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Resorts in Southern Appalachia: A Microcosm of American Resorts  
in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

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A thesis  
presented to  
the faculty of the Department of History  
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in History

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by  
Mary F. Fanslow  
December 2004

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Dr. Marie Tedesco, Chair  
Dr. Dale Schmitt  
Dr. Stephen Fritz

Keywords: Mineral Springs, Hotels, Montvale, Tate, Unaka, Cloudland, Wonderland

## ABSTRACT

### Resorts in Southern Appalachia: A Microcosm of American Resorts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

by

Mary F. Fanslow

Five resorts in East Tennessee--Montvale Springs and the Wonderland Hotel in the Smokies, Tate Spring in the Holston River Valley, Unaka Springs on the Nolichucky River, and the Cloudland Hotel at the summit of Roan Mountain--stand testament to the proposition that their region engaged fully with areas outside southern Appalachia. Their origins, clientele, and health and leisure offerings followed those of other resorts of the same time period. Moreover, the effects of national socioeconomic trends on the hotels serve as a contradiction to the stereotype of southern Appalachia as an isolated region barricaded from the outside world by mountainous topography. The East Tennessee resorts covered in this thesis indicate that the region as a whole was emblematic of national socioeconomic and cultural trends.

In Loving Memory of My Grandparents  
Thomas Carver (1898-1974) and Myrtle Little Carver (1908-2003)  
of Carter County, Tennessee

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Roan Mountain on the border between northeastern Tennessee and western North Carolina has long been one of my favorite natural spots to seek beauty and relaxation. As a child growing up in East Tennessee, my family, grandparents, and I enjoyed picnics near the Roan's summit. Much later, when I enrolled in a graduate program in history, I decided to write my first research paper on an aspect of Roan Mountain about which I knew practically nothing, the long-gone Cloudland Hotel. My interest in East Tennessee resorts was further sparked when Dr. Bruce Wheeler of The University of Tennessee suggested I explore the Wonderland Hotel in the Smokies after he had heard a presentation I gave on the Cloudland Hotel. As I delved into research, I realized that the East Tennessee region contained a bevy of watering hole activity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hence, a topic for my thesis began to crystallize.

Searching a variety of electronic and printed resources for background material on American resorts, and then very specifically on East Tennessee leisure establishments, gradually coalesced into the concept that East Tennessee resorts, for the most part, followed the patterns and models of other eastern American resorts in terms of their origins and attractions to gain and keep guests. The East Tennessee resorts' health regimens, entertainment offerings, and transportation did not differ substantially from those provided by other resorts in the country during the same time period. The socioeconomic factors affecting the nation as a whole--for example, the burgeoning industry during and after Reconstruction, the delineation of an expanding middle-class culture, health reform issues, and economic booms and panics--shaped the growth and

direction of East Tennessee as well. The long held view of southern Appalachian isolationism, most widely articulated in the late 1800s and early 1900s through such condescendingly titled magazine articles as William Aspenwall Bradley's "Hobnobbing with Hillbillies" and George E. Vincent's "A Retarded Frontier," holds no sway when looking at East Tennessee resorts.<sup>1</sup> As sociologist Wilma Dunaway points out, "Much of the accumulated knowledge about Appalachia has been generated out of 'history written backwards' . . . . Successive generations of academics have faithfully re-legitimated, without accumulating any empirical evidence, the colorful exaggerations of early-twentieth-century novelists and journalists."<sup>2</sup> This thesis will describe the evolution of five resorts in East Tennessee, with emphasis on their "hey-day" periods, to demonstrate that they symbolize national, not isolated regional, trends in the expression of health and leisure pursuits in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

I selected the five resorts to be studied in a somewhat nonscientific fashion. As mentioned earlier, I chose the Cloudland because of personal interest and the Wonderland at a professor's suggestion. I then decided that I should pick at least one other resort geographically near each of these two hotels to determine any similarities or differences in

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<sup>1</sup> Bradley commented that "as in the case of all mountain races, isolation has served to keep intact the identity of original manners and customers." See William Aspenwall Bradley, "Hobnobbing with Hillbillies," *Harper's Monthly Magazine* 132 (December 1915): 92. Vincent described eastern Kentucky residents as a "social order arrested at a relatively early stage of evolution." See George E. Vincent, "A Retarded Frontier," *The American Journal of Sociology* 4 (July 1898): 20, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed July 27, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Wilma Dunaway, *The First American Frontier: Transition to Capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700-1860*, The Fred W. Morrison Series in Southern Studies (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 8.



their cultures. While researching the Cloudland in 1998 for a course at East Tennessee State University, I chanced upon a newspaper clipping for the Unaka Springs Hotel in Unicoi County, about thirty miles from the Cloudland. While investigating the Wonderland at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives, I found a typescript describing a few dozen resorts scattered among the Smokies; intrigued, I picked the earliest one on record, Montvale Springs. Later, I serendipitously learned that a red-roofed gazebo that I often saw while driving on Highway 11W between Kingsport and The University of Tennessee as an undergraduate signified the only remains of a once wildly popular resort near Bean Station in Grainger County, Tate Spring.

Montvale Springs, purported to be the earliest East Tennessee resort, billed itself as the “Saratoga of the South.” With its seven-gabled, two-hundred-foot long façade, it entertained hundreds of guests each year prior to the Civil War and served as the background for Sidney Lanier’s novel *Tiger Lilies* and for William G. “Parson” Brownlow’s political letters while on vacation. Like Tate Spring and Unaka Springs, it began as a watering hole for invalids seeking its mineral waters and transformed into a gathering place for recreation and genteel amusement. During the Civil War, its Confederate-sympathizing owners fled to the Deep South, and a Northerner acquired ownership. Unlike the other four resorts, its “hey-day” ended before the twentieth century.

Tate Spring constituted just one of several mineral springs establishments in Grainger County. Its two hotels, like the Cloudland, attracted not only middle and upper-class society, but also the national elite: robber barons and Gilded Age capitalists such as the Studebakers. Like the Cloudland, it prided itself on its high elevation that allegedly kept away mosquitoes and hay fever allergens. Like Unaka Springs, it declined during the

depression; the elite from the late 1800s and early 1900s had long since found other fashionable resorts and the middle class frequenting it on newly opened roads had little money to continue coming.

The last resort studied that began around the curative powers of a mineral spring is the Unaka Springs Hotel near Erwin, Tennessee, and Poplar, North Carolina. Like most of the resorts covered, its guests in the late 1800s and early 1900s consisted of the middle class and upper middle-class elite—doctors, lawyers, bankers, and railroad management. Again, its emphasis on health offerings declined as it, like the other resorts, began to offer such recreational activities as croquet, miniature golf, and dancing. Like the other four resorts, it prospered under proprietors with warm, tolerant dispositions who bonded with sophisticated, demanding guests and who possessed the deep pockets to maintain the hotel infrastructure. Unique to Unaka Springs, however, was its dependence on the railroad for transportation. Without the railroad, one had to ford a river or scramble down a steep cliffside path to reach it. That isolation, however, aided in its appeal to upper-class elite just as Catskill resorts of the same era advertised their isolation in the rugged mountains of upstate New York.

The Cloudland Hotel at an elevation of about 6,285 feet on Roan Mountain promoted its altitude as a curative for that very fashionable disease of the late 1800s: Hay fever or summer catarrh. “The Hay Fever Brigade” trooped to the hotel each summer from 1878 to the early 1900s. Again, as at the mineral spring resorts, the Cloudland offered a variety of recreational activities, such as hiking, golf (using weighted balls), and dancing. Unlike the other resorts, Roan Mountain’s high altitude offered a tremendous variety of plant species, some not found elsewhere, which attracted serious scientists as

well as amateur naturalists. Like Montvale Springs, Unaka Springs and the Wonderland, the Cloudland Hotel held connections with a northern entrepreneur. General John Wilder, who built the Cloudland and served as a commissioner of Unicoi County, home of Unaka Springs, symbolizes the northern businessman who came south to invest in natural resources and to initiate business enterprises.

The Wonderland Hotel owed its beginnings to another northern industrialist, W.B. Townsend, a Pennsylvania lumberman who saw opportunity in the Great Smoky Mountains' virgin timber in the late 1800s. After harvesting the lumber at Elkmont, a timber camp in the Smokies, Townsend conceived the business plan that the denuded Elkmont land could serve as a hotel for tourists and lumber buyers near his private club's cottage colony, the Appalachian Club. While guests did not travel to the Wonderland for mineral-water cures or for hay fever relief, they came for a less direct health reason: to escape the stress of the modern workplace and to find relaxation in natural surroundings. The national trend toward scientific management and industrial efficiency in the workplace in the early twentieth century inspired the Craftsman movement and journalistic calls for relaxing weekends in the country. The Wonderland, being associated with a private club, did not suffer financially during the Depression. Indeed, it is closed today only because the National Park Service chose not to extend its lease in the early 1990s.

These five resorts dispel the Romantic notion that the Great Smokies and the Unaka Mountains of East Tennessee surrounded their innocent inhabitants as a great fortress against the sophistries, cruelties, and knowledge of the outside world. The resorts received supplies and goods through regional markets connected to distribution centers outside southern Appalachia. Prospective resort guests read about the hotels in

newspapers and pamphlets published on the East coast as well as in local Tennessee broadsides. And, of course, a transportation network of turnpikes and later railroads and paved roads existed to serve the thousands of guests who traversed the southern Appalachian region each season. The East Tennessee resorts covered in this paper indicate that the region as a whole was not isolated but emblematic of national socioeconomic and cultural trends.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN RESORTS FROM THE COLONIAL PERIOD TO THE CIVIL WAR

American resorts sprang from a tradition of English bathing establishments which, in turn, followed a culture of bathing rituals dating back to antiquity. Typically established at springs known for their medicinal properties to Native Americans, northern and southern resorts flourished from colonial times to the outbreak of the Civil War. While purportedly providing hydrotherapeutic treatment for almost every known disease, the resorts also offered a variety of leisure and social activities for their elite guests.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis of the antebellum resorts gradually shifted from an exclusive focus on medical treatment to a recreational culture that purposefully cultivated a largely elite clientele. Just as importantly, many of the resorts provided an ambiance of such public spaces as verandahs and landscaped gardens where the elite could relax, enjoy the natural scenery, and yet be on display to their peers and social subordinates. This chapter sets the stage for a discussion of the development of East Tennessee resorts by providing background information on the geography of southern Appalachia, an historical overview of resorts, the English influence on colonial resorts, and the changing nature of northern and southern resort culture throughout the antebellum period. This discussion therefore gives a foundation for

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<sup>1</sup> “Elite” refers to the upper-class aristocracy in society, not the middle or lower classes. Wealth largely determined one’s rank. In addition, as Sterngass points out, dress, behavior, and deference accorded or received helped to define one’s social position. See Jon Sterngass, *First Resorts: Pursuing Pleasure at Saratoga Springs, Newport, and Coney Island* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 212-13. Discussion will follow in this chapter about the classes who visited resorts.

subsequent chapters' discussion of the development of East Tennessee resorts from resort leisure trends originating in the antebellum period.

An examination of American resorts must first establish the meaning of a resort as used in this thesis. For purposes of discussion, a resort indicates a destination where guests visit for health or curative purposes, for rest, for leisure and entertainment, or for social status enhancement. These four reasons are not mutually exclusive: colonial guests, for example, often visited resorts to cure ailments and returned later, when well, for social and leisure benefits. Resorts may be defined according to the lodgings and amenities provided. A resort, for example, may consist of a mineral springs around which one or more entrepreneurial proprietors builds a hotel, bathhouse, and/or cottages for guests seeking a hydropathic or balneological cure.<sup>2</sup> So-called “watering holes,” bath establishments, spas, hot springs, thermal springs, sulfur springs, or other types of springs with guest accommodations may therefore constitute resorts. A resort may also describe a village of hotels and boardinghouses clustered in such pleasurable natural settings as mountains or lakesides, which provide a restful escape from the tedium of everyday life. A resort may transmute from a retreat setting where anyone with sufficient time and money may lodge

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<sup>2</sup> “Hydrotherapy” in this chapter is synonymous with “water cure,” the internal and external use of usually cold water to effect a cure of a disease. “Balneology” refers to the science of bathing in water, usually warm or hot water. The terminology can overlap ambiguously in medical works. One paper, for instance, uses these terms interchangeably: “taking the waters,” “balneotherapy,” “spa therapy,” and “hydrotherapy.” See A. van Tubergen and S. van der Linden, “A Brief History of Spa Therapy,” *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* 61 (March 2002): 273. Another paper challenges the equivalence of these terms; see T. Bender, P.V. Balint, and G.P. Balint, “Matters Arising: A Brief History of Spa Therapy,” *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* 61 (October 2002): 949, <http://ard.bmjournals.com/cgi/reprint/61/10/949> (accessed November 30, 2004).

into an exclusive enclave for societal elite replete with a whirlwind of social activities and fashionable engagements.<sup>3</sup>

A resort is typically not an inn, public house, ordinary, or tavern. While these antebellum entities may have provided food and drink, social pleasures, or rooms, they did not constitute the terminus for travelers. Rather, they provided a means by which resort guests and others reached their final stops. They served as the loci for village politics, gossip, and news shared by travelers. Inns and taverns typically stood along transportation routes and served the businessmen, politicians, and tradesmen of the day, not the elite who could afford leisure time in a remote scenic spot.<sup>4</sup> Resort hotels covered here, it should be asserted, constitute a separate category from city hotels, which existed after colonial times. City hotels, while often inveighed with the opulence seen at resort hotels, served urban guests, not travelers seeking health or leisure. Examples of city hotels include the Buffalo Statler, Denver's Brown Palace, Chicago's Palmer House, and New York City's Astor House and Fifth Avenue Hotel.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Several authors cover the concept that antebellum resorts developed initially for curative or palliative reasons and later grew into social retreats. The sources I relied on most often to explore the evolution of antebellum resorts were Theodore Corbett, *The Making of American Resorts: Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa, and Lake George* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001), passim, and Charlene Marie Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display: Planter Society at the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1997), passim.

<sup>4</sup> Maxine Mathews, "Old Inns of East Tennessee," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 2 (1930): 22-23.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Rushmore and Eric Baum, "Growth and Development of the Hotel-Motel Industry (Features)," *Appraisal Journal* 70 (April 2002), [http://web7.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/563/894/54905665w7/purl=rc1\\_EAIM\\_0\\_A85921088&dyn=3!xrn\\_1\\_0\\_A85921088?sw\\_aep=tel\\_main](http://web7.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/563/894/54905665w7/purl=rc1_EAIM_0_A85921088&dyn=3!xrn_1_0_A85921088?sw_aep=tel_main) Expanded Academic ASAP

American resorts may also be classified by geographical region. East Tennessee, the focus of future chapters, falls into the southern Appalachian region.<sup>6</sup> While some authorities or organizations, such as the Appalachian Regional Commission, include most of Middle Tennessee in their definition of Appalachia, southern Appalachia as I shall use the term comprises the area John C. Campbell defined in 1921 in his seminal work on the region. Campbell described southern Appalachia or, in his appellation, the “Southern Highland Region,” as three geological areas: the Blue Ridge Belt, the Greater Appalachian Valley, and the Allegheny-Cumberland Belt. The Southern Highland Region extends from northeastern Alabama, including Birmingham, to the West Virginia- and western Maryland-Pennsylvania border. Campbell delineates the eastern boundary of the Southern Highland region as mainly Maryland west of Frederick, the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, about two dozen western North Carolina counties, four counties in northwestern South Carolina (including the counties for Greenville and Spartanburg), and northern Georgia. The western boundary of Campbell’s Southern Appalachia consists of the West Virginia-Ohio

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database, Tennessee Electronic Library (accessed November 18, 2004). City hotels, taverns, and inns will not be covered in this discussion. For examples of literature dealing with inns and taverns specifically in East Tennessee, see Jane Gray Buchanan, *Early Inns and Taverns of East Tennessee: A Photoessay* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1996); LaReine Warden Clayton, *Stories of Early Inns and Taverns of the East Tennessee Country* (Nashville: National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the State of Tennessee, 1995); Michael K. Jackson, “The Netherland Inn: Its Evolution in History, Its Restoration for the Future” (M.A. thesis, East Tennessee State University, 1999), passim; and Mathews, “Old Inns of East Tennessee,” 22-33. For overviews of inns in the nation at large, see Alice Morris Earle, *Stage-Coach and Tavern Days* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1900), and Elise Lathrop, *Early American Inns and Taverns* (New York: R.M. McBride and Company, 1926).

<sup>6</sup> The geographical and political meanings of “East Tennessee” will be defined in the next chapter, which looks at antebellum resorts in that region.



border, eastern Kentucky, the western escarpment of Tennessee's Cumberland-Allegheny Plateau, and several counties in northeastern Alabama, including the city of Decatur.<sup>7</sup>

Southern Appalachia falls into what Lawrence calls the Southern Spring Region. He classifies antebellum resorts' three regions based on resort design. The Northern Spring Region encompassed roughly the Middle Atlantic Seaboard and New England, except for most of Pennsylvania, most of Maine, and save for the northern coastal area from New Jersey to eastern Massachusetts. This northern coastal area constituted the second region, the Seaside Resort Region. The third region, the Southern Spring Region, included all of Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia, and stretched west to western Arkansas, south to Mobile, and east through the Carolina Piedmont. Both the Northern and Southern Spring Regions contained "cores," where most of the resorts for that region were concentrated. Northern Spring Region resorts were mainly located in the Catskills and Saratoga Springs area. In the Southern Spring Region, the many watering holes in Virginia, several of which were located in southern Appalachia, constituted the core area for mineral spring resorts.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and his Homeland* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921), foldout [n.p.]. To compare Campbell's boundaries with other sociological or political boundaries of Appalachia as a whole, see David Whisnant's excellent map at <http://www.unc.edu/~whisnant/appal/maps/Appreg.gif> (accessed June 24, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Henry W. Lawrence, "Southern Spas: Source of the American Resort Tradition," *Landscape* 27, no. 2 (1983): 8.

The discussion of the antebellum period resorts that follows will largely focus on the core areas in the Northern Spring Region and the Southern Spring Region. Discussion and analysis of the resort architecture, the nature of visitors, and the general resort ambiances in both the northern and southern core areas allow comparisons and contrasts to subsequent chapters' treatment of East Tennessee resorts.<sup>9</sup>

American resorts must also be placed in context of western and eastern history. The origin of resorts, as especially related to spas or baths, extends back to antiquity. Water therapy, popularly called "hydropathy" or the "water-cure" in the nineteenth century, but more accurately known in modern science as "hydrotherapy," served as medical treatment or ritualistic cleansing in the ancient world. Babylonian physicians developed a hydrotherapeutic system incorporating hot and cold compresses and medical baths. The Chinese over two thousand years ago wrapped patients in sheets drenched with cold water. Greek physicians, notably Hippocrates and later Galen, treated patients with hydrotherapy. Various religions--including ancient Egyptian deity worship, Judaism, Christianity, and Hinduism--early on incorporated ablution and ritual bathing into their practices. Engineers of the Roman Empire built baths and thermal spring complexes in England, Belgium,

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<sup>9</sup> To learn more about specific resorts in the Seaside Resort Region, see, for example, Fred Miller, *Ocean City: America's Favorite Family Resort*, The Making of America Series (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2003) and Jeffrey M. Dorwart, *Cape May County, New Jersey: The Making of an American Resort Community* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992). See also relevant sections of Jon Sterngass, *First Resorts* and Richmond Barrett, *Good Old Summer Days: Newport, Narragansett Pier, Saratoga, Long Branch, Bar Harbor* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1941). Barrett writes in a breezy, anecdotal, somewhat gossipy style reminiscent of that of Cleveland Amory in *The Last Resorts* in his commentary on past and current social life at the resorts. The first three authors provide a scholarly examination of their subjects.

France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Eastern Europe, and northern Africa. The use of Roman baths gradually changed in nature from therapeutic treatment to leisure use, which, in several areas of the empire, degenerated to debauchery in the baths. With sexual practices thus linked to baths, the rise of Christianity, particularly during the Middle Ages, caused bathing and bath houses to fall into disrepute. The church remodeled some bath houses into churches and sanctioned some springs or fountainheads as “holy wells,” which numbered into the hundreds. Charlemagne, however, patronized sulfur springs at Aachen, and later the Moors and returning Crusaders built thermal or warm baths in the Iberian peninsula and other parts of western Europe. Baths in central Europe, many of which are still used today, were founded during the fourteenth century at Carlsbad and Wiesbaden. In fact, the term “spa” derives from the Walloon or Latin word “espa” meaning fountain, which in turn served as the basis for the naming of the famous Belgian thermal spring town of Spa in the fourteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

During the Renaissance, the rekindling of interest in public baths waned in several countries or nation-states as their populations linked their unsanitary conditions to such contagious illnesses as the plague and syphilis and as the baths acquired reputations as gathering places for political and religious radicals. Italian physicians, however,

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<sup>10</sup> Harry B. Weiss and Howard R. Kemble, *The Great American Water-Cure Craze: A History of Hydrotherapy in the United States* (Trenton, N.J.: The Past Times Press, 1967), v, 1; van Tubergen and van der Linden, “A Brief History of Spa History,” 273; Hirak Behari Routh and others, “Balneology, Mineral Water, and Spas in Historical Perspective,” *Clinics in Dermatology* 14 (November–December 1996), 551-52; George Kersley, “The History of Spas,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Health* 109 (February 1989): 2; Phyllis Hembry, *The English Spa, 1560-1815: A Social History* (London: The Athlone Press; Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990), 1-2.

rediscovered the therapeutic value of bathing; in 1571, physician Andrea Bacci published *De Thermis* in which he described Aristotle and Galen's bathing methodology as having a theoretical foundation as opposed to being based only on anecdotal, empirical experience.<sup>11</sup> About the same time, in 1557, English doctor William Turner published a treatise on English, German, and Italian baths. He described eighty-nine illnesses that might be cured by taking the waters at the English resort of Bath, advocated bath house sanitation and championed the controversial idea that the sick poor should have access to baths. Bacci disagreed that the sick poor should be allowed in the baths, as they could not afford the food and wine he thought must accompany a water regimen.<sup>12</sup>

Over the next two centuries a large number of spas developed on the Continent and in England. In England political events encouraged the growth of spas. Elizabeth I feared that English Catholics visiting Spa, then in the Spanish Netherlands, might use that resort as a gathering place to seek political asylum and to plan an insurrection against her. Consequently, she lifted Henry VIII's Reformation ban on public bathing and drinking English spring water; her government encouraged scientific inquiry, as opposed to religious interest, in the water from the "holy wells." She even began to journey to Bath and allowed

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<sup>11</sup> Routh and others, "Balneology, Mineral Water, and Spas in Historical Perspective," 552; van Tubergen and van der Linden, "Brief History of Spa Therapy," 273-74.

<sup>12</sup> Hembry, *English Spa*, 6-7; van Tubergen and van der Linden, "Brief History of Spa Therapy," 274.

her cousin Mary Queen of Scots to visit another English spa, Buxton. Nobility followed royalty's sojourns to these spas and also began to frequent other English baths.<sup>13</sup>

By the late 1500s English spas were attracting a cross-section of society. Rural aristocrats mingled at the baths with members of the English court. Some resorts, notably Buxton, instigated poll taxes on guests to allow the poor access to the baths. Social etiquette therefore became more flexible at the spas. The informality of the resorts' social life also appealed to guests seeking a leisure setting free from the constrictions of aristocratic country life. Thus, spas evolved from offering strictly medicinal use of their waters to providing a relaxed alternative to the aristocratic social rules the upper class followed even when visiting country estates.<sup>14</sup>

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw a further increase in the use of spas as social rather than strictly health resorts. The stability of property rights following the 1688 revolution in England encouraged spa proprietors to erect buildings much more elaborate than the crude accommodations previously available at most English resorts. Ornate bath houses specifically designed for cold-water bathing came into vogue at several English spas, in part inspired by the popularity of Sir John Floyer's and Dr. Joseph Browne's cold-bathing treatises. Hotels or cottages for guests replaced huts and other shabby lodging. Spa developers constructed formal garden promenades, wells with roofs, coffee houses, music galleries, and dance halls. While each spa retained on staff a physician or sought published approval from a medical doctor, the emphasis of the resorts shifted during the 1700s to

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<sup>13</sup> Hembry, *English Spa*, 2-3; Lawrence, "Southern Spas," 2.

<sup>14</sup> Hembry, *English Spa*, 8-11, 29, 52.

formally-organized social activities, with therapeutic treatment either a secondary concern or a façade for seeking pleasure.<sup>15</sup>

The rise of formally organized recreational activities initiated a new staff position to coordinate them. By the early 1700s, Bath had established a master of amusements position funded by participants who retained an assistant, the master of ceremonies, a position originally appointed by the court. The famous Richard “Beau” Nash served as master of ceremonies at Bath in the early 1700s to ensure proper social decorum and to organize parties, dances, concerts, and other festivities. The master of ceremonies position at Bath proved to be so successful that other spas sent their novice masters of ceremonies there to train.<sup>16</sup>

The mingling of social classes at the English spas generated social tension for much of the resort social season, which generally lasted from spring to mid-autumn. Bath and Cheltenham in particular experienced class tensions because both towns permitted the poor to bathe as charity cases. The huge number of laborers, tradesmen, and servants employed at the major resorts--Harrogate and Bath respectively received six thousand and ten thousand guests each season in the early 1800s--also contributed to aristocratic unease. The elite successfully limited their social functions to their station; tradesmen, in turn, began their own tradition of dances. The upper class also inhabited certain exclusive districts within the resort towns to enhance their status. Yet, the casual spa ambiance

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 67-69, 78, 161-62.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 115-16, 137-38.

allowed for greater informal interaction among the classes than would have been possible in the rigid stratification of London society.<sup>17</sup>

The concept of the spa spread to the American colonies where resorts developed typically at springs that Native Americans frequented for their curative powers and which Europeans or early settlers later discovered or used. Hernando De Soto in 1541, for example, came across the Valley of the Vapors, a low-lying area of springs venerated by tribes as a sacred bathing ground where all disputes were put aside. By the early 1700s, French settlers were traveling to the valley to be relieved of fevers or paralysis; the springs later became known as Hot Springs, Arkansas.<sup>18</sup> In the Adirondacks, Mohawks revered the Medicine Springs of the Great Spirit Manitou, one of several springs that developed into the New York resort of Saratoga Springs.<sup>19</sup> Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania, valued by white settlers by the late 1700s for its thermal waters, was known as Medicine Springs to the Iroquois, Shawnee, and Tuscaroa.<sup>20</sup>

In southern Appalachia tribes traveled the Great Buffalo Trail, which ran from the Atlantic to the Ohio Valley, to visit the waters at what is now The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Native Americans also discovered the therapeutic values

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 306-10.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony V. Benedetto and Larry E. Millikan, "World Survey of Mineral Waters and Spas: Mineral Water and Spas in the United States," *Clinics in Dermatology* 14 (November-December 1996): 583.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 586; George Waller, *Saratoga: Saga of an Impious Era* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 1-8.

<sup>20</sup> Benedetto and Millikan, "World Survey of Mineral Waters and Spas," 596.

of such famous watering holes as Berkeley Warm Springs and Hot Springs, future site of The Homestead.<sup>21</sup> Tribes bathed in or drank the waters of the mineral springs much later commercialized as Hot Springs, North Carolina. In middle and eastern North Carolina, outside southern Appalachia, Native Americans frequented Indian Springs and Roper Springs. While concertedly avoiding sipping the water of “Poison Springs,” they immersed themselves in its waters, later known as the resort of Barium Springs.<sup>22</sup> Until the end of the French and Indian War, though, the rural countryside lacked sufficient stability to attract hordes of visitors.<sup>23</sup>

As in England, health concerns provided the initial impetus for visiting the early American resorts. Prominent contemporary figures spoke of the curative powers of water. John Wesley, the Anglican priest who with his brother Charles founded the Methodist movement, wrote a pamphlet in 1742 extolling water treatment for almost every disease. Dr. Benjamin Rush, probably the most famous physician in colonial and early-republic America, forty years later published *Directions for the Use of the Mineral Water and Cold Baths at Harrowgate near Philadelphia*. A few years after the printing of that work, southern medical doctors began to issue scientific documents weighted down with such

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 595; Carl Bridenbaugh, “Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 3 (April 1946): 160, <http://www.jstor.org>.

<sup>22</sup> W. Burns Jones, Jr., “Carolina History: Mineral Springs and Medicine in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Medical Journal* 44 (September 1983): 593; Ray Woodlief, “North Carolina’s Mineral Springs,” *North Carolina Medical Journal* 25 (April 1964): 162.

<sup>23</sup> Bridenbaugh, “Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America,” 152.



descriptive titles as *A Complete Treatise on the Mineral Waters of Virginia: Containing a Description of Their Situation, Their Natural History, Their Analysis, Contents, and Their Use in Medicine.*<sup>24</sup>

Testimonies of personal healings also increased the desire of readers to frequent resorts. Stafford Springs, Connecticut, considered by some as America's first resort in the 1600s, exploded in growth after Boston newspapers published accounts in 1765 of a man's cure from a dermatological disease after he bathed several times in the spring. Other regional resorts subsequently developed in the resulting frenzy for water treatments with what one author describes as a "new enthusiasm . . . with almost as exciting a result as the religious fervor of previous decades."<sup>25</sup> Maine's Poland Springs began in 1793 when a dying feverish white man drank its waters; after news of his complete recovery began to circulate, the water then attracted myriads of health-seekers, particularly those with digestive disorders.<sup>26</sup> About the same time, a military officer cured from gout after drinking from a Virginia spring constructed a rude lodge at what became Fauquier White Sulphur

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<sup>24</sup> Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 2-3; Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 87n31.

<sup>25</sup> Cleveland Amory, *The Last Resorts* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), 17 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Bridenbaugh, "Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America," 152.

<sup>26</sup> Benedetto and Millikan, "World Survey of Mineral Water and Spas," 597. The Web site for Poland Spring water, pumped from the famous Maine springs, uses the singular form of "spring" to designate the geographical location, unlike the Benedetto article. See <http://www.polandspring.com> (accessed June 5, 2004).

Springs; his son and his son's business partner rebuilt the property envisioning a resort similar to European spas and counting on favorable publicity to attract guests.<sup>27</sup>

Regardless of whether located in the Northern or in the Southern Spring Region, early colonial resorts developed roughly in the same time period. True, early settlers first visited springs in the New England area: Lynn Red Spring, Massachusetts, received its first European-born guests in 1669, and Pilgrims took the waters at Stafford Springs in Connecticut.<sup>28</sup> For the most part, however, resorts in the South, notably those in Virginia, catered to their first visitors about the same time developing northern spas received theirs.

In the North, English spas influenced the development of many resorts, particularly those in the Northern Spring Region core. Phillip Schuyler, for example, who visited England in the early 1760s, named his springs in Saratoga "Chalybeate" after the English expression for water containing iron. His son-in-law, Stephen van Rensselaer, a Federalist elite, also traveled in England and developed a nearby resort called, appropriately, "Bath." In 1793, Nicholas Low, a Federalist elite whose business partner had visited Cheltenham, built another resort in the Mohawk spring area, Ballston Spa.<sup>29</sup>

As Ballston Spa prospered in the next few years, Low built the famous Sans Souci Hotel which, with one hundred guest rooms, became the largest American hotel of the era. In the English tradition of thoughtfully designed public spaces, Low then planned a main

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<sup>27</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 71.

<sup>28</sup> Bridenbaugh, "Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America," 152; Amory, *Last Resorts*, 17.

<sup>29</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 16.

street with house lots to reach from the Sans Souci to the Aldrich Hotel with its imposing six-columned porch, perfect for the elites to promenade to be seen. While Ballston Spa from 1794 to 1830 led all other American resorts in numbers of guests, it faltered as its elite began to travel to the increasingly fashionable Saratoga Springs hotels and as Low refused to invest more in Ballston Spa or allow other capitalists to enlarge its infrastructure. By 1849 the once grand Sans Souci had found another use--as a law school.<sup>30</sup>

In contrast to Ballston Spa, and many other early resorts of the early 1800s, Saratoga Springs prospered. Saratoga Springs in the early 1790s actually consisted of two settlements, Congress Springs and High Rock Springs, located by healing waters revered by the Native Americans. In the early 1800s, the two villages built a road, Broadway, to connect them. Henry Walton, an early developer, drew upon his English education to design several public places, including town squares and the Georgian Pavilion Hotel. Other early developers, notably John Clarke and Samuel Freeman, included English or classical designs in their architectural renderings of boulevards, pleasure gardens, private lots bordered by rear alleys based on London mews, and other structures. In fact, Saratoga Springs in 1813 became the first American community to plan public squares for beautification, another drawing card for elite visitors. By the early 1840s some hotels had incorporated several acres of land each for pleasure gardens, which included promenades, pavilions, and sculptures. Such public spaces provided not only amusement for guests but, more importantly, along with hotel verandahs, offered areas for the elite to be on display

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 30-36.

and to meet one another. Unlike Ballston Spa and other contemporary resorts, Saratoga Springs developers invested in the town's infrastructure to create a pleasing and attractive ambiance for elite guests. The initiative and patience of the Saratoga Springs developers to invest and then wait for a solid return on their investment, instead of turning their attention to other business projects, constitutes a major factor in the resort's success.<sup>31</sup>

The architecture of early Saratoga Springs hotels overall was Federal.<sup>32</sup> Beginning in the 1820s, the Greek Revival style appeared in several hotels and private homes and became a common characteristic of northern resorts, according to one authority.<sup>33</sup> Two large hotels, the Congress Hall and the Union Hall, displayed the Greek Revival features of large two- or three-story garland-decorated massive columns supporting a long verandah; in fact, the Congress Hall verandah gained wide fame even in Europe for its fashionable promenades.<sup>34</sup> The United States Hotel, the largest in Saratoga Springs by 1860, possessed a verandah that sprawled for an impressive eight-hundred feet.<sup>35</sup> Inside the hotels, the guest rooms were small, but the public spaces occupied grand dimensions. Typically, a hotel contained large salons, parlors, and dining rooms where the elite socialized and promenaded.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 59, 61-62, 74-76, 82.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 85-93. Corbett does not emphasize one dominant architectural style for a region's antebellum resorts as do Lawrence and Lewis. He notes, however, that the Federal style was used into the 1840s for several Saratoga hotels.

<sup>33</sup> Lawrence, "Southern Spas," 3.

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 112; Lawrence, "Southern Spas," 3; Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 86-87.

<sup>35</sup> Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 21-22.

Guests might complain about spartan private rooms, but they subjected themselves to them in order to take advantage of the highly visible public chambers.<sup>36</sup>

In the early years guests in the Saratoga Springs area typically were male aristocrats who could afford the time and cost of boarding at a resort. Jefferson and Madison, for example, visited the area in 1791 to collect botanical specimens and to tour historical sites.<sup>37</sup> Later Lafayette, Joseph Bonaparte, and such antebellum American politicians as Calhoun and Webster traveled there.<sup>38</sup>

In the early 1800s, women usually did not frequent resorts unless they were ill. While they might have spent time at their family's or friends' country houses, they limited their public exposure due to the era's dictum that they belonged within the privacy of the home. Beginning in the 1820s, however, single women began visiting Saratoga Springs as social etiquette began to prescribe that upper-class young ladies spend time at the resorts to enhance social skills and to meet possible candidates to court long term once back at home. Married women who began to visit resorts with their families found an informal, bonding environment in which to socialize with other women.<sup>39</sup>

Rules of propriety bent under this relaxing ambiance of Saratoga Springs and other early resorts. In 1800, in a group camping activity around Ballston Spa, for example, men

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<sup>36</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 85-86; Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 114-20.

<sup>37</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 225.

<sup>38</sup> Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 20-21.

<sup>39</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 233-34.

and women shared the same tent with only a flimsy curtain separating the genders. Girls occasionally traveled by themselves to the spas where they typically found older women to escort or guide them at social functions. Saratoga Springs lacked a master of ceremonies position; therefore, upper-class matrons generally arranged parties, dances, and other entertainment for hotel guests.<sup>40</sup>

As at Bath during roughly the same time period, most service workers were women. Before 1845, female service workers typically were African American; the large influx of single Irish Catholic women during the Irish famine of the decade displaced most African American females in laundry and hotel domestic jobs, a trend that held throughout the antebellum period. Irish women, unlike American females, did not consider domestic service as degrading work. In fact, according to Corbett, without the employment of single Irish women, who stayed in domestic service jobs into middle age, Saratoga could not have operated its hotels during this period.<sup>41</sup>

Saratoga Springs' neighborhoods and hotels attracted almost a cross-section of society. Neighborhoods occasionally did not consist of exclusively upper- or lower-class members. The middle class occasionally, for example, bought lots in upscale neighborhoods that had been reduced in selling price. The alleys situated at the back of upper-class lots, which were originally based on London mews, attracted lower-class

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 208-11, 217.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 150, 156-58, 162-65.

workers.<sup>42</sup> While laborers and tradesmen could not afford any time off for leisure, the elite, the intelligentsia, and, eventually, the middle class frequented Saratoga hotels.

By the 1840s the elite visitors to Saratoga consisted of the nouveau riche and those with “old money.” Many of the wealthy old New York City families attempted to segregate themselves from the rest of the Saratoga crowd; lack of successful isolationism led several to seek the beaches of Newport, which rivaled Saratoga by 1860.<sup>43</sup> As one contemporary observer, James Buckingham, dryly stated in 1841 about the lack of strict societal stratification: “Hundreds who in their own towns could not find admission into the circles of fashionable society. . . come to Saratoga, where, . . . they may be seated at the same table, and often side by side, with the first families of the country. . . .”<sup>44</sup>

Antebellum Saratoga guests also included the intelligentsia. Such New York authors as Washington Irving and Catherine Maria Sedgwick stayed there in the 1820s. Thirty-some years later, Susan B. Anthony’s initiation of women’s rights meetings in the area demonstrates the flexibility of Saratoga Springs’ social rules and the diversity of its visitors.<sup>45</sup>

Beginning in the 1830s, according to Corbett, the urban middle class began to visit resorts. Corbett appears to define this urban middle class based on religious values which,

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 73-74.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 212-13, 228; Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 71.

<sup>44</sup> John [sic] Buckingham, *America: Historical, Statistical, and Descriptive*, vol. 2 (London: n.p., 1841), 435; quoted in Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 114. James Buckingham is the correct author; Sterngass mistakenly gives his first name as “John” in his endnote.

<sup>45</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 214-19, 236.

in turn, dictated social activities. The Methodists and Baptists at Saratoga decried such “sinful” activities as drinking, nonobservance of the Sabbath, dancing, and playing cards because of what Corbett terms their “middle-class values,” which he states were held by a majority of Saratoga visitors beginning sometime in the 1830s-1840s. The elite Episcopalians had no qualms about participating in the frowned-upon activities. Within twenty years, Saratoga Springs hotels typically catered to different crowds based on perceived social status; Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston elite groups stayed at separate hotels and followed their own social dicta. According to Corbett, Saratoga “took the early lead among the resorts in being open to visitors by providing the greatest range of facilities, and it maintained its lead throughout the nineteenth century.”<sup>46</sup>

The assertion that the middle class went to resorts in antebellum times is controversial. Corbett argues that resort elitism in some areas actually began to decline in the 1820s and that the middle class began to travel to different resorts at different times: “Tourism in New York State, not just aristocratic traveling, commenced in the early nineteenth century with the publication of guidebooks . . . this publication of guidebooks democratized travel because these once-exclusive itineraries for the well-bred were now open to anyone who could afford the trip.”<sup>47</sup> I argue that anyone who could afford the time and expense to travel to an antebellum resort was economically elite, regardless of

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 226-27. Barrett enumerates which hotel became associated with which faction: Congress Hall attracted Whigs; the United States Hotel, Democrats; and Union Hall, such “religious” types as the clergy, judges, and professors. See Barrett, *Good Old Summer Days*, 166.

<sup>47</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 8.



religious affiliation. Harris, whom Corbett criticizes, follows the traditional argument that antebellum resorts almost always attracted only elites and that the postbellum economic growth and boom in railroad construction precipitated the growth of a new urban middle class that then could afford resort visits.<sup>48</sup> As discussed later in this chapter, however, Lewis distinguishes between the elite and those who could afford only a few days at a Virginia springs resort.<sup>49</sup> Historian Cindy Aron agrees that few nonelites (e.g., farmers, teachers, lawyers, businessmen) could afford resort stays, but she notes an insurance agent's 1826 diary entry that indicates that he spent a week at an island for health and leisure purposes. Aron also discusses religious camp meetings that provided social encounters for nonelites. In sum, though, she states that middle-class vacations, "short pleasure trips," did not occur until mid-century when industrial and government bureaucracies began to develop.<sup>50</sup> De Vierville, however, remarks that resorts in general improved and increased the number of their accommodations during the Jacksonian era for the "democratic masses" and gives as an example, without specifying occupation, the large number of "citizens who fled the filthy cities for mountain watering places" during the 1832 cholera epidemic. Furthermore, he comments that "All levels of society and

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<sup>48</sup> Neil Harris, "On Vacation," in The Architectural League of New York and The Gallery Association of New York State, *Resorts of the Catskills* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 101-2.

<sup>49</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 336-38.

<sup>50</sup> Cindy Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 29-32, 46-47.

classes of society took to touring the spas and using their healing waters, whether they could afford it or not.”<sup>51</sup> The consensus, however, is that middle-class vacations occurred much more frequently after the Civil War than before it.

To understand who did frequent antebellum resorts in view of the disparate assertions above, the words of contemporary observers may aid. To counter De Vierville and Corbett’s assertions that the middle classes visited antebellum resorts, are the observations of William Burke, a physician commenting on White Sulphur Springs in the early 1850s: “To say that all the elite of the nation are annually seen here would not be true; but to say that a large portion of them, and of the learning, wit, beauty, elegance, and fashion of the States is here assembled, is certainly no exaggeration.”<sup>52</sup> In regard to the Virginia springs in general, Burke observed that the wealthy could afford bathing but not “persons of moderate circumstances living in cities, and workers in manufactories.” In his view, public authorities and employers needed to provide arrangements for the nonelites to bathe.<sup>53</sup> As a second example, the *Southern Literary Messenger* noted in 1837 that at the

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<sup>51</sup> Jonathan Paul De Vierville, “American Healing Waters: A Chronology (1513-1946) and Historical Survey of America’s Major Springs, Spas, and Health Resorts, Including a Review of their Medicinal Virtues, Therapeutic Methods, and Health Care Practices” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1992), 167, 211.

<sup>52</sup> William Burke, *The Virginia Mineral Springs: With Remarks on Their Use, the Diseases to Which They Are Applicable, and in Which They Are Contra-Indicated: Accompanied by a Map of Routes and Distances* (Richmond: Ritchies & Dunnivant, 1853), 42.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-3.

Virginia springs “are usually congregated the elite of our country.”<sup>54</sup> In fairness to Corbett, Lewis quotes one southerner who in 1839 disdainfully stated that “every class” was to be found at Saratoga and other northern resorts because of inexpensive day-trip fares.<sup>55</sup> In addition, the 1852 publication, *The Traveler’s Guide for Montreal, Quebec and Saratoga Springs*, reported that the Congress Spring Hotel consisted of “the rich and poor, the learned and unlearned, the wise and unwise.”<sup>56</sup> The use of the phrases “every class” and “rich and poor,” however, seems exaggerated to me in view of the long work-days and low wages facing many workers of that era. Perhaps, however, contemporary observers viewed Saratoga as more of a melting pot of society than the Virginia springs and thus exaggerated the small differences in Saratoga’s socioeconomic strata. To the contrary, the Virginia springs clientele represented a more homogenous, elite group.

I also conjecture that some scholars may misinterpret the word “class” in antebellum writings regarding resort visitors. Even though Buckingham wrote in 1841 that “Saratoga affords the best opportunity that a stranger can enjoy for seeing American

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<sup>54</sup> “A Visiter [*sic*],” “Virginia Springs: Remarks on the Mountain Region and Mineral Springs of Virginia; Especially on the Red Sulphur Springs,” *Southern Literary Messenger* 3 (May 1837): 281, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed July 23, 2004).

<sup>55</sup> *Six Weeks in Fauquier. Being of the Substance of a Series of Familiar Letters, Illustrating the Scenery, Localities, Medicinal Virtues, and General Characteristics of the White Sulphur Springs, at Warrenton, Fauquier County, Virginia* (New York: Samuel Colman, 1839), v-vi; quoted in Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 329. Lewis does not identify the southerner by name.

<sup>56</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 226; *The Traveler’s Guide for Montreal, Quebec and Saratoga Springs* (Buffalo: n.p., 1852), 26; quoted in Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 226.

society on the largest scale, and embracing the greatest variety of classes at the same time,” he also finished his paragraph by stating that “except for the small shopkeeper and mere labourer, every other class has its representatives here.” As examples, he gave

“rich merchants from New Orleans, and the wealthy planter from Arkansas, Alabama, and Tennessee; with the more haughty and more polished landowner from Georgia . . . the successful speculator in real estate from Kentucky, Ohio, Missouri, and Michigan; . . . the grave Quaker . . . the official functionary from Washington, and the learned professor from New Haven . . . all mingle together in strange variety. . . .”<sup>57</sup>

I speculate that Buckingham used the word “class” to mean certain occupations or lifestyles. His observations, therefore, really refer to Saratoga visitors hailing from a cross-section of the country and engaged in a variety of occupations or lifestyles that implied wealth, prestige, and/or distinction. This nuanced definition of class therefore gives credence to the hypothesis that the middle and lower economic classes rarely visited Saratoga.

Another way to examine the classes visiting the resorts is to determine how contemporary observers viewed the “middle class” as contrasted to the laboring class. One antebellum reviewer of a text on the history of Virginia, in comparing Virginia’s lack of progress (“social and physical greatness”) to that of Ohio and Massachusetts, concluded that the deficiency in Virginia stemmed from the “comparative absence of a producing middle class; from whose ranks the rich, the powerful, and the great are constantly coming

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<sup>57</sup> Buckingham, *America*, vol. 2, 435, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbtn:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(lhbtn6750bdiv27\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbtn:@field(DOCID+@lit(lhbtn6750bdiv27))); , Library of Congress, American Memory (accessed September 12, 2004).

forth, leaving room for those next in order. . . .”<sup>58</sup> An 1860 article discussing American aristocracy commented that “The poor satirize the mechanic for waste and fashion; they, the middle class; they, the aristocracy. . . .” The article concluded that intellect along with wealth and refinement defined aristocracy; conversely, “the ignorant laborer pounding stones . . . thinks only of his wages and his pot of beer” and is “too tired at night to study books.”<sup>59</sup>

Obviously, antebellum society understood the concept of a middle class, which from the above quotations can be deduced to consist of those who, status-wise, ranked above the poor and engaged in occupations requiring more than hard physical labor. In the parlance of Marx and Engels, society consisted of the working class (the proletariat) and the capitalist class (the bourgeoisie). However, the term “petty bourgeoisie,” coined to describe the middle class, were those who were economically independent or self-employed such as storekeepers, artisans, or independent farmers (not farm laborers). In 1776, about two thirds of Americans fell into the petty bourgeoisie category.<sup>60</sup> From 1820 to 1840, the country saw a 127% increase in manufacturing, thus causing a need for urban

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<sup>58</sup> Review of *A History of Virginia, From its Discovery and Settlement by Europeans, to the Present Time, vol. 2, Containing the History of the Colony and of the State from 1763 to the Retrocession of Alexandria, in 1847, with a Review of the Present Condition of Virginia*, by Robert R. Howison, *The Princeton Review* 20 (April 1848): 203, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed July 23, 2004).

<sup>59</sup> J.T. Wiswall, “Causes of Aristocracy,” *Debow’s Review, Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress, and Resources* 28 (November 1860): 555, 557-58, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed July 23, 2004).

<sup>60</sup> Reeve Vanneman and Lynn Weber Cannon, *The American Perception of Class, Labor and Social Change*, ed. Paula Rayman and Carmen Sirianni (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 3, 11, 53.

workers.<sup>61</sup> The need for urban factory supervisors, those who ranked above the floor workers, yet did not own the factory, saw an increase in the middle class numbers. Thus, a redefinition of “middle class” became necessary because the supervisors technically were not self-employed. Even with the increasing ranks of the middle class, I find Corbett and De Vierville’s reasoning incorrect. While factory owners may have been able to take time off from work, the possibility is unlikely that floor supervisors or clerical workers in general enjoyed much time off, which if granted, was typically unpaid.

Most Saratoga visitors hailed from cities in both the North and the South. While many initially came as invalids to seek a water cure, others first came for preventative health reasons: to escape the dreaded malaria, cholera, and other summer fever epidemics that occasionally swept the country. As might be expected, the majority of guests came from New York and urban New England.<sup>62</sup> Philadelphians divided their time among several resorts, including Cape May and White Sulphur Springs, presumably because Saratoga Springs itself did not command a sufficient critical mass of Philadelphia elites. Until the issue of slavery heated up with such controversial legislation as the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, southern visitors—typically a party consisted of a white male with a black slave serving as attendant—comprised a significant minority of visitors.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1945), 9.

<sup>62</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 237-38; Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 36.

<sup>63</sup> Sterngass notes that in 1852, a New York judge freed the slaves of a Jonathan Lemmon while on a visit to that state, claiming that emancipation under New York law

In the early days, northern and southern visitors reached Saratoga by stagecoach, which traveled at best seven miles an hour.<sup>64</sup> When the railroad in 1833 reached from Albany to Schenectady and on to Saratoga Springs, visitation jumped by one third to a total of about eight thousand guests per season.<sup>65</sup> By 1850, the number of guests, according to the *National Era*, had more than quadrupled, to thirty-five thousand per summer.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, according to Corbett, antebellum “Saratoga Springs was the dominant resort for the fashionable and the rich.”<sup>67</sup>

These and other early resorts in the Saratoga region prospered, according to Corbett, if they adhered to the same principles leading to the major English resorts’ popularity: entrepreneurial leadership to plan accommodations and amenities; the availability of public spaces and sanitary infrastructure; provision of entertainment and leisure activities; access to churches to offset the perceived licentious behavior often associated with a spa; and sufficient service employees and building craftsmen.<sup>68</sup> For

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applied to slaves traveling through it. Naturally, outrage in southern papers and threats of boycotts against northern resorts resulted. See Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 27-28.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>65</sup> George Waller, *Saratoga*, 75-76. To show the inaccuracy of estimates, contemporary writers placed the number of visitors to Saratoga Springs as 12,000 (1823); 12,000 (1827); 3,000 (1832); 3,500 (1833); and 8,000 (1833). See Aron, *Working at Play*, 20; Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 226; Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 18, 21-22.

<sup>66</sup> Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 22.

<sup>67</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 239.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 17.

example, Ballston Spa faltered in part because Low expected an immediate return on his investment in building construction, adopted a “hands-off” attitude due to preoccupation with other business concerns, and refused to allow other capitalists to invest in the resort. Other nearby resorts in the late 1700s did maintain a satisfactory infrastructure for guests but failed because they lacked service workers and such public spaces as permanent gardens or promenades.<sup>69</sup>

Other resorts in the North also drew upon the European tradition for inspiration. In the 1820s, Hudson River boat passengers traveled upstream through New York as an extension of the European landscape romanticism. Just as Europeans were drawn to the Alps or to England’s Lake District as part of a movement back to nature, so were some early Americans attracted to the Adirondacks. In keeping with the Romantic trend of focusing on folklore, supernaturalism, and regional fairy tales, Catskill visitors were lured by local lore and provincial stories, notably those by Washington Irving.<sup>70</sup> In addition, while travelers to the Catskills did not in general seek curative effects of mineral springs, they, like those visiting the Saratoga area, sought relief from summer fevers and cholera.

In 1823 the Pine Orchard House, later known as the Catskill Mountain House, opened, built in the Greek Revival style characteristic of the Northern Spring Region resorts.<sup>71</sup> It signaled the beginning of resorts in the Catskills and became part of the

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 26, 30-39.

<sup>70</sup> Alf Evers, “Early Days,” in *Resorts of the Catskills*, 1-3; Betsy Blackmar, “Going to the Mountains: A Social History,” in *Resorts of the Catskills*, 72-74.

<sup>71</sup> Lawrence, “Southern Spas,” 3; Evers, “Early Days,” 4.



American and European elites' Grand Tour from Niagara Falls to Boston.<sup>72</sup> The Catskill Mountain House along with other antebellum Catskill hotels all contained extensive verandahs, used for elite promenades as in Saratoga, but more so for the Romantic ideal of communing with nature. From the security of the porch, guests could appreciate the rugged beauty of the Adirondacks without needing to venture into the wilderness.<sup>73</sup> Early travelers experienced difficult and long horseback or stage rides to reach the Catskills, but the journeys constituted an exciting adventure in and of themselves. Some hotel ads boasted of their hard-to-reach location high in the mountains.<sup>74</sup> Probably the remoteness and inaccessibility of the early Catskill resorts added to the sense of eliteness for the upper class; one had to have enough time and money to pay for such excursions. As happened at Saratoga Springs, the middle class began traveling to the Catskills in the 1850s. Steamboat access and affordable rail prices opened the region to a wider cross-section of society. With increasing urbanization and a simultaneous emphasis on health reform, city residents primarily from New York, eastern Pennsylvania, and New Jersey frequented the Catskills in the summer.<sup>75</sup> Guests from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds did not intermingle as a rule; one author points out that a "paradox of clusterings and exclusions

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<sup>72</sup> Blackmar, "Going to the Mountains," 72.

<sup>73</sup> Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., *Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise, 1850-1950* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2003), 3-4; Elizabeth Crowley, "A Room with a View," in *Resorts of the Catskills*, 17.

<sup>74</sup> Blackmar, "Going to the Mountains," 75.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-76.

within individual hotels” overlaid what might have appeared to an outsider to have been a democratization of visitors at any one hotel.<sup>76</sup>

In the Southern Spring Region core, the Virginia springs resorts were the earliest of any watering holes in the South and were the best known of southern spas. Old Warm Springs (later known as Berkeley Bath Springs or Berkeley Springs), Little Warm Springs (later known as Hot Springs), Sweet Springs, and White Springs began attracting tourists in the mid-1700s. As was the case for northern resorts, health concerns initiated early visits.<sup>77</sup>

In the early colonial years, guests received rude accommodations and few amenities at the Virginia watering holes. At Berkeley Bath Springs, canvas tents, covered wagons, and primitive log buildings served as guest dwellings. The one bathing house consisted of pine brush serving as a screen of sorts around a large earthen bath hole. Guests brought their own food. While the curative powers attributed to the waters attracted invalids, horseracing, drinking, dancing, and other amusements entertained other guests.<sup>78</sup>

Within twenty-five years after the end of the Revolutionary War, Virginia spring room and board provisions had vastly improved in response to increasing numbers of guests. By 1780, at Berkeley Bath Springs two-story adjacent brick classical-styled

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>77</sup> Amory, *Last Resorts*, 17-18.

<sup>78</sup> Katherine M. Hunter, Bernard E. Hunter, and John Chumaseo, “Some Notes on Berkeley Springs, West Virginia,” *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, 2d ser., 16 (July 1936): 347, <http://www.jstor.org>.

buildings catered to male visitors respectively as the “Gentlemen’s Bathhouse” and the “Reading Room.”<sup>79</sup> By 1834 a four-story edifice with a wide front piazza dignified by twelve columns had replaced the crude lodge the military officer cured of gout had built about eighty years earlier at Fauquier White Sulphur Springs.<sup>80</sup> In 1839 one visitor noted that White Sulphur Springs was planning additions to accommodate twelve hundred guests; meanwhile, nearby Sweet Springs had begun construction on a large hotel to house four hundred visitors while Blue Sulphur was improving its infrastructure and hotel for two hundred guests.<sup>81</sup>

Many Virginia springs hotels commanded two to four stories, often in the English Palladian style, with one- or two-story wings extending for several hundred feet on each side of the main building. In front of each hotel stood a public space containing pavilions and bath houses. Guest cottages--rendered in a Palladian style at some resorts or simply fashioned as log dwellings at others--also lined up on the perimeter of the public square. At Blue Sulphur Springs, for instance, the red brick main building boasted a three-story promenade; Red Sulphur Springs consisted of two large hotels flanked by several cottage rows.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Hunter, “Some Notes on Berkeley Springs, West Virginia,” [photo] [n.p.].

<sup>80</sup> Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 71-72.

<sup>81</sup> Mark Pencil [Mary Hagner], *The White Sulphur Papers; or, Life at the Springs of Western Virginia* (New York: Samuel Colman, 1839), 35, 49-50, 64-65.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-65.

Palladian landscape design, similar to that found on many southern plantations, which in turn were influenced by Jefferson's embracing of the Palladian villa style, differed from the northern resort layout. Northern resorts, especially Saratoga Springs, consisted of several hotels in an urban setting; one observer noted of antebellum Saratoga that it appeared like "an immense wilderness of hotels—like stray cabbages in a potato patch."<sup>83</sup> Contrasted to the northern urban settings of Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs was the pastoral, rural environment of the Virginia springs resorts where typically only one hotel was surrounded by rows of cabins. This "romantic voluntary simplicity" of cabins situated about a main lodge proved to be the prototype for resort landscape after the Civil War.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 86.

<sup>84</sup> Lawrence, "Southern Spas: Sources of the American Resort Tradition," 4-6; Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 73-75. Lawrence and Lewis disagree about the architecture styles of the resorts in the South. Lewis uses the term "Greek Revival" to describe both northern and southern period architecture. Lawrence carefully distinguishes the Northern Spring Region from the Southern Spring Region partially on the grounds that many northern resorts were identified by Greek Revival architecture and that many southern resorts were influenced by Jefferson's affinity for Palladian style. Both styles do have English roots—for example, Inigo Jones was a disciple of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio—which bolsters the idea that English spas influenced in many ways the appearance of American resorts. The two major shared architectural ideas that can be gleaned from Lawrence and Lewis are (1) the wide verandahs common to both Greek Revival and Palladian resort design on which the elite could promenade to heighten their exclusiveness and (2) the southern resort villa concept in which a central lodge was surrounded by guest cottages or cabins in a rural setting as opposed to northern resorts based in towns.

