

SECTION E: DIXIE HIGHWAY BUS TOUR TWO

MOON PIES, MONUMENTS, AND MOTELS

Martha Carver
Tennessee Department of Transportation

with assistance from
Claudette Stager
Tennessee Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Office, Nashville,
Tennessee

Dixie Highway Tour #2 *Moon Pies, Monuments, and Motels* makes a counter-clockwise circle through Hamilton and Marion Counties in Southeast Tennessee and a side trip to Lookout Mountain which lies in both Hamilton County and Walker County, Georgia (see Figure E-1). The tour route begins at the Read House in downtown Chattanooga, the conference headquarters, and proceeds north on the common alignment of both the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Dixie Highway. In the community of Red Bank where the Divisions split, the tour turns west and follows the Western Division along the Suck Creek Road, one of the most difficult sections to complete of the entire Dixie Highway. This route was also the original route of the Lee Highway. In Kimball, at the wye with the Lee Highway, the tour returns to Chattanooga along the Wauhatchie route of the Dixie Highway (later U.S. 41), an official alternate route that the Dixie Highway Association approved due to the difficult road conditions of the Suck Creek Road. The tour contains side trips to Signal Mountain and to Lookout Mountain.

BACKGROUND ON THE ROAD: The route between Jasper and Chattanooga which crossed Walden Ridge, on what came to be known as the Suck Creek Road section (**tour route out of Chattanooga**), was one of the three most difficult sections in Tennessee to complete. Both the Monteagle portion and the Suck Creek Road crossed steep mountains that were primarily located on the edge of Marion County. Not only were the roads difficult and expensive to construct, but local voters perceived both sections as primarily benefiting through travelers and as having little local value. Therefore, both projects had limited support in Marion County, which, prior to Federal and state aid programs, would

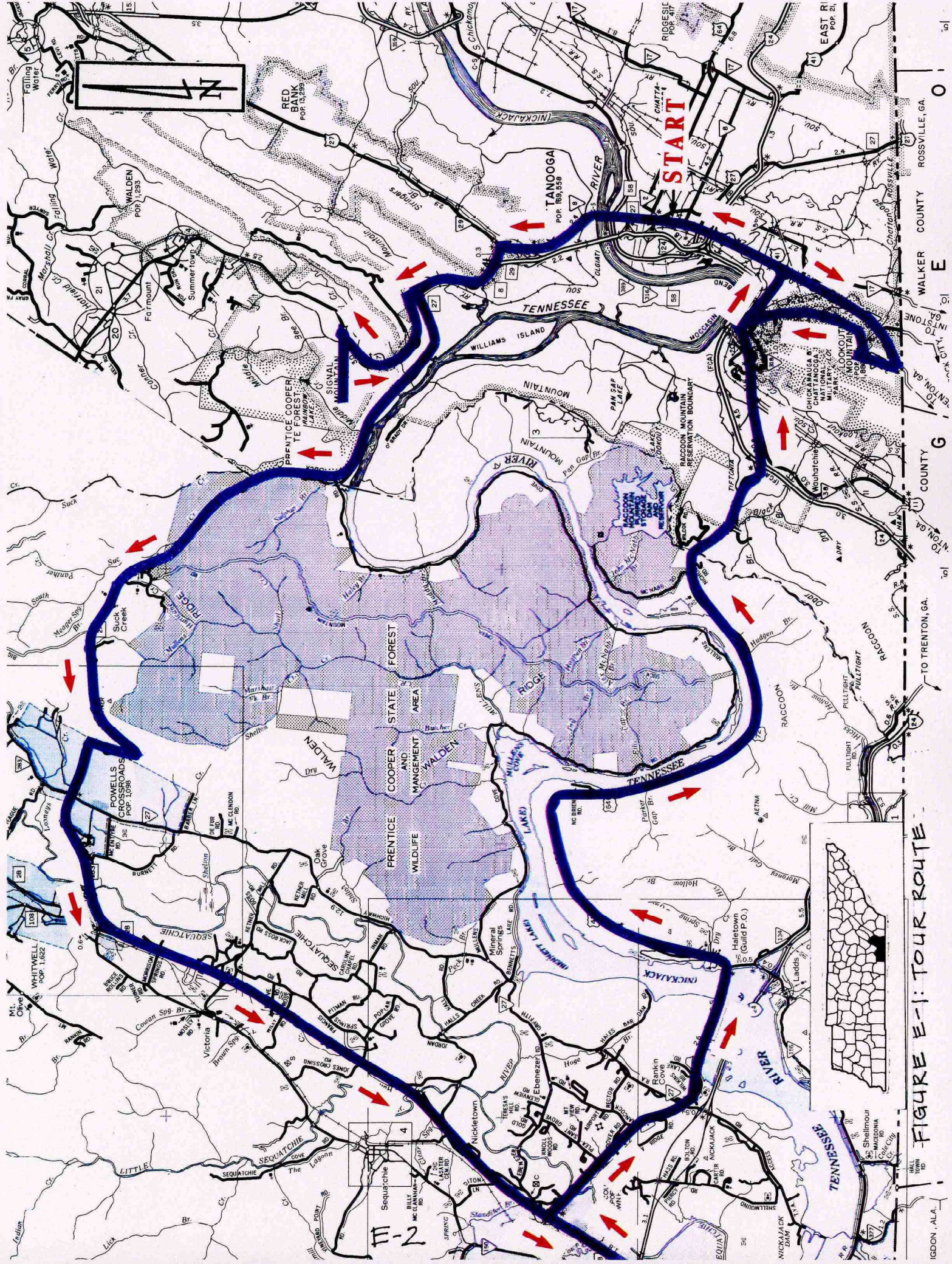
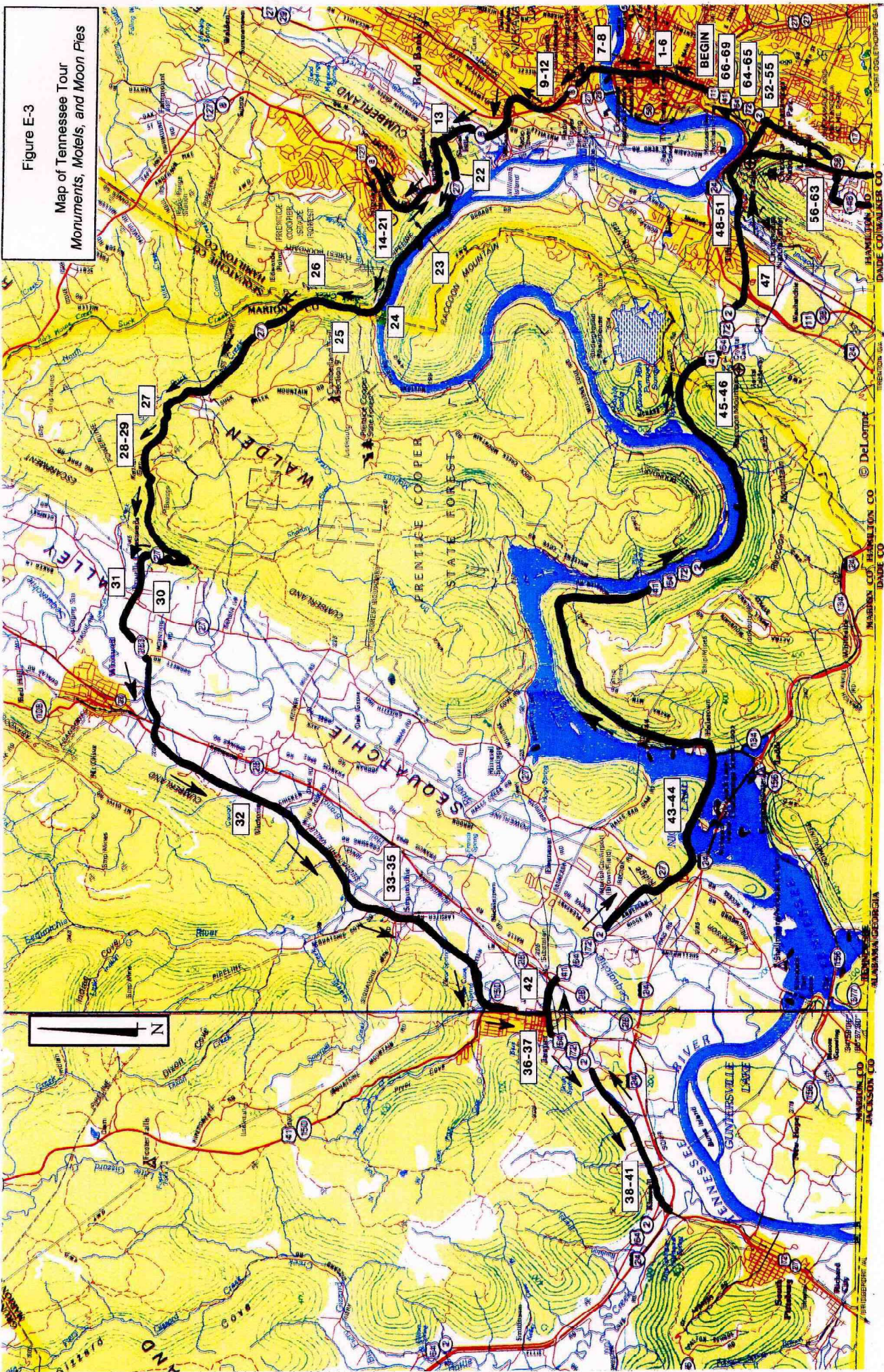


FIGURE E-1: TOUR ROUTE

Figure E-3

Map of Tennessee Tour
Monuments, Motels, and Moon Pies



© Delorme
MORSON CO., HAMILTON CO., DADE CO.
ALABAMA/GEORGIA
JACKSON CO., JACOBSON CO.
DADE CO., WALKER CO.



Figure E-4: Map of Downtown Chattanooga, Tour Sites #1-12 and 66-68

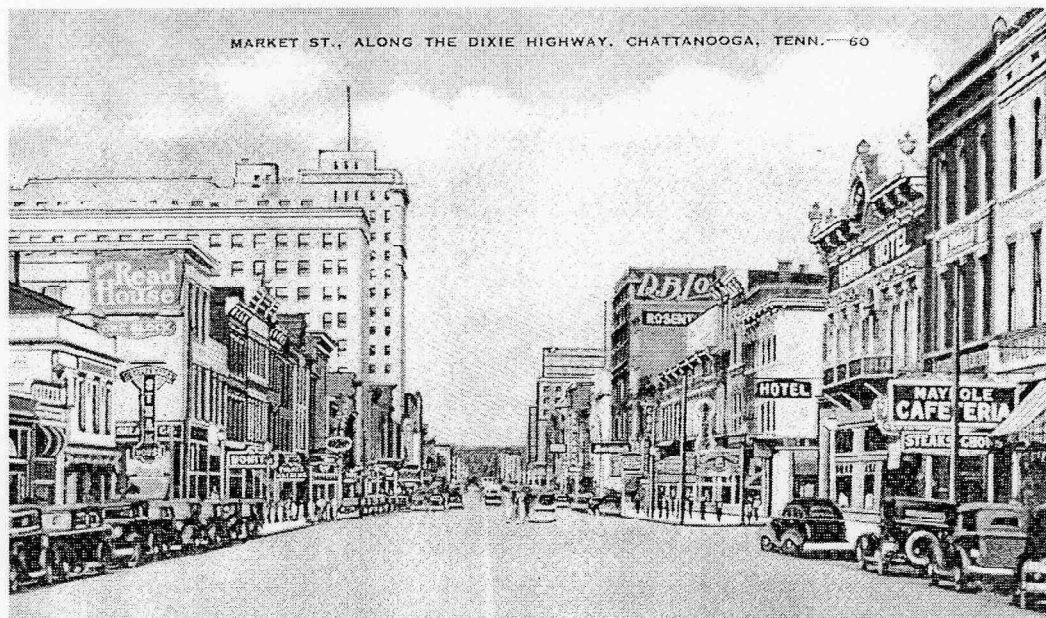


Figure E-5: Historic Postcard, “Market Street Along the Dixie Highway, Chattanooga, Tenn.” Note the advertisement for the Read House, conference headquarters, on the left.

