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The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All: Southern Recipes, Sweet Remembrances, and a Little Rambunctious Behavior

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REVIEWS

The Birds of Kentucky



Burt L. Monroe Jr.
Original Paintings by
William Zimmerman
Lexington: University Press of
Kentucky, 2021
ISBN: 9780813151410
152 p. \$40.00 (Hbk)

Born in Louisville, Kentucky on August 25, 1930, the only child of Burt L. Monroe, Sr. and Ethelmae Tuell. At the age of 63, Burt L. Monroe, Jr. succumbed after a long and heroic battle with cancer. However, Monroe left to us *The Birds of Kentucky* a book produced by The Kentucky University Press which showcases his determination to share all he learned about ornithology in the state of Kentucky.

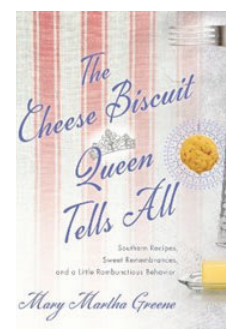
Monroe presented the data that he shares in four sections: Introduction, Ornithology, Species Accounts, and Acknowledgements (pages vii-xi). To this reader, the highlight and most appealing section of the book is the inclusion of William Zimmerman's paintings of the birds that populate the book. The Index gives the reader an opportunity to search a particular type of bird and see the painting that features the particular bird. Recurrence and abundance of the birds, classified under species is a great resource for anyone interested in the months of the year in which the specific bird species appear in Kentucky skies. Monroe and colleagues, family, and friends often traveled and recorded the instances of bird sightings and patterns of movement within Kentucky. The Bibliography gives credit to sightings of breeding, nesting, migration, and seasonal behaviors.

A beautiful and inspiring gift to those of who come after him who love birds and love Kentucky. Recommended to all who love of birds, public, and academic libraries.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All: Southern Recipes, Sweet Remembrances, and a Little Rambunctious Behavior

Mary Martha Greene
Columbia: The University of
South Carolina Press, 2021
ISBN: 9781643361826
248 p. \$24.99 (Pbk)



Much more than a cookbook, Mary Martha Green's *The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All* is an invitation and reference guide on southern hospitality. Greene spent 40 years as a lobbyist in South Carolina, where she cultivated her family recipes and entertaining expertise. The work contains 110 Low-country recipes collected and perfected by her family and friends. The content includes an introduction, a section on Aunt Mimi and the famous cheese biscuits that inspired the book (recipe included in this section), and "A Little Queenly Insight" that offers advice on baking essentials such as bakeware and measuring utensils. The recipes are divided into 8 sections: Breakfast Baking; Hors D'oeuvres; Salads, Vegetables, and Side Dishes; Meats and Poultry; Seafood; Cookies, Bars, and Candies; Cakes, Pies, and Other Treats; and Libations. There is an index at the end.

Each recipe is prefaced with an anecdote on the recipe's origin, such as "Shrimp Burgers" based on the heavily guarded recipe from the Shrimp Shack in St. Helena Island, SC. Greene spent years trying to recreate the recipe, tracking her attempts on a spreadsheet until she finally found a combination that worked, or a family story, like her mother's wedding punch from 1953. Further, some recipes have become local legend, like the "Best-Ever Chocolate Chip Pecan Cookies" that are so good they are able to bypass the J. Verne Smith Rule that prohibits food from being consumed on the 2nd floor of the lobby of the South Carolina State House.

Family photographs are also interspersed throughout the sections. Mary Martha Greene shares her joy of cooking and entertaining and invites the reader to use the recipes to start their own traditions. These recipes can be made by beginners and seasoned cooks. Recommended for public and academic libraries.

Sarah Grace Glover, University of North Georgia

The Child in the Electric Chair: The Execution of George Junius Stinney, Jr. and the Making of a Tragedy in the American South.



Eli Faber
Columbia: University of South
Carolina Press, 2021
ISBN: 9781643361949
192p. \$29.99 (Hbk)

In many ways, this is a timely book. The struggle by African Americans to seek justice in an unjust criminal justice system is perpetual but has become even more urgent in recent years as the nation has grappled with the racially motivated killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, to name only three of the most prominent cases. The guilt or innocence of five-foot one-inch 95-pound 14-year old George Junius Stinney, Jr. remains unclear but the travesty of the South Carolina criminal justice system of 1944 in action as it rapidly rushed to judgment and then executed Stinney has been made clear thanks to Eli Faber's fascinating and disturbing investigation in *The Child in the Electric Chair*.

Sadly, Eli Faber (1943-2020), a professor of History at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, died before completing this book. His long-time friend, Carol Berkin, has successfully completed the task. Because Stinney's case was not appealed to a higher court, there was no existing trial transcript for Faber to consult in his research on the case. However, Faber was able to locate a number of primary sources in South Carolina archives plus microfilmed documents produced by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), along with a number of

newspaper and magazine articles of the time. Perhaps his most valuable primary sources are his interviews, conducted in 2014, with the elderly surviving siblings of George Stinney. Faber also consulted interviews conducted by lawyer David L. Bruck in 1983 with surviving witnesses and law enforcement officers.

Among the many strengths of this book is the fascinating socioeconomic analysis of Alcolu, South Carolina Faber employs to set the stage for this tragic story. It was a small company town dominated by the lumber mill owned by the Alderman family who had established Alcolu in the 1880s. Until the double murder and the conviction of George Stinney in 1944, there had, generally, been little racial tension according to Charles Stinney, brother of George (p. 10).

On March 24, 1944 two white girls, 11-year old Betty June Binnicker and 7-year old Mary Emma Thames, took a bicycle ride together on one bicycle, to pick flowers on the outskirts of the small town. Their bodies were found in a water-filled ditch, underneath the partially disassembled bicycle. Their heads had been bashed in by some type of metal object (variously reported as a railroad spike or a piece of metal pipe).

The identification of George Stinney as the murder suspect is somewhat mysterious. Among those investigating was state trooper Sidney J. Pratt. According to his 1983 interview with David Bruck, Pratt recalled encountering an African American man who responded to Pratt's questioning by stating that "The meanest fellow in this community is a boy by the name of George Stinney" (p. 30). Faber states in the lengthy endnote that this anonymous informant (referred to as John Doe) needs to be kept anonymous: "Revealing Doe's identity even now could cause harmful and damaging consequences to relatives who are still alive" even though Doe is now deceased (p. 137).

In any event, Stinney was arrested and jailed. He apparently (without a lawyer being present) confessed to the murders and included the incendiary information that he had sexually molested the older girl after she was dead. Incendiary because in the Deep South of 1944 accusation of rape or sexual assault upon a white female made against an African American male was the most frequent justification given for lynching. Accordingly, Stinney was spirited away from the Claren-