975.6
B

Number 14 — 50 — Shares

The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company

INCORPORATED 1920

This certifies that Chatham Manufacturing Co is the owner of

Fifty Shares of the Prior-Preference stock of

The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company

transferrable only on the books of the corporation by the holder hereof in person or by attorney, on surrender of this certificate properly endorsed.

The holder hereof is entitled to receive, and the corporation is bound to pay a fixed yearly dividend of six (6) per cent per annum, payable quarterly on the first day of January, April, June and September of each year, before any dividend shall be set apart or paid on the Common capital stock or the preferred capital stock; said dividends shall be cumulative, so that if in any year dividends at the rate of six per cent per annum shall not have been paid on said stock, the deficiency shall be paid before any dividends shall be paid on, or set apart for the preferred or Common stock. In the event of any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company, before any payment or distribution of assets shall be made to the holders of the Common stock and the holders of the preferred stock, the holders of the prior-preference stock shall be entitled to be paid in full the par value of their shares, and an amount which, together with the aggregate of the dividends theretofore paid upon said prior preference stock, will equal six per cent, upon the par value thereof, to the date of such liquidation, dissolution or winding up. So long as any of the prior preference stock is outstanding the Company shall not, without the affirmative vote or written consent of the holders of record of at least two-thirds in amount of the prior preference stock then outstanding, create or suffer to be created any mortgage or other lien upon any of the real or personal property of the Company, other than purchase money mortgages and pledges of quick assets as security for loans made in regular course of business, and excepting that the corporation may acquire additional property subject to existing mortgages or liens and renew the same, or issue any shares of stock having priority over the present authorized issue of prior preference stock. The prior preference stock may be redeemed at the option of the Company, in whole or in part, at one hundred and ten per cent of its par value, and, in addition, the amount of any dividends thereon or accrued at the time of such redemption, on any day fixed for the payment of dividends on any prior preference stock. Said stock shall have the same right to vote as the Common Capital stock.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company has caused this certificate to be signed by its duly authorized officers and caused its Corporate seal to be affixed, this the 5th day of June A. D. 1928

J. E. Gant — SECRETARY

H. G. Chatham — PRESIDENT

SHARES $100 EACH

THE ELKIN & ALLEGHANY RAILWAY COMPANY

Compiled

by

Dan R. Bray, Jr.

Printed

by

Norman Offset
Route 1, Box 82
Traphill, N. C. 28685

1979

PROPERTY OF
MUSEUM OF REGIONAL HISTORY
Mount Airy, N. C.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work could not have been completed without the kindnesses and strong memories of all the following people who opened their doors to me:

Ned Ball, Elkin
Pauline Billings, Elkin
Ohna P. Bivins, Elkin
Clay Blackburn, Elkin
Dan Bray, Jonesville (Swan Creek)
Tom Bray "
A. O. Bryan, Elkin
Button Bryan, Elkin
Hugh Chatham, State Road & Elkin
Richard Chatham, Ronda & Elkin
Abb Crater, Elkin
Ms. C. T. Doughton, Sparta
Ms. J. K. Doughton, "
Ms. R. B. Harrell, Elkin
Mr. & Mrs. Garr Harris, Elkin
Mr. & Mrs. "Nux" Harris, Elkin
Mrs. Raymond Harris, Elkin
Lin Hendren, Elkin
Beatrice Holbrook, Traphill
John Ipock, Elkin
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Jim Lyon, Elkin
Montgomery Lyon, Elkin
Ted Lyon, Elkin
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Ralph Reich, Elkin
Paul Shumate, Elkin
Louise & Joe Transou, Elkin

OTHER SOURCES

Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, D.C.

Elkin Public Library, Elkin, N.C.
Employment Security Commission, Raleigh, N.C.
Ford Archives & Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan
General Services Administration,
National Archives, Records Division, Washington, D.C.

Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, D.C.
N.C. State Archives, Raleigh
N.C. State Library, Raleigh
The Tribune, Elkin
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston, S.C.

(Acknowledgments continued)

Surry County Historical Society- financial assistance with pictures.

Stock Certificates- Courtesy of Richard T. Chatham

Explanatory notes: The deed to J.W. Ring and wife Molly, between pages 12 and 13, was photographed from a Xerox copy of the old and faded original; therefore, there are many smudges.

Most of the pictures were old and faded; some were copies of old pictures. This accounts for some loss of detail and blemishes in some of the photographs. However, it is hoped the story they tell is worth preserving for historical purposes.

The Gwyn Home shown in two of the photographs was the home of Richard Gwyn II; it was later known as "the Foard home" and "the Click home". It is now occupied by the William R. Sanders family.

FOREWORD

As long as I can remember, I have always been interested in trains. My grandfather, Montgomery Lyons, encouraged this interest, and it was from him I learned about the Elkin and Alleghany Railroad. As I grew up, a keen desire developed in me to learn more about it. In my senior year at Elkin High School, this desire became a reality when I chose the Elkin and Alleghany Company as the subject for my term paper assignment.

Now, five years later, this history of the railroad is being printed with the hope of preserving a bit of Elkin Valley history and as a tribute to the pioneer efforts of Elkin's founding fathers.

Dan R. Bray, Jr.
Jonesville, N.C. 28642
May, 1979



Elkin 1890. Beside the water tower is the railroad station of the R & D. The church on the left is the First Methodist. The Click & Co. building is now Spainhour's, and the other one is now Casteven's Hardware. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

THE ELKIN & ALLEGHANY RAILROAD COMPANY

1907 - 1931

The year was 1890. The first train ever to be seen in the town of Elkin, N. C., rolled to a stop at the depot. It was the heyday of railroad expansion in the nation. Towns in the south with promising industries were being linked by ribbons of steel. With the location of a line through many a promising, sleepy hamlet; the results would be a growing, thriving town in a few years. The Richmond & Danville was one of these rail expansion builders. No rail line extended into the northwestern corner of North Carolina until 1890. Before then, all supplies and freight moved across the plank road from Salisbury and Fayetteville, N. C. Freight from farther south came from Charleston and Columbia, S. C. The reason for all the freight coming from the south instead of the east was that there were no roads at all to the major towns of Winston-Salem, ports of Moorehead City and Wilmington, N. C., to serve the northwest portion of the state. In several instances the extension of a line into a remote area perpetuated the birth of a town.

The Richmond & Danville was responsible for the formation of the town of North Wilkesboro, N. C. When the rails reached the river bottom opposite Wilkesboro, a town had already been laid out. A month earlier in June, under the eye of Colonel George W. Hinshaw, the Winston Land Development Co. was organized to develop extensive, unclaimed lands in Wilkes County. Colonel Hinshaw, a major R & D promoter, sent W. F. Frogdon to purchase two large farms close to where the Reddies River flows into the Yadkin River. At that time, not over thirty people lived on the tracks, including the owners, renters, and laborers. Immediately, surveys were made, plotting and laying off streets, alleys, blocks, and lots for businesses, residences, and manufacturing. The Land Company erected a bank, a grade school, an opera house and hotel, and several store buildings. Lots were sold at auction, and many people bought for the purpose of raising stores and houses. The reality of the town of North Wilkesboro, N. C., was not the end of Colonel Hinshaw's ventures. He had his eye on a large natural resource, twenty miles away, which was worth millions of dollars. This valuable piece of property had never been filed upon because a homesteader could not farm granite. This was a giant monolith called locally Stone Mountain. But in December of 1890 the three hundred acre tract containing "the big Stone Mountain and the Indian Rock tract" was acquired by the Winston Land & Development Company for fifteen cents an acre. Total price was forty-five dollars. By 1895, an additional four thousand acres was acquired and managed by a new company formed by Hinshaw called "The Stone Mountain and Granite Company." Colonel Hinshaw's motive here was to build a railroad from a convenient point such as the small community of Roaring River to Stone Mountain and beyond to the Tennessee or Virginia State line. Its purpose was to transport the quarried granite and virgin timber from the mountain and surrounding area.

As with all financially promising enterprises, everybody desires a piece of the profits. The opposition that Hinshaw met in political circles bears this out. While trying to obtain a charter in the legislature, Hinshaw found that every town within twenty miles of North Wilkesboro, N. C., wanted the line to start from their locality. In Wilkesboro, Senator McNeil would fight the charter unless the line was begun at his hometown. Opposition came from the Chathams in Elkin, N. C., and the Doughtons in Sparta, N. C., because they wanted their respective towns connected by a railroad. But despite these strong objections, the charter was granted on February 25, 1897, in the North Carolina legislature as the Stone Mountain Railway Company. But to satisfy Hinshaw's opponents, the charter contained the following statement: "That said company, shall have and it is hereby given, the right and power to locate, construct, equip, maintain, and operate a railroad or any part thereof..... from some point on the Northwestern North Carolina Railroad between the station Siloam, (six miles below Elkin, N. C.) and North Wilkesboro, N. C. ...."

After the initial survey, the Stone Mountain Railway project came to a standstill! With construction of the road nonexistent, Hinshaw's former opponents went to work on their own. The Doughtons and the Chathams wanted a line constructed quickly to open the resources of the sparse section of the counties of Wilkes, Surry, and Alleghany. While Hinshaw was lamenting the financial difficulties of his railroad, a different charter was being proposed and ratified in the legislature on March 4, 1901. Its title was the Elkin & Alleghany Railway & Power Company. Its incorporators were H.C. Fields, R.A. Doughton of Sparta, N.C.; Hugh G. Chatham of Winston, N.C.; R.M. Chatham of Elkin, N.C.; C.W. Smith of Laurel Branch, N.C.; A.A. Woodruff, H.E. Fries, C.F. Fields, and several others. There is no record that this first company ever got farther than the paper the charter was printed on. But the idea of starting afresh caught on with George Hinshaw. So in 1907, the same incorporators of the earlier Elkin and Alleghany again incorporated the same idea under a new name: "The Elkin & Alleghany Railway Company". Also, several new incorporators were listed in the new charter: J.N. Edwards, E.F. McNeer, and A.G. Click of Elkin, N. C.; J.T. Miller and C.C. Smoot of Wilkesboro, N. C.; and W.E. Cox. This new charter in most part was very similar to the 1901 charter except for several new provisions. One of these provided for the use of convicts for the actual construction. From fifty to a maximum of one hundred prisoners would be loaned under the supervision of the State Board of Prisons, and for each one thousand dollars worth of work performed by these laborers, the state was to receive the equivalent of ten shares of Elkin & Alleghany stock.

The last months of 1907 were spent making the survey of the forty mile route to Sparta, N. C. As a boy of twelve, Columbus Bray served as a chain boy on the surveying team. The purpose of the line was to connect with the Norfolk and Western line at Jefferson, N. C., sixty miles away, or somewhere along the N & W's route. The idea was to have a shorter, direct line into the rich coal fields of West Virginia and tap the heavily timbered lands of sparsely settled northwestern North Carolina.

By the spring of 1908, enough stock had been subscribed to to provide collateral to obtain a mortgage which would be used to begin construction. The first group of convicts arrived by train from the state prison soon after.



1908- Convicts at work- breaktime in the afternoon. The location is close to where the Elkin Public Library now stands on Front Street. The road in the background is old Virginia Road going up Cotton Mill Hill. The water tank is for the E & A. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

They came in passenger cars under guard in the traditional striped suits. A small camp enclosed in a fence had been built upon land leased from Hugh Lyons. The location was approximately where the new Elkin water treatment plant now stands.

