

**TENNESSEE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS PARK  
COMMISSION  
1927-[1931]-1937**

**RECORD GROUP 262**

*Processed by:*

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**MICROFILMED**

## INTRODUCTION

Record Group 262, Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission, spans the years 1927 through 1937, with the majority of the records focusing on the year 1931. Colonel David Chapman of Knoxville, Tennessee, was appointed the first commissioner of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission. The responsibility of the commission was to acquire the lands within the borders of Tennessee that were to be transferred to the federal government in order to create the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The records contain the correspondence and related materials generated by Col. Chapman and the Park Commission. The original order of this record group, alphabetical, has been maintained. The source of the materials is unknown, as is the date that it was received by the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

The collection is contained in five Hollinger boxes and one oversized folder. The oversized folder contains two broadsides of the House and Senate Rosters for the 67th Tennessee General Assembly. This collection contains primarily correspondence. Some of the subjects discussed in the collection that were of special importance in 1931 were the settlement of the Champion Fibre Company land dispute and the appraisals and purchase of private property, especially in the Cades Cove community.

*Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains* (revised, 1969) is a book by Carlos C. Campbell, who was Secretary of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association. Mr. Campbell's book gives much detail, some from first hand involvement, pertaining to evolution of the park movement. Portions of the book relate to the documents in this collection.

This record group has been microfilmed and the original documents have been maintained. One half cubic foot of duplicate documents were discarded. Many of the documents in this collection are carbon copies on onion skin paper that required flattening and cleaning with Absorene paper cleaner. There are no restrictions on the use of materials in this record group.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission, Record Group 262, consists of the records of the commission established by the State of Tennessee for the purpose of purchasing land. This land was purchased to be turned over to the Federal Government in order to establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Record Group 262 spans the years 1927-1937; however, the majority of the documents are for the year 1931. Colonel David Chapman was appointed the first commissioner of the Park Commission and maintained these records. The original order was evident and therefore, maintained during processing. Chapman evidently maintained an alphabetical arrangement for his filing system, incorporating correspondence with non-correspondence records. The correspondence was separated from the non-correspondence records for the purpose of clarity while maintaining the original alphabetical arrangement. The records are then arranged chronologically with responses to correspondence attached to the carbon copy letters.

Important issues discussed in this record group include the legal outcome of the Champion Fibre Company land settlement, negotiations for the Little River Lumber Company, and the Morton Butler Timber Company property. Leasing questions are discussed particularly in Box 1, Folder 9. Sites discussed include Wonderland Park, Elkmont, LeConte Lodge, Cherokee Orchard, Indian Gap, and Little River. Box 5 contains the bulk of materials pertaining to property appraisals, property settlements, taxes, deeds, property lease information, bank statements, canceled checks and a checkbook. Also included are property assessments for individually owned tracts of land in Blount County, Sevier County, and the Cades Cove community. Box 5, Folder 10, contains a file of leases for 1931, arranged alphabetically by the tenant's last name. Information included in this file is county location, description of property, cost of the lease, and date of payment. Bank Statements from three different banks are included for accounts of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission. Vouchers, canceled checks, and a check book for the Tennessee State Park and Forestry Commission are also included.

Individuals of prominence represented in correspondence are: A. B. Cammerer, Associate Director of the Interior Department, Judge John R. Aust, Attorney, John M. Clark, Park Commission member, Henry E. Colton, Park Commission member, E. E. Conner, Park Commission member, General James W. Cooper, chief attorney for the park during the Champion Fibre Company case, A. O. Delozier and W. R. Mize, land agents for the Park Commission, Major John R. Eakin, first Superintendent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Phillip R. Hough, Assistant Chief Ranger of the National Park, Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, Honorable Mark Squires, State Senator of North Carolina and Chairman of the North Carolina Park Commission.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **COLONEL DAVID CARPENTER CHAPMAN**

Colonel David Chapman was born August 9, 1876, and died July 26, 1944. He was the son of John Ellis and Alice Young Chapman and a lifelong resident of Knoxville, Tennessee. Chapman attended the University of Tennessee from 1895-1897 but did not graduate. After the death of his first wife, Augusta McKeldin Chapman, he married Sue Johnston Chapman. He was very active in social clubs, civic clubs, and fraternal organizations in the Knoxville area. He was Director of the Commercial Club, the Appalachian Exposition, and the Appalachian Club.

