

CUMBERLAND RIDGES ARE UNIQUE AMONG MOUNTAINS OF THE EARTH

No Other Location in the United States Presents Such Spectacular Scenic Effects as Chattanooga Section.

(By Bruce I. Crabtree.) Chattanooga's environs are so truly enchanting from a scenic standpoint and so widely appreciated that it becomes a difficult undertaking to say anything new about the subject.

Chattanooga is considered absolutely upon its merits as one of the most remarkable formations in the country, the wonder grows. It is a liberal education, even for one born and reared here, to go to every one of the main points of attraction, to take little excursions into unsuspectingly beautiful gorges, ravines, etc., and to familiarize himself with his own section.

"Country is All Rolled Up." The impression gained will perhaps be not unlike that voiced by a Texas doughboy recently passing through the city. He said to one of the canteen workers at the station: "This country certainly does roll up." To him, with his plainsman's outlook, the mountains with their sharply sloping sides and the perpendicular cliffs along the long rims gave the effect of crested waves, all rolled up and ready to break.

As a matter of fact, one of the chief distinctions of this section is that the formation of the heights around the city is absolutely unique. It is as absolutely different in its way as the Grand canyon is in its way. Both are the most striking examples of two very pronounced extremes. Other mountain ranges in the south have high and tumbled masses for the delight of the visitor, but none, outside of the Chattanooga section, have a display which does not occur in some measure elsewhere. There is a difference of degree; Chattanooga's a difference of kind.

Chattanooga in Midst of Cumberlands. Chattanooga is situated in the Cumberland range at the point where the distinguishing features of these mountains are most pronounced. Rising usually about 1,500 or 1,600 feet above the valleys, the elevations begin at a sharp line of cleavage with the lowlands and proceed to a point about 100 feet from the summit, when the slope gives way to a solid perpendicular wall of rock. This battlement-like, encircling wall of stone is a feature met with in all these mountains and almost entirely absent in other regions.

But this is among the least of the differences. The Cumberlands, instead of being sharp-pointed mountains, are really great level plateaus, from fifty to sixty miles long and from fifteen to twenty miles wide. The valleys between have about the same proportions of length and breadth, so that an air-plane view of the whole would give the effect of great slices having been lifted from the earth and dissipated into thin air.

Because of this peculiar formation, the aspect presented to the eye from the top of any one of these ranges differs from anything else on earth. Nothing like the same thrill is felt upon ascending the other mountains of the Appalachian system, where near at hand are multitudes of peaks to fill the landscape and rob it of its immensity.

From the Cumberlands the visitor is greeted rather with a sensation of depth than of height. In that respect the vista resembles that from the rim of the Grand canyon, but, whereas the Grand canyon presents an awful void, almost the epitome of nothingness, the Cumberlands present a landscape of intimate, pleasing characteristics. The observer is high enough to get the sensation, which, for lack of a better term, is generally described as grand, and yet is close enough not to lose sight of the fact that it is the good old familiar earth he observes, whereon people are living and striving, where trees and crops are growing. Spread out before him is an immense panorama of farms, towns, railroads and highways, and more than half of the thrill the visitor feels is because he is thus enabled to grasp at one view so large a vision of human activities. It is possible to observe at the same time the tiny speck on the road below.

which, crawling along at an apparently snailish pace, is in reality a swiftly-speeding automobile, and then to lift the eyes to the far horizon to gaze at the smoke of a city 50 or 100 miles distant.

Intimate and Vast Combine at Chattanooga. That gratifying grasp of the vast and the intimate alike is more evident from the heights around Chattanooga than from any other point in the range. The conformation of the city to the features of the valley in which it lies becomes when seen from Lookout mountain or Signal mountain is in itself a startling vista. From the former is this especially noticeable.

The visitor goes straight up the side of Lookout mountain, up 1,700 feet of incline almost as straight as an elevator shaft, and from the incline station at the top the usual procedure is to go to Point park, and from Point Lookout view the city nestling in the bend of the river, known as Moccasin bend. There the river, in a wide sweep, traces the acute outline of a foot before disappearing into the canyon between Signal mountain and Sand mountain, with the city skirting the bank. Enclosed within the Moccasin are some of the finest farms of the county, which, viewed from the elevation, seem like green and brown check-board squares. The view from Lookout in every direction is most wonderful in its inclusiveness, and it is said that seven states fall within the radius of vision upon clear days.

Lookout gives the visitor a view of the city from the south. The view may be reversed by going to Signal mountain, north of the city, which has about the same elevation as Lookout, but which is much closer to the Tennessee river. From the top of Signal mountain the river, as it winds its way through the canyon formed by the almost straight walls of Raccoon mountain on the one side and Signal mountain on the other, presents a picture which rivals anything the west has to offer. The river, 1,700 feet below, seems like a winding ribbon of fluid, so interlaced with the mountains that almost hopeless of exit. Upon it the large river steambot seems a toy creation, almost stationary and only half real.

These are but two of the many vantage points. Mission ridge, the low elevation running along the eastern edge of the valley, is topped by a magnificent government boulevard, and a drive along the highway is replete with picturesque glimpses at close range of the city, the factories, parks and highways.

From Raccoon mountain, which, however, is difficult of access, a view comparable with that from Lookout mountain or from Signal mountain is obtainable; the aspect changes and presents various angles of charm from other points along Lookout and on that part of Signal mountain which retains its old name of Walden's ridge, and, in fact, all that is necessary to feast the eyes at any time is to ascend any one of the heights around the city.

