

*The Chicamauga Path*

*near*

*Beersheba Springs*

Clopper Almon

August 2018



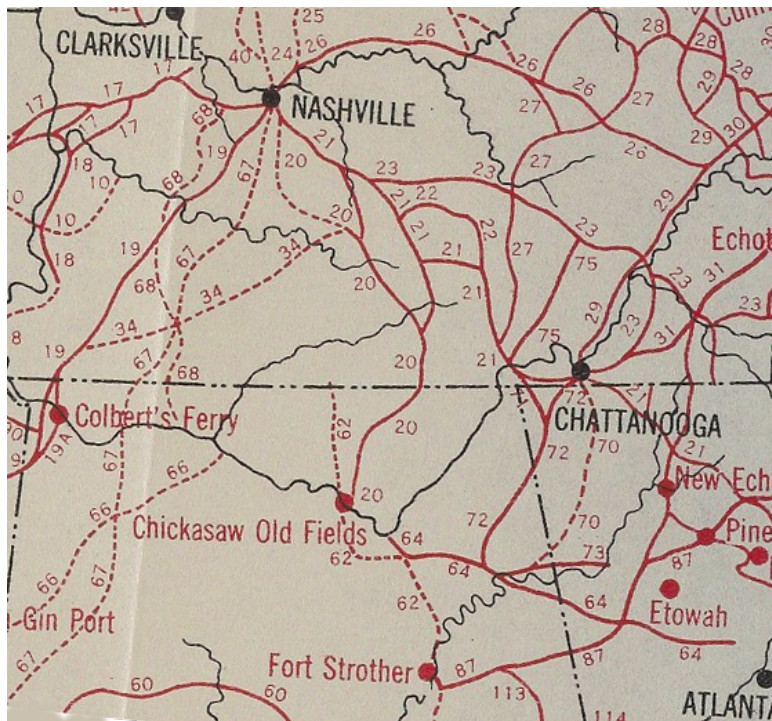
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## Indian Trails in the Southeast

Indian trails once criss-crossed the southeastern United States. One of the most famous of these became known after 1775 as the Chicamauga Trace (or Path), the war path of a break-away group of Cherokees bent on the destruction of the white settlements. It almost certainly ran through Beersheba Springs, Tennessee and off to the southwest of Beersheba through the Shady Valley Nursery property recently acquired by the State of Tennessee for use in conjunction with the South Cumberland Recreation Area.

After a brief story of the trace, I will attempt to identify precisely its location in and near Beersheba and will report, with pictures, on its present condition. The precise location and present condition are relevant to any effort to take notice of the old trace in the newly acquired state property.

## The Route of the Chicamauga Trace



William E. Myer, *Indian Trails of the Southeast*

The map on the left shows the network of trails in Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. It also reveals that the Tennessee River was a formidable barrier to north-south traffic. At only one place between Chattanooga and the Mississippi-Alabama line was there a ford where one could normally wade across. That place was known as the Old Creek Crossing.<sup>1</sup> On the Myer map above, it is in Tennessee, a little upstream from South Pittsburgh at a point where the 1895 topographic map of Tennessee shows Burns Island. Other sources place it several miles downstream at Long Island near Bridgeport, Alabama. Indeed, Myer himself refers to it as being near Bridgeport (page 847) rather than South Pittsburgh. There were islands in the

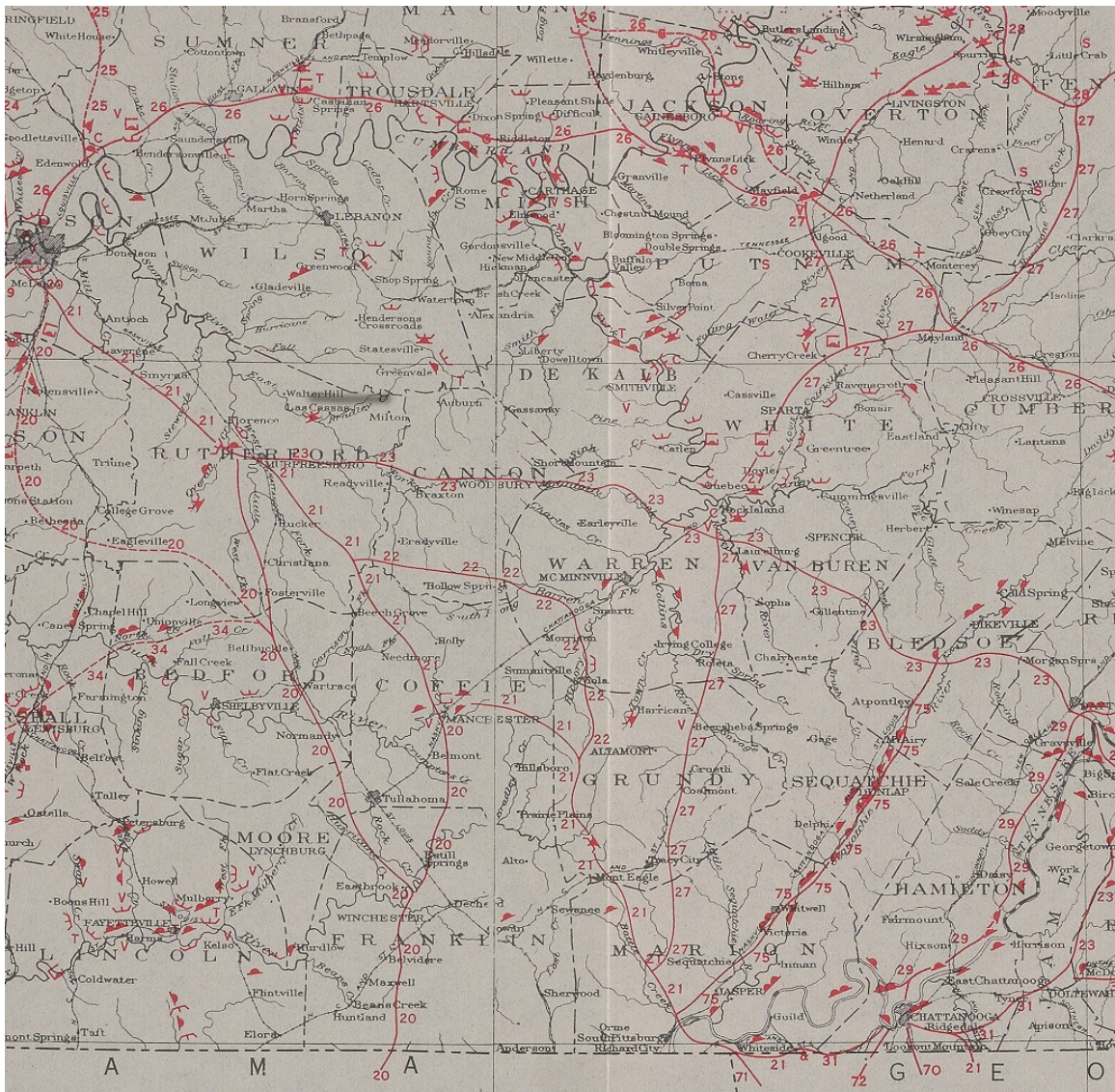
river at both sites, and there may even have been fords at both sites. Today both sites are submerged by the lake created by the TVA dam at Guntersville. South of that crossing, – wherever it was – trails

