New North Carolina Books

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MICHAEL A. GODFREY. *Winter Birds of the Carolinas and Nearby States,* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1977.) $24.95.

Birdwatching is an activity that has increased greatly in popularity in recent years. Michael Godfrey has written and illustrated with color photographs a fine guide to the 88 species of upland birds that winter from northern Georgia to southern Pennsylvania. The species covered by the book are divided into four groups, including "At the Feeder," "Farther Afield," "Birds of Prey," and "Rare and Uncommon Birds." For each species, a color photograph accompanies a description of the bird which includes field marks, length, voice, range in our region and habitat. Such information is readily available in any of the widely-used field guides to birds, but Godfrey's book contains several features that most field guides lack. For example, his notes on the natural history of each species are well-written, informative, and frequently fascinating. The photographs that accompany the species descriptions attest to many hours spent patiently stalking subjects in the field, or waiting in cramped blinds for a particular bird to return to the feeder. Most of the photographs are excellent; some are of lesser quality. For example, shadows hide the field marks of the Winter Wren and Swamp Sparrow, and one would be hard put to distinguish the Cooper's or Sharp-shinned Hawk from the photographs alone. However, the technical difficulities in obtaining good photographs of birds are enormous, and one of the most interesting sections of the book is an appendix describing how each photograph was taken.

The book is not meant to be field guide; its size (9 x 9½ inches) makes it too large to carry in the field, and its price seems unnecessarily high. No aquatic or coastal species are included, probably in order to limit the scope of the book to a reasonable number of birds. For birdwatchers, "naturalists," and photographers, this book will be a welcome addition to all libraries.

Lynn Moseley

GUY OWENS and MARY WILLIAMS, eds. *Contemporary Poetry of North Carolina* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1977).

They are "Walking Out," "Southbound," or taking a "Morning Stroll." They are "Driving through a Country which is Vanishing," "Returning to North Carolina," "Wintering," "Moving North," leaving "No Forwarding Address." Sometimes they are "Going Nowhere at Night," and barely "Balancing on Stones." But there is no doubt about it: the writers published in *Contempory Poetry of North Carolina* are on the move.

They work "A Forge of Words," they plant "The Seed of Fire." They are "Clean-

ing the Well," and they are "Sowing Salt." They speak in the voices of Moses, of "The Women at the Washington Zoo," and through the "Diary of a Madwoman." They tell of "Flannery O'Connor," of "The Bee Woman," "The String Lady," "A Visit to Nefertiti," "School Days," "January Hog-Killing," "The Lost Colony," "The New South," "Ghosts," "Silver," "Corson's Inlet," and "The Philadelphia Airport." All that; more, too, in ways that surprise, deepen, and delight.

Guy Owens and Mary C. Williams have made a collection which illustrates what they call the " . . . unprecedented explosion of fine poetry in our state." The collection includes work by well known artists: Randall Jarrell, Robert Watson, A. R. Ammons, Reynolds Price, Fred Chappell, Ann Deagon. And it includes others who are familiar from their book and journal publications. In addition, there are some fine writers in the collection who may be unknown to the reader. Quality varies. Style varies. But the impact of these poems, the energy they express and generate, will, as Owens and Williams claim, " . . . bear witness to the poetry explosion by providing a representative sampling of what is being written *here* and *now*." In any library the volume will continue to witness this moment while, also, providing experiences in poetry which transcend time and place.

Claire Rhea Helgeson

IVEY F. GRIGG and JESSIE SCHNOPP GRIGG. *Man of the Piedmont: A Profile.* (Lenoir: Crabtree Press, Inc. 1976.) $7.95.

Is the term "Piedmont" anything more than a geographical expression? Is the piedmont section of North Carolina anything more than the middle part of the state, lying between mountains and the sea? Are the people different? Is the culture different? Ivey and Jessie Grigg think so, and they have attempted to draw distinctions and to make these distinctions a matter of record. They have not made a very strong case. This book is neither history nor sociology. It is essentially folklore, an account of one man's impressions of central North Carolina in the pioneer days — the work habits, religion, humor, and life styles of a world and a time that he remembers.