For more information on Jeffersonian classicism and Greek revival, see Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 31-35, 38-47; Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture: From the First Colonial Settlements to the National Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), 352-80; and Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America: Being an Account of Important Trends in American Architecture and American Life Prior to the War Between the States* (London: Oxford University Press, 1944; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1964), 17-21, 192-3, 258-62 (page citations

White Sulphur Springs, the most fashionable of the Virginia resorts and located in southern Appalachia, ironically included no hotel until 1858, according to Lawrence, and serves as the “best example of the simple rustic character of the Virginia springs. Its elite deigned to stay in small cabins or boardinghouses.”<sup>85</sup> Lewis, however, paints quite a different portrait of White Sulphur Springs. She contends that it did possess a central hotel as far back as the 1830s, and that rather than displaying the simple rusticity to which Lawrence alludes, the White Sulphur Springs followed the elaborate English landscaping tradition. Graveled paths in geometric patterns intersected at a central sundial. Trees were carefully left intact in strategic places along cottage rows to provide shade. In the late 1850s a fountain and new hotel, later fondly known as the “Old White” (probably the hotel

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are to the reprint edition). Morrison and Whiffen’s descriptions of Palladian and Jeffersonian classical architectural styles--a two-story central building with a long series of low one-story wings sometimes terminating into pavilions--dovetail with Lawrence’s view. Hamlin also comments on the Jeffersonian influence in western and northern Virginia but wryly adds that “Generally, however, the history of Greek Revival architecture in the southern states is a confused story of local influences, of conservatism in taste, and of a sudden and late flowering.” See Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 370; Whiffen, *American Architecture since 1780*, 35; Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America*, 193.

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence, “Southern Spas: Sources of the American Resort Tradition,” 5. Lawrence’s assertion about the resort’s simple rustic nature leaves one pondering if he is indeed referring to the same resort described in the next paragraphs from information supplied by Lewis. To put the matter to rest, one observer in 1839 wrote that the springs did possess a hotel, one which accommodated more than one hundred guests and where could be found “clean white sheets, not always to be had at watering places.” See Pencil, *White Sulphur Papers*, 35-36.

to which Lawrence refers) were constructed.<sup>86</sup> The thrust of the design above all signified the landscape and architecture of the plantations from which many of the guests came: a central majestic, massive building (whether hotel or plantation house) constituting the apex of a hierarchy of adjacent, less important structures (whether guest cottages or slave dwellings).<sup>87</sup> In addition, the manicured lawns and symmetrical geometry of buildings with public spaces juxtaposed with the rugged isolated mountains heightened the antebellum literary theme of man versus nature.<sup>88</sup> The romanticism that captivated the visitors to the Catskills also enthralled the Virginia springs visitors. In both areas visitors had to make arduous journeys through wilderness to stay at some resorts; the exciting travels alone appealed to the Romantic side of the travelers. Then, once arrived at either the Adirondack Catskill hotels or the southern Appalachian Virginia springs resorts, visitors again could indulge in their Romantic selves by admiring the wild natural scenery from the orderly confines of the resort.

Travelers' accounts in the 1850s described the Blue Ridge Mountains of western Virginia as "wild," "sublime," or "romantic."<sup>89</sup> Burke, for instance, wrote of standing on the mountains to "raise the soul from groveling thoughts of self to the contemplation of the God of Nature." The "Visiter" to Red Sulfur Springs in 1837 pronounced the mineral

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<sup>86</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 73-75; Amory, *Last Resorts*, 453.

<sup>87</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 104-5.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 116-33.

<sup>89</sup> Allen W. Batteau, *The Invention of Appalachia, The Anthropology of Form and Meaning*, ed. J. David Sapir (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990), 30.

water as “the cool, pellucid nectar of nature’s own production” and, in so doing, evoked the name of “Alpheus, thou most romantic of lovers.”<sup>90</sup> The employment of these adjectives to describe the natural scenery surrounding the western Virginia springs not only exemplifies the preoccupation with romanticism in the eastern United States but also foreshadows the concept developed in later decades of southern Appalachia as a region distinct from the rest of the country. The Visiter intuitively grasped this with his observation that “If [western Virginia] possesses not the ... refined society, great wealth and greater luxury of Eastern Virginia, it enjoys blessings peculiar to itself, and adapted to the habits. . .of its inhabitants. *There* [italics original] nature appears in all her magnificence.”<sup>91</sup>

As Americans moved westward, cutting down forests and draining swamps in an effort to tame a “wild” nature (again, the literary theme of man versus nature), they simultaneously sanctified nature as the wilderness lessened. By sanctifying or consecrating nature, Americans began to elevate nature as an element apart from their daily lives in increasingly “civilized” or populated areas. Therefore, as southern Appalachia became known almost exclusively in the eastern United States for its “wild” or “sublime” scenery, its affiliation with nature caused it to be considered a special place remote from the rest of the country, a “region apart.”<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Burke, *Virginia Mineral Springs*, 5; A Visiter [sic], “Virginia Springs,” 283. Lewis gives several examples of similar language from diaries and letters. See Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 127-30.

<sup>91</sup> A Visiter [sic], “Virginia Springs,” 281.

<sup>92</sup> Batteau, *Invention of Appalachia*, 20, 22, 25, 28-30, 33.

Virginia springs visitors in colonial times perhaps represented as much an intermingling of society as did Saratoga Springs in antebellum times or the English town of Bath, which allowed the sick poor to use the city bath houses. At Berkeley Warm Springs, for instance, those seeking water cures consisted of the planter elite, rural settlers, and Native Americans.<sup>93</sup>

In time, however, as the Virginia springs began to attract leisure-seekers, they acquired an air of exclusiveness among guests. Because of their remoteness in the southern Appalachian mountains and in the Shenandoah Valley, their stature depended in part on the difficulty in reaching them, again just as some early Catskill resorts used their rugged isolation as a drawing card. The farther from home, the greater the allure and eliteness associated with the resorts.<sup>94</sup> And as was true for travelers to the Catskills, getting to the Virginia springs constituted a great adventure. A Cumberland Gap resort brochure in the early 1890s recalled that Deep South planters on the way to the Virginia springs journeyed “with extravagance and luxury” through the gap and “camped at night by the roadside with all the paraphernalia and magnificence of an Eastern caravan.”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Bridenbaugh, “Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America,” 161.

<sup>94</sup> Lawrence, “Southern Spas,” 7-8.

<sup>95</sup> Cumberland Gap Park Co., *Cumberland Gap Park, a Luxurious Health Resort in the Cumberland Mountains Situated Near Cumberland Gap, Tenn.: Four Seasons' Hotel, Casino, Sanatorium, Sanitorium, The National Spa; Sulphur, Lithia and Chalybeate Springs* (Harrogate, Tenn.: Cumberland Gap Park Co., 1892), 23.



Recognizing that they could capitalize on the elite, proprietors built more substantial lodgings and charged accordingly. A twenty-day stay, for example, at White Sulphur Springs in 1831 cost one family \$114.50 for themselves, servants, and horses. Chief Justice Roger Taney and his entourage of two women, one child, and three servants spent almost \$700 for one season at the Fauquier White Sulphur Springs in the late 1850s. In contrast, Virginia female domestic servants earned ninety-six cents per week, including board, in 1850; Virginia day laborers were paid sixty-five cents per day. Obviously, only the upper class possessed the time and money to stay at the Virginia springs. Visitors who could afford to stay only a few days, thus marking them lower than the elite on the socioeconomic hierarchy, found themselves ostracized from social events. Wealthier guests who could afford to stay longer at the resorts, but were still poorer than the elite, could enjoy equal access to social activities as long as they treated the elite in a deferential manner in their fraternization.<sup>96</sup>

William Burke commented with a hint of condescension that “The Society which frequents the Virginia Springs is for the most part the elite of the country. Saratoga and other northern watering places being accessible by railroads to persons in every condition of life and at trifling expense, the mass of visitors is of course composed of all sorts of people.” Burke continued to speculate that the relative democratization of Saratoga Springs’ guests caused unease among visitors of different stations whereas the smaller

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<sup>96</sup> Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 324-26, 336-38, 451-52. Lewis provides other interesting wage information, too, which she located in DeBow’s *Statistical View of the United States* (1854). In addition, Lewis points out that when ill, at the behest of their owners, slaves bathed in the Virginia springs. She does not mention, however, if slaves used a separate bathing area or any other segregated facility.

number of visitors to the Virginia Springs could enjoy the “relinquishment of formality, a republican simplicity of manners” among those of the same class.<sup>97</sup> As southern resorts gained more guests, some fell in prestige: Berkeley Bath Springs, for example, lost visitors to more remote southern spas.<sup>98</sup>

Spring visitors, however, did not treat locals or rural travelers with the disdain that they accorded the poorer resort guests. Locals were not shunned; indeed, they provided goods and foodstuffs to the resorts and worked as resort laborers, thus fueling the local economy. As a foreshadowing of the late 1800s and early 1900s conception of southern mountaineers as “contemporary ancestors,” guests perceived local inhabitants as Romantic beings, those who, according to one visitor, must “lead a merry life in the Green Wood.” On the other hand, Saratoga’s non-elite visitors--mechanics, shopkeepers, and others--annoyed many of its elite guests for “eclips[ing] the fashionables.”<sup>99</sup>

Southern spa visitors came from more rural areas than did northern resort guests, who typically lived in urban areas. Most visitors to the Virginia springs naturally lived in that state; Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina also provided a fair number of

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<sup>97</sup> Hunter, “Some Notes on Berkeley Springs, West Virginia,” 348. Hunter does not give a citation for Burke’s quotation. Lewis asserts that “the top of antebellum, and especially Southern, society” traveled to the Virginia springs. This statement contrasts with Corbett’s view, as stated earlier in this chapter, which considers Saratoga Springs to be the most fashionable. See Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 3.

<sup>98</sup> Lawrence, “Southern Spas,” 4.

<sup>99</sup> Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 146-47, 340-41.

Virginia springs guests. Others hailed from the Deep South plantations and as far west as Texas. Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia residents mingled with guests from New Orleans and Mobile at the springs.<sup>100</sup> Even though they considered themselves the arbiters of social etiquette at the resorts, southerners welcomed their northern elite counterparts for much of the antebellum period. However, just as southerners began to avoid Saratoga Springs in the politically contentious 1850s, so did northerners simultaneously begin to shun the Virginia springs.<sup>101</sup>

Guests came to southern spas for the same reasons as did those who traveled to Saratoga Springs or to the Catskills: to seek cure from a disease, to escape summer coastal fevers and other epidemics, to enjoy the natural scenery or landscaping, to lessen depression or pathos in a different setting, and to engage in social activities away from their daily routines.<sup>102</sup> Because the South held the dubious distinction of being the unhealthiest region of the country, thousands of southerners came to the springs each season to drink or

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 372-73, 448-49. Chambers analyzed the hotel ledgers of Buffalo Lithia Springs and Yellow Sulphur Springs, both in Virginia, for the summers of 1857 and 1858 and found that almost 99% of the visitors listed southern locations for their places of residence. See Thomas A. Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease: Promoting Health and Leisure at Saratoga Springs, New York and the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860" (Ph.D. diss., The College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1999), 335-36.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 192-96, 305, 342-43.

bathe in the water or to live in a relatively mosquito-free environment.<sup>103</sup> The spring mineral water was believed to cure diseases ranging from deafness to paralysis.<sup>104</sup>

Antebellum physicians categorized mineral spring water according to three attributes: its ability to stimulate, sedate, or to restore the body's energy. After the Civil War, the classification of mineral spring water became more detailed and sophisticated. With names often based on the largest percentage of elemental, cationic, anionic, or colored salt precipitate, springs gained reputations in one of these three categories. White Sulphur Springs, for example, was known for its stimulant properties; Red Sulphur Springs, for its sedative characteristics; and Red Sweet Springs for its roborants.<sup>105</sup> Disagreement and discussion often occurred among physicians and guests as to the exact therapeutic powers of each spring.<sup>106</sup> Visitors either drank or bathed in the waters, although only the thermal springs had bath houses. While visitors often engaged in elaborate social rituals of drinking the water at prescribed times, they generally bathed whenever they wished.<sup>107</sup>

While bathing in of itself proved to be a relaxing, even sensual, leisure activity, Virginia springs guests also engaged in the more usual recreational pursuits. Tenpins,

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 192-96, 225. Lewis and Chambers provide chronologies of various epidemics in pre-1860 America. See Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen," 196-97; Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease," 148n78.

<sup>104</sup> Aron, *Working at Play*, 20.

<sup>105</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 201-2.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 207-8.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 278, 282.

shuffleboard, walks, horseback rides, hunting, dancing, singing, fishing, and card playing comprised some of the more common activities.<sup>108</sup>

The relationships formed and maintained through visits at the Virginia springs constituted the foundation for recreational activities and return trips. As at Saratoga and the English spas, social rules lessened in rigidity. And, as at Saratoga, flirtation with the opposite sex was a prime activity. While Saratoga Springs lacked a master of ceremonies, Colonel William Pope served as the most famous staff member in that post at White Sulphur Springs. His “Billing, Wooing, and Cooing Society” began with strict etiquette rules for the courtship of females; its male membership, a requirement to be considered one of the elite, eventually reached about seventeen hundred before 1839.<sup>109</sup>

Just as at Saratoga Springs, Baptists and Methodists disapproved of several of the amusements, including drinking, and therefore clustered in their own groups at the Virginia springs resorts.<sup>110</sup> Condemnation of alcohol consumption as a sin increased in proportion to its widening use across the United States. At the same time that alcohol use peaked at

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 313, 348-50, 355-60.

<sup>109</sup> Amory, *Last Resorts*, 456; Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 208; Pencil, *White Sulphur Papers*, 138-139. Lewis discusses at length the relationships between men and women, especially among women. She points out that plantation life limited tremendously the possibility for establishing friendships outside one’s family and that the Virginia spring resorts, with their relaxed atmosphere, provided a casual yet socially approved way to bond. See Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 408-13.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 456-61.

Saratoga in the 1830s, for example, Lyman Beecher was establishing the American Temperance Society in the North.<sup>111</sup>

The temperance movement constituted just one of several reform movements sweeping across the northern United States during and after the Jacksonian era. From 1828, the year Jackson was elected President, to the beginning of the Civil War, reform movements affecting every aspect of American society arose almost simultaneously. As Commager points out, reformers saw all societal alterations as interrelated, as “all part of a larger moral pattern [in which] neither salvation nor divinity was divisible.”<sup>112</sup>

The reforms actually stemmed from religious, economic, and political changes. The Great Awakening of the 1740s, for instance, split New England Congregationalists into the “Halfway Covenant” intellectual branch, which bent toward Unitarianism, and into Jonathan Edwards’ “New Light” branch, which emphasized emotional spiritual experiences. Cycles of religious renewal continued in the next decades, particularly in New York, where the Adventist, Wesleyan Methodist, Millerite, and Mormon movements originated.<sup>113</sup> Transcendentalism, a movement in the Unitarian church to embrace parts of

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<sup>111</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 190-94. Corbett interestingly points out that beer in the antebellum period contained three times the alcohol content of modern beer and that Americans consumed four times the amount of spirits per capita in antebellum times as they do now.

<sup>112</sup> Henry Steele Commager, *The Era of Reform, 1830-1860* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1960), 11. Commager believes that the reform movement achieved most of its momentum in New England and secondarily in New York and Ohio. He attributes its lack of southern support to the perspective that the South considered almost all aspects of reforms to be anti-slavery at their root.

<sup>113</sup> Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell

Edwards' theology, spawned reform movements in its attempt to "to harmonize man with moral order."<sup>114</sup> From these religious experiences came reformers who equated good deeds with godliness and some of whom, particularly the Millerites and the Adventists, believed that the end of the world was near.<sup>115</sup>

The American economy changed during the era as well. The North became home to manufacturing and commerce while the South remained overwhelmingly agrarian and dependent on a slave workforce. The completion of the Erie Canal, the advent of steamships, and the increased construction of railroads resulted in better transportation, allowing for increased mobility. Increased immigration and a rise in the reproduction rate intensified urban growth in the North. In spite of the Panic of 1837, the country as a whole prospered during the decades. As a result, those members of a growing middle class who had the time, money, and education began to call for reform measures to deal with urban crime, disease, alcohol, poverty, and racial, ethnic, and religious prejudice. At the same time, in the 1830s, northern reformers intensified efforts to emancipate slaves.<sup>116</sup>

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University Press, 1950; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 7-13 passim (page citations are to the reprint edition). Cross explores one particular region of New York in terms of the religious ultraism that gave impetus to reform movements.

<sup>114</sup> Commager, *Era of Reform*, 8-9. Commager states that the reform movement of 1830-1860 was a product of Transcendentalism without delving into various religious movements as Cross does.

<sup>115</sup> Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers: 1815-1860*, American Century Series (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 3.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-10.

Politically, the country experienced intra-party squabbling among Democrat-Republicans, once the Federalists disbanded, and then found itself in political turmoil again as the nascent Whig party rose to battle the Democrat-Republicans. Reformers took issue with the ensuing spoils systems and election abuses and lobbied Congress for political causes, including abolition, temperance, and labor laws.<sup>117</sup>

In particular, concerning labor laws, reformers or those in the skilled labor movement pushed for such reforms as an eight-hour or ten-hour work day, child protection laws, and for an end to Sunday workdays for postal employees.<sup>118</sup> While the reformers did not win legislation calling for an eight-hour work day, both artisan and factory workers by the 1840s enjoyed a ten-hour day rather than the traditional sunrise-to-sunset work day.<sup>119</sup> Even with a shortened work day and an average increase in pay in during the reform period, workers still lacked the time and money to enjoy any vacation except for an occasional picnic or day trip, much less an excursion to a health resort.<sup>120</sup>

Health resorts also underwent change during the reform era. As part of the general reform culture to enable the populace to achieve self-mastery in a time of religious, economic, and political shifts, reformers introduced various health enhancement movements to replace or supplement such heroic traditional medical practices as blood-

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 6-8.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 8, 180, 190; Harris, "On Vacation," 102; Schlesinger, *Age of Jackson*, 138.

<sup>119</sup> Walters, *American Reformers*, 188-90; Schlesinger, *Age of Jackson*, 342-43.

<sup>120</sup> Harris, "On Vacation," 101.



letting or purging. Phrenology, spiritualism, mesmerism, homeopathy, and Thomsonian medicine flourished as all but three states by 1850 repealed medical licensing laws.<sup>121</sup>

The water cure, or hydropathy, constituted a key health reform and one which effected changes in some health resorts. The water-cure movement began in Europe in 1829 when an Austrian peasant, Vincenz Priessnitz, opened the Gräfenberg Water Cure. Priessnitz developed a regimen of applying cold water compresses and sheets soaked in cold water to patients to treat fractures, internal organ problems, and diseases in general. In fact, Priessnitz proclaimed that the water cure could heal all afflictions. If a patient adhered to a strict discipline of being swathed in cold-water wraps followed by sweating under blankets, drinking twelve to thirty glasses of cold water daily, eating certain coarse simple food, avoiding caffeine and alcohol, and engaging in outdoor exercise, he or she could return to good health over the course of three months to several years.<sup>122</sup>

The water cure differed from mineral spring treatment in that the former relied solely on the coolness of the water rather than on its chemical analysis. Moreover, the water cure obviously differed from thermal bath regimens in terms of heat although American and English hydropaths began using tepid water exclusively by the late 1850s.

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<sup>121</sup> Walters, *American Reformers*, 13; Marshall Scott Legan, "Hydropathy in America: A Nineteenth Century Panacea," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (May-June 1971): 267; Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 18; Jane B. Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health*, Contributions in Medical Studies, no. 17 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986), 8; Susan E. Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health*, Health, Society, and Policy, ed. Sheryl Ruzek and Irving Kenneth Zola (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 2.

<sup>122</sup> Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health*, xiii, 3-4; Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 8-9.

In all three treatments, however, patients could bathe or drink the water according to the advice of resort physicians, popular water-cure publications, or well-meaning family members or friends.<sup>123</sup>

The water cure movement especially found female converts from allopathic medical practices. Hydropaths believed that traditional or allopathic medicine through its heroic measures or use of drugs produced irregularities in pregnancy or irreversibly weakened women's constitutions. Traditional doctors believed that women were more susceptible to disease than men (they considered childbirth an illness) and that, in particular, elite women sheltered too much within their domestic sphere were particularly weak and prone to sickness. While hydropaths agreed that female elites were pampered, they saw women as capable of enjoying as robust health as men and held them responsible for their well-being. Hydropaths, for example, unlike allopaths, did not prescribe days of passive bed rest for mothers following childbirth. Rather, hydropaths called for new mothers to avoid caffeine; to eat fruits, vegetables, and dairy products; to engage in walking for exercise; and to use soaked compresses and to take baths. In addition, hydropaths advocated dress reform; they

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<sup>123</sup> Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health*, 3-4, 186; Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 19-22. Several water-cure publications gained a following in the 1840s. A traditionally-trained physician, Dr. Joel Shew, cofounder of the hydropathic movement in the United States with a fellow medical doctor, Dr. Russell Thatcher Trall, started the *Water-Cure Journal* in 1844, which published articles on the therapeutic benefits of hydropathy and printed patient testimonials. Shew also published the *Water-Cure Manual* in 1847, which described various types of baths (e.g., sitz bath, mouth bath, douche bath) to be used in combination with exercise, sleep, and diet. Trall followed in 1851 with his *Hydropathic Encyclopedia, a System of Hydropathy and Hygiene*, which discussed midwifery, physiology, hygiene, and other aspects of water cure treatment.

believed that corsets, tight and heavy clothing, skirts, and bustles could harm female reproductive systems. Such early women's rights leaders as Catherine Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Amelia Bloomer, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton supported the hydropathic movement, and upwards of one third of hydropathists were female, attesting to the affinity the movement held for women.<sup>124</sup>

By the late 1840s women and men could travel to thirty water-cure institutes located in the eastern United States, from Maine to Georgia. As was the case for mineral spring resorts, water cure institutes provided a venue for female social bonding outside the constraints of the home, but even more so due to their emphasis on women's health. In addition, just as mineral spring resorts branched out into recreation, water-cure institutes also began to enhance their walking regimens with such leisure activities as gymnastics, dancing, billiards, and bowling. New facilities for water cure were built in natural scenic areas; in other cases, water-cure institutes were added to already popular mineral spring resorts such as Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky.<sup>125</sup>

Between 1843 and 1900, over two hundred water-cure institutes existed at various times in the United States. Some failed during the Panic of 1857; most went out of business during the Civil War. In antebellum times, New York--one of the hotbeds of the Jacksonian reform movements--boasted at least sixty-four water-cure institutes, followed by Pennsylvania with thirty. Saratoga saw its first water-cure institute begin in 1855. It

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<sup>124</sup> Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health*, xiv, 51, 59, 61, 68-70, 164, 194.

<sup>125</sup> Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, 161; Legan, "Hydrophy in America," 276; Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 24, 41-42, 121.

specialized in female disorders and afflictions associated with overworked businessmen. Rather than strictly adhere to the Priessnitz regimen of cold water, simple diet, and outdoor exercise, the institute offered its elite guests a Russian bath--complete with a steam room, shampoo and rinsing room, and a cooling room--as well as musical entertainment and meals that included meat.<sup>126</sup>

The South also contained a fair number of water-cure institutes. The Milledgeville Institution and Oxford's Hydropathic Institute existed as early as 1846 in Georgia. The *Water-Cure Journal* that year commented on both institutes. For the Hydropathic Institute's opening that year, the *Journal* remarked of the "salubrious air, shady walks, and beautiful scenery" in which a patient might indulge while experiencing the "purifying bracing and invigorating effects of water . . . with a well regulated diet, pure air, and proper exercise."<sup>127</sup> A Savannah resident exclaimed upon her stay in Milledgeville: "One man who had been afflicted for twenty-five years with paralysis . . . resorted to the water-cure about three months ago, and . . . is now convalescing fast. . . . You never know the pleasure I experience at finding all my anticipations of the water-cure more than realized. . . . Oh! if the world were only rid of its learned quackery!"<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 96-97. The trend of the overworked American in a stressful workplace began, if Corbett's interpretation is correct, in the antebellum period.

<sup>127</sup> Henry Gaither and George G. Smith, "Hydropathic Institution at Oxford, Georgia," *Water-Cure Journal* 2 (Whole No. 21) (1 October 1846): 141.

<sup>128</sup> Isabella Waite, "Water-Cure in Milledgeville, Ga.," *Water-Cure Journal* 2 (Whole No. 18) (15 August 1846): 92.

Central Alabama contained water-cure institutes in Rockford and Auburn in the 1850s. Kentucky had at least seven water-cure resorts; Middle Tennessee offered two institutes, the Nashville Water-Cure and the Franklin Water-Cure and Physiological School near Winchester.<sup>129</sup> Interestingly, none of the Virginia springs resorts appeared to espouse water cure. It can be speculated that their attraction as mineral and thermal springs resorts combined with elite leisure activities provided sufficient revenue for their proprietors and that any additional health offerings would have diminished their elite, exclusive status as more of the populace sought the water cure.<sup>130</sup>

Native Americans first prized mineral springs in the United States for their therapeutic powers. In colonial times, entrepreneurs in the North, particularly around the Saratoga area, and in the South, based around the Virginia springs, patterned mineral spring resorts after such major English spas as Bath or Cheltenham. The mineral springs resorts first attracted a variety of invalids and patients; by the 1820s, several resorts also were offering leisure activities for their elite clientele. Only the elite possessed sufficient time and money to visit the resorts, although Corbett and Lewis conclude that the middle class was beginning to venture to Saratoga Springs and White Sulphur Springs. Most working-class and middle-class families could not afford to send women and children to resorts to relax or to escape summer fever epidemics; they were limited to occasional

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<sup>129</sup> Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 41-42, 109, 113-17, 121, 208-9.

<sup>130</sup> Burke, the resident physician at Rockbridge Alum Springs, does not mention the water cure or Priessnitz in regard to any of the Virginia springs he describes. See Burke, *Virginia Mineral Springs*, passim. Weiss and Kemble also do not include any water-cure institutes for Virginia in *The Great American Water-Cure Craze*.

picnics or day trips. While many northern artisan and factory workers successfully lobbied for a ten-hour work day in the 1840s, their low pay still prohibited time off. They received no pay on patriotic or religious holidays; in fact, the number of holidays in the United States in the 1800s was much fewer than the number of holidays in Europe in the 1500s.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, what one author terms the “Privileged Vacation” includes the description of travel to mineral springs in nineteenth-century America.<sup>132</sup>

The water cure attracted many adherents, particularly women, during the reform movements of the 1830s-1860. While many women could buy water-cure manuals for use in their homes because water cure did not dictate a particular type of water, the water-cure institutes that arose in scenic settings or as add-ons to traditional mineral springs resorts, still proved to be too expensive for most. Patients at the water-cure institutes typically paid \$5-\$10 per person each week for room, board, and treatment, which could last several months or even several years. Catherine Beecher, a strong proponent of hydropathy, concluded that time and money were necessary for successful treatment.<sup>133</sup> As a result of intensive staff labor required to meet the needs of their clientele, water-cure institutes tended to be relatively expensive and catered to the elite.<sup>134</sup> Unlike the English spas, which frequently offered free or cheap rates to the indigent sick, American health resorts apparently did not look after the poor in the same way, even during the reform movement

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<sup>131</sup> Harris, “On Vacation,” 101.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health*, 185.

<sup>134</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 96-97.

era, which included reform of poor laws and poor houses (almshouses). From the 1820s through 1860 American spas served an even more exclusive clientele than did their English counterparts of an earlier time period.

This chapter's analysis of visitors and why they visited resorts, resort architecture, and resort development overall can be applied to both northern and southern resorts in the antebellum period. As mentioned earlier, some of the Virginia springs are located within Campbell's definition of the Southern Highlands, or southern Appalachia. Indeed, the bellwether of southern elitist watering holes, the White Sulphur Springs, was located in southern Appalachia as were such other favorite antebellum touring destinations as the Blue Sulphur Springs and Sweet Springs.<sup>135</sup> The fact that guests purposefully and even eagerly came to the steep terrain of western Virginia from all parts of the country and from points abroad indicates that southern Appalachia did not isolate itself from the rest of the United States. Even though traveling to the springs consumed several days of rough, uncomfortable rides in the early antebellum period, many guests embraced such travel as either an adventure or a journey that made the springs seem even more special or elite because of their inaccessibility.<sup>136</sup> By the late 1850s, a venerable network of roads--from

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<sup>135</sup> See "Map of Routes & Distances to the Mineral Springs of Virginia" published by Ritchies & Dunnivant, Richmond, Virginia, insert in Burke, *Virginia Mineral Springs*, [n.p.].

<sup>136</sup> Pencil describes the route from Washington to White Sulphur taking three days if one went directly from Washington to Charlottesville first or six days if one went instead by boat from Washington to Fredericksburg and then to the west. Importantly, Pencil describes the stagecoach road through the mountains for the last one hundred miles as "very good," thus showing the upkeep of transportation infrastructure in part of southern Appalachia. See Pencil, *White Sulphur Papers*, 153-54.

Harper’s Ferry in the northeast to Abingdon in the southwest--coupled with the Central Rail Road terminus in Charlottesville provided relative ease of access to the western Virginia springs.<sup>137</sup> The fact that elites sought out the Virginia springs just as they sought out Saratoga Springs also indicates that the southern Appalachian springs did not constitute any sort of “second rate” destination: White Sulphur Springs rivaled Saratoga Springs as *the* resort to visit during the antebellum period. In the next chapter, I will examine antebellum resorts in parts of southern Appalachia, including Middle and East Tennessee. The trends and characteristics influencing the development of Saratoga Springs, the Catskills, and the Virginia springs effected and shaped the growth of East Tennessee resorts as well.

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<sup>137</sup> “Map of Routes & Distances to the Mineral Springs of Virginia” published by Ritchies & Dunnavant, Richmond, Virginia, insert into Burke, *Virginia Mineral Springs*, [n.p.].



## CHAPTER 3

### ANTEBELLUM SOUTHERN APPALACHIA: DESCRIPTION OF THE ECONOMY AND RESORTS IN VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, AND TENNESSEE

Within the Southern Spring Region lies southern Appalachia that, as stated in the first chapter, stretches from northern Alabama through West Virginia. Just as the first chapter describes the development of mineral water resorts on a macro-level for the United States and then concentrates on the Northern and Southern Spring Region cores of Saratoga and the Virginia springs, so will this chapter give a macro-socioeconomic overview of southern Appalachia and then focus specifically on the origin of mineral water resorts in western North Carolina, southwestern Virginia, and Middle and East Tennessee. By examining southern Appalachian antebellum socioeconomic characteristics and the nature of resort development in Middle and East Tennessee, this chapter will demonstrate that antebellum Southern Highland resort features paralleled the northern and southern resort movement.

Ambiguity exists about the geographical boundary between East Tennessee and Middle Tennessee. The demarcation of East, Middle, and West Tennessee follows a natural geological course. East Tennessee, one of the so-called “Grand Divisions of Tennessee,” consists of the Valley and Ridge region east of the Cumberland Plateau and the rugged Unaka Mountains region adjacent to western North Carolina. Middle Tennessee comprises the Cumberland Plateau and to its west, the Highland Rim surrounding the Central Basin. Therefore, the Middle Tennessee land is one of foothills

and fertile basin farmland. West Tennessee, the flat lowlands region, extends eastward from the flat Mississippi River Valley to Middle Tennessee's Highland Rim.<sup>1</sup>

According to Campbell, East Tennessee therefore includes several counties that many Tennesseans and the Tennessee state government consider as part of Middle Tennessee. Examples of these counties--all in the Cumberland Plateau--include Franklin, Warren, and Grundy near Alabama and Pickett and Fentress Counties near Kentucky. My use of the terms "southern Appalachia" and "East Tennessee" will observe Campbell's lines of demarcation for these geographical regions.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, my overview of antebellum resorts in Tennessee will include several in Middle Tennessee because of the ambiguity in defining Middle and East Tennessee.

Dunaway adheres to Campbell's definition of southern Appalachia in her examination of the region's position within the antebellum global economy. While her assertion that antebellum southern Appalachia was not an isolated, insular region of the United States consisting of subsistence yeoman farmers initially turned traditional

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<sup>1</sup> Tennessee, Department of State, *Tennessee Blue Book 2001-2004* (Nashville: Tennessee Secretary of State, 2004), 355, <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/bluebook/online/hist1.pdf> (accessed June 9, 2004). The "Grand Divisions" were mentioned in legal documents in antebellum times and are codified into the state code. See, for example, the Tennessee Constitution (1835) at <http://www.tngenweb.org/law/constitution1835.html> (accessed July 20, 2004) and Tennessee, *Tennessee Code Annotated*, title 4, chapter 1, part 2.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell, *Southern Highlander*, foldout [n.p.]; Tennessee, Department of State, *Tennessee Blue Book 2001-2004* (Nashville: Tennessee Secretary of State, 2004), 507, <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/bluebook/online/countyorigins.pdf> (accessed June 14, 2004).

layperson and academic views on their heads, her critique has won increased acceptance in recent years.<sup>3</sup>

Dunaway uses the world-systems model of renowned sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein to analyze southern Appalachia to demonstrate that antebellum southern Appalachia was fully integrated into the world economy; indeed, she asserts that “incorporation of southern Appalachia’s local economies into the capitalist world system involved every level of society.” In the world-systems paradigm, the traditional definition of capitalism--the exchange between a private enterprise owner earning income from manufactured goods and his workers who receive a wage for making those goods--widens to include both the landless rural workers who sell their labor and other types of wage laborers who emerge in an agrarian society. By this broadening of the concept of capitalism, southern Appalachia can be examined in relation to other regions of the country which, with their factories and farm owners, fall neatly into traditional capitalistic

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<sup>3</sup> Wilma Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 1-5. For traditional scholarly works on southern Appalachia as an isolated region, see, for example, Ron Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 4, and Dwight Billings, Kathleen Blee, and Louis Swanson, “Culture, Family, and Community in Preindustrial America,” *Appalachian Journal* 13 (1986): 150-70. To learn how scholars have changed their views concerning southern Appalachia’s relationship to other regions within the United States, including comments on the above two works, see Dwight B. Billings, Mary Beth Pudup, and Altina L. Waller, “Taking Exception with Exceptionalism: The Emergence and Transformation of Historical Studies of Appalachia,” in *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina L. Waller (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 1-24. For an historiographic essay on changing scholarly approaches to isolationism in the Mountain South, see Ronald L. Lewis, “Beyond Isolation and Homogeneity: Diversity and the History of Appalachia,” in *Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes: Back Talk from an American Region*, ed. Dwight B. Billings, Gurney Norman, and Katherine Ledford, with a foreword by Ronald D. Eller (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 21-43.

constructs.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, capitalism can be analyzed in terms of countries' hegemony as they jockey for economic supremacy. Core countries, those that export manufactured goods, may lose their elite economic status during business downturns. Conversely, semiperipheral countries, those that import manufactured goods and export raw materials and limited finished goods (e.g., rum or iron) may simultaneously gain economic advantage. On the other hand, during prosperous times, the core entities gain by receiving the surplus value extracted from peripheral entities, those regions that primarily export raw materials and that absorb surplus manufactured products, thus causing a difference in the levels of social structure, labor specialization, and wealth.<sup>5</sup>

Dunaway illustrates the core-periphery model by the position of nation-states in the 1672-1700 business expansion. Great Britain and France rivaled each other for hegemonic supremacy in the western European core. During this period semiperipheral entities included Sweden, Russia, Spain, and the northern and middle American colonies.

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<sup>4</sup> Dunaway points out that most southern Appalachians who did not own land constituted an "agricultural proletariat." In 1860, up to one-third of farm operators did not own the land on which they worked. East Tennessee farm operators during this time were about twice as unlikely as West Tennessee farm operators to lack land title. See Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 120, 288. Her numbers generally agree with those from a source she did not cite, that of the Owsleys, whose statistical study of landownership showed that 60% of East Tennessee agricultural families owned their farms. Percentages of land-owning agricultural families increased westward in their analysis, to 75% of West Tennessee rural families owning their land. See Frank L. Owsley and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee, 1850-1860," *Journal of Southern History* 8 (May 1942): 172.

<sup>5</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 9-17.

Peripheries included eastern Europe, Hispanic America, and the “extended Caribbean,” an arc sweeping from northeast Brazil to Maryland. Southern Appalachia fell as a peripheral fringe or frontier area to the southeastern American coastal colonies. Colonial southern Appalachia linked into the world system trade through its export of deerskins to the semi-peripheral colonies of Georgia and North and South Carolina and to the peripheral middle and northern American colonies. Thus, from colonial times, southern Appalachia served as an integral part of a larger world economy and remained so during the antebellum period.<sup>6</sup>

Dunaway pulls together a massive wealth of data on southern Appalachian counties to show within her world-system analysis that the region participated actively in external markets. She also uses the same data to show that southern Appalachia was becoming increasingly peripheral relative to other regional economies, rather than moving on the force of economic strength toward the core group of nations. From 1840-1860, southern Appalachia evolved into an extractive region in which mineral and timber resources and farm goods were taken to other markets where they were either manufactured into goods or directly sold. Local economies were thus dependent upon distant markets for purchasing their crops, livestock, and mineral ores. Rather than

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. For a deeper understanding of world-systems analysis, see the pertinent works by Immanuel Wallerstein and Christopher Chase-Dunn. Examples include Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730-1840s* (New York: Academic Press, 1989) and Christopher Chase-Dunn, *Global Formation: Structures of the World Economy* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1989). For its application to a specific area in southern Appalachia, that of frontier Kentucky, see Dwight B. Billings and Kathleen M. Blee, *The Road to Poverty: The Making of Wealth and Hardship in Appalachia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 27-50.

consisting of subsistence farmers who grew sufficient food for their own families and artisans who produced crafts for an isolated southern Appalachian market, the region participated in the global market with an emphasis on export production.<sup>7</sup>

In agriculture, for instance, most southern Appalachian farm owners by 1860 exceeded national averages in per capita production of wheat and corn. In comparison to southern farm owners, southern Appalachian farm owners raised cattle at two and one-half times the production level per capita for the South and grew wheat at seven times the production level per capita for the South. According to the 1860 census, the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee boasted almost double the number of swine raised compared to any other state's southern Appalachian counties; southern Appalachia, in turn, raised swine at three times the per capita production level of the South as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

Processing of agricultural goods did not take place exclusively in the stereotypical self-sufficient farm household. Nor did it occur routinely in large factories in southern Appalachia or consistently across the region. Even though southern Appalachia experienced high swine and cattle production rates in southern Appalachia, only three large companies--one in East Tennessee's Hamilton County--packed beef and pork in the region. Tobacco, on the other hand, was processed into plugs throughout most of southern Appalachia in some eighty-five factories; East Tennessee, western Virginia, and western Maryland also produced cigars and smoking tobacco in addition to plugs. Leather

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<sup>7</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 320-21.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-32, 132, table 5.3.

tanning and leather good production also constituted a key agricultural manufacturing sector. While most companies with high gross sales were centered in western Maryland and in western Virginia, the southern Appalachian counties of Hamilton and Warren in Tennessee also housed two relatively large leather manufactories. As an illustration of Dunaway's point about the unevenness of industrial growth in southern Appalachia, in contrast to Hamilton and Warren Counties, East Tennessee's Blount County contained seven tanners in 1820 employing fifteen men and only four tanners with nine men on the eve of the Civil War. Textile production from wool and cotton constituted another large agricultural goods processing sector. East Tennessee's Blount County housed a factory famous for its Chilhowee cotton, and Warren County manufactured jeans popular throughout the South. Tennessee's Warren and Washington Counties comprised two of eleven southern Appalachian counties with cotton mills.<sup>9</sup>

As in agricultural goods, southern Appalachia largely exported industrial goods while its regional industries developed unevenly. In addition, southern Appalachia employed fewer workers than did the average corresponding industry in the country as a whole. For example, southern Appalachian Tennessee's Polk and Warren Counties contained capital investments in manufacturing that exceeded national averages in per capita investments, but almost three fourths of all southern Appalachian counties' capital investments lagged behind those of the South in the aggregate.<sup>10</sup> Most southern

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 147-48, 148n40, 151; Inez Burns, *History of Blount County, Tennessee: From War Trail to Landing Strip, 1795-1955* (Nashville: Benson Printing Company, 1957), 240.

<sup>10</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 157-58, 162-63.

Appalachian firms consisted of fewer than five workers yet, according to Dunaway's data, produced the same quantity of outputs as did the average firm in the country that employed five to ten workers.<sup>11</sup> In terms of industrial goods exports, southern Appalachia produced, as examples, almost 20% of the country's iron in 1840, led the country in salt production by 1810, and extracted more copper for foreign exports than any other region.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of East Tennessee industrial production, Knoxville by 1820 was serving as a redistribution center for northeast Tennessee nail manufactories. By 1860, East Tennessee forges stood third in the country in iron production.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, however, such East Tennessee furnaces and forges as Sullivan County's Pactolus or Embree Iron Works, Washington County's Bumpass Cove, Johnson County's Laurel Bloomery, and Blount County's Amerine Forge were sending about two thirds of their processed iron to secondary markets for finishing.<sup>14</sup> East Tennessee played a role in salt production as well; southwest Virginia sent salt by boat down the Holston River to

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 158-160, 158, table 6.1. Dunaway states that "Appalachian manufactories exploited smaller labor forces to produce the same amount of goods as did the average medium-size firm nationally." She bases her conclusion on analyzing southern Appalachian firms by the number of workers per firm and the amount of capital investment and output per firm.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 171, 175, 182.

<sup>13</sup> Constantine G. Belissary, "Industry and Industrial Philosophy in Tennessee, 1850-1860," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 23 (1951): 52.

<sup>14</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 173-74. Dunaway mistakenly places Bumpass Cove in Sullivan County. In antebellum times, it was located in Washington County; today, it is part of Unicoi County.



Knoxville, where the mineral was then transported to secondary markets.<sup>15</sup> Polk County in southeast Tennessee boasted of the two largest copper mines in southern Appalachia in 1860. Indeed, Polk County and three other southern Appalachian counties led the nation in copper production destined for foreign markets; no copper was processed locally or regionally.<sup>16</sup>

Timber comprised another major southern Appalachian extractive industry. At least seven tenths of southern Appalachian counties contained sawmills. In East Tennessee, lumber was shipped to redistribution markets in Knoxville and Chattanooga for export to more distant markets and was sent to regional manufactories for fuel or for processing into shingles, barrels, and other semifinished products.<sup>17</sup>

According to Dunaway, the concentration of extractive industries in southern Appalachia generated low-wage paying jobs, was associated with a lack of investment in new manufacturing firms in the region, and resulted in natural resource hoarding and speculation by absentee capitalists. In regions closer to the core in the world system, capitalists invested not only in extractive enterprises, but also in processing, finishing, artisanship, and other phases of production. Therefore, southern Appalachia, being on the peripheral fringe, found itself impeded by the lack of full investment from capitalists in the core region.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 182-83.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 183-84.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 192-94.

Dunaway points out another investment trend in southern Appalachia that caused it to fall behind other regions by 1860: travel capitalism. Here, she maintains that absentee speculators owned most of the region's 134 mineral water resorts. By 1835, they were attracting ten thousand to fifteen thousand visitors per season to make them within five years "among the wealthiest commercial enterprises" in southern Appalachia. The largely absentee owners invested about one fourth the amount of capital into the spas that industrial owners invested into manufactories, a fact that underscores both the value of the resorts in generating a profit and the relative lack of large factories in southern Appalachia.<sup>19</sup>

In Dunaway's view, the fact that resort owners lived outside the county location of their spas contributed to a drain of money outside the region. Like the export of raw materials or lightly-finished goods, travel capitalism also contributed to the stagnation of growth in southern Appalachia: "Investments were concentrated into those activities that were geared to the export of raw materials and travel capitalism, and those economic sectors could not generate diversified manufacturing or sustained growth."<sup>20</sup> Southern Appalachia's deepening peripheralization from the world economy occurred, according to Dunaway, in its response to the core demand for increased grain, livestock, tobacco,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 305, 307, 311-12. Estimates of numbers of resort visitors in any region vary widely. As a broad point of comparison, however, between the southern Appalachian mineral spring spas versus Bath and Saratoga Springs, Chapter 1 earlier stated that Bath attracted 10,000 visitors per season in the early 1800s and that Saratoga roughly attracted between 3,500 and 8,000 in 1833.

<sup>20</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 321.

cotton, and tourism. Because the region relied heavily on the core markets' economic fortunes, its own markets' development suffered; its labor remained cheap to make goods more competitive; and absentee industry and resort owners did not reinvest into the region.<sup>21</sup>

Dunaway's argument about travel capitalism impeding the economic advancement of southern Appalachia hinges on three factors: the definition of travel capitalism, the definition of absentee ownership, and the relative economic importance of the resort visitors. First, Dunaway includes in her definition of travel capitalism the hog and cattle drovers (herders) who stayed in inns along the way to regional markets; she considers that over one third of southern Appalachian counties either provided room and board or sold feed to the drovers en route.<sup>22</sup> Hog drovers and spa guests traveled, however, for obviously different reasons. Because southern Appalachia was on the peripheral fringe of the world economy, it relied heavily on the economic cycles occurring in the semiperiphery or in the core entities. Therefore, travel capitalism with its reliance on livestock drives and tourists from the North, the Deep South and even Europe fits into the model of southern Appalachia as a peripheral player in the economy: when times were good, travel capitalism prospered.

I question, however, how much economic cycles contributed to the development of resorts in southern Appalachia. As I will show later in this chapter, the number of

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 316, 320-21.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 305.

watering holes--including the number of southern Appalachian resorts--increased during antebellum times. Dunaway states, however, that farmers during the period 1840-1860 in southern Appalachia decreased the amount of grain and livestock sent to external markets and simultaneously increased cotton and tobacco staple production for export.<sup>23</sup> If a positive correlation existed between livestock drives and the development of tourist infrastructure, a stagnation in travel capitalism in affected areas should have ensued. Perhaps it is true that western North Carolina resort development lagged due to the number of drover stands that did not evolve into elite watering holes. Historian John Inscoe, however, states that western North Carolina farmers continued to increase their livestock and corn production in spite of declining livestock prices due to their closer proximity to coastal markets than Ohio River Valley producers.<sup>24</sup> According to Congressman Thomas Clingman of North Carolina's First Congressional District, the mountain farmers in his district "can get their livestock into the planting states south of us at one-half expense which those of Kentucky and Ohio are obliged to incur."<sup>25</sup> Inscoe believes that in spite of livestock price decreases, "the heavier traffic led to greater demand and thus higher prices for corn, so that most mountain farmers welcomed the

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 296-98.

<sup>24</sup> John C. Inscoe, *Mountain Masters, Slavery, and the Sectional Crisis in Western North Carolina* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 51.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas L. Clingman, *Selections from the Speeches and Writings of Hon. Thomas L. Clingman of North Carolina* (Raleigh: John Nichols, 1844), 166; quoted in Inscoe, *Mountain Masters*, 52.

*increase* [emphasis mine] in southbound herds and profited by them.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the change in the southern Appalachian economy from livestock to staple crop production may not have diminished the need for drover stands in western North Carolina as much as would be assumed by analyzing southern Appalachia’s agricultural economy in the aggregate. Resort development, moreover, in southwestern Virginia and the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee seems to have occurred independently of the farming transition from livestock to staple production.

If travel capitalism were largely dependent on guests visiting mineral water spas, then again a correlation should be evident between business cycles and the number of guests. But, as Dunaway herself points out, “planter families trekked annually” to the springs and “traveled the same circuit each year.”<sup>27</sup> While the Panic of 1837 and the economic depression of the late 1830s through the mid-1840s prompted Kentucky’s Henry Clay to bemoan that in his home state “[e]very description of property, without exception, [was] greatly depressed,” the same depression “barely touched” Saratoga. According to Lewis, during the Panics of 1819 and 1837, families borrowed money if necessary to ensure that family members, particularly young single females, could attend the Virginia springs resorts for at least a month. Interestingly, however, she also notes that the same panics also bankrupted many Virginia springs proprietors. To reconcile her observations, I wonder if perhaps some of the more elite Virginia springs were able to

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<sup>26</sup> Inscoc, *Mountain Masters*, 52.

<sup>27</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 306.

continue to attract sufficient patronage during the depression years while less exclusive resorts were not able to sustain a profit. From a health as opposed to a social perspective, however, Gillespie notes that new resort construction slowed during the depression years of the 1840s, but that existing spas “were crammed with visitors” due to massive cholera outbreaks.<sup>28</sup>

The drop in disposable income during the Panic of 1837 and the ensuing depression probably did cause a decline in the number of visitors to some southern Appalachian resorts. The fact that the vast majority of the visitors to the springs were elite--which in Dunaway’s analysis includes the flagship White Sulphur Springs and its neighboring exclusive springs--indicates that the elite may have visited the springs with little financial regard to business cycles.<sup>29</sup> The desire for status and health needs trumped financial reasons.

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<sup>28</sup> Billings and Blee, *Road to Poverty*, 117; Sterngass, *First Resorts*, 21. Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 159, 401; Margaret Gail Gillespie, “Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly: Society, Sickness and Space at Nineteenth Century Southern Spring Resorts,” (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1998), 138. Corbett only discusses the Panic of 1837 in terms of its detrimental effects on the Saratoga building crafts trade: apprentices and journeymen found upward mobility through the crafts system more difficult to achieve as the depression lessened the number of jobs available at the master level. See Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 132.

<sup>29</sup> I suspect that most of the 10,000 to 15,000 visitors that Dunaway estimates visited southern Appalachian springs largely spent their time making the grand tour of the Virginia springs. Lewis notes that White Sulphur Springs alone could accommodate at least 1500 and that “thousands, not just hundreds, came to the [Virginia springs] each summer.” Therefore, considering that the elite were largely immune to business cycle ebbs, the impact of the business panics on southern Appalachian springs in total was perhaps less than, say, on the agricultural economy. More research is needed to determine the effect of business cycles on those resorts outside the Southern Spring Region core. See Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 225, 400.

Second, Dunaway's point regarding the contribution of travel capitalism to regional stagnation also hinges on the concept of absentee ownership of the resorts. For southern Appalachian Tennessee, Dunaway sampled eleven county tax lists of households to determine absentee owners. If the tax list showed that a taxpayer owned only land and no other property and that he did not pay a poll tax, then she assumed the taxpayer to be an absentee owner.<sup>30</sup> While Dunaway's methodology is sound, an exact count of absentee owners cannot be made.

Two potential problems arise with Dunaway's methodology (although it is well documented).<sup>31</sup> First, the reliance of the poll tax as an accurate measure of county of residence of the resort owner is somewhat unreliable. The penalty for not paying a poll tax in antebellum Tennessee was a mere twenty-five cents, twice the poll tax of twelve-and-one-half cents per white male between the ages of twenty-one and fifty. Perhaps a property owner might be over the age of fifty, or perhaps he might choose to ignore the tax.<sup>32</sup> Michaux, for example, in 1802, observed that Kentucky poll "taxes are very

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<sup>30</sup> Wilma Dunaway, "Incorporation of Southern Appalachia into the Capitalist World Economy, 1700-1860," (Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1994), 998.

<sup>31</sup> Dunaway uses Soltow's methodology. See Lee Soltow, "Land Inequality on the Frontier: The Distribution of Land in East Tennessee at the Beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century," *Social Science History* 5 (1981): 275-91; cited in Dunaway, "Incorporation," 998n11.

<sup>32</sup> John Haywood and Robert L. Cobb, *The Statute Laws of the State of Tennessee: Of a Public and General Nature*, vol. 1 (Knoxville: F.S. Heiskell, 1831), 358; R.L. Caruthers and A.O.P. Nicholson, *A Compilation of the Statutes of Tennessee, of a General and Permanent Nature, From the Commencement of the Government to the Present Time, With Reference to Judicial Decisions, in Notes, to Which is Appended a New Collection of Forms* (Nashville: Steam Press of J. Smith, 1836), 603. Some statutes provided for financial penalties as much as \$400. Twenty-five cents from 1831 is worth

moderate, and nobody complains of them, yet a great number of the contributors are always behind in their payments . . . I understand, that a similar difficulty in obtaining the duties prevails in all the Eastern States.”<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, Dunaway does not indicate what percentage of absentee resort owners lived in a different part of southern Appalachia, thus keeping their profits in the regional economy. For example, in southern Appalachian Tennessee, General John B. Rodgers and his brother, residents of Warren County’s McMinnville, in the 1840s or early 1850s bought Bon Air Springs in neighboring White County, also in southern Appalachian Tennessee. In 1854 Rodgers paid taxes in Warren County, showing he still owned land there. At about the same time, the Bon Air opened its 1855 season under either the ownership or management of “D. Williams.” Rodgers during the same period owned land in White County, which may or may not have been the Bon Air property. Based on these records, I can therefore speculate that he may well have continued to live in Warren

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today about \$59 (Unskilled Wage) or about \$5.29 (CPI), not a large sum by either calculator if one is a resort owner as opposed to a blue-collar worker or rural laborer. See Samuel H. Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?” Economic History Services, April 15 2004, <http://eh.net/hmit/compare/> (accessed August 13, 2004).

<sup>33</sup> The 1802 Kentucky poll tax was 40 French sous for a white male. See F.A. Michaux, *Travels to the Westward of the Allegany [sic] Mountains: in the States of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, in the Year 1802*, translated from the French (London: R. Phillips, 1805), 76, Kentuckiana Digital Library, <http://kdl.kyvl.org> (accessed August 29, 2004). For comparison to the dollar, the Louisiana Purchase Treaty of 1803 set one dollar at “five francs 3333/100000 or five livres eight Sous tournois.” Therefore, a sou was a very small fraction of a dollar. See <http://www.usconstitution.com/LouisianaPurchaseTreaty.htm> (accessed September 9, 2004).



County while he owned the resort.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, one author believes that Rodgers and his brother moved from McMinnville to Rock Island, also in Warren County, at the same time that they began to operate Bon Air in White County.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the Rodgers brothers most likely were not absentee resort landlords outside southern Appalachia.

A third factor concerning Dunaway's assertion that travel capitalism drained the southern Appalachian economy hinges on the economic value of guests to southern Appalachian resorts. Even if resort owners were largely absentee and thus taking away profits from southern Appalachia, the guests' expenditures directly and indirectly affected the local economies, if on a smaller scale than the income generated by the drovers.<sup>36</sup> At Montvale Springs in East Tennessee's Blount County, for example, hacks owned by Maryville businessmen carried visitors between Montvale and Maryville in the 1840s to

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<sup>34</sup> Charle B. Thorne, "The Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 29 (Winter 1970-71): 339; White County, Tennessee, Land Records <http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~dobson/tn/tnwhite2.htm> (accessed August 11, 2004); Warren County, Tennessee, 1854 Tax List <http://www.tngenweb.org/warren/gant-1.htm> (accessed August 11, 2004). No other pertinent tax or property records are available on the Internet for either Warren or White Counties. To determine conclusively about Rodgers's place of residence, more research is needed.

<sup>35</sup> Walter Womack, *McMinnville at a Milestone, 1810-1960: A Memento of the Sesquicentennial Year of McMinnville, Tennessee, 1960 and Warren County, Tennessee, 1958* (McMinnville, Tenn.: Standard Publishing Co.; McMinnville, Tenn.: Womack Printing Co., 1960), 66.

<sup>36</sup> The drover stands which housed hog drovers and guests probably accommodated thousands of animals while lodging only a few hundred people. Corn bought by the stand owners from local farmers to sell to the drovers at a profit enabled the stand owners to buy goods from town and, in turn, sell them to the local farmers. This corn trade enabled the drover stands to provide access of goods to the farmers. See L. Alex Tooman, "The Evolving Impact of Tourism on the Greater Smoky Mountain Region of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina," (Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1995), 69-70.

the start of the Civil War.<sup>37</sup> In Middle Tennessee Sumner County's Tyree Springs' gardener sold fruit to antebellum political elites.<sup>38</sup> While slaves largely constituted the resort workforces at the Virginia springs, others, presumably locals, also found employment as servants. Local residents sold grain, liquor, produce, dairy products, livestock, even maple sugar cakes, among other foodstuff to the proprietors and to the guests.<sup>39</sup> Western North Carolina resorts in the 1840s employed blacks and whites as cooks, chambermaids, teamsters, gardeners, and waiters.<sup>40</sup> It is reasonable to assume that other antebellum southern Appalachian resorts also employed locals as servants, caretakers, carpenters, and masons among other occupations. As Lewis points out, "the springs resorts seem to have been economic motors in their corners of the Blue Ridge region."<sup>41</sup> Her comments in my view can be extrapolated to the economic interchange between guests and locals in southern Appalachia in general.

Dunaway's assertion about a relationship between hog drovers and their impact on travel capitalism applies particularly to western North Carolina in terms of resort development, but less so regarding the contribution to capital drainage from southern

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<sup>37</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 257.

<sup>38</sup> Anna Durham, "Tyree Springs," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 28 (Summer 1969): 161. Sumner County is located at the Kentucky border. While Campbell does not classify it as a part of southern Appalachian Tennessee, its use of locals would extrapolate to many resorts, North and South.

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 146-47, 173, 358.

<sup>40</sup> Richard Dale Starnes, "Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina" (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 1999), 25-26.

<sup>41</sup> Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 146.

