

Music in the Mountains in Smoky Junction, Tenn.

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Great, Great, Grandson of John Thomas Anderson,
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Great Great Grandpa Sexton, (had) incredibly large hands, (and) was a guitar player. His son, Leonis and Grandson Ervin Adkins were also guitar players. My Grandpa Chester Anderson gave me my first guitar when I was 7. My Uncle Steve Anderson showed (me) some of my first guitar licks. My Uncle Dave Anderson's record collection supplied my ears with tunes of the times back in the sixties. It has been said that a "Gerber" studied under Johann Sebastian Bach. Don't know if he was related or not.

Great, Great Grandpa John Thomas Anderson, born about 1865, originally moving from Clinton or Russell County, Kentucky, married Sallie Adkins and later Lassie Lowe and settled in Smoky Junction at what was later called Anderson Crossing. Tom's gun, from the deputy days is still in the family with notches on the handle, not sure how many. John Thomas Anderson's son, my Great Grandpa Wiley owned land in Smoky Junction, Tennessee, including a coal chute on his property that was rented to the Peabody Coal Company. Wiley kept the local graveyard orderly and worked in the coal mines early in life. He suffered from black lung in his seventies but lived several more wonderful years. Most of the family land in Smoky Junction was sold to the coal companies and is no longer the same. Progress?

I remember taking my banjo to Great Grandpa Wiley Anderson's house and sitting on the front porch picking. There was another house up on the hill and I was told they were Lowe cousins, I never actually met them, but we exchanged musical licks, echoing through the holler. It was literally a "Deliverance"-like experience. I also remember walking up the steep, rocky driveway to Great Grandpa Wiley's with Great Grandma Belle "Lowe" Anderson to the dirt road winding up through Smoky Junction and meeting a traveling General Store truck (the rolling store). Grandma bought necessities to make our incredible meals with. I have been told that there is a monument to Michael "Grand Mickey" Low up the road past Smoky Junction in the Appalachians. It takes a four-wheeler and hiking to get to the top of the mountain where it stands, marking the spot of the cabin. Grand Mickey was the first white man to settle in that part of the country in the 1700's. He moved to Scott County from Pennsylvania. He is my 6th Great Grandfather.