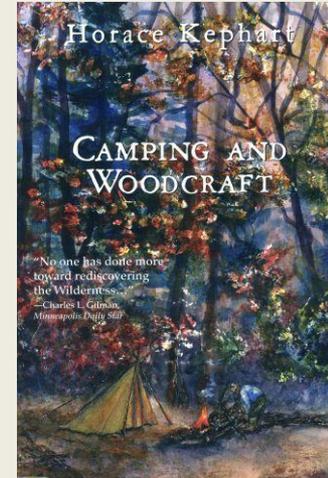
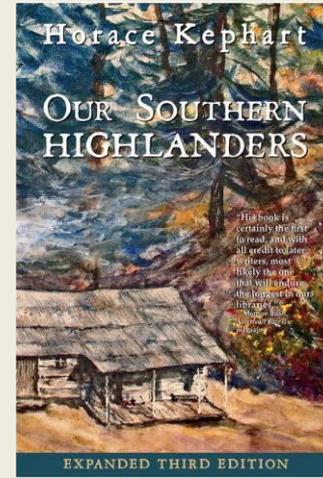
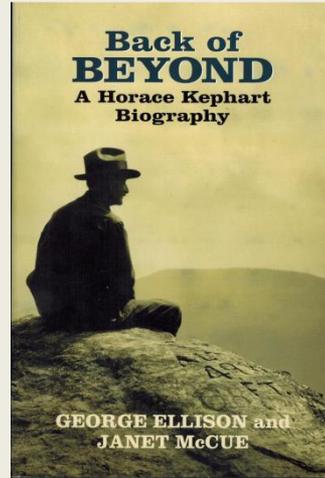


Not so random thoughts and selective musings of a mountaineer on the recently released biography *Back of Beyond* and works of Horace Kephart

By Don Casada, amateur historian

© June, 2019

Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery



Back of Beyond by George Ellison and Janet McCue is available through the Great Smoky Mountains Association web site, at GSMA bookstores and other commercial booksellers. *Our Southern Highlanders* and *Camping and Woodcraft*, both by Horace Kephart, are also available through those venues. Early editions of [Our Southern Highlanders](#) and [Camping and Woodcraft](#) are available free on line.

Note: a [Timeline of the life](#) of Horace Kephart is available on the FBCC website









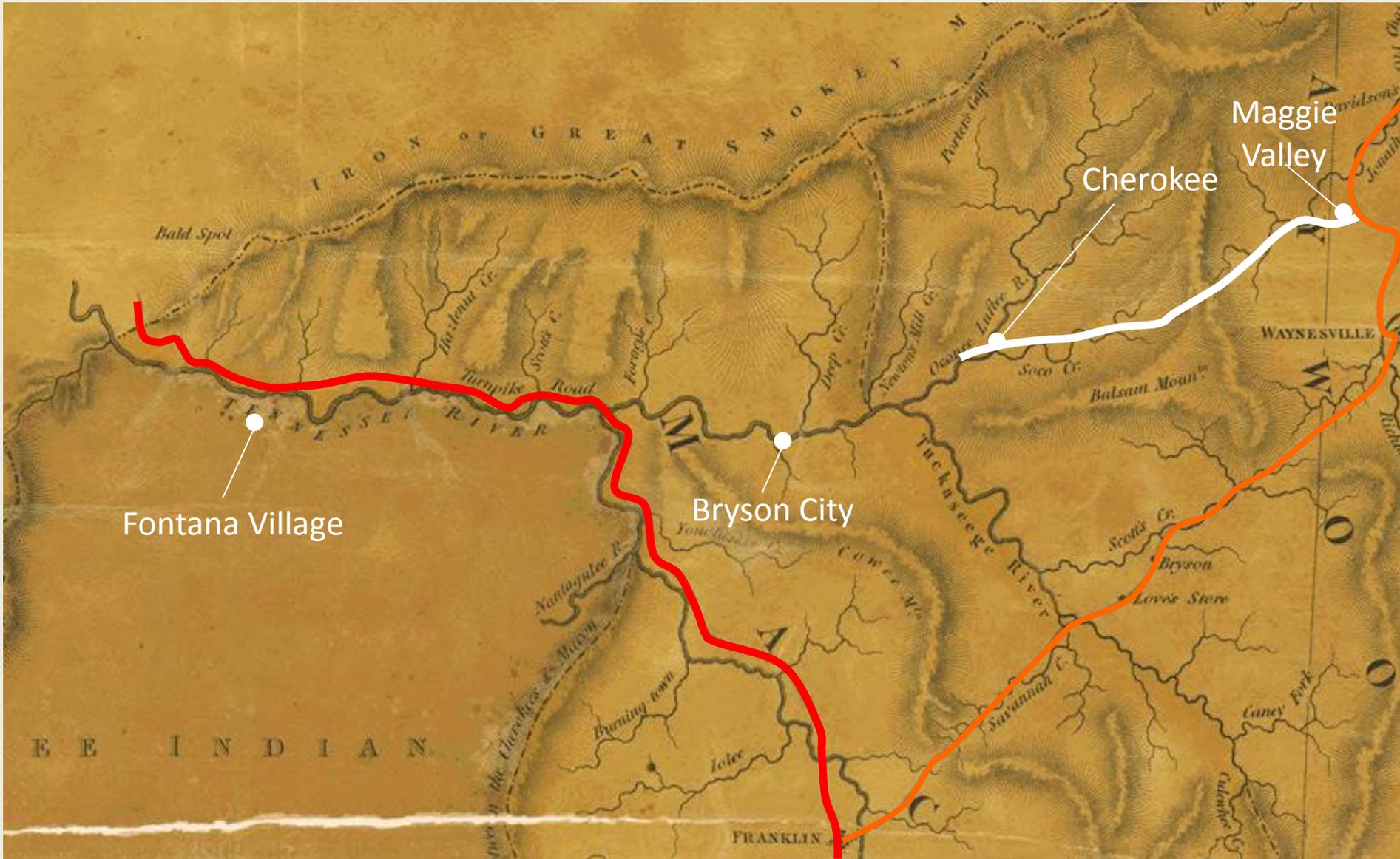








1833 map – Robert Brazier, with old roads highlighted, modern locations marked





These are my mountains

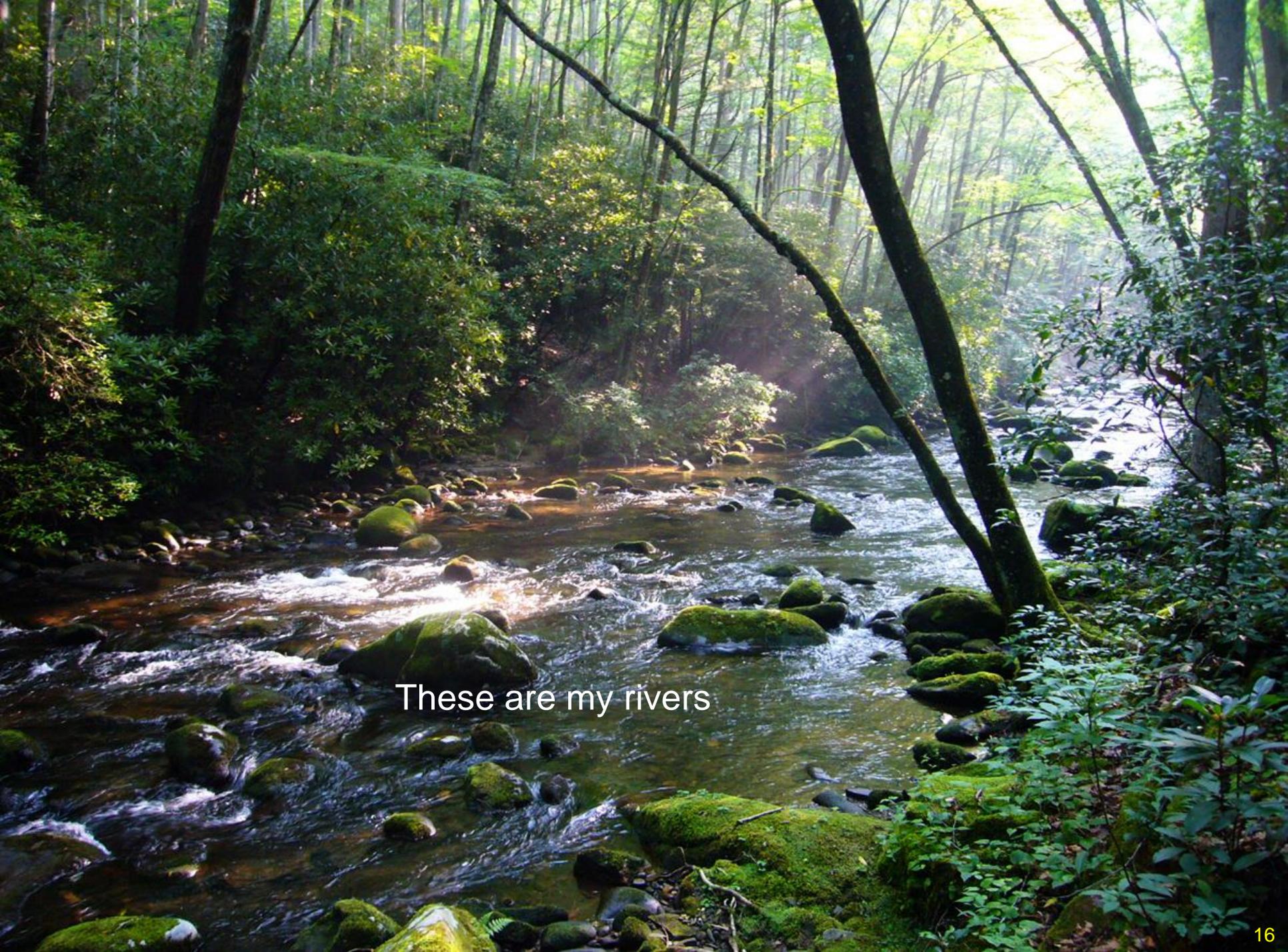




My valleys







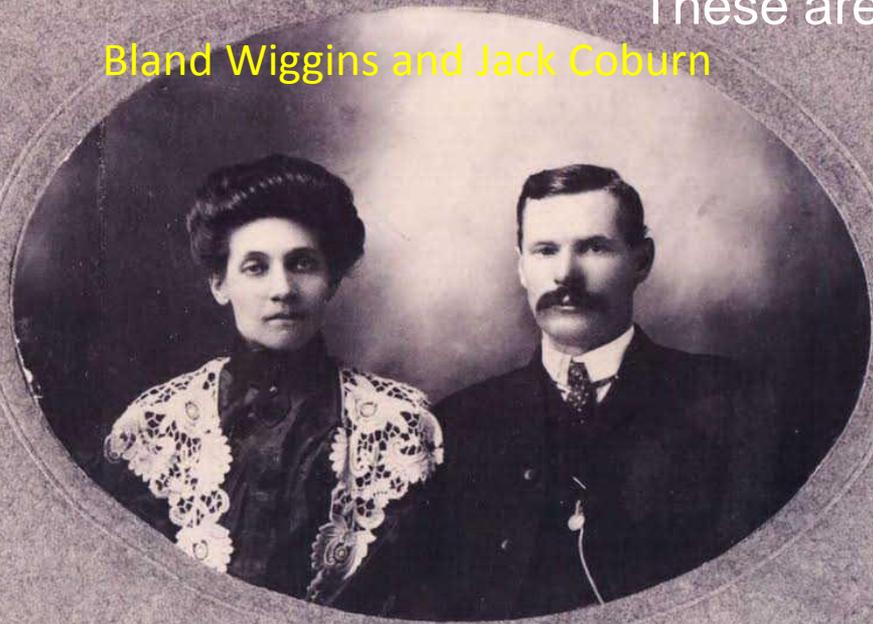
These are my rivers

Flowing like a song



These are my people

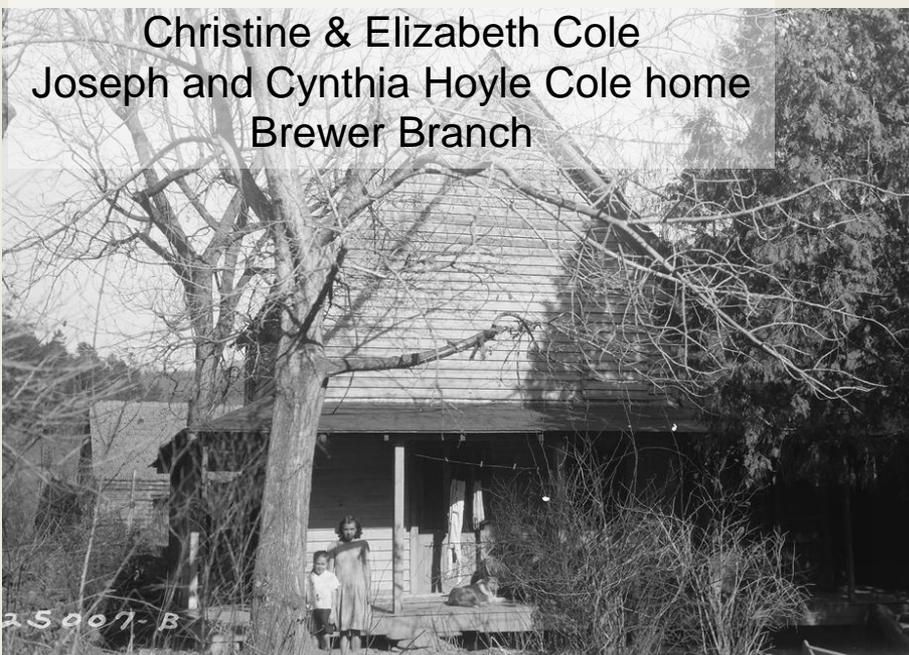
Bland Wiggins and Jack Coburn



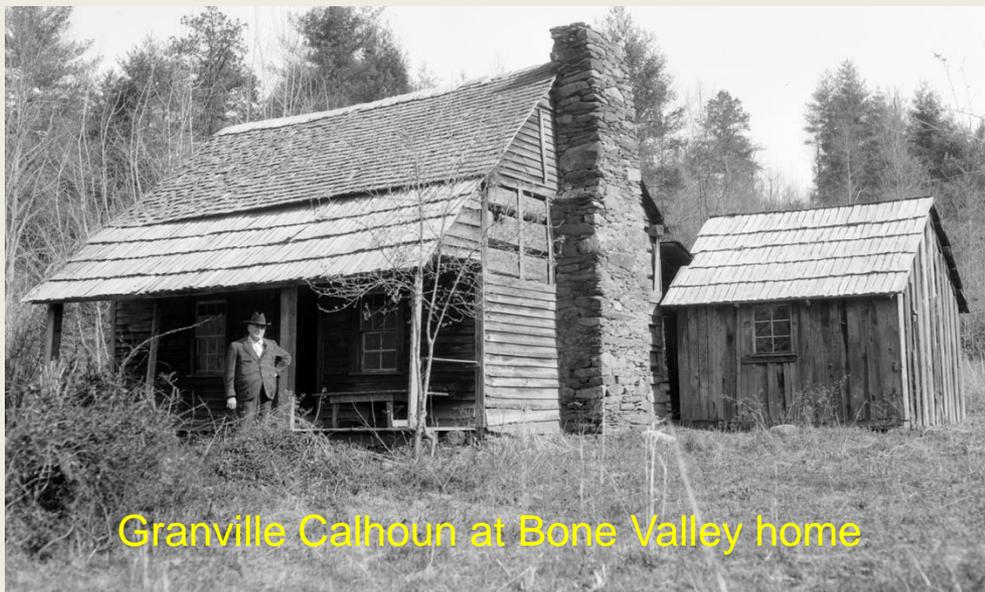
Jim and Bertha Holden home, Middle Peachtree



Christine & Elizabeth Cole
Joseph and Cynthia Hoyle Cole home
Brewer Branch



Granville Calhoun at Bone Valley home

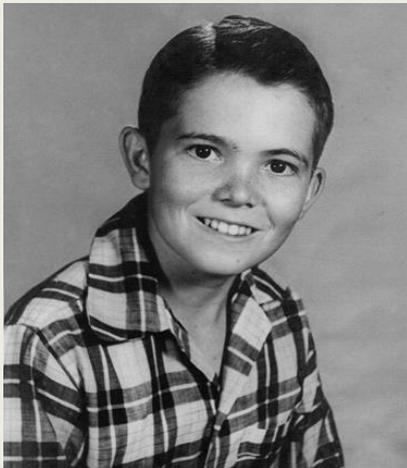


Sources: Bryan Jackson, TVA collection – Atlanta National Archives, Open Parks Network

My memories



Hall Casada, Tom Woodard, Commodore Casada on a camping trip with a "Mr. Osborne of India" – circa 1925, absent the sanctioned camping gear from *Camping and Woodcraft*.



These are my mountains



This is my home

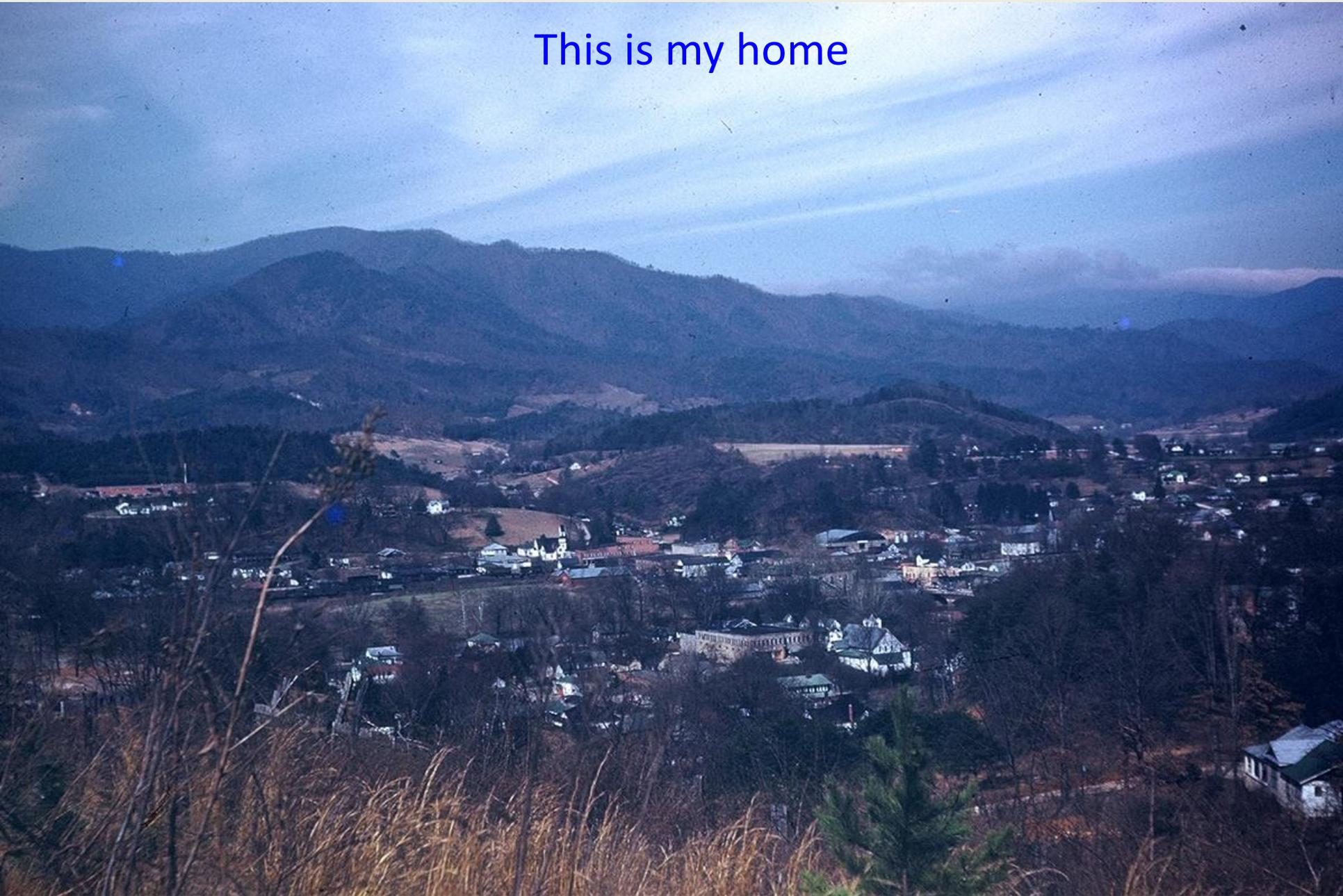


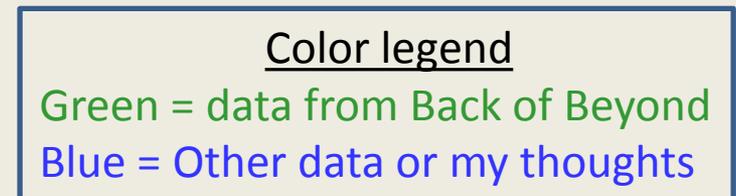
Photo courtesy of Bo Curtis, taken in late 1950s by his father, Keith

These are not just my mountains and my valleys;
These are my people and their memories. They
belong to me, and I belong to them.
They wouldn't think of letting you put them on a
pedestal. But they'd insist on the truth.

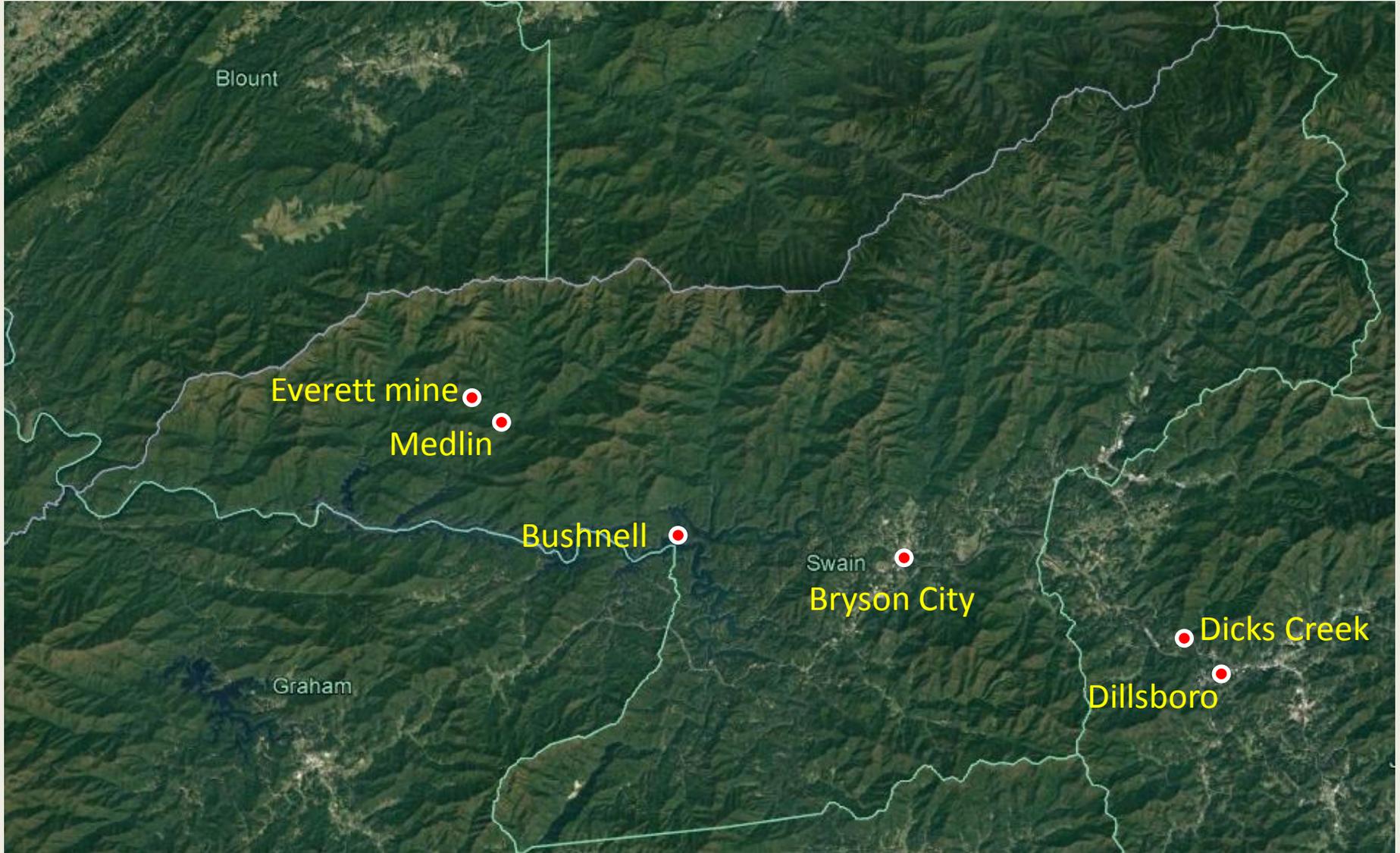
What's ahead

- Selections from *Back of Beyond*
- A time line of the life of Horace Kephart, based on *Back of Beyond*, will be provided in a separate bulletized synopsis
- Examples of subjects not covered (or not in detail) in the biography
 - Disputations of an amateur
 - “Decivilized 18th century folk; castaways in the sea of mountains” – does historical data support this characterization?
 - Confirmation bias
 - A librarian’s anathema – or was it?
- We’ll begin with Kephart’s arrival in the Smokies

Throughout, this font color scheme will be employed



After arriving in the Smokies, Kephart first lived for about three months on Dicks Creek



A latter day dispute regarding Kephart's transition from Dicks Creek to Hazel Creek is perhaps symptomatic and illustrative of broader issues

A *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article is presented in *Back of Beyond* as "the most insightful written about Kephart during his lifetime"

The Man Who Has Lived Two Lives

Horace Kephart, Bookman, Driven From the St. Louis Mercantile Library to the Woods in Search of Health, Found the Treasure of Which He'd Dreamed in Curious Mountain Folk of the Big Smoky Mountains. Now Again the Libraries Know Him—As An Author.

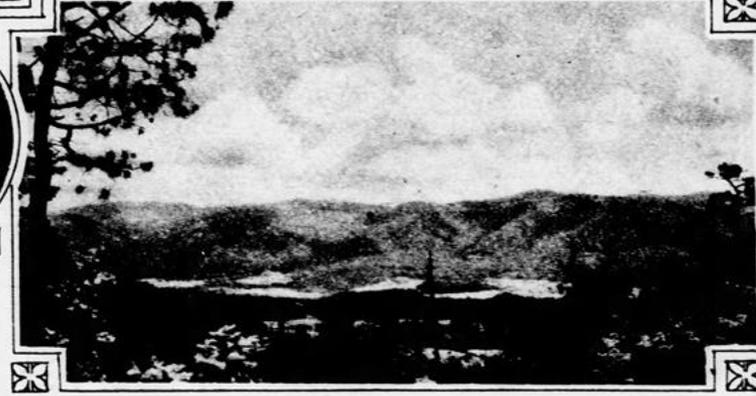
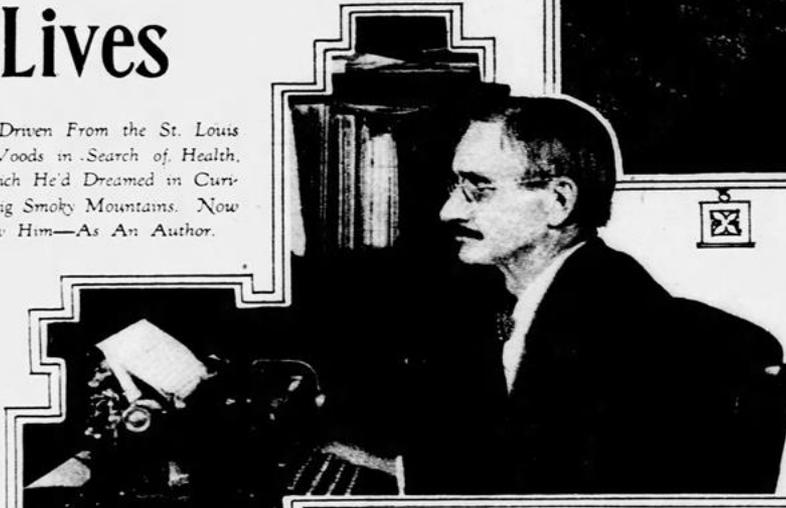
By F. A. BEHYMER
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff



WHEN he rises his eyes and look through his window at the swiftly-flowing water and the mountains that rise, ridge on ridge. And if the day's toil licks and the outdoors calls, there's a wide escape hanging on the wall and within two hours he can be out in the wide spaces and the high places where he likes best to be.

Horace Kephart won high position in the busy world as a librarian. He was a front-rack man. For 13 years he was at the head of the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Success was his, but it began to pall. He longed for a different life. Like a legion of other men who have followed sedentary occupations for the rewards that they bring, he wanted to be away in the wild places where the rewards are less and the satisfactions greater. Like them, he had stayed at his task. Like them, he kept promising himself that some day he would throw off the burden of it all and find a lodge in a wilderness and LIVE. Unlike most of the others, he did it.

There was a contingency that helped him up the great decision. At the height of his career his health broke and he was advised to give up city life and professional work. Other men, so advised, have taken a brief cure, lacking the courage to cut loose, and have returned to their tasks and died, still longing. Horace Kephart was more valiant. He chucked everything and went away to begin over again and live another life in another way. He went to the



Above—A "chimney" in the Big Smokies.
At left—Horace Kephart at his window, which opens to river and mountain.
Below—Great Smoky Range from Cade Mountain.
At left, below—The Cooper House, where the author lives.
At right—The Twinkling Falls.
(Mountains shown above from the Smoky Mountains National Park. Copyrighted.)



ship, to which a made frequent trips, swimming out to it in imagination, returning on an imaginary raft laden with imaginary weapons, chests, bottles of rack and cordials, kits of tools, barrels of powder and bags of shot. On other trips I brought rhapsodies of rum, a great hoghead of bread, barrels of flour, a box of fine sugar, pieces of salt, ropes and rope-twine, and other salvage recovered through infinite labor.

The man has been true to that first Dayton, Ohio, the man who was going to footfalls of man. So Little Fork of Sugar the yearnings for books. Out of the thou-

THE forest and the streams and the mountains had interested him most at first, but after he had written his book on camping and woodcraft he became more absorbed in study of the man associates in the backwoods of whom he saw:

"They were unlike any people I had ever met elsewhere. They were like figures taken from the old frontier histories and legends that I had been so fond of, only they

Article by F.A. Behymer, published October 31, 1926

Locating his backcountry “biding place”

F.A. Behymer interviewed Kephart at his office in the Wilhide Building, next to the river. Based on that interview, he reported:

- “Resting awhile at his father’s home at Dayton, Ohio, the man who was going to beat back to boyhood took a map and a compass and with Dayton as the center drew circles, seeking the nearest wilderness, in any direction, where he might cast himself away. The region of the Big Smoky Mountains in Western North Carolina seemed to meet the requirements. A topographic map showed him, by means of the contour lines and the blank spaces, where nature was wildest and where there were no settlements.”
- “It was a primitive hinterland without a history....It would be a good place to begin again, he thought.”

The Wilhide Building, old iron bridge



Photo by Frank Fry, courtesy of Jean Douthit, circa 1905-1910

Further details about Kephart's arrival

- Behymer's newspaper account:
 - When he arrived, “He had three days' rations in his pack. Beyond this provision his dependence was upon his rod and gun.”
 - “He did not know where he would make his lodge. Probably where night found him. Or the next night or the night after that.”
 - “For three years he lived, most of the time, when he was at home, in the little log cabin on Little Fork. ‘Seldom during those three years as a forest exile did I feel lonesome in daytime’”
 - “A scant two miles away was the metropolis of Medlin....A little cramped, one might say, but there were vast uninhabited areas not far away and when he felt crowded he could fare forth for days or weeks in solitude....”
- This man in the wilderness motif makes no mention of Granville Calhoun or any other local real person. However, fictional character Robinson Crusoe is prominently featured.
- Most insightful, indeed.

Granville Calhoun met Kephart at the Bushnell depot. Elements of Granville's recollection, as told by Michael Frome, Alberta & Carson Brewer, Margaret Gooch

- Brewers (*Valley So Wild*, 1976): Kephart arrived “a sick man,” “He was run down and had been drinking too much....I had to carry him into the house.” “Within a few weeks” he was strong enough to live alone on the Little Fork of Sugar Fork.
- Frome (*Strangers in High Places*, 1966): Calhoun had to carry him from the mule into the house. He was nursed back to health over three weeks.
- Gooch (Private communication to George Ellison, 1977): “Mr. Calhoun, probably Kep's best friend.....told me that when Kep first came there, he was the sickest man he had ever seen and Calhoun personally carried him to his house and put him to bed where he stayed in a fever for a few days.”

Note that all three of these sources date to no later than 1977 – a year after Granville Calhoun died. It was decades later that they were challenged – with none of the principals around to respond.

Dillsboro to Bushnell by train, then to Medlin by mule: the *Back of Beyond* version

- A passage in *Back of Beyond*:
“His notations in the Index (to Diary) relating to his train trip from Bushnell to Medlin¹ indicate he traveled second class, jotting down observations of what he saw outside his window: “Grade at Nantahala,” “Delayed freight,” “Buzzards and hog cholera,” “Holly, mistletoe, ‘ivy,’” and “a barefoot kid (chores, barefoot in snow).””
- The claim is made that “the number of detailed observations and photographs² he was capable of generating along the way” in a section of his *Index to Diary* refuted Granville Calhoun’s recollection as related by Frome, Brewer, and Gooch.

1. The train trip was from Dillsboro to Bushnell, not Bushnell to Medlin.
2. The photographs are not identified. None of the photos in the on-line WCU collection could be categorized as having been taken en route.

Multiple problems with the "Index to Diary"

1. Re: "grade at Nantahala" – will be discussed in a bit
2. "barefooted in snow" – Weather data from the NC State Climate Office showed zero precipitation at Murphy, Bryson City, Waynesville and Hendersonville in during the 10-day period from Oct 24 to Nov 2, 1904. The minimum daily high for the Oct 24 to Nov 2 period was 55° F in Hendersonville.
3. *Back of Beyond* itself ironically notes that he left for Medlin on "A perfect Indian summer day," "Bright sunshine," and "a faultless turquoise sky."

36. Off for Medlin.
Second-class travel.
Grade at Nantahala. + 77.
Tramway.
Delayed freight.
Barefoot-kid. (Chores, barefooted in snow.)
Blacksmith (no butteris).
Trip to Medlin.
Ginseng. + 53 + 56.
Buzzards and hog cholera.
Holly, mistletoe, "ivy." + 45.
The mail-rider.

37. The Everett mine.
The cabin.
Prices of hauling. + 38 + 56.
Forest fires.
Ownership of lands. + 57.
The man whose eyes shine.
Josh Calhoun + the burnt shoe.
Levying on ground-hogs.
Working on cabin. + 38.
Dearth of provisions.

The argument that the entries following Off for Medlin in the "Index to Diary" is gobsmackingly absurd. The absurdity is borne out by other entries.

Josh Calhoun and the burnt shoe

19-6. Defeat Creek. A right hand head stream of Bone Valley Creek, rising near Halls Cabin on the state line. This stream was originally called Josh's Defeat Branch from the following incident:

A party of old hunters consisting of Josh Calhoun, Bent Cook, Bill Welch, and Clingman Sawyers, went to a place on this creek to build a camp and to hunt a few days. Arriving late in the afternoon, they did not have time to complete the construction of their camp. Snow and very bad weather came on in the night. Both men and their dogs nearly froze. In their scramble to keep warm around the camp fire, one of Josh Calhoun's shoes got into the fire, and was burned to a crisp. He crumbled it to bits in his hand. Next morning they started home in the snow and extremely cold weather. Josh, at first, wrapped his foot in a sack for protection. Then Clingman Sawyers cut the top off his own boot from which Josh made a sort of improvised moccasin. Bent Cook said in view of Josh's predicament, and the failure of their hunting expedition, "Let's call it Josh's Defeat. The name stuck."

Defeat Branch is three miles and a full drainage removed from the Everett mine; it has zero relationship to "37. The Everett mine"

Index to Diary.

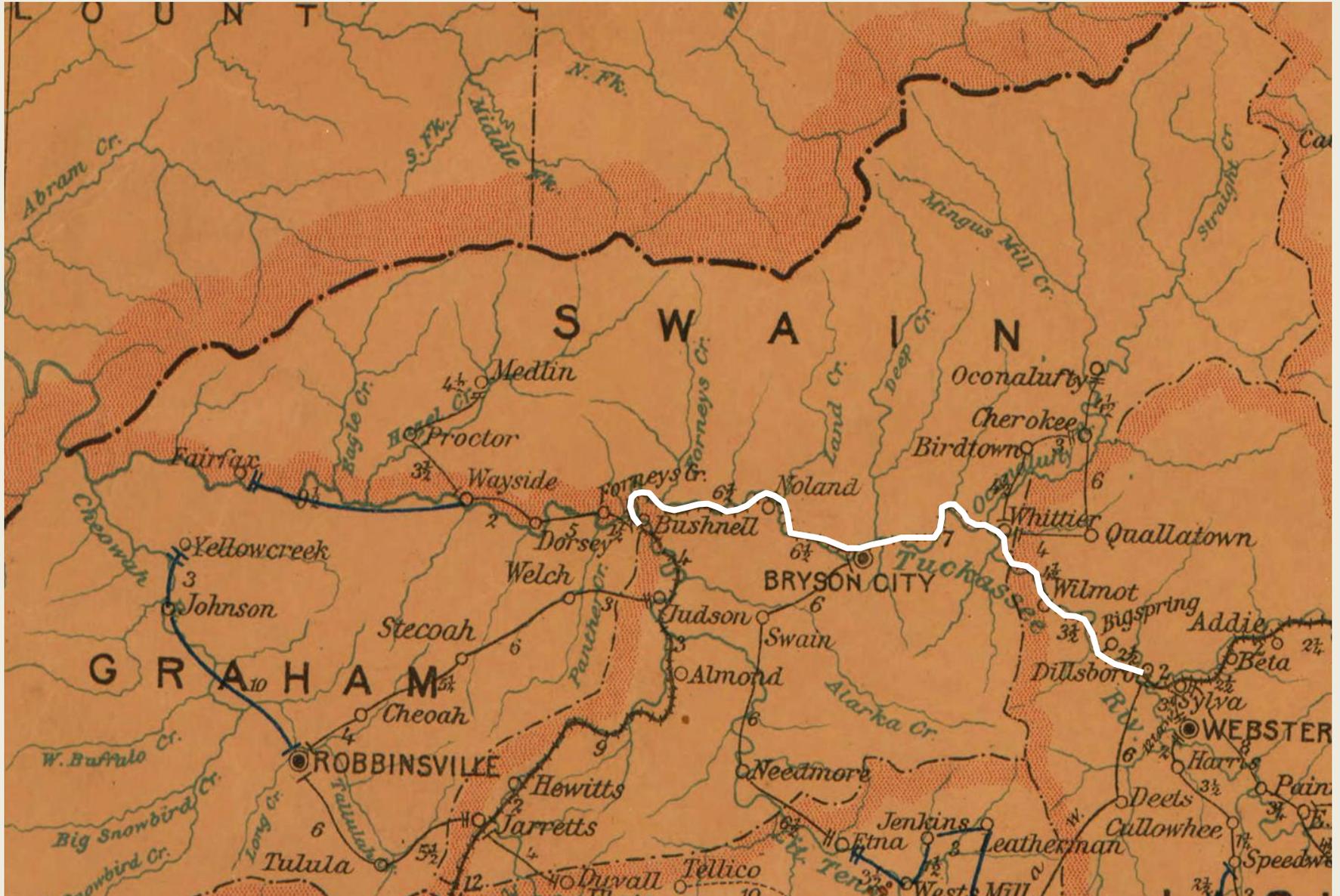
56. Trapping ravens and eagles.
To tell straight-grained and curly trees.
Cattle-weighing and dehorning.
Distance from Medlin to Siler's Meadow.
Cost of cabins.
Team loads from Bushnell.
Return.
Abstemiousness.
Petition for pardon of Indian.
Stalled horses and brutal driver.
Eggs!
Sled-building. + 59, illus. + 18.

58. Improvement on leggings.
Mistletoe.
Bear-hunting season.
Gant-lots.
Immersion.
Share of bear's hide.
Packed up.
Queer names.

“Queer names” and “Gant-lots” are clearly connected to “Improvement in leggings”, right?

Pure silliness.

It was > 16 miles from Bushnell to the “grade at Nantahala”-
which begins above Hewitts (closer to Jarretts)



Another element of the *Back of Beyond* argument against the reported Calhoun accounts was the Kephart photo album notation that he was at the cabin on Little Fork beginning Nov. 2, 1904 (i.e., immediately after the trip).

But Kephart's dating is unreliable. In *Our Southern Highlanders*, the caption under the photo at the right reads "Cabin on the Little Fork of Sugar Fork of Hazel Creek, where the author lived alone for three years." The caption above the photo – by Kephart – disagrees with his three year assertion.

Back of Beyond notes that he was there for just over a year.



Photo source: WCU Special Collections site, "[Horace Kephart – Revealing an Enigma](#)"

A cautionary note: the coordinates provided in *Back of Beyond* are to NAD27 datum; the location is mapped below



“In 1906 I spent the summer in a herders’ hut on top of the divide, just west of the Locust Ridge” (*Our Southern Highlanders*)



The Hall Cabin; Used with the permission of Hunter Library Special Collections
<https://www.wcu.edu/hunter-library/find/special-and-digital-collections.aspx>

The Hall Cabin

(North Carolina room on left, Tennessee room on right-
State line — the watershed of the Smokies — runs through
the entry- Elevation, 4900 feet above sea-level-
J.B. Anderson and I lived here through the three summer
months of 1907-)

Back of Beyond notes the dating inconsistency highlighted here.

A mischaracterization plus viewpoints of others

- *Back of Beyond* states that the Casada brothers claim “Calhoun’s version as recounted by Frome is unimpeachable.”
- This is untrue. The Casadas claim that the proposition that the “Diary to Index” could be used to impeach the accounts of Calhoun’s story has no merit whatsoever. Reference: [Smoky Mountain News, 20 August, 2014](#)
- George Ellison, in a Nov 6, 2013 article in *Smoky Mountain News* stated: “George Frizzell, curator of the Kephart materials at WCU, and Daniel S. Pierce, chairman of the Department of History at UNC-Asheville and author of *Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* (2000), agree with my conclusion — based on currently available documentation, there was evidently no three-week interval of “torpor and tremens” and “spoon-feeding.”

Viewpoints of others, continued

- Requests were made to Frizzell and Pierce to confirm that this was an accurate statement on their views. Neither have responded. No evidence could be found in their published writings that they concurred.
- Pierce wrote the “Introduction” to *Back of Beyond*, and observed that Ellison and McCue bring Kephart to life in “a full, faithful, honest, and utterly compelling manner.”
- Frizzell’s description in “Praise for *Back of Beyond*” is more tempered.
- Ken Wise, in *Hiking Trails of the Great Smoky Mountains* observed: “There is evidence that Calhoun’s recollection of his first encounter with Kephart is largely inaccurate.”
- Wise did respond to a request for clarification on his evidence:
 - Referred to the Index to Diary; our viewpoint on that should be quite clear – see pages 33 – 37
 - Stated that Frome’s work was not well-cited – we agree, but well-cited and well-researched are two different matters
 - Cited a lengthy letter from George Kephart castigating Frome, from which Wise deduced Frome was in error - While the defensive posture of a family member, even one who was abandoned by his father, is understandable, we completely disagree that this remotely debunks anything said by Frome. George Kephart was one of nine individuals Frome interviewed. Among those Frome noted to have known “Horace Kephart intimately,” were locals Helen Angel, Stanley Black, Kelly Bennett, and Granville Calhoun, all of whom spent years around Horace Kephart. All but Stanley Black lived well beyond the publication *Strangers in High Places*, and there is no record that any of them disputed its claims.

Regardless of his condition at arrival, Kephart was on Hazel Creek by November 1904, but not for three years, as claimed

- He lived near the community of Medlin on the Little Fork of Sugar Fork of Haw Gap Branch of Hazel Creek from early November, 1904 for a little over a year. Part of the time was “alone” – but he also lived part of the time with the Bob Barnett family in another cabin at the mine.
- Returned and spent ~ three months at the Hall cabin in the summer of either 1906 or 1907; and visited it another time “in either 1912 or 1913”

-

Note: the latter dates appear to be off by a year; Dodette Westfeldt Grinnell, whose recollections are archived in Pack Memorial Library, dated her recollections to 1913 or 1914, when a group including Kephart, Jack Coburn, J.B. Anderson, Grinnell and a friend of hers, Mrs. Buquo had a several night outing in the Smokies, including two nights at Jack Coburn’s home at the mouth of Bone Valley. The group visit to the Hall cabin was but one night in duration.

Let's go off on a bit of a tangent re: the Hall Cabin

Back of Beyond and *Hiking Trails of the Smokies* claim the Hall cabin was erected ~ 1882 (no cited source). See note below



Reference: Swain County deed book 19, pp 147-148. An October 10, 1898 lease agreement between Taylor and Crate (NY lumber barons) and Crate Hall and his son-in-law Granville Calhoun provided for the latter to “build a cabin, clear, fence and cultivate about two acres of land.....near the head of the Locust Ridge and the State Line” (which is the location of the Hall Cabin). Note the difference in the two sides of the cabin. The NC side had a puncheon floor while the TN side had a dirt floor. Could the Tennessee and North Carolina sides been built at different times – and by different folks? The lease otherwise makes no sense. 44

The Hall Cabin site in 1910



Could this be Granville Calhoun???

Source: Mike Aday, GSMNP librarian. The back of the photo reads: "HALL CABIN 1910. Hunter and herder's cabin on NC-Tenn line 10 miles west of Clingmans Dome. The old original cabin was of logs and burned down sometime after 1900. The state line goes through the center of cabin. Picture by G.S. Tennent, 1910 Asheville." Dr. G.S. Tennent was a charter member of the Carolina Mountain Club, organized in 1923.

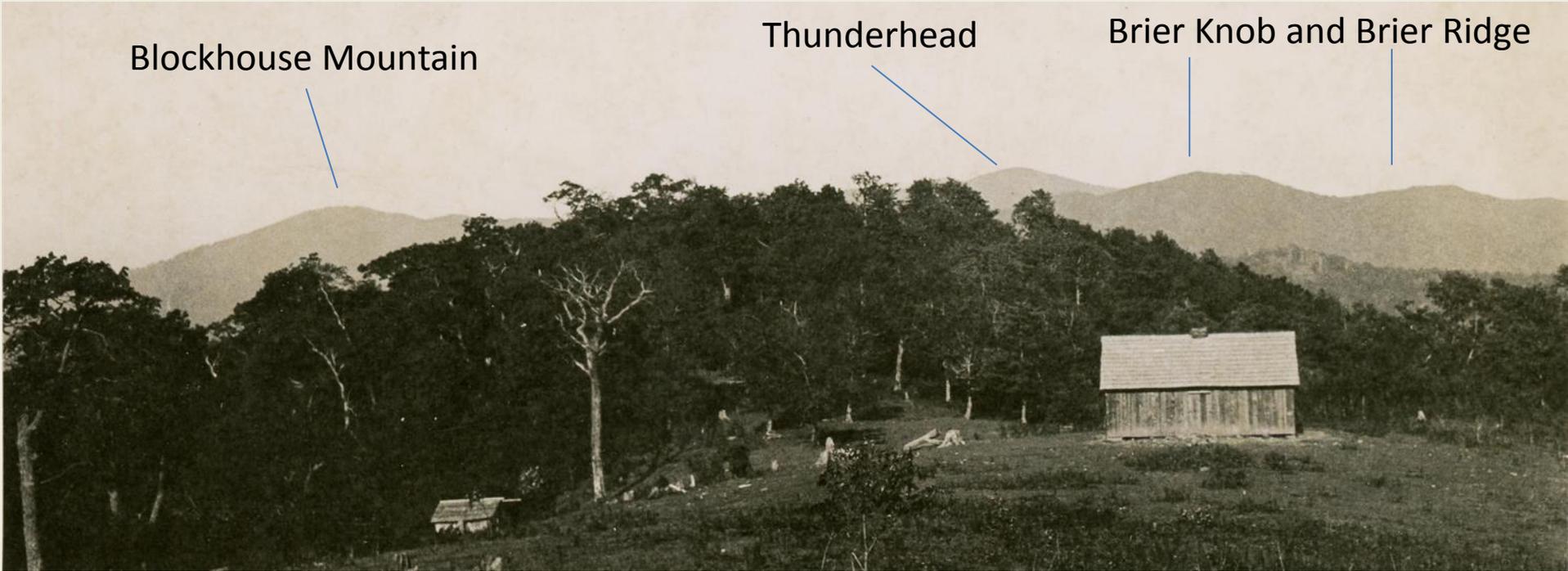
There is no mention by Kephart of the burning of the original or the new cabin in either edition of *Our Southern Highlanders*, which is a bit odd since Dodette Westfeldt Grinnell recorded being at the "old Hall cabin" with Kephart and Jack Coburn in 1913 or 1914.

The “Hall cabin” in 1919, as seen from Big Chestnut Bald, looking west

Blockhouse Mountain

Thunderhead

Brier Knob and Brier Ridge



Source: Mike Aday, GSMNP librarian. This photo was taken in 1919 by Dr. S.H. Essary (professor of botany, University of Tennessee). This is clearly a third structure at the same location – right on the state line. The smaller structure to the left is in North Carolina.

After Hazel Creek, a couple of years elsewhere, then to Bryson City

Back of Beyond places Kephart in the Little River area in parts of 1907 and 1908. In the fall of 1908, he went to Dayton to be with his ailing father, who died in October of that year.

Afterwards, he spent several months with his family in Ithaca under strained circumstances, briefly visited with his mother, then went to south of Rome, GA to live with Bob Barnett for a time before coming to Bryson City.

There are three elements of the time in Bryson City which I'm going to pick on. If I seem too critical, that may be the case. But I care deeply about both the place that I call home and its people; their story deserves to be told truthfully, and not sacrificed in grossly inaccurate claims.

1. The history of Bryson City (pages 150-152, *Back of Beyond*) is chockful of disprovable errors

- An *Asheville Citizen* article from 1959 which was previously used by Lillian Thomasson to describe the town history is literally riddled with errors on prices (such as “a wagon and brace of mules”), agreements, and even names of individuals. Mrs. Thomasson added to the confusion. *Back of Beyond* appropriately cites both the *AC* article and Thomasson as its source, but adds to the pre-existing errors.
- None of the town area was deeded to “commissioners of the newly formed Jackson County” in 1870 as is stated in *Back of Beyond*. Jackson was formed in 1851; the land was never deeded to that county. Swain was formed in 1871, and the land was deeded (twice) to Swain County Commissioners.
- Twenty-five acres of land was not “donated” by Lucy Ann Raby Cline (and minor heirs of Alfred Cline, whose grave has the first marked stone in the Bryson City Cemetery) – it was sold to Swain County Commissioners, first by deed registered in September 1871 (\$500). In July 1873, the same property was again conveyed for \$100 while retaining ownership of three prime town lots. It is unclear whether this was a replacement for, or an addendum to, the 1871 deed.
- There are too many errors to individually correct; an alternate summary will be prepared and posted on the FBCC website. This has long been needed.

2. Recollections of Karl Brown, director of *Stark Love*

- “We stored our gear in baggage rooms [at the Bryson City rail station] while we wandered up the street looking for someone who might give us news of Kephart. Suddenly I saw and recognized him, standing negligently before the town’s one hotel.”
- Between the railroad depot and the Cooper House, Brown walked past the expansive Entella Hotel – directly across Everett Street from the depot, the Westdale Hotel – directly across Fry Street from the depot, and the Freeman House on Everett Street, about halfway between the depot and the bridge. En route – and at the Cooper House itself, the relatively new Fryemont Inn (opened in 1923) overlooking the town from the southwest would have been a hard-to-miss structure.
- In light of this, can Brown’s unsourced recollections of minutiae such as the model of Kephart’s typewriter and office layout be believed, and do they merit the first drop of ink?
- Well, I reckon hit don’t have to be true to be interestin’, if’n hit’ll “sell in the North.”

3. *BOB* claims re: infrastructure improvements during Kephart's short alderman tenure are simply untrue

- “During his tenure as chairman of the Bryson City aldermen, the board improved the town’s infrastructure – adding a new power plant, extending the water and sewer lines, and paving streets. Paying for these improvements meant raising taxes and issuing bonds.”
- “As he (Kephart) explained to the governor of North Carolina, ‘there is a conservative element that did not want these improvements, and naturally, they dislike me.’”
- Kephart had nothing to do with the bonds, nothing to do with the power plant; streets and sidewalks were paved well before his abbreviated tenure, and the water and sewer lines had been in for decades.
- There were certainly folks who it would be accurate to say disliked him; the claim that the folks of Bryson City and the greater area “did not want these improvements” is both false and slanderous.
- This assertion is one of unsourced dozens regarding elements of the life of Kephart in *Back of Beyond*. This one happens to be provably wrong.

June 15, 1924 *Sunday Citizen* (a year before Kephart took office)

- “In addition to Main Street, which is a part of No. 10 highway, Bryson City has paved Everett Street from the square to the Presbyterian Church. Sidewalks are paved on Main, Everett, and Church Streets. At present the town is contemplating a paving program which will include all the principal sidewalks not yet paved.”
- “The aldermen* have sold \$100,000 in bonds, following an overwhelming vote last fall, for the purpose of providing a modern lighting system. The contract for a dam that will furnish on the Ocona Luffy River, six miles above town and on No. 10 highway, was scheduled to be let around July 1.”
- “A complete system of water and sewer lines covers the town.”

*The town board in June 1924 was composed of Mayor Kelly Bennett and Aldermen Jack Coburn, Thurman Leatherwood, and Alec Elmore, all of whom are buried in the BC Cemetery. The attempt to assign this progress to Kephart is a shameful effort to steal from the legacy of these men and the community at large.

NOTICE OF SALE OF BONDS

Sealed proposal will be received by the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Bryson City, N. C. up to 1 o'clock P. M., Tuesday, the 22nd day of January, 1924, and thereafter publicly opened in the office of J. E. Coburn, Chairman of the Board of Aldermen of said Town, for the sale of \$100,000 of bonds of said Town of Bryson City, N. C. These bonds are issued for the purpose of providing funds for the construction and equipment of a hydro electric power plant to furnish electric current to the said Town of Bryson City for light and power purposes and shall be in denominations of \$1,000 each, bearing interest at 5 1-2 per cent per annum, payable semi-annually at Chase National Bank, New York City, both principal and interest being payable at said Bank. These bonds are general obligations of the Town of Bryson City, N. C. and will be numbered from one to one hundred inclusive and dated January 1st, 1924, and shall mature as follows: \$2,000 on the first day of January in each of the years 1928 to 1931, inclusive; \$3,000 on the first day of January in each of the years 1932 to 1935, inclusive; \$4,000 on the first day of January in each of the years 1936 to 1955 inclusive.