Appalachia. Drovers from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and western North Carolina herded swine, cattle, sheep, mules, horses, and poultry every late summer through the fall through the Asheville area to regional markets in northern Georgia, Spartanburg, and Charleston.<sup>42</sup> Tennessee farmers, in particular, largely supplied the swine for the mid-Atlantic and southern markets, giving rise to Tennessee as the “Hog and Hominy State.”<sup>43</sup> Hotels primarily for the hog herders, called “drover stands,” developed along the Buncombe Turnpike, the road used by coastal antebellum Carolina families to travel from Saluda Gap to the western North Carolina mountains to escape summer heat and fevers.<sup>44</sup> Warm Springs (later Hot Springs) in western North Carolina’s Madison County was one of fifteen drover stands operating between Asheville and Tennessee by 1850. James

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<sup>42</sup> Another major droving route existed from the Ohio River valley along the Wilderness Trail, through Cumberland Gap, to the Holston River Valley and then south to Knoxville. Knoxville served as a livestock redistribution center to Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. See Sam Bowers Hilliard, *Hog Meat and Hoecake: Food Supply in the Old South, 1840-1860* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 193-94, 194, fig. 3.5, “Droving Routes in the South.”

<sup>43</sup> Donald L. Winters, *Tennessee Farming, Tennessee Farmers: Agriculture in the Upper South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 65; Bill Landry, “Hog Drive,” *The Heartland Series*, vol. 4 (Knoxville: WBIR-TV; Gannett, 2000), videocassette.

<sup>44</sup> Starnes, “Creating the Land of the Sky,” 14-16, 20-21; John Preston Arthur, *History of Western North Carolina*, Chapter 21, “Notable Resorts and Improvements” (1914), New River Notes, <http://www.ls.net/~newriver/nc/wnc21.htm> (accessed August 15, 2004); Timothy Silver, *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains: An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 69. During the fall, hog drovers herded about 150,000 hogs through Buncombe County each year. They fed the hogs local corn at a rate of twenty-four bushels daily per 1000 hogs, thus showing the monetary benefit to the local economy. See Arthur, *History*, Chapter 11, “Manners and Customs,” (1914), <http://www.ls.net/~newriver/nc/wnc11.htm> (accessed August 15, 2004).

Patton, a businessmen involved in the construction of North Carolina turnpikes, apparently recognized the double economic potential of buying the springs' small hotel, which could serve both the hog drovers and a regional clientele who had been traveling to the springs since colonial times. After the Warm Springs drover stand burnt in 1838, Patton built a two-story hotel for up to five hundred resort guests, with a 230-foot long verandah supported by thirteen large white columns overlooking the French Broad River. In the spring and summer, the elite of the Carolinas and Tennessee gathered at the hotel to enjoy the scenery and the thermal springs. In the fall, hog drovers largely comprised the springs hotel's clientele. Occasionally, when the two groups overlapped at the hotel--the elite naturally accorded the best rooms--friction between them occurred.<sup>45</sup>

Other watering holes and drover stands sprang up in western North Carolina in antebellum times. Deaver's Sulphur Springs in Buncombe County near the Buncombe Turnpike, discovered by one of Reuben Deaver's father-in-law's slaves in 1827, became "immensely popular" to the point where Deaver eventually accommodated five hundred guests during the summer. The travel writer Charles Lanman observed that the Sulphur Springs hosted mainly families during the summer from Charleston and Savannah and that its hospitality was "well worthy of even such places as Saratoga."<sup>46</sup> As occurred at

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 21-22; Gillespie, "Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly," 128. Starnes does not comment on any complaints on odors from porcine "guests"!

<sup>46</sup> Charles Lanman, *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces, with an Appendix by Lieut. Campbell Hardy*, 2 vols (Philadelphia: John W. Moore, 1856), 426-27, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed August 16, 2004). This work consists of several of Lanman's books, including *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains*.

other watering holes throughout the country, by the 1840s at Deaver's, health objectives took second place to such leisure activities as balls, bowling, fishing, and female socializing and bonding.<sup>47</sup> While Warm Springs and Deaver's Sulphur Springs served a clientele largely drawn from the Carolina Low Country planter aristocracy and from Tennessee in the case of the former, other secondary resorts also populated western North Carolina. Burke County's Piedmont Springs, for example, mainly catered to North Carolina elites rather than to the Deep South planter aristocracy.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Starnes, "Creating the Land of the Sky," 25.

<sup>48</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5. Dunaway in this table distinguishes between Buncombe County's Patton's Warm Springs, which she states served Deep South planters, and Madison County's Warm Springs, which she says served primarily in-state elite. Starnes and Gillespie both mention that Patton started the Warm Springs resort in Madison County but do not mention any mineral spring resort he began in Buncombe County (he did own the Eagle Hotel, originally an Asheville drover stand). Charles Lanman uses the terms "Patton's Warm Springs" and "Warm Springs" interchangeably. Therefore I conclude that these names are synonymous. See Lanman, *Adventures in the Wilds*, 431-33.

In addition, Dunaway includes in her table Madison County's Shocco Springs and Madison County's Warren Sulphur Springs. Jones places Shocco Springs in northcentral North Carolina's Warren County and states that it enjoyed a "national reputation" and, with Jones White Sulphur Springs in the same county, was one of the two most celebrated spas in antebellum North Carolina. I speculate that Dunaway may mean Warren County's Jones White Sulphur Springs instead of Warren Sulphur Springs because neither Starnes nor Lanman refer to a spring by that appellation in Madison County. Therefore, I exclude Shocco Springs and Warren Sulphur Springs from southern Appalachia. See Jones, "Mineral Springs and Medicine in North Carolina," 593, 595. A University of North Carolina study concurs that Shocco Springs and Jones White Sulphur Springs were both located in Warren County. See "Warrenton, Warren County, North Carolina: A Community Diagnosis including Secondary Data Analysis and Qualitative Data Collection—History of Warren County," <http://www.hsl.unc.edu/phpapers/warrenton01/whistory.htm> (accessed August 16, 2004).

As with the Catskills and the Virginia springs resorts, the natural scenery took on a life of its own with guests. *DeBow's Review* commented favorably on western North Carolina's spring waters' therapeutic value but reserved lavish praise for its "salubrious . . . absolutely perfect" mountain scenery. Its description of the trip from Asheville to Warm Springs is replete with such phrasing as "the wild grandeur of the route along which we sped" and "[winding] along the precipice with a perpetual sense of danger, which increases the sublimity of the scene." By emphasizing (or exaggerating) to its readers the danger in reaching the springs, thus giving them a sense of exclusiveness by trekking there, *DeBow's* conformed to the era's Romantic theme of man versus nature.<sup>49</sup>

In western Virginia, the development of resorts outside the elite Virginia springs circuit lagged because of inadequate transportation. Therefore, the Virginia springs maintained their sense of exclusivity until the construction of mountain railroads after the Civil War.<sup>50</sup> Southwestern Virginia resorts, however, sprang up with the building of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad through the Shenandoah Valley with its numerous free-flowing springs. Between 1845 and 1855, according to Gillespie's analysis of antebellum Virginia maps, about ten new mineral springs resorts opened in southwestern and western Virginia for a total of sixteen resorts. Dunaway, however, relying on other sources, counts a total of sixty-two resorts in the southern Appalachian counties of antebellum Virginia.

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<sup>49</sup> Editorial and Literary Department, "Southern Watering Places and Scenery," *DeBow's Review: Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress, and Resources*, 10 no. 3 (1851): 355-56, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed August 10, 2004).

<sup>50</sup> Gillespie, "Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly," 137.

Of these, she considers eighteen catered primarily to the Deep South planters while forty-four served mainly in-state elites. Gillespie notes that a period of rapid growth for resorts occurred from the late 1840s, after the economy had recovered from a national depression, up to the eve of the Civil War.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, with improved rail transportation and an upbeat economy, a building spurt of resorts occurred in the region, most of which evidently did not rate an entry on antebellum maps. The increase in resorts in southern Appalachian Virginia indicates that Dunaway's claim that the agricultural change in emphasis from livestock and swine to staple production adversely affected resort development probably applies chiefly to western North Carolina.

The traditional Virginia springs lost little if any clientele to the resorts established after the completion of the railroad. The perception begun in the early nineteenth century that the exclusiveness of a Virginia resort relied primarily on its relative inaccessibility and secondarily on its high prices and room shortages still held sway by the late 1850s.

Therefore, the Deep South planter elites continued to seek out White Sulphur Springs, the most fashionable resort, and its neighboring springs. In fact, the closer a new resort was located to the Southern Springs Region core, the higher its perceived status. White Sulphur, Sweet Springs, Red Springs, and Warm Springs outranked Yellow Sulphur and Montgomery White Sulphur Springs, located about forty to fifty miles to the southeast in Montgomery County. These springs in turn superseded Pulaski Alum Springs, located

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 138-40, 158, table 6.1; Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104-1106, 1104, table 8.5.

farther south, and most certainly took precedence over, near the Tennessee border, Washington County's Washington Springs and Scott County's Holston Springs.<sup>52</sup>

The southern Appalachian counties of East Tennessee, just as was occurring elsewhere in the country, also saw the construction of many watering holes beginning in the early 1820s and continuing to 1860. In fact, their proliferation, along with the growing construction of western North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley, and southwestern Virginia springs resorts, constitute a "domain" to the Southern Spring Region core.<sup>53</sup> As one author notes in his study of mineral spring resorts in Middle Tennessee, which includes some southern Appalachian counties, they "accurately mirrored in their available waters, accommodations, and amusements other successful spas throughout the world."<sup>54</sup>

In Tennessee, many antebellum resorts developed on the Highland Rim. Shale beds exposed around the margins of the Highland Rim in Middle Tennessee contain iron sulfide, which leaches out into water flowing along the shale. Limestone strata in the Highland

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<sup>52</sup> Gillespie, "Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly," 141, map 6.1, 149-56; Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1105, table 8.5. Gillespie points out that some exceptions, notably Fauquier White Sulphur Springs and Berkeley Springs, which lay some distance from the White Sulphur Springs yet were frequented by the planter aristocracy. Dunaway's classification of Virginia and West Virginia antebellum mineral springs resorts as to the type of clientele served is consistent with Gillespie's spatial hierarchy. Dunaway lists, for example, Montgomery White catering mainly to Deep South planters and Scott County's Holston Springs serving primarily in-state elite. Holston Springs is located on Yuma Road, about one mile from the intersection of Yuma Road and U.S. Highway 23 near Weber City. It was used until the 1950s for therapeutic water use and leisure activities such as picnicking. An old springhouse still stands. Janice Winegar, interview by author, 24 August 2004, Kingsport, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

<sup>53</sup> Gillespie, "Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly," 16.

<sup>54</sup> Thorne, "The Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 323.



Rim are also the sources of mineral leaching, presumably including calcium carbonate, into ground water. The result is an abundance of mineral springs, particularly sulfur, throughout Middle Tennessee's Highland Rim and Cumberland Plateau.<sup>55</sup>

Antebellum Middle Tennessee contained at least seventeen mineral springs resorts. Of these, six lay in the Cumberland Plateau: White County's Bon Air, Grundy County's Beersheba Springs, and Franklin County's Water Cure, Hurricane Springs, Winchester Springs, and Estill Springs.<sup>56</sup> The other eleven lay in the Highland Rim or in the Central Basin, outside of southern Appalachia, and included Sumner County's Tyree Springs and Macon County's Red Boiling Springs.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> The Cumberland Plateau in my discussion is synonymous with Campbell's definition. Its counties, therefore, all lie within southern Appalachia. The Highland Rim in my discussion constitutes the counties to the west of the Cumberland Plateau and includes such counties as Davidson, Sumner, and Cheatham.

<sup>56</sup> Dunaway also includes for Middle Tennessee's southern Appalachian counties resorts that from the literature I have read either did not begin until after the Civil War or whose date of origin is not given. I examined the same sources Dunaway cites in her table for her data: Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," passim, and Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Tennessee, *The WPA Guide to Tennessee*, with a new introduction by Jerrold Hirsch and a foreword by Wilma Dykeman (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986), passim. The springs she includes as part of the antebellum resorts that I do not are Warren County's Crisp (Nicholson Springs) and Franklin County's East Brook, Pylant, and Burnt Springs. More research is needed to determine whether these actually existed as antebellum resorts. For more information on Crisp Springs, see Marie Summers, "Nicholson Springs Resort Hotel: A Nineteenth Century Spa," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 45 (fall 1986): 244-55.

<sup>57</sup> The eight Middle Tennessee resorts that Thorne definitely mentions as antebellum in origin that I will not mention in detail in the text are Sumner County's Castalian Springs, Wilson County's Horn Springs, Hickman County's Bon Aqua and Primm Springs, Cheatham County's Kingston Springs and Sulphur Springs, and Davidson County's The Fountain of Health, White's Creek Spring, and Robertson's Springs. For more information on these spas, see Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,"

Tyree Springs, begun as a resort in the late 1820s or the early 1830s, by 1834 had blossomed into the “most celebrated watering place in the state” according to the *Tennessee Gazetteer*.<sup>58</sup> Probably initially due to its wide range of waters--white, black, red, yellow “banana” sulfur, chalybeate, and magnesia--Tyree Springs attracted the elite beginning in the early 1820s. Its two Alabama owners in the early 1830s publicized the springs through Nashville physicians’ testimonials and flowery descriptions of the springs, whose “common nectar of nature” eased the “dyspeptic, the rheumatic, and in fact all invalids of all conditions and classes.”<sup>59</sup> Travel to the commodious springs hotel--it contained 120 rooms--was relatively easy: stages ran daily by its convenient location on

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passim. For a brief history of Castalian Springs, located a few miles from Tyree Springs, see Samuel D. Smith, *Archaeological Explorations at the Castalian Springs, Tennessee, Historic Site; Including a Report on: Tree Ring Research at Castalian Springs National Historic Landmark by Lynn Jordan Bowers and Dinah L. Grashot* (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1975): 16-20. Castalian Springs opened in 1830, possibly as a competitor to Tyree Springs. Closed in 1861, presumably by the Civil War, it sometime during or after the war began taking boarders but did not open again as a resort until 1899. The second incarnation included bowling alleys and a dance pavilion. The resort closed in 1914. This information differs from Thorne who states that it operated for only a few years in the antebellum period. Another source on Castalian Springs is Walter T. Durham, *A Historical Research Report on the Castalian Springs Located at Castalian Springs, Sumner County, Tennessee; Prepared for the Tennessee Historical Commission* (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1975).

<sup>58</sup> Eastin Morris, *Tennessee Gazetteer* (Nashville, 1834), 165; quoted in Durham, “Tyree Springs,” 156; Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 336.

<sup>59</sup> Gallatin [Tenn.] *Union* (1839) as quoted in Neil Pond, “Tennessee’s Tyree Springs: ‘The Most Celebrated Watering Place in the State’,” *Kentucky Folklore Record* 24 (July-December 1978): 65; Durham, “Tyree Springs,” 158-59. Interestingly, Gillespie notes that “dyspepsia” in many nineteenth-century spa advertisements encompassed a wide variety of gastrointestinal ailments, probably including constipation, which afflicted many lowland Southerners, who lacked easy market access to vegetables with high fiber. See Gillespie, “Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly,” 99-100.

the Walden Ferry Road between Nashville and Louisville.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, unlike the Virginia springs, its exclusivity was not based on its inaccessibility. Its rates, however, in 1829 were five dollars per week for boarding and lodging, roughly comparable to a few of the Virginia springs establishments.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, I speculate that the fact that Presidents Jackson and Polk stayed there in turn drew regional elites, including other politicians from Tennessee and Kentucky and the aristocrats of Bowling Green, Franklin, Nashville, and Gallatin.<sup>62</sup> Tyree Springs reached its hey-day from the late nineteenth century to the early 1930s.<sup>63</sup> In spite of its offerings of croquet, vaudeville, dances, and excellent country-style dinners, Tyree Springs's primary attraction, even in later years, was its water, either straight from the springs or available for purchase as bottled water.<sup>64</sup> After a long-time owner died in 1925 and the property divided, the resorts declined, hastened by improved roads and cars that allowed guests to venture elsewhere.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 334.

<sup>61</sup> Durham, "Tyree Springs," 160. Lewis states that Sweet Springs charged \$1.00 per day in 1809 and that Botetourt Springs charged the same rate in 1832. See Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 158n36. A CPI calculation shows that \$1 in 1829 equaled about \$1.32 in 1809 dollars and that \$1 in 1832 equaled about \$1.44 in 1809 dollars. Therefore, Tyree Springs' \$1 daily rate in 1829 fell between the two Virginia springs' rates. I used the CPI economic calculator at the Economic History Services Web site for the conversion. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>62</sup> Durham, "Tyree Springs," 160.

<sup>63</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 334-35.

<sup>64</sup> Pond, "Tennessee's Tyree Springs," 66, 68; Durham, "Tyree Springs," 162-63.

<sup>65</sup> Pond, "Tennessee's Tyree Springs," 69; Durham, "Tyree Springs," 164.

Outranking the Highland Rim's Tyree Springs in terms of elitism was Grundy County's Beersheba Springs on the Cumberland Plateau in southern Appalachia. In 1833, Mrs. Beersheba Porter Cain, spouse of a wealthy Warren County merchant, discovered the springs, which quickly became known for their therapeutic powers. A local physician resided at the springs by 1836; the same year, two Warren Countians bought the land and by 1839 had built a rude hotel, a dining room, and several log cabins.<sup>66</sup> With yellow fever epidemics prevalent in Memphis, a business-savvy Memphis medical professor, with the backing of a McMinnville elite, John Hopkins French, bought the property sometime before 1853.<sup>67</sup> In 1854, John Armfield, a well-known slave trader, bought Beersheba and built twenty cottages and renovated the hotel, adding a second story and a two-story columned verandah.<sup>68</sup> He improved the existing road to the Collins River Valley and constructed a new road to Altamont, the seat of Grundy County established in 1844. Under Armfield, Beersheba began a transition from a resort for regional elites to a spa attracting the Deep South planter aristocracy. Rates in 1857, for example, ran about \$2 per day, \$10 per week, and \$35 per month. In terms of the Consumer Price Index (CPI),

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<sup>66</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 342-43.

<sup>67</sup> Isabella Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 3 (March 1944): 47-48. People in the nineteenth century believed that yellow fever, malaria, and summer fevers could be avoided by seeking out higher elevations. See Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease," 148-49.

<sup>68</sup> Herschel Gower, "The Hotel: A Fortress that Shrugged at Doom," in Margaret Brown Coppinger and others, eds., *Beersheba Springs: 150 Years, 1833-1983, A History and a Celebration*, with the assistance of numerous contributors (Beersheba Springs, Tenn.: Beersheba Springs Historical Society, 1983), 8; Morton B. Howell, "Beersheba: A History and a Personal View," in *Beersheba Springs*, 18, 20.

\$2 per day translates to about \$42 per day in 2003. However, North Carolina male teachers earned \$25 per month for four months in 1858, and a carpenter in Tennessee earned \$1.38 per day without board in 1850. Therefore, the hotel rates prohibited most middle and working class members from visiting Beersheba.<sup>69</sup> A French chef, French servants, and a New Orleans French band provided meals and entertainment.<sup>70</sup> Because Armfield lived for a while in Louisiana and invited friends and others from Louisiana and other parts of the Deep South to build extravagant cottages on the property, I can speculate that he chose these employees to cater to his guests' cultural interests.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," 49-50, 57; I used the CPI economic calculator at the Economic History Services Web site for the conversion. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?" For North Carolina teacher salaries in 1858, see Philobibulus [pseud.], *History and Progress of Education, From the Earliest Times to the Present; Intended as a Manual for Teachers and Students*, with an introduction by Henry Barnard (New York: A.S. Barnes and Burr, 1860), 295, table "Statistics of Education in the United States--Public Schools," <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed September 8, 2004). For Tennessee carpenter salaries, see J.D.B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States, Embracing its Territory, Population--White, Free Colored, and Slave--Moral and Social Condition, Industry, Property, and Revenue; The Detailed Statistics of Cities, Towns, and Counties; Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census, to Which are Added the Results of Every Previous Census, Beginning in 1790, in Comparative Tables, with Explanatory and Illustrative Notes, Based upon the Schedules and Other Official Sources of Information* (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P. Nicholson, 1854), 164, table 175, "Average Wages, 1850," <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed September 8, 2004). DeBow's table is referenced in Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display," 326n12.

<sup>70</sup> Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," 59.

<sup>71</sup> Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," 46; Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 343. Virginia French, an author from Memphis married to John Hopkins French, wrote a novel serialized in the *Detroit Free Press* in 1879 about her life at Beersheba. The articles, known as "Darlingtonia: The Eaters and the Eaten," particularly highlight Beersheba during the Civil War. In discussing guests, French writes of "the long pendulum of 'Southern society' in its annual vibration [impinging upon Beersheba] in summer, while the other extremity of the arc lay wintering in New Orleans,

Bowling, billiards, balls, fox hunts, horse rides, and scenic walks--just as developed at other contemporary resorts--occupied guests' leisure time.<sup>72</sup> And, as was the case at other resorts, the Romantic influence pervaded even health literature; Moorman, a physician, in his widely read work on the southern springs complimented Beersheba for its chalybeate water but exclaimed over the "beautiful and picturesque" scenery remarkable for its "wild and romantic prospects."<sup>73</sup> During the Civil War, looters ransacked the hotel and cottages. An associate of John D. Rockefeller living in Cleveland, Ohio, bought the property in 1868; the hotel reopened in 1870.<sup>74</sup> Beersheba Springs remained a resort, beginning a decline about the time of World War I. A Tullahoma businessman established a short-

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Mobile, Memphis, Natchez, and all the 'intermediate landings,' so to speak." See Herschel Gower, "Beersheba Springs and L. Virginia French: The Novelist as Historian," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 42 (Summer 1983): 117. For more information on French at Beersheba, see also Herschel Gower, "The Beersheba Diary of L. Virginia French, Part I, Summer and Fall, 1863," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 52 (1980): 89-107 and Herschel Gower, "The Beersheba Diary of L. Virginia French, Part II, Winter, Spring, and Summer, 1864," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 54 (1982): 3-25. Episcopal priest turned Major General Leonidas K. Polk and Mary Noailles Murfree's family were elites who stayed there in the 1850s. See C. Brendan Martin, "Resorts, Historic," *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, ed. Carroll Van West (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press and Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 791.

<sup>72</sup> Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," 57-58.

<sup>73</sup> John J. Moorman, *The Virginia Springs and Springs of the South and West* (Philadelphia, 1859), 383-84; quoted in Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 344.

<sup>74</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 344; Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 3 (June 1944): 162-63. Howell's article on Armfield was divided between the March and June 1944 issues of the *Quarterly*.

lived tourist camp there in 1929; the business faltered, and the Methodist Church bought the property in 1941.<sup>75</sup>

If Beersheba Springs were the most fashionable Tennessee spa in antebellum days--though Montvale Springs, to be discussed in Chapter 3 may arguably have rivaled it--Red Boiling Springs succeeded it to that title in the period between the World Wars.<sup>76</sup> Red Boiling Springs, located on the Highland Rim near Kentucky, began in 1840 after a newcomer to the area recovered from a serious eye infection after bathing the eye in the springs. The resort developed slowly until the 1880s when railroads came to the area and when James F. O. O'Shaughnessey bought the land, hotel, and boarding houses for about \$15,000.<sup>77</sup> He invested in a new hotel and publicized the property's many mineral springs, including red and black sulfur water and the famous "Double and Twist" spring, as curatives for gravel (kidney stones), diabetes, gonorrhea, dyspepsia, and other afflictions. As at most other health resorts, leisure activities eventually superseded the interest in the medicinal attributes of the spa. Tennis, croquet, bowling, dances, hunting, and fishing

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<sup>75</sup> *History of the United Methodist Assembly* ([Beersheba Springs, Tenn.?]: n.p., n.d.), possession of the author. The brochure was available at Beersheba in 2002; Carl Elkins, "How We Acquired Beersheba Springs Assembly," in *Beersheba Springs*, 12.

<sup>76</sup> Summers, "Nicholson Springs Resort Hotel," 45 (Fall 1986), 244. Summers argues that Crisp Springs, later known as Nicholson Springs, followed Beersheba Springs and preceded Red Boiling Springs as the "most prestigious mineral springs resort in Tennessee." Nicholson Springs' "hey-day" lasted from about 1881, when a medical doctor opened the resort, to 1910, after which better transportation and changes in medicine diminished its clientele.

<sup>77</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 325.

constituted some of the recreation by 1895. By the early 1920s, nine hotels and several boarding houses stood at Red Boiling Springs; several hotels evidently were two-story structures with the usual verandahs hugging the perimeters. As at Saratoga, guests migrated to the public spaces--the porches or the parlors--due in part, I speculate, to the simple nature of the small guestrooms.<sup>78</sup>

The Depression affected Red Boiling Springs' profits very little; regional visitors continued to enjoy the golf, swimming, house parties, and other amenities of the 1930s. Such middle or upper middle class guests as doctors or lawyers from Middle Tennessee, Kentucky, or Chattanooga perhaps found the quaintness of the facilities and home-style meals perhaps a nostalgic experience.<sup>79</sup> In addition to the middle and upper middle class guests, several political elites, including Tennessee Congressmen, frequented Red Boiling Springs' Palace Hotel during this time.<sup>80</sup> Locals sold produce and dairy products to the hotels, while young local white girls served as waitresses; blacks worked chiefly in the kitchens. Typically, the local townspeople gathered on the weekends to admire the elite

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<sup>78</sup> Jeannette Keith Denning, "Good Times: Vacationing at Red Boiling Springs," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 42 (fall 1983): 228-30, 231, photo, 233, photo; Jeannette Keith Denning, "A History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee," (M.A. thesis, Tennessee Technological University, 1982), 44-45.

<sup>79</sup> Denning, "History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs," 3.

<sup>80</sup> Denning, "Good Times," 227; Denning, "History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs," 37. Room rates were \$2 per day in 1916 and \$2.50 per day in 1935. See Denning, "Good Times," 227. Both of these amounts translate into about \$34 today based on the CPI. The \$2 rate in 1916 equals about \$134, and the \$2.50 rate in 1935 equals about \$86 in current dollars based on the Unskilled Wage index. Any of these rates suggest a more affordable figure for the middle class than either the Tyree or Beersheba rates. I used the CPI and Unskilled Wage economic calculators at the Economic History Services Web site for the conversion. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"



promenade in their finery to a resort hotel for a formal ball.<sup>81</sup> The “Good Road Movement,” however, prompted vacationers to travel elsewhere and to visit Red Boiling Springs for just a few days because relatively little time was now required for the trip. In addition, World War II’s tight labor market forced hotels to pay more for labor, and the war’s gas rationing also limited business. What Denning calls the “changing tastes of the middle classes in the area” also attributed to Red Boiling Springs’ decline. In 1983, three hotels still survived.<sup>82</sup>

The Highland Rim’s Cheatham County, on the western border of Nashville’s Davidson County, contained at least three minor resorts. While limestone strata account for many mineral springs within Cheatham County, only one, Kingston Springs, began in antebellum times. The other two, Craggie Hope and Sam’s Creek Resort, operated in the late nineteenth century as hotels surrounded by cottages. Craggie Hope, as did many resorts of the era, bottled its sulfur water and sold it by mail order.<sup>83</sup>

On the other hand, the Cumberland Plateau’s Franklin County was home to the most resorts in Thorne’s essay. Thorne attributes the large number to the geology of the area and, more importantly, to the completion of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad through the county in 1853.<sup>84</sup> Just as the secondary Virginia springs developed in the

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<sup>81</sup> Denning, “Good Times,” 235-36; Denning, “History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs,” 40.

<sup>82</sup> Denning, “Good Times,” 239-42; Denning, “History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs,” 60-62, 64.

<sup>83</sup> Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 353-54.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 345.

Shenandoah Valley and southwestern Virginia with rail accessibility, so did the same trend occur in parts of Tennessee. Of the seven spas in Franklin County, Estill Springs, Water Cure, Winchester Springs, and Hurricane Springs originated before the Civil War. The other resorts either began after 1865 or at an unspecified time after the war's end.<sup>85</sup>

Dunaway places Estill Springs and Winchester Springs in her list of primary resorts, those favored by the Deep South planters.<sup>86</sup> Dr. William Estill, a medical doctor from Philadelphia who practiced in Winchester, founded the eponymous resort in the 1830s for therapeutic use of the chalybeate and sulphur springs. During the Civil War, the resort suffered almost total destruction; afterwards, four hotels by the railroad were either built or reconstructed; they housed over three hundred visitors and offered medical and leisure activities at reduced summer rates.<sup>87</sup> Visitors also stayed at private homes. Prices in 1909 ranged from \$12 weekly and \$40 monthly at the Estill Springs Hotel, situated closest to the tracks, to \$8 weekly and \$30 monthly at two small hotels.<sup>88</sup> The hotels began to

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<sup>85</sup> I used two easily available sources for this general survey, Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 345-48 and B.C. Rauchle, "Famous Resorts of Franklin County," *Franklin County Historical Review* 1 (December 1969): 3-10.

<sup>86</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5.

<sup>87</sup> Thorne, "Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee," 345-46; Rauchle, "Famous Resorts of Franklin County," 7.

<sup>88</sup> Rauchle, "Famous Resorts of Franklin County," 7. The rates in today's dollars are \$242 per week (CPI calculator) and \$1080 per week (Unskilled Wage calculator) for \$12 in 1909. For \$8 in 1909, the rates in today's dollars are \$161 per week (CPI calculator) and \$724 per week (Unskilled Wage calculator). Vacations at this time were obviously still relatively unaffordable by the working class. See Williamson, "What is the Economic Value?"

close at the beginning of the Great Depression.<sup>89</sup> Although neither Thorne nor Rauchle describe the nature of the visitors, I can speculate that Dunaway bases her assertion on the fact that the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad provided relatively easy access to the resorts from all over the South. Again, like Tyree Springs and unlike the primary Virginia springs, transportation ease increased the number of visitors, in particular the elite from the Deep South.

Winchester Springs, described by *Goodspeed's History of Tennessee* in 1887 as “formerly a great resort for the wealthy planters of the South” and famous for its red, white, and yellow sulfur waters, consisted of a small, sixty-person hotel near the Elk River.<sup>90</sup> True to the architecture of other resorts, it contained verandahs around its perimeter for the first two of its three stories. Presumably, guests could admire the river scenery and socialize on the porches as well as engage in typical resort leisure activities. Its rates in 1909 were competitive to Estill Springs’ small hotels at \$8 per week or \$30 per month.<sup>91</sup>

The Franklin County Water Cure Establishment constituted the one hydropathic institution in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee according to one source.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 346.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 347.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 348; Rauchle, “Famous Resorts of Franklin County,” 5.

<sup>92</sup> Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 208-9. As may be remembered from Chapter One, the Nashville Water-Cure was evidently the only other water-cure institute in Tennessee. North Carolina and Virginia, including what is now West Virginia, contained no water cures, according to Weiss and Kemble.

Two physicians staffed it beginning in 1858 to treat typhoid fever, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, and other illnesses. Patients typically brought their entire families and any servants, though leisure activities may or may not have been provided. Dinners typically consisted of vegetarian fare, some of it grown on the institute's grounds. The water cure never attracted many patients in the region around Franklin County; one doctor left within the year he came. The other physician remained at the institute until the Civil War. After the war, and with the national demise of hydropathy, the hotel and cabins were turned into a regular summer resort .<sup>93</sup>

Hurricane Springs consisted of a hotel and cottages and, according to *Goodspeed's History of Tennessee*, in the 1880s was “the great fashionable resort for invalids and pleasure seekers.”<sup>94</sup> According to an undated promotional brochure announcing its thirty-seventh season, the resort offered relief as far back as the end of the War of 1848 to returning soldiers, who were experiencing dyspepsia and the “terrible scourges which visit all armies.”<sup>95</sup> The pamphlet praised not only the springs’ “golden greenish yellow water” for its sulfur and bicarbonate therapeutic aids “combined in the water as nature only can combine,” but it also touted the cool summer and fall

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<sup>93</sup> Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 348; Rauchle, “Famous Resorts of Franklin County,” 7; B.C. Rauchle, “A New Cure-All for Franklin County,” *Historical Review and Antique Digest* 3 no. 2 (1974): 10, 12, 14, 16.

<sup>94</sup> Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 348; Rauchle, “Famous Resorts of Franklin County,” 8. Thorne and Rauchle both quote Goodspeed in their very brief summaries of Hurricane Springs.

<sup>95</sup> *Hurricane Springs: with Analysis of its Waters, the Diseases to Which They are Applicable, Hints as to Use, Location of Springs, etc.* ([Franklin County, Tenn.?]: n.p., n.d), 2.

temperatures, the “beautifully picturesque” mountain scenery, and the quietude afforded visitors “of delicate and sensitive nerves.”<sup>96</sup> The five-hundred person hotel contained the usual amenities: a dance hall and such public spaces as parlors and sitting rooms. Visitors strolled from adjacent cottages surrounded by “beautiful shrubbery and flowers” to the hotel dining hall and to the springs under covered breezeways.<sup>97</sup> The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad provided guests transportation to Tullahoma where they then engaged carriages to carry them the six miles to the resort. Interestingly, the brochure fails to list rates or to carry a drawing of the hotel. Cured guests writing testimonials hailed predominantly from Middle and West Tennessee, indicating that the springs served a regional clientele in the 1880s or 1890s.<sup>98</sup>

The last Highland Rim resort originating in the antebellum period to be described is White County’s Bon Air about five miles east of Sparta. McMinnville’s General John B. Rodgers, as indicated earlier in this chapter, and his brother bought the large four-to-five-hundred person hotel and property probably in the late 1840s or early 1850s. As with other hotels situated on the Cumberland Plateau, nineteenth-century Tennessee elites probably lauded the mountain views as much if not more than the springs. Confederate soldiers allegedly destroyed the buildings, which were not rebuilt after the war.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 3-5.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 7-16.

<sup>99</sup> Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 339-40; Dunaway, “Incorporation,” 1104, table 8.5. A minister in 1838 observed that “some visitors from the lower country in the hot season” and others filled the house at a springs about nine miles

In East Tennessee proper, Rhea County's Rhea Springs, Blount County's Montvale Springs and Grainger County's Tate Springs served the Deep South planter elite.<sup>100</sup> This fact indicates that the antebellum agrarian aristocracy frequented at least three resorts each in East Tennessee and on Middle Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau, therefore implying that the planter elite did not show a geographical preference for one region over the other.<sup>101</sup>

Franklin County, however, home to both Estill Springs and Winchester Springs, might have constituted the one preferred area for antebellum elites from across the South. In-state elite occasionally made a "grand tour" of southern Appalachian Tennessee and other southern resorts. One antebellum Tennessee girl, for example, expressed sorrow about her cousin's poor health that might require family travel to Clarksville, Nashville,

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from Sparta. Possibly, the watering hole corresponds to Bon Air. If so, then it attracted Deep South planters in addition to in-state elite. See H. Ruffner, "Notes of a Tour: From Virginia to Tennessee, in the Months of July and August, 1838; Chapter Four: From West Tennessee, by the Eastern Route to Virginia," *Southern Literary Messenger* 5 (April 1839): 269.

<sup>100</sup> Montvale Springs and Tate Springs will be discussed in the next chapter. Rhea Springs, located in the same county of the so-called Scopes Monkey Trial, evidently earned an early reputation among slave traders for its waters, to which they brought ailing slaves. See Wilma A. Dunaway, *Slavery in the American Mountain South*, Studies in Modern Capitalism series, ed. Maurice Aymard, Jacques Revel, and Immanuel Wallerstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 84. Rhea Springs will not be covered in this thesis.

<sup>101</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5. The three Highland Rim resorts serving the agrarian elite, as described earlier, were Beersheba Springs, Estill Springs and Winchester Springs.

and “some springs either in east Tenn. on [sic] the western part of Virginia.”<sup>102</sup> In the early 1900s, a Nashville grandmother and her granddaughter made an annual summer spa tour beginning at Nicholson Springs and including Red Boiling Springs or Beersheba Springs.<sup>103</sup> It is possible that the grandmother was continuing with her granddaughter a family summer ritual begun years earlier. Perhaps elites also made summer tours exclusively of the many watering holes in Grundy and Franklin Counties, although more research is needed to ferret out that fact.

In addition, while more research outside the scope of this discussion is required to study which Highland Rim resorts catered to the elite, my reading of Thorne’s detailed article reveals that they held no special prerogative over the six elite resorts on the Cumberland Plateau or in East Tennessee. Tyree Springs and Hickman County’s Bon Aqua resort, probably the best known of the Highland Rim antebellum resorts, evidently enjoyed a regional Tennessee and Kentucky reputation, but they did not attract the Deep South elite.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, dispelling the image of southern Appalachian Tennessee counties

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<sup>102</sup> A paragraph later, though, in her letter, the girl had recovered from her remorse and exclaimed with pleasure about the tentative amusements awaiting them on the tour: “Oh! The funn [sic] we will have.” Ann Maria Bryon, Springfield, Tenn., to Lucy L.C. Bailey, Clarksville, Tenn., 4 May 1838, "Tennessee Documentary History, 1796-1850," machine readable transcription of an image, property of Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn., <http://idserver.utk.edu/?id=200300000000499> (accessed August 10, 2004).

<sup>103</sup> Summers, “Nicholson Springs Resort Hotel,” 253.

<sup>104</sup> Thorne considers Bon Aqua to have been at one time after the Civil War the largest resort in Middle Tennessee. While he does not discuss the antebellum patronage, he states that many Tennessee elite males stayed there in the years 1865 to 1890. See Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 351.

isolated from the rest of the South is the evidence that southern aristocrats did seek out the Cumberland Plateau's Beersheba Springs, Estill Springs, and Winchester Springs and East Tennessee's Rhea Springs, Montvale Springs, and Tate Springs.

East Tennessee contained a number of watering holes catering primarily to in-state or regional elites. Blount County's Henderson Springs and Alleghany Springs, along with Montvale, were located in the Smokies. Northeast of Blount County was found Anderson County's Oliver Springs and, still farther to the north, Hawkins County's Hale's Alum Springs and Galbraith's Springs. To the south lay Lookout Mountain along the Georgia-Tennessee border. Other possible antebellum resorts included Campbell County's Eagle Bluff and Cocke County's Carson's and Houser's springs.<sup>105</sup> Brief descriptions will follow of Henderson Springs and Alleghany Springs in the Smokies, and of Hawkins County's Galbraith's Springs and Hale's Alum Springs.<sup>106</sup>

On the perimeter of Chilhowee Mountain in the Smokies, about two-thousand feet above sea level, stood the resort of Alleghany Springs. Located about fifteen miles from Maryville, visitors reached it by hack from the train depot in Maryville.<sup>107</sup> Although no

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<sup>105</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5. Dunaway also includes Unicoi County's Unaka Springs as an antebellum resort serving in-state elite. In my research, I cannot find evidence that a hotel existed at Unaka Springs prior to the Civil War.

<sup>106</sup> For information on Cocke County springs, see Eddie Walker III, "Watering Places in Cocke County," *Smoky Mountain Historical Society Newsletter* 3 (no. 5 1977): 13-16.

<sup>107</sup> Mary Ruth Chiles, "Resorts-Watering Places in the Smoky Mountain Region, 1832-1930, 1985," 8-1, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Library, Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Chiles, a lawyer, served as secretary to the Superintendent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for many years and produced an unpublished typescript of the history of watering holes in that area. Interspersed with her discussion are photocopies of



hotel stood on the site until Joseph Kerr, Jr., built one about 1859, locals knew of two springs there, the Chilhowee Medical Springs and the Yellow Sulphur Springs, and evidently of their curative powers as far back as 1837.<sup>108</sup> Many visitors must have traveled to the hotel in the year after its opening, for a post office opened there in 1861. Slaves purportedly set fire to the hotel the same year; circumstances surrounding the blaze are unknown.<sup>109</sup> A Civil War veteran from Indiana secured the property in 1885 and built, with great difficulty on the mountainside above Yellow Sulphur Springs, a three-story, sixty-room hotel which could accommodate three hundred to four hundred guests.<sup>110</sup> Because the post office had changed its name to “Alleghany Springs” in 1866, the hotel assumed that appellation upon its completion twenty years later.

The Alleghany Springs Hotel, though built in the 1880s, appeared to blend a late Tennessee Greek Revival style with a mansard roof with gables. On top of the roof perched a small lookout tower with a flag on top.<sup>111</sup> As the Greek Revival style swept across the nation in antebellum times, regional modifications resulted. In East Tennessee, the style can best be described by “long, narrow, high” proportions. Kingsport’s

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newspaper ads, journal articles, and clippings, some from non-identifiable sources. She assigned a number for each watering place and appended to it another number to indicate the page within the section for that resort. Hence, Alleghany Springs is #8, and the first page of its section is designated as 8-1, the second page as 8-2, etc. She does not, however, always number all pages within a resort section.

<sup>108</sup> Inez Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel; P.O. Address Mint, Tennessee,” *Smoky Mountain Historical Society Newsletter* 14 (autumn 1988): 70.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 71; Chiles, “Resorts,” 8-3.

Netherland Inn manifests the style with its long verandah and narrow porch. As an aside, if southern Appalachia had been as insular as its stereotype has perpetuated, the Greek Revival style and other architectural trends might well have bypassed it. As one architectural historian points out, by the 1830s, Tennessee architecture manifested the “wide cultural and commercial interests” of both the North and the South along the Mississippi.<sup>112</sup>

The Alleghany Springs Hotel possessed a 140-foot long verandah on its first two stories, wrapped around two sides of the building. Simple wooden columns extended the length of the first-floor porch floor to the top of the second-floor porch roof.<sup>113</sup> As held true at other resorts, the verandah provided a venue for socializing and for admiring the Smoky Mountain view.

Construction of the hotel cost between \$50,000 and \$85,000, an exorbitant sum for 1885.<sup>114</sup> The opulence gained from such extravagant spending showed in the hotel’s Belgian carpet, walnut and cherry bedroom furniture, crystal chandeliers, several dozen sets of table silver, and finely upholstered parlor furniture. Alleghany Springs’ grand ballroom easily accommodated fifty to one-hundred couples with enough room for an

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<sup>111</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 8-1.

<sup>112</sup> Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America*, 235, 237.

<sup>113</sup> Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel,” 71, photograph, 75, drawing.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 71; Chiles, “Resorts,” 8-8. Burns states the cost as “nearly \$85,000”; Chiles, as “more than \$50,000.” The value of \$85,000 from 1885 in today’s dollars is \$1.6 million (CPI calculator) or \$1.5 million (GDP Deflator calculator). See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”

orchestra.<sup>115</sup> Relatively modern conveniences such as electric call bells, gas heating, and gaslights were used at the hotel; however, each floor contained only one bathroom.

Outdoor leisure activities included croquet, fishing, and boating.<sup>116</sup>

Drinking the springs water still played a role in spite of the recreational and social activities. According to an ad in the 1886 *Maryville Times*, the curative power of the iron, sulfur, and “Eye” (arsenic) springs healed “any female complaint, rheumatism, neuralgia,” and all “liver, kidney, bowel and nervous diseases.”<sup>117</sup> The high elevation supposedly fended off malaria. A bathhouse offered both cold and hot baths. A physician was on staff to advise guests of the merits of the waters in respect to their infirmities.<sup>118</sup>

Rates at the hotel were \$2 per day, \$5 weekly, or \$40 per month according to the 1886 ad, thus signifying that the hotel catered to the middle or upper middle class.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>Chiles, “Resorts,” 8-3. A local newspaper noted that “the first grand ball and banquet ever held in the new hotel at Alleghany Springs, Blount county [*sic*], came off Friday night, and was a success in every respect.” See *Knoxville Daily Journal*, 4 July 1886.

<sup>116</sup> Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel,” 71-72.

<sup>117</sup> One might wonder about the health benefits of drinking from an arsenic-laced spring. Visitors sipped the Eye Spring water until their eyes became puffy, a reaction to the arsenic that signaled that they should stop. Supposedly, the water caused a dermatological process that caused their skin to peel, thereby leaving them with a fresh, young-looking countenance. See Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel,” 72, 75.

<sup>118</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 8-3.

<sup>119</sup> Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel,” 75. The value of \$2 from 1886 in today’s dollars is \$233 using the Unskilled Wage calculator and about \$39 using the CPI calculator. See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?” The daily and monthly rates were similar to Beersheba Springs’ rates in 1887: \$2.50 per day and \$40-\$45 per month. The weekly rate for Beersheba was \$15 versus Alleghany’s \$5. See Gower, “The Hotel: A Fortress that Shrugged at Doom,” 11.

While Dunaway considers Alleghany to have catered largely to in-state elite during antebellum times, I wonder if the sheer grandeur of the Alleghany Springs Resort Hotel also attracted aristocrats from outside Tennessee during its hey-day of the late 1880s to the mid-1910s. Burns notes that locals often peered through the ballroom windows to watch the dances; that fact indicates that a lower class was observing the finery of a privileged class, whose activities excluded them.<sup>120</sup> With access to the Louisville and Nashville (L&N) Railroad at Maryville, elites from across the South may have ventured to what Burns calls “perhaps the most elegantly furnished” hotel around Chilhowee Mountain.<sup>121</sup>

Henderson Springs in Sevier County, adjacent to Blount County, constituted the third antebellum watering hole in the Smokies besides Montvale and Alleghany Springs. It first saw use as a health retreat at least as early as 1830; its first hotel, however, was not built until 1878. The watering hole, as in the tradition of many southern resorts, also contained several cabins near the hotel. A three-story, frame hotel eventually replaced the smaller, two-story hotel. Like Alleghany Springs, this hotel possessed side and front verandahs on the first and second floors. Unlike Alleghany Springs, its appearance was much more rustic. While its two-story wooden columns and long, narrow, high proportions revealed its Tennessee Greek Revival character, it lacked the ornate roof, lookout tower, and other fine detail of Allegheny. In fact, it closely resembled

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<sup>120</sup> Burns, “Alleghany Springs Hotel,” 72.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

Kingsport's Netherland Inn.<sup>122</sup> Its architecture according to one source was in style with the “vernacular” design followed in the Smoky Mountain resorts of the period, including the Wonderland Hotel (the subject of Chapter 5), in which the resorts lacked decorative ornamentation.<sup>123</sup>

A profitable business must have caused the 1909 addition of a two-story building separate from the hotel. It contained a dining room on the first floor and a dozen guest rooms upstairs. Verandahs on both stories were constructed across the front of the hotel.<sup>124</sup>

Guests reached the hotel by hack from the railroad at Sevierville; to encourage potential guests to take the six-mile drive from the depot to the resort, the hotel advertised that its “livery man can put tourists there in less than an hour.”<sup>125</sup> Once at the hotel, visitors could partake of a “health-giving” spring enclosed in a spring house. Fishing, swimming in back of a grist mill, and socializing made up some of the recreational activities.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 2-3, photo. The photo on p. 2-3 was taken in 1916, probably several years after it was built. See Ibid., 2-5. For a view of the Netherland Inn, see <http://www.danielboonetrail.com/html/netherland.html> (accessed August 20, 2004).

<sup>123</sup> Todd Cleveland, Larry McKee, and Paul Webb, *Cultural Resources of the Elkmont Historic District, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Sevier County, Tennessee*, with contributions by David S. Leigh, Steve Gaddis, and Tasha Benyshek (Atlanta: Garrow Associates, September 2002), 56, <http://www.elkmont-gmpa-ea.com/CRReport.PDF> (accessed November 18, 2004).

<sup>124</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 2-2.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 2-1.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 2-2, 2-3, 2-4.

While Chiles notes that “prominent families from Knoxville and from more distant points spent the summers there,” the Henderson Springs Hotel--as shown by its more limited offerings and more rustic appearance--most probably served the upper middle class as opposed to the elite clientele that I speculate stayed at the Alleghany Springs.<sup>127</sup> Even though the middle class was taking vacations by the early 1900s, few members probably could afford for their families to be gone the whole summer. In this regard, Henderson Springs may be similar to the early twentieth-century clientele of the Smoky Mountains’ Wonderland Hotel and neighboring Appalachian Club. Knoxville business owners, architects, and lawyers sent their families to the Wonderland and Appalachian Club cottages for the summer and commuted on the weekends to join them. In 1909, the daily rate was \$1 or worth about \$91 today (Unskilled Wage rate) or about \$20 (CPI).<sup>128</sup> While this hotel rate is not an economy price, compared to the \$233 Unskilled Wage rate in current dollars for the Alleghany, it bolsters my hypothesis that the Henderson Springs clientele were probably less elite than that of the Alleghany.

The Henderson Springs Hotel continued to function as a resort during the first part of the twentieth century: rates in 1930 were \$11 per week. In 1959, the property was leased to a civic club to use as a boys’ camp; a few months later, it burnt, perhaps as a result of arson.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 2-5.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 2-3. I used the Unskilled Wage and CPI calculators to derive this figure. See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”

<sup>129</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 2-3, 2-5.

About eighty miles to the north is the hill and river country of Hawkins County, situated at the Virginia border. At least two antebellum resorts, Hales' Springs and Galbraith's Springs, thrived there. Galbraith's Springs was located less than a mile from the Holston River near Short Mountain, about twelve miles southeast from Hales' Springs and about twelve miles northeast of Grainger County's Tate Springs (to be covered in Chapter 3).<sup>130</sup> As early as 1838, visitors to Galbraith's Springs stayed in pole cabins about the chalybeate water to be cured of "female troubles," "debilitated systems [refusing] to assimilate the food necessary to sustain life," and other afflictions.<sup>131</sup> In the late 1870s, a hotel was built; by 1888, it and surrounding cottages accommodated one hundred twenty-five visitors. A resident physician advised guests on the quantity of water to imbibe. The usual resort activities of croquet, bowling, boating, fishing, and hunting were offered.<sup>132</sup> Indicative of the increasing stress in the middle-class office bureaucracy, the increasing urbanization of the country, and the trend for the middle class to go on vacation in the late 1800s, the springs advertised to the "man of business, worn with cares and anxieties" and emphasized its offerings of quietness, affordability, and rustic, natural setting.<sup>133</sup> The fact that its 1887 season drew visitors from over one third of the states also highlights the

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<sup>130</sup> Galbraith and Greever, *Season of 1888: Annual Announcement of Galbraith's Springs Giving Location, Description, Analysis of Water, Rates of Board and Other Information, with Extracts from Letters and References, Galbraith's Springs, Hawkins Co., Tenn.* (Knoxville: Tribune Job Office, [1888]), 5,7.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 9.

increasing number of middle-class members traveling for pleasure, recuperation, and relaxation. The location nine miles from the railroad probably accounted for much of its traffic. The majority of the visitors, however, hailed from Tennessee and surrounding states.<sup>134</sup>

Near Galbraith's Springs was Hales' Springs, or Hales' Alum Springs. Considered a watering hole for Tennessee elite in antebellum times, the coming of the Tennessee and Ohio Railroad probably propelled its visitation in the 1880s.<sup>135</sup> Like Galbraith's Springs, Hales' Springs billed itself as "a quiet home-like place" in a pastoral setting with cool, invigorating temperatures.<sup>136</sup> In keeping with the agrarian ambiance depicted in their brochures, both resorts advertised their country-grown food, orchards, and fresh dairy products.<sup>137</sup> Hales' Springs' description and use of sulfur, freestone, and chalybeate springs occupy more space in the pamphlet than the few sentences given to leisure activities such as dancing and fishing.<sup>138</sup> Yet, it appears, like Galbraith Springs, to have tailored its advertising as much to families as to nervous women or dyspeptic men in such

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 7, 20-23.

<sup>135</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5; R.F. Powell, *Season of 1889: Hales's Springs; You Meet Only the Best in the South; the Place for Families; Read What Guests Say* (Knoxville: n.p., [1889?]): 3-4.

<sup>136</sup> Powell, *Season of 1889*, 4.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 4; Galbraith and Greever, *Season of 1888*, 7.

<sup>138</sup> Powell, *Season of 1889*, 5.



phrases as “where the little children can fish” and “I took my family of six with me; they all improved in health and feeling.”<sup>139</sup>

Readily available access to the railroad allowed more families to visit resorts after the 1850s. Fathers could commute between their workplaces and the resorts where they left their families for several days or weeks in the summer; they might join their families either on weekends or take time off for work for several days. This trend became more common after 1870 with more rail access and with more middle-class members going on vacation.<sup>140</sup>

East Tennessee began planning for a railroad as early as 1836 due to its interest in linking more expeditiously with regional markets. In June 1855, the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad saw its first train arrive in the northern terminus of Knoxville from the southern terminus of Dalton, Georgia.<sup>141</sup> Once the 130-mile East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad between Knoxville and Bristol linked to the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad in 1858, an unbroken rail system existed from Memphis to New York.<sup>142</sup> The railroads in

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 5, 9.

<sup>140</sup> Aron, *Working at Play*, 49, 57.

<sup>141</sup> James W. Holland, “The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 3 (January 1931): 89, 100, 103.

<sup>142</sup> James W. Holland, “The Building of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 4 (January 1932): 99, 100. For a history of the early struggles to fund rail construction in the region, see also S.J. Folmsbee, “The Beginnings of the Railroad Movement in East Tennessee,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 5 (January 1933): 81-104. The Western North Carolina Railroad, on the other hand, did not connect Asheville with the eastern part of the state until 1880, and the Asheville and Spartanburg line between Asheville and Charleston only opened in 1886. See Starnes, “Creating the Land of the Sky,” 34-35.

East Tennessee and the Cumberland Plateau probably enabled many antebellum resorts without the reputation of a Montvale or a Beersheba Springs to prosper for several decades beyond what would have been possible otherwise. The rails opened these watering holes to new guests and provided travelers access to new resorts built along the rail routes. Twenty years after the completion of the rail connecting Georgia to Virginia, an East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad brochure advertised over sixty resorts and rural boarding houses, probably almost five times the number that existed in the 1830s.<sup>143</sup> Without the railroad's large-size promotional brochure's flowery descriptions and detailed engravings of the pastoral countryside, possibly such small antebellum resorts as Galbraith's or Hales' would not have survived past the 1850s. Formerly inaccessible resorts such as Henderson Springs, tucked into the "Y" of three mountain ridges coming together, might have languished if the railroad had not reached Sevierville. The railroad serves as further evidence that southern Appalachia was not isolated from the outside world.

One question remains about the development of antebellum resorts in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia: Why did the Virginia springs continue to maintain their hold as the top fashionable watering holes in the South above other sophisticated antebellum resorts located in Tennessee and North Carolina?

Corbett argues that a proprietor with sufficient patience to receive a return on investment and with adequate capital to develop a pleasing and satisfactory infrastructure

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<sup>143</sup> I counted the number of resorts listed in the railroad brochure and compared it with the number listed in Dunaway for East Tennessee. See Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5; East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railway Company, *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee* (Memphis: S.C. Toof, 1879): 28-45.

is necessary for a resort to thrive.<sup>144</sup> Beersheba Springs reached an antebellum zenith under John Armfield's willingness to spend money on such niceties as French employees. Middle Tennessee's Tyree Springs' Alabama owners invested in a relatively large hotel for the 1830s. On the other hand, Tyree faltered a century later when a long-time owner's estate was divided among several buyers, none of whom individually maintain his part of the property.<sup>145</sup> Why did the Virginia springs retain their social status in view of Beersheba's fashionable attributes? Why did Beersheba not become as elevated in social status as the Virginia springs resorts?

All the resorts discussed in this chapter possessed mineral water lauded for its therapeutic value. Southerners fled to many of these resorts to escape summer fevers. Furthermore, most of the resorts provided similar leisure activities: socializing on verandahs; participating in bowling, croquet, and billiards; and enjoying the out-of-doors through walking, fishing, and hunting. Therefore, the exclusiveness of the Virginia springs cannot be because of the typical explanations given for antebellum visitors staying at resorts: to drink the water and to engage in recreational offerings.

Perhaps the argument can be made that the inaccessibility of the Virginia springs accounted for their exclusivity. Perhaps the romanticism enrapturing many Americans in the 1840s contributed to the infatuation with nature in the western Virginia mountains. The southern Appalachian resorts of Tennessee, however, also commanded scenic views from their lofty perches on the Cumberland Plateau or in the Smokies. Likewise, the

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<sup>144</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 5, 59, 82.

<sup>145</sup> Pond, "Tennessee's Tyree Springs," 69.

western North Carolina resorts offered spectacular vistas in the Blue Ridge Mountains. In addition, before improved turnpikes and the advent of the railroad, many of the Tennessee and certainly all of the western North Carolina resorts were nearly as inaccessible as the Virginia resorts. Colton in 1859, for example, lamented that western North Carolina's Piedmont Springs' "somewhat out-of-the-way location has kept them from being much resorted to; but the beauty, of the scenery around, and the health-restoring properties of the waters, certainly demand for them more attention at the hands of visitors."<sup>146</sup>

I think that "elite breeds elite." Once a resort attracted the fashionable of the day, it continued to attract similar clientele--of like wealth and blueblood family background--and thus established its reputation.<sup>147</sup> Some authors consider that Saratoga attracted not only more of a cross-section of classes, but that it also drew considerable numbers of truly invalid and ill patients.<sup>148</sup> The Virginia springs, on the other hand, catered to a more homogeneous crowd--to the patricians preeminently and to the truly ill only secondarily. Some Virginia springs evidently had a reputation for attracting sick visitors: consumptives traveled to Red Sulphur for tuberculosis treatment, and Hot Springs "seemed to be a

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<sup>146</sup> Henry E. Colton, *Mountain Scenery: The Scenery of the Mountains of Western North Carolina and Northwestern South Carolina* (Raleigh: W.L. Pomeroy, 1859; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries, "Documenting the American South," 2001), 49, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/colton/colton.html> (accessed August 30, 2004).

<sup>147</sup> Corbett disagrees. See Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 3-4.

<sup>148</sup> Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease," 152; Gillespie, "Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly," 116-17. Chambers notes that Saratoga and Ballston visitors knew which hotels, or "invalid houses," catered to those unable to participate in social events. Gillespie states that southern elite in the early 1800s considered Saratoga and Ballston Spa to be health, rather than social, resorts.

gathering place for Disease.”<sup>149</sup> Other Virginia springs resorts, notably the White Sulphur, catered to the healthy privileged. The conclusion I draw is that while resorts first attracted ill patients, their status rested on the class of elite who came (whether Deep South planter or in-state elite) and the continued patronage of that class of elite in pursuit of leisure activities and social networking.

