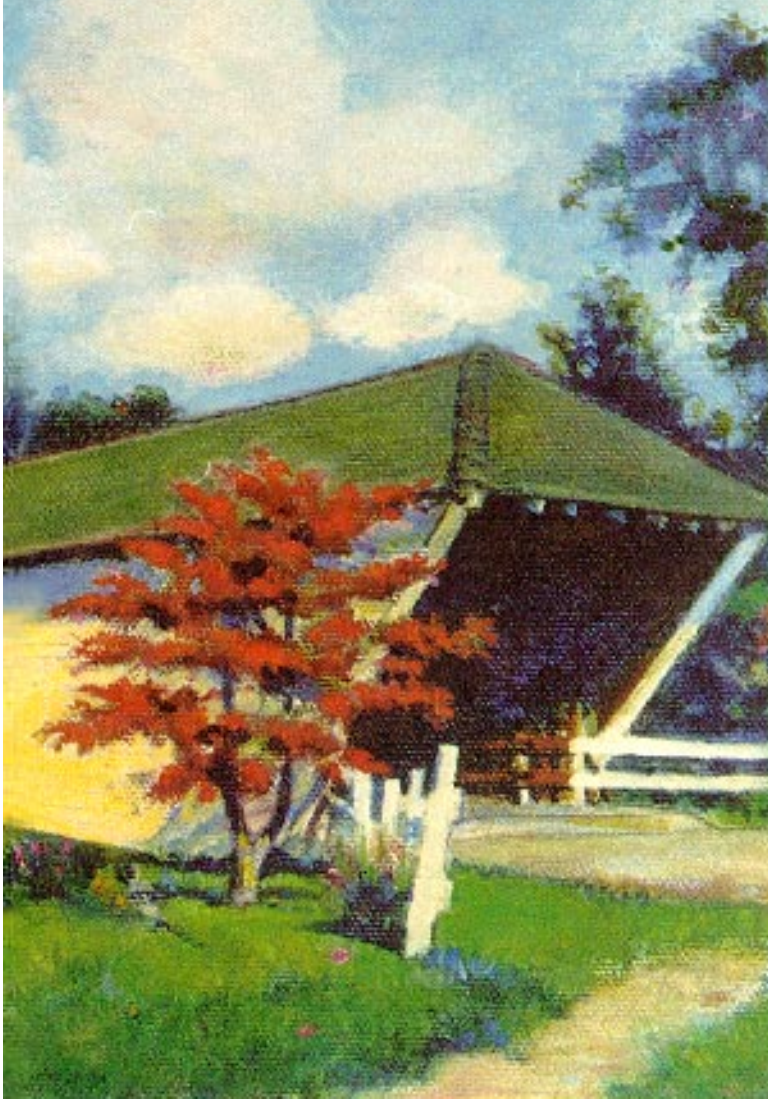


ELIZABETHTON
WALKING
TOUR



W elcome to Elizabethton.

*Thou waterest its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth...Psalm 65*

The land you are standing on is old land. The dirt beneath your feet found its way there slowly, migrating westward from the slopes of what was once a towering mountain range over 15,000 feet in elevation. The Appalachians are one of the oldest mountain ranges on earth. Because of the maturity of the land, the diversity in flora is rich, the hardwood forest unmatched, and the numerous creeks and rivers have many stories to tell about life in the rich open valley where Elizabethton has flourished.

The Native Americans that inhabited this area when the white man came were called "Cherokee" by the Creek Indians meaning "people who live in caves." The Cherokee, who called themselves the "Principal People," used the alluvial area of the nearby rivers, the Doe and the Watauga, as hunting grounds and for trade gatherings. They were preceded by ancient Woodland and Mississippian cultures that left traces of burial grounds and hunting camps. The Cherokee were known as carvers of wood and stone, basket and pottery makers and dancers who dressed in garments of feathers which were warm, weatherproof and lightweight. Their lives were based on strong religious beliefs and rituals, which included the use of sacred medicinal formulas. By the time the white men arrived from the East in the 1750s and later settled on what was then Cherokee land, some of the area had long been cleared of virgin timber; the newcomers found remains of campsites but no inhabited permanent settlement. Their name for the area was Watauga Old Fields; the word "watauga" came from the Creek word "wetoga," meaning "broken waters."