With sturdy hands, new rails, fresh ties cut locally, and a bright spirit the first phase of construction began. A switch was constructed into the main-line of the Richmond & Danville Railroad. While one crew worked ahead making the permanent grade, another crew commenced to lay rails. But for the rails to leave the vicinity of downtown Elkin, a large hill had to be blasted through. The town of Elkin lies against a low ridge which runs parallel to the Yadkin River. Up until that time there was no man-made gap through this ridge. Mother Nature had cut through it with the Elkin Creek, but the E & A was going to match this natural feat with a cut of their own. The task would be expensive, but it had to be done to reach the smooth, rolling foothills before ascending the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 1909 the cut was begun! After the soil was hauled away, a large formation of sandstone was uncovered. This rock would have to be removed by blasting using dynamite and blasting powder. Drilling for the blast holes was accomplished by using a heavy hammer and a three foot drill. The holes were packed with sticks of dynamite and a charge of powder packed in as a blasting cap. The fuses were wired in series and made ready for the blast. Blasting usually began early in the morning. The bell of the Episcopal Church was rung as a signal that there was "fire in the hole," which meant a blast was soon coming. With each blast nearby houses and residents of West Main Street alike were showered with small rocks and dust. Only minor damage usually was done except in one known incident. While the Harris family was sitting down to lunch one summer day, the signal warning came. Immediately after the blast a deafening crash on the back porch was heard. The plaster ceiling in the dining room fell on the family's lunch! The cause of all this was a good size boulder that had been thrown from the blast area. It came across the creek and crashed the back porch roof and promptly flattened a table. Mr. Harris took the rock to the railroad station and weighed it on the freight platform.

Day after day, with weather permitting, the work on the cut continued. A small quarry engine had been obtained for the purpose of moving large quantities of the rubble out of the cut. This work train ran on a lightweight three foot gauge track. When the dirt and rock became too much for the convict crew to remove every day, the train was put to use. After each blast, the train steamed in and the four hopper cars were filled by hand. Then the debris was pulled away to be dumped for the foundation of the permanent track grade.

Citizens of Elkin were continuous spectators of this busy activity, especially the school children. Each day, as they walked to and from school, a regular stop was made to watch the work progress. One six-year-old boy came home after intensely watching the busy convicts at work; to his amused mother he announced, "I want to be a convict when I grow up." The children felt sorry for the convicts and sometimes presented apples and other small gifts of food to them. But some of the boys got a bit mischevious. On a large lot owned by the E & A, adjacent to the creek above the R & D tracks, stood a warehouse and the workshop. Inside, under lock and key, among other things were stored the materials used for blasting. Mysteriously the lock was broken one evening after the day's work was through. A small keg of powder was stolen and carried off to an isolated spot below Elkin on the R & D tracks. The boys poured the

powder between the rails and waited for the evening train to come along; as soon as it was heard coming the powder was set afire. Burning furiously, the engineer didn't miss the fiery flash. With the brakes locked, the "Sunset" as it was called, came to a screeching halt. The poor engineer thought the tracks were on fire!

Day after day, for about a year the work continued on the cut before it was finished. Upon completion, the cut was cleared of the light gauge track and permanent track was laid down. Laying the ties and track down would be slightly easier now since the permanent grade had been finished twelve miles beyond Elkin. At the end of the cut a long graded bed had been made in the shape of a Y. Upon this roadbed, track and switches were laid down to make it possible to turn the train around. The leg of this Y extended into the cut where the Elkin Fire Department now stands.

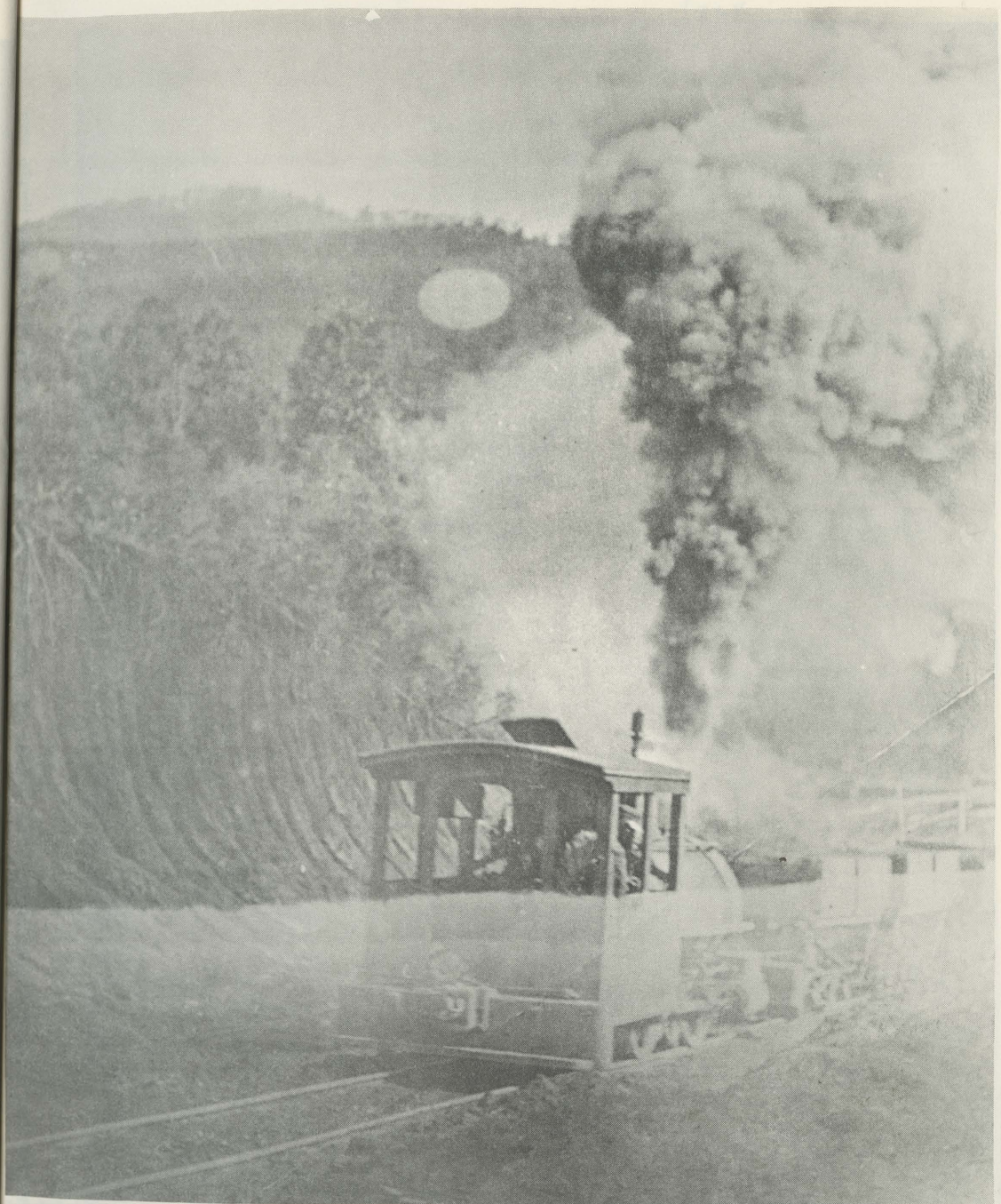
The officers of the company in the year 1911, were H.G. Chatham, president, from Winston, N. C.; Alex Chatham, Jr. of Elkin, N. C., secretary and treasurer; R.A. Doughton of Sparta, N. C., vice president; R.M. Chatham of Elkin, N. C., chairman of the executive committee; and John A. Mills of Raleigh, N. C., general manager. In addition to the officers, the directors were: J.F. Hendren, Jasper Atkinson, A.H. Smith, and Dr. J.W. Ring, all of Elkin, N. C.; J.T. Miles, S.A. Choate, and C.W. Smith of Laurel Branch, N. C.; and G.W. Hinshaw of the "Stone Mountain Railway" venture. Frank P. Alspaugh of Winston, N. C., was proxy for the state. Earlier that year the directors made a contract with John A. Mills and F.J. Lismon of New York City to take over the property, complete construction, equip, and operate.

Tuesday, July 4, 1911, was designated to be the official grand opening day. A reporter for the festivities was on hand from the Winston Journal
4 (forerunner of the Winston-Salem Journal). The title of his account on the front page of Wednesday's edition was: "Elkin Jubilant Over E & A Ry.--- Ten Thousand People Attend the Magnificent Celebration. Many Fine Speeches --- Eloquent Speakers Pay Tribute to the Men Who Have Brought Road to Present Condition". Since the previous Saturday, people from the surrounding area had gathered in Elkin, lured by the promise of a great celebration. This was before the ease of entertainment came in a local theatre or on a TV screen. Every passenger train that came through since the first of July had an extra coach full of eager spectators; and four trains came through regularly each day of the week except Sunday.

July the 4th. dawned sunny and hot. The first item on the agenda was a grand parade up West Main Street in Elkin traveling from east to west. Among the horsedrawn floats was one sponsored by the railway which bore the names of H.G. Chatham, Rufus A. Doughton, A.H. Eller, and J.C. Smoot. On another float stood a gathering of lovely young girls. Among them was Mary Franklin (Mrs. Mary McNeely who resides on West Main Street, Elkin, N. C., at the present time). Then she was a girl of eleven years of age. After the parade, the crowd gathered at the west end of town near the railroad to watch a professor Collins of Charlotte, N. C., ascend in a balloon. After reaching an altitude of

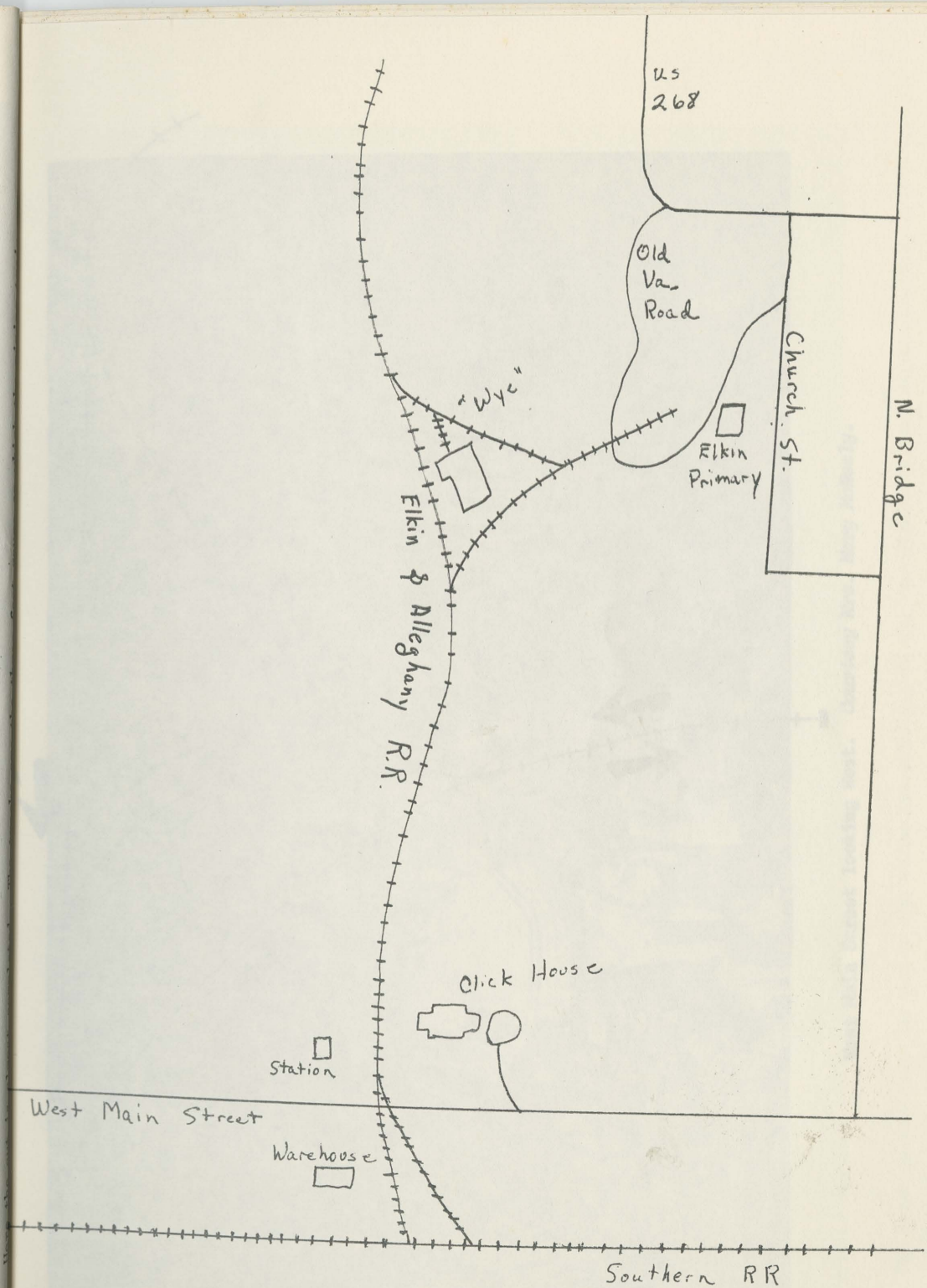


The first Chatham Woolen Mill opposite where the Elkin Water Treatment Plant now stands. The convicts are the grading crew working on the permanent roadbed in 1909. *Courtesy Elkin Public Library.*

