

# Appalachian Dictionary

Grammy was born in Appalachia. The Appalachian vocabulary is very colorful. While this isn't a comprehensive list, you may find several of these colorful sayings sprinkled through the book.

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|--------------------|
| 'bout = about      |
| 'Cause = because   |
| 'Cept = except     |
| 'em = Them         |
| 'er = her          |
| 'ere = here        |
| 'fraid = afraid    |
| 'im = him          |
| 'Magine = imagine  |
| 'Mater = tomato    |
| 'maters = tomatoes |
| 'Nother = another  |
| 'Nough = enough    |
| 'Spect = expect    |

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| <i>'Splain = explain</i>  |
| <i>S'posed = supposed</i>   |
| <i>'Tater = potato</i>  |
| <i>A' = of</i>  |
| <i>A'course = of course</i>   |
| <i>Acrost = across</i>  |
| <i>Acrost the waters = from overseas</i>  |
| <i>Afeared = afraid</i>   |
| <i>A'fore = before</i>  |
| <i>Aggin = against</i>  |
| <i>A'growin' = growing</i>  |
| <i>Aimin' = have been going to</i>  |
| <i>Ain't = is not</i>   |
| <i>Ain't got a dog in that fight = It's none of my business</i>                 |
| <i>Ain't no hill fer a climber = Not a big deal for someone with experience</i> |
| <i>Anxi'ty = anxiety also Jim Jams = Anxiety (Appalachian)</i>                  |
| <i>Any word with "g" on the end is abbreviated with an</i>                      |

## Appalachian Dictionary

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| <i>apostrophe at the end</i>   |
| <i>App-a-LATCH-un = Appalachian</i>  |
| <i>Appa-latch-uh = Appalachia</i>  |
| <i>As the twig is bent so shall the tree grow = The direction you point something/someone in is the direction it/they will go</i>                      |
| <i>Back in the day = years ago</i>   |
| <i>Bad off = very sick</i>   |
| <i>Bad turn = someone ill-tempered</i>   |
| <i>Barking up the wrong tree = you're wrong</i>  |
| <i>Bat = quick blink of the eye</i>  |
| <i>Be a-waitin' on 'em at the house = I'll be waiting for them at the house</i>  |
| <i>Beauty never made the kettle sing</i>   |
| <i>Bein' ugly = being hateful, rude, cross, cruel</i>  |
| <i>Beside Oneself = confused or worried</i>  |
| <i>Better git on = need to leave</i>   |
| <i>A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush = It's better to have the certainty of what you do have than the possibility of what you might have</i> |
| <i>Bite yer tongue = be quiet, don't say it</i>  |

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| <i>Black dark = night time</i>   |
| <i>Blackberry winter = time when there is cool weather at the same time as the blooming of wild blackberry shrubs in May</i> |
| <i>Bless yer pea-pickin' lil heart = you poor, unfortunate soul</i>  |
| <i>Blind house = windowless cabin</i>  |
| <i>Blinked milk = sour milk</i>  |
| <i>Bobble = mistake</i>  |
| <i>Britches = pants</i>  |
| <i>Brung up = raised, as in from childhood</i>   |
| <i>Bugger = frightful (wooly bugger = anyone who is frightful looking)</i>   |
| <i>Buggy = shopping cart</i>   |
| <i>Bumfuzzle = confused or puzzled</i>   |
| <i>C'mon = come on</i>   |
| <i>Cain't = Can't</i>  |
| <i>Cain't tell nobody nothin' that ain't ever been nowhere! = They think they know more than they do</i>                     |
| <i>Cain't think of nothin' right off = Can't think of anything at the moment</i>   |

