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# New North Carolina Books

Alice R. Cotten, Compiler

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William D. Snider. *Helms and Hunt: The North Carolina Senate Race, 1984*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985. 215 pp. \$9.50 paper. ISBN 0-8078-4132-3.

After enduring the campaign's 20,000 television commercials, including 7,800 in the last five weeks, many Tar Heels may still shudder at the thought of the state's 1984 U.S. Senate race. But for those wishing to reexamine one of the Old North State's most colorful, bitter, and fascinating elections, William D. Snider's *Helms and Hunt: The North Carolina Senate Race, 1984* offers an excellent starting point.

Snider, retired editor of the *Greensboro News and Record*, has written a highly readable and entertaining account of a contest the national news media early on labeled "the second most important race in the nation," after only the presidential. The struggle pitted two popular and successful politicians with different views of the role of government and separated in age by seventeen years, but from similar rural, church-oriented backgrounds. When the dust settled, incumbent Senator Jesse A. Helms had bested two-term Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., by 86,280 votes out of 2,239,061 cast. In the process, \$25,000,000 in reported expenditures had been spent, the most on a Senate race in U.S. history.

In *Helms and Hunt*, Snider begins with a well-researched account of the early lives of the two contestants. The reader learns of Helms's Monroe childhood; of his tenure as a sports writer for the *Raleigh News and Observer*, by 1984 a bitter political opponent; and of his career as a Raleigh television editorialist, in which he gained valuable exposure from 1960 to 1972. Snider depicts Hunt as an ambitious, hard-working, and intense youth, one intrigued by politics at an early age. An admirer of moderate and liberal Democrats, the Wilson County farm boy nicknamed his cows for Hubert Humphrey and Kerr Scott, as well as for his girlfriends. The author uses such anecdotes throughout the book, not only to enliven his writing, but also to illustrate the lighter side of two shrewd politicians and two professionally run campaigns.

After sketching the pre-1984 political careers of Helms and Hunt, Snider turns to the senatorial contest, a contest he points out started many months before the November 6 voting. He argues that the Helms decision to commence anti-Hunt television ads in April 1983 was one of the most significant of the campaign. Unable to find many major blemishes in Hunt's gubernatorial record, the Helms forces chose to concentrate their attack on the governor's credibility and integrity. Over the next twenty months, the Helms theme "Where do you stand, Jim," repeated in variations thousands of times on television and radio and in print, weakened voter trust in Hunt. The governor was never able to seize fully the initiative and make Helms's record the campaign focus.

In roughly chronological order, Snider recounts the major issues and events of the contest. Topics from Social Security to the federal tobacco program, from unsuccessful gubernatorial candidate Eddie Knox's defection from Democratic ranks to Hunt's refusal to halt the November 2 execution of convicted murderer Velma Barfield, receive careful treatment. The author's career as a political reporter and observer serves him well.

Snider concludes with a brief but good discussion of why Helms won and Hunt lost. Future historians, with the advantage of time, will offer more detailed analysis. Having been rushed to print barely three months after the votes were cast, *Helms and Hunt* was not intended as the definitive study of the election. Nevertheless, the decision to omit footnotes, bibliography, and index is regrettable. But the book still offers the reader a well-crafted account of a monumental political battle. It belongs in all North Carolina public and academic libraries.

Robert G. Anthony, Jr., Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County

Nancy Sweezy. *Raised in Clay: The Southern Pottery Tradition*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press for the Office of Folklife Programs, 1984. 280 pp. \$39.95 cloth, ISBN 0-87474-860-7; \$19.95 paper, ISBN 0-87474-859-3.

This book, written in conjunction with an exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Office of

Folklife Programs, concentrates on the thirty-five southern potteries that continue carrying the pre-industrial traditions of the craft. The author, herself a potter with thirty years of experience, lived and worked for twelve years at Jugtown Pottery in Seagrove, North Carolina. Her experience enabled her to conduct the fieldwork and write the study with a clear grasp of the historical background, and an impressive understanding of the technology used in traditional pottery making.

The potteries included in the study are grouped by the type of ware that they produce. Nine of the potteries work in the utilitarian stoneware tradition, seven produce primarily unglazed horticultural ware, and nineteen are known for the glazed ware developed in the twentieth century. Excerpts from the numerous interviews with the individual potters are quoted verbatim; their reminiscences, professional knowledge, and comments on the continual adaptation to the changing needs of buyers communicate in a direct, honest, and unpretentious way their love for their craft.

