

# New North Carolina Books

Alice R. Cotten, Compiler

Smith Barrier. *On Tobacco Road: Basketball in North Carolina*. New York: Leisure Press, 1983. 352 pp. \$10.95 paper.

As a sports writer for the *Greensboro Daily News* and *Record* for forty years, Smith Barrier has had a press row view of basketball in North Carolina for four decades and is well qualified to have undertaken this work. After retiring as executive sports editor of the above newspaper in 1980, Barrier has written articles for such publications as *Sports Illustrated* and *Street and Smith Magazine*. His first book, *The ACC Basketball Tournament Classic* (1981), is an interesting, well-illustrated review of that popular, yearly sporting event.

"Tobacco Road" indeed has had a long and rich tradition of basketball, particularly at the college level. Although books have been written on individual teams and a few on the Atlantic Coast Conference, no one prior to Barrier has tackled the difficult task of compiling a comprehensive history of basketball in this state. Inspired by the consecutive national championships of North Carolina (1982) and North Carolina State (1983), Barrier traces roundball in this state from the first intercollegiate game—Guilford vs. Wake Forest in 1906—to the Wolfpack's rise to the top in 1983.

*On Tobacco Road* begins with the invention of basketball in 1891 by Dr. James Naismith at Springfield, Massachusetts. It reveals the gradual spread of the game to college campuses and into the South by the turn of the century. Basketball gained a solid foothold in the South following World War I with the founding of the "old" Southern Conference in 1920 and its popular invitational tournament held in Atlanta. Barrier explains the formation of the "new" Southern Conference in 1932 and follows its evolution into the Atlantic Coast Conference by 1953.

The book's twenty-six chapters include material on prominent coaches, schools, events, and trends of basketball in the Tar Heel state. Not only does Barrier cover such coaching giants as Eddie Cameron, Ben Carnevale, Everette Case, Murry

Greason, Bones McKinney, Frank McGuire, Vic Bubas, John McLendon, Clarence Gaines, Cal Irvin, Dean Smith, Norman Sloan, Bill Foster, Carl Tacy, and Jim Valvano, but he also writes about other aspects that have been instrumental in the development of the sport. He highlights the growth of women's basketball, the emergence of black athletes, the history of small college basketball, and the short-lived regime of the Carolina Cougars. Barrier credits radio, television, and the presence of large coliseums with giving a tremendous boost to the popularity of college "hoops." He acknowledges Everett Case of North Carolina State and the Dixie Classic tournament as the two major factors in bringing big-time college basketball to North Carolina.

The book's appendix, a valuable reference guide for basketball enthusiasts, lists all-America players and coaching records from 1921-1983. Unfortunately, the book does not include either an index or bibliography.

A book such as *On Tobacco Road* was long overdue, and Barrier is due our thanks for this attempt to portray the story of basketball in North Carolina. The book, however, has several problems that may hamper the reader. At times it suffers from a lack of organization, and some of its information is repetitious. Sometimes the writing is awkward and difficult to follow. Barrier occasionally assumes that the reader is more knowledgeable on the subject than might be the case. The quality of the work further suffers from poor proofreading, as evidenced by a frequency of typographical errors and misspellings.

Barrier's book belongs in the personal libraries of all North Carolinians who have an interest in area college basketball. Likewise, it is suitable for school, public, and academic libraries across the state.

*Stephen E. Massengill, North Carolina State Archives*

Brian F. Berger. *Thomas Wolfe: The Final Journey*. West Linn, Oregon: Willamette River Press, 1984. 45 pp. \$10.00.

After completing manuscripts for *The Web and the Rock*, and only a few weeks before he died of tuberculosis, North Carolina novelist Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938) visited the American Northwest for the first time. In Portland, Oregon, he met Edward Miller and Ray Conway as they were completing plans for a whirlwind automobile tour of national parks in the western states. They invited Wolfe to go along, and he accepted. The itinerary called for a drive of almost five thousand miles in only two weeks.