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| <i>Cake a' soap = bar of soap</i>   |
| <i>Call on = to visit someone</i>   |
| <i>Care = will do something, don't mind to do something</i>               |
| <i>Carry on = to misbehave</i>  |
| <i>Catawampus = askew, awry</i>   |
| <i>Cause = because</i>  |
| <i>Cheer = chair</i>  |
| <i>Chewed up and spit out = feeling poorly</i>                            |
| <i>Chil'ens = children</i>  |
| <i>Chock Full = full to running over</i>                                  |
| <i>Clean fergot = I forgot</i>  |
| <i>Commode = toilet</i>   |
| <i>Conniption = a mad fit</i>   |
| <i>Could'na = could not</i>   |
| <i>Courtin' = dating</i>  |
| <i>Crayun = crayon</i>  |
| <i>Crick = creek</i>  |
| <i>Crooked as a dog's hind leg = a person who is crooked or deceitful</i> |

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| <i>Cut on the light = turn on the light</i>                        |
| <i>Cuttin' up = acting a fool</i>                                  |
| <i>D'ya = Do you</i>   |
| <i>Dab = cooking measurement – small amount</i>                    |
| <i>Dahlin' = darling</i>   |
| <i>Dawg = dog</i>  |
| <i>Did'na = did not</i>  |
| <i>Differ'nt = different</i>                                       |
| <i>Diggin' his own grave = messing up</i>                          |
| <i>Do what? = What did you just say?</i>                           |
| <i>Dodge = to avoid</i>  |
| <i>Don't go gittin' yer gussie up = don't get upset</i>            |
| <i>Done = finished</i>   |
| <i>Don't you blare yer eyes at me = don't give me a dirty look</i> |
| <i>Dope = soda water - coca-cola</i>                               |
| <i>Dorter = daughter</i>   |
| <i>Drawers = underwear</i>   |
| <i>Dreckly = directly</i>  |

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| <i>Druthers = things one would rather do over anything else</i>  |
| <i>Duns = bills</i>  |
| <i>Ears are burnin' = someone is saying bad things behind your back.</i>                                 |
| <i>Eat up = consumed. "I'm eat up with love."</i>  |
| <i>Eh law = Oh well</i>  |
| <i>Ever'body = everyone</i>  |
| <i>Ever'time = every time</i>  |
| <i>Ever'where = everywhere</i>   |
| <i>Ever'thin'll be fine, good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise = something should happen unless</i> |
| <i>Fair to midlin' = I'm okay</i>  |
| <i>Fair up = when rainy weather clears up</i>  |
| <i>Far = fire</i>  |
| <i>Farboard = fire place mantle</i>  |
| <i>Faster than a hot knife through butter – fast and easy</i>  |
| <i>Fatback = fatty meat from the back of a hog that is salt cured</i>                                    |
| <i>Favor = to resemble</i>   |

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| <i>Feisty = spunky, lively</i>                                  |
| <i>Fer = for</i>  |
| <i>Ferget = Forget</i>  |
| <i>Fetch = to get or bring</i>                                  |
| <i>Finer 'n frog hair = Things are going well.</i>              |
| <i>Fisticuff = a fist fight</i>                                 |
| <i>Fit = suitable, ready to use</i>                             |
| <i>Fit as a fiddle = fine</i>                                   |
| <i>Fit ta be tied = angry</i>                                   |
| <i>Fitified = frozen with fear</i>                              |
| <i>Fixin' = fixing to or a side dish</i>                        |
| <i>Flatter'n a flitter = something is pretty flat</i>           |
| <i>Fler = flour</i>   |
| <i>Flares = flowers (I chose to substitute flow'rs instead)</i> |
| <i>Foller = follow</i>  |
| <i>Foller = follow</i>  |
| <i>Follerin' = follow</i>                                       |
| <i>Foretole = foretold</i>                                      |
| <i>Fotch = fetch</i>  |