<sup>1</sup> It may appear from the map that there was a ford at the Chickasaw Old Fields, which is due south of the center of Huntsville, Alabama. That settlement, however, was on an island in the middle of the river, a site chosen probably at least partly because of the difficulty of attacking it. There was no ford there.

diverge, one going to Chattanooga and points east and another to St. Augustine and points south. North of the crossing, they also diverge. One, called the Main Trail (numbered 21), follows Battle Creek up the side of the Cumberland Plateau not far from the present route of I-24. It then goes by the Old Stone Fort near Manchester, and then on to the Salt Lick where Nashville now stands.

As the Main Trail begins its ascent of the Cumberland Plateau, trail 27, later called the Chicamauga Path, branches off to the north. In *Indian Trails of the Southeast*, William E. Myer writes “[It] crossed the Tennessee River at the Old Creek Crossing along with the Cisca-St. Augustine Trail, led thence up Battle Creek to the forks of the creek, near Comfort, and afterwards passed along the Cumberland Plateau by Coalmont, Beersheba Springs, and the Rock Island crossing of Caney Fork River, to the prehistoric fortified Indian town at Cherry Hill, in White County. At the latter place it seems to have forked, the eastern fork probably intersecting the old Cumberland trail near the present Mayland on the Tennessee Central Railroad in Cumberland County, and passing all in a northerly direction until it met the great East and West Trail (No. 28) at the settlement near the present site of Jamestown, Fentress County. It was then possible to follow the latter trail westward to the long string of Indian settlements on the Obey and Wolf Rivers, or eastward by the settlements at B. R. Stockton Rock Shelter on White Oak Crook and at the mound at Rugby, to its intersection with the Tennessee River, Ohio and Great Lakes Trail (No. 29) at Glenmary. From Glenmary the Indian traveler could go north or south on the trail last mentioned, or he could continue eastward, on the East and West Trail, by an ancient Indian village site – of which three mounds still remain on Brimstone Creek in the Brimstone Mountains in Scott County, and thence by the present sites of Clinton and Knoxville, to the Indian settlements of east Tennessee.”





*An Extract of Myer's Map of Tennessee.*

## The Story of the Trace

It must be emphasized that the trace goes back long before the brief Chickamauga era. It was a north-south thruway for trade connecting Florida with the Cumberland valley. Nevertheless, it is the twenty years from 1775 to 1795 that inscribed the name of the trace in the memory of the white man.

In 1775 Richard Henderson negotiated at Sycamore Shoals<sup>2</sup> with the Cherokees for the purchase by Henderson's Transylvania company of all Cherokee lands north of the Cumberland River. At the end of a day's negotiations when the elder Cherokee chiefs had agreed to the sale, a young chief, Dragging Canoe, rose and painted a vivid picture of what would happen to the Cherokees if they made this sale.

<sup>2</sup> Now Sycamore Shoals State Park, near Elizabethton, Tennessee, a little east of Johnson City.

The elders were awed and canceled the deal. The next day, the whites brought more food, more whiskey and rum, and the elders again agreed to the sale. Dragging Canoe rose and said through an interpreter, “You have bought a fair and pleasant land; but if you try to settle it, you will find it dark and bloody ground.” Of course the white man did try to settle it, and Dragging Canoe devoted his life to making his prophecy come true.

Dragging Canoe’s sub-tribe first took up residence on Chickamauga Creek near Chattanooga and took the name of the creek as the tribe’s name. Following an attack on Knoxville in which they were soundly defeated and hunted into their homeland, they moved farther down the Tennessee River to settle “lower towns” on the south side of the Tennessee near where I-24 now crosses it. There are cliffs along the left bank of the Tennessee at that point, and the towns seemed totally inaccessible to anyone who did not know the terrain intimately. From there, the Chickamauga used the old trail we have described to reach the Caney Fork at Rock Island and then attack the settlements in the Cumberland valley.

Blanche Spurlock Bentley vividly describes the last of these attacks. “[On] a day in October 1793, when the ancient trail had become the Trace of the Chickamaugas, there came along the mountain a company of Chickamaugas and Creeks, their objective point, Rock Island, where an encampment was to be made as base of supplies for attacks upon the Cumberland Settlers. They marched in single file, the Chickamauga Chief, it is claimed, leading his own warriors, who were armed with war clubs, scalping knives and bows and arrows, while each Creek bore, as a gift from his Spanish allies, a bundle wrapped in bear skins containing gun, knives and vermilion war-paints. A week or ten days later a sunrise fight – one of the last important engagements in Tennessee Indian history – occurred at Rock Island between those same Indians and scouts from the Cumberland, and a band of fugitives in precipitate flight, again crossed the mountain hastening to their villages at Nickajack.”<sup>3</sup>

Dragging Canoe died in 1792. The failed raid described above was in 1793. In 1794, Joseph Brown, a white boy who had been a captive among the Chickamaugas, guided a U.S. Army expedition led by Maj. James Ore to attack and destroy Nickajack and Running Water, two of the five lower towns. The surprise was complete, and this defeat in their home base broke the spirit of the Chickamauga. They sued for peace and rejoined the other Cherokees.

## **Where Exactly did the Trace Run Near Beersheba?**

Back in the 1920s or earlier William E. Myer found a section of the Chickamauga trace running through the forest in Coalmont. He also presumed that Beersheba Cain had followed another section of the trace when, in 1833, she and her three companions rode horseback up the mountain and discovered the chalybeate spring which became the basis of the Beersheba Springs resort. On his map, Myer drew the trace as a nearly straight line between these two points. It thus shows the trace as entering Beersheba from the south. That route, however, would have had anyone following it go over cliffs. It is much more likely that, as the trace left the Coalmont area, it stayed to the west, came close to Altamont, crossed Big Creek and Firescauld Creek upstream from where the cliffs begin and then

3 Blanche Spurlock Bentley, *The Chickamauga Trace*, reprinted in *Beersheba Springs, A History*, vol. 3.

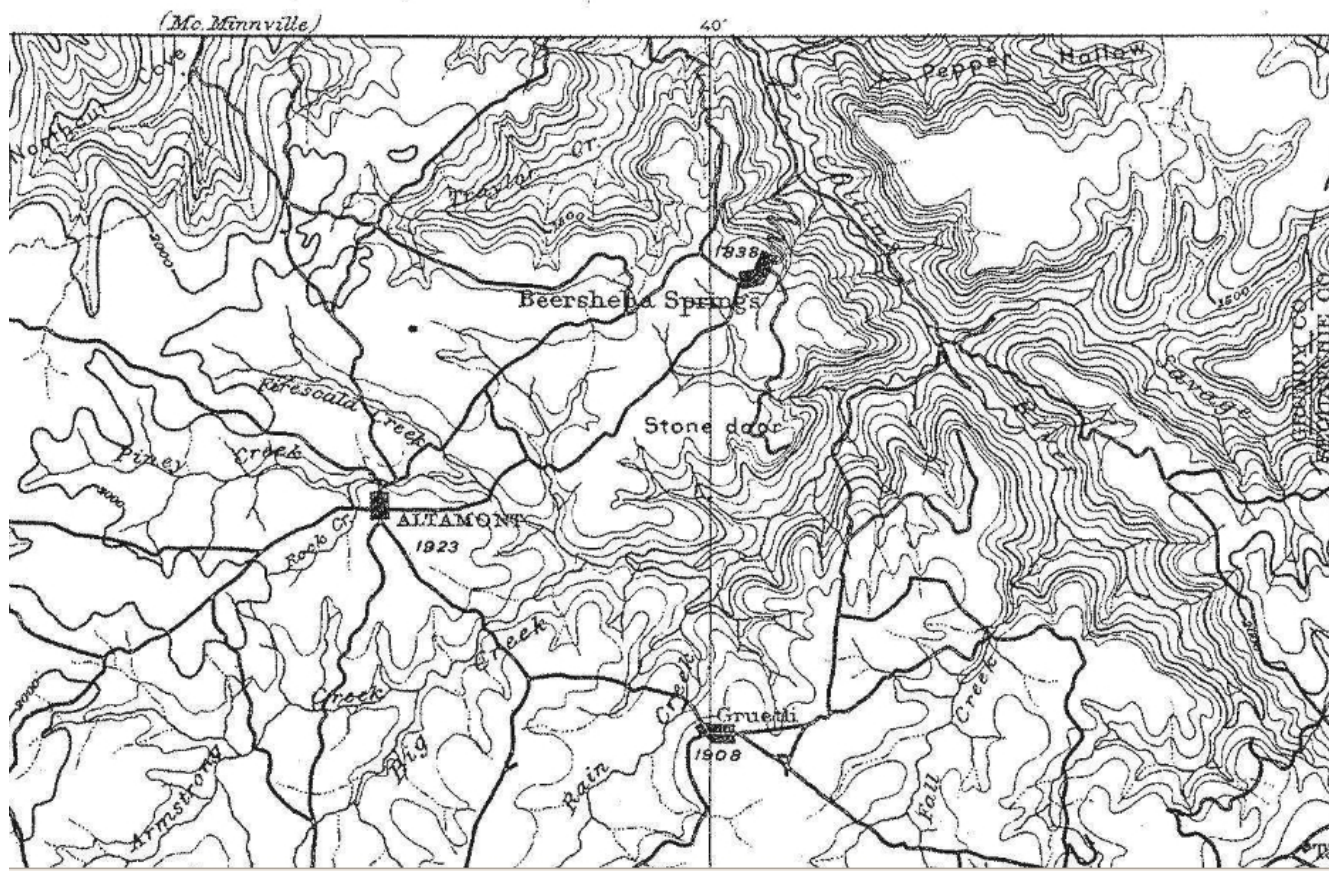
came into Beersheba from the southwest. The eastern most point where there is no cliff on either side of Firescauld creek is about two hundred yards upstream from the big boulder just above the rapids above the swimming hole now called by the generic swimming hole name of Blue Hole, but was formerly known by the history-preserving name of Long's Mill. The mill was just about at the eastern-most point without cliffs on either side. In other words, it was at the optimal crossing point for the Chickamauga Trace.

In Beersheba Springs, there is a Hunter's Mill Road that runs south from Highway 56 just west of the Howell Cottage and just east of the Beersheba Springs Medical Clinic and the Church of Christ. Shortly before his death, I asked Ralph Thompson, "Where was Hunter's mill?" He answered that, from his study of old land records, he was sure that Hunter, Arthur Long, and John Greeter were three successive owners of the one and the same mill or mill site. References to Hunter's Mill Road go back to the 1840s; Long appears in the 1850s and 1860s, and Greeter first in 1880.

Thus, Hunter's Mill Road ran from the heart of Beersheba to that eastern-most point where Firescauld Creek could be crossed without cliffs on either side. The Indian trail ran between the same two points. It thus seems highly likely that Hunter's Mill Road followed exactly the old trace.

Within the heart of Beersheba, Dahlgren Avenue between TN 56 and Hege Avenue is pointing to the chalybeate spring to the northeast and generally towards Hunter's Mill to the southwest. It seems more than probable that this section of modern road is lying directly on the Indian trace. North of Hege, the builder's of the hotel in the 1830s and 1840s bent the old road a bit to the west so that it would not run through the courtyard of their hotel. South of TN 56, John Armfield, in the 1850s, put a jog in the old road to create a nice lot for the cottage he was building for Bishop Polk, the house now known as the Howell Cottage. But if in our imagination we continue from Dahlgren Avenue straight ahead through the Howell Cottage we come into Hunter's Mill Road just before it bends to the west and heads off to the southwest almost straight towards the site of Hunter's Mill.





