

Oklahoma Books and Authors

THE Short Grass country is a region of superlatives, of extremes, of incredible excesses.

"It grows the shortest grass—and the tallest; has the widest rivers—with the least water in them; the thickest dust and the deepest mud, the least rain and the heaviest downpours; the hottest days and the coolest nights; the brightest sunshine and the blackest clouds; the strongest winds, the most magnificent electrical storms, the longest summers, and the shortest winters, the biggest hail, the loudest thunder, and the brightest moonlight in the whole Mississippi Valley."

That's a sample of vigorous style used by Stanley Vestal (W. S. Campbell of the O. U. English faculty) to describe the country he loves in his new book, *Short Grass Country*. The book is published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, as the third volume in a series on American Folkways, edited by Erskine Caldwell.

The short grass country is a region that Mr. Campbell not only loves, but understands. Few other writers have managed to analyze the spirit of the western Indians and cowboys and pioneers on such a logical basis, and still never lose that romantic haze of adventure that readers like so well.

Writing with humor and insight, Mr. Campbell presents a word picture of the Short Grass that is enjoyable both to natives of the region and to persons who know about it only from hearsay.

The Short Grass country is bounded roughly by the Ozarks and the woodlands on the east, by the foothills of the Rockies on the west, by the Colorado River on the south, and by the corn-lands of Kansas and Nebraska on the north. A region with a colorful history, its story is the story of Indians, of cowboys, of buffalo hunts, of cattle drives, oil wells, tornadoes, prairie fires, dust storms, rodeos, county-seat wars; the story of Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickock, Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday; the story of Indian fights, and Samuel Colt's "equalizer."

It's a story of lusty life in a region that has a strong flavor and individuality of its own. And Walter Campbell makes it all live again.

"It isn't history, sociology, geography, legend nor literature," says Kenneth Kaufman, book critic for the *Sunday Oklahoman*. "It is the sort of knowledge a man gets by living a long, long time in a given region, and by loving it more than he does any other place. It is a look, a long and satisfying look, into the mind of a man who has become a part of one of the grandest and most fascinating localities on the globe. From Indian legend to windy story, from history to wisecrack, from geography to poetry, from botany to balloon ascensions, from Boot Hill to black blizzard—this is as genuine stuff of the plains as the smell of

sagebrush and saddle leather, as the howl of a coyote or the wail of a cowboy who didn't want to be buried on the lone prairie. A book to chuckle over, and dream about, and re-read again and again."

Book on News Writing

Charles E. Rogers, '14ba, head of the department of technical journalism at Iowa State College, is author of *Reporting FFA News*, published recently by the Iowa State College Press.

Future Farmers of America is the name of the national organization for vocational agriculture students. Because agriculture is vital, either directly or indirectly to a large proportion of the communities in the United States, FFA news is real community news.

Mr. Rogers estimates in his book that a directory of publications which may be a possible market for Future Farmer news, articles and pictures would include 75 or 80 percent of the 21,571 newspapers and periodicals published in the United States.

The book gives practical pointers on news writing for FFA members who want to learn the essentials. Numerous examples of actual stories are presented; numerous suggestions for developing ideas are given; and such modern news supplements as photographs and radio broadcasts are discussed in a stimulating manner.

Thorough in coverage of the subject, without getting too technical, the book should be of tremendous value to FFA chapters and their sponsors and instructors. Scope of the contents is indicated by the chapter headings: How to Find News, How to Write News, The Language of Journalism, Stories for the Community Paper, The State FFA Paper, Stories for the Farm Papers, FFA News in Pictures, FFA News on Radio. The appendix includes a valuable list of farm papers that are markets for FFA news, and a condensed style sheet representing typical usage on a community newspaper.

Reporting FFA News is presented in attractive format and is well illustrated.

New Pamphlets

Two pamphlets, one dealing with the ideals of America's founders and the other with individual and mass freedom, have been released as booklets 4 and 5 in the second series of Co-operative Books.

The first, called *Radicals of Yesterday*, is written by Hope Holway, Tulsa. Historical incidents which led to the American Revolution are presented in an interesting style and interspersed with short passages pertinent to present-day occurrences.

The second, *What Is Freedom*, by Dwight L. Bolinger, professor at Washburn College, is a definition of freedom in terms of individual citizens of the state and collective government, outgrowth of modern society.

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Give Sooner Books for Christmas

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Short Grass Country

by STANLEY VESTAL

"It is a look, a long and satisfying look, into the mind of a man who has become a part of one of the grandest and most fascinating localities on the globe. From Indian legend to windy story, from history to wisecracks, from geography to poetry, from botany to balloon ascensions, from Boot Hill to black blizzard—this is as genuine stuff of the plains as the smell of sagebrush and saddle leather, as the howl of a coyote or the wail of a cowboy who didn't want to be buried on the lone prairie. A book to chuckle over, and dream about, and re-read again and again."—*Kenneth Kaufman in the Sunday Oklahoman.*

\$3.00

OKLAHOMA:

A Guide to The Sooner State

The Oklahoma volume in the *American Guide Series*, this veritable encyclopedic of the state will be published in December. Crammed with interesting and vital information about Oklahoma, the book has 544 pages, including 64 pages of illustrations. A "natural" as a Christmas gift for any Oklahoman, young or old.

\$2.50

Possum Trot

by H. C. NIXON

Author of *Forty Acres and Steel Mules*

The biography of a typical southern rural community—in which are sown the seeds of the grapes of wrath. This book is for the same reader whose enthusiasm made Paul B. Sears' *Deserts on the March* a best-selling non-fiction book.

\$2.00

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