

POINSETT BRIDGE

A Historic Context and Archaeological Survey

GREENVILLE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



Poinsett Bridge:
A Historic Context and Archaeological Survey,
Greenville County, South Carolina

Report submitted to:
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ABSTRACT

Poinsett Bridge, located in Greenville County, South Carolina, is the oldest surviving bridge in the state and may be the oldest in the southeastern United States. Constructed of stone in 1820, Poinsett Bridge was one of the first completed elements of the State Road, which would ultimately connect Charleston to Columbia and South Carolina to western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. While Poinsett Bridge's date of construction is known, recorded in the key stone of the Gothic arch which forms the passage for Little Gap Creek, less is known about its history and architect. This report provides a historic overview of the bridge, its role in the State Road and later transportation, and the men associated with its building. This research suggests that the bridge may have been designed by noted architect and South Carolinian Robert Mills, although an absolute attribution to Mills cannot be made as the architectural plans for the bridge have apparently not survived. Due to the details of its construction, the bridge was almost certainly designed by an architect and hence is likely to be the work of Mills or his predecessor with the South Carolina Board of Public Works, William Jay.

Archaeological survey of the land immediately associated with Poinsett Bridge was also completed as part of this project. This survey identified intact segments of the State Road as well as a stone culvert which have been incorporated into the archaeological site form for Poinsett Bridge. Also identified by this survey were the wooden remains of another, later bridge. This report provides the history of Poinsett Bridge, and the archaeological findings, and discusses interpretive elements of the site which can be incorporated into the future presentation of the bridge as a heritage preserve. It is also recommended that the existing National Register eligible boundary be revised to include additional elements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A significant amount of historical research on the Poinsett Bridge has already been accomplished by area historian Anne McCuen. Chair of the Committee for the Preservation of the Poinsett Bridge, which led to the current efforts to preserve, stabilize, and interpret this important piece of South Carolina's history, Ms. McCuen graciously allowed New South Associates' access to her files, which included a chain-of-title of the Poinsett Bridge property as well as various articles and publications concerning the bridge. We are indebted to her for providing us with the use of these materials, and recognize Ms. McCuen as the spiritual co-author of the Poinsett Bridge history presented herein.

Elsewhere, the staffs of the South Caroliniana Library, the South Carolina State Library, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, the Greenville County Library, and the Tulane University Library are all thanked for the assistance they provided during our research. Historian John Bryan, biographer of Robert Mills, is thanked for answering our questions about Robert Mills' association with Poinsett Bridge. Wayne Roberts, Chief Archaeologist for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, is thanked for sharing his knowledge of regional resources and in particular for introducing us to Ms. McCuen. Area resident Wesley Breedlove provided information on archaeological sites in the project area, including the location of a stone culvert associated with the State Road, and his assistance and interest in the project are gratefully acknowledged.

The Poinsett Bridge project was overseen by Chris Judge of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Heritage Trust Program. Chris's interest in the project, knowledge of source materials, and patience were all greatly appreciated and we hope that the resulting study goes some of the distance as an expression of thanks.

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I. INTRODUCTION

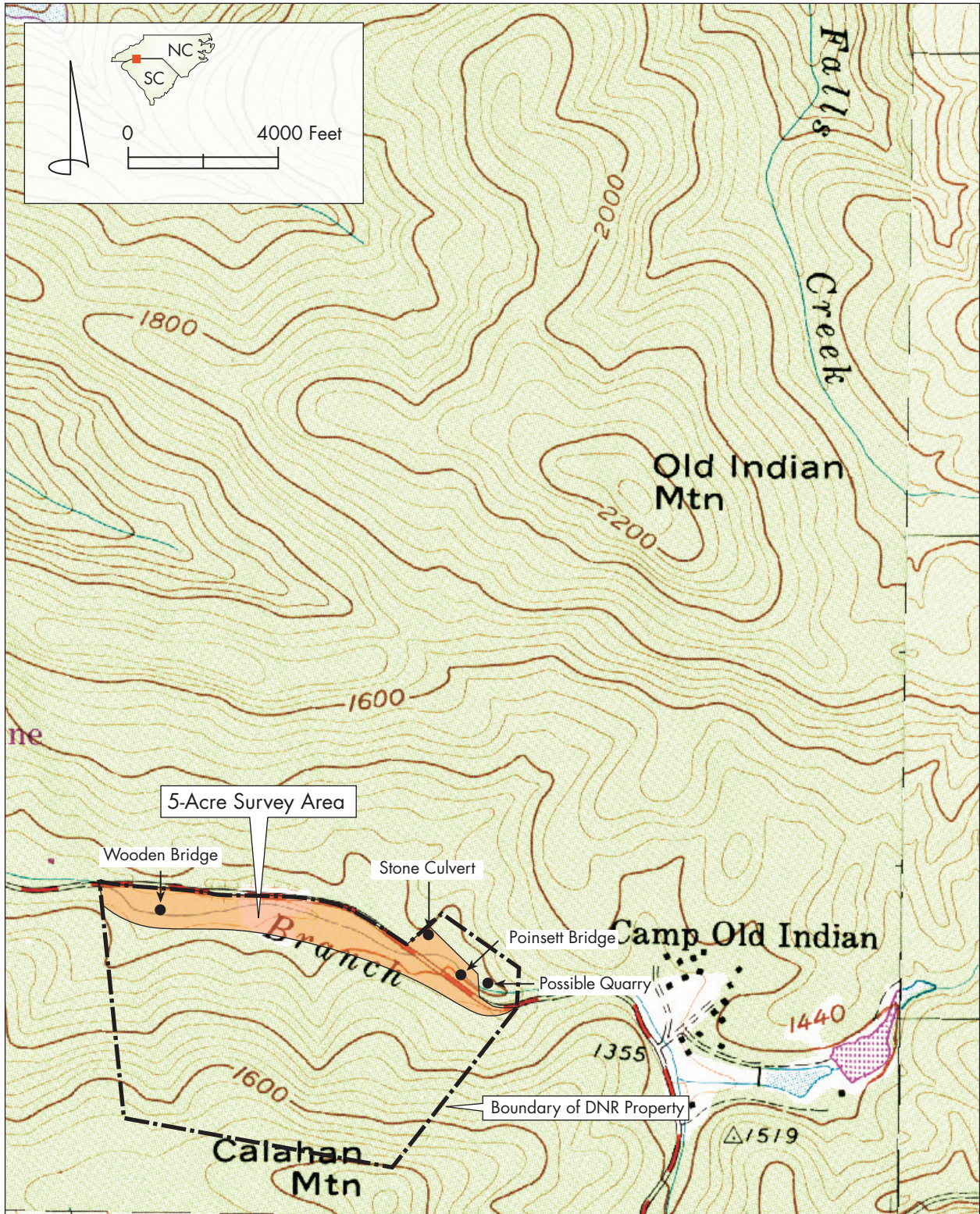
Poinsett Bridge spans Little Gap Creek, a small tributary of the North Fork of the Saluda River, also known as the North Saluda River. The bridge is about 4.5 miles northwest of the intersection of US Route 25 and State Route 11, and is located immediately north of County Road 42, often known locally as Dividing Water Road (Figure 1). It has a distinctive Gothic or pointed arch, and it was one of three bridges constructed along the Saluda Mountain Road in 1820 as part of the construction of the State Road. Today it is the only one of the three still extant. Little Gap Creek flows basically from east to west, and the bridge crosses the stream roughly north and south.

Up until the 1950s, this portion of the Saluda Mountain Road (including the bridge) was a common property line. As a result, for many years the bridge has been split right down the middle between two property owners (Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004). In recent years, the two owners have been the Boy Scouts of America, Blue Ridge Council, on the east and north sides, and Jack Parkhurst of Cary, North Carolina, on the west and south (Hyndman 2002; Greenville, South Carolina, Realty Atlas 2003; see Appendix A for the chain-of-title for the bridge).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in preserving the bridge. One of the first bodies created to do that was the Commission for the Preservation of the Poinsett Bridge, chaired by local historian Anne McCuen. Formed in 2000 and dissolved two years later, the commission was appointed by the Greenville County Council. The commission was instrumental in gathering information about the bridge, and in convincing the Heritage Trust Program of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR-HTP) to assume the task of protecting the bridge (Hyndman 2002; Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004). In 2002, the South Carolina Department of Transportation awarded funds to Greenville County for further study of the bridge and its eventual stabilization (Hyndman 2002). In 2003, the Parkhurst Tract was acquired by the SCDNR-HTP to develop a heritage preserve for the bridge and the immediate area (Zacher 2003; 2004). Similar arrangements were made with the Boy Scouts to acquire land on their side of the bridge. At present, the preserve contains 122 acres, and, in addition to the bridge and adjacent road bed, will include a number of proposed improvements, such as trails, viewing decks, and information kiosks. In December of 2003, a Phase I archaeological project was conducted on a five-acre area around the bridge to determine the presence or absence of significant cultural resources. At that time, it was determined that stone culverts and a possible quarry site were associated with the bridge and the roadbed, and those results are discussed herein.

The creation of a heritage preserve has only highlighted the importance of Poinsett Bridge to both local and state history. The bridge has been a noted historic landmark since at least the 1920s, and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1970. At that time, it was noted that the bridge, one of the oldest in the state, was named in honor of Joel R. Poinsett. Poinsett, a prominent South Carolina politician and diplomat, was also president of the state's Board of Public Works in the late 1810s and early 1820s. Other prominent persons associated with the bridge were Abram Blanding and Robert Mills. The

Figure 1
Project Location Map



Source: USGS Topographic Quadrangle; Zirconia, NC and SC.

NRHP form noted that Mills executed a brush and pen drawing of the bridge that is currently located in Tulane University's Special Collections. Mills was considered the most likely candidate for the designer of the bridge (Schuette 1970). In addition, South Carolina Department of Archives and History staff member H. Thomas Shaw recorded Poinsett Bridge in 1988 for the Historic American Engineering Record with large format photography by Jack Boucher (Appendix C). No measured drawings were completed for the study that was given Record Number SC-14 in the Library of Congress collection.

Poinsett Bridge is also featured in Donald Jackson's *Great American Bridges and Dams* (1988). According to this source, the bridge was constructed by the South Carolina Board of Public Works, headed by Joel Poinsett, and was possibly designed by Robert Mills, thought to have been serving as state architect and engineer at the time of construction. It is also believed to be the oldest surviving bridge, not just in South Carolina, but in the entire southeastern United States (Jackson 1988:184).

A number of years ago, the Nathaniel Greene Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a stone marker on the south side of the bridge that reads, "This bridge on the state road from Greenville to Asheville was built in 1820 by Abram Blanding, Acting Commissioner, Board of Public Works, Joel R. Poinsett, President." Not mentioned on the marker is Robert Mills, perhaps because it has been difficult to determine his exact relationship to the bridge. It is one of the main research agendas of this project to try and determine just what that relationship was.

The SCDNR-HTP has recently acquired the Poinsett Bridge and is in the process of completing engineering assessments to stabilize the bridge for interpretation as well as developing interpretive plans for the area immediately surrounding the bridge. As a result of those plans, the SCDNR-HTP contracted with New South Associates, Inc. (NSA) to develop a historical context of the bridge and conduct an archaeological survey of the surrounding lands. The archaeological survey area consists of tracts adjacent to Poinsett Bridge and along associated historic road segments in Greenville County. This 5-acre survey area excludes portions of the larger 122-acre parcel acquired by the SCDNR-HTP, most of which is steeply sloping uplands. As indicated by Mr. Christopher Judge of SCDNR-HTP, areas included in the survey are those that will or might be affected by upgrades to the property designed to enhance its accessibility and usefulness to visitors.

This report presents the results of these investigations, and is divided into four chapters. Chapter I is the introduction to the project and report. Chapter II presents the history of the bridge and also discusses the sources consulted in developing this history. Chapter III presents the archaeological methods and findings. Chapter IV provides summary conclusions and offers recommendations for the interpretive display of the bridge. The historical research was conducted and authored by Mark Swanson. Brad Botwick completed and wrote the results of the archaeological survey. Mary Beth Reed served as the project's Principal Investigator. Dr. J.W. Joseph served as Project Manager and the author of Chapter IV. Graphics presented in this report were developed by Tracey Fedor. Report editing was provided by Dr. Joseph and Ms. Reed.

II. A HISTORY OF THE POINSETT BRIDGE

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This chapter covers the history of the bridge and its place in the history of South Carolina and the region. It will also document the lives of those believed to be responsible for the design and construction of the bridge. Three men are generally associated with this work: Joel R. Poinsett, for whom the bridge is named; Abram Blanding, associated with the construction of the bridge; and Robert Mills, who is commonly supposed to have supplied the design. All three men, and their contributions, will be the subject of further analysis and description.

To help determine the relationship of Abram Blanding, Joel Poinsett, and Robert Mills to the Poinsett Bridge, the research efforts for this project have been directed toward a number of different sources. Anne McCuen provided most of the chain-of-title information, and many of the maps pertinent to the project area. Her information on the first property owner of the bridge, John Hodges, was extremely valuable. The rest of the chain-of-title, essential to the creation of the preserve but rather peripheral to our story, is presented in an appendix to this report (see Appendix A).

Another important source of information were the papers of the Board of Public Works (sometimes given as the Department of Public Works), housed at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Most of the 12 categories of items in this collection were physically examined, with the exception of a couple that were clearly too late to contain information about the construction of the bridge. Even though there was more information on contemporary canal work than there was on the construction of the state road, there was still a great amount of information about the road and its construction. This information clearly indicated that Abram Blanding, not Joel Poinsett, was in charge of the day-to-day construction of the Saluda Mountain Road, including the three bridges that were part of that road.

Much more difficult to pin down was the role of Robert Mills, believed by many to have been the designer of the bridge. In order to help determine the connection, examination was made of various Robert Mills collections in the Southeast. Mills, a native son of South Carolina and later famous as the designer of the Washington Monument, was not only the nation's first American-born professional architect, but was an engineer as well. His interests spanned many topics, and he was prominent in his own day as well as in ours. His papers have been collected in a number of places.

One such collection, in the South Carolina State Library, was compiled in 1980 by the South Carolina Historical Society. Preserved in microform, this collection contained all known Mills manuscripts preserved by his descendents. No information about the bridge was found in these materials. A much larger collection of Mills papers was organized in 1984 by Robert Alexander, John Bryan, Pamela Scott, and Douglas Evelyn, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institute. A microfilm copy of this collection is on file at the South Caroliniana Library, and comes with a comprehensive guide and index (Scott 1990). Even though there were a few sketches of bridges in this collection, they were clearly not associated with the Saluda Mountain Road.

Last but not least was the Mills Collection at the Southeastern Architectural Archive, housed at Tulane University's Special Collections. As part of this project, a trip was made to New Orleans to view these materials, which included letters, notebooks, and around 20 different sketches that Mills made along the Saluda Mountain Road in the fall of 1821. The Tulane collection proved to be the most productive of the three for this project, resulting in the recovery of sketches of the Poinsett Bridge, the bridge over the North Saluda River, and other views of the area. None, however, produced direct evidence that Mills designed the Poinsett Bridge, even though, for reasons that will be explained below, it would seem likely that he did so.

In order to follow the development of the Poinsett Bridge and the Saluda Mountain Road, we have put together a bulleted chronology of the events discussed in greater detail in the body of the report. Among the highlights of both the chronology and the report are the events that led to the creation of the South Carolina Board of Public Works in the late 1810s; the work of the board in constructing the Saluda Mountain Road; the involvement of Robert Mills and others; and the slow decline of the state road and other "internal improvements" that occurred in the wake of the Nullification Controversy.

Table 1. Basic Chronology of Poinsett Bridge and Saluda Mountain Road

1794-97	First formal road over Saluda Gap.
1807	Petitions to improve road over Saluda Gap.
1812-1815	War of 1812. American control of Southeastern territories secured. Westward expansion continues. South Carolina becomes interested in improving the state's transportation system ("internal improvements") to maintain connections with the West.
1817	Robert Mills, prominent architect and native son of South Carolina, visited Charleston and sought government position back in his home state, apparently without success. Mills was then a resident of Baltimore. Mills then became involved in a Baltimore housing project that turned into a financial disaster (1817-19).
1817 Dec.	South Carolina legislature created Office of Civil and Military Engineer to begin program of internal improvements.
1818 early	John L. Wilson appointed Civil and Military Engineer.
1818	Wilson recommends road to connect Charleston and upland South Carolina. One of the first ideas of a state road with connections to western North Carolina and Tennessee.
1818 Dec.	Legislature appropriated \$1 million for internal improvements, to be spread out evenly over four years. Work would entail construction of roads, canals, and public buildings.
1819 Dec.	Wilson dismissed as Civil and Military Engineer. Office of Civil and Military Engineer abolished, replaced by Board of Public Works, with five members: Abram Blanding, Thomas Baker, Joel Poinsett, William Jay, and Robert G. Mills—no relation to architect Robert Mills. Poinsett was president of the board (1819-21).
1820 Jan.	Board of Public Works organized. William Jay worked up standard plans for courthouses and jails. Poinsett sought skilled laborers from North, including stone masons, for work on canals and roads.
1820 Jan.-Apr.	Skilled workers arrived in Charleston; began work on canals, roads in lowcountry.

- 1820 May-June Abram Blanding reconnoitered route for Saluda Mountain Road.
- 1820 June Advertisements placed for local labor on the Saluda Mountain Road.
- 1820 July 9 Poinsett arrived at Saluda Mountain, probably for reconnaissance trip. By the end of that month, he was already out of the area. According to his diary, he never returned to Saluda Mountain during the bridge construction period.
- 1820 July Workers shifted from lowcountry to mountains to begin work on Saluda Mountain Road.
- 1820 July 17 Work formally began on Saluda Mountain Road, including the road's three bridges: over Little Gap Creek (later known as Poinsett Bridge), North Saluda River, and Hodge's Creek.
- 1820 July-Oct. Construction of Saluda Mountain Road and bridges. Abram Blanding supervisor.
- 1820 Oct. Work on the Saluda Mountain Road neared completion. One-third of work force dismissed on the 15th; another third on the 22nd. By the 28th, there was only a small crew left to finish the North Saluda River bridge.
- 1820 Oct. 30 Architect Robert Mills decided to leave Baltimore due to financial problems and lack of work.
- 1820 Nov. 1 Collection of tolls began on Saluda Mountain Road. Col. Marony was first toll gate keeper.
- 1820 Nov. Blanding submitted progress report to the legislature.
- 1820 Dec. 20 Legislature appointed new Board of Public Works. Most previous members remained. Architect William Jay replaced by architect Robert Mills. Mills, still in Baltimore at the time, quickly moved to South Carolina. Mills and Blanding were the only paid members of the board: Mills served as superintendent of public buildings; Blanding, as superintendent of public works.
- 1821 early Mills began work in South Carolina, where he replaced or modified Jay's work.
- 1821 Sept. Mills's trip to Saluda Mountain Road, where he sketched two of the bridges.
- 1822 Dec. 31 Legislature abolished Board of Public Works. Existing projects split between the two paid members of the former board, or acting commissioners: Blanding and Mills. Blanding would serve as superintendent of public works until 1827.
- 1823 Dec. 31 Mills lost position as superintendent of public buildings to Roderick Evander McIver. For the next year, Mills operated as consultant to McIver and began his career as private architect in South Carolina.
- 1824 Dec. McIver's position, superintendent of public buildings, abolished by legislature
- 1825 Mills published *Atlas of the State of South Carolina*.
- 1826 Mills published *Statistics of South Carolina*.
- mid-late 1820s Completion of state road; road connected to western North Carolina and Tennessee. Decline of South Carolina's public works program. Rise of Nullification Controversy.

1830	Mills moved back to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Later became a federal architect (1836-53) and was responsible for the initial design of the Washington Monument. Died in 1855.
1830s-1850s	Decline in state road revenues. State turns toll collection over to Greenville District. Sale of state lands along the road in 1844. In later years, the main traffic was lowcountry planters going to summer retreats in the mountains.
1910-12	Partial collapse of the North Saluda River bridge.
1914-16	First alterations to the route of the Saluda Mountain Road, due to automobile traffic.
1920s	Boy Scout camp established near "Poinsett Bridge."
1955-56	Poinsett Bridge abandoned with realignment of County Road 42.
Late 1950s- early 1960s	North Saluda Reservoir established; two bridge sites lost. Poinsett Bridge remained as the only survivor.

LOCAL GEOGRAPHY

The Poinsett Bridge is located almost due north of Greenville, South Carolina, just four or five miles from the North Carolina line. This area is also located in the Blue Ridge Mountain physiographic province of South Carolina, a rather small portion of the state located in the extreme northwest corner, adjacent to western North Carolina and northeastern Georgia. This is the only mountainous part of the state, with elevations ranging from 1100 to just over 3000 feet above sea level.

A portion of the South Carolina border, in the northwest corner of Greenville County, lies along the Blue Ridge itself, which forms the Eastern Continental Divide, separating waters that flow to the East Coast from those that flow to the Mississippi River. The Blue Ridge, however, leaves the South Carolina border in the vicinity of Jones Gap and continues northwestward into North Carolina. Flat Rock, for example, about five miles north of the South Carolina line, is located on the Blue Ridge. After Jones Gap, the South Carolina-North Carolina border still follows a ridge line for another 17 miles before it veers eastward in a straight line to form the state's northern boundary. This ridge is generally known as Saluda Mountain. Waters north of this ridge flow into the Green River or the North Pacolet River, both of which eventually find their way into the Broad River. Waters south of Saluda Mountain form the Middle Saluda and the North Saluda rivers. These eventually form the Saluda River, which also flows into the Broad much further to the south to form the Congaree River at Columbia (Kovacik and Winberry 1987:26-27). Even though Saluda Mountain is a dividing ridge, it is crossed by a number of gaps, and these have been used ever since people have settled in the area.

South of the Blue Ridge and Saluda Mountain are a number of isolated mountains or peaks, known as monadnocks (Huff 1995:1-2). Some of the highest of these in South Carolina are located in the project area. These include the peaks known as Glassy Mountain (2760 ft.) and Hogback Mountain (3240 ft.). Waters on the north and west sides of this monadnock flow into the North Saluda. Waters to the east and south flow into the South Pacolet or into the Middle or South Tyger rivers. The stream that is spanned by Poinsett Bridge drains the west side of Glassy Mountain. The stream then continues westward, between

Old Indian Mountain (2280 ft.) to the north and Callahan Mountain (1880 ft.) to the south. The Poinsett Bridge is located in the area between these two peaks, about one-third of a mile north of Callahan Mountain.

The stream that flows under Poinsett Bridge is now called Callahan Branch, at least on modern topographic maps. The name came from Gresham Callahan, whose family owned much of the land on both sides of the stream in the later 1800s (McCuen 2000:18). In earlier years it was often called Gap Creek, but it should be called Little Gap Creek. This was the name favored on the earliest maps, and it distinguishes this stream from another, much larger, Gap Creek located further west. The larger Gap Creek, one of the tributaries of the Middle Saluda River, would later be prominent as one of the ways across the Saluda Mountain ridge. Little Gap Creek, a much smaller stream, flows westward into the North Saluda River.

In 1820, the Saluda Mountain Road was selected as the best way to get across the South Carolina mountains into western North Carolina. Approaching the mountains from the south, the route went east of Callahan Mountain and then turned west, down the south side of Little Gap Creek to the Poinsett Bridge. The road then continued on the north side of the creek to the North Saluda, which was crossed by another bridge. The route then continued northward, crossing yet another stream by means of a third bridge. As the road approached the North Carolina line, the route veered westward, across the Saluda Gap, located between Vance Mountain (2440 ft.) to the north, and Corbin Mountain (or Posey Mountain) (3025 ft.) to the south. Poinsett Bridge is all that is left of the three bridges that united the Saluda Mountain Road. The other two bridge sites have been obscured by the North Saluda Reservoir, part of the Greenville Watershed Program put in place in the 1950s and 1960s.

EARLY HISTORY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY AREA

When Charleston was founded, in 1670, the mountains of the Carolinas, Georgia, and Tennessee were home to the Cherokee. Within a few decades, British traders were in direct contact with this group, valued for their access to furs and deerskins (Huff 1995:7; Richardson 1930:23). By the time of British contact, the Cherokee people were divided into broad geographic categories. The "Lower Towns" were located in what is now northwest South Carolina and northeast Georgia; the "Middle Towns" were in western North Carolina; while the "Overhill Towns" were in east Tennessee. In South Carolina, the Cherokee Lower Towns were situated west of what is now Greenville County, in modern Oconee and Pickens counties. The area of Greenville County was part of the Cherokee hunting grounds, which extended east to the Broad River. Even in those days, there were trails that coursed over the mountains, probably based on even earlier animal trails, blazed by deer and buffalo. There was an Indian trail over the Saluda Gap, even though the path does not appear on any of the early maps (Huff 1995:3-7).

The British began to pay more serious attention to the Cherokee in the early 1700s, after the Yemassee War and after the French established themselves in the Mississippi Valley. In the tug of war between the French and British, the Cherokee generally sided with the British, but had cause to regret the choice as British settlers began to encroach on their lands, beginning in the 1740s. The first formal treaty between the British and Cherokee was signed in 1753, and ceded much of the northwest third of South Carolina to the British. It also permitted the British to construct forts on Cherokee lands. After 1753, the only part of South Carolina that still belonged to the Cherokee was what is now Anderson, Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee counties, the northwest extreme of the state (Huff 1995:8-9; Richardson 1930:24-26).

The Cherokee initially fought with the British in the French and Indian War (1754-1763), but a conflict with local white settlers triggered a war between the British and Cherokee in 1760-61. The Cherokee were eventually defeated (Huff 1995:19; Richardson 1930:28-29). Even though the status quo was restored, the Cherokee were now even less able to fend off the white influx, which became a wave in the 1760s. This was the great Southward Migration along the foothills of the Appalachians, a migration of Scots-Irish and German settlers that began in Pennsylvania and emptied into the Carolina and Georgia Piedmont (Richardson 1930:25-26; Cooper 2000:15).

This migration into the backcountry of South Carolina led to demands for new administrative districts that would bring law and order to the region. As a result, Ninety-Six District was created in 1769. The fort and settlement at Ninety-Six was established near the Saluda River in what is now Greenwood County (Huff 1995:20; Edgar 1998:232). Some settlers also moved into the Cherokee lands as well, and one of the first to do so was Richard Pearis (Paris), who settled on the banks of the Reedy River, near what is now Greenville, in 1768. There he built a grist mill and a trading post, and legitimized his land holdings, almost 10 square miles, through an illegal land grant obtained directly from the Cherokee. Paris Mountain, a monadnock just north of Greenville, still bears his name. Most settlers, however, stayed out of the area until the early years of the American Revolution (Huff 1995:14-15; Cooper 2000:15).

The early years of the Revolution saw fighting in the area of Greenville County. In 1775, there was conflict between Patriots and Loyalists, and the following year, between Patriots on the one hand, and Cherokee and Loyalists on the other (Richardson 1930:40-41). The outnumbered Loyalists were either cowed or forced to flee, while the Cherokee had to cede more land. In 1777, they relinquished any claim to the rest of South Carolina, even though settlers only began to move into the area in great numbers after the war. Beginning in 1784, veterans of the Continental service were given bounty grants of 200 acres each; these bounty grants would effect over 6000 acres in Greenville County. Others received title to the land through state grants. In one form or another, almost all land in what is now Greenville County was originally parceled out by the state (Huff 1995:36-39; Richardson 1930: introduction; Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004). Within the project area, some of the earliest settlers to the area around Glassy and Hogback mountains were the families of Gowen, Howard, Fisher, and Dill (Huff 1995:18).

In 1785, Ninety-Six District, which had inherited the 1777 Cherokee cession, was split into six new counties. The following year, in 1786, Greenville County was formally created between Spartanburg and Laurens counties (South Carolina's administrative units were usually referred to as "counties" until 1800, after which they were called "districts"; they were again called counties after 1868). Greenville County was probably named in honor of Revolutionary War hero Nathaniel Greene, not, as Robert Mills would later assert, because of the area's green appearance. Regardless of the name's origin, the area grew quickly, and by 1790, Greenville County had a population of 6503. Most of these were white (5888). The rest (615) were black, and most of these were enslaved (Huff 1995:1, 40-43, 47-48).

By the early 1800s, Greenville County, with the seat of government at the town of Greenville, was taking on a settled appearance, and this was true even in the mountains. Unlike most of South Carolina, however, Greenville County was not yet a servant of King Cotton, at least not before the Civil War. Local agriculture remained diversified, with a considerable emphasis on wheat and corn, as well as some tobacco. This contributed to the development of wagon roads, most of which went east and west, rather than north, over the mountains (Huff 1995:43-44, 62-63). Even though there was an increasing demand for mountain roads, such routes remained little better than trails and were an effective impediment to any serious commercial interaction between South Carolina and its western neighbors.

GROWING INTEREST IN INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS

As early as the 1790s, it was proposed that a road be constructed from the North Fork of the Saluda River, over the mountains into North Carolina, to help connect the local area with the settlements then being opened in east Tennessee. The South Carolina legislature collected \$2000 for the construction of this road and stipulated that it had to be wide enough for four horses to pull a wagonload of one ton. Elias Earle and John William Gowen completed the road between 1794 and 1797. It initially connected Greenville and Asheville, but was eventually extended to Knoxville. This road went through the Saluda Gap, but was so narrow that two wagons could not pass each other at the same time. There were also precipitous drops of 100 feet right off the edge of the road (Huff 1995:63-64).

As early as 1807, there were petitions to the state legislature to improve the Saluda Gap Road, parts of which were so bad that travelers had to hire locals to help pull the wagons. This served to thwart much of the traffic from Tennessee, which tended to go northward, along the Valley of Virginia toward Baltimore and Philadelphia (Batson 2003:preface, 2). Even so, there was some wagon traffic, and a considerable amount of droving, over local mountain roads. Wagon traffic tended to move in caravans of up to 15 or even 20 vehicles. The caravans might make 24 miles a day, and the teamsters camped overnight in the woods. As for the droving, herds of horses, mules, cattle, hogs, and sheep were driven over the roads. There were even flocks of turkeys. The difficulties of all these operations led to increased demands for an improved turnpike over the mountains (Huff 1995:65).

The demand for better mountain roads dovetailed with a rising national interest in better roads and river transportation. This interest became particularly acute in the wake of the War of 1812 (1812-1815). The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 had opened up vast regions of the West to new settlement, but this became a flood only in the wake of the war, which checked the power of the Creek Nation and cemented American control of New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley. A simultaneous development was the steamboat, which greatly improved the efficiency of river transportation. As American settlement expanded into the Mississippi Valley, the older ports along the Atlantic became concerned. This led to the demand for new "internal improvements," such as canals to augment river transportation and roads over the Appalachian Mountains. Charleston was certainly one of the Atlantic ports that feared being left behind, and in the late 1810s powerful South Carolina politicians, including John C. Calhoun, favored the idea of internal improvements to correct the matter. As Calhoun stated at the time, "Let us bind the republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals. Let us conquer space" (Huff 1995:76-82; Bryan 1989:75).

Economically, Charleston had been in relative decline since the late 1700s, largely due to the country's westward expansion. This led to the rise of New Orleans as one of the nation's premier ports. Charleston, which was not even well connected to the river systems of South Carolina, was even less well suited to attract trade from further west. This led to an interest in both a better canal system within South Carolina, as well as a "state road" that would connect Charleston with the West, which began on the other side of the Blue Ridge.

Local interest in canals began as early as the late 1700s. The Santee Canal Company was chartered in 1786 to dig a channel between the Santee and Cooper rivers, a task that was not completed until 1800. A more comprehensive system of roads also began during this period, and much of this development was driven by the spread of cotton, which was grown throughout the uplands of the state after the invention of Eli Whitney's cotton gin (Huff 1995:63; Marsh 1970:8-9).

SOUTH CAROLINA'S PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM AND ITS LEADERS, 1817-1820

After the end of the War of 1812, when cotton could again be sold freely to British factories, the state had a surplus of funds to do even more in the way of internal improvements. Beginning in 1817, the state legislature began to pass programs that specifically included the construction of roads, canals, and public buildings (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1; Marsh 1970:9). In December of 1817, at the urging of Governor Andrew Pickens, the state legislature created the Office of Civil and Military Engineer for the purpose of coordinating the various state programs for internal improvements. The Civil and Military Engineer was to survey the state's rivers, report on the potential for canals and roads, and supervise the construction of public buildings, such as courthouses and jails. The post, to be filled at the discretion of the legislature, would command a salary of \$4000 per year. In early 1818, the legislature appointed John L. Wilson to the post of Civil and Military Engineer (Bryan 1989:75; 2001:151; Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1).

In 1818, one of Wilson's first recommendations called for a road that would better connect Charleston to the state's upland area. Some fifty miles outside the port city, the proposed road would split into three branches: one to Lancaster, one to Saluda Gap, and another to York. The middle branch, to the Saluda Gap, would extend out from Columbia and then along the ridge between the Tyger and the Enoree rivers (Huff 1995:87). Of the three branches, the Saluda Gap road was probably the most important. It would not only connect Charleston with Columbia, but also it would connect the state to western North Carolina and east Tennessee. With this road, Charleston would be in a position to better compete with rival cities like Savannah (Kohn 1938:77, 90).

To act on this and other projects, the legislature appropriated \$1 million dollars for internal improvements in December of 1818, to be spread out into \$250,000 annually for the next four years. This sum was to cover improvements in local watercourses, navigation channels, canals, and turnpikes. The rationale behind all of this was to facilitate the movement of goods to market, especially if the market was in Charleston (Statute 1818, No. 2178). This was the first of a number of different appropriations that were enacted over the next ten years, which in the end totaled some \$1.9 million. This sum was soon spread across a number of public projects that included canals, roads, and a wide range of public buildings (Huff 1995:86; Bryan 2001:149).

John Wilson was a professional engineer and surveyor, not an architect, and he found that managing more than 40 different projects across the state was beyond his abilities. Unable to fulfill his responsibilities, he was dismissed from the office in December of 1819, and the legislature chose not to replace him. Instead, the legislature abolished the post of Civil and Military Engineer, and recreated in its place the "Board of Public Works," with five members (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1; Bryan 1989:75; 2001:151). As originally established, in December of 1819, the five members were Abram Blanding, Thomas Baker, Joel R. Poinsett, William Jay, and Robert G. Mills.

