

Emma Bell Miles Tour – Walden’s Ridge/Signal Mountain

- Meet: parking lot at **the Walden Town Hall**, 1836 Taft Highway

[There are two of Miles’ paintings on view at the Town Hall].

- Turn left on Taft Highway
- Turn left on Anderson Pike, go by **The Bachman-McCoy Property** and **the Bell Gate** on the right

[In June 1892, Miles’ mother, Martha Ann Mirick Bell, bought 2.46 acres and had a frame house built here. Miles lived in this house through her teens, until she left for St. Louis in 1899, and then again after she married in 1901. Her twin daughters, Jean and Judith, were born here in September 1902. Before they were a year old, Miles’ father turned the family out, disregarding her mother’s will].

- Turn left on East Brow, the site of the former **Dance Pavilion** is on the right, then immediately down to the right is **the W Road**

[It is said that Miles met her husband Frank when he was driving the public hack on this road. Miles used to walk down Anderson Pike to get the mail at the Albion View post office and groceries at the store at the Top of the road. After she attended a dance at the pavilion in August 1914, Miles wrote at length in her journal about the reasons for the run-down appearance of young mountain mothers].

- Continue on East Brow, go around the curve and turn left on the gravel road (no sign)
- Continue to **the Little Brown Church** (Union Chapel)

[Miles gave poetry readings here, her husband Frank sometimes played his guitar, and the children collected donations].

- Turn right at the Chapel. Cross Lake Avenue onto Ivory, turn left at the triangle, across Lake, still on Ivory
- Turn left on Glenway, go through **the Mabbit Springs** area
- Turn left on Wilson (**the Hatfield Property** is in the direction to the right)

[When her father turned them out of the Bell house in 1903, Miles, her husband Frank, and their infant twins spent the summer in two tents set up in the yard of Frank’s sister Laura and her husband Ab Hatfield. They stayed there again, in a shack that Frank built, in the summer-fall of 1907/winter 1908].

- Continue past **the Key House (Topside)**

[Sarah Key Patten was one of Miles’ benefactors and customers].

- Turn right at the 4 way stop
- Bear left on Fairmount Pike, Turn left on Taft Highway
- Turn Right on **Timesville/Smokey Row**

[Miles’ in-laws lived here, she stayed with them after her first hospitalization at Pine Breeze in March 1915, her husband Frank made her a bed in a sunny spot on the back porch].

- Note the Lines Orchids building to the right (the **Oakwood School** used to be here)

[Miles' mother, Martha Ann Bell, taught here. "The Log Church School" essay in *The Spirit of the Mountains* is partially based on Miles' experience as her mother's assistant. Miles and her family stayed in a house that they called Number 4 and that was near the school early summer 1906-winter 1907].

- Turn left on **Bell**, go around the loop back to Taft Highway

[When Miles returned from St. Louis in the summer of 1901, her father built her a log cabin somewhere near here to sketch and paint in].

- Turn a sharp right on James Blvd.
- Continue on past the **Hedges House** to the right and then the Signal Mountain Library to the left

[Miles and her family lived here for about a year before going to Miami, Florida, in November 1909, and again after their return to the mountain in the summer of 1910].

- Turn right to continue on James.
- Turn right on Louisiana
- Turn left on Ohio
- Turn right into **Alexian Inn** (former Signal Mountain Inn)

[The Bird Lovers Club that Miles directed met here in the late winter and spring of 1916].

- Turn right on Signal Point Road, continue to **Signal Point**

[Miles came to paint here often].

- Turn right on James (trolley tracks), continue past the trolley stop
- Turn right on Mississippi, go past **Hollywood Station**, now the Signal Mtn Dump, to the right

[Miles and her family lived in a shack here January-August 1916].

- Continue straight on Mississippi to the light
- Go straight on to Palisades (across Taft Highway)
- Turn right to **Shoal Creek**

[Miles liked to come here to have a picnic, sketch, lie on the rocks, observe the birds, or just to be by herself].

- Turn left on 127, back to Chattanooga

Sources: Grace Toney Edwards, "Emma Bell Miles: Appalachian Author, Artist, and Interpreter of Folk Culture" (Dissertation, U of Virginia, 1981); Kay Baker Gaston, *Emma Bell Miles* (Walden's Ridge Historical Association, 1985); Emma Bell Miles, "Journal" (U of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Lupton Library Special Collections, transcribed by Steven Cox).