

North Carolina Books

Eileen McGrath, compiler



The North Carolina Gazetteer: A Dictionary of Tar Heel Places and Their History



William S. Powell and Michael Hill, eds. 2nd ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. 581 pp. \$70.00. ISBN 978-0-8078-3399-5 (trade cloth). \$25.00. ISBN 978-0-8078-7138-6 (trade paper).

Reference librarians, historians, genealogists, writers, and many other users will be delighted by the publication of the second edition of William S. Powell's classic *North Carolina Gazetteer*. Edited by Michael Hill, the research supervisor for the North Carolina Office of Archives and History, the second edition preserves most of the content of the original publication while correcting errors, judiciously adding new entries, and making minor changes in format.

The passage of more than forty years since the publication of the first edition in 1968 is testimony to the book's enduring value. For many years William S. Powell, curator of the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, gleaned place names from census records, county highway and soil maps, state and federal documents, David Leroy Corbitt's *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties*, and many other sources; and in compiling the *Gazetteer* he relied on the assistance of his wife, colleagues, and a large number of volunteers throughout the state. The 19,638 entries in the first edition contain basic facts pertaining to the state's cities and towns, bodies of water, and physical features, but it is the origins of the place names and the stories associated with them that give the work its widespread appeal. As a work of scholarship, the *Gazetteer* has held up well; indeed, it has few, if any, peers in other states.

Michael Hill enhanced his predecessor's work by adding approximately 1,200 entries. Some of the places—Jordan Lake is an example—did not exist in 1968. Many others were found through a careful examination of D. C. Mangum's *Historical Compendium and County Gazetteer of North Carolina*, published in 1901 by Rand, McNally & Company. This map enabled Hill to discern which post offices (a category Powell deliberately omitted in most cases) were associated with actual

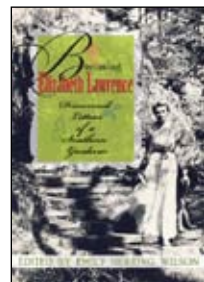
communities. Also of help to Hill were reference tools such as a four-volume guide to Tar Heel post offices published by the North Carolina Postal History Society, the *National Gazetteer of the United States of America*, and the *Omni Gazetteer of the United States of America*, all of which post-date Powell's edition. Hill added some places of particular interest to him and others—The Bullhole, for example—that represent interesting stories. He updated some entries, including those for counties and towns, to reflect changes in agricultural or manufacturing production.

Physically, the new edition is similar to the original one. The two-column format has been retained, although the columns are no longer right justified. Entries are still alphabetized by letter instead of by word, a practice that may confuse some readers. A useful new feature is the addition of headers that allow the user to determine at a glance the alphabetical range of names on each page.

The North Carolina Gazetteer is an indispensable reference tool in libraries of all kinds, and librarians will want to update their collections to include this excellent new edition.

Maurice C. York
East Carolina University

Becoming Elizabeth Lawrence: Discovered Letters of a Southern Gardener



Emily Herring Wilson, ed.
Winston-Salem: John F. Blair,
Publisher, 2010. 315 pp.
\$19.95. ISBN 978-0-89587-375-0.

"The grass is always greener when she leaves. Have you noticed how some people sear it?" Only a year into a three-decade

correspondence, at age 31, Elizabeth Lawrence wrote these words to Ann Preston Bridgers about Ann's mother. Ann, a neighbor in Raleigh, thirteen years older, and renowned for writing the Broadway play *Coquette*, had recently become one of Lawrence's primary correspondents and her chief writing mentor. Ann's sister, Emily, a writer too, also aided Lawrence. Lawrence's comment about Ann's mother displays her trademark: ironic delight that often spotlighted an elegant, pointed wisdom.

These letters from Lawrence to Bridgers illuminate a complex friendship. The few letters from Ann and Emily further reveal the bond among these women. One wishes for more.

Elizabeth Lawrence is to American garden writing what M. F. K. Fisher is to food writing – literate, poetic, opinionated, knowledgeable, ripe. During her lifetime, Lawrence published five books. After her death in 1985 a volume of her newspaper columns, two of letters, and a luminous biography appeared. Unlike Fisher, Lawrence remained a private, warm, southerner. She was a daughter devoted to family, friends, neighbors, church, community, and a far-flung cadre of correspondents. All these supported her love of nature and garden. Elizabeth Lawrence lived in a quaint fast-dissolving past (she loved old people) and embraced the future (she adored children). In a quiet but forthright way she expressed her family's liberal heritage on matters of race and war.

As Lawrence matured as a writer, she showed herself to be a uniquely engaging person with a capacity for true friendship. Her innate tenderness recognized the value of every person and experience. Her bravery took each to heart. She was shy but not so shy as to avoid speaking her mind. She could appear a little eccentric—she learned from gardening to love experiment and take risks; both failure and success were her companions. Ann and Emily taught her to tighten and edit in the same way she gardened. Along the way Lawrence became herself – an apt title for this charming, oddly profound book.

