

me somewhat plaintively that he had vainly tried to peddle that chapter to various magazines—the ones in natural history wouldn't touch it, and even the sensation magazines said it was too hot for them to handle! In the confines of our own plant it was suggested that we promote sales by offering the turtle chapter in mimeographed form with each order for ten or more copies of the book. We never have had a book banned in Boston, but sometimes I toy with the idea of what an unexpurgated edition of that volume might have done for an otherwise sedate University Press.

Happily, most authors appreciate the suggestions of the editor and are content to leave design in the competent hands of the art editor. But now and then an author has a definite idea how he wants his book to look. Usually he wants it to be as big as Professor So-and-So's, and certainly it should weigh as much as Dr. Thus-and-Thus's, because he has spent two more years in his research than either of them, and his book should look it. The art editor wonders if he judges the worth of all books by size and weight. And, of course, we get the repercussions if the book falls short by so much as an inch or an ounce.

We had an author once who persisted in addressing me as "Miss Smith"—a common enough mistake once or twice, but slightly irritating after several months of correspondence. He had a rather unusual name himself. It happened that just before his book went on the press, I had to send him a telegram requiring an urgent answer. A couple of days went by with no reply. I wired again, and was just on the point of resorting to long-distance phone when his reply arrived. It seems, according to Mr. Author, that a letter had been missing from his given name, so the wire had been making the rounds of all the offices in the Department of Agriculture in Washington before it got to the right man.

Now, even though editors are supposed to turn the other cheek to authors and

to be consistently diplomatic, I couldn't resist. I wrote him a nice, sympathetic note, telling him I could fully share his feelings about his name since my simple, one-syllable surname was often spelled "Smith," although despite all the "Mary Smiths" in the world, *my* mail always seemed to reach me on time.

And Things . . .

Ordinarily the editor in a book-publishing organization is the most anonymous animal there is. There have been editors whose names have become known to the general public—witness the late, extremely gifted Maxwell Evert Perkins of Scribner's—but there are few Maxwell Perkinses either in ability or in news value. Most of us remain, except within the confines of immediate publishing circles or to "our" authors, faceless beings who vaguely "do something" in publishing.

But once I attained a sort of publicity, rather by accident to be sure. I was sent to Amarillo (in Texas) to represent the Press at an autographing party—a pleasant form of promotion when the public is invited to the book store to meet the author of a new book and, it is hoped, to buy a copy for the author to inscribe. This book was by a real rancher and cattle raiser of West Texas. That morning he had some calves to brand and so was late in getting to town. Before he arrived, in came the press bent on getting an interview and a picture for the evening editions. Time passed and no author. Newspaper deadlines can't be postponed, so the reporters and photographer bowed to the inevitable and took a desperate way out. As a result I treasure a nice cut of me fingering one of the books (title prominently displayed, of course) and an interview about the author, the illustrator, the University of Oklahoma Press, and scholarly publishing in general. I won't deny that I made the most of the opportunity. But I was a poor second to the colorful rancher, and my amazement at being drafted was so great that the people of Amarillo probably still think that all

editors stand around with their mouths open.

Since things have gotten slightly personal, I may as well go on and tell you that, so far as my own position as associate editor of the University of Oklahoma Press is concerned, I am frequently identified with various other departments of the University, from Journalism to the Library, until I have almost quit trying to explain exactly what I am and what I do. "Why, I thought *The Oklahoma Daily* was edited by a student" (obviously I am past that age), or "Will you please put an ad in the *Daily* for me?" are everyday occurrences. Or, if the speaker has a little more information, "Isn't reading proof awfully hard on your eyes?" "You correct the punctuation and spelling, don't you?" Well, an editor occasionally *does* read proof, and he *does* correct punctuation and spelling, but he does something else, too.

After nearly fourteen years in the business of publishing, nine of them with the University of Oklahoma Press, I find that publishing books is nine-tenths sweat and one-tenth accomplishment and reward, but —Where's that blue pencil, the shop is howling for copy!

Books

Life and Death of an Oilman

A distinguished addition to studies of Oklahoma and Oklahomans is the recent biography of E. W. Marland, *Life and Death of an Oilman* by John Joseph Matthews, '20ba, University of Oklahoma Press. \$3.75.

Drawings by J. Craig Sheppard brilliantly illustrate the author's skillful revelation of Marland's character. The frontispiece shows the Marland of happy prosperous days, fondling his dogs. Chapter headings depict Marland the school boy, allowing his adoring mother to straighten the tie of his absurd Glengarry costume before starting him on his way to disaster; the smoking chimneys of Pittsburgh where the young man was secretly afraid; the horse and buggy which took him prospecting; the derricks of the oil field where he got his start.

The sketches move on to the New Cumberland Anticline where Marland brought in an oil well while he was hunting coal. They picture the buffalo, symbols of 101 Ranch where, after losing his first million, he arrived penniless to bring in a gusher; and the tank farm that spread over acres,



About the Author

Miss Mary Smith, '30ba, '37ma, Associate Editor of the University of Oklahoma Press, taught in the Anchorage High School, Louisville, and in 1938 became editor for the Economy Publishing Company of Oklahoma City. She joined the editorial staff of the Press in 1943. By her experience, discretion, and zest for her work, she is well-qualified to write this article for the Quarterly.

with a red triangle and the name "Marland" on every tank.

They show the mansion he built at Ponca City.