#4 CHATTANOOGA CAR BARN, 301 MARKET: Beginning in 1875, Chattanooga’s primary form of mass transportation was horse drawn street cars. From 1889 until the 1940s, overhead electric lines powered an all-electric streetcar system. The 1886 barn on the south side of Third Street stabled horses and mules, and the 1920s buildings on the north side of Third housed offices and garages for electric streetcars. The city later used the complex for its city bus system until 1978. The complex now contains commercial businesses and is listed in the National Register.

#5 TENNESSEE AQUARIUM: Note the recently constructed \$45 million Tennessee Aquarium, built entirely with private money. Quickly becoming a major regional attraction, it advertises itself as the world’s largest fresh water aquarium and as the first major freshwater life center in the world dedicated to the understanding, conservation, and enjoyment of rivers. The complex also contains the Tennessee Aquarium IMAX 3D Theater, one of only 14 in the world when it opened in 1996. Since the aquarium opened in 1992, it has revitalized tourism in Chattanooga, dramatically increasing revenues for other tourist related facilities in the area.

#6 ROSS'S LANDING (WEST OR LEFT OF MARKET STREET): In about 1816 brothers John and Lewis Ross established a ferry, warehouse, and landing at this location, now listed on the National Register. Located near a ford across the Tennessee River, the landing was an important link on the supply route for missionaries and for the Cherokee Indians. It became a trading center for the Cherokees and, beginning in the 1820s, for white settlers. Federal troops erected a stockade near this site where they held the Indians prior to their forced removal in 1838 on the Trail of Tears.

After the Cherokee removal, white settlers renamed the community Chattanooga. Town leaders laid out wide streets in a grid pattern. Originally, settlers called the primary thoroughfare, now Market Street, "The Road." From the river south to Ninth Street, they assigned the streets numbers, and from Cameron Hill to Georgia Avenue, the names of native trees. Prior to the 1850s, most development occurred along the river, but after the construction of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad to the north in the 1850s, development shifted in that direction.

#7 MARKET STREET BRIDGE STATE ROUTE 8, SPANNING TENNESSEE RIVER (Figure E-6): After the 1891 construction of the Walnut Street Bridge, the area north of Chattanooga grew so quickly that the county began building a second bridge in the 1910s. The Hamilton County government firmly wanted a concrete bridge, in large part due to maintenance problems with the Walnut Street Bridge (**to the right, or east, see text below**) that had experienced various small fires as well as a serious fire in 1897 that nearly destroyed the bridge. Yet, from the earliest planning stages, the county knew that the War Department's clearance requirements (300-foot span, 100-feet above water) precluded a concrete river span. Even so, the county persisted in debating the issue with the War Department. Ultimately, the county adopted a compromise bridge design that contained a central movable lift span flanked by concrete arches.

In 1914, the county hired Benjamin H. Davis of New York to design the bridge, Vang Construction Company of Maryland to erect the concrete spans, the Scherzer Rolling Lift Bridge Company of Chicago to design the lift span, and the Toledo Bridge and Crane Company to erect the main steel span.

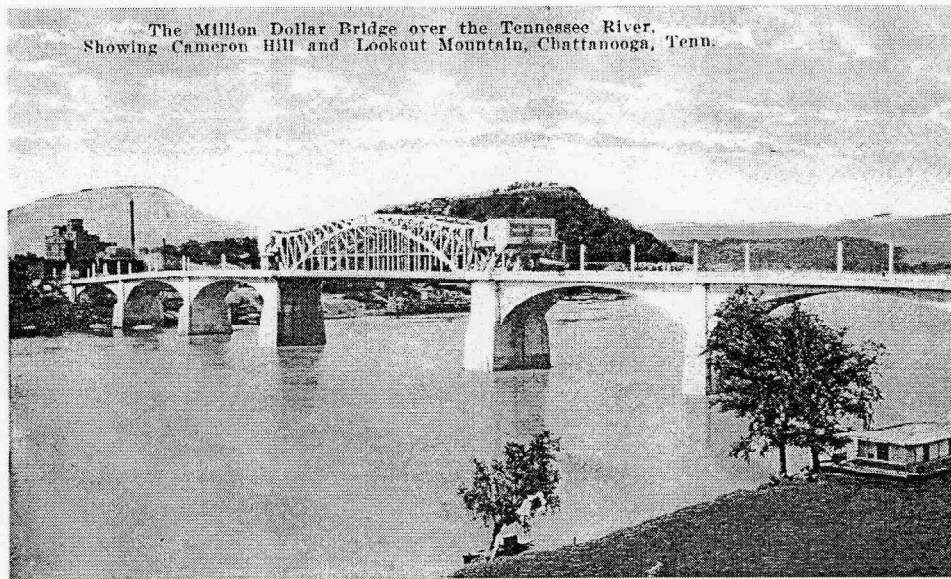


Figure E-6: Historic Postcard,
*"The Million Dollar Bridge over the Tennessee River.
Showing Cameron Hill and Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, Tenn."*

Dramatic and unpopular cost overruns during construction of the bridge resulted in the nickname, The Million Dollar Bridge. The cost overruns played a key role in the defeat of County Judge Will Cummings at the next election. The card is postmarked 1924 and mailed to a friend in Ohio, noting "Fine country down here."

Construction crews encountered several difficulties. High waters repeatedly delayed work, and in December 1915, despite extensive work by Vang, one span with falsework and forms washed away. A far more critical problem was the discovery of serious foundation problems that were a prime factor in doubling the cost of the project. The county blamed this cost overrun on Davis and fired him, but the courts eventually exonerated Davis and awarded him damages. The additional money could not be raised locally, and Judge Will Cummings (**home on tour #2, site #47**) went to New York to seek the funds. At first unable to get the loan, Cummings approached former Chattanooga resident, Adolph S. Ochs, editor and owner of the *New York Times*, who provided Cummings with a letter of introduction that secured the remaining financing. (Ochs and his family were also involved in the Good Roads Movement; see Lookout Mountain portion of the **tour**.) These cost overruns were also a major factor in Judge Will Cummings' 1918 election defeat, by less than 100 votes. A regionally significant Democrat, Cummings had led the fight for the new bridge and was considered, for better or worse, the "individual, living or dead [most] responsible for the completion of the bridge and its construction" (Hixson 1962:59).

Dedicated 17 November 1917, the Market Street Bridge was a major engineering achievement. The main channel span was a 310-foot double leaf bascule lift bridge that was then the longest span of its type in the country. Today it is considered the third largest span of its type in the world (Encyclopedia 1979). The span opens in the middle and each leaf is raised by a 25 horsepower motor. In theory, it is balanced so well that the motors simply start the process and the counter-weights (the large concrete blocks on each end) pull it the rest of the way (similar to the way a see-saw functions). Six substantial concrete arch spans flank the lift span. When completed, local papers called it the largest concrete bridge in the South. Until the state rebuilt the Wauhatchie Pike route (State Route 2/U.S. 41) from Jasper to Chattanooga between 1933 and 1935, the Market Street Bridge was on the main north-south route in this region, both the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Dixie Highway as well as U.S. 41 (Carver Bridge Survey).

#8 WALNUT STREET BRIDGE, SPANNING TENNESSEE RIVER (TO THE RIGHT OR EAST): Prior to the construction of this bridge, there had been only other bridge crossing the Tennessee River at Chattanooga. This bridge stood briefly from 1864 to 1867, and afterwards ferries provided the only crossings. By the early 1880s local citizens began lobbying for a bridge and a series of committees worked on the project. It was not until the late 1880s that the county hired nationally recognized Edwin Thacher (1839-1920) as chief engineer.

For such a large bridge, work proceeded relatively smoothly. Even so, accidents killed three laborers; a beam hit one and two drowned. Although the contractor largely finished the bridge by November 1890, a lost shipment of lumber delayed completion. About 5,000 people attended elaborate dedication ceremonies held on 18 February 1891. When finished, the Walnut Street Bridge cost about \$247,000. The structure is 2,370 feet long and contains six pin-connected through modified Camelback trusses and thirty-nine steel stringer spans. A 780 foot viaduct, lying on a 3.6 percent grade and composed of thirty-nine steel stringers on bents made of channels connected with lacing, forms the north end of the bridge.

By the 1890s, electricity powered the streetcars, and a fire that destroyed two of the approach spans was attributed to a spark from the power lines. Over the following years numerous fires occurred on the bridge, usually caused by lighted cigarettes tossed on the sidewalks. Several suicides occurred from the bridge, and it was the site of at least two lynchings. The city barricaded the bridge to traffic on 11 May 1978 and it remained closed until the City of Chattanooga rehabilitated the National Register listed bridge for pedestrian use and reopened it in 1993 (Carver Bridge Survey).

#9 MOTELS ALONG CHEROKEE BOULEVARD: Typical examples of lodging along the Dixie Highway can be seen here. The Northside Motel on Cherokee Boulevard is an unimposing motel now covered with Permastone. Its close location to the road and exuberant neon sign advertised its accessibility to travelers. Just south of Stringers Tunnel, on the west (left) south side of the road on a steep embankment, was the old City View Motel, built banked into the hillside, a site arrangement designed to attract the attention of tourists driving along the road. This complex was demolished in May 1998.

#10 STRINGERS TUNNEL (Figure E-7): Tunnels were rare on the Dixie Highway, and although expensive, they eliminated time consuming and often impractical routes over rough mountainous terrain. Stringers Ridge, an elongated land formation lying on a northeast-southwest axis posed a substantial barrier to travel north of Chattanooga until Hamilton County built the 300-foot, two-lane Stringers Ridge Tunnel in 1909-1910. The mountains that bordered Chattanooga to the north made growth impractical until the city and state built this and other tunnels: the paired Wilcox Tunnels (1929-1930), the paired Bachman Tubes (1929) (**on tour #1**), and the paired Missionary Ridge Tunnels (1950).

#11 CHEROKEE TOURIST CAMP (Figure E-8): The Eastern and Western Divisions formed a common alignment just north of Stringers Ridge, commonly called Cherokee Boulevard, and entered Chattanooga through the Stringers Ridge Tunnel. Several tourist related facilities such as the Cherokee Tourist Camp and Cherokee Service Station were clustered at the tunnel. Postcards for the facilities praised the tourist camp "as modern throughout. It is equipped with hot shower baths, rest rooms, grocery store, lunch room and cottages completely furnished.... There are also outdoor camping grounds for those with their own tents.... The camp...is a small city in itself." The Service Station claimed to be "the South's largest and most beautiful filling station, located at the tunnel on the Dixie Highway" (Durbin Postcard Collection). The Cherokee Motel is now located on the site of the Tourist Camp.

#12 TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMPLEX, ASHMORE AVENUE: This complex consists of a group of industrial buildings and Spanish Mission design buildings constructed circa 1928-1934 for the Tennessee Highway Department. This complex is an excellent example of an operation dependent on easy access to roads locating its facility along the Dixie Highway. Originally, Ashmore Avenue formed a semi-circle drive connecting on both ends to the main road.

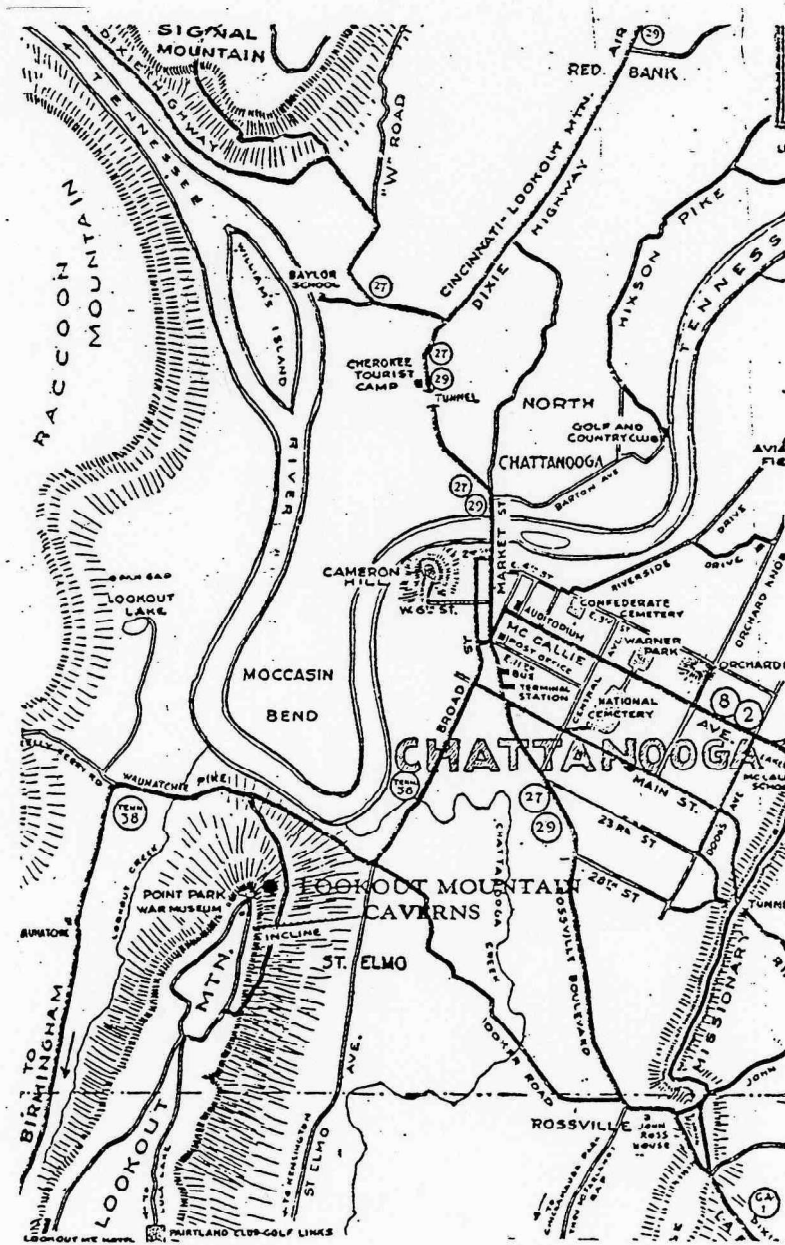


Figure E-7: 1931 Map of Chattanooga. This map was in an advertising brochure in the back of a history book of Hamilton County, published in 1931 (Armstrong 1931). North of Chattanooga, note the tunnel, Cherokee Tourist Camp, and the Dixie Highway heading northeast along the Eastern Division. The tour route follows the Western Division to the northwest. The lower left corner of the map shows the area the tour will cover this afternoon, Lookout Mountain. Note Lookout Mountain Caverns (in large caps--after all, it published the brochure that contained this map), the Incline, St. Elmo, Fairyland Club, and Point Park.

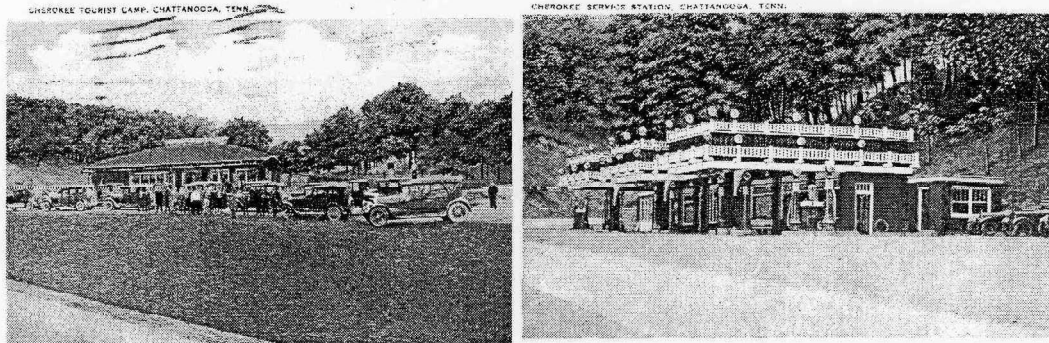


Figure E-8: Postcards of the Cherokee Tourist Camp and the Cherokee Service Station

The text on the back of the postcard for the tourist camp (postmarked in 1930) noted that it was "*modern throughout. It is equipped with hot shower baths, rest rooms, grocery store, lunch room and cottages completely furnished.... There are also outdoor camping grounds for those with their own tents.... The camp...is a small city in itself.*" The Service Station claimed to be "*the South's largest and most beautiful filling station, located at the tunnel on the Dixie Highway.*" The pre-1930 postcard noted that the service station handled "*nine different brands of gasoline and 17 different brands and grades of motor oils. Battery Service, high grade vulcanizing tires, tubes and accessories. Ladies' and gentlemen's rest and comfort rooms. Lunch room in connection. Phone Main 4052-J. Always open. Welcome tourists.*"

The state legislature created the state highway department in 1915 and Governor Austin Peay reorganized it in 1923 with four regional offices. About 1927-1928, the state acquired a divisional garage in Chattanooga for this region and constructed an industrial structure topped by a monitor roof with clerestory windows. In 1932, due to an expanded work load, the state established regional headquarters at Nashville, Jackson, Knoxville, and Chattanooga. Funds from the Works Progress Administration paid for the construction of the Jackson and Knoxville buildings, and construction dates from the 1935-1937 period can clearly be established for them. Unfortunately, the same records do not mention a construction project at the Chattanooga facility. It is estimated that the state

built the Mission influenced buildings about 1932-1934. This complex served as the Chattanooga or Region Two Office from its construction until the mid-1950s when the buildings were turned over to Hamilton County for its use as a county highway and maintenance complex.

Figure E-9 contains a map showing the locations of Tour Sites 13-24 in the Signal Mountain area.

#13 GLENDALE TOURIST COURT (Figure E-10): The Glendale Tourist Court is a collection of buildings constructed ca. 1925 by Mr. J. H. Haston. Nestled at the foot of Signal mountain, a 1942 United Motor Courts brochure stated that the Glendale had twenty-three brick cottages, tile baths, showers, tubs, automatic steam heat, circulating hot water and a cafe. The complex operated as a motor court until the 1970s and is presently used as apartments. The Glendale Tourist Court consists of a hipped roof office, a building originally used as a restaurant, and five separate buildings with overnight units. The complex is built into a hillside and the buildings are located in a row-on-row plan in a stepped terrace design. The buildings reflect the Bungalow style and have not been substantially altered despite the recent loss of the court's neon sign. Glass and wood doors, six-over-six wood sash windows, gable roofs and exteriors of brick veneer are some of the original features that remain. The landscaped area surrounding the buildings contains original cobblestone and concrete retaining walls and curbing.

#14 SIGNAL MOUNTAIN BOULEVARD (Figure E-11): About 1910, a Chattanooga developer named C. E. James, who was then in his 60s and who in 1915 would briefly serve as the first president of the Dixie Highway Association, purchased 4,400 acres on the Signal Point end of Signal Mountain. James planned to develop a year-round community, as opposed to the seasonal homes that existed at Summertown on another portion of the mountain. At that time, the only road from Chattanooga to Signal Mountain was the "W" Road, a difficult route that features a series of switchbacks that provided access only part of the year and then only to small local roads on a different portion of the mountain.

Thus, James's first priority was to provide access to Signal Point. James cleared a road from the top of the W Road to the hotel site so that building materials could be delivered. However, James funded and built a new road as his primary access to his development, Signal Mountain Boulevard, present-day State Route 8. In addition to vehicular lanes, the roadway contained a street car line that the Chattanooga Traction Company, of which James was president, operated. The street car line ran from 1912 until 1934. Afterwards, the state converted the street car lane to a third traffic lane serving north (up) bound traffic.