Overall, I agree with Dunaway’s assertions that the southern Appalachian antebellum economic markets participated in world trade and that southern Appalachia’s economic stagnation by 1860 derived from non-investment of capital into finishing or manufacturing industries on site. The stagnation, in my mind, perhaps did not weigh that much on travel capitalism. Livestock drovers had a major impact on western North Carolina’s resort development, much more so, I conjecture, than they did on the development of resorts in East Tennessee and southwestern Virginia. Absentee property ownership played some role in not reinvesting in the southern Appalachian economy, but the evidence for that is, in my view, mainly speculative. Resorts continued to develop and to thrive in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee, especially with the completion of regional rail, until the Civil War. The southern Appalachian Tennessee resorts, like those on Middle Tennessee’s Highland Rim, offered the same therapeutic and leisure opportunities as other regional resorts. They did not demonstrate a “backwoods” lack of sophistication or architectural structures or infrastructures more primitive than those of other regional spas. At least seven of the southern Appalachian resorts in Tennessee attracted the Deep South planters: Montvale, Alleghany, Estill, Winchester,

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<sup>149</sup> Chambers, “Fashionable Dis-ease,” 152.

Tate, Beersheba, and Rhea Springs.<sup>150</sup> The geographical diversity of these seven resorts' guests indicates that the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee were not isolated and that many of the planter elite favored these resorts; else, the resorts would have failed within a few years after opening. The next chapter will examine two of these antebellum resorts, Montvale Springs and Tate Spring, in more detail and will also include a discussion of a more recent watering hole, Unaka Springs, which largely thrived as a result of railroad construction.

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<sup>150</sup> Dunaway, "Incorporation," 1104, table 8.5.

## CHAPTER 4

### MINERAL WATERS IN EAST TENNESSEE: MONTVALE SPRINGS, TATE SPRING, AND UNAKA SPRINGS

Montvale Springs, Tate Spring, and Unaka Springs lie in a section of East Tennessee that runs from the Smokies northeasterly through the Holston River Valley to the Unaka Mountains at the North Carolina border.<sup>1</sup> While it is convenient to aggregate these three resorts with other watering holes in southern Appalachia for analytical purposes, each of these resorts has unique characteristics that set it apart from the others. Each resort's development, moreover, can be put in context of national trends and influences concerning the medical and therapeutic uses of mineral spring water, thus reiterating the position that southern Appalachia interacted with other regions of the country.

All three springs, in common with all other spring resorts discussed previously, originated as watering holes for the sick to visit: Montvale and Tate in the antebellum period and Unaka in the late 1800s. All continued to attract invalids and the ill for decades after their beginnings, thus demonstrating that the use of mineral water for curative purposes constituted an accepted medical practice into the early twentieth century.

Medical doctor John Bell's manuals, *On Baths and Mineral Waters* (1831) and its successor, *The Mineral and Thermal Springs of the United States and Canada* (1855),

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<sup>1</sup> Some sources use spelling variations of Tate Spring, such as "Tates" or Tate's" modifying either "Spring" or "Springs." I use "Tate Spring" because resort letterhead and promotional brochures appear to use exclusively that phrase.

used extensively to analyze and recommend the waters of antebellum springs, gave way to more sophisticated classification schedules after the Civil War.<sup>2</sup> John Jennings Moorman, another physician, organized *Mineral Springs of North America* (1873) by region and state, within which he described the resorts and the types of springs (e.g., Winchester contained “Red and White Sulphur, Chalybeate, and *Freestone*”). Moorman’s chapter on Tennessee covered ten watering holes, including Beersheba and Winchester on the Cumberland Plateau, Montvale in the Smokies, Grainger County’s Tate Spring, and two springs near Tate--one of which may have been Hale’s Alum Springs. In a discussion on saline springs located from the Smokies to West Virginia, Moorman singled out four Virginia springs (Shannondale, Blue Ridge, Alleghany, and Yellow) and two Tennessee springs, Montvale and Tate, thus signifying the therapeutic importance of those two springs. Saline water was especially beneficial for its “purgative operations” on the patient suffering from either “dyspeptic depravities” or chronic diarrhea. Moorman may have seen many Deep South planters sip Montvale waters, for he noted during his summer of 1854 stay at Montvale that the springs benefited several people who suffered from diarrhea, “a disease very common and very fatal in our extreme Southern latitudes.” Moorman devoted only a few sentences to Tate, noting the quantity of iron in its water, but gave an eloquent description of Beersheba’s “select, elegant, and cultivated” society. Based on Moorman’s

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on Bell, a mineral springs resort physician who practiced in Philadelphia, and his publications, see de Vierville, “American Healing Waters,” 223-28. De Vierville provides background on the development of mineral water classification schemes in the nineteenth century throughout much of his dissertation. See, for example, pp. 317-47.



work, it seems apparent that at this postbellum time, the most fashionable Tennessee watering hole was Beersheba and that the most health-inducing springs were located at Montvale, the latter particularly so because Moorman chose to spend time there.<sup>3</sup>

The same year that Moorman published his work, George E. Walton, a graduate of New York's Bellevue Hospital Medical College, published his first edition of *Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada* (1873). Walton relied on the writings of Bell, Moorman, and other authorities to establish a universal classification system for purportedly all known mineral waters.<sup>4</sup> Drawing upon the German and French chemical classifications, Walton devised a new schedule that also included therapeutic activity: alkaline, saline (sodium chloride), sulphur, chalybeate (iron-containing), purgative, calcic (calcium-containing), and thermal.<sup>5</sup> Like Moorman, who cautioned against the “drink and be healed” mentality of many of Montvale's patrons, so did Walton warn against many

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<sup>3</sup> J. J. Moorman, *Mineral Springs of North America; How to Reach, and How to Use Them* (Philadelphia: Lippincott's Press, 1873), 165, 195-99, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed April 30, 2004). DeBow in 1861 had singled out Beersheba and Montvale as the “chief watering places of Tennessee.” Their reputations over other Tennessee springs evidently were intact over a decade later. See “Southern Scenery, Watering Places, Resources, etc.,” *DeBow's Review, Agricultural, Industrial Progress and Resources* 31 (August 1861): 196, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed August 10, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> De Vierville, “American Healing Waters,” 288-89, 290.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 288-91; George E. Walton, *The Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada, with Analyses and Notes on the Prominent Spas of Europe, and a List of Sea-Side Resorts* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1873), 32-35.

springs proprietors' “ ‘cure-all’ style of advertisement [from which] hopeless invalids have been induced to take long journeys to springs in no way adapted to their disease.”<sup>6</sup>

In Walton's guide covering about 235 American springs and several dozen European spas, he listed only Beersheba and Montvale for Tennessee. Just as Moorman paid homage to Beersheba's exclusive clientele, so did Walton note that Nashville and Chattanooga's “wealthy” frequented Beersheba. Again, Walton, like Moorman, did not discuss any Montvale elite. Walton, however, rapturously described the “the pleasures of mountain-rambles, the various sports of field and stream, and the luxury of cool, pure mountain-air,” thus indicating that Montvale's rural location in the high elevation of the Smokies was as beneficial as its waters. Interestingly, while Walton neglected many fashionable Tennessee watering holes, including those in Franklin County, he included such smaller and more rustic springs as southwestern Virginia's Pulaski Alum and Holston by briefly mentioning their hotels, transportation access, and water analyses.<sup>7</sup>

In 1886 Albert C. Peale, under the auspices of the U.S. Geological Survey, published a massive work listing 2,822 spring sites. Relying on state geological reports, scientific publications, and other sources, he determined that of the over two thousand locations with springs found in the country, “over 600 are places of resorts and more than 200 sell the waters to a greater or less extent.” By way of comparison, Peale noted that an 1880 American Medical Association study listed about 500 localities; Walton's 1883

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<sup>6</sup> Moorman, *Mineral Springs of North America*, 198; Walton, *Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada*, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Walton, *Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada*, 249-50, 255, 282.

edition, about 279 localities; Moorman's 1873 edition, about 171 spring sites; and Bell's 1831 edition, 21 places.<sup>8</sup> Two factors probably account for the dramatic increase in the number of resorts: the U.S. Geological Survey's sweeping analysis of all resorts and a reliance on earlier publications' surveys as helpful aids and the increase in the number of new resorts after the Civil War. Whereas several previously published guides mentioned primarily only Beersheba and Montvale for Tennessee, Peale's work noted that Tennessee possessed more mineral spring resorts than any other state (Virginia stood in second place) with most of the Tennessee resorts catering to locals.<sup>9</sup>

Peale's volume, in addition to classifying the type of spring water, also listed for each watering hole, if known, its volume flow per unit of time, its temperature, and the number of springs at each site. For several springs in each state--for Tennessee he chose Montvale, Tate, Galbraith's, Hurricane, and twenty others--Peale provided detailed chemical analyses of the water.<sup>10</sup> Because his work was of a geological, rather than of a medical slant, he provided no commentary as to the therapeutic benefits of the water and only succinct notations about the status of the springs' infrastructure and the nature of visitors.

Peale observed that many of the antebellum Tennessee resorts "have fallen into disuse, and other springs of extensive local reputation are still unimproved." Of the 177

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<sup>8</sup> Albert C. Peale, "Lists and Analyses of the Mineral Springs of the United States (A Preliminary Study)," *Bulletin of the U.S. Geological Survey*, no. 32 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Geological Survey, 1886), 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 103-6.

Tennessee spring sites, however, Peale listed one third as “Resort” and only another four as “Resort prior to the war.” Of the fifty-four Tennessee mineral springs classified under “Resort,” about one half (twenty-eight) were located in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee. Because all other springs annotated with remarks (about eighty-two springs carried no notation) listed such comments as “Local resort,” “Used locally,” or “Unimproved,” it seems reasonable to assume that guests traveled to the twenty-eight southern Appalachian resorts from across the state or elsewhere. By comparison, Peale listed only twenty-seven resorts for North Carolina, four for West Virginia, and forty-four for Virginia.<sup>11</sup> If the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee were as isolated as stereotypically portrayed by a number of twentieth-century scholars, then many fewer resorts would have developed on the Cumberland Plateau or in the East Tennessee mountains. Many spa travelers probably perceived southern Appalachian Tennessee watering holes as destinations or part of a springs “grand tour.” One may speculate that a fraction of the travelers found at the southern Appalachian Tennessee springs were using those locales as possible stopping points along the way to the Virginia springs, but a larger number of the visitors must have viewed the Tennessee watering holes as their final destination, given the large number of mineral spring resorts in that part of Tennessee.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 55-57, 69, 74-76, 98-102. Peale, as undoubtedly any source would in an attempt to be comprehensive, made some errors. He listed Winchester, for example, as a “resort prior to the war.” Thorne, however, gives the name of the Hurricane proprietor in 1887, the year after Peale’s publication issued. Thorne also lists such other springs as Dowdy that Peale omitted. See Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 347, 349.

Over twenty years later, the publication of *The Mineral Waters of the United States and Their Therapeutic Uses* (1899) demonstrated that mineral water's curative powers still held credence in the medical community at the turn of the century. Dr. James K. Crook, a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine and an adjunct professor at the New York Post-Graduate Medical School, published a guide to update previous ones. Drawing upon personal visits to springs, geological reports, railroad guides, correspondence with spa proprietors and postmasters, and preceding works such as Moorman's and Walton's, Crook sought to produce "by far the most comprehensive account of the mineral springs our country which has ever been written."<sup>12</sup>

In his guide, Crook found the German, French, English, and Walton's American classifications inadequate due in part to his belief that "none of these tables is sufficiently simple on the one hand or sufficiently comprehensive on the other." Drawing upon Peale, he devised yet another classification, the main thrust being the division of mineral waters into either "non-thermal or cold" or "thermal," and then subdivided these two categories into various chemical classes and subclasses (e.g., "chalybeate--muriated" or in current chemical nomenclature, ferric chloride or  $\text{FeCl}_3$ ). Crook's massive chemical reclassification of springs and investigation of their state of operations--whether in business, unimproved, or unused--therefore provided medical doctors with a "definite idea of [the mineral water's] general chemical composition and to obtain a view of its

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<sup>12</sup> James K. Crook, *The Mineral Waters of the United States and Their Therapeutic Uses; With an Account of the Various Mineral Spring Localities, Their Advantages as Health Resorts, Means of Access, etc; To Which is Added an Appendix on Potable Waters* (New York and Philadelphia: Lea Brothers and Co., 1899), title page, iii-iv. Some of Crook's credentials are listed under his name on the title page.

probable medicinal value” without needing a “strictly therapeutical tabulation” of each spring’s curative or palliative properties.<sup>13</sup>

Crook described in the first eighty-odd pages of his treatise his water classification scheme, the phase components (e.g., gas) of mineral waters, and the therapeutic value of mineral water drinking and bathing. In the second half of his tome, he listed for each state and territory the springs then in use. For Tennessee, he unscientifically declared that “the climate of no State in the Union is more salubrious or considered more healthful than that of Tennessee” and singled out the “eastern elevation . . . in particular for the purity of the mountain air,” showing as Walton did in his description of Montvale, the contemporary belief that mountain air was beneficial for one’s health.<sup>14</sup> Because Crook omitted springs that had fallen into disrepair or were not developed, he listed only twenty-five Tennessee springs, of which over one half (thirteen) were located in the southern Appalachian counties. Of another twenty-three Tennessee springs for which he could not ascertain their status (perhaps some spring proprietors did not respond to his correspondence), eleven were located in the southern Appalachian counties.<sup>15</sup> Of these uncertain resorts, several--notably Winchester, Hurricane, and Alleghany--were actually accepting guests.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 28-33.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 432.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 433-48.

<sup>16</sup> Hurricane, for example, issued a promotional pamphlet in 1900 (the pamphlet copy I used for Chapter Two is undated). See *Hurricane Springs With Analysis of Its Waters, the Diseases to Which They Are Applicable, Hints as to Use, Location of Springs, etc. Mail, Telegraph, & Express Facilities Are Perfect, With Offices in Hotel, Four Daily Mails-- Two From South & Two From the North*, (n.p.: Franklin County News

Interestingly, a small resort such as Sullivan County's Avoca Springs, not featured in the previous treatises discussed, warranted more text than the fading *grand-dame* watering hole, Beersheba Springs. Unaka, Montvale, and Tate each warranted one to three descriptive paragraphs in Crook's volume, thus demonstrating that they, as well as a plethora of watering holes on the Cumberland Plateau and in East Tennessee, attracted a following at the turn of the century.<sup>17</sup>

The study of mineral springs to ascertain their medicinal value was also evident in the vast number of medical articles and other publications indexed in the *Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office*, a decades-long effort by John Shaw Billings to organize citations to medical materials dating from the seventeenth century. Excluding cross-references to such related indexing terms as "Health Resorts," "Hydrotherapy," and "Baths," about 160 pages--with about twenty-five to forty citations per page--are found in the 1895 volume to the subject heading "Waters, Mineral."<sup>18</sup>

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Print., 1900). The citation, not the full pamphlet, is located at the Tennessee State Archive and Library Web site, <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/statelib/pubsvs/bibfrank.htm> (accessed September 14, 2004). The Alleghany experienced several management changes beginning in 1895, so a proprietor may not have corresponded with Crook. See Burns, "Alleghany Springs Hotel," 73.

<sup>17</sup> Crook, *Mineral Waters of the United States*, 443-46.

<sup>18</sup> Library of the Surgeon General's Office, *Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, U.S. Army*, vol. 16 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895), 151-310. The Library of the Surgeon General's Office later became the National Library of Medicine; the *Index-Catalogue* expanded into the Internet database, Medline, widely used by health professionals all over the world. An Internet trial version of the *Index-Catalogue* became available for searching in July 2004. Searching it for "waters mineral" for the same time period as the printed equivalent resulted in 867 citations. See <http://indexcat.nlm.nih.gov> (accessed September 15, 2004).

In addition, medical textbooks of the late 1800s discussed in detail the therapeutic use of waters but not always with the lavish praise bestowed on their curative traits by antebellum physicians such as William Burke of the Virginia springs. According to one textbook, relief for chronic inflammation of the stomach could be “obtained by a few weeks’ treatment at a suitable watering-place.”<sup>19</sup> However, the textbook sermonized:

Many patients will cheerfully submit to a strict régime and a thorough course of treatment at a spa or continental sanatorium, when no amount of persuasion will induce them to follow the same principles in their own homes, and it is consequently often a matter of expediency rather than of absolute necessity that a course of mineral waters is recommended in place of the usual medicinal treatment.<sup>20</sup>

The writer in this case obviously recognized that the congenial atmosphere and the spring-water-drinking ritual of spas lent itself to a patient’s being more self-disciplined if surrounded by others also undergoing the mineral water regimen in a relaxing ambiance. Another textbook author discussing “nervo-motor dyspepsia” criticized resident doctors at mineral springs who “would render even greater services to their patients if they would but . . . [pay] more attention to diet and to hygiene. . . It is deplorable, for example, that patients of this class are often entrusted, as regards their diet, to the mercies of the average hotel keeper. . . .”<sup>21</sup> The author, as did hydropaths a half-century earlier, believed that diet played a role in the recovery from disease.

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<sup>19</sup> W. Soltau Fenwick, *Dyspepsia: Its Varieties and Treatment* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Co., 1910), 195.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Mathieu, *Treatment of the Diseases of the Stomach and Intestines* (New York: William Wood and Co., 1894), 94-95.



State boosters sometimes differed with such cautionary medical authorities about the use of springs. A physician in the Medical Department of The University of Tennessee extolled the “peculiar virtue of the variety of waters of Tennessee” from which “the rapid improvement of those suffering from chronic diseases can not be explained. . . .”<sup>22</sup> The Tennessee State Board of Health noted that the “mineral waters of the Valley of East Tennessee are important from a sanitary point of view.” The board’s report then described briefly the sulfur waters--“large, bold springs, and often of excellent quality”--and alum, iron, carbonate, and other springs in the region.<sup>23</sup> The board did not mention in the two-page summary of Tennessee springs that the curative or palliative effects achieved through imbibing the mineral water might also be gained through other medical treatment.

Against this nineteenth-century background of increasingly sophisticated scientific, medical, and geological approaches to analyzing and describing mineral waters, Montvale developed for invalids, dyspeptic patients, and those seeking a restful change of scenery. Sometimes controversially called Tennessee’s oldest mineral spring resort, Montvale unequivocally is the oldest spa in East Tennessee, dating to 1832.<sup>24</sup> Montvale stands at an

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<sup>22</sup> W. M. Vertrees, “Mineral Waters of Tennessee,” *Southern Practitioner: An Independent Monthly Journal Devoted to Medicine and Surgery* 12 (1890): 151-52.

<sup>23</sup> Tennessee, State Board of Health, *First Report of the State Board of Health of the State of Tennessee; April, 1877 to October, 1880* (Nashville: Tavel and Howell, Printer to the State, 1880), 286-87.

<sup>24</sup> Martin, “Resorts, Historic,” 791. Thorne notes that several Middle Tennessee families stayed in log cabins near a spring in Hickman County as early as 1827; William Loche Weems bought the spring in 1837 and named it Bon Aqua, which some sources give as Tennessee’s first mineral springs resort. See Thorne, “Watering Spas of Middle Tennessee,” 351.

altitude of about fifteen-hundred feet at the foot of the ridgeline of Chilhowee Mountain, about nine miles away from Maryville and about twenty-four miles from Knoxville. At the summit of Chilhowee Mountain, about three miles by trail from Montvale, is a large rock formation, Look Rock or View Rock, offering a spectacular view of Happy Valley and the Smokies to the east and foothills and rolling country to the west.<sup>25</sup>

As happened at many mineral springs in the United States, Native Americans first used the twin springs at Montvale for their curative powers. In 1829 Jesse Wallace and Jesse Thompson rediscovered the two springs while searching for stray cattle. In 1832, the summer after acquiring a several-thousand acre tract from the state (Wallace and Thompson had evidently defaulted on the payment for the tract), Daniel D. Foute opened a two-story log hotel near the two springs. The hotel, in typical resort fashion, contained a verandah across the entire front. The building may have had about ten rooms, with a kitchen and dining room ell to the back. Foute advertised his newly-opened establishment with a hand-written bill for “Montvale or Modern Bethesda Springs,” probably because Sam Houston a few decades earlier had supposedly christened the area “Montvale.” A few years later, in 1834, Foute also bought a few miles away another tract of land that

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<sup>25</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County, East Tenn.; Joseph L. King, Proprietor, Knoxville, Tenn.; An Analysis of the Springs, by the Late Professor Mitchell of East Tennessee University, and an Account of Their Medical Properties and Applicability to Particular Diseases; With an Appendix, Containing Various Certificates of their Successful Use* (Knoxville, Tenn.: Ramace & Co., 1870), 2; Nathalia Wright, “Montvale Springs under the Proprietorship of Sterling Lanier, 1857-1863,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 19 (1947): 51; Burns, *History of Blount County*, 82, map. I consider Burns and Wright to be the authoritative sources for Montvale. Both researched deeds, early newspapers, and other sources to provide excellent overviews. Several Montvale articles published since Burns and Wright and that do not use citations appear to have relied on them because of their identical or very similar phrasing.

contained the “Black Sulphur Spring” to provide additional access to mineral water to his guests.<sup>26</sup>

No doubt to encourage resort business and to allow access to his vast land holdings, Foute began the construction of several pack trails or roads in the 1830s. He constructed, with hired Native American labor, a road from Montvale across the mountain and down Rhea Valley (now Happy Valley) to intersect with the Calloway and Parson’s Turnpike, which then led to the Unicoi Turnpike going to Georgia and North Carolina. Foute also built a pack trail that went by way of Look Rock into Cades Cove, where his land tract extended. In addition, he also constructed what is known as the Foute Trail crossing through Happy Valley into the eastern Smokies and eventually reaching Gregory Bald at the North Carolina border.<sup>27</sup>

Business at the hotel increased to the point that Foute obtained the right to open a post office in 1837. Perhaps as a result of problems stemming from an 1840 lawsuit or perhaps to devote time to other business concerns (no source gives a definitive reason),

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<sup>26</sup> Martin, “Resorts, Historic,” 791; Burns, *History of Blount County*, 79-80, 80n40; Burns, “Montvale--The Saratoga of the South,” [*Smoky Mountain Historical Society Newsletter* ], 13, “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, Branch of the Knox County Public Library System, Knoxville, Tenn. (Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection hereafter cited as McClung Collection); Chiles, “Resorts,” 1-3; Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 50, 50n7.

<sup>27</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 80-81, 280; Burns, “Montvale--The Saratoga of the South,” 13-14. According to Ludwig Pflanze, owner of the Montvale in 1932, Native Americans working on the Foute Trail went on strike because of their low wages, a yard of domestic for one day’s labor. See “Cherokee Indian Trail 100 Years Old Leads to Look Rock, Rendezvous of Vacationers,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel* [May 1932?], “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection.

Foute stepped down as postmaster in 1847. Three years later, with the administrators of Jesse Thompson and James M. Toole, Foute sold 3,840 acres, including the Black Sulphur Springs tract, to a Mississippian, Asa Watson.<sup>28</sup>

Watson was a wealthy Deep South planter who had traveled to Montvale that year to seek a cure for his chronic diarrhea and dyspepsia; healed of his gastrointestinal ailments, he bought the Black Sulphur tract and other acreage.<sup>29</sup> To put into perspective the size of his holdings relative to other land owners in Tennessee, it may be helpful to compare the Montvale tract with another antebellum watering hole property, Castalian Springs. Smith cites Owsley to demonstrate that the Wynne family owned over three hundred acres surrounding Castalian Springs in Middle Tennessee placed them on par with the elite Middle Tennessee land-owning farmers.<sup>30</sup> For Foute, and then Watson, to hold several thousand acres placed them in a similar elite category for East Tennessee landowners, where they owned more land than ninety percent of other landowners in that

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<sup>28</sup> Foute made a trust deed for Jesse Wallace and Jesse Thompson's debts in 1837, if I interpret Burns correctly. As stated in the chapter, Wright comments that Foute acquired the Montvale tract from the state. Burns does not identify James M. Toole, but I speculate he may have been assigned Wallace's debts.

<sup>29</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County, East Tennessee; Jos. L. King, Proprietor, Montvale Springs, East Tenn.; An Analysis of the Springs by Eminent Chemists, and an Account of their Medical Properties and Applicability to Particular Diseases; With an Appendix, Containing Various Certificates of their Successful Use, and References to Some Who Have Tested their Virtues* (Knoxville, Tenn.: Daily Chronicle Steam Print., 1874), 3-4.

<sup>30</sup> Frank Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), 224; cited in Smith, *Archaeological Explorations at the Castalian Springs*, 17.

part of the state.<sup>31</sup> In addition, while Watson falls into Dunaway's absentee landlord category, Foute, on the other hand, was a local elite who encouraged travel capitalism by road construction and promotion of his hotel.

Three years after he had purchased the Black Sulphur and other land from Foute and others, Watson bought from William C. Lillard the old resort furniture for one thousand dollars and then secured the hotel lease from Lillard, who had in turn bought the lease of the Montvale Springs Hotel. Watson tore down Foute's rustic lodge and replaced it with the most famous of Montvale's four hotels during its existence, a seven-gabled, three-story frame inn fronted by two-hundred foot long verandahs on each floor.<sup>32</sup>

Watson also built for his guests forty frame cottages and twenty log cabins, some of which were designated for slaves or servants.<sup>33</sup> The hotel contained about 125 rooms, allowing for about three hundred to four hundred guests to stay in either the hotel or the cottages. On the expansive lawn of least ten acres, Watson planted from his visits to Asia,

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<sup>31</sup> In 1860 slaveholding landowners owning 1001-5000 acres in East Tennessee constituted only 8.74% of the total number of slaveholding landowners; nonslaveholding landowners possessing 1001-5000 acres made up only 1.01% of the total number of nonslaveholding landowners. Slaves worked at Montvale as will be discussed later in this chapter. See Owsley and Owsley, "Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee," 176.

<sup>32</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 80-81.

<sup>33</sup> The cottages must have been built before the seven-gabled hotel. Broady notes that David W. Tedford, an early proprietor, announced that they were available for rent "for families wishing to board themselves." According to Wright, Tedford was hotel proprietor in 1848 and again in 1852, the year before Watson bought Foute's log hotel. See Adele Broady, "Montvale Springs," [*Enterprise*, 29 December 1938?], "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 55n29.

California, and other locales outside of the South ginko, paulonia, cypress, and other non-native trees to provide landscaping.<sup>34</sup>

In late 1856, Sterling Lanier, who had been managing the Lanier House in Macon, Georgia, moved to Knoxville to join his brother Sampson, from Tuskegee, Alabama, to run the Lamar House, formerly the Coleman House, an establishment holding two-hundred-fifty persons.<sup>35</sup> Shortly after that, in 1857, Sterling and his son-in-law, Abram P. Watts, became joint proprietors of Montvale. A few years later, the two, along with Sterling's sons Sidney and William, founded the Montvale Springs Company and bought Montvale and land in excess of four thousand acres for \$25,674, a sum roughly equivalent today to \$564,000.<sup>36</sup> There, the Laniers divided some of the land into quarter-acre lots for homes and began to advertise widely the availability of lodging. The Laniers spent some \$15,000 to improve Montvale, including hiring two landscape gardeners at an annual salary of \$700 and retaining a French cook. The two younger Laniers and Watt spent part of the year in Alabama managing Montgomery's Exchange Hotel, but the elder Laniers

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<sup>34</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 80-81; Burns, "Montvale--Saratoga of the South," 14; Chiles, "Resorts," 1-2; Herma R. Cate and Martha H. Callaway, eds., and Anne M. Anderson and Sarah B. McNiell, project cochairmen, *Back Home in Blount County: An Illustrated History of Its Communities* (Maryville, Tenn.: Blount County Historic Trust, 1986), 85.

<sup>35</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 48; "Lamar House" newspaper advertisement, *Knoxville Mercury*, 5 February 1857, p. 1. The Lamar House-Bijou Theater was operated as a hotel until 1971. See Lucy Lee, "Montvale Springs: 'Saratoga of the South'," *The Courier*, 4, "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection.

<sup>36</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 81-82; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 48. I used the CPI calculator for the comparison. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

stayed at Montvale where Sterling Lanier, calling it “one of the prettiest places I have ever seen,” intended to “[enjoy] the balance of my days here.”<sup>37</sup>

Guests at Montvale in the antebellum period, as elsewhere across the country, were the elite in society. They came from a variety of locations, attesting to the fact that even before the completion of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad in 1855 through Knoxville, the southern Appalachian mountains did not present an impenetrable barrier to guests. Moreover, Montvale’s relative inaccessibility compared to resorts outside the Appalachians added to its attractiveness to the elite and enhanced its reputation. Montvale’s potential visitors read of it through ads placed in the Alabama and Georgia press. Two publications mentioning Montvale, published by James Gray Smith, an Englishman who lived near the resort, appeared in London and its environs for prospective English immigrants to East Tennessee. A handbook on Tennessee, published in German, advertised Montvale to central Europeans.<sup>38</sup>

Deep South planters flocked to the high elevation of Montvale to escape the hot humid summer weather and to find refuge from such summer epidemics as cholera and

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<sup>37</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 82; Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 48n2, 49, 55; Sterling Lanier, Montvale Springs, Tenn., to Jane Lanier Ogburn, March 3, 1861; quoted in Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 49.

<sup>38</sup> Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 49-50, 60, 60n44; “Montvale has Great History,” [*Knoxville Journal*, 30 June 30 1929?], “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection.

other seasonal afflictions.<sup>39</sup> As one letter correspondent wrote in 1833, “I am convinced that none will be [exempt from cholera] unless it is the high pine hills if they are [*sic*].”<sup>40</sup> Perhaps that reasoning inspired Foute to build a resort in 1832, the year of a massive cholera epidemic across the country, which caused many elite to head to the Virginia springs.<sup>41</sup>

Interestingly, though, the testimonials from the antebellum period published in an 1867 Montvale promotional pamphlet came not from the elite of Georgia or Mississippi, but largely from a socioeconomic variety of East Tennessee residents who hailed from a variety of backgrounds. A Charleston, Tennessee elite wrote in 1853, for example, that he preferred Montvale’s therapeutic water to that of Saratoga, the Virginia springs, and “all the celebrated watering-places of the West,” thereby demonstrating that many residents of southern Appalachia traveled outside their region. As happened at the Virginia Springs and at Rhea Springs, slaveholders took or sent ailing slaves to the springs. A Blount County slave owner sent a slave boy ill with scrofula (tuberculosis of the neck lymph

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<sup>39</sup> Michaux, for example, noted the “Tennessee Itch,” a dermatological affliction which caused pimples to appear on the abdomen, shoulders, arms, and thighs. A “cooling regimen” and bathing provided relief. See Michaux, *Travels to the Westward of the Allegany [*sic*] Mountains*, 93.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas O. Moore, Fayetteville, N.C. to J.M. King, Murfreesboro, Tenn., July 26, 1833, The Albert Gore Research Center, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tenn., "Tennessee Documentary History, 1796-1850," <http://idserv.utk.edu/?id=200300000000132> (accessed August 10, 2004).

<sup>41</sup> The cholera and yellow fever epidemics in 1832 producing a wealth of business at the Virginia springs contributed to two medical physicians buying respectively Hot Springs and Red Sulphur Springs. See Perceval Reniers, *The Springs of Virginia: Life, Love, and Death at the Waters, 1775-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 74.



nodes) to Montvale for five weeks in 1851. Likewise, a Knoxville slave owner paid a six-week bill for a “little negro girl” with the same affliction to stay at the springs the following year.<sup>42</sup> The fact that these slaveholders could afford to send slaves for lengthy stays indicates the owners’ elite status.

A Knoxville physician, however, observed that the springs “owed their celebrity . . . to the wants and sufferings of the country people among whom they are situated.” For example, a Blount County smith, who by his occupation was probably middle class, stayed at Montvale for three months. A house-carpenter from Knoxville in 1851 went to Montvale to be cured of chronic diarrhea.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, while the Charleston visitor and the slaveholders belonged to the upper class, it appears that Montvale attracted as well members of a local middle class who could afford the time and expense to travel a short distance.

Famous southern politicians during Montvale’s hey-day in the antebellum period included William G. Brownlow and Robert Y. Hayne. Brownlow cultivated a friendship--perhaps partially based on a common ardent Methodist faith--with Sterling Lanier.

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<sup>42</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County, East Tennessee; Joseph L. King, Proprietor, Atlanta, Georgia; An Analysis of the Springs, by the Late Professor Mitchell of East Tennessee University, and an Account of their Medical Properties and Applicability to Particular Diseases; with an Appendix, Containing Various Certificates of their Successful Use* (Atlanta: Franklin Steam Printing House, 1867), 14, 20-21, “Montvale Springs, Blount County, An Analysis of the Springs 1867” Tourism Folder 8, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection. Of twenty-five testimonials, twelve were written by persons located in East Tennessee, one by a Georgia resident, and two by Alabama residents. See pp. 14-24 for all the testimonials.

<sup>43</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1867), 17, 21, 23.

Brownlow ended it when Lanier professed Confederate sympathies.<sup>44</sup> Hayne allegedly wrote his debate speech at Montvale before he confronted Daniel Webster on states rights, and, tradition has it, that he, as well as Brownlow, practiced his oratory at Look Rock.<sup>45</sup>

Other antebellum notables included authors Charles Todd, who wrote *Woodville* (1832), the first novel published in Tennessee, and Sidney Lanier, Sterling's grandson, who published *Tiger-Lilies* (1867), both books loosely based on Montvale.<sup>46</sup> Although a reviewer called *Tiger-Lilies* "one of those novels, the chief wonder of which is, that they ever got published at all," *Tiger-Lilies* does afford a look at Montvale in the pre-Civil War period with its description of a masked ball, shooting matches, and other activities at Montvale and the surrounding area.<sup>47</sup> In addition to Todd and Lanier, the Swiss geologist Arnold Guyot stayed at Montvale in 1859 and measured and named two peaks, Clingman's Dome and Mount Le Conte, respectively after a Lanier relative, Thomas

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<sup>44</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 55-56.

<sup>45</sup> Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 14; Broady, "Montvale Springs."

<sup>46</sup> Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 14; Peggy Swenson, "Montvale Hosts Aristocracy During 1800's," *Maryville-Alcoa Times*, 28 February 1975, p. 10E, "Springs--Montvale" folder, McClung Collection.

<sup>47</sup> *Peterson Magazine*, 53 (1868), 237; quoted in Sidney Lanier, *Tiger-Lilies: A Novel*, with an introduction by Richard Hartwell, Southern Literary Classics Series (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), i; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 59.

Lanier Clingman of North Carolina, and a Lanier family friend, Joseph Le Conte.<sup>48</sup> The Irish nationalist John Mitchell wrote in 1856 from Montvale, where he had received an open invitation the previous year, to his sister: “Montvale Springs is one of the great watering-places of the South. It is a vast wooden house with accommodations for three or four hundred guests.”<sup>49</sup> He further opined: “There was a brass band and dancing every night. Such gorgeous dressing I have never seen in America or anywhere else.”<sup>50</sup>

As at Saratoga and the Virginia springs, many of the guests enjoyed a wide variety of outdoor sports and indoor socializing. Montvale’s wide verandahs provided opportunities for “healthful promenades,” socializing, and for viewing by other elites. As Burns states, “smokers, loungers, and flirts” flocked there.<sup>51</sup> In addition, other public spaces, which allowed the elite to be seen, existed on the path leading to an elaborately enclosed spring house and at benches scattered across the vast lawn.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 57. For more information on Guyot and mountain names, see Paul M. Fink, “Smoky Mountain History as Told in Place-Names,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 6 (1934): 3-11.

<sup>49</sup> Burns, “Montvale--The Saratoga of the South,” 14. Burns notes that Mitchell also wrote that most of the guests were from Georgia during his stay but also observed families from Louisiana and Alabama.

<sup>50</sup> Cate and Callaway, *Back Home in Blount County*, 86.

<sup>51</sup> Burns, “Montvale--Saratoga of the South,” 16; *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1874), 4.

<sup>52</sup> “Famed Old Montvale Springs May Rise Again as Y Boys’ Camp,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 27 October 1945, p. C-8, photo, “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection; Robin Dial, “Montvale is ‘Experience’ for Campers,” [*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 29 June 29 1975?], photo, “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection.

Antebellum costs for attending Montvale were roughly comparable to Beersheba's, above the grasp of the vast majority of the working class and most of the middle class. In 1853, for example, the Montvale rates were \$2 per day, \$12 per week, and \$40 per month, a month costing slightly more than one half of an iron castings manufacturing worker's monthly salary in Tennessee.<sup>53</sup> Beersheba rates in 1857 were \$2 per day, \$10 per week, and \$35 per month.<sup>54</sup> Adjusting 1853 dollars to 1857 dollars shows that Montvale was about 25 percent more expensive, assuming its rates did not drop from 1853 to 1857.<sup>55</sup>

Montvale costs may or may not have been similar to those of the Virginia springs. White Sulphur charged \$8 per week in 1835.<sup>56</sup> Rates at Warm Springs, Virginia, during

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<sup>53</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 81. A Tennessee male engaged in making iron castings earned \$17.96 per month in 1850; see John Hayward, *A Gazetteer of the United States of America: Comprising a Concise General View of the United States, and Particular Descriptions of the Several States, Territories, Counties, Districts, Cities, Towns, Villages, Their Mountains, Valleys, Islands, Capes, Bays, Harbors, Lakes, Rivers, Canals, Railroads, etc; With the Governments and Literary and Other Public Institutions of the Country; Also, Its Mineral Springs, Waterfalls, Caves, Beaches, and Other Fashionable Resorts; To Which are Added Valuable Statistical Tables* (Philadelphia: J.L. Gihon, 1854), 1109, <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed September 7, 2004).

<sup>54</sup> Howell, "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs," 57.

<sup>55</sup> The value of \$2 in 1853 dollars converted to 1857 dollars is \$2.26, about a 25% increase. I used the CPI economic calculator for the conversion. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>56</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 53n19. Wright, in her footnote, includes a quote from the *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1835, asking rhetorically if White Sulphur Springs' water were "worth eight dollars per week to partake of this *villainous compound*?" Several Montvale sources state that the writer is referring to Montvale water (and by extension, Montvale rates). They probably lifted the quotation from Wright's footnote without noticing that in it, she is referring to mineral waters *in general*. See

the years 1834 and 1836, were \$8 per week and \$9 per week respectively.<sup>57</sup> Adjusting Montvale's 1853 \$12 per week rate to 1835 dollars yields about \$13.60, showing that Montvale may have been more expensive than the Virginia springs establishments assuming Montvale's rates in 1835 were consistent with the changes in the CPI. Perhaps a more accurate assessment, however, is Wright's observation that the White Sulphur charged \$18 per week at the end of the 1850s, over one third more than Montvale's rate.<sup>58</sup> In any event, the hack ride from Knoxville to Montvale at \$2.25 each way in 1858 would have been beyond the means of most workers; a typical Tennessee day laborer would have paid the equivalent of almost ten days' wages for a round trip.<sup>59</sup>

While most members of the local working class were not guests at the resort, they did interact, however, with Montvale's guests and staff. Two or three local hunters

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Wright, "Montvale Springs," 53n19. For an example of a mistaken source, see Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 16.

<sup>57</sup> Peregrine Prolix [Philip Houlbrooke Nicklin], *Letters Descriptive of the Virginia Springs; the Roads Leading Thereto, and the Doings Thereat; Collected, Corrected, Annotated, and Edited by Peregrine Prolix*, with a Map of Virginia (Philadelphia: H.S. Tanner, 1837), 27, 162. The conversion of \$8 in 1835 to the equivalence in 2003 dollars gives \$166 (CPI calculator) and \$1,580 (Unskilled Wage calculator). See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>58</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 50-51.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 51; J.D.B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States*, 164, table 175, "Average Wages, 1850," <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp> (accessed September 8, 2004). In 1850, a Tennessee day laborer given board earned 43 cents per day; a Tennessee day laborer not given board earned 58 cents per day. Converting 1850 dollars to 1858 dollars via the CPI and Unskilled Wage calculators yields almost the same amounts. Conversion of 58 cents in 1850 to 1858 dollars yields 61 cents (CPI) and 66 cents (Unskilled Wage). Conversion of 43 cents in 1850 to 1858 dollars gives 45 cents (CPI) and 49 cents (Unskilled Wage). See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

provided game to the hotel. Locals sold garden vegetables, dairy products, and eggs there.<sup>60</sup> Some, perhaps, may have found work maintaining the extensive grounds or helping at the hotel. Watson or the Laniers, however, owned slaves to maintain the croquet grounds; to clean the ballroom and other hotel rooms; to take care of the billiard parlor, bar, and ten-pin alley; and to guide guests on hunting, fishing, or hiking trips.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the local laborers may not have found service jobs at Montvale, to the same extent, if at all, as the African Americans or Irish domestics did at Saratoga or at southern watering holes whose owners had too little income to purchase slaves.

When the Civil War broke out, the Laniers continued to stay at Montvale even though they were staunch Confederates. The early months of the war evidently did not affect East Tennessee resorts. A July 1861 Knoxville newspaper ad publicized the White and Black Sulphur Springs located at Lea's Springs near Knoxville. Another ad on the front page of the same issue announced that Jesse Kerr's Yellow Sulphur Springs, later the site of the Alleghany Springs Hotel, was now open.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 16; Cate and Callaway, *Back Home in Blount County*, 86.

<sup>61</sup> Dunaway, *Slavery in the American Mountain South*, 84. Dunaway points out that Beersheba Springs also used slaves to help staff its hotel and grounds.

<sup>62</sup> *Knoxville Daily Register*, 11 July 1861, pp. 1, 3. The Yellow Springs ad described a "large and commodious Hotel and 28 Cottages . . . prepared to accommodate three or four hundred boarders, and twenty-eight families. . . ." Cottages rented for \$3 per week; hotel board may have been about \$1.25 per day or \$36 per week (microfilm examined from two library collections is very difficult to read). Yellow Springs therefore accommodated about the same number of guests as Montvale; rates appear to have been comparable to Montvale's.

A newspaper ad appeared, though, in the early summer of 1862, informing potential guests that Montvale “will not be opened for visitors this summer.”<sup>63</sup> The next day, a neighboring resort in Blount County, Kerr’s Yellow Sulphur Springs, announced its summer schedule and rates, thus signifying that the guerrilla activity in East Tennessee did not shut down all resorts.<sup>64</sup> The appearance of the Yellow Sulphur Springs ad is significant. All sources consulted state that because Kerr, like Lanier, was a Confederate sympathizer, African-Americans burnt down the hotel during the winter of 1861. I speculate that all sources relied on an interview Wright conducted with a Blount County antiquarian. The interviewee stated that his father, a Unionist, was staying at Yellow Sulphur the night it was to be torched; a friendly African-American’s warning allowed his family to escape.<sup>65</sup> While more research, especially examination of period newspapers, is needed to corroborate either Wright or the newspaper ad, it is possible that not all southern Appalachian resorts run by Confederate sympathizers were ransacked, like Beersheba, or shut down, like Montvale. The Laniers may have been more vocal in their support of the Confederacy than Kerr--Sterling’s grandson, the poet Sidney Lanier, served

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 12 June 1862, 3.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., June 13, 1862. Yellow Sulphur rates for 1862 were \$1.50 per day, \$40 per month, and \$4 for weekly cottage rental.

<sup>65</sup> Wright, “Montvale Springs,” 50n7, 61, 61n49. Burns gives no citation for her paragraphs on the torching of the Yellow Sulphur Springs.

in the Confederate army--and their strong anti-Unionist stance explained why they moved to Alabama in 1863.<sup>66</sup>

On March 23, 1863, Joseph L. King, originally of Knoxville and possibly a merchant, bought Montvale from Sterling Lanier and Abram Watt for \$40,000 or about \$582,000 in 2003 dollars.<sup>67</sup> In 1867 King, who listed his address as Atlanta on Montvale's promotional pamphlet, hired "White & Whitlock," proprietors of the American Hotel in Atlanta.<sup>68</sup> While the hotel endured relatively untouched by the war--though possibly injured soldiers may have been taken there-- King renovated the structure and bought new furniture. Dancing, billiards, and bowling were again offered as they had been before the war.<sup>69</sup>

In 1868 King and two associates incorporated the resort under the same title the Laniers had used, the Montvale Springs Company, and undoubtedly increased their business as a result of a spur laid by the Knoxville and Charleston Railroad to Montvale

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<sup>66</sup> Fred Brown, "Water from Montvale Springs Would Cure All that Ailed You," "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 49.

<sup>67</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 49. The *Knoxville Register*, 4 September 1839, shows an ad on p. 2 for a Joseph L. King, whose store was selling coffee, claret, window glass, shot, plough plates, shoes, and various other sundries and foods, so I speculate he may be the same person. For the dollar conversion, I used the CPI calculator. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>68</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1867), 2.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 60, 61n50. Wright mentions one Confederate soldier who convalesced at Montvale. Perhaps other wounded troops involved in mountain skirmishes recovered there. More research is needed to determine if it served as an informal hospital during any time during the war.



Station, three miles from the hotel.<sup>70</sup> In 1870 and again in 1874, King listed himself as proprietor in the annual Montvale Springs promotional pamphlet.<sup>71</sup> In 1875 or 1876, King executed a trust deed to Spencer Munson of Knoxville in favor of David Engel of Baltimore, who eventually obtained the property. Charles S. King of Blount County bought the property in 1875 from the executors of Engel's estate.<sup>72</sup>

In 1879 Carter County native James Anderson leased Montvale but unfortunately saw little business because of the yellow fever epidemic in Memphis.<sup>73</sup> About 1886 the property "reverted" to J.C. Engel of Baltimore, who may have been related to the David Engel who had obtained the property from Joseph L. King via a trust deed. An 1886 news brief noted that "J.C. Engle [*sic*] was over working up the interests of Montvale yesterday. There are now about sixty boarders at this resort."<sup>74</sup> Compared with the three hundred guests reported by the 24 July 1878 *Maryville Times*, Engel faced decreasing interest from

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<sup>70</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 49, 62.

<sup>71</sup> *Montvale Springs*, Blount County [1870], front cover; *Montvale Springs*, Blount County [1874], front cover.

<sup>72</sup> Exactly to whom and when did King sell is a source of confusion between Burns and Wright. Wright states that King sold to "Burke and Sims" in 1876, no doubt the same D.H. Sims and James Birks whom Burns says secured the property in 1889. Because Burns cites deeds for several of the transactions while Wright gives no source for this time period, I infer that Burns is correct. See Burns, *History of Blount County*, 83; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 62.

<sup>73</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 83. Interestingly, a yellow fever epidemic killing 723 in West Tennessee alone had swept through the state the previous year; no source, however, states how that affected Montvale business. See Tennessee, *First Report of the State Board of Health*, 535.

<sup>74</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 83; Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 17; *Knoxville Daily Journal*, 30 June 1886, p. 4.

customers in a resort capable of housing up to four hundred.<sup>75</sup> Perhaps confronted with a losing business or for other reasons, Engel sold the resort in June 1889 to D.H. Sims and James Birks, who defaulted on their payments. At an 1893 auction, Frederick Bonner of New York City bid the highest for Montvale. In May 1896 the seven-gabled hotel burnt. The *New York Times* reported a loss of \$50,000 (about \$1,080,000 today), with an insurance of \$15,000.<sup>76</sup>

Montvale cottages must still have been available, for Burns notes that several ads ran in the *Maryville Times* for the 1898 season. In 1901 Andrew Gamble, who had purchased the property through a court sale, built a two-story, five-gabled frame hotel with seventy-five rooms to accommodate two hundred guests, about half the number of the previous hotel. Gamble sold the property in 1904 to Thomas F. Cooper, who then resold it to Ludwig Pflanze, who built on the property a small lake, christening it “Lake Sidney Lanier.”<sup>77</sup> Pflanze operated the hotel from 1911 until it burnt on November 21,

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<sup>75</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 83.

<sup>76</sup> I used the CPI calculator. See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”; Burns, *History of Blount County*, 84; *New York Times*, 14 May 1896, p. 5, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004). Interestingly, the newspaper cited “Robert Bonner of New-York [*sic*] and other Eastern capitalists” as owners. Perhaps this Bonner was related to the Frederick listed on the deed. A Robert Bonner was publisher of the *New York Ledger*, a highly successful inexpensive weekly in the latter 1800s, but I have not been able to verify that he is the same mentioned in the *New York Times*.

<sup>77</sup> *Montvale Springs* [1902?], 3; Burns, *History of Blount County*, 84-85. The *New York Times* reported that a “Montvale Springs Corp., hotel and innkeepers, managers of health resorts” with a worth of \$250,000 was newly incorporated in Delaware. Burns, however, does not mention this fact, and more research is needed to determine any connection between it and Montvale in Blount County, particularly in view of the large

1933. Pflanze reported a loss of \$40,000 to \$50,000 (about \$709,000 in 2003 dollars), with insurance of only \$5,000. The fire destroyed the entire hotel, including Pflanze's research for a history on Montvale; only a trunk near the front door was saved. Three houses and ten cottages on the property were unscathed; Pflanze at the time of the fire expected to continue to operate them.<sup>78</sup>

After Pflanze's death almost a year later, the small two-story Montvale Inn was erected, which operated until about 1945. In 1947 the Knoxville YMCA acquired the property for a boys' camp, which opened in 1949. In 1974 the spring house and the bandstand were restored. Today, the YMCA still operates the 515-acre camp.<sup>79</sup>

Elites continued to dominate Montvale clientele for a few decades after the Civil War. Brownlow frequented Montvale after the war; there in 1869 for a recuperative stay, he wrote that "this is a beautiful watering place . . . I sleep better, have steadier nerves,

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capital involved. See *New York Times* 7 August 1926, p. 20, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

<sup>78</sup> "Hotel Burns at Montvale," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, [21 November 1933], "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; "Famous Resort Hotel Goes Up in Flames," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, [21 November 1933], "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection. I used the CPI calculator to convert \$50,000 to 2003 dollars. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>79</sup> "Montvale Springs Hotel Adjoining the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," photo, "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Louise Durman, "Waters Were Healing," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 2 July 1978, "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; "Famed Old Montvale Springs May Rise Again as Y Boys' Camp," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 27 October 27 1945, p. C-8, "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Dial, "Montvale is 'Experience' for Campers." The YMCA maintains a Web site for Montvale, located at <http://www.campmontvale.org> (accessed September 19, 2004).

an improved appetite, and digestion . . . .”<sup>80</sup> Mary Noailles Murphee, who had spent time at Beersheba Springs, drew upon Montvale’s mountain culture for her books, *The Ha’nt that Walks Chilhowee* and *The Prophet of the Smokies*, the latter particularly controversial today for its misleading stereotypical mountaineer images. Dr. Felix T. Oswald of Cincinnati, known in the mountains as the “Monkey Man” for his primate companion, spent the summer of 1885 at Montvale and stayed the next two summers writing *Household Remedies* in a house nearby built especially for him.<sup>81</sup>

Most other postbellum guests did not enjoy a national reputation and probably consisted largely of regional elite. One columnist remembered her Knoxville family’s annual summer tours in the late 1880s to Montvale, to Virginia, and back to Montvale as a child with the family nurse. The ability of the family to travel extensively and to employ servants coupled with the eventual building of their own mountain retreat signified their place as elites.<sup>82</sup> While the 1874 Montvale promotional pamphlet included glowing references from guests who hailed from such places as Memphis, Nashville, Savannah,

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<sup>80</sup> “A Letter from Senator Brownlow,” *New York Times*, July 31, 1869, p. 2, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004). Brownlow actually spent the entire summer at Montvale. In the letter and perhaps in other communications from Montvale, he “issued a reluctant support” of the Republican party’s plank of universal suffrage. See Philip M Hamer, ed., *Tennessee: A History (1673-1932)* (New York: American Historical Society, 1933), 649.

<sup>81</sup> Burns, “Montvale--The Saratoga of the South,” 17.

<sup>82</sup> Lucy Templeton, “Sunday Country Calendar: Old Montvale,” [*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 19 June 1955?], “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection; Fred Brown, “Landmark Livery Yielding to New Federal Offices,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, [27 December 27 1992], “Springs--Montvale” Subject File, McClung Collection.

Atlanta, and Montgomery, and the year 1901 saw visitors from twelve states, later years found increased numbers of locals frequenting the resort.<sup>83</sup>

Locals interacted freely with Montvale guests during the postbellum period. Stagecoach and hack drivers provided transportation from Knoxville or Maryville. Cherokees came from the North Carolina side of the Smokies to sell baskets, moccasins, beadwork, and other craft items. Locals sold produce to the hotel although Montvale boasted of its own vegetable garden and vegetable gardener by the early 1900s. Affiliated with Montvale was a store frequented by locals; residents, in turn, ran at least two general stores by 1915 at Carpenter's Community, a village at Montvale Station, the train depot. The Pflanzes provided transportation on occasion to locals; their niece recalled that they had "many friends among the mountain people."<sup>84</sup> Genial interaction seems to have occurred, although if Murphee's writings are any indication, some elites may have considered the mountain people to have been primitive and backward. The trade, in addition, allowed for economic and some, if limited, social exchange.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1874), 35-36; Burns, "Montvale--The Saratoga of the South," 17.

<sup>84</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 249, 257; *Montvale Springs, Blount County, Tennessee; Health and Pleasure Resort: Open All the Year; For Information Write Andrew Gamble, Proprietor* (Knoxville; S.B. Newman & Co., [1901?-1903?], 7-8, "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Templeton, "Sunday Country Calendar"; Gertrude E. Callahan, *Montvale: A Narrative of the People Who Lived in the Foothills of the Smoky Mountains* 2d ed (n.p.: Gertrude E. Callahan, 1978), 71-72; Cate and Callaway, *Back Home in Blount County*, 86; Tooman, "Evolving Impact of Tourism," 72.

<sup>85</sup> Tooman states that minimal economic impact came about from tourism in the nineteenth through early twentieth century in the Tennessee Smokies. See Tooman, "Evolving Impact of Tourism," 71-73.

Although elites continued to dominate Montvale for several decades after the war, the nature of Montvale visitors and their purposes for visiting gradually changed as happened at most mineral spring resorts of the time. Promotional pamphlets from a selected number of years from 1867 to 1874 largely presented the chemical analysis of the water, its therapeutic value, resident physician credentials, and patient testimonials. An ad in Walton's 1873 guide highlighted the benefits of the water for liver, bowel, and other organic problems but only briefly mentioned that "all the accessories for enjoyment and recreation, at the best watering-places will be found here." An 1886 article describing Montvale as part of a series on southern resorts, however, waxed poetic about "the mountain portal of the Chilhowees, a grassy glen, overarched by magnificent shade-trees" and such amusements as horseback riding, music, and hiking but did not mention the mineral water. A few years later an early 1900s Montvale promotional brochure--while extolling the springs--also gave proportionately more space to the natural scenery of the mountains in its eight pages than did the earlier pamphlets in their thirty-some pages. The 1928 Montvale promotional brochure, consisting of only four pages, briefly mentioned a "good drink from the springs" among a list of such leisure pursuits as shuffle board, bowling, tennis, and rowing.<sup>86</sup> A promotional placard from the early 1930s omitted

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<sup>86</sup>*Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1867), passim; *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1870), passim; *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1874), passim; *Montvale Springs, Blount County, Tennessee* [1901?-1903?], 2, 6; *Montvale Springs Hotel Adjoining the Smoky Mountain National Park, 1832-1928, Maryville, Tennessee, in the Chilhowee Mountains* (n.p., 1928), n.p., "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection; Felix L. Oswald, "Southern Summer Resorts. III. Tallulah and Montvale," *Southern Bivouac* 2 (October 1886): 269-71; Walton, *The Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada*, 8. Montvale was only one of fourteen ads in Walton's mammoth guide, signifying that its owner, Joseph L. King, had money to invest in a national

mention of the spring water in its attractions.<sup>87</sup> While medical advocacy of mineral water continued into the early twentieth century, the therapeutic value of mineral waters as a source of favorable publicity declined in importance at many resorts, replaced by advertisement of outdoor activities and other leisure pursuits.<sup>88</sup>

The changing nature and number of Montvale's visitors over time can also partially be discerned by examining the resort costs and resort season length. Adjusted via the CPI and Unskilled Wage calculators, the rates dropped from 1867 to 1870 but were still beyond reach of the average laborer. The rates were about one third cheaper for an unskilled laborer in 1902 compared to 1867. Certainly, Montvale was becoming more affordable to non-elites, even though few working-class members went on extended trips in the early 1900s.<sup>89</sup>

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publication's advertising section and that he envisioned Montvale as more than a local watering hole in the 1870s.

<sup>87</sup> *Montvale Springs Hotel: Adjoining the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Ludwig Pflanze, proprietor (n.p., [1933]), n.p., "Springs--Montvale" Subject File, McClung Collection.*

<sup>88</sup> As an example, the White Sulphur Springs advertised riding and fox hunting in an early twentieth-century ad. See *Daily Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 11 June 1911.

<sup>89</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1867), 2; *Montvale Springs, Blount County* (1870), 2; *Montvale Springs, Blount County* [1901?-1903?], 7; *Daily Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 5 June 1911. I used the CPI and Unskilled Wage calculators to convert resort rates to 2003 dollars. Rates in 1867 were \$3/day (\$37 (CPI), \$311 (Unskilled Wage); in 1870, \$2.50/day (\$35 (CPI), \$264 (Unskilled Wage); about 1902, \$2/day (\$42.70 (CPI), \$203 (Unskilled Wage); in 1911, \$7/wk (\$135 (CPI), \$626 (Unskilled Wage). See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

The working class most probably did not go to Montvale even in the 1910s. As

In 1874 the Montvale resort season was extended to include May; by the early 1900s, Montvale was open year-round, perhaps meaning that it now accepted traveling businessmen during autumn and winter or that it could not afford to be shuttered for several months. The fact that monthly rates were no longer posted by 1911 indicated that few Montvale clientele stayed for long periods. Perhaps increased numbers of visitors were of the middle-class nature and had less time and money for vacation.<sup>90</sup>

The decline in numbers of Montvale guests also resulted from a typhoid epidemic that swept through the region in 1901, contaminating Montvale water. Just like the 1879 yellow fever epidemic, the typhoid outbreak severely hampered business for several years.<sup>91</sup> While one week in 1886 saw one-hundred-fifty guests and more on the way, the second week of June 1904 found only seventy-two guests, of which forty were campers.<sup>92</sup> By the 1920s, Montvale management was renting to or allowing outside groups like the

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evidence, in 1907, Knoxville's Edward J. Kinzel, who built the Kinzel Springs Hotel in Tuckaleechee Cove in 1914, donated land in that area to the Mary J. Williams Sunshine Club, Knoxville chapter of the International Sunshine Society. He wanted the society to build a modest hotel to be run on a non-profit basis so that working girls could afford an inexpensive vacation. See Chiles, "Resorts," 16-1, 16-3; Durman, "Waters Were Healing."

