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established a college at Fayetteville, Tennessee and named it in Bryson's honor. It was closed in 1929 because the church could not afford to support two colleges (the other was Erskine) during the depression. However, "A large group of Bryson alumni and friends come to the Fayetteville A.R. Presbyterian Church each June for a reunion — no school left — but they have each other and what a marvelous spirit they have," according to a participant.¹¹

Henry Bryson probably prepared a clean copy of his journal to present to his presbytery, but neither his original notes nor such a copy can be found. The present text is that of a copy made some years ago by Mrs. Pressley Fife of Fayetteville, Tennessee. She worked from what she described as a "very bad copy on onion skin."¹² There are many obvious errors in this version. Some, like "Laurensville" for Lawrenceville, Georgia are made consistently and were probably mistakes by the author. Others may have been the work of copyists somewhere along the line. For example, the "Judge Morton" and the "Martin" of December 18 and 19 are obviously the same person. At some points, however, it is not clear whether the text is correct or not. The "Mr. George McGill" of December 10 may or may not be the same person as the "Mr. George McDill" of three days later. To avoid making further errors in the name of correction, the spelling of Mrs. Fife's copy has been retained here. Definite and probable corrections appear in the text in brackets the first time an error appears, and in the footnotes.

TRAVELS OF HENRY BRYSON

Decb. 1826

Monday morning Dec. [4] 1826

On this morning about half past eight o'clock, I left Mother's in company with brother Wm. We traveled on to Pucket's Ferry on the Saluda River, 8 miles, and there we met with our brother in law, George Nickels. We three went

¹¹Letter from Mrs. Pressley Fife of Fayetteville, Tenn., Jan. 30, 1979. I am indebted to Mrs. Fife for the use of her text of Bryson's journal as well as for other information.

¹²*Ibid.*

on together to the Rev. John T. Pressly's [Bryson's theological tutor] that night and stayed with him. The day was somewhat disagreeable. It rained on us from near Ligon store to the river, then some little afterwards. The weather was cold and the wind blew piercing. I rode in the gig most of the day. Expenses were nothing.

Tuesday morning. 9 o'clock. After breckfast [*sic*], here brother leaves us. He takes the road . . . on our journey for Georgia. From the Rev. J.T. Pressly's we went on to the ferry on little river, I crossed free. From there to Barksdale's ferry on Savannah River,¹³ crossed there also free. We rode from there to Washington, Wilks [Wilkes] County, Georgia that night, we arrived there about 7 o'clock at night. Put up at Alexander's tavern, after supper, George and myself went up street to the Presbyterian Meeting-house, where we heard the Rev. Mr. [Alexander H.] Webster¹⁴ preach. After service we returned to the tavern, and shortly afterwards, some person having let Mr. Webster know that there was a preacher of the presbyterian order here, he immediately called at the tavern to see me, and invited me home with him all night. Treated here very . . . ndly, early the next morning I arose and went up to the tavern and eat breckfast and started. The day was clear and pleasant. I was charged \$1.50 Nickels, \$1.75 cents. There was a revival of religion commencing here.

3. Wednesday morning we left this in company with a Mr. Smith from E. Tennessee, a Merchant, who had been at Augusta to purchase goods for to supply his store. We went through Lexinging [Lexington], a handsome little town, and proceeded on that day to a Mr. John Mayne's, four miles from Athens. Here we were very hospitably received. Had a considerably long conversation on religion. The people was of the Methodist persuasion. I was not charged anything for my night's lodging. This day was dark, foggy, cold and somewhat missty [*sic*] all

¹³"Barksdale's Fer." shows on a period map, near Goshen, Ga. The road Bryson probably followed ran from the ferry to Goshen and on to Washington. H. S. Tanner, "Georgia and Alabama" from *American Atlas* (Philadelphia, 1823; reprint ed., Atlanta, n.d.).

¹⁴Webster (d. 1827), formerly "a tutor in the college at Athens," came to Washington in 1823 and was also "Rector of the Academy" there. The church building was apparently completed in 1826. Eliza A. Bowen, *The Story of Wilkes County Georgia*, ed. Louise Frederick Hays (Marietta, Ga., 1950), 159-162.

day we never saw the sun during the day. We rode about 40 miles.

