

# Effie Smith Ely: Forgotten Poet Untangling the Publications of Effie Smith Ely and Effie Waller Smith

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In 1909, a young woman from East Tennessee published her first collection of poems, *Rosemary and Pansies*. Although she continued to publish regularly for decades (into the 1960s), her identity as a writer has been nearly erased. In 1991, her work was conflated with and republished as the work of another Appalachian woman who had lived a mere 100 miles away.

## **A Tale of Two Effies**

Effie Smith Ely and Effie Waller Smith were born within months of each other in 1879 on the edge of the Appalachian Mountains—Effie Waller on January 6 and Effie Smith on September 10. Their lifespans parallel each other: Effie Waller [Smith] died in 1960 and Effie Smith [Ely] in 1968.

Both women wrote and published under the name Effie Smith in 1909, the year that *Rosemary and Pansies* was published. Up until 1908, Effie Waller [Smith] was only known as Effie Waller (her maiden name) and published as Effie Waller. Effie Smith [Ely], on the other hand, published poetry, short stories, and other writings as Effie Smith until 1921, when she married Joseph B. Ely and began to publish as Effie Smith Ely. Between 1908 and 1921, either woman could have published as Effie Smith.

This essay traces the outline of Effie Smith Ely's life and publications, focusing on her earlier writing. An Afterword charts both poets' lives and work, with parallel timelines and a brief commentary on their sharply different experiences as well as on ways in which they mirror and complement each other.

## **Effie Smith, Hawkins County, Tennessee, December 1909**

In 1909, when Effie Smith's first collection of poems was published by Gorham Press in Boston, she was living with her parents—most likely on her family's homeplace on the Holston River at McPheeter's Bend near her birthplace in Church Hill, Tennessee. A quiet woman, described by family members as

“retiring,”<sup>1</sup> Effie was thirty years old, a third-grade teacher, not yet married.<sup>2</sup> But she was also a poet who had been publishing in national magazines for years. *Rosemary and Pansies* gathered her poems, including “At the Grave of One Forgotten” (which had appeared in *Zion’s Herald* in July 1906),<sup>3</sup> “The Shepherd’s Vision” (*The Independent*, December 24, 1908),<sup>4</sup> and “Preparation,” originally published in *The Christian Advocate*, a New York-based weekly newsletter.<sup>5</sup>

*Zion’s Herald* in Boston published Effie’s poems frequently. Perhaps it was *Zion’s Herald* that brought Effie’s work to the attention of editor Richard C. Badger. Badger owned Gorham Press, a highly respected Boston publishing house of the early twentieth century. One of his imprints was “Representative Poets of To-Day.” From the early 1900s through at least the 1930s, Gorham Press also produced *Poet Lore*, which remains active and is the oldest continuously published journal in America.<sup>6</sup> Throughout his career, Badger was known for actively pursuing poets whose work he admired. Effie Smith became one of his authors in 1909, which was no small achievement given Gorham’s reputation.

I try to imagine Effie opening the box with the first copies of her book. Her parents, her twin sister, Ada, and her younger brother, Summers (who also lived at home), would have received the book with a particular kind of pride—and with gratitude—because Effie had dedicated the collection to her brother, Marvin. Marvin Smith’s sudden death in 1903 had drawn the tight-knit family even closer together.<sup>7</sup> Effie’s father, Frank, had been devastated by the death of his “brilliant schoolteacher” son at twenty-one.<sup>8</sup>

