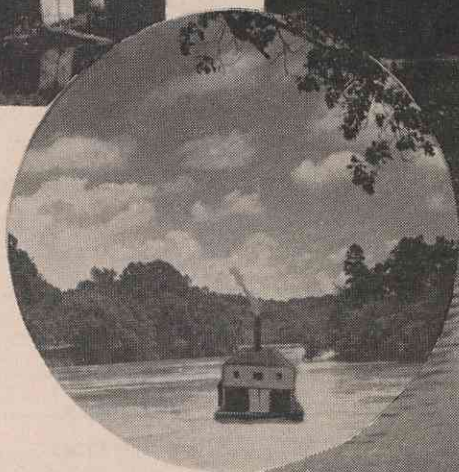


Above: the Mountain Lily, the first and only steamboat to ply the French Broad River between Brevard and Asheville, after it ran aground at King's Bridge in 1885. It lay stranded in the mud for some time before it was finally dismantled.

Center photo: The Mountain Lily must have made a stirring scene as she rounded the bends in the French Broad. The boat was constructed at Horseshoe, N. C., for Col. S. V. Pickens by a Norfolk, Virginia, shipbuilder.

Right: This photo, showing the jetties, was made last summer when the water in the French Broad was low. Normally jetties are below water level.



THE MOUNTAIN LILY

A STEAMBOAT, the Mountain Lily, a side wheeler with two twelve horsepower engines, was the first and only undertaking of the French Broad Steamboat line. Col. S. V. Pickens organized the line in 1881 and built this steamboat, which was designed for making regular trips on the French Broad River between Asheville and Brevard.

The Mountain Lily made regular trips for a few seasons, but stream-flow variations finally proved disastrous. Congress was influenced by Senator Vance to appropriate funds to be used in building jetties in the upper part of the river to narrow and deepen its channel. Some forty thousand dollars were spent in installing these jetties, most of which can still be seen between the mouth of Davidson river and Patton's Bridge.

During the "dry spell" last summer we counted fifty-eight of these jetties between Pisgah Forest and Penrose. They mainly consist of large stones, which were hauled on wagons and sleds from the old quarry near Davidson River Station. Some of these were anchored with cement, cables or logs. The jetties made a straighter and deeper channel in the river for about fifteen miles.

After operating at intervals for several summers, the Mountain Lily ran aground in 1885 at King's Bridge. There it lay stranded in the mud for some time before it was dismantled.

Thus, the operation of the "highest steamboat line the world" came to an end.

(More information can be found in Sadie Smathers Patton's book, "Story of Henderson County." A copy of this book is in our library.)