

Dorothy Hodder, Compiler

Daniel W. Barefoot, attorney, travel writer, and resident of Lincolnton, discovered early in his career that Confederate General Robert Frederick Hoke (also a native of Lincolnton) was "a genuine American hero ... whose story needed to be told to and preserved for future generations of Americans." Hoke, as a young lieutenant of twenty-three, served in the first contingent of North Carolina troops who fought at Little Bethel Church near Yorktown, Virginia, in early June of 1861. He "led Confederate soldiers with uncommon bravery and skill on virtually every important battlefield of the Eastern theater" and surrendered as a twenty-eight year old major general near Greensboro, NC, in late April of 1865. He, however, refused to write or talk much about the war; and historians have found few letters, diaries, narratives of Hoke's adventures, or personal memoirs on which to base a military biography—that is until Barefoot, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a graduate of the University's School of Law, extensively researched Hoke's career.

Far more than fifty thousand books and pamphlets have been written on the Civil War, some so recent that Barefoot did not cite them in his twenty-page bibliography, notably Mark L. Bradley's *Last Stand in the Carolinas: The Battle of Bentonville* (1996). The Confederate Army, moreover, produced 425 general officers. Yet, no single biography of North Carolina's "most distinguished" and modest soldier, Robert F. Hoke, had been written in the years following the sanguine conflict until Barefoot produced fifteen chapters of a military biography that is prefaced by a delightful chapter on antebellum Lincolnton and followed by two chapters that broadly cover Hoke's marriage, the birth and careers of several of his children, and his efforts to industrialize his native state.

The bulk of the book outlines in sharp detail General Hoke's military service to the Confederacy from January 1864 to May 1865. In North Carolina, Hoke offered President Jefferson Davis a plan to rid the eastern portion of the state of Union control around Plymouth and New Bern, a plan which was foiled by events in the defense of Richmond and Petersburg, and later by the battlefield ineptitude of General Braxton Bragg. Somehow, the events and plans for Hoke's aggressive maneuvers and his limited successes seem out of proportion to a more strategic and realistic view of the Civil War: by January of 1864, Confederate forces had surrendered at Vicksburg, lost at Gettysburg, and withdrawn from the siege of Chattanooga. The Mississippi River had been opened to Union forces and most of the major ports had been blockaded, except for Wilmington and Mobile.

A most important addition to Barefoot's biography might have been an inclusion of a railroad map for North Carolina just prior to the Civil War. A reader unfamiliar with the state may have difficulty locating Lincolnton, Plymouth, New Bern, Trenton, the Trent River, Kinston, Averbosboro, Elevation, Fort Fisher, Wilmington, or Bentonville. Although Barefoot is a travel writer who has a sense of place, his two other works (*Touring the Backroads of North Carolina's Lower Coast*, 1995, and *Touring the Backroads of North Carolina Upper Coast*, 1995) do not give adequate historic maps to be used as supplements to this biography. The reader is left with a clear and logical narrative of each battle and military campaign that competes with the best in historical writing, although recounted within narrow parameters. Barefoot's work will be a major contribution to Civil War and North Carolina history collections in academic and public libraries.

— Stewart Lillard

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Daniel W. Barefoot.

General Robert F. Hoke: Lee's Modest Warrior.

Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1996.
452 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 0-89587-150-5.

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It is a rare pleasure to be able to state without hesitation or equivocation that a book is superb and unquestionably worth buying and reading. This is such a book. Though Wolfe scholars and devotees will certainly read this book its audience should be much broader. All readers who are serious about literature — those for whom writers, their works, and the critical reaction to those works still matter — should add this volume to their lists of required reading.

Carol Johnston, on the faculty of the Department of English at Clemson University, is already well-known and respected for her definitive book, *Thomas Wolfe: A Descriptive Bibliography*, published by the University of Pittsburgh Press in 1987. In *Of Time and the Artist*, Johnston demonstrates that she is not only a careful, meticulous scholar but also an imaginative and gifted writer, able to show the reader new patterns, themes, and connections among Wolfe's writing and life, that of other writers, and the views of critics.

Johnston begins with an introduction to Wolfe's life and work and the critical community, followed by an overview of Wolfe studies. In thirty concise pages she captures the essence of her subject. In the following four chapters she discusses Wolfe's "semi-autobiographical novels," — *Look Homeward, Angel*, *Of Time and the River*, *The Web and the Rock*, and *You Can't Go Home Again*. The short chapter entitled "Conclusion: The Pebble in the Pool," summarizes Johnston's findings. An extensive list of works consulted and an index add to the value of the book.

Johnston's thesis is that "literature and criticism nourish each other and each in turn nourishes and is nourished by society." Her book focuses on Wolfe as a member of this literary community and on the dialog between his writing and that community.

At the beginning of chapter three, Johnston addresses a basic question: "What is it that empowers *Look Homeward, Angel*?" Her answer is that, for general readers and critics alike, Wolfe's 1929 novel "changed their lives, or altered their perception of reality, or encouraged them to achieve goals that they believed beyond them." She illustrates by citing the responses of Hugh Holman, Louis Rubin, and William Styron, as well as that of younger members of the Thomas Wolfe Society. This personal response to Wolfe's work helps explain Wolfe's continuing popularity with readers despite sometimes harsh evaluations by literary critics.

A pivotal episode in Wolfe's literary career was the publication in April 1936 of Bernard DeVoto's abrasive review of Wolfe and *The Story of Novel*, Wolfe's book about writing *Of Time and the River*. DeVoto accused Wolfe of being "astonishingly immature" and totally dependent on his editor, Maxwell Perkins. By the end of 1936, Johnston says, Wolfe recognized the truth of what the critics were saying, that "in lionizing Perkins's influence on Wolfe, they denied Wolfe the authority of his own prose." Within six months, Wolfe had broken his relationship with Perkins and Scribners, and his literary career "took a whole new direction." Johnston clearly and thoroughly traces the story of the huge manuscript that became *The Web and the Rock*, stating that "Aswell and Harpers (Wolfe's then-editor and publisher) were less than forthright about the conditions under which the manuscript had been prepared." She points out that "in retrospect, it is clear that despite its good intentions, Harpers bungled the publication of Wolfe's third novel." This difference between Wolfe's authorial intent and the intent of his editors has been a major theme in Wolfe studies, as Johnston shows.

In light of the high number and quality of publications relating to Wolfe that have appeared in the last fifteen years, Johnston asks, "What is left to be said about Wolfe? The answer is *plenty* — especially as the best scholar/critics increasingly avail themselves of the archival material available at Harvard University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Pack Memorial Library in Asheville. ... [T]he study of Thomas Wolfe still has much to tell us about him and his writing, about the nature of literature, and about the complexities of publishing it." And that is why this book is so important: writing, the nature of literature, the complexities of publishing — the stuff upon which intellectual inquiry is founded — is discussed intelligently, imaginatively, and excitingly in this volume.

Johnston has written a stunningly successful book. Though the price, unfortunately, may deter some potential purchasers, it is recommended for all academic libraries and for public and high school libraries with readers who are serious about literature and want more than the latest best seller.

— Alice R. Cotten

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Carol Ingalls Johnston.

***Of Time and the Artist:
Thomas Wolfe, His Novels,
and the Critics.***

[Columbia, SC]: Camden House, 1996. 221 pp. \$54.95.
ISBN: 1-57113-067-5. [Order from Camden House, P.O.
Box 4836, Hampden Station, Baltimore, MD 21211.]



o many the word "orphanage" brings to mind visions of uncaring, Dickensian, institutionalized abuse and neglect of unfortunate children. This was indeed the sense behind the uproar over Newt Gingrich's politically explosive suggestion that orphanages could be a viable alternative to welfare and the foster care system. Richard McKenzie, the Walter B. Gerken Professor of Enterprise and Society in the Graduate School of Management at the

University of California at Irvine and the author of numerous books and articles on economics, has challenged this criticism and has written an eloquent defense of the idea of orphanages in his book *The Home: A Memoir of Growing Up in an Orphanage*.

