

SPEAR FINGER'S BRIDGE

BY
Mrs. Tom Harbison

Traceable at intervals from Whiteside Mountain to the Hiawassee River is a vein of rocks known as Spear-Finger's Bridge. Wildcat Cliffs, Wolf Ridge, and

Square Dance

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Sunset Rocks are a part of this vein which is broken in many places for short distances but invariably reappears and is easily traced by boulders strewn in a curved line along the way. Near the gap on the Highlands-Horse Cove road, fragments of stone ranging from one to four or more feet in height appear to have been set in the earth by hand. They are set edge-wise and resemble abutments of some ancient bridge. The following Indian Legend of Spear-Finger's Bridge is retold from Frank Jarrett's "Oconneechee", and explains why the stones are set as they are.

It seems that long ago - more moons than any of our grandmothers even can remember - a terrible woman monster lived in the mountains whose only food was human livers. She was an old woman whose

skin was made of stone which no weapon could penetrate. She used her right forefinger which was long and stony and shaped like a spear-head for stabbing and cutting out the livers of her victims, and was thus known as Utlunta, or Spear-Finger. It was her habit to hide in the dark passes along the trail and wait for victims, and she was greatly feared by all the Indians.

Spear-Finger had much power over stone and could lift immense rocks, so she undertook to build a great stone bridge from Sa'nigila'gi, home of the Thunder God -- Red Man of Lightning (Whiteside Mountain) to the Tree rocks on Hiawassee River, that she might escape to the top of Whiteside when chased by the warriors. There she knew she would be safe, for the Indians did not dare trespass on the grounds of the Thunder God. However, when the bridge was nearing completion, the Thunder God himself took the part of the Indians by sending bolts of lightning to destroy the bridge. When the lightning struck it, it scattered fragments of stone along the whole ridge, leaving some of the abutments standing, and it is these pieces which can be seen today by those who follow along the course of the ancient bridge.

Spear-Finger was later trapped in a pit prepared by the Indians and killed, a Tsi-killi bird having told them that the monster's vulnerable place was her heart, which she always carried in her fist.

Part of Spear-Finger's bridge is within the town limits of Highlands, and a five-minute drive will bring into view these unusually placed rocks at the gap on the Horse Cove Road.

TOWN WATER IMPROVEMENTS TO BEGIN AT ONCE

Mr. Owens, Assistant Engineer of the WPA at Franklin, met with the town board and a gathering of citizens last Saturday at the Town office for the purpose of discussing the proposed water improvements. He advised the Board to set aside the former plans, and to get an entirely new set of plans and bids from different engineers and start on this work at once. The Board passed a resolution to get these bids and plans and begin the improvements immediately. Mr. Owens is meeting with the Board again Saturday, August 26, at 2 o'clock in the Town Office.

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