

ACHS SUMMARY FORM

1. Name: Howard Chapel and Cemetery

2. Planning Area/Site Number: 23/11 3. M-NCPPC Atlas Reference: Map 9 G-4

4. Address: Northwest Corner of Howard Chapel and Elton Farm Roads

5. Classification Summary

Category <u>building</u>	Previous Survey Recording <u>M-NCPPC</u>
Ownership <u>public</u>	Title and Date: <u>1976 Inventory of</u>
Public Acquisition <u>N/A</u>	<u>Historical Sites</u>
Status <u>unoccupied</u>	
Accessible <u>yes:unrestricted</u>	Federal <u> </u> State <u>x</u> County <u>x</u> Local <u> </u>
Present use <u>park</u>	

6. Date: c. 1900

7. Original Owner: George Howard and Howard Chapel Congregation ?

8. Apparent Condition

a. deteriorated b. unaltered c. original site

9. Description: This simple frame chapel sits hidden by under growth and forest close to the side of Howard Chapel Road. It is in ruinous condition. It is a one-and-a-half story, one bay by three bay, chapel which faces southeast. The exterior walls have white novelty siding. The southeast elevation has a simple post and lintel opening. All the windows and doors are gone. The gable roof had asbestos shingles. At the southeast end there is a bell cote astride the roof ridge.

10. Significance: The small chapel served the rural black community for the last part of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century.

The land on which the chapel is located was owned by George Howard and his heirs. Howard was a former slave who had gained his freedom by 1857, and was well respected by the community. Although no deed to the congregation from the family could be located, land for the chapel was probably donated by the Howards. They also helped to establish a black school which was located south of the church.

The chapel was used from about 1900 to 1930, and was served by a circuit minister from the Washington Negro Conference. Burials in the cemetery began in 1901 with that of George Howard. Names on tombstones include Howards, Greens, Ishwoods, Simpsons, Gaithers, Fishers, and Nettles. Since 1968 the property has been part of Patuxent State Park.

11. Researcher and date researched: Harold E. Radtke, Jr.-7/79 Arch. Description

Candy Reed

12. Compiler: Gail Rothrock

13. Date Compiled: 10/79

14. Designation Approval

15. Acreage: 2 acres

Howard Chapel Cemetery

94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 23/11
MAGI:

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC Howard Chapel and Cemetery
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Northwest Corner of Howard Chapel and Elton Farm Roads
CITY, TOWN Unity VICINITY OF _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6
STATE Maryland COUNTY Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Dept. of Natural Resources
State of Maryland Telephone #:
STREET & NUMBER Taylor Avenue
CITY, TOWN Annapolis VICINITY OF _____ STATE, zip code Maryland 21401

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, LIBER #: 3784
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse Folio #: 460
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland zip code 20850

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites
DATE 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Park Historian's Office
CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland zip code 20855

94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This simple frame chapel sits hidden by undergrowth and forest close to the side of Howard Chapel Road. It is in ruinous condition -- the roof has holes in it, the floor is entirely gone and all the windows and doors have been broken or removed.

The chapel is one-and-a-half stories high, one bay across and three bays deep. It has a gable roof and its gable-end faces southeast toward Howard Chapel Road. Its exterior walls have novelty siding. It is built upon a wooden sill directly on the ground, with a low stone footing which runs down the center of the building like a spine. Heavy oak beams run southwest to northeast across the width of the building. At the northwest elevation there is a small pavilion. There are remains of a two-step platform on the inside at the northwest corner which indicate that the pavilion and platform were used as the altar area. There is an exterior stone chimney on the southwest elevation toward the south corner.

The southeast (front) door has a simple post and lintel wooden frame. Two windows surmount the door at the second level. A small bell-cote with a gable roof and fish scale shingle sits close to the southeast end at the roof ridge. The gable roof which is in serious disrepair appears to have asbestos covering.

The interior walls, now almost entirely gone, were recently covered by plaster board or sheet rock. The ceiling was lined with decorative metal sheeting.

The overgrown cemetery is on the north side of the building and is surrounded by a black metal fence.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

94
 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
 HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
 FARM ROAD

23/11 Howard Chapel

People Buried in Howard Chapel Cemetery

William H. Nettles
Husband of Bettie Nettles
Died October 14, 1918 - Age 62

Malinda J.
Wife of Daniel W. Green
1847-1924

George Howard
Born 1872 *g - our records*
Died 8, 1901 - Age 29 years

Harriet A.
Wife of John H. Howard (August 25, 1839 - May 6, 1923)
February 9, 1843
Died July 31, 1917

Daughter - Christeen Howard Vonce
December 11, 1874
Died October 9, 1931

Lucy, Wife of Evan Gaither
Died June 17, 1912 - Age 89 years, 10 months and 7 days

John B. Howard
January 19, 1885
Died - May 12, 1920

Fannie Fisher
October 30, 1942 - Age 53

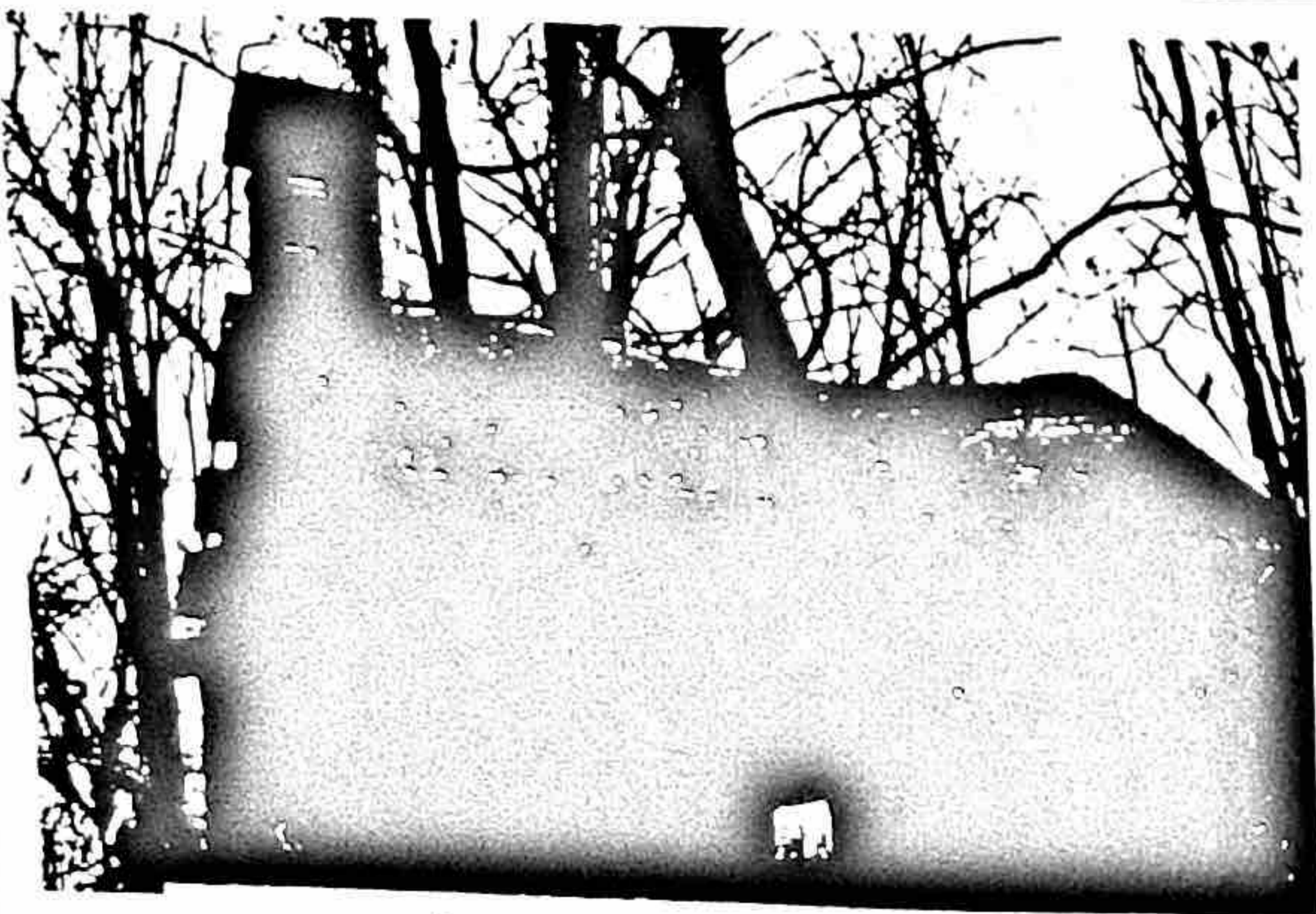
Mildred Simpson
Daughter of Martha Whitney
July 1912 - Age 22 years

Robert Simpson
January 19, 1902 - Age 55 years

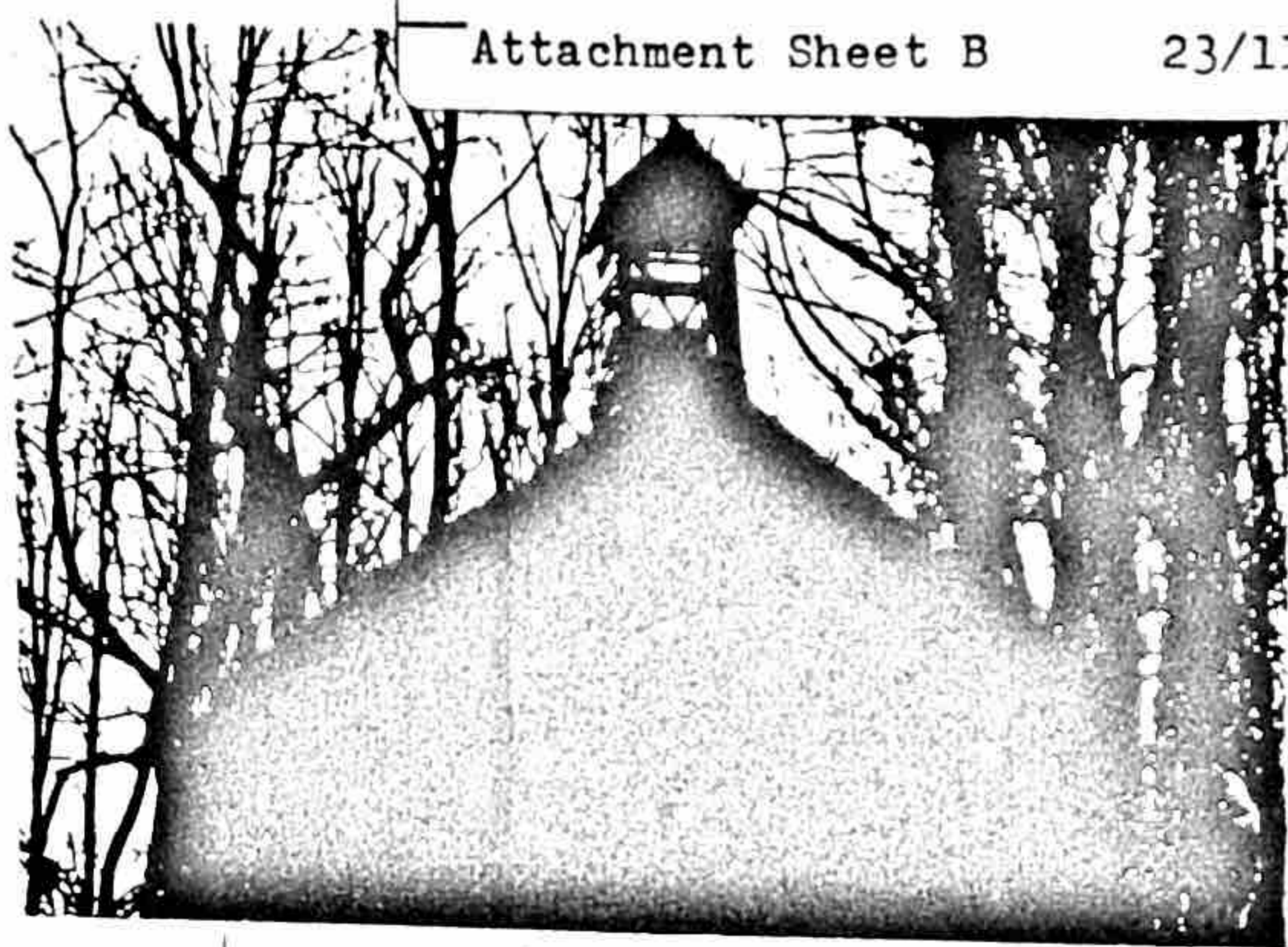
Arthur H. Ishwood
March 1, 1862
Died October 27, 1915

