Area Research file

Blue Ridge Pkwy

ECOLOGICAL HISTORY AND HISTORICAL ECOLOGY OF THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

Final Research Report 68-1

National Park Service

RSP: SHEN-N-5
BLRI-H-1a
BLRI-H-2a

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Appalachians (1961), scientists have studied many parts and aspects of the region, but generally have neglected the Blue Ridge. Hopefully this investigation will partially fill that vacuum.

However, this investigation was not designed to be merely a reconstruction of the nature and movement of settlement elements. It is also a study in "method," if one means by that word not only the techniques of observation and analysis, but also the conceptions which allow characterization and comparison. Method deals with the entire aspect of problem solving; it is inseparable from purpose. Simply stated, therefore, the object of this investigation was the evaluation of the degree of variation in mountain folklife and mountain settlements.

Method permits precision communication and the sharing of acquired knowledge, both substantive and theoretical. In organizing my field data, I erected a model of the settlements in the Blue Ridge (Figure 1). By model I mean simply a way of organizing, conceptualizing and presenting data. The model considers each mountain folk settlement type as a unit in itself as well as part of a greater whole, a portion of a mountain-folk settlement-

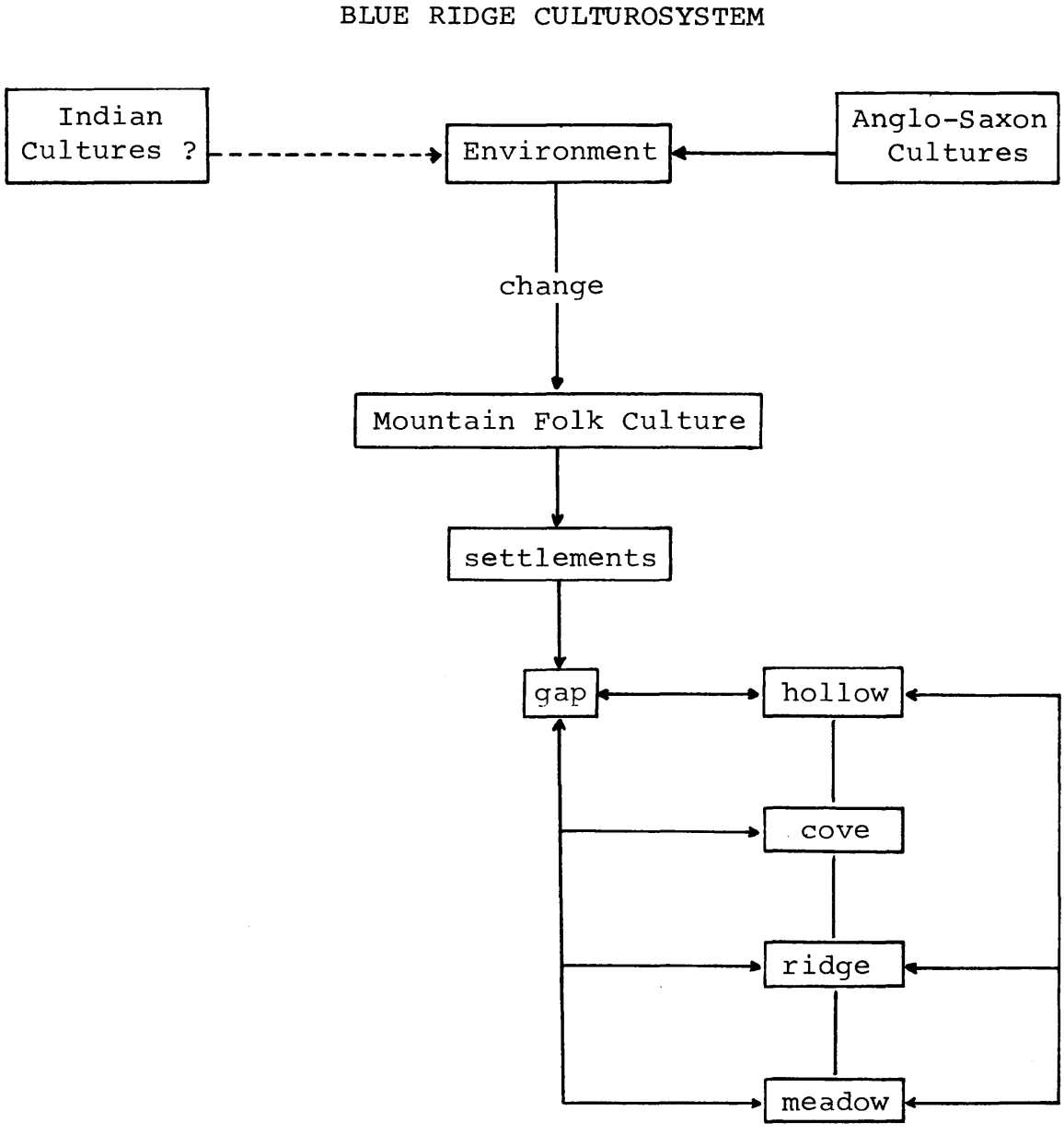

Figure 1. Conceptual model of Blue Ridge culturosystem. Arrows indicate directions of culture contact.

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pattern system.

In this investigation a system is an analyzed whole; the entities that compose it and their interrelationships

along the Skyline Drive - Blue Ridge Parkway every ten miles along the 350-mile long transect. Thirty-eight settlements, ten of which were abandoned in Shenandoah National Park, were then chosen for intensive study. Communities were divided into the various settlement types as follows: gap - 7, hollow - 20, cove - 5, ridge - 3, and meadow - 3. Visits were also made south of Grandfather Mountain to examine and to compare other mountain settlements, but none of these were included in this investigation. Additional information was acquired from bibliographic research in county court-houses, National Park headquarters, and at the University of Virginia library. Field techniques included settlement mapping, photographing settlement elements, using aerial photographs for locating settlements and noting their evolution, and taped interviews. Nearly one-hundred hours of taped interviews with mountain folk required approximately 300 hours of editing and synthesizing of data.

This investigation is obviously incomplete. Facts have been selected and interpreted with an obvious bias. The risks of omission are unavoidable where the basic intent is the exploration of an approach and methodology rather than the exhaustive survey of a given areal unit. The study

presents no report of thought completed; it exhibits some thinking just begun. This is an exploration, not a finished map. But a course has been laid.

Acknowledgments. This investigation could never have been completed without the splendid cooperation of many organizations and individuals. Particular gratitude is extended to the National Park Service, Eastern National Park and Monument Association, Shenandoah Natural History Association, and McGill University. The Superintendents of Shenandoah National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway and their staffs assisted the project in numerous small ways both in the field and indoors. Finally, a special thanks is rendered to Chief Park Naturalist E. Ray Schaffner, Shenandoah National Park, and Donald Robinson, NPS, Richmond, for their personal interest and encouragement during the long, and often painstaking, steps of research.

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INDIAN CULTURES

More or less well-established trails made by wild animals in search of food and water existed in the Appalachians, as Meyer (1924-25:735) contends, for a long time before the appearance of man. Indians certainly found the Blue Ridge landscape already dissected by gap-trails and began using them because they led to places where the primal necessities of life could be obtained. Bushnell (1933:2) states that game was plentiful in the mountains, especially deer, bear, elk, and smaller animals. Buffalo were known to have reached both sides of the Blue Ridge by moving through the gaps, but they may have never been numerous. Many arrow points found at the base of the range prove that game was sought here over a long period. As Strackey (1849:75) wrote: "In the tyme of their huntings, the Indians leave their habitations for ... the mountains where indeed there is plenty of game ..."