Col. Chapman served in the Spanish-American War with the rank of Second Lieutenant in the 3rd Tenn. Volunteer Infantry and was the Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier-General L. W. Colby. When the Tennessee National Guard was drafted for World War I, Governor Rye selected him to reorganize the National Guard in East Tennessee. He became Colonel of the 5th Tennessee Regiment which was later changed to the 4th Regiment. Chapman resigned from the National Guard on November 20, 1918.

Col. Chapman's father, John Ellis Chapman, started a wholesale drug company in Knoxville and Col. Chapman served as president after his father's death. Chapman was establishing himself as an important business and civic leader in Knoxville at this time. Knoxville hosted two events known as the Appalachian Exposition, in 1910, and again in 1911. Chapman served on the board of directors. The purpose of the expositions was to make known the natural resources of the Southern Appalachian sections of the United States. As leader of the Appalachian Club, he became deeply involved in the movement to create a national park in the Smoky Mountains. Governor Austin Peay appointed Chapman to be the East Tennessee member of the Tennessee State Park & Forestry Commission on April 11, 1925. This appointment came about with the urging of the Smoky Mountains Conservation Association and illustrates recognition of Chapman's strong leadership role early on in the park movement. The Conservation Association voted to add the word "Great" to their name, thus recognizing Great Smoky Mountains as the official and full name of the mountains in which the park would be located.

The State of Tennessee created the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission in 1927, for the purpose of purchasing the land for the proposed park. The land was then turned over to the federal government to be used as a national park. Chapman was appointed the first commissioner and served as commissioner until August 25, 1932. At that time a new commission was appointed as a result of political maneuvering. Chapman was retained as a member. However, his opponent, George R. Dempster was appointed Temporary Commissioner. Conflict between Chapman and

Dempster erupted in a fist fight as the result of an audit report presented by Chapman to the Commission. The audit charged that \$11,067.00 had been spent by the new commission during the previous three months but they had purchased only four-tenths of an acre. Governor Hill McAllister abolished the Park Commission and turned over its duties to the Tennessee Park and Forestry Commission after a vote of approval of the Tennessee Senate on April 6, 1933.

Recognition of the strong leadership of Colonel Chapman came with the naming of Mt. Chapman, a 6,340 foot peak located between Mt. Guyot and Mt. Sequoyah, as well as the designation of U. S. Highway 441 in Knoxville as Chapman Highway. Colonel Chapman, "Father of the Park," lived to witness the official dedication of the park by President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Newfound Gap on September 2, 1940. He died of Congestive Heart Failure on July 26, 1944 and was buried at Highland Memorial Cemetery in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Sources:

*Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains*, by Carlos C. Campbell, University of Tennessee Press, Revised 1969

*Tennessee the Volunteer State, 1769-1923, Volume II*, S. J Clark, Publishing Co., 1923

*Who's Who In Tennessee, Notable Tennesseans of To-day, 1911*, Paul & Douglas Co., 1923

*Knoxville Journal*, July 27, 1944 issue.

## CONTAINER LIST

### BOX 1

<b>FOLDER #:</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>
1.	Correspondence--A
2.	Correspondence--Aust, Judge John R.
3.	Correspondence--B
4.	Correspondence--C
5.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Assoc. Director, Interior Department
6.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Forest Ranger Applications
7.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Leases-Condernation
8.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Rules & Regulations
9.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Lease Requests, Land Dispositions, & Negotiations
10.	Correspondence--Cammerer, A. B., Rockefeller Memorial Fund, Equitable Trust Co.
11.	Correspondence--Champion Fibre Company, Canton N. C.
12.	Correspondence--Clark, John M., Maryville, TN
13.	Correspondence--Colton, Henry E., Nashville, TN
14.	Correspondence--Conner, E. E., Sevierville, TN
15.	Correspondence--Cooper, J. W.

