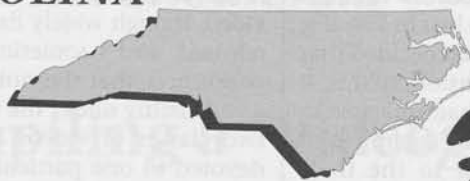


NORTH CAROLINA



Books

Robert G. Anthony, Jr., Compiler

Born and educated in North Carolina and now residing near Raleigh, Margaret Maron (rhymes with baron) is a veteran mystery writer. Previous novels, most featuring New York Police Department (NYPD) smart cop Lieutenant Sigrid Harald, have been nominated for the Anthony, Agatha, Macavity, and American Mystery awards. In *Bootlegger's Daughter*, Maron forsakes the streets of New York for fictional Colleton County, North Carolina, just east of Raleigh and the setting of her earlier mystery novel *Bloody Kin* (Doubleday, 1985).

The authenticity of the setting is the strongest point of *Bootlegger's Daughter*. Wonderful, true to the ear description abounds without intruding on the plot. From Main Street to Possum Creek, Colleton County feels and smells like home. While its focus on crime weaves a darker texture, Maron's style is close kin to the humorous exaggeration in Clyde Edgerton's stories of Listre, North Carolina, and the smiling through the tears sentiment of rural Alabama in Fannie Flagg's *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*.

Margaret Maron.

Bootlegger's Daughter.

New York: Mysterious Press, 1992. 261 pp. \$18.95.
ISBN 0-89296-445-6.

In Colleton County nobody locks the door, at least not before dark. There are plenty of political barbecues, great fields of tobacco, ponds loaded with large-mouth bass, country stores with old-fashioned drink coolers, and a mouth-watering litany of southern home cooking. ("Supper was the usual pork barbecue, cole slaw, hush puppies, and sweet iced tea.") People read the *Raleigh News & Observer* and discuss the Jesse Helms-Harvey Gantt United States Senate race. Family is everything; who your daddy and granddaddy are determine

your place in the community and the legitimacy of your actions. Yuppies from Raleigh and the Research Triangle, as well as a few damn Yankees, are gradually encroaching on the tranquility of Colleton County, but the patterns and rhythms of life are still governed by tradition.

The story opens with Deborah Knott, a young attorney, deciding to run for district judge. Deborah's family is old and well known — perhaps too much so, for her daddy, Kezzie, is notorious for his bootlegging activities. Kezzie is politically powerful, but his reputation greatly affects Deborah and her political aspirations.

At the same time Deborah is asked by Gayle Whitehead to investigate an eighteen-year-old unsolved murder. When Gayle was only a baby someone kidnapped her and her mother, Janie. Three days later the two were found in an abandoned mill. Gayle was still alive, but Janie had been killed. As Deborah campaigns across the district she questions people she has known all her life about the murder and discovers secrets long buried. The story proceeds at a good clip, intertwining campaign dirty tricks with new murders, until all is revealed in an exciting, if slightly contrived, denouement.

While Maron exhibits thorough knowledge of police procedure, she softens the edges with humor that sparkles throughout the novel. As Deborah notes, "North Carolina houses our State Bureau of Investigation in what used to be a school for the blind on Old Garner Ferry Road south of Raleigh. Some of us don't let the agents forget it either."

The book dust jacket introduces *Bootlegger's Daughter* as "A Deborah Knott Mystery." Here's hoping Deborah and her family and friends in Colleton County will be back soon. It is good to see a strong, independent, thoroughly southern woman appear on the detective scene.

This novel is recommended for all public libraries and for those academic libraries collecting North Carolina fiction.



— Suzanne Wise, Appalachian State University

Although they constituted the vast majority of the population for over two hundred years, the "common" people of North Carolina have rarely been studied in depth by historians. Travelers in the colonial period and observers before the Civil War commented that such people made a lasting impression on them. It was they who gave North Carolina its character. The planter and professional class and the very poor have been the subject of many books and articles. Now we can understand the large middle group of people who left their mark on much of the state.

Bill Cecil-Fronsman.

***Common Whites:
Class and Culture in Antebellum
North Carolina.***

Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992.
274 pp. \$34.00. ISBN 0-8131-1777-1.

Farmers who owned small tracts of land and artisans who provided services, most of whom rarely held public office, were numerous in all sections of North Carolina. Self-sufficient, poorly educated if educated at all, generally honest but sometimes not, law-abiding but willing to take matters into their own hands when necessary, these people made the best of the work God had called them to do. Nevertheless, they recognized the inequities that existed between themselves and the wealthy planter and slaveholding class.