Waymon Ishwood
Son of Arthur and Anna Ishwood
September 6, 1890 - January 7, 19--

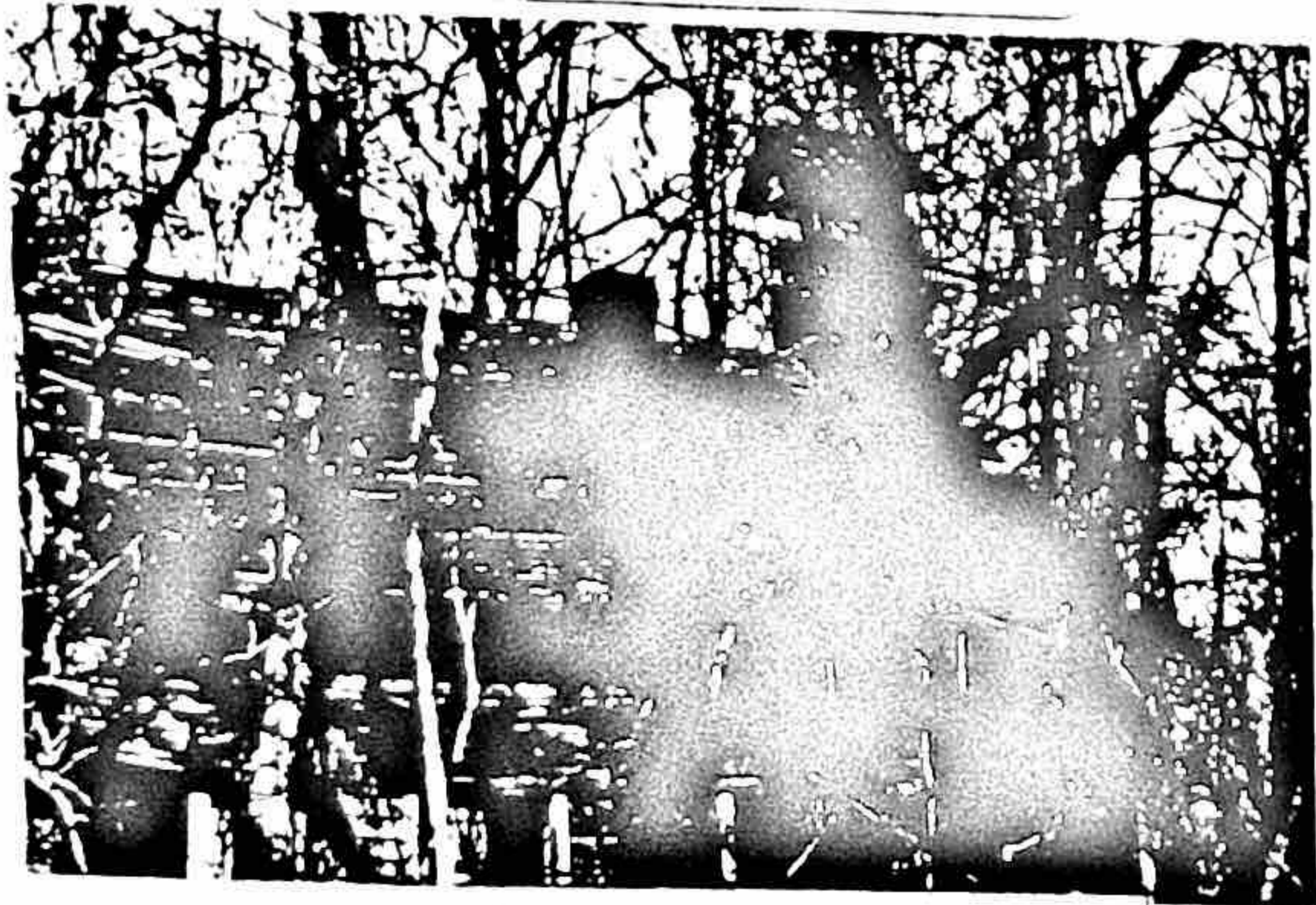
94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD



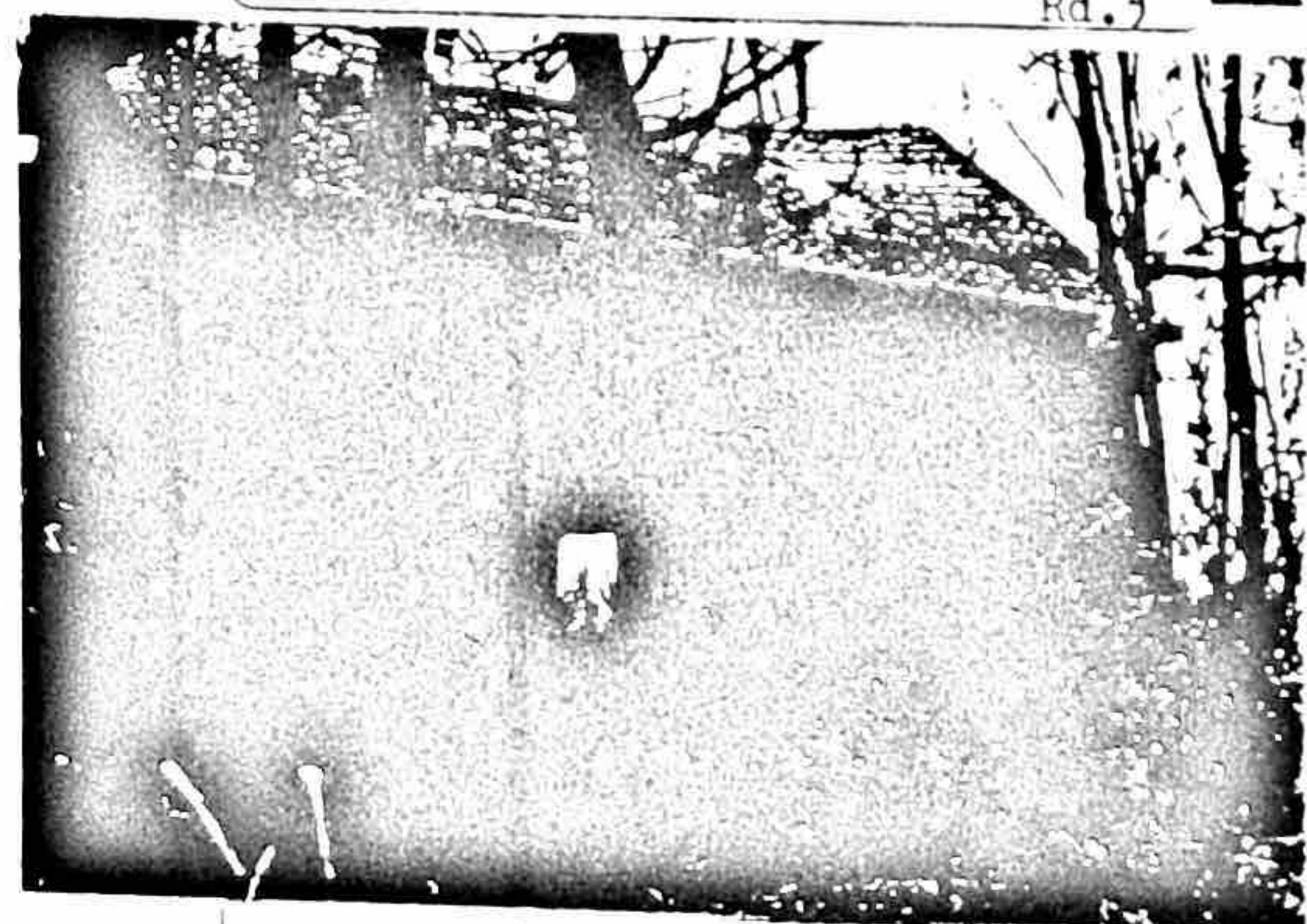
April 2, 1978
Side View - North



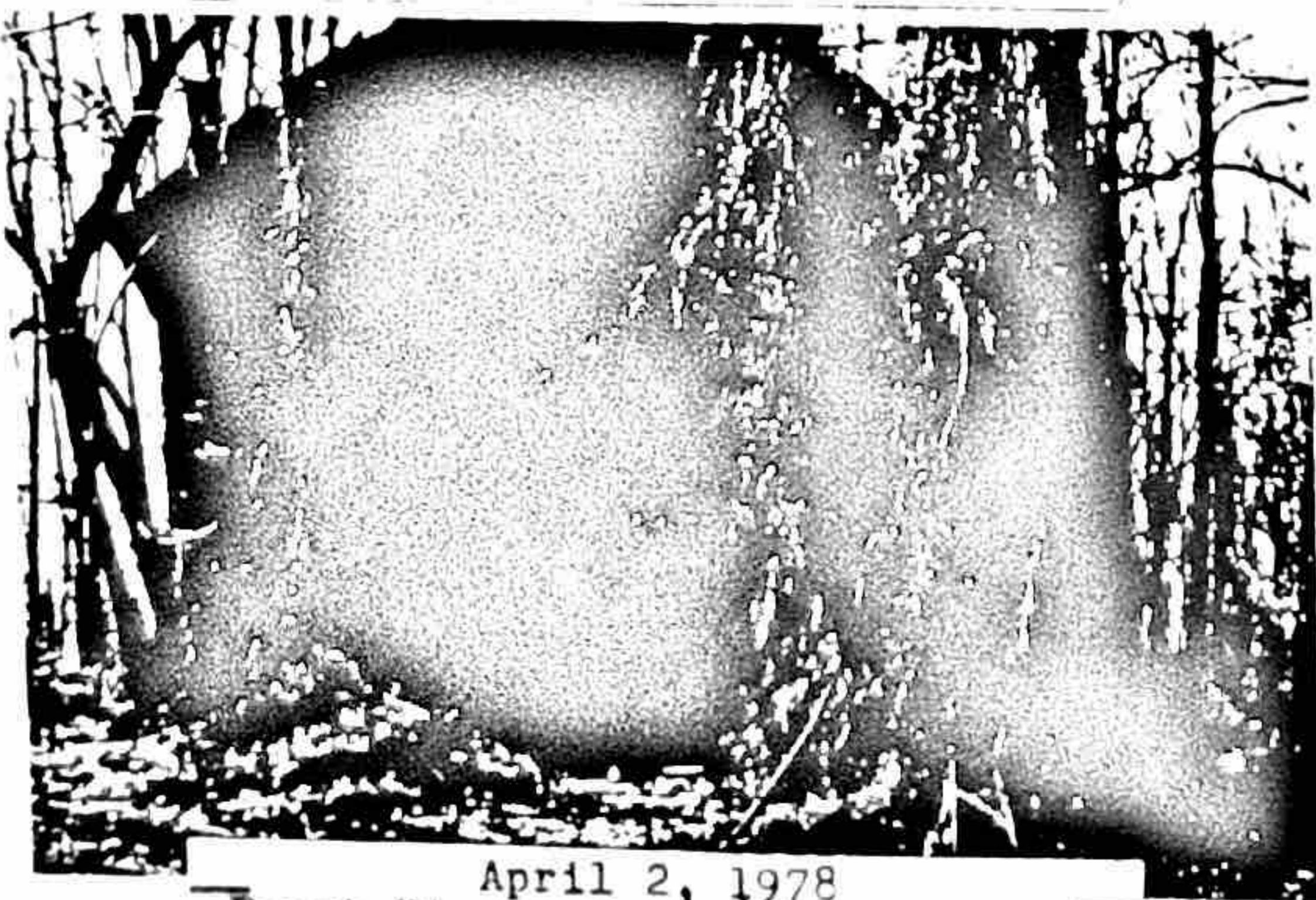
April 2, 1978
Belfry - East (from Howard Chapel Rd.)