The Beersheba - Altamont area in the 1895 topographic map of Tennessee.

Here we may ask, Are there mentions of the trace in the early records of land transactions? Indeed, there are. In 1828, in the records of Warren County, of which Grundy County was still a part, there is an entry for Samuel Turney entering 640 acres on the “headwaters of the Collins River, on a creek called Little Laurel, *near a trace*.” In 1831, there is an entry for William Dugan “on the headwaters of the Collins River *on both sides of the trace* leading from said Dugan's in the horseshoe.” On September 3, 1836, William Dugan sold to William R. Stewart and George R. Smartt for \$1000 1500 acres “on top of Cumberland Mountain near the bluff and *on both sides of a trace* leading from said Dugans to the Horseshoe.” This purchase included the hotel site and the site of the resort that would be created twenty years later by John Armfield.

The 1895 topographic map of Tennessee is the first fairly accurate map of this area. The Beersheba area is shown above. It shows two roads between Beersheba Springs and Altamont. One follows approximately the route of modern TN 56. The other, to the south, seems to follow quite well where we would expect the old trace to run. And it crosses Firescauld Creek at exactly the right point. I will call it the Hunter's Mill Road.

Within the Shady Valley property, coming from the northeast there is first a continuation of the current Hunter's Mill Road. Then, near where the center of nursery operations were, the road is obliterated. Farther to the southwest, about halfway across the 100-acre Clem Tract – which did not

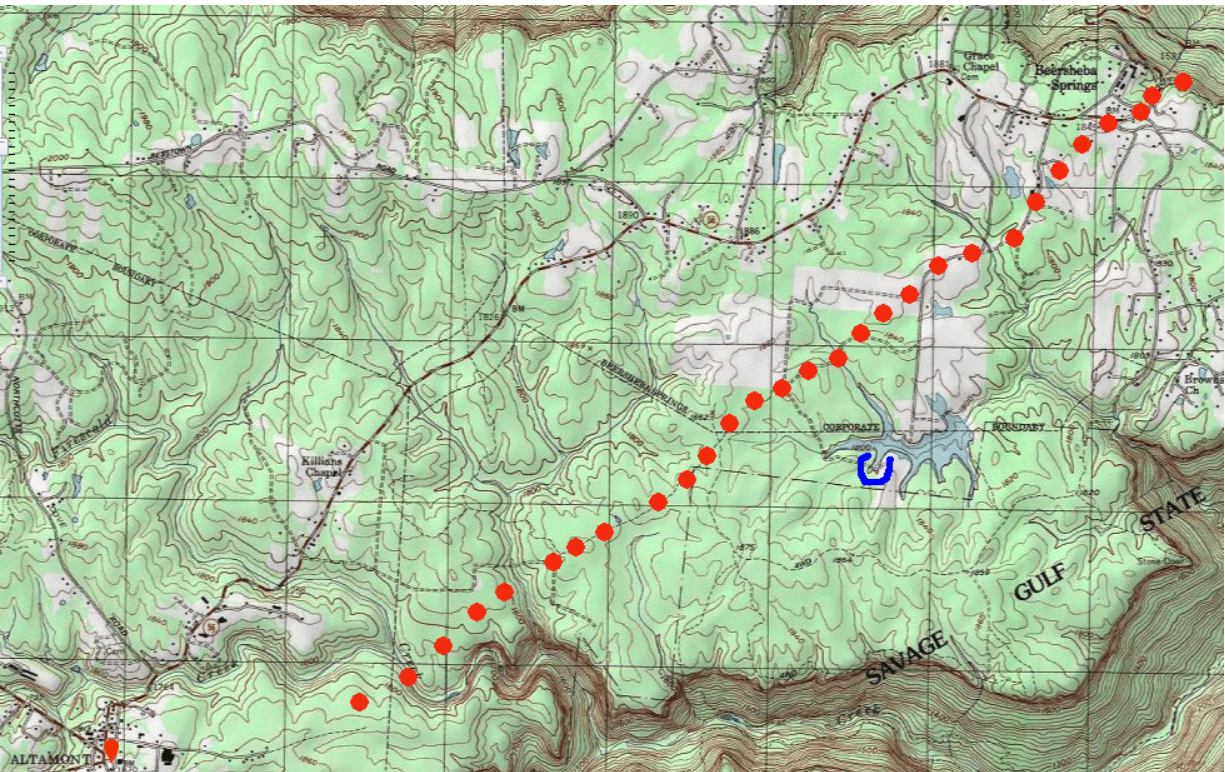
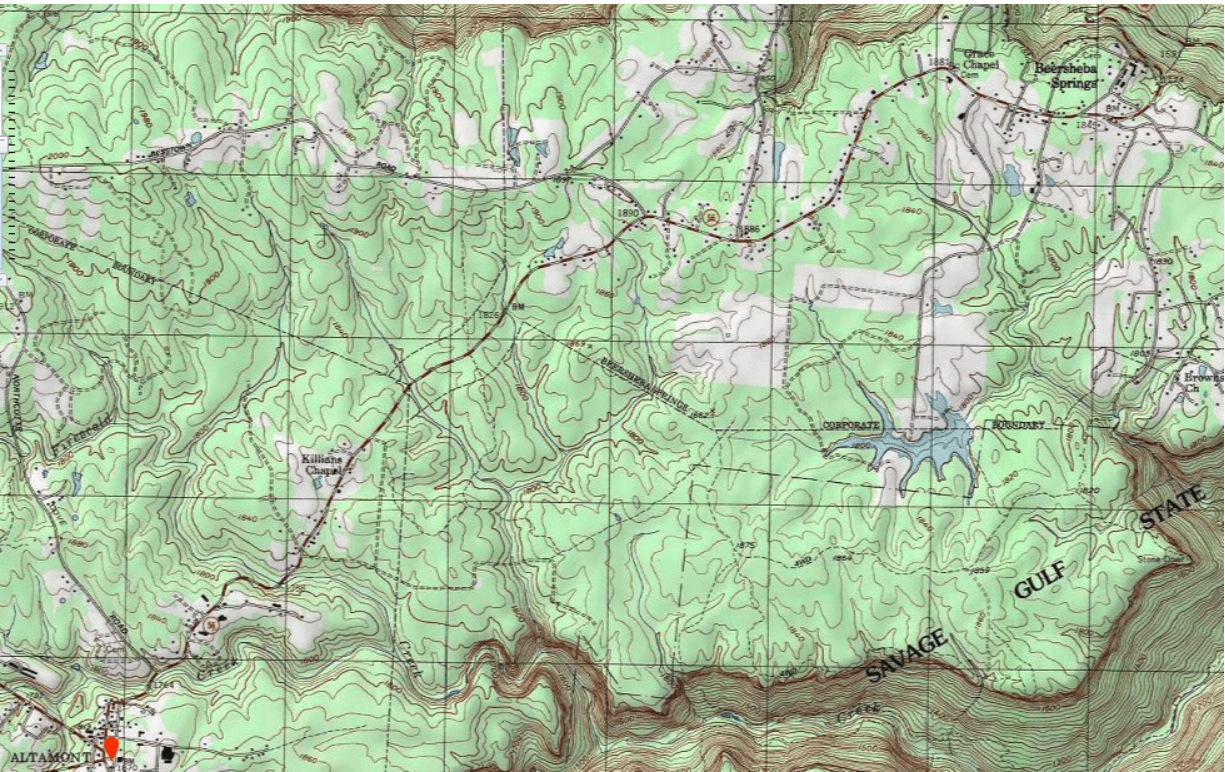
belong to the nursery and does not presently belong to the State – a southwest-bound road resumes, right where Hunter’s Mill Road should be.

