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# New North Carolina Books

Alice R. Cotten, Compiler

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Daniel Joseph Singal. *The War Within: From Victorian to Modernist Thought In The South, 1919-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982. 453 pp. \$27.00 cloth, \$12.00 paper.

Many historians, when attempting to account for the sudden increase in intellectual activity in the South following World War I, have accepted the thesis that the region's intellectuals were stimulated to heightened creativity by an intense conflict of values in a society rapidly shifting from agrarian to industrial. Now, in an important new book, *The War Within: From Victorian to Modernist Thought In The South, 1919-1945*, Singal offers a different explanation for the emergence of this vigorous and fruitful period in southern intellectual history.

Singal dismisses the economic thesis with the observation that industrialization was not a significant factor in the South between the two world wars. He points out that a majority of Southerners did not hold industrial jobs until well after 1945 and that, if anything, "the region relapsed toward an agricultural society during the 1930s as a result of economic depression," (p. xii). Yet, he believes a radical evolution was occurring in this region.

The change affecting southern intellectuals, in Singal's view, was an internal rather than external one. Southern thinkers were gradually adopting a new way of perceiving the world, and their personal struggles with inherited traditions and beliefs produced a fierce "war within" many of them. Such was the tension that inspired and informed their writings and other intellectual activities.

The culture that southern intellectuals inherited from the late nineteenth century, Singal explains, was a Victorian one. For the Victorian, the world could be divided into civilized and savage, noble and ignoble. A central theme of this mentality was the belief that a "proper" culture for man was possible if society recognized and accepted natural laws governing the universe.

A unique mesh of defensive myths, Singal argues, strengthened southern Victorianism by convincing the South that it had achieved the best possible culture. First, Southerners had proclaimed their culture a morally superior one led by a noble aristocracy. After the Civil War, they continued pretensions to cultural superiority, claiming that their emerging industrialists were philanthropic entrepreneurs seeking to help their region develop economically and not typical profit-oriented capitalists.

While Victorianism flourished in the South, the rest of the Western world moved a new intellectual style. Singal defines this new mode of thought, Modernism, as a mentality ultimately based on the "assumption that man was the human animal, that the universe was inherently irrational, that morality was embedded in history and not in immutable laws, and that personality was primarily determined by one's culture." (p. 261) Such thought directly challenged the basic tenets of Victorianism. Modernism also promoted intense criticism and self-examination as a way to social improvement. Contrarily, Victorianism usually saw criticism as a threat to stability and order.

By the turn of the century, southern intellectuals, influenced through their reading and by contact with non-Southerners, began to experience this powerful conflict of world views. Singal explores in detail the lives and works of thirteen such intellectuals active in the decades between the wars. His examinations of historians Ulrich B. Phillips and Broadus Mitchell; novelists Ellen Glasgow, William Faulkner, and Robert Penn Warren; publisher William T. Couch; sociologists Howard Odum, Rupert Vance, Guy Johnson, and Arthur Raper; and Agrarian poets John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, and Allen Tate form the bulk of the book. Using psychobiography, more traditional methods of historiography, and intensive literary criticism, Singal shows the influence of Victorianism and Modernism on each man. Several of his subjects, he concludes,

never overcame their Victorianism. But others, after fierce and often emotionally painful struggles with their cultural inheritance, emerged as full-fledged Modernists who laid much groundwork for revolutionary social changes in the twentieth-century South.

Singal, assistant professor of history at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, is coeditor of *Regionalism And The South: Selected Papers of Rupert Vance*. His new discussion of Vance, plus the accounts of Couch, Odum, Johnson, and Raper, will be of particular interest to Tar Heels, since these five men had Chapel Hill connections. But even if *The War Within* lacked such a direct North Carolina link, it would still merit a place in all academic and larger public libraries in the state. It is a meticulously researched, ably argued, and well-written explanation of a significant period in southern intellectual history.