April 2, 1978
Side View - South (from Elton Rd)



April 2, 1978
Side View - North

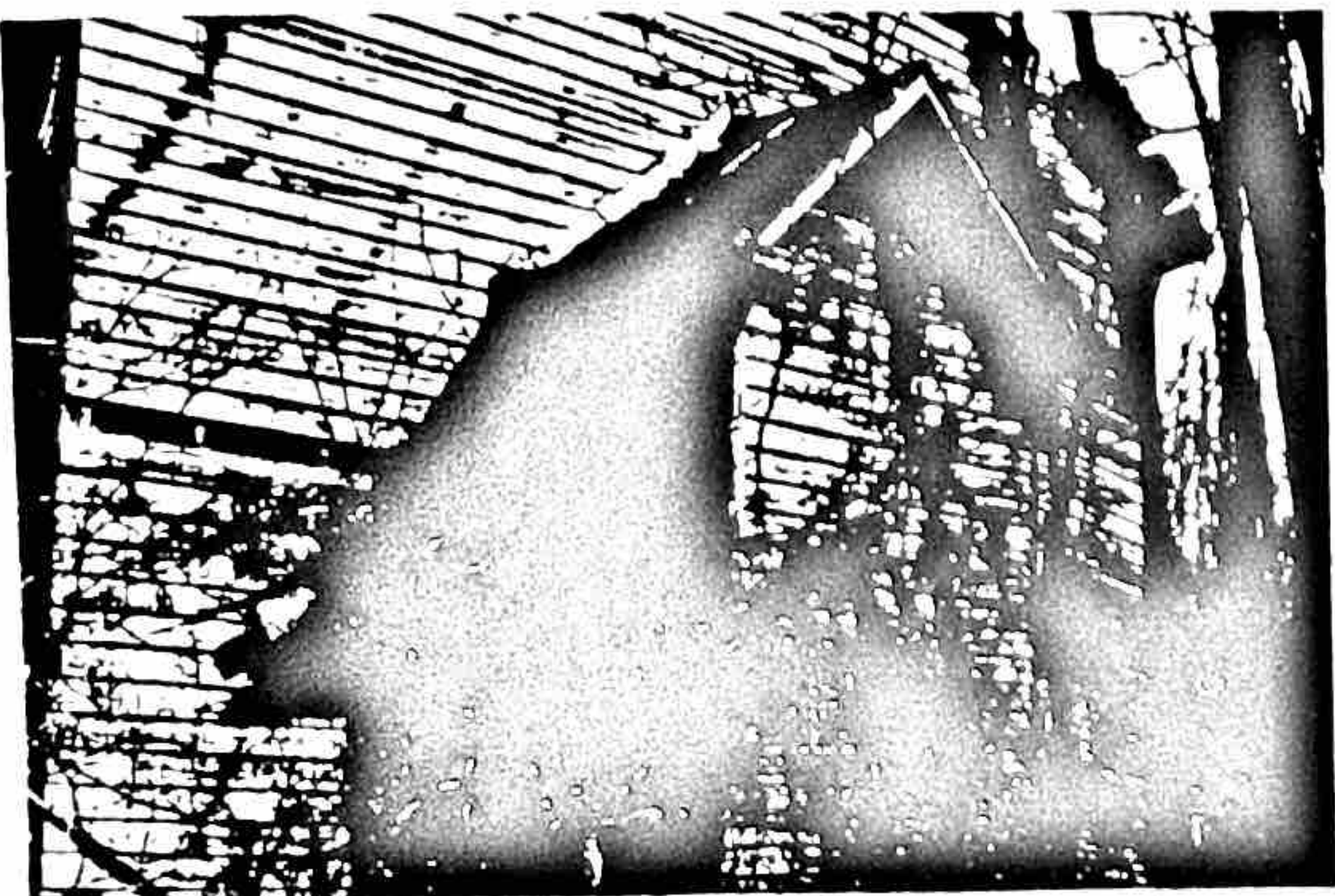


April 2, 1978
Front View - East (from Howard Chapel Road)