Only two members of the board were paid members, and they were known as "acting commissioners." These two were Abram Blanding, in charge of roads, rivers, and canals, and *de facto* head of the public works program; and Thomas Baker, a contractor in charge of the construction of public buildings. As for the other three, William Jay was an English-born and trained architect who was active in the Charleston and Savannah area from 1817 to 1823. Jay created some of the first designs for the program's courthouses and jails. Robert G. Mills was a contractor, and no relation to the architect Robert Mills, who

would later serve on the board. Joel Poinsett was by far the most prestigious member and served as president of the board. A prominent politician, Poinsett was a strong believer in the goals of the internal improvement movement. Even so, his position appears to have been titular. There is little evidence that Poinsett exercised more than nominal control over the Board of Public Works (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1; Bryan 1989:75; 2001:151).

BACKGROUND ON JOEL POINSETT AND ABRAM BLANDING

Even if his direct involvement was limited, Joel Robert Poinsett (1779-1851) was one of South Carolina's most prominent politicians in the 1810s, and his involvement with the board insured that it had the imprimatur of the highest circles of state government. Born into a wealthy Charleston family in 1779, Poinsett's family moved to England in 1782, returning to South Carolina in 1788. He was schooled in Connecticut and at St. Paul's School in Wandsworth, England. He went on to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh, but was forced to drop out due to poor health. After a stay in Portugal and England, Poinsett returned to Charleston in 1800. For the next 10 years, he divided his time between Charleston and Europe, during which period he met many heads of state, from Napoleon to the Tsar of Russia. Poinsett put his international connections to good use. From 1810 to 1815, he served as special American envoy to Latin America, during which time he engineered commercial treaties with both Argentina and Chile. After that, he returned to South Carolina to serve in the state House of Representatives. As such, he served as a member of the committee on inland navigation (1816-19) and the committee on internal improvements (1817-19), among others. Capitalizing on his interest in internal improvements, he served as the president of the Board of Public Works from 1819 to 1821 (Bailey et al. 1986:1286-1287).

Abraham (Abram) Blanding (1776-1839), one of the two acting commissioners of the Board of Public Works, was in charge of the day-to-day work done on the state's roads, rivers, and canals. Born in Massachusetts and educated at Brown University, Blanding moved to Columbia, South Carolina, around 1797-98. There he taught at the Columbia Male Academy while studying law. Moving to Camden in 1799, Blanding was admitted to the bar in 1802. In the years that followed, he became well known as a businessman, attorney, and public servant. Moving back to Columbia in 1819, he was soon after appointed one of the paid members of the Board of Public Works (Bailey 1984:60-62).

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, EARLY 1820

The Board of Public Works, appointed in December of 1819, had its first organizational meeting in January of 1820. Even with the work split among five members, it is clear that the board had problems with the huge workload they were expected to tackle (Bryan 1989:75). The board hired one of its non-paid members, William Jay, to work up six sets of drawings of courthouses and jails to serve as stock plans. Initial work on a number of county courthouses began on this basis in 1820 (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1). This was the general situation at the Board of Public Works throughout most of 1820, when a tremendous amount of work was begun on both the canals and what was called the "state road" from Charleston to Saluda Gap. It should be noted here, at least in passing, that the architect Robert Mills, later the designer of the Washington Monument, was not yet a member of the Board of Public Works. He was not appointed to that position until December of 1820. In fact, Mills was not even in the state until the end of 1820. Mills' involvement with the state road and the Poinsett Bridge will be discussed a little later in this chapter.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM OF 1820

The Saluda Mountain Road and the Poinsett Bridge were constructed in 1820, but they were only part of an ambitious program to augment transportation, both river and road, throughout the state. Both canal work and roadwork were begun in early 1820, and were continued throughout much of the early 1820s. The entire state road was not finished until later in the 1820s, but the Saluda Mountain Road, that portion of the state road that was located in upper Greenville County, was started and finished in the first year of construction. This is pretty remarkable since work that year began not on the mountain road, but on the canal works in the lower part of the state.

Much of this work, both for the canals and the road, required skilled laborers, including stone masons, which were in short supply in South Carolina. In early 1820, if not before, Poinsett sent out agents to various Northern cities to acquire much of the skilled labor needed for the construction program. In January of 1820, Poinsett wrote to Burn Frankford of Pennsylvania to request the services of 100 stoneworkers. A similar request, for 50 stonemasons, was sent to Jonah Tenny of Boston. All were to book passage for Charleston, and by April of 1820, the laborers began arriving from Philadelphia, Boston, and New York (Batson 2003:9-10). The plan was to employ this mostly white labor force first in the lowlands, where they would work on both canals and parts of the state road. They would then be relocated to the mountains at the onset of the malarial season ("the sickly season"), which usually began in early summer (Kohn 1938:22).

By April, if not before, work began on a number of projects in the lowcountry. One of the first was work on the causeway for the state road through the Huckabuck Swamp, below Columbia. Causeway work began in April with a Mr. Anderson and his white work force. Here, the state road would pass beside the Congaree River on top of an embankment 40 feet wide at the base and 22 feet wide at the top, at an elevation of 7 feet above the river. The embankment was covered with timber, sand or gravel, as available locally. Later, in July, this work force would be removed to the Saluda Mountain Road. Work on the causeway would continue with slave labor under a Col. Myddleton (Blanding 1820; Kohn 1938:47, 76). Another white work party, headed by [Gaius] Kibbe, worked on the canal and locks at Dreher's Falls, on the Saluda River, about 15 miles above Columbia. They too would later be moved to the mountains. By spring, the internal improvements labor force was estimated to have been in excess of 700 men, possibly as high as 1000 (Kohn 1938:67).

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SALUDA MOUNTAIN ROAD

In the records of the Board of Public Works, housed in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, it is clear that much more planning was devoted to the canal projects, than was devoted to the state road. While there are a number of diagrams and plans for the canals and locks constructed in 1820, there is not a single map or plan of the Saluda Mountain Road or any of its three bridges. From notes left by Abram Blanding, it appears that no such plans or surveys were ever conducted for the road (Blanding 1820). This portion of the road, it would appear, was constructed with a minimum of prior thought. It is also clear that Blanding was in charge of almost all phases of construction of the mountain road. Most of the extant documentation left by the Board of Public Works from this project consists of receipts and bills of great variety and detail, and almost all are addressed to Abram Blanding.

In connection with his work on the state road, Blanding stated that the extent of the road was too great to allow for any plans or comprehensive surveys. Blanding was clearly given great latitude in determining the location of the route. Certain points were fixed by the legislature, but the rest was to be decided in the

field. Blanding elected to construct the hardest parts first, and these were tackled in 1820. These included the swamps between Charleston and Columbia (Huckabuck, Dean Swamp, Wassamasaw Swamp) and the Saluda Mountain Road (Blanding 1820).

A preliminary examination was made of the mountain road options in May and June of 1820, while the labor force was still working in the lowlands. In his official report of the work done that year, Blanding noted that several routes were already in use in the area, and that all were difficult. Furthermore, none took the direction desired for the state road. "A new course was therefore determined on, which possesses the advantages denied to all old routs (sic)." In this way, the Saluda Mountain Road was laid out from the northernmost edge of level land to the North Carolina line, a distance of 11 miles (Blanding 1820; Batson 2003:3).

Blanding must have been exaggerating a little. Any route through Saluda Gap would have been following earlier roads for at least part of the distance. This almost surely would have included the road cut by Earle in the 1790s. Even Blanding, in the same official report, said that the old road at Saluda Gap had serious grade problems, with some parts as steep as 12 degrees (Blanding 1820; Batson 2003:14). Even so, this gap was chosen over the other possibilities. Among these other possibilities was Jones Gap, also known as Middle Gap, adjacent to the Middle Saluda River. A road was later constructed at this gap, and it was reported that the grade was more accessible than that of the state road (Batson 1995:17; 2003:3-4). Another possibility was Gap Creek Road, which followed the Middle Saluda River and then veered eastward up Gap Creek, following this line to the North Carolina border (Batson 1995:15-16).

Even if the Saluda Gap route did not present the best grade over the mountains, it was the one that best fit Blanding's plan, which in turn reflected the wishes of the state legislature. That wish was to direct all traffic on the state road toward Columbia and Charleston. Saluda Gap would have travelers descending the mountain road in the right direction to continue on to Columbia. Jones Gap and Gap Creek Gap would have had them heading toward Augusta, which was clearly not the intent of the legislature. The Saluda Gap route also had the advantage of intersecting with the Buncombe Road that already went from Greenville to Asheville. These roads intersected at Hodge Bottoms, a long level area on the North Saluda River that belonged to Col. John Hodges (Batson 2003:6). A state road in this location would also intersect with the road that connected Greenville and Spartanburg, favoring neither one over the other (Kohn 1938:77).

Blanding must have been an efficient planner and contractor, for by mid-July the labor crews had been relocated from the lowlands to begin work on the Saluda Mountain Road. Work formally began on July 17, 1820 with around 500 workers. At that time it was estimated that the work would take three months to complete. Instead, it took three and a half months, possibly four. As Blanding detailed in his report, there were a number of unexpected delays. Malaria had struck the state early that year, and many in the labor force were already sick when they were brought up into the mountains. Other delays were occasioned by rain and by the availability of the local liquor. Even so, construction of the mountain road began to wind down in October of 1820, as the project neared completion. On October 15th, a third of the work force was discharged, followed by another third on the 22nd. Most of the rest were dismissed on October 28th, except for a force retained to finish the bridge over the Saluda River. This task had been delayed by frequent rises in the river that had delayed the foundation work (Blanding 1820; Kohn 1938:67; Batson 2003:10).

Little is known about the kind of sickness suffered by the labor force, except that it was probably malaria. Nothing in the official reports contradicts that assumption. During the first three to four weeks of work on the Saluda Mountain Road, 40 to 50 laborers, mostly “mechanics,” were in the hospital (Blanding 1820; Huff 1995:87). Little is known about the hospital facilities, although it can be assumed that they were fairly minimal and relatively informal. Hiram Whitted, Peter McQuire, and Wheaton Merritt, three local residents, provided room, board, and hospital care for sick workers from the project (McCuen 2000:19). There were probably other locals involved as well.

As for the problem with liquor, much of that could have been avoided. Blanding stated that initially it was to be forbidden to sell spirits to the laborers. The Board of Public Works asked the board of commissioners of roads for Greenville District to refuse all licenses to sell liquor to the workers. Even so, three of the local commissioners came up to the project area to do just that. The liquor that was then made available had “great adverse effect on the mechanical labor” (Blanding 1820).

As for the labor force, most appear to have been white workers, not slave laborers. Ordinary labor was plentiful and came from “all parts of the country” (Blanding 1820). Advertisements were placed in the local papers as early as June of 1820:

For hands to work on Saluda Road for three months, beginning July 15 and ending October 16. Wages were \$13 per month. Good well cooked provisions would be served on the table three times a day along with one half pint of whiskey. Good tents would be furnished but the workers would provide blankets and beddings (Batson 2003:9).

Skilled laborers, or “mechanics,” were not as plentiful as ordinary laborers, and most of these had been recruited from the North earlier in the year. There were at least eight different companies that worked on the Saluda Mountain Road, and their relative contribution to the project can at least be surmised by the amounts that each were paid for two months worth of work:

Alexander Bell’s Company	\$1, 407.67 and 3/4
[Gaius] Kibbe’s Company	\$1,689.93
Anderson’s Company	\$845.07
Dyer’s Company	\$1,181.95
McKenzies’s Company	\$5,388.71
Roger’s Company	\$618.40
Thomas’s Company	\$1,900.52
Benson’s Company	\$525.62 and 1/2

Source: Department of Public Works 1819-27, S208001, Box 1 of 2, Folder: FY 1820-21, Accounts and Receipts, Saluda Mountain Road).

Much of the official documentation about the Saluda Mountain Road preserved in the records of the Board of Public Works consists of receipts and accounts to and from workers who billed their time to the project. Thomas Walker, for example, got a receipt from John Couty, on behalf of the board, for 48 days of labor, from 17 July to 9 September, at \$15 per month (Department of Public Works, Superintendent 1819-27; FY 1819-20, Saluda Mountain Road). Other notes sent to Blanding were to pay workers like:

Isaac Willey for 34 days, at \$20 per month (21 Aug. 1820)

Andrew Billings for 13 days, at \$16 per month (22 Aug. 1820)

John Moore, at \$30 per month (22 Aug. 1820)

Source: Department of Public Works, Superintendent, Misc. Papers 1819-44, S208006, FY 1819-20 Assignment of Accounts)

Prominent among the various “mechanics” or skilled workers imported to work on the road, were the stonemasons. They did much, or at least supervised much, of the “heavy masonry that the road required” (Blanding 1820). In the final accounting of the costs of building the road, done in 1821, it was noted that Thomas Harris received \$36 wages as a stonemason. It was also noted that Kibbe’s stonemasons received \$221. The same sheet also awarded \$1,554.84 to Kibbe’s Company, for final work done from September 4th to October 22nd (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers 1820-59, S208006, FY 1820-21, Abram Blanding in Account with Saluda Mountain Road).

The Kibbe Company, run by Gaius Kibbe, was one of the several companies that worked on the Saluda Mountain Road. Kibbe appears to have been one of the major stonemasons on the project, although there is little direct evidence for this. It is not even certain where he came from, although it has generally been assumed that he and his company were imported from the North. The Kibbe family definitely appears to have New England roots, first coming to the Boston area from England in the 1640s. The Kibbe’s were a particularly large family, and by the 1800s they were branching into other regions of the nation, as well as New England. There also appear to have been a number of Gaius Kibbe’s. The first Gaius Kibbe that is recorded for the family was born in Enfield, Connecticut in 1765, moved to Buffalo, New York, in 1814, and then moved to Louisiana, where he died in 1821. This Gaius Kibbe had a number of children by two wives, including a Gaius Kibbe II (1788-1873) by his first wife. This could quite possibly be the same Gaius Kibbe associated with the Saluda Mountain Road (Kibbe Family 2004)

Gaius Kibbe first appears in the records of the Board of Public Works in January of 1820, when he was doing work on the Saluda Canal. Later, in July, he switched to work on the Saluda Mountain Road, where he drew wages as a superintendent. At least one of his bills has been preserved: from July 24th to August 24th, he billed the board at \$75 per month. The total bill presented was \$225, although the rest of this amount is not accounted for (Department of Public Works, Superintendent 1819-27, S208001, FY 1819-20, Receipts 1820). According to local tradition, his company consisted of Irish laborers brought from up North, but there is no direct confirmation of this (Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004).

In addition to receipts for labor payments, there are other receipts for other types of expenses, and these give some indication of the materials required to construct the road. There were expenses for the hospital care of the sick men. Money was also expended to purchase provisions, room and board, and wagon services. Funds were also allocated to purchase land, whenever that was necessary. Among the many

items purchased by the board were these items from one invoice dated to July 1820: 8 London blankets, 2 gallons of rum, 8 lbs. of sugar, 1 barrel of bread, 22 lbs. of bacon, 8 tea tumblers, 1 iron pot, 8 jack knives, as well as other items, like fry pans, spoons, vinegar, and barrels of pork and beef (Department of Public Works, Superintendent, Misc. Papers 1819-44, S208006, FY 1819-20, FY 1820-21, Bills for Board and Provision).

Local residents along the road certainly received some of this money, since they provided services, room and board, and were on occasion paid for the land or for crop damages. Col. John Hodges, who had a tavern on the North Saluda River, was paid for board. Many others were paid for their service as wagoners, or for providing corn and fodder. Other, more specialized items were purchased in Greenville (McCuen 2000:19).

Many residents made out well in these arrangements: John Hodges was paid at least \$4,000 for everything from whiskey and rum, to beef and pork. Others who received comparable sums were John Gowen and Sam Thompson. Others who also did well were Alexander and John McKinney, Nipper Hood, Hiram Whitted, Wheaton Merritt, and Peter McGuire. All of these received much needed cash for goods and services (Batson 2003:12; Anne McCuen, personal communication 2004).

The bills continued to come in long after the close of construction. Some were for labor, but most of these later bills were for damages road construction had done to the land or the previous season's crop. Mr. H. Izard, for example, billed the Board of Public Works for damages, and the board agreed to pay him \$1,500 (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers 1819-44, S208006, Appraisals and Evaluations 1820). Perhaps for this reason, there are two figures provided as the total cost of the construction of the Saluda Mountain Road. One accounting gives the cost as \$52,500 (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers 1820-59, S208006, FY 1820-21, Abram Blanding in Account with Saluda Mountain Road). Another, probably more accurate, listing gives the figure as \$60,223.30 (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; List of Expenditures 1820).

Relatively little is known about the various techniques employed in the construction of the Saluda Mountain Road, and much of this comes from Mann Batson's recent work, *The State Road: Poinsett Bridges and Culverts* (2003). It would appear that the road was built in the time-honored fashion of removing the excess from one area and using it to fill in other areas. Many of the tools were basic. Poinsett placed orders with Northern firms for 20 tumbling carts, 12 scrapers, and 4 plows. Given the rocky terrain, it was also necessary to use gunpowder, and Poinsett ordered 200 kegs of powder from John Vaughn of Philadelphia. Rock that had to be removed from the roadway was blasted away by first drilling holes in the rock at close intervals and filling the holes with powder. The holes were drilled by hand, using drills and sledgehammers. The drills required constant sharpening, and blacksmiths were employed for this purpose. Charcoal, iron, and steel were regular deliveries. Lime was also acquired for the production of mortar (Batson 2003:11-12). Mortar was used in the stone walls that were required to support the downhill side of the road, or in the culverts that helped drain the road, or in the road's three bridges.

At the end of 1820, Blanding reported that the Saluda Mountain Road was constructed to a width that was usually 17 feet. On steep sides, where there was a great amount of rock to be removed to make the roadbed, the road might be cut only 10 feet into the solid rock. The materials that were cut away would then be used to make up the rest of the road width, which would be supported by a retaining wall. Wagons could pass each other "on all parts of the road at some point constantly in view." Blanding went on to note that there were only four places where the road had even a five degree angle, and each of these

places were usually not longer than 1.25 miles. All other parts of the road manifested a grade less than five degrees (Blanding 1820). To achieve this grade, twists and turns had to be put into the steepest grades, and these were called "the winds." There were at least two winds on the Saluda Mountain Road: one at Callahan Mountain, near the Poinsett Bridge, and another at Plumley Mountain, above the community of Merrittsville. In these areas, the downhill side of the road was secured with walls of stone that were around four feet thick, and could be up to 200 feet in length (Batson 2003:60-61). Similar stone work was used to pass ravines as well, and here the retaining walls could be as high as 23 feet. In addition to such walls, there were a total of 44 culverts or small stone bridges "flagged both at top and bottom" to permit the passage of water underneath the road. Where culverts would not do, there were arched bridges, and there were three constructed on the Saluda Mountain Road (Blanding 1820).

THE BRIDGES OF THE SALUDA MOUNTAIN ROAD

Blanding's report described the three bridges found along the Saluda Mountain Road. The first bridge, the southern-most of the three, was constructed at Little Gap Creek. It had a Gothic or pointed arch that was 15 feet high and 7 feet wide. The total length of the bridge was 130 feet. Stepped parapet side walls were constructed on both sides of the bridge. The height of the bridge, from the water to the top of the parapets, was 24 feet. The second bridge spanned the North Saluda River and was comprised of two elliptical arches, each 15 feet wide. The whole of the stonework was only 60 feet in length, and the elevation from the water level to the parapet walls was 15 feet. The third bridge spanned Hodge's Creek, and was comprised of a single circular arch. The length of the bridge and its abutments was 50 feet, and the elevation of the bridge was 12.5 feet (Blanding 1820).

It happens that all three bridges were situated on land that belonged to, or would eventually belong to, Col. John Hodges. Hodges, a veteran of the War of 1812, lived in the project area in the years before the construction of the road. Even so, at the time of construction, Poinsett Bridge was located on state land. It was not until later that Hodges obtained a state grant for 4,789 acres that covered the entire project area (State Grants, Vol. 81:118). The grant was not platted until 1831. Hodges's property, astride the North Saluda, also sat at the intersection of the Saluda Mountain Road and the "road from the Greenville Court House" (Figure 2; Greenville County Grant Book H, p. 157). As the map shows, Hodges's house was situated at the intersection. Poinsett Bridge was constructed on what would later be the eastern edge of Hodges's property, the bridge over the North Saluda was found in the middle, while the bridge over Hodge's Creek was found at the north end.

These three bridges were the only ones constructed along the Saluda Mountain Road, but they were not the only bridges built on the state road. One was constructed on the Congaree Creek. The Congaree Creek Bridge, 104 feet in length, had just one arch, which spanned the entire stream, and was covered by a light roof. The bridge was based on the plan of a Mr. Town, who had already constructed two other bridges based on this principle. The bridge contractor, a Captain Grafton, examined Town's bridge in Fayetteville (North Carolina?) before construction. A similar bridge was prepared for Goose Creek (Blanding 1820: Kohn 1938:47-48, 76).

Unfortunately, out of all these bridges, and probably others associated with the state road, only the bridge over Little Gap Creek still stands today. In recent years, this bridge has taken the name Poinsett Bridge, in honor of the man who headed up the Board of Public Works.

POINSETT BRIDGE AND ITS FEATURES

The Poinsett Bridge is the only bridge left of the three originally constructed as part of the Saluda Mountain Road. It still stands in remarkably good shape (Figure 3; Marsh 1970). As was first noted by Blanding, the Poinsett Bridge had a Gothic or pointed arch that was 15 feet high and 7 feet wide. The total length of the bridge was 130 feet. Stepped parapet walls were constructed on both sides of the bridge. The height of the bridge, from the water to the top of the parapets, was 24 feet. The bridge has many other features not mentioned by Blanding. The date "1820" was chiseled into the keystone and was clearly visible until fairly recently (Simmons 1926; Thomas 1971:46). Not much remains of the old roadbed except that portion adjacent to the bridge. As for the rest, at least in the area around Little Gap Creek, the old roadbed has been masked by the construction of County Road 42. As noted by the archaeological survey of the bridge, there is an original stone culvert 122 m west of the bridge along the old roadbed (see Chapter III for more details).

Another original feature of the bridge was a railing or guardrail on either side of the stepped parapets. This would have served to protect travelers along those areas of the bridge, especially around the abutments, not protected by the highest section of the parapets. This railing, presumably made of wood, is depicted in Robert Mills's sketch of the bridge, executed in the fall of 1821 (Figure 4). All other aspects of this sketch will be treated in greater detail in the discussion about Robert Mills.

Much ink has been spilled concerning the masonry work of the Poinsett Bridge. Batson repeats a comment made by William P. Center, born near Glassy Mountain in 1875, that "every rock used in the Poinsett Bridge was cut to fit exactly before it was put up and they were precise all the way" (Batson 2003:12-13). This is simply not so. Except for the arch—and even there, only along the edges of the arch—the stones used in the bridge are only roughly hewn. To ensure a good fit, mortar was used throughout. In fact, the only smooth-faced stones found in the whole bridge, are those that define the outer edges of the arch, technically called the "surround" (Harris 1977:514). The arch, which rests on bedrock in the

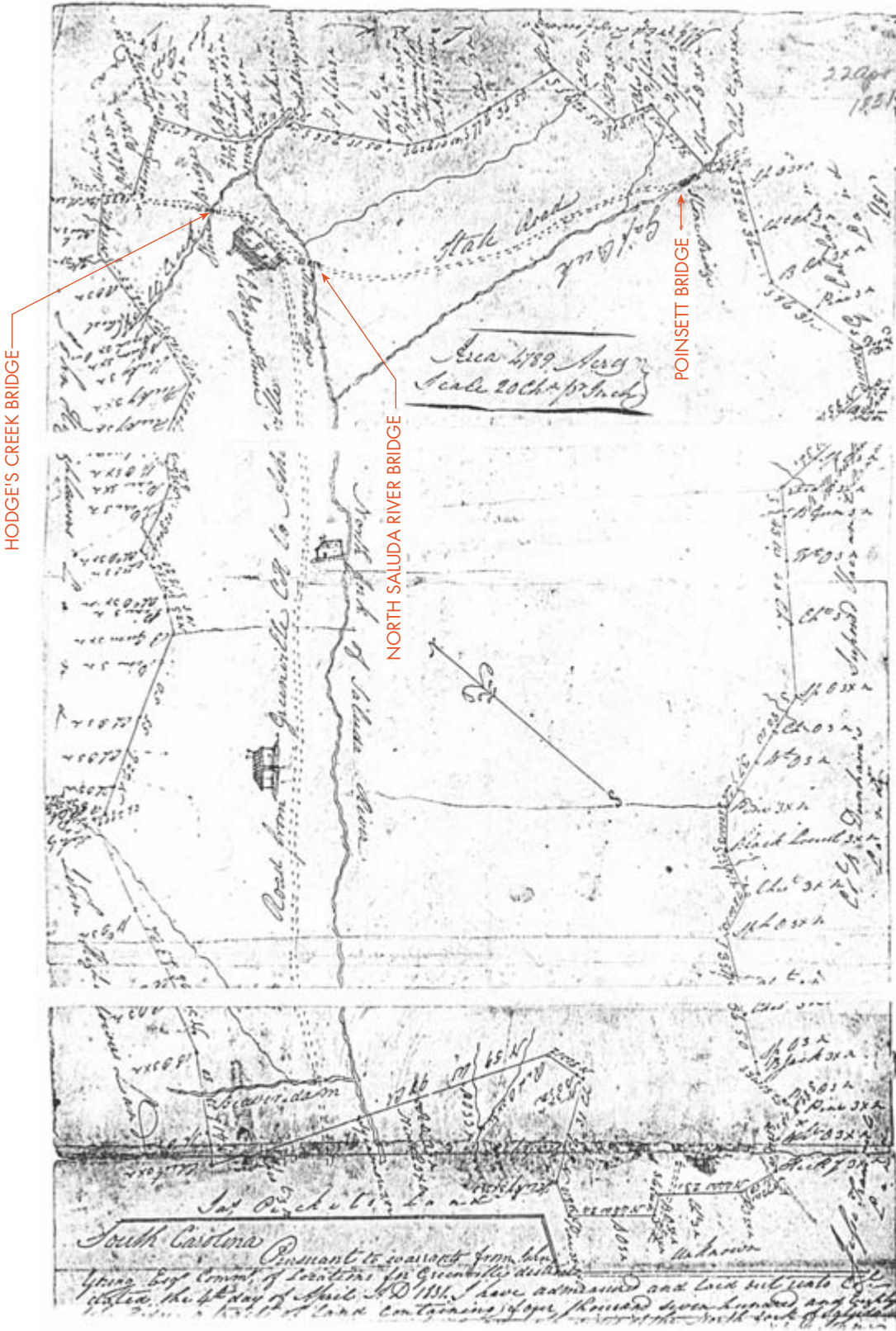


Figure 2
John Hodge's State Grant, 1831, Showing Three Bridges on the Saluda Mountain Road

Figure 3
Photograph of Gothic Arch on Poinsett Bridge (from Marsh 1970)



Figure 4
Mills Atlas, 1825, Showing the State Road and Three Bridges Below Saluda Gap



streambed, is formed by rectangular-shaped blocks or voussoirs that are slightly wedge-shaped and cut to fit into the arch. These blocks are laid in an alternating pattern: one stone placed so that the long side faces outward; the following stone placed so that its long side faces the inside of the arch. The stones facing outward, which already form an alternating pattern, are also slightly raised to create relief. This trait appears to be called “exaggerated voussoirs” (Marsh 1970:146-147). The alternating pattern, the relief, plus the pointed apex of the Gothic arch, give the bridge a medieval look. Overall, the bridge walls contain roughly coursed stone.

Given the difficulty of transporting stone in the era of animal transportation, it is likely that the stone used in the bridge was quarried nearby. One likely source was what looks like a quarry site less than a quarter mile east of the bridge, on the south side of County Road 42. Here, in a spot opposite the Boy Scout camp, is a place where rock has clearly been removed from a cliff face. From this location, uphill from the bridge site, it would have been relatively easy to transport stone to the construction site. Another possibility for the source of stone is from the rock walls immediately adjacent to the bridge site, on both sides of Little Gap Creek. Here, the stone outcrops along the roadside appear to have been cut to make room for the road, and the excess stone from this operation could well have been used in the construction of the bridge. With this sort of rock extraction going on for the construction of the road, it made perfect sense to construct a stone bridge over Little Gap Creek. The raw material was at hand, and a bridge of stone would have a level of permanence that no timber structure could match.

POINSETT’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ROAD AND BRIDGE

Because Joel Robert Poinsett was president of the Board of Public Works, and because he was well known, and still is famous today, the bridge has long been associated with his name. Whether this is justifiable or not is frankly open to question, especially if such an association is made on the basis of his personal involvement in the project.

A. V. Huff’s *Greenville: The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont*, states that Poinsett, as president of the Board of Public Works, “personally supervised the construction of the state road over Saluda Mountain” (Huff 1995:87). This is basically repeated by Mann Batson, who has stated that “Poinsett personally supervised the construction of the road in the mountains and lived on the site,” possibly in reference to a house that Poinsett later had in the area (Batson 1995:3). Batson has pointed out that Poinsett’s memorandum book indicates that Poinsett left Columbia on July 5, 1820 and arrived in Saluda Mountain on July 9 (Batson 2003:9). Even so, there is no indication that he stayed for any length of time, and his trip to the mountains was probably more a reconnaissance than the move of a supervisor, especially since work had not yet started on the mountain road at that time. By the end of that month, Poinsett was already out of the area, and his diary indicates that he never returned to Saluda Mountain during the construction period (Anne McCuen, personal communication 2004). Anyway, it is unlikely that Poinsett, a prominent politician, handled the day-to-day construction of the project. He would not have had the time (Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004). Poinsett’s contribution to the project, organizing the companies of workmen to come from the North, was great enough as it was. For the day-to-day operations, it is clear that Abram Blanding was the main supervisor.

ROBERT MILLS’ EARLY LIFE AND CONNECTION TO THE POINSETT BRIDGE

A much thornier question concerns the contribution of Robert Mills, a native of South Carolina and one of the nation’s first architects. According to local tradition, Robert Mills designed the three bridges on the Saluda Mountain Road, including of course the Poinsett Bridge. Local Greenville historian Anne McCuen

has stated that Mills “no doubt was responsible for the design of all the bridges” (McCuen 2000:19). This assumption is also found in Blanche Marsh’s biography, *Robert Mills: Architect in South Carolina*. As Marsh stated, Mills rarely signed his designs or plans, and as a result, many of the plans he prepared while working in South Carolina have no official attribution. Unfortunately, no original plans of any sort have been found for any of the Saluda Mountain Road bridges. Still, Marsh assumed that the Poinsett Bridge was associated with Robert Mills. The bridge has a distinctive Gothic arch, which suggests the input of a professional architect. It was also constructed in 1820, the year that Robert Mills returned to South Carolina. Marsh assumed that Mills designed the bridge as part of his duties as state engineer, “although he was not officially named to the seat on the Board of Public Works until December of 1820” (Marsh 1970:4, 16, 144). Donald Jackson, in *Great American Bridges and Dams* also says that it is possible that Robert Mills designed the Poinsett Bridge, since according to this source, Mills was serving as state architect and engineer at the time (Jackson 1988:184).

Unfortunately, Robert Mills’ association with the Poinsett Bridge is problematical, and the primary reason for that is that Mills was not in South Carolina until right around December of 1820, when he was named to the Board of Public Works. When the Poinsett Bridge was constructed in the summer and fall of 1820, Robert Mills was still in Baltimore. This does not preclude him having designed the bridges of the Saluda Mountain Road, but if he did, it was from a distance. He did not leave his situation in Baltimore until after October of 1820.

In hopes of finding plans for Poinsett Bridge, or at least some direct reference to the bridge in the architect’s notes and papers, examination was made of a number of different repositories of Robert Mills’ personal papers. One was a collection in the South Carolina State Library, compiled in 1980 by the South Carolina Historical Society. A large collection of Mills papers, organized in 1984 by Robert Alexander, John Bryan, Pamela Scott, and Douglas Evelyn, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institute, was examined at the South Caroliniana Library. Examination was also made of the Mills Collection at the Southeastern Architectural Archive, housed at Tulane University’s Special Collections in New Orleans. Despite these searches, no original plans of the Poinsett Bridge, or any of the other bridges associated with the mountain road, came to light. There were no references about designing the bridges. Mills did a sketch of the Poinsett Bridge and one of the North Saluda River bridge as well as other mountain scenes during a trip he made to the Saluda Mountain Road, but the date of that trip was the fall of 1821, not the fall of 1820. Even so, these sketches are very important and will be discussed in more detail below.

At this point, it would be useful to examine Robert Mills’ life and work in some detail, for if he can be associated with the bridge, the case will probably have to be made on the basis of circumstantial evidence.

Robert Mills was born on August 12, 1781 in Charleston, South Carolina, and lived until the middle of the following century (Marsh 1970:4; Bryan 1989:ix). A protégé of Thomas Jefferson, he was the first native-born American to train for an architectural career. He never studied abroad, and actually used this as a selling point with his clients. He reinterpreted classical architecture for an American setting, and he helped popularize the Greek Revival movement in the early 1800s. President Andrew Jackson made him a federal architect in 1836, and he held that post for the next 16 years. Although he designed the Treasury Building and the Patent Office, he is perhaps best known for the design of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. In all, he has been accredited with over 160 different projects (Bryan 1989:ix).

Much of Mills’ fame, both then and now, rests on his assumption of the mantle of first “American” architect. Before Mills, American-born architects had been gentlemen-amateurs, with a limited range of experience

and training. Other architects, such as Pierre Charles L'Enfant, who laid out Washington, D.C., had been born and trained in Europe. Mills was the first to be trained as an architect in the United States, and did so by serving as an apprentice to established architects and by extensive traveling throughout the American Northeast. All architects from that period were deeply influenced by the styles of Classical Greece and Rome, but Mills was one of the first to suggest that styles should be made to conform to American needs, rather than simply be imitated (Bryan 1989:1-2).

Mills' father, William Mills (deceased 1802) was a Scottish tailor who moved to Charleston around 1770. There he married Ann Taylor, who was well connected and had an impeccable South Carolina ancestry. William Mills, a new-comer to South Carolina, was something of a Loyalist in the coming Revolution, but does not appear to have suffered later for the association (Bryan 1989:4; 2001:2-3).

Robert Mills, born in 1781, is believed to have been first educated at the College of Charleston. He began his architectural training in 1800 when he was sent to Washington, D.C. to work as an apprentice in the office of James Hoban. The following year, Mills came to the attention of the new president, Thomas Jefferson, and Mills had access to Jefferson's library. Through Jefferson's connections, Mills traveled extensively throughout the Northeast, studying the local architecture. Later, Jefferson introduced Mills to Henry Latrobe, a foreign-born architect whose Philadelphia office Mills entered as a student in 1803. He almost immediately began survey work for the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal (Bryan 1989:2-4).

