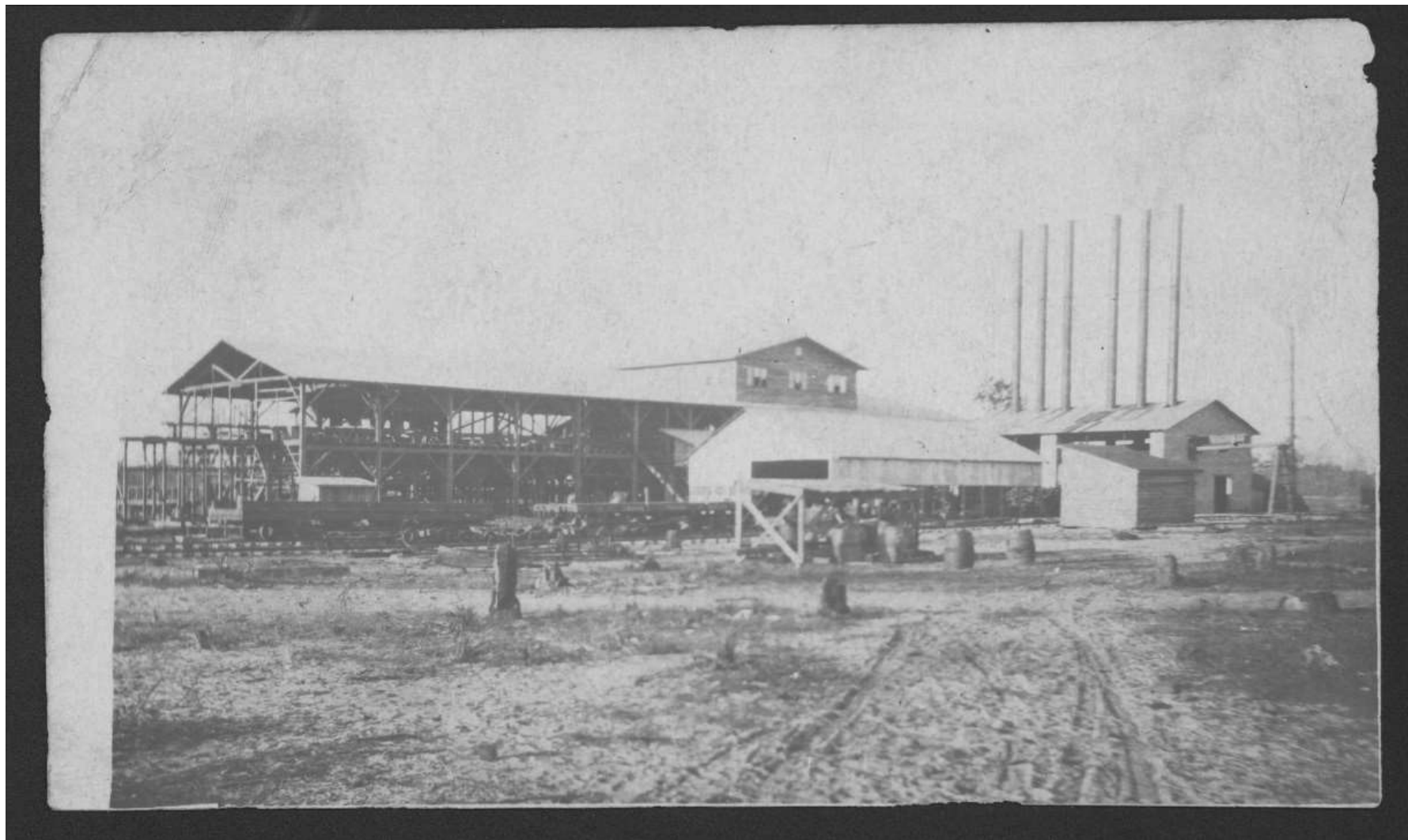


Cypress Logging at Centralia



Compiled by Sid Taylor
Park Naturalist, Tillis Hill
Recreation Area
Withlacoochee State
Forest, Citrus Tract for

May 7, 2015

Hernando Preservation
Society, Inc.



In Memory of Virginia Jackson (Mar. 22, 1930-Jul. 12, 2014) who moved to Brooksville in 1970 and began her extensive volunteer work by becoming active in the Hernando Head Start program and the Hernando Association of Retarded Citizens. She was Hernando County Historian for over 30 years, writing 25 books. Virginia served as Director of the Hernando County Historical Society and was actively involved with the Hernando Heritage Museum, Brooksville Historical Train Depot and the Hernando County Extension Program and Cannery until she retired in 1987.

In 1998 she received the Humanitarian of the Year and in 2004, was honored as the Great Brooksvillian by the city of Brooksville. As a director the Train Depot, Virginia was in charge of the volunteer program. She was still volunteering until March 2014.



15 Feb 2008

This Magnolia tree marks the site of the Commissary adjacent to the North Florida Railroad line. Virginia Jackson took groups to see the tree since 1977 and she lobbied the Hernando County BOCC to protect the site. The tree likely dates to the 1920s.



Scott Terrell

Kathy Turner
Thompson

Dennis Rhodes

April 2008



Today amid black-jack, pine and palmetto lies the muted foundations of the once proud master of the cypress swamp, where abundantly grew the highest grade of Red Tide water cypress, second to no other Cypress belt in the U.S.A. (Butler, 1972)

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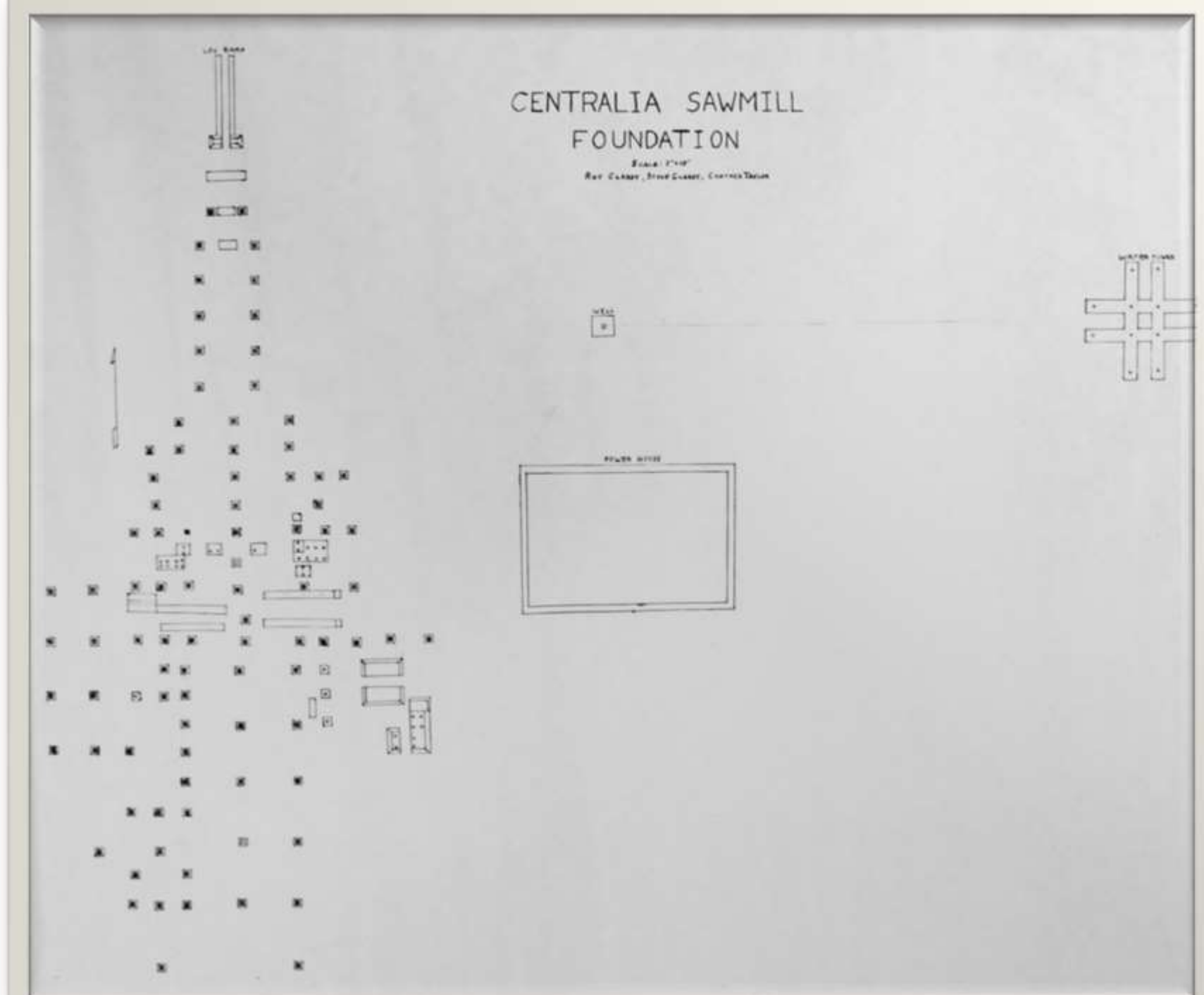
Davis, Paul and Stan Weston. “Death of a Forest and Town”, *St. Petersburg Times*, 21 Jan 1962

www.floridamemory.com

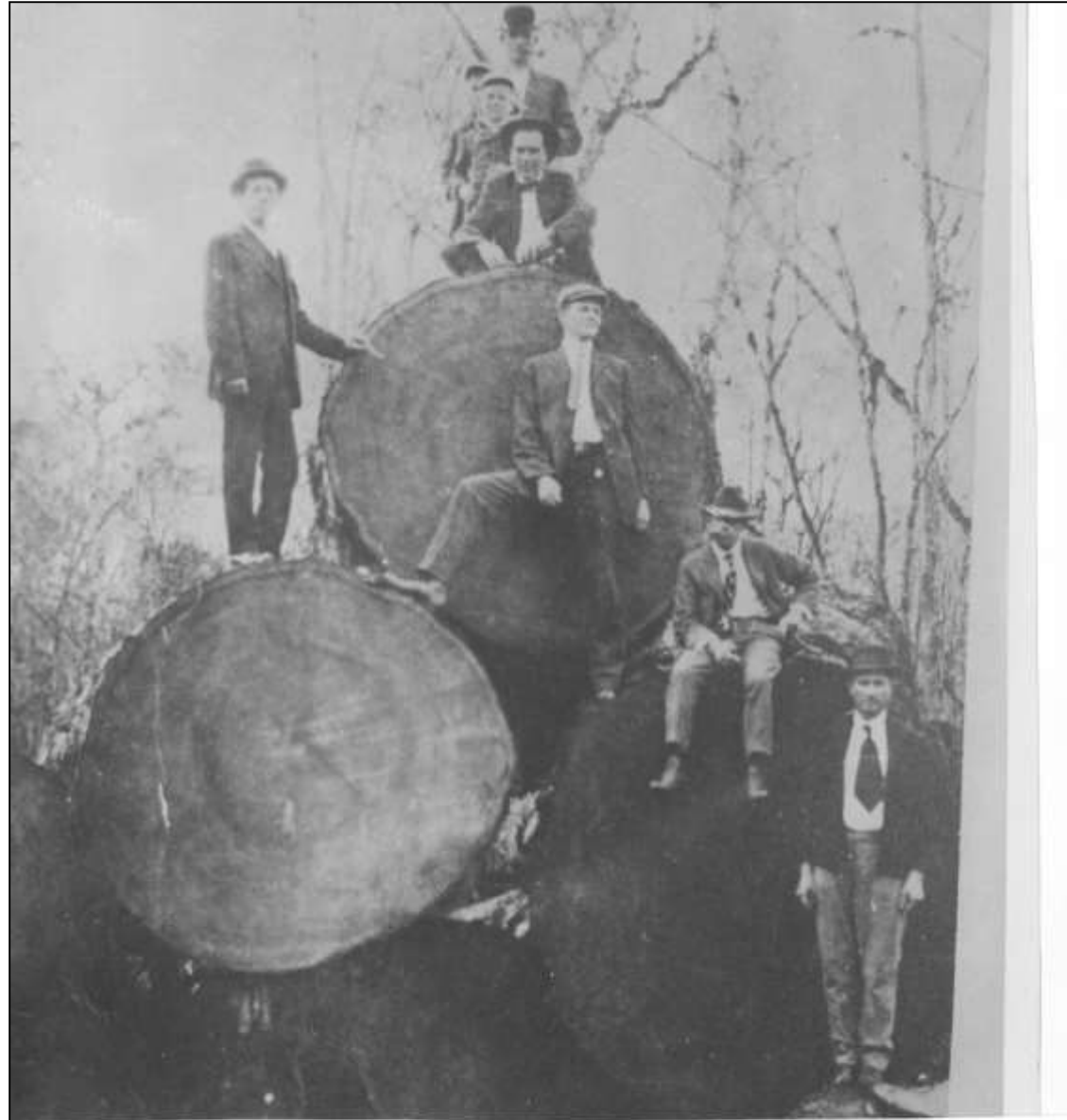
Florida Gazetteer and Directory, 1918.

To scale schematic
of Centralia
Sawmill
foundation by Roy
and Steven Clardy,
2012.

Main sawmill bldg.
is 100 ft. by 50 ft.
Length from Mill
Pond (top) to S.
end of bldg. is 200
ft. and to S. most
fndt. is 260 ft.



Centralia was a short-lived logging town to harvest 15,000 acres of monster red Tidewater Cypress trees on the edge of the Gulf of Mexico.

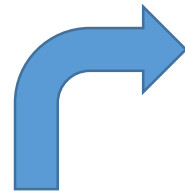


CYPRESS LOGS
CENTRALIA, FLORIDA
(1910-1922)

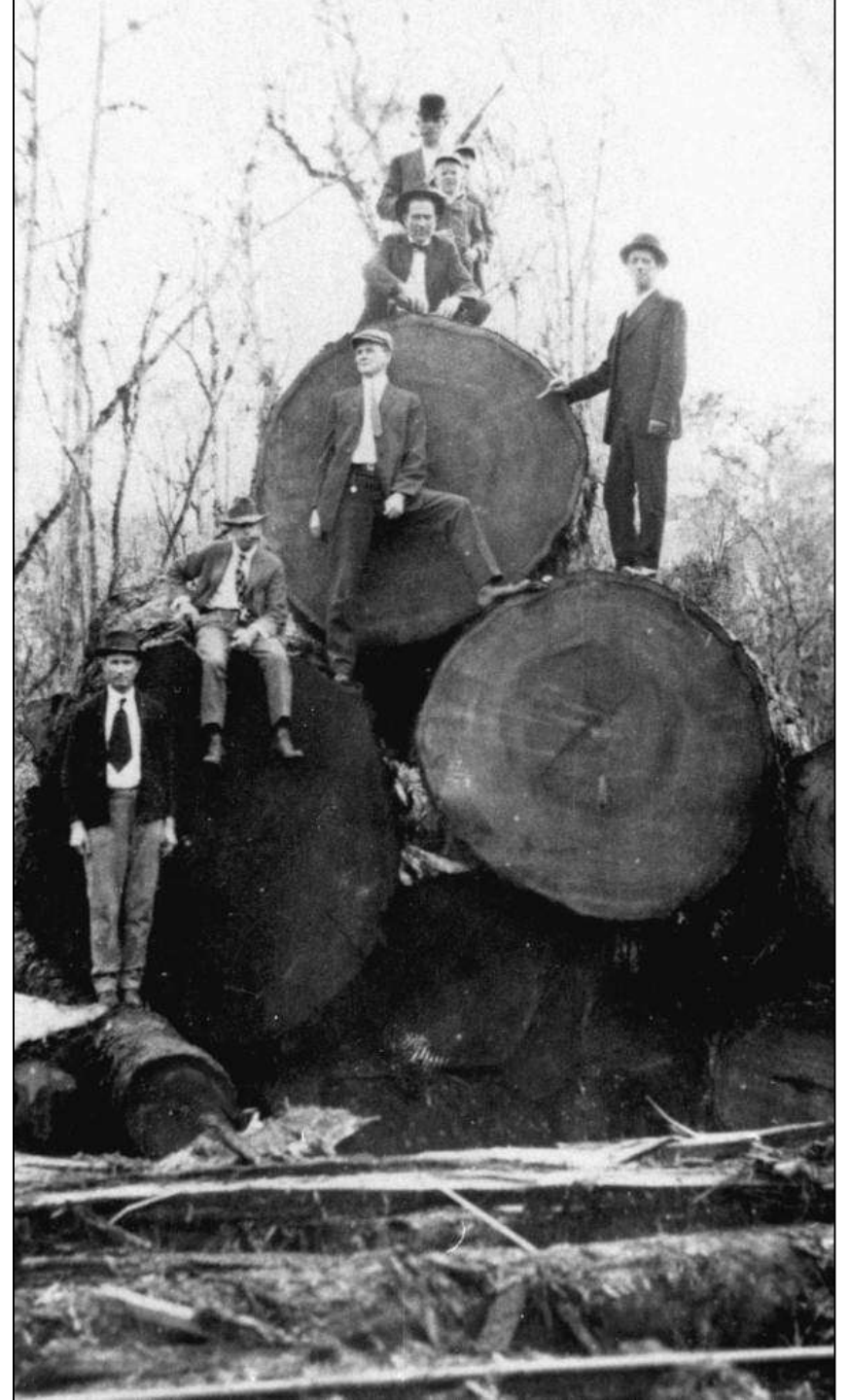


CYPRESS LOGS
CENTRALIA, FLORIDA
(1910-1922)

large cypress
cut by Union
Cypress
Company,
Hopkins,
Florida, 1916



Hopkins is
South
Melbourne
in Brevard
County



Folks who have worked to collect this history:

Virginia Jackson (d.) and Dennis Rhodes of Hernando Heritage Museum

Father James Hoge (d.) with his article on Big Cypress for the Old Inverness Museum in Dec. 2000.

Ken Sutherland, Burt Golub,
David McAlpine, Roy and
Carolyn Clardy, Stephen Clardy, Sid Taylor



Jeff
Lewis,
Betty
Cason
Snow,
April
2006

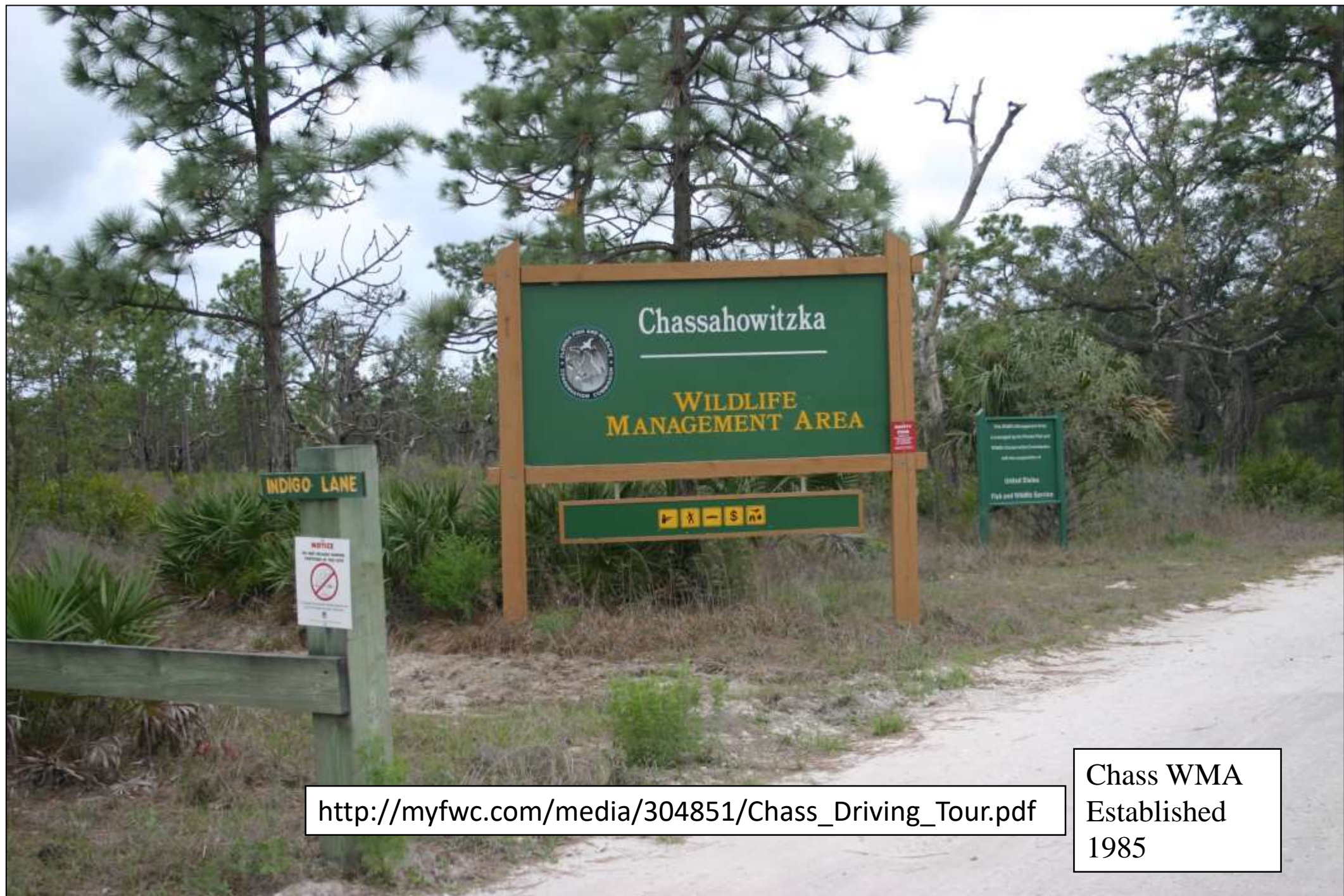
From Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Chassahowitzka
Wildlife Management Area, 17260 Necklace Warbler Road Brooksville, FL
34614 (352) 592-5634: Jennifer Roberts, Stan Kirkland and Aaron Given
Workerbees: Jeff Lewis (d.), Doug Davis, Kathy Thompson, Ken Morgan, Betty
and Bobby Snow, Robert Martinez of *Old Brooksville in Photos and Stories*

Back row:
Roy and
Stephen
Clardy, Stan
Kirkland,
Doug Davis
Front:
Sid Taylor,
Ken
Sutherland
Jan.6, 2008






The mill had the capacity to produce 100,000 board feet per day from the double-banded raw timber sawmill operation.



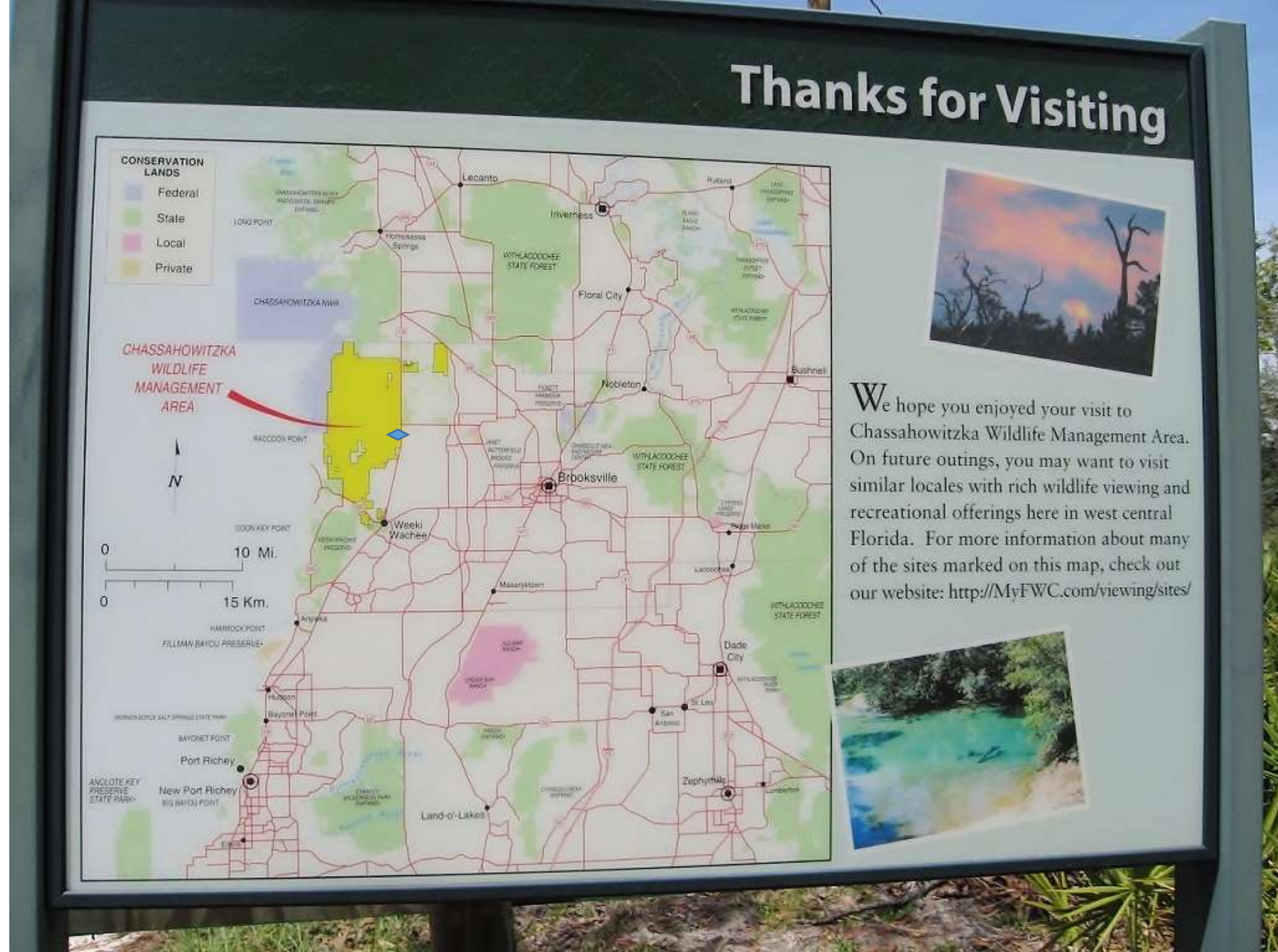
http://myfwc.com/media/304851/Chass_Driving_Tour.pdf

Chass WMA
Established
1985

Cultural Resource
Assessment of Recent
CARL Acquisitions,
including the Former
Town of Centralia, 
Chassahowitzka Wildlife
Management Area,
Hernando County,
Florida

Mellissa Memory,
Christine Newman,
Jonathan Lammers and
William Stanton

CARL Archaeological
Survey
Bureau of
Archaeological Research
Florida Division of
Historical Resources
June, 1999



Mr. Edgar Roberts, mill superintendent at Centralia was a native of Michigan in the timber business. He later moved to Donna, Louisiana, still engaging in timber business. When the mill at Donna cut out, he bought the mill and moved it to Coleman, Florida, and operated the Coleman Cypress Company. He moved the same mill to Centralia in 1910. (Robert Butler, 1972)



Edgar Roberts

The town was named by Edgar Roberts (1867-1939) maybe for the name of his wife's (Nettie Fish) home county in PA: Centre. Roberts and his brother, Baxter, operated the Central Cypress Lumber Co., which cut mostly giant cypress in Hernando County and surrounds. The brothers had the logging town built primarily to provide housing and services for their employees. An article in the *Tampa Morning Tribune* of Aug. 1, 1917, referred to Roberts as general manager of Central Cypress Lumber Co. of Centralia. A 1915 article referred to him as president of the Central Cypress Co.



A great contributor to the success of Centralia was family life. Unlike earlier, isolated logging camps, a town was built with modern amenities and available goods that cultivated a content and stable workforce. Many of the families probably followed Turner and/or Roberts from New Orleans area or Coleman, Florida.



