Camden, Campus Shakespeare Expert, Gives Views on Rice Students, Profs

By CLAIRE PLUNGUAN

Dr. Carroll Camden, chairman of the Rice English department, has gained quite a reputation nationally as an expert on Shakespeare and Elizabethan customs. In fact, an informal poll last year of the English graduate students revealed that many of them came to Rice especially to study Shakespeare under Dr. Camden.

The Elizabethan

Perhaps his book best-known to Rice students is THE ELIZABETHAN WOMAN, a study of the place of woman in society and customs of the time. He has also written many articles on various facets of Elizabethan life which have appeared in many periodicals.

He is currently preparing for publication a book on Elizabethan life, for which he has found an English publisher, but not yet an American publisher.

Middle English

When asked how he acquired his melodic Middle English accent, which has impressed English 200 students for years, he revealed that he studied at Iowa (where he got his Ph. D.) and at Harvard under some of the leading Chaucer authorities in the country. One of these was Robinson, who did the standard translation of Chaucer used in most colleges today.

No Doubt About Shakespeare

Dr. Camden admitted that his opinion about which play of Shakespeare's he likes best varies from year to year, but there's no doubt that Shakespeare is his favorite author. He cited Shakespeare's tremendous insight into human nature and said that, for instance, almost everyone identifies himself with Hamlet. (His answer to "Do you identify yourself with Hamlet?" was withheld by request.)

An Actor, Too

"He's quite an actor," was the comment of one of the students in Dr. Camden's Shakespeare class. He succeeds in giving his students a vivid picture of the personalities that Shakespeare writes about. Yet Camden admits that in spite of intensive study he doesn't feel he knows...