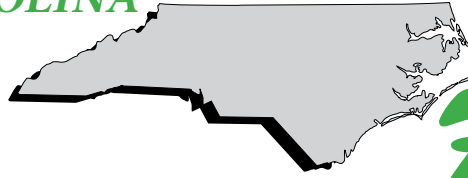


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# NORTH CAROLINA



# Books

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Nicholas Graham, Compiler

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Milton Ready.

## *The Tar Heel State: A History of North Carolina.*

Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005.  
404pp. \$39.95. ISBN 1-57003-591-1.

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be viewed as a replacement for key works by Hugh T. Lefler, Albert Ray Newsome, and William S. Powell, it deserves a prominent place among histories of the Tar Heel State.

That Ready chose to write this book is interesting in itself. Professor *emeritus* of history at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, he earned his PhD in history from the University of Georgia. Ready is the author or editor of several books pertaining to Georgia during the colonial period. His writings about North Carolina appear to be confined to popular histories of Asheville and African Americans in the western part of the state.

Readers who want a well-written interpretation of major trends from the period of prehistory to the present will enjoy this book. Chapters at the beginning (“The Great Rift”) and near the end (“Triads, Triangles, and Parks: The Urbanization of North Carolina”) describe in detail how North Carolina’s geography and geology have affected its development. The author employs interesting turns of phrase and assertive declarations to describe well-known events and themes, helping them to come to life. Moreover, he devotes long passages, including an entire chapter on the Cherokee, to ethnic groups and minorities whose lives were treated less fully in earlier histories. Here we learn not just about Thomas Day, the free African American cabinetmaker in Milton, but also about African American businessmen, educators, and leaders of the civil rights movement. People in western North Carolina will appreciate Ready’s unusually full attention to that region.

More than 150 illustrations enliven the text. Gleaned largely from the extensive holdings of the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the State Archives, the images include many that are not commonly seen in print. Professor Ready and the archivists and librarians who assisted him obviously invested much time in this fruitful effort.

In a work of this scope, omissions and problems inevitably occur. Perhaps most disappointing is the total lack of information concerning trends in the arts, literature, and music. Ready ignores the role of libraries in promoting knowledge. The judicious editing of a number of redundant passages might have made space for these or other topics, which certainly are as important as barbecue, Cheerwine, and Texas Pete hot sauce. One wonders what led the author to state, on page 364, that North Carolina did not produce high-level military leaders during the Civil War because it lacked “major educational institutions such as the Universities of Virginia and South Carolina or military academies like Virginia Military Institute. . . .” Ready’s commendable effort to produce an interesting text resulted in the use of a number of colloquialisms that probably should have been removed.

Nevertheless, the author has interpreted important trends and movements in history with insight and grace. *The Tar Heel State: A History of North Carolina*, deserves a place in North Carolina’s public, academic, and high school libraries.

Maurice C. York  
East Carolina University

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Peter J. Robinson.

## *North Carolina Weather & Climate.*

Chapel Hill: Published in association with the  
State Climate Office of North Carolina by the  
University of North Carolina Press, 2005.  
256pp. \$24.95 ISBN 0-8078-5625-8.

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Whether you are a weather enthusiast or just curious about the local forecast, North Carolina’s ever-changing weather is sure to keep anyone interested. *North Carolina Weather & Climate* is the first book devoted solely to the state’s weather, and it does so in a way that makes the complex science of meteorology accessible to the general reader.

Peter J. Robinson, co-author of *Contemporary Climatology*, professor of geography at UNC-Chapel Hill, and director of the North Carolina Climate Program, sets out to inform North Carolinians about the weather in their state so they can better understand and adapt

to its frequent vagaries. The book begins with an overview of meteorology basics, then proceeds to an examination of the weather of the state's regions—Coastal, Piedmont/Sandhills, and Mountains—and how forecasts are created.

Robinson skillfully describes hurricanes and other recent major weather events. These sections, along with easy-to-read charts and clear diagrams, help the reader connect to the material through personal experience as well as develop an understanding of key meteorological principles in the overall picture of North Carolina weather. Robinson makes a concentrated effort to ensure that the content is of practical value; he provides advice about making personal forecasts and tips on using forecasts for activities like gardening and vacation planning. Along with an index, there are three appendices that provide additional resources for weather information, guidance for amateur collection of weather data, and basic weather statistics for a group of North Carolina cities. Using a lucid and informative style, this book addresses the larger global climate and its effects on North Carolina weather as well as the regional weather patterns that influence the day-to-day forecast.

Robinson's book will help North Carolinians gain better insight into the state's weather in a way that makes the book suitable for academic, public, and school libraries.

Laura Smith  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Adams, Kevin.

***North Carolina Waterfalls:  
A Hiking and Photography Guide.***

Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 2005.  
590 pp. \$19.95. 0-89587-320-6.

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**N**eed a guidebook to waterfalls in North Carolina? This is the one. Kevin Adams has updated his 1994 guide to North Carolina waterfalls. This book describes hundreds of waterfalls, provides directions to each one, and suggests tips for photographing them. A rating system distinguishes waterfalls that are easily accessible, beautiful, or both. Historical events that impacted each waterfall area are included, enabling readers to integrate geography and history for a unique view of the state.

*Waterfalls in North Carolina* works from east to west. The book groups waterfalls into hubs. For example, Hub 21 denotes 27 waterfalls located around Brevard, in Transylvania County. Hub 24, also in and around Transylvania County, groups waterfalls located around Lake Toxaway. Trail descriptions allow hikers to gauge slope gradient, accessibility, and walking distances. Advice for photographers includes suggested lenses, filters, and best viewing angles and seasons for successful pictures. All of the waterfalls described in the book are listed in an index. The illustrative material includes color and black-and-white photos and maps. Adams will continue to update the text and provide new information on his website at <http://www.kadamsphoto.com/waterfall.htm>.

Readers will encounter waterfalls that are well known as well as many that are less familiar but worth seeking out. Popular waterfall areas include Blowing Rock, Grandfather Mountain, Hickory Nut Gorge, and Linville Falls. The latter was the setting for scenes in the 1992 film, "The Last of the Mohicans." Waterfalls that may be less familiar include four along the Little River near Brevard. They are part of the DuPont State Forest. The land was once owned by the DuPont Company and later by Sterling Diagnostic. The state bought the land after years of contention with a private developer who intended to subdivide the entire property into housing lots. Another waterfall area worth seeking out is the Thompson River corridor. Many of the waterfalls in the area are on land once owned by Crescent Resources, a subsidiary of Duke Energy. Several years ago, Crescent transferred large tracts to the state, greatly increasing access to the falls.

*Waterfalls of North Carolina* is recommended for both public and academic libraries.

Mary Metzger  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

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Jones, H.G.

***Scoundrels, Rogues, and  
Heroes of the Old North State.***

Charleston, S.C.: History Press, 2004.  
128pp. \$16.99 ISBN 1-59629-025-0.

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**H**.G. Jones steps outside of the traditional concepts and facts of North Carolina history and gives a glimpse of the state from a different perspective in this collection of wildly entertaining stories.

Originally written for a weekly column, *In Light of History*, which was distributed by the Associated Press from 1979-1986, these wide-ranging essays illustrate the wit and color of the Old North State and its people. As befits their original format, all of the essays are short, quick reads.

There are many recognizable figures in the book, including the "original" Siamese twins Eng and Chang Bunker; Anne Bonney, "the female pirate;" and Frankie Silver, who was the first woman hanged after being convicted of murder in North Carolina.

But Jones also veers away from the familiar to cover some of the more scandalous and astounding figures in the state's history, including North Carolina's colonial governor Arthur Dobbs, who had a relationship with a fifteen-year girl old whom he eventually married, and Ruben C. Bland of Robersonville who fathered thirty-four children. Jones states that the facts presented are true to the best of his ability, but acknowledges that, as with many stories of this nature, there is room for error.

Jones is a longtime authority on North Carolina history, having served as State Archivist and as Curator of the North Carolina Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill before his retirement. These stories will delight any reader interested in an entertaining collection of tales about North

Carolina and lesser-known North Carolinians, and is appropriate for all libraries.