In 1808, at the age of 27, Mills married Eliza Barnwell Smith, the daughter of General John Smith of Hackwood, near Winchester, Virginia. That same year, he left Latrobe's office and started his own practice in Philadelphia (Bryan 1989:35-36). Mills was an architect with the soul of an engineer. In addition to designing churches and other buildings, Mills also liked to design engineering projects (Liscombe 1985:1; Bryan 1989:2-3). Foremost among these were canals and bridges. In fact, one of his most famous early works was a bridge over the Schuylkill River, above Philadelphia. Designed and built between 1809 and 1812 with the engineering assistance of Lewis Wernwag, the Schuylkill Bridge (also known as the Upper Ferry or Lancaster Bridge) was a wooden construction that was comprised of a single arch with a span of 344 feet. The rise of the arch itself was 20 feet, and the crest of the arch was 30 feet above the water. The entire length of the bridge was 400 feet. At the time that it was constructed, it was believed to have been the longest single arch span in the world, and it created quite a sensation. Even though it burned in 1818, this bridge helped make Mills' reputation (Wilson 1919:23-24; Gallagher 1935:128-131).

In 1815, Mills moved to Baltimore, where he soon became the president and chief engineer of the Baltimore Water Company (Bryan 1989:2-3). Much of the work that was promised in Baltimore failed to materialize, and Mills was casting around for a new position and situation as early as 1817. It was that year that Mills visited Charleston in search of employment opportunities. It was not a coincidence that this was also the time when South Carolina became interested in a comprehensive program of internal improvements (Bryan 1989:75). Even so, the trip did not bring any immediate offers of employment, and Mills returned to Baltimore, where he began work on a housing project known as Waterloo Row (1817-19). Mills became deeply involved in this project financially, and the eventual failure of this venture forced him into bankruptcy. This problem, plus the residual effects of the Depression of 1819, made it difficult for Mills to make a living in Baltimore (Bryan 2001:131-147). In a letter dated June 16, 1820, Mills wrote to his old benefactor, Thomas Jefferson, telling him about his financial problems and asking for a letter of recommendation for a job on a canal in Virginia. Apparently this ploy did not succeed, and on October 30, 1820 he told the managers of Baltimore's Washington Monument, in which Mills was involved, that he would have to seek work outside the city due to his continuing financial woes (Scott 1990:9-10). Even then

it seems clear that he was pressing for a job in South Carolina. As part of his growing concern for improvements in regional transportation, Mills prepared a pamphlet entitled "Inland Navigation," which was put out in 1820 while he was still in Baltimore. In this he discussed a proposed system of canals that would greatly expand and interconnect river navigation (Wilson 1919:15). Almost surely this was done with the hope of South Carolina employment as the end result.

In December of 1820, the new commissioners of the Board of Public Works were selected by the South Carolina legislature. Most had been serving the board since the previous year: Abram Blanding, Joel R. Poinsett, and Robert G. Mills. John L. Wilson, the old state civil and military engineer, was elected but declined to serve. The only completely new member was Robert Mills (Batson 2003:1).

Robert Mills was still in Baltimore on December 20, 1820, when he was appointed a salaried acting commissioner for public buildings. This meant that the Board of Public Works was effectively led now by Abram Blanding and Robert Mills, the only two salaried acting commissioners. Mills replaced Thomas Baker. Another casualty of the shake-up was William Jay, who was replaced by Nicholas Herbemont. This meant that Mills was now in a position to replace or modify any of Jay's plans. In 1821, when Mills began working in South Carolina, much of Jay's work was either halted or redesigned (Bryan 2001:151; 1989:75; Waddell and Liscombe 1981:1).

Mills was in South Carolina for 10 years, from the end of 1820 to 1830. Before we examine what Mills did in the state, it might be useful to list the official positions he held. From December 20, 1820 to December 31, 1822, Mills was one of the two paid members of the Board of Public Works. As such, he was an Acting Commissioner in charge of public buildings. In December of 1822, the legislature abolished the Board of Public Works and divided its authority between the two salaried acting commissioners. Abram Blanding was made superintendent of public works, while Robert Mills was made superintendent of public buildings. Mills held this position for one year, from January 1, 1823 to December 31, 1823. After that, Mills lost this position to Roderick Evander McIver, who often referred to Mills for both advice and designs. This situation lasted until December of 1824, when the position of superintendent of public buildings was abolished altogether. After December 31, 1823, Mills operated as a private architect, even though he was often employed by the state on an *ad hoc* basis (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:2; Bryan 1989:76; 2001:151).

Mills' position started off grand and was slowly whittled down, as the state legislature lost interest in internal improvements throughout the 1820s. The nature of his work reflected this shift. Grandiose engineering programs in the early 1820s were soon limited to public buildings and even these became few and far between by the end of the decade.

Starting out big in 1821, his first year of work on the Board of Public Works, Mills wrote an essay in favor of a proposed Charleston-Columbia Canal. Called "Inland Navigation: Plan for a Great Canal between Charleston and Columbia," the essay proposed a canal of some 110 miles that would not only serve to unite South Carolina's two main cities, but would also take river commerce to the foot of the Appalachians. From there, it could be connected on the other side of the Eastern Divide to other canals that would serve commerce on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. It was a rather quixotic attempt to tie Charleston to the burgeoning settlements west of the mountains, and nothing ever came of the plan (Bryan 1989:77; 2001:152).

During this same period, Mills wrote other pamphlets to popularize internal improvements, and one was entitled "Plans and Progress of Internal Improvements in South Carolina." Here, Mills recognized the importance of inexpensive transportation to the continued spread and development of cotton, which required cheap transportation in order to be profitable. In addition to hawking a series of canals that would expand river navigation throughout the state, Mills also favored an intracoastal waterway, many years before such a thing was considered feasible. Mills also suggested the drainage of the state's many swamps, and the embankment of the larger rivers prone to flooding. He may have stepped on some toes when he addressed the issue of slavery, which he said flatly was "an evil." Although he believed in the repatriation of former slaves back to Africa, rather than anything like full equality, this was still an advanced position to take in a region where chattel slavery was accepted without question in most levels of white society (Mills 1821:144-148; Bryan 1989:78-79).

Relatively little came of Mills' engineering schemes. He did much more with architecture. During his 10 years in South Carolina, Mills is known to have designed 14 courthouses, 13 jails, the insane asylum in Columbia, as well as the county records office and magazine complex in Charleston (Bryan 1989:76). And these were just the buildings that can definitely be attributed to him. There may well have been others. Mills also made improvements in the use of fire-proof masonry vaulting, while at the same time further developing his version of American classicism (Bryan 2001).

Mills did other work, primarily as a means to make money. In South Carolina, he is today best remembered for his monumental "Atlas of the State of South Carolina," which included a map of every county in the state, the first time such a project had been completed for any state in the Union. Published in 1825, it also showed the route of the state road from Charleston to Saluda Gap. The Greenville County map clearly showed the Saluda Mountain Road as it went around the east side of Prospect Hill and west of Glassy Mountain (see Figure 4; Mills 1825). From there, the road went over Little Gap Creek—the site of the Poinsett Bridge—and then over the North Saluda River, past the "Hodge House" and the road extending southwest toward Greenville, across another bridge, past a toll gate and up "State Fall Creek." Just before the state line, the road veers west over Saluda Gap and into the Green River Valley in North Carolina.

Mills had occasion to travel throughout the state of South Carolina in the early 1820s. Unfortunately, the details of his 10-year stay in South Carolina are not as numerous as the other periods in Mills' life. Among the letters, diaries, and papers in the Mills Collection at Tulane, there is a noticeable gap in the documentary record from 1818 to 1828, roughly the same period that Mills was in South Carolina. Even the documents from the late 1820s refer to personal money matters, and virtually nothing of an engineering or architectural nature. The only exceptions are the series of pencil, pen and ink sketches of various scenes along the Saluda Mountain Road, and elsewhere, during a trip that Mills made to the mountains in late 1821. The sketches, some 20 in number, were made in the back of a bound notebook that Mills used to write a rough draft of his undated "Manual on Railroads, with Numerous Tables." Even though the sketches are not dated in the collection catalog, it is almost certain that they were executed in the fall of 1821. Some of the individual sketches are dated, and these bear the date of September of 1821. The rest of the drawings, some of which are neither labeled nor dated, were almost surely done at the same time. Just as an aside, these are the same sketches listed in H. M. Pierce Gallagher's 1935 biography of Robert Mills.

Many of these sketches depict scenes along the Saluda Mountain Road, including two of the bridges, the Poinsett Bridge and the North Saluda River bridge (Figures 5 and 6; Mills Collection, Tulane University).

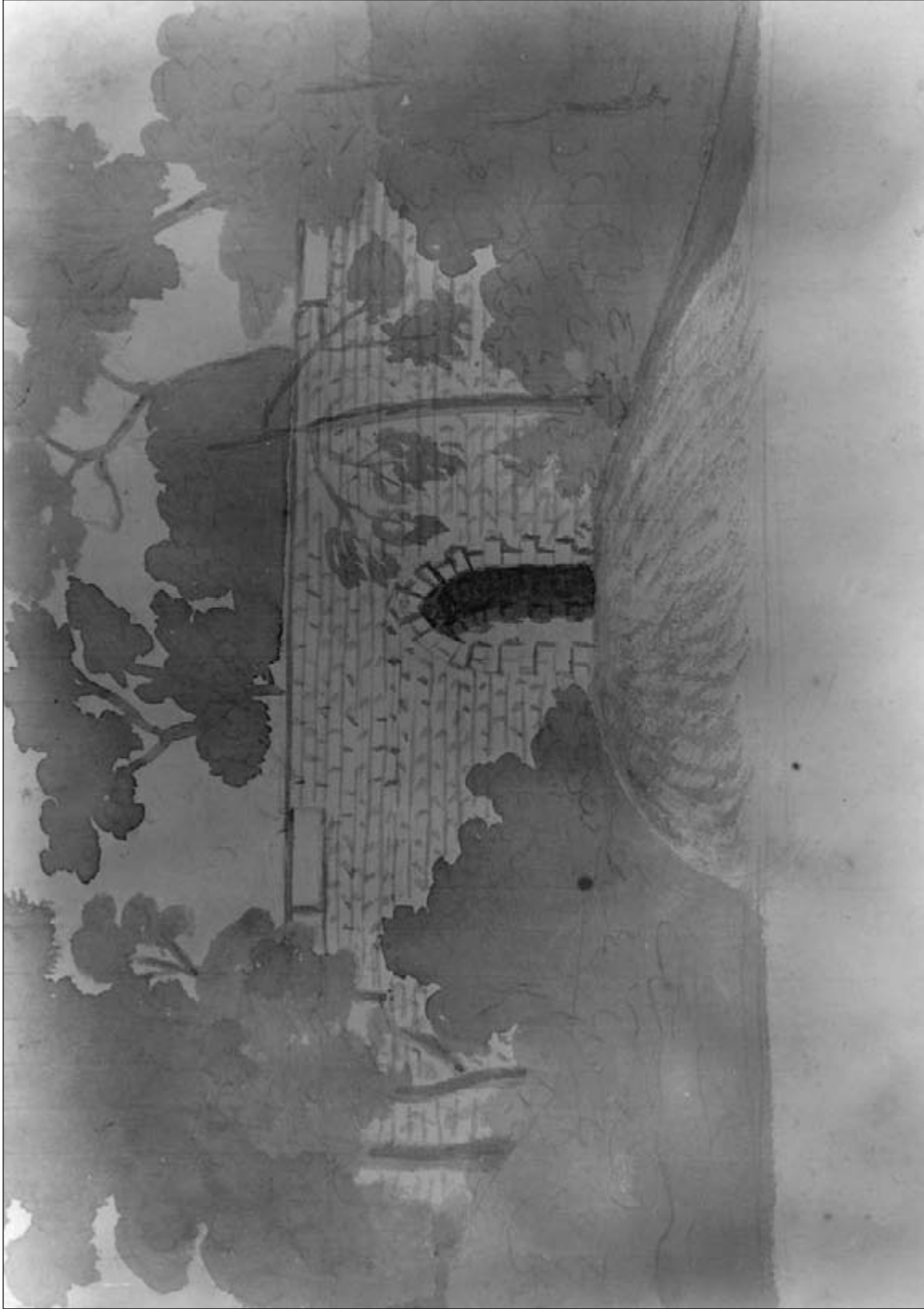


Figure 5
Robert Mills' Illustration of the Bridge over Little Gap Creek (Poinsett Bridge), ca. 1821

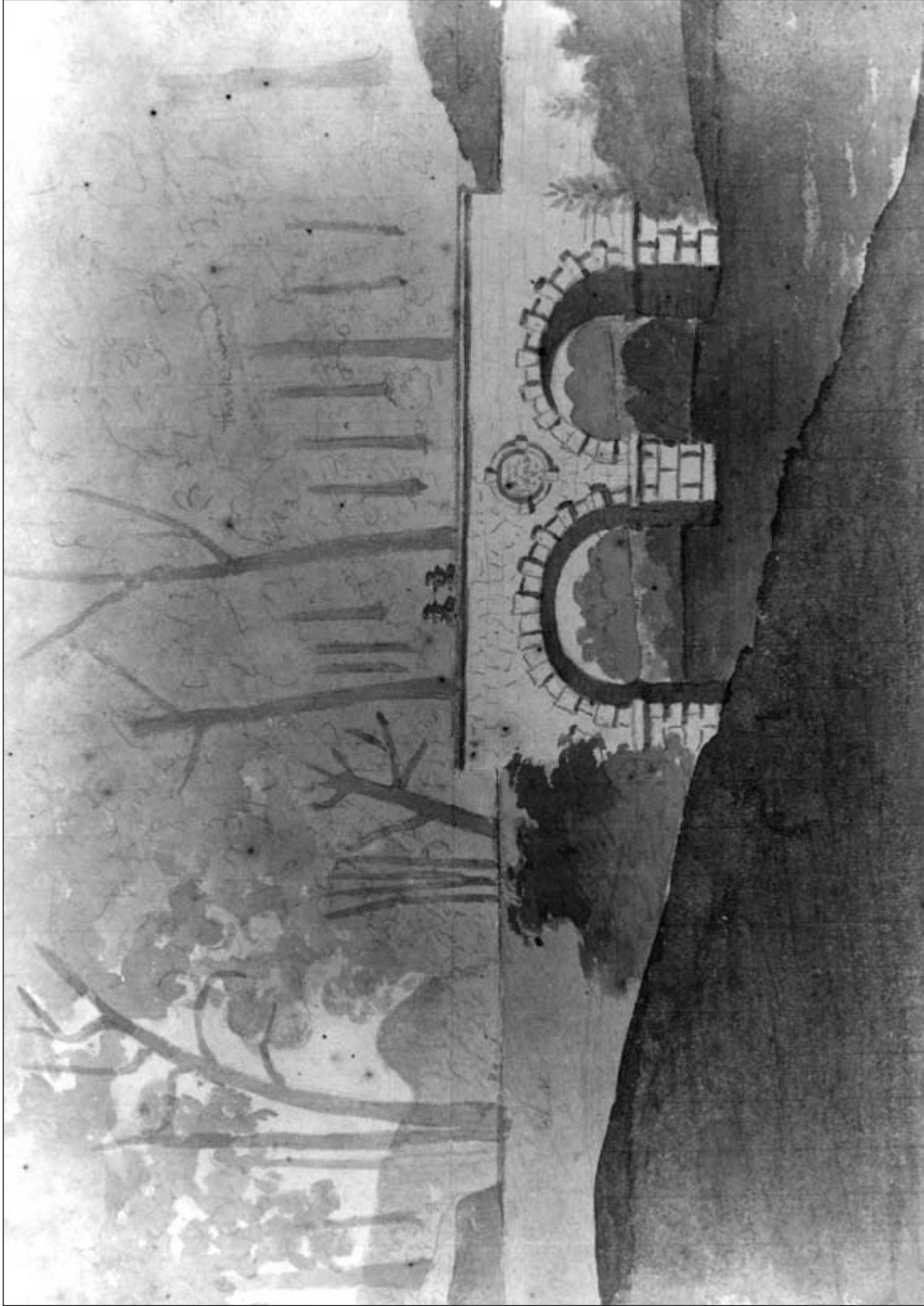


Figure 6
Robert Mills' Illustration of the North Saluda River Bridge, ca. 1821

Even though the Poinsett Bridge sketch is neither labeled nor dated, the subject matter is unmistakable. The date of the sketch is almost surely in line with the other sketches, some of which are dated. It is also clear from the nature of the sketch, with the trees and vegetation around the bridge, that this was a view of the bridge after construction, not some sort of engineering drawing or plan. All of these sketches were clearly done after the Saluda Mountain Road had been completed (Figures 7-9; Mills Collection, Tulane University).

What evidence is there that Robert Mills designed the Poinsett Bridge? So far as direct evidence is concerned, there is virtually nothing. There are no extant plans of the bridge prior to construction, and there are no letters or other written documentation that suggest that Mills designed the bridge. To complicate the matter, Mills was not made a member of the Board of Public Works until December of 1820, which was after the construction of the bridge. He was not even in South Carolina at the time of construction.

Even so, the circumstantial evidence of Mills' involvement is stronger than it looks at first glance. Mills had been trying to obtain a position in South Carolina since at least 1817, when he returned to the state for the first time since his youth. He undoubtedly would have submitted examples of his work, which had already made him well-known, and would probably have promised to help with the state's comprehensive program of internal improvements, then gearing up for the first time. These might well have included plans for bridges and canals that would be constructed a couple of years later. He could have submitted plans for such projects while he was in Baltimore, with the assumption that he would soon acquire a permanent position in South Carolina. He was interested enough in the area and the bridges to draw them one year after their construction. Even so, the greatest evidence of Mills' involvement can be found in the bridges themselves. The bridges could have been built with identical arches, with no frills in the arch work. Instead, both the Poinsett Bridge and the bridge over the North Saluda had arch designs and ornamental features that only a formal architect would have included, or would have thought to include. Specifically, this entailed the use of three different styles of arches, the Gothic arch for the Poinsett Bridge, two elliptical arches over the North Saluda, and a single circular arch over Hodge's Creek. In addition, the arch work itself had a professional look. The arch stones, or voussoirs, were rectangular blocks laid in an alternating pattern, with one tier of stones facing outward, and another tier exposed to the inside of the arch. To complete the effect, the stones facing outward were raised out an inch or so from the surface of the bridge wall, providing relief. This is what one source refers to as "exaggerated voussoirs" (Marsh 1970:146-147). In all likelihood, only a professional architect would have added this purely decorative touch.

Even so, this leaves the possibility that Blanding and his work crews constructed the bridges with plans provided by William Jay. Jay was a trained architect who was a member of the Board of Public Works at the time of construction. Part of his job description was to provide stock plans for buildings as needed by the board. However, there is no mention that Jay ever worked up plans for bridges, something that Robert Mills certainly did. Also, by the time the Saluda Mountain Road bridges were constructed, it is possible that Jay was in disfavor. Jay's position was not renewed in December of 1820, and after Mills replaced him, work based on Jay's designs was either halted or modified to suit Mills. With all this in mind, it would appear more likely that Mills, not Jay, designed the bridges.

COMPLETION OF THE STATE ROAD AND ITS MAINTENANCE, 1820s

Even though the Saluda Mountain Road was finished in the fall of 1820, most of the rest of the state road remained to be completed, especially in the middle of the state (Blanding 1820). Much less is known about

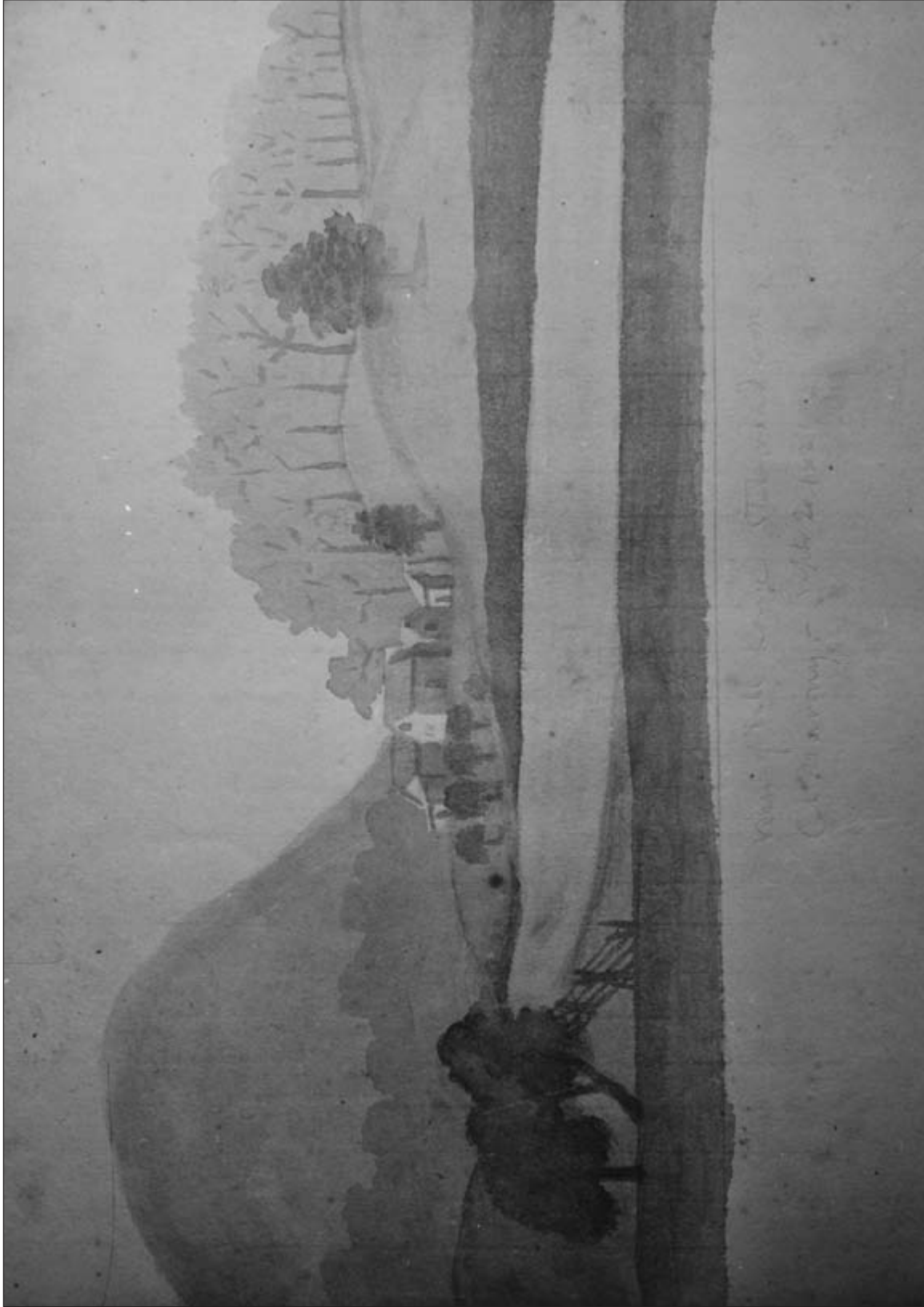


Figure 7
Robert Mills' Illustration of the Toll Gate on Saluda Mountain Road, ca. 1821

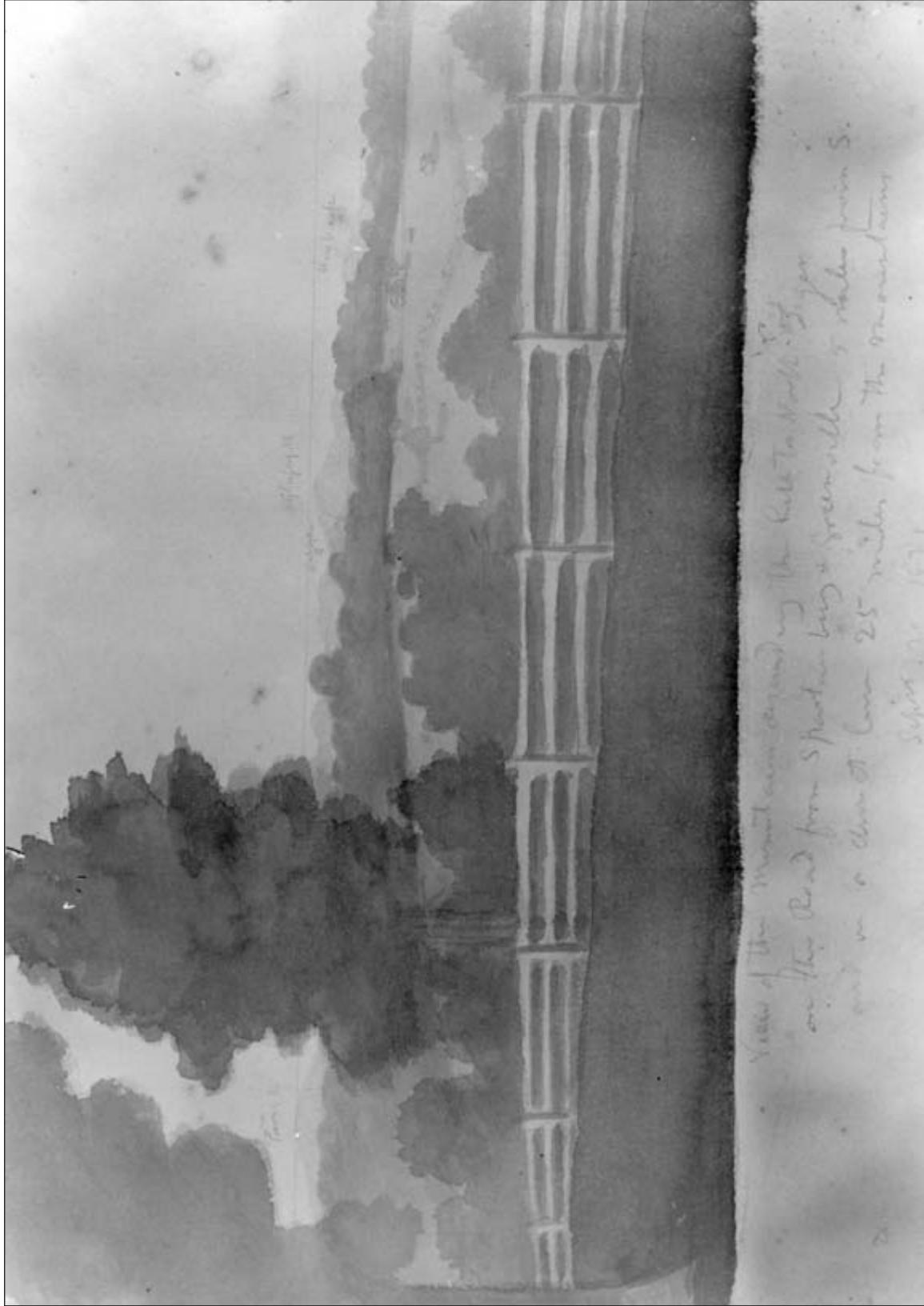


Figure 8
Robert Mills' Illustration of the South Carolina Mountains from Saluda Mountain Road, ca. 1821



Figure 9
Robert Mills' Illustration of Glassy and Hogback Mountains from the Saluda Mountain Road, ca. 1821

the construction of this portion of the state road, presumably because it was easier to build. It is not even known exactly when the rest of the road was completed, but it appears to have been finished by the mid to late-1820s. The year 1821 was a construction year just like 1820, but there were a number of changes made in the labor arrangements. Moving laborers to the mountains during the sickly season was determined to be too expensive and it was decided not to repeat that experiment. With the completion of the Saluda Mountain Road, there might not have been much demand for laborers in the uplands anyway. The board decided not to take into service those engaged by the several contractors during the previous autumn, even though this contravened the original directives from the legislature (Kohn 1938:126-127). Presumably, this meant that most of the laborers from 1820 did not return to work on the project in 1821. This would explain the greater length of time it took to finish the road.

Eventually, however, the road was finished, and was linked with North Carolina's Buncombe Turnpike, which joined up with the Saluda Mountain Road at Saluda Gap. The Buncombe Turnpike, which passed through Asheville and then down the French Broad River, was completed in 1828, finally connecting South Carolina with east Tennessee (Batson 1995:7-8).

Also completed were the various canal projects that were an integral part of South Carolina's internal improvements program. Most of this work was done by the middle of the 1820s, and included Lockhardt's Canal on the Broad River; the Landsford, Catawba, Rocky Mountain, and Wateree canals on the Catawba/Wateree; the Columbia Canal; the Santee Canal; and the two canals on the Saluda: Lorick's and Dreher's (Kovacik and Winberry 1987:94; Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers, 1819-44, S208006, Titles Extinguished). By 1826, Robert Mills was able to boast that the Saluda River was improved with three canals and was now navigable for 120 miles above Columbia (Mills 1826:156).

As for the Saluda Mountain Road, the biggest problems during this period were those of maintenance and payment. From the beginning it was planned that the state road would be a toll road, and tolls were collected shortly after the construction of the road. The first toll gate for the mountain road was established between the forks of the road at Hodges, and the top of Rocky Hill—between the North Saluda River and Saluda Gap (Batson 2003:16). This location was at the site of a long, narrow plantation that was so compromised by the construction of the road that it was determined more cost-effective to buy the place rather than pay crop and property damages. Tolls were to begin at this location on the first day of November 1820. Blanding negotiated a contract with a Col. Marony to collect the first tolls (Blanding 1820:49-50; McCuen 2000:19). As determined by the legislature, the board was to appoint a toll collector for one year, with tolls used to pay for road maintenance. Any monies left over were to go into the public treasury. After the first year, the toll leases were to be let for three-year periods (Statutes, vol. 10, Index, p. 546). This time interval does not appear to have been honored, for lease intervals appear to have varied over time. By 1821, when the toll gate was fully operational, there were believed to have been a number of structures related to the toll gate: the toll house, a residence for the toll gate keeper, as well as other farm buildings. Mills even sketched the toll gate complex in the fall of 1821 (see Figure 7). Years later, it appears that the toll gate was relocated to a slightly different location that was still between the river and the gap (Batson 2003:20, 55-57).

Col. John Hodges was one of the early toll gate lessees. In 1826, bids for the position were held at his house, with the post going to the highest bidder for one year. In addition, the highest bidder would have access to "the farm and houses at the top of Rocky Hill" (Batson 2003:16-17). Hodges himself appears to have been the highest bidder, for he received the lease for one year. Among his duties was to keep the

road in good repair for a total of 17 miles, beginning at the edge of the North Carolina line. He was also to pay \$1,000 for tolls for one year (*Greenville Republican*, Nov. 4, 1826).

The toll rates appear to have varied over time, but one of the earliest listings charged 75 cents for a carriage pulled by 4 animals (horses, oxen, or mules). A conveyance pulled by 2 animals commanded 62 cents. One pulled by 1 animal, 25 cents. Other vehicles, presumably wagons, also had to pay based on the number of draft animals: for 6 or more, it was 75 cents; for 5, it was 62 cents; for 4 animals, 50 cents; and for 3 or less, it was 37 cents. A cart was charged 25 cents. A rider on horseback, 12.5 cents. A led animal cost 5 cents. A herd of animals driven to market were charged per head, depending on the type of animal: oxen, 5 cents; cattle, 3 cents; goats, sheep, hogs, or turkeys, 2 cents (McCuen 2000:20). All South Carolina citizens living within 10 miles of the toll gate did not have to pay (Kohn 1938:126). Even so, they soon had an obligation that may have been more onerous, and that was road repair.

Blanding signed the first contract for road repair in 1820. At that time, the annual funds to repair the road came to \$1,000, with a possible rise to \$1,800 in case of flood or other natural disaster. Funds were to be dispersed at the discretion of the board (Blanding 1820:50). As early as 1821, however, it was noted that the drains and culverts had not been maintained as they should have been, which caused great damage during the seasonal downpours. So it was proposed that citizens exempt from tolls could be put to work on road repairs (Kohn 1938:126). At this point, the state legislature ordered the Greenville District road commissioners to enforce the contract between the Board of Public Works and Hiram Whitted and John Hodges, both of whom had failed to keep the road in shape as their contract stipulated (Batson 2003:15).

According to the State Road Act of 1824, all lessees of the toll gate on the Saluda Mountain Road were also obligated to keep the road in good repair. This included keeping the road free of ruts and holes, and cleaning the culverts that passed underneath the roadbed (*Greenville Republican*, November 4, 1826). Where a bridge was constructed of brick or stone, damages to the masonry were to be repaired according to the original style. The same was to be done for stone walls, culverts, and drains. Lessees were not required to repair or replace a bridge if destroyed by flood. Even with this caveat, if commissioners found the road in poor repair, they were authorized to suspend toll payments until the lessee finished the repairs (Batson 2003:20-21).

By the mid-1820s, when the state road was completed, it was divided into sections for easier maintenance (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers, 1819-44, S208006, Certificate of Contract Fulfillment 1826). By 1830, the position of toll collector, which was still awarded on a yearly basis, was to have a salary and the use of the farm attached to the toll gate (*Greenville Mountaineer*, March 13, 1830). That same year, the superintendent of public works, or any employee thereof, was given the power to call out the local inhabitants, and their slaves, to do repair work on the turnpike (Statutes 1830, No. 2500).

By this time, use of the Saluda Mountain Road had settled into a routine. The road was favored by freight wagons, or heavy wagons that moved in convoy so that if one got stuck, the other teamsters could help pull it out. Many of these wagons were shaped like the "prairie schooners" more often seen out West. Some of the most common loads carried by the freight wagons were apples from Buncombe County, North Carolina, dried apples, cabbages, and chestnuts. Also seen on the road, but less common than in earlier years, were items like butter, and bear and deer hams (Batson 2003:37). The established road etiquette was that descending traffic, especially if it was loaded, kept to the inside or "mountain" side of the road (Batson 2003:14).

With regular traffic came resting places and watering holes. Joel Poinsett, said by tradition to have had a house on the side of the road about one mile below Saluda Gap, is supposed to have created Basin Spring, a stone basin put beside the road for travelers. Water was brought to the basin from adjacent Poinsett Spring by means of a log pipe. Chestnut Springs was a popular campsite on the road just below the Poinsett House (Batson 2003:63-64). Other places were taverns and inns. John Hodges had an inn at Flat Rock, just a few miles on the other side of the state line, as well as another closer to his residence on the road. (Batson 2003:54-55). Other establishments included the Knothole, located on the state road near the Callahan Mountain winds. Much further down, on the road to Greenville and Spartanburg, was Hurricane Tavern, as well as the tavern, store, and drovers' stand of Philip Lister (Batson 2003:25, 52-53).

