

2-15-2019

## The Climb from Salt Lick: A Memoir of Appalachia

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### Recommended Citation

Dunn, Melanie (2019) "The Climb from Salt Lick: A Memoir of Appalachia," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 66 : Iss. 4 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol66/iss4/12>

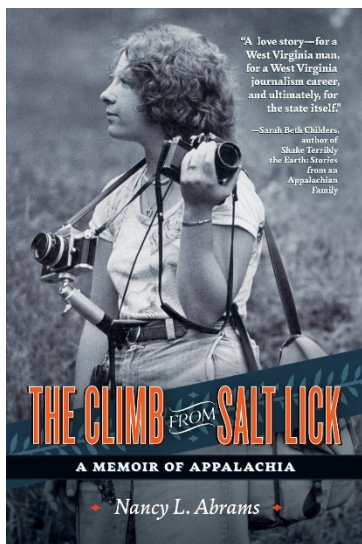
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attitudes of plantation owners. Stubbs proposes through his research and theories that in time they began to recognize the importance of paternalism toward their slaves (bondpeople). Stubbs shows that this paternalism eventually led plantation owners and farmers to seek different types of overseers or managers for their land.

I recommend this book for academic libraries, public libraries and faculty who conduct research or teach the history of slavery. The contents 1-163, Notes 165-212, Bibliography 213-226, Primary Sources 213-215, Index 227-234. Few illustrations, black and white, buried in text.

*Carol Walker Jordan*  
Librarian and Consultant

**The Climb from Salt Lick: A Memoir of Appalachia.** Nancy Abrams. Morgantown: Vandalia Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-946684-18-9 (Pbk.). ISBN 978-1-946684-19-6 (ePub). ISBN 978-1-946684-20-2 (PDF). \$26.99. 276 p.



In her memoir *The Climb from Salt Lick: a Memoir of Appalachia*, Nancy Abrams affectionately recounts her years in West Virginia, where entranced by the beauty of West Virginia and its people, she comes into her own both personally and professionally. Relating the beauty of the stark mountains and genuine friendliness she encountered as an outsider, she pays homage to the Appalachian culture that influenced and inspired her.

Abrams candidly chronicles her personal journey, from a young woman fresh out of college in her first professional position as managing editor of the Preston News in Terra Alta, WV. After a junior year internship at the paper, she's lured back to the mountains following graduation from the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Independent, and a bit of a self-described hippie raised by liberal Jewish parents in rural Missouri, she enthusiastically embraces her new life, settling quickly into the area. After renting a cabin in Salt Lick and adapting to a simpler lifestyle, she learns to

make her own fun - hiking, kayaking down the Cheat River and taking advantage of the endless snow to toboggan.

Responsible for all aspects of publication of The Preston News, one of Abram's greatest pleasures comes from interacting with the community, photographing regional events and developing stories. From snapping the Buckwheat Festival queen and junior deputies for the Good Neighbors Day parade, to covering contentious school consolidation politics and profiling the impact of coal on the region, she involves herself in all aspects of the town.

Cementing her ties to the place, she falls in love with and marries a mountain boy. Love of place, though, does not always ensure contentment and despite the satisfying job, disappointments begin to accumulate. Her small salary for a growing family of two boys, a husband who is functionally illiterate and often inebriated, and a new boss at the Preston News who relentlessly applies pressure, all combine to convince her to make changes.

When the Dominion Post in Morgantown WV, advertises for a photographer, Abrams jumps at the opportunity and later graduates to editing the newspaper's Sunday magazine Panorama. Estrangement from her husband and a realization that she can no longer depend on him for support, leads her to leave him and settle in Morgantown.

While the memoir poignantly recounts Abram's personal history, it is the stories she covers that especially resonate with the reader. Her reporting on the fiftieth anniversary celebration of Arthurdale - a utopian experiment by Eleanor Roosevelt that created a new community for the poorest of Americans who lived in Scott's Run - makes the reader grasp the lasting impact of Roosevelt's New Deal policies in Appalachia. Her coverage of the Great Flood of 1985 that washed away roads, bridges, houses, schools and churches captures the historic damage that devastated close to thirty counties in West Virginia.

Selected photographs from Abram's years in West Virginia are included and provide visual context for the people, places and events she describes. An exhibit of her photographs is currently on display at the Rare Nest gallery in Chicago.

Recommended for public and academic libraries.

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