Emily Wilson has edited these letters with the same delicate brilliance she brought to her Lawrence biography, *No One Gardens Alone*, and to the letters between Lawrence and Katherine White published as *Two Gardeners: A Friendship in Letters*. Aside from adding another essential volume to the Lawrence canon, this book also offers a poignant look into the period between the two world wars, a time of rapidly changing society. Lawrence's portrait of Raleigh seems familiar, joyful, yet sadly lost. The book concludes with the passings of friends and family, a move to Charlotte with Elizabeth's mother to be next to her sister, Elizabeth's greatest achievements in writing, and the creation of her famous garden (now an historic site).

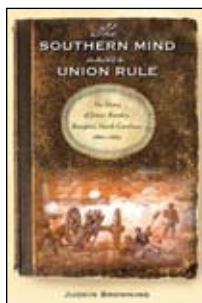
The reader leaves enlarged not only by Lawrence's passions, but by her example of deep friendship and wisdom. "You know, every now and then you meet with a book that makes you start at the beginning and think through again all of your hard-won ideas." It's like that.

Becoming Elizabeth Lawrence is an essential for public or academic libraries with gardening or North Carolina history collections, and a valuable addition to any secondary, public, or academic library's collection on the writing craft or memoirs.

Jeffery Beam

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Southern Mind under Union Rule: The Diary of James Rumley



James Rumley. Beaufort, North Carolina, 1862-1865. Edited by Judkin Browning. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009. 199 pp. \$34.95. 978-0-8130-3407-2.

Early in the American Civil War (by April 1862), a significant portion of the North Carolina coastal plain

had fallen to the forces of Union General Ambrose Burnside. For most of the war, then, Beaufort and much of the surrounding countryside was under Union military jurisdiction. Since the campaign had been relatively swift, the devastation and dislocation usually attendant on a military incursion was absent. The local civil infrastructure was intact, but obviously dependent on, and subservient to, the military government. Such a situation was fraught with difficulty for both sides. The Union had to enforce its will without antagonizing the inhabitants so much that they would rise in open rebellion. The local population, entirely reliant on the occupying forces for their economic and social welfare, had to remain loyal Confederates, while still being obedient enough to maintain the Union's good will, and, therefore, their own livelihoods.

This delicate balancing act finds a fascinating representative voice in the diary of James Rumley, a Clerk of Court for Carteret County, and an unrepentant Confederate. The diary, ably edited and annotated by Judkin Browning, a military historian at Appalachian State University, covers the period from 1862 through 1865, thus encompassing nearly the entirety of the war and also the first tentative steps of Reconstruction. Browning's introductory essay reveals the somewhat problematic provenance of the work (the original no longer exists, but the text has been reconstituted from two other sources), as well as putting the diary in a larger social and military context. The diary itself consists of entries of varying lengths—some a single sentence, others running to several pages filled with high flown rhetorical flourishes—that detail the military, social, and economic consequences of continuous occupation. Rumley's ruminations, obviously those of an educated man, provide a window into the code by which he sought to live even as the society underpinning that code was in

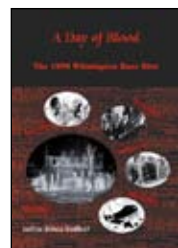
violent upheaval. The content, though revealing and enlightening throughout, can sometimes be difficult for modern sensibilities, since it oscillates frequently from vituperation against Yankee treachery, to vitriolic racism, to an exasperating naiveté about the duties and responsibilities of an occupying force. Throughout the diary, Browning has painstakingly traced every name mentioned; footnoted and explained every incident or battle; and sourced every quotation. Browning's sources, mentioned in the footnotes and the bibliography, are standard works, and as such are both scholarly and easily accessible.

With the sesquicentennial of the Civil War approaching, interest in the conflict is likely to rise exponentially. Rumley's diary provides a rare window into Confederate thinking under Union rule, and would be of value to many North Carolina libraries, especially those with strong military or Civil War collections.

Steven Case

State Library of North Carolina

A Day of Blood: The 1898 Wilmington Race Riot



LeRae Sikes Umfleet. Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2009. 288 pp. \$18.00. ISBN 978-0-86526-344-4.

On November 10, 1898, white supremacists in Wilmington, North Carolina overthrew the legally elected Republican government in the only successful coup d'état in United States history. The attack was not a spontaneous action but rather a well-planned, violent insurrection carried out by white businessmen to regain power lost in recent elections. The federal government did not intervene and the perpetrators went unpunished. The impact of the events in Wilmington led to increased oppression of African Americans throughout North Carolina and to Jim Crow legislation at state and local levels.

LeRae Sikes Umfleet is Chief of Collections Management for the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. The Wilmington Race Riot Commission (WRRC), established by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2000, authorized her research. Her original report, released in 2005, was revised and re-released in 2006. She received the American Association for State and Local History's Award of Merit and WOW! Award for the report. *A Day of Blood* grew out of her research report.

A Day of Blood follows a chronological format, beginning with the Civil War and Reconstruction and ending at the dawn of the First World War. Umfleet examines the factors leading to the

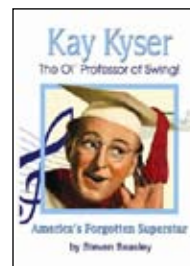
municipal overthrow, the day itself, and the aftermath. As the author explores the actions of the Democratic Party and influential white businessmen she makes the case that the riot itself was the result of a conspiracy. Umfleet meticulously sets the stage by drawing on a variety of primary and secondary sources, including some controversial sources, in order to paint a vivid picture of Wilmington society. She explores the development of the Fusion Party, formed by the merger of the Populist and Republican Parties. Political cartoons convey the intensity of the political climate during 1898 and the escalating tensions leading to the riot.

The text is accompanied by a wealth of maps, photographs, and other illustrative materials. Umfleet includes a significant amount of supplemental material including appendices listing major participants and brief biographical sketches of key figures. Extensive notes accompany the text; there is also a bibliography. *A Day of Blood* is recommended for academic libraries as well as libraries that maintain a collection about Wilmington history.

Dea Miller Rice

Appalachian State University

Kay Kyser: The Ol' Professor of Sing! America's Forgotten Superstar



Steven Beasley. Northridge, CA: Richland Creek Publishing, 2009. 341 pp. \$23.95. ISBN 978-0-615-31983-4.

He didn't look like a cheerleader. Even as a freshman, Rocky Mount's James Kern Kyser bore more than a little resemblance to the stereotypical absent-minded professor. So, when this professorial-looking undergraduate strode onto the University of North Carolina's Emerson Field during a 1927 baseball game to tryout as a cheerleader, he took the spiritless crowd completely by surprise, shouting, "Gang, let's give five rahs for the Baptist Church!" To the astonishment of just about everyone present, including Kyser, the crowd was soon "yelling their heads off" for the denomination. A showbiz career was born.

James Kern "Kay" Kyser has not one, but two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Despite the fact that he played no instrument and couldn't read a note of music, from the 1930s through the late 1940s, Kyser was one of America's most popular big band leaders. He had eleven number one hit records, including *Ole Buttermilk Sky* and the *Woody Woodpecker Song*, and 35 other top ten songs including *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition* and *White Cliffs of Dover*. *Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge*, on the air from 1933 to 1949,

was one of the most popular shows on radio. Dressed in academic gown and mortarboard as “the ol’ professor,” Kyser kicked off each of these shows with “Evening folks, how y’all?” before tying together a string of comic quizzes, swing music, ballads, and novelty tunes with his own engaging personality. He appeared in movies alongside the likes of Lucille Ball, John Barrymore, Jane Wyman, Peter Lorre and Boris Karloff; had one of the first television programs on NBC; and turned up in Warner Brothers’ cartoons and a Batman comic book.

Kay Kyser was the first bandleader to play before a military audience. During World War II he and his band endeared themselves to America by travelling to more than 500 military installations to play USO shows. He also contributed to the war effort by being one of the most successful of celebrity war bond salesmen. He helped organize and lead the Hollywood Bond Cavalcade, a traveling variety show that included the likes of Fred Astaire, Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, James Cagney, and the Marx Brothers. By the end of World War II, Kay Kyser was one of the nation’s best-known celebrities.

Kyser grew tired of show business and retired to Chapel Hill in 1950 where he turned his attention to activities such as the “Good Health Movement” (which had begun during the previous decade) and the creation of North Carolina Public Television. He also became more involved in Christian Science, eventually running the denomination’s television and film department. He was elected President of the Worldwide Church of Christian Science in 1983.

Steven Beasley wondered how such a prominent man could fade from the nation’s memory so quickly. Beasley spent years collecting recordings, reminiscences, photographs, and memorabilia related to the ol’ professor, all in the hopes of making a documentary film about Rocky Mount’s favorite son. Perhaps most importantly, Beasley performed yeoman’s work in recording the stories of key Kyser colleagues, a number of whom are no longer with us. While the film has yet to be released, one result of all of this interviewing and collecting is this book, which in many ways resembles the ultimate fan’s scrapbook. Bits and pieces from interviews rub up against rare publicity stills, which precede quotes from industry press, which come after mimeographed letters from show sponsors, which rest beside playbills, which come back around to the author’s own telling asides and educated guesses. Reading his book, I couldn’t help but forgive the author for outbidding me on ebay for so many Kyser-related 78s. Collectors of North Caroliniana will want to add this item to their shelves.