A tax has been provided for the payment of both principal and interest of said bonds. All bids must be accompanied by a certified check on an incorporated bank for the sum of \$2,000, payable to the Town of Bryson City, N. C., and the right is reserved by said Board to reject any and all bids. Mail all bids to the undersigned.

J. E. COBURN,
Chairman Board of Aldermen,
Bryson City, N. C.

The "conservative element" – which included Stanley Black and Jack Coburn, both of whom had promoted the Ela dam construction, was composed of both Democrats and Republicans. Although the piece below is from a month after the death of Kephart, it is indicative of the time. The first (winning) ticket was made up of four men who are buried in the BC Cemetery. (May 5, 1931 Asheville Citizen)

Bryson City

Two tickets have been named for the Bryson City election. The first, the citizens' ticket, is composed of Thad. D. Bryson, Jr., for mayor; Stanley W. Black, Democrat, McKinley Edwards, Republican, and Jack E. Coburn, Democrat.

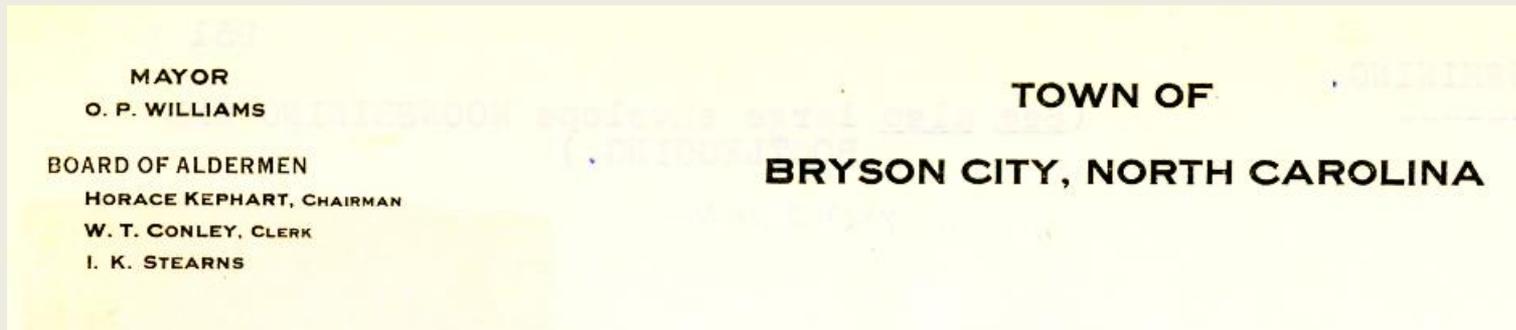
The second ticket carries the names of John P. Randolph for mayor; and Queve Woody, Walter Bostic, and Gomer Martin for aldermen, all Democrats. Dan G. Fisher was nominated on this ticket. He has withdrawn his name and Mr. Bostic is in the running.

Mr. Black has been chairman of the Bryson City board of aldermen for some years, Queve Woody has served as alderman for the past two years on a citizens' ticket.

The sale of bonds was approved in the fall of 1923 and were offered for sale in January 1924, more than a year before Kephart took office. (January 9, 1924 Asheville Citizen - one of several days in which the ad ran)

Minutes of the town board meetings during the 1923-1930 period were lost in a fire

But there's plenty of stationery in the Kephart Journals at WCU to prove that he was once, in fact, chairman of the town aldermen:



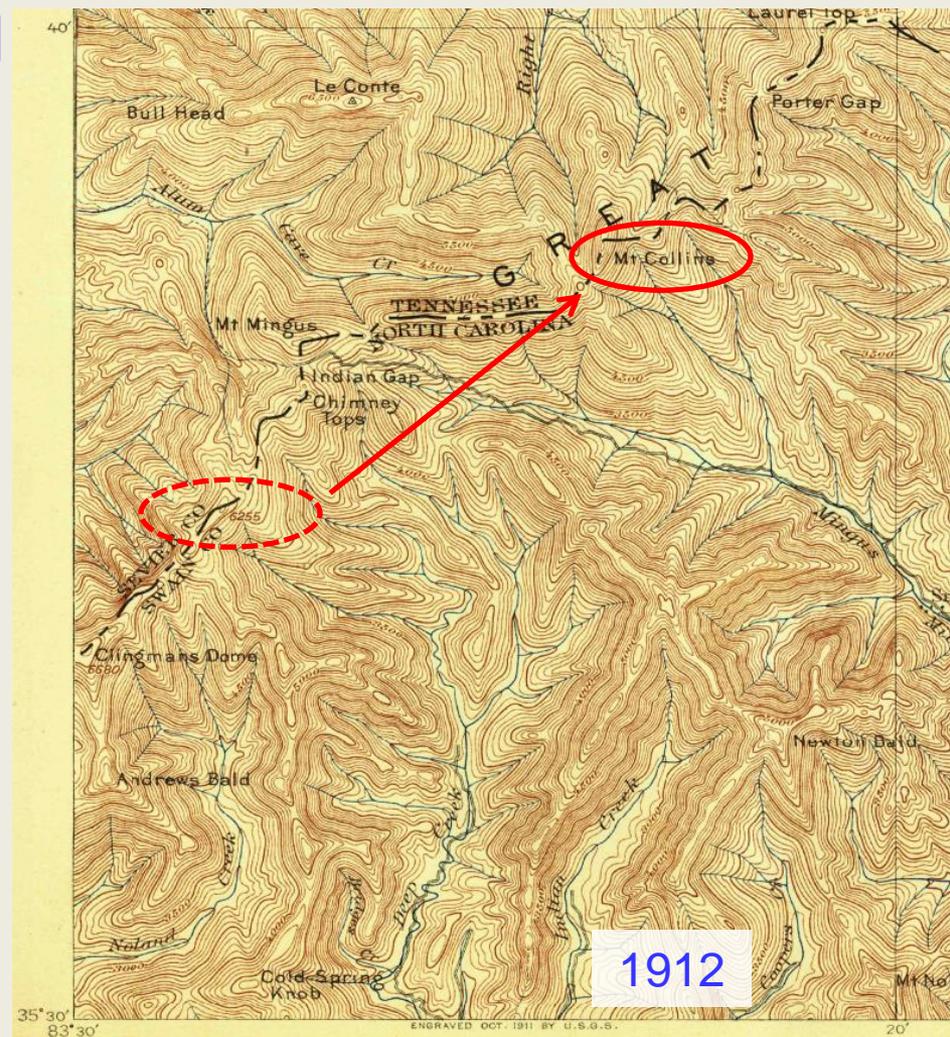
The stationery was obviously provided by the “conservative element” of the Bryson City taxpayers.

Kephart's tenure was short; no more than a year of his two year term was completed. He resigned for unknown reasons, but it most certainly was not because the citizens of Bryson City were opposed to improvements.

Awards and recognition

- Patterson Cup (for *Our Southern Highlanders*) was awarded to Kephart in 1913 by the NC Literary and Historical Association.
- He was elected president of that organization in November of 1929
- President of the Appalachian Fish and Game Association, an organization which Granville Calhoun was instrumental in founding
- Named County Historian in 1927
- Had a mountain named for him while still living, but Mt Kephart ended up moving.....

Between 1893 and 1912, the USGS inexplicably moved Mt. Collins several miles northeast from the location specified by



In response to an effort led by I.K. Stearns in the 1920s, the USGS named the former Mt. Collins location Mt. Kephart. This revealed gross ignorance of – or choice to ignore – a fundamental piece of Smoky Mountain history by both the proponents and the USGS. An uproar from over the hill in Tennessee ensued.

The Princeton Presbyterian, Arnold Guyot, had named Mt. Collins for his “excellent friend” Baptist Bobby Collins, two-thirds of a century before the brouhaha

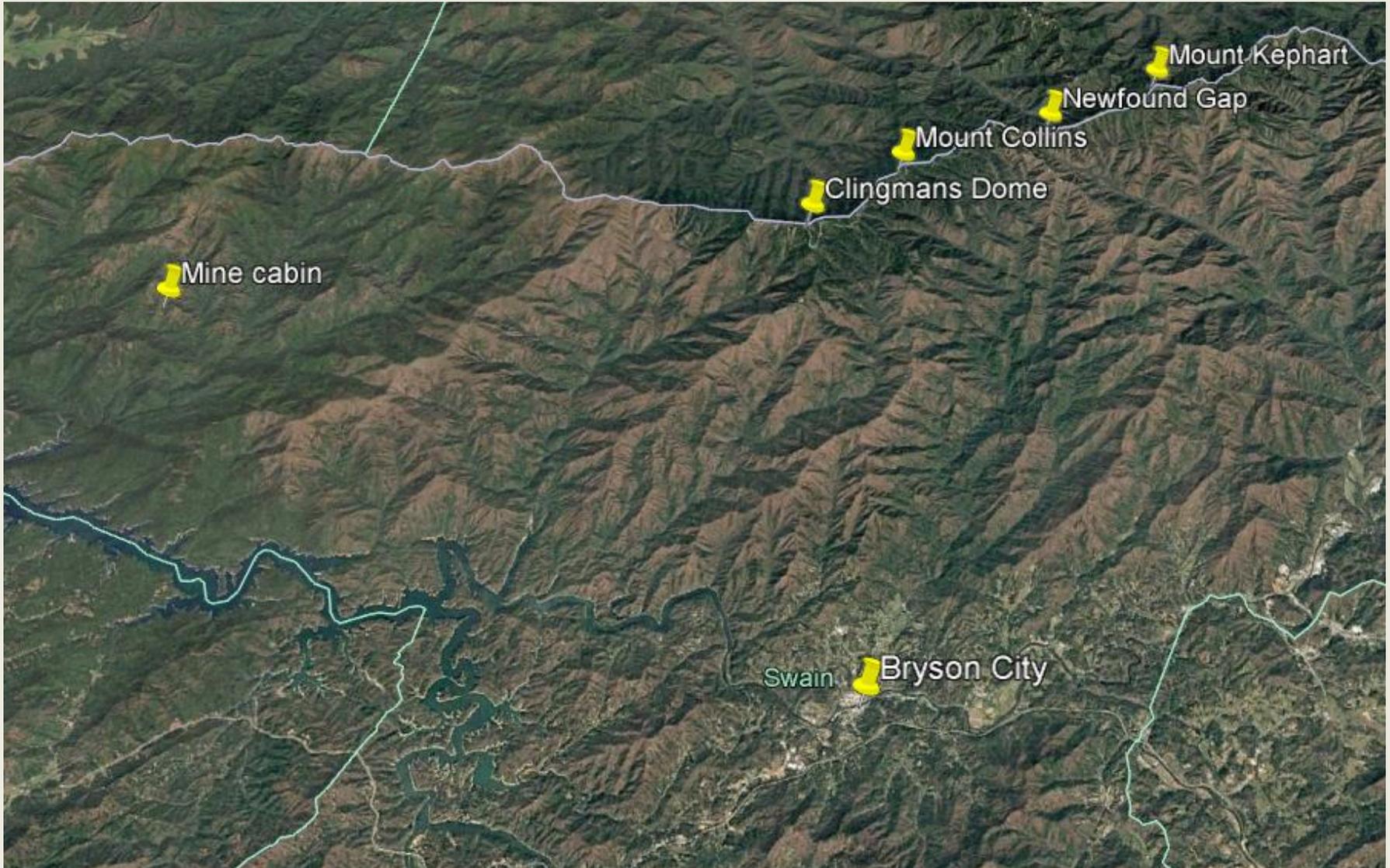


Professor Arnold Guyot
Source: Findagrave.com

In thanking those who had been of assistance in his incredible work to measure elevations in the WNC area, Guyot reserved his highest praise for Robert Collins, Deacon of Ocona Lufty Baptist Church when it was founded, noting *“quite particularly that of my excellent friend, Robt. Collins, Esq., of Oconaluftee Valley, for the Smoky Mountains. Mr. Collins placed himself and his sons* at my disposal for more than a month and without his intelligent aid I scarcely could have succeeded, as I did, in exploring to my satisfaction that most wild and difficult portion of the mountains of North Carolina.”*

* The two sons were Joe and D.K. Collins; D.K. built the first home in Bryson City, was its first postmaster and first banker; he is buried in the Bryson City Cemetery

Bless those tenacious Tennesseans; Mt. Collins was returned to its home and Mt. Kephart was relocated to its present location



