

# **The Little Old Lady Grabs the Mayor's Shoes: Isabella Cannon, Neighborhood Activism, and the 1977 Raleigh Mayoral Election**

**John Blythe, Special Projects and Outreach Coordinator,  
North Carolina Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill Library**

**Delivered September 2012 at the Historical Political Campaigns in North Carolina Conference**

Isabella Cannon had just the attributes for a good headline. First there was her age. She was 73. And then there was her stature. Cannon was small—five-feet tall and 95 pounds. She was a retired library administrator and a bundle of energy. In fact, though more prone to heels, she had once hung a pair of sneakers over her shoulder to prove her fitness. More on that shortly.

In the days following Cannon's defeat of Jyles J. "Jack" Coggins for mayor of Raleigh in 1977, the headline writers went to town. "Librarian Makes Cannon fodder of Jyles Coggins" read one headline. " 'Little Old Lady' in tennis shoes sneaks mayoral election win" read another. "73-Year-Old Dynamo Topples Incumbent: Raleigh Officials Will Be Saying Mrs. Mayor" a third proclaimed.<sup>1</sup>

As the last headline suggests, Cannon's election was notable not just for the age of the new mayor. It also marked the first time a woman had claimed the job as top-elected official in Raleigh and, likely, (though I still can't say definitively) in a major North Carolina city. Cannon even boasted she was the first female mayor of a U.S. capital city.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the firsts, her victory represented the apex of a wave of neighborhood activism and civic involvement that had risen in Raleigh in response to the city's fast growth. So who was Isabella Cannon?

Although new to electoral politics, Cannon was no novice in Raleigh community affairs. In the 1940s she helped the nascent Raleigh Little Theatre build a permanent home. As a member of the United Church of Raleigh, she was involved in efforts to bring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Ralph Bunche and Eleanor Roosevelt to Raleigh in the 1940s and 1950s. She was a charter member of Wake County Democratic Women and a member of the Women's Political Caucus of Wake County. She served as bookkeeper for Jim Hunt's gubernatorial campaign in Wake County in 1976. And, perhaps most importantly for this paper, she was chair of the Wade Avenue Citizens Task Force, one of 18 neighborhood groups formed as part of the Raleigh City Council's efforts to increase citizen participation in local government.<sup>3</sup>

Born Isabella Walton in Dunfermline, Scotland in 1904, Cannon immigrated at age 12 with her family to Kannapolis, NC, where her father took a job as a textile engineer at a local mill.<sup>4</sup> While a student at Elon College, she met Claude M. Cannon, the college's registrar, and they married during her sophomore year. After Isabella's graduation in 1924, the couple remained in Elon, with Claude moving up through Elon administration and Isabella working as a teacher and bank cashier.

The couple left Elon in 1935, when Claude Cannon accepted a job as an administrator with National Youth Administration, a New Deal agency. They briefly lived in Williamston before settling in Raleigh. Isabella busied herself with volunteer work, mostly for her church and for the Raleigh Little Theatre, which had formed in 1935. In 1944 Claude was called to Washington, D.C. to work for the Lend-Lease program and Isabella followed him. She worked for several federal agencies before settling at the French Purchasing Commission as head of its statistical department. Over time, Claude's work took him to India and China for extended periods, but Isabella was prevented from traveling with him. She remained in Washington until 1947, when she made her way to Liberia, where her husband was then working. From Liberia, the couple moved to Iraq, where they lived until 1954 when Claude's deteriorating health forced their return to Raleigh. Claude died within six months of their resettlement in Raleigh.

Isabella, a fifty-year-old widow with no children, searched for work that would fill her time and her purse. She eventually found it in the administrative offices of the D.H. Hill Library at North Carolina State University. "I had to fudge a bit on what I could do," she told an interviewer in 1993. "I took a secretarial test knowing that I probably wouldn't pass it. But I squeaked through it. And I got the job at a very low level. However, it was a job. And it paid enough for me to manage on."<sup>5</sup> Cannon eventually took on payroll and budgeting responsibilities and she remained at the D.H. Hill Library until her retirement in 1970. As a mayoral candidate, and, in response to Coggins' accusations that she lacked the necessary business experience to lead Raleigh's government, Cannon proudly boasted of her administrative experiences at the Library and with federal agencies.<sup>6</sup>

Cannon's decision to run for mayor occurred just hours before the filing deadline. Neighborhood activists were keen to field a candidate to oppose Coggins, a developer and builder who had served as mayor since 1975. His tenure as the city's top elected official had been marked by frequent tangles with those supporting planned growth for the ever-expanding city. And that number included several of his fellow council members.

On the evening of September 8, with the filing deadline looming at noon the next day, Wake County Commissioner Betty Ann Knudsen, a powerful force in local Democratic politics and a strong voice for neighborhoods, called Cannon to her house. Knudsen had gathered together several other community leaders, including Mike Boyd, a former Raleigh City Council member known for his antipathy toward Coggins. As Cannon describes it, she had considered running for a council seat. But the group spent several hours trying to persuade her to run for mayor. And just before midnight, she acceded to their request.<sup>7</sup>

When Cannon filed her papers at the Wake County Board of Elections the following morning, she took on a man known for his independent stands and his straight talk—a man who proudly displayed these words on his office wall "My way of joking is to tell the truth. It is the funniest joke in the world."<sup>8</sup>

Born on an Iredell County farm in 1921, Coggins arrived in Raleigh as a penniless 20-year-old. He attended North Carolina State, UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke. But he failed to earn a degree. During World War II he joined the Marines and served as a bomber pilot, seeing action on 20 islands in the South Pacific and earning 10 combat decorations. His World War II comrades nicknamed him "Bomber Jack," a sobriquet his political rivals would latch onto some 30 years later. At war's end Coggins returned to Raleigh and entered the construction business, starting with small duplexes, then moving into apartment and government buildings and eventually adding on land speculation. Through long hours and seven-day weeks, Coggins reached millionaire status. "I would say that the average person with the average capability can achieve success if he's willing to pay a price, and it's a very exacting price," Coggins said.<sup>9</sup> For Coggins that *exacting price* included scarce time with family and friends as well as few opportunities to hunt, fish or golf.<sup>10</sup>