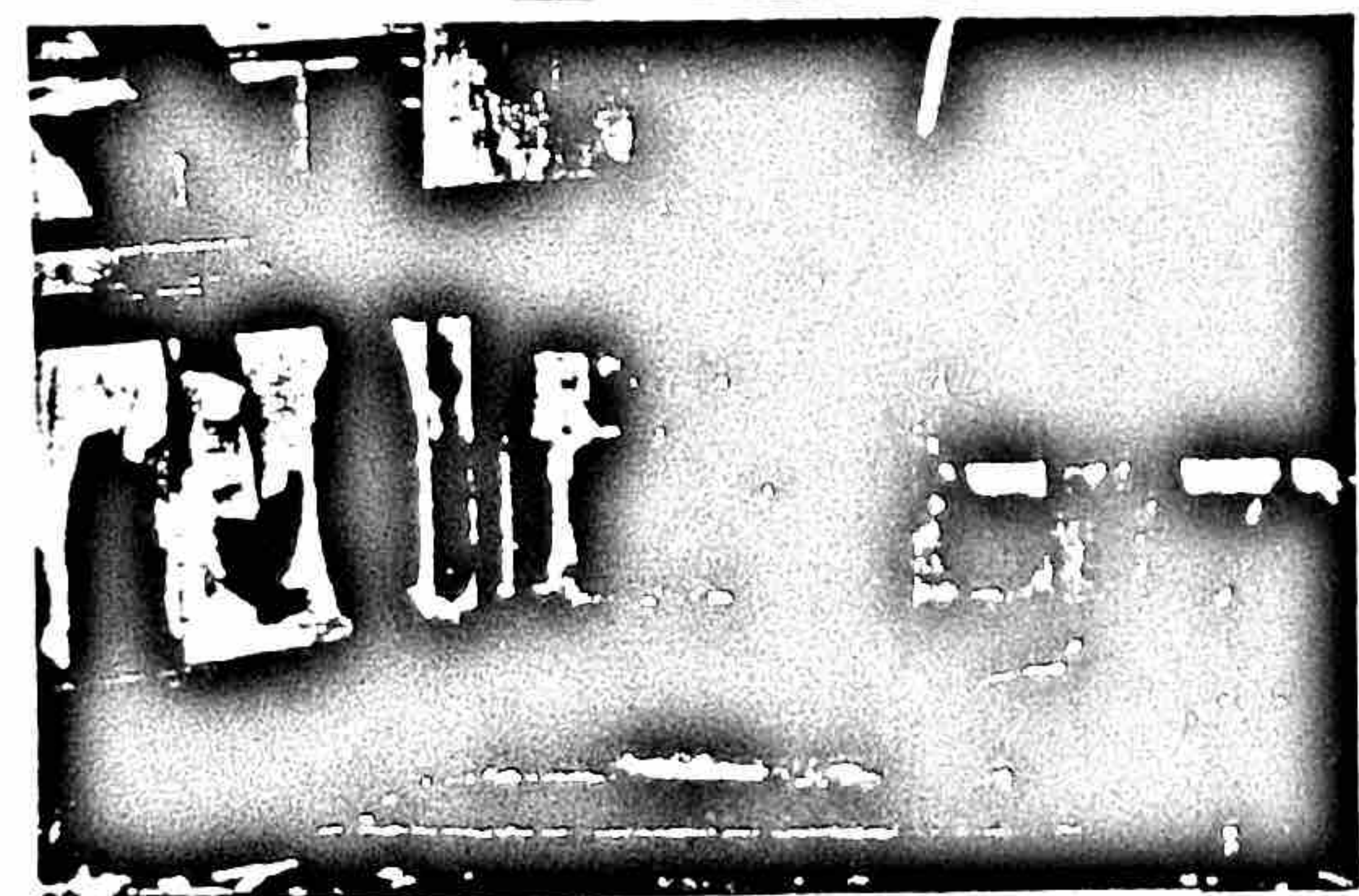


April 2, 1978
Back View - West

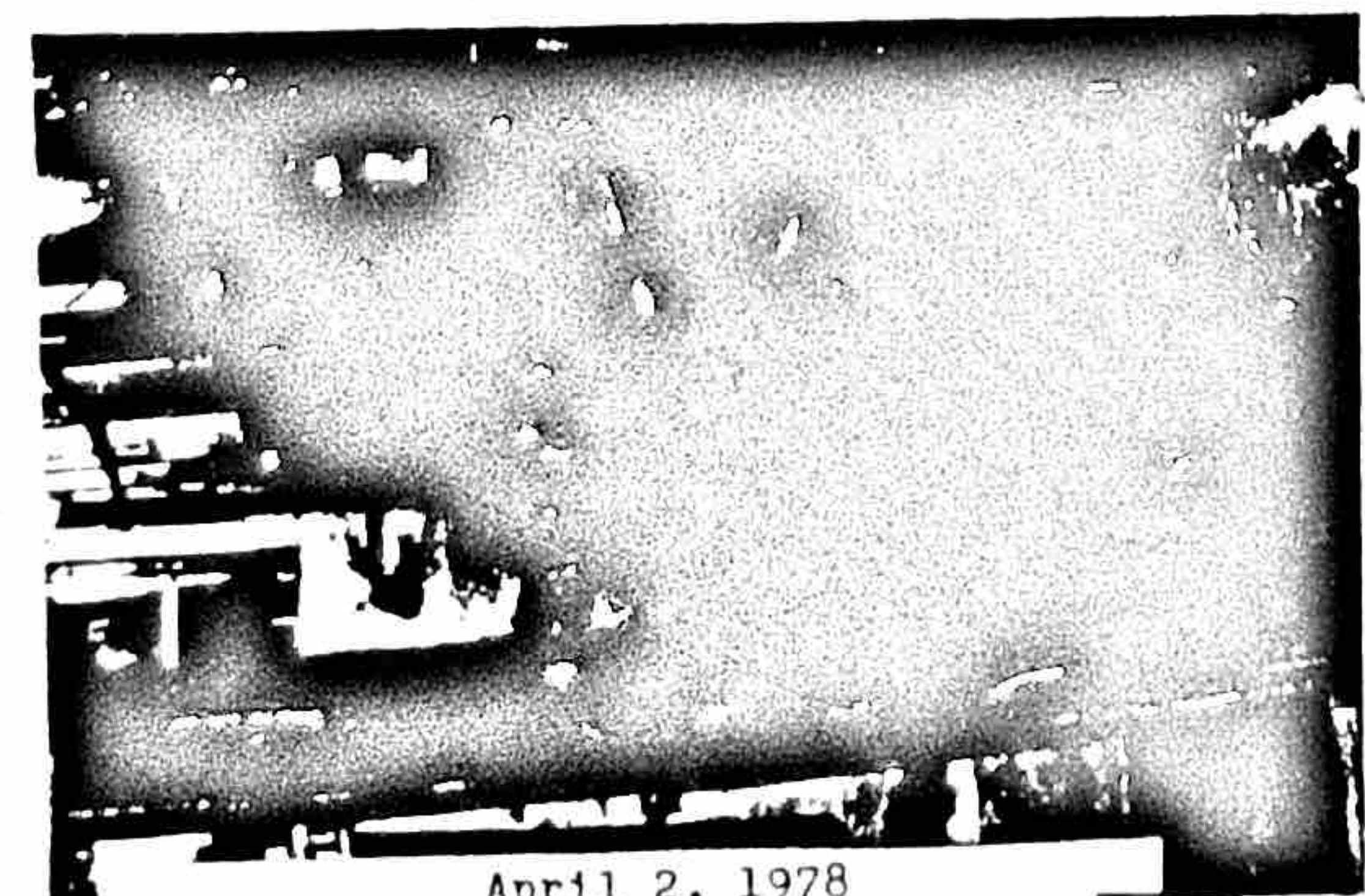
94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD



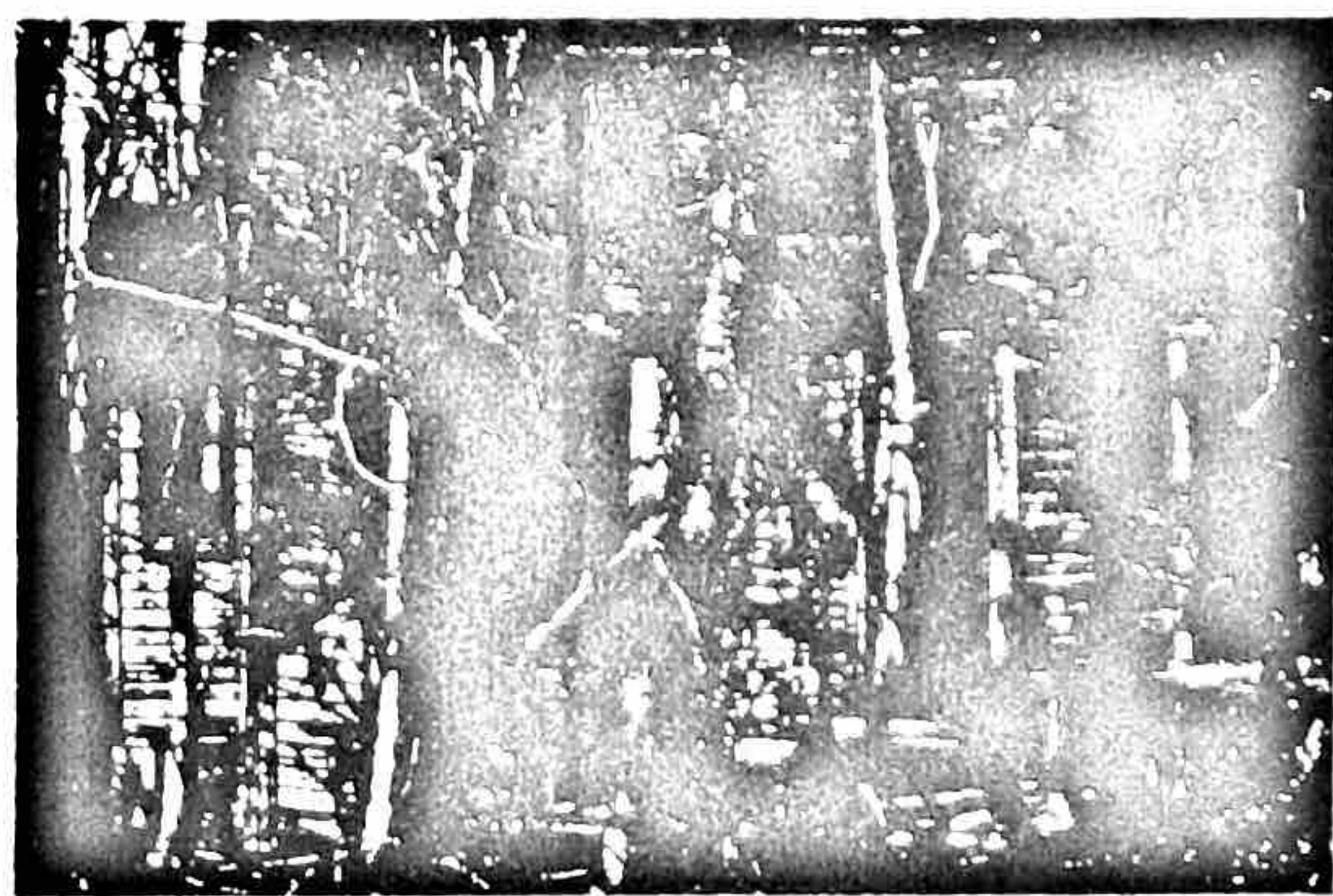
April 2, 1978
Back View - West



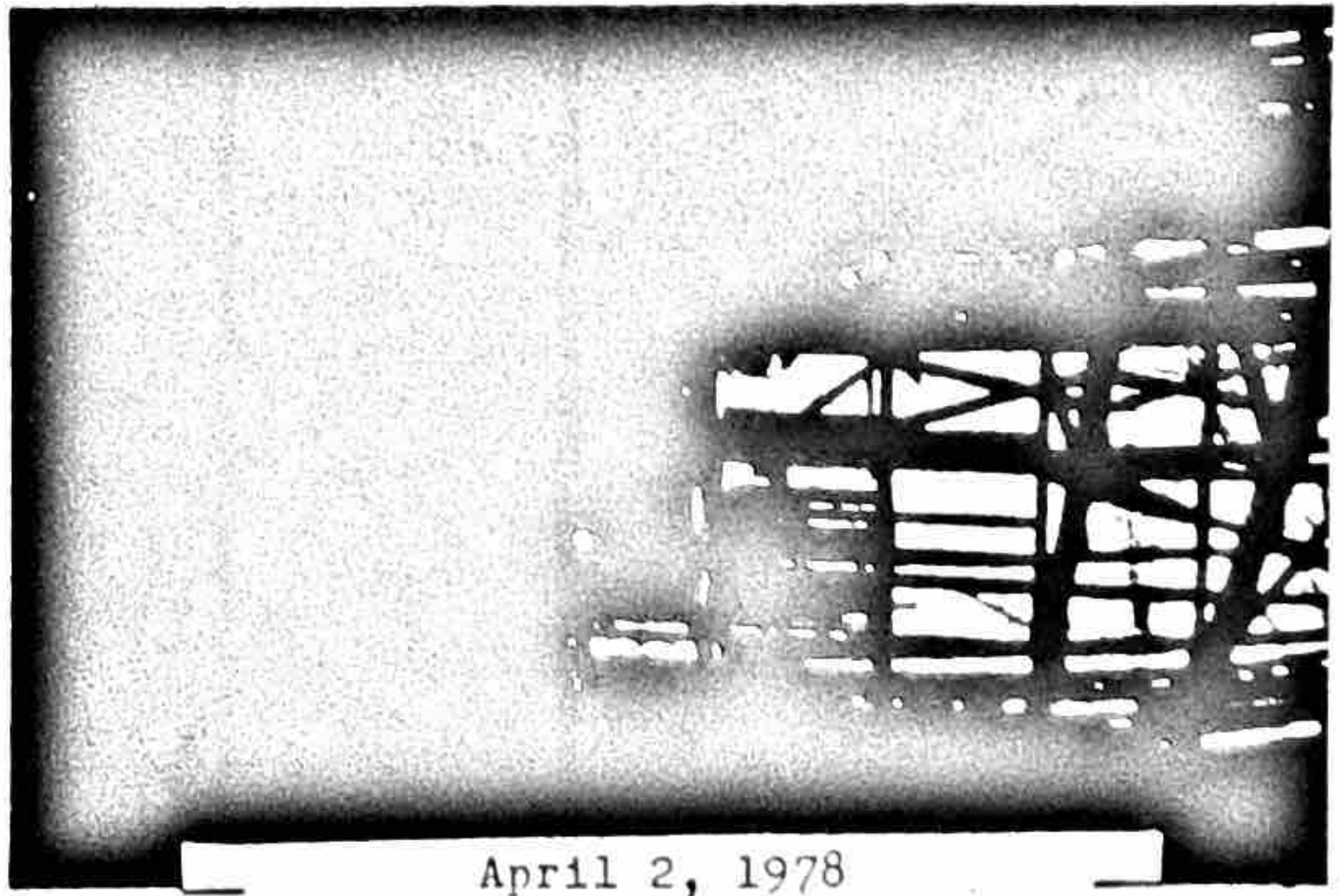
April 2, 1978
Sanctuary (from front door-East)



April 2, 1978
Ceiling (from front door - East)

