

Oregon Becomes Active Center for Writers

Novels, Short Stories, Poetry and Historical Productions Provide Vehicles for Scores of Successful Contemporary Authors

Eleanor Allen, contributor of the following article, has written "Seeds of Earth," a volume of poetry, has written plays for the radio and theater and has produced a number of stories for juvenile readers. Several of her narratives for children appeared serially in The Oregonian.

By Eleanor Allen

WESTWARD HO! Today, as in the era of the covered wagons, the eyes of America are turned westward. Not alone because of our national resources and possibilities for expansion, but also because of our literary pre-eminence. Oregon is fast becoming one of the literary centers of the nation.

Did you know that Portland ranks third in numbers of nationally known writers? New York leads off, with Hollywood following in second place.

Oregon novelists, dramatists, historians, poets—their total is an arresting one. National magazines such as Forum, American Mercury, Current History, Saturday Review of Literature, Saturday Evening Post, carry the names of Oregon and northwest writers. Oregon books are placed on best seller lists and run into many editions.

Names such as H. L. Davis, winner of the 1935 Harper prize novel contest; Anne Shannon Monroe, Edison Marshall, Eli Colter, Kay Cleaver Strahan, Ernest Haycox, Robert Ormond Case, James Stevens, Theodore Ackland Harper, Eva Emery Dye, Ared White, Albert Richard Wetjen lead off the list of Oregon novelists who are internationally known.

Novelists Draw on Northwest Background

Oregon poets may not be so regionally conscious as a whole, but many Oregon novelists have drawn heavily upon our rich heritage of folk lore. From that shadowy time before the white man penetrated this northwest, through the adventurous times of the fur traders, trappers and the pioneers, our past has unrolled in a dramatic pageant of courage, tragedy and vision, from the vivid recreation by our writers.

Notable for their strictly western flavor, Oregon has the novels of E. M. Bower (Mrs. Bertha Muzzy Cowan), who has not read "Chip of the Flying U?" or "Haunted Hills?" Ernest Haycox, whose original plots, descriptive style and authentic backgrounds have placed him in the ranks of nationally known writers interpreting the western scene, has published many short stories and novels, including "Starlight Rider," "Riders West," "The Silver Desert."

Stories Have Western Flavor

Wallace Smith, a colorful writer and artist, whose picture of the bucking bronco and cowboy is used as the official poster for our Pendleton Round-up, has contributed short stories and novels of western flavor, including "The Little Tigress," "Are You Decent?" Mr. Smith has gone the way of many other writers and tied his horse to the golden Hollywood rail. He now writes for the motion pictures and lives in an imposing Spanish hacienda on a high hill.

Robert Ormond Case, who has written short stories and novels of distinctive western atmosphere, has a high rating among writers. "Buckaroo Partners," "A Pair of Mavericks," "Whispering Valley" are a few of his recent novels.

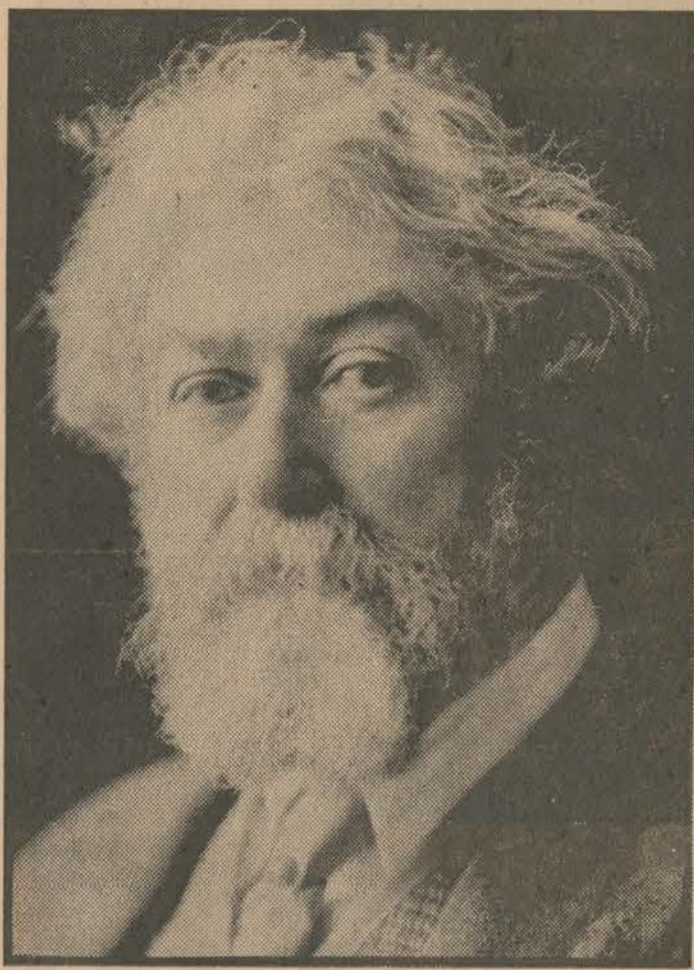
Eli Colter (Mrs. Glenn Fagalde) is just as individual a personality as her many novels. Although she is known for her western stories of characteristic flavor, she has also distinguished herself in the writing field of the supernatural. The titles alone of her novels intrigue all ages from 8 to 80. "Bad Men's Trail," "The Adventures of Hawk Travis," "Outlaw Blood" are typical examples of this unique woman writer doing westerns with a swagger.

