



All Along the Mountain
Blue Ridge Mountains, Western North Carolina
Photo by Dan Hardison

Forest Wonder

Dan Hardison

All along the Appalachians
the mighty Chestnut stood
towering above all others,
as wide as a man is tall.

With a canopy of blossoms
like snow in springtime
and a nut that was prized
by wildlife and man.

From fences to tannin,
from furniture to cabins,
this forest wonder
was valued by all.

But like an unseen fire
a disease from afar
would soon imperil
this American treasure.

From the North to the South
the destruction was spread
until a ghostly forest
was all that was left.

Many years have passed
since the Chestnut reigned
with only bleak reminders
of this once great tree.

But there are those
who remain hopeful
for the day when the Chestnut
returns to these mountains.