In *Thomas Wolfe: The Final Journey*, Brian Berger brings together two elements that illuminate Wolfe's national parks tour. One is Edward Miller's "Remembrance" of his travels with Wolfe. This was previously published in a slightly different version in *The Thomas Wolfe Newsletter* (spring 1977). The second part of the volume is an article from the Portland *Oregonian's Northwest Magazine*, October 26, 1980. This is a daily chronicle of the national parks tour embellished with quotations from Wolfe's own journal of the trip. Also included are photographs made on the tour, several of which were previously unpublished.

Although it provides little in the way of new material, *Thomas Wolfe: A Final Journey* brings together much of what is known about the author in the last days preceding his fatal illness. The book is attractively printed and illustrated, including a facsimile letter from Wolfe to Edward Miller. This short volume is interesting to read and should be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of Wolfe enthusiasts. It is also recommended for libraries with literature collections that include works about Wolfe.

Jerry W. Cotten, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Maureen Brady. *Folly*. Trumansburg, N.Y.: The Crossing Press, 1982. 197 pp. \$7.95 paper; \$16.95 cloth. [P.O. Box 640, Main Street, Trumansburg, N.Y. 14886-9990.]

*Folly* is Maureen Brady's second novel. Set in a small North Carolina town, it follows the lives of two white women, Folly and Martha, who work in the local garment factory, as they organize a strike, enlist support for a union, negotiate a contract with management, and finally discover that, after years of friendship, they are in love with each other.

Though Folly and Martha are the pivotal characters in the story that unfolds, the novel explores themes in the lives of a number of other characters. Among them are Folly's daughter

Mary Lou, who is sixteen and struggling with the problems of growing up; Martha's mother, Daisy, who endures the problems of aging; Mary Lou's friend Lenore, who has dropped out of school and whom Folly initially distrusts because she suspects rightly that Lenore is a lesbian; Lenore's mother, Evelyn, whose alcoholism is the source of conflict between her and her daughter; and Lenore's friend Sabrina, a young black woman working as a waitress, through whose friendship Lenore begins to realize her own racism. *Folly* is the weaving of the narrative of the strike with events in these women's lives. Without being didactic, the novel shows the women learning to recognize the forces that have oppressed them, learning their own strengths, and making changes in their personal and working lives.

Maureen Brady's first novel, *Give Me Your Good Ear* (Spinsters, Ink, 1979), the story of one woman's discovering and coming to terms with the issues in her life, is a more powerful book. In *Folly* the author's narrative voice is not as clear or as certain. And, although her characterizations of the women are often compelling, her descriptions of the strike never are. Perhaps part of this failure is due to the novel's shifting point of view or to its shortness or to the fact that the dialogue, which tries to sound working class and southern, does not always succeed. Because of its many characters and subplots, the book should be longer. Brady has achieved an admirable degree of character development in so short a space, but more would be better.

In her acknowledgements Brady says she was encouraged to write *Folly* by reading Kathy Kahn's *Hillbilly Women*, which describes the founding of a worker-owned sewing factory by a group of women in Fannin County, Georgia. She then gathered material for the novel by interviewing a number of women textile mill workers in North Carolina. Her efforts in conducting these interviews are commendable. But many of the artistic problems in the novel stem from the fact that the author has never worked in a mill. Despite her considerable empathy with the mill women, she had serious difficulties in rendering the material she gathered on strikes and working conditions. *Folly* is, nevertheless, both believable and authentic. It is also an honest book, an important book that gives us insight into the lives of working women, black women, and lesbians — all of whom are grossly underrepresented as characters in fiction. For this reason it deserves a place in academic and public library collections.

