

THREE MONTHS AGO, in his life story published by *Sooner Magazine*, Walter S. Campbell said: "All the men in my family of whom I have any record died in the harness. I cannot understand how anybody could be so behind-hand with his projects that he could be stopped even by retirement, so long as he retains a measure of health and spirit."

Last Christmas night, like his ancestors, Walter Campbell died in the harness. The man who had created the University's famed professional writing curriculum fell to a heart attack in Oklahoma City.

The sudden passage shocked the campus which had known Campbell for 43 years. Said President George Cross: "His death creates a vacancy here which cannot possibly be filled adequately."

Edith Copeland, literary editor of the *Sunday Oklahoman*, recalled a postcard she'd received from him a while back, when he was, as always, enjoying himself: "I wish," wrote Campbell, "that I could last forever."

Campbell, 70, was to have retired from teaching this spring.

He came to O. U. in 1915 as an English instructor. An Oxford student, he was invited to the campus by President Brooks. After serving with the Army in France during the first World War, he returned to teach such budding authors as Lynn Riggs. And Campbell himself began to write for publication. *Southwest Review* and *Poetry* maga-

zines snapped up his ballads, and H. L. Mencken wrote to him, requesting his verse for the *Mercury*.

Beginning in 1927 he turned out a book practically every year, reaching a total of 24, plus the editing of three others and contributions to many anthologies, magazines and journals. His specialty: Southwestern and Western life.

About 23 years after joining the faculty, he published the book *Professional Writing*. Then a friend suggested that he ask the University to let him establish a true professional writing curriculum. It was done. The result has been called "the most successful professional writing school in . . . the world." More than 150 books have resulted from its students.

Equally famed is the writers short course, held on the campus each summer.

Campbell was born Walter Stanley Vestal in 1887 on a claim in Kansas. When Walter was a year old, his father died, and several years later his mother married James R. Campbell. Walter took his stepfather's surname, but reverted to his true name—Stanley Vestal—when his writing seemed to demand a pen-name.

White-haired, quiet, always hard at work, he will be remembered for his intense interest in and realistic approach to life. "Working with writers," he said, "is a rewarding experience. They (lead) exciting lives . . . of trial and error, triumph and disappointment. . . ."

WALTER CAMPBELL

Two Pass From O.U. Scene

DR. WILLIAM B. SWINFORD was teaching law at the University of Arizona when, in 1924, he decided to move east and take up similar duties at the University of Oklahoma. Then he settled for a long stay—26 years—in the Sooner law school.

He brought a wealth of learning and experience with him. Born in Illinois, he took a bachelor's degree from his home state's Eureka College, then went on to receive other degrees from Harvard and Stanford Universities.

Guthrie, Oklahoma, attracted him in 1901. He practiced law there for several years, then did the same in Stillwater and Palo Alto, California. Abandoning the private practice of law in 1922, he accepted the Arizona University position for two years.

When Swinford joined the O. U. faculty, an eight-year era of expansion had just begun at that institution. James S. Buchanan, formerly dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was new president, following the resignation of Stratton D. Brooks who had moved on to the presidency of the University of Missouri.

Swinford came to the campus in the same year that the School of Petroleum Engineering was established and the Oklahoma Geological Survey re-established. Within three years he watched the founding of the Phillips Collection (first in Monnet Hall, then in Bizzell Library), of the Lew Wentz

Foundation and the international quarterly, *Books Abroad*.

Faculty members who went to work along with Swinford include Mark R. Everett, today dean of the School of Medicine; Asa Weese, zoology; Bruce Houston, chemistry; J. Rud Neilsen, physics; Ernest C. Ross, English; Arthur C. Shead, chemistry; William Willibrand, languages; Rose Leske, secretarial science; Henry Rinsland, education, and others.

Swinford, a member of the American and Oklahoma Bar Associations, taught literally hundreds of students. He witnessed some of the largest and smallest law classes O. U. has known (in 1949 there were about 190 graduating lawyers, in 1945 only four).

The University's board of regents gave Swinford the title of Professor Emeritus of Law in 1948, and two years later he retired. Thereafter he continued to follow events of the profession which had been his life's work.

Then he became ill and for a long time was confined to his Norman home. Early on the afternoon of this January 7, Swinford died there at the age of 80.

He is survived by Mrs. Swinford, their son and daughter, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Interment was in Norman.

WILLIAM SWINFORD