

NR listed 7/24/92

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

historic name: Couch-Marshall House

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

street & number: 505 West Monroe

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Magnolia

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Columbia code: AR 027 zip code: 71753

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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**Summary**

The Couch-Marshall House is a two-story, wood frame residential structure constructed in the vernacular architectural idiom known as the Plain Traditional style. Its irregular plan is largely due to its evolution from a small, gable roof Greek Revival cottage to a large Plain Traditional house with Queen Anne Revival influence, as reflected in such characteristics as the picturesque, rambling floor plan and the turned wood detail on the wrap-around front porch. A total of four brick chimney flues rise through the combination hipped/gable roofline at various points within the building. The composition shingle roof shelters walls that are covered with both weatherboarding and novelty siding, and the entire structure is supported upon brick piers, the interstices of which have been filled with concrete block.

**Elaboration**

The Couch-Marshall House is a two-story, wood frame residential structure constructed in the vernacular architectural idiom known as the Plain Traditional style. Its irregular plan is largely due to its evolution from a small, gable roof Greek Revival cottage to a large Plain Traditional house with Queen Anne Revival influence, as reflected in such characteristics as the picturesque, rambling floor plan and the turned wood detail on the wrap-around front porch. A total of four brick chimney flues rise through the combination hipped/gable roofline at various points within the building. The composition shingle roof shelters walls that are covered with both weatherboarding and novelty siding, and the entire structure is supported upon brick piers, the interstices of which have been filled with concrete block.

The principal elevation of the house faces north, though the rambling, irregular plan responds to both Monroe Street to the north and Clay Avenue to the east. The plan overall is formed principally by a large hipped roof section to the south that is intersected at its northern side by another large, gable roof section that extends to the west and connects with the smaller, perpendicular gable roof section that was the original house on this site. On the northern elevation, the single-story, shed roof, wrap-around porch is accented at the northeast corner by a four-sided projection that is capped with a hipped roof. The wall surfaces beneath the porch feature a single entrance on each of the

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northern and eastern elevations, and another in the northern wall of the hipped roof section to the south. A single one-over-one wood sash window lights the wall to the east, and around the corner, two more light the wall to the north. A tall, steep wall dormer rises above each side of the wrap-around porch, and each dormer is fenestrated with a single, central window, covered with wood shutters. To the west, a projecting, gable roof section is fenestrated with two one-over-one wood sash windows on the first story and a single, central window of identical sash configuration on the upper story. The western end of the elevation is finished by two symmetrically-placed one-over-one wood sash windows.

The eastern elevation is composed of the wall dormer and wrap-around porch (as described above) to the north and the hipped roof section - with its projecting gable and c. 1920 Craftsman-style addition - to the south. The wall next to the porch is fenestrated with two symmetrically-placed one-over-one wood sash windows. The projecting gable is fenestrated with a single central wood sash window on each story, and the single-story, Craftsman-style addition at the southern end features a centrally-placed bank of three three-over-one wood sash windows.

The southern elevation is composed of the gable end of the Craftsman addition to the east, above and to the west of which is the asymmetrical rear of the main structure, with the western end being finished by the projecting gable end of the original house structure. The end of the Craftsman addition is fenestrated with a bank of five three-over-one wood sash windows, with a shed roof porch projecting from the western side. The gable wall above is blank, as is the second gable that is recessed to the rear. The shed roof section to the west of the side porch is sheathed with board-and-batten except for the two large, multi-pane modern windows next to the single-leaf entry at the rear of the porch. The gable end of the original house to the west is fenestrated with two tall, four-over-four wood sash windows placed symmetrically beneath the broken returns. Another shed roof porch supported on wood posts projects from the western elevation of this section also, and the side of the projecting western gable completes the elevation.

The western elevation consists of the shed roof porch on the Craftsman addition to the south, echoed by the shed roof porch on the original gable roof section to the north, next to the later projecting gable. One single-leaf entrance punctuates the wall beneath the porch on the Craftsman addition, while two four-over-

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four wood sash windows flank the central entrance on the original house. The entrance itself is surmounted by a four-pane transom and flanked by three-pane half-sidelights. A later room at the northern end of the porch is sheathed with board-and-batten, and the taller gable end to the north is fenestrated with a single, central wood sash window on each story.

Significant exterior details include the turned posts and cornice detail on the front porch; the Craftsman-style exposed rafters on both of the western shed roof porches; and the double-entry with half-sidelights and transom on the rear of the building, a feature typical of the Greek Revival style.

The interior of the house has suffered some alterations since the principal construction date of c. 1890 in that some partitions have been added and certain windows and doors have been moved to accommodate changes in the floor plan. However, the bulk of the interior has been restored, including original door and window trim, mantelpieces, pocket doors and turned trim details.