Paul Bunyan Prompts Tales

Besides the Oregon writers who have specialized in writing the real western novel, we have other novelists who are utilizing northwest life and lore. That amazing Paul Bunyan, who gets bigger and stronger with every telling, has several chroniclers of note.

James Stevens first attracted attention with the publication of his Paul Bunyan tales in the American Mercury. Novels bearing his name include "Paul Bunyan, Brawnyman," "Mattock," "Homer in the Sagebrush." Ida Turney has recently published "Paul Bunyan Comes West." Stewart H. Holbrook has brought this legendary figure of the logger's saga to life in many tales. Paul Hosmer has given a valuable contribution to Western Americana in his "Now We're Loggin'."

H. L. Davis, one of our most individual and interesting personalities, brought additional literary eminence to Oregon with his winning of the 1935 Harper prize novel contest. His "Honey in the Horn" has zoomed high in the lists of best sellers. Davis also is distinguished as a poet, having received the Levison prize for poetry. He



C. E. S. Wood

was awarded an exchange Guggenheim Fellowship to Mexico.

Northwest country has received an authentic interpreter in Nard Jones. His novels include "Oregon Detour," "Wheat Women," "All Six Were Lovers." His short stories have wide syndication.

Novelist Uses Oregon Background

Anne Shannon Monroe, one of our Oregon writers, whose books climb into numerous editions, has written many of her novels using Oregon and the northwest as backgrounds for her themes. "Happy Valley," "Behind the Ranges," "Singing in the Rain," "God Lights a Candle," "Walk With Me, Lad" are a few of her books. Her editorial-essays, which have been a feature for many years in Good



Ernest Haycox

Housekeeping magazine, are rich with sympathetic understanding of life and draw a vast reading audience.

Although Oregon has a distinguished list of women writers, only one has achieved literary importance in the field of detective and mystery fiction. Kay Cleaver Strahan, who won the \$2500 Scotland Yard prize for her novel, "Footprints," is considered to have created the leading woman detective in sleuth fiction today in the person of Lynn McDonald. Using Oregon settings frequently in her novels, which have a wide sale, Mrs. Strahan has published "Desert Moon," "October House," "The Hobgoblin Murder," "Death Traps."

War Stories Produced by Soldier

The Saturday Evening Post often has carried stories by Ared White. Writer of war novels, such as "The Spy Net" and "Agent B-7," this writer, whose real name is George A. White of Salem, Or., has served with the A. E. F. during the world war and has been adjutant-general of Oregon since 1914.

Edison Marshall, one of our most prolific and successful novelists, formerly lived in Medford, Or. He now roams the world in search of fascinating material. With some 24 novels written to date, and many short stories, Mr. Marshall's fame as a writer is international. Some of his more recent books in-

clude "The Far Call," "Forlorn Island," "The Light in the Jungle," "The Splendid Quest," "Sam Campbell, Gentleman."

The literary spotlight of America has singled out other Oregon novelists. Ben Hur Lampman's recent book, "Here Comes Somebody," has been hailed as a classic by reviewers. Frances Gill, with her poignant picture of pioneer days, "Chloe Dusts Her Mantel," will take her place in the lists of enduring Americana interpreters.

Novelists Here in Large Numbers

Additional novelists who are focusing attention upon our state include Alan L. Hart, whose book, "Dr. Mallory," was published last season; Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Griffith, who collaborated in "The Monkey Wrench"; Charles Alexander, who has published "The Fang in the Forest," "Splendid Summits," "Bobbie—a Great Collie"; Alexander Hull, whose short stories and novel, "Shep of the Painted Hills," are widely known.

