

Books

Dorothy Hodder, Compiler

Farming has been the way of life for the fictional Clare family of Lothian County, North Carolina, since before the Civil War. They work from sunrise to sunset, toiling over their crops of tobacco and corn, harvesting crops with varying success. Life as a farmer is difficult in the modern United States, and the Clare family of the Sandhills Region of North Carolina provides a true example of the modern farm family's struggle to survive.

Waiting for Rain: A Farmer's Story chronicles the battle of one farmer to maintain his livelihood during economic hard times. Dan Butterworth, a professor at Morehead State University in Kentucky, writes about his subject with firsthand knowledge. He spent the hot, dry summer of 1986 with the family upon whom the Clares are based while teaching at a nearby college. While boarding in the "Clare household," he became the friend and confidant of the family patriarch, Archie Clare.

Archie Clare, aged sixty, contemplates giving up the life that he has known and which has sustained his family for generations. He pours out his thoughts to the author in a steady stream throughout that summer, and Butterworth, a willing listener, is fascinated. He listens patiently and sympathetically to all that Archie has to say: stories of his military service, his family history, his neighbors and their problems, government troubles, economic crises. Clare seems to have a love-hate relationship with the land, and having tried to escape the life of a farmer and failed, he has in fact developed a curious detachment about it. Butterworth's description of Clare's daily routine of riding the circuit rings true: the constant driving around in an old pickup through acres and acres of sandy farmland, checking on fields of crops, making personal contact with tenants and farm workers, maintaining machinery, with Archie continually smoking and talking about his life and work.

As the book progresses, Archie realizes that he must make a change in his occupation. His children are grown, and his son has no intention of following in his father's footsteps. Clare tries his hand at other jobs, including working in a tobacco warehouse, and finally settles on logging in the swamp. This is dangerous (Archie gives himself a back injury while on the job) but the pay is good, and he begins to clear some of his debts. Butterworth notes, though, that it is hard for Archie completely to give up his old ways — to a large extent he still keeps up his farming routine of riding the circuit.

Dan Butterworth's portrait of Archie Clare is realistic and straightforward, without much sentimentality. He depicts Clare for what he is: a Camel-smoking, weathered, hard-working survivor, although part of a dying breed. The author greatly admires his subject—particularly Clare's determination, grit, honesty, and strength in dealing with adversity. Through his writing, the author enables us to know this man personally, and to reach a basic understanding of his way of life. Butterworth's descriptions of the geographic area of rural Lothian and Campbell Counties and of the small communities of Farlanboro and Wayfare (all based on real places) add to the realism of his narrative. His writing style is thoughtful, purposeful, and flows along smoothly, much like the Lumber River locale he writes about.

Dan Butterworth has written a thought-provoking book about a very timely subject. *Waiting for Rain* very ably conveys the message of how hard it is to be a small farmer in today's world, and of how the simple, rural farm life that Americans have come to romanticize is in danger of extinction. It provides insight into what small farmers everywhere face: strangling government regulations, mountainous paperwork, heavy debt, labor troubles, and ultimately, always being forever at the mercy of the weather.

Waiting for Rain: A Farmer's Story is very highly recommended, and deserves a place in all high school, public, and academic libraries.

— Michael I. Shoop, Robeson County Public Library, Lumberton

Dan Butterworth.
***Waiting for Rain:
A Farmer's Story.***

Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1992.
226 pp. \$17.95. ISBN 0-945575-78-5.

7extile manufacture doesn't rank high on the list of glamour industries, but it runs deep in the lives of many North Carolina families. Even today nearly a quarter of the state's manufacturing jobs are in textiles. And no other state has more than North Carolina's 208,000 textile workers.

Brent Glass, concerned for many years with the state's industrial heritage as a historian with the Division of Archives and History, has written a brief chronological survey of the textile industry in North Carolina. The very readable text is dense with facts and figures, yet it gracefully tells a fascinating story, from the earliest mills to the current efforts by the industry to vitalize itself against the ravages of offshore competition. (Remember "Crafted with Pride"?)

