

**PEN NOTES: REVIEWS**  
**Book Review**  
**Old Pines and Other Stories**

Any reader who enjoys the craft of fiction as James Boyd was wont to practice it during his Carolina sojourn, will find *Old Pines and Other Stories* a rewarding book. It was published recently in a limited edition, by the University of North Carolina Press. (Price \$3.00). After reading, one can easily believe, and hope, that reprinting will be necessary. Before the author's death in 1944, his *Drums, Marching On* and *Bitter Creek*, to mention only a few titles, had succeeded in establishing him firmly as a historical and American novelist of first magnitude.

*Old Pines*, which is suitable reading for senior high school students and adults, contains ten stories, each memorable and distinctive in its own right. The mores of small-town Southern life, of which Mr. Boyd obviously had intimate knowledge, serve as the stones with which the story houses are constructed. The characters are drawn with vigor and understanding, each being presented as three-dimensional figure. Not one is flat or distorted; all are real. Poignancy is obtained by meager accent on style. The reader finds each story unhampered by wordiness.

Particular attention is called to the story "Bloodhound" which, except for a single opening sentence, is written as conversation entirely. The brevity of seven pages make this form of story-telling appear not so difficult as it actually is, but does not lessen the reader's emotional response. This book will stand comparison with the best of regional short story collections.

—GEORGE F. BENTLEY.