<sup>90</sup> *Montvale Springs, Blount County (1874)*, 3; *Montvale Springs, Blount County [1901?-1903?]*, 1. The Appalachian Club and the Wonderland Hotel elite clientele, to be discussed in the next chapter, spent summers at their Smoky Mountains retreat, with the fathers commuting on weekends. Therefore, Montvale may have seen a shift in its economic client base from elite to middle-class since it no longer published monthly rates.

<sup>91</sup> Callahan, *Montvale*, 55.

<sup>92</sup> Burns, *History of Blount County*, 84.



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club to use its facilities, thus indicating that its meeting or banquet rooms were not in use exclusively by guests.<sup>93</sup>

Montvale's decline is perhaps best symbolized unwittingly by the 1928 promotional brochure. The back side of the brochure showed the paved roads available to travel to Montvale.<sup>94</sup> Just as happened at Red Boiling Springs, more and better roads and the increasing popularity of the automobile served to whisk potential guests in short time to other resorts. In addition, another factor contributing to Montvale's decline might be the rivalry arising from other postbellum watering holes in the Smokies.<sup>95</sup>

Competition also probably arose from the preponderance of resorts elsewhere. A typical 1911 Knoxville newspaper ad page called "Hotels and Resorts" demonstrated the variety of other vacation choices: White Sulphur had just spent \$500,000 to update its infrastructure; New York City's Gregorian Hotel was offering rooms at \$2 per day (compared with Montvale's June special of \$7 per week); and the Canadian Pacific Railway was publicizing its "Fifty Switzerlands in One" tour.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Albert Gordon (Dutch) Roth, "Annual Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Banquet Inside Montvale Springs Hotel," September 14, 1929, photograph, Roth Photograph Collection, Great Smoky Mountains Regional Project, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville, Tenn., <http://idserver.utk.edu/?id=20030000002239> (accessed August 23, 2004).

<sup>94</sup> *Montvale Springs Hotel* (1928).

<sup>95</sup> Chiles wrote about nine mineral spring resorts in the Smokies hosting visitors at the turn of the century: Henderson Springs, Mount Nebo Springs, Wildwood Springs, Line Springs, Alleghany Springs, Melrose Springs, Glen Alpine Springs, Dupont Springs, Carson Springs, See Chiles, "Watering Resorts," 2-1, 3-1, 5-1, 6-1, 8-1, 9-1, 10-1, 11-1, and 14-1.

<sup>96</sup> *Daily Journal and Tribute* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 11 June 1911.

Montvale, in summary, did not constitute an isolated mountain retreat, even in antebellum times. Not only did it attract Deep South planter elite, but its antebellum proprietors were well traveled and sophisticated. Sterling Lanier, through his proprietorship of Macon's Lanier House, hosted Alexander H. Stephens, President Millard Fillmore, and Stephen A. Douglas.<sup>97</sup> Asa Watson traveled extensively.

After the Civil War, several owners--many of whom were natives of or lived in East Tennessee--struggled to make Montvale as successful as it had been in its antebellum days. Corbett notes that a proprietor must have sufficient capital and patience to invest in a resort infrastructure for the resort to succeed. Even though Watson most probably was an absentee landlord, contributing perhaps to some drainage of capital from southern Appalachia, according to Dunaway's construct, he built Montvale's reputation through his investment in a spectacular seven-gabled hotel and its grounds. If the later owners had possessed his capital--he sold Montvale for over \$500,000 in 2003 dollars--then perhaps they might have been able to retain elite clientele by investing in Montvale's infrastructure, just as the White Sulphur did in 1911 by spending \$500,000 on renovations.

While Montvale's hey-day was in the antebellum period, the next mineral springs resort to be discussed, Tate Spring, did not reach its zenith until the late 1800s. Tate Spring was located near the intersection of the Great Warrior's Path and the Kentucky Road (also known as the Old Catawba Trail), near today's intersection of U.S. Highway

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<sup>97</sup> Wright, "Montvale Springs," 54.

11W and U.S. Highway 25E in Grainger County.<sup>98</sup> Similar to the Cumberland Plateau's Franklin County's cluster of mineral springs, numerous watering holes stood in Grainger County. About twelve miles southwest of Tate stood Galbraith's Springs. Between Knoxville and Tate was Lea Springs. Avondale Springs was located in the area now known as the Head of Richland; Gammon Springs stood in the old town of Bean Station. About one mile from Tate and about ten miles from Morristown was Mineral Hill Springs, near the intersection of what is now U.S. Highway 11W and Poor Valley Road.<sup>99</sup>

Native Americans frequented the springs at Tate for their therapeutic powers particularly for eye diseases; as noted in Chapter 1 for Hot Springs, Arkansas, the warring

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<sup>98</sup> "Bean Station, Tennessee: From Stagecoach Stop to 21<sup>st</sup> Century, A Brief History of Bean Station," <http://www.beanstation.com/pages/history.html> (accessed February 3, 2004); Amelia Leer Caruthers, "Bean Station," *National Historic Magazine* 77 (January 1943): 33. Bean Station also was served by boats coming down the Holston from the boatyard at Long Island (Kingsport). Once the boats reached Bean Station, their passengers could debark and venture north across Clinch Mountain and through Cumberland Gap. For the historical importance of Bean Station as a crossroads community, see Robert L. Kincaid, "The Wilderness Road in Tennessee," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 20 (1948): 37-48.

<sup>99</sup> *Goodspeed's History of East Tennessee Containing Historical and Biographical Studies of Thirty East Tennessee Counties, reprinted from Goodspeed's History of Tennessee 1887* (Nashville: Charles and Randy Elder Booksellers, 1972), 1154; Gayle Bruce, "Bean Station," *Grainger County, Tennessee and Its People, 1796-1998* ([Grainger County?]: Grainger County Heritage Book Committee and Don Mills, Inc., 1998), 6; David Harkness, "Resorts Provided Relaxation, Health for Knoxvilleians," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 26 September 1990, p. N2.

Beginning in 1878, Dr. William Joseph Heacker and then his daughter ran Mineral Hill Springs for many years. Dr. Heacker was a leading bacteriologist in the state and the publisher of *HealthBeauty Magazine*. See "A German Southern Patriot," *Confederate Veteran* 24 (July 1916): 329; Amy Dunaway, "Mineral Hill.net: An Online Genealogy Project," (Emerson College, 2000), <http://www.mineralhill.net/mineralhill.html> (accessed February 3, 2004). Ms. Dunaway, a Heacker descendant, developed the Web site for a Master of Arts project.

factions in the vicinity of the springs regarded the area as sacred, neutral territory.<sup>100</sup>

Sometime in the antebellum 1800s, Samuel Tate built a hotel near the springs.<sup>101</sup> Guests frequented the springs as early as 1857 and although the Civil War's impact on the resort is unknown, it never closed during the war.<sup>102</sup> Business increased after the war to the point that Edward O. Tate became postmaster in 1873 of the newly created "Tate Springs" post

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<sup>100</sup> Hamer, *Tennessee: A History*, 679; Federal Writers' Project, *WPA Guide to Tennessee*, 312.

<sup>101</sup> Several sources disagree about the status of Tate Spring in the antebellum period. Graves states that William Hord sold 6000 acres, including the springs, to Samuel B. Tate in 1787. Miller believes that Tate's wife inherited the property from her grandfather and gives Tate's date of birth as 1798. Bruce writes that Tate received a North Carolina land grant and built a hotel in the early 1800s. "A Brief History of Bean Station" states that Tate bought the land and constructed the hotel in 1865; the Web site also precedes its list of sources with the statement that they are "often contradictory." Obviously, more research is needed to determine more fully the details of Tate Spring in antebellum times. See Gayle Bruce, "Bean Station," 7; Alan N. Miller, "David Tate (Pioneer)," *Grainger County*, 209; Mary Graves, *Tate Springs: Home of Kingswood School* (Rutledge, Tenn.: Bill Shirley Publishing Co., [1981?]), 11; "A Brief History of Bean Station," <http://www.beanstation.com/pages/history.html> (accessed February 3, 2004).

<sup>102</sup> The 1879 Tate promotional pamphlet includes testimonials from a judge who traveled to the resort in 1857 and from an Alabama major, Confederate or Union affiliation not given, who took his daughter ill with chronic diarrhea to Tate in 1863 and back in 1866. See *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.; Annual Circular of Tate Epsom Spring, Containing Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for Which the Water is Highly Recommended; Items of General information with Regard to Its Use, Effects, etc., Together with Many Certificates and List of References, Card of Resident Physician, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: Whig and Chronicle Steam Printing Co., 1879), 10-11, "Tate Epsom Spring, Grainger Cty, TN--Annual Circular 1879" Tourism Folder 19, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

office.<sup>103</sup> That same year, however, a cholera epidemic swept through the area to the resort. After a Tate daughter died from cholera, the Tates' attempts to calm guests' fears failed; they moved to Morristown after hotel business plummeted in the wake of the epidemic.<sup>104</sup>

In 1876 Thomas Tomlinson, son of a wealthy South Carolina merchant and planter, and a merchant and farm owner himself in Mooresburg, Hawkins County, along with twenty-two others, paid Tate \$25,000 for the hotel. In 1879 the joint stock company advertised a need to sell the property due to apparent disagreement among the twenty-three partners. Tomlinson bought the resort for \$30,000 from his partners in 1882.<sup>105</sup>

Upon Tomlinson's death in 1909, his four surviving children--Dr. Oscar R. Tomlinson, Clement Tomlinson, Mrs. Annie M. Ragsdale, and Mrs. John R. Jarnagin--co-managed the hotel. In 1926 one newspaper reported that its editor was invited to attend the May 1 opening of the resort under new management, which had bought it for more

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<sup>103</sup> D.R. Frazier, *Tennessee Postoffices and Postmaster Appointments, 1789-1984* (n.d., 1984), 344, Historical Collection of George E. Webb, Jr., Rogersville, Tenn. (Collection hereafter cited as Webb Collection).

<sup>104</sup> John Beckwith, e-mail message to author, October 7, 2004. Beckwith is a friend of a Tate descendant, whose family history has been documented.

<sup>105</sup> Hamer, "Thomas Tomlinson," *Tennessee: A History*, 678; *Goodspeed's History* (1972 reprint), 1159; Durman, "Waters Were Healing"; *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.*(1879), 7.

than one million dollars.<sup>106</sup> Oscar and Clement Tomlinson may have been involved with the new management, or they may have bought the resort back: when Oscar died in 1930, two obituaries listed him as joint owner with Clement. At some point Fidelity Bankers Trust gained control of the property. In 1938 a small group of capitalists led by S.G. Gluck of Indianapolis then managed the resort for a few years.<sup>107</sup> By 1941 the resort closed; the following year, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) bought much of the property for the creation of Cherokee Lake. In 1945 Kingswood School, a Christian-based institution for needy and neglected children, was incorporated in Tennessee. Its founder, the Rev. A.E. Wachtel, moved the school from Springfield, Virginia, to Tate Spring upon property purchase. In 1958 much of the main hotel was condemned; the upper three floors were torn down and students relocated eventually to newly constructed cottages on the property. The remaining structure burnt down in 1963. The school is still in operation

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<sup>106</sup> "Tate Springs Hotel Will Open May First," *Erwin Magnet*, 27 April 1926. A syndicate of Knoxville and Atlanta capitalists, connected with the Adair Realty and Trust Company of Atlanta, bought the resort and brought in new management from the Miami Biltmore for the start of the 1926 summer season. Plans called for construction of a new hotel, which was never built. See "Formal Opening of Tate Spring Hotel Will Occur Saturday Night," *Knoxville Journal*, 30 April 1926, p. 4. An invitation for a dinner dance announced that "scores of prominent people from many Southern cities" already had reservations. Tickets were \$2 per person. See *Knoxville Journal* 25 April 1926, p. 8C.

<sup>107</sup> Graves, *Tate Springs*, 15. "Dr. Tomlinson Passes Here: Associate Owner of Hotel at Tate Springs," *Knoxville Journal*, 28 August 1930, p. 3. "Dr. Oscar R. Tomlinson," *New York Times*, 28 August 1930, p. 15, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004). That Tate Spring enjoyed a national reputation even at this late period is indicated by the *New York Times* obituary. More research is needed to determine how the Tomlinsons interacted with investment groups during this era.

today on the Tate Spring property; the springhouse, in the form of a two-story white-frame, red-roof gazebo, stands to the north of U.S. Highway 11W.<sup>108</sup>

Travelers to the Tate Spring region could venture there year round, at least from the time Tomlinson bought the resort from Tate. Before the completion of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad in 1858, they journeyed on either of the two main roads that intersected near it, the road leading from Morristown through Cumberland Gap (roughly U.S. Highway 25E today) or the road from Rogersville to Knoxville (roughly U.S. Highway 11W today). Once the rail extended to Morristown, visitors took a hack or stage to Tate, about nine miles away.<sup>109</sup> By the turn of the century, guests could go to Tate Spring Station from Corryton on the Knoxville and Bristol (“Peavine”) Railroad from Morristown. Both Morristown and Corryton connected to the Southern Railway at Knoxville. At the Tate Spring depot, Clement Tomlinson’s transfer service picked up passengers for the one-and-one-half mile ride to the resort.<sup>110</sup> Visitors arriving on the

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<sup>108</sup> “Building Condemned: Kingswood School Has Housing Need,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 5 October 1958; “Kingswood School President Dies at 76,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 22 December 1991, p. B2; “Kingswood to Honor 50 Years,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 28 May 1995, p. E3. These newspaper articles are in the “Springs--Tate” Subject File, McClung Collection.

<sup>109</sup> East Tennessee, Georgia, and Virginia Railroad Company, *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee* (Memphis: S.C. Toof & Co., 1880), 46, “Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee 1880” Tourism Folder 4, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

<sup>110</sup> Charles H. Faulkner, “Industrial Archaeology of the ‘Peavine Railroad’: An Archaeological and Historical Study of an Abandoned Railroad in East Tennessee,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 44 (spring 1985): 41-42, 48, map; *Tate Spring, Tennessee; The Carlsbad of America; Open All the Year; Annual Pamphlet of Tate Epsom Spring Containing Information Relative to Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for which the Water is Highly*

Cumberland Gap and Louisville Railroad from the North or Midwest changed trains at Corryton to go to Tate Spring Station.<sup>111</sup> The very rich went by rail in private railroad cars. By 1919 the Morristown-Tate Spring train was no longer in service. By the mid-1920s, the new Lee Highway (now U.S. Highway 11W) traversed the hotel property and intersected with the Dixie Highway (now U.S. Highway 25E); visitors now could travel by automobile from many parts of the country without a need for train service. One of the most elite families, the Studebakers from Indiana, drove the biggest model their company manufactured. Those who came by train in the early 1930s, called the “high society” by one interviewee, were picked up at the depot by an African-American driver in a touring car.<sup>112</sup>

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*Recommended, Items of General Interest With Regard to Its Use, Effects, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: S.B. Newman & Co., [1898?-1908?]), 9, Webb Collection. The pamphlet has no date, but the fact that it lists Thomas Tomlinson as proprietor indicates that it was issued before 1909, the year of his death. It also was issued after 1898, the year when the Southern Railway purchased two regional lines to Morristown. See Fred Brown, “Big Dreams of Corryton’s Found Were Shattered by Panic of 1892,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 14 June 1992, p. B8.

<sup>111</sup> *Annual Pamphlet of Tate Epsom Spring Containing Information Relative to Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for which the Water is Highly Recommended, Items of General Interest With Regard to Its Use, Effects, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: S.B. Newman & Co., 1898), 9, “Tate Spring: The Carlsbad of America, Tennessee Annual 1898,” Tourism Folder 22, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

<sup>112</sup> Faulkner, “Industrial Archaeology,” 54; Cora Lee Brooks, telephone interview by author, 26 August 2004, Kingsport, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author; Carson Brewer, “Tate Spring Still Flows; The Tales It Could Tell!” [*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, July 25, 1982], “Springs--Tate” Subject File, McClung Collection; *Tate Spring Hotel; Thomas Tomlinson Estate; American Plan; 200 Rooms; 80 Baths; Tate Spring, Tennessee* (n.p.: [1910?-1925?]), 2, 4, “Springs--Tate” Subject File, McClung Collection. The promotional brochure was issued after 1909, when Tomlinson died, and before the eighteen-hole golf course was finished in 1926.



Costs for the Tate, as indicated for Montvale, provide evidence of the socioeconomic status of the guests. In 1881 three years after Tomlinson had purchased the hotel from Tate, the hotel rates indicated an elite customer base as compared to Bean Station's Hotel at Mineral Hill Springs about one mile away. The Tate summer (June through September) monthly rate of \$35 was 40 percent higher than Mineral Hill's monthly charge. Montvale rates that year, however, ranged from 14 percent to 60 percent higher than Tate's, demonstrating that Montvale could charge a premium for its rooms and thus possessed more exclusivity than Tate in terms of elite clientele. All of these rates, as mentioned earlier, were too high for those in the working class and, with the exception of the Bean Station's Hotel, probably out of the range of most of the middle class.<sup>113</sup>

By 1926, however, a different picture of relative exclusivity emerges for Tate and Montvale. Tate rates ranged from \$15 to \$42, depending on such room amenities as a private bath. Once adjusted using the CPI, Tate prices were higher than rates of the early 1880s and varied little from the rates of 1898. Not only was Tate still attracting elites during the early twentieth century, but it had also eclipsed Montvale in terms of exclusivity: Montvale in 1911 was charging more than 50% less than Tate's cheapest rate

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<sup>113</sup> East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad Company, *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and Alabama; Including a Brief Historical Sketch and Description of Its Topography, Climate, Agricultural and Mineral Resources* (Memphis: S.C. Toof & Co., 1881), 24, 30, Webb Collection. Montvale rates ranged from \$40-\$56 per month; Bean's Station Hotel rates were \$25 per month; Tate rates were \$35 for June through September and \$25 for all other months. The CPI and Unskilled Wage calculators show that \$35 equals \$626 (CPI) and \$4,380 (Unskilled Wage) in 2003 dollars. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

in the early twentieth century.<sup>114</sup> Montvale, in other words, was in the mid-1910s much more affordable to the middle class than Tate.

Tate's rising exclusivity is shown by the increasing services and leisure activities it offered guests. In 1879 three years after Tomlinson's purchase of the resort and one year after Mineral Hill Springs opened near by, the bowling alley and bath house had been repaired and improved and a brass band had been contracted.<sup>115</sup> Just three years later, Tate was offering horses for riding and driving to such area attractions as Clinchdale Springs (exaggerated as "fully equal to the famed Sulphurs of Virginia"); hikes, fishing, climbing, cavern exploration, archery, and other outdoor activities; a string and bass band for outdoor and ballroom music; a "hop" or concert nightly; occasional masquerades and "Fancy Balls"; and the usual bowling, croquet, and billiard games.<sup>116</sup> About ten years later, "morning germans" (i.e., morning dances) and dramatic entertainments constituted part of

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<sup>114</sup> *Tate Spring, Tennessee: The Carlsbad of America, Open All the Year* (n.p., [1927?]), 3, "Tate Spring, Tennessee Annual Booklet? ca. 190\_?," Tourism Folder 23, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection. I believe the second pamphlet dates from after 1926, not in 190?, because it mentions an eighteen-hole golf course. Montvale charged \$7 per week in 1911. See *Daily Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 5 June 1911.

<sup>115</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County* (1879), 7.

<sup>116</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.; Annual Circular of Tate Epsom Spring, Containing Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for Which the Water is Highly Recommended; Items of General information with Regard to Its Use, Effects, etc., Together with Many Certificates and List of References, Card of Resident Physician, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: Ogden Brothers General Book and Job Printing, 1882), 10-11, "Tate Epsom Spring Annual Circular, Ogden Bros. Gen., Book and Job Printing 1882," Tourism Folder 20, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

the leisure activities.<sup>117</sup> “Clock golf” (a game in which golfers putt from the circumference of a circle to the hole in the middle), cards, tennis, and nightly dancing were added to the activities a few years later.<sup>118</sup>

It can be speculated that the activity that distinguished Tate from other southern Appalachian resorts was golf. By the 1910s, the resort boasted of a nine-hole golf course, with the first and last holes near the spring gazebo or pavilion, an inadvertent symbolic juxtaposition of the leisure pursuit adjacent to the health pursuit.<sup>119</sup> In 1926 an eighteen-hole golf course designed by Donald Ross two years earlier opened; like the shorter course, it ended near the spring pavilion. To play the course, guests joined a Tate management-sponsored club, which allowed them to play the links all year round and to participate in Tate-sponsored tournaments.<sup>120</sup> In the early 1930s, Tate caddies made twenty-five cents to fifty cents daily, carrying the bags of the likes of Sam Snead and Ben

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<sup>117</sup> *Tate Spring; The Carlsbad of America; A Health and Pleasure Resort; Situated in One of the Loveliest Valleys of East Tennessee; Environed by Mountains 3,000 Feet High; Where Heat, Dust, Mosquitoes, Malaria and Hay Fever are Unknown; Open All the Year; Special Rates in June and September; Thos. Tomlinson, Owner and Prop'r, Tate Spring, Tenn.* (n.p.: S.G. Newman, [mid-1890s?]), 7. I speculate that this pamphlet dates from the mid-1890s.

<sup>118</sup> *Tate Spring, Tennessee; The Carlsbad of America* [1898?-1908?], 6, 9-10.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>120</sup> *Tate Spring, Tennessee: The Carlsbad of America, Open All the Year* [1927?], 5, 36; Bradley Klein, *Discovering Donald Ross: The Architect and His Golf Courses* (Chelsea, Mich.: Sleeping Bear Press, 2001), 182.

Hogan. Helping to maintain the course at some point in its history were sheep which kept the grass trimmed.<sup>121</sup>

The Tate course symbolized the elitism of the resort. The *New York Times* reported in 1916, in an article on the expanding interest in golf in the South, that only five communities in Tennessee, four of them in southern Appalachia, had golf courses.<sup>122</sup> Because of its green fees, membership dues, and equipment and caddy expenses, golf was traditionally associated with the privileged classes. The existence of links in the 1910s in four southern Appalachian Tennessee municipalities again indicates southern Appalachia's socioeconomic integration with the rest of the nation.

As at other resorts through the years, public spaces that allowed the wealthy to flaunt themselves signified elitism. Not only did the verandahs adorn the perimeters of both floors of the two-story structure built by Tate, but they also wrapped around the sides of the four-story Victorian gingerbread rambling structure Tomlinson erected before the 1898 summer season. From the verandahs, the fanciful turrets and balconies of the two-hundred person "main hotel," as Tomlinson's building was called, guests took in views of the pasture and hills behind the hotel as well as the train depot over a mile distant

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<sup>121</sup> Bruce, "Bean Station," 7; Brooks interview. Mrs. Brooks' late husband worked as a caddy at Tate in the early 1930s; his father had worked at Tate before him as a carpenter and handyman.

<sup>122</sup> "Many New Courses Laid Out in South: Florida, the Carolinas, Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama Now Have Golf Links," *New York Times*, 22 March 1916, p. 8, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004). Nashville had two courses; the three southern Appalachian communities with courses besides Tate were Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Johnson City. The article mentions Donald Ross as a professional golfer associated largely with Pinehurst, North Carolina.

from the hotel. Sometime between 1899 and 1909, two ells with verandahs were added onto the main hotel, thus showing the increasing popularity of the resort. Guests occasionally bought lots to erect “cottages”--actually small Queen Anne-styled mansions with turrets and wraparound porches. Bachelors and those wishing for more than a quiet retreat stayed in one of the row cottages--all with verandahs--named after such southern states as Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. This setup resembled the Virginia springs where males wishing to enjoy a good time stayed in a row of cottages apart from the relatively quiet decorum of the vast majority of guests.<sup>123</sup> The use of public spaces to socialize and to promenade reflects trends seen at the Virginia springs and at Saratoga.

Even though leisure activities at all resorts studied made up a significant part of a typical attendee’s day, health activities attracted a steady stream of clientele up to the 1930s, when Tate Spring began to decline.<sup>124</sup> Tate, as did other mineral spring resorts, promoted its waters for a variety of illnesses, primarily gastrointestinal in origin. Clientele in the 1870s, for example, sought its waters for dyspepsia, chronic diarrhea, and, in the case of the president of a Mississippi railroad, for a “torpid liver, indigestion, and diseased

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<sup>123</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.; Annual Circular of Tate Epsom Spring, Containing Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for Which the Water is Highly Recommended; Items of General Information With Regard to Its Use, Effects, etc., Together with Many Certificates and List of References, Card of Resident Physician, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: The Chronicle Co., Steam Book and Job Printers and Binders, 1883), 11; *Annual Pamphlet of Tate Epsom Spring* (1898), 7, 23, 29, 35; *Tate Spring, Tennessee; The Carlsbad of America* [1898?-1908?], inside front cover; Lewis, “Ladies and Gentlemen on Display,” 613-14. For example, White Sulphur Springs’ line of cottages for predominantly bachelors was called “Wolf Row.”

<sup>124</sup> Brooks recollected that “people put great stock” in the mineral water, that Tate Spring’s reputation was based on it. See Brooks interview.

kidneys, accompanied by general nervous prostration.”<sup>125</sup> Guests may have made a “grand tour” of springs: A husband recuperating at Tate in 1899 for a “soreness in my stomach” wrote his wife that unless he began to feel better soon, he would join his wife at Franklin County’s East Brook Springs where she was resting.<sup>126</sup>

Tate brochures at least as far back as 1879 interestingly reflected a national trend in how visitors perceived the health attributes of mineral spring resorts. Such flowery statements as “Nature’s own remedy, compounded and labored we know not how, its healing effects are such that no art can equal them” appeared repeatedly in the Tate promotional literature, even after automobile traffic began coming to the resort.<sup>127</sup>

Gillespie notes that the idea of “nature’s laboratory” began to appear in resort promotional literature around the 1850s and continued well into the 1880s; she interprets the concept as one blending the science of the day with the continuing belief that the water and its environment’s purifying properties together helped the patient. While various chemical analyses appeared in promotional literature, Gillespie observes that the promoters “were careful to base their claims for the curing power of their waters on properties that went

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<sup>125</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1879), 11.

<sup>126</sup> “Your faithful devoted husband,” Tate Spring, Tenn., July 25, 1899, to “My Precious Darling,” [East Brook Springs, Tenn.], Webb Collection. No names are found in the letter’s salutation or signature.

<sup>127</sup> See, for example, *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1879), 3, and *Tate Spring Hotel; Thomas Tomlinson Estate; American Plan: 200 Rooms, 80 Baths; Tate, Spring Tennessee, (n.p., n.d.)*, 8, “Tate Springs Hotel 19\_\_?” Tourism Folder 25, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

beyond the scope of science.”<sup>128</sup> While at least one Montvale pamphlet used the concept of nature’s laboratory, Tate brochures repetitively conveyed that construct. For both resorts, the use of the terminology represents one level of participation in national trends, unlike an isolated southern Appalachia with limited contact to the outside world.

Tate also promoted a medical technique that by the 1880s was gaining acceptance in established medical circles, electrically-based therapy. In 1883 it publicized “Electro Therapeutic Baths,” a “new and scientific mode of applying electricity for the cure of many diseases that are curable.” A Knoxville electrician, a Professor Spencer, gave treatments. In keeping with the theme of nature and technology working together, the promotional brochure inquired “What more can a sick person desire than Tate Spring Water, pure mountain air, and electricity, all of them nature’s remedies?” Tate’s treatment appears to have been in vogue with similar electrotherapies in use in the late 1800s across the country. The First Brooklyn Light and Water Cure Institute in New York, for example, advertised blue and white electric light baths, electric vibration massage, and Swedish massage (the latter also offered at Tate). In Georgia in 1880 there was found the Atlanta Health Institute or Hygienic Movement and Electrical Water-Cure. The Kneipp Springs Sanatorium opened in 1895, offering hydrotherapy and electrotherapy among other treatments. Rather than existing in a backwards, insular world, Tate kept up with health trends.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Gillespie, “Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly,” 124-25.

<sup>129</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1883), 10; Weiss and Kemble, *Great American Water-Cure Craze*, 100-2, 117.

Tate's focus on health, in spite of all its leisure offerings, manifested itself in another way that continued for decades, its sale of bottled water. By billing itself as the "Carlsbad of America," Tate sought to compare its waters with those of the famous German spa.<sup>130</sup> For at least thirty years, Tate sold its water at a consistent \$5 per barrel, a hefty price that in 2003 dollars translates to slightly over \$100 for most of the period.<sup>131</sup> Knoxville druggists advertised it as early as the 1880s; by 1898 at least nine druggists in seven states sold it. The water's winning of a silver medal at the 1904 St. Louis Universal Exposition served undoubtedly to increase its reputation. By 1926 redistributors for Tate water were located in "almost all of the cities and towns of the country," but Tate continued to offer direct mailing from its "Shipping Department," a small operation at the gazebo.<sup>132</sup>

Again, the selling of water in containers puts Tate squarely with a national and even international trend. Some Virginia springs, Poland Spring, Saratoga, and other springs marketed bottled water beginning in the antebellum period; by the middle of the

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<sup>130</sup> Unfortunately, for Tate, however, it alone could not claim that title. Eight other mineral spring resorts, all claiming that distinction, were profiled in a medical journal article. See Enno Sander, "The 'Carlsbad Springs' of the United States of North America," *Medical Mirror* 8 (January 1897): 567-76.

<sup>131</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1879), 18; *Tate Spring, Tennessee: The Carlsbad of America, Open All the Year* [1927?], 13. Using the CPI calculator, \$5 in 1879 and in 1927 (I believe the undated pamphlet to be later than the McClung Collection staff's notation) translates in 2003 dollars to \$101 and \$53 respectively. However, the value of \$5 as late as 1915 in 2003 dollars still was quite high, at about \$91. See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>132</sup> *Knoxville Daily Journal*, 15 May 1886; *Annual Pamphlet of Tate Epsom Spring* (1898), 18-19 ; *Tate Spring, Tennessee; The Carlsbad of America* [1898?-1908?], 18, 19.



nineteenth century, American mineral water bottlers were exporting some brands to Europe. In Europe, sales of Apollinaris Spring water in earthenware bottles began in 1853. A year after Tate won its St. Louis medal, Evian of France began exporting its water to the United States. The participation of Tate in such a market--and Tate even sent its water to Germany--points to the active trade between southern Appalachia and other regions.<sup>133</sup>

Like Montvale, Tate experienced several waves of guests over the years. In the early antebellum period, I can speculate that local elites frequented the waters. As Tate Spring's reputation spread, it attracted--just like Montvale--Deep South elites seeking refuge from summer heat and fevers in the shade of Tate's fifteen-hundred foot elevation.<sup>134</sup> As the Irish nationalist John Mitchell observed in the 1850s that families from Georgia made up most of Montvale's clientele, so did Tate guests follow the same geographic trend a few decades later. While the 1870s may have seen more Tennessee elite than Georgia elite, by the mid 1880s, Georgia residents frequented Tate more than visitors from any other state. Alabama and Mississippi residents visiting Tate were, respectively, the second and third most populous group at Tate in the 1880s; Louisiana

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<sup>133</sup> Lois D. George, "Uses of Spring Water," in *Springs and Bottled Waters of the World: Ancient History, Source, Occurrence, Quality, and Use*, ed. Philip E. LaMoreaux and Judy T. Tanner (New York: Springer, 2001), 107, 109; Philip E. LaMoreaux, "Famous Springs and Bottled Waters: Introduction," in *Springs and Bottled Waters*, 135; *Tate Spring; The Carlsbad of America; A Health and Pleasure Resort* [mid-1890s?]; Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease," 46-50.

<sup>134</sup> The 1883 pamphlet boasted of over 800 shade trees about the resort, an enticement for southerners experiencing the summer's humid heat. See *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1883), 11.

and South Carolina residents constituted a third tier during that time.<sup>135</sup> National and regional elites during this time included Alexander Stephens, former Confederate Vice-President and then Congressman from Georgia; Chief Justice James W. Deaderick of Tennessee's Supreme Court; Mrs. W.G. Brownlow of Knoxville; General J.B. Hood of New Orleans; J.M Studebaker of South Bend, Indiana; and former Georgia Governor Joseph E. Brown.<sup>136</sup>

While Montvale attracted mainly Deep South elite, however, Tate by 1886 was experiencing as much business from New York and Pennsylvania residents as it probably was from Louisiana and South Carolina.<sup>137</sup> Tate's proximity to two major rail lines allowing access to the South, Midwest, and North may have largely explained the relative

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<sup>135</sup> I counted the number of testimonials and references from the 1879, 1882, 1883, and 1886 Tate Spring promotional pamphlets. While I tried to, but did not succeed in avoiding double-counting--some testimonials and references appeared season after season--and realize that publication of testimonials and references does not give a true picture of the resort's total guest breakdown by state, I believe it suggests interesting trends. See *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1879), 9-17; *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1882), 36-39; *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1883), 30-34; and *Annual Pamphlet of Tate Epsom Spring Containing Location, Analysis of the Water, Means of Access, Accommodations, Diseases for Which the Water is Highly Recommended; Items of General Information with Regard to Its Use, Effects, etc.; Together with Many Certificates and List of References, Card of Resident Physician, Shipping Directions, etc.* (Knoxville: S.B. Newman and Co., Steam Book and Job Printers, 1886), 16-22, "Tate Epsom Spring Annual Pamphlet, Grainger Co., TN 1886 Knoxville," Tourism Folder 21, PAM Tourism Box 7, McClung Collection.

<sup>136</sup> *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1879), 10, 12-13, 17; *Tate Epsom Spring; Grainger County, Tenn.* (1882), 33, 36.

<sup>137</sup> New York attendees gave, for example, 1 testimonial or reference in 1879; 12 in 1882; 29 in 1883, and 35 in 1886. South Carolina residents provided 6 testimonials or references in 1879; 10 in 1882; 20 in 1883; and 23 in 1886. These numbers suggest trends and should not be taken as absolutes for inevitably some double-counting on my part occurred in reading through hundreds of testimonials and references.

geographical diversity of guests during this period. The concept that elites attract elites may also have played a role. It can be speculated, for example, that the increase in guests from Indiana during this time may have originated with Studebaker's ardent testimonials about Tate.<sup>138</sup>

A different guest geographic pattern emerged in the 1920s. Summer guests in June 1923 were chiefly local--Knoxville, Morristown, Rogersville--although some hailed from Alabama, Toledo, and Atlanta and a few from locales farther removed, New York, California, and Ontario. In June 1934, guests again appear to have been mainly from Tennessee, with a few from Florida, New York, Oklahoma, and a few other states.<sup>139</sup>

While Tate during the 1920s and 1930s may no longer have attracted as many nationally known elites as it did some years earlier, its reputation still held sway.<sup>140</sup> A

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<sup>138</sup> J.M. Studebaker enthused in his testimonial: "My first vist [sic] to Tate Springs [sic] was in 1872. I had traveled all over Europe seeking my health and found no relief until I visited Tate Spring. Two weeks restored me to health, and for these many years I owe my life and health to the waters. . . ." See *Tate Spring, Tennessee; The Carlsbad of America* [1898?-1908?], 29. A regional elite family visiting Tate in the late 1880s were Adolph and Effie Ochs. Adolph owned the *Chattanooga Daily Times* during this period; later, in 1896, he became owner and publisher of the *New York Times*. See Alex S. Jones and Susan E. Tift, *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999; Boston: Back Bay Books, 2000), 22.

<sup>139</sup> "Tate Spring Hotel Register," MS-198, June 1923, Box 1, Special Collections Library, Special Collections Library, James D. Hoskins Library, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn. (Special Collections Library hereafter cited as UTK Collection); "Tate Spring Hotel Register," MS-198, May 1933-September 1935, Box 4, UTK Collection.

<sup>140</sup> The Studebaker family attempted unsuccessfully to purchase the resort from the Tomlinsons in the late 1920s or early 1930s. It is interesting to speculate what might have happened to Tate if they, with their capital and elite connections, had bought it. See Doug Smith, telephone interview by author, 6 October 2004, Kingsport, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

newspaper journalist in the late 1930s counted Tate among his “Seven Quests” that he described in his travel writings. Tate featured as prominently on his list as White Sulphur Springs, Cumberland Gap, Shenandoah Valley, Monticello, Natural Bridge, and Cumberland Gap, thus showing its prominence even at that late date. Moreover, Tate was still providing dinners served by African American waiters, evening dances, card playing, and mineral water “night caps” at the spring gazebo.<sup>141</sup> Tate evidently during this period of the Great Depression had not greatly reduced, though it may not have expanded, its services. Tate Spring, however, by this time, had scaled back its months of operations: it now was only open for the summer as opposed to all the year.<sup>142</sup>

As happened at Montvale and other older resorts, Tate found that its elite clientele were seeking other climes; as Aron has pointed out, the Great Depression did not hamper the vacation habits of the truly rich.<sup>143</sup> In addition, as Corbett observes, the rich sought more exclusive locales once the middle class begins to travel to the elite resorts; Saratoga elites “escaped” eventually to the private compounds of Newport.<sup>144</sup> Particularly during the Depression, middle class visitors were probably primarily limited to local or regional residents such as J. Fred Johnson, a founding father of Kingsport. In June 1923, about 736 parties registered at the Tate; about a decade later, in the Depression month of June 1934,

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<sup>141</sup> Clark Barnaby Firestone, *Bubbling Waters* (New York: R.M. McBride, 1938), 145-46.

<sup>142</sup> Federal Writers’ Project, *WPA Guide to Tennessee*, 312.

<sup>143</sup> Aron, *Working at Play*, 241, caption, 242.

<sup>144</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 10, 228, 239-40.

the number had fallen to about 493 parties.<sup>145</sup> Those who did stay at Tate now limited their stays to a few days, rather than weeks, thus decreasing the resort's revenue further.<sup>146</sup> The growing availability of the automobile, coupled with better roads, especially at Tate's location at the intersection of two major highways, led many people to travel elsewhere. In addition, as one interviewee observed, by 1938, the "old folks" who owned it had passed away, and the younger generation had other interests.<sup>147</sup>

Several conclusions can be made about the significance of Tate Spring. The rich, the very rich, found exclusivity tucked away in a corner of Northeast Tennessee, a region often associated with subsistence mountain folk. Tate's prominent location--at the intersection of major routes in continual use from Native Americans and frontiersmen traveling by foot to tourists motoring by automobile-- enhanced its ability to attract elite from beyond the South.

Of the five resorts discussed at length in these chapters, Tate epitomizes the most variety of trends in vacation during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In terms

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<sup>145</sup> Tate Spring Hotel Registers, UTK Collection. Johnson stayed there in June 1923. In spite of dropping attendance, however, Tate still ranked as one of the largest resort hotels in Tennessee during this time. In 1924, for example, it ranked third with 84 rooms; in 1929, though the data for hotel rooms are more difficult to separate by resort hotel, Tate still placed at least fifth and probably was still in the top three. See C.E. Allred, "Economic and Social Study of Tennessee: 1. Tennessee Compared with Each of the Other States; 2. A Comparative Study of the Counties of Tennessee," *The University of Tennessee Record Extension Series 1* (December 1924), 52, table "Summer and Winter Resort Hotels--1924"; C.E. Allred, S.W. Watkins, and G.H. Hatfield, "Tennessee, Economic and Social; Part II. The Counties," *The University of Tennessee Record Extension Series 2* no. 3 (September 1929), 125, table "Summer Resort Hotels--1929."

<sup>146</sup> Smith interview.

<sup>147</sup> Brooks interview.

of health treatments, Tate not only provided relief from summer fevers and offered the usual mineral water springs' curative or palliative therapy, but it *extended* a range of health services even after it had begun to offer a smorgasbord of leisure activities. Its provision of cold and hot baths constituted a type of latter-day water cure, and its foray into electrotherapy was in keeping with a national trend using the new-fangled technology of electricity. Tate adroitly packaged and marketed its water in a variety of containers (barrels, demijohns, half-gallon sizes, etc.) through mail order, druggists, and redistributors. Tate of the five resorts discussed in this thesis most completely represents the trends (and fads) in vacation trends related to health in the nineteenth century.

In spite of its varied medical options, Tate nonetheless led a shift in travel from exclusively health purposes to leisure objectives as evidenced by its ever increasing choices in recreation, ranging from horseback riding in the 1870s to golf in the 1910s. And, as happened at other resorts, only the regional elite frequented its springs at first, then the very wealthy, and finally, the middle class and locals. Unlike the Virginia springs, whose inaccessibility enhanced their elite reputation, the trails, railroads, and paved roads provided ways for elite from outside the South to visit.<sup>148</sup> Ironically, as happened at Montvale, the same roads that allowed entrance for the elite took them elsewhere as the middle class began to displace them at Tate.

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<sup>148</sup> Supposedly the Rockefellers and the Fords visited Tate Spring according to several secondary sources. See, for example, Amy Dunaway, "Mineral Hill.net: An Online Genealogy Project," in which she lists Henry Ford. The Tate promotional brochures I examined, however, do not mention these families but do refer to the Mellon Brothers of Pittsburgh and the New York firm of Inman, Swan. More research is needed to determine which national elites did visit Tate Spring.

The third resort to be covered in this chapter is Unaka Springs in Northeast Tennessee, which developed in the late 1800s, long after many fashionable antebellum springs had faded away. The Unaka Springs Hotel was located about four miles southwest of downtown Erwin, Tennessee, near the unincorporated community of Chestoa, and about one-half mile from the North Carolina border. It stood within the Nolichucky River Gorge, where today many kayakers and rafters enjoy the white water. The CSX Transportation railroad crosses the river at the site of the hotel, making its position easy to spot from the other side of the Nolichucky. The mineral springs around which the resort was built are slightly more than one-half mile behind the hotel on a steep hill.<sup>149</sup>

In 1886 Arthur V. Deaderick and his wife, Mary Adeline Walker Deaderick, built a small hotel next to the Nolichucky.<sup>150</sup> Both were scions of Tennessee elite. Arthur was the

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<sup>149</sup> Many railroads in the United States have undergone several name changes due to line mergers and changes in ownership. CSX is no exception. For a brief history of its lines and owners, see <http://www.csx.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=history.heritage> (accessed October 3, 2004).

<sup>150</sup> Secondary sources differ about the starting date of the hotel. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Dunaway lists its beginnings before the Civil War. Other sources give 1893 or 1899. See, for example, Brian Woodson, "Unaka Springs Hotel Still Evokes Memories," *Erwin Record* 23 October, 1996, p. 11; Dorothy Hamill, "Of Many Things," [*Johnson City* [Tenn.] *Press-Chronicle*? n.d.], Series I, "Menus, Newsclippings, and Receipts," box 1, folder 2, Murrell Family Collection (1883-1993), acc. no. 432, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. (Murrell Family Collection (1883-1993) hereafter cited as Murrell Collection).

A good source for the early Unaka Springs history is Adeline Deaderick Brown Lyle, granddaughter of Arthur and Mary Deaderick, who played at the resort as a child, per Pat Alderman in an WSJK-TV interview. Lyle evidently annotated the Hamill clipping with the comment, "Mrs. Hamill failed to catch fact Grandpa built both first and second hotels." She also states that the first hotel was built in 1886. See Adeline Deaderick Brown Lyle, "Unaka Springs Resort," *Unicoi County, Tennessee and Its People, 1875-1995* (Waynesville, N.C.: Don Mills, Inc. and the Unicoi Heritage Book Committee, 1995), 15; Chester and Carrie Bailey, "Lost Cove and Unaka Springs," interview by Pat

son of James W. Deaderick, an antebellum state senator from Jonesboro, who served as Chief Justice of the Tennessee State Supreme Court from 1876 to his retirement in 1886. Arthur's mother was Adeline McDowell, granddaughter of Tennessee Governor Isaac Shelby. Arthur, a West Point graduate and civil engineer, was also first cousin to William V. Deaderick, a Judge of Arbitration for East Tennessee. Their son Henry, or "Mac," who ran the hotel after his father, was a photographer for the Carolina, Clinchfield, & Ohio Railway, later merged with CSX by stockholder vote in 1982.<sup>151</sup>

Business prospered the first year, for in June 1886 Lizzie Deaderick began serving as the first Unaka Springs postmaster, followed by Arthur Deaderick in 1887. Guests reached the hotel by fording the Nolichucky because no rail or road traveled to it;

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Alderman, [1970s?], videocassette recording, WSJK-TV Collection, acc. no. 89, program no. 6, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.

<sup>151</sup> "Unaka Springs--Deaderick, Arthur V.," *Who's Who in Tennessee, A Biographical Reference Book of Notable Tennesseans of To-day* (Memphis: Paul & Douglas Co., 1911), 556; "Unaka Springs--Deaderick, Henry McDowell," *Who's Who in Tennessee*, 556; John Trotwood Moore and Austin Powers Foster, eds., "James W. Deaderick," *Tennessee: The Volunteer State, 1769-1923*, vol. 2 (Nashville: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1923), 109-10; "William V. Deaderick," *Tennessee: The Volunteer State, 1769-1923*, 110-11; James A. Goforth, interview by author, 14 March 2004, Erwin, Tenn., audiotape recording in possession of author; James A. Goforth, *Building the Clinchfield: A Construction History of America's Most Unusual Railroad* (Erwin, Tenn.: Gem Publishers, 1983), 98.

A Tate Spring promotional brochure of the early 1880s interestingly listed Arthur's father as a reference. I do not know whether the year the Chief Justice retired and the year Arthur started Unaka Springs (1886) are purely coincidental.



otherwise, the intrepid with little luggage could scramble a steep path carved into the hillside behind the hotel.<sup>152</sup>

The same year that the Unaka Springs resort opened, General John T. Wilder, a Civil War hero at Chickamauga, formed with other capitalists the Charleston, Cincinnati & Chicago Railroad Company, or the “Three C’s.”<sup>153</sup> The investors envisioned building the Three C’s to reach from Charleston, South Carolina, over the Blue Ridge Mountains into Northeast Tennessee, to Ashland, Kentucky, on the Ohio River, and to intersect with other rail lines. The impetus for the rail lay in coal and iron transport; Wilder strongly believed that Charleston would become the top southern coaling port and that the iron ore found along the proposed route was the type best suited for making Bessemer steel.<sup>154</sup>

In 1890 according to two standard sources, one segment in East Tennessee was in operation for the twenty miles from Johnson City southeast to Chestoa, about one half mile upstream from the Unaka Springs resort.<sup>155</sup> The Panic of 1893 forced the Three C’s

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<sup>152</sup> “Unicoi County - Misc - Unicoi County Postmasters,” <http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/tn/unicoi/misc/unicoipo.txt> (accessed March 17, 2004); Goforth interview.

<sup>153</sup> General Wilder exerted a major influence on the direction of East Tennessee commerce following the Civil War and built the Cloudland Hotel on Roan Mountain in neighboring Carter County, Tennessee. Chapter 4 will center on the Cloudland and provide more information on Wilder.

<sup>154</sup> William Way, Jr., *The Clinchfield Railroad: The Story of a Trade Route Across the Blue Ridge Mountains* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1931), 55-56, 59-60.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 87, 87n45; Goforth, *Building the Clinchfield*, 10, 13.

into bankruptcy; it was reorganized under Charles E. Hellier as the Ohio River & Charleston Railway. According to the two sources, under this new management, the rail was extended from Chestoa over the Nolichucky River past Unaka Springs to Hunt Dale, North Carolina, in 1899.<sup>156</sup>

However, an 1891 newspaper article stated that some Three-C's sections, including the Ellisons Mills, Tennessee, to the North Carolina state line section, were "put into operation in December 1890." An 1894 newspaper advertisement instructed guests to ride the Three-C's from Johnson City. Moreover, an 1895 deed referred to a planned esplanade "at or near the railroad bridge across the river," thus indicating that visitors to Unaka Springs could reach it by bridge--even if the rail was not in operation due to bankruptcy--four years earlier than has been popularly believed.<sup>157</sup>

The 1895 deed is noteworthy for other reasons as well. In July, according to the deed, the Unicoi County Commissioners, one of whom was General Wilder, partitioned lots in the Unaka Springs community at the request of the owners of the Unaka Springs

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<sup>156</sup> Way, *Clinchfield Railroad*, 95; Goforth, *Building the Clinchfield*, 14.

<sup>157</sup> *Erwin Weekly*, 22 November 1891; *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 12 July 1894; Unicoi County, Tennessee, "Report of the Commissioners in the Partition of the Unaka Springs Property," *Deed Record*, vol. 5, 437. A *Scientific American* article stated that in 1890, the portion of the line from Allison's Mills (probably the same as Ellisons Mills) to Johnson City was torn up and the material used to extend it farther south to Hunt Dale. A spectacular bird's-eye photograph of the old railroad bridge crossing the Nolichucky (the Unaka Springs Hotel is to the right of the bridge) is included in the article. See J.O. Lewis, "The Costliest Railroad in America: A New Railroad That Cost More than Thirty Million Dollars," *Scientific American*, suppl. no. 1752 (July 31, 1900), <http://www.catskillarchive.com/rrextra/stclin.html> (accessed September 27, 2004)

tract.<sup>158</sup> Owners of tracts at this time included Arthur Deaderick, Henry Deaderick, and the heirs of Robert Love, a well-known local elite of the late 1700s.<sup>159</sup> The commissioners noted that the tract owners previously had settled among themselves the questions of previous use and occupation of the lots as well as the matter of timber taxes. The commissioners designated two lots to Arthur Deaderick--the southern boundary of one stood eighty-three feet north of the mineral springs--and two to Henry Deaderick, one of which adjoined one of his father's lots. The commissioners then stipulated that the Deadericks could close an alley, established in the deed, between their two pieces of land.<sup>160</sup>

The importance of the mineral springs and access to them was evident in the detail that the commissioners devoted to the topic in the deed. The commissioners sectioned off an esplanade or drive of one hundred feet along the Nolichucky near the railroad bridge, established streets and alleys according to an annexed plat, and set apart one lot which included the mineral springs. The commissioners declared that the lot with the mineral springs, the planned esplanade, and the planned streets and alleys were to “remain

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<sup>158</sup> Unicoi County *Deed Record*, 437-42. Two handwritten dates in the deed give 1895 as the year; two other dates for the same deed appear, however, to be written as 1893. Traditionally, heirs dividing property petitioned the court to divide up the land; the court in many cases appointed county commissioners to do so.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*; Pat Alderman, *All Aboard* (Erwin, Tenn.: Y's Men's Club of Erwin, 1969), 12. Love beat Andrew Jackson in a famous horserace held at the Greasy Cove racetrack in 1788.

<sup>160</sup> Unicoi County *Deed Record*, vol. 5, 437-38, 440.

unpartitioned and to remain the property of all the owners,” who were to be “equally liable for the taxes and improvement of the park or lot.” The springs were to be “free and equal to all the owners” and to be accessible via piped water to a first basin connected to a second basin to receive overflow. The commissioners further decreed that no person “shall contaminate or foul the water” in either basin or damage any pipe or other convenience for accessing the mineral spring water. More than likely a dispute had taken place about the ownership and right to the springs for the commissioners to put such stress on these concerns in the deed.<sup>161</sup>

In 1901 the Deadericks razed the hotel and planned to build a new hotel on its site, but that May a massive flood--one that attracted national attention--swept away the building materials. The Deadericks built a second hotel after the flood clean-up.<sup>162</sup>

The second hotel was a three-story, white-frame building with a verandah on the first floor facing the river and side verandahs on the first and second stories. The front

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 437, 440. A property tax on the springs is still controversial today, per V. Faye T. Tipton, interview by author, 1 May 2004, Unicoi County, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author; Ulis Miller, interview by author, 27 September, 2004, Unicoi County, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

<sup>162</sup> Lyle, “Unaka Springs Resort,” 15. The May 1901 flood was so severe that it swept away Magnetic City (now Buladean), N.C., and many homes in Roan Mountain Station and in Bakersville, N.C. See *New York Times*, 25 May 1901 <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 14, 2004). Roan Mountain is about 16 miles from Unaka Springs and site of the Cloudland Hotel to be discussed in the next chapter. A saw mill owned by General Wilder less than a mile from the Unaka Springs Hotel was completely destroyed. See Miller interview; Arnold Webb, interview by author, 27 September 2004, Unicoi County, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

porch railing consisted of latticework railings carved from rhododendron branches.

Scattered about the lawn were benches and paths, one leading uphill to the springs.<sup>163</sup>

In 1907 the rail from Johnson City to Spruce Pine, North Carolina, was improved. Known as the South and Western Railway, under the leadership of George L. Carter who had bought the Ohio River and Charleston line, the new management implemented several changes in the rail, including eliminating the railroad's sharp curves in the mountains with line changes. At Unaka Springs, a steel girder bridge replaced the old timber truss bridge. Evidently, to accommodate these renovations to the rail and the bridge at the Nolichucky, the Deadericks moved the hotel sixty feet back from its riverside location. The repositioning of the hotel blocked its previous first-floor view of the Nolichucky; a railroad bed now stood about ten feet above the ground along the river. The hotel was set on moorings sufficiently high to avoid contact with a small creek that ran under the hotel. The Deadericks built a boardwalk with rhododendron latticework railings from the railroad bank to the hotel verandah about forty feet away; an ad for the resort, according to one interviewee, claimed that ladies' feet never had to touch the ground from the time they disembarked from the train to when they entered the house. A pond with two gushing fountains, one on each side of the boardwalk, completed the scene guests saw upon arrival.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Tipton interview; Lyle, "Unaka Springs Resort," 15; Painting based on photograph, property of Faye Tipton, Unicoi County, Tenn.

<sup>164</sup> Tipton interview; Lyle, "Unaka Springs Resort," 15; Hopson interview; Goforth, *Building the Clinchfield*, 27; H.M. Deaderick, Unaka Springs, Tenn., to O.K. Morgan, Johnson City, Tenn., February 23, 1916, transcript in the hand of H.M.

When guests entered the hotel, they saw a large lobby. Located near the lobby was a dining room with seating for about one-hundred-thirty guests; it contained a victrola and piano that evidently provided dinner music. A staircase stood in front; behind it was a hallway, decorated with marble and quartz, leading to parlors. Chandeliers with oil lamps lit the hallway and the main rooms on the first floor, which included a railroad ticket and telegraph office. The hotel floors contained about forty spacious guestrooms, many decorated with wallpaper and with high ceilings made of bead board. An ornately decorated dresser, a spring bed with headboard hand-carvings to match the hand-carvings on the dresser, a washstand, a few chairs, mirror, and a wardrobe probably constituted the furniture in each room. A bathroom served each floor; water reached the hotel through a gravity-flow pipe from a freestone spring above the hotel. According to one source, the hotel had “modern plumbing ahead of the times” and contained its own sewer system.<sup>165</sup>

The springs purportedly provided the usual health benefits; hotel stationery stated that the waters were one of the “finest mineral springs in the South,” which “will greatly

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Deaderick, property of James A. Goforth, Erwin, Tenn. Deaderick wrote his letter on stationery that included a photo of the hotel and a hotel ad.

Lyle states that the hotel was moved in 1910 to accommodate construction of the mainline Carolina, Clinchfield, and Ohio Railway. Goforth, however, states that all construction work begun in 1905-1908 was finished by 1909 before the CC&O ran.

A spectacular bird’s-eye photograph of the old railroad bridge crossing the Nolichucky (the Unaka Springs Hotel is to the right of the bridge) accompanied a 1900 article on the Clinchfield. See J.O. Lewis, “The Costliest Railroad in America: A New Railroad That Cost More than Thirty Million Dollars,” *Scientific American* suppl. no. 1752 (July 31, 1900), <http://www.catskillarchive.com/rrextra/stclin.Html> (accessed September 27, 2004)

<sup>165</sup> Tipton interview; Hopson interview; *Deed Book* 74, 1946; Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman.

benefit any case of indigestion.” Several sources disagree about the mineral content of the springs—whether iron, sulfur, or a combination—but the water most likely, by my observation, is iron. In fact, one interviewee claimed that unsuspecting guests came to take the “sulfur water cure” but actually received iron water therapy.<sup>166</sup> A spring drinking ritual constituted part of the daily resort activities. Every afternoon, female guests took their guestroom pitchers to the mineral springs to fill them for their evening servings. Occasionally, a Deaderick grandchild lay in wait in the thickets surrounding the springs, screeching like a wildcat, to frighten the guests away.<sup>167</sup> Like Tate, the hotel shipped its water and at the same price, five dollars per barrel, demonstrating that its water likewise commanded an elite customer base outside Northeast Tennessee.<sup>168</sup>

Guests, as at other resorts, frequented the parlors and porches to be seen and to play board games, read, socialize, and to attend church on Sundays (although their children most often attended alone due to their parents’ late Saturday night hours). Guests participated in talent shows and in dances, accompanied by piano and fiddle. Outdoor activities included hiking, swimming (a swimming hole in the river was located a few

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<sup>166</sup> H.M. Chitwood, interview by author, 1 May 2004, Erwin, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author; Jetta Hopson, interview by author, 1 May 2004, Unicoi County, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author; Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman, [1970s?], videocassette recording, WSJK-TV Collection, acc. no. 89, program no. 6, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. From my observation, the water lacks the “rotten egg” odor associated with sulfur; the trough into which the spring water flows is stained with a reddish-orange hue, thus indicating the presence of iron.

