



Dorothy Hodder, Compiler

In the 1820s, Sequoyah developed a writing system for the Cherokee language, which was to become the most famous of the indigenous Native American alphabets. The system is based on syllables rather than letters, so that each symbol represents a vowel or a consonant plus a vowel. The syllabary is a table of these symbols. According to legend, Sequoyah's system was so easy to learn that literacy became widespread, and Cherokees began to keep records, translate the New

Testament and the Psalms, and publish a newspaper.

Today, however, very few Cherokees can use the syllabary fluently, but read and write Cherokee using a variety of English-based phonetic systems instead. In this engaging study, Margaret Bender examines how the syllabary survives and functions for Cherokees in North Carolina.

Far from gaining instant and universal acceptance, the syllabary was greeted with suspicion by many segments of the Cherokee community. In the early nineteenth century the Cherokee nation was trying to negotiate its identity between the traditional religion and Christianity, the old ways and new technologies, and separatism and assimilation with the United States. Bender demonstrates that the syllabary was a nexus for these social, political, and religious tensions, and indeed continues to act as such today.

Bender visited several classrooms from the elementary to the adult levels to discover how the syllabary is learned and taught, and then examines how the syllabary is used in Cherokee daily life. The New Testament and the Psalms were among the first documents to be translated into Cherokee symbols, and these versions are still considered authoritative texts, much like the King James Bible to English speakers. Most adult Cherokees who study the syllabary do so for their Christian faith, and are esteemed for doing so. But the syllabary has also been used to transcribe the writings of medicine men on herbal remedies and magic.

In a thought-provoking final chapter Bender makes some very interesting points about the relationship between the syllabary and tourism, which has taken on a new importance since the opening of the casino and the subsequent increase in the numbers of visitors. She describes how the syllabary is marketed as a cultural product on everything from key chains to pottery, denoting a given item as "Cherokee." But the syllabary is also used as a sign to exclude tourists, a way of marking certain areas as "Cherokee only."

Margaret Bender is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Wake Forest University. Her research interests include the relationship between language and culture. This book, her first, is based on her dissertation at the

Margaret Bender.

Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah's Syllabary in Eastern Cherokee Life.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
187 pp. Cloth, \$49.95, ISBN 0-8078-2707-X; paper,
\$19.95, ISBN 0-8078-5376-3.

University of Chicago, and combines her interest in Cherokee society with her experiences as a literacy educator in elementary and adult classrooms. Royalties from the book will be donated to the Eastern Cherokee Language Project, a program to study and preserve the language for future generations.

This scholarly book is very well and clearly written. Bender does an excellent job of defining terms and clarifying her points with examples, and provides notes, references, and an index. The illustrations include several very engaging representations of the syllabary from books, signs, and artifacts. The detailed linguistic analyses will not appeal to the casual reader, but Bender's discussion of the relationship between the syllabary and tourism will interest anyone who has ever been a "cultural tourist." This book is strongly recommended for academic collections, and is also suitable for public libraries in the western part of the state and those with Native American studies collections.

—Shannon Tennant
Elon University

When a gold rush is mentioned one typically imagines intrepid adventurers panning for gold in California, or hardy souls braving the snowy Yukon. Although these gold booms were momentous in shaping the growing nation, the truth is that our first gold discovery occurred in North Carolina in 1799. The 22 essays published in *Gold in History, Geology and Culture* were planned as presentations at a 1999 bicentennial symposium that was ultimately cancelled due to the approach of Hurricane Floyd. The resulting anthology is a fitting commemoration and presents a pleasing variety of reflections on gold and its heritage of exploration, edification, and exploitation, with a core focus on the Carolina gold boom that began in Cabarrus County.

Richard F. Knapp and Robert M. Topkins, editors.

Gold in History, Geology and Culture: Collected Essays.

Raleigh: Division of Archives and History,
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 2001.
379 pp. Paper, \$20.00. ISBN 0-86526-291-8.

The authors include historians, geologists, geographers, educators, and mining engineers and professionals, and their collective output illustrates the diverse ways in which we remain fascinated by what H.G. Jones calls "that most alluring of metals." Topics range from I.S. Parrish's overview of global gold production from 4000 B.C. to 1500 A.D., to Elizabeth Hines's study of Cornish miners who settled in the North Carolina gold regions from 1830 to 1880. P. Geoffrey Feiss presents quantitative data couched in practical premises such as

"What is gold?" and "Where does it come from?" while other essays offer pleasing historical anecdotes. Brent D. Glass's essay on gold mining in North Carolina refers to Thomas Edison's shadowy visit to the Gold Hill district in 1890, and the *Carolina Watchman's* hopeful reportage that the inventor and his "wonderful friend and servant electricity" would bring about innovations to jumpstart the flagging mining industry. (Alas, Edison's interest lay in iron ore.)

