

New North Carolina Books

Suzanne S. Levy,
Compiler

Clifford R. Lovin, ed. **OUR MOUNTAIN HERITAGE; ESSAYS ON THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF NORTH CAROLINA.** Franklin, N.C.: North Carolina Humanities Committee and Mountain Heritage Center, Western Carolina University, 1979. 131 pp. \$1.50. (Order from Western Carolina University Mountain Heritage Center, Cullowhee, NC 28723)

Our Mountain Heritage evolved from a growing interest among the residents of southwestern North Carolina in their heritage. The combined efforts of the North Carolina Humanities Committee, the Mountain Heritage Center at Western Carolina University, and the citizens of the North Carolina mountains culminated in the publication of this book, aimed primarily at high school students and visitors to the region.

The book, which presents the history of western North Carolina through 1865, is divided into three parts. The first, written by James H. Horton and entitled "Our National Heritage," focuses on the evolution of the mountains themselves and the types of flora and fauna found there. The second section, "Our Indian Heritage" by Theda Perdue, deals with the history and culture of the Cherokee Indian nation. The third section, "Our Pioneer Heritage" by James Gifford, begins with the Spanish and English explorers and progresses through the various periods of American history until the end of the Civil War. Great emphasis is placed on the way people lived, in a style reminiscent of the *Foxfire* books.

The book is well written and has numerous, appropriate illustrations. The reading level, however, would probably put the book above the level of a good many students in junior high school where North Carolina history is taught. Even so, the material would be of great interest to students of all ages. *Our Mountain Heritage* would definitely be a worthwhile addition to any library where books on North Carolina are found.

Diane Kessler
Durham County Schools

Dunes of Dare Garden Club. Wildflower Identification Committee. **WILD-FLOWERS OF THE OUTER BANKS: KITTY HAWK TO HATTERAS.** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. 165 pp. paperback. \$6.95.

I predict that hardly a summer cottage or permanent home in Dare County will be without *Wildflowers of the Outer Banks* this year. It should also be a popular gift item for Christmas. Although its appeal is largely regional, the book will be a welcome addition to public and academic libraries across

North Carolina. Visitors to Dare County will also find the book helpful.

What began as a committee project of the Dunes of Dare Garden Club grew into a full-fledged book of authority and precision. Ten women began five years ago to take field trips to identify the variety of wildflowers in Dare County and ended up taking a college level botany course as their interest grew. The suggestion that the group put their findings into a book came from several people whose encouragement led them to publish.

Illustrations by Jane Sutton, a naturalist with the National Park Service, are outstanding. Flowers are divided into groups according to their color; this makes identification easier. For the layman this division also makes the book simpler to use as a guide.

Besides the obvious accuracy of the information, the book's attraction lies in its clear text and such features as an index, glossary, and Cape Hatteras National Seashore Herbarium list. Along with the botanical information on each flower, the reader is told where the flower can be found and when it blooms.

The lore associated with some of the herbs, along with their medicinal and culinary uses, make interesting and enlightening reading. Dare County residents will be amazed to learn that the flower of the yucca plant can be battered and fried, that the sneeze weed will clear nasal passages, and that the fragrant, beautiful Carolina jessamine is poisonous to humans and livestock, but not to deer.

Wildflowers of the Outer Banks will not only be useful as an identifier and as a handbook but can be regarded as a special kind of guide to the Outer Banks.

Anne Sanders
East Albemarle Regional Library

Fred Powledge. **JOURNEYS THROUGH THE SOUTH.** New York: Vanguard Press, 1979. 240 pp. \$10.00.

Journeys Through the South grew out of a series of articles which were written for the *Charlotte Observer* in 1977. Fred Powledge traveled the South to rediscover the land where he grew up and reported from during the civil rights activities of the mid-1960's. His reactions to the changes that have occurred since then involve a strange blend of emotions which are honestly expressed from the viewpoint of a self-proclaimed "Southern chauvinist."

He is angered by much that he sees. Many negative changes have been imposed by big government and big business, including agribusiness. Especially distasteful are those elements most conspicuous to a cross country traveler—interstates, fast food restaurants, and endless suburbia. Individualism, a characteristic of Southerners, is still evident but harder to find under a Northern, plasticized veneer.

The author does unearth some old-time individualists and talks to others who have returned to the South in hopes of enjoying a friendlier environment and slower paced way of life. We catch a glimpse of the likes of a free thinking Baptist minister who doesn't attend church on Sunday and a gentleman in Luka,

Mississippi, who has stretched a parachute over his front lawn because he likes the way it looks. Outspoken, old-fashioned Jim Graham, North Carolina's Commissioner of Agriculture, makes an appearance too.