<sup>167</sup> Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman.

<sup>168</sup> Deaderick to Morgan letter.

hundred yards downstream from the hotel), horseback riding, croquet, and miniature golf. A particularly popular activity in the summer humidity was to visit “Cold Storage” or “Ice Cave,” a shallow cave opening in the ground around which guests sat to feel the cool blasts of air emitting from the cavity; lemonade and various beverages also were stored in the hole to keep cold. Occasionally guests took the train to Erwin for sight-seeing.<sup>169</sup>

Guests most frequently visited the hotel in summer; winter weather could be frigid, and the hotel’s location in the winter shadow of a mountain kept ice and snow from melting. Although it was open year-round for one to two years in the late 1920s; by the late 1940s, even though the hotel allowed selected guests to stay past the weekend, it officially was open only on weekends.<sup>170</sup>

Prices around 1915 were \$2 per day, \$10 per week, and \$30 per month. After adjusting for CPI variability, Unaka weekly rates compared to Montvale weekly rates and those of Franklin County’s Estill Springs and Winchester Springs for roughly the same time period were typically slightly higher, indicating that the same upper middle class or middle class clientele visited Unaka as traveled to these other resorts. Tate Spring’s

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<sup>169</sup> Hopson interview; Tipton interview; Miller interview; Alderman, *All Aboard*, 12. The local newspaper reported that “a party of ladies and gentlemen were down from the Springs Monday.” See *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 9 August 1894.

<sup>170</sup> Tipton interview; Hopson interview; *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 12 July 1894. The July 12, 1894, ad announced the summer season and ran repeatedly throughout August and stopped for the first two weeks in September. Inexplicably, the same ad ran in October and November 1894. The text of the ad reads as follows: “This famous mineral spring is now open for the summer. It is situated on the Nola Chucky [*sic*] River, and on the Three C’s railroad. Scenery unsurpassed. Take the cars at Johnson City in morning and reach Unaka for Dinner, same day. All information cheerfully given when desired. Respectfully, A.V. Deaderick, Proprietor.”



weekly rate, after adjusting for CPI fluctuation, demonstrates that it commanded a much more exclusive clientele.<sup>171</sup>

Unaka Springs and other regional resorts at this time were still too expensive for the working class or lower middle class to enjoy for more than an afternoon picnic on its grounds. In 1900 for example, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad paid blacksmiths \$2.56 daily; woodworkers, \$1.85 per day; and helpers from \$1.00 to \$1.60 daily for about ten hours of work. Before Ford Motor Company introduced its five-dollars-a-day “profit-sharing” plan in 1914, its least skilled workers earned slightly over \$2.50 each day. In Georgia, white teachers in 1905 received \$42.85 per month during the teaching year or about \$1.43 per day.<sup>172</sup>

Visitors to Unaka Springs before the Great Depression ranged from area residents to travelers from along the eastern coast. In its hey-day from the 1890s through roughly the 1910s, Unaka Springs constituted a “fashionable resort known from New York to Florida.” Several interviewees stated that guests came from various regions of the country;

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<sup>171</sup> Deaderick letter; *Daily Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 5 June 1911; Rauchle, “Famous Resorts of Franklin County,” 5, 7; *Tate Spring* (190\_?). The Unaka Springs letterhead Deaderick used listed hotel prices but did not give a year. Because Deaderick wrote his letter in February 1916, I am assuming the given hotel weekly rate of \$10 was for the 1915 summer season. Montvale’s weekly rate in 1911 was \$7 (\$7.43 in 1915 CPI-adjusted dollars); Estill Springs’ hotels’ weekly rates ranged from \$8-\$12 in 1909 (\$8.88-\$13.30 in 1915 dollars); Winchester Springs’ 1909 rate was \$8 (\$8.88 in 1915 dollars); and Tate’s rates around 1926 ranged from \$15-\$45 (\$8.60-\$25.81 in 1915 dollars). I used the CPI calculator. See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”

<sup>172</sup> Kincaid Herr, *Louisville and Nashville Railroad: 1850-1940, 1941-1959* (Louisville: L. & N. Magazine, 1943), 106; Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 47; Mary Frances Berry and John W. Blassingame, *The Black Experience in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 265.

when pressed for how potential guests knew of such a small rustic watering hole, one interviewee stated that advertisements appeared “everywhere.”<sup>173</sup> Probably the Clinchfield railroad issued promotional guides to scenic stops along its passenger routes much like the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railway did in its annual *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee*. The hotel during this time often teemed with visitors; the overflow crowd camped on the lawn when the guest rooms were full.<sup>174</sup>

Before the Depression, local residents also frequented the resort for day trips. They came to the hotel for Sunday dinner by train from Johnson City and Erwin; this tradition continued to the 1950s. Locals also swam, picnicked, hiked, and camped there.<sup>175</sup> Area elites from Johnson City, Kingsport, and Erwin sometimes came on the “Jitney,” a special passenger train car, in the 1920s to the resort.<sup>176</sup> Elites in Erwin bought lots near

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<sup>173</sup> Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman; Hopson interview; Tipton interview.

<sup>174</sup> Webb interview; Tipton interview. For example, an 1896 Southern Railways publication, “Summer Homes and Resorts,” highlighted Atlantic Coast resorts, Lookout Mountain, Swannanoa, Asheville, and other resorts in the mountains. See description in the *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 12 December 1896.

<sup>175</sup> *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 12 July 1894; “Hike to Unaka Springs,” *Erwin Magnet*, 11 June 1926; *Erwin Magnet*, 2 July 1926; *Erwin Times*, 26 July 1926; “Family Picnic at Unaka Springs,” *Erwin Record*, 24 August 1928; Theodore T. Lynch, interview by author, 21 May 2004, Erwin, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author; Goforth interview; “Bachelor Girls’ Group Outing to Unaka Springs, Unicoi County, Tennessee, 1908,” EGM nos. 41-42, subseries I-A, Gaunt and McDonald Family Members and Friends, 1892-1922, box 1, folder 1, Evelyn Gaunt McDonald Collection, acc. no. 70, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.

<sup>176</sup> Chitwood interview; Miller interview.

the hotel from the Deadericks and built summer cottages, one-and-one-half to two-story houses about the same size as their primary residences. Some working class locals also lived near the hotel; one interviewee's father, for example, worked on a nearby section of the railroad.<sup>177</sup>

The elites--for example, lawyers, doctors, and railroad corporate managers--did not socialize much with what one interviewee called Erwin's "lower class," those who worked in the pottery, timber, or railroad industries. As a youngster, the interviewee believed that the local elites did not want to associate with the "common people." He did, however, as did several other interviewees or their parents as youth, play either with some of the cottage owners' children or with the Deaderick grandchildren. Another interviewee recalled that hotel management did not allow locals in the late 1920s through early 1930s who came to dance or to slip a drink on weekends to mingle freely with guests; in addition, guests, who mainly hailed from Florida, "didn't mix with us too much."<sup>178</sup>

One interviewee recalled, however, that her mother, an orphan whose grandmother cared for her and several other siblings, received considerable attention from the elites. One guest from Maryland or New York wanted to adopt a younger sibling; the grandmother refused, but the interviewee's mother thought that her younger sibling would have enjoyed a better life if the adoption had occurred. One cottage owner, knowing the

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<sup>177</sup> Tipton interview; Chitwood interview; Webb interview; Miller interview; Hopson interview.

<sup>178</sup> Chitwood interview; Tipton interview; Webb interview; Lynch interview.

dire straits of the grandmother and her many charges, paid the interviewee's mother fifty cents every night to wash his family's dishes and also bought her shoes and socks.<sup>179</sup>

While guests normally rode the train, local young people primarily walked the railroad bridge to swim or, in the 1930s, to attend or watch the hotel's weekend dances; a walkway attached to the bridge enabled them to scramble down quickly if a train were coming. With the introduction of the automobile, some locals and guests parked their vehicles on the opposite side of the river from the hotel and then walked across. After the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) chiseled a narrow road bed out of the steep hillside behind the hotel, guests could access the hotel via that route.<sup>180</sup>

The CCC road severely diminished the hotel's aura of exclusivity. Business plummeted so much after the advent of the car and of the onset of the Great Depression, that one interviewee reared in the Unaka Springs community could recall only Deaderick family members and a retired New York judge visiting the resort in the early 1930s.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Tipton interview.

<sup>180</sup> Webb interview; Hopson interview; Goforth interview; Lynch interview. Unicoi County had tried at least as early as 1923 to construct a road from the south end of the county bridge to Unaka Springs. The county court in that year appropriated \$1,000 to supplement a government amount. A newspaper article noted that the road "will be a great convenience in getting to Unaka Springs." See "Road to Unaka Springs Soon," *Erwin Weekly Magnet*, 11 April 1923.

<sup>181</sup> Hopson interview; Webb interview; Tipton interview; Miller interview; Chitwood interview. All of these interviewees were adamant that the CCC road ruined the hotel; all noted the irony that the road making travel so much easier was responsible. Webb, for example, recalled that when his family moved to the Unaka Springs community in 1933 before the construction of the CCC road, they had to ford the Nolichucky with wagon and horse to transport their belongings. On one hand, Tipton remembered her mother stating that the Depression did not affect business at the hotel; only the CCC road did. On the other hand, Webb stated that the hotel was not operating when his family

Just as the Virginia springs attracted clientele due to their inaccessibility in the Blue Ridge Mountains, so did the Unaka Springs Hotel attract regional elite in its hey-day in the deep gorge of the Nolichucky River. After the road was constructed, so-called “drunks” and others who lacked the sophistication of the earlier hotel clientele now found the resort a place of sometimes rowdy entertainment on the weekends.<sup>182</sup> And, as happened at other resorts, vacationers began to travel elsewhere.

The hotel lingered on during and for a few more decades after the Depression.<sup>183</sup> Henry Deaderick ran the hotel when his father became elderly. Arthur, unfortunately, borrowed \$1,403.35 against the hotel and defaulted on the loan; C.B. Rumbley of Johnson City, who owned the debt on the hotel, bought the resort at auction for only two hundred dollars in 1936. He conveyed the property to J.E. Rumbley, who then conveyed deed to Dr. Aura Barrowman. Stella Hopson bought the hotel and its furnishings in 1946 for seven thousand dollars from Barrowman.<sup>184</sup> She operated the hotel year-round for several years.

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moved there, and that his father bought three of the cottages for \$100 each at auction (most probably after Deaderick had defaulted on his loan). Webb and his brother axed the cottage furniture for firewood.

<sup>182</sup> Hopson interview; Tipton interview.

<sup>183</sup> Though business declined at the resort during the Depression and with the advent of the CCC road, the resort still warranted a description in the Federal Writers’ Project travel guide to Tennessee, which called it a “resort that became popular because of its iron and sulphur water.” See Federal Writers’ Project, *WPA Guide to Tennessee*, 326.

<sup>184</sup> Unicoi County, Tennessee, “Trustee’s Deed from Howard Akers to C.B. Rumbley,” *Warranty Deed Book* 65, 152-53; Unicoi County, Tennessee “Warranty Deed from Dr. Aura Barrowman to Mrs. Stella Hopson,” *Deed Book* 74, 320-22; Unicoi County, Tennessee, “Warranty Deed from Stella Hopson to Rex Lewis,” *Deed Book* 80, 130-31.

Her daughter built Melody Inn, a “dance hall and beer joint” located uphill from the hotel on the CCC road; later, the dance hall was converted to a church. Hopson sold the hotel for two thousand dollars in 1950 (possibly, she had sold off the personal property earlier, thus explaining the low selling price). Gradually, the elite cottage owners moved out; they sold some homes to residents relocating from Lost Cove, North Carolina, when that community dissolved after train service to it stopped in 1955.<sup>185</sup>

The hotel changed hands several more times after Hopson owned it. Sometime in the 1950s, the owner of the hotel removed its third story and its middle section so that two separate houses could then be rented out. In the mid to late 1970s, a river rafting company rented the facility for overnight stays or as a convenient place for rafters to change clothes. From 1982 on, a family in New Jersey with relatives in Chestoa has owned the hotel as a private summer residence.<sup>186</sup>

Unaka Springs was typical of many mineral springs resorts in the southern Appalachians that attracted upper middle-class elite and, in its later years, members of the middle class. Like the family which revisited Montvale annually until building their own summer cottage in the Smokies, Unaka Springs visitors returned to celebrate weddings,

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<sup>185</sup> Hopson interview; Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman. Lost Cove’s last resident left in 1957. This intriguing community stood in an isolated, rugged area of the Unakas in extreme western North Carolina as a habitat for families seeking, depending on the story, either refuge from the tax collector or from Civil War skirmishes. The community never had electricity or telephone service. For a brief description of Lost Cove, see Pat Alderman, *All Aboard*, 14.

<sup>186</sup> Chester and Carrie Bailey, “Lost Cove and Unaka Springs,” interview by Pat Alderman; Tipton interview; Webb interview; Goforth interview; Hopson interview.

anniversaries, and other occasions at the resort.<sup>187</sup> Corbett acknowledges how crucial it is for a proprietor to live at his resort, so that he could set social standards and exert social influence, whether at Bath or at the White Sulphur Springs. While Unaka Springs obviously lacked the exclusivity of these aforementioned spas, its first owner, the Deaderick family, lived at the resort for several decades and undoubtedly established strong bonds with its clientele.<sup>188</sup>

The three springs resorts examined in detail in this chapter--Montvale, Tate, and Unaka--shared a common origin in treatment of diseases and in later provision of leisure activities. While Montvale served the antebellum elite and Tate, the elite of the 1870s through the early 1920s, Unaka Springs catered to the upper middle class and middle class of the late 1880s through the early 1900s. Ironically, at the same time Tate extended its entertainment and leisure activities, it also invested more heavily in its health offerings; Montvale and Unaka, while still serving mineral spring water in their later years, probably catered relatively much more to clientele seeking a restful and recreational place in the mountains.

All three resorts participated in what Harris terms the “Commercialized Vacation” phase of tourism occurring in the United States after the Civil War. Increased numbers of persons worked in clerical, business supervisory, and government middle class jobs, which

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<sup>187</sup> Hopson interview; Tipton interview.

<sup>188</sup> Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 82, 208. Arthur and Adeline Deaderick continued to live at the resort after their son Henry operated it; a newspaper article noted that they celebrated their seventy-second wedding anniversary there, having lived at the resort for forty years. See *Erwin Times*, 26 July 1926.

provided them with more discretionary income than factory workers. With increased rail transportation--about six times the rail mileage existed in the United States in 1900 than was available in 1860--the middle class could take time to go on brief trips. As evidence, more travel guides were available and by 1910, most major newspapers had begun a Sunday travel section. At the same time, public interest in wilderness and nature appeared in American society as shown by the beginning of the Boy Scout and Girl Scout movements and formation of municipal parks. In an increasing urban setting, families reconnected to nature by vacationing each summer in a natural setting.<sup>189</sup>

Montvale and Unaka Springs in their later years also participated in Harris's third phase of vacation, the "Industrialized Vacation." By 1916 federal workers were entitled to up to thirty days' paid leave; by the 1920s, selected numbers of factory workers, most probably located in the North, began to receive paid leave. While Tate even in its later years served regional elite, if not the national elite, as it had in its prime, Montvale and Unaka visitors during those two resorts' waning days were middle class, and in the case of Unaka, were working-class members who could afford a day off occasionally for a picnic at the resort. As Harris points out, though, American unions tended to focus their energies on increasing hourly pay, not on vacation benefits.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Harris, "On Vacation," 103-4.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 104.



All three resorts provide testimony to southern Appalachia's interactions with the "outside" world. Tate Spring and Unaka Springs are contrasts when analyzing their health and leisure offerings, yet both shipped mineral waters outside their local areas. Deep South planter elites visited Montvale in the antebellum period; deep-pocketed capitalists enjoyed stays at Tate in the early twentieth century. A small forty-room hotel like Unaka Springs hidden in the Northeast Tennessee mountains even enjoyed guests from New York and Florida. The resorts, therefore, symbolize the interconnectivity between southern Appalachia and the rest of the country.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMER HOME ABOVE THE CLOUDS: THE CLOUDLAND HOTEL ON ROAN MOUNTAIN

Roan Mountain, or “the Roan” as it is more commonly called, straddles the easternmost section of Carter County in Tennessee and the westernmost section of Mitchell County in North Carolina. The Roan does not consist of a single peak: its undulating ridgeline varies from 5,512 feet at Carver’s Gap to 6,285 feet at Roan High Knob. The peaks or knobs are generally called “balds” because of a preponderance of sedges and grasses, the cause of which is still debated in scientific circles.<sup>1</sup> As a result of

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<sup>1</sup> Phillip J. Castro, “A Qualitative Study of the Subalpine Forests of Roan and Bald Mountains in the Southern Appalachians” (M.S. thesis, East Tennessee State University, 1969), 24. For more information on the flowering plants and ferns of the Roan, see pp. 46-49, Table XIV, “Estimated Average Distance Between Individual Stems in the Herbaceous Layer by Species, According to Class.”

The balds are not the only mystery surrounding the Roan. The origin of its name is steeped in several fascinating legends. One story states that the Roan is named for the color of Daniel Boone’s horse. Boone allegedly left the weary roan to graze on the balds while he continued on a hunting expedition from North Carolina to Kentucky. When he returned several months later, the horse had fattened considerably from the abundant pastureland. Other theories emphasize the interplay of light on the mountain: the ridges appear reddish in the late afternoon or pinkish in winter when the early or late sunlight glistens on the snow. One imaginative tale suggests that the Roan is named after the purplish-red blooms of the rhododendron, which in turn absorbed this color from the blood of Catawba Indians fighting centuries ago on its balds. Much more mundane is the story that the shortened version of the name of a Mr. Rowan was used for the mountain. Lastly, one hypothesis states that the Roan was named after its many mountain ash, or rowan, trees that bear bright red berries in October and give the slopes a reddish hue in the fall even after their leaves have dropped. See “Several Legends Trace Name of Beautiful Roan Mountain,” [unannotated newspaper clipping], “Roan Mountain, North Carolina” Folder, William Leonard Eury Appalachian Collection, Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C. (Collection hereafter cited as Eury Appalachian Collection); Russ Dailey, Jr., “The Roan,” [*Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 15 May 1977], Eury Appalachian Collection.

the lack of trees, one may hike for hours and admire unobstructed panoramic vistas. Elisha Mitchell, the nineteenth-century University of North Carolina science professor for whom Mount Mitchell is named, wrote that “a person may gallop his horse for a mile or two, with Carolina at his feet on one side, and Tennessee on the other, and a green ocean of mountains raised into tremendous billows immediately about him.”<sup>2</sup>

Mitchell was only one of many scientists and travelers who trekked to the Roan in the antebellum era. André Michaux, royal botanist of France appointed by Louis XVI and who named the famous *Rhododendron catawbiense*, in 1793 collected plant specimens along the western North Carolina slope of the Roan across what is now Carver’s Gap-- located on the Tennessee-North Carolina border--and then onto the slopes of Roan Mountain’s Round Bald. In his journal he wrote of several settlements or cabins, none of which were situated above western North Carolina’s Toe River, thus giving an idea of the relatively low population density on the slope in that year.<sup>3</sup> Three years later, Methodist

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<sup>2</sup> Elisha Mitchell, “Notice of the Height of Mountains in North Carolina from Prof. E. Mitchell of Chapel Hill University. (Taken from the *Raleigh Register* of Nov. 3, 1835, and forwarded by Prof. M),” *The American Journal of Science and Arts* 35 (January 1839), 378. Mitchell originally published his account as a letter to the editor of the Raleigh newspaper. The passage was also quoted and cited in the Tennessee state geological report of 1869 and was quoted in the North Carolina state geological survey of 1875. I first found the quotation with no citation in Jennifer Bauer Laughlin, *Roan Mountain: A Passage of Time* 2d ed. (Johnson City, Tenn.: Overmountain Press, 1999), 55. A former ranger-naturalist at Roan Mountain State Park and now the park manager of Sycamore Shoals State Park in Elizabethton, Bauer has spent many years interviewing Roan Mountain residents and researching the area’s cultural heritage.

<sup>3</sup> Nathaniel Lord Britton and Addison Brown, *An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada and the British Possessions* (reprint title, *An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada: From Newfoundland to the Parallel of the Southern Boundary of Virginia and from the Atlantic Ocean Westward to the 102d Meridian*), vol. 2, *Amaranthaceae to Loganiaceae (Amaranth to Polyplemum)*, 2d ed.

bishop Francis Asbury rode for fourteen hours from North Carolina's Toe River, perhaps across the Roan's Carver's Gap, to the Doe River in Tennessee where he preached the following day. In his journal the next year he noted his inability to find corn to buy along the same route until he reached his host's cabin, again pointing out the lack of settlement in the Roan area during the late 1700s.<sup>4</sup> About the same time, in 1799, the Scotch botanist John Fraser collected plant specimens in the region for Catherine the Great; his name now denotes *Abies fraseri*, the Fraser fir, endemic to the southern Appalachians and whose dark green color may have given the Black Mountains their name. François-André Michaux, son of André, botanized on the Roan and later published *Forest Trees of North*

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rev. and enlarged ([New York]: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1970), 681 (page citation is to the reprint edition); Silver, *Mount Mitchell*, 62; Samuel C. Williams, *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country, 1540-1800, With Introductions, Annotations, and Index* (Johnson City [Tenn.]: The Watauga Press, 1928), 331-32, 331n14. Michaux noted the abundance of the yellow-flowered *Azalea lutea* (flame azalea) in the region and the *Convallaria* (the genus for lilies of the valley) in bloom. Williams states that Martin Davenport guided Michaux through Carver's Gap, but his description of the route leads me to wonder if he really meant Yellow Mountain Gap, part of the Roan ridge to the northeast from Carver's Gap.

<sup>4</sup> Williams, *Early Travels*, 303-05. Williams again identifies Asbury's route as crossing Carver's Gap, but Asbury described his route as passing through "the gap of the Yellow Mountain." Yellow Mountain Gap is lower in elevation than Carver's Gap, making the climb less difficult over the Roan ridge. The Overmountain Men traveled through it on their trek to Kings Mountain, South Carolina, during the Revolutionary War.

The Toe and Doe Rivers were named independently in spite of their spelling similarity. The Toe is the abbreviated form of "Estatoe," a Native American girl who, according to lore, drowned herself in the river after her lover was killed. See Muriel Sheppard, *Cabins in the Laurel*, with illustrations by Bayard Wootten (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1935), 4. According to the author's family tradition, Carver's Gap was named for ancestors who crossed from North Carolina and settled eventually around Carter County's Tiger Creek; more research is needed to confirm that supposition.

*America* (1857).<sup>5</sup> In 1841, Harvard University botanist Asa Gray, honored later by the eponymously named *Lilium grayi*, the orange-red Gray's lily, wrote that "it was just sunset when we reached the bald and grassy summit of this noble mountain, and after enjoying for a moment the magnificent view it affords, had barely time to prepare our encampment."<sup>6</sup> Over a decade later, in 1856, travel writer Charles Lanman observed that the same balds' "fine and luxuriant grass" was serving as pastureland for the "immense numbers" of local farmers' cattle and horses, therefore pointing out the increased populace of the Roan valley.<sup>7</sup>

Carter County experienced over a fivefold gain in population from the time André Michaux botanized along the Roan through the period when Lanman traveled about the

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<sup>5</sup> Silver, *Mount Mitchell*, 65; Arthur, Chapter 22, "Flora and Fauna," *History of Western North Carolina*, <http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/hownc013.html> (accessed March 31, 2004). The rhododendron habitat of more than six hundred acres on the Roan constitutes the largest natural rhododendron garden in the world. See "Group Seeks to Protect Roan," [*Hickory Daily Record*, 6 July 1997], Eury Appalachian Collection. Both Bakersville, N.C., and the town of Roan Mountain, Tenn. host annual Rhododendron Festivals around the third week of June when the blooms are expected to peak.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Joslin, "Lilies on the Roan," *Mitchell News-Journal*, 12 July 1995, "Roan Mountain, North Carolina," Folder, Eury Appalachian Collection. In 1884, Gray presented a paper at a British scientific meeting at which he gave an overview of American plants. In his paper, he stated that the North Carolina and Tennessee mountains are "composed of a greater variety of genera and species than in any other temperate region, excepting Japan." For visits to these mountains to observe the rhododendron and various azalea species in bloom, he pronounced that "the latter part of June is the proper time to explore this region, and, if only one portion can be visited, Roan Mountain should be preferred." See Asa Gray, "On the Characteristics of the North American Flora," *Report of the British Association of the Advancement of Science*, 29 August 1884: 565.

<sup>7</sup> Lanman, *Adventures in the Wilds*, 452.

region.<sup>8</sup> The socioeconomic development of Carter County during this antebellum period shows that in spite of the rugged mountains, the county interacted with regions outside southern Appalachia. In terms of education, for example, some local elites sent offspring to schools in coastal areas or to boarding schools in Virginia or North Carolina. Other elites funded their children's education locally; as early as 1806, the county seat of Elizabethton boasted of a private school, the Duffield Academy. Newspapers flourished in the county. W.G. Brownlow in 1839 lived in Carter County where he edited the *Elizabethton Whig*, which earned a national reputation several years later in Knoxville as *Brownlow's Whig*. Local farmers grew grain and corn for milling; Tennessee's first gristmills began operation on Carter County's Buffalo Creek and Gap Creek in 1775. From an industrial perspective, iron works built by such local and regional elites as Elijah Embree and John Sevier along the Holston River and in the Unaka Mountains proliferated in number and production in antebellum times.<sup>9</sup> Elizabethton lobbied as early as 1835 for the proposed Cincinnati and Charleston railroad to pass through Carter County and into western North Carolina

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<sup>8</sup> Frank Merritt, *Early History of Carter County, 1760-1861* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1950), 180, table, "Population of Carter County (1791-1860). The table shows the population in 1791 to be a total of 1,289 Whites and 113 Negro Slaves and the 1860 population to consist of 6,728 whites, 22 Free Negroes, and 374 Negro Slaves.

<sup>9</sup> Robert E. Corlew, *Tennessee: A Short History*, 2d ed., incorporating revisions developed by the late Stanley J. Folmsbee and the late Enoch Mitchell (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 231; Thomas S. Wyman, "Tennessee Places: The British Misadventure in Embreeville," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 54 (Summer 1995): 100; Hamer, *Tennessee: A History*, 867-68. For detailed information on the antebellum development of iron forges and associated enterprises in Carter County and parts of Johnson and Unicoi Counties, see Robert Tipton Nave, "A History of the Iron Industry in Carter County to 1860," (M.A. thesis, East Tennessee State College, 1953), passim.

because of its claim that the area then “could manufacture enough iron to supply the whole United States.”<sup>10</sup> Rather than constituting a backwoods area of primitive frontiersmen, Carter County possessed a tiered class system in antebellum times, including a class of slave-owners; provided education for those who could afford it; published newspapers; and engaged in trade with the rest of the country.

Iron production also occurred in western North Carolina catalan forges. In the Cranberry Creek area of Mitchell County, adjacent to the Roan, the Cranberry Bloomery Forge smelted ore as early as 1820. It produced seventeen tons of iron bars in 1857 alone, over four times as much as its neighboring forges, the Toe River Bloomery Forge and Johnson’s Bloomery Forge. At least a dozen other forges also produced iron bars in Ashe County and Cherokee County in antebellum times; the largest, Cherokee County’s Persimmon Creek Bloomery Forge, yielded over forty-five tons of iron bar in 1855.<sup>11</sup>

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Tennessee--by virtue of the iron forges located predominantly in its northeastern region--ranked third nationally, behind Pennsylvania and New York, for iron production.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the quality of the iron ore in the Roan region gained a national reputation. The *New York Times* noted the quality of the “soft and pure ores that are found in Southwestern Virginia and along the line between North

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<sup>10</sup> Merritt, *Early History of Carter County*, 54-55, 63, 124-25.

<sup>11</sup> Arthur, Chapter 24, “Mineralogy and Geology,” *History of Western North Carolina*, <http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/hownc013.html> (accessed March 31, 2004). Catalan forges produce wrought iron directly from the ore.

<sup>12</sup> Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 173; John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 128.

Carolina and East Tennessee.” The article favorably compared the “very fine grade of iron” to that of Swedish forges and rolling works. Tennessee boiler iron, in particular, held the “highest place in the confidence of the rather reckless men who navigated Southwestern rivers.”<sup>13</sup>

The excellent iron ore grade attracted General John T. Wilder, the builder of the Cloudland Hotel, to the Roan Mountain area in the 1870s. Wilder was born in New York in 1830 and moved to Ohio as a young man where he learned the technical and business skills associated with mill-wright and foundry work and studied geology at night. In 1857, Wilder resettled in Indiana where he opened his own foundry and mill-wright enterprise and used his knowledge on hydraulics (he held three patents on a turbine wheel device) to build plants in several states, including Tennessee and Virginia.<sup>14</sup>

When the Civil War broke out, Wilder ordered his foundry to convert to cannon ball production for the Union forces. He organized a light artillery company, which was mustered into an Indiana regiment. The military inducted him with the rank of captain but

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<sup>13</sup> J.E. MacGowan, “Iron Trade of the South,” *New York Times*, 15 November 1897, p. 4, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Samuel C. Williams, *General John T. Wilder: Commander of the Lightning Brigade* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1936), 1-3; *Cloudland Hotel On Top of Roan Mountain in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina; 6394 Feet Above Sea Level; The Highest Human Habitation East of the Rocky Mountains* ([Cloudland, N.C.?], [1895?], inside back cover. I date the pamphlet based on three facts: it mentions the Southern Railway, which took over several regional lines in 1894; it refers to W.E. Ragsdale as the proprietor, who left after 1896; and it mentions the Asheville Normal School. Another brochure, also mentioning the Southern and Ragsdale, alludes to the Asheville Normal College. Therefore, I date the pamphlet referring to the Normal School as 1895 and the one mentioning the Normal College as 1896.



within a month promoted him to lieutenant colonel. After his soldiers' actions at the Battle of Hoover's Gap, where they swiftly broke through Confederate lines to capture the strategic Murfreesboro-Shelbyville pike, Union and Confederate officers alike christened his regiment as "Wilder's Lightning Brigade."<sup>15</sup> After the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863, Wilder was promoted to brigadier-general for "his ingenuity and fertility of resource in occupying the attention of the entire corps of the rebel army while [the Union] army was getting around its flank."<sup>16</sup>

After studying a Tennessee state geological report during campaign lulls, Wilder decided after the war to move to Chattanooga for its proximity to mineral resources and for its milder climate (his poor health had forced him to resign from the military in 1864). He formed the Roane (after Roane County, Tennessee) Iron Company with two former military associates and erected there the first blast furnace operated in the South. By 1878, the company was worth about one million dollars. Wilder also engaged in a number of foundry and machine-tooling enterprises and manufacturing concerns largely in the

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<sup>15</sup> Williams, *General John T. Wilder*, 3, 10, 13, 18-19. Wilder's original instructions were to simply force the Confederate front line back into Hoover's Gap and then wait for supporting Union troops to arrive. Wilder, encountering little enemy resistance, forged ahead to capture the gap. One general estimated that Wilder's decisive action saved the lives of one thousand men. Wilder's innovative use of Spencer repeating rifles undoubtedly aided in his victory. See also Samuel C. Williams, "John Thomas Wilder (1830-1917)," *Dictionary of American Biography* (n.p.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1928-1936); reproduced in *Biography Resource Center* (Farmington Hills [Mich.]: The Gale Group, 2004), <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC> (accessed April 21, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> Williams, *General John T. Wilder*, 35.

Chattanooga area.<sup>17</sup> Heavily involved in Chattanooga business affairs, Wilder served as mayor in 1871 but resigned his office after seven months to concentrate on entrepreneurial interests. Five years later, he ran unsuccessfully for Congress; the following year, in 1877, he began the first of five years as Chattanooga postmaster.<sup>18</sup>

Around 1870, Wilder purchased seven thousand acres at the Roan's higher elevation for \$25.15 per acre.<sup>19</sup> Wilder evidently spent some of the next few years in the vicinity of Roan Mountain, in a community called Crab Orchard, which he later renamed Roan Mountain Station, in anticipation of the rail reaching it from Johnson City. According to one local, he laid out and named all the streets, planted all the trees, and,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 39-40, 42-43; Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country, 1540-1976: From Tomahawks to TVA*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., revised and updated by James W. Livingood (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 295-98.

<sup>18</sup> Patrice Hobbs Glass, "Wilder, John Thomas (1830-1917)," *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, 1058. Although mayor for less than a year, Wilder established a free public school system and initiated and lobbied successfully for state legislation to prohibit the establishment of saloons or the sale of whiskey within four miles of any chartered school or iron works. See William T. Hale and Dixon L. Merritt, "Gen. John T. Wilder," *A History of Tennessee and Tennesseans: The Leaders and Representative Men in Commerce, Industry, and Modern Activities*, vol. 6 (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1913), 1612.

<sup>19</sup> Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 71. Wilder acquired much of the acreage from Francis A. Stratton, a New York native who married Wilder's daughter Annie and who eventually acquired more than 500,000 acres of timber rights in the southern Appalachians. Stratton also served as the first manager of the three-story Cloudland Hotel. See Hamer, ed., "Francis A. Stratton," *Tennessee--A History*, vol. 3, *Biographical*, 267-68; Frank Merritt and Carter County Homecoming '86 Heritage Committee, *Later History of Carter County, 1865-1980* (Carter County, Tenn.: Homecoming '86 Heritage Project, 1986), 10.

succinctly put, “gave spark to the town.”<sup>20</sup> Four years later, he moved to Johnson City, presumably to be closer to his varied business affairs, which eventually included positions as agent for the Carnegie Land Company, as vice-president of the Three C’s railroad, and as mill and timber operator in Unicoi and Carter Counties.<sup>21</sup> Sometime in the 1870s, Wilder purchased the Cranberry and other iron ore tracts in western North Carolina. He evidently constructed a blast furnace at Cranberry and mined the ore there and at what is now Buladean (first called “Wilder’s Forge” and later called “Magnetic City” after the

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<sup>20</sup> “Cloudland High School: ‘Home of the Highlanders’; School History,” ([Carter County, Tenn.]: Carter County Board of Education, 2002-2003), [http://c3qtz11.remote.schoolcenter.com/education/school/schoolhistory.php?sectiondetailid=40&sc\\_timestamp=1098481613](http://c3qtz11.remote.schoolcenter.com/education/school/schoolhistory.php?sectiondetailid=40&sc_timestamp=1098481613) (accessed December 17, 2003); Julian Caldwell, “Folklore Interview,” interview by Matthew Lane, 6 March 1992, Box 1, transcript, Roan Mountain Project Collection, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University.

<sup>21</sup> Wilder chartered the Carnegie Land and Improvement Company around 1878 to plan and build a model industrial city, the “Carnegie Addition.” As part of the master plan, he contracted with a Massachusetts businessman to build an upscale hotel, the original Carnegie Hotel, and employed an engineer from Birmingham, Alabama, to construct the Carnegie Blast Furnace, which had the capacity to produce 125 tons of pig iron daily. For more information concerning his entrepreneurial interests in Johnson City, see Robbie D. Jones, “Carnegie,” in Washington County Historical Association, Inc., Washington County and the City of Johnson City, Tennessee, *History of Washington County, Tennessee: A Contribution to the Bicentennial Celebration of Tennessee Statehood*, compiled and edited by Joyce and W. Eugene Cox (Johnson City: Overmountain Press, 2001), 736-42; Ray Stahl, *Greater Johnson City: A Pictorial History*, 2d ed. (Norfolk: Donning Company, 1986), 60, 68; “Carnegie Hotel: History,” <http://www.carnegiehotel.com/History.htm> (accessed December 3, 2003).

Wilder also owned several timber tracts in Unicoi County. In 1894, he made arrangements to build a cotton factory at Unaka Springs and to erect a saw mill that was to cut 25,000 feet of lumber per day for the Smoky Mountain Lumber Company for the next five years. His son Stuart aided him in his Unicoi County lumbering operations. See *Erwin Magnet*, 13 September 1894; Miller interview. As noted in Chapter 3, the May 1901 flood destroyed the saw mill.

magnetized ore deposits there). After the completion of the narrow-gauge East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad in 1882 from Hampton to Cranberry, Wilder's mines shipped pig iron and ore on the railroad from Cranberry to Johnson City.<sup>22</sup>

In the early to mid 1870s, Wilder built a summer cottage on top of the Roan. Because his cottage proved popular with family and friends, he began accepting paying customers in 1877. According to a ledger passed down by the Peake family, who lived on the North Carolina side of the Roan, Wilder's construction contractor, L.B. Searle, hired Ben Mozely and Wesley Garland in November 1878 to build a spruce lodge nearby. The men earned twelve cents for each log hewn and one cent for each rafter, if "of good size and straight." Searle also contracted with them to cut sixty thousand balsam shingles at two dollars per thousand. In addition, Searle arranged for Garland "to take care of the houses and property" for fifteen dollars each month. Items or services bought for the hotel in 1878, itemized in the ledger, included thirty-eight pounds of feathers, sixty-four towels, a croquet set, and advertising space in the *Tourists Guide*.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Arthur, "Mineralogy and Geology," *History of Western North Carolina*; Marie Tedesco, "East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Transportation Company Records, 1868-1970: Historical Note," Finding Aid, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn., <http://cass.etsu.edu/ARCHIVES/AFINDAID/a91.html> (accessed October 12, 2004). Arthur observes that the Cranberry blast furnace, the only one in western North Carolina, processed the Cranberry ore. Jones states that the Carnegie Blast Furnace stood empty in 1890 due to financial downturn. How non-Cranberry ore was processed during the downturn needs to be further researched. See Jones, "Carnegie," *History of Washington County*, 740.

<sup>23</sup> C. Rex Peake, *Roan Mountain* (n.p., n.d.), cited in Michael Joslin, "Hotel Key Part of Roan's Mythology," *Johnson City Press*, 11 January 1987, sec. D, p. 43, Series I, Folder 2, Murrell Family Collection, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.; "Hotel With 166 Rooms Operated on the Roan for Many

The one-and-one-half-story spruce lodge consisted of fourteen to twenty rooms. On the front side lay a thirty- to forty-foot long porch tucked between two short extensions of the lodge. A small gable extended over the porch. A stone chimney stood on the right side; also on the right side a rudely constructed ell, probably for use as a shed and a stable, jutted behind the lodge.<sup>24</sup>

Wilder's lodge proved so popular that he enlarged it to rent rooms.<sup>25</sup> Business succeeded to the point that within a few years he began construction on a much larger hotel several hundred yards to the right of the first.<sup>26</sup> Wilder erected a steam saw mill, an

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Years," *Spruce Pine* [N.C.] *Tri-County News*, 21 December 1950, Roan Mountain Folder, Spruce Pine Public Library, Spruce Pine, N.C.; Lloyd Bailey, "The Cloudland Hotel," in Lloyd Richard Bailey, Sr., ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley: Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties, N.C.*, vol. 1, (Marceline [Mo.]: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1994), 19. Many secondary sources I consulted state that the spruce lodge was built or opened in 1877. I believe that the ledger date of November 1878 coupled with Searle's contract comments concerning "two houses" indicates that the spruce lodge probably opened in 1879. Jennifer Bauer states that a Wilder photo of a cottage or lodge on the Roan is dated 1877, the year she believes Wilder began receiving guests. See Bauer, email correspondence, 15 October 2004.

<sup>24</sup> "Original Twenty-Room Hotel on Roan Mountain," digitized photograph, in possession of George Morgan, Bakersville, N.C.; Morgan's material hereafter cited as Morgan Collection; "Sherman Pippen, Roan Mountain, Carter County, Tenn.," in *Southern Appalachia, 1885-1915: Oral Histories from Residents of the State Corner Area of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia*, compiled by Roy Edwin Thomas (Jefferson [N.C.]: McFarland and Company, Inc., 1991), 27; Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 71. I estimated the length of the porch based on the photo. Pippen drove a hack to the Cloudland as a teenager in the early 1900s and later became the engineer on "Tweetsie," the train for the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad.

<sup>25</sup> The discrepancy among the sources as to the number of rooms may be due to each referring to the lodge at a different time in its history. See *Cloudland Hotel* [1895?-1896?], inside back cover.

<sup>26</sup> *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], inside back cover; Julian Caldwell, "Folklore Interview," interview by Matthew Lane, 6 March 1992, Box 1,

innovative technology in the area, near the new hotel site to process nearby spruce timber for the hotel. He also constructed a tram-road to bring in materials for the hotel and to haul out about a million board-feet of cherry lumber that had been cut on the Roan. Built at a cost of over \$40,000, about \$750,000 in 2003 dollars, the hotel, officially named the Cloudland Hotel, opened for business in 1885.<sup>27</sup>

Cloudland management continued to operate the spruce lodge in tandem with the new hotel for at least four years. A Johnson City newspaper observed that W.S. Ayers of Richmond, the proprietor with his brother for the 1889 season, “has already received hundreds of letters from parties engaging rooms for the summer, and he expects to have

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transcript, Roan Mountain Project Collection, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. I date the pamphlet at either 1895 or 1896 because it was published after Southern Railway took over several regional lines in 1894 and before N.L. Murrell became proprietor in 1897.

<sup>27</sup> David Gaynes, “Cloudland Hotel: What It Used to Be, and Is Now,” *Johnson City Press-Chronicle*, 17 August 1975, “Roan Mountain, North Carolina” Folder, Eury Appalachian Collection; *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], inside back cover; *Lenoir Topic*, 4 March 1885; cited in Lloyd Bailey, “Some More Information About the Old Cloudland Hotel,” *Mitchell News-Journal*, 19 June 1991, p. 5B, photocopy in possession of Joyce Street Masters: Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 83; Ashton Chapman, “Was Festival Visitor: Former Clerk Recalls Proud Cloudland Hotel Atop Roan,” [*Charlotte Observer*?, 8 July 1953?], “Western North Carolina” Folder, Folder 281, Vertical Clipping File, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, N.C. (Library hereafter cited as Pack Library). The value of \$40,000 from 1884 to 2003 dollars is \$745,000 (CPI) and \$688,000 (GDP Deflator). See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?” One newspaper gave the cost of the hotel as \$100,000, but that figure may have been speculative. See “Mitchell County News, 1885”; reproduced from *The Lenoir Topic*, 20 May 1885, in Lloyd Richard Bailey, Sr., ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley: Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties, N.C.*, vol. 4, *Area News (1777-1949)*, (Marceline [Mo.]: Walsworth Publishing Co., 2004), 99.

both hotels full during the entire season.” A hotel pamphlet in the 1880s noted that “Tennis Courts will be added to both Hotels for the pleasure of guests.”<sup>28</sup>

The new Cloudland’s three-story white-frame vernacular construction on the top of a bald dominated the horizon. Its front faced into North Carolina; its back and two ells stood in Tennessee. In fact, a painted line on the dining room hardwood floor indicated the boundaries between the states. Guests could sit on the first-story verandahs extending almost four hundred feet along the front and the two ells of the hotel and, from their vantage point of over six thousand feet in elevation, admire the neighboring mountain peaks below them. Ten miles of fencing surrounded the property.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Johnson City Comet*, 13 June 1889; *Cloudland Hotel; the Great Southern Resort for Hay Fever; 6,394 Feet Above Sea Level; Top of Roan Mountain; Highest Habitation East of Rocky Mountains; W.E. Ragsdale, Sole Manager* ([Cloudland, N.C.?], [1885?-1888?]), n.p. Later brochures do not mention tennis, so it is not a fact that the courts were actually built. The hotel brochure dates from 1885 to 1893, the year before the Southern Railway took over several regional lines. I place it closer to the 1885-88 range, however, because of the reference to two hotels and because Avery was the 1889 seasonal proprietor.

<sup>29</sup> Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 103, caption; Digitized photographs, Morgan Collection; “Cloudland Hotel” newspaper photograph and caption, “Western North Carolina” Folder, Folder 281, Vertical Clipping File, Pack Library; *Johnson City Comet*, 14 June 1884; Doris Wilson, interview by author, 18 May 2004, Unicoi, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

Wilson is the granddaughter of John and Mary Gouge, the last caretakers of the Cloudland in the early 1900s. One popular story repeated in numerous secondary sources, but not the hotel pamphlets, states that the famous painted line was also found on top of the Cloudland’s dining room table. Wilson’s uncle used part of the dining room table in his home after the Cloudland fell into disrepair (he had shortened it to fit it inside his home). Wilson, who saw the table regularly over the decades, denies that the table had a stripe.

The painted line served more than as an idle attraction. Tennessee during the “hey-day” of the Cloudland allowed for the sale of alcoholic beverages; North Carolina was dry. Guests who imbibed stayed on the Tennessee side because North Carolina law officers occasionally came to observe, and then arrest, any drinkers who strayed to their state’s side of the dining room. See Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 101.

The number of guest rooms fluctuates wildly among sources. However, from a floor plan I found, there appears to have been sixty-six bedrooms on each of the two higher stories and perhaps another thirty on the first floor for a total close to the 166 rooms given by some sources, including Frank Shell who worked there as a clerk for five years.<sup>30</sup>

Even though each room had a fireplace, steam heating warmed the entire building; oil lamps provided light. Each room had several pieces of solid cherry furniture, a wash stand with a china bowl and pitcher, and a copper bathtub. Telephone service, available in 1885, soon failed because of unusual static charges at the Cloudland's high elevation; a telegraph line replaced it. While some sources state that only one bathroom served all guests, Shell remembered that the Cloudland had four bathrooms. Renovations to the Cloudland were to take place in 1892, so perhaps the remodeling explains differences in the number of rooms.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *How to Get There* [1885], "Cloudland Hotel" Descriptive Folder, Mitchell County Public Library, Bakersville, N.C.; Chapman, "Was Festival Visitor: Former Clerk Recalls Proud Cloudland Hotel Atop Roan"; "Hotel With 166 Rooms Operated on the Roan for Many Years." No consulted source mentions how it derived its room account. E. Frank Shell, the subject of the two newspaper articles, worked at the hotel from 1900 to 1905.

The *Johnson City Comet*, 14 June 1884, gives building dimensions: each wing was 42 feet by 414 feet. It also inexplicably states that the hotel was to have 218 bedrooms, "4 more than Warm Springs, NC," and was to be open in June 1884, a year earlier than that given by other sources.

<sup>31</sup> *How to Get There* [1885]; Chapman, "Was Festival Visitor: Former Clerk Recalls Proud Cloudland Hotel Atop Roan"; "Cloudland Hotel: Only Memories Remain," handout available at Roan Mountain State Park, Tenn. as of November 1998, copy in possession of author; Wilson interview; Ruby Ford, "Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day--The Price of a Good Steak Now. . .," Series I, Folder 2, Murrell Family Collection; *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 14; [C.S.



Around the mid-1890s, the Cloudland management encouraged visitors to own or rent summer cottages on top of the Roan, a trend seen at Montvale, Tate, and Unaka Springs. W.E. Ragsdale, the proprietor, and the Southern Railway, whose line guests used to reach Johnson City during this period, offered Roan Mountain lots for sale. Prospective buyers approached the railroad office in Washington, D.C., the Cloudland directly, or the Cloudland's New York City office; it can be speculated that Wilder's many business interests by this era required an address in New York. The railroad was probably interested in coordinating this venture with Cloudland management because of the potential increase in rail travel to Johnson City likely to ensue with cottage renters or owners. One cottage, "Gigglers Roost," eventually was built south of the Cloudland; whether its construction took place during the era of the ads requires further investigation. Unlike the three East Tennessee mineral spring resorts, however, no evidence exists that a cluster of cottages existed about the Cloudland.<sup>32</sup>

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Sargent?], "A Suggestion [editorial article]," *Garden and Forest* 5 (13 July 1892): 325. The *Garden and Forest* editorialist noted in 1892 that the "large and prosperous hotel . . . is soon to be extended. . . ."

According to the *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* pamphlet, the intense amount of electricity in the air necessitated frequently disconnecting the phone wires. The telegraph almost ran solely under the electricity in the air and consequently needed only a weak battery.

Guests made extensive use of the telegraph line running from Roan Mountain Station to the Cloudland to check on their stocks' performance . One interviewee remembered the excitement generated when a telegram arrived announcing President McKinley's assassination. See "Ex-Cloudland Hotel Staff Holds Reunion," non-annotated newspaper clipping; photocopy received from Pauline Murrell Stone, Johnson City, Tenn.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas O. Maher, "Roan Mountain and Gen. John T. Wilder," *The Tennessee Conservationist* 61 (July-August 1995): 6; *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain; In East Tennessee and Western North Carolina; 6,394 Feet Above Sea Level; The Highest Human Habitation East of the Rocky Mountains* ([Cloudland, N.C.?], [1896?]), n.p. 1

Access to the Roan summit and later to the Cloudland proved to be as formidable a task as it was to reach Unaka Springs before rail service. Wilder and his partners in 1873 built the first road (later the Calf Pen Road, the Roan Road, or the Glen Ayre Road) from Little Rock Creek in North Carolina up to Carver's Gap. Cloudland guests who came by carriage from the Asheville or Linville areas traveled this road. In 1875, Wilder constructed a hack line (called such because of the buggies or "hacks" running on it) from Wilder's Forge (modern Buladean) near Big Rock Creek, North Carolina, to the vicinity of Roan High Bluff. The road from Wilder's Forge became known as the "Ball Road" or the "Bald Road." It probably was the way Wilder's family reached their lodge in the early days and became the main route to the Cloudland for guests arriving from the direction of Iron Mountain and the Toecane, North Carolina, rail depot. Eventually, a minor road from North Carolina's Yellow Mountain via Roaring Creek led to the hotel. Another secondary route, probably used exclusively by locals, was one ascending from Gouge's Creek in North Carolina, between Orange Spring and Chestnut Ridge, to the Roan.<sup>33</sup> The most

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date this brochure to 1896, after the Southern Railway had acquired several regional lines in 1894, and before N.L. Murrell became proprietor in 1897. The brochure refers to the "Asheville Normal College," while another undated brochure, also issued after the Southern Railway had implemented service and before Murrell's time, mentions the "Asheville Normal School." I infer that the Asheville Normal School preceded the Asheville Normal College. Therefore, I assign the brochure mentioning the college to the year 1896 and the brochure referring to the school to 1895.

<sup>33</sup> Sheppard, *Cabins in the Laurel*, 92; Joe L. Morgan, "The Cloudland Hotel," "Cloudland Hotel" Descriptive Folder, Mitchell County Public Library; John Parris, "Roaming the Mountains: The Cloudland Hotel, Barely a Trace Remains of Cloudland Hotel," *Asheville Citizen*, <http://129.252.62.88/Dan/RHODO/cloud.htm> (accessed November 20, 1998); Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 83; Michael Joslin, "The Bald Road: Pathway to the Top of the Mountain," *Mitchell* [Mitchell County, N.C.] *News-Journal*, 1 February 1995, "Roan Mountain, North Carolina" Folder, Eury Appalachian Collection;

notable road, however--parts of it still in use today as the Burbank Road and as a U.S. Forest Service Trail--is the Hack Line Road on the Tennessee side of the Roan.<sup>34</sup>

The Hack Line Road began at Roan Mountain Station and snaked up the side of the Roan. Given the extreme ruggedness of the area coupled with the primitive equipment available in the 1870s, building the road constituted no insignificant civil engineering project. As he did for his hotel projects, Wilder employed locals, largely from the North Carolina side of the Roan, as his work crew. According to an 1878 account book belonging to S.B. Searle, Wilder's contractor for the first hotel, Wilder spent \$500 on equipment and wages. Equipment included maddocks at \$1 each, axes at \$1 each, hoes at

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Joslin, "Hotel Key Part of Roan's Mythology"; Tom Hodges, "Old Cloudland Hotel Remembered," *Johnson City Press-Chronicle*, 8 March 1982, p. 20, photocopy in possession of Doris Wilson; Joyce Street Masters, interview by author, 16 October 2004, Mitchell County, North Carolina, handwritten notes in possession of author; Jennifer Bauer, email communication to author, 14 October 2004. The history of the roads is confusing at best because of the several names associated with each route and because of arcane geographical place names forgotten over the years.

Another route discussed by one longtime resident in a letter to the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle's* Tom Hodges is the Fork Mountain Road; it was probably built for automobile traffic, however, in the late 1920s, according to Joyce Street Masters, a lifelong resident of Mitchell County's Buladean vicinity. The Bald Road, now an overgrown path, is a spur off Blevins Branch Road, about one or two miles from Fork Mountain Road, both off N.C. Highway 226.

The Yellow Mountain road probably began a few miles from the intersection of Roaring Creek Road with U.S. Highway 19E, which is about eight linear miles from the highway's intersection with Cranberry.

<sup>34</sup> Tom Hodges, "Old Cloudland Hotel Remembered." For efforts to designate the Hack Line Road Trail as a government trail, see Dan Russo, "The Hack Line Road--Then and Now," *Friends of Roan Mountain*, 3 (Fall 2000), <http://www.etsu.edu/biology/roan-mtn/newsletterarticles/The%20Hack%20Line%20Road%20-%20Then%20and%20Now.htm> (accessed October 14, 2004).

75 cents each, shovels at \$1.25 each, drill steel at 64 cents per foot, and dynamite at 60 cents per pound. Wilder paid each man 50 cents per day, hardly the wages necessary to afford a trip to a resort.<sup>35</sup> A Mitchell County resident corroborated the income by noting that his father “got fifty cents a day to build the road to the old hotel on the Roan” and that he “went to work when it was light enough to see and worked until dark.”<sup>36</sup>

Both the Hack Line Road and the Bald Road were narrow at times. In fact, the Bald Road is probably the carriage road that two sources state needed trussed and stilted construction to widen the road so that carriages could pass along bluff edges.<sup>37</sup> Sherman Phippen, who drove guests from Roan Mountain Station to the Cloudland in the early 1900s, recalled that the Hack Line was very curvy and narrow in places; he relied on his

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<sup>35</sup> “Before This Time Next Year We May All Drive to the Top of the Roan in High on Paved Roads: Wages and Prices on Road to the Roan Construction in 1878,” *Spruce Pine* [N.C.] *Tri-County News*, 21 December 1950; “Roan Mountain” Folder, Spruce Pine Public Library, Spruce Pine, N.C.

<sup>36</sup> Clint McKinney, “Cloudland Hotel,” in *Stories ‘Neath the Roan: Memories of the People of Yancey, Mitchell, and Avery Counties at the Foot of Roan Mountain in North Carolina*, ed. Blue Ridge Reading Team (n.p., 1993), 4.

<sup>37</sup> Everett M. Kivette, “The Roan Was Always a Very Special Mountain,” *State*, 1 May 1972, 14, Cloudland Hotel Descriptive Folder, Mitchell County Public Library; [Bill Sharpe], “Mitchell,” *A New Geography* (n.p.: n.d.), 239, two-page photocopy annotated with book author’s name, Roan Mountain Folder, Spruce Pine Public Library, Spruce Pine, N.C. The Kivette article includes a sketch of a covered hack drawn by four horses on the stilted road. The supporting vertical road posts appear to be about eight feet in height (about the same length as the carriage). An important fact to note is that this stilted construction is not to be confused with the “Board Road” or “Plank Road” built in the logging days of the early twentieth century, which also ran on the North Carolina side of the Roan. All sources whom I asked about their knowledge of the stilted construction on the Bald Road either thought I was referring to the Board Road or had not heard of any such construction on a Cloudland hack road. For more information on the Board Road, see Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 129-31.

horse's ears perking up to know when a wagon from the other direction was approaching.<sup>38</sup>

With the advent of the railroad to Roan Mountain Station and to some points in western North Carolina, guests found the journey less difficult but still an adventure on the hack rides. About a year after the spruce lodge opened, visitors could ride the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad to Johnson City (then known as Johnson's) and take one of the tri-weekly hacks for the thirty-two mile ride to the Cloudland.<sup>39</sup> Once the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina, or Stemwinder, narrow gauge railroad was completed in 1882 to Cranberry, travelers could take a two and one-half hour rail trip through the Doe River Gorge, "the wildest gorge of the Alleghanies," to Roan Mountain Station, a depot for which Wilder lobbied strenuously to have as a stop on the railroad.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Sherman Phippen, interview by Thomas Swindell, Roan Mountain, Tenn., 9 March [1976?], audiocassette recording, collection of Judy Murray, Stewardship Director, the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, Kingsport, Tenn.; transcript of interview by Bob Fulcher, Tennessee State Parks Folklife Project Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn. I am indebted to Bob Fulcher, Park Manager for the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail and the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park, and previously Regional Interpretative Specialist for the Tennessee state park system, for providing me with a copy of the recording and with a copy of his transcript of the interview. The transcript date is 1979, but the recording refers to the upcoming Bicentennial, so the interview probably took place in March 1976.

<sup>39</sup> *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee* (1879), 36; *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and Alabama* (1881), 23; Ida F. Chun, *Descriptive Illustrated Guide-Book to North Carolina Mountains. Their Principal Resorts* (New York: E.J. Hale and Son, Publishers, 1881), 66, Pack Library.

<sup>40</sup> *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1896?]; John R. Waite, "Elk Park, North Carolina," *Blue Ridge Stemwinder*, 10 (October-November-December 1997): 5. For an account on riding on the rail in 1946, see James A. Goforth, "A Long Day on the 'Tweetsie'," *Blue Ridge Stemwinder*, 1 (spring 1989): 3-5.

From North Carolina, guests could ride the Western North Carolina Railroad to Marion where they obtained a hack for a forty-five mile ride to the Cloudland via Linville Falls, fifteen miles southeast of the Roan. From Asheville, sixty miles from the Roan, guests paid for a driver to take them to Bakersville where they spent the night before embarking on a several-hour journey the next day to the Cloudland.<sup>41</sup> Alternatively, the Clinchfield railroad maintained a depot at Toecane, situated about fifteen miles from Buladean and about ten miles from Bakersville; guests could disembark at that depot and then take a hack up the Bald Road.<sup>42</sup>

Once at the depot, visitors typically spent the night across the railroad at the Roan Mountain Station Hotel, also known as the Roan Mountain Inn, a three-story, white-framed structure also built by Wilder. The next day they embarked on a several hour covered-hack ride, courtesy of the Roan Mountain Stage Line, over the twelve-mile hackline road.<sup>43</sup> The hack ride cost in 1885 was \$4 roundtrip (about the cost of two nights' lodging at the Cloudland or about \$76 in 2003 dollars) with the first fifty pounds

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<sup>41</sup> *Descriptive Illustrated Guide-Book to North Carolina Mountains. Their Principal Resorts*, 66, 69-70.

