

From October 25, 1944 Asheville-Citizen Times

William Marcus Cathey, 73, well-known Swain County woodsman, fisherman and guide, died Monday afternoon in the setting he loved so well – hunting squirrels near Bryson City.

His body was found by a searching party about 11:30 o'clock Monday night, slumped across his rifle near the base of a big tree. He apparently had suffered a heart attack while seated by the tree waiting for a shot at a squirrel.

Mr. Cathey, "Uncle Mark," as he was known far and near, left the home of his sister, Mrs. Charlie Beck in Arlington Heights about 5:30 o'clock Monday afternoon to go into the cove to shoot some squirrels.

When he failed to return by dark, Mrs. Beck and a neighbor set out to search for him. They called for aid at 11 p.m. and 50 men volunteered and began the hunt with torches. The body was found about 30 minutes later.

Because of his thorough knowledge of the Great Smoky Mountains, Mr. Cathey had served as guide for many parties who came to the region to hunt for sport. He was an expert hunter and fisherman himself and up to 1938 had killed 57 bears. The largest trout he ever caught measured 24½ inches and was taken from Deep Creek.

A native of this section, Mr. Cathey loved to recall the early days when hunting was really good in the mountain region.

He loved his mountains and when offered a Hollywood picture contract, gave as his reason for turning it down, "No I ain't going to Hollywood, it's too fine here."

He once declared "I shall not leave the Smokies where I was born and where I have lived most of my life. I know them like a book. Ever since I was a little feller I have hunted and fished in them. I've traveled about a lot and this is the best country I've found. I like the people; you don't find people like our people elsewhere. They're kind and sociable."

Warned by his physician that his heart was bad and that he should not take strenuous exercise, Mr. Cathey loved his hunting and fishing too much to give it up and he was rarely seen without his gun or fishing tackle, depending on the season.

His fame as a guide had spread far as a result of the many tourists from other sections who came here each year seeking game and whom he had served during their visits.

In addition to his sister, Mrs. Beck, with whom he made his home, he is survived by another sister, Mrs. Forest McCracken.

Funeral arrangements had not been made Tuesday.