

BOOK REVIEWS

Tarheel Talk; an Historical Study of the English Language in North Carolina to 1860;
by Norman E. Eliason. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1956.
324 p. \$5.00.

There are few books classified in the 410's which could be recommended as enjoyable reading. *Tarheel Talk* is such a book. Any Tar Heel "reader," as a librarian defines the word, will enjoy parts, if not all of this discussion of the vernacular in the Old North State.

Using manuscripts in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina, Dr. Eliason made an historical study of the English language in North Carolina before 1860. The writers of the material used included, "plantation owners, overseers, slaves, students, professors, lawyers, politicians, storekeepers, blacksmiths, fisherman, goldminers, housewives and children." After a background chapter and chapters describing the types of writings used, and language attitudes and differences, the author discusses vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

"Scuppernong" and "buncombe" are identified as two words of indisputable North Carolina origin. Other words, although not native to this state, were found to be in use here at an earlier time than the *Dictionary of Americanism* cites. Many words were common in one part of the state but not in others: *fireboard* (mantelpiece), *cuppin* (cow pen), and *poke* (paper sack). The only two words tentatively suggested as "Tarheelisms" are *tow sack* and *biddie*.

Pronunciation was easier to determine from the spelling in writings of the lower classes and children than of the educated adult. It was more difficult to determine what differences existed in pronunciation between the social classes because the upper classes usually spelled correctly. Most lapses of writers in this group were in the use of plantation or shop terms which were in common verbal usage but not "eye-words."

Two appendices contain word lists. The first is a list of "word usage" which gives words and phrases with a short definition and a quotation with author and date used. The second list is of "significant spellings" also identified by county and date.

The value of this book to the philologist will no doubt be assayed in the other reviews. Anyone interested in North Carolina should find it fascinating reading. The author is Professor of English at the University of North Carolina. A Guggenheim fellowship enabled him to do the necessary research for *Tarheel Talk*.

ELAINE VON OESSEN

A Union list of Social Science Periodicals Currently Received in the Libraries of Duke University, North Carolina State College, The University of North Carolina, and The Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, edited by Robert E. Thomason, Chapel Hill, N. C. 78 pp. processed.

A project of the Inter-University Committee on Library Cooperation, this alphabetical title list was edited by Robert E. Thomason, supervisor of bibliographies, University of North Carolina Library. It lists periodicals (not all serials and few government documents) currently received by the four libraries in anthropology, economics, geography, planning, political science and sociology. History and psychology are not included. The purpose of the union list is to "reveal some duplication of subscriptions to highly specialized periodicals for which single subscriptions may suffice to meet the needs of all four campuses." Other libraries may find the list useful as a checklist and for referral. Only a limited number of copies are available from the UNC library.

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