Local Man's Acquaintance With Royal Dixon, Widely Known Writer, Has Unusual Beginning

Argument Over Negro's Equality With Whites In South Led to Long Friendship

By HOUSTON A. LAWING.

An argument over the social equality of the southern negro just 20 years ago in a New York hotel developed an everlasting friendship between two then comparatively young men from different sections of the country who later became widely known for their activities in the world war and in their respective professions.

After 20 years of friendly relations that have led them through many countries these two men are this week celebrating their acquaintance right here in Greensboro.

Basis of Acquaintance.

Twenty years ago, Rev. Clarence Woods, ordained Reformed minister and now owner of the Clarence Woods Coffee company here, was sitting in the lobby of the old Bristol hotel in New York city when he became interested in the conversation of two northerners who were ridiculing the southerners for their treatment of the negroes with the contention that the negro should have social equality with the whites.

The ignorance expressed by the easterners brought Mr. Woods to his feet in defense of the south, and hardly had the present Greensboro resident, a graduate of Catawba college, risen to his feet to deplore the situation when he was joined by another southerner from Texas, who was also seated in the hotel lobby.

Royal Dixon, of Houston, Tex., who later became an internationally famous writer of nature publications, lecturer and naturalist, clamped Mr. Woods by the hand with a clasp of old southern hospitality that seldom had been seen in New York and explained:

Start of Friendship.

"I don't know who you are, or where you're from, but from now on we're going to be friends," Mr. Dixon stated.

And for 20 years Mr. Woods and Mr. Dixon have been the closest of friends. They have traveled the country together, and when the Americans entered the world war they fought together, sang together and took a very active part in entertaining the soldiers for many months. Both became widely known in the army ranks for their leadership and their entertaining qualifications.

This relationship over a period of years today accounts for an extended visit Mr. Dixon is making to Greensboro, remaining here as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Woods at their home, 917 North Eugene street.

FAMOUS WRITER HERE—Royal Dixon, (extreme left), famous writer, lecturer and naturalist from Houston, Tex., and Chester Snowden, (center), artist and illustrator of Mr. Dixon's publications, are visiting Clarence Woods, (right), and Mrs. Woods at their home, 917 North Eugene street. Mr. Dixon and Mr. Woods have been friends for the past 20 years. (Staff photo by Houston Lawing.)

Accompanied By Secretary.

Mr. Dixon was accompanied here by Chester Snowden, also of Houston, Tex., who is well known in the art world. Mr. Snowden, an accomplished artist, is traveling with Mr. Dixon as his secretary, and also sketches all the illustrations for the nature publications that have made Mr. Dixon famous throughout the educational field. Mr. Snowden maintains a studio at New York city, and has exhibited his works in many places.

The famous Texas writer, who has written many nature publications, among them being his internationally famous set, including "The Human Side of Plants"; "The Human Side of Birds"; "The Human Side of Animals," and "The Human Side of Trees," and a more recent novel, "The Ape of Heaven," plans to spend a couple of weeks in Greensboro and this section of North Carolina, where he will continue his studies for further publications.

"Garden of Eden."

Mr. Dixon, quite impressed with the beautiful gardens, the climate and the hills of this section, said yesterday that he wasn't quite sure, but he believed that the "Garden of Eden" must have been located somewhere near Greensboro. He is so impressed with the Gate City, the charm of local plants, flowers, trees and animals that he's thinking seriously of establishing a residence here.

Mr. Dixon, whose great nature publications are used as authoritative classbooks in many schools and libraries throughout the world, believes that all insects, animals and plants are living personalities, and each has a remarkable history.

"Insects are living personalities, for instance," Mr. Dixon explained. "They do nearly everything man does, and many things he cannot do. The more primitive of them dwell under rocks or in the bosom of the earth. There are those which exist by hunting, trapping, and fishing. Any casual stranger is pounced upon and killed. Other species are more sociable. They keep herds, raise crops and clothe themselves in leaves. The extremely civilized insects gather in large communities. They build huge apartments with thousands of rooms. Slaves and servants are at hand to wait upon the masters; doctors and nurses are trained to care for the sick. To facilitate travel, a vast system of streets and highways is engineered. Chasms are bridged and streams are tunneled. Their government is of every form known to man."

Real Authority.

And for hours Mr. Dixon can sit in his chair and relate the history of insects, birds, plants and animals, telling of their interesting lives, their courtships and their relations to men. Each is characteristic in some phase or another, and all have their odd forms and characters.

Even the lowly earthworm is characteristic, in the opinion of Mr. Dixon. If the earthworm's head is cut off he immediately grows another. The tiny amab is also characteristic. It divides and multiplies.

"Every form of life has it's interesting features," Mr. Dixon explained.

Started In New York 20 Years Ago; Mutual Esteem Continues to Burn Brightly

The plants are regarded by the famous author as living creatures, and Mr. Dixon went into detail about plant life in his publication, "The Human Side of Plants."

Plants have seven senses, Mr. Dixon pointed out. They have physical eyes and can see, and he illustrated his discussion with the leaf of a banana plant, which has a tendency to open and close its eyes under strong lights.

Plants have a moderate sense of hearing, as he illustrated with a discussion of the pudica mimosa plant, and plants also have a sense of hearing with a recognition of vibrations that tend to close plants at times. They also have a sense of knowing, as was illustrated by the red trumpet vine, which nearly always grows on a dead or burned tree or post, and they have a sense of taste to the extent that certain plants will grow in certain spots where others die, and they have a definite sense of smell, as was illustrated by the orchid, which closes when placed where bad odors exist.

Sees Intelligence.

In discussing the senses of plants, Mr. Dixon discussed the growth of a cucumber vine. If the cucumber seed are planted near a huge rock and a post is driven into the ground on the opposite side of the seed from the rock, the vine will start growing and moving gradually toward the post instead of the rock, he stated. Then if the post is removed and placed on the back side of the rock, the vine will have a tendency to change its course of direction, and grow in the direction of the post, which Mr. Dixon explained was the seventh sense—the sense of knowing.

He also pointed out a few facts about the cactus of the desert, which grows with prickles and thorns to protect the plant from cattle. If the plant is moved inside a building it almost immediately drops its prickles and thorns, realizing that it no longer needs this protection, Mr. Dixon stated, but if the plant is ever returned to its old location, or outdoors it will again grow its prickles and thorns for protection.

Odd Characteristics.

Various plants have their interesting characteristics, in the opinion of Mr. Dixon. But among the most interesting are those that grow in South America. The wild fig vine, for instance, is a remarkable plant. The male and female plants are distinctively different. They develop a courtship as the ends of their vines extend over a long distance of trees and gradually wrap around each other to become finally one living plant, bearing fruit together.

The vampire vine is another interesting South American plant, Mr. Dixon explained. The vine gradually expands upward, clinging to large trees, until finally the vine extends to the top of the tree where it can enjoy the sunshine, and during that time it saps all the blood from the host tree and the tree dies.

"There are many dead trees in South America which have been killed by these vampire vines," Mr. Dixon explained.

All plants have their interesting features, and all plants need their sunshine, the writer stated.

North Carolina has many interesting plants, and for this reason Mr. Dixon explained that he always enjoys visiting in this state.

CAROLINA
Air Conditioned
Any Seat 25c Till 6 P. M.
Katharine Hepburn
Cary Grant
—in—
"HOLIDAY"
"March of Time"
Carolina News

Today-Sat.
"Dangerously Yours"
with
Cesar Romero
Phyllis Brooks

NATIONAL

Probation Workers

Would End Terrorism

lar legislature to restore the death