

USGENWEB NOTICE: In keeping with our policy of providing free information on the Internet, material may be freely used by non-commercial entities, as long as this message remains on all copied material, AND permission is obtained from the contributor of the file. These electronic pages may NOT be reproduced in any format for profit or presentation by other organizations. Persons or organizations desiring to use this material for non-commercial purposes, MUST obtain the written consent of the contributor, OR the legal representative of the submitter, and contact the listed USGenWeb archivist with proof of this consent.

## News from the Dark Corner

As published in Greenville Newspapers  
Greenville County, S.C.

Transcribed by  
Cathy Griffith

### Sources:

1. Microfilms; Greenville News, Greenville Daily News, Greenville News Piedmont (newspapers)  
Publisher: Greenville, S.C., Greenville News Piedmont Co.; Greenville Co. Library, Greenville, S.C.  
2. Microfilms; Greenville Mountaineer, Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer (newspapers); Scattered issues beginning 1838.  
Greenville Co. Library, Greenville, S.C.

### Additional Reading:

1. Title: The Upper Part Of Greenville Co., S.C.; author: Batson, Mann; Publisher; Faith Printing Co., Taylors, S.C., 1993; Call Number: 975.727; Greenville Co. Library, Greenville, S.C.  
2. Title: Dark Corner Heritage; author: Howard, James Alexander; Self Published, Landrum, S.C. cir1980; Call Number: 975.71; Greenville Co. Library, Greenville, S.C.

There are many others available.

*This is installment 1 of some articles published in Greenville Newspapers concerning the Dark Corner of Greenville County.*

*Obviously most of these articles report the infamous moonshine business but they also include personal interviews and sentiments of residents in the area.*

*Special thanks to Cathy Griffith for her interest and efforts in the transcriptions of these articles.*

---

SOURCE: Greenville Mountaineer

DATE: Friday, July 13, 1849

### CELEBRATION OF THE FOURTH OF JULY

Some three or four hundred of the citizens of the Dark Corner of Greenville, met at Old Bladensburg to celebrate the 4th of July, which was done in a very patriotic style.

Capt. Moon paraded his uniform company, which was joined by many of the citizens, together with part of another Beat company, presenting a very pretty drill. The whole was conducted with that unprecedented unanimity of sentiment, and a sobriety which sheds a lustre on that part of the district.

After parade, the company was conducted to the stand in the Grove, where prayer was made to a Throne of Grace by the Rev. J. Center, and the Declaration of Independence was read by Capt. A.A. Stewart, which was followed by a very able, lengthy and appropriate Oration by W.R.D. Thompson. The whole was concluded with cheers and huzzas, and an exhibition of that patriotism which characterizes our District.

(NOTE: Following this was a list of thirteen toasts that were made in general and then under this is a list of volunteer toasts, of which I am only including a few. Cathy Griffith)

By John Barnett: The Mexican war and its vigorous prosecution shed lustre on the American people.

By B.J. Stewart: May the tree of liberty flourish around the globe, and every human being be shadowed by its branches.

By Joseph Pittman: Success to the administration of the hero of Buena Vista, if it be consistent with the best interests of our country.

By Capt. J.A. Moon: The day we celebrate, and the occasion, like the roman matron, publicly display the jewels of which she is proud.

By Capt. A.A. Stewart: May the ladies, before the next 4th of July, triumph over the hearts of many gentleman, and me for one.

---

SOURCE: Enterprise & Mountaineer

DATE: April 24, 1878

### THE REVENUE KILLING OF MR. RUFUS SPRINGS

We regret exceedingly to chronicle the killing of Mr. Rufus Springs, one of the Revenue officials, who has been discharging his duties as such in this portion of the state, and who was well known in this and the adjoining counties as well as in the border counties of North Carolina. It is not known who killed Mr. Springs, and various surmises have been expressed, but they are unsupported, we believe by any tangible proof. The affair transpired on Friday last.

