

B A T T L E F O R T H E B L U E R I D G E P A R K W A Y

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Being a detailed account of the long and bitter contest between the state of North Carolina and the state of Tennessee for the routing of the final approximately 187 miles of the scenic Parkway connecting the Shenandoah National Park and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; a history of the inception of the project; the steps taken to get federal approval and appropriations; the controversy as to the route; North Carolina's insistence it traverse the western area of the state; the opposition of Tennessee; the official hearings; the multiplex North Carolina campaign; the strategic moves made open and secret; the groups and leading individuals involved; with appended official documents, briefs, decisions, reports, and some personal letters.

F O R E W O R D

When I resigned as Manager of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce in 1940, after serving in that official capacity for 12½ years, I left complete records, not only of my own administration, but also left undisturbed files of the historically valuable contributions the then, nearly half a century old civic organization, had made to the progress and advancement of Asheville and Western North Carolina. These records my administrative predecessors also had carefully preserved. Had my successor not ordered all those records destroyed, there would have been no particular call for the writing of this account. Much of which will be written was contained in the extensive correspondence and in the numerous documents in the Chamber of Commerce files, preserved for future reference by any one interested, but now lost forever.

Upon retirement, I did take with me a few letters, which were of such personal nature I felt their contents should not be available to anyone else, since the writers were still living and might be embarrassed should their correspondence with me be made public. Death and the passing years prompts me to make these letters a part of this narrative. The originals are filed with this manuscript. I do have a few memoranda, and my memory is clear concerning the events and circumstances of that critical period in the history of our state, and especially as it concerns Western North Carolina, with which this writing deals.

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Furthermore in preparing this account, I have had access to the voluminous scrap book of one of the leading participants in the Parkway project, as will be manifest later. I have also consulted newspaper files of the period, to pin point certain dates and complete the list of names of those participating in certain phases of the enterprise.

Only one other individual, still living, is conversant with practically all the facts I shall relate. Two, possibly three others alive are familiar with much of which transpired, in the open and behind the scenes, but not all. That being the case, I must necessarily relate this story in a personal way, as there were no major developments anywhere along the line of which I was not fully informed. I do not write from hearsay nor from interviews, but as an ancient Latin narrator observed concerning his account, I, in all candor, can say also: "All of which I saw, and a great part of which I was."

My only intent, and my single interest, is to provide a permanent and factual record, for some student, or researcher of those several crucial months' struggle which meant so much to the present and to the future economy of "The Land of the Sky".

The importance of the victory, and accenting what has just been written, was thus epitomized by Mr Robert Lathan in his editorial in the Asheville Citizen, Nov. 13, 1934; "No other project, as the Citizen has said repeatedly, has ever meant so much to this community. There was no other conceivable project by which the mountain counties could be given the opportunity to share generously in the nation's recovery.** We do not

believe that in the whole history of the mountain counties there has ever been any matter before the people here, which has excited so eager an interest, or regarding which, the people were so much a unit."

Fred L. Weede

Fred L. Weede
Asheville, N.C.

1957

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What many newspaper editorials asserted, and what many long time North Carolinians declared, was the finest, most harmonious, most united campaign ever put forth by all sections of the state, was the battle to have the Blue Ridge Parkway routed through Western North Carolina. The word "battle" is used advisedly, for it was all of that. It was no short skirmish. The struggle began in the summer of 1933 and continued vigorously until November 12, 1934, when the final decision was announced by Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, approving the North Carolina route. Even then, certain leaders in the state of Tennessee, who had fought tenaciously to have the final two hundred or so miles travers that state, endeavored vigorously to upset the decision-but to no avail. Had Tennessee won its contention, Western North Carolina would have been deprived of this popular and scenic Parkway entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The people of North Carolina, and especially citizens of Asheville and all other Western North Carolina communities, realized from the beginning the economic factors involved. For half a century the economy of this region was based most heavily on the scenic vacation land this area provided. The people knew industry and agricultural developments would continually increase, still the tourist dollars would always be a prime source of revenue. So when there came a real threat that a prospective avenue that held limitless possibilities of tourist popularity for all time would not only bypass this area, but also divert the flow of travel to another state, the appalling disaster it would inflict upon them, spurred them to vigorous action. Therefore because what these citizens did meant so much to the present and to the future

these citizens did, meant so much to the present and to the future of this "state within a state", it seems fitting some record be made of "who, what, and how" in this great endeavor. That is the purpose of this narrative, as mentioned in the Foreword. It will go into detail, for one of the secrets of our success was, that in our strategy, details were never neglected. It will also bring into focus apparently unrelated events. The campaign was a mosaic, and many components were psychological, or political, or personal, complementing the more outstanding parts in the overall pattern, such as surveys, maps, photographs, briefs, hearings, publicity, official decisions, reports, resolutions etc. etc.

The Blue Ridge Parkway connects the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with its 507,168 acres, roughly one half in the state of North Carolina, and one half in the state of Tennessee. The connecting Parkway is the longest and, most travelers say, the most scenic in America, if not in the world. Its total length is approximately ~~497~~ 469 miles, 216.9 in Virginia. It is a continuation of the Skyline Drive which starts at Front Royal Va., runs through the Shenandoah National Park ending at Rockfish Gap, a distance of 105.4 miles. That is where the Blue Ridge Parkway begins. The average elevation of the Parkway is about 3000 feet, but at Richland Balsam it reaches its maximum height of ~~5600~~ 6050 feet. The average width of the right of way is about 850 feet, with a greater area at strategic points for camping or recreation facilities. The states of Virginia and North Carolina purchased all rights of way, and deeded the land to the federal

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government. The exception was where the Parkway traversed National Forest areas. Originally the total cost of this project was estimated at \$30,000,000. That was in 1933. In 1955, with only 326 miles completed, the total cost thus far was \$40,000,000. In February of that year, Conrad L. Worth, Director of the National Park Service, estimated another \$45,000,000 would be needed to complete the job. Even in its uncompleted state, in this year 1957, the Parkway has each year carried an imposing number of travelers, and with continued publicity and word of mouth praise, its future prospects are indeed rosy.

Before going into the history of the various stages of the enterprise, and the wrangle over its routing, a little background of Asheville's first connection with the projects seems proper. I am quite sure, also, that this was the first contact by anyone in the state of North Carolina. On July, 12, 1933 I returned from a two weeks' vacation in the middle west. The next day the late J. Quince Gilkey, of Marion, came to my office in the Chamber of Commerce. He and I had worked together on several area projects. He took from his wallet a newspaper clipping and remarked, as he handed it to me, that as I had been out of touch with eastern newspapers, the item had probably escaped my attention. The item was about a stick in length, with a small cap heading, and dated Richmond, Va. It told of a meeting the day before in Richmond, a Mr Theodore Straus had suggested a scenic highway be built connecting the Shenandoah National Park with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park along the crest of the Blue Ridge mountains. I handed the clipping back with the observation

it was a beautiful pipe dream. We discussed the tremendous problems of engineering and financing and yet agreed, if such a highway were built, it would be a great asset to this mountain region. I reread the clipping and told Mr Gilkey I would write Mr Straus and encourage him to go on with his idea, in the hope that it might somehow be included in the many work make projects President Roosevelt was starting, to ease the depression.

I stepped over to the telephone office and got Mr Straus' address from the Baltimore directory. I wrote him that same afternoon urging him to have someone close to the President present the plan to him as a possible PWA project. I also pledged Mr Straus the support of Asheville Chamber of Commerce and all western North Carolina in furthering the project. I never received a reply, but in his scrap book on the Parkway, Mr Straus has a memorandum telling of the receipt of my letter. Later on I was to learn that the proposed highway was, at the time I wrote, among the make work projects being considered by District No. 10 of the Public Works Administration, covering seven southeastern states and the District of Columbia-Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee among them. The Regional Director of the District was Mr George L. Radcliffe, later U.S. Senator from Maryland, and Mr Straus, an engineer, was a member of his Advisory Board of eleven, with highway matters his immediate concern. This Board was very active and was pointed out as a model for other sections of the nation.

There the Parkway matter rested as far as anyone in

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Asheville was aware. Copy of my letter to Mr Straus reposed in the files of the Chamber of Commerce, the lone beginner of what was later to grow into a voluminous series of correspondence and materials connected with the Blue Ridge Parkway—all of it burned, as previously mentioned. Otherwise it would be a part of this narrative.

It was not until Sept. 1933 that any publicized action was taken. For that I quote from a release prepared by the National Park Service, in a brief history of the Blue Ridge Parkway. No date is mentioned in this sketch, but the meeting referred to was held Sept. 22, 1933. Quote:

"The earliest records of the Blue Ridge Parkway date back to the fall of 1933, when efforts were being made to set up the project on a federal basis. As the territory through which the Parkway was to run included Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, a coordination of these three states was made possible, since they were in district #10 of the Public Works Administration under the guidance of U.S. Senator George L. Radcliffe, then regional Advisor. During September, a meeting of the League of Virginia Municipalities was held in Richmond Va., in the assembly chamber in the capital building. After the meeting, at a luncheon in the executive mansion attended by regional Director Radcliffe, Executive officer, Major Philip B. Fleming, Governor John Garland Pollard, U.S. Senator Harry Byrd, Mr Theodore Straus of the Public Works Administration, Virginia State Engineer J.A. Anderson and others, the possibility of such a Parkway was proposed by Mr Straus and received the approval of Governor Pollard, who immediately appointed a Virginia committee, requesting Sen. Byrd to

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act as its chairman. Conferences were held with Public Works Administrator Harold L. Ickes, Mr Thomas MacDonald, Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, Mr Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, and on Nov. 18, 1933, Secretary Ickes notified Director Cammerer that the President had approved the proposed Parkway, connecting the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, on the basis that the three states of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee would defray the cost of location surveys, and acquire and deed to the United States the rights of way for the Parkway.

