

1. TV Coverage was very helpful to us. Our website visits went from 3-4/day to 124 in three days. We received a surprise \$1000 grant from the Caplin Foundation and signed up 5 new Friends.

2. Esmont History – our Historian, Andi Cumbo-Floyd, is still in the research mode, plans to start writing in March. Hope to be done in June. Please let us know if you have any information you think should go into the history. She plans to organize the history in sections: Buildings, which will include the plantation homes; Stores, as there were so many of them at the time; Schools and Commercial. People will be written into each of the sections rather than separated out.

When the history is completed, the plan is to have a mural type painting done depicting various components of the history so that painting can be hung in the future Esmont Museum. It can also be made into posters which can be sold for all to enjoy. In the attachment is a picture of a mural done for Culpeper, VA. It hangs in the hall of their museum protected by plexiglass cases.

3. Garth Groff who wrote the booklet, **Soapstone Shortlines** (which is on our website), has given us the entire manuscript which contains much more information than the booklet. Andi will pull from that information in the Esmont History.

Garth also provided us with me several photographs from his collection to possibly use in the history book, some of them are included in the attachment. My favorite is the picture of the Blue Ridge Slate Company in action with the train. This is the Esmont plant and is the view the village residents could see from Esmont road. There is also a good picture of Esmont village included.

4. Esmont West postmark – Alec Pendaleon, a Friend of Esmont who lives in upstate NY, sent us a copy of an envelope he saw for sale online bearing a West Esmont postmark. So far, no one can tell us where that post office was. If anyone

knows anything about this, please let me know. We want to buy the envelope when the price goes down. We have asked them to donate it to us. Copy of the envelope is in the attachment.

5. Trail - Esmont Alberene Quarry Line Trail – mapping will be done July and August, paid for by the BAMA Works Grant we received in December. Meanwhile we have decided to extend the trail to Simpson Park on Porters Road. A map showing how this could work is in the attachment. Follow the orange line. The yellow line would also work but has a large number of property owners who would have to agree. Hopefully, we can work this out.

6. Esmont Depot – we may design the area as memorial rather than rebuild the depot, depending on our ability to gain ownership of the Purvis Store property. We will need input from community on what the memorial should look like. The Friends board would like to see, at a minimum: (1) The Cedar Tree will remaining to restart Christmas celebrations (2) State Marker containing a brief depot history (3) Use of railroad ties in some way, symbolic of lumber industry at that location and (4) Engine/caboose that went through Esmont either at Depot or across from Purvis Store Market. A picture of the depot, the train, and a stock of railroad ties is in the attachment.

7. Purvis Store Market property – Rod Coles, the owner, has suggested he is interested in making us a proposal. Will get back to me before end of February. If a deal can be made, the outbuilding will be used as Trailhead. Preservation folks are very interested in us getting this property as it both structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing resources in the Southern Albemarle Rural Historic District document. The Friends Board would like to see the following as a minimum: (1) Design of building would house The Esmont Museum and Visitor Center (2) a caretaker's apartment (3) Grocery Store.

A lot of community input will be requested for the use of the property; a fundraising program will be needed.

