

**NORTH CAROLINA
SKETCHES:
PHASES OF LIFE WHERE
THE GALAXY GROWS**

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North Carolina Sketches: Phases of Life Where the Galax Grows by Mary Nelson Carter

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MARY NELSON CARTER

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North Carolina Sketches

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GALAX GROWS

BY
MARY NELSON CARTER



CHICAGO
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1900

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF ONE WHO, AS FRIEND AND
PHYSICIAN, WENT IN AND OUT
FOR YEARS AMONG THOSE WHO DWELL WHERE
THE GALAX GROWS

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
MRS. SMITH	13
STEPPING BACKWARDS	43
A FOGGY DAY	59
MR. TIMMINS	75
PLAYING WITH FIRE	81
NEIGHBORLY GOSSIP	93
BARTER	105
THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE	121
HIDING OUT	137
IN MARIA'S GARDEN	149
THE SUMMER IS ENDED	163
A WHITE DAY	177
NOW IS THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT	199
SALLY	211
OLD TIMES	225
GETTING AN EDUCATION	243
LIKE OTHER CHILDREN	301

MRS. SMITH

MRS. SMITH

I

Mrs. Smith, her "old man," and their six grandchildren lived in a two-roomed cabin on a hillside.

There was a good view of the mountains from the hilltop, and when I walked out that way I often stopped in to rest and chat with Mrs. Smith.

She and Bijah had just been married when the war broke out, she told me, and she had many entertaining stories to tell of war times.

"Me and Bijah was livin' down to Coon Branch them times," she said. "Bijah were always mighty peaceable, and he allowed he hadn't no call to go to war. We-uns never did know what it were about, nohow. When the recruitin' officers come round, I done told 'em how Bijah were too puny to chop wood or work much in the craps,

and they reckoned he weren't no 'count for a soldier. It's curious how many men's weakly about work," added Mrs. Smith, with a sly twinkle in her eyes; "especially if their women folks is right peart to do it themselves.

Them were skeery times, and we drewed the bolt on the door nights. One night there come a little knock on the door, and Bijah crept out of bed, and whispered through the crack, 'Who's there?' He daresn't open the door. 'It's me, Bill Sines,' come a voice back. Bill were a free nigger that lived in the holler. 'What you want, Bill?' says Bijah. 'Lemme in, Mr. Smith, fer God's sake! and I'll tell you,' Bill says. So Bijah opened the door a crack, and Bill slipped in, and shut it quick, scared-like. He says in a whisper: 'It's four Union soldiers, escapin' from prison. There's six of 'em, but two's give out, and they done hid 'em in the woods. T'others is nigh perished. I done told 'em you-uns knowed the road to Bentonville better'n most, and I allowed mebbe you'd come a piece of the way with us, Mr. Smith.' Bill knowed Bijah were right soft-hearted, and hated it bad to see a body sufferin'.

'I ain't never been fur on that road myself,' says Bill; 'and them poor fellows is like