### BOX 2

<b>FOLDER #:</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>
1.	Correspondence--D
2.	Correspondence--Delozier, A. O. & Mize, W. R., Sevierville, TN
3.	Correspondence--Department of Interior, Washington, D. C.
4.	Correspondence--E
5.	Correspondence--Eakin, Maj. John R.
6.	Correspondence--Eakin, Maj. John R., Park Administration Issues
7.	Correspondence--Elliott, John M.
8.	Correspondence--F
9.	Correspondence--Fink, Paul M., Jonesborough, TN
10.	Correspondence--G
11.	Correspondence--H
12.	Correspondence--Hough, Phillip R.
13.	Correspondence--I
14.	Correspondence--Inquiries
15.	Correspondence--J
16.	Correspondence--K

**BOX 3**

**FOLDER #: DESCRIPTION:**

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1. Correspondence--L
2. Correspondence--Lease and Acquisition Issues
3. Correspondence and Reports--Legislature
4. Correspondence--Legislature-Extra Session
5. Correspondence--Little Company, Arthur D.
6. Correspondence-- Mc
7. Correspondence--McGuire, A. J.
8. Correspondence--M
9. Correspondence--Maloney, General Frank
10. Correspondence--Markham, Col. A. E., Tiptonville, TN
11. Correspondence--N
12. Correspondence--National Conference on State Parks
13. Correspondence--North Carolina Park Commission

**BOX 4**

**FOLDER #: DESCRIPTION:**

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1. Correspondence--O
2. Correspondence--P
3. Correspondence--Prentiss & Carlisle, Inc., Bangor, Maine
4. Correspondence--Q
5. Correspondence--R
6. Correspondence--S
7. Correspondence--Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D. C.
8. Correspondence--Squires, Hon. Mark, Lenoir, N. C.
9. Correspondence--T
10. Correspondence--U
11. Correspondence--V
12. Correspondence--W
13. Correspondence--XYZ
14. Telegrams--Outgoing
15. Telegrams--Incoming

## **BOX 5**

<b>FOLDER #:</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>
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|-----|---|
| 1.  | Act--Legislation-SB 781   |
| 2.  | Bank Statements--City National Bank-TN Great Smoky Mtn. Park Comm.,1928-1931            |
| 3.  | Bank Statements--East TN national Bank- TN Great Smoky Mtn. Park Comm., 1928-1931       |
| 4.  | Bank Statements--Holston Union National Bank- TN Great Smoky Mtn. Park Comm., 1928-1930 |
| 5.  | Bank Statements--Hamilton National Bank-TN State Park & Forestry Commission, 1936-1937  |
| 6.  | Canceled Checks--TN State Park & Forestry Commission, 1936                              |
| 7.  | Checkbook--TN State Park & Forestry Commission, 1933-1937                               |
| 8.  | Clippings--Articles   |
| 9.  | Deeds--Recorded & Returned  |
| 10. | Leases--1931  |
| 11. | Lists--Property Deeded to Government, Blount County                                     |
| 12. | Lists--Cades Cove Property  |
| 13. | Lists--Property Purchased along Indian Gap Highway                                      |
| 14. | Lists--Property Purchased by Great Smoky Mt. Conservation Association                   |
| 15. | Lists--Taxes--Blount & Sevier County, 1930  |
| 16. | Lists--Taxes Paid, 1931-1932  |
| 17. | Newspaper Releases  |
| 18. | Property Appraisals   |
| 19. | Property Approved for Purchase  |
| 20. | Reports--Daily--B. E. Rippy   |
| 21. | Vouchers--TN State Park & Forestry Commission, 1936                                     |

### **OVERSIZED MATERIALS**

1. Senate Roster--67th General Assembly
2. House of Representatives Roster--67th General Assembly