Your goal as a fly fisherman should be to become better every year. This month we will talk about New Year resolutions to achieve that. And part of that means assuring our streams remain healthy. We’ll discuss what you can do to achieve that. And then we will take you back to the mountains of North Carolina in the 1880s to give you a glimpse of what it was like back then. Wishing you all a Happy New Year on your favorite trout streams.

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year. Hopefully Santa refreshed your fishing gear and supplies for the upcoming season. If not, it is time for an inventory check before you get to the stream and find out you forgot to replace your tippet spools that went swimming last fall.

This is also the time to get back to tying flies. There are new colored beads and new patterns that will surely catch more fish than last year’s patterns. We all sacrifice many flies to the tree Gods in hopes of dropping that one fly in that deep pool, under the low hanging limbs. That is where trout hang around, teasing and daring us to get through, and if we do, the reward is a monster fish, a big tangle, or a good story to tell.

The fish are still feeding at most delayed harvest sections, so don’t wait around till March when stocking starts again. Get out on nice days put a nymph or two on a big colorful strike indicator and you will be surprised at the takers. You may even see some trout rising and catch them on a small dry.

So get your gear together and go fish, while most fisherman are still huddled at home. You will be pleasantly surprised at the lack of crowds and competition at your favorite spots.

Robby Abou-Rizk

JANUARY MEETING

When: Tuesday, January 17th, 6 PM
Where: Sixty Six Grill and Tap House
3440 Frontis St, Winston Salem
What: Liars Contest

If you have a good fishing story, we would love to hear your story. We have heard some doozies in the past. Please come join us at the Sixty-Six grill and taphouse at 6 pm for some good fellowship, dinner, and a good laugh. There will be awards for the best stories.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fly Tying Classes
At 9am on Wednesdays Project Healing Waters will host fly tying classes and at 6pm on Wednesday evenings Blue Ridge Trout Unlimited will host classes. The classes are free and all are welcome - from beginners to advanced. No need to sign up, just come join us. If you have specific questions about the evening classes, you can contact, Rusty Berrier at rustyberrier@outlook.com.

Meetings and Events
February 21, Wes Waugh – Wilson creek watershed
March 21, Patrick Hayes, guide, euro nymphing presentation
March, Annual BRTU fundraiser to benefit conservation and trout in the classroom
April 18, Jason Sparks – Tenkara presentation

Atlanta Fly Fishing Show

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to BRNCNews@gmail.com and let us know.
ORNAMENT CONTEST RESULTS

There were ten entries for the Ornament Contest at the Fiddlin’ Fish Brewery event. There were two categories: Best fishable fly ornament and best non-fishable decorated ornament. The winners were as follows:

Best ornament category:
1st Rickie Woodson
2nd Fred Frank
3rd Robbie Abou-Rizk

For the fly category there was only one person entered and he had three ornaments
1st Tom Jackson
2nd Tom Jackson
3rd Tom Jackson

Thank you to everyone who tied up ornaments to make this a fun and great contest and thank you to everyone who attended the event and voted on the awards.

MITCHELL RIVER UPDATE

In early December several volunteers went to the Mitchell River and to Thompson Branch / headwaters of the Mitchell to investigate the sediment situation further. This summer sediment filled the Mitchell River form two main sources, Olde Beau golf resort new RV Park construction in Roaring Gap and agricultural fields the Mitchell Valley above the delayed harvest. Volunteers checked the delayed harvest area wading into the Mitchell and doing drone photography. The pictures show the big cabbage field right above the DH section had no buffer zone at the bottom of it and farming was done to the edge of the stream. The cabbage field slopes down into the Mitchell and Potters Creek, so the rain brings sediment down into that section. There is 16 inches of sediment covering the bottom of Potters creek and the Mitchell in that area. We did send the photos and location to Department of Water Quality to investigate. However, they keep discounting any evidence we provide. They cite reasons like the need to be present to see the sediment flowing off the fields before they do anything, photos and videos don’t count. The rivers transport sediment naturally and they have to be able to prove violations beyond any doubt to pursue the source of the sediment. Yet the DWR has not stepped into the water or walked into the fields to investigate the sources of the sediment or make a simple judgement of where it seems to be coming from. They have only done turbidity testing at various locations with negative results. Since all the fields have a winter cover and there is no farming activity, there is very little sediment coming out of the fields til the spring plowing begins. Below are some photos showing the fields, the sediment covering the bottom of the Mitchell and Potters creek as well as the lack of any buffer zone and farming to the edge of the water.
As for the Headwaters of the Mitchell/Thompson Branch, volunteers were only able to get half way due to trail conditions. There was no sediment was present in the stream. This could be due to the mitigation that Olde Beau golf resort RV park has put in place since our complaint to DWR and the involvement of DEMLR. The caretakers of the property noted that they did have sediment in the stream this summer but it has since washed away. Volunteers also checked other sections of the Mitchell and noted sediment 10 inches deep by Haystack Rd below the Devotion area where other cabbage fields were farmed this summer.