Maureen Brady deserves more recognition as a writer. She spent her early childhood in upstate

New York, her "second decade" in Florida, and now lives near Argyle, New York. She is a physical therapist and has taught physical therapy at Russell Sage College. She is the co-founder of Spinsters, Ink, a feminist publishing company. In undertaking *Folly* she dared a great deal and has written a book of which she should be proud. She should continue to write and not become frustrated by commercial publishers and professional reviewers who fail to heed her work.

Susan Ballinger, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Jerry Bledsoe. *Carolina Curiosities: Jerry Bledsoe's Outlandish Guide to the Dadblamedest Things to See and Do in North Carolina*. Charlotte: The East Woods Press, 1984. 224 pp. \$7.95.

Have you ever been riding down a North Carolina highway, seen something unusual, and wondered, What was that? Chances are Jerry Bledsoe's *Carolina Curiosities* will have an answer. It is a guide to the wonders of the Old North State. In his twenty years as a journalist covering North Carolina, Bledsoe has discovered the biggest (weeping willow tree, gospel sing, frying pan), the "oldest" (Putt Putt miniature golf course, wagon train, grapevine), the only (Woolly Worm Festival, pirate school, Collard Festival). But do not be misled by this list, for the book is not limited to the outlandish, "dadblamedest," or curious. Certainly the unusual prevails, but there is also a good sampling of significant historical and natural sites.

The arrangement is geographical, and there are directions to most sites. (In the case of Ayden's Collard Festival, however, all you need to do is follow your nose.) There is an index, but travel and trivia buffs will go through this book page by page.

*Carolina Curiosities* belongs in every library in North Carolina. Public libraries will want a circulating copy as well as a copy in the reference collection. And I suggest that you keep a copy in your car. That way, the next time you're traveling by Forest City you'll know to drop in on Charlie Yelton and see his house of bottles. (Clear quart jars are set in mortar, 7-Up bottles accent the windows, and Milk of Magnesia bottles form a decorative cross.) And be sure to drop by if it's a moonlit night—that's when Charlie says it's prettiest.

Becky Kornegay, Western Carolina University

Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. *Psalms From Prison*. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983. 169 pp. \$10.95.

*Psalms From Prison*, like the Biblical Psalter, is a collection of 150 prayers, laments, meditations, exhaltations, doxologies, and exhortations. To be sure, it is not an anthology of poetry; it is a book of psalms that speak to God and speak of God.

The parallelism between the Biblical Psalms and the prison psalms is intentional on the part of the author. However, while the Biblical Psalms have been a source of hymnody since antiquity, the prison psalms are not so adaptable to a musical setting. Although sometimes lyrical and metrical, they are far too political, sociological, and theological to be employed liturgically.

The prison psalms do preach, however. They were compelled to preach; for Chavis, who was an altar boy for sixteen years, who studied theology at Duke University, and who earned a doctorate in ministry from Howard University, is an ordained clergyman in the United Church of Christ. His cup runneth over as Biblical scripture, King James prosody, hymnody, and lyric from anthems, gospels, and spirituals are effectively interwoven among his psalms.

The overriding theme which recurs throughout the psalms is the political imprisonment of the author on October 18, 1972, as one of the Wilmington Ten. Despite his incarceration, in Psalm 2 he is heard praying for his persecutors: "forgive them, O God/for they know not what they do."

In the introduction, Chavis says that, while in prison, he sought to demonstrate that God is Grace and is the Lord of Liberation. Although he reiterates this universal thematic trilogy—oppression-struggle-liberation—the experience he shares with the reader is intimate. Thus Chavis is heard crying out in Psalm 73, "Without thee, O God,/prison would be hell."

While the Biblical Psalter contains five divisions, the prison psalms contain only three. In part I (oppression) the key element is faith in the sustaining power of God: "But one thing was clear from the first day of confinement," says Chavis. "We had to keep the faith..." And indeed it was his Christian faith that sustained him through his 131-day fast and beyond his release from prison on December 4, 1980.