On the 1958 Coastal and Geodetic Survey map of this area, shown at the top of the next page, there appears at the southwest end of the stretch in the Clem tract an old road indicated by a single dashes like this - - - . It runs off to the southwest just as Hunter’s Mill Road should. At its western end it terminates on a recently-made road marked by double dashes like this = = = . The total straight-line distance between the beginning and end of this road is 1.1 miles. The road distance would be slightly greater. It looks very like a continuation of the Hunter’s Mill Road reaching to within half a mile of the mill site.

The lower map is the same as the upper map except that I have added red dots to mark the presumed route of the trace. Also I have added on the south side of the Shady Valley lake a blue U where I think the “Horseshoe” was that is mentioned in the early land transactions.

Shown on the 1958 topographic map, this road marked with the single dashes disappeared from later maps. Could it still be found? And what condition would it be in – passable or grown up with greenbriar and blackberry? There was only one way to find out. Go look.







## Walking the Trace

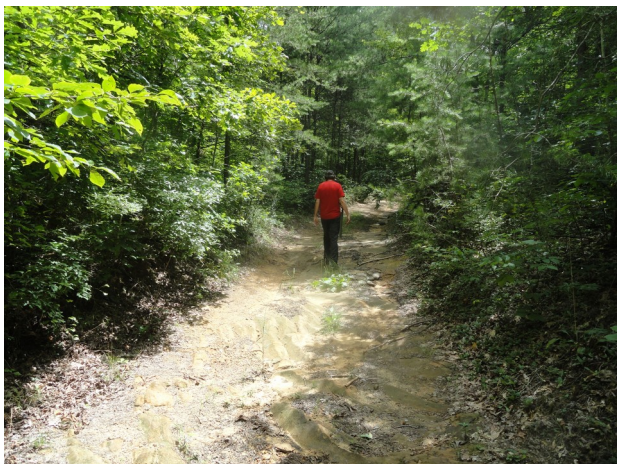
The western end near the Greeter Falls parking lot was more accessible and would be easier to find than the eastern end. When in Beersheba briefly in April 2018, I went out to look and was delighted to see that the road was easily identified and easily walkable. I got as far as the pond, shown as a tiny blue dot on the map. I did not have a camera of any kind, and turned around promising myself to return during the summer.

It was late June before Jo Fassnacht and I returned to the road. We had not gotten far along before the rain began, so that my pictures from that trip were poor and, with one exception, are not used here. We passed the pond. After maybe two thirds of a mile, we came to a fork. We first took the right fork, but after a short distance the road was so grown up in grass that we turned around, went back and took the left fork. After some little distance, we came to the top of a ravine with a creek at the bottom. Since there was no such creek on our intended route, we turned around. The rain had become more intense, so we gave up for the day and went home to get warm and dry.

About two weeks later, on July 9, 2018, I returned with Steve Blackwell. (Jo was not in Beersheba at the time.) The day was sunny and the pictures turned out fairly well except for a speck of something on the lens which I did not notice until later. It produced a blue hazy spot on some of the pictures. We left the car in the Greeter Falls parking lot, walked north along the road on the west side of the parking lot, took the first right – on a road marked on the map with double dashes like this = = = and walked down to an earthen “bridge” over Board Tree Branch. There must be a sizable culvert at the bottom of this fairly recent structure, for the creek flows right through what looks like an earthen dam. We then



walked up the other side until just before the road turns to the right to the point where Hunter’s Mill Road goes off to the left. In the picture above Steve is pointing to Hunter’s Mill Road as it branches off.



The walking along the road was pleasant and easy, as you can see from the picture on the left. On my walk in April, there had been marks of truck tires in the road, and indeed I encountered a truck with a very friendly and informative driver, Rickie Whitman, son of Elmo and Topsy. He now runs the sawmill that had belonged to his father, but he was

on a “joy ride” just because he liked to get out in the woods. But on this walk in July there was little evidence of motor traffic.

At some places, it seemed that the current main road took a slightly different route from the old road, which, however, was still clearly to be seen, as in the picture on the right. (It is actually made looking back to the west.)



It was surprising to find on the surface of this old road limestone gravel, seemingly from the quarry on Tennessee 108 as it descends the mountain between Altamont and Viola. It seems clear that the road was being maintained even after World War II when Tennessee 56 had been paved and was the standard way from Beersheba to Altamont. The gravel is particularly clear in the stretch shown on the left, but it is characteristic of the whole of the road.



The road is often worn down deeply, as shown in the picture on the right, where the soil level on either side of the road is above Steve's waist. Were this a modern road, one might presume that it was an intentional cut. In a road of this age over the thin mountain soil, it is more likely natural sinking of a heavily used road that produced the appearance of a cut.