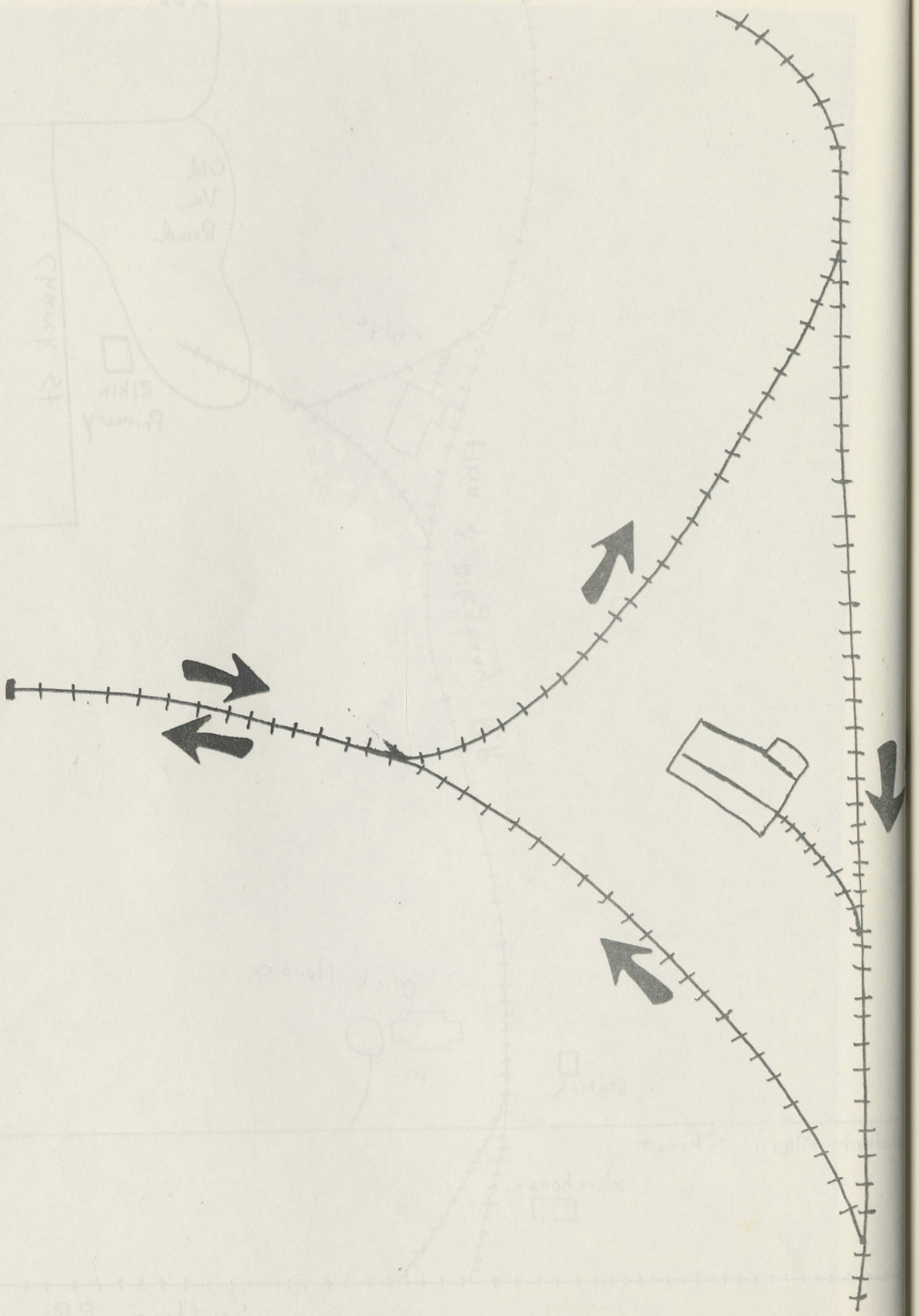


The "Dinky Train" at work close to where the Elkin Water plant now stands. The horizontal marks in the bank were made by the steam shovel. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

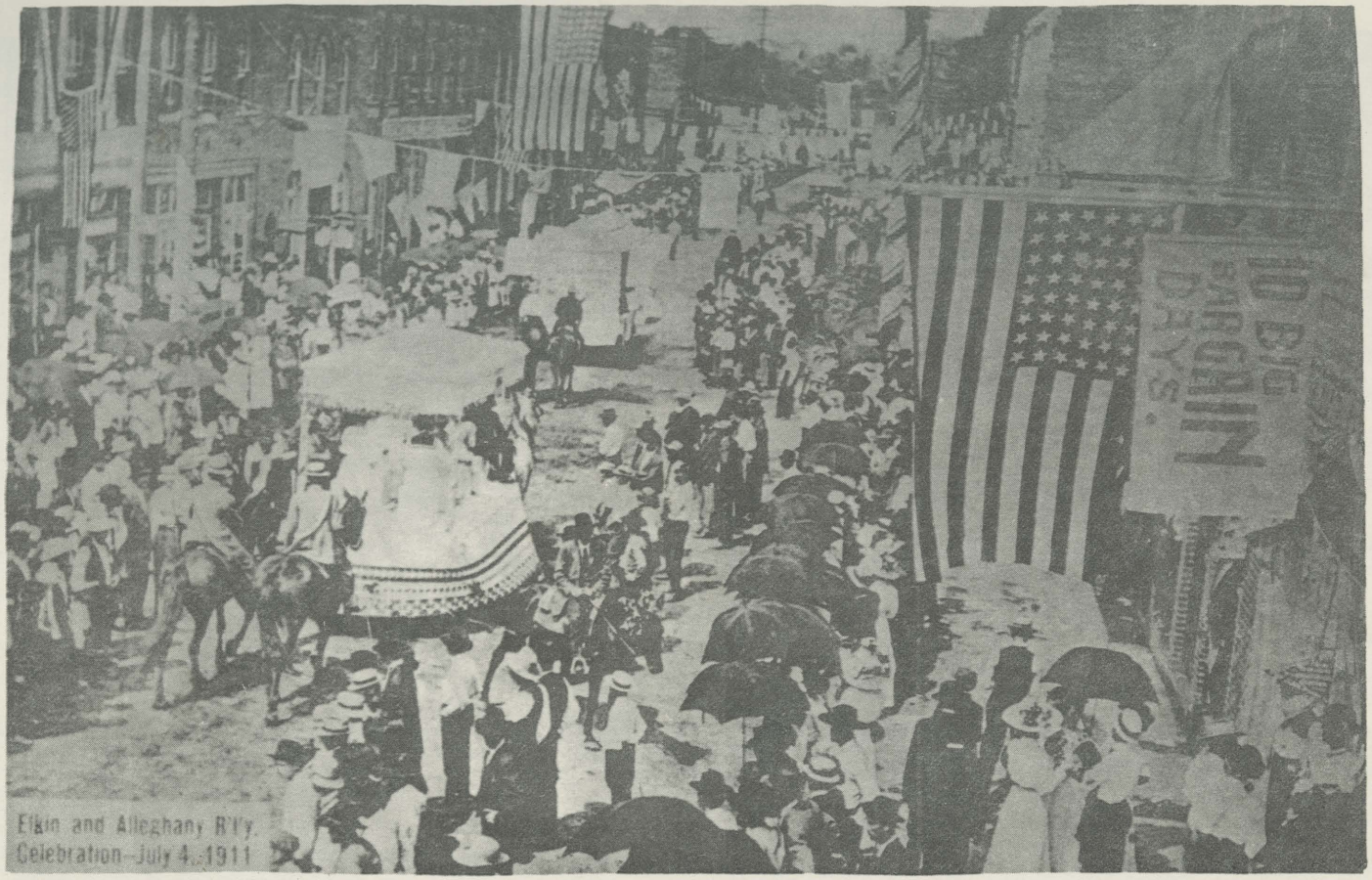




The Elkin & Alleghany's route through Elkin.



The operation of the wye. In the center sat the tool shed which housed the Ford Train, hand car, and most of the company's hand tools. *Courtesy of Mr. Ted Lyon.*



West Main Street looking West. *Courtesy Mrs. Mary McNeely.*



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Mount Airy, N. C.

The first excursion. The man in the straw hat standing on the cowcatcher is Paul Gwyn. *Courtesy Mrs. Pauline Whitaker Moose.*

several thousand feet, he jumped out, and with the aid of a parachute landed on the school house on Cotton Mill Hill above the town! The performance was again repeated in the afternoon.

By noon, lunch was ready; a huge barbecue had been prepared near the schoolhouse by Mr. Henry Ford of Winston, N. C. The fixings for this feast consisted of thirty-five fat sheep, eight calves, sixty boiled hams, and fifteen hundred loaves of bread. Besides the barbecue, many local residents brought their own picnic lunch. One unknown family, like many of their fellow citizens, brought theirs in a large wicker hamper tied on the back of their surry. In it was potato salad, fried chicken, lemonade, and several other goodies. But that family, whoever they were, did not have the chance to enjoy their picnic; a group of prowling boys spied the hamper and sped gleefully off with their find! The petty thieves were never caught, but one or two are well known in this community today!

After the lunch the official speeches and ceremonies began. Among the prominent speakers was J.F. Hendren of Forsyth County, who praised Governor Rufus A. Doughton and Hugh Chatham for their promotion in building the railroad. To show their appreciation, a gold watch was presented to Hugh Chatham by the people who lived along the right-of-way. Mr. Chatham considered the people of the area to be his own as can be read in his response to the gift. He said in part, "I am overwhelmed with gratitude and surprise; I have worked for this project because I love each of you and would rather have your regard than the praise of the whole world without the regard and respect of the people of this community". Another speaker was Colonel W.A. Blair, also of Forsyth, who spoke of the benefits that would come of the railroad for generations to come. He said, "...when two men such as Hugh Chatham and Governor Doughton got behind a movement and made up their minds to accomplish a desired end, nothing could stop them". Governor Doughton, after also receiving a gold watch, said, "...interested in a large increase in the development of northwestern North Carolina----- the country is rich in iron, copper, timber, livestock, vegetables, and especially rich in its industrious, enterprising, and loyal people. This section of country across the mountains has long been chained to Virginia, but now this will end and the trade will be brought to Elkin and the towns of Winston and Salem".

