter of thanks to the benefactor. 57


57"Grants and Donations," 142-47; Peirce, Harvard, 99. Many of Hollis' gifts were in kind—arms, frying pans, locks, hinges, and nails—which were converted into cash and invested. It is to be noted that Hollis had been a hardware merchant, as had been his father. (See Blackburne, Hollis Memoirs, 1: 594-95.) While the $5,656 endowment is small in comparison with the $600,000 to
Besides naming the professorships and the scholarships funded by Hollis in his honor, the grateful college erected Hollis Hall (although not until 1764). The citizens of Sherborn, Massachusetts, in 1724 renamed their town Holliston in gratitude for a large folio Bible which Hollis had sent to them from England. Boston redesignated Harvard Street for Hollis in 1731, and in 1775 the people of Holles, New Hampshire, a town originally established in honor of Thomas Pelham Hollis, Duke of Newcastle, changed the name of their community to

$1,000,000 required to endow a chair today, let it be remembered that the initial 1721 salary of the Hollis Professor was to be but $40 (around $135) a year. (This stipend as noted in Section I, was doubled almost immediately by Hollis for a full-time divinity professor: Hollis was thinking initially of one who also had a church.) With additions to the endowment by Hollis and by other friends of Harvard, and with grants from the Massachusetts General Court, the annual salary was raised by 1748 to $721 (about $2,065). In 1947, when Harvard University published the amount of its individual endowment funds, the Hollis Professorship of Divinity had a value of $32,666.24. As one of the objects of the "Program for Harvard College," the 1963 fund-raising campaign, unrestricted gifts were used to raise to $400,000 each of the endowments of all chairs established in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences before 1900. This step benefitted the Hollis Professorship in Mathematics, which Hollis was to establish in 1726, but the Hollis Chair in Divinity apparently did not share in this campaign, as the chair was assigned to the Harvard Divinity School in the early 1800s. See Harris, Economics of Harvard, 176; College Book IV, PCSM, 16: 788; Endowment Funds of Harvard University (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1947); Derek C. Bok, "The President's Report, Harvard University, 1781-72," Harvard Today (Cambridge, 1973). For an examination of what a faculty member's compensation would be in the early 1700s, see Margery S. Foster, "Out of Smalle Beginnings...." (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 129-38.
Hollis to commemorate the good works of the philanthropist.\(^{58}\)

When news of Hollis's death reached America, a memorial service was held in Boston on April 1, 1731, before Governor Jonathan Belcher and the General Court. Intoned the Reverend Benjamin Colman at this gathering, "Mr. Hollis merits to be named among great Men, and to stand before Kings . . . . [He] has left behind him Wardrobes of rich Clothing, in many Places, both for the Souls and Bodies of the Poor; and some of our Sons wear them in our Sight, and others are to put 'em on from Generation to Generation."\(^{59}\)

The Harvard Corporation held a ceremony five days later at which President Benjamin Wadsworth praised Hollis for having 'continu'd the College and made it a River, the streams whereof made glad the City of God." And Edward Wigglesworth, delivering the sermon

\(^{58}\)"Papers relating to the T. Hollis Orders without date," MSS. On Hollis Hall, see Quincy, 2:99. On Hollis Street, see Samuel G. Drake, The History and the Antiquities of Boston, (Boston: Lather Stevens, 1856), 811. On Holliston, Massachusetts, see Dorothy E. T. Sahley, Librarian, Holliston Public Library, to Russell V. Kohr, April 22, 1977, and May 13, 1977; Reed, "New England education's first Maecenas," 31. Hollis presented the Bible through Elisha Callender to the Reverend James Stone, first pastor of "Hollistowne." (See Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, 1729, MSS.). On Hollis, New Hampshire, see NEH&GR, 18: 86; Samuel T. Worcester, "The Town of Hollis, N.H.," in NEH&GR, 38: 337-38; Mrs. Frances B. Hayden, Reference Librarian, Hollis, N.H., Public Library, to Russell V. Kohr, February 21, 1976. The idea of the citizens of Hollis, N.H., to rename their community in honor of the benefactor of Harvard College might have been prompted not only by his generosity, but also by anti-Tory sentiments existing on the eve of the American Revolution.

\(^{54}\)Benjamin Colman, The Friend of CHRIST and of his people. A SERMON Preached at the Lecture in BOSTON April 1, 1731. Before His Excellency the Governour and the General Court: Upon the News of the Death of the Much Honored Thomas Hollis, Esq., The most generous and noble patron of Learning and Religion in the Churches of New-England. (Boston: B. Green for T. Hancock, 1731), 6.
at that service, prayed that the "end of Hollis's foundation" may always be well answered; that they may be unto him a Name better than Sons and Daughters." The next day Isaac Greenwood, the Hollis Professor of Mathematics, dedicated his *Philosophical Discourse Concerning the Mutability and Changes of the Material World* in honor of his late patron.  

Writing in 1764, Governor Thomas Hutchinson, recounting the history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, said, "Of the many benefactors to the College, the family of Hollis stands first among the list."  

The accolades to Hollis from these men are a far cry from the orthodox conservative criticism voiced of the latitudinarian purposes of the professorship at the time that Hollis founded it. The ten intervening years had brought to Harvard a liberalization of theological and sectarian views. Harvard, as well as New England, was changing.

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60 Edward Wigglesworth, *The Blessedness of the Dead who die in the Lord. A SERMON, Preached at the Publick Lecture, Tuesday, April 6, 1731. In the Hall of Harvard-College, in Cambridge, N.E. Upon the News of the Death of Thomas Hollis, Esq., of London, the most bountiful Benefactor to that Society*. (Boston: Printed for S. Gerrish at the lower end of Cornil, 1731), 22-3

61 Isaac Greenwood, *A Philosophical Discourse concerning the Mutability and Changes of the Material World; Read to the Students of Harvard-College, April 7, 1731, Upon the News of the Death of Thomas Hollis, Esq., of London, the most Bountiful Benefactor to that Society*. (Boston: Printed for S. Gerrish, 1731).
II: FIRST INCUMBENTS OF
THE HOLLIS PROFESSORSHIP OF DIVINITY

What kind of men were the first occupants of the Hollis chair of divinity?

Even though Harvard in the 1720s was changing under President John Leverett from an institution with a rigid Calvinist ambience to one with greater liberality, the Board of Overseers was still predominately conservative. Thus it was natural that a man of orthodox principles such as Edward Wigglesworth be elected to the chair. Completing his studies at Harvard in 1713, he had taught at the Boston Latin School and had preached as a visiting minister in various churches. His father, Michael Wigglesworth, also a Harvard graduate (1651) and a tutor there, later a distinguished minister at Malden, Massachusetts, was famous as the author of The Day of Doom, a poem about the last judgment. This work, the best seller of its day, had established the elder Wigglesworth as a staunch Calvinist proclaiming that the wrath of God will descend on all who do not walk in His ways. If there was, therefore, any question about Edward's childhood training in orthodox Calvinism, one certainly could not fault the father, even though the elder Wigglesworth died when Edward was but twelve.¹

Wigglesworth was formally installed as Professor of Divinity at ceremonies at the College Hall, October 24, 1722, by repeating the pledges of allegiance required by Hollis. In his inaugural address, delivered in Latin, he modestly reminded his hearers that he had "spent atmost Ten Years of the little time he hath lived in the World in studies very foreign to Divinity." Then he prayed for their indulgence and understanding as he took up his new challenge. While he outlined no plan for his new position, he did proclaim that "there is no precept of Catholic Truth conducing to a Good Life, delivered either in Oeconomics, Ethics, Politicks, or Law but what is either expressly Revealed to as in the Holy Scriptures or by Genuine Consequence deducible from them," a statement with which few theologians would disagree.  

The choice, at least as far as Wigglesworth's first years in the Hollis chair were concerned, was a sound one. Both in his lectures and sermons, the incumbent upheld the Calvinist training he had received at Harvard and from his father. He became famous as a preacher and was called upon frequently to be a guest minister. 

2"Account of Wigglesworth's Inauguration," PCSM, 50: 429-30, 432-33; see also Edward H. Dewey in DAB, s.v. "Wigglesworth, Edward, (1693-1765);" also "The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth," PCSM, 35: 311-444. In his introduction to the Diary, Edmund S. Morgan, the eminent colonial historian, says (p. 236), "Wigglesworth was probably not a typical Puritan, and he was not a typical human being; but he was closer to the ideals of Puritanism than were his more warm blooded contemporaries." Wigglesworth's noting that he had lived ten years in studies "very foreign to Divinity" referred to his being away from formal theological studies since receiving his degree.

By 1738, however, Wigglesworth began to present both sides of theological questions in a manner resembling a Socratic dialogue. His lecture, *An Inquiry into the Truth of the Imputation of Adam's First Sin to his Posterity*, 4 in which he presented arguments in support of both Arminianism and Calvinism, is an illustration of how he desired his students to judge for themselves. His students and colleagues described him as "candid," "far removed from bigotry," "charitable to others, though they differed largely from him," "first rate," and one who "had a very excellent talent for satire." Indeed, he was sometimes criticized for his latitudinarianism, and for not forcing on his students the conservative, high Calvinist, principles. 5 In this ecumenical approach Wigglesworth could not be faulted, since Hollis' orders called for the professor to "instruct the students in the several parts of Theology by reading a system

4 Boston, 1738. Wigglesworth concludes (1) "That the very weighty Considerations, which are offer'd on both Sides of the Controversy, which I have here debated, should be a strong Argument for mutual Charity, with Those who differ in their Apprehensions concerning it," and, (2) "Let no man prejudice himself or others against this Doctrine, by being too positive in Matters of which he hath no Certainty." See Appleton, DISCOURSE, 89. Wigglesworth was among those New England pastors whose views on Arminianism were ahead of those of the public. See Shipton, 7: 300-01, s.v. "Balch, William."

5 Reverend Charles Chauncey, pastor of Boston's First Congregational Church, to President Ezra Stiles, May 6, 1768, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, 1st ser., 10: 160; Shipton, 5: 548-49; Sprague, 2: 227. However, Wigglesworth's ecumenicalism did not embrace the Roman Catholic Church. See his Dudlean Lecture in which he calls the Church of Rome "an implacable enemy to Protestants of every denomination." (Overseers Records, quoted in Benjamin Peirce, A History of Harvard University, from its foundation, in the year 1636, to the Period of the American Revolution, (Cambridge, Mass.: Brown, Shattuck, and Company, 1835), 233.
of Positive and a Course of Controversial Divinity beginning allways
with a short prayer."

