

New North Carolina Books

Suzanne S. Levy,
Compiler

Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise, eds. **Writing North Carolina History.**
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979. 247 pp. \$17.50.

The North Carolina Division of Archives and History in June, 1977, sponsored a symposium at which eight very qualified Tar Heel historians presented papers pertaining to the study and writing of North Carolina history. Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise have edited these papers, and they describe the result, *Writing North Carolina History*, as "...the first comprehensive statement on the status of North Carolina's historical writings and an agenda for what needs to be done."

Motivated by their awareness of historians' neglect of abundant source materials (particularly in the Research Triangle area) and by a fear of amateurish or even ahistorical accounts of the past, the organizers of the symposium asked their essayists to achieve specific goals while discussing the historiography of their periods of expertise. Each of the speakers was instructed to assess the scope and approach of general studies, point out important periodical articles and monographs, discuss the development of important themes, and elucidate resources, topics, and themes that remain "untapped, underutilized, or even unaddressed."

The historians tackle their assignments in a variety of ways. William S. Powell presents a chronological account, "Colonial North Carolina, 1585-1764," while Sarah McCulloh Lemmon and H. G. Jones structure their assessments of twentieth-century historiography by discussing types of historical writing. The other scholars weave their sources into smoothly written treatments of the pivotal themes of their eras: Alan D. Watson, "Revolutionary North Carolina, 1765-1789"; Robert M. Calhoun, "A Troubled Culture: North Carolina in the New Nation, 1790-1834"; Harry L. Watson, "The Historiography of Antebellum North Carolina, 1835-1860"; Allen W. Trelease, "The Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1876"; and Robert F. Durden, "The Reconstruction That Took: North Carolina in the New South, 1877-1912."

The essays vary in length and in the degree to which all of the "requirements" are met. Alan Watson's forty-page piece is perhaps the most comprehensive; indeed, Durden's sixteen-page essay seems pale in comparison. All of the papers list subjects that require further study, but only Trelease and Lemmon make more than passing mention of potential research materials. Only Lemmon's "North Carolina in the Twentieth Century, 1913-1945" and the sprightly work of H. G. Jones consider the humanities in any detail. The other writers generally ignore topics such as architecture, art, literature, and music (what has been written as well as what ought to be written) in favor of exploration, politics, economics, war, and other subjects.

Considering the enormity of their tasks, however, the scholars acquit themselves well. H. G. Jones' "North Carolina, 1946-1976: Where Historians Fear to Tread" in particular must have pleased Crow and Tise, for, as they

say, in addition to addressing most issues, it provides a "philosophical capstone" to the essays. After stating that the failure of historians to write about modern history has contributed to the present dearth of public school history courses and a concomitant rise in popularity of the social sciences, Jones warns that social studies education is "...in danger of becoming indoctrination in political, social, and economic views that remain untested by the experience of history."

Writing North Carolina History, which contains ample footnotes and an index, will be useful not only as a guide for students and historians, but also as a solid reference work. Despite its high price it deserves a place in every library in the state.

Maurice C. York
East Carolina University

Dennis R. Lawson, Donald R. Lennon, and Alan D. Watson. ***Harnett, Hooper & Howe: Revolutionary Leaders of the Lower Cape Fear.*** Wilmington: Louis Toomer Moore Memorial Commission of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., 1979. 100 pp. \$8.95. (order from Belk-Berry Co., 201 Chestnut, Wilmington, N.C. 28401)

"Cornelius Harnett, William Hooper, and Robert Howe stood at the forefront of the Revolutionary effort in North Carolina. While they must share the acclaim of later generations with colonial leaders from other areas of the province...no triumvirate of Carolinians more perceptively recognized the British threat to American liberties, more effectively worked to secure American freedom, or more conscientiously labored to establish a viable government for the independent state." Having said this, Dennis Lawson, Donald Lennon, and Alan Watson present concise biographical essays on these three Revolutionary leaders.

Cornelius Harnett, the "Samuel Adams of North Carolina", was a legislative leader and fomenter of whig sentiment during the Revolutionary period. His death, on April 20, 1781, has been attributed to physical abuse suffered at the hands of the British occupiers of Wilmington. William Hooper, lawyer and statesman, studied law under James Otis and was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Robert Howe, legislator and soldier, was the highest ranking Revolutionary officer from North Carolina. He has been described as "a man of the world, the sword, the senate and the buck." All three risked life and property to further the patriot cause and each served his region and nascent country well. Indeed, the authors would maintain that Harnett, Hooper, and Howe compare favorably with Revolutionary leaders throughout the colonies.