Cecil-Fronsman relates the role of the common people in different sections of the state and how their "betters" managed to lull them into contentment with their status. He discusses their understanding of slavery which led them to accept it with little or no question for a long time. He also refers to the hard life they led, their limited resources, and the self-sufficient economy under which they struggled. The importance to them of honor and religion and the role of folklore and superstition are covered.

The reference to contemporary documents, particularly petitions to the legislature and letters to the governor, make this an especially moving and realistic account. In many respects it is reminiscent of Guion B. Johnson's *Ante-Bellum North Carolina*.

Although this book is the outgrowth of the author's doctoral dissertation and is carefully documented, its style no longer betrays its origin. Its detailed index will make *Common Whites* a useful reference tool. Its variety of unusual topics will surely suggest subjects for term papers or feature stories for newspapers. It will also be welcomed by any reader interested in the years before 1865.

— William S. Powell, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

U*nruly Women* begins with the premise that women whose behavior violated law in the antebellum and Civil War South are the logical focus for studying resistance to the white male domination of the political economy of that era. Like many of the new social histories written in the last twenty years, Bynum's book analyzes women's lives at the grassroots level. She has chosen to study those disorderly and discontent white and free black women whose behavior became part of the court records in three North Carolina Piedmont counties: Orange, Granville, and Montgomery.

Women who complained in court about their husbands, or, vice versa; those who broke the laws governing social and sexual behavior; and those who resisted the Confederate state are the focus of her study. This necessarily leaves out a great many women in these counties.

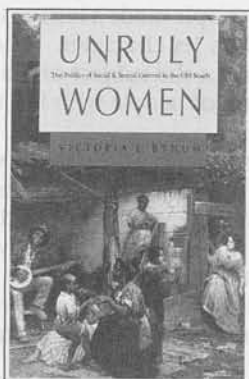
Those who were part of the social and economic mainstream and those who were slaves do not appear often in the court records. Instead, the sources used by Bynum record episodes from the lives of women who were not usually part of the Piedmont yeomanry, the planter class, or slave society. They tended to be poor white women, single women (especially unwed mothers), and poor free black women. Bynum contends that race, class, and gender were dominant elements in the power structure that taught these women in its legal web. She argues that the need to keep women dependent on marriage for position in society, to maintain the racial purity of white womanhood, and to deny adult status to blacks were among the most important underlying assumptions of this system.

In a book whose six chapters are liberally annotated and illustrated with tables, maps, and charts, Bynum compares and contrasts the social structures of the three counties. She looks at popularly held views of black versus white womanhood and the reaction of the courts to miscegenation. She also assesses how the paternalistic court system enforced laws relating to property, divorce, and domestic relations. In the final chapters, Bynum searches court records for signs of white and black women's resistance to the Civil

Victoria E. Bynum.

***Unruly Women:
The Politics of Social and Sexual
Control in the Old South.***

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,
1992. 233 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8078-2016-4 (cloth)
0-8078-4361-X (paper).



War through illicit trade, rioting, and support for draft evasion.

Bynum acknowledges that the three counties she chose do not represent the traditional view of the Old South, but she sees in their economic and social structure a good example of the diversity of the South as a whole. She recognizes how thin the record is for those voiceless members of society whose point of view is represented only by what the court chose to record. Consequently, she sets up a feminist theoretical framework for these women and writes about them as if they were conscious activists in a fight against male-dominated society. Her introductory chapter is useful in explaining her premise for the book, but it is jargon-laden and assumes a modern feminist motivation for the actions of nineteenth-century women. This is otherwise a strong and well-documented piece of historical research that does reveal the types of behavior that caused women to become entangled in the court system and the responses of the judiciary to those violations. Her analysis of the motivation for the courts' handling of these cases, that is, maintenance of the political and social status quo, is borne out more clearly by the historical record than her assumption that these women were struggling "to carve out a space for themselves in a society that condemned and marginalized them."

Victoria E. Bynum is a women's history professor at Southwest Texas State University. Her bibliography, which includes primary sources (numerous manuscript collections, public records, newspapers, and books), along with about two hundred additional secondary sources, is a gold mine for anyone studying the social history of this region of Piedmont North Carolina. A detailed index also makes topical and proper name access easy. Bynum's book is of interest for academic libraries and any North Carolina library building local history or women's history collections.

— Linda McCurdy, Duke University

Women finding strength is the unifying theme that links the eleven short stories of Jill McCorkle's *Crash Diet* into a cohesive pattern of voices.