Others include Agnes D. Campbell, whose book "The Fragrance of Sage" is a nostalgic book of Oregon country; Nancy Noon Kendall, with her "The New House"; Daniel A. Poling, who has published several books, including "The Furnace," "John of Oregon"; Cobia De Lespinasse, who wrote "The Bells of Helmus"; Kathleen MacNeal Clarke, whose "Thoughts From Oregon to Greet a Friend" has attracted much comment. "Happy Endings," by Marian Miller, is another book of human interest essays that has wide following.

Juvenile Fiction Provides Field

In the field of juvenile fiction Oregon has some half dozen or more writers. Theodore Ackland Harper, one of our most distinguished interpreters in this category, has published countless stirring books, including "Mushroom Boy," "Siberian Gold," "Red Sky." Sabra Conner is another writer of virile stories for the young American. Her "Quest of the Sea Otter," "Captain Redlegs" and "The Fighting Stars of Oregon" are widely known.

"Children of the Covered Wagon," written by Mary Jane Carr, was the choice of the Junior Literary Guild during the year of publication. Elizabeth Lambert Wood has had several juvenile novels of high quality published, including "Silver House of Klone Chuck," "Trail of the Bear," "Wolves of the Illahee." T. S. Easton, with his "Secret of the Wallowa Cave"; Dennis H. Stovall



Edison Marshall

with his "Suzanne of Kerbyville," "The Spell of Shang Kambu," and Eleanor Hammond, whose juvenile serials are widely published, complete the list of leading juvenile writers.

In the article field, Richard L. Neuberger has contributed to Harpers, Today, Current History and The Nation on political subjects. Kelley Loe has written on similar subjects for Harpers, New Republic and other magazines.

The list of Oregon writers who are delving into northwest history for their material is a formidable one. Within the past few years the resurgence of folk life and depiction of America's past has been embodied in short story, novel, biography and narrative poetry. There is an ever-increasing demand for this type of material—all a part of America's return to the basic beginnings of her history for fresh courage.

History Receives Much Attention

Some of the ablest writers of our state have selected this field for their material. "Before the Covered Wagon," written by Philip H. Parrish, now in its third edition and the demand for it is greater than ever. Richard G. Montgomery, who entered the literary field with his "Pechuck-Lorne Knight's Adventures in the Arctic," has been on the New York Herald-Tribune's best-seller list with his recently published biography of John McLoughlin, "The White-Headed Eagle."

M. Leona Nichols, with her "Joab Powell, Homespun Missionary," and Robert C. Johnson, with his book, "John McLoughlin, Patriarch of the Northwest," are two recently issued biographies which have drawn discriminating comment. "Life and Letters of Anna Maria Pittman Lee," by Theresa Gay, is another enduring book of Oregona.

Alfred Powers has recently published a long-needed "History of Oregon Literature." Chester Anders Fee will soon have a biography of Chief Joseph released from a New York publishing house. Sheba Hargraves has reached an ever-increasing public with her historical novels, "The Cabin at the Trail's End," "Ward of the Redskins" and "Heroine of the Prairies."

In 1934 "The Soul of America—An Oregon Illad" was published, written by Eva Emery Dye, pioneer writer, at the age of 79, this



H. L. Davis

latest book is still another contribution to Oregon's literature by this remarkable woman. Considered to be one of Oregon's most popular pioneer novels, "McLoughlin and Old Oregon" has joined the lists of invaluable Americana. "The Conquest—the True Story of Lewis and Clark" and other novels, bear the name of Mrs. Dye.

Mrs. Dye Produces Many Books

Frederick W. Skiff recently has published a delightful book for collectors, "Adventures in Americana," which is having a successful sale.

Oregon's colorful and stirring past has still other distinguished chroniclers: George Estes, with his "The Stagecoach" and "The Rhodie Railroad"; R. J. Hendricks, who published "Bethel and Aurora"; Caroline C. Dobbs' "Men of Champeog"; Fred Lockley, who has written many chronicles of early days, including "Oregon Trail Blazers" and "History of the Columbia River from The Dalles to the Sea"; Joseph Schafer, whose "History of the Pacific Northwest" and "The Acquisition of Oregon Territory" are considered valuable research documents.

