

Branch of Plans and Design

B

GROSSMAN

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

A SKETCH  
OF  
MOUNTAIN LIFE

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Photos: E.E.Exline  
Text: C.S.Grossman

ON MICROFILM

SUPPLIES

and

Grossman) SKETCH OF MT. LIFE  
& Exline) GREAT SMOKY MTS. NP

Life Series: How the West  
Was Won

D-316

IN  
STORAGE

U.S.Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Branch of Plans & Design

PLEASE RETURN TO:

TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER  
DENVER SERVICE CENTER  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1

THE LITTLE GREENBRIER SCHOOL HOUSE

LITTLE GREENBRIER

SEVIER COUNTY

TENNESSEE



### THE LITTLE GREENBRIER SCHOOL HOUSE

About fifty-five years ago a group of men who, with their families, lived in one of the little coves in the Great Smoky Mountains, decided it was time that they had a church house and that their children get some "book larnin'". The church house would also serve as a school house. School would be held in the building six days a week and church the seventh day.

One man gave the land on which to build the school, another offered the finest poplar trees on his land with which to construct the building. Within a short time after it was decided to build a church and school house, work was started, each man in the community doing his share of the work.

The trees were first felled, some of them three feet in diameter. These were carefully split so as to get two wall logs from each tree. After the logs were roughly hewn, they were hauled on a logging shed to the site of the building by a yoke of oxen. Puncheons for the floor were made by splitting slabs three or four inches thick from poplar logs, one face of the puncheons being smoothed with a broad axe or adze. Small straight trees were cut for the pole rafters, shingle laths were split from the straightest grained oak, shakes, locally called boards, were rived from this same material.

While the materials for the building were being prepared and brought to the site, a date was set for the house raising. A house raising is the greatest social event in the mountains - every one for miles around attends. They are one of the few times when all of the women of the community have an opportunity to get together. From among the men were selected the four men most expert in carrying up the corners of a building, for the most important part of a log building are the corners. In most cases in these mountains, the corners of the buildings are dovetailed. This requires skill and judgment on the part of the four men working on the corners, that they may all be carried up evenly. With the four corner men directing the work, the rest of the men help in the work of hewing and handling the logs, making pins and cutting the openings, and any other work required. The four corner men on the Little Greenbrier school house were John Walker, father of the Walker Sisters, Ephraim Ogle who gave the logs for the building, John Abbott, the preacher in the community, and Gilbert Abbott, his brother.

The first benches used in the school and church house were made of logs split in half with four peg legs. These were set around the walls, the benches with the longest legs against the wall, and the



shorter legged benches in front.

The first windows were holes about two feet square cut in the walls. There were two windows in each side wall where the present windows are, and one on the rear wall to light the teacher's desk. This last opening can be seen today though it is closed with a log slab.

After the building was completed, a teacher had to be found. The State and county at that time did not supply teachers, so the people decided to hire their own teacher, which they did. The teacher was boarded by the various people whose children attend-

ed school, so while his salary probably was small, he was able to make a living.

A new church has been built but school is still held in the original school and church house. Near this old church house is the cemetery in which rest many of the people who had a part in the establishing one of the first schools in the Great Smokies.

One of the early pupils of this school was Miss Louisa Walker who is still living where she was born about one mile from the school. While going about her work in the fields or the house she frequently composes poems. On the following page is one of her poems.



### HISTORY OF THE GREENBRIER SCHOOL HOUSE

My father and other men met  
In this valley years ago  
To build a house for church and school  
Where their children could go.

They cut logs in the forest  
Though they had no saw mill  
The logs were drawn by oxen  
Near the foot of the hill.

There they were hewn  
And notched with care  
To build the school house  
That now stands there.

Yes they all met and  
With one accord  
To build a house where they  
Could meet to worship the Lord.

Though the building of this  
House I did not see  
Because the school house  
Is older than me.

But I can remember  
In my life's early day  
How the people would meet  
There to sing and pray.

And preachers often spoke  
Of a city grand  
And a mighty happy meeting  
In the promised land.

Most all of the builders of  
The school house have gone to God  
Let us never forget their labor  
Nor the path that they trod.

Composed by Louisa Walker.





THE SCHOOL AND CHURCH HOUSE









SIDE ELEVATION





REAR ELEVATION  
(Showing one of the original window openings)

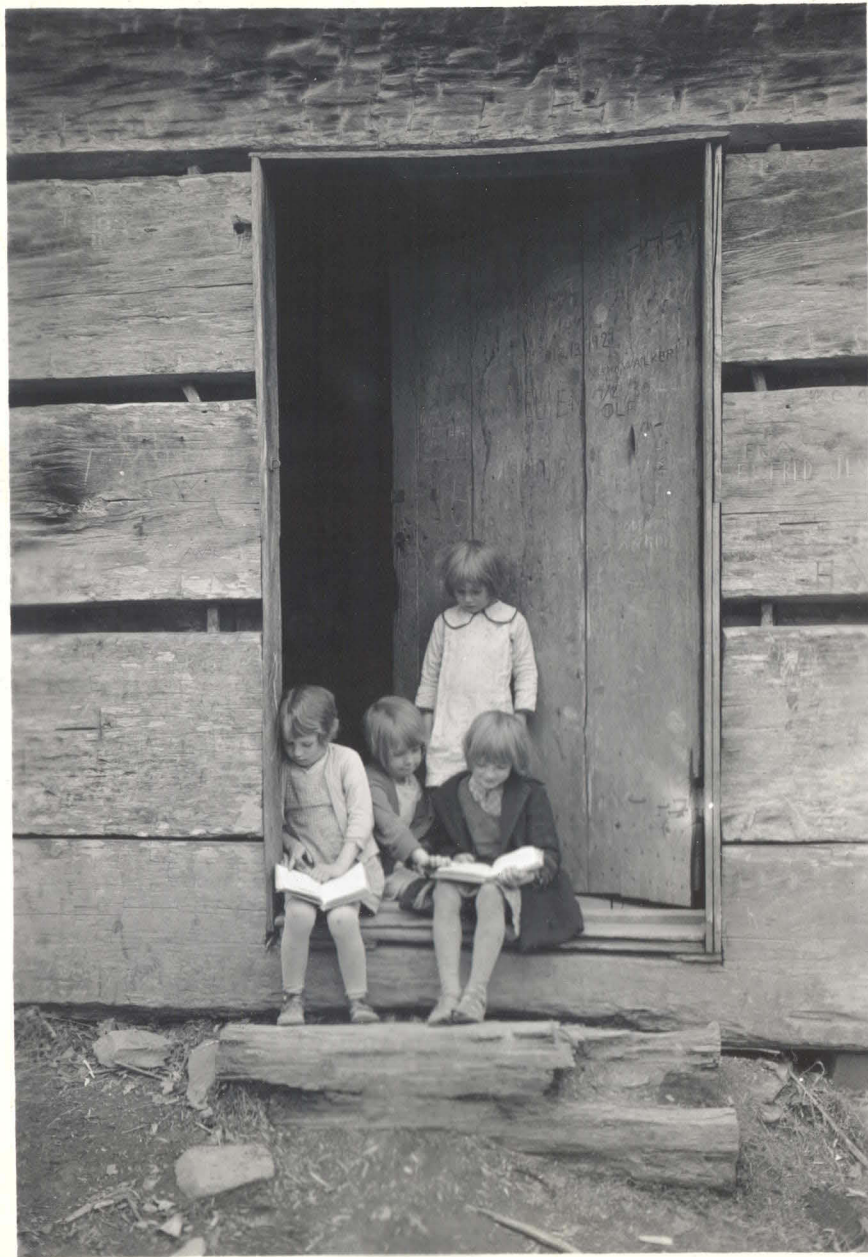




DETAIL OF ONE OF THE CORNERS  
(Showing dove-tail joints  
and the thickness of the logs)

(Note: The two lower logs are  
twenty-eight inches wide.)





PUPILS STUDYING IN THE DOORWAY





THE SCHOOL ROOM  
(Note the carving on the benches)





PUPILS AT THEIR DESKS



Branch of Plans and Design

B

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THE WALKER SISTERS PLACE

LITTLE GREENBRIER

SEVIER COUNTY

TENNESSEE



THE WALKER SISTERS  
LITTLE GREENBRIER  
SEIVER COUNTY, TENNESSEE

About one mile from the Little Greenbrier school and church house lived the Walker Sisters. The coming of the lumbering companies which brought with them the advancements and evils of the outside world have passed them by, leaving them unspoiled. Today they live in the manner of their forebears, sustaining themselves with the work of their hands and the products of their land.

The big house in which they live was built nearly eighty-five years ago by Wiley King and his sons, and father and brothers of their mother. This was the second house built on the property, the first one having been built near the blacksmith shop. The present kitchen at one time was occupied as a house on another part of the property. About fifty years ago John Walker, their father, moved this house to its present location, remodeled it into the kitchen, and added the porch.

The big house contains one large room downstairs and a loft reached by a ladder. The downstairs room is a treasure house to anyone interested in pioneer culture. It is lighted by two small windows, one on either side of the fire place, and the open doors. A large fire place on one side of the room heats it in winter. Five double beds and a trundle bed, all made by their father, are covered with quilts and cover lids made by the Walker sisters and their mother. On pegs driven into the logs above the beds are hung the clothing of the family. On a few crude shelves are piled extra cover lids and blankets. Quilting frames, canes, seeds, baskets, and many other things are

either stored between the ceiling joists or hung from them. Over each door is a rifle. Several chests and chairs complete the furnishings of this room. The walls of the room are covered with pages taken from magazines, the many brightly colored illustrations adding bright spots of color. In this room the family, consisting of the parents and seven girls and two boys, lived.

On the porch, half as large as the living room, and which really is the living room during the summer, is the loom and the spinning wheels. In one corner is a pea sheller which was made by their father. This sheller can shell a bushel of peas in five minutes. Along the walls are pegs on which are hung saddles and other gear. The chinks between the logs are filled with many interesting articles necessary to the self-sustaining life they live.

In the center of the kitchen is a long table with benches on each side. In two corners are cupboards, and at one end of the room is the large fire place in which the cooking is done.

Close to the house is the corn crib with its gear sheds on each side containing sleds, ox yokes, mauls, harnesses, and all kinds of home made tools, and farm implements.

Back of the corn crib is the apple house, with its apple bins and cider and vinegar barrels. By the side of the apple house is a row of bee hives, locally known as been gums because they are made



from hollowed sections of the gum tree.

Near the house is also the smoke house in which meats of all kinds are smoked or salted and stored.

Between the smoke house and apple house is the wash kettle and ash hopper. From wood ashes placed in the ash hopper lye is obtained for making soap. In addition to boiling the wash in this kettle, it is also used for making soap and apple butter.

The spring, one of the finest in the mountains, is near the wash kettle.

Water from the spring enters the can house nearby. Here milk, butter, and cheese are kept cool in crocks set in the running water. Large crocks and wooden kegs contain lard and kraut, and are on shelves along the sides. About one hundred feet from the can house and along the stream is the blacksmith shop now in ruins. The forge, bellows, anvil, and tools scattered about can still be seen by looking through the chinks between the logs. Outside the shop are parts of wheels and other equipment. Very few people in the mountains had a blacksmith shop on their place, so that people for miles around came to this shop to have their work done.

A tub mill was also in operation until several years ago. The blacksmith shop and tub mill drawing people together made the Walker Place a center at which gossip and news could be exchanged. Since John Walker was one of the leaders in this community, it may well be that the

idea of a school and church house had its origin around the forge and in the mill.

Up the hill from the house is the barn with its three log cribs for stock and its heavy overhanging shed roofs. Here are found the cattle and the sheep which still graze in the pasture. The sheep are still sheared and the wool, picked, washed, carded, spun, dyed, and woven into coverlids for the beds and cloth by the Walker Sisters.

Near the barn is the log pig pen with its hollowed log trough.

Back of the house is the large garden in which are grown all kinds of vegetables, herbs, berries, and medicinal plants. Apple orchards almost surround the house. Grape arbors are scattered through the orchard six varieties of grapes being grown. Flowers and shrub of all kinds border the road and the paths around the house.

In this setting is preserved the finest and truest and most unspoiled example of mountain life remaining in the Great Smokies.

The two brothers and two of the sisters have married and moved away. The five remaining sisters live at home. They do all of the work, tilling the fields, planting the garden, drying fruit, spinning and weaving, and all the other many activities and chores necessary to the self sustaining life they live. As children they attended school and church in the Little Greenbrier school and church house. They love their home, their fields, and the mountains, and their only desire is to live the full span of their lives in their mountain home.



### MY MOUNTAIN HOME

There is an old weather beaten house  
That stands near a wood,  
Surrounded by an orchard  
For almost one hundred years it has stood.

It was my home in infancy  
It sheltered me in youth  
When I tell you "I love it"  
I tell you the truth.

For years it has sheltered me  
By day and by night,  
From the summer sun's heat,  
and the cold winter's night.

But now the Park Commissioners come  
All dressed up so gay,  
Saying "This old home of yours  
We must now take away."

They will coax, they will wheedle  
They will fret and bark  
Saying "We must have this land  
For a Great National Park."

For us poor mountain people,  
They don't have a care  
But must have a home  
For the wolf, the lion and bear.

But many of us have a title  
That is sure and will hold  
In the city of peace,  
Where the streets are pure gold.

There no lion in its fury  
Those paths ever trod  
It is the home of the soul  
In the presence of God.

When we reach the portals,  
Of glory so fair  
The wolf cannot enter  
Neither the lion nor the bear.

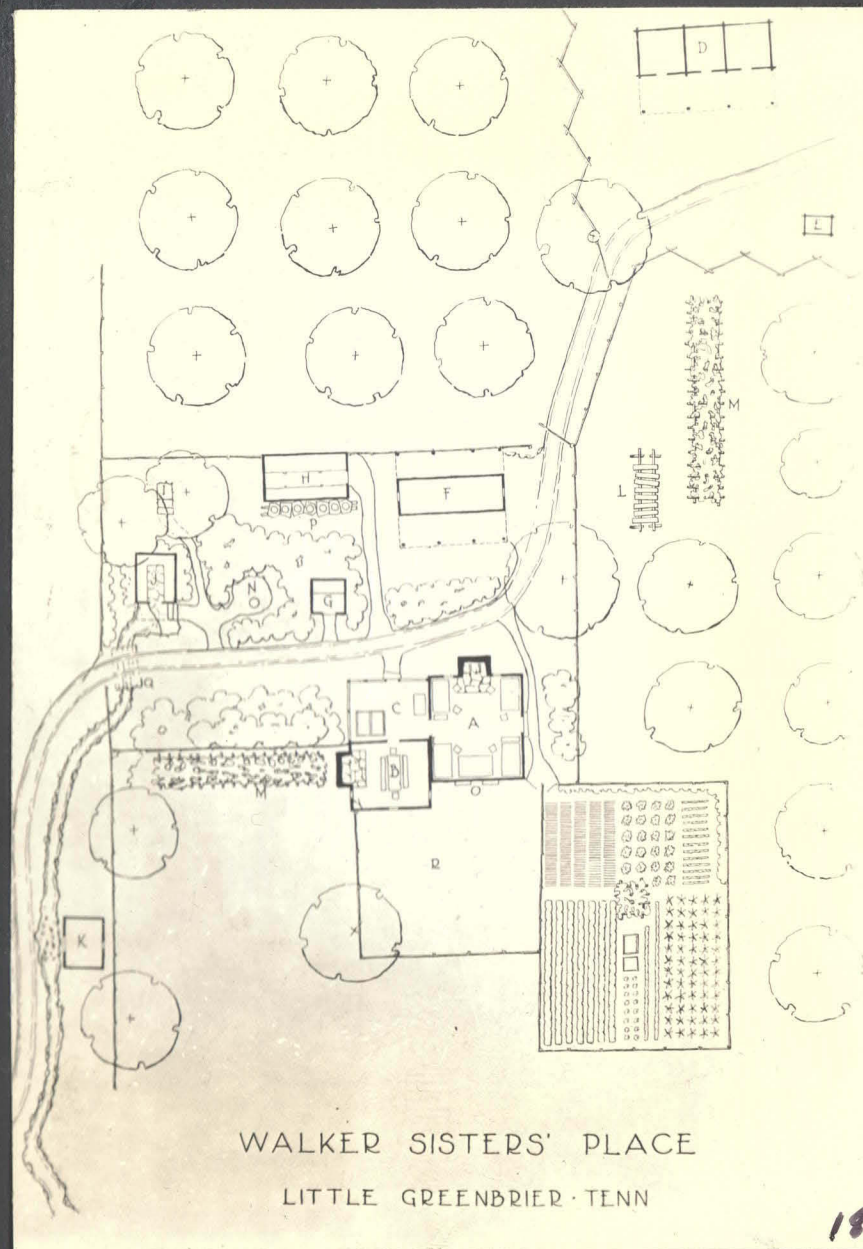
And no Park Commission  
Will ever dare  
To disturb or molest  
Nor take our homes from us there.

Composed by Louisa Walker.



# KEY

- A - LIVING AND BED ROOM
- B - KITCHEN
- C - PORCH
- D - BARN
- E - PIC PEN
- F - CRIB AND GEAR SHEDS
- G - SMOKE HOUSE
- H - APPLE HOUSE
- I - SPRING
- J - CAN HOUSE
- K - BLACKSMITH SHOP
- L - FRUIT DRYING RACKS
- M - GRAPE ARBORS
- N - WASH KETTLE
- O - CHICKEN HOUSE
- P - "BEE GUMS"
- Q - LOG BRIDGE
- R - CHICKEN YARD







THE GARDEN





THE BIG HOUSE





THE HOUSE FROM THE GARDEN  
WITH COVE MOUNTAIN IN THE DISTANCE





THE LIVING AND BED ROOM  
LOOKING TOWARD THE FIRE PLACE

(Note the wall paper, beds,  
and chest.)

A



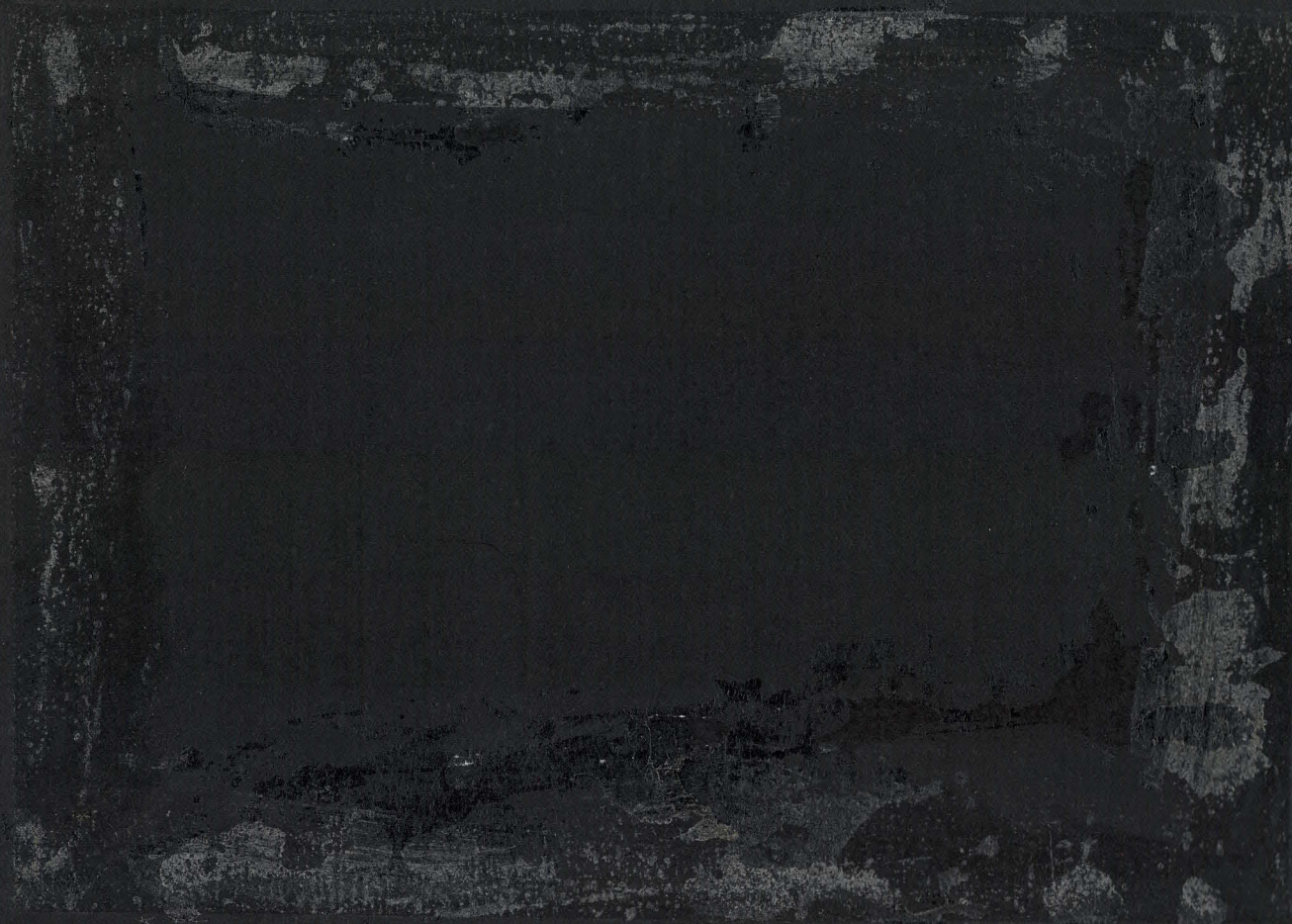


THE LIVING AND BED ROOM  
LOOKING TOWARD THE PORCH

(Note the trundle bed with cover-  
lid, and beds with quilts, also  
the "Hog rifle" over the door  
and the ladder to the loft.)

B



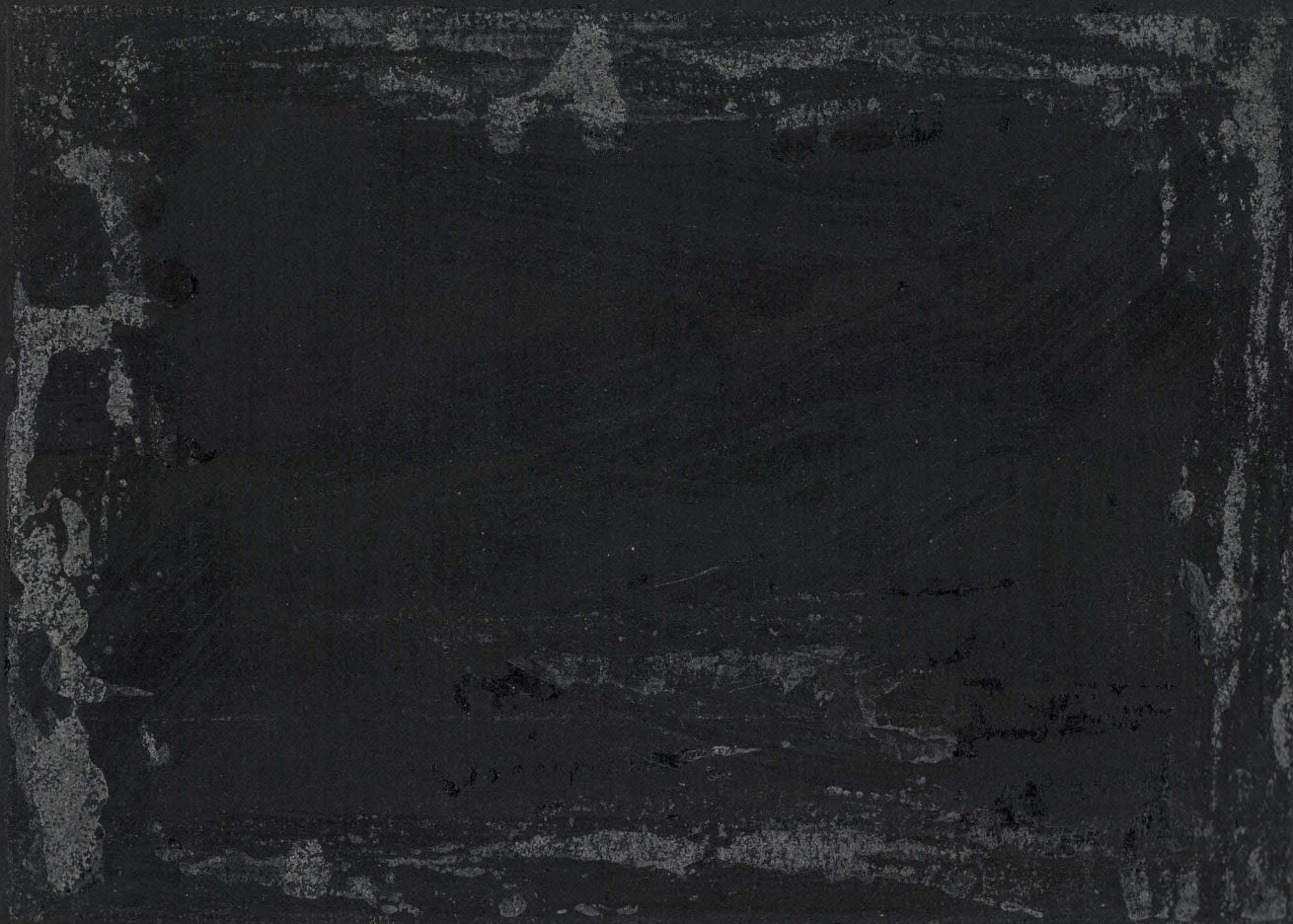


THE PORCH FROM THE DOORWAY  
OF THE LIVING AND BED ROOM

(Note the loom and the spinning wheels)

24





COIN CRIB AND GEAR SHEDS

D

25





THE SPRING





THE CAN HOUSE

27





LOOKING THRU THE DOOR  
OF THE CAN HOUSE





THE BLACKSMITH SHOP





THE BARN

30





THE FIG PEN  
(Note the hollow log trough)





THREE OF THE WALKER SISTERS  
GINNING COTTON

Miss Hettie Miss Martha Miss Louisa



THE JIM CABLE MILL.

GADES COVE

BLOUNT COUNTY

TENNESSEE



THE JIM CABLE MILL  
CADES COVE, TENNESSEE

The Jim Cable Mill, powered by an overshot water wheel, is an example of one of the six methods of making meal to be found in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The other methods are the Indian pestle and mortar, Indian querns, the pounding mill, the "tub mill," and the steel turbine mill.

In the larger valleys or coves, mills using overshot water wheels with all wooden gearing, or a combination of wood and iron gears, used to be fairly common. At one time eight mills of this type were in operation in Cades Cove alone. Today the Jim Cable mill is the only mill of this type existing in the park.

The present mill is the third to be built on this site. The first mill was powered by a large wooden turbine called a "tub" by the natives, thus giving the name "tub mill" to this type of mill. The second mill used an overshot wheel, as in the present mill.

Jim Cable built the present mill about sixty years ago. The mill was in continuous operation until the Fall of 1935 when the main gear wheel broke. Originally the mill had two sets of stones, one for grinding wheat which was removed some years ago, and the one which is still in use, for grinding corn.

The work of restoring the Jim Cable mill was started November 13, 1935. Three key men were employed on the project. They were: John Burns, mill wright, and Tom and Jerry Hearon, two of the finest axe men in the Smokies. These men, natives of this

region, were employed to preserve in the restored mill, the character, workmanship, and spirit of the original.

Working under these men were CCC enrollees from Camp NP-11. These boys showed a keen interest in their work and the project as a whole. The many questions asked concerning the history and operation of these old mills showed that to them, working on the Cable Mill was more than just another job.

In connection with the grist mill, and right by it, Jim Cable also operated a saw mill. This mill was of a type known as a sash saw. It derives its name from the frame or sash in which the saw blade is hung when cutting a log.

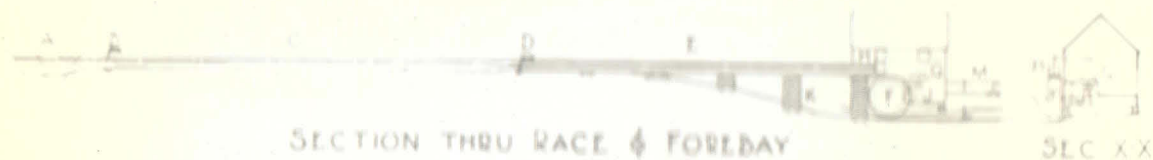
In addition to the two mills mentioned above, an iron forge operated about one-quarter mile up the creek from the mill. The creek derives its name from this forge, being known today as Forge Creek. Heaps of slag and pieces of iron ore mark the site. Part of the forge hammer used in this forge is now among the artifacts being collected for the park museum.

These three activities, the milling of grain, sawing of lumber, and forging, form a most interesting group of manufacturing activities. This group is typical of many such isolated groups which existed before the high development of transportation, with the resulting concentration of industry.



# KEY

- A - DAM
- B - FLOOD-GATE
- C - RACE
- D - CHUNCK-RACK
- E - FOREBAY
- F - WATER-WHEEL
- G - MILL-STONES
- H - WATER-GATE
- J - GEARING
- K - CRIBBING
- L - TAIL-RACE
- M - BRIDGE
- N - SITE OF OLD  
SASH-SAW MILL



SECTION THRU RACE & FOREBAY

SLC XX



PLAN  
JIM CABLE MILL  
CADES COVE TENN





THE MILL.  
(Before Restoration)





THE MILL  
(After Restoration)





DETAIL OF THE WATER-WHEEL,  
WATER-GATE, AND FOREBAY  
(Before Restoration)



DETAIL OF THE WATER-WHEEL,  
WATER-GATE, AND FOREBAY  
(After Restoration)





UNCLES TOM AND JERRY HEARON  
HEWING THE WATER-WHEEL SHAFT





THE SHAFT COMPLETED

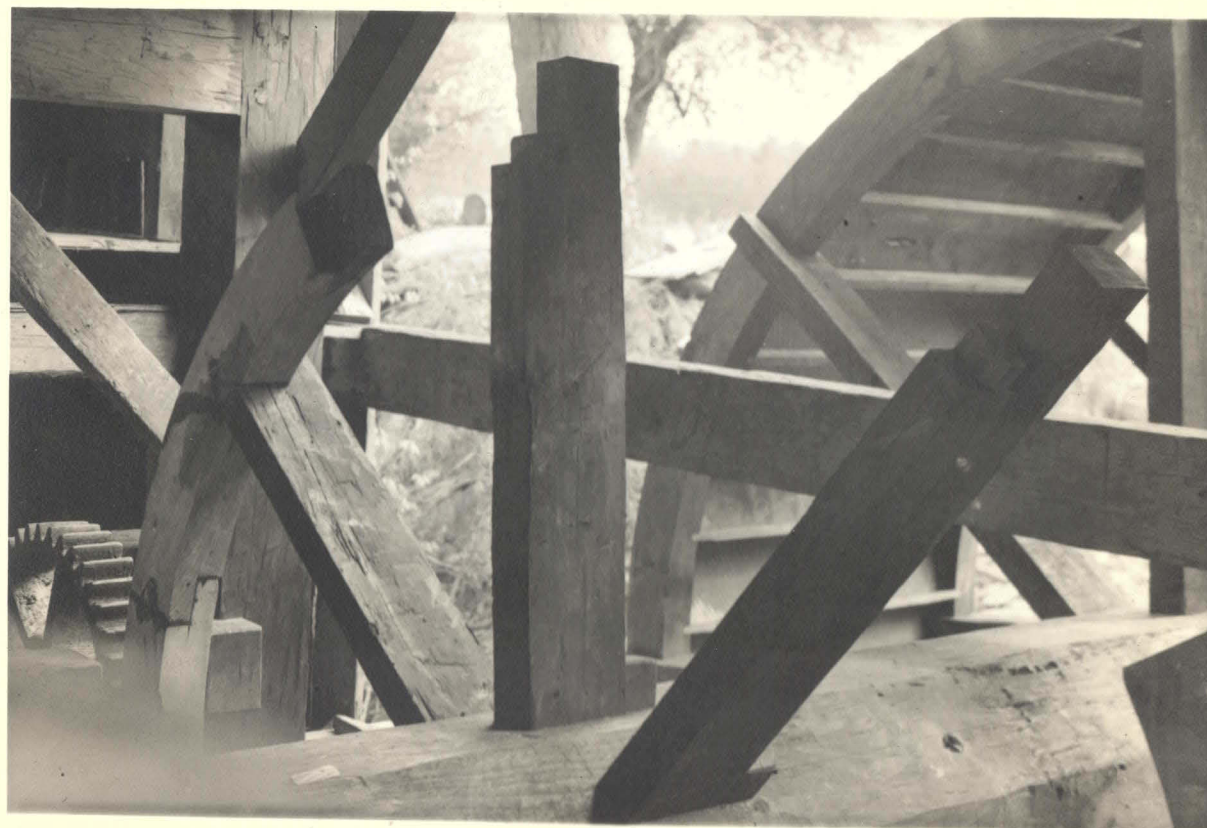
40





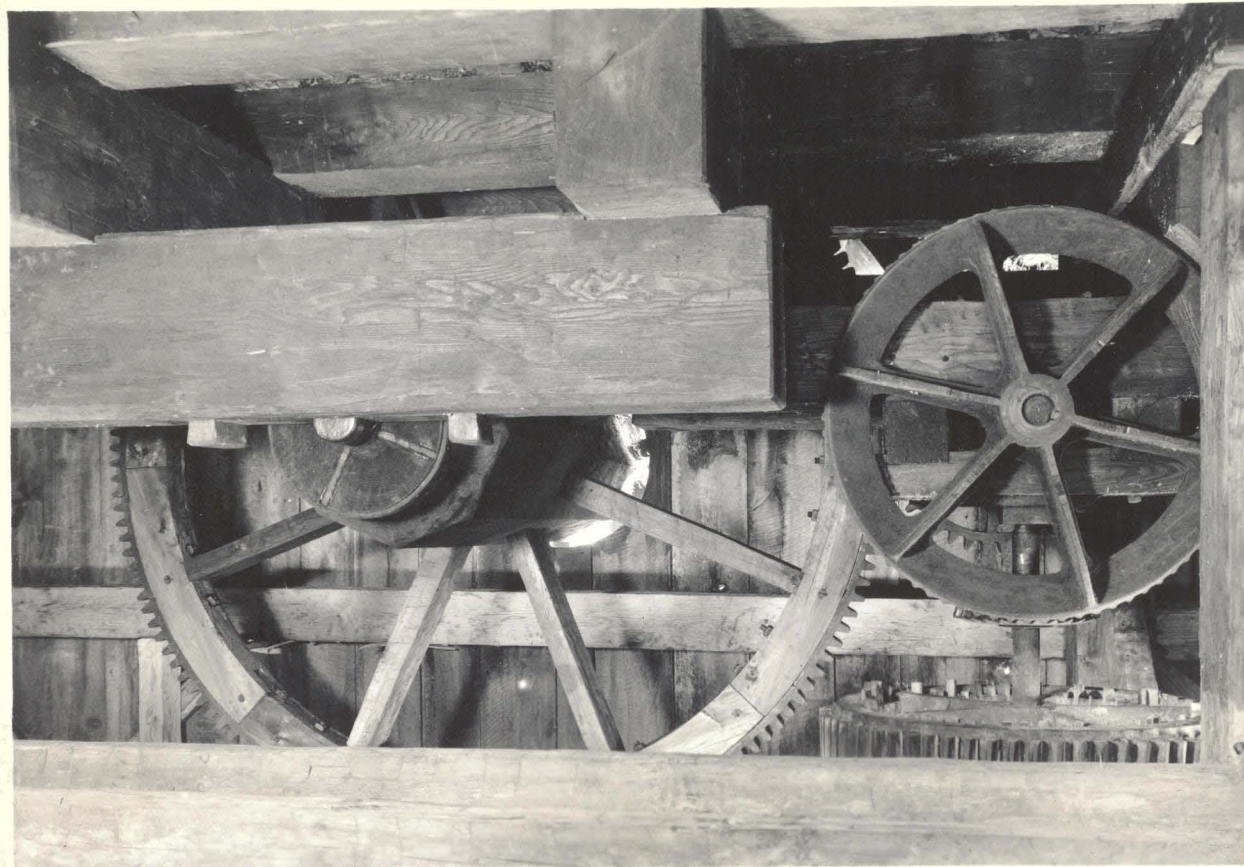
DETAIL OF HOPPER, SHOE,  
AND MILL-STONE HOOP  
(After Restoration)





CONSTRUCTION OF THE MAIN GEAR WHEEL  
WATER-WHEEL IN THE BACKGROUND  
(Note how the rims are constructed  
of segments called shrouds)





DETAIL OF THE GEARING  
(After Restoration)







DETAIL OF THE CRIBBING  
SUPPORTING THE FOREBAY  
(After Restoration)

44



DETAIL OF THE CRIBBING  
SUPPORTING THE FOREBAY  
(Before Restoration)

45





MILL DAM ON THE RIGHT  
FLOOD-GATE IN LEFT FOREGROUND  
(After Restoration)





RACE, CHUNK-RACK, AND FOREBAY  
(After Restoration)



THE RACE LOOKING TOWARD THE CHUNK-RACK  
FROM THE DAM (After Restoration)