



A Tribute to Greatness

SOONER MAGAZINE

That Future Generations Might Know

Such was the purpose in the minds of those who contributed ideas and money for the two monuments to Dr. William Bennett Bizzell, on the north . . . a library, on the south . . . a statue.

Down the aisle came a stream of people. The tables in the reading room of the library had been removed and rows of chairs occupied their place. Organ music filled the room with a mood of reverence.

The onlookers were a mixture of youth and age. Students of the present and students of the past found their places with faculty members, town-folk and good friends. The family was there—Mrs. William Bennett Bizzell, son William Sangster, New Orleans, and daughter Elaine (Mrs. Lee Thompson, '24, Oklahoma City).

Dr. John Raley, president of Oklahoma Baptist University, arose and said a prayer. Wilda Griffin, '27fa, associate professor of music, and Joseph Benton, '20ba, '41ma, professor of music, sang "The Lord's Prayer," and "Ave Marie." Then they joined the University Choral Club in another selection.

Dr. M. L. Wardell, '19ba, David Ross Boyd professor of history, made his way to the microphone. Said he, "From today the Library of the University of Oklahoma will be known to future generations as the William Bennett Bizzell Memorial Library."

This was why the people had gathered on this December 14 day. This was the way the world was to remember one of its members long after the group who sat silent in their seats could tell of the occasion.

Quoting from *Oklahoma's Crown Jewel*, which

was issued at the time of dedication of the library in 1930, Dr. Wardell said:

"William Bennett Bizzell, president of the University, early set as the goal of the University a library building. Interested in books, himself a collector of rare and precious books, the president regards a library as the touchstone of any university. He had early expressed his wish that the University become a center of research and culture; and by sacrifice made this magnificent Library building possible."

Concluding, Dr. Wardell said:

"While giving almost the whole of his adult professional life to the heavy responsibilities connected with students of a large university which was constantly expanding, he had time to become a leader of leaders, a contributor to the enrichment of the lives of young men and women and the lives of all those with whom he associated. Dr. Bizzell through his accomplishments was a resourceful and radiant personality. The world in which he lived was bounded by horizons far beyond the vision of the average man. His interests were deep, abiding and universal."

Lee Thompson, Jr., grandson of Dr. Bizzell, moved to the front of the room and unveiled a portrait of his grandfather.

Earl Sneed, Jr., '34ba, '37Law, acting dean of the school of law, who represented the "President's Classes," told with simple eloquence of the privi-



DR. M. L. WARDELL, '19BA

lege that came to top men on the campus to meet with President Bizzell and enjoy the atmosphere and frank discussions in the presidential home.

Joe Looney, himself a former regent of the University, spoke for the regents. The listeners were stirred by his warm tribute.

Then from the family group came William Sangster Bizzell. With quiet dignity he presented the University with the famous 650-volume Bible collection of his father. He said the family thought it fitting that the library which bore Dr. Bizzell's name be given one of his father's prize possessions.

Then the gathering moved outside. They stood on the lawn in front of the William Bennett Bizzell Memorial Library and faced the South Oval. Across the street that separates the Oval and the library stood Sue Starr Virtue, '43ba. Beside her was an imposing veiled limestone slab.

Pigeons unperched themselves from the alcoves and roof of the library shattering the solemn atmosphere. Then Mrs. Virtue, representing the class of 1943 which had contributed the funds for the statue, unveiled the partially completed figure of Dr. Bizzell.

Joseph Taylor, professor of art, had done his job well in the few weeks he had been at work. The amazing likeness, pictured on these pages, looked to the library, now his library, as he will continue to look for generations to come. Another star was fitted into place.

To some stars come early, to others stars are added late in life, but to Dr. Bizzell the stars were added along the way and twinkle with more radiance as time goes by.

He was born October 14, 1876, in Independence, Texas. President Bizzell graduated from Baylor University with a bachelor of science degree in 1898 and a bachelor of philosophy in 1900. In 1911, he received a master of laws degree from the Illinois College of Law and the degree of doctor of civil law in 1912. He received a master of arts degree from the University of Chicago in 1913 and a doctor of laws from Baylor University in



Lee Thompson Jr., Oklahoma City, unveils a portrait of his grandfather, Dr. William Bennett Bizzell, at the library dedication.



William Sangster Bizzell, New Orleans, Mrs. William Bennett Bizzell, Norman, and Mrs. Lee Thompson (Elaine Bizzell, '24, Oklahoma City) inspect the Bible collection which the family presented to the University.

1919. Columbia University granted him the degree of doctor of philosophy in 1921.

After serving ten years as superintendent of public schools at Navasota, Texas, Dr. Bizzell became president of the College of Industrial Arts at Denton, which position he held from 1910 to 1914. From 1914 until 1925 he was president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. On July 1, 1925, he became president of the University. He became president emeritus of

the University in 1941 and was chairman of the department of sociology. Dr. Bizzell died May 13, 1944.

Dr. Bizzell, in addition to his Bible collection, was a lover and collector of fine books. His personal copies are marked with a book plate with a quotation from Shakespeare, ". . . Ignorance is the Curse of God, Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven." And thus he equipped himself and the people who followed in his light.