A prosperous developer by the early 60s, Coggins turned his attention to politics. In 1963, as a conservative Democrat, he ran for and won a seat in the North Carolina House of Representatives. In 1965 Coggins was elected to the North Carolina Senate and served four terms there, fighting on behalf of those with disabilities and opposing liquor by the drink, pornography and coed living on state university campuses. While at the General Assembly, Coggins became known as a maverick and independent thinker who refused to fall in line with Democratic Party leaders. That reputation may in part explain his loss in 1972 in a Democratic primary bid for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

With aspirations for national office squelched, Coggins turned to local politics and in 1975 claimed the mayor's seat in Raleigh. Coggins proudly boasted that throughout his political career he never had a campaign organization and he never accepted a campaign donation.<sup>11</sup> Acknowledging his status as a political loner, in the opening

weeks of his 1975 campaign for mayor, Coggins said, "It is good politics to be a loner in a city where concern over the effect of rapid growth have been coupled with a suspicion among many residents that developers have had too much influence in city hall in the past."<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, there *were* concerns about rapid growth. The city over which Coggins assumed leadership in 1975 had struggled through two decades of dealing with the issue. Between 1950 and 1960, Raleigh experienced a 43 percent increase in population. The rate of increase slowed down in the 1960s with the city's population growing by 30.8 percent to a population of 122,830 in 1970. By 1975 another 11, 401 people called Raleigh home. Annexation likely explains part of the population growth. Raleigh grew in area from 34 square miles in 1960 to 48.3 square miles in 1975. Major businesses were also relocating to the area, particularly to the Research Triangle Park, where IBM moved in 1965 and brought 1500 jobs. Burroughs-Wellcome followed in 1970, adding 1,100 jobs. And in May 1971, the Environmental Protection Agency opened a large office in RTP, employing several hundred people.<sup>13</sup>

With the population influx came the need for housing and services. And builders and developers were ready to oblige. Longtime Raleigh developer J. W. "Willie" York built Cameron Village in 1949. North Hills, the first two-story indoor mall between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, opened its doors in 1966. And Seby B. Jones, a former Raleigh mayor, erected Crabtree Valley Mall in 1972.<sup>14</sup>

As Raleigh grew, it did so without a plan. Rezoning for apartment complexes and commercial development in burgeoning North Raleigh was taxing the city's infrastructure and pitting developers against residents, with city planners and elected officials in the middle. Flooding along Crabtree and Walnut creeks in 1973 caused more than \$1 million in damage to homes and businesses and further stoked cries for checks on development. City planners began work on a comprehensive growth plan in 1968, but the document went years without completion.<sup>15</sup>

As citizen frustration with Raleigh city government grew, the city council approved a structure designed to give residents a greater voice in the political process. The Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) began operating in 1973. Its purpose, in the words of one Raleigh city official, was to bring city government closer to the old New England town meeting structure.<sup>16</sup> The city also needed to demonstrate greater citizen involvement to qualify for federal funds for social programs. To develop the CAC, Raleigh's 300 plus neighborhoods were grouped into 18 distinct task forces. Each task force included a board, which weighed issues important to residents in the constituent neighborhoods. The chair of each task force, in turn, served on the Citizens Advisory Council, which met monthly and served in an advisory capacity to

the city council. In the minds of some, the city had created a shadow government. In a 1973 analysis for *The News and Observer* reporter Rob Christensen pointed out that while the city council had stirred interest in local issues, it had also, "created an organization that may come back to haunt the City Council with the potential of kicking it out of office. This is not what the city wants." <sup>17</sup>

As Raleigh residents struggled with how to include the Citizens Advisory Council in the civic process, they also had to adjust to a new form of selecting their leaders. Since the mid-1950s, Raleigh city councilmen had been elected at-large and the mayor selected by council members from within their ranks. But in 1972, voters approved a referendum calling for a district system of elections and a popularly elected mayor.<sup>18</sup> The change in municipal elections grew out of community leaders' dissatisfaction with the inability to elect individuals who were well-known in their neighborhoods, but not citywide. The voting system shift proved one of the early successes of the Community Coalition, a political organization representing a host of Raleigh's community groups. In effect, the Coalition served as a counter-balance to Raleigh's developers, backing candidates and legislation that supported controlled growth.

The Coalition achieved further success in 1973 when voters elected Clarence E. Lightner as mayor. The city's first (and so far only) African-American mayor, Lightner owed his victory to an alliance between African-American civic organizations—his traditional base of support—and the Community Coalition.<sup>19</sup>

Lightner's two-year term as mayor saw the city council strongly oppose major road projects, strengthen floodplain regulations and establish a municipal transit system. Raleigh even earned All American City designation because of its citizen involvement.<sup>20</sup> But Lightner's time as mayor was also characterized by questions about his family and associates. His wife was arrested in early 1975. He pushed the city to buy a pool from his former campaign manager. And he stood behind a planning commissioner whom neighborhood activists sought to oust because of his strong ties to developers.<sup>21</sup>

When Lightner sought re-election in the mayoral primary in 1975, he found that the Community Coalition had shifted its support to one of his two rivals. Without the Coalition's support Lightner failed to advance beyond the primary.