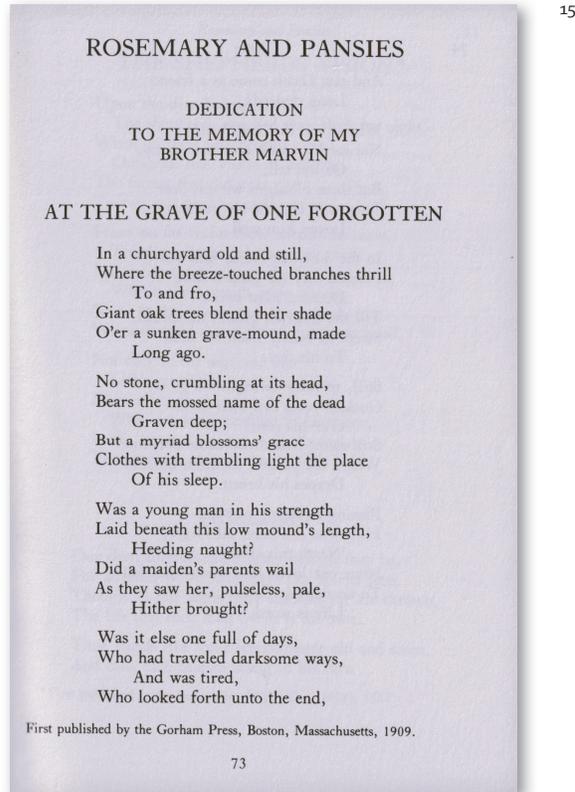
### Restoring Effie Smith Ely to Appalachian Literature

My narrative of that December day in Tennessee when Effie Smith opened the first box of her books has been pieced together bit by bit from publication data, census records, and genealogical research. I began to uncover Effie Ely’s story in 2015 when I first discovered that she was the true author of *Rosemary and Pansies*.<sup>9</sup> Nearly a decade later, it is clear that Effie Smith Ely’s life and writing should be part of Appalachian literary history, accessible to readers and scholars—but it is not.

Instead, a substantial portion of Effie Smith Ely’s poetry and fiction has been wrongly attributed to Effie Waller Smith for over thirty years. Since 1991, when Ely’s work was published as part of *The Collected Works of Effie Waller Smith*, her writings appear in web searches and in scholarly studies as Effie Waller Smith’s. Even the Library of Congress’ citation for her first book, *Rosemary and Pansies*, originally copyrighted to Effie Smith, has been amended and now erroneously appears with Effie Waller Smith as its author.<sup>10</sup>

An internet search for Effie Smith Ely yields very few hits, but one entry researchers might come upon will lead to “Forever—by Effie Smith Ely,” reprinted in 1997 in *Aspects*, a monthly devotional journal.<sup>11</sup> If one looks a bit longer, one might discover an entry for Effie Smith Ely on *Hymnary.org*, noting that Ely’s poem, “Forever” provides the words to a hymn still included in Methodist hymnals.<sup>12</sup> The accompanying biographical note reads: “Wife of a Methodist

minister, Rev. Joseph B. Ely, with whom she shared the work of rural parishes in the vicinity of Morristown, Tennessee. Born in Hawkins County, Tennessee; educated at Sullins College, Bristol, Tennessee; and in Peabody Normal College, Nashville.”<sup>13</sup> The poem, “Forever,” appears in *Rosemary and Pansies*, currently copyrighted to Effie Waller Smith.<sup>14</sup>



### Marvin Smith

Effie Smith dedicated her first collection of poetry, *Rosemary and Pansies*, to “My brother, Marvin.” The collection contains a poem, “My Brother,” subtitled: “1882 - 1903.”<sup>16</sup> No references to this brother appear in Effie Waller Smith’s first two books, and no census records, photographs, or other records of a Marvin Waller exist in Effie Waller Smith’s family history. Only in *Rosemary and Pansies*, copyrighted by E. Smith of Baileyton, Tennessee, in 1909, does Marvin appear.<sup>17</sup>

Who was the Effie Smith that lived in Baileyton, Tennessee? In 2015, I searched again and again for Effie Smiths in Tennessee using *Ancestry.com*, putting both “poet” and “Effie Smith” into the search. One of the hits returned a drawing of a woman in Victorian dress, seated at a desk and bent over her writing. With a shock I read the caption, “Effie Smith Ely was an author of Christian essays and poetry.” I’d found another Effie Smith who was a writer! Though this Effie’s last name was Ely, she had come up in a search for Effie Smiths.