Nevertheless, and especially when pressed, Wigglesworth generally 
adered to his Calvinist upbringing. In his public lectures he argued 
that "the Scriptures cannot prove the Infallibility of the Roman 
Church" and therefore "the Infallibility which the Romanists 
agogue to their Church is not found in the Spirit of Truth, but from 
a Spirit of Error. He entered into two pamphlet wars, one with John 
Checkley, a colonist who argued for equal footing, along with the 
Congregationalists, for Anglicans in America, and the other to defend 
Harvard from charges that it was lax in piety. That he was prevailed 
upon, in both instances, to write or speak publicly on these issues is 
an indication of the esteem in which he was held by his colleagues. 
An examination of some of his statements on these matters provides 
a further insight into his beliefs and tenets.

6Rule 2, "Rules for the Hollis Professorship of Divinity," 
Harvard College Records, PCRM, 49: 371; Edward Wigglesworth, A 
Letter to the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield by way of Reply to 
his Answer to the College Testimony Against him and his Conduct 
(Boston: T. Fleet, 1745), reproduced in part by Richard Hofstadter 
and Wilson Smith in American Higher Education, A Documentary 
1: 63-74; Samuel E. Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard (Cambridge, 
Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), 88. See also Edward H. 
Dewey in DNB, s.v. "Wigglesworth, Edward."

7Edward Wigglesworth, Some Thoughts upon the Spirit of 
Infallibility, claimed by the Church of Rome (Dudleian Lecture, 
Harvard College, May 11, 1957) (Boston: John Draper, in 
Cornhill, 1957), 14, 28. See also his public lecture, June 24, 
1955, Some Evidences of the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures 
of the Old Testament From the Testimony of Jesus Christ and 
his Apostles in the New (Boston: D. Fowle for D. Henchman, 1755), 
20.
In the Anglican controversy, a pamphlet attributed to Checkley, "A MODEST PROOF of the Order & Government Settled by Christ in his Apostles in the CHURCH," stressed apostolic succession and thus attacked the foundations of the Standing Order. The pamphlet's wide circulation provoked a stir, and so it behooved the Congregational leaders to provide a response. Wigglesworth, hardly three years in the professorship, arose to the challenge and wrote, in 1723:

"... the Apostles, consider'd in their ordinary Capacity, were only Presbyters: and so consequently all that truely sustain the Character of the Presbyters or Gospel-Ministers, are the Apostles true Successors; and hence, by an easy Inference, appear entitle'd to the Commission and the Promise given of old to the Eleven Different Disciples, by our blessed Lord.

Furthermore, he asked:

Where shall we in all our Bible find the place, that assigns different Successors to the Apostles, & dispenseth the ministerial Powers, united in them, committing to one this, & to another that, as distinct Officers in the Church?

and he declared:

"... there's no solid proof of any Rule in the Sacred Scriptures, for this Consecration of Bishops, as different from the Ordination of Presbyters. I will boldly affirm, They may turn over all the Leaves of the Bible, as long as they have Eyes to see, and not be able to produce a Scripture-Canon for anything more than Ministerial Ordination.

He concluded "That the Apostolic Power spoken of, was founded in peculiar and extraordinary Ends and Designs, respecting the Infancy of the Gospel-Dispensation; That there's nothing in the Nature and Reason of things requiring the Continuance of it, nor the least Intimation

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given in Scripture, to move us to think it any other than Temporary." 9

Wigglesworth lost the argument, insofar as public action was concerned. After Checkley brought forth another pamphlet to reiterate his stand, the Massachusetts General Court, in 1742, ruled that members of the Church of England in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, who had been paying taxes to support Congregational ministers, now could have their taxes applied to the support of their own clergy. 10 This act was a sign that the bulwarks of the Standing Order were beginning to crack.

The other pamphlet war involving Wigglesworth had to do with the Great Awakening in the 1740s when Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield stumped the colonies to preach revivalism. These and other itinerant ministers realized that the Puritan objective of a Godly society based on a purified church was far from being obtained, and they noted as a principal reason the large numbers who were not yet church members. In spite of the Half-Way Covenant which opened the way for children of non-church members to be members, a high as seventy-five percent of the residents of the New England Colonies, and perhaps higher in


10 Slafter, Checkley, 2: 201-02, n71.
the others, were still not formally affiliated with a religious denomination. For this situation, they blamed a growing laxity of the clergy, the influence of books by English liberal theologians and by English and French Enlightenment thinkers, and the increased sophistication of colonists who lived in Boston and other major towns which in turn brought about a growing indifference to the church. They thus appealed to end sectarianism, saying that heaven did not recognize distinctions among faiths. It was no wonder, then, that the orthodox members of the Standing Order—the "Old Lights," as they were called, trembled, as the revivalists struck at the very foundation of their belief that the Congregational way was the only way to grace.

When Whitefield came to Boston in September, 1740, he preached to a large crowd at Old South Church (Samuel Sewall's) and to equally large gatherings at nearby churches as well as to an estimated 15,000 gathered at the Boston commons. On the 24th of that month he preached to Harvard students, teachers, and Cambridge townspeople. While he was entertained by President Holyoke and listened eagerly to the college students, he did not like what he saw. He complained that Harvard's tutors "neglect to pray with and examine the hearts of their pupils," that "discipline is at a low ebb." Citing the works of Tillotson who, he said, is "in hell for his heresy," and those of Clarke, he complained of the Harvard

library that "bad books are become fashionable." It was natural, then, that Whitefield was not invited to return to the campus on his next visit to New England (1744). When he continued to denounce Harvard as a college of Godlessness and sin, the Harvard faculty responded with a pamphlet, with which Wigglesworth no doubt had a hand in writing, attacking the revivalist as one who by his "furious zeal . . . had so fired the passions of the people" as to have, in many places, "burnt up the very vitals of religion," and denigrated his criticism of the College as "a most wicked and libelious falsehood." Whitefield's published reply made it obvious that his charges were based on mere surface observations, and led the way for Wigglesworth to set the matter straight. The professor, in an answering tract, denied that tutors neglected to pray with their students, and noted that Harvard had even expelled a professor for immoral and scandalous practices, as well as a tutor who did not conform to the rules. "Discipline never was," he said, "nor is at so low an Ebb, as to deserve that we should be reproached publicly with the want of it."

As to the charge of having bad books, Wigglesworth replied that "Tillotson had not been so much taken out of the Library by any Undergraduate; nor any of Dr. Clark's works for about Two Years, Whereas Owen, Baxter, Flavel, Bates, Howe, Doolittle, Willard, Watts and Guyse (who be sure most of them may be reconed Evangelical Writers, as well as Shepherd and Stoddard, have some
or other of them been borrowed by Undergraduates during this whole time; and that they are scarcely ever in the Library; and that these Books have been more commonly borrowed by the Graduates, than Tillotson and Clark."

He also proclaimed:

It seems to us strange preposterous Management, for any Man to go about from one Province and Colony to another, Year after Year, acting as an extraordinary Officer of Christ, and never show all the while, what Warant he has from the Word of God so to do . . . .

Then Wigglesworth asked Whitefield why he broadcast his charges, when a letter to the president or other officer of Harvard might have been more appropriate. Such public accusations, the professor, said, interfere with the College's fundraising. He accused Whitefield of being "an uncharitable, censurous and slanderous man," and said that evangelists were undermining Christianity.

12 Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 84-87; Edward Wigglesworth, A Letter to the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield by Way of Reply to his Answer to the College Testimony against him and his Conduct (Boston: T. Fleet, 1745), 26, 27, 28-30. See also "To the Author of the Vindication of Mrs. Whitefield's Journal, touching his Remarks upon the College in Cambridge," Boston Gazette, Monday, June 15 to Monday, June 22, 1941; Peirce, Harvard, Appendix 21, 147-48. The two faculty members to whom Wigglesworth referred as being discharged from Harvard, both for intemperance, were Isaac Greenwood, the first Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and Nathan Prince. See Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 81, 108.

13 Wigglesworth, A Letter to the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, 10.

14 Ibid., 31; Herbert M. Morais, Deism in Eighteenth Century America (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960), 59; Edward Wigglesworth, Some Extraordinary and Ordinary Members of the Church of Christ, briefly considered on two discourses delivered at the Public Lectures in Harvard-College November 12th and 19th, 1754. After the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Preaching at Cambridge. (Boston: Thomas Fleet at the Heart and Crown, 1754); Shipton, 5: 552.
But Whitefield had made his mark; the perception of Harvard as "godless" lingered among the New Englanders until the Unitarian controversy at the College (1815) gave the people something new to attack.  

Wigglesworth's scholarship and piety were recognized by others early in his career, as is shown by his election to the rectorship of Yale College. In 1730 he was awarded the doctorate by the University of Edinburgh. He was selected a commissioner of the London Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and was chosen a member of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. In addition, he was elected a Fellow of the Harvard Corporation in 1723, a post he held until his death in 1765. Although, in spite of holding the Hollis Professorship, he never received an income higher than £200, he annually gave a tenth of his salary to charity. His fame as a teacher and theologian was such that a throng, drawn not only from Cambridge, but also many other communities, attended his funeral. 

