

Cades Cove: A Brief History

Within an hour's drive from Knoxville, Tennessee—by way of Highway 321 (old Highway 73) is one of nature's choicest spots. Cades Cove is one of the largest, and by far the most interesting, coves within the bounds of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is reached by following the natural meanders of a beautiful mountain stream for several miles until the road leaves the stream and climbs to enter Cades Cove, which lies imbedded in the midst of surrounding mountains. The elevation is 807 feet higher than Tuckaleechee Cove, which you have just left.

The cove stretches five miles in length and two miles in width and is completely hemmed in by mountains. As you wind along the modern highway into the cove, you might well wonder how the first man found this secluded spot and how the first settlers managed to get their families and belongings over the rugged mountains into this place.

The first reference to Cades Cove is in 1809 when John Smith and **William Crowson** petitioned the state of Tennessee for entry rights to lands in Cades Cove to which they held North Carolina land grants. In the same year, Hugh Dunlap, an attorney in Knoxville, was issued a grant by the state of Tennessee based on his claim that he held a North Carolina land grant issued in 1794 for 5,000 acres in Cades Cove which had been mislaid, and the record lost from the Secretary's office (North Carolina). The grant was issued with the proviso that it should interfere with no occupant right or school reservation.

In 1820, **Aaron Crowson**, in a petition to the Tennessee legislature, stated that his father, **William Crowson** and a Mr. James Ross, had both possessed "the right of preemption and occupancy" to a tract of land in Cades Cove on the 6th day of February 1796.

The first Tennessee grant to land in Cades Cove was registered March 23, 1821 in the name of William Tipton for 640 acres in Cades Cove as assignee of Aaron Crowson.

William Tipton was a revolutionary soldier who came to Cades Cove from Carter County, Tennessee.