"The project was set up under the National Park Service and the Bureau of Public Roads, in accordance with an existing interbureau agreement. Mr George L. Radcliffe was appointed chairman of an advisory committee to coordinate federal and state interests in the project. On Dec. 7, 1933, \$4,000,000 of Public works funds were allocated for construction of the Parkway."

For the record, here is the full memorandum from Secretary Ickes to Director Cammerer, dated Nov. 18, 1933:

"Memo from Secretary Ickes to Director Cammerer of the National Park Service: The President has approved the proposed scenic Parkway connecting the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. The three states, Va., N.C. and Tenn., through their appropriate officials, have agreed to defray the cost of location surveys, and to acquire and deed to the U.S. rights of way 200 feet in width, where this Parkway crosses other than federally owned lands.

"The President has also suggested that the states take options running for a period of one year on such additional

lands as may be indicated by the office of National Parks, for buildings and reservations as necessary for recreational purposes. Should these options be exercised, federal funds will be used for their purchase. It is hoped that much of the necessary land can be obtained through donation.

"This project will be headed by your office in cooperation with the Bureau of Public Roads. The surveys and location of the Parkway should be in accordance with the existing inter-department agreement covering the cooperative road work between your department and the Bureau of Public Roads. I have requested Mr George L. Radcliffe, Regional Advisor, to act as chairman of an advisory committee to coordinate federal and state interests in this project".

As indicated in Secretary Ickes' memorandum, our North Carolina state officials had been advised of the project and had agreed readily to cooperate-in fact were eager and active. The Asheville Chamber of Commerce had been conferring with the highway officials, but there was not much that could be done at this stage except talk. Mr John Geary was President of the Chamber when the project was first mentioned in 1933, but it was being watched. Mr Ottis Green became President beginning with 1934, just as the subject was taking on more form.

When announcement was made that President Roosevelt had approved the Parkway idea, Mr George Stephens came to my office and volunteered to serve in any capacity we felt would be helpful. Mr Stephens had had a successful business career in Charlotte prior to moving to Asheville. He had wide interests in this city, and had also been active in many movements for civic progress. He

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was widely acquainted throughout the state, and an intimate friend of Governor J.C.B. Ehringhaus and other state officers and leaders. I suggested to President Green he appoint Mr Stephens Chairman of a Parkway committee, and leave it to the Chairman to select other members for his committee as he found desirable. The appointment was made, but no other members were ever selected. Mr Stephens and I were in almost daily conference. We called upon other citizens from time to time for advice or some particular service and always had most hearty cooperation.

Mr Stephens and I met with the State Highway Commission in Raleigh several times when that body was mapping out North Carolina's participation. The first problem then to solve was what route should this state present as its official designation. Governor Ehringhaus was present at these conferences and was in full agreement when the bold decision was made, that if the Parkway was to be the scenic route expected, it must traverse not only the Blue Ridge, but continue along the Blacks (Mount Mitchell), the Craggies, ~~the Balsams~~, and into the Smoky Mountains Park on the North Carolina side. This of course was what Asheville and western counties had been urging. The thinking and the planning in Washington had been that the Parkway would enter the state from Virginia at Low Gap, thence along the crest to the vicinity of Grandfather Mountain, veer past Roan Mountain into the Unaka in Tennessee, and end at Gatlinburg, already the western entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Thus North Carolina's decision "flung down the gauntlet" and the battle for the Parkway was on.

Here is the line up of the obstacles that confronted us. In perspective, viewed now a quarter of a century later, our goal seems as unattainable as it did at that time. We had no illusions. We did not underestimate the gigantic task we faced. First was the Presidential directive that the Parkway was to traverse the three states of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee. No President likes to alter a proclamation he has authorized—that was especially so with F.D.R. We had a National Park Service more friendly to Tennessee always than to North Carolina. (That was probably our own fault in not demonstrating the same warmth of friendship as did the people of Knoxville when the Smoky Mountains Park first became a member of the National Park system. That friendship gave the Park headquarters to Tennessee. All this despite the fact that Asheville citizens had been foremost in suggesting this Park— in fact the idea was born here.)

The Bureau of Public Roads was unfriendly. The advice of their engineers had been basic in the federal proposal and they had no intention of retreating from that position. The officials of District #10 P.W.A. had submitted the original plan, and were determined it should be unchanged, and travers the three states as outlined. In addition we recognized that in Washington, Tennessee had powerful political influence, probably a slight edge on that of our own state. In the face of all this, what possible chance had Western North Carolina of getting the Parkway routed through this area when other factors than scenic beauty entered the equation.

If I may be permitted, this very personal reference will demonstrate that we did not underestimate our situation. Very

early in the campaign, President Green asked some fifteen men to meet at the Chamber of Commerce for consultation. There were present three or four from Waynesville, Mr Stephens, Mr Charles Webb, of the Citizen, the Mayor of Asheville, Mr Gilkey, and some others whose names escape me. Mr Frank Miller, district Highway Commissioner told what the state had done and was doing. President Green and Mr Stephens detailed what the Chamber was doing and the lines planned. Mr Webb pledged full cooperation on the news front. All phases of the situation were discussed and suggestions came from many. There was complete unity of opinion. I thought there was too much optimism so, just as the meeting closed, I summed up the opposition as I have outlined it above. I asserted we should face the fact that we were licked before we began. But as dedicated citizens we should roll up our sleeves and fight; prepare our case as completely and detailed as possible; enlist the support of the entire state through newspapers, Chambers of Commerce and leading citizens; persuade our entire congressional delegation to be intensely active; knowing all the time the odds were against us, but hoping that somewhere along the line, Tennessee would let its foot slip and we might get a toe hold, and somewhere find a leverage to turn the tide in our favor. God had given us the better scenery, but man's strategy and energy had to win the Parkway.

Immediately after the official state decision to press for the Parkway to travers the western counties, with its exact location still up in the air, we were confronted with some irritating problems. As in all public works certain individuals thought they saw an opportunity to cash in, and get for their particular

area the benefits that would accrue. Within certain limits that is a laudable attitude. We were approached openly by some of these, but some we discovered were doing a bit of under cover maneuvering. Some of these suggestions we accepted and placed on file. Some we informed, as politely as possible, we were positive their plan could not possibly be considered—because of geographic reasons. In most instances our disposition of the proposals were accepted, possibly not relished, but accepted. There were a few instances, however, where our suggestions were being disregarded. This we felt was undermining the splendid solidarity of the area. We always found means to persuade or exert pressure that solved the problem. Iron hands are sometimes necessary.

There was no disagreement that the Parkway route would take in Lineville Falls, Little Switzerland, the Blacks, (Mount Mitchell), and the Craggies, thus bringing it to the edge of Asheville. From there a bee line to Soco Gap, or skirting Pisgah, via Lake Junaluska were suggested. In fact, some time later, federal surveyors flagged a route running just north of Asheville to the Park boundary.

Mr Frank Miller of Waynesville, Highway Commissioner of District #10, had discussed with me the possibility of extending the route along the crest of the Balsams, at that time an almost impenetrable region. That would extend the mileage and greatly increase the cost, but would add some wonderful rugged scenery. Mr Miller and Mr Getty Browning, Chief Locating Engineer of the state Highway Department, prepared a map locating this route, and later Mr Miller with Mr Charles Ray, representing the Waynesville Chamber of Commerce, brought the map to my

office and asked if the Chamber of Commerce would approve it, and recommend its adoption by the State Highway Department. The Chamber readily agreed. That route became our state's proposal to the federal government. Mr Ray had been quite active in many conferences, and other ways, from the earlier days of the Parkway project, and he continued most energetic all the way through the long fight. We held conferences on various features of the campaign every few days.

When the Asheville Chamber of Commerce Board approved the route, they instructed me to go the limit in support of our state officials in every way possible. They attached no check rein upon my activity. I was given throughout the widest possible latitude and could act with authority, without having to go to the Board for special permission. Of course at each Board meeting I reviewed the situation, and in between had frequent conferences with the President, Mr Green. And I desire to add here, that Mayor Wambolt and members of the city council were in full accord with this authority, as were the Buncombe County Commissioners. And I am very glad to testify, also, that the citizens of Asheville, and Western North Carolina were a unit in supporting the Chamber of Commerce in its leadership in the campaign. With such unity at home, it was much easier to enlist the support of the state at large.

After the State Highway Department and the Governor had approved the route, Governor Ehringhaus appointed a citizens committee to assist, as occasion permitted, with the state officials. This committee was called The North Carolina Federal Parkway Committee. Mr Quince Gilkey, of Marion, was made Chairman. The

other members were: R. L. Gwynn, Lenoir, Secretary; U. S. Senator Robert R. Reynolds; U. S. Senator Josiah W. Bailey; Congressman Robert L. Doughton, Laurel Springs; Reuben B. Robertson, Asheville; Francis Clarkson, Charlotte; Charles Hutchins, Burnsville; and John P. Randolph, Bryson City. No funds were appropriated for this committee and I am positive the committee never held any formal meetings. The Asheville Chamber of Commerce paid for some stationery, and I kept a plentiful supply and, with the consent of the Chairman, I used it as necessary for correspondence, and wrote many letters for him. Upon several occasions, the Chamber also paid traveling expenses of the Chairman. Members of the committee were very active personally, those in Washington exceedingly so, and some of the others were in frequent conference with us in Asheville. They also attended hearings and individually did splendid work.