The speakers represent variety in age and race but similarity in development of coping skills, each one facing disorienting experiences with reserves of courage and occasionally piercing insights into the human female condition. Along with the hard-earned insights come grit, determination, compassion, and irresistible doses of high good humor.

Known for her earlier novels, including *The Cheer Leader*, *July 7th*, *Tending to Virginia*, and *Ferris Beach*, McCorkle has moved into the challenging genre of short stories with confidence and agility, notwithstanding her initial hesitations about whether she could be a successful "switch hitter" — able to go back and forth between novels and stories." She can.

Unlike the novels, the southern setting for most of these stories seems almost coincidental: one can easily imagine the characters doing the same things with the same motives anywhere in the United States. In the title story, a deserted wife substitutes a buying spree for food binging, charging everything on her wayward husband's MasterCard. "Migration of the Love Bugs" reviews the adjustment problems facing an older woman who has retired to Florida with her husband. The widow in "Departures" finds temporary solace in watching small family scenarios at shopping malls and airports.

Jill McCorkle.

Crash Diet: Stories.

Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books, 1992.
253 pp. \$16.95. ISBN 0-945575-75-0.

In one story, however, the southern setting seems vital to characterizations and plot. "Words Gone Bad" reveals the poignant relationship of Mary and Bennie, close friends and co-workers in the custodial department at a large southern university. Both have experienced the bitter blows of racism, yet life has dealt a kinder hand to Bennie in giving him religious faith, a sunny disposition, and a supportive wife. Mary, on the other hand, has had only her repressed love for Bennie to see her through. Now, as Bennie tells Mary that he is retiring, she struggles to affirm some kind of belief in herself and her world without his daily presence. "If you throw a piece of trash to the ground then I'll do my damndest to make you feel like a worthless pig. And all the while I'll hold my head way up high because maybe, just maybe, *I am* on my way to something."

With four novels and this book of short stories on her résumé, as well as other short works that have appeared in literary journals and magazines such as the *Atlantic*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Seventeen*, Jill McCorkle has left North Carolina to teach creative writing at Harvard University. For now, North Carolina's loss is Harvard's gain. But it is hoped she will be back, bringing with her the attention to plot detail, sensitivity to character motivation, and universality of theme that will no doubt figure in anything she writes. *Crash Diet: Stories* is highly recommended for all public libraries and for college and university libraries that feature modern fiction collections.

— Nancy Ray, Southern Pines Public Library

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is the oldest state-sponsored university in the nation and in 1995 will celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of its opening. In recognition of its impending bicentennial, the university commissioned William D. Snider, retired editor of the *Greensboro News & Record*, to write the first comprehensive history of the institution since Kemp Battle published his magisterial two-volume account in 1912.

Snider writes fondly but objectively of the institution from which he graduated in 1941. He does not gloss over the university's low standards in its earliest years when it was barely more than an advanced academy, nor does he sugarcoat the university's poor record of opening its doors to black students after World War II. As one might expect from the author of *Helms and Hunt: The North Carolina Senate Race, 1984*, he is at his best in describing the political context in which the university first struggled and then thrived.

The excellence of Snider's analysis of the political milieu is offset by his inadequate treatment of educational issues, both within the institution and on the regional and national levels. Relying almost exclusively on secondary sources and neglecting two decades of scholarship on the history of American higher education, Snider superficially addresses or ignores altogether the kinds of questions that should receive more prominent attention in the history of any academic institution. For example, while he recounts the conflicting

curricular preferences of founders William Richardson Davie and Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, he fails to carry forward the story of curriculum changes except in a cursory fashion. He identifies with brief biographical sketches some of the more prominent graduates, especially those who occupied administrative posts; but he does not investigate the social and economic background of the student body as a whole. His account of the Reconstruction university focuses entirely on its political difficulties and misses the significance of efforts by the much-reviled Solomon Pool and by Kemp Battle, first as trustee and then as president, to transform the college into a true university. More seriously, he does not explain how one of the leading universities in the South was shaped by larger societal and educational influences and how it might have been different from or similar to other institutions. Only in his description of student unrest in the 1960s and 1970s is there a sense that the university was affected by forces outside the state.

In spite of these limitations, Snider's work does have a place in the historiography of the university. It will satisfy the interest of most general readers and will stand as a thorough chronicle of the university's political fortunes within the state. For the specialist on higher education, however, the definitive history of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill remains to be written.