To top the day, the first official run was to be made on the Elkin & Alleghany. Several boxcars were coupled behind the Baldwin Engine and the call "ALL ABOARD" rang out! Everywhere there was a hand hold or a place to stand, an eager passenger was holding on! Slowly the locomotive with its train of cars made its first run on the one mile of track to the site of the first trestle not yet completed over the Elkin Creek. Running in reverse the train made its way back to Elkin as an end to the day's festive celebration. But one little girl in particular was unable to attend the festivities with her father because she had been struck by lightning on the previous Monday and was recovering. Dewitt had been seated along with two other girls beside an open cottage window at Roaring Gap when the summer storm struck. Mr. H. G. Chatham, her father, did not return to Winston from the celebration but went to check on his daughter. Later she did get to ride the train and actually ran the engine one time.

Construction progressed through the fall and early winter. The first trestle had been completed across the creek on its concrete pilings. A second trestle, which was much higher and longer, had been completed across the creek about one mile farther on where the rails were to cross the creek again The railroad proved profitable for local industries such as logging. Hundreds of locally cut crossties were needed upon which to lay the track. Also these two trestles and several smaller ones had to be built of sturdy timbers to last the weathering of several years until they could be replaced with permanent steel. Turning to an easterly path from the first trestle, the railroad crossed the second trestle heading for a gap between two hills in the forested distance. Here the rails crossed where the National Guard Armory now stands.

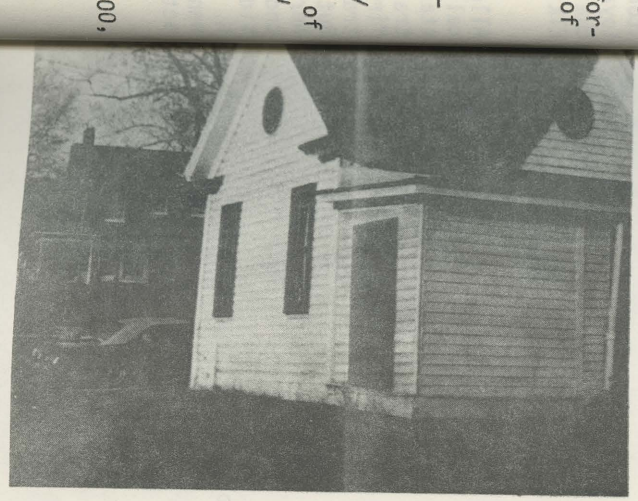
Steadily moving, the convicts laid the track on a gentle curve through the small cuts behind where the North Elkin School now stands. Now, in a northerly direction, the crews pushed the rails across a small trestle which crossed a dirt track which would later be known as Poplar Springs Road. About one-half mile farther, the railroad crossed the dirt track that served as the major road in the area. It was later to be designated by the Highway Department as Route 26- later changed to U.S. 21. Skirting along the boundary of Klondike Farm, the railroad was laid through the community of State Road. Meandering through the rolling hills, the line stopped for a rest. The end of the line at this point in time was designated as Thurmond, named for Mrs. Ralph Hanes' brother. As of December 31, 1911, the total distance of the line from Thurmond to Elkin was twelve miles. Finances were the main reason the line stopped construction for several years. Besides a slump in finances, the next year saw the change of directors and officers. In 1912, John Mills became president, and H.G. Chatham stepped into the position of vice-president because H.E. Fries was no longer with the company as
6 vice-president. A new office was added to the board; that of auditor, which was filled by Mr. F.L. Long of Elkin, N. C. On the board, two members did not return; J.T. Miles and S.M. Choate, but A.H. Eller was a new member. Since the convict labor was temporarily discontinued Mr. Alspaugh was no longer proxy for the state. The general office was established in Elkin in the former offices of the Elkin Woolen Mills at the west end of town on the bank of the Elkin Creek. This small office still stands as the North Carolina License Bureau on West Main Street.

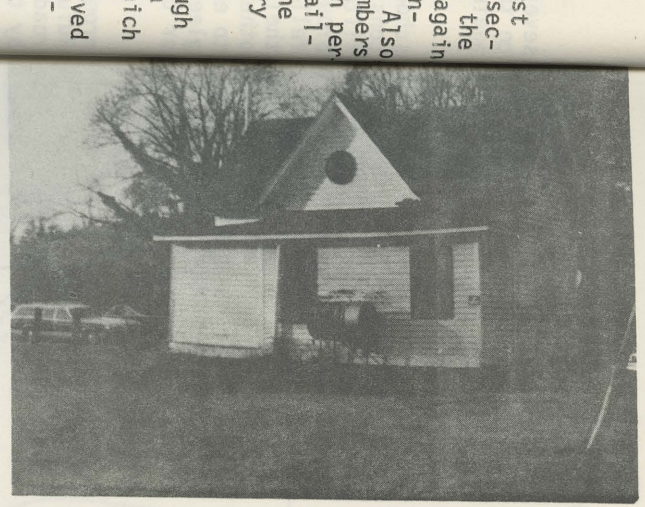
The authorized and outstanding issuance of stock was $150,000.00 with each share valued at $100.00 each. A funded debt of $120,000.00 was established with the maximum limit set at $1,800,000.00. The first mortgage on the property consisted of six per-cent, thirty year $1,000.00 gold coupon bonds which would mature on July 1, 1941. They were subject to call on any interest date at 107½%. The interest from the detachable coupons was payable on January 1st. of each year of the thirty year period at the offices of F.J. Lisman & Co. of New York with the Trustee Bankers Trust Company of New York. But despite the hunt for money to stabilize the company, a fairly healthy business was carried on as usual. In 1913, the authorized capital stock was boosted to $3,000,000.00 with an outstanding debt of $234,200.00. The funded debt had dropped to $73,000.00, and the first issue of mortgage bonds were still open to investors. No change of officers or board members had been made. On May 1st, 1914, to raise more capital, another issue of gold bonds were made. The denomination of these bonds were $100.00, $500.00, and $1,000.00 with a principle of $3,750,000.00. The bonds would be due in thirty years on May 1st, 1944, at the Columbia Knickerbocker Trust Company

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Steadily moving, the convicts laid the track on a gentle curve through the small cuts behind where the North Elkin School now stands. Now, in a northerly direction, the crews pushed the rails across a small trestle which crossed a dirt track which would later be known as Poplar Springs Road. About one-half mile farther, the railroad crossed the dirt track that served as the major road in the area. It was later to be designated by the Highway Department as Route 26- later changed to U.S. 21. Skirting along the boundary of Klondike Farm, the railroad was laid through the community of State Road. Meandering through the rolling hills, the line stopped for a rest. The end of the line at this point in time was designated as Thurmond, named for Mrs. Ralph Hanes' brother. As of December 31, 1911, the total distance of the line from Thurmond to Elkin was twelve miles. Finances were the main reason the line stopped construction for several years. Besides a slump in finances, the next year saw the change of directors and officers. In 1912, John Mills became president, and H.G. Chatham stepped into the position of vice-president because H.E. Fries was no longer with the company as
6 vice-president. A new office was added to the board; that of auditor, which was filled by Mr. F.L. Long of Elkin, N. C. On the board, two members did not return; J.T. Miles and S.M. Choate, but A.H. Eller was a new member. Since the convict labor was temporarily discontinued Mr. Alspaugh was no longer proxy for the state. The general office was established in Elkin in the former offices of the Elkin Woolen Mills at the west end of town on the bank of the Elkin Creek. This small office still stands as the North Carolina License Bureau on West Main Street.

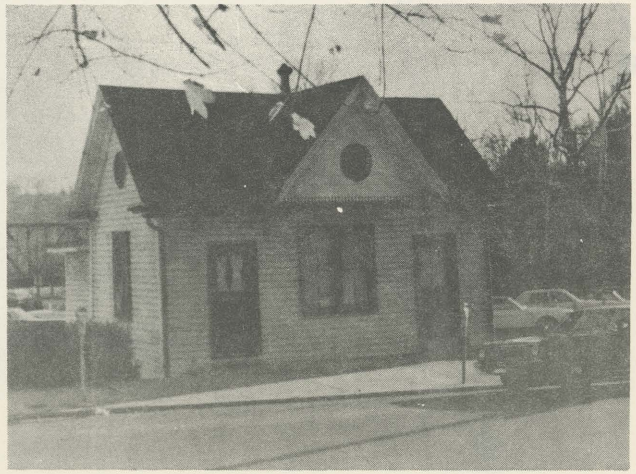
The authorized and outstanding issuance of stock was $150,000.00 with each share valued at $100.00 each. A funded debt of $120,000.00 was established with the maximum limit set at $1,800,000.00. The first mortgage on the property consisted of six per-cent, thirty year $1,000.00 gold coupon bonds which would mature on July 1, 1941. They were subject to call on any interest date at 107½%. The interest from the detachable coupons was payable on January 1st. of each year of the thirty year period at the offices of F.J. Lisman & Co. of New York with the Trustee Bankers Trust Company of New York. But despite the hunt for money to stabilize the company, a fairly healthy business was carried on as usual. In 1913, the authorized capital stock was boosted to $3,000,000.00 with an outstanding debt of $234,200.00. The funded debt had dropped to $73,000.00, and the first issue of mortgage bonds were still open to investors. No change of officers or board members had been made. On May 1st, 1914, to raise more capital, another issue of gold bonds were made. The denomination of these bonds were $100.00, $500.00, and $1,000.00 with a principle of $3,750,000.00. The bonds would be due in thirty years on May 1st, 1944, at the Columbia Knickerbocker Trust Company