In part II (struggle) Chavis becomes more poetic in his expression and more profound in his "critical interrogation." His struggle is not only a personal one against imprisonment but a universal one against poverty, racism, and war; all of

which are the transgressions of what he calls "the 'new south' plantations" and the "modern babylon."

In part III (liberation) the central theme is Jesus Christ as liberator of the oppressed. Chavis reemphasizes this theology in the epilogue by stating that justice, liberation, and freedom are the product of the liberating work of God in Christ. His theology here is certain to have been influenced by author Dr. James H. Cone, with whom he studied at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

The psalms succeed in recording Chavis's political persecution; and because they are historically documentary they should certainly be found in every college and public library. Because they are theological, doctrinal, and ethical, they should particularly be found in the libraries of seminaries and schools of religion. Dr. C. Eric Lincoln of Duke University's School of Religion says of this, the author's first book: "These psalms of Ben Chavis are one of the most important theological expressions of our time."

While the Davidic Psalms are pseudopigrapha, the *Psalms From Prison* could only be attributed to Benjamin Chavis; for, in accordance with the countenance of the man, they are earnestly uttered and deeply devout. They chronicle the living testimonial of a faithful servant of God as he struggled to overcome oppression and was liberated.

Jon Michael Spencer, North Carolina Central University

J. C. Harrington. *Archaeology and the Enigma of Fort Raleigh*. Raleigh: America's Four Hundredth Anniversary Committee and the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1984. 36 pp. \$2.00 paper plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. (Order from Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones St., Raleigh, 27611.)

The whereabouts of the Roanoke colonists was a mystery to John White in 1590, and the settlers' fate has remained an enigma to this day. Scholars and writers such as David B. Quinn, David Stick, and, most recently, Karen Ordahl Kupperman have advanced explanations for why the colonists may or may not have fled to Croatan Island, intermarried with nearby native Americans, or trekked north to the Chesapeake. Much of the continued appeal of the Roanoke story lies in this uncertainty; no one knows what *really* became of the colonists left on North Carolina's

stormy coast in 1587.

*Archaeology and the Enigma of Fort Raleigh* (one of a series of publications produced by America's Four Hundredth Anniversary Committee) demystifies at least one aspect of the Roanoke saga: the location of a fort built in North Carolina by Walter Raleigh's first settlers. In addition to describing the fort itself, J. C. Harrington's booklet vividly summarizes in popular language the frustrations, hard work, and occasional rewards involved in archaeologically investigating an historical site. Ms. Harrington is well qualified to offer these observations; since 1947 she has directed several digs at the site of what we now call Fort Raleigh and has published numerous reports, pamphlets, and articles based on her findings.

Ms. Harrington discusses a variety of worrisome circumstances which often hampered work on Roanoke excavations. Contemporary descriptions of Raleigh's colonists provided tantalizingly few clues to the location of the first settlement in North Carolina, other than to draw attention to the northern end of Roanoke Island. Forces of nature and mankind further impeded attempts to interpret what remains of this earliest English colony. Sand has swept over much of the area presumed to contain the settlement and fort sites, and visitors to the area since at least the early eighteenth century probably removed many traces of the colonists. Late nineteenth-century efforts at "archaeological" investigation of the island, a 1921 movie production, and Depression-era public works projects had mixed results, and in Harrington's opinion, often did more to harm than to interpret the site. Public interest and government funding waxed and waned over the years; archaeologists' experiences at Fort Raleigh illustrate how closely these scholars have always been linked to the concerns of the society in which they work.

Despite such distractions, Harrington and her coworkers persevered, as they carefully studied the scanty evidence in contemporary accounts of the colony and its fortifications and attempted to avoid areas that earlier investigators had searched. *Archaeology and the Enigma of Fort Raleigh* includes detailed, but not overly technical, descriptions of Harrington's efforts, such as the methods used to excavate the area around the fort and alternative approaches considered for exploring the site. Harrington explains specialized terminology carefully, both in the text of the booklet and in brief endnotes, and has included many drawings and photographs of site plans and artifacts to amplify her descriptions of

archaeological procedures.