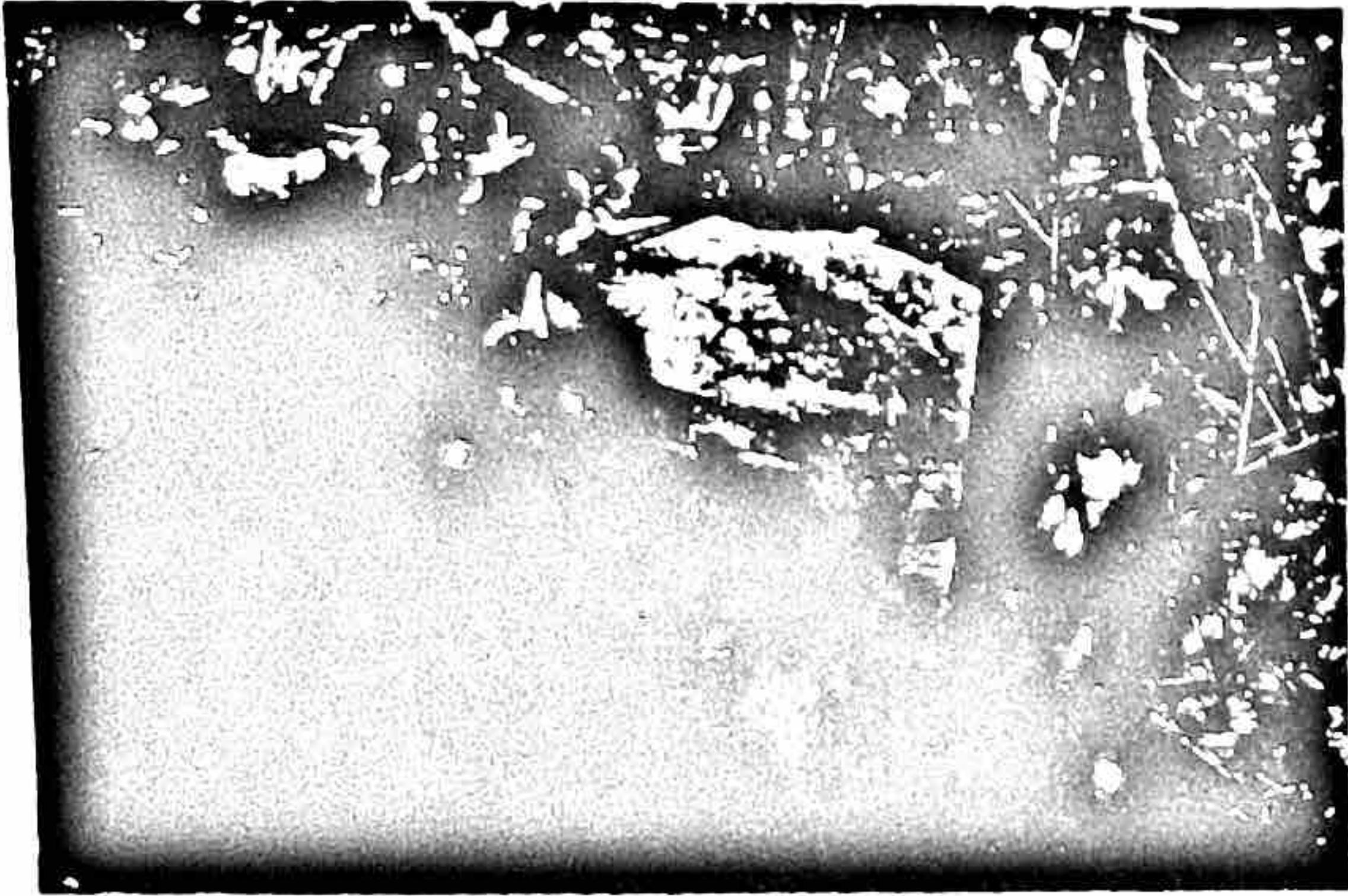


April 2, 1978
Side View - South (from Elton Rd.)

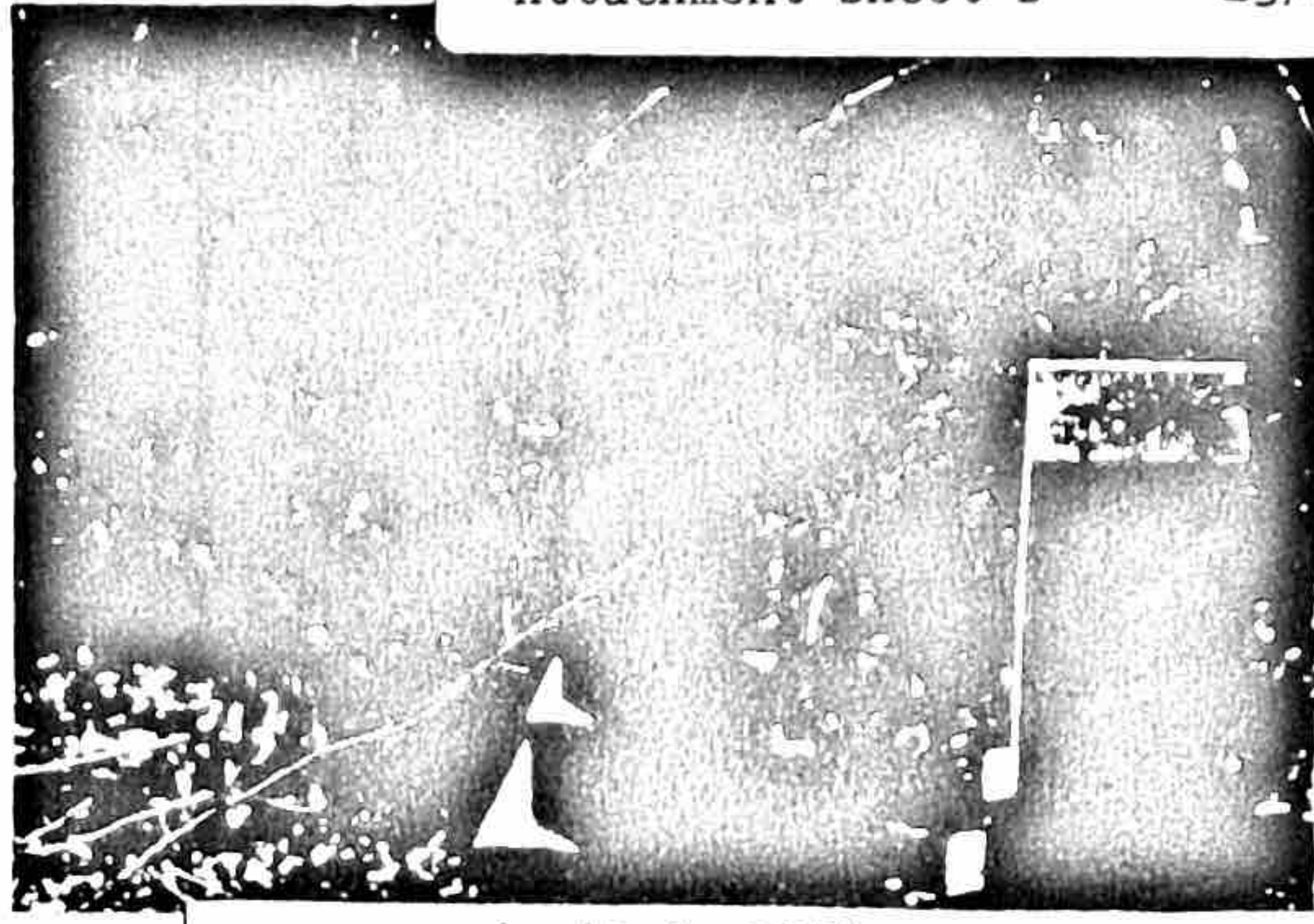


April 2, 1978
Ceiling from Northwest window

94 HOWARD CHAPEL SANCTUARY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD



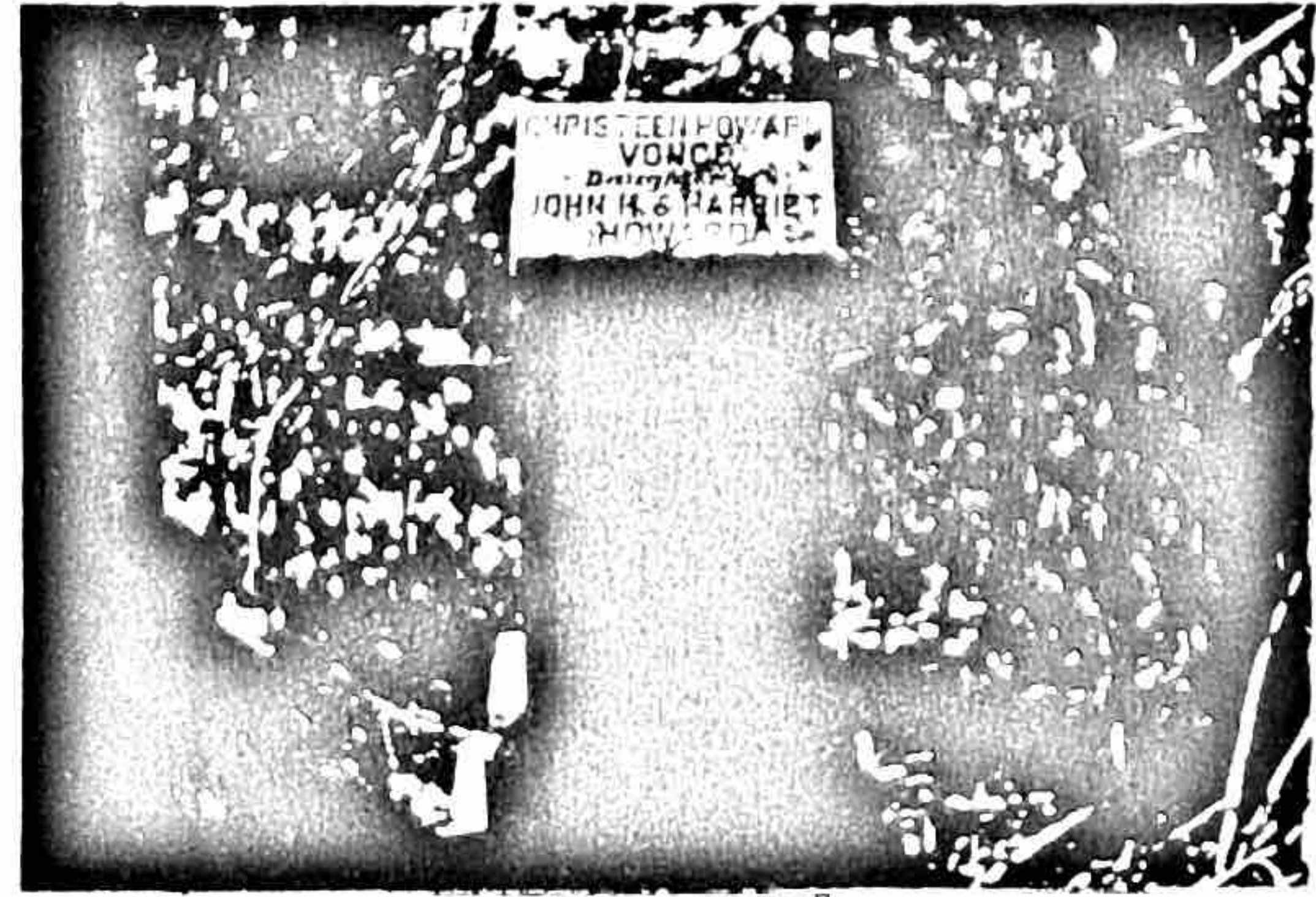
April 2, 1978
Burkley tombstone in cemetery:
North of Howard Chapel