Other than those already noted, the principal alterations to the c. 1890 structure are the addition of the Craftsman-style addition on the eastern side of the southern elevation, the two shed roof porches on the western (rear) elevation, and the filled section on the southern elevation, between the Craftsman addition and the original house, which was originally an open gallery.

There are two contributing outbuildings on the property that are associated with the period of significance of the Couch-Marshall House. A gable-roof, frame garage constructed c. 1935 lies approximately 25 feet south of the eastern Craftsman addition on the southern elevation of the house. The garage is covered with corrugated tin and is sheathed with a wide, simple-drop novelty siding. A large, folding wood door faces Clay Street.

A shower house was also constructed c. 1935 at the rear of the c. 1840 projecting gable end on the southern elevation. Constructed of small, round, saddle-notched logs, the shower house measures approximately 6' X 8' and is covered by a composition-shingle gable roof. The shower house is presently located approximately 100 feet to the south of its original orientation.

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Cathryn R. Byford
Signature of certifying official

6-21-92
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====
6. Function or Use
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Historic: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Domestic Multiple Dwelling
Current : Domestic Sub: Multiple Dwelling
Other: Function Site Weddings, parties, etc.

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7. Description  
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Architectural Classification:

Queen Anne  
Greek Revival  
Craftsman

Other Description: Plain Traditional

Materials: foundation Brick, Concrete roof Asphalt  
walls Weatherboard other Brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1840 - c. 1935

Significant Dates: c.1890

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property: Approximately one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

Table with 4 columns: A, B, C, D. Values include 15, 477200, 3680560.

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

East 1/3, Lot 268 & East 1/3 of North 1\2, Lot 275; Original survey of the City of Magnolia.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Ken Story, National Register Coordinator

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 06/19/92

Street & Number: 225 E. Markham, Suite 300 Telephone: (501) 324-9346

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201



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### Summary

The Couch-Marshall House, constructed in its present appearance c. 1890, is locally significant under Criterion C as the best surviving example of a Plain Traditional style residence with Queen Anne Revival influences. Its irregular plan, steep wall dormers, and both turned and jig-sawn porch detail combine to create a unique overall design that is unparalleled within the community of Magnolia, the county seat of Columbia County.

### Elaboration

The city of Magnolia, the county seat of Columbia County (founded 1852), was established around 1854, when the previous county seat six miles to the west was abandoned in favor of this site, which was more centrally-located with respect to the county boundaries. The entire county passed through the Civil War relatively unscathed, as not only did it not lose many men to the cause, but no actual conflagrations occurred within its borders. The town grew slowly after the Civil War, until the arrival in 1882 of the branch connecting Magnolia with the main line of the St. Louis, Arkansas and Texas Railroad that had been laid through the northern section of the county in the previous year. A short period of prosperity resulted, brought on not only by the increased accessibility to national and international markets for the locally-grown cotton crop but also by the concomitant exploitation of the plentiful but heretofore remote stands of virgin timber nearby.

Magnolia arguably entered its greatest period of physical growth during this period, manifesting itself in, among other ways, a spurt of new residential construction. Irvin and Lucy Couch, the parents of Thomas G. Couch (who built this house), relocated to the Magnolia vicinity in 1850 from their ancestral home in Georgia, though it appears that they first settled on a farm somewhere outside of the city itself. Their son Thomas was their fourth child, born on February 28, 1852. After a "fair education" in the local schools, young Thomas decided to farm the family homestead before setting out on his own, which he did until he was twenty-three years of age. He left for a short period of time to farm in Lamar County, Texas before he returned to the Magnolia area once again, eventually settling in town and forming a grocery business with a Mr. J. B. Curry. Couch pursued a variety of business opportunities in a short span of time thereafter, eventually settling on a partnership with Thomas J. Blewster in 1886 to form a mercantile business that became one of the largest and most significant mercantile businesses in the southwestern part of the state within just a few years.

Though Couch married Maggie Bayless of Columbia County in 1880, the original part of the house dates from well before this time (c. 1840), and so it is

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reasonable to conclude both that the young couple lived in what is now the rear part of the house during their first years of marriage and that Couch chose to expand the residence only after his partnership with Blewster (which later also included Couch's brother Sanford O. Couch) proved successful. Interviews with both descendants and long-time residents of Magnolia who remember the Couch family have produced the c. 1840 date for the original, Greek Revival part of the house that now forms the rear. These same sources have documented the Couch's expansion of the house, and both deed and tax records have corroborated their claims. Furthermore, we also know that the Couch family retained ownership of the house until 1963, though it ceased to function as a single family dwelling around 1920, when it was divided into rental apartments (though family members continued to reside in the building at various times until 1963). It functions presently as both a rental residence and a function site for such events as weddings, private parties, etc.