"Decade of Illusion" lay ahead. For this, the artist has chosen a foreground figure of a solitary Indian holding his horse, watching from the shelter of his feathered hat and blanket the automobile parked beside the rutted road while its owner supervised the mad activities at the well.

During the years soon after World War I, Marland, like many others, seemed to believe "that the supply would never catch up with the demand, and that the people would always have 'crazy money' to spend." Sheppard has illustrated this attitude with a line-drawing of the hunt, that curious anacronism so typical of Marland.

By 1929 the glory faded. Matthews, analyzing Marland's reaction to disaster, concludes that it was much like that of the nation as a whole. The thing which hurt him most was the disappearance from the symbolic red triangles of the name "Marland" and the painting in of the name "Conoco" on every tank car, truck, pump station, and company owned building. But his optimism and energy were not "merged out" with his name.

He borrowed \$850,000 to pay his income tax, mortgaged his estate, and postponed the crash for a little while. One more time he played the prince, presenting the statue of the Pioneer Woman to the state. The gesture was magnificent; it had cost \$200,000 just to send the models made by twelve artists over the nation that the people might choose.

Like so many events of his life, that ceremony was marred, for him, by a change of program not at all to his liking. This was in his eyes a dignified, important occasion; and he had refused to invite Will Rogers. But Pat Hurley, Secretary of War, was unable to come to Oklahoma,—and somehow, Will Rogers flew in from California to make the speech at the unveiling ceremony.

The crowd loved the earthy humor, the exposure of human frailties, the puncturing of all pretense, which Rogers always distilled. Marland winced. For him the event had lost its savor.

Little more than a year later, a tattered sign tacked to a wall on Tulsa street corner announced foreclosure of the Marland Estate, Inc. Now, instead of fabulous wealth, Marland had only his hopes, his mansion and its 37 acres of ground, and their costly maintenance.

A majority of more than 18,000 votes sent him to Congress, where he thought to be conspicuous,—and soon felt he was wasting his abilities and time. He carried out his campaign promise to attack the

About the Author

Mrs. Edith Jamieson Copeland, '20ba, '25ma, has been active in school and civic affairs in Norman, and is at present Executive Secretary of the Cleveland County Tuberculosis Association. A writer, too, she is preparing a biography of Kate Barnard, the first Commissioner of Charities and Corrections in Oklahoma, a colorful personality responsible for many of the policies still in effect in that branch of state government.



bankers' control of national economy, helped frame emergency legislation for the people's welfare, and announced his candidacy for the ill-paid, difficult task as governor of Oklahoma.

Campaigning for that office in 1934, Marland was deeply moved by the people's worn faces; their drouth parched fields and starving cattle. The slogan "Elect me and bring the New Deal to Oklahoma" swept him into office. Banners flew in the inaugural parade crying "Poverty Must Be Wiped Out" "\$50 Old Age Pensions" and "Those Who Till the Soil Should Own It."

They were an extension of Marland's own desires. In his wealthy years he had helped his almost 6,000 employees to achieve pleasant living, at low interest rates. He and W. H. McFadden built the American Legion home for destitute children. There had been many other charities. Now he would, he felt, become a benefactor for the people of the state.

The biographer shows Marland, at the time he became governor, to have been at once sincere and naïve, as well as imaginative and able. He outlined his plans to the legislature. Call in the Brookings Institute to survey state government, he asked. Establish civil service and abolish the spoils system. Open public office to women. Bring in new industries. Put a sevrance tax on oil and gas. Retire the \$20 million debt of the preceding administration at \$2,500,000 a year, and issue short-term notes to retire the outstanding deficiency warrants. Up the sales tax to three per cent, to give one mill for schools and two for relief. Pass new tax laws to raise general revenue.

The new governor was baffled by the flood of telegrams from frightened taxpayers, and annoyed by a legislature sensitive to the people's voice.

Some of his desired legislation passed. To him can be credited the sales tax for the aged, the blind and dependent children; an increase in the gross-production tax; the state highway patrol; the planning board, state aid for weak schools, and state control of petroleum conservation; the

leasing of state land around the capitol to produce oil for the state.

He failed to get the police-pension bill, the old-age pension measure, the school reform he wanted. He feared impeachment.

Instead, the Senate became the governor.

He was defeated for Congress. Leon C. Phillips became governor, and with relief Marland went back to Ponca City and sold his mansion to the Carmelite Friars. Now the swimming pool was silent; the paneled walls were bare; saw horses laid with planks set the note of austerity in once-luxurious rooms; and the terrace where exotic transplants once bloomed became a vegetable garden.

In the lodge-studio where Marland lived the downward curve plunged fast. Frequently he was ill. He had a slight stroke. Friends called with food. Some offered money.

His death in 1941 marked the end of an era.

What Matthews has achieved in *Life and Death of an Oilman* is revelation, in simple, beautiful language, of a complex personality in a world of many sides and many layers. Marland the lover of beauty, who longed to create a beautiful world for all those around him, whose every effort began in joy and enthusiasm and ended in frustration and defeat, is the central figure of every page.

In the background, centering their careers upon Marland's or checkmating him to defeat, are many others; the bankers whom he feared; the "bright young men" who made up his organization; the Indians who watched his activities and commented sardonically "white men ack like tomorrow they ain't gonna be no more worl'".

The years of careful study and research which make the book authentic are well concealed beneath the smell of oil, the clink of dollars, and the writer's sense of brooding destiny which hangs over the pages. The result is worth more than a single reading.

Mrs. Edith Jameson Copeland