England claimed this territory as a part of the colony of North Carolina from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi

River. King George III by proclamation in 1763, after the French & Indian War, reserved this land west of the mountains for the Indians. However, those who sought out this valley, cajoled by stories that originated with the likes of Daniel Boone, and physically led there by James Robertson, William Bean, John Carter and others, were not interested in leaving the land that had attracted them. By 1772, between 75 and 85 farms were located along the Holston and Watauga Rivers. Outside of any protocol that existed at the time, the landowners drew together and formed, in 1772, the Watauga Association under which they scripted a set of articles, adopting the laws of Virginia, by which they would abide. This entity paid the Cherokee a few thousand dollars for use of the land on the waters of the Watauga for ten years. However, by 1777, the area became part of colonial North Carolina as Washington District and later Washington County.

A group of stockholders formed by Judge Richard Henderson from North Carolina comprised the Transylvania Corporation. On March 17, 1775, at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga, they met with the Cherokee and paid them 10,000 pounds sterling in cash and merchandise for 20 million acres of land. However, a young Chief named "Dragging Canoe" delivered a fiery speech to the settlers present and told them that they had bought a fair land but would find its settlement "dark and bloody." For many years afterwards during the American Revolution, Dragging Canoe and his band of warriors, the Chickamaugans, raided the settlements in the area.

Many times during the American Revolution, militia from this area left their mountain refuge to strike at the British and Loyalist on the eastern side of the mountains. But in September 1780, a defining moment in American History took shape beginning at Sycamore Shoals in what is now Elizabethton. The British, under Major Patrick Ferguson, threatened to march their army over the mountains and destroy the settlement "with fire and sword."

The Overmountain Men militia responded by “uncommon endeavors of common men” when they gathered 1,100 strong at Sycamore Shoals, and rode for twelve days to find and defeat Ferguson’s army at King’s Mountain on October 7, 1780. This event according to many historians was the turning point of the Revolutionary War in the South.

Carter County was created out of Washington County in April 1796 by the General Assembly while in session in present day Knoxville, and was named in honor of Landon Carter. Elizabethton was named by an act of that same body as the seat for justice in honor of Landon Carter’s wife Elizabeth Maclin Carter. Elizabethton became Tennessee’s first incorporated town on October 23, 1799. Tennessee officially became the sixteenth state on June 1, 1796 when President George Washington signed the document for statehood. By 1883, there were 176 inhabitants, 1 academy, 1 church, 1 lawyer and two doctors. The original town was settled on the east banks of the Doe River where, on this tour, you’ll find two of the oldest houses in town. Gradually, the town moved westward and outward from an imaginary point close to where the Soldiers’ monument stands today.

The mid-1800s saw Tennessee in general and Carter County more so than many other areas torn in two by the strife of the Civil War. The state of Tennessee, last to secede from and first to rejoin the Union, saw more battles than any other state. Inhabitants of Middle and West Tennessee tended toward the Confederate side and East Tennessee, particularly this county, comprised predominantly Union sympathizers. It is interesting and telling of the heartbreak of war to note that the two antebellum homes mentioned above stand across the street from each other and housed officers from opposing armies. The neighbors became mortal enemies.

Carter County’s modern history began with the arrival of the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad, a

narrow gauge railroad known as the "Tweetsie," in the late 1880s. The county's first major industries were Line and Twine and the Elizabethton Shoe Factory both established in 1892. Fifteen or so years later the Watauga Extract Company located here and became a major industry. Elizabethton thrived in the early part of the century due in part to lumber and wood-related businesses, and, a little later, to the location here of two German-owned rayon factories. The Lynnwood Hotel, a grand hotel built around 1907 on the west bank of the Doe River was the setting for numerous dances and parties, and hosted at one time or another the likes of Herbert Hoover, Warren G. Harding, William Jennings Bryan, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, Thomas Edison, as well as every one of Tennessee's governors for more than 60 years. The hotel was demolished in 1972.

In 1926 and 1929 the Bemberg and Glanzstoff Rayon factories began operations in this region because of the unlimited supply of waters "of exceptional purity." This was necessary in the chemical process used to manufacture rayon or, as some called it, "artificial silk." The factories had their own Railroad depot (Port Rayon) to handle the thousands of workers, mainly women, who reported for work every day. In March 1929, 3000 workers at the rayon plants went on strike. Most city and county officials strongly supported the owners. The factories survived the strikes. While rayon is no longer produced in Elizabethton, North American Corporation, as it is now known, continues to operate a variety of businesses.

Now, begin your walk and use your imagination to create the ambiance of previous eras that trekked across these same soils.



- 1772** - The Watauga Association was formed under the Sycamore Tree.
- 1775** - The Transylvania Purchase acquired over 20 million acres of land from the Cherokee Indians.
- 1780** - Overmountain men leave from Sycamore Shoals to defeat British Army at Kings Mountain
- 1780s** - Carter Mansion built by John Carter and son, Landon (see area map)
- 1796** - Tennessee becomes 16th state. Carter County was created and Elizabethton named as county seat.
- 1799** - Elizabethton incorporates as a town.
- 1819** - The Alfred Moore Carter Home was built. (oldest house on walking tour)
- 1861** - American Civil War begins.
- 1882** - Covered Bridge was constructed for \$3000.
- 1880s** - First railroad, the "Tweetsie," begins operation.
- 1901** - Highest recorded flood in Elizabethton.
- 1912** - Soldiers' Monument and Lynnwood Hotel were constructed this year.
- 1926** - Bemberg and Glazstoff factories open.



1 Rhudy House

This handsome brick dwelling was built by Capt. L.H. Rhudy and Carrie Dungan Rhudy in 1894 and remained in the family until 1992. Capt. Rhudy was a businessman and industrialist and along with his brother-in-law, Judge Dungan, developed much of what is now the downtown area. The interior and exterior walls of the Queen Anne Style home are solid brick. Although extensively remodeled, the interior still retains most of the original oak and maple woodwork and 8 of the 10 original fireplaces. Two other original buildings remain on the property: a 4-person, two-door brick outhouse and the carriage house which has been converted to a small residence.

2 Dungan House

The Dungan House, located at 619 Hattie Avenue, was constructed by Judge W.P. Dungan in 1892, and is believed to be the first house built in the New Town. One of the more elaborate homes built in the city during the 1890s, the Victorian home in the Eastlake Style reflected the success, prosperity and status of its owner, a town builder for more than 30 years. It was the first house in Elizabethton to have electric lights, a residential telephone, and its own private water system which supplied water, during its early years, to the old Lynnwood Hotel which originally stood two blocks away.

3 Range House

Owned by former Gov. Robert L. Taylor in the 1880s, the Range House, located on the corner of Hattie Avenue and Riverside Drive, was built by Dr. Abraham Jobe. The earliest known landowner of acreage in the Hattie Avenue vicinity, Dr. Jobe was engaged in the mercantile business, was an Indian agent, and served as Postmaster. Hattie Avenue was named for his daughter, Hattie Jobe Taylor who married Nathaniel, brother of Tennessee Governors Robert and Alfred.



4 The Doctor Bowers House

The house known as the Doctor Bowers House was built around 1906 by Dr. E.E. Hunter and his wife, Mollie Jobe Hunter, daughter of Dr. Abraham Jobe, after a fire destroyed their previous home. One of Elizabethton's most beloved physicians, Dr. Hunter, also operated a drug store in the city, served for a short time as Postmaster, and oversaw the construction of the Covered Bridge. The house is primarily Greek Revival Style with various other architectural style influences, particularly Classical Revival. The north bay of the interior stair landing features beautiful stained glass windows.



5 & 6 Hunter Cottage & Franklin House

These two houses were built by Dr. E.E. Hunter, for his children. Both feature elaborate fireplaces and beautiful woodwork. Neither of the houses originally included a kitchen since the daughters and their families were expected to take meals at the "big house."

Built in 1902, Hunter Cottage displays an English architectural influence in the barley twist spindles that line the lovely oak staircase and in the pocket doors which lead into the dining room.

The Franklin House, built in 1901, was reportedly the first house in Elizabethton to have an indoor bathroom. A stained glass window, a wall-mounted razor strap, and the floor and wall tile remain from the original construction.

7 Garland Manor

Dating back to 1893, it is believed that this house was built by a family in the lumber business named Smith, for their son, John. John's bride died before the wedding and he would not live in the house after this, though different family members lived there for several years. At one time, ladies from the Methodist Church gathered on the lawns of this home to make quilts which they later sold to pay for a sign for their church.

Behind this house are what remains of the concrete troughs used in the tannic acid extracting process that was part of the Watauga Extract Company's operations.

8 The Covered Bridge

Built in 1882, the Covered Bridge is believed to be the oldest such bridge in the state that is still in use.

Constructed at a cost of \$3,000 by contractor Dr. E.E. Hunter, George Lindamood and three carpenters, it spans the river for 134 feet, resting on earth and limestone abutments. Hunter hired Colonel Thomas Matson, who had engineered the elevated railroad tracks in New York City, to design the bridge and serve as construction chief. The original structure was made almost entirely of wood; mainly mountain oak and white pine beams that were hauled down the steep slopes of the mountains by draft horses and mules, weatherboard of mountain poplar, and shingles cleaved by mallet and fro from chestnut. Hand forged steel spikes and hand threaded bolts fastened together the massive pieces of oak flooring. Termed an "engineering feat," and listed in the Historic Engineering Record, the Covered Bridge survived numerous floods, including the great May flood of 1901, which destroyed all the other bridges in the county that crossed the Doe River. It is one of two bridges in Tennessee identified by a Tennessee Historical marker and is included on the National Registry of Historic Sites. The Covered Bridge remains the most photographed and most admired historical structure in Carter County.

9 Sycamore Tree

The first republic established west of the Appalachians was the Watauga Association, which was formed in May 1772 under the shade of an old Sycamore tree, located on the banks of the Doe River.

Very little is known about the first court except that five magistrates and 13 commissioners were chosen to

lead the government that existed until 1776. Tradition holds that Andrew Jackson may have also held court under the tree or in a house nearby. The famed tree, cut down in 1987 (after many efforts to save it), was located across the street from this memorial where a concrete pedestal marks the hallowed spot where the court arising from the first written compact made by a free and independent American people was held.

10 Old "Girls' Academy"

Sometime during the 1830s, the Elizabethton Female Seminary was organized. Little is known about it, but it is thought that it was a private subscription school since no record was found of it receiving any support from the state. There is record of the legislature incorporating a female academy on Feb. 3, 1850; however, it probably did not exist after 1853 when a law prompted the Duffield Academy (#18) to admit girls to its establishment. Regardless of the exact history, the house is one of the oldest on the tour. The walls of the Georgian style building are approximately 3 bricks—one foot—thick.



11 126 South Main

Charming Carpenter Gothic Style trim graces the gable ends of this nearly 100 year old house about which little else is known.

12 The Folsom House

This clapboard-sided Greek Revival Style home was built by Henderson Folsom around 1861 on what were then tracts #48 and #49 of the original 77 lots laid out in 1796 (the town incorporated in 1799). These had been two of the first lots sold at public auction in October of that year. They were one-half acre in size and were purchased for \$10 each from Samuel Tipton who donated 50 acres of his farm for the town site. The portion of East Elk Avenue it faces was once called Forge Street due to the location of an iron forge at the base of Lynn Mountain east of here, the first such forge west of the Alleghenies. Major H.M. Folsom, the only commissioned officer from Carter County in the Confederate Army, was also a lawyer and teacher of law. His neighbor on the *north* side of the street was a famed Union Army officer.

12a Fraser Fir

The 78-foot Fraser Fir located next to the Folsom House is the tallest Fraser Fir in Tennessee and second tallest in the U.S. The tree was one of two planted by Major H.M. Folsom, Civil War veteran. In the Christmas season of 1988, the tree was decorated for the first time with lights, which are visible for several miles in either direction. The Fraser Fir has been designated the Community Christmas Tree and the lighting of the fir has become an annual event.

13 Alfred Moore Carter Home

The Alfred Moore Carter Home showing elements of the Greek Revival Style was built in 1819 on Forge Street, and is located on the site of an old Indian village. The structure was built from hand-hewn timbers and the foundation and chimneys were made

from unusually large bricks imported from England. The exterior sports a refined two-story Palladian portico. Elaborate carvings decorate the interior woodwork, doors, window casings and mantels.

Alfred Moore Carter, a well-to-do iron manufacturer, was the most famous of Landon and Elizabeth Carter's children. His son, Samuel P. Carter, was born in this house and is the only person to hold the ranks of both Major General in the U.S. Army and Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy. An officer in the Union army, he was forced at times to use Tennessee troops against Tennessee targets in attempts to defeat the Confederate army. Although the marker here shows Carter's middle name as "Powhatan," it was actually Perry.



14 Carter County Courthouse

Originally built during the 1850s, the courthouse has been altered numerous times. It survived severe wind storm damage in March of 1901 and flood damage during the great flood that occurred in May of that same year wiping out 23 Elizabethton dwellings and all bridges except the still-intact Covered bridge across the Doe River.

15 Soldiers' Monument

Located in the Courthouse Square, the Soldiers' Monument was constructed in 1912 and dedicated in 1913 to all soldiers from the Revolution to that time. The monument stands approximately 60 feet tall with a 20-foot base, and was made of river rock and hand-mixed concrete. In the 1920s and 1930s before radio and TV, hundreds of local residents would gather around the Monument on Election night to await the results which were read by the clerk of the courthouse. The monument was refurbished in 1989 and dedicated to Carter County soldiers serving in all wars.





16 St. Thomas Episcopal Church

The St. Thomas Episcopal Church was formerly the Southern Methodist Church. The United Methodists were among the first organized religious believers in the City, dating back to 1833. They first worshiped in the Courthouse, and later in Duffield School. The Civil War divided the local congregation, and the Southern Methodists built their own church. The building was begun in 1861, interrupted by the Civil War, and finally completed in 1867. The Gothic Revival Style church was constructed of handmade brick built on the site.

17 Wedding Chapel

Formerly known as the Presbyterian Church, this Greek Revival Style building is probably the oldest church in the City, dating back to 1836. Among the first members were the Carters, Taylors, Duffields, Smiths, Stovers, and Camerons. The Civil War almost forced the church to close as many of the leading families were slave owners, and moved away. A few staunch members, however, remained, and because of their efforts the church continued.

18 Duffield Academy

Duffield Academy, named for attorney George Duffield, was established Sept. 13, 1806. The original brick building was erected near Doe River about 1809 and was the first school in Elizabethton. A new building was erected in 1838. For a brief period following the Civil War, the school was operated by the Presbyterian Church USA and renamed Davies Academy. George Duffield, who was instrumental in getting the school started, was married to Sallie Stewart Carter, a daughter of Landon and Elizabeth Carter. The school for many years was operated as an elementary school by the Elizabethton City School System. Since 1969 it has served as the administrative offices of the Carter County School System.



19 Shepherd House

Built sometime before 1894, this house was constructed by the builder/owners of an overall factory that was at one time located across the river and to the south. The basement still includes the river rock from which it was originally built. To the right of the house was the only site in the area where settlers forded the river with horses and wagons. Until the recent flood, one could still see the old wagon ruts. The house now serves as a bed and breakfast, the Doe River Inn.

20 Banks Law Office

The Riverview Building was built in the late 1930s atop the foundation of what was originally the tavern where it is said former President Andrew Johnson in 1875 took his last drink. Later that night, at his daughter's house just a few miles from here, he died from a stroke.

21 Edward's Island Park

This piece of land is flanked by the Doe River on the east side and a mill race on the west. Even before the weir dam which exists upstream today, an earlier dam had served the purpose of diverting water to the stream for the purpose of providing mills in the area with power to turn the wheels. The Elk Avenue Bridge was then a 5 foot wide foot bridge.

West of the park and facing the river once stood the Lynnwood Hotel pictured below.



Lynnwood Hotel

22 Old Post Office

At least one account has it that in 1908 the post office moved into this building which was owned by Postmaster E.C. Alexander. In July 1920, Dr. C. C. Hacker opened medical offices in this building.

Eating Establishments



Southern Restaurant

Mon-Thur 6:00AM to 6:55 PM



Dino's Restaurant

Mon-Thur 11:00AM to 8:00 PM

Fri 11:00AM to 9:00 PM

Sat. 11:00AM to 8:00 PM



The Coffee Company

Mon-Fri 7:00AM to 7:00 PM

Sat. 7:00AM to 4:00 PM



Duck Duck Goose Cafe

Mon-Sat. 11:00AM to 3:00PM



Hook's Restaurant

Mon-Fri. 6:00AM to 2:00 PM

Sat. 11:00AM to 8:00 PM



Classic Malt Shop

Mon-Wed 10:30AM to 3:00 PM

Thur-Fri. 10:30AM to 8:00 PM

Sat. 8:00AM to 9:00 PM



Betsy Dairy Kreme

Mon-Sun 10:30AM to 7:00 PM



Sycamore Drive-In

Mon-Sun 10:30AM to 7:00 PM



City Market

Mon-Fri 11:00AM to 5:00 PM

Sat 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Legend:



Look for these numbered marker at each tour location



Handicap Accessible Public Restrooms



Parking Area for Walking Tour

23 Barnes Boring Hardware

Barnes Boring was officially established as a corporation on February 26, 1900 with J.M. Barnes and J. R. Boring as principal stockholders. Eight years later, others joined Barnes and Boring as owners and the hardware store moved across the river to the "handsome building on Elk Avenue" you visit now. The two gentlemen died just months from each other nearly 30 years after beginning their partnership. Treat yourself to a walk inside to get a real feel for the past.