As Kay would say, “C’mon, chillun! Le’s dance!”

Kevin Cherry
Institute of Museum and Library Services

Haven on the Hill: A History of North Carolina’s Dorothea Dix Hospital



Marjorie O’Rourke. Raleigh: Office of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 2010. 321 pp. \$18.00. ISBN 978-0-86526-332-1.

The thought of mental health institutions may elicit images of padded rooms and lounges filled with sedated individuals staring out windows. *Haven on the Hill: A History of North Carolina’s Dorothea Dix Hospital* largely shatters those popular images. In this history Marjorie O’Rourke details how much activity took place at North Carolina’s first mental health hospital. Most patients, while receiving some therapeutic care for various mental disorders, epilepsy, and alcoholism, also managed to work in the hospital’s extensive farms, construction shops, gardens, and sewing room, and to enjoy various amusements and the beautiful grounds.

O’Rourke, who holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Oberlin College and a nursing degree from Yale University, has volunteered at Dix Hospital since the 1960s. She presents a thoroughly researched chronological history of the hospital from its inception in 1848 and through turbulent decades of changing patient populations, evolving practices, political intrigues, wars, racial divisions, and devolution of centralized state care to regional and local providers. She focuses heavily on the hospital’s administrative and medical leaders, building projects, maintenance issues, and political efforts to secure funding. While theories and methods of patient care are covered, they sometimes seem asides to their political, cultural, and financial context. Despite her evident love for the hospital, O’Rourke does not shy away from describing unseemly practices and conditions when they existed. As a detailed history of mental health care, this book is perhaps lacking; as a comprehensive history of how Dix Hospital and (to a lesser extent) other state mental health centers were created, adapted, and sustained for generations, O’Rourke succeeds brilliantly. On a larger scale, *Haven on the Hill* demonstrates to the reader the powerful impact federal and state governments have had on health care for over one hundred and sixty years.

The author researched this book in various archives and libraries; she also conducted personal interviews. The vast majority of the work is clearly objective; occasional editorial remarks are easy to identify as such. Black and white photographs of buildings and people help the reader better understand the conditions described in the text, but many are either recent pictures of buildings or portraits of leaders. Additional photographs of the daily life of patients and staff would have

personalized the text more. The physical format of the book—an 8.5 x 11 inch paperback—makes it awkward to hold for casual reading, but the extensive notes section, bibliography, and 21-page index make it a highly usable reference work.

Given the decade-long attempt by some mental health reformers, commercial developers, and others to close Dorothea Dix and repurpose its prime real estate, this book is a timely reminder of the hospital’s important history and of the state’s on going need for quality mental health care.

This book is recommended especially for medical libraries, but also for academic and larger public libraries with readers interested in the history of medical services in North Carolina.

C. William Gee
East Carolina University

The Middle of the Air



Kenneth Butcher. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 2009. 307 pp. \$22.95. ISBN 978-089587-371-2.

Take a missing truck full of radioactive material, an unconventional western North Carolina family, and an “ends justify the means” Washington, DC administrator and put them all together. What do you get? That’s a good question, and one that is not altogether satisfactorily answered in Kenneth Butcher’s debut novel *The Middle of the Air*.

While searching for petroglyphs near the Appalachian Trail, archeologist Leon Colebrook, his wife Sue, and their implausibly precocious five-year-old daughter Audrey discover the wreckage of a small unmanned aircraft. Leon’s brothers—Xavier, an engineering student, and Charles, an engineer—help examine the parts, bringing them all under government suspicion in the process. Their trying-to-retire father Philip, their candy store-owner mother Lilly, and their nonconformist painter grandfather Pipo are all drawn into the investigation of how a truck full of radioactive material could disappear.

The book contains generous doses of humor and some genuinely funny scenes, including a puppet therapy session that takes a very wrong turn. The chapters are peppered with footnotes about animal behavior based on research conducted by the “Ecuadorian biophysicist Henrico Carr.” The notes are creative and amusing, but reading them disrupts the narrative flow and their relevance is only marginally apparent towards the end of the book.

The dust jacket description of the book as a “techno-mystery” makes it difficult to identify the intended

audience. The plot maintains a steady pace, but there are not enough clues to make it a traditional mystery and, with a few exceptions, not enough action scenes to make it a thriller. Some sections are written in science fiction style, and slogans such as "Government Without Shame" and "Continuous Improvement With No Change" have Orwellian overtones. It's easy to lose interest in why the truck was stolen in the first place as the storyline is gradually overwhelmed by vivid portraits of the members of the Colebrook family.

