

Culgee Watson, the Hermit on Ginger Cake Mountain

By Jeannette Holland Austin



Ginger Cake Mountain derives its name from a singular pile of rocks which occupy its extreme summit. The pile is composed of two masses of rock of different materials and form, and they are arranged as if to stand upon a small base. The lower section is composed of rough slate stone, and is in the form of an inverted pyramid, while the upper section is of solid granite which surmounts the lower section in a horizontal position. The rock display offers the viewer the appearance of a masterful work of art.

One has the sense of teetering off into space. The mountain was named by Culgee Watson, a hermit who resided at the foot of the mountain in about 1800 and died in 1816. He lived inside of a small cabin and was considered to be eccentric, yet friendly. Whenever a party of ladies visited him, he treated them politely, without speaking to them.

Once, after the ladies had left, he had so disliked the visit that he tore down his fence and used it for firewood. Source: Letters from the Alleghany Mountains by Charles Lanman (1849). ...more articles