Scott's History Proves Valuable

Leslie M. Scott, who edited Harvey Scott's editorials into a commendable "History of the Oregon Country"; George H. Himes, joint author with Herbert O. Lang, with the book, "History of the Willamette Valley"; Henry E. Reed, who has given memorable pictures of Portland's early days; Charles H. Carey, with his scholarly "History of Oregon" and "The Journal of Theodore Talbot"; J. Neilson Barry, who has contributed numerous articles to the Oregon History Quarterly, is also joint author with H. M. Barr in the book, "Redskin and Pioneer"; Da-



Kay Cleaver Strahan

vid W. Hazen, author of "Giants and Ghosts of Central Europe," has written many interesting interviews with old-timers. Walter Meacham wrote "Bonneville, the Bold."

"Oregon Geographic Names," by Lewis A. McArthur, is a valuable research edition. Nellie Pipes has contributed to northwest history through her editing and writings in the Oregon Historical Quarterly.

Stewart H. Holbrook, formerly associate editor of the Four-L Lumber News, has humorously called himself "Oregon's lowbrow historian." His tales of Portland's picturesque characters in early days, such as "Calamity Jane," "Harry Tracy" and "Shanghai Days in Portland," as well as his logging tales, are unique in the article field.

Oregon's wealth of flora and fauna has a small but distinguished group of interpreters. For many years the editorial-essays of Ben Hur Lampman upon nature have been features of countless publications. In his book, "How Could I Be Forgetting?" Mr. Lampman's observations in natural history are considered to rank with the works of John Burroughs, eminent naturalist. Following closely in his father's footsteps, Herbert Sheldon Lampman in his book, "Northwest Nature Trails," has given the story of Oregon's wild life.

Wild Life Books Written

William L. Finley and his wife, Irene Barnhart Finley, have contributed immeasurably to the preservation of wild life in Oregon. Besides articles upon birds and animal life, as well as invaluable photographic studies of wild life, Mr. Finley has published "American Birds," "Wild Animal Pets" and "Little Bird Blue." The last two books were written in collaboration with his wife.

Frances Staver Twining's book, "Bird Watching in the Pacific Northwest," is a most valuable book upon the life and movements of birds.

Leslie Haskin, in his "Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast," presents historical sketches of the wild flowers found in the northwest. Drew Sherrard's unique book, "Roadside Flowers of the Pacific Northwest," has gone to all parts of the world. Samuel B. Lancaster, noted engineer, whose courage and vision aided in the building of the famous Columbia River highway, pays tribute to Oregon's wild beauty in his book, "The Columbia River Highway."

Oregon poets have brought added attention to their state by their ever-increasing output of high-



Albert Richard Wetjen

quality poetry. Anthologies, American and English poetry magazines and current periodicals carry the names of our Oregon poets. Some 20 poets have published books, which have received discriminating comment from hard-boiled eastern critics.

C. E. S. Wood Widely Known

Charles Erskine Wood, the patriarch of poetry, perhaps is the most widely known of the earlier Oregon poets, unless one considers Edwin Markham as a local product. Mr. Wood's "Poet in the Desert" has received the accolade from critics throughout the world.

In the list of contemporary poets who have one or more books to their credit are: Mary Carolyn



Eva Emery Dye

Davies, "The Drums in Our Street," "Skyline Trail," "Penny Show"; Anthony Euwer, "Rhymes of Our Valley," "By Scarlet Torch and Blade," "Friendly Firs"; Ethel Romig Fuller, "White Peaks and Green," "Kitchen Sonnets"; Frances Gill, "Windy Leaf"; Harriet Markham Gill, "Highways of Oregon"; Grace E. Hall, "Homespun," "Patchwork"; Ada Hastings Hedges, "Desert Poems"; Ben Hur Lampman, "How Could I Be Forgetting?"; Howard McKinley Corning, "These People," "Mountain in the Sky"; Laurence Pratt, "A Saga of the Paper Mill."

Mabel Holmes Parsons, "Pastels and Silhouettes"; Ernest G. Moll, "Campus Sonnets," "Native Moments"; Chester A. Fee, "Rimes of Round-up"; Wilma Leiter, "Bursting Bubbles"; David McCord, "The Crows"; Dorothy Collins Aleya, "All Your Argument"; Mary Alethea Woodward, "Songs of the Soul"; Robert Schlick, "Klov," "The Poems of Roy de Coverly"; Dr. Egon Ullmann, "Graver Than Nonesuch," "Moon Moods"; Edwin T. Reed, "Lyrics," "The Open Hearth"; Bert Huffman, "Song of the Oregon Pine." Hazel Hall (who died in 1924), with her books, "Curtains," "Walkers" and "The Cry of Time," was one of the forerunners of our present fine quality of Oregon poetry written by contemporary poets of the northwest.

