
North Carolina writer Jill McCorkle has proven to be a phenomenon in the world of publishing—so much so that she was recently featured in *Publisher's Weekly* (Sept. 21, 1984). Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill is simultaneously publishing her first novel, *The Cheer Leader*, and her second, *July 7th*, believing "that the two together would be mutually supportive and bring added attention to a writer at the beginning of her career." A native of Lumberton, Ms. McCorkle is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Hollins College and now lives in Chapel Hill.

*The Cheer Leader* is described as a novel that "reveals what it means to have grown up in the years so recently gone by that their dynamics and patterns have not yet been explored." This may well be the reason for the unique appeal of this work. For those of us of Jill McCorkle's generation, being a child in the sixties and attending college in the late seventies has until now not been expressed in a way that is so true to life, so heartwringingly realistic that we can almost relive those days and those very feelings. Her Jo Spencer is a character whose voice is pure eastern North Carolina and whose observances are high school circa 1976. Her memories of growing up are like photographs—tiny moments, sometimes insignificant, but captured so clearly, in such crisp detail, that the reader sees, hears, even feels the images. Jo is the girl so many of us were at seventeen—striving to excel in studies, become popular and accepted, please our parents and our friends, attract A BOY—in a hurry to grow up, but hearing a small voice inside still wishing to slow down, go home, and be the protected little girl again. It is when she first begins to lose her perfect control and to doubt her direction that Jo's carefully regulated life begins to crumble. Pressures, expectations, and the struggle to find out who Jo Spencer really wants to be result in a frightening time that will be hauntingly familiar to many readers.

The cliché of the seventies was “finding oneself.” This is a story of slowly losing sight of self, of the discovery that “love can be a very depressing thing,” of the pain of loss, the loneliness of withdrawal, and the triumph of hope. This novel describes a time when Southern girls were torn between becoming independently successful and finding their success defined in terms of their attractiveness to men. The “me” generation was self-absorbed and serious-minded, struggling for liberation while yearning nostalgically for the simpler past. The first steps toward adulthood, the separation from families, the pseudo-independence of going away to school, and the illusion of control are rarely so well portrayed as they are here. Jill McCorkle brings growing pains to life.

From eastern North Carolina to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the sense of place here is flawless. Jill McCorkle seems destined, at age twenty-five, to become an important voice in literary North Carolina now and for years to come.

[Ed. note: *July 7th* will be reviewed in the next issue of *North Carolina Libraries*.]

Julie W. Sanders, Forsyth County Public Library


Intent on plundering Spanish colonies and treasure ships and eager to promote England's naval greatness, expeditions set out from the Devon coast in the 1580s bound for the New World. In *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony*, Professor Karen Ordahl Kupperman of the University of Connecticut has crafted an engaging and thoughtful narrative of the achievements and failures of those adventurers and settlers who represented the interests of Elizabeth's England in North America.

This intriguing volume discusses events from the period of first English contact with the North Carolina barrier islands to the establishment of a permanent English settlement at Jamestown on the Chesapeake Bay. Kupperman illustrates how
the perceptions of sixteenth-century Englishmen about themselves, their fellow Europeans, and the New World shaped the colonizing enterprises they undertook. For example, the dual interests of private plunder and public glory shared by Raleigh and other financiers dictated that they would choose colonists—such as the men sent out under Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe in April, 1584—who were not well fitted for founding a permanent settlement. Barlowe's glowing account of North Carolina's coast only decreased the likelihood that a lasting colony would be established by fostering false expectations of quick wealth that might be extracted from the New World settlement.

The titled but inexperienced leadership of Sir Richard Grenville brought trouble to his 1585 venture. Grenville's quarrels with Ralph Lane, the colony's governor, created dissension where a firm hand was needed to keep the colony under control. Among the most grievous shortcomings of Grenville, Lane, and other colonists was their callousness in dealing with the area's native population. The English, unfortunately for the Indians, used military methods to subdue "recalcitrant" neighbors, based on lessons the invaders had learned in Ireland.