If you look very closely at the topographic map, you can see a small blue blob on the north side of the road about a third of the way along. I had wondered whether it would still be there and exactly what it was. When I reached it on my first walk, I was quite excited for it showed that the 60-year-old map





was still quite relevant. The pond was alive with the buzzing of insects, chirping of birds, and croaking of frogs. Strangely, it looks as if the pond was created by the road's blocking of a small stream.

Although the weather was dry, there were some significant mud holes, not to say ponds, in the road. Walkers should wear shoes that can deal with water.



A little farther along we come to an even deeper cut. Here is Joe Fassnacht on the rainy walk pointing to the ground level on the south side of the road.



Farther along we come to the fork where Joe and I, after a brief exploration of the right fork – which was indicated by the gravel – turned around because the road was very grown up with grass and weeds and took the left fork, which led to the creek that should not have been there. Here Steve starts down the right fork.



As Jo and I had found before, the road was quite grown up with grass and weeds but still covered with the limestone gravel and walkable without major problem.

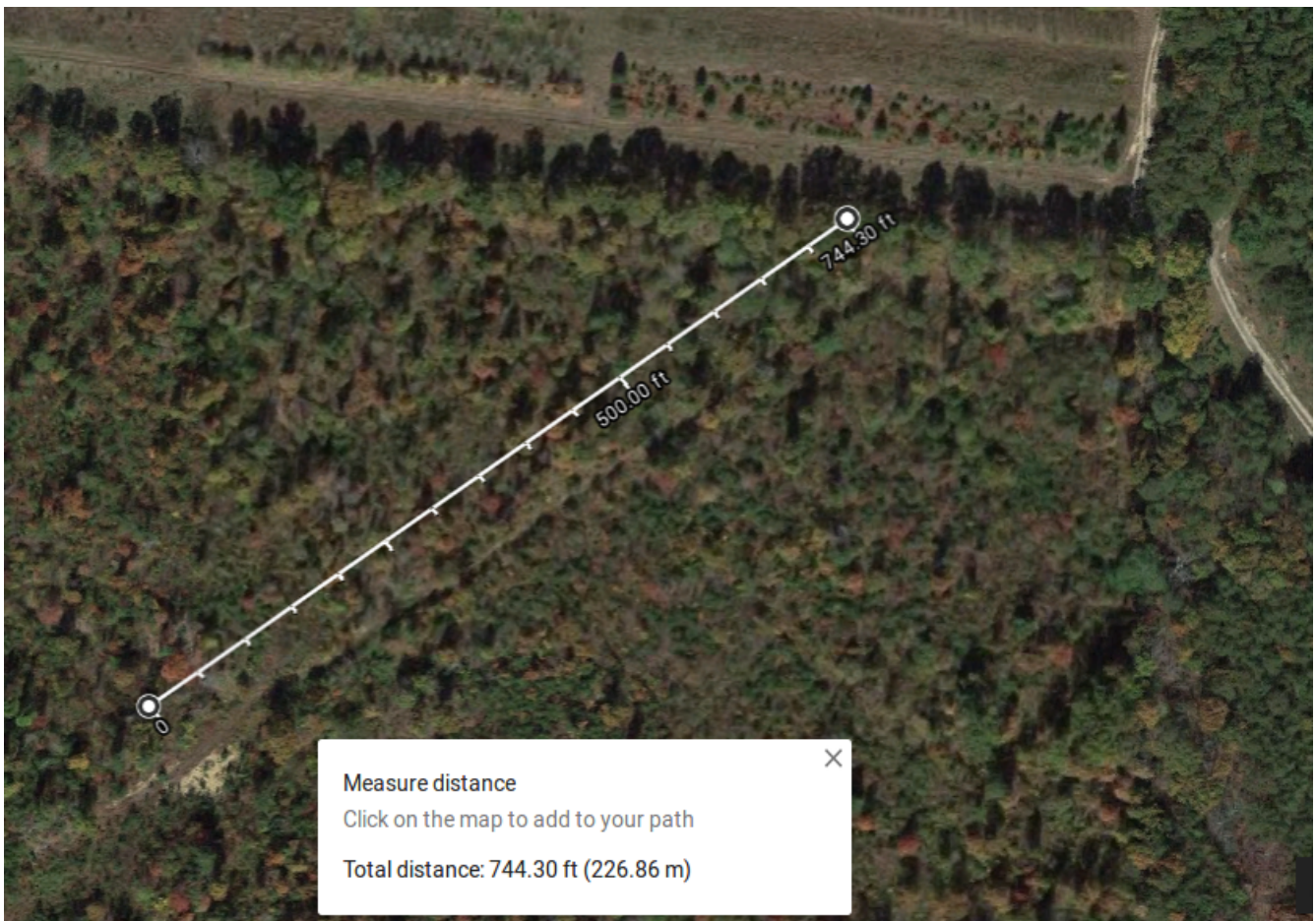
We passed a new State property boundary sign on a tree, so we knew we were on Shady Valley property but not yet on the part that had been developed as a nursery. Then a hundred yards or so farther along, we came to a disgusting sight – a dump of some kind of white stuff. It was so disgusting that I failed to take a picture of it. Our guess was that it was lime or other chemicals that had been used by the nursery and then hauled off and dumped here when the nursery ceased operation. It appeared to us that the road could not be followed farther north. I now think we were mistaken; we should have looked harder for the road at the north end of the dump.



We retraced our steps a short distance and tried a north-bound road branching off to the west side of the road we had followed to the dump. Soon, however, it became so grown up in pine saplings that we could not walk it although we could clearly see the trace of the road in the ground. We turned around and came back to the road with the limestone gravel. Steve took a GPS reading, and I took a picture of him pointing to the road that had been blocked by the pine saplings. That picture is on the left. What ultimately proved to be the right road is going off to the right of the picture.

At this point we noticed that the outer sole of my left shoe had almost fallen off. Steve gave it a jerk, and off it came. That seemed a sign that it was time to turn around and head back to the truck at the Greeter Falls parking lot. The inner sole of my shoe was substantial, so walking was not a problem. But I was pretty tired and moved slowly. Steve went on ahead and brought the truck closer. And I was glad to crawl in.