The Couch-Marshall House, though the earlier section was constructed c. 1840, attained its present appearance c. 1890, when the house was expanded from a simple, Greek Revival "cottage" to a much larger residence that displayed the influence of both traditional, vernacular architectural influences and the high-style idiom then in favor for such construction, the Queen Anne Revival. The steep, gabled wall dormers, the projecting gabled bays and the relatively simple exterior cornice and corner trim are features common to traditional house construction throughout Arkansas from various periods; however, the rambling, asymmetrical plan, the complicated, almost jumbled roofline, the wrap-around porch and the abundance of turned and jig-sawn detail on the porch, and around the windows and doors all reflect the influence of the Queen Anne Revival style that had become popular in Arkansas around 1880 and that continued to be one of the preferred styles -- if not the preferred style -- for residential construction in the state until the turn of the century. The Couch-Marshall House remains, without question, the best example in Magnolia of the synthesis of what has become known as a Plain Traditional style of architecture with the nationally-popular Queen Anne Revival style.

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### Bibliography

*Deed Records*, Columbia County Courthouse, Magnolia, Arkansas.

Goodspeed's *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, Chicago, Nashville and St. Louis, 1990.

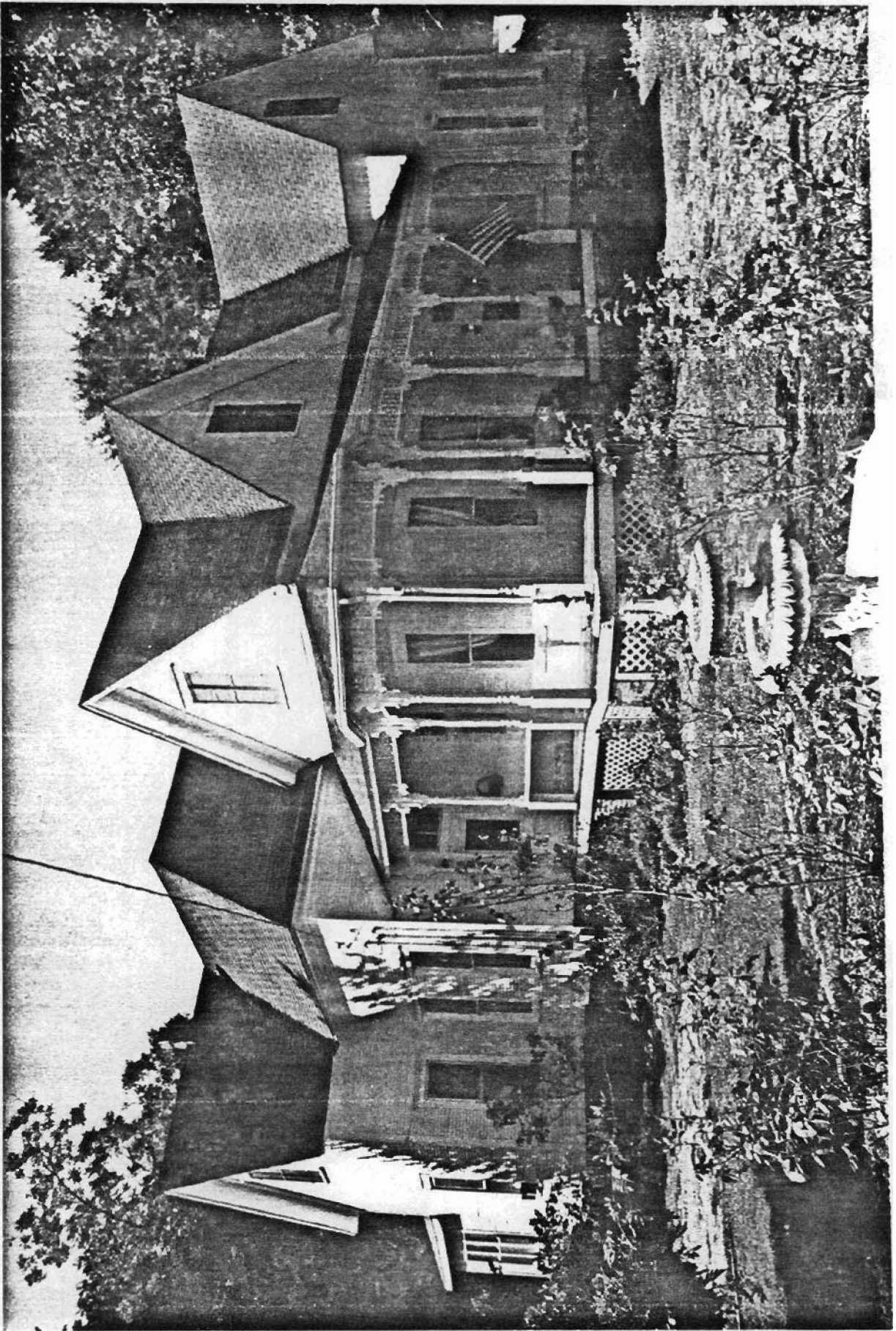
Herndon, Dallas T., *Centennial History of Arkansas*, Chicago, Little Rock, 1922.