DECLINE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM, LATE 1820S

Despite the expenditure of over a million dollars, South Carolina's internal improvements program began to peter out towards the end of the 1820s. The cost of the public works program proved to be greater than expected, but the main reason for the decline was that the various canals and the state road failed to generate revenues sufficient to off-set the expense. What was really at stake was that the state could not override the nation's move westward, a move that affected South Carolinians as well as others on the Eastern Seaboard. As increasing numbers of the state's cotton growers moved to fertile western lands, state revenues declined (Bryan 1989:76).

By the end of the 1820s, most of the canal works had been abandoned as too costly to maintain. Many had been sited poorly due to political considerations. Others were damaged in local floods and never repaired (Edgar 1998:282-283; Moore 1987:18). Even the state road went into eclipse for many of the same reasons, even though the road itself was operational for decades to come. By 1829, public construction in South Carolina had virtually come to an end (Waddell and Liscombe 1981:2). The development of railroads put the nails in the coffin. South Carolina was one of the first states to experiment with the "iron horse," but it was funded by private groups, not state programs. Robert Mills himself recognized that "railroads will supercede entirely the use of canals in our great system of internal improvements" (Mills n.d.:40).

If railroads killed the state's internal improvement program on the ground, what killed it philosophically was the Nullification Movement. Born of a poor market for cotton and fear of national tariffs that protected Northern industry, Nullification gained steam throughout the late 1820s and finally broke across the political landscape in the early 1830s. Proponents of Nullification, foremost of whom was John C. Calhoun, believed that South Carolina had the right to nullify national legislation within the state's borders. This struck at the heart of the kind of Unionism favored by populist leaders like Andrew Jackson, and it led to a bitter dispute between Jackson and Calhoun at the national level. Although it eventually died down, it planted the seeds of disunion. Nullification prepared the way for the secession controversy that would erupt in 1850 and again in 1860, leading finally to the Civil War. Even though Unionist sentiment was strong in the Greenville District, the Nullifiers seized control of the state government in 1830. By that time, if not before, the state government lost all interest in better connections with its western neighbors. The program of internal improvements was dead (Huff 1995:ix, 103-105).

THE LATER YEARS OF MILLS, BLANDING, AND POINSETT

The decline in the state's public works program can also be followed in the decline of Robert Mills' fortunes in South Carolina. As one of Mills' biographers commented, Mills' work for the state was some of the most expensive in the whole public works program (Bryan 1989:76). As a result, Mills' involvement with the state was constantly cut throughout the 1820s. Mills served as Acting Commissioner of the Board of Public Works from December 1820 to December 1822. When the board was abolished in December of 1822, Mills was made superintendent of public buildings. Mills was removed from state office the following year, in December of 1823, when he was replaced by Roderick Evander McIver, a clerk of court and part-time contractor. From this point on, Mills did piecemeal work, either for the state or for private clients, and was chronically short of money (Bryan 1989:3, 76; 2001:149). As early as 1824, Mills was sending letters to John Calhoun, then Secretary of War, seeking a federal position in Washington, D.C. (Glenn 1938:3).

During this period, he continued constructing public buildings on an *ad hoc* basis. He also worked on one of his greatest achievements, the Mills "Atlas of the State of South Carolina," published in 1825. It was followed the next year by "The Statistics of South Carolina" (Bryan 1989:3, 76-77). Mills hoped to support himself by selling these publications, but was only marginally successful. In 1830, Mills gave up making a living in this way and moved back to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. On January 16, he wrote Col. Blanding, apparently from Washington, about the money that he owed Blanding, and whether he could sell his house in Columbia for \$2,000. Later that year, in Baltimore, Mills did plans for the courthouse in Savannah, Georgia, and began design work for the Washington Monument. Mills would go on to design some of his most famous works, and write a guide to American lighthouses, *The American Pharos* (1832). He never came back to work in South Carolina (Bryan 1989:3; Mills Papers at Tulane University).

Abram Blanding's career as state employee continued longer than Mills' tenure. In addition to serving as Acting Commissioner of the Board of Public Works from 1819-1822, he served as chief superintendent of public works for the five years that followed (1822-27). A Federalist and a Unionist, Blanding probably saw his career go into eclipse during the Nullification era (Bailey 1984:60-62).

This was even true of Joel Poinsett, an ardent Unionist. Poinsett, however, had national connections and was not limited to state government positions. Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1821, Poinsett served as President Monroe's personal envoy to newly independent Mexico in 1822. Three years later, in 1825, he resigned from Congress to serve as the first official American ambassador to Mexico, appointed by John Quincy Adams. Favoring the liberal factions over the more conservative powers in that country's internal politics, Poinsett was eventually asked to leave, returning to the United States in 1830. He brought back a new plant, the poinsettia, which was named in his honor. Elected to the South Carolina General Assembly in 1830, Poinsett served as Andrew Jackson's "agent" during Nullification, when it was thought possible he might have to raise a Unionist militia to put down a rebellion.

In 1833, he married Mary Izard and moved to her plantation, "White House," in the Georgetown District. By this time, he also had a farm on Charleston Neck and a summer residence called "The Homestead," located in the Greenville District, close to the Saluda Mountain Road. In 1837, President Van Buren appointed him Secretary of War, where he helped reform the military and create a general staff. He opposed the growing tide of secession, which he thought was wrong, with little chance of success. He died in Statesburg in 1851, while on his way to Greenville (Bailey et al. 1986:1287-1289; Fant et al. 1996:305).

LATER YEARS OF THE SALUDA MOUNTAIN ROAD, 1830s-1950s

Even though the Saluda Mountain Road, and the state road of which it was a part, was never as successful as was anticipated, it proved to be extremely long-lived. The Saluda Mountain Road remained in use not only throughout the antebellum period, but also well up into the 20th century.

As early as 1834, there was a stage route than ran once a week between Greenville and Asheville, a distance of 64 miles. The fare was \$5 (*Greenville Mountaineer*, July 12, 1834). The total tolls taken in for the month of April of 1841 came to \$128.87 and 1/2 (Department of Public Works, Superintendent; Misc. Papers 1819-44, S208006, Travel Book, Unidentified Toll Gate). This represented a considerable amount of traffic, and in 1847 it is recorded that 1200 wagons, 499 carriages, 1536 persons on horseback, 3509 horses in droves, 4492 head of cattle, and 40,118 hogs and sheep passed through the toll gate (McCuen 2000:20). During this period, it is clear that repair arrangements were still made on a yearly basis. Only now it seemed that the responsibility for leasing the road passed from the state to Greenville District (Batson 2003:18).

Even so, there was an inexorable decline in the volume of trade that made use of the road, if not of the road itself. According to one source, the lower portion of the state road was not completed until 1829, and at no point was enough money taken in to make the road profitable (Edgar 1998:282-283). One of the reasons for this was that the toll roads offered few real advantages over free roads, and many travelers avoided them as a result (Moore 1987:16).

As a result of this general decline, the state began to divest itself of responsibility for the road, beginning in the 1830s. At that time, the Saluda Mountain Road effectively became a county road, with Greenville District commissioners taking over the leasing of the toll gate and the repair work. This was soon followed by the sale of state lands that had been purchased or claimed by the state since the inception of the road (Anne McCuen, personal communication, March 1, 2004). By the Act of 1819, the state had been granted the authority to either purchase or lay claim to any desirable lands within 10 miles of the state road. Most of these lands, around 14,000 acres, were sold by 1844. John Hodges appears to have purchased some of this land that same year (*Greenville Mountaineer*, June 21, 1844). It is interesting that John Hodges, whose land included the three bridges of the Saluda Mountain Road, also appears to have owned the bridges. There is no mention of state ownership, even at the beginning of road construction, and subsequent deeds make no mention of exemptions for state ownership, as would normally be done if the state had purchased or acquired the land.

By the 1850s, there was competition from the railroads, even though this was indirect at first, since no railroads were able to penetrate the mountains until after the Civil War. As early as 1833, the South Carolina Railroad had been built to Hamburg, opposite Augusta, and 20 years later, there was a railroad to Greenville (Huff 1995:120-121; Richardson 1930:103). Perhaps a more immediate threat was posed by other local roads, which began to proliferate in the 1850s. A plank road was proposed from Greenville to Asheville, even though it was never built (Batson 1993:49; 1995:12-13). A more serious threat was Gap Creek Road, which approached the mountains from the Middle Saluda River, and then followed Gap Creek to the North Carolina line (Batson 1993:42-44).

While economic activity declined on the state road, and many avoided it in favor of free roads, there was one category of traveler that clearly favored the route. During the years before the Civil War, there was increasing numbers of lowcountry planters and their families who headed for the mountains to escape the

heat of summer, as well as the dangers of the “sickly season.” In previous years, many of these planters would have traveled to the South Carolina Sand Hills, where communities like Stateburg sprang up to cater to this seasonal traffic. The state road made it easier to go further, up into the mountains, where it was even cooler. Most planters usually traveled in their own carriages, although some used public conveyances. Often six or more families traveled together for safety. These lowcountry “caravans” were accompanied by baggage and provision wagons, personal slaves, as well as mounted attendants who rode beside the convoy. In this fashion, it would often take up to 10 days to make the journey across the state (Batson 2003:77-78).

Some of the more popular destinations for these lowcountry travelers were Caesar’s Head, Raven Cliff Falls, and Table Rock, but the most popular of all was the area around Flat Rock, North Carolina. Located on the crest of the Blue Ridge, Flat Rock was about 12 miles north of the Poinsett Bridge. For those approaching the mountains from either Charleston or Columbia, the best way to get to Flat Rock was by way of the state road (Cooper 2000; Huff 1995:89-92).

This sort of attention gave the Saluda Mountain Road an upper-crust veneer and even a little upper crust notoriety. According to local tradition, Joel Poinsett kept a summer residence just inside the South Carolina line. Further up the road, just over the North Carolina line, there was a duel that occurred on November 5, 1827 between Dr. Robert B. Vance, a former North Carolina Congressman, and Samuel P. Carson. Carson’s second was Davy Crockett. Dr. Vance was mortally wounded and died at John Davis’ tavern in North Carolina. Both Carson and Crockett eventually moved on to Texas. Crockett died at the Alamo and Carson became Secretary of State in the new Texas Republic (Batson 2003:64-65).

Small settlements sprang up along the Saluda Mountain Road. Merrittsville, located close to the toll gate, became a small community as a result of this traffic. The settlement coalesced around the farm of Benjamin Merritt, who settled on the North Saluda at the base of the mountains in the late 1700s. At first just the site of Merritt’s mill, this community grew to contain a general store, blacksmith shop, tannery, drover’s stand, saw mill and a post office, first established by John Hodges in 1821 (Batson 2003:55, 58). Hodges and his family lived south of Merrittsville.

Living to the northeast of John Hodges, further up Little Gap Creek, was Jordan Holcombe. To the southeast was William Lynch, Jr. Both men had their land as a result of state grants, and much of this land would fall into the possession of Gresham Callahan, for which the Callahan Mountain would later be named. Further upstream, near the headwaters of Little Gap Creek, were Tim Pitman and William Howard, both of whom had land grants. Their lands would later be in the possession of John and Charles Gosnell, and Jacob and Joshua Pruitt (See Appendix A). This area, located on the west flank of Glassy Mountain, was on the edge of what became known as the “Dark Corner.”

Lowcountry visitors were exposed to the regionalisms of this mountainous part of the state. One of the most interesting was the story of the Dark Corner, another name for the area around Glassy and Hogback mountains, which formed the headwaters for the Pacolet, South Pacolet, Middle Tyger, South Tyger, and North Saluda rivers. During the Nullification Controversy, lowcountry people described the local residents, almost all Unionists, as being “in the dark,” or living in a “dark corner.” Many of these locals also made their own whiskey, an activity that became illegal after the Civil War. In the era of moonshine, the name “Dark Corner” took on yet another meaning (Batson 2003:66).

It would appear that the Saluda Mountain Road was still being leased out right up to the time of the Civil War (Batson 2003:18-19). This system, however, fell apart in the later years of the war, when deserters often congregated in the mountainous areas of the state and across the border in North Carolina. Caesar's Head, Pott's Cove, Saluda Gap, and the Dark Corner, all became known as areas where deserters could gather (Batson 2003:65). In the years that followed the war, with the state's economy in tatters and with widespread poverty, the Saluda Mountain Road became just another road, one of many that provided access to the mountains.

After the war, it appears that the state attempted to reinstate the collection of tolls on the Saluda Mountain Road. In a message dated to October 24, 1865, the governor said that no tolls had been collected or work done on the road for the previous two to three years (Batson 2003:19). The implication was that that situation would change. Whether it did is not clear. Some years later, around 1872, it was announced that the Saluda Gap Turnpike was to be leased by authority of the Sinking Fund Commission for a term of five years, with the lease to be paid in advance (Batson 2003:19).

Cartographic sources from the late nineteenth century typically show the road with few changes. The 1873 Stoeber map shows the mountain road as just one of many in the area (Stoeber 1873). Even so, it still appears that the Saluda Mountain Road and the Gap Creek Road were the main routes over the mountains.

The road appeared again on the 1882 Kyzer map with basically the same configuration (Kyzer 1882). The toll house appears, as does Merrittsville. The creek spanned by the upper-most of the three bridges, originally called Hodge's Creek, and later Mill Creek, appears on this map at least as State Falls Creek. J. H. Goodwin and J. F. Hightower were among the local residents listed in the vicinity of the road on this map. Closer to Little Gap Creek, there were W. I. Hart, A. D. Hart, and John Gosnell.

By the time of the 1904 Edens map, the road toll was no longer collected. The tollgate was abandoned, and the road does not appear to be any different from the other roads in the area (Edens 1904).

A few years later, around 1910-1912, one of the stone arches of the North Saluda River bridge collapsed and was replaced by a wooden span. This was the situation when traveler Thomas Robinson Dawley spent the night with Arthur Hodges and his family before crossing the half ruined bridge (Batson 2003:14, 22, 77).

There were other changes to the road about this time. The coming of the automobile led to a few stretches being widened and straightened, beginning around 1914-1916. The village of Merrittsville began its slow decline with the growing popularity of the auto (Batson 2003:22; 55-58).

Other forces were at work in the depopulation of Merrittsville and the surrounding area. The phenomenal spread of cotton mills throughout the South Carolina piedmont in the early 1900s, drew South Carolina mountain folk to the cities of Greenville and Spartanburg. The same Thomas Robinson Dawley who crossed the Saluda River bridge, reported that much of the South Carolina mountains were almost abandoned as people moved off to the mills, leaving houses and cabins unattended (Batson 2003:75-77).

In the wake of this depopulation came the lumber industry, which clear-cut much of the mountain areas of South Carolina and adjacent parts of North Carolina in the early years of the 20th Century. This activity led Howard Wiswald to work up a property map of the region between 1918 and 1921 for the Saluda Land and Lumber Company (Greenville County Plat Book Y:118). The scale of this map is such that it is not

suitable for reproduction in this report, but, with the aid of a magnifying glass, it is an incomparable resource for determining property ownership in the area.

One of the more unusual additions to the local area was a Boy Scout camp, which was established in the area as early as the 1920s (Simmons 1926). This establishment came to be called Camp Old Indian, and was located on the slopes of Old Indian Mountain on the Saluda Mountain Road, just about a quarter mile above Poinsett Bridge (Batson 2003:54). The Boy Scout camp inaugurated a period when the Poinsett Bridge was more frequently exposed to visitors. From this point on, the bridge begins to appear in the local newspapers as a historical curiosity.

One of the few plat maps showing the bridge area dates to 1937 (Dalton and Neves 1937). It shows the H. P. McGee Land, also known as the Callahan Mountain Tract, some 116 acres on the south side of the old State Road. It shows the "Old Stone Bridge," the Boy Scout land to the east, Jesse Watson's land to the north, and Saluda Lumber Company land to the west. Since the property line in this area ran along the road, the property line ran over the bridge as well. It is for this reason that the bridge in recent years has always been split between two different owners.

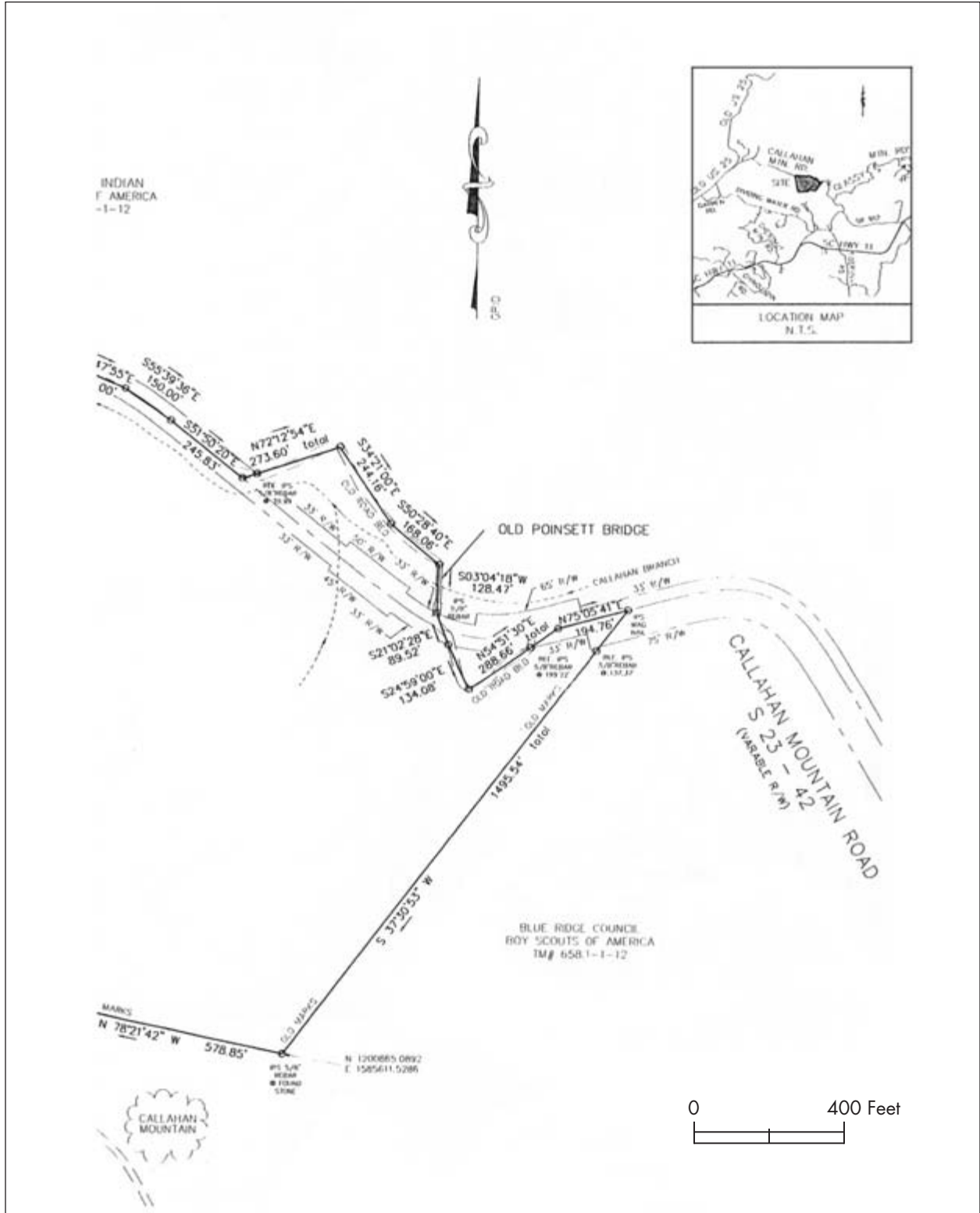
As unlikely as it seems now, the Saluda Mountain Road (the old State Road) and the Poinsett Bridge, remained in use until at least 1955 (Batson 1955). In the year or so that followed, the road was realigned so that the Poinsett Bridge and the sharp turns associated with it were cut off by a new road bed, located immediately south of the old bridge (Figure 10; Williams 2002).

Another, even bigger change occurred about the same time. The North Saluda Reservoir, planned and constructed from the middle 1950s to the early 1960s, was an integral part of the Greenville Watershed Area, an upland area set aside as the water supply for the growing city of Greenville and surrounding area (Greenville Piedmont 1955). The reservoir had a direct impact on many of the local historic resources. The site of the North Saluda River bridge was impacted by the reservoir's dam. The uppermost of the three bridges, as well as the site of Merrittsville, were covered by the waters of the reservoir (Batson 2003:14, 22, 55-58). Only the Poinsett Bridge and isolated segments of the old roadbed remain to remind modern visitors of the Saluda Mountain Road, once the pride of South Carolina's Board of Public Works. As the bridge became the sole symbol of the old road system and an era long gone, it became increasingly the subject of local newspaper articles that repeated and even fabricated local lore about the bridge.

RECENT HISTORY OF THE POINSETT BRIDGE AND THE CREATION OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVE

By the time of the Boy Scout camp, in the 1920s, the Poinsett Bridge over Little Gap Creek was becoming a curiosity piece. One of the first known newspaper articles dealing with the bridge is dated to 1926, a little over one hundred years after the bridge was built. At that time, the construction date of 1820 was still clearly visible on the keystone of the arch. Already called "Poinsett Bridge," it was considered built by Joel Poinsett and Col. Abram Blanding. It was also thought to have been constructed by two Irish stonemasons, surnamed Denny or Danny (Simmons 1926).

Figure 10
Area of Poinsett Bridge Showing Old Road Alignment and New (1955) Alignment



By this point, it seems clear that Poinsett's association with the bridge had risen over the years, while that of Abram Blanding and Robert Mills had slipped. Another source dated to about this time claimed that Poinsett himself designed and built the bridge (Richardson 1930:64). This bit of misinformation was at least partly offset by David Kohn's *Internal Improvements in South Carolina, 1817-1828*. Here, Abram Blanding's pivotal role in the construction of the Saluda Mountain Road and its bridges was well established (Kohn 1938). This work also contained a photograph of the Poinsett Bridge, showing the downstream face, the Gothic arch, and the parapet (Figure 11; Kohn 1938:16). This is one of the first known images of the bridge since the Robert Mills' sketch of 1821.

The bridge and the area around it again received attention in the mid-1950s, when the road was realigned and the North Saluda Reservoir was constructed. According to a newspaper article dated to 1955, the bridge was haunted, and the Irish masons, Denny and Danny, were so pleased with their work that they came back to haunt the bridge at night. Another story making the rounds was that a man was killed during the construction of the bridge and was then buried in the abutments. He too came back at night (Batson 1955). In another story, a small cabin that stood nearby was the home of Poinsett's foreman during the construction of the State Road (*Greenville Piedmont* 1955). A much less savory development seems to have been vandalism. Possibly because it was no longer in use after 1955, people began hauling off stones from the top levels of the bridge (*Greenville News* 1956).

In 1971, a newspaper article about the bridge mentioned that the plans were believed to have come from Robert Mills. According to local tradition, the bridge was built by a stonemason named Mr. McDevit, who used Indian and slave labor in the construction (Thomas 1971:46).

Beginning around 1970, when Poinsett Bridge was put on the National Register of Historic Places (Schuette 1970), there was growing interest in the history of the bridge. Ways were also examined to preserve the structure, which was still in private hands. A 1998 drawing of the bridge by Dr. William McCuen was included in Anne McCuen's article that summarized the bridge's known history (McCuen 2000:18). By this time, the structure was thought to be the oldest extant bridge in South Carolina, if not the entire Southeast United States. It was listed in Donald Jackson's *Great American Bridges and Dams*, and was included in an international database of structures (*Structurae* 1998-2003). Even so, it was still not certain who designed the bridge. Many modern sources have enlisted Robert Mills as the architect responsible for the design, but others, like Nancy Cooper, still say that Poinsett "supervised the building of the state road" and "may have designed the arched stone bridges in Greenville County" (Cooper 2000:47).

In early 2000, a committee for the preservation of the Poinsett Bridge, appointed by the Greenville County Council and chaired by Anne McCuen, began a study of the bridge and the various means available to preserve the bridge and adjacent road remnant. Based on the work of that committee, before the end of that year, the South Carolina Heritage Trust decided to assume the project, with the goal of turning it into a Heritage Trust Preserve (Hyndman 2002). At that time, the preserve was to include a six-acre tract to be obtained from the Boy Scouts, as well as other lands obtained from the south and west side of the bridge (Project Area c.2000).



Figure 11
1937 Photograph of Poinsett Bridge Showing Intact Parapet

In 2002, the South Carolina Department of Transportation awarded funds to Greenville County for further study of the bridge and its restoration (Hyndman 2002). In 2003, the Parkhurst Tract was acquired by SCDNR-HTP to develop a heritage preserve for the bridge and the immediate area (Zacher 2003; 2004; Botwick 2004:1). Arrangements were made with the Boy Scouts to acquire land on their side of the bridge. At present, the preserve contains 122 acres, and will include the bridge, the adjacent roadbed, and a number of proposed improvements, such as trails, viewing decks, and information kiosks.

This report was compiled to complement the establishment of the preserve. One of our goals was to bring together what is currently known about the Poinsett Bridge and the Saluda Mountain Road. Another was to identify, if possible, the individual responsible for the design of the Poinsett Bridge and the other bridges associated with the road. In particular, we wanted to determine whether or not Robert Mills, a native son of South Carolina and famous as the original designer of the Washington Monument, had a hand in this design. Unfortunately, we were not able to prove or disprove this association. The best we could do with the evidence was to suggest that Mills was the designer, but the evidence is at best circumstantial. The evidence of the bridges themselves strongly suggests that a professional architect was involved with this work, and this would rule out Poinsett as a possible designer, and almost surely Abram Blanding as well. There is still the possibility of William Jay, who was the architect on the Board of Public Works at the time the bridge was constructed, in the summer and fall of 1820. There would appear to be no evidence, however, that Jay ever worked up any plans for bridges, something that Mills is known to have done. Since Mills had been actively seeking a position with the board or its predecessors since 1817, and actually became a paid member of the board in December of 1820, his involvement with the bridge in the fall of 1820 is not as far-fetched as it might appear at first glance.

III. ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS AND RESULTS

The objective of archaeological survey for this project was to identify resources associated with Poinsett Bridge and the extant historic road segments in the SCDNR-HTP property. Background research and reviews of site file data provided a basis for developing predictions regarding archaeological resource potential. Fieldwork for this survey entailed surface reconnaissance and shovel testing of areas alongside the historic road and bridge. Fieldwork took place on December 18 and 19, 2003. The following sections describe the methods used for this survey and the results.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL

Reviews of previously recorded locations and prior studies of prehistoric and historic settlement provide a basis for evaluating archaeological resource potential. Review of the archaeological site files at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology indicated that one site (38GR24) has been recorded in the project area while two additional sites (38GR3 and 38GR104) are within one mile of the project area.

Site 38GR24 is Poinsett Bridge. The site file, dating to 1972, describes the site as a "massive stone bridge with pointed arches. Constructed without concrete in 1820." No related features (e.g., the historic road bed) are noted on the site form.

Two other sites within one mile of the project area are both prehistoric. Site 38GR3 ("Camp Old Indian") is described as a Native American burial site containing mounds and stone box burials. The presence of pottery sherds indicated a Woodland period component. The site was recorded in the early 1970s based on information in the files of the Charleston Museum and no further information was available. Similarly, 38GR104 was recorded on the basis of informant data. This site contained evidence of multiple components dating from the Middle Archaic to the Woodland and Mississippian periods. No information on site function was provided.

The two prehistoric sites utilize different landforms. Site 38GR3, the burial site, appears to lie at the foot of Old Indian Mountain and at the margin of the Callahan Branch Valley. This site represents a special function, though, and its location probably is not typical of the majority of prehistoric sites in the region. Site 38GR104 lies on a small bottomland ringed on three sides by steep ridge slopes. This position suggests a smaller type of site, probably a transient occupation or seasonal camp. The site file data also indicates that this site lies along Barton Creek, a stream of roughly the same size as Callahan Branch. It also appears to lie on Cartecay and Toccoa soils. This setting is similar to the Poinsett Bridge survey area. Due to the paucity of recorded sites in the project vicinity, it is difficult to generate expectations regarding the project area. However, the conditions at Site 38GR104 indicate that prehistoric Native Americans would have utilized settings such as the project area. Based on this assumption, the project area was judged to have a moderate potential for prehistoric archaeological resources. Any such resources would likely reflect brief occupations (no more than seasonal camps) and might represent any prehistoric period.

For historic archaeological research potential, historic maps provide one means for projecting past occupation. Historic maps that show structures and land use include Mills (1825) and Kyzer (1882). These maps each show the intersection of the historic road and Callahan Branch (known as Little Gap Creek during the 19th century), and indicate the presence of a bridge by the 1820s. No other occupation of any kind is shown in the project area. However, because historic settlement tends to follow transportation routes, and because the road dates to 1820, NSA characterized the project area as having a moderate potential for historic archaeological resources.

METHODS

The fieldwork included surface reconnaissance and subsurface survey. Reconnaissance consisted of inspecting the project area to identify surface features and archaeological deposits and to note conditions. It also served to identify areas that could be omitted from further survey due to slope, poor drainage, or disturbance.

Subsurface survey consisted of shovel testing in level, well-drained locations. Conditions in the project area were best suited for discontinuous transects where slope and drainage permitted. Shovel tests were placed at 15-m (50-ft) intervals in all surveyed areas. In addition, NSA placed shovel tests at 7.5-m (25-ft) intervals in the projected location of a 19th century farmhouse to look for archaeological evidence of this occupation.

Shovel tests measured 30cm (1ft) in diameter and were excavated by hand until culturally sterile soils were encountered. Screening excavated soils through 1/4-in mesh hardware cloth ensured systematic artifact recovery. Notes on all shovel test locations were recorded on standardized forms and information collected on each shovel test included depths of individual natural strata, soil color and texture, location with respect to natural landforms, and cultural materials recovered. Shovel test locations were plotted on maps of the project area and survey transects were tied to reference points shown on the project maps. Conditions in the project area were also indicated on these maps and further documented with color photographs. No artifacts were recovered during the survey and therefore, no laboratory analysis was conducted.

RESULTS

CONDITIONS IN THE SURVEY AREA

An initial walkover of the project area indicated that it contained rugged terrain along Callahan Branch. The stream valley was generally narrow within the project area and was flanked by slopes in excess of 20 percent, particularly in the area of Poinsett Bridge. The area around the bridge contained only narrow and mostly low stream terraces (Figure 12a).

Immediately downstream from the bridge, the valley became narrower, and for a distance of approximately 300m (1000 ft), was not surveyable. Downstream from this area and near the western portions of the survey area, however, the valley became wider and exhibited a relatively level floodplain flanked by lower terraces to the south (Figure 12b). Examination of portions of the floodplain along the stream indicated these were poorly drained. Other portions of this floodplain were well drained, although subsequent shovel testing revealed that they consisted of historic alluvial deposits.

Figure 12
Conditions in the Project Area



A Setting of Poinsett Bridge showing the narrow valley and steep valley walls. Looking upstream (east).



B: Wide segment of Callahan Branch Valley showing level floodplain and adjacent terraces. The projected 19th century house was on the high terrace at left. Looking southeast.

Vegetation in the project area was primarily forest with a light under story of vegetation. A section of floodplain and higher terraces located about 485m (1600 ft) west of Poinsett Bridge was an open field that was covered in dead kudzu. Ground cover was heavy throughout the project area and surface visibility was poor.

The project area contains several historic structures and sites, all of which have been previously identified but not recorded as archaeological sites. The most prominent of these is Poinsett Bridge, a gothic style stone structure crossing Callahan Branch. Associated with this feature in the project area are sections of a historic road, which according to local resident Wesley Breedlove, was used until the 1950s. A historic stone culvert crossed below the roadbed 122m (400 ft) downstream from the bridge. Mr. Breedlove also pointed out a possible stone quarry or borrow pit just upstream from Poinsett Bridge and remains of a wooden bridge located about 0.8km (0.5mi) downstream from the stone bridge. Mr. Breedlove also indicated that a late 19th century farmhouse was present, although archaeological remains of it had not been identified.

SHOVEL TEST RESULTS

In all, NSA excavated 35 shovel tests for this survey. Specific locations that NSA tested included low terraces of Callahan Branch immediately downstream from Poinsett Bridge, including the area for a proposed new parking lot on the south side of Callahan Mountain Road (State Highway 42); a high terrace immediately upstream from the creek; and high and low stream terraces in the western portion of the DNR property. In addition, NSA surveyed the projected location of the historic farmhouse, which consisted of a high terrace or bench overlooking the stream (Figure 13).

Shovel tests on the lower stream terraces and floodplains encountered soils that appeared to reflect historic flood deposits. Examples of these shovel tests included STP7, located on a terrace of the stream and STP23 situated on a low floodplain section. STP7 encountered a 34-cm (1.1ft) thick layer of very dark grayish brown (10YR3/2) sandy silt loam that represented topsoil above dark gray (10YR4/1) coarse sand with bands of red (2.5YR4/8) clayey sand that extended to the base of excavation at 88 cm (2.9ft) below surface.

STP23 exposed a deposit of olive brown (2.5Y4/3) fine silt with mica to 44cm (1.4ft) deep. These soils lay above dark gray (2.5Y4/1) compact sand that resembled stream channel deposits. Soil profiles such as these were interpreted as evidence that floods had scoured the valley bottom and low terraces. Much of the reworking of these landforms probably occurred during the historic period as clearing led to intensified erosion and high-energy floods.

Soil profiles on higher terraces included shallow topsoil above clayey subsoil. STP17, for example, revealed a 13-cm (0.4-ft) thick topsoil of dark brown (10YR3/3) sandy loam with mottles of yellowish red (5YR4/6) silt and clay. This material lay above reddish brown (10YR 4/4) clay that graded to red (2.5YR4/6) clay. The presence of angular gravel and cobbles in some of the shovel tests on higher landforms suggested that colluvial deposition had occurred.

None of the shovel tests produced cultural materials. The bottoms and low terraces surveyed probably were not stable enough for long-term settlement and any evidence of prehistoric or early historic occupation has probably eroded.

