

N.C. history

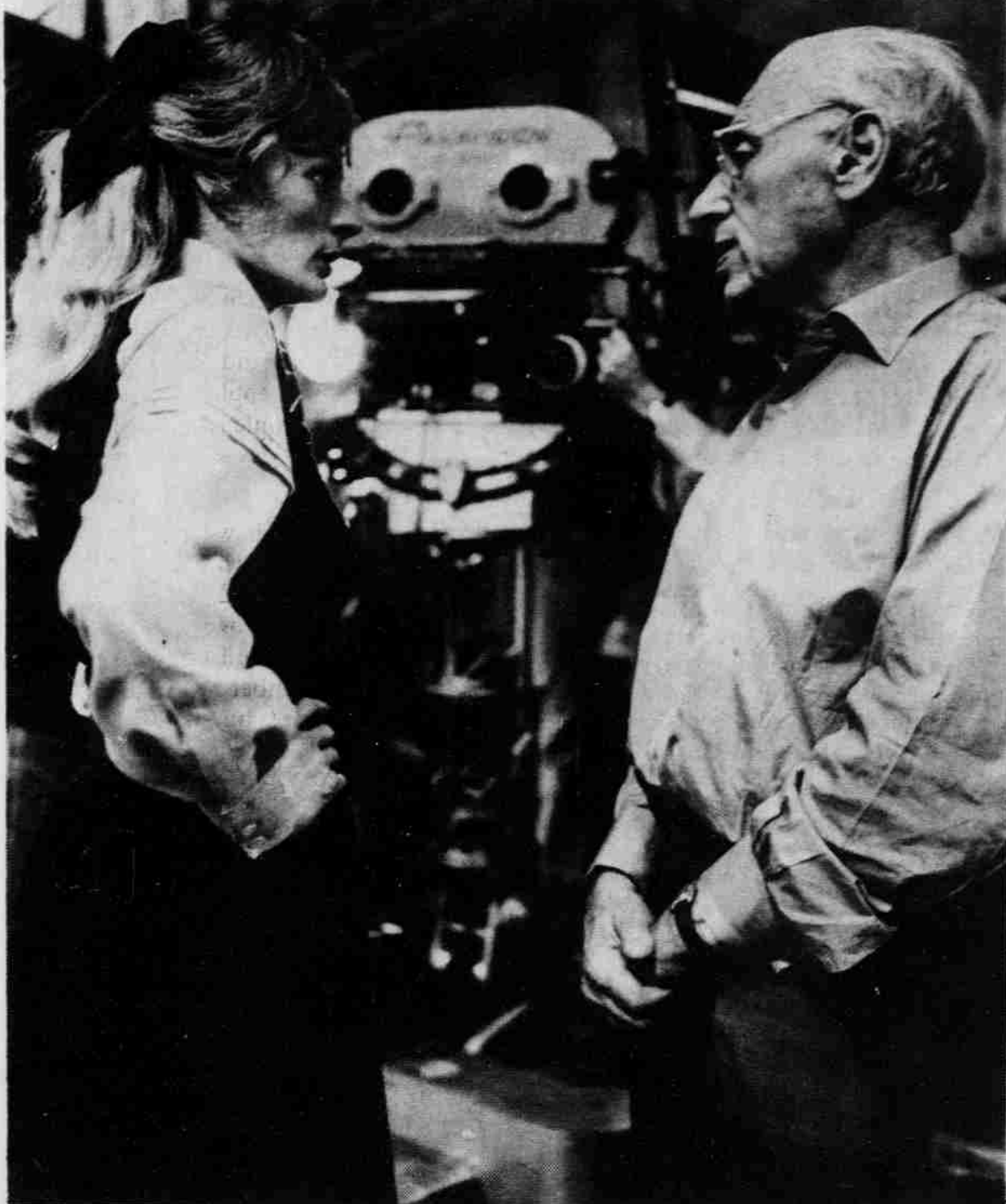
Curator Powell plans 'Dictionary'

by Kevin McCarthy
Feature Writer

The room was terribly crowded. Bookshelves, crammed with encyclopedias, oversized biographies and dusty dictionaries, stood tight against the wall. Boxes of papers and pamphlets covered the chairs around the office. Family pictures, memorandums, hastily scratched notes were scattered about the desk. A picture of a fraternity in the early twentieth century was propped against the wall. The room smelled of history, of the past.