Eight essays focus on North Carolina's major gold discoveries and mining operations, Charlotte's development, the history of the area mints, and the role of African Americans and slaves in the mining explosion. The other essays examine the global history and science of gold, and offer case studies of the major gold rushes in California, Nevada, Alaska, and Canada. The essays offer rich illustrations and extensive bibliographies and

references, providing the reader with exhaustive avenues to the wider world of gold literature.

The editors laud North Carolina's historic status as home to the nation's first gold discovery, but they make no attempt to challenge the looming stature of the iconic western gold rushes. Their goal here is to acknowledge the Tar Heel State's place in the timeline of gold, and it is this mix of pride and practicality that gives the collection its thematic strength. North Carolina's gold heritage is thoroughly detailed here; its commemoration within a greater context succeeds in H.G. Jones's introductory goal of promoting knowledge of "the role of gold in the life of state and nation." Recommended for public and academic libraries.

—Susannah Benedetti

University of North Carolina at Wilmington

"Sea-born Woman" is the title of novelist B.J. Mountford's favorite story from Charles Harry Whedbee's *The Flaming Ship of Ocracoke*. It recounts the legend of Francis Spriggs, an eighteenth-century pirate captain who retired on the Outer Banks, and his housekeeper, Jerushia Spriggs O'Hagan. Jerushia's birth at sea spared a ship full of emigrants from the ruthless Spriggs, and supposedly gave her special gifts of communicating with water and its inhabitants and saving sailors from shipwrecks. B.J. Mountford continues the legend through the character of Roberta "Bert" Lenehan, another sea-born woman. A 50-something transplanted northerner, Bert comes to spend the summer as a National Park Service volunteer resident in Portsmouth Village at Cape Lookout National Seashore after an accidental fire kills the wife of the former volunteer.

B.J. Mountford.

Sea-born Woman.

Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 2002.
284 pp. Paper, \$14.95. ISBN 0-89587-265-X.

While learning to cope with ATVs, generators, nutria, and a mysterious fog, Bert meets the island's few remaining villagers, artifact hunters and other visitors from the mainland, and park staff. She becomes lovers with Hunter O'Hagan, a younger man and a distant relative of Jerushia's who is also new on the island, who gradually unfolds the family legend. After a villager dies from another accident, and as Bert notices strange behavior in the

marine wildlife, the curious volunteer begins to suspect that the island really has suffered two murders. If the motive has something to do with Jerushia's house and Spriggs's tomb, Bert reasons, then anyone could be a suspect, even Hunter. Could supernatural forces be at work? If Bert can find the remains of the house and tomb, will she also find the killer?

Flashbacks to Jerushia's tragic life transport readers to the heart of the legend. An unleashed hurricane builds the tension to a crescendo before a plausible conclusion ties up all the loose ends. In addition, fully developed characters with authentic dialects contribute to the novel's appeal. Hot and heavy not only describes the humidity on the island, but also the refreshingly unconventional romance between Bert and Hunter. The result is a successful blend of mystery, suspense, romance, folklore, and local history.

Like her amateur sleuth, B.J. Mountford has relocated to North Carolina's coast, where she has worked as a volunteer resident at Portsmouth Village and braved several hurricanes. Her novel is recommended for academic libraries and public libraries, where it should be well received by fans of mystery and North Carolina fiction, and would make an excellent choice for book discussion groups.

—Angela Leeper

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

If you live in North Carolina, you know about stock car racing. You may not be a fan, you may even think it is ridiculous to spend hours watching cars go around in circles, but unless you have been trapped in a very deep well for the past ten years, you are aware that stock car racing is big business. The sport, and especially the racing series sponsored by NASCAR, is more than a regional cultural quirk. NASCAR is second only to the NFL in national sports attendance and television viewership, and race drivers have become heroes to millions of people.

Driver #8 follows one of these racing heroes during an entire racing season. Dale Earnhardt, Jr., shoved into the spotlight early in his career because of his famous father and grandfather (NASCAR champions Dale Earnhardt and Ralph Earnhardt), stepped up to the NASCAR Winston Cup Series, the major leagues of stock car racing, in 2000 after winning the Busch Series "AAA" level championship the previous two years. The #8 of the book's title refers to the number of his race car. We are told that the words here are his own, with just a little polishing by Gurs, who owns a sports publicity firm. Each chapter covers a race and reveals a lot about relationships between drivers and crews.

Dale Earnhardt, Jr., with Jade Gurs.

Driver #8.

NY: Warner Books, 2002. 298 pp. \$23.95.
ISBN 0-446-53030-1.