Calvin Craig  
Gaston College

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Persons, W. Scott and Jeanine M. Davis.

***Growing & Marketing Ginseng,  
Goldenseal & Other Woodland Medicinals.***

Fairview, N.C.: Bright Mountain Books, 2005.  
466 pp. \$25.00. ISBN 0-914875-42-6.

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As globalization, technology, and pharmaceuticals change every aspect of American life, a book about the cultivation and use of herbal remedies is appealing. As the title suggests, *Growing & Marketing Ginseng, Goldenseal & Other Woodland Medicinals* is no simple gardening book. It guides readers through the process of medicinal herb entrepreneurship—from the creation of the ideal shaded plot up to the sale of mature herbs to a U.S. distributor, sometimes years later.

For twenty-six years, W. Scott Persons has grown ginseng and goldenseal commercially in Western North Carolina. This book partially revises portions of his thrice-reissued *American Ginseng: Green Gold*. Co-author Jeanine M. Davis is affiliated with the N.C. State University Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station, and brings expertise in the cultivation of woodland herbs.

The first half of this book is devoted to American ginseng. A history of ginseng cultivation and trade is followed by a dozen chapters devoted to the planting and care of ginseng crops; a separate bibliography and a resource list follow the American ginseng chapters. The second section of the book—titled “Other Species of Green Gold”—covers eleven other forest botanicals: Bethroot, Black cohosh, Bloodroot, Blue cohosh, False unicorn, Galax, Mayapple, Pinkroot, Spikenard, Wild ginger, and Wild indigo. A brief history of use, a botanical description, and a cultivation guide is provided for these eleven species; resources for further reading are also cited for each.

This book guides readers in great detail through the process of cultivating medicinal plants. Additional marketing and business topics lead to chapters with applications mainly for those involved in commercial agriculture, not the casual gardener. Interesting economic and political histories of the medicinal herb industry are present, but not in great detail.

The authors’ conversational prose is very readable—even on subjects like pest diagnostics, or finding a seller. Text is interspersed with illustrations, tables, and timelines. Main text is followed by a glossary, directory, bibliography, tables of commercial and botanical information, and an index.

Regionally, ginseng growth is limited to cooler, deciduous forest areas with rich soil. Patrons in the foothills and mountainous North Carolina counties would make best use of this book.

Jessica Efron  
Appalachian State University

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Walter J. Klein.

***He Ain't Heavy He's My Brother Zeb.***

Raleigh: The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted  
Masons of North Carolina, 2005.  
133 pp. ISBN 0-9771115-0-4.

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This handsomely-printed and well-illustrated production by the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, N.C. is like a grandfather’s tale of a beloved and important Confederate governor and Reconstruction senator. It is neither a biography of Zebulon Baird Vance, nor a history of Masonry in North Carolina during Vance’s life, but a meandering melding of both, interspersed with long anecdotes lifted, with attribution, from other works. It is, nonetheless, informative and entertaining. The author squarely faces—and bemoans—the racial spirit of the time that Vance and the Masons endorsed despite their own paeans to equality. While the intended audience appears to be Masons, or perhaps school children, this is a worthwhile addition to libraries with an interest in North Carolina. More complete and traditional recent biographies are Joe A. Mobley’s *War Governor of the South: North Carolina’s Zeb Vance in the Confederacy* (University Press of Florida, 2005) and Gordon McKinney’s *Zeb Vance: North Carolina’s Civil War Governor and Gilded Age Political Leader* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Patrick Valentine  
East Carolina University

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Jerry D. Neal, with Jerry Bledsoe.

***Built on a Rock: A Memoir of  
Family, Faith, and Place.***

Asheboro, N.C.: Down Home Press, 2005.  
Dist. By John Blair.  
224 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 0-9767829-0-1.

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Jerry Neal showed an interest in science early on. His future in electronics was foreshadowed by his very first phone, built as a third-grader using a Band-Aid box, a razor blade, and a pencil lead. Neal would later become a highly successful founder of RF Micro Devices in Greensboro, which pioneered some of the technology critical to the cell phone boom.