Only one kind of man could work in such a room. A man of research, a man of activity. That man is William S. Powell, curator of the North Carolina Collection in Wilson Library.

Powell, the author of "The North Carolina Gazetteer," "The North Carolina Colony" (a book for teenagers), "Paradise Preserved—A History of the Roanoke Island



'Travels With My Aunt'

Actress Maggie Smith discusses a scene with director George Cukor on the set of "Travels With My Aunt." The film arrives in Chapel Hill Friday for a five-day run. "Travels" is Cukor's fiftieth film.

Historical Association," and author-editor of "The First State University," always has three or four projects going on at once. His latest project is a "Dictionary of North Carolina Biography" for which he is co-ordinator.

Powell traces back his interest in the past to his grandmother. "She was always telling me how things were in the old days," he said. Dr. Lefler, UNC Kenan professor of history, also influenced Powell.

Born in Johnston County, Powell soon moved to Statesville, N.C. After four years of college at UNC, Powell was drafted into the army and served for four and one-half years. Returning to UNC, he earned his master's degree in history and political science and also a degree in library science. Soon, thereafter, he headed North to Yale University, where he was a reference assistant in the rare book room. He then returned to work in historical research at the State Archives Building in Raleigh for three years.

Finally, he was appointed Assistant Librarian of Wilson Library in 1951 and became curator of the N.C. Collection in 1958. Powell also has taught a course in N.C. history since 1964.

Powell decided to begin work on a "Dictionary of North Carolina Biography" because he feels the dictionary will fill a scholarly and popular need in North Carolina. Presently, there is only one other N.C. biography, Ashe's "Biographical History of North Carolina," published between 1908 and 1917. Powell said, "Working here at Wilson, I know how desperately biographical information on North Carolinians is needed."

Powell emphasizes that the dictionary is not just his own project. Members of the Historical Society of North Carolina have revised and expanded his original list of subjects to be included in the dictionary. Besides Powell, over 300 authors will be writing concise sketches (about 100 to 800 words) for the biographical dictionary. In addition to North Carolina writers, people from Connecticut to California and possibly two in England will be contributing.

Over 3000 names will be included in the dictionary. Governors, U.S. senators, congressmen, artists, important doctors, craftsmen, potters, presidents, ministers, and writers will all find their place in Powell's book. "I tried to get as many women and blacks as I could," Powell said. "We're trying to be as inclusive as possible."

Even the infamous will make it into the dictionary. Powell is presently considering adding pirates such as Blackbeard and Bonnet and other notable criminals.

One such criminal is Otto Wood, who apparently kidnapped a small girl. "I remember parents saying, if you don't behave, Otto will get you!" he said.

To get in the biography, a subject must have passed on, been born in the colony or the state or moved to North Carolina and accomplished something significant while here. Powell plans to stress what a subject did while he was in North Carolina, not what he accomplished when he moved away. For example, Polk and Andrew Johnson, both native North Carolinians, will be included since they were so famous in their time, even though they both moved out of North Carolina during their youth.

The sketches will be coming in for the next two years, and Powell hopes to read and edit them, if necessary, as they arrive. According to Powell, the manuscript should be ready within three years.

As of yet, there is no publisher, although the UNC Press has expressed an interest in the dictionary. Powell hopes for financial support from North Carolina foundations.

What does Powell do with his limited spare time? "I try to garden, but the soil's not very good; I collect antiques when I can afford them; and I travel when I have the time."

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Concerts

"Slaughterhouse-Five." Film version of Kurt Vonnegut's novel of Billy Pilgrim, the time tripper. Splendidly written, acted, directed, photographed and edited. One of the year's best. Carolina Theatre. 1:08, 3:03, 4:58, 6:53, 8:48.

"The Emigrants." At last, a film which concentrates on 'pretty pictures' and is also genuinely forceful, dramatic and moving. Jan Troell's film on Swedish emigrants to America is a bit simplistic, but it is also a rare and beautiful work of cinema art. The first foreign film since 'The Garden of the Finzi-Continis' that can safely be recommended to everyone. Varsity Theatre. 12:50, 3:25, 6:00, 8:35.