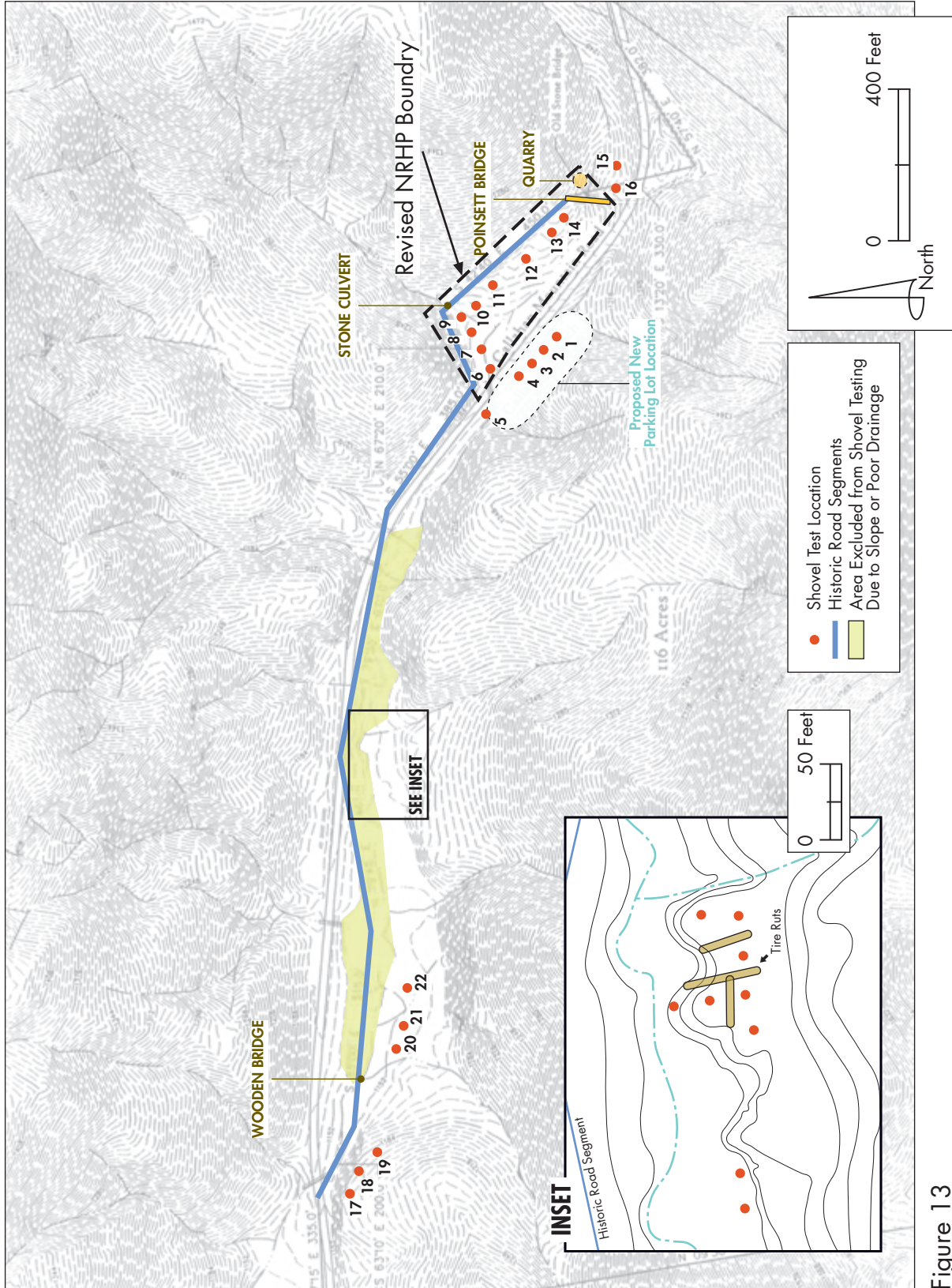


Figure 13
Archaeological Survey Coverage and Results

Survey of the reported 19th century farmhouse site also failed to produce any cultural remains. According to Wesley Breedlove, this structure was located on a high terrace south of the creek at roughly the mid-point of the study area and dated to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. At the time of the present survey, this site area was covered in kudzu that had succumbed to cold and frost to create a dense ground cover. The landform on which the house sat was raised about 5m (16 ft) above the floodplain and was bounded on the north, east, and west by steep slopes. To the south, the landform sloped upward. The resulting level area measured approximately 35-40m (115-130 ft) long and 15m (50 ft) wide. This landform also exhibited several deep ruts that suggested some disturbance by heavy machinery. Examination of the area failed to identify any surface features (e.g., foundation or chimney remains) while shovel testing at 7.5-m (25-ft) intervals did not yield any artifacts. Based on the observed disturbance, it seems likely that remains of this house were removed.

RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS

Sites observed during the survey consisted of surface features associated with the historic bridge and roadway and were pointed out by Wesley Breedlove, who had previously surveyed the property. Identified features included a historic stone culvert, a possible quarry or borrow pit, and a wooden and stone bridge.

The culvert and possible quarry relate to Poinsett Bridge, previously recorded as archaeological site 38GR24. Because of this relationship, the archaeological site boundary was expanded to include these features. Changes to the site boundary and description were recorded on a revised Archaeological Site Inventory Form (Appendix B).

Stone Culvert

The stone culvert lies 122m (400 ft) west of the Poinsett Bridge and permitted a 5th-order tributary to flow under the historic roadbed and into Callahan Branch. The feature consists of a conduit with dry-laid stone sides and roof measuring 70cm (2.3 ft) high (above the extant stream bed) and about 1.5m (5ft) wide (Figure 14a). The length of the feature is about 3m (10 ft). Given that the road remained in use into the 20th century, and probably saw periodic repair, the age of this feature cannot be determined at present.

Historic Borrow Pit/Quarry

The possible borrow pit lies immediately northeast of Poinsett Bridge on the north bank of Callahan Branch. This feature consists of an apparently excavated section of the ridge slope measuring approximately 20m (65 ft) across and 15m (50 ft) high (Figure 14b). Remnants of a rock ledge are exposed within the excavated area. Wesley Breedlove noted (personal communication, 2003) that this feature might have been used to quarry stone for Poinsett Bridge.

It is worth mentioning that a rather expansive rock outcrop located downstream from the bridge and adjacent to the old road has an exposed face that was apparently flattened to clear the road and/or to acquire stone for the bridge. Also, large stones are strewn in the area between this outcrop and the stream, while the slope above the outcrop does not contain loose stones. This circumstance suggests that the stones reflect quarrying debris.

Figure 14
Cultural Resources Identified in the Project Area



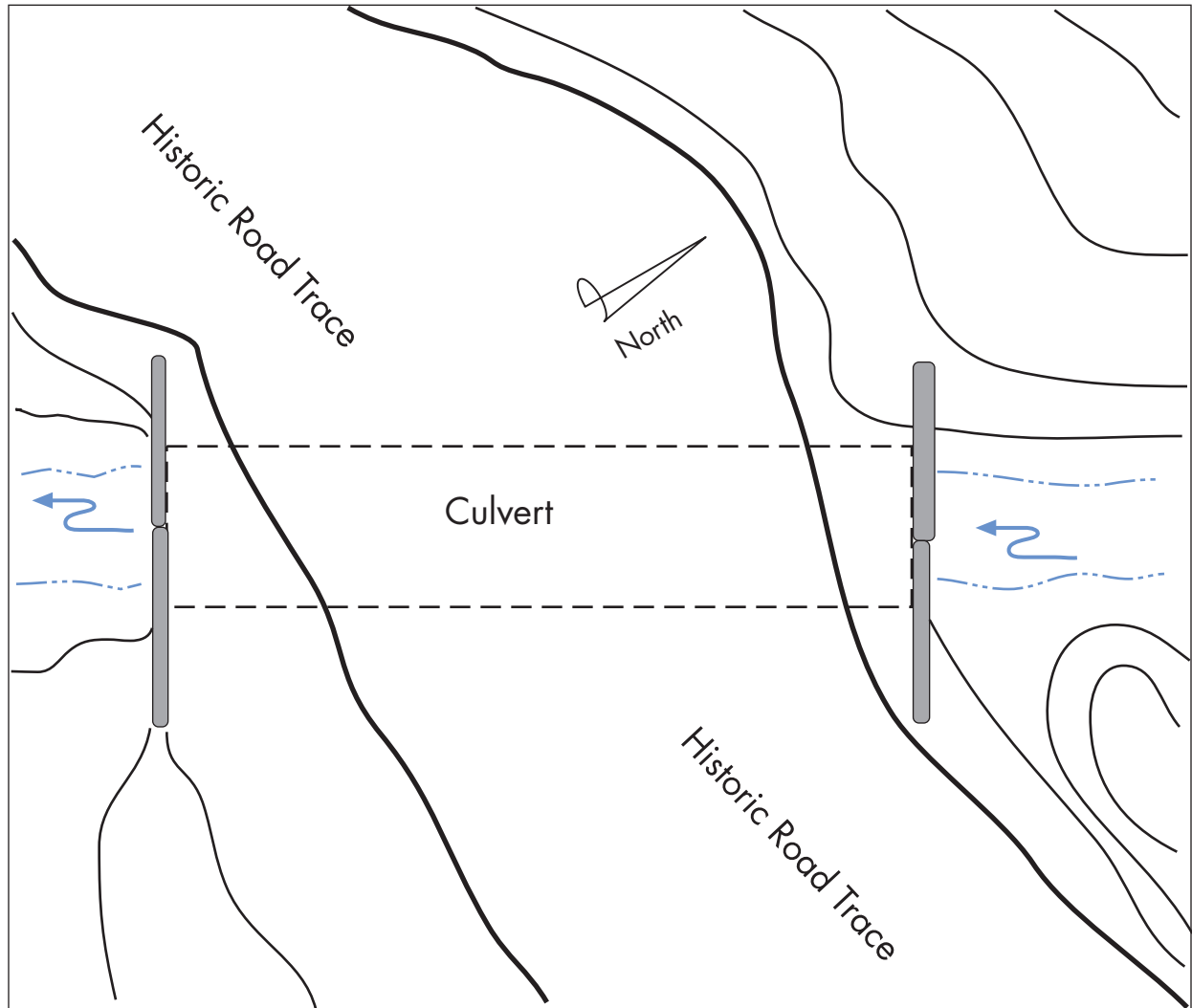
A. Stone Culvert. Looking North.

B. Historic Borrow Pit/Quarry. Looking North.

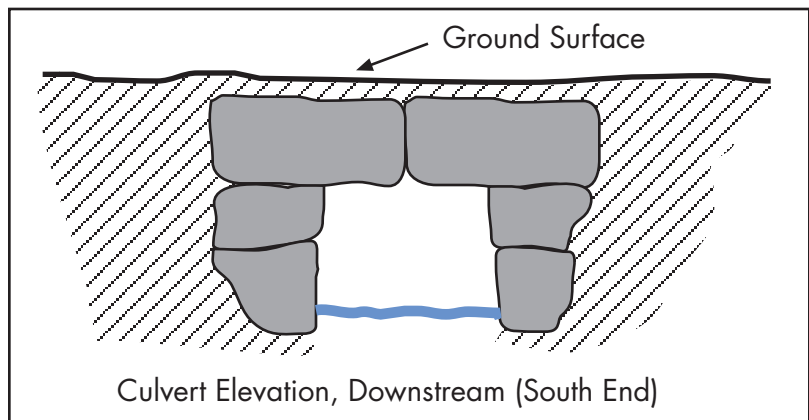


C. Wood Bridge Remains (Site 38GR316). Looking Southwest.

Figure 15
Plan View and Profile of Historic Culvert, Site 38GR24



Plan View of Stone Culvert



Culvert Elevation, Downstream (South End)

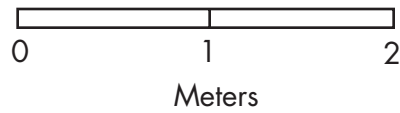
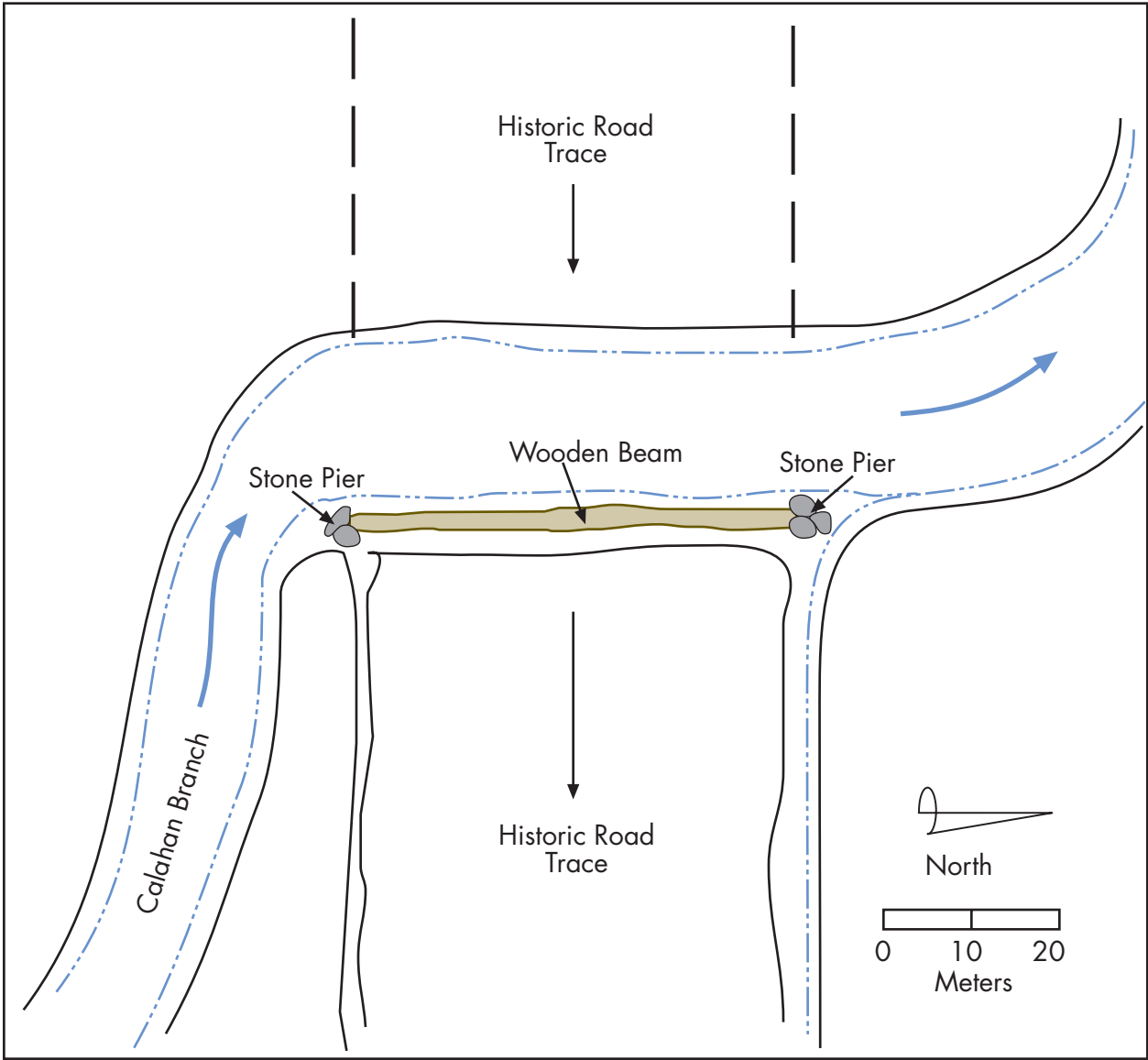


Figure 16
Plan of Site 38GR316



The stone culvert and the evidence for quarrying contribute to the significance of the complex represented by the bridge and extant road sections. Both features have good integrity and clearly convey a sense of their functions. Moreover, they have good integrity of context in that they can be viewed with respect to their historical associations to the bridge and road. While the chronologies of these features are not clear and they do not appear to possess significant research potential, they contribute to the historic feeling of the Poinsett Bridge site and so are recommended as contributing elements of it.

Wood Bridge (Site 38GR316)

The final archaeological resource recorded during this survey is a wooden bridge remnant—designated 38GR316—that formerly carried the historic road over Callahan Branch. This site is 0.8km (0.5mi) west of Poinsett Bridge. Remains of the structure consist of a 4.9m (16ft) long square wooden beam at the water line of the east stream bank (Figure 14c). Piles of fieldstone lie at either end of the beam and are probably remnants of the bridge abutments. Some large stones are on the opposite bank but no other wooden structural remains were noted. Presumably the bridge consisted of a relatively basic wooden deck spanning the stream and resting on stone footings. Examination of the beam indicated it is a squared timber although no saw marks are visible. Several modern galvanized wire nails are embedded in it, indicating relatively new construction or repairs.

The apparent recent age of this feature and its poor overall condition suggest that it does not possess qualities of significance as defined by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). While this feature is clearly associated with the historic roadbed, it lacks sufficient integrity to clearly convey a sense of its original function. Also, these remains almost certainly represent a late replacement for any earlier structure that might have been present. Therefore site 38GR316 does not likely comprise a significant cultural resource.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HISTORIC CONTEXT SUMMARY

Poinsett Bridge was constructed in 1820 as one of three bridges built along the Saluda Mountain Road. These bridges were built under the direction of the South Carolina Board of Public Works and were some of the earliest elements of the State Road, one of the Board's most significant transportation projects, which would ultimately connect Charleston to Columbia and South Carolina to western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. The actual construction of the bridges and other work on the Saluda Mountain Road, including the construction of stone culverts and retaining walls and the grading and clearing of the road itself, was largely completed by stone masons and mechanics brought to South Carolina from northern states.

Work on the Saluda Mountain Road was completed between July and October of 1820 and this work was conducted during the summer months to provide the northern workers with a respite from construction in the coastal plain during the malarial season. The three bridges built for the Saluda Mountain Road were all constructed of stone and all expressed architectural elements, such as the Gothic arch incorporated into the design of the Poinsett Bridge, which suggest that they were designed by an architect. No plans or designs for these bridges have been found, however. Poinsett Bridge is the only one of these three bridges to survive, and is the oldest surviving bridge in South Carolina as well as one of the oldest in the southeast.

At the time of its construction, the Board of Public Works was composed of five members: Abram Blanding, Thomas Baker, Joel R. Poinsett, William Jay, and Robert G. Mills. Only two of these were paid and these appear to have done much of the Board's work as "acting commissioners." These two were Abram Blanding, who was in charge of roads, rivers, and canals, and who was the *de facto* head of the public works program; and Thomas Baker, a contractor in charge of the construction of public buildings. Of the other three, William Jay was a prominent English-born and trained architect who created some of the first designs for the program's courthouses and jails. Robert G. Mills was a contractor, and no relation to the architect Robert Mills, who would later serve on the board. Joel Poinsett was a politician, the president of the Board, and by far the Board's most prestigious member. Poinsett traveled to the Saluda Mountain Road area in July of 1820 and would later own property near the completed road, however, there is no evidence that he was involved in the physical design and construction of the bridge itself. Poinsett Bridge is named for him, in recognition of the role he played in the building of the State Road.

The identity of the architect who designed the Poinsett Bridge may never be known, as no plans of the bridge or the other bridges built for the Saluda Mountain Road have been found. However, the design of these bridges, which feature various architectural and engineering elements not known in the southeastern US nor common in northeastern bridge architecture of the era, suggests these bridges were the work of an accomplished architect. Two candidates emerge from the historical literature who may be associated with these designs, both of whom were associated with the Board of Public Works. The first of these is William

Jay. Jay was an architect who trained in Europe. While he designed a number of the public buildings which were planned by the Board of Public Works, there is no evidence that he designed any bridges or had experience with bridge design. Jay was replaced on the Board near the end of 1820 by Robert Mills. Mills would subsequently redesign many of the building plans Jay had developed. While Jay was the architect on the Board of Public Works when the Poinsett Bridge was designed, there is nothing in his catalog to suggest he was capable of executing three different complicated bridge designs, particularly while working on a number of other building plans for the Board.

The other architect is Robert Mills. Mills would not be hired by the Board of Public Works until December, 1820, after the Poinsett Bridge had been completed. However, he was actively seeking work in his native state of South Carolina as early as 1817 and thus may have been in touch with Joel Poinsett and other of the state's politicians advertising his services. The Board of Public Works had embarked on an ambitious building program following its establishment, with everything from courthouses and public buildings to canals, roads and bridges on its slate, and it is likely that the Board would have sought additional architectural services to augment the plans that William Jay was able to produce. Trained architects were not easily found at that time, and Mills was a South Carolinian with political connections who was actively promoting himself in the state as one of the first American-trained architects. It thus seems likely that the Board would have called upon Mills for assistance. The fact that he was brought on to replace William Jay at the end of 1820 suggests that the Board was familiar with his work and had already decided they would be better served by Mills than by Jay. Mills also had experience with the design of bridges, having created the design for the Schuylkill Bridge in Philadelphia which was the largest single span bridge in the world when completed in 1812. There are also aspects of the design of the Saluda Mountain bridges which suggest the hand of Robert Mills. Rather than utilizing comparable designs and plans, each of the three bridges employed a unique architectural vocabulary. This suggests the work of an architect who was familiar with bridge engineering and design, as well as the work of an expressive architect anxious to display his abilities and style. All of these elements suggest the hand of Robert Mills. Perhaps the strongest association between Mills and the Saluda Mountain Bridges, including Poinsett, was his tour of the Saluda Mountain Road in 1821 and his preparation of detailed pen and ink drawings of the road and each of the bridges. These drawings suggest that Mills had a strong interest in the bridges, an interest that would be difficult to understand unless he was their designer.

Following its completion, Poinsett Bridge became part of the State Road with tolls collected for travel through this section of the road. The flurry of transportation work and planning, and the Board of Public Works, had already come to an end, however. Population migration west, coupled with the introduction of the railroad in the early 1830s and the Nullification Controversy diminished the grand schemes of the 1810s which called for both roads and canals to facilitate travel in the state. Passage over Poinsett Bridge would continue at a slower pace, primarily reflecting the travel of planters and others to the mountains during the summer season. With the introduction of the automobile, the movement to bypass Poinsett Bridge could be predicted, and by the mid 1950s the bridge was no longer in use. Its preservation to this date is testimony to its remarkable architecture and a reminder of the dreams and aspirations of the state in the early 19th century.

POINSETT BRIDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

The context research has provided more information on this historic bridge and has brought together various images of the bridge over time as well as themes for future interpretation. The Mills' sketch, although stylized, gives some sense of how the bridge looked after construction. The simple railings used

as a guard rail indicate that the sidewalls on the bridge entries were fairly low. The 1938 photograph is extremely useful and the large format photography completed for the 1988 HAER study contributes greatly to our knowledge of this significant historic resource. However, very little primary information was found that would benefit or guide future bridge restoration. The original gross dimensions are known but details are still missing such as the height of the entry sidewalls that are now in poor condition.

The details may be in the bridge itself. To date there has been no thorough study of the bridge by a historic architect that fully describes its appearance and its construction. The HAER study was confined to large format photography and a summary form with no description. A full architectural description and measured drawings of the bridge today would provide a permanent record as well as baseline information as planning begins for bridge stabilization and possible restoration. It is recommended that SCDNR-HTP and the Greenville County Recreation District require the drafting of measured drawings and the completion of a historic structures report for the bridge to provide a record of its condition prior to or as part of any stabilization work. We also recommend that notices or advertisements be posted in local areas such as community centers and libraries asking for old photographs of the bridge. Views from the 1920s through the 1950s in private collections would be of great value for future work and this call would allow the interested public an avenue to contribute to the bridge's preservation. A press release on the results of this historic context could be provided and could include a call for historic images. Similarly, a public meeting could be held to present the results of this research and attendees could be asked to bring historic photographs with them for scanning and documentation. Finally, we recommend that the organization selected for the stabilization effort include a historic architect given the significance of the bridge.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Archaeological survey focused on areas adjacent to the bridge and roadway, which included bottomland along Callahan Branch. The survey found that much of the bottomland contained soils deposited by historic floods and no prehistoric or early historic sites were identified during the shovel testing.

The survey resulted in the recordation of three surface features in addition to Poinsett Bridge and the historic road. These features include a stone culvert under the historic road, a possible quarry or borrow pit used to obtain building material for the bridge, and wooden bridge remains located downstream from Poinsett Bridge. The culvert and possible quarry possess integrity and convey a sense of their functions and association with Poinsett Bridge and the historic road. They have been included in archaeological site 38GR24, which previously included Poinsett Bridge and contiguous historic road segments. The newly recorded features are recommended as contributing to the historic significance of the Poinsett Bridge Site, which is listed on the NRHP.

Based on this recommendation, the boundaries of 38GR24 should be expanded to include these newly recorded features. Included in the boundaries are the bridge, the quarry located east of the bridge, the stone culvert, located northwest of the bridge, and the extant road trace in the site area, which ties together elements of the site (see Figure 13). The boundaries are drawn to include a roughly 200x60-m (650x200-ft) area that includes a discrete section of Callahan Branch terraces bounded by steep slopes on all sides and containing extant portions of the historic road trace and other features. Although segments of the historic road exist in other parts the survey area, these no longer connect to the NRHP site and do not strongly contribute to its historic character. The revised site boundaries therefore include a discrete and representative sample of features associated with the construction and operation of Poinsett Bridge.

The wooden bridge, designated Site 38GR316, apparently represents a 20th century span of the creek at a point along the historic road. This resource lacks integrity and does not convey a sense of its function. This resource is therefore recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SITE INTERPRETATION

The Poinsett Bridge is a historically significant site with the ability to address a number of aspects of South Carolina's history. Ultimate development of the interpretive plans and displays at Poinsett Bridge will be developed by the SCDNR-HTP and the Greenville County Recreation District. This section provides a summary overview of possible themes and topics for site interpretation suggested by the historical and archaeological research.

Who Was the Bridge's Architect?

Perhaps the most fascinating element of the history of Poinsett Bridge is the fact that its architect is not known but may have been the famous Robert Mills, the self-styled first American architect who would go on to design the Washington Monument as well as many public buildings in South Carolina, Washington DC, and Philadelphia. This interpretive theme should examine the men associated with the building of the bridge, most notably Blanding, Poinsett, Jay and Mills, and should present the evidence which suggests the bridge was built by Mills. This theme may also look at various newspaper articles and other publications over time which have credited the construction of Poinsett Bridge to various individuals, most notably Mills and Poinsett, and use these observations to note that history is often detective work requiring the analysis of facts and observations, rather than the simple reading and reporting of the past.

What Is the Bridge's Style and How Was It Built?

The Poinsett Bridge was constructed of stone that appears to have been locally quarried; a quarry site was identified by the archaeological survey. Local history contends that the bridge was built without mortar. The stones used in the construction of the bridge were rough-hewn, with the exception of the arch, where the stones were finished. The arch, which rests on bedrock in the streambed, is formed by voussoirs that are slightly wedge-shaped and cut to fit. These blocks are laid in an alternating pattern: one stone placed so that the long side faces outward; the following stone placed so that its long side faces the inside of the arch. The stones facing outward, which already form an alternating pattern, are also slightly raised to create relief. The alternating pattern, the relief, plus the pointed apex of the Gothic arch, give the bridge a medieval look. Mills' sketches of the bridge show what appear to be wooden guardrails along the deck. The use of stone in the bridge's construction, as well as its formal style and appearance, speak to the importance of the State Road and the Board of Public Work's desire to build both a durable and attractive structure.

The exuberance of the bridge styles and their harkening to classic elements and styles was purposeful and had cultural meaning. They showed that the young nation even in its backcountry shared an educated architectural vocabulary on par with Europe. On a more personal level it also showed that the designer, be it Jay or Mills, was no backwoods architect/engineer. With bridges of this caliber, South Carolina "arrived" on the forefront of a developing American discipline and profession.

Why Was the State Road Built in Segments?

Poinsett Bridge and the other bridges on the Saluda Mountain Road as well as the roadway itself were one of the first elements of the State Road to be constructed. Work in 1820 started on two portions of the road, a causeway through the Huckabuck Swamp, below Columbia, and the Saluda Mountain Road in Greenville. While it does not seem logical that the Board of Public Works would begin building the road in different areas of the state at the same time, this construction schedule reflected two aspects of construction in the south: the need to import skilled workers from the northeast, and the prevalence of malaria in the coastal plain and lower piedmont during the summer, which was known as the “sickly season”. South Carolina’s work force was largely comprised of enslaved African-Americans who labored on the plantations. The state lacked skilled stonemasons and other mechanics needed for the construction of the State Road, although African-Americans were skilled builders and would accomplish some of this work. Workers, many of whom were Irish immigrants, were thus brought to South Carolina from northeastern cities such as Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, to work on the road. However, European-Americans were susceptible to malaria which was carried by mosquitoes and which was a life threatening disease of that era (it should be noted that many African-Americans were immune to the disease due to genetics which, however, led to sickle cell anemia). Many planters and their families left the coast and moved to towns in the Sand Hills, Piedmont and Mountains to avoid the threat of disease during the summer. The Board of Public Works could not afford to have their imported work force stricken by malaria, and so they shifted these workers to the Saluda Mountain Road during the summer months.

What Happened to the Board of Public Works and the Transportation Plans of the Early 19th Century?

South Carolina had ambitious plans for improving the state’s system of transportation which were begun by the Board of Public Works. These plans had several objectives: improve the movement of crops and goods from the upcountry to Charleston to enhance that city’s importance as a port, improve the movement of goods and crops, primarily rice, along the coast to Charleston, which would require the construction of canals linking the major rivers of the state; and connect South Carolina to the mountainous region of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee to link those areas with port facilities in Charleston. Work began on both road and canal projects during the Board of Public Works operation. The State Road was the largest, and most significant transportation project completed. While some canals were built with private funds, several events of the 1820s and 1830s lessened the need for these transportation improvements as well as the funding to complete them. First, the expansion of the country to the west resulted in a loss of planters and slaves, and the agricultural productivity of much of the state was no longer as vigorous as a result. Second, the decline in agricultural production also affected taxes and resulted in less money being available for public projects. Third, the railroad would be introduced in the state in 1830 and railroads would replace the roles of canals and roads in moving crops and would also diminish the importance of Charleston as a port. Finally, the Nullification Controversy of the late 1820s and 1830s would result in a change in political outlook in South Carolina and would lessen the desire to connect the state to its neighbors.

Who Traveled Over Poinsett Bridge and What Did They Pay?

The Saluda Mountain Road and Poinsett Bridge connected northern South Carolina with the mountains of western North Carolina. Many of the travelers on the road were farmers and merchants conveying crops to market. Early on, convoys of wagons moving crops, in particular apples, from North Carolina south, were common along the road. Later, a number of summer resorts would develop in the mountains which were favored by South Carolina planters and their families, and the road became known for the caravans of carriages and wagons that passed as a group of planters would move their families together up to the

mountains to avoid the sickly season. Livestock was also herded along the road. Tolls were charged by the types of carriage, by the number of animals which moved it, or by the type of animal being herded along the road. A carriage pulled by 2 animals was charged 62 cents, while one pulled by 1 animal was only charged 25 cents. Other vehicles, presumably wagons, also had to pay based on the number of draft animals pulling the vehicle: for 6 or more animals it was 75 cents; for 5 it was 62 cents; for 4 animals, 50 cents; and for 3 or less, it was 37 cents. A cart was charged 25 cents. A rider on horseback was charged 12.5 cents, while a led animal (such as a cow) cost 5 cents. A herd of animals driven to market were charged per head, depending on the type of animal: oxen, 5 cents; cattle, 3 cents; and goats, sheep, hogs, or turkeys, 2 cents.

How Do Historic Sites and Local Oral Tradition Interact?

Poinsett Bridge's historic sense of place and atmosphere has fueled oral tradition, producing a number of folk stories or local legends. The ability of historic places to transport visitors to another time and to conjure up factual, "kernel of truth," or fictional narratives that stimulate imagination and enrich that sense of place can be interpreted. Folklore about Poinsett Bridge can be presented as well as the historical evidence for such folklore. For example, folklore maintains that the bridge is haunted and some contend that a worker was buried in the bridge during its construction. Where do folktales come from, and why are they associated with historic sites?

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APPENDIX A: CHAIN-OF-TITLE

Chain of Title for Poinsett Bridge, from Earliest to Latest Owners.

Transactions after the state grant recorded in Greenville County Deed Books, shown with book and page in parentheses. This information provided courtesy of Anne McCuen of Greenville, South Carolina.

John Hodges Recipient of South Carolina state grant (1831-33)

Davis W. Hodges, son

Bridge ownership split down the middle after 1860. Each half followed separately below.

East half of bridge (north side of the old road):

John Lynch from Davis W. Hodges, 1860 (Y:875)

John M. Brady (or McBreaty) from Lynch, 1860 (Y:867)

M. D. Dickey from Brady, 1861, recorded 1879 (JJ:511)

John Gosnell from Dickey, 1863, recorded 1864 (Z:760)

John Gosnell from Brady, 1863 (land close to the bridge) (Z:761)

East or north half of bridge stays in Gosnell family from 1863 to 1925

Farmers Loan and Trust Company from P. D. Gosnell, 1925 (107:268)

Trust to People's National Bank, for Boy Scouts of America

From Farmers Loan and Trust, 1936 (185:16)

(NOTE: It appears that the Boy Scouts had a camp in the area as earlier as 1926, even though they did not formally own the land at that time)

Quit claim: Trusteeship to Boy Scouts of America, Blue Ridge Council

Transfer from People's National Bank, 1995 (1626:1549)

West half of bridge (south side of the old road):

Elisha Pruitt from Davis W. Hodges, 1876 (HH:559)

Gunter Allen from Elisha Pruitt, by way of family relation?

George Murry or Murray from Pruitt, 1876 (HH:620)

(other transactions) from Gunter Allen, 1868, recorded 1904 (MMM:59)

	From Gunter Allen, 1869, recorded 1872 (DD:724)
	From Gunter Allen, 1870, recorded 1871 (DD:28)
To sheriff for taxes	from Murry, 1895 (ZZ:564)
S. J. Dickey and G. H. Hunt	from sheriff, 1895 (ZZ:564)
S. J. Dickey	from Hunt, 1903 (JJJ:402)
Henry P. McGee	from Dickey, 1915 (26:549) see also Book 59, p. 80
Charles McGee, Jr.	from H. P. McGee, 1936 (188:24)
Charles Jackson Parkhurst	from Charles M. McGee, Jr., 1986 (1258:441)

APPENDIX B: SITE FORMS

SOUTH CAROLINA INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SITE INVENTORY RECORD
(68-1 Rev. 85)

STATE: SC COUNTY: Greenville SITE NUMBER: _____
Recorded By: B. Botwick Affiliation: New South Associates, Inc. Date: March 24, 2004

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Site name: Wooden bridge site Project: Historical and Archaeological Survey of Poinsett Bridge
2. USGS Quadrangle: Zirconia Date: 1991 Scale: 7.5 or 15 minute (circle one)
3. UTM: Zone 17 Easting 373158 Northing 3888039
4. Other map reference: _____
5. Descriptive site type (see handbook):
Prehistoric _____ Historic Bridge
6. Archaeological investigation (circle): Survey Testing _____ Excavation _____
7. Property owner: SC Department of Natural Resources Phone number: _____
8. Address: 1000 Assembly Street, Columbia, SC
9. Other site designations: _____
10. National Register of Historic Places status (circle one):
Potentially eligible _____ Probably not eligible Additional work _____

Office Use Only

Determined eligible _____ Date _____ Determined not eligible _____ Date _____
On NRHP

11. Level of significance (circle): National _____ State _____ Local _____
12. Justification: The site lacks integrity and is of uncertain date, but appears modern.