Judy (1936-37:5) believes that Indians did not live permanently in the Blue Ridge, but instead made temporary seasonal visits for the purpose of hunting, fishing, and gathering. No pottery or implements of agriculture have

been unearthed in the mountains to dispute this belief, although rich artifact materials have been found nearby in the Shenandoah Valley and on the Piedmont. It is likewise known that Indians used certain spots in the Blue Ridge, like Lewis Mountain and Tanner's Ridge, as quarries for fashioning their implements and weapons. It seems likely that, because the Blue Ridge offered such good hunting and fishing and was so accessible by trails and rivers to many tribes in all directions, the country was set aside as a common hunting ground.

Although the Indians did not make a deep impression on the total Blue Ridge landscape, they did modify certain parts of it. Indians on the adjoining Piedmont were practicing a shifting agriculture based on maize, squash, pumpkins, and beans when found by the English in 1608. While using the mountains primarily as a hunting-fishing-gathering-chipping ground, the Indians modified the base of the Blue Ridge by burning and "deadening" the forest land for agriculture. Open areas, called "Indian Old Fields" by the pioneers, soon resulted. Since most of these fields were located near the mouths of hollows, they were logical settlement choices for the pioneers, and became

nuclei in many instances for future mountain-settlement expansion.

Certain localities in the Blue Ridge were periodically burned and cleared for the driving and gathering of game, and for the collection of wild berries. The largest single clearing, Big Meadows, predates white settlement. Presently it flanks the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park from Fisher's Gap to Milam Gap, a distance about five miles long. The spot, according to Judy (1936-37:4), was known variously among the initial settlers in the eighteenth century as Big Meadows, Great Meadows, Big Clearing, and the Dead Lands. A survey map (in National Park Service files) dated 1795 clearly shows Big Meadows among other clearings, proving its existence at that time. As Evans (1966:77-78) emphasizes, it is time the historian (and others) abandon the time honored concept of "virgin forests" in the Appalachians broken only by narrow trails. There was certainly much open country in the Blue Ridge, both atop the plateaus and at the mouths of hollows, plus a well-defined trail system.

Although native society had disappeared by the time the Blue Ridge Mountains were settled by pioneers, the

newcomers already had acquired valuable knowledge from other Indians in transit. Knowledge centered mainly on agricultural techniques, which were important for survival and well-being. Settlers quickly adopted the "deadening" method of eradicating trees, burning the forest, and utilizing the mound system of planting. Evans (1966:78) further points out that Indian trails guided the pioneers' footsteps and settlers adopted Indian dress and foods (Table I). They even accepted the ritual of the fall hunt and rigidly held to an ecological calendar for planting and harvesting their crops. As Price (1960:1-20) and Evans (1965:34) mention, much of pioneer plant-lore and home remedies was Indian in origin (Table I).

Because so little concrete information is known about the Indians of the Blue Ridge, the conceptual model for this investigation (Figure 1) shows an unassigned variation for Indian cultural element. Nevertheless, as seen above, Indians did modify the mountains, and these changes in turn did influence initial pioneer settlements to some degree. This relationship is depicted in the conceptual model (Figure 1) by means of a dashed arrow. Again, it is important to stress that person to person culture

TABLE I

INDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO APPALACHIAN SETTLERS

Plant Dyes and Fibers
Medicinal Roots and Herbs
The Fall Hunt
Ecological Calendar
Corn Complex
Girdling and Deadening
"Hilling" Corn
Hoe Agriculture
Food Dishes
Indian Dress
Deerskin Hunting Shirt
Deerskin Pants
Moccasins
Indian Trails

Source: 1964-47 field data and various readings.

contact between pioneer and Indian occurred outside the confines of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

ANGLO-SAXON CULTURES

Kercheval (1833:64-78), Thompson (1910), Campbell (1921:40), Strickler (1924:6-7), Kephart (1929:434-437), and Evans (1966:74) are among the many observers who agree that the first pioneer movement into the Shenandoah Valley was from southern Pennsylvania. According to Strickler (1924:6), the first settlement occurred in 1726 at Massanutten in Page County. However, some of these early settlers may have traded with Indians there shortly after Spotswood's expedition in 1716. German settlers were in the majority near the mouth of the valley until the 1730's, although Gottmann (1955:79) claims that British (Scotch-Irish?) immigrants were dominant. Gottmann is in error, for, according to Wayland (1907:9-10), there were probably a few Germans in the lower valley as early as 1704. In the mid-and late-1730's, however, the great Scotch-Irish movement from Pennsylvania assured the predominance of this culture in the central and upper reaches of the valley (see Ford, 1941:378-388).

When the first Anglo-Saxon elements moved into the

Blue Ridge Mountains is difficult to pinpoint. Kercheval (1833:69) hints that in the 1730's the slopes of the Blue Ridge were being considered for pasturage by valley settlers. Because most of the initial mountain settlers were Scotch-Irish squatters, land titles and other official written documents are non-existent. Proof of early eighteenth century mountain settlements comes from a few old family diaries, bibles, and letters uncovered during my investigation. When possible, evidence was xeroxed and filed with the National Park Service. I did discover a crude map in a family diary belonging at one time to Mark Medley. The map depicts a trail system leading from the Shenandoah Valley in the vicinity of Front Royal four miles east into the Blue Ridge. The map, dated 1742, presently belongs to a cousin, Richard Jenkins of Arlington (personal communication, 1967). Apparently Medley, a storekeeper, kept a map-record of his mountain customers for business purposes. The only other early date of mountain settlements is found in Strickler (1924:9) when he mentions that the settlers at Massanutten petitioned the County Court of Orange in June, 1740, to construct a road from their settlement over the Blue

Ridge to Mr. Thornton's mill on the east slope of the Blue Ridge. This road was in operation at least by 1746 and soon became known as the New Market-Sperryville Pike.

During the next three decades predominantly Scotch-Irish settlers continued to arrive in the mountains in appreciable numbers. A survey map, now in the National Park Service files, and dated 1795, clearly shows 33 families living in hollows in the general vicinity of Big Meadows, the majority of whom were Scotch-Irish in origin. Graham (1956:20) points out that the Scotch-Irish have long been famous for their exploits as pioneers of the Appalachian frontier. Leyburn (1962:325) even suggests calling these backwoodsmen "the first Americans." The Revolutionary War marked a turning point in the settlement of the Blue Ridge. After the war, English descendants, as opposed to Scotch-Irish and German, began to predominate among the new settlers. The greatest majority moved from Piedmont localities into the mountains between 1795 and 1830.

How did the Anglo-Saxon cultural elements pierce the Blue Ridge Mountains? And why should they settle in the mountains when better land was available in the Shenandoah Valley? As Semple (1911:521) suggests, a mountain system

presents the most effective barrier which man meets on the land surface. It offers a resistance to the spread of population which long serves to exclude settlers. But the difficulty of the barrier, according to Barrows (1962:119), depends on the elevation of the barrier above the local relief, the length (if short, the people may skirt it), the width, the number of ridges, steepness of slope, number of passes, and finally upon the presence or absence of vegetation. Although this generalization by Barrows (1962:120) may be accurate for most of the Appalachians, it does not hold true for the northern Blue Ridge landscape. Access from either the Great Valley or the Piedmont was made easier because of the range's narrowness (5 mile average width), by its single, relatively low profile (2,800 feet average elevation), and by the many gaps and streams that formed a network of waterways.

For migrating, the interest of the Blue Ridge is centered in the gaps and along the streams. They point the easiest pathways to montane country. Semple (1911:545) held that gaps are always significant for settlement; their influence persists through the ages. They are nature-made thoroughfares. Interestingly enough,

only Blue Ridge gaps that were low enough to be serviceable and led from one important natural site of settlement to another were utilized for settlement. To a large extent, therefore, the mountain gaps and the accompanying network of waterways controlled the movements of the settlers more than did the mountain ridges.