The Home, as it is simply referred to throughout the book, is a Presbyterian home for children. We are told only that it is in rural North Carolina and is near the town of Planeville and about forty miles north of a "large city" called Centralia. (A little research, however, revealed that the Home is the Barium Springs Home For Children in Iredell County and that Planeville is most likely Statesville and Centralia is probably Charlotte.) Life in the Home was generally a positive experience for McKenzie and for others with whom he has kept in touch. Rules were strict and punishments could be harsh, but when compared to the alternative (in McKenzie's case a drunken, abusive father and a loving but alcoholic mother who committed suicide), the Home was a haven where boys and girls could grow up in a stable environment. Children worked hard but also had free time to explore the

1,500-acre grounds, build close and lasting friendships, acquire a solid secular and religious education, indulge in childhood pranks and adventures, and generally have as "normal" a young life as possible under the circumstances. McKenzie has researched the adult lives of alumni of the Home and of other orphanages and found that among them the divorce rate is lower and that they tend to be more successful and earn higher salaries than the average. He boldly and without apologies maintains that his experiences with orphanage life are preferable to the uncertainty of today's foster home system and that negative ideas about orphanages should be set aside.

While supporting orphanages as institutions, however, McKenzie tells the disturbing story of an ex-Master Sergeant nicknamed "Bowtie" who administered punishments by whipping boys with his belt, often to the point of bleeding. These punishments went unchecked for months before the administration got wise and Bowtie was fired. This leads one to wonder what would happen in an orphanage were such a situation were ignored or where several persons with "Bowtie's" tendencies might be employed. Certainly the results could be disastrous and worthy of comparison to the most nightmarish Dickensian vision. In the case of the Home, however, this was an isolated occurrence and not in keeping with its generally sensible and constructive approach to mass child raising.

The Home is not merely a dissertation on the merits of an orphanage upbringing. It is a moving, humorous, and exciting story of a boy's growing up and coming of age. In this sense, it deserves the compliment of comparison to Tim McLaurin's *Keeper of the Moon*. Particularly noteworthy are the moving accounts of the "execution" of a favorite pet collie at the Home, McKenzie's mother's suicide and the disturbing event that preceded it, and his relationship with his father. *The Home* is also full of interesting and sometimes powerful sociological and psychological insights. All North Carolina libraries should acquire a copy for circulation and for their North Carolina collections. It could be recommended as reading for adults and young adults and could also be useful in providing background information for high school "controversial topic" papers.

— Dan Horne
New Hanover County Public Library

Richard McKenzie.

***The Home:
A Memoir of Growing Up
in an Orphanage.***

New York: Basic Books, 1996. x, 228 pp. \$23.00.
ISBN 0-465-03068-8.

* Due to a computer glitch, Dorothy Hodder needs the addresses and phone numbers of all persons who have reviewed, or are interested in reviewing books for this section. Please refer to Editorial Staff on page 43 for reply address. —
Thank you.



Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina is a long-awaited addition to a growing library of cultural history of the Tar Heel state. The book is the first of three volumes which describe and illustrate regional examples of the art and technology of building through a broad expanse of terrain, traditions, and types of architecture that have survived over a period

Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern.

A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina.

Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996. xvi, 458 pp. Cloth, \$35.00. ISBN 0-8078-2285-X. Paper, \$19.95. ISBN 0-8078-4594-9.

of two centuries. Two upcoming guides will feature the mountains and the Piedmont. The current volume focuses on 1,700 individual buildings located in forty-one counties reaching west from the tidewater and coastal plain inland to Interstate 95. County and local maps pinpoint locations of the sites along well-marked public roads. Four hundred photographs add to the clarity and rationale of the selected architectural examples. Among the treasures the reader will discover are colonial churches, antebellum plantations, and nineteenth-century lighthouses. Country churches, small farms, tobacco barns, factories, coastal fishing villages, and market towns add to the architectural variety packed into the guided journeys.

The purpose of the book as stated in the preface, is to be a field guide and reference for the traveler, resident, student, and preservationist with an interest in the architectural

resources of North Carolina. Unfortunately, the book is not pocket-size, but it can be carried easily and stored in a backpack, bicycle basket, and car seat. One advantage of the book is that the examples presented are easily spotted along well-marked roads and are close to other sites discussed in the text. Another plus is that the arrangement leads the reader and traveler through a progression of connected counties so that a circuit of several areas can be made conveniently. To assist in planning a field trip, simplified county maps appear at the front of the book with selected town maps within the text. An excellent introduction unravels the tale of the region's founding and development and includes sections on land and water, people and architecture, settlement and development, architectural traditions, changing architectural styles, and transformations from the Civil War to World War II. Good photographs and plans depict selected works in each section. Finally, the body of the book is given over to an abundance of county-by-county architectural treasures that, although not all illustrated, are accompanied by concise descriptions of architecture and history that enliven each site.