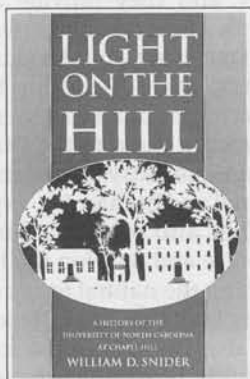
— Robin Brabham, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

William D. Snider.

Light on the Hill:

A History of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992. 370 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 0-8078-2023-7.



"This is what nobody in the wide world understands, she thought. This happiness. Small victories."

Louise's plaintive appeal for life's little pleasures sets the tone for Bingham's *Small Victories*, a somber story full of pathos. Set in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1958 with interludes in Kentucky and Massachusetts, the novel chronicles the lives of a southern-born and bred family, three generations linked by despair and tragedy.

Sisters Louise and Shelby Macelvene live alone in a homeplace full of memories of their mother and father running a military boarding school. Over the years after her father's death, Louise cares for the childish and childlike Shelby, mentally handicapped after an accident during childhood. Louise's responsibility to Shelby becomes her driving force when State Senator Tom, cousin to the spinster sisters, decides it is best for everyone concerned to have Shelby institutionalized.

Louise unleashes a maelstrom of family secrets in letters to Tom, Jr., away at college, as she attempts to draw ranks to persuade the elder Tom to return Shelby to her home. As young Tom absorbs the sorrows of the family's history, the heavy weight of the family's past encircles

him. "What is inherited is the way we all have to stop, quit ... give up. I don't know how to put it. There isn't much sap in this family anymore."

Sallie Bingham.

Small Victories.

Cambridge, Mass.: Zoland Books, 1992. 298 pp. \$20.95. ISBN 0-944072-20-8.

Young Tom is the only hope for illuminating the darkness. As thin as it is, the thread for renewed, revitalized life is woven into Tom's response to the family's past and in his exodus from its stranglehold. Louise's life revolves around Shelby's, has no definition of its own outside the role of caretaker and historian. Tom's mother and father live lives of material wealth and impoverished souls. It is Tom upon whom rebirth depends.

Bingham's writing at times soars but is more often a methodical telling of a dim tale with characters and events at times so morose as to be almost unbelievable. The encompassing darkness and string of catastrophes prompt the reader to question Bingham's inspiration and motivation. How much of this reflects Bingham's own family history can be discovered in her family memoir, *Passion and Prejudice* (Knopf, 1989).

Small Victories is most appropriate for public library collections and may provide for the academic library collection insight into the Bingham family psyche. Other writings by Bingham include the novel *After Such Knowledge* (Houghton Mifflin, 1960), as well as two collections of short stories, *The Touching Hand* (Houghton Mifflin, 1967) and *The Way It Is Now* (Viking, 1972). In 1985, Bingham established the Kentucky Foundation for Women which is the publisher of *The American Voice*, a feminist literary magazine.

— Sharon Snow, Wake Forest University

M

any books have been written about the Outer Banks. This latest one is a fascinating study of those famed barrier islands along the North Carolina coast. The authors are naturalists, and they provide an interesting combination of science and history in a beautifully written style. Lazell is a scientist who has published extensively and Alexander, a former English teacher and newspaper editor. Their friendship began in 1957 when they began observing and collecting animals together in Tennessee. This common interest eventually brought them to the Outer Banks.

Their goal is to describe the unique ecosystem of the Outer Banks and show how it has influenced animal and human life, exploration, and experimentation on the islands. They also present arguments for and against human intervention to stabilize and develop the islands.

The authors begin by describing the natural forces of sand, wind, and water along the coast, explaining how the Outer Banks were formed and how they have survived. Later they show how the forces of nature affected man's settlement on the islands, providing interesting accounts of the Lost Colony, Blackbeard's defeat, and the Wright Brothers' aviation experiments. They also describe the distribution of flora and fauna and

the ecological balance maintained by various species on the islands. The authors conclude by discussing current controversies over oil and gas exploration, dredging and jetty construction, and the fate of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

There is a bibliography for each chapter and an extensive index. Source materials include scientific articles, government documents, books, and newspapers. Drawings and maps throughout the book provide clear illustrations of coastal processes. Libraries should preserve the book jacket because it contains an aerial photograph that is referred to several times in the text.

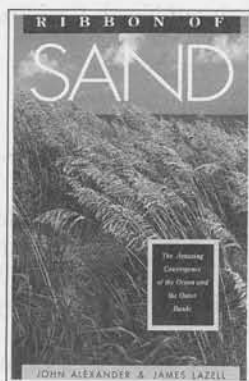
Ribbon of Sand is a comprehensive study of the ecology of the Outer Banks from a naturalist point of view. It covers the scientific, political, and social elements that have created and sustained these barrier islands, and provides insight for their future. This informative and interesting book is appropriate for all libraries.