Joe T. Silver, b Dec. 3, 1910



Evelyn Repetto, b Oct. 16, 1913, Centralia





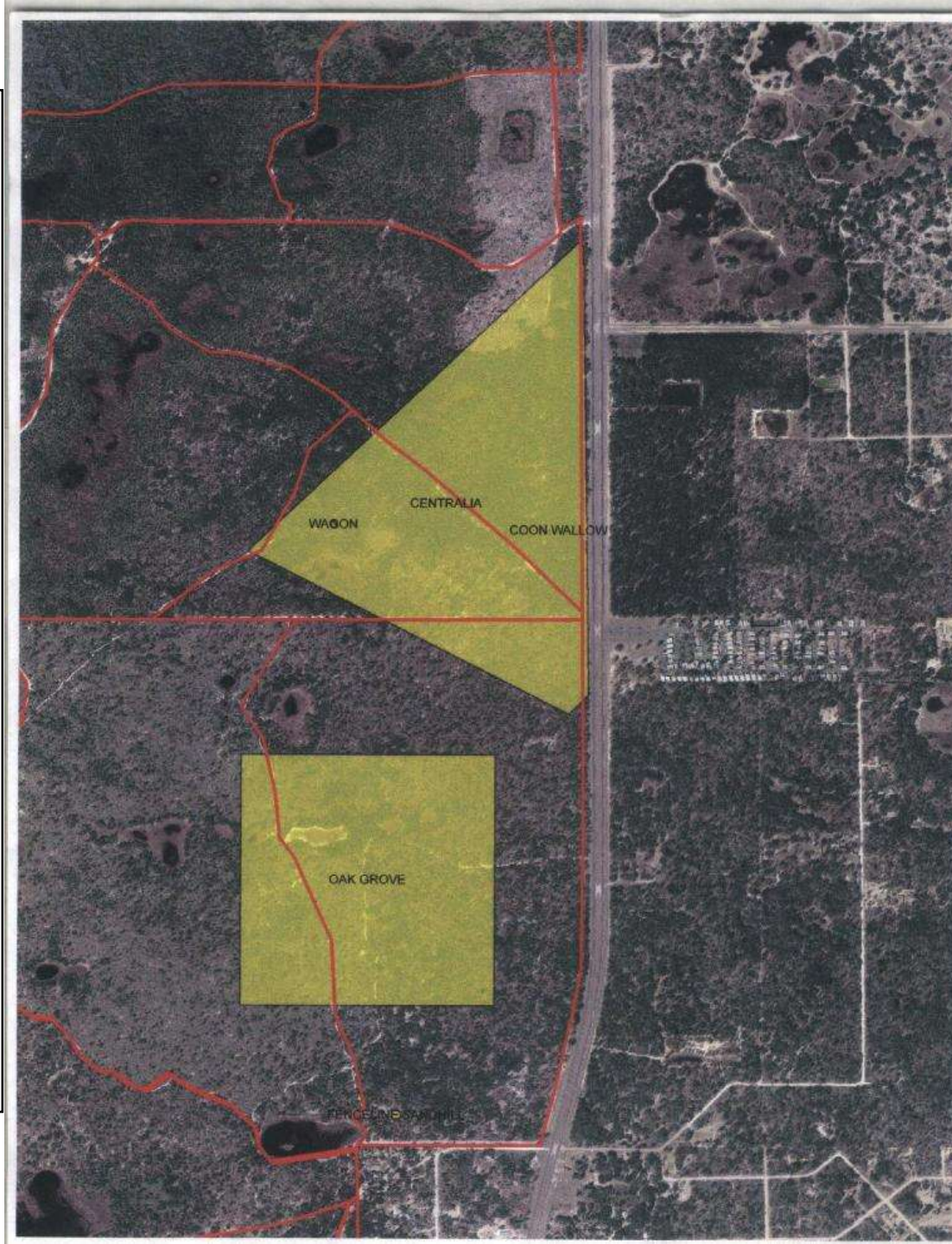
CENTRAL COMMERCIAL COMPANY CENTRALIA FL. 004868

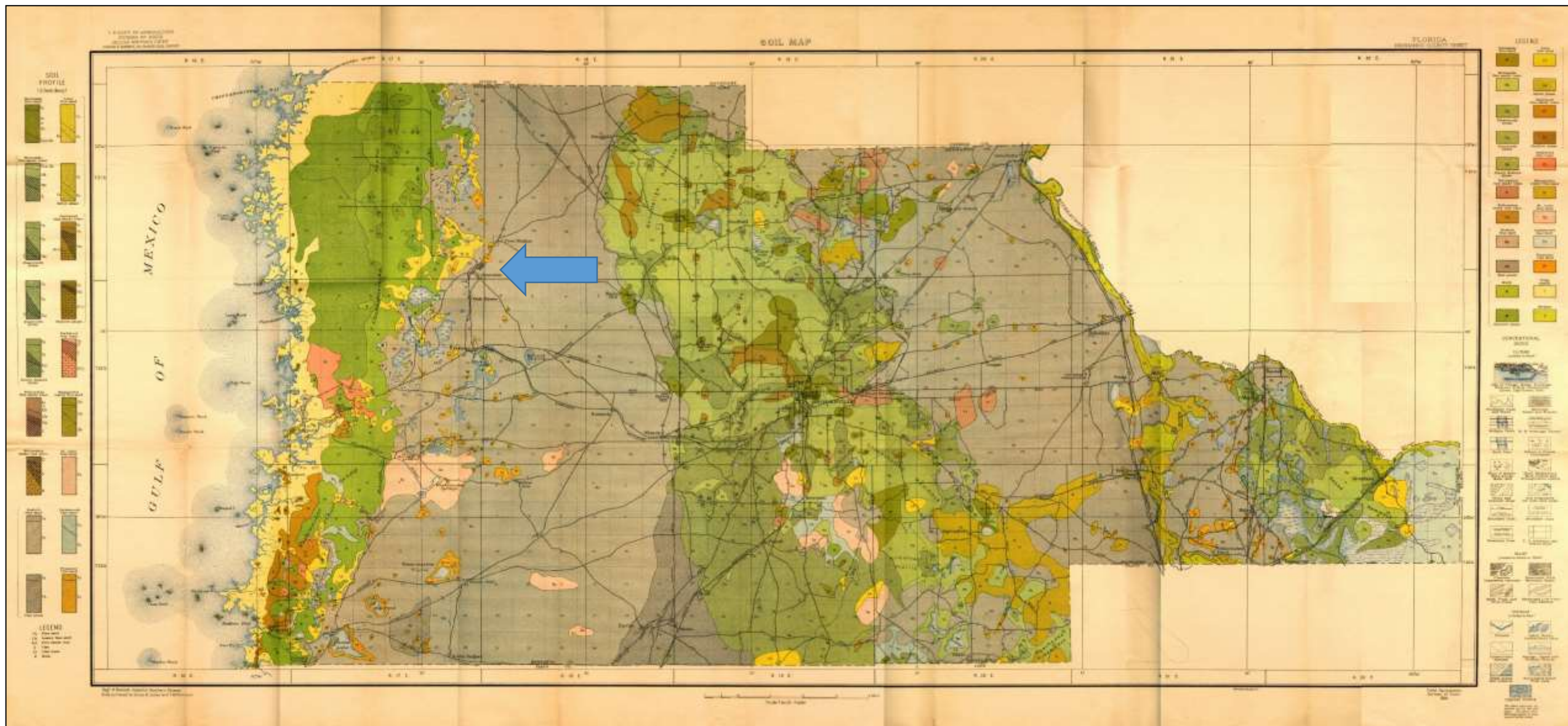
Filed 11/25/1910

DISSOLUTION 03/26/1926

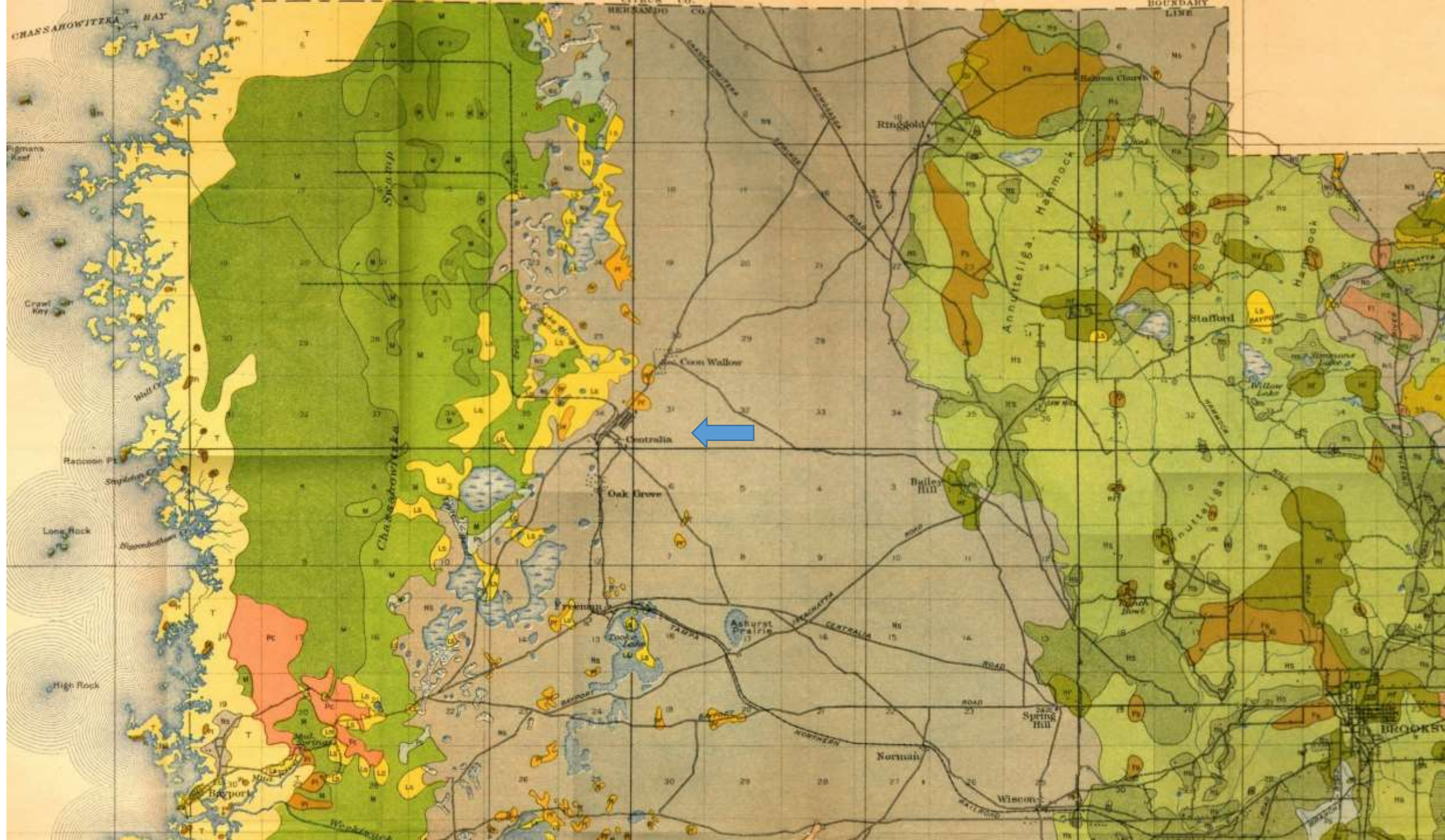


To drive to Centralia from Brooksville, travel west on CR 476 and take Centralia Road. When you reach US 19 you are just north of “downtown” Centralia which existed from June 1910 till the Post office closed December 11, 1922.

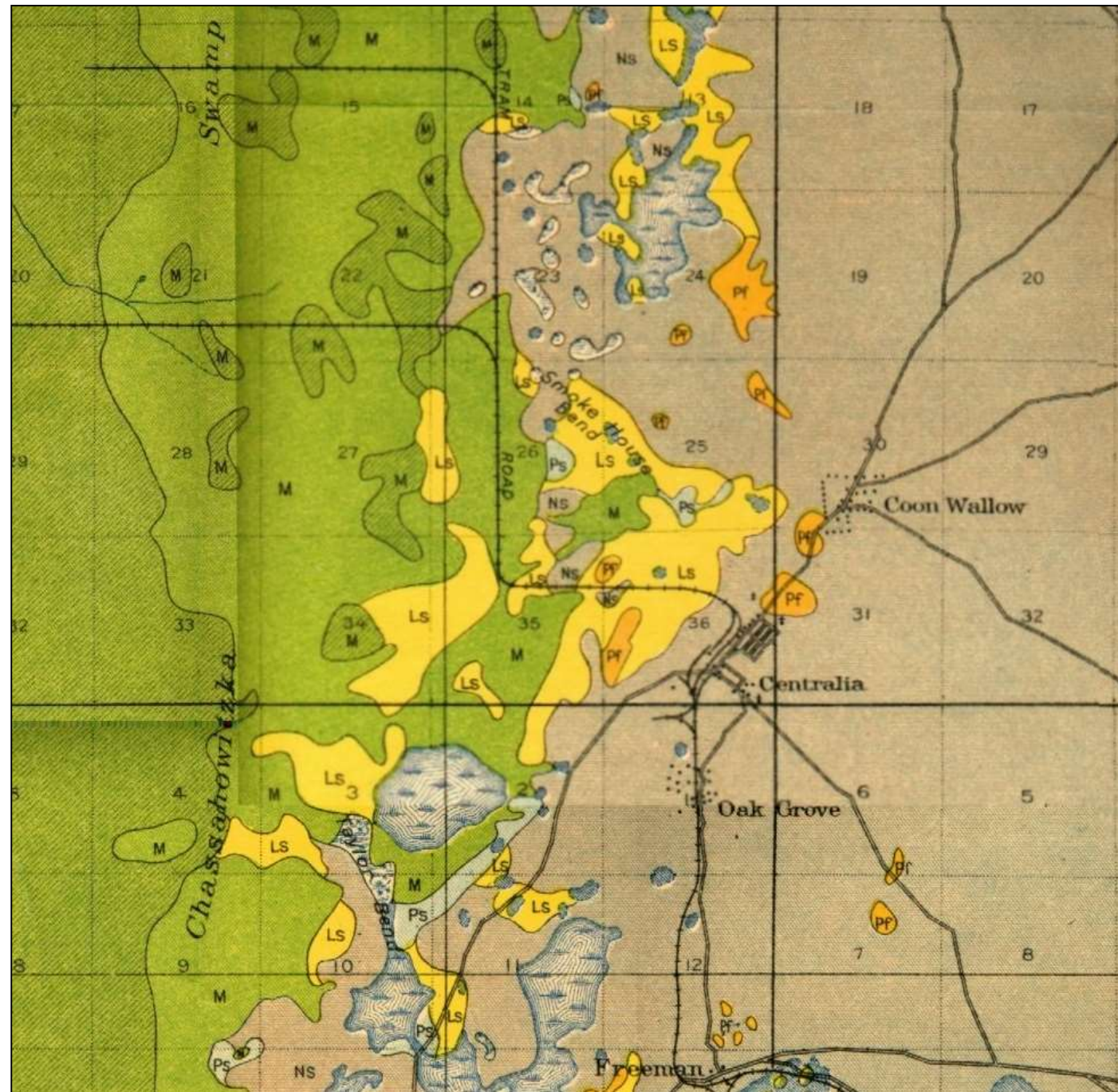




1914 Hernando County Soil Map



1914 Hernando
County Soil Map



The low lands and swamps contributed the greatest volume, highest grade, fastest growing, durable, red tide water cypress to be found any where in the United States of America. This wealth of timber seemed inexhaustible and lured men and industry from all corners of the earth.





Workers hailed from Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Canada and most U.S. states.

About 1200 laborers and their families and support, numbering another 3000, occupied the “boom town”.

What animals in yard?
What is on side of other bldg.?



The boarding house for visitors and unmarried workers was the Centralia Hotel, run by Mrs. George Varn from Brooksville.

Centralia Hotel
(and Boarding
House) and
Chicken Coop



Edgar Robert's Centralia home in 1914. Thanks to Mary Frances (Youngblood) Repetto for some of these photographs of daily life at Centralia. She was the daughter-in-law to Will Repetto.



Guests at the Hotel could purchase Centralia postcards (24 images) to write home. Most are featured in this work.



Centralia was served by Dr. Johnson, M.D. and surgeon who lived at Centralia. But the dental care came from Dr. D. L. Heddick, from Booksville, who kept office in the hotel. He would come over and stay at the hotel each month until he took care of all the dental needs. (Butler, 1972)

The are tools of
the lumbering
trade of the day,
at least for pine
felling.

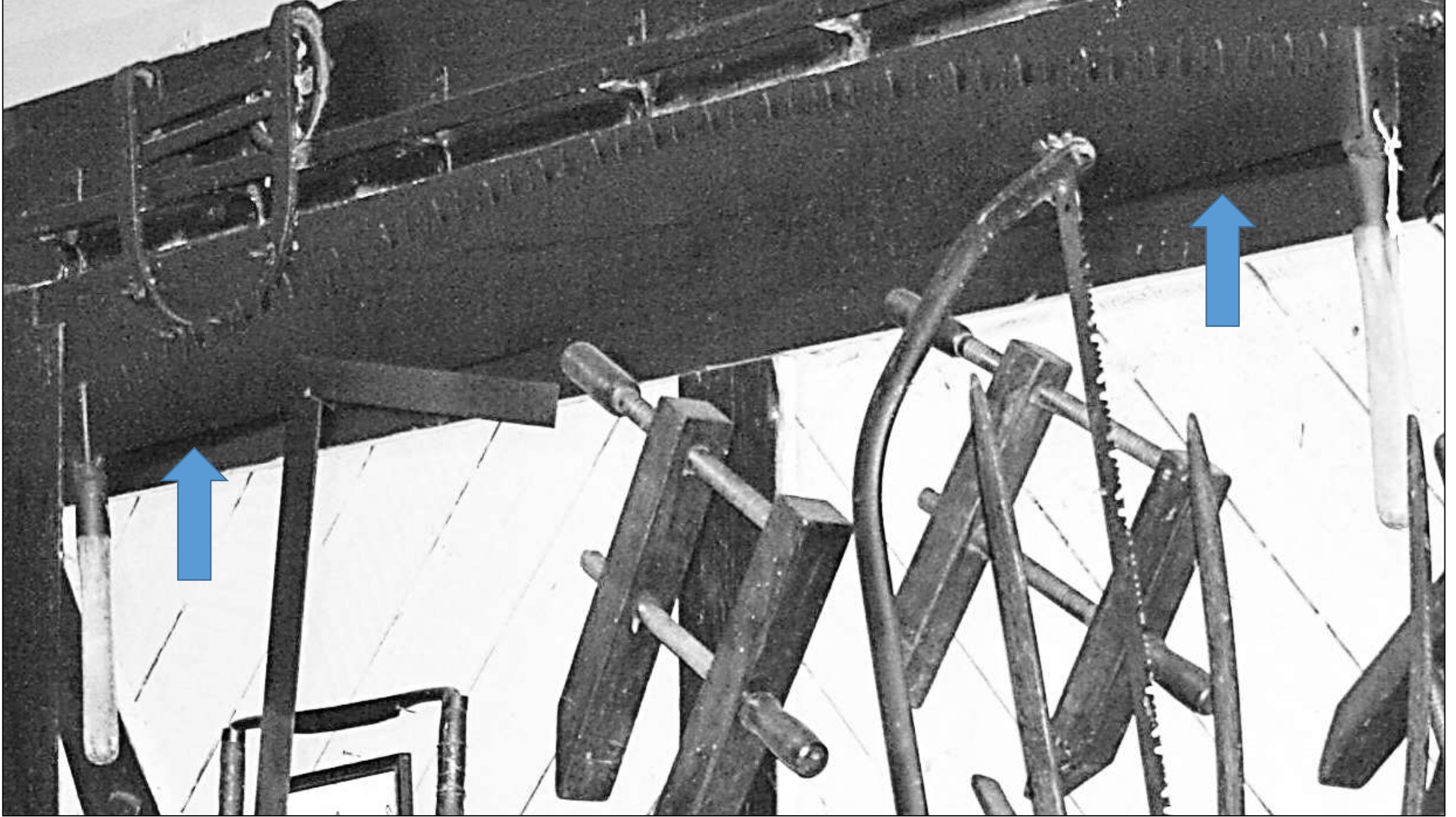
But it took
something
bigger for
cypress.....



...saws to 14 feet. It also took crews of loggers, sawyers, skidders, thirty-six millwrights, blacksmiths, planers, mechanics, expert builders, surveyors, foreman, quarter bosses, trail-cutters, lumber inspectors, and craftsman of many specialties many who came and left with the mill.



Photo not of Centralia loggers, but from FloridaMemory.com



Centralia Cross cut saw donated by Mary Francis Youngblood Repetto is located at the Brooksville RR Depot Museum

D. G. Mondon (who was the Hernando county courthouse custodian in 1962) remembers trees 12 feet across. Special-made Disston cross cut saws, 14 feet long, were used to fell them.

Paul Davis , *St. Petersburg Times*,
Sunday, Jan. 21, 1962

Sawyers, Rufus M. Beebe and Norman Kimble cutting tree. Sawyers in three operating areas near Copeland cut an average 10,000 cypress board feet a day (as many as 600 logs), 1948.



Another segment of the population was some fifty Greeks from Tarpon Springs, Fl., who were employed to stack lumber in the lumberyard. Only one of them spoke English. George Maillis in the store acted as an interpreter. He gave them all their work instructions. (Robert Butler, 1972)



Sponge Diver re-enactor in 1962 in Tarpon Springs.

The workers could buy any provisions and clothing at the commissary and Johnny Doolittle, the lumber inspector, helped the Greeks do so. He was taught to speak Greek. There were no women among them; the owner built a two-story building to house them; they were most appreciative and grateful for the kindness shown them by the other nationalities. Johnny Doolittle and Robert Stewart in the meat market were their favorites and they were always giving them sponges and all sorts of items. Before long Robert and Johnny were giving them English lessons in return. (Butler, 1972)



When the Greeks arrived at Centralia, James Condrey was operating a small bakery and his first chore after their arrival was to get a Greek baker from Tarpon Springs to teach him how to make Greek bread and pastry. Gamble imported not only necessities but even luxuries, including Greek delicacies such as feta cheese, olive oil, roka (rocket salad) and black Calamata olives. Indeed, the commissary was better stocked than most stores in larger cities of the Gulf coast. (Butler, 1972)



Mr. Roberts was so pleased with their work he decided that he would transfer them to the logging woods. But they were so afraid of the large trees when they were cut down; because of their size the earth would shake when they fell. Though fearless when it came to putting on heavy suits and diving for sponges in 20 fathoms of deep water in the Gulf, in mass, they refused to work and departed from Centralia on the first train out. They all left except Tony who was a cobbler and decided that he would stay. (Butler, 1972)



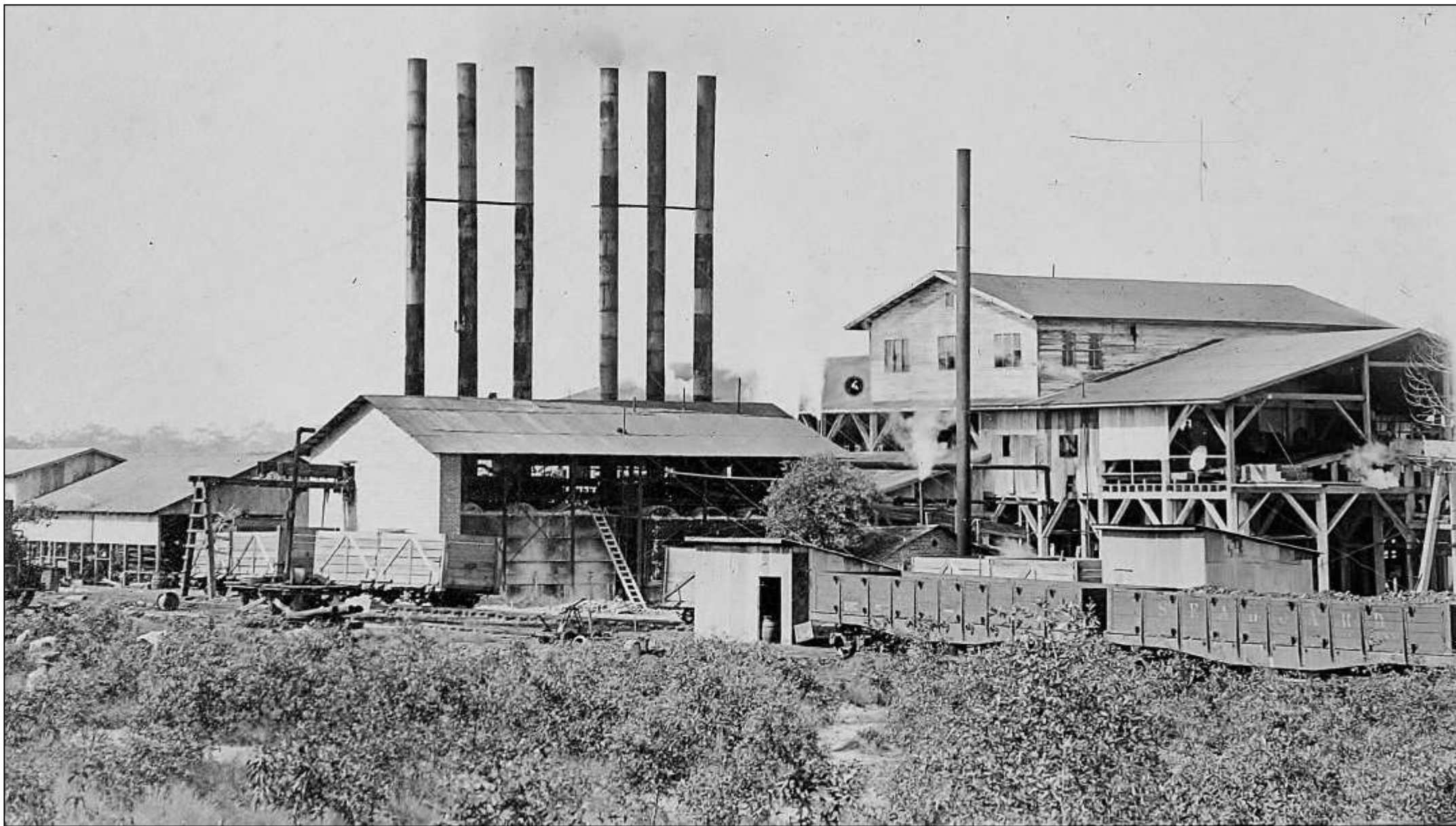
Bagdad Land and Lumber Company - Bagdad, Florida, 1939

Though long recognized for its qualities of resistance to insects and rot, the national market for Florida cypress did not come into full-swing until the turn of the 20th century.



Bud Alston, Dixie County, 1929

The mill at Centralia was constructed by the J. C. Turner Lumber Company, a prominent firm in the annals of Florida Cypress lumbering. Perhaps the finest documentation of this company's development is provided by the reminiscences of J. Arthur Currey.



Currey went to work for the Co. in 1907 and remained with the firm for the next 57 years. He was interviewed in 1967 by Baynard Kendrick, whose book was edited and published as *A History of Florida Forests* by Ms. Barry Walsh in 2007. Currey said:

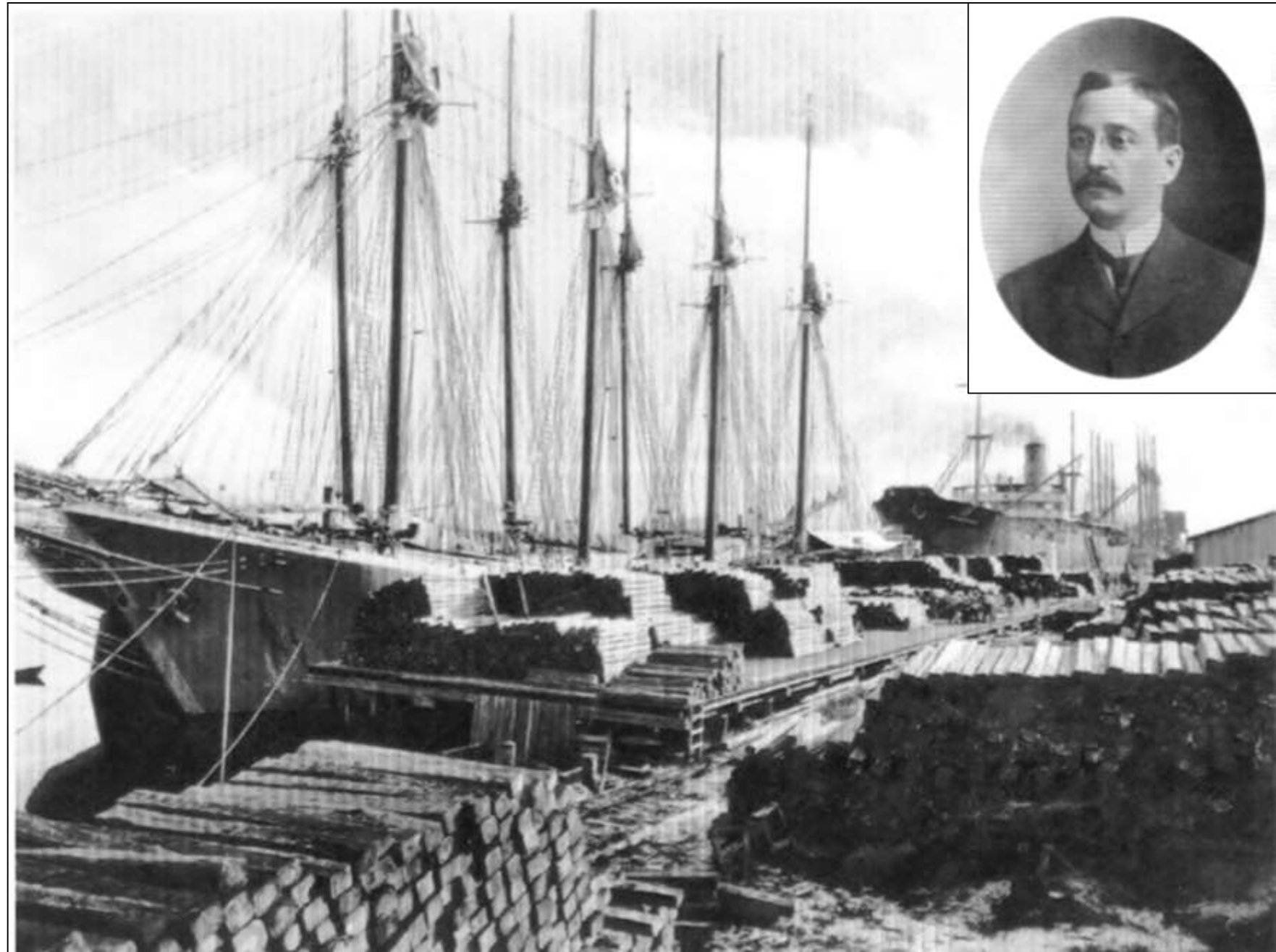
“John Charles Turner was born in Albany, NY not too long after the Civil War. Shortly thereafter, his family moved to Michigan where he graduated from Hillsdale college...about 30 miles south of Jackson. He went to work for Joseph Rathbone, who was a wholesale white pine distributor with fine facilities in Chicago. Turner’s first job was in the sales department and eventually he was assigned a territory in Southern Illinois. One Day, while at East St. Louis, Turner saw a barge on which some shingles were loaded. He investigated and found that they were cypress shingles. He was so impressed with the appearance of these shingles that shortly after he persuaded Mr. Rathbone to send him down to Louisiana to investigate the possibilities of this product.

John Charles Turner



Soon the two built a cypress mill at Harvey across the Mississippi River from New Orleans, which became the Louisiana Cypress Lumber Company. Loggers credited it as being the first company ever to put a skidder on a barge, a rig which eventually became the general method of logging the cypress from deep swamps in Southern La.

J. C. Turner pioneered in successfully marketing cypress in northern states that were running out of pine forests. Around 1895 he organized the J. C Turner Cypress Lumber company and built a wholesale distributing cypress yard at Irvington on the Hudson River in New York.



Port Tampa Inn (foregrd.) and The St. Elmo built by Henry Plant 1887 at the terminus of his RR at Pt. Tampa (also know as Black Point and Passage Point).

Shingles, laths and construction lumber were transported from Centralia on the Northern Tampa Railroad for shipping to Irvington, NY from Port Tampa.