The reminiscences are those of Ivy Grigg; the writing has been by his wife, Jessie S. Grigg. Oral History is perhaps the best term to describe the book. It should be interesting to readers who enjoy stories and yarns about the old days. Public libraries might want to make it available to their older readers. University and college libraries should purchase it only if complete North Carolina folklore sections are being maintained.

LEE PARKER and RUTH DORVAL JONES. *China and the Golden Weed.* (Ahoskie: The Herald Publishing Company, 1976).

Lee Parker worked in China for a number of years as a representative of the British American Tobacco Company. Since Parker is a native of Ahoskie, and tobacco is one of the state's leading money crops, I assumed, given the title of this book, that Parker's story would deal directly with the selling of tobacco products in a foreign market. It does not; the title is misleading. Except for a page or two toward the end, very little is said about the tobacco business in China.

The book contains some interesting observations about China, but gives us little that we did not already know. It is essentially a diary, a story of one man's adventures in a strange culture. The omission of dates weakens the book; we don't know, except by inference, when Parker arrived,

how long he stayed, or when he left. Parker's experiences could certainly have been turned into an excellent book on China, but it would have taken a veteran social critic and writer to have accomplished such a task.

RAYMOND GAVINS. *The Perils And Prospects Of Southern Black Leadership: Gordon Blaine Hancock, 1884 -1970.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1977). $11.75

Many colleges and universities across the country have introduced black studies majors into their degree programs. These majors have been severely criticised — for both sound and unsound reasons. The most responsible criticism has come from certain black scholars who have said, quite simply and to the point, that not enough scholarly literature exists to support such programs. Accordingly, they argue, the curriculum planners should wait until the scholars have done their work. To do otherwise is to compromise scholarship and do a distinct disservice to black students. This biography of Gordon Blaine Hancock is the kind of scholarly work these critics are calling for.

Gordon Blaine Hancock was born in South Carolina and educated at Benedict College, Colgate University, and Harvard University. He was a minister, sociologist, professor, and social activitist. He returned to the South after finishing his degree at Harvard because of his belief that educated blacks from the South should confront the problem of racial segregation where it existed in its most virulent form. This is what he did, as a professor at Virginia Union University and Moore Street Baptist Church in Richmond. From these positions Hancock extended his influence throughout the South, working and speaking in the interests of ending racial segregation and instilling in black people the concept of self-help. The dominant themes of his life were Christian ethics and racial brotherhood.

Gavins portrays Hancock as a "marginal man," a black man of immense pride in being black who saw racial integration as the only hope for America, a man who saw accomodation rather than confrontation as the only hope for democracy and brotherhood in a divided country. Hancock preached self-help, hard work, pride, and determination to his own people. To white people he argued against the evil of racism. Throughout the three decades before the *Brown* decision in 1954 Hancock was recognized, along with many others, as a leader in the fight against racial segregation. When the movement broke loose into the streets in the 1960's Hancock was pushed aside as younger, more active leaders claimed the limelight. Though he admired and supported Martin Luther King, Jr., Hancock never agreed with the more radical leaders who sought racial change through confrontation.

Gavin's point is that men like Hancock, and there were many, are not being given their proper due in the writing of black history. They are not being entirely ignored, but their contributions are being slighted in the literature. He sees men like Hancock as vital links in the civil rights movement, links between the difficult days of the 1920's and 1930's which called for certain kinds of methods and the more active days of the 1960's when other methods came into vogue.

This is a thoroughly researched and carefully written biography. It is not only good history; it is a valuable study of the sociology of race relations in America as well as a study of the trials of citizen leadership in a multi-racial society. It is a valuable contribution to Afro-American history. Every North Carolina library should order it.