Robert G. Anthony, Jr., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

David B. Quinn and Alison M. Quinn, eds. *The First Colonists, Documents on the First English Settlements in North America, 1584-1590*. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1982. 199 pp. \$5.00 paper plus postage—total \$6.00.

This is a book that librarians, historians, and the general public have wanted for a long time. The editors are well-known authorities on the English exploration and colonization efforts on the coast of North Carolina in the sixteenth century. They are often in this state and have spoken widely here. Their preface and introduction to this work are models of historical narrative that set the stage for the documents that follow. The bulk of the volume consists of fifteen contemporary accounts, virtually all that survives concerning England's attempts nearly four hundred years ago to establish colonies in the New World. The Amadas and Barlow expedition of 1584, the Ralph Lane colony of 1585, and John White's "Lost Colony" of 1587 are the focus of the work, but other related contemporary events are also covered. As the source of knowledge for adults whose interest is aroused by the 400th Anniversary events forthcoming, this book will also provide the information on which young people may draw for school assignments and essay contests that will be sponsored during the same period.

Of further interest are the full explanatory notes that accompany the text of the

documents, a select bibliography, a chronology of the voyages, classified indexes, and a dozen excellent illustrations from contemporary sources. For the remainder of the decade of the 1980s it is highly likely that this will be one of the most popular books in the libraries of North Carolina.

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

William H. Hooks. *Circle of Fire*. New York: Atheneum, 1982. 147 pp. \$9.95.

William H. Hooks's *Circle of Fire* offers young readers a gripping story of a boy's first confrontation with prejudice and of his courage to do something about it.

Set in rural tidewater North Carolina during December, 1936, the story focuses on eleven-year-old Harrison Hawkins's life on the family farm. Harrison enjoys a relatively care-free life with his best friends, Kitty Fisher and Kitty's sister Scrap, who are black. While gathering walnuts one day, the three children met Liam Cafferty, a boy of about the same age, who is part of a band of Irish tinker gypsies camped on property belonging to the Hawkins family. Luther Harrison overhears local bigot Bud Highsmith's plans for the Ku Klux Klan to attack the gypsy camp on Christmas Day. The boy knows he must do something to stop the Klan or to warn the gypsies but is torn, since he suspects his father of being part of the Klan. The tension mounts and climaxes in a highly-charged scene. Fortunately, Harrison's conviction to act at any cost averts any tragic consequences during the raid. The story ends on a satisfying note with father and son reconciled. Although awakened to the harsh realities of life, Harrison realizes that his world is still basically good.

The author presents a readable, believable story in *Circle of Fire*. Most of the characters are true-to-life and are very likeable. Bud Highsmith and his Klan group are thoroughly villainous bigots and may appear stereotyped; however, this is necessary in order for the plot to work. Young readers are brought free-to-face with the reality of prejudice that rings as true today as in 1936. Particularly enlightening for readers is that Ku Klux Klan prejudice is not aimed exclusively at blacks but also at other groups. The rural North Carolina setting provides interest for local readers and gives a fine representation of this area for non-natives.

Born and raised in tidewater North Carolina, William H. Hooks has written a number of

books for children in the middle years and has co-authored an adult book on child care. He is the chairman of the Bank Street College Publications Division and is a leader in the field of educational publications. School and public librarians may want to consider purchase of *Circle of Fire* for their middle year children.

Susan J. Smith, Beaufort-Hyde-Martin Regional Library

William Lanier Hunt. *Southern Gardens, Southern Gardening*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1982. 191 pp. \$16.50.

Gardners will surely enjoy this collection of writings on gardening and gardens in the South.

Hunt, a prominent authority on southern horticulture, is a gardening writer, consultant, and lecturer. He helped to found the North Carolina Botanical Garden, which will eventually include the W. L. Hunt Arboretum. More recently, he helped organize the Southern Garden History Society.

The book is not a gardening manual or a how-to guide, yet it provides a wide range of practical and historical gardening information, arranged by month, under 145 topical headings. These include: color schemes, camellias, winter care of trees, winter flowers, bluebells, pruning notes, gardening under mulches, wild flowers of June and July, day-lilies, southern maples, camellia companions, and Chinese hollies. Especially interesting is the historical background provided for many of the plants mentioned, including the place of origin. The text even supplies names and addresses of seed companies and nurseries.