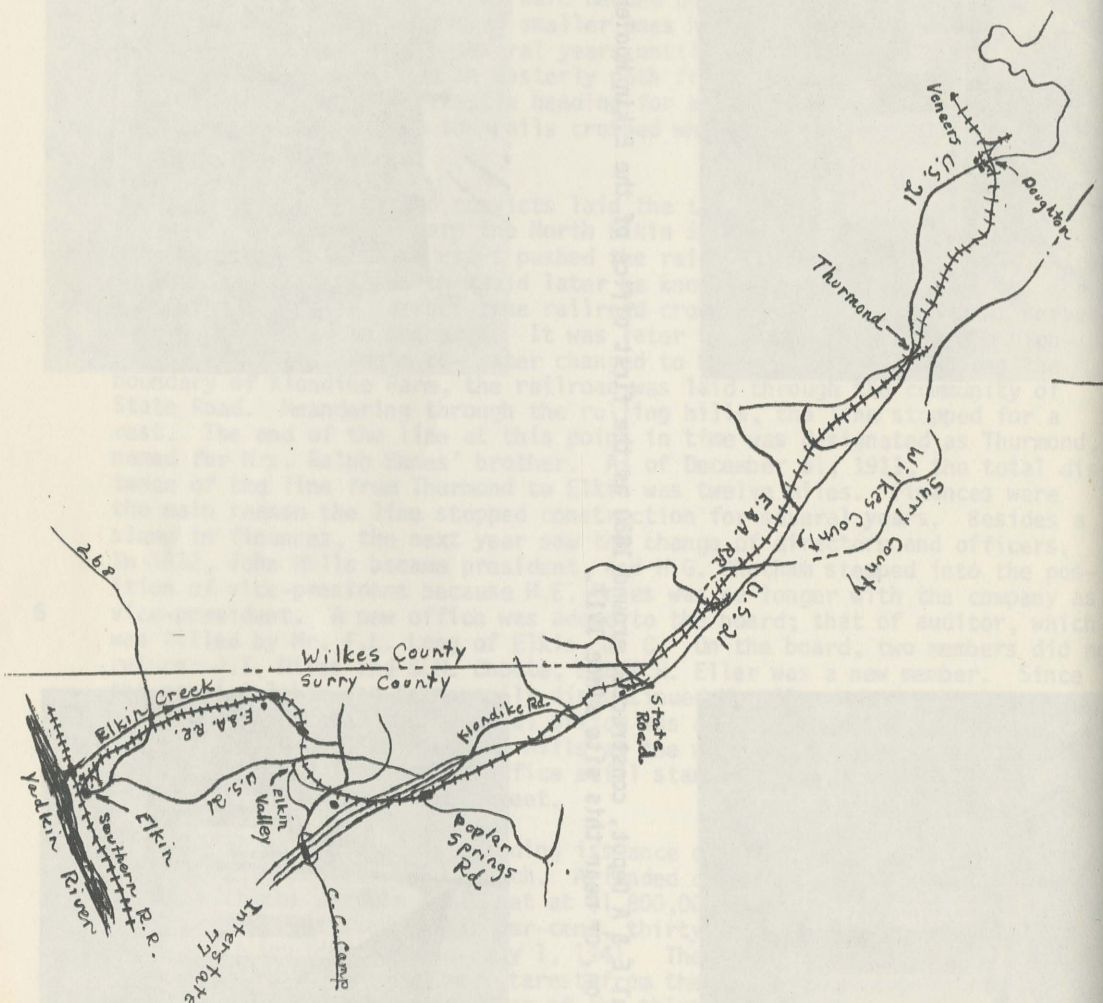




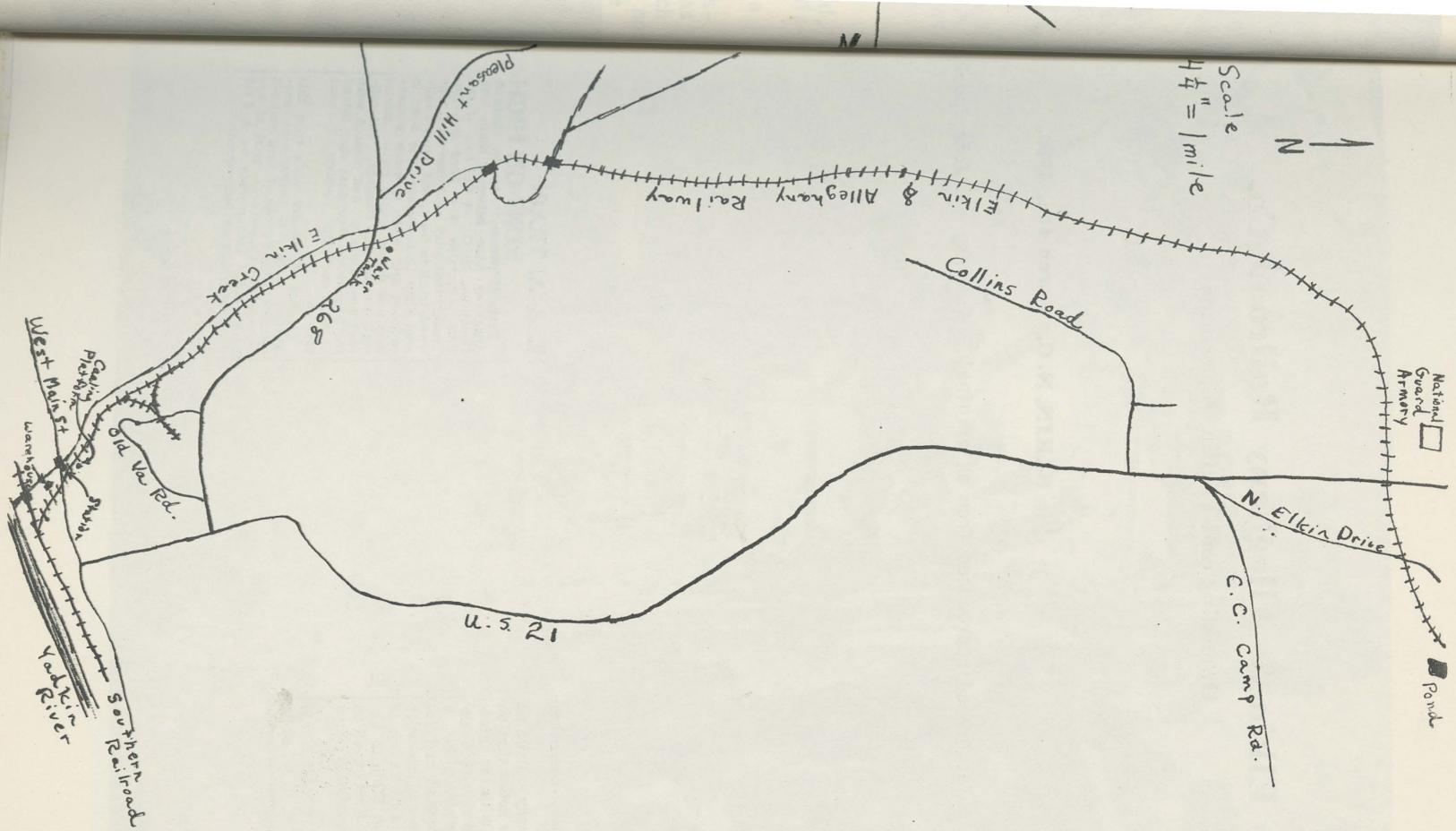
The original E & A Depot, constructed around 1880 as the first office of the Elkin Woolen Mill. It has sat on, or near this site since 1917.







The Elkin & Alleghany's entire route from Elkin to Veneer



The Elkin & Alleghany's route through the Elkin Creek valley.

Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Co.

Operating and Traffic Department

J. P. IPOCK,
GENERAL MANAGER

ELKIN, N. C. March 4th, 1930.

FILE A-

The company's letterhead reproduced from an original. *Courtesy Mr. John Ipock*

NOTICE

Elkin and Alleghany Railroad Company hereby gives notice that on June 30, 1931, it filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission at Washington, D. C., its application for a certificate that the present and future public conveyance and necessity permit the abandonment of its line of railroad extending from Elkin to Veneer, approximately 15.2 miles, all in Surry and Wilkes Counties, North Carolina.

ELKIN & ALLEGHANY RAILROAD COMPANY. 7-23-3t

E. & A. TRAIN RUNS ON HIGH

Train "Number 1" on the Elkin & Allegheny Line between Elkin and Doughton, N. C., at the foot of the Blue Mountains is a Ford One-Ton Truck fitted with an improvised four wheel truck in front, and flanged railroad rims in, the rear. The body is enclosed and seats nineteen passengers and driver, and a trailer carries mail, express and baggage. The railroad people are so well pleased with the improvised train that they intend putting on train number 2 next spring.

On one of number one's trips this winter, it carried twenty-nine passengers, 1,187 pounds of mail and 940 pounds of express or a total of approximately 6,165 pounds up a 2 1-2 per cent grade on high speed.



1917 - Here the convicts are at work on the three-mile extension. Foreman Garr Harris is in the background. *Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Garr Harris.*



This picture was taken from the bridge in the preceding picture. The dirt will be used for making fills somewhere in the foothills near the end of the line beyond Doughton. *Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Garr Harris.*

of New York. Until then, the bearer of the interest coupons would receive six per-cent interest on May 1st. and November 1st. of each year for the next thirty years. In 1914, the contract that was made with Messrs. Mills and F. J. Lisman & Co. was acquired by I.M. Taylor & Co. of Boston, Massachusetts. But due to continued financial difficulties, the E & A was thrown into receivership on December 13, 1915, by the Superior Court of Forsyth County. Comus B. Penny of Buffalo, New York, and Melville W. Thompson were appointed receivers to take charge of the company. Receivership certificates were issued to the total amount of $41,000.00 for the purpose of continuing construction and meeting small deficits. Enough money was raised to extend the line an additional three miles into the community of Doughton through 1916-1917. At Doughton another Y was constructed. Even under these extreme financial difficulties business went on as usual.

Each morning that a run was to be made engineer Cyrus McCoin and fireman John Brendle were up early to mount Engine #100 to get up steam. The train was ready to roll around 7:30 a.m. Usually the train consisted of the locomotive, several boxcars, one or two flatbed cars, and maybe a combination coach if it was needed (a combination coach is one-half passenger space and one-half baggage) With two long blasts of the whistle the train was ready to roll! Out of Elkin it moved on its short run into the foothills. First stop would be in the State Road community. The small store there received its supplies by rail delivery when the train made its stop. Immediate population of the community was around fifty. Next stop was at the store in Thurmond to deliver its goods and take on board any farm goods to be transported to market. Last store stop on the line was the store in Doughton owned by Foley Norman and Joe Bivins. This store was located in part of a long low shed beside the track. Mr. and Mrs. Norman resided in the back of the store. After the store's supplies were unloaded, tan bark that had been stored under the shed was piled in the boxcars. Tan bark was and is used in the process of tanning hides into leather. Collection of tan bark provided income for several local residents. They were guaranteed a fairly steady market. The tan bark was either sold to the Elkin Tannery or sold to C.C. Smoot & Son, buyers for their tannery in Wilkesboro, N. C.

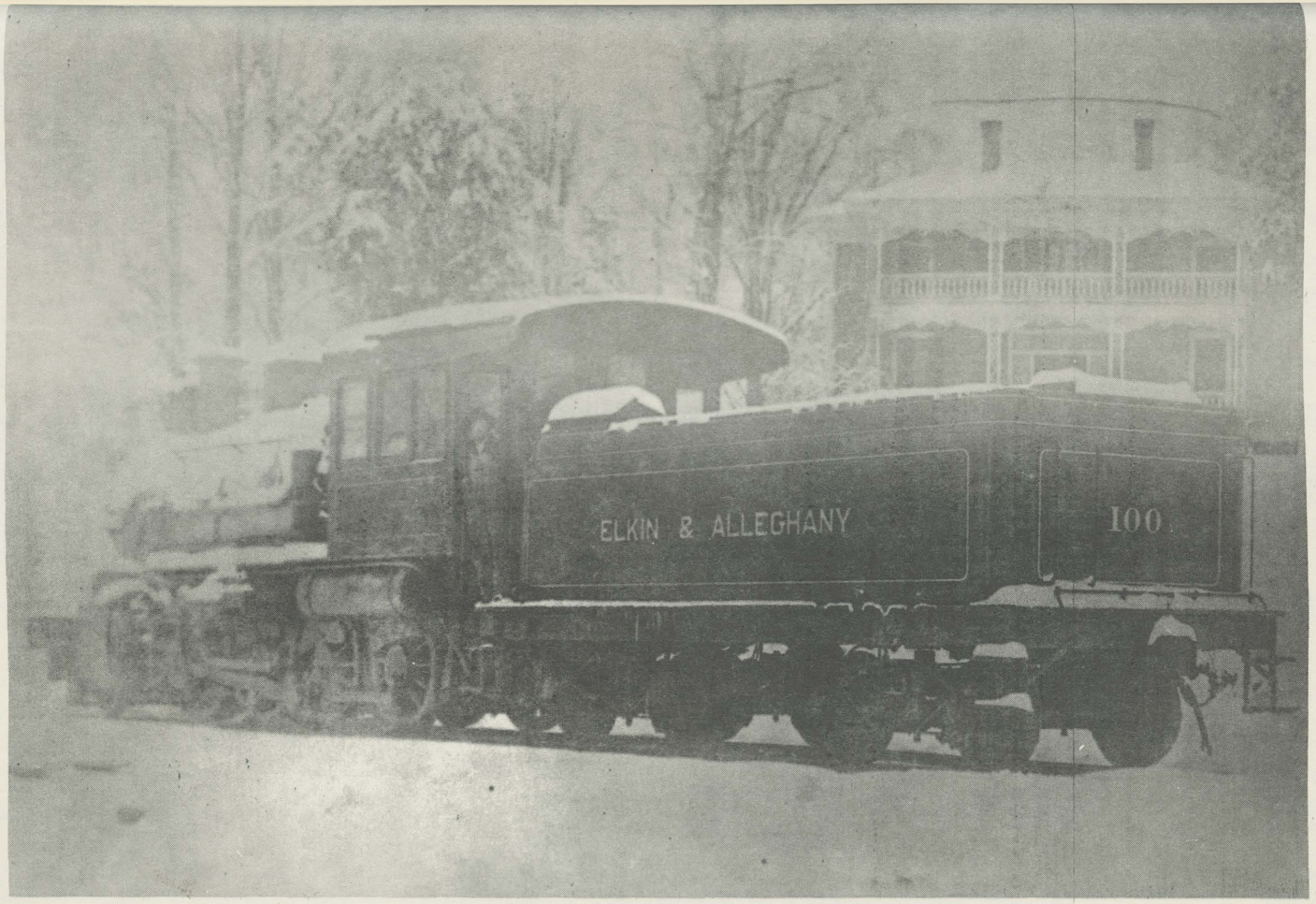
The end of the line had been named Veneer because there, cut logs were left to be loaded onto flatcars. The logs would be turned into veneer at the Elkin Veneer Co. The logs were skidded down the mountainside to Veneer with the aid of either oxen or mules. There, several flatcars were usually left to be loaded with the logs and to be picked up on the next run. On days when the locomotive wasn't going to run, the loaded flatcars were coasted all the way to Elkin. A brakeman was aboard with a short stout stick stuck in the brake wheel of one of the cars. He used this as a lever to tighten up or loosen the mechanical brakes. This way, the two or three flatcars could be kept from becoming runaways. But once there was an actual runaway. At the end of the line one day were two empty flatcars with the brakes supposedly tightly set. Foreman Garr Harris was standing on one end; before he could jump off, the brakes failed and the cars began to roll swiftly down the line. Mr. Harris did not have a brake lever, and it took too long to wind the brakes up for them to become set, especially if the cars were going fast. Just before the cars jumped the track, Mr. Harris took a flying leap and safely landed with little injury. Meanwhile, one car was broken in twain after it jumped the tracks and crashed into the mountainside, and the second one was stuck part way into the hillside.

Garr Harris.

Small accidents were few and far between. Out behind where North Elkin School now stands a small pond had been constructed for the purpose of providing water for the locomotive. While in motion one day, the engine jack that was secured to the cowcatcher came loose and rolled off into the pond! A track crew was sent with Foreman Harris to retrieve the lost jack, if possible. The jack had rolled into ten feet of water and looked impossible to salvage. This kind of situation provided a fertile spot for some wagering to be proposed. Among the crew, a dollar bet was made that the jack could not be retrieved by any one of them and also could not be carried back to Elkin without stopping for a rest. But one took the wager; Mr. Harris! Diving in, he managed to tie a rope around the jack and headed for shore. The crew pulled the jack out of the water and prepared to send Mr. Harris on his way with his burden. With the hundred odd pound jack on his shoulders and a crew member along to make sure he didn't cheat, he started his long walk of three miles back to town. Believe it or not, he won the dollar, but not without two very sore shoulders!

The company somehow remained solvent under the management of the receivers. Mr. Penny, along with his wife and maid had moved into the Richard Gwyn house after extensive internal alterations. The Pennys' were high society compared to the rough edges of the growing town. They had their own French maid who spoke very little English. Mrs. Penny became the talk of the town, especially in the proper ladies circles. In those days ladies who succumbed to the practice of putting on makeup and such were looked down upon. Mrs. Penny was considered a "painted lady." It has been said that she was a sight to behold walking down the street in a fancy dress and all painted up. To permanently put her down the social ladder of the community, Mrs. Penny's language was far from that becoming a lady of the south. She didn't curse as far as anyone knew, but she did use such words as hell, damn, and such. Meanwhile her husband and his associates were having more serious problems of their own.

In July of 1916, a large flood hit Elkin and surrounding area. Water from the flooded Yadkin River rose up to the eaves of the Southern Railroad depot. In the E & A office the water rose to the roof and destroyed all the company records. After the water receded, the E & A's depot was moved to its present location. Beyond slight water damage, no serious damage was done to the trestles or tracks. Beyond the damp effect of the elements the road continued to have financial problems. The United States had entered World War I in 1917. To speed and make more efficient the movement of war supplies, the department of the U.S. Railroad Administration was organized. The E & A was under this department's control until the war's end in 1918. At the war's end, pursuant to the USRA's policy, the E & A could apply for continued government control and also financial aid. The receivers made plans to pursue this desired means, if possible. Meanwhile the property was ordered sold at auction by the Forsyth Superior Court in early 1918. A notice of the sale was put in several local newspapers including the Elkin Tribune on the first day of February, 1918.



The motive power of the E & A. The engine is a 2-8-0, probably built at Rogers Locomotive Works, Philadelphia. The engineer standing in the way is Cyrus McCoin. The location is West Main Street crossing, March 11, 1912. A light snow fell during the night. In the background is the Richard Gwyn home (built 1855). *Courtesy Mrs. Pauline Whitaker Moose.*



1916 Flood. The bridge carries West Main Street across the creek. At the right is the end of the coach and the wall of the depot in its old location can be seen beyond the coach. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*



The Flood of 1916. The house on the left is the old Ratledge house. You can see by the water mark that the flood is receding. The shed on the right is the workshop and the other one is the tool shed which still stands. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

1916



HARLOTTE OBSERVER. S

ELKIN HARD HIT
BY THE CLOUDBURST

Special to The Observer.

Elkin, July 22.—As a result of the cloudburst the town of Elkin had no communication with the outside world since last Saturday till Friday. The damage and loss of property is great the estimate reaching over $200,000 in this town of 2,000 people. There are numbers here who lost everything they had and have no means of resuming their business. Fortunately no lives were lost, but several were rescued, among them a colored woman and five little children, who were living in an old chair factory formerly owned by the Baily Manufacturing Company. They were entirely surrounded by water. The cries for help were pitiful. Bern Franklin swam in the building (risking his life) with a rope which he secured to the building while men on the railroad worked the rope, bringing the larger ones as the mother dropped them down from upstairs. Albert Bivins and Ray Brandon also swam in. With one on his back and the two-months-old baby tucked under his arm he swam with one hand to the railroad and was exhausted. In 10 minutes the building moved off and collapsed.

The Yadkin River was the highest known in history, being 50 feet above normal. A wall of water 10 feet high was seen coming down the river about 7 o'clock p. m. as a result of a cloudburst on both the Yadkin and its tributary, Roaring River. Water rose three feet in three minutes.

The homes of J. S. Bell and Martin Simmons, who lived on Front street are complete wrecks and the Elkin Machine Company, owned by Mrs. Claude Greenwood, which manufactures half the telegraph and telephone insulator pins and brackets used in United States, the big tobacco warehouse, J. E. Bowles' Livery Company buggy and harness shops were wiped away. A new $10,000 steel bridge over the Yadkin River was struck by box cars and a coach off Watauga Railroad and was swept away. The Chatham Manufacturing Company, the biggest wool blanket factory in the South is completely submerged. It is doubtful if it resumes work at this place any more. Most of their employes were women and live in Jonesville across the river. Many were separated, by high water, from their husbands. This town is wholly dependent on the mills here for support. Just how soon the trains will be in operation is nothing more than guess work. Fortunately a passenger train was tied up here and can begin work below us. In a few more days sugar, flour and many more things the supply is going to be exhausted.

Miss Mary McNeely

CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

ELKIN HARD HIT
BY THE CLOUDBURST

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Special to The Observer

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"NOTICE OF SALE OF THE PROPERTIES AND FRANCHISES OF THE E & A RAILWAY CO."

Pursuant to two certain decrees of the Superior Court of Forsyth County, N.C., in the case of Brown-Rogers Co. and others is E & A Railway Co. and others, then the undersigned Comus B. Penny and Melville W. Thompson, Commissioners named in said decrees, will on the 5th day of April, 1918, at the depot of the said E & A Railway Co. at Elkin, N.C., at 1:00 o'clock p. m. offer for sale and sell to the highest bidders the following property and rights of the E & A Railway to wit: All and singular the railroad as well that part now in operation as the extension of the roadbed beyond said point, assets, properties, rights, franchises, and privileges of the E & A Railway Co. under Chapter 159 of the Law of 1907 of the State of N.C. And also all of the right-of-way, rails, bridges, piers, fences, tracks, side tracks, depots, grounds, stations, station houses, freight houses, warehouses, machine shops, work shops, building structures, fixtures of improvement of any kind and nature whatsoever and all other real estate now owned by the E & A Railway Co., including that immediately connected with the roadbed and that which may be disconnected with said roadbed particularly that located at Elkin; also all locomotives, tender cars and other rolling stock or equipment and all rails, machinery, tools, implements, fuel materials, and supplies of every kind whatsoever for construction, equipping, operating, repairing, or replacing the said railroad of any part thereof also all rights, franchises, privileges, immunities, including the franchise to be a Corporation and operate the Railroad, all other property real, personal land mixed of every kind and whatsoever now owned by the E & A Railway Co.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE: That part of the roadbed and its appurtenances beyond the present terminus of operation which is 16 miles from Elkin, N.C., being that point which has been and is being graded will be first sold separate and apart from the remainder of the property and then all the residue of the assets and properties and rights, privileges, and franchises will next be sold. This sale is for cash subject to confirmation by the Court and the purchaser will be required to deposit with the undersigned ten percent of the amount of the bid and the remainder to be paid upon confirmation. In the event however the successful bid is in excess of twelve thousand five hundred dollars or then such excess may be paid by an equal amount of Receivers Certificates and in the event the bid is in excess of fifty thousand, the excess over fifty thousand may be paid with an equal amount of the bonds secured by the mortgage to the Bankers Trust Co. as Trustee. This 1st day of February, 1918, Comus B. Penny, Melville W. Thompson, Commissioners.

But this sale date was postponed several times probably because the receivers were still working toward continued federal control. The following is one of the numerous announcements of the postponement of the sale:

"NOTICE OF THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE SALE OF THE E & A RAILWAY COMPANY."

For reasons considered sufficient the sale of the properties, rights, franchises, privileges, roadbed, rails, etc., including all real and personal property of the E & A heretofore, advertised to be had on April 5, 1918, at the Depot of said Railway Co. in the town of Elkin, N. C., has been postponed until May 7, 1918, when the same will be made at the Depot of the said E & A Railway Co. in the town of Elkin, N. C., at 1:00 p.m. on the same terms and conditions as set forth in the Notice of Sale, heretofore, advertised and dated February 18, 1918,--- Comus B. Penny, Melville W. Thompson- Commissioners.

On June 29, 1918, a letter was sent to Mr. C.B. Penny from the Railroad Administration office in Washington notifying him that the E & A Railway Co. was released from federal control in accordance with the "recommendation of the regional director." The letter ended with the statement, "If you feel that hardship may result from relinquishment and desire to make a contract on fair terms, right is reserved to consider the advisability of making such a contract." Since possibly Mr. Penny was pressed to keep both positions of manager and receiver, a new manager was hired. So in August a Mr. Joseph S. Correll from Greensboro arrived to become General Manager. After assessing the duties of his new job and consulting with the receivers, he issued this statement: "Even though work on the E & A stopped because of shortage of labor and war conditions, I believe it will be completed into Virginia opening up one of the best sections of the south." He would stay on until 1925.

Soon after his arrival, formal application was made before John Baxton Payne, General Counsel of the Division of Law in Washington. The application was made in the form of a verbal plea from a group of prominent Tarheel citizens led by Senator Funifold McLendel Simmons, Democrat. Together with his secretary, Frank A. Hampton, Senator Simmons had pushed virorously hard for the continuance of federal control. At the time of application, the State of North Carolina owned forty-five percent of the capital stock, and of the bonds that were issued there were $132,000.00 outstanding with the state government owning $52,000.00. The residue of these bonds were subscribed to by private individuals. The gross revenue of the E & A per month averaged $1,500.00. Operating expenses for the road per month was about $1,400.00 including $300.00 to $400.00 going for maintenance. All this information was presented in the request from the company which asked the government to take over the road and build an eight mile extension to the top of the mountain. This line, if constructed, would reach thirty thousand acres of shipbuilding timber, tan bark, etc. With the addition of spurs the eight miles could be graded for $100,000.00, and with ties and rails added the total bill would be approximately $200,000.00.



* Mrs. Ohna Bivins and Charlie Castevens on the end of the combination coach, around 1919. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

**Ohna Poindexter in her early 20's.*

On September 6th. another application arrived in Washington from receiver Penny. This new application asked for two things: a loan of $200,000.00 for ten years at five percent interest to make the eight mile extension, and a loan of $50,000.00 on the same terms for the purpose of "reorganization and the discharge of receivers' obligations." A letter dispatched on December 20th. to Mr. R.A. Doughton of Sparta and Mr. J.F. Hendren of Elkin brought good news. Instruction of the letter was simple; a court decree from the Superior Court would have to be granted authorizing the receivers to enter into contract with the government. Also, the directors and stockholders had to meet and agree with one another on the terms of the contract. Three copies of these proceedings had to be sent to the Railroad Administration along with two copies of the contract data questionnaires, certified copies of the court petition, and decrees. The letter ended with the following statement: "...traffic matters will be investigated by the Division of Traffic and upon receipt of satisfactory report on these matters, if the papers submitted by you are at hand and satisfactory as to form, the contracts will be forwarded to the Director General for signature." For some reason the Railroad Administration never received the contracts, petitions, and decrees. Possibly the receivers and stockholders could not agree to contract for such a large debt. Obviously plans had been made to finally dispose of the property in 1919. On October 7th. the entire railroad was sold to a partner, one of a group of five prominent area men. The receivers, C.B. Penny and M.W. Thompson auctioned the railroad off to Dr. J.W. Ring for $56,000.00. His partners were H.G. Chatham, C.C. Smoot, G.T. Roth, and Rufus Doughton. After the sale the partners became the sole stockholders of the company. One of the partners said on the way home with his armful of shares, "These things aren't worth the paper they're printed on."

On February 20, 1920, the purchasers reorganized and incorporated a new company, the Elkin and Alleghany Railroad Company. Authorized capitalization was $1,000,000.00. Mixed with this good news was bad news about several industries vital to the business of the E & A. The Elkin Veneer Co. had gone out of business that same year. The year before, the train was returning to town after a run and the coach caught on fire and burned to the chassis!

To replace the coach the new owners hired Gaither Billings to build a gasoline driven coach. He was given the repair shop as a place to work. With a one ton Ford truck chassis, the front wheels were replaced with a home-made truck using four handcar wheels. The two rear wheels were replaced with wheels from the front pony truck of a regular locomotive. A body was built and placed on the frame. The number of this "gasoline locomotive" was #1. After it was completed there was a slight problem to overcome; the coach was bigger than the doorway of the shop! To get it out the whole end of the shop was torn out. A four wheel trailer was built to carry large freight. This little train can be considered the first truly gasoline powered locomotive in the U.S. rail history. The capacity of the new coach was twenty-four people with room for mail and small express. The cost of running the train as to daily upkeep of the locomotive was a big saving to the company. It cost about $2.50 to buy the gas for each run at fifteen cents a gallon compared to seventy-five dollars for coal for the locomotive. The large locomotive was semi-retired to a siding to be used for excursions and large freight. The Ford Motor Company published a company magazine called "The Ford Man". News of the new train reached the editor and a small item was published in an issue of this magazine.

The new gas train came to be known as "Noah's Ark". "Uncle" Noah Ford, a respected black citizen, had been fireman for the company for several years. He was put in charge of riding and conducting the new service of the gas train. Since Mr. Ford's first name was Noah, the local people came to call the gas train the name suggested by the Biblical story, but Mrs. Penny had a name of her own invention, the "Go Devil", the reason for this name is unknown. Fare for the entire life of the road had always been fifty cents!

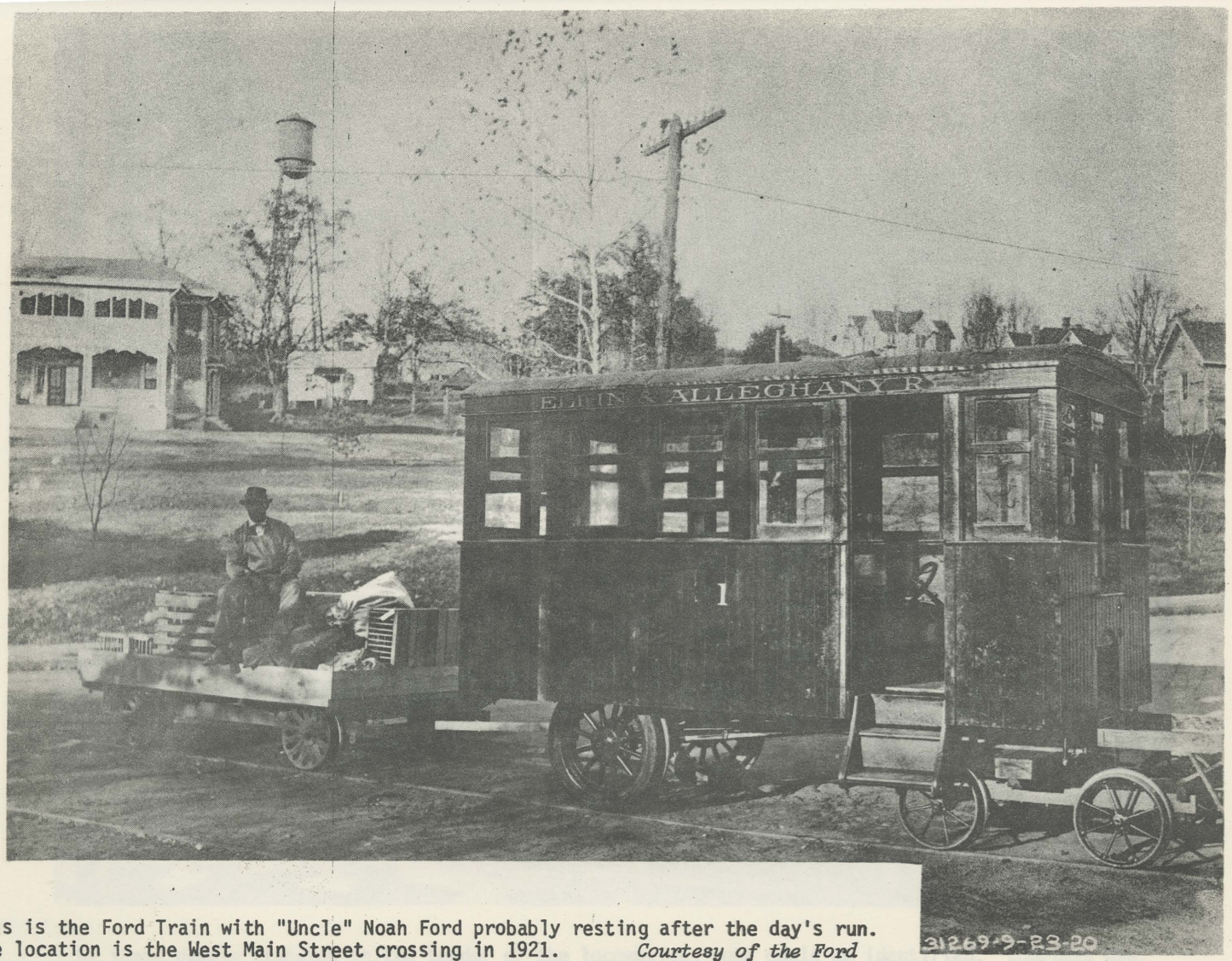
Moonlight picnics were a favorite for the young and old couples alike in warm weather. Engineer Irey Blackburn, who took the job after McCoin, would fire up the locomotive with the help of Mr. Ford for these excursions. Two or more flatcars were coupled to the front of the engine and fitted with simple benches, and late in the evening, as it turned cool, couples would arrive, pay their fares, and step aboard. Conductor Paul Gwyn cried "all aboard", and everybody was ready to go. Along at a leisurely, slow pace, sometimes the excursion would make a stop at Hugh Chatham's farm, Klondike; and after a light picnic supper the train steamed home around eight or nine o'clock. Conductor Gwyn always provided entertainment; he always had several good jokes or a popular song. A very popular song of that day was "Sailing Along On Moonlight Bay". Paul Gwyn had his own favorite version of this song called "Snailing Along On The E & A"!

Church socials were much more common then. One or more churches would reserve the train for a Saturday afternoon and travel to a stop below Doughton.

From there it was but a short walk to Jonce Gentry's shady orchard to lunch and play games. Another favorite trip was to ride to the end of the line and from there walk up the old wagon road up the mountain side to Roaring Gap. From there a buggy was hired for the ride into Sparta to visit relatives or friends. Another pleasure was to spend the night in Roaring Gap at the Roaring Gap Hotel! Besides pleasure trips, the railroad provided an excellent walking path; during the season, children with empty pails would go to pick blackberries along the right-of-way. Two or three friends would ride the train to a spot where the berries were thick, and get off there. After picking their pails full, they waved the train, or the "Ark", down on its return trip. Many a quart of berries were sold to the Elkin Canning Co. from this enterprise for pocket money.

Now some boys were using their imagination for another enterprise, hitchhiking. Whenever the regular locomotive was used a boxcar or two usually made up the rest of the train. When the engineer or conductor wasn't looking, the gang sneaked aboard a boxcar for a free ride! The nuisance of finding six boys in boxcar number two ten miles from home was abated for a while with a lock and chain on each door. But somebody discovered old hacksaw blades were handy in cutting the chains. Comparing the cost of replacing cut chains with the loss of popularity among the town children, the company went back to the practice of unlocked doors.

When school was out or a lazy Sunday afternoon came around, the handcar was pressed into use. The handcar was stored in an unlocked shed in the center of the Y above Elkin. Four or five kids would roll the car out and position it on the track. Taking turns at pumping, the kids could easily move the car up the gentle grade. Sometimes the car wasn't put back where it was stored! On many occasions the engineer or foreman would suddenly find the car abandoned four or five miles up the line.



This is the Ford Train with "Uncle" Noah Ford probably resting after the day's run. The location is the West Main Street crossing in 1921. *Courtesy of the Ford Archives and the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn , Michigan.*



Of these people standing in the tender of the locomotive, none could be identified. *Courtesy Mrs. Ohna Bivins.*

NORTH CAROLINA,

SURRY COUNTY.

THIS DEED, made this the 5th day of February 1920, by and between J. W. Ring and wife Mollie V. Ring of Elkin, Surry County, North Carolina, of the first part, and The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company, a Corporation organized under the laws of North Carolina, with its principal office at Elkin, North Carolina, Witnesseth:

That for and in consideration of the sum of Fifty-Six Thousand ($56,000.00) Dollars and other considerations paid the parties of the first part by the party of the second part the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, the parties of the first part have bargained and sold and by these presents do hereby bargain, sell, convey, transfer and assign to the said party of the second part and its successors and assigns, all that certain real estate, property, rights, privileges and franchises as follows, to-wit:

All and singular the railroad of the said Elkin & Alleghany Railway Company in the State of North Carolina extending from Elkin, in Surry County, North Carolina through Doughton, in Wilkes County, North Carolina, to a point about two miles North of Doughton in said County, upon which rail is laid, and from that point some two or more miles into the County of Surry, said last named point being the end of the construction work upon which there is laid no rails; and all real estate now owned or acquired for the purpose of said railroad, including all station, depot or other grounds held and used in connection therewith; and all rails, railway tracks, sidings, switches, bridges, fences, turntables, watertanks, viaducts, culverts, super-structures, passenger and other depots, station and freight-houses, buildings, fixtures, rolling-stock, equipment, machinery, tools and implements whatsoever now owned or acquired for the purpose of business, of the said Elkin & Alleghany Railway Company, in connection with said railroad; and all fuel, material and supplies of every kind used in or about or connection with said railroad; and all franchises, rights, privileges, easements, incomes, earnings and profits of the said Elkin & Alleghany Railway Company connected with, issuing from, or relating to the said above described railroad, including the rights and privileges granted to the Elkin & Alleghany Railway Company under Chapter 159 of the Private Laws of 1907 of the State of North Carolina.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD unto The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company its successors and assigns forever, all the right, title and interest of the parties of the first part, in and to the property, franchises, etc. heretofore described.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The said J. W. Ring and wife Mollie V. Ring have hereunto set their hands and seals, the day and year first above written.

J. W. Ring (SEAL)

Mollie V. Ring (SEAL)

NORTH CAROLINA,
SURRY COUNTY.

I, Robey M. Bates, Notary Public, do hereby certify that J.W. Ring and wife Mollie V. Ring, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the annexed Deed of Conveyance; and the said Mollie V. Ring being by me privately examined, separate and apart from her said husband, touching her voluntarily execution of the same, doth state that she signed the same freely and voluntarily, without fear or compulsion of her said husband, or any other person, and that she doth still voluntarily assent thereto.

Witness my hand and official seal, this the 6th day of February 1920.

Robey M. Bates
Notary Public.

State of North Carolina
Surry County

The foregoing certificate of Robey M Bates a Notary Public in and for the county of Surry is adjudged to be in due form and according to law. Let the foregoing instrument with these certificates be registered.

this 17 day of Oct 1927

Fred L. Lewis
Clerk of the Superior Court

ash



The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company

AUTHORIZED CAPITAL $1,000,000.00

This certifies that Chatham Manufacturing Co. is the owner of Fifty shares of **ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS** of the Common Capital Stock of

The Elkin & Alleghany Railroad Company

Fully Paid and Non-Assessable, transferable only on the books of the Corporation by the holder hereof in person or by attorney upon surrender of this certificate properly endorsed.

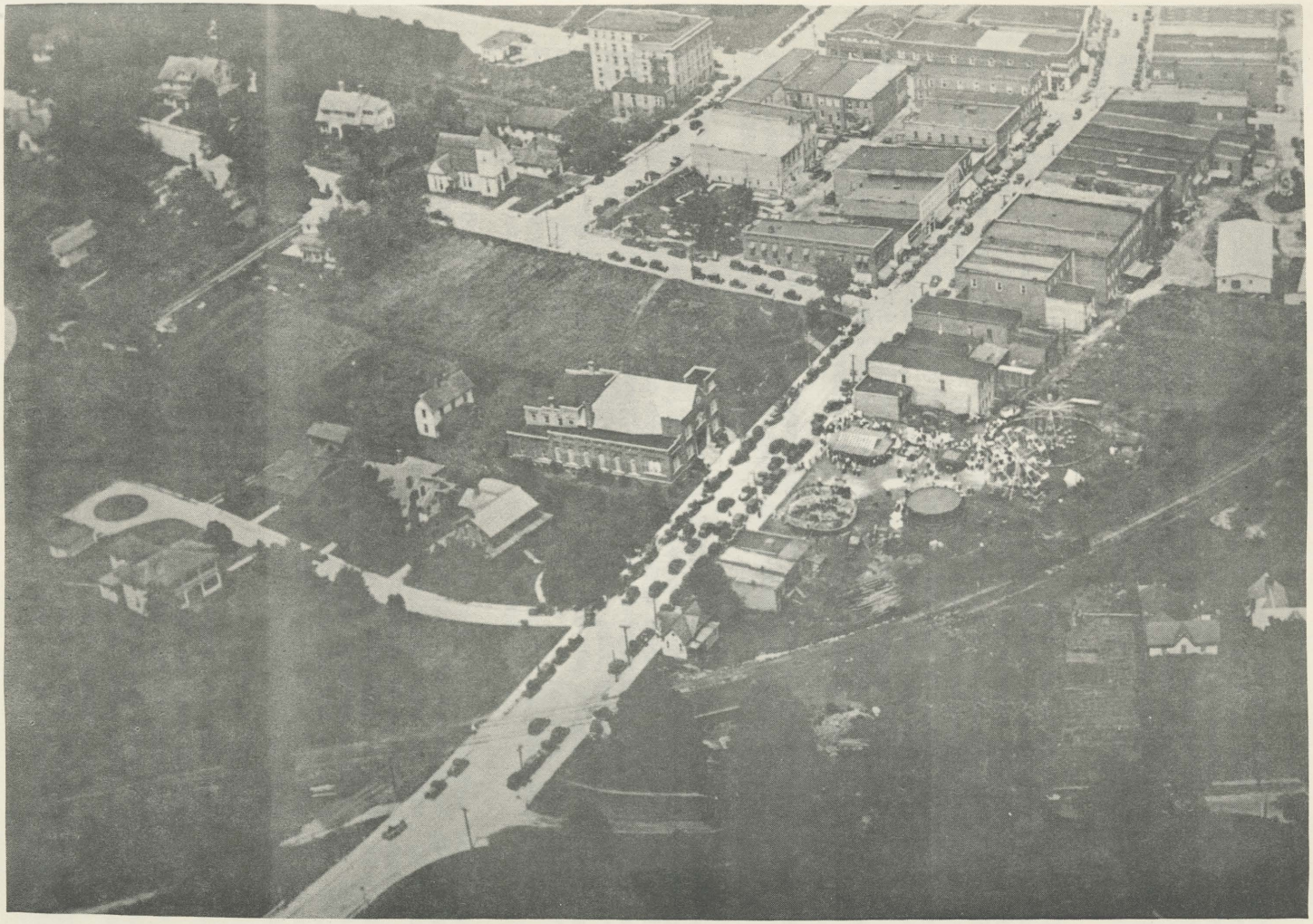
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said Corporation has caused this Certificate to be signed by its duly authorized officers and to be sealed with the seal of the Corporation at Elkin, N. C., this 5th day of June A. D. 1913.

J. L. Gwyn
SECRETARY

W. H. Chatham
PRESIDENT

SHARES $100 EACH

SHARES $100 EACH



This is an aerial view of Elkin on July 4th, 1931, taken at a height of 7,000 feet. The E & A tracks can be seen at the bottom with the locomotive standing to the right. *Courtesy Mr. Paul Shumate.*

The year 1921 dawned with a brighter outlook for the company. Everything was running smoothly with the company financially stable. One serious accident did mar that year. Bud Phillips, a black man, attempted to cross the tracks on Main Street on his mule one June day; the mule bolted at the whistle of the approaching train and threw Mr. Phillips to the track. Dazed, he could not move fast enough to avoid the train and was struck by it. His left hand was amputated and three teeth were knocked out. He survived this accident to live for many more years.

Through 1926 business was good enough so that the gross revenue usually met all the expenses with a small profit each month. But time and weathering began to creep up on the road. Quite a bit of repair was needed to the roadbed and wooden trestles. The original crossties were mostly untreated unlike the creosote treated ties of today. As the ties deteriorated, the chance of the rails spreading and causing derailments became serious. In 1926, complete passenger service was discontinued. Two years earlier a state road had been planned from Elkin to Sparta by the State Highway Commission. So in 1926, Highway 26 became a hard surfaced reality. Also, the use of the new automobile in the area decreased the use of the Ford train.

Dan Chatham and Albert Bryan took over as general managers for several years, but in 1928 they left to enter the lumber business. John P. Ipock took over the position until 1931.

From 1926 on, the state of the line continued to deteriorate. For example, when the train did run, the speed was slow so to do as little damage as possible in case the train did derail. When crossing one of the trestles, the engineer braked the locomotive while the fireman walked to the other side. Then the engineer would slowly open the throtle just enough to move the train across. The engineer would jump off and wait for the fireman to catch the train and put the brakes on. If the trestle did not fall in, the engineer Blackburn would walk to his waiting locomotive to resume that day's trip. Never once did a mishap occur even up to the end!

With the building of new roads and easier mobility into the region by automobile, the E & A traffic decreased steadily. The tonnage of goods destined for delivery along the line dropped from 1,236 tons in 1926, to 62 tons for the first seven months of 1931. And the tonnage to be shipped out on Southern also dropped in the same period from 19,158 tons in 1926, to 1,991 tons in 1931. Financially the company was barely staying afloat. In 1926, the gross income was $23, 074.16, which dropped to $2,454.12 in 1931. After meeting expenses, salaries, and interests, the net income for the period was $2,932.17 in 1926, to $1,058.07 in 1931. The worst year was 1929 with the annual net profit at only $635.98.

With a crunch, the local economy felt the impact of the depression as well as the whole nation. The directors could not see any chance of completing the line the necessary eight miles to the top of the mountain. If this extension could have been completed, the line might have survived. But with not many alternatives, the instant solution for this white elephant was to apply for abandonment. Before applying for abandonment, the railroad officials appealed to the Piedmont & Northern Railway and Duke Power Company to purchase and rebuild the line, but neither one showed interest in acquiring

the line. Receivership was considered, but was voted down as being expensive and impractical. Only one solution remained, that of abandonment. On June 26, 1931, by a unanimous decision, both the stockholders and directors, general manager and secretary, John Ipock was placed in charge of the business of applying for abandonment. On June 30, 1931, the letter reached the Interstate Commerce Commission applying for a certificate of abandonment.

According to the 1930 census, the population of the area served by the rail line was approximately 5,000 people with the territory being approximately 200 square miles. Elkin was the only incorporated town served by the line with a population of approximately 2,300 people. The population of the villages served were: State Road, 75; Thurmond, 25; and Doughton, 25. There were no large industries in the territory served except for some of a very minor character and several small lumbering operations.

As required by ICC rules, a notice of the abandonment application was printed in two local newspapers three consecutive times; the Wilkes Journal and the Elkin Tribune. On October 19, 1931, a letter from E & A president, Alex Chatham, to the commission urged that the abandonment be granted as soon as possible because the road's condition would not carry traffic through the winter without considerable expenditures for repairs. So on October 27, a formal certificate of abandonment was granted by the ICC. Promptly upon receipt of permission, liquidation of the road began. The rails were taken up and sold for scrap, while the ties that were salvageable were sold for ten cents apiece. Engineer Irey Blackburn bought the timbers of one of the
14 trestles and built a sturdy house which is still standing today. All bills were paid from the liquidation with cash, and in one instance, land. John Ipock received almost an acre of downtown property owned by the railroad for payment due him.

By 1935, the Elkin & Alleghany Railroad was but a fresh memory to the area's residents. Little remained of the line except for the roadbed, the Elkin station, and the workshop were left standing. Many ventures have survived and many have failed, but this one is special. This story doesn't end here because those who remember the Elkin & Alleghany will never forget!

THE END

PROPERTY OF
MUSEUM OF REGIONAL HISTORY
Mount Airy, N. C.
0000.131 Surry

CERTIFICATE

FOR

SHARES

of the

PRIOR-PREFERENCE

Capital Stock

THE ELKIN & ALLEGHANY RAILROAD COMPANY

ISSUED TO

DATE

For Value Received ____ hereby sell, assign and transfer unto _____

_____ Shares

of the Capital Stock represented by the within Certificate, and do hereby irrevocably constitute and appoint _____ Attorney to transfer the said Stock on the books of the within named Company with full power of substitution in the premises.

Dated _____ 19__

In presence of

_____

NOTICE: THE SIGNATURE OF THIS ASSIGNMENT MUST CORRESPOND WITH THE NAME AS WRITTEN UPON THE FACE OF THE CERTIFICATE, IN EVERY PARTICULAR WITHOUT ALTERATION OR ENLARGEMENT, OR ANY CHANGE WHATEVER.