Happy Hills of Song: Mountains in the Lyrics of Obscure Dalton, Georgia Poet Robert Loveman

Session 6.01 Literature

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Presentation #1 Abstract or Summary

This presentation will introduce a largely forgotten poet, Robert Loveman, who lived 1864-1923, and who grew up in the small city where I now live, Dalton, Georgia. Dalton is fifteen minutes south of Chattanooga. Although I am a poet myself and an Associate Professor of English at Dalton State College, I have only just come to learn of Loveman's work. My paper will explore the idea of mountains in selected poems. On examining Loveman’s A Book of Verses, published in 1900, I noticed a powerful fusion of nature and spirit. In his poem “Riches,” he writes of the “heaven-kissing hills.” Furthermore, he titles one of his poems, “The Heart of God in Nature,” and opens it with gusto: “I bear no ill to any hill,/I’m brother to the trees,/My mind doth melt to mountains. . . . ” Although Loveman’s writing is by no means limited to Appalachia, many of his poems undeniably reveal his Appalachian roots. My research will include consulting the Crown Gardens and Archives (Dalton) and William Stanley Hoole’s It’s Raining Violets: The Life and Poetry of Robert Loveman.

At-A-Glance Bio- Presenter #1

Marsha Mathews is a poet and an Associate Professor of English at Dalton State College. Her most recent chapbook, Hallelujah Voices (Aldrich Press), presents the voices of an Appalachian church congregation as they experience pivotal moments on their life journeys.