Hunt's style of writing is enjoyable and delightful, conveying his extensive gardening experiences. At times he is poetic, as when writing of the tiny trumpet daffodil: "It blows its tiny trumpet in my woods in January or February ... and it is always insulted if I do not come down immediately and admire it" (p. 152). The text is illustrated by only seven black-and-white plates. A short bibliography is followed by a thorough index.

I highly recommend this book for both academic and public libraries.

William R. Burk, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Carole Marsh. *The Mystery Of The Biltmore House*. Tryon, North Carolina: Gallopade Publishing Group, 1982. 120 pp. \$4.95.

First, recruit "real" children as characters. Then place them in "real" local spots, arti-

cially devise a plot, and record the children's "real" comments. Do not forget to douse liberally with local celebrities and local history. Such a formula book would certainly generate a response within the community. Perhaps this was the author's plan, but the results could have been at least readable. Alas, *The Mystery of the Biltmore House* is rife with inconsistencies in plot, grammar errors, an overabundance of strained similes and metaphors, and awkward phrasing. Most jarring is the almost total dependence on the vernacular, in both dialogue and narrative. "It was sort of neat, like it gave them all something in common," and "The curator looked like she was going to be sick," are two typical uses.

Yet, even such language abuses could have been partially redeemed by a convincing and exciting plot. Unfortunately, the mystery in this book is contrived and uninspired. Four children are thrown together by their parents' attendance at a convention of mystery writers. The convention, set at Biltmore House, coincidentally occurs just after the theft of the chess pieces from Napoleon's priceless set. Cryptic clues are conveniently handed to the children, who solve the mystery on the last night of the convention. Though secret passages are utilized and suspicious characters are inserted, the plot lacks suspense. In searching for some positive aspect to the book, one notes that interesting historical facts are included. The book is one of a series of History Mystery titles, each an attempt to make history more palatable for children. The concentration on local history is admirable but does not justify such a poorly written book as *The Mystery of the Biltmore House*.

Yvonne Hardy, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville

Seth B. Hinshaw. *Friends At Holly Spring*. Greensboro: North Carolina Friends Historical Society, 1982. 169 pp. \$6.00 paper. (Order from the North Carolina Friends Historical Society, P.O. Box 8502, Greensboro, NC 27410.)

This work of down-to-earth history comes to us without most of the accessories one associates with historical publications, such as full and precise footnotes, bibliography, and carefully documented sources.

Having noted this we must, in fairness, note further the author's intent to understand and appreciate a heritage and to transmit that heritage to the young and formative minds of succeeding generations. The work, as stated by



the author in his introduction, is presented, "not as complete history, but rather as a beginning which can be amplified as time goes along."

Sources of information for the book are listed as records of the Friends Historical Collection in the Guilford College Library, older Friends living in the community, and the author's recollections.

Seth Hinshaw has written six books, all dealing with Quakers, four about North Carolina Quakers specifically. He grew up in the Holly Spring Community of Randolph County, with close ties to the Friends. Writing this book was obviously a labor of love for him.

The reader should keep these factors in mind and enjoy reading the book for what it is: a fascinating account of a rural North Carolina community and its people and their faith which brings them through two and a quarter centuries of life in the New World. Never mind that a "scholar" would have supplied thorough documentation of each source, tightened up organization, and left out many of the personal observations; the author does very well what he set out to do, and we are in his debt for this record of a time, a place, a people, and a faith.

The book contains several photographs, maps, reproductions of paintings, and drawings. There are two appendixes: "Geology: 'A Goodly Land,'" and "The Indians Were Here First!" There are also two chronologies.

The Briarpatch Press of Davidson has produced a high quality product.

The work is appropriate for collections of North Caroliniana, local history, and religion in public, academic, and religion libraries.