Kupperman devotes a sensitive chapter to Carolina's native Americans and their interaction with the Roanoke colonists, a task for which she is well qualified by earlier researches (summarized in Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of English and the Indian Cultures in America, 1580-1640 [Rowman and Littlefield, 1980]). Aspects of Indian theology, medicine, agriculture, and psychology are treated with a careful and informed hand.

The ordeals and triumphs of John White's colonists make for engrossing reading, largely because Kupperman succeeds in placing the settlers squarely in the context of both earlier and later ventures. Roanoke's legacy—in addition to the splendid drawings of John White and the scholarship of Thomas Harriot—is that it served as "the prototype of all later successful plantations" (p. 107). Families, not single men, would prove to be the New World's most successful colonists. Funding settlements through joint-stock ventures would succeed where intermittently-funded privateering forays had not. Raleigh's colonies were, Kupperman writes, "a fitting beginning for American history" (p. 172) because they illustrated graphically that colonial and native interdependence—or the lack thereof—would dictate the success or failure of England's efforts in the New World.

Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony provides a succinct introduction to the central issues of the Roanoke story. For popular audiences, Kupperman's volume is a readable, delightful synopsis of current interpretations of the activities of Roanoke's settlers. The dearth of endnotes and lack of bibliographical citations slightly impairs the book's usefulness for students and scholars. Public, college, and university libraries will want to purchase this volume as a welcome addition to their collections of early American and North Carolina history.

Julia S. Hesson, East Carolina University


This handsomely produced and well-written book is an informative and entertaining account of the early development of stock car racing—a development in which North Carolina played a prominent role. The author's introduction provides a useful background for "the series of individual remembrances" of promoters, car owners, and former drivers who experienced first-hand the sport's evolution from rowdy and obscure beginnings toward its present status as a major spectator sport.

Each of the book's sections is based upon in-depth interviews. Bill France Sr., Tim Flock, Ned Jarrett, Wendell Scott, Banjo Matthews, Freddie Lorenzen, and a half dozen other stock car veterans provided the author with their often colorful recollections, including their memories of Fireball Roberts, Little Joe Weatherly, Curtis Turner, and other greats who no longer survive.

Although Sylvia Wilkinson is known primarily as a novelist, she brought to the writing of this book considerable experience in the world of auto racing. A North Carolina native, she has worked as a timer for actor Paul Newman's Can-Am and other sports car teams and has contributed regularly to racing magazines. Her writing reflects both a factual knowledge of racing and a feeling for the relationship between the drivers and their cars.

The book's flaws detract only slightly from its overall impact. Several sections might have benefited from tighter editing to eliminate extraneous material. At other times topics are insufficiently developed, and a few of the numerous black and white photographs seem unrelated to the text. The serious student of stock car racing might also question why some veterans were selected to be
interviewed while others, perhaps more prominent, were not. On the whole, however, the arrangement of the volume is logical and its illustrations effective.

Because North Carolina is and always has been a major center for stock car racing, this book should prove a popular addition to the holdings of the state's public libraries.

Wilson Angley, North Carolina Division of Archives and History


The tragic events of November 10, 1898, in Wilmington constitute a landmark in North Carolina history. What is traditionally termed the "race riot" on that day left at least twelve blacks dead in the city's streets. This followed the 1898 election by only two days. The campaign over the preceding weeks had been marked by unprecedented appeals to mob violence on behalf of a "white supremacy" effort. In Wilmington, the state's largest and least-segregated city, this appeal bore particular force as blacks had for some years occupied positions of power and influence. In the aftermath of the events of 1898 blacks in Wilmington and across North Carolina were increasingly denied access to the political process.

H. Leon Prather, Sr., professor of history at Tennessee State University, offers a provocative interpretation of what he terms "the most ghastly massacre of the Progressive era." His book is touted on the dust jacket as an account of "the only coup d'etat in the history of the United States." By strict definition the phrase does seem to fit since in the hours and days after the riot the legally elected regime in Wilmington was ousted from power by armed force. In his preface the author credits historian Arthur Link with being the first to apply the term to the sequence of events. Yet Prather finds a "propensity for distortion among white scholars," arguing that "the definitive pen of the black scholar is needed to correct the distortions and to fill in the glaring omissions." Since most of what has been written on the subject predates the civil rights era, his perspective does offer a useful corrective. Prather, author of a previous volume on education in North Carolina between 1890 and 1913, is the first historian to write a book-length account of the Wilmington riot.