What emerges is a portrait of a typical guy in his early twenties. Little E, or Dale Junior, or just Junior, as he is variously called, likes hot cars, hot music, and hot girls. He likes to hang out with his buds, playing video games, and drinking beer (Budweiser, since Anheuser-Busch is his primary sponsor). He's nice looking and, as they say, "built" (*People* magazine included him in their "Sexiest Man" issue), so along with an inside look at every Winston Cup race of 2000, we see what it's like to be a hot property. Junior does interviews with MTV, *Rolling Stone*, and countless television and radio people, signs literally thousands of autographs, and attends functions across the country promoted by the companies that sponsor his race team, where he answers more questions and signs more autographs.

Especially insightful are the peeks at the relationship between Dale Sr. and Dale Jr.—Big E and Little E. Big E was hard on his son, expecting him to stand up for himself and make his own way. "Coddle" was not a word with which Big E was familiar; he routinely bumped and battered his son's car during a race just like he did other competitors'. However, a deep love and respect between father and son shines through.

2000 started well, got better, and ended in a slide. Junior won twice early, then was victimized by a series of mechanical difficulties, tire problems, and crew and driver errors during the second half of the year. He acknowledges his rookie mistakes and we see him grow up a bit as he deals with disappointing race results. He needed all the maturity he could muster in February 2001 when his father was killed in a crash on the last lap of the Daytona 500. Junior handled his grief and heavy new responsibilities with admirable courage.

I began this book thinking of Little E as a somewhat spoiled young man whose way has been easy because of his father's clout. I finished it thinking that he has done the work and has handled both celebrity and adversity well. Kids could do a lot worse than view Junior as a role model.

Driver #8 will appeal to race fans of all ages, and most libraries in North Carolina should have it. It is the first stock car racing book to make the *New York Times* bestseller list. However, be aware that four letter words do crop up, one of Junior's favorite nouns being "shit." Recommend it to readers accordingly.

— Suzanne Wise
Appalachian State University



The Rise of a Southern Town is the second book on Wilson and Wilson County by Patrick M. Valentine, library director of the Wilson County Public Library. His first book, *The Episcopalians of Wilson County: A History of St. Timothy's and St. Mark's Churches in Wilson, North Carolina, 1856-1995* (Gateway Press, 1996) won the North Carolina Society of Historians' Ethel Twiford Religious History Book Award and the North Carolina Genealogical Society's Award for Excellence in Publishing, both in 1997.

Valentine's narrative is arranged by decades, from 1850 to 1920, with attention to social, political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural themes. He begins with a description of that area of Old Edgecombe County that eventually became Wilson County, and the early settlers of European stock who arrived about 1740 from Virginia, rather than directly from England or the Carolina coast. Slaves accompanied white Virginian slaveholders on their journey south. Agriculture was the dominant occupation of the region.

Transporting the reader forward a hundred years to the late 1840s, Valentine details the incorporation of the city of Wilson, still a part of Edgecombe County, formerly known as Toisnot (from the Tuscarora "Tosneoc" meaning "halting place" or "tarry not"), on January 29, 1849. On Valentine's Day, February 14, 1855, Wilson County was formed of land taken from the older counties of Edgecombe, Nash, Johnston, and Wayne.

Both the town and county of Wilson were named for former Edgecombe County Representative for five terms, North Carolina State Senator for fourteen terms, and hero who died during the Mexican War, Louis Dickens Wilson (1789-1847). Wilson County measures thirty miles east to west and twenty miles north to south and contains 373 square miles. Wilson County's capital, the town of Wilson, positioned at an elevation of 138 feet above sea level, is located at its center. Straddling the boundary between the clay soil of the Piedmont and the sandy soil of the Coastal Plain, the town of Wilson is located 47 miles from the state capital of Raleigh to the west, and 75 miles from the mouth

of the Neuse River at New Bern to the east.

Valentine compares the lives of whites and African Americans in Wilson County before the Civil War, during the Reconstruction years, and in the years following emancipation. He tells the fascinating story of the educational reforms that brought educational opportunities to poor whites and African Americans.

The story of the economic life of Wilson and Wilson County is solidly supported by agricultural statistics from the federal censuses. Valentine shows how Wilson County agriculture in the 1880s was dominated by the cultivation of traditional crops, especially cotton. By the 1890s tobacco dominated the cultivated crops, so much so that in 1913 Wilson earned the epithet World's Greatest Tobacco Market.

Valentine paints an iconoclastic portrait of Josephus Daniels, native of Washington, North Carolina, who was editor of the *Wilson Advance* and the author of the autobiography *Tar Heel Editor*. Readers who may have idolized Daniels as the founder of the *Raleigh News and Observer*, Secretary of the Navy, confidant of President Woodrow Wilson, and Ambassador to Mexico under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, may find it difficult to accept Daniels's advocacy of white dominance and segregation that was part and parcel of the man. This particular political portrait is proof positive of Valentine's objectivity in his discussion of southern politics in general and

Valentine, Patrick M.