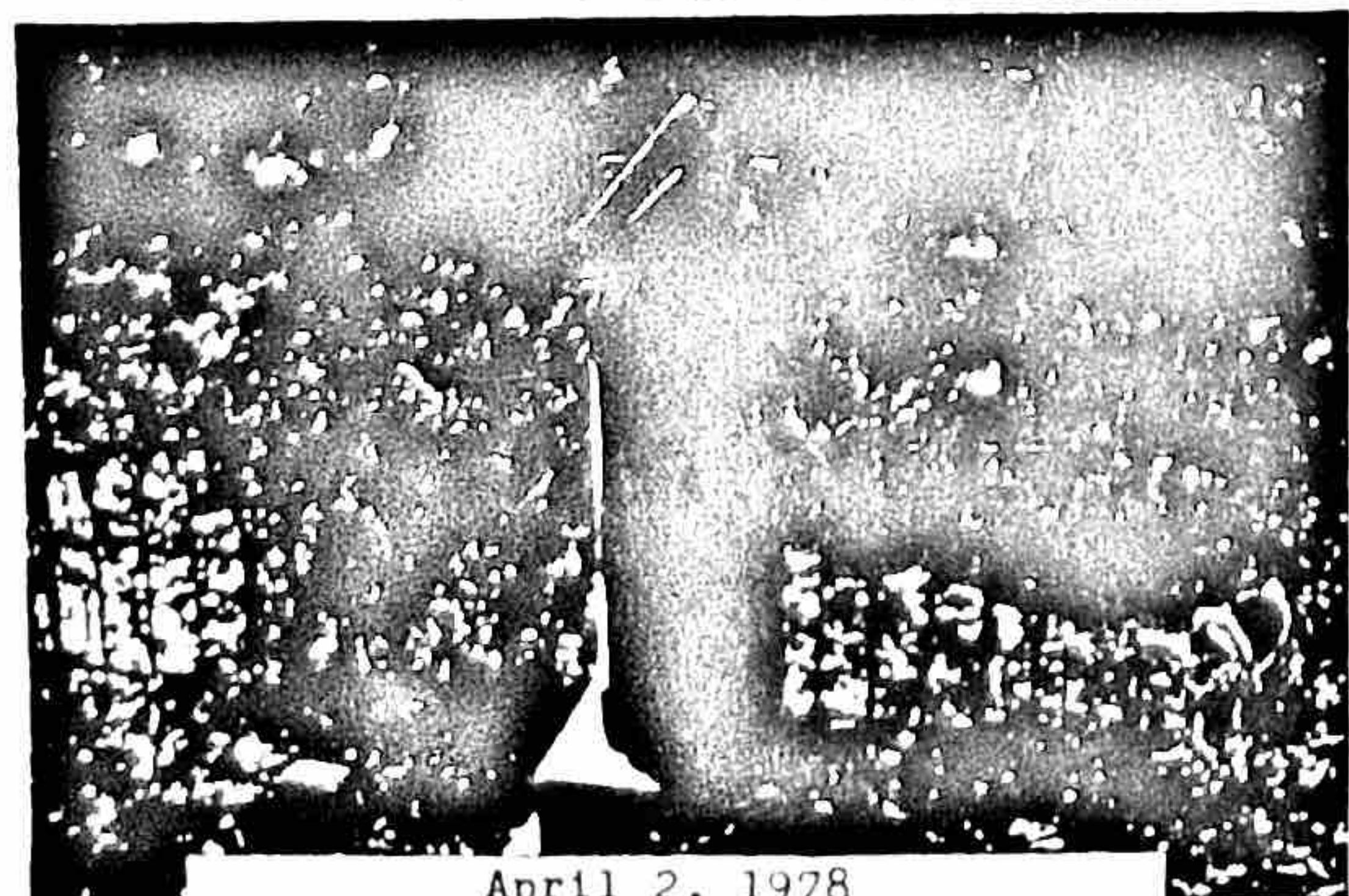
April 2, 1978
Cemetery



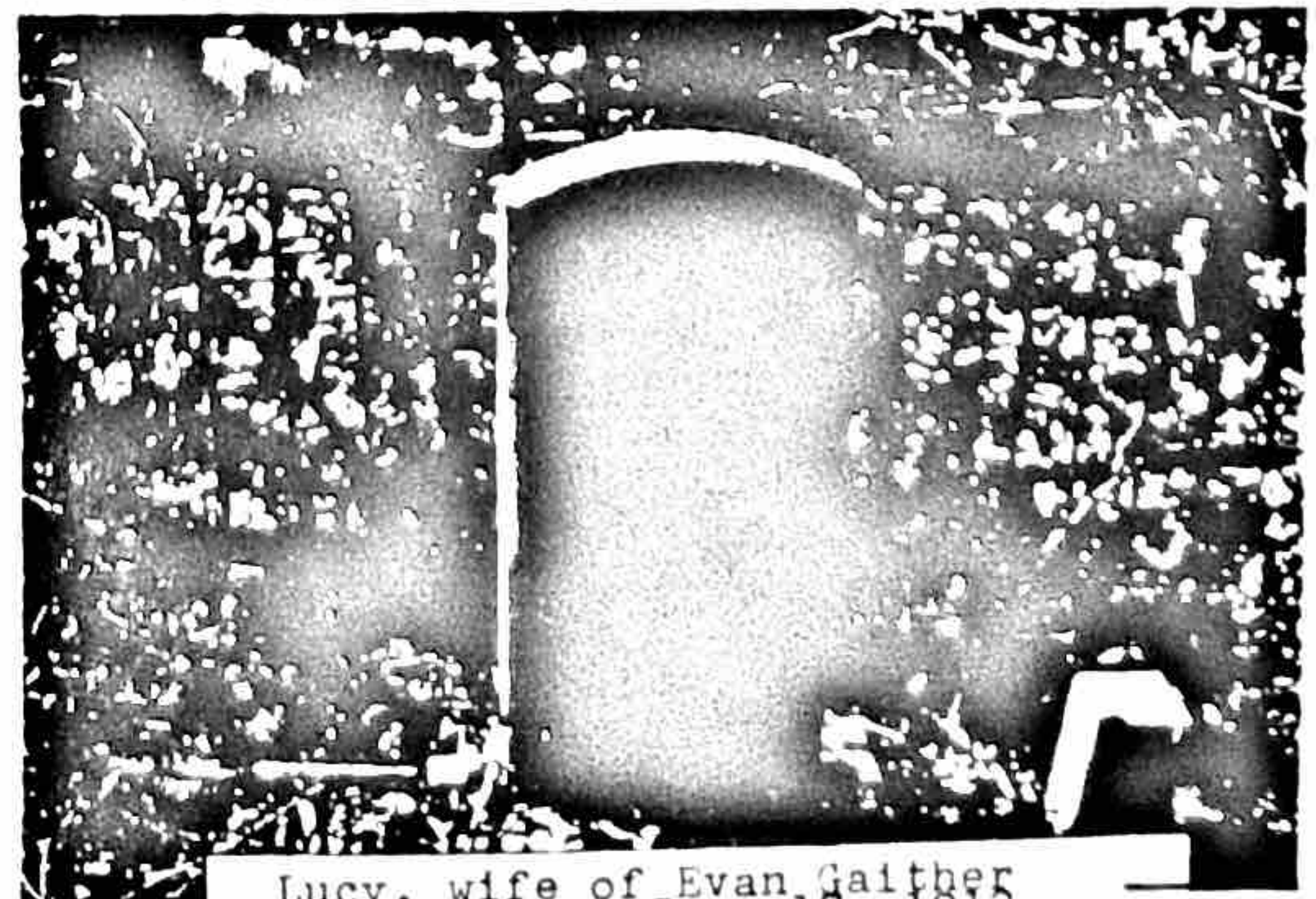
April 2, 1978
John B. Howard tombstone 1/19/1885
Died - May 12, 1920



April 2, 1978
Cemetery: daughter Christeen
Howard Vonce 12/11/1874 10/19/1931



April 2, 1978
Cemetery



Lucy, wife of Evan Gaither
tombstone -- June 17, 1912
Age 89 yrs. 10 mos. & 7 days

94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIA
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local Histor
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1900 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This small chapel served the rural black community for the last part of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century.

The land on which the chapel is located was owned by George Howard and his heirs. Howard was a former slave who had gained his freedom by 1857, and was well respected by the community. Although no deed to the congregation from the family could be located, land for the chapel was probably donated by the Howards. They also helped to establish a black school which was located south of the church.

During the majority of the period during which the chapel was in use approximately 1900 to 1930, the congregation was part of the Washington Negro Conference, a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church to which black congregations belonged after its formation in 1870. It was served by a circuit minister who shared his time among the several congregations in his assigned area. A circuit minister usually was not assigned to a specific circuit for longer than a few years at a time, due as much to hardships of the job as to the dictates of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Members of the congregation included William H. Nettles (an illiterate farm laborer) and his wife Bettie, who could read and write. Harriet & Howard owned the property and were liberate. In 1900 the Howards had been married 38 years and had 12 living children.

Burials in the adjacent cemetery began in 1901, with that of George Howard. The most recent burial date legible on a tombstone is that of Fannie Fisher, who died in 1942. Names on tombstones include Howards, Greens, Ishwoods, Simpsons, and Gaithers.

The property was sold by Jacob and Mary Vogel to Leonard and Jene Williams in Parcels.² Since 1968 it has been owned by the State of Maryland, and comprises part of Patuxent State Park.

FOOTNOTES:

1. U.S. Census Records (1900).
2. Land Records of Montgomery County, Md., 982/12 (August 18, 1945); 1832/272 (August 24, 1952).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

94
 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
 HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
 FARM ROAD

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland.
Interviews with Fanny Brown, (926-4551); Maude Taylor, (460-1845);
Constantia Sims, Unity, Maryland.
U.S. Census Records.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 2 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

On the corner of Howard Chapel and Elton Farm Roads. Delineated by a rectangle of approximately 50 yards north and 100 yards west.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Harold E. Radtke, Jr.

Candy Reed

Architectural Description

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

7/79

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

94
HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD



Type In Your Name & Get Your Instant Family Tree!

Your First Name: Your Last Name: Your State:

Home About Us What's New Browse Cemeteries Our Blog Publish Transcription Links

Search Maryland Burials

Google Custom Search

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www.probategeorge.com

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GaryHillLaw.com

Living Wills

Medical Directives Richard Mayberr, Attorney At Law
FallsChurchElderlaw.com

Create A Gun Trust Now

Protect Your Privacy Online. Easy To Complete, Custom & Affordable!
LivingTrustsontheWeb.com

1 Tip of a flat belly :

Cut down 3 lbs of your belly every week by using this 1 old weird tip.
Everyotherdaydiet.com

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Home > United States > Maryland > Montgomery > Howard Chapel Cemetery

Howard Chapel Cemetery Montgomery County, Maryland

23000 Howard Chapel Road
Laytonsville, Maryland

Lat: 39° 15' 04"N, Lon: 77° 08' 37"W

Contributed by Anne Braun, Jan 13, 2003 [annieb1961@comcast.net]. Total records = 18.

From the intersection of Highways 650 (New Hampshire Ave) and 97 (Georgia Ave) turn and go west about 1.25 miles until you reach Howard Chapel Road turn and go north for about 1 mile. The cemetery is on the west side of the road and it is in the entrance of Patuxient River State Park.

The cemetery is not in very good condition. Broken headstones and headstones that are hidden are in there. There is overgrown grass and trees that are down.

There is a sign that is in front of the cemetery that says, "In 1862, the cemetery became the burial ground of the Ancestors of the original African American Community of Howard Chapel."

This is a work in progress.

I visited and walked this cemetery starting Jan 08, 2003 and continuing.