The well placed illustrations consist of photographs of the potters at work and their wares, as well as drawings of various potteries and their equipment. In the layout, the captions to the colored photographs represent the only irritating flaw; they are designed to fill a pre-determined rectangular space regardless of the ensuing illogical divisions in the description. The book includes extensive bibliography. Since not all the potteries listed in the table of contents are known by the name of the owner, an index would have been helpful. The publication is well bound on paper meeting standards for performance and quality. This book is essential for collections strong in decorative arts and is also recommended for collections of North Caroliniana.

Anna Dvorak, North Carolina Museum of Art

Weeks Parker, *Fayetteville, North Carolina: a Pictorial History*. Edited by Reginald M. Barton, Jr., Josephine H. Deem, Allene A. Moffitt. Chapter introductions by Reginald M. Barton, Jr. Norfolk: Donning Company, 1984. 208 pp. \$25.00 (Order from Historic Fayetteville Foundation, P.O. Box 1507, Fayetteville 28302).

James Vickers. *Chapel Hill: an Illustrated History*. Thomas Scism—illustrations. Dixon Qualls—color photography. Chapel Hill: Barclay Publishers, 1985. 208 pp. \$24.95 less 20% for libraries. (P.O. Box 739, Carrboro 27510). ISBN 0-9614429-0-5.

Although they are in some ways as different as night and day, these pictorial histories have at least three things in common. First, they provide valuable views of and information about cities that have changed dramatically during the twentieth century. Second, each book boasts outstanding components. And, unfortunately, a variety of shortcomings detract from the quality of both works.

Weeks Parker succeeded in his twenty-year quest to preserve images of Fayetteville's past. *Fayetteville, North Carolina: a Pictorial History* inspires the reader with a collection of over 350 fascinating views of people, events, buildings, and objects, which were assembled with the help of many individuals and organizations, including the Fayetteville Publishing Company. Many of the photographs depict action, and a few of them span two pages. The photographs' age, size, and layout combine to make this a fine picture book.

Even though Mr. Weeks intended his book partly as a visual supplement to John A. Oates's *Fayetteville, North Carolina* (1950), many readers will be disappointed with its text and other features. The bibliography of eight items hardly dents even the secondary sources pertaining to Fayetteville. Chapter introductions of one or two pages fail to provide an adequate understanding of Fayetteville's development as a city or its place in North Carolina history. Most of the picture captions lack mention of sources, and the index leaves much to be desired. Finally, the photographs and narrative provide an unbalanced view of the city. The reader is left to wonder why the book virtually ignores the role of blacks or the development of Fayetteville's somewhat negative image after World War II.

In producing *Chapel Hill: an Illustrated History*, a book of higher quality than his first pictorial history, *Raleigh: City of Oaks* (1982), James Vickers avoided some of the drawbacks in *Fayetteville*. The lively, well-written text reflects considerable research in primary and secondary sources, many of which are recorded in the book's selected bibliography. Vickers succeeded in writing a balanced history of Chapel Hill itself, although the extensive narrative also discusses in detail the origin and development of the University of North Carolina. The book is not merely a summary of several histories of the university, however. The reader learns much about Chapel Hill's physical development and the businesses, churches, schools, and other institutions that existed at different periods. Chapel Hill's first families share the book with average citizens and minorities, and the seamy side of life does not

escape discussion. Delightful quotations and anecdotes enliven many pages.

One wishes that as much thought had been directed toward other aspects of *Chapel Hill*. Although Dixon Quall's forty-six color illustrations of present-day Chapel Hill please the eye, the content and layout of many of the 200-odd black-and-white illustrations are of little interest. "Mug" shots and other small photographs predominate. Although Thomas Scism attempted to locate photographs in private hands, the vast majority of those included in the book came from the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina and the State Archives. Surely other repositories could have yielded additional views. The extensive captions expand on subjects mentioned in the text but often do not reveal the origin of the illustrations. The index gives little guidance to readers who seek subjects instead of names.

Both of these books increase our knowledge of the subjects they address. Public and academic libraries with North Carolina or local history collections may want to add these titles, but librarians in institutions located some distance from Chapel Hill and Fayetteville should carefully weigh the cost of the books against interest of patrons.