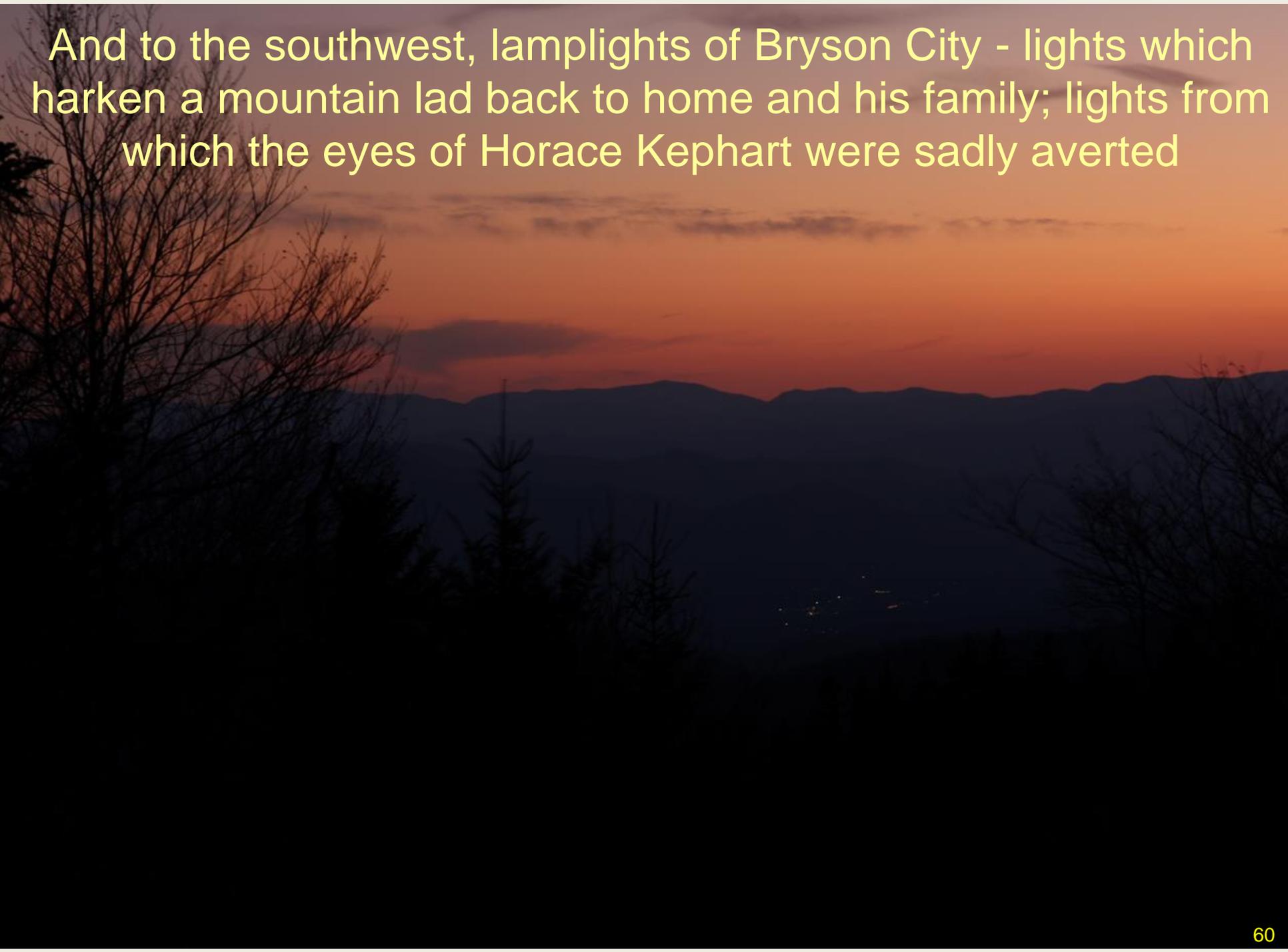
In my view, the final location of Mt. Kephart is most fitting; a true back of beyond lies to its east



To the northwest, the gaudy commercial lights of the Pigeon Forge strip from which any sane person would seek refuge in a back of beyond



And to the southwest, lamplights of Bryson City - lights which harken a mountain lad back to home and his family; lights from which the eyes of Horace Kephart were sadly averted



Perspectives on *Our Southern Highlanders*

Ask a reader of *Our Southern Highlanders* what they think of it and you'll get quite a range of responses

- Novelist and historian Wilma Dykeman (held the honorary title of Tennessee State Historian):
“*Our Southern Highlanders* was written by an ‘outsider’ who became a mountaineer in spirit and lifestyle...is a work of scholarly research and dedication to the craft of writing, as well as an autobiographical and sociological memoir.”
- Durwood Dunn, author of *Cades Cove – The Life and Death of A Southern Appalachian Community* and Professor of History and Political Science at Tennessee Wesleyan:
“The nadir of Southern Appalachian stereotypes occurred in 1913 with the publication of *Our Southern Highlanders* by Horace Kephart.”

More.....

Continuing....

- Judge Felix Alley, native of Jackson County and long-term jurist (1903-1948) in *Random Thoughts and Musings of a Mountaineer*.
“Horace Kephart, the author of *Our Southern Highlanders*....and Miss Margaret Morley, of Boston, the author of *The Carolina Mountains*....have written by far the best books that have been written about our mountain section.”
- But Judge Alley wasn't done:
“They, like all other writers about our people, write to be interesting and not to tell the truth; their primary object, with respect to what they say about our mountaineers being, to write books that would sell in the North.”
- Jim Casada:
Our Southern Highlanders – “Enduring but not endearing.” In his talk at the UT Symposium on Kephart (2010), Casada noted that scholars such as Allen Batteau (Wayne State) and John Rehder (UT) had high praise for Kephart, but pointed toward others, such as Stephen Wallace Taylor.

More.....

Continuing....

- **Stephen Wallace Taylor, author of *The New South's New Frontier*:**
“Some of his best-known works are treatises on backcountry camping and a guide to sporting firearms.....however, the romantic individualism and rugged lifestyle of which Kephart wrote in his signature work, *Our Southern Highlanders*, is a popular but misleading stereotype of the region.”
“Kephart’s backwoods adventures helped mislead readers into seeing the upper Little Tennessee as isolated and romantic.....Kephart’s style and influence place him among the ranks of Murfree* and other local colorists of the southern mountains.”
- **Beau Westfelt (sic) in a 1929 *Asheville Citizen* column on the Cooper House:**
“The best book a damyankee could write about the South”

* Mary Noailles Murfree (Charles Egbert Craddock), author of novels set in east Tennessee, including *In the Tennessee Mountains* and *The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains*, both of which were written before ever setting foot in the Smokies.

A proposition

- Significant portions of the themes found in *Our Southern Highlanders* were not based upon independent personal observations of a bit over a year, but drawn from the writings of others over the course of decades. This can be quickly deduced from the “*Kephart Journals*” in the Western Carolina collection and a host of published articles which long predate his arrival in the Smokies.
- There’s a name for this in the scientific world: Confirmation Bias
- Evidence to follow

Distribution of materials in Journals 1-4

- Newspaper clippings 27%
- Transcriptions, references: 58%
- Personal notes: 12%
- Sayings of locals: 3%

- External sources: 85%
- Local observations: 15%

The distribution is based on a page-by-page assessment on the part of the author, getting an “eyeball” estimate of the coverage. The tabulation accounted for the fact that some pages were not fully covered. If, for example, a single newspaper clipping covered half of a page and the rest was blank, then it was recorded that there was half a page of newspaper clippings. This effort took over two hours to complete. A word-by-word tabulation would have required days.

Examples of other authors whose words are transcribed in Journals 1 and 2; note publication dates

Author	Text	Date of publication
Hayes	<i>The Southern Appalachians</i>	1896
Holmes	<i>Practical Forestry in the Southern Appalachians</i>	1900
Shaler	<i>The Proposed Appalachian Park</i>	1901
Allen	<i>Through Cumberland Gap on Horseback</i>	1886
Thwaites	<i>Daniel Boone</i>	1903
Ayres & Ashe	<i>The Southern Appalachian Forests</i>	1901
Mooney	<i>Myths of the Cherokee</i>	1900
Miles	<i>The Spirit of the Mountains</i>	1905
Wilson	<i>Report on So. Appal. Forests, Rivers, Mountains</i>	1901
Warner	<i>On Horseback</i>	1889
Bailey	<i>Cyclopedia of American Horticulture</i>	1902
Robinson	<i>Wild Traits in Tame Animals</i>	1896
Frost	<i>Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains</i>	1899
Vincent	<i>American Journal of Sociology,</i>	1898

Passages from *Through Cumberland Gap on Horseback* (published in *Harper's* magazine in 1886) and *Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains* (published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1899) were almost certainly available to Kephart when he was librarian at the St. Louis Mercantile, and almost equally certain, not available in WNC. The magazines are not part of his collection at Western Carolina, so it is presumed that the transcriptions were brought to WNC in handwritten or possibly typed form and retyped in his office in Bryson City.

Let's compare the words and ideas of James Lane Allen in 1886 (*Through Cumberland Gap on Horseback*)

and

William Goodell Frost in 1899 (*Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains*)

with those of

Horace Kephart in 1913 (*Our Southern Highlanders*)

Neglected graveyards – a borrowed thought

- James Lane Allen – 1886 (Kentucky):
“Nothing that I have ever seen in this world is so lonely, so touching in its neglect and wild irreparable solitude, as one of these mountain graveyards...no foot-stones, no head-stones”
- Horace Kephart – 1913 (North Carolina):
“The saddest spectacle in the mountains is the tiny burial-ground, without a headstone or headboard over it, all overgrown with weeds....Nothing on earth can be more poignantly lonesome than one of these mountain burial-places, nothing so mutely evident of neglect.”



It is a claim not borne out by local reality at
Proctor Cemetery, Hazel Creek

Don Casado

Isolation – the single most fundamental underlying theme* that wends its way throughout *Our Southern Highlanders*, was clearly based on neither observations nor original thought on the part of Horace Kephart

* The authors of *Back of Beyond* acknowledge that Kephart was liable to lay the theme of isolation on the threshold of any door he opened, but do not explore the source of that theme in *BOB*.

James Lane Allen, 1886: "It is but a short distance from the blue-grass country to the eastern mountains; but in traversing it you detach yourself from all that you have ever experienced, and take up the history of English-speaking men and women at the point it had reached a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago."

Harper's Magazine, June 1886

THROUGH CUMBERLAND GAP ON HORSEBACK.

BY JAMES LANE ALLEN.

I.

FRESH fields lay before us. We had left the rich, rolling plains of the blue-grass region in central Kentucky, and had set our faces toward the great Appalachian uplift on the southeastern border of the State. There Cumberland Gap, that high-sprung gateway through the mountain, abides as a landmark of what Nature can do when she wishes to give an opportunity to the human race in its migrations and discoveries, without surrendering control of its liberty and its fate. Such way-side pleasures of hap and scenery as might befall us while journeying thither were ours to enjoy; but the especial quest was more knowledge of that peculiar and deeply interesting people, the Kentucky mountaineers. It can never be too clearly understood by those who are wont to speak of "the Kentuckians" that this State has within its boundaries

two entirely distinct elements of population—elements distinct in England before they came hither, distinct during more than a century of residence here, and distinct now in all that goes to constitute a separate community—occupations, manners and customs, dress, views of life, civilization. It is but a short distance from the blue-grass country to the eastern mountains; but in traversing it you detach yourself from all that you have ever experienced, and take up the history of English-speaking men and women at the point it had reached a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago.

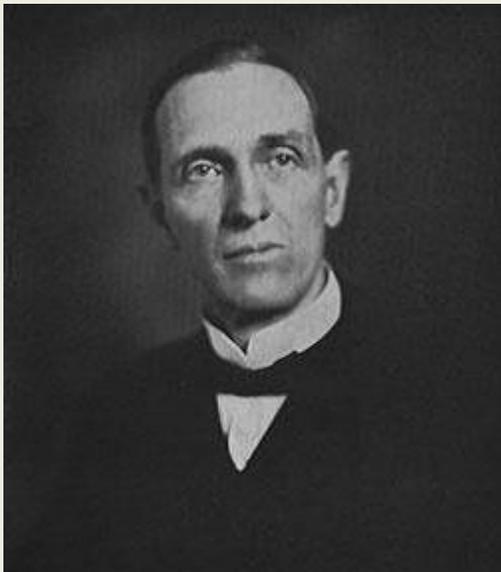
Leaving Lexington, then, which is in the midst of the blue-grass plateau, we were come to Burnside, a station on the Cincinnati Southern Railway some ninety miles away, where begin the navigable waters of the Cumberland River, and the foot-hills of the Cumberland Mountains.

OUR CONTEMPORARY ANCESTORS IN
THE SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS
BY
WILLIAM GOODELL FROST

REPRINTED FROM THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY FOR MARCH, 1899

William Goodell Frost was President of Berea College
from 1892 to 1920

Photo source: [Hutchins Library, Berea College](#)



William Goodell Frost: *Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains* (1899)*

Horace Kephart: *Our Southern Highlanders* (1913)

- “It is a longer journey from northern Ohio to eastern Kentucky than from America to Europe; for one day’s ride brings us into the eighteenth century.”
- “Time has lingered in Appalachia. The mountain folk still live in the eighteenth century.”
- “This is the excuse for their Rip Van Winkle sleep. They have been beleaguered by nature.”
- “So the southern highlanders languished in isolation, sunk in a Rip Van Winkle sleep”

* Published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1899 (five years before Kephart left St. Louis)

William Goodell Frost: *Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains* (1899)

Horace Kephart: *Our Southern Highlanders* (1913)