Although the first successful mill in North Carolina was built in 1813, growth of the industry was slow until late in the nineteenth century. The change from water to electric power to operate textile machinery made possible the construction of large mills, which could be sited in more urban areas, in contrast to the early small mills located in villages along rivers at the fall line. Under the banner of "New South" industrialization in the southern Piedmont, textiles flourished in the early twentieth century to the point of surpassing the industry of New England by 1923. The promise of low wages, a plentiful supply of placid workers, proximity to the cotton fields, and a modern railroad network, enticed many an entrepreneur in North Carolina. Worker agitation to organize was frequent and intense, but the deep paternalism of the southern capitalist could not be overcome. Solidarity peaked during the great strike by four hundred thousand textile workers in 1934, but this strike, the largest in American history, failed. Reforms came during the next several decades with new corporate leadership.

The number of textile employees in North Carolina peaked at 293,600 in 1973. Since then about eighty-six thousand jobs have been lost, most of them to foreign competitors. Many mills have closed, and

in the 1980s the industry was hit hard by mergers and takeovers. Some pundits say the game is over for American textiles: there is no way to compete with the low wages of the Caribbean, Mexico, or Asia. The industry, on the other hand, is responding by shifting to high-value products, integrating manufacturing through automation, and creating new markets with innovative products in areas such as microfibers, medical textiles, geotextiles, non-woven, nonsewn apparel, industrial textiles, and composites. A highly skilled work force with a global outlook is being trained. North Carolina State University, with over nine hundred students in the College of Textiles, awards half the undergraduate textile degrees in the United States. High job placement rates for graduates continue to make careers in textiles attractive.

The author portrays an industry that "will continue to have a profound impact upon the state's economy and history for many years to come. There is hardly an area of life in North Carolina that does not reflect its impact." The book has fifty-three illustrations, quality printing, a bibliography of published and unpublished sources, and an index. It is a worthy addition to any collection on North Carolina history.

— Paul L. Garwig, North Carolina State University

Brent D. Glass.
***The Textile Industry
of North Carolina:
A History.***

Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1992. 119 pp. \$10.00. ISBN 0-86526-256-X.

Grover Cleveland Wolfe, of Asheville, North Carolina, died of typhoid fever on November 16, 1904. His four-year-old brother would always remember Grover's wasted body laid out on a cooling board in the family boarding house in St. Louis. That brother was Thomas Wolfe — Thomas Wolfe, who noticed every rich thing and never forgot any luscious taste, aromatic zephyr, or timbre-laden note of life; who never forgot his raven-haired brother Grover; who wrote a literary memory of a lost boy he called Grover. This was a scarcely fictionalized picture, in four different voices and times, of an almost twelve-year-old boy, called by his mother the brightest boy she had.

Truncated and bowdlerized sections of this novella appeared first as a story in the November 1937 *Redbook* magazine. It was anthologized, also in diminished form, in the posthumous collections, *The Hills Beyond* and *The Complete Short Stories of Thomas Wolfe*. James W. Clark, Jr. has re-edited this fully developed work using the manuscript material at Harvard. Professor Clark teaches English and is a director of Humanities Extension at North Carolina State University. He also serves as president of the Thomas Wolfe Society. He has inserted a few lost words, made the most felicitous of capitalizations, and let stylistic

Thomas Wolfe.

The Lost Boy: A Novella.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992. 100 pp. \$15.50. ISBN 0-8078-2063-6.



idiosyncrasies stand to preserve "the Gantian authenticity" of the text.

The Lost Boy is a literary journey of transformation of memory through time. It is a transformation through an imagined self, to mother, sister, brother; each narrator acting as a witness to the lost promise of the boy. Professor Clark places this construct of memory testimony within the Gantian saga, the great work that Wolfe had started with *Look Homeward, Angel*. The abrupt loss of elegiac happiness that follows an incident in front of the "stingy Crockers" assumes its full power as Professor Clark restores the sense impressions of "old Grover." The very important Jim Crow episode and the "evening of hot despair" had both been lopped off the *Redbook* version and their restoration makes the work.