Neal attended Gaston Tech (now Gaston College) for his electronics engineering training and shortly after graduation married his high school sweetheart. His first professional job was with the W.B. Robinson power plant in Hartsville, S.C., but he soon left to join Hewlett-Packard’s High Point (N.C.) office. Neal eventually founded his own company and moved with his family to Ohio. However, a disastrous business relationship put a strain on the family’s finances and contributed to his eventual divorce.

Neal headed back to Randolph County to regroup at his parents' home. It was a difficult period, but he took great strength from the "rock," which was his parents' faith in God and their belief in him. He found another job and married again, and rediscovered the entrepreneurial urge. Neal was one of the co-founders of RF Micro Devices, the highly successful venture that provided his family with a level of monetary success that would change their lives forever.

Linda and Jerry Neal began to focus on the ways they could use their wealth to help others, particularly sick children. They became affiliated with the work of St. Jude Children's Hospital and the Victory Junction Gang Camp for chronically ill children, a NASCAR-themed camp they founded in memory of Adam Petty. But another, independent project was also slowly taking shape in their minds, one that would combine an absorbing interest in historic homes with their growing desire to do more for sick children. This project would become an estate home called Linbrook Hall.

Construction on Linbrook is a story in itself, one full of setbacks, delays, cost overruns, and worries. At the book's end the Neals are reconsidering whether to actually live in Linbrook Hall at all because of the ongoing construction costs and maintenance work required. However, they are clearly committed to the project and fully intend to use the house for conferences and charitable events that will continue to help support research and the care of sick children for many years to come.

The "rock" referred to in the title has multiple meanings. Jerry Neal's parents were just fourteen years old when they first met at a flat rock on a dirt road near his grandfather's land. Through a series of fortuitous events the rock itself, long considered lost, was recovered and placed at Linbrook Hall. The "rock" also represents the strong religious faith of Neal's parents, which they instilled in their son, and which has carried him through the best and worst of times.

Jerry Neal's earlier book, *Fire in the Belly: Building a World-leading High-tech Company from Scratch in Tumultuous Times* (Down Home Press, 2005) offers in more detail his philosophy of success in business and provides further insight into the entrepreneurial spirit. It is also co-written with author/journalist Jerry Bledsoe.

*Built on a Rock* is recommended for libraries in the Piedmont as well as libraries with an interest in the state's business history and prominent North Carolinians generally.

Bryna Coonin  
East Carolina University

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Doris Iarovici.

*American Dreaming and Other Stories.*

Charlotte: Novello Press, 2005.  
166 pp. \$21.95. 0-9760963-5-X.

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This short collection of seven stories, Iarovici's first book and the winner of the 2005 Novello Literary Award, is a promising start by a new author. A psychiatrist at Duke University, Iarovici published her first story in *Seventeen* when she was a teenager.

In the title story, a Thai woman who came to the United States with her American husband has worked fourteen years as a cleaning woman, never even encouraged by her husband to learn to read and write. Now, with money secretly saved up, she can afford to return to Thailand or go to school or find her own American dream. A Romanian immigrant in the story "Practical" also pursues her own American dream--a medical career. Her husband married her for her plainness, because he wanted a lifelong nurse who would not tempt rich American men. Her own motives for marriage come as a shock to him.

In the chilling story "Tap Dance," a medical student watches a star resident attempt a painful spinal tap over and over, though she knows he should stop and seek help. She changes her respect from the resident to the patient, whose humanity she comes to understand. "If Wishes Were Horses" is also chilling, as it unravels the tale of a woman who steals a neighbor's husband. Though he's already beginning to suffer from Alzheimer's, she plans to marry for his money and soon be rid of him.

In "Facts," a woman visits the father who deserted her family because of his mental illness. The meeting goes badly, and though she wants to reject everything about her father, his warning words about her marriage prove to be true. "Waiting for Power" shows a wife's mental journey to freedom, as she discovers that her ex-husband lied about losing power at his house in order to stay at hers. Finally, in "Attempt, Unsuccessful," a pregnant professor unintentionally causes a suicidal student to be committed to the hospital.

Although some passages feel contrived and the author seems to hold characters at a clinical distance, the writing is insightful and fast-moving. The collection is recommended to public and academic libraries.

Nancy P. Shires  
East Carolina University