

TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSFORMATION IN TENNESSEE'S
CUMBERLAND PLATEAU:
THE RAILS AND ROADS OF WARREN AND WHITE COUNTIES, 1870-1940

By

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ABSTRACT

Between 1870 and 1940, Warren and White Counties saw a transformation in transportation that dramatically changed their rural landscape. By 1855, Warren County gained access to the main line of Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad from a branch that began in Tullahoma and ended in McMinnville. In the following decades, McMinnville prospered from having greater accessibility to larger national markets. In 1884, the branch extended past McMinnville and into Sparta. For Sparta, the railroad provided access to largely untapped resources such as coal and timber. Transportation continued to evolve with the mass production of automobiles. In 1915, the route of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway through Warren and White Counties further transformed the landscape of the two counties, providing even larger connections to national markets. Due to the presence of the railroad and the first state highway, Warren and White Counties stood out from the rest of the Upper Cumberland.

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INTRODUCTION:

UPPER CUMBERLAND HISTORY AND SCHOLARSHIP

On a cool day in November, the distant sound of a train rolled through Tullahoma, Tennessee. I arrived in the town as the train came down the tracks. It felt like the perfect end to a day focused on the history of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad (NC&STL), the company that once owned the tracks in front of me. As I stepped out of my car, the train rushed by, and I found myself drawn to the power and history the machine represented. Once the train pushed past the depot, my view of the locomotive diminished as it moved towards Chattanooga. The moment was over, and the day continued. The cars that had been stopped along the right-of way crossed over the tracks, moving along towards their destinations. The primary connection to the line's history, represented by the train, left as soon as it had rushed in. Or did it? At that moment, I stood by the tracks, close to the depot, and across the street from the town that the railroad created. Though the train moved on, it represented only a piece of the larger landscape that symbolizes the "metropolitan corridor."

John R. Stilgoe defines the metropolitan corridor as, "the portion of the American built environment that evolved along railroad right-of-way in the years between 1880 and 1935. No traditional spatial term, not urban, suburban, or rural, not cityscape or landscape, adequately identifies the space that perplexed so many turn-of-the-century observers." While the era of the railroad has diminished, the landscape that it created and

influenced still exists.¹ CSX Railroad uses the Tullahoma depot, though it now lacks the luster of a passenger station that it had once possessed. The paint of the depot is peeling, and the grounds surrounding the building are overgrown and cluttered. This downtrodden look is a common theme for most small-town depots of the south. The landscape that had once brought modernity to rural communities often sits in disrepair.

When the golden era of the railroad diminished, the era of the automobile continued to change the south. The modern technology of the railroad eventually gave way to the modern concept of individual transportation through automobiles. The story of Henry Ford, the assembly line, and the mass production of cars in the early twentieth century is well known. What has not been largely looked at is how the good roads and highway movement effected the Upper Cumberland and two counties that are the focus of this thesis.

Following along a portion of the original branch of the NC&STL that went from McMinnville to Sparta, the five hundred-mile Memphis-to-Bristol Highway stretched across the state, connecting west to east in one single road. Businessmen throughout the state formed the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway Association in 1911, with construction of the highway ending a few years later. In the late 1920s, the route through Tennessee

1. John R. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 3. For a national approach to landscape studies see John Fraser Hart, *The Rural Landscape* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998); John R. Stilgoe, *The Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983). For a look at early studies in rural landscapes see Llewellyn MacGarr, *The Rural Community* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1924); Donald Mitchell, *Rural Studies with Hints for Country Places* (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1867); Charles Morrow Wilson, *The Landscape of Rural Poverty: Corn Bread and Creek Water* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1940).

became a part of the Broadway of America Highway. The Broadway of America Highway spanned the entirety of the U.S., from California to New York.² While construction of other highways continued to progress in Tennessee, the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway became the first state road, and it still designated as Tennessee Highway 1. The route went into both Warren and White Counties but did not extend into the rest of the Upper Cumberland. As with the railroad, the northern portion of the region continued to remain isolated from outside markets while the physical and built landscape of Warren and White Counties changed.

The significance of the railroad and the state highway lies within how Warren and White Counties vary from the overall region of the Upper Cumberland. The two counties are located at the southern boundary of the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee. While Warren County gained access to the railroad by 1855, and White County by the 1880s, the remainder of the Upper Cumberland did not have access to a railroad until the early twentieth century with the completion of the Tennessee Central Railroad. The two counties that are the focus of this thesis had significantly earlier access, particularly Warren County, to outside markets and industry through the railroad. Additionally, the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway that went through the two counties further distinguished the area from the rest of the region in terms of landscape and accessibility to larger markets. Because of this, the natural and built landscapes of the two counties varied from the other counties of the Upper Cumberland during the New South period. I argue that this

2. Martha Carver, "Historic Highways," The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture Version 2.0, <http://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=1104> (accessed December 9, 2017).

difference in landscape makes it hard to place Warren and White Counties within the rest of the region.

As readers will see in the historiography of the Upper Cumberland, definitions of what counties are to be included in this region vary. Warren County is often left out of the definition of the region. White County's inclusion varies, but both counties, when included, are typically excluded from the overall narrative. Why is this? I argue that it is because of the lack of isolation that the two counties faced due to the presence of the railroad, and later the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway. Isolation characterized the Upper Cumberland during the New South period. The rugged terrain of the Cumberland Plateau made it difficult for early roads, railroads, and eventually highways to become established in the area. The main form of transportation for a long period of time remained the Cumberland River. While Warren and White Counties used the same forms of early transportation as the rest of the Upper Cumberland, the advancement of transportation and market accessibility created a landscape that did not exist in the rest of the region. These factors play a role in why historians of the Upper Cumberland often do not examine the two counties.

Upper Cumberland studies largely came out of the regional study of Appalachia in the 1960s and 1970s. Author Mark T. Banker argues that Appalachian studies came about during a time when other marginalized histories of the United States began surfacing. Scholars studied the region for two reasons: to understand the origins of

identity for the region, and to find the beginnings of the stereotypes that defined the area.³

A common term used in past characterizations of the region is backwardness. This stereotype continues to plague the area even in current times. During the New South period, people argued that backwardness generally stemmed from a lack of education, income, and access to outside markets. The rugged and inaccessible terrain of the region became a key factor in the acceptance of such characteristics. While I will argue that the lack of accessibility to outside markets contributed to the region's continued isolation, I will not argue that lack of accessibility led to the stereotypical theme of backwardness.

First, it is best to discuss some of the geological definitions and boundaries of the Upper Cumberland.⁴ The Upper Cumberland is situated within the larger region of Appalachia. The Appalachian Mountain range defines this region of the eastern United States (Figure I). The range spans thirteen states: New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South

3. Mark T. Banker, *Appalachians All: East Tennesseans and the Elusive History of an American Region* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), 3. Though the Appalachian region will only be discussed briefly in this paper, Banker's book provides a comprehensive history of the region from 1750-2006. Other books about the Appalachian region and its identity are Henry J. Shapiro, *Appalachia on our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Ronald D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982); Richard Drake, *A History of Appalachia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001); John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskell eds., *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006).

4. Though it cannot be determined when the region began to be called the Upper Cumberland, William Montel in *Don't Go Up Kettle Creek* theorizes. He argues that the name likely began to be used in the early 1830s with the arrival of the steamboat and the states dependency on the river systems as a means of transportation of goods. He points to the town of Carthage and states that, "Many of the riverboat captains of the day worked the Cumberland both above and below Carthage; along with the warehousemen and lumbermen in Nashville, they made a rather clear distinction between the upper river and the lower river, for the upper waters were more treacherous and the cargoes were different." William Lynwood Montell, *Don't Go Up Kettle Creek: Verbal Legacy of the Upper Cumberland* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 3.

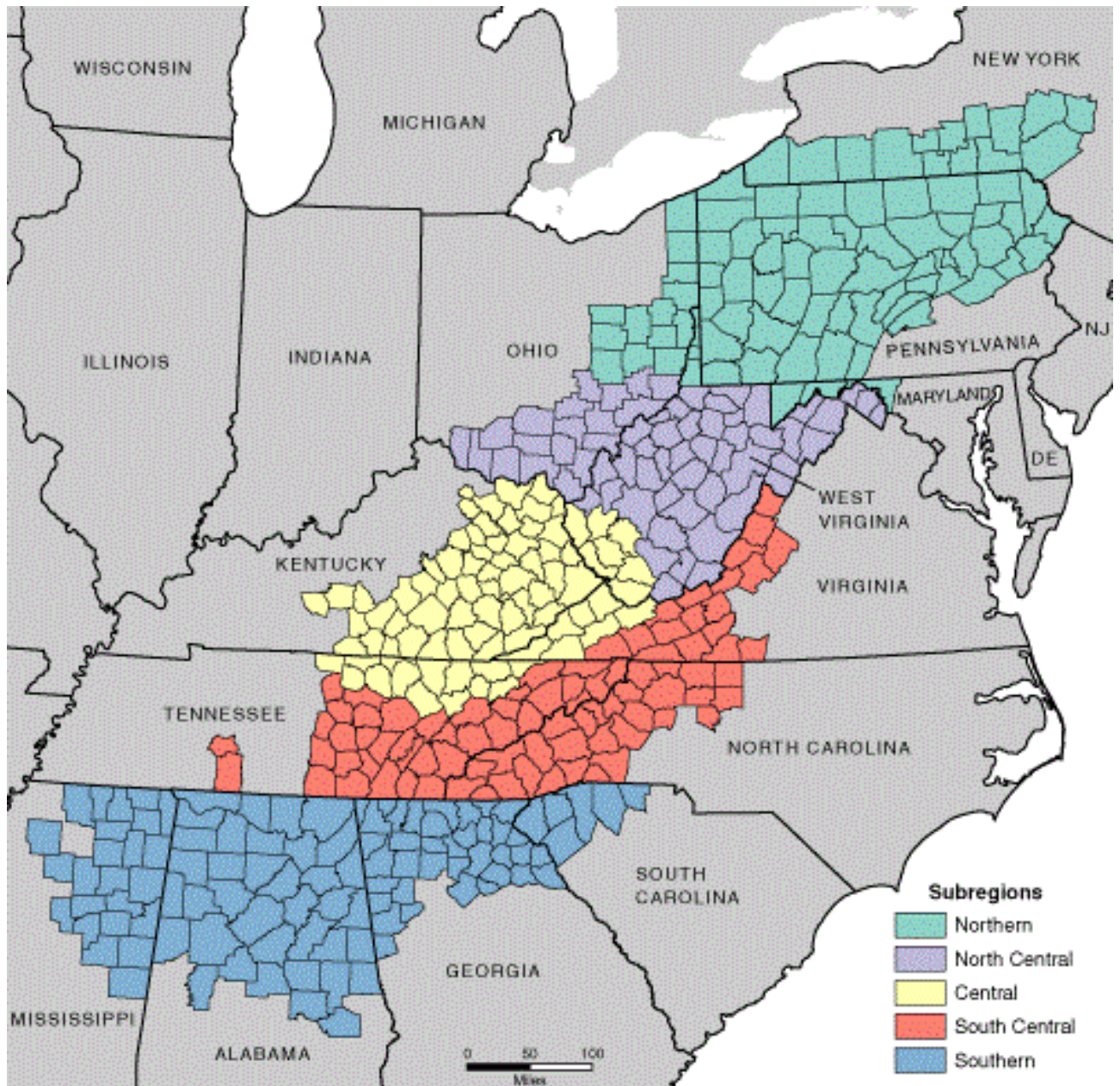


Figure 1. Appalachian Region of the United States. Map courtesy of the Appalachian Regional Commission

Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi.⁵ The Appalachia studies of the 60s and 70s that focused on Tennessee generally discussed the eastern part of the state. The coal fields and lumber industry within that area changed the landscape in similar ways when compared to how Warren and White Counties changed during the period of the New South. The Upper Cumberland, however, typically gets overlooked in the overall narrative of East Tennessee Appalachia. Nonetheless, looking at the historiography of the Appalachian Region of East Tennessee provides the broader narrative of similar circumstances that occurred in the Upper Cumberland.

One of the main discrepancies within past literature of the Upper Cumberland is the inconsistent definitions of what counties are to be included and excluded (Figure II). Scholars began publishing research on the region in the early 1980s. Published in 1983, *Lend and Ear: Heritage of the Tennessee Upper Cumberland* written by Calvin Dickinson, Leo McGee, Larry Whitaker, and Homer Kemp discusses general topics of the region.⁶ In the text, the authors discuss Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, and White Counties. There is, however, a clear bias in this book for Putnam County history. All

5. Appalachian Regional Commission, "Maps," Appalachian Regional Commission, <https://www.arc.gov/maps> (accessed November 12, 2017).

6. It is worth mentioning the book that W. Calvin Dickinson, Michael E. Birdwell, and Homer D. Kemp wrote in 2002. The book discusses the architecture that is typically seen in the Upper Cumberland, and what may have influenced such architectural styles in the region. For more information see, *Upper Cumberland Historic Architecture* (Franklin: Hillsboro Press, 2002).

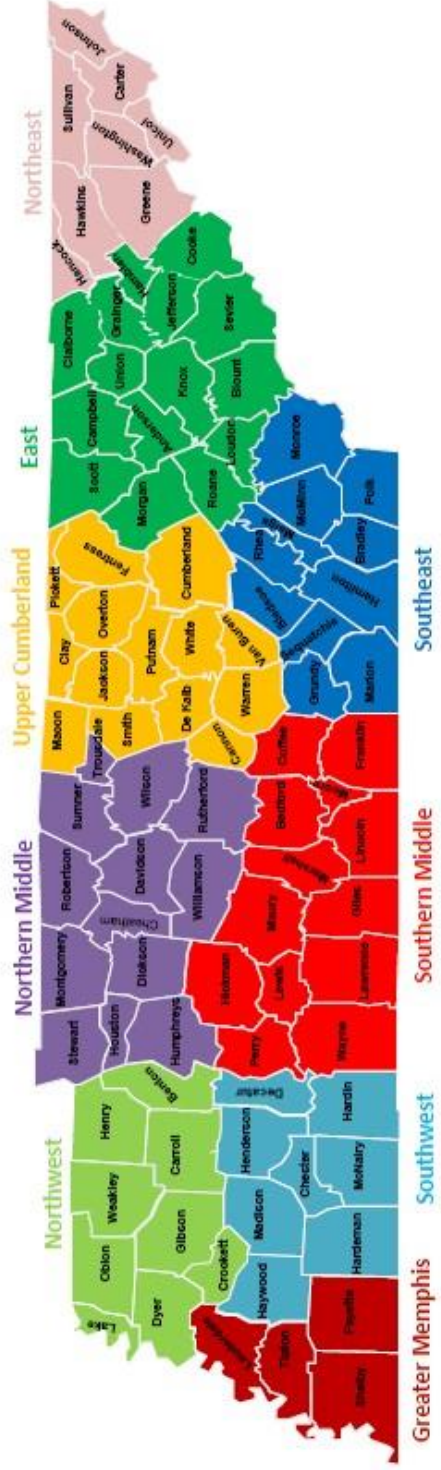


Figure II. Tennessee regions and county map. Map courtesy of Tennessee Department of Transportation

authors of the essays are professors at Tennessee Technological University, with another being a preacher in Cookeville. There is only one author who was not associated with Putnam County or TTU, and that was Charles Wolfe, a professor at Middle Tennessee State University. Because of this focus, Warren and White Counties, though included as part of this book's definition of the Upper Cumberland, are left out of the narrative.

Another early publication about the Upper Cumberland is *Don't Go Up Kettle Creek: Verbal Legacy of the Upper Cumberland* written by William Lynwood Montell in 1983. Montell is the author of numerous books that discuss the folk history of the Upper Cumberland, in both Tennessee and Kentucky.⁷ Montell defines the Tennessee portion of the region as consisting of Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Scott, Smith, and White counties. His definition varies from *Lend an Ear* in that it excludes Warren County, while adding Morgan and Scott Counties. As the title suggests, the book discusses the oral histories of the region in relation to the rivers and their use as a means of transportation. Montell states:

These physical features dictated the emergence of small farms in the upland areas and larger ones along the rivers. The timber that flourished on the hill slopes and the presence of the rivers combined to provide lucrative logging, rafting, and sawmilling

7. Montell, *Kettle Creek*, 6. Montell also includes ten Kentucky counties as part of the Upper Cumberland. Those ten counties are: Adair, Barren, Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, Metcalfe, Monroe, Pulaski, Russell, and Wayne. He includes these counties because of the book's focus on the river systems throughout the Upper Cumberland. Many of these systems begin in Kentucky, with the tributaries flowing into the rest of the region. Other books by Montell that discuss the Upper Cumberland are: *Upper Cumberland Country* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993); *Grassroots Music in the Upper Cumberland* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2006); *Killings: Folk Justice in the Upper South* (Louisville, University Press of Kentucky, 1986); and *Ghost along the Cumberland: Deathlore in the Kentucky Foothills* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975).

activities between 1870 and 1930. The rugged terrain of the region precluded extensive development of roads and railroads, so the river served as the major means of transporting farm products and timber to market for more than a century.⁸

While residents in Warren and White Counties both used river systems during the early period of the area's history, transportation in the area modernized when the two counties gained access to the railroad and established highways.

Another influential text in Upper Cumberland studies is Jeanette Keith's 1995 book titled *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland*. Keith includes the counties of Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, and White as part of the region. Once again, Warren County is left out of the narrative. Keith's book has been influential in inspiring many of the ideas that will be presented throughout my arguments. Her book makes the argument that while the Upper Cumberland did not modernize at the same rate as the rest of the state, it does not mean that the area is representative of the stereotype of backwardness. This stereotype has come to define those who live in mountainous regions of the south.

My personal bias lies in the fact that I am from the south, and I grew up and currently live in Warren County. My connection to Warren County has influenced the arguments within this thesis, but only in ways that follow along similar lines as Keith. Her work focuses on self-sufficient farmers who had limited access to outside markets. Through the ownership of land, avoidance of debt, production of small surplus crops, and

8. Montell, *Kettle Creek*, 6.

reliance on the family, rural farmers in the region were able to survive despite isolation.⁹ They were cash poor, but they did not lack the necessities of daily life. Keith's exclusion of Warren County and minimal focus on White County can be attributed to her focus on this isolation. Warren and White Counties were not as isolated as the rest of the region. While those in the northern part of the Upper Cumberland fought the effects of isolation through independence and self-reliance, those in Warren and White Counties were able to do the same through modernized means of transportation that did not exist in the rest of the region. Both the northern and southern parts of the Upper Cumberland wanted prosperity and a good life for their families. The two were able to accomplish the goal in different ways, and because of outside factors, Warren and White County's landscape began to change during the New South in a way that the rest of the region did not.

Rural Life and Culture in the Upper Cumberland, published in 2004 and edited by Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, also discusses the region.¹⁰ Much like *Lend an Ear*, including some of the same authors, *Rural Life* is composed of numerous essays. Counties discussed within the book are: Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Scott, Smith, Trousdale, Van Buren, Warren, and White. This number is the largest out of all the books referenced in this thesis. The topics range in variety, thought once again, many of those associated with the book are current or retired professors at Tennessee Technological University.

9. Jeanette Keith, *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 12-13.

10. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, *Rural Life and the Upper Cumberland* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004).

Much of the content is centered around the northern part of the region, with an emphasis on Putnam County, and though Warren and White Counties are both included, they have little mention in the book. In the index, Warren County is referenced fourteen times compared to the forty-three references to Cookeville alone, the county seat of Putnam County.