*Maurice C. York, Edgecombe County Memorial Library*

Mike Collins. *North Carolina Jobhunter's Handbook: A Guide to Finding Your Best Job in North Carolina!* Raleigh: FAN Publishing Company, 1985. 142 pp. \$6.00 paper (includes tax, postage, handling). ISBN 0-932179-00-2.

Books on job-seeking have appeared with increasing frequency and in proliferating numbers during the past decade; and with workers responding to a changing society and the ensuing changing marketplace, they have been popular sellers. As a result, many writers who have little expertise in the fields of career counseling and job-seeking have published books that at best add little to the literature, and at worst provide unhelpful advice to individuals who need more effective assistance.

*North Carolina Jobhunter's Handbook: A Guide to Finding Your Best Job in North Carolina!* does not fall into that category. While its content is a little formulaic, and with slight changes could be used to write jobhunting guides for forty-nine other states as well as North Carolina, the advice given has been culled from the best of the job-seeking literature currently available

and is presented in clear, concise fashion. Brief discussions of geography, economy, education patterns, and employment history and trends in North Carolina open the book. Regional maps that delineate the major areas of the state provide visual indication of specific geographical sites for those unfamiliar with the state.

There follow several chapters on the job search process. These include brief but adequate explanations of the importance of career planning, the accessibility of information regarding careers, the techniques and tools of job hunting (specifically resumes and interviews), and the various sources of information about specific openings that are available to a jobseeker. The author spells out federal, state, and local agencies that provide assistance and job opportunity.

Some special sections deal matter-of-factly with the stress that accompanies any job search, as well as the unique difficulties that special populations such as minorities, women, the handicapped, older workers, and inexperienced students may face.

Extensive appendixes list the major manufacturing and non-manufacturing companies in the state, power companies, law enforcement departments, telephone companies, television and radio stations, hospitals, financial institutions, and the like. Although the information given is minimal, each does provide a quick reference point for identifying specific kinds of organizations that may hire in a field of interest. Additional appendixes include lists of relevant periodicals and publications, helpful books, manuals, and directories, and information to assist in preparing a resume and in readying for questions likely to be included in employment interviews.

*North Carolina Jobhunter's Handbook: A Guide to Finding Your Best Job in North Carolina!* is by no means the definitive source on the job search process or on the organizations that provide good employment opportunities for job hunters in the state. It is *not* a directory of employers, and anyone seeking a position in the state needs to consult a number of such sources for more comprehensive information about companies. It does not claim to be that, however, and is useful in its own way as a good review of major employing organizations in North Carolina and the process involved in successfully seeking work in them. It is recommended for public, academic, and school libraries as an initial source to be supplemented by use of more specific directory materials.

*Pat Carpenter, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

George K. Schweitzer. *North Carolina Genealogical Research*. Knoxville, TN, 1984. 192 pp. \$9.00 paper. (Order from Genealogical Sources, Unltd., 7914 Gleason, C-1136, Knoxville, TN 37919)

Dr. Schweitzer, author of books dealing with the genealogy of Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and the War of 1812, has prepared a detailed and comprehensive guideline to genealogical research in North Carolina.

The book is broken down into four chapters, each chapter dealing with a specific area of North Carolina genealogical research. Chapter 1 contains a brief description of the geography of the state, followed by a short history in which Schweitzer describes how both the geography and history of North Carolina relate to genealogical research.

Chapter 2, the largest section of the book, discusses the many types of records that are available for North Carolina genealogical research. Schweitzer covers thirty-four types of records in this chapter, among them birth, death, court, land, probate, census, and military. As an example, the section on Military Records first defines the kinds of records a researcher can expect to find—service, pension, bounty land, claims, and military unit history—tells which of these records are available for each military period in the state, and then tells how to locate those records for certain historical periods.

Chapter 3 deals with locations of records, discussing in great detail the North Carolina State Archives, North Carolina State Library, the library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the library at Duke University, and the libraries of the Genealogical Society of Utah. For North Carolina libraries, hours of operation are given, rules and regulations for working in the libraries, locations of materials within the libraries, and how to proceed with research once you have entered the library. For researchers visiting Raleigh, he lists motels (with addresses and telephone numbers) within walking distance or a short drive from North Carolina State Archives and State Library.