FISH UNTAMED

9 FLY FISHING NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Just for Fun

Every year, people make New Year's Resolutions to go to the gym, eat better, read more, and save money. And, every year, those same people give up on their resolutions after a few months because most resolutions aren't fun.

What if New Year's Resolutions were for things we liked doing, though? This year, I thought it'd be fun to come up with a few fly fishing resolutions and goals. They're meant to be enjoyable, not a chore. This means that they may actually be achievable, and will lead to happy, healthy, and successful anglers.

Here are some ideas for fly fishing resolutions and goals to aim for this coming year.

1. Switch presentations before flies

After a few casts in a run with no fish, it's easy to get frustrated and blame the fly. While switching flies in this scenario could change your odds for the better, the more likely culprit for a lack of fish is presentation. Many times, fish won't be that picky about the actual bug. They may, however, want that bug essentially served to them on a silver platter.

Changing techniques is frequently more effective than changing flies and can also be quicker and easier. Instead of retying every fly on a nymph rig, it may be as simple as moving an indicator or adding some split shot. Even easier, try getting a more drag-free drift. If you've exhausted presentation styles and still aren't getting anything, a fly change might be the answer.

This year, make a resolution to try a new presentation before switching flies. As tempting as new flies always are, you may be rewarded with half the effort.

2. Have good etiquette

Nothing ruins a day of fishing faster than a stranger walking through your run, fishing right on top of you, or generally being obnoxious. While we like to think we're never the bad guy, it's easy to fall prey to showing bad etiquette at times.

Maybe you show up to "your run" and there's already someone there. Even though the right thing to do is fish somewhere else, it can be tempting to try and squeeze in. Alternatively, you may be in a drift boat on course to cross a wading angler's path and need to decide between just following the current and rowing to give him space.

It's easy to be a jerk when you're not avoiding being one, so this year, consider making a conscious effort to have good etiquette on the water. Your fellow fly fishermen will be grateful.

3. Treat fish well

You just caught the biggest fish of the day and want a photo. Even if you already made a resolution to have better angler etiquette, try to have good etiquette toward fish, too! No fish in its right mind wants a hook jammed through its lips, so the least we can do as anglers is treat them well once we've landed them.

Though the natural reaction may be to hoist the fish up and take a hundred photos of all its good angles, taking care of the fish once in the net will give it the best chance of survival (if you plan to release it). Making a New Year's Resolution to use barbless hooks, keep fish in the water, and spend time reviving them is a great way to keep the fishery healthy.

Check out How to Handle Fish the Right Way for more ideas for this resolution.

4. Be a better fish photographer

One of the most frustrating qualities I notice in fishing partners is an inability to take appealing photos of fish. I'm by no means a photography expert, but I know a bad fish photo when I see one.

It doesn't take an expensive camera, technical knowledge, or a photography class to get good-looking photos, so making a New Year's resolution to try being a better photographer for your pals is definitely achievable.

The things I notice most often (which all happen to be very easy to fix) are focusing on a person's face instead of the fish, having the sun at a bad angle, and taking the picture down over a crouching angler.

If you're using a smartphone, which is likely, the camera may automatically sense a face and focus on it. This leaves the outstretched fish blurry. Tapping on the screen to make sure the fish is in focus will greatly improve the photo.

Angles are also very easy to fix. There isn't necessarily a single correct angle to have the sun, since different angles
will produce different effects, but not paying attention to the sun at all is definitely a mistake. If you aren't sure what angle is best for the effect you're after, or aren't sure what's best for that time of day, the easy fix is to take the photo from several different angles. Then, you can pick your favorite afterward.

Getting down in line with the fish is a good way to up your photo game.

Probably my biggest camera pet peeve is when the photographer stands upright and takes a photo down on a crouching fisherman. Not that this can never work, but I find that the photo almost always looks better when the photographer gets down to the same level as the angler. Once again, this is a super easy fix that can make a big difference.