With Lightner out, the 1975 mayoral election pitted Coggins against J. Oliver Williams, an N.C. State political scientist supported by the Community Coalition. By some accounts, in the weeks leading up to the primary, Coggins had sought the support of the Coalition, or, at least, some of its active members. But when that

endorsement failed to materialize, he turned to attacking the group.<sup>22</sup> Coggins accused the Coalition of trying to dominate the City Council, "I think people are tired of any group—no matter what grandiose name they call themselves—trying to take total control of the city government," he said.<sup>23</sup>

While Coggins did not garner the support of controlled growth proponents, he did find backing among two of the city's African-American civic organizations—the Raleigh Wake Citizens Association and the Wake County Black Democratic Political Caucus.<sup>24</sup> Although some African-American leaders had considered backing Williams, they united behind Coggins to maximize their political clout.<sup>25</sup> That united support helped Coggins claim the mayor's office with 55 percent of the vote citywide.<sup>26</sup>

Although Coggins scored a resounding victory, his tenure as mayor was characterized by council discord and frequent tie votes. The eight residents who joined Coggins on the council included six incumbents. But, in the end, their experience mattered less than their stances on limiting growth. Four council members, all backed by the Community Coalition, staunchly supported controlled growth. The four others were businessmen who worried that restrictions on growth could limit new businesses in Raleigh.<sup>27</sup>

The council's split was evident at its first meeting in December 1975. Coggins called for a vote on re-election of Council member Jack B. Keeter as mayor pro tem. Four council members, those whom had received backing from the Community Coalition, asked to delay the vote until another meeting at which time they could consider *all* committee chairmanships and appointments. Despite their requests, Coggins called for the vote, which split 4-4. Coggins broke the tie with a vote in support of Keeter. After the vote, the mayor angrily addressed the council, "If we're going to have division, let's bring it to a head right now," he said. Then, turning to address the four council members who had received support from the Community Coalition, he added, "I refuse to be intimidated. I refuse to be coerced. And I will not be dictated to by any group regardless of who supports it." Coggins later confirmed that the *group* to which he was referring was the Community Coalition.<sup>28</sup>

Relations didn't improve after that first meeting. Members fought over whether Coggins could send matters to committee without full council approval. They struggled to revise the city charter, with Coggins demanding the city cease support for the Community Advisory Council. And they were unable to pass a comprehensive growth plan.

When the mayoral election rolled around in 1977, Cannon focused on the rancor that plagued the council under Coggins' leadership. "I feel that reasonable people can work together to end squabbling to get on with the business of governing the city of Raleigh," she told a group early in the campaign.<sup>29</sup>

For his part, Coggins didn't wait long to attack the Community Coalition again. On September 13, just four days after Cannon announced her candidacy, Coggins joined his opponent and other council candidates at a forum sponsored by the Raleigh Coalition, the successor to the Community Coalition. In an opening statement he told its members, "I'm not seeking your endorsement as an organization." He then continued by labeling the Coalition "a self-appointed, self-anointed group of people serving as an ad hoc city council in exile." At the forum's conclusion he described the event as a "farce" and said the Coalition had decided whom it would endorse before the meeting began.<sup>30</sup> In truth, the Coalition did not plan to announce endorsements until the following week. Other candidates, including Cannon, used the event to discuss the city's annexation policy, the proposed new city charter and the Citizens Advisory Council. Cannon set herself in juxtaposition to Coggins, telling forum attendees that she was dedicated "to bringing about unity, cooperation and dignity to the council."<sup>31</sup> Her comments paid off on September 20 when the Raleigh Coalition endorsed her.<sup>32</sup>

Some suggest that Coggins attacked the Raleigh Coalition during his campaign because he didn't want to speak critically of a woman, particularly a septuagenarian. Coggins offered differing responses to the suggestion, denying it on one occasion and confirming it several days later with the comment, "I still think a gentleman should treat a lady as a lady."<sup>33</sup>

Besides presenting herself as a unifier, Cannon sought to prove that she was a fit 73-year-old. One day after filing for office, Cannon arrived to shake hands at a Raleigh event with a pair of tennis shoes draped over her shoulder.<sup>34</sup> "I ran as 'the little old lady in tennis shoes' for a special reason," she told an interviewer in 1993. "At the time, it was the most derogatory thing you could say about anybody, 'Oh, she dresses like a little old lady in tennis shoes,' or 'She thinks like a little old lady in tennis shoes.' It made me angry because I saw all these young people walking by my door and what they have on their feet? Sneakers, tennis shoes."<sup>35</sup> Cannon's label as "the little old lady in tennis" became an oft-used phrase among reporters and headline writers.

Coggins appears to have never described Cannon as a "little old lady in tennis shoes." But he did make references to her age and to her gender, describing her on several occasions as a "nice lady" and once suggesting that Cannon was "a lady who is basically the same age as my mother."<sup>36</sup>

Editorial writers, too, noted Cannon's age. One week into her campaign, *The Raleigh Times* featured an editorial headlined "White-curled candidate." "Isabella Cannon's entry as a late dark horse in Raleigh's mayoral sweepstakes surprised some who wonder why a nice old lady would want the job," the writer began. "It's safe to assume they're unacquainted with the lady." He continued, noting that Cannon's "petite white-curled exterior conceals a tough Quaker spirit of conviction." After a short summary of her biography and her views, the writer concluded by suggesting, "It's clear the public and incumbent Mayor Jyles Coggins would be wrong to discount Mrs. Cannon. White curls and all, her campaign is for real."<sup>37</sup>

Cannon laughed off concerns about her age, noting that she was an avid gardener, regularly participated in folk dancing and kept a busy campaign schedule. On occasion she noted that her medical bills in 1976 totaled \$10 and then added, "That's because I decided that I'd better go see my doctor so he wouldn't forget me."<sup>38</sup> In later years she reflected on Coggins' claim that she was old enough to be his mother, commenting, "I did a little figuring, and since he was in his late 50s and I was 73...I would have had to start mighty early to have been his mother."<sup>39</sup>

Cannon's age didn't seem to bother a group of young, politically-active, Raleigh professionals who signed on to help run her campaign. Earle Beasley was a 30-year-old Raleigh advertising executive who had overseen campaign commercials for Charles G. "Charlie" Rose's bid for U.S. Congress from North Carolina's Seventh District and Senator George S. McGovern's 1972 presidential bid in North Carolina. He remembers reading about Cannon's candidacy in the paper the morning after she filed. "I remember looking at the paper and saying, 'Boy, that's a long shot. But if she does this right, she could win,'" Beasley recalled in summer 2012. "I told my partner at the time, later wife, 'We got to watch this gal because this could be a change in city politics.'"<sup>40</sup>