The sheer number of buildings and sites presented is awesome—and this is only one-third of the state! A useful glossary of terms and a well-selected bibliography conclude the tome. In sum, this is a book that will become a cherished addition to the library of anyone interested in the architecture of North Carolina; a book to be carried afield at any free moment, alone or in a group; a source of great pleasure to guide us into our architectural heritage.

— Edward F. Turberg
Restoration Consultant, Wilmington, NC



A Guide to the **HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE of EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA**

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It is 1898 in Wilmington, and young Troy Worth's father has told him that it's "the best possible time for black people." Mr. Worth owns his own barbershop, the family lives in an integrated neighborhood, and the city's Republican government has actively promoted desegregation in the years since the Civil War. Trouble is brewing, though, in the days before the November elections, and Troy soon finds himself involved. His best friend, Randy, is suddenly distant and hostile; the boys overhear Randy's father taking part in a Ku Klux Klan meeting. Troy runs errands for people trying to avert the hostilities, spies on a hostile Democratic rally, and helps the mixed-race newspaper editor whose editorials have inflamed the city. All too soon Wilmington is literally in flames and Troy's family, along with many others, are suddenly refugees packed into a cattle car heading north.

Celia Bland.

The Conspiracy of the Secret Nine.

Illustrated By Donald L. Williams. New York: Silver Moon Press, 1995. 90 pp. \$12.95. 1-881889-67-X.

The Conspiracy of the Secret Nine is a well-intentioned attempt to make a relatively little-known period in history accessible to upper elementary and middle school readers. The text is brief enough and simple enough in its style, so that most fourth to eighth graders would not have much difficulty with it. It is presented as a mystery/adventure, one of the publisher's "Mysteries in Time" series. While the author has made some effort at historical research, acknowledging a particular dependence on H. Leon Prather, Sr.'s *We Have Taken a City*, this novel never evokes the vivid sense of time, place, and personality which characterizes the best historical

fiction. The language is disappointingly modern, not giving any real sense of difference in time or place. Troy doesn't display much individuality, and though Troy and Randy are at first presented as relatively equal characters, Randy appears rarely after the second chapter and the author does not really try to explain his motives, losing the opportunity for young readers to try to understand the values (unattractive as they were) of the segregationists. The book does include a bibliography and a map of "The Great Migration: 1890s Black Exodus from Southern States to New York, Pennsylvania, and Oklahoma" as historical resources.

Teachers searching for historical fiction for cross-curriculum literature/social studies tie-ins know that there is very little of any quality set in the U. S. between the Civil War and the Great Depression. The publisher, Silver Moon Press, lists its specialty as "literature-based books with a focus on fourth and fifth grade curriculum" and *The Conspiracy of the Secret Nine* may be of interest when a cursory exposure to the events of 1898 is more important than a literary experience. Teachers and readers seeking quality historical fiction, though, will do better to turn to more recent periods in history with Mildred D. Taylor's *The Friendship* or Bruce Brooks's *The Moves Make the Man*, both of which also deal with the difficulties of interracial friendship, but in an infinitely more involving fashion.

—Margaret Miles

New Hanover County Public Library

M

cCorkle, a native of Lumberton and a former teacher and librarian, is a true "overnight success." Her first two novels, *The Cheer Leader* and *July 7th*, were published simultaneously when she was twenty-six. They received glowing reviews and in 1985 both works were added to the Viking Penguin Contemporary American Fiction series. *Carolina Moon*, like her other writing, examines relationships in a small southern town.

Jill McCorkle.

Carolina Moon.

Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Press, 1996.
272 pp. \$18.95 ISBN 1-56512-136-8.

