

Alan D. Watson, with Eva C. (Bea) Latham and Patricia M. Samford. *Bath: The First Town in North Carolina*. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History, 2005. 153 pp. \$24.26
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Alan D. Watson, with help from Eva C. (Bea) Latham and Patricia M. Samford, provides readers with an in-depth glimpse of life in eighteenth-century North Carolina through the book, *Bath: The First Town in North Carolina*. Although eventually replaced in dominance by towns like New Bern and Edenton, Bath never lost its distinctive atmosphere and colorful heritage. The town also served as a port for shipping goods like hogs, cattle, tobacco, and wood products to markets in New England or overseas.

Among other things, Bath also experienced some political and cultural developments throughout its development in colonial times. Specifically, Alan D. Watson illustrates the role of women in society. Some of their duties included overseeing the daily operations of taverns, taking care of the home while their husbands were working, assisting with child-rearing and education, and providing meals.

Over time, Bath attracted notable individuals, including the pirate Blackbeard (at the height of his many excursions for loot and glory in the surrounding waterways) and the writer Edna Ferber, to its boundaries. Ferber used the town of Bath as inspiration for her novel *Show Boat*. Bath also is known for some its historic buildings such as St. Thomas Episcopal Church (built in 1734) as well as the Palmer-Marsh House and Van Der Veer House.

Throughout the book, there are numerous maps, facsimiles, and portraits of key individuals like photographer Thomas R. Draper who played a key role in the history of Bath. Tables within the text enable the reader to understand the significance of import/export activities from the port of Bath. An extensive bibliography of both primary and secondary sources is provided for easy reference.

This book would be well-suited for placement in an academic or special library's collection. Specifically, the work should be considered for inclusion in an academic institution's library that might specialize or contain a sizeable collection of materials dealing with North Carolina's colonial past.

Alan D. Watson holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of South Carolina and currently teaches history at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. He has published a multitude of books or articles on the topic of North Carolina history. I would recommend highly *Bath: The First Town in North Carolina* to anyone with an interest in southern history.

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