

Land of the Black Mountain



Men of Montenegro.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

Little Montenegro, which was the tiniest kingdom in Europe, has been merged since the World War into the big new kingdom of Yugo-Slavia. Its well-loved king is dead; its capital only the seat of a province. But half a millennium of dearly bought independence and the most intense patriotism has made its inhabitants not altogether willing to lose their identity; so from time to time commissions appear to present Montenegro's case to the world and to keep alive its marvelous history and traditions.

This little country, then smaller than Delaware, and sometimes with no more than 8,000 fighting men within its borders, has the distinction of being the one patch of land in the broad expanse of the Balkan peninsula that kept itself free from Turkish conquest during the five and a half centuries since the Turks crossed the Hellespont. One after another, the regions that are now Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Albania fell before the excellent Turkish fighting organizations, and settled down for hundreds of years under a condemned little better than slavery to Moslem masters. Montenegro remained free and was practically a Christian island in a sea of Mohammedanism. Only on its western border was it in contact during this long period with other Christian territory, a narrow strip of Adriatic coast controlled by Venice.

Upon the final overthrow of the ancient glory of the Serbs on the field of Kosovo, a few valiant souls retreated to the rocky fastnesses of Cernagora, to seek asylum with the Volvode of the Zeta. A few years later, abandoned by their ruler—who preferred a life of ease at Venice—they turned to their bishop, made him also their prince, and with him retreated still deeper into the hills and there set up that long line of the Vladikas which did not end until well into the last century.

Tributes to Their Bravery.
There they maintained their freedom, with suffering indescribable and with courage illimitable; and won from Gladstone, the great English apostle of Balkan freedom, those words of undying praise, in which he gave it as his "deliberate opinion" that "the traditions of Montenegro exceed in glory those of Marathon and Thermopylae and all the war traditions of the world"; and inspired in Tennyson what he regarded as the finest of his sonnets, inscribed to the

"... smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Cernagora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and broke the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers."

Within but a stone's throw of the Adriatic sea, Montenegro was long cut off from it until in the middle of the Nineteenth century her arms won Antivari from the Turks. Cattaro has always been the logical port of the country and its natural gateway from the West, yet it remained until the World War in the hands of Austria. Now Cattaro is Yugo-Slavic and is no longer under a control alien to that of Montenegro.

In the days before the World War the few diplomats and travelers who visited Cetinje, the capital of Montenegro, considered the ride over the automobile road from Cattaro one of the grandest scenically to be found in Europe.

Ascending the marvelous zigzag road which leads up from the port, one approaches the stern and gloomy defile which forms the portal to this historic stronghold of freedom in the Balkans. Splendid engineering is this road. Built for post and military uses, it clings to the face of the sheer rock and weaves back and forth in a multitude of "hairpin curves" which the chauffeurs of the post automobile treat with that contempt which familiarity alone can breed.

Up and ever up, one goes. Below stand forth the dusky cliffs which jut into the southern fjord; nesting beneath them, and hemmed in with the massive battlements of those giants of

an earlier day who stretched out the lion of St. Mark's from the Lido to the Bosphorus, lies Cattaro—which was Italian in appearance, Austrian in allegiance, but Serb in feeling, its heart ever in the Highlands. Beyond smiles the Adriatic, and above tower the gaunt gray rocks, against which the road seems a veritable ladder laid upon a wall.

A Wilderness of Rocks.

Threading at last a narrow defile, whose walls are pierced with caves where lurk the fables of the mountaineers, and crossing a pass too often swathed in clouds, one turns a corner and comes face to face with the ancient realm of the Vladikas.

The smile of the soft blue sea lies behind, and before stretches a wild, turbulent ocean of rock, rising and sinking in angry gray waves flecked with white, which seem to leap and rage and battle together like a sea lashed by a storm. Stones, rocks and crags, nothing else; not a tree, not a blade of grass; scarcely even a tuft of brushwood to relieve the dreary scene of desolation.

At the creation, so runs the Montenegrin legend, an angel was sent forth to pick up the superfluous stones on the earth's surface. He placed them in a bag, which burst as he was flying over Cernagora—and certainly the landscape bears out the tale.

And yet the scene cannot be said to lack charm—the charm of majesty always to be found among the hills. And while Cernagora at first sight—gaunt, gray and drear, an arid wilderness of bare rock—tells in one blow of the sufferings of centuries, pity does not long endure; it passes almost at once to praise for a people who have preferred liberty in this desolation to slavery in fat lands.

From the old Austrian border to Cetinje one encounters but one village, Niegush, nestling in a little cleft in the hills and claiming attention as the cradle of the Petrovich dynasty, which for more than two centuries ruled the destinies of the land. Here was born not only Danilo I, progenitor of the line, but most of his successors, including the late king, whose tiny villa is the show-place of the town.

From the pocket of Niegush, one begins the ascent and an hour's climbing brings him to the top of the pass, in sight of Cetinje. The distance as the crow flies is short; but the winding road multiplies the miles, and one has ample opportunity to survey the tiny former capital which boasts—albeit somewhat inaccurately—that its streets alone of all the Balkan capitals have never echoed to the tread of a conquering Turkish host.

Cetinje, the Capital.

Two broad, parallel streets, connected by irregularly laid out cross streets, comprise the town, which lies hemmed in on every side by the stern hills. The green fields, the elms, the buttercups by the roadside, and the steep gables of the houses, which often lie banked to their eaves with winter's snows, are reminiscent of a White mountain village.

European dress has made slight inroads in this part of the world. Though the army, thanks to Russian generosity, wore khaki, the palace guard wore Montenegrin garb to the end, and it was the habitual dress of both king and queen, the latter having pointedly refused the suggestion of her daughters-in-law that, together with the royal title, she should take on modern gowns.

Montenegrins are nearly all giants and they stride as though each wore seven-league boots. Indeed, when a Montenegrin wants to go anywhere in a hurry he walks, not using the splendid roads with which his mountains are threaded, but taking the old short cuts among the hills.

These Montenegrins are a race of warriors, and before the World War sat about in the coffee houses bemoaning their lot. "What a life for a man!" they said. "Thirty years without a war; nothing for a man to do." But there was always plenty for the women to do, and the women of Montenegro, so alert and graceful in their youth, soon lose their good looks and become bent and bowed and ugly.

QUAINT CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Cupid Plays Part in Many of the Superstitions That Are Still Given Consideration.

Good St. Thomas, serve me right
And send me my true love tonight,
That I may gaze upon his face,
Then him in my fond arms embrace.

AFTER placing a piece of holly under her pillow, many a girl, in the north of England especially, repeats these lines to herself before retiring to rest on Christmas eve, according to a writer in London Tit-Bits. Cupid plays an important part in many of the superstitions and customs that are still extant at this season.

A Christmas practice among superstitious girls who wish to dream about their future lovers is that of abstaining from food or drink or speech during the whole of Christmas eve. Then, after all the family have retired, they make a cake of flour, salt and water, called a "dumb cake." This they eat just before retiring to bed, in the belief that their somewhat indigestible supper will cause them to dream of their future husbands.

In the Alps there exist several charming Yuletide customs of proposing marriage by the language of flowers. If a girl accepts a bouquet of edelweiss from a man during the period from Christmas day to New Year's eve the action denotes that she accepts him as her future husband.

Another Christmas custom in Switzerland is for the young man to place a flower pot, containing a single rose, and a note on the window sill of the girl's room when she is absent from home. He then waits for a reply. If the maid accepts the flower before New Year's eve, then the young man boldly enters the house to "ask papa."

If, on the other hand, the rose is not touched, but is allowed to fade away, the proposal is rejected without a single word of love having been exchanged between the couple.

In Sardinia Christmas wooing is far more complicated. If a Sardinian father has a marriageable daughter, the would-be suitor applies to him for permission to speak to her by means of a species of telephone that has been in use for the purpose for centuries of Christmases.

It is a long string with a wooden knob at each end. The girl drops one knob out of her window and, the shutters being closed, places the other knob to her ear. Down below her would-be lover pours words of undying devotion into his knob!

On every New Year's day in Rumania a fair of marriageable girls is held. The girls are all drawn up in one line and the men in another, with the parents of both behind them. If a young man likes the looks of any particular girl he steps out of his line, goes up to her and enters into conversation. If he is favorably received by the girl, his parents and her parents compare notes as to the marriage settlement and similar practical matters.

Many quaint superstitions are associated with the festive season in various parts of Britain. In Hertfordshire the wearing of new shoes on Christmas day is considered to be very unlucky.



SOME JOB

"John, your face looks terribly battered up," said the teacher to John aged seven.

ASSESSED VALUATION, TAXES LEVIED, BONDED AND OTHER INDEBTEDNESS—1921

Town of AHOSKIE, for the Fiscal year ending May 31, 1922.

Name of mayor: W. L. Curtis.		
Name of Clerk: D. P. Boyette.		
Name of Treasurer: D. P. Boyette.		
Name of Attorney: Winston & Matthews.		
Names of Commissioners: J. B. Barnes, H. W. Stokes, D. P. Boyette.		
Assessed valuation of real estate and		
Assessed valuation of personal property	\$1,439,827.20	
Railroad and other property assessed by		
Corporation Commission	136,629.60	
TOTAL valuation of all property	\$1,576,456.80	
Total amount of tax levied on property	19,905.71	
Total taxes levied on polls	847.50	20,753.21
Total taxes collected for fines	9.20	
Total taxes from License for all other purposes	600.00	
Receipts from electric lights, water works		
or other municipally operated public service	12,641.21	
Receipts from sale of bonds or money borrowed	39,418.28	52,668.69
GRAND TOTAL		73,421.90
Disbursements of above were as follows:		
Streets and sidewalks	986.91	
General purposes	733.09	
Salaries of Mayor and other officers	1,935.00	
Expenses operating electric light, water		
works, or other municipally		
operated public service	13,629.67	
Payments upon principal or interest		
of bonds or other indebtedness	51,705.70	
TOTAL disbursements		68,990.37
Amount uncollected from property (ending		
of fiscal year) and		
Amount uncollected from polls (ending of		
fiscal year)	11,787.12	
TOTAL uncollected from property and polls		11,787.12
Tax rate on the \$100 for the year 1921 was as follows:		
Special (water, sewerage and lights)	\$.75 on the \$100 valuation.	
General	.50 on the \$100 valuation.	
TOTAL tax rate for all purposes on the \$100 valuation	\$ 1.25	
Number of white polls, 153.		
Number of negro polls, 73.		
Total number of polls, 226.		
Tax levied on each poll, \$3.75.		
Bonded indebtedness:		
Amount authorized	\$ 140,000.00	
Amount issued	140,000.00	
Purpose of issue, Water, Light and Sewerage.		
Date of issue, June 1, 1920 and March 1, 1921.		
When due, Serial Bonds		
Amount outstanding	139,000.00	
Rate of interest 6 per centum per annum.		
Current liabilities	10,758.95	
TOTAL indebtedness	\$149,758.95	
	L. C. WILLIAMS, Clerk.	

Town of Ahoskie, N. C. Dated December 5, 1922.

An Ideal Christmas Gift

This Beautiful Ribbon Wrist Watch

\$17.50



It is not very often that we can offer to our customers such values in watches as the attractive wrist watch illustrated in this advertisement. This watch is a high-grade imported 15 jewel movement in a 20 year case. This same movement in a plain case is one dollar less.

Our selections of Christmas merchandise are most complete, and we urge you to make your selections early. Order now and avoid disappointment later.

All orders filled same day received.

Paul-Gale-Greenwood Co.

LARGEST JEWELERS SOUTH
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

TWO WEEKS
AND THEN---
CHRISTMAS



As is custom with us, our store is well prepared to take care of the Gift Buyers, both expensive and inexpensive.

Perfumes, powders, stationery, Cigars, Smoking Tobacco, Candies, all make acceptable gifts, and are moderately priced at our store.

We also have displays of special Christmas goods, and know we can fill your requirements.

"THE QUALITY KIND"

Ice Cream

Is always tasty and never staple—it never outgrows its sweetness, and is as pure as can be made

Place your order with us

Ahoskie Ice Cream Co.

Manufacturers of

"The Quality Kind"

124 Main Street

Ahoskie, N. C.

City Deliveries Made on Sunday from

10:00 a. m. to 1:00 p. m.

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MURFREESBORO, - NORTH CAROLINA

CHRISTMAS TIDINGS!!

Everyone should take advantage of our Christmas offerings in our various departments

Ladies Suits, Coats and Dresses at exceptionally LOW PRICES that will not only APPEAL to your purse but also to your good judgment as to both quality and style. Coats in Velour, Normandy Cloth and Bolivia. Sport Coats in Polo and Astrakhan

STYLISH, SNAPPY, SEASONABLE DRESSES in Poiret Twill, Serge and Canton Crepe

HOSIERY—New line Ladies Silk Hosiery, just the thing for gift seekers

SHOE DEPARTMENT

Florsheim shoes for men. Complete line of Roberts, Johnson and Rand Shoes for men, women and children

READY-TO-WEAR CLOTHING

Men's Overcoats, Boy's Overcoats. Biggest and best line of Men's and boys suits ever offered in this section at prices that DEFY COMPETITION

REMEMBER—That every garment offered by us is absolutely new. No left-overs or shopworn goods bought on the high war market, but we sacrificed our entire stock of clothing, notions, and dry goods last July which makes it possible for us to present to you this wonderful opportunity

SEE OUR BEFORE CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS AT AFTER CHRISTMAS PRICES

WYNN BROS.

THE SHOPPING CENTER

WHY YOU SHOULD DEPOSIT YOUR MONEY IN THE BANK OF AHOSKIE

When you deposit your money in this bank, you not only deposit it in one of the strongest banks in this section, but it is financially able to take care of you during the dull season of the year.

We loan money to our patrons, and when you deposit your money here you become one of the large number that we are glad to accommodate in every way possible.

We loan money to our patrons, and when you deposit your money here you become one of the large number that we are glad to accommodate in every way possible.

If you are a farmer you buy merchandise, and if you buy on time you pay more than you would have to pay if you were financially able to pay cash—The way to do this and get ahead, is to deposit your money here during the harvest; and we accommodate you during the spring and summer.

Every accommodation extended our customers that sound banking will permit.

BANK OF AHOSKIE

The Bank That Has Never Charged Any Person More Than 6 Per Cent Interest

Ahoskie, N. C.

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