McCorkle tells the story of Queen Mary Stutts Purdy (she calls herself Quee and has lately taken to pronouncing her last name PurDAY). Quee, who adopts needy humans like some people collect stray cats, is a sixty-nine year old entrepreneur who has performed abortions, designed ceramic meat centerpieces complete with aroma for vegetarians, and is currently operating Smoke-Out Signs ("Put your butt out and bring your butt in"), a combination spa and extended therapy session for people who want to quit smoking. From her "ghost wall" of old photographs of strangers, Quee spins stories of lives that are remarkably similar to hers and her neighbors', but in *her* versions

the characters survive hard times and flourish because they are strong.

Within Quee's sphere is Tom, who spends his free time at the beach, walking the boundaries of an oceanside lot that since Hurricane Hazel is mostly under water, and thinking about his father, who committed suicide when Tom was ten. Denny, a motormouthed nonconformist, is trying to start a new life. Her academic husband divorced her after she took off most of

her clothes in a movie theater while watching William Hurt in *Body Heat*. Mack is forever tied to his beautiful wife Sarah, who lies in their bed in a possibly permanent coma. Alicia is trapped in a marriage to a man of movie star looks and monstrous actions.

At first these people seem bizarre, nothing like the neighbors in my home town. And yet ... while McCorkle may exaggerate to catch our attention, her characters ring true. Quee, a woman with a colorful reputation, knows most of the secrets of the town, all of which reflect some shade of love: unrequited love, hidden romantic liaisons, a sense of abandonment and rage at the loss of a loved one, an abused wife, a lonely church-going widow with lascivious thoughts....

The story is woven together with letters from the dead letter file in the post office addressed to "The Wayward One." (Interestingly, McCorkle's father was a postal worker). In the missives, covering a period of twenty-five years, a woman confides her innermost feelings to her dead lover.

Once one gets comfortable with the somewhat disconcerting use of present tense narrative, the people of Fulton, North Carolina, spring to life. *Carolina Moon* is a funny and sad, angry and romantic, whimsical and tough look at love in all its nuances. It will only enhance the reputation of this major young American writer. All academic and public libraries should buy it.

— Suzanne Wise

Appalachian State University

In the summer of 1774, Joseph Hancock took out an advertisement in the *North Carolina Gazette* calling for the return of his runaway slave. Hancock explained in the ad that his slave, named Buck "calls himself Tom Buck." This brief statement discovered by the authors of *Slavery in North Carolina, 1748-1775*, could be used to illustrate the cultural separateness of slaves and owners, the persistence of African customs in the slave quarters, and a subtle but telling form of slave resistance. "Tom Buck" the authors tell us, could be an anglicized version of "Taiwo," Yoruban for the first born of twins, "Thambo," an Ngoni or Malawian name, or any of a host of other names used over the years by slaves and their descendants.

There are precious few sources available to study the formative years of slavery in North Carolina. This could, perhaps, explain the little that has been written on the peculiar institution during the colony's early days. If the evidence doesn't exist, there just isn't much a writer can say. But by drawing upon the few records that are still present, by making comparisons to Virginia's Chesapeake region and South Carolina's lowcountry, and by noting numbers and demography, the authors have been able to construct a picture of North Carolina slavery during its initial development.

The picture shows two-thirds of all slaves during this time period being African born, many of whom would never speak English. It shows individual acts of resistance — sabotage,

arson, feigned ignorance, truancy, petty pilfering, murder, and running away—coalescing into an unconscious, almost organized, slavery-wide opposition. It shows African values and worldviews holding sway in the naming of children, the creation of families, and the worship of gods. And it shows masters constricting the already circumscribed world of their African laborers.

Kay and Cary, professors emeriti of the University of Toledo, spent twenty years scouring county court records, tax lists, old newspapers, wills, etc., for mention of North Carolina slaves and slavery. They have counted heads, averaged export totals, and calculated sex imbalance ratios, seeking in composites the lost individual situations. They have extrapolated and compared — but still, the lack of source material is all too evident. The authors call upon two or three contemporary commentators time and again to give voice to a circumstance their numbers describe. They revisit the same murder several times to illustrate various points, and they describe a slave's preparation of the poison, "touck," in support of sundry observations.

