

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

GREGG-CABLE HOUSE

HISTORIC FURNISHING PLAN

September 1980

GRSM 19

HARPERS FERRY CENTER

Historic Furnishing Plan  
Sections A through F

for

GREGG-CABLE HOUSE  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Recommended: *Elmer L. ...* 10-3-80  
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HISTORIC FURNISHING PLAN  
Sections A through F

GREGG-CABLE HOUSE  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

by

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September 1980

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations.....	iv
Introduction.....	v
Part A. Definition of Interpretive Objectives.....	1
by Edward L. Trout, Park Historian, Great Smoky Mountains National Park	
Part B. Operating Plan.....	4
by Edward L. Trout, Park Historian, Great Smoky Mountains National Park	
Part C. Analysis of Historic Occupancy.....	6
1. Architecture--Historical and Structural Data.....	6
2. The Becky Cable Period.....	17
Part D. Evidence of Original Furnishings.....	29
1. Front Room.....	29
2. Middle Room.....	35
3. Back Room.....	36
4. Upstairs Rooms.....	37
5. Pre-1955 Areas.....	38
a. Kitchen.....	38
b. Back Porch.....	40
Part E. Recommended Furnishings.....	42
1. Front Room.....	44
2. Middle Room.....	54
3. Back Room.....	56
4. Front Porch.....	59

Part F. Special Installation, Maintenance and Protection Recommendations.....	61
Bibliography.....	64
Illustrations.....	67

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures 1, 2, and 3	Cable House, c. 1940
Figure 4	Cable House, c. 1936
Figure 5	Becky Cable, c. 1936
Figure 6	Becky Cable, c. 1936

## INTRODUCTION

Much of the information contained here represents the remembrances of three former Cades Cove inhabitants--Lenard Cable, Randolph Shields, and John Coad--as recorded by myself and Park Historian Edward L. Trout in Maryville, Tennessee on August 2 and 6, 1979. Lenard Cable (b. 1901) grew up in his Aunt Becky Cable's house. His recollections apply primarily to the second decade of this century, with some application to the first. Because the house is to be restored to the 1900-1920 period, this plan rests heavily upon Lenard's memory. Overlapping Lenard's remembrances are those of Randolph Shields (b. 1913). Shields was Becky Cable's immediate neighbor and his publication, The Cades Cove Story, establishes him, rightfully so, as the historian of Cades Cove. John Coad's impressions of the house are somewhat later. Married to Becky Cable's niece, Jane, he moved to the house in 1935, and he and Jane attended Becky there until her death in 1940. Coad also visited the house several times prior to 1935. Interestingly, Coad's recollections of the house depart very little from those of Cable and Shields.

Because no Historic Structure Report has been prepared for the Gregg-Cable house, I have included in Part C the extant historical data pertaining to the house. Also included is a brief description of the structure itself, together with possible explanations for its evolution. By no means does this structural information preclude

a thorough examination by an historic architect, a further and important step in the documentation of this building.

Hearty thanks are extended to Lenard Cable, Randolph Shields and John Coda for so willingly digging into their pasts. Further thanks go to Ed Trout for lining up the interviews and making documentary material housed throughout the Park available to me, and to other members of the Park staff for their complete cooperation in this effort.



## PART A - DEFINITION OF INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

by  
Edward L. Trout, Park Historian  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

The Gregg-Cable house is a major focal point of interpretation in Cades Cove and in the Cable Mill area in which it stands. Although moved to its present site in 1956, the house is only a few hundred yards from its original location; and close to the family mill with which it is associated.

The early two-room portion, built in about 1875 by Leason Gregg, was used as a general store building by him. On passing into the hands of Becky Cable and her brother, Dan, the building was altered as the store operation was gradually phased out around 1900. Now a mere residence for a sizeable family, a third ground floor room, three upstairs rooms, and a kitchen ell were added onto the older edifice. The kitchen was razed when the house was moved in 1956 and is still absent.

As a structure, its chief value is illustrating the transition from log to framed construction in Cades Cove in the latter nineteenth century. This remote mountain community was not "totally isolated from the rest of the world," as so much literature on Appalachia contends. Waterpowered sawmill and building technology within the Cove took advantage of opportunities for improvement as they became available. The Gregg-Cable house is evidence of those two points. The additions to the building also illustrate the ancient practice of recycling structures for different uses.

As a furnished home, the house interprets the lifestyle of a lower-middle income farm family of Cades Cove. John P. Cable had been a moderately successful farmer/businessman in Cades Cove -- "A spark plug of the community" as it were. However, after his death, the family's economic position slipped a notch or two. His farmland, mill and other interests were divided among several children, thus lessening the aggregate value they once had.

Family illnesses and perhaps other difficulties unknown today, combined to place a heavy burden on John's daughter, the spinster "Aunt Becky" as she became known. While accumulating a fair amount of land, Becky also inherited her disabled brother's children and the responsibility for their upbringing.

Seeking to make ends meet, Becky briefly continued the Gregg store operation, farmed her land and took boarders into the home -- mostly sawmill workers and farm laborers. Try as she might, she was never able to bring her portion of the family back up to the economic level it had enjoyed during her father's day.

The house reflected these conditions. As time passed, the homeplace sloughed off its coat of paint, the lattice balustrades along the porch became "snaggle-toothed," and interior furnishings remained sparse. They also deteriorated. The two dressers, for instance, show signs of patch-on-patch maintenance, cheap replacement drawer pulls, and crazing finishes -- clear signs of a family just getting by with what it had, but by no means reduced to poverty.

This house, then, belonged to a simple hardworking family. Its mistress, careworn and long suffering, was liked and respected for what she was. Our interpretation of her home should make her no more, nor no less, than that.

PART B - OPERATING PLAN  
by  
Edward L. Trout, Park Historian  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Three rooms in the house will be furnished to appear as they did during Becky Cable's occupancy in the early years of the twentieth century: Becky's room (the "front room"); Perry Cable's room; and the "back room." No upstairs rooms will be furnished, as the narrow winding stairway precludes public access to the second floor. All of the Cable family furnishings owned by the Park will be used; a few others may have to be purchased. Placement of furnishings will correspond to that described by members of the family who lived in the house.

Visitor access to the house will be by self-guided tour through the Cable Mill area in general, with interpretation being supplied via tour booklet. The doors to each room, all opening onto the front porch, will remain open during daily operation of the nearby visitor center. A rope barrier, or equivalent, will be placed in each of the three doorways. Small objects will not be placed within arm's reach from the doorways.

Doors will be locked after hours and during the off-season. During those periods, visitors can easily see into the rooms through the windows along the front porch wall.

Staffing Requirements

No personnel need be in the house during normal operating hours, as the barriers should secure the doorways adequately.

Interpreters can be on hand intermittently for brief presentations on the porch, or in front of the house.

Occasionally demonstrations may be held in Becky's room, or the "back room." These should be activities that do not disturb the basic furnishings: spinning, quilting, knitting, stringing leather britches, beans, etc.

All interpretive paraphernalia not in use should be stored out of sight, unless its presence is compatible with the permanent furnishings. For instance, a partially knitted pair of socks might be appropriately left on a bed. A twenty-five pound sack of raw wool would have been stored out of the way.

## PART C - ANALYSIS OF HISTORIC OCCUPANCY

### 1. Architecture--Historical and Structural Data

The Gregg-Cable house sits toward the eastern end of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the mountain-ringed basin of Cades Cove, Blount County, Tennessee. Named after its two owners, Leason F. Gregg and Rebecca (Becky) Cable, it is one of nine structures that make up the John P. Cable Mill complex. Prior to 1955, when the Park Service created this complex, the house stood a quarter of a mile to the south, on Forge Creek Road. The house was moved to its new site without its kitchen ell, back porch, and outbuildings. Like the Gregg-Cable house, the other buildings making up the Mill complex (with the exception of the Mill itself) are not indigenous to the site. Some were transported from other areas of the Park while others are National Park Service reconstructions.

Some portion of the Gregg-Cable house was built by June, 1876 when Leason F. Gregg and James F. Beals acquired one and three-fourths acres in Cades Cove, "the same on which the store of Beals and Greggs now stands." The property was purchased from John P. Cable and adjoined his farm.<sup>1</sup>

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1. While recorded in 1876, the deed was not registered until 1879, John Cable to James F. Beals and L. F. Gregg, May 27, 1879, Blount County Deeds, Book C, p. 174, and Book HH, pp. 100-101.

How long prior to 1876 the store was in operation is unclear. Blount County Census records for 1870 list no merchants, storekeepers, or the likes, while, by 1880, one John Gregg was "clerking" in a Cades Cove store.<sup>2</sup> An attempt to establish a relationship between John and Leason F. Gregg has proved fruitless. One inhabitant of the Cove during the nineteenth century has written that Leason Gregg opened a store in a room of his house in 1873 and that Gregg "later" built a store on the Cable farm.<sup>3</sup> However, neither of the store proprietors show up on the tax books until 1876, when "L. F. Gregg" was assessed a poll tax. In that year, Gregg and Beals together paid tax on one acre valued at seventy-five dollars. This property, described as bounded on four sides by Cable lands, is surely the same described in the 1876 deed.<sup>4</sup>

Although neither the dates of the store's opening nor its construction can be pinned down, it is certain that Gregg and various members of the Beals family operated the store until 1887 when Rebecca

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2. Population Schedule, Ninth U. S. Census, 1870, Blount County, Tennessee, Sixteenth Civil District; Population Schedule, Tenth U. S. Census, 1880.

3. The Oliver records are inaccessible in the original and can be used only in a second-hand fashion in one of two theses, the authors of which were able to use family connections as an introduction to the papers. This information was cited in Durwood Clay Dunn, "Cades Cove During the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee (August, 1976), p. 106 ff.

