

**THE KENTUCKY
HIGHLANDERS FROM A
NATIVE MOUNTAINEER'S
VIEWPOINT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760570590

The Kentucky highlanders from a native mountaineer's viewpoint by Josiah Henry Combs

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOSIAH HENRY COMBS

**THE KENTUCKY
HIGHLANDERS FROM A
NATIVE MOUNTAINEER'S
VIEWPOINT**

THE
KENTUCKY HIGHLANDERS

From
A Native Mountaineer's Viewpoint

By
JOSIAH HENRY COMBS
Member of the American Folk-Lore Society



J. L. RICHARDSON & Co.
LEXINGTON, KY.
1913

APOLOGIA

"The Kentucky Highlanders" was published, in part, in Tom Watson's *Jeffersonian Magazine*, for March, 1912. With the permission of this magazine it is here published in full. My only apology for publishing a brochure of this sort is an attempt to correct, what is in my opinion, some erroneous impressions under which the outside world has long labored, with regard to the Kentucky Mountaineers.

In my discussion of religious conditions in the mountains, I trust that my Primitive Baptist friends in that section of the state will be fair-minded enough not to consider it as a thrust, or a challenge. Further, I would add that the contents of this brochure have reference, not especially to the towns in the mountains, but more particularly to the outlying sections.

I would be ungrateful if I failed to acknowledge my sincerest thanks to the following friends, for their assistance in the preparation of this brochure: Dr. Hubert G. Shearin, Professor of Old English, and of English Philology in Transylvania University; Dr. A. S. MacKenzie, Professor of English and of Comparative Literature in the State University of Kentucky; Clarence Campbell Freeman, Professor of English Literature in Transylvania University; Senator H. H. Smith, of Hindman, Ky.; Roscoe C. Kilgore, of Hindman, Ky.; Mr. Desha Breckinridge, Editor of the *Lexington Herald*; to my mother, Mrs. John W. Combs, and to Mr. Monroe Combs.

J. H. C.

Lexington, Kentucky,
September, 1913.

To

Hubert Gibson Shearin

SUBJECTS TREATED

	PAGE
ORIGIN, EXTENT AND NATIONALITY:	7
THE SCOTCH-IRISH THEORY	9
THE SCOTCH HIGHLANDER THEORY.....	10
OLD ENGLISH AS A THEORY	12
FOLK-LORE AND PHILOLOGY AS AN ARGUMENT.....	14
OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH.....	16
THE MOUNTAINEER'S PERSONALITY AND HOSPITALITY	17
THE WOMEN OF THE MOUNTAINS	19
NO SOCIAL CASTES	21
BORN LAWYERS AND POLITICIANS.....	22
DECAY OF THE FEUD SPIRIT	24
OLD ENGLISH CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS.....	26
COQUETRY AND FLIRTING UNKNOWN.....	30
FOLK-LORE AND BALLADRY	31
THE MOUNTAINEER'S RELIGION	36
THE EDUCATIONAL OUTLOOK	39
WHAT OF THE FUTURE ?.....	43

THE KENTUCKY HIGHLANDERS

THEIR ORIGIN, EXTENT AND NATIONALITY.

“**H**IS (the Covenanter's) race had defied the Crown of Great Britain a hundred years from the caves and wilds of Scotland and Ireland, taught the English people how to slay a king and build a commonwealth, and, driven into exile into the wilderness of America, led our Revolution, peopled the hills of the South, and conquered the West.

“The breed to which the Southern white man belongs has conquered every foot of soil on this earth their feet have pressed, for a thousand years. A handful of them hold in subjection three hundred millions in India. Place a dozen of them in the heart of Africa, and they will rule the continent unless you kill them.”

These words from the pen of Thomas Dixon, Jr., in “The Clansman,” may be somewhat overdrawn and far-fetched. They are quoted here, however, because the Kentucky mountaineers are of that breed which is spoken of as “peopling the hills and conquering the West.”

An area of nearly thirteen thousand square miles of mountainous country extending northeast and southwest along the eastern part of Kentucky; ridges and peaks rising from an altitude of from five hundred to three

thousand feet; comprising a population of more than four hundred thousand; with an area of coal beds sufficient to supply the world for the next half century, besides large areas underlaid by excellent clays of several sorts, commercially important deposits of iron ore and of ochre, superior sand for glass-making and other purposes, proved fields of oil and of natural gas, pure limestone for iron furnace flux, and stone well suited for structural purposes; the reputed pre-historic dwelling-place and scene of sanguine encounters between the Atalans and Cutans, Telegans (long-headed mound-builders) and Apalans (round-headed mound-builders); the Istacans, a Mongolian race; the Huasiotos and Zulocans. This is the land, and this the people about whom so much has been written during the past fifteen years. Yet, with such a long chain of history (?), and with such a pedigree, United States Senator "Jo" Blackburn once said, in a heat of political frenzy, that a stick of dynamite ought to be put under this section to blow it into hades!

Now, since the writer is a Kentucky Mountaineer, both by birth and by adoption, he seeks your indulgence and pardon in attempting to add to the long list of those who have discussed the social, political, economical and anthropogeographical status of the Kentucky mountains. Much has been said by various writers concerning the descent and nationality of the Kentucky mountaineers. Fiske, the historian, says they are of Scotch-Irish descent, and that their fore-fathers came down from Pennsylvania into the Southern Alleghanies early in the history of the Republic; Thomas Dixon, Jr., in "The Leopard's Spots," and also in "The Clansman," calls the Southern high-