

Oklahoma Books

WHEN W. S. Campbell, now director of creative writing courses at the University of Oklahoma, was an undergraduate student at Oxford University in England, he discovered in the Bodleian Library the manuscript of Pierre Esprit Radisson's *Voyages*.

It was such a remarkable story of adventure that it "haunted" him through the years. When he found time, he dug into other sources of information about the amiable and clever explorer. And now he has produced a biography *KING OF THE FUR TRADERS, The Deeds and Deviltry of Pierre Esprit Radisson*, published last month by Houghton Mifflin under Mr. Campbell's pen name, Stanley Vestal. (\$3.50.)

Historically, Radisson is important as the almost forgotten Frenchman who explored the country now known as Canada and founded the famous Hudson's Bay Company, the commercial establishment that was largely responsible for bringing Canada into the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In the reader's memory, however, Radisson will linger as one of the most picturesque, resourceful and altogether engaging adventurers who ever roved the American continent. His adventures began as a boy when he was captured by the Mohawks. He was successively prisoner, Indian scout and warrior, voyageur, hunter, trapper, trader, diplomat, promoter, an officer in the French navy, and a writer.

Radisson was a successful explorer in the Indian country because he learned everything possible about the Indians and dealt with them in a thoroughly human manner—meeting courage with courage, treachery with treachery, trust with trust. He took pains to learn how the Indians expected to be treated, and how they would probably react. He was fortunate in that nature gave him a strong constitution, and also an audacity and good humor that quickly won friends for him, even in the wilderness.

Mr. Campbell has told the story with a pleasing proportion of attention to Radisson's personal qualities as well as the historical facts of the fur trader's adventures. So human and understandable is the picture of Radisson that it is hard to believe that his adventures took place nearly three hundred years ago.

One reason that the author has been able to make his hero seem so real is that he himself thoroughly understands the Indian point of view. Having talked with,

lived with, and studied the Indian nature—particularly the philosophy of the Indian warrior and the white frontiersman who acquired similar ideas—Mr. Campbell is able to relate the story of Radisson with complete sympathy and understanding.

State Financial Picture

A study that should prove of great value to Oklahomans interested in putting the state's financial affairs on a sounder basis is *Oklahoma's Deficit*, by Findley Weaver, issued last month by the University of Oklahoma Press.

The book is a study of financial administration, combining criticisms and constructive suggestions. No effort is made to place blame for the state's deficit and various financial troubles, the author explaining that "Our system of state finance has developed over a long period of time, and the people as well as public officials must assume credit or blame collectively for the course this development has taken."

Dr. Weaver, who is professor of marketing and director of the Bureau of Business Research in the University, has made a thorough study of the state's financial picture and he presents it in convincing detail. He has analyzed the basic causes of the state's deficit; the state's revenue and expenditures; effects of earmarking a large proportion of the state's revenues; expenditures without appropriations; inadequate reporting, accounting and budgeting; nullification of constitutional debt limitations; attempts to end the deficit, and recommended reforms.

Some of the material in the book has been presented in *Sooner Magazine* in an article by Dr. Weaver. The book develops the subject in full, and presents supporting charts, tables and statistics. In studying the state's finances as a whole, Dr. Weaver found that he had to make up his own balance sheets, getting his figures from various sources since the state has no centralized office preparing complete information.

"Oklahoma does not have a budget worthy of the name, a fault that anyone recognizes as fatal to efficient financial management," Dr. Weaver says.

Under the present system, he declares, "intelligent planning of income and expenditures is impossible, because there is no complete financial information to use in planning."

The book is a calm, thorough, and convincing discussion of a very important

problem. It deserves thoughtful reading by every responsible citizen, and particularly by legislators and other public officials.

Sooner Writers

Tuberculosis and Genius is the title of a new book by Dr. Lewis J. Moorman, Oklahoma City physician and former dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine. Dr. Moorman, widely known for his research in tuberculosis and operator of his own sanatorium at Oklahoma City, for twenty-five years, develops a theory that tuberculosis has the paradoxical quality of sapping the physical strength and stimulating the mental processes at the same time. Much of the book is devoted to case histories of noted men who were victims of tuberculosis. The book is published by the University of Chicago Press. \$2.50.

► Foreign mission work in Africa by Dr. Ray Northrip, '38med, and Mrs. Northrip is described in *From Oklahoma City to Ogbomoso*, published by the Baptist Messenger, Oklahoma City. The adventurous trip is described in letters from Mrs. Northrip to friends in Oklahoma.

► *High Frontier*, by Leland Jamieson, '23, which appeared serially in the *Saturday Evening Post*, has been published in book form by William Morrow, New York. The story is about a young man who inherited an airline back in the early days of aviation when pilots flew "by the seat of their pants." It tells how he made a go of it despite serious obstacles. It's the story of the pioneer days of the commercial aviation industry that now is accepted as commonplace by the general public.

► *Captain Lee Hall of Texas*, by Dora Neill Raymond, published by the University Press, has been chosen as the outstanding Texas book of the year by the Texas Institute of Letters. The choice was based on literary excellence, brilliant scholarship and excellent biography.

► Present and former students in W. S. Campbell's courses in professional writing have been making more sales recently. A story by Naomi John White entitled "Come Blow Your Horn" appeared in *Everyweek*, making her sixth story appearance since she enrolled in Mr. Campbell's course. Elsie J. Wheeler, of Oklahoma City, won first prize in the literary department of the Tri-State Fair held in Amarillo, Texas, recently, with her story "Minstrel by Proxy," competing against contestants from Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. Mrs. Demma Ray Oldham had an article "Front Page Stuff" in a recent issue of *The Writer*, and a poem in the November issue of *Science of Mind*. Mrs.

Ennen R. Hall has a story "The Heart of a Savage" in the December issue of *Rangeland Sweethearts*. Students of Mr. Campbell's courses and Foster Harris's fiction laboratory have sold eighty-seven manuscripts since last Christmas.