With Wigglesworth's passing, his son, Edward II, a Harvard graduate, class of 1749, was chosen for the chair. Although not an ordained minister, he had a keen interest in Biblical scholarship, and had been a school teacher in Andover and later a Harvard tutor. At

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16 For reasons to be enumerated in Section III, he did not accept.
his official election by the Corporation on July 22, 1765, he was brought before that body so that it might "Make inquiry concerning his principles in Divinity, whether they were Orthodox, according to the Doctrines of the Churches of Christ with us." Wigglesworth gave what have been described as "full and satisfactory answers." The Board of Overseers, upon reading the report of the Corporation, accepted it without inquiry and unanimously approved the appointment. He was formally installed in October 16, 1765, after publicly declaring his theological beliefs.18

In contrast to the elder Wigglesworth who preached as well as taught, young Wigglesworth felt that his role was chiefly that of a lecturer. It may be because he was never ordained that he held this stance. He rarely, if ever, entered matters of controversy as had his father. Even during the preliminaries of the American Revolution, when ministers such as Jonathan Mayhew were preaching on behalf of the insurgents, Wigglesworth was silent, hoping for a reconciliation. During this period, however, he was closely involved with affairs at the College. John Hancock, then Harvard's treasurer, had been negligent in his administration of the College's funds, and Wigglesworth, who had been serving as tutor in mathematics in 1779 was, in 1782, pressed into service as acting president and as a member of the Corporation.19 His

18Quincy, 2: 85; Appleton, DISCOURSE, Appendix 2, 3; Shipton, 5: 508-12. Even though not ordained, Wigglesworth did occasionally serve as chaplain to the General Court of Massachusetts. See Shipton, 5: 510.

not speaking out during the Revolution may have been due to his preoccupation with administrative affairs of the College.

As acting president, Wigglesworth was popular with students and faculty alike, and was dubbed by them with the sobriquet, "Wiggy."

He took interest in the welfare of students by expanding the hours of the library and by allowing ladies to be admitted to public theatrical performances of the Harvard boys. Among those whose early education he fostered and guided was John Quincy Adams. 20

In his divinity lectures, Wigglesworth treated the development of different theological systems as man's search for knowledge of God. He was more of a teacher of comparative religion or a religious historian than one who stressed a particular dogma. He liberalized the curriculum by dropping the works of the orthodox Swiss theologian, Johannes Wollebius, in favor of those of the English dissenting scholar, Philip Doddridge. And, in 1784, recognizing that more and more Harvard students were planning careers in professions other than the ministry, he separated out those students who intended to become clergymen.

From that time on, the work in divinity for the rank and file student was elective, while that for those planning careers for the ministry was deepened to include "a comprehensive view of the evidences of the divinity of the Christian religion", an acquaintance of "the arguments adduced by the Christians of the several persuasions," and "critical knowledge of the languages, in which the scriptures were written."


21 Shipton, 5: 511, 515; Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, The Development of Academic Freedom (New York: Columbia University
Edward Wigglesworth II was more noted for his demographic research and for his compiling actuarial tables than he was for his theological scholarship. Along with John Winthrop IV and Benjamin Franklin, he was one of the first men of the day to apply the new science derived from such earlier Enlightenment thinkers as Locke and Newton. He observed meteorological phenomena, using instruments given to the College by Winthrop. In his *Calculations on American Population* he projected the future relative strength of "British Americans," as he called them, should the Revolutionary War continue. (Their numbers, which he said in 1775 stood at 3,026,678, doubled, he computed, every twenty-five years. At this rate, he wrote, the Americans would be more populous than the British by 1825.) Carrying his projections further, he estimated that by 1845, the "British-American" population in the colonies would exceed that of Great Britain and Ireland combined. With such a market open to Great Britain, Wigglesworth suggested that the Crown end the conflict with the American colonies.\(^23\)


\(^22\) Great-grandson of the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

\(^23\) Edward Wigglesworth (1732–1794), *Calculations on American Population*, with a Table for estimating the annual Increase of Inhabitants in the British Colonies: The Manner of its Construction Explained and its Use Illustrated (Boston: John Boyle, 1775), 5, 7, 8, 24; Edward Wigglesworth to Joseph Willard, D.D., President of the University and Chairman of the Committee of the Convention of Ministers, instructed with the Care of forming the Society, 1785 (MSS.); Shipton, 5: 513, 516. See also James H. Cassedy, *Introduction to Mortality in Pre-Industrial Times: The Contemporary Verdict* (Westmead, Farnborough, Hants, England: Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Wigglesworth's growing fame as a mathematician and an actuary led to his being chosen as one of the original members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and to an invitation to construct an annuity and income plan for ministers and their widows. In this research he concluded that the European life expectancy tables, especially those of the English astronomer and mathematician, Edmund Halley, could no longer be relied upon. He then used as a basis for calculations the life statistics of 2,400 Harvard College graduates. While Richard Price, the English scientist, felt that the data were sketchy, Wigglesworth himself recognized the problem and in 1871

Geeg International Publishers Limited, 1973), 2; J. B. D. DeBow, Statistical View of the United States (Washington: U.S. Census Office, 1854) (rep. ed. New York: Gordon and Breach, 1970); Brian R. Mitchell, Abstract of British Historical Statistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 8. Wigglesworth missed in his projection of the number of Americans in 1825 by about 1,600,000 persons, but his further projection was born out; in 1845 the population of the United States (interpolated) was 26,253,098; that of Great Britain and Ireland combined was 25,034,000.

If Wigglesworth's demographic intelligence was used by General Washington in the Revolutionary War, apparently that fact was kept secret; no reference to it appears in the papers of Washington, the papers of the Continental Army, or in any of the Wigglesworth memorabilia. (See Jane C. Lucey, Assistant to the Executive Officer, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston, to Russell V. Kohr, June 10, 1977.)

Benjamin Franklin, in 1751, also had predicted that English colonists in America would double in number every twenty to twenty-five years, and that their numbers would exceed those in the homeland. He used a 1751 base of 1,000,000 British Americans, but this was but an estimate. Wigglesworth's base of 3,026,678 for 1775 appears to be more accurate. Franklin, like Wigglesworth, had pointed out the implications of the doubling of the population. He wrote in 1751 in his famous pamphlet, OBSERVATIONS concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, &c, "What an Accession of Power to the British Empire by Sea as well as Land! What Increase of Trade and Navigation! What Numbers of Ships and Seamen! We have been here but little more than 100 Years, and yet the Force of our Privateers in the late War, united, was greater, both in Men and Guns, than that of the whole British Navy in Queen Elizabeth's Time...." (Quoted in Benjamin Franklin, A Biography in his Own Words, Thomas Fleming, ed., (New York: NEWSWEEK, 1971), 97, 104, 105.
through the services of sixty-two correspondents of the American Academy was able to garner statistics of various towns in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. With the resulting data on 4,893 lives, he was able to widen his base. A side result of this study was his conclusion that the native population of these states doubled every twenty-five and three-tenths years, corroborating his earlier projections.24

His mathematical abilities also led to his being enlisted to assist the Hopkins Charity, of which he was a trustee. In recognition of his teaching and his statistical studies, as well as his services to his alma mater, Harvard awarded him the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology in 1786. He was also chosen one of the original members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.25

When paralysis forced Wigglesworth to resign the chair in 1791, his cousin, the Reverend David Tappan, was elected. A modern Calvinist, Tappan had preached in various churches since his graduation from Harvard in 1771, and had been ordained, in 1774, as minister of what is now the Second Congregational Church of West Newbury, Massachusetts. His sermons, many of which were published, became known for their ideas rather than for their dogma; they emphasized "natural religion" as compatible


25Shipton, 5: 513-16.
with "revealed religion" and stressed God's redeeming grace rather than damnation. 26

Although in a Fast Day sermon of 1793 Tappan praised the French Revolution as a "renovation of the face of the world by the introduction and universal triumph of knowledge and freedom, of virtue and peace," he later, in 1798 and 1799 reversed himself and joined the anti-Jacobins. Indeed, one of the reasons Tappan was appointed to the Hollis chair was to correct deistic heresies which had begun to penetrate Harvard. However, he instituted no changes in the administration of the professorship. Instead he followed the pattern established by Edward Wigglesworth II by reading from Doddridge and by giving two public recitations a week in which he emphasized the good life rather than liturgical precepts. He was "evangelical," "practical," and "plain and affectionate" in his approach; an unidentified eulogist commented of Tappan that "not expecting youth to overlook their pleasure in their love of improvement, he aimed, in his public lectures, to unite entertainment with information." Abiel Holmes wrote that Tappan "was diligent and laborious in the composition of his theological Lectures; that both their matter and form were discreetly adapted to youthful and inquisitive auditory, to which they were addressed;

and that they were admirably calculated to form enlightened divines, and practical Christians."  

In the view of one minister and observer, Tappan was a better preacher than he was a scholar or a teacher; he used flowery language, and was considered extremely devout. One of his students, William Ellery Channing, remarked that "Professor Tappan belonged to the old school of theology, and had much of the grave courtesy of the clergymen of that school." And his friend, the Reverend Daniel Dana, felt Tappan's "vigour and versatility of mind, his clear perception and powerful exhibition of heavenly truth, his force of reasoning and richness of style, his sprightliness of imagination and seriousness of spirit, were all fitted to make the best impressions on the youth of the seminary."  

Indeed, it was during Tappan's incumbency that science and modern literature were gradually ascending in popularity; theology was losing its position as queen. By the 1780s French was regularly taught at Harvard (and at several other colonial colleges) and a Harvard student could substitute study in that language for Hebrew. This latter development was particularly frightening to the orthodox Congregationalists who were accustomed to Harvard students being versed in the language of the Old Testament and who were concerned with the penetration into the Harvard curriculum and into cultured

28 William Bentley (1759-1819), The Diary of William Bentley, D.D., 4 vols., (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1962), 3: 38; William E. Channing, Memoirs of William Ellery Channing with Extracts from his Correspondence and Manuscripts, 3 vols., (Boston: Wm. Crosby and H. P. Nichols, 1848), vol. I, (January 1803-December, 1810); Sprague, 2: 102. When the Reverend Channing was installed, in 1803, as minister of Boston's Federal Street Church, the Rev. Mr. Tappan preached the sermon. See Sprague, 8: 363.
thought some of the liberal ideas expressed by the books of contemporary France. For, were not Rousseau's concepts of the excellence of human nature and the perfectability of man leading to the development in Massachusetts of Unitarianism—that doctrine which held that God was one of love and compassion, as opposed to the Calvinists' God of election and retrobation? Earlier, in 1734, Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield in the Great Awakening had tried to stamp out liberalism in the churches by sermons on justification by faith, but neither they nor those who followed them could eradicate it completely. 29

Tappan died August 27, 1803, two days before the annual Harvard College commencement. The graduation ceremonies that year were solemn: the audience sang a Watts hymn, Why Do We Morn, and the student, Samuel Kirkland, in his Latin oration praised the deceased professor. Among other declamations in the ceremony was that by John Farrar, later to be Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, who attacked the inclination of students to read novels and plays. One can almost assume that he was warning his students not to pay attention to the French Romantic ideas which were beginning to permeate the country. 30