Another book that is important to the discussion of the Upper Cumberland is *Reminisces and Reflections: African Americans in the Kentucky-Tennessee Upper Cumberland since the Civil War* written by Wali Rashash Kharif and William Lynwood Montell.¹¹ The book provides a much-needed narrative pertaining to the African American experience in the Upper Cumberland. The authors focus on the period of the New South and discuss aspects of daily life during that time, mostly relating to schools, churches, and the economic and social mobility of African Americans in the region. Within the book, the authors include the same counties that are discussed in Jeanette Keith's book *Country People*, while also including the same eight Kentucky counties that have been included in a portion of the other books. The authors also emphasize the northern portion of the Upper Cumberland. Little information on White County is provided, regardless of the county being included in the definition. Warren County is excluded altogether.

11. Montell provides an in depth look at the Coe Ridge Community in southern Kentucky in *The Saga of Coe Ridge: A Study in Oral History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981). Though this community exists in the Upper Cumberland region of Kentucky, it provides the larger narrative of the African American experience that can be applied to the overall region.

The exclusion of Warren and White Counties in past scholarship reflects the fact that the two counties do not relate well with the other counties. Both counties experienced early advancements in transportation when compared to the rest of the region. Transportation matters in any discussion of the Upper Cumberland. The first transformative period was the development of the NC&STL Railroad, and the later Tennessee Central Railroad in the northern section. The second period began with the construction of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway.

The N&C Railroad changed the physical and built landscape of Warren and White Counties. In 1855, only five years after completion of line between Nashville and Chattanooga, McMinnville gained the capability of selling goods nationally. The early roads were unreliable during the winter months, and whenever it rained. Sellers could use the river systems, but they were equally unreliable during periods of low rainfall. For rural farmers and those within the city, the ability to sell and receive goods relied on Mother Nature. That all changed when the railroad came. Once the railroad was established in White and Warren Counties, the lumber and coal industries increased. Though lumber industry existed in both counties before the railroad, the industry increased when loggers no longer had to rely upon unreliable modes of transportation to get their timber to buyers.¹² When the coal and lumber companies came to Tennessee, they created a built environment that was unique to the industry.¹³ Such an environment

12. For a national narrative on how the lumber industry shaped and influenced America, see Michael Williams, *Americans and their forests: A historical geography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

13. The main way in which the lumber and coal industries changed the built environment of the south was through the building of company towns. For more information on company towns, how they operated, and their general layouts, see Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of*

can be seen in both Warren and White Counties. Additionally, as can be seen in John R. Stilgoe's work *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene*, the landscape around the railroad became a unique feature of the industry. The line brought modernity through every area that supported its right-of-way. The modernity of the railroad would not been seen in the northern section of the Upper Cumberland until the turn of the century, once again showing how the landscapes of Warren and White Counties vary from the rest of the region.

The good roads/highway movement of the early twentieth century also shaped the landscape of the two counties. In *Dirt Roads to Dixie*, Howard Lawrence Preston concludes, "Deplorable roads were, indeed, one of the South's most visible deficiencies. Overland travel in the southern United States was difficult during most of the year but next to impossible during rainy winter months. Some communities in mountainous areas of the South were completely isolated from the outside world when rain and snow made roads impassable, even for a mule."¹⁴ The movement had little traction until businessmen throughout the north and south realized that a lucrative trade could occur if the regions of the United States were connected through improved, paved highways.

For Tennessee, the most important development was the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway.¹⁵ The portion of the highway that cuts through Warren and White Counties

American Company Towns (New York: Verso, 1995), and Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in the Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); John C. Hudson, "Towns of the Western Railroads," *Great Plains Quarterly* (Winter, 1982).

14. Howard Lawrence Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South, 1885-1935* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 12.

15. For more information on early state road developments see, Leland R. Johnson, *Memphis to Bristol: A Half Century of Highway Construction* (Nashville: Tennessee Road Builders Association, 1978); and Tammy

followed along the right-of-way of the NC&STL Railroad that had been constructed decades earlier. Once better roads came to the south, travelers found they were able to depend on themselves for transportation, rather than pay the high fees of the railroad. Roadside development soon changed the culture of the south. Town plans began to shift to accommodate the new roads that had been developed on the outskirts. Gas stations began to dot the countryside, and roadside advertisement blocked the views of the natural landscape. The Memphis-to-Bristol continued the transformation of the landscape in Warren and White Counties that had begun with the development of the railroad.

Primary sources in this thesis include photographs, census data, court documents, newspapers, various forms of correspondence, early county histories, oral histories, financial reports, church records, maps, and of course, the physical landscape. Because of the modern forms of transportation that developed in Warren and White Counties between 1850 and 1930, earlier access to larger markets occurred in the area, a fact that goes against the image of an “isolated backward” Upper Cumberland. These two counties provide a regional case study of how two different modes of “modern” transportation changed the built and natural landscape.

CHAPTER ONE:

EARLY MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Between the 1870s and 1930s two modes of transportation, railroads and public highways, reshaped the rural southern landscape, a pattern still apparent in Warren and White County. The period leading up to these developments, however, played a role in the two counties transformation of landscapes. A look at the pre-railroad years for Warren County, formation of the county to 1855, and White County, formation of the county to 1884, reveals potential factors that influenced the transformation of transportation in the area. Early roads, waterways, natural resources, and established market connections set the two counties apart, and influenced the development of the railroad in Warren and White County. Because of the railroad and the first state road, the landscape of both counties would forever be distinguished from the rest of the Upper Cumberland.

The Tennessee General Assembly created Warren and White County early in the state's history. In 1805 at Tellico Block House in East Tennessee, the Cherokees signed a new treaty which granted a portion of Kentucky and Tennessee to the United States that included the entirety of what became Warren and White Counties (Figure 1.1).¹ Out of the treaty, the state legislature formed new counties, including White County on September 6, 1806.

1. Walter Womack, *McMinnville at a Milestone, 1810-1950* (McMinnville: Womack Printing, 1960), 13.

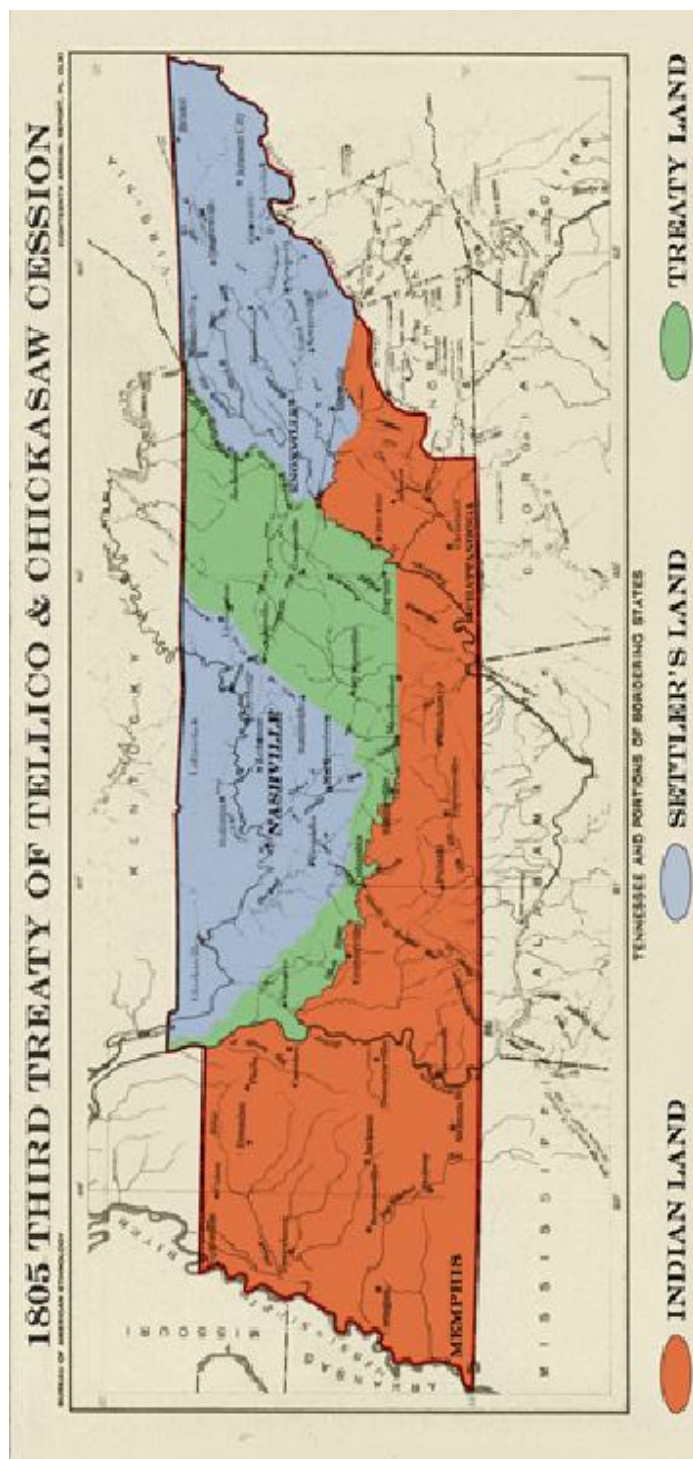


Figure 1.1 Land granted to early Tennessee settlers from the Cherokee, represented in green. Map courtesy of the Native Heritage Project.

John White cleared the first land in the area and became the namesake of the county. A veteran of the American Revolution, he is said to have come to the area before 1791 with his wife and several children. Initially, the county named Rock Island as the county seat, however, this changed with the establishment of Warren County, along with several other counties in 1807. The formation of the new counties changed the original boundaries of White County, and the first county seat, Rock Island, became a part of Warren County. White County commissioners then established Sparta as the county seat in 1809.²

The General Assembly then created Warren County in 1807, and two years later in 1809, named McMinnville as the county seat. J.B. Killebrew, a nineteenth century historian and surveyor of Tennessee noted, “To the lover of the picturesque and the beautiful, but few counties in the state present a greater variety of attractions than Warren County. Situated for the most part under the very shadow of the Cumberland Mountains, with only a few noted but isolated peaks within its borders, it enjoys the salubrity and freshness of the mountain air with the fertility and beauty of the valleys.”³ Figures 1.2 and 1.3 document how the creation of Warren County decreased the overall acreage of White County. The same would occur to Warren County in subsequent years later. The creation of Franklin, Grundy, Coffee, Cannon and DeKalb Counties later decreased the acreage of Warren County to 281,600 by the mid-1840s.⁴

2. Monroe Seals, *History of White County Tennessee*, (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company Publishers, 1935), 9-10.

3. J.B. Killebrew, *Warren County: Its Organization, Scenery, Resources, and Representative Men* (Nashville: Union and American Book and Job Print, 1871), 3.

4. Will T. Hale, *Early History of Warren County* (McMinnville: Standard Printing Co., 1930), 28.

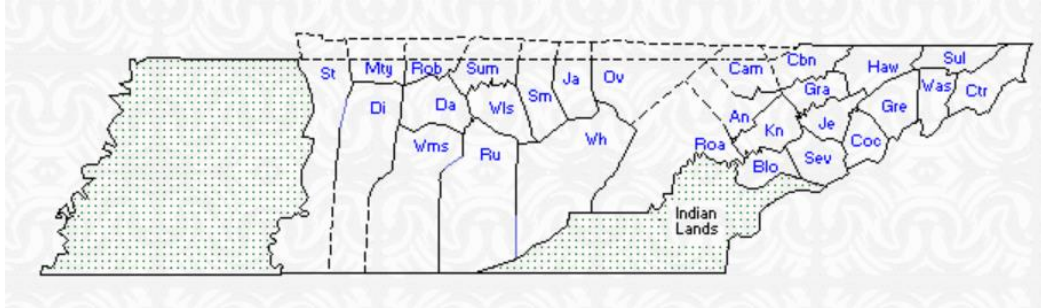


Figure 1.2 1806 map of Tennessee showing the size of White County (Wh). Map courtesy of Rootsweb

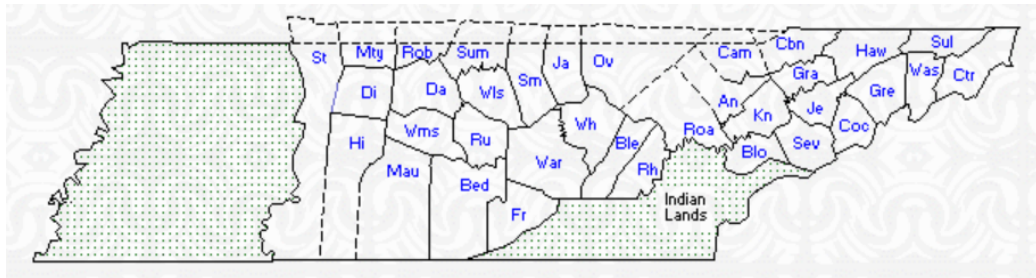


Figure 1.3 1807 map of Tennessee showing how the formation of Warren County (War) decreased the size of White County. Map courtesy of Rootsweb

Defining the landscape of the Upper Cumberland is the Cumberland Plateau. The plateau is the world's largest hardwood forested plateau.⁵ Much like the unique culture that has developed in the region, the Cumberland Plateau is home to a thriving ecosystem that nourishes wildlife not seen in any other region of the United States. Large varieties of fish are sustained in the river systems of the area, and the valleys between the mountains support one of the richest wildflower locations in the southern portion of the Appalachian Mountains. The terrain of the plateau is rugged, with elevations reaching more than 1,000 feet above the Tennessee River Valley.⁶ What is the significance of this unique terrain during the pre-railroad period?

The geological characteristics of the Upper Cumberland made it difficult to construct a railroad in the area, but in Warren and White County the terrain did not present as large of a challenge when compared to the rest of the region. Seen in figure 1.4 the Upper Cumberland is comprised of the Cumberland Plateau (represented by 68a), the plateau escarpment (represented by 68c), and the Highland Rim (represented by 71g). Both Warren and White County have portions of the plateau, the plateau escarpment, and the Highland Rim within their county boundaries, though the larger portion of both counties are classified within the Highland Rim section. The line of the NC&STL railroad, and later the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway, lies between McMinnville and Sparta. Highlighted in figure two is U.S. Highway 70S. Along this highway lies the

5. The Nature Conservancy, "Tennessee: Cumberland Plateau," The Nature Conservancy, <https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/tennessee/explore/cumberland-plateau.xml> (accessed December 10, 2017).

6. Conservancy, "Tennessee: Cumberland Plateau."

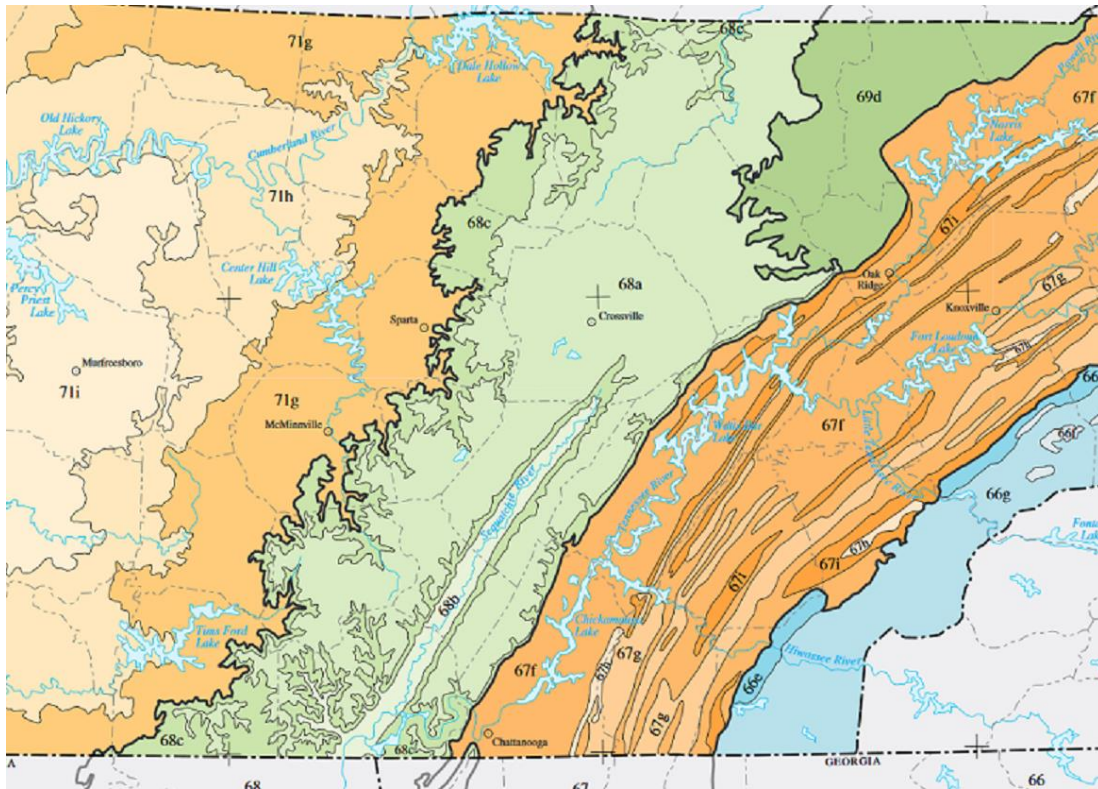


Figure 1.4 The Cumberland Plateau. Map courtesy of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

branch of the NC&STL railroad. Following closely by the railroad is the original portion of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway. The highway that is now designated as U.S. Highway 70S is not the original highway but is parallel to the original road. The path that both the railroad and highway followed lies to the west of the higher elevations of the plateau escarpment. Although the path lies within the Cumberland Plateau region, future construction of the railroad and highway occurred in this strategic location that offered easier terrain.

In the early period of both counties, roads and rivers proved unreliable, but they remained the best means of transportation. Typically, early roads were little more than game trails, but were crucial to trade. As settlement grew, trails became wider well-known roads, such as the Old Kentucky Road (sometimes called the Elk River Road). The road began in Maysville, Kentucky, cut through the Upper Cumberland, and ended in what is now Huntsville, Alabama, the early state capital on the Tennessee River (Figure 1.5).⁷ The Old Kentucky Road connected many parts of the Upper Cumberland to outside markets. Campaign native James McGiboney remembered being told that, “in the early days it was used for transporting mules and slaves from Kentucky to the Alabama and Mississippi

7. I could not find a reliable picture that mapped out the original path of the Old Kentucky Road. Instead, I used Arthur Crouch’s book *The Caney Fork of the Cumberland* to figure out the names of numerous cities that are known to have been established or later established along to original path. In Google Maps, I entered in each city and chose the walking option. I found that using this option gave me the best results when it came to remaining off the interstates and keeping close to older roads. Though this mapping is not completely accurate, it follows closely to the original road’s location. Arthur Weir Crouch, *The Caney Fork of the Cumberland: The Story of a River, Its History, Features, Moods, People and Places with Particular Reference to Rock Island and the Area Above Great Falls* (Nashville, 1973), 68-69.