The most exciting discovery at the Roanoke excavations resulted from what the author calls "a piece of luck." While digging a trench for utility lines in 1959, workers uncovered a small cache of ashes and pieces of brick, objects which they realized were man-made, not natural, deposits. Later, when archaeologists investigated the lucky find, they discovered what appeared to be an "outwork" of the already-excavated fort, containing the remains of several native campfires, bricks, and roof tiles, and a European-made bottle. Harrington's explanation of how these materials can help us understand the fort's history illustrates well the lessons to be learned from historical archaeology. Her analysis of still-unanswered questions about Fort Raleigh leaves the reader eager to discover what clues will next emerge from this historical puzzle.

In *Archaeology and the Enigma of Fort Raleigh*, novices to history and archaeology as well as aficionados of early North Carolina will find fascinating reading. Those who are less well acquainted with these topics will especially appreciate the booklet's brief annotated list of materials for continued reading. Libraries on high school, college, and university campuses, as well as public libraries, should find this small book a useful addition to their holdings.

Julia S. Hesson, East Carolina University

Thomas Heffernan. *City Renewing Itself*. Raleigh: Peloria Publications, 1983. 27 pp. \$3.00 paper. [P.O. Box 50263, Raleigh 27607]

This recent book of poems by Thomas Heffernan, a well-known North Carolina prize-winning poet, teacher, and lecturer, is Number 5 in the Peloria Poetry Chapbook Series, a publication effort based in Raleigh that has presented the works of several North Carolina-based poets. "City Renewing Itself" is, however, the first of the series to feature local settings and regional themes. The city of the title poem refers to Raleigh: "The scrubbed grey stones of the capitol weather,/And the new copper sheath on the dome shines." (p. [1]) Weathering and shining are the two threads that Heffernan uses to suggest Raleigh's contemporary character, that of crumbling buildings and outmoded lifestyles deriving new energy from memories of the city's rich past. Other poems, set in Charlotte, Greensboro, and High Point, are full of images and vignettes that North Carolinians will recognize and enjoy all the more for Heffer-

nan's colorful lines. The most ambitious poem in the book is the award-winning "Thanksgiving Parade," set in Charlotte. The floats, marchers, spectators, and street scenes are depicted in a vigorous style in which the words march along like the parade itself: "A gnomish lady Eskimo-like in her fake black fur cape and a man with patches of very brown/ hair avoid two red coats and purple fezzes/ driving white singleseater VW dunebuggies..." (p. 11) These closely-observed details and inventive vocabulary make these poems appealing both to the casual reader and the poetry enthusiast. Peloria Press is to be congratulated for this series of chapbooks giving young poets exposure and now bringing out a writer of Heffernan's unpretentious but solidly earned reputation. This project deserves support and this volume, especially, a place in library collections.

[Other chapbooks in the series are (1) David J. Kelly. *Werewolf Poems*. (out of print) (2) Gerry Dawson. *The Baby Boom Blues*. \$2.00 (3) Karen Bartlett. *Whole Poems*. \$2.00 (4) Roger Lell. *Kamikaze Polar Bear Sinks Nuclear Submarine and Other Kamikaze Poems*. \$3.00. All are paperback. Three new chapbooks will be released this fall.]

Coyla McCullough, Burroughs Wellcome Company Library

Helen Hill Miller. *Passage To America: Raleigh's Colonists Take Ship for Roanoke*. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1983. 84 pp. \$5.00 paper.

For the reader acquainted with Helen Hill Miller through her biographical studies of George Mason and her analysis of the Stamp Act Crisis, her new book, *Passage To America*, will be a treat for both mind and eye. Sponsored by the America's Four Hundredth Committee, this eighty-four-page volume is a model of concise writing reflecting thorough research and the judicious use of meaningful illustrations.

