



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.

Now, western magazines have started reprinting them as models.

Oddly enough, Harris doesn't have much time to write now. His students follow him home of evenings, and what scribbling he does must be done in the early morning hours. However, he has found time to write a book, "The Basic Formulas of Fiction." Along with Campbell's manuals on writing, it has become another guide for struggling students from 18 to 70.

Like Campbell, Harris can tell his students a thing or two. There's a seasoning of Cherokee Indian blood in him. He knows his Injuns, his cowboys and badmen, for he's seen a few.

He has edited oil journals, worked as a "lease hound" and amateur geologist. He has seen boom towns where Texas Rangers, for lack of a jail, handcuffed their men to convenient trees. There were other towns, too, that "had their man for breakfast." Now it all adds up to experiences he can pass on to students sweating over a plot or action story, or something more sophisticated for the Post or Atlantic Monthly. The field is open for good writers.

As one student put it, "If Texans had this writing school, they'd look you in the eye and claim it's the best in the country—bar none."



► E. E. Noth, associate editor of *Books Abroad*, attended the SMLA meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas December 26-29.

The men who can solve writing problems and two of their star pupils discuss a recent sale. On the left is Walter S. Campbell, director of courses in professional writing, and on the right is Foster Harris, assistant professor of English. In the center are Bill Gulick, '47, and Bill Scott, '49.

## ALUMNI DEVELOPMENT FUND

# \$10.99--An Average Contribution

How much is an average gift to the Alumni Development Fund? That's a question many would-be contributors have been asking and here's the answer. For the period from July 1, 1949, to January 10, 1950, the average contribution was \$10.99.

A total of \$3,244.75 was received during that period from 296 friends of the University. Fund Field Representative Guy Brown, '42ba, '48ma, said these gifts ranged from \$1 to \$300.

Anyone who has considered a gift but didn't want to put money into a fund that didn't accomplish anything would have

to look no farther than the Development Fund. Projects outlined for the 1949-50 year include:

Scholarships, band fund, research in public health, business consultant service, publication of research and specialized information, international students' fund, engineering research and equipment, president's emergency fund, Asiatic Institute, film production fund, studies in local government and educational aids for the blind.

The contributors who helped compile the \$10.99 average include:

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