

Mayflower Cup, R.I.P.

On November 15, 2002, a long-standing Tar Heel tradition came to an end. On that evening, at the meeting of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association in the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, the Mayflower Cup, awarded annually for seventy-two years, was presented for the last time. Created in 1931 by the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of North Carolina, the cup originally was awarded annually to the best published work by a North Carolinian, fiction or nonfiction. Since the creation of the Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction in 1952, the Mayflower Cup competition has been limited to works of nonfiction. The history of the venerable old cup provides a prism into North Carolina arts and letters over the last two-thirds of the twentieth century.

The North Carolina Literary and Historical Association traces its beginnings to 1900. Most noteworthy among its early achievements was the central role it played in the creation in 1903 of the North Carolina Historical Commission, now known as the Office of Archives and History. From 1905 to 1922 “Lit and Hist” at each fall meeting presented the Patterson Cup to the most deserving book, prose or poetry, by a North Carolinian. Lucy Bramlette Patterson of Winston-Salem, who in 1902 had served as the first president of the North Carolina Federation of Women’s Clubs, established the prize—a gold, jeweled loving cup—in memory of her father, William Houston Patterson. President Theodore Roosevelt, speaker at the “Lit and Hist” dinner in 1905, made the inaugural presentation to John Charles McNeill for his volume of poems, *Songs, Merry and Sad*.^{*} Judges for the competition were professors of history and English at North Carolina colleges and universities. No awards were presented in 1918, 1919, and 1921. Each year the winner kept possession of the cup until the next year’s dinner. The original plan had been for a three-time winner to take permanent possession. Clarence Poe won the cup twice but, absent anyone with a better record and with the space for engraving gone, the cup was retired in 1922.

A proposal to recognize once again the year’s best book by a North Carolinian arose in 1930. The president of the Literary and Historical Association that year was Horace Kephart of Bryson City, the recipient in 1913 of the Patterson Cup for *Our Southern Highlanders*, the now-classic interpretation of the culture of the North Carolina mountain region. Working jointly with Albert Ray Newsome, the association secretary-treasurer and secretary of the Historical Commission, and Josephus Daniels, publisher of the *Raleigh News and Observer*, Kephart advised Burnham S. Colburn of the Mayflower Society on the creation of such a prize. The North Carolina chapter of the society, a hereditary group with membership limited to those who could trace their ancestry to a passenger on the *Mayflower*, had been organized in 1924. The society’s objectives were to promote the memory of the Pilgrim Fathers, maintain and defend principles of religious and civil liberty as set forward in the Mayflower Compact, cherish ideals and institutions of freedom, and transmit the “purity of purpose and steadfastness of will of the Pilgrim Fathers.”

^{*}In thirteen subsequent presentations only one other Patterson Cup award was for poetry (and none for fiction), that being the prize given to Olive Tilford Dargan for *The Cycle’s Rim* in 1917. The other Patterson Cup winners were Edwin Mims, Kemp Plummer Battle, Samuel Ashe, Clarence Poe, R. D. W. Connor, Archibald Henderson, Horace Kephart, J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton, W. L. Poteat, Winifred Kirkland, and Josephus Daniels.

Colburn commissioned a Biltmore Forest neighbor, William Waldo Dodge Jr., to design the cup. A work of detailed craftsmanship, the twenty-inch-tall cup was placed on display in the Hall of History (it remains on display today in the third-floor case of the Archives and History/State Library Building). Atop the cup is a faithful model of the *Mayflower*. Around its original black Belgian marble base is a band of sterling silver. As additional winners names have been added over the years, it has been necessary to add new bases to provide space for engraving.

In 1931, as in succeeding years, a replica cup was presented to the winning author. The original guidelines, little changed over the years, called for the cup to be presented “to the resident of the State of North Carolina who during the preceding twelve months ending November 1st shall have published an original work of outstanding excellence, which in the opinion of the Board of Award, hereafter specified, shall appear to have been the most deserving of recognition.” The agreement called for the chairmen of the departments of history and English at the University of North Carolina and Duke University to serve as members of the Board of Award along with the association president. Whenever a member of the board had a book in the competition, a substitute judge would be engaged.

