

New North Carolina Books

By Suzanne S. Levy

Frank P. Albright. *Johann Ludwig Eberhardt and His Salem Clocks*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press for Old Salem, Inc., 1978. 160 pp. \$12.95

Frank P. Albright has researched considerable primary material in the Archives of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, to produce this valuable work, the third in the Old Salem Series. His effort provides much information about the life and work of one of North Carolina's few real clock-makers, Johann Ludwig Eberhardt, who in 1799 migrated to Salem from Gnadensfeld in Silesia.

The author supplements historical data with educated guesses (a necessity he readily acknowledges in the preface) to describe Eberhardt's character, working habits and shop facilities, and to document the existence of thirty-seven of his clocks. Albright's hypotheses, such as his belief that Eberhardt may have crafted 600 movements in Salem before he died in 1839, are based upon careful reasoning and therefore complement the facts well.

Johann Ludwig Eberhardt and His Salem Clocks would be useful in an academic or large public library because of its description of Salem and the mechanisms made by a craftsman who lived there, but it probably would not appeal to the average reader. The chapters entitled, "Archival Records" and "Eberhardt's Work" are rather technical in nature. Further, the illustrations included in these chapters, as well as the photographs of Eberhardt's clocks in the "Catalog of Clocks," are not as sharp as they would have been if they had been printed on slick paper. The work is definitely not a picture book of North Carolina decorative arts.

Maury York
Chapel Hill, N. C.

Carole Klein. *Aline*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. 352 pp. \$12.95.

A biography of Aline Bernstein, first lady of American stage design and patron and mistress of Thomas Wolfe, is long overdue. Carole Klein's sympathetic biography gives an insight into the career of the Esther Jack of *The Web and the Rock* and *You Can't Go Home Again* which Wolfe only touched on in his fictional accounts of their tormented affair. In the novels Wolfe described his anger and jealousy when "Esther" was happily and successfully occupied with her work. Carole Klein shows us Aline as she researches, plans and executes her stage designs for the Neighborhood Playhouse, Eva LeGallienne's Civic Repertory Company, and dozens of Broadway plays.

Aline Bernstein was born of the theater; her father was Joseph Frankau, an actor. Her parents died before Aline was twenty, and while shifting about from relative to relative, and caring for her younger sister, she attended art schools in New York. In 1902 she married Theodore Bernstein, a young investment counselor, and together they established the home which Aline considered inviolate until she died.

Klein weaves these three threads of Bernstein's life into her biography. There is Aline, the stage designer, totally committed to her career; there is Aline, the fondly affectionate wife of Theo, and loving mother of her two children; and there is Aline, the Esther Jack of Wolfe's novels, obsessed with a man twenty years her junior.

Her five-year affair with Wolfe is described at length. They met almost daily, and had two sojourns abroad together. Aline cooked and scrubbed and cleaned for Wolfe, performing housewifely tasks which were not required of her in the home which her husband provided. She was also Wolfe's patron and sponsor. She supported him, off and on, over the years they were together and it was she who found the agent who ultimately led Wolfe to Maxwell Perkins. After *Look Homeward, Angel* was published in 1929, Wolfe began his agonizing attempt to break free from the woman who had brought him "love such as I never had before."

After Wolfe left her, Bernstein lost her cool resolve and for a period she retreated into self-pity and near alcoholism. Though she regained her composure, renewed her career in the theater, and re-established her loving companionship with Theo, she never denied her love for Wolfe. His picture remained by her bed for the rest of her life.

Carole Klein knows her subject intimately, having met and talked with Aline Bernstein's family, friends and colleagues in the theater. She also had access to the Wolfe-Bernstein correspondence, which is with the Wolfe papers at Harvard. The biography is flawed, however, by Klein's use of fictional devices, such as telling us what Aline "thought" when she hung up the phone after a conversation with Wolfe. A more serious flaw is her portrait of Thomas Wolfe. There is no question that many of the characteristics Klein attributes to Wolfe were true. He was slovenly in personal habits; he drank heavily; he had a quick, violent, and abusive temper. But he must have had something more than Klein describes if the Aline Bernstein portrayed in this book loved him so passionately. This book is a great tribute to Aline Bernstein. It is not quite fair to Thomas Wolfe.

North Carolinians have a special interest in this biography. It is recommended for public libraries and is a must for colleges and universities.

Frances A. Weaver
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Kelly Cherry. *Augusta Played*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979. 304 pp. \$10.95.

Augusta Played is a modern love story. Augusta, a sweet young thing from North Carolina, meets Norman, a nice Jewish boy from New York. She's a flutist of some talent, a student at Juilliard. He's a graduate student at Columbia, doing his doctorate in cultural musicology. They meet, fall in love, marry, and divorce. In the interim, they contend with Norman's father, who disowns his son for marrying a goy; his father's mistress, a stripper known

professionally as Miss Chicken Delight; Augusta's former lover (and his jealous wife) and so on. Although not entirely plausible, the plot is light and amusing, a good quick read. It is recommended for large public and academic library fiction collections.

Diane Strauss
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Conrad Lynn. ***There is a Fountain: the Autobiography of a Civil Rights Lawyer.*** Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill, & Co., 1979. \$12.95.

Conrad Lynn is a black lawyer born in Rhode Island in 1908. Since getting a law degree at Syracuse, he had devoted his life to promoting and defending unpopular causes. In 1958, Lynn became involved in defending two black children accused of attempted rape in Monroe, N. C., a case known as the Kissing Case. Out of this grew his association with the local N.A.A.C.P leader Robert Williams, who later fled the state and country to avoid prosecution for what Lynn feels was political persecution.

Although the writing is polemical, these chapters shed light on an important aspect of recent state history. The book is recommended for public and academic libraries in the state.

William Schenck
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

W. F. Wilson and B. J. McKenzie. ***Mineral Collecting Sites in North Carolina.*** Raleigh, N. C.: North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, Geological Survey Section, 1978. 122 pp. \$4.00 + tax. (order from Geological Survey Section, P. O. Box 27687, Raleigh, N. C. 27611)

This publication, No. 24 in the section's Information Circular series, has something for every individual interested in collecting mineral specimens in North Carolina. The excellent color photographs of specimens and the maps which indicate collecting locations will be of interest and use to all collectors. Sites are indexed both by mineral names and the 54 counties in which they are located. The locations are described by map reference points such as highways and communities; many also are described by physical features which the potential collector will see in the vicinity of the sites. Information about minerals, gems, semi-precious stones, ornamental stones, cutting and polishing, and related subjects is presented clearly and concisely. Addresses of dealers in mineral specimens are listed and museums are both listed and located on maps with their featured exhibits indicated.

A rank beginner may need a dictionary of geologic-mineralogic terms to use in conjunction with the parts of this guide which should be read before starting a collecting trip. The value of this book far outweighs that possible slight hindrance. Heavy use, much of it outdoors, should mark the life of many copies of this excellent work. It is recommended for purchase by public libraries and schools and colleges which offer earth science courses.

Rodger S. Harris
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Beth G. Crabtree and James W. Patton, editors, "*Journal of a Secesh Lady*," *The Diary of Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston, 1860-1866*. Raleigh, N. C.: N. C. Division of Archives and History, 1979, 850 pp. \$28.00.

During the Civil War Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston (1823-1875), eracy. She followed the course of the war with great attention. In addition to reporting occurrences as she learned of them, she also added her own comments. Her judgment of the leadership on both sides was incisive, and time reading provided additional subjects for comment as did her daily perusal of newspapers, particularly those from Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy. She followed the course of the war with great attention and in addition to reporting occurrences as she learned of them she also added her own comments. Her judgment of the leadership on both sides was incisive and time proved her to have been correct in many cases. Some wartime activity she also knew at first hand since much of Eastern North Carolina was occupied quite early in the war by Federal forces; raids and engagements were constantly on her mind and the firing of guns assaulted her ears on many occasions. She was responsible for concealing large numbers of bales of cotton and other supplies from possible capture by the enemy and then, after the threat had passed, of recovering them. Drying cotton that had been wet in a sudden rain in the woods was a particularly difficult task.

The almost constant movement of family and friends involved in the war, the sending and receiving of messages, shortages and substitutes, and her concern for a Southern victory are mentioned throughout her journal. Mrs. Edmondston's wide range of interests, her devotion to relatives, friends, and slaves, her concern for the wounded and the survivors of the casualties, her love of gardening and of the land, and finally her despair as the war ended in defeat make her diary a work to be read as much more than a historical document. It is an intensely human document.

Historians at the local, state, and national levels may also benefit from her recording of so much that came to her attention. The adjustment made by the residents in occupied Elizabeth City, for example, or her account of what seems to have been a customary three-day mid-summer holiday granted slaves, or the use of United States treasury notes in the Confederacy in purchasing goods all provide interesting commentaries on the life of the people in the South at that time.

Mrs. Edmondston possessed a literary gift not only in expressing herself so clearly in prose but also in composing poems to commemorate a number of events. These she sometimes included in her diary. From time to time she also pasted in printed broadsides of newspaper clippings and these are included along with the transcription of her own writings. Her comments on many well known people as well as on a host of lesser people make them all the more human.

Whether read for pleasure or for information, Mrs. Edmondston's journal will be both enjoyable and satisfying. It has the potential to become a classic and will surely take its place alongside a handful of others from other Southern states.

While this is a massive work, the index would have been better had it been more detailed. There is a great deal of interest in the book that the reader must ferret out for himself, and it is likely that much that is good will not be discovered by the casual researcher seeking information on some particular subject.

William S. Powell
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Burke Davis. *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers*. New York: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, Inc., 1978. 33 pp. \$6.95. Bonnie Carey, translator. *Grasshopper to the Rescue*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1979, 30 pp. \$6.95.

In *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers*, Burke Davis, along with illustrator Douglas Gorsline, paints a portrait of Lincoln just before his presidency. Davis uses the now-famous correspondence with eleven-year-old Grace Bedell, who suggested that Lincoln grow a beard, as well as anecdotes collected from accounts of Lincoln's train ride from Springfield to Washington, D. C., to give a warm, human picture of Lincoln. Davis writes with a clear, straightforward style, and Douglas Gorsline's illustrations fit the text well.

Grasshopper to the Rescue demonstrates the universality of folktale themes. In this Georgian story, translated from Russian by Bonnie Carey, a grasshopper manages after many detours to save his friend, the ant, from drowning. The format resembles closely that of the English folktale "Old Woman and Her Pig." The rhythm is perhaps not as well suited to telling or reading aloud as the English tale, but children will enjoy this new version. Lady McCrady's illustrations add a nice touch—they not only show the grasshopper's travels, but also the ant's attempts to save himself. These are all in vain, until at last the grasshopper returns.

Although neither book deals with North Carolina, both authors have ties to the state. Burke Davis is a native North Carolinian and Bonnie Carey presently lives in Raleigh. I would recommend both books for purchase for public library children's collections and school libraries.

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