

Editor's Pages  
A SOUTHERN JOURNEY  
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Being interested in the South and especially in the part played by geographic factors in the development of southern history, I have made numerous trips into the South during the past twenty years. On many of these jaunts, whether by train or automobile, my wife has accompanied me. We do not go South to spend the winters as do hundreds of people annually. We go at any period of the year to enjoy the country, to study mountains, plateaus, and rivers, and to become acquainted with southern crops at different stages of growth. We have a real interest in the present South, but our foremost purpose is to acquire a first-hand knowledge of the general geography of the area whose people staged a determined four-year war for independence from 1861 to 1865.

Friday afternoon, December 22, 1922, found Mrs. Lynch and myself boarding a Monon train at Bloomington, Indiana, for Louisville. We were headed for Charleston, South Carolina, but we did not buy either round-trip or one-way tickets to that city. Our plan was to travel comparatively short distances on each part of the journey, going and returning, and to purchase transportation for each stage of the trip as needed. We traveled very little after nightfall. We patronized dining cars occasionally, but did not sleep on the train. There is no chance after traveling in this manner to bore one's friends later with the details of struggles to obtain lower berth reservations. Nevertheless, it is a very fine method of journeying by train when the object is to see the country and gather information about different regions through observation.

We spent the night in Louisville at the Seelbach Hotel, and went to Ashland, Kentucky, the next day. The Chesapeake and Ohio line from Louisville passes through the blue grass country and the hills farther eastward. The state road to Ashland had not been constructed in 1922, but often the railway followed a narrow valley and paralleled a road. One could see along the line scores of "coves" each opening out on a larger but still narrow valley. In each cove was a house with stable and other buildings behind it and little

fields and patches extending back towards the vanishing point of the acute triangle.

We spent the evening of the twenty-fourth, and remained overnight, with my sister, Mrs. William C. Myers, and her husband, who lived in Ashland. On Christmas morning, we left early for Johnson City, Tennessee. We passed southward on a spur of the C. & O. to Elkhorn City where we transferred to the Clinchfield Railway. The C. & O. branch line passes up the Big Sandy for a few miles and then follows the western fork, which is known as Luvisa (or Louisa) Fork. There is a succession of hills and the road is lined with coal mines and little settlements of miners. Nature did her part to provide beautiful scenery, but about every thing that man has done lessens the attractiveness of the region. In the neighborhood of Pikeville, there is a less hilly area with considerable farm land. This little city has a population of less than 2500, but it is the home of a college. At the end of the branch line from the Ohio River and at the beginning of the Clinchfield Railway, stands Elkhorn City, the main feature of which is that it has almost no inhabitants. It is, or was in 1922, merely the connecting point of two railway lines, which did a large freight business and carried a considerable number of passengers on the two trains that passed each way on each road daily. There was a sandwich joint near the "union" railway station in December, 1922, but the little building which it occupied had burned prior to August, 1924, when we passed that way again, going in the opposite direction.

The train for Spartanburg, South Carolina, left Elkhorn City very soon after our arrival, and immediately began an ascent of the adjacent mountain. The Chesapeake and Ohio spur follows the valley closely, but the Clinchfield road passes through from twenty to twenty-five tunnels as it winds its way over the Cumberlands to the valley of the Clinch River. This part of the trip was a delightful experience, and we enjoyed it to the full as we passed through an area that few people ever choose to traverse who do not live near it or have business reasons for traveling through it. In the midst of the afternoon, we came to St. Paul, Virginia, where we saw a number of automobiles, a rare sight since we had left Ashland. The railroad built to carry coal from eastern Kentucky to factory towns of the Piedmont

Plateau of the Carolinas, after passing St. Paul on the upper Clinch, follows that stream southwestward for about forty miles before turning southeastward again. This is in order that it may pass through the gap in Clinch Mountain not far from Gate City and near the boundary line between Tennessee and Virginia. This narrow mountain in the midst of the Appalachian Valley lies in Virginia and Tennessee between the Clinch and Holston rivers. It trends from northeast to southwest as do nearly all of the ridges of the Southern Appalachians.