The first recipient of the Mayflower Cup, selected from a field of twelve entries, was Marcus Cicero Stephens Noble, dean of education at the University of North Carolina and member of the Historical Commission, for his *History of the Public Schools in North Carolina*. Gov. O. Max Gardner was asked to make the presentation, but he elected to keep a football game appointment. Instead a Raleigh member of the Mayflower Society, Kingsdale Van Winkle, presented the cup to the seventy-six-year-old Noble. The 476-page tome, published by the university press, was a workmanlike study but Colburn, in private correspondence, suggested that there was “little of real literary worth” in the volume. Newsome was defensive about the selection and noted that literary luminaries such as playwright Paul Green had no work eligible for the competition that year.

Green was in the running the next year but with a shorter work not judged to carry the heft to make it worthy of the distinction. Archibald Henderson, the Chapel Hill polymath, was the winner for the first volume of his biography of George Bernard Shaw (a second volume on Shaw would win in 1957), a work labeled “Boswellian” by one of the judges. The fact that another resident of Chapel Hill, a young sociologist named Rupert Vance, won in 1933 made it three years with the winner from the same town. The winner in 1934 was Erich Zimmermann, a Duke professor, but it was evident nonetheless that scholars tended to vote for colleagues or acquaintances.

The judging procedures in the early years led to other unforeseen consequences. The simple matter of getting the books to the judges was among these. Newsome asked judges at the same institution to share books and, to facilitate this, placed copies in the respective libraries. The success of the competition led judges to complain about the onerous nature of the task. From twelve nominated books in 1931 the number swelled to more than forty. R. D. W. Connor, one of the Chapel Hill judges, declined to participate any longer pointing out that the task came around at the busiest time of the school year. William K. Boyd of Duke joined him in withdrawing. As a consequence Newsome, in consultation with Colburn, devised a rotation sequence for judges, calling upon professors of history and English at Davidson College, Wake Forest College, North Carolina State College, and the Woman’s College as well as UNC and Duke. “The men would know when to expect their tour of duty,” Colburn surmised.

The popularity of the Mayflower contest increased considerably under Christopher Crittenden, who succeeded Newsome as association secretary-treasurer in 1935. News of the competition reached the western provinces. Arthur T. Abernethy of Rutherford College, the state's first poet laureate, wrote, "Living, as I do, in the famous South Mountain terrain, capital of Moonshine, and in a town about equally divided as to population between Bishops and Bootleggers, I could find a very handy service in the cup." Olive Tilford Dargan wrote from rural Swain County in 1936, expressing her intention to submit her next work but noting, "I have been wrestling over here all summer with my unprofitable acres, which must be made to provide for seven adults and fifteen children before I can enjoy the sleep of the just." Another western North Carolinian, Thomas Wolfe, was ineligible for consideration given the residency requirement and the fact that he lived in New York. Years later, Wilma Dykeman Stokely, when her own eligibility was questioned, pointed out the arbitrariness whereby Wolfe was ineligible but Carl Sandburg, the Illinois native living in Flat Rock, was welcomed.

The success in 1937 of a book on medicine led Crittenden to write Colburn of a "general feeling that the competition has become too academic." In tandem they ruled that technical and scientific works should be ineligible. Religious titles remained perennial entries. Books written to promote a particular belief received little notice from judges but in 1942 a history of Quakerism won and in 1952 a book on the Papacy received the honor. Crittenden further devised a new judges panel, substituting two literary critics for one pair of professors, keeping the total number of judges at five, including the association president. The new scheme produced a more varied set of winners beginning with Jonathan Daniels in 1938 for his *A Southerner Discovers the South*, the winner over a field that included Guion Griffis Johnson's acclaimed *Ante-Bellum North Carolina*. The next year produced the first female winner with Bernice Kelly Harris's taking the award for her novel *Purslane*. Harris was the second winner for a work of fiction, after James Boyd for *Roll River* in 1935.