There were numerous "tight spots" encountered in shaping up a united front. Two of them, not previously mentioned, might serve as examples of how such things were handled and the outcome very satisfactory. When it was proposed the Parkway enter the famous Biltmore Estate, and run a considerable distance through that property, our leaders were considerably disturbed, because the Biltmore Estate officials had, on several occasions, rejected proposed incursions on the property. It wanted no encroachment that might threaten its privacy, or interfere with the more than a decade of its use as an outstanding tourist attraction for Asheville. That use, by the way, had been granted at the request of the Chamber of Commerce early in my managerial administration. Personally I could not disagree with some of the earlier refusals that gave

a veto to attempts to occupy portions of the Estate for some community use. Now here was another idea, more extensive in its implications, and it was with considerable trepidation that I asked for a conference with Judge Junius G. Adams, President of Biltmore Estates. I informed him of the tentative plans for routing the Parkway through the Estate and showed him on a map the probable entrance and exit. I could give him few details as the whole matter was still prospective. He asked if the route would run near Biltmore House, and I told him the thought was it would be quite a distance away. Judge Adams said he realized the tremendous advantages the Parkway would be to Asheville, and said that if and when more details had been developed, and it was found no damage would be made to the beauty of the famous House and Gardens, he saw no reason why permission for using a portion of the grounds should meet with objection. So that particular hurdle did not prove too rough.

There was another however, that could have been disastrous. What line would the survey follow from near Mount Mitchell, over the Craggies to Asheville? Originally the thought in Asheville had been the route would have been fairly close to Mount Mitchell, and probably run along the north of the Craggies, so as to avoid the 20,000 acre watershed of the city of Asheville. When we learned the federal surveyors were planning a route from Black Gap, about six miles from Mount Mitchell, along and through about nine miles of the watershed, we were very disturbed. This watershed had always been most carefully guarded and protected, and to propose a boulevard, that would be heavily traveled, was

an invasion that threatened the health of the city and county water purity. We questioned whether this routing was the best engineering, or a designed challenge to Asheville. If we raised objection, and demanded a change in routing, that would provide an excuse to veer the Parkway farther away from Asheville and possibly eliminate the Balsalms entirely. That would provide another argument to bolster the Tennessee proposal. To add to our complication, word had come to me that Dr Carl V. Reynolds, North Carolina Health officer, was preparing to oppose the use of watershed lands. He was a stubborn fighter as I had had reason to know from previous tangles. He was a most competent guardian of all phases touching the health of his state. Furthermore a prominent and capable engineer of Asheville, I was told, was waiting for Dr Reynolds to make the first move, and then start a campaign here in opposition to encroachment on the watershed.

Our strategists decided our first move should be to get the consent of the Asheville officials. Mr Browning and I had a long conference with the City Manager, Mr Pat. M. Burdette. Mr Burdette had many questions to ask particularly as to how well modern engineering could eliminate the hazards to contamination from a heavily traveled highway, surface wash, scars of construction, litter, and things of that sort. Mr Browning was fully prepared for those questions and gave the City Manager details of construction and protective measures that were found safe. Mr Burdette said he would bring the matter to the city Commissioners attention at the next meeting, and would explain the protective methods advanced by Mr Browning. We also advised him of

the danger of playing into the hands of Tennessee should we engage in a battle among ourselves. It was a great relief to all of us when the city fathers later decided the engineering precautions would protect the water purity and consented to the right of way in and along the water shed.

There still remained Dr Reynolds to be contacted. The Chamber of Commerce regarded this of sufficient gravity that President Green called a special meeting of the Directors to consider it and the threatened local opposition. First move was to find out what the State Health Officer thought about the projected route along the water shed. Next step to seek an avenue of persuasion, should that be necessary. Who best could talk to Dr Reynolds intimately, and in whose judgement he would have great confidence. Several individuals were suggested but it was finally agreed that Judge Adams would be our best representative. Especially so since he had himself considered hazards and dangers and had approved a route through Biltmore Estate, placing his reliance on engineering protection. President Green phoned the Judge asking him to step across the street to confer with the Directors. The meeting was being held in secret in the Board room of the Wachovia bank. After the problem had been presented to Judge Adams he said he did not have any closer relations with Dr Reynolds than many other citizens, but if the Directors desired he would go to Raleigh next day. Upon his return he reported that Dr Reynolds had no intention of interfering in the situation provided the city officials of Asheville were convinced the danger of contamination would be minimized by competent engineering methods.

and that pledges for such provisions be incorporated in any agreements entered into by the state and the federal government. That eliminated another possible road block. Nothing more was heard of a local opposition group.

There was no division of opinion in Virginia concerning the route the Parkway was to follow. As North Carolina and Tennessee had conflicting and diverging routes, Chairman Radcliffe of the special committee appointed by Secretary Ickes, summoned these states to appear before the committee in Baltimore and present their claims. North Carolina was heard on Feb. 6, 1934, and Tennessee on Feb. 7. At the request of Chairman Gilkey, of the North Carolina Parkway committee, I wrote a brief setting forth the main argument of our state, describing and detailing the chief scenic landmarks along our proposed route, and telling of the recreational advantages already provided along its route, and the ample available accommodations for the comfort and convenience of those who would travel the Parkway. The Chamber of Commerce paid for the printing of this brief, and they were distributed not only to the members of Mr Radcliffe's committee, but this same brief was used throughout as a part of our state's official presentation. It was also sent throughout the state as part of our campaign to enlist support of all sections in this united effort. A copy of this brief is filed with this manuscript, along with certain letters which belong to a narrative of this historical controversy.

We very carefully and thoroughly prepared our case for this Baltimore hearing. Governor Ehringhaus and Chairman Jeffres of the Highway Commission had commissioned Mr Getty Browning to

assemble what exhibits and enlarged maps were best suited to make the most favorable impression. It was spectacular and very impressive. Mr Browning was in fact, from the beginning, the liason man between the state officials and those of us in Western North Carolina who were engineering our part in the campaign. Therefore Mr Browning spent a great portion of his time conferring and planning with us. The program of speakers, the subject matter, all phases of our presentation, was carefully arranged, and organized.

Mr Ratcliffee presided. The other two members of his committee were Mr Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, and Mr Thomas MacDonald, Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads. Assisting as consultants were Mr Theodore Straus, member of District #10 P.W.A. board and Mr C.D. Clark, landscape architect, and Abel Wolman consultant with the district board. There was a splendid representation of official and non official North Carolinians headed by Governor Ehringhaus. The hearing lasted several hours. Our group felt we had made out a very impressive case. Of course no immediate comment was made by the hearing committee, their report was to come later, as Tennessee was yet to be heard. Observing at the hearing were several others who later on played important roles in the Parkway battle; Thomas C. Vint, Chief Landscape Architect of the National Park Service, Stanley W. Abbott, Resident Landscape Architect, Col. J.N.S. Waring, R. Howard Blankall, of Baltimore and members of the Regional PWA board.

Both our U.S. Senators were present, Josiah Bailey and Robert Reynolds. Congressmen present were; Zebulon Weaver, Robert Doughton, William B. Umstead, A.L. Bulwinkle, Franklin Hancock.

Chairman Gilkey and the following members of his committee were there: R.L. Gwynn, Reuben B. Robertson, J.P. Randolph, Francis C. Clarkson, Charles Hutchins. Chairman E.B. Jeffress and the following members of his commission: Frank W. Miller, and W.C. Woodward, as was former Highway Chairman, Frank Page, of Raleigh. Others in the Tar Heel delegation were: George M. Stephens, John Bohanan, and Francis Heazel of Asheville; General Albert D. Cox of Raleigh and Washington, G.C. Robbins and Nelson Mace of Blowing Rock, and Robert McKee reporter of the Asheville Citizen. A number of the Tennessee delegation and several men from Virginia, sat in on the hearing, but did not participate.

After considering the two proposals for a few weeks, the Radcliffe committee decided to make a personal inspection tour of the proposed routes before making its report. Some of the terrain had only poor mountain roads which would be difficult to travel even in summer, much less in this month of March, when snow and ice were sure to be encountered, especially at the higher elevations. Only that portion as far as Asheville was included in the inspection. On March 23 the inspection party left Roanoke Va. in 15 autos and trucks—some federal, but most furnished by the North Carolina Highway Department, with drivers accustomed to mountain traveling. In the party were engineers, and landscape architects from the National Park Service and the Bureau of Public Roads, some North Carolina Highway commissioners and engineers, some members of the N.C. Parkway committee, representatives of the PWA district #10 board, and representatives from the Asheville Chamber of Commerce.

This inspection trip really became a highway nightmare.

The cavalcade followed the approximate route along the crest of the Blue Ridge in Virginia via parallel highways and side roads, entering North Carolina at near Low Gap. At about that point a severe snow storm-the worst of the winter-hit them. Their proposed night stop had been arranged at a hotel in Blowing Rock, but the weather was so cold and the going so difficult, they were glad to reach shelter at Boone when night fell.