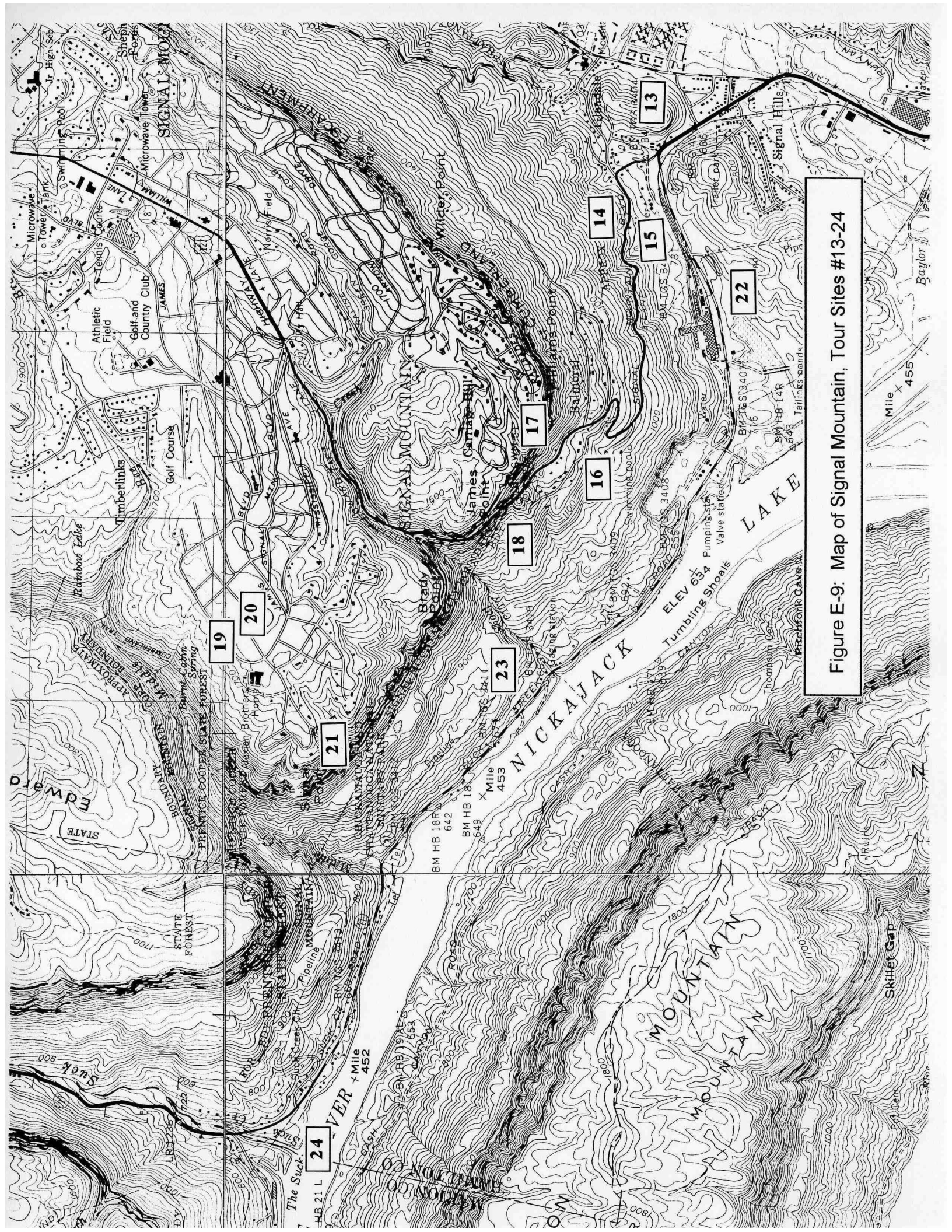
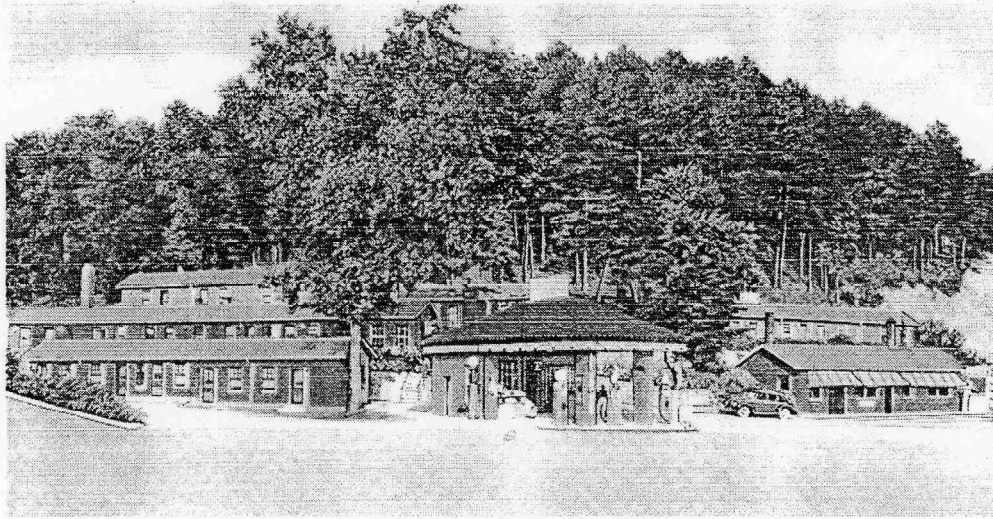


Figure E-9: Map of Signal Mountain, Tour Sites #13-24



GLENDALE TOURIST COURT

2 MILES NORTH OF CHATTANOOGA ON TENNESSEE 8. AT THE FOOT OF SCENIC SIGNAL MOUNTAIN

23 NEW BRICK COTTAGES, STEAM (STOKER) HEATED

MODERN.

CAFE.

QUALITY COURTS AND AAA APPROVED

28158

Figure E-10: Historic Postcard, the Glendale Tourist Court. The postcard noted its 23 new brick cottages, steam heat, and its AAA rating approval. The complex remains largely intact and is used for apartments.

The proposed road traversed a rugged mountainside. Webster T. James prepared the plans and specifications. In March 1912, a contract for the grading was let. Locals believed that this contract was one of the largest grading contracts ever let in Chattanooga and involved some of the heaviest excavations up to that time attempted in the area. Work on this road employed over 300 laborers. Crews of men and mules with their equipment camped at the foot of the mountain at Glendale. Five sawmills produced cross-ties for the trolley line as well as lumber for the Signal Mountain Inn (see below) and residential development. James also opened a quarry for the sandstone used on the inn and the trolley stations. Many of the cottages were also built with the sandstone. When completed, although several "switch-backs" had been included, the grade did not exceed 5 to 5½ percent, which was considered a notable achievement. At the north end of Signal Mountain Boulevard, a huge sandstone bluff had posed particular problems, and the contractors and engineers named this crest "James Point." The completed road not only provided access to Signal Point but also provided magnificent scenic vistas of the Tennessee River and Chattanooga and became in itself somewhat of a tourist attraction.

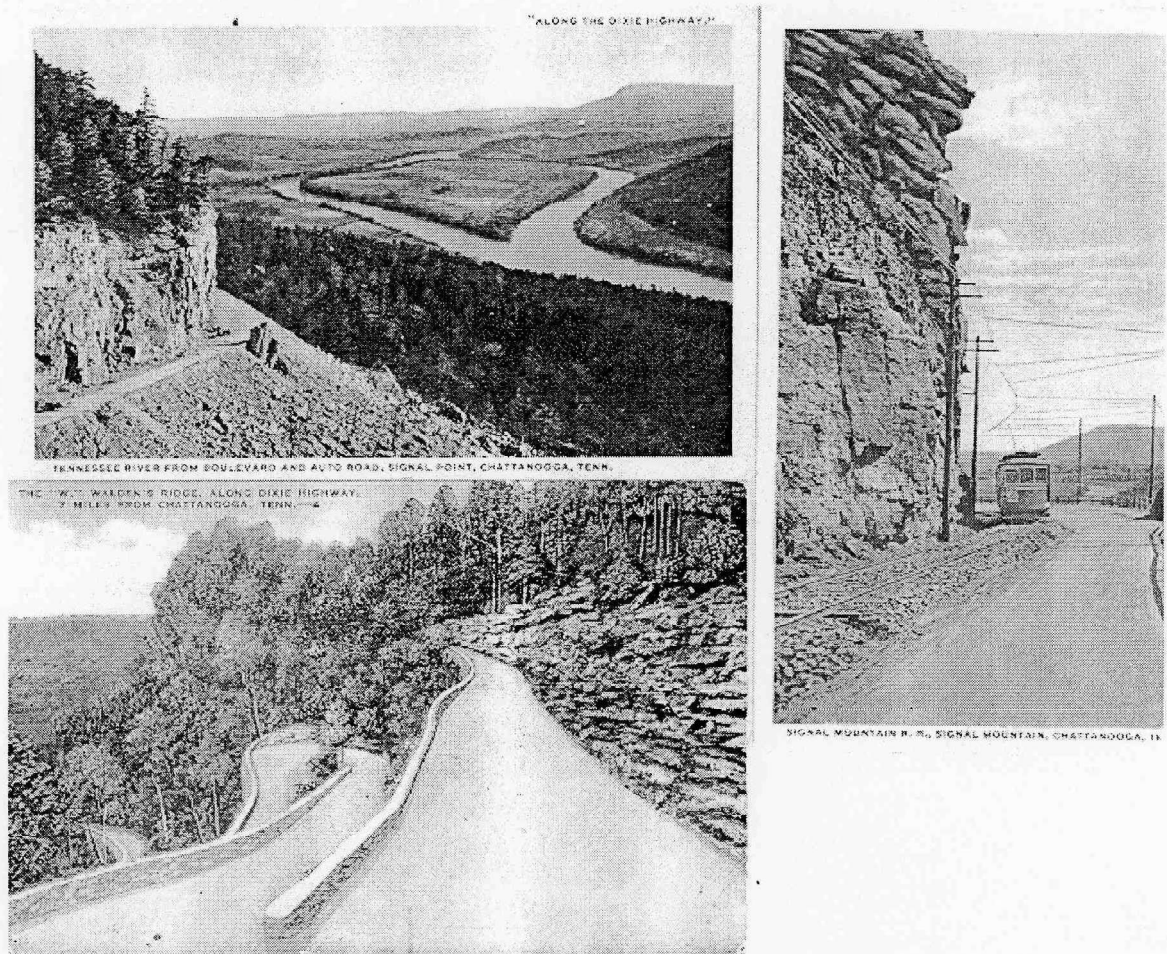


Figure E-11: Signal Mountain Boulevard and the W Road: These postcards label Signal Mountain Boulevard and the W Road as “*Along the Dixie Highway*.” The caption on the postcard on the top left notes that this is a view of “*James Point where tons of explosive made a path along the mountain for boulevard and electric car line.*” The large rock on the right side of the road remains, however, the Town of Signal Mountain recently relocated the James Monument, originally embedded in this rock in 1926.

Although the minutes of the Dixie Highway Association do not specifically note that this was an official Detour Route, the postcards suggest that conclusion. Both the W Road and Signal Mountain Boulevard extended, from different sides of Signal Mountain, to the Signal Point Hotel, a noted resort hotel built by C. E. James, the first president of the Dixie Highway Association. Together these roads form a spectacular loop drive.

also provided magnificent scenic vistas of the Tennessee River and Chattanooga and became in itself somewhat of a tourist attraction.

Originally, Signal Mountain Boulevard extended to near Palisades Drive and then veered to the left/west toward Signal Mountain Inn. This portion of James's development catered to tourists, and he also built a casino, a lake, a swimming pool, tennis courts, a miniature golf course, (reportedly, the second in the country; the first being on nearby Lookout Mountain, **on tour #2, site #58**), and a nine-hole golf course. Concurrently, James formed the Mountain Land Company which focused on residential development on Signal Point. As residential development spread, James provided jitney service to other areas in the mountain (Livingood 1981; Patten 1962; Signal Mountain File).

In the late 1910s, the state designated Signal Mountain Boulevard from the Suck Creek Road (Dixie Highway, State Route 27) at Glendale, at the foot of the mountain, to Signal Mountain Inn as State Route 30. However, sometime after 1940, the orientation changed and the main route bypassed the Signal Point area, continuing north at Palisades, forming present day State Route 8. Although the minutes of the Dixie Highway Association do not refer to Signal Mountain Boulevard as an official route of the Dixie Highway, old postcards label both Signal Mountain Boulevard and the W Road, which would form a spectacular scenic loop, as the Dixie Highway (Carver Postcard Collection).

Specific sites along Signal Mountain Boulevard include:

#15 TROLLEY STOP: Portions of this 1920s trolley stop have been rebuilt, and another one is located on James Boulevard near the inn where the old trolley lines are still visible.

#16 SPACE SHIP HOUSE (Figure E-12): A Chattanooga developer, C. W. King, built this house in 1973. He first intended it to be a home for his bachelor son. However, after it was finished, King considered making it the first house in a subdivision of space ship houses. The house cost too much for it to be a competitive design and this is the only one he ever built. King reportedly wanted a house that would be unique and safe. The steel and masonry residence is accessed through the retractable stairs below it. When completed, the interior featured many novel designs such as black upholstered doors, a raised bathtub, mirrors, and gold and black wallpaper. In 1997, the National Realtors Association listed this property as the second most unusual house in the country for sale (the first was a wooden water tower in California that had been converted into a residence) (Space Ship File).

