

Draper Woman Discovers There's More Here Than Riches Of Cowee Valley

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article, by Mrs. F. P. Parker, of Draper, appeared in a recent issue of THE LEAKSVILLE NEWS. It concerns the visit of Mrs. Parker and her family to Cowee Valley in search of rubies.)

The door to the little brown cottage closed and locked with a click. The bags, the Indian drum, the bows and arrows, along with the vacation trophies were in the car. Vacation was ending and we felt a little sad as we turned for a last look at our "home away

from home".
On A Hill
We had been fortunate to find this comfortable and attractive cottage about four miles from the town of Franklin, North Carolina, as we had made no reservations. Located on a hill away from the highway and surrounded by trees, we could imagine we were the only people within miles. Actually, we had very close neighbors, including a family of Indians on a dairy farm about a half a mile away.
Our first night we planned to get to bed early to be ready to

explore next morning. Of course, there were a few strange sounds such as "Who-who" and "katty-did-katty-did", but at last we drifted off to sleep. In no time it seemed we were awakened by screams in the night—"hi-hi-ya-hi". I realized they must be rounding up the cows on the dairy farm.

Heed Call
This was our first trip here so our surroundings were all completely new. Having read of the Cowee Ruby Mines nearby, we heard the "call of the west" (Western North Carolina, that is,) where for \$2 for each adult, we could spend the day prospecting for rubies. This, and our love for the mountains had lured us to Franklin, the county seat of Macon County.

Franklin, a town of about 2,000 people, is located in the heart of the Nantahala National Forest. This is a thriving little city, modern in every way but retaining the mellow touch of "the good old days." Its business section usually resembles any other town of this size, but on Saturdays the scene changes. The streets are lined with people from miles around, taking the day to "go to town". Perhaps there is business to be attended to, but neighbor greets neighbor taking time to "pass the time of day." And there are checker boards waiting beneath the thick shade trees—waiting for a game if one isn't in progress.

Scenic Drive
Interested in a scenic drive? Highway 64 east leads to Highlands, North Carolina, the highest town in Eastern America. We drove along the Cullasaja River as it gurgled over the rocks and cascades, then rested in quiet pools where trout fishermen waited to make their catch. We left our car in a parking lot for a breathtaking view of Dry Falls. The trail led into a deep gorge, going under the falls. Beneath tons of rocks and water in the cool mist, the sounds of the world unable to penetrate the crash of the water as it falls on the rocks below, there came an awareness of the Creator, the Master Artist whose hand sculptured this and created every natural beauty we were enjoying.

A little further along we drove under Bridal Veil Falls as it arches over the highway. Welcoming us to Highlands was lovely Lake Sequoyah with her bouquet of pink water lilies. Out of Franklin to the west one may drive through picturesque mountains and gaps to Hayesville, or on to Murphy. As you descend you may look into a valley of color, red, yellow, and hite, surrounded by blue mountains. The colors, you discover

are made of acres of gladioli.
Cold Swim
Perhaps you had rather go west a few miles, then turn right into Wayah Valley, and stop at Arrowwood Glade recreation area. There you will find a picnic area and shelter. You may visit the fish hatchery, or swim in the clear, cool waters of the lake. The children insisted that it wasn't cold. After my teeth quit chattering and I got my breath back, I did enjoy it, so maybe it wasn't cold. Further in this direction the road runs through a forest of virgin timber with branches meeting overhead, forming a tunnel of green, going across Wayah Bald with a trail to the peak where a stone tower offers a magnificent view. On the other side of Wayah Bald we "discovered" Lake Nantahala. The sun was sinking in a burst of color behind the blue mountains, painting the sky lavender, orange, and crimson.

As for the scenery on the northern route into Cowee Valley, I was too excited to notice, and too busy watching for signs leading to the ruby mines. We had been told to go to Holbrook No. 1, for at the other mines we would have to sluice mine in the creek. Here hose pipes were furnished to wash the gravel. We found the place and paid our fee. We were furnished pick, shovel, buckets, and a sieve-like box. A man called "Red" showed us where to dig in a bank of the hardest and reddest clay imaginable. He very obligingly filled our buckets the first time, then tried to show us what to look for as we ran water into our sieves, and squashed mud through our fingers. When the mud was washed off we looked through the rocks for our "take"—they all looked just like that to me—"rocks". I was looking for brilliant red stones. We did find a few small ones that would do to cut—some small sapphires, and topaz—I bet we threw the big ones away. Rubies aren't all bright red; some are dull brownish, some even pink. We learned later at the gem shop in town—where we should have gone before going to the mine.

Much Richer
Well, we'll know better next time and I wouldn't have missecc trying, for after all, this was what

had brought us here and though we hadn't found a fortune in gems we definitely were richer for having had the privilege to visit nature's wonderland and to come in contact with some wonderful people, including our neighbors, the Andersons, who were never in too much hurry to make us feel welcome.

We drove from our little brown cottage into Franklin where we stopped to have breakfast at the Uncle Remus Restaurant. As we were being served, we heard a voice humming, accompanied by the clink of pots, and pans. Usually I don't care for music so early, but as I listened I began to enjoy it. The voice was clear and sweet, and I began to recognize the tune, and remember the words, "Somewhere, Somewhere, Beautiful Isle of Somewhere."

A Benediction
The song lingered like a benediction as we drove along—watching the white mists rise like wisps of smoke up the sides of the mountains—mountains harboring lakes and waterfalls, flower gardens in lush green valleys—precious jewels sprinkled by God's own hand.

We felt refreshed, our lives seemed richer as we drove home from a "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere."

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN
Miss Nancy Sutton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Sutton, of Route 2, will serve as chairman of the committee in charge of the religious activities room for "Religious Emphasis Week" on the Pfeiffer College campus November 16-20. Nancy is a junior at Pfeiffer and has taken a very active part in the campus program.

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Low Cost Meat Cuts Can Help Tight Budgets

Use low cost meat cuts for budgets that won't budge. They will satisfy the family's taste for meat and can be glamorized to fit into meals for the finest occasion.

According to Miss S. Virginia Wilson, food and nutrition specialist for the N. C. Agricultural Extension Service, there are many ways to improve meat cookery.

Select recipes that call for moist heat—that is, the addition of some liquid or cooking slowly with a close fitting lid.

Perk it up with spices or herbs. Experiment by using only a dash to begin with. Be careful not to use too much. Practically every company that distributes herbs has a chart suggesting what herbs to use with certain foods. You want to make the flavor subtle.

Temp't your tasters into wondering just what it is that makes your dish something special.

Extend the meat flavor by cooking it with gravy, potatoes, rice, dumplings or noodles.

Miss Wilson says to add a flare to the way you serve your meat dishes. Instead of slinging a meat stew on a dish with gravy dripping over the edge, serve it in a large or individual casserole. Top with puffs of mashed potatoes, browned in the oven, or thin biscuits baked to a golden brown.

Left-over chopped chicken is not hash when it is served as chicken short cake between split biscuits, pieces of cornbread, or on waffles. Parsley, radish roses, green celery tops, and many other bits of colored vegetables or fruits are inexpensive ways to add glamour to a meat dish.

"Use these dishes to lift the level of your family's meals from a hum-drum affair to something special," says Miss Wilson. "Don't save the best for company meals but for those you love the best."

The horizontal silo, either trench or bunker type, is becoming popular among North Carolina dairymen as a place to store and feed silage.

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