Reasons for settling the Blue Ridge Mountains are many, complex, and not agreed upon. In fact, several suggestions can be disputed. For example, Raine (1924:42) claims that the Germans were better farmers than the Scotch-Irish, and for this reason the majority of German settlers preferred to settle in the Shenandoah Valley rather than in the mountains. However, Evans (1965:33) notes that today Augusta and Rockbridge counties in the valley include a preponderance of Scotch-Irish descendants. Other valley counties have their share of the latter racial stock as well (see Strickler, 1952). From outward appearance and productivity of land the Scotch-Irish farms are just as prosperous as those of their German neighbors. Raine (1924:42) also implies that the Scotch-Irish who settled in the Blue Ridge wanted to be huntsmen, traders, and pioneers. After personal interviews

with descendants of these initial settlers, I have concluded that many different occupations were represented. Two facts about the initial settlers should be stressed at this point: 1) during the settlement period between c. 1740-1800, the Scotch-Irish outnumbered the German element at least 5 to 1; 2) not only did the Scotch-Irish settlers include many kinds of occupational specialists, but also these specialists settled in mountain localities most suited to the needs of their careers. (Table II). But as Evans (1965:33) concludes, the vast majority were ordinary agriculturalists, and as such they played a no less significant part in shaping the Blue Ridge landscape and the pattern of life that was to emerge there.

We can also discount lowland population pressure in the initial pioneer period as another reason for mountain settlements. Semple (1911:521) claimed that as a rule only when population pressure in the lowlands becomes too great under prevailing economic methods do clearings and cabins move upslope. Henry and Sherman (1933:10) suggested that increase in valley population "forced" the new settlers to turn to the mountains. But tithables checked by Greene and Harrington (1932:150-154) prove

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF MOUNTAIN SETTLEMENT VARIABLES: ANGLO-SAXON CULTURE*

Occupation	Gap	Hollow	Cove	Ridge	Meadow
Hunter-Trapper	x	x	x	x	x
Lumberman		x	x		
Horticulturalist		x	x	x	x
Grazer			x		x
Carpenter	x	x	x	x	x
Tanner		x	x		
Stone Mason	x	x			
Blacksmith	x	x	x		
Miller	x	x	x		
Innkeeper	x				
Merchant	x	x	x		
Pioneer		x	x	x	x
Preacher	x	x	x	x	
Teacher	x	x	x		

*Pertains to initial pioneer settlement period of c. 1740-1815. The Scotch-Irish element dominated.

Source: 1964-67 taped interviews with the Mountain Folk.

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that there was plenty of accessible valley land and very few

people before 1800. Most valley land, however, was held by speculators and sold at a relatively high price. Relatively few of the Scotch-Irish settlers could afford valley land, so they turned to the mountains. What did the Blue Ridge have to offer?

I believe that the motivating force for settling in the Blue Ridge was the belief of those who took part in it that they would ultimately find more satisfactory living conditions in the mountains. Some sought freedom from interference in religious and political matters, some hoped to improve their social status, a few were drawn by the love of adventure, or the desire to escape the consequences of past conduct (Table III). But, according to Owsley (1945:147), the dominating, most significant motive of the greatest majority of mountain settlers was economic opportunity and advancement. This goal centered on the desire to acquire property, and in the agricultural economy of the eighteenth century the principal form of property was land. The combined lure of unoccupied and free land was the great magnet that drew the settlers to the Blue Ridge. Economic advancement governed the settlers more than liberty, and free land

TABLE III

RATIONALE FOR SETTLINE IN THE MOUNTAINS

Absence of Indians
Accessibility
Unoccupied and Free Land
Freedom from Interference
Economic Opportunity & Advancement
Competitive Sites
Reasonable Soil
Good Water
Protection from Elements
Woods-Pasture
Situation
Bountiful Game, Fish, and Fruits
Some Resemblance to European Communities
Love of Adventure
Time

Source: 1964-67 field data.

became the key to the Blue Ridge frontier.

Frederick Jackson Turner (1914, 1920) previously announced

that one process - the existence of free land - explained the advance of American settlement ever westward. Weller (1965:12) and Peattie (1943:45) support this idea and even use the phrase "land hungry" settlers. Land speculation and keen competition for sites, problems in the Shenandoah Valley, did not exist or were less crucial for the many squatters who invaded the Blue Ridge, at least not until after 1850 when population began to expand in the mountains.

The development of settlement is dependent both on the cultural heritage of the settlers and on the physical condition of the region they occupy (Buck and Buck, 1939:1; Eyre and Jones, 1966:13). Reasons for settling in the Blue Ridge, other than those already mentioned, need explanation and actually relate to site and situation. By site I mean the sum of natural conditions available for the settlers to work with. Site elements include such obvious qualities as relief, climate, exposure, soil, water, plant-animal life, and situation. Situation relates location and position of settlement with respect to other places and things. Without the qualities of site man cannot exist, yet there is no known power inherent in a site that dictates how man must solve his problems of living according to one specified fashion. Morton (1951:

97-104) views settlement as largely a competition for sites; he defines site as a point of comparative advantage for productivity, exchange and transfer, and homesteads.

Factors governing the choice of settlement sites in the Blue Ridge are comprehensible upon close examination. The desire for accessibility caused the settlers to favor locations near gaps and at the mouths of hollows first (Table IV), a condition Johnson (1945:39-57) states was repeated by settlers elsewhere in America. Certainly such sites were chosen both because of desire for marketing facilities and communications with the settled regions of the Shenandoah Valley, and because the sites were richly endowed with natural resources (Table IV).

It must be remembered that during the period of initial settlement the Blue Ridge abounded in such resources as offered the conditions for a full and satisfying life. The lower hollows were fairly broad and had a rich abundant soil. Soil conditions of the hillsides, on the other hand, were relatively thin, but originally covered by a heavy coating of humus which gives a high fertility when first cleared of forest and placed under cultivation. But the life of this soil is short.

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF MOUNTAIN SETTLEMENT VARIABLES: ENVIRONMENT

	earliest ← Chronology → latest				
	1) gap and hollow		2) cove	3) ridge	4) meadow
	+ (most advantageous) ← Composite Matrix of Site Elements → (least advantageous)				
Relief	1) hollow and cove		2) gap	3) ridge and	meadow
Climate	1) cove	2) hollow	3) gap	4) ridge	5) meadow
Exposure	1) cove	2) hollow	3) gap	4) ridge	5) meadow
Soil	1) cove	2) hollow	3) meadow	4) gap	5) ridge
Water	1) hollow	2) cove	3) gap	4) meadow	5) ridge
Natural Vegetation	1) hollow	2) cove	3) gap	4) ridge	5) meadow
Wildlife	1) hollow	2) cove	3) meadow	4) gap	5) ridge
	+ (least isolated) ← Comparative Situation → (most isolated)				
	1) gap	2) hollow	3) cove	4) ridge	5) meadow

Source: 1964-67 field data.

The forests covering the mountain slopes and ridges abounded in wild fruits, nuts, game of all sorts, and the finest of timbers for building construction and fences. Of the wide variety of trees available, the chestnut and white oak were probably the most useful to the first settlers. The chestnut flourished in hilly areas in gravelly dry soil, and was utilized in many ways: wood for fuel, structures, fences, staves and shingles, bark for tanning, nuts for food dishes and as mast for stock animals. The white oak afforded excellent material for the building of cabins, wagons, tools and implements.

The chief food products of the Blue Ridge were fish and game, and both were abundant during the initial settlement period. Of the birds useful for food the most important were the wild turkey and ruffed grouse. Some mammals, like the deer, elk, and bear, were particularly useful to the early settlers. From them they obtained food, skins, and furs, plus many other by-products.

Arnow (1960:8) indicates that the earthly dreams of a typical pioneer were to own a good farm-site with a big stretch of bottomland and a fair boundary of timber. Sites most sought were the wide bottoms and rolling lands at the

mouths of hollows. Land along a stream was important in rough country, for here flat land encouraged the growing of crops. Hillsides and coves farther upstream were sought for their rich supporting timber. There was then no feeling against steep slopes; in fact, everything in initial mountain sites indicates the pioneers wanted at least a bit of roll to their land.