<sup>42</sup> Masters interview. Toecane is found at the confluence of Cane Creek and the Toe River. It is near the community of Loafer's Glory.

<sup>43</sup> For photograph and descriptive advertising information on the Roan Mountain Inn, see *Roan Mountain Inn, Roan Mountain, Tenn.: We Challenge the World for Healthful Climate*, S. B. Wood, M.D., Owner and Proprietor, "Roan Mountain, North Carolina" Folder, William Leonard Eury Appalachian Collection, Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C. For length of hackline road and travel time, see Felix L. Oswald, "Southern Summer Resorts: First Paper," *The Southern Bivouac*, 6 (July 1886): 124; Morgan, "The Cloudland Hotel"; *Cloudland Hotel; The Great Southern Resort for Hay Fever*, n.p.

of luggage free.<sup>44</sup> Though many of the visitors hailed from such humid climes as New Orleans or Atlanta, even they could feel uncomfortable after a few hours in the hack. At about the halfway point, the hack driver pulled off to the left at a spring for his passengers to enjoy water “cold enough to frost a glass.”<sup>45</sup>

Of course, walking to the hotel was always an option, either for tourists or for local residents. It appears that an ongoing challenge of sorts existed: an 1885 newspaper account noted that three men walked the Hack Line’s twelve miles in two hours and fifty-eight minutes, the “best time on record.”<sup>46</sup>

Among visitors in 1879 to the Cloudland when it was a small spruce lodge were Asa Gray and other nationally prominent botanists William Canby, John Redfield, and Charles Sprague Sargent. They found the hotel “comfortable and well kept,” and Redfield noted that the forest that had been appearing to encroach upon the bald at the Cloudland had been checked by the cutting of firewood and fencing materials.<sup>47</sup> Several years later,

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<sup>44</sup> “Cloudland Hotel at the Top of Roan Mountain,” *Resources and Enterprises of Upper East Tennessee* (Knoxville?: Enterprise Publishing Co., 1885), in *Historical Reminiscences of Carter County*, ed. Mildred Kozsuch (Johnson City, Tenn.: Overmountain Press, 1985), 68. The conversion of \$4 in 1885 to 2003 dollars yields \$75.80 (CPI) and \$470 (Unskilled Wage). A laborer working for fifty cents per day required over a week’s wages to pay for the round trip by hack. I used the CPI and Unskilled Wage calculators; see Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”

<sup>45</sup> Pauline Murrell Stone, interview by author, 12 November 1998, Johnson City, Tenn., handwritten notes in possession of author.

<sup>46</sup> *Johnson City Comet*, 6 August 1885.

<sup>47</sup> Bob Fulcher, “Muir, Michaux, and Gray on Roan,” *Tennessee Conservationist*, (September-October 1998), [http://www.state.tn.us/environment/tn\\_consv/archive/roan.htm](http://www.state.tn.us/environment/tn_consv/archive/roan.htm) (accessed October 20, 2004).

about 1883, a member of Boston's Appalachian Mountain Club journeyed to Johnson City and took the Stemwinder to Roan Mountain Station. There the member hoped to act on a rail table footnote that promised "Carriages at Roan Mountain Station for Cloudland Hotel" and to obtain a room at the Cloudland (the spruce lodge) because he had been assured that the Cloudland was open all year.

To his chagrin, he was told that the one wagon at Roan Mountain Station was broken, that the hotel had not been open for several years, and that the Hack Line Road was not finished. However, he did secure a horse and later reported to his club that "from the base of the summit a road is nearly completed. . . . It was a delightful stroll through the finest forest that I ever saw, through a magnificent flower garden, from base to summit." The Cloudland was a "low picturesque building, rudely constructed, but sufficiently large to make a party of thirty or more comfortable." Scott encountered a workman repairing lodge shingles and had a "comfortable [night] on a bed of shavings in front of the log fire" inside the lodge.<sup>48</sup>

Charles Dudley Warner, a collaborator of Mark Twain's and a humorist in his own right, also visited the Cloudland when it was a spruce lodge. In his travel essay, he wrote that "the hotel (since replaced by a good house) was a rude mountain structure, with a

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<sup>48</sup> A. E. Scott, "A Visit to Mitchell and Roan Mountains [read June 11, 1884]," *Appalachia: Journal of the Appalachian Mountain Club* 4 (1884), 18-19. Scott did not identify which "hotel had not been opened for several years." I assume he referred to the Cloudland rather than the Roan Mountain Station inn because of his acknowledgement a few sentences later that he could not attempt a round-trip in one day to the top of the Roan.



couple of comfortable rooms for office and sitting room, in which big wood fires were blazing; for though the thermometer might record 60°, as it did when we arrived, fire was welcome.” Unlike Scott, Warner did not sleep in a pile of shavings but stayed in one of the sleeping compartments upstairs in the loft. Use of the term “bedroom” might be too extravagant because Warner recorded that he experienced the “feeling of camping out” and that the strong gusts of wind shaking the loose boards reminded him “of being at sea.”<sup>49</sup>

Also unlike the New Englander, Warner encountered several other visitors: some from New Orleans and some who were female botanists, but all of whom were “delightful company.” After a day of rain, Warner and his traveling companion walked about a mile away to Roan High Bluff to see the sunset. He wrote: “In every direction the mountains were clear, and a view was obtained of the vast horizon and the hills and lowlands of several states – a continental prospect, scarcely anywhere else equaled for variety or distance.”<sup>50</sup>

While Cloudland alone of the five resorts discussed in this thesis hosted numerous scientists, particularly botanists, in its early years, it followed the other resorts in attracting

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<sup>49</sup> Charles Dudley Warner, *On Horseback: A Tour in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee With Notes of Travel in Mexico and California* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1888): 51-52. To curb the shaking, Wilder built the second Cloudland with 12” by 12” sills as opposed to modern standard 2” by 6” sills. See “Cloudland Hotel Once Crowned Roan Mountain,” unannotated newspaper clipping in Ezra Wise notebook, property of Joyce Street Masters. Wise, an older relative of Masters, kept a scrapbook of news items.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

later clientele based on its health and leisure offerings. Its promotional materials paid homage to the nineteenth century obsession with mineral springs: one brochure succinctly noted “that several springs of mineral water . . . within a few minutes’ walk of the Hotel . . . have excellent medicinal properties.”<sup>51</sup> The Cloudland’s high altitude, however, allowed it to boast in its advertisements of the absence of heat, humidity, malaria, and pollen and as a place of respite to find relief from hay fever.

While one promotional brochure for western North Carolina cautioned against recuperating from hay fever at an altitude over six thousand feet due to a diminished appetite and “frequently disordered” “digestive organs,” the Cloudland promoted its “6,394 feet above sea level” to hay fever sufferers; indeed it billed itself as “The Great Southern Resort for Hay Fever.” So many guests afflicted by asthma, hay fever, and other pollen-induced illnesses trekked to the Cloudland in the late nineteenth century that they became known as the “Hay Fever Brigade.” A Tennessee State Board of Health report recommended the Cloudland as an example for prospective hotels and sanitarium to follow to attract guests suffering from summer asthma and other afflictions. Just as mineral springs visitors made grand tours, so evidently did hay fever patients. A Pennsylvania woman in one testimonial averred that the Cloudland air completely eradicated her hay fever as compared to her treks to the exclusive resort of Caesar’s Head in South Carolina and to the White Mountains in New Hampshire.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 23.

<sup>52</sup> Presbery, *Land of the Sky* (Passenger Dept., Southern Railway: [1898?-1900?]), n.p., Pack Library; Tennessee State Board of Health, *First Report of the State Board of Health of the State of Tennessee*, 266; *Cloudland Hotel. The Great Southern Resort for*

The Hay Fever Brigade constituted part of a national preoccupation with the illness in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Hay fever--also known as summer catarrh, autumnal catarrh, Peach Cold, Rose Cold, June Cold, or July Cold, depending on the time of year--became a fashionable disease after the Civil War. Beginning in 1865, hay fever sufferers started to visit resorts in the White Mountains to seek relief from their symptoms. In the early 1870s, physicians began to publish their hypotheses as to the epidemiology of the disease. A British doctor, Charles H. Blackley, in *Experimental Research on Hay Fever* (1873), speculated that the preponderance of hay fever among clergy and physicians as opposed to the rural working class stemmed from either the professionals' lack of continued exposure to pollen found in the countryside or from their higher education and wealth. In Blackley's view, hay fever was "almost wholly confined to the upper classes of society, it was rarely, if ever, met with but among the educated."<sup>53</sup> American doctor George M. Beard three years later echoed Blackley in *Hay-Fever; or Summer Catarrh* (1876). He commented that hay fever prevailed among those with "nervous diasthesis," a condition most commonly found in the

organization of the civilized, refined, and educated, rather than of the barbarous and low-born and untrained--of women more than of men. It is developed, fostered, and perpetuated with the progress of civilization, with the advance of

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*Hay Fever*, n.p.; Stone interview by author; *Cloudland Hotel, Top of Roan Mountain, 6,394 Feet Above the Sea, Western North Carolina* [ after 1892?]; reprinted in Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 90; Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 94. I date the pamphlet reprinted in Laughlin's book as dating from after 1892, the date of one of the guest testimonials. No other information is given to help date the brochure.

<sup>53</sup> Gregg Mitman, "Hay Fever Holiday: Health, Leisure, and Place in Gilded-Age America," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 77 (Fall 2003): 606-7, Project Muse, <http://muse.jhu.edu>.

culture and refinement, and the corresponding preponderance of labor of the brain over that of the muscles.<sup>54</sup>

Beard's observation that hay fever was "a disease of the fashionable and the thoughtful--the price of wealth and culture," indicative of the opinion of many physicians, encouraged many to believe that they had the disease. In 1874, hay fever sufferers organized at a meeting in the White Mountains the United States Hay Fever Association, whose goals the *New York Times* dryly speculated "[related] to handkerchiefs." The newspaper in another year chided the group for existing: "People who have small-pox or scarlet fever, or even gout, have never formed a small-pox club, a scarlet fever society, or a gouty men's association."<sup>55</sup>

The association held annual meetings, which typically included a hay fever parade of decorated carriages and various readings on the illness. Foremost among the association's beliefs was that alleviation of hay fever symptoms could generally occur at exclusive seaside or mountain resorts. Their argument on one hand was supported by the contemporary medical literature. Scientific books and journals advocated either coastal or

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<sup>54</sup> George M. Beard, *Hay-Fever; or Summer Catarrh: Its Nature and Treatment; Including the Early Form, or "Rose Cold"; The Later Form, or "Autumnal Catarrh"; and a Middle Form, or July Cold, Hitherto Undescribed; Based on Original Researches and Observations, and Containing Statistics and Details of Several Hundred Cases* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1876), 81-82. Beard also included the interesting observation that "the fact that the women of America are more fragile and nervous than those of England and the Continent, and lose their beauty earlier, has long been recognized." See Beard, *Hay-Fever*, 83.

<sup>55</sup> Beard, *Hay-Fever*, 87; Mitman, "Hay Fever Holiday," 619-20; "Hay Fever and Hope," *New York Times*, 2 September 1898; "The Hay Fever Delusion," *New York Times*, 17 September 1880. Both *New York Times* articles were found at <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

mountain areas for hay fever relief or even went so far as to claim that certain White Mountain peaks provided an optimal ambiance to neighboring mountains in the same range and to the entire coastal area. The U.S. Hay Fever Association published a list of places at which its members might travel during the catarrhal season; the entire Alleghany Mountain range was included, thus providing the Cloudland with indirect endorsement from this group.<sup>56</sup>

On the other hand, the elite hay fever patients' assertion that stays at certain resorts effected a cure led the *New York Times* to ponder rhetorically why catarrh patients felt compelled to visit the White Mountains or a "pleasant sea-beach." The newspaper article opined that the typical patient believed he would recover in the "cool and picturesque region of the White Mountains" but that he "would rapidly sneeze his life away" in Cocksackie or in White Plains. The article continued on to blame hotel-keepers, particularly those in the White Mountains, for promoting that each resort "kept a peculiar brand of air that is an infallible remedy for the disease." In short, stated the newspaper, "hay fever is simply the creation of hotel-keepers . . . kept alive and spread by their

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<sup>56</sup> "Among the White Mountains: Preparations for the Coaching Parade and Hay Fever Literature," *New York Times*, 13 August 1893, p. 13; John O. Roe, "The Pathology and Radical Cure of Hay Fever, or Hay Asthma," *The Medical News: A Weekly Medical Journal* 42 (February 10, 1883): 169; Mitman, "Hay Fever Holiday," 616; "Hay Fever and Its Cure: A Disease Which is on the Increase in This Country; The Victims of Sneezing and the Sufferings Which They Endure--Places Where Exemption May Be Found," *New York Times*, 14 September 1884, p. 4. The 1893 *New York Times* commented that the parade coaches' "rustic make-up and appearance would attract Barnum." The *New York Times* articles were found at <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

exertions.”<sup>57</sup> Whether Wilder through his entrepreneurial instincts or with the best of medical intentions highlighted the Cloudland’s elevation to attract hay fever patients is left to debate.

The Cloudland and its hay fever trade, in a larger sense, followed a national trend in American travel. The hay fever craze resulted from and enhanced a burgeoning tourist industry already offering services to the educated elite, particularly those in the urban and industrial East.<sup>58</sup> Unlike consumption, for which doctors also prescribed “perfectly pure air, away from towns or even villages, on some height for choice,” being diagnosed with hay fever appeared to have been a badge of honorable class distinction.<sup>59</sup> As Beard lectured in his work, “tuberculous diathesis frequently appears in the coarsely organized, the plethoric, and the muscular. . . . [T]uberculosis also afflicts the day-laborer and the savage.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> “The Hay Fever Delusion,” *New York Times*. The Cloudland most likely viewed the White Mountain resorts, particularly the Summit House on Mt. Washington, as rivals. Much of the Cloudland’s promotional material proudly proclaimed that it stood an elevation two hundred feet higher than Mt. Washington. One pamphlet also reprinted an 1885 *New York Tribune* article praising the Cloudland’s “commanding magnificent views” to Mt. Washington’s “low, heavy building that crouches under the lee of a cliff.” See *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 9.

<sup>58</sup> Mitman, “Hay Fever Holiday,” 609.

<sup>59</sup> *Health Resorts of the South; Containing Numerous Engravings Descriptive of the Most Desirable Resorts of the Southern States, Together with some Representative Northern Resorts* (Boston: Geo. H. Chapin, 1892): 328, George and Eleanor Stephens Collection, Pack Library.

<sup>60</sup> Beard, *Hay-Fever*, 84. Tuberculosis or TB--also known in the nineteenth century as wasting disease, consumption, or phthisis--did not begin as a disease stereotypically associated with the working class or with urban slums. Society from the early to late 1800s regarded upper-class female victims’ gaunt, pale figures as fashionable

The lure of the wilderness coupled with better rail transportation constituted two national trends responsible for Americans visiting such mountain locales as the Cloudland in increasing numbers. As early as the 1850s, most travelers to the western North Carolina mountains were tourists, not scientists. The advent of the Western North Carolina Railroad and improved roads brought more Low Country and Piedmont guests to the area resorts and to the Asheville area.<sup>61</sup> The White Mountains also saw larger numbers of

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and chic. The wasting characteristics of the disease influenced society's belief that the artistic depths of the soul were exposed as the patient lost weight. Robert Koch's discovery of the tubercle bacillus in 1882 validated the hypothesis that microbes caused disease (now known as the germ theory). The acceptance of the germ theory led to a change in how society regarded TB: society began to associate TB with African-Americans in the South. See Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 193-94. For information on nineteenth-century thought on urban life, industrialization, and TB, see Georgina D. Feldberg, *Disease and Class: Tuberculosis and the Shaping of Modern American Society*, Health and Medicine in American Society, ed. Judith Walzer Leavitt and Morris Vogel (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 29-33. For additional information on nineteenth-century social history on TB, see Katherine Ott, *Fevered Lives: Tuberculosis in American Culture Since 1870* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

Asheville saw the rise of several sanatoria, of which Dr. Karl von Ruck's Sulphur Springs Hotel was one of the better known. Other sanatoria also thrived on their care to the elite, who alone could probably afford a lengthy stay. By the 1880s, however, Asheville hotels and boarding houses began to turn away prospective consumptive guests to shun the reputation of harboring contagious diseases so that they could maintain their status as resorts for the affluent. Sanatoria refused to admit advanced cases. Businessmen viewed the tourist trade as more profitable than the tuberculosis market. See Starnes, "Creating the Land of the Sky," 38-44.

The Cloudland promotional material stated that "[c]onsumption is unknown and malaria finds no refuge among these mountains. . . ," implying that the resort provided a wholesome ambiance, not that it catered to tubercular patients. See *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 20.

<sup>61</sup> Silver, *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains*, 103.

visitors with improved rail transportation. Historian Gregg Mitman interestingly points out that the rails played another important role also in the transformation of the White Mountains from an economically productive area to a non-productive region that functioned as a refuge from urban life. The rails' conveyance of midwestern grain eastward lessened the significance of farming to the region's economic sustainability: "In bringing the hinterlands closer to the city, the railroads helped transform the White Mountains into a genteel tourist region, one that drew upon Romantic ideals and urban income in fashioning the area as cultivated wilderness."<sup>62</sup> Likewise, tourism to the Catskills increased after the war because of better rail transportation and because of the idealistic view that mountain retreats provided escapism in nature for the stressed businessman and a pure, clean atmosphere compared to the increasing unsanitary conditions in the cities of New York and New Jersey.<sup>63</sup> Aron also observes that increasing rail mileage led to a proliferation of resorts along waters and in the mountains. In the South, she notes the growing number of vacation hotels in Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. Of the nine hotels she enumerates as examples for these states, most if not all of the resorts appear to be located in southern Appalachia. By way of example for North Carolina, she lists the "Cloudland House on Roane Mountain," featured in a *Southern Bivouac* article. On a national level, the increasing number of vacation spots by the late 1800s prompted one magazine writer to opine that "Summer hotels are

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<sup>62</sup> Mitman, "Hay Fever Holiday," 613-14.

<sup>63</sup> Blackmar, "Going to the Mountains," 77-78.



everywhere. They form an almost continuous line along the coast of New England and the Middle States. One mountain region after another has succumbed to their invasion.”<sup>64</sup>

The back-to-nature movement seemed to attract two types of tourists: those who chose to enjoy nature from a distance and those who vigorously pursued physical activity in the out-of-doors. Most visitors to postbellum White Mountain resorts were the East’s middle- and upper-class urban inhabitants who “drew poetic inspiration, botanized, and took solace in nature . . . [but] did not care to toil in it.”<sup>65</sup> They were the guests who, as at antebellum resorts, could admire nature and its Romantic ideals from the security of their “easy chair[s] on the verandah.”<sup>66</sup> In western North Carolina, as historian Timothy Silver observes, the Darwinian “survival of the fittest” concept played out in the wilderness as well as in the corporate world. Campers and hikers proved their mettle in strenuous physical exercise, including scaling Mt. Mitchell. Amateur ornithologists and sports hunters trekked through the Black Mountain woods.<sup>67</sup> Such outdoor wilderness activity

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<sup>64</sup> Aron, *Working at Play*, 51-52; “The Summer Exodus,” *Century Magazine*, 28 (July 1889): 47-48; quoted in Aron, *Working at Play*, 53.

<sup>65</sup> Mitman, “Hay Fever Holiday,” 613.

<sup>66</sup> *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 12.

<sup>67</sup> Silver, *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains*, 128-30. To learn more about pursuit of leisure activities in nature, see Mark V. Barrow, Jr., *A Passion for Birds: American Ornithology after Audubon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) and Margaret Welch, *The Book of Nature: Natural History in the United States, 1825-1875* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998). See also Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982) and Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

provided a way to grow closer to nature in an increasingly industrialized society dominated by “robber baron” capitalists.

At the Cloudland, probably a substantial number of guests in the late 1800s fell into the same category as the visitors to the White Mountains. They enjoyed nature with limited physical exertion and with an amateur hobbyist’s interest in the flora and the geology of the Roan. For the businessmen, the Cloudland aimed to “[build] up [their constitutions] for another season of the nervous strain and tension that is the necessary result of the rush and bustle of city life.”<sup>68</sup>

During the day, guests collected plant specimens, fished in one of Cloudland’s two ponds, golfed (using weighted balls at the high elevation), or hiked. The daughter of the last proprietor recalled that her mother often led hikes; the women did not have any difficulty as might be thought because they wore skirts that stopped above their ankles and laced on high-topped shoes. Other excursions to the “little bluff” at ten cents and the “big bluff” at twenty-five cents were scheduled at intervals. The Cloudland occasionally retained a couple of western North Carolina mountain fiddlers to serenade the hikers at the bluffs.<sup>69</sup> As Wilma Dykeman comments, while the Cloudland attracted those interested in mineral and botanical study, “the larger number of plant enthusiasts followed ‘flower

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<sup>68</sup> *Cloudland Hotel: Announcement for the Season of 1903* ([Cloudland, N.C.?], 1903), 6, Morgan Collection.

<sup>69</sup> Caldwell; Stone interview by author; Morgan, “The Cloudland Hotel”; Pauline Murrell Stone, interview by Norma Myers, 1993, Series II, Folder 4, Murrell Family Collection.

pressings' and whether the winter value of those dried and flattened summer posies held greater scientific than sentimental attachment is open to the question."<sup>70</sup>

Famous guests at the second Cloudland hotel included Judge Grafton Greene who later served as Tennessee State Supreme Court Chief Justice, Brownlow family members from Knoxville, Harvey Firestone, Henry Ford, and the naturalist John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club. Sherman Pippen remembered transporting dignitaries from Great Britain, Ireland, and France to the Cloudland. Probably more exotic were a Madame Yznaga from New Orleans and her daughter Consuelo, named after a Vanderbilt family friend's daughter, and a princess from Spain, who evidently spent too much time on the Tennessee side of the dining hall one night.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Wilma Dykeman, *The French Broad* ([n.p.]: Henry Holt and Company, 1955; reprint, Newport, Tenn.: Wakestone Books, 1974), 187-88 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

<sup>71</sup> Ford, "Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day"; Caldwell cite; Fulcher, "Muir, Michaux, and Gray on Roan"; Stone interview by Myers; Pippen interview by Swidnell. Pippen told his interviewer that Harvey Firestone and Henry Ford "come here after the hotel was down. Set down." He also mentioned an "Estelle Josephine" who visited. This guest was undoubtedly a notable in her day in the context of Pippen's commentary. He noted that she had an entourage of three people with her and that her trunk was exceedingly heavy. Her name may indicate a French background; perhaps she hailed from New Orleans.

Consuelo Yznaga, the Duchess of Manchester, lived in New Orleans and had as a family friend, Alva Eskine Smith (née Vanderbilt), whose daughter was named Consuelo. Probably Yznaga is the same person whom Stone recollected; Stone was an octogenarian at the time of her interview and was recounting what she had heard from her mother, including the precise spelling of Yznaga's name. More scholarly research is needed to verify this point. However, a John Singer Sargent portrait and anecdotal information are found at [http://www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Consuelo\\_Yznaga.htm](http://www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Consuelo_Yznaga.htm) (accessed October 14, 2004).

The Vanderbilt connection is intriguing. George Washington Vanderbilt, grandson of the Commodore, first bought land near Asheville for his eventual Biltmore château in 1888. By 1890, he was also a shareholder in Asheville's Kenilworth Inn, showing his interest in the local tourist industry.<sup>72</sup> In June 1892 an Annie "Vanderburt" (signature is somewhat difficult to decipher) of New York City registered at the Young's Hotel, a Victorian house located in Bakersville, North Carolina. Perhaps as part of a separate party a few days or weeks later, George W. Vanderbilt, R.H. (R.M.?) Hunt, F.H. (W.H.?) Lord, all of New York City; "Hon." E. Burnett from Southborough; Dr. S.W. Battle of Asheville; and Charles McNamee, also of Asheville, registered at the hotel.<sup>73</sup> McNamee served as construction supervisor of Biltmore. Battle, who moved to Asheville in 1888, was one of its most influential doctors and one of its biggest promoters. George Vanderbilt evidently brought his ailing mother to Battle, and during his stay, decided to purchase land near Asheville.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Starnes, "Creating the Land of the Sky," 48, 74.

<sup>73</sup> *Register--Penland House*; property of Mary Lee Barron, Bakersville, N.C.; Mary Lee Barron, interview by author, 16 May 2004, Bakersville, N.C., handwritten notes in possession of author. Barron is the great-granddaughter of the first owner of Young's Hotel, formerly known as the Penland House.

<sup>74</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary [*sic*]: Asheville, NC," <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/asheville/text.htm> (accessed October 10, 2004); "Biltmore Estate Archives," [http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/archives/architects/Public\\_Asheville.html](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/archives/architects/Public_Asheville.html) (accessed October 14, 2004). Richard Morris Hunt and W.H. Lord designed much of Biltmore and its surrounding buildings. It is possible I misread their initials on the register. Hunt also designed the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Breakers at Newport, and the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. See "Richard Morris Hunt," [http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Richard\\_Morris\\_Hunt.html](http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Richard_Morris_Hunt.html) (accessed October 14, 2004). Congressman Edward Burnett represented Massachusetts' Ninth District from

The Young's Hotel ran a hack up to the Cloudland through the Valley of the Roan, most probably the old Glen Ayre road; the ride took about eight hours. Cloudland guests coming from Asheville often took a full day to reach Bakersville and most probably spent the night at Young's Hotel or any other hostelry in the area, especially given the fact that the hack ride from Young's Hotel to the Cloudland took almost a full day.

Occasionally, ads for both hotels were found together in newspapers. Therefore, it seems likely that the Vanderbilts visited the Cloudland.<sup>75</sup>

A signature for John Jacob Astor in September 1883 in the Young's Hotel register may also imply that his family vacationed at the Cloudland. It could be argued that he was scouting out prospective business interests in the rich mineral deposits and virgin timber of the western North Carolina slopes. It is plausible, however, that he might have delegated any business detail--assuming he had an interest in the region's resources--to a

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1887-1889 and is buried in Southborough, now in the Third District. More research is needed to determine if this Burnett accompanied Vanderbilt's party.

<sup>75</sup> "Cloudland Hotel" and "Penland House" ads, *Lenoir Topic*, 14 October 1885; reproduced in Bailey, ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, vol. 4, 103. In addition, Sheppard mentions that Uncle Stokes Penland drove hacks to the Roan from Linville's Penland House. I believe she meant the Young's Hotel (Penland House) in Bakersville. See Sheppard, *Cabins in the Laurel*, 97. Arthur mentions an anecdote placing Stokes Penland in Bakersville. See Arthur, Chapter Twelve, "Humorous and Romantic," *History of Western North Carolina*, <http://www.ls.net/~newriver/nc/wnc13.htm> (accessed 19 October 2004). A Stokes Penland also was the owner of the Penland House who sold it to Reuben Young. See Evelyn S. Hyams, "The Penland (Pentland) Family," in Bailey, ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, vol. 1, 360.

subordinate and therefore stayed at the Bakersville inn on his and his family's way to the top of the Roan.<sup>76</sup>

Notable groups convening at the Cloudland included the Tennessee Press Association. The group met there in 1887 to hear John Allison, the Tennessee Secretary of State, who vividly painted the Roan as “a Niagara of color flashing from the rhododendron and Mountain Magnolia.” They held their annual meeting there again in 1896 to “indulge in genial converse and comradeship . . . forgetful of the dust and din of the printing office.”<sup>77</sup> For newspapermen to travel to the Roan from across the five-hundred mile length of Tennessee again points to the prominence of the resort and that its perch at over six thousand feet did not constitute an impregnable barrier.

To indulge aristocratic guests with banquets and a wide array of activities required the services of many staff. In the first few years of the second Cloudland, “two of the best cooks from Virginia and Tennessee were employed.” Later, in a more exclusive move, the

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<sup>76</sup> Barron interview; *Register--Penland House*. Gillespie notes in her analysis of the Catawba Springs, N.C., register, often only the male head of the household signed. Therefore, it can not be assumed that any of the persons signing the Young's Hotel register were signing only for themselves. See Gillespie, “Havens for the Fashionable and Sickly,” 67.

<sup>77</sup> John Allison, *Address of John Allison, on East Tennessee a Hundred Years Ago; First Free and Independent Government in America; First Church; First Institution of Learning; First Newspaper West of the Alleghanies. Delivered at Seventeenth Annual Meeting Tennessee Press Association, at Cloudland, (Roan Mountain, Tenn.) N.C., July 14-16, 1887* (Nashville: Hasslock & Ambrose, 1887), 3, in Samuel Cole Williams, *Tennesseeana*, 1 no. 5, Special Collections and Archives, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia; *Elizabethton Mountaineer*, 26 June 1896. Williams collected pamphlets and miscellany which are bound together in *Tennesseeana*.

Cloudland hired “a French artist educated in his line” to head the culinary department.<sup>78</sup> A physician, barber, butcher, and a baker from Knoxville who made “exquisite French pastries” lived at the Cloudland during its ninety-day season.<sup>79</sup>

Meals often constituted extravagant affairs in the large dining room. A typical breakfast, according to Nannie Snyder Murrell, wife of the proprietor in the early 1900s, consisted of bacon, liver, steak, fried apples, fried potatoes, biscuits, coffee, eggs, and flannel cakes (pancakes). Dinner, served at noon, offered a choice of two soups, at least two meats, six vegetables, and a choice of four desserts. Mountain trout was evidently a specialty, for hundreds of pounds were served each season. Supper was often dinner leftovers accompanied by cereal, meats, flannel cakes, and eggs.<sup>80</sup>

In the evening, guests adjourned to the basement and either amused themselves in the bowling alley or waltzed in the spacious dance hall to music provided by a piano, violin, and cornet. During the 1885 season, the niece of Governor Bates of Tennessee taught young children in the “kindergarten” or playroom located in the basement.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Cloudland Hotel, the Great Southern Resort for Hay Fever*, n.p.; *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 22-23.

<sup>79</sup> “Cloudland Hotel: Only Memories Remain”; Ford, “Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day”; “Hotel Life on Roan Meant Being in Two States at Once,” Series I, Folder 2, Murrell Family Collection; Stone interview by Myers.

<sup>80</sup> Ford, “Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day”; Chun, *Descriptive Illustrated Guide-Book to North Carolina Mountains*, 70.

<sup>81</sup> Ford, “Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day”; “Cloudland Hotel: Only Memories Remain”; Gaynes, “Cloudland Hotel: What It Used to Be, and Is Now”; “Mitchell County News, 1885,” *The Lenoir Topic*, 20 May 1885; reproduced in Bailey, ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, vol. 4, 99.

Many locals found employment at the Cloudland. Bill Hughes was a butcher at the Cloudland in the summer and was employed as a caretaker in the winter.<sup>82</sup> Sometime later, in the early 1900s, John Gouge from the North Carolina side of the Roan earned forty dollars per year plus free rent for his family to serve as a year-round caretaker and to scour the countryside for produce and livestock.<sup>83</sup> One Roan Mountain town resident recalled her father's experiences as a 14-year-old who fired the stoves for the cooks, who in turn taught him how to bake potato-yeast bread, a recipe which he passed on to his children.<sup>84</sup> Local girls and women walked several miles one way every day up the mountain to the Cloudland to work as chamber maids and to iron and mend clothes.<sup>85</sup> Other residents took the Bald Road to the Cloudland to sell such foodstuffs as chickens, potatoes, eggs, milk, butter, chestnuts, and vegetables. Wilder ate meals at the home of a Cove Creek family near the Hack Line Road and bought honey, vegetables, fruits, and other foods from them.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> "Aunt Eliza Remembers the Cloudland Hotel," reproduced from unannotated newspaper clipping in the scrapbook of Myron Houston, in Bailey, ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, vol. 4, 344.

<sup>83</sup> Ford, "Guests Stayed at Cloudland Hotel for \$2.50 per Day"; "Hotel With 166 Rooms Operated on the Roan for Years." In 2003 dollars, \$40 from the year 1905, one of the years the Gouges lived at the Cloudland, translates to \$830 (CPI) and \$3,380 (Unskilled Wage). See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>84</sup> Joslin, "Hotel Key Part of Roan's Mythology."

<sup>85</sup> Morgan interview; Masters interview.

<sup>86</sup> Masters interview; Joslin, "The Bald Road: Pathway to the Top of the Mountain"; Morgan, "The Cloudland Hotel"; Ruth Gardner Bledsoe, "Evan and Mary (Polly) Hughes," in Bailey, ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley*, vol. 1, 293.



One New York visitor wrote that “the poverty of these people is startling, and sometimes pathetic. A man walked eight miles to bring 60 cents’ worth of corn to the hotel, and another day two girls walked twelve miles to bring 15 cents’ worth of beets!”<sup>87</sup> A man whose father had helped build the hackline road stated that his father and other locals “didn’t get but about twenty cents a dozen for corn. Everyone who had anything to sell took it up there. They didn’t get much for it, but no one had any money at all and they were so glad to get some.”<sup>88</sup>

Obviously, Cloudland Hotel rates were vastly beyond the affordability of the local farmers and laborers and probably to a large extent, the middle class. Rates in 1881 at the spruce lodge were \$2 per day, or \$250 converted to 2003 Unskilled Wage dollars.<sup>89</sup> During this time, Montvale charged monthly rates one third higher than Cloudland; Cloudland’s monthly rates, in turn, were slightly lower than Tate Spring’s for the summer. Therefore, Cloudland, while it catered to the elite in its early years, did not command a higher class of society than did Tate and Montvale if prices are any indicator.<sup>90</sup> By about

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<sup>87</sup> H. T. Finck, “Mammoth Cave and Cloudland,” *Evening Post: New York*, 27 August 1898; Series I, Folder 2, Murrell Family Collection.

<sup>88</sup> McKinney, “Cloudland Hotel,” 4.

<sup>89</sup> *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and Alabama* (1881), 23. The Cloudland rate of \$2 per day is \$35.70 (CPI) or \$250 (Unskilled Wage) in 2003 dollars. See Williamson, “What is the Relative Value?”

<sup>90</sup> *Guide to the Summer Resorts and Watering Places of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and Alabama* (1881), 23-24, 30. Tate posted only monthly rates for 1881. Its rate was \$35 for June through September and \$25 for other months. Montvale’s monthly rate varied from \$40 to \$56. Cloudland monthly rates were \$30 except for September and October when “special rates [were offered] to hay fever patients and other friends.”

1886, the Cloudland was charging \$45 per month, about the same as Beersheba Springs and Tate Spring and five dollars more per month than Alleghany Springs. Horseback riding was \$2 per day, the cost of a room at several resorts.<sup>91</sup> It therefore was beginning to charge a premium. By around 1905, the Cloudland was charging \$10 per week; Montvale about the same time, in 1911, listed \$7 per week. Cloudland at this time was charging about 40 percent more than Montvale, which had begun a decline.<sup>92</sup>

The Cloudland was prosperous for many years in spite of Wilder's personal monetary setbacks during the Panic of 1893.<sup>93</sup> Perhaps still financially recovering three years later, Wilder almost lost the Cloudland Hotel for failure to pay delinquent property taxes of \$11,615, a sum worth about a quarter of a million dollars in 2003. He owed more than twice the amount due by any other delinquent Carter County property owner, thus

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<sup>91</sup> *Cloudland Hotel. The Great Southern Resort for Hay Fever*, n.p.

<sup>92</sup> Chapman, "Was Festival Visitor: Former Clerk Recalls Proud Cloudland Hotel Atop Roan"; *Daily Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, Tenn.], 5 June 1911.

<sup>93</sup> *The New York Times* reported that New York City's Hanover National Bank had obtained an attachment for \$5,000 against Wilder and Dugald S. McIntyre, the president of Johnson City's Citizens' Bank. A few weeks later, the newspaper reported that Wilder's Carnegie enterprises owed \$125,000. His assets, including the blast furnace and the Carnegie Hotel, were valued at only \$60,000. The newspaper contacted H.C. Frick, head of Carnegie Steel, who disavowed a connection between the two firms. See "Business Troubles," *New York Times*, 24 May 1893, p. 3, and "Carnegie Companies Assign.: Unable to Float Bonds, There Was Nothing Else for Them to Do," *New York Times*, 5 June 1893, p. 2. Both *New York Times* articles were found at <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

indicating the extent of his assets in the region and the loss he had suffered in the financial downturn.<sup>94</sup>

Wilder eventually lost interest in the Cloudland and offered to sell the property to the Murrells for twenty thousand dollars, which they declined. They later regretted their decision and moved to Elizabethton to run the Lynnwood Hotel. Interestingly, they knew the Deadericks from Unaka Springs and spent six months at that resort several years after they left the Cloudland.<sup>95</sup> John and Mary Gouge and their dozen children stayed at the Cloudland as caretakers for several years after the Murrells' lease expired in 1905. Often the winter weather proved so severe that they remained at the Cloudland rather than risk the three-mile trip down to their cabin on the North Carolina side of the Roan.<sup>96</sup> Lack of sufficient funds and attention from Wilder--particularly for repairs after lightning hit the hotel--caused a visitor in 1913 to note the "dirty" condition of the building. The hotel was

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<sup>94</sup> "Quarterly Minutes Carter County Court (1889-1899)," *Book 2*, 398, Carter County Courthouse, Elizabethton, Tenn. For description of tracts on which tax was due, see *Elizabethton Mountaineer*, 31 July 1896. The conversion of \$11,615 from 1896 dollars to 2003 dollars yields \$253,000 (CPI) and \$222,000 (GDP Deflator). See Williamson, "What is the Relative Value?"

<sup>95</sup> Stone interview by author; "Deaderick, Mr. & Mrs. A. V. (Uncle Dot and Aunt Addie)," 1927, Series III, Folder 5, Photograph 7, Murrell Family Collection; Georgia Greer, "Murrell Family Collection (1883-1993): Biographical Note," Finding Aid, <http://cass.etsu.edu/ARCHIVES/afindaaid/a432.html> (accessed October 18, 2004).

<sup>96</sup> "Hotel With 166 Rooms Operated on the Roan for Many Years"; Annie Jones, "The John Wilson Gouge Family," unpublished typescript, 15 April 1986, 4, photocopy in possession of Doris Wilson. This paper, drawn on extensive family interviews, was written by a Gouge descendant for a history class. It interestingly describes the Gouges' way of life at the turn of the century in the mountains.

eventually abandoned: in 1915 a hiker in his journal described the Cloudland's "glassless windows, leaking roofs, [and] sagging floors."<sup>97</sup>

Wilder died at his vacation retreat in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1917. The Johnson City, Tennessee, newspaper, the largest in the area at the time, surprisingly made no mention of his Cloudland connection in its obituary.<sup>98</sup>

In 1919, Wilder's heirs sold the hotel to Holden Garland, who then parceled it off room by room. One family bought the kitchen for thirty dollars in 1919 and reassembled the timber into a house five miles down the mountain. A lawyer in Burbank obtained the barn and livery stable and rebuilt them on his property. Locals took the fine cherry furniture and other furnishings. Many homeowners eventually replaced their front doors with hotel bedroom doors painted with the Cloudland room numbers.<sup>99</sup>

Roan Mountain residents continued to walk or ride in wagons to the Cloudland site for camping or Sunday picnics. A few enterprising Johnson City businessmen in the

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<sup>97</sup> D. R. Beeson, Sr., "Illustrated Record of Walking Trip from Toecane, N.C. on C.C. & O. Ry., East over Roan and Grandfather Mountains to Blowing Rock, N.C.: Vacation Trip, Aug. 31-Sept. 7, 1913," D. R. Beeson, Sr. Papers, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn., 1-4; Paul M. Fink, *Backpacking Was the Only Way* (Johnson City: East Tennessee State University, Research Advisory Council, 1975), 16; Wilson interview. Wilson interestingly commented that her aunt, Edith Roan, was born in 1910 on the dining room table at the Cloudland. A doctor charged \$25 for his services; the Gouges in turn charged him \$25 to spend the next several days at the hotel because of a snowstorm.

<sup>98</sup> *Johnson City Staff*, 23 October 1917.

<sup>99</sup> Gaynes, "Cloudland Hotel: What It Used to Be, and Is Now"; Joslin, "Hotel Key Part"; Morgan, "The Cloudland Hotel"; Laughlin, *Roan Mountain*, 105.

early 1930s set up a toll road on the Burbank Road, the name given to part of the Hack Line Road, and hired locals to collect a fare of one dollar for each car and driver and twenty-five cents for each additional passenger. Even during the Depression, occasionally a few hundred cars a day bounced their way up the old trail.<sup>100</sup>

In 1941, the U.S. Forest Service acquired almost three thousand acres of the top of the Roan. By spring 1955, the government agency had constructed a paved road from Carver's Gap to the Cloudland site.<sup>101</sup>

The Roan Mountain Hotel that Wilder owned in conjunction with the Cloudland was sold in 1905 to S.B. Wood, a doctor for the Forge Mining Company, whose drug store still stands next to U.S. Highway 19E; Wood operated the inn for ten years. It also fell into a state of neglect. It reopened in 1949 after renovation but closed for good in the early 1950s.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Violet Carver, interview by author, 9 March 2004, Johnson City, Tenn., audiotape recording in possession of author; Myrtle Carver, interview by author, 3 February 2003, Carter County, Tenn., audiotape recording in possession of author; Dan Russo, Jennifer Laughlin, Florence Greer Street, Judy Murray, Rosalee Russo, interview by Bob Fulcher, 9 June 2000, Carter County, Tenn., transcript and audiotape recording, Tennessee State Parks Folklife Project collection; Bob Fulcher, "Hack Line Road: The Route to Roan," *The Tennessee Conservationist* 67 (May-June 2001): 34. J.C. Penney was one elite who paid the toll to visit the Roan.

<sup>101</sup> "The Week of April 29, 1941," [*Tri-County News*, 20 April 1971], Eury Appalachian Collection; Miriam Rabb, "New Road Opens Roan Mountain to Thousands of Auto Travelers," [*Journal and Sentinel*, 22 May 1955, p. 3B], Eury Appalachian Collection.

<sup>102</sup> Norman C. Gibson, "Historic Roan Mountain Inn to Be Re-Opened in a Few Days," *Elizabethton Star*, 8 July 1949, p. 5; Merritt, *Later History of Carter County*, 23; Chapman, "Was Festival Visitor: Former Clerk Recalls Proud Cloudland Hotel Atop Roan."

The Cloudland constituted only one of several enterprises engaging Wilder, called by some as the “greatest of the carpetbaggers.” As historian John Hope Franklin points out, the moniker--originally used as early as 1846 as jargon for a suspicious stranger--need not have a negative connotation concerning all northerners who came to the South following the Civil War. Many northern teachers, ministers, common laborers, Union veterans, and businessmen moved south, not to ravage the assets of the region, but to help rebuild it through their investments and labor. In Charleston, for instance, northerners operated at least half the stores on the main thoroughfares.<sup>103</sup> In Tennessee, the last state to leave the Union and the first one to rejoin, less ambiguity probably existed about attracting northern investment. In fact, Tennessee newspapers cajoled readers who owned mills, factories, or mines to advertise to attract northern investment. Carpetbaggers, then, were, to be commended rather than condemned for “exploiting” the South’s resources.<sup>104</sup>

Wilder stands out as an exemplary example of the carpetbagger who engaged fully in public and commercial affairs. For example, in terms of civic services, he approached Andrew Carnegie about contributing to an endowment fund for the Knoxville public library; he donated land to Johnson City officials for the building of a school to memorialize his first wife; he led the Chickamauga National Park Commission; and he served as Commissioner for Tennessee to an exposition in Vienna where he succeeded in

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<sup>103</sup> John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War*, The Chicago History of American Civilization, ed. Daniel J. Boorstin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 93-94.

<sup>104</sup> E.B. Hesseltine, “Tennessee’s Invitation to Carpet-Baggers,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 4 (January 1932): 102, 103.

the state capturing first place as a “mineral state.”<sup>105</sup> In business, he constructed the first hydroelectric power plant for the Knoxville Power Company; he helped develop coal fields in the Upper Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee, serving as the head of the Fentress Coal Company; and he worked for the government as the U.S. Pension Agent for Knoxville. The *New York Times* lauded him as the founder of the “real Southern iron trade”: at his Rockwood (Roane) Iron Company, he innovated the use in 1868 of a blast furnace to produce “the first iron smelted by mineral fuel in the South in commercial quantity.”<sup>106</sup> A Knoxville newspaper in 1886 exclaimed that “there are thousands of East Tennessee republicans who would be glad to see General John T. Wilder nominated [for governor]. His name has been so prominently identified with the development of the material resources of the state, that hundreds of persons would support him who are not partisans . . . . He is energy personified . . . .”<sup>107</sup> Unlike the stereotypical rapacious carpetbagger, Wilder spent (and lost) capital to begin manufacturing and business enterprises and engaged in a wide variety of public causes.

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<sup>105</sup> Stahl, *Greater Johnson City*, 95; Mary U. Rothrock, ed., *The French Broad-Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1946), 246; Govan and Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country*, 297; Williams, *General John T. Wilder*, 48.

<sup>106</sup> “Wilder, John T.,” *Who’s Who in Tennessee* (1911), 238; Jeanette Keith, “Country People: Tennessee’s Upper Cumberland, 1890-1925,” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1990): 121; Stahl, *Greater Johnson City*, 68; “Iron Trade of the South,” *New York Times*, 15 November 1897.

<sup>107</sup> “The Republican Gubernatorial Situation,” *Knoxville Daily Journal*, 1 June 1886.

Although the Cloudland Hotel constituted a minor part of Wilder's wide-reaching business and community responsibilities, he--like the Deadericks at Unaka Springs, Thomas Tomlinson at Tate Spring, and Asa Watson of Montvale Springs--invested financially in the hotel infrastructure and stayed at the Cloudland on regular occasion or in a house he owned in Roan Mountain Station. His fame and connections were probably first responsible for attracting notables outside botany circles to the hotel. Then as the Cloudland gained in popularity with the elite, more of the aristocratic set frequented it. Though it billed itself as the "highest human habitat east of the Rockies," its perch on a southern Appalachian peak did not dissuade visitors from taking a hack to the summit. The attraction to it by elites outside the region--even outside North America--again points to the interactivity of southern Appalachia with the rest of the world.

The Cloudland perhaps serves as a microcosm of the United States during the late 1800s. Wilder, of course, represents the northern interests investing in the devastated South after Reconstruction. The Stemwinder symbolizes the rapidly growing rail industry, serving to take the upper-middle class and the elites to far-flung resorts in formerly relatively inaccessible or remote areas; at the same time, the rail provided an interconnectivity between the increasingly differentiated agricultural areas of the Midwest and the industrial cities of the East. The Cloudland also represents the back-to-nature movement seen in the formation of hiking clubs and amateur botanizing. Both Cloudland and Tate attracted elites; Cloudland, it may be speculated, entertained the "elite of the elites," the Vanderbilts and others who epitomized the Gilded Age's wealth. Juxtaposed against the millionaires who visited the Cloudland were the locals, many of whom eked out hardscrabble livings in the valley or on the mountain slopes.



As Dunaway points out, southern Appalachia became increasingly isolated by 1860 due to its largely underdeveloped processing and manufacturing industries. The Civil War itself, of course, with guerrilla activity in the mountains, halted any further industrial or agricultural progress. Beginning in the 1880s, those living outside southern Appalachia initiated a “do good” mission campaign in the region. Northern ministers who traveled to western North Carolina for health concerns began the first two educational institutions for local whites. One clergyman founded Asheville’s Home Industrial School for Girls in 1877; another in 1879 organized the Dorland Institute at Hot Springs in Madison County. About twenty years later, the settlement school philosophy evolved. Susan Chester founded the Log Cabin Settlement near Asheville in 1894. Hindman in Kentucky was established in 1902. The Penland School in Spruce Pine, about ten miles east of Bakersville, followed in 1923. Eventually, more than two hundred missionary and settlement schools existed in Appalachia between 1875 and 1920.<sup>108</sup> In the popular press, Horace Kephart and Mary Noailles Murphee capitalized on the perceived differences between southern Appalachia and the rest of the country in their literature based on their experiences living in the Smokies (Murphee had lived at Montvale Springs after Beersheba Springs). Batteau notes, however, that Murphee has been commended for her accurate

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<sup>108</sup> John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 198-202; Jess Stoddart, *Challenge and Change in Appalachia: The Story of Hindman Settlement School* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 1-2. It is interesting that no guest, after spending several days or weeks at the hotel, saw a need to begin philanthropic ventures around the Roan. No settlement school, for example, evidently ever existed in Carter County. Merritt’s anthology of newspaper articles and data on Carter County refers only to public schools in the late 1800s in Hampton (Doe River Cove) and the village of Roan Mountain. See Merritt, *Later History of Carter County*, 14, 289-92.

portrayals of mountaineers though she based their cultural traits on several different mountain districts. In her books, Murphee contrasts the “folk” and the “urban” spheres.<sup>109</sup>

These spheres may be viewed in terms of the interactions between the guests and the locals perhaps better at Cloudland than at any of the other resorts covered in this thesis. The differences between the wealthy and the locals at the Cloudland were more magnified there than, say, at Tate Spring or certainly Unaka Springs. One interviewee commented that her elderly relatives felt no ill will or resentment towards the wealthy Cloudland patrons; neither did her relatives feel downtrodden in the elites’ presence. Locals engaged in their local culture, attending church and social functions, and cultivating family and friends. They felt fulfilled in their own sphere and grateful for any extra income.<sup>110</sup>

Probably their interactions with the aristocrats ranged across the spectrum. On one hand, for example, one Buladean-area chambermaid never took the silver coins left in her rooms as cleaning tips for fear that she would be condemned for theft; she felt that she was being “tested.” On the other hand, the colorful Sherman Phippen once grabbed a turkey over the side of the hack as he was driving guests to the Cloudland and threw it

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<sup>109</sup> Batteau, *Invention of Appalachia*, 40, 89-91.

<sup>110</sup> Bauer, email correspondence, 15 October 2004; Masters interview. Bauer indicated that the dozens of interviews she conducted with elderly residents gave her the perception that they considered their lives fulfilled with family and social activities. Masters discussed the subsistence lifestyle of her great-grandparents and others of the era in western North Carolina. She stated that the people in that poor region were “satisfied to exist.” Owning a cow, for example, constituted a status symbol. Her grandfather sold a chicken for a quarter to the Cloudland and was very happy with the transaction.

into the lap of a passenger, a bishop, and charged the august minister with holding it until they reached the Cloudland.<sup>111</sup>

Locals working at the Cloudland, however, were constrained somewhat in their interactions with the elite. In the Cloudland's hey-day, for example, local girls did not serve the elites in the dining room. Cloudland management reserved those eight or ten positions for young females from the Asheville Normal School, which apparently had cultivated a sense of sophistication that the local girls were deemed to lack.<sup>112</sup> Other staff evidently fell into a higher socioeconomic bracket as well. Walter Eugene Ragsdale, one of the proprietors in the late 1800s, also served as the proprietor for the Highland Hotel in Interlachen, Florida, during the winter. His position--and that of his father-in-law, the chief engineer of an elevated railroad--warranted an announcement of his wedding in the prestigious marriage section of *The New York Times*.<sup>113</sup>

The Cloudland thus served as a stage where material wealth came into limited contact with mountain poverty. Perhaps to the elite of the Gilded Age, the Cloudland constituted one more exclusive resort to visit outside Newport. To the mountain folk, it provided a way to supplement meager income. And--positioned offstage because they journeyed to and camped on the Roan before and after the hotel's existence--many of its

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<sup>111</sup> Masters interview; Pippen interview by Swindell.

<sup>112</sup> *Cloudland Hotel on Top of Roan Mountain* [1895?], 23.

<sup>113</sup> "A Day's Weddings: Balston-Ragsdale," *New York Times*, 9 December 1896, p. 5, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/nytimes/advancedsearch.html> (accessed April 1, 2004).

scientific guests may have subconsciously viewed the Cloudland as a link between man and nature.

Today the Roan Mountain Hotel is gone; the site of the Roan Mountain Station depot is now a bank; and U.S. Highway 19E covers much of the narrow gauge rail past Elizabethton. Hunters or horsemen may sometimes traverse sections of the Bald Road, little more than a trace of a path in spots. A few curious hikers may occasionally stumble on the overgrown road bed of the Calf Pen Road a short way down the North Carolina side of the Roan from Carver's Gap. Tourists wandering on top of the Roan through a grassy expanse may stop to read a U.S. Forest Service sign commemorating the Cloudland.

Where aristocratic guests once feasted at the magnificent dining room banquet table now grows wheat-colored grass broken only by the Appalachian Trail. Where naturalist John Muir wrote to his family a century ago that "I have been quite miserable but this air has healed me" now stands a copse of red spruce and Fraser fir.<sup>114</sup> And, within this group of trees lies a rubble of foundation stones, the only remnant of the summer home above the clouds.

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<sup>114</sup> Fulcher, "Muir, Michaux, and Gray on Roan."

## CHAPTER 6

### FROM TIMBERING TO TOURISM: THE WONDERLAND HOTEL'S EARLY YEARS <sup>1</sup>

Although the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States, few visitors probably know the story behind a rotting wood-frame building guarded by a forbidding ten-foot high chain-linked fence near the Little River. The deteriorating structure constitutes the remains of the Wonderland Hotel, a name probably bestowed to describe the scenic vistas of the Smokies, but which today evokes more “wonder” and curiosity about its crumbling edifice than amazement at the panoramic views of the mountains.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will explore the Wonderland Hotel and its environs, from the hotel's origins in 1912 through its early “hey-days” in the 1930s, a time coincident with the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission's early purchase of property in its vicinity. By focusing on the rationale for the hotel, the nature of its owners and guests, its social amenities, and the architecture and interior design of the hotel, the discussion will demonstrate that a heterogeneous class structure existed in its vicinity. The heterogeneous class structure did not evolve due to the imposition of the culture of northern industrialists on a homogenous isolated mountain society. Rather, it

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<sup>1</sup> Previously published in the *Journal of Appalachian Studies*, vol. 9, issue 2, (fall 2003) by Mary Fanslow. © 2004 by *Journal of Appalachian Studies*. Reprinted by permission.

<sup>2</sup> Allen R. Coggins, *Place Names of the Smokies* (Gatlinburg, Tenn.: Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association, 1999), 160. As far back as 1936, before the park's official dedication, more tourists visited it than any other national park. See Laura Thornborough, *The Great Smoky Mountains* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1937), 3.

was molded by the influence of largely southern elites on a local class structure that was already intrinsically stratified by the regional commercial activity that had been in place since antebellum times.<sup>3</sup>

The hotel originated in the burgeoning southern lumber industry of the late 1800s. As timber companies depleted the northern hardwood forests, they refocused their interests on the largely virgin forests of the South. One such area encompassed the three forks, or prongs, of the Little River meandering from western North Carolina through Blount and Sevier Counties in Tennessee. Within the area was a valley, Tuckaleechee Cove, in which at least fifteen white families had settled by 1800 after the signing of the First Treaty of the Tellico a few years earlier had legalized white settlement in the area.<sup>4</sup>

The cove was not as isolated as might be expected in a mountainous area. Iron works, tanneries, distilleries, saw mills, and grist mills comprised some of the antebellum industries in the Great Smokies.<sup>5</sup> As early as 1833, Tuckaleechee Cove maintained its own

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<sup>3</sup> For an interesting discussion of two alternative views of socioeconomic structure in southern Appalachia, see Crandall A. Shifflett's commentary on Ronald Eller's thesis that mine culture in southern Appalachia developed in response to the northern mine operators' imposition of their values on a homogenous socioeconomic southern mountain culture. Shifflett argues that the miners contributed their own culture to the life of the coal mining communities independent of the culture brought to the region by the northern industrial elite and that the region was not homogenous intrinsically. See Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Inez Burns, "Settlement and Early History of the Coves of Blount County, Tennessee," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 24 (1952): 48-49.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 53; Daniel S. Pierce, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 15-16.

post office, with mail running on a biweekly basis and gradually increasing to a daily basis by the early 1900s.<sup>6</sup>

While such contemporary commentators as Horace Kephart and John C. Campbell depicted nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century rural southern Appalachia as a homogenous society of isolated subsistence farmers, the commercial activity indicates that the region engaged in trade or services with other areas. In addition, while some inhabitants did indeed lead hardscrabble lives on rocky hillside farms, others possessed sufficient capital either to invest in business concerns or to produce surplus agricultural products for market. For example, one Tuckaleechee Cove entrepreneur managed both a grist mill and a saw mill. Another Smoky Mountains businessman operated a tannery, owned part interest in area saw mills, and exported large volumes of herbs out of the area. In her work on the development of southern Appalachia, Wilma Dunaway points out that southern Appalachian farms exceeded productivity levels of all crops except cotton when compared with the South as a whole.<sup>7</sup> Most likely, social hierarchies existed within these

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<sup>6</sup> Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 53. Interestingly, the fastest mail hack in the country was purported to be the horse-drawn wagon run between Knoxville and Sevierville, which took three-and-one-half hours as opposed to six hours for a passenger hack. See Robbie D. Jones, *The Historical Architecture of Sevier County, Tennessee* (Sevierville, Tenn.: Smoky Mountain Historical Society, 1996), 66.

<sup>7</sup> Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 53; Pierce, *Great Smokies*, 15; Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 131.

rural areas.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, no one socioeconomic class can be ascribed to Smoky Mountain residents of this era.

Furthermore, as such nearby towns as Knoxville grew with the advent of the railroad, they obviously experienced increasing diversity of socioeconomic levels. By the turn of the century, Knoxville ranked third of southern cities in terms of wholesale trade. Business and trade contact among Knoxvillians and Smoky Mountain inhabitants discredits the idea of an isolated mountain society and that of a homogenous southern Appalachian region in general.<sup>9</sup>

By the late 1800s, northern sources of hardwood timber had diminished, causing many lumber industrialists to look south.<sup>10</sup> The extraordinarily high output of the southern

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<sup>8</sup> Eller admits that “traditional status distinction had always existed.” See Ronald D. Eller, “Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers: The Modernization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930,” (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1979), 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ronald L. Lewis and Dwight B. Billings, “Appalachian Culture and Economic Development: A Retrospective View of the Theory and Culture,” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 3 (spring 1997): 30; William Bruce Wheeler and Michael J. McDonald, “The Communities of East Tennessee, 1850-1940: An Interpretive Overview,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 58 (1986): 10-11. Lewis and Billings cite Knoxville’s status as a commercial and transportation center, which drew upon local mountain labor, as opposed to the “Black Belt” sharecroppers, whom many industrialists attracted to the North. Wheeler and McDonald also note that Sevier County, where the Wonderland Hotel is located, was losing population in the late 1800s; see Wheeler and McDonald, 14. Some Smoky Mountain residents, however, traveled regularly with produce from their farms to Knoxville. See, for example, Wiley Oakley, *Roamin’ and Restin’ with the Roamin’ Man of the Smoky Mountains* (Sevierville, Tenn.: Oakley Enterprises, 1986), 21.

<sup>10</sup> Robert S. Lambert, “Logging on the Little River,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, no. 33 (1961): 32; Ronald G. Schmidt and William S. Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain: Timber, Track and Trails in the Tennessee Smokies* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Graphicom Press, 1994), 2.



virgin timber, estimated in a 1901 U.S. Forest Service report at over 161,000 board feet per acre compared to a normal average of 6,000 to 8,000 board feet per acre, attracted the northern lumber magnates. In addition, southern lumber workers typically did not belong to unions and therefore worked for lower hourly wages and for longer hours, although lumber companies occasionally rewarded the non-union workers with pay incentives.<sup>11</sup>

In April 1900, Wilson B. (W.B.) Townsend, William McCormick, William Wrigley, Joe Dickey, and Asbury Lee traveled from Pennsylvania to the Little River to survey the economic potential of the forests. In addition, the area's Schlosser Tannery had enticed them with both its need for a steady supply of tanbark and with its assurance of ready transportation for timber because it had recently completed a private rail line from its location at Wallend in the Smokies to Maryville, Tennessee.<sup>12</sup> In February 1901, the Little River Lumber Company was chartered, with its home office in Philadelphia. By the end of the year, it had built at least one sawmill at Tuckaleechee Cove, which eventually handled fifty-seven varieties of hardwood lumber. It also had established the Little River Railroad Company to build a railroad from Chilhowee Gap past the west prong of the Little River to North Carolina in order to transport timber back to Tuckaleechee Cove.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Margaret Lynn Brown, *The Wild East: A Biography of the Smokies*, New Perspectives on the History of the South, ed. John David Smith (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 49-50, 56-57.

<sup>12</sup> Lambert, "Logging on the Little River," 35-36; Schmidt and Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain*, 8-10; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 56-57.

<sup>13</sup> "Summary for Elkmont Town Walk," *Old Elkmont Town Walk*, Cat. No. GRSM 16295, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg, Tenn. (Archives hereafter cited as GSMNPA); Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 57. The *Old Elkmont Town Walk* is a three-ring binder of

W.B. Townsend and his family moved from Pennsylvania to Tuckaleechee Cove, and the cove residents renamed the town in his honor.<sup>14</sup> The community of Townsend characterized what Crandall A. Shifflett terms “contentment sociology,” the paternalistic culture inculcated by a company owner in a company town to ensure a reliable, even happy, workforce.<sup>15</sup> Many residents recall W.B. Townsend and his three wives (he survived two of them) in endearing terms. They bought Christmas gifts for children in the community as well as in the other Little River Lumber Company logging camps and gave young people “loans” to attend Tennessee Wesleyan College.<sup>16</sup>

Townsend promoted the Methodist denomination by building a Methodist church in Townsend in memory of his first wife and by building combination school/church buildings in at least one of the logging camps where he stipulated that a Methodist service was to be held at a minimum of once a month. By developing a community culture

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typescripts and photocopies of newspaper articles and photos that park naturalists used occasionally in the past to educate tourists when leading walks through Elkmont.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, *Wild East*, 54.

<sup>15</sup> Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> Schmidt and Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain*, 136-43; Myrtle Carver interview; Florence Cope Bush, *Dorie: Woman of the Mountains* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 166; “Interview with Roy Patty,” 10 February 2002, Sevier County, Tenn., handwritten interview notes taken by the author. Schmidt and Hooks state that Townsend loaned \$100 to young people willing to attend Tennessee Wesleyan (a local college whose Methodist affiliation probably appealed to Townsend). Often, Townsend would conveniently forget about the loan. Patty recalls that every Townsend child’s letter written to Santa was given to Townsend and his wife, who bought the requested presents. Carver remembers her late husband, a Little River Lumber Company accountant in the 1920s, speaking of Townsend with great affection and respect. In Patty’s words, “everyone loved him.”

affiliated with religion, through such a denomination as Methodism that frowns on drinking, Townsend hoped to avoid the rowdy single male workers who inhabited the logging camps of the Northwest.<sup>17</sup> While the temptation is great to assume that his civic goodwill acted strictly as a shrewd catalyst to stabilize his work force, the genuine esteem in which the community held Townsend implies that he truly was interested in his employees and their families. Contrary to the stereotype of the absentee northern speculator, he and his family lived in the town until Knoxville business concerns necessitated their move there.<sup>18</sup>

A paternalistic class structure existed, but Townsend and his family's extensive involvement in community affairs softened any sharp delineation that might be expected between their elite status and the laboring class. Therefore, rather than Townsend's influence alone dictating the culture (and class structure) of the community of Townsend, it appears that Townsend and his family somewhat blended into the existing culture of Tuckaleechee Cove while trying to "elevate" it through such provisions as a church and community center.

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<sup>17</sup> Schmidt and Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain*, 136-43; Bush, *Dorie*, 83, 93; Fink, *Backpacking*, 115-16. Fink recalls, that after checking into the Townsend hotel with two friends after all were dirtied from a long hike, that the town marshal barged into their room to ask them about their "business in town." He thought that they might be rum runners. This anecdote illustrates the law-and-order ambiance that W.B. Townsend sought to maintain in his logging communities.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, *Wild East*, 73. Brown states that Townsend alone of the northern lumber industrialists who operated timber operations in the Smokies lived in his company town.

Experienced with various other extractive enterprises of his parent corporation, such as coal mining and clay sewer tile production in Kentucky, Townsend purchased large tracts of land in the general vicinity of the Little River.<sup>19</sup> His company established a timber camp at Elkmont, situated on the west prong of the Little River about eighteen miles from Townsend. Elkmont in the early 1900s consisted of a small community of several families, churches, and stores. At one time, probably sometime between 1910 and 1920, Elkmont was the second largest town in Sevier County. Its population declined in the early 1920s as the Little River Lumber Company began harvesting timber along another prong of the river.<sup>20</sup>

While W.B. Townsend did not live in Elkmont, his paternalistic culture permeated the ambiance as evidenced by the Little River Lumber Company's addition of a commissary, a boarding house called the "Hotel Elkmont," a theater, a store, an infirmary, and modest homes for employees.<sup>21</sup> As was the case for the community of Townsend, Elkmont evidently already existed as a small village prior to the advent of industrial lumbering and therefore had developed its own community culture. Because Townsend spent less time there, probably to make irregular business inspections, his paternalistic stamp on Elkmont can be speculated to be less than that on the community of Townsend.

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<sup>19</sup> Cardwell, "Brief History of Elkmont Area," 1, *Old Elkmont Town Walk*, Cat. No. GRSM 16295, GSMNPA; John Ogden Morrell, "A History of the Cottages in the Vicinity of the Former Town of Elkmont. The Appalachian Club and the Wonderland Club, 1976," 1, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Library, Gatlinburg, Tenn. (Library hereafter cited as GSMNPL).

<sup>20</sup> Morrell, "History of the Cottages," 2, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Cardwell, "Brief History of Elkmont Area," 1.

The Hotel Elkmont, a modest wood-frame boarding house, served primarily laborers (and occasionally their families), but not the elite who toured through the area.<sup>22</sup> It is doubtful that it had a bawdy or adverse reputation given W.B. Townsend's tendency to hire family men. Its simple structure probably did not satisfy the sophisticated tastes of the tourist elite, who later stayed in the area at either the Wonderland Hotel or the Appalachian Club as guests of members, where their presence did contribute to a more heterogeneous socioeconomic structure in the area.

By 1908, the Little River Railroad Company had completed the railroad from Townsend to Elkmont. Building the railroad through the sharp curves of the river gorge was an "outstanding engineering achievement," according to one author; indeed, the construction cost for the eighteen-mile stretch ran upwards of \$360,000, an extraordinary expense in that era.<sup>23</sup> Probably to help defray this expense, the Little River Lumber Company inaugurated passenger service to Elkmont later that year. The "Elkmont

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<sup>22</sup> Schmidt and Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain*, 67; Brown, *Wild East*, 84.

<sup>23</sup> Lambert, "Logging on the Little River," 38. Lambert gives the year of completion as 1908. Morrell states the year as 1910 (Wallend to Elkmont railroad), and the "Old Elkmont Town Walk" splits the difference by giving year as 1909. Also, in addition to the complicated engineering design necessary to build the Little River gorge section of the railroad, engineering ingenuity was also required to bring harvested timber down the steep mountain slopes to Elkmont. Three-cylinder geared engines or slow-moving (about five to six miles per hour) train engines called "shays" carted timber down the slopes to Elkmont where employees restacked it onto railcars pulled by more traditional Baldwin locomotives to the Townsend sawmill. See Cardwell, "Brief History of Elkmont Area," 2.

Special,” an observation car hitched onto the regular logging train in Knoxville, proved so popular that the company increased its weekly run to daily service the following summer.<sup>24</sup>

Elkmont probably took its name from Elks Mountain, where the Knoxville Elks Club had long held its annual summer jamboree. A photo from 1911 or 1912 corroborates this speculation as it shows members of the group posing on the Elkmont Special in the Little River Gorge.<sup>25</sup> The beauty of the Little River gorge as an excursion destination also was not lost on those in areas more rural than Knoxville. *Montgomery's Vindicator*, a Sevierville newspaper, proclaimed in 1909 that “If Elkmont was a little heaven[,] I think that almost everybody would be saved for almost everybody wants to go to Elkmont.”<sup>26</sup>

If salvation indeed served as an impetus for a visit to Elkmont, then surely the business elite of Knoxville of the early 1900s counted themselves among the divinely anointed. Many of them traveled to the area to hunt and to fish. In February 1910, the Little River Lumber Company deeded about fifty clear-cut acres near the Jakes Spur of the Little River Railroad in the Elkmont area to an elitist Knoxville businessmen's organization called the Appalachian Club.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Jones, *Historic Architecture*, 71-72; Vic Weals, *Last Train to Elkmont: A Look Back at Life on the Little River in the Great Smoky Mountains* (Knoxville, Tenn.: Olden Press, 1993), 29.

<sup>25</sup> Cardwell, “Brief History of Elkmont Area,” 1; Gene Aiken, *Mountain Ways: An Album of the Smokies* (Gatlinburg, Tenn.: Buckhorn Press, 1983), 164.

<sup>26</sup> *Montgomery's Vindicator* [Sevierville] September 8, 1909, as quoted in *Old Elkmont Town Walk*, Cat. No. GRSM 16295, GSMNPA. The newspaper article is not a photocopy of the original but is a photocopy of a typescript of the original.

<sup>27</sup> *Deed Book* 16, 345, Register's Office, Sevier County, Tenn.; cited in Morrell, “History of the Cottages,” 2, 15.

As its male members began to bring their families into the Elkmont area, the Appalachian Club gradually evolved from a sportsman club into a posh summer colony consisting of a private lodge with cottages. Its exclusive membership in 1919 included such prominent Knoxville elites as J.W. Brownlee, a banker, and R.C. Matthews, a professor at the University of Tennessee. The 1919 roster also lists Townsend, whose membership probably explains the Little River Lumber Company's willingness to deed the land to the club.<sup>28</sup>

According to one individual who first began traveling to the area around 1920, Townsend needed a lodge to house lumber buyers and asked three Knoxville brothers-- John P., Charles B. (C.B.), and A.E. Carter--to build a hotel.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps reacting to Townsend's request and extrapolating from the popularity of the Appalachian Club property as to how they might benefit financially from developing a nearby tract, the Carter brothers bought several large clear-cut sections of land from the Little River Lumber Company in late 1911 and early 1912. They in turn formed the Wonderland Park

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<sup>28</sup> For more details on the elitism of the Appalachia Club, see Morrell, "History of the Cottages," passim; Thomason and Associates, *The History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community: Sevier County, Tennessee, Great Smoky Mountains National Park*, Report Prepared for the National Park Service Southeast Region, Atlanta, Georgia (Nashville: Thomason and Associates Preservation Planners, 20 March 1993) [catalogued as Elk Community Survey 1993, GRSM 45741, GSMNPA], passim; and Chiles, "Resorts," 15-2. Morrell intersperses commentary of the Appalachian Club with that of the Wonderland Club. Thomason and Associates devote much of their survey on the Appalachian Club architecture and its historical context.

<sup>29</sup> *George K. Preston Discusses the Wonderland Club, CCC, Trails, Snow Plows*, VC-367, videocassette, Smoky Mountain Collection, Anna Porter Public Library, Gatlinburg, Tenn. (Collection hereafter cited as Smoky Mountain Collection).

Company and deeded this land to the Wonderland Park.<sup>30</sup> In spring 1912 the Wonderland Park Company built the Wonderland Hotel for a cost between \$8,000 and \$10,000; it opened for business on June 15, 1912.<sup>31</sup>

The rapid rate of construction of the Wonderland Hotel implies that the Carters wished to receive a quick rate of return on their investment. In addition, the Carters subdivided the original 48.3 acres of land deeded by C.B. Carter to the Wonderland Park Company into over two thousand lots, which were sold by April 1913 along with an additional subdivided fifty-five acres deeded by C.B. to the Wonderland Park.<sup>32</sup> The subdivided lots averaged about 20 feet x 52 feet; the value of undeveloped lots in 1914 ranged from about \$25 to \$250, thus ensuring a handsome profit for the Carters, who had paid less than \$5 per acre.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Morrell, "History of the Cottages," 3; "Report on the Title to the Lots of Land Known as the Wonderland Park Club, Located at Elkmont, Tennessee," #1061, p. 2, Wonderland Park Collection, File I-12, Report on Title, GSMNPA; Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 12.

<sup>31</sup> *Wonderland Park Company v. Thos. M. Carter*, filed 10 April 1913, Chancery Court at Knoxville, Tennessee, Section I, Wonderland Park Collection, File I-5, *Wonderland Park Co. vs. T.M. Carter-Bill of Complaint, Final Decree*, GSMNPA.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> One acre equals 43,560 square feet. If at least 2000 lots were sold, then each lot averaged no more than 1045 square feet. The square footage can then be broken down linearly (20' x 52.3'; 25' x 41.8', etc.). Thomason and Associates state that if "it actually [had] been built, Wonderland Park would have had the density of a major city for its time. However, even if the grids of streets had been laid, many of the tracts were tiny and on sites not suitable for building." See Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 12. For the Carters' payment per acre, see Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 12. For 1914 prices, see "Tax List, Office of R.H. Shields, Trustee of Sevier County, Sevierville, Tennessee, December 3, 1914," Wonderland Park Collection, File I-6, Taxes, GSMNPA.



The Carters brokered arrangements with land agencies to sell the lots “as fast as possible.”<sup>34</sup> The social status of their prospective buyers evidently did not concern them as much as the economic status of the potential buyers’ banking accounts. Through the land agents, the Carters either directly or indirectly influenced unscrupulous dealings. One woman, having won a free lot at a movie drawing, was pressured to pay \$25 for an adjoining tract of land she had never seen. Another woman discovered almost twenty years after purchasing her lot that it had been sold previously to someone else. A few owners lost their unimproved lots in court as a result of the Carter brothers planting apple orchards to “develop” their property after the Wonderland Park Company had been legally liquidated in the 1920s.<sup>35</sup> Many of the original owners were women, possibly widows, primarily from Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Alabama, and Tennessee. One can speculate that the Carters preyed on their vulnerability or naivety in selling them lots.<sup>36</sup> Aside from their questionable ethics in selling land, the Carters caused many years of title problems in the 1930s–1940s when Wonderland properties were being deeded to the Tennessee Great

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<sup>34</sup> Wonderland Park Company v. Thos. M. Carter, Section I.

<sup>35</sup> Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 12. Morrell states in a letter that “the Company got into a row with its own stockholders, and finally went into voluntary liquidation in which boundary deeds were made to the stockholders in consideration of the cancellation by them of their stock certificates.” See “Memorandum for the Superintendent”, from John O. Morrell, Park Ranger, September 9, 1941, Wonderland Park Collection, File VII-5, Correspondence 1941, GSMNPA.

<sup>36</sup> “Index to Lots Sold by Wonderland Park Company,” Wonderland Park Company, File I-11, Index to Lots Sold, GSMNPA. Most women were listed in the index as, for example, “Mrs. Jane Doe” rather than as “Mrs. John Doe.” The former convention traditionally denotes that the husband is dead.

Smoky Mountains Park Commission or to the federal government for creation of the national park.

Around 1914 or 1915 the Wonderland Park Company sold the Wonderland Park Hotel to a group of Knoxvilleians who felt “snubbed” by the nearby Appalachian Club and proceeded to organize their own club and to rename their hotel the “Wonderland Club Hotel.”<sup>37</sup> In its early years, the Wonderland Park Club restricted facility use to members. After being approved by the club, each new member could then pay \$100, in addition to his \$5 to \$10 annual dues, to purchase a lot on which to build a cottage.<sup>38</sup>

Even though the Wonderland Park and Appalachian Clubs’ properties stood less than a mile apart, the two clubs’ memberships rarely socialized in the early years. On the one hand, a Wonderland member remembered that the consensus was that the Appalachian Club membership possessed “more money” and was of a “higher echelon” than his club’s membership. On the other hand, one woman recalled to an interviewer that her parents joined the Appalachian Club to spite the Wonderland Club, which had rejected her family’s application for membership.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Morrell, “History of the Cottages,” 3; Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 15; Schmidt and Hooks, *Whistle over the Mountain*, 69.

<sup>38</sup> *George K. Preston* videocassette.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*; Lisa L. Williams and Milton M. Klein, “Elkmont: A Brief History, Preliminary Report” (Knoxville, Tenn., 1990) (McClung Collection). The Elkmont report was never published in a final version, and no record was kept of the location of the unpublished sources cited in its footnotes, per a November 2002 e-mail communication between the author and Dr. Klein.

Ironically, in view of their disinterest in and perhaps disdain for each other, both the Appalachian Club and the Wonderland Park Club shared in their charters identical wording to promote fraternization:

closer relations [of] the people of various states. . . . [to make] leisure, [sic] recreative, pleasant, uplifting, and otherwise profitable. . . . and for the acquisition, maintenance, and use of clubhouses and ground, game, hunting, and fishing preserves.<sup>40</sup>

This common characterization of their purposes dovetails with Thorstein Veblen's 1899 articulation of the Gilded Age's elite class's trait of "conspicuous leisure" in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. The concept of leisure time or vacation, however, reaches back into the antebellum period in the southern Appalachians. Such health resorts and hotels as those at Henderson Springs and Montvale Springs in the Smokies welcomed guests as early as the 1830s. South Carolinian elites vacationed in the 1820s in summer colonies south of the Smokies once the Buncombe Turnpike from Greenville, South Carolina, to Greeneville, Tennessee, was finished. The "Grand Tour of the Virginia Springs" attracted many of the antebellum wealthy, who often based their selections of a dozen mineral springs resorts upon medical advice edicting that a certain group of spas be visited in a certain order for a given affliction.<sup>41</sup> While obviously some rugged parts of the Smokies were not easily accessible to tourists until construction of the railroads, outsiders seeking the cool, invigorating mountain air for health or leisure found respite in dozens of mountain inns

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<sup>40</sup> Chiles, "Resorts," 15-1; Virgil F. Carmichael, "The Acquisition of the First Tract of Land in the Creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," *Smoky Mountain Historical Society Journal and Newsletter* 25 (spring 1999): 5.

<sup>41</sup> Amory, *Last Resorts*, 452.

and mineral spring spas.<sup>42</sup> The Knoxville elite and other notables, including Governor Austin Peay, who formed the Wonderland Park Club therefore followed a century-old tradition of southern Appalachian resorts catering to outsiders.

The Wonderland members, at the same time, also constituted a new class of mountain hotel visitors. Margaret Lynn Brown defines two waves of hotel visitors: those traveling to the mineral spring resorts in antebellum times and those visiting mineral spring resorts and mountain inns to escape from the increasing industrialism of the southern Appalachians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The elite who established the Wonderland and the Appalachian Clubs belonged to the second wave of rich industrialists and businessmen. In addition, as historian T.J. Jackson Lears points out, a revival of an emphasis on rural or simple life also occurred during the early twentieth century. By the eve of World War I, the revival was largely relegated to weekend leisure activities.<sup>43</sup> Whereas the club families often stayed at Elkmont for several weeks during the summer, the harried husbands often were only able to escape the workplace pressures when they joined the families on the weekends.

While locals in some parts of the Smokies may have been used to travelers passing through to enjoy the regional mineral springs or to relax for several days at a mountain

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<sup>42</sup> Margaret Ann Roth, "Early Hotels," *Smoky Mountain Historical Society Newsletter* 3 (May 1977): 5; Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 8; Dunaway, *First American Frontier*, 64; Chiles, "Resorts," passim.

<sup>43</sup> Brown, *Wild East*, 83-84; T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 61-65.

inn, the concept of outsiders buying property to build a second home or to rent rooms for the summer season may have been unfamiliar to them. When the Wonderland Club members built cottages on their lots as second homes or rented rooms either in the Wonderland Hotel or its annex, they had ample opportunity each summer to interact with the locals.

As a consequence of the interaction, the class structure at Elkmont in some respects became more stratified. An elderly man remembered in 1992 that as a boy, he often stood on the Wonderland Hotel porch, watching the passengers swish off the train in their elegant finery.<sup>44</sup> Dorie Cope, a young wife in a lumber camp, understood the concept that the “rich were different” and that the Wonderland Hotel was “off limits” to local inhabitants. She viewed with envy the society ladies from Knoxville sitting on the hotel’s front porch, “daintily” fanning away insects.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, one of the Bradshaw sisters, whose family stayed in a nearby logging camp, recollected in an oral history interview that the logging community had no contact with the summer residents because of the perceived socioeconomic differences.<sup>46</sup>

Rather than view the club members as elites to be respected from a distance, some locals saw them as fair game when it came to charging fees for services. One author recalls that her brother and brother-in-law as teens hauled trunks from the

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<sup>44</sup> *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 16 November 1992.

<sup>45</sup> Bush, *Dorie*, 199.

<sup>46</sup> *Georgie Bradshaw and the Bradshaw Sisters Discuss Elkmont Logging, Schools*, VC-370, videocassette, Smoky Mountain Collection.

railway depot up the steep hill to the Wonderland Hotel. One wealthy lady balked at paying the standard thirty-five cents they charged to carry her trunk from the depot to her second-floor room. They promptly took the trunk down the stairs to the lobby where it remained until she paid, not only the original thirty-five cents, but also an additional fifteen cents they demanded for them to redeposit the trunk in her room.<sup>47</sup> The locals in this example did not obsequiously cater to the society lady but asserted their rights as porters deserving fair payment.

As a converse of the above, sometimes the locals did not consider that the club members might themselves deserve fair payment. One club member's daughter taught for five months at the Elkmont School for local children during a period of teacher shortages during World War I. However, her perceived status as a wealthy elite prompted the school superintendent to withhold her paycheck because he assumed she did not really need the money.<sup>48</sup>

Much of the recreational activity centered about the Wonderland Hotel was open to locals unlike that at the Appalachian Club, whose members or guests alone could enjoy its dances, bridge games, and dinners held at "Millionaires Row."<sup>49</sup> Entertainment at the

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<sup>47</sup> Gladys Trentham Russell, *It Happened in the Smokies: A Mountaineer's Memories of Happenings in the Smoky Mountains in Pre-Park Days* (Alcoa, Tenn.: Gladys Trentham Russell, 1998), 59-60.

<sup>48</sup> *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 27 December 1980.

<sup>49</sup> R.C. Matthews in a 1965 interview recalled being rebuffed at the Appalachian Club for lunch even though he entered the dining room with a friend who was a member. He scrounged for food and finally found sardines, cheese, and crackers in the commissary ("commissary" could refer to the Hotel Elkmont boarding house). Although he later joined

Wonderland included Saturday night dances, formal in the early years with a several-piece orchestra, and slanted more toward square dancing in the later decades. Sometimes, over two hundred people attended a Wonderland dance; in particular, young men from a nearby private summer camp often came to meet the daughters of club members, whom they considered to be the “epitome of glamour.”<sup>50</sup> While the hotel newsletter remembered in the 1980s that alcohol was prohibited publicly in the early days, one old-timer recalled that in the 1920s, people arriving for the dances would “get into corn whiskey and have a time.”<sup>51</sup> Horseshoes, card games, horseback riding, lawn tennis, canoeing, and swimming took place around the hotel. Outdoorsmen stayed there while on hiking excursions, fishing expeditions, or hunting trips, although many types of game had been outlawed by the 1920s because of their scarcity in the denuded mountains.<sup>52</sup> Many families, local as well as those who traveled by train in the early days from Knoxville, came specifically for the Sunday dinners at the Wonderland.<sup>53</sup>

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the Appalachian Club, the club never apologized. See *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 5 March 1978.

<sup>50</sup> *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 24 May 1990.

<sup>51</sup> Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 17; “Dining at Wonderland,” Wonderland Hotel newsletter, *Old Elkmont Town Walk*, Cat. No. GRSM 16295, GSMNPA; *Knoxville News-Sentinel* 8 August 1990.

<sup>52</sup> Chiles, “Resorts,” 15-4; Robert Mason, *The Lure of the Great Smokies* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company; Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1927), 319; Fink, *Backpacking*, 45-46.

<sup>53</sup> Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 18; Russell, *It Happened in the Smokies*, 60. The club members appear to fit Veblen’s definition of the leisure class’s “social duties”: “performance of conspicuous leisure, in the way of calls, drives, clubs, sewing-circles, sports, charity organizations, and other like

Food served at the Wonderland largely depended upon ease of transportation and local availability. Local hunters and fisherman sold bear meat, wild rabbit, and mountain trout to the Wonderland.<sup>54</sup> A general store owner in the mid-1910s in the Sugarlands area regularly sent a wagon loaded with locally grown berries, chestnuts, honey, and other produce to the Wonderland Hotel for resale.<sup>55</sup> Occasionally, before the construction of roads in the early 1920s, families staying for several weeks brought their own food, and trains brought in supplies as needed.<sup>56</sup> The locals therefore not only benefited economically by their trade with the Wonderland but also at times interacted directly with either the Wonderland staff, not all of whom were local, or indirectly with the club members.<sup>57</sup> Little overt socialization, beyond any business transactions, occurred between the club members and the locals.<sup>58</sup> By being exposed to the wealthy through trade at the

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social functions.” See Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Reprints of Economic Classics (New York: Macmillan, 1899; reprint, New York: Viking Press, 1965, 65 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

<sup>54</sup> Sevier County Heritage Book Committee, *Sevier County, Tennessee and its Heritage* (Waynesville, N.C.: Don Mills, 1994), 111; *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 8 August 1990.

<sup>55</sup> Kate Whaley Marshall, “A Historical Scan of the Life of John Mitchell Whaley,” *Smoky Mountain Historical Society Newsletter* 3 (July 1977): 3-4.

<sup>56</sup> Betsy Beller Creekmore, *Knoxville* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1958), 214.

<sup>57</sup> One elite mentioned in conjunction with Wonderland management was Mary Hume Crozier, whose biography in the chapter “Pioneers and Civic Leaders” states that she operated the Wonderland Park resort for a number of years. See Rothrock, ed., *French Broad-Holston Country*, 405.

<sup>58</sup> *George K. Preston* videocassette.



Wonderland, and probably the Appalachian Club, the locals perhaps subconsciously reshaped their cultural beliefs to take into account any elitist attitudes encountered at the Elkmont enclaves.

When debarking from the Little River train in the early years, the passengers' first glimpse of the Wonderland was that of an imposing, white-frame, two-story building with a one-story wraparound porch. The Wonderland Club Hotel and its adjacent properties changed little over the decades.<sup>59</sup> The original section built in 1912 consisted of a grand lobby with a wooden check-in counter on one side and a stone two-hearth fireplace opening into both the lobby and a social room separated by a wooden partition from a ballroom. The upstairs guestrooms were furnished with Craftsman pieces; most rooms lacked a private bath. Local carpenters and builders were typically employed, thus again contributing to the socioeconomic interaction between the mountain people and the elite.<sup>60</sup>

In 1920, fourteen Wonderland families who desired apartments but did not need a kitchen to prepare meals, built a two-story, white-frame annex, connected to the hotel by an open-air, wood-frame breezeway. Each apartment consisted of two rooms joined by a

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<sup>59</sup> Roy Patty, who worked at the Wonderland Hotel from 1984 to 1992, sketched the layout of the hotel for me and described its interior. His memory corroborates the same information presented in Thomason and Associates. Therefore, I believe him to be an accurate source for interior details; see Patty interview. As for hotel rates, in 1927, they were \$2.50 per day, with lower rates by the week. Other mountain hotels in the area at the time posted similar rates. See Mason, *Lure of the Great Smokies*, 300-302. By 1933, Wonderland rates were \$3.50 per day or \$19 for a week; see Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 20.

<sup>60</sup> Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 66, 100-106.

bathroom, a minor extravagance in most homes in that area at the time.<sup>61</sup> As in the hotel, the simple rustic interior design and furniture conveyed the Craftsman period.<sup>62</sup> A few years later, in 1930, servants' quarters were constructed as a one-story frame building with a cobblestone chimney. The construction was of fine enough quality that the club later converted the quarters into a club member's cottage.<sup>63</sup> The cottages or cabins also retained a Craftsman influence and largely contained "Adirondack Rustic Style" furniture.<sup>64</sup>

The grounds, having been clear-cut earlier by the Little River Lumber Company, had little natural landscaping. Showing the political clout of the Wonderland elite, the club worked out an arrangement with the park superintendent in 1936 to move small trees and shrubs from park property if the work were done under the supervision of the park forester.<sup>65</sup>

The Craftsman style, the Adirondack Rustic furniture, and the natural landscaping used at the Wonderland mesh with Veblen's observation that the leisure class is secure

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<sup>61</sup> Chiles, "Resorts," 15-3, photo; Patty interview; Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 106; George K. Preston videocassette.

<sup>62</sup> Thomason and Associates, *History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community*, 80, 106.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 25-26, 56.

<sup>65</sup> J.R. Eakin, Superintendent, to Harry H. Slatery, President, The Wonderland Club Hotel, 5 December 1936, Wonderland Park Collection, File VII-1, Correspondence-1935, GSMNPA.

enough in its reputation that their tastes “do not so consistently insist on an unremitting demonstration of expensiveness.” Therefore, “a predilection for the rustic and ‘natural’ in parks and grounds makes its appearance on these higher social and intellectual levels.”<sup>66</sup>

While the architecture of the hotel, annex, and cottages obviously does not reflect the ostentatious style of a Biltmore Estates, the quality of material and style itself probably conveyed a sense of prestige to many of the locals, thus aiding in the stratification of socioeconomic classes.

Historian Ronald D. Eller asserts that “industrialization introduced rigid class distinctions into the highland culture.”<sup>67</sup> The southern elite, however, who joined the Wonderland Park Club, who stayed at the Wonderland Hotel, or who built Craftsmen cottages on the Wonderland estate did not impose an outside culture on an isolated homogenous mountain society. Nor did W.B. Townsend as a northern industrialist shape and control the societal structures of the logging camps at Townsend or at Elkmont, even if he did act paternalistically toward the inhabitants. Rather, the Townsend and Elkmont residents were already members of small, established communities and part of a larger diverse agricultural and business mountain society that interacted with the “outside” world via trade and commerce long before W.B. Townsend visited the area. In addition, the concept of mountain resorts in the Smokies did not originate with the Wonderland. Wealthy people from other parts of the country had traveled to the southern Appalachian spas and resorts since the early 1800s as a form of leisure or vacation, thereby

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<sup>66</sup> Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*, 136-37.

<sup>67</sup> Eller, “Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers,” 13.

contradicting the isolated mountaineer paradigm. The Wonderland did provide several ways, however, in which elites did influence the existing socioeconomic class structure. Locals interacted with hotel residents or staff by working at the hotel, by providing foodstuff or other goods to it, or by participating in such recreational activities as dances held at the hotel. The dress, demeanor, and manners of the elite often captivated or intrigued the Elkmont year-round inhabitants and influenced their attitudes toward their own place in society relative to that of the elites. The architecture of the Wonderland and its environs, while not grandiose, displayed a Craftsman style associated with the middle and upper classes of the time. Local residents were undoubtedly reminded of the wealth every time they walked by the banks of the Little River near the hotel, thus formulating subconsciously their views of the socioeconomic strata in their area. Whether the locals felt subservient to the elites, whether they were in awe, or whether they welcomed the opportunity for commerce, their socioeconomic view of their society was influenced by the elites.

In November 1992 the Wonderland Hotel bade its last guest good-bye. During the next ten years, the remaining property owners in what is now designated the Elkmont Historic District turned in their cottage keys. These events signified the end of the special leases between both the Wonderland Club and Appalachian Club members and the federal government, which allowed the club members to maintain their properties within the borders of the land that Congress designated in 1934 as the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Today, environmental groups and descendants of families evicted from land acquired by the government for the national park are pitted against historical preservationists and club descendants as to the fate of the buildings in the Elkmont area. A

socioeconomic class debate is brewing: the elites whose families bought land only in the 1910s or later versus the lower-class locals who lost land that had been in their the 1910s or later versus the lower-class locals who lost land that had been in their families for generations. The outcome remains to be seen.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> To learn about the displacement of locals from property later incorporated into the park, see Daniel S. Pierce, “The Barbarism of the Huns: Family and Community Removal in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 57 (spring/summer 1998): 62-79. For more on the leasing arrangements between the Elkmont groups with the federal government, see Morrell, “History of the Cottages,” 4-21. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park Library and Archives each contain pertinent newspaper articles, government documents, and other records in several collections, including the Wonderland Park Collection, GSMNPA.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

Five resorts in East Tennessee--Montvale Springs, Tate Spring, Unaka Springs, the Cloudland Hotel, and the Wonderland Hotel--stand testament to the proposition that this region engaged fully with areas outside southern Appalachia. Their origins, clientele, and health and leisure offerings followed those of other resorts of the same time period. Moreover, the effects of national socioeconomic trends on the hotels serve as a contradiction to the stereotype of southern Appalachia as an isolated region barricaded from the outside world by mountainous terrain.

Mineral spring resorts in colonial America largely patterned themselves after the English spas, which followed the ancient tradition of drinking and bathing in mineral and thermal waters dating back to antiquity. Saratoga Springs and the Virginia springs best represent the northern and southern spring regions, which developed in the late 1700s largely as a result of white settlers discovering the therapeutic benefits of waters formerly frequented by Native Americans. While both the southern and northern springs attracted invalids and those seeking refuge from cholera and summer fever epidemics, both gradually emphasized social and leisure pursuits, which often attracted healthy visitors in search of pleasure and amusement.

Saratoga and the Virginia springs contained such public spaces as spacious and long verandahs, gazebos, and landscaped gardens patterned after English spa design. The public spaces, particularly the hotel porches, allowed the aristocrats to view others and to be on display themselves. While guest room accommodations were often small and simply furnished, the hotel parlors, dining rooms, and ballrooms functioned as interior public spaces, permitting elites to socialize.

Both Saratoga and the Virginia springs allowed for more informal etiquette and social networking than was possible either within the constraints of traditional social decorum or through the relatively isolated life on a southern plantation. Following the English spa tradition of a master of ceremonies, White Sulphur Springs employed a “social director” whose purpose was to arrange suitable amusements and oversee etiquette; in Saratoga, older married matrons unofficially provided the same function.

The remoteness of the Virginia springs in the southern Appalachians added to its allure; the farther from turnpike or rail access, the greater the appeal of the resort. The Romantic ideal of a wild nature easily played out at the relatively inaccessible Virginia springs just as it did at the rural Catskill resorts in New York. White Sulphur Springs, the most remote Virginia spring, became the most fashionable southern spring and a rival to Saratoga in terms of the aristocracy of its guests as elite planters and northerners congregated there yearly before the Civil War.

Guests at the northern and southern springs largely constituted the wealthiest, the most socially-connected, and the most famous of American society. The working class--the unskilled laborers and farmhands--could not afford vacations until the early 1900s. Even then, they enjoyed their leisure time in small increments, perhaps at a day picnic on the grounds of a rustic watering hole. While some authors put forth the concept that the middle class--the shop owners, land-owning farmers, and the growing clerical and office staffs of businesses and the government--began to travel to resorts in the 1850s, the middle class largely did not visit resorts until increasing rail access, more affordable fares, and the concept of company vacation developed in the decades after the Civil War.

The therapeutic value of water gained a new following during the reform movements of the 1840s. The water-cure movement, or hydropathy, derived from the teachings of an Austrian peasant, Vincenz Priessnitz. Priessnitz believed that cold-water wraps followed by sweating under blankets and adherence to certain dietary and exercise regimens could cure any disease. Water-cure institutes were organized primarily in New York, site of many reform movements; the antebellum South, however, boasted a fair number, including one in the southern Appalachian county of Franklin in Tennessee.

The fact that a seemingly remote southern Appalachian county participated in a health reform largely concentrated in the North lends credence to the concept that southern Appalachia wholly engaged in national trends. Its peripheral-fringe economy, for example, as sociologist Wilma Dunaway explains via the world-systems model, supplied deerskins in the colonial period to the semi-peripheral colonies of Georgia and the Carolinas and to the peripheral middle and northern American colonies. In the antebellum 1800s, southern Appalachia evolved into an extractive region from which minerals, timber, and farm goods were taken to other markets where they were either further processed into finished goods or directly sold. East Tennessee in particular gained prominence for its iron ore extractive and processing industries.

Dunaway constructs a travel capitalism model to demonstrate that southern Appalachian resort owners largely lived outside the region, thus contributing to capital drainage. She includes in her model the hog and livestock drovers who stayed at drover stands on their way to markets; many drover stands, especially those in western North Carolina, evolved into resorts. I find minor fault with her travel capitalism model based on the criteria used for determining absentee landlords and on the lack of analysis of the effects of antebellum resorts on local economies. I also



question the actual impact of business cycles both on the ability of elites to travel during financial panics (many of them did) and on the direct correlation of livestock prices to livestock production in certain areas of southern Appalachia (historian John Inscoc points out, for example, that western North Carolina farmers increased livestock and corn production in spite of declining livestock prices because of their closer proximity to coastal markets than Ohio River Valley producers).<sup>1</sup> I agree fully, however, with Dunaway's well-constructed argument that southern Appalachia participated in the global economy. In other words, southern Appalachia in the antebellum period did not constitute a world of subsistence yeoman farmers.

While western North Carolina resorts mainly developed because of the proliferation of hog drover stands, southwestern Virginia mineral springs grew because of increasing rail mileage in the region. The southwestern Virginia springs' claims of eliteness, however, stood in direct correlation to their distance from White Sulphur Springs: the closer the resort lay to White Sulphur, the greater its allure. In the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee, encompassing all of East Tennessee and largely the Cumberland Plateau of Middle Tennessee, the initial attraction largely relied initially on the curative powers of the mineral springs and then subsequently on the hotel and grounds design and the resort's leisure offerings.

The most famous antebellum springs in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee were Beersheba and Montvale. Other resorts, largely concentrated in Franklin County and in parts of the Smokies, attracted mainly in-state elites. Dunaway notes, however, that Deep South planters, not just in-state elites, also visited Franklin County's Estill and Winchester Springs, Rhea

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<sup>1</sup> Inscoc, *Mountain Masters, Slavery, and the Sectional Crisis in Western North Carolina*, 51.

County's Rhea Springs, and Grainger County's Tate Spring. An analysis of most of these springs in the aggregate--which includes selected other watering holes in southern Appalachian Tennessee--compared to Red Boiling Springs and Tyree Springs in Middle Tennessee, indicates that the southern Appalachian springs offered the same variety of health and leisure pursuits as those in Middle Tennessee. Indeed, several of the southern Appalachian springs appeared to outrank Middle Tennessee springs in terms of exclusivity. Beersheba, for example, attracted planters from Louisiana and other parts of the Deep South; Tyree Springs' most elite clientele were regional politicians. All resorts examined offered such social amenities as dancing, croquet, bowling, fishing, or nature excursions; in addition, most resorts prided themselves on their meals.

Notwithstanding the opulence of Beersheba, Montvale, or Alleghany Springs in the Smokies, White Sulphur Springs and other Virginia springs retained their position as the resorts for southern elite to visit. Historian Theodore Corbett argues, based on his assessment of English spas' popularity, that the success of a resort depends upon several factors. These factors include the willingness of its proprietor to spend sufficient funds to develop and maintain a pleasing infrastructure, to incorporate public spaces for elites to promenade, and to wait a sufficient (long) period of time to receive a return on his capital investment. The success of White Sulphur Springs, in my view, relied not so much on Corbett's factors--many of which can be argued for in other southern Appalachian springs--but upon the supposition that elite clientele at White Sulphur Springs continued to attract other elites. I contend that once a resort attracted the fashionable of the day, it continued to attract similar clientele, those of like wealth and distinguished family background. In this manner, White Sulphur Springs secured its reputation. The fact that the aristocracy sought out White Sulphur Springs and other fashionable southern Appalachian resorts

demonstrates that the reputation of the resorts was known throughout the United States.

Antebellum southern Appalachia constituted a major health and leisure destination of those with sufficient funds and time.

East Tennessee fully participated in the mineral springs resort movement. Classification schemes of mineral water devised by physicians and geologists noted the abundance of springs in Tennessee (the state contained more spring resorts than any other state, about half of them in southern Appalachia, according to an 1886 U.S. Geological Survey report).<sup>2</sup> Concurrent with the printing of increasingly complex mineral water classifications and springs compilations after the Civil War was the publication of a growing number of medical articles on the therapeutics of mineral water. In the midst of the nineteenth and early twentieth century national interest in mineral springs grew many watering holes in East Tennessee, several of which were located in the Smokies and others along the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad.

Three East Tennessee mineral springs--Montvale Springs, Tate Spring, and Unaka Springs--symbolize the fashionable popularity of mineral springs and other national trends occurring in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Montvale Springs, the earliest East Tennessee resort, was located near Chilhowee Mountain in the Smokies. Montvale gathered antebellum fame under the patronage of Asa Watson, a Mississippi planter who built Montvale's widely touted seven-gabled hotel and planted its grounds with exotic plant species gathered during his extensive travels. Sterling Lanier succeeded Watson as proprietor in the late 1850s and continued Watson's investment in Montvale by, for example, hiring landscape gardeners and even

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<sup>2</sup> Peale, "Lists and Analyses of the Mineral Springs of the United States," *passim*.

a French cook. Visitors to Montvale included Deep South planters and Europeans, attesting to the fact that Montvale's location in the Smokies did not prove impossible for guests to reach even before the completion of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad to Knoxville in 1855. In contrast to many antebellum resorts catering exclusively to the elite, Montvale received a fair number of local middle class visitors. These East Tennesseans came for therapeutic purposes, not for the dancing, billiards, and other leisure activities provided by the hotel. After the Confederate-sympathizing Laniers fled southern Appalachia during the Civil War, Montvale saw several proprietors, but none of whom invested time and money to the degree of the Laniers or Watson. It reached its hey-day in the late 1800s. A 1901 typhoid epidemic contaminating the waters, competition from other resorts in the early twentieth century, the advent of paved roads and automobiles serving to take potential guests to other vacation spots, and a hotel fire in 1934 all contributed to Montvale's decline.

Tate Spring, located in Grainger County, stood at the intersection of two pre-colonial roads that today are paved over in places by U.S. Highway 11W and U.S. Highway 25E. Unlike Montvale and the Virginia springs, Tate clientele reached the resort easily by carriage or by rail. Like Montvale and many of the Saratoga and Virginia springs hotels, Tate flourished under the attention given by its proprietors, Samuel Tate and the Thomas Tomlinson family.

Tate stands unique among the mineral water resorts examined in that it extended its health offerings even while investing in additional recreational activities. It offered in the 1880s cold and hot water baths, a type of latter-day water cure. Its foray into "Electro Therapeutic Baths," a type of electrical stimulation to treat various diseases, coincided with similar therapies offered around the country in the late 1800s. Moreover, Tate shipped its water across the United States and even

to Germany, the home of many mineral springs resorts. Its marketing of bottled water again shows the parallel between Tate's health offerings and those offered by such mineral springs outside southern Appalachia as Poland Spring in Maine and Saratoga.

Among recreational offerings, Tate offered morning and evening dances, dramatic readings, bowling, horseback riding, and croquet. While most of these activities accounted for many of the leisure opportunities available at other northern and southern resorts, Tate also boasted a nine-hole golf course by the 1910s. Only four other communities in Tennessee had links, four of which were located in southern Appalachia. The appearance of golf, traditionally a sport associated with the privileged, occurring in the early 1900s in East Tennessee again reflects southern Appalachia's socioeconomic integration with the rest of the country.

Whereas Montvale and Tate both attracted elite from the Deep South, Tate also drew wealthy patrons from the Midwest and the North. The Studebakers from Indiana visited faithfully over the years, even tendering an offer to buy the resort from the Tomlinsons in the 1920s. The Mellons of Pittsburgh also endorsed the mineral water; Sam Snead and Ben Hogan played golf at Tate. Tate continued to attract wealthy out-of-state guests until the 1920s. From that decade until its closing in 1941, predominantly local and regional middle-class visitors registered at the hotel. The Great Depression limited travel for some; for others, they could afford to remain at the resort for only a few days instead of the traditional summer stay of several weeks. Moreover, as Corbett notes, once the middle class began to spend time at the resorts normally frequented by the elite, the wealthy sought exclusivity at other retreats.

Unaka Springs symbolizes the small rustic retreat in southern Appalachia in the 1880s through the 1930s that attracted the upper middle class in its hey-day and, in its later years,

members of the middle class. It stood on the Nolichucky River in Unicoi County, about four miles southwest of Erwin and less than a mile from North Carolina. Its first owners, Arthur and Adeline Deaderick, were of regional elite lineage: Arthur's father was Chief Justice of the Tennessee State Supreme Court, and Adeline's grandfather was Governor Isaac Shelby of Tennessee.

Like Montvale, Tate, and many other watering holes, Unaka Springs consisted of a central hotel with verandahs surrounded by private or leased cottages. Local elite--Erwin lawyers, railroad management, and doctors--predominantly used the cottages as summer homes. The Unaka Springs Hotel itself was small, consisting of forty rooms; overflow crowds occasionally camped on its grounds. While locals enjoyed picnics on its lawn or used a nearby swimming hole, they did not socialize regularly with the upper middle class from such states as New York or Florida, which congregated there during the summer to drink the mineral spring water and to indulge in walks, dancing, croquet, and other amusements.

That such a small watering hole hidden in the Unaka Mountains attracted visitors from states outside southern Appalachia shows the rising popularity of vacations at the turn of the century and attests to the growing awareness of tourist resorts advertised in newspaper Sunday travel sections and railroad promotional guides. Unaka Springs was part of another resort trend. Bottled water, as at Tate, constituted a thriving business at Unaka, which sold its water for exactly the same price, five dollars per barrel, as did the more exclusive Tate.

Unaka Springs' appeal probably partially lay in its relative inaccessibility. For the first several years, visitors reached it by fording the Nolichucky or by gingerly walking a steep trail carved out of a hill behind the hotel. The Charleston, Cincinnati & Chicago Railroad Company built a bridge crossing the Nolichucky at the Unaka resort about four years after it started

receiving guests. Until the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed a road out of the steep trail in the 1930s, the railroad provided the primary means of access to the hotel. Ironically, rather than introducing new upper middle and middle-class patrons to the resort, the road diminished the exclusivity of the hotel by attracting locals who upon occasion found it a convenient spot for drinking. The owner of the hotel in the 1950s removed its third story and middle section so that two separate buildings could be rented; today, a family in New Jersey with relatives in the Unaka Springs community owns the property for a summer residence.

The Cloudland Hotel on top of Roan Mountain, straddling the border between western North Carolina's Mitchell County and Northeast Tennessee's Carter County, attracted very wealthy clientele as did Montvale in antebellum times and Tate during the 1870s through the early 1920s. It also offered mineral springs, but they represented a footnote compared to the Cloudland's major therapeutic benefit: relief from hay fever. Beginning in the mid-1880s, the "Hay Fever Brigade" arrived at the Cloudland towards the end of June, probably after the rhododendron bloom had peaked, to spend several weeks seeking relief from pollen found at lower altitudes. In the late 1800s, hay fever constituted a very fashionable disease, perceived to inflict the upper class--those who lived in urban areas and engaged in intellectual professions--as opposed to the rural farm hands or workers who performed hard menial labor. Among elites traveling through western North Carolina or East Tennessee by rail and then hiring a hack or buggy for a several hour ride to the Cloudland's elevation at over six thousand feet were most probably John Jacob Astor, George W. Vanderbilt, Harvey Firestone, Henry Ford, and a variety of European nobility.

Cloudland also attracted botanists, geologists, and others well known in scientific circles. Asa Gray, the Harvard botanist; John Muir, the Sierra Club founder and naturalist; and a host of academic professors studied the rare flora, geology, and the unusual atmospheric and meteorological conditions found at its high elevation.

Responsible for the mix of scientists and Gilded Age capitalists congregating at the top of the Roan was General John T. Wilder, a Union commander made famous through his exploits at the Battle of Hoover's Gap near Murfreesboro and Chickamauga. Wilder built the Cloudland originally as a summer cottage for his family and friends; its popularity inspired him to build a spruce lodge containing eventually about twenty rooms and, in about 1885, to open a three-story hotel of almost two hundred rooms.

Guests at the Cloudland enjoyed croquet, bowling, dancing, botanizing, hiking, and even, for a brief period, golf using weighted golf balls at the high elevation. Like the guests at Montvale, Tate, and Unaka, the Cloudland clientele probably had limited interaction with the locals, who often supplied the resorts with produce, meats, dairy products, and craft items for sale on occasion. In addition, at the Cloudland, locals worked in the kitchen, as chamber maids, as hack drivers, and as caretakers. More public positions--dining room waitress jobs--were reserved for female students from the Asheville Normal School.

Wilder earned the admiration of a wide spectrum of the East Tennessee population. From the North originally, he settled in Chattanooga after the Civil War where he served several months as mayor. He engaged in a wide variety of extractive industrial enterprises, most notably iron ore mining in the Unaka Mountains, and participated in civic affairs wherever he lived, whether Johnson City, Roan Mountain Station, Knoxville, or elsewhere. Confederate and Union veterans



alike revered him. One Knoxville paper even called for him to consider a bid for governor. Unlike the stereotypical carpetbagger seeking personal gain at the expense of the southern populace after the Civil War, Wilder represents the northern interests intent on rebuilding and re-energizing the South.

Once Wilder moved out of Northeast Tennessee, his attention to the Cloudland waned. He sold it to a local, who then parceled it out room by room. Residents of Mitchell and Carter Counties took the furniture, the wood frames, and even the hotel doors to use in their own residences.

The last resort covered in this thesis, the Wonderland Hotel, also originated because of the efforts of a northerner. W.B. Townsend, a lumberman from Pennsylvania, began logging the Little River region in the Smokies in 1901. Once the area known as Elkmont was cleared of timber, his enterprise, the Little River Lumber Company, donated about fifty acres of land in 1910 to an elitist Knoxville businessmen's organization called the Appalachian Club. The Appalachian Club eventually evolved from a hunting and fishing preserve into a posh summer colony consisting of a private lodge with cottages. Because he needed a hotel to house lumber buyers, Townsend contracted with three Knoxville brothers--John P., Charles B., and A.E. Carter--to build such an establishment. In June 1912, the Wonderland Hotel opened for business. It attracted not only businessmen, but also area elites seeking repose in the Smokies, who reached it by rail in the early years and then by a road laid over the railbed once logging ceased in the area.

The Wonderland, like the mineral springs resorts discussed and like the Appalachian Club, consisted of a main building surrounded by summer cottages. While the Wonderland Hotel and the Appalachian Club stood less than a mile apart, the two groups rarely socialized, in part due to

several members in each group considering the members in the other group to be pretentious or of a different clique.

Dancing, horseshoes, horseback riding, canoeing, lawn tennis, swimming, and hiking constituted some of the Wonderland's activities. Outdoorsmen passing through the Smokies occasionally spent the night there; businessmen from Knoxville, however, often dropped their families off at both the Wonderland and the Appalachian Club for the summer, visiting them on weekends.

The Wonderland did not offer such tangible health benefits as mineral waters or relief from hay fever. Rather, it provided an avenue to reconnect with nature in view of the increasing industrialization of the early twentieth century just as the Black Mountains in western North Carolina attracted outdoor enthusiasts intent on proving, as historian Timothy Silver notes, their "survival of the fittest" in a natural setting as opposed to the cutthroat workplace environment.<sup>3</sup>

Smoky Mountain residents in the environs of the Wonderland and the Appalachian Clubs as at the Cloudland and at Montvale sold produce to the Wonderland. As at Roan Mountain, the Smoky Mountain residents knew that the elite were different but did not appear to begrudge them their wealth.

W.B. Townsend, like Wilder, earned the respect of the locals and his Little River Lumber Company employees. According to historian Margaret Brown, he alone of the northern lumber industrialists who operated lumber enterprises in the Smokies lived in a company town. He lived in Tuckaleechee Cove, renamed Townsend in his honor, where timber from the mountains was

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<sup>3</sup> Silver, *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains*, 128-30.

processed at saw mills. He engaged in civic affairs in Townsend, practicing what historian Crandall A. Shifflett characterizes as “contentment sociology,” keeping his workforce pacified through such philanthropic gestures as buying Christmas presents for children and giving “loans” to young people to attend college.<sup>4</sup>

The Wonderland Hotel did not founder due to the advent of paved roads and automobiles offering transportation to other resorts. Nor did it suffer during the Great Depression. Rather, its demise occurred in the early 1990s when the federal government declined to extend leases to the Elkmont cottage owners and to the Wonderland management, whose property stood in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The debate over the fate of the Wonderland--whether to renovate it for public or government use or to allow it to crumble into the forest--stands unresolved as of 2004.

The resorts examined in this thesis represent health and leisure trends in American society in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Montvale, Tate, and Unaka Springs signify the country’s interest in using mineral waters as curative and palliative regimens from the early 1830s through the Great Depression. The high elevations of Montvale, Tate, and the Cloudland beckoned southerners escaping from the cholera and summer fevers of the Deep South. The Cloudland’s altitude of over six thousand feet attracted those afflicted with (or presumed to be afflicted with) the fashionable disease of hay fever, placing the Cloudland in rivalry with the White Mountains, whose hotel keepers boasted of their resorts’ pristine air quality.

Visitors to these resorts engaged in tours of watering holes just as guests at the Virginia springs made the rounds of White Sulphur, Blue Sulphur, and a host of other colorfully named

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<sup>4</sup> Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, 54-55.

watering holes in the western Virginia mountains. An antebellum southeastern Tennessee elite pronounced Montvale's water as more therapeutic than that of Saratoga and the Virginia springs. An ailing guest at Tate wrote his wife at Franklin County's East Brook Springs that he might soon try the waters there. A hay fever sufferer praised the Cloudland's location for curing her hay fever whereas the White Mountains and Caesar's Head in South Carolina had failed. The traffic among the nation's health resorts, including those in the southern Appalachian counties of Tennessee, demonstrates the interconnectivity of the regions throughout the country.

Guests at the East Tennessee resorts in antebellum times engaged themselves in the romanticism of nature just as travelers to the Catskills or Virginia springs did. Whether walking through the carefully landscaped gardens at Montvale or sitting on a wide verandah at Tate, they indulged themselves with the "wild" or "sublime" beauty about them. After the Civil War, when railroad mileage dramatically increased, resorts blossomed throughout the country. Coincident with easier rail access was the growth of eastern cities and increased industrialization. Visitors during this period, in addition to visiting Montvale and Tate, might also flock to the Cloudland and to Unaka Springs to reconnect with nature. And, with the introduction of scientific management practices encouraging more efficient processes on a harried middle-class bureaucracy, businessmen might leave their families at the Wonderland for the summer while commuting from their jobs in Knoxville. The reasons for Americans--and Europeans--journeying to the East Tennessee resorts overlapped with those of visitors traveling to Saratoga, the Catskills, the White Mountains, and the Virginia springs.

The five East Tennessee hotels analyzed in this thesis therefore do not constitute backwards, isolated watering holes in a primitive southern Appalachia. Montvale Springs and the

Wonderland Hotel in the Smokies, Tate Spring in the Holston River Valley of Grainger County, and the Cloudland Hotel and Unaka Springs in the Unaka Mountains comprise a microcosm of American resorts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as evidenced through their health offerings, leisure activities, and the socioeconomic nature of their clientele.

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"Roan Mountain, North Carolina" Folder

### Private Collections

**George Morgan Collection, Bakersville, North Carolina**

**Historical Collection of George E. Webb, Jr., Rogersville, Tennessee**

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