It was the author's stated aim in this book to bridge the world between scholars and the general reading public. Using newspapers, archival materials, and interviews with descendants of principals in the disruption, Prather has uncovered a wealth of new details about the riot. Unfortunately, disjointed writing, occasional factual errors, and poor editing detract from his contribution. The illustrations, however, will appeal to the general reader, and historians will find much to appreciate in the footnotes and bibliographical essay. Although the book has its weaknesses, it does belong in college libraries and in public libraries in the Wilmington and Cape Fear area.

Michael Hill, North Carolina Division of Archives and History


Adcock's first book of poetry, Walking Out, appeared in 1975 and was also published by Louisiana State University Press. At that time Adcock described the concerns of her poetry as "growing up in rural, small-town south, folk-tales, ancestral hauntings, objects touched by time, the world's myths, the despair of the present, language as possibility. I am interested in pointing out relationships... And I care about our people, our failings, our deaths and the real earth. I have no program for salvation."

Nettles continues and develops these same concerns. As a collection it has a satisfying wholeness. Part One deals with the past in general, the "spiders of memory" of the first poem of the work. Part Two deals with the poet's particular past, especially with her mother's death when Adcock was a child, and her father's death thirty years later, two events which affected her deeply. Poems also recall her childhood suffering with asthma and an accident "when car and bridge, colliding, threw me / out of my fifteenth spring." Part Three brings us to the poet's present life—her daughter Sylvia, now grown, her twentieth wedding anniversary, teaching poetry at a reform school. The final part consists of one longer poem, dedicated to her husband, which shows the poet's struggle to come to terms with the past and to look toward the future. This collection is a mid-life view, hard-won.

The poems are permeated with an autumnal sadness, nostalgia, foreboding, and richness. The poet looks into October woods, her grandmother's pine quilt chest left now with only "flakings from dreamed-under patterns," a box-camera snapshot she doesn't quite remember, her grandfather's now run-down farm. The child, even while
safely recovering in bed, hears the radio hum "somewhere in the Pacific" and wonders whether she should cry. Looking at the run-down farm, Adcock writes:

we shape a world that will become all risk, as warfare will become all light.

Until, from necessary dark, we take the real, pared moon we've earned.
Then, knowing what we ask, we'll ask the ground again to dream as if it can.

Images and insights in the poems must be re-read and savored. This is polished writing. Adcock writes in "To Sylvia, Grown Daughter":

You may enter by the door of what is not yet, as you did before. Or by the new door of what has been taken from you.

Pain will let you in, or fury. Ordinary love will let you in, or any dying.

No key is too odd, no reason too far away.

It is only the house of your first name …

Of marriage after twenty years she writes:

And whatever singing, forgetting or nightmare howled in this house between man and woman, the child laughing or stifling in clenched sleep, here it is summer and cool, the shelves green with okra, beans, pears in clear jars.

The final poem of the collection, "The Swan Story," is a summing up of the whole. The child finds that "String and tatter, a life / is what it can find / growing wild in the woods and churchyard," while the adult discovers that "Nettle, thorn and sandspur, / The world stings itself into summer." But, in the end, the poet says to her husband:

We walk toward our winter fire
under the sky's downfall,
Bird-Loose-Feather whitening our hair.
Dear one, hold on. We are only halfway there.

And so there is hope—earned the hard way, but hope.

Betty Adcock is Kenan Writer in Residence at Meredith College. She grew up in Texas, did part of her college work at North Carolina State University, and now lives in Raleigh. She has published in various journals and has been included in anthologies such as New Southern Poets, edited by Guy Owen, to whom she dedicates this volume.


This survey of the work of Thomas Wolfe and the critical reaction to it is one of a series of handbooks that appraise the fiction of contemporary authors. It is a short work, carefully researched, which provides a well-written insight into the major themes of Wolfe's work and the fictional characters he created.