The first mountain settlers also wanted everlasting water in the form of a spring. A spring meant permanent, year-round water supply, and with a stone spring house, it was refrigerator, pantry, cellar, and milk house in summer. In winter the spring kept kraut from freezing and likewise warmed the farm animals. During any settlement experience good water is a must. Such activities as distilling, hog killing, hominy making, ash leaching, dairying, dyeing, and laundrying, all called for large amounts of water.

Hollow and gap sites also afforded advantageous protection against exposure to the elements (Table IV). Even the climate of hollows was not too divirgent from that to which the settlers had been accustomed in Europe. Today mountaineers claim that in choosing a new homestead site they would consider the factors of reasonable soil, good water, and protection from the elements,

in that order, as basic essentials for settlement. A detailed comparison of site elements and an explanation of way they were so important to the various settlement types is made below under "settlements."

Therefore, the Scotch Irish settlers, in choosing the Blue Ridge, were seeking a country similar in appearance, climate, soil, and water to their European communities. Bowman (1931:6) observes that the primary function of American settlers consisted merely in finding soils and slopes that resembled those back home that were known to be good. The implication of this prejudice in favor of a similar country is that the Scotch-Irish were not in search of the richest lands, but merely as Owsley (1945:168) stresses, the richest of the particular type of land to which they were accustomed in Ulster (see Evans, 1957). Perhaps in most cases they were content with land almost identical with that left behind except that the new land was fresh.

In discussing the rationale for mountain settlements, the time element cannot be neglected (Table III). The earlier settlers who sought gap and hollow sites in which to establish themselves and develop homesteads and businesses secured the vantage points. Late-comers who arrived after

these vantage spots were occupied had to seek other sites. A few newcomers were fortunate in finding uninhabited hollows and gaps; a few others moved into the less accessible coves, usually in close proximity to hollow settlements. But the vast majority of late-comers found site competition keen and the best locations inhabited. For these unfortunates only the inaccessible ridges and meadows remained. In the competitive shuffle after 1850 it was not the more vigorous and alert who necessarily managed to possess the vantage points, as Hatcher (1934:382) implies, and the less highly endowed were shunted off to the less desirable locations, but the factor of time. These settlers came too late to secure the vantage points. For it must be remembered that the basic problems of existence interested the pioneers more than the cultural appurtenances they certainly brought from Europe.

The Anglo-Saxon culture underwent modifications in the process of migration into the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Scotch-Irish, German, and English elements lost some of their original virtues but gained others. Certain factors tended to unify the various elements prior to their arrival in the Blue Ridge. Most lived as under-dogs in a world divided into economic and social classes. Land was the god, and property

holders composed a sacred preisthood that ruled for its own benefit. The modes of living of the various groups in the Old World did not differ greatly from each other, and as Evans (1965:34-35) shows, they did not differ as much from those on the American frontier as is sometimes supposed. The Scotch-Irish in time blended with the Germans and English, but they were by far the largest element in the Blue Ridge population.

MOUNTAIN FOLK CULTURE

"Folk" has been defined and employed by Odum (1947), Boskoff (1949:749-58), Sjoberg (1952:231-39), and Foster (1953:159-73), among others. Robert Redfield (1947:293-308) used "folk" as an ideal conceptual model with which to examine and to generate questions about community living. The usefulness of such a mental construct enables investigators to see aspects of the human community that are in complementarity to each other and that provide bases for comparing one community with others, or with itself at other times.

The term "folk" reflects a natural product of the interaction of people and environment, and of the interaction of people with people. Folk represents not just a people, but individuals who, integrated through various units

within a regional culture, are inseparable from the regional environment which has produced them.

The conception of a folk culture demands a detailed examination of its interrelated characteristics. Although each feature is equal in culture value, each changes in weight of emphasis when applied to specific settlement types. For example, the mountain folk in gap settlements are not as isolated as are the inhabitants of meadow settlements. Still isolation as a mountain-folk trait occurs in both settlement types. The following characteristics in my judgment epitomize the Blue Ridge mountain folk: isolation, illiteracy, homogeneity, group solidarity, little division of labor, economic independence, patterned behavior, familial structure, sacredness, creativity, and an intelligible world view.

Isolation. This term, when used in literature, usually implies physical isolation, an interpretation which is erroneous for the Blue Ridge Mountains. True, the settlers became isolated, but "culturally isolated" due to their own choosing. Even the most physically isolated ridge or meadow settlement connected via trails with the "outside world," while dozens of gaps and trails transected the "mountain

barrier" long before the coming of the settlers. Thus isolation must be employed in the folk sense, that is, the folk group looks inward upon itself, thereby creating its own limited world. The folk way of life is executed in terms of the group. However, as acculturation increases cultural isolation diminishes.

Illiteracy. In this investigation this term signifies the lack of dependence or need of the folk group upon the written word. Emphasis is on verbal speech and oral tradition. "What was said," not "what was written," is important to the mountain folk.

Homogeneity. Activities and states of mind are much alike for all persons in corresponding sex and age positions. The career of one generation repeats that of the preceding one. The term implies a clinging to traditional folkways and mores; it is equivalent to slow-changing.

Group Solidarity. Members of a mountain folk not only think alike but also act alike in order to protect one another, thereby preserving the folk unit as a separate, functioning entity. A double network of kinship and neighborly connection holds the people together. A particular mountain settlement recognizes its own unity and

distinctiveness. The characteristic "we" used by the folk illustrates the separateness of their settlement from all others.

On a smaller scale, the social life and emotional security of the mountaineer within his settlement is centered in the reference group. Weller (1965:58) states that this group is composed of persons of the same sex, economic status, and approximately the same age. There are no strict rules for defining this group, but for adults it is always based on kinship. Compatibility is essential, so that not all members of a given family are in a particular reference group. Because a reference group is either all men or women there is a distinct separation of the male and female roles. When the people get together, the men gather in one group, the women in another. Though this pattern of separation of the sexes is common in many cultures, it is extreme in the Blue Ridge.

Little Division of Labor and Economic Independence result from homogeneity and group solidarity. A division of labor according to age, sex, and kinship exists among the mountain folk, for many individuals know particular trades and perform special tasks which set them apart

from other inhabitants. However, an equilibrium amongst folk division of labor is nearly always apparent, and when it is absent, changes in the roles of the inhabitants quickly move toward such a stabilization of labor. A particular job position held by an individual in a mountain-folk settlement must be kept because both the position and the individual are recognized as essential to the local community. One worker could change or even destroy an entire economic system by changing job positions.

Economic independence infers self-sufficiency. All or most of the economic needs and activities of the folk group are provided; there is a lack of dependence on the "outside world" for life necessities. This situation constitutes a cradle-to-the-grave arrangement, an internal dependence, a mutually traditional but oral agreement to keep the folk group economically functional or operative. Such economic subsystems vary in quality and quantity from group to group and settlement to settlement, depending on environmental attributes and cultural outlook.

A Patterned Behavior stems from group solidarity. Ideas, attitudes, and values originate within the folk

culture itself, resulting in a consensus of behavior. In the Blue Ridge ideas are agreed upon or rejected by the folk group. If an idea is accepted, oral tradition will help carry it forward. Gradually a pattern develops which is handed down from one generation to the next. The pattern changes due to shifts in the mountain folk population and due to more or less acculturation.

A patterned behavior emphasizes an interaction between a high and a low tradition. The high tradition is represented by outsiders who visit the folk culture and act as carriers of new ideas, eventually passing them onto the group. These external carriers include: circuit preachers, lowland doctors, peddlers, mailmen, seasonal teachers, lowland handymen, and tax collectors. Few carriers join the mountain-folk culture. The low tradition includes ideas which originate within the mountain-folk culture and gradually influence the high tradition. Members of the high tradition convey folk ideas to the "outside world" with the assistance of mountain folk like animal drovers and seasonal laborers. In returning to the Blue Ridge these internal carriers act as agents of acculturation.