4. Blount County Tax Books, 1876, 1879.

Cable purchased the property. Gregg's deed to Rebecca Cable included the one acre "store house" lot, plus an additional five acres and thirty poles that Gregg and Beals had purchased from John Cable in 1880.<sup>5</sup>

Rebecca Cable, the structure's next owner, was the daughter of John P. Cable, one of the founders of the nineteenth-century community at Cades Cove. John P. Cable's first recorded land purchases in Blount County date to 1868. However, one of two sizeable acquisitions that he made that year adjoined the "lands of said Cable," indicating that he already owned land in the area.<sup>6</sup> Tradition holds that Cable, like others among the Cove's early landholders, arrived here from Carter County, North Carolina.<sup>7</sup> An 1866 document survives entitling him, by way of certifying his loyalty to the Union, to vote in Carter County.<sup>8</sup> However, Blount County census records place Cable's

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5. John P. Cable to F. J. Beals, April 22, 1880, Book HH, pp. 392-93; Leason F. and S. A. Gregg to Rebecca Cable, October 14, 1887, Book MM, pp. 571-72. There were intervening transactions between Beals and Gregg. Gregg and James F. Beals transferred the property to T. J. Beals in 1880, whereupon Gregg regained title in 1884, James F. Beals and Leason H. Gregg to T. J. Beals, April 26, 1880, Book HH, pp. 392-93; Thomas J. and B. J. Beals to L. F. Gregg, June 5, 1884, Book KK, pp. 277-78.

6. A. M. McConnell to John P. Cable, March 17, 1868, Book BB, p. 592; G. W. Feezell to John P. Cable, June 1, 1868, Book CC, p. 127.

7. Randolph A. Shields, The Cades Cove Story (Gatlinburg, Tenn.; Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association, 1977), pp. 74-75.

8. Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Accession 523 (cited hereafter as GRSM).



1819 birth in Tennessee, and also locate there the births of his nine children, the oldest of whom, Rebecca, was born in 1844, and the youngest, Daniel, in 1866.<sup>9</sup> A genealogical study of Eastern Tennessee families confirms this, stating, however, that John Cable's marriage in 1842 to Elizabeth Whitehead did, indeed, take place in Carter County, North Carolina.<sup>10</sup>

Following 1868, John P. Cable steadily expanded and improved upon his holdings. The water-powered saw and grist mills that he opened on his property in the early 1880s in time rendered the Cable farm a focal point of the community.<sup>11</sup>

Prior to her purchase of the Gregg Store, Rebecca Cable was one of eight offspring living at their father's house. The 1870 census listed Rebecca "without occupation," while, by 1880, she was occupied with "housekeeping." Tax Records of 1888, as well as the 1900 census, confirm Rebecca's new status as a landowner. Fifty-six years old in 1900, she was now engaged in "farming," and headed a household of six that included her brother Daniel (b. 1866), his wife

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9. Population Schedule, Tenth U. S. Census, 1870; Population Schedule, Eleventh U. S. Census, 1880.

10. Olga Jones Edwards and Izora Waters Frizzell, The Connection in East Tennessee (Edwards and Frizzell, 1969), pp. 249-50.

11. Shields, The Cades Cove Story, pp. 26, 75. In one place Shields assigns an 1868 construction date to the mill but, in another, dates the mill to sometime after 1882. Tax records agree with the later date, taxes first being assessed on the mill property in 1884, Blount County Tax Books, 1868-1884.

Martha, and their three children.<sup>12</sup>

Very soon after she acquired the Gregg property, Becky Cable's holdings began to grow. John P. Cable died in 1891. To Becky, he left, "eighteen acres of land to be cutt [sic] off my land so as to adjoin the land my daughter Rebecca now owns," and to Daniel, James, and Rebecca, he left, "in equal shares of one-third each," the "grist mill including the one acre of land upon which it is located and which belongs to the mill, also all the water privileges or power necessary and belonging to said grist mill." The saw mill went to James Cable who also inherited the major part of his father's land.<sup>13</sup>

In 1896, James sold seven of his acres to Becky who, in 1898, purchased another acre from a J. M. Saults, "known as a part of the John P. Cable home farm," and "adjoining Rebecca Cable on the south."<sup>14</sup> Randolph Shields writes that, after 1896, J. M. Saults operated a store on his property with goods from the old Gregg operation that Saults purchased from Becky and Dan Cable. Furthermore, Shields maintains that, prior to this time, Becky and Dan Cable had

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12. Population Schedule, Ninth U. S. Census, 1870; Population Schedule, Tenth U. S. Census, 1880; Population Schedule, Twelfth U. S. Census, 1900; Blount County Tax Books, 1888.

13. John P. Cable will, January 24, 1891, Blount County Wills and Inventories.

14. The 1896 deed was registered in 1905 in place of one that has been lost, James B. and Susan Cable to Rebecca Cable, March 4, 1905, Book 60, p. 11; J. M. and N. E. Saults to Rebecca Cable, December 13, 1898, Book 52, p. 96.

carried on the business themselves.<sup>15</sup> This same tradition is held by Becky's nephew, Lenard Cable, and by John Coad. Indeed, the marked drop in value of Becky's taxable property in 1895 may be a function of Becky having liquidated her retail business.<sup>16</sup>

Becky's 1898 purchase of the Saults' property may have included a house. The two hundred and fifty dollar price certainly points to the presence of some improvements on this property. Interestingly enough, prior to Saults, this property was owned by Benjamin, Florence, and Casper Cable, who received in their father's 1891 will, "the remainder of my lands including my dwelling and barn and blacksmith tools also my mowing machine and hay rake."<sup>17</sup> The Saults' acreage clearly contained a house (whether or not the former John P. Cable house) in 1915, when Rebecca Cable rented it out and her responsibilities as a landlord included the upkeep of fencing, house, and barn.<sup>18</sup>

In 1905, James B. Cable sold six more acres to his sister Becky, she and Daniel, in the meantime, having transferred their interests in the mill to James.<sup>19</sup> In 1923 and 1927, Becky added a

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15. Shields, The Cades Cove Story, p. 74.

16. Blount County Tax Books, 1893-1897.

17. John P. Cable will, January 24, 1891.

18. Rebecca Cable to R. D. Burchfield, November 15, 1915-November 15, 1920, GRSM, Accession 523.

19. J. V. and Susan Cable to Rebecca Cable, November 11, 1905, Book 61, p. 29; J. V. and Susan Cable to Rebecca Cable, June 6, 1905, Book 60, p. 12.

final seven acres to her holdings, all originally part of the John P. Cable farm. Interestingly enough, among these last acquisitions was the "John P. Cable mill tract," transferred once again back to Becky Cable.<sup>20</sup>

When the National Park Service acquired Becky Cable's property in 1931, the seven acres originally purchased from Leason F. Gregg had grown to fifty-three acres. There were forty-three acres of, "fair cultivated soil," and ten of "fair oak and chestnut timber." The property supported "a good apple orchard with forty bearing trees;" a wire and rail fence in good condition; a six-room, two-story frame house in fair condition; and a frame barn and smokehouse in "good condition."<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that no mention was made of a second house on the property. Becky Cable continued to live on the property until her death in 1940, as one of three Cades Cove residents with whom the Park Service maintained lifetime leases.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to this fifty-three acres, Becky Cable also turned over to the Park Service a 640-acre tract of mountain land

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20. J. V. and Phebia Cable to Rebecca Cable, March 27, 1923, Book 92, p. 381; J. M. and Bettie Lequire to Rebecca Cable, May 9, 1927, Book 98, p. 232; J. V. Cable to Rebecca Cable, May 9, 1927, Book 101, p. 233.

21. Deed No. 545/546, recorded June 3, 1930, delivered to State of Tennessee, January 17, 1931, delivered to the Federal Government January 1, 1931, Archives, GRSM.

22. She paid one dollar a year for the lease, which is dated March 21, 1932, Archives, GRSM.

that she had used exclusively for grazing. The acreage was known successively as the Tipton, Lawson, and Cable Sugar Grove, after its two large stands of sugar maple trees. John P. Cable had acquired a substantial part of this property in 1885. Following his death, the tract passed jointly to James V. and Benjamin Cable, from whom Becky began to acquire it in 1899.<sup>23</sup>

The Gregg-Cable house is, as stated in the 1931 Park Service transaction, a two-story building of frame construction. In fact, tradition maintains that this was Cades Cove's first frame house, and that it was raised of lumber sawn at the John P. Cable mill.<sup>24</sup> Built on a stone foundation, the house has a stone chimney at its west end. The exterior is covered with sash sawn clapboards and single shakes on the roof. The gable roof reflects that seen in a 1947 photograph of the house, including the comb at the roof's

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23. N. H. and Jane Sparks to John P. and Rebecca Cable, December 12, 1885, Book LL, p. 414; John P. Cable to J. V. and Benjamin Cable, March 14, 1891, Book 43, p. 486; J. W. and C. J. Sparks to J. V., Rebecca, and Benjamin Cable, October 6, 1896, Book 45, pp. 577-78; J. V. and S. E. Cable to Rebecca Cable, December 18, 1899, Book 52, p. 159; J. V. Cable to Rebecca Cable, November 29, 1921, GRSM, Accession 523; John and Evie Cable to Rebecca Cable, November 15, 1926, Book 99, p. 563; John and Evie Cable to Rebecca Cable, November 2, 1929, Book 104, p. 421; James Cable to Rebecca Cable, November 26, 1938, Book 98, p. 251; Rebecca Cable to Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, November 26, 1938, Book 98, p. 268.

24. Shields, The Cades Cove Story, p. 75. Dunn cites an earlier frame house, one built in 1849 by Daniel Foute, Dunn, "Cades Cove During the Nineteenth Century," pp. 60 ff.

peak.<sup>25</sup> A tin roof, apparently applied sometime in the interim, is visible in a photograph taken about 1955 (Figure 1).

Rooms are distributed three up and three down. The lower rooms, lined up side by side, each have a door opening onto a porch that runs nearly the length of the house's front. These exterior doors were cut in half soon after the house was moved to its present site, in order to provide a dutch door viewing approach into the lower rooms and stairwell.<sup>26</sup> There is no interior communication from the front, or west room, to the middle room, while the middle and back rooms are connected by a door in the south end of their common wall. Additional door openings, now closed off, are evident in the north walls of both the front and middle rooms.

The three upper rooms all open off a stair hall. Access to the enclosed stairway, located in the southwest corner of the lower middle room, is from the exterior front of the house.

The front porch once had a clapboard windbreak enclosing its west end, and diagonally crossed lattices beneath the handrail (see Figure 4).<sup>27</sup> About 1935, John Coada removed the lattice, finding it in a state beyond repair, and substituted the present balustrade.

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25. Margaret Elisabeth Gamble, "The Heritage and Folk Music of Cades Cove, Tennessee," Masters thesis, University of Southern California, School of Music (August, 1947), p. 82.

26. Archives, GRSM.

27. Gamble, op. cit.

Interior walls are hand planed boards, as are ceiling and floor boards. The layer upon layer of newspapers on walls and ceilings in the lower middle and east rooms were applied by the Park Service in the 1950s.

John Coad remembers the exterior paint of the house at the time he arrived as white with red trim. The kitchen and back porch were entirely green. By contrast, Lenard Cable recalls not red, but green, trim.

Pre-1955 photographs and former Cades Cove residents provide certain details regarding the now demolished back porch and kitchen ell (see Figures 1-3). The single story kitchen extended from the lower middle room. Two doors opened off the kitchen, one into the middle room and one onto the back porch. Lenard Cable cited the most heavily traveled path to the kitchen as proceeding from the front room, by way of this porch, rather than via the middle room. At the end of the kitchen was a large fireplace. The examination of the fireplace foundation, still on its original site, would probably disclose some of the kitchen dimensions. No interior partitions in the kitchen have come to light.

Like the front porch, the back porch was enclosed by diagonally crossed lattices. But, on the back, the lattices reached the porch's full height. In addition to doors opening onto the kitchen and front room, there was a doorway on the end of the porch and a large window opening on the back.

Both Lenard Cable and Randolph Shields described this porch

as L-shaped. However, extant photographs show a rectangular porch, oriented with its long side against the front room. And this is the same impression retained by John Coad.

Clearly, a thorough architectural investigation of the house is in order that would address unresolved areas, such as the west wall in the lower middle room. Formed of vertical planks on one side and horizontal planks on the other, this appears to be a partition wall. But evidence is contained here of two window openings. The openings are located symmetrically within the full wall, apparently taking no consideration of the stairwell at the south end. It is important to determine whether this was ever other than a partition wall, and, therein, begin to unravel the correct evolution of the structure.

The most significant question remaining about this structure is how much of it represents the "store house" put up in the 1870s by Gregg and Beals? In all likelihood, portions of the house are later additions, and this is supported in a tradition handed down by John Coad wherein one Uncle Bill Boring (b. 1835) supervised the enlargement of Becky's house, in addition to constructing a few items of furniture for it.<sup>28</sup> Coad believes that the two lower back, or

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28. It is assumed that Uncle Bill Boring was the same Wm. Boring, born 1835, that appeared in the 1850 Census. There was a second Wm. Boring, born 1881, listed in the 1900 Census who would hardly have been a contemporary of Becky Cable's. Additional information on the elder Wm. Boring is that he was continuously taxed for his Cades Cove property after 1887, Population Schedule, Seventh U. S. Census, 1850; Population Schedule, Twelfth U. S. Census, 1900; Blount County Tax Books, 1868-1900.



east, rooms represent the original structure, both of which Gregg used for his store. Lenard Cable, on the other hand, locates the store in the easternmost room only. Coadá alludes to the front room and second floor being added at the same time, but does not know whether the kitchen came between, or was a later addition. What is certain is that all additions predated Lenard Cable's recollections, and it is, therefore, unlikely that any of the present structure was put up in this century.

## 2. The Becky Cable Period

Former Cades Cove residents remember Becky Cable as kindly, although somewhat abrupt in manner. To her nephew, Lenard Cable, she was uncomplicated, a "good Christian woman," who was tireless in accomplishing the tasks at hand. While somewhat distinctive within the community for not marrying, she shared her status as a single woman with at least one other member of the local population.<sup>29</sup> Jane Coadá explained to William O. Douglas in 1962 that her Aunt Becky, "wasn't much on sweet-heartin' except'n one man," a man of whom her father

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29. Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1966), p. 236.

never approved; "so aunt Becky never did jump the broom."<sup>30</sup> It will remain for others to determine whether Becky remained single as a result of a broken heart, or simply never felt the need of a helpmate. After all, she was reportedly strong enough herself to grab "a bull by the tail," and all who knew her agree that she worked, "just like a man."

The fact that one of Becky's strengths clearly lay in property management has been illustrated by her impressive record of land acquisitions. Another remarkable facet of this woman was the degree of responsibility she shouldered throughout her long life for her brother Daniel and his family. Daniel's fourth child, Lenard Cable, was born in 1901. Sometime thereafter, Dan Cable was committed to the Eastern Tennessee State Hospital where he spent the remainder of his life. The support of his wife and children, one of whom was severely retarded, fell to Becky.<sup>31</sup> In fact, provisions that Becky made in her later years for the care of Perry, the retarded child, reveal that he was her legal as well as moral responsibility.<sup>32</sup> Perry became a familiar and well tolerated figure in the Cove, where he is remembered watching children by the hour, or seated

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30. William O. Douglas, "The People of Cades Cove," National Geographic, 122, no. 1 (July, 1962), 77.

31. While the precise date of Daniel Cable's internment is not known, he retained taxable property as of 1900, indicating that he was still abroad, Blount County Tax Books, 1900.

32. Rebecca Cable to Benjamin Lenard Cable, n.d., Book 101, p. 234.

in a rocking chair next to the fireplace in Becky's house.

Housekeeping was never Becky's forte and Dan's wife, Martha, assumed much of this responsibility prior to her death from tuberculosis. In later years, Martha and Dan Cable's daughter, Jane, stepped into this role. With Jane's marriage to John Coada, Becky's household eventually expanded to include seven Coada children.<sup>33</sup>

Home comforts were limited at Becky's house. Heat was generated only by fireplaces in the big room and in the kitchen. Winters, one lingered hardly at all after dinner before climbing beneath a generous pile of covers. Water came from a fifteen-foot, rock-lined well at the southwest corner of the house, and Lenard Cable remembers both well and nearby Forge Creek running dangerously close to dry in the summer. The well was without a roof of any kind, and is visible in Figure 5.

There was never interior plumbing nor, during the early years, an outdoor privy. Bodily needs were answered easily enough in the woods. During the early 1920s, the U. S. Health Department waged a sanitation campaign in the Southern Mountain area. Above all, this was an effort to endow each house with what was considered up-to-standard toilet facilities, and Becky's house, along with all others in the Cove, acquired a privy. In teams of two to four, the government workers went from house to house constructing privies out of

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33. Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," p. 85.

materials provided by the local residents. Randolph Shields remembers the governmental presence being cheerfully accepted, each Cove resident trying to outdo the next's privy. Less enthusiasm was expressed in a nearby area by Margaret Jane Walker, who was deeply embarrassed at acquiring so obvious a place for her private functions.<sup>34</sup>

Another result of this governmental campaign was the introduction to Cades Cove of screen doors and windows. Earlier, fans of various descriptions were used to discourage flies. Randolph Shields' grandfather made one out of long strips of newspaper held at one end by a slit piece of wood. The fan moved back and forth the length of a table on wooden spools. Shields' grandfather could operate it with his foot and eat at the same time. More often, one of the children operated the fan while the adults ate.

Lenard Cable remembered few regular diversions or leisure activities at Becky's house. Becky herself was illiterate and the house was devoid of reading materials, with the exception of one short-lived subscription to the Maryville Times. And no visual diversions, such as photographs or prints, were found on the walls, with the exception of two mirrors attached to bureaus.

Interestingly enough, the house's exterior probably reflected greater attention paid to decoration than the interior. Lenard

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34. Robert K. Madden and Russell T. Jones, "Walker Sisters Home, Historic Structures Report, Part II, and Furnishing Study, Great Smoky Mountains National Park," National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation (March 3, 1969), p. 15.

claims that it was Becky herself who planted flowers at the front of the house in the summer, and kept potted plants lined up on the porch, a wealth of which are visible in Figure 4. And Randolph Shields remembers seeing an occasional potted flower in the kitchen. John Coad, however, attributes flowers in and around the house to his own efforts, not Becky's.

Nevertheless, whatever Becky's house may have lacked in extras, it made up for in the necessities of life. The three daily meals were generous and sleeping space was never found wanting. Lenard, in fact, remembers a frequent surplus of beds. And Jane Coad implied the same as she described putting bread under the "company" bed to rise overnight.<sup>35</sup>

Apparently, the only members of the household with permanent sleeping quarters were Becky herself and the retarded child Perry. The lower middle room was always Perry's, whereas Becky always slept in one of two beds in the front, or big, room. John Coad points to the lower back room as his and Jane's, while both Lenard Cable and Randolph Shields cite the upper back room as "Janie's room." No doubt, these men are recalling distinct periods of time. Lenard slept all over the house. At times when Becky was feeling "poorly," he would sleep in the front room with her. He also slept in an upstairs room and in the lower back room. Where Dan and Martha Cable, or the Coad children, slept is unknown. From time to time,

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35. Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," p. 82.

Becky boarded workers from the Cable Mill who were lodged in the front room on the second floor. John Coada also remembered a school teacher staying here.

As was true all over the Cove, Becky's household was largely self-sufficient, sustained almost entirely by its own produce and livestock. Lenard tells of Becky spending all her daylight hours farming, at which she remained remarkably facile through her mid-seventies. As the only able-bodied male at the house prior to the arrival of John Coada, Lenard was Becky's chief farmhand. While he and the other children (Perry excepted) were enrolled in school, Lenard remembers farm chores sometimes superseding school attendance. Much has been written about neighborly joining of forces in the Cove--at harvest time, for house raisings, or at births, weddings, and deaths.<sup>36</sup> When needed, this sort of communal labor was always available. In addition, Becky occasionally hired an extra hand.

For getting in the crops, Becky maintained a wagon and team that she also used for trips to town, infrequent as they were. Her large barn stood behind the house. An image of this seventy-two by forty foot structure, now demolished, survives in a 1936 photograph (Figure 5). Lenard describes a six-foot crib to one side of the barn with a shed between that was used more or less for "plunder." In the winter, sheep were fed from the crib which was stocked with ragweed.

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36. Shields, The Cades Cove Story, p. 22 ff; The Knoxville Journal, August 17, 1960.

Additional outbuildings, neither of which survives, were a chicken house, and a shed that served variously as a loom house, wood shed, and smokehouse.

Corn and wheat were the staple crops. Corn was easily processed in the local grist mills, of which the John P. Cable Mill was one. Among other things, the Cable Mill supported a cattle food grinder that processed the full ear, cob and all. Only during its earliest years of operation was the Cable Mill equipped to grind wheat. Becky hauled her wheat to Townsend for grinding, flour being one of the rare items of imported food to enter the house.<sup>37</sup>

The mainstay of the family diet was pork. Becky also raised cows, sheep, and a few ducks. Lenard recalls a constant eighteen to twenty head of sheep that produced enough wool for home consumption and a surplus to sell. Each year, Becky also sold one or two steers and calves. What little cash came in was no doubt applied towards such items as sugar, coffee, shoes, and iron cooking hardware.<sup>38</sup>

A rare survival of farming data is contained in an 1880 Agricultural Schedule for the Cades Cove area.<sup>39</sup> While the Census

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37. Douglas, op. cit.

38. For a sampling of items retailed in Cades Cove, see, Shields, The Cades Cove Story, Appendix C.

39. While regularly taken, agricultural schedules were usually destroyed after the data had served its immediate purpose, Agricultural Schedule, Blount Count, Tennessee, Sixteenth Civil District, 1880.

predates Becky Cable's tenure as a farmer, it is nevertheless of interest because it describes in detail the farms of both her father and brother. At the time, John P. Cable's operation was more than twice the size of his son's, James V. Cable. A condensed version of information contained in the Schedule is offered below.

	<u>John P. Cable</u>	<u>James V. Cable</u>
Improved acres, tilled	60	20
Improved acres, permanent meadows, pastures, orchards, vineyards	5	
Unimproved acres, woodland and forest	93	20
Farm values		
Land, fences, buildings	\$2400.	\$200.
Implements	\$ 50.	\$ 4.
Livestock	\$ 688.	\$131.
Cost of building and repairing fences, 1879	\$ 15.	\$ 4.
Labor		
Amount paid for wages, 1879, including value of board	\$ 31.	
Number of weeks of hired labor, not including housework--white.	8	
Estimated value of all farm productions	\$ 408.	\$ 40.
Grass lands, number of mown acres, 1879	4	
Grass lands, products harvested 1879, hay	4 tons	
Horses on hand	2	1
"Neat" cattle and their products		
Milk cows on hand	7	4
Other	34	7
Calves dropped	15	3
Purchased	20	1



	<u>John P. Cable</u>	<u>James V. Cable</u>
Sold living	6	
Slaughtered	2	
Died, strayed, etc.	4	
Butter made on the farm, 1879	300 lbs.	75 lbs.
Sheep		
On hand	33	7
Lambs dropped	17	5
Slaughtered	1	
Clip, Spring 1880, shorn and to be shorn		
Number of fleeces	33	7
Weight	60 lbs.	14 lbs.
Swine on hand	19	1
Barnyard poultry on hand, not including		
Spring hatching	91	28
Eggs produced, 1879	500	50
Cereals		
Indian Corn		
Area in acres	34	6
Crop in bushels	700	60
Oats		
Area in acres	8	3
Crop in bushels	30	10
Wheat		
Area in acres	25	2
Crop in bushels	78	5
Orchards, 1879		
Apple		
Acres	2	
Bearing trees	35	
Bushels	100	
Total value of orchard products sold or consumed	\$25.	
Pounds of honey produced, 1879	100	

	<u>John P. Cable</u>	<u>James V. Cable</u>
Forest products		
Cords of wood cut, 1879	30	25
Value of all forest products sold or consumed	\$15.	\$12.

Becky Cable ran livestock on her 648 mountain acres during the summer. There was a house on the mountain land where Lenard remembers spending many nights. Rain, which hindered normal farming activities, was often Lenard's signal to go to the mountain land. Becky also traveled back and forth regularly to this acreage, but she rarely stayed overnight. "She'd be all over them mountains" Lenard said. In 1960, The Knoxville Journal printed a particularly lively account of Becky Cable's mountain treks:

Becky traipsed the hills barefoot. She'd start out with her shoes tied together and slung over her arm. She might come back that night with the shoes still over her arm.

She knew the easiest paths to the good grazing grounds on the slopes above. She told John [John McCaulley] once about a route she's taken, barefoot, when she stepped on a rattlesnake and didn't realize it until she was several paces past.

The coldness of what she had tramped on seized suddenly at her fears. She stopped, looked around, and saw the snake.

"Old feller, you was good to me and I'll be good to you<sup>40</sup> I'll not kill you. I'll just go on....."

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40. The Knoxville Journal, August 17, 1960.

Clearly, Becky's primary occupation was the management of her farm. But, there was another activity at which she is perhaps better remembered, and this was spinning. Whether shearing and washing the wool, or dyeing, carding, and spinning it, this involvement filled most of her free moments. In the summer, Becky set up her large wool wheel outside on the porch, or in the yard. Throughout the winter, her wheel remained fixed in front of the fireplace in the big room. Lenard reports that Becky's main object with this arrangement was to prevent the naturally brittle wool from freezing and breaking.

With the yarn that she spun, Becky kept the family dressed in her hand-knit sweaters, shawls, and socks, of which each member of the household required at least two pair yearly. While many Cades Cove residents maintained a patch of flax, Becky apparently did not, nor did she own a flax wheel. And while there was a loom on the farm, Lenard remembers his own mother rather than Becky as the weaver in the family. However, John Coad recalls, if only vaguely, seeing Becky at the loom. Putting a warp on a loom is a task made considerably easier with four hands and Lenard helped his mother at this many times. For the most part, Martha Cable wove solid-colored woolen blankets, dozens of which were needed for winter bedding.

The three-harness loom survives in the Park collection. Used only in the summer, it was housed in one of the farmsheds, where its bulky frame just fit. Such "loom houses" were common in Cades

Cove. The James Cable family kept one in a room over their smoke-house.

How much quilting went on in the house is unclear. One writer has pointed to Becky turning up at community "quiltings."<sup>41</sup> Jane Coada has also been cited as an accomplished quilter, but primarily during the years after she left the Cove.<sup>42</sup>

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41. Frome, Strangers in High Places, p. 236.

42. Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," p. 77.

## PART D - EVIDENCE OF ORIGINAL FURNISHINGS

### 1. Front Room

Two beds, one in each interior corner, dominated the front, or big, room. The front bed was Becky's. These, and all other bedsteads in the house, were unadorned, low-post beds. None had turned members, nor were they painted. Like other pieces of household furniture, they were simply varnished from time to time. Beds throughout had slat bottoms, with the exception of one rope bed in an upstairs room.

Bedding was ample, consisting of a straw mattress, topped by a feather mattress and feather pillows, all covered with flour sack linens, and plenty of blankets in the winter. Although Lenard Cable first mentioned sleeping under as many as a half dozen "quilts," upon further discussion it appeared that these were a combination of quilts and the plain woolen blankets woven by his mother.

Straw beds were renewed yearly, at threshing time, while feather beds and pillows were maintained from ducks kept on the farm. Lenard still uses feather pillows from his Aunt Becky's house.

It is unclear whether the family actually used sheets and pillow cases, or simply relied on pillow and mattress covers, or ticks. Ticks were fashioned from flour sacks. These sacks, a byproduct of hauling wheat to Townsend for grinding, were probably among the rare manufactured textiles to enter the house. The practice of putting used food bags to new uses in the house was acknowledged in

an 1897 promotion of the cotton bag industry that included facsimiles of its more decorative products. The plates showed white bags printed in single-color linear, or small geometric, patterns.<sup>1</sup> With the beginning of the paper bag takeover around 1930, the cotton bag industry viewed the conversion of its products into useful household decorations as one of its primary selling points. A pamphlet of bag patterns was made available by the Household Science Institute which broadcast information that Mrs. Herbert Hoover owned a flour bag quilt, and former President Coolidge a pair of flour bag pajamas.<sup>2</sup>

On the opposite side of the big room sat what Lenard termed a "safe, or cupboard." Its location, just inside the front door, was well remembered as the spot where everybody stopped to comb his hair.

This was, in fact, one of two bureaus with looking glasses that Jane Coad sold to the Park in 1958 (acc. 523, cat. 10934). Constructed of poplar, it has been varnished numerous times. The bureau is typical of inexpensive bedroom furniture patterned after the Eastlake style that was marketed so widely in this country during the last decades of the nineteenth century. It approximates a number of models advertised in 1889 by the Montgomery Ward Company. Ward's

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1. M. Buckworth Bailey, B.A., A New Industry (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Ltd., 1897), passim.

2. Bags, Burlap and Cotton, Devoted to the Textile Industry, I, no. 12 (March, 1930), 17.

bureaus were, "finished in walnut, mahogany or antique." Costs ranged from nine to fourteen dollars, the latter for a full suite of furniture.<sup>3</sup>

A safe stood in the northeast corner. While Cable, Shields, and Coads all described this as a two-door cupboard with punched tin panels, in detail, three quite distinct pictures emerged. Shields remembered punched tin panels on the top only, and wire mesh screening on the lower portion. Lenard Cable described three panels positioned vertically in each door, all of punched tin. A similar picture was drawn by John Coads, with the addition of a drawer extending the width of the cupboard at the top. All agreed that the cupboard's sides contained no tin panels. Like some other pieces in the house, this information describes what could have been either a homemade, or manufactured, item.

All pointed to a clock sitting on top of this safe and Lenard distinctly remembered two clocks here. One, a shelf clock operated by weights, is in the Park collection (acc. 523, cat. 10946). While such ogee-framed clocks were produced as early as the 1840s, this clock bears the label of the William L. Gilbert Clock Company of Winstead, Connecticut, dating it to the period 1871-1934.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Montgomery Ward & Co., Buyers' Guide and Catalogue, no. 45, Spring and Summer, 1889 (Chicago, Illinois: Montgomery Ward & Co., 1889), passim.

4. Brooks Palmer, The Book of American Clocks (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1950), p. 199.

"Becky always went by that old weight clock" Lenard said. Periodically, it would break and it, "felt like the whole damn house fell down when that weight hit the bottom." Often Lenard repaired the clock himself, repositioning the weight with tightly twisted sewing thread.

Lenard pointed to the second clock ticking steadily away in his Maryville living room. A spring-wound wall clock with octagonal face, this clock must have hung above, rather than sitting directly on the safe.

On the south side of the fireplace sat an "old time home-made" rocking chair that, according to Lenard, was reserved exclusively for Perry. The rocking chair had arms and a hickory splint seat.

Only John Coada cited additional chairs in the front room, remembering side chairs just like several others located throughout the house. Coada still uses two chairs from the Cable house in his Maryville home. Coada's chairs have hickory posts, slats, and rungs, and splint seats, one of poplar bark and the other of oak. They are representative of the mule-ear, or slat-back, chair commonly found throughout the South after the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Many such chairs have survived with their bottom-most rungs

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5. Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1963), pp. 229-232.



nearly scraping the floor. Often, this is due to a chair having supported generations of sitters rocking back on the rear posts.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, tradition holds that toddlers used these chairs as walkers, pushing them along on their backs and wearing a marked bevel into the rear posts. In either case, the legs had to be evened up at the bottom periodically.