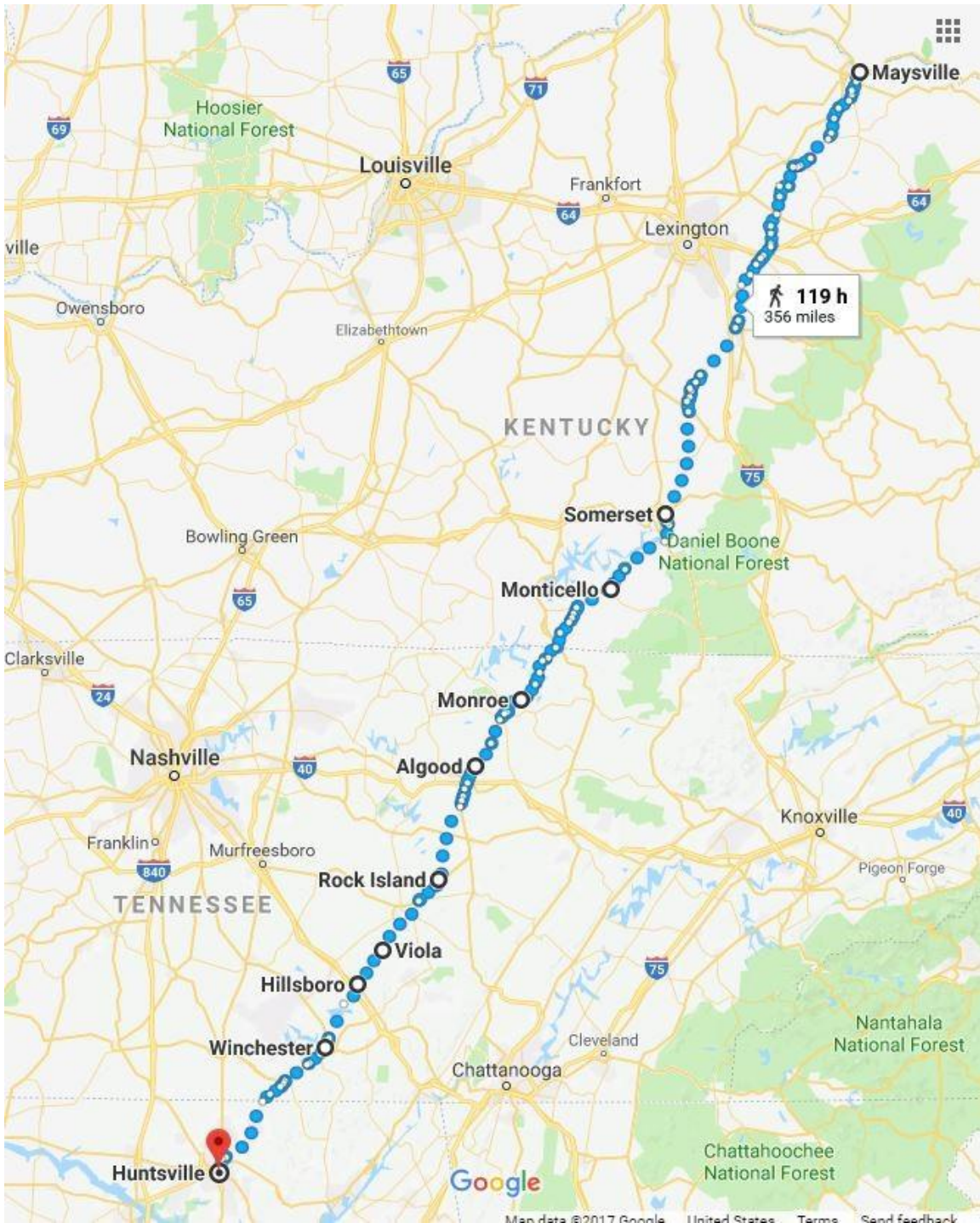


Figure 1.5. Route of the Old Kentucky Road. Created by author using Google Maps

plantations.”⁸ Furthermore, according to Warren County historian Walter Womack, “So well worn was this trail that the early settlers had little difficulty bringing their carts and wagons over it.”⁹ A portion of the road between Algood (Putnam County) and Rock Island (Warren County) is still called the Old Kentucky Road (Figures 1.6 and 1.7). Between Rock Island and Sparta, the route of the road and the line for the NC&STL Railroad follow a very similar path. Did the Old Kentucky Road play a part in the placement of where the branch of the NC&STL Railroad would occur? It is very likely. It would make the most economic sense for the developers of this specific line for the NC&STL Railroad to follow the similar route of an already well-established road.

While the Old Kentucky Road proved to be one of the more influential early roads for Warren and White County, the Old Walton Road also proved influential. The Walton Road intersected the Old Kentucky Road at Allgood, making this future Putnam County crossroads an important one to travelers. It is likely that many of the early inhabitants of the two counties who wished to travel further east or north east would travel to Algood via the Old Kentucky Road, and then use the Old Walton Road.¹⁰ Neither road was weatherproof. In the rainy months of spring, the roads would become impassable, and in the winter months roads would freeze. Womack states that:

Before 1855, access to the outside world had been by vehicles creeping over roads which became impassible during heavy rains, snow, and the quick thawing of the ground. The shipment of freight, in and out of McMinnville, was

8. Crouch, *Caney Fork*, 78.

9. Womack, *Milestone*, 174.

10. *Ibid.*, 175.



Figure 1.6 1933 stone marker for the Old Kentucky Road on Rock Island Road. Photograph taken by author.



Figure 1.7 Kentucky - Alabama Road historical marker on Highway 70S heading towards Sparta. Photo taken by author.

spasmodic and uncertain. It was not profitable or practical to send many of the products of the county even to the closest markets by that mode of transportation.¹¹

Travel on early roads was arduous and unreliable. With the development of railroads and highways throughout the state, rural communities in Warren and White Counties gained access to national markets.

Stage roads also dotted the pre-railroad landscape of Warren and White Counties. Arthur Crouch discussed some of the early roads that intersected Rock Island. One of the routes began in Blountville, Tennessee and ended in Huntsville, Alabama. Between the two destinations, the stage roads went through the towns of Knoxville, Campbell's Station, Kingston, Sparta, Rock Island, McMinnville, and Winchester. Another line went between Nashville and Knoxville by going through the cities of Kingston, Sparta, Rock Island, McMinnville, Danville, Readyville, and Murfreesboro.¹² Both roads were important to transportation in the Upper Cumberland, with McMinnville and Sparta being destinations for both.

Along these routes and between larger towns, such as McMinnville and Sparta, smaller communities would have existed. In Walling, a community directly outside of Rock Island, travelers could stop and rest. Additionally, continuing two miles down the route would take travelers into Quebec, a somewhat larger community than Walling. Here, those on the road could stop and change out horses. It is recorded that an African

11. *Ibid.*, 81.

12. Crouch, *Caney Fork*, 67.

American man named Bill Hodgkins looked after the horses in this particular spot.¹³

Walling had been known as “Teeter’s Cross-roads,” but was later changed to Walling after Thomas Walling who owned a store there and later became involved in the timber industry with Singer Sewing Machine Company.¹⁴

Along these routes, structures would have existed that catered to travelers. Figure 1.8 shows an old stage coach barn in Sparta. The date of the photograph is unknown, but such structures like this would have dotted the landscape of the Upper Cumberland before the coming of the railroad. One existing building of this period is the Rock House outside of Sparta, shown in figure 1.9. The Rock house became a destination for many early settlers who used the various roads that intersected Sparta. Located on the Wilderness Trail, one of the larger stage coach routes in the area, the building became an overnight home to those traveling from far distances such as Washington DC. Prior to the advent of railroads, it would have taken six weeks to travel from Philadelphia to Sparta on this route. Builders Barlow and Madison Frisk constructed the house out of native sandstone sometime between 1835 and 1839. In 1973, the Rock House was added to the National Registry.¹⁵

The existence of these overland modes of transportation between McMinnville and Sparta likely influenced entrepreneurs of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad during the 1850s. If a road between the two cities was already well traveled and could

13. *Ibid.*, 68.

14. *Ibid.*, 68.

15. Bon Air Historical Society, “The Rock House,” *Rich Past of the Mountain* (The Sparta Magazine: Sparta, 2008), 8-9.

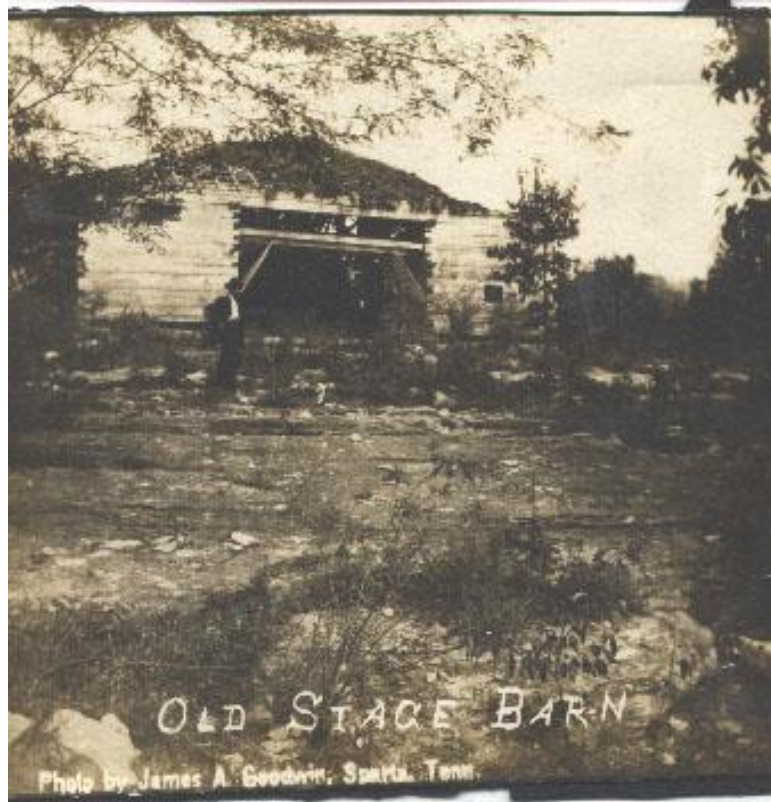


Figure 1.8 Old stage coach barn located in Sparta. Photograph courtesy of Tennessee State Library and Archives



Figure 1.9. The Rock House outside of Sparta, located on 70S heading towards Bon Air. Photograph taken by author.

provide a mode of transportation that traversed the rugged terrain of the Upper Cumberland, then the most successful plan of construction for a railroad would follow such a route.

River systems provided the other core mode of transportation for the pre-railroad period of Warren and White County, particularly the tributaries of the Cumberland River. William Montell states that, “The rugged terrain of the region precluded extensive development of roads and railroads, so the river served as the major means of transporting farm products and timber to market for more than a century. The river not only dominated the region physically, but also controlled it economically; thus, the lives of the people were intimately bound up with the river.”¹⁶ The Barren Fork, Caney Fork, Collins River, Rocky River, and Calfkiller River are the main rivers of the area.

For Warren and White Counties, river transportation begins with the Cumberland River and its tributary, the Caney Fork River. The Cumberland River is a tributary of the Ohio River. The river begins in Smithland, Kentucky. From there it continues into the northwestern section of Tennessee. At that point, the river continues into Clarksville, Ashland City, Nashville, and then east into Carthage. From this point, the Cumberland river branches off into the Caney Fork River. The Caney Fork River continues south into Rock Island, and at this point, the river branches off into the Collins River (Figure 1.10). For pre-railroad Warren County, the Collins River provided the most

16. William Lynwood Montell, *Don't Go Up Kettle Creek: Verbal Legacy of the Upper Cumberland* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 6.

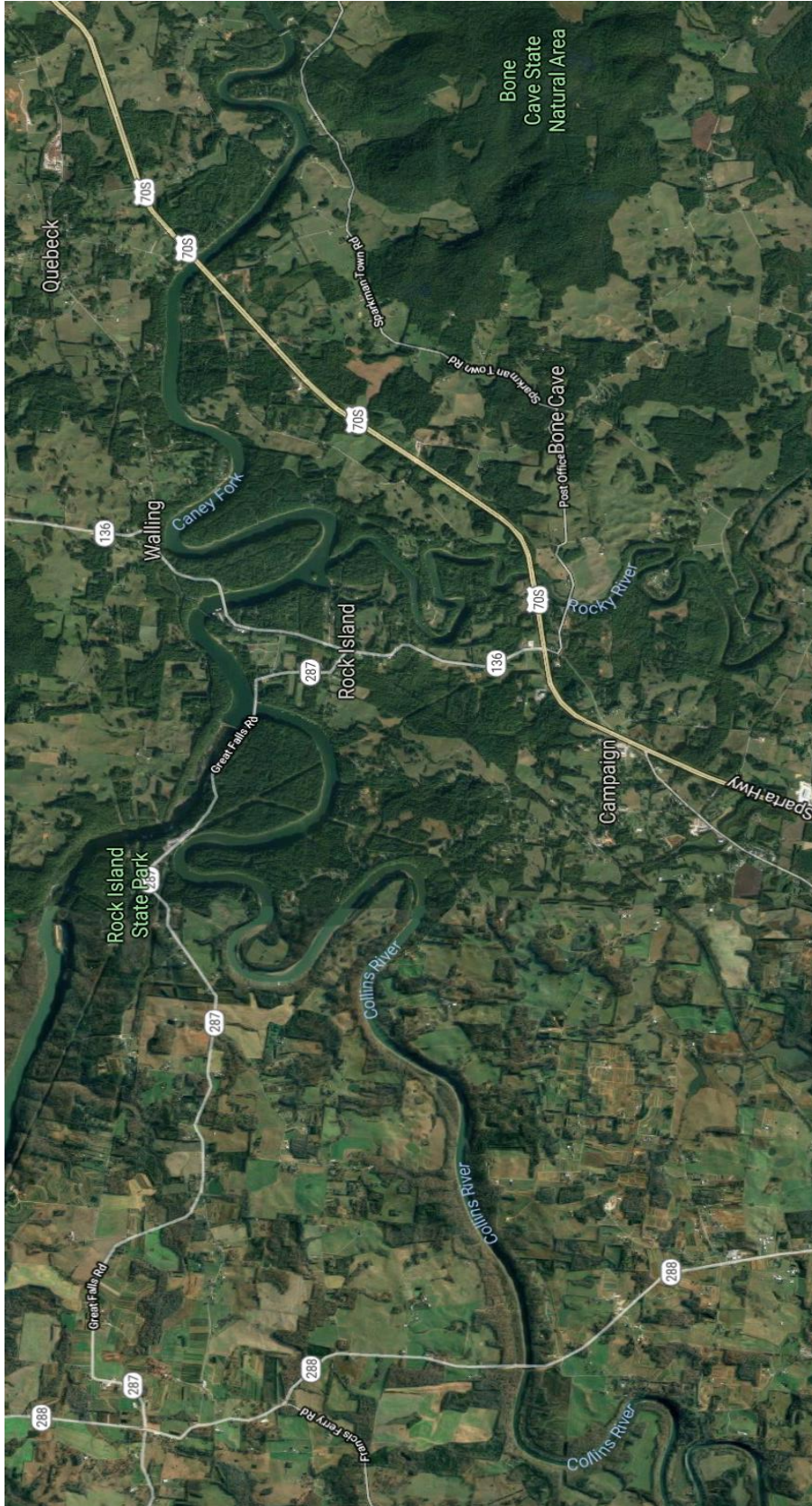


Figure 1.10 Map shows the Caney Fork River coming into Rock Island. The split to the southwest is the Collins River which goes into McMinnville. The Caney Fork continues past Rock Island and splits south to form the Rocky River in Van Buren County. The Caney Fork then goes further east and splits once more to form the Calkiller River, the major river in White County. Photograph taken from Google Maps.

reliable means of transportation since it is the largest river in the county. As for White County, a few miles past Rock Island, the Caney Fork River splits again and forms the Calfkiller River.¹⁷ Not only was Rock Island a major crossroad for overland travel, the area also was a crossroad for river transportation.

Though rivers provided access to larger markets for residents in the two counties, they were often too low for travel. Then there were floods. In 1902, a thirty-eight-hour period of rainfall in Middle Tennessee led to one of the worst floods that the area witnessed. The storm stretched from Nashville to McMinnville and resulted in destruction of numerous mills, homes, and businesses.¹⁸ Furthermore, the winter months also proved disruptive for transportation on the rivers of the Upper Cumberland. Freezing waters stopped traffic altogether. In 1832, one of the worst freezes of the Cumberland River was recorded. For a two-week period, wagons crossed the river in Nashville.¹⁹ While these instances were not located in Warren or White Counties, it is likely that the same conditions effected the counties in similar ways.

Reliant upon the rivers, the pre-railroad timber industry was another important source of income for rural farmers of the area before the railroad, though this industry did not boom until the post-railroad period in both counties. The importance of timber is best understood when put into perspective of the national narrative. The lumber industry shaped the entire landscape of the nation. According to Michael Williams, "Other than

17. I followed the path of the Cumberland, the Caney Fork, the Collins, and the Calfkiller River through Google Maps.

18. Lawson III, "The Role of Stone's River in the Early Exploration, Trade, and Settlement of Rutherford County, Tennessee," in *Rutherford County Historical Society*, no. 18 (1981): 127.

19. Lawson, "Stone's River," 126.

the creation of cities, possibly the greatest single factor in the evolution of the American Landscape has been the clearing of the forests that covered nearly half of the country. The existence of the forest and the effort either to use or subdue it have been a constant theme in American geography, economy, and history until the opening decades of this century.”²⁰

The construction of railroads throughout the state and nation substantially developed the already important timber industry. Building lines required a huge amount of lumber to survive. Workers needed lumber for railroad ties. Workers needed lumber for the construction of trestles, especially in the Upper Cumberland region due to its mountainous terrain and steep hillsides. Additionally, railroads required a large amount of lumber to power trains, creating a dependency on forests.²¹ Railroads shaped the forested landscape because their presence provided easier access into heavily forested previously inaccessible areas. The further development of the lumber industry relied upon the railroads just as much as the railroads relied upon the industry for construction materials. Though there existed small rural operations pertaining to the lumber industry before the railroad, for Warren and White County, the largely uncut forested areas became an attracting feature to future entrepreneurs of the railroad.

In the 1887 Goodspeed history of Warren County, it is noted that yellow poplar, ash, linn, chestnut, buckeye, sugar, hickory, oak, black walnut, locust, dogwood, and

20. Michael Williams, *Americans and their forests: A historical geography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), xvii.

21. Williams, *Americans*, 344.

many other “unimportant species” inhabited the area.²² The species of trees that covered the region were anything but unimportant. According to Montell, “The importance of logging and rafting activities to the people of the Upper Cumberland cannot be overstated. Money changed hands either in the woods or on the river banks every time a farmer cut a tree to be sold to a timber buyer.”²³ He continues explaining the importance of timber by arguing that, “Final sales at major market centers such as Nashville and Cincinnati pumped large sums of money back into the Upper Cumberland region, thus ensuring a continual cycle of economic activities related to the harvesting and marketing of virgin timber.”²⁴ Specifically discussing the Caney Fork, author E.G. Rogers states:

The sixty odd miles of stretch along the channel of the Caney Fork provided an abundance of timber of the finest quality. Rafting was the practice for most of the larger consignments in proximity to the streams. The Entire valley of the Upper Cumberland produced the finest timber in large quantities. At this time [1875-1880] the greatest variety of trees were to be found within this area of any place on the American Continent.²⁵

Regarding White County and its market for timber, Seals states, “There are over two hundred varieties of trees and shrubs native to the county, some fifty of them being of commercial value. Since the coming of the railroad, timber and timber products have

22. “Warren County,” *Goodspeed Histories of Tennessee* (Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888), 813.

23. Montell, *Kettle Creek*, 84.

24. *Ibid.*, 84.

25. E.G. Rogers, *Memorable Historical Accounts of White County and Area* (Collegedale: College Press, 1971), 70.

been one of the chief sources of profit.”²⁶ This was the environment for both Warren and White County before the coming of the railroad, and after. Lumber was an abundant resource in both counties, and residents needed a better form of transportation to ship out the lumber to buyers throughout the United States.

The presence of coal within both counties, particularly White, is another significant factor that influenced the coming of the railroad. The industry existed within both counties but did not flourish until the coming of the railroad. After the Civil War, General George G. Dibrell sought to increase his economic standing that had taken a hit during the war. He purchased 15,000 acres of land in White County that became the Bon Air Coal, Land, and Lumber Company.²⁷ By the late 1880s, the mine was running, and the prosperous company was the subject of talk throughout the region. At that time, the company mined 240,000 tons of coal compared to only 36,000 tons earlier in the company’s history.

The branch of the NC&STL railroad helped move product outside of Tennessee, but more spurs were built off of the line in hopes of finding more coal beds in the county and surrounding areas.²⁸ J.M. Overton, general Manager of the company, received a letter from John C. Kemsby, secretary of the NC&STL, that said, “The possibilities of Bon Air Coal are great. It is unusual to see any bituminous coal that will stand freezing and thawing and not disintegrate. I know of no, but anthracite and Bon Air coal that will

26. Seals, *White County*, 52.

27. E.G. Rogers, *Memorable Historical Accounts of White County and Area* (Collegedale: College Press, 1971), 90.

28. Rogers, *Memorable Accounts*, 90-91.

stand.”²⁹ By 1900, the company owned around 38,000 acres of valuable coal land in White County. Chapter three will continue to discuss the coal industry and its transformation in post-railroad Warren and White County.

There are several unique factors that distinguished Warren and White County from the rest of the Upper Cumberland prior to the coming of the railroad, factors that possibly influenced the development of the railroad, and later the highway, in the two counties. The general terrain of the area proved to be less of an issue because of the counties location on the lower elevated Highland Rim. Additionally, some of the earliest traveled roads and stage coach lines of the state ran through McMinnville and Sparta. The route of the Old Kentucky Road established a major pathway between the two counties. Furthermore, the presence of already established textile factories and mills, virgin timber, and a developing lumber industry attracted the eyes of railroad owners. While much of the early beginnings of Warren and White County are comparable to the overall Upper Cumberland, there are unique qualities of both that attracted the eye of future railroad entrepreneurs.

29. *Ibid.*, 91.

CHAPTER TWO:
RISE OF THE RAILROAD

The railroad transformed the rural landscape of nineteenth-century Middle Tennessee. It brought economic change, reliable modes of transportation, and tied the emerging markets of Warren and White Counties to national networks. The railroad also brought a new type of landscape to the rural counties. As John R. Stilgoe states, “Every intersection of railroad and way represented a crossing of two kinds of space, one metropolitan and futurist in character, one essentially rural and traditional. At every grade crossing evolved a microenvironment shaped by the confusion of the metropolitan space and landscape.”¹ In this new era of transportation, Warren and White County citizens experienced changes in every facet of their lives.

Railroad fever began in Tennessee’s antebellum era. As historian T.D. Clark noted, “The movement to build a railroad from Nashville to the Atlantic was almost as old as the railroad idea itself (Figure 2.1).”² In 1835, Colonel Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina suggested the construction of a railroad from Memphis to Knoxville. He had hoped to gain support from businessmen in South Carolina by promoting the idea of continuing the line from Knoxville into

1. John R. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 167.

2. T.D. Clark, “The Development of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad: part I,” *Tennessee Magazine* 3, no. 3 (1935): 160.



Figure 2.1 Street sign following along the right-of-way of the railroad in downtown Tullahoma. The sign shows the past desire for the railroad to reach the Atlantic. Photograph taken by author

Charleston.³ Clark concluded that Hayne, “never succeeded because Mr. Hayne himself was personally obnoxious to the Tennessee leaders, but the idea survived and served to direct public attention to the possibilities of building such a road.”⁴ Vernon K. Stevenson, a Tennessee railroad executive, “dreamed of a railroad stretching from the Northeast to the Southern seaboard cities with the center of the system being Middle Tennessee.”⁵

The charter for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad (N&C) was drafted and accepted in 1845, and by the mid-1850s, the line between Chattanooga and Nashville was completed. Workers during construction consisted mostly of slave labor.⁶ What was once a twenty-two-hour stage coach journey between the two cities, turned into a nine-hour ride by rail.⁷ In the late 1870s the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad evolved into the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad.⁸

Vernon K. Stevenson became the first president of the N&C Railroad and remained in position from 1848 to 1864.⁹ The N&C Railroad branch to McMinnville was opened in 1855. The spur, owned by the McMinnville and Manchester Railroad Company, became known as the McMinnville and Manchester Railroad (M&M). The Tennessee General Assembly chartered the McMinnville and Manchester Railroad

3. T.D. Clark, “The Development,” 160.

4. *Ibid.*, 160.

5. Thomas N. Johns Sr., “The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad Through Rutherford County, 1845-1872,” in *Rutherford County Historical Society*, no. 5 (1975): 2. For an early history on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad see S.J. Folmsbee, “The Origins of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad,” *East Tennessee Historical Society*, no. 6 (1934).

6. T.D. Clark, “The Development,” 165.

7. Bonnie L. Gamble, “Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad,” *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* Version 2.0, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=1104> (accessed December 4, 2017).

8. Walter Womack, *McMinnville at a Milestone, 1810-1950* (McMinnville: Womack Printing, 1960), 190. From this point, the N&C railroad will be referenced to as the NC&STL railroad.

9. Johns, “Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad,” 3.

Company on February 4, 1850. The railroad was completed in 1855, and the company, along with its steam powered trains, were one of the first to make a trip into Warren County. Distance of the branch totaled at thirty-four miles between McMinnville and Tullahoma.

On November 22, 1853 the president of the M&M Railroad wrote his semiannual report of the company's progress in the county. Concerning costs of the road, P.H. Marbury noted:¹⁰

Gradiation including Rock Excavation	\$75,200.00
Bridges and Masonry	\$25,000.00
Timber for Substructures	\$15,000.00
Laying down tracks	\$15,000.00
Engineering and Contingencies	\$15,000.00

	\$145,000.00

Marbury also recorded the means of the company at the time of his report:

Warren County Subscription	\$60,000.00
Coffee	\$21,000.00
?	\$60,000.00
Stock of the Nashville and Chattanooga R Road Co.	\$2,100.00
Stock taken by Contractors on the work	\$8,000.00

	\$151,100.00

For 1853, neither amount is a small number. It shows the investment and influence that the county and the M&M Railroad had on the county's economy. Continuing that line

10. P.H. Marbury, November 22, 1853, annual report, Records of Various Boards and Commissions 1800-1900, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

into Sparta also shows the railroads dedication to gaining access to largely inaccessible areas, areas rich in natural resources.

In 1862, the federal army occupied Middle Tennessee and took control of the McMinnville spur, placing occupation troops in the town. As the war raged, soldiers dismantled sections for repairs on the N&C's main line.¹¹ Once the war ended, the company repaired the spur, but owners of the M&M Railroad went bankrupt by 1871 due to the inability to reimburse the state for the repairs. At this point, the Memphis & Charleston Railroad purchased the line from the State of Tennessee.¹² The Memphis & Charleston Railroad then sold the line to the NC&STL Railroad in 1877.

The spur from McMinnville to Sparta came in the 1880s (Figure 2.2). In 1858, the Southwestern Railroad Company had undertaken construction of a line from McMinnville into Sparta, but the company never finished the route. In 1878, the NC&STL Railroad took control.¹³ In 1881, the first train reached the Rock Island depot. Engineer Eden Mauzy blew the whistle as the train crossed over the Caney Fork River for the first time. Citizens of the community saw this as the beginning of a new era. With the line extended into Rock Island, people were able to ride the morning train to the river for a day of recreation, and then take the afternoon train back into McMinnville.¹⁴ By 1884, the NC&STL Railroad company continued the line past Rock Island and into Sparta.

11. Terry L. Coats, *Next Stop on Grandpa's Road: History and Architecture of NC&St.L Railway Depots and Terminals* (Nashville: Authors Corner, LLC, 2009), 193.

12. Coats, *Next Stop*, 193.

13. Womack, *Milestone*, 193-195.

14. Arthur Weir Crouch, *The Caney Fork of the Cumberland: The Story of a River, Its History, Features, Moods, People and Places with Particular Reference to Rock Island and the Area Above Great Falls* (Nashville, 1973), 80.



Figure 2.2 The McMinnville/Sparta branch of the NC&STL Railroad. Map courtesy of the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Along the route, small communities that had existed before the railroad, increased in size and became stopping points between McMinnville and Sparta. The three communities that had small depots were Walling, Quebeck, and Doyle. All three are in White County (Figure 2.3). A 1902 special edition of the *Sparta Expositor* discussed the three communities and their importance to the NC&STL Railroad. At this time, Walling was an important shipping point for lumber and timber used to make spokes. J.H. Webb was depot agent, postmaster, and manager of the J.H. Webb Company at Walling.¹⁵

In 1886 Ireland native John S. Cooper built the Tennessee Saw and Planning Mill in Quebeck¹⁶. The *Sparta Expositor* described it as, “One of the greatest industrial enterprises of the Mountain District,” that provided builders with materials that were, “the best for an economic price.”¹⁷ Additionally, Quebeck had two general stores, run by H.J. Burnett and the Johnson-Dyer Company, two physicians, one postmaster, and John N. Sparkman as the depot agent.¹⁸

Continuing down the line, Doyle was the last stop before Sparta. Out of the three stops on the line between McMinnville and Sparta, Doyle was the largest. The town became another important shipping point for the NC&STL Railroad, particularly with lumber used for spoke and handle fabrication. In 1884, the Southern Baptist Convention

15. “Quebeck, Tennessee,” *Sparta Expositor Souvenir Supplement*, Jan. 1902, 52.

16. In earlier maps of the railroad branch, the area of Quebeck is called Holder.

17. “Quebeck,” 52.

18. *Ibid.*, 52.

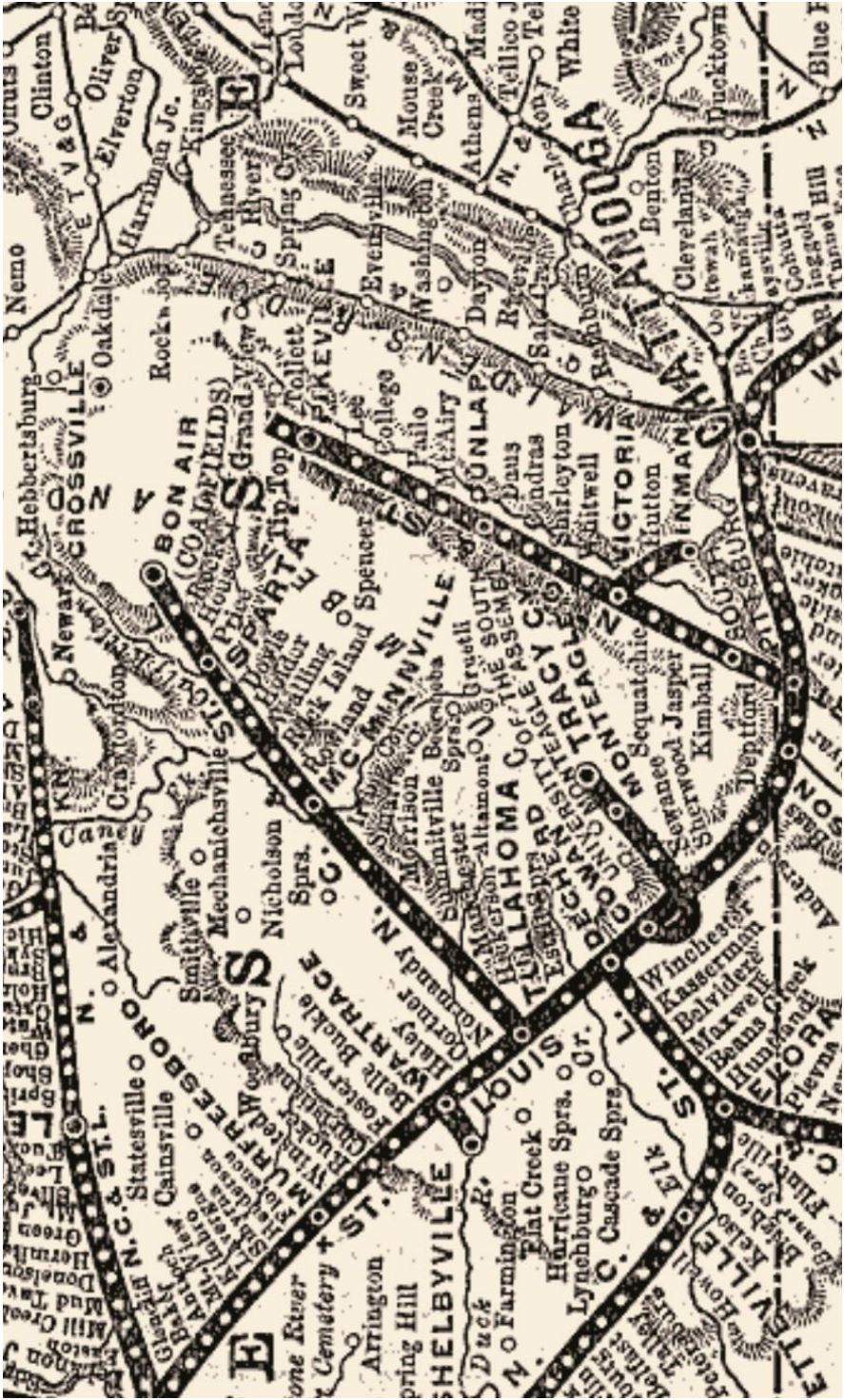


Figure 2.3 Depot stops on the McMinnville/Sparta branch of the NC&STL Railroad. Map courtesy of Official Guide of the Railways, 1896

established and managed Doyle College, which opened with a total of 142 students. The owners named the school after Harvey Doyle, who immigrated to White County from South Carolina in the late 1700s. The namesake of the community also came from Harvey.¹⁹ By the late 1880s, a square existed in the town. On the square was a pool hall, a bank, the post office, multiple grocery stores, a drug store, and a shoe repair store.²⁰ In 1902 Doyle gained an additional merchant, two physicians, and one railroad agent.²¹

The 1896 Annual Report of the President and Directors of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway to the stockholders lists the mileage of the NC&STL Railroad in Tennessee. The main line between Nashville and Chattanooga extended a total of 320.21 miles. 68.96 miles is the amount listed for the branch of the line that went from Tullahoma, into McMinnville, and then ending in Sparta. Total mileage of the line equaled 905.62 miles (Figure 2.4). The report also shows the gross earnings for passenger and freight cars. The NC&STL Railroad earned \$1,229,652.67 in passenger transactions. For freight cars, the company earned \$3,481,387.40. Freight cars also had higher mileage than passenger cars. Mileage for freight cars in 1896 was 2,390,099 miles, while passenger cars travelled 1,325,077 miles. Though both numbers are large, the numbers show that transportation of goods played a larger role in the company rather than transportation of passengers. Additionally, 4,500 freight cars were used for transportation of goods, while only 150 cars transported or aided in the transportation of passengers. Out of the ten lines that made up the NC&StL, including the main line between Nashville

19. *Heritage of White County: 1806-1999* (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1999), 75.

20. Billie Swack Clark and Charlie Clark, *Doyle, Tennessee: My Home Town* (Sparta).

21. *Ibid.*, 52.

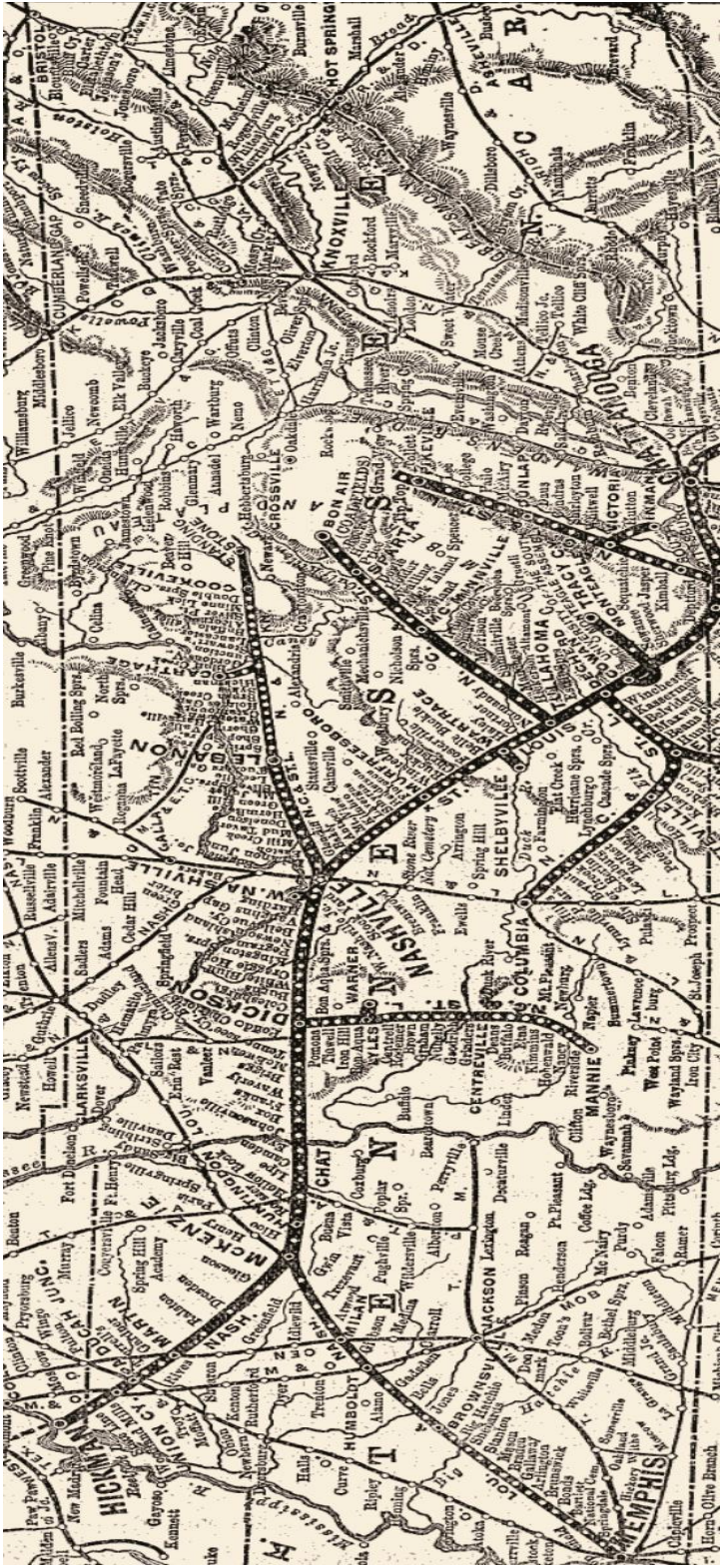


Figure 2.4 The NC&STL Railroad in Tennessee. Map courtesy of Official Guide of the Railways, 1896.

and Chattanooga, the McMinnville and Sparta branch was fourth in overall annual revenue at \$125,615.77 for 1896.²² By 1907, however, passenger traffic increased. The *White County Favorite* commented on the successes of the branch specifically regarding passenger traffic. An unknown author of an article titled “Doing Good Business” stated that, “Only a few years ago the traffic on the branch could be handled by one passenger train each way daily. Now it requires three trains each way daily.”²³

For eighty years, the NC&STL Railroad company controlled the line from Tullahoma to Sparta, but eventually their success declined. The company, like many others in America, suffered during the years of the Depression, but managed to continue operating until 1957. In 1957, the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, which already had management control of the line, took full control and ownership of the NC&STL Railroad.²⁴ The change lasted only a little over twenty years. In a 1983 plan to try and attract more industry into Coffee, Warren, and White County, “the Tri-County Railroad Association bought the Sparta branch. Operated at the Caney Fork & Western Railroad, today the railroad still operates from Tullahoma to Sparta carrying carbon black to a tire plant, steel, grain, and fertilizer, while exporting wood chips to the CSX interchange at Tullahoma.”²⁵

22. Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad Company, July 1, 1896, annual report, Records of Various Boards and Commissions 1800-1900, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

23. “Doing Good Business,” *White County Favorite*, Oct. 4, 1907.

24. Coats, *Next Stop*, 194.

25. *Ibid.*, 194.

The L&N, who owned the NC&STL by the 1880s and allowed the company to continue operation under its original name, serviced the majority of Middle Tennessee.²⁶ The rest of the Upper Cumberland remained without railroad service until Jere Baxter, a Nashville businessman, envisioned a new line between Nashville and Knoxville. He took an earlier line known as the Nashville and Knoxville Railroad, which reached Cookeville by 1885. He renamed it the Tennessee Central Railroad (Figure 2.5). By 1902, the line had reached Knoxville.²⁷ The middle counties of the region – Smith, Putnam, and Cumberland – now joined the transportation mainstream. The northern most part of the area remained without a line.

Having one of the first railroad lines in the state separated Warren County from the rest of the Upper Cumberland. The same happened when the line reached into White County. From the beginning, both counties had resources, timber and coal, that only required a mode of transportation to get them out of the region and into larger markets. From 1870 to 1900, Warren and White Counties, along with their neighbors Putnam and Overton Counties, formed a railroad-dependent region that focused on transporting and selling natural resources to larger markets.

The agriculture census between 1870 and 1900 is one way to track the railroad's impact. Looking specifically at population, the census shows an increase in population

26. Jeanette Keith, *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 79.

27. Keith, *Country People*, 79.

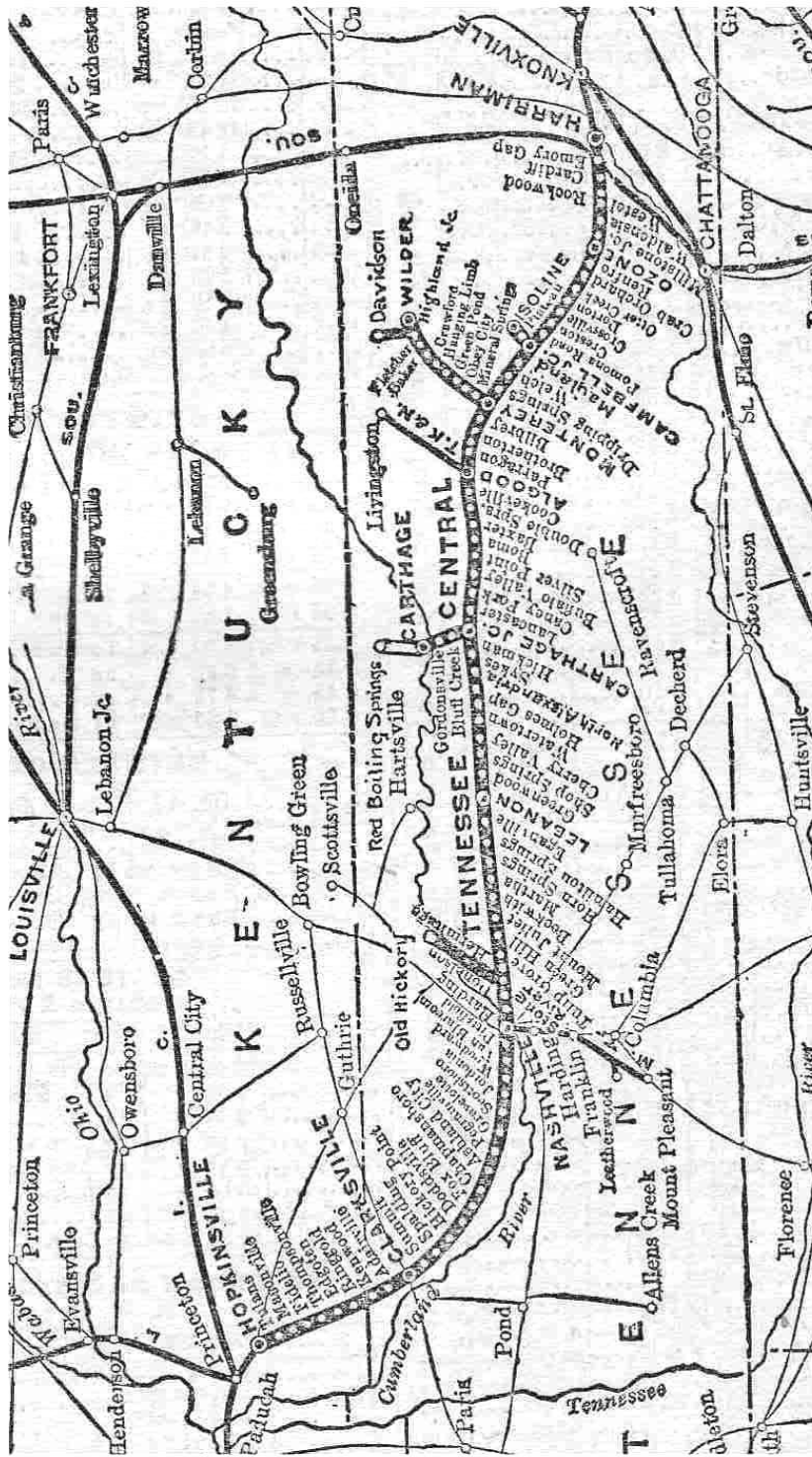


Figure 2.5 Destinations along the Tennessee Central Railroad, 1931. Map courtesy of TN History for Kids.

post-railroad. In 1870, Warren County's population was 12,714, and for White County, 9,375. In Warren County, with its railroad connection, population increased 14.1% from 1860's recorded population of 11,147.²⁸

In 1880, population numbers increased for both counties. Warren County reported 14,079, and White County, 11,176. This was a 19.2% increase for White County. At this time, construction of the railroad from Warren County and into White had begun. In 1890, population continues to increase for both counties with 14,413 in Warren County and 12,348 in White County. Again in 1900, both counties see a large increase in population. Warren County reported 16,410, a 13.9% increase, and White County had 14,157, a 14.7% increase.²⁹

The population numbers are revealing. Warren County saw the biggest increase in the county's population between 1860 and 1870. For White County, the larger increase in population occurred between 1870 and 1880, and then again between 1880 and 1890. During this time, White County went from a population of 9,375 in 1870 to 12,348 in 1890. The increase in population for White County occurred during and after the continuation of the McMinnville spur into Sparta. The construction of the railroad influenced new coal and lumber companies to move into the area. The new companies in return had an impact on the county's population.

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps provide another avenue that shows the influence of the railroad on Warren and White Counties. The first Sanborn map for McMinnville is

28. Family Search, "Historical Populations," Family Search, https://www.familysearch.org/White_County,_Tennessee-Genealogy (accessed February 20, 2018).

29. Family Search, "Historical Populations."

1887 (Figure 2.6). Depot Bottom was and still is the lower portion of the city that runs alongside the right-of-way of the railroad. The railroad's influence on the town between the 1870s and 1900s is clear.

Figure 2.6 shows the main portion of Depot Bottom in 1887. On the top left is a foundry shop not in operation. The main factory in the area is the T.F. Burrough & Co. Spoke & Handle Factory (later known as the Burrough, Ross, Colville Co.). On the far left is Carson & Bass Tannery. Though not pictured, the branch of the NC&STL Railroad is in the southeast corner of the map.³⁰ The next Sanborn map shows Depot Bottom in 1891 (Figure 2.7). The size of T.F. Burrough & Co. increased greatly. Additionally, the foundry that appeared on the 1887 map is no longer closed and has been expanded. The bottom right corner of the map shows a new factory, the Rice and Williams Saw and Planning Mill and Hoop Factory. A portion of the NC&STL Railroad can be seen in the far righthand corner.³¹ In just four years, the landscape of Depot Bottom dramatically changed. Expansions of existing factories occurred, and one new factory had been established. Out of the four factories represented in this section of Depot Bottom, three dealt with the lumber industry.

The first Sanborn map available for Sparta is 1908. The 1908 map shows three main industrial areas within Sparta. One was located 1/8 of a mile west of the courthouse. In this area was the Sparta Electric Light Plant and the Sparta Spoke Factory (Figure 2.8)

30. Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Map of McMinnville, 1887, Sheet 2.

31. Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Map of McMinnville, 1891, Sheet 4.

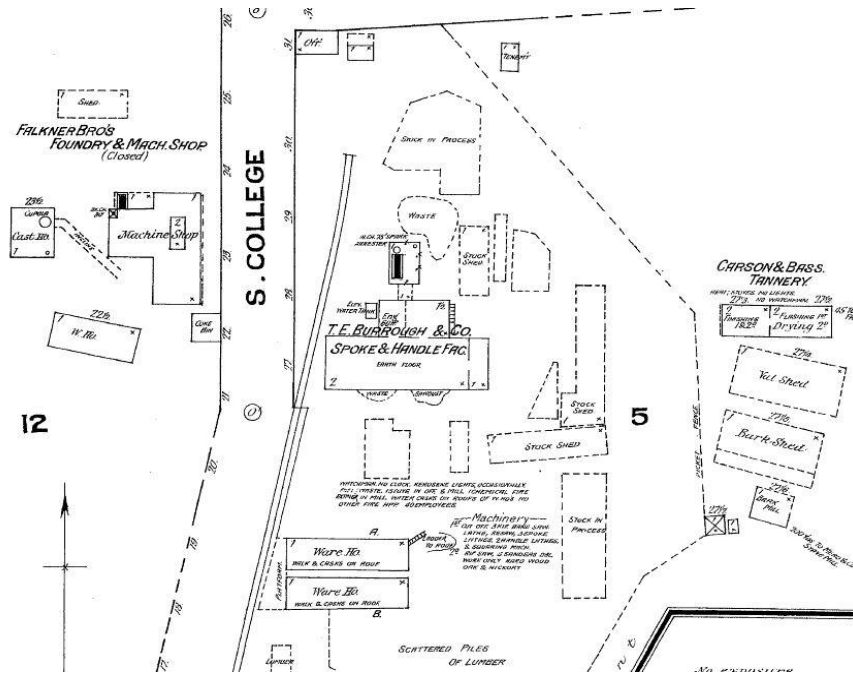


Figure 2.6 Depot Bottom in 1887. Map produced by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

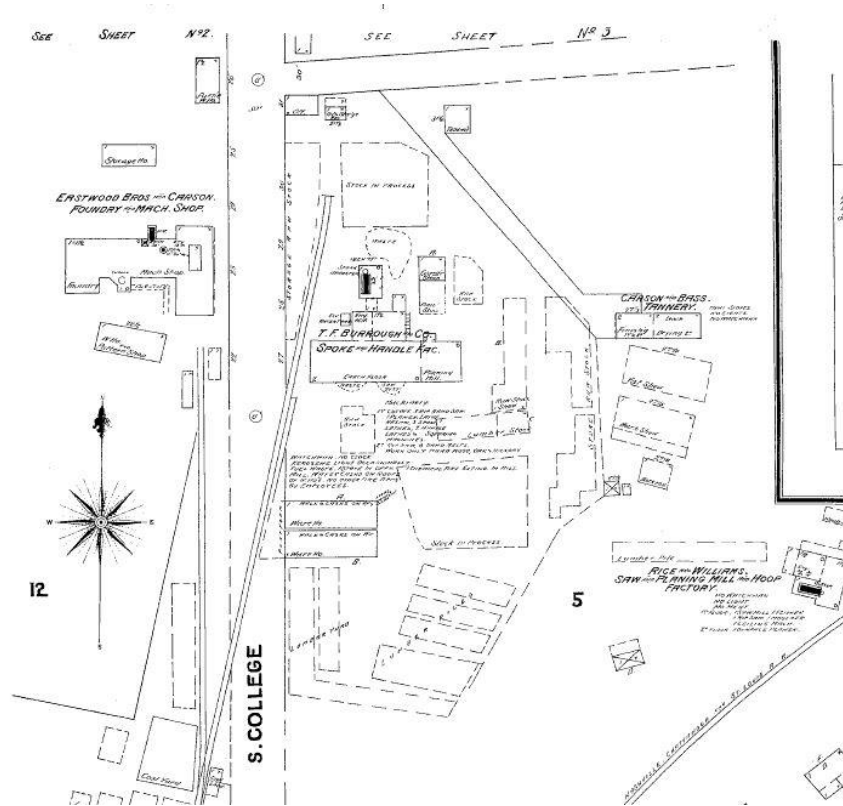


Figure 2.7 Depot Bottom in 1891. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

The second section was located ½ of a mile east of the courthouse, which was the site of the Flem Baker Saw and Planning Mill (Figure 2.9). The final area of industry in the 1908 map was located ½ of a mile west of the courthouse, where the railroad depot and the Farmer's Mill and Elevator Company stood (Figure 2.10). While Sparta had access to the railroad since 1884, the industrial areas of the city were largely underdeveloped.³²

The 1921 Sanborn map, however, shows changes in the city since the 1908 map thirteen years earlier. The portion of the map that had previously shown a small railroad depot in 1908, now shows a new depot that serves both passenger and freight traffic (Figure 2.11). The old depot is also shown. Additionally, the Hill Hensley and Company Incorporated is a new addition to the map, built by the Sparta Milling Company (previously Farmer's Mill and Elevator Company). Located ½ of a mile east from the courthouse is a new lumber factory. There are two buildings that make up the Lee and Fooshee Lumber Company. One building is the planning mill, while the other is the saw mill. One of the more noticeable changes to the 1921 map is that the appearance of the branch of the NC&STL Railroad that continued into Bon Air and Ravenscroft in the early 1900s (Figure 2.12).³³ The 1908 and 1921 Sanborn map of Sparta shows the changes that occurred in industry due the railroad. It is likely that the industrial section of Sparta would have increased further between 1908 and 1921 if operations of the numerous coal companies in White County were located closer to the city instead of Bon Air.

32. Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Map of Sparta, 1908, Sheet 2.

33. Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Map of Sparta, 1921, Sheets 5-6.

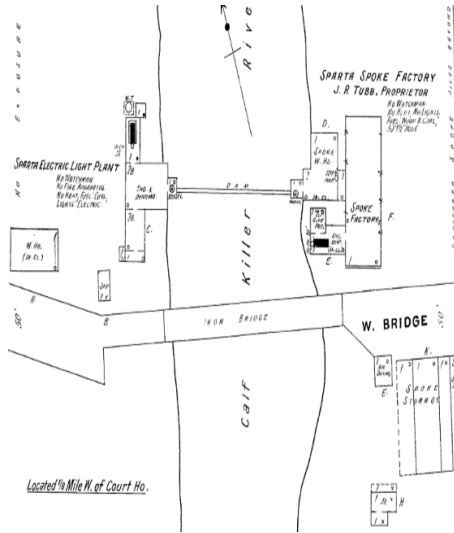


Figure 2.8 Sparta Electric Light Plant and Sparta Spoke Factory, 1908. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

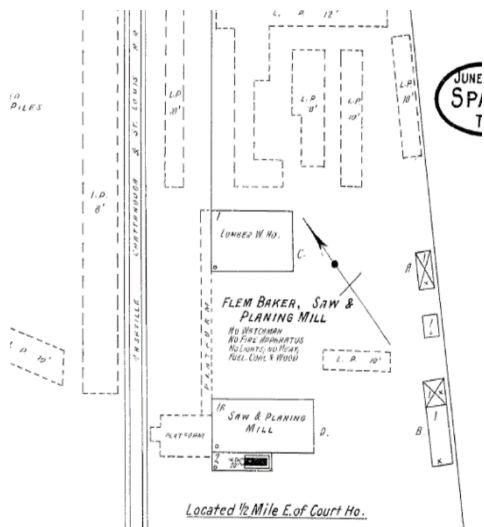


Figure 2.9 Flem Baker Saw & Planing Mill, 1908. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency

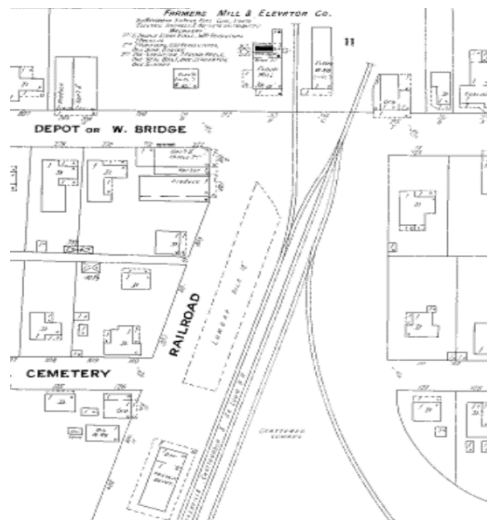


Figure 2.10 Farmers Mill & Elevator Company and Sparta's railroad depot. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

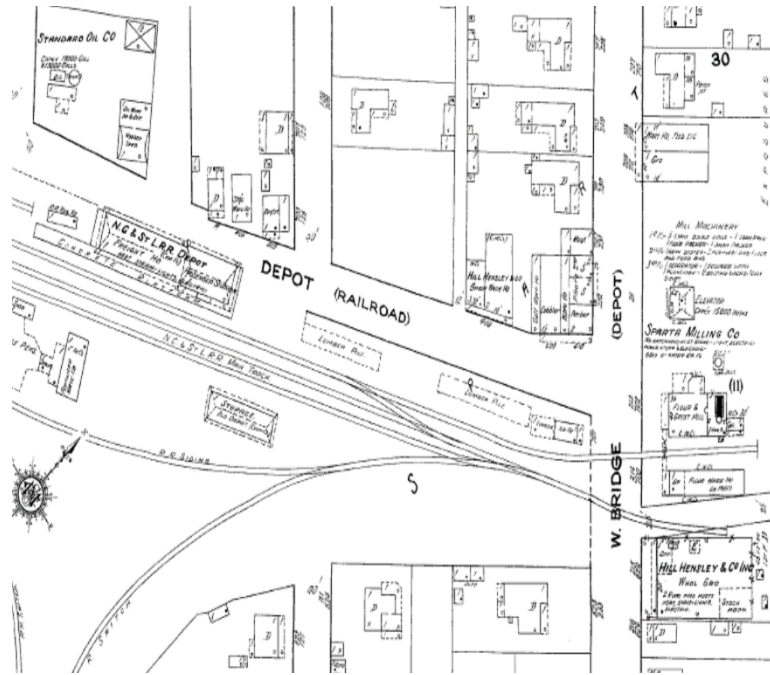


Figure 2.11 New railroad depot, 1921. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

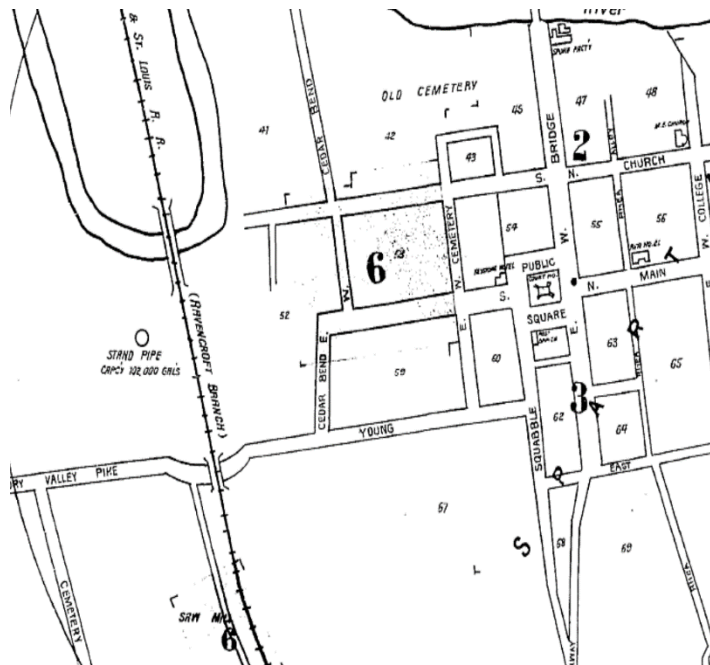


Figure 2.12 Addition of Ravenscroft branch. Map produced by Sanborn Fire Insurance Agency.