Records Procedure and County Listings are covered in Chapter 4. After identifying the ancestor's county, Schweitzer suggests several approaches for undertaking research in North Carolina, recommending as the best approach one in which the researcher first exhausts the resources of libraries near his home, then searches the collections at the North Carolina State Archives and the North Carolina State Library,

and perhaps the libraries at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University, and then going to the county seat to do research at the local library and the courthouse. Most of this chapter consists of a list of each of the counties in North Carolina, giving county seats and zip codes, records available in the county and where they are located, and locations of libraries in the county.

If there is a fault with this book, it is in the use of abbreviations which can be troublesome at times. NCSA (North Carolina State Archives), NCSL (North Carolina State Library), BLGSU (Branch Libraries of the Genealogical Society of Utah), and LGL (large genealogical libraries) are a few among the many abbreviations that dot the pages. The book, however, is generally easy to use, gives excellent advice to researchers, and is thorough in its coverage. It belongs in every genealogy library in the state—as well as in the hands of everyone who undertakes genealogical research in North Carolina.

*Beth Young, Cannon Memorial Library, Kannapolis*

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Archie K. Davis. *Boy Colonel of the Confederacy: The Life and Times of Henry King Burgwyn, Jr.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985. 406 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 0-8078-1647-7.

Harry Burgwyn commanded the 26th North Carolina Infantry, one of the most remarkable regiments in the Confederate army. The unit's first colonel, Zebulon B. Vance, became governor in 1862 after a brief military career. Burgwyn, who succeeded Vance at age nineteen, was among Robert E. Lee's youngest field officers. Under Burgwyn's leadership, the 26th entered the Gettysburg campaign in July, 1863. Here it earned the melancholy distinction of the greatest regimental loss of the Civil War: a staggering 88% casualty rate in two days of bloody fighting. Among the dead was the Boy Colonel, struck down on July 1st as his regiment struggled to repel the Union Iron Brigade from McPherson's Woods.

Although best remembered for his military achievements, Burgwyn is a worthy biographical subject for other reasons as well. Born in 1841, he was the son of a Northampton County planter who was one of the first Southerners to apply engineering and scientific technology to agriculture. His mother, Anne Greenough Burgwyn, belonged to a prominent Massachusetts family whose ancestors included Governor Increase Sumner and Jonathan Edwards. Mature, intelligent, ambitious, gifted by heredity and breeding, and a born leader, young Burgwyn doubtless could have anticipated a brilliant civilian career had not the war intervened. But his talents were subsumed in the secession crisis and in an intense longing for military glory. His life exemplified many of the better qualities which the Southern plantation system was capable of producing, while his death underlined the war's tragic human cost, both to the region and to the nation as a whole.

Archie K. Davis's biography is itself an accomplishment of note. A lifelong devotee of the late unpleasantness, Davis completed graduate studies in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill following his retirement as chairman of the Wachovia Corporation. His dissertation, based on the extensive Burgwyn Family Papers in the Southern Historical Collection was 1500 pages long. Yet, out of modesty, he declined the Ph.D. degree (settling instead for a "certificate of recognition" from the university) and resisted publication of his work. Only after ten years, and considerable persuasion, did he consent to revise the dissertation into its present form.

Students of the Civil War are fortunate that

Davis eventually changed his mind. To be sure, those with considerable previous knowledge may find his style discursive. As Davis traces the war throughout Virginia and the Carolinas, Burgwyn frequently disappears for pages at a time. Despite impressive background research, Davis also overlooked at least two manuscript sources known to this reviewer that relate to the 26th regiment: the Leonidas Lafayette Polk Papers at the Southern Historical Collection, and the privately owned W. W. "Buck" Edwards Letters, of which portions have been published. Finally, the absence of a bibliography is surprising in a volume produced by a major university press. These are, however, relatively minor flaws that do not harm the overall value of the book.

*Boy Colonel of the Confederacy* is both an outstanding biography and a significant contribution to the historiography of this state. Every collection of North Caroliniana should include it.

Everard H. Smith, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Lewis W. Green. *The Silence of Snakes*. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1984. 343 pp. \$15.95. ISBN 0-89587-040-1.