Adjacent to North Carolina Mountains. While most of the scenery around Chattanooga is of the type peculiar to the Cumberland ridges, the city is fortunate in being situated almost on the edge of the great tumbled masses of mountains which distinguish the North Carolina country, and it is possible for a traveler to leave Chattanooga in the morning, go right into the heart of these mountains along one of the most remarkably beautiful gorges in the whole Appalachians and to return by midnight, having seen in this short time, perhaps, the widest range of landscape possible to observe anywhere in the United States.

That trip is just beginning to be recognized for its wonderful scenic value and when the war started there was a movement on foot to have automobile roads built paralleling the route, and it was predicted that should these roads be provided they would prove among the most popular in the country for touring parties.

The trip in question is along the Hiwassee river down to Ducktown and Copperhill. Leaving Chattanooga in the early morning the traveler goes to Athens, Tenn., transfers to Etowah and catches the L. & N. for Ducktown. Immediately upon getting away from Etowah the whole aspect of the country changes and it is extremely hard to realize that by air line it is not forty miles back to Chattanooga. Ahead are great tumbled mountain masses and the train heads straight for them entering by the gorge of the Hiwassee, which twists its way down from North Carolina. The gorge of the French Broad river is famed because along it runs a main line railroad, and those who travel are many, but for rare beauty the Hiwassee has it "skun a mile." The railroad in the latter case is only a little branch line, traveled mainly by "drummers" and so the fame of the Hiwassee is not widely scattered.

On either side the walls of the gorge rise almost perpendicularly, the river widens out in places over the flat rocks to a mere shimmering sheet of silver, then it narrows to a raging rapid. All the time the train is climbing, passing little way stations where life is forty years retarded, and it is not uncommon to observe by the track a figure whose attire is strangely reminiscent of Daniel Boone. In the "coves" are little cabins, weatherbeaten and old, doors wide open whatever the weather, and by the side of each the patch where the family tobacco is raised.

After awhile the train comes to what is called the "loop of the river," and by that time has climbed a mountain about as high as Lookout, mounting the gorge all the time, so that far below stretches the shining thread of water, twisting in all directions, and there is unfolded a truly wonderful panorama of mountain tops running off into Carolina as far as the eye can see. A great part of the time the train has been running through the part of the great Appalachian forest reserve, and now begins the rapid descent into the treeless Copperhill basin, so that the sense of contrast is great.

Because of the fumes from the copper smelters, vegetation in the whole basin of about fifty miles diameter has been killed and the depression lies red, naked, and entirely ugly in the sun. Not a blade of grass, not even a weed to break the bleak monotony of the red earth, and the whole is a picture so bizarre in a section of the country abundantly clothed in greenery, that it is worth a trip of many, many miles to see. The train arrives at Copperhill shortly after noon and a return train may be caught in time to land the traveler back in Chattanooga by midnight, after having seen a variety of country which includes the verdant aspect typical of this section and the sun-baked expanse of Ducktown, a sight which could only be duplicated by going to the great desert of the southwest.

been mentioned by Mr. Graham as having done wonderful work in the past winter in distributing these articles. Mr. Poole is representing the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the camp, looking after the needs of any one who can use his services. He wears the uniform of the Y. M. C. A., is officially accredited to the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, helps in Red Cross work whenever needed, and in a few words, is one of the hardest working most polite and friendly men in the limits of Chickamauga Park. He distributed thousands of sweaters, comfort kits, mittens, etc., during the past winter, in addition to carrying on his own personal work among the soldiers, and assisted in one of the Y buildings every evening, during the rush hours.

"Are there any other organizations in the park doing work similar to that done by the Y. M. C. A.?" Jewish Welfare Board. "Yes, there are two such organizations: the Jewish welfare board and the Knights of Columbus. J. W. B. has as its head in the park, Charles Mantinband, a superintendent and social worker of the Y. M. H. A. Arthur Kling, a theological student, is the assistant, and their building is at Civic Center, in the circle.

"An entertainment is given once a week at the different Y buildings, and a smoker is held Friday nights, and one service on Sunday morning. A program of serious music will be started in the near future. On every Sunday afternoon Jewish ladies of Chattanooga come to the park and dispense lemonade and cakes to over a thousand men at Y 23, irrespective of religious affiliations.

"Visits are made by representatives of the J. W. B. daily to the barracks and the hospital, and a record is being made of every Jewish soldier in camp. Their work is not a duplication of the work done by the Y. M. C. A., but is simply an extension of it."

"And the Knights of Columbus, have they buildings in camp, also?" K. C. Work Headed by Niel Crowley. "The K. C. has three buildings in camp; one at the 11th cavalry, one at Civic Center, and one near the Lookout theater. Neil J. Crowley, a prominent K. C. of Chattanooga, is at the head of the work in camp, and is assisted by A. B. Cummings, John L. McDermott, Harry McPolin, Jas. Connelly, Leo Kernan and J. Downey.

"The K. C. buildings are installing moving picture machines and will show pictures three times a week in their buildings. There are two services in each building on Sunday, and mass is held in each building every morning. Letter paper and envelopes are furnished, stamps are sold, and mail handled. In fact, the activities of the K. C. are along the same lines as those of the Y. M. C. A., but, of course, up to this time, on a smaller scale."

Light Housekeeping the Vogue. It is estimated that there are close to 500 families of officers stationed at Chickamauga park renting from one to four rooms in various apartments scattered over Chattanooga, engaged in light housekeeping. The presence of so many temporary residents of the city has created the strongest kind of demand for apartments, but it is to the credit of the home people that rents asked are very moderate.

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