The growing desire to lift the veil of Calvinist orthodoxy was in the background when the first religious contest in connection with the Hollis chair, other than the examination which the two Wigglesworths had undergone, was occasioned by the death of Tappan (1803). When the Corporation met to consider who was to be his successor, the laymen on that body put forth as their candidate the 1785 Harvard valedictorian, Henry Ware, a Unitarian minister. Acting Harvard President Eliphalet Pearson, who had been the Hancock Professor of Hebrew, nominated the Reverend Jesse Appleton, a man who had come to be considered a leader in the conservative element of the Congregational churches. The Corporation was equally divided, but eventually Ware was nominated by the change of a single vote. Both Pearson and the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, an Overseer, objected strenuously to Ware because, in Morse's words, Ware "was not a Trinitarian, as the foundation required." 31

Interest in the ultimate selection of the professor by the Overseers ran high; normally meetings of that body drew but ten to thirteen of the then sixty-five members, but this time (February 15, 1805), fifty-six came; the vote for Ware was thirty-three to twenty-three. Morse was bitter and circulated a tract in which he complained

that the original purpose of having a professor of "sound or orthodox" principles, the language used in the orders for the chair as set forth originally by the Overseers and ultimately approved by Hollis, had been abandoned. "God forbid," he lamented, "that this change should be injurious and ruinous; that in consequence, the faith of our churches should become less pure, their discipline less strict, the standard of Christian morality lowered, the differences lessened between those, who professedly serve God, and those who avowedly serve him not; till at length the spirit and power of our religious shall have evaporated, and its very forms abolished."32

Afterward, Dr. Pearson resigned his Hebrew professorship, saying that "the University was the subject of such radical constitutional maladies as to exclude the hope of rendering any essential service to the interests of religion."33 As a counteraction he removed to Andover where he, with Morse and Leonard Woods, also an Orthodox Calvinist, helped to found, in 1807, Andover Theological Seminary, the nation's first professional training

32Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 189; Morse, True Reasons, 27-28. Morse had enjoyed reading the letters of Lord Chesterfield and desired to pattern after him; he began publish- in The Panoplist which upheld the conservative theological view. See John White Chadwick, William Ellery Channing, Minister of Religion (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1903), 128, 129n.

33Sprague, 8: 201.
school for ministers, and one which was to become a bastion for Congregational theology. Thus was laid the foundation for what became known as the Unitarian controversy.

Although Ware as the new Hollis Professor of Divinity did not enter into the dispute between the Congregationalists and the Unitarians immediately but instead devoted attention to the presentation of his lectures on the "Evidences, Doctrine and Ethics of Religion" and "Biblical History and Criticism," he did not remain still when Woods issued his "Letters to Unitarians." Ware responded with his "Letters Addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists," and each continued to exchange views publicly in what became known as the "Woods-'n-Ware" contest. In one letter, Woods reaffirmed the Calvinist view by a doctrinal statement "That men are by nature Destitute of holiness; or that they are from the first inclined to..."

evil, and that, while unrenewed, their moral affections and actions are wholly wrong." Ware, on the other hand claimed that "Man is by nature, by which is to be understood as he is born into the world, as he comes from the hands of the Creator, innocent and pure; free from all moral corruption, as well as destitute of all positive holiness; and until he has, by the exercise of his faculties, actually formed a character either good or bad, an object of the divine complacency and favor." Later, when the Unitarians stressed man's "likeness to God," the Andover Calvinists answered by quoting the stark words of Isaiah (64: 6): "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf."

As a result of this pamphlet war, thirty-nine churches, including the First Congregational Church of Boston—the initial church of Winthrop's "city upon a hill"—became Unitarian. Eighty-one other congregations were divided, and matters were not resolved until the late nineteenth century. 35

35 Frank H. Foster, A Genetic History of the New England Theology (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), 304-5, 307; Howe, The Unitarian Conscience, 102; John N. Booth, The Story of the Second Church, the Old North, 1649, Boston (Boston: by the Church, 1959), 29; "The Records of the First Church of Boston, 1630-1858," PSCM, 5: 1. At Governor William Bradford's Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Unitarians, dissenting from the Congregationalists, in 1801 constructed an edifice across the street from the Congregational Church building. Each of the two fellowships claimed—and continue to do so today—lineage to the Pilgrims. A tablet attached to the Congregational Church reads: This tablet is inscribed in grateful memory of the Pilgrims and their successors who at the time of the Unitarian controversy in 1801 adhered to the belief of the Fathers and, on the basis of the original creed and covenant, perpetuated at great sacrifice in the Church of the Pilgrimage the evangelical faith and fellowship of the Church of Scrooby, Leyden, and the Mayflower, organized in England in 1606.
Like the Andover Congregationalists, Ware also recognized the need for a more systematic training of clergyment. In 1811 he began a special course at Harvard in pre-ministerial education from which, in 1819, was developed a "Faculty of Theology," with Ware, as one of its four professors, teaching "Systematic Theology" and "Evidences of Christianity." Thus was laid the foundation of what gradually became the Harvard Divinity School.  

A cataract in one of Ware's eyes

The Unitarians, not to be outdone, caused to have installed in 1857 on its their edifice a tablet with the following inscription:

The first church in Plymouth, this church of Scrooby, Leyden and the Mayflower gather on this hillside in 1620 has ever since preserved unbroken records and maintained a continuous ministry, its first covenant being still the base of its fellowship. In reverent memory of the Pilgrim founders this fifth meeting house is erected A.D. MDCCXCVII.

(Telephone conversations, Russell V. Kohr with Thelma Stassel, Secretary, Church of the Pilgrimage, and with Harry Taylor, custodian, Unitarian Church, December 4, 1981).

36 Williams, Harvard Divinity School, 23. While Harvard students planning careers in the ministry had elective courses in divinity from the time of Edward Wigglesworth II, these courses did not constitute a "school" of theology. A divinity student, in addition to being taught by a Hollis Professor, occasionally had the opportunity to read a sermon at Sunday evening chapel. He also had access to the library. Upon graduation he pursued theological studies for his Master of Arts degree in residence at the College or under the tutelage of a clergyman. See Leonard Woods, History of Andover Theological Seminary (Boston: J.R. Osgood and Company, 1885), 17; Morison, Harvard in the Seventeenth Century, 1: 273. Andover Theological Seminary for the first half of the nineteenth century was to educate most of the ministers of the Congregational churches in Massachusetts and nearly all of the foreign missionaries of the American Board, as well as a number of Presbyterian clergymen and church workers who later undertook assignments in the Middle and Western states. (See Rowe, Andover Theological Seminary, 22.)
forced him to resign the Hollis Professorship in 1840, but he continued to teach theology. 37

Ware was noted in his undergraduate classes for asking questions of his students based on their assigned reading and then marking on a numerical scale of eight his assessment of each student's answers. In the Divinity School he required students to write weekly dissertations on a subject, and then in the classroom would call on one to read his paper and then ask every other student successively to add any matters not covered. In cases of differences of opinion, he had the ability to present both sides with conviction. 38

On two occasions, Ware served as acting president of Harvard: in 1810, before the election of Samuel Webber, and again in 1828-29, between the administrations of John T. Kirkland and Josiah Quincy. Both Webber and Kirkland had Unitarian sympathies, and

37Williams, Harvard Divinity School, 25, 27-28; see also Rowe, Andover Theological Seminary, 50; Starr in DAB, s.v. "Ware, Henry." Upon Ware's retirement in 1840, the Hollis divinity professorship stood vacant for over 40 years because the Hollis endowment fund during this period produced next to nothing. Ultimately, in 1882, David G. Lyon, a Baptist, was appointed, and from that time on the chair was assigned to the Harvard Divinity School. (Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 68n; Peter Oliver, Archivist, Harvard Divinity School, to Russell V. Kohr, June 19, 1976.)

38Andrew W. Peabody, Harvard Reminiscences (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1888), 5-7; Williams, Harvard Divinity School, 39-40. In memory of Ware's teaching ability, an annual "Ware Lecture" is held at the national meeting of the American Unitarian Association with an authority in some academic field of speaking. (See Booth, Second Boston Church, 29. Booth errs, however, in writing that Henry Ware Jr. held the Hollis Professorship; only Henry Ware Sr. did. See Peter Oliver, Archivist, Harvard Divinity School to Russell V. Kohr, June 19, 1976.)
thus it was that during the occupancy of the president's chair by Ware that the transition of Harvard from strictly Calvinist principles to the more liberal Unitarian position was advanced.  

Indeed, the tide had changed long before, insofar as the identification of the prime educational source for the Congregational ministry was concerned. Yale College, chartered in 1701 as the Collegiate School of Connecticut by ten strict Calvinist Congregational ministers (nine of them Harvard graduates), had become the center for the training of clergy for the Congregational churches. During the period 1721-1805, of those Trinitarian Congregational ministers listed in the Annals of the American Pulpit, sixty-three were Yale graduates, while Harvard claimed but twenty-two. Nevertheless, Harvard during the Wigglesworth-Wigglesworth-Tappan period did produce educated ministers who played distinctive roles in eighteenth century American Congregationalism. And, starting with the elder Ware, Harvard became the citadel for the

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39 See Starr in DAB, s.v. "Ware, Henry;" Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 190-191; Hofstadter and Metzger, Academic Freedom, 184-185. Trinitarian Lyman Beecher invited to assist in a revival at Boston's Park Street Church, that "Gibraltar of orthodoxy," later complained: "All the literary men of Massachusetts were Unitarian; all the elite of wealth and fashion crowded Unitarian churches; the judges on the bench were Unitarian, giving decisions by which the particular features of church organization so carefully ordered by the Pilgrim fathers had been nullified, and all the power had passed into the hands of the congregation." See Booth, Second Boston Church, 29; Henry, Unvanquished Puritan, 17, 124.

40 Richard Warch, School of the Prophets, Yale College, 1701-1740 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 19; Sprague, Chronological Index, 1: xxv-xxvii; 2: v-vii; 71: xxxiii-xxv. Leonard Woods reported that, as he recalled, in his first years at Harvard there were not more than three or four resident students in divinity there.
education of Unitarian ministers: of the twenty-six Unitarian clergy listed in the 1807-1844 period (the listing ends with the latter year), twenty-one were Harvard graduates. The "School of the Prophets" had been won over to liberalism.


