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## Brown Mountain Light Is Again "Solved"

Geologist Says It Is Train Headlights, But Mountaineers Have Their Own Explanation

(Rupert Gillett in Winston-Salem Journal)

Blowing Rock, Jan. 29.—The Brown Mountain light is not the Brown Mountain light.

It is the Adams Mountain light. And so the argument goes merrily on, despite the scientific investigations of several years ago which were thought to have settled the matter entirely. But it is not settled for the mountaineers, some of whom still hold to the belief that the phenomenon so clearly visible over Brown Mountain from Blowing Rock is a supernatural manifestation of weird portent.

Perhaps their reluctance to accept the scientific explanation is that the scientists do not agree among themselves as to the origin of the light. The U. S. Geological survey, for example, gives one origin as a result of its investigation, and the National Geographic society attributes the light to a wholly different cause.

One old mountaineer told the correspondent confidently that the light is on Adams Mountain and that it comes from the window of a negro's house, which is the only habitation in the vicinity. When he was asked why the light appeared to move erratically, the mountaineer replied that the pines swaying in front of the house produced the optical illusion of a moving light.

The explanations of the Brown Mountain light are as numerous as the investigators, for no two have ever agreed on the same cause. The National Geographic society, for example, explains the light as similar to the Andes light, which is an electrical spark of great magnitude, like a spark jumping from positive to negative poles. Mountain peaks act as the poles, but in the case of the Andes light the spark is silent.

Other investigators have attributed the light to sources similar to St. Elmo's fire, the light seen at the tops of masts by sailors and so named because they believed that when the light appears their patron saint, St. Elmo, was protecting them against storms.

Phosphorous, phosphorescence, will-o'-the-wisp, radium emanations, chemical reaction between hydrogen sulphide and lead oxide, the lights of whiskey stills on the mountain, and mirages have been suggested as possible causes of the light, but all have been discarded for various reasons.

George Rogers Mansfield, investigator for the U. S. Geological survey, studied all of these possible causes and rejected them one after another, because in each case the conditions were unfavorable; there were no marshes to produce phosphorous, phosphorescence is too weak to be seen so far, the sulphur and lead on Brown Mountain are too far apart to react on each other, there are not enough stills on the mountain to produce the light, St. Elmo's fire depends upon a solid conductor, the Andes light is different from the Brown Mountain light, radium ore does not produce such an effect, and mirage is a phenomenon of the day time.

The light is variously described—sometimes red, sometimes yellow, sometimes bluish, sometimes with a halo around it, and sometimes like the star of a skyrocket. It appears between seven and eight o'clock of evenings, and again about ten o'clock. Of late years it is said to have been visible much more often than formerly, but it is known to have been seen for half a century.

Mr. Mansfield, after a careful investigation of all the suggested causes and after observations covering several weeks, hit upon an explanation that was as plausible as it was simple. It was this:

Brown Mountain is lower than Blowing Rock, Lovens, Gingercake Mountain and other points from which the light can be seen. Beyond Brown Mountain lies the Catawba valley, with a number of towns, all electrically lighted, highways along which automobile headlights can be seen at all hours of the night, especially before midnight, and railways with powerful locomotive headlights. The observer at Blowing Rock, for example, looks over the top of Brown Mountain, which is low enough to allow his line of sight to strike the plain of Catawba valley. What he sees,

## BOWIE'S EVOLUTION BILL INTRODUCED IN ASSEMBLY

The North Carolina Bible League's anti-evolution bill, prepared by Tam C. Bowie, the league's attorney, was introduced in the legislature last week by Representative Poole. The provisions of the bill are as follows: "A bill to be entitled an act to prohibit the teaching of atheistic evolution in certain schools and colleges in the state of North Carolina:

"The general assembly of North Carolina do enact:

"Section 1. That it shall be unlawful for any professor, teacher or instructor, to teach in any school, college or educational institution within the state of North Carolina, receiving aid from the state, any doctrine or theory of evolution, which contradicts the divine origin of man or of the universe, as taught in the Holy Bible:

"Provided, however, that nothing in this act shall be construed to prohibit the teaching in said schools, colleges or educational institutions of all useful arts and sciences, provided the same are not taught in such a manner as to contradict the fundamental truths of the Holy Bible.

