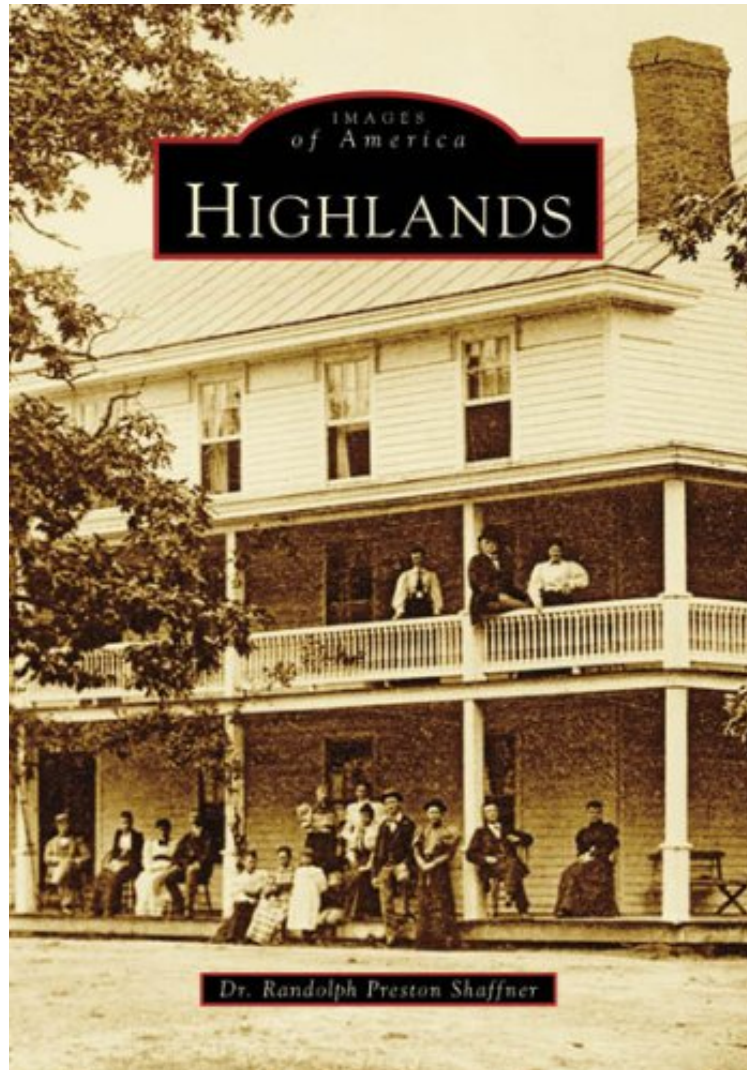


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Highlands (Images of America: North Carolina)

Dr. Randolph Preston Shaffner
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Dr. Randolph Preston Shaffner : Highlands (Images of America: North Carolina) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Highlands (Images of America: North Carolina):

Perched on the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains and founded in 1875 as a health and summer resort, the town of Highlands in Western North Carolina enjoys a northern climate in a southern setting. Its people originate from across the nation, giving an otherwise provincial village a cosmopolitan worldview, and its natural surroundings have attracted professionals in the arts and sciences as well as laborers, tradesmen, and craftsmen. The photographs in this

volume attest to the extraordinary variety of characters that inhabited the Highlands plateau at the towns founding and during the first half-century of its growth and development.

Title: Book Author: Staff Writer Publisher: The North Carolina Historical Date: July 2009 In Highlands (2008), part of Arcadia Publishing's Images of America series, Randolph Preston Shaffner documents through photographs the fifty-five years before and after the founding of Highlands, North Carolina, in 1875 by New Yorker Samuel Truman Kelsey and Vermonter Clinton Carter Hutchinson. As the legend goes, the two men simply drew lines from Chicago to Savannah and from New Orleans to New York. They believed the place where the two lines crossed would eventually become a great trading center and commercial crossroads. What resulted was a seasonal resort that at just over 4,000 feet provided common ground for pioneers from both the North and South only a decade after the Civil War. The author begins with chapters on the regions rich botanical diversity and physical beauty, and then briefly reviews the families who first settled the land that would become Highlands. The next two chapters cover the years 1875 to 1930 and account for the bulk of the book. These chapters include numerous photographs of Highlands' first homes, including those of its founders. There are photographs of the first sawmills, schools, boardinghouses, general stores, and churches, some of which have long since disappeared from the landscape. The author concludes with chapters entitled, Architectural Gems, which focuses on several of Highlands' more unique homes and buildings; Artistic Creations, which reflects on Highlands as an artists' haven; and Then and Now, where Shaffner compares several present-day photographs with their historical counterparts. Like similar titles in Arcadia's Images of America series, most pages have two well-printed black and white photographs, each accompanied with a one-paragraph informative caption that often includes interesting trivia. People seldom think of their old photographs with their sepia-toned images of awkwardly posed ancestors as historical documents, but Highlands proves once again how such artifacts can express more about how people lived than dozens of pages of historical text. The author's personal ties to the area and sense of place lend an engaging authenticity and homespun perspective to the book. Highlands is a pleasure to read and compares favorably with other titles in the series. There are few attempts to connect the founding of Highlands to larger historical currents in North Carolina history, but the book's regional appeal is undeniable, and its strength is in its well-crafted portrayal of the unique families and individuals that helped to build Highlands. The 127-page paperbound book is available for \$19.99. JEFF FUTCH, Western Office, North Carolina Office of Archives and History. About the Author Dr. Randolph Preston Shaffner attended Davidson College and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As an educator, he studied and taught in the United States, Europe, and Asia. As an author, he published a seminal study of the bildungsroman and two histories, including Heart of the Blue Ridge, labeled the definitive history of Highlands by the North Carolina Historical Society. As an entrepreneur, Shaffner founded Cyranos Bookshop and Faraway Publishing, both based in Highlands, and he currently serves as archivist for the Highlands Historical Society. His fascination with the town and its people has evolved from 30 years of living in Highlands and recording its history.