Edgar Roberts, General Superintendent;

Baxter Roberts, Superintendent of Logging;

Hamilton Roberts, Assistant Superintendent of logging;

John Maguire and Ruben Boaz, Surveyors;

MacLendon, Trail-cutter;

Charley McKinney, Quarter Boss;

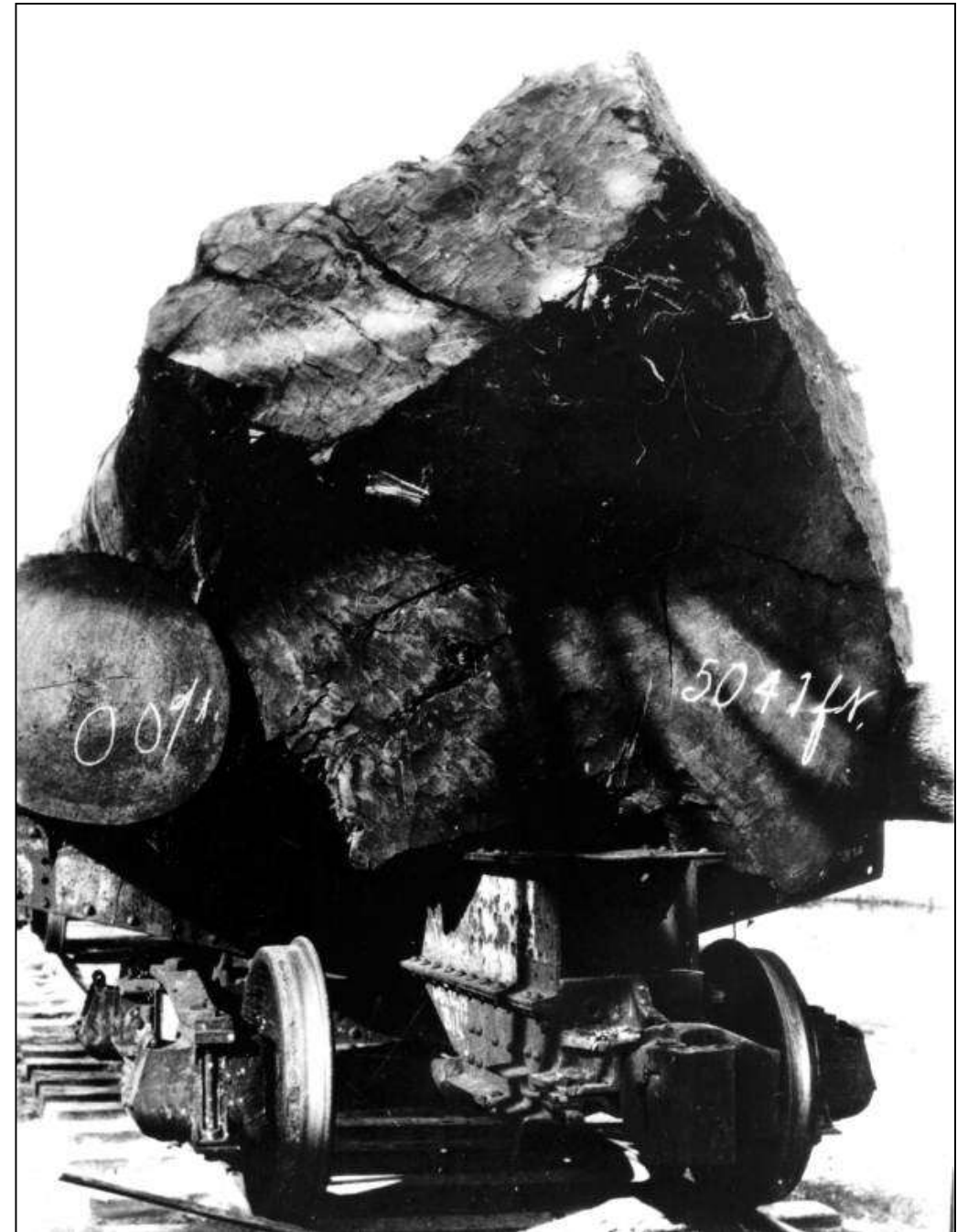
Bennett, Office Manager;

Bob Stewart, First Time-Keeper;

Leatherwood, Master Millwright;

Frank Silver, Millwright (Bob Butler, 1972)

3000 year old cypress log on railcar from Burton-Swartz
Cypress Company (1926) produced 5041 board feet



Hole Way, Saw Filler;

Al Wineman, Frank Cobb, Payette,
Dursheimer, Sawyers;

Tom Wineman, Mill Foreman;

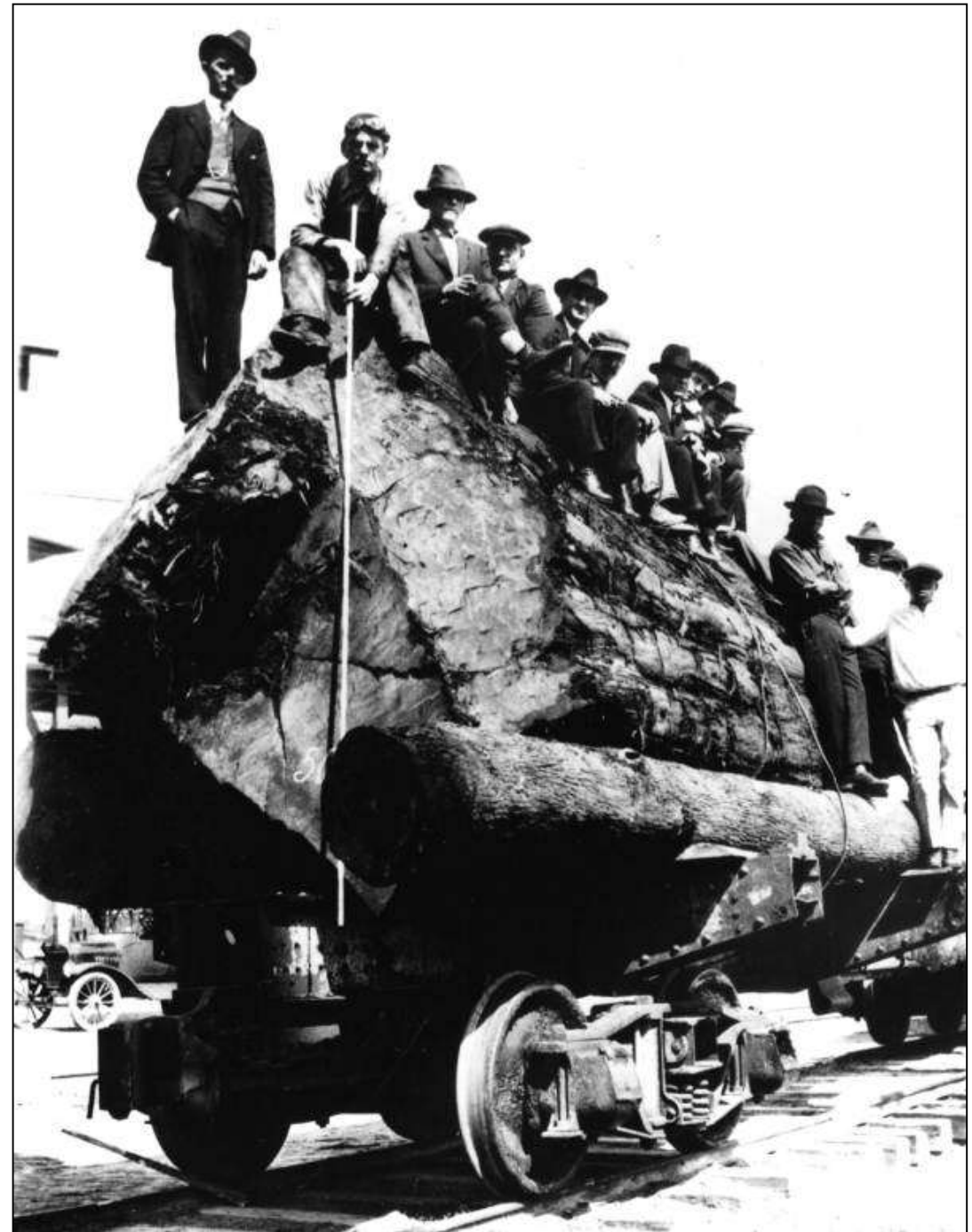
Herby, Planer Mill Foreman;

Gray, Planer Mill Mechanic;

Johnny Doolittle, Lumber Inspector;

"Dad" Doolittle, Master Mechanic and
craftsman (Bob Butler, 1972)

Men sitting on cypress
log at Burton-Swartz
Cypress Company -
Perry, 1926



John Charles Turner

JOHN C. TURNER 45

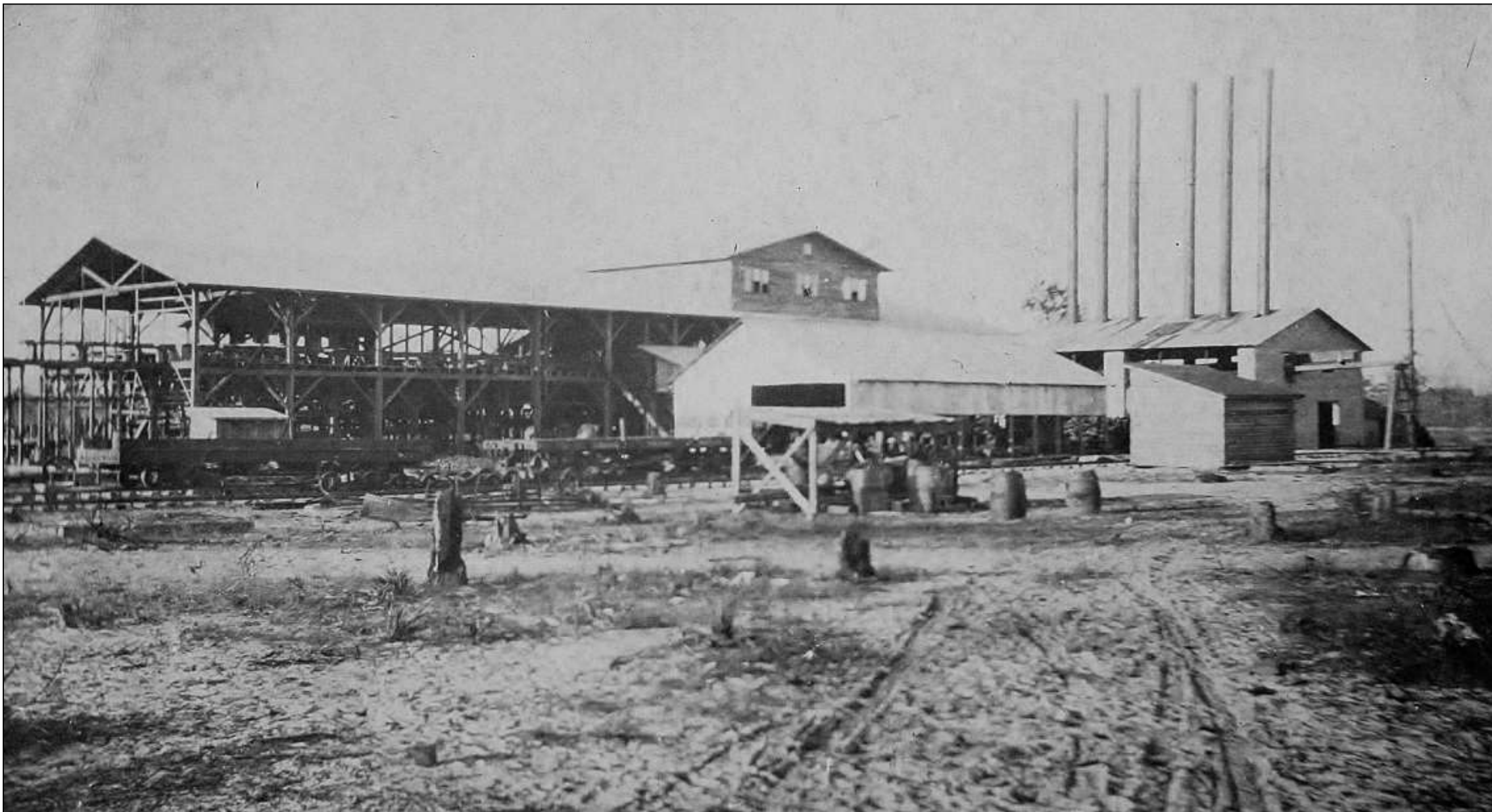
Better than all this, however, the individual cypress manufacturers of the South had come to know J. C. Turner intimately and well. They knew that his integrity, his ability and his judgment were no chimerical qualities, and, although the cash capital of his company was small, his standing with the cypress manufacturers was such that he commanded unlimited credit at once. This confidence of the cypress producers, possessed then by Mr. Turner, he possesses today in an increased ratio. It has been his largest and most valuable asset and has resulted in his becoming the most extensive handler of cypress lumber in the world. In addition to that, the Turner Cypress Lumber Company has become one of the largest owners of cypress timber lands in the United States. It is estimated that the company's holdings aggregate fully 1,000,000,000 feet.



http://www.archive.org/stream/americanlumberme01chicrich/americanlumberme01chicrich_djvu.tx

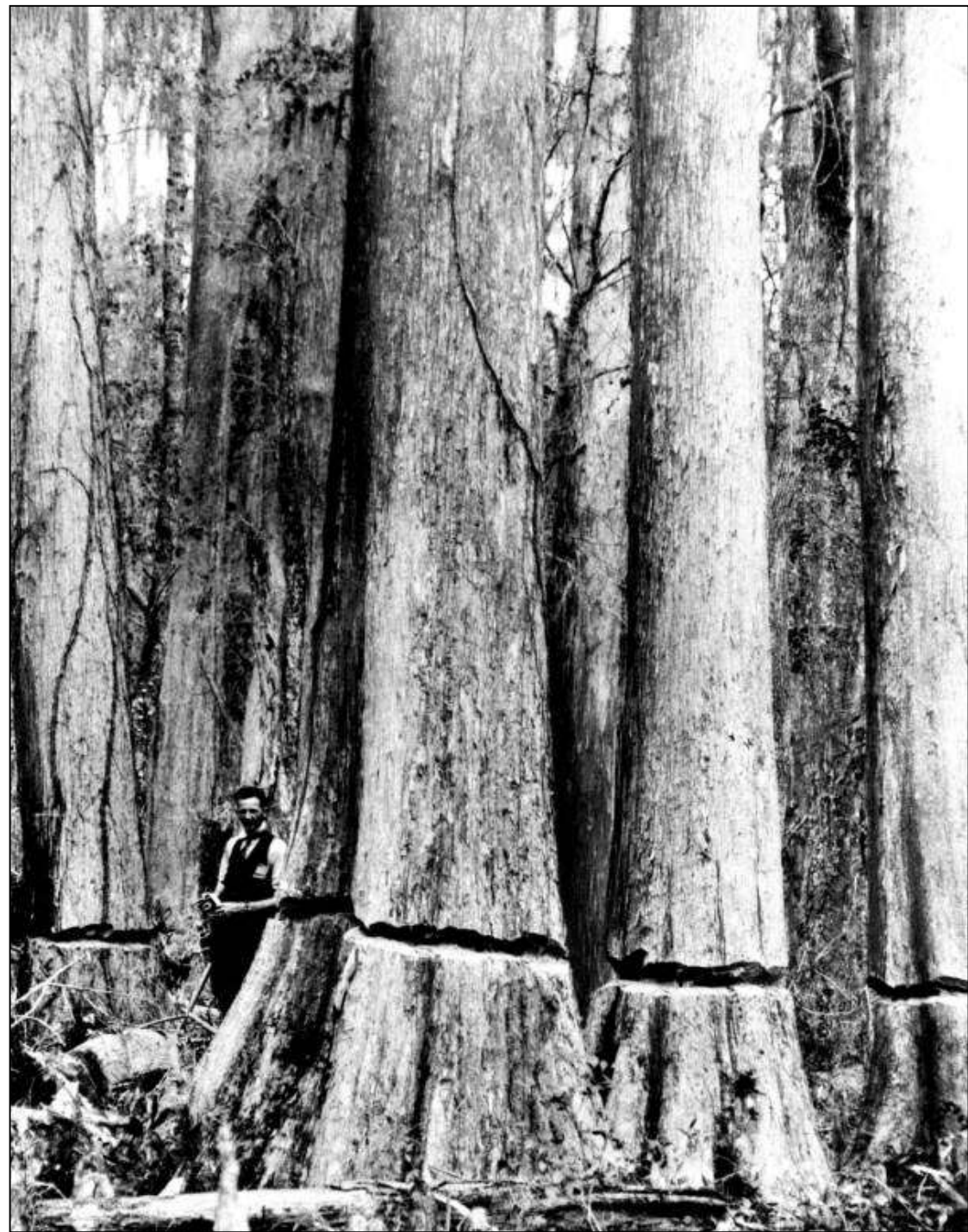
Central Cypress Company of Centralia was formed in 1910. Under the supervision of Mr. Leatherwood, Master Millwright, along with thirty-five other millwrights, and they completed the mill construction. With the addition of a double band mill in 1911, they had the estimated capacity average daily cut of one hundred thousand (board) feet of lumber. Even in later days this output and efficiency hasn't been surpassed. (Butler, 1972)





Postcard with "Centralia Mill" written on the back. Note the "turpentine stump" front left.

Florida cypress were girdled up to a year before harvesting so as to die and lose water. Then they could be floated to the mill without sinking if there was a waterway.



Est. age of "The Senator" as 3500+ years in 2000 and 11 ft. diameter

The Majestic Bald Cypress: Florida's Oldest Trees

by Rev. James Hoige

Taxodium distichum: bald cypress, once widely distributed across North America, remains only in a narrow band from Virginia southward, throughout Florida, and westward to Louisiana. The largest and oldest specimens remained past the Ice Age in Florida, and had a life span of up to 6,000 years (see photo opposite), but now have widely disappeared due to lumbering in the machine age. The largest and oldest living cypress known in present-day Florida is "The Senator", located in a swamp near Sanford. Its known age is 3,500-plus years, and it is eleven feet in diameter at the base (the cypress depicted with this article far exceeds that; it was an estimated 16 feet in diameter).

Where and when was this picture of an ancient cypress under attack by man taken? It surfaced in a collection of pioneer Florida photographs. The owner, Ms. Lorise Abraham of Dade City, Florida, thinks it was in either the Withlacoochee River swamp or the tidewater swamp of Hernando-Citrus Counties. When? It had to have been prior to power tools and dynamite, most likely between 1900 and 1910. Why? Because of the primitive method in use to fell the tree. The blackened cavity at the base of the tree in the photograph indicates a futile charge of black powder. The tree had been sectioned top and bottom by axe, and from pegged perches the lumbermen

are stripping huge slabs from the section by sledge and iron wedges.

Was the tree felled in the Withlacoochee swamp? Hardly. Those giants originally remained submerged in water year-round and developed flared trunks from the base up, with "knees" protruding from the roots for oxygenation in the growing season. Conversely, the tree in the photograph shows no spreading at the base, and no "knees."

Alfred McKeithan, historian of Brooksville, Florida, thinks that this pictured beary-giant tree was felled in the tidal swamp north of the former West Hernando lumber town of Centralia, along the Chassahowitzka River. Our search turned there, where many large cypresses were felled by the Edgar Roberts Lumber Company of Centralia, founded in 1910. Mr. McKeithan's book, "Hernando County—Our Story," depicts huge photographed cypress logs (a single log occupies an entire railroad flatcar) coming into the Centralia mill.

The Centralia area northward fits the specifications of the accompanying photo. This ancient specimen has an unflared base, with no "knees", indicating that the swamp completely drained on at least a seasonal basis.

So the search for the locale of our mystery tree turns to southern Citrus County. At the headwaters of the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife refuge at Crystal River, I talked to the district manager, Mr. Jim Kraus. He referred me to his field assistant, Bob Quarles, at the Chassahowitzka office.

In his field office at Chassahowitzka, Mr. Quarles could give me no help. The photo was as curious to him as to me,

even though he patrols the edge of the swamp on a regular basis to check for lumber poachers.

Where next may I turn? Fortunately, I am given the name of James "Jockey" Cato, retired hauler and landfill trucker, native to Old Homosassa. Mr. Cato, now 82, was tracked down at the Crystal River Health and Rehabilitation Center.

"Yes, this looks like the

THE FELLING OF A GIANT

This picture, taken around 1900 of the felling of a Florida bald cypress, despite the evidence in the photograph, remains a mystery. Who are these people? Where was this photo taken? Perhaps you may recognize a face in this photo.

Chassahowitzka Swamp north of the river," he remarked, looking at the photo. "There are a few big cypresses still left in that part of the preserve. About 40 years ago I went with a few friends into the swamp to look at a big one like in this photo. It's still there, I expect."

In the same facility with Mr. Cato is Mr. Chester Ward, 86, who worked for the Hunt lumber and planing mill at Homosassa in the 1930's. "I was paid 15 cents an hour to help grade the right-of-way for a tram railway from the mill into the Chassahowitzka swamp. There still were some big old cypresses in the swamp at that time," Chester allowed.

Do the Florida swamps still shroud "big-foot" bald cypresses awaiting discovery? Likely, yes. But the "big daddy" of our photograph is gone forever. We must preserve for posterity the few middle-sized giants remaining!



16'
dbh

COPY DEADLINE
"at home"
December 12

Florida had already emerged as an important state in the production of pine timber, but cypress forests--in flooded bottomlands and swamps--forced innovative harvesting methods to be developed.



1920s--Steam powered skidder loading cypress logs in Florida.

Heading into Big Cypress Swamp, Osceola National Forest, 1937

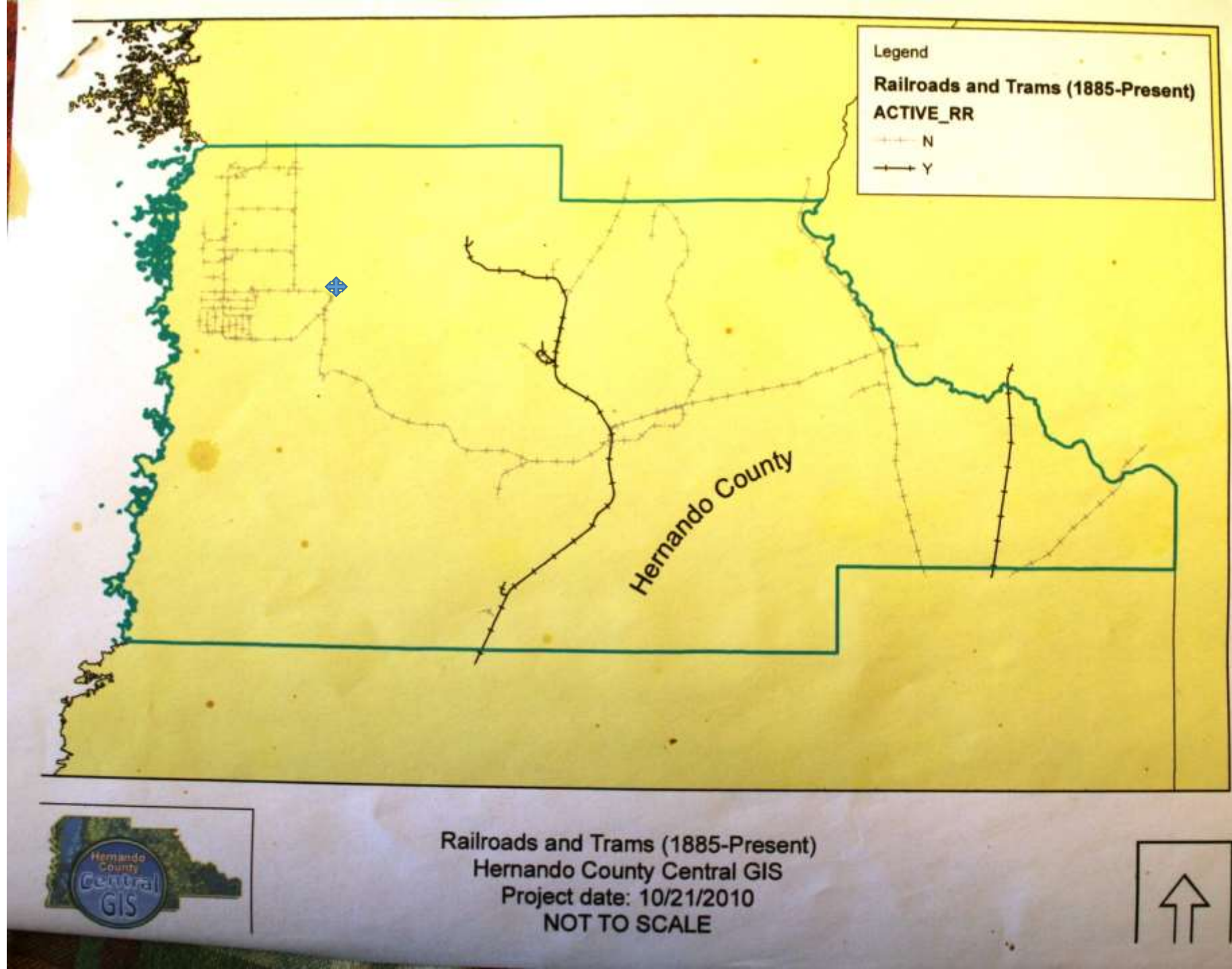
And the building of
railroads into areas
with shallow tidal
waters.



To service Centralia, the Turner Lumber Company had a narrow gauge logging tram railroad throughout their logging areas but never connected to the standard gauge line due to the difference wheel sizes. Instead there was a loading and transfer platform between the two railroad termini.



Narrow-gauged railroad trams were built into the swamps to the W and NW of the mill for extracting the logs. In 1912 there were 6 miles of logging trams, which tripled to 18 miles of track by 1917.



Section 36 and 31 of
Township 21 South of
Range 18 East

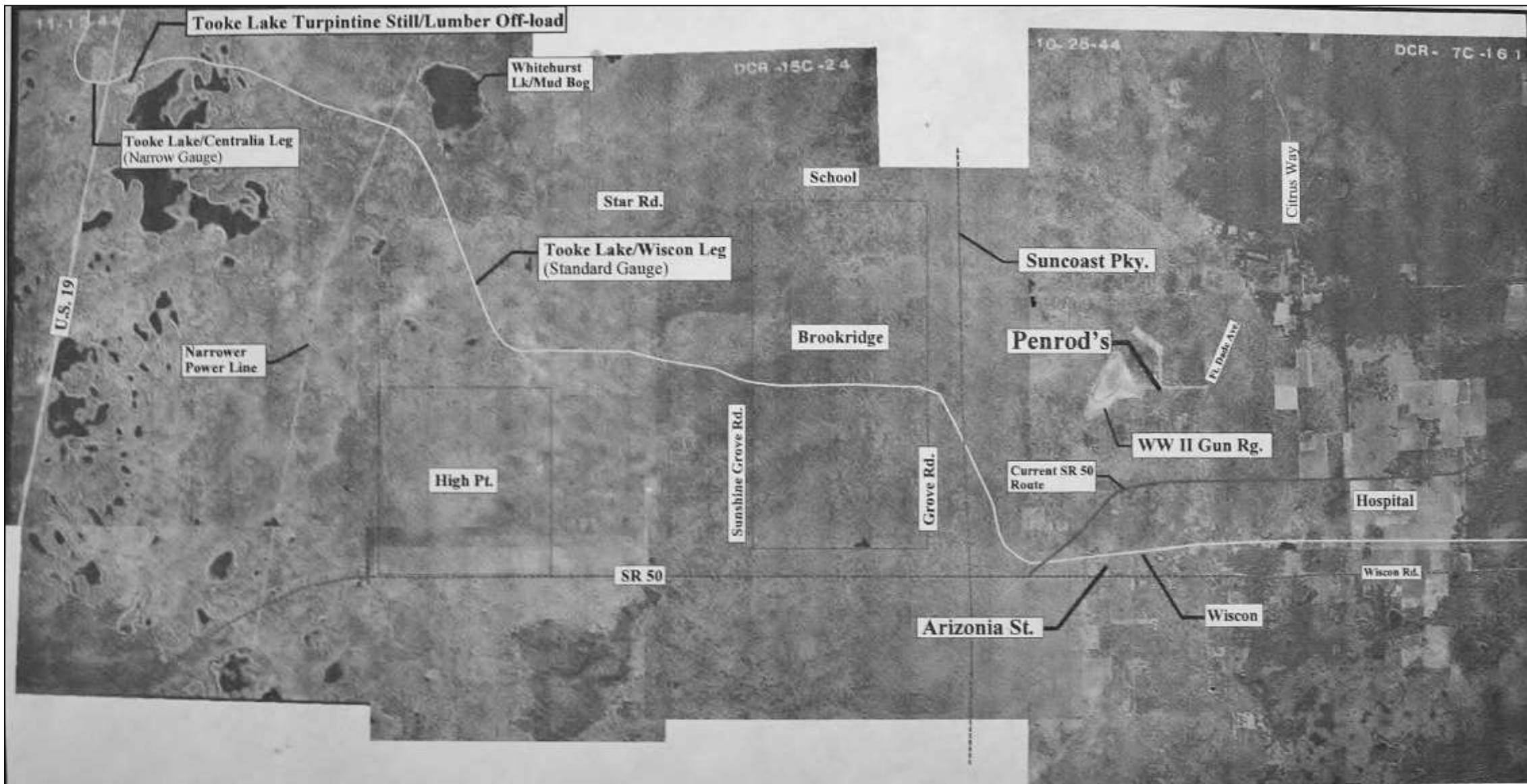


CR 476

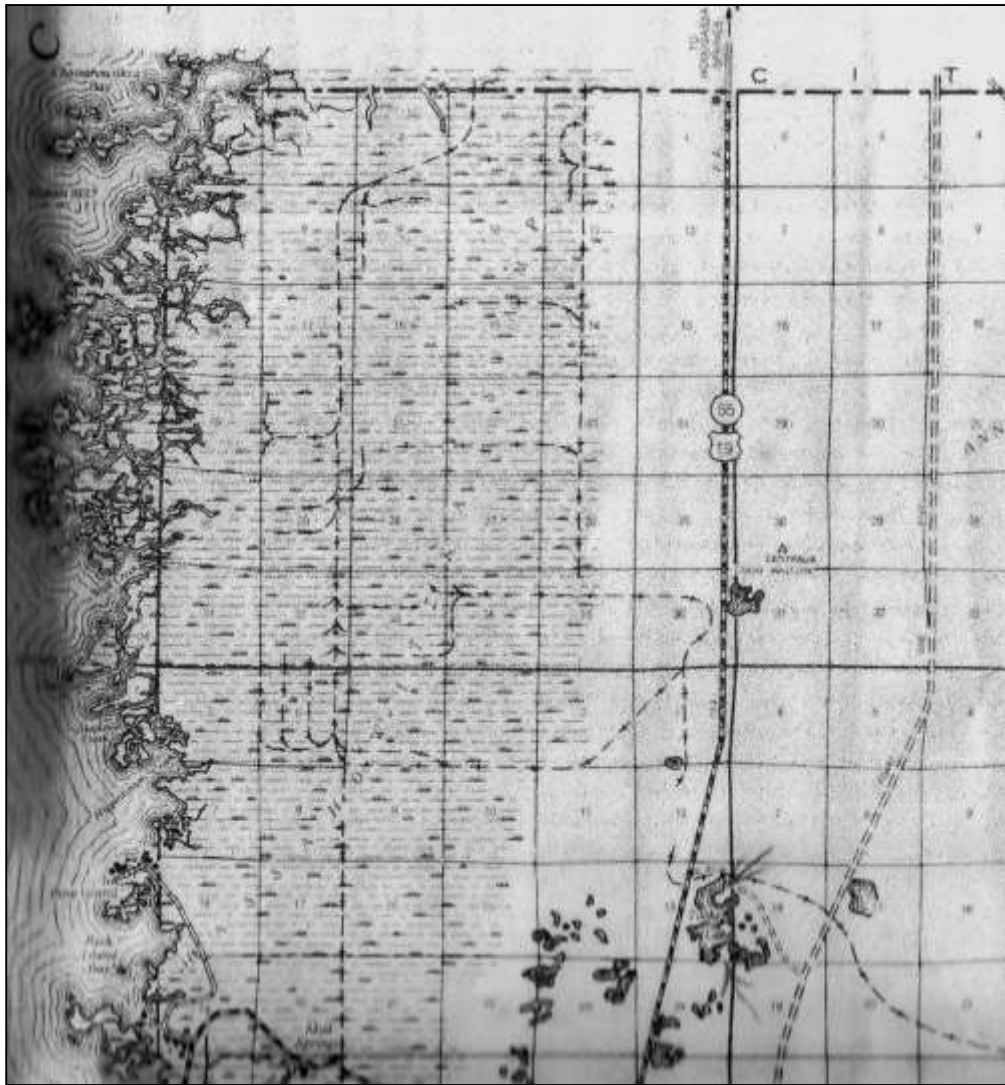


McAlpine Environmental Consulting, Inc.
12154 Kansas Road, Brooksville, FL 34614
352-585-2033 (Mobile)
davidmcc@tampabay.fl.com

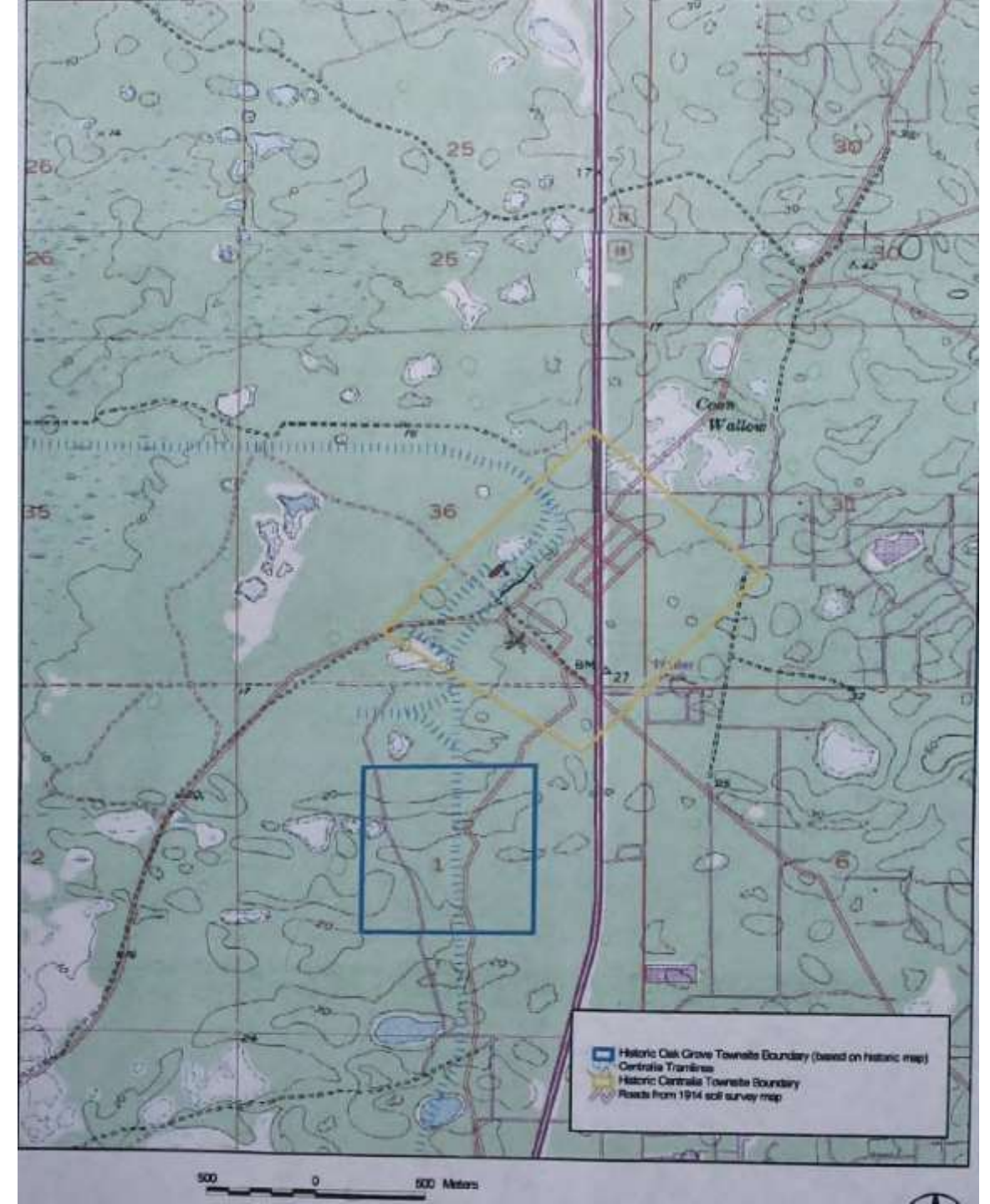
Abandoned Tooke Lake/Wiscon R/R Route
(From 1944 Aerial Overlay)