B. ENVIRONMENT AND LOCATION

1. General physiographic province (circle):
Lower Coastal Plain _____ Middle Coastal Plain _____ Blue Ridge Mountains Upper Coastal Plain _____
2. Landform location: stream floodplain/cove Site elevation (above MSL): 1150 (in feet)
3. On site soil type: silty loam Soil classification: Cartaway and Toccoa soils (Cb)
4. Major river system (circle): Pee Dee _____ Santee _____ Ashley-Combahee-Edisto _____ Savannah _____
5. Nearest river/stream: Calahan Branch
6. Current vegetation (circle): Pine/coniferous _____ Hardwood _____ Mixed pine/hardwood
Old field Grass/pasture _____ Agricultural/crops _____ Wetlands/freshwater
Wetlands/saltwater _____ Other _____ Comments: _____
7. Description of groundcover (circle): Absent _____ Light _____ Moderate _____ Heavy

C. SITE CHARACTERISTICS

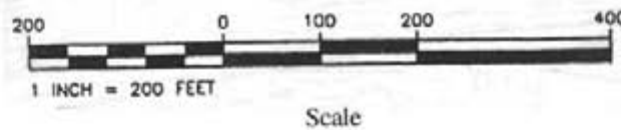
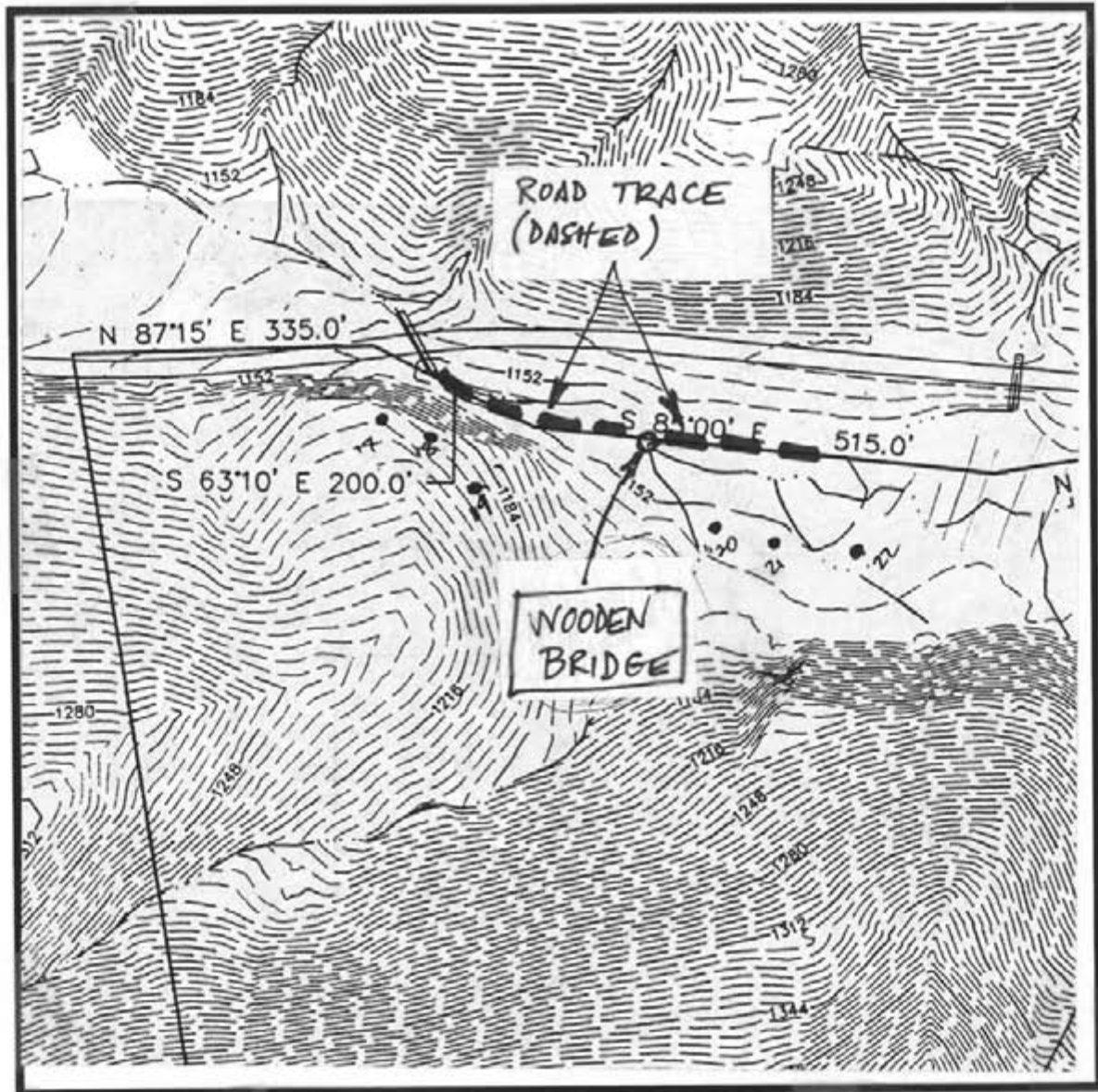
1. Estimated site dimensions: _____ 150 meters by _____ 15 meters
2. Site depth: n/a cm.
3. Cultural features (type and number): Remains of a wooden bridge; segments of the associated historic road. All features are above-ground. There do not appear to be any related structures or activity areas.

4. Presence of (circle): midden _____ floral remains _____ faunal remains _____ shell _____ charcoal _____
5. Human skeletal remains (circle): _____ present _____ preservation (circle): good _____
absent _____ poor _____

6. General site description: The site consists of the remains of a short wooden bridge across Calahan Creek and segments of a 19th-century road that continued in into the 1950s. Segments of this road are extant and are clearly related to the bridge. The bridge is mostly gone except for a wooden beam at the streambed and stone piers. The beam contains wire nails that appear galvanized, suggesting a relatively recent date. The site lies in a narrow, steep-sided mountain valley. Archaeological survey of adjacent areas did not find any prehistoric or historic deposits or features except the surface remains noted above.

(Use in conjunction with handbook)

Site Map



The following information should be provided on the site map: site boundaries, nearby topographic features, associated streams, modern cultural features, different land use types in site area, collection loci, test excavation loci, archaeological features and means of access (include north arrow and scale).

MAP KEY:

Verbal description of location: The site is located off (south of) Calahan Mountain Road. Take Rt 29 north from Greenville to SSR 969. Follow to Calahan Mountain Road (SSR 42). The site is in the woods south of the road.

D. ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPONENTS

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paleo Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Woodland | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Archaic | <input type="checkbox"/> Late Woodland | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Archaic | <input type="checkbox"/> Mississippian | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late Archaic | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Woodland | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown historic |

E. DATA RECOVERED

List materials recovered:

Total number of artifacts: 0

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(Attach additional artifact inventory sheets if needed)

F. DATA RECOVERY METHODS

1. Ground surface visibility (circle one): 0% 1-25% 26-50% 51-75% 76-100%

2. Number of person hours spent collecting (total hours X total people): _____

3. Description of surface collection methods (circle):

Type: grid collection	Extent: complete
grab collection	selective
controlled sampling	no collection made
other (specify): _____	

4. Description of testing methods (circle):

<u>Systematic</u>	Type <u>shovel testing</u>	Test units:
Nonsystematic		Number Size/max. depth
		<u>6</u> <u>30cm dia/50</u> cm.
		_____ cm.
		_____ cm.

5. Description of excavation units:

Number	Size/max. depth	Comments:
_____	_____ cm.	_____
_____	_____ cm.	_____
_____	_____ cm.	_____
_____	_____ cm.	_____

G. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

1. Present land use (circle):

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| <u>Forest</u> | Residential, high density |
| Agricultural | Commercial |
| Fallow | Industrial |
| | Residential, low density |
| | <u>Other</u> (specify) <u>in a DNR heritage preserve</u> |

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (Cont.)

2. Present condition/integrity of site (circle):

Intact

Damaged

Extent of damage

light
| moderate
heavy

Nature of damage

erosion
| cultivation
| logging
| construction/development
| vandalism
| inundation
other (specify) probably wrecked by floods

3. Potential impacts and threats to site (circle):

Potential threat:

none
low
moderate
high

Nature of threat:

erosion
cultivation
logging
construction/development
vandalism
inundation
other (specify) _____

direct impact zone
indirect impact zone
outside impact zone
indeterminate

4. Recommendations for further work (circle):

survey testing excavation archival none other: _____

Comments: _____

5. References (circle):

Historic/archival documentation Yes No Not Known

To be presented in upcoming (in 2004) historical and archaeological survey by New South Associates, Inc.

Archaeological documentation Yes No Not Known

Prior archaeological site file (dated 1972). Upcoming (in 2004) historical and archaeological survey by New South Associates, Inc.

6. Additional management information/comments: _____

7. Location of existing collections: _____

8. Location of photographs: Temporarily with New South Associates, Inc., Stone Mountain, GA

9. Location of special samples: _____

Type of special samples: _____

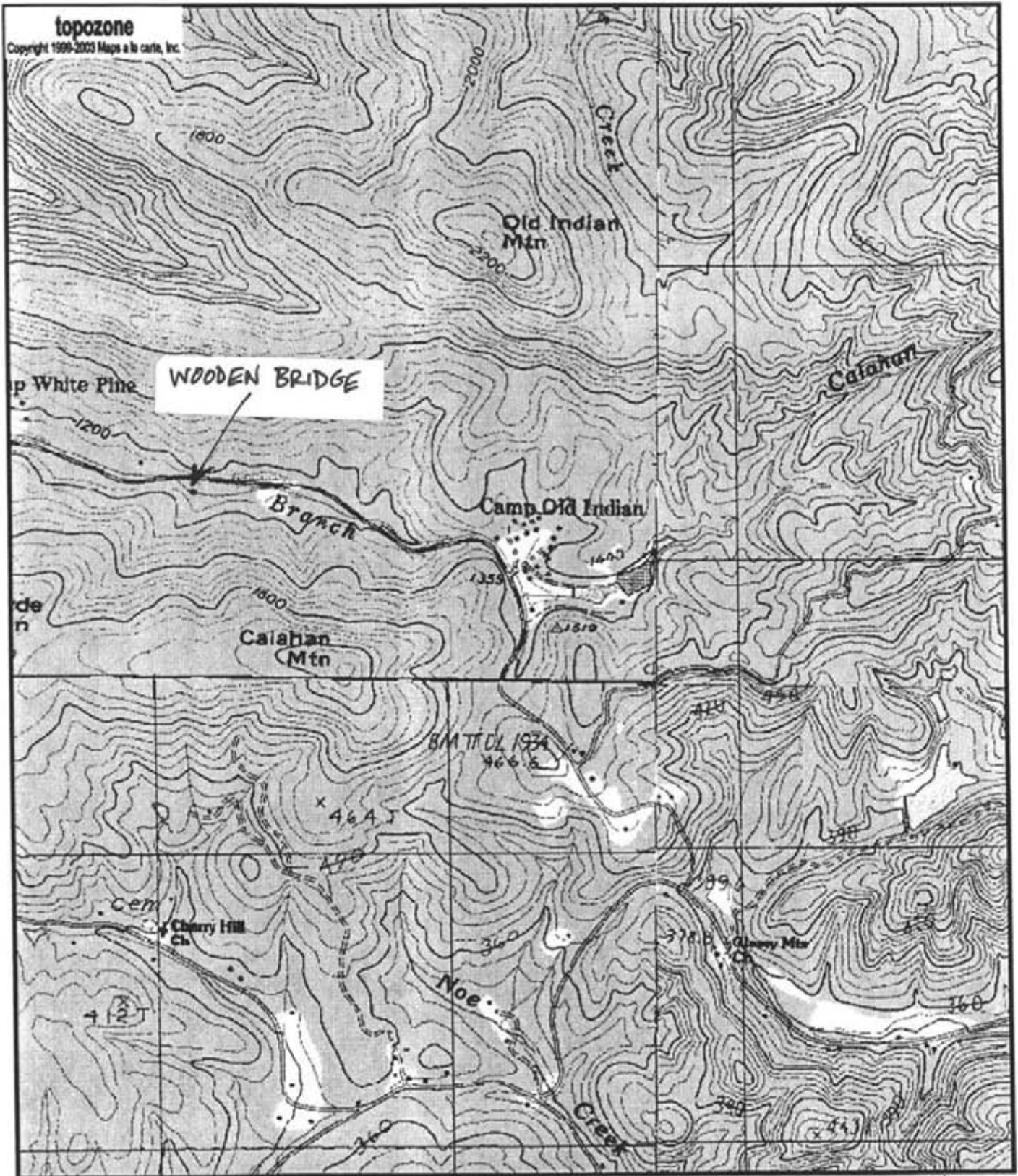
Signature of observer: _____ Date: _____

Subsequent visits:

Observer _____ Date: _____

Observer _____ Date: _____

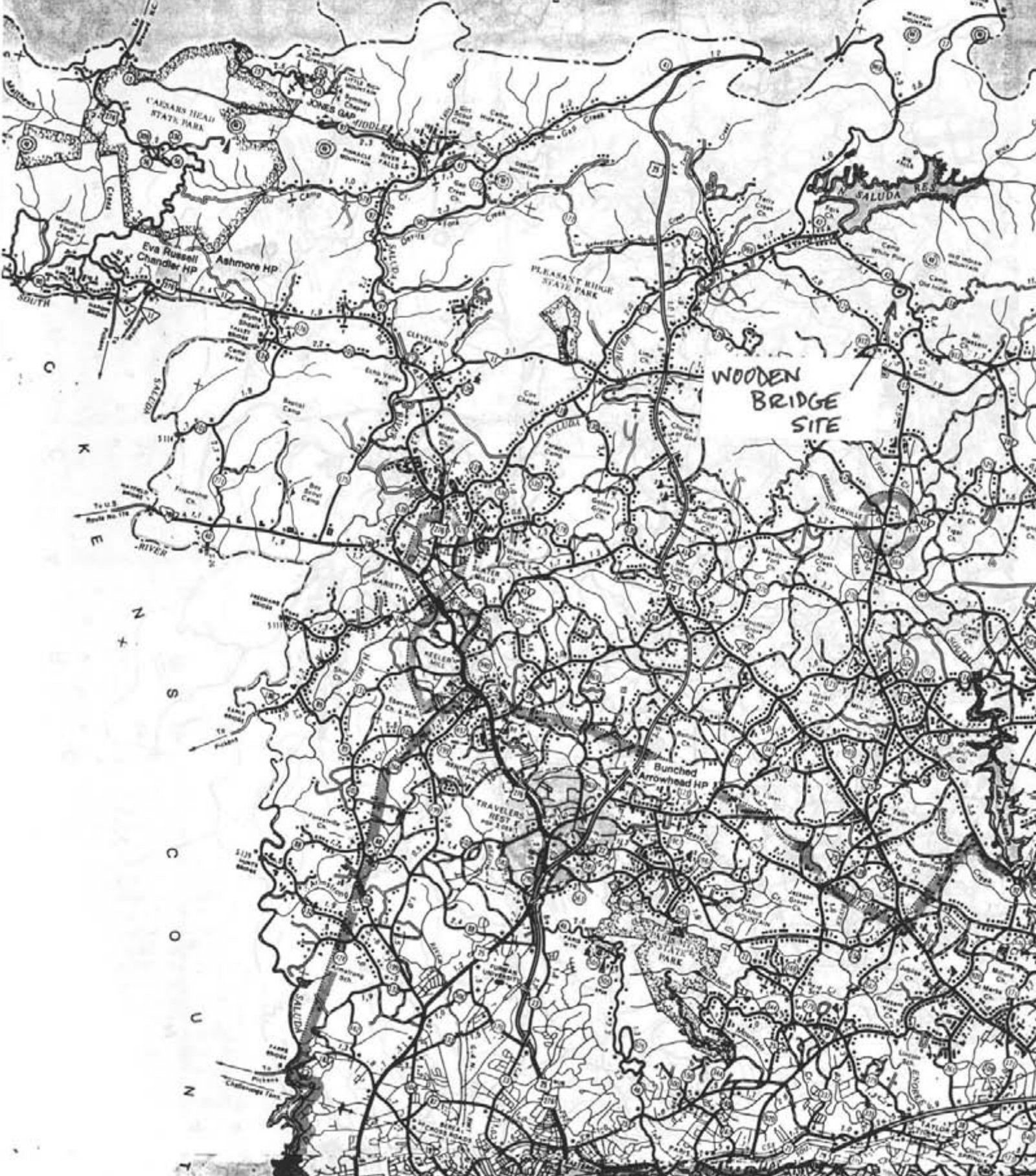
Observer _____ Date: _____



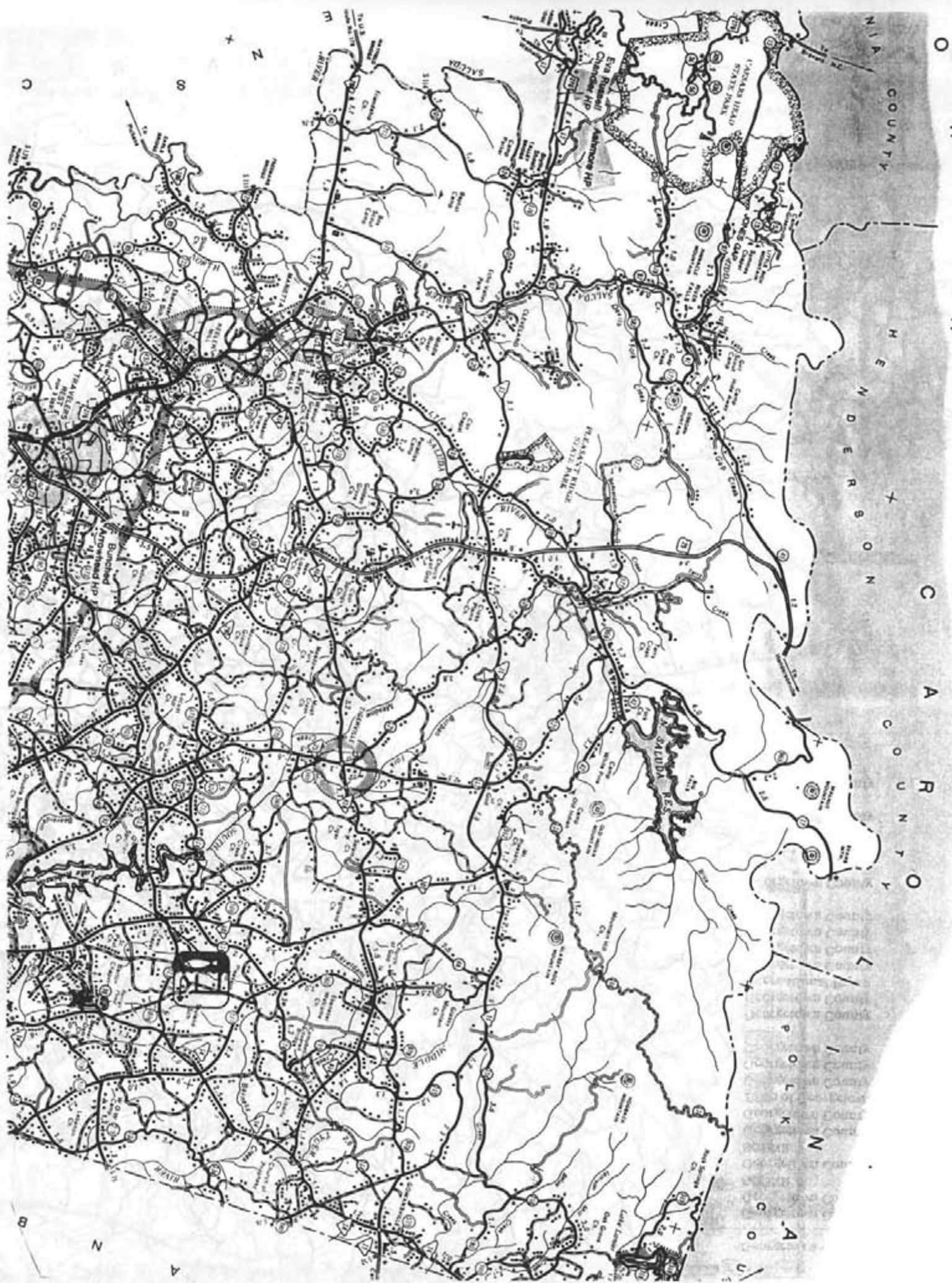
0 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 1.5 km
 0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 mi
 Map center is UTM 17 374234E 3888098N (WGS84/NAD83)
 Zirconia quadrangle
 Projection is UTM Zone 17 NAD83 Datum

M^K
 M=-5.858
 G=-0.794

N O R T H H E N D E R S O N C O U N T Y

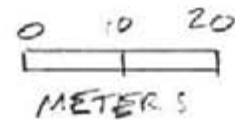
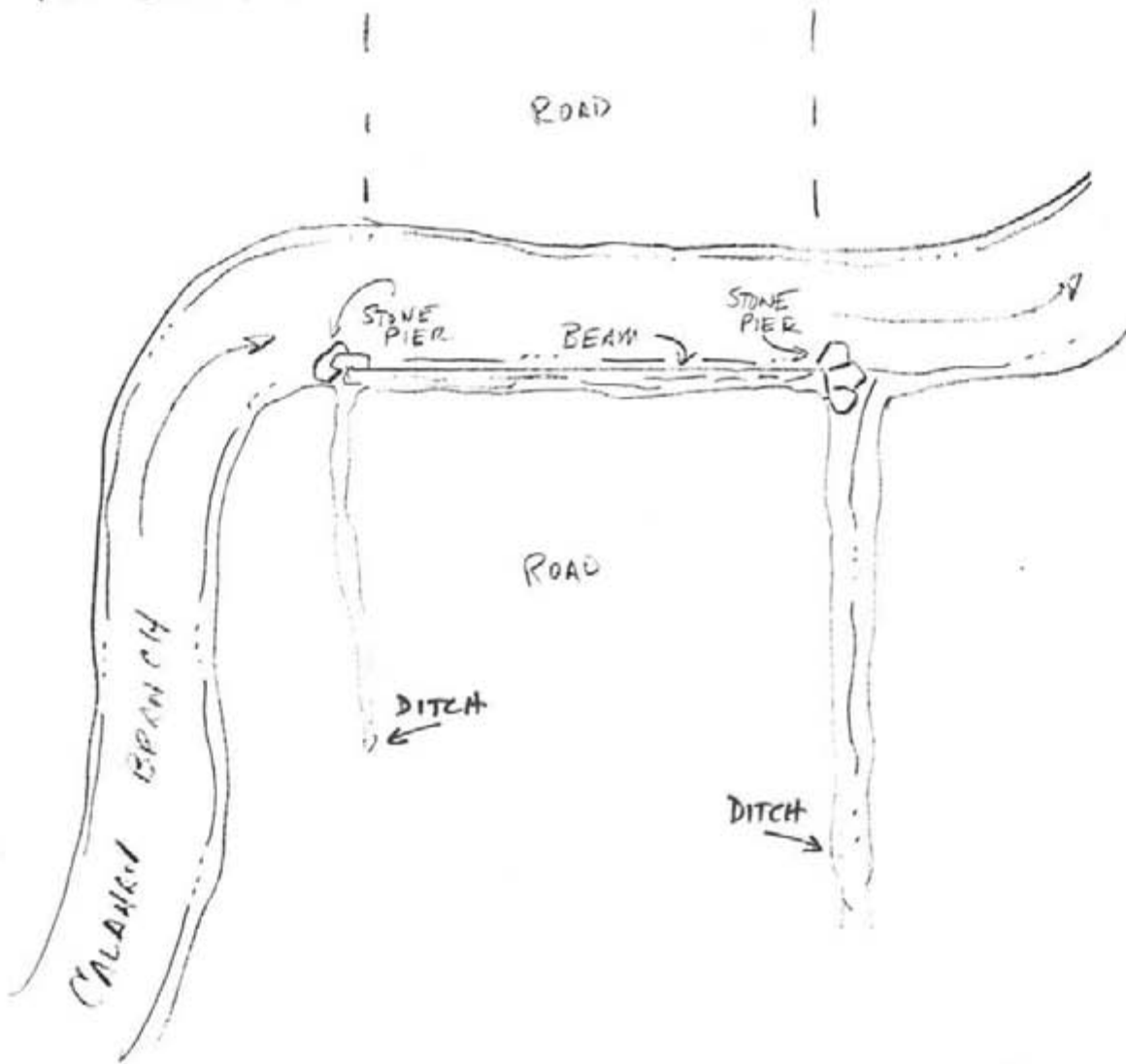


WOODEN
BRIDGE
SITE



POINSETT BRIDGE SURVEY
GREENVILLE COUNTY, SC
WOODEN BRIDGE SITE
NEW SOUTH JOB 2220

DEC 19, 2003



COPY OF FIELD
SKETCH MAP



SOUTH CAROLINA INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SITE INVENTORY RECORD
(68-1 Rev. 85)

STATE: SC COUNTY: Greenville SITE NUMBER: 38GR24 (Revised)
Recorded By: B. Botwick Affiliation: New South Associates, Inc. Date: March 24, 2004

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Site name: Poinsett Bridge Project: Historical and Archaeological Survey of Poinsett Bridge
2. USGS Quadrangle: Zirconia Date: 1991 Scale: 7.5 or 15 minute (circle one)
3. UTM: Zone 17 Easting 373866 Northing 3888071
4. Other map reference: _____
5. Descriptive site type (see handbook):
Prehistoric _____ Historic Bridge
6. Archaeological investigation (circle): Survey Testing _____ Excavation _____
7. Property owner: SC Department of Natural Resources Phone number: _____
8. Address: 1000 Assembly Street, Columbia, SC
9. Other site designations: _____
10. National Register of Historic Places status (circle one):
Potentially eligible _____ Probably not eligible _____ Additional work _____

-----Office Use Only-----

Determined eligible On NRHP _____ Date _____
Determined not eligible _____ Date _____

11. Level of significance (circle): National State _____ Local _____
12. Justification: The site is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and engineering qualities.

B. ENVIRONMENT AND LOCATION

1. General physiographic province (circle):
Lower Coastal Plain _____ Piedmont _____ Middle Coastal Plain Blue Ridge Mountains Upper Coastal Plain _____
2. Landform location: stream floodplain/cove Site elevation (above MSL): 1200 (in feet)
3. On site soil type: silty loam Soil classification: Saluda and Edneyville soils, very steep (SFG)
4. Major river system (circle): Pee Dee _____ Santee _____ Ashley-Combahee-Edisto _____ Savannah _____
5. Nearest river/stream: Calahan Branch
6. Current vegetation (circle): Pine/coniferous _____ Hardwood _____ Mixed pine/hardwood _____
Old field _____ Grass/pasture _____ Agricultural/crops _____ Wetlands/freshwater _____
Wetlands/saltwater _____ Other _____ Comments: _____
7. Description of groundcover (circle): Absent _____ Light _____ Moderate _____ Heavy

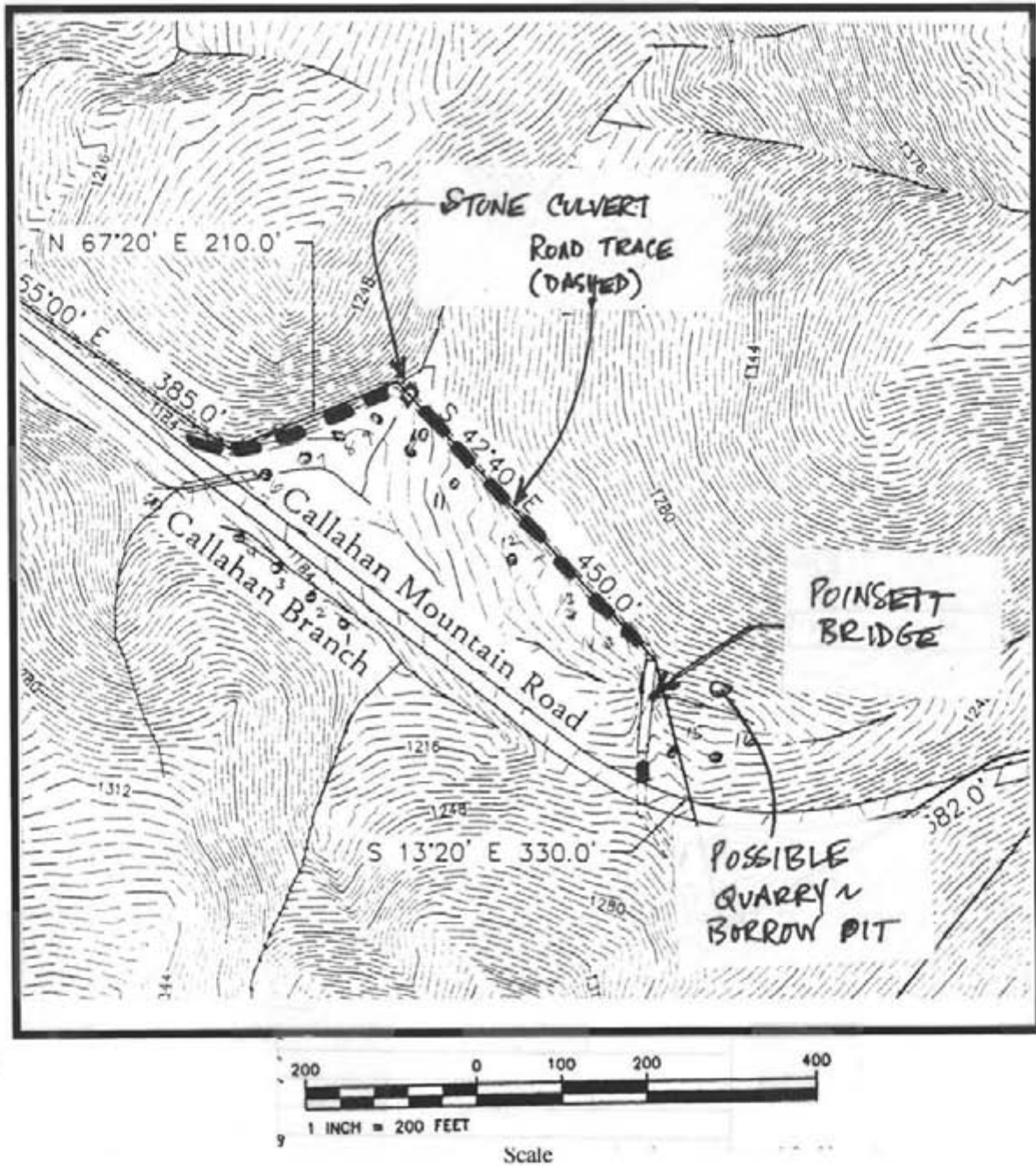
C. SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1. Estimated site dimensions: _____ 185 meters by _____ 65 meters
2. Site depth: n/a cm.
3. Cultural features (type and number): Poinsett Bridge: a 19th-century stone bridge listed on the NRHP; segments of the associated historic road; one stone culvert under the road; a possible quarry used to obtain building material for the bridge and other features. All features are above-ground.

4. Presence of (circle): midden _____ floral remains _____ faunal remains _____ shell _____ charcoal _____
5. Human skeletal remains (circle): _____ present _____ preservation (circle): good _____
absent _____ poor _____

6. General site description: The site consists of a group of features associated with the Poinsett Bridge Historic Site. The bridge was built around 1820 and remained in use into the 1950s. It carried a historic road across Calahan Branch. Segments of this road are extant and are clearly related to the bridge. The site lies in a narrow, steep-sided mountain valley. Archaeological survey of adjacent areas did not find any prehistoric or historic deposits or features except the surface remains noted above.

Site Map



The following information should be provided on the site map: site boundaries, nearby topographic features, associated streams, modern cultural features, different land use types in site area, collection loci, test excavation loci, archaeological features and means of access (include north arrow and scale).

MAP KEY:

Verbal description of location: The site is located off Calahan Mountain Road. Take Rt 29 north from Greenville to SSR 969. Follow to Calahan Mountain Road (SSR 42).

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (Cont.)

2. Present condition/integrity of site (circle):

Intact Damaged

Extent of damage → light moderate heavy

Nature of damage → erosion cultivation logging construction/development vandalism inundation other (specify) _____

3. Potential impacts and threats to site (circle):

Potential threat: none low moderate high

Nature of threat: erosion cultivation logging construction/development → direct impact zone indirect impact zone outside impact zone vandalism inundation other (specify) _____

4. Recommendations for further work (circle):

survey testing excavation archival none other preservation and maintenance by periodic inspection; there are no immediate concerns for stabilization.

Comments: _____

5. References (circle):

Historic/archival documentation Yes No Not Known

To be presented in upcoming (in 2004) historical and archaeological survey by New South Associates, Inc.

Archaeological documentation Yes No Not Known

Prior archaeological site file (dated 1972). Upcoming (in 2004) historical and archaeological survey by New South Associates, Inc.

