

## TRAILS OF HIGHLANDS

By Sarah Summer

The trails of Highlands offer delights to the hiker that are found all along the way and not just limited to the waterfall or fine view at the end of the trail. The different kinds of moss, leaf and rock have their own special quality of mountain beauty to enchant those receptive to their magic. Those who see Highlands from their cars miss a great deal as the trails are an unending source of pleasure, but unfortunately too little is known about them. It is for this reason a more detailed listing of the trails is given.

Almost everyone is familiar with the trails to Satulah and Sunset. These trails are so well-marked they hardly need any explanation except perhaps for distances. To go to Sunset Rocks, take the right hand turn just above the Museum. Follow the narrow road about a half mile to the top and be sure to go to each side of the Ridge as the east side overlooks Horse Cove, Black Rock and Whiteside and the west side commands a view of the Highlands plateau with the Bearpens to the right, Satulah to the left and Wayah Bald ranges directly ahead. For the adventurous and agile, there is a trail down over the cliff, which isn't as precipitous as it looks, through Hoot Owl Glen and thence to

Pierson Drive in Highlands. However, the trail through Hoot Owl Glen is very overgrown and this is not a recommended route for anyone without a seventh sense of direction (plus a snake-bite kit!)

The trail to Satulah Mountain is about two miles. It is possible to drive up  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, park and then hike up to the top, about half a mile. There are numerous "straight up" trails along the way that shorten the curves while they shorten the breath but they are only for the very hardy or very young. After reaching the top of Satulah, if you can find it, there is a rather overgrown trail that leads out to the "Toadstool", a big odd-shaped rock overlooking South Carolina and Georgia.

Glen Falls turnoff is about two miles out on the Dillard Road. This is one of the lucky ones as it is plainly marked and all you have to do is follow the signs. A good dirt road leads out to the beginning of the trail and after a fairly downhill walk, a bit steep in places but very well-kept, you come to Glen Falls and the lesser falls that follow it. Another trail, also plainly marked, leads to Blue Valley. The parking place for these trails is an excellent picnic spot. This Falls was discovered by Mr. J. Heacock in the 188's and he named it for one of the waterfalls in his home state of New York.

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