Southern Part of Heaven [1]

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by Jerry Leath Mills, 2006

See also: State Names and Nicknames [2]

Cover of The Southern Part of Heaven, 1950. Image from the National Archives. [3]

The "Southern Part of Heaven" is a phrase coined by author William Meade Prince [4] in 1950 for the title of his volume of reminiscences of growing up in Chapel Hill. Prince was drawing on an old, probably apocryphal anecdote about a Dr. Klutz, a Franklin Street store owner in the early years of the twentieth century. As Prince relates it, Klutz, on his deathbed, inquires of his Presbyterian [5] minister, Parson Moss, what heaven is like, and Moss replies: "Dr. Klutz, I believe Heaven must be a lot like Chapel Hill in the spring."

Prince's title has long held the status of a beloved cliché in Chapel Hill and continues to be cited in both promotional and sarcastic contexts. An example of the latter is a suggestion, not infrequently made, that in light of Chapel Hill's and the greater Research Triangle [6]'s development, population growth, and demographic change in recent years, the label should be emended to the "Southern Part of New Jersey."

References:


Additional Resources:


Image Credits:


Subjects:
Post War 20th Century (1946-2000) [8]
Places [9]
Slogans, slang, and sayings [10]

Authors:
Mills, Jerry Leath [11]

Origin - location:
Chapel Hill [12]

From: