



**One of the greatest of all Southern Appalachian mountain anglers!**

***Stream Blazer***

**"Uncle Mark" Cathey**

**1871-1944**

**Deep Creek – BrysonCity, North Carolina**



## Dance of the Dry Fly

Sam Hunnicut's friend Mark Cathey was the first great dry-fly legend in his area, a wizard of the bamboo rod who modestly remarked "I've been accused of being the best fisherman in the Smokies." Mark sometimes guided anglers who visited the famous Hazel Creek Club, which flourished in the Great Smokies from the mid-twenties up until their land became part of the National Park. Mark always fished in his "overhauls," did not care much for fancy equipment even though he owned a fine Abbie and Imbrie bamboo. He was not particular about fly choice though he preferred a size 10 or 12 Gray Hackle Yellow. Most memorable was his style according to Jim Gasque who said, "He held out his rod and tossed the fly into the pocket. The instant it touched, he had it turning from one side to the other, dancing across the pocket like a struggling fly trying to rise from the surface. Now and then it would rise an inch or two from the surface, only to fall back with more skitter and dance. The fly gave a perfect impression of an insect desperately trying to take off but never being able, seemingly, to do so." When Cathey died, just as the private fishing lands like Hazel Creek came under National Park laws, his tombstone in Bryson City was graven with...

**"Caught by the Gospel hook, just before the season closed for good."**

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