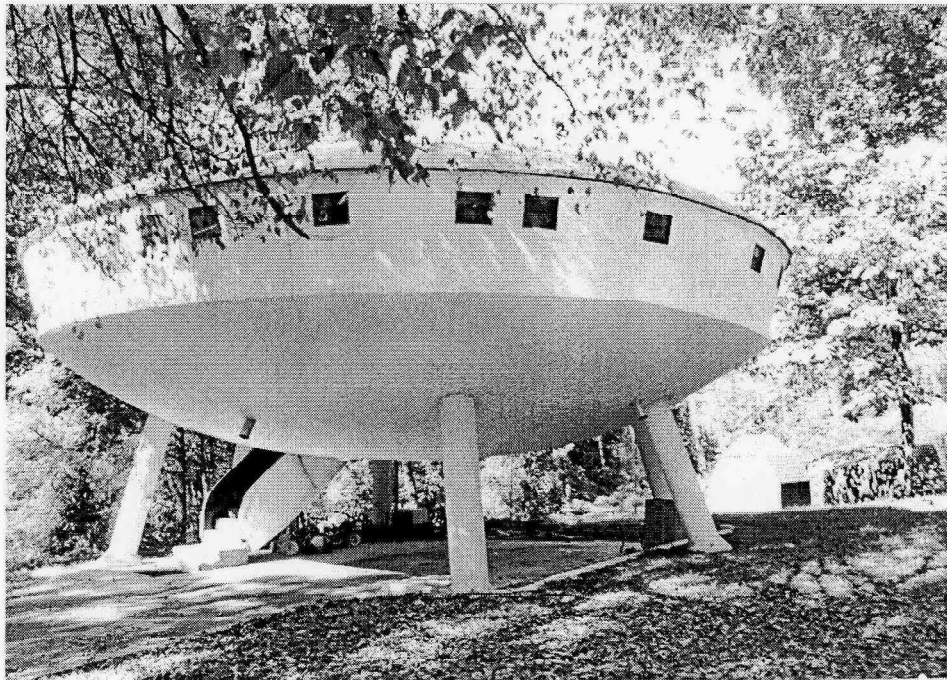


Figure E-12: The Space Ship House was built in 1973, a prototype for a planned subdivision that was never built.

#17 TROLLEY SUBSTATION: Due to the steep grade, heavier than normal trolley cars, and the high speed necessary to climb the mountain, the Chattanooga Traction Company decided circa 1922 that it was necessary to build a substation half-way up the mountain to deliver a direct current of power to the streetcars from the nearby Hale's Bar Dam (**on tour #2, site #44**). The old two-story brick substation, now a residence, is located on the east side of Signal Mountain Boulevard at 1547 Signal Mountain Boulevard.

#18 JAMES POINT: This massive boulder denoted James Point, an area of the road that caused severe problems during construction. In 1926, the year after James died, a brass marker was attached to the boulder in his honor. In recent years, the town of Signal Mountain moved the marker to a small park at the top of the mountain where it would be more accessible.

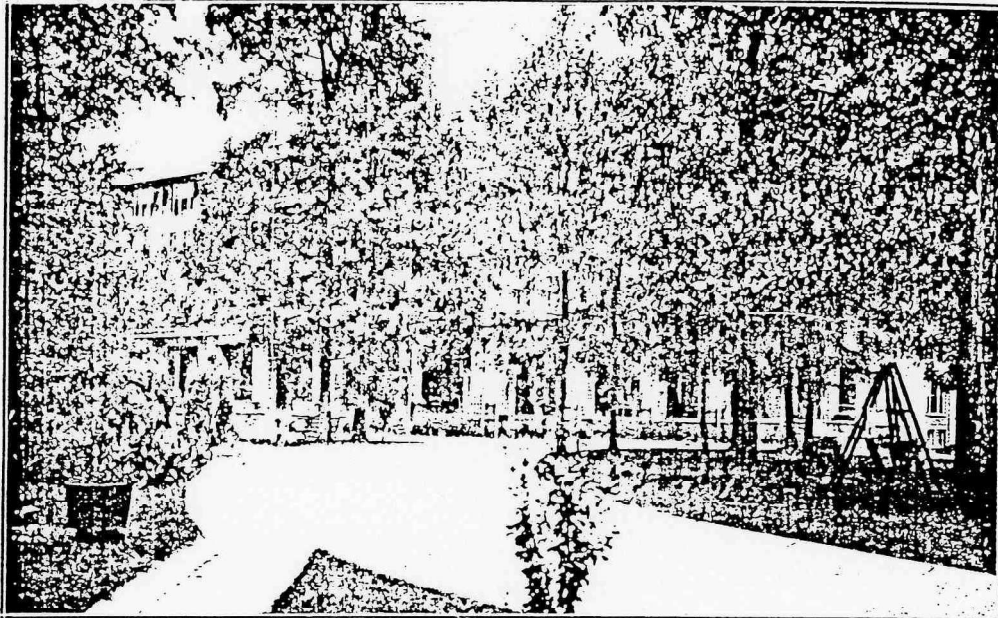
#19 SIGNAL MOUNTAIN INN (Figure E-13): C. E. James, a prominent Chattanooga developer, had the original Signal Mountain Inn built in 1913. He called it Signal Mountain Inn after Signal Point which was a strategic location during the Civil War. Constructed out of native stone with approximately 100 rooms, the inn's size was doubled in 1916 with a rear addition. The 1913 part of the hotel burned in 1924 and was rebuilt that same year. Declining revenues resulted in the sale of the inn to the Alexian Brothers, a religious order, in 1936. During remodeling of the inn in the 1980s, the 1916 portion of the building was demolished.

The 1934-1935 AAA Southeastern Tour Book described the Signal Mountain Inn as "9 miles from Chattanooga over a beautiful, scenic paved highway..." and stated that the 185 rooms rented for between \$3.00 to \$7.00. The Inn was the only large hotel in the area to advertise baths in all of the rooms. It was a seasonal hotel (May to October) and provided golf, tennis, horseback riding, a swimming pool, a playground, and a main dining room. Still a seasonal resort in the 1940s, the Signal Mountain Hotel advertised 200 rooms with American Plan accommodations costing between \$16.00 and \$24.00 (AAA 1934-1935; United Motor Court 1942).

#20 TROLLEY STOP: Note the stone trolley stop and substantial building where tickets were sold, both built in the 1920s. Portions of the old streetcar lines still exist along the road.

#21 SIGNAL POINT RESERVATION: A part of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the National Park Service administers this reservation. In 1863 the Federal Army set up a signal station here, under the U.S. Signal Corps, to relay messages between Chattanooga and the west brow of Walden Ridge. The communications chain extended to the Federal supply base at Bridgeport, Alabama. This Point provides a remarkable view of the Tennessee River and the "Grand Canyon of Tennessee."

In 1932, the town of Signal Mountain attempted to give two acres at this location to the Federal government to include in the national military park. However, the government's policy was to refuse anything less than five acres. The Signal Mountain Garden Club took the site as a project and through its efforts increased the acreage to seven. On 1 May 1948, the club gave the land to the park. In 1966, the garden club contributed a \$10,000 circular observation shelter overlooking the river (Livingood 1981:298).



Signal Mountain Hotel

One of America's Most Attractive
All the Year Resorts

- Signal Mountain, Tennessee, overlooking Chattanooga—Two Thousand feet elevation.
- On the Dixie Highway Route to and from Florida. Excellent road from Dixie Highway, near Chattanooga, up Signal Mountain.
- Two hundred Rooms, 200 Baths—FIRE-PROOF—Modern—Always open. European Plan with meals table d'Hote and a la carte. Moderate rates.
- GOLF (18 holes), Tennis, Swimming Pool, Saddle Horses, Dancing, Wonderful Woodland Walks and Trails.
- Famous for its Mineral Waters—Epsom, Iron, Freestone. Recommended cure for Insomnia.

Address **SIGNAL MOUNTAIN HOTEL**
SIGNAL MOUNTAIN, TENNESSEE
Railroad Terminus, Chattanooga.

Figure E-13: Many of the leaders and founders of the Dixie Highway Association showed their support through paid advertisements in *The Dixie Highway*, a magazine the association published from about 1915 to 1927. This ad for Signal Mountain Motel appeared on the frontispiece of the February 1924 issue.

NOTE: Along many sections of the tour route, including Signal Mountain Boulevard, kudzu grows abundantly. In 1937, the Federal government regionalized the Conservation Service, and the Southeast Conservation District implemented a unique experiment. It imported the Japanese kudzu vine, a "porch vine" known as a vigorous and effective plant for shade or ornamental use. The Soil Conservation Service planted 73 million seedlings in the South from 1935 to 1941. Southern farmers were--rightly--suspicious of its appropriateness in their region. The imported Kudzu formed "the beachhead of a vegetative invasion that has since subdued large areas of the South." Kudzu anchored the soil, filled gullies, covered denuded hill, and fed livestock. But, with growth rates of up to a foot in twenty-four hours and roots that can burrow as deeply as seven feet, Kudzu has also engulfed trees, houses, and hillsides and is virtually impossible to tame or control. Although Kudzu is effective in stemming soil erosion, it is also perceived as "one of the more blatant indiscretions of the thirties land revitalization effort" (Cutler 1985:113-114).

#22 SIGNAL MOUNTAIN PORTLAND CEMENT COMPANY (Figure E-14): In the early 1900s, a variety of cement companies existed in Tennessee, however, by the mid-1990s, only two remained, one being the Signal Mountain Portland Cement Company. The company began construction at this site in 1920 and opened in 1923. Most of the buildings visible from the road on the western end date from the 1920s, including the silos and the concrete parking garage. Note the use of the crossed red flags in the entry sign, a construction symbol of warning or danger. This firm produces about 500,000 tons of cement annually which is primarily used in ready mix concrete. In 1998-1999, the firm is planning a \$100 million expansion program to increase capacity to 800,000 tons a year which will result in the demolition of several of the 1923 buildings on the western end. Note the conveyor belt that crosses the road.

The makers of cement had obvious ties to the road building industry, and this company advertised in *The Dixie Highway* magazine. Also, in 1924, the company began construction of a stretch of concrete road in front of the company's facility. However, the company did not finish its sample section, and the state highway department eventually completed it (Dixie Minutes 1924:157; 1925:192).

#23 BYPASSED CONCRETE BRIDGE (ON NORTH, RIGHT SIDE): This circa 1920 structure is an example of typical rural concrete bridges found along the Dixie Highway. Simple and functional in design, decorative details are found in the incised rail.



Being used in Highway Construction in Tennessee,
Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina,
Florida and Kentucky



CONCRETE FOR PERMANENCE!

Quality  *Service*

Signal Mountain Portland Cement Company
General Office: James Building, Fifth Floor
CHATTANOOGA, TENN., U. S. A.

Figure E-14: Signal Mountain Portland Cement Company Advertisement (*The Dixie Highway* May 1924:5)

#24 THE SUCK, SOUTH OF SUCK CREEK: The road crosses Suck Creek at the foot of the escarpment leading to Walden Ridge. To the south (left) the creek empties into the Tennessee River where it formed a dangerous whirlpool and rapids, hence the name of the creek. The Suck created an extreme navigation hazard during the pioneer settlement period, and local Indian tribes, who frequently ambushed early settlers at this location, compounded the danger. One such attack involved the famous Donelson party, one of two parties enroute in 1779-1780 to the Cumberland Valley where they would establish Nashborough, which resulted in the deaths of several of the settlers. The Indians captured one boat traveling somewhat separate from the others because several passengers had smallpox, and as a result, the disease soon decimated the tribe. The construction of TVA dams along the Tennessee River tamed the Suck, leaving only its name as an indication of the terror it once held for travelers. Other rapids through the gorge bear the distinctive names "The Frying Pan" and "The Fire."