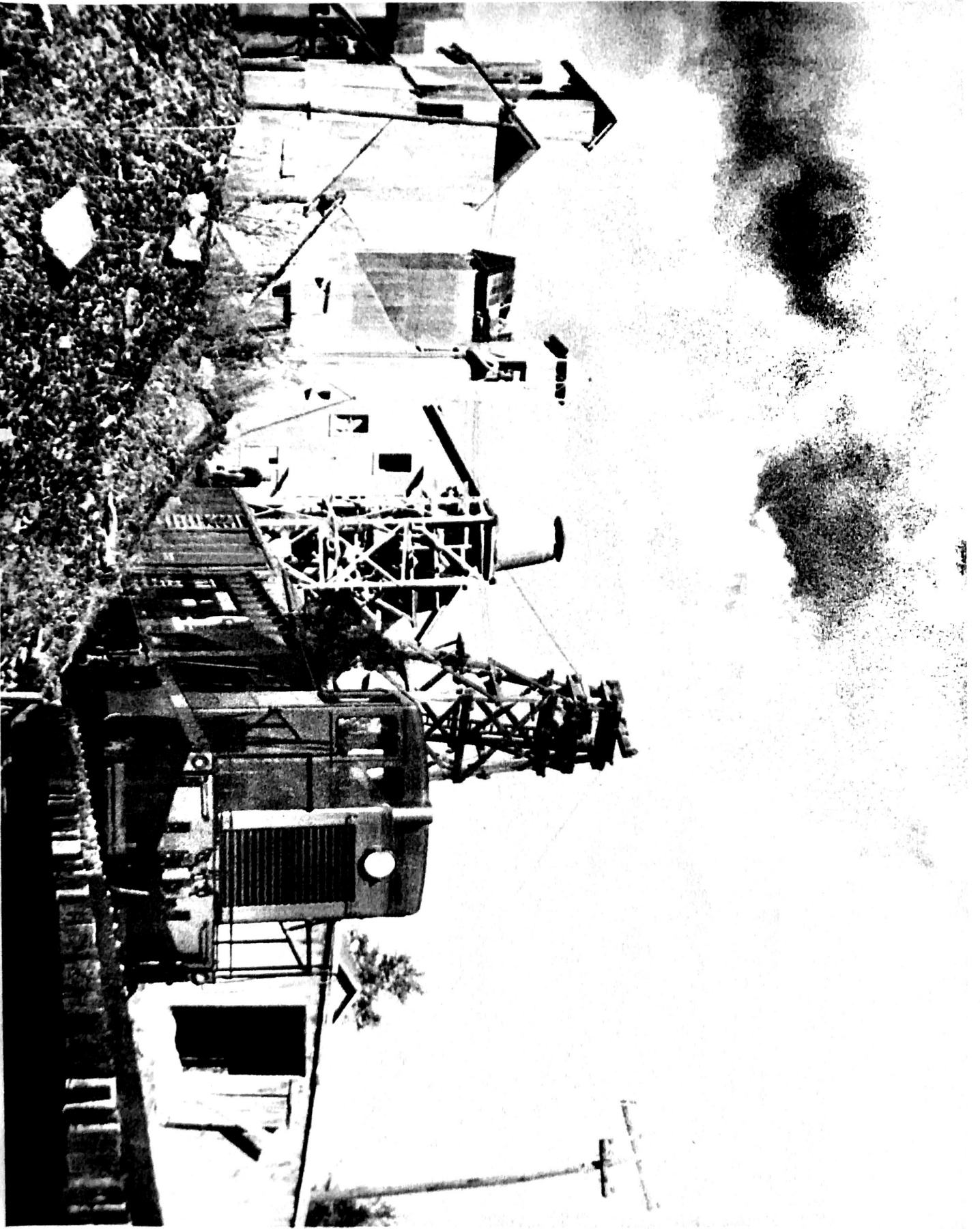


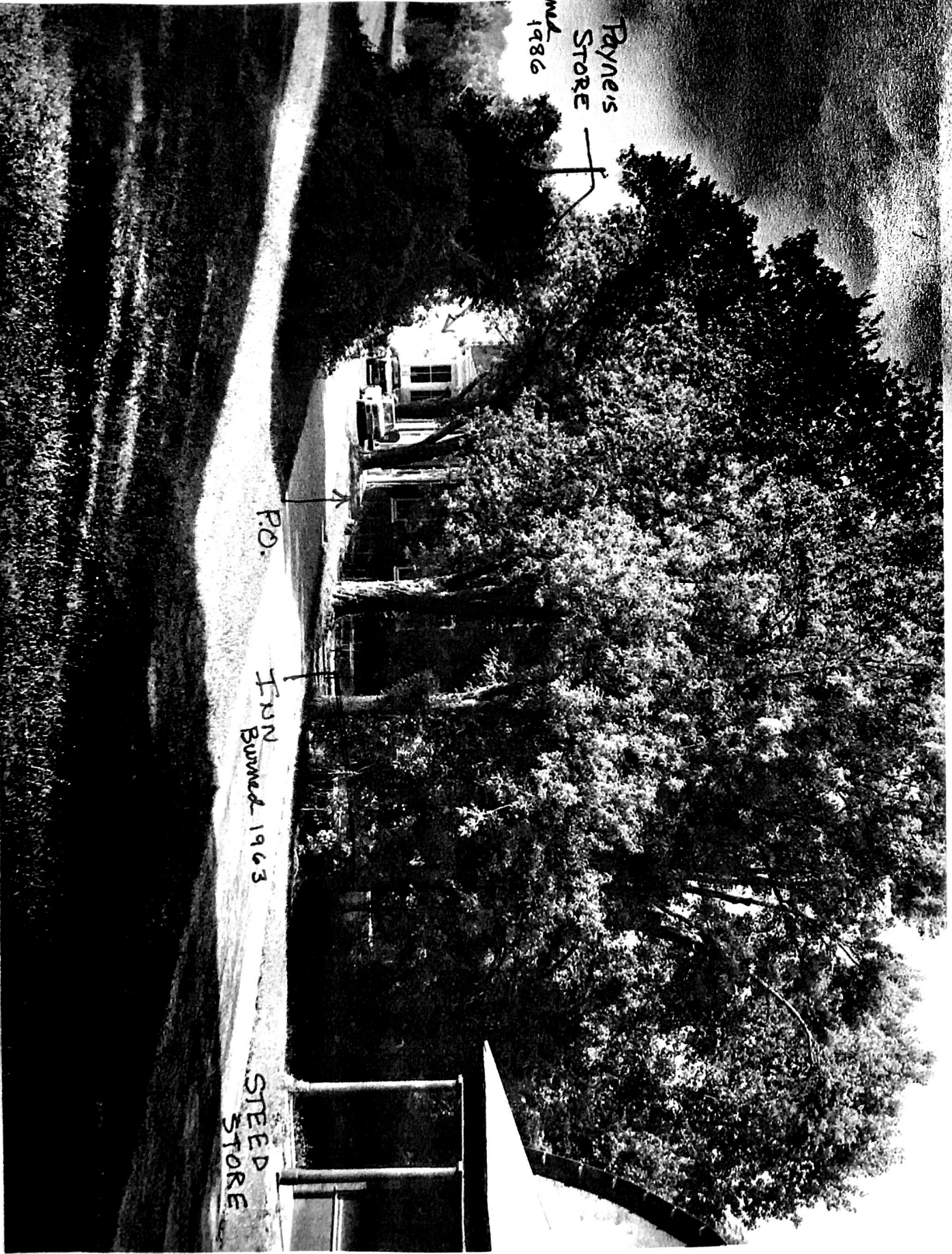
Culpeper



North Knott / Charles Donnell