42 Morison, The Founding of Harvard College, 5, n1. Both Yale University and Rutgers University also claimed to be a "School of the Prophets." Warch adopts the phrase for the title of his history of Yale, while the term was used by the organizers of Rutgers. See Warch, School of the Prophets, Yale College, 1701-1740, and Richard P. McCormick, Rutgers, A Bicentennial History, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1966).
III. IMPORTANCE OF THE
HOLLIS PROFESSORSHIP OF DIVINITY

Effect on Harvard College

The creation and endowment of the Hollis Professorship of Divinity, with a regular and then unheard of stipend of £80, New England money (equivalent to but $270 today)\(^1\), was a milestone along the road to the establishment of college teaching as a full-time career. Prior to 1722 the typical teacher at Harvard—or tutor, as he was officially called—did not remain in his post long. Generally he was a recent graduate of Harvard or of Oxford or Cambridge and his salary was low. The prestigious and financial attraction of the pulpit or a position in commerce and industry was strong. From 1643 to 1767, for example, with but six exceptions, the length of stay of the sixty-three Tutors on the faculty rolls was not more than nine years each, with an average of but three years. And it was not until after 1720, after enrollment had, in 1718, reached 124 resident students, that Harvard College had as many as four Tutors at any one time.\(^2\)

Thus the establishment of the Hollis chair tended to give the incumbent a feeling of permanence. It is true that the stipulations worked out between Hollis and the Overseers called for the re-election


of the professor or the choosing of a new one every five years, but Hollis
soon waived this requirement. In effect, therefore, the person elected
held the post for life. Indeed, Edward Wigglesworth, the first Hollis
Professor, served a total of forty-three years in the chair until his
death in 1765; his son, Edward Wigglesworth Jr., who succeeded him in
the post, served twenty-six years until his paralysis in 1791, and a cou-
sin, David Tappan, the next twenty years until his death in 1803. Thus
the Wigglesworth family dynasty in the chair extended through eighty-
one years. 3

The creation of the professorship was significant in another way:
it introduced the concept of a department or a discipline into the
faculty and curricular organization at Harvard College. Up to that time
Harvard had copied the practice existing at the English universities of
Cambridge and Oxford whereby a teacher—or Tutor as he was officially
called—was typically assigned to a class and taught its members all
subjects. Indeed, the instructor in many cases slept in the same
dormitory room as his students, and was responsible not only for their
educational advancement, but also for their moral and spiritual progress.
As a recent graduate from one of the English universities or from Harvard
itself, it was assumed that he, the Tutor, was qualified to instruct in
all disciplines required for that degree. These subjects were the
seventeenth century counterparts of the liberal arts derived from the

3 Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman August 1 (1724), PCSM, 50: 525;
Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, London August 10, 1725, PCSM, 50:
560; Shipton, 5: 522, 549–53; John W. Dean, Memoir of Rev. Michael
Wigglesworth, 2nd ed. (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsel, 1871), 122; Benjamin
Pierce, A History of Harvard University, from its Foundation, in the Year
1636, to the Period of the American Revolution, (Cambridge: Brown,
Shattuck and Company, 1833), 97–98.
cathedral schools and universities of the Middle Ages (grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy), Aristotelian philosophy (ethics, politics, and physics), metaphysics, humanistic studies (Cicero and Virgil), Greek, Hebrew, and Biblical studies.  

The Hollis Professor of Divinity, on the other hand, was to teach only theology. Thus, the establishment of the professorship provided the first break at Harvard from the English tutorial system. Students of theology were eventually separated out, and thus could concentrate on their divinity studies in greater depth. Because of the process of nominating and selecting the candidate for the chair, as vacancies occurred, students were assured of a professor who was more than a run-of-the-mill tutor.

Although budgetarily the Hollis Professorship was incremental, fiscally its creation provided some relief to the College's operating budget if Harvard was ever to have a professor of divinity. This relief was important because, in contrast with Cambridge and Oxford whose substantial endowments had been provided by rich patrons or the established church, Harvard was poor. The College's total endowment by 1712 was but £5,265 sterling whose annual return provided but fifteen percent of


5 Rule 6, "Rules for the Hollis Professorship of Divinity," *PCSM*, 49: 371. Edward Wigglesworth 1st, however, served as a tutor to the Class of 1767 for its second year, in addition to teaching divinity.
the College's total income. By contrast, the gifts of Thomas Hollis by 1726 resulted in an addition to the endowment assets of £4,900 New England currency, equivalent to £6,615 sterling. Thus the Hollis grants more than doubled the Harvard endowment of 1712.

Very little endowment income prior to the establishment of the Hollis chair went into faculty salaries. One-half of a faculty member's compensation up to that time was derived from tuition, and the balance came from the Charlestown Ferry rent and other income. Furthermore, the interest on the Hollis fund and subsequent professorship endowments helped to provide some budget relief for faculty salaries at a time when few colonists in New England had the capacity to make substantial gifts to the College. And, when in 1726 Hollis endowed a second chair at Harvard, this time in mathematics and science, the additional funds were indeed welcome.

Although no record has been discovered suggesting a causal relationship between the establishment of the Hollis chairs in


divinity and in mathematics-science and in the creation in 1765 by Thomas Hancock, uncle of John, of a chair in Hebrew and Oriental languages, it can be noted, nevertheless, that Hancock was in his youth apprenticed to the Boston printer and bookseller, Daniel Henchman. It was Henchman who, in 1747, gave Harvard £220 to be added to the principal of the Hollis chair of divinity. Possibly Hancock gained the idea of creating a chair in his name from his former employer. In any event, Hancock, who eventually established himself in the paper milling business and later as a commodity merchant and financier, bequeathed £1,000 sterling to create this third professorship at Harvard and in the nation, the first to be established by an American colonist.9

By the time of the American Revolution, the Harvard faculty consisted of the President (who in addition to his administrative and fund-raising duties, also taught), the Hollis Professor of Divinity, the Hollis Professor of Mathematics, the Hancock Professorship of Hebrew and Oriental Languages, and four Tutors. Each Tutor, instead of teaching a class in all subjects through the four years, was henceforth assigned a specific subject: one, Latin; another, Greek, a third, Logic and Metaphysics, and the fourth, Natural Philosophy. Each of the four taught English. Thus, the division of the curriculum vertically by subject matter, initiated by the establishment of the Hollis Professorship in Divinity, was complete. While many attempts have been made to integrate the curriculum at Harvard and at other colleges so as to bring unity in course content and/or to return to the tutorial system,

the department division which was set in motion by the first Hollis Professorship is essentially that existing at Harvard and at most other American colleges and universities today.  

Effects on Other Colleges

One might well expect that the creation of the Hollis Professorship in Divinity at Harvard College would provide a stimulus to the establishment of an endowed professorship in that same area of learning at the Collegiate School of Connecticut (now Yale University), the second colonial New England college to be founded (1701). This expectation can be reinforced by the fact that of the ten clergy who founded the Collegiate School, nine were graduates of Harvard, although, to be sure, they were of an earlier time (their graduating classes ranged from that of 1681 to that of 1684). Furthermore, their stated purpose in establishing the School would indicate that they would want, first of all, a benefactor for a divinity chair, as they had created the institution "out of their sincere Regard to & Zeal for upholding and Propagating of the Christian Religion by a

Quincy, 2: 241; Charles W. Eliot, Harvard Memories (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1923), 15; Richard B. Boone, Education in the United States: Its History from the Earliest Settlements (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1894), 28-29. With the exception of the Hollis Professor, the faculty still required class recitations from prescribed books. It remained for George Ticknor to propose, in 1823, that the lecture system, as practiced in Germany, be instituted at Harvard College. And, while the faculty in 1825 was officially organized into six departments, it was not until the introduction of the elective system by President Charles W. Eliot (1869-1909) that a student could effectively "major" in a specific area of learning. See Samuel E. Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), 232, 346, 389.
succession of Learned & Orthodox men."\textsuperscript{11}

That the name Hollis was well known by officials of the School is demonstrated by the correspondence between Jeremiah Dummer and Connecticut Governor Gurdon Saltonstall when Dummer, as Colonial agent in London for Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, as well as for the Collegiate School and Harvard, attempted to secure a grant from Hollis for the Connecticut college. Although a Harvard graduate (1699), Dummer had become disappointed at not being appointed to the Harvard faculty, and this may have led to his working at cross purposes with his alma mater. Proud and ambitious, it was he who helped to influence the British merchant-governor Elihu Yale to make a grant, in 1718, to the Connecticut institution which led to the adoption of its permanent name in 1745.\textsuperscript{12} In 1721, even before Hollis had finished his "orders" for the chair at Harvard, Dummer personally conveyed to Hollis a letter from Governor Saltonstall on the subject of a gift to the Collegiate School. Hollis, in reporting the interview to Harvard's Benjamin Colman, added that he told Dummer that "as I am projecting


some things in Harvard College—until I am finished I think not to take his case into consideration."\textsuperscript{13}

Dummer, on the other hand, in his report to Governor Saltonstall, was more optimistic. In spite of the fact that Hollis had indicated his preoccupation with the Harvard project, Dummer reported to Governor Saltonstall that he, the Governor, will be "satisfied you'll find him a benefactor e're long."\textsuperscript{14}

When Hollis suspected that two anonymous letters importuning a grant to Yale had been sent or urged by Dummer, he wrote to Harvard, "I have no inclination to be diverted from my projected

\textsuperscript{13}Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, Feb. 9 /1721/, PCRM, 49: 328.

