

## You Are Kelly Bennett

You are Kelly Edmond Bennett, citizen of Bryson City, Swain County, the Great Smokies, the state of North Carolina, the United States of North America.

You are a pharmacist, the son of a pharmacist, the father of a pharmacist. You were licensed the year China was made a Republic and the year the *Titanic* was wrecked, and the same year became active in the affairs of your state Pharmaceutical Association. For five years you were a member of your state's Pharmacy Board. The North Carolina Hospital Board of Control has reaped the harvest of your constructive labors for seven years.

Your fifty years of devotion to pharmacy have been an epitome of the manner in which you have served your fellowmen. Your crowded life of service includes fourteen years as Mayor of your city, and four years as an alderman. You were president of the Bryson City Chamber of Commerce for three terms and are one of the founders and a trustee of the Cherokee Historical Association. You serve God and man as an elder in your church.

You widened your scope as Chairman of the North Carolina Parks, Parkway and Forest Development Commission. You used twelve years as Chairman of U. S. Bond Sales. You are a past president of your city's Rotary Club and you belong to numerous other state and national societies. Believing always in education, you gave twenty years to the School Board.

You represented your neighbors and the people of your state in their Senate for three terms and two special sessions and they have been proud to choose you to again represent them in the coming session of the General Assembly. They feel they are in a good heart and in good hands.

You have ever been an ardent woodsman, nurturing the beautiful flora and magnificent grandeur of your native hills. You fathom the depths of feeling when you chant "*Levabo oculos meos in mon-*

*tes*" as reverently as a penitent evoking a benison. Your Bible is dog-eared at the 121st Psalm.

When the prejudice of effete-ness, the indifference of bureaucracy and the ignorance of the aliens have threatened the existence of your people amid the beauties of their own natural heritage, you have risen like Jason and brought back the Golden Fleece—and a thousand Medeas have aided you without recourse to the mutilation of ideals. By so doing you have made America aware of the natural beauties of your corner of the world.

It has been said of you in this wreath of words, "For half a century he has fought to bring modern America to the mountain people—and the peace and beauty of the mountains to modern America." This you have done in a manner befitting the dignity of the mountains and your absorption of the unswerving constancy so typical of the mountains.

Although in the mid-sixties, you are still on the upgrade. Your fifty years of devotion and service to an honorable profession in the health services weaves a diadem that is bound more snugly by the accolade your fellows in the profession honor you with. They have named you "Pharmacist of the Year" in your state and have presented you with an actual symbol of the profession, a mortar and pestle that has been in service for half a century. This symbol's first duty of comminution might well have been simultaneous with your baptism in the pungent, spicy smells of a Bryson City drug store, circa 1905.

This honor has not been lightly bestowed. Nor is it ephemeral or transient in its significance. You join the illustrious galaxy of the unforgettable O'Hanlon, Eubanks, Suttle, Daniel, Andrews, and Hood. Your place among them is secure.

Your fellows in the profession from across the state were happy in joining

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with your fellow townsmen and your family, even to the fourth generation, who honored you on September 28th.

Your pastor invoked the blessing of the Divine Being on the occasion. Your Chamber of Commerce president made your contemporaries welcome. Your staunch friend, S. W. Black, revealed more of you than you thought was known to any man. W. A. Ward gave an account of your achievements that caused wonder how you crowded so much into one life. You were a reminiscent listener as R. C. Sisk, reared within the shadow of your drug store, painted word pictures of the then and now with deft strokes of memory.

You basked in the nostalgic atmosphere of Don Womack's music as you allayed your nervousness by a touch of hands with your wife. You reveled in the glance of pride and the utter adoration caught in the smile beamed to you by your daughter, Mary Alice Greyer, one of the state's first women pharmacists. You foresaw in one clairvoyant moment a lengthening line of tradition as daughters, grandchildren, kith and kin, and friends intercepted your sweeping glance. You were graciously amenable to the repetitive infringements of television cameras as the proceedings were recorded by an almost insatiable director.

You were humble, yet proud and stately, as you received the symbol and the honor presented by W. L. West, president of the North Carolina Pharmaceutical Association, capably and dutifully acting for the organization of which you are a vital part.

And if nineteen million emotions made your face a wrestling mat, and caused your voice to quiver in the hushed silence of your acceptance, you were entitled to the overwhelming moment when natural involuntary reflexes transplant the heart to an abnormal location in the throat.

You will wear this honor well. You have earned it by your remarkable achieve-

ments in community endeavor and your unstinted devotion to the profession you so admirably grace by belonging to it.

You remember a maxim taught you by your father that many a man has been undone by a surcease of effort at the moment of his triumph and you will not halt your efforts in good works as time goes on.

You are Kelly Bennett. You never give up.

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