We give the most reliable statement we can gather: The party of Revenue detectives, eight in number, were on a raid near the North Carolina line in the vicinity of Hogback Mountain. They had captured a still house and destroyed a lot of mash, and the party were scouring the country round about in reach of the distillery which had been removed before their arrival. The party being divided, some went in one direction and some in another. During the hunt a rifle shot was heard but no reply or signal being heard, no attention was paid until two of the party, named Pittman, who had found the still and were bringing it down to the still house, came across the body of Springs, where he had been shot, lying across his gun, face downward. Springs was alone when he was killed, and was doubtless shot from an eminence to his rear, as the ball entered back of the right shoulder and lodged against the ribs of his left side, cutting the main artery. As soon as the death of Springs was made known to the balance of the party, the distillery was left and the body of Springs was brought down to the house of Mr. J.W. Hightower, and from thence to the city on Saturday morning last.

Coroner Bayne held an inquest on the body but no information was elicited as to who were the guilty ones.

We hope the murderers will be arrested and dealt with according to law. No one had a right to act in defiance of the legally constituted authorities. In many respects, the Internal Revenue Laws are objectionable - but they should be observed notwithstanding, as long as they remain on the statutes. Our people in the mountains must quit stalling in violation of the law. Two hundred dollars reward has been offered for the arrest of the murderers.

---

SOURCE: Enterprise & Mountaineer

DATE: January 30, 1889

### FIGHT WITH MOONSHINERS IN THE MOUNTAINS OF GREENVILLE

We learn from one of the parties who was engaged in the fight with the moonshiners in the Panther Mountains, the following: Five of us who left here one day last week to capture a blockade still in the Panther Mountains, 30 miles above this place, was fired on while destroying a "blockade" still. After destroying one we were returning to our horses, in broad daylight when we were met by six moonshiners, who stepped out and opened fire at short range, shooting, Deputy Marshall Hightower in the knee, making a painful wound, but not serious. The revenue men returned the fire and charged, putting the moonshiners to flight, and capturing one of them named Howard.

---

SOURCE: Enterprise & Mountaineer

DATE: May 21, 1890

### IN THE MOUNTAINS OF GREENVILLE

The Columbia Register of the 17th inst. says:

During the period from the 9th to the 11th of the month Raiding Deputy Ensor succeeded in capturing and destroying five illicit stills in the Hogback and Glassy Mountain sections of Greenville County. In two cases he tried the efficacy of dynamite cartridges as a means of destroying stills, and those particular stills will never gurgle with mountain dew again.

---

SOURCE: Greenville Mountaineer

DATE: Saturday, February 5, 1898

### MOONSHINE DIPLOMACY

The French Broad Hustler gives the following information: "Special Raiding Deputies E.A. Aiken and A.C. Patterson made a raid through Polk County, N.C. and the "Dark Corner", in upper South Carolina, the first part of this week, and report having captured and destroyed three blockade distilleries and many hundred gallons of beer on the expedition. One still was found in Polk and the others in "Dark Corner". When Gus Aiken goes after a moonshiner he seldom fails to take him in."

A citizen of the Dark Comer section was talking about the above mentioned raid to our reporter a few days ago. It seems that heretofore it has not been the custom of the moonshiners to work at whiskey making on Sunday. The revenue officers knew this and never made a raid on that day, but for some time the raids have been getting so numerous that the moonshiners have been forced to work on Sundays, laying low the rest of the week to throw the deputies off. The revenue men have now caught on and lately they have made several raids on Sunday. That spoken of above took place on that day and was eminently successful. One or two of the moonshiners were caught and another barely escaped, being just a little too quick for Uncle Sam's men. The officer's will have to camp on the spot to cut off the moonshine business and then they may not live to tell the tale.

---

SOURCE: Greenville Mountaineer

DATE: November, 19, 1898

### WHAT A REVENUE OFFICER SAYS ABOUT THE MOONSHINERS - A DANGEROUS BUSINESS TO RAID BLOCKADE STILLS AROUND GLASSY MOUNTAIN

The Piedmont Headlight has interviewed Capt. W.H. Harp, who is described as one of the most efficient officers in the Revenue Services, and asked him if there was much blockading in the upper section of our state, and if it wasn't a dangerous business to tackle these moonshiners?

