

CADES COVE



AUTO TOUR

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK
TENNESSEE / NORTH CAROLINA

What You See...

Man became part of Cades Cove beyond reach of human memory. Indians hunted and farmed here for uncounted centuries, but hardly any sign of them remains. White settlers crowded the Indians out of the Cove and their sign is everywhere: buildings and roads, apple trees and fences, daffodills and footpaths. Cades Cove is now an open air museum, set aside to preserve the material culture of those who last lived here. The 11-mile loop road follows many of the grades and turns of the old wagon roads, fording a stream now and then. Along the way you are likely to see some wildlife: deer and wild turkey year-round, lots of groundhogs in the summer. The cattle grazing here help us to keep the Cove from returning to forest.

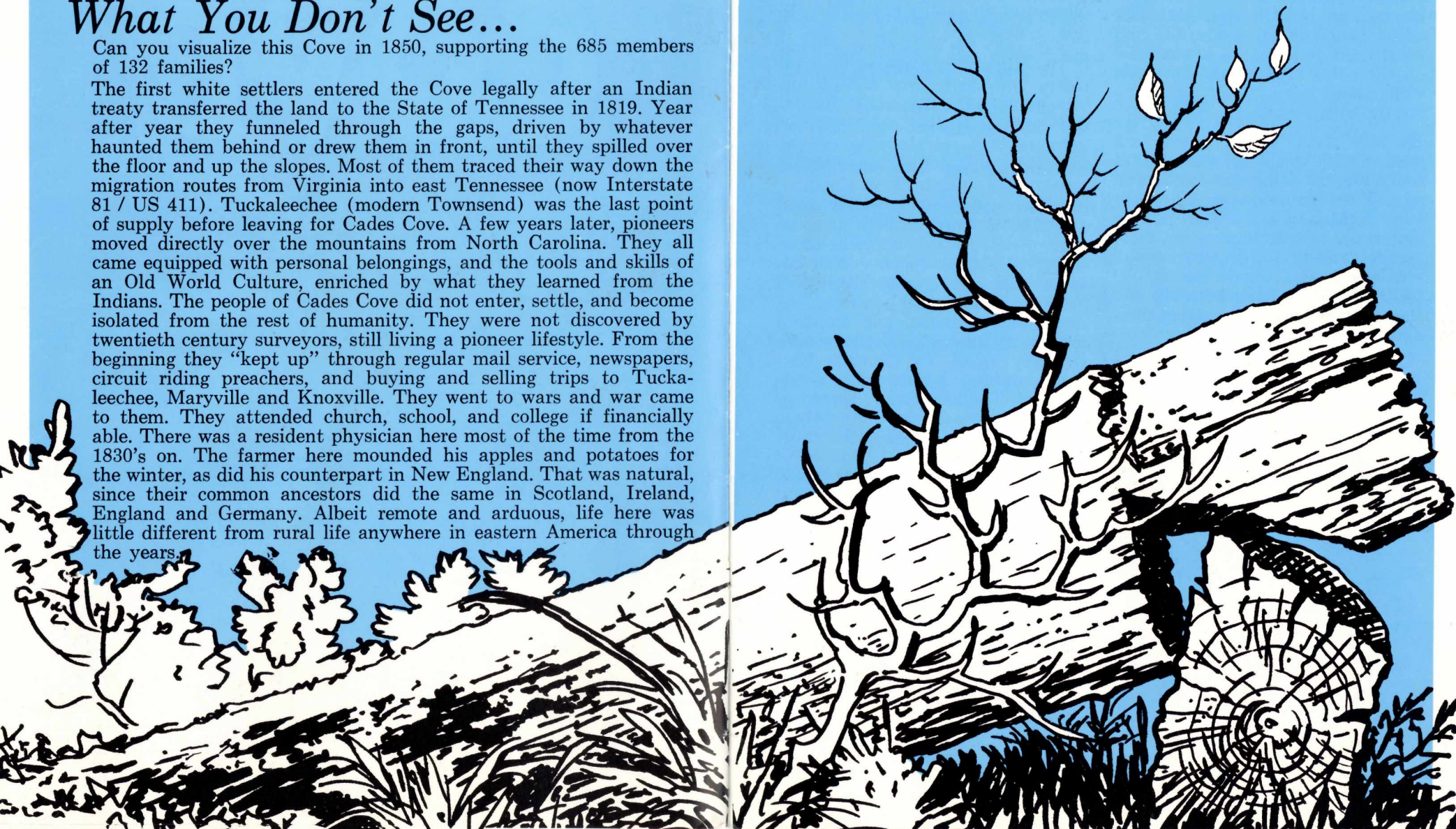
What You Don't See...

Can you visualize this Cove in 1850, supporting the 685 members of 132 families?

The first white settlers entered the Cove legally after an Indian treaty transferred the land to the State of Tennessee in 1819. Year after year they funneled through the gaps, driven by whatever haunted them behind or drew them in front, until they spilled over the floor and up the slopes. Most of them traced their way down the migration routes from Virginia into east Tennessee (now Interstate 81 / US 411). Tuckaleechee (modern Townsend) was the last point of supply before leaving for Cades Cove. A few years later, pioneers moved directly over the mountains from North Carolina. They all came equipped with personal belongings, and the tools and skills of an Old World Culture, enriched by what they learned from the Indians. The people of Cades Cove did not enter, settle, and become isolated from the rest of humanity. They were not discovered by twentieth century surveyors, still living a pioneer lifestyle. From the beginning they "kept up" through regular mail service, newspapers, circuit riding preachers, and buying and selling trips to Tuckaleechee, Maryville and Knoxville. They went to wars and war came to them. They attended church, school, and college if financially able. There was a resident physician here most of the time from the 1830's on. The farmer here mounded his apples and potatoes for the winter, as did his counterpart in New England. That was natural, since their common ancestors did the same in Scotland, Ireland, England and Germany. Albeit remote and arduous, life here was little different from rural life anywhere in eastern America through the years.

Please watch for cattle in the road and do not climb over fences or leave gates open. Pull over to the side to stop and read this booklet, so that you will not feel pressed to move on.

Go carefully and observantly into another place and time, one apart from your existence today. See its sights and hear its sounds. Feel the road rise and fall under you. Stop, get out, and sense the rocky paths under your feet. Be carried into the world of Organic Man, when he was a generalist and not a specialist. He lived each day as it came, solving each problem with hands and mind in common harness. Neither master of his environment nor victim of it, he took what nature allowed him to have, and survived.



THE TOUR:

①SETTLEMENT:

In 1820 this was frontier country, newly acquired by the state from the Cherokee Indians. Those who peopled the Cove were mostly farmers who got their land by grant, or bought it from grantholders. They gradually cleared the entire Cove by burning or girdling trees, and planted crops and orchards. Corn, wheat, beans, peas and potatoes were staples, supplemented with apples, peaches and wild foods — blueberries, blackberries, nuts and edible greens. Meat was varied and plentiful. Cattle grazed in summers on the balds high above the Cove, while deer, bear, turkey and domestic hogs ranged the woods.

By 1850 the population grew to a peak of 685. Unable to sustain that much life, the soil began to tire and yield less. In ten years, the population crashed to 275 as people moved out in search of newer, more fertile frontiers. Slowly, human numbers again rose to about 550 by the 1920's, when urban jobs and Park development eliminated residents from the Cove.

②SPARKS LANE:

This lane crosses the Cove from north to south, and was the east end of a "family to family" road system that evolved by the 1840's. It is a short-cut back to the campground or out of the Cove, and is a two-way road.

③OLIVER CABIN (BUILT 1850's):

The Olivers bought land in the Cove in 1826 and this cabin remained in the family until the Park was established.

The house is typical of many found in the Appalachian region, and reflects the skills and techniques brought into the mountains by descendants of British and Germanic immigrants.

The round logs were scored first along their length with a felling axe, then hewn square with a broad axe. The notched corners need no pegs or nails, as gravity locks them together. Chinks (open spaces between the logs) were filled with mud to seal out wind and rain. The stone chimney was laid in mud mortar. Windows and doors are typically small, to conserve heat and maintain the strength of the building. The loft usually served as a children's bedroom and storage area. Split oak shingles, the most common material used here, cover the roof.

The materials to build this house are growing or lying all around you.

④PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH (ORGANIZED 1827):

Some of the earliest settlers organized this institution, and a log building served their religious needs until about 1900. During the Civil War ill feelings and turmoil shut the church down, demonstrating that Cades Cove was not immune to outside influences. In the cemetery lie Olivers, Gregorys, Shields, Anthonys and others who first populated the Cove. Wander among the graves, but not on them! Notice the different kinds of stones, the infant burials and other hints of life as it once was here.

⑤METHODIST CHURCH:

This church was organized in the 1820's, with services held in a log building until 1902. The structure and all its furnishings were the work of one man, J. D. McCampbell, a blacksmith and carpenter, who built it in 115 days for \$115. Afterward, he became its preacher for many years.

Ladies and children entered through the left door, and men through the right one. A divider separated the two groups, causing frustration among courting couples.

⑥HYATT LANE:

This road crossed the Cove from the Peter Cable property, past the old Hyatt land, and joined the Cades Cove Road (Rich Mountain Road). It was a direct route out of the Cove from the southside for those going to Tuckaleechee and Maryville. Hyatt Lane is a two-way road, and can be used as a short-cut back to the campground or out of the Cove.

⑦MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH:

This church was formed in 1839 by members of the Primitive Baptist Church who were dismissed over the question of whether to support missions. During the Civil War it



ceased to meet, but reopened in 1865 with a revised membership list. The present building dates from about 1915, when there were about 100 members.

⑧CADES COVE ROAD (RICH MOUNTAIN ROAD):

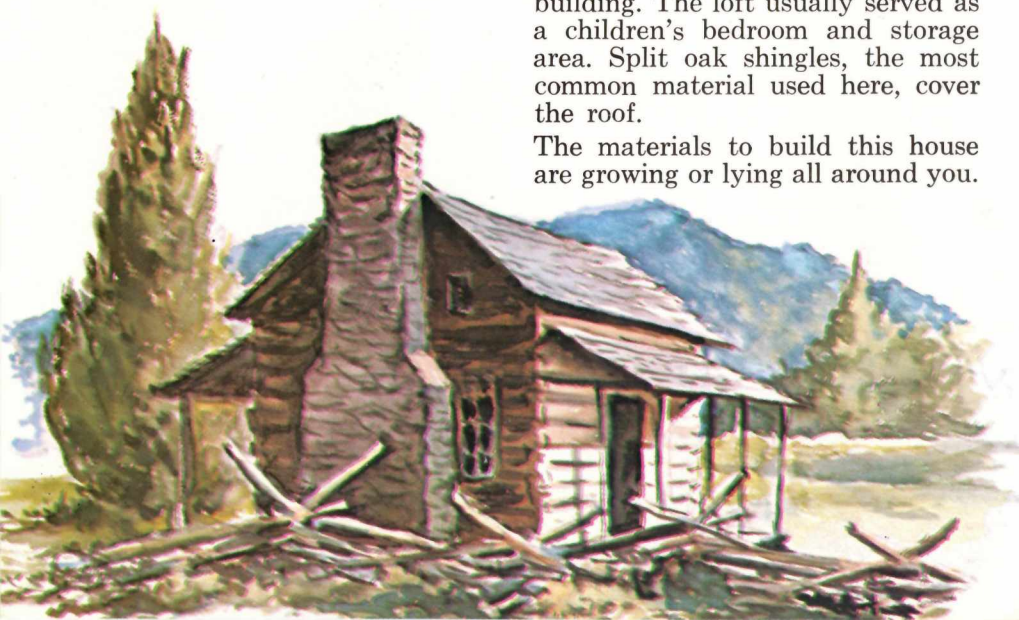
At first an Indian trail, this was the primary route into the Cove for the first settlers. In the 1830's a wagon road was ordered by the county court over basically the same route, and served for nearly a hundred years as the main road to Tuckaleechee. The present road was built in the 1930's by the CCC. It is twelve miles long, with one-way traffic. See you in Townsend!

⑨COOPER ROAD ("JOE" ROAD):

Just a trail in the 1830's, this road gave access to Maryville in pioneer days. Eventually it was improved into a wagon road by Joe Cooper. Hauling goods in and out in good weather was difficult; in rainy weather, almost impossible. Ten or twelve miles per day was good time. Today it is a 10-mile foot trail terminating near the Foothills Parkway.

⑩ABRAMS FALLS PARKING LOT (RIGHT 1/3 MILE):

One of the finer waterfalls in the Park, it is reached by trail only. (Five miles round-trip). Turn right across the foot bridge at the parking lot for the Elijah Oliver Place Trail.





⑪ ELIJAH OLIVER PLACE
($\frac{1}{2}$ MILE TRAIL):

Buildings speak to us clearly if we will listen. They reflect the needs, skills and wealth of the owner, and the dictates of the environment. Today our homes are compact with most of our needs filled under one roof (stove, refrigerator, freezer, pantry, living quarters and garage). We can build of almost any material, in any style, and engineer out the local environment. The life of the pioneer was more scattered out, with whole buildings given over to one function. The smokehouse and corn crib stood between him and hunger. The springhouse cooled his food. The kitchen was often a separate building, while the barn sheltered his livestock from the winds of winter.

The location of the buildings is significant. The house faces west, its southern shoulder against the prevailing winds and summer heat. Nearby, the garden sprawled on a warm south slope convenient to the house. The smokehouse huddles close to the kitchen, secure from animal and human intruders. The springhouse looks down on everything else, insuring a clean water supply; while the barn stands below all other buildings.

Although "they all look alike," there are notable differences in workmanship and use of wood material among these structures. Several show the same hasty selection of logs, with very little hewing and many knots and limb stubs remaining. Another shows much more care in the choice and use of materials, with corner notching of a more durable type and better executed. Yet another is made of split logs, each

half going into an opposite wall, thus reducing the number of trees needed to build it. Do you think that they were all built at the same time by the same man?

There are other things to look for—points of function and beauty. Peg holes in the logs on the porch tell us that a weaver lived here. Smoke from thousands of fires still clings to the kitchen walls. The creamy smoothness of the mud chinking sets off the rough texture of the logs—run your fingertips across both. In the chimney, bees have made a home in someone else's home. The spring—in winter the water's so cold it'll crack your teeth. Pause, and feel this place with your whole being.

Everything around you here speaks of an organic society, one living in and off of things that could be found or grown at home. The human settler who lived among these logs was almost as much a child of the forest as the other beasts. He pressed closer to the breast of the earth and danced with the seasons far more than we. Like the beaver and the paper hornet, he built shelter from native woods. He and the bear robbed bee trees and berry bushes. He took live prey, as did other predators. These buildings merely refined man's life here. Rugged as it was, the pioneer at least understood the how's and why's of his existence. If a dough bowl split, he knew the cause lay in the seasoning of the wood, not in the miscalculation of some unknown plastics technician in a far-away land.

⑫ CABLE MILL AREA:

Except for the mill, old buildings in this complex were assembled here from other places in the Park. The store and blacksmith shop were constructed in recent years to represent what might have been here.

COUNTRY STORE

About 75 years ago the community of Cades Cove was populous enough to support several general stores. Although remote, these stores offered a wide variety of goods. Hardware and housewares comprised much of the stock. The farmer bought harness, tools, guns, feed and seed. His wife purchased tableware, kitchen utensils, lamp oil and other necessities. Clothing not made at home could be bought at the store. In either case, the storekeeper came out ahead because he sold cloth, needles and thread in addition to readymade stuff.

Although most food was grown at home, the seeds often came from the store: bean, corn, potato, lettuce, beet and turnip were some that passed over the counter. Chewing gum and candy were good for a sweet tooth, while paregoric and laudanum (opium derivatives) dulled the pain of toothache and bowel disorders.

Notions of many kinds struck the fancy and the habit of the old-timer. He smoked, chewed and dipped his tobacco (so did she), and tapped his foot to the music of a French harp, jew's harp or banjo. The "store man" had them all.

Stocking the store was done by wagon hauling, and a customer occasionally settled his account by bringing in a load of merchandise. In a limited-cash economy there were other ways of settling up: chickens, eggs, washing clothes, cutting firewood, mending fences and repairing barrels. Even haystacks still in the field were traded too. The general store is still with us. The department store and the mall fill our needs, but they lack something. There is no smell of tobacco juice searing on the stove, no hound on the porch, no apples in a wooden barrel or cat hole in the door.

BLACKSMITH SHOP

Iron was an important material in pioneer life. The blacksmith, its master, was a requisite figure in most communities. He pounded violently on material from the depths of Hell, beside a fire from the same place, to forge a graceful candlestick. From under his hammer came the tools of life: axes, adzes, drawknives and froes; bolts and bits, chains and hooks; the bull tongue plow and

the wagon tire. He made and repaired the bits and pieces that cut, dug, hung, dragged, bore through, or held together most everything else.

The substance of his work, coal (or charcoal) and iron, were scarce and valuable. Iron from the fire is an incredibly plastic material. Heated, formed into a tool and cooled, it serves man for a long time. Worn out, it can be re-heated, re-formed, and given a new use and life. A simple blank becomes a spike,

then a meathook, a pothook, a kettle bail and a handful of screws; so on endlessly until time forgets its original form. The blacksmith — a community could not easily survive without him.

JOHN CABLE MILL (ABOUT 1870)

Man needs food, clothing and shelter to survive. Food is the most critical, and corn was a central fact of life to the pioneer. A native American plant, its grain, stalks and foliage fed man



(CABLE MILL AREA Cont.)

and beast. Corn grew dependably with minimum attention, frequently under poor circumstances. It was a natural food choice for the farmer who had other things to do besides nursemaid his crops. Corn was used for a variety of breads, cakes, mushes and a potent beverage. But first, it had to be ground into meal.

In the Smokies, single family "tub" mills were numerous, but could grind only about a bushel per day. Though small, they were complex machines and the tools and skills needed to build one were not universally owned.

Where the need and environment were favorable, a large mill powered by a waterwheel was built and became an important feature of a community. It could grind grain much faster than a number of small tub mills. A sawmill was often operated off the same mainshaft (and was here), adding another service to the community. The mill was one of the few examples of specialization in a time and place where family self-sufficiency was the rule.

SORGHUM MILL

The sorghum mill stands in contrast to the Cable Mill. After the juice was squeezed from the sorghum canes, it was boiled down on the furnace into a heavy syrup. Along with honey, sorghum molasses was a popular sweetener. The mill is powered by horse or mule.

The pioneer had only two energy sources: water power and animal power. One was strong but stationary; the other relatively weak, but mobile. Food and energy are at the center of our lives. Well into this century, mills like these continued to serve the mountain people, operating on primitive power alone.

GREGG-CABLE HOUSE

The life of a building, like that of a person, often takes many turns. Built by Leason Gregg in 1879, this may have been the first framed house in the Cove. The lumber was sawed on the sash saw portion of John Cable's mill (now missing). Moved once and altered as the need arose, it served its owners as a store, boarding house and private residence. A kitchen wing once extended out from the rear.

Aunt Becky Cable later bought the place and lived here until her death in 1940. She helped her brother manage the store, kept boarders, farmed her land, cared for the orphaned children of her brother, and died at 96.

⑬ HENRY WHITEHEAD PLACE (TURN RIGHT, .7 MILE):

The ultimate log house, built in 1895. From logs sawn square at a nearby mill, a tight-fitting crib was built with hardly any spaces left to chink. The corners are worked to near perfection. Most of the interior log faces, ceiling joists and boards were dressed with a hand plane. How many endless strokes brought them up to this smoothness? The wall toward the prevailing wind was boarded over, to keep out wind and rain, and to preserve the chinking. A brick chimney, rare for the Smokies, was made of clay moulded

and fired on the property. A transition house, this one is a beautiful blend of handwork and sawmill technology.

By contrast, the older cabin was built almost entirely with a felling axe under emergency circumstances. Rough-hewn logs with jagged ends, and the rubble stone chimney show the most hasty kind of construction.

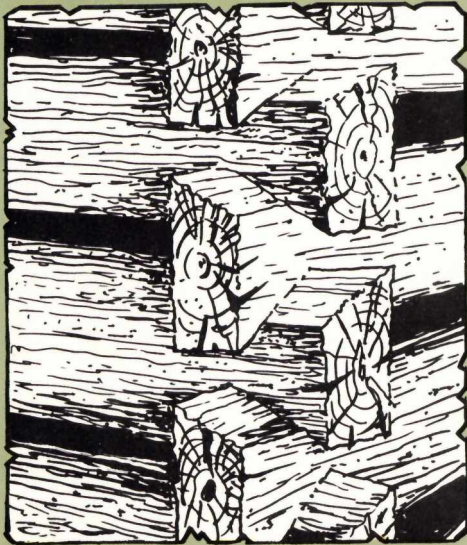
This pair of dwellings represents about the roughest and finest of log construction in the Smokies.

WILDLIFE IN CADES COVE

Men and wildlife have long shared the riches of this Cove, and still do. Some animals were reduced in number by human use, such as farming and hunting. Other species increased because man's interference with nature incidentally improved certain types of habitats. Deer, ground hog and wild turkey are often seen in the fields and at the edges of the forest. Other animals leave telltale tracks, nests, burrows and similar signs. Put your eyes and ears to work as you go through the Cove!

⑭ PINE-OAK NATURE TRAIL
(½ MILE LOOP):

Throughout the southern Appalachians there are thousands of acres of forests dominated by a mixture of pine and oak trees. Because Uncle Andy Shields liked to sit on the porch and look at them, some of the large specimens survived axe and saw. Go look at them yourself.

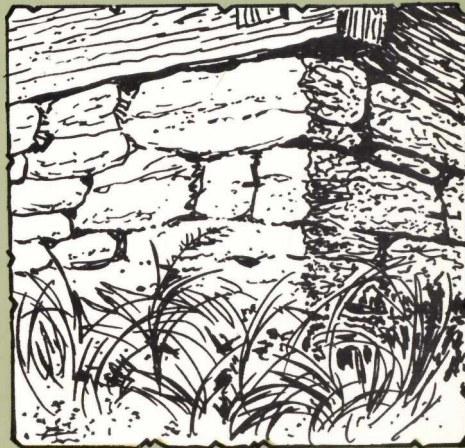


⑮ HYATT LANE:

If you wish to return to the Cable Mill area, turn here and go back across the Cove.

⑯ DAN LAWSON-PETER
CABLE HOUSE (ABOUT 1855):

Some of the best bladework left in the Park is in this house. The interior faces of the logs were hewn smooth with an adze, and ceiling joists were dressed and beaded with a plane. Chinks are battened inside with beveled poplar boards, and outside with brick bats and clay.



⑰ GEORGE CAUHRON
HOUSE:

Built in 1908, this is a good example of the transition from log to framed construction in the Cove. Despite all the romance surrounding the pioneer log cabin, a framed house is what the average family aspired to, and eventually built. Many framed houses, stores, churches and schools were built in the Cove from about 1880 onward. This home still retains the flavor of the past with its back porch well, food cellar and smokehouse.



⑱ PERMITTEE'S QUARTERS:

A few people still live in Cades Cove. This residence is occupied by one of the families that farms the land under Special Use Permit. It is their cattle that help keep the Cove from returning to forest. Please respect the fences, property and privacy of this family.

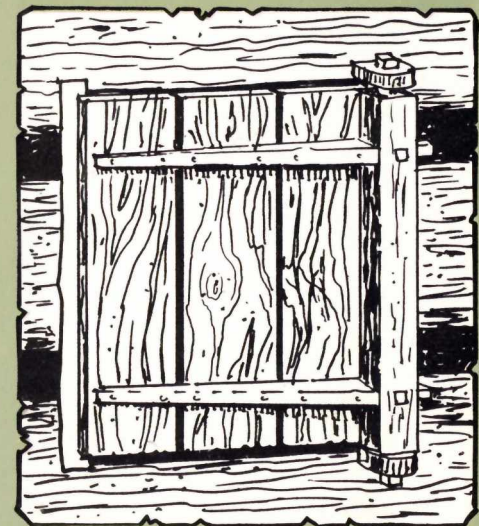
⑲ SUNKEN ROAD:

Erosion and long use caused the high banks along this section of road. After each rain a new crop of rocks had to be removed, and ruts filled. Some of the men of the community paid their road taxes by doing maintenance work. Naturally, the road got deeper as years went by.

⑳ TIPTON OLIVER PLACE:
Colonel "Hamp" Tipton had this place built a few years after the Civil War. After living in it a while, he moved back to Tuckaleechee in 1878. James McCauley, a blacksmith, moved into the vacant house while he built his own. The Maryville "Index" cheered McCauley's arrival to Cades Cove, declaring that he would "fill a great need."

The drive-through corn crib immediately beside the road is larger than average. Corn was stored here, still in the shuck, to dry and be ground into meal. Cribbs were nearly always long and narrow, with chinks left open, so that air could circulate freely.

Behind the crib is a reconstruction of a cantilever barn. The great hay loft overhangs on cantilever beams, tapered toward the ends to reduce their weight farther out. This type of barn is found extensively throughout the east Tennessee mountains, and is attributed by some to German influence among the settlers.





②1 CARTER SHIELDS CABIN

Your journey is almost ended. Among the things you saw were part of the finest collection of log buildings in this country, and the miscellaneous tools and trappings of an organic society. They tell you much, but not everything, about those people.

You saw little evidence of extraneous finery, for this was a culture of limited supply and minimum waste. But esthetic pleasure was not unknown or unappreciated. The craftsman found beauty in a well-wrought corner notch or smoothly-adzed parlor beam. The woman expressed herself in a quilt or woven bed coverlet. The object itself was necessary; its beauty not, but there nonetheless. Design and function became one through understanding of the materials at one's fingertips.

For one hundred years life in the Cove proceeded at a pace rarely faster than a walk. This allowed time to see and hear the world one lived in. Cowbells in the pasture, the almost-silent chatter of a horse-drawn mowing machine, a decent "howdy" while walking past a neighbor's house, all were part of that life.

Community involvement on a personal level was a clearly understood obligation. It activated almost automatically in cases where family independence was inadequate. A death in the community brought many people together quickly and efficiently. One made the coffin, another lined it, others dressed and laid out the corpse, while still more dug the grave. Common understanding got the deceased in the ground in twenty-four hours.

A large cabin log weighs several hundred pounds, and one man could not build a house of them without great difficulty. Therefore, when all the materials were assembled on-site, a cabin raising got underway with many neighbors participating.

These and other qualities of our ancestral society can not be put on display. They can only be understood through deliberate contemplation. We leave this last little cabin to your imagination. Rebuild, refurnish, and re-people it in your own mind, and let it say to you whatever it will.



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