

Cy Lyle's Normal Plea for Johnson City

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Attorneys S. C. Williams, H. H. Carr, Editor Cy H. Lyle, George F. Campbell, James A. Summers and others from Johnson City are in town to appear before the education board today in the interest of their city as the site for the East Tennessee Normal. The people of that section feel confident that their offer will be accepted as they think that their proposition is superior to any other and their site incomparable. These gentlemen represent a county which deserves the favor of the administration, other things being equal.

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In the beginning when God finished the universe He rested from His labors in East Tennessee, and found that he had an immense amount of mineral wealth left over after giving all portions of the world their quota. This He piled up around Johnson City and covered it with earth that the sluggard might "root hog or die." With lavish hand He fringed the mounds with the giant timber and the clinging and creeping verdure that have called forth the admiration of the world. Standing upon the highest of these peaks God looked over his handiwork, smiled at its rugged beauty and completeness, and stepped easily into heaven. At long intervals natives of this section have gone to heaven, but many more have gone to Texas. This is the only authentic statement as to why this is called a God-favored section. It has been correctly stated that from the giant peaks you can tickle the feet of the angels, but a practical demonstration could not be made for the state board of education because the members had overlooked the essential feature of bringing their angels with them.

It was through Johnson City that the buffaloes traveled en route to their doom, and ever since then people who have not located here have been doomed to disappointment. Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett left their visiting cards close to Johnson City away back when it was necessary to carve them upon trees. The Seviers, Shelbys, Doaks, Jacksons, Brownlows, and a long line of illustrious names have made Washington County famous because of their achievements as warriors and statesmen, and the history of Washington County alone, formerly the State of Franklin would repay one to take a year's course in the normal to learn.

Johnson City is 1,628 feet above the sea and the school may be located upon hills 1,700 feet high or higher if desired. From these points the students can see from the Blue Ridge on the east to the Big Sandy on the west, and early risers can see the gray mists of the morning bound from peak to peak like a toy balloon at a circus. There is more inspiration, determination, aspiration, and perspiration imbibed and required in climbing these hills than can be found at any other point in the state.

Why shouldn't the normal be located in Johnson City? It is the most rapidly growing town in the south and property acquired will continually enhance in value as the years

roll into history. It is here that Uncle Sam spent nearly \$3,000,000 building the Mountain Branch of the National Soldiers Home and is maintaining it as it becomes one who has been faithfully served by the crippled remnants of a disappearing army. Thousands of visitors come here annually to see this home and all are amply repaid for their trip of any length. This national park with its miles of flower bordered drives and cement walks is a revelation, and is always open to the public. Johnson City's railroads reach in the most direct manner all parts of the contiguous section and make it the ideal location from the point of accessibility.

Johnson City is located in a fine farming section and the cost of living is therefore reduced to a minimum. The climate can't be equaled in the state, the temperature seldom reaches zero in the winter or 90 in the summer, and those points are just touched for a moment as if the mercury were ashamed to linger there. Our healthfulness is such that our doctors are forced to carry side lines in order to make both ends meet, and an epidemic is unknown since the county physician has been placed on a salary basis.

These are only a few of the spiritual reasons why Johnson City should be chosen. Nature has been so lavish with her gifts to this section that it has left nothing to be desired but the state normal and that has been left for a human agency to locate, or it too, would have been here long ago.

There are many material reasons equally as compelling why Johnson City should not be overlooked, chief among which may be mentioned: **One hundred and fifty thousand dollars will be given, one-half by the County of Washington, one-half by Johnson City; sufficient land will be provided without cost for a site wherever shall be selected, a pure and ample water supply and electric lights will be furnished free, the city will pave a street to the reservation and cause sidewalks to be laid, the electric car line will be extended to give it the best service possible, and everything else done that may be desired by the state board of education.** Johnson City is in the center of a section filled with sturdy descendants of pioneer ancestors, the finest material from which teachers can be made. It remains for you, gentlemen of the board, to give the only thing necessary for their welfare.

Cy H. Lyle, Publisher of the *Johnson City Comet*