O.U. WRITERS ARE MAKING THEIR MARKS IN THE HIGHLY COMPETITIVE FIELD OF FICTION

"Things ain't like they used to be," an oldster of twenty-nine said glumly. "Shucks," croaked old Dave, an incorrigible epigrammatist, "they never was." Such was the feeling of William Ralph Scott, whose tenure as a student spanned eleven years, from 1940 to 1951, and who, like so many of his age, interrupted his education to fight a war.

In these experiences Bill Scott was like many other servicemen, but he was unlike most, too, in that he was possessed with a restless, inquiring mind and an urge to write. He returned to the campus in 1948 to take the professional writing courses under the late Walter S. Campbell and Foster-Harris. While still a student supporting himself and a family, he wrote successfully for such publications as Collier's, Saturday Evening Post, This Week, McLeans and Argosy. Bill knew good times and bad, for while he supplemented his earnings by chopping and selling cord wood in and around Slaughterville, a small community near Norman. During this time he wrote his first novel, Onion Head. This book was an outstanding success and was later made into a movie.

Scott's most recent success, and perhaps the most profitable of all his writing efforts to date, is a book called The Long Summer of George Adams, which he wrote under the pen name of Weldon Hill. The movie rights to this latest novel have already been sold for a reported sum of from $50,000 to $75,000.

The most successful courses in this part of the country, and perhaps anywhere, for the training of professional writers are at the University of Oklahoma. At least this is the claim made for the courses established by Walter S. Campbell many years ago and taught now by Professor W. Foster-Harris and Associate Professor Dwight V. Swain. An impressive list of successful writers can back this claim with the stories, books and articles they are selling. In addition to Scott, three other professional writing alumni are in the news this month.

Robert Onell Bristow, '51journ, has just sold the movie rights to his story, The Geneva Image. This is Bristow's fourth novel, and is one of his students as "an inside story of the sex-life of the world's biggest and best picture magazine."

The professional writing courses were first offered at the University of Oklahoma in the fall of 1938. Professor Walter S. Campbell described his new course as being aimed at "shortening the apprenticeship of the beginning writer by giving him the viewpoint and methods of work of the professional writer" and "bridging the transition from the usual course in English composition to professional magazine writing."

Actually, in 1938 there were two courses, one taught by Campbell, and a second course consisting of a "fiction laboratory" under the supervision of W. Foster-Harris.

Campbell spent his early life in western Oklahoma and graduated from college at Southwestern Normal School at Weatherford. He was Oklahoma's first Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. There he received his BA and MA degrees in 1911, with honors, in the school of English Language and Literature. He served a member of the faculty at the University of Oklahoma from 1915 until his death on Christmas Day, 1957.

He received wide recognition as poet, historian and biographer. He was without peer in telling the story of the American Indians of the late 19th century. He was proud to be a member of the Sioux Indian tribe which, incidentally, gave him the privilege of being buried in the Custer Military Cemetery in Wyoming.

---RBG

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION

Officers: Wallace C. Kidd, Anadarko, president; Don Barnes, Okmulgee, and Mrs. Jack Maurer, Duncan, vice presidents; R. Boyd Gunning, Norman, executive secretary; Don Walker, Tulsa, immediate past president.

Executive Board Members: Robert J. Emery, Oklahoma City; Joe Curtis, Pauls Valley; Jack Patten, Norman; Mrs. S. F. Ditmars, Muskogee; Mrs. Jack Maurer, Duncan; Dr. William C. McCurdy, Purcell; L. B. (Bean) Selman, Tulsa—all members at large.

Finance Committee: Denzi D. Garrison, Bartlesville (District 1); Don Earses, Okmulgee (District II); Ernest "Mike" Massad, Ardmore (District III); Mrs. John A. Love, Shawnee (District IV); Patrick W. O'Connell, Oklahoma City (District V); Fred R. Harris, Lawton (District VI); Charles Engleman, Clinton (District VII); C. D. Northcutt, Ponca City (District VIII).


Association Membership: Any former student who completed satisfactorily one or more semesters at the University of Oklahoma is eligible for membership. Annual membership is $5.00. Life Membership is $80.00, payable $5.00 down and $5.00 quarterly.