6. Additional management information/comments: _____

7. Location of existing collections: _____

8. Location of photographs: Temporarily with New South Associates, Inc., Stone Mountain, GA

9. Location of special samples: _____

Type of special samples: _____

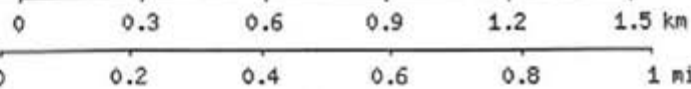
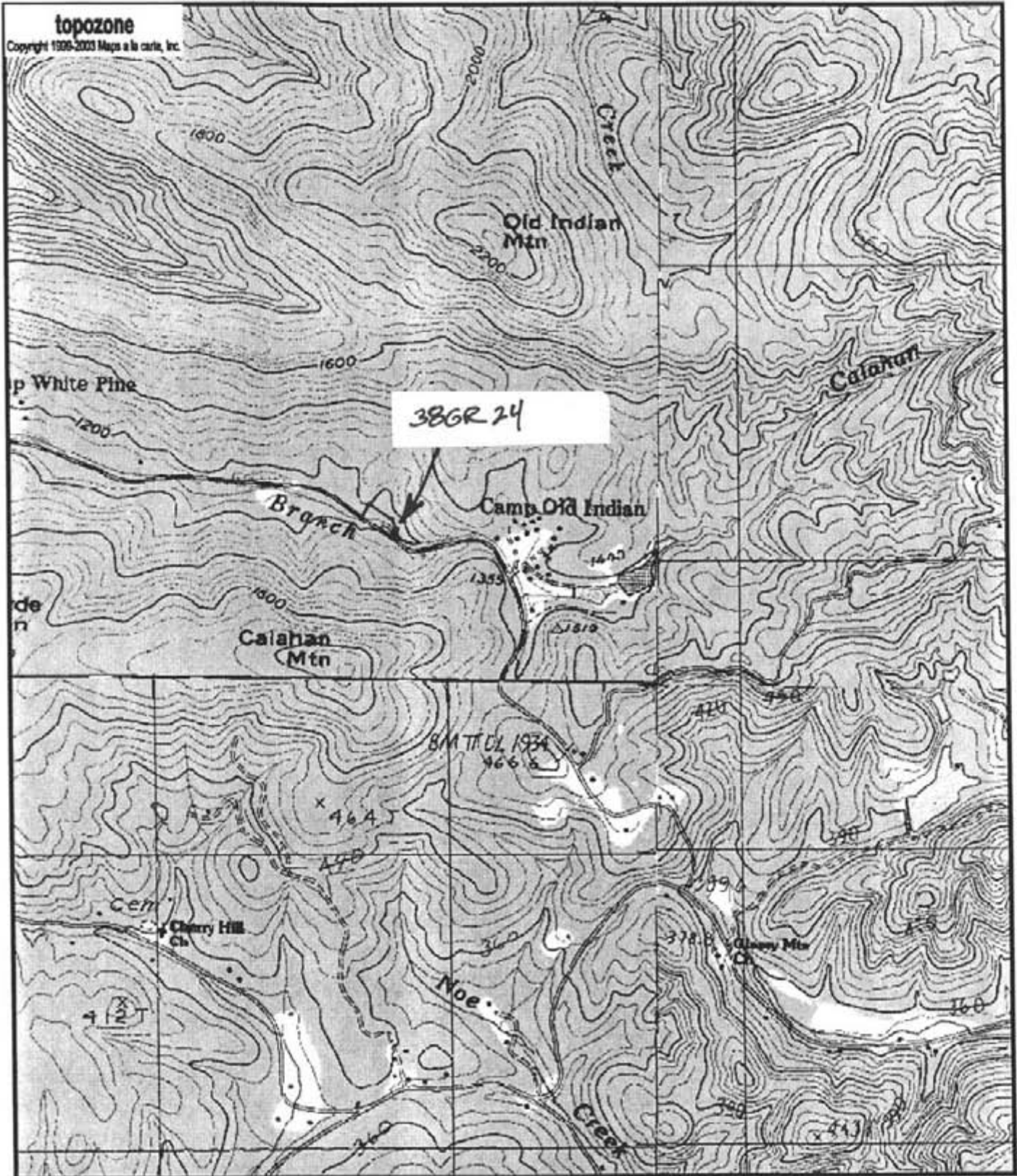
Signature of observer: _____ Date: _____

Subsequent visits:

Observer _____ Date: _____

Observer _____ Date: _____

Observer _____ Date: _____



Map center is UTM 17 374234E 3888098N (WGS84/NAD83)
 Zirconia quadrangle
 Projection is UTM Zone 17 NAD83 Datum



M=-5.858
 G=-0.794

N O R T H H E N D E R S O N C O U N T Y



38624

VIRGINIA COUNTY
C
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N

Copyright 1954

38BK0052	UK	Richmond Plantation/Girl Scout Plantation
38BK0053	UK	
38BK0164	UK	
38BK0168	UK	
38BK0169	UK	
38BK0173	UK	
38BK0177	UK	
38BK0193	UK	
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38BK0309	UK	
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38BK0311	UK	
38BK0312	UK	
38BK0394	UK	
38BK0395	UK	
38BK0400	UK	
38BK0401	UK	
38BK1111	UK	
38BK1117	UK	
38BK1121	UK	
38BK1811	UK	East Branch Dugout Canoe
38BK0002	UK	
38BK0021	UK	
38BK0025	UK	
38BK0028	UK	
38BK0036	UK	
38BK0037	UK	
38BK0054	UK	
38BK0170	UK	
38BK0189	UK	
38BK0251	UK	
38BK0252	UK	
38BK0253	UK	Bushy Park Tar Kiln
38BK0285	UK	
38BK0350	UK	
38BK0364	UK	
38BK0365	UK	
38BK0366	UK	
38BK0367	UK	
38BK0368	UK	
38BK0369	UK	
38BK0385	UK	
38BK1266	UK	
38BK1764	UK	
38BK0069	UK	
38BK0070	UK	
38BK0118	UK	
38BK0145	UK	
38BK0146	UK	
38BK0147	UK	
38BK0154	UK	
38BK0155	UK	
38BK0156	UK	

APPENDIX C: HAER FILE (SC-14)

POINSETT BRIDGE
SC Route 42, 2 miles NW of
SC Route 11, 2.5 miles E
of SC Route 25, 25 miles
N of Greenville
Tigerville vicinity
Greenville County
South Carolina

HAER No. SC-14

HAER
SC
23-TIGVI.
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

POINSETT BRIDGE

HAER No. SC-14

SC Rt. 42, 2 miles NW
of SC Rt. 11, 2.5 miles E
of SC Rt. 25, 25 miles N of
Greenville
Tigerville vicinity
Greenville County
South Carolina

Jack Boucher, photographer, November 1986

- SC-14-1 GENERAL VIEW OF BRIDGE ROADWAY, LOOKING NORTHWEST
- SC-14-2 GENERAL VIEW OF BRIDGE ROADWAY, LOOKING NORTH
- SC-14-3 ROADWAY, LOOKING NORTH
- SC-14-4 DETAIL, EAST WALL
- SC-14-5 DETAIL, EAST WALL, WITH SCALE
- SC-14-6 GENERAL VIEW OF BRIDGE, LOOKING NORTHEAST
- SC-14-7 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST
- SC-14-8 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST, WITH MEASURE
- SC-14-9 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING EAST
- SC-14-10 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING EAST, WITH TOM SHAW, SC DEPT ARCHIVES & HISTORY
- SC-14-11 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING NORTH
- SC-14-12 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING EAST
- SC-14-13 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING EAST, CLOSER VIEW
- SC-14-14 WEST SIDE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING EAST, CLOSER VIEW, WITH MEASURE
- SC-14-15 WEST SIDE, POINTED ARCH
- SC-14-16 WEST SIDE, POINTED ARCH, CLOSER VIEW
- SC-14-17 GENERAL VIEW OF EAST SIDE OF BRIDGE
- SC-14-18 VIEW THROUGH ARCH, LOOKING WEST

STATE COUNTY TOWN OR VICINITY
South Carolina Greenville Greenville

HISTORIC NAME HAER NO.
Poinsett Bridge (NR nomination) SC-14

SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES

COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL AREAS) Adjacent to SC Secondary
Road 42, spanning Little Gap Creek, 2 miles NW of SC Primary Highway 11. ..

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, BUILDER, OR FABRICATOR

1820 (NR nomination)

SIGNIFICANCE (TECHNOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE) The bridge was
completed in 1820 by the South Carolina Board of Public Works as part of the old
state road, laid out by Joel Poinsett from 1817-1819 while he was director of
public works, which ran from Charleston, SC to Greenville, SC and from Greenville, *

STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)

Stone

SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE

Finely crafted Gothic Arch

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE MECHANICAL SYSTEMS, MACHINERY OR EQUIPMENT)

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES

PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Threatened, roadbed is eroding and sidewalls are
becoming destabilized; roadside park.

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER-
ING SOCIETY LANDMARK DESIGNATIONS, ETC.)

Listed in National Register 10/22/70

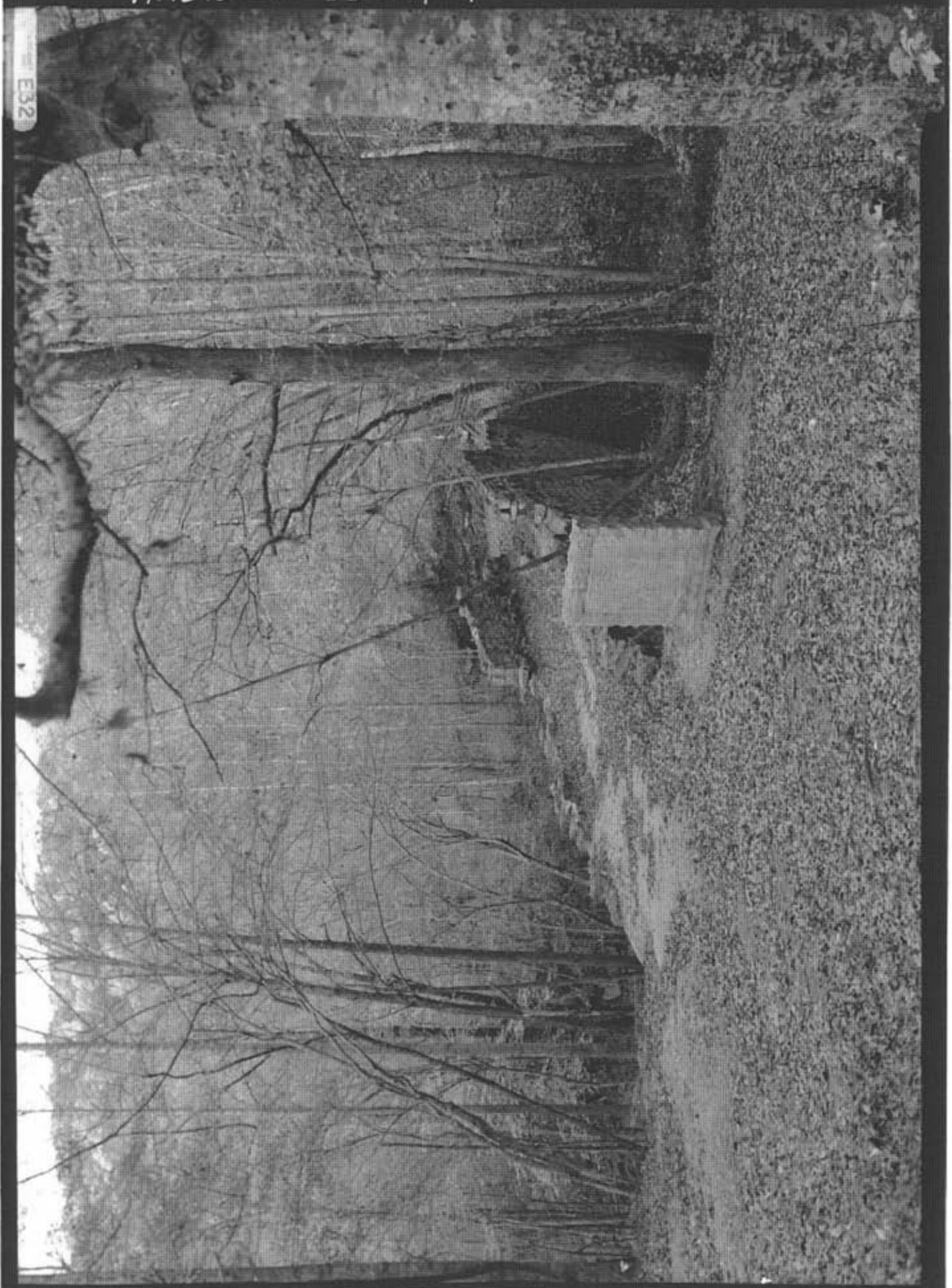
COMPILER, AFFILIATION DATE
H. Thomas Shaw, SCDAAH 4/5/88

POINSETT BRIDGE
HAER NO. SC-14 (page 2)

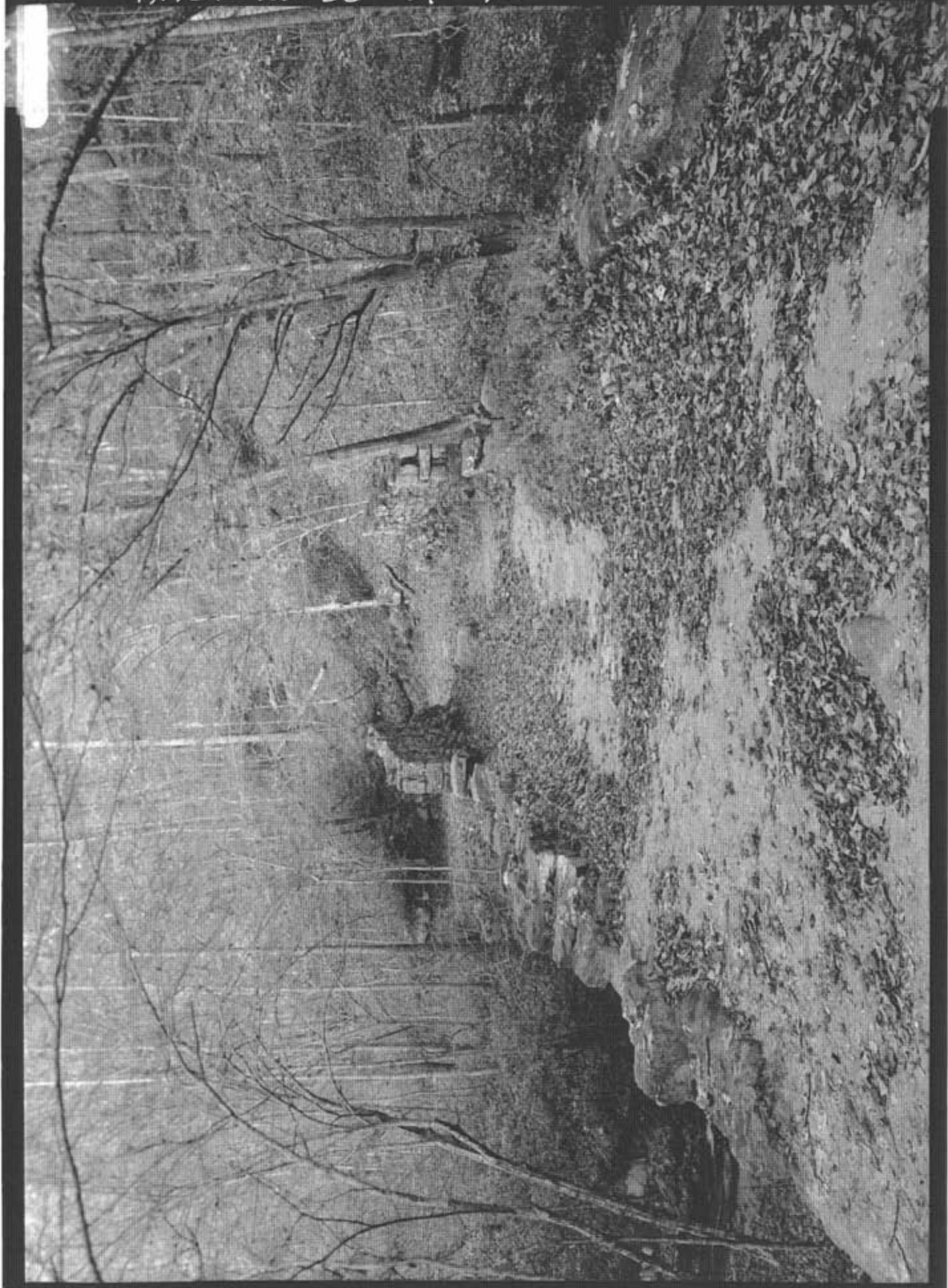
* SC to Asheville, North Carolina. It is built of stone quarried and fitted without mortar. This was unusual for bridge construction in South Carolina and represents a significant technological and engineering achievement in such a remote part of the uncountryside in the early 19th century. The peak of the Gothic arch is almost fourteen feet high.