Several hours after reading the article, Beasley said, he received a call from Mike Boyd, a former Raleigh city council member known for his opposition to Coggins.<sup>41</sup> Boyd invited Beasley to meet with him and Knudsen, the catalyst behind Cannon's run, at the Ham n' Egger, a Raleigh diner. "They had no idea whether the campaign could be put together to win. But they wanted to give it the best shot possible," Beasley said. "It seemed like a real long shot. No one else was willing to get into Bomber Jack's sights. But they had promised Isabella they would give it a shot. And, if she would be the candidate, they would do what they could to make it happen." Then, Beasley recalled, Boyd and Knudsen asked him to manage Cannon's campaign. "And I kind of scratched my head and said, 'Golly, I was just thinking that she had a chance and now, lo and behold, I'm being asked to make sure that chance happens.'"



Beasley considered the idea for about a day and then signed on to manage Cannon's campaign. One of his first steps was purchase of *The Election Campaign Handbook*, a 1976 publication that offers to guide candidates and campaign managers through such tasks as setting up a campaign organization, opposition research, press relations and field organization.<sup>43</sup> "I determined that we've got a short time," he said. "We've got no budget. We might as well do it by the book. So I went and bought the book and started making strategies out of that." Beasley says that initially he leaned heavily on Betty Ann Knudsen's campaign organization.<sup>44</sup> In fact, organizational charts for Cannon's campaign appear to be carbon copies of ones created for Knudsen's campaign, with some names scratched out and others added in their places.<sup>45</sup> Supporters were given such jobs as legal counsel, scheduler, treasurer and media buyer.

Initially the Cannon campaign consisted of the 73-year-old candidate, Beasley and a few others. But the number of volunteers grew quickly. "I would go to the grocery store and come home with my handbag full of little slips of paper with names of people saying, 'I want to help,' " Cannon said. "It was a people's movement and was exciting."<sup>46</sup> Sixteen days after Cannon filed for office, a newspaper report quoted Beasley estimating that about 750 people had signed on to work for Cannon.<sup>47</sup>

To accommodate the ever-increasing number of volunteers, the campaign rented an office in North Hills. "We went in and talked to the landlord there and persuaded him to let us occupy some of the office space for a negligible rent, with the understanding that if he got it rented in the meantime, we'd move out,"<sup>48</sup> Beasley said. The headquarters consisted of six rooms. The walls were plastered with maps of Raleigh divided by precinct and featuring color-coded stripes denoting which candidate had carried each precinct in previous elections. Another wall held a brown paper chart with campaign duties printed on it. Beasley said the office was a hive of activity. On one occasion, he recalled, the office turned into a factory for campaign yard signs. "Yard signs were quite the vogue in campaigns at that point in time," he said. "We didn't have a lot of budget for them at first. So I managed to go out and scrape together some money to buy poster boards and then had somebody create silk screens for us and we got together and had a silk screening party."<sup>49</sup> Those yard signs were among the 1,200 campaign workers distributed between October 1 and Election Day. They also handed out 2,000 bumper stickers, 10,000 campaign cards and 25,000 campaign tabloids.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast with Cannon and her well-oiled campaign machine, Coggins took a low-key approach to drawing supporters. He had no campaign manager and no formal campaign organization. In the first weeks of the campaign Coggins spoke at candidate forums, asserting that the central issue of the campaign was Raleigh's need for jobs and emphasizing his business experience.<sup>51</sup> But soon he found himself

on the defensive, seeking to explain in the media why the deeds for Raleigh Memorial Park, a cemetery that he owned, barred burial to anyone but whites. Such a restriction was in clear violation of federal law. Coggins responded that he had ordered the language in the cemetery's standard deed changed to omit the whites-only clause about 18 months prior to the story. He pointed out that he was not involved in day-to-day management of the cemetery and that although he signed the deeds, he did not read them. Coggins confessed he was "guilty of neglecting the details." Cannon used the story to her advantage, suggesting that Coggins' lack of follow-up in ordering the deed change "is a very strong indication of the kind of administration he provides." She added: "If that's the sort of thing he does in his private business, I think that is a reflection on his administration of city government."<sup>52</sup>

At least one press report questioned whether the issue would undermine Coggins' support among African American.<sup>53</sup> But the heads of the Raleigh NAACP and the Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association, the latter of which supported Coggins in his 1975 mayoral bid, suggested it wouldn't. African-American businessman James Augustus Shepard, writing in his weekly "Odds and Ends" column for *The Carolinian*, a newspaper targeted at Raleigh's black population, opined that segregated cemetery lots was a "dead issue" drummed up by "the two Raleigh daily newspapers and the various Raleigh political coalitions" in an effort to deprive Coggins of the black vote in the November election.<sup>54</sup>

But Shepard and the heads of the NAACP and the Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association didn't speak for all of Raleigh's African-American residents. They represented Raleigh's traditional black leadership. But a younger group of African-Americans were also making their political voices heard. They had joined together in 1975 as the Wake County Black Democratic Caucus and were led by Daniel T. "Dan" Blue, a Robeson County native and a Duke University-educated attorney who had opened a practice in Raleigh. Although the Caucus had joined with the Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association to endorse Coggins in 1975, they had done so in response to an appeal for black unity by Lightner and others.<sup>55</sup> In 1977 the Caucus leadership was comfortable taking a different stance from the Citizens Association. Dan Blue made that clear in response to reports of the whites-only clause in the Raleigh Memorial Park deeds. Blue said the issue could have some impact on African-American support for Coggins. And he suggested that the "research committee" of the Caucus would need to investigate further.<sup>56</sup>

Just days before election day, the two African-American political groups further underscored their separation when the Caucus endorsed Cannon and the Citizens Association backed Coggins.<sup>57</sup>