\textsuperscript{14}Jeremiah Dummer to the Honorable Gurden Saltonstall, February 25, 1721, Dexter, ed., \textit{Documentary History of Yale}, 209. When Benjamin Colman learned of Dummer's approach to Hollis, he reprimanded the agent. Dummer replied that his prevailing upon the trustees of Yale not to sue Harvard or the estate of former Connecticut Governor Edward Hopkins, an estate which the court had awarded to Harvard, was a good service to Harvard College." To sue, he said, would have necessitated Harvard's using up the funds of the estate "and therefore their sons should not grudge the little services which I am capable of doing ye College in Connecticut." (See Jeremiah Dummer to Benjamin Colman, February 16, 1720, MSS.) Dummer reported to Yale that Hollis had given him "some hopes that he will think of you when he has finish'd what he intends to do for Harvard College, which I'll do every thing in my power to promote, tho I've Received very Severe reprimands from some of my friends in Boston for having made application to him. (Underscore by Russell V. Kohr.) (See Jeremiah Dummer to the Reverend Woodbridge, 7 March, 1721, Dexter, ed., \textit{Documentary History of Yale}, 189. For more on the Hopkins bequest, see "Grants and Donations to Harvard College," \textit{American Journal of Education}, 9 (1860): 43; "Notes on the Charity of Edward Hopkins, 1657," PCRM, 43: 248; Alan Simpson, "A Candle in the Corner, How Harvard College Got the Hopkins Legacy," PCRM, 33: 313.) Hollis reported that Benjamin Colman also accused Dummer of sending "high church" (i.e., Church of England) books to Yale without balancing them with those of dissenters. (Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, Feb. 18 /1723/, PCRM, 50: 452), a charge which Dummer denied. (See also Jeremiah Dummer to Benjamin Colman, February 16, 1720, MSS.)
design."\textsuperscript{15} He also reported a third anonymous letter, and that Dummer had continued to press the matter, although less directly. Later, Hollis informed President Leverett, "Dummer's management for Yale college gives me grounds to suspect a snake in the grass," and wondered if the agent was worth his retainer from Harvard, let alone Yale. And so Dummer's efforts to secure a grant from Hollis for Yale came to naught.\textsuperscript{16}

Harvard College's Hollis Professorship in Divinity also entered into the thinking of the trustees of what was to become Yale University when, in 1724, Edward Wigglesworth of the Hollis chair was elected rector (president) of the Collegiate School of Connecticut. Although

\textsuperscript{15} Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 9, 1721, PCSM, 49: 348; Thomas Hollis to John White, July 12, 1721, PCSM, 49: 364. It is possible that one or more of these letters might have been written by Cotton Mather. Although a graduate of Harvard (1678) and the son of Increase, with his father he had become disenchanted with the Cambridge institution. Mather even attempted to out-Dummer Dummer by writing to Elihu Yale without authority to request the English merchant to make a supplemental gift to the Connecticut institution and to suggest to the Englishman that the college bear his name. (On relations with Harvard, see Kenneth B. Murdock, \textit{Increase Mather, The Foremost American Puritan} (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926), 356, 376. On correspondence with Elihu Yale, see Cotton Mather to Governor Elihu Yale, of London, 14th d., 11th month, 1718, Dexter, ed., \textit{Documentary History of Yale}, 163-64; Murdock, \textit{Increase Mather}, 382, 383; "Cotton Mather to Governor Saltstonstall, 25th d., 6th Month, 1718," Quincy, 1: 526-27; Oviatt, \textit{Yale}, 339-40.

\textsuperscript{16} Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 9, 1721, PCSM, 49: 348; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 8, 1721, PCSM, 49: 367; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, May 10, 1723, PCSM, 50: 459; Jeremiah Dummer to Timothy Woodbridge, September 10, 1723, PCSM, 6: 188. Nevertheless, Hollis expressed great sorrow upon hearing that Governor Yale died intestate, and that therefore all the hopes for Yale from the latter's estate had died with him. Dummer's address to King George on behalf of the colonies was "graciously received." See Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, August 8, 1723, PCSM, 49: 367; Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, May 10, 1723, PCSM, 50: 459.
he had occupied the Hollis divinity chair but three years, Wigglesworth's
fame as a teacher and a fellow of Harvard had been brought to the atten-
tion of the trustees of Yale, many of whom were Harvard graduates.
Wigglesworth declined the post, however, citing his ill health (he
was partially deaf), although the fact that he was elected without
anyone's conferring with him beforehand may also have been a factor in
his refusal. (Yale then proceeded to elect Elisha Williams, a Harvard
graduate of 1711, to the rectorship.) 17

While, therefore, the Hollis Professorship in Divinity at Harvard
was well known in the Connecticut institute's circles, and while an
attempt had been made to secure a professorship grant from Thomas
Hollis, the major impetus for the establishment at what by then had
become Yale College of the institution's first endowed chair—one in
divinity—came from the desire of President Thomas Clap (who had
succeeded Williams) and the Yale trustees to have students hear only
the Orthodox Calvinist view in order to combat the evangelism of
Edwards and Whitefield. Very likely coupled with this wish also was
the ambition of Clap, who had been a student at Harvard in 1721 when
it announced the Hollis Professorship of Divinity, to have Yale keep
abreast of, if not exceed, his alma mater. He was also apparently
influenced by what appears to have been his dissatisfaction with the
teaching and preaching of the Reverend Joseph Noyes, pastor of the
New Haven church, whom Clap accused of being dull and, more importantly,
noncommittal on the dispute between the Old Lights (the conservatives,

17 Warch, Prophets, 128, 130.
represented by Clap) and the New Lights (represented by Edwards and Whitefield).

While the full story of the accomplishments of Yale's first endowed professorship belongs more properly elsewhere, nevertheless it is appropriate to sketch the events leading to its establishment because of the contrast of its initial effects with those of the Hollis chair. To control the type of theology presented to the then 200 students of Yale, President Clap decided to have a college church with a chaplain of conservative mien who would also teach. Yale students would no longer, then, attend the New Haven church. Acting on his recommendation, the Yale Corporation voted in 1746 to choose a professor who would fill this combined post as soon as funds became available, and then assigned an unrestricted gift of £28, 10 s. from Colonel Philip Livingston, of Livingston Manor, New York, to endow the chair. Livingston also pledged an additional £200, the interest of which he designated to endow the maintenance of a chapel. A fund-raising campaign for the endowment was mounted, and Clap himself contributed £30.

Livingston, a 1737 Yale graduate, was to represent New York in the First Continental Congress and to be one of four Yale graduates to sign the Declaration of Independence. A brother, Philip, also a Yale graduate, was one of the founding trustees of Kings College, the predecessor to the present Columbia University.

Until a qualified person could be found to fill the chair, President Clap, under the recommendation of the General Association of the Ministers of Connecticut and the trustees of the College, undertook both the teaching and preaching duties associated with the position. Thus was begun, in September, 1753, campus worship at Yale for both students and the public. Clap also defended the passage by the Yale Corporation of a test act which, as a means of protecting and perpetuating orthodoxy at Yale, called for each college officer to consent to the Ministerial Assembly's catechism and confession of faith.

The establishment of the campus church and the creation of the test act aroused the First Ecclesiastical Society, whose members, consisting of the Old Lights such as the attorney, Jared Ingersoll, were opposed to the setting up of a separate campus church within their jurisdiction and to all confessions of faith and doctrinal statements. Indeed, the test act issue had split the Corporation. 21

Against this background the Reverend Naphtali Daggett of Long Island was called in September 1755 to aid Clap in preaching to students

Annals, or History, of Yale College, 1700-1746, (New Haven: n.p. 1766), 2: 67; "To the Rev'd the Fellows of Yale College" from Thomas Clap, Jan. 27, 1746 (MSS.); "Whereas the Hall of Yale College is so small...," (contains subscription list for the chapel), (MSS. Yale University Library), Oct. 20th, 1761. (The Livingston Professorship was discontinued in 1868 when endowment was received exclusively for the support of the pastor of the College. See Yale Historical Register, 63.)

20 Kingsley, Yale College, 1: 82. (Harvard was not to organize a college church until 1814. See Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 202.)

on Sundays and to be examined for the professorship. Daggett had been an honor graduate of Yale (1748) and was considered orthodox in his theology. By his sermons his conservative views were probably even more greatly well known. Nevertheless he was subjected to a more thorough examination of his religious beliefs and practices than any of the appointees to the Hollis chair at Harvard. He was required to write a long thesis setting forth the tenets to which he subscribed, and then was interrogated orally for a full day as to his "Principles of Religion, his Knowledge and Skill in Divinity, cases of Conscience, Scripture History and Chronology, Antiquity, Skill in the Hebrew tongue, and various other Qualificants for a Professor." Fortunately for him, he "acquitted himself to the good Satisfaction of the Corporation." On the second day he delivered a sermon, after which he was required to reaffirm his belief in the existing catechism and confession of faith, and his willingness to abide by the rules of church discipline of the Saybrook Platform.

22 This oral interrogation, lasting a full day, in the words of Ralph H. Gabriel, historian of the Church of Christ at Yale, "makes the twentieth-century doctor's examination look by comparison but a little better than a ten-minute paper." See Ralph H. Gabriel, Religion and Learning at Yale: The Church of Christ in the College and University, 1757-1957 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), 28.

Before he could be installed, however, he was forced to make a full confession of faith, in accordance with the test act, and to disdain "principle Errors, prevailing in these times, such as Arminianism, Arianism, Pelegianism, Antinomialism, and Enthusiasm." Possibly this intense interrogation was due to the opposition to Daggett of men like Ingersoll, William Samuel Johnson, and other members of the First Ecclesiastic Society who had accused Clap of wavering toward New Light views. 24

By the creation and filling of the professorship, Clap's program to emphasize religion at Yale was advanced. While, as in the case of the Hollis Professorship at Harvard, the establishment of the Livingston chair helped to bring the Yale curriculum out of the classical lockstep, it also had an opposite effect religiously from the Hollis chair. The creation of the Hollis endowment helped to liberalize instruction in theology at Harvard (by introducing the works of the English liberal Doddridge, for example), while on the other hand the establishment of the Livingston professorship at Yale put the capstone on President Clap's attempts to keep its educational curricular structure tied to religious orthodoxy. 25


25 But the winds were changing. In the interim, Clap had himself been converted to the New Light cause. Even Daggett was becoming an especially sincere New Light and began to emphasize in his sermons original sin and the inability of humans to counteract the Almighty. In 1764, when Whitefield made his fourth visit to Yale, Daggett invited him to preach at the chapel. Yale students were being won over to evangelism. (See Kingsley, Yale College, 92; Sidney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 290. Among students of Daggett was Benjamin Turnbull who was to serve for sixty years as a minister at North Haven. Turnbull, however, was to remain a pious orthodox. (See Cohen, "Turnbull," 37.)
Indirectly, the creation of the Hollis chair also had some effect on the founding of Dartmouth College, on the early thoughts of the trustees of the predecessor institution to the University of Pennsylvania to have a "Hollisian or German Professor of Divinity," on the founding of what ultimately became Brown University, and on what is now Andover-Newton Theological Seminary.