24 Burgie Drugs

In 1885, Dr. E.E. Hunter and Harry Burgie opened the first drugstore in the "new part" of Elizabethton. Burgie later decided to own and operate his own business, Burgie Drugs, from the building you see here. The lions' heads once held chains which supported the canopy in front of the building.

25 Betsy Walkway

This walkway now exists where once the Grand Theater, the first theater in Elizabethton, stood. The theater had a balcony for blacks only, but sometimes white males snuck up the stairs to join them and smoke cigars. The Grand burned in the fall of 1927 and was remodeled and reopened in December of the same year. The theater was later named the "Betsy."

26 Public Library

The older (eastmost) portion of this building, Classical Revival in design, originally served as Elizabethton's main post office. James A. Wetmore, working for the WPA, designed the building in 1931, and it was constructed in 1933. The renovation of this building to accommodate its current function as a public library took place in 1992.

27 Ritz Theater (Birchfiel Building)

Originally one of four movie theaters in downtown Elizabethton, this building was constructed in the late 1920s by local building contractor, Thomas Construction Company. The Art Nouveau style building is the only one of its type in Elizabethton. Note the masks of comedy and tragedy and the decorative pattern in the concrete.

28 S.H. Kress Building

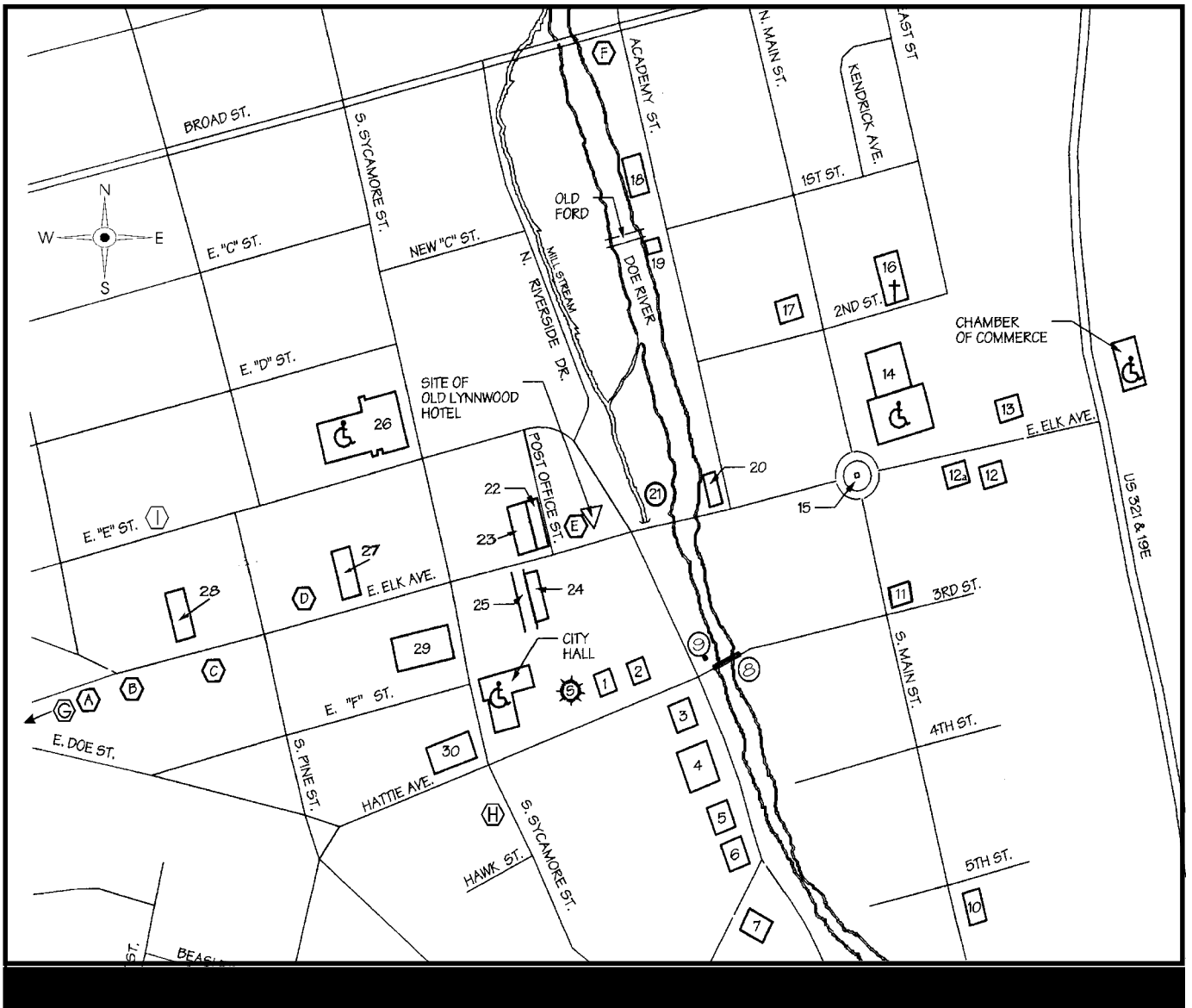
Designed by George E. MacKay, this building was constructed in 1929. The Elizabethton Star, in announcing the investment to be made by the Kress Company, stated that the store would have fifty sales ladies, seven sales men, and 975 lineal feet of counters. The terra-cotta clad 2nd floor and parapet are enlivened by fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals, a frieze with rosettes, and an ogee cornice. The gilded terra-cotta logo on the parapet is surmounted by a polychrome cartouche.