Faced with such a paucity of information, it must have been difficult not to inflate the importance of some findings or to overinterpret others. This was perhaps the case when the authors observed that South Carolina bandits demonstrated class solidarity by choosing their victims "primarily from the ranks of the more affluent backcountry farmers." Social bandits? Perhaps. But then again, these backcountry highwaymen maybe just found it more lucrative to steal from "them that had."

This work is clearly intended for an academic audience.

— Kevin Cherry

Rowan Public Library

Marvin L. Michael Kay and Lorin Lee Cary.
Slavery in North Carolina, 1748-1775.

Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press,
1995. 402 pp. \$45.00. ISBN 0-8078-2197-7.

SLAVERY

in North Carolina

1748-1775

**Marvin L. Michael Kay
and Lorin Lee Cary**

7

he *Last Chivaree* is the chronicle of the Hicks family of Beech Mountain, that traces its roots back generations to the mountains of western North Carolina. One of its most famous members is Ray Hicks, the well-known teller of Jack tales.

The book is based on a series of interviews and conversations with Hicks, his family, and neighbors, which reveal much about the character of mountain people and their way of life. The author is able to capture the speech, beliefs, and folklore of the family.

Ray Hicks and his late cousin, Stanley, who was a master dulcimer maker, are among the nation's most prominent ambassadors of traditional Appalachian culture. Both men have been named National Heritage Fellows by the National Endowment for the Arts. Ray Hicks was a founder of the annual Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, of which he says, "There's a lot that's not true, but a lot that is."

Robert Isbell's book is a snapshot of the mountain traditions of the Hicks family, which remain virtually untouched since the eighteenth century. The author is able to weave together the lives of the people with their stories and customs. Developing a feeling for the rugged way of life in the mountains before the modern world encroached, Isbell writes about the dignity, tenacity, and endurance of early pioneers that survive into today's world. The story of Ray Hicks' early years as one of ten children and his later courtship of his future wife Rosa is told with clarity and understanding.

Isbell first met Stanley Hicks in 1955 after hearing him perform near Boone. Thirty years later, he was able to locate him and began a friendship with him and his family which provides a basis for this book. His admiration for the Hicks family is evident.

The Last Chivaree is a book to be savored and to remind us of a quieter and simpler way of life. It is a book of interest to any collection of folklore or Appalachian materials. Sources are appended.

— Joan Sherif
Northwestern Regional Library

Robert Isbell.

The Last Chivaree:

The Hicks Family of Beech Mountain.

Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996. 174 pp. \$19.95. ISBN 0-8078-2266-3.



A

nn Fearington of Raleigh combines family traditions and imagination to create *Christmas Lights*.

Christmas Lights is the story of one family's annual Christmas night trek to "ooh and ahh" at all of their city's holiday decorations.

The reader climbs into the old station wagon along with the family and travels over country roads, down city streets, passing sights each one more dazzling than the previous. Tall pine trees are transformed into peppermint sticks, an office building is decorated like a giant gift box, and toy soldiers and snowmen bedeck a fast food restaurant. One house is so alive with lights the night quiet is shattered by its "blink, dazzle and shine!"

Just when we think we have seen it all, the family turns for home. They know they have saved the best light show for last — their very own Christmas lights on their very own tree!

The dark pages of *Christmas Lights* seem to glow with Fearington's illustrations of multicolored lights. The bold yellow text adds illumination to every page.

Though the story could be set in Anytown, USA, Fearington has chosen to include many North Carolina landmarks throughout. The rolling hills of Stokes and Surry Counties are represented, as are the lighted trees of Cameron Village Shopping Center, Winston-Salem's downtown lamp posts and Moravian stars, Granville County's 1899 Puckett Farm House, and Raleigh's WRAL TV tower.

The simple text, glowing illustrations and perennial theme of book will make it a welcome addition to every public library and elementary school collection, as well as their holiday storytime programs.

— Beth Hutchison
Public Library of Charlotte Mecklenburg County

Ann Fearington.