Poetry Published in Magazines

There are a large number of poets in Oregon who, although they have not had book publication, are contributing distinguished poetry to leading national magazines. Among this group are: H. L. Davis, Walter Evans Kidd, Verne Bright, Courtland Matthews, Albert Richard Wetjen, Lulu Piper Aiken,

Eleanor T. MacMillan, Myna A. Russell, Otto Freund, Leland Davis, Audred Roberts, Charles Oluf Olsen, Elizabeth Olsen, Queenie B. Lister, Charlotte Mish, Borghild Lee, Frances Holmstrom, Eleanor Hansen, Phyllis B. Morden, Iris Lora Thorpe, Emma Bennet Miller, John Scheffer, Paul E. Tracy, Wilma Oelsner, Mary Jane Carr, Eleanor Hammond, Elinor Norcross, Irma Grace Blackburn, Lydia Littell, Mary Agnes Kelly, Agnes E. Hines, William Bernard Norton, Frances B. Huston, Sonia Willard and Alice Weister.

Oregon dramatists have not been so plentiful to date. Frederick Schlick, who, with his gripping play, "Bloodstream," which was produced at the Times Square theater in New York and drew the attention of the drama world, has sold additional plays for future production. "Joy of the Serpents," produced at the Provincetown playhouse, and "The Man Who Broke His Heart," produced by Paramount Pictures, are a few of the dramas written by this young Portlander.

Sally Elliott Allen, winner of a national prize for her play, "What the Gulls Knew," has contributed numerous one-act plays to American periodicals. Alice Henson Ernst, of the University of Oregon faculty, has recently published a book of plays of regional material. "High Country" is receiving widespread comment. Laura Miller has contributed one-act plays to many publications. Her stories of Oregon pioneers are widely known.

Local Stories Selected in Anthologies

W. F. G. Thacher achieved literary prominence for his picturesque pageant, "Kiatawa—a Pageant of Transportation." Dean Collins, known as a newspaper columnist, has written countless dramatic pageants and dramas, including "Where Rolls the Oregon," "The Edge of the Law," Civic theater productions of "Alice in Wonderland" and "A Christmas Carol." Some distinctive poetry also bears the name of Dean Collins.

Edward J. O'Brien, in his yearly anthology of "Best Short Stories of the Year," often lists stories written by Oregon authors. The O. Henry Memorial Yearly anthology has honored Oregon short-story writers.

The state has a number of short-story writers, who are writing detective and mystery fiction and true detective stories. Among the writers achieving prominence in this specialized field are Duane Hennessy, Harold Moore, Arden X. Pangborn and Stewart H. Holbrook.

Many Oregon short-story writers are writing their names in the literary fabric of American literature with adventure and western material. Here are some of the names the vast reading public finds heading stories in current magazines: Palmer Hoyt, Harold Bradley Say, Edmund Du Perrier, Victor Shawe, Nard Jones, Vivian Brotherton, Charlotte Mish, Albert Richard Wetjen, Robert Ormond Case, James Stevens, H. L. Davis, Ernest Haycox, Eli Colter, Sally Elliott Allen, Myron Griffin, Roderick Lull, Claire Warner Churchill, Laura Miller, W. F. G. Thacher, Howard McKinley Corning, Borghild Lee, Charles Alexander, Alexander Hull, Edison Marshall, Fred E. Michelson, Victor Kauffman and Dorothy Cox Hesse.

Educators Produce Many Volumes

Oregon's higher institutions of education have upon their faculties many teachers who, besides guiding young Americans, have published various types of books, including textbooks, poetry, dramas, philosophy and essays.

Reed college, in Portland, has a number of faculty heads who have published one or more books. Oregon State college has some 29 faculty members who have published books, mostly of textbook nature.

The University of Oregon faculty members have the edge on Oregon State college in the number of professors having books published. Some 34 have published books on a great variety of subjects.

Indian Lore Inspires Writers

Our Oregon country is rich with Indian lore. We have a few interpreters in this field of folk-literature. "Cathlamet on the Columbia," written by Thomas Nelson Strong; "Slave Wives of the Nehalem," by Claire Warner Churchill; "Legends of the Klickitats," Clarence Orvell Bunnell, are leading books upon this subject.