Section 2. That any professor, teacher or instructor violating the provisions of Section 1 of this act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined or imprisoned in the discretion of the court, and in the discretion of the court may be disqualified from teaching in such schools, colleges or educational institutions upon such terms and conditions and for such a time as the court in its discretion may order.

"Section 3. That this act shall be in force from and after its ratification."

## MOUNTAIN CITY ROAD BUTLER'S CHIEF OBJECT

Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 28.—There is one chief object for which I am over here this time," said Senator E. E. Butler, of Mountain City, today, in speaking of his plans for the session of the Tennessee general assembly.

"I want a road from Mountain City to Elizabethton."

Senator Butler is working incessantly to get this road. This proposed state highway would connect Mountain City and Elizabethton, two thriving east Tennessee towns and would traverse or touch three counties—Carter, Johnson and Washington.

Senator Butler is seeking state aid on this project through the state highway department and believes that he will get it.

## REV. O. L. BROWN SUCCEEDS WOOSLEY AT GREENSBORO

Greensboro News, Friday. Rev. O. L. Brown, of Cedar Falls, Randolph county, has been appointed pastor of Bethel and Grace Methodist Episcopal churches in the local district to succeed the late Rev. J. E. Woosley, it was learned last night. The appointment was authorized by Bishop F. D. Mouzon yesterday and will be effective at once.

Mr. Brown is a young man and recently graduated from Emory university, Atlanta. He has been pastor of the Cedar Falls church for some time, and will move his family here at once. Mrs. Brown, who is actively connected in church work is a daughter of Prof. B. B. Dougherty, of the Appalachian State Normal School, Boone.

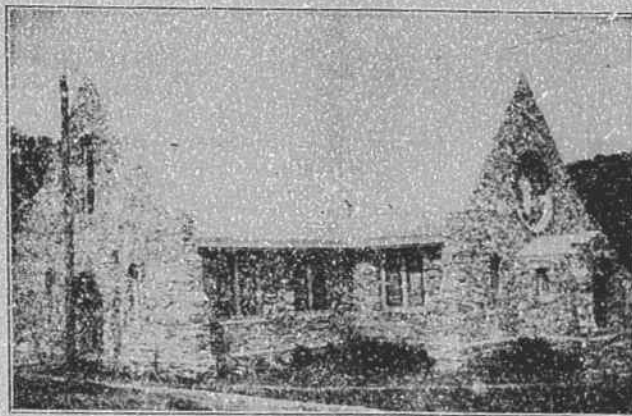
A canal between the Rhone river and Marseilles, the dream of southern France for more than 400 years, has at last been completed.

therefore, is the light of the towns in this valley, locomotive and automobile headlights.

In support of this theory, Mr. Mansfield said he studied the railway schedules and traced several of the lights observed directly to locomotive headlights. Others were attributed to automobile headlights, and the rest to the lights of the towns in the Catawba valley. He points out further that no one has ever seen the Brown Mountain light when he himself was on the mountain.

But your true mountaineer will not accept this explanation; he has his own theory, and he will defend it against all comers. Moreover, no two of them agree on the cause of the light.

## Death Claims Popular Pastor



Above—Boone Advent Christian church, erected during the year's pastorate of Elder Baldwin. (Below)—Elder R. N. Baldwin.

## Rev. R. N. Baldwin Dies at Lenoir Hospital

Popular Pastor of Advent Christian Church Died Monday Afternoon; Burial in Kentucky

### CAME TO BOONE YEAR AGO

Handsome New Church One of His Great Accomplishments

Elder R. N. Baldwin, pastor of the Boone Advent Christian church, died at the Caldwell Hospital, Lenoir, Monday afternoon at 6 o'clock, following an illness covering a period of a little more than two months, having been taken to Lenoir two weeks ago. Mrs. Baldwin and baby were with him when death came.

Mr. Baldwin came to Boone a little more than a year ago from Augusta, Ga., and took the pastorate of the Boone Advent Christian church, since which time he had devoted his best energy to the upbuilding of that denomination. Largely through his efforts the handsome new church building in the eastern part of town was completed during his pastorate, he having even done much manual labor on the edifice.

Elder Baldwin had spent the major part of his forty-three years of life in church work, interspersed sometimes with journalistic endeavor. A well educated and ambitious man, he was always one of the leading factors in civic movements, having been especially prominent in connection with the local Chamber of Commerce. The esteem in which he was held by this organization was evidenced by a beautiful floral tribute for his funeral.

Deceased was very prominent in the Advent church work, having been secretary of the Piedmont Conference and chairman of the ways and means committee of that body.

Elder Baldwin had made a host of friends during his brief sojourn in Boone who are grieved at his death. The town as a whole will be the poorer for the loss of his efforts, along all lines looking to the growth of the town and the betterment of the community.

A number of local citizens went to Lenoir Tuesday, some of whom will likely accompany the remains to Pineville, Kentucky, where interment is to be made amid the scenes of his childhood.

Gastonia, Feb. 1.—A dispute that began here early today when three women stepped from the bus owned by Ephraim Huffstetler, 50, into that of Carroll Clemmer, driver for the Inter-Carolinas Bus company, ended tonight when Huffstetler lay dangerously wounded before the door of Clemmer's home on the main street of Dallas. Huffstetler is held under \$3,000 bond in a Lincoln hospital. His face is badly lacerated and his body torn in several places by buckshot from a shotgun fired by Clemmer. George Huffstetler, son of the bus owner, and J. C. Bynum, a neighbor are held without bond as accessories.

Washington, Jan. 31.—Computations by the government's census experts indicate that the population of continental United States on July 1, 1927, will be 118,628,000. That is an increase of 1,492,000 over the estimate for July 1, 1925 and an increase of 12,317,360 over the figure for January 1, 1920, when the last actual census was taken.

To the destruction of the city of London by fire in 1666 may be traced the present system of fire insurance. The first fire insurance company was formed at that time.

## WARRING FACTIONS IN CHINA PREPARE TO DECIDE MASTERY

Peking, Jan. 31.—The northern and southern governments are preparing for a supreme struggle to determine the mastery of all China. Each has begun arming its forces for a campaign to the basin of the Yangtze river, with Hankow, in central China as the focal point.

Marshal Wu Pei-Fu, considered one of the ablest generals in China, has been received into the northern alliance of war lords and with Gen. Hsueh-Liang, son of the Manchurian dictator, Chang Tso-Lin, is expected to lead the northerners' advance toward Hankow.

Wu, whose prestige suffered when his forces were thrown back from Hankow last August by the Cantonese and he lost much of his domain in Central China, gave assurances to Chang Tso-Lin that he had put down the insubordination in his army, and was prepared to take the field against the southerners.

The men of Shanung province are arming under leadership of their governor, Chang Tsung-Chang, ally of the northerners, who is expected to lead them in battle.

To meet the great force rolling upon them from the north, the Cantonese (nationalists) are concentrating their forces at Hankow. Large numbers of their troops are on the move from Ichang and elsewhere on the Yangtze river.

## GROUND HOG SEES SHADOW AND RETREATS FOR 40 DAYS

Those who depend solely on the groundhog for the forty days beginning February 2 were "settin' pretty" Wednesday morning, happy in the expectation of a season of balmy weather, for there was nary a break in the clouds hovering over this section. But imagine their chagrin when shortly before noon, almost within the hour, the sun blazed forth for a few seconds, when, of course, His Hogship saw his shadow and forthwith retreated into the innermost recesses of his habitation, there to be snug and warm during the six weeks of stormy weather.

Some who look upon the hog as an official weather bureau will have their faith strengthened if the blizzards come while unbelievers will say "Just happened so."

## ROMINGER NEWS

Rominger, Feb. 1.—J. B. Hicks had about \$50 worth of fine hams stolen from his smokehouse recently. Bloodhounds were used in an effort to catch the thieves but without success.

Mc. Rominger and son, Charlie, and Ben Harman, of this section, are working in the mines of Pennsylvania.

Rev. Raymond Cornett has been conducting a series of protracted meetings at Piney Grove, M. E. church this week.

Prof. H. A. Hagaman is teaching a singing school at "Windy Gap" this week.