The following day, March 24, was no better, even worse. Snow and ice coated all roadways making progress almost impossible. More snow was falling, sleet and fog added to the confusion. One of the objectives was Mount Mitchell. The party could not make it. They did reach Little Switcherland, but when they reached Buck Creek Gap they were forced to abandon the inspection and decided to try to make Asheville via Lake Tahoma, thus bypassing Mount Mitchell and the Craggies.

A reception group of city, county and Chamber of Commerce officials awaited them at Grove Park Inn where accommodations for the party's lodging had been arranged. We knew they would be extremely weary and half frozen so had provided some essential stimulants. The day here in Asheville had been dark with intermittent snowing. Long after the hour of their expected arrival had passed, with no word of course from them, fear was expressed for their safety. At long last the first snow and ice covered members of the party entered the big lobby with its two huge fire places blazing brightly. They were a bedraggled lot. Some were so weary they could scarcely walk and all were chilled to

the bone. Soon as they could clean up and change to dry clothing we whisked them to the Biltmore Forest ^{Country} club where Mr Reuben Robertson, member of the N.C. Parkway committee, was host at a hearty and sustaining dinner.

Those intrepid individuals who made that historic trip of 200 miles, including side trips, under such adverse weather conditions, deserve more recognition than just being names on a list. Here is the roster and I believe it omits no one. From the federal agencies there were: H. J. Spelman, and W. M. Austin of the bureau of Public Roads; T. C. Vint, Chief Landscape Architect, and Stanley Abbott, Resident Landscape Architect, of the National Park Service; V. Roswell Ludgate, Landscape ~~Architect~~ of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Theodore E. Straus, engineer, and Col. Gilmore D. Clark, landscape engineer, with District #10 PWA; Chairman E. B. Jeffress, R. Getty Browning, Chief Locating Engineer, John C. Walker, Chief Engineer of the Western North Carolina district #10, Frank Miller, #10 Commissioner, J. H. Council of Boone and Ross Sigmon, of Salisbury, commissioners of the N.C. Highway Department; B. B. Marsh, Wayne Morgan, S. C. Austin N.C. Highway Engineers; Chairman Gilkey and R. L. Gynn of N.C. Federal Parkway committee; George M. Stephens, Chairman Parkway committee of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce. Also in the party were Frank W. Webster, Chairman, and engineer Briggs Smith of the Tennessee Highway Commission. Others who were members of the party in and around Blowing Rock but who did not continue on to Asheville were; Judge Heriot Clarkson, of Charlotte, Grady Farthing, C. D. Franklin and W. R. Lovel of Blowing Rock.

In addition to the above, those present at the Biltmore Forest ^{Country} club dinner were; Ottis Green President, and Fred L. Woodde Manager of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, Grady Reagen, Chairman of the Buncombe County Commissioners, George L. Hackney, Asheville City Manager, Don Elias, Robert Lathan, and Robert H. McKee, of the Asheville Citizen, Francis J. Heazel, and George Myers Stephens. My Robertson was Toastmaster and introduced all present, and called on several of the visitors to give their impressions of the day's endurance test, complementing them upon their fortitude and invigative loyalty under so unfavorable climatic conditions. He urged especially that the Washington and Baltimore investigators return when the beauty they had journeyed to see, was not obscured by snow and clouds, rain, hail and fog.

Later, in the month of April, the Washington officials arranged for an aerial view of the two contesting routes, but again the weather prevented. It was not until late in May that their engineers, landscape specialists, and others on the Radcliffe committee, were able to make the inspection desired. It was during this period that a compromise plan was devised—namely a combination route, shifting across from the Blue Ridge near Linville Falls to the Unaka range beyond Roan mountain. As part of this plan, the actual entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains Park was to encompass a loop route at the northern end of the Park, a part of which would be in the state of North Carolina. It was at that time also that there was injected into the Parkway picture, an alteration of the original purpose of the project, which was scenic beauty. Now there was discussion of an express type of highway which the less rugged Tennessee terrain would provide.

This change in thinking we in North Carolina charged as another evidence of favoritism to Tennessee-an acknowledgment too, of our scenic advantage. Sometime about this time, Mr Cammerer came to my office in the Chamber of Commerce. I had no advance notice of his visit. We of course knew each other well, and had conferred on many occasions, always harmoniously, except on this matter of the Parkway. It so happened that Mr Thomas Raoul, Treasurer of the Smoky Mountains Park N.C. Commission, and also a member of Governor Ehringhaus' Parkway committee, ^{was in my office.} He knew Mr Cammerer well. Mr Cammerer quickly brought the conversation around to the Parkway controversy. I was well aware just where he stood as between the two states. He was for Tennessee. He said, and I believe most sincerely, that he wanted to end the controversy. He proposed this compromise to me. Why not route the Parkway a little to the north of Asheville, and then run it northwestward to enter the Park somewhere nearer the Tennessee boundry than would be the case if we routed it over Pisgah and the Balsalms. That would give Asheville access, and would be a better break for Tennessee.

I told him frankly I knew that compromise idea would not be acceptable to our people. We were united on the route we had proposed, and intended to press to the finish for its acceptance. He said you know you have a hard fight on your hands, and I admitted we were well aware of that fact. He mentioned the Roosevelt directive that Tennessee should have a portion of the route, and wanted to know how we hoped to get around that. He also mentioned the great political power Tennessee had in Washington. If we would yield a little, some plan might be worked out to compose the differences. I reiterated we would not consider any compromise.

Mr Cammerer was not angry. Neither was I. But he did not conceal his disappointment that his compromise plan had been so firmly rejected. His exit was rather chilly. During this verbal exchange, Mr Raoul never said a word, but his face showed concern. When we were alone, he remarked I had been rather short and vigorous in talking to one who held such high position. I told Mr Raoul I wanted the Park Director to know exactly where we stood, and that we were taking him on as well as the others who were favoring Tennessee. Mr Raoul agreed we should make no compromise. I am sure he did not think me too pugnacious, for later on, when we had won the fight, he wrote and presented a resolution adopted by the Asheville Civitan club, expressing appreciation to the Chamber of Commerce for its work in obtaining the Parkway and was kind enough to name me personally for commendation.

On July 19 1934, Secretary Ickes announced the approval of the Parkway route from Jarman's Gap to the James river, and from Adney Gap to Blowing Rock, N.C. This order permitted start of the surveys, to be followed by initial construction, in the northern portion of the Parkway in Virginia.

We realized all along that President Roosevelt would have to alter his original directive before our proposed route, along the Balsalms to Soco Gap, could be approved. As one means of bringing our cause to his personal attention, and impressing him of our route's superior scenic beauty, we decided to prepare an album of photographs and present it to him. It was not to be an ordinary affair, but exquisite, unique and comprehensive - and that also meant expensive. It is telling no tales out of school to remark that this particular period was in the depth of the depression and our Chamber

of Commerce revenue had shrunk to the vanishing point. We did economize as best we could on general activities, and even on the Parkway battle, which we financed locally, we were forced to refrain from many things which ordinarily we would have done. This album was planned to be something extra special. And it was.

First we sorted over the large collection of mountain photographs, made through the years by George Masa, famous pioneer, who roamed this area thoroughly with his cameras. Then we combed through the splendid scenic collection of Elliott Lyman Fisher, artistic photographer we had persuaded to come to Asheville from Alaska. There were some scenes along the proposed route which had never been photographed, so Mr Fisher spent several days of arduous labor taking these views—~~w~~ far from highways. We selected about twenty-five as outstanding representative. Mr Fisher obtained some special deluxe sensitized paper—a recent product. All prints had to be enlarged a trifle, and each photograph was therefore a single page in the book. A commercial artist hand lettered the title on each page, and also the carefully worded presentation addressed to the President. Mr Frank Barber, of the Inland Press, bound the album in genuine red Morocco leather, and stamped in gold on the cover, was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In a pocket, on the inside of the back cover, was a specially drawn relief map prepared by the North Carolina highway engineers—very artistic and impressive. Also in the album was the official brief I had written for our various hearings.

Mr Marvin Mac Intyre, one of the President's secretaries, a former Asheville resident, and throughout most helpful to our

cause in many ways, arranged an appointment with the President for the presentation of this album. In the group that went to the White House for this ceremony were: Governor Ehringhaus, Mr George Stephens, Congressmen Zebulon Weaver and Robert Doughton, and Mr Charles Webb, of the Asheville Citizen. The President commented on the elegance of the book, read the inscription, remarked upon the great beauty of the scenes shown, and astonished the group with his familiarity ^{with} of some of the places pictured. We felt we had at least got one foot inside the door through this personal contact.

For us, in North Carolina, this was an exasperating period of waiting. The Radcliffe committee report had not been made, or if made, had not been released. In fact, the copy I have of it has no date, but its release, as will later be told, came at a dramatic moment. These weeks meant for us intensive and persistent work, much of it under cover activity. The core of strategy centered in Mr Browning and myself. Mr Browning made frequent trips to Washington, where he conferred with our two Senators, with Congressmen Weaver and Doughton, National Park and Bureau of Public Roads officials. He had a wide acquaintance among lesser personnel in these federal bureaus from whom he gathered considerable information and hints, that were valuable clues as to the thinking and purposes of those higher up. He was in Asheville almost as much as he was in Raleigh. His state wide highway work, during this period, was largely delegated to his assistants. His superiors regarded the Parkway as his prime activity, and Mr Browning was given a free hand.

