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## Book Review: Books of Southern history and life

Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society

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Here are three books anyone interested in Southern history and life should read; together they explain much of the Southern make-up and why we are what we are today.

Edgar Thompson for many years was a professor of sociology at Duke University who specialized in the study of Southern society. Now many of his papers have been published by Duke University Press under the title "Plantation Societies, Race Relations, and the South: The Regimentation of Populations" (\$12.75). To Thompson the pivot of Southern society was the plantation and he began to study the society that made up the plantation. Most of the papers presented in this work cover social aspects of the plantation and especially the relations between the slaves and those who controlled them.

Duke University itself owes its existence to the Duke family of Durham, and Robert F. Durden, chairman of the Department of History at that institution, has written an excellent work on the two Dukes most responsible for the establishment of this leading Southern University. Aptly titled "The Dukes of Durham 1865-1929" (\$9.75) its main importance lies in the generally objective treatment of the Dukes by the author and the portraying of Benjamin Newton Duke as the family's primary agent for philanthropy until physical infirmities forced him somewhat to the sidelines after 1915.

Benjamin has always been overshadowed by his younger and more flamboyant brother James, and it is good to see that at least Benjamin is placed in historical perspective.

Norman D. Brown, professor of history at the University of Texas, has written a first-class biography of one of the most controversial characters in Southern history. "Edward Stanly: Whiggery's Tarheel Conqueror" (University of Alabama Press, \$10) is about the North Carolina Whig before the Civil War who moved to his native state as the first Union military governor. Appointed in 1862 by Lincoln, of course he became anathema to Southern leaders, many of whom, right or wrong, regarded him as the premier scalawag of them all, even though Stanly resigned his position when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