***The Rise of a Southern Town:
Wilson, North Carolina,
1849-1920.***

With a Preface by William S. Powell.
Baltimore: Gateway Press, 2002. 308 pp., illus.,
statistical appendices. LC# 2002100569. \$29.95 +
\$3.00 shipping and handling + \$1.95 NC sales tax.
Available from: Patrick M. Valentine, 3001 Landrum
Drive, Wilson, NC 27896-1260.

local politics in Wilson specifically.

Valentine's *The Rise of a Southern Town* is meticulously indexed and documented, with an 18-page index and 60 pages of endnotes to the approximately 200 pages of text. Appendices include regional population, agricultural, and manufacturing statistics for decades 1860 through 1920 for the counties of Edgecombe, Greene, Johnston, Nash, Pitt, Wayne, and Wilson, with totals for North Carolina; regional concentration of agriculture for the same counties with totals for North Carolina for the decades, 1860 through 1920 (with the exception of 1870); population statistics for towns and the county of Wilson for the decades 1860 through 1920; and selected officials of Wilson and Wilson County (mayors of Wilson, Chairmen of the County Commissioners, North Carolina Senators, North Carolina Representatives, Sheriffs, and Clerks of Superior Court).

One wonders why the State of North Carolina does not make grants available to historians of Valentine's caliber to help them write local histories such as this one. It is a wonderfully conceived and executed history, richly illustrated with vintage photographs—obviously a labor of love which Valentine has personally financed. *The Rise of a Southern Town* should be in the collections of academic libraries throughout the state and nation, public and school libraries in Eastern North Carolina, and in special collections of North Caroliniana wherever they reside.

—Plummer Alston “Al” Jones, Jr.
East Carolina University

Waiting for the Trout to Speak is evidence of true literary talent in the voice of a poet who is both seasoned and refreshing. Irene Blair Honeycutt's most recent collection is comprised of 49 poems and prose poems. The book is divided into three sections: Steep Ravine, A Time for Moons, and All the Way Home Through the Dark.

Following these and other familiar landmarks, *Waiting for the Trout to Speak* takes the reader on a fascinating spiritual and intellectual journey through time and space. Along the way, Honeycutt points out intricate details of her observations about everyday living and human existence.

These poems are finely crafted works that sustain memory and feelings long after the last line is finished. The author touches on subjects that have a ring of truth for people everywhere, particularly the South. She makes skillful use of language, and her Southern voice is comforting as she talks about family, life and death, pain and sorrow, and moments of joy. Through her incredible use of imagery, she shows us alternative ways of seeing and thinking about ordinary and not-so ordinary things. In the poem “Embroidering, 1949,” for example, she talks about homemade pillowcases and describes “lace around the edges that looks like snow/ clinging.”

Honeycutt's writing is ripe with courage and rich with the dignity of the human spirit that prevails in trying times. An example is the poem “The Rest of Our Lives,” which makes the reader privy to a telephone conversation between siblings. The brother is battling cancer and undergoing chemotherapy, but remains optimistic in spite of his agony, “his smile blossoming through the phone.” All of the poems in this collection have the power to make the reader reflect deeply.

Irene Blair Honeycutt resides in Charlotte. She teaches creative writing at Central Piedmont College, teaches journal writing at Queens College, and serves as a writing workshop leader. Her poetry has appeared in numerous publications and won prestigious awards, notably the 1992 Sandstone Publishing's Regional

Irene Blair Honeycutt.

Waiting for the Trout to Speak.

Charlotte, NC: Novello Festival Press, 2002. 75 pp.
Paper, \$13.95. ISBN 0-9708972-3-5.

Poetry Contest for her first poetry manuscript, *It Comes as a Dark Surprise*. Other honors for Honeycutt include the 1998 Best of Charlotte Award for the Best Contribution to the Improvement of the Literary Climate in the City of Charlotte; the 1997 Adelia Kimball Founders Award for her advocacy for writers; a North Carolina Arts Council Scholarship to study at the Prague Summer Writers Workshop in the Czech Republic; and a 2000 Creative Fellowship from the Arts and Science Council.

Waiting for the Trout to Speak would be fine company on a quiet evening with a warm cup of tea, and will make a wonderful addition to school, public, academic, and personal libraries. It is ideal for serious students of poetry at the high school level and beyond, and will be a wonderful resource for anyone teaching poetry.

—L. Teresa Church
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Guidelines for the Preparation of Reviews for North Carolina Libraries

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3. Mention the author's background and qualifications. If the book is the first by an author, say so; if it is not, mention other works. If possible, compare the book to earlier works.
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At the beginning of the review, cite the author(s), editor(s) or compiler(s) in order; place of publication and publisher; number of pages; price; and ISBN. Note ordering information if this differs from publisher.

Examples: Anthony J. Badger. *Prosperity Road: The New Deal, Tobacco and North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. 295pp. \$20.00. ISBN 0-8078-1367-2.

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