It was Isaac Hollis, a grand-nephew of Thomas Hollis III, who in the spirit of the family, granted £100, along with other donors, to help establish the Charity School, an institution founded in New England in 1759 by the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock (Yale, 1733) to educate New England Indians. From this school the present Dartmouth College grew. The Hollis grant was in the spirit of the interest of the great-uncle in bringing the Enlightenment to American natives, for it is to be remembered that the elder Hollis was a member of the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and Parts Adjacent in America. This gift was probably solicited by the Reverend Samuel Occam and the Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker, agents in England of the Charity School.26

The concept of having an endowed professorship in divinity at what eventually became the University of Pennsylvania entered into the plans of the Academy of Philadelphia, the predecessor institutions. Twenty-three years after Hollis's death in 1731, William Smith, one of the masters of the Academy (founded in 1740 in part to train teachers and ministers for the Pennsylvania Germans), wrote to

Benjamin Franklin and the Anglican minister, the Reverend Richard Peters, both Academy trustees, that "schoolmasters educated on the Proprietor's Bounty, and other Germans that come to the Academy shall . . . be instructed in their own Religion, and it is proposed to the Society to give such a Clergyman £20 or £30 per annum and call him Hollisian or German Professor of Divinity." It was not until 124 years later, long after the Academy had become known as the University of Pennsylvania, that the institution received its first endowed professorship—the John Welsh Centennial Professorship in English.

When the Reverend James Manning, a graduate of the Academy of Philadelphia, and other members of the Philadelphia Association joined in 1765 with New England Baptists to found the College of Rhode Island (which was to become Brown University), they naturally turned to the heirs of Thomas Hollis, as well as to other wealthy English Baptists, for support. Manning, who was the first president of the College, wrote that, "it would be happy for us if we could find in England a family of Hollises to patronize our college; but I fear the Baptists are not to expect such an instance of public spirit in their favor, although I have heretofore indulged in such


hopes, and am yet unwilling to give them up." Again, in 1783, in attempting to secure a grant from Thomas Llewellyn, like Hollis a wealthy Baptist in London, he lamented: "Cambridge College was so fortunate as to attract the attention of a Hollis, New Haven of a Yale, and New Hampshire of a Dartmouth." Unfortunately for the College, Llewellyn died without giving the College anything.\(^{29}\)

One of the reasons that Manning failed to obtain substantial gifts from the Hollis family was that his college was controlled by the New Light (evangelical) Baptists. Their views were far removed from the more ecumenical, catholic outlook practiced by the Hollis family, and which was coming into prevalence at Harvard. Furthermore Harvard officials kept in constant touch with members of the Hollis family, just as any modern-day college or university development officer does with donors, and this may have made it difficult for President Manning to gain attention of a Hollis. The Reverend Benjamin Colman, Harvard overseer, as noted earlier, carried on a voluminous correspondence with Thomas Hollis, the donor of the professorships, and the Reverend Jonathan Mayhew, one of Edward Wigglesworth's star students as Hollis Professor, followed suit with Thomas Hollis IV after Mayhew became a Harvard College Overseer. Thirdly, Thomas Hollis III was in touch with Harvard graduates who had studied under his professorship, and to whose achievements he could point with particular pride.

These graduates, exemplified by the Reverend John Callender, were friends of members of the Standing Order and, as ministers of churches in Boston, Newport, Framington, and other important cities, took a dim view of the pietistic, sectarian platform of the founders of the College of Rhode Island.  

Furthermore, according to the anonymous author of a biographical sketch of Jonathan Mayhew, the College of Rhode Island "was not upon the same plan as that of Harvard, where young persons were admitted without any exception to their religious professions..." and this was the reason that Thomas Hollis IV "did not approve of the principles of it." He and his kinsman, Timothy Hollis, did, however, give 10 guineas each to Manning, saying that "If youth are but fairly grounded in learning, the best of them, will make out their way to purest knowledge and truth."  

The presence at Harvard College of the Hollis Professorship in 


"Thomas Hollis: a biographical account," in Jonathan Mayhew Papers, 138, Bortman Manuscript File, Boston University; "List of subscriptions collected by Morgan Edward in England and Ireland to establish Brown University, 1768," (MSS). Thomas Hollis [IV] is listed as having given "10" guineas. The list also includes a gift from William Penn. See also Henry S. Burrage, *A History of Baptists in New England* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1894), 76. Because the College of Rhode Island in the early days did not have the financial backing that Harvard, or even Yale, did, it had to struggle to keep open, and it was not until 1804 that it received its first endowed professorship. This was in the form of a grant of $5,000 from Nicholas Brown, a Providence industrialist, for a chair in oratory and belles-lettres. It was in honor of this gift that the trustees of the college named not only the professorship, but the college itself, for the benefactor. (See Francis Wayland, *A Discourse delivered in the Meeting-House of the First Baptist Church, Providence, May 22, 1842* (Providence, 1842), 22; McLoughlin, *New England Dissent 1630-1833*, 1: 499.
Divinity was a factor in the establishment, in 1794, at Phillips Academy (a private secondary school which was the predecessor of the Andover Theological Seminary, now Andover-Newton Theological Seminary) of the Samuel Abbot Professorship in Divinity, and the loss by Harvard of the same endowment. Because Abbot, a Boston merchant, did not like the trend of Harvard toward Unitarianism which was then developing, he directed that his funds, which originally were to be bequeathed to Harvard, be used to establish a theological "professorship" at the preparatory school. In the codicil to his will, Abbot used terms very similar to Article 11 of the "orders" for the Hollis Chair, directing that the person appointed "be of sound, orthodox, Calvinistic principles of divinity." Eventually, Abbot gave the funds to the Academy during his lifetime. (The institution became Andover Theological Seminary in 1807.) Abbot was probably also encouraged in these actions by David Tappan, third Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard, and by Eliphalent Pearson, acting president of Harvard when the Unitarian controversy broke out in 1811. All three men—Abbot, Tappan, and Pearson, were trustees of the Academy. The lifetime gifts of Abbot, amounting to the then princely sum of $100,000, was the first for a professorship in theology not at a university.

The existence of the Hollis Professorship of Divinity apparently had no effect on the creators of the first endowed professorial chairs

at Princeton, Rutgers or Columbia universities, or on the attempts of these universities to secure endowment for professorships. An examination of the factors leading to the establishment of the initial endowed chairs at these institutions lends to this conclusion. Nor did it apparently have any effect on the creation of the first endowed chair at The College of William and Mary, Virginia. Although this institution, founded in 1693, was the second oldest college in the colonies, it was not until 1779 that it received its first endowed professorship.

Princeton University, although its foundation as the College of New Jersey dates to 1746, did not receive its first endowed professorship until Silas Holmes of New York gave $30,000 in 1857 to create what the trustees then named the Holmes Professorship of Belles Lettres; Lyman Atwater, who had been a member of the faculty and who had become a noted logician and theologian, was the first incumbent. Columbia University, established originally as King's College in 1754, obtained its first endowed professorship in 1843 by the bequest of Frederick Gebhard of New York City. He gave $20,000 "for the endowment of a Professorship of the German Language and Literature in the said College and for no other purpose whatever." While the trustees of Queens College, established in 1766 and the predecessor to the present Rutgers University, tried for many years to raise funds for a divinity professorship, they failed. It remained for the Collegiate Church of New York to create the University's first funded chair in 1863-64. The occupant of this chair was to provide students with instruction in psychology, philosophy, and logic. The first person appointed to the chair, the Reverend T. Sanford Doolittle, in addition to teaching students the works of the major philosophers also provided them instruction in the field of what was still then called "mental philosophy." Nevertheless, although the title of the chair still remains, sufficient funds were not made available to complete the endowment. The first fully-endowed professorship at Rutgers came in 1867 as the result of a bequest of Abraham Voorhees. Established in the fields of history, political economy and constitutional law, it had as its first holder (1869) George W. Atherton. Although The College of William and Mary was chartered in 1693 as the second oldest college in the colonies, it was not until 1779 that its first professorial chair was established—that in "Law and Police." This was the first professorship in this subject area in America. George Wythe was elected to the post and taught, among others, John Marshall. The chair was to be the first of six professorships; the others were to be "Anatomy and Medicine; Natural Philosophy and Mathematics, Moral Philosophy, the laws of Nature and of Nations, and of the Fine Arts; Modern Languages; and the sixth for Bufferton." However, it does not appear the the chair in Law and Police,
or the others for that matter, were endowed, but were, rather, merely created by an act of the College's Board of Visitors. Each professor, except the master of Bufferton, was to receive from every student who attended him one thousand pounds of tobacco annually. What appears to be the first truly endowed professorship at William and Mary is the James Pinckney Harrison Chair in History, established in 1968 by Mr. Harrison. See Alexander Leitch, A Princeton Companion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 160; Thomas I. Wertenbaker, Princeton, 1746–1896 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), 274, 275, 261, 260; Marion E. Jensmott, Acting Secretary, Columbia University, to Russell V. Kohr, June 15, 1976; A History of Columbia University, 1754–1904 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1904), 120; Richard C. McCormick, Rutgers: A Bicentennial History (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1966), 28, 29, 32, 38, 41; Williams H. S. Demarest, A History of Rutgers College 1766–1924 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers College, 1924), 400; Humphrey, From King's College to Columbia 1746–1800, 59–66; William G. Miller, Rutgers University Archivist, to Russell V. Kohr, March 17, 1980; Virginia Gazette, December 18, 1779; J. E. Morpurgo, Their Majesties' Royall Colledge: William and Mary in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Williamsburg, Va.: The Endowment Association of the College of William and Mary of Virginia, 1976), 196; Kay J. Domine, Archivist, The College of William and Mary, to Russell V. Kohr, June 14, 1976; Kay J. Domine to Russell V. Kohr. December 8, 1980.
IV: SUMMARY

In the 1980-1981 catalog of the Divinity School of Harvard University is a statement reading that in view of the desire of the founders of Harvard College to perpetuate the ministry, "theology continued to hold a position of importance as Harvard grew." The statement then refers to the Hollis Professorship of Divinity as the first professorship at Harvard College, one which built upon the concept of the founders of Harvard as outlined in New England's First Fruits:

... to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity; dreading to leaving an illiterate ministry to the churches, when our present ministers shall lie in the dust.1

The creation of the Hollis Professorship did indeed focus attention on theology as a subject. Acceptance of the Hollis gift to create a chair in a specific discipline forced a crack in the wall protecting the classical curriculum. As other professorships were created, a vertical, departmental academic structure began to be established, leading to the departmental lines which exist at Harvard and at most colleges today. Since then, many a college president or dean has struggled to determine how to demonstrate the interrelationships of knowledge, and still enable a student to learn a speciality in depth.2


The teaching over a span of eighty years of the first three Hollis professors, of whom the first two were direct descendants of Michael Wigglesworth and the third related to the Wigglesworth family, helped to pave the way for the religious liberalizing of Harvard from an institution guided principally by the conservative High Calvinist precepts to one which admitted the precepts of deism and Unitarianism. Although Hollis bore no brief for the deists, he was nevertheless a latitudinarian and, had he lived to see it, would probably have been pleased with the transformation of the College to the more liberal outlook.

