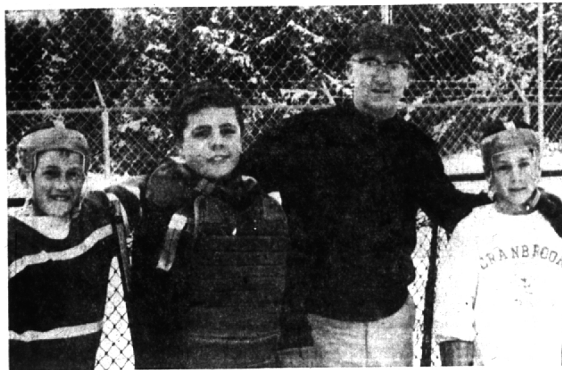


Cranbrook Author's Historical Novel Published



FIRST HAND knowledge of young men's interest is learned by Bruce N. Coulter, Cranbrook English instructor and author of a "late juveniles" book, as he coaches hockey and takes part in other sports with Cranbrook students.

Tale Follows Wagon Paths To Oregon

CRANBROOK—Three long summers of hard work and research are just beginning to pay off for local author Bruce N. Coulter of Cranbrook school's English department. His first book is being published, and will be on sale in bookstores April 8.

Coulter's book is what the publishing world refers to as a "late juvenile," meaning that it is aimed at the junior high school age level. It's called, "Wagons Across the Mountains," and is a detailed, accurate, and delightful account of a young boy in search of his father. The search is long and hard, and takes the lad on a historical trek from Vermont to Oregon.

For author Coulter, "Wagons Across the Mountains" is much more than just an exciting book for youngsters to read. It's a book jammed to the hilt with the very principles and ideals that Coulter himself lives by and in which he believes.

THE NARRATIVE is wound around perfectly ordinary people who do ordinary things in their struggle to find new lives and homes out West. They live together, work together, and consequently do rather extraordinary things.

"It's the average conscientious human being I'm concerned with—not the noise-making kind of hero we see on the movie screen. I've tried to show in my book how the quiet man or, more specifically, through the character of school teacher Jonas Patch, how the scholar can be a man of action," said Coulter.

None of this is intended to mean that Coulter looks at himself as an ordinary man, nor as a quiet man. But like his fictional Jonas Patch, the author is a school teacher, and has been one for 25 years.

HE HAS WORKED with boys aged 12 to 16 almost exclusively over this long period of time, and consequently felt best qualified to direct his book to them.

"It was a hard and tough job to do," he says, "but a rewarding one. I write very slowly, and then when I'm through, I rewrite the whole thing. But it's worth it. Even if I had all the leisure and money in the world, I'd do the same thing—write more and more books. They'd probably all be historical fiction, and all directed to the same age level."

Coulter is a slow-speaking, big man, who gives a relaxed appearance in old clothes and white buck shoes. Frequently he pedals a bicycle to get where he's going. For he's a busy fellow, teaching and training boys at Cranbrook school nine months of the year.

AT HOME he has a wife, three children, and a big black Labrador named Mandy. Still he finds time to write books, take out his bow and arrow and hit the bullseye, sing tenor in barbershop quartets, and grow nostalgic about making maple syrup in Vermont. And he believes it or not, his middle initial, "N," stands for Noel. He was born on Christmas day.

He grew up in Saranac, New York, and until a few years ago owned a small farm in nearby Ver-



BRUCE N. COULTER

mont. He graduated from Brown university. In 1954 he took a year off from teaching at Cranbrook, and went to Ann Arbor to get a master's degree in English from the University of Michigan. In between degrees, he studied at Harvard, Columbia, Minnesota, Cornell and Wayne State university.

HE SPENT two years serving on the Birmingham Community Council, both as a director and treasurer. He was also elected a director of Brookside school Cranbrook for 15 years, and at present is a trustee of Kingsbury school in Oxford, Michigan.

Throughout his entire life Coulter has followed one credo—integrity. He is not saccharine about it, rather, he manages to live, convey, and carry about him an air of uncomplicated honesty.