Coy Rominger, who has been working in the mines in Pennsylvania, is at his home here again.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilliam and Mrs. Della Harmon visited at the home of Louis Harmon last Sunday night.

Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, Jan. 31.—Prediction that the military operations of the United States marines in Nicaragua ultimately will result in their opening fire against the Liberal forces was made in a statement given to the Associated Press today by Dr. Juan Sacasa, leader of the Liberal government, which has been set up here. Stating that the Conservative government of President Adolfo Diaz, which has been recognized by the United States, could not exist long without support of American forces, Dr. Sacasa declared that he had done everything possible to avoid conflict with the marines despite "outrages" against the Liberals. "In due course," he continued, "the marines will have to open fire against the Liberals and kill hundreds of Nicaraguan citizens to support Diaz as in 1912."

What is said to be one of the most sensational "rum ring" trials ever held in a United States court opened in New York Monday with Judge Isaac M. Meekins, of North Carolina, presiding.

A recent investigation shows that the average income of doctors in New York is about \$2,000 annually.

## News of a Week At Blowing Rock

New City Hall Formally Dedicated; Officials Recommend Stone as Best Suited for New School Building

By RUPERT GILLETT

Blowing Rock, Feb. 2.—The accompaniment of the shrieking, doleful voice of a fire siren that awoke sleeping mountaineers far up in the "holies," the completion of Blowing Rock's new town hall was celebrated Saturday night with a dance that drew almost the entire population of the town and a goodly number from Boone and other neighboring communities. The square dance, the Virginia reel and other old time steps were mingled with modern dances. The building has a concrete floored garage on the first floor for the fire truck. On the second floor are the office of the mayor and other town officials and a large room that can be used as an auditorium or dance hall. Behind the building on the lower is the fire siren, which is connected with the alarm system. The building was to be dedicated late this week, and a formal dedication was to be held Saturday night.

Two architects and the state superintendent of buildings, grounds and construction have recommended a stone school building for Blowing Rock as more suited to the landscape than brick or tile, the two other materials being considered for the \$35,000 consolidated school building. The material has not been decided upon, however, and meanwhile the school board is awaiting the second report of John J. Blair, state building superintendent, who is expected next week to bring with him several model plans for the building.

With the first days of spring, Blowing Rock's side streets, many of which are in an almost impassable condition, will be graded and put in condition for the summer traffic, Mayor George M. Sudderth said Monday.

Stockholders of the Bank of Blowing Rock held a second meeting Saturday but no statement for publication was forthcoming after the meeting.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Winkler are spending a few days at the home of Mr. Winkler's parents near Asheville.

Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Robison have left Blowing Rock after a residence here of several years and have returned to their home near Rockville, Maryland.

A. M. Critcher went last week to Pinehurst, where Mrs. Critcher has been visiting her son Cecil Critcher. Mrs. Critcher returned Thursday to Blowing Rock with Mr. Critcher and Cecil.

L. P. Henkel, of Staesville, has recently made several business visits to Blowing Rock.

TO SECURE AUDIENCE OF 25,000 FOR COOLIDGE

Washington, Jan. 31.—A move to obtain a radio audience of more than 25,000,000 "listeners-in" for President Coolidge's address in commemoration of Washington before congress on February 22 was initiated today by Representative Bloom, Democrat of New York. The president's address will launch formal arrangements for the Washington bi-centennial celebration in 1932.

The New York member will attempt to have civic organizations in each city obtain a hall where the radio address may be heard.

## TRIPLETT HAPPENINGS

Triplet, Feb. 1.—There was a merry deer hunt in this section this week, as a result of which some of our citizens have been eating venison. The hunt began late Sunday afternoon and the deer was killed Monday near Rev. D. M. Triplett's.

Mr. C. C. Triplett went to West Virginia last Tuesday on business. He returns Friday.

Rev. D. M. Wheeler preached an interesting sermon at Mt. Ephraim church Sunday.

Mrs. J. A. Hartley, who has been ill with typhoid fever, is improving. Mrs. Newton Graser is visiting her daughter, Mrs. J. A. Hartley.

Simon E. Baldwin, noted authority on international law and twice governor of Connecticut, died at his home at New Haven Sunday. He was 87 years old.