All his information, and all we in the west had, we two

discussed and evaluated mostly in conferences in his hotel room here, sometimes lasting long after midnight. All the moves being conducted or proposed, no matter by whom or where, were scrutinized. Road blocks-and they were plentiful-were approached from all angles and various solutions were weighed and when we found what we hoped would be our best procedure, he carried to Raleigh or Washington, and I passed on to our local leaders. Conversely suggestions from state officials and our numerous western area advisors we analysed and tested as to effectiveness in the over all campaign. There were secret activities being carried on that we did not dare disclose. Between us-even if otherwise disposed-all cards had to be put on the table faces up. These long and patient conferences, searching for solutions to our problems, paid off in complete harmony, locally and in Raleigh. No cross purpose currents were flowing and therein was the secret of our effective campaign.

A few months after the rugged March inspection trip, our state Highway Chairman, Mr E.B. Jeffress was taken seriously ill. and resigned his position. Mr Jefferess , a native of Buncombe county had always been keenly interested in transportation facilities in Western North Carolina. Asheville was especially grateful when the state at his suggestion took over the Elk Mountain scenic Drive and improved it. When the Parkway was projected he visualized this highway as a short connecting link for easy access into Asheville, which it is. From the beginning he was very enthusiastic for extending the Parkway along the route it now follows. With Mr Browning he walked along the mountains from Blowing Rock to Asheville exploring the engineering problems. Later

Browning walked over that portion not included in prior ex-
rations which gave him a vast store of factual information
ch was to be of tremendous importance in the official hearings.
Dunlap, who succeeded Mr Jeffress as Chairman, was equally loyal
the North Carolina campaign, but his entrance during its progress,
vented him from having a thorough knowledge of all its ramifica-
ns. Very wisely he relied upon Mr Browning and continued to give
unstinted support.

After Secretary Ickes officially established a portion of
route in North Carolina, we felt his next move would be to sum-
both states to a hearing before himself where their respective
posals would be presented, just as had been done in Baltimore. The
etary had given no intimation as to his next move. In the mean-
e in the Asheville Chamber of Commerce had been very busy
weeks encouraging all sections of North Carolina to line up
vely behind our state's fight.

Our program was a combination of education, and an urge
enthusiasm in a statewide undertaking. We had newspaper mats
of the Highway department maps, showing the location of the
e; stories of the plan, and what had been done; mats of some of
outstanding scenic features; stories of what the economic ef-
to the state as a whole would be ^{from} the revenue from the travel
etc. These were sent to the newspapers of the state, daily and
ly, and we received a remarkably favorable response. Letters
President Green and myself, went to all Chambers of Commerce,
esting them to adopt resolutions, endorsing the North Carolina
e) be sent to Secretary Ickes, and also that they urge offici-
their congressman to do all he could to get an endorsement of
project. Most of these organizations cooperated heartily. We also

a steady flow of letters to our congressional delegation, keeping them informed, in a general way, of the progress of the campaign so they would realize we considered their assistance vital to our cause. It was, and they responded splendidly. That this publicity, and the cooperative result was a big success, was amply demonstrated when Mr Ickes did call for a hearing, and in many other useful ways.

During this waiting period we perfected our presentation material. The one at Baltimore had been splendid, but we added to the material to be presented verbally, statistics showing the immense sums of money the federal government had allocated to Tennessee and the relative meagre funds North Carolina had received. This proved considerable value, as will be disclosed later. Mr Browning found material to strengthen his factual and engineering arguments. We decided to prepare a striking and impressive pictorial exhibit, consisting of greatly enlarged photographs which required oversized print. We used some of those photographs shown in Baltimore but there were some decidedly beauty spots never before photographed which Mr Browning had observed on his tramps, and these we decided to get. The Highway Department furnished the trucks and drivers, and the Asheville Chamber of Commerce arranged for the photographer. Day after day after laboriously reaching those high altitude locations, our party encountered fogs and clouds. Finally came a day of friendly perfect atmospheric conditions and these superb scenes were obtained. All ten photographs, blown to 20 by 24 inches, were mounted on stiff, but attractive, ply board, so they would withstand handling and could be used on easels or hung, whichever would best facilitate

At last Secretary Ickes announced he was coming to Asheville to hear both states present their arguments. That produced fireworks. Tennessee loudly objected, declaring North Carolina, in such a setting, would have a decided advantage. Senator ^{Mr} Kelller of Tennessee was quite violent. So Secretary Ickes called the meeting in Washington and set the date, Sept. 15, in the Interior building, and icily declared he would not make a personal inspection of either route, thus eliminating any accusation of favoritism.

Senator Reynolds was the one in Washington specifically charged with contacting Secretary Ickes regarding the hearing. He telephoned me immediately when advised of the altered plans. As soon as we finished our conversation, I got Governor Ehringhaus on the phone and relayed the conversation with the Senator, and said I hoped the Governor's schedule would not conflict. The Governor was quick in saying: "Mr Weede, the Governor of the State of North Carolina would not permit any engagement of any kind to interfere with a meeting which means so much to this state. Furthermore I want you to know that a large delegation of our state officers will accompany me to Washington, and all of us will fit ourselves into any plan you folks make and serve in whatever manner you think will best promote our interest". And Governor Ehringhaus did just that, and that same spirit was uppermost all throughout our campaign, as regards our state's Chief Executive.

Personally I do not blame Tennessee for objecting to having the hearing in Asheville. I can reveal now that we were going to have such a tremendous crowd attending that hearing it would have overrun any available spot, including either McCormick Field or Memorial Stadium-in fact it would have been a larger gathering ^{than any} this city has

ever assembled. Western North Carolina was on fire, and they would have turned out in such numbers it would have overwhelmed Secretary Ickes.

So the shift of the hearing from Asheville, to Washington forced us radically to change our plans. We asked Senator Reynolds to come to Asheville for a conference. Some fifteen of our leaders met with him at the Chamber of Commerce. It was only natural that our "crowd psychology" should shift from Asheville to Washington. The main decision was to arrange for a large delegation to go by special train to the nation's capitol. This train would pick up other parties along the line, including the Governor and other state officials. Senator Reynolds suggested that Asheville Postmaster, Wythe Peyton, be asked to head the committee whose job would be to sign up the largest possible delegation from all the counties in the western area. Mr Peyton consented, and an energetic Chairman he proved to be. He selected his own committee-Ottis Green, Hiden Ramsey, W.T. Morris, John J. Curran, Jack Woodcock, Joseph Dave, Richard Loughran, and Scott Rad-eker, and Burnham Colburn.

This committee was very active, the Chairman especially so, making, with members of his group, many trips to surrounding counties, getting pledges of participation. Asheville particularly had not seen such excitement in recent years, if ever. The Chamber of Commerce sent invitations to all other Chambers in the state to join in the "march to Washington". Letters were sent to hundreds of leading citizens throughout the state urging them to attend the hearing. The response we received was very heartening. We knew we would have a large attendance and it would be state wide in character. The many weeks of

intensive publicity and urging for united action had borne fruit in a state wide effort that surpassed any thing of the sort in recent years.

Then came the hearing, so long awaited. Knowing ~~the~~ the small room originally designated by the Secretary for the presentation would not begin to hold the crowd North Carolina itself would have, much less augmented by the Tennessee representatives, we asked for and got, a change to the biggest auditorium in the Department of ~~Interior~~ ^{Interior} Revenue building.

All along, in our planning, we always considered the smallest details, left nothing to chance. So in keeping with our methods, Mr Browning, Mr Stephens and myself went to Washington a day ahead of the hearing to check on everything. We visited the auditorium and studied the stage and mapped out how and where our pictorial exhibits should be placed to best advantage. We met with congressman Weaver and Doughton in the latter's office and reviewed our plans and program previously arranged. We were told that a very large delegation from Tennessee was expected. Knowing the size of our own group, and estimating the probable capacity of the auditorium, I decided to send a telegram to President Green, who was in charge of our special train, to be read in all pullmans, telling of the proposed preliminary meeting we had arranged in the big Ways and Means committee room, which Chairman Doughton had placed at our disposal. And to be sure that our delegation would all get into the hearing room, I urged our representatives be at the auditorium an hour earlier than the time originally set for the opening of the hearing. First come, first seated-the strategy paid off handsomely next day.

That delegation by special train was most successfully managed from start to finish, and played a most important role in our final victory. There were 18 Pullman cars when the party left Asheville, and other cars were added along the route, including the car with Governor Ehringhaus and other state officials from Raleigh. At the Asheville station, the Kiffin Rockwell American Legion Post bugle and drum corps, in uniform, gave the more than 250 representatives from every Western North Carolina county an enthusiastic "Send Off". The Asheville newspapers next day printed the names of most of the "boosters", but it was not complete as probably a hundred or more made the trip to Washington by chartered bus or in private automobiles. All Asheville civic clubs had delegations, all the members of Chairman Gilkey's committee were present, Buncombe county commissioners, Mayor Wambolt and all city councilmen, - in fact it was a most outstanding group of leaders. Every North Carolinian was given a big badge, so there was no mistaking in identifying that he was a "Tar Heel" supporter.

The Ways and Means committee room is spacious. It was jammed by mid-morning when the Western North Carolinians were joined by crusaders from other sections of the state. Both our U.S. senators were there, as was every congressman from our state. Scores of federal employees took a day off, and eagerly pinned on badges and joined the throng of enthusiasts. There was no speech making - no need for "rousings". Congressman Doughton, I think it was, told the delegation how to find the Interior building and impressed upon them the importance of arriving at the hearing early.