Coggins may have also lost another crucial constituency—female voters—with comments he made at a candidate forum sponsored by the Wake County Women's Political Caucus on October 19. The non-partisan group of about 300 politically active women met with 12 mayoral and council candidates at White Memorial Presbyterian Church. The group asked each contender to name Raleigh's most pressing problems and provide a solution. Cannon cited the need for city planning and council unity. Coggins mentioned neither and then proceeded to refer to the group as the "ladies' auxiliary" of the Raleigh Coalition. The following day the Women's Caucus announced its support for Cannon.<sup>58</sup>

Coggins remained in attack mode two days later, on October 21, when he and Cannon met with students at Raleigh's Broughton High School. He again lashed out at the Raleigh Coalition, suggesting that the group and its leaders were his real opponents in the Nov. 8 election. He told students that no coalition leader "had the guts or fortitude" to run against him. And then he added, "They looked for months to find someone not tainted by Coalition membership. So what did they do? At the last minute, they got a nice lady to come out of retirement and run against me." His comments drew boos and hisses. Cannon responded to Coggins' accusations with a history lesson. "You've heard of the McCarthy era, when some people feared Communist influence?" she asked. "Well, according to the mayor there must be a coalition member under every chair and table." Broughton students greeted her remarks with cheers and whistles.<sup>59</sup>

Just three days after the two mayoral hopefuls appeared together at Broughton, Coggins entered Rex Hospital for removal of gallstones. He told a reporter that he had hoped to wait until the start of the new year, but that doctors had encouraged him to move forward with the surgery sooner. "If I should be re-elected, I want to be sure to be completely recovered when the new council is seated," he said. "I had to go when I found a doctor who could promise to take out the stones and leave me the gall." The report noted that the "outspoken mayor" made the comment "with a grin."<sup>60</sup>

During Coggins' weeklong hospital stay, the Cannon campaign sought to capitalize on his absence from the hustings.<sup>61</sup> On October 26 in a speech before the Raleigh Exchange Club, Cannon attacked Coggins as "one of the most flagrant violators" of the city housing code and accused him of setting up a committee to investigate city housing inspectors rather than correcting problems with his property. Subsequent reporting noted that Coggins had, indeed, received 16 certified letters from the city inspections division over a 22-month period advising him that he needed to correct problems on seven of his properties. Five letters told Coggins to fireproof doors and interior stairways at his Beckanna Apartments. Eleven others required him to clear debris or perform other clean-up on five vacant lots and at an old service station that he owned. From the hospital Coggins dismissed Cannon's accusations,

responding "I think that her aides and her advisors from the Coalition and from the woman's auxiliary are giving her misleading and incomplete information." Coggins explained that residents of neighboring properties often left trash on his vacant lots. He acknowledged that he had set up a committee to study the inspections department, but the group's task was to examine policies. He said that he formed the committee in response to complaints from apartment owners who charged that they were being held accountable for property damage done by their tenants. The story dropped after two days.<sup>62</sup>

Coggins found his practices subject to more questions in the days leading up to the election. On November 4—four days before the election—newspapers reported that Coggins mailed 25,000 campaign brochures in envelopes bearing Raleigh's city seal. A portion of the envelopes were stamped by postage meters registered to local businesses, a violation of North Carolina law, which forbade corporate contributions to political campaigns. Coggins explained that supporters used the postage meters as a convenience to the campaign and that he planned to reimburse the businesses. He acknowledged that the seal on the envelopes resembled the city's, but pointed out that the green ink use to print it was a different shade from that used by the city. He also noted that the return address was different from the one used on his official stationary. The first line read "Mayor Jyles J. Coggins" rather than "Office of the Mayor" and the mailing address was a post office box for his construction company and not the city. Despite the differences, some who received the mailing thought it had come from city hall. Even the US Postal Service was confused. Undeliverable envelopes were returned to city hall.<sup>63</sup> Despite its potential for controversy, especially with its proximity to election day, the confusion over the mass mailings appeared to have little effect on voters' decisions at the poll.<sup>64</sup>

In the final week of the campaign, both candidates sought to control their media image and step up their exposure through advertising. Coggins spent almost \$9,000 on newspaper advertisements, including \$4000 on four full-page ads that ran in Raleigh papers in the two days prior to the election.<sup>65</sup> Under a banner headline reading "Straight talk from Raleigh's straight talking mayor" the ad characterized Cannon supporters as "no-growth" advocates and noted, "My opponent is an honorable, well-intentioned lady. Unfortunately, she is being used by a noisy group of people who place very narrow, selfish interests above the well-being of the entire City of Raleigh."<sup>66</sup>

Cannon also advertised in newspapers and she distributed a multi-age tabloid featuring her photos and stances. But she spent much of her advertising budget on radio and television ads. Her campaign ran eighteen 30-second television spots and 60 radio ads in the week preceding the election. WRAL-TV alternated between three spots with Cannon appearing on camera. In one, she touched on the city's need for leadership. A second featured Cannon discussing the importance of drawing

industry to the city and offering job training. And the third included Cannon touting the need for "wise" growth. Each ended with the tag line, "Let's get Raleigh moving again. On November 8, vote for Isabella Cannon." <sup>67</sup>

Television and radio advertising accounted for about a third of the \$9600 total that Cannon spent on getting elected. Her campaign funding came largely from donations of \$20 to \$100.<sup>68</sup> It started out with my newspaper boy bringing me one dollar," Cannon recalled in 1993.<sup>69</sup> Cannon, herself, lent the campaign \$3400, most of which she was able to recoup from the \$12,318 she raised during her three months on the hustings.<sup>70</sup>

Coggins, who proudly proclaimed that he did not accept campaign donations, spent about \$12,000 from his own pocket on his unsuccessful bid for mayor. He led all the candidates for mayor and city council in spending.<sup>71</sup>