Figure E-15 contains a map showing the locations of Tour Sites 25-35 in eastern Marion County.

#25 WALDEN RIDGE, CUMBERLAND PLATEAU: Since leaving the intersection at Glendale, Suck Creek Road has been skirting Walden Ridge, a mountainous formation on the Cumberland Escarpment, the steep eastern face of the Cumberland Plateau. The Cumberland Plateau, which extends past Tennessee's borders to the north and south, is the southern portion of the Appalachian Plateau which extends from New York to Alabama.

After crossing Suck Creek, the road begins to climb Walden Ridge. This section of the Dixie Highway, the Suck Creek Road section between Jasper and Chattanooga as it crossed Walden Ridge, was one of the most difficult sections in Tennessee to complete, due to the difficult terrain and limited financial support from Marion County. The Dixie Highway Association labored very hard to build the Suck Creek Road section and even managed to secure a special state enabling act allowing Marion County to pass a bond issue to fund this section. The act also changed the Hamilton-Marion county line to allow Hamilton County to provide additional funding.

#26 DIXIE HIGHWAY, BYPASSED SECTION: Over the years, highway projects have improved sections of the Dixie Highway. One of these projects bypassed a short stretch of the old road, leaving it as a scenic pull-off. It also serves a more practical purpose, as a pull-off for logging trucks.

#27 JUDGE ALLISON PARK AND MONUMENT (Figure E-16) (TOUR STOP): Since the Dixie Highway Association had struggled so long with the Suck Creek section and because it was considered to be the highest point on the entire Dixie Highway route and roughly its mid-point as well, the association chose this site as the location for a park and monument commemorating President Allison's contributions to the Dixie Highway. In 1924 the Dixie Highway Association held elaborate dedication ceremonies at the unveiling of the monument and park. An editorial discussing the event in the *Atlanta Constitution* by editor Clark Howell, one of Georgia's two directors on the Dixie Highway Association, said, "No man in the south has contributed more to the development of the south--indeed the whole country for it is a national project--than Judge Allison in his faithful and untiring work in this one outstanding interstate highway project" (*The Dixie Highway* May 1924:4). The text of the marker states:

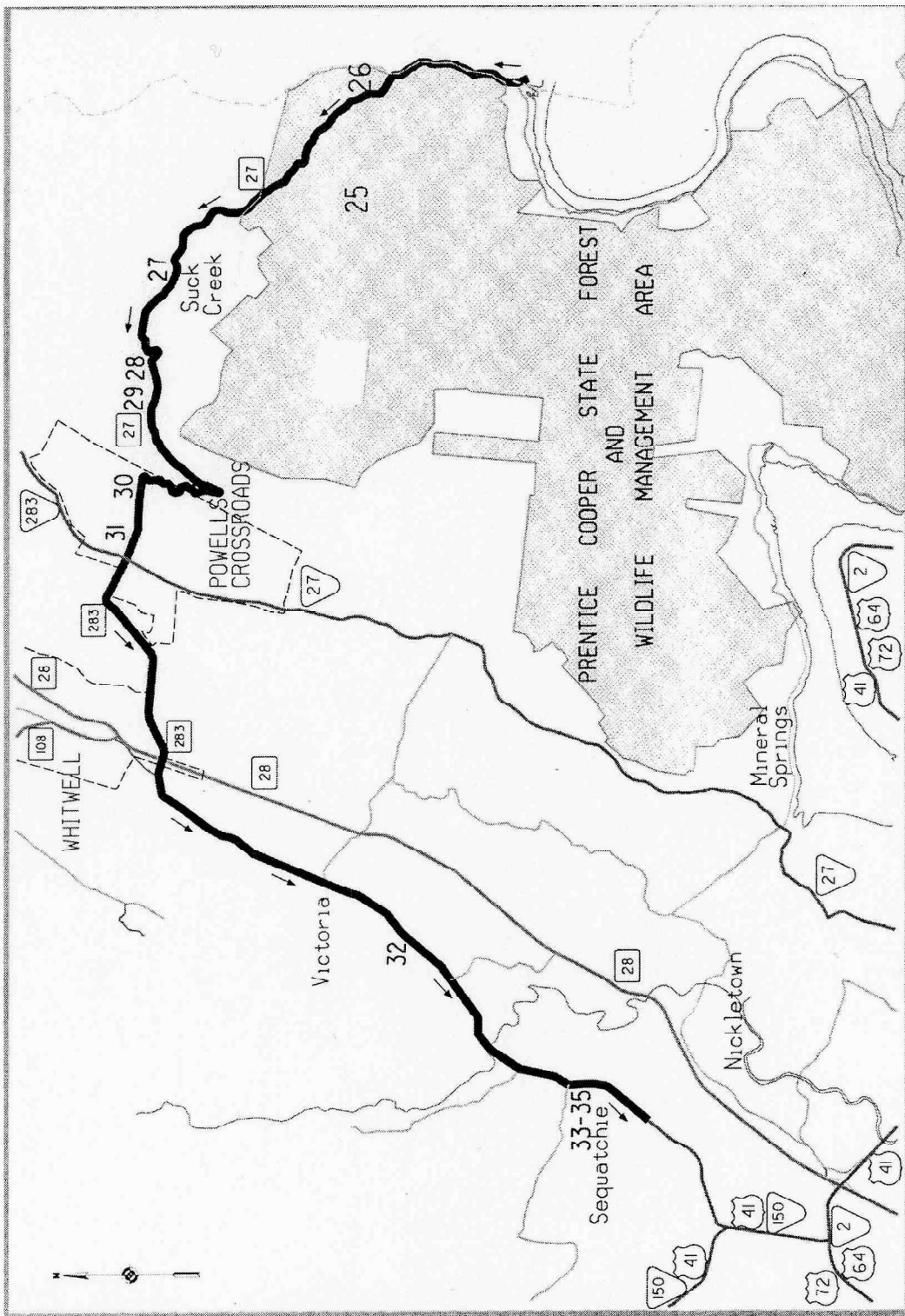


Figure E-15: Map of Marion County, Tour Sites #25-35

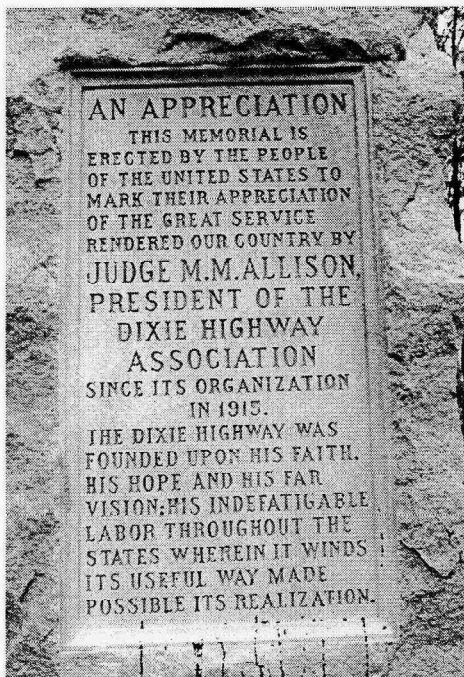


Figure E-16: The Dixie Highway Association built the Allison Monument, roughly halfway on the Dixie Highway and at its highest point, in 1924.

This memorial is erected by the people of the United States to mark their appreciation of the great service rendered our country by Judge M. M. Allison, president of the Dixie Highway Association since its organization in 1915.

The Dixie Highway was founded upon his faith, his hope and his far vision, his indefatigable labor throughout the states wherein it winds its useful way made possible its realization.

#28 STONE GATES (NORTH OR RIGHT SIDE): In the 1920s, members of the Chattanooga Automobile Club initiated construction for a planned development. However, the Great Depression interrupted the project, and the gates were the only element ever built.

#29 BLEVINS GROCERY: The Terry family built this store, house and garage in the 1920s. Note its key location, at the top of the mountain and near the entrance to the Chattanooga Automobile Club's planned community.

#30 SEQUATCHIE VALLEY (Figure E-17): After crossing Walden Ridge the road drops into the Sequatchie Valley. The Cumberland Plateau contains two prominent north-south linear valleys that lie nestled within the plateau: the Elk Valley in Carter County in northeast Tennessee and the Sequatchie Valley. Sandstone capping the plateau forms prominent cliffs and many waterfalls. The best known, and highest in Tennessee, is the 256-foot tall Fall Creek Falls, located further to the north in a state park. The falls "is reputed to be the highest falls in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, and more than twice as high as Niagara Falls" (Luther 1977:62). Although the Sequatchie Valley extends into Alabama in a less dramatic form, the Tennessee portion is about sixty miles long but only four to five miles wide where the escarpment averages a thousand feet high on each side.

The Sequatchie Valley, an almost ruler-straight chasm that bisects the southern half of the Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee, is an anticlinal valley. In general, an anticline is a fold in strata that is convex upward, and therefore has the older rocks toward the center of the curvature (Billings 1972). In the case of the Sequatchie Valley, the valley developed when erosion breached the thick overlying sandstone, exposing the more easily eroded limestones and dolomites underneath (Fenneman 1938). The steep escarpments bounding the valley are the result of the easier weathering of the weaker rocks under the sandstone (Fenneman 1938). This explains one of its spectacular features, that its escarpments or faces are inclined toward each other. Many geologists consider the Sequatchie Valley one of the largest and most spectacular anticlinal valleys in the world.

The tour route comes down the escarpment, leaving Hamilton County, and entering the Sequatchie Valley from the east. The road moves west across the floor of the Sequatchie Valley, passing through Powell's Crossroads and over the Sequatchie River. The road then turns south and skirts the edge of the escarpment on the west of the valley, passing through the towns of Sequatchie, Jasper, and Kimball in Marion County. The tour then moves southeast across the Sequatchie Valley, returning to Chattanooga and Hamilton County along the base of Raccoon Mountain, another mountainous area of the Cumberland Plateau.

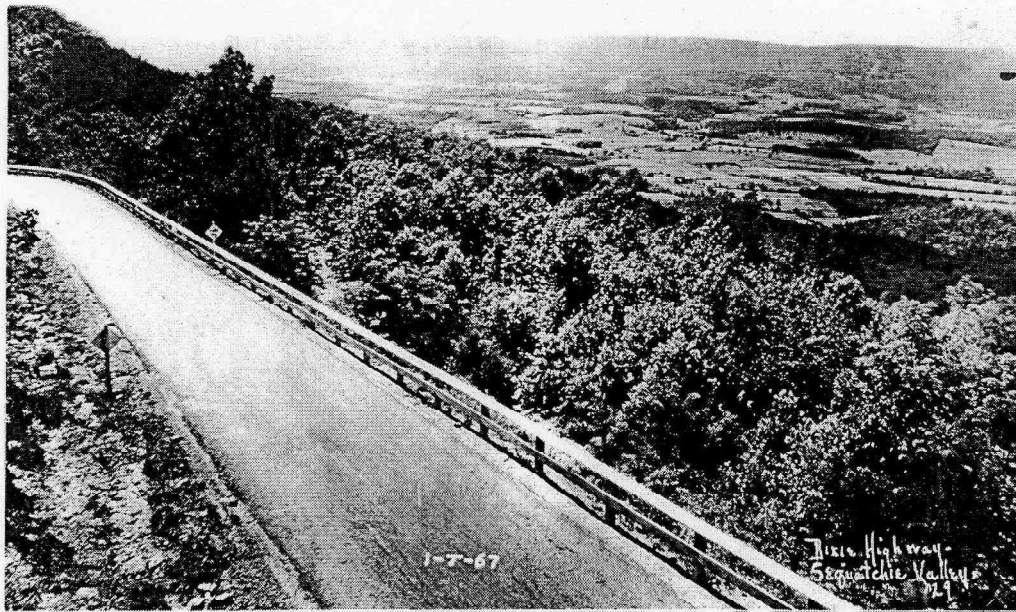


Figure E-17: Photographic postcard “Dixie Highway-Sequatchie Valley, ‘29”

#31 POWELL’S CROSSROADS: When Foster Powell returned from World War I, he built a small store and gas station at the crossroads formed by the Dixie Highway and the East Valley Road. He later built a grist mill, blacksmith shop, barber shop, and tourist cabins. This crossroads community contained several other garages and stores, including the Flag Pole Cafe, named for a 70-foot flagpole made by the owner from a tulip poplar tree. Note the remaining garages and the Dough Roller, a two year old business designed to look like an old diner.