Familial Structure. The social nexus of the Blue

Ridge mountain-folk culture surrounds family or kin relationships. The devotion to family or clan is strong. In each folk settlement familial interpretation is in terms of kinship rather than political or religious organizations and functions. Further, the mountain folk practice leveling, a system that gives equal status to all within the framework of kinship and that recognizes no authority other than the force of the clan. No hierarchy, authority, or expertise exist in the culture; pressures from outside the culture fail to gain entrance.

There is no certain degree of relationship at which the sense of membership in a kindred ends. They are relationships based on descent or on marriage. Furthermore these kinship relationships are obedient to certain pervasive principles that give a coherence to the whole. There is the principle that young people are subordinate to older people; a younger brother, for example, should show deference to his older brother. To these relationships of kinship in the Blue Ridge we should add the relationships between the various kinds of specialists and their customers. Also men and women have roles and functions appropriate to their sex; men carry on most agricultural labor, except

that women help in the harvest, while only women tend to the gardening, and men the hunting and fishing. We should also include in the Blue Ridge kinship structure both the ideals and expectations that the mountain folk have, and also the actual forms that such relationships tend to have. In this respect kinship is a system of norms and expectations; it is an ethical system. It is a set of limiting conditions within which the conduct of individuals takes place.

The Blue Ridge custom of settling close to kin makes each hollow or cove the domain of a single family. It is not unusual to find families with four generations living side by side in one narrow hollow--brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins--inter-marrying to such an extent that in some fashion every person is related to every other. Often only one or two family names exist in a hollow.

Sacredness. Sacredness involves the entire aspect of mountain folk spiritual life or morality. What is, mixes itself with what ought to be, and with what one ought to do. In the mountain folk culture there are recognized obligations, commitments, sentiments and judgments of what is good and what is bad. The mountain folk have developed more or less

orderly ideas about a universe to which, in some way, man is significantly related, or of which he is a part, and to clothe these relationships with feelings of inherent rightness and obligation. Thus sacredness includes taboos, magic, traditions, religious ceremonies, festivals, and special rites, but the inference is that the mountain folk think out these things as non-material considerations. The emphasized quality of the relationships to a powerful and unseen something may or may not be stressed, may or may not take the form of propitiation rather than constraint, may or may not be directed toward godlike beings, and may or may not be spiritual.

Creativity. The Blue Ridge mountain folk, taken as a culture acting and thinking over long periods of time, show a creativity beyond the demands of subsistence and mere survival. In any mountain folk settlement, however meager its resources and however hardpressed it is to survive, we see some production of imagination, a sense of coherence, a progressive building of some "work of the mind." Mountain folk are makers of things expressive, creators of works beyond their material needs. These things they display in legend, art, music, morality, social relationships, or

whatever. Concerning these creations, the mountain folk make judgments that are more than immediately practical; they are intellectual, or moral, or aesthetic. A great range of achievement occurs with respect to these mountain folk productions of the imagination and constructive power. But even in mountain folk settlements where these productions are scant, it is common to find some attention given to reflection upon elements of the local tradition, some discussion of the meaning of things, some enjoyment of a tale well told, a ballad well sung. These traits extend beyond material usefulness and practical necessity.

Intelligible World View. In the Blue Ridge mountain-folk culture there is an intelligible world view. The people find in this view an understandable significance both of things about them and of their own customary actions. It supposes that everyone distinguishes his own self from all other things and sees all else from this fact of self. Life has meaning. There is an order to the mountain-folk world view. This order includes elements of man, nature, and morality. Elements of nature and elements conceived as existing and significant, though perhaps unseen and unmaterial, are so composed as to document and justify the

traditional course of life. Redfield (1959:16) underscores the main point in a folk world view as the universality of meaningful conceptions of the universe and of man's place in it.

SETTLEMENTS

Of all the conspicuous enduring forms in which humanity occurs, the self-contained settlement is the most nearly self-sufficient and the most nearly comprehensible in itself. However, it should be stated quite clearly that no words describe all that a settlement is. Further, it was not the intention of this investigation to duplicate data on classification of rural settlements. For examples, see Trewartha, (1946:568-596) and Dickinson, (1949:239-263) for pertinent comments and references.

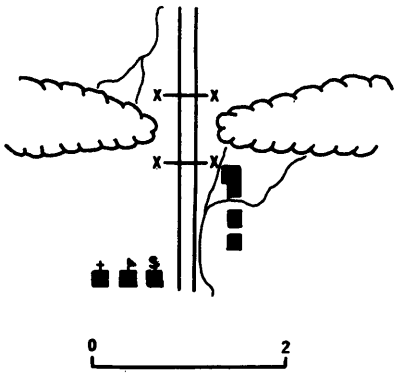
The emphasis placed upon settlement in this investigation will be explained for it is important both to folklife and settlement geography. The location of settlement records the particular preferences of site that interested the initial occupants. Since settlement once established is not readily transferred, subsequent culture changes alter the site value and confront the inhabitants with the alternative of moving elsewhere, or meeting

developing handicaps. Even related material culture, like house types, is an integral part of settlement. The study of folk housing, for example is basically the examination of the smallest economic unit. House types with their accompanying barns and outbuildings are both historical and cultural records of settlement, and may still preserve conventional qualities which were once functionally important.

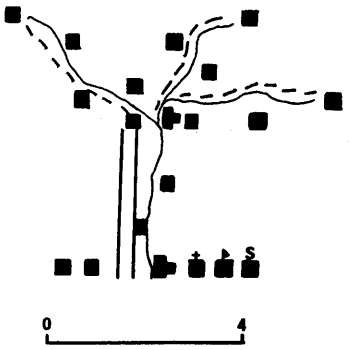
In pursuing a more intimate understanding of Blue Ridge mountain-folk culture, the author suggests the existence of a continuum of mountain settlements which run from gap, through hollow, cove, and ridge, to meadow. Locally these folk terms refer both to particular settlements and to general land features. When a mountaineer uses a proper noun with a term (e.g. Tanner's Ridge) he is talking about a given settlement. However, when a mountaineer uses the term "ridge" by itself he is referring to a general physiographic phenomenon. These relatively simple and widespread forms of organized human life constitute no closed class but shade into communities with other qualities. Indicators for each settlement type on the continuum are made which highlight the differences and at the same time facilitate comparative studies. The segments of the

SETTLEMENT TYPES — BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

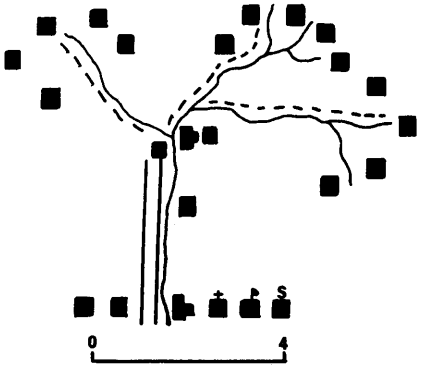
Gap or Notch



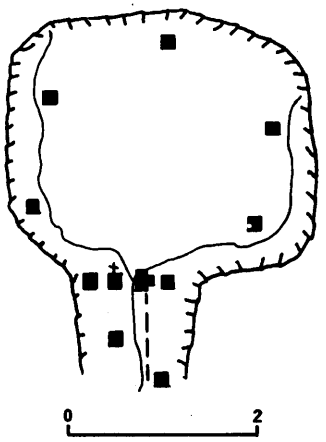
Hollow (Linear)