HAEM NO. SC-14-1

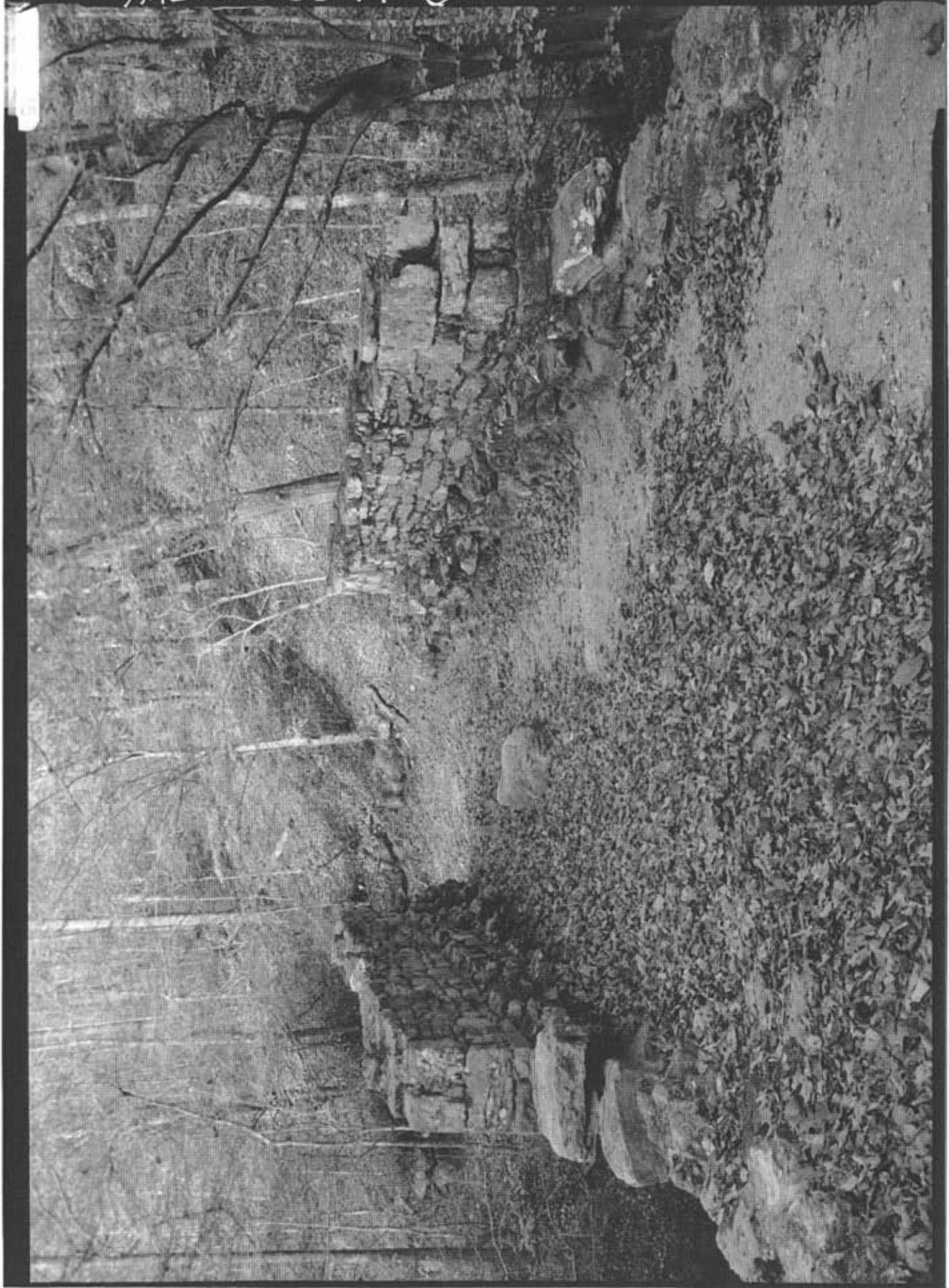
E32



HAEK WD. SC - 14 - 2



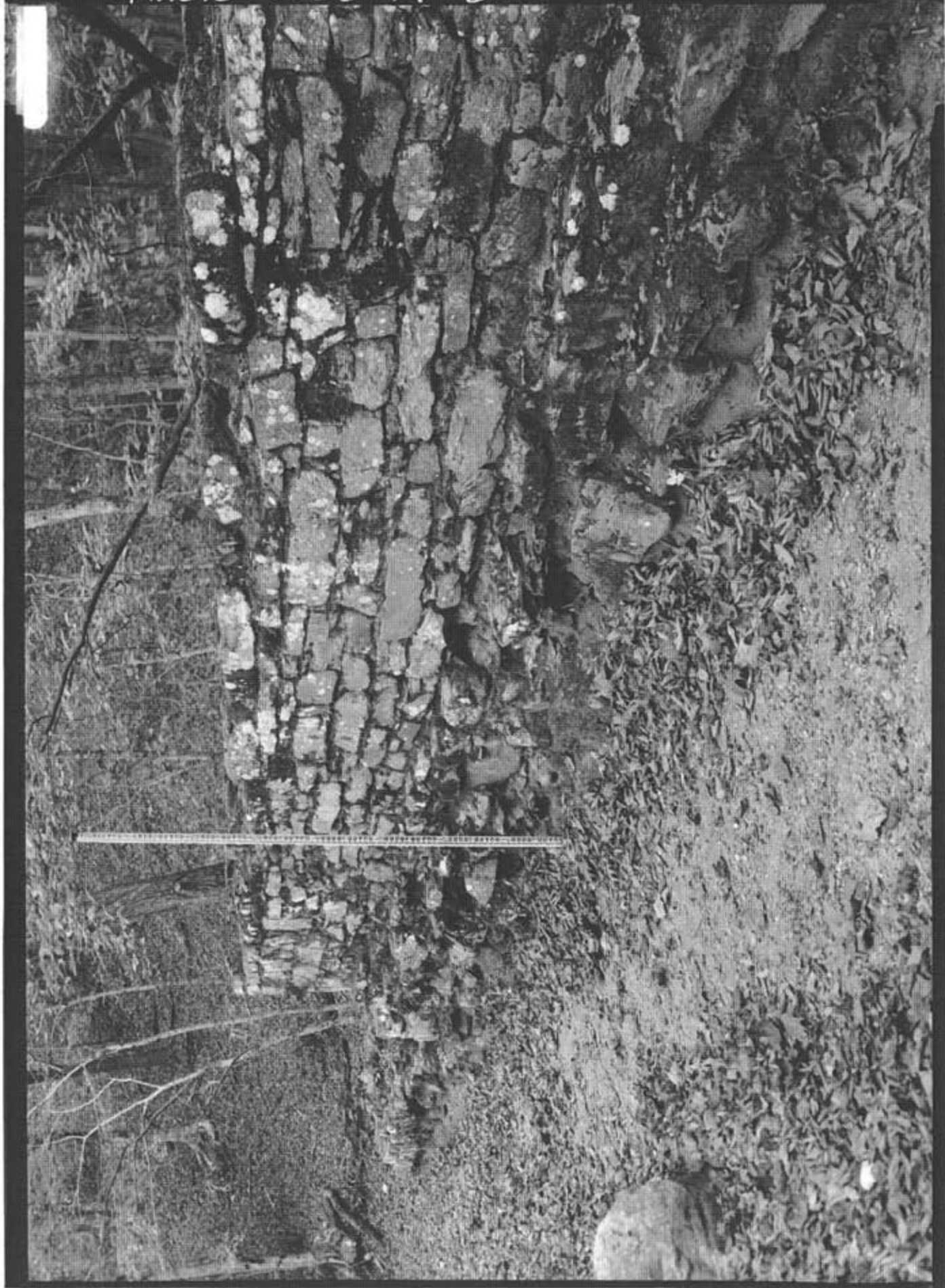
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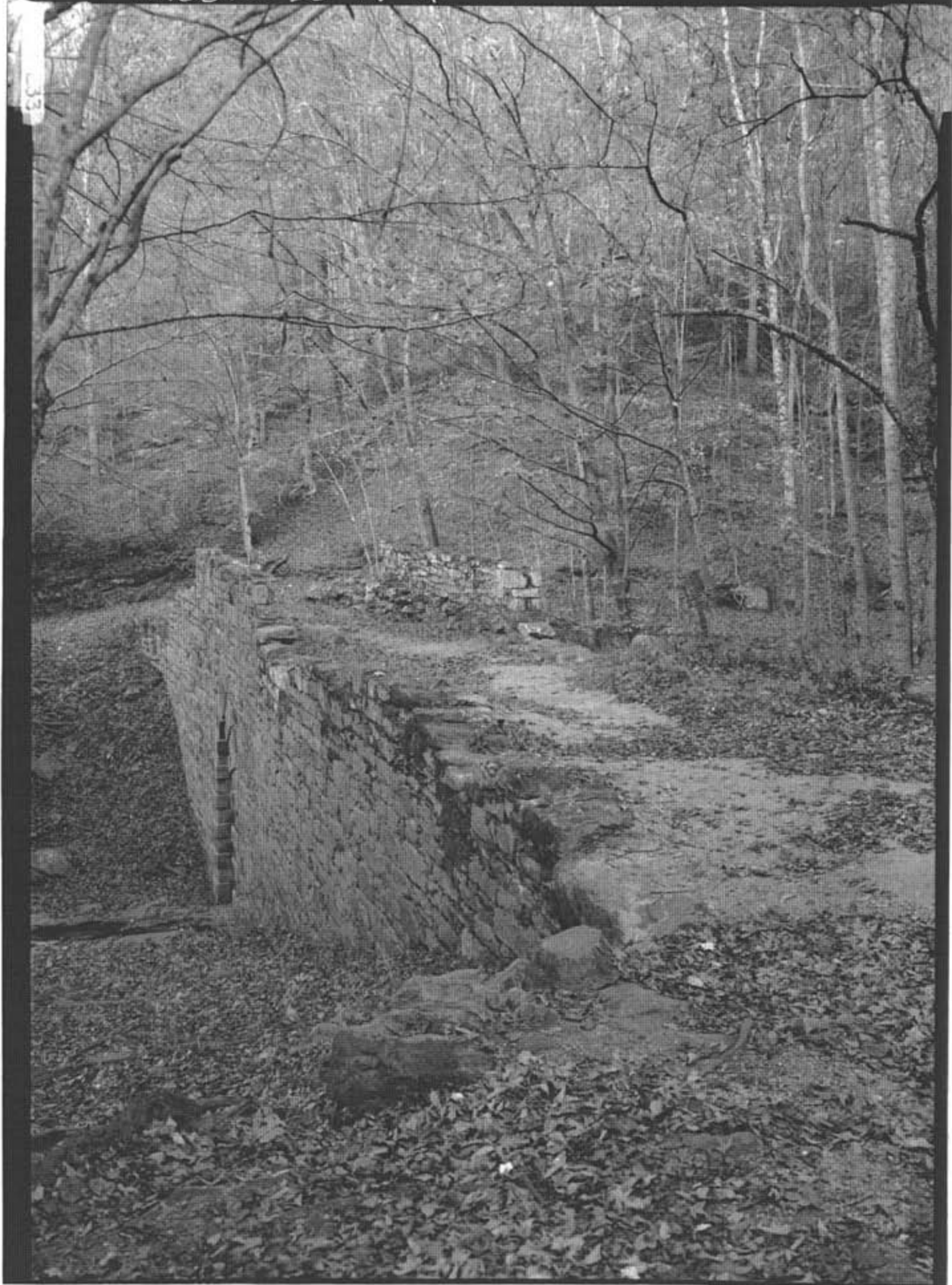
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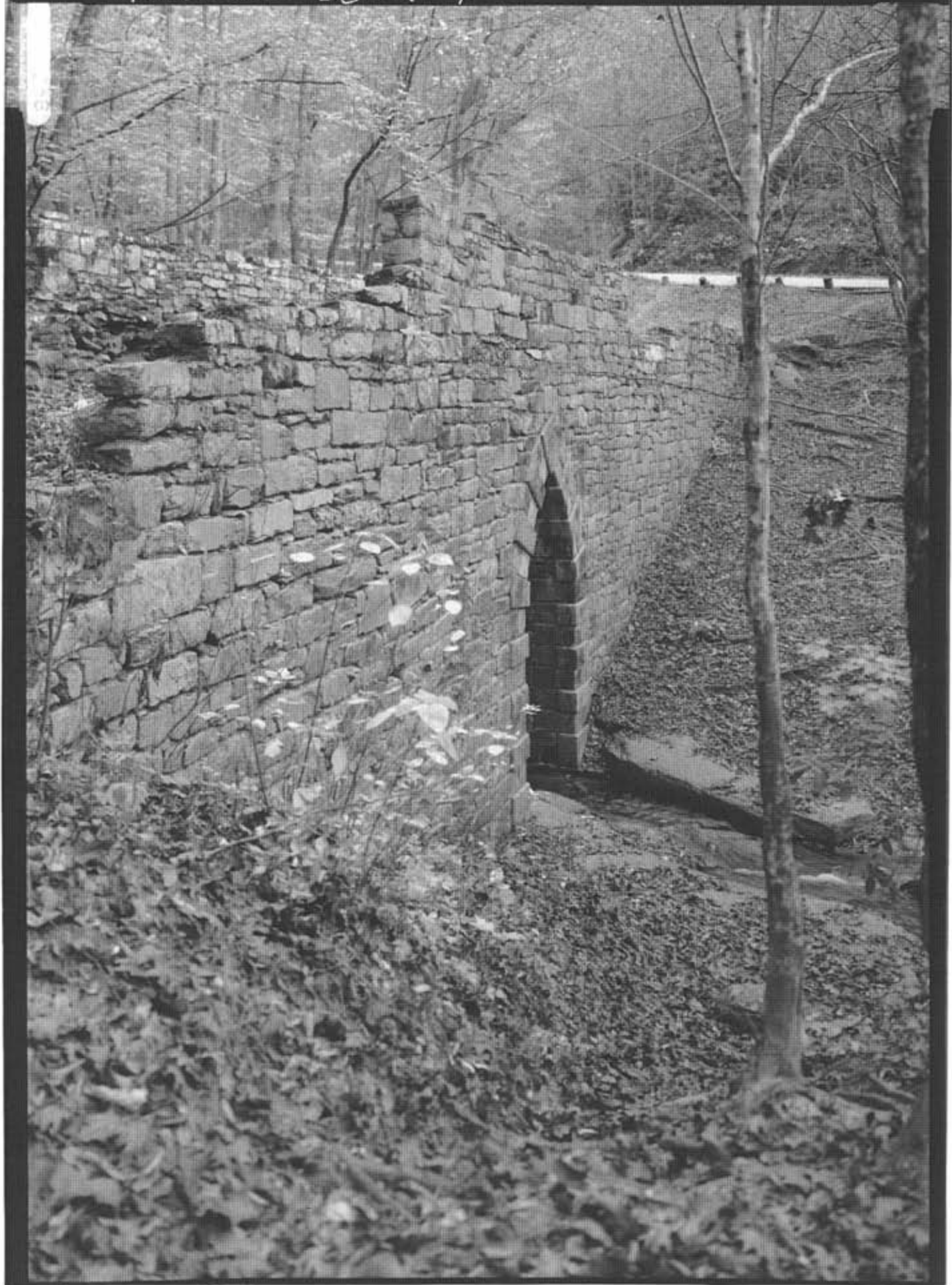
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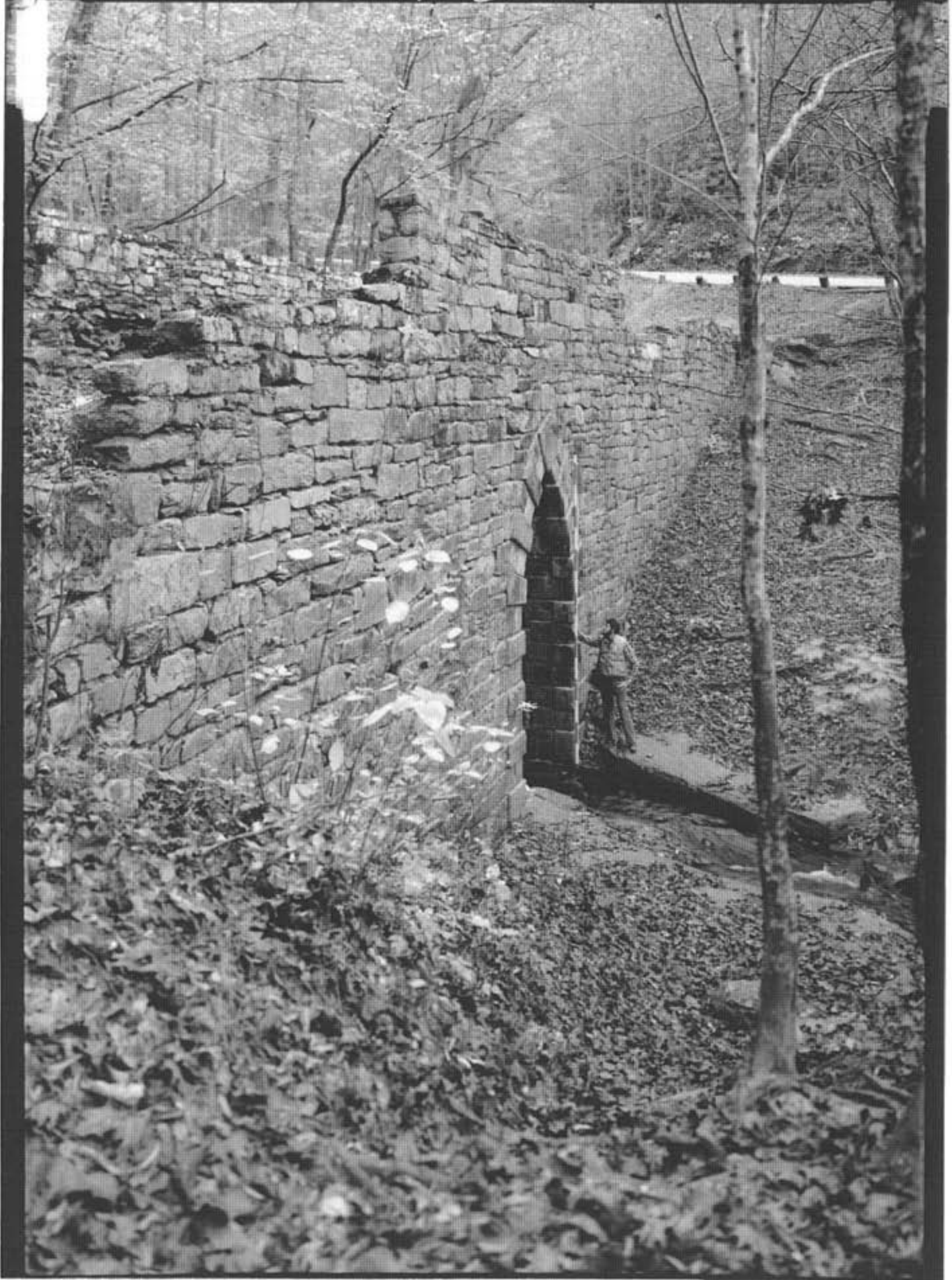
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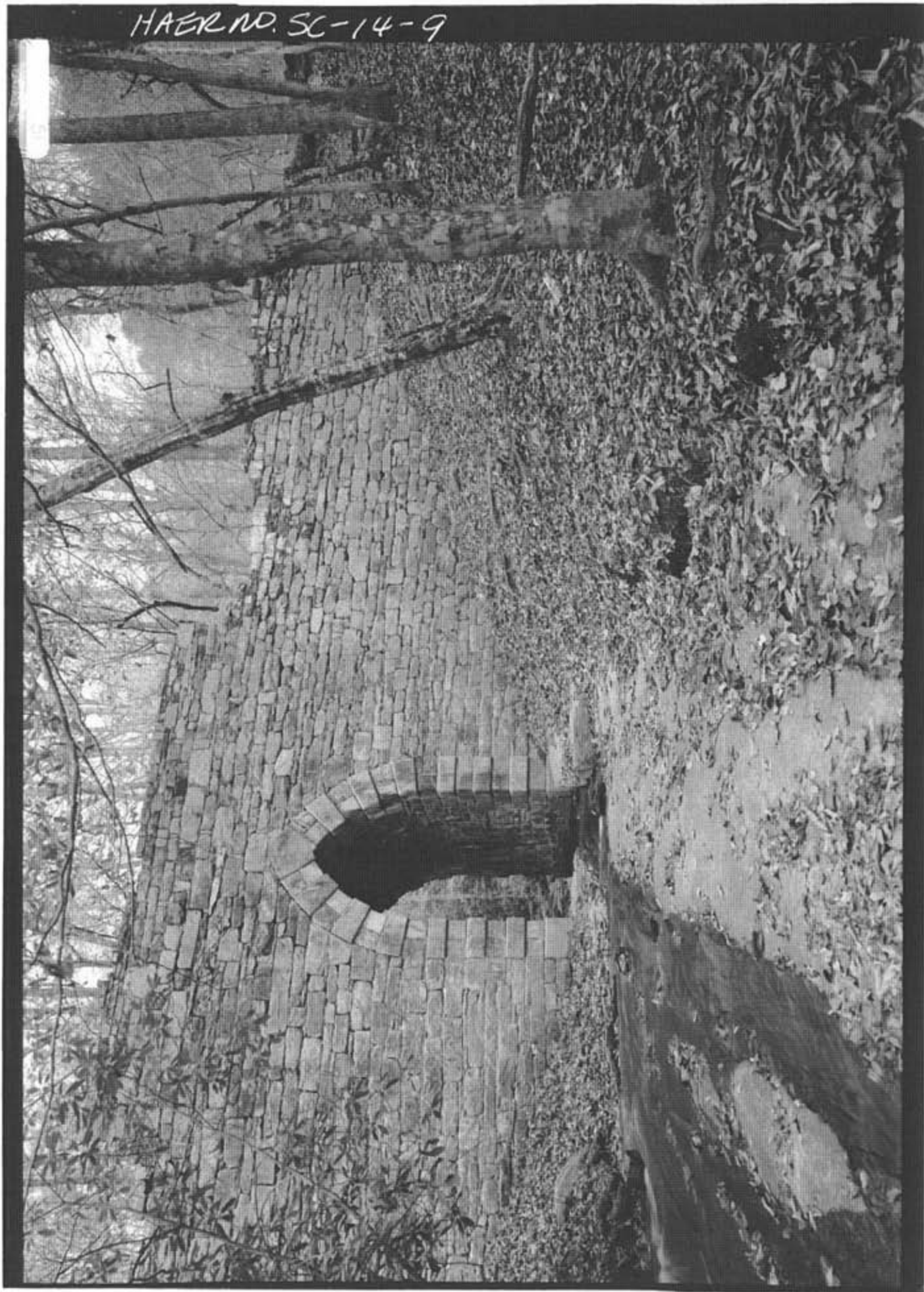
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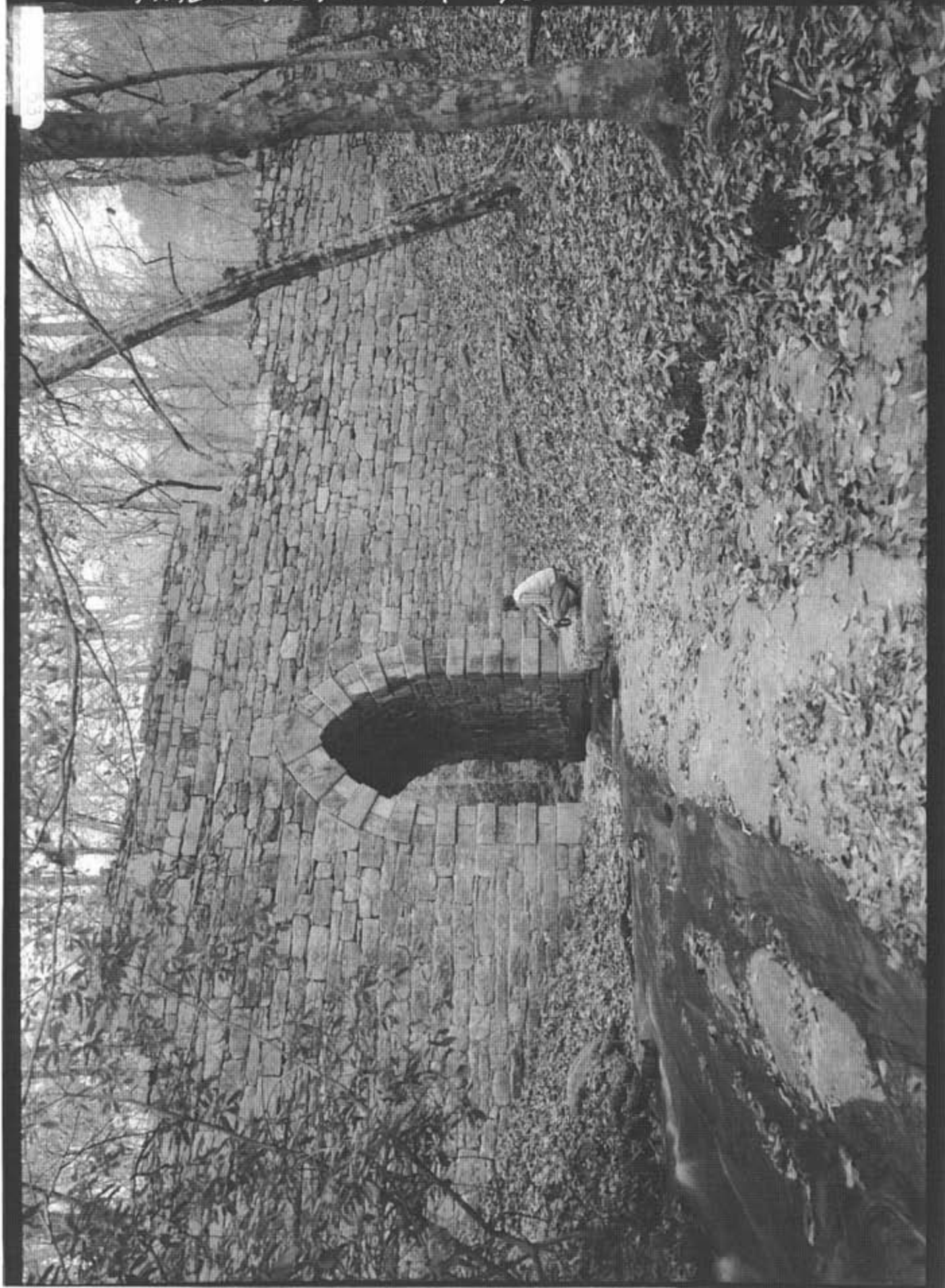
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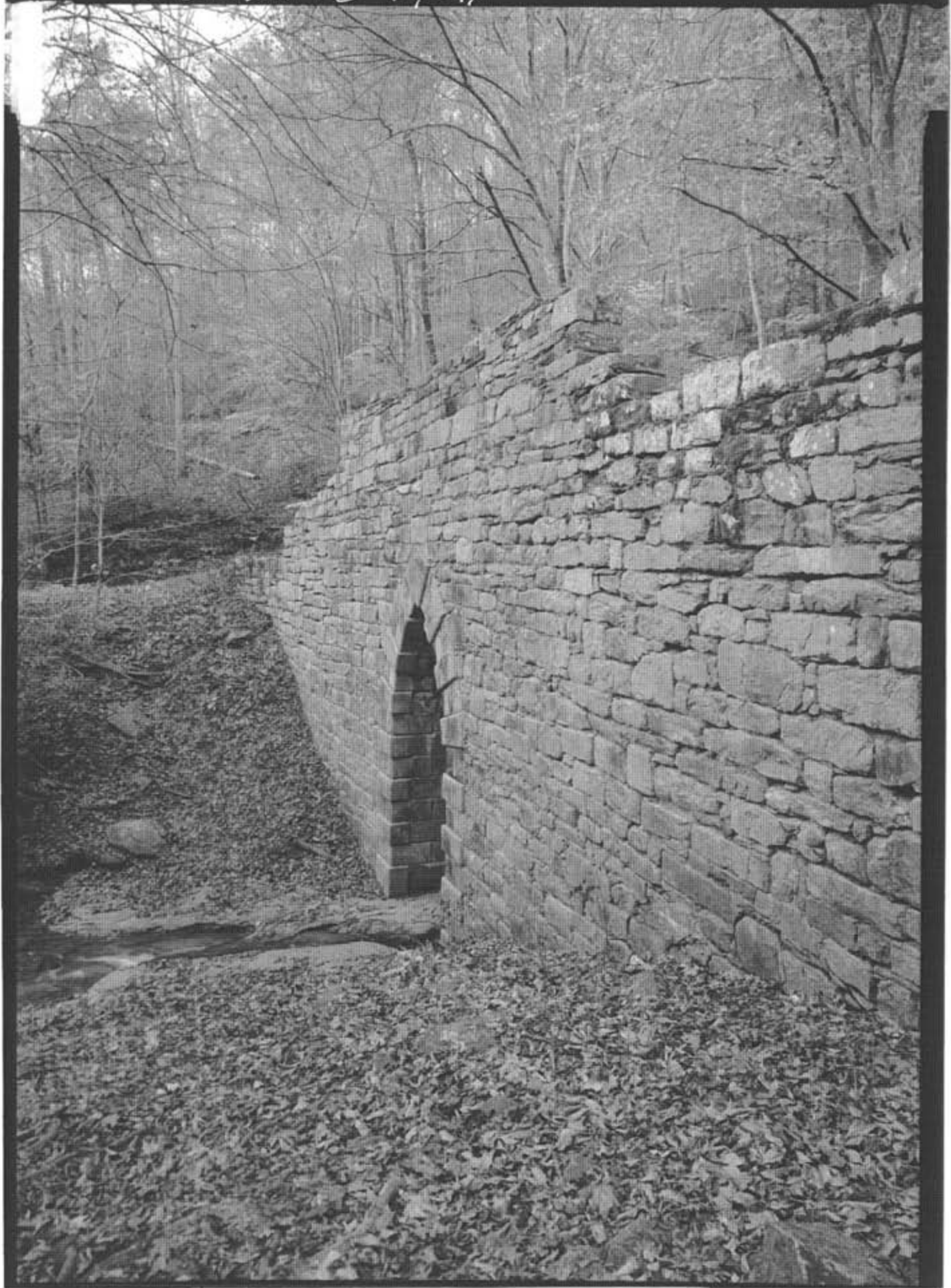
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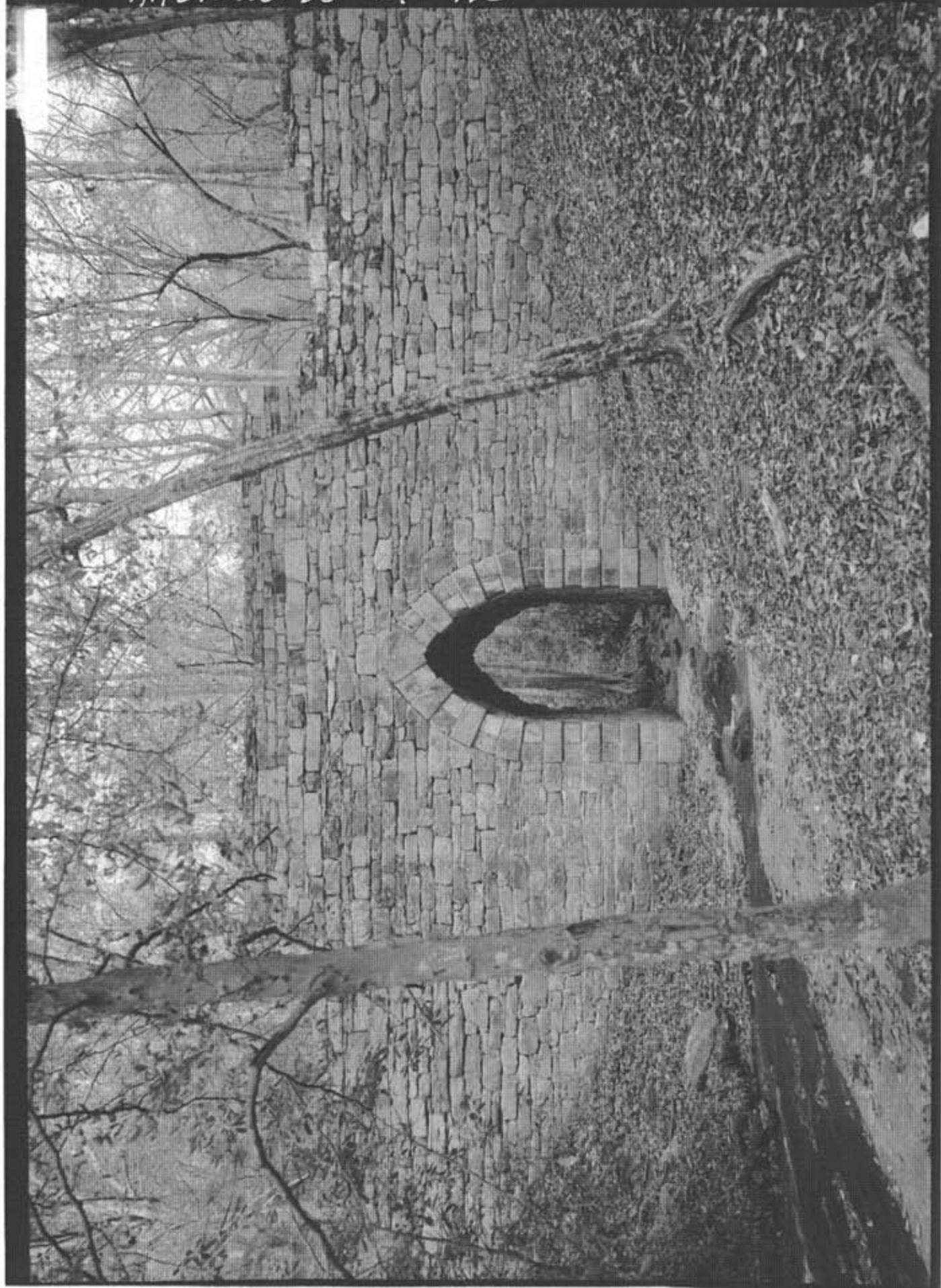
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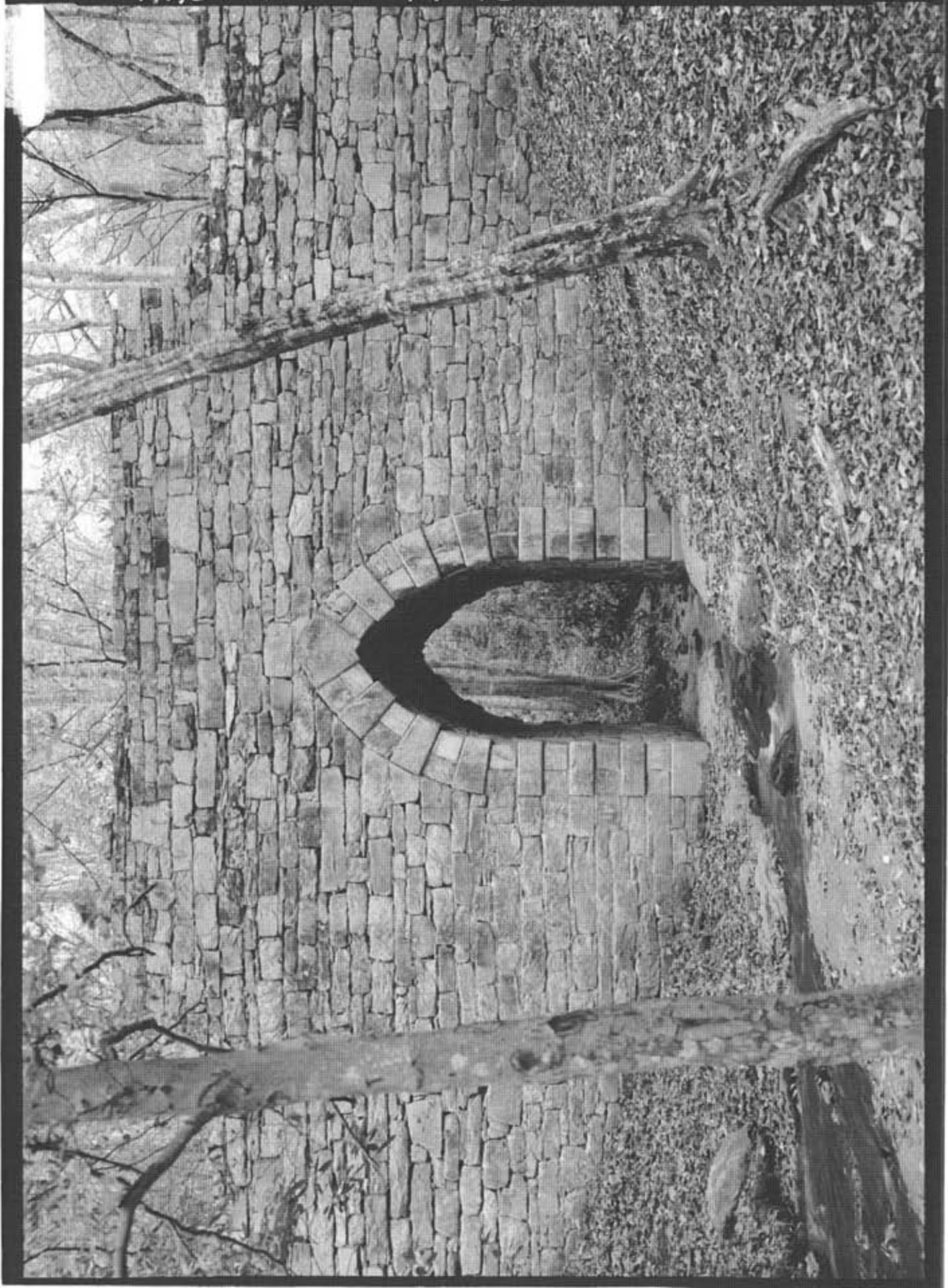
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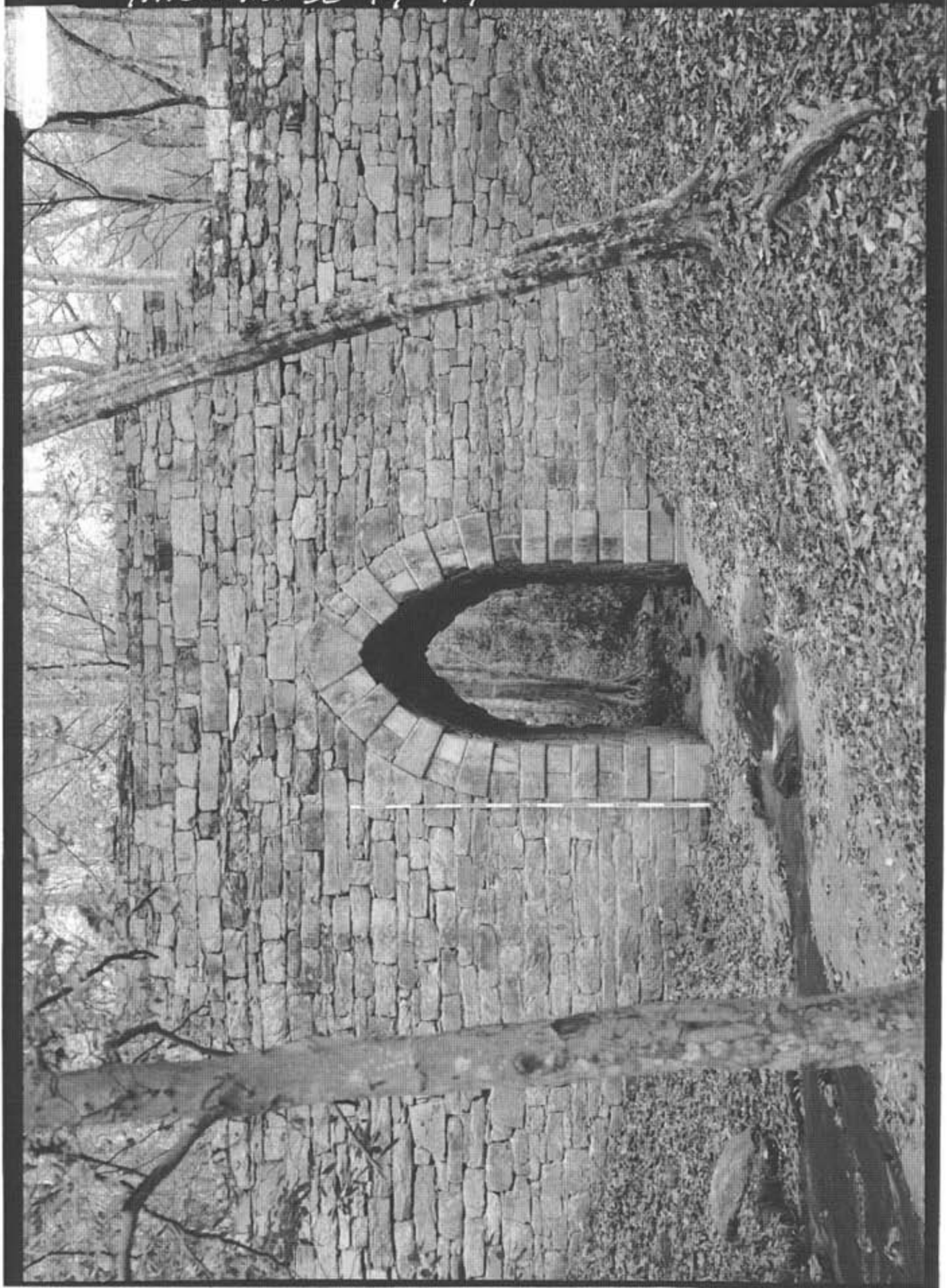
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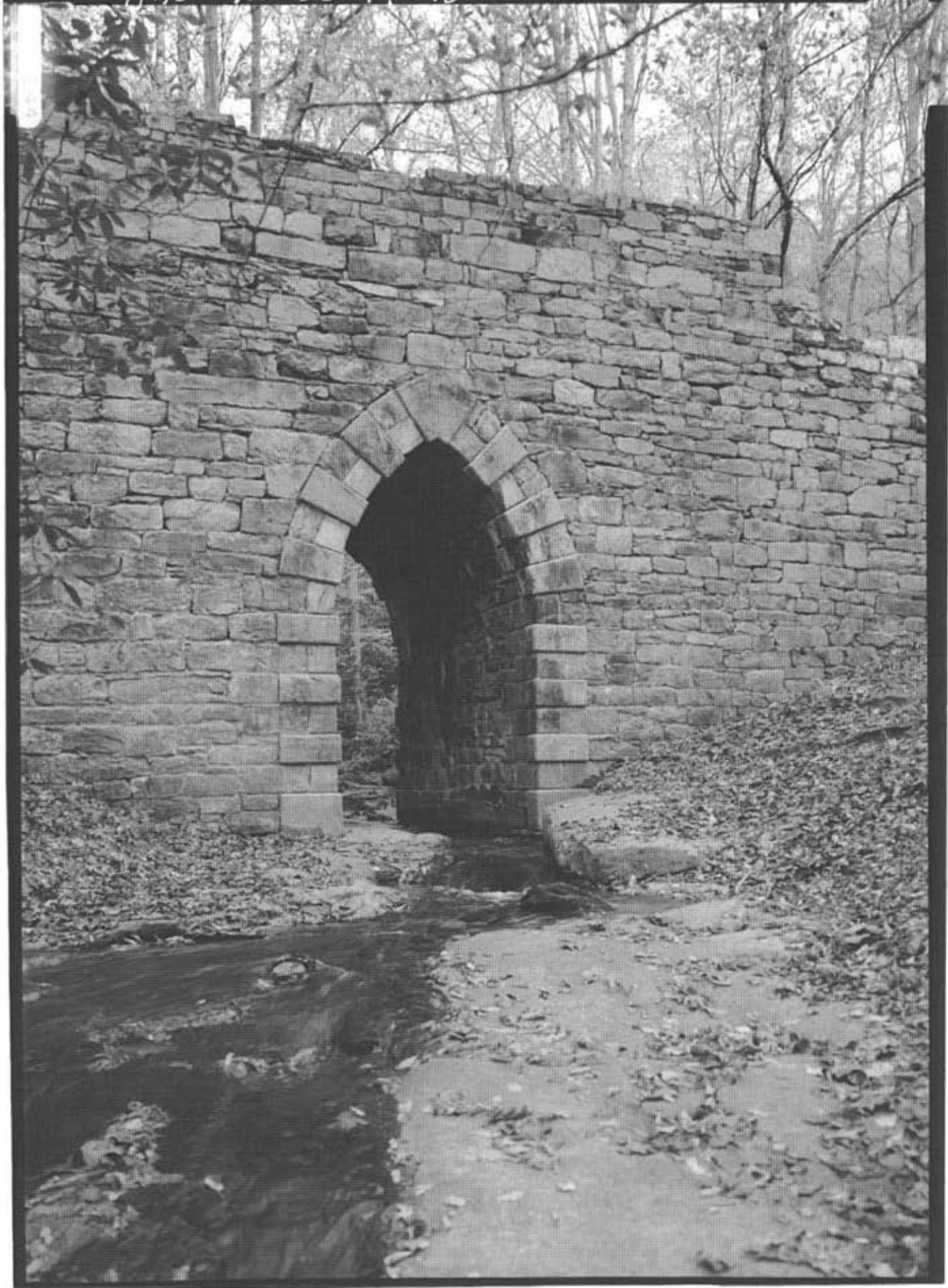
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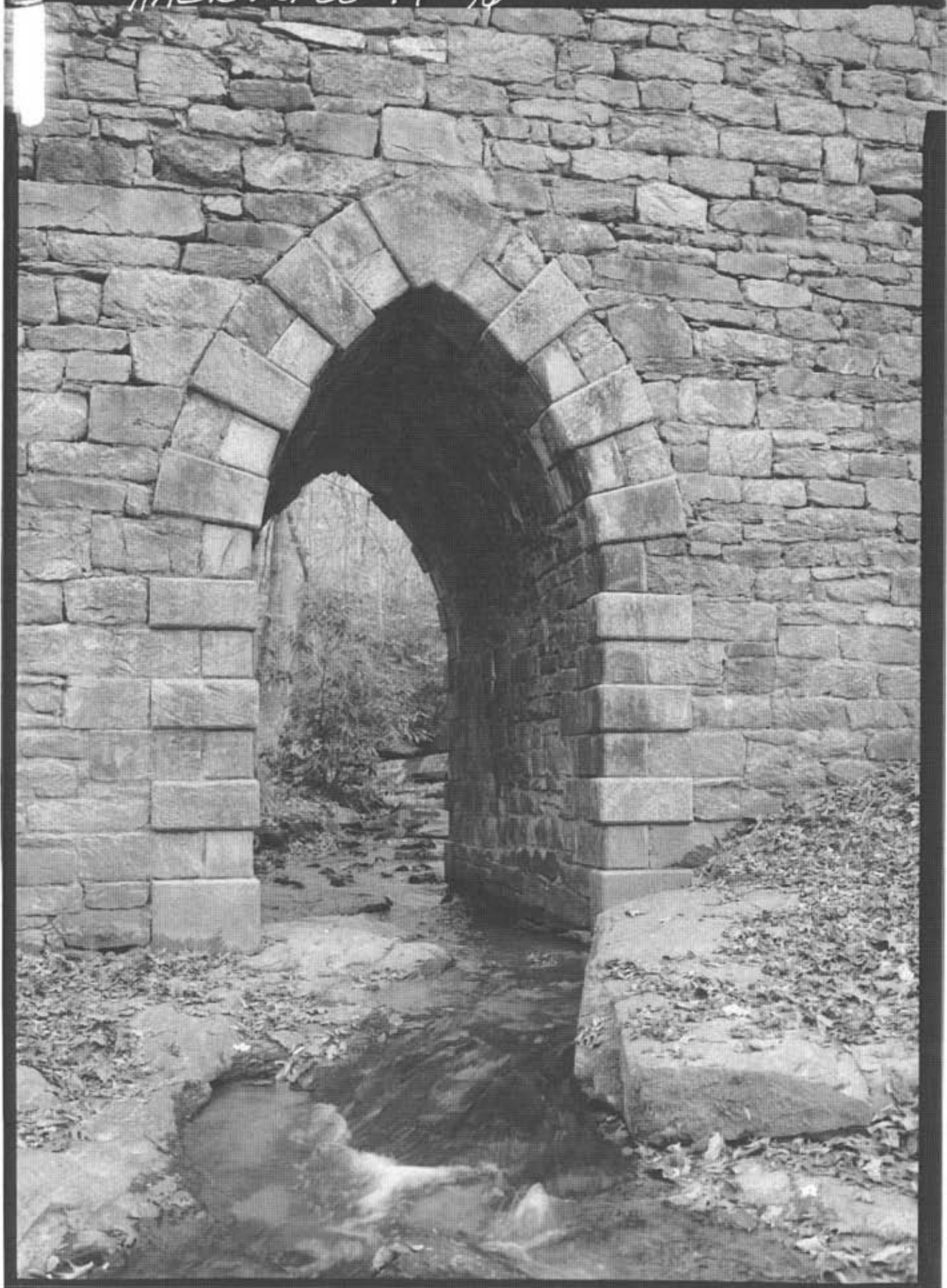
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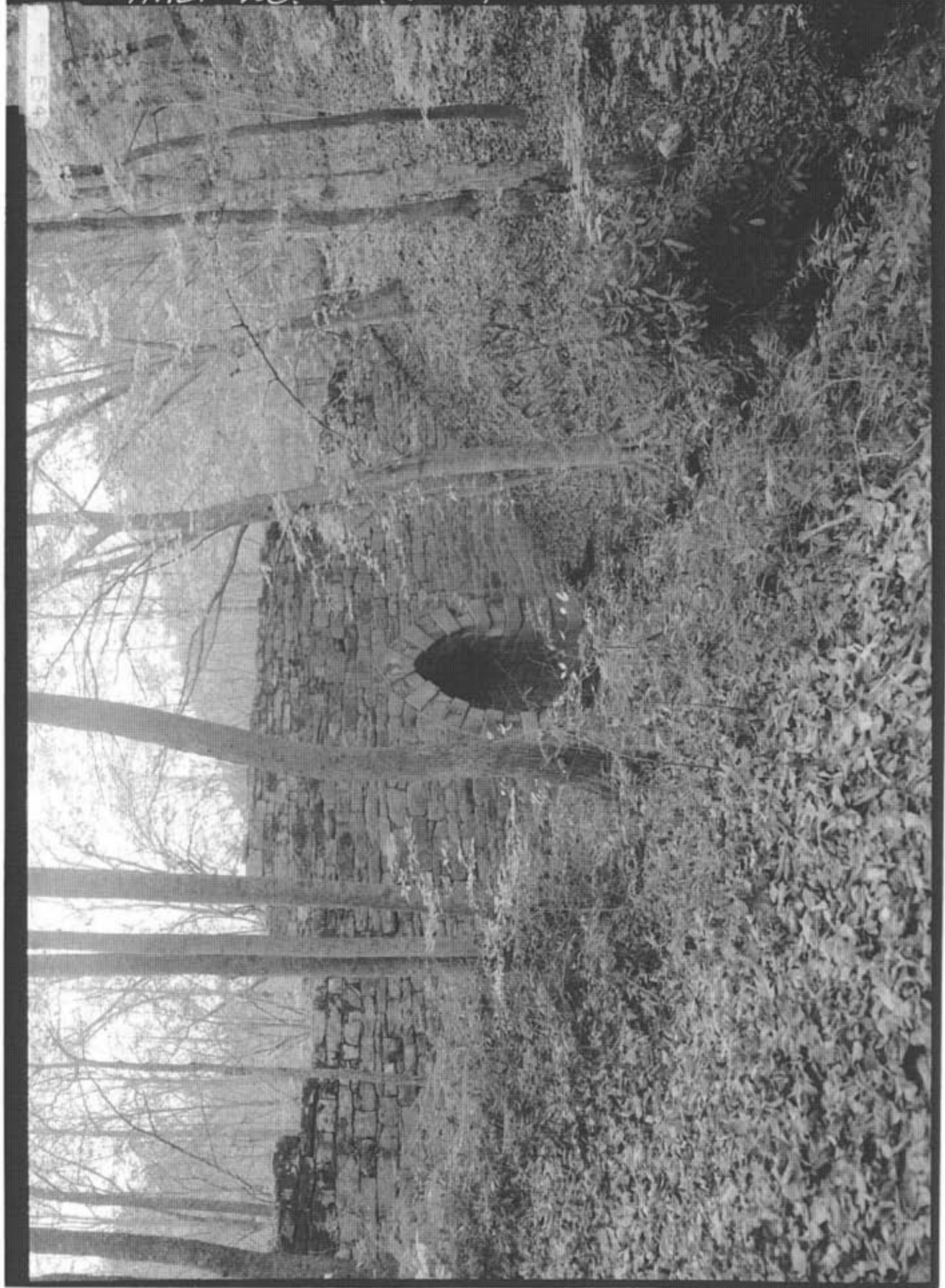
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HALL NO. SC-14-16



HAER NO. SC-14-17



HATCH NO. SC-14-10

E47