For the new year, try resolving to be a better photographer for your buddies. With a couple quick tips, they can return the favor.

5. Start a fishing tradition

Something about having a tradition to look forward to makes nearly any activity more enjoyable. Fishing is no exception.

Some crews listen to the same type of music on their way to the river every time. Others take a shot of whiskey together while they put on waders. Meeting up for a beer afterward is probably one of the most common.

The beauty of these rituals, though, is that they can be whatever you want. If you don't already have a fishing tradition, consider making that a goal for the coming year.

Not only will it give you something to look forward to every time you hit the water, it'll provide lasting memories that you and your friends can look back on and laugh about.

6. Try a new technique

It's easy to fall into the trap of continuing to use the same techniques that have always worked. This is a great way to catch fish if you have it dialed in, but part of the fun of fishing is being surprised by the unexpected.

There are constantly new flies, rods, and techniques being developed. Fishing styles that have been around for ages are gaining popularity, and even tactics that have been common for years are still new to someone who's never tried.

Spay casting, Tenkara, and Euro nymphing are a few examples of methods you can try if you're getting bored with the same old dry-dropper rig. Even something as simple as tightlining is fun for someone who's used to only using an indicator.

Consider a New Year's resolution to try a method outside your comfort zone. Not only will it give you something to practice, but it may be the only thing that works at times!

7. Catch a new species

Along the same lines as trying a new technique is catching a new species. This is a fun and often easy goal to achieve, and you'll probably become a more well-rounded angler along the way.

Catching a new species doesn't necessarily mean going to an exotic destination in search of taimen, dorado, marble trout, and the like. There are most likely new species to be caught within a few hours of home if you're willing to look.

If you feel like you're running out of new species to catch, you can edit this resolution in other ways. Maybe you've caught a brook trout, but never a brook trout in its native region. Maybe you've caught a catfish, but never a catfish on a fly rod. These resolutions are meant to be fun, so don't feel bad about altering them to fit what you're looking for.

The bonus to this one is that in targeting new species, you'll almost certainly learn a technique or two you didn't know before, and these may be applicable to species you catch all the time.

8. Show someone else how to fish

Once you have a lot of fish under your belt, it's fun to see the joy on someone else's face when they land their first fish.

There are a ton of people out there who would love to learn to fish (bring up fly fishing in nearly any group setting, and someone will likely mention that they've always wanted to try). Taking up fly fishing is an intimidating ordeal, though, and most people won't really give it a try unless someone shows them. Offering to give them a hand may be all they need to start down the path to a new lifelong passion.

This resolution is both satisfying for you and really helpful for someone else. Plus, you'll probably get a new fishing buddy!

Editor's note: Combine this with number 9. Project Healing Waters needs help from volunteers to lead fishing trips and assist the veterans one on one in all their needs in the river, from assisting wading into the river to casting and other instructions and being a companion on the river.

9. Give to a good cause

Ideally, every time you bring a new angler into the world of fly fishing, you also bring one more person into the world of conservation. On that note, don't forget to make a resolution every year to put some time or money toward a good cause in the outdoor world.

Although this sounds like one of the loftier goals on the list (it doesn't necessarily involve actual fishing, which is the fun part), it doesn't take much to make a difference and is
arguably the most important resolution you can make if you want to have clean and healthy waters to fish for years to come. There are also a ton of options to fulfill this resolution. Joining or donating money to organizations like Trout Unlimited or Backcountry Hunters and Anglers helps protect what we love, and is also a great way to connect with likeminded individuals. Alternatively, go to a creek cleanup, participate in a fundraising event, or contact your representatives to encourage them to fight for conservation. These are just a few ways to help out even if you don’t have the money to give.

**QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

“Rivers are essential and the lifeblood of ecosystems. Please donate your time or funds to organizations who support our rivers. It is a gift that will keep giving for generations to come.”

.........Taffy Mercer

**VOLUNTEERING AND DONATING**

If you have joined Trout Unlimited it shows that you have a concern about maintaining and improving the habitat of the trout. There are several organizations that we work with that are dedicated to this effort and they need your labor and/or donation to achieve their (and our) goals.

**Blue Ridge TU BRTU Contact**

The most obvious choice is your local chapter of Trout Unlimited. You are fortunate to belong to a chapter that has been very active with many events and activities during the year. The burden often seems to fall on only a few of the membership and chapters tend to die due to burnout. The chapter truly appreciates all the help it can get. Below is a list of ongoing activities. You can find out more about them on the chapter website.