4. Thursday morning we went through Athens, a town of considerable size, situated on the [North Fork of the Oconee] River. Two miles beyond this we separated with Mr. Smith of Tennessee. He took the right and we the left hand towards Laurensville [Lawrenceville] in Guinette [Gwinnett] county. Passed by Pentecosts, jugtavern [now Winder], into the hog mountain road¹⁵ and a way into Alen Coleman's 1½ miles below B's Mill on the Alcovy River. Stayed allnight here for nothing. This was another very dark missty and cloudy day, we never saw the sun until near night. We traveled near 57 miles. The land nothing but poor hills and nobs, desolate looking places.

5. Friday morning. left C's at sunrise, went in by Elijah Foster's, we spoke and then went on to Mr. Morrow's on Yellow River, took breckfast and had our horses fed, charge nothing. 4 miles from here to Laurensville. We went on to Laurensville, a very flourishing little Town, here enquired for John Mills, the Blacksmyth, found him, and after a short conversation, George Nickels and I parted. We went on to find Andrew Hunter in the lower edge of Guinette, and I stopped and took dinner at the Tavern with J. Mills. After dinner, he rode out with me to Stewarts, the Silver Smiths 2 miles from town. Stopped here a short time. Then went on to Mr. Joseph Coney's 4 miles farther on Yellow Riber [sic]. The place where I was sent by order of presbytery. Here stayed all night. The day was clear and pleasant.

6th. Saturday morning. Stayed at Mr. Coney's until evening, and then went to his Son's, J.C.'s and preached that night. And notwithstanding the night was cold and the warning short, there was a considerable number assembled. I stayed at young Jos. Coney's.

7. Sabbath. This day preached to a large and respectable assemblage. The people appeared to pay good attention to sermon.

¹⁵The Hog Mountain Road "is coincident with present Georgia Highway 53, running from Winder to Watkinsville." It apparently extended to Hog Mountain near Buford in Gwinnett County. Kenneth K. Krakow, *Georgia Place-Names* (Macon, Ga., 1975), 110.

I went this night to Mr. John Weed's, about one mile from Mr. C's.

8. Monday. This morning I took my leave of these people and went on to Mr. Stewart's, the silver smith's, and took dinner and had my horse fed. I then went on to Laurensville and preached by candle light in the academy, the house was crowded with hearers and we had good order. In the village there are a male and female teacher, a Mr. [John S.] Wilson,¹⁶ a presbyterian clergiman [*sic*], and a Miss Farrow are the proprietors.

Presbyterianism flourishes considerably here. The greatest number, and also the most intelligent and respectable citizens are professors of one church or other. There are also a great number of Methodists and some Baptists.

9. Tuesday. After breckfast, expenses nothing, I went down to Covington county seat in Newton. Put up with a Baptist clergyman, Mr. Hand, Thomas J. Hand. Preached in the court-house, there was not a very great collection. There is an academy here taught by the Rev. Mr. Hand. There are a great number of professors but mostly of the Methodist order. My expenses were nothing here. Mrs. Hand's maiden name was Arrington, formerly an attendant on Mr. Loury's ministry near Louisville.

10th. Wednesday. I left Covington going a west direction, crossed Yellow River at Briant's bridge 3 miles from C. and there to the snapping sholes on South River [Snapping Shoals, east of McDonough] 7 miles to Mr. George McGill's. These sholes is the end of navigation. I stayed at Mr. McGill's this night and next day till 3 o'clock. The people here are indeed a very kind people.

The land here is tollerable good, and is selling from two o 5 dollars an acre. On this river at these sholes there is a

¹⁶The Reverend Dr. John S. Wilson" came to Lawrenceville in 1824 and "took charge of the Lawrenceville Academy in 1826 and was its rector or superintendent for twelve years." He was pastor of Fairview Presbyterian Church and later of Goshen Church. James C. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County Georgia*. (2 vols. Hapeville, Ga., 1943 and 1956), 1, 69.

great trap fishery for catching shad.

11. Thursday. I came up this evening to Mr. Russel's Tavern in McDonough County seat of Henry, enquired for Doctor Stokes, but he had gone out of town and was not to be in until the next day. The people of the tavern were generally peaceable, but great polliticians [*sic*], and argued to late at night on the sublect [*sic*]. The land up from the snapping sholes to McDonough is indeed but poor. This town is flourishing fast, a splendid court house is near about finished.