The success of a fiction entry likely inspired Houghton Mifflin in 1940 to nominate Carson McCullers's *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, written while she resided in Fayetteville. That work received votes but was bested by *The Good Old Days* by David L. Cohn. Nell Battle Lewis, the acerbic critic for the *News and Observer*, took the opportunity to assail the Mayflower Cup process. She noted that Yanceyville resident Cohn had been born in Mississippi and educated in Virginia. Lewis especially regretted that Paul Green had never been a recipient. Crittenden, who had tried to enlist Lewis on the board of judges, wrote his friend George McCoy, an Asheville newspaper editor, that "on several occasions she had shown personal animosity toward me." Green never received the Mayflower Cup but, with the institution of the Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction in 1952, he was the inaugural recipient for "outstanding literary achievement."

The reconceived judges panel, by including literary critics as well as academics, produced during the World War II years two especially noteworthy winners. In 1941 the leading contenders were a multivolume history of North Carolina by Archibald Henderson, a biography of Percy Bysshe Shelley by Duke professor Newman White, and *The Mind of the South* by Shelby native and Charlotte journalist W. J. Cash. Results were inconclusive after three ballots. W. T. Couch, the president of the Literary and Historical Association that year, had delegated Chapel Hill journalism teacher and writer Phillips Russell as his substitute. Crittenden summoned the five judges to convene at the home of William T. Polk, an attorney and an associate editor of the *Greensboro Daily News*. Russell took the bus to Raleigh on November 30, rode with Crittenden to Polk's home in Warrenton, and there influenced the others to support his choice of Cash.

The award was the first one presented posthumously. W. J. Cash had committed suicide in his hotel room in Mexico City the previous June. His widow attended the presentation ceremony.

In 1943 the balloting, in a surprise, resulted in the first African American winner of the Mayflower Cup, J. Saunders Redding, a Delaware native, who had taught English for five years at Elizabeth City State Teachers College. A critic and social commentator, Redding traveled across the South to research *No Day of Triumph*, an unvarnished documentary look at contemporary black life. Published by Harper and Brothers, the book was well received, coming to the attention of national critics such as Malcolm Cowley and Wallace Stegner. The ex officio judge for the Mayflower Cup in 1943 was Paul Green, that year's president of the Literary and Historical Association. From the Woman's College A. M. Arnett and Winfield Rogers were appointed while from Washington, North Carolina, came Pauline Worthy, a librarian (in time co-author of the standard history of Beaufort County) and insurance man John Bragaw. (Shortly after devising the scheme to include literary critics, Crittenden had broadened the definition to include librarians, booksellers, and others with a serious interest in books.) Also nominated that year was historian John Hope Franklin for his pathbreaking study *The Free Negro in Antebellum North Carolina, 1790-1860*.

Redding's book caught the eye of Worthy, who wrote Crittenden, "I don't know how interested you are in the race problem. I am keenly. And I found *No Day of Triumph* very disturbing." The initial balloting was inconclusive and Green called the judges together in Raleigh on Sunday, December 1. Green took a particular interest in African American life and delight in literary work that documented everyday life and speech. He had collaborated with Richard Wright, author of the introduction to Redding's book, on the stage adaptation of Wright's *Native Son*. On receipt of notice that he had won the prize, Redding traveled to Raleigh on two days' notice. In accepting he stated, "I am happy about the award not only for my own sake, but for the sake of the new hope and new faith which it kindled in the hearts of many Negroes who did not believe it could happen."