- Mitchell River Water Improvement
- Stream clean ups
- Wounded Warriors Program
- Teaching fly tying
- Trout in the Classroom

**Piedmont Land Conservancy Piedmont Land**

Piedmont Land Conservancy’s purpose is to protect the area’s special places to help ensure clean water for our communities, habitat for our wildlife, locally grown food, parks and trails, and other places for people to connect with nature.

**FOOTHILLS CONSERVANCY PROTECTS 93 ACRES ALONG WILSON CREEK**

On November 4, Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina acquired 93 acres along one-and-a-half miles of Wilson Creek, a nationally-designated Wild and Scenic River in Caldwell County, from Duke Energy, and subsequently recorded a conservation easement held by the North Carolina Land and Water Fund to permanently protect the land and water resources.
“Foothills Conservancy is proud to permanently protect another large segment of Wilson Creek,” said Executive Director Andrew Kota. “As a National Wild and Scenic River, Wilson Creek is an important outdoor recreation area for Caldwell County and our region, and a significant watershed conservation area for our land trust as we and our partners continue to protect water quality in the Catawba River’s headwaters.”

From 2007 to 2009, Foothills Conservancy led the permanent protection of more than 850 acres of land along six miles of Wilson Creek. These lands are now under the ownership and management of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission or held under permanent conservation easement by the State of North Carolina.

In 2021, a 333-acre parcel containing two miles of Wilson Creek, adjoining the popular Pisgah National Forest Day Use Area, was donated to Foothills Conservancy.

“With these conservation achievements, 87% of the land in the Wilson Creek watershed and 80% of the National Wild and Scenic River is formally protected,” said Land Protection Director Tom Kenney. “We’re proud to have helped permanently protect this beautiful resource.”

This is a pretty minimalist pattern and a dead easy tie. The hook is a 3x long 90’ Jig streamer. You can tie these in #10 up to #2. #8 seems to be the sweet spot for me. the bead is a 3.5mm cyclops in silver, but any color is fair game. I’m using tungsten, but the weight is up to matching your own water needs. Same with lead free wire wraps, weight the fly to the water you fish. I keep a variety of weights. In several sizes and colors. The pins are made specifically for the balanced leech, but a standard straight pin will work just fine if the head fits the bead.

The tail is a single blood quill marabou and the dubbing is Simi-Seal type dubbing for leeches from Fly Tyers Dungeon. It comes in a pretty wide variety of colors, so be as creative as you want.

I typically tie streamers with GSP thread and will do so with these. A little wax helps the slick nature of the thread. When using GSP, I have a special pair of scissors, as GSP is really rough on your super sharp razor scissors. These are scissors I don’t mind throwing the diamond stick on to hone up the edges- not micro serrated.

Start off with dressing the hook from the eye back to the point where the pin will lie. Take tight wraps to secure the pin and bead in. I typically leave about a gap space between the eye and the start of the bead.

Dress the remainder of the hook and tie in the marabou quill tailing. Take about 2 hook shanks worth of length in the tail. This can be left optional if you choose to use only dubbing for the tail.
Next, get a clump of dubbing about the diameter of a coffee stir straw, and align the fibers of the dubbing up by pulling them into a rough alignment in your fingers. These fibers are typically 3-4 inches long. Tie in the clump at the center point of the shank with a few snug wraps. The clump should align with the back of the marabou tail.

Fold the front half of the bundle back so it also lays on the top of the tailing, and secure it down to the bend of the hook.

Form a dubbing loop about 4-5 inches long and stack the fiber loosely up the length of the thread loop. Less is more in a dubbing loop, don’t get it too full and keep it even, and spin that loop. Once it’s spun, brush out any lumps so that you have a pretty even noodle.

Wrap the loop from the tail to the bead, brushing the loop out as you wind your way to the bead.

Work the dubbing around the eye and up the pin to the bead.
Whip finish 5-7 turns and you have completed the fly. Give it a good brushing to stroke those fibers rearward to create the body. Once in the water, all those fibers waving around are attention getters for sure.

Fish this fly any ole way you please, under an indicator on an upstream drift or off the bank on a cross cast and strip it home. It moves through the water with a lot of action and appears to be a good sized morsel worthy of the fishes attention. Enjoy the winter season, be safe and careful out there.