The Lost Boy has eleven illustrations by Ed Lindlof. They charmingly reflect the life of the Wolfe family and turn of the century America. This is a singularly beautiful book. It is well designed, printed, and bound.

— Philip Banks, Asheville-Buncombe Library System

In 1988, Paxton Davis, North Carolina-born journalist and educator, published the first volume of his autobiography, *Being a Boy*, which recounts his idyllic childhood in his native Winston-Salem. Despite growing up in the aftermath of the Great Depression of 1929, Davis's childhood was not overshadowed by economic austerity; rather, it was tempered by the pervasive optimism of New Deal progressivism, and, more importantly, by the privileges of being from a middle-class, educated family.

The second volume of his autobiography, *A Boy's War*, published in 1990, constitutes Davis's memoirs of his experiences as a soldier in the U. S. Army during World War II. For Davis and other servicemen and women of his generation, World War II was a pivotal point in their lives.

Despite its centrality in Davis's life, however, World War II decisively postponed his late adolescence by abruptly forcing his passage to premature adulthood. *A Boy No More*, the third volume of Davis's autobiography, recounts a crucial psychological period in which he lives out his delayed late adolescence upon his return to civilian life and then consciously experiences the rite of passage into mature adulthood.

After receiving his honorable discharge, Davis returned to his hometown of Winston-Salem to discover that the concomitant events of World War II had irrevocably changed not only him and his comrades in arms, but also the civilians who worked for the war effort on the home front. Davis observed, among his discoveries in postwar Winston-Salem, the newly found independence and importance of women in the workplace; the progress, albeit slow, of blacks in their struggle to achieve equality under the law; the expansion of the economy, manifested by the overnight growth of shopping malls, housing developments, and supermarkets; and the rush to resume personal relationships placed on hold by the war — to marry, settle down, and raise a family — a phenomenon which led inexorably to what was later termed the "baby boom."

The bulk and heart of *A Boy No More* center on Davis's decisions to get a college education and to return to Winston-Salem to begin his professional career. Davis's descriptions of his life as a student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, and his life as a rookie journalist with the *Winston-Salem Journal* mirror the experiences of other GIs, men and women, who took advantage of the GI Bill to get an education to prepare them for careers which would enable them either to maintain the status they inherited from their parents, or, in many cases, to climb one or more rungs of the socioeconomic ladder. Davis captures both the stimulating intellectual environment of Johns Hopkins, its stellar professors and invigorating curriculum, and the fascinating behind-the-scenes action in the newsroom of one of North Carolina's oldest newspapers.

Educational and work-related experiences notwithstanding, it was the death of his father which sealed Davis's passage from his postponed adolescence to adulthood. Confronting the mortality of his father made Davis realize that from this moment on he was "a boy no more."

Throughout *A Boy No More*, Davis, the returning veteran, transforms his beloved Winston-Salem into a metaphor for postwar America. Through Davis's unique perspective the reader recognizes common threads of experience uniting all who lived through that tumultuous but exhilarating period of American history.

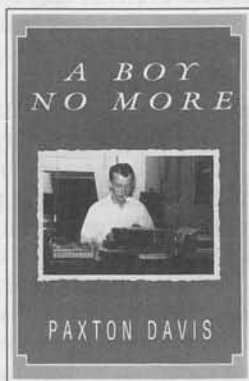
Davis's third installment of his autobiography will provide enjoyable reading and a sense of identification for those of his generation, who experienced World War II and its aftermath firsthand. Perhaps, more importantly, Davis's memoirs breathe life into this

Paxton Davis.

A Boy No More.

Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1992. 252 pp. ill.