It shows in what he says, what he does, and what he writes. "Wagons Across the Mountains" is accurate in every single historical detail. In his usual earnest manner, Coulter set out to make his book as true to the actual 1843 wagon trip across the Oregon trail as was humanly possible.

HE ACTUALLY took his family over most of the Trail. With wife and children he camped where the pioneers about whom he was writing pitched their tents a century ago. Nothing fazed him—if the wagnones made camp on an island in the middle of the Platte river, so did he.

"Historical fiction is tricky," he claims. "There's no end to it. I read diaries and letters of the people who made this trip so long ago, and then I poked around in archives of historical societies to find more pertinent data."

"I discovered, for instance, that en route to the West my wagon train suffered no Indian raids, no prairie fires, and no buffalo stampedes! Consequently, I didn't put any of these into my story, but tried to make the book an exciting rise of the narrative fiction."

THUS COULTER sticks to his belief that there is adventure in ordinary people doing ordinary things.

Less flushed with success than with a desire to write, he has another "late juvenile" already in the way. This time he is borrowing into the life of an American hunter and guide for the Lewis and Clark expedition, John Colter, no relation.

Once again he is painstakingly pouring out his story in longhand atop a hundred year-old Peter Cooper writing chair, his most prized possession.—M.S.M.

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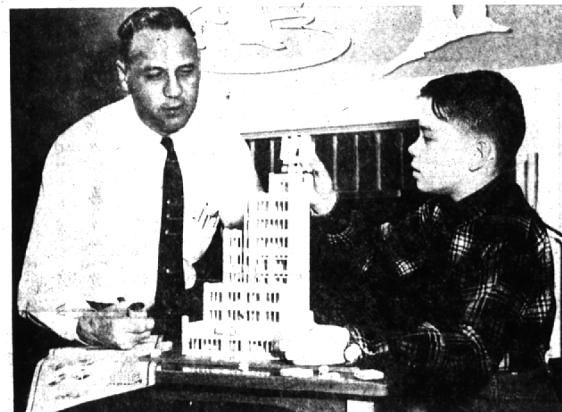
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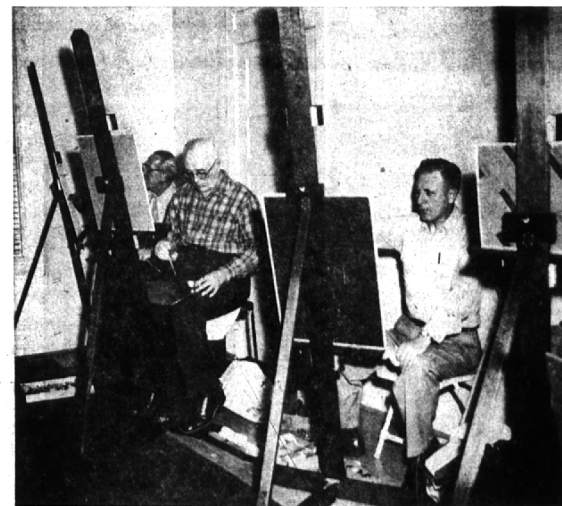
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Following in Dad's Steps

Barry Brown, 10-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul B. Brown of 1656 Washington Blvd., seems to be following in the footsteps of his father who is vice president and project administrator of Harley, Ellington and Day, Inc., Detroit architects and engineers. Here the elder Brown and the younger Brown team up to build a skyscraper with a new plastic skyline construction kit.



Art Classes for Men Only

Classes in oil painting, life drawing and water color are in progress at the Bloomfield Art association's building at 361 North Woodward. A class for men only is held Monday nights under direction of Peter Gilleran, art instructor at Wayne State university.



Weaving for Pleasure

ST. JAMES Episcopal church mission on 12 Mile road will have a beautiful white and gold boucle dossal curtain for Easter Sunday services, made by Mrs. Lawrence Mathews of Amherst. Mrs. Mathews, a graduate of Marygrove college and a member of the Detroit Home Economics club, has made weaving her hobby since college days, studying weaving at MSU, Penland, N. C., and Hartland, Mich. Although a fifth grade teacher in Highland Park, Mrs. Mathews keeps her loom busy, recently completing 28 yards of material for bedroom curtains and 27 yards of material for living room drapes.

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