The descriptions of covert nuclear power operations, the technology of autonomous aircraft, DC bureaucrats, and the Colebrook family are well written, but these disparate threads are woven together somewhat clumsily. Nevertheless, the camaraderie exhibited by the Colebrook family is appealing and readers familiar with Asheville will be nodding in agreement with the author's depiction of the area. The ending contains a satisfying twist which serves to make this book a fun and worthwhile, if slightly disjointed, weekend read.

The Middle of the Air is recommended for libraries that collect North Carolina fiction.

Arleen Fields
Methodist University

Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South: Race, Identity, and the Making of a Nation



Malinda Maynor Lowery.
Chapel Hill: University of
North Carolina Press, 2010. 339
pp. \$65.00. ISBN 978-0-8078-
7111-9 (cloth). \$21.95. ISBN
978-0807871119 (paper)

Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South presents the history of the Lumbee people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

and their struggles to define themselves. Malinda Maynor Lowery describes this struggle as a clash of conflicting forces: the Lumbee and their own ideas about identity, race, and kinship; the government and its concepts of race, tribe, and blood; segregationists and Jim Crow laws and norms; and the turmoil caused by whites, blacks and Native Americans competing for resources in opposition to the others. Each group tried to secure the best treatment and most resources for their group, with some groups (such as the segregationists) working both to secure their own place and to demote others.

The government's actions toward the Lumbee reflected confusion as to how to recognize this group, particularly in light of New Deal legislation which made it possible for recognized Indian

tribes to have some degree of autonomy and local self-governance. The task of the Lumbees was to convince the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) that they were indeed an autonomous Native American group set apart from others. The government's struggle became one of definition, as the official concept of tribe did not mesh well with the way the Lumbee thought of themselves. Into this problem stepped Arthur Estabrook, a sociologist who had worked for the Eugenics Records Office of the Carnegie Institution and had co-authored a book entitled *Mongrel Virginians*. Estabrook was certain he could resolve these difficulties by providing an anthropometric analysis. He administered physical and mental tests to Lumbees to determine how much "negro blood" was part of their genetic makeup.

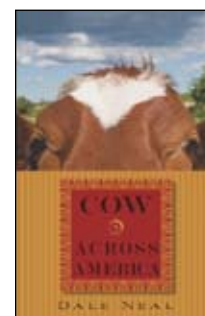
Segregationists were interested in this genetic determination for their own purposes, which involved exercising power over African Americans. After African Americans had been disfranchised, Democratic politicians in North Carolina essentially blackmailed the Lumbee into voting for them by threatening to cut off support for allowing them the vote. At every turn, Native American groups had to renegotiate status with segregationists depending upon the demands of the moment. The status of groups such as the Lumbee reflected what segregationists hoped to gain, whether it was their land, or some further erosion of the rights of African Americans. The Lumbee had to chart their own path through the dangerous territory of Jim Crow and had to maintain their difference from African Americans in order to secure better treatment. For example, in the administration of the public schools there was a constant battle for resources that ranked white schools first, Indian schools second, and schools that served African American children a distant third. But to get this preferential treatment, the Lumbees had to accept the racial structure of the Jim Crow South, which left all non-white races vulnerable to more discrimination.

Lowery's book is a well-written account of the Lumbee story in these decades. The most interesting parts of the book were when Lowery would bring the story down to the personal level by relating anecdotes concerning her own family history. In her introductory discussion of how the Lumbee refer to themselves as "our People," she relates a story of how she negotiated a conversation with a local preacher about her kin to show that she was indeed from "around here." This vividly illustrated the clash between the Lumbee notion of kinship and the difficulties the government had placing this group of people in the appropriate pigeonhole. Malinda Maynor Lowery was born in Robeson County and is now an Assistant Professor of History at Harvard University. She has written numerous articles on the themes of Native American identity and politics in North Carolina and has produced three award-winning documentaries about Native Americans, two of which focus on Lumbee identity and culture.

The book contains maps, black-and-white photos, genealogy charts, and footnotes. I recommend this well researched and readable book for academic libraries and for libraries with collections on Native Americans or the Jim Crow South.

Scott Rice
Appalachian State University

Cow across America



Dale Neal. Charlotte: Novello
Festival Press, 2009. 220
pp. \$21.95. ISBN 978-0-
9815192-3-4.