As always, I’m honored to answer questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly tying and fishing. Don’t hesitate to contact me at Jacobsforkflytyimg@gmail.com or check out some of my current ties on Facebook and Instagram at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

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TROUT IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
By Charles Ebber Craddock,

“Forest & Stream Magazine”,
July 15, 1886

Editors Note: This is one of the oldest published articles about fly fishing in the highlands of western North Carolina. While the byline is Charles Ebber Craddock, in reality, this is but the pen name of Mary Noailles Murfree. 1850-1922. Murfree was born on her family’s cotton plantation, Grantlandf, near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, a Location later celebrated In her novel, Where the Battle was Fought and in the town named after her great grandfather, Colonel Hardy Murfree. We hope you find it as fascinating as we do. FYI, Forest & Stream Magazine launched in 1879, and many years later was renamed Field & Stream Magazine.

I am seated in a log cabin that has withstood the storms for over a quarter of a century, in view of that huge archaeon pile, Grandfather Mountain—summit of ranges that never disappeared during the convulsions of millions of years—and at the foot of the knoll on which this cabin stands are the lovely meadows through which ripple the pellucid waters of Elk River after its animated descent. Down it has come from its source in the foothill of Grandfather, over boulders and beneath blooming laurel (rhododendron), with banks bordered and pools shaded by ivy (kalmia) and honeysuckles (azaleas), pausing here and there to afford shady retreats for its royal inhabitants, and again dashing over rocky impediments until it reaches the pebbly channel of the Banner Meadows. Through these it sings and laughs, hiding its “beauties” under an occasional clump of laurel until it reaches the rocky rapids that lead on down to Soky and Scaly mountains. And every pool at foot of rapids is alive with trout—a fish that above all others that swim, can thrill the nerves most deliciously when struggling on a brown hackle that has hooked him securely. And this Elk is but one of three limpid rivers whose sources are found in that foothill a couple of miles beyond the meadows.

This charming spot, with its sublime mountain surroundings, five or six thousand feet above the tide, and forest-clad on their tallest summits, is never visited by anglers from the North because Bohemians have defamed and ridiculed these mountains out of consideration. Never was a greater wrong done to fishermen. For eight years successively and in the month of June the anglers of our city have gone to Banner’s Elk, and been welcomed with a hearty, simple, dreamy hospitality found nowhere else out of these mountains; have been fed on well-cooked and wholesome food at Mrs. Louis Banner’s and have caught thousands of trout ranging in weight from six ounces to one
pound. True, these pink-dotted darlings are not so large as can be found in some streams of the North, but they are just as gamy when hooked and just as delicious when lifted from the frying pan. Banner’s Elk, headquarters for movements on the Elk, Watauga, and Linnville rivers is reached by the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railway to Johnson City, twenty-five miles south of Bristol and about 200 miles northeast of Chattanooga. The East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad connects at Johnson’s and will transport you to Cranberry, thirty-five miles distant in the mountains, where there is a gem of a hotel kept in Northern style. From Cranberry you go in a hack or on horseback, as you prefer, to Banner’s Elk, eight miles distant. At Banner’s Elk you can be accommodated at S. M. Dugger’s who keeps a regular boarding house or at his father’s, a farmer who takes in fishermen. Our club, including our ladies, always stop at Mrs. Louis Banners, but as only ladies compose that family they are sometimes tired of entertaining those they do not know, realizing, no doubt, that few strangers turn out to be angels in disguise. Board is one dollar a day, and it is excellent for the mountains of any part of the country.

railway ride from Johnson’s to Cranberry carries you through the Great Portal—the Doe River Gorge—into the Alleghenies. This gorge pierces the mountain that swings from the pillar of the Smokies—Roan Mountain—and latches on the pillar of the Blue Ridge—Grandfather Mountain—both of these lofty elevations entering the clouds 6,000 feet above the sea. The Doe has ground down a channel through this rocky spur, in places 1,000 feet deep, and alongside its rushing waters the railway ascends up grades 300 feet, and around curves as short as 20*. Now it is on a level with the stream, again it is 100 feet above; now the iron horse pants so close to the rear coach you can almost toss a cigar to the engineer five car-lengths away, again it dashes into a short tunnel that pierces a section of the Potsdam vertebra. The peaks reach up into the clouds, usually clothed in pines, maples, beeches, linns and balsams, but occasionally exposing bare piles of rock hundreds of feet perpendicular, which at times shut in our train as securely from sunbeams as if it was in the bottom of a deep well. Over the clear, cold water project fringes of blooming laurel, ivy and honeysuckle.

From Cranberry the road ascends on the bosom of the mountain that bounds Cranberry River on the south, affording snatches of lovely mountain views. After three miles you ford the Elk and then you ascend that river. If you come in June, not only will the oaks, the maples the hickories, poplars, chestnuts, cherries, linns and beeches and balsams clothe Smoky and Scaly, but the laurel will have on its glorious white plumes, the ivy its delicately tinted and dotted clusters, and the honeysuckle the great redly golden blossoms that are the glory of the mountain sides all through Western North Carolina. For over three miles you will ascend through bough-embracing forests, along the bosom of the mountains at whose feet the Elk tosses, bumbles and swirls, the water of which is clear as crystal, cold as ice and filled with speckled trout. Only the young and agile fishermen venture on these boulders and they are always repaid with creels full of the largest fish found in this section of the mountains.

In the low mountain, three miles from Banner’s Elk—a foothill of Grandfather—rise the Elk, Watauga and Linnville and the springs of their sources are not a thousand yards apart. The Watauga leaves the feet of Grandfather, flows on by Valle Crucis to the Tennessee and thence through the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. The Elk commingles in the same flood. The Linnville, however, pours down through a deep rift in the Linnville range, and after tumbling over a precipitous ledge one hundred feet perpendicular, it hurries on between the gloom wall of a deep canyon to the valley and thence to the Atlantic Ocean. I am told by those who have followed the course of the Linnville from its source and gazed upon its rapids, pools, falls, carious and beetling cliffs, that there is no sublime scenery to be found anywhere on the continent.

It has been a wet June all over the country and these mountains have not been exempt from the discomforts of showers. We reached Banner’s Elk on June 13 for dinner, and at 5 that afternoon began our first assault upon the gamy inhabitants of the Elk. Only three of the four men were in the first engagement and one of these was hampered by the presence of ladies who attempted the sport for the first time, yet when darkness fell, after two hours of whipping, there were discharged from the three creels upon the floor of the porch seventy-five toothsome beauties, and over twenty had been thrown back to grow larger by next year. From that evening on we found the brown hackle and the king of the waters or the coachman the most attractive flies. We never caught a large trout on a miller, though sometimes a little fellow would rise to it. Tuesday we fished with three flies on a six foot leader, a brown hackle always at the tail, then a king of the waters or a coachman and a miller or another hackle.

From Banner’s Elk an excursion is made through the McCandless Cabin Gap to the sources of the Watauga and Linnville. It is for a while up the Elk, then through the dense laurel and up the precipitous face of the foothills, with a soil of leaves and woods decayed during the centuries. Twelve inches deep, covered with trees of fifteen feet girth, and ferns and mosses that are as beautiful as found anywhere else on earth. There is excellent fishing in the Watauga beginning a little after you leave Callaway’s, a mile or so below the source of the river. At Callaway’s you can ascend to the summit of Grandfather, from which can be obtained and almost limitless view of mountain scenery. From Callaway’s you can fish down to Shull’s Mills, where the river makes a short turn to flow out into the valley of Valle Crucis. That journey will be an unalloyed delight—mountains, valleys, laurels, ivy, honeysuckles, dancing rapids, flower shaded pools, trout large and plentiful. At Shull’s Mills is Boone Fork, full of trout, and Joe Shull’s residence, a reasonably
comfortable lodging place. It is better to take lunch from Banner’s and avoid the wretched cooking at Callaway’s.

Returning from Shull’s Mills along the highway you enjoy the scenery to the full. After passing Callaway’s you reach the Lynnville, and in about three miles excellent fishing. You fish on down to Webb’s Pond and spend the night at Estes, a half mile beyond; reasonably fair entertainment. In the morning you can go to Linnville Falls, then across to Martin Banner’s for dinner, where you will get an excellent meal. You will now be only five miles from your feather bed and big wood fire at Mrs. Banner’s, at Banner’s Elk. One pressed for time can fish the Watauga to Shull’s Mills, ascend to the summit of Grandfather, so down the Linnville to the falls, and be back to Banner’s Elk within three days, after having a bushel of sport and a barrel of enjoyment.

There are other streams in Western North Carolina where trout are as plentiful and perhaps larger—as, for instance, the Nantahala, Toe (Chestatoa) and Pigeon—but my heart turns lovingly to the Elk, Watauga and Linnville and my homelike home at Banner’s Elk. My residence is in Chattanooga, Tenn., and I will cheerfully answer all letters of genuine anglers who may wish to learn more of these arteries of the heart of the Alleghenies.