

## PEN NOTES: REVIEW

### *Piedmont Partisan*

(Davidson, Chalmers Gaston—*Piedmont Partisan; the life and times of Brigadier-General William Lee Davidson*; Davidson College 1951; 190p. \$3.00.)

*Piedmont Partisan*, the biography of William Lee Davidson, is more than a biography—it is the history of the Piedmont section of North Carolina during and prior to the period of the Revolutionary War.

General Davidson, by his ability, courage and determination to organize and maintain forces for the army, made a place for himself and western North Carolina in the annals of history. He "comes alive" in the pages of *Piedmont Partisan*. The people who find North Carolina history readable for enjoyment will be pleased with the action and drama found in the life of General Davidson. These facts and many more are touched on in many histories of North Carolina. However, too few books have been written about the individuals who made North Carolina history.

Dr. Davidson has enhanced the value of his book by including detailed notes, a critical bibliography and an index. These are all valuable aids to a student of North Carolina history. Such a limited amount of material is available for use in the course in North Carolina history taught in the eighth grade in North Carolina public schools that this book will be welcomed by pupils and teachers. *Piedmont Partisan* also will be a valuable source of information for college students.

—Jane Howell, Librarian,  
Lindley Junior High School,  
Greensboro.

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### *North Carolina Poetry*

In school and public libraries from Murphy to Manteo, the red brown volume of Richard Walser's *North Carolina Poetry* has been familiar and quite indispensable, since it first appeared some eleven years ago. Students and teachers, after dinner speakers and

book club members, poetry lovers and local patriots, have all had occasion to be grateful for this anthology of skilfully selected poems, with its biographical sketches of the poets, and its introductory essays on the history of North Carolina poetry.

In the new and revised edition (Garrett & Massie. Richmond, \$4.00) Mr. Walser has included the newer writers: James Boyd, Edwin McNeill Poteat, Charles Edward Eaton, Thad Stem, Lucy Cherry Crisp, Randall Jarrell, and Helen Bevington, whose sprightly lines inspired Irwin Edman to remark in rhymed couplets:

"I like these verses, every one,  
By poet Helen Bevington . . ."

In his introduction Mr. Walser discusses the three periods of North Carolina poetry; the contents of his book are arranged in roughly chronological order. The Early Period, beginning in the 18th century, includes writers like Thomas Godfrey of Wilmington and William Hill Brown, writers of polished classical verses, embellished with numerous literary allusions. To the modern reader there is something faintly ludicrous in the thought of nymphs and muses disporting themselves in regions associated in the popular mind with oyster roasts and fishing trips, but the works of these men often have a quaint and delicate charm. A particularly choice example of this school is found among the works of Thomas Godfrey, the State's first poet:

"O Come to Masonborough's grove,  
Ye Nymphs and Swains away,  
Where blooming Innocence and Love,  
And pleasure crown the day.

Here dwells the Muse, here her bright Seat  
Erects the lovely Maid,  
From Noise and Show, a blest retreat,  
She seeks the sylvan shade."

In the latter half of the nineteenth century North Carolina poets began to break away from classical tradition and to write about their own region, in everyday language. In many of the poems of this Middle Period there is expressed a deep and moving love of home. Here are John Henry Boner, with his *Hunting Muscadines* and his *Country House in the South*; James Larkin Pearson's *Fifty Acres*; the well-known poems in dialect by John Charles McNeill, as well as his lovely:

"When I go home, green, green will glow the grass  
Whereon the flight of sun and cloud will pass;  
Long lines of wood-ducks through the deepening gloam  
Will hold above the west, wrought on brass;  
And fragrant furrows will have delved the loam,  
When I go home."

Finally, there is the Modern Period, with writers who are less sectional in their concepts and whose reputations have spread beyond the borders of the State. Thomas Wolfe, whose prose was often superb poetry; Charles Edward Eaton of Winston-Salem, who is perhaps the most gifted of our younger poets; Paul Green, and many others are represented here, rounding out some two hundred years of literary history.

—Mary Cutler Hopkins, Current Affairs Librarian,  
University of North Carolina Library,  
Chapel Hill, N. C.