We arrived at Johnson City at about seven and ate our Christmas dinner at eight o'clock. The city has a fine location and is about 1600 feet above sea level. In the midst of a fine agricultural area, with power and excellent transportation facilities, the city had been growing rapidly. Much of it was new, and the business district showed evidences of change and uncompleted plans. The East Tennessee State Teachers College and a National Soldiers' Home are located at Johnson City, and Milligan College is a short distance eastward. The beautiful Watauga River flows westward from the mountains to join the South Fork of the Holston, but unfortunately Johnson City is about four miles away.

Leaving for Spartanburg about noon we again traveled on the Clinchfield Railway. Running south we soon reached the Nolichucky River and followed it up to and through the mountains that form the line between Tennessee and North Carolina. Above the boundary the River is known as the Toe, which is formed by the junction of two forks, the North Toe and the South Toe. These cut their winding courses across the high, narrow plateau from the Blue Ridge. The route across the plateau and over the Blue Ridge by way of Alta Pass is impressive. The descent from the pass is quite rapid for a time. After passing Marion, North Carolina, the railroad runs nearly southward towards the South Carolina line. It was in this area that we saw the first cotton fields, with their dark red Piedmont soil. We reached Spartanburg early in the evening, and stayed at the Cleveland, a new and very fine hotel, where we obtained a room with twin-beds and bath at \$5.00. Spartanburg is a charming city of the upper Piedmont.

On the way from Spartanburg to Charleston we stopped off between two eastbound trains of the Southern Railway

to spend a few hours at Columbia, a fall-line city on the Congaree, which river is formed by the junction and the Broad and the Saluda just above the city. In the evening, we resumed our journey and rode into Charleston at about eight o'clock. We stopped at the Hotel Charleston. This fine old building with its imposing columns had been recently remodeled and renovated. Our room was one of unbelievable dimensions, the bathroom, which was considerably smaller, being about fifteen by twelve feet. Charleston is a city of distinction and charm, and the place is rich in history. I have no wish to lessen the winter tourist trade of Florida or California, but I am unable to understand why people who seek pleasanter climes in the winter time should all go where the crowds go. I am sure that numbers of persons could obtain the advantages of mild winters, along with greater enjoyment and more cultural benefits if they should choose Charleston, New Orleans, Mobile, Savannah or others of the finer old cities of the deep South in which to spend the colder months.

We spent two days in Charleston. This was a hurried sojourn, but we found the harbor, the Battery, the museum, the old planter residences of ante-bellum days, old churches, old cemeteries, and sundry other features of the city to be fascinating in their appeal. The old residences, very many of which have suffered gradual decline since the day when Charleston so proudly and willingly led off in the war for southern independence, interested us more than anything else, perhaps. These imposing mansions, that open directly on the sidewalk, but whose verandas front on the side yard, are proud specimens of one type of southern architecture. Built mostly by wealthy rice-planters, they reveal the high-tide of social prestige under the old régime. It seems too bad that any of these splendid homes of another day should be permitted to disappear in time through a slow but certain decay.

On the return from Charleston, we again visited Columbia for a few hours, and then took the train for Asheville which we reached at about ten at night. The next day, December 30, we went to Bristol on the Tennessee-Virginia line in the Appalachian Valley, *via* Morristown, and then back to Knoxville. The Appalachian Valley in Southern Appalachia lies almost entirely in Virginia and Tennessee.

It is one of the most beautiful and most fruitful areas of the entire United States. It is drained by many streams, some of which lie entirely within the Valley, flowing northeast or southwest; others rise in the Valley and flow out through mountain ranges, some of them to the eastward cutting through the Blue Ridge, but one, the New River, crosses the Valley in the opposite direction and flows through the Alleghany Front at the Narrows. After performing this feat, it flows down the Alleghany Plateau, becoming the Kanawha on the way to the Ohio. The Appalachian Valley is not a river valley, but is drained by many rivers that flow in various directions, and is a longitudinal depression or trough, bounded by the main ranges of the Appalachians and containing lesser mountains within its bounds.