North Carolina native Lewis W. Green is no stranger to the people and customs of the North Carolina mountains, as evidenced in his second novel, *The Silence of Snakes*. Formerly a reporter and a teacher of journalism, Green uses words in a manner so powerful and evocative as to plunge his readers into the very center of his fictional world. The images he conjures are often too vivid, too painful, too ugly; his words are disturbing, wrenching. *The Silence of Snakes* is not an easy book to read; it is not a pretty story, and it could only have been told in this way.

The mountain community that is home to Green's characters is not peaceful and picturesque. The image of snakes runs through this novel—silent and deadly, the poison that pervades the lives of these suspicious, superstitious, proud men and women. Alcohol is an important force—from the brilliant yet alcoholic reporter Paul Fortune who nearly destroys himself by drinking, to the Skiller family's infamous moonshine business, the influence of alcohol on Green's characters is unmistakable and frightening. In this novel, the line dividing good and evil is far from distinct. Characters are not either sympathetic or despicable—they have the frailties and weaknesses born of a life filled with too many hardships, disappointments, and injustices. And yet, they display a fierce loyalty to family and friends, concern for the welfare of a seriously ill

child, commitment to fairness and justice in the trial of an unquestionably guilty man.

Green exposes his readers to feelings and events that most of us would prefer to avoid. His talent for description and insight makes us understand, makes us feel the pain that could drive a man to madness, to murder without remorse. The crime in the story is unthinkable, yet in the end, the reader cannot be sure which side to take.

*The Silence of Snakes* begins with a birth—painful, frightening, mysterious. Death ends the novel—the final silence. Green's novel is not comforting, not a pleasant, mindless diversion. This excellent effort evidences a keen journalistic eye, tremendous awareness and knowledge of mountain life, and a rare talent for evoking with the written word images that bring to life characters and places and moments and emotions. A truly disturbing and insightful portrait of a slice of North Carolina life.

Julie Sanders, Forsyth County Public Library

Linda Brown Bragg. *Rainbow Roun Mah Shoulder*. Chapel Hill: Carolina Wren Press, 1984. 133 pp. \$6.00 paper. (300 Barclay Road, Chapel Hill 27514) ISBN 0-932112-20-X.

"It is you who belong to God, not me. You are the real priest." Those were the words spoken to her by Father Theodore Canty on that last night in the sanctuary of St. Ignatius Church. It was then that she accepted the growing knowledge that she had been blessed with special powers to love and heal.

At twenty-two, Rebecca Florice was a tall reed of a girl and handsome in a Creole way that drove her black husband, Mac, to desperation as he felt them drift apart. There was a "strangeness" about her that he had never understood, nor could he accept that she was somehow mixed up with God and that awesome gift. He left her, running away in a rage of confusion, screaming curses, calling her crazy and unfaithful. "She could still hear his voice fighting the enormity of the ocean. The sea gulls whined; she understood, and wrapped herself up for the night in the slicker Mac had left behind."

It was 1919, and Rebecca was living in the home of her sister. She and Mac had come there, to eastern North Carolina, to escape their discontent and unhappiness in New Orleans. She planted the magic herb seeds that she had brought with her, and the gardens thrived every year.

Slipping chamomile tea one evening on the

porch with her friend, Alice, Rebecca suddenly recognized the meaning of the "growls of sound" that crossed the dark distance separating them from the lynch mob. She had known that afternoon in town that trouble was in the air, and she sat silently on the porch throughout the hour that it took to kill.

When her sister, Marie, and her husband decide to leave Jacksonville, Rebecca Florice and Alice go to Greensboro to take jobs cooking in a struggling Negro college. Rebecca becomes a stable, respected member of the campus community, and in her own small way helps uphold its tradition as "a college Black folk could be proud of."

Rebecca Florice also finds the Reverend Robert Brown, pastor of the Mount Olive AME Zion Church. The Reverend Brown "was not the same intellectual Theodore [Canty] had been, but he had roots of wisdom that scoured the earth for answers." He discovers strength in Rebecca's love that helps him denounce from his pulpit the injustices of a town that would jail an innocent young black on a trumped up murder charge and allow his mysterious death behind bars to go uninvestigated and unanswered. Though fearing for the safety of his family when the Klan burns crosses in the yard of his home, he invites the NAACP to meet in his church, and he continues his crusade as president of its local chapter.