\$17.95. ISBN 0-89587-094-0.



pivotal historical period for "baby boomers," and, even more so, for today's youth for whom World War II is already ancient history. Academic, public, and school libraries throughout the South and the nation will find *A Boy No More* a well-crafted personal narrative with universal appeal. Read in sequence after *Being a Boy* and *A Boy's War*, the reader will discover or rediscover in Davis's autobiographical trilogy the essence of North Carolina life in the 1930s and 1940s.

—Plummer Alston Jones, Jr., Elon College

Baseball trivia buffs would probably name the Cleveland Spiders of 1899 as the worst professional baseball team of all time. Wilt Browning, a sports columnist for the *Greensboro News & Record*, in his little book, *The Rocks: The True Story of the Worst Team in Baseball History*, proves, however, that this dubious distinction was earned in 1951 by the Granite Falls Rocks of the Class D Western Carolina League. The Rocks finished the season with fourteen wins and ninety-six losses for a winning percentage of .1272. They were last in the league in nearly every offensive category and, most importantly, scored only 367 runs, 241 runs fewer than the Lenoir Red Sox, the team just above the Rocks in the season's final standings.

But *The Rocks* is not a mere litany of futility. It is the very human story of six businessmen in love with the game of baseball, who were clearly out of their depth when it came to fielding a viable professional team. It is the story of the players and managers, many of whom were far better than the record suggests. It is the story of a time of great social change in the United States and in North Carolina: World War II was still a vivid memory, the Korean War was raging at its peak, Senator McCarthy was infecting the nation with fear of Communism, and old ways of life were beginning to disappear.

Granite Falls had in 1948, 1949, and 1950 produced state champion semi-pro teams. The whole town was crazy about baseball. When a slot came open in the Western Carolina League, it seemed reasonable that Granite Falls could fill the gap with a good team and steady fan attendance at the games. What the owners failed to realize was that playing grueling games almost everyday was far different from the more relaxed semi-pro schedule. More importantly, 1951 was not a good time to go into the professional baseball business—teams throughout the minor leagues were failing and attendance was way down. In short, it was a perfect prescription for disaster.

Despite their abysmal record, the Rocks weren't really all that bad. They were competitive in many games until about the seventh inning when their pitching inevitably failed. The owners were forced to sell many players in order to meet the payroll, players that time and time again, as members of better teams, came back to haunt the Rocks. As the best players left so did the fans, which compounded the owners' financial problems. The official scorer became so disinterested that he failed to file official game reports for the final sixteen games, a neglect

which has kept hidden all these years the most remarkable event of that long and dismal season. In the season's last week, the owners asked five excellent black ball players to join the team. Their gracious acceptance marked the first integration of any professional team in North Carolina.

The Rocks is a fine example of small scale social history and is a first-class baseball book. Browning has used interviews with "survivors" and available primary source material in reconstructing the events (unfortunately, many of the team's business records were destroyed by fire). For the baseball statistics enthusiast, an appendix is included with team and league records from 1951. Browning is a good storyteller who deftly plays the events of the Western Carolina League season and details of small town life against the larger crises of the world. Included as well are several highly entertaining related stories including the harrowing and miraculous story of a team bus with failed brakes hurtling down a twisting mountain highway. The reader is transported back to a time still near enough for many of us to remember but far enough away to seem ever more remote; an era which can tantalize us with its apparent simplicity but which in its own way was as complex as our own.

The quality of this little book goes beyond mere local interest. As an extraordinary slice of southern history, and as a view of life in a small North Carolina town forty years ago, it belongs in all southern libraries. As an extraordinary piece of baseball writing which touches fascinating but relatively unknown aspects of the game, it belongs in baseball collections everywhere.

—Daniel C. Horne, New Hanover County Public Library

Wilt Browning.
The Rocks: The True Story of the Worst Team in Baseball History.

Asheboro, N.C.: Down Home Press, 1992. 139 pp.
\$19.95. ISBN 1-878086-14-6.

