

Forge Creek Dam  
Cades Cove  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
Blount County  
Tennessee

HABS No. TN-118

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TENN  
5-CADCO,  
1-

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey

Forge Creek Dam-John Cable Mill  
(Forge Creek Dam)  
Cades Cove  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
Blount County  
Tennessee

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Addendum to:

Forge Creek Dam  
Cades Cove  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
Blount County  
Tennessee  
(drawings first transmitted)

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C.

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FORGE CREEK DAM - JOHN CABLE MILL  
(Forge Creek Dam)

HABS No. TN-118

Addendum to:

Forge Creek Dam  
Cades Cove  
Great Smoky Mountains  
National Park  
Blount County  
Tennessee  
(drawings first transmitted)

Location: Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Blount County, Tennessee.

Present Owner: National Park Service.

Present Use: Public demonstration.

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

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

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

John Cable built the present mill in the 1870s. Originally the mill had two sets of stones, one for grinding wheat which was removed some years ago, and the one which is still in use, for grinding corn. The mill was restored in 1935-36.

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

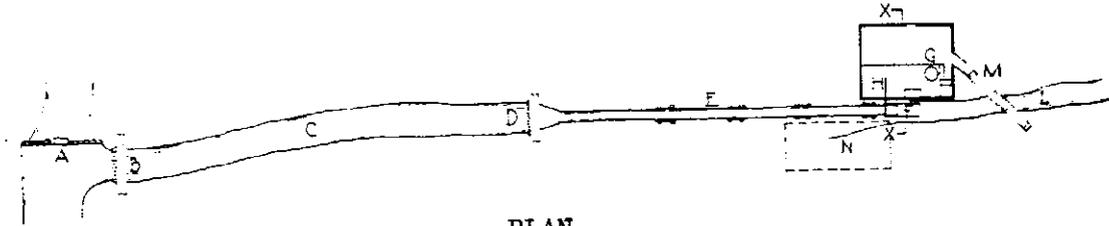
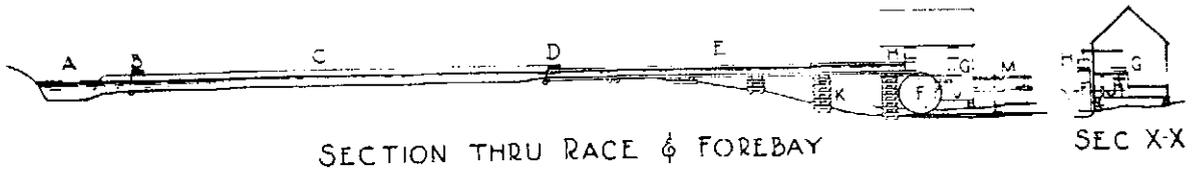
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In addition to the two mills mentioned above, an iron forge operated about one-quarter mile up the Forge Creek from the mill. The creek's name is derived from this forge. Heaps of slag and pieces of iron ore mark the site. Part of the forge hammer used in this forge is now in the collection of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

These manufacturing activities are a good example of a type of industry which existed before the era of modern transportation.

Prepared by: Charles S. Grossman  
National Park Service  
Late 1930s

FORGE CREEK DAM-JOHN CABLE MILL  
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PLAN

JOHN CABLE MILL  
AND  
FORGE CREEK DAM

KEY

- A: DAM
- B: WATER-GATE
- C: HEAD-RACE
- D: TRASH-RACK
- E: FOREBAY
- F: OVERSHOT WATER WHEEL
- G: MILL-STONES
- H: WATER-GATE
- J: GEARING
- K: CRIBBING FOR FOREBAY
- L: TAIL-RACE
- M: BRIDGE OVER TAIL RACE TO MILL
- N: SITE OF OLD SASH-SAW MILL