The news sparked considerable public interest. The day after the program, the *News and Observer* heralded the evening's program on the front page with an accompanying photograph. The story named the judges and noted that the presentation was especially timely given that the evening's principal speaker, Richmond editor Virginius Dabney, had delivered an address entitled "Race: The South's Problem Number One." On the editorial page of the same paper, the writer concluded that the award "demonstrates that in North Carolina a man who does a good job is recognized without regard to race or creed." The following week Nell Battle Lewis recommended the book with reservations. In conception, she noted, the book recalled Jonathan Daniels's *A Southerner Discovers the South*. Calling attention to the rough language (mild by today's standards), she suggested that "the book needs some lye soap and sand." Nevertheless, she applauded the choice and concluded "I am—and always have been—in favor of inter-racial amity, in the direction of which this award was a sensational gesture."

Progressive the choice might have been but there were dissenters. Willis Smith was a Raleigh attorney, remembered best today for the heated 1950 race against UNC President Frank Porter Graham for a seat in the United States Senate. In November 1944 Smith wrote to Crittenden to renew his membership in the Literary and Historical Association but took strong exception to the previous year's award for what he termed "a filthy piece of literature" and "an obscene portrayal of

sordid incidents.” He concluded “probably some of the committee was trying to prove that they were liberal” for awarding the prize “for such a piece of trash as the Negro wrote.” In his reply Crittenden wrote that “there is much to be said for your position in the matter” but pointed out that his involvement in the process was limited to the selection of judges.

A challenge of a different sort arose during the war years. Due to the restrictions on the use of metal, the Mayflower Society was unable to procure replica cups for the recipients. Colburn proposed that each winner receive instead a fifty dollar check and a certificate but, for the short term, agreed to an arrangement whereby the winner would take temporary possession of Jonathan Daniels’s 1938 cup on loan for the purpose. Daniels’s father Josephus solved the conundrum by virtue of his connections within Mexico, where he served as U.S. ambassador from 1933 to 1941. Six silver cups were obtained and the tradition was renewed. Appropriately the winner of the prize in 1946 was the third female recipient, Josephina Niggli, for her book *Mexican Village*. In 1971 a similar need arose and the former president of Mexico was prevailed upon personally by Bernard Flatow, a University of North Carolina alumnus, and once again six cups were supplied “as a gesture of inter-American friendship and understanding.”

The most consequential change in the history of the Mayflower Cup took place in 1952 when a separate competition for fiction, the Sir Walter Raleigh Award, was established (at the same time awards were introduced for the year’s best volumes of poetry and juvenile literature by North Carolina writers). Sam Ragan of the *News and Observer* and Richard Walser, English professor at North Carolina State College, led the effort to create the new categories, each of which operated under similar criteria. On behalf of the Mayflower Society, Burnham Colburn expressed initial reluctance to change the criteria. The shift to the nonfiction emphasis was adopted in stages. During the 1950-1951 biennium, the judges agreed to consider fiction only for the first calendar year and nonfiction for the second. As a consequence, Chapel Hill writer Max Steele received the final Mayflower fiction award in 1950 for his novel *Debby*. Jonathan Daniels received his second of three cups for nonfiction the following year for a biography of Harry S. Truman. Daniels was one of two three-time winners of the Mayflower Cup, the other being historian Glenn Tucker. No writers won over three times. Seven have been two-time recipients: Archibald Henderson, LeGette Blythe, Paul D. Escott, David R. Goldfield, Joel Williamson, Catherine W. Bishir, and William A. Link.

The list of names reinforces the public impression that in the postwar period the Mayflower became a “history cup” or “historian’s cup.” A closer examination of the list of winners proves that, while the trend since 1950 has been in that direction, the specialties of recipients have been more varied. Blythe, collaborator on two winning titles, was a newspaperman as were Ben Dixon MacNeill, the choice in 1958 for *The Hatterasman*, and Vermont Royster, winner for his 1984 memoir. Bill Sharpe, the editor of *The State* magazine, received the Mayflower Cup in 1962 for “outstanding literary achievement over a period of years,” the only award not tied to a single work. Harry Golden, outspoken editor of the Charlotte-based *Carolina Israelite*, was a perennial also-ran. Upon winning his third cup in 1971, Jonathan Daniels acknowledged the news: “I am afraid I’m getting greedy. But if the Mayflower Society will hand out cups, I’ll take ’em.”

Literary scholars and biographers rounded out the list of winners. Jay B. Hubbell of Duke University won in 1955 for *The South in American Literature, 1607-1900*, and C. Hugh Holman of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1975 for his study of Thomas Wolfe entitled *The*

Loneliness at the Core. Two other Chapel Hill professors, Townsend Ludington and Joseph Flora, won in back-to-back years for books on, respectively, John Dos Passos and Ernest Hemingway. A third UNC teacher, Charles G. Zug III, a folklore specialist, won in 1987 for his book on pottery traditions in North Carolina.

But professional historians have dominated the balloting over the years, taking thirty of the seventy-one cups awarded up through 2001. The year 1970 saw a close competition among an especially varied field of titles. After three ballots the finalists were books on Russian history, Shakespeare, seafood cookery, and black laborers in the Civil War. The judges that year included two Greensboro journalists and two professors, in addition to historian Joseph Steelman of East Carolina University, that year's association president. The Greensboro newspapermen strongly endorsed the cookbook. Steelman refused to go along, expressing some surprise that the book had even been nominated. In the end the group chose *The Confederate Negro: Virginia's Craftsmen and Military Laborers, 1861-1865* by James H. Brewer, making the North Carolina Central University professor only the second African American recipient of the honor.

In 1967 Christopher Crittenden, the longtime secretary-treasurer of the Literary and Historical Association, suggested that the future of the group, then 2,100 members strong, needed study. For two decades cultural organizations had convened in Raleigh in successive days for speeches and awards presentations, culminating in the "Lit and Hist" dinner on the final evening. The term "Culture Week," originally applied to the Raleigh tradition in derision by Jonathan Daniels, was picked up and used to advantage. Crittenden suggested that the association either be recast, forsaking the traditional literary role, or that Culture Week be scaled back. The last recommendation was adopted and the annual meeting was reduced to a single day. In 1969 Crittenden died and H. G. Jones assumed his duties as secretary-treasurer and awards coordinator.

From time to time questions have arisen as to why a North Carolina award should bear the name of Mayflower, most closely associated with Massachusetts. In 1971 James G. W. MacLamroc, a local historian in Greensboro, wrote Jones voicing his complaint that the award was given "by a private hereditary organization composed of descendants of Massachusetts settlers." He stated that he carried membership in the Jamestowne Society and suggested that he personally might endow a Jamestowne award. Jones responded that the awards bill was fairly full at present and no further action ensued.

In 1983, in order to assist the judges, award administrators refined a points system, suggesting that a maximum of twenty-five points be assigned based on the extent to which the author covered the subject and achieved the expressed purpose. A like maximum number of points were to be attributed to excellence of style, universality of appeal, and relevance to North Carolina and its people. The last guideline resulted in an increase of winners with North Carolina content. Of the seventy single winning titles since 1931, twenty-four have been related to the state; twelve of eighteen since 1983 have fallen into that category.

Customarily judges act altogether independently, without conferring, and unanimity is rare but not unheard of. For example, in 1998, from a field of twenty-two nominated books, all judges gave their first-place vote to *Closing: The Life and Death of an American Factory*, a collaborative effort by photographer Bill Bamberger and Duke English professor Cathy Davidson. The number of judges was dropped from five to three in 1993, leaving one from a history department and one from

an English department at the same institution in addition to the association president. The consequence was to eliminate the need for judges to share books. The elimination of literary critics (or non-academics) also made more likely the success of books by professors, the very problem that the revision to the judging system in 1938 was designed to preclude.

An analysis of the list of winners with respect to publishing houses is revealing. It is not surprising that the University of North Carolina Press, given its mission and track record since its founding eighty years ago, should have produced the highest number of winning books with twenty-two. Ten other publishers have had multiple winners, led by Louisiana State University Press with eight and Oxford University Press and Harper with four each. Duke University Press, Knopf, Bobbs-Merrill, Rinehart, and Appleton each produced three winning titles. Macmillan and Doubleday each had a pair. Three established North Carolina presses had a single Mayflower winner. John F. Blair of Winston-Salem published Ben Dixon MacNeill's *The Hatterasman* in 1958. Vermont Royster's *My Own, My Country's Time* was part of the inaugural list issued by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill in 1984. Tim McLaurin's *Keeper of the Moon: A Southern Boyhood* was published by Down Home Press of Asheboro in 1992.

Over the course of the award's long history, the relationship between the Mayflower Society and the Literary and Historical Association has undergone strains. In 1954 Christopher Crittenden suggested that the Mayflower group contribute toward the costs involved in conducting the competition which he estimated at \$230 per year. The Mayflower governor declined and suggested that the two groups share the costs of the replica cups. In 1989 another Mayflower officer complained about the lack of press coverage given the presentation and suggested that the society might withdraw from the "Lit and Hist" dinner and present the award at its own function. No action was taken. In recent years Rudy Topping of Charlotte, a past governor, has capably handled the presentation program at the "Lit and Hist" dinners. The 2001 winner was timely given national events. Announced within weeks of the New York and Washington plane attacks, the choice was Michael Kent Curtis, a Wake Forest University law professor, for a book about freedom of speech.

In February 2002 Eleanor Blackwell of Washington, North Carolina, a past governor of the Mayflower Society, corresponded with Jeffrey J. Crow, secretary-treasurer of the Literary and Historical Association. She cited several factors in the pending decision as to whether to continue sponsorship of the cup beyond 2002. Among these were the costs involved for replica cups and for dinner tickets for recipient and presenter. She complained that members were not pleased with their lack of input into the annual selection of the winner, noting, "In recent years, the award was given twice to the same author who wrote the same type of book!" Most importantly, she cited the fact that the award sponsorship did not "gain any publicity or new member interest in our society or any other benefit," adding, "this is a *big* issue." In closing, Blackwell wrote that "times do change and other ways of honoring our Mayflower Ancestors may be more appropriate today." Several weeks later she telephoned the decision of her committee to forego future sponsorship.

The executive board of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association has signaled its intention to seek a sponsor for or independently establish a new award for nonfiction beginning in 2003. Details and criteria remain to be determined but the plan is to create a worthy successor to the Patterson Cup (1905-1922) and the Mayflower Cup (1931-2002).