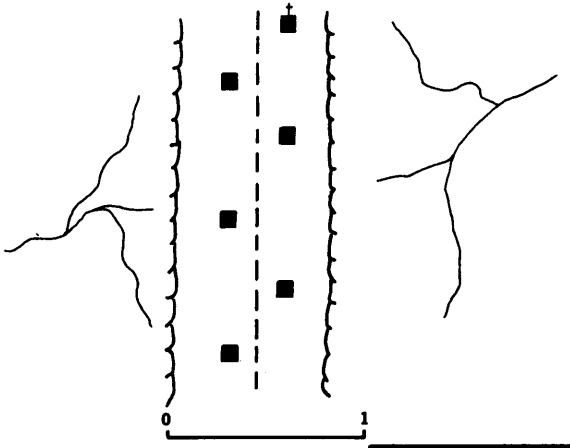
Hollow (Fan – Shaped)



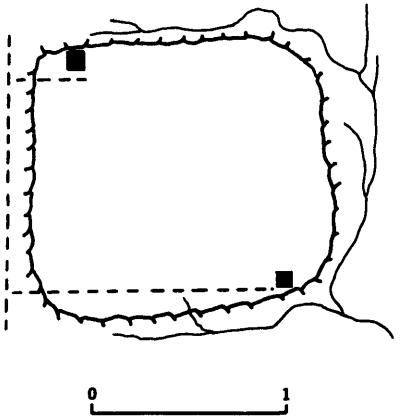
Cove



Ridge



Meadow



Period Represented: 1790 – 1930

Source: Field Data 1964 – 67

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

x—x Toll Gate	Water-Powered Mill
Inn or Ordinary	Dwelling
Church	Dirt Road
School	--- Trail
General Store	Perenial Stream

continuum are related to one another as links to a chain, each link leading to the next, and so on. Thinking of the continuum as a chain, one sees that many links are connected with subsidiary related chains of means and ends.

In moving to understand the systematic character of the life of a settlement the student cannot begin everywhere. He must commence at some point, commonly with things visible. Prominent are the houses, outbuildings, fences, tools, works of house and forest, fields, and so on. That is, the land and the work upon and with it, the things taken to eat or otherwise to consume, and the material objects made. These things are visible, and understanding them is easier.

The lone-farmstead, according to Evans (1965:33), was the mark of the pioneer and the Scotch-Irish in particular were disposed to secure in this way the freedom from interference they had vainly sought in Ulster. Settlement in scattered homesteads may be illustrated from other parts of the world as well (see Dickinson, 1949:259-362). Interestingly enough, the diffuse form of rural settlement not only is able to function without a unifying social center, but often seems to be opposed to all forms of centralization. Perhaps the hearth of the lonely farmstead

is the only center. Evans (1957:11) even expresses the idea that most rural people desire to live in isolated dwellings.

The distinctness of the isolated mountain settlements is apparent and easy to explain. Limits were determined by site and situation. It was quite simple to draw a line around the mountain settlements and the lands over which the mountain folk work and wander. This investigation considered only those settlements located in the Blue Ridge Mountains proper. Settlements of the Great Valley and Piedmont are excluded.

There remains ample tangible evidence of the cultural antecedence of the immigrants to the Blue Ridge. In the brief resume that follows, the settlement forms and activities of the pioneers are described in an effort to assess their impact upon the genesis and evolution of the cultural landscape. These data provide the basis for cultural isolation and analysis of factors responsible for cultural conservation as well as for processes of change. The scheme here submitted rests on the conception of the whole process of settlement as a great unified complex, a living system, constantly changing, advancing, and retrogressing. In other words, each settlement type represents a distinct part

of a whole mountain way of life (Figure 2).

The following interpretation of settlement types was derived by analyzing site elements first, then functional aspects of settlement. This approach allowed for systematic arrangement but simultaneously left room for rational flexibility.

Gap Settlement Type. A gap is simply a break or cut in a main ridge or mountain chain. No attempt is made here at explaining the geological origin of gaps (see Thornbury, 1965:102-108). Main ridges usually trend northeast-southwest in the Blue Ridge Mountains, whereas gaps cut east-west through the ridges. "Crests" of gaps average 300 feet lower in elevation than the main ridges. In the study area the majority of crests average 750 feet above the Great Valley floor, or approximately 1,800 feet (average) above sea level. Generally the widest and deepest gaps possess permanent streams, which are usually nourished by a series of springs near their crests.

Due to the relatively higher elevation, greater exposure, and funneling of winds, climate is harsher in the gaps than in the surrounding lowlands. Climate, however, is less extreme than that experienced atop the

ridge. Exposure of gaps to the natural elements varies among sites. Because most gaps cut east-west through the Blue Ridge, and because winter weather is dominated by cold westerly fronts, the windward (west) side of gaps is exposed to the elements more than the leeward (east) side. On an exposure scale of one to five (one representing the most protected, five the least protected site), the gap rates three among the five settlement types. It is not too surprising, then, to discover four of the five gap settlements in this investigation on the leeward slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Soils in the gap settlements are rocky and infertile. Natural vegetation before 1850 was oak-hickory-American chestnut forest, but settlements gradually cleared it, producing long, narrow, openings with the remaining forest encroaching linear fashion upon the clearing. Years ago big game was common to abundant in gap localities. Today deer constitute the largest form of big game, and are relatively common. Smaller game mammals and birds, like rabbits, squirrels, and grouse, have returned with the coming back of the forest.

Generally the crests of mountain gaps had only

emergency inhabitants like toll-gate watchmen. Instead, at or near the foot of the ascent to the gaps were located the settlements (1,200 feet average elevation; 2-mile average distance from crest) that lived largely by the transmontane travel. Gap sites, along with adjacent hollows, represent the earliest permanent settlements in the Blue Ridge, the first record dating back to the 1740's. By the late 1750's several settlements sprang up in linear fashion, sometimes on either side of a gap-crest, but more likely on the leeward slope only. Until the turn of the twentieth century, the main economic pursuit in gap settlements was commercial enterprise rather than agricultural endeavors or hunting-fishing-gathering. Since gaps provided easy passageways across the mountains, industrious individuals were quick to set up toll roads and toll gates. Toll gates were generally operated by separate families if erected on both sides of the gap.

A typical gap-settlement plan consisted of a small general store, an inn or ordinary for weary overnight travelers, livery stables for exchange of horses or oxen, a blacksmith shop, and toll gates. Occasionally farther downslope a grist mill, store, church, and school were

erected along with a few dwellings. By the time of the Revolutionary War gap settlements became vital physical-cultural links between the Piedmont and the Great Valley, as well as communication centers for the surrounding mountain folk. From such centers flowed daily mail, news, ideas, and goods into the neighboring settlements. On the continuum, therefore, the gap is the most open or the least isolated of the five settlement types.

Hollow Settlement Type. Mountain folk use the term "hollow" to denote a long, narrow valley nestled between two mountain ridges. It is characterized by an immature stream with a steep gradient, producing swift-flowing water and a countless number of cascades and falls in the mid- and upper sections. Generally the drainage follows a dendritic pattern in the Blue Ridge. The lower elevation factor and the protected nature of hollows, especially on the leeward (east) side of the Blue Ridge, provide for a more moderate climate than that experienced in gaps. Winters are usually short and relatively mild, but summers are long and often warm. Hollow site elements offer the second best natural protection among the five settlement types (3 on an exposure scale of 5). Prior to the late 1800's, oak-hickory-

American chestnut forest clothed the upper hollows, while tulip poplar, magnolia, and white pine mixed with oak and walnut near the mouths. Soon after the settlers arrived in the hollows much of the virgin forest was cut and used in construction of necessary homes and outbuildings. Later, in the nineteenth century, large lumber companies decimated the remaining tracts of virgin timber.

Actually the steep gradient of hollows played a dominant role in the process of clearing the natural vegetation by the settlers. First, the bottomland close to the stream was cleared of trees and the land utilized for garden and small field crops. As more land became necessary, succeeding generations of mountain folk progressed "up-hollow" toward the headwaters of the stream.