Captain Harp replied that stills around Glassy Mountain were almost as thick as fleas in a hog pen, and every secluded branch was utilized by moonshiners. The Revenue Officers are constantly making raids and cutting the "coppers", but when one still is destroyed two others are at once set up. These moonshiners generally make their own stills, buying sheet copper at some hardware stores, but it takes considerable mechanical skill to manufacture a worm, and after a run is made, the moonshiner removes the worm from his flake stand and conceals it in the bushes. These moonshiners, too, are very adept at patching up stills after they have been hacked all to pieces, and will make them do service over and over again. These home-made stills are very rough and will make them do service over and over again. These home-made stills are waylaid. Just as quick as they can demolish a still and arrest the prisoners at hand, they put spurs to their horses and make for home. Captain Harp says if a man don't believe those Glassy Mountain moonshiners will shoot, he had better go up there and tackle

them, and his mind will be quickly disabused. They have no more compunction of conscience about shooting down a revenue officer than they would a rabid dog, and as their neighbors are either in sympathy with the blockaders, or afraid of them, it is hard work to apprehend or arrest a violator of the law.

Captain Harp says that many of those Glassy Mountain moonshiners have Indian blood in their veins and possess all of the cunning and blood thirstiness of the red men. A revenue officer never goes into that section but he risks his life.

The government would never be able to capture a moonshine still were it not for the spies who point them out. A reward of \$10 is paid to the informer for every "copper" captured, and these spies will often give away their own kinsman's still for the sake of the reward. Other informers are prompted through spite and malice.

Captain Harp says there is a peculiar excitement and fascination about raiding moonshine stills, and when an officer begins that business he will follow it like an old fox hunter does a chase.

---

*SOURCE: Greenville Daily News, Page 1*

*DATE: Wednesday, June 5, 1901*

#### AFTER MOONSHINE

#### REVENUE OFFICERS HAD VERY BUSY WEEK SEVERAL CAPTURES THEY WENT THROUGH THE DARK CORNER DESTROYING STILLS, SPILLING LIQUOR AND MAKING ARRESTS. NOBODY KILLED.

The United States Revenue Officers played havoc with the moonshiners in the Dark Comer section last week, destroying several stills, hundreds of gallons of beer and whiskey and making several arrests.

The raiding party consisted of General Deputy Collector E.A. Aiken, Revenue Agent M.D. Houck, Deputy Marshall Phillips and Special Employer Roberts. Nearly every day of last week was spent in the mountains by the officers.

On Friday near Glassy Postoffice they succeeded in capturing a ninety gallon copper still, six or eight hundred gallons of beer, about ten gallons of liquor and found J.W. Bridgeman and L.P. Harris in the act of operating the still. They were placed under arrest by Deputy Marshall Phillips.

On the day previous in the same neighborhood, the officers destroyed a large distillery and also a large quantity of whiskey. Henry Rector was placed under arrest on the charge of illicit distilling, having been caught at the still by the officers.

This still was said to have been an altogether new apparatus for making liquor. The machinery was run by steam, something quite different than heretofore known to the Dark Corner section. Solomon Heatherly was also arrested several days before. All the men have been brought to Greenville and taken before United States Commissioner J.G. Hawthorne. The case against them have been sent up to court.

Notwithstanding the frequent raids of the revenue officers, the inhabitants of the Corner make liquor. They are very cautious, however, in their proceedings, placing the stills in the most remote comers of the hills and mountains and often making almost impenetrable fortresses by means of undergrowth and small trees.

In the raids made last week the officers were forced to go long distances on their knees over hills and mountains before reaching the hiding places of the stills.