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hen Catherine Carter moved from an elementary school library to a community college library and no longer numbered storytelling among her duties, she satisfied her desire to share her stories by writing them down. Her original collection, *Ghost Tales of the Moratoc*, comes from the northeastern North Carolina counties of Bertie, Martin, Tyrell, and Washington, where her family has lived for generations, and which has been largely unrepresented in regional literature of this nature. This is a book for those of us who remember those delightfully scary tales told to us by grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, and cousins, back when we were children. And it's a book that can be read from upper elementary age on up.

Catherine T. Carter.

Ghost Tales of the Moratoc.

Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1992. 150 pp. \$9.95.
ISBN 0-89587-091-6.

Fred T. Morgan.

Haunted Uwharries.

Asheboro, N.C.: Down Home Press, 1992. 173 pp. \$10.95
ISBN 0-878086-13-8.

Nancy Roberts.

North Carolina Ghosts and Legends.

Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992.
122 pp. \$8.95. ISBN 0-87249-765-8.

Both Fred T. Morgan's and Nancy Roberts's new books are essentially reprints. If your library doesn't own the older volumes, or has a large demand for regional ghost stories, and/or a budget which can absorb a certain amount of duplication, both are recommended purchases. They are both available in trade paper, and have attractive covers.

Fred T. Morgan's *Haunted Uwharries* is a collection of thirty-five ghost, witch, and "strange happening" stories. The stories range from the amusing to the truly macabre. They are short enough to be read by children in upper elementary school, and interesting enough to appeal to their elders. Twenty-nine of these stories appeared in Morgan's *Uwharrie Magic* (Durham, N.C.: Moore Publishing, 1974) with some minor title changes but no apparent textual differences.

Nancy Roberts's *North Carolina Ghosts and Legends* was originally published as *An Illustrated Guide to Ghosts and Mysterious Occurrences in the Old North State* (Secaucus, N.J.: Castle Books, 1967). It is reproduced here with the addition of three new stories. Roberts's ghosts range from the mountains to the Outer Banks, and are perennial favorites with both children and adults.

— Samantha Hunt, New Hanover County Public Library

Other Publications of Interest

James Mooney's History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees, originally published by the Bureau of American Ethnology as *Myths of the Cherokee* (1900) and *The Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees* (1891) have been reissued with George Ellison's new biographical introduction under Bright Mountain Books' Historical Images imprint. This illustrated trade paper edition includes a bibliography of Mooney's other writings about the Eastern Cherokees and a glossary of Cherokee words. It is available through Waldenbooks and independent bookstores at \$15.95, or directly from the publisher at \$20.00, which includes shipping and handling. (1992: Bright Mountain Books, 138 Springside Road, Asheville, NC 28803; 397 pp.; ISBN 0-914875-19-1).

An Index to North Carolina Newspapers, 1784-1789, by Alan D. Watson, is the final title in the Historical Publications Section and the North Carolina Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution's series "North Carolina and the Constitution." Dr. Watson is one of the state's leading scholars on colonial and Revolutionary North Carolina history, and is professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. His introduction and index will be invaluable tools for public and academic libraries. (1992: Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, N.C. 27601-2807; 68 pp.; pbk;\$12.00, plus \$2.00 postage and handling; ISBN 0-86526-253-5).

A handsome bicentennial edition of William S. Powell's *The First State University: A Pictorial History of the University of North Carolina*, adds forty pages of photographs covering the last dozen years at Carolina, as well as some "recently discovered photographs from previous eras." Also new in the third edition is a section of campus maps dating from 1792 to 1992. (1972, 1979, 1992: The University of North Carolina Press, P.O. Box 2288, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515-2288; 389 pp.; \$29.95; ISBN 0-8078-2049-0).

Persons interested in reviewing for North Carolina Libraries are invited to contact Dorothy Hodder at New Hanover County Public Library, 201 Chestnut St., Wilmington, NC 28401, (919) 341-4389. Reviewers are not paid, but may keep the books they review.