Naturally Governor Ehringhaus was expected to take the helm and steer our presentation. What he did however was to ask Mr. Downing,

Mr Stephens and myself to step one side and this in effect was what he said: "You gentlemen have been laying the groundwork for this meeting. You are familiar with all phases of our effort. I am told each state has been given one hour and a half to present its case. As your Governor I ask you to select whom you desire to speak for North Carolina. It makes no difference to me what part I play, or none. I am at your command. I shall do as little, or as much, as you decide."

No strategists could have asked for wider latitude than that. We told the Governor we had prepared, for his approval, a tentative program. There was no question but that he should preside and make the opening address. He said his remarks would be brief.

I informed him we had been tipped off that Secretary Ickes was more interested in the actual engineering facts than in generalities, and that we thought, and that our senators and congressmen were in agreement, that Mr Browning should be given more time than any other speaker to present those facts with which he was so familiar. The Governor said he heartily agreed.

From many years experience I have observed that when the spot light is turned on in any affair of crucial magnitude, there customarily are certain individuals, for political or other reasons, who seek to get as much of the limelight as possible. Let me say right here-and emphatically-that not a single person of the many who had proper claims for that distinction in this historic moment in North Carolina history made the slightest effort to get such precedence. The contrary was the fact. Each one approached, senators, congressmen, or other leaders, all said forget personalities, select spokesmen you think can best present our state's case. That agreeable

attitude eased immensely our task of allotting time and subject matter as well as selecting the limited number of speakers. We did not have to worry about the tender feeling of anybody when we told them so many minutes and no more—and stick to your subject. Secretary Ickes had warned in advance he would hold a stop watch on each state and neither would be given a minute more than the time assigned. And that is how, and why, our presentation was so complete, terse, smooth, so effective.

We three managers arranged our maps and enlarged photographs. We never left the auditorium from early afternoon until the hearing concluded. Our exhibit was on the right of the stage, and in place, before any Tennessee appeared. Luckily for us they did not have a very large exhibit and so there was no crowding. Their maps and the few photographs were, about ordinary size and the comparison was marked. Soon the white badges began to appear and an hour before the set time, every seat was filled with North Carolinians, and many were standing on each side and in the space in the rear. And not a single Tennessee delegate in sight. When at last they did arrive, their faces showed amazement as they edged their way into the packed auditorium, or were forced to stand with white badged men in the outside hallway.

Promptly on the dot in came Secretary Ickes, accompanied by a stenographer and his aides. On the right of the stage sat the North Carolina Governor and the speakers for our state. On the left was Governor McAllister and the Tennessee spokesmen. Center stage was a small table and chair for Mr Ickes. Before seating himself, the Secretary shook hands with the two Governors. He announced he would toss a coin to determine which side should open the debate

and also have 15 minutes for closing. Governor Ehringhaus won the toss. When the Secretary was seated, the Governor thanked the Secretary for giving our state an opportunity to present its claims, expressed confidence that the speakers he would introduce would demonstrate the superiority of the North Carolina route in a national project that meant so much to all the people for all time, and one by one presented the following: Senator Robert Reynolds, Congressman Doughton, Frank Page, former N.C. State Highway Chairman, Robert Latham, editor of the Asheville Citizen, Senator Josiah Bailey, and as the last speaker, R. Getty Browning, who had been left about one third of all our time. Secretary Ickes followed what Mr Browning said most attentively. Each speaker, by arrangement, confined himself to one particular phase of the general over all arguments we had stressed throughout our campaign—scenic, economic, our state's right to an entrance to the Great Smoky National Park, the tremendous sums of federal money Tennessee had received as compared to the very small amount we had been given—these were the main points. One other phase was the burden of Mr Latham's remarks, namely that Western North Carolina had for years built up, with considerable expense, its tourist industry, which would be damaged tremendously should that travel be channeled through another gateway into Tennessee.

Governor McAllister opened for Tennessee and introduced these speakers: Senator Kenneth McKellar, Frank W. Webster, State Highway Chairman, Gen. W. T. Kennedy, William Taylor, Congressman, and Senator Nathan Buckman. The most dramatic feature of the hearing, and to the great surprise of everyone in the room, with the possible exception of the Secretary himself, was the announcement by Senator McKellar, that the Radcliffe committee had made its

report and had unanimously approved the Tennessee route. We were not surprised at the recommendation of this committee, but we had no knowledge the report had been submitted. The information that the report had been handed Secretary Ickes that morning, had been leaked to Senator McKellier and he immediately demanded the Secretary furnish him a copy. The announcement was a bombshell for us, and no mistake. We realized the import of it and the impact on the hearing now in progress. We looked at each other with considerable consternation. It was a fine bit of strategy on the part of our opponants, and Senator McKellier made the most of it in his firey and rather ill tempered speech. He argued that should the Secretary award the Parkway to North Carolina he would be repudiating the decision of his own committee. Also he argued such an award would be contrary to the Presidential directive that Tennessee be included in the territory through which the Parkway was to run, and contrary to National Park Service and Bureau of Public Roads numerous investigations and findings. Senator McKellier did not read the report in full. But in order that it be a part of this record here is the report:

REPORT OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Honorable
The Secretary of the Interior.
My Dear Mr Secretary:

A thorough study has been made of various possible routes for the proposed Parkway to connect the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. Hearings were held in Baltimore at the Regional office in February at which the three states involved, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina, were given an opportunity to submit such data as they desired. In two complete field examinations the Highway Commissions of these states were given opportunity to point out the relative merits of routes suggested by them. Other examinations in the field, and map studies have been made by the landscape architects of the Park Service and the

er Radcliffe and Straus, as well as by the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads and Mr Gilmore D. Clarke.

The general routes considered are shown on the enclosed map. All of these routes are feasible from both an engineering and landscape standpoint. From a landscape standpoint, one may be said to assess characteristics causing it to stand out so well that its selection would be inevitable.

The route lying wholly in Virginia and North Carolina may be said to be dominately a mountain and plateau route. The route in Virginia, and principally in Tennessee, may be said to be a mountain and an interior valley route.

Our recommendation is that the route to be approved be the Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee route which would begin at the South boundry of the Shenandoah Park, pass by the Peaks of Otter, the Pinnacles of Dan, Grandfather Mountain, cross to the West and on through Tennessee to the Great Smokies, continuing through Clinburg on the Tennessee side, and to Cherokee on the North Carolina side as shown on the attached map.

This route will provide for the wider variety of topography, scenery, and roadside conditions. It will provide mountains, plateau, interior valley, and stream side location. It will provide for a much relatively easy road alignment. Its altitude will be generally high, since the interior valleys selected will be largely at elevations of 2500 feet or more and it will be the most direct in character.

Considering the recommended route of the Parkway as a link in a national Parkway to serve the entire chain of the Atlantic states, it is so placed that it may fork at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one fork continuing on into Tennessee connecting with the Natchez Trace toward New Orleans, the other branch toward Atlanta and Florida. The fork might be placed also in the vicinity of Grandfather Mountain utilizing much of the route proposed in North Carolina to the south of Asheville. Likewise to the north of Shenandoah Park, the Parkway could be extended to connect ultimately with the proposed Green Mountain Parkway.

It would seem that a suitable name for this Parkway as recommended would be the Appalachian Parkway and we would so recommend.

As to the undertaking of construction, it is recommended that this be undertaken in three general areas;

(1) The section from the south boundry of the Shenandoah to the James river.

(2) The section from near Adney Gap (just south of Roanoke) to Lowing Rock, North Carolina (near Grandfather Mountain)

(3) The loop around the eastern portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the section from this loop northward through Tennessee toward the Cold Spring Mountain.

Drawings showing the right of way needed to be required for the first section of nine miles in Virginia from the south boundry of the Shenandoah National Park to Rock Fish Gap, are now complete and can be certified to the State Highway Commission for acquisition of rights of way.

Signed

George L. Radcliffe,
Special Advisor to the
Secretary of Interior and
Chairman of Coordinating
Committee.

Thomas H. Macdonald
Chief of the Bureau of Public
Roads,

Arno B. Cammerer
Director National Park
Service;

When the time limit was just about up, North Carolina ended its summation. Secretary Ickes, watch in hand, thanked the two Governors and said to them that as soon as feasible he would communicate to them his decision. Our group returned to their homes conscious that their case had been ably presented, that the unity of the state had been wonderfully demonstrated, but also deeply concerned that a new official barrier had been raised against them—the Secretary's committee decision. It was no light matter, heads of federal departments usually are guided in their decisions by the recommendations of their own committees.

Up to this point, this narrative has dealt largely with those activities and movements, a major portion of which were given publicity, and these our Tennessee opponents could see and counteract as deemed most strategic to them. It is doubtful if they altered their plans, as all along, one could detect a bit of smugness, if not confidence that they all but had the Parkway "in the bag". The slim crowd that had at the hearing was an evidence of their assurance. And we, on our part, knew very well, too well, that there was more substance to our expectation than we liked to admit. The bases of that sureness had been referred to previously in the discussion of the opposition we faced from the beginning. And we were in the dark as to any

additional elements of strength they had engendered in "behind the scenes" maneuvers.

But we did have an ace in our hand that had ^{not} been played - an ace we felt confident Tennessee could not top. This ace was a very "hush, hush" move. No more than half a dozen individuals were in on the secret. Even at this late date I doubt if more than that number of North Carolinians are aware of it. This record would not be complete without the disclosure.