#32 VICTORIA: In the 1870s, English businessmen opened coal mines, and the area continued to mine coal until 1962. They named the area for Queen Victoria, and the names of several communities in the area are related to this aspect of the county’s history such as Victoria, Whitwell, or English Cove. The old Victoria Freight Depot, now a residence, has a good example of advertising a tourist might see along the Dixie. Like today’s large billboards along the interstate, businessmen placed advertising signs to attract the attention of the motorist. Portions of the bed of the abandoned railroad lie parallel to the road.

#33 SEQUATCHIE: This community was first known as Owen Switch after William Owen, a railroad agent who also sold groceries from his depot. When English businessmen opened the nearby Sequatchie Valley Coal and Iron Company in 1890, they renamed the community. Substantial debate exists about the origin of the name and its various spellings. Two versions are that Sequatchie is derived from two Cherokee words: *sequa* a hog and *chee* a feeding place or from *sequa* an opossum and *hatchie* river. Developers laid out a plat for the town, built a park and a large hotel, provided a town water system, and planted a large vineyard for wine production. In its heyday at the turn of the century, the community was a booming industrial town that boasted several businesses including a handle factory. The Sequatchie Handle Works began operation in 1899 and employed forty to fifty workers. The factory whistle blew regularly through the day to note work hours, and it was always used as the town's emergency alert system.

A local history of this area notes that 1902 was the first year that anyone drove an automobile through Sequatchie, a couple on their way from Monteagle to Chattanooga. In 1916, two families drove the 123-mile trip from Sequatchie to Knoxville in their new Maxwell car in twelve hours. "Eventually, with the completion of the Dixie Highway, the town got a good road" (Marion County 1990:20).

#34 GLANCY SHERMAN HOUSE: One of the most influential residents in Sequatchie was Glancy Sherman who came to Sequatchie in 1889 as the agent for two English companies. Sherman was actively involved in many local charities, including donating land for a Girl Scout Camp that remains near Sequatchie. Sherman built his home, The Mansion which boasted five bathrooms, in 1927. Note the unusual concrete bridge on his driveway.

The concrete structure on the creek is the remains of a pumping station that provided water to Sherman's residence and to the Sequatchie Handle Works which Sherman managed.

As traffic increased through Sequatchie, Sherman saw another business opportunity. On the left (east) side of State Route 27 in downtown Sequatchie is the substantial brick Sherman Filling Station, which Sherman built in 1925. It has been altered in recent years with a replacement roof and canopy.

#35 BLOWING SPRINGS CAVE AND PARK: This roadside park features a loop drive off State Route 27 that circles by the entrance to the Blowing Springs Cave. As soon as Sequatchie was formed, local groups began using this cave as a gathering place. The name is derived from the “blow and suck” phenomenon associated with many caves. In summer months breezes flow from the caves because of a difference in density between the surface and cave air, and in the winter months, the reverse movement produces a sucking effect. The park attracted visitors and groups throughout the summer, including the local chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic who used it as a reunion site. In 1903, a special train brought 1,000 people to the park for the Chattanooga Grocers Picnic. On most summer weekends, a large crowd of people gathered for music, dancing, good food, and watermelons (Marion 1990:20). The spring in the cave also played a pivotal role in local affairs as it served as the city’s water supply until the 1990s.

Note the wooden posts forming the guard-rail and the concrete picnic tables.

Figure E-18 contains a map of western Marion County showing the locations of Tour Sites 36-44.

#36 JASPER, COUNTY SEAT OF MARION COUNTY: Jasper’s rectangular court square plan is typical of many Tennessee counties. The county built the present courthouse in 1922, and after a fire destroyed much of the courthouse, the county extensively remodeled it and added a new entrance wing in 1986.

#37 CUMMINGS MONUMENT, JASPER SQUARE: After the state rebuilt the Wauhatchie Pike section of the Dixie Highway (The Will Cummings Highway) in the mid-1930s, private citizens erected paired but different monuments honoring Will Cummings and The Will Cummings Highway in Jasper and Chattanooga. President Franklin D. Roosevelt participated in elaborate dedication ceremonies 24 October 1937 by pushing a gold plated button from his office to transmit a signal (Hixson 1962:109). It is somewhat ironic that a monument to the Hamilton County Judge is erected on the courthouse yard of the county seat Jasper in Marion County. The monument in Jasper, a free-standing plaque with a lengthy text, is located along both the Wauhatchie and Suck Creek routes of the Dixie Highway. An identical monument is erected at the base of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga (**on tour #2, site #52**). A third monument is located on Jonas Bluff of Lookout Mountain (**on tour #2, site #51**).

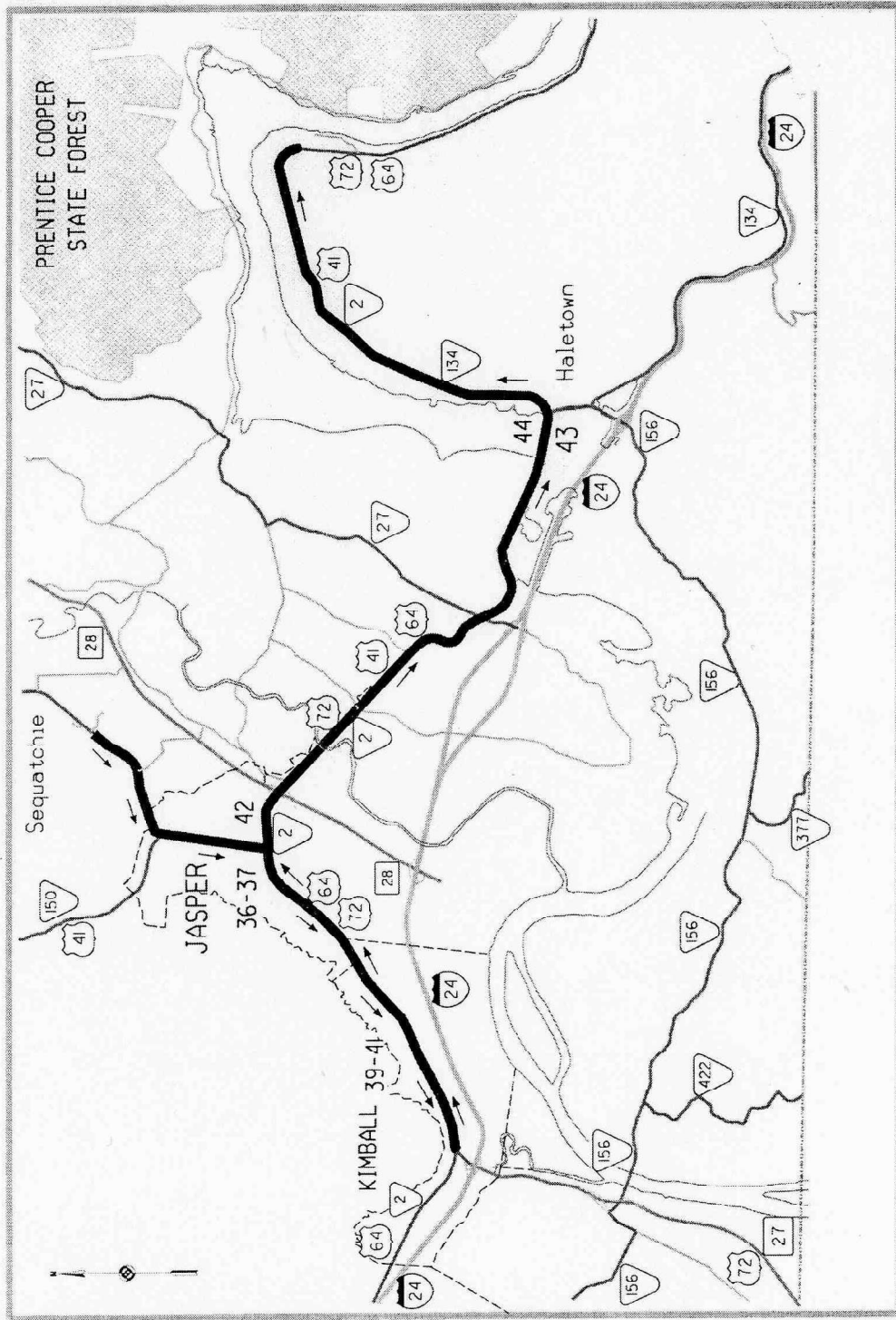


Figure E-18: Map of Marion County, Tour Sites #36-44

The Jasper Monument reads:

In recognition of the rare vision, the indomitable courage and capacity of achievement of Will Cummings, County Judge of Hamilton County, the pioneer of permanent road building and public improvements in East Tennessee and the Chattanooga district, the 1931 Session of the State Legislature of Tennessee by Joint Resolution designated this highway, "The Will Cummings Highway."

Here is one of the most picturesque highways of the state. It extends from Jasper to Chattanooga. Passes under the historic Point of Lookout Mountain (the site of the "Battle Above the Clouds"). Above the famous "Moccasin Bend." Winds through Wauhatchie Valley. And skirts the beautiful Tennessee River. Every foot of this scenic route was bitterly contested and fought for by the Federal and Confederate Armies during the "War Between the States."

This marker is erected by grateful citizens in appreciation of the services rendered Hamilton County and this section of the state by Judge Will Cummings.

#38 KIMBALL: Settlers formed a community here in the early 1800s, named Wallview in honor of Josh Wall, an early settler. In the 1880s, businessmen attempted to develop the area for its mineral resources and purchased 64,000 acres. Five thousand people, including the governor of Tennessee attended elaborate ceremonies in 1890 when the town was christened Kimball in honor of H. I. Kimball, the manager of the Kimball Town Company. The town was incorporated as Kimball in 1962.

#39 SHIRLEY'S STYLE CENTER, KIMBALL (Figure E-19): This complex contains several cabins, a restaurant, and the owner's house. An old postcard refers to this as the Pine Crest Motel and Cafe, noting: "New, Ultra Modern Tourist Cottages, all with private baths and electric heat. Cafe, famous for good food. Serving all meals. Telephone connection. Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Walker, Owners, Mgrs. On U.S. 41 and U.S. 64, 30 miles northwest of Chattanooga, Tenn. P.O. R.F.D. No. 1, Jasper, Tenn" (Carver Postcard Collection). The family atmosphere, a key component in an era when motel complexes were suspect, is evidenced in the owner's substantial on-site home. Note the later Kimball Motor Lodge sign from a subsequent owner.