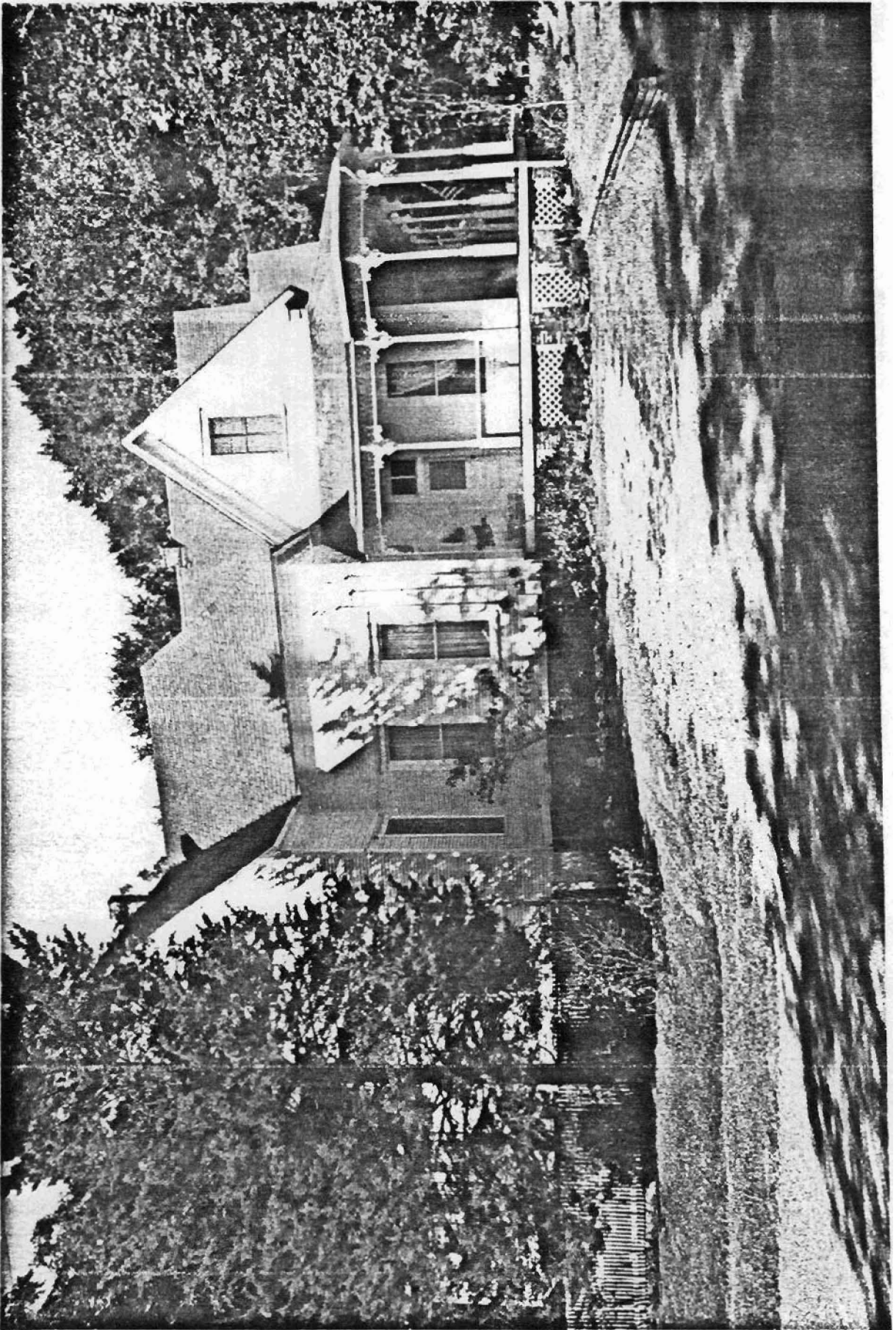
Interview with Kathleen Paschall Fullenwider; May, 1991.