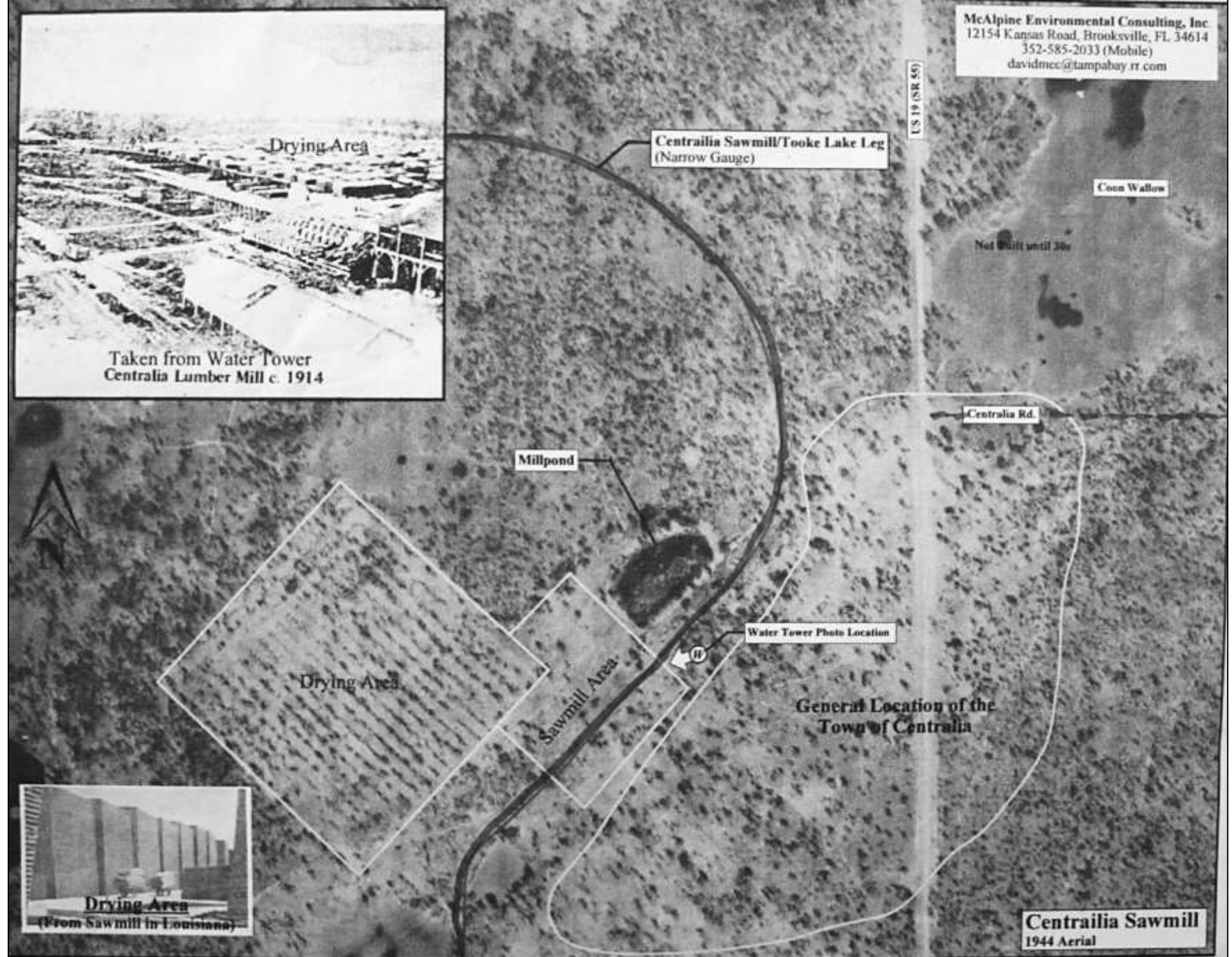
**Composite of 1944 Aerial Photography
Abandoned Tooke Lake/Wiscon R/R Route**



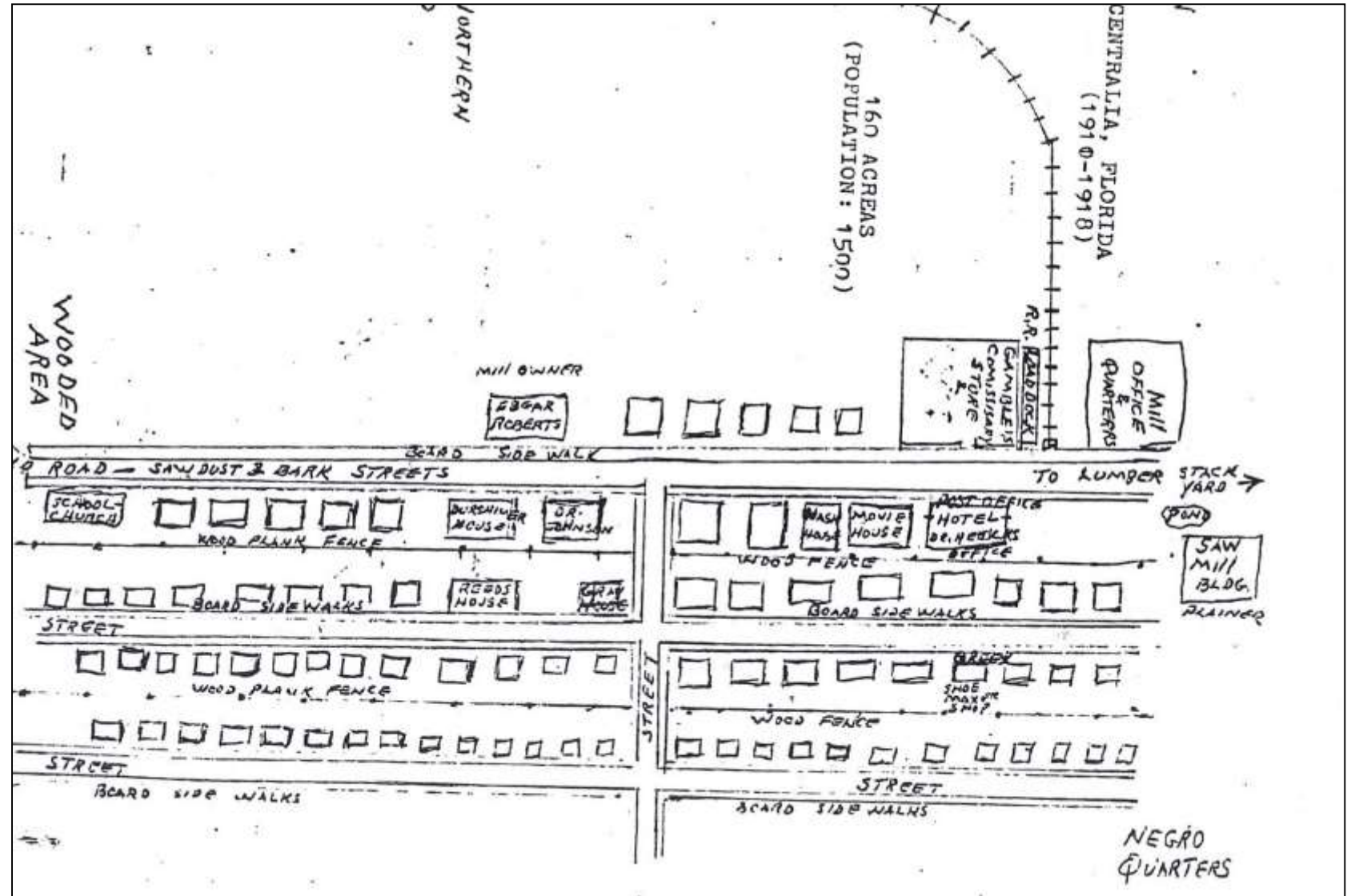
SE Quadrant of section 36 is site of **Sawmill** (red cigar) on blue tramline



David McAlpine Environmental Consulting, Inc.



Margaret Dirschsheimer's descriptive sketch of Centralia drawn by Carl Hartley prior to 1986 and is located at May-Stringer Heritage Museum.



1920 Census for Brooksville, Florida (June 1920)

Name: C Frank Dershshimer

Age: 50 Birth Year: abt 1870

Birthplace: Pennsylvania

Home in 1920: Brooksville, Hernando, Florida

Race: White

Gender: Male

Relation to Head of House: Head

Marital Status: Married

Spouse's Name: Margaret Dershshimer

Father's Birthplace: Pennsylvania

Mother's Birthplace: Pennsylvania

Able to Speak English: Yes

Occupation: Band Sawyer

Industry: Saw Mill

Employment Field: Wage or Salary

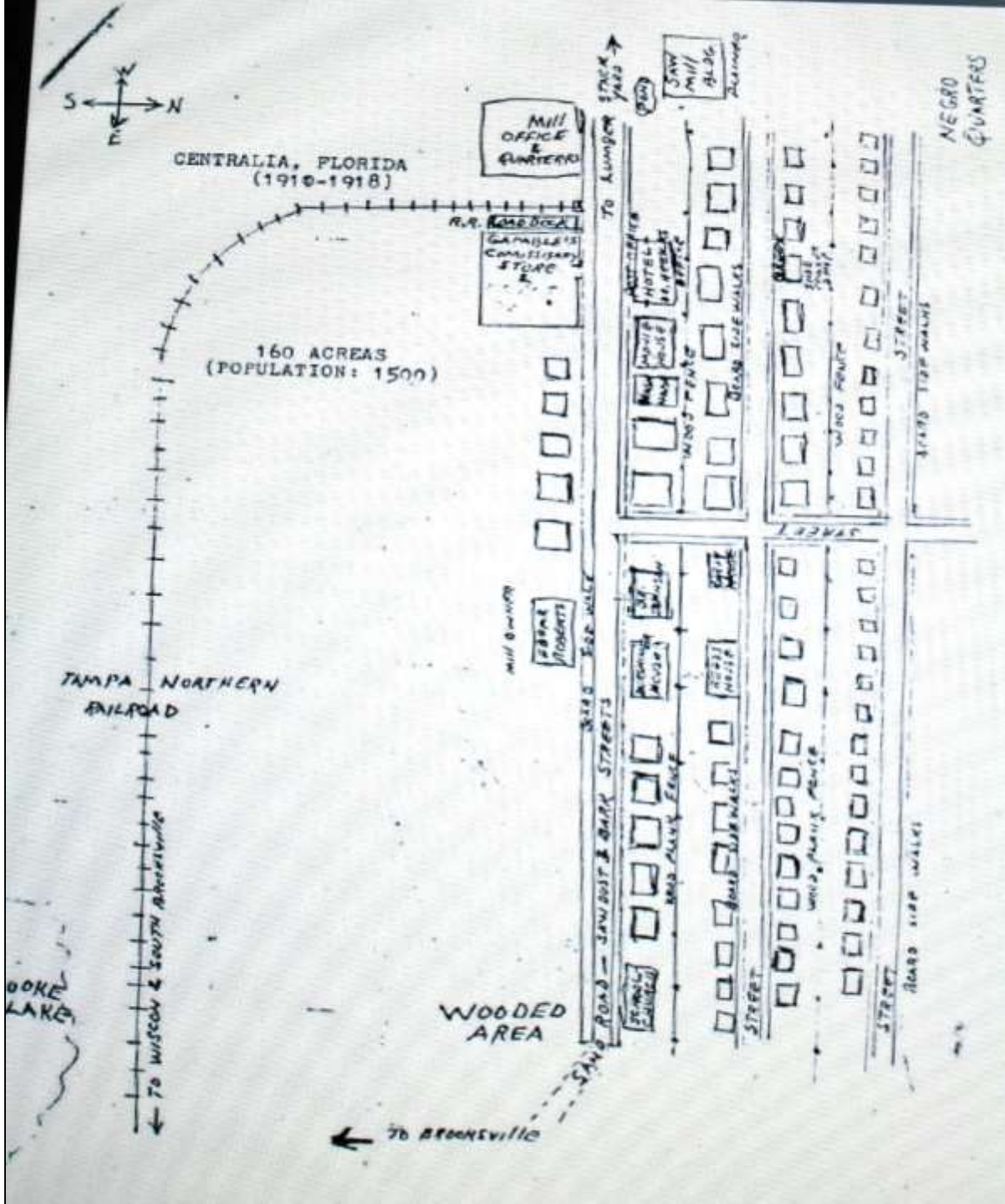
Home Owned or Rented: Rent

Able to Read: Yes Able to Write: Yes

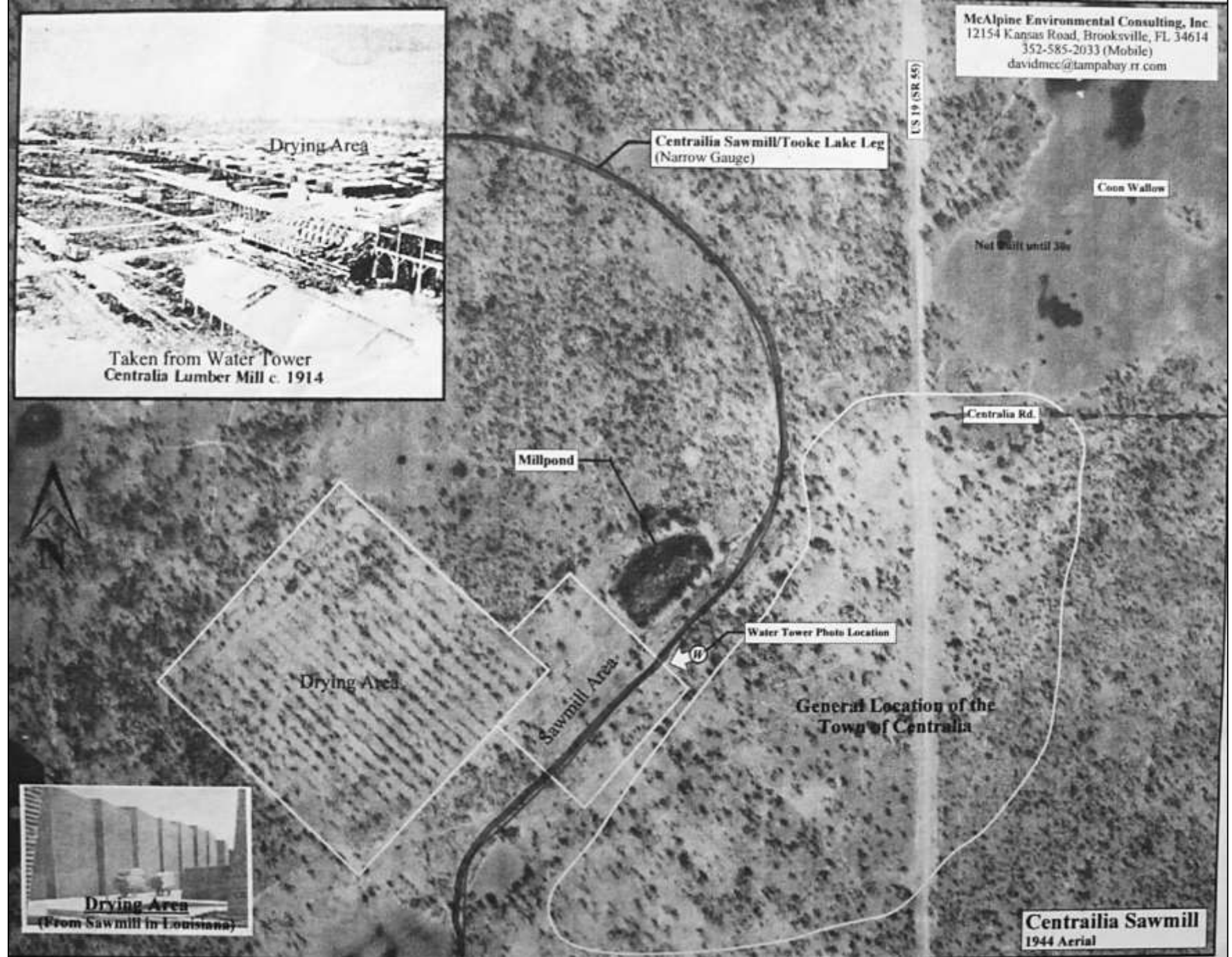
Household Members:

Name	Age
C Frank Dersh*	50
Margaret Dersh*	46
Frank Dersh*	16
Arthur Dersh*	14
Margaret Dersh*	11
Eleanor Dersh*	7
Els* Dersh*	7

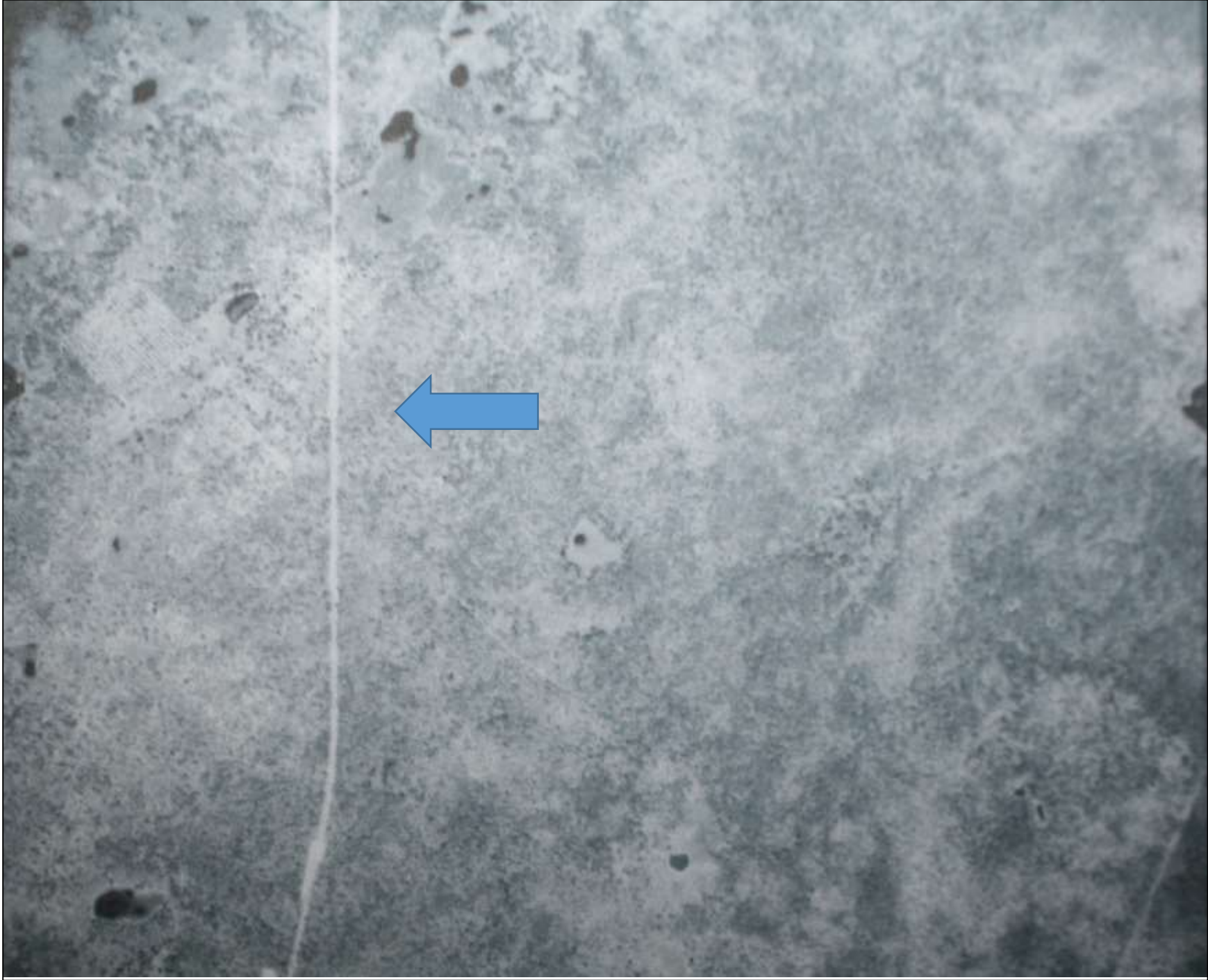
Margaret born abt. 1909, brother Frank (Jr) born abt. 1904, both in West Virginia. In 1920 at 16 years old, Frank works in a store at Centralia.

[illegible]

David McAlpine Environmental Consulting, Inc.



1944 Aerial Map



GS=Gambles's Store

M=Sawmill

O=Mill Office and Quarters

D=Dircsheimer Home

R=Edgar Robert Home

W=Wash House

F="Flicker" Movie House

H=Hotel, Dentist and Post
Offices

C=Church and School

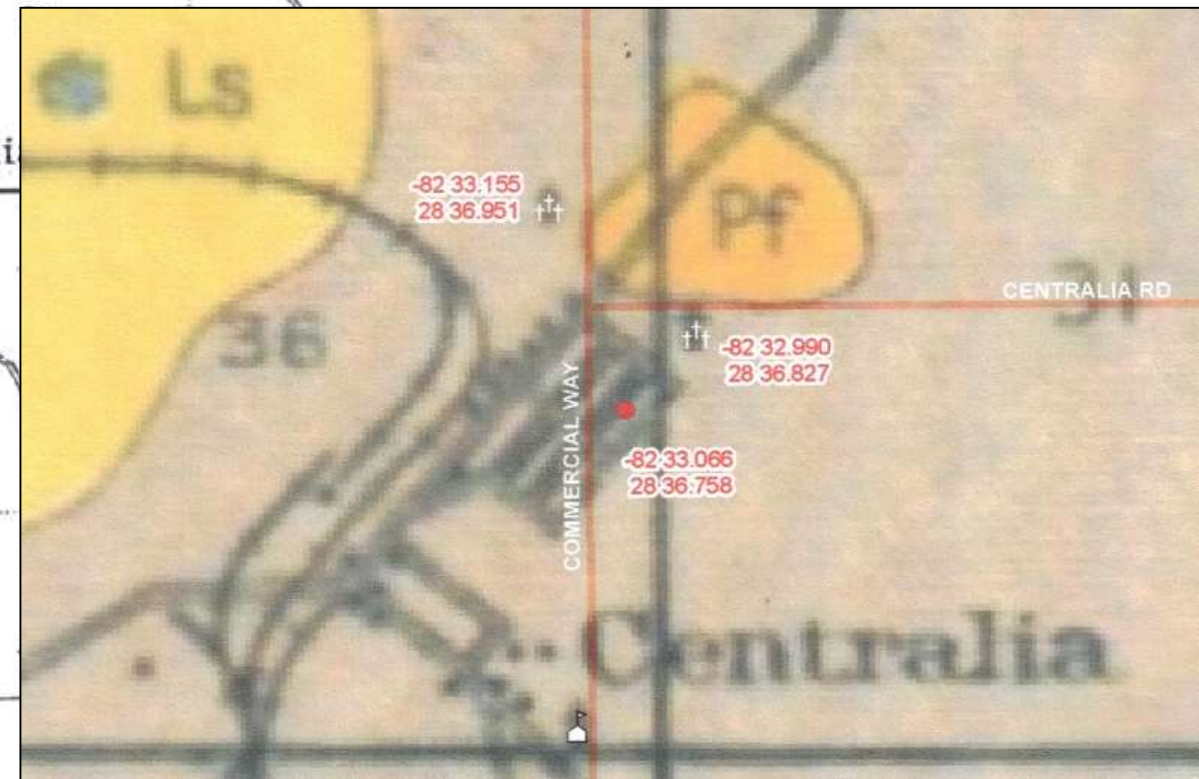
J=Dr. Johnson

S=Green's Shoe Maker Shop

G=Gray House RH=Reed House



1914 Soil Map shows
Centralia with Coon Wallow
to northeast and Oak Grove
to south.





boarding house

Repetto
House

X

P O

post office

store

office

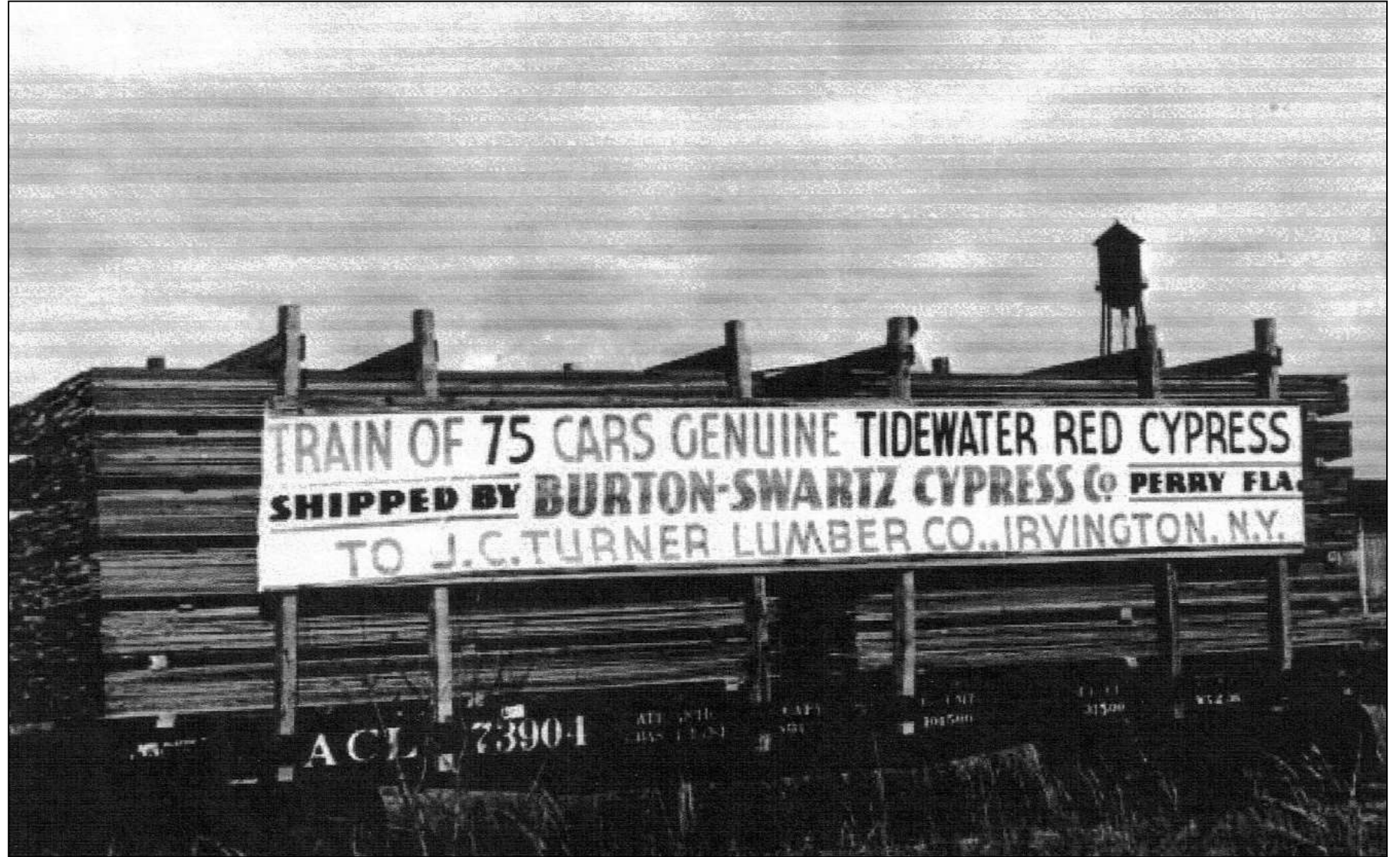
main st

Might be
Tommie
Beard at the
wheel next
to the store.
He is
featured in
another
photo
driving Dr.
Johnson.



Turkey
Oak

Initially, J.C. Turner shipped cypress up to NY from Louisiana. Then, discovering cheaper schooner rates from Florida ports, he began to search for Florida sources of tidewater cypress and by 1910 was buying cypress from about half dozen or more Florida sawmills. In 1910, he built Centralia.



1940

INSURE WITH THE **Florida Mutual Fire Insurance Co., Inc.** OF TAMPA, FLORIDA

*The Only Fire Insurance Company on the West Coast that Pays Back.
Dividends to Every Policyholder*

MAIN OFFICE: 307 DAWSON & THORNTON BUILDING

AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY (1918)

CENTURY

103

Bay Hotel
Booth Joseph, dairy
Brewer T W & Co, confectioners
CEDAR KEY STATE BANK (Capital \$15,000), J W Turner Pres, Y H Kirchhain Cashier
Collins Delta Mrs, baker and restaurant
Consolidated Fish Co, F E Wadley mgr
Corcoran John, coffee shop
Curry J H & Son, grocers
Ellison W B, hotel and restaurant
Gulf View Hotel
Hale W H, whol fish
Hampton S T, barber
Hodges Bros, genl store
Hodges W R, whol fish
Hudson James J, meats
Johnson A W, whol fish
Joseph Charles & Co, grocers and dry goods
Joseph Toney, grocer
Kepote James, confectioner
Kepote Manuel, confectioner
Kirchhain Y H, cashr Cedar Key State Bank and county commissioner
Lutterloh John B, genl store
Marshburn M T, hotel
Rowland B E, barber
Schlemmer N & Son (Nicholas and August), genl store
Standard Mfg Co, fibre mfrs
Stapleton R W, lumber
Star Theatre, Y H Kirchhain propr
TOLER L A, Postmaster
Turner J S, physician
Union Fish Co, whol fish
Wadley F E & Son (F E and F B), genl store
White House, S T White prop
Whitlock Carl, r r and exp agt
Whitman C F, grocer
Williams J A, lawyer

CENTER HILL

Population 300. On the A. C. L. Ry. in Sumter county, 8 miles southeast of Bushnell, the county seat. Has a bank, hotel and saw mill. Tel., W. U. and Postal. Exp., Sou.
Archibald J M, justice
Bank of Center Hill (Capital \$15,000), J M Harvey pres, J S McMullen cashr

Beville House, hotel
Center Hill Pharmacy
Cherry H S, physician
Cone Timber Co, saw mill
Forrester J A, hardware
Harkness H F, dry goods
Hobbs M J & Co, genl store
Hooten W J & Co, genl store
Kimbrough J H, genl store
McMullen J S, cashr Bank of Center Hill
Merritt R V, hardware and blacksmith
Smith F D & Co, hardware and garage

CENTRALIA

On the T. N. R. R. in Hernando county, 15 miles from Brooksville, the judicial seat and banking point, and 9 from Bayport on the Gulf of Mexico, with which there is connection by daily stage. Has a Baptist church. The industry here is lumbering. Telephone connection. Edgar A. Roberts, postmaster.

Central Commercial Co, genl store
CENTRAL CYPRESS CO, saw mill and drugs

CENTURY

Population 1,500. Settled 1900. A town on L. & N. and Escambia Rys. and on the Escambia river in Escambia county, 42 miles north of Pensacola, the seat of justice, and 3 from Flomaton, Ala., the banking town. Has Methodist and Baptist churches and a graded public school. Lumbering is the main industry here. Tel., W. U. Telephone connection. Exp., Sou. Eva R Vaughn, postmaster.

Alger-Sullivan Lumber Co, E A Hauss pres, genl store
Barwick E W, r r, exp and tel agt
Boyett W A, genl store
Cater E H, dentist
Gay & Sightler, furniture
Hall W L, genl store
Hudson B J, grocer
Hurry Genie, milliner
Jeter J W, grocer
Jones James H, notary

Southern Art Glass Co.