In a highly readable style Dr. Evans gives us a brief biography of Wolfe and examines each of the novels as well as From Death to Morning, a collection of short stories that appeared in 1935. While Evans draws heavily on the work of other Wolfe scholars, she is not without her own point of view. Many of the comments on Wolfe's style, themes, and characterizations are clearly her own.

While Evans considers Wolfe, in one sense, a failed talent, she seems to agree with William Faulkner, who said that among their literary contemporaries Wolfe was "first because we had all failed but Wolfe had made the best failure because he had tried harder to say the most." Evans thinks that Look Homeward, Angel escapes many of the literary pitfalls of the later works, which she believes are patchworks inexpertly pieced together. Acknowledging their failures, Evans points also to their strengths: the brilliant novellas they contain, the vivid characters that people them, and the lyrical quality of much of the writing.

The book explores Wolfe's recurrent themes of loneliness and death and shows how deeply rooted they are in Wolfe's life. Finally, Evans touches on Wolfe's slowly developing social awareness, as evidenced by the haunting short story, "I Have a Thing to Tell You."

This is a fine book for the serious high school or college student, as well as a useful guide for high school and college teachers. There is an excellent bibliography of works by and about Wolfe. The book is recommended for high school and college libraries.

Frances A. Weaver, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill


It would be easy to focus on the historical accuracy of Tancy, a novel for young adults that provides a lucid portrayal of the transition from Civil War to Reconstruction. But in addition to portraying correctly a period in history, this book
is the personal story of Tancy, a sixteen-year-old house girl for the mistress of Gaither's Mill in piedmont North Carolina.

Tancy works well as a historical vehicle, for through her we learn of the atrocities of slavery and the social upheaval created by sudden freedom for blacks. Because Tancy is one of the few literate slaves, she is able to work for a time at the Freedman's Bureau. This allows us to view the rampant governmental abuses of the period. Yet Tancy is more than a chronicler of events or a representative of her people. She is an individual with real problems who is forced to make serious decisions for which she has been grossly unprepared. When Tancy is twice almost raped by the master's son, it is the feelings of that naive young girl that emerge and not merely the historical prevalence of such brutality. When Tancy discovers that she is actually the daughter of the recently deceased master of Gaither's Mill, we respond to her ambivalence. Though such an occurrence was commonplace, it is as though Tancy is unique in her torn desires. Should she search for her biological mother, sold away when she was very young? Or should she be content with her dependency on "Miss Puddin," the only "mother" she has ever known? It makes no difference that Tancy's choices between the comfort of the known and the dubious promise of the unknown were the rule of the day. It is Tancy who counts, Tancy who draws upon our sympathies. Hurmence, through sensitive characterization, lifts this novel from its interesting historical underpinnings into the realm of a memorable coming-of-age story. Tancy is surrounded by and reacts to characters who are very human combinations of good and bad. Stock characters are used only to facilitate the movement of the plot.

And the plot moves well. Through a judicious balance of dialogue and narration, Hurmence sustains interest throughout. In fact, a bit of slowing at the end might have been welcome. Tancy becomes decisive about her life—tying up loose ends, intimating future directions, and leaving the absorbed reader saying "Wait! Not so soon!" Perhaps that reaction is simply the ultimate compliment for a fine, affecting novel. Ms. Hurmence, author of two previous novels, A Girl Called Boy and Tough Tiffany, might consider a sequel to Tancy. This is one reader who cares about what happens to that endearing young girl.

Yvonne Hardy, Asheville-Buncombe Library System.


Dr. Censer is associate editor of the Frederick Law Olmstead Papers at American University, Washington, D.C., but this book is the result of doctoral research carried out primarily in North Carolina at Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Personal letters, wills, deeds, and other records of hundreds of families were combed to produce this pioneer study of North Carolina parents and children. Initially we are introduced to the planter class by being told of many of their common characteristics—means of livelihood, religion, recreation, attachment to locality, political and economic backgrounds, their ideals, sentiments, and other traits. Six chapters then deal with young children and family life, youth and education, courtship, and marriage, parent/adult offspring relations, the younger generation as adults, and finally, the white family and slaves.