12. Friday. I stayed at the tavern until after breakfast, then was conducted by Mr. Russel over to Stokes's boarding house but he was not at home, and I stayed there until about 12 o'clock at which time he came home. I took dinner and supper here with Stokes' and after night preached to a very small number of people. I stayed all night with Dr. Stokes. Paid nothing for my dinner and supper at Stokes' boarding house, not at the Russel's tavern.

13. Saturday. This morning I saw Mercer Babb. I started before breckfast and came down to Mr. George McDill's, preached to but a small collection of people. The place of preaching was a small distance from McDill's gate at a stand.

14. Sabbath. This day was clear and nice. A vas [*sic*] con-course of people assembled. I preached two sermons to them. the [*sic*] behaved really well, went after dinner to James Gastons one mile off.

15. Monday. It rained near all night, and after breckfast this morning, then broke off. The good people gave me nine dollars and a quarter for my labours among them. Thomas McDill, and James Gaston came with me about 15 miles. Came through a very poor part of the country part of the way, a very rich one the other. Came on by where Wm. Rodgers lives. and the Hollingsworths. The country about them is very hilly not so very rich, but from them up to near Decator [*sic*], is really good. I came on to Decator the distance of about 42 miles. There found Doc. Calhoun the first man. Put up at William's tavern, eat supper, and C. and myself went up to Mr. Lemmon's,

a member of Mr. [A.] Kirkpatrick's¹⁷ church. I preached to a house crowded full and the doors also full. The people behaved well. After sermon I returned to Mr. Lemmon's, stayed all night. Saw James Stokes. Charged nothing for either my horse or self.

16. Tuesday. I left Decatur in company with a young man, a mechanic, formerly from Virginia, he came with me 10 miles. I this day came through a vast tract of good country on to the Chattahoochee. Traveled a north and northeast direction all day. Crossed the Chattahoochy [*sic*] into the Cherokee Nation at Rodger's ferry and stayed with him all night. He was a good old Methodist and charged me nothing for a nights lodging and breckfast next morning. This, his ferry and dwelling, are about 13 miles from Laurensville, Guinette County.¹⁸

17. Wednesday. This is a fair and clear day. I took a new blazed way from this into the Alabama road one mile and a half of Blackburns on the old federal road, and after going along the Alabama road 1/2 mile, took a little road and crossed the Hightower River and went in the Tennessee road,¹⁹ about

¹⁷"A Kirkpatrick" was received in Hopewell Presbytery (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) in Georgia from South Carolina Presbytery in 1826, and dismissed to South Carolina in 1829. James Stacy, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia* (Elberton, Ga., n.d.), 332.

¹⁸A Cherokee (or, more likely, part Cherokee) family named Rogers, kinsmen of the humorist Will Rogers, lived and operated a ferry on the Chattahoochee where Rogers' Bridge is now. According to Goff, the home and ferry were in Forsyth County, but a U.S. Geological Survey map (Duluth Quadrangle) shows the bridge south of the Forsyth line, crossing the river between Gwinnett and Fulton Counties just north of Duluth. John H. Goff, *Placenames of Georgia*, ed. Francis Lee Utley and Marion R. Hemperley (Athens, Ga., 1975), 458.

¹⁹A number of routes were called "the Alabama Road." Two "Federal Roads" ran to the west. This must have been the one which ran from "the present Hall-Jackson County line northwestward across the Cherokee country toward Knoxville and Nashville." *Ibid.*, 393. There is a Hightower Creek in Forsyth County, but the name is a corruption of Etowah, so this could have been the river of that name of which Hightower Creek is a tributary. Krakow, *Georgia Place-Name*, 108. An "important Cherokee route known as the Tennessee Road or Sally Hughes Trail," the latter name derived from that of "a ferry on the Etowah which was maintained by a Cherokee woman named Sally Hughes," could have taken Bryson to Tennessee. More likely, however, he followed the "Old Federal Road" (a name common to a number of roads; this one was also called the "Cherokee Federal Road of 1805") which ran from Flowery Branch, Ga. across the Cherokee lands to Tennessee. One branch led past Vann's home and Taylors, a stage stop, both of which Bryson mentioned, to Missionary Ridge and beyond. Both roads are discussed and the latter is mapped in Goff, *Placenames*, 251-252, 254n., 349-360.