The run from Asheville down the valley of the French Broad is through a part of the same area as that crossed by the Toe-Nolichucky, but it is even more splendid to look at. Meandering across the high plateau between the Blue Ridge and the Great Smokies, the waters of the French Broad have cut a deep gorge. The sides of this narrow valley have been carved up by smaller streams and the resulting hills smoothed down somewhat by the erosion of the ages look much like mountains to one riding along the river on a Southern Railway train. It has been our good fortune to drive from Tennessee to Asheville by automobile, but the train trip through this magnificent country is the more enchanting because the railroad follows the French Broad so closely.

In the Appalachian Valley, it seems better to travel by automobile, though we shall never forget the train trip of seventeen years ago. Of all the parts of the South, we recommend the Appalachian Valley of Virginia and Tennessee as the most splendid in which to make automobile tours. From the Valley it is easy to reach the most picturesque of the mountain ranges that make up the Southern Appalachians. Our run to Bristol was an extra feature of our tour, made solely that we might study the Valley in the drainage area of the upper Tennessee system.

Knoxville on the Tennessee River, has a choice location. Its chief drawback is that the ridge on which the heart of the city is located is too limited. There are too many one-way streets, and traffic is always congested in the busiest

section of the city. The development of Broadway, which parallels Gay Street and leads to a new bridge across the Tennessee a few blocks to the southwest of the Gay Street Bridge, has added much to the solution of an acute traffic problem. When the owners of a few large department stores gather courage enough to move from Gay Street to Broadway, should that time ever come, Knoxville will start on a new era. Other businesses will follow, and, with a much more extensive shopping district, the economic growth of the city can be more free and vigorous.

Never in Knoxville before 1922, we have often visited this city on the Tennessee since, and in 1930, we lived for three months on its highest point from which we could see the Great Smokies to the southward at any time when not obscured by clouds.

From Knoxville to Bloomington, we returned by way of Cumberland Gap, Corbin, and Louisville, spending the last night of 1922 in the latter city. The famous pass in the Cumberlands at the extreme southwestern angle of Virginia is a wind-gap. Not only does no stream flow through it, but it is used by no railroad line. A tunnel through Cumberland Mountain carries railroad traffic under the Gap. Middlesboro lies below the pass on the Kentucky side of the mountain and close to the Tennessee line. In fact, Cumberland Gap on the Virginia-Kentucky line is but a little way from Tennessee. The Cumberland River in its upper course flows southwest not far from Cumberland Mountain. About twelve or fourteen miles west of Middlesboro, the river turns to flow northwest for quite a distance. In this part of its course the River leads towards the Blue Grass country, hence Boone's Wilderness Road, the railroad line, and the present Dixie Highway follow the valley from Pineville to Barbourville, and then pass on towards the Kentucky River climbing over one ridge after another on the way from one little valley to the next.

It was necessary to change from a branch of the Southern Railway System to a branch of the Louisville and Nashville System at Middlesboro, and wait an hour or two for an L. & N. train. The next change was at Corbin, a famous L. & N. junction point. On the last day of December of 1922, it seemed that everybody was changing cars at the Corbin station of the L. & N. The station facilities were

entirely inadequate for the handling of the vast number of waiting passengers who were there for no other purpose than to change cars. We got away after two very long hours on a train for Louisville. Reaching Louisville that night, we stopped at the Henry Watterson Hotel. Sleeping soundly at midnight, Mrs. Lynch and I were suddenly awakened by the firing of salutes to the new year in the downtown district. The next forenoon we made the short run from Louisville to Bloomington on the Monon. The total expended for carfares was \$134.10, and the number of miles covered was 1,862. For rooms, meals and taxi fares our outlay was \$63.87, and incidental expenses ran to \$14.65.

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