

THROUGH MAMMOUTH CAVE

Written for the Okolona Messenger.

Having just returned from a very interesting trip, and thinking perhaps it may be of some interest to you and your readers, I will endeavor to note some of the many wonders of this, one of the grandest productions of nature's wonderworks.

On Friday morning last with a party of twenty-five among whom were Mrs. Gilliam, Misses Lou Ella and Irene Gilliam, Mary Ezell, and myself of Okolona. Leaving Louisville at 8 o'clock, we arrived at Mammoth cave about noon, and after partaking of a hearty luncheon, immediately prepared to enter the cave. A jollier, livelier, party never was seen, and the greatest good-humor prevailed from beginning to end. Before entering we passed through a beautiful garden at the rear of the hotel, down one hill after another, winding around until reaching the mouth of the cave.

On entering, the cool draught of the bracing atmosphere, and the sound of the dripping waters almost persuaded one to believe they had reached the long sought for spring the elixir of life. We first came to a huge gate which the guide unlocked, passing through in couples of two each bearing a torch, into a broad corridor, which we traversed for a mile or so, then coming to the "Valley of Humility," through which we went in single file, and bending almost to the ground, after passing through for some distance. We then came to the "Hall of Relief," which is very rightly named, where we all sat for some minutes on the rocks and rested before going into the "Grecian bend," which is very similar to the former, only differing in a sideward bend. From there, we began descending and ascending huge steep rocks, passing through "Fat Man's Misery," "Shin Alley" and "Turkey Lane." The most wonderful feature being unexpected and intricate turns we constantly were taking. After covering some distance in this way and crossing the river "Styx" by means of a bridge, we came to the most wonderful and mysterious feature of the cave, which is the "Echo River" which makes a distinct separation in the cave, and by which means only one can pass from one part of the cave to another. Where we were rowed for some distance in utter darkness, only the dim light of our torches lighting up our boat. One cannot conceive of the awe which you are filled with on this body of water, parts of which being rowed under immense rocks where you are compelled to flatten yourself in the boat to pass under. Notwithstanding the fact that you are struck with awe, there is the grandeur of it, that amounts to the sublime. One single sound is reproduced seventeen times. Our guide requested us to sing some familiar air and we all joined in "Take me home." No music to us has ever sounded as that the echos over the water, made one believe that some grand Cathedral chimes in the distance had burst forth and could scarcely believe that it was only our own voices, roecheing, again and again. The guide caught some of the curious fish and insects and showed them to us. After passing over this wonderful specie of nature and feeling very thankful for our safety, we soon came to "Washington's Dining Hall" where we were surprised with a most elegant supper in readiness for us, (and you've heard of hungry people, but that was the place to see them.) After spending an hour in feasting and drinking of the cold delightful spring water, we felt greatly refreshed and were eager to pursue our journey onward.

The next notable feature was "Martha's Vineyard" where the grapes hung in clusters, and one could hardly resist reaching up and trying to pluck them. I will not attempt to mention all of the numerous wonders on what is known as the long route, but will only note some of the most interesting. The Chambers of Sun, Flowers and Lillies, and the Hall of Diamonds, are perfectly beautiful and realistic, and I feel as if I could dwell on this longer, but will hasten to tell of some of the more rugged and mysterious features one of which is the "Rocky Mountains" that we had to climb for quite a distance on huge rocks, one at a time, slipping here and there until we were quite satisfied to reach the end. After crossing with some difficulty we soon reached the extreme end of the cave, where we all kissed the "Blarney Stone" and rested being quite fatigued after having walked nine miles. Then retracing our steps over the rockies, back for some distance crossing Echo Riv-

er again and finding it a little more difficult as it had risen since crossing it the first time; our journey homeward was almost in a run until we came to what is known as the "Corkscrews" which I believe was the most difficult feature and passage in the cave, ascending one ladder after another, over deep ravines, winding around through without the assistance of the guide. For further information of the Corkscrew, I refer you to the Okolona party. After ascending and descending the Corkscrew it was only a short distance from the starting point of our journey where we soon passed through the gate again out into the mouth of the cave having walked 10 miles since noon. When we reached the hotel it was 12:30. After a refreshing sleep of several hours and a hearty breakfast the next morning, we again entered the cave on what is known as the short route. I will not go into details, but will try to give some of the most interesting features of this route. We passed through the "Shakespearean Gallery" where Booth gave to a party of friends, some years ago, "Hamlet." Passing out into the "Reception Hall" where every nation, State, and Organization of any prominence is represented by a pile of stones. Each of our party throwing a stone for their native state and the different societies to which they belonged, in which The daughters of the Confederacy, The Eastern Star and others were represented. Through this immense hall we went down into the "Wine Cellar" by steep rocks thence coming to "Dorins Dome," the "Bottomless Pit," "Giants Coffin," going through the "Infernal Regions." Other notable features was the "Bridal Altar" where seventeen couples have been married, "The Old Arm Chair," the Stalagmites Stalagmites and the Canyons. One of the most beautiful sights, is the Starry Chambers, where you can look about and see millions of stars, and on one side the comet, on another the sun rises gradually until it is almost overhead and again the sky clouds and not a star is visible. Martha Washington's Statute is a most striking piece of natural art. Our journey here ended, having explored both the long and the short route of the cave, feeling that few things in nature could surpass the picturesque grandeur of this mysterious subterranean passage. After another elegant luncheon at the hotel, the party returned to Louisville in high spirits notwithstanding the fatigue after going through Corkscrews, Fat man's miseries etc. and on top of it all a drenching rain, each regretting that the two delightful days spent at Mammoth Cave, were pleasures of the past.

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Members of the United States senate are unwilling to trust their chances of election to the people. For that reason there will be no vote on the proposed popular election scheme. Who shall say they are not wise in their decision. Many of the present incumbents probably would be retired at the first opportunity if the people could get a whack at them.

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Free. Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser in paper covers is sent free on receipt of 21 one-cent stamps to pay expense of mailing only; or 3 stamps for cloth-bound volume. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

Miss Stone would better get in her work on the lecture-going public before the army of Martinique explorers returns.

Prosperity has grown to be so old a story that it is doubtful whether it can be used to advantage in the coming campaign.

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To those that wait, even now and then aches and pains, Rheumatism, Catarrh, Neuralgia, and everything that hurts. Hunt's Lightning Oil keeps off everything except old age and death. Try it. 25 and 50 cts. Satisfaction or money refunded. Sold by Hall & Lyles.

We believe that we have at last located an overworked man: he got a letter from a girl at 9 this morning, and didn't get a chance to read it till noon.

When we see a girl of 10 crying these days, we don't know if we should give her a new doll to comfort her, or tell her no man's love is really worth crying for.

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Both are contained in Cheatham's Laxative Chill Tablets. Fry them. 25 cts. No cure—no pay. Sold by Hall and Lyles.

A man isn't really great until the newspapers begin to print jokes he has originated, which are so dreary they couldn't draw a laugh from a man with money in his pocket.

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