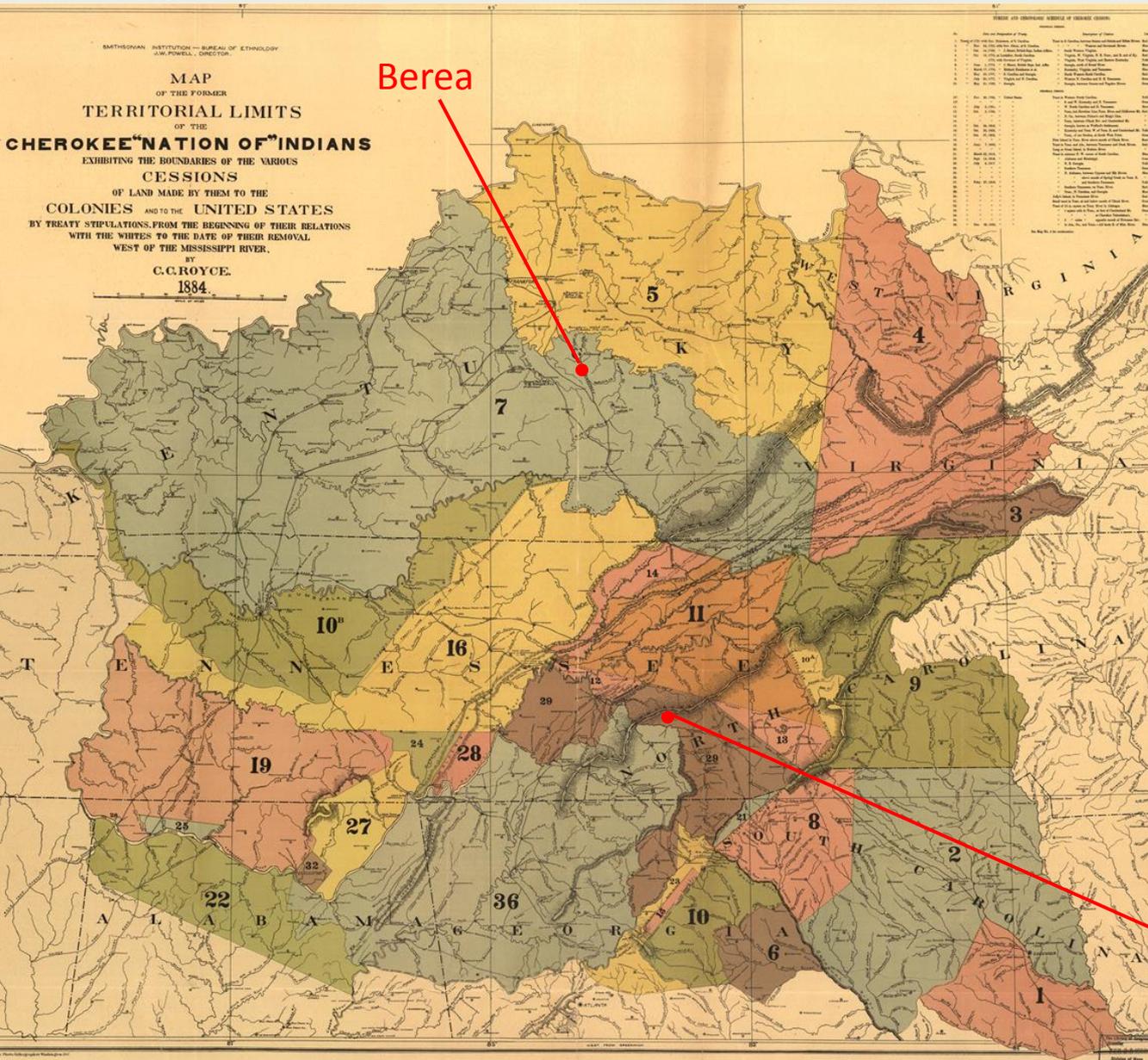
- “When you cannot get what you need at this little store down by the creek, where do you go?
The mountain woman answered with a frank smile, ‘I go without.’”
- Title of *Our Southern Highlanders* Chapter XI – The Land of Do Without
- "Where are ye aimin' ter go?...Where do ye live at? Where's yer old man?"
- "What you aimin' to do up hyur? How much money do you make? Whar's your old woman?"

William Goodell Frost: *Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains* (1899)

Horace Kephart: *Our Southern Highlanders* (1913)

- "They are behind relatively as well as absolutely, and their pride is all the more vehement because conscious of an insecure foundation. Shy, sensitive, undemonstrative, the mountain man and woman are pathetically belated."
- "The mountaineers are high-strung and sensitive to criticism...Of late years they are growing conscious of their own belatedness and that touches a tender spot."

Frost was a first class stereotyper, but his situation was altogether different than that in the Great Smoky Mountains



Section 7 in Charles Royce's map of Cherokee cessions was conveyed in March, 1775. White settlers could legally have been within a day's ride of 1899 Berea with roots in the 18th century.

Section 29 was part of the February, 1819 cession which included all of Swain County north of the Little Tennessee River to modern Cherokee. The first settlers in the Hazel Creek area didn't arrive until the third decade of the 19th century; yet Kephart has them living in the 18th century.

Entire north shore area of Swain County (+)

The isolation theme which Allen, Frost (and others) originated and which Horace Kephart copied and greatly amplified into popular literature, with all the associated stereotyping features of character, literacy, and moonshine-centric society into the broader public domain, has persisted.

“Isolation” in the nomination of the Hall Cabin on Bone Valley to the National Register of Historic Places

Application prepared by Paul Gordon, Historian* with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park:

(Red letters – as in blood boiling)

“The area around Bone Valley, and its major water course, Hazel Creek, was characterized, as was much of the mountain area, by isolation. For generations contact with the outside world was limited, there was inbreeding, and much distilling and drinking of moonshine whiskey. Illiteracy was prevalent, and violence was common.”

“But for all its shortcomings, the area was one of generally self-reliant, independent people. They formed small farms, herded cattle on the high mountains, and, later, worked in the logging industry.”

* Take note that he is not an amateur

The isolation stereotype persists and turns uglier: *New York* magazine

Intelligencer

No Sympathy for the Hillbilly

Democrats need to stop trying to feel everyone's pain, and hold on to their own anger.

By Frank Rich



Photography by Nick Young/Alamy

Frank Rich is a native of Washington DC, Harvard graduate and lives in New York City

Frost has been called out by his home folks recently

- “Frost is one of the chief villains in the stereotyping of mountain people” – Shannon Wilson, former Head of Special Collections & Archives and Berea College Archivist in [William Goodell Frost: Race and Region](#)
- “Frost probably had good intentions. Unfortunately, this came at the cost of truth. By claiming that the language was somehow ‘frozen in history.’ he helped perpetuate the stereotype that Appalachians were a retrograde people.” – Kirk Hazen, resident linguist of West Virginia University’s English department in [Combatting Stereotypes About Appalachian Dialects](#)

Note: both are available on line through the title links

Do we have like-minded Western North Carolina and East Tennessee scholars? Well, we once did....

- UT Press has published some contrarian works, and [Stephen Wallace Taylor's PhD dissertation* at UT \(1996\)](#) does a wonderful job of relating Kephart's isolation stereotype to later published works of the WPA and TVA population readjustment reports. That could be extended to the National Park Service in its application to put the Hall cabin (the one on Bone Valley) on the National Historic Register, as previously shown.
- Durwood Dunn took it on in the context of the Cades Cove community and his Oliver family in [*Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community*](#); as noted earlier, he viewed *Our Southern Highlanders* as the worst of the worst.

*[*Building the Back of Beyond: Government Authority, Community Life, and Economic Development in the Upper Little Tennessee Valley, 1880-1992*](#). That dissertation is available on line through the link. Taylor's dissertation was, in large part, incorporated into [*The New South's New Frontier: A Social History of Economic Development in Southwestern North Carolina*](#).

Two non-scholarly works by Smoky natives do an outstanding job of debunking the 18th century isolated race stereotype – without even trying

- Sam Hunnicutt could've cared less, and he certainly didn't intend to, but he embedded an outstanding contemporary social commentary of the area than his *20 Years of Hunting and Fishing in the Great Smoky Mountains* - that is, if you're willing to study the lives of his outdoor colleagues.

Profiles of Hunnicutt and outdoors friends who are buried in the Bryson City Cemetery are available in the FBCC on line articles [here](#). A more comprehensive profile is [here](#).

- Florence Cope Bush, in her tribute to her mother, *Dorie: Woman of the Mountains*, speaks with refreshing honesty and humility of a very non-stationary, non-isolated life – one which was characteristic of all the families of this area, most certainly including upper Hazel Creek.

Claims by Kephart, in *Our Southern Highlanders*:

“Our typical mountaineer is lank, he is always unkempt.”

“The mountain folk still live in the eighteenth century.”

“The mountaineers of the South are marked apart from all other folks by dialect, by customs, by character, by self-conscious isolation.”

“Gray eyes predominate, sometimes vacuous, but oftener hard, searching, crafty—the feral eye of primitive man.”

“Many wear habitually a sullen scowl, hateful and suspicious, which in men of combative age, and often in the old women, is sinister and vindictive.”

“And so, in order to be fair and just with these, our backward kinsmen, we must, for the time, decivilize ourselves to the extent of *going back* and getting an eighteenth century point of view.”

Testing Kephart's claims with data

“Our typical mountaineer is always unkempt”



Source: Calhoun family photo collection

This photo, circa 1914, includes a number of folks who were neighbors to Kephart during his short stay on Hazel Creek, including Joshua and Susan Crisp Calhoun, Pink and Modena Calhoun Martin, William and Nora Lee Calhoun with children Verayle and Inez, John and Pearl Calhoun with daughter Eloise, Susan Calhoun, and Granville's son Seymour

“Our typical mountaineer is always unkempt”



Ellis Estes on horse; standing, L-R: Sam Hunnicutt,?,?, Tom Clark, Laura Estes Clark, Cora McCracken Estes. Photo circa 1915 courtesy of Jim Estes.

“Our typical mountaineer is always unkempt”

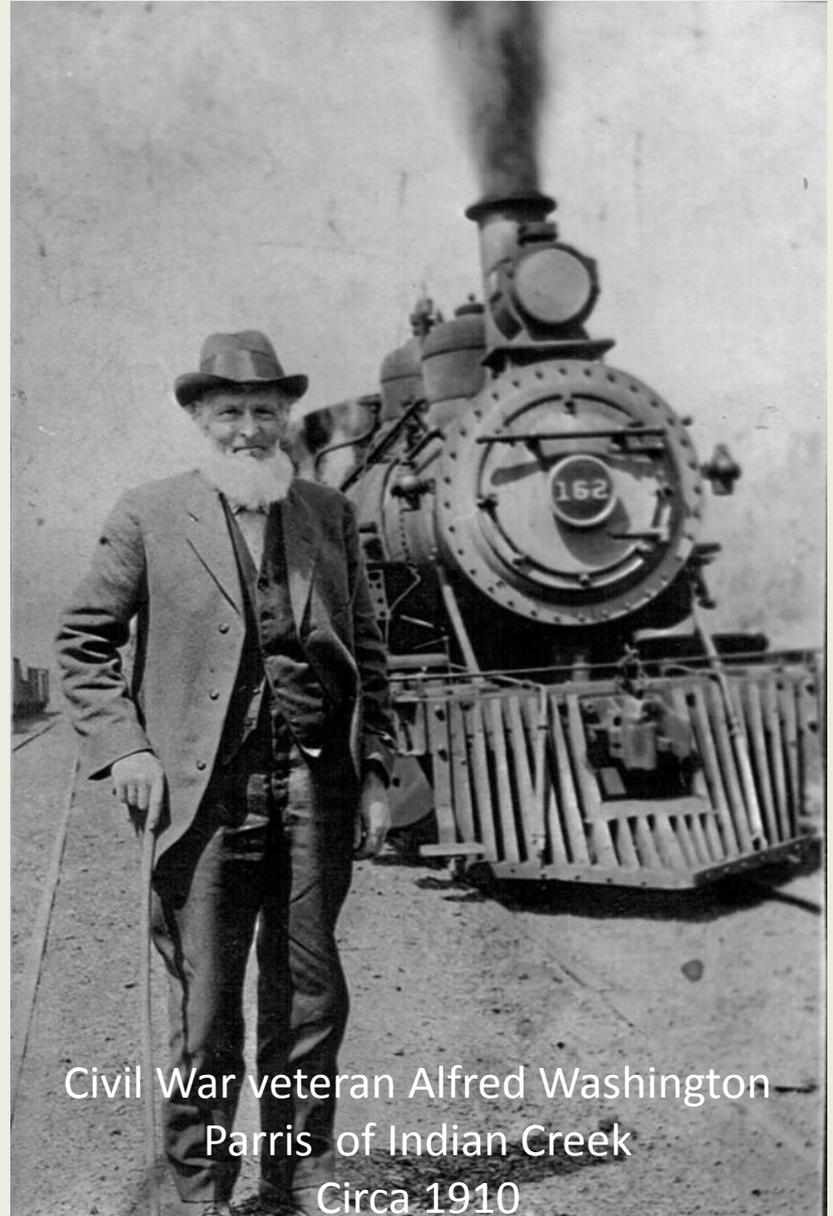


Standing, L-R: Charlie Hunnicutt, Mark Cathey, ?, Claude Williams, Granville Calhoun, ? Sam Hunnicutt
Kneeling, L-R: Jeff Hunnicutt, ?, maybe John Everett, ?, Noah Seay. Photo circa 1922, at the Bryson Place, courtesy of Jim Estes.