Esment Blue Ridge State





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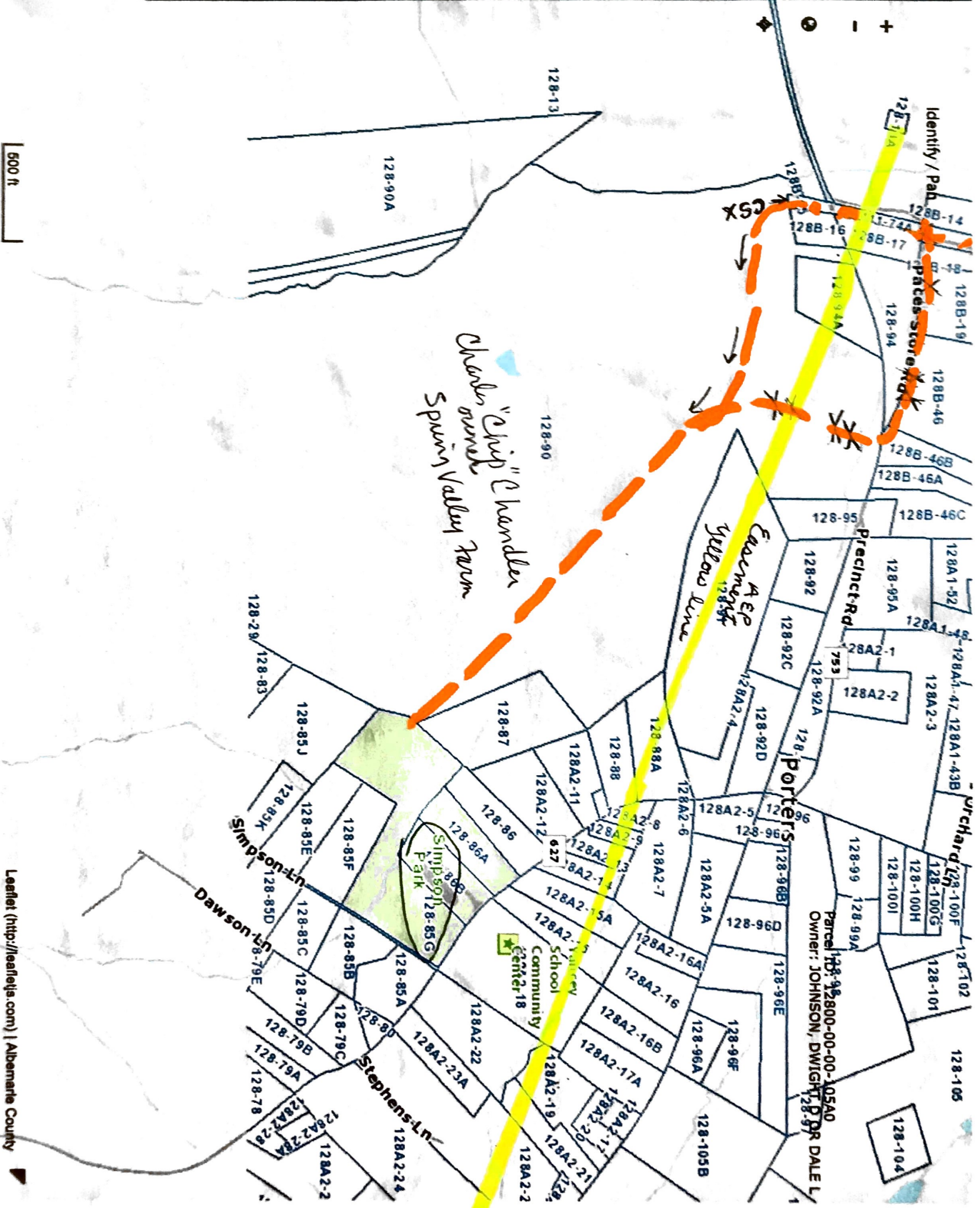
