

sketch necessary to appreciate conditions by war's end. In early April 1861, the city acted as a vibrant and prosperous industrial, commercial, and transportation hub. Its citizens, like most Virginians, initially rejected secession and hoped to avoid war. Yet, when the war came, Petersburg's Confederates served with confidence and enthusiasm. Time, of course, would erode enthusiasm. Greene believes a turning point in rebel perceptions of the war came as early as July 1861, when Petersburg became a collection point for the wounded and dead of First Manassas. There is truth in his observation, for few things are more sobering than a military hospital. Yet, as Greene's narrative also shows, the city's Confederates remained remarkably resilient. One finds, as in most other Confederate community studies, a slow, rather than precipitous, erosion of will. It was not the shock of the war, or even the realization of war's destructive power, so much as its suspense, relentless nature, capriciousness, and ceaseless demands for both human and material sacrifices that made people yearn for peace.

But this is not just a story about the city's Confederates, or only of its civilians. Greene does a good job of integrating the experience of the city's black population and the comings and goings of rebel armies, although the armies raise one questionable choice of organization on the author's part. For most of the war (July 1861–April 1864), he tells the civilian and military stories in alternating chapters. This is an effective way to emphasize military operations, but it often detracts from our appreciation of the shared encounter with war of soldiers and noncombatants. The contrast between these segregated chapters and the final year of the war—the year of the great siege—when Greene joins the two stories, is apparent. Still, that can hardly detract from Greene's far greater achievement. Founded on a mountain of research in both published and unpublished sources, and supplemented with excellent maps and revealing photographs, his paean to Petersburg offers an authoritative and highly readable account of the wartime South.



*Super-Scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History* • Anne Mitchell Whisnant • Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006 • xxvi, 434 pp. • \$34.95

Reviewed by Anthony J. Stanonis, lecturer in modern U.S. history at Queen's University Belfast. He is the author of *Creating the Big Easy: New Orleans and the Emergence of Modern Tourism, 1918–1945* (2006).

In Anne Mitchell Whisnant's lucid analysis, the Blue Ridge Parkway becomes more than a ribbon of concrete connecting the Shenandoah National Park to the Great

Smoky Mountains National Park. The design and positioning of the scenic drive reflect the physical, social, cultural, and political terrain of its 469 miles. Unpacking the slow process of construction, which lasted from 1935 to 1987, Whisnant exposes the remarkable complexity of local issues that determined the motorway's design.

From its beginnings under the New Deal, the parkway embodied the "dilemma over how both to promote tourism . . . and to preserve the integrity of the tourist-drawing attraction . . ." (p. 158). Boosters in Asheville, North Carolina, desperately battled counterparts in Knoxville, Tennessee, for the parkway. Their success, aided by the engineering skills and amicable personality of R. Getty Browning, reflected local determination in the face of a dramatic decline in tourism as well as Knoxville's greater concern for harvesting government money for the Tennessee Valley Authority. The most contentious battles over the parkway came from North Carolina, where state officials maintained stricter enforcement of the minimum 200-foot right-of-way than those in Virginia, who showed more concern for small farmers. Nevertheless, when faced with opposition from landowners, state governments and the National Park Service used "delay and divide-and-conquer tactics" to pressure property holders to accept buyouts (p. 148). State officials, dismayed by the restricted access and non-commercial parkway, initially cut funding for road maintenance near the highway with the expectation of forcing a more utilitarian function. Whereas images of poor mountaineers bolstered reasons for constructing the parkway, commercial interests primarily focused on exploiting the "federally financed, business-enhancing, and gasoline-tax-boosting project" for their own profit (p. 33). Despite its poverty and lack of state political power, the Eastern Band of Cherokees proved united and resilient enough to force the parkway on a route around rather than through the fertile Soco Valley. In contrast, Heriot Clarkson, a North Carolina Supreme Court justice heavily invested in his elite resort of Little Switzerland, exposed the contradiction between "how to reconcile the Parkway's goals of boosting regional (mostly privately run) tourism and of serving a broader public good by building a spectacular, protected, scenic road" (p. 181). The National Park Service limited commercialization by restricting signage and, even more galling to area businessmen, by awarding concessions to a few large operators rather than locals. Clarkson's political dexterity and manipulation of the press won such concessions as exits and higher payment for the right-of-way through Little Switzerland. Prominent businessman Hugh Morton likewise turned the parkway's mission of preserving scenery against proponents. As owner of a large portion of Grandfather Mountain, he used claims of protecting scenery to squeeze more money from the parkway and to bend the roadway to facilitate growth of his tourism-oriented enterprises. Yet, once in federal hands, parkway officials maintained stringent regulations that involved "re-membering" the landscape to meet

tourists' expectations of rustic, backward mountaineers instead of rural, progressive Americans (p. 215). At Virginia's Peaks of Otter, for instance, the area's engagement with tourism since the nineteenth century was erased to protect the "isolated and remote" image of Appalachia (p. 215).

Whisnant's study is an overdue addition to the historiography on American tourism and the politics of preservation, especially in regard to park development east of the Mississippi River. With a discerning eye, Whisnant provides "a series of case studies" that reveal the contentious relationship between government-sponsored tourism and private enterprise (p. 9). Her work provides vital lessons on historic and environmental preservation, forcing engagement with the "conundrums" created by efforts to conserve historic and natural sites while simultaneously satisfying modern expectations for profits, comfort, and the exotic (p. 217).