Starting with a publicly shared family tree, I followed Effie Smith's genealogical trail. In the 1900 census record for Hawkins County, Tennessee, I discovered Benjamin and Ernestine McPheeter Smith, parents of four children: twin daughters, Ada and Effie, born in 1879, a son, Marvin (born 1882), and a son, Summers, born in 1886.<sup>18</sup> This Effie Smith had a brother named Marvin whose birth date matched the poem in *Rosemary and Pansies*, which she'd dedicated to him. I would come to learn how keenly the Smith family grieved Marvin's death. Not only did Effie dedicate her book of poems to him, but her twin sister, Ada Smith Kincheloe, named her son Marvin Smith Kincheloe (born in 1903) for their brother Marvin whose sudden death that same year had left the family reeling.

Marvin Kincheloe would prove to be a key part of my ongoing research. His memoir, *More Than I Can Say*, provides an intimate history of his mother Ada's (and her twin sister Effie's) family. Kincheloe confirmed Marvin Smith's death date and related how he came to be named for his late uncle: "My mother [Ada] was much attached to her brother Marvin. When he died November 24, 1903, she was ... in Texas. My name was ready when I arrived three weeks later, December 15."<sup>19</sup>

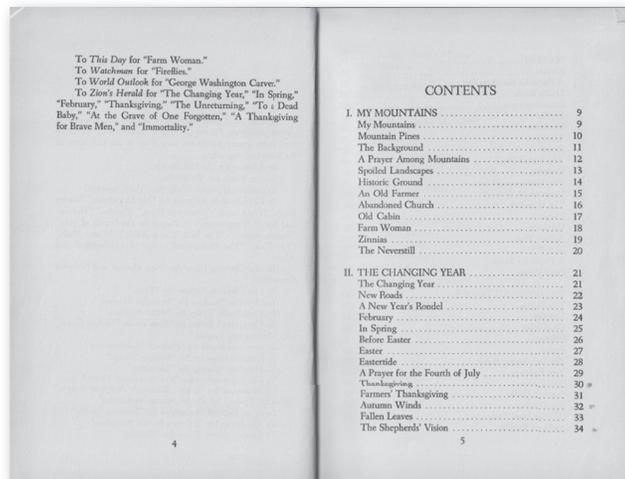
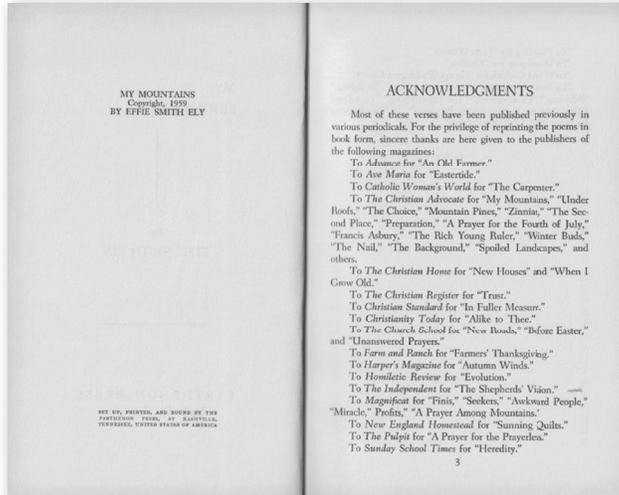
In his book, Marvin draws brief, vivid portraits of the family members who shaped him—especially his mother and his beloved Aunt Effie. He traces the influence of his father's mother, Elizabeth McPheeter Smith, a staunch Methodist, who loomed large in the lives of her descendants. Kincheloe relates that his great-grandmother "had a very strong influence" on Ada and Effie Smith, her twin granddaughters. In fact, he noted, "the afterglow of it lingered some into my day."<sup>20</sup> And it did: Marvin Smith Kincheloe was among a number of Elizabeth's descendants who became Methodist ministers. In fact, Effie's brother, Marvin Smith, had been named for a Methodist bishop, and Effie's father, Frank, "was a Methodist circuit-rider awhile, then a teacher, and a country squire on his portion of the ancestral farm that had been homesteaded by Samuel and Margaret Seawright McPheeters in 1780."<sup>21</sup>

Effie Smith Ely had no children to pass along her story, but she did have her nephew, Marvin, who was also a writer. And the two were close. Marvin Kincheloe's memoir affirms that Effie's love of the Appalachians of East Tennessee, "my mountains" (as she called them), anchored her life. He writes that, except for her education at Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee and a stint as a civil servant in Washington, DC during Woodrow Wilson's administration, Effie Smith Ely spent her life in the East Tennessee areas of Kingsport, Johnson City, and Bristol, living occasionally in southwestern Virginia.<sup>22</sup>

The home farm on McPheeter's Bend in Laurel Hill (later renamed Baileyton), Tennessee, where Effie Smith grew up, held deep sway over the family. It makes sense that Effie would honor her home by choosing Baileyton as the place of her book's copyright.

**Effie Smith Ely, author of *Rosemary and Pansies***

In 2018, I continued to research Effie Ely in the library at Emory and Henry University where I first found a reference to *My Mountains*, a collection of poetry Ely published in 1959.<sup>23</sup> I tracked down a copy and discovered that Effie Ely had reprinted fifteen poems from *Rosemary and Pansies* in *My Mountains*. In republishing her work, Effie Smith Ely reached back and reasserted her authorship of these poems.



On the Acknowledgments page, Ely listed the publications in which the reprinted poems had first appeared. Using these acknowledgments, I began to track down the original publications. It became clear that poems included in *Rosemary and Pansies* could not have been by Effie Waller. Not only had Effie Smith Ely reprinted them in her 1959 collection, but some of the poems (such as “At the Grave of One Forgotten,” published in 1906) could not have been published by Effie Waller Smith because she didn’t marry Charlie Smith until February 1908.<sup>24</sup>

<i>Poem Title</i>	<i>Rosemary and Pansies</i>	<i>My Mountains</i>	Original publication data traced from Effie Smith Ely's acknowledgments page in <i>My Mountains</i> .
	as included in <i>The Collected Works of Effie Waller Smith</i> , Oxford, 1991.	Effie Smith Ely (Parthenon Press, Nashville, TN, 1959).	
	Page number	Page number	
At the Grave of One Forgotten	73	65	<i>Zion's Herald</i> , Boston, vol. 84, no. 27 (Jul 4, 1906): 846.
The Shepherd's Vision	75	34	<i>The Independent</i> , New York, vol. 65, no. 3134 (Dec. 24, 1908): 1521.
Heredity	75	54	<i>The Independent</i> , 65 (24 Dec 1908). (This poem first appeared in <i>The Sunday School Times</i> .)
Preparation	78	56	<i>The Christian Advocate</i>
To a Dead Baby	82	76	<i>Zion's Herald</i> , Boston, vol. 83, no. 12, (Mar 22, 1905): 368.
Thanksgiving	82	30	<i>Zion's Herald</i>
Under Roofs	83	36	<i>The Christian Advocate</i>
Benefaction	87	55	
Historic Ground	87	14	
A Mountain Graveyard	88	74	
In Fuller Measure	95	75	<i>Christian Standard</i>
The Unreturning	97	77	<i>Zion's Herald</i> , Boston, vol. 86, no. 36 (Aug 26, 1908): 1104.
Fallen Leaves	99	33	
Trust	100	73	<i>The Christian Register</i> , vol 83, 1904.
Autumn Winds	104	32	<i>Harper's Magazine</i> , Sept. 1917. The citation on the <i>Harper's</i> archive has been amended to credit this poem to Effie Waller Smith.

### Effie Smith Ely, Marriage and Later Life

Effie Smith's poetry didn't bring her "fame and fortune" or whisk her away to the big city, but her writing did prove to be life-changing: one of her poems connected her with the love of her life.

Joseph B. Ely, a Methodist minister in Greenville, Tennessee, regularly read the Nashville *Christian Advocate*. A poet himself, he'd grown to look forward to poems by Effie Smith. Marvin Kincheloe relates that Effie's "poem on the cover of July 4, 1921, issue of Nashville *Christian Advocate* led him [Joseph] to write to her."<sup>25</sup> They soon met. Less than four months later, they were married on Thanksgiving Day, 1921. Effie was forty-two years old, and Joseph was forty.

Though they married late, they enjoyed “a most congenial union” (according to Effie’s nephew, Marvin) for forty-seven years, until her death.<sup>26</sup>

Effie Smith Ely led a circumscribed life. I believe that she chose this life, and that within its confines her poetry and her faith created spaces in which she lived fully. She continued to publish poetry, short stories, articles, and essays well into the 1960s. In 1936 and 1937, her poetry appeared in the *American Women Poets* anthology series.<sup>27</sup> As years passed, her work stayed in-demand in Methodist publications and was requested for use in church programming.

After her marriage, Effie immersed herself in her role as a preacher’s wife. Whatever youthful ambitions she had harbored when she was a young poet writing and publishing nationally in places like *Harper’s Magazine* and crafting collections such as *Rosemary and Pansies* must have gradually seemed less important in her middle years. In a short story entitled “The Minister’s Wife—Just for Him,” published in *The Homiletic Review* in 1932, Ely’s main character espouses the view that ministers’ wives owe their duty and energy not to themselves or their personal lives, not even to their husbands and the advancements of their husbands’ careers, but to the work of God in the form of ministering directly to the outcast, the sick, and those in need.<sup>28</sup> This description seems a fair characterization of Effie Ely’s values. Her long life was defined by her Methodist faith, her role as a preacher’s wife, and her vocation as a writer. She died in Morristown, Tennessee in August 1968, at the age 88, leaving Joseph Ely to grieve her loss until his death seven years later.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Conflation of Two Appalachian Women Poets and Their Work**

Preparation<sup>30</sup>

by Effie Smith Ely

“I have no time for those things now,” we say;  
“But in the future just a little way,  
No longer by this ceaseless toil oppressed,  
I shall have leisure then for thought and rest.  
When I the debts upon my land have paid,  
Or on foundations firm my business laid,  
I shall take time for discourse long and sweet  
With those beloved who round my hearthstone meet;  
I shall take time on mornings still and cool  
To seek the freshness dim of wood and pool,  
Where, calmed and hallowed by great Nature's peace,  
My life from its hot cares shall find release;  
I shall take time to think on destiny,  
Of what I was and am and yet shall be,

Till in the hush my soul may nearer prove  
 To that great Soul in whom we live and move.  
 All this I shall do sometime but not now—  
 The press of business cares will not allow.”  
 And thus our life glides on year after year;  
 The promised leisure never comes more near.  
 Perhaps the aim on which we placed our mind  
 Is high, and its attainment slow to find;  
 Or if we reach the mark that we have set,  
 We still would seek another, farther yet.  
 Thus all our youth, our strength, our time go past  
 Till death upon the threshold stands at last,  
 And back unto our Maker we must give  
 The life we spent preparing well to live.

—attributed to Effie Waller Smith  
 in *The Collected Works of Effie Waller Smith*<sup>31</sup>  
 See also, *The Academy of American Poets*<sup>32</sup>

In February 2015, as Effie Waller Smith was inducted into the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame, I first heard “Preparation” read from the podium to introduce Effie Waller Smith’s poetry to the assembled crowd. The poem stayed with me. By September 2015, after months of archival and genealogical research and weeks spent reading and thinking about Effie Waller Smith’s poetry, I had discovered that it was Effie Smith (later Ely) who had written “Preparation.” Yet, there was no way I could rescue the poem for her. Even citations I initially found crediting the poem to Effie Smith have gradually been amended to assert Effie Waller Smith as its author.

Effie Waller Smith’s silences compelled me to write about her. I wanted to know what had stopped her poetry. Stung by the loss of one poet’s voice, I came upon another woman whose authorship had been obscured. My passion for Effie Waller Smith led me to Effie Smith Ely—a poet hidden in plain sight, if one knew where to look. Nearly a decade after my discovery, her name has been erased from the works she published prior to 1921.

Effie Smith Ely’s writing has not been catalogued, much less analyzed. The work of restoring her authorship will likely take decades. I believe that this restoration will make way for Effie Waller Smith’s work and life to be explored in a truer context. Scholars and readers can celebrate her resilience, spirit, and literary accomplishments without the confusion of another voice—another poet’s works—being appended to her own. Our understanding of Effie Waller Smith can be deepened even as scholars assert Effie Smith Ely’s authorship of *Rosemary and Pansies* and a score of short stories, articles, and meditations.

**The Parallel Lives of Effie Smith Ely and Effie Waller Smith**

Effie Waller Smith, 1879–1960



Effie Smith Ely, 1879–1968



Effie Waller (later Smith)	Effie Smith (later Ely)
• Born 6 January 1879	• Born 10 September 1879
• Pike County, Kentucky	• Church Hill, Hawkins County, TN
• Daughter of former slaves	• Daughter of preacher turned farmer
• Among the first students at what became Kentucky State University	• Educated at Sullins College and Peabody Teachers College, Tennessee
• First book of poetry, 1904	• First book of poetry, 1909
• Married Charlie Smith, 1908	• Married Joseph B. Ely, 1921
• Second book of poetry, 1909	• Second book of poetry, 1959
• No confirmed publications after 1909	• Publications in anthologies of women poets in the 1930s and in religious newsletters, 1900s—1960s.
• Moved to Wisconsin, joined Metropolitan Church Association 1918	• Died, Morristown, Tennessee, 1968
• Died, Neenah, Wisconsin, 1960	• Third book, <i>Devout Poems</i> , 1969, published posthumously by Joseph Ely.

Born the same year, at the end of a century when women's opportunities were expanding, Effie Smith and Effie Waller read widely as young women. Both were born into families who valued education; each grew up familiar with classical literature. Both taught school at one time or another. Both wrote and published poetry beginning around the turn of the twentieth century. Both were devout Christians whose poems were steeped in matters of faith. Both were independent women, unmarried during their young adulthood, who held Progressive values. And both, oddly enough, had fathers named Frank.

The "Bachelor Girl"  
by Effie Waller Smith

She's no "old maid," she's not afraid  
To let you know she's her own "boss,"  
She's easy pleased, she's not diseased,  
She is not nervous, is not cross.

She's no desire whatever for  
Mrs. to precede her name,  
The blessedness of singleness  
She all her life will proudly claim.

She does not sit around and knit  
On baby caps and mittens,  
She does not play her time away  
With puggy dogs and kittens.

And if a mouse about the house  
She sees, she will not jump and scream;  
Of handsome beaux and billet doux  
The "bachelor girl" does never dream.

She does not puff and frizz and fluff  
Her hair, nor squeeze and pad her form.  
With painted face, affected grace,  
The "bachelor girl" ne'er seeks to charm.

She reads history, biography,  
Tales of adventure far and near,  
On sea or land, but poetry and  
Love stories rarely interest her.

She's lots of wit, and uses it,  
Of "horse sense," too, she has a store;  
The latest news she always knows,  
She scans the daily papers o'er.

Of politics and all the tricks  
 And schemes that politicians use,  
 She knows full well and she can tell  
 With eloquence of them her views.

An athlete that's hard to beat  
 The "bachelor girl" surely is,  
 When playing games she makes good aims  
 And always strictly minds her "biz."

Amid the hurry and the flurry  
 Of this life she goes alone,  
 No matter where you may see her  
 She seldom has a chaperon.

But when you meet her on the street  
 At night she has a "32,"  
 And she can shoot you, bet your boots,  
 When necessity demands her to.

Her heart is kind and you will find  
 Her often scattering sunshine bright  
 Among the poor, and she is sure  
 To always advocate the right.

On her *pater* and *mater*  
 For her support she does not lean,  
 She talks and writes of "Woman's Rights"  
 In language forceful and clean.

She does not shirk, but does her work,  
 Amid the world's fast hustling whirl,  
 And come what may, she's here to stay,  
 The self-supporting "bachelor girl."

—from *Rhymes from the Cumberland*,  
 reprinted in *The Collected Works of Effie Waller Smith*.<sup>33</sup>

Effie Waller Smith was a Black woman, born in Pikeville, Kentucky, the daughter of Frank and Sibbie Waller, who were formerly enslaved. Frank Waller owned property and was a farmer, blacksmith, and successful businessman in Pike County. The family lived in the racially mixed Chloe Creek community. Intelligent, curious, and deeply spiritual, Effie Waller was adventurous, freely trekking the hills and valleys of Pike County and beyond. As a young adult, she loved hiking the rugged Breaks of the Mountains. Her two books, *Songs of the Months* and *Rhymes from the Cumberlands*, celebrate the landscape of her home in the Big Sandy River Valley. Often light-hearted, the poems speak of

her enjoyment of the natural world, her attention to the politics of her day, and her expansive love for her family and friends.

We cannot know how much Frank and Sibbie read poetry, but they clearly valued it, as they named their son Alfred Tennyson Waller.<sup>34</sup> Ruth Smith, Effie Waller Smith's adopted daughter, recalled in an interview in 1987 that Effie "had a very congenial home life" and that Frank and Sibbie had "provided a deeply religious background." Ruth remembered that Effie shared that "her parents read to her, what little they could, being [former] slaves and not having much of a chance."<sup>35</sup> The Wallers made sure that each of their children had every opportunity they could offer, starting with the best education available to them. All three of the Waller offspring attended Kentucky Normal School for Colored Persons (later Kentucky State University) in the years soon after the college was founded in 1886. The older children, Alfred and Rosa, not only paved the way for Effie at Kentucky State, they were also her first mentors and teachers. And Effie proved to be a remarkable young woman, becoming Pike County's first certified Black teacher in the 1890s while still a teenager, even before she completed her college studies sometime between 1900-1902.<sup>36</sup>

In 1916, when Frank Waller died suddenly, his widow, Sibbie, lost not only economic stability but also whatever margin of physical safety his well-respected place in the community had given her. America was deep into the Jim Crow era: unrest seeped even into the formerly welcoming community on Chloe Creek in Pike County, Kentucky. Sibbie's son, Alfred, had long ago moved to Chicago and worked as a Pullman porter for the railroad. We have no record of her daughter, Rosa. It fell to Effie to provide for herself and her mother. By 1918 or 1919, Effie had moved her mother to Wisconsin and joined a commune in Waukesha run by the Metropolitan Holiness Association, a progressive offshoot of the Methodist church. The sect presented itself as committed to ideals including women's suffrage, racial equality, and pacifism.<sup>37</sup> However, a couple of years after their move, the extremes of that sect caused many of its adherents who, like Effie, had given the church everything they owned, to sue for some of it back.<sup>38</sup> Effie Waller Smith would grow old in Wisconsin. She died in her adopted daughter's home in Neenah in 1968.<sup>39</sup>

excerpt from "Forever"  
by Effie Smith Ely

We sigh for human love, from which  
A whim or chance shall sever,  
And leave unsought the love of God,  
Though God's love lasts forever.

We see earth's peace in things that pass  
Like foam upon the river,  
While, steadfast as the stars on high  
God's peace abides forever.<sup>40</sup>

Effie Ely's writing reveals her to be a serious-minded woman. More withdrawn by nature, she lacked Effie Waller's exuberance. Her poetry is not as lively, but staid—less ebullient, more polished. Effie Smith Ely, a white woman, did not have to suffer the racism of the Jim Crow era. She never had to figure out how to save herself and her parents as Effie Waller Smith had done when she engineered the move to Wisconsin.

Though her white privilege brought with it inevitable blindnesses, Effie Ely (like Effie Waller Smith) held progressive values. Marvin Smith Kincheloe reports that Effie and her husband, Joseph Ely, "were fearless when issues were drawn, making some enemies in supporting Negro rights and opposing the Ku Klux Klan."<sup>41</sup> Effie Smith Ely both read and wrote about the poetry of the Black authors of her time. Her essay, "American Negro Poetry," published in *The Christian Century* in 1923, was apparently widely read and cited in articles by contemporary scholars.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the chasm that separated them racially, Effie Waller Smith and Effie Smith Ely were similar in their sensibilities and preoccupations. Perhaps the strongest parallel between these two poets is that each "disappeared" from public view as writers, in part, because they answered the larger calling of family and faith. Both women were Appalachian, spending their formative years within 150 miles of each other: you can draw a straight line almost due north and south connecting their homes. Each one loved and was shaped by her particular and distinctive geography and culture—as well as by the inequalities of twentieth-century America.

Effie Waller Smith survived many losses—among them her early joy in making poems. She gave up publishing poetry, as well as her beloved eastern Kentucky homeplace, when she moved to Wisconsin. Living communally as part of the Metropolitan Holiness settlement, she gave up claims to individual possessions—perhaps even her words were no longer her own. All labor was shared (in theory) and all persons were assigned roles. Her days would have revolved around work and worship; no doubt she did not have the luxury of time for poetry in those years.

The privilege and stability of Effie Ely's life not only afforded her the luxury of time but also provided a ready audience for her writing, since church periodicals were eager to publish it. With the exposure she gained through Richard Badger's publication of *Rosemary and Pansies*, she had the attention of editors who curated national anthologies of women's poetry, and was subsequently published in a handful of volumes. Perhaps most of all, she had the satisfaction of seeing her writing as a vital part of living out her faith. Effie Smith Ely continued writing into old age. Her husband, Joe, saw her final book, *Devout Poems*, into print after her death.

### Afterword: The Important Work Ahead

Though Effie Smith Ely was well-known as a poet and writer in East Tennessee and beyond during her lifetime, she has disappeared from her region's literary history. Much of her early published writing, where it is known, is not credited to her. Its authorship has been claimed for Effie Waller Smith. I am certain that Effie Waller Smith would be deeply troubled by this claim. Effie Waller Smith's writings attest to a remarkable life. She has her own legacy—a legacy that writers and scholars like Alice Kinder and David Deskins have restored to us.

The work of restoring Effie Smith Ely's authorship seems almost insurmountable. It may never be possible to completely correct the "fact" that Effie Waller Smith authored *Rosemary and Pansies* and other writings since that assumption has become firmly embedded not only online but also in archival records. However, the record can be clarified, as illustrated by the actions of the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame. In large part because of Deskins' research and writing, Effie Waller Smith was inducted into the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame in 2015—an honor much deserved. On February 5, 2020, based on the new information about Effie Smith Ely's copyrights, the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame officially amended Effie Waller Smith's citation, removing *Rosemary and Pansies* and three additional short stories from Effie Waller Smith's bibliography.<sup>43</sup>

My aim in writing this essay is to open Effie Ely's life and work to research and study by Appalachian literary scholars. Effie Smith Ely's story waits to be told. Her work warrants being known and read—as her own. Now, writers and scholars have the opportunity to restore Effie Smith Ely to the Appalachian canon. The work ahead belongs to us: to celebrate and reclaim the rich and distinctive voices of two Appalachian women poets.

### Notes

1. Marvin Smith Kincheloe, *More Than I Can Tell* (Collegedale, TN, The College Press, 1977), 24.
2. US Census Bureau. "1910 Civil District 6, Hawkins, Tennessee Census." Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, microfilm roll T624\_1504, p. 9a.
3. Effie Smith, "At the Grave of One Forgotten," *Zion's Herald* [Boston] 84, no. 27 (July 4, 1906): 846.
4. Effie Smith, "The Shepherd's Vision," *The Independent* [New York] 65, no. 3134 (December 24, 1908): 1521.
5. Effie Smith, "Preparation," *The Christian Advocate* [New York] [I have not yet been able to locate a citation for the issue in which "Preparation" appears.]
6. *Poet Lore*, 2024, <https://www.poetlore.com>
7. Census records show that both Effie and Summers lived with their parents until 1920.
8. Kincheloe, 24.
9. Leatha Kendrick, "Looking for Effie," *Appalachian Heritage* [now *Appalachian Review*] 43, no. 4 (2015): 90-116.

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14. Effie Waller Smith, "Forever," in *The Collected Works of Effie Waller Smith*, ed. David Deskins, (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 84.
15. Effie Waller Smith, "Rosemary and Pansies: Dedication," in *The Collected Works*, 73.
16. Effie Waller Smith, "My Brother," in *The Collected Works*, 94.
17. Kendrick, 105.
18. US Census Bureau. "1900 McPheeters Bend, Hawkins, Tennessee Census," *Ancestry*, roll 1577, p. 11.
19. Kincheloe, 25.
20. *ibid.*
21. Kincheloe, 24.
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