While we were awaiting in that mid summer of 1934 for Secretary Ickes to set a date for the final hearing, Mr Frank Milller and Mr Charles Ray, both of Waynesville, came to my office, and after pledging me to absolute secrecy (I was already the custodian of many other secrets in the Parkway strategy, so readily assented to another) they told me that Mr Josephus Daniels, U.S. Minister to Mexico was spending his vacation at his summer home at Lake Junaluska, and that they had talked to him, and found him intensely interested in the controversy over the Parkway, and eager for North Carolina to win. He was not only a native of the state but a part time resident in Western North Carolina, so directly concerned with the routing of this federal project. They said Mr Daniels had told them he would do anything he could to assist, but that the way things were going, he felt all was being done that could be done unless the situation changed. They told me that Mr Browning was in on the secret, as he was an old time friend of Mr Daniels in Raleigh. At this point it might be well to record that Mr Daniels was Secretary of the Navy in the Woodrow Wilson administration, and that Franklin D. Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary to Mr Daniels. The friendship born in that

relationship had even grown closer, evidenced in Roosevelt's appointment of Mr Daniels to the important post in Mexico City.

But Mr Daniels had told Messers Miller and Ray that he was reluctant to discuss the Parkway with the President-and those who knew the character of the Tar Heel statesman, could well understand this hesitancy. Mr Daniels was also very close to Secretary Ickes, but here too, he had the same reluctance to use friendship as a lever.

This seems a proper place to recite an incident, many facets of which have never been revealed, but which was a contribution to our Parkway campaign. It must be kept in mind that that campaign was a mosaic, composed of numerous seemingly unrelated parts, but they were valuable factors in the overall strategy. Mrs Harold Inckes was a well known student of Indian affairs. She desired to visit the Cherokee nation, bordering on the Great Smokies. Mr Ickes asked his friend, Josephus Daniels, to facilitate her journey through North Carolina. He asked if Mr and Mrs Daniels would not accompany her. This was some time prior to the critical stage of the Parkway battle.

Mr Daniels suggested to us, the Chamber of Commerce, that it would be a nice thing for Asheville to show her special attention. It was put up to me to make the arrangements. It so happened her visit coincided with our annual Rhodendron Festival. Everybody was rushed, and many of us burdened with Festival responsibilities that consumed all our time. But this opportunity to please Mrs Ickes, and of course her husband, could not be muffed. I arranged a dinner in Mrs Ickes' honor at the Grove Park Inn. The President of the Chamber of Commerce and members of the Board of Directors, the Mayor, the City Manager, the Chairman of the County Commissioners, the Presidents

Of the civic clubs, members of the Smokies Park Commission and several others, with their wives, were our guests. I had urged upon each one the importance of this gathering, and they all responded. You may be sure Mr Daniels was given a list of the guests and their position in the community, which list was later handed Mrs Ickes. Mr Arno Cammerer, Director of the National Parks, was in the party as Mrs Ickes' guide through the Park. The menu left nothing to be desired. Our local participants did nothing more than extend a cordial welcome to Mrs Ickes and her party. Mr Daniels was very gracious in his remarks and introduced Mrs Ickes. We knew Mrs Ickes was always happy to discuss her favorite subject, the Indians, so we had arranged for all the time she wanted. After dinner our guests were driven to the very colorful coronation ceremonies of the King and Queen of Rhododendron, occupying choice seats. Mr Daniels told me afterward how very pleased Mrs Ickes was at the reception given her. We hoped her husband would be pleased too.

Now to go back a bit in time, or rather to the main subject. While awaiting the hearing in Washington, mention has been made of our various activities during those days. We checked to find something more to add to our campaign. The most important unaccomplished idea was the promised aid of Mr Daniels. I kept asking our Waynesville campaigners to get a specific date for Mr Daniels to go to Washington. They reported he was still hesitant. How to get him to move was our big problem. It was the more ticklish as ethics and expediency were apparently waging a conflict in the conscience and in the mind of this famous North Carolinian.

President Green and I held conferences almost daily about our situation. One Sunday morning I telephoned him suggesting we have a conference with Mr Charles Webb, inform him of the Daniels problem, and see if he could suggest a method of persuasion. Mr Webb was available and suggested Mr Green and I bring our wives to his home in West Ashville that same afternoon, and while we discussed the Parkway, the ladies could visit. We did so. At that conference we brought Mr Webb up to the minute on all aspects of the campaign with emphasis on the desirability of Mr Daniels talking with the President and Mr. Ickes prior to the hearing in Washington. I knew Mr Browning was in our area over the week end and suspected he was, or would be, at Juniluska. As neither Mr Green nor I had talked the Parkway matter over with Mr Daniels, it was decided we should proceed that very afternoon to Juniluska, and bring the matter of his going to Washington to a head. In brief we were to convince Mr Daniels that if he meant what he said about wishing to aid in getting the Parkway, there must be no further delay-that he must lay aside his delicacy in using his personal influence, and see the President and the Secretary at the earliest possible moment. No sitting on the fence-but action.

So in Mr Green's auto, with our wives, we drove to Waynesville, through a driving rain. We might have regarded it as an ill omen. We ate supper at a restaurant, then picked up Mr Miller at his home and drove to Juniluska, to the Daniels' cottage. It was no surprise to find Mr Browning on the porch talking with Mr Daniels. We lost no time in getting down to the object of our visit. We impressed

upon Mr Daniels the grave danger of delay, and I am sure gave him a clearer picture of the Time factor than he had had. Still he hesitated to use his close friendship with both Roosevelt and Ickes to approach them on such a matter-and there was no doubting the absolute sincerity of his reticence. Indeed our own consciences had to be stifled in urging a man to lay aside his lofty and sincere ideals of propriety and the niceties of friendship, and perform an act to aid his state in its rugged battle for a great project. It was no easy task to out argue him. But we were four against one. And we were sincere and desperate.

After three hours of parley, Mr Daniels, reluctantly, said he would wire Secretary Ickes for an appointment, and asked if I would take the telegram and file it that night in Asheville. He took from his pocket a letter, and we sat in silence as he scribbled on the back of the envelope. He read it to us and it asked Secretary Ickes for a conference, on a very important matter, at the earliest possible date. He looked at his watch and remarked that probably the telegraph office would be closed. I thought so too, but said I thought it would be open until midnight, and that we might make it. I wanted that telegram, fearing that if Mr Daniels slept over the matter, he might change his mind in the morning. He then promised us positively he would either wire or phone the Secretary next morning, and assured us he would not change his mind. We all bade him good night and went our way, ending not only a most dramatic episode in our great battle, but one I still regard as the ace card in the all-around splendid hand we North Carolinians had played.

Of itself, the conferences Mr Daniels had that next week with the President and with Mr Ickes-and at other times-would not

have brought the Parkway through this section. A project of such great magnitude does not hinge on one single man's desire. But imposed upon, and combined with, all that had been done from the very inception of the idea-including every detail, every organized effort, every individual endeavor, the campaign in its entirety-this personal appeal of Mr Daniels was an ace card, in winning the Parkway for Western North Carolina.

When Mr Ickes fixed the date for his hearing for Sept. 18 some of our leaders thought it would be a good idea if Mr Daniels would consent to be one of the speakers for our side. Some of us disagreed, knowing secretly that he had already talked with both the President and Secretary Ickes. However I was asked to wire Mr Daniels, in Mexico City, where he had returned, to get his opinion on the matter. His letter in reply is filed with this manuscript. In this letter he writes; "I have had several talks with Secretary Ickes, and a long talk with the President and have been in touch with Mr Ickes ever since I returned from the United States. I have put before him every argument possible, and I have found him very receptive and quite friendly. Before the 18th, I shall again get in touch with him. I believe this is more effective than for me to fly to Washington, and advertise that I am seeking to bring influence to bear upon him. I shall be the most disappointed man that ever lived if he does not grant our request after our conversations". Personally I thought his answer would be no, and I think he was absolutely sound in his position. But I could not, and did not, disclose the contents of his letter, simply reported he declined to join our presentation at the hearing. Two other letters attached hereto, from Mr Daniels, show how splendidly he carried out

his promise made at that crucial conference on the porch of his Juniliska cottage.

Secretary Ickes made public his decision on Nov. 12, 1934. It was in the form of long letters to Governor Ehringhaus and to Governor Mc Allister, both identical. He declared the evidence so overwhelming it would be unfair to North Carolina to select the Tennessee route. He visioned, eventually, a federal scenic Parkway from New Hampshire to Stone Mountain, Ga., and declared the North Carolina scenery should not be eliminated from such a route. He stressed particularly the economic factors involved, which of course we had emphasized in our arguments. The fact that Tennessee already had an entrance to the Great Smoky National Park to funnel travel from the western section of the nation and to give that state the entrance for eastern travel also, he said would be unjust. "I can see nothing equatable or fair in such a proposition," was his wording. In fact every point we had stressed in our campaign was sustained by Mr Ickes.

Congressman George A. Shuford obtained for me a copy of this letter together with the National Park Service press release, which in itself is interesting reading, especially between the lines. There was no copy of this historic decision in Asheville. A document which meant so much to the economic future of Western North Carolina, assuredly deserves to be available, and to be a part of any detailed account of the battle which produced it. Therefore it is appended along with some other pertinent documents.