---

*SOURCE: Greenville News*

*DATE: Wednesday, August 20, 1905*

#### THERE IS MONEY IN "MOONSHINE" LIQUOR IN SPITE OF FREQUENT RAIDS. MOONSHINERS PERSIST IN ILLICIT DISTILLING

"Not many weeks ago," said an officer yesterday, "we were much concerned over the persistent attempts of people in the Dark Comer section to evade the revenue and liquor laws, and at one time feeling ran so high that it looked like serious trouble between some of the moonshiners and the officers."

"On one occasion a man's dwelling house was shot into because he was presumed to be an informer, that is, one who keeps the officers in touch with the moonshiners and blind tigers. And a short time afterward a vehicle belonging to a raiding party was cut to pieces. It had been left in the road while the officers went forward on horseback. When they returned only the fragments could be found."

"Men in the business could feel trouble in the air. It has been a long time since revenue officers and moonshiners have fought each other with rifles and shot guns in South Carolina, and it has begun to look like a return to old times."

"By careful work, however, the revenue officers and constables have been able to bring about a better understanding between the authorities and the moonshiners, and while any number of distilleries have been destroyed in the Dark Comer section during the past month there has been no trouble as yet, and we have every cause to hope that none will come."

People have wondered how it is that in spite of the fact that while nearly three stills are destroyed in Greenville every week, the illicit dealer finds the business profitable enough to keep on. I admit it does kook queer, but when it is remembered that the whiskey making outfit, such as is found in the mountains today, only costs about \$50, the thing does not seem so unreasonable after all. Once a still gets in operation enough can be realized in a few days from the sales of liquor, on which there is no tax of course, to pay for the outfit. If a man can manage to keep his still running for a month or two he has not lost anything when the officers come along and destroy the business."

"Most of the liquor distilled in the mountains is consumed in the upper part of the county. Very little finds its way to the city, or into competition with licenses and dispensary whiskey."

---

*SOURCE: Greenville News*

*DATE: Tuesday, February 27, 1906*

#### REVENUE MEN IN HAIL OF FIRE GREENVILLE OFFICERS AMBUSHED YESTERDAY IN DARK CORNER - FIFTY SHOTS FIRED HIDDEN MOONSHINERS USED WINCHESTERS ON RETURNING RAIDERS. BUT WITHOUT ANY CASUALTIES

Fifty or more shots were exchanged between moonshiners and a party of officers at noon yesterday, as the officers were starting toward Greenville after a raid in the Dark Corner. No one was hurt, the range being long. The mountaineers were armed the same as the officers, with repeating rifles carrying smokeless, steel-jacketed ammunition, and were lying hidden among the bluffs, so that no target was afforded the raiders, who put spurs to their horses, firing into the brush as they rode.

In the party, besides Special Deputy Collector E.A. Aiken, the leader, were Deputy United States Marshall McDaniel, State Constables Bell, Charles, and Cooley, of this city, and Constable Mulligan, of Spartanburg. They left Greenville on horseback Sunday afternoon. Yesterday morning, they found and destroyed two distilleries. One was a steamer of fifteen gallons run per day, with ten fermenters and about 1,000 gallons of beer. The other was a copper still, of thirty gallons run per day, with nine fermenters and 700 gallons of beer. The stills and worms were chopped to pieces and the fermenters knocked into staves and hoops with little hatchets carried by revenue officers. The beer was poured. The latter plant was found within four hundred yards of Glassy Church, twenty-four miles from Greenville, near the North Carolina line. Its operators were surprised and scampered up the hills barely in time to avert arrest. Fire still blazed under the still and white corn liquor dripped from the condenser, while six or seven head of cattle were tethered nearby. After completing their work of destruction, the officers started homeward, winding single file down the ravine through which the mountain trail runs.

Within sight of the Church, the sharp clean report of a winchester rang out from an overhanging cliff, and was followed by a steady fusillade, to which the officers replied at great disadvantage, since their assailants were sheltered by the cliffs and moreover were using smokeless powder.

In the past officers have been fired on frequently in the Dark Comer, but of late years the proceeding has been but an interchange of courtesies, with no intent to kill or wound on either side.