29 Bonnie Kate Theater

The Bonnie Kate Theater, another Classical Revival Design, formally opened on May 16, 1926. All 500 of the seats were filled and the audience enjoyed the showing of a silent film. A local music program "Barrels of Fun" originated here in the 1930s and in the 1940s was broadcast by two radio stations (one next door) to a listening audience of 3.2 million people in the southeast area. This was the first theater East of the Mississippi to have rocking chair seating (1969).

30 Antique Fire Engine

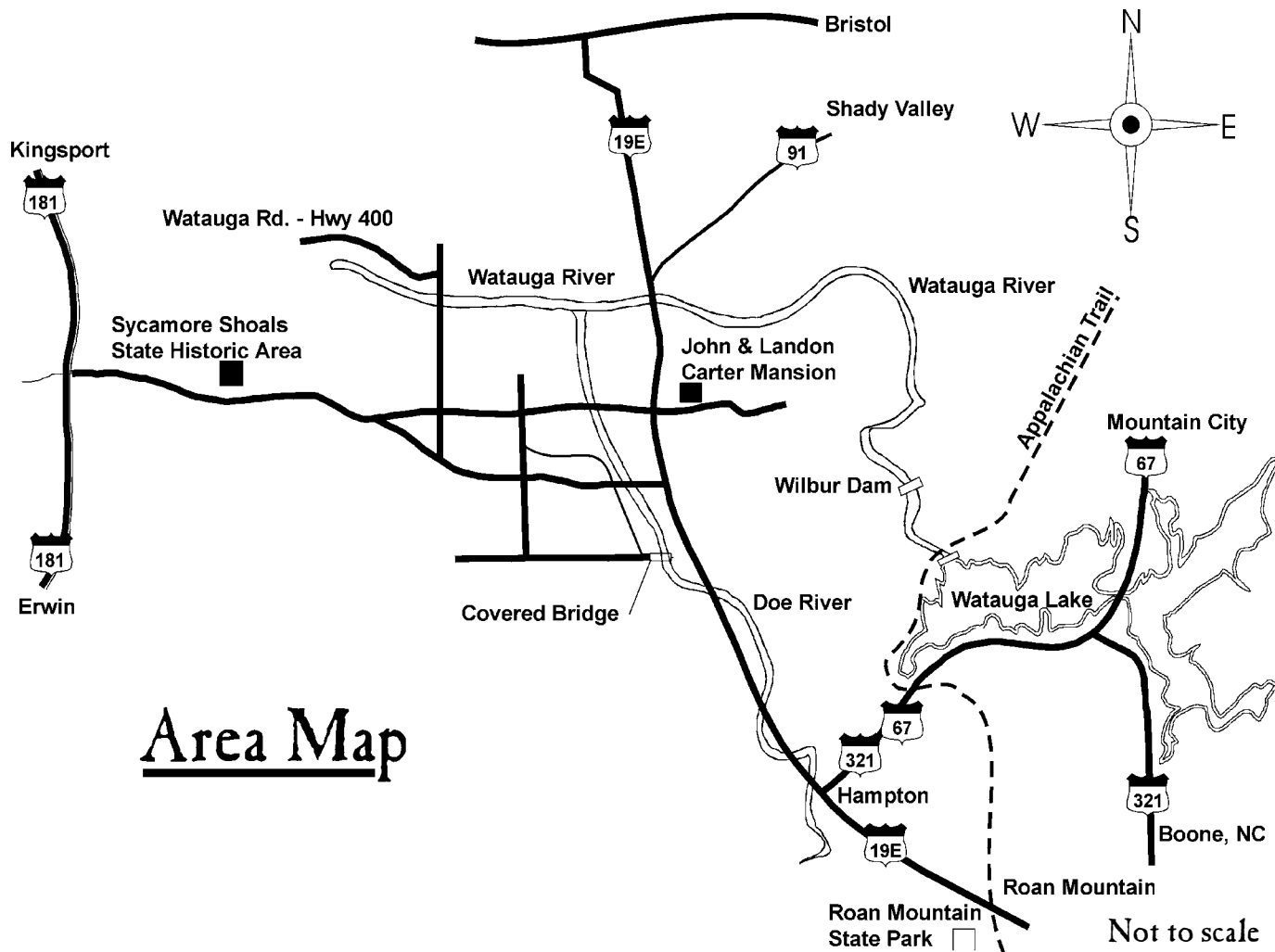
This 1921 T Model fire engine carried chemicals rather than water for extinguishing fires. Several years ago fireman & friends restored the vehicle to its present "cherry" condition.



- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Rhudy House | 12. Capt. Lynn Folsom House |
| 2. Dungan House | 12a. Fraser Fir |
| 3. Range House | 13. Alfred Moore Carter Home |
| 4. Dr. Bowers House | 14. Carter County Courthouse |
| 5. Hunter Cottage | 15. Soldiers' Monument |
| 6. Franklin House | 16. St. Thomas Episcopal Church |
| 7. Garland Residence | 17. Wedding Chapel |
| 8. The Covered Bridge | 18. Duffield Academy |
| 9. Sycamore Tree | 19. Shepherd House |
| 10. Old "Girls Academy" | 20. Banks Law Office |
| 11. 126 South Main | 21. Edward's Island Park |

Historic Downtown Elizabethton

- | |
|------------------------------------|
| 22. Old Post Office |
| 23. Barnes Boring Hardware |
| 24. Burgie Drugs |
| 25. Betsy Walkway |
| 26. Public Library |
| 27. Ritz Theater (Birchfiel Bldg.) |
| 28. S.H. Kress Building |
| 29. Bonnie Kate Theater |
| 30. Antique Fire Engine |



Area Map

Points of Interest — The Surrounding Area

- Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area - West Elk Avenue.
- Carter Mansion - (built 1780s) East of 19E - 3 minutes drive.
- Watauga Lake - East of Hampton on Hwy 321 - 15 minute drive.
- Roan Mountain State Park - 45 minute drive southeast of Elizabethton off of 19E.
- Appalachian Trail - intersections at 321 and 19E
- Cherokee National Forest (picnicing & hiking)

Other Sources of Information:

Locations:

Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce

500 19-E Bypass

Elizabethton, TN 37643

Phone: 423-547-3850

Elizabethton Public Library

201 N Sycamore St.

Phone: 423-547-6360

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area

1651 W Elk Ave

Phone: 423-543-5808

U.S. Forest Service (Unicoi)

P.O. Box 400

Unicoi, TN 37692

Phone: 423-753-1500

Literature:

"From a Window on Hattie Avenue"

Rozella Hardin, 1993.

"History of the 13th Regiment"

Samuel W. Scott & Samuel Angel, 1903.

"Later History of Carter County 1865-1980"

Frank Merrit, 1986.

Also: "Early History of Carter County"

"More History of Carter County"

"The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture"

The Tennessee Historical Society,

Carroll Van West, Editor in Chief, 1998.

"Tennessee's Historic Landscapes: A Travelers Guide"

Carroll Van West, 1995.

"Touring the East Tennessee Backroads"

Carolyn Sakowski, 1993.

The Wataugans

Max Dixon, 1976



Acknowledgements:

This brochure was produced in conjunction with other activities commemorating the bicentennial celebration of the establishment of Elizabethton – Tennessee's first incorporated town.

Funding:

Elizabethton/Carter County Tourism Council
Tennessee Department of Tourist Development – Heritage Tourism
Elizabethton Bicentennial Committee

Contributions:

Design, Layout, and Photography by MER, Inc.
Maps by Reedy and Sykes Architecture & Design
Marker Design, Layout, and Installation by Pioneer Sign Company
Cover Art by Michele Warner
Color Scan & Prepress work courtesy Royal Printing
Printed by Royal Printing