Two subtypes of hollow settlement occurred in the Blue Ridge. In the first, houses, barns, outbuildings, and fences paralleled streams in linear fashion. Each farmstead was more or less evenly spaced from its neighbor, averaging about one-half a mile apart. This land-use plan continued "up-hollow" until the headwalls were reached. There, when conditions permitted, the ridge slopes were cleared for home sites and gardens. Mountaineers often left rhododendron,

azalea, and mountain laurel grow by the sides of a stream to protect the watershed against rapid erosion.

In the bottomland of this subtype, near the mouth of the hollow, single pen log houses were constructed on natural terraces near the "flat," while single crib barns and various outbuildings strung out in linear fashion either on the "flat," or on the natural terrace, or on both. Fields were located on the alluvial "flat" adjacent to the stream, usually in close proximity to the single crib barn. Here the soil was richest, exposure to sun was fullest, vegetation was abundant, water supply and lines of communication were easier. As Hatcher (1934:382) suggests, social and economic relationships tied in with these geographic conditions. The single pen, although sturdy, was not large and from the beginning of its development additions like a rear shed, lean-to, or ell were made onto it. These additions, which were often kitchens, are rarely found in log, but are common in frame, indicating that they were for the most part added after the introduction of milled lumber.

In mid-hollow, where the valley is narrower, the gradient is steeper, the soil is poorer and thinner, the variety and yield of vegetation were greatly reduced. As a

result the returns from the investment of capital and labor were less, and the conditions of living were much poorer. Houses were much smaller and less comfortable than those near the mouth. Houses were built on the narrow alluvial "flat," as Weller (1965:12) describes, while the barns, outbuildings, and fields were located above them on the slopes. Although the house took up the best land, it was considered more advantageous by the mountain folk to have the farm complex oriented from "top to bottom," with the house at the bottom. This plan is based on a "let it roll to us" philosophy, the wisdom of which can be easily appreciated when one considers that the mountaineer had few implements for hauling.

Again the land use pattern altered in the upper reaches of the hollow, since the land along a stream provided the most fertile soil, although extremely rocky, and a bountiful supply of water for garden agriculture. The single pen log house was located on the steepest slope above the barn, outbuildings (if any existed), and garden plots. In many instances steep slopes required terracing before cultivation could commence. As far as I know, terracing has not been found in other parts of Appalachia, but my discovery should not be too surprising. Mountain people the world over have resorted to terrace

agriculture. These hand-made fields used parallel stone walls four feet high, one above the other, and were constructed on horizontal lines across the face of steep slopes. I discovered terracing in the upper reaches of five hollows, indicating that the technique may be more common than supposed and has been overlooked by field investigators.

Likewise I discovered that most mid- and upper hollow settlements contained an infield-outfield agricultural pattern similar to that system described by Evans (1957:8-9) for Ulster. The log house is situated at the center of the pattern, surrounded by open fields that are cultivated each summer. In winter this arable land was under stubble, pastured and manured by grazing cattle. This open land was the infield, in contrast to the outfield, the outlying rough pastureland which was broken up periodically into temporary enclosures. Beyond the outfield stood the hardwood forest. Picket fences usually enclosed the house and adjacent gardens. Often the entire infield, which contained the majority of outbuildings and fruit trees, was fenced off with stone and zigzag fences. In time, if a mountaineer became more prosperous, he would clear more of the outfield and incorporated the land into the infield. Nevertheless, infields averaged barely five acres in size,

outfields 12 acres, while mid- and upper hollow farmsteads averaged 35 acres in total land. These figures contrasted sharply with the average 100-acre farmsteads at the mouths of hollows. There infields averaged 10 acres and outfields 30 acres in size.

This linear hollow settlement was the typical pattern in the past. Settlement began at the mouth of the hollow, then spread upstream. Actually an ecological control operated on the size of hollow settlements. The largest settlements containing the most people existed at the mouths of hollows. As families expanded, the younger generation moved farther up-hollow where in turn the valley grew narrower and steeper, and the fields smaller. Such a terrain could not support many people. Some garden plots were less than ten feet wide and thirty feet long in the upper sections of hollows. Certainly dissatisfaction of some mountaineers with either the social structure or the economic conditions caused some people to migrate farther "up-hollow." Thus an interplay of ecological factors and those arising out of the strains within social structure were involved in this upward migration.

A second, far less common, subtype of hollow settlement occurred in the Blue Ridge. This fan-shaped settlement

originated at or near the headwalls of a hollow, then gradually progressed sideways to neighboring tributaries. Finally, the pattern leap-frogged downslope to the major confluence of streams. A cluster of log houses and outbuildings developed in semi-circle fashion around the headwaters of each tributary, and again at the major confluence of the tributaries. Fields, orchards, and pastures took up the better, more spacious land in-between. Farmsteads within the clusters were situated about one city block apart, while the distance between clusters averaged one-half a mile. Generally, three to four miles existed between the highest settlement cluster and the settlement situated at the major confluence of tributaries downstream. Evidence shows that each family within the settlement cluster possessed its own plot of land farther downstream. Only pastureland, when available, was communal. Field and garden crops grew in long strips on the fertile alluvial "flats" parallel to the streams. Orchards often adjoined the long fields farther up the sideslopes. Usually the original inhabitants of a fan-shaped settlement claimed all the land between the headwall of a hollow and the first major confluence with other tributaries. Each succeeding generation was forced to go farther downstream

to farm, and because of subdivision of property, received smaller portions of land. Furthermore, the "flats" were rarely subdivided by the older generations, forcing the younger people to move sideways above the established orchards into rocky, infertile terrain.

The fan-shaped settlement was oriented from top to bottom of a hollow. Apparently a few reasons existed for the origin of this form. The most common cause centered on renegades, squatters, and extreme individualists who wanted to escape from the law or simply to stay clear of civilization. Of the 20 hollows investigated in depth, four instances of fan-shaped settlement occurred.

Corn was the principle foodstuff for all the hollow folk, although small gardens yielded potatoes, cabbage, beans, squash, and other vegetables. In addition, apple, cherry, peach, and plum trees were planted early in the nineteenth century. Stock animals usually consisted of one family cow, a mule, horse, or ox, some poultry, and always a few hogs. Hogs were allowed to forage for themselves until the fall, when they were collected for fattening and slaughtering. This type of subsistance agriculture, with its many related features, was typical not only to the hollows, but also to

the coves, ridges, and meadows in the Blue Ridge.

With the passing of time, two economic complexes evolved in the hollows. The first developed at the major confluence of tributaries, perhaps two miles upstream from the mouth of a hollow. This complex consisted of a grist mill, tannery, and a blacksmith shop; often a log church, and sometimes a school, existed nearby. The second complex, larger in size and greater in functional flexibility, was located at or near the mouth of a hollow. Structures included a grist mill, tannery, blacksmith shop, livery stables, church, school, general store, and post office. The hollow typifies more than the other settlement types the traditions, the individual and rugged nature of mountain existence. On the continuum the hollow represents the second least isolated settlement type. Even the lowliest members of hollows had some interest in the land and its cultivation was not beyond their means. Possession of a cow, a horse, or a mule demanded less in the way of equipment and tools. The simple arts and crafts proved adequate, and the poorest man was able to play his part in the settlement and stand on his own feet.

Cove Settlement Type. Coves are rather smooth-floored, somewhat oval-shaped "valleys" that rarely exceed 10 square miles in area. In physical appearance the cove is quite distinct from the hollow. Surrounded by high mountains, a cove resembles an amphitheater from the air. At one end there is generally a narrow drainage outlet, usually affording the only route in and out of the cove.

The climate of coves is less extreme than that of gaps or hollows. Its unique shape offers maximum protection from the elements, thus the cove rates the most protected site on the continuum (1 on an exposure scale of 5). The average elevation for the five coves examined in this investigation was 2,000 feet above sea level. This elevation corresponds approximately to that of mid-hollows.