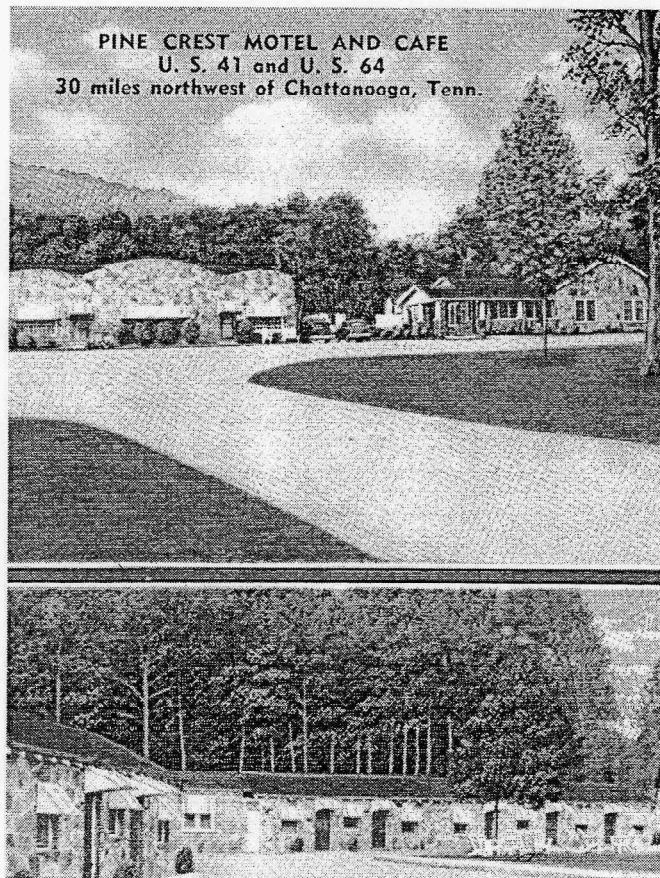
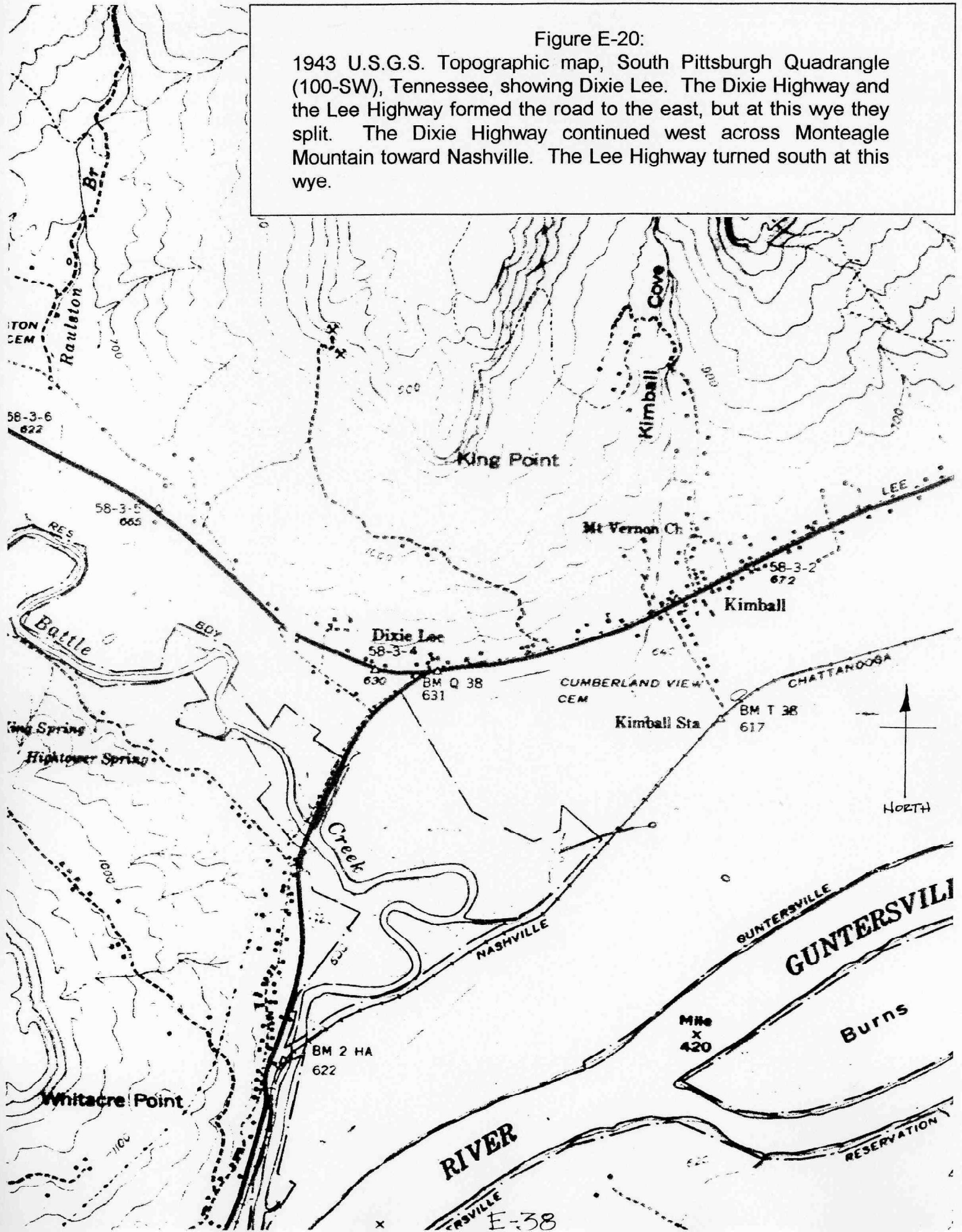


Figure E-19: Historic Postcard, Pine Crest Motel and Cafe.
The text on the back boasts *"New, Ultra Modern Tourist Cottages, all with private baths and electric heat. Cafe, famous for good food. Serving all meals. Telephone connection. Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Walker, Owners, Mgrs. On U.S. 41 and U.S. 64, 30 miles northwest of Chattanooga, Tenn. P.O. R.F.D. No. 1, Jasper, Tenn"*

#40 DIXIE-LEE, KIMBALL (Figure E-20): From Chattanooga, the route of the Dixie Highway passed through Hamilton and Marion Counties on the Suck Creek Road over the top of Walden Ridge (present day State Route 27), overlapping the Dixie Highway until north of South Pittsburg where the roads split. Quad maps identify this wye as Dixie-Lee and the community to the east as Kimball, but locals refer to the entire area as Kimball.

Figure E-20:
 1943 U.S.G.S. Topographic map, South Pittsburgh Quadrangle (100-SW), Tennessee, showing Dixie Lee. The Dixie Highway and the Lee Highway formed the road to the east, but at this wye they split. The Dixie Highway continued west across Monteagle Mountain toward Nashville. The Lee Highway turned south at this wye.



The Dixie Highway continued northwest to Monteagle, and the Lee Highway continued southwest on State Route 27 through South Pittsburg into Alabama. From the Alabama state line, the Lee Highway proceeded south and west through Alabama and Mississippi for about 230 miles before re-entering Tennessee near Corinth, Mississippi, at the southwest corner of McNairy County near the Shiloh National Military Park (Carver Bridge Survey).

#41 FIREWORKS, I-24 (TOUR STOP): Tennessee is one of 32 states where it is legal to sell fireworks and does a thriving business. Eighty-seven fireworks retailers operate year-round in Tennessee, and the state issues over one thousand temporary licenses around the Fourth of July. It is legal to buy fireworks in Tennessee and return with them to states where it is illegal to sell fireworks but not to possess or shoot them, such as Georgia.

The Kimball area contains several full-time retailers, who supplement their income selling souvenirs and food items during off-season times. Interstate 24 provides easy access to nearby Georgia (where it is illegal to sell fireworks) and Alabama (where some cities and counties have outlawed selling fireworks). A fireworks plant is located in nearby South Pittsburg. Note the Atomic Fireworks Space Age Gift Shop and the Tennessee-Alabama Fireworks and Gift Shop. These shops serve tourists as well as locals, and during the Fourth of July and New Year's, traffic jams occur. Locals call this "Little Las Vegas" due to the colorful lights and "strip" flavor.

#42 SILO CITY SILO (Figure E-21): Here is another fine example of early roadside advertising along the Dixie. Unlike typical modern roadside advertising, historic signs were apparently painted on whatever building or object was readily available and close to the road.

The Rock City barns are perhaps the most famous type of structural roadside advertising. This silo originally contained a "See Rock City" logo, but it has been painted over. Although no "See Rock City" structures are located along the tour route, the location of the first "See Rock City" barn was on the Dixie Highway north of Chattanooga (Preston 1991:152)



Figure E-21: Silo City Silo, Marion County At one time, this silo contained the famous “*See Rock City*” logo, but it has been painted over.

#43 MARION MEMORIAL BRIDGE: Between 1927 and 1929, the state legislature approved the construction of sixteen specially funded toll bridges that included this bridge. The bridge contains four riveted through truss spans, two 365-foot Parkers and two 140-foot Warren trusses with polygonal top chords. Tolls were \$0.50 for car and driver and \$0.05 for each additional passenger. The toll system was not financially rewarding for the state, and farmers and other groups opposed the toll system. In 1939, the state removed tolls from eight bridges. The state did not remove the tolls from the other bridges, including this bridge, until 1947.

#44 HALE'S BAR DAM, TENNESSEE RIVER, NORTH OR LEFT OF BRIDGE

(Figure E-22): Begun in 1905 for the Chattanooga and Tennessee River Power Company, the Hale's Bar Lock and Dam were scheduled to be constructed by 1909 at a cost of four million dollars. Around 1914 the eight million dollar project, the first major hydroelectric project in the state, was completed. During the construction of the dam, a temporary camp housed 3,000 people and contained churches and a school. In the early 1920s, the newly formed Tennessee River Power Company (TEPCo) expanded the facility generating capacity through the construction of a new steam plant.

Repairs were repeatedly made to the dam, including some by TVA who acquired the dam in the 1930s. By the 1960s TVA deemed it more economical to erect a new dam than try to continue repairing the old one. As a result, TVA built the Nickajack Dam in the 1960s downstream from (south of) this bridge crossing. Due to changes in water levels, in 1967, TVA demolished a portion of Hale's Bar Dam and the powerhouse's tail race (and rebuilt the substructure of the *Marion Memorial Bridge* [see above] and raised its main truss spans 21 feet). In the 1970s, T-DOT demolished the steam plant. The original powerhouse, with a 1950s extension, remains (Jones 1989).

Figure E-23 contains a map showing the Wauhatchie area of Hamilton County and the locations of Tour Sites 45-50.

#45 ALPINE LODGE (Figure E-24): The present owners advertise this complex of cottages as the area's first motel. Nestled in with hillside landscaping, it was built in 1935 and known as the Interstate Lodge. Since its opening, the lodge has gone through several transformations as Crystal Courts and Crystal Air Sport Motel, a name change that reflected the commercialization of the nearby Crystal Caverns (*see below*). The name Interstate Tourist Lodge seems appropriate when you consider that as a member of the United Motor Courts, it prominently advertised its location on four roads: Route 4, U.S. 41, U.S. 64, and U.S. 72. In the 1940s, the motel advertised that it offered innerspring mattresses, private tiled showers, free garages, telephone and telegraph service. The current name, Alpine Lodge, dates from the early 1990s.