- Anne Braun

Gaither, Lucy, d. Jun 19 1912, age: 89yr 10mo 7da
Green, Melinda J., b. 1847, d. 1924, w/o Donald
Hackett, Lloyd A., b. Jul 14 1879, d. Aug 24 1903, age 24yr 1 month and 10da
Howard, George E., d. Dec 8 1901, age 26yr
Howard, Greenberg, b. 1903, d. 1918, s/o George and Louise
Howard, Harriet H., b. Feb 9 1843, d. Jul 31 1917, age: 74yr 5mo 22da, w/o John
Howard, Henry, d. Feb 12 1834, in his 60th year
Howard, J. Howell, b. 1879, d. 1936
Howard, J. Singleton, b. Jul 11 1864, d. Jul 31 1940
Howard, John B., b. Jan 29 1885, d. May 12 1920
Howard, Laura P., b. 1898, d. 1939, Mother
Howard, Martha G., b. 1866, d. 1937, s/w J. Howell
Ishwood, Maurice, d. Dec 9 1892, age 3mo 9da
Ishwood, Wayman, b. Sep 6 1890, d. Jun 7 1917, s/o Arthur and Anne
Miles, Deborah D., b. Apr 16 1872, d. Oct 20 1896, age 24yr 6mo 4da, w/o Scott
Nettles, William H., d. Oct 14 1918, age: 62yr, h/o Bettie
Simpson, Mildred Whitman, d. Jul 22 1912, age 22yr, d/o Margaret Whitman
Vonce, Christeen Howard, b. Dec 11 1874, d. Oct 19 1931, d/o John and Harriet Howard

Sponsored Maryland Genealogy Links

- [Maryland Death Records, 1900-Present](#) - Genealogy Archives
- [Maryland Obituary Records, 1900-Present](#) - Genealogy Archives
- [Maryland Birth Records, 1900-Present](#) - Genealogy Archives
- [Maryland Marriage Records, 1900-Present](#) - Genealogy Archives
- [Maryland Vital Records, 1900-Present](#) - Genealogy Archives
- [View the National Archives Microfilms Online](#) - Footnote
- [Research Death records in the Largest Newspaper Archive](#) - NewspaperArchive
- [Find Obituaries in the Largest Newspaper Archive](#) - NewspaperArchive
- [1880 United States Federal Census](#) - Ancestry (free!)
- [WWI Civilian Draft Registrations](#) - Ancestry (free!)

94
HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

94 HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

The Washington Post
Montgomery Extra

THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2001

Howard Chapel

MN

Rooted in History



A Time-Worn Cemetery Is One Family's Link To Its Legacy On Map That Traces County's Black Heritage

**STORY BY
MICHAEL H. COTTMAN**
Page 14

BY TOM ALLEN—THE WASHINGTON POST

Members of the Howard family—Jean Moore, from left; Mable Thomas; John Smith; Danielle Bacon, holding daughter Jasmine; Alice Thomas; and Martha Burgess—visit their ancestors at the Howard Chapel cemetery outside Brookeville. The property is listed on a map of other historic black sites in the county.

Celebrating The Fourth

Around the Washington



INSIDE

Planning Board Chair

Arthur Holmes Jr. is the favorite to head county planning board. **3**

Affordable Housing

Frederick studies ways to help lower-income residents find inexpensive homes in the county. **17**

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HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

Howard
Chapel

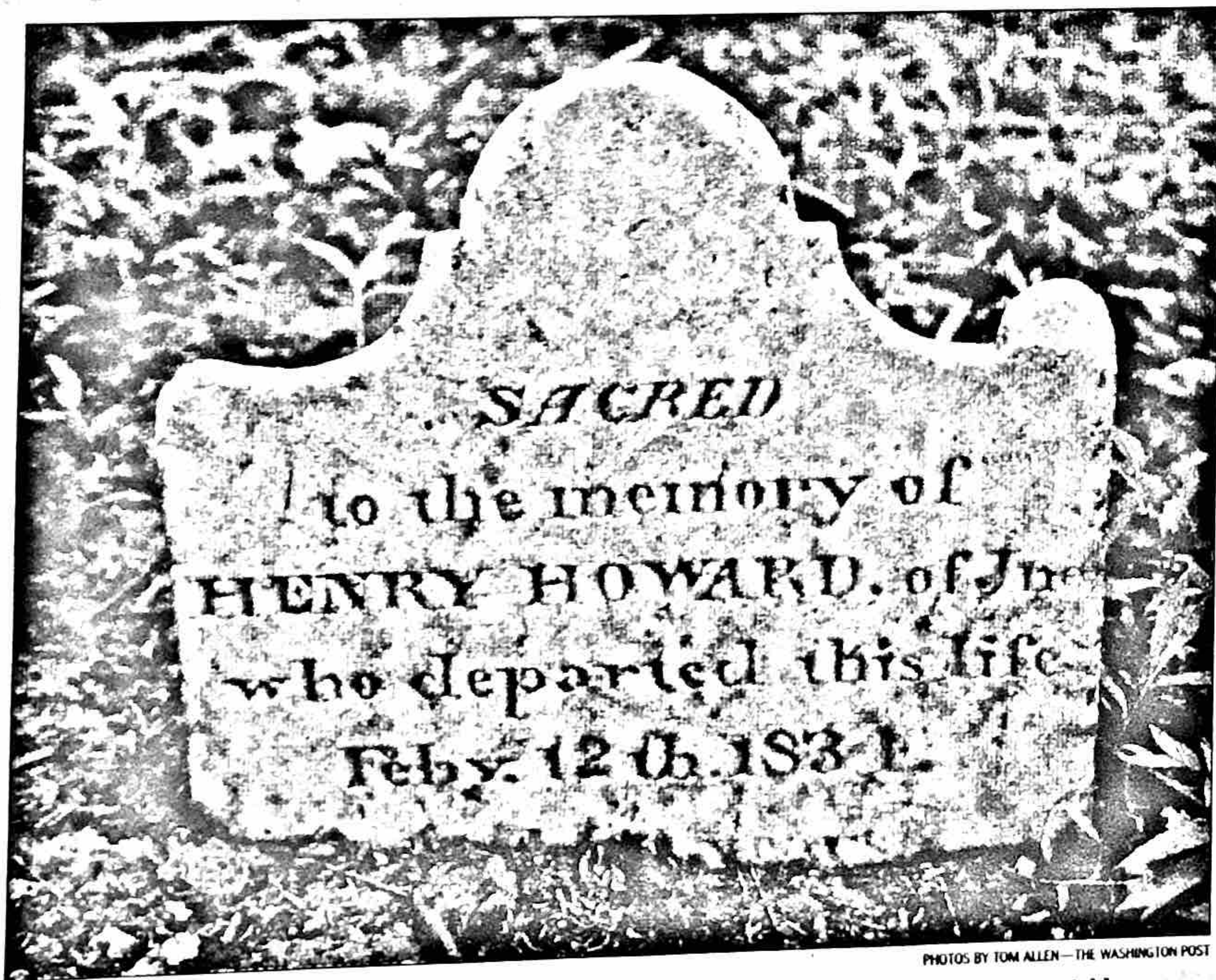
14
MN
MS

COVER STORY

15

14

COVER S



PHOTOS BY TOM ALLEN—THE WASHINGTON POST



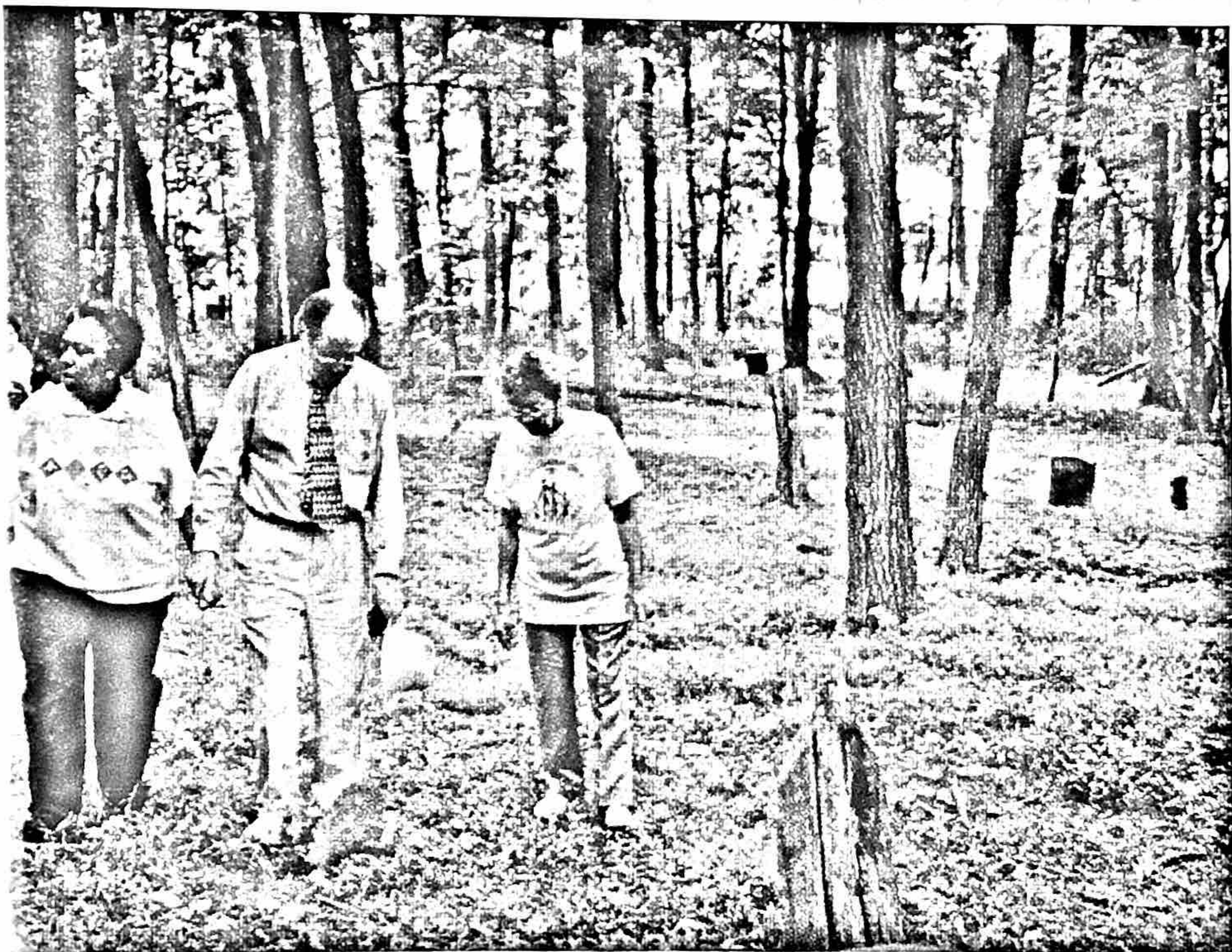
Members of the Howard and Holland family, at right, walk through the Howard Chapel cemetery outside

94

HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

COVER STORY

15
MN
MS



Jasmine Bacon, 5 months, is a part of the ninth generation of the Howard and Holland family.

spected citizen."

Other relatives of Enoch Howard owned by the Gaither family escaped to Canada on the Underground Railroad and changed their name to Holland.

"I think this history and this area symbolize roots, family unity and family heritage," said Thomas, who still lives in Cloverly where she grew up.

94

HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

Map Traces Family Legacy, Local Heritage



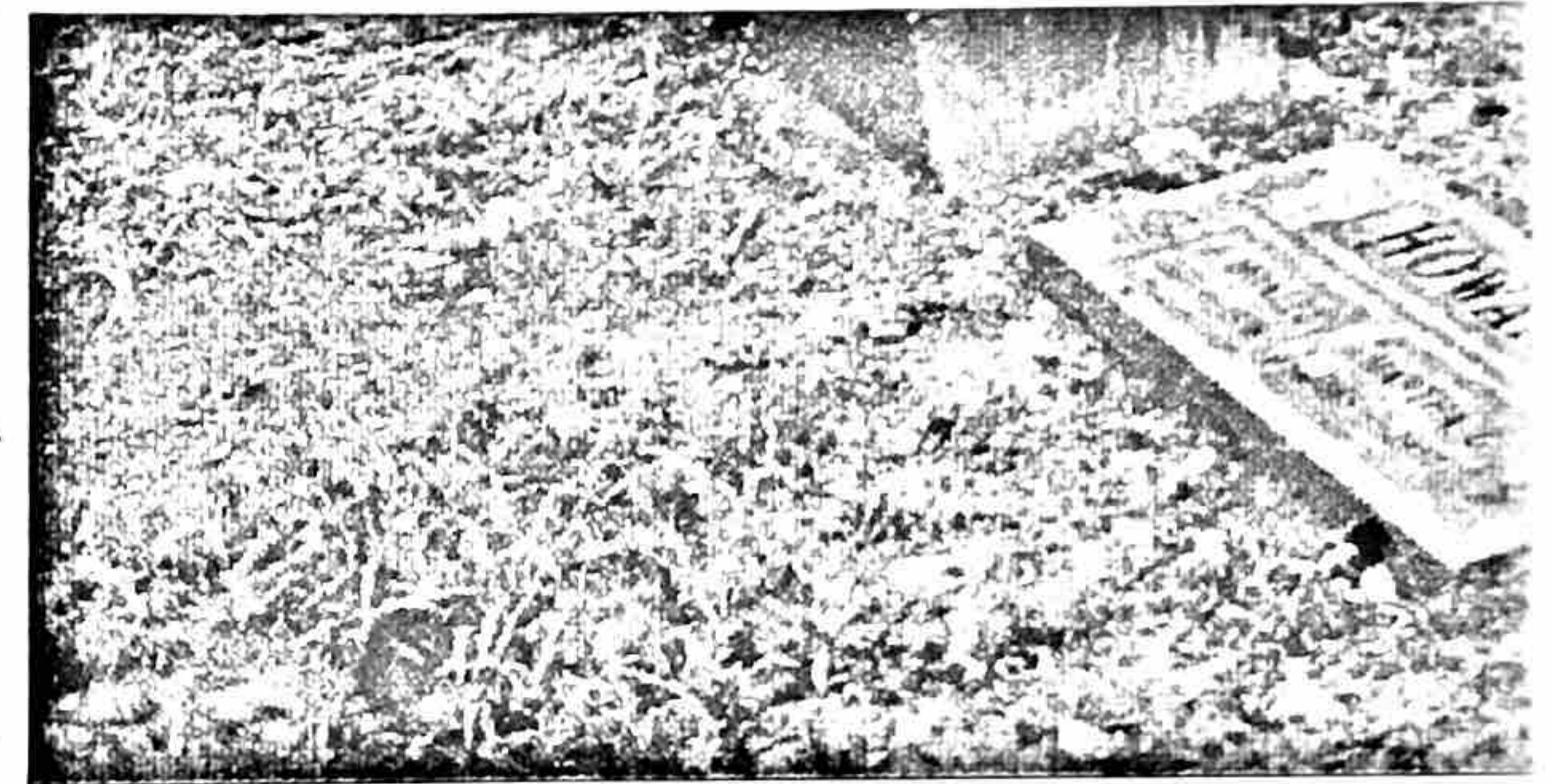
Howard Chapel Site Is Part Of Hidden Black History

By MICHAEL H. COTTMAN
Washington Post Staff Writer

The 100-year-old gravestones in the weathered cemetery on Howard Chapel Road just outside Brookeville are faded by time, but as Mable Thomas walked across the earth where her ancestors are buried, her memories of the stories she was told about them as a child were strong and clear.

"We were told about our ancestors who were led away in slavery," said Thomas, who visits the family cemetery often. "We were told about our great-grandmother who was bought out of slavery by her husband, a free man; a grand-uncle who was sold into slavery before the Civil War and came back. We're just trying to keep our history alive."

Thomas's family—the Howards and the Hollands—trace their roots in upcounty Montgomery to the early 1800s. Their story is one of determination, persistence and preservation of family unity, even though the family is spread across the United States and Canada as a result of slavery.



The Howard Chapel cemetery—and the nearby deteriorating houses that sit on what was once family-owned property—is one of 150 African American historical sites in Montgomery County recently documented in a study by the Lincoln Park Historical Foundation/Society.

The cemetery is included in a map of the sites, which were largely compiled by Anita Neal Powell, 48, founder and president of the grass-roots historical society. The society operates from her home in Rockville's historically black Lincoln Park neighborhood.

Compiling the map was necessary, Powell said, to preserve the African American heritage and locate the many lost and overlooked historically black communities of Montgomery County.

Powell, who works for the federal government, spent five years compiling the sites, using a \$3,400 grant from the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. Montgomery County government printed the map.

Powell and family members hope the county will designate Howard Chapel cemetery and the surrounding land a historic site.

County officials say the decision could be made by the end of the year. Powell also would like to see some historical recognition from the state.

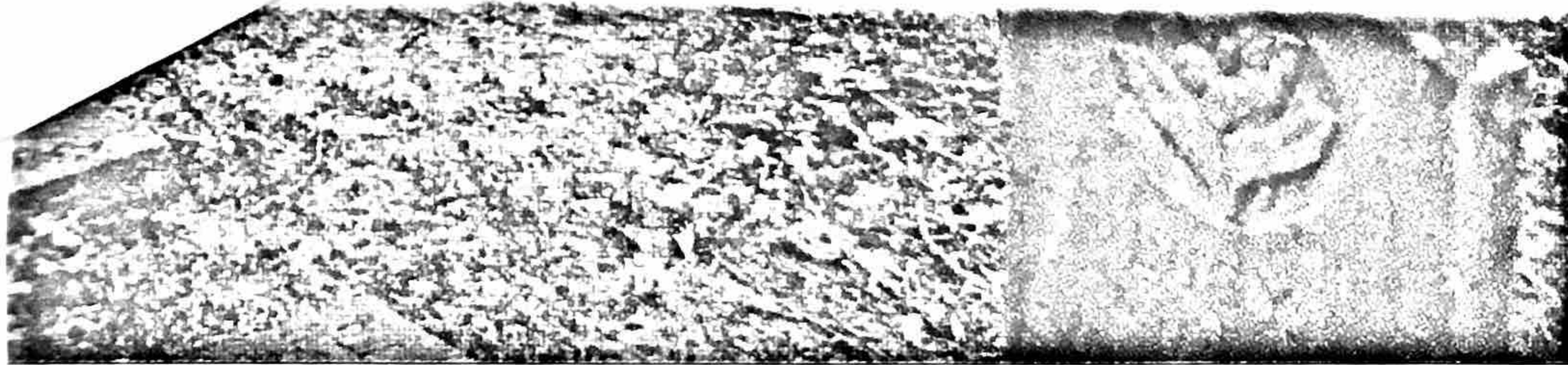
"This area is unique because of the Railroad-Canada connection," Powell said. "When I think of the area, I think of a lily-white area, but there are black communities here."

"If we didn't have this history, we wouldn't know the significance of this cemetery."

Because of sympathetic slaveholders, Montgomery County served as an Underground Railroad point to Canada and other locations that included Sandy Spring and other locations in the county. The network was the network of safe routes for slaves seeking freedom in the North.

Sites listed on the map include churches, parks and schools in the county from Poolesville to the historic black district in Chatham. The Colored School in White Plains is also on the list.

94

HOWARD CHAPEL CEMETERY
HOWARD CHAPEL RD & ELTON
FARM ROAD

is ongoing and a
nd of the year. Pow-
d other sites receive
ounty and state.
of the Underground
these two families,"
Montgomery County,
ere are a lot of hid-
s of history here.
y, we'd never know
or these houses."
lers, Montgomery
d Railroad starting
ations, with stops
more than 20 other
erground Railroad
es used to harbor
rth before the Civil
de neighborhoods,
a stretch across the
esda. It includes a
Chase, Burnt Mills
Smith's Tavern in

Muncaster Mill and slave quarters and Under-
ground Railroad stops in Colesville, Whites Ferry,
Dickerson, Germantown, Rockville and Hyatt-
stown.

Many of the sites are indicated by name only on
the map because buildings and identifying land-
marks no longer exist.

Ross M. Kimmel, a supervisor with the Maryland
Department of Natural Resources, who first learned
of the Howard Chapel site about 20 years ago, said
researching Montgomery County's black history is
challenging but rewarding.

"It's great history and it's out here, you just have
to dig for it," Kimmel said.

Michele Naru, a preservation planner for the
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Com-
mission, started surveys of Howard Chapel in 1999
and began formulating a history of the property.

Howard Chapel, she said, is "an important Afri-
can American resource within the county," but one
of many significant historical sites Powell was able
to uncover.

"It's a wonderful evolution of where we've been
and where we are now," Naru said.

The Howard Chapel property is on 204 acres
owned by the Maryland Department of Natural Re-
sources and is part of the Patuxent River State Park,
near the Howard County line. The site includes the
cemetery, a primary residence, known as the Gaith-
er/Howard house, which was built in 1790; two ad-
ditions to the original house; and a second stone re-
sidence. The property once included Howard Chapel
Church.

The property originally was owned by the Gaith-
er family. In 1857, a slave and field foreman of the
Gaither family, Enoch George Howard, bought free-
dom for himself and his wife, Harriet, with \$3,000 of
his savings, obtained from selling produce he culti-
vated from a small plot of land that had been given
to him.

Later, the couple bought freedom for their five
children. A few years later, they bought the Gaith-
er/Howard house and 289 acres of land from the
Gaither family. During his lifetime, Enoch Howard
acquired at least 600 acres of land and donated
some of it for a school.

When he died in 1895, the Montgomery County
Sentinel wrote that "he was an old and highly re-

Thomas, along with other relatives, started the
family reunions in 1982 and the event has attracted
hundreds of people over the years.

For the past few years, Thomas, a descendant of
one of Enoch Howard's sisters, and other family
members have been caring for the cemetery
grounds because county and state officials don't
have the funds to continue the upkeep.

"I do wish they would put a fence around the cem-
etry because at least 12 headstones have been sto-
len," Thomas said.

John Smith, a descendent of a nephew of Enoch
Howard who works as an adviser to County Council
member Philip Andrews (D-Rockville), said he
looks forward to the family reunions—which al-
ternate between Montgomery County and Cana-
da—because it continues the family connection and
reminds the younger Howards and Hollands about
their legacy.

"This history is so important, and important for
young people, because it grounds them in their
roots," said Smith, standing in front of the cemetery
and proudly displaying a photograph of a recent
family reunion in Gaithersburg attended by more
than 400 family members.

"It says to me—and others—that there is a great
tradition here that has been hidden, but now it is
coming to the surface," he said.

*Copies of the map, "African American Heritage,
a Journey Through History: A Guide to African
American Sites and Attractions," are available
at Montgomery County's Conference and Visitors
Center, libraries, regional services centers, the
county executive's office and the Lincoln Park
Historical Foundation/Society. For more
information, call 240-777-2500 or 301-251-2747.*