Christmas Lights.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.
32 pp. \$15.95. ISBN 0-395-71036-7.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

Tell Me a Tale: A Novel of the Old South is the story of young Moses, a former slave, who returns to the neighborhood of the eastern North Carolina plantation where he once lived. He seeks out four old-timers, and, over a bottle, tells them a story of his former life that draws to a bitter and dramatic conclusion. This is actor James McEachin's first novel; his acting credits include *Play Misty for Me*, *True Grit*, and a television series. (1996; Presidio Press, PO Box 1764, Novato, CA, 94948-1764; iv, 252 pp; cloth, \$18.95; ISBN 0-89141-584-X.)

Jerry Bledsoe has written a simple, bittersweet story about a childhood Christmas in Thomasville, North Carolina, that will be a sure hit as a stocking stuffer this year. Public libraries can expect requests for **The Angel Doll: A Christmas Story**. (1996; Down Home Press, PO Box 4126, Asheboro, NC 27204; 128 pp; cloth, \$14.95; ISBN 1-878086-54-5.)

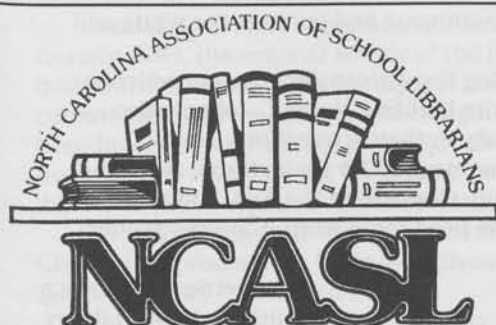


Taffy of Torpedo Junction, a children's adventure story by the late Nell Wise Wechter about life on the Outer Banks during World War II, is available in an attractive new paperback edition with a foreword by Bland Simpson. The book was originally published in 1957 by John Blair, and won the North Carolina Division of the American Association of University Women's award for Juvenile Fiction. (1996; University of North Carolina Press, PO Box 2288; Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2288; xvii, 134 pp; paper, \$9.95; ISBN 0-8078-4619-8.)

Richard Rankin, a history professor at Queens College in Charlotte, has collected twenty-six essays representing **North Carolina Nature Writing: Four Centuries of Personal Narratives and Descriptions**. In the process he traces the evolution of nature writing, and serves up a poignant reminder to guard our remaining natural habitats. (1996; John F. Blair, Publisher, 1406 Plaza Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27103; xv, 272 pp; paper, \$12.95; ISBN 0-98587-151-3.)

Something new in guidebooks: **The Newcomer's Guide to North Carolina: Everything You Need to Know to be a Tarheel**, by Bill Lee, may come close to living up to its ambitious title. After detailed introductions in Chapter One: Who We Are, the book presents Our Land; History; Politics; Our Economy; Sports; Travel and Leisure; What We Eat—and Drink; Arts and Entertainment; Haunts, Mysteries, Legends and Wonders; Notable Crimes and Disasters; Education; Motor Vehicle Regulations; and Taxes. Chapter Ten contains a comprehensive list of North Carolina authors; appropriate chapters list telephone numbers for state government offices or quote tax rates; most chapters conclude with short bibliographies for further reading. Folksy, down to earth, and wideranging, the book is a reasonable length for a beginning Tar Heel to absorb. An index would make the book more useful, but it does have a detailed table of contents. (1996; Down Home Press, PO Box 4126, Asheboro, NC 27204; viii, 278 pp; paper, \$14.95; ISBN 1-878086-51-0.)

New publications from the ultimate North Carolina legal reference authorities at the Institute of Government include **The Law of Self-Defense in North Carolina** by John Rubin (1996; Institute of Government, CB No. 3330 Knapp Building, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330; xvi, 215 pp; paper, \$18.00; ISBN 1-56011-245-X); and David Owens' **Introduction to Zoning** (1995; Institute of Government, CB No. 3330 Knapp Building, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330; iv, 120 pp; paper, \$15.00; ISBN 1-56011-275-1.) New editions of their titles on employment law, municipal government, the law and the elderly, North Carolina crimes, and many other useful subjects are also listed in their catalog.



NCASL Awards and Scholarship

Elizabeth J. Jackson of Cary:
recipient of the \$1000 NCASL Scholarship

Rebecca Bloxam of Lexington City Schools:
winner of the NCASL Administrator of the Year

Pam Kanoy of Pilot Elementary School in Davidson County:
winner of the Carolyn Palmer Media Coordinator of the Year