So You Want to Write

It takes a little more than desire, but if you enjoy work and still want to write, the University can solve your problem.

So you want to be a writer? Besides, you could use some folding dinero, fast. And pounding out fiction, you muse dreamily, looks easy from here. No pick. No shovel. No sweat. In short, not too much work.

Maybe your high school teacher said you punctuated themes very correctly. Maybe you wrote smirking, clever little pieces for the school paper. Maybe you ran your name over a satirical commentary on the senior play. Pretty slick, eh? You're ready to ride the clouds, you think.

But wait a minute. There's a pick and there's a shovel to this write-for-pay business. To begin with, it's sliding down from that hazy dreamland of yours and learning craftsmanship, just as you would prepare for any other profession. You would not trust your appendix operation to some ambitious amateur whose training consisted exclusively of reading the Dr. Kildaire stories, would you?

Of course not. Chances are, if you did, you'd never live to tell about it in a bragging tone.

So take a peck at sales of students and graduates of the courses in Professional Writing at the University of Oklahoma. They learned fundamentals first. Under the teaching team of Professors W. S. Campbell and Foster Harris, free lancers in

1948 sold 25 books (including fiction, non-fiction and poetry), three magazine serials, 16 novelettes, 174 short stories, 82 articles, two plays, 13 poems, two booklets and one book-length condensation in the Reader's Digest. Unreported sales probably would run the totals far above those figures.

A national record! But Campbell and Harris are quick to stress, for example, that such "slick" magazine regulars now as William R. Scott, '49, Bill Gulick, '47, and Clifton Adams, '48, put in grinding, sometimes discouraging, apprenticeships before they arrived to stay.

Scott, whose tally sheet shows eight sales this year to the Saturday Evening Post and Collier's, started banging a typewriter in 1940. Gulick, who recently sold two short stories and a serial to the Post, began scribbling seriously back in 1939. Incidentally, he's the first Campbell-Harris-tutored writer to sell the Post a serial. Adams, a western and adventure story hand, fired manuscripts at editors for years, too, before the checks started hitting his home mailbox with regularity.

Fact is, Coaches Campbell and Harris, although it's hard to believe now, did not sell their first stories either. They had the same hopes, the same starting troubles, their beginners wrestle with now.

As a result, would-be Sooner writers are learning time-saving techniques you can't buy in that never-never dream world.

"You never stop learning in writing," Campbell says. "It's a continuing development, like any other profession where you really work at it. But you can save a great deal of time and disappointment if you learn the methods which have produced successful writers."

Speaking of time spent, Harris quotes from experience when he says, "Four to six hours make a good day's work for a writer. Does it get any easier after you've written a bunch of stories? Well, a pound of dirt in a shovel weighs the same all the time."

Campbell, Research Professor of English and Director of OU's professional writing program, teaches the basic course, English 161, Professional Writing. This course telescopes the student's apprenticeship, by putting him—in only one semester—through those experiences every writer must have before he can know what he is doing. "We want our students to understand and solve actual problems of the writing profession," he explains. Campbell also teaches advanced courses in Fiction and Non-Fiction Writing.

Hopefuls don't start right out tackling stories, though there's no ban on trying it. First, they're drilled in fundamental techniques and self-analysis, so that they can learn for themselves what their writing interests really are. Most people do not know. They just want to write, which is fine, but it is important to know where you are heading.

For example, a self-styled adventure story writer may find that he belongs in the western or mystery markets. It all conditions you for the next big jump—over to individual conferences with Harris on those stories you've been aching to flash to the waiting reading world.

Under Harris, students bring in plot ideas, kick them around and iron them out. He shows them how to plot. Then they start writing short stories. He teaches an advanced course on the short story and another on the novel—but later. Men may try the pulp magazines with their many markets, while women often prefer to attempt the women's magazines. Both Harris and Campbell work with correspondence students. Their mailing addresses read like a cross-country tour.

What's this writing team like?

Well, their student-fans call the Campbell-Harris duo the sharpest doubleplay teaching combination in professional free-lancing today, with the buying editor the third man in the writing relay. The year of 1949 has been another big one for the school. When sales are counted in the tally book next January, prospects are that the 1948 record will be broken. For 1949 has already shown the greatest number of slick story sales.

Campbell is a Rhodes scholar who couldn't forget the West and the Southwest. So he wrote about them—poetry, articles, short stories and now some 20 books on his shelf. From "Sitting Bull" to "Warpath and Council Fire," he has painted the Old West from the Indian's viewpoint, particularly the wars on the Plains. Apparently not as many redskins bit the dust as we believed. Anyway, Campbell proved there was another side to the frontier's problems and that the white man wasn't always right.

Although he has been busy teaching Professional Writing since 1938, there's always another book cooking. And, generally, it's about the Southwest. Three of his books are standard professional writing texts.

What about Foster Harris? Now Assistant Professor of English, he joined the University teaching staff in 1938. He's already a legend around the Sooner campus. Long ago his western and adventure short story sales passed the amazing 800 mark.