Manufacturers of

CHURCH WINDOWS

850-858 Florida Avenue

JACKSONVILLE

Bell Phone 203

Petersburg times Sunday article on January 21, 1962. Text by Paul Davis.

Catholics and Protestants worshiped in the same building; it served also as an entertainment hall. Misses Jennie Gozier and Gladys Chalker taught their kids their three R's. A motherly soul ran a restaurant called Hungry None, meaning meals at all hours.

Bob butler wrote in 1972, "As the hours for meals conflicted with those of the commissary and the meals at the hotel, the men having certain tasks to perform (such as the opening and closing of commissary, deliveries, some being there during noon, etc.) the creation of the "Hungry None", under the supervision of Mr. U. B. Gainor, (was) where the fifteen hour a day commissary boys found a true Mother Hubbard."



Could this be the
Hungry None?

2nd from left:
George Perry?

At Brooksville
Railroad Museum
(?), this photo is
created as being
NW of Wiscon.



Back row:
Mr. Wren

George
Marsh?

George
Gamble

Front row:

Unknown

George Perry

U.B. Gainor?

Bob Stewart



On one holiday, long to be remembered by all, was an all day celebration. The children were taken by the teachers to Double-sink on a picnic and swimming party. Some of the men went hunting for deer and turkey around the Smoke House area (NNW), others hunted quail near Coon Wallow (NE), but come night, all were back to attend the masquerade ball at the dance hall. The Greeks in their colorful costumes, gave a great performance of their native dances accompanied by bagpipes. Finally, however, Jim Peachtree got the best of several for the local "Beau-Brummel's", thus ending the mystery to Mr. Roberts of the anonymous Mr. Jim Peachtree. (Butler, 1972)



Taylor County, 1919

As Jim Peachtree has made his appearance, now we must of necessity clear the mystery of this fictitious character and bring in the **Twin-Pine** tree that stood as long as Centralia was in existence. Mr. Edgar Roberts abhorred whiskey in any degree, here is one time when traditional color line made no difference in the deep south, for any white or colored man he saw with whiskey, he would take it away and break it right on the spot. Some brave souls decided they would like a few bottles for a gala occasion, thus Jim Peachtree was born. "Doc Lynch", conductor on Tampa Northern Railroad, was advised of Jim Peachtree's existence. The train would pull into Centralia to unload freight and the commissary, then "Doc Lynch" would call out names for express and freight parcels, always waiting if possible for Mr. Roberts to leave before calling out Jim Peachtree's (name). One day it didn't work and Mr. Roberts found out about the anonymous Jim. He took the parcel and broke it on the Twin-Pine. (Butler,1972)

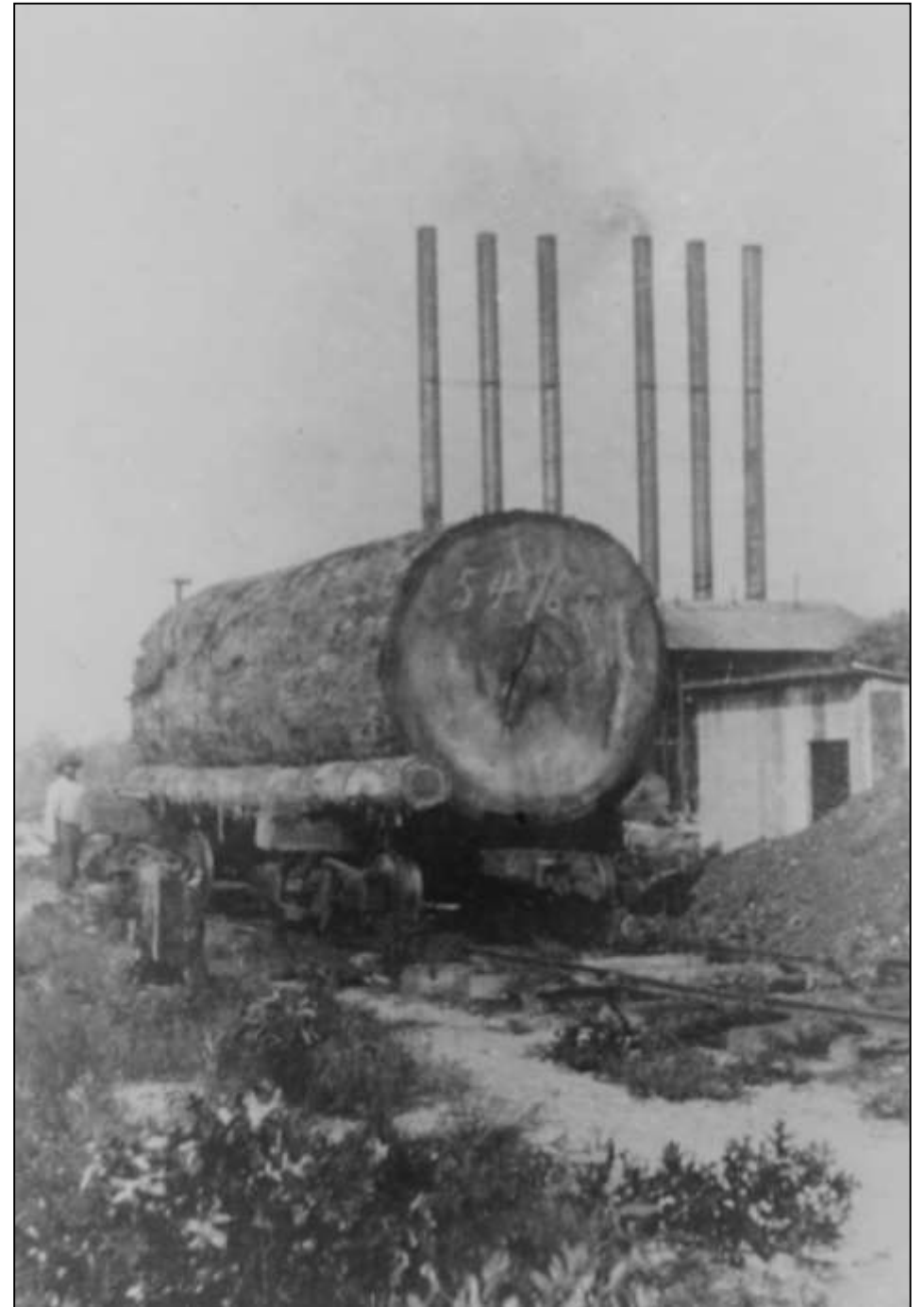


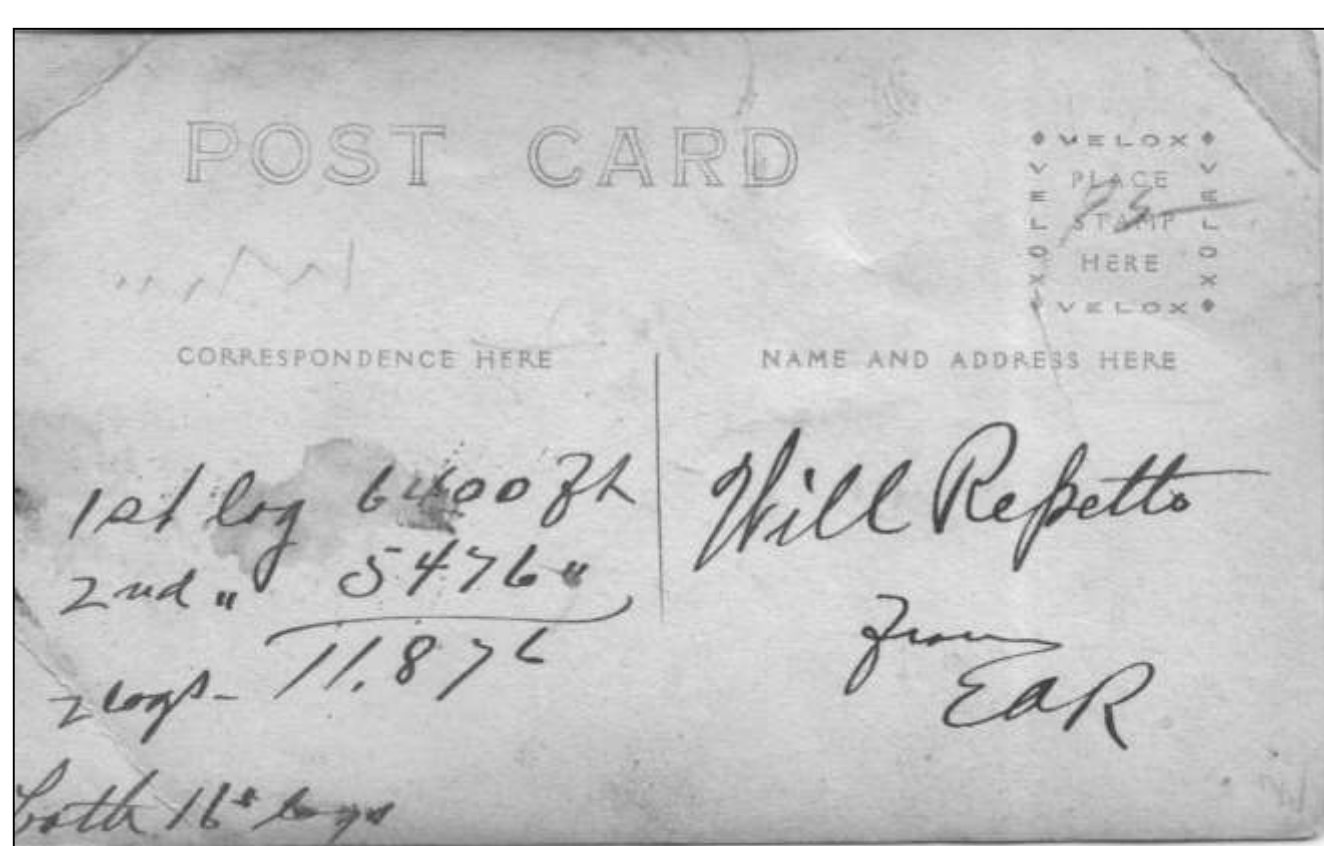
U.S. FOREST SERVICE, NATIONAL FORESTS IN FLORIDA

Early Florida lumbermen often rode the rails from the mill to the woods on handcars similar to this one, as described in painful detail by Martin Hoban.

“Central Cypress Co., 1912”

Wilfred T. Neill wrote in an article which appeared in the *St. Petersburg Times* in 1977, “One day in 1912 the Centralia sawmill received its largest log, a cypress timber that yielded 5,476 board feet of lumber, enough to build a modern home. For several weeks the tree’s gigantic top was displayed on a flatcar for people to view.” It had to be quartered with dynamite to get onto the sawyer’s carriage. Only the top twenty feet were left on the flat car for viewing.





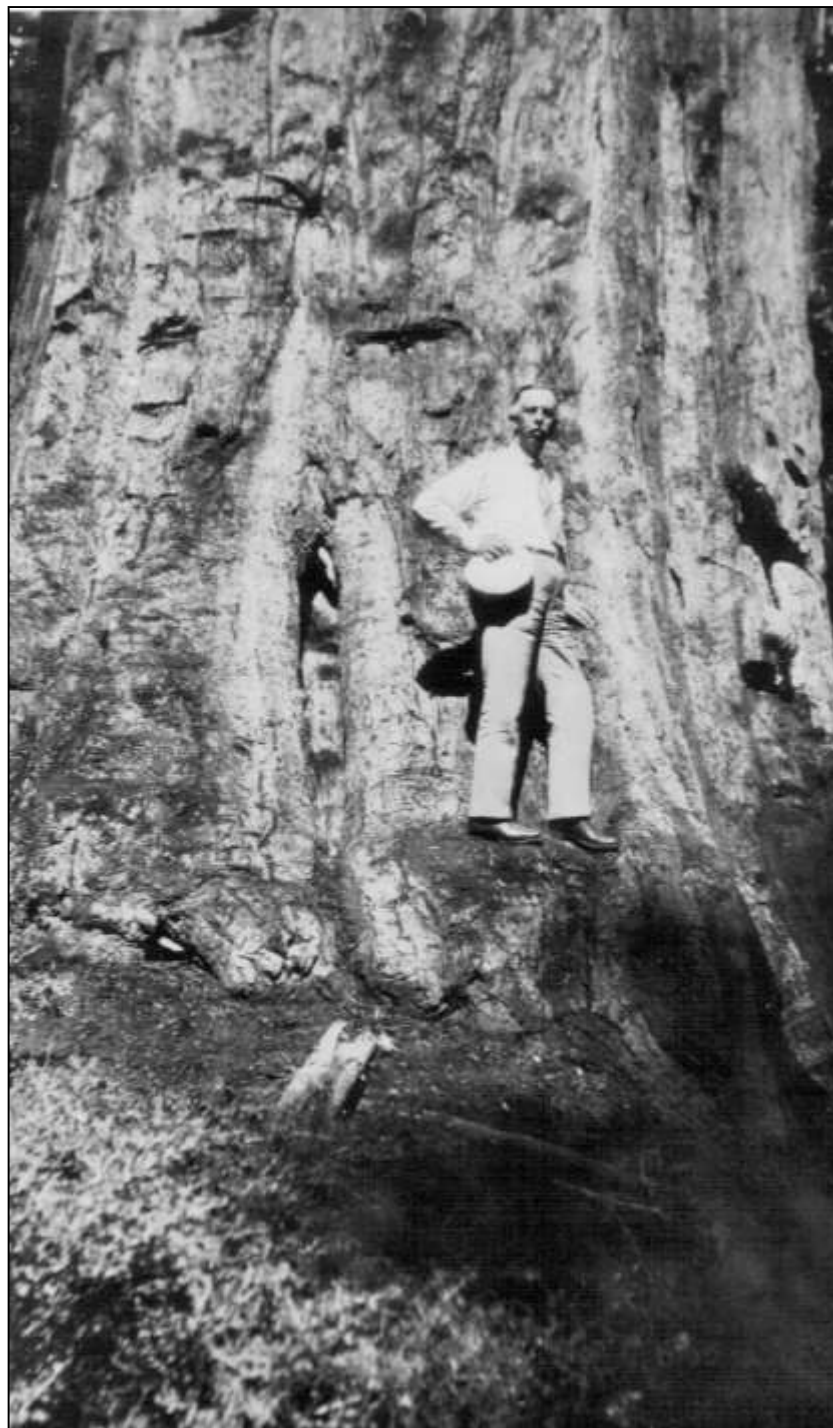
Al Wineman, the Sawyer at the time, on the short side, made the statement that the entire tree had less than 100 (board) feet loss through wind-shake or any other defects, a real tank stock tree. "both 16 ft. logs" in diameter?!!!



Tom
Wineman
(right) Mill
Foreman,
his wife,
Grace Ann,
their
daughter,
Roseman
(Catherine)
and son
Thomas
(Franklin).
They
moved to
Largo
when mill
closed.



“Boss” Edgar Roberts



Postcard to Will Repetto from
Edgar A. Roberts

1st log 6,400 board ft.

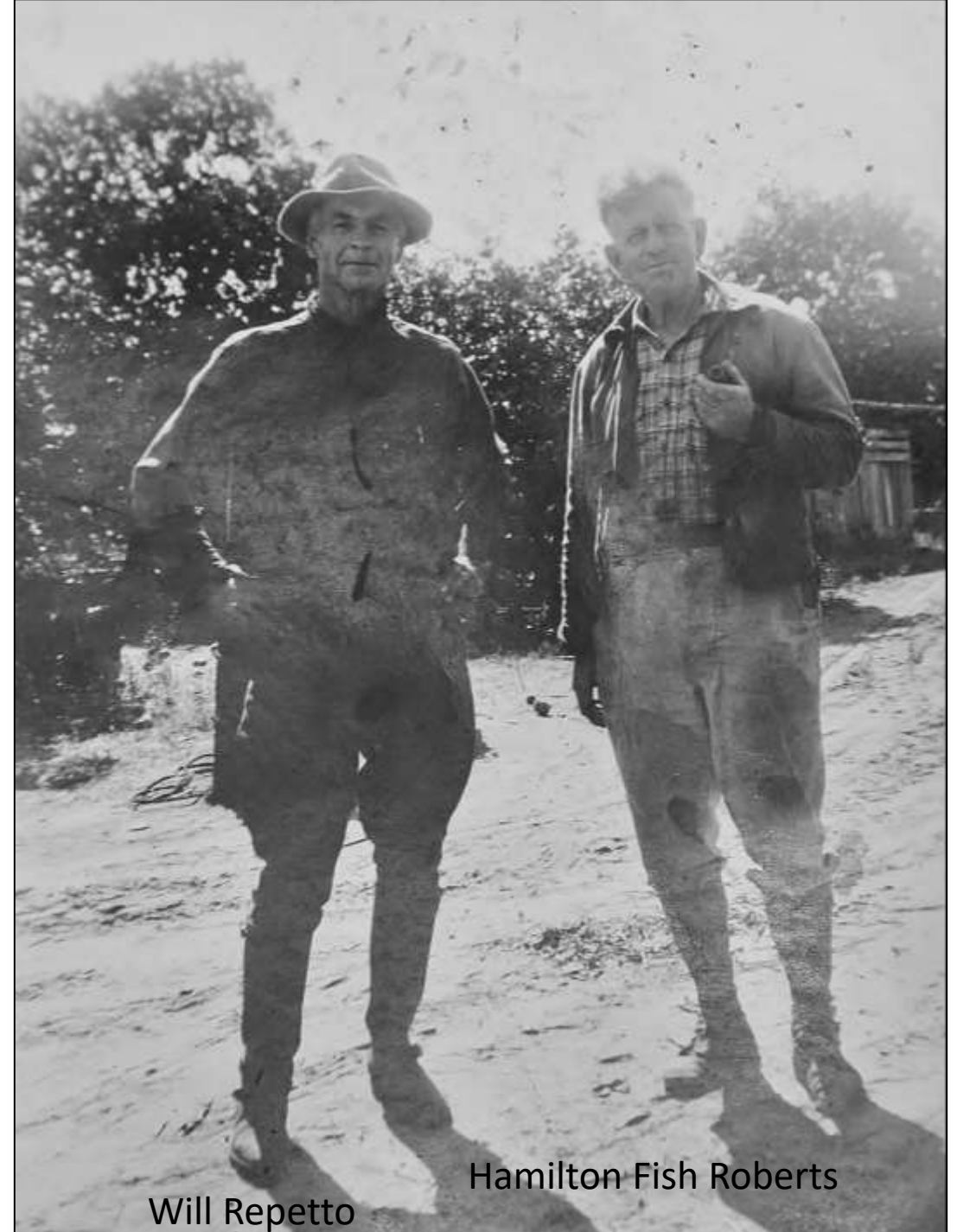
2nd log 5,476 board feet

Together=11,876 board feet

Both logs were 16 foot long



William Alison Repetto (1883-1977), a foreman in the early 1920s, with Hamilton Fish Roberts (1882-1953), Asst. Superintendent of Logging (and Baxter's son). Will was born near Leidy, Clinton County, PA and was working in Adams County, on a wheat ranch in Washington at age 27. He met a MI girl, Gladys whose father was a plumbing contractor in Spokane, WA. Gladys was chaperoned from WA to Chicago, where she met up and m. Will, Dec. 18, 1912. They came by train to Centralia. Their son was Wm. Weston Repetto (1927-2011), whose wife, Mary, donated all these photos. The Roberts brothers persuaded Will to leave WA to work for them. Olin Repetto, Will's brother was married to Edgar's sister-in-law, Dora Fish,.



Will Repetto

Hamilton Fish Roberts



Nettie Fish Roberts and 2
of her sisters (Dora E.
Fish Repetto and ?),
daughters of Hamilton
and Elizabeth Fish from
**Leidy Township in
Clinton County, PA.**

Dora (1870-1951) was
married to Orlin Repetto.
Mary Fish Roberts
(1860-1913) was the
wife of Baxter Roberts
(1856-1945).

Baxter and Edgar's father,
Nathaniel Danforth Roberts
(1822-1898) relocated with
them from ME to first
Isabella, UP Michigan and
ran a boarding house at age
56 and on to Shreveport, LA



Gladys (1892-1972), wife of William Alison Repetto, and daughter Evelyn (1914-2005) on porch of their company house. She is “holding her pet chicken, too thin from being mauled.”



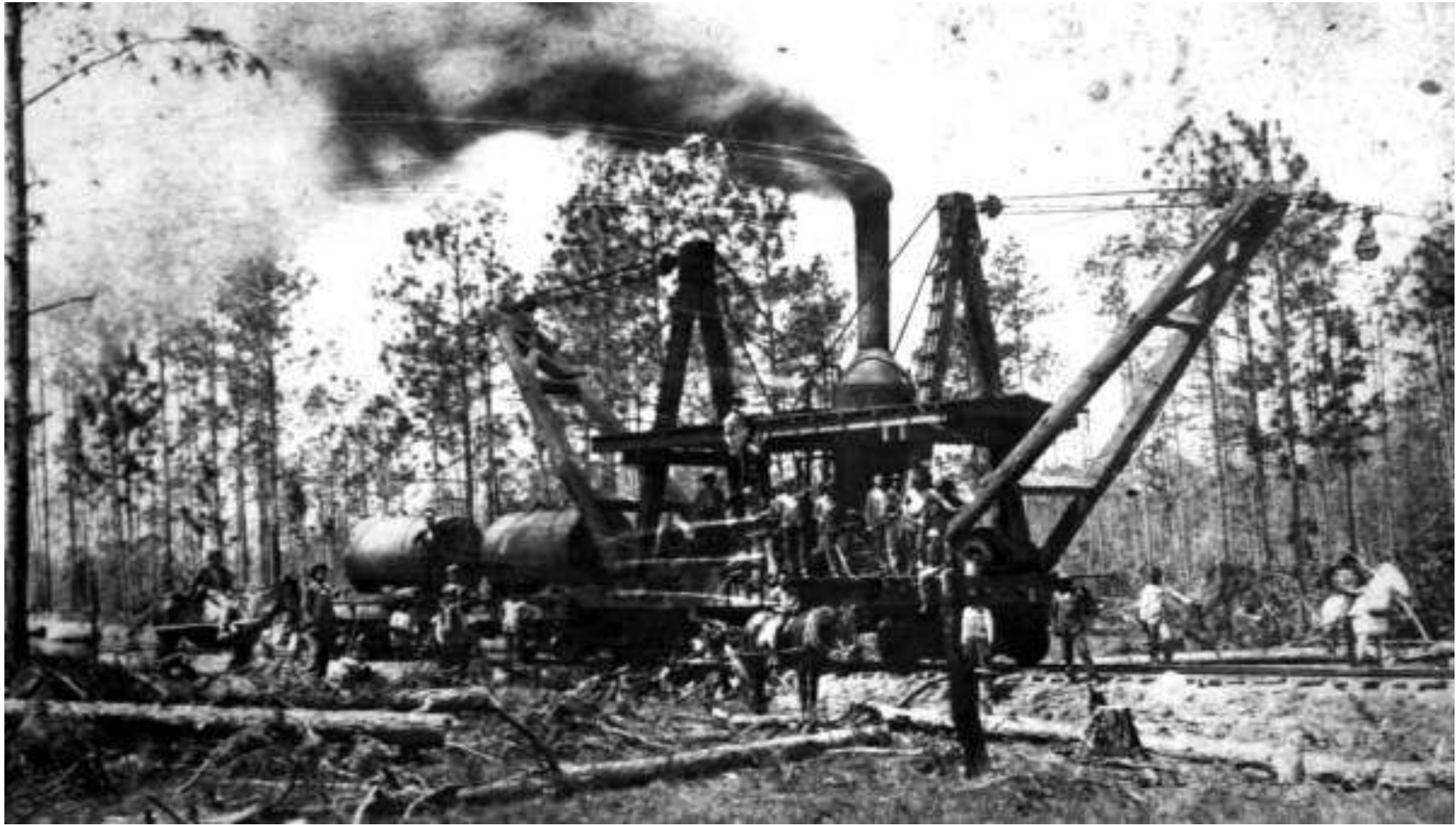
Obviously the challenge to harvesting the monstrous cypress trees was moving the logs from the swamp to the sawmill. Often steam powered skidders were incorporated to cable the logs from their fell site to the railroad flatcars. There is no documentation that overhead skidders were used at Centralia but the one in the photo is labelled Tampa Hillsborough RR Line. What else does studio stamp tell us? See right corner.



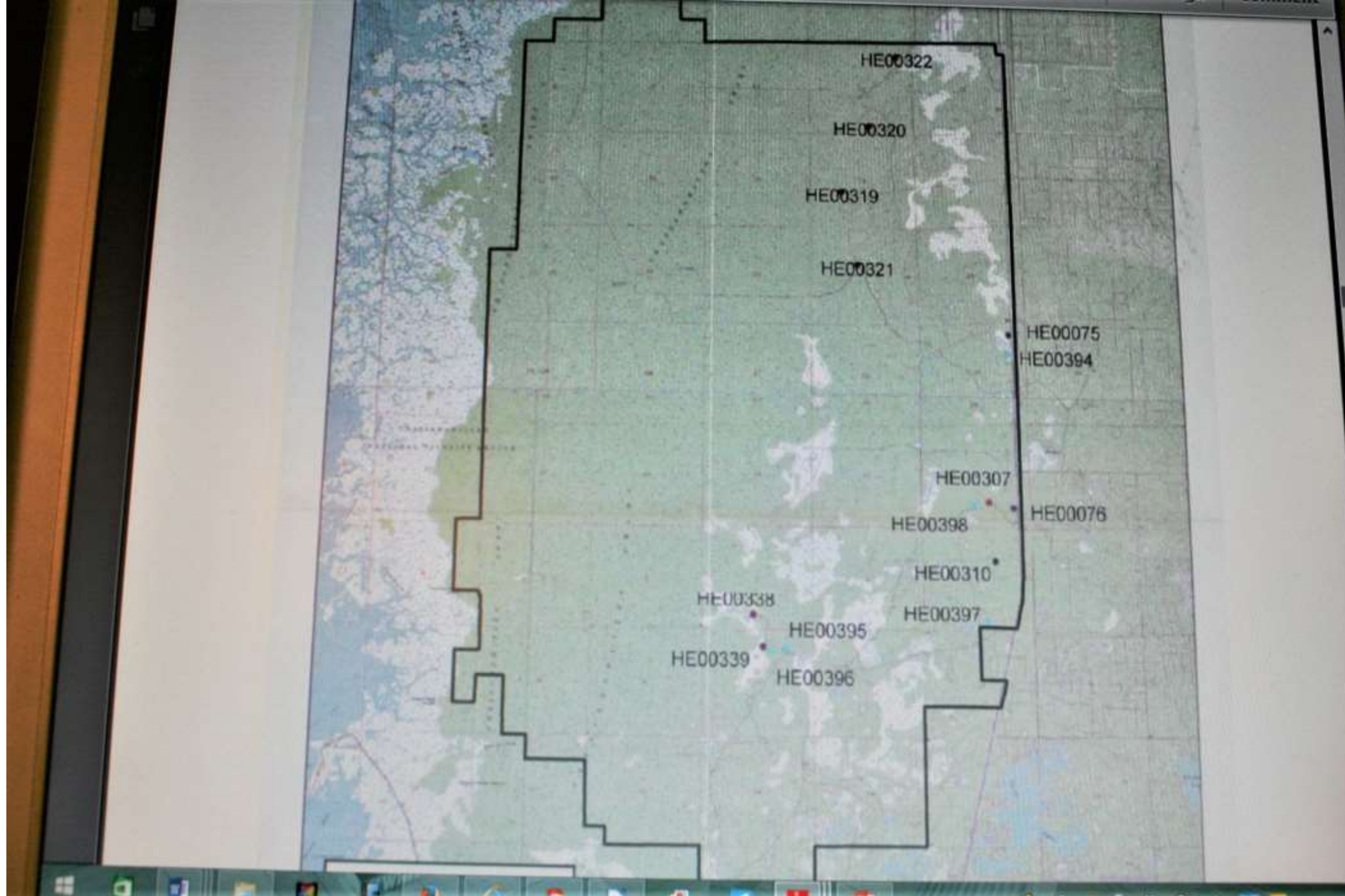
Good example of the overhead cable system. At times cables extended up to a mile from the tracks with multiple anchor trees.



Steam powered skidder loading cypress logs, 1920



Bagdad Land and Lumber Company (Bagdad, Fl.) on the Alabama and Florida track, 1915





Ulysess Ellison prepares to clamp giant tongs on cypress logs - Copeland, Florida in the Everglades, 1948



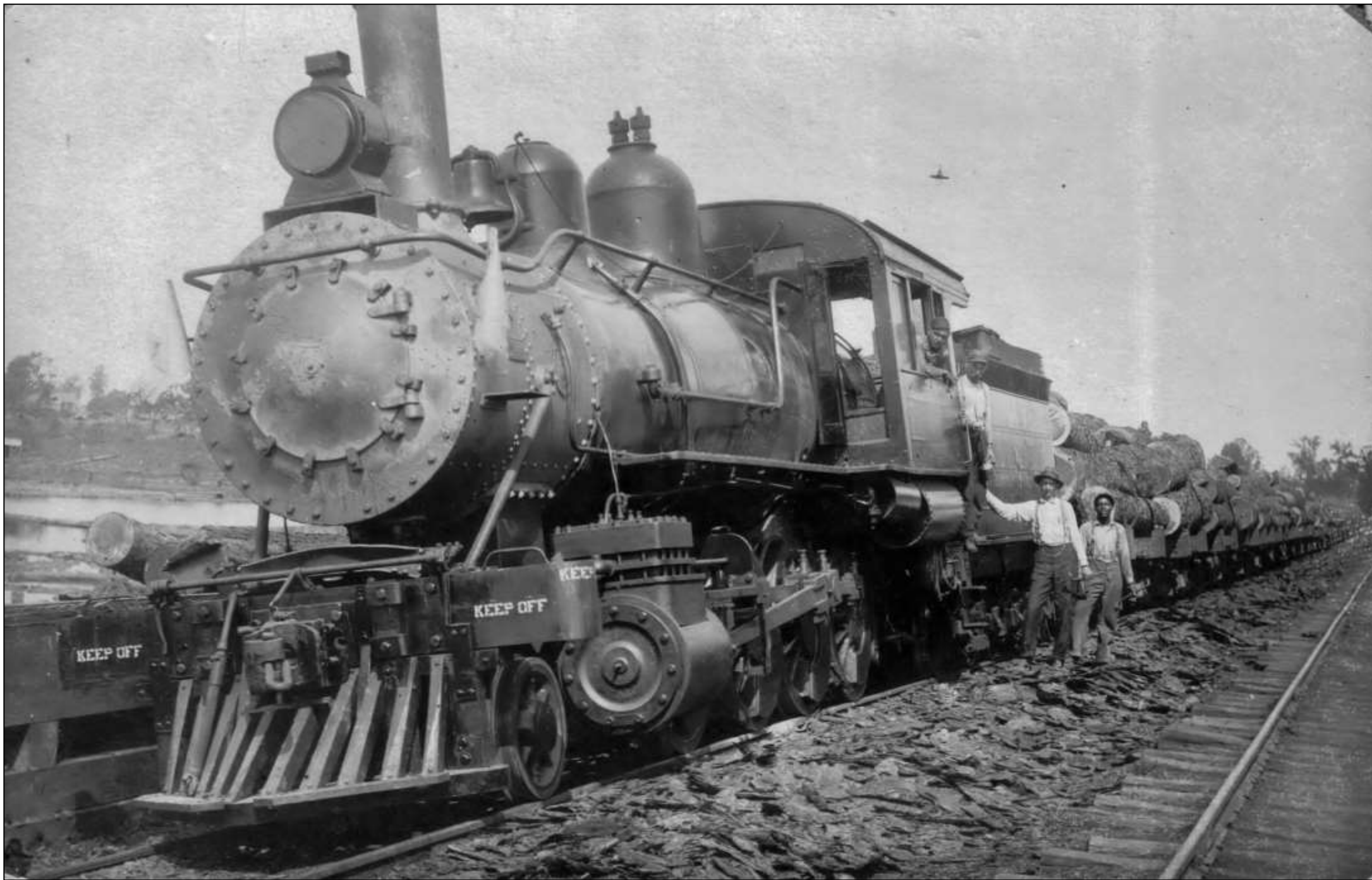
Master site file for Centralia

HE00398 Wagon site, which consists of a cement pad with protruding anchor bolts, as well as a partially buried wagon nearby, appears to be the location of a steam-powered skidder that would pull felled logs out of an area with a cable attached to the engine. Once all of the logs radial to the skidder were removed, the engine was taken elsewhere. A small pond adjacent provided water for the steam engine.



Burton-Swartz, Loading pine logs onto flatcars 1920s

There was a standard gauge railroad that ran west from Brooksville through the settlement of Wiscon to Tooke Lake. This is a photo at Centralia.



Being some eighteen miles from Brooksville, over typical woods roads, Mr. Roberts financed a connecting line of railroad to Tooke Lake to tie into Tampa Northern Railroad. This served a dual purpose: hauling supplies for the various needs of the commissary, passengers and the transport lumber (Butler,1972), and recreational outings. The train had to backup 2 ½ miles from Tooke Lake back to Centralia.



Tooke Lake

Edgar and
Neddy
(Nettie)
Roberts and
the
Wineman
family.
Note water
tower in
center of the
background
and 2 stories
of
construction
or balconies
to left.



Tom Wineman , Mill
Foreman, and his wife,
Grace Ann. Far right is
Neddy (Nettie) Roberts.



Tom Wineman,
top left, next an
unknown, who
maybe Tom
Franklin
Wineman or
Roseman's
beau.)

Bottom left:
Neddy (Nettie)
Roberts and
Tom's wife,
Grace Ann, and
their daughter,
Roseman
(Catherine).

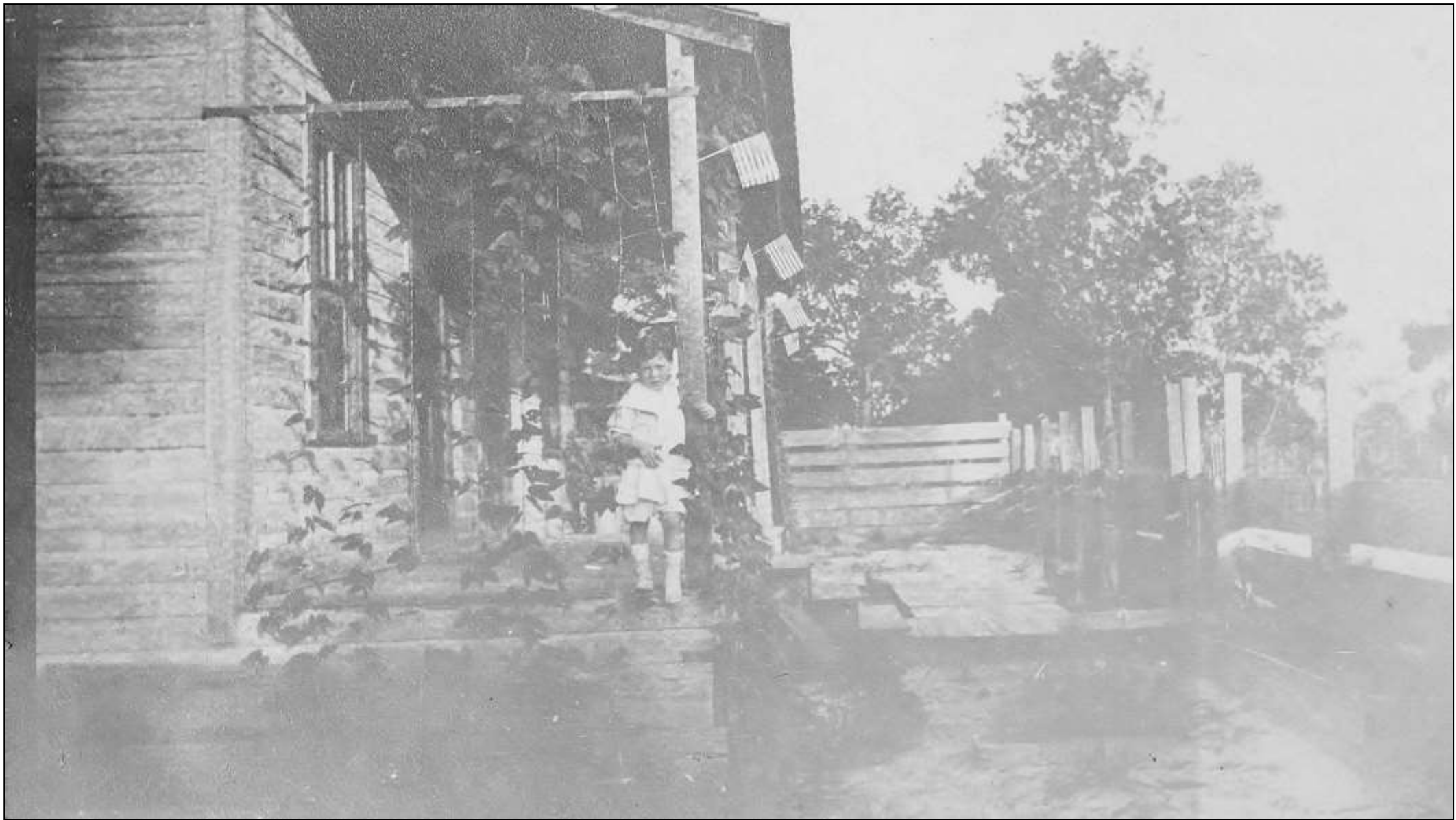


Neddy
(Nettie)
and Edgar
Roberts

Tom
Wineman
and
Roseman
and Grace
Ann

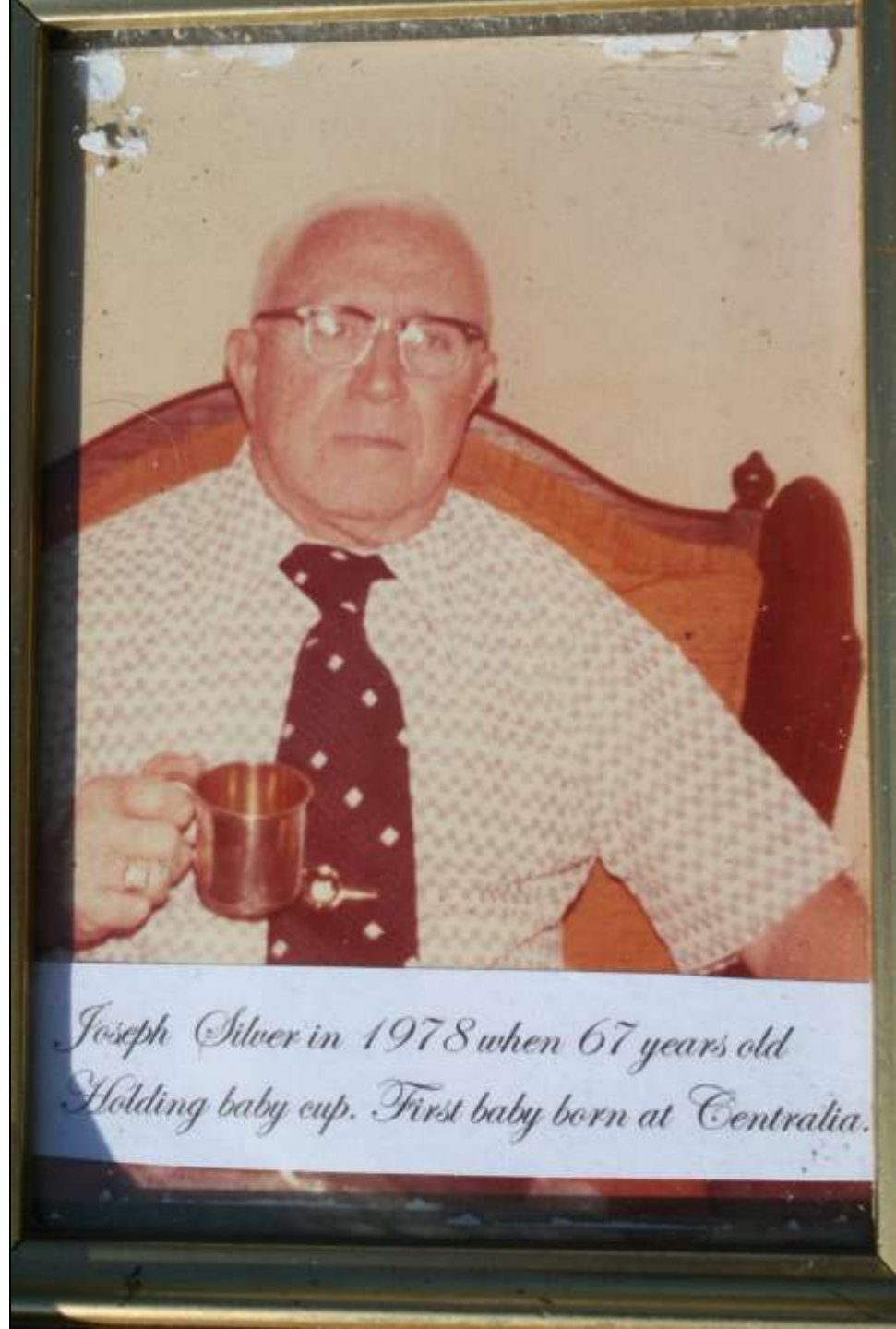
Conductor
on train





Joseph Silver, son of Frank (Centralia Deputy and Millwright) ca. July 1913 or 1914

Joe Silver (born December 3, 1910) attended first through third grade at the one-room school house in Centralia. One teacher taught all eight grades. At age 68 he visited Brooksville and was interviewed by Kevin P. Mulligan for The Sun-Journal, April 3, 1978.



*Joseph Silver in 1978 when 67 years old
Holding baby cup. First baby born at Centralia.*

Joseph Silvers recalled a painfully long trip to Brooksville one summer afternoon as a young boy to see Dr. Vi Coogler, the owner of the Centralia Drug Store who also maintained a physicians office where the Hernando State Bank is today.(1978) "It was after the mill had closed down and I was playing around when I stepped on some shingle nails," said Silver explaining that the rubber for his shoe was pushed up into his foot along with the nails. "Dr. Coogler treated it with some sort of salve, a black ointment. I don't know what it was, but it worked."



Al Wineman (? See slides 130/131), George Gamble and Frank Silver, Centralia Deputy, Millwright



At Centralia steam skidders moved the cut logs to the railroad cars and they were transported and dumped into a mill pond 155 feet from the double band saws.

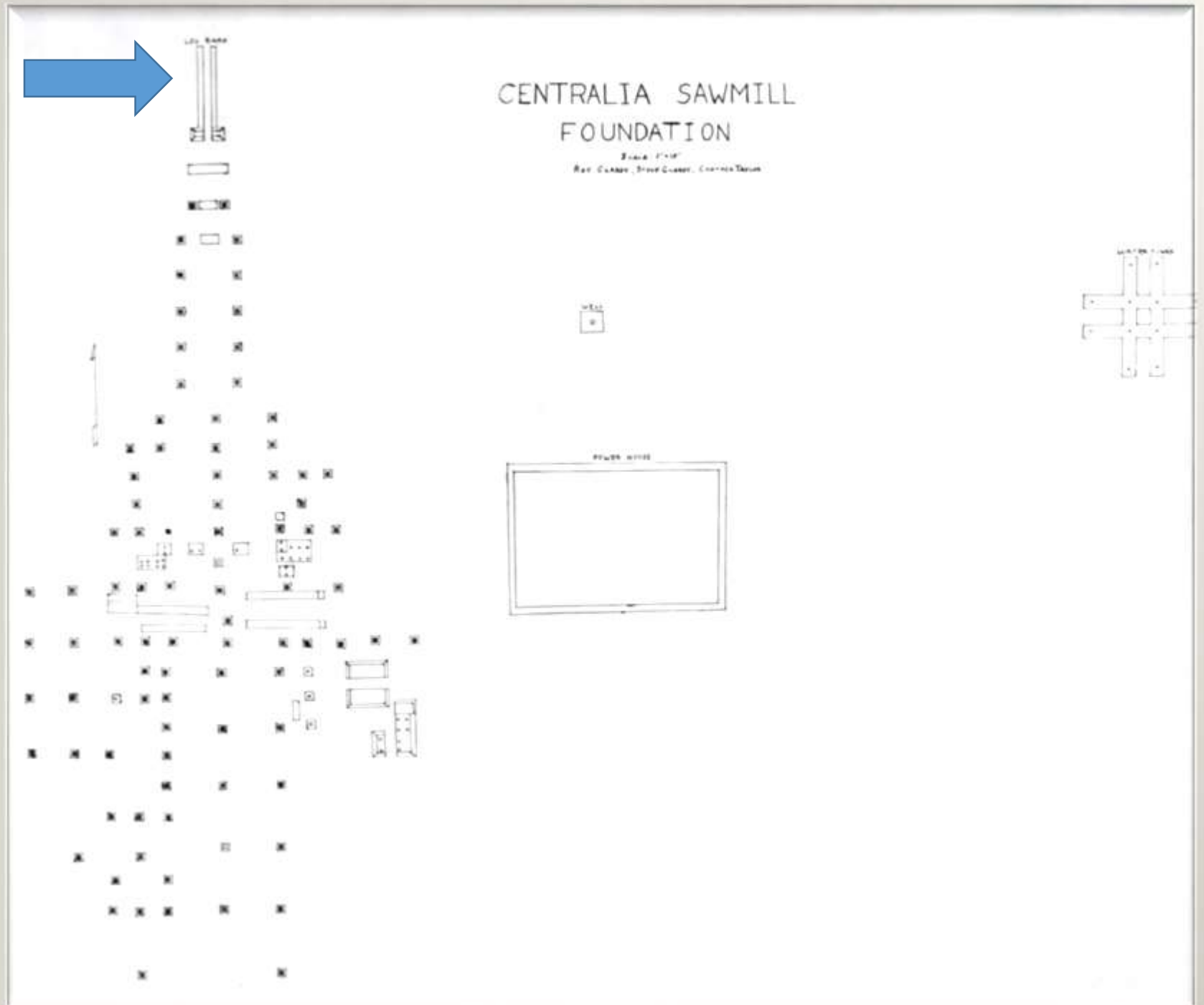


1897, unidentified sawmill jack slip

Burton & Swartz
Mill Pond with
ladder jack into
sawmill at
Perry, 1944



Concrete log ram
at top of schematic
of Centralia
Sawmill (by Roy
and Steven Clardy,
2012).



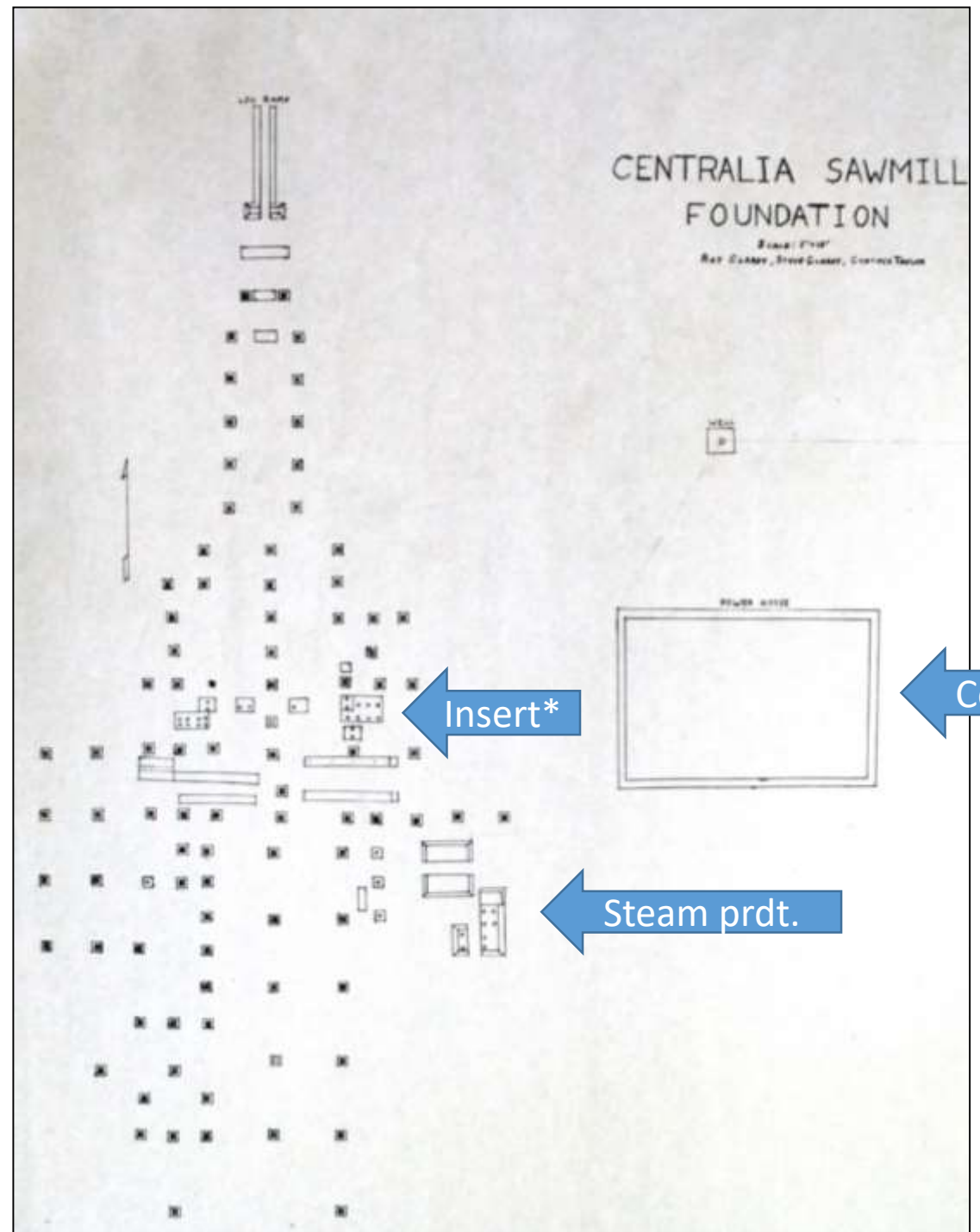
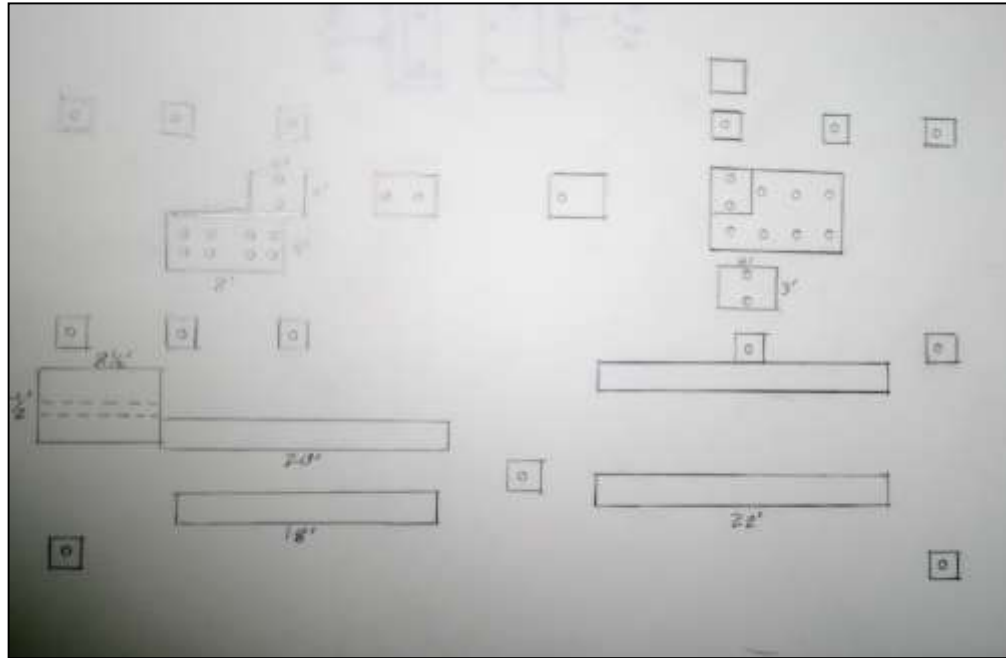
Steam power was used to pull the logs up the concrete log ram called a jack slip from the mill pond.





Coal burning
power house
that produced
the steam for
both sawmills
and the town.

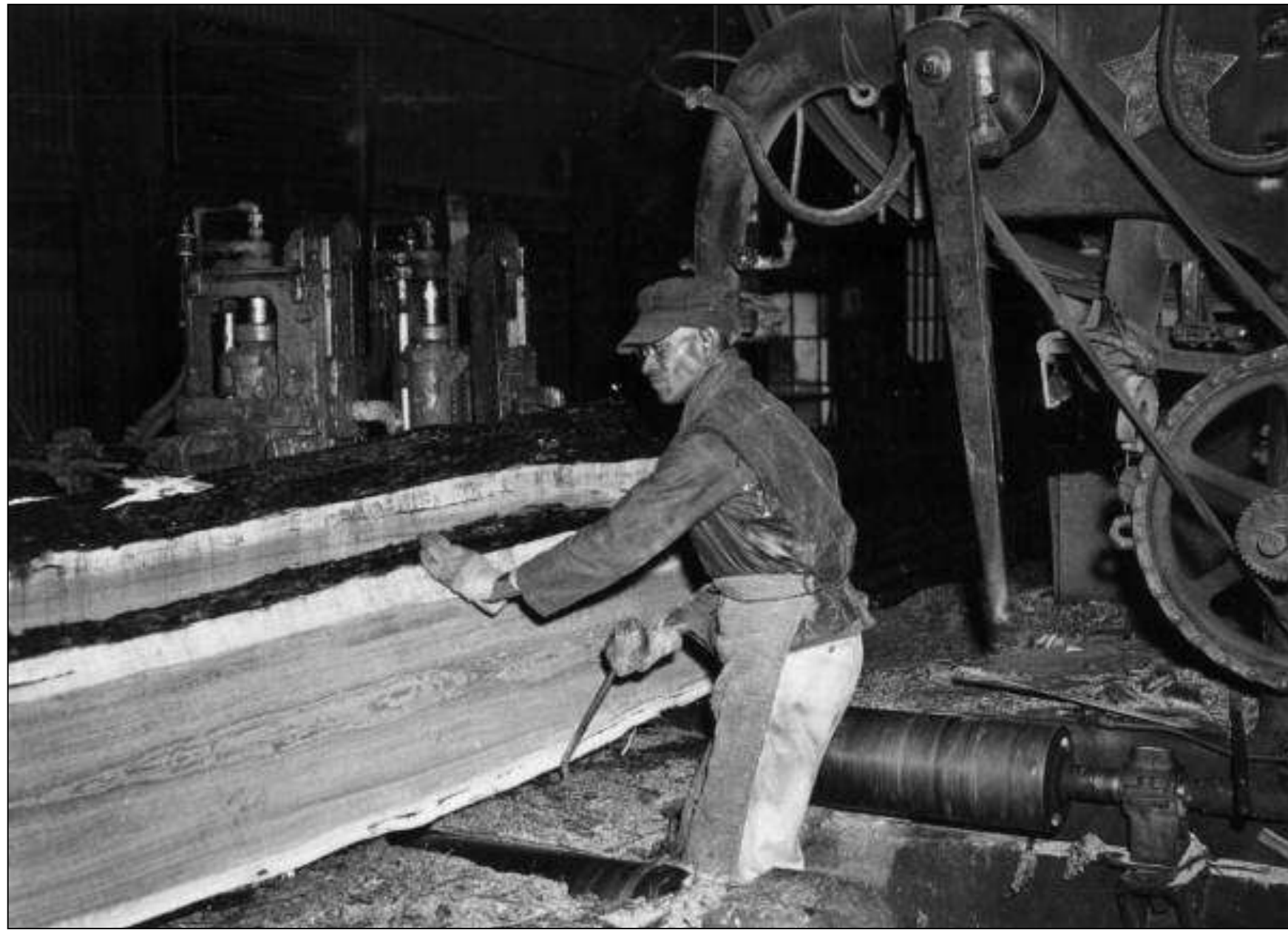
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Though there are few contemporary descriptions of mill operations at Centralia, a Florida Times Union article from 1953 discusses those of a similar mill owned by the Lee Tidewater Cypress Co. This mill at Perry was built in 1914 four or five years after the mill at Centralia and both were financed, if not owned, by Turner Lumber Co.

“It was a double (banded)-saw mill with two 53 1/2 inch by 14 inch band saws ripping out the logs as fast as they are fed by chain conveyors into the mill proper.

Baynard Kendrick 1967: 137
quoting Mason 1953

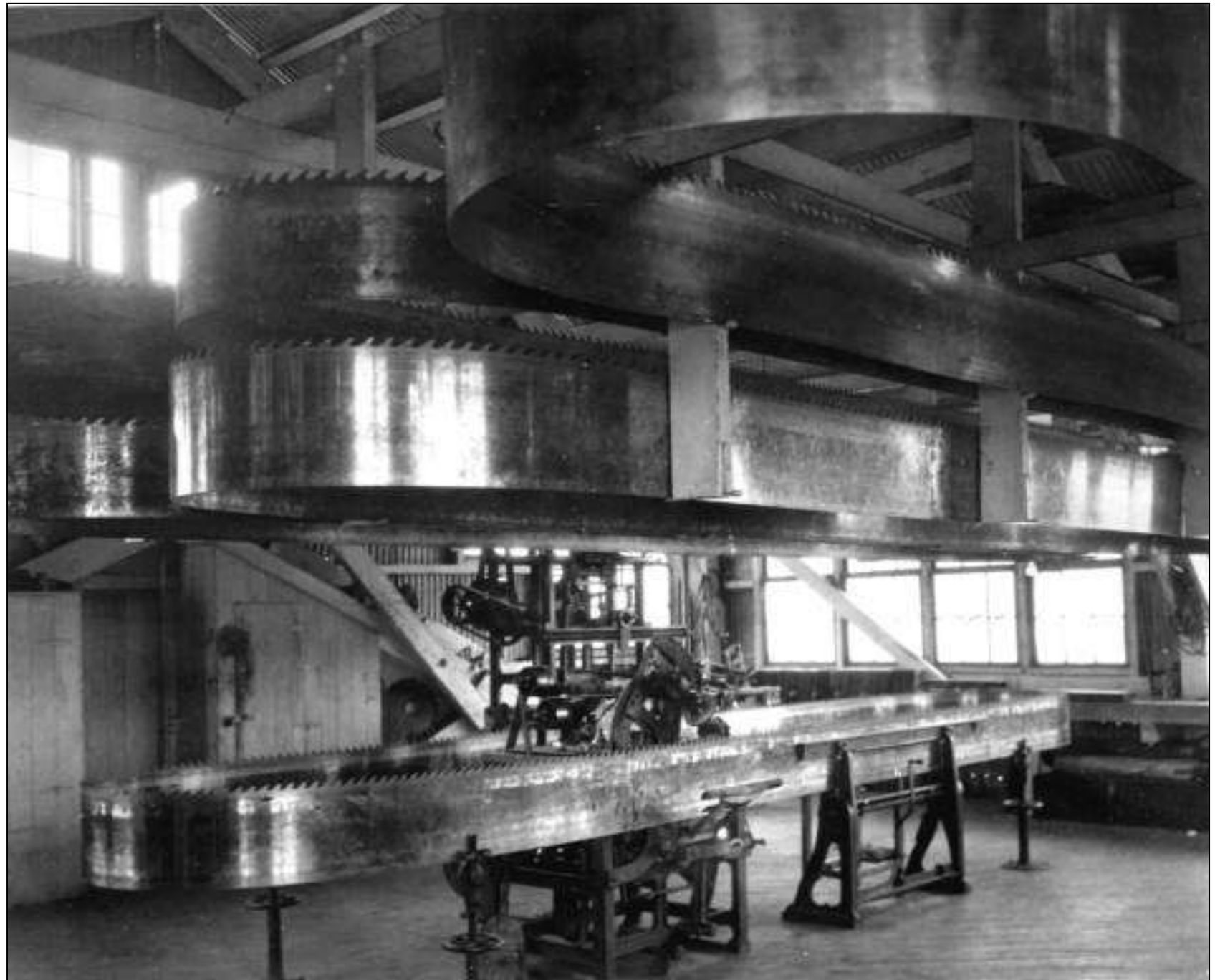


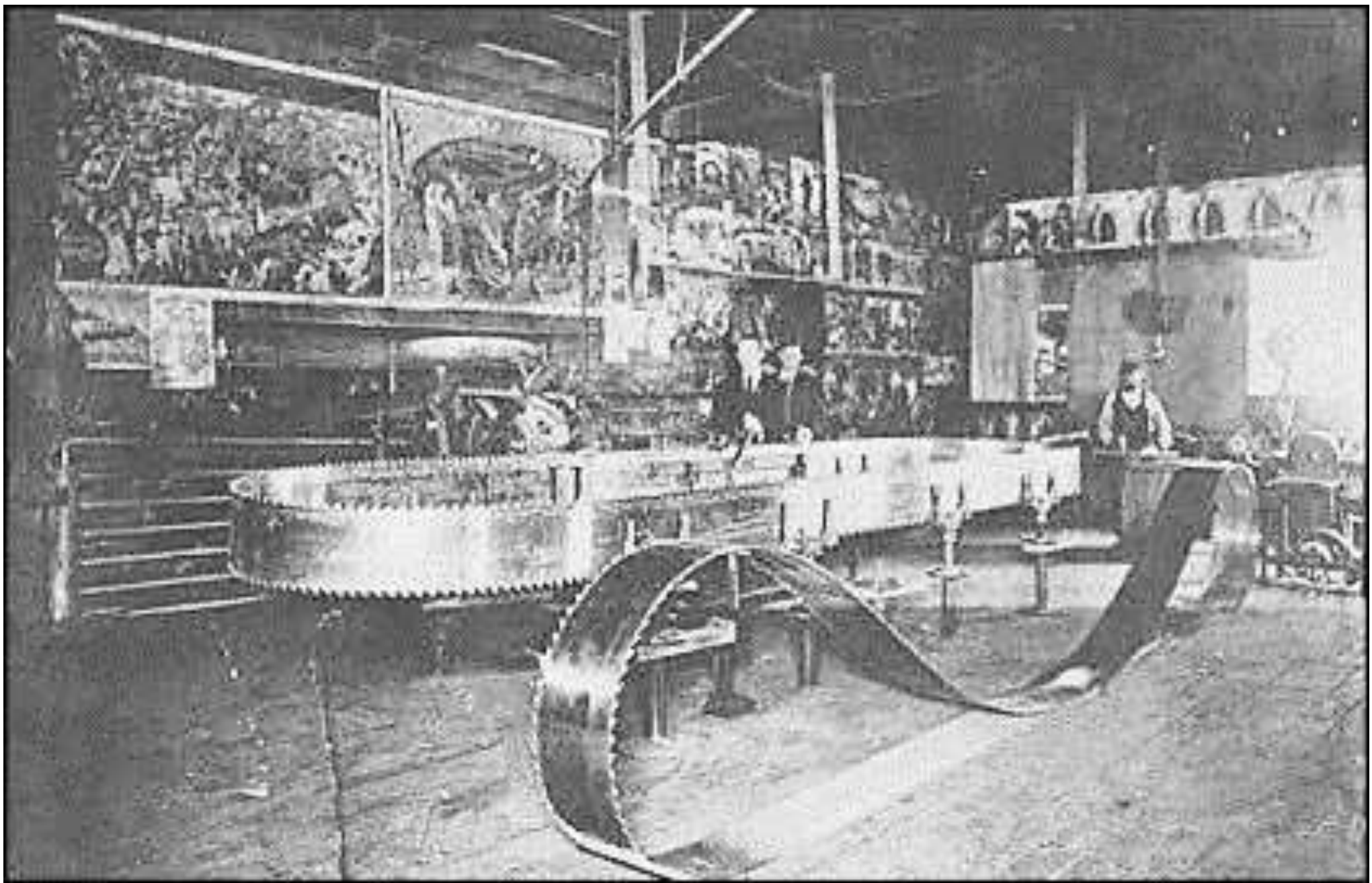
<https://www.floridamemory.com/fpc/commerce/c002357.jpg>

A worker watches over
sharpening a band saw
at Lee Tidewater
Cypress Company mill
– Perry 1947



It takes 8 minutes to change the 14-inch band saw--52 feet in length. Each (band) saw lasts 5 months and costs \$600 a pair.





<https://www.floridamemory.com/fpc/commerce/c002357.jpg>

This is an example of a gang saw, with a score or more of blades working vertically like a jig saw. It would reduce a big log to suitable planks in a single operation at Tidewater Mill, Perry, 1944.





Lumber was moved out to drying yard or on to the south planing mill via the railroad. Is this south of that mill site?

There was also a RR line to the commissary which was operated by Mr. George Gamble, a friend of Mr. Roberts', who had been a prosperous merchant at the Coleman Cypress Company. The ceilings were seventeen feet high and required a rolling ladder to reach the merchandise on the top shelves.

No retail store in the state carried as large a stock of merchandise. They had everything that was needed to cooking, farming, clothing, etc. (per Virginia Jackson) and was open 16 hours a day.



Storekeeper George Gamble (at far right in these photos of his commissary, above, and drygoods department, below) was the "Doc" Webb of Centralia. His store was 50 by 100 feet and held four carloads of merchandise, from corn flakes to spats.

St Petersburg Times, Sunday Jan. 21, 1962 based on DOF Farm Forester Stan Weston's article, Death of a Forest and Town.

Fresh vegetable and beef from local Annutaliga growers were bought by George Gamble, who ran the Commissary/General Store. His first building was 100 foot by 50 foot. Shortly thereafter an addition of forty by one hundred feet was built to take care of the tremendous increase in business from the neighboring communities such as Annuntaliga Hammock (Indian name, meaning black dirt), Wiscon, Norman, Freeman (Tooke Lake), Oak Grove, Coon Wallow, Chassahowitzka, Aripeka, Fivay, Bay Port and Brooksville. (Virginia Jackson)



The store room had a capacity of four freight car loads of merchandise. They sold flour, cornmeal, grits, sugar, salt, coffee, seasonings, medicines, garden produce, clothing, yard goods, household utensils, tools, kerosene—everything needed by the loggers, sawmillers, and families. As news spread of the stock and bargains, Inverness folks were added to the store's clientele. Food stuffs came up from Tampa by train. His store fed and clothed communities from miles around.



It was not unusual to count 100 barrels of flour, 20 barrels of sugar, 10 barrels of grits, 10 barrels of meal, 100 cases of tomatoes and corn, 10 bags of dry lima beans and navy beans, 50 bags of potatoes, 500 cases of soft drinks, and 10 - 45 lb. cans of oil sausage. This commissary store, owned by Mr. Gamble in partnership with Edgar Roberts, supplied the groceries, dry goods and hardware needs of the town. It was open from 6 am until 10 pm, and was well patronized by the clientele who “chewed the fat” around the cracker barrel, telling the stories, lies and the day’s lumber output. (Butler, 1972)



Stand-in “fat chewers” from a Vermont general store.

CENTRALIA COMMISSARY, Dry Goods Side
 to Right:
 GEORGE MARSH - DELIVERY MAN
 EDGAR ROBERTS - Supt of the Mill
 GEORGE PERRY - GROCERY CLERK
 BOB STEWART - MANAGER OF MEAT MARKET
 W.B. GAINOR - BOOK KEEPER
 MR WERN - MANAGER Dry Goods
 GEORGE GAMBLE - MANAGER, COMMISSARY



Maybe
 identified by
 Bob Griffin.

1919

G M E R G P B S U B G W GG

Back row:
Mr. Wren

George Perry?

George Gamble

Front row:
Unknown

Unknown

U.B. Gainor?

Bob Stewart

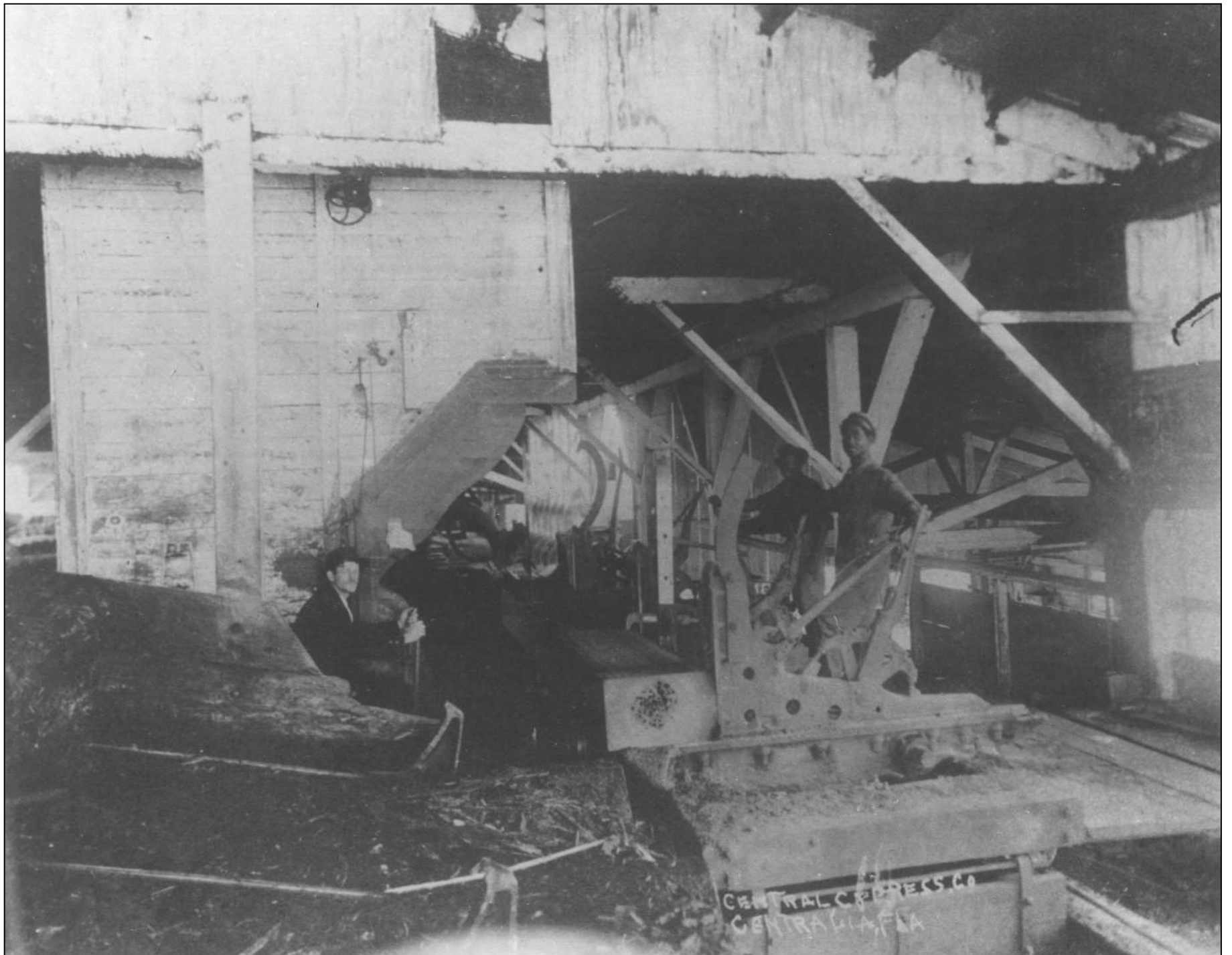


Each Monday a salesman from Knight & Wall, a Tampa wholesale company, Chenshow Brothers, Armour & Norris and Co. meat packers, came to Centralia on the train to take orders which would be delivered on the train on Wednesday. To supplement these goods, farmers in the area provided fresh vegetables, citrus, chicken, pork and beef. The Clarks, Lisks, and Jacksons were some of these. They grew greens, tomatoes, okra, corn, black eyed peas, green beans and squash and also mulberries, blackberries and elderberries as well as peaches, pears and peanuts. (Va. Jackson)

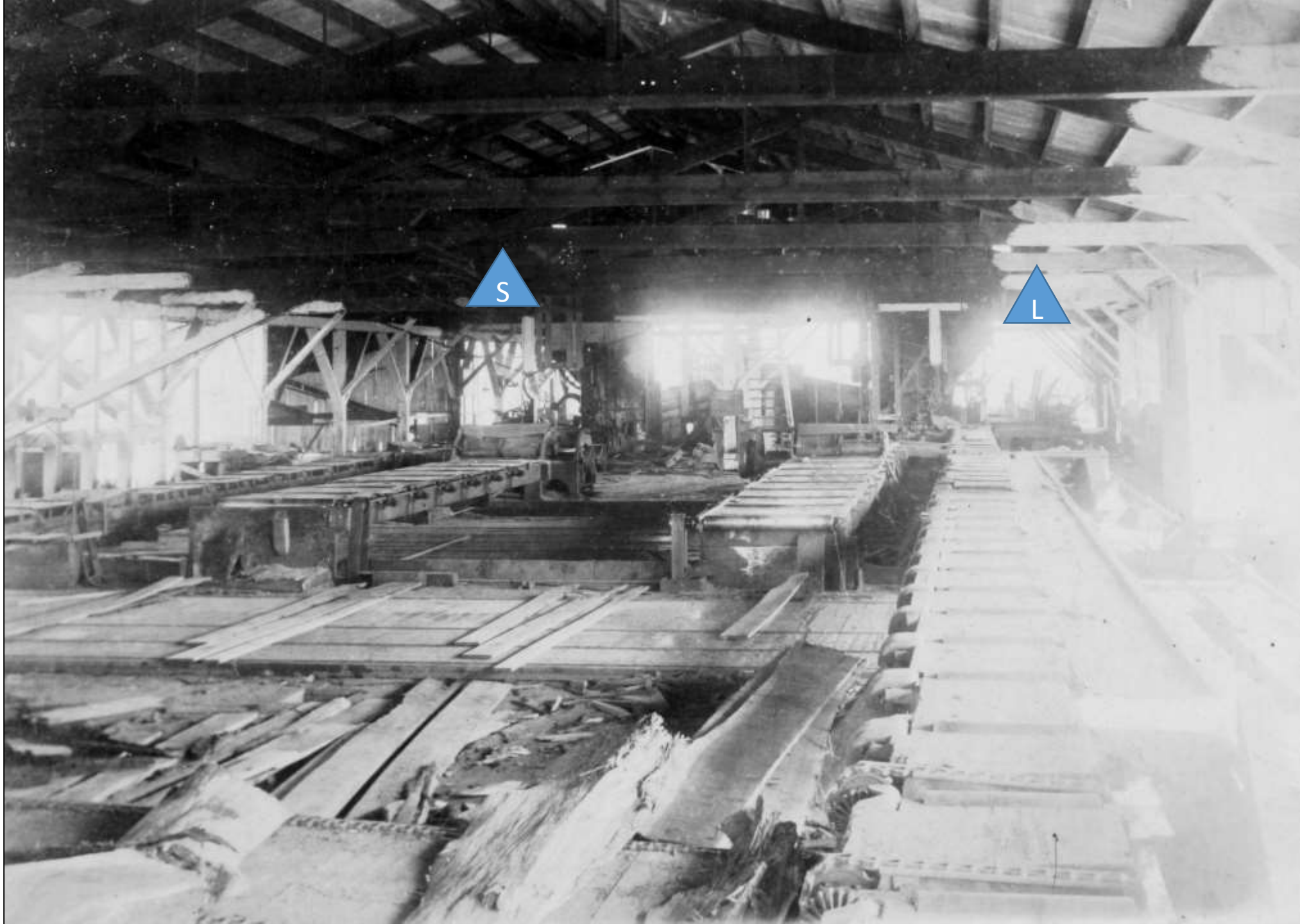


The sawyers on the double band mill were Frank Cobb, Al Wineman, Mr. Payette and Mr. Dursheimer; all had sawed from Michigan, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and Louisiana to Florida.

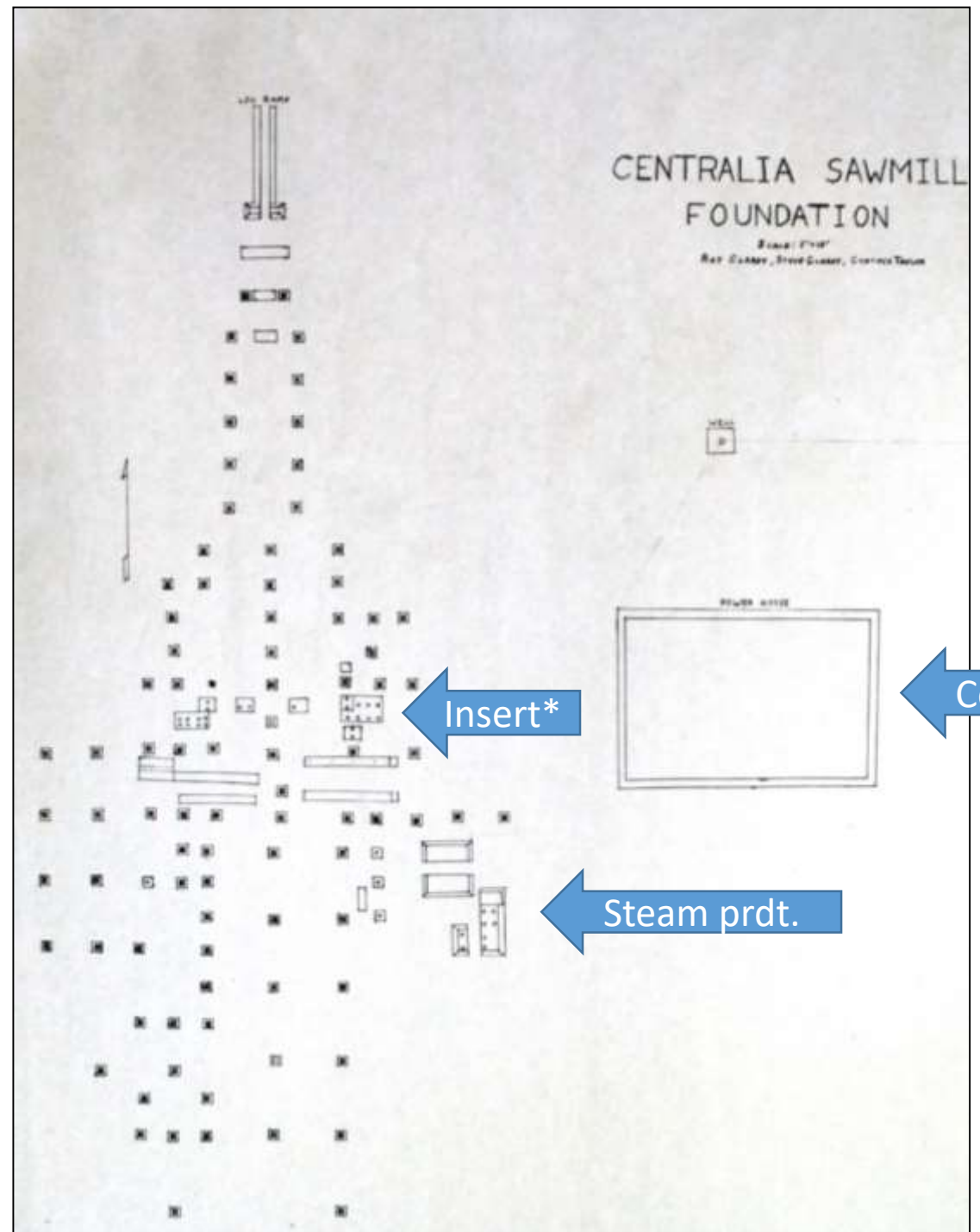
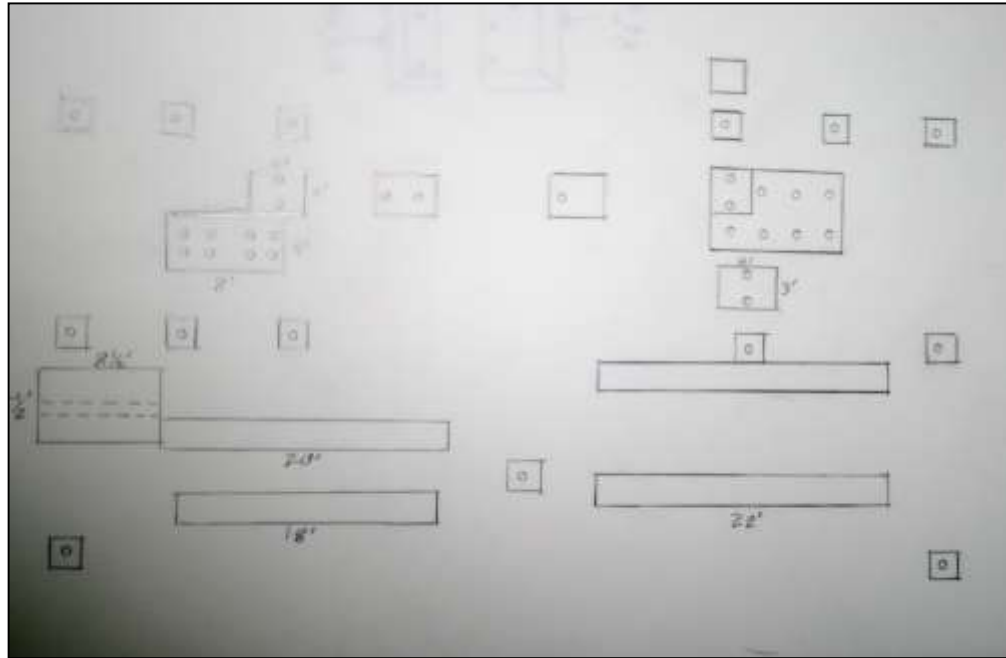
Short-side



"The short side was a sawyers' dream", and the long side was capable of sawing and the squaring of the largest and longest (logs) they had ever seen in all their travels.(Butler quoting Al Wineman,1972)



Insert *



Where fly
wheel spun
producing
energy from
steam?



Photos that appear to have been taken when disassembling the sawmill to move on to Perry. This is labelled “main floor of the mill.” X’s mark the two bandsaws.



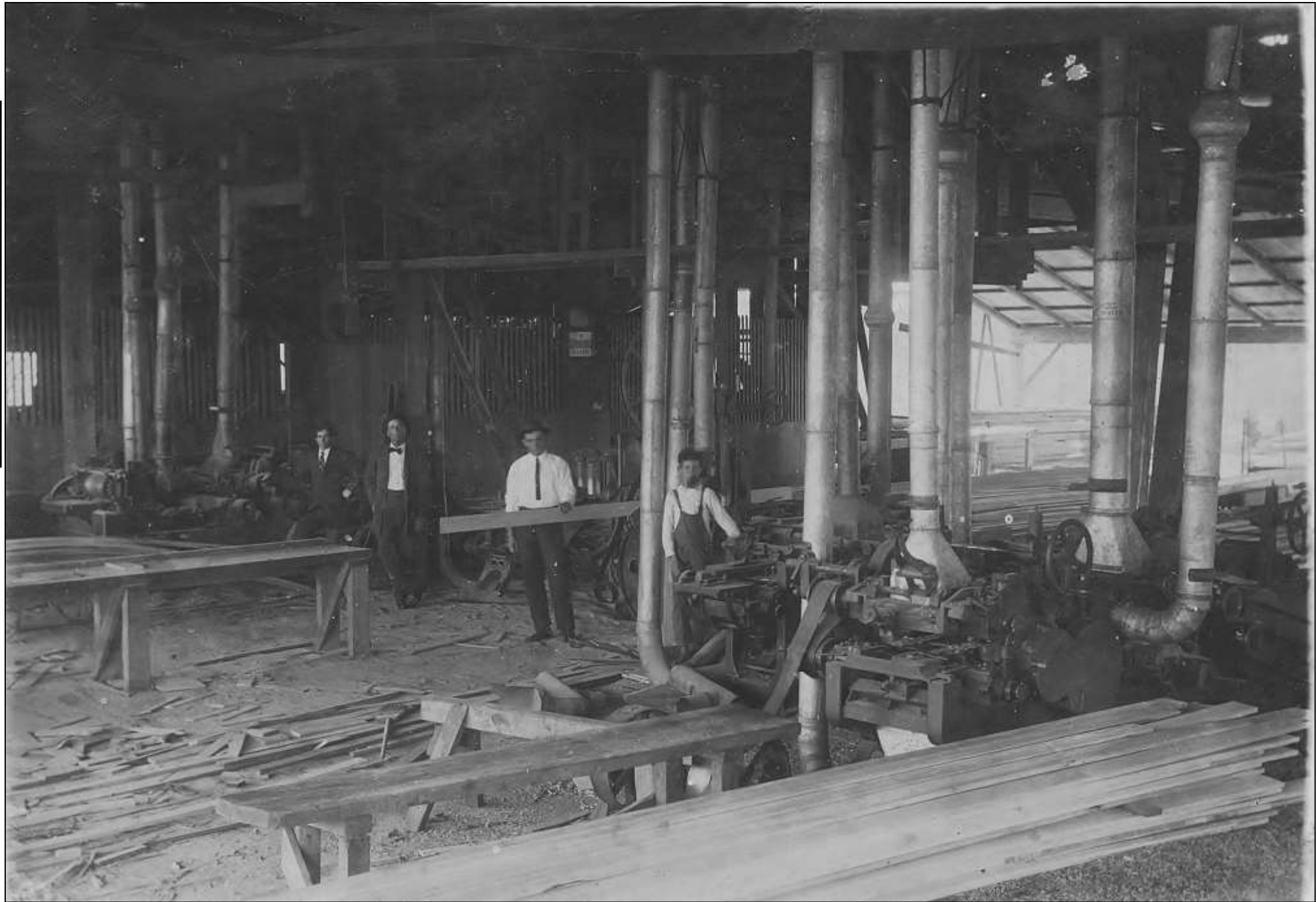
Long side
where cut
lumber
exits
sawmill.



Planing Mill



Labelled
Planing Mill,
Central
Cypress
Company,
Centralia



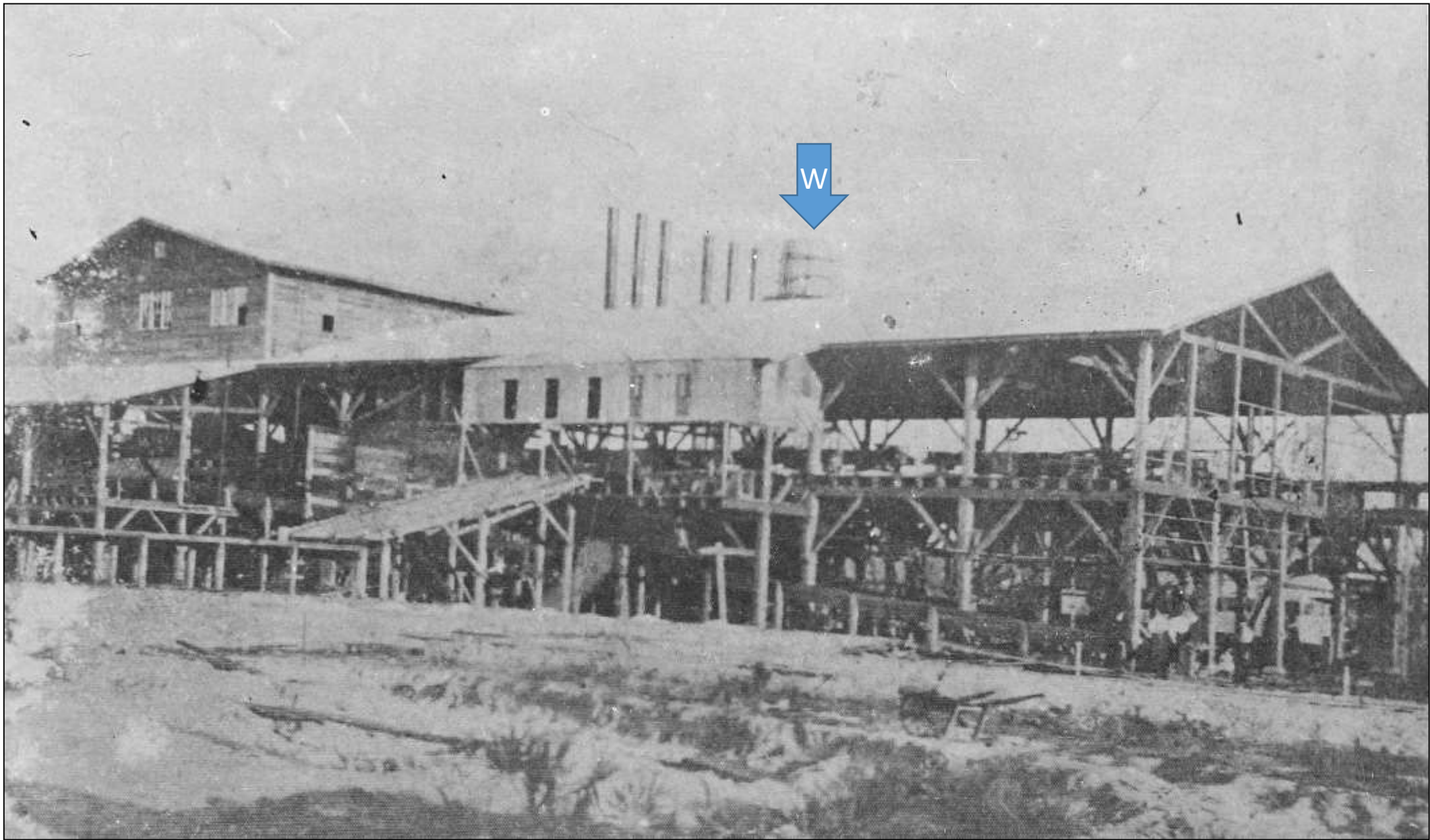
To the right of the photo are 160 acres of stacks for drying the raw cut cypress. Stacks were 15 feet high. Some of the lumber probably sat there drying for several years after the town vanished. Cypress lumber contains as much as 309 gallons of water per thousand board feet and this water must be removed by a natural sun drying process.



The mill is (at) the center of vast yard of stacks, most of them running two or three stories high and covering acre after acre. Millions upon millions of feet of lumber are dried in the curing process, which takes a year or more. As a matter of fact, the storage is necessary for the curing process and makes the lumber tremendously valuable because of long handling period.”

Baynard Kendrick 1967: 137 quoting Mason 1953



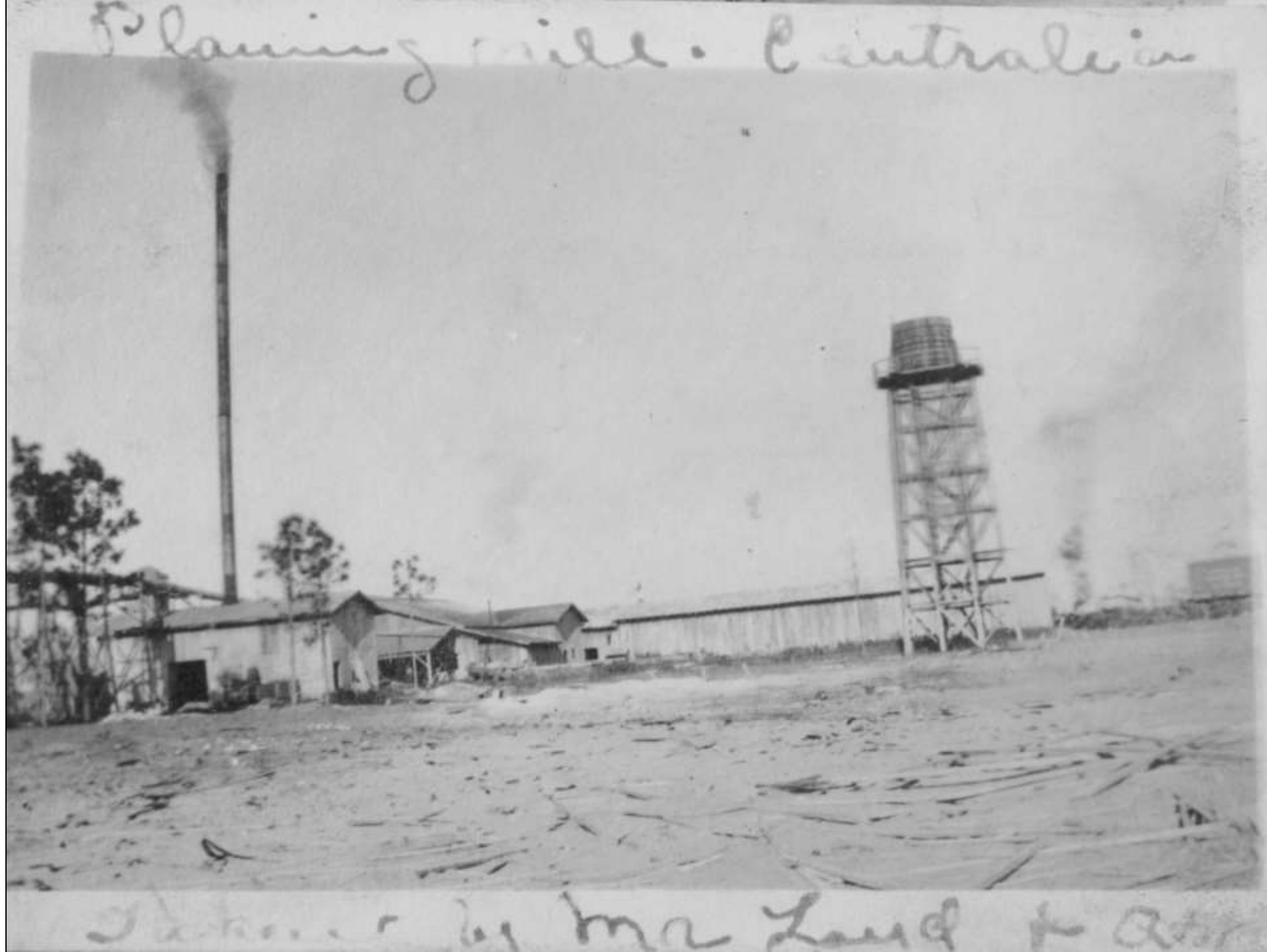


Several of these photos were taken from the water tower (W) beyond the smoke stacks.

Looking WSW from water tower: note the railroad tracks in the foreground that move the logs first to the sawmill, then the lumber to the **planing mill** or to the drying yard and eventually to the port in Tampa for shipping to New York City.



Included also was sizable shingle and lath mill, in other words, efficiency and complete utilization of all lumber was the order of the day around Centralia. Each piece of lumber regardless of size had its place. This was stressed at all times by both Mr. Edgar Roberts and Mr. Herby, the Planer Mill Foreman, along with the inventive Mr. Gray, his assistant and mechanic at planer mill. Robert Butler, 1972



Central Cypress Co

Centralia, Florida

MANUFACTURERS
OF

Cypress Tanks, Cypress Boats

Cedar Chests,

We can also supply any kind of Lumber on short notice. We would like to figure with you on your bill whether small or large.