Because he is a just man, Robert Brown is unable to reconcile his love and passion for Rebecca with his sense of duty and loyalty to his wife. He seeks and accepts a call to a church in another state thus ending a relationship that has become consuming for Rebecca.

The author, in discussing her writing, explains that her "major emphasis is always to give life to the concrete world through imaginative work so that it will speak of the great mysteries."

The book is a chronicle of Rebecca Florice's ministry to those who are loved by her and healed through her powers. The central characters and many of the minor ones are richly drawn against the background of the Negro's struggle to attain justice and position in a society that has only grudgingly begun to recognize his unalienable rights. The author's voice is one of authority for it is the consciousness of her own people.

That Linda Bragg is a poet is evident in her descriptive prose. It winds itself like wisteria vine around the dramatic and the mundane, the humorous and the tragic. Like Rebecca Florice, she understands the "struggle between bread and incense."

Linda Bragg is a lecturer at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where she teaches

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Afro-American literature and creative writing. Her teaching emphasizes "subjects such as the uses of imagination and the connection between the sacred and the artistic." Though this is her first published novel, she has written poetry since the age of fourteen and has been published in a number of periodicals and an anthology titled *Beyond the Blues*. A book of her own poems, *A Love Song to Black Men*, was published by Broadside Press in 1974.

*Rainbow Roun Mah Shoulder* is a book for the general reader and the student of creative writing. It is recommended for public and academic libraries, and it should be essential to any collection of contemporary black literature.

Rebecca Ballentine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

C.J. Puetz. *North Carolina County Maps*. Lyndon Station, WI.: C. J. Puetz. 156 pp. Index. \$10.90. (Available from County Maps, 300 Buck Jones Road, Raleigh 27606.)

*North Carolina County Maps* is one of ten county map books published by C. J. Puetz. Other states for which similar county map publications are available include South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Florida.

This is a nice general reference resource for transportation and recreation information in map format. The maps are clear and easy to read. The publisher has reproduced the black and white county highway maps published by the North Carolina Department of Transportation at the scale of 1" = 2 miles. The scale of some counties has been slightly reduced. The maps are arranged in double page spread format (22" x 16") with larger counties covered on two pages. Interstate highways are depicted in blue and recreational areas are represented with blue symbols. County seats, state and national parks and forests, wildlife refuges, museums and historic sites, ferries, lighthouses, and ski areas are highlighted. Two small inset maps appear with each county: a key to county location within the state, and a key to county road numbers.

Accompanying each map is a brief text which includes county seat, short historical notes, and, for most counties, some recreational information. Short descriptions of state parks appear with the appropriate county. This county information seems to have been compiled from a variety of sources. The N.C. Wildlife Commission, the N.C. Travel and Tourism Division, and the Division of Parks and Recreation are acknowledged. Portions of the historical notes are identical to citations in

William S. Powell's *The North Carolina Gazetteer*.

Unfortunately, there are minor errors in the text. When the reader is unfamiliar with a county's history or points of interest, he should consult additional guidebooks for more complete information, for the scope of this atlas is not extensive enough to encompass all points of interest and recreation in North Carolina. There are three types of mistakes in the text: typographical/editing errors for place names (e.g., Appalachian National Forest for Pisgah National Forest and Knott's landing for Knott's Island); incorrect location (e.g., Bridal Veil Falls cited on the wrong river); and misleading descriptions (e.g., Stagville Plantation in Durham County, noted as Stagville Center for Preservation Technology, appears to be part of the Duke University campus). A few errors were also found in state road numbers, dates, index listings, and the alphabetical arrangement in the content list. The maps may be consulted for spelling, location, and road numbers.

Despite errors in the county descriptions, *North Carolina County Maps* is a handy resource. Recommended for all libraries.

Celia D. Poe, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Edwin M. Yoder, Jr. *The Night of the Old South Ball and Other Essays and Fables*. Oxford, MS: Yoknapatawpha Press, 1984. 248 pp. \$13.95. ISBN 0-916242-53-6.

The title of Edwin Yoder's *The Night of the Old South Ball* is taken from that of the first essay, which humorously recalls the author's remembrance of his college roommate's attendance at the Kappa Alpha Order's Old South Ball. It is a wonderful parody, told as a mock epic, of the seriousness of the southern concept of noblesse oblige carried to an extreme. The roommate, whom Yoder refers to as Altgeld, has been fitted for the occasion in a rented general's uniform "complete with epaulettes and ceremonial sword." Though Altgeld leaves triumphantly for the ball in his Confederate finery, his return home at a much later hour wearing only his undershorts causes Yoder to suspect that "the general had been failed by both God and women."