- 1931 M.C.S. Noble. *History of the Public Schools in North Carolina*
- 1932 Archibald Henderson. *Bernard Shaw: Playboy and Prophet*
- 1933 Rupert B. Vance. *Human Geography of the South*
- 1934 Erich W. Zimmermann. *World Resources and Industries*
- 1935 James Boyd. *Roll River*
- 1936 Mitchell B. Garrett. *The Estates General of 1789*
- 1937 Richard H. Shryock. *The Development of Modern Medicine*
- 1938 Jonathan Daniels. *A Southerner Discovers the South*
- 1939 Bernice Kelly Harris. *Purslane*
- 1940 David L. Cohn. *The Good Old Days*
- 1941 Wilbur J. Cash. *The Mind of the South*
- 1942 Elbert Russell. *The History of Quakerism*
- 1943 J. Saunders Redding. *No Day of Triumph*
- 1944 Adelaide L. Fries. *The Road to Salem*
- 1945 Josephus Daniels. *The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917*
- 1946 Josephina Niggli. *Mexican Village*
- 1947 Robert E. Coker. *This Great and Wide Sea*
- 1948 Charles S. Sydnor. *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819-1848*
- 1949 Phillips Russell. *The Woman Who Rang the Bell: The Story of Cornelia Phillips Spencer*
- 1950 Max Steele. *Debby*
- 1951 Jonathan Daniels. *The Man of Independence*
- 1952 John McKnight. *The Papacy: A New Appraisal*
- 1953 Mary T. Martin Sloop and LeGette Blythe. *Miracle in the Hills*
- 1954 Hugh T. Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome. *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State*
- 1955 Jay B. Hubbell. *The South in American Literature, 1607-1900*
- 1956 Glenn Tucker. *Tecumseh: Vision of Glory*
- 1957 Archibald Henderson. *George Bernard Shaw: Man of the Century*
- 1958 Ben Dixon MacNeill. *The Hatterasman*
- 1959 Burke Davis. *To Appomattox: Nine April Days, 1865*
- 1960 Richard Bardolph. *The Negro Vanguard*
- 1961 Mabel Wolfe Wheaton and LeGette Blythe. *Thomas Wolfe and His Family*
- 1961 Bill Sharpe (for Outstanding Literary Achievement over a Period of Years)
- 1963 Ethel Stephens Arnett. *William Swaim: Fighting Editor*
- 1964 Glenn Tucker. *Dawn Like Thunder: The Barbary Wars and the Birth of the U.S. Navy*
- 1965 John Ehle. *The Free Men*
- 1966 Glenn Tucker. *Zeb Vance: Champion of Personal Freedom*
- 1967 Joel Colton. *Leon Blum: Humanist in Politics*
- 1968 George B. Tindall. *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*
- 1969 John R. Alden. *A History of the American Revolution*
- 1970 James H. Brewer. *The Confederate Negro: Virginia's Craftsmen and Military Laborers, 1861-1865*
- 1971 Jonathan Daniels. *Ordeal of Ambition: Jefferson, Hamilton, Burr*
- 1972 John Bivins, Jr. *The Moravian Potters of North Carolina*
- 1973 Lionel Stevenson. *The Pre-Raphaelite Poets*
- 1974 Helen Bevington. *Beautiful Lofty People*
- 1975 C. Hugh Holman. *The Loneliness at the Core: Studies in Thomas Wolfe*
- 1976 Eleanor Smith Godfrey. *The Development of English Glassmaking, 1560-1640*
- 1977 Lawrence Goodwyn. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America*
- 1978 Louis D. Rubin, Jr. *The Wary Fugitives: Four Poets and the South*
- 1979 Paul D. Escott. *Slavery Remembered: A Record of Twentieth-Century Slave Narratives*
- 1980 William H. Chafe. *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom*
- 1981 Townsend Ludington. *John Dos Passos: A Twentieth Century Odyssey*
- 1982 Joseph M. Flora. *Hemingway's Nick Adams*
- 1983 David R. Goldfield. *Cottonfields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980*
- 1984 Vermont Royster. *My Own, My Country's Time*
- 1985 Joel Williamson. *The Crucible of Race*
- 1986 Paul D. Escott. *Many Excellent People: Power and Privilege in North Carolina, 1850-1900*
- 1987 Charles G. Zug III. *Turners & Burners: The Folk Potters of North Carolina*
- 1988 William C. Harris. *William Woods Holden: Firebrand of North Carolina Politics*
- 1989 William S. Powell. *North Carolina Through Four Centuries*
- 1990 David R. Goldfield. *Black, White, and Southern: Race Relations and Southern Culture, 1940 to the Present*
- 1991 Catherine W. Bishir. *North Carolina Architecture*
- 1992 Tim McLaurin. *Keeper of the Moon: A Southern Boyhood*
- 1993 William A. Link. *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930*
- 1994 Joel Williamson. *William Faulkner and Southern History*
- 1995 William A. Link. *William Friday: Power, Purpose, and American Higher Education*
- 1996 James L. Leloudis. *Schooling the New South: Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880-1920*
- 1997 Catherine W. Bishir and Michael Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*
- 1998 Bill Bamberger and Cathy Davidson. *Closing: The Life and Death of an American Factory*
- 1999 Margaret Supplee Smith and Emily Herring Wilson. *North Carolina Women: Making History*
- 2000 John David Smith. *Black Judas: William Hannibal Thomas and The American Negro*
- 2001 Michael Kent Curtis. *Free Speech, "The People's Darling Privilege"*
- 2002 To be announced in November

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