Cow across America interweaves two lighthearted and humorous tales. The first is the coming-of-age saga of Dwight Martin. We meet Dwight as he's writing his first novel at

age ten during a boring summer on his grandparent's farm in Beaverdam, North Carolina. Dwight's story will bring back childhood memories for many readers as he learns to whistle, bravely face the world with a wooden pop gun, struggle awkwardly into adolescence, watch the unraveling of his parents' marriage, and tolerate the company of doting grandparents. Most of the book, though, consists of his Grandpa Wylie's fantastic and fabulous descriptions of a teenage hike to California with his best friend and a beloved milk cow. Grandpa Wylie makes Dwight hand over his spare pocket change to hear each almost-unbelievable installment—a month of collecting gear for the trip, week after hungry week of hiking, days of lying injured and trapped in an old Indian mound, and dramatic (and impossible?) sagas of crossing the Mississippi River, being swept up in a tornado, and traveling through a mysterious tunnel under the Grand Canyon. Years later, after Grandpa Wylie is gone, Dwight is aware of "a lifetime of nickels and dimes traded for all the tall tales he'd heard as a boy and secretly measured himself against."

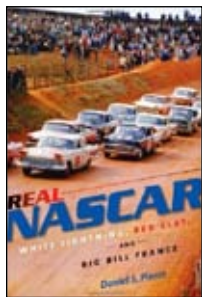
Beneath the warmth and humor of the intertwined tales lie glimpses of the strong bonds between a growing boy and his grandfather and the life lessons our elders can teach us through storytelling. The themes of growing up, relationships with parents and grandparents, and young boys' fantastic adventures on the road will make *Cow across America* appeal to a wide range of readers. Mark Twain-like humor and wit make the book a good fit for young adult and adult fiction collections.

Dale Neal is a North Carolina native and a graduate of Wake Forest University and the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. He is an avid hiker and mountain biker and a staff writer for the Asheville *Citizen-Times*. *Cow across America* is his first novel and was the winner of the 2009 Novello Literary Award, granted annually by Novello Festival Press for a book of fiction or

creative nonfiction by a North or South Carolina writer. Novello Festival Press is the nation's only public library-sponsored literary publisher, and is an imprint of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

Dianne Ford
Elon University

Real NASCAR: White Lightning, Red Clay, and Big Bill France



Daniel S. Pierce. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. 348 pp. \$30.00. ISBN 978-0-8078-3384-1.

No book can reproduce the sheer sensory overload of noise, power, and speed that NASCAR fans find so addictive, although many have been published to feed their obsession between events. Daniel Pierce differentiates his *Real NASCAR* from the rest of the pack by basing his chronological history of the founding and early stages of organized stock car racing on documented sources, disqualifying himself from using many colorful myths and self-promotional anecdotes that he was unable to verify. The result is an imposing record of drivers, cars, promoters, racetracks, racing associations, and sponsors that will be useful for researchers and gratifying for faithful followers, even if it moves too slowly to attract new converts to the track.

In his introduction, Pierce addresses two major problems that handicapped his attempt at a scholarly treatment of NASCAR's past. First, NASCAR is a family-owned business that exercises strict control over its image and refuses access to its archives. Second, he found that while witnesses to the birth of the sport might speak frankly about their own past illegal activities, they were reticent about implicating friends and family members even after the statute of limitations had run out. Although NASCAR downplays the popular belief that early stock car racers were bootleggers pitting their cars and driving skills against each other, Pierce's research links not only drivers but also many of the early mechanics, car owners, promoters, and track owners to the illegal manufacturing and trafficking of liquor. It seems likely that the hard drinking going on before, during, and after the races also contributes to the difficulty of documenting some of the sport's most hair-raising stories.

Pierce sets the stage for the emergence of stock car racing amid struggling small farms in the piedmont South of the early twentieth century, where making moonshine was the only way many families found to hold on to the land and to avoid the soul-

deadening grind of mill work. Cheap used early model automobiles were becoming available by the late 1920s; the faster they could be made to run, the more useful they were for delivering product. Car races of various types and "Hell Driving" stunt shows were already popular entertainments. It was only a matter of time before men who risked their necks bootlegging by night started challenging each other in front of crowds by day.

In describing the character of typical stock car racers and their fans, Pierce invokes descriptions by earlier social historians of the typical white working-class southern male, the "Hell of a fellow" in W.J. Cash's phrase. Stock car racing perfectly satisfies that demographic group's traditional affinity for violent physical competition, excessive alcohol consumption, unrestrained behavior, and general braggadocio. The author carries this theme throughout the book, emphasizing the frustrations of outdoorsmen facing modernization and urbanization, and particularly the regimentation of mill work, to explain their readiness to flock to the racetracks and regard bootleggers-turned-stock car drivers as outlaw-heroes. Interestingly, although he traces the history of stock car racing to the early 1970s, Pierce does not explore whether the Civil Rights movement and desegregation has any bearing on the continuing appeal of the sport to an almost exclusively white audience.

