

It's on The House

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Sooner Feature Writer

Have you met Oklahoma's literary ambassador to the world?

He is Roy Temple House, foreign language scholar and editor of the internationally famous literary quarterly publication, *Books Abroad*.

Dr. House's fame in his field is easily recognized when one scrutinizes the work which has made him a recognized sage locally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

Recently (November 16) Dr. House was accorded the high honor of induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. Late in October of this year he was endorsed as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize by the South-Central Modern Languages Association. His work in promoting international peace through understanding is recognized in literary circles the world over.

He has appeared in *Who's Who in America* since 1908 and his distinguished list of honors further exemplifies the importance of this man who has brought international cultural recognition to the state of Oklahoma—a state which 50 years ago could boast of little more than wild Indians and numerous unsettled settlers.

Let's look at his record: He belongs to the Asociation de Escritores y Artistas Americanos and to the International Association of P.E.N. clubs. The Belgian Medaille du Roi Albert was presented to him in 1920 while he was serving as a member of Herbert Hoover's commission for relief in Belgium. He was custodian and head translator in care of all official documents.

"I really didn't deserve the medal," he once remarked with a smile. "But it was free, so I accepted it."

He also was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French government in the summer of 1935. "I don't know what that was for either, but it wouldn't have been polite to decline it; so I accepted that too."

He is an honorary member of many foreign cultural organizations, including the Societe de Journalistes Belges. Recently he became a member of the advisory board of *Who's Who in Latin America*.

Dr. House's international brainchild is one of the few truly unique magazines in America. It is the only one of its kind in the world. Possibly that's because its editor is the only one of his kind in the world too.

Dr. House's leadership, hardwork, and genius have set up in *Books Abroad* a magazine whose sponsors operate, and whose

contributors write material for, without compensation. His sole purpose is to further international understanding. He believes firmly in the fact that as the literature of a nation influences and is influenced by the thought of its people, so a knowledge of this literature helps in comprehending underlying causes of social and political attitudes.

Thus, *Books Abroad* reflects the national thoughts and trends of nations throughout the world as expressed in the foremost works of their authors. Its purpose might easily be said to reflect the world rather than reform it.



ROY TEMPLE HOUSE
Oklahoma's Literary Ambassador to the World.

An interesting anecdote about Dr. House concerns the extremely long hours he has always spent at work. As head of the language department and as a teacher instructing 15 hours a week plus his various administrative tasks, he undertook the publication of *Books Abroad*. It has often been said that Dr. House is one of the few men in the world who measures the day in terms of a full 24 hours. For almost three decades the campus nightwatchman has opened his door late at night and bade Dr. House good night as he continued to bang away on his always busy typewriter.

Probably one of the chief factors involved in making the magazine the great one that it is will be found in the fact that it is an entirely catholic journal. Its scope is international including some 36 to 40 countries. It

is "neither hot nor cold" on political questions. The magazine reviews books on both sides of major issues with a sincere attempt to be perfectly fair. In short, under the leadership of its unpretentious editor-founder there is no editor's bias.

The outstanding thing about the magazine is the fact that it holds the distinction of being better known abroad than in this country. In practically every nation in the world and especially in the leading cultural centers of England, Germany, France, Spain and South America, *Books Abroad* enjoys an enviable reputation.

Dr. House's thoroughness and literary exactness have resulted in his being dubbed the "book detective." Here's one reason why:

Shortly after the war, the editor of a Swiss encyclopedia was trying to secure information about a German author, not 200 miles away. Europe was torn up, many books and records lost, documents misplaced and persons missing or killed.

No trace of the author was to be found; however, the Swiss publisher had an idea that Dr. House might know something about him, since as an editor he had extensive contacts with the German. It turned out that Dr. House did know something about the German author and the encyclopedia notice was completed with the aid of an editor in Norman, Oklahoma.

His success in promoting "international understanding" was evidenced not too long ago when *El Nacional*, official Mexican paper, praised *Books Abroad* for its service to Mexican authors.

The magazine is a sort of international Saturday Review of Literature, representing literature of no particular country, nationality or race, but of all countries, literatures and races.

Of unusual value is an index of 50,000 cards filed on foreign publications since the magazine's conception in 1927. They cover a period of international intrigue and war. The catalog has no duplicate, and information gathered no counterpart, since not even the Library of Congress has such an index.

Dr. House recalls vividly the first magazine. There were 900 copies issued of that first grey-backed number and a copy was sent to almost every university in the country, to a host of famous scholars in America and abroad. Dr. House and his associates waited at home in some trepidation; it requires some hardihood to launch a new magazine, much more if that magazine is a scholarly one.

Much to their astonishment, praise began to pour in rapidly. *Books Abroad* was not only the only magazine in America devoted to a survey of foreign-language literature but it was an immediate success. Dr. House had no difficulty whatever in associating with himself many of the most distinguished modern language scholars in America.

The Carnegie Endowment for International peace quickly recognized the useful service *Books Abroad* was rendering international understanding and gave a fund of \$2,000 to it. The University printed the magazine at its own expense at the University Press, but because the magazine had no subscription charge at that time, it could not obtain second class mailing privileges.

Yes, many problems have come—and gone—because Dr. House dealt with them only as a man with determination can. He solved them and made it a point that nothing would stand in his way.

The original 32-page critical bibliography of foreign books quickly expanded to 124 pages and now, during its 21st year, it sends 13,500 copies yearly to subscribers all over the world, with 250 going to Great Britain alone. Contributing editors review books in any language and their articles are read in at least 36 countries.

Yes, 70-year-old Roy Temple House is truly Oklahoma's own literary ambassador to the world. His outlook and that of *Books Abroad* might well be found in the words, Let's meet the problems of the world by first meeting the world.

It is with this idea in mind that Dr. House continues to introduce the world to itself.

Enrolment Tops 12,000

For the second straight year the University of Oklahoma's enrolment is above the 12,000 mark. Total for the first semester is 12,174, largest number of students in any Sooner state school, figures released by President George L. Cross reveal.

Veterans' enrollment continued high with 6,360 officially registered compared to 6,919 a year ago. Included were 3,089 married veterans and 3,271 unmarried former servicemen and women. Ages range from 17 to 60. The largest group is 925 in the 23-year-old-bracket. Of the total veterans, 6,284 are men and 76 women.

Thirty-one foreign countries and four territories are represented on the campus among 146 students. Canada leads with 47 enrolled. Out-of-state students total 2,491 with Texas sending 617 for the greatest number. New York state is next with 330.

Lowell Dunham, University of Oklahoma assistant professor of modern languages, has been awarded the annual Andres Bello literary prize for 1949 by the government of Venezuela. Dunham's prize-winning work was based on the life and works of Manuel Diaz Rodriguez, Venezuelan author. Dunham is now working toward his doctor's degree at UCLA, where he is on leave of absence.



Joseph Brandt, '21ba, and Mrs. Brandt inspect the toy dog past editors of the *Oklahoma Daily* have signed. Dr. Brandt was president of the University from 1941 to 1943.

Former Prexy Returns for Visit

One of the University's most colorful personalities, former O.U. president and alumnus Joseph A. Brandt, '21ba, the man everybody calls "Joe" returned to the campus for a visit.

He and Mrs. Brandt, who is a graduate of DePauw University, were the guests of President and Mrs. Cross and visited their son, Ted, who is a pre-journalism University College freshman.

Time has faded the redness of Joe Brandt's hair, but it has not noticeably dented the mental exuberance that made him one of the most controversial figures in the University's history.

He became the first alumnus president of O.U. in 1941 when he was elected to succeed Dr. W. B. Bizzell. He resigned in 1943 to become director of the University of Chicago press and in 1944 became president of Henry Holt and Company, publishers. He recently resigned as head of the publishing firm but will continue as educational consultant.

Ted Brandt in studying journalism is following the lead of both his father and mother, who met when Dr. Brandt was city editor and she a feature writer of the *Tulsa Tribune*.

Ted is a member of Delta Tau Delta social fraternity as was his father who helped found the local chapter in 1922. Dr. Brandt dined at the DTD house while visiting the campus.

Young Brandt said he thought his father was probably "a little sorry" that he left the University but that he certainly was happy to revisit the campus and see all his old friends again.

Dr. Brandt was impressed both by the growth of the University and the ease with which President Cross administers such a large institution.

He characterized Sooner City as "the best veterans" village of a dozen I have seen. Only the one at Colorado College even approaches it," he said.

In a visit to the *Oklahoma Daily's* office, the former president put his signature on the *Daily* editor's autograph dog and chuckled over his censorship troubles when he was editor of the *Daily* in 1921.

He recalled the time that Stratton D. Brooks, then president of the University, told him, "You may be right but I am the president and I say that story should not have been printed."

Dr. Brandt was pleased with the new Press building which houses the University Press. He was the first director of the Press, serving from 1928-38 in that capacity, and by his work established Oklahoma as a publishing center. He also founded the *Sooner Magazine* and was its first editor. He commented favorably on the present-day *Sooner*, termed it a "first rate college publication."

Is he sorry that he left newspapering?

"Well," he says, "most newspapermen are underpaid. They have professional ethics and integrity but their pay is seldom commensurate with their professional status. Yes, I do regret not being a newspaperman."

Business improved generally over the state during October, the University of Oklahoma bureau of business research reports in its current summary.