Safely back in Beersheba, Steve entered the GPS map point he had recorded into some app and soon had a satellite picture of the area where we were. The dump was very clear. It shows up as the irregular grey blob in the lower left corner of the above picture. Across the top of the picture is Shady Valley property developed as nursery land. In the upper right corner is the southwest corner of the Clem tract. We could now see that the road did indeed continue past the dump; we just gave up too easily in looking for it. It continues on northeast to within a few yards of the nursery land, then turns to the east and runs over to a point very near where a road through the Clem tract emerges. This east-west jog in an otherwise northeast-southwest road appears, by the way, in the 1895 topographic map on page 8 – some reassurance that we are, in fact, on the old road. The app had a distance measuring feature which showed that at the dump we were only 744 feet by road from the nursery land. And we had turned around! Obviously, we had to go back. But it was two weeks until we could do so.

This time, on July 27, with permission from the Park, four of us – Jo, Steve, Steve’s wife Julie, and me – attacked mounted on Blackwell bicycles from the north entrance into the Shady Valley property from TN 56 just west of the Beersheba Springs post office. We were no little surprised by what we found, but we continued with our plan to return to exactly the same point – as determined by GPS – where the picture on the previous page was made and then finish the walk up to the nursery land. At the top of the next page are two photographs made 18 days apart from the same spot in the same direction.





*July 9, 2018*



*July 27, 2018*

We could not believe our eyes, but it was reassuring that all four of us were seeing the same thing. A bulldozer had been at work during the intervening two weeks. What it was doing will appear below.



Since we had already past a State boundary marker, I assumed that we were on State property. This assumption was wrong. As you can see on the property line map on page 22, there is a 50 acre rectangle surrounded on three sides by former Shady Valley property that was never acquired by Shady Valley and is still in private hands. We had left the State property and were in this tract. Farther to the northeast, the swath cut by the bulldozer narrows somewhat, but is wider than necessary for a one-lane road. To the southwest, over State property, it appeared

that the dozer had driven over the road but was not working on it.

Farther along to the northeast, the dozer's path narrowed to a one-lane road that made a pleasant enough walking path.





Then farther on to the northeast, it widened out again, as shown on the right. Here I believe we are in the area where the dump was. It seems to have been pushed over to the right side (east side) of the picture. Beyond this clearing, the clearing narrows again to normal road width.



An important clue as to what was going was given by the sight shown on the left. In the foreground there are apples on the ground – not grocery-store apples but apples from a local tree that had, however, been picked (or picked up) and brought here. On the stump is salt, beloved by deer. Now the large clearings began to make sense. They will grow grasses, and the seeds of the grasses make much better foraging for deer than does the sparse vegetation of the forest floor. This fact was well-known to the American Indians who hunted here before

the white man came. They used fire to maintain the open spaces. We, it seems, are using the bulldozer, which is certainly safer. The open spaces also allow a much better shot at the deer than does the forest. Let us hope that today's huntsman is sportsman enough to startle the deer and shoot it on the run, not while placidly licking the salt.

The road then continues on to the northeast. In the picture to the right, the nursery property is just beyond the trees at what appears to be the end of the road, but the road turns to the right – the east-- just before reaching the nursery property, exactly as indicated by the satellite photograph shown above – and by the jog in the 1895 topographic map!





At the end of the section of road shown in the picture just above there was a strip of woods along the south edge of the nursery property. In it we spied a State property boundary marker, shown in the picture to the right. The upper piece of the marker says “BOUNDARY” and the lower piece says, if I remember correctly, “South Cumberland Recreation Area.”



We veer to the right with the road and soon reach an iron gate across the road we have been following. In the picture, note that the road is sunken well below ground level. Since there is no significant fence on either side of the gate, it serves a function more informative than barring. But what is it saying? And who put it there? Those to the north or those to the south?

If the photographer of the preceeding picture now does an about face and looks back at the road just traversed, the picture on the right meets the eye. The road is on the left, and an orange state property boundary stake is on the right. Farther to the right are four horizontal white bars painted on a tree by surveyors and presumably marking the southern edge of the State’s property at this point.





Just on the other side of the iron gate there is a narrow stretch of grass and then the 100-acre Clem tract begins. Through it runs a road now grown up in grass. The picture on the right, taken from the north side of the gate, shows the south end of this road, looking like a green cave in the edge of the woods on the Clem track. This is presumably the continuation of Hunter's Mill Road to the northeast. This is familiar territory to several of us and is not further explored here.



Instead, let us have a look at the other end of Hunter's Mill Road, the southwestern end near where the mill was on Firescauld Creek. There has been so much modern earth-moving work between the point where we began the road and the beginning of the path to Greeter Falls that there is not much hope of finding the old road in this area. I have not searched the area carefully for possible traces. Let us instead take the official path leading south from the parking lot with signs pointing to Greeter Falls and Blue Hole. After a hundred yards or so, the path forks, the left fork marked "Greeter Falls" and the right fork "Blue Hole". Take the right fork. We are now walking pretty much due south. After a hundred yards or so there comes in from the northeast – and thus on our left – a broad and recessed old road, as shown below. In this picture we are looking northwest.