Because of the construction of railways throughout the region's countryside, lumber and coal companies flourished in the Upper Cumberland. Jeanette Keith states that, "Improved transportation had an immediate impact on the Upper Cumberland economy, facilitating intensive exploration of the region's coal fields and timber stands. The pace of the economy quickened since trade no longer depended on the 'tides' of the river."³⁴ For White County, change occurred with the establishment of the Bon Air Coal Company.

In a 1927 NC&STL Railroad newsletter, the company portrayed Bon Air as, "High in the hills, far-famed for their rugged grandeur, where mountain streams, scenic beauty, and primeval forest combine to make a veritable garden spot among the clouds."³⁵ It is in this setting that the railroad wished to provide rail access to the untapped natural resources of Bon Air. To reach Bon Air, a continuation of the line needed to be built from Sparta. The Tennessee Acts of 1875 chartered the Bon Air Road with the purpose of constructing the McMinnville line of the NC&STL Railroad from Sparta to the Bon Air coal fields. The Bon Air Road company built six miles of track before the NC&STL Railroad bought out the company in 1887 and completed the line to Bon Air that year.³⁶ Jeanette Keith states that, "the economic effects of the rail line [to Bon Air] foreshadowed what rail connections would do for the region as a whole.

34. Keith, *Country People*, 76.

35. "Bon Air, Tennessee," *The N.C. & St. L. RY News Item* (N.C. & St. L. Railroad, 1927), 6.

36. "Sparta Branch," Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railroad Vertical File, White County Heritage Museum (accessed February 16, 2018), 6.

Between 1888 and 1904 coal companies built four towns on Bon Air Mountain. Bon Air Coal itself employed 600 men.”³⁷

In 1904, the NC&STL Railroad further extended the branch past Bon Air and continued northeast into Ravenscroft. The extension equaled 5.5 miles and served the Bon Air Coal and Lumber Company. By the 1910s, the line had extended into a community called Clifty. After all extensions were completed, the total mileage of the branch from Tullahoma to Clifty equaled 80.2 miles.³⁸ With the line extended past Sparta, coal and lumber companies were able to extract natural resources from the land and ship them to larger markets outside of Warren and White Counties. The 1927 newsletter stated, “For nearly half century hundreds of thousands of tons of high grade coal have been brought forth from these famous mines, not only to comfort Southern homes, but also to serve hundreds of industries in the south with efficient and economical fuel.”³⁹

The once small community of Bon Air, and its surrounding area, became a booming coal empire. Discussing the importance of the coal to industry within the country, author Crandall A. Shifflett states, “In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Industrial Revolution dug into the steep mountain hillsides, and soon the lodes of rich bituminous coal filled the railroad cars bound for the boilers, furnaces, and hearths of America.”⁴⁰ Coal companies like the Tennessee Products Corporation, which owned

37. Keith, *Country People*, 78.

38. Elmer G. Sulzer, *Ghost Railroads of Tennessee* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1975), 242-247.

39. “Bon Air,” 6.

40. Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in the Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), xi.

multiple coal companies in White County, employed thousands of employees surrounding Bon Air. Like other coal companies throughout the United States, Tennessee Products Corporation, “equipped all of its communities with comfortable homes, with every convenience, built schools and churches, community houses, rest and recreation rooms, social clubs and athletic fields.”⁴¹ While the quotation paints a pleasant picture of company towns, “comfortable homes with every convenience” were not always the case. Regardless, coal companies came into White County and changed the built landscape.

Warren County shared a similar story with White County. Northern investors brought the Rocky River Coal and Lumber Company (RRC&L) to Warren County in 1921. The company played a large role in the new development. As the name suggests, the company dealt with coal and lumber, and in its earlier years, coke.⁴² In a 1906 certificate of organization of a corporation under the general law of the State of Maine, investors created the company with the purpose of extracting natural resources from other states, particularly states in the south. In its certificate of organization, the company states its purpose to “purchase, take on lease, or otherwise acquire and hold any mine, mining rights and lands, coal lands, and any interest therein, and to explore, work, exercise, develop, and exploit the same...in regard to resources and minerals such as anthracite, bituminous coal, iron, limestone, phosphate, manganese, oil, and gas.”⁴³ In addition to

41. “Bon Air,” 6.

42. Crandall Shifflett defines coke as, “a light porous, cinder like by-product of coal that had been baked at high temperatures in glazed firebrick-ovens -sometimes called “beehive ovens” because of their appearance-for forty-eight to seventy-two hours. Foundries and iron furnaces preferred this efficient and clean-burning fuel until the coming of natural gas and oil.” Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, 93.

43. Rocky River Coal and Coke Company, November 8, 1906, organizational certificate for a business, *Foreign Charters 1874-1971*, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

that, the company also claimed the right to “purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire timber rights, and to purchase, own, sell, and deal in timber or woods.”⁴⁴ At the time, the company was called the Rocky River Coal and Coke Company, with its headquarters in Portland, Maine.

In a 1921 certificate of organization, the Company changed its name to the Rocky River Coal and Lumber Company. Though no reference to the name change is made in the foreign charter, one could assume that the change reflects the shift of the company’s focus from coke to lumber. The 1921 charter also documents its purchase of “all the stock of the Welch-Millard Company, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Tennessee, which has an authorized capital stock of \$100,000.00.”⁴⁵ George N. Welch, likely the Welch named in the certificate, became a major stockholder in the RRC&L Company. He lived in Monterey, Tennessee where he owned a lumber mill. The lumber company purchase was another indicator of a shift in the company’s focus. When the company came to Warren County in 1921, the small community of Campaign became the headquarters.

The RRC&L Company was in search of large forests full of virgin timber, and in Warren and other surrounding counties, it found it. Before the company came to Tennessee, it made a survey of the land surrounding Warren County. Included within this survey were Warren, Van Buren, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, and Grundy Counties. In the end, the RRC&L Company purchased a 200,000-acre tract that encompassed all five

44. Rocky River Coal and Lumber, 1908, Foreign Charters.

45. Rocky River Coal and Lumber Company, July 21, 1921, organizational certificate for a business, Foreign Charters 1874-1971, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

counties.⁴⁶ Van Buren County stood out to the surveyors. At the time, the county had an abundant amount of uncut timber, but the forests in the county were inaccessible because no rail line existed. In May 1921 the company began surveying the area for the construction of a spur branch from the McMinnville and Sparta branch of the NC&STL Railroad. Owners of the company planned the branch to begin in Campaign and extend to Rocky River, a place on top of the Cumberland Plateau in Van Buren County.

One of the first runs of the line came later in 1921 when six flatcars brought residents of Campaign to a celebration in Crain Hollow, a community that bordered the Warren/Van Buren County line, where the company built a seventy-foot trestle to traverse the difficult landscape (Figure 2.13) The wife of major company investor George N. Welch attended the celebration, where she drove the first spike into the line of Van Buren County's first railroad. At the celebration was a barbeque dinner and a brass band that played for guests.⁴⁷

46. Sulzer, *Ghost Railroads*, 234.

47. *Ibid.*, 234.



Figure 2.13 N&ATLC Railroad trestle crossing through Crain Hollow. The trestle is under construction. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Alliance of McMinnville.

RRC&L Company completed the entire ten-mile spur line in 1922. The line became the Nashville and Atlantic Railroad (N&ATLC), owned by the RRC&L Company.⁴⁸ The N&ATLC Railroad served the company by bringing in timber from the surrounding area, preparing it at various band mills in Rocky River, and then shipping it by train car to the main lumber yards in Campaign. Once in Campaign, workers refined the product and shipped it down the line to Tullahoma, where train cars shipped the product throughout the nation.

The railroad also acted as a passenger train. In 1922, the Interstate Commerce Commission reported that the branch had more than 30,000 passenger rides since the completion of the line and that “products of the forest and mines flowed out in a stream that seemed never-ending.”⁴⁹ To gain access to timber on the mountains, workers created a pulley system. Cars that had been loaded at the top would go down the cable system, and in return, bring up empty cars.⁵⁰ The system became an ingenious solution to a problem that plagued loggers of the Upper Cumberland.

One unique aspect of railroad, coal, and lumber industries were the towns that they created. According to Margaret Crawford, “Company towns, dependent on the nature and viability of the industry that supported them, have appeared in many different forms, locations, and situations.”⁵¹ In many ways, Campaign was a company town. Though the RRC&L Company did not create Campaign as a company town, it did

48. *Ibid.*, 234.

49. *Ibid.*, 236.

50. *Ibid.*, 236.

51. Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns* (New York: Verso, 1995), 2.

transform the community into such. After the company came to the community in 1921, it built a company store, church, and school. Like many other company towns, RRC&L Company provided its workers with company housing. Seven of these houses can still be seen today. The president's house was located across a field from the workers housing, and this dwelling is also still standing, along with the company store (Figures 2.13 and 2.14) The company store has been transformed into a home, and the president's house, along with several of the company houses, are current residences. Workers of the RRC&L Company were issued company scrip like many other workers in company towns. This scrip allowed workers to buy items only in the company store. This system kept workers dependent on the company, providing the owners with a somewhat reliable workforce.

The Depression hurt the economic vitality of the RRC&L Company. While in the early years of the N&ATLC Railroad passenger and freight service boomed, by 1938, one daily trip from Campaign to Rocky River and back is all that was needed. As the company struggled during the years of the depression, it became financially burdensome to continue to keep the trains operating. Mill operations ceased at the headquarters of Campaign, and the company filed to abandon the N&ATLC Railroad on January 18, 1939.⁵² In the same year, the company filed bankruptcy. According to a Davidson County Chancery Court case, the materials of the N&ATLC Railroad were leased from the NC&STL Railroad. The case also stated that the company was in default on their payments, totaling to an amount of \$381.05. At the declaration of the bankruptcy, the

52. Sulzer, *Ghost*, 237.



Figure 2.14 RRC&L Company store located in Campaign. Photograph courtesy of Sydney Rutledge.



Figure 2.15 President's house of the RRC&L Company located in Campaign. Photograph courtesy of Sydney Rutledge.

N&ATLC Railroad had a deficit of \$273,794.21. Because of the deficit and the default on the payments, the NC&STL Railroad demanded that the joints and rails be returned within a 60-day period.⁵³ The company removed the tracks, and the railroad ceased to exist.

Small communities in Warren and White Counties increased in population due to the railroad. For Walling, Quebeck, and Doyle, their location on the right-of-way of the NC&STL McMinnville/Sparta branch created the opportunity for all three communities to become important shipping points for the company. The railroad changed the two counties much like it changed the nation. The built landscape of the railroad is still present. Rocky River Road closely follows the original path of the N&ATLC Railroad, while families of Campaign inhabit old company houses. If you go to Campaign and ask older members of the community if they have heard of the RRC&L Company, they will say yes. The same can be said for White County. The Bon Air Coal and Lumber Company created four company towns in the matter of a decade. While the track that connected Bon Air to Sparta no longer exists, the memory of the company and its influence on the landscape is still present in the minds of those that live in the area. The railroad changed the physical characteristics of the two counties while also changing the identity of the people within its boundaries.

53. Hudson Company, January 16, 1939, Chancery Court Case No. 53,473 of Davidson County Tennessee Part One Hudson Company et al vs. Rocky River Coal & Lumber Company et al, pgs. 33-34, William Waller Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

CHAPTER THREE:

GOOD ROADS COME TO TOWN

Highways transformed Warren and White Counties in the first third of the twentieth century. The Memphis-to-Bristol Highway became the first state highway of Tennessee (Figure 3.1). It connected the three grand divisions of the state: west, middle, and east Tennessee. The route went from Nashville, into Murfreesboro, and then traveled directly through McMinnville and Sparta, providing local farmers in Warren and White County access to larger markets, markets that had been previously established by the railroads. While this first state route went from west to east, it was not until the late 1920s that a north/south route would go through the remainder of the Upper Cumberland, providing the same accessibility that Warren and White Counties had seen years earlier.

Before the good roads movement swept through the south, farmers in rural communities, such as Warren and White Counties, had to rely upon early established roads and railroads. While the railroads presented a reliable mode of transportation, farmers in or around the two counties who lived a distance from the branch of the NC&STL Railroad still had a difficult time with getting their goods to the line. In 1910, president of the Southern Appalachian Good Roads Association Joseph Hyde Pratt discussed this issue. He observed:

When railroading was first begun in this country many people had the idea that there would be little use for the public road in those sections of the country that were traversed by the railroad. Time has demonstrated, however, that railways are simply the main arteries of travel, and public roads are the veins, each being a necessary part of the other in our system of transportation, and that without

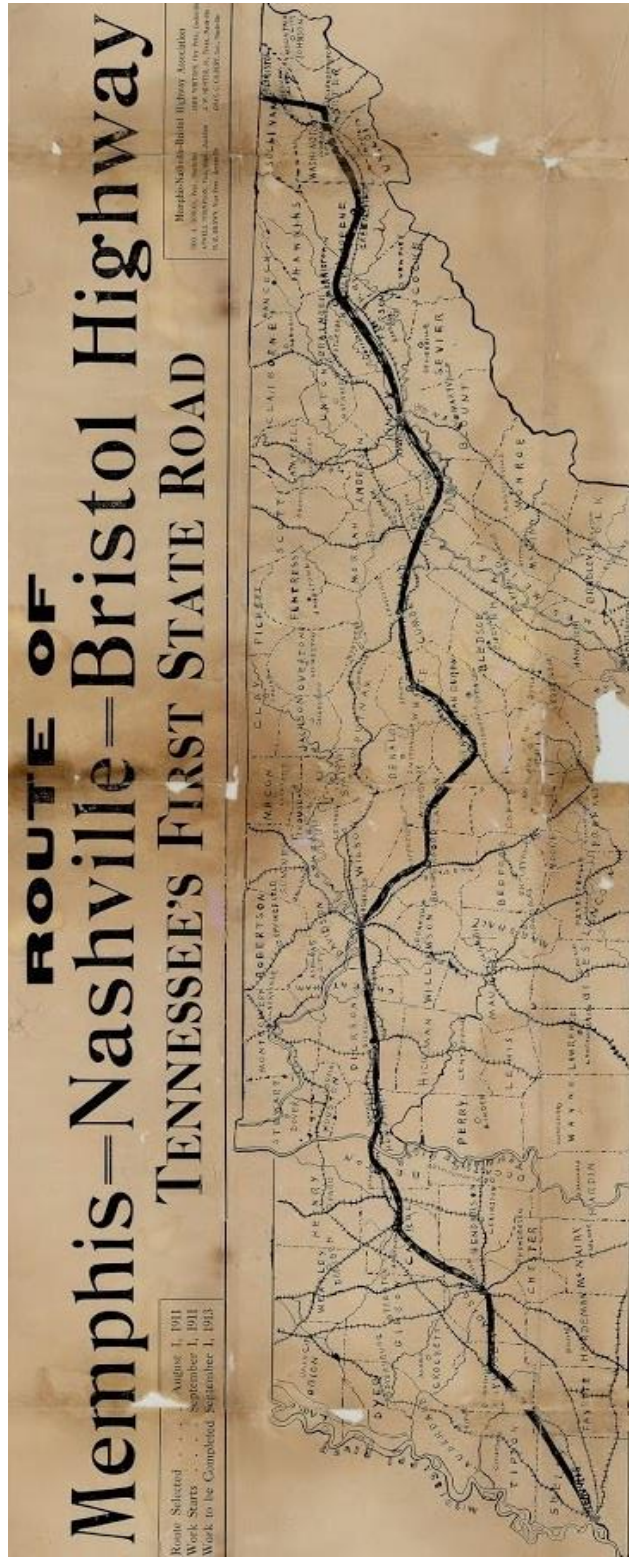


Figure 3.1 Route of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway through Tennessee. Notice Warren and White Counties and the highway running along the right-of-way of the railroad. Photograph courtesy of Tennessee State Library and Archives.

good public roads, railroads fail in accomplishing what is required and demanded of them. Improvements in railway transportation facilities have reached a high state of efficiency, while the public highways have in many states been greatly neglected.¹

An unsigned article in *Scientific America* shared similar views. The author stated:

The railway should be located with reference to the main traffic channels. It can no more take the place of the wagon road for the collection and distribution of traffic in a rural community than the wagon road can replace it as a main highway of commerce. Considered as parts of a general transportation system the railway and the wagon road supplement each other, and I believe that this relation should be recognized in the formulation of plans for road improvement.²

Joseph Pratt never tired of discussing why good roads were important to farmers. Tennessee was behind. Pratt recorded that 1,800 miles of roads were surfaced with stone, and 2,575 were surfaced with gravel. The total mile of improved roads in the state equaled 4,375. The total miles of unimproved roads in the state equaled 48,982.³ Even though the good roads movement had begun in the 1800s, Tennessee's rural roads in 1910 still needed improvement. Better roads made from harder materials would improve rural accessibility to the railroad.

Well maintained roads and their connection to the railroad became a common theme for those wanting economic development in the Upper Cumberland. In a 1930 history of Warren County, Will T. Hale emphasized the significance of the Broadway of America Highway, the national coast-to-coast highway that included the entire length of

1 Joseph Hyde Pratt, "Good Roads Movement in the South," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 35, no. 1 (1910): 105-106.

2. "The Good Roads Movement," *Scientific America* 108, no. 22 (1892): 492.

6. *Ibid.*, 109.

the Memphis to Bristol Highway in Tennessee. Hale saw the highway as important as the NC&STL Railroad.⁴ Monroe Seals, in his 1935 history of White County agreed: the highway and railroad defined economic development in the county at the time.⁵

For some years after the establishment of better roads, citizens recognized that the federal highway and railroad line had a mutual relationship with one another, and citizens recognized this. In 1912 Harold Parker, first Vice President of the Hassan Paving Company, commented that, "If it had not been for the invention of the steam engine, it is difficult to see how this great country would have reached its present state of progress, except after many years of slow development."⁶ While there was a period when the railroads and improved roads

7. Will T. Hale, *Early History of Warren County* (McMinnville: Standard Printing Co., 1930), 58.

8. Rev. Monroe Seals, *History of White County Tennessee* (Spartanburg: The Reprint Company Publishers, 1935), 147.

9. Harold Parker, "Good Roads Movement," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 40 (1912): 52.



Figure 3.2 The Rock House in the middle of the Broadway of America and the NC&STL Railroad. Photograph courtesy of White County Heritage Museum.

and highways benefitted one another, eventually the increase in better paved roads and easy access to automobiles led to the decline of railroads being used as a major mode of transportation.

According to southern roads historian Howard Laurence Preston:

There were, then two groups of southerners who called themselves good roads progressives: the original faction of disgruntled turn-of-the-century farmers and intellectuals who perceived road improvements as a panacea for improving the downtrodden, rural, impoverished South and as means of restoring a measure of the agrarian values that were losing importance in an increasingly urban-industrial society; and a subsequently formed second group, highway progressives, who espoused all the rhetoric of the first contingent of good roads reformers but who had at heart the motivations of capitalists.⁷

Jeanette Keith presents a similar argument. She states:

Progressives wanted a series of interlocking reforms to create a more orderly, prosperous society in the region. Good roads would facilitate access to markets, churches, and schools; schools would teach good citizenship, proper consumer attitudes, and market-oriented farming; better-educated citizens would support law and order. To promote these ends progressives used secular and religious means.⁸

The progressives wanted to promote good roads in a manner that would attract the support of the locals. By organizing their ideas to coincide with religious views, which were important to the lives of those in Warren and White County, progressives found themselves an audience. Good roads progressives “believed that orderly communities

10. Howard Lawrence Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South, 1885-1935* (Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 6

11. Jeanette Keith, *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 104.

with good schools and socially minded churches would attract capital to the Upper Cumberland.”⁹

For Warren County, the local interest in better roads came early. An 1881 advertisement in McMinnville’s newspaper the *Southern Standard* provides a glimpse into some of the attitudes in the county surrounding the topic of better roads. The notice is titled “For Good Roads,” and reads, “Shall we argue the question, or let their present condition plead it. We prefer the latter. Facts are more eloquent than words.”¹⁰ Essentially, the author stated that the cause for good roads can be pleaded without words, because the condition of the roads speak for themselves.

Imagine you are an owner of an automobile in the early 1900s. You are traveling on the rural roads between Warren and White County. The day before, there had been a heavy rainstorm, and because of wet roads, simply traveling into town that day became impossible. The automobile provided everyone with independency, but they were only as independent as the road would allow. According to a White Countian named Gertrude Saylor, “Around a decade after the turn of the [twentieth] century, a young man’s ambition still was to own a sleek horse, a shiny buggy, a long whip, and a gold tooth.”¹¹ At this same time, however, the desire for the modern automobile began to replace the desire for a horse and buggy. A 1923 article in the *McMinnville Leader* recognized the

12. Keith, *Country People*, 104.

13. Notice, *Southern Standard*, January 29, 1881.

14. Gertrude Saylor quoted in E.G. Rogers, *Memorable Historical Accounts of White County and Area* (Collegedale: College Press, 1971), 78.

relationship between the farmer, the automobile, and the better roads industry. The author stated:

The American farmer is not a stupid person. Let him once realize how much he can save by a truck and he won't ask for better roads, he will demand at the polls that the United States Government give him better roads. He already is asking in no uncertain voice, which is why it can confidently be predicted that the industry of the future which will be the biggest in the United States is neither railroads nor automobile building (the two present leaders, except farming) but road making. When the farmers of the nation insist on having their two and a half million miles of mud tracks made into roads, highway building will become the nation's premier industry.¹²

Road making did change the landscape of both Warren and White County, much like the railroad did in the later nineteenth century and the automobile in the early twentieth.

According to White County history, a Nashville man known as Quarles owned the first car to come through the county's boundaries. He owned a summer home in the Bon Air area. Thomas Anderson, however, became the first citizen of Sparta to own a car.¹³ Though a date is not known, it is recorded that Leland Hume became the first owner of a car to live in McMinnville.¹⁴ In 1909 Jesse Walling bought an automobile in Nashville and drove it back to McMinnville in the same day. The trip took six hours.¹⁵ While it may seem unusual to remember small pieces of history, the three accounts show the importance of owning an automobile in the early twentieth century. Eventually, widespread ownership of automobiles became common. In 1914, McMinnville Hardware

15. "Highway Building to be Greatest Industry," *McMinnville Leader*, Oct. 4, 1923.

16. Rogers, *Memorable.*, 78.

17. Womack, *Milestone*, 92.

18. Charles Nunley, *Year by Year – Celebrating Our Bicentennial: Warren County, Tennessee, 1807-2007* (McMinnville, 2007), 17.

had sold fourteen automobiles. Jump ahead twenty-two years and a car dealership known as McMinnville Motors is ranked ninth in the nation for the sale of Hudsons.¹⁶

Farmers did not always easily accept the changes that came along with the good roads movement. In White County the presence of automobiles on their roads annoyed some farmers. There are numerous instances where farmers felt endangered by this new mode of modern transportation. It is said that, "Horses snorted, ran backward, and reared up on the harness [with the approach of a vehicle] narrowly averting danger to their master. The one in charge may often have been more frightened than the animal. The narrow dirt roads often added difficulty to the problem of meeting or passing another."¹⁷

In 1923, various publications of the newspaper *McMinnville Leader* had articles and advertisements regarding automobile and pedestrian safety. One published a set of eight safety standards that the Chicago Automobile Dealers Association issued. Within the standards were typical safety precautions that pedestrians today would recognize: alertness, caution, and responsibility. The sixth standard is particularly applicable to today. It states, "Don't stargaze while crossing the street."¹⁸ While pedestrians today are unlikely to stargaze, they are likely to be distracted by cellphones. Another article discussed the issues with road glare. The article points out that road glare could be reduced by dimming headlights, but at the risk of the driver. The solution comes with the lighting of streets. The article concludes by theorizing that, "Exactly as the Post Office

19. Nunley, *Year by Year*, 17-23.

20. Rogers, *Memorable*, 79.

21. "Motor Safety Code," *McMinnville Leader*, Oct. 19, 1923.

Department maintains beacons to guide its mail flyers at night, so will the National Government eventually light its national highways at night.”¹⁹

Besides written articles, many of the publications of the *McMinnville Leader* in the 1920s had automobile advertisements that sought to appease the fears of rural citizens. One advertisement discusses a brake safety test that the Chief of Police in San Francisco conducted. According to the test, an automobile stopped two feet before hitting the Chief of Police. It is said that the, “bumper is so arranged that when a person is struck the ignition is shut off and all brakes are applied.”²⁰ Other advertisements about brake safety are also present in the newspaper. Two Buick advertisements are particularly interesting (Figures 3.3 and 3.4). Both portray a male driver who is being cautious when coming upon pedestrians. One shows a Buick driving towards a farmer and his horse team, while the other looks through the windshield of a Buick at a traffic director.²¹ In both advertisements, a paragraph of text below the illustrations are provided that discuss the state-of-the-line breaking systems that were in Buicks at the time.

While advertisements and articles portrayed and discussed the dangers of automobiles, accidents continued to happen. Regardless of the farmer’s fears, better roads in Warren and White Counties brought along more automobiles, which increased

22. “Safe Road Lighting of the Next Decade,” *McMinnville Leader*, Oct. 3, 1923.

23. “This Auto Can Not Run You Down,” *McMinnville Leader*, Aug. 24, 1924.

24. “Safety for Emergencies,” Buick Advertisement, *McMinnville Leader*, Aug. 24, 1924; “Double Breaking Efficiency,” Buick Advertisement, *McMinnville Leader*, Aug. 22, 1924.



Safety for Emergencies!

Buick Four-wheel Brakes

Buick four-wheel brakes meet the demands of present day traffic conditions by having power in reserve to insure a rapid, safe and reliable "stop".

Actual braking effectiveness is practically doubled by Buick four-wheel brakes. This is accomplished by slowing down the two front wheels. Each brake band has a three-quarter wrap or grip on its brake drum, rather than the half-way wrap in common practice.

The Buick four-wheel brakes are an integral part of the Buick front axle design. Their arrangement and operation are simple. The front brakes are coupled in relation to the rear so that when the brake pedal is operated more pressure is put on the rear brakes than on the front.

Buick four-wheel brakes [on all models] are one of many definite advances in motor car operation and maintenance that the 1924 Buicks have contributed to automobile transportation.

E-7-38-NP

**McMinnville Buick Co.,
McMinnville, Tenn.**

WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

Figure 3.3 Buick advertisement depicting relationship between farmers and automobiles. Published in the Southern Standard, 1924.



Double Braking Efficiency
Buick Four-Wheel Brakes

Buick four-wheel brakes, because they double the braking surface brought into action, increase the braking efficiency of the car practically 100 per cent.

The action is simple, positive and rapid. A slight pressure on the service pedal (the method of operation is unchanged) and all four wheels are retarded—the car is quickly, smoothly and safely brought to a stop. With these proved Buick four-wheel brakes a stop is made in a much shorter distance with a minimum of skidding danger.

Obtaining braking friction at four contacts with the road increases the braking power and lessens the wear on each brake lining and each tire.

The 1924 Buick models, with four-wheel brakes, a more powerful engine, beautiful new bodies and numerous other advanced features fully exemplify the Buick policy of incorporating every improvement that will give greater safety, comfort and satisfaction to the owner.

E-1-30-NP

McMinnville Buick Co.,
McMinnville, Tenn.

WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

Figure 3.4 Buick advertisement depicting the importance of pedestrian safety. Published in the Southern Standard, 1924.

awareness of the potential dangers of automobiles. Eventually, automobiles became a common feature in Warren and White County, and fears subsided. According to a local White County author, “Soon cars began to strengthen a demand for better roads. Better roads accommodated bigger and faster cars. Faster cars began to cut distance and time. The consumer’s needs had begun to be met by the producer himself.”²²

The real push for development of new roads in Warren and White County began in the late 1880s. In 1887, White County appropriated \$60,000 for the building of better roads. Later that year, another \$50,000 was appropriated to complete the project in the county. For this project, crushed limestone was used for the surface of the road, the road being twelve feet wide. In the beginning, the project was not widely accepted because farmers feared an increase in taxes to support the project. Once automobiles became more common, however, projects such as these became more accepted.²³

During the 1910s, the Tennessee Good Roads Association focused on the route that would later become the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway.²⁴ This road would be a 500-mile all-weather road that followed a path between the southwest corner of Tennessee at Memphis, to the northeast corner of Tennessee at Bristol. A group of business men formed the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway Association in 1911. In 1912 Governor Ben W. Hooper announced that he felt it would be best for counties to issue bonds that would pay for the portion of the highway that would go through their county. In 1913, the General

25. *Ibid.*, 79.

26. Seals, *White County*, 65.

27. Leland R. Johnson, *Memphis To Bristol: A Half Century of Highway Construction* (Tennessee Road Builders Association, 1978), 30.

Assembly approved the use of bonds in the construction of the highway.²⁵ The highway was completed in 1915. The new Tennessee State Highway Department designated it as Tennessee State Route 1. In the late 1920s, the entire state route became a portion of the Broadway of America Highway, which ran from California to New York.²⁶

By the 1920s, White County had made great progress in building better roads for its citizens and for travelers. According to a pamphlet written by the White County Immigration Bureau in Sparta, the county had spent \$190,000 in the span of five years on macadamized roads. The bureau recorded seventy-five total miles of macadamized roads to date within the county.²⁷ With regards to the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway, authors praised the development of the route for enhancing “the value of every acre of land in the county beyond the ideas of our people.”²⁸

For Warren and White County, the creation and direction of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway through both the county’s seats of government meant further access to larger markets within the region, state, and nation. From Nashville, the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway, now largely designated as U.S. 70S, followed a southeast path towards Murfreesboro. From Murfreesboro, the route continued east through Woodbury and into McMinnville. As the current 70S enters McMinnville, the road’s name changes to Old

28. Johnson, *Memphis to Bristol*, 31.

29. Martha Carver, “Historic Highways,” *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* Version 2.0 <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=632> (accessed February 24, 2018).

30. White County Immigration Bureau, *White County, Tennessee In a Nut-Shell* (Sparta, White County Immigration Bureau), 4. The pamphlet has no date, but the Broadway of America Highway is referenced as not yet complete with the Memphis-to-Bristol being completed, therefore it is likely that it was published between 1917 and 1925.

31. Immigration Bureau, *In a Nut-Shell*, 4.

Nashville Highway. This section is an original portion of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway. Old Nashville Highway, however, changes back to 70S at the bypass that connects with Tennessee State Route 55. If one is to follow 70S, this bypass will direct you away from the original route of the highway that went through downtown McMinnville. To follow the original route, continue on Old Nashville Highway over the bypass and onto West Main Street. From here, follow West Main Street into downtown McMinnville and pass the courthouse. Two blocks past the courthouse, the road takes a left and turns in Sparta Street (Figure 3.5). Sparta Street eventually merges with 70S, and once again 70S follows the original route out of McMinnville and towards Sparta. 70S will go over a bridge that spans the Collins River.

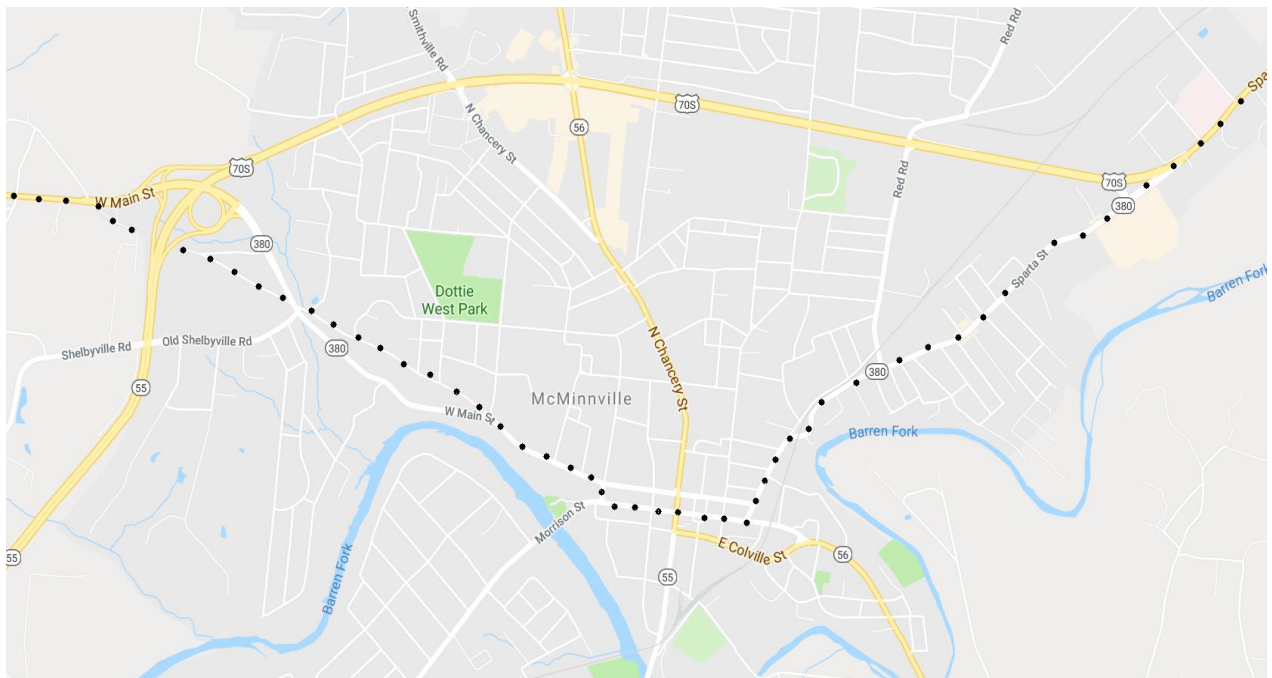


Figure 3.5 The original route of the highway as it enters and leaves McMinnville. Created with Google Maps

For a few miles, U.S. Highway 70S continues to follow the original route until it reaches Old Rock Island Road. The highway will continue into Sparta from this point, but to follow the original alignment of the highway, take Old Rock Island Road into the community of Campaign, until it connects briefly again with 70S. The route diverts from 70S and is now called Rock Island Road and goes into the community of Rock Island (Figure 3.6) and continues into a crossroads community called Walling. From Walling, the highway's original route is called McMinnville Highway. McMinnville Highway leads into another small community called Quebeck. The highway then continues into the community of Doyle (Figure 3.7). The original route continues past Doyle, and outside of Sparta it bypasses 70S, which like in McMinnville, directs traffic past downtown Sparta.

To continue the original route into Sparta, drive over the bypass and go onto a portion of the highway that is called Broadway of America. At the next major intersection, a left onto West Bockman Way, which is once again 70S, will take the route into downtown Sparta past the courthouse. From this point, the original route continues to follow 70S out of Sparta, but once outside of downtown, 70S diverts from the path. Instead, the original route is called Gaines Street until it turns into Country Club Road. Following Country Club Road, the original route continues until it reaches the historical Rock House. At the Rock House, the original highway goes over 70S again to make a quick directed turn to a scenic overlook known as Sunset Rock. This portion of the road is called Old US Highway 70, and then quickly turns into Old Bon Air Road. A 1927 newsletter from the NC&STL Railroad portrayed this area of the highway as, "a majestic beacon to mark the half-way point between Knoxville and Nashville on the modern

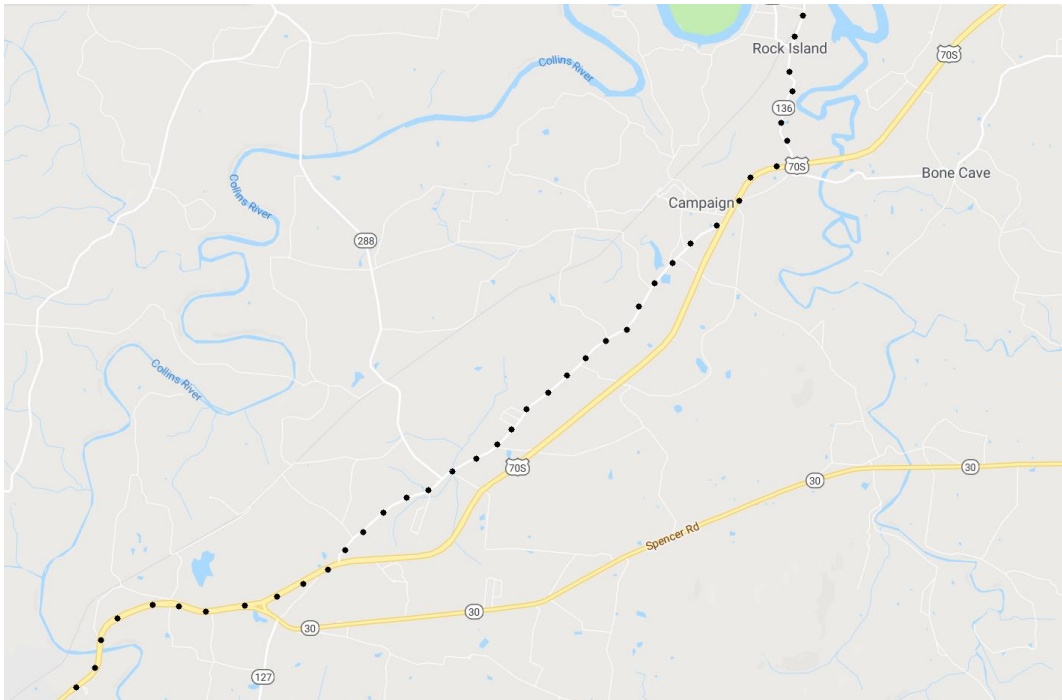


Figure 3.6 Path of the original route leaving McMinnville and heading into Rock Island. Created with Google Maps.

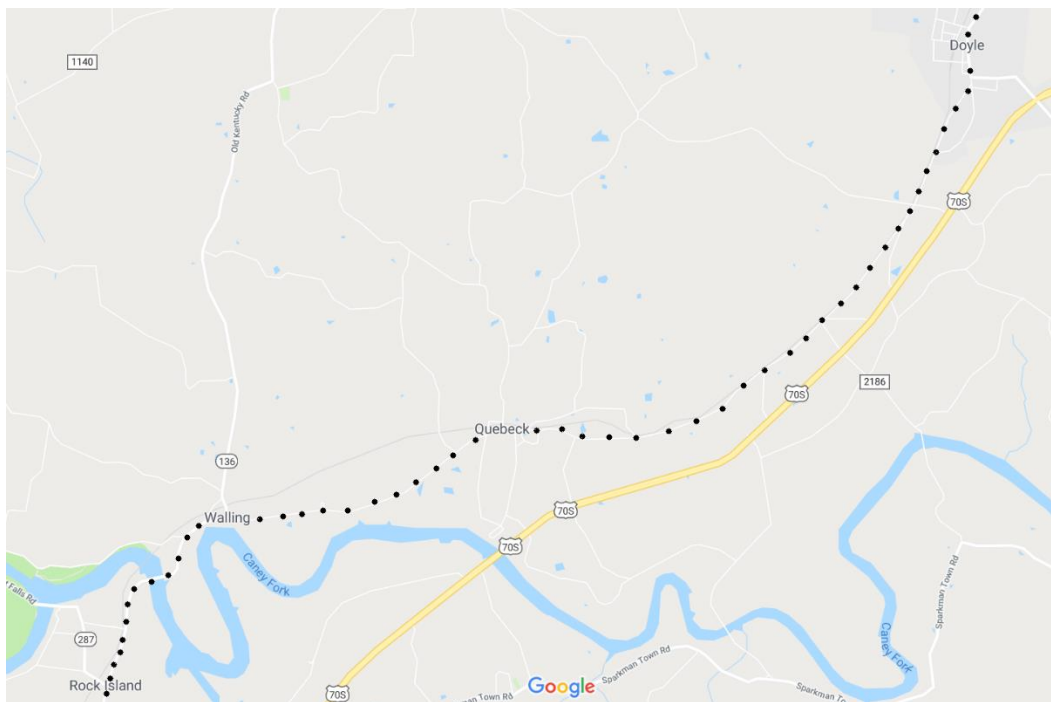


Figure 3.7 Path of the original route leaving Rock Island and heading into Doyle. Created using Google Maps

Highway. (Figure 3.8)”²⁹ Old Bon Air road follows the original route, and once again connects to 70S at Bon De Croft. From this point, the old route of the Memphis-to-Bristol highway generally follows the route of U.S. 70S until it reaches Crossville (Figure 3.9).

For much of the nation, the good roads movement caused the decline in the use of railroads as a major mode of transportation. The push for better roads increased the amount of automobiles in the country, which lessened the status of the railroad as being the sole provider of larger market accessibility to rural areas. John R. Stilgoe states, “No longer did a scenic postcard emphasize a railroad line or depot; by 1930, at least east of the Mississippi River, it emphasized a well-graded, often paved road. No longer did an absence of rails indicate poverty.”³⁰ Stilgoe continues to portray a sad image of the forgotten railroad by writing, “As automobiles veered away from the [metropolitan] corridor, as railroad passenger and freight traffic decreased, the corridor became the new wildered environment, a sort of vast jungle of sumac and Tree of Heaven likely to hide tramps and certain to shelter decrepit factories watched over by cold smokestacks. Trolley cars vanished, almost instantly, and once-ordered suburbs, quickly jammed with motor cars, changed character within two decades. Backyard vegetable gardens surrendered to the spatial requirements of garages; lawns gave up to driveways. Narrow

34. “Bon Air, Tennessee,” *The N.C. & St. L. RY News Item* (N.C. & St. L. Railroad, 1927), 6.

35. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor*, 333.

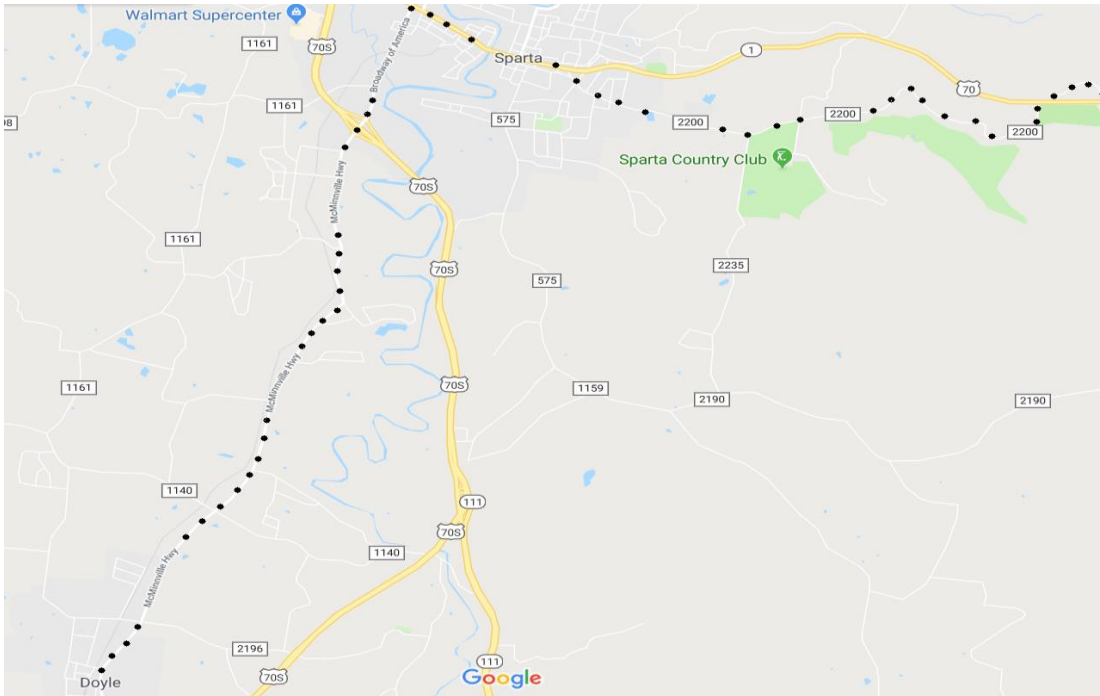


Figure 3.8 Path of the original route leaving Doyle and heading into Sparta. Created using Google Maps.

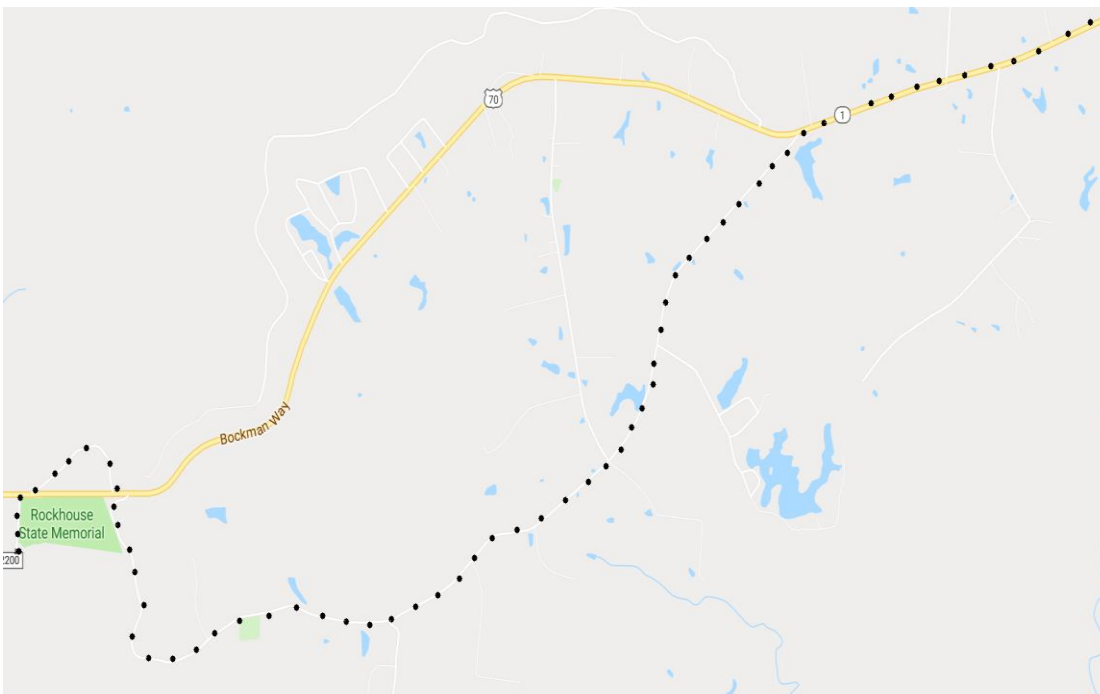


Figure 3.9 Path of original route leaving the Rock House and heading towards Bon Air. Created using Google Maps

streets focused on railroad stations clogged with cars, and station gardens vanished before bulldozers madly creating larger and larger parking lots-until commuters turned away from trains.”³¹ Was this the case, however, in Warren and White Counties?

For White County, the answer is yes and no. By 1928, the increased popularity and readily available automobile decreased passenger traffic on the line between Ravenscroft and the final stop on the branch, Clifty. At this time, only one train was needed to move passengers about between the two points. On October 15, 1930 passenger service between the two destinations stopped. For this reason, the automobile industry did affect the use of the railroad as a mode of transportation. The same can be said for Warren County. With the completion of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway, and the continued improvement of farmer-to-market roads, freight traffic around McMinnville also decreased. For Sparta, however, freight traffic also declined during the 1930s.³²

The decline in passenger freight directly related to the operations of the coal and lumber companies in the Bon Air area. By 1934, the coal fields located in Eastland and Clifty became exhausted, and many of the coal operations that had once boomed in that area, closed. The population in both Eastland and Clifty decreased to a meager 15 families each. As for freight traffic, the tonnage of freight decreased to 14,990 tons in 1934 from 54,939 tons in 1928.³³ Warren County managed somewhat better because it

36. *Ibid.*, 341.

37. Elmer G. Sulzer, *Ghost Railroads of Tennessee* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1975), 243.

38. Sulzer, *Ghost Railroads*, 243.

did not depend so heavily upon coal, but instead, lumber. Many of the lumber companies that started in the early twentieth century are still operating and producing large amounts of hardwoods that are shipped throughout the South.

The railroad began the change in transportation that residents of Warren and White County experienced during the mid to late nineteenth century, but the highway system continued that change into the new century. The Memphis-to-Bristol Highway, like many other highways in the state, changed the landscape of the two counties. Though the downtown areas of McMinnville and Sparta now get bypassed by U.S. 70S, there are reminders of the original highway in those areas if one knows where to look.

Highways not only influenced Warren and White County, but the entirety of the South and the nation. With the increase in new and better roads, people who were once separated by great distances that could not be traveled, could now travel such distances in a relatively short amount of time. The modern technology of highways conquered the Cumberland Plateau, which had always been a challenge, and connected it to an increasingly different New South.

CONCLUSION

TODAY'S LANDSCAPE

The transformation of transportation between 1870 and 1940 had a definite impact on the built and natural landscape of Warren and White Counties. From the establishment of the counties, and up to the development of the railroad, transportation either relied upon early roads and turnpikes or the river systems that flowed through the two counties. Much like the rest of the Upper Cumberland, Warren and White County relied on these early modes of transportation for travel across county lines, and to get their goods to market. Goods were typically sold within local markets because getting product any further became costly.

During this time, both counties had an abundance of natural resources, but no means of reliable transportation to get resources to larger markets. The railroad changed that. With the construction of the branch of the NC&STL Railroad in the counties, farmers, business owners, railroad entrepreneurs, and those interested in coal and lumber had a means of transportation that could get their goods to markets, markets that now encompassed the nation. While the railroad provided relief, poor road conditions made it difficult for farmers to utilize the new transportation. With the demand for better roads and the accessibility of automobiles, rural roads improved, and by the 1930s, automobiles became an accepted and accustomed aspect of life.

It is hard to stress the importance of the railroad and the automobile on the rural citizen's life in Warren and White County during this period. In the grand scheme of

things, the period of evolution of transportation in the United States is not that distant in our past. While citizens no longer rely on the railroad for all their transportation needs, it still exists in the background of life. Vehicles are used daily, and it is unlikely that one in today's world would wonder about early transportation when getting from point A to point B. So accustomed are we to our freedom of mobility that the history of such events becomes forgotten. The landscape, however, still exists. From Tullahoma to McMinnville and McMinnville to Sparta, traces of this period in history remain and are ready to be rediscovered.

While the golden era of railroads has passed, and the uniqueness of cars have diminished, exciting pieces of history still exist from the time when transformations in transportation brought about changes in the landscape. The following pages provides photographs that show historical resources that still exist from this period. From them, a few conclusions can be made. The first is that many of these small communities that were once thriving, now have a look of abandonment, much as John Stilgoe discussed in *Metropolitan Corridor*. Railroad depots, however, along the McMinnville/Sparta branch remain important. Tullahoma is on the CSX main line. The Sparta depot is listed in the National Register of Historical Places. The depot in Manchester is now being used as a home. The original Quebeck depot is now on private property and is used as storage space.

In these communities and cities, one will find those who are happy to share their knowledge on the past. Both the White County Heritage Museum and the Bon Air museum work to bring about the area's history to the public. The community of

Campaign continues to have monthly suppers in their community building. While conducting research, I attended one of these suppers. Once I explained that I was researching the Rocky River Coal and Lumber Company, I barely had time to eat. A line formed to talk with me as each person wanted their moment to share with me their memories of the company. It was at one of these community dinners that I discovered that a handful of the homes in the area were original company housing, and that the company store, along with the president's house, were still being lived in.

The building of modern U.S. Highway 70S hurt many of these communities. Though the highway runs only a few miles to the right of Walling, Quebeck, and Doyle, it impacted the amount of traffic that once went through the small communities. One can only imagine what such places would be like today if they remained main destinations on the way to Sparta.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

KEY TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA

Tullahoma



Figure A.1 Tullahoma Depot. Tullahoma was the starting point for the branch of the NC&STL Railroad that went through McMinnville and Sparta. CSX still uses the depot and trains actively pass through the city between their destinations of either Chattanooga or Nashville. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.2 L&N red caboose. The L&N Railroad eventually took ownership of the NC&STL Railroad. The caboose is located just down the track from the Tullahoma depot. Photo taken by author.

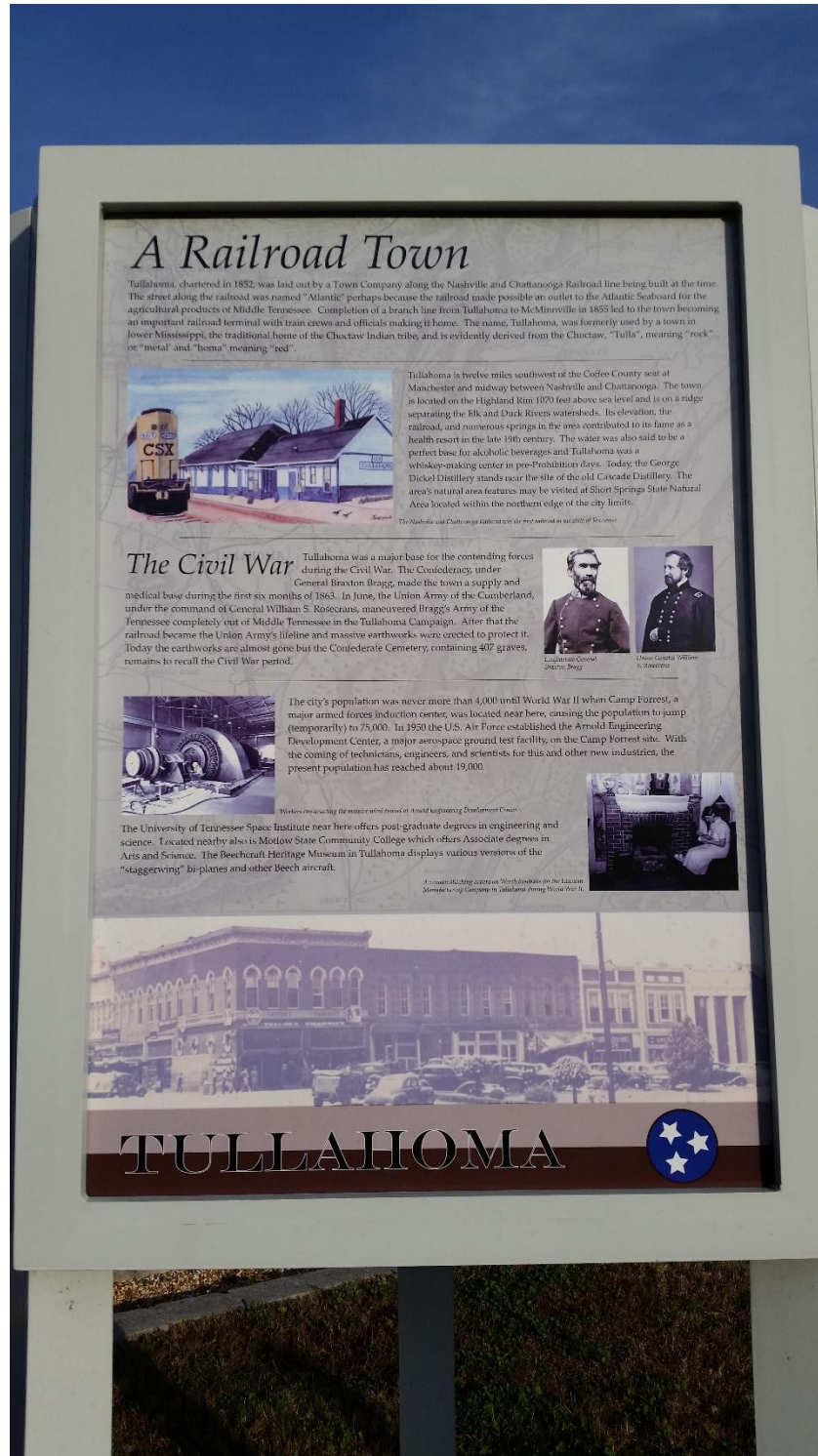


Figure A.3 Panels around the train depot are provided for visitors. This particular one discusses the development of Tullahoma as a railroad town. Photo taken by author.

Manchester



Figure A.4 Morrison Depot. Though not for certain, it seems that the depot in Morrison has been repurposed as a home. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.5 Tracks in Morrison are still being used to distribute lumber along the railroad. Photo taken by author.

McMinnville



Figure A.6 McMinnville Depot. This is not the original depot. Notice CSX trains are still active in the area. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.7 Depot Bottom in McMinnville, Tennessee. The red buildings are part of the Burroughs-Ross-Colville Lumber Company. To the far right is the railroad station. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.8 Late 1800s building that makes up the Burroughs-Ross-Colville Lumber Company. This company is still very active and distributes hardwood floors throughout the United States. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.9 Circa 1935 gas station. This historic Pure Oil gas station lies on the corner of Morford and Spring Street in downtown McMinnville. The Memphis-to-Bristol Highway influenced the building of gas stations throughout the landscape that the highway traversed. Photo taken by author.

Campaign



Figure A.10 RRC&L Company house on Maple Street. Out of the four, this house has had the most remodeling. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.11 RRC&L Company house on Maple Street, now a private residence. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.12 RRC&L Company house on Maple Street, now a private residence. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.13 RRC&L Company house on Solomon Street, abandoned. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.14 RRC&L Company store has been adapted into a home. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.15 Campaign Station. One of the local buildings has become a place for food and live music. Photo Taken by author.

Walling



Figure A.16. Walling Post Office. While Walling was an important shipping point for the NC&STL Railroad, the community now receives income through nature enthusiasts. A bend in the Caney Fork River can be seen on the far right. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.17 New cabins have been built recently in Walling along the original route of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway. The cabins overlook the Caney Fork, which can be seen in the background. Photo taken by author.

Quebeck



Figure A.18 Abandoned gas station and post office. The buildings are located at the crossroads of McMinnville Highway and Quebeck Road. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.19 Sign directing traffic to businesses in Rock Island. The community of Quebeck has long been identified with the larger Rock Island community. The sign sits along the original road of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway. Photo taken by author.

Doyle



Figure A.20 Doyle's old square that developed around the late 1880s. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.21 Another section of Doyle's old square. The stone plaque at the top of the building says, "W.S. Terry 1916." Photo taken by author.

Sparta



Figure A.22 Sparta depot, listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Photo taken by author.



Figure A.23 Train display in the White County Heritage Museum in Sparta. Notice the photographs showing the Walling and Quebeck depots. Photo taken by author.

Bon Air



Figure A.24 Bon Air Museum at Bon Air. The building is one of the old company houses from Bon Air Coal. Photo taken by author.