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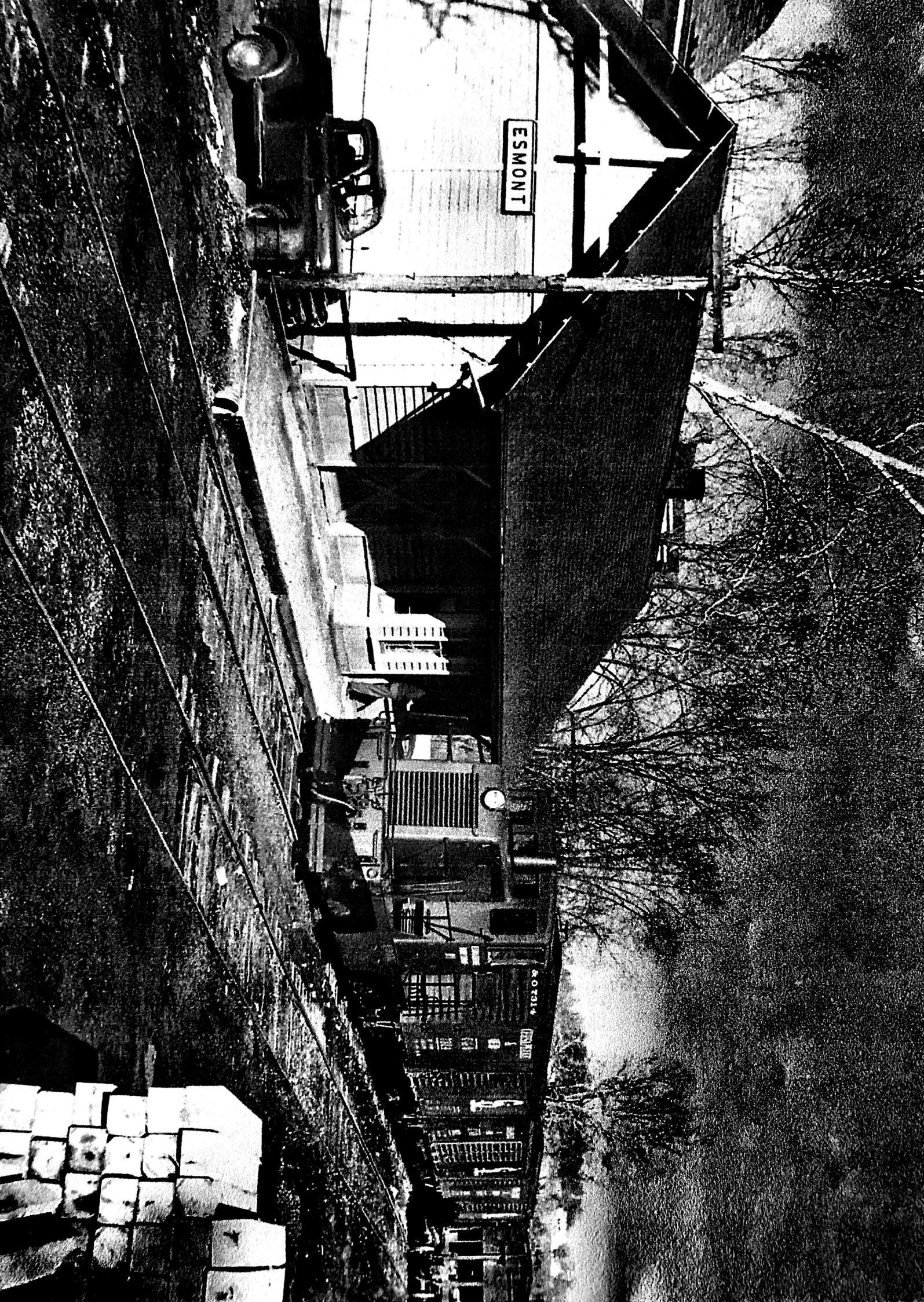
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