As the founder of NASCAR, William Getty "Big Bill" France is pivotal to this history. France was a racer and mechanic who settled his family in Daytona Beach, where he finished fifth in the town's first stock car beach/road race in 1936. The 250-mile event lost \$22,000 for Daytona Beach; the scoring system was so complicated that no one was sure who had won when it was over; and every car in the race had to be towed out of the deep sand on the turns at least once. That could have been the end of the story, but Bill France began organizing and promoting races and in a few years built Daytona into a successful venue. Soon after World War II, he was promoting races throughout the piedmont South and building a network of racetracks. In 1948 he founded NASCAR and began picking off competing racing associations. He controlled the independent drivers with an often arbitrary iron fist, penalizing them for driving in non-NASCAR races and other undesirable behavior, and twice beating their attempts to unionize with a mixture of bullying and concessions. In the 1950s he forged unprecedented partnerships in Detroit that greatly boosted the visibility and rewards of stock car racing. Pierce's account of the mixed blessing of corporate sponsorship may be the most revealing part of the story. The author draws the curtain in 1972, the beginning of NASCAR's first Winston Cup season and the year France turned over the reins to his son. Given the lack of access to his business records and personal memories, Big Bill unfortunately remains a remote and enigmatic figure to the reader.

Daniel S. Pierce is chair of the History Department at the University of North Carolina at Asheville

and the author of *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park*. A native of Asheville, he is a late convert to racing fandom. This book includes a bibliography, notes, an index, and black-and-white photographs. It is recommended for academic and public libraries.

Dorothy Hodder
New Hanover County Public Library

27 Views of Hillsborough: A Southern Town in Prose & Poetry



Michael Malone. Hillsborough, NC: Eno Publishers, 2010. 210 pp. \$15.95. ISBN 978-0-9820771-2-2.

The back cover blurb for *27 Views of Hillsborough* may in fact be the twenty-eighth view. Frances Mayes—

herself a part-time Hillsborough resident when not in Tuscany—writes: "If there are hot spots on the globe, as the ancients believed, Hillsborough must be one of them. I can't count the number of historic markers in the gracious old town. More recently, some ground force is attracting an astonishing number of writers, artists, photographers, and musicians . . . Say hello. The natives are friendly." In his introduction, Michael Malone goes so far as to state that Hillsborough contains "more novelists, poets, essayists, scholars, and historians per square foot than any other small town since, well, Concord, Massachusetts."

Despite such observations, *27 Views* is no work of chamber of commerce puffery. A mélange of commentary and literary tribute, the "views" paint a many-faceted, layered portrait of the Orange County seat. Essays, fiction, and poetry range from the earliest Trading Path days to the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Voices include whites, African Americans, Native Americans, southerners, and new arrivals. Entries run the gamut from local color to realism, with the emphasis on realism.

Among those viewing Hillsborough are literary lions (Allan Gurganus, Lee Smith, Jill McCorkle, Randall Kenan, Michael Malone), essayists and journalists (Hal Crowther, Barry Jacobs, John Valentine), poets (Jaki Shelton Green, Jeffery Beam, Mike Troy), a chef (Aaron Vandemark of Panciuto), a gardener (Nancy Goodwin of Montrose), and a musician (Katharine Whalen of Squirrel Nut Zippers fame). As with any good collection, themes in some essays resurface in others, and the sum is greater than the individual parts.

Bob Burtman details the combination of geography and citizen-assisted good luck that thus far has

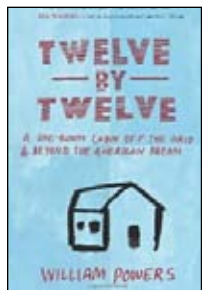
spared the town from the overdevelopment and homogenization plaguing most of the Triangle. Thomas Campanella contrasts China's frenetic rush into modernity with the development of Hillsborough's historic district. Barry Jacobs describes the colorful North Carolinians, warts and all, who settled Moorefields, just outside of town. And Tom Magnuson chronicles the town's many names, including Acconechee, Corbinton, Childsburg, and Hillsboro/Hillsborough: "And so it is today, a Colonial name for a town of Revolutionary fame with streets bearing the names of Colonial tyrants of various stripe. History is larded with such ironies."

Hillsborough is rightly proud of this affectionate, contemporary portrait. At a recent event sponsored by the Friends of the Orange County Library, Hillsborough's reading public streamed to the new library, packing the meeting room to capacity and leading Barry Jacobs to remark that the program was a "nice break from a previous conversation on municipal solid waste disposal."

Daniel Wallace, whose illustrations graced last September's North Carolina Literary Festival in Chapel Hill, created the cover art for *27 Views*. This book is suitable for all types of libraries, especially those with collections focusing on North Carolina, and should be required reading for anyone within hailing distance of Orange County. It would appeal to adult and older young adult readers.

Margaretta Yarborough
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Twelve by Twelve: A One Room Cabin off the Grid and beyond the American Dream



William Powers. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2010. 296 pp. \$14.93. ISBN 978-1-57731-897-2.

This book by William Powers has some nice features: a black-and-white watercolor by Hannah Morris at the beginning of each

part and a tiny sketch of the 12 x 12ft. house that precedes each wise saying Powers found on pieces of paper in the house. "About the author" at the end is useful and interesting. An appendix with resources for further study and an index are features that will help the reader.

The author is very active in aid and conservation work worldwide. He is well known as the writer of books based on these experiences, such as *Blue Clay People*. *Twelve by Twelve* came out of Powers' experiences in a house on "No-Name Creek" in "Adams County" North Carolina. He uses his

observations of neighbors and friends in that area to discuss their use of permaculture, wild crafting, living off the power grid, and the broader implications of those actions. He experiences the intrusiveness of a chicken factory, especially when the wind is right. "Adams County" is Chatham County, and his walks and bicycle rides place him near Siler City. He also mentions Chatham Marketplace and uses Southern Village in Chapel Hill to make some of his points.

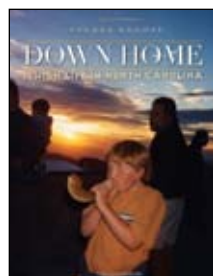
The book is set in a near-Eden of garden, sun-heated showers, candle light at night, and wood heat, but the region, while a good setting for Powers' musings, is not the real subject of the book. As the author lives, takes walks, and visits with neighbors, he considers the distance these people are from the mainstream of American life, dependent as it is on institutions such as the intrusive chicken factory.

Powers also considers the paradox in his life's work helping humanity—at the expense of large quantities of jet fuel. He begins to reflect on the lessons he has been helping to teach other cultures, and the possibility that he has been encouraging the adoption of a lifestyle of overdevelopment in societies where enough had been a comfortable goal. His time in the cabin, much of it alone, gives Powers time to consider his young daughter and the pain of his separation from her. He comes to a new appreciation of his life as a parent, seeing it as a reason to help the world both achieve a sufficiency and avoid overdevelopment with its false economies of vast scale. He wishes for a new "soft world" for his child. In the end, he fits into the cabin and feels at home in a small space and the world around it.

Many public libraries will want this thoughtful book on the state of the world; it fits into the current stream of literature examining our way of life. Also, all libraries in the Triangle and, especially Chatham County, will want the book as a picture of our local ways of living.

Nancy Frazier
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina



Leonard Rogoff. Chapel Hill: Published in association with the Jewish Heritage Foundation of North Carolina by the University of North Carolina Press, c2010. 432 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 978-0-8078-3375-9.

Credited with building the first scientific laboratory in America (an assayer's oven in Fort Raleigh), Joachim Gans was also the first Jew to step foot in North Carolina. Gans, part of Sir Walter Raleigh's second expedition, was a

German metallurgist hired to investigate minerals and artifacts. Far more than a book of firsts and facts, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* presents four hundred plus years of Jewish presence and heritage in North Carolina beginning with Gans's arrival in 1585. Author Leonard Rogoff, Historian for the Jewish Heritage Foundation of North Carolina and President of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, clearly demonstrates his passion for, and scholarship of, Southern Jewry in this expansive work.

The book, which is divided into six sections spanning from the colonial period to the Sunbelt era, expertly traces how North Carolina's first Jewish families came to settle in small towns throughout the state, arriving primarily from larger cities in South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and New York. Communal and fiscal ties with these cities remained strong and initially helped anchor many of the families as merchants in their new environs. Over time, peddlers became shop owners turned industrialists, scholars, politicians, doctors, lawyers, or entrepreneurs, all the while connecting to their communities through patronage, civic leadership, and activism.

Throughout the book, Rogoff incorporates a thoughtful combination of photographs, oral histories, richly drawn personal portraits, and archival documents. Each is well placed in the text and helps propel the very detailed and extensive historical narrative to good effect. Acculturation is amply addressed throughout the book and interwoven with issues of slavery, anti-Semitism, civil rights, and women's rights. Rogoff does not shy away from the irony of some of newly immigrated Jewish southerners turning a blind eye to (or engaging in) slavery while fighting for their own religious and cultural freedoms. But another part of the story is the importance of Jewish activism in advancing civil rights. The process of community building is a focus of the book, and Rogoff asserts that one of the main challenges for both native and immigrant North Carolina Jews was "to become southerners while remaining Jews."

Leonard Rogoff has taught at North Carolina Central University and written for *The Spectator* (Raleigh) and *The Independent* (Durham). He has also written *Homelands: Southern-Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* published by the University of Alabama Press in 2001.

This scholarly work is highly engaging and would prove a welcome addition to high school, public, college and university library collections. Of note, Rogoff directed a documentary of the same title, bringing to screen many of the oral histories and personal portraits introduced in the book.

Winifred Metz
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill