

Those who lived very close to the Earth, like the Ogles, had to know her well, heed her signs, and comply with her demands. Compliance brought health and plenty; disregard for the elements meant hunger and misery.



6 getting by with less

The lane now passes by a former cow pasture. When a piece of land was too rocky to be cultivated but not rough enough to remain a woodlot, it was often used as a pasture. When open, with few trees, the land would support enough grass to sustain a few cows. The family derived dairy products from very marginal land. Survival here depended on the use of each kind of ground to its maximum potential. Even the rocks didn't go to waste. They were often laid into walls to keep the cows in place. You'll pass several walls built by the family further down the lane. One of the challenges—and one of the beauties—of living here was that of turning nuisance materials into something useful.

7 leaving the nest

Children, as they married, had to move out of the home. The large pile of stones in front of you is what remains of the "honeymoon" or "weaner" cabin in which newlyweds were

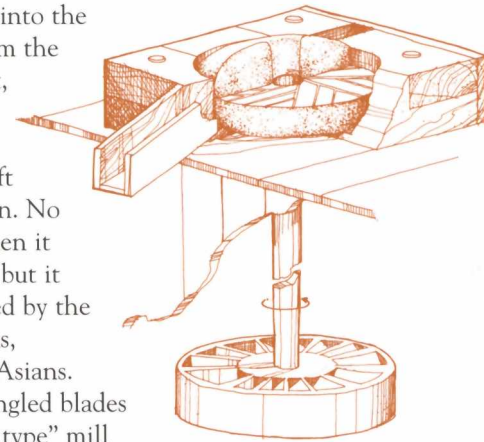


"weaner" cabin

allowed to live for one year while establishing a place of their own. The practice continues today, in modified form. How about the mobile home in Mom and Dad's side yard?

8 breadwinning made easier

Farms located on streams often had a small mill. This type is a "tub" mill, so called because the horizontal water wheel was originally enclosed in a wooden tub-like casing. As European settlers migrated into the mountains from the north and east, they eventually omitted the tub and left the wheel open. No one knows when it was invented, but it was widely used by the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Asians. The sharply angled blades of this "Norse type" mill facilitated ice removal and dumped the tail water faster to improve efficiency. Except for a couple of iron bearings, the materials for this mill were available free in the forest to anyone who knew how to collect and assemble them. Most families preferred to own their own mill if possible, to avoid paying a toll to someone else for grinding their corn into meal. The dozen or more mills on this creek, and the scores of "Mill Creeks" in the Southern mountains, attest to this tendency. Nonetheless, there were those who could not own or operate a mill, so many of the Ogle's neighbors brought their corn here. The toll was usually one gallon per bushel of corn ground. Widows and other unfortunates were not expected to pay. The electrical whine of today's mill is far removed



section view of grinding stone and tub mill

from this device, but its costs are far greater than the dash of the stream, the swish of the wheel, and the soft whirring of these stones.

9 the end of the rope

The limits of land use are finally reached here. This pile of boulders was tossed here by the hand of nature. Hardly anything would grow under, on or beside them, and they could not be moved. They are an enjoyable spot to sit in the shade and relax, though.

10 nature's supermarket

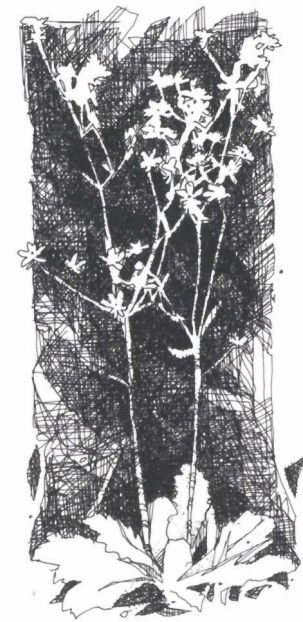
The field crops and animals were not the only resources for those who knew the woods. Here is a sampler of stock in nature's general store. Many plants growing around you were used at home, and others were traded for goods in Gatlinburg.

Hemlock trees are abundant. A tea brewed from its cones could rid one of boils on the body. Juice from the bark, mixed with cornmeal to form a paste, soothed the pain of burns on the skin. The same tannic acid effective on burns was the main ingredient in tanning leather.

The wild black cherry tree was valued for its inner bark, which was rendered into cough syrup. It still is today, but costs more.

The hulls and bark of the butternut tree yielded brown dye for cloth.

When we think of tea today, we think of paper bags with strings and tags. Teas were used here for medicinal purposes, as well as for ordinary beverages. Along the stream bank you



brook lettuce

will find, in summer, a variety of mints and bushes, each valued for its particular kind of tea from leaf, stem or root. Many are packaged and sold today in specialty stores, but you probably could find them growing wild along country roadsides.

There is more to life than meat and potatoes. Spicy fresh salad greens were not in the garden year round, but they do grow here in the stream. Brook lettuce (Saxifrage) and toothwort hide among the rocks, and occasionally poke their leaves through the late winter ice and snow.

11 changing times

This old cornfield is overgrown now with trees and shrubs. No longer a producer of food for a human family, this piece of ground will feed the animals of the forest.

It should also feed the souls of people like yourself, who come here for renewal of spirit. This kind of productivity will never run out; it will always be here.

12 the heart of a farm

If the house was where the living was done, the barn was where the living was made. It was the main activity center of the farm. The draft animals that pulled the wagon and the plow lived there. Dairy cows, the source of milk, butter, and cheese, lodged there. Chickens and pigs hung around it. The tools of living—plows, harness, hoes and rakes, harrows, cradles, saws and hames—were stored in the barn. Upstairs in the loft were the winter's fodder and hay. The barn was so critical to a

farm's operation that families sometimes built it before the house, and its contents were far more valuable than those of the home.

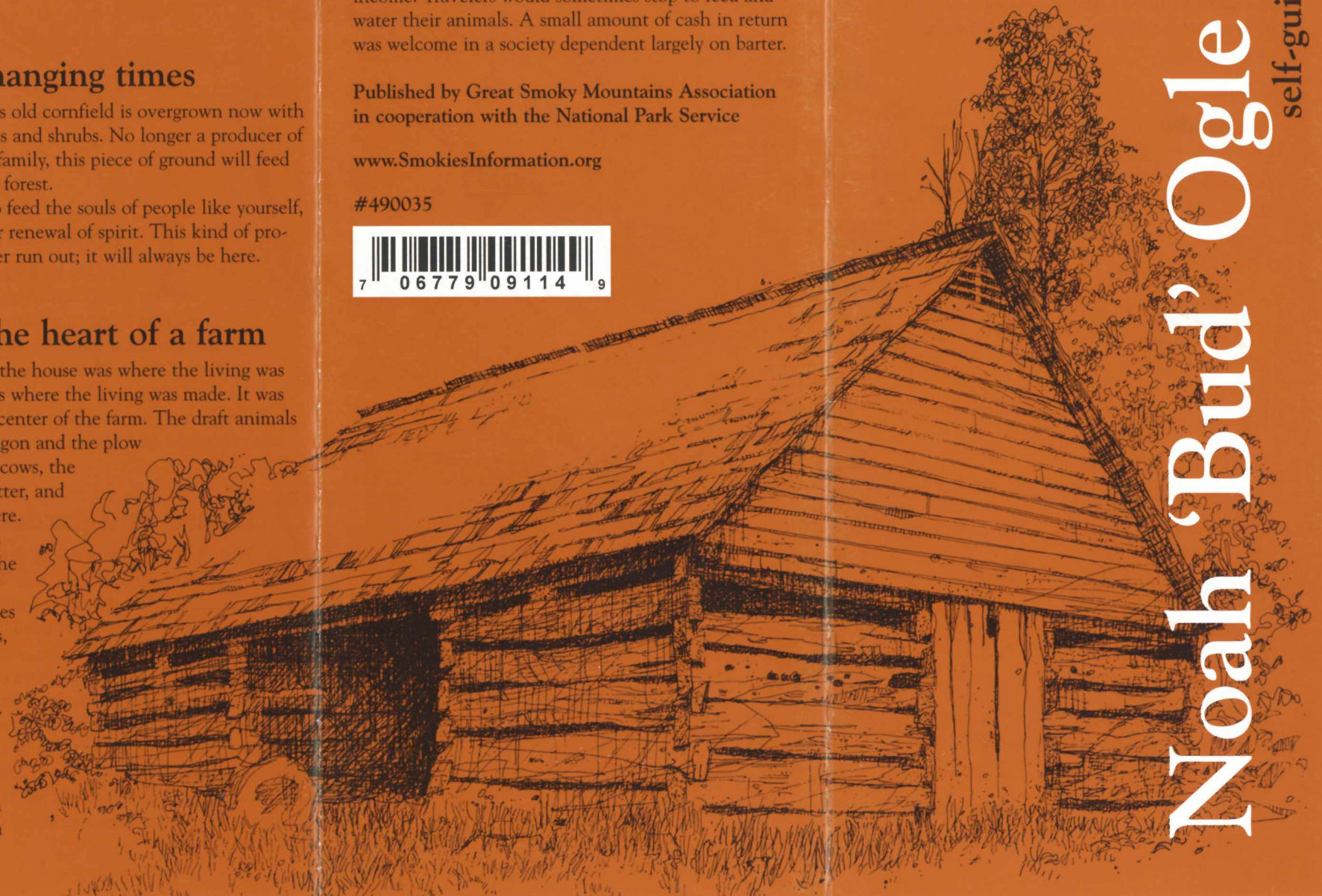
There were many types of barns in the Smokies. This one is a drive-through barn. Log pens for livestock were built several feet apart and joined by a common roof. This provided a covered hallway in which to park a wagon or sled. Access to the loft over the pens was easy from ladders in the hall or from a wagon bed.

The barn reportedly brought the Ogles a little extra income. Travelers would sometimes stop to feed and water their animals. A small amount of cash in return was welcome in a society dependent largely on barter.

Published by Great Smoky Mountains Association in cooperation with the National Park Service

www.SmokiesInformation.org

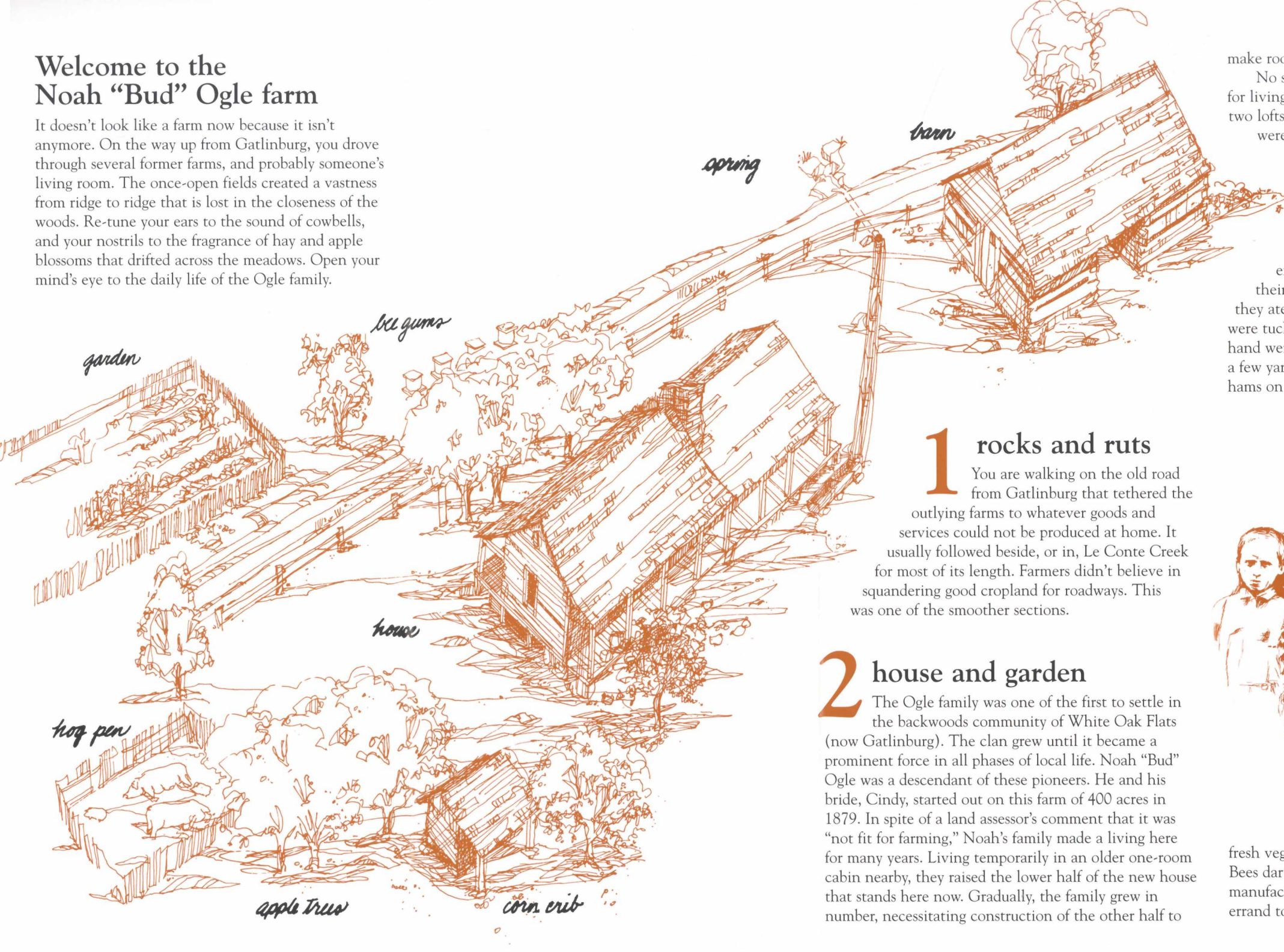
#490035



Noah Bud, Ogle Place
self-guiding nature trail

Welcome to the Noah “Bud” Ogle farm

It doesn't look like a farm now because it isn't anymore. On the way up from Gatlinburg, you drove through several former farms, and probably someone's living room. The once-open fields created a vastness from ridge to ridge that is lost in the closeness of the woods. Re-tune your ears to the sound of cowbells, and your nostrils to the fragrance of hay and apple blossoms that drifted across the meadows. Open your mind's eye to the daily life of the Ogle family.



1 rocks and ruts

You are walking on the old road from Gatlinburg that tethered the outlying farms to whatever goods and services could not be produced at home. It usually followed beside, or in, Le Conte Creek for most of its length. Farmers didn't believe in squandering good cropland for roadways. This was one of the smoother sections.

2 house and garden

The Ogle family was one of the first to settle in the backwoods community of White Oak Flats (now Gatlinburg). The clan grew until it became a prominent force in all phases of local life. Noah “Bud” Ogle was a descendant of these pioneers. He and his bride, Cindy, started out on this farm of 400 acres in 1879. In spite of a land assessor's comment that it was “not fit for farming,” Noah's family made a living here for many years. Living temporarily in an older one-room cabin nearby, they raised the lower half of the new house that stands here now. Gradually, the family grew in number, necessitating construction of the other half to

make room for the kids.

No space was wasted. Downstairs rooms were used for living, cooking and sleeping; the boys slept in the two lofts. Outside, the two alcoves beside the chimney were valuable storage space. Meat, cornmeal and salt were kept in the front one, while chickens resided in the rear—relatively safe from the foxes and other varmints.

The modern concept of a lawn was foreign to most mountain families. It would have been impossible to justify such an extravagant waste of ground. The Ogles, like their neighbors, raised the plants and animals that they ate. To save time and energy, their food sources were tucked as close as possible to the house. Close at hand were fruit trees, mostly apple and plum. Downhill a few yards hogs grunted in their pens—pork chops and hams on the hoof until needed. Across the old road



fresh vegetables grew, handy to the kitchen. Bees darted about the gum stand in front of the house, manufacturing the favorite mountain sweetener. An errand to the family mill led one right past the crib full

of dried corn. All was carefully arranged for economy of labor and space.

The Ogles had running water, a little unusual for this time and place, but it didn't get to the house through metal pipes. Wood, the answer to so many needs here, was fashioned into an open trough or flume. About halfway up the road toward the barn you will find the spring, which poured water into the flume that ran all the way to the house. There it dumped into a double sink hewn from a single large log. Clothing, children's faces, and all manner of things were scrubbed on the back porch of the house.

Bob was here

Bob visited Great Smoky Mountains National Park and especially enjoyed the historic buildings. He liked them so much, he wrote his name on a wall. He did not care that these irreplaceable structures are protected by law as part of our nation's heritage, just like the Statue of Liberty or a President's home.

By writing his name, Bob committed a crime. A visitor reported his vandalism to a park ranger and Bob paid a \$100 fine. If his case had gone to court, he could have spent six months in jail and been fined up to \$5,000.

If you wish to leave your mark on this park, please do it in a positive way by helping to protect and preserve the natural and historic resources.

3 a country lane

Walk through the rhododendron down the old lane and look for evidence of the Ogle's life here.

4 chestnut—the all-purpose tree



Here in the woods, large stumps and rotting logs are your companions. Most of the big ones are the remains of chestnut trees. The chestnut blight killed them in the late 1930s.

Any oldtimer here will give at least one reason for liking the chestnut tree, and many will offer several. As a

rot-resistant timber, it had few peers. Log buildings made of it would last “forever,” and shingles for the roof would do the same. Light-weight and strong, it framed many barns, mills, and other large structures. The straight grain allowed it to be split easily into fence rails, palings and weatherboards.

Chestnut bark was a good source of tannin for the leather industry, and tons of it were skewed off and hauled to the tanneries for years after the trees were dead.

Best of all were the nuts. As long as a tree was vigorous and sound, other uses were postponed in favor of the annual nut harvest. People stuffed themselves on chestnuts, and traded them by the wagonload for new shoes and other goods. To the squirrel hunter, the tree was the best bait for game. Finally, it was the hog fattener to beat all. As a local man put it, “A hog would cross hell on a rotten log to get to my chestnut orchard.”

5 reading the signs

How do you tell the temperature without a thermometer? Look at the rhododendron leaves, here to your right. As the temperature drops to freezing, the leaves begin to darken in color and droop. Around 20°F, they start to curl, and by 0°F, they're rolled up tight and turned back toward the stem. A trivial bit of information? Not really.