There was jubilation throughout the state when Mr Ickes' decision was made known. State newspapers gave high praise for the

manner in which the campaign was conducted, and told what the Parkway would mean to the economy of the state. Robert Latham who had been closely identified with the campaign all the way, had this to say in the Asheville Citizen, "No other one project, as The Citizen has said repeatedly, has ever meant so much to the community. There was no other conceivable project by which the mountain counties could be given the opportunity to share generously in the nation's recoveryxxxWe do not believe that in the whole history of the mountain counties there has ever been any matter before the people which excited so eager an interest, or regarding which the people were so much a unit".

A victory dinner was held at the George Vanderbilt hotel a few days after the decision was announced, and it drew a large and enthusiastic crowd of Asheville leaders. All local and state individuals, who had played a conspicuous part in the campaign, were lauded, mentioned by name. The Asheville Chamber of Commerce, which had headed the forces in our area, its President, Manager, and the Chairman of its Parkway committee, were praised by every speaker, as was also done through resolutions adopted by most of the civic clubs of this city. Everybody thought the long battle was at an end, but not so.

Tennessee's chief spokesman, Senator McKeller, would not accept defeat. He criticized Secretary Ickes bitterly, and hurried to Washington to see President Roosevelt, and demanded he over rule the Secretary because he had decided contrary to the Presidential directive, and had thrown out the recommendation of his own special committee, appointed to select a route. Our Washington delegation acted promptly, there was no reversal. That was the end of that.

We now thought every obstacle in routing the Parkway had been overcome. We were mistaken. The route from Soco Gap, through the Cherokee Indian Reservation was still to be determined. When Chairman Dunlap and Mr Browning began negotiations with the Indians, they encountered a demand, supported by the Tribal Council, that the route be run through or near the town of Cherokee, instead of along the high ridge into the Park, connecting with the highway from Cherokee somewhere near Smokemont. One member of the tribal Council owned some land along or near the old wagon road from Soco to Cherokee, and he wanted to build a motel and profit from the travel. All sorts of false rumors had been circulated among the Indians. The State Highway department was accused of trying to rob the Indians. It was the old, old story of the white man's injustice to the red men. The leader of the opposition was keen and clever. His wife was smart, and she aided him.

This knotty situation caused us many headaches. Mr Browning and I several times worked out what we thought would be solutions, only to see them checkmated. The fact that we were dealing with wards of the federal government presented complications. Reasoning was ineffective against ancient hatreds. Pressures that might have been used against our own race, were not tenable under the circumstances. Our final conclusion was that the only way out was to overwhelm the opposition with an exorbitant offer of cash for the land needed for the right of way. This would enrich the Tribal treasury-no individual would profit. Mr Dunlap balked at this. Practically all the land along this ridge was next to worthless-there was about 12 miles of it in length. The state had offered a figure over generous-more than that Mr Dunlap declared was a gouge.

We were in another vise-equity and economy one prong, dangling bait for cupidity, on the other. Chief Jerre Blythe of the Indian Council had favored accepting the state's offer, knowing it was more than fair. He had been out voted.

A conference between Mr Browning, Chief Blythe and Mr Clyde M. Blair, Superintendent of the Reservation, was arranged. Mr Blair had been very helpful all along in trying to get an agreement that was just to both parties. At this conference he proposed a figure considerably above any amount previously mentioned. He knew the sum would be excessive, but he hoped it might be the key to unlock the vise—should the state accept. He suggested \$40,000.00. Mr Browning did not bat an eye. Chief Blythe nearly fainted. Mr Browning merely said he would present the matter to the highway Commission, if the Indian Council would pass a resolution naming that figure and agreeing to deed the land should the state accept. The Council did. The state reluctantly agreed. So the last hurdle in determining the Parkway route was cleared.

Mr Browning in his continuing work of obtaining rights of way did encounter difficulties here and there. In fact, as this is being written, there are disputes still unsettled. Also there have been seemingly unnecessary delays in construction. All of these incidents however have been mere skirmishes and amounted to little more than irritations. The main engagements are now a matter of history.

In this narrative I have made critical comments regarding the National Park Service, despite the fact that several of the top officials were warm personal friends of mine. But what I have written, I knew whereof I spoke. It took some time for the Service

to accomodate itself to the fact that the Ickes' decision was final, and that it also served the nation best. There may still be disagreement as to that last assertion. However, from my position on the side lines, during the 17 years since my retirement, with only an occasional briefing of behind the scene activity, it seems to me there has developed a climate of cooperation with the communities along the Parkway. The various Chambers of Commerce, and the organization they united to form to publicize and promote travel along the popular route, have found willing helpers in these federal officials. There have been some disagreements and arguments about rules and regulations, about locations and rights of way, about services that should or should not be federally supervised and established, but these differences could be expected. The Superintendent of the Parkway, Sam Weems and his associates - above and below - have seemed to me eager cooperators and devoted builders, as proud of this wonderful scenic boulevard as any North Carolinian partisan.

The main story of this narrative has been told. There are however certain phases germane to this interesting project that merit exploration. One that must arouse curiosity is, who first suggested a federal Parkway to join these two Southern National Parks? In this recording, mention has been made of the first "suggestions" publically presented. But that does not necessarily mean that the individual offering the suggestion was the real father of the idea. In several places I have said Mr Theodore Straus made the first suggestion - in an address in Richmond (or so it seemed) and later at a gathering in the Governor's mansion in Richmond. Authority for the first was a press service release; for the second, a quotation

from a National Park Service release telling of the Sept. 1933 meeting.

On this subject ,in his extensive scrap book on Parkway activities,Mr Straus mentions that the idea of such a prōject was first mentioned in a conference in the Washington office of Mr Thomas H.Macdonald,Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads-when Chairman Radcliffe and Mr Straus of District #10 PWA were discussing various possible work projects.Just which one of the three men first suggested a connecting highway is not clear.Was it a flash inspiration,or was it a warmed over idea that had been previously born in someone's brain?Leaving that question unanswered,I think this the proper place for me to say that,whether or not Mr Straus originated the idea or not,it was he who gave the idea its first publicity,and with unflagging zeal kept the idea alive and moving until it became a reality.There is certainly a lot of fatherhood wrapped up in that.

A somewhat different picture of the Parkway's inception is found in this official memorandum from the Nationa Park Service, delving a trifle into its historical background.Quote:

"The Blue Ridge Parkway was born in the depression days of 1933.Work projects were being developed all over the country and in this section construction of the Skyline Drive had started. The Skyline Drive captivated the imagination of several prominent men ,including George Radcliffe,PWA Director and later Senator from Maryland;Senator Byrd of Virginia,Theodore E.Straus,Arno Cammerer,Director of National Park Service;Thomas H.Macdonald, Commissioner of Roads;and there was a general agreement that

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construction of a scenic road should continue to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Secretary of Interior Ickes gave the green light to this idea by earmarking \$16,000,000 of PWA funds for this job, under the authority of N.I.R. Act of June 16, 1933. Early in 1934 the government had survey parties in the field and location was being determined and agreements with the states worked out for the right of way. The first actual construction started in Sept. 1935. Public Law No. 848 approved June, 30, 1936 provided for the administration and maintenance of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and since that date funds for this area have been included in the regular appropriation bills."

Not an individual pin pointed, but a group clutching a hovering thought, and pinning it to earth.

Now enters another shining Knight into the lists of this Tournament of Originators-the venerable and revered Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia. In a speech at the National Citizens Planning Conference on Parks and Open Spaces for the American People, held in Washington D.C. May 22-25, 1955, he says he at least made the suggestion first to President Roosevelt. Here is a quotation from that speech: Quote:

"In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt came to the Shenandoah National Park to dedicate the first CCC camp. I was driving along with him on part of the Skyline Drive, and pointed out to him a road that had been built by Mr Hoover to his camp. And I suggested to the President that it would be a very fine idea to connect up the Great Smoky National Park with the Shenandoah, on top of the Blue Ridge, by a Skyline Drive. Mr Roosevelt was always responsive to the suggestion to spend money, so he said, 'Harry, that is a

fine idea, but we ought to start up in New England.' That was a good idea on his part, too, but I found out later that when he made overtures to the New England people, and the Governors for the Drive to start up there, provided they would furnish the right of way, they did not respond. But then he said to me, 'You and Secretary Ickes (who was along that day) get the right of way and I will assign some of this money, that has been given me to spend (I think it was some two or three billion dollars at that time) to start the construction of the Skyline Drive.' So Secretary Ickes appointed me Chairman of the committee to secure the right of way. It had to be gotten in three states - Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. So we got the right of way - a thousand feet in width I think, was required, and the states paid for the land."

To add to the confusion, there recently appeared a news item, purporting to give the genesis of the Parkway, crediting President Roosevelt with being the father of the idea. And now if you will read Secretary Ickes' decision of Nov. 12, 1934, giving North Carolina the route, you will find he gives considerable space to what he terms "an understanding", or deal, between the states of North Carolina and Tennessee - which, by the way, we in Asheville never heard of prior to the Secretary's comment. But this quote from that decision is pertinent to the discussion of the Parkway's conception: "My own recollection", he says, "is that representatives of the states of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee came to me, as Administrator of Public Works, to propose this scenic highway." He might of course ^{have} been referring to the proposal of District #10 which included these three states.

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There may be other claimants to the fatherhood of this Parkway-those cited are all that have come to my attention. I do not question the sincerity or the honesty of any one of them. I have presented the data without passing judgement. All of the men mentioned did loom large in the project from its very inception. All hail to them, each one. The Blue Ridge Parkway is of sufficient magnitude to diffuse glory-plenty of it- upon every single individual who participated in its becoming a reality.