Powledge also tells of several blacks who report that the South has changed for the better. They believe that racial tensions have eased and are pleased with the new opportunities that are open to them. The "Mississippi fear," which the author knew as a reporter in the 1960s, is gone.

Better writers have traveled the same roads, but most North Carolina public libraries will want the book because of many references to personalities and localities in the state.

*Barbara Hornick-Lockard
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill*

Thomas J. Schoenbaum. **THE NEW RIVER CONTROVERSY.** Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1979. 195 pp. \$12.95.

This is a chronicle of the eleven year struggle of the people of the New River Valley against the development plans of the Appalachian Power Company. It is a story well worth telling and is one which will give hope to environmentalists everywhere. The New River is the oldest river in North Carolina and it came close to destruction in the name of progress. Only the combined efforts of the people of the area, the state of North Carolina, and conservation groups and newspaper editors stood against the powerful forces advocating destruction for economic growth. A major power company, the Federal Power Commission, the AFL-CIO, and the governors of Virginia and West Virginia stood firmly behind the building of a pumped storage facility for generating electricity called the Blue Ridge Project. The damming of the New River would have brought economic progress to the area as well as one of the largest recreational facilities in the East. It would also have destroyed thousands of acres of farm land, forced thousands of people from their homes, ruined hundreds of miles of scenic beauty, wiped out historic sites, and created acres and acres of mud flats all to supply peak-load electricity to cities far way. As one irate resident stated, "I'll give you an alternative. Why don't you people cut your life style and help America save some energy? ... P.S. Flooding another man's backyard has never been right."

This is not a totally unbiased report as Mr. Schoenbaum was a lawyer involved in litigation on behalf of the anti-dam forces. However, it is a reasonably fair story and greatly helps to clear up much of the confusion and controversy surrounding the Blue Ridge Project. It is recommended for all libraries with North Carolina collections and all people interested in saving the natural environment or a good fight or both.

*Ridley Kessler
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill*

William H. Chafe. **CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS: GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, AND THE BLACK STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. 436 pp. \$13.95.

Twenty years ago four young blacks sat at a lunch counter in Greensboro and changed the South. William Chafe, a Duke University historian, examines the black struggle for equality by focusing on race relations in Greensboro from 1940 through the mid 1970's.

Chafe's thesis is that North Carolina political leaders resisted the civil rights movement not by massive resistance but by civility and paternalism. Ironically, he contends, this proved a very successful strategy for it not only upheld segregation but also supported the state's progressive image. While the study focuses on Greensboro, events in the city are described in the context of state politics.

Greensboro provides an excellent model for study in this period, for it had a strong black community and a strong, white, business oriented political community dedicated to the status quo.

Chafe first gives a history and description of the Greensboro black community, with emphasis on its schools, colleges and churches. In 1954 Greensboro declared it would comply with the Supreme Court decision on integration; Chafe carefully documents how this became empty rhetoric, demonstrating how city and state went to elaborate lengths to avoid integration. Chafe spends several chapters on the demonstration in Greensboro, from the famous Woolworth's sit-in to the violent clashes which erupted as the decade ended. The protest, he shows, was a natural continuation of protest which already existed within the black community. After the more blatant forms of discrimination disappeared, blacks focused on integrating schools, a victory finally won in 1971. Chafe shows that the changes which occurred came only as a result of pressure. And he feels that the struggle will continue, as he thinks civility and civil rights are not compatible.

Chafe skillfully combines oral and written sources to produce a well documented and very readable work. If it has a fault, it is that Chafe fails to appreciate fully the courage which it took for whites to push for civil rights for blacks in North Carolina in the 1950's. Highly recommended—at least one copy of this valuable study should be in every library (except elementary schools) in the state.

William Z. Schenck
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

Carole Marsh. **THE MISSING HEAD MYSTERY.** Rocky Mount, N.C.: Gallopade Publishing Group, 1979. 163 pp. paperback. \$3.95.

The Missing Head Mystery is the first in a series of children's mystery stories set in historic sites in eastern North Carolina. There will be a minimum of 5-6 books in the series, each with identical format. All of the books use local children in photographs taken at the historical sites.

The Missing Head Mystery is set in historic Bath where the outdoor drama about Blackbeard is threatened by the loss of a most important prop, Blackbeard's head. Mysterious clues leads four children on an exhaustive search for the missing head.

The plot is good, with well-paced action, plausible dialogue, and a sufficiently scary air about it. What is lacking in character development is compensated for by historical detail. Ms. Marsh's chief purpose is to impart historical information. Sometimes this is all too apparent, but it does not interfere too much with the plot. The book's chief appeal will probably be to those who are somewhat familiar with the area.