Even before Coggins launched his two-day newspaper advertising blitz, his campaign received favorable press when the city's two major dailies backed him for a second term. Writing for *The News and Observer*, publisher Frank Daniels Jr. acknowledged that Coggins is at times "abrupt, arrogant and intimidating" and that he "finds it difficult to compromise when compromise is the wiser course." Nevertheless, Daniels wrote, Coggins is a "strong and determined leader" experienced in both public service and private industry. "This city likely will face major problems in the next two years in employer-employee relations in its police, fire and sanitation departments," he continued. "Jyles Coggins has demonstrated the ability to deal with such problems effectively. That reason alone is sufficient to warrant his re-election."<sup>72</sup> *The Raleigh Times* sang Cannon's praises, labeling her as "hardworking" and "inexhaustible" and describing her as "an intelligent, charming, articulate and witty campaigner." But then the editorialist wrote, "we do not think these commendable attributes are enough. And although Mrs. Cannon has exhibited a toughness that belies her age, we fear she may not be quite tough enough to make some of the difficult decisions required in her post."<sup>73</sup> James Augustus Shepard, addressing black voters in *The Carolinian*, but not, as noted, speaking for the paper, echoed *The Raleigh Times* endorsement of Coggins, asking "What, if any experience does she possess that would help her in administering the affairs of a multi-million dollar business? Because, in the final analysis, the City of Raleigh is a multi-million dollar business."<sup>74</sup>

On Election Day, Beasley sent out about 300 volunteers to distribute campaign literature, focusing on 19 precincts that he determined were key to Cannon's victory. Those Cannon supporters augmented the several dozen campaign workers who spent the weekend prior to the election making get-out-the-vote phone calls. All efforts were to ensure what Beasley had already determined a foregone

conclusion. "It got to a point where, about three weeks out, I told the campaign team that we were going to win," he recalled in summer 2012. "Survey results and every feeling in my bones told me that we were going to win....We wanted to make sure that we didn't do anything between now and then to lose."<sup>75</sup>

As Beasley hoped, the Cannon campaign steered clear of any major missteps. Its candidate took 52 percent of the votes, beating Coggins 14,508 to 13,315. Cannon won 28 of Raleigh's 43 precincts, faring well in the university-oriented precincts of west Raleigh, the new suburbs of North Raleigh and the black precincts of southeast Raleigh. Coggins performed best in the "silk stocking" precincts that were home to many of the city's financial elite, including Country Club Hills and Drewry Hills. He also won blue-collar neighborhoods in east Raleigh.

Reporters and local leaders offered various theories to explain the election results. G. Wesley Williams, the head of the Raleigh Merchants Bureau and an unsuccessful candidate for mayor in 1975, pointed his finger squarely at Coggins. "Jack blew it. He started blowing it the day he went into office," Williams said. "He couldn't control his tongue. I've heard a lot of people say they were just tired of his vitriolic statements."<sup>76</sup> A Raleigh architect who often argued before the council on behalf of developers suggested that Coggins was blamed for the council's frequent stalemates. "Some people were voting against Coggins and some were voting for Mrs. Cannon," he said. "But I think most people were voting against what happened in the last council."<sup>77</sup> Sonnya Quinn, the wife of a former Raleigh city council member and one of the people responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Cannon campaign, attributed her candidate's success to a growing support for feminism.<sup>78</sup> Not surprisingly, Coggins blamed the Raleigh Coalition. That woman wasn't the opposition," he told a reporter. "They were. They ran the campaign." Coggins also attributed his loss to unfavorable newspaper coverage. "After reading these articles, I figured I'd have to meet this man, Jack Coggins, because I didn't know him," he said.<sup>79</sup> Newspaper reporters suggested that an additional factor was central to the election results—the once, solid bloc of African-American voters had split its support. They pointed out that had Coggins garnered the solid support that he received from black voters in 1975, he would have won the election, despite an erosion of support for him in old Raleigh neighborhoods around Five Points and in East Raleigh.<sup>80</sup>

Cannon's victory sparked press attention from across the United States and Europe. Her win was mentioned on all three major networks. Reporters called from *Time*, *Newsweek*, *People*, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the Associated Press—even a newspaper in Scotland.<sup>81</sup> But, on election night, amid election cheers of "power to the people" and "the people won over the dollar," one of her supporters, former Raleigh councilman James T. Quinn, leaned over to the

victorious candidate and uttered words that would prove prophetic. "I don't envy you one bit," he said. "You've got a tough row to hoe."<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, Cannon would find her two years in office much more arduous than any task she had performed in her Brooks Avenue garden. While Raleigh voters had elected her as mayor, they had also chosen a city council whose members were more aligned with development interests than those who had preceded them. And, as she sought re-election in 1979, Cannon would find herself accused of fomenting the same council discord and stalemate with which she charged Coggins. In the end, she would be forced to turn over the mayor's seat to a fellow council member and developer, Smedes York.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Greensboro Daily News*, November 10, 1977; *The Vidette -Messenger* (Valparaiso, IN), November 10, 1977; *Charlotte Observer*, November 11, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Vitae for Isabella Cannon, February 1985, Box 5, Isabella Cannon Papers, #04459, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

<sup>3</sup> Cannon's papers in the Southern Historical Collection include several different curriculum vitae and biographical sketches written by Cannon. Other sources for background information on Cannon are: Isabella Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993 (Interview G-0188), Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007), Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>; Cannon, interview with Kathryn Nasstrom, June 27, 1989 (Interview C-0062), Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/9968>; Cole Campbell, "CAC's Cannon Files for Mayor," *News and Observer*, September 10, 1977; Steve Knowlton, "Challenger Cites 'Leadership Crisis,'" *Raleigh Times*, October 31, 1977.

<sup>4</sup> "Mayor Isabella Cannon Asks, 'Who, Me?'" *Durham Sun*, November 10, 1977.

<sup>5</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>

<sup>6</sup> Knowlton, "Challenger Cites 'Leadership Crisis,'" *Raleigh Times*, October 31, 1977.

<sup>7</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Independent Stand Coggins Trademark," *Raleigh Times*, October 3, 1977.