Most of the natural vegetation in coves was cleared by the settlers in the early nineteenth century. Forest remnants of oak-hickory-American chestnut-tulip poplar cling only to the high slopes. The flat basin-coves, underlain by limestone and shale, possess the highest soil fertility among the settlement types. Field agriculture was preferred by the settlers at first, but later the coves became important local centers for the raising of stock animals.

The settlement pattern of coves usually took an oval shape, with the log houses, barns, and outbuildings located around the perimeter of the basin and near the outlet. While the house types and their accompanying barns and outbuildings were of similar architecture to those found in the hollows, here the log-frame houses occupied a more central position on the farmstead with outbuildings more widely dispersed.

At the outlet of the cove, near the junction of streams, a mill, church, and school were usually erected. General stores, blacksmith shops, tanneries, and similar functional structures did not exist until after 1850, especially after the livestock industry became well established. On the continuum the cove represents the middle position for degree of isolation (Table IV).

Ridge Settlement Type. The ridge site has the most rugged topography on the continuum. Constituting long and narrow perpendicular "fingers" to the main mountain chain, ridges are characterized by large rock outcroppings and steep "fall-away" slopes. Consequently a dearth of flat and fertile land exists; erosion of the steep slopes is commonplace.

Ridge exposure is severe. For that reason the settlement

type rates 4 on the exposure scale. Together, elevation and exposure produce a harsh climate in comparison to that recorded in gaps, hollows, or coves. Since initial settlement around 1815, the original but sparse forest cover of oak-hickory-locust-pine has been removed.

Settlement has produced a linear pattern along the backbone of the ridge. Despite the fact that the farmsteads are located in the most available protected sites, they still suffer greatly from exposure.

A true subsistance farmer, the ridge dweller eked out a meager existence from his small garden plot, which either adjoined or was directly below, his home. Poor grazing conditions greatly limited the number and quality of stock animals. Water on the ridge is conspicuous by its absence. Generally it is fetched from springs far downslope, necessitating the arduous task of carrying water uphill. In rare cases a ridge dweller settled near a spring and secured a large piece of flat land atop the ridge. In such instances the "I" house took the place of the single pen or "saddlebag." However, this affluent house type did not appear until about 1900. As was true elsewhere in the Blue Ridge settlements, the picket fence enclosed such houses and their gardens.

The ridge constitutes the second most isolated settlement on the continuum. Seldom was there a general store, post office, blacksmith shop, grist mill, or similar functional structures. Occasionally a mission church and school existed, but even these depended on the size of the local community. Ridge settlements were and still are oriented to the hollows and coves below them and not to the closer meadow settlements above them. Frequently a steep, dirt mountain road or worn trail connected the ridge settlement with the closest hollow, perhaps four or five miles below.

Meadow Settlement Type. A meadow is generally a man-made clearing of gently rolling profile atop a plateau. As a result of continued human activities, especially burning, which in many cases dates back to the Indian period, meadows grew in time to encompass large expanses of land. Gradually a mixture of short and tall grasses replaced the original forest cover of oak-hickory-maple-American chestnut. Save for an occasional lone tree, dense stands of timber occur only around the perimeter of the meadow.

The meadow site ranks 5 on the exposure scale due to its average elevation of 3,000 feet above sea level, and its extreme open condition. Harsh winds, cool temperatures, and

lack of protection cause the climate to be more severe here than that experienced in the other four settlement types.

In the past succulent meadow grasses attracted many wild animals, especially ungulates. Elk and deer favored these lush areas the year round, and particularly sought out meadows during their semi-annual vertical migrations. For centuries meadows abounded with big game and provided natural hunting grounds for Indians, and later, white settlers.

Lack of protection, severe climate, far-removed water in many cases, and inaccessibility discouraged settlement in meadows. A common feature of meadow settlements, once they finally occurred about 1840, was for a single family to occupy the area. Settlement, however, was last among the various types, and it depended almost entirely upon the emergence of livestock raising. Lone meadow families acted as tenant farmers and drovers for lowland livestock. Cattle and sheep were driven up to the meadows in May and allowed to remain there until October. At that time the tenants drove the animals to market, usually on the Piedmont. In a few instances this transhumance system was absent, and in such cases the meadows were cultivated by subsistance farmers. Even in the early twentieth century meadows were burned

annually in the late fall to produce better grasses for the livestock, to foster better berry crops, and to keep back the encroaching forest.

In summary, settlements altered the natural landscape and were likewise affected by it. Actually the Blue Ridge frontier was more primeval than primitive. Frontier conditions provoked inventiveness but, while many makeshifts were used, most of the inventions came from behind the margin of settlement. The Blue Ridge was notable less for invention than for its rapid application of new techniques.

CONCLUSIONS

Toward what understanding, and with what forms of thought, did this investigation study Blue Ridge settlements? In this case the study was not made with reference to one settlement or one type, but with regard to all Blue Ridge settlements. Interest was in the thinking about settlements without reference to practical action in or outside of them. The concern here was in understanding the "context of the whole." This view, based on the analysis of field data, stresses that there are five settlement types in the Blue Ridge, each dependent upon one another, each a vital part

of a complex whole. Investigation of the settlement-complex did not atomize any single part, or choose from the complex some one fact or problem to study. The viewpoint is as holistic as I have been able to make it.

It was the generic nature of this whole that gave purpose to these pages. I was committed beyond description to analysis. I was concerned with the settlement-complex as an analyzed system. Perhaps the analysis has not here been pushed very far, but these pages report something of a beginning made to form concepts for description of the whole. In some cases one can see relationships among the parts of the complex entity.

I approached the understanding of the whole in two ways: 1) by attempting to comprehend the internal or personal world view of the mountaineer who lived within it; and 2) by taking an external or ecological view of the material and non-material aspects of settlement, then combining both approaches into an analyzed, synthesized, holistic view of settlements.

Both approaches are important. The first was an attempt on my part to understand the past in terms of the native inhabitants. I tried to interpret the changing views of site

and culture as recorded by the mountain folk. In every mountain settlement what most importantly surrounds and influences the people are the oral traditions, sentiments, norms, and aspirations that make up the common mental life. The world of the mountaineer is made up in the first place of ideas and ideals. The personal world view of the mountaineer starts with self, then relates self to family, neighbors, settlement, and the rest of nature (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Schematic of the Holistic View used in the Investigation.

Internal View (personal world view) ———— self - nature

External View (ecological view) _____ man & nature

The external or ecological view takes into account much of the whole settlement when that community is one that is closely dependent upon the land and the seasons. Then it is possible to describe concurrent regularities of man and nature in such a way as to include much of the life of the people and to describe the unique character of that people. The ecological approach is not merely a system described as an interrelationship of statically conceived parts but is

also a dynamic system in which occur regular transformations of its organization.

Finally, this investigator discovered that any particular item selected for examination must always be considered with some regard to its place in the total phenomena in the life of the human group concerned. I was able to investigate settlements in their full context of social reality. Settlements stand always ready to serve the student in the mechanics of learning, in the workings of simple economics, in the natural history of social movements. And settlements offer so many kinds of contexts. They offer the investigator opportunity to see how, in a multitude of variously composed arrangements for taking care of all that people require and much of what they desire, the generic relationships really occur. In this investigation the self-contained settlement was a poor but useful substitute for experiment. I would go so far as to claim that settlement is a veritable laboratory for the professional geographer.

TABLE V

METHODOLOGICAL COMPARISON: CULTURAL PROCESSES & RELATIONSHIPS

Level	Material Analyzed	Units of Observation	
human or cultural	landscape & site	settlements & land use	
Hypotheses	**Variations**	**Methodology**	**Results**
influence of man on land	human intervention & ingenuity	historical analysis	nature-culture inter-action
effects of land on man	human resistance	experiments? (settlement types)	

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