North Carolina families were found to have been devoted to and concerned about their children and persistent upon education and achievement and the wise use of time and money. Even so, parents were not unduly manipulative of their children's lives. For example, young people were free to choose their own marriage partners, to make their own decisions as to occupations, and in other ways to manage their own lives. Parents were generous in helping their children become established in life and fair in distributing family property, often dividing estates much earlier than might have been expected.

This book is carefully researched and written in a readable style. The variety of information it contains will appeal to a wide range of readers both to inform and to entertain. It is a delightful supplement to Guion Johnson's Ante-Bellum North Carolina, a work that has fascinated North Carolina readers since it first appeared in 1937. The assorted charts and tables will have reference value for librarians, and the classified bibliography will be useful to students of history. The scholarly reader will regret that the index, while certainly useful, is not more detailed. The pedantic reader will wish that the author had made use of guardianship records in the State Archives, a source for unusual information on wealthy orphans: they contain precise information on clothes, jewelry, toys and games, travel, educational expenses, and other unusual facts not available from other sources. But this would have prolonged the research perhaps by years, and we must be grateful for the new look at antebellum children that the author has given us.
Portfolio 1983: A Collection of Award Winning North Carolina Poetry. [32] sheets in 1 portfolio. $5.00

Portfolio 1984: A Collection of Award Winning North Carolina Poetry. [22] sheets in 1 portfolio. $7.50
Greensboro, NC: Poetry Center Southeast. (Library, Guilford College, 5800 Friendly Ave. W., Greensboro, NC 27410)

These titles, anthologies of poems by North Carolina authors, have each been published in the form of looseleaf printed sheets or broadsheets sheafed together in an attractive folder. The original Portfolio concept is attributed to Barbara Rosson Davis. Several different styles of printing are used, and the individual design of each piece enhances the work as it appears on the page and intrigues the reader beyond the appreciation of the poetry itself.

The poetry, award-winning works submitted statewide for these publications, varies in subject matter and level of skill. Some of the most accomplished poets in the state appear in these collections, along with some new voices. Ruth Moore's "River Bed" (You made your bed / on the pine needles / under the tin roof / in the rain. You rarely / think for the roar, / think for the roar.) is a good poem by an author many North Carolinians will recognize. This reviewer's favorite is a poem by Paul Jones from the 1983 Portfolio, "There Are Not Enough Ways" (to talk about passion. / ... like the field resting / in the arms of winter, / we hold seeds in us, / the smoldering code of briar / whose crooked thorns forbid / the mention of spring.). The 1983 selections were made by Sam Ragan, Poet Laureate of North Carolina, and San Francisco poet Roger Apton, and the 1984 ones by Stanley Lindberg, editor of The Georgia Review. In general the poems reflect a strength of craft and variety of theme that should appeal to a wide spectrum of readers.

What makes this publishing effort unusual, the broadside format, also unfortunately makes it unwieldy for library or personal use. I enjoyed handling the loose pages, appreciating each example of the printer's art, until they began to scatter and fray because they weren't bound between conventional covers. In general the works would be better served if they were in book form and could be placed on a shelf. This reservation aside, however, the Portfolio projects, supported by several grants including one from the North Carolina Arts Council, are a success in terms of quality of content and presentation and are recommended for public, academic, or high school libraries.

Cojila Barry, Chapel Hill


Among the most valuable legacies of America's Four Hundredth Anniversary Committee are many fine publications sponsored in whole or part by the committee. Surely this volume is one of the finest.

John White was the artist who came from England with the colonists who landed on Roanoke Island in 1585. He had instructions to draw plants, animals, and people in the New World. His drawings are remarkable. The surviving original watercolors are in the British Museum. This volume reproduces all seventy-six of those, plus the complete set of Theodor de Bry engravings (1590), and the copies made in the early 1660s. There are 186 illustrations in all, eighty of them in color.