In the historiography of English attempts to plant colonies in America, the "who, where, when, and why" of the voyages have been the topics of numerous publications. Miller's *Passage To America*, examines the "how" of such voyages. From her descriptions of sixteenth-century techniques of shipbuilding, knowledge of geography, and level of navigational skills, as well as the shipboard perils faced by crew and passenger alike, one can appreciate the fact that a successful voyage depended as much upon pure luck as upon care-

ful planning and foresight. This point is even more clearly drawn when Miller's focus shifts to the Roanoke voyages specifically.

While scholars will deplore the absence of footnotes and a bibliographical note, Helen Hill Miller's *Passage To America* is a welcomed addition to the literature on the exploration of America and one well worth the small purchase price.

*Michael G. Martin, Jr., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

P. H. Perkinson and L. C. Johnson, compilers. ***North Carolina Post Office Catalog: Alphabetical***. Raleigh: P. H. Perkinson and L. C. Johnson, 1983. 228 pp. Softbound with hasp and tabs. \$31.50.

P. H. Perkinson and L. C. Johnson, compilers. ***North Carolina Post Office Catalog: By Counties***. Raleigh: P. H. Perkinson and L. C. Johnson, 1983. 272 pp. Softbound with hasp and tabs. \$51.50.

(Order from the compilers at P.O. Box 158, Norlina 27563. Libraries may deduct 10 per cent for single volumes or 25 per cent when ordering both volumes. Lists for individual counties are one dollar each.)

What do Ada, Amelia, Anna, Geba, Helena, Hilda, Ida, Laura, Topia, and Vera have in common with Barrett, Boyer, Miles, Murray, Norman, Romulus, Teddy, Van, and Ward? They are all post offices that once operated in Alleghany County. At the other end of the alphabet, Yancey County's long-gone addresses include Anatone, Athlone, Bee Log, Butch, Day Book, Dobag, Egypt, Flinty, Jack's Creek, Lost Cove, Narrows, Pedro, Sioux, South Toe, Spiceland, Swiss, Vixen, and Wampler.

Elsewhere in North Carolina, mail was once addressed to Faith, Hope, and Charity; Acceptance, Accommodate, Affinity, and Assurance; Bliss, Charm, Devotion, Fidelity, Joy, Love, Mutual Love, Reliance, and Trust; Balm, Peace, Relief, Repose, Rest, Retreat, and Tranquility; Lonely and

Lonsome (*sic*); Affluence, Benefit, Deposit, Thrift, Security, and Success; and Flay, Muff, Pant, Passion, Rough and Ready, Savage, Shaken, Shatter, and Sodom.

Pure joy can come from a study of place names in North Carolina; history can be learned from them too. To that splendid work of William S. Powell's *The North Carolina Gazetteer*, we can now add these two looseleaf volumes produced by Phil H. Perkinson and L. C. Johnson, devoted students of North Carolina postal history. Powell's, of course, is a professionally published work with *descriptions* of place names compiled over a long period of time but without any effort to include all post offices. On the other hand, the Perkinson-Johnson catalogs provide lists—one alphabetically arranged for the entire state, the other by county—of *post offices* that have operated in the state. Each entry usually includes county, date of establishment, date of discontinuance if no longer in operation, name of the successor post office, name of first postmaster, and when appropriate, remarks.

This information, though sketchy, is of immense value to historians and geographers, and only those who have conducted research in the originals or microfilm copies of federal postal records will be able to appreciate fully the contribution that Perkinson and Johnson have made in publishing these abstracts. For the first time, printed lists are available in easy-to-use formats, and local historians can now begin compiling additional information on obscure post offices—location, origin of name, and identification of all postmasters. Once compiled, this data will be useful for a supplement to or revision of Powell's *NCG*.

In their prodigious research, the compilers observed the unevenness of the federal records in content, legibility, and accuracy; and they invite readers to report any errors and to provide additional information on the post offices listed.

*H. G. Jones, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*