Some Cades Cove residents fashioned their own chair seats, such as Lenard's Uncle Bob Cable, who used hickory splints for the job, or Randolph Shields' grandmother, who preferred tulip poplar. When a household was without this particular talent, as the Cable house seems to have been, the services of an itinerant chair-bottomer usually became available every three or four years.

During the winter, there was another piece of furniture in the front room. This was Becky's wool wheel and the various spinning paraphernalia that accompanied it, such as cards, bobbins, and probably a basket or two for supplies. Becky's wheel, now in the Park collection (acc. 523, cat. 10931), stood directly in front of the fireplace, where the wool thread could be kept pliable.

Although no one remembered floor coverings anywhere in the house, there were window coverings throughout and these, Lenard recalled, were store bought. Curtains may well have been hung from

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6. William O. Douglas, "The People of Cades Cove," National Geographic 122, no. 1 (July, 1962), 81.

string, as one writer somewhat disparagingly observed was standard Southern Mountain practice in the 1930s.<sup>7</sup>

Many Cades Cove inhabitants covered their walls and ceilings with newspapers, pasting up a fresh layer each year. Most desirable for this were decorative pages from the likes of Stark's fruit catalogues. While the papers certainly lent some pattern to a room, it should be pointed out that their primary value was as insulation rather than decoration. An alternate practice was hanging heavy brown paper that was available inexpensively in rolls, complete with tacks for hanging.

At the Cable house, such wall coverings were used during the later years only with the exception of Perry's room which all remembered had papered walls early on. After 1935, John Coada purchased machine-made wallpaper, with a printed floral design, for much of the house. At the time, he recalled a previous wallcovering in one of the back rooms, but the walls in the front room were entirely without either paper or paint until Coada covered them himself. Indeed, the presence of a fireplace in this room may have made its insulation needs seem less important.

Lighting in this room, as elsewhere in the house, was provided by kerosene lamps.

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7. Jerome W. Hughes, "Marthy's Kitchen," Mountain Life and Work (July, 1936), 12.

Finally, clothing was limited and, therefore, hanging space was of little concern in the front room, or in any other room. Nails were simply pounded into the walls when and where needed.

## 2. Middle Room

This space was given over entirely to Perry. While John Coadá remembered one or more small tables here, both Cable and Shields recalled that the room's furnishings were limited to a bed only, and this was a narrow, single bed. In place of the usual complement of straw and feather ticks, this bed was topped by only a thin pad.

Lenard located Perry's bed in the southeast corner of the room, just inside the door leading onto the porch. Approximately a four-foot long space, this location is questionable. John Coadá's placement of the bed, along the west wall of the room, is more plausible.

The most salient feature of this room was a series of holes, still visible, in the plank floor. Ranging from knothole size to somewhat larger, the holes facilitated cleaning up after Perry who was never toilet trained.<sup>8</sup>

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8. Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1966), p. 236.

### 3. Back Room

Cable's and Shields' impressions of this room were identical. It was furnished with a bureau and two double-sized beds. As was the pattern for other areas of the house, John Coada confirmed this picture, but supplemented it with a few additional items--a table, a chair "or two," and a clothes chest.

The clothes chest, made by Uncle Bill Boring, survives in one of Coada's bedrooms. According to Coada, Boring was also the maker of the bureau in this room, the second bureau with looking glass transferred to the Park by Jane Coada (acc. 523, cat. 10932). Both chest and dresser exhibit rural craftsmanship of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Made entirely of walnut, the chest is formed of six wide boards joined at the corners by square posts that extend at the bottom into turned legs. The lid is fitted with cleats overhanging the box on all sides. On the interior is a till with a single partition. The lock is a late addition installed by Coada.

The bureau with looking glass evidences somewhat more sophisticated workmanship. Also made of walnut, with pine used secondarily, the bureau has three equal-sized drawers of dovetailed construction. The bureau front is framed in bead molding and there are two recessed boxes on the top. The use of a scroll, or band, saw shows in decorative details at the lower sides; in applied brackets at the lower front; and in the fancifully shaped posts that support the mirror. The mirror, typical of the arched top "cottage" mirror

so common during the mid to late nineteenth century, could well have been store bought, as no doubt were the stamped iron drawer pulls.

Lenard placed this bureau on the east wall. But John Coada recalled a table in that spot, placing the bureau in the southwest corner of the room between the two doors. The chest now owned by Coada sat at the foot of a bed.

As for beds, both Coada and Lenard Cable placed one in the northeast corner. Lenard remembered the second bed in the northwest corner while Coada placed it towards the center of the west wall. It is not inconceivable that beds were moved according to the season.

#### 4. Upstairs Rooms

As on the first floor, the three upstairs rooms were, above all, sleeping rooms. In fact, the second story contained nothing but beds, with the exception of one bureau that Lenard Cable remembered in the northeast corner of the east room. In the northwest corner of this room was a double bed. Coada pictured the east room somewhat differently, without a bureau and with two beds, one in each north corner.

All agreed that the middle room contained, in its northeast corner, the only rope bed in the house. Shields described this as a three-quarter sized bed.

In the westernmost room were two beds, one in each west corner.

## 5. Pre-1955 Areas

### A. Kitchen

During the early decades of this century, the kitchen contained what all referred to as a "step stove" or a box stove with a stepped cooking surface. Vented into the fireplace chimney, this stove dated from Lenard's earliest memories of the house, if not earlier. In 1936, John and Jane Coada replaced this with a "bungalow" stove, named after the warming oven located over its cooking surface. They purchased this stove in Maryville.

The fireplace itself was also equipped for cooking with an iron crane fitted into one of its sides, and there was at least one large dutch oven. This cast-iron "baker" operated most efficiently with coals, preferably those burned from oak bark, piled on the lid as well as underneath.<sup>9</sup> Shields remembered one or two smaller dutch ovens in addition.

One long relished dutch oven product was Aunt Becky's corn bread. Made with buttermilk, soda, and salt, Jane Coada remembered corn bread and sweet milk sometimes serving as a meal in themselves. Some variations were "gritted bread" made from grated corn, and "hoe-cake," or corn meal, water, and salt baked on the blade of a hoe.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 82.

10. Ibid.

Jane Coada related these recipes in 1962 to the late Justice William O. Douglas. Additional dishes that she had prepared at the Cable house included pork hash, made by slow cooking a hog's head, feet, and liver, grinding it and adding salt, ground red peppers, and sage; "white sop," or gravy made with unbrowned flour; and "red-eye" gravy, made with ham or sausage drippings and water. Finally, she described Becky Cable's appie pie:

Want to know about Aunt Becky's apple pie? Make plain biscuit dough. Take a small piece, roll it out to fit a square bread pan, place it in a greased pan, have apples cooked and mashed and sweetened, put it on the dough, roll out another piece, place on top of the apples, bake until done. Then, cut in squares, lift out on platter, and eat with lots of good butter.<sup>11</sup>

Lenard Cable remembered a single table in the kitchen while John Coada described both "cook" and dining tables here. A bench was located along the back side of the latter. The tables stood more or less across from one another, on each long side of the room. Usually, tables were left uncovered, oilcloths being used occasionally during the later years.

While only John Coada remembered cupboards in the kitchen, it is assumed that some provision for storage existed here prior to Coada's arrival at the house. Coada located a safe, not unlike that in the front room, in the southeast corner. A second cupboard stood

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11. Ibid.

in the southwest corner. This one measured approximately three feet across and displayed open shelves arranged in two sections, the uppermost of which was stepped back.

The only means of refrigeration was the well, where buckets of milk were stored in the summer. Butter was a staple in this house and a cedar churn was in use at least three days out of each week. A common use for butter in Cades Cove was for making soap. The other primary ingredient was drippings from wood ashes.<sup>12</sup>

Kitchen implements used at the Cable house that remain in the Park collection include a large dough tray made of buckeye that displays a tin patch fashioned from a baking powder can (acc. 133, cat. 284); a gourd, hollowed out at the front, that may have been used to hold salt (acc. 133, cat. 38); and a cast-iron, wall-mounted, coffee grinder labeled, "No 6/PAT JUNE 84/ARCADE MFG CO" (acc. 133, cat. 317).

#### B. Back Porch

All remembered well a large table that sat on the porch year round. It was, according to Shields, the primary fixture of the summer dining room. To Lenard Cable, it recreated visions of threshing time with "a whole ring of people sitting way around." The table

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12. Randolph A. Shields, The Cades Cove Story (Gatlinburg, Tennessee: Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association, 1977), pp. 28-29; Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 68.



measured four by eight feet. Coadá remembered that either this table, or one of the kitchen tables, was homemade of walnut. A long bench stood on its back side with chairs on the ends and front side. Apparently, these were just like the slat-back chairs found elsewhere in the house.

As has been seen, Shields' and Cable's images of the porch's configuration may be in error. While both located this oversized table along the kitchen wall, Coadá's placement of it along the front room wall is probably correct.

Also found on the porch was the household washstand, simply formed of a wooden shelf on which sat a bucket of water, a dipper, and a wash pan. Shields remembered a nail, or a peg, located close at hand for a towel, and he recalled vaguely some sort of soap dish. Winter and summer, this was the only washing facility in the house. Used water was simply tossed onto the ground. Shields located this washstand on the wall of the front room, while Coadá placed it beneath the window opening in the porch's lattice wall. Certainly, the latter would have been a more convenient spot from which to dispose of water.

## PART E - RECOMMENDED FURNISHINGS

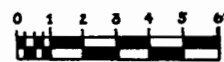
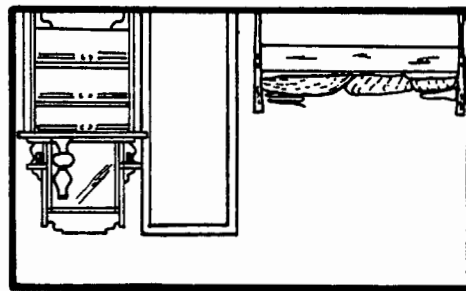
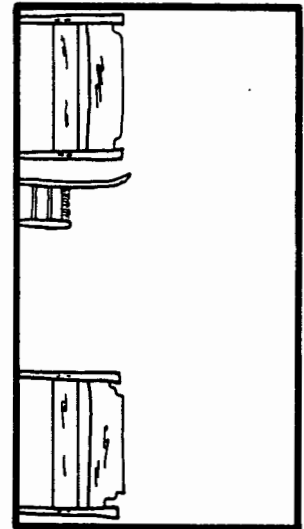
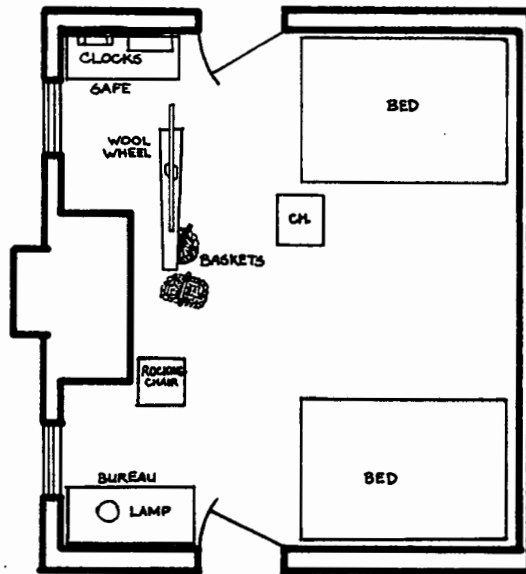
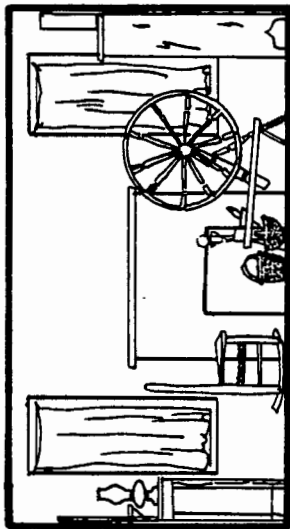
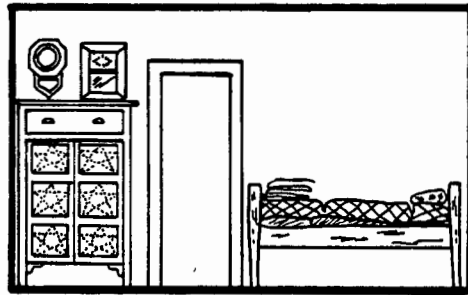
The following recommendations for refurnishing are tailored to the 1900-1920 period and are based primarily on the oral information recorded in Part D. The plan includes the lower front, middle, and back rooms, and the front porch. It includes neither the upper rooms where structural concerns prohibit visitation, nor the no longer existent kitchen and back porch.

Assuming that Becky Cable maintained into the twentieth century furniture that she used during the nineteenth, most of the recommended furniture predates 1900 and surviving pieces associated with the house bear out this assumption. Textiles, on the other hand, require replacement more often than furniture and the recommended textiles date primarily between 1910 and 1920.

The visitation season at Cades Cove is limited more or less to June 1 through November 1 and the recommendations reflect this time of year.

The minimum of architectural restoration suggested prior to the implementation of this plan is the removal of paper and paint on interior walls and ceilings in the lower rooms, and the restoration to full doors what are now dutch doors on the south face of the house.

The plan was prepared with the understanding that, with the exception of textiles, refurnishing can be accomplished out of the Park collections. Therefore, cost estimates are included for textiles only.



GREGG-CABLE HOUSE  
FRONT ROOM

metric patterns. Tie openings should be left either at one end or, lengthwise, down the middle. An additional inner tick that is invisible to the visitor will make for easier maintenance.

Pillow sizes in the early decades of the twentieth century ranged from 19 by 28 inches to 23 by 28 inches.<sup>1</sup>

Location: Front room, on beds

Documentation: Part D, pp. 24-25

\* \* \*

Object: Wool blankets (three)

Date: 1890-1920, reproduction

Brief Description: Because the Cable loom has three harnesses only, its products are restricted to the simplest of weaves. Accordingly, these blankets should be of plain-woven or twilled construction, made of single ply wool yarn, undyed or vegetable dyed. Pattern should be limited. Blankets made in Tennessee homes are further discussed in, Richard H. Hulan, "Tennessee Textiles," Antiques (September, 1971), 386-89.

Location: Front room, on beds

Documentation: pp. 22, 24

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1. Sears, Roebuck & Co., Catalogue 130 (Chicago: Sears, Roebuck & Co., 1915).

Object: Quilt

Date: 1890-1920, or reproduction thereof

Brief Description: Three quilts seen in use in the Walker Sisters home form local prototypes (Madden and Jones, "Walker Sisters Home," Figs. 16, 17).

Location: Front room, on south bed

Documentation: Part D, p. 24

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Object: Bureau with looking glass, Cable Collection, GRSM, acc. 523; cat. 10934

Date: c. 1890

Brief Description: Factory-made poplar bureau in Eastlake style.

Location: Front room, southwest corner

Documentation: Part D, pp. 25-26

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Object: Tin paneled safe

Date: 1890-1900

Brief Description: The safe may be representative of either a home or factory-made piece. If homemade, the safe should reflect construction methods seen in the Cable bureau and looking glass supposed to have been made by Bill Boring (Cable Collection, GRSM, acc. 523; cat. 10932).

Such a piece would most likely exhibit board, rather than frame and panel, construction. Contouring and/or brackets might be in

evidence at the lower edges. Suitable woods are poplar or walnut, or walnut with secondary uses of poplar.

A factory-made example might contain a single drawer across the top. Most likely, it would be constructed of pine, with panels framed by bead molded boards. Bracketing inside the feet is optional.

Location: Front room, northwest corner

Documentation: Part D, p. 26

\* \* \*

Object: Clock, Cable Collection, GRSM, acc. 523;  
cat. 10946

Date: c. 1880

Brief Description: Ogee-framed shelf clock operated by weights, made by the William L. Gilbert Clock Company, Winstead, Connecticut.

Location: Front room, on safe

Documentation: Part D, pp. 26-27

\* \* \*

Object: Clock

Date: c. 1890

Brief Description: Octagonal, spring-wound, wall clock with pendulum case below. The prototype is the clock owned by Lenard Cable.

Location: Front room, hanging above safe

Documentation: Part D, p. 27

Object: Kerosene lamp  
Date: 1890-1920  
Brief Description: Stand lamp with pressed glass base (with or without pattern), and bead-top chimney. The lamp's height may range from 16 to 19 inches.  
Location: Front room, on bureau with looking glass  
Documentation: Part D, p. 29

\* \* \*

Object: Lamp mat  
Date: 1910-1920, reproduction  
Brief Description: Homemade cotton mat with knitted wool border.  
Location: Front room, under kerosene lamp  
Documentation: Period sources

\* \* \*

Object: Rocking chair  
Date: 1890-1900  
Brief Description: Slat back, homemade rocking chair with arms, made of hickory, and with hickory splint seat.  
Location: Front room, south side of fireplace  
Documentation: Part D, p. 27

\* \* \*

Object: Side chair  
Date: 1890-1900  
Brief Description: Homemade slat-back chair, made of hickory, with splint seat of poplar bark, oak, or hickory.

Location: Front room, near wool wheel

Documentation: Part D, pp. 27-28

\* \* \*

Object: Wool wheel, Cable Collection, GRSM, acc. 523;  
cat. 10931

Date: 1875-1890

Brief Description: Becky Cable's wool wheel appears in Figures 5 and 6. It is constructed of pine and poplar with an oak or hickory wheel mounted on a cherry hub.

Location: Front room, in front of fireplace

Documentation: Part D, p. 28, and photographs

\* \* \*

Object: Baskets (two)

Date: 1890-1920

Brief Description: Homemade white oak splint baskets. Locally made baskets are seen in, Madden and Jones, "Walker Sisters Home," Figs. 15-18, 20. One basket might contain wool in its final stages of carding, and the other, spun wool. Additional likely contents include a paper of gold-eye steel needles and one or more spools of mercerized cotton thread.

Location: Front room, near wool wheel

Documentation: Madden and Jones, "Walker Sisters Home"



Object: Knitting needles (two or more pairs)

Date: 1890-1920

Brief Description: Montgomery Ward advertised two varieties of knitting needles in 1889: 1. bone needles, 12 inches long and with nickel plated centers (@ \$.15 pair); 2. polished wood needles, ranging in length from 14 to 16 inches (@ \$.10 pair). Needles marketed by the same firm in 1914 differed little with the addition of a new, and very inexpensive, form--steel needles that were sold five pairs in a wooden case (@ \$.30 a set).<sup>2</sup> Given the amount of time that Becky Cable spent knitting, it is assumed that she would have equipped herself with the most efficient types of needles available --namely, bone or steel needles. The needles exhibited here should vary in size.

Location: Front room, near wool wheel

Documentation: Part C, p. 22

\* \* \*

Object: Fireplace equipment--poker and shovel;  
ash hopper

Date: c. 1890

Brief Description: Fireplace tools at the end of the century were available in iron, steel, nickel plate, or a combination thereof, while ash hoppers were, typically, japanned tin.

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2. Montgomery Ward & Co., Buyers' Guide and Catalogue, no. 45, Spring and Summer, 1889 (Chicago, Ill: Montgomery Ward & Co., 1889); Montgomery Ward & Co., New York. Catalogue No. 83 (New York: Montgomery Ward & Co., 1914).

Location: Front room, near fireplace

Documentation: Period sources

\* \* \*

Object: Window curtains (two pair)

Date: 1910-1920, reproduction

Brief Description: Curtains made of cheesecloth or simply patterned white muslin, measuring the height of the window. A casing at the top of each curtain will accommodate a string, the ends of which are nailed to the window frame.

Location: Front room

Documentation: Part D, pp.28-29

\* \* \*

Object: Miscellaneous items of clothing

Date: 1910-1920

Brief Description: Becky Cable's habitation of this room can be suggested by a pair of shoes, hand knit socks, and a straw hat, the last hung from a nail. The hat should approximate those seen in Figure 4.

Location: Front room

Documentation: Part D, p. 30

\* \* \*

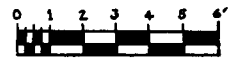
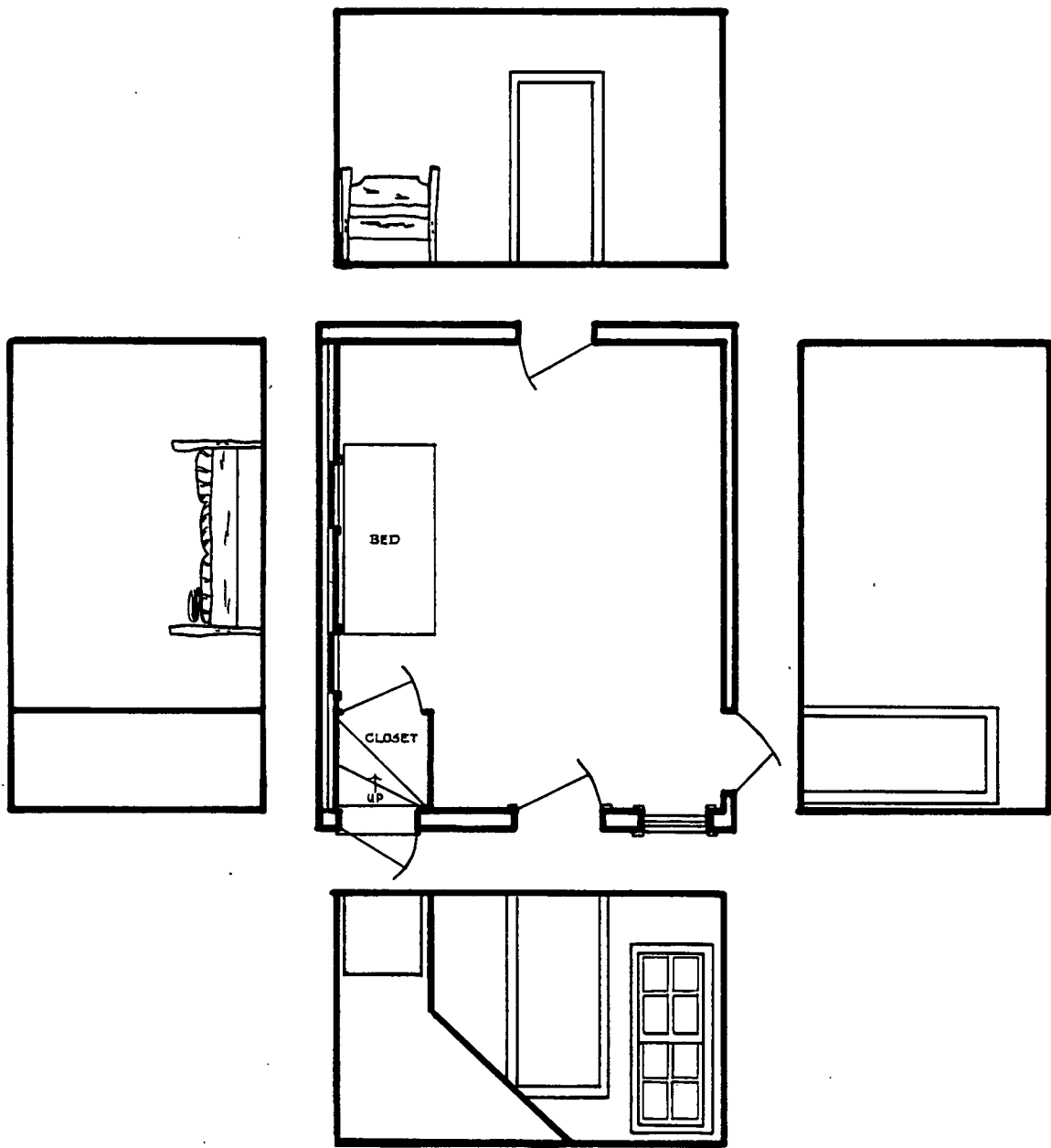
Object: Calendar

Date: 1910-1920

Brief Description: Hung from a nail on the wall should be a local calendar, preferably one labeled by a Maryville hardware firm.

Location: Front room

Documentation: The inclusion of a calendar is based upon the intense involvement of this household with farming, implying more than a mild reliance upon seasonal changes.



GREGG-CABLE HOUSE  
MIDDLE ROOM

Middle Room

Object: Bed

Date: 1890-1900

Brief Description: See description on p. 39 of beds recommended for the front room.

Location: Middle room, west wall

Documentation: Part D, pp. 24, 30

\* \* \*

Object: Mattress

Date: 1915-1920, reproduction

Brief Description: See description on pp. 39-40 of bedding recommended for front room.

Location: Middle room, on bed

Documentation: Part D, pp. 24-25, 30

\* \* \*

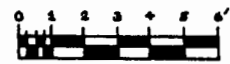
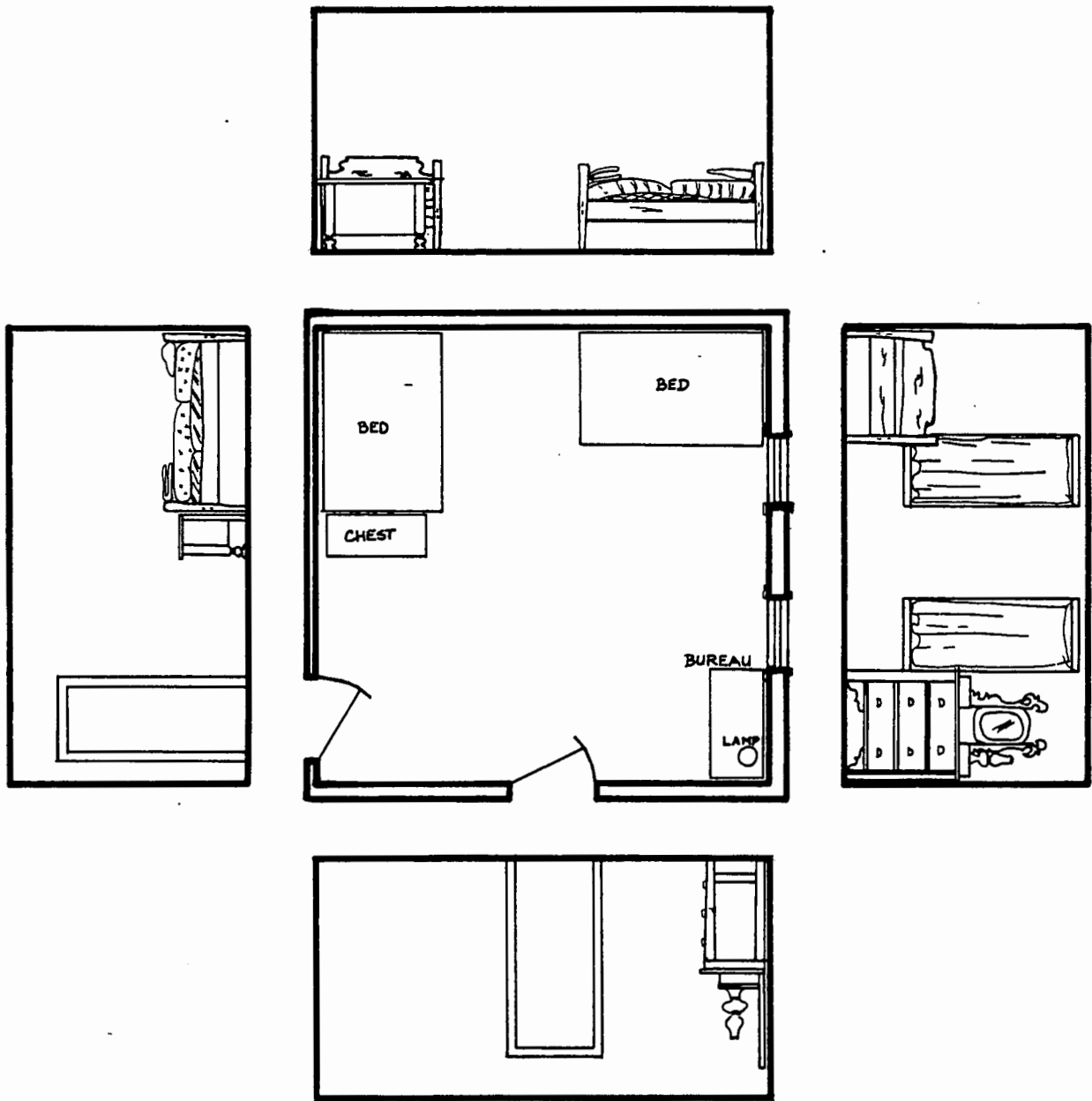
Object: Wool blanket

Date: 1890-1920, reproduction

Brief Description: See description on p. 40 of blankets recommended for front room.

Location: Middle room, on bed

Documentation: pp. 22, 24



GREGG-CABLE HOUSE  
BACK ROOM

Back Room

Object: Beds (two)  
Date: 1890-1900  
Brief Description: See description on p. 39 of beds recommended for the front room.  
Location: Back room, northeast and northwest corners  
Documentation: Part D, pp. 24, 32

\* \* \*

Object: Bedding--straw mattresses (two); feather mattresses (two); feather pillows (two)  
Date: 1915-1920, reproduction  
Brief Description: See description on p. 39-40 of bedding recommended for front room.  
Location: Back room, on beds  
Documentation: Part D, pp. 24-25

\* \* \*

Object: Wool blankets (three)  
Date: 1890-1920, reproduction  
Brief Description: See description on p. 40 of blankets recommended for front room.  
Location: Back room, on beds  
Documentation: pp. 22, 24

Object: Clothes chest  
Date: c. 1890  
Brief Description: Homemade, walnut chest formed of boards joined at the corners by square posts, and with turned feet. The prototype is the chest made by Bill Boring and owned by John Coad.

Location: Back room, at end of westernmost bed

Documentation: Part D, p. 31

\* \* \*

Object: Bureau with looking glass, Cable Collection, GRSM, acc. 523; cat. 10932

Date: c. 1890

Brief Description: Walnut and pine bureau made by Bill Boring.

Location: Back room, east wall

Documentation: Part D, pp. 31-32

\* \* \*

Object: Window curtains (two pairs)

Date: 1910-1920, reproduction

Brief Description: See description on p. 46 of curtains recommended for front room.

Location: Back room

Documentation: Part D, pp. 28-29



Object: Kerosene lamp  
Date: 1890-1920  
Brief Description: See description on p. 43 of kerosene lamp recommended for front room.  
Location: Back room, on bureau with looking glass  
Documentation: Part D, p. 29

\* \* \*

Object: Lamp mat  
Date: 1910-1920, reproduction  
Brief Description: See description on p. 43 of lamp mat recommended for front room.  
Location: Back room, under kerosene lamp  
Documentation: Period sources

\* \* \*

Object: Miscellaneous toilet articles  
Date: 1900-1920  
Brief Description: Women's toiletries such as a hair brush, hair pins, and a hard rubber pocket comb.  
Location: Back room, on bureau with looking glass  
Documentation: Period sources

### Front Porch

The 1936 photograph of Becky Cable's front porch (Figure 4) provides a rare glimpse of exterior household decoration. The porch should be fitted out, insofar as possible, in accordance with this photograph which shows five to six vines--possibly morning glories--climbing on twine (or cotton string) out of containers set on the ground directly in front of the porch. Balanced on the porch railing are at least two boards that support six or seven more household-containers-become-planters. It is difficult to identify these last plants. It should be mentioned here that Lenard Cable remembered roses planted around the house. The planters are assorted kitchen vessels ranging from enameled tin dishpans and coffee pots, used food tins, and stoneware crocks, to wooden boxes which retain their paper labels.

Cost Estimates--Textiles

(Estimates anticipate price inflations through 1981)

<u>Object</u>		<u>Estimate</u>
Bedding:		
9 ticks, printed cotton	@ \$ 30.	\$270.
9 inner ticks, polyester	@ \$ 10.	\$ 90.
4 pillow ticks, printed cotton	@ \$ 10.	\$ 40.
7 wool blankets	@ \$100.	\$700.
Quilt		\$600.
4 Pairs Window Curtains:		
Cheesecloth	@ \$ 5.50	\$ 22.
Patterned muslin	@ \$ 40.	\$160.
2 Lamp mats	@ \$ 15.	\$ 30.

PART F - SPECIAL INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND  
PROTECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan requires little maintenance beyond routine house-keeping. The installation of visitor barriers in the refurbished rooms will reduce maintenance needs and protect the furnishings. Recommended are three to four-foot barriers that allow the visitor about a three-foot entrance into the rooms. The barriers must, of course, provide access into the rooms by the Park staff. Protective flooring duplicating the original floors should be installed on the public side of the barriers. Portable items, such as the kerosene lamps, can be secured further with microcrystalline wax. While infrequent burning of the lamps and fireplace by the Park staff will convey a desirable used appearance, neither should be lit during visitation hours.

Housekeeping should follow practices set forth in Lewis, Manual for Museums. A suggested schedule is outlined briefly here.

<u>Type of Object</u>	<u>Treatment</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
Structure--walls, floors, ceilings	Vacuum, using dusting brush where applicable	Monthly
Windows	Dust with untreated cloth	Monthly
	Wash	Twice Yearly
Wooden furniture, varnished	Dust with treated cloth; or vacuum with dusting attachment	Weekly

<u>Type of Object</u>	<u>Treatment</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
Wooden furniture, unvarnished	Dust with untreated cloth; or vacuum with dusting attachment (Note: Splint seats in fragile condi- tion should be vacuumed through a screen, using brushless attachment, and low suction.)	Weekly
Clocks	Dust cases with treated cloth, and face with untreated cloth	Weekly
Baskets	Vacuum with dusting attach- ment (Note: Fragile bas- kets require the use of a screen.)	Monthly
Wool, spun and unspun	Dry-clean (Note: The un- spun wool should be re- placed periodically.)	Yearly
Mattress and pillow ticks	Plump to maintain shape	Daily
	Vacuum through a screen, using brushless attach- ment and low suction	Twice Monthly
	Dry-clean, or wash by hand  (Note: Periodically, the ticks should be checked on the inside. If in- fested, fillings should be replaced. Eventually, the ticks can be expected to fade and should be re- placed.)	Yearly
Wool blankets, quilt	Vacuum through a screen, using brushless attach- ment, and low suction	Twice Monthly
	Dry-clean	Yearly

<u>Type of Object</u>	<u>Treatment</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
Window curtains	Take down and vacuum through a screen, using brushless attachment and low suction.	Monthly
Kerosene lamps	Dust with untreated cloth	Weekly
Chimney	Wash	Twice Yearly
	Treat according to procedure outlined in <u>Manual for Museums</u> , pp. 256-57.	Yearly
Mirrors	Dust with untreated cloth	Weekly
	Wash	Twice Yearly

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Figures 1, 2, and 3.

Cable House, c. 1940

(Photographs courtesy of Great Smoky  
Mountains National Park)



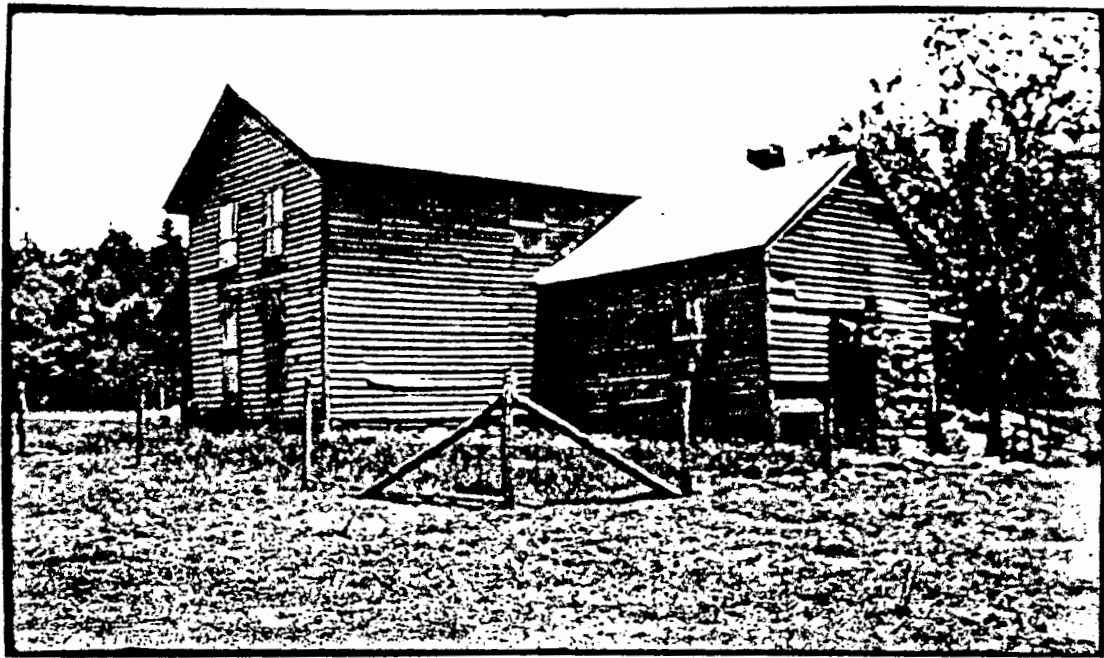


Figure 4.

Cable House, Front Porch, c. 1936

(Photograph courtesy of Great Smoky  
Mountains National Park)



Figure 5.

Becky Cable, c. 1936

(Photograph courtesy of Great Smoky  
Mountains National Park)

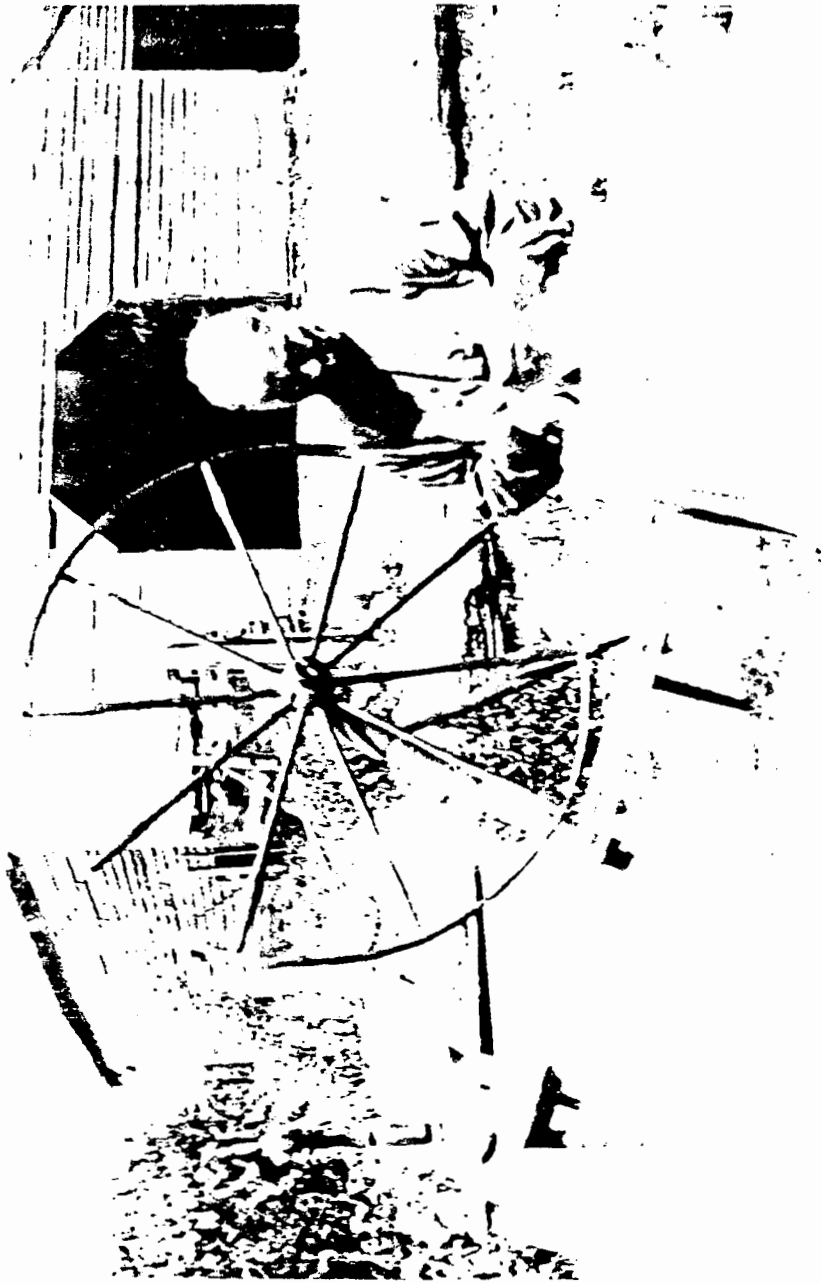




Figure 6.

Becky Cable, c. 1936

(Photograph courtesy of Great Smoky  
Mountains National Park)



