

Charles Robertson, an Update

It's funny and a little odd how we, who are heavily immersed in history, feel as though we commune with the ones who have gone before us. Maybe it's more of just a connection that we feel. Whatever it is, after talking to others who feel the same way, there is certainly something there. With that being said, I had no feeling of connection to Charles Robertson. I worked on his story for the better part of three weeks and there were no vibes, no chill bumps, nothing. That is, until I posted his story online. As Paul Harvey used to say, "here's the rest of the story."

Research on where Charles Robertson lived was relatively easy to place on a map. We knew the general area before we even got started. When the map was drawn on the tax maps, there was an obvious, odd little city park in the area where we believed his home would have been. We wondered if this could be the spot...wondered if maybe the land was set apart because someone knew the exact location of his home, back in the 1930's.

Within a few hours, we were told by a few persons that no, this was just a soggy, wet piece of property that the developers could not build on, and it was decided to set it apart as a community park. I even visited the property myself to see if I could figure it out. I felt nothing, except spongy, wet, soggy ground underneath my feet.

A few days ago, I had an enlightening email. One of the people that I had questioned had done some research several years back and remembered an important source he had used in their collection. He sent three photographs from Mary Hardin McCown's collection, housed in the Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University.

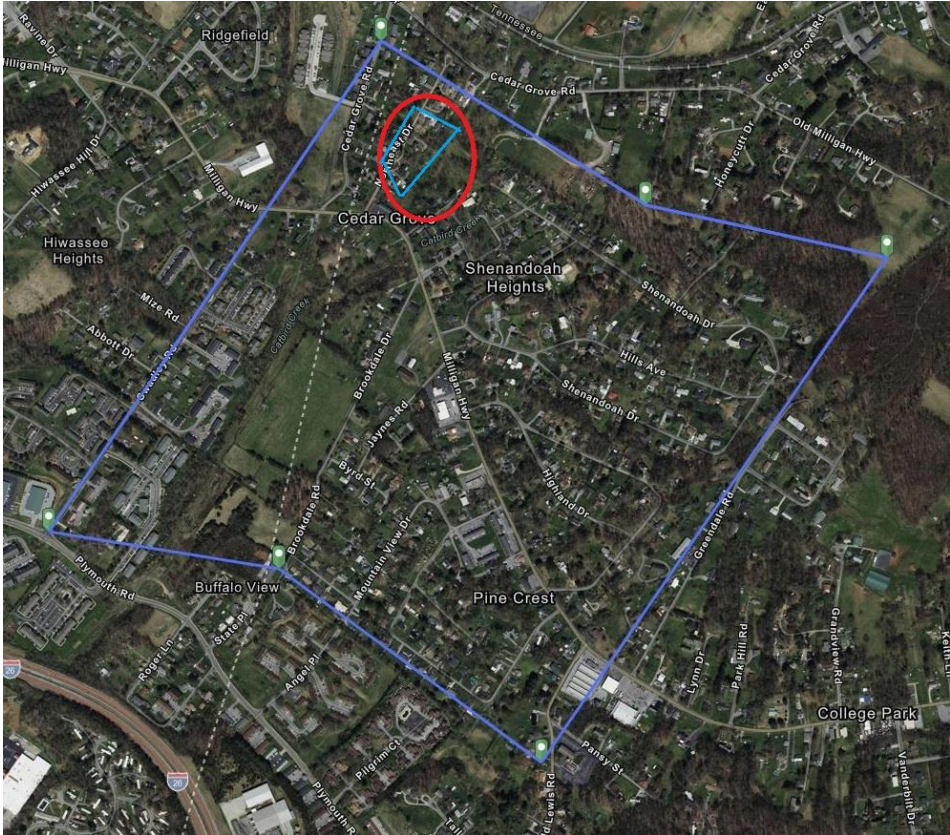




This photo was the most intriguing, as there was an obvious rock formation running from Catbird Creek. We hoped to be able to recreate this photo.

The photos were dated 1952, during a time when the Daughters of the Revolution were working to locate the historical places and mark them with some type of signage, usually either a DAR marker or a Tennessee State Historical marker. Mary Hardin McCown was a leader in this effort and there are several photos of her at these historical sites, hoping to mark a specific location.

Although we can't be 100% sure, we are fairly certain we have pinned down the area (see map below) where Robertson's home was located, not forgetting that his home was the site of the first court of Washington County, on February 21, 1778. Maybe. 😊



The two maps above show what we believe is a likely location of the Charles Robertson home, and the first court of Washington County.