"Up the Sandbox." Unsatisfactory comedy exploiting Women's Lib themes. Irvin Kershner's direction is razor-sharp in its observation of modern life, but pretty poor in the fantasy sequences. Some very good moments but generally a mess. Plaza I. 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10.

"The Getaway." Basically just a brainless bank robbery and escape film, but the direction by Sam Peckinpah is so tough and mean that it transforms the film into something that is always interesting and often tremendously exciting. Plaza II. 2:25, 4:40, 6:55, 9:10.

Theatre

"Guys and Dolls." Musical comedy spoof on Broadway. Opens Thursday. Village Dinner Theatre. Buffet at 7 p.m. 8:30 p.m. curtain. Nightly except Monday.

"Indians." Carolina Playmakers production of Arthur Kopit's drama. Directed by John Mezz. Tonight through Saturday, 8 p.m. at Graham Memorial. Tickets \$2.50 at 102 Graham Memorial or Ledbetter-Pickard.

"Faust, Part I." Randall Jarrell, UNC-G's late, great poet's translation of Goethe's famous play. UNC-G in the Taylor Building. Feb. 21 through 25. 8:30 p.m. nightly. 2:30 p.m. Feb. 25.

"Monique." Greensboro College Players. Feb. 22-24. 8:15 p.m. Odell Memorial Auditorium, Greensboro. Free.

"The Hunting Society" by Earl Settlement. Play reading sponsored by the Laboratory Theatre. Sunday, 3 p.m. Grail Room. Graham Memorial. Everyone invited to attend.

"Wizard of Oz." UNC Readers Theatre (in association with the Carolina Union). 8 p.m. today. Free at Deep Jonah.

Radio

WCHL. "Interlude." 1360 on the AM dial. 6:15-7 p.m. Vaughn Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis.

"Cosi Fan Tutte." Mozart. National Opera Company. In English. WRAL-TV Auditorium today and Friday at 8 p.m. East Carolina University. McGinnis Auditorium, 8:15 p.m. Saturday.

Annual Music Scholarship Concert. Features three pianists, two vocalists, one French horn performer with the UNC Symphony Orchestra directed by David Serrins. Tuesday at 8 p.m. Hill Hall. \$1 for students, \$3 for townspeople, \$10 for contributors (2 tickets), \$25 for donors (2 tickets), \$50 for patrons (2 tickets) and \$100 for sponsors (2 tickets).

Leo Kottke, guitarist and vocalist. Concert in Memorial Hall. Wednesday at 10 p.m. Tickets \$1.50 on sale at the Carolina Union Information Desk.

Television

"An American Family." Ambitious documentary study of a family in crisis. 9 p.m. Channel 4.

"The Violent Earth." National Geographic special on volcanoes. 8 p.m. Channels 2 and 11.

Planetarium

The Astronomy of Astrology - An adventure into science behind astrology - for believers and skeptics. Monday through Friday, 8 p.m. Saturdays, 11 a.m., 1 and 3 and 8 p.m. Sundays, 2,3, and 8 p.m. Through March 5.

Art

Howard Thomas. "The Later Paintings, 1958 to 1971." North Carolina Museum of Art. Through March 4. 107 E. Morgan St. Raleigh. Open Tuesday through Saturday (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Sunday, 2 to 6 p.m. Closed Mondays.

Duke University Museum of Art. Tuesday through Friday, (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Saturdays and Sundays (2 to 5 p.m.)

Ackland Art Center. The Dillard Collection of Art on Paper Exhibition. Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday 2 to 6 p.m. Closed Mondays.

Ron Snapp and Don Sultan, prints, paintings and drawings. The Art Gallery. Through March 2.

Other

Poetry Reading. James Hutton reads selections from T.S. Eliot. Sunday 8 p.m. Deep Jonah. Free.

SANTA! (John Santa - guitar, Mike Kott - cello) in concert. Also George Ceres. Saturday, Feb. 17, 8 p.m. in Deep Jonah. Vintage flicks. Free.

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