<sup>9</sup> Rob Christensen, "A Maverick Takes the Reins as Raleigh's Mayor," *News and Observer*, December 7, 1975. For additional background information on Coggins see also Knowlton, "Independent Stand Coggins Trademark," *Raleigh Times*, October 3, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> Christensen, "A Maverick Takes the Reins as Raleigh's Mayor," *News and Observer*, December 7, 1975.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

---

<sup>12</sup> Rob Christensen, "Coggins Sure He Could Control the Helm of Raleigh," *News and Observer*, October 2, 1975.

<sup>13</sup> Gary Gallant, "Raleigh's Development Geared to Population Rise," *News and Observer*, April 12, 1971. *County and City Data Book 1967*, [Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; *County and City Data Book 1972*, [Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; *County and City Data 1977*, [Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; Natalie Cohodas, "Apartments Clog Raleigh Market," *News and Observer*, July 23, 1973.

<sup>14</sup> Ann Pelham, "...And Fayetteville Street," *News and Observer*, June 8, 1975.

<sup>15</sup> Rob Christensen, "City Leaders Plan Battle on Rezoning," *News and Observer*, July 23, 1973; Christensen, "Jones Blames Subdivisions in Flooding," *News and Observer*, July 23, 1973; Christensen, "Plan Department Unveils Growth Scheme Proposals," *News and Observer*, September 6, 1973; Christensen, "Council Oks Zone Plan to Curb City's Growth," *News and Observer*, February 7, 1974.

<sup>16</sup> Rob Christensen, "Ultimate Purposes of CAC Still Open to Question," *News and Observer*, March 13, 1974.

<sup>17</sup> Rob Christensen, "Citizens Advisory Council: How It All Came About," *News and Observer*, March 11, 1974.

<sup>18</sup> Rob Christensen, "Community Groups Changed the System," *News and Observer*, December 28, 1973.

<sup>19</sup> Ferrel Guillory, "Raleigh City Election Was About More Than Just Race," *News and Observer*, November 18, 1973; Rob Christensen, "Coalition Hails Victory in City," *News and Observer*, December 19, 1973.

<sup>20</sup> Rob Christensen, "Council Record 'Preservationist,'" *News and Observer*, August 13, 1975; Rob Christensen, "City Council 'Firsts' Include Bus, Job Programs," *News and Observer*, August 14, 1975.

<sup>21</sup> Editorial, "Attention Focuses on Mayor's Race," *News and Observer*, September 17, 1975.

<sup>22</sup> Rob Christensen, "Coalition Rebuts Coggins Charge," *News and Observer*, October 10, 1975.

<sup>23</sup> Rob Christensen, "Coggins Assails Neighborhood Coalition," *News and Observer*, October 9, 1975.

<sup>24</sup> Rob Christensen, "Wake Black Group Endorses Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 1, 1975; "RWCA Backs Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 4, 1975.

<sup>25</sup> Rob Christensen, "Black Leadership May Split on Mayor's Race," *News and Observer*, November 5, 1977.

<sup>26</sup> Knowlton, "Independent Stand Coggins Trademark," *Raleigh Times*, October 31, 1977.

<sup>27</sup> Editorial, "Election a Signal for Compromise," *News and Observer*, November 11, 1975; Steve Knowlton, "Neighborhood Groups Gloomy," *Raleigh Times*, September 10, 1977; Knowlton, "Independent Stand Coggins trademark," *Raleigh Times*, October 31, 1977.

<sup>28</sup> Ann Pelham, "Angry Mayor Raps Council," *News and Observer*, December 10, 1975; Cole Campbell, "Critic Blasts Coggins," *News and Observer*, October 19, 1977; Cole Campbell, "Mayor Raps Charges by Kirschbaum," *News and Observer*, October 20, 1977.



---

<sup>29</sup> Cole Campbell, "Raleigh Mayor Race Opens; Coggins Raps City Coalition," *News and Observer*, September 14, 1977.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Campbell, "Raleigh Mayor Race Opens; Coggins Raps City Coalition," *News and Observer*, September 14, 1977; Steve Knowlton, "Candidate Session Not Lively," *Raleigh Times*, September 14, 1977.

<sup>32</sup> Cole Campbell, "Coalition Backs Ex-Librarian," *News and Observer*, September 21, 1977.

<sup>33</sup> Knowlton, "Independent Stand Coggins Trademark," *Raleigh Times*, October 31, 1977; Cole Campbell, "Differences in Style Mark Mayoral Race," *News and Observer*, November 6, 1977.

<sup>34</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Challenger Says Her Role 'Serious,'" *Raleigh Times*, September 19, 1977; "'Little Lady' Scores Big in Election," *Durham Sun*, November 9, 1977; Jack Betts, "Librarian Makes Cannon Fodder of Jyles Coggins," *Greensboro Daily News*, November 10, 1977; Arthur Siddon, "Two Big-City Mayors Years Apart: Raleigh's 'Old Lady' is 73," *Chicago Tribune*, November 13, 1977; "Raleigh's 'Mama' Gets Ready," *North Carolina Leader*, January 5, 1978.

<sup>35</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>.

<sup>36</sup> Knowlton, "Neighborhood Groups Gloomy," *Raleigh Times*, September 10, 1977; Advertisement for Jyles J. Coggins, "Straight Talk from Raleigh's Straight Talking Mayor," *News and Observer*, November 8, 1977; Campbell, "Differences in Style Mark Mayoral Race," *News and Observer*, November 6, 1977.

<sup>37</sup> "White-curled Candidate," *Raleigh Times*, September 19, 1977.

<sup>38</sup> Cole Campbell, "Mayoral Bid Shows Contrasting Styles," *News and Observer*, September 25, 1977.

<sup>39</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Cole Campbell, "Black Group Gives Backing to Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 8, 1977.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>43</sup> [https://openlibrary.org/books/OL5215137M/Election\\_campaign\\_handbook](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL5215137M/Election_campaign_handbook)

<sup>44</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>45</sup> See "Campaign Organization" folder, Box 1, Isabella Cannon Papers, #04459, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

<sup>46</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>.