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| <i>Frail = old, feeble, sickly</i>                     |
| <i>Fret = to worry</i>                                 |
| <i>Friz = frozen</i>                                   |
| <i>Fuss at = to scold</i>                              |
| <i>Gall = nerve</i>                                    |
| <i>Galoot = an older man who acts like a fool</i>      |
| <i>Gander = look, stare</i>                            |
| <i>Garden sass = greens-tumip, mustard, lettuce</i>    |
| <i>Gamtee = guarantee</i>                              |
| <i>Father up = to assemble; to collect</i>             |
| <i>Gimme some sugar = Give me a kiss</i>               |
| <i>Gittin' = leaving</i>                               |
| <i>Gob = a large amount of something</i>               |
| <i>Gom = make a mess or stop up something</i>          |
| <i>Gonna = going to</i>                                |
| <i>Go on = talk at length</i>                          |
| <i>Good turn = someone with a pleasant personality</i> |
| <i>Got that straight = You are correct</i>             |
| <i>Gotta = Have to</i>                                 |

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| <i>Gotta = must or got to</i>   |
| <i>Grinnin' like a possum eatin' a sweet tater = someone who is a mite too pleased with themselves.</i> |
| <i>Hand = worker or hired hand</i>  |
| <i>Hanker = want or crave</i>   |
| <i>Hard feeling = animosity between people</i>  |
| <i>Harder'n a one-eyed man doin' push-ups = Doing something really hard- with all your strength.</i>    |
| <i>Haul off = to take action</i>  |
| <i>He 'bout skeered me outta my house shoes = he scared me.</i>   |
| <i>He ain't got no sense a-tall = He doesn't make any sense</i>   |
| <i>He ain't no count a-tall = of any account</i>  |
| <i>He gets my goose = irritated</i>   |
| <i>He's as crooked as a dog's hind leg = he's a thief</i>   |
| <i>He's as happy as if he had good sense = Happy and that's a good thing</i>                            |
| <i>He's crooked as a jay bird = a thief</i>   |
| <i>He's lower 'n a snake's belly in a wagon rut = bad character</i>                                     |
| <i>He's mad as a mule chewin' on bumblebees! = He's</i>   |

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| <i>really angry</i>   |
| <i>He's probably just laying off drunk somewheres = drunk and passed out</i>  |
| <i>Heap o' = a lot of</i>   |
| <i>Hear tell = to be informed or learn of</i>   |
| <i>Heared = heard</i>   |
| <i>Hep = help</i>   |
| <i>Hesh up = be quiet</i>   |
| <i>Hissy fit = tantrum</i>  |
| <i>Hold yer horses = wait</i>   |
| <i>Holler = valley</i>  |
| <i>A holler is a place where ya can let yer young'uns run loose cause ya know ya got plenty a time a'fore it gets dark.</i> |
| <i>Holp = help</i>  |
| <i>Hootenanny = a part with fold music and dancing</i>  |
| <i>Hotter 'n blue blazes = really hot</i>   |
| <i>Hunker = to work in a determined manner</i>  |
| <i>I better git on = I have to leave</i>  |
| <i>I don't chew my cabbage twice = I'm not going to</i>   |

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| <i>repeat myself</i>   |
| <i>I feel like I've been chewed up and spit out = Yelled at and criticized</i> |
| <i>I knowed = I knew</i>   |
| <i>I reckon = I guess</i>  |
| <i>I'm just loaferin' today = I'm just hanging out</i>                         |
| <i>Ideal = idea</i>  |
| <i>Iffen = if and</i>  |
| <i>Ill = hateful, angry, combative, always ill-tempered.</i>                   |
| <i>If I had my druthers = If I had my way</i>                                  |
| <i>Infare = wedding</i>  |
| <i>In a great while = a long period of time</i>                                |
| <i>In under = beneath, underneath or below</i>                                 |
| <i>Is all = that's all</i>   |
| <i>It's blowin' up a storm = really windy</i>                                  |
| <i>It's rainin' cats and dogs = it's raining hard</i>                          |
| <i>It's never to late to mend = It's never too late to forgive</i>             |
| <i>It's ver' airish = a little bit chilly outside</i>                          |
| <i>I've a mind to = of a particular inclination</i>                            |

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| <i>It doesn't amount to a hill of beans = something that has little of no value</i>                            |
| <i>Jack = bust, tear, steal</i>  |
| <i>Jasper = a bad person, a dishonest person</i>   |
| <i>Jaw = talk</i>  |
| <i>Jerk = pulled</i>   |
| <i>Jim jams = to be restless or feel anxiety; nervous</i>  |
| <i>Jes' = Just</i>   |
| <i>Jist = Just</i>   |
| <i>Job = poke</i>  |
| <i>Jump the broom = get married</i>  |
| <i>Jumped out of the fryin' pan an' into the fire = someone went from one bad situation right into another</i> |
| <i>Keer = care</i>   |
| <i>Kilt = past tense of killed</i>   |
| <i>Kin = family</i>  |
| <i>Kinda = kind of</i>   |
| <i>Kindly = kind of, somewhat, rather</i>  |
| <i>Knee-high to a grasshopper = someone or something</i>   |

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| <i>is short</i>   |
| <i>Knee-deep = a bull frog</i>  |
| <i>Knock a tater in the head = Let's go eat</i>                                       |
| <i>Knows'll = knows will</i>  |
| <i>Knowed = past tense of know</i>  |
| <i>Laid up = sick, hurt, bedridden</i>  |
| <i>Latch = lock, close</i>  |
| <i>Lay down = to give up or surrender</i>   |
| <i>Leastways = at least, at any rate</i>  |
| <i>Leave things in the floor = leave things on the floor</i>                          |
| <i>Lemme' = let me</i>  |
| <i>Lessen = unless</i>  |
| <i>Let on = pretend</i>   |
| <i>Lie down with dogs and you'll get up with fleas = bad pals will rub off on you</i> |
| <i>Like it or lump it = deal with it</i>  |
| <i>Lil' = little</i>  |
| <i>Lipping full = filled to capacity</i>  |
| <i>A little birdie tole me = Juicy gossip that you don't want to share who told</i>   |

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| <i>Lookie = look</i>   |
| <i>Lookie here = Look here</i>   |
| <i>Lookin' like the hind wheels o' destruction = You look terrible</i> |
| <i>Looks to me like = I agree</i>                                      |
| <i>Lotta = lot of</i>  |
| <i>Ma = my</i>   |
| <i>Makin' a mountain outta molehill = exaggerating</i>                 |
| <i>Mayhap = perhaps and maybe</i>                                      |
| <i>Meaner 'n a wet hen = making someone really mean or meaner.</i>     |
| <i>On the Mend = to improve in health</i>                              |
| <i>Mess = enough food for your family</i>                              |
| <i>Might could = it's a possibility</i>                                |
| <i>Mighty = very, especially, exceedingly</i>                          |
| <i>Mill over = to study or ponder</i>                                  |
| <i>Mind = to watch or attend</i>                                       |
| <i>Mite = little</i>   |
| <i>Mizzle = fine misty rain</i>  |
| <i>Mock = imitate</i>  |

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| <i>More'n = more than</i>  |
| <i>Mushmelon = cantaloupe</i>  |
| <i>N'er = never</i>  |
| <i>Nary = none, not one</i>  |
| <i>Naw = no</i>  |
| <i>Near about = nearly</i>   |
| <i>Never get yer horse in a place where ya cain't turn 'round = don't do something you'll regret later</i> |
| <i>Never mind = makes no difference</i>  |
| <i>No bigger 'n a minnow in a fishin' pond = not very important.</i>                                       |
| <i>No count = of little value</i>  |
| <i>No how = in any case</i>  |
| <i>Not shore = not sure or Shore = sure</i>  |
| <i>Notion = inclination</i>  |
| <i>Now that's the pot callin' the kettle black = don't criticize someone for something you do</i>          |
| <i>Now y'all don't be bad-mouthin' her = Don't talk about her in a mean way.</i>                           |
| <i>Of a mind to = to decide to do something</i>  |

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| <i>Offer = To try</i>  |
| <i>Offish = quiet, unfriendly, hard to get to know</i>                             |
| <i>Ole = familiar with somethin', an attachment.</i>                               |
| <i>Oh, my country alive = an expression of unbelief</i>                            |
| <i>Old as methusaleh's housecat = pretty old</i>                                   |
| <i>Oodlins = a large amount</i>  |
| <i>Omery = hard to deal with or get along with</i>                                 |
| <i>Outlander = a stranger; outsider</i>  |
| <i>Paper Poke = a bag to carry groceries</i>                                       |
| <i>Pick = to play a stringed instrument</i>  |
| <i>Pick'n' grin'n = A party with stringed instruments</i>                          |
| <i>Piddlin' = dawdling, wasting time doing something</i>                           |
| <i>Pig in a poke = not having all the information about what's about to happen</i> |
| <i>Pinch = small amount in cooking</i>   |
| <i>Pitch a fit = to become uncontrollably upset</i>                                |
| <i>Plumb foolish = stupid (Plumb added to a word = completely)</i>                 |
| <i>Plumb give out = exhausted</i>  |
| <i>Plumb tickled = pleased to hear</i>   |

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| <i>Plumb wore out = tired</i>  |
| <i>Point blank = exact; precise</i>  |
| <i>Pot callin' the kettle black = accusing someone of something you're guilty of</i> |
| <i>Pole cat = skunk</i>  |
| <i>Pray'r = prayer</i>   |
| <i>Prouda = proud</i>  |
| <i>Puny = sick or sickly feeling</i>   |
| <i>Quit piddlin' around and get ta work</i>  |
| <i>R'call = recall</i>   |
| <i>R'member = remember (In a command, you always say r'member)</i>                   |
| <i>Racket = a noisy fight, a sudden loud occurrence</i>                              |
| <i>Ragler = regular</i>  |
| <i>Rare up = to raise up</i>   |
| <i>Reach me a = hand me a</i>  |
| <i>Recollect = remember to do something</i>  |
| <i>Reckon = suppose</i>  |
| <i>Rem = ruin. Past tense: remt</i>  |
| <i>Resternt = restaurant</i>   |

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| <i>Right quick = quickly</i>   |
| <i>Right smart = pretty good amount</i>                              |
| <i>Righter'n rain = You did that correctly</i>                       |
| <i>Rightly = correctly</i>   |
| <i>Riled up = angry</i>  |
| <i>Ruckus = a commotion</i>  |
| <i>Ruination = total destruction</i>                                 |
| <i>Run together = spend time together</i>                            |
| <i>Salat = salad</i>   |
| <i>Ser'ous = serious</i>   |
| <i>Settin's cheaper'n standin' = sit down and rest yourself</i>      |
| <i>She's as pretty as a peach = she's pretty and sweet</i>           |
| <i>Shine = to like</i>   |
| <i>Shiny britches = dress pants</i>                                  |
| <i>Shivaree = a loud noisy celebration occurring after a wedding</i> |
| <i>Sight = a large amount</i>  |
| <i>Sigogglin = not built correctly, skewed or out of balance</i>     |

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| <i>Silly ole' me = I should have known better</i>   |
| <i>Sit with me a spell = sit with another typically for conversation</i>  |
| <i>Skedaddle = leave immediately</i>  |
| <i>Skeered = scared</i>   |
| <i>Skift = A dusting of snow</i>  |
| <i>Sleep tight, don't let the bed bug's bite = can lids filled with oil were placed under each bed post to discourage "bed bugs" – this was a hint that it was time to leave.</i> |
| <i>Slew = a large amount</i>  |
| <i>Slip off = ran away and got married</i>  |
| <i>Slower than a Sunday afternoon = slow</i>  |
| <i>Smack = to chew loudly on food</i>   |
| <i>Smidgen = small amount in cooking</i>  |
| <i>Sorry = worthless</i>  |
| <i>Stout = physical strong</i>  |
| <i>Stove up = hurt, arthritis</i>   |
| <i>Sweet milk = regular milk (as opposed to buttermilk)</i>   |
| <i>Sweet on = you like someone</i>  |

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| <i>Swipe off = to wipe off</i>   |
| <i>T'know = to know</i>  |
| <i>Ta = to</i>   |
| <i>Take after = to inherit qualities from someone</i>                                      |
| <i>Talkingest = talkative</i>  |
| <i>Tell a man what fer = tell him off</i>  |
| <i>Thar' = there</i>   |
| <i>Thar's a fox in the hen house = someone is somewhere they don't need to be</i>          |
| <i>That dog don't hunt = the story doesn't add up</i>                                      |
| <i>That possum's on the stump = that's as good as it gets</i>                              |
| <i>Thataway = that way</i>   |
| <i>Them polecats are from my neck of the woods =</i>                                       |
| <i>Thick = dense, numerous, plentiful</i>  |
| <i>Thick as fleas on a dog's back = Where there is a lot of something- such as a crowd</i> |
| <i>Til the cows come home</i>  |
| <i>Toboggan = snug wool cap- like a beanie</i>   |
| <i>Tole' = told</i>  |

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| <i>Too big fer his britches = conceited, self-important</i>  |
| <i>Tore up about it = upset</i>  |
| <i>Torn up = something is broken</i>   |
| <i>Tote it in the house = carry it in the house</i>  |
| <i>Upscuddle = A quarrel</i>   |
| <i>Ustocould = past tense of could</i>   |
| <i>Varmint = a wild animal</i>   |
| <i>Ver' = very</i>   |
| <i>Wanna = Want to</i>   |
| <i>Want'cha = want you</i>   |
| <i>Warsh = wash</i>  |
| <i>Warshed = washed</i>  |
| <i>Was you born in a bam? = shut the door or you don't have manners.</i>   |
| <i>Ways = a distance</i>   |
| <i>Worter = water</i>  |
| <i>We just live right 'round the bend = we live around the corner</i>  |
| <i>Weddin' without courtin' is like vittles without salt = salt seasons food just as courting prepares for and</i> |

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| <i>seasons a marriage.</i>  |
| <i>Well, I'll be = surprise or astonishment</i>   |
| <i>Well, it's six of one, half dozen of the other = no difference between two choices</i> |
| <i>Whaddya' = What do you.</i>  |
| <i>What can't be cured must be endured = Be patient and endure</i>                        |
| <i>Give someone what fer = Going to tell them just what you think</i>                     |
| <i>What's got yer bee in a bonnet = someone who is agitated about something</i>           |
| <i>Whatch'all = what are y'all</i>  |
| <i>Whatcha' = What are you</i>  |
| <i>Where thar's bees thar's honey = something attractive to a person or group</i>         |
| <i>Whoo-wee = astonished</i>  |
| <i>Whoo-wee doggee = astonished</i>   |
| <i>Whoop and a holler = a short distance</i>  |
| <i>Winder = window</i>  |
| <i>Windshaken = a crack or twisted grain in timber, produced by high wind</i>             |

Appalachian Dictionary

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| <i>Woulda = would have</i>   |
| <i>Ya = You</i>  |
| <i>Y'all = You all</i>   |
| <i>Y'all come back now, ya hear? = Come back soon</i>                                  |
| <i>Yassir = yes sir</i>  |
| <i>Yer = Your</i>  |
| <i>Yer not from 'round these parts are ya? = You're not from around here, are you?</i> |
| <i>Yer slower than molasses = slow</i>   |
| <i>Yonder = Over there</i>   |
| <i>You favor yer Momma = You look like your mom</i>                                    |
| <i>You'ns = You all</i>  |
| <i>You'ns ain't seen me in a coon's age = You haven't seen me in a long while</i>      |
| <i>Young'un(s) = One or Multiple young people</i>                                      |
| <i>Younger'n = younger than</i>  |

**Many thanks to:**

Backroads Living  
Blind Pig & the Acorn  
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Dancing on Mountaintops

These Storied Mountains – John Parris

Three Ladies and their Babies

And many more who lovingly share the beautiful Appalachian culture.

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