Paul Hulton, the author, was Deputy Keeper in the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum. The British Museum is a co-publisher of this volume. In addition to the reproductions of the white drawings, this volume contains brief chapters on the English discovery of the New World; on White; on Theodor de Bry, White's publisher; on the history and publication of the drawings; on their meaning and influence; and on White as artist. Extensive notes on the plates, a short bibliography, and an index complete the volume.

A book of this quality and importance deserves a place in all public, school, and academic libraries in the state. It is a stunning accomplishment. Congratulations to the publishers and to Mr. Hulton.

Alice R. Cotten, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Other Publications of Interest

Hunter Publishing Company in Winston-Salem has a series of North Carolina county histories (twenty-three so far) that are of interest to public libraries and local genealogical collections. The text of each was written by local county residents and includes a brief history of the county, a large section of family history, pictures, and an
index. The quality of the writing varies, and researchers familiar with publications such as this know that some information presented as factual must be verified. The presence of an index certainly enhances the usefulness of each volume. The books are printed on archival paper, are hardbound, and are embossed with the county seal, making attractive and durable volumes. Prices range from $30-$45. (P.O. Box 5867, Winston-Salem, NC 27113)

The North Carolina Friends Historical Society has recently published (1984) "Friends "at the Spring": A History of Spring Monthly Meeting" by Algie I. Newlin, fourth in their series of histories of Friends meetings. Newlin's story is a meticulous tracing of this Piedmont meeting from its beginning in the mid-eighteenth century until the present. Two appendixes, notes, and a bibliography round out this 147-page volume. Recommended for collections of local history and of religion.

Sketches of Old Warrenton, North Carolina by Lizzie Watson Montgomery, originally published in 1924, has been reprinted by The Reprint Company in Spartanburg, S.C. (P.O. Box 5401). Warrenton, county seat of Warren County, was incorporated in 1779. The book is subtitled "Traditions and Reminiscences of the Town and People Who Made It," and it covers the daily lives and events of the residents, including education, social customs, newspapers, business, churches, and anecdotes about the residents. It's fascinating and quite readable, suitable for genealogical and local collections, and for libraries with collections of North Caroliniana. It's good to have this one back in print. ($25.00)

A new edition (paper) of Jane Corey's Exploring the Seacoast of North Carolina is available for $5.95 from The Provincial Press, Box 2311, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Since the volume first came out in 1969, this book has been popular with both tourists and natives who like to explore our state's coast. It's slim (40 pages), attractive, nicely illustrated, has good maps, and is useful. This edition includes changes along the coast in the last fifteen years. Recommended for school and public libraries and for collections of North Caroliniana.

Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc. (1001 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, Md. 21202) has recently published North Carolina Taxpayers, 1701-1786, first of a projected two-volume work. For about half of North Carolina counties formed before 1786, this volume lists those persons paying poll or property taxes. Names are from tax lists at the North Carolina State Archives and from North Carolina Genealogy. There are about 28,000 names, giving county of residence, date, and occasionally some additional information. ($17.50)

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The purposes of the grant are to encourage (1) membership in NCLA and RTSS, (2) attendance at NCLA Biennial Conferences, and (3) participation in RTSS activities.

The grant will be for $250.00 to finance attendance at the next Biennial Conference of NCLA. Membership in NCLA and RTSS are required upon acceptance of the grant.

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2. The applicant must not have attended an NCLA Biennial Conference previously.
3. The applicant must work in North Carolina.
4. The applicant must demonstrate financial need.
5. The completed application form must be neat and intelligible.
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Conditions of Grant Acceptance

1. The recipient must provide confirmation of acceptance in writing to the chairperson of the Resources and Technical Services Section.
2. The recipient must be a member of, or join, NCLA and RTSS.
3. The recipient must attend the entire Biennial Conference and all RTSS functions and will assist with RTSS programs if requested by the Executive Committee.
4. The recipient must notify the chairperson of the section, and return the grant funds if the terms of the grant cannot be met.

The selection of the grant recipient will rest solely with the RTSS Executive Committee. In the absence of qualified applicants, no grant will be awarded.

For application forms, write to: Joline Ezzell, Head, Serials Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C. 27706. Deadline for applying: July 1, 1985.