The above essay is one of several the author tells with wit and good fun in this first published collection of essays by the nationally-syndicated Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist now based in Washington D.C. Yoder, whose hometown is Mebane, N.C., is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a former Rhodes Scholar. While at Chapel Hill, he was edi-

tor of the *Daily Tar Heel*. He went on to work at the *Charlotte News*, the *Greensboro Daily News*, the *Washington Star* and the *Washington Post*, writing essays from which these eighty-eight were selected.

One of Yoder's strong points is his keen interest in and awareness of history and the workings of historical processes. His best historical and political pieces are reflections on the South, the region that has nurtured his intellect, which involve assessing the region itself as well as describing the figures that have inhabited it. He challenges "historical misconceptions," such as the charge that Thomas Jefferson was guilty of miscegenation. His praise of a biography of Huey Long, the "Kingfish" of Louisiana politics, becomes a lucid discussion of the man and southern politics in the turbulent 1920s and 30s. Essays on later southern politicians, especially Jimmy Carter, are equally lucid and pertinent and help to cast light on the ever-growing debate about the efficacy of Carter's presidency and on his "enigmatic" personality.

The book is entertaining reading because Yoder's range of subjects is so wide. The author is as much at home discussing the works of Flannery O'Connor as he is recalling the malapropism issued by Coach Weems every time he lectured on "benevolent depots" in his history class. Some of the essays are too short, probably due to time and space limitations imposed on journalists. Still, this collection would be better if Yoder had expanded some of the essays, especially the political ones. As they are, these essays show glimpses of insight but, for the most part, contribute nothing new.

The book is recommended for adult nonfiction collections.

Jim Chapman, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County

T. R. Pearson, *A Short History of a Small Place*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985. 381 pp. \$16.95. ISBN: 0-671-54352-0.

Following the pattern of southern storytellers who sit on their front porches and remember "when," T. R. Pearson's *A Short History of a Small Place* travels through bits and pieces of the more eccentric moments of Neely, a fictional southern town in the northern Piedmont of North Carolina. The novel reads like a front porch talk, as "little Louis Benfield" tells us what his Daddy has told him. This is the way of oral history, and Pearson has a good knack for the fictionalized kind.

The story is held together by Daddy, Momma, and Louis Benfield, a small family of "normal" people in comparison with the more eccentric characters of the town. Louis wanders through a few decades of Neely's history, including the tale of the Epperson sisters and a cousin who go about getting the townspeople to sign a petition acknowledging that they are indeed triplets. And why shouldn't they be? There seems to be no good rationale in the minds of the Neelyites for denying these three their "triplet-hood" if that makes them happy. Another character is "Mr. Britches," a monkey who doesn't seem to enjoy wearing the clothes that Miss Pettigrew, the mayor's sister, wants him to wear. But he does enjoy hanging out on the top of a flag pole and causing a ruckus.

There is a typical range of people from rich families to poor families. But in all this diversity there is a very conscious acknowledgment by all people that they must and do live together. The little habits that each person has and the "different" things each does keep the town interesting. Neely seems to appreciate, at least through the eyes of the Benfield family, all of the eccentricities of their neighbors and each other. For instance, Momma Benfield washes dishes over and over, staring out the kitchen window, when something happens that she needs to think about in silence. Daddy and Louis Benfield just let her be alone when she washes dishes. And by the same token, Momma Benfield puts up with Daddy's smoking habit. They have an agreement that he will not carry "any means of making fire," so he has hidden matches all over town; and as Louis notes, "more than once I myself had watched him turn over a rock at Tadlock's pond and pluck a full, unweathered matchbox out from among the ants and the nightcrawlers."

Through the many digressions of Louis, who seems to have a good sense of how things tie together in the community, we learn much about how many small towns operate. Though the events are fictional, their possibility is very real, especially to all who feel as if they have met the cousins of the character in Pearson's book.

