Hooker [1]

Hooker

Joseph Hooker, 1962. Image courtesy of Library
by Whitmel M. Joyner, 2006 of Congress. [2]

See also: Prostitution [3]

"Hooker," a slang word for prostitute, was used in an 1845 letter written by a student to a classmate at the University of North Carolina [4]. This is the earliest known written usage of the word in this sense. The letter was found in the university library's Southern Historical Collection [5] by noted UNC professor and philologist Norman E. Eliason [6]. The date of his finding undermines the popular notion that the term came into usage in the Civil War [7] era in "honor" of Union general Joseph Hooker [8]'s well-documented personal proclivities.

Reference:

Norman E. Eliason, *Tar Heel Talk: An Historical Study of the English Language in North Carolina to 1860* (1956).

Image Credit:

Joseph Hooker, 1962. Image courtesy of Library of Congress. Available from http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008680202/ [2] (accessed July 23, 2012).

Subjects:
Antebellum (1820-1861) [9]
Culture [10]
Authors:
Joyner, Whitmel M. [11]
From:
Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. [12]

1 January 2006 | Joyner, Whitmel M.