Yesterday, however, the veteran raiders, profiting by previous experience under fire, knew enough to spur up and make a valiant, but running fight. Steel jacketed bullets zipped and whined between the officers and snipped limbs from trees along side, but for a miracle there were no casualties among the little group of the law's executors. The party reached the city about dark, tired, relieved and happy, after a scout of seventy miles in twenty-four hours through the wildest moonshiners country southeast of Kentucky.

---

*SOURCE: Greenville News*

*DATE: Sunday, May 27, 1906*

#### DECLARE OPEN WAR ON MOONSHINERS

"Fair warning. No More stills will be allowed within four miles of this place. We mean business. Law abiding citizens."

This bold legend, placarded on the door of the Glassy Mountain Church, in the very heart of Greenville County's Dark Comer, is the outward sign of a radical change of sentiment in that quarter. It is the knell of the illicit distilling industry, for the moonshiners' business may be carried on profitably and with impunity only when the weight of public opinion in the community upholds it.

That leaders in the new movement now making peace and order mean business. It takes nerve to criticize moonshiners in Glassy Mountain township, and no man suspected of being an "informer" would consider his life safe there for a moment. The history of the community is full of dark deeds done in the protection of what many moonshiners considered their natural right - to make whiskey. Several revenue officers have lost their lives, and the murder of the entire Henshall family and the cremation of their bodies in the flames of their homes only ten years ago has never been explained. Time was, and not so long ago, when there were only two or three families in the community not either engaged in the traffic or in sympathy with it, and these dared not express their sentiments, lest a bullet find its way into their back from the hillsides.

Just three weeks ago, an itinerant fruit agent is said to have disappeared as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up. It was reported that he was an agent of the Internal Revenue Department and that for this reason he was put out of the way by suspicious moonshiners. This could hardly have been true, for the federal government, which protects its officials with jealous vigilance, would long since have set foot on vigorous measures to avenge the murder. But since he was merely, in all probability, just what he said he was, a trader in fruit trees, his disappearance may never be explained. There is, of course, the possibility that he may have gone over the mountains into North Carolina unhurt. But the case and comparative impunity with which such deeds may be performed in the mountain fastnesses is shown by the fact that though his disappearance was reported three weeks ago, his fate is not known here yet.

Though Glassy Mountain's fair name has been spoiled by many dark and bloody deeds and many years of open defiance of the law, there have been in the community all along men of different stripes. They have endured with growing anger and impatience the outrages of their turbulent neighbors, and now their righteous wrath has crystallized in a definite, organized movement to eradicate illicit distilling, the cause of all their woes. They are not running the revenue officers here, so far as may be learned, not one of them has disclosed the location or ownership of a still. But they are serving notice on their moonshining neighbors that they must shut up shop and quit the business, or take the consequences. Notice of the new order of things have been posted at half a dozen likely places within four miles of Glassy Mountain Church, and this limit will shortly be extended so as to prohibit moonshining anywhere at all in the township.

To some one's suggestion that maybe members of the new law and order movement might meet the fate that has overtaken several revenue officers, the gentleman was describing the change of sentiment and that enough good and brave men were in the movement to make it formidable.

"If a single one of us is harmed for this" he said, "we will rise up and clean the

moonshiners and rowdies out of our section just like you would clean the rats out of a barn. If necessary we will shoot them down like rattle snakes. They have got to realize that times have changed. Glassy Mountain shall no longer be ruled and terrorized and given a black name by skulking, cowardly wretches who do not represent the township any more than the prisoners on the street gang represent Greenville city. Yes, Sir, we mean business."

{NOTE: Typed exactly as it appeared in the paper with a wrong name included}

---

SOURCE: Greenville Daily News

DATE: Tuesday, July 3, 1906

FLOGGED, NOT KILLED

FRUIT TREE AGENT GIVEN COW HIDING IN DARK CORNER AND MADE TO MOVE ON

Some time ago there was current in the city a persistent rumor to the effect that a fruit tree agent had been seen to go in the Dark Corner section of the county, where he disappeared completely, and it was said on the streets that dwellers in the Dark Corner section had supposed that the fruit tree agent was a revenue officer in disguise and that they dealt with him harshly.

Sheriff Gilreath was in the Dark Corner section of the county yesterday morning on business, and while there learned that the fruit tree man had not been annihilated by the citizens of the Dark Corner, but was told that the agent had been cow hidden and urged to leave the county at once. The agent departed forthwith, leaving no cards behind and went to North Carolina. He was a very reticent man and had little to say concerning himself or his movements while in Greenville and reticence is not regarded as a virtue in strangers who visit the Dark Corner.

---

SOURCE: Greenville Daily News, Page 8

DATE: Friday, February 14, 1908

THEY KILLED HIS COW AND SMASHED BUGGY

CONSTABLE PLUMLEY SAYS HE WAS VISITED BY PARTY OF MOONSHINERS

HE WENT ON A RAID

OFFICER HAD ACCOMPANIED A REVENUE PARTY SOME DAYS PREVIOUS

WHEN SEVERAL STILLS WERE DESTROYED - DEPREDATIONS BELIEVED TO BE

AN ACT OF REVENGE

"Moonshiners" some of whom are yet to be found in the Dark Comer, have a peculiar idea of what constitutes revenge. When an injury, or at least what they term an injury, is done them by the officers of the law they at once set about trying to secure some retaliation.

On Saturday night Mr. Wade Plumley, who is a Constable for his brother, Magistrate J.D. Plumley, was a member of a party which made a raid on the Dark Comer section and cut up several stills. The men whose stills were raided, chanced to know that Mr. Plumley was a member of the party and at once they determined that some revenge must be had upon him. A consultation was probably held among them and the following night was set as the time for securing this revenge.

Monday morning when Mr. Plumley went to his lot he found his fine cow lying on the ground in a puddle of blood. He made an examination of her and found that her throat had been cut. He then went on to his barn and found that his buggy had been torn in splinters. He realized that he had been visited by the moonshiners. On further investigation he found that the clan of men had done other acts of depredation.

Of course there is no way of ascertaining who did the work, their names will probably never be known. Acts similar to this have been committed by the lawless in that section of the country many times but not once have the perpetrators been caught and punished for it. The work is done in the still hours of the night and as there is no police protection in that country the men have no trouble in keeping their identity unknown.

"I have known them to cut down fields of corn" said a gentleman yesterday who once lived in that section. "Once they burned down an outer house which was full of corn and cotton", he continues, "and they have been so desperate as to attempt to set houses of the officers on fire. A favorite method of securing revenge, however, seems to be killing animals. Many fine horses, mules and cows have been found with their throats cut and they even butcher hogs and take them to a man's steps and leave them."

Policeman Rector was once Magistrate for Highland Township and he has had considerable dealings with moonshiners. "They never did anything to me but I have known them to do things that bordered on barbarism. When their anger is stirred nothing is too low for them to do. I know Mr. Plumley well and he is an active enemy of anything that pertains to lawlessness. I was not surprised to hear of his house being visited by the night riders."

An effort will be made to apprehend the parties who visited Mr. Plumley's premises on Sunday night, but it is hardly probable that the effort will be successful for the men who did the work are experts at dodging the officers of the law. If they should be caught a serious charge will be preferred against them.

---

SOURCE: The Greenville Daily News, Page 5

DATE: Friday, August 2, 1912

(Obituary of Shadrack Howard)

OLD HERMIT OF THE MOUNTAINS IS DEAD

CHADWICK HOWARD DIED IN HIS HUT ON THE TOP

OF GLASSY MOUNTAIN - WAS THE FATHER OF BILL AND MITCH HOWARD -

LIVED ALONE FOR SOME 40 YEARS - WAS 80 YEARS OF AGE

News reached the city yesterday of the death of Chadwick Howard, an aged and well known citizen of the extreme upper section of Greenville County. The News informant said that Mr. Howard died Wednesday and was buried yesterday. He was about 80 years of age, and for the past 40 years lived the life of a hermit in a hut on the top of Glassy Mountain. He was the father of Bill Howard and Mitch Howard, and an uncle of Steve Howard, all well-known characters of the mountains.

It was said that neighbors went to Mr. Howard's hut and found him lying on the floor, in an unconscious condition where he had probably been for two days or more. He was picked up and nursed until the time of his death. Mrs. Howard is said to have died some forty years ago, and since that time Mr. Howard has lived alone in his little cabin.

---

SOURCE: Greenville News, Page 5

DATE: Sunday, February 17, 1924

MOUNTAIN FOLK HAVE CODE OF HONOR ALL THEIR OWN; DISPENSERS OF

HOSPITALITY

INHABITANTS OF "DARK CORNER" AREA ARE INTERESTING PEOPLE - DON'T

BELIEVE IT WRONG TO MAKE WHISKEY - LATCH STRING ON THE OUTSIDE

Cut off from the city of Greenville by towering mountains, which rise majestically toward the sky, by roads which the average city motorist would declare totally impassable and by streams which babble peacefully down mountain sides and over countless millions of stones, worn smooth through the ages, live the people of North Greenville County, isolated and misunderstood.

The "Dark Corner" embracing Glassy Mountain township and parts of Cleveland township for half a century has been famous for its blockade whiskey, gun-play and tragedy. Naturally readers of the newspapers in the city, listeners to tales of moonshine and tragedy and the public at large have formed the opinion that northwest Greenville County is a wild man's neighborhood.

YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME

But a friendly excursion into the heart of the famed section will tend to dispel the wild man theory. It is anything else. Recently a group of newspapermen and attorneys spent a day in the shadow of Hogback Mountain. On the return trip members of the party unanimously proclaimed the day one of the most enjoyable spent in many months.

Although sitting within a mountaineer's home the visitor may be able to see the blue sky through cracks in the walls of the dwelling, the reception of a visitor at a mountaineer's table could not be more cordial if the hosts were of royal blood and were in a position to offer the comfort of a palatial home.

An indication of the cordiality of these people of the mountain is shown by their friendly table talk. It runs something like this: "We haven't much fine eatin' but we have plenty of what we have, such as it is, and you are welcome. Be sure you eat all you want before you quit. We haven't much else, but we've got plenty of welcome."

As a general rule people of the mountain are as peace loving as any citizen of a city. They do not fight and kill for the joy, nor the brutality of the deed, but they have an unwritten law. A code of ethics.

Those who operate distilleries, and they are many who do, attend to their own business and expect everyone else to attend to theirs. They are at peace with the world until someone crosses their path which leads to their still. They love their neighbor until he, or she, reports their distilling plant to the officers.

Making whiskey is illegal and in the belief of the blind goddess of justice is a crime. Mountain folk do not believe that it is a crime. Their ancestors lived on the proceeds of making whiskey. Their land is unfit for farming on a scale which would yield an existence, to say nothing of a comfortable living. Their argument, as old as law, is "if we raise corn on our land, work it with our hands, it is ours and nobody's business what we do with it."

These silent, all seeing folk of the mountain are honest. They look on a man who would steal as the basest of criminals. This was proven on the occasion of the recent excursion of lawyers and newspapermen.

TEST OF HONESTY

In hiking to the site of a recent post-Votstead distilling plant, which had been destroyed by raiding officers, the visitors became hot and coats were uncomfortable. In perfectly good faith the party shed their outer raiment, laid the coats on the ground by a log on the side of the road and walked on. Three or four hours later they returned. The overcoats had not been touched. They were lying in exactly the same positions they had fallen when dropped earlier in the day.

In the veins of these simple mountain people runs the purest Anglo-Saxon blood of the nation. Though decades upon decades, family names have been preserved and the present generation is as proud of their surname as are the direct descendants of those who came over on the Mayflower.

Lurking behind every homicide in the city lies complications involving a woman or women, sometimes moral but usually immoral and infamous. Behind a homicide case in the mountains invariably lies a simple distillery.

---

EOF

Greenville Co., S.C. GenWeb

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~scgreenv/>

October, 2003