In several other respects, however, Hollis would have been disappointed. While twenty-seven percent of Harvard graduates from the time of the founding of the chair (1721) to 1801 became "settled ministers," this was a decrease from the fifty-two percent recorded in the years 1642-1721. That fewer proportionately were entering the ministry, once a popular vocational goal, was due in part to the expansion of opportunities in business and government.

By contrast, the greater number of Congregational ministers listed in the Annals for the latter part of this period were graduates of Yale College and carried with them the more orthodox view advanced by President Thomas Clap and taught and preached by Naphtali Daggett.

With respect to the Deists, Hollis had written to Benjamin Colman on July 22, 1727, that while some persons felt that the movement would sublimate the teaching of the Revelation, nevertheless by the challenge "we hope to gaine stronger proofs in the Ishue for our Faith and practice. Great is the Truth and it will Prevaile, the God of truth is greater than all." (PCSM, 50: 603-06.)
Yale, with its conservative views, had become a center for pre-ministerial education insofar as the Congregational ministry was concerned, and this also was a factor in the decrease in the number of clergy with Harvard degrees.\(^5\)

Hollis would also have been disappointed with the fact that the number of Harvard educated Baptist ministers serving New England and who had studied under the Hollis Professor was so small. It had been Hollis's desire to have their number increase, but only four Baptist ministers among those listed in the *Annals of the American Pulpit* since the time of the founding of the chair in 1721 to 1840 (the end of the listing), attended Harvard: John Callender (1723), Edward Upham (1740), Charles Train (1806), and Stephen Chapin (1818). Of the other college-educated Baptist ministers listed who attended college (and slightly less than one-third did), a third attended the Baptist-related College of Rhode Island; most of the remainder enrolled at Yale or Princeton. Thus, the chair failed to accomplish its immediate purpose of attracting prospective Baptist ministers and elevating them to the ranks of college graduates.\(^6\)

\(^5\)Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard*, 241; Sprague, 1, 2; Clinton Rossiter, "The Life and Mind of Jonathan Mayhew," *William and Mary Quarterly*, ser. 3, vol. 7: 531. Rossiter writes that "the fact that of the five Massachusetts colonials James Otis, Oxenbridge Thacher, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Jonathan Mayhew most prominent in the first overt phase of the Revolution four were men of affairs (two lawyers, one politician, a merchant) and only one a man of God—and he the fifth in line. Had any such roll-call of Commonwealth leaders been drawn up in 1650 or 1700, or even so late as 1750, the influence of the pulpit would surely have been more pronounced."

\(^6\)Sprague, 6: 34, 53, 530, 673; William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent 1630-1833*, 2 vols., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1: 283–85. Indeed, in addition, as noted, only one of the nine Hollis Professors in the chair's 256-year history has been a Baptist; he was David G. Lyon, who served 1882–1910. (See Morison, *Three Centuries of
At least two reasons might be advanced for this failure. The first is that members of the typical early Baptist church, unlike its Congregational counterpart, did not usually specify a college graduate for their minister, and hence the paucity of Baptist ministerial candidates applying to Harvard. Even when Hollis had informed the Baptist churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, where numerous congregations existed, of his professorship at Harvard, he could not find "one Preacher among them that understands the Languages," not "one from South Carolina to Boston that has any tolerable degree of Learning." Two calls, one in 1722, and the other in 1731, by the Baptist Philadelphia Association for "Young Persons Hopefull for the Ministry, and Inclinable for Learning" who might be nominated for the Hollis Scholarships at Harvard, apparently went unheeded, even when Hollis had asked the College, should a Baptist from these colonies apply, to "stretch their Charity a little."^7

Another possible reason for the low Baptist pre-ministerial enrollment is the apparent reluctance of Baptists living away from the Boston area to send candidates to a college controlled by representatives of the Congregational Churches—representatives who by means of their political and civic power had denied religious

freedom to Baptists. (The exception constituted those Baptists living in Boston, who were granted freedom of religious assembly. The few Baptist candidates for admission to Harvard came from Boston or from the immediate surrounding area.)

That the few Baptist ministers who did attend Harvard during this period became identified as leaders is a tribute to the education they received from the Hollis professors, and also to their own initiative. John Callender (Class of 1723), who held a Hollis Scholarship, became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newport, Rhode Island, helped to revise the laws of that Colony, was a member of the Society for Promoting Virtue and Knowledge by a Free Conversation, and, in 1736, penned a history of Baptists in New England. Jeremy Condy (Class of 1726), who also was a Hollis Scholar in 1738 was ordained pastor of the First Baptist Church of Boston (by his colleague, John Callender, along with three Congregational ministers), was invited by Boston magistrates to be the first Baptist ministers to deliver the election sermon (illness forced him to decline), was elected to the Harvard Board of Overseers (he chose not to sit), and became a trustee of the College of Rhode Island. Charles Train (Class of 1809), held pastorates (1806-1839) in Newton, Framington, and Weston, became secretary of the Massachusetts Baptist Association, and as state senator was instrumental in securing the charter for Amherst College.

Stephen Chapin (Class of 1804), after serving as pastor of two Congregational churches (1805-1818) and then as pastor of the North Yarmouth, Maine, Baptist Church in 1823 became professor of theology at Baptist-related Waterville College (now Colby College, Waterville, Maine), and, in 1829, was elected president of the then existing Baptist-related Columbia College at Washington, D.C.9

In the wider sphere, however, the Hollis Professorship of Divinity did have significant effects, as measured by the achievements of men elevated to the chair and by the accomplishments of some of the students who studied under the Hollis Professor.

Edward Wigglesworth, the first incumbent, earned fame as that rare kind of teacher who could present antithetical views on a theological subject, forcing the student to think and to draw his own conclusions. His Socratic-like classroom lectures helped to train men like Jonathan Mayhew (Class of 1744), the American patriotic minister; Payne Wingate (Class of 1759), later a New Hampshire delegate to the Continental Congress and, subsequently, United States Senator from that state, and Joseph Willard (Class of 1765), who was to become president of Harvard in 1871. By the time of Wigglesworth's death in 1765, after forty-three years in the chair, the greater number of ministers in Cambridge and the neighboring towns and provinces were the products of his teaching.10


10Sprague, (Trinitarian Congregational), 2: 23-25; see also Appelton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, s.v. "Wingate, Payne" and "Mayhew, Jonathan;" Quincy 2: 85; Sprague, 1: 277; Appleton, DISCOURSE on the DEATH of Wigglesworth, Appendix 2, 3. Willard, a senior sophister at the time
That the second Hollis Professor, Edward Wigglesworth II, specialized in mathematics as well as in theology, brought additional honor to the chair. It has already been noted that, like his father, Wigglesworth II taught a future statesman, in his case, John Quincy Adams (Class of 1787). Among Wigglesworth's students who were to become leading congregational ministers of the period were David Osgood (attended one year—1771-1772), David Parsons (Class of 1771), Seth Payson (Class of 1777), and Jonathan Fisher (Class of 1792). The junior Wigglesworth's liberalizing the program in theological studies and his confining the courses in religion for those planning careers in the ministry showed curricular foresight and adumbrated by twenty-seven years the establishment of the Harvard School of Divinity. And his construction of an annuity and insurance plan for ministers and their widows heralded, by 140 years, the creation by Andrew Carnegie in 1917 of a similar program for college professors.  

of Wigglesworth, wrote an ode to his teacher which is reproduced in Appleton's DISCOURSE, Appendix, 1-4. Wigglesworth had influenced Willard to enter the ministry, which led to the latter's becoming a candidate for the Harvard College presidency (See Shipton, 6: 356). Regarding Mayhew, the fact that he had become one of the most famous pulpeteers of his day has been attributed, in part, to Wigglesworth's teaching. (See Shipton, 7: 637.)

In addition to William Ellery Channing (Class of 1798) who was to become the famous Unitarian minister at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Eliphalet Pearson (Class of 1773) and Sidney Willard (Class of 1798 and son of President Joseph Willard of Harvard College), were among those molded by David Tappan, the third Hollis Professor. Both Pearson and Willard were to hold the John Hancock Professorship in Hebrew at the College. Joseph McKean (Class of 1794), clergyman, member of the Massachusetts General Court, and later successor to John Quincy Adams as Boylston Professor of Oratory; Leonard Woods (Class of 1796), the theologian at Andover; and Joshua Bates (Class of 1800) who became president of Middlebury College, were also products of his classroom.\textsuperscript{12}

The achievements of these former students, and the academic accomplishments of the Hollis professors themselves, brought distinction to the chair and enhanced the memory of its creator. Thomas Hollis had built greater than he knew.

\textsuperscript{12} Shipton, 7: 261; Sprague, 8: 363-64; 2: 98, 126; Shipton, 17: 643-45; Sprague, 2: 414, 438, 465.
Thomas Hollis
(1660-1731)

Painted by John S. Copley
from a bust by Cipriani
1776

Reproduced from Linda Ayers,
HARVARD DIVIDED, Cambridge,
Mass.: Fogg Art Museum, 1976

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