Leading a life of self-conscious isolation



Spanish-American War veteran Frank Fry,
Mattie Pender Fry family of Hewitts
Circa 1905

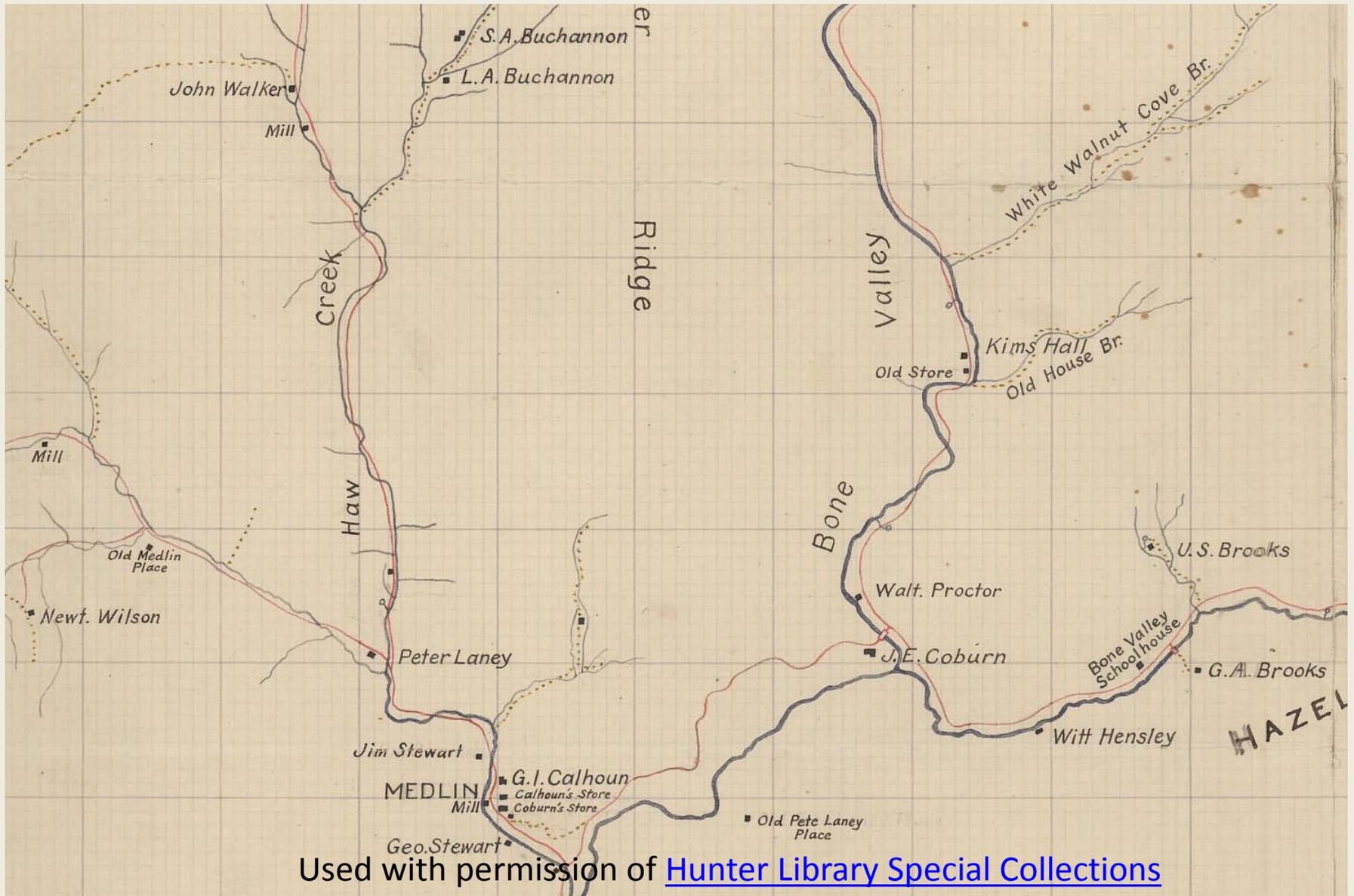


Civil War veteran Alfred Washington
Parris of Indian Creek
Circa 1910

Photo sources: Jean Douthit, Wade Patterson

Testing claims on Hazel Creek

Maps in the WCU collection identify folks living on Hazel Creek in the 1905-06 (part of one of six maps)



Used with permission of [Hunter Library Special Collections](#)

The earliest settlers of Hazel Creek – and all of Kephart's neighbors – must've required decivilizing

- The earliest known white settlers on lower Hazel Creek, Moses and Patience Proctor, arrived three decades into the nineteenth century – around 1830
- The upper Hazel Creek area was first settled around the 1880s* – closer to the 20th than the 18th century – by folks who came there from such places as Buncombe County (Brooks), Jackson County (Buchanan, Calhoun, Cook, Cope, Hall), Macon County (Hampton), Caldwell County, NC then Hawkins County, TN (Laney), Sevier County, TN (Pink Martin family).
- No family on upper Hazel Creek had been there for more than a generation when Kephart arrived
- The overwhelming majority of both men and women were literate; the literacy rate for (particularly younger) women was higher than for men.

* There may have been earlier, undocumented settlers. Hiram Wilburn records in his *Place Names* manuscript that Forrester Ridge, the divide between Haw Gap Branch and Bone Valley Creek, was named for a man named Forrester, who settled near Deep Gap in 1878. However, no land or other primary source records have been found to attest to this.

Virtually every family on upper Hazel Creek had immediate family members involved in the Civil War

Examples

- Sam and Sarah Johnson Buchanan – both fathers served
- Marion Medlin – Thomas Legion and 3rd TN Mounted (Union)
- Two older brothers of Crate Hall – Fonzie and Kims – served different regiments from out of Jackson County
- Bent Cook and two brothers enlisted in Jackson; one brother died at Camp Douglas (Chicago)
- Pete Laney enlisted in Caldwell County, was taken POW at Bristoe Station, VA, kept at Point Lookout, MD until paroled; lived with his parents in TN immediately after the war
- Quill Rose, born in Blount County, enlisted in 29th NC Infantry; he deserted and joined the Thomas Legion. He and Vacey had lived on Deep Creek before Eagle, and Quill had made an expedited trip to Texas in the meantime.

Even the earliest settlers of lower Hazel Creek had considerable external exposure

- Moses and Patience Proctor were born outside of the mountains – in Rutherford and Randolph Counties; they lived in Tennessee before coming to Hazel Creek.
- Their daughter Catherine was born on Hazel Creek and spent most of her life there, but early in her married life, she and Joseph W. Welch lived up the river about ten miles (Kirkland Branch area). Joe was born in Tennessee to a father who was a native of Illinois. He had lived in both NC and TN prior to marriage, served in the Thomas Legion and was taken POW – likely at the Battle of Deep Creek, and ended up at Fort Delaware.
- James V.B. Bradshaw was born in what is now Jackson County to a NC native father and TN native mother. He moved with his family to Cherokee (now Graham) and married Martha Cuthbertson in Macon in 1860. He served in the Thomas Legion. His family moved before 1910 after selling their land in Proctor to Ritter Lumber.

Literacy summary for fourteen families who were Hazel Creek neighbors (census data)

- Oldest generation:
 - 13 of 14 fathers were literate; there were mixed reports on the 14th (Bill Cope)
 - 9 of 14 mothers were fully literate (read and write), 2 could read, 2 were illiterate (Vickey Rose and Elizabeth, wife of Doc Jones), 1 had mixed reporting (Margaret Higdon Cope, wife of Bill)
- Of 89 children born to these parents who also lived in the area:
 - 40 of 44 sons were literate (91%)
 - 44 of 45 daughters were literate (98%)
- Joseph Washington Welch and his wife, Catherine Proctor, were both illiterate in 1880 (ages 47 and 43). By 1900, Joe was fully literate and Catherine could read. Catherine learned to write sometime after she was 73 years old (between 1910 and 1920).

One final tidbit on the origins of thought in
Our Southern Highlanders

Another Frost article appeared in *The Independent* on April 4, 1912.

The selection of the same title for Kephart's book was made a few months later.

There is no mention of this in *Back of Beyond*, and it is also not mentioned in the annotated bibliography, *Terra Incognita* (Bridges, Clement, Wise)

Our Southern Highlanders

BY WILLIAM GOODELL FROST, D.D., LL.D.

[The writer of this article is president of Berea College, which is situated in the heart of the mountain country in the South and which educates more mountaineers than any other educational institution in the country. No one can speak with more authority on our Southern highlanders than President Frost.—EDITOR.]

THE object of this article is explanation. The daily press is bringing us news from the Virginia mountains which is startling indeed. What are the conditions which make such lawlessness and bloodshed possible? How are we to believe that the Southern mountaineer is the most hopeful man in the South when representatives of the mountain clans are guilty of such deeds?

To begin with, let us draw a distinction between the degenerate and the unregenerate—the man who has fallen from a higher state of civilization into a lower one and the man who has not yet emerged from a lower state into a higher. Mountain countries have always been lands of survivals. New ideas penetrate more slowly and the old ideas persist longer. The whole South has been moving more

slowly toward modern conceptions than the North. Its original settlers, so far as there was any distinction between those of the North and the South, were more conservative and more aristocratic. Slavery suppressed free speech and made all progress difficult, while it intensified the old world feeling that God intended certain families to be rich and mighty and other families to be poor and humble.

The Greek historian, Thucydides, counted it a great step in the history of Athens when the people ceased to carry weapons while engaged in their daily occupations. This step was not taken in England until after the time of Elizabeth, and this step has not yet been fully taken in the South. Consider, for a moment, the mental attitude of the Elizabethan



A librarian's worst nightmare –
or was it?

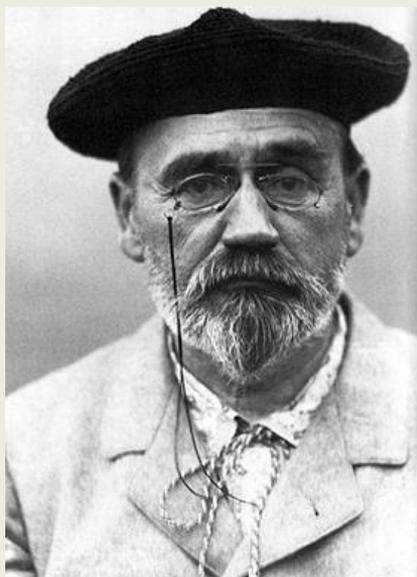
In 1902, at least four newspapers (from Wichita, Chicago, Marshalltown, IA and Vancouver, BC) reported the burning of books at the St. Louis Mercantile during Kephart's tenure

- Books burned in 1902 included works of:
 - Kate Chopin
 - Zola
 - Balzac
 - Mark Twain
 - Walt Whitman
 - Unknown others
- This goes unmentioned in *Back of Beyond* although it can be found in a handful of minutes spent on Newspapers.com.



Kate Chopin

Source: Katechopin.org



Émile Zola

Source: Wikipedia

Kephart showed a disdain for “the bulk of the people” of St. Louis and Zola:

“The bulk of the people are worse than illiterate – they can read, but care for nothing better than flash newspapers and American Zolaism” (*Back of Beyond*)

That same sort of disdain is often found in private thoughts recorded in his Journals.

BAD BOOKS BURNED.

Librarian in St. Louis Destroys Certain Volumes.

St. Louis, Sept. 5.—“The Awakening,” a story of creole life in Louisiana, written by Mrs. Kate Chopin of this city, has been placed under the ban with the works of Zola, Balzac, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman and other noted writers by Horace Kephart, librarian of the Mercantile Library, because it was objected to by some members of the governing board.

The copies on the shelves of the Mercantile were taken out and burned in the furnace. The book was written in 1899, and while it has been sharply criticised by the reviewers, all agree as to the artistic merits of the work. A number of copies are on the shelves of the public library and the question of their withdrawal from circulation has never been considered by Librarian Cruenden.

An attempt was made to see Mr. Kephart, but he was absent from the library. His assistant, however, said: “‘The Awakening’ was taken off the shelves of the Mercantile Library because it was objected to by some members of the library association. Mr. Kephart simply acted upon the request of the persons objecting to the novel. I know Mrs. Chopin personally, and she is a very fine woman, a gifted writer.”

Mrs. Chopin is in no wise disturbed over the action taken by Librarian Kephart.

Above: *The Wichita Beacon*, 5 Sep 1902

Examples of privately recorded observations (journals) which didn't make *Back of Beyond*

- Knickers in a wad – complaints that his flannels weren't being washed according to instructions
- Feminine hygiene matters which won't be discussed here
- “Impossible to keep clean in Cooper House”
- “Mrs. X*. snuffing, spitting on floor, blowing nose ditto, wiping fingers on apron (if at all), while waiting on table”

* The initial is not provided because it would reveal the lady's identity

Horace Kephart was clearly a man who had something winsome about him

- Dodette Grinnell: “He was fine company and a very friendly and likable man....He did love the Great Smoky Mountains – and the mountain people.”
- While there are no records (that I can recall) of Jack Coburn speaking of him, he was a long-term friend.
- I.K. Stearns, President of Carolina Wood Turning Company, was devoted to Kephart and said Kephart was like a grandfather to his son, Joe.
- The local Boy Scout troop took on his name

Horace Kephart and Jack Coburn



Photo courtesy of
Dennis Anthony

This photograph was taken by Doc Kelly Bennett. The negative was found in a collection which has been turned over to the University of Tennessee for archiving by Dennis Anthony, a Bryson City man who inherited a large collection of Doc Kelly's materials.

I.K. Stearns at his Carolina Wood Turning desk



Photo courtesy of
Theo Stearns

Note the photo of Kephart at the tree on Mt. Collins next to Stearns' desk. The man in the photo to the right of the globe may be Stearns' father, Theodore; the image is too out of focus to be certain.

At Kephart's funeral, Joe "Sparky" Stearns read a passage from Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*

Coronach*

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

* According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a coronach is a lament for the dead in Celtic tradition

A memorial was placed by the Horace Kephart Boy Scout Troop near the Bryson Place



The memorial is located, per my GPS waypoint, at N35.51995 W83.41965 (degrees and fractions of degrees, NAD83). It's about 40 yards from the Deep Creek Trail. Depending on the time of year, a faint path may be seen leaving the trail about 90 yards below the Bryson Place campsite.

If you want more of Kephart, there's more in
the mill...

A work in progress - *Horace Kephart: Writings* Target Publication 2020 (UT Press)

Draft Table of Contents

1. Biography
2. Family and Friends
3. Camping and Woodcraft
4. Guns
5. Southern Appalachian Culture
6. Fiction
7. Cherokees
8. Scouting
9. Park and Trail

Introduction authors

- George Ellison, Janet McCue
- Libby Kephart Hargrave, George Frizzell
- Mae Miller Claxton
- Jim Casada
- George Frizzell
- Mae Miller Claxton
- Andrew Denson
- Mae Miller Claxton
- Andrew Denson

Appendix 1 “Index to Diary” with photographs

Appendix 2 List of books in Kephart library – Jason Brady

Appendix 3 Bibliography – George Frizzell

Publications summary

- Approximately 400 items (at present) in a bibliography being prepared by George Frizzell
- There is some double-counting in that articles published in periodicals were later used in book form (*Camping and Woodcraft, Our Southern Highlanders*)
- His most prolific years, at least numerically, were 1915-1925, when half of the cited pieces were published
- His published works predominately appeared in outdoor periodicals, including *Outing, All Outdoors, Shooting and Fishing, Forest and Stream, Field and Stream, National Sportsman, Outdoor Life, and Sports Afield*
- Also published in various other periodical venues such *Arms and the Man, Collier's, Dialect Notes, Flynn's, and Harper's* as well as in a number of newspapers, including *Asheville Citizen, Asheville Citizen-Times, Asheville Times, Bryson City Times, and New York Times*

(Bibliographic data in draft status, courtesy of George Frizzell)