Joe Rees, Duke University

Kathleen Pepi Southern. *Historic Preservation in Rural North Carolina: Problems and Potentials*. Edited by Ernest Wood. Raleigh: Historic Preservation Society of North Carolina. 1982. 188 pp. \$6.00 paper.

Historic preservation of the built environment is not a new concept in North Carolina. The preservation and use of historic buildings has added a great deal to the quality of life in cities and towns such as Edenton, Tarboro, Winston-Salem and Wilmington. Rural historic preservation, however is neither so fashionable nor so well defined as urban preservation, but the potential for the preservation of rural historic resources is real. Until the 1900s most of the state's population was rural, an indication

that there should be a large number of rural dwellings of historic interest that are suitable for preservation and use. Inventories of specific areas indicate that as many as one third of these houses of historic value are abandoned or near ruin. Besides their historic value, these rural dwellings have value as housing stock in an age when new housing is cost and resource intensive. They have additional value because of their role as part of the traditional landscape of North Carolina.

*Historic Preservation in Rural North Carolina: Problems and Potentials* addresses many sides of this preservation issue in North Carolina. The book outlines the problems which stand in the way of rural preservation. Changing agricultural practice, migration, and changes in lifestyle have contributed to the abandonment of these potentially useful homes. The difficulties of the rehabilitation process, credit problems, building codes, and other stumbling blocks stand in the way of reversing the trend and preserving these buildings. These problems and possible solutions to them are outlined by Ms. Southern. Broader program objectives, such as educational programs to make the public more aware of North Carolina's rural heritage, or pilot projects to demonstrate the value and viability of rural preservation are suggested. Sources of information and financing programs such as the Agricultural Extension Service or the Farmers Home Administration are identified, with specific information about what services and programs they provide.

This book was produced through the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources with funding from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the United States Department of Interior. The book is a first step in the process of developing a program for rural historic preservation. Outlining the problems and identifying resources and strengths will enable the Department of Cultural Resources and interested groups and individuals to begin to understand and address the issues involved in rural preservation. The information provided in this book is current and detailed and includes a bibliography and appendixes which cover the sources of assistance and information.

*Historic Preservation in Rural North Carolina: Problems and Potentials* will be of interest to individuals and groups throughout the state. Its authoritative and complete presentation and its timeliness and significance make this

book a worthwhile addition to academic and public libraries.

Carson Holloway, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

***Index of North Carolina Ancestors.***

Raleigh: North Carolina Genealogical Society, 1981. 378 pp. \$17.50, plus \$1.25 postage and handling — total \$18.75. (Order from The Reprint Co., P.O. Box 5401, Spartanburg, SC 29304.)

This most recent publication of the North Carolina Genealogical Society, which was responsible for the highly acclaimed guide *North Carolina Research* (see *North Carolina Libraries* 20:1, Spring, 1981,) contains over 10,000 names of North Carolina ancestors and their spouses. Its purpose is to "stimulate the exchange of genealogical information among researchers who are working on the same family lines."

The book is divided into three indexes and supplement. An introduction explains the purpose and arrangement of the indexes and warns of some alphabetical problems presented by computer listing. Tables of abbreviations are conveniently placed opposite the introduction and on the back cover. The *Ancestors Index* is an alphabetical listing of ancestral names with birth, death, and marriage data to identify each individual. Each listing is keyed to its contributor by a computer code number. Because each entry was based on information sent by 1,003 contributors during 1979 and 1980, the quality of information varies. The Society warns in its introduction that it is not responsible for accuracy of information and advises researchers to verify data from other sources. The *Spouse Index* is an alphabetical list of husbands or wives of those in the *Ancestor Index*. A separate index of doubtful names, maiden names, names of widows who married, and double surnames appears at the end of the master spouse index. Each entry is identified by the name of the appropriate spouse. The *Contributor Index* is in two parts. The first section is an alphabetical list of each contributor and his computer code number. The second is arranged by computer code number in numerical order followed by name and address of each contributor. The supplement features a table of North Carolina counties with dates of formation as well as parent and offspring counties and an outline map of present counties.

The book not only allows researchers to find others working on the same family lines but also offers suggestions for county(ies) of residence and migration patterns of a particular person or family. All North Carolina libraries with local history and genealogical collections will want to add this to their collections.

A second volume of this *Index* is in preparation. Information and entry forms should be requested from the North Carolina Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1492, Raleigh, NC 27602, prior to July 1, 1983.

Pam Toms, North Carolina State Library

Patsy Moore Ginns. *Snowbird Gravy and Dishpan Pie: Mountain People Recall*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982. 210 pp. \$12.95.

*Snowbird Gravy and Dishpan Pie*, similar in form and content to Ginn's previous book, *Rough Weather Makes Good Timber* (1977), is a selection of brief stories and anecdotes of mountain life as remembered by an older generation of North Carolinians. These tales and recollections from everyday experience are presented as a sampling of the cultural heritage of the western Carolina mountains.

The tape-recorded narratives are printed verbatim, except for that of Maggie Wachacha, which was translated from the Cherokee. The speech appears to be accurately transcribed and is represented without resorting to those extreme orthographic conventions that often veil more than they enlighten. However, on page 17, "holped" (i.e., helped) would make more sense than "hoped," and one speaker is sometimes reported as saying "covered," other times "kivered." The approach seems a reasonable compromise between the desire to give a feel for the flavor of mountain speech and the requirements of readability. Some of the passages are printed as free form verse "to facilitate the appreciation of singular phrases and provide easy reading," although it is not clear why some passages are so arranged, and others, equally singular, are not. In some odd cases, by setting the speech in short, oddly divided lines, the compiler disturbs the usually smooth flow of mountain speech and gives a jarring, choppy quality to the rhythm.

As in the earlier volume, the narratives have been arranged in chapters under several broad subject headings, e.g., "Home and Family Life," "Religion," and "Community." While this arrangement may prove useful for

some readers, it obscures the story tellers by dividing each person's narrative into multiple parts. The pieces are brief and unaccompanied by much biographical information, resulting occasionally in a fragmentary, depersonalized quality.

This volume is illustrated by the pen and ink drawings of J. L. Osborne. The scenes are not particularly mountainous and are unpeopled, but they picture rural views and an older life style, though locations are not identified.

There are good stories in this collection, some funny, some poignant, and they are fleshed out with the interesting details and bits of information that denote vivid memories. The lack of an index will make it difficult to relocate those interesting bits. However, the audience for this publication is unclear. The brevity of the selections and the lack of contextual information limit the usefulness of the work for historians. The lack of a bibliography or dis-cography will prevent most readers from learning that some of the speakers have been published elsewhere and that some can be heard on commercially available recordings.

If there is a point to the book, aside from the enjoyment of some good yarns and fine story-telling, it is to remind the readers of the wealth of valuable memory available in the minds of their foreparents and friends. If by so reminding, the book stimulates the readers to seek out, attend to, and perhaps record the vanishing remembrances of their kin and neighbors, then it is worth the price. The material is fine, but a university press with all the resources available to it should do a better job.

Eric J. Olson, *Appalachian State University*

Ann C. Alexander. *Perspective on a Resort Community: Historic Buildings Inventory, Southern Pines, North Carolina.* Southern Pines, North Carolina: The Town, 1981. 97 pp. \$6.00 paper plus \$1.00 postage and handling — total \$7.00. (Order from Marvin Collins, Town of Southern Pines, P.O. Box 870, Southern Pines, N.C. 28387.)

This is an interesting and important work describing the special architectural character and development of this noted health resort as well as the many famous people whose families still reside there. At the request of the town's Appearance Commission and with a matching grant from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, an agency of the Depart-

ment of the Interior, an inventory of historic sites was undertaken. Approximately two-thirds of the buildings surveyed from that inventory are represented in this work. The author skillfully uses photographs to unravel events leading to the development of Southern Pines as an area offering a variety of recreational and social activities.