These three North Carolinians have been relatively neglected by historians of the period as well as by citizens of their native state. If for no other reason than past neglect, this collection of biographies is both timely and valuable. Further, the authors have utilized primary resources to produce essays which are both scholarly and readable. *Harnett, Hooper & Howe* will be of interest to historians as well as to casual readers and will be a valuable addition to public and academic libraries.

H. Kenneth Stephens II
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Caroline B. Cooney. *Safe as the Grave*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979. 48 pp. \$6.95.

Eleven year old twins are supposed to look alike, dress alike, act alike. However, Lynn and Victoria are the exception rather than the rule. Lynn's imagination and curiosity runs riot as she ponders the family's graveyard mystery lady. Who was Cornelia? Why was her tombstone flat while all the others were upright?

Poison ivy, a Civil War raid on Lynn's town, and an amazing ability for getting herself into trouble lead this adventuresome twin into a blinding rain-storm to seek the answers to one of the town's greatest mysteries.

This slender mystery has touches of human and everyday occurrences. Lynn's character is lovable while Victoria seems too much like "Goody Too Shoes." Lynn clearly dominates the tale. Plot seems forced in places but the graveyard idea as well as the picturesque thunderstorm will appeal to fourth thru sixth grade girls.

Although the setting is North Carolina, there is little mention of the state. The story could actually have taken place anywhere in the South. Black and white full page illustrations are run-of-the-mill.

All in all *Safe as the Grave* it is an acceptable juvenile book but not an exceptional one.

Cate Howard
Wake County Public Libraries

Pamela Barefoot and Burt Kornegay. *Mules and Memories, A Photo Documentary of the Tobacco Farmer*. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1978. 127 pp. \$17.75.

Mules and Memories may be somewhat of a misnomer for a contemporary photographic work on tobacco and the tobacco farmer. But Pamela Barefoot and Burt Kornegay, both of Johnston County, have produced a volume that is both attractive and interesting. From the flue-cured tobacco of the southeast to the chew-type grown by the Pennsylvania Dutch, the tobacco story is told through historical narrative and reminiscence. More than just a book to read, it is above all a book to look at. There are 102 contemporary photographs depicting the tobacco culture. Even those for whom reading is not a regular pastime should find this book appealing. It concludes with a glossary (air-cured to trucking) of tobacco terminology. Reasonably priced for a 127 page pictorial work, *Mules and Memories* will make an attractive addition to bookshelves in tobaccoland.

Jerry W. Cotten
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Wallace Kaufman and Orrin Pilkey. *The Beaches are Moving: The Drowning of America's Shoreline*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979. 326 pp. \$10.95.

Wallace Kaufman is a real estate developer and a writer and Orrin Pilkey is a leading marine geologist. Both authors are conservationists concerned with the development of coastal properties in this country. Residents of coastal North Carolina who have witnessed movements of the coastline will be interested in their explanation of the forces which have caused these changes

and their suggestions for developing communities which can exist in harmony with the natural forces of the oceans which tend to alter the coastline.

The authors are critical of modern engineering techniques, such as jetties, seawalls, and bulkheads, that have been short term solutions to beach erosion and which cause more extensive erosion in the long run. Political factors have also contributed to the problems, and exorbitant sums of tax money have been spent trying to create beaches and to establish permanent property lines. These attempts are often futile. Man has been basically unsuccessful in trying to harness the force of the tides and a rising sea level, which are the cause of the shifting shoreline.

Kaufman and Pilkey have done extensive research on coastal communities throughout the world and cite many instances in which nature has defeated man's attempt at stabilizing the coast. They provide useful checklists for buying or building at the beach, and there is a section which directs the reader to locations where there is evidence of beach erosion.

The book has an excellent index and an extensive bibliography. There are several illustrations which clarify the scientific principles which are described, but unfortunately they are grouped together in two sections with no references in the text.

The book is recommended for academic and public libraries, particularly those serving coastal communities.

*Arlene Hanerfeld
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