One of the best aspects of *A Short History of a Small Place* is that it doesn't have to be read in one sitting. You can take as much time to read it as necessary without losing the flavor of the book, just as you can talk on the porch about a subject, go off and get tea or a snack, return to the front porch, and maybe take up where you left off or maybe just go on to something else, knowing it will all come back together in the end.

Pearson has written a novel that is funny, controlled in its digressive ways, and well worth



## New North Carolina Books

reading for its little insights into a small town and the people who live there, together. Recommended for all fiction collections.

Virginia A. Moore, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

### Other Publications of Interest

**Inns of the Southern Mountains: One Hundred Scenic and Historic Hostelrys from Virginia to Georgia** by Patricia L. Hudson would be a good addition to the travel section of public and academic libraries. This 160-page volume covers inns in the mountain regions of Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia. Nearly half (forty-nine) of the inns are in North Carolina. Arrangement is by state from north to south, with towns listed alphabetically under each state. For each inn the author includes address, telephone number, name of innkeeper, when open, meals served, whether children or pets are permitted, whether checks or credit cards are accepted, directions for getting to the inn, and rates. A brief but informative text tells a bit about each inn. Also included and most helpful is a map for each state showing locations of inns. There is an index by state and town. Order from EPM Publications, Inc. 1003 Turkey Run Road, McLean, VA 22101, (\$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-914440-80-2)

The Appalachian Consortium Press (University Hall, Appalachian State University, Boone 28608) in 1984 published **Minstrel of the Appalachians; The Story of Bascom Lamar Lunsford** by Loyal Jones. Lunsford (1882-1973) was a North Carolinian who promoted traditional mountain music and dancing. This account is thorough and scholarly, with notes, bibliography, and appendixes, including a discography and list of Lunsford's recordings in the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress. One minor quibble is that there are no credit lines for the fifty photographs. 249 pp. paper. \$10.95. ISBN 0913239-11-9.

In 1984 Velma Barfield was executed by the state of North Carolina for the murder of four people, including her mother. She was the first woman to be executed in this country for twenty-two years. **Woman on Death Row** by Velma Barfield is her story of her life until just before her execution on November 2, 1984, including her drug addiction and her religious conversion while in prison. Though this certainly is not an impar-

tial account of Ms. Barfield's life, it is an important book. It is published by Oliver Nelson Books, a division of Thomas Nelson Publishers, P.O. Box 141000, Nelson Place at Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. 175 pp. paper \$6.95. ISBN 0-8407-9531-9.

For public library ghost and mystery collections is a new title from East Woods Press (429 East Blvd., Charlotte 28203); **Coastal Ghosts: Haunted Places from Wilmington, North Carolina to Savannah, Georgia**. The North Carolina ghosts center around Wilmington; most of the tales are about South Carolina ghosts. 184 pp. \$12.95.

Libraries that collect regional materials or cookbooks will want to get a copy of **Bill Neal's Southern Cooking** (UNC Press). Neal, co-owner and chef of a Chapel Hill restaurant, has received national attention and praise from such notables as Craig Claiborne. The nice thing is that it's all true. The **Cookbook** is southern, sensible, and literary (an appropriate quotation opens each chapter), and the recipes are good, easy to read, list both English and metric amounts, and have complete instructions, including recommended equipment. There are both a list of works consulted and an index. 233 pp., \$15.95. ISBN 0-8078-1649-3.

**Clenched Fists, Burning Crosses: A Novel of Resistance** by Chris South is a feminist novel set in the Durham area, though the location is not crucial to the plot. It is a story of opposition to the power of white men, all of whom are evil characters in the book. The plot involves a group of lesbians who are fighting the Klan and the racist, sexist society they see around them. Libraries that are consciously collecting feminist literature will want to purchase this title. Others may want to examine it before deciding whether to purchase. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1984. 183 pp. \$17.95 cloth. ISBN 0-89594-154-6; \$7.95 paper. ISBN 0-89594-153-8.

Collections of genealogy will want to note a new title recently published by Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. of Baltimore. **Marriages of Johnston County, North Carolina, 1762-1868**, compiled by Brent H. Holcomb, contains abstracts of all 3,946 extant marriage bonds for the period indicated. Arrangement is alphabetical by name of groom and provides name of bride, date of bond, and name of bondsman. An index lists both brides and bondsmen. 162 pp. \$15.00 + \$1.25 postage & handling ISBN 0-8063-1120-7.