Ms. Alexander also provides the reader with many fine representative photographs displaying the "eclectic" architecture of the area, a result of the influx of the people from the North and East. Many of these were wealthy businessmen, authors, and hunters who envisioned Southern Pines as a midway resort between New York and Florida.

The publication is divided into two sections. The first is an illustrated historical account of Southern Pines presented largely through its local architecture from the town's founding in 1887 through 1979. The second section contains an abbreviated architectural inventory and short analysis of each of the 141 local landmarks previously discussed throughout the book. This section also includes a reduction of the photographs used in the first section, which occasionally diminished the visibility of

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the architectural detail of the building being discussed.

The work is well documented, citing many unpublished as well as published titles, with credits for most of the photographs. It is interesting to note here that many of the photographs come from the Moore County Historical Association and the University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill. A few maps indicating geographical locations are also provided for the reader's information.

Historians, preservationists, and others interested in the origins of such famous North Carolina landmarks as the Highland Pines Inn, the Southern Pines Hotel (now the site of the Southern Pines Library), the Market Square Block, and the Weymouth Area (now on the National Register of Historic Places), will revel in reading this definitive work on Southern Pines and nearby Pinehurst.

The book is suitable for North Carolina college, university, school, and public libraries, particularly for special libraries with concentrations in architecture and architectural history and for collections of North Caroliniana.

Maryellen LoPresti, North Carolina State University

Vernon Alford, Jr. *A Poetic Reunion*. Southern Pines, N. C.: Vernon Alford, 1982. 38 pp. \$4.95 paper. (Order from the author, 1320 Eastview Drive, Aberdeen, N.C. 28315.)

Vernon Alford, Jr., a 1976 graduate of St. Andrews College, teaches reading and assists with the drama program at North Moore High School, and works part time with the Moore County Library. He is currently working on a master's degree in Reading and Secondary School Administration. His poetry has been published in the *St. Andrews Review*. In *A Poetic Reunion*, Alford gives us a few poignant moments at best; at worst, scatterings of his thoughts skitter across the page like small furry animals, cute-looking, but with no direction. Clearly a beginning poet, he is not afraid to take chances with language. In his poem "Down South is What We Call It Too," Alford's description of a southern bar creates a unique rhythm with words:

Empty wallet, bent over and limber,  
But you've got phone numbers.

Slide back to your car  
In one fluid motion  
The good times and the beat  
Keep pounding in your mind....

Not a bad place to party  
When you're out there in the streets.

Clearly this is poetry for everyone, not only for English majors. In another poem, "Chapel Island," one of his best, Alford describes a man's anticipation while waiting by the water for his date. Images of light, darkness and the woman's face are instrumental in creating an unexpected twist at the end. Unfortunately, the book as a whole does not live up to the standard set by this poem.

Many of his poems contain inconsistent end-rhyming patterns. One wonders whether Alford shouldn't have stayed away from rhyme altogether. Some of the poems could be developed more effectively as short stories. For example, "Norma's Restaurant" gives only a few glimpses of this apparently interesting character as the entrepreneur, but the poem ends with an entirely different theme, leaving the reader curious about Norma herself.

The book is divided into sections titled "Love City," "Thoughts in Winter," "Music," "Enjoyment," "People," "Frustration," and "Toward a New Direction." The last section touches on the themes of struggle and justice for all, but Alford carefully avoids the sentimental sensationalism so prevalent in modern poetry. He is a recorder of life's joys, local color, and common experience. As he tells us, his role is that of the artist:

Race riots, sit-ins fist fights, National Guard.  
They were the rough parts of trying to get it right.

Many pointed fingers,  
Others got into real trouble.  
I took pictures.

Though Alford may lack the profundity of Langston Hughes, he does possess the potential for extending his voice to the rest of the world around him. His poems, some of which would be wonderful set to music, cross the boundaries of color, region, and political preference by giving the readers a glimpse of the growing spirit of a young and passionate poet.

Lynne S. Gragg, University of North Carolina at Charlotte