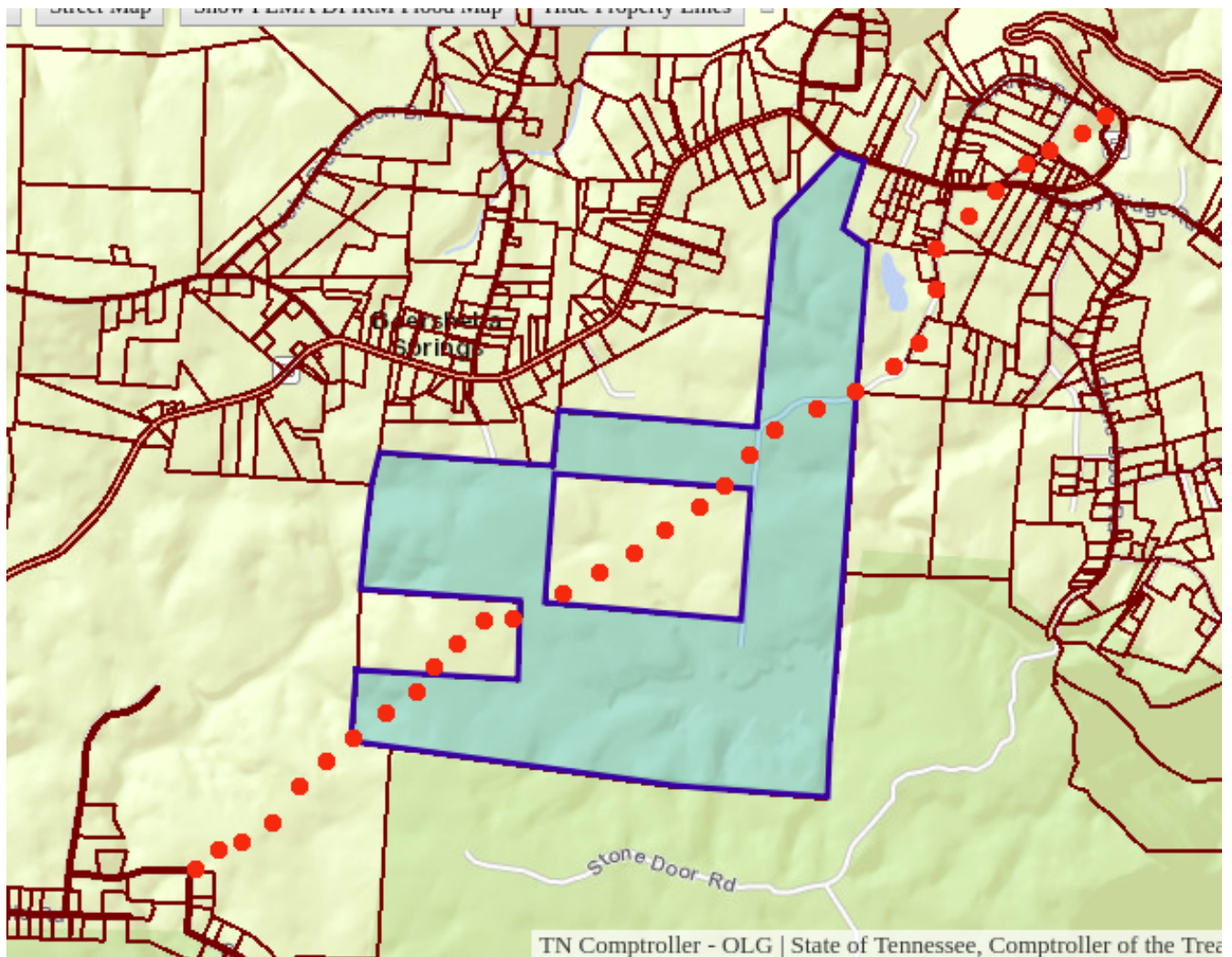


This road is exactly where it should be to be the continuation of the Hunter's Mill Road. I had never noticed it or thought anything of it until this last spring when I had Hunter's Mill on my mind. When I showed it to Jo Fassnacht, he was equally amazed, having walked past it countless times without ever having been conscious of it or thinking of its significance.

This road continues on southeast on the other side of the path, as shown in the picture below.



It is leading off towards the old mill site. Does it get there? That is for younger explorers to discover, but I feel fairly certain that it does. It has only about 500 yards to go. The interruption from the road we have explored in detail is about 350 yards. Logically, this road must have crossed the present path to Greeter Falls shortly after it branched off to the left (east) from the path to the swimming hole. Jo and I searched for it there but could not identify it with certainty. Probably there has been too much modern earth moving in making a good path to Greeter Falls.



Perhaps you wondering how the Hunter's Mill Road – and the old Indian path – relate to modern property lines. The above map is taken from the Tennessee Property Viewer web site. I have added the red dots to show the presumed route of the Chicamauga Path and, where they coincide, the Hunter's Mill Road. The Shady Valley property recently acquired by the State is shown in blue. Land already part of the park is green. Entirely surrounded by the former Shady Valley property is the 100-acre rectangular Clem Tract. To the southeast of it is a 50-acre rectangular tract surrounded on three sides by State property and currently owned by Christine Stockwell et al. of Palmer. The major bulldozing operations seem to have been on this tract. Farther west, where the red dots marking Hunter's Mill Road begin, the surrounding land is owned by Joyce Greeter Henley.



I hope that this report of our explorations will contribute to an awareness of this old road and historic Indian trail going back long before white man entered this area. As the State of Tennessee begins the development of the former Shady Valley property, decisions must be made about how to treat the portion going through State property. It may be ignored, or given a marker, or featured by restoring it as a walking trail from Beersheba to the old mill site and swimming holes on Firescauld Creek. Obviously, I hope for the restoration as a walking trail. Physically, not much work needs to be done, Some of it will run through private property, but there are other trails in the Park's system that run through private property. Where else in the Park can one walk a trail with so much history?



*Three of your four explorers: (left to right) Julie Blackwell, Jo Fassnacht, and Clopper Almon*

The following websites offer interesting old detailed topographic maps of areas discussed here.

<http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/topo/alabama/txu-pclmaps-topo-al-stevenson-1884.jpg>

<http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/topo/tennessee/txu-pclmaps-topo-tn-sewanee-1894.jpg>

saw Old Fields, which is due south of the center of Huntsville, Alabama. That settlement, however, was on an island in the middle of the river, a site chosen probably at least partly because of the difficulty of attacking it. There was no ford there. The settlement had, however, an interesting history. "According to the traditional history of the Cherokees they were the first inhabitants of the Tennessee valley. About 1650 they withdrew from the region to the east of the Cumberland and Sand Mountain, reserving the valley as a hunting ground. Some years after their withdrawal, bands of Shawnees moved southward from Cumberland river and took possession of the Tennessee River country in Alabama. This action angered the Cherokees and they were soon at war with the intruders. Finally after some forty years of warfare, with the aid of the Chickasaws, about 1721, the Shawnees were driven from the country and forced to seek a new home beyond the Ohio. After this long war the Tennessee valley remained without occupants for many years. About 1765 the Chickasaws moved into the country and formed a settlement in the great bend of the Tennessee River in Marshall County. The founding of this settlement aroused the resentment of the Cherokees, who were soon at war with their former allies. In 1769 a great battle was fought between the two tribes at the Chickasaw village. The Chickasaws were the victors, but their victory was won at such a great loss that they withdrew from the country. This abandoned settlement was thenceforth known as the Chickasaw Old Fields, and a Cherokee settlement was finally made in it. " (Quoted from [https://alabamagenealogy.org/madison/native\\_americans.htm](https://alabamagenealogy.org/madison/native_americans.htm))"