— Arlene Hanerfeld, University of North Carolina at Wilmington

John Alexander and James Lazell.

***Ribbon of Sand:
The Amazing Convergence of the
Ocean and the Outer Banks.***

Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books, 1992.
238 pp. \$18.95. ISBN 0-945575-32-7.



COMPILER'S NOTE: For the past five years, during which I have served as book review editor of this journal, many colleagues in the Tar Heel library community have cheerfully contributed book reviews to this column. Their reviewing skills, willingness to take the time to write reviews, and interest in informing fellow librarians about newly published North Caroliniana have been truly impressive and greatly appreciated. To them, and to the other readers of "North Carolina Books," thank you.

Beginning with the next issue of North Carolina Libraries, Dorothy D. Hodder will assume the book review editorship. She encourages comments and suggestions concerning the "North Carolina Books" column, which should be sent to her at the New Hanover County Public Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington, N.C. 28401.

Other Publications of Interest

In 1891, the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial School was established at Greensboro to train young white women as schoolteachers. Today, one hundred years later, approximately twelve thousand women and men attend the school, now known as the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where they pursue studies in a variety of disciplines. In *Changing Assignments: A Pictorial History of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro*, longtime UNC-G history professor Allen W. Trelease has gathered more than five hundred photographs illustrating the development of the school. As would be expected, many of the images depict major campus events, such as the construction of buildings and the arrival of male and black students. But most show people engaged in daily collegiate life at an institution ever evolving to meet its mission. (1991; University Book Store, Elliott University Center, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27412-5701; 214 pp.; \$29.95.)

The Historical Publications Section of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History has recently released *Addresses and Public Papers of James Grubbs Martin, Governor of North Carolina, Volume I, 1985-1989*, edited by Jan-Michael Poff. This 1,089-page volume, the latest in the Division's series of governors' documentaries that began with Thomas W. Bickett (1917-1921), covers Martin's first term. It includes his inaugural address, messages to the General Assembly, selected speeches and statements, and a roster of executive orders. Libraries may request a copy at no charge but are asked to submit \$3.00 to cover mailing costs. (1992; Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones Street, Raleigh, N.C. 27601-2807; 1,089 pp.)



First published in 1955, *North Carolina & Old Salem Cookery*, by Beth Tartan, has proved to be as much a staple in many a Tar Heel kitchen as sugar, salt, and spice. Now, several dozen new recipes are included in a new and revised edition of the book recently published by the University of North Carolina Press. Tartan not only provides several hundred recipes in all, but she also tells the significance of various foods in the culinary heritage of the Tar Heel state. (1992; University of North Carolina Press, P.O. Box 2288, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515-2288; 382 pp.; \$29.95; ISBN 0-8078-2035-0 (cloth); \$16.95; 0-8078-4375-X (paper).)

North Carolina provided more troops to the Confederate cause during the American Civil War than any state. In *Compendium of the Confederate Armies: North Carolina*, Stewart Sifakis has compiled a reference guide to facilitate research on those Tar Heels who wore the gray in that bloody conflict. This volume, one in a series on the southern states, is divided into three sections—artillery, cavalry, and infantry. Each section includes a listing of its military units, and, for each unit, official name, nicknames, and organizational details, such as date and location of creation, names of commanding officer and other field-grade officers, command assignments, and battles and campaigns in which the unit participated. Occasionally, titles of narrative histories of particular units are given. (1992; Facts on File, 460 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016-7382; 187 pp.; \$24.95; ISBN 0-8160-2289-5.)

Considered a classic description of life in the Appalachians, *Cabins in the Laurel*, by Muriel E. Sheppard, was first published in 1935. This study of mountain folk in the Toe River Valley in North Carolina also included 128 powerful photographs by noted Chapel Hill photographer Bayard Wootten. The University of North Carolina Press has chosen *Cabins in the Laurel* as the inaugural volume in its Chapel Hill Books series, which will publish new editions of the best books about the South or by southerners. The new Sheppard is a large-format edition and includes Wootten photographs specially produced from the original negatives. (1991; University of North Carolina Press, P.O. Box 2288, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515-2288; 287 pp.; \$29.95; ISBN 0-8078-1986-7 (cloth); \$16.95; 0-8078-4328-8 (paper).)