<sup>47</sup> Campbell, "Mayoral Bid Shows Contrasting Styles," *News and Observer*, September 25, 1977.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

---

<sup>49</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>50</sup> Cole Campbell, "Mrs. Cannon Seen Aided by Antipathy to Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 10, 1977.

<sup>51</sup> "Candidates Cite City's Need for Jobs," *Raleigh Times*, September 19, 1977.

<sup>52</sup> Cole Campbell, "Deeds Forbid Black Burials in Mayor's Lot," *News and Observer*, September 24, 1977; Steve Knowlton and Gail Westry, "'Whites Only' Deed Clause Seen as Blow to Coggins," *Raleigh Times*, September 26, 1977; Cole Campbell, "Coggins Urged Cut of Race Rule," *News and Observer*, September 27, 1977.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell, "Deeds Forbid Black Burials in Mayor's Lot," *News and Observer*, September 24, 1977.

<sup>54</sup> "The 'Great' Cemetery Fiasco—What's the Issue?" *Carolinian*, October 6, 1977.

<sup>55</sup> Rob Christensen, "Black leadership may split on mayor's race," *News and Observer*, November 5, 1977.

<sup>56</sup> Knowlton and Westry, "'Whites Only' Deed Clause Seen as Blow to Coggins," *Raleigh Times*, September 26, 1977

<sup>57</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Coggins Uses Ads, Cannon Uses Phones on Voting Eve," *Raleigh Times*, November 7, 1977; Cole Campbell, "Black Group Gives Backing to Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 8, 1977.

<sup>58</sup> Roger Thompson, "Candidates Stress Plans," *News and Observer*, October 20, 1977; Steve Knowlton, "Mrs. Cannon Backed by Women's Caucus," *Raleigh Times*, October 20, 1977; "Caucus Endorses Cannon Candidacy," *News and Observer*, October 21, 1977.

<sup>59</sup> Roger Thompson, "Mayoral candidates clash," *News and Observer*, October 22, 1977.

<sup>60</sup> "Mayor surgical patient at Rex," *Raleigh Times*, October 24, 1977.

<sup>61</sup> Cole Campbell, "Council Decides to Buy Loaders," *News and Observer*, November 2, 1977; Earle Beasley interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Cole Campbell, "Cannon Says Coggins Fails to Abide by Housing Code," *News and Observer*, October 27, 1977; Campbell, "Mayor Told Often to Fix Up Property," *News and Observer*, October 28, 1977.

<sup>63</sup> Cole Campbell, "Firms Stamped Coggins Letter," *News and Observer*, November 4, 1977; Steve Knowlton, "Mayor Defends Envelope Use," *Raleigh Times*, November 4, 1977.

<sup>64</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Cannon's Attack, Miscues by Mayor Credited in Upset," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

<sup>65</sup> Cole Campbell, "Black Group Gives Backing to Coggins," *News and Observer*, November 8, 1977; Campbell, "Coggins Led All Candidates in Spending, Reports Show," *News and Observer*, November 22, 1977; Campbell, "Hard Work, High Spirits Gave Cannon Mayor's Job," *News and Observer*, November 11, 1977.

<sup>66</sup> *News and Observer*, November 8, 1977.

---

<sup>67</sup> Campaign organizations folder, Box 4, Isabella Cannon Papers, #04459, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Cannon, interview with Jim Clark, spring 1993, Southern Oral History Program Collection, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/11307>.

<sup>70</sup> Campaign organizations folder, Box 4, Isabella Cannon Papers, #04459, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

<sup>71</sup> "Campaign Costly for Coggins," *Raleigh Times*, November 22, 1977; Cole Campbell, "Coggins Led all Candidates in Spending, Reports Show," *The News and Observer*, November 22, 1977.

<sup>72</sup> "Jyles Coggins Endorsed for Mayor," *News and Observer*, November 7, 1977.

<sup>73</sup> "Second Term for Coggins," *Raleigh Times*, November 3, 1977.

<sup>74</sup> "Decision Day-Next Tuesday, Please Vote." *The Carolinian*, November 3, 1977.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with author, July 2012.

<sup>76</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Cannon's Attack, Miscues by Mayor Credited in Upset," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

<sup>77</sup> Benjamin B. Taylor quoted in Knowlton, "Cannon's Attack, Miscues by Mayor Credited in Upset," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

<sup>78</sup> Knowlton, "Cannon's Attack, Miscues by Mayor Credited in Upset," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

<sup>79</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Defeat Brings Decision to Step Out of Politics for Good," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

<sup>80</sup> Knowlton, "Cannon's Attack, Miscues by Mayor Credited in Upset," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977; Rob Christensen, "Mayor's Loss Due to Black Split," *News and Observer*, November 10, 1977.

<sup>81</sup> See Box 5, Isabella Cannon Papers, #04459, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill. The box includes several folders with newspaper and magazine clippings noting Cannon's election as mayor. The folder "Media after election" includes a clipping from the *Scottish Daily Record* of Glasgow, Scotland. The date is not visible.

<sup>82</sup> Steve Knowlton, "Sobering Thoughts Encroach on Heady Evening of Victory," *Raleigh Times*, November 9, 1977.

---

*John Blythe is Special Projects and Outreach Coordinator for the North Carolina Collection at UNC's Wilson Library. As such, he prepares and edits publications on North Carolina-related topics. Blythe's responsibilities also include editorial supervision of the North Carolina Miscellany blog, to which he is also a contributor. From January to June 2010, Blythe served as Project Librarian for the North Carolina Maps online collection. Prior to working in libraries, Blythe spent seventeen years in journalism. From 1989-1994, he worked as a reporter for the Winston-Salem Journal. During the mid-90s Blythe helped launch and served as editor on several websites for Condé Nast Publications in New York City. Blythe has also worked as a public radio producer in New York, Virginia, and North Carolina. He is a native of Chapel Hill.*

*Presented on September 14th and 15th, 2012, the conference "To Gain Attention to Their Various Claims: Historic Political Campaigns in North Carolina" took place at Wilson Library, co-sponsored by the North Carolina Collection and the Southern Historical Collection.*