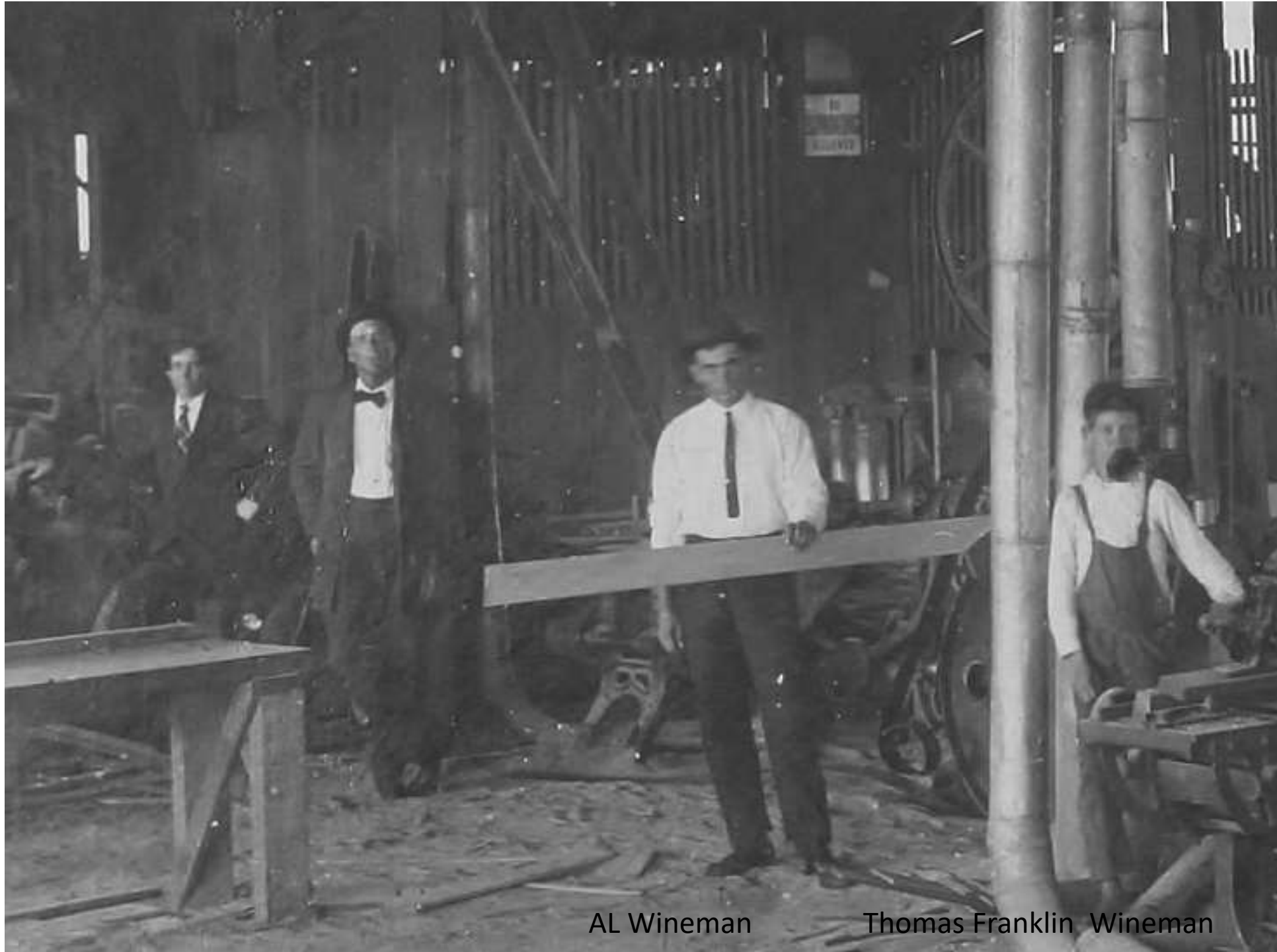
Shingle and
Lath Mill and
Manufacturing
Building, half
a mile south of
main sawmill



See next slide with bow tie, George Gamble and Frank Silver, Centralia Deputy, Millwright



The sawyers were
Frank Cobb, Al
Thomas
Wineman, Mr.
Payette and Mr.
Dursheimer.



AL Wineman

Thomas Franklin Wineman



Workers hailed from Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Canada and most U.S. states.



S

N



This maybe the elevated tram to the mill, directly behind the wooden structure. Rattlesnake Camp Road in foreground.



Another colorful person was a Frenchman, Mr. Foyette, sawyer from Lourdes, France, via New Orleans, La. He was a true stylist in clothes. His custom was that after the evening meal each day, weather permitting, he would appear on the boardwalk (wooden sidewalks) dressed in expensive clothes and shoes to match each season of the year. He would promenade down the length of the sidewalk twirling a walking stick as if he were at a sidewalk outside a café in Paris. (Butler, 1972)

Stand- in Dandy: Samuel Walker Booksh with same ethnicity, 1920s



Like any village or town, Centralia was not lacking in culture or characters. Mr. MacLendon, trail cutter, typical Scotchman from the old country, highly educated, very interesting to converse with, had a hobby of fine guns and pipes. Needless to say, his collection was the envy of all. His delight was in displaying them to all visitors and salesmen that came to Centralia, which incidentally, were many. (Butler, 1972)



Substitute
Scottish herder

Edgar and Queen Roberts



1920 census residents of Centralia Hernando Co FL

Moses Aarons	Agness Harris	Jane Kenedy	Evelyn Ross
Hezekiah Aarons	Leroy Harris	Eva Mar Kenedy	Mildred Ross
Benjamin Aarons	Allie Harris	Joseph Kenedy	Samuel Russell
Jessie Ash	Lula Harris	Joseph King	Annie Shafton
Sinclair Ash	Bessie Harris	Eugenia Lewis	Clarence Shafton
Joseph Barco	William Harris	Ethan Lewis	Lota Shafton
Mamie Barco	Annie Harris	Marie Lockett	William Shafton
Kenneth Barco	Edward Hemby	Joel Lockett	Miller Shield
Joe NickBarco	Louis H Henderson	Alma Lockett	Percy Shields
Andrew Barnes	Louella Henderson	Webster Lockett	Joseph Silver
John Barrington	Pearl Henderson	Anrville P Marsh	Alvin Silver
Love Bason	Joseph Henderson	Mary G Marsh	Abe Simmons
William Battle	James Henry	Sam McCullough	Hellen Simmons
Orange Bell	James Henry Jr	Mabel McKinney	James Sims
Lucius Bennett	Willie Hill	Georg E McKinney	May Smith
Emma Bevins	Robert Hill	Claire McLean	Jane Smith
Evelyn Bobbit	Sim Hines	Harry E Mears	Ashley Spooner
Neil Bowland	Maggie Hines	Elizabeth Morgan	Thelma Spooner
Robert Brooks	Lucy Holland	John Nelson	Josh D Spooner
Hervey Brooks	Joseph Holland	Cora Oglesby	Wade Washington
Leslie Brooks	Ruth Holland	Samuel Owen	Tempy Watley
Charley Brunson	Kear Holland	Hattie Owen	James Williams
Edward Coffie	McKinley Hughes	Agnes Owen	Parker Williams
Marie Coffie	Hattie Irby	Jerome Owen	Luvina Williams
Louetta Corley	Mabelle Jackson	Samuel Owen Jr	Jesse Williams
Elsie Day	David Jackson	Mary E Owen	Robert Williams
Irma Dean	Arthur Jackson	Anderson Owen Jr	Ora Williams
Fred FARline	Lucy Jackson	Fred Owen	Sellers Williams
Carrie Farmer	Queene May Jackson	George C Perry	Vivian Williams
Charles Fisher	Timothy James	Fred S Perry	John Wilson
Ama Fisher	Nettie James	Mary J Perry	Bertha Wilson
Raymond Fletcher	Ireen James	Cecil Perry	
Maggie Fletcher	John C Jarvis	Mary Powell	
Wallace Folds	Elisabeth Jarvis	John powell	
Emory Folds	Inez Jefferson	Olin Powell	
Maud Frazier	James Jefferson	Angus Powell	
George E Gamble	Earl Jefferson	Myrtle Powell	
William Gardener, Jr	Rayfield Jefferson	Lucille Powell	
Clyde Giddens	Charley Johnson	Ila Mar Powell	
Della Green	William E Johnson	Cora Powell	
Robert Green	Lucy Johnson	Woodroe Powell	
John E Green	Moses Johnson	Virginia Powell	
Howell Green	Horrice Johnson	Ernest Pruitt	
Anderson Green	Clyde Johnson	Samuel J Rankin Jr	
Edward Green	Vera Johnson	William Robinson	
Horace Griffin Jr	WillieJohnson	Lum Ross	
Andrew Gross	Edith Johnson	Wade Ross	
Ova Gross	Mary J Kenedy	Roy V Ross	
Adrian Gross	Leroy Kenedy	Katie Ross	



Edgar and Nettie Roberts at 705 Bay Ave. in Clearwater. The house was built with cypress from Centralia in early 1920s. Back of photo notes imply Queen Roberts Brown continued to live in it after she married. 1940 census has Nettie (widowed, 72 yrs), brother-in-law, Baxter (widowed, 85 yrs) and his son, Hamilton (single, 58 yrs) living in house. Edgar died in 1939. The house still stands.

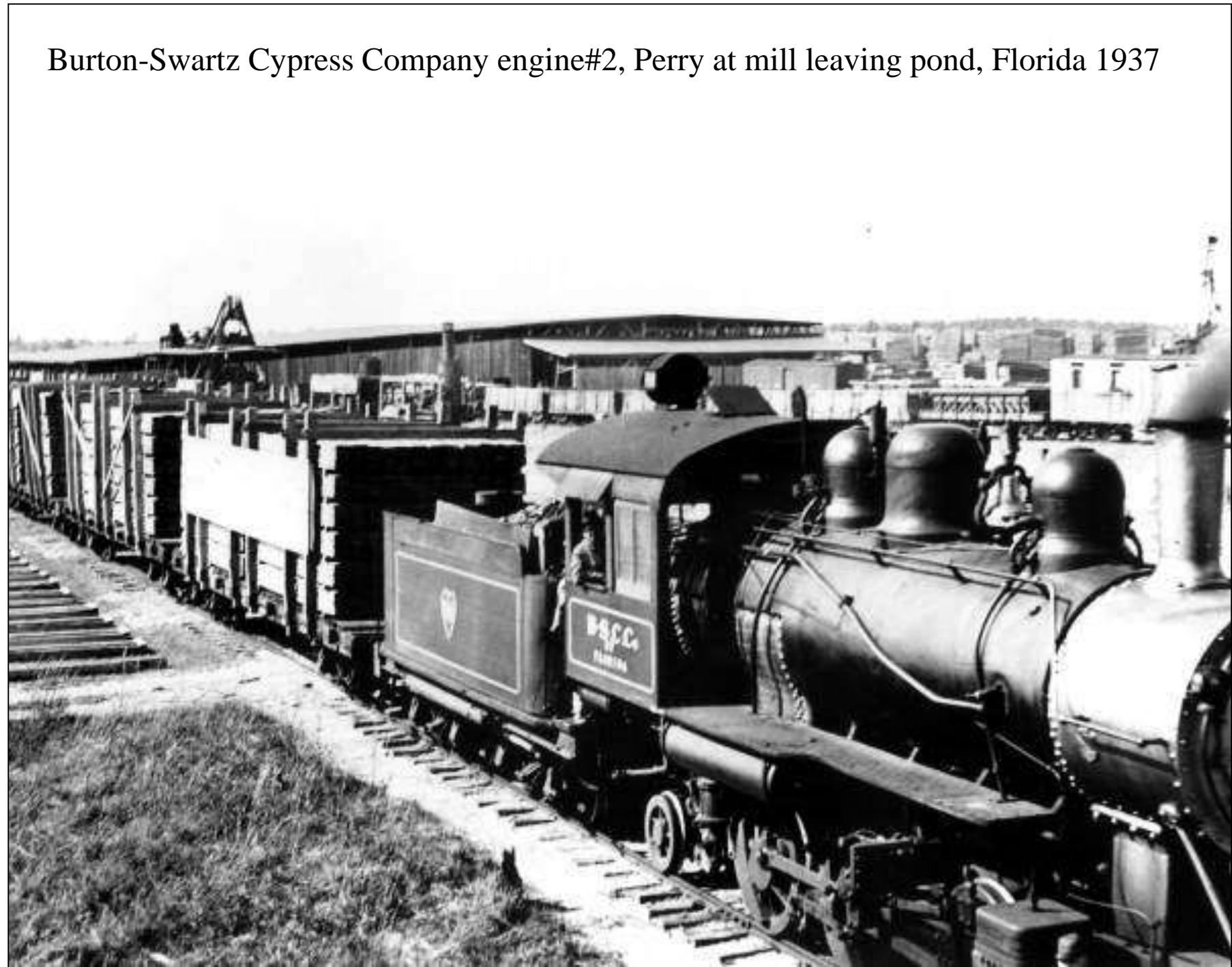
“As all good things have to come to an end; on the last day (unkn) of the mills' operations, Mr. Edgar Robert's daughter, Queen, was placed on a platform high enough to reach the cord of the whistle, held it down until it was tied down blowing continuously for over thirty minutes. Howls of dogs could be heard. Unashamed tear stained faces of both men and women could be seen. Others, with saddened hearts started straight ahead, as if in a trance for what had once been their home, ceased to exist.

Tommie Beard and Hoke Way closed the Flicker House picture show that night. Not a single customer made his appearance thus in complete stillness, except for an occasional hideous panther squall, Old Centralia wasted away.” (Butler, 1972)



J.C. Turner joined with Burton & Swartz in Perry, Florida where Turner always owned 40 % of the plant. J. C. Turner died in 1923 and Burton died in 1926, but the business continued.

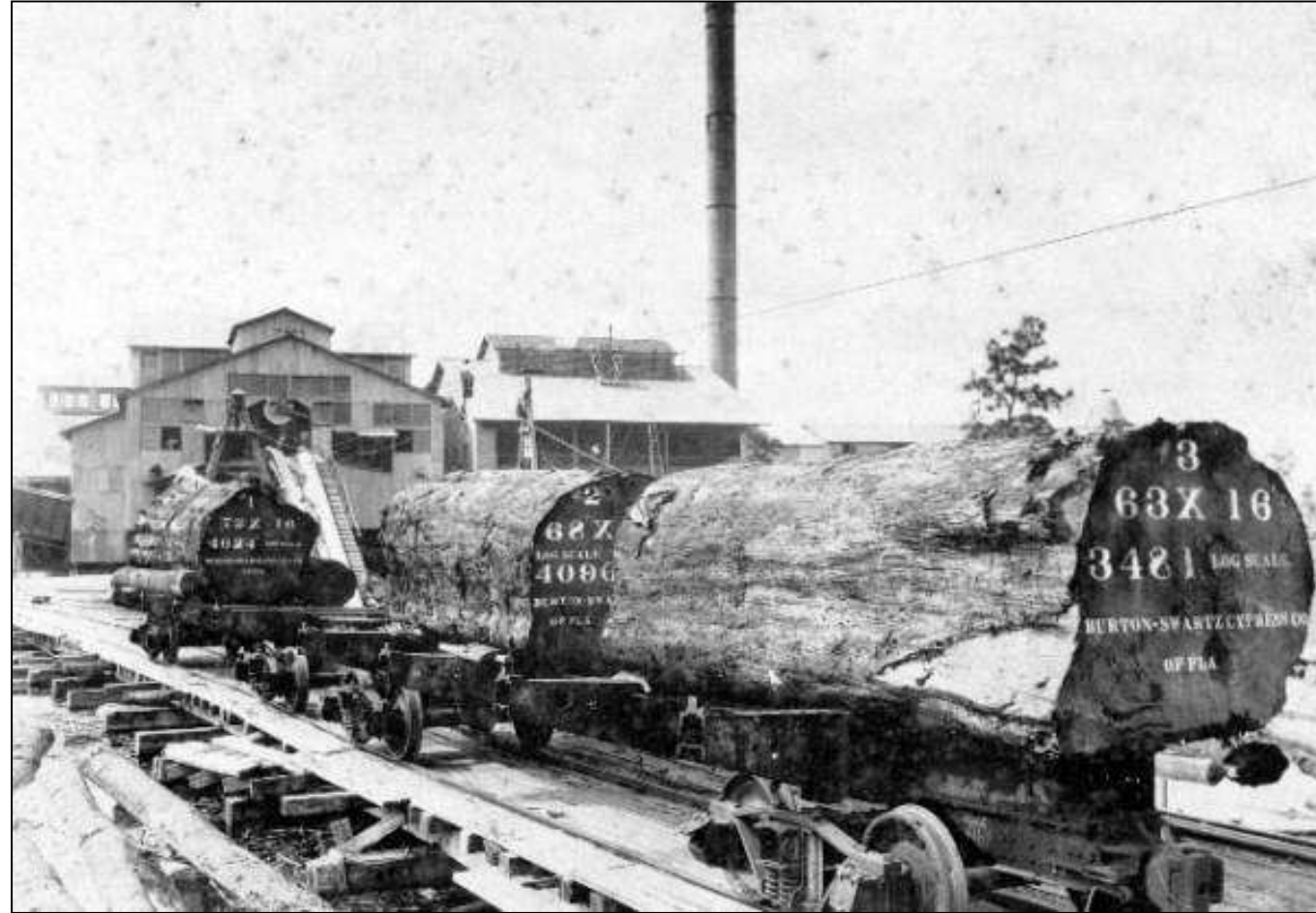
Burton-Swartz Cypress Company engine#2, Perry at mill leaving pond, Florida 1937



The Perry plant operated as Burton & Swartz till 1943. The J. C. Turner Lumber Company bought 54% from the Burton estate and 6 percent from Swartz, who died in 1944. With complete ownership in 1943, the J.C. Turner firm started logging cypress from Lee County in the Big Cypress Swamp.



Mill Pond

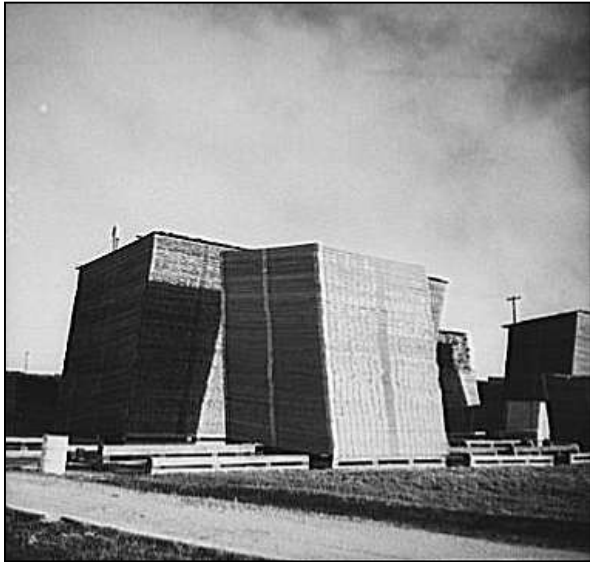


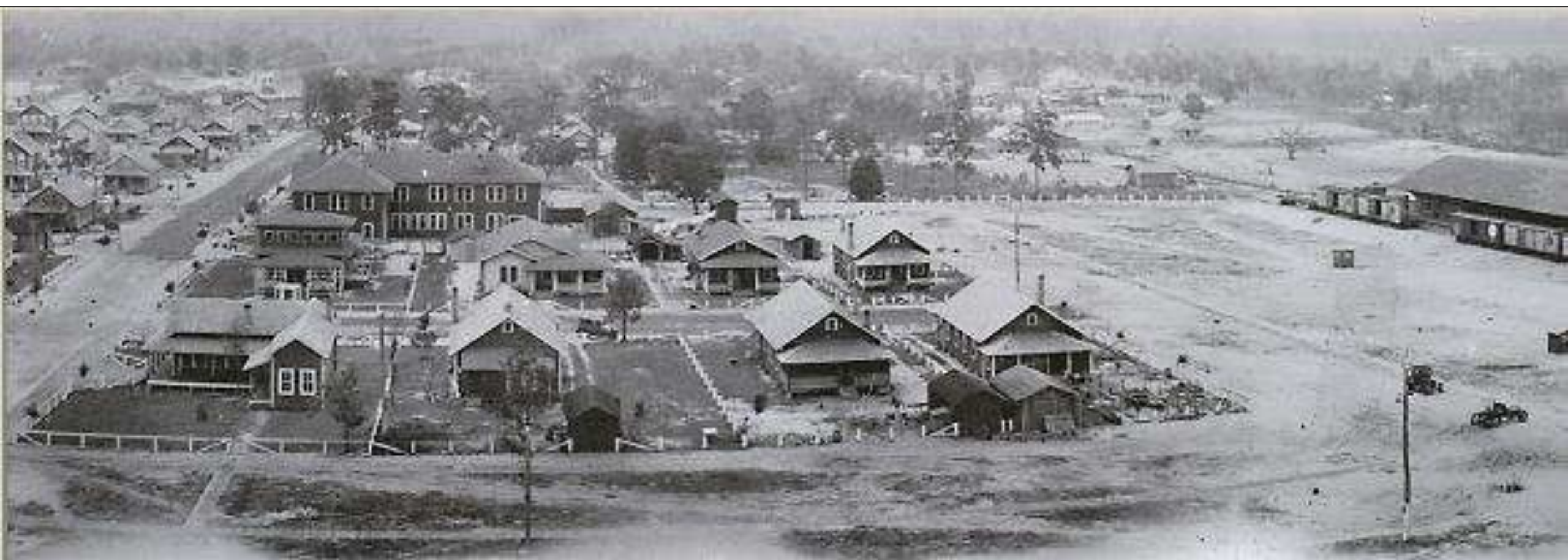


In 1944 the Lee Cypress Company took over operation at Perry and in 1947 changed the name to the Lee Tidewater Cypress Company and continued logging Cypress in the Everglades, as did Cummer.



Cypress logging
ended in Florida
with the closing
of Lacoochee
Saw mill in east
Pasco county,
1959.





Cummer Sawmill in Lacoocchee, Pasco County.

“Centralia's life blood flowed from this mill and when the timber was cut out, the stream dried up and this thriving town of some 1,500 to 1,800 persons faded into oblivion.”



Stan
Weston,
Farm
Forester,
Division of
Forestry,
March 1962

Stan Weston's interest in Centralia resulted in a St. Petersburg Times Sunday article on **January 21, 1962**.
Text by Paul Davis.

"J.C. Turner Lumber Co., with offices in New York and Perry, Fla., has launched a long-range reforestation program on 20,000 acres it owns, stretching along the coast southward from the Citrus County line.

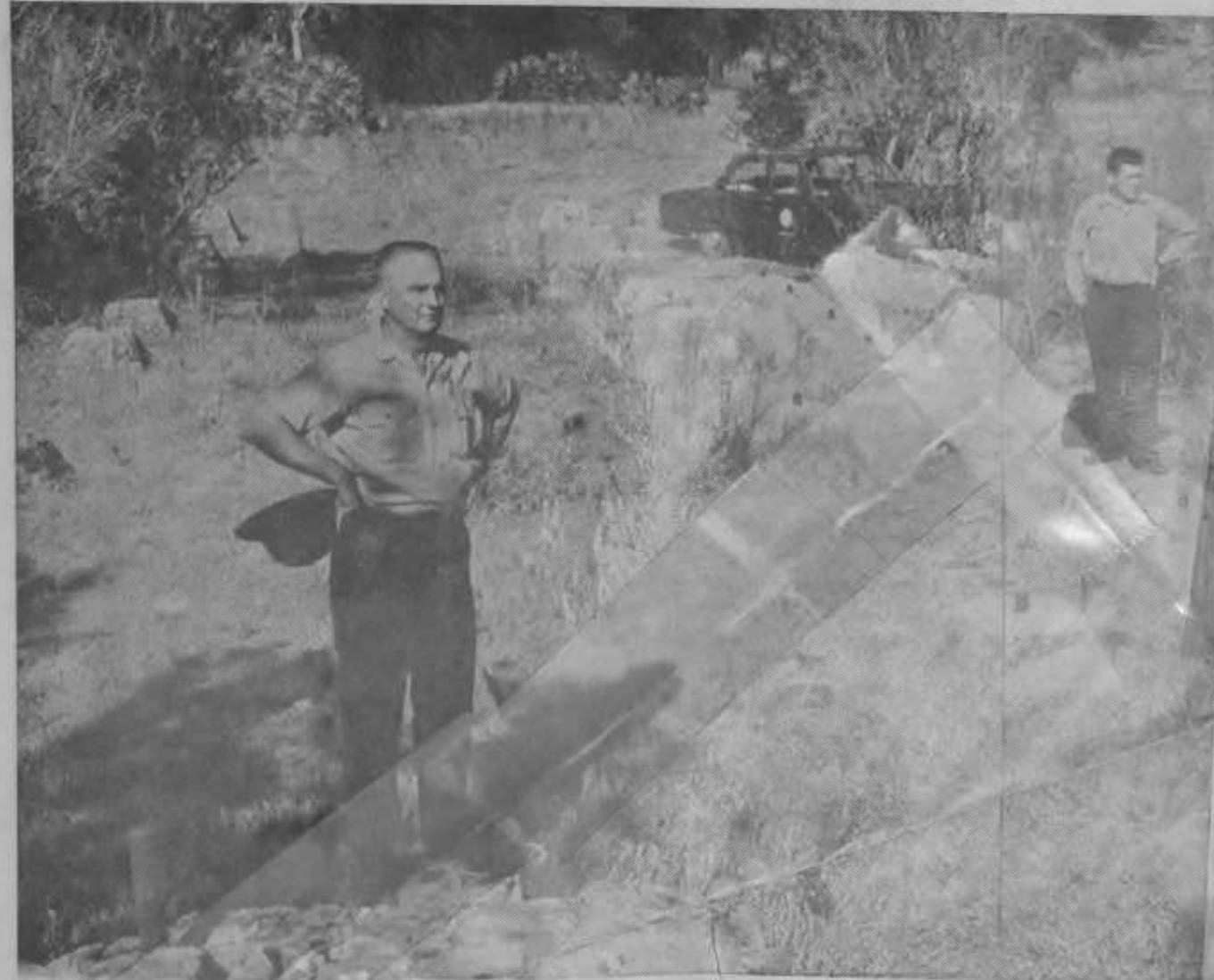
Stan Weston, county forester for Division of Forestry in Hernando and Pasco counties, acts as an adviser for the job. Planting will continue each year until barren spots are cleared of scrub and planted, all to slash pine, which is best suited to the soil of the area.

Plantings will be conducted on what is called a 30-year rotating plan, covering space of time from date planted to harvest of trees large enough to saw into lumber.

The project will put the land back to work with the promise of income from the trees.

In the past 32 years four million trees have been planted in Hernando and Pasco; two million pine seedlings were set out this past season. Over the last 48 years (in 1962) seven million trees were planted in the two counties."

Forester Weston Looks Over Old Mill Site

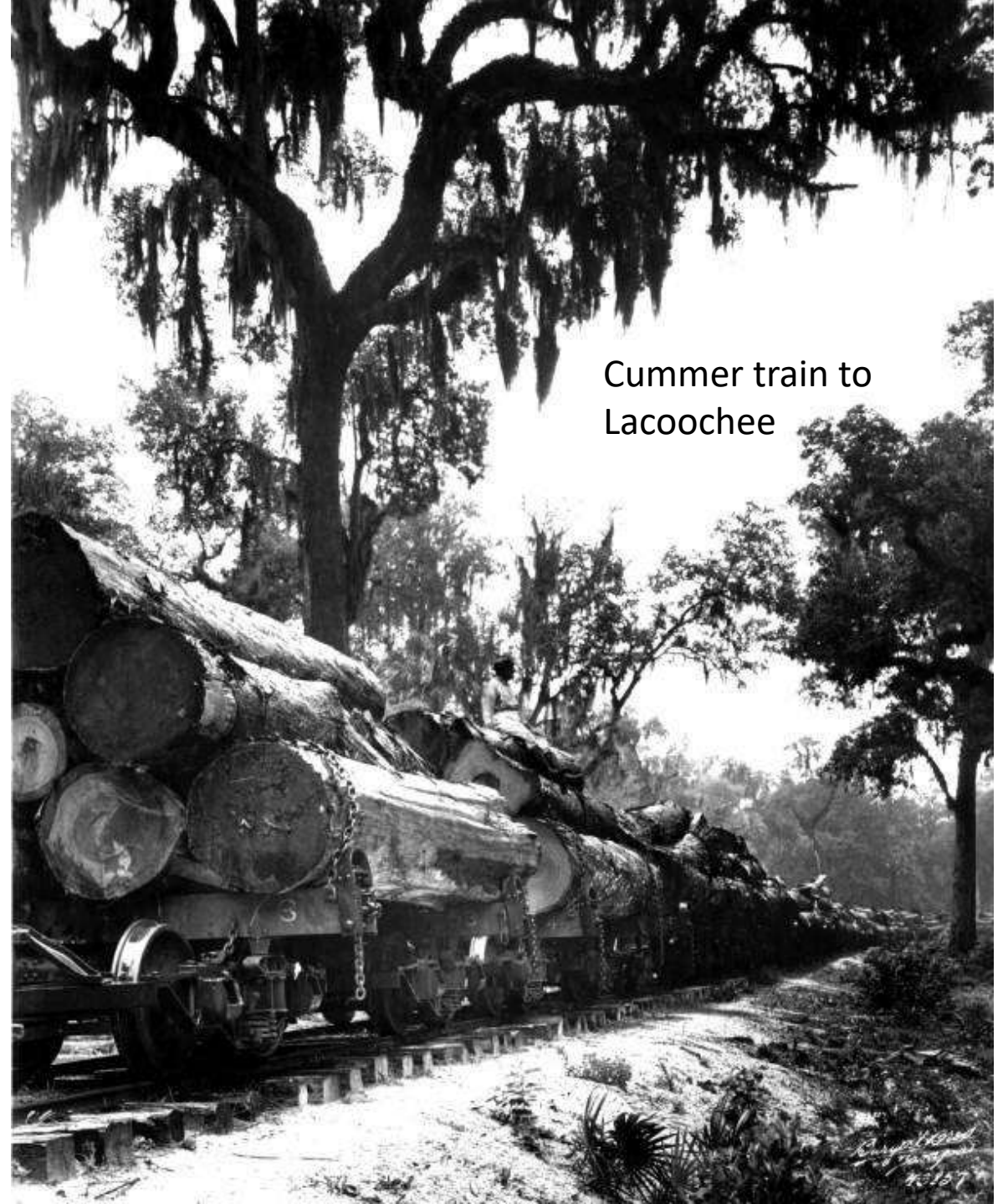


Farm Forester Stan Weston looks over an abandoned mill site in west Hernando County, closed many years ago when the supply of timber ran out and was not replanted. Florida foresters are now replacing pine trees, with two million seedlings set out last season in Hernando and Pasco counties. (Courtesy St. Petersburg Times)

Still the sawmills throughout the southeast whined louder and louder. No thought was given to the future of replenishing the forest. Was not this blanket of forest inexhaustible? Wasn't it a waste land of wilderness, jungle, something to be removed so that 'civilization' might advance? Leave seed trees, plant new trees, seedlings, -- ridiculous they thought. Never would this sea of virgin timber be exhausted. How wrong they were!

St Petersburg Times, Sunday Jan. 21, 1962
Forester Stan Weston's article, *Death of a Forest and Town*.

The railroad through Centralia ceased in 1938 per
CWMA brochure.



Cummer train to
Lacoochee

Steven Clardy
and former
manager of
Chassahowitzka
Wildlife
Management
Area, Jennifer
Roberts,
April 2014.



There remains
a living legacy
of the natural
resource that
brought all
these people
and machines
to Centralia.

http://myfwc.com/media/304851/Chass_Driving_Tour.pdf

A History of Florida Forests

Baynard Kendrick (1967) and (Ms.)
Barry Walsh (2007)

University Press of Florida, 2007



Baynard Kendrick, author of twenty-nine books, among them the Duncan Maclain detective series, also wrote on Florida history observed during a long career in the forest products industry.

CHARLES BYINGTON PORTRAIT, BAYNARD KENDRICK PAPERS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA, TAMPA LIBRARY

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Jeffrey Drobney, *Lumberman and Log Sawyers: Life, Labor, and Culture in the North Florida timber Industry, 1830-1930*, Mercy University Press, Macon, GA, 1997

Green Empire: The St. Joe Company and the Remaking of Florida's Panhandle, Kathryn Ziewitz and June Wiaz, University Press of Florida, 2006

Drew Harrington, "Burton-Swartz Cypress Company of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* (April 1985).

Tapping the pines: the naval stores industry in the American South, by Robert B. Outland

Cypress Swamps, H.T. Odum with Katherine C. Ewel, ed., University of Florida Press, 1984

Brooks-Scanlon Corporation No. 1 a 2-6-2 steam locomotive http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooks-Scanlon_Corporation_1

A St. Johns River Logger The Upchurch Lumber Company of Jacksonville, FL
by Donald R. Hensley, Jr. Copyright ©1998-1999 <http://taplines.net/upchurch/ulc.html>

The Lake Santa Fe Route A short history of the narrow gauge Western Railway of Florida
By Donald R. Hensley, Jr. Copyright May, 2009 <http://www.taplines.net/MELROSE/MELROSE.html>

The Great Cypress Swamps, John V. Dennis, Louisiana State University Press, 1988