

Rugged Beauty, Hearty Souls

By Cain Pence

Union man, Mountain man, Mothman
Loyal to country, earth and clan
Fox, bear, deer, tick
Huckleberry, hillbilly, blueberry, hick

Back roads, country roads, no roads
Stories shared, music played, tales told
Rugged beauty, hearty souls
Wild and wonderful, cool and coal

Raging rapids, coonskin hat, local pride
Second Amendment, Bible belt, teenage bride
Harpers Ferry, Civil War, Football, Old blacksmith forge
Charleston, Morgantown, Wheeling, New River Gorge

Lovers walk in daylight
Lincoln walks at midnight
Rivers run in moonlight
Creeks run with moonshine

Old farmer plays his fiddle
Nature's harsh beauty, eternal riddle
Coal miner widow, Baptist preacher
Union wages, backwoods teacher

History and county
Dirt and bounty
Mountaineers always live free,
Free Mountaineers never leave

Every American should spend a little time
Every visitor mouth may be moved to rhyme
When one visits the land of Appalachia and new birth
Called the West Virginia earth

Cain Pence is a writer based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mr. Pence is a graduate of Georgetown University. In his 20's Mr. Pence travelled extensively throughout all 50 states. He was always impressed by the rugged beauty and hearty souls he found in West Virginia. This is the first time Mr. Pence has shared this poem. He can be reached at caino@cainpence.com.