The greatest disappointment with this book is the illustrations. The black and white photographs are dark, not sharp, and worst of all, could have been taken just about anywhere. The depth of field is so limited that the photographs give absolutely no feel for the historical area. Furthermore, the tops of heads (in 2 of 8 photos) or fleeting backs certainly are not camera worthy subjects. The photographs are not even located properly in relation to the text in all cases. One gets a nasty suspicion that the author simply wanted to have her own children's pictures in the book.

The Missing Head Mystery is intended to appeal to 8-14 year olds but it appears more suited to 9-11 year olds. One wonders if the appeal level is to remain the same for the entire series, or if it will rise along with the age of the author's children, who are, amazingly enough, 8 and 14.

The next book in the series, *The Secret of Somerset Place*, is scheduled for publication in the fall of 1980. Because of its local interest, it should be worth perusing.

Kay Taylor
Durham Public Library

Eloise Greenfield and Lessie Jones Little. **CHILDTIMES: A THREE GENERATION MEMOIR.** New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1979. 179 pp. \$7.89.

This is a delightful and captivating memoir of three black children, grand-mother, mother, and daughter, and their growing up times in Bertie County, North Carolina, and later in Washington, D.C. Most of all *Childtimes* is about "black people struggling, not just to stay alive, but to live."

Blacks young or old will find no difficulty relating to *Childtimes*. The images are sharp and sometimes poignant: doing laundry outdoors on a cold winter day; listening to a grandfather's ghost stories; marching to the creek to be baptized; or facing the specter of a burning cross. These and other childhood images have been experienced or reminisced about by their parents and grandparents.

Black and white photographs compliment the book and remind you of an old family album. The format is simple and the style is somewhat lyrical which makes it easy reading. This title is recommended for public and academic libraries.

Carolyn Robinson
Durham Public Library

Bernard S. Martof, William R. Palmer, Joseph R. Bailey, and Julian R. Harrison, III. **AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF THE CAROLINAS AND VIRGINIA**. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. 264 pp. \$14.95.

North Carolina has its share of snakes and more than its share of toads and frogs. And every step in the woods sends salamanders and lizards running for cover. Color pictures of these and other reptiles and amphibians fill *Amphibians and Reptiles of the Carolinas and Virginia* published in April by The University of North Carolina Press. Jack Dermid's photographs are large and clear and much more useful for identification than the drawings and black and white photographs of older books of this type.

The accompanying text provides the standard descriptive information (distribution, habitat, etc.) as well as any unusual habits the animals may have. There is an index and a glossary.

Amphibians and Reptiles of the Carolinas and Virginia is written at the adult level, but is not beyond the ability of young adults and interested younger readers. Every library in the state should have a copy for the reference collection as well as a circulating copy for the nature-lover's backpack.

Becky Stroud
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THE NEWS AND OBSERVER INDEX, 1974. Greenville: East Carolina University Library, 1980. 6 microfiches. \$5.00. (Order from Reference Department, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C. 27834)

THE NEWS AND OBSERVER INDEX, 1975-1976, Raleigh, N.C.: Department of Cultural Resources, Division of the State Library, 1979. 982 pp. in 2 vols. free. (Order from News and Observer Index, N.C. Division of State Library, 109 East Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27611; please enclose a self-addressed mailing label)

A perennial problem for those working with current North Carolina newspapers has been the paucity of published indexes to these papers. Librarians are probably more acutely aware of this problem than others, having seen many times that look of horror on the faces of researchers when they are told that there simply is no index to a North Carolina newspaper after 1973. Faced with the prospect of spending days or weeks reading microfilm in search of an elusive article, researchers often simply decide not to use the newspaper, thus depriving themselves of a valuable source of information.

Well, hooray! Help is on the way. The library at East Carolina University has added a 1974 index to Raleigh's *News and Observer* to their previous ones covering the years 1967-1973, and it is another fine one, this time on microfiche. And the North Carolina State Library has completed a hard-

copy *News and Observer* index for the years 1975-76. There are many similarities in format. Both are arranged by subject, though the headings vary somewhat. The State Library index has a separate name index, while in the East Carolina index, names are listed under the subject "People." This reviewer found the East Carolina index to be especially helpful because of the number of cross-references. (For example, if a researcher looks in the ECU index under "religion," he will find cross references to a number of other subjects, including names of denominations. The NCSL index has no cross references under "religion," though the researcher can find entries under names of denominations, as well as under other related topics.) The NCSL plans to continue indexing, with the 1977-1978 index in preparation now.

Both of these indexes belong in every library which has North Carolina newspapers for the period 1974-1976. They are invaluable. They may not be as popular as current fiction, but their value in the long run will undoubtedly surpass that of most popular novels.

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To: Moore Publishing Company
P. O. Box 3036
Durham, NC 27705

Yes!

I agree that each book about North Carolina (or one of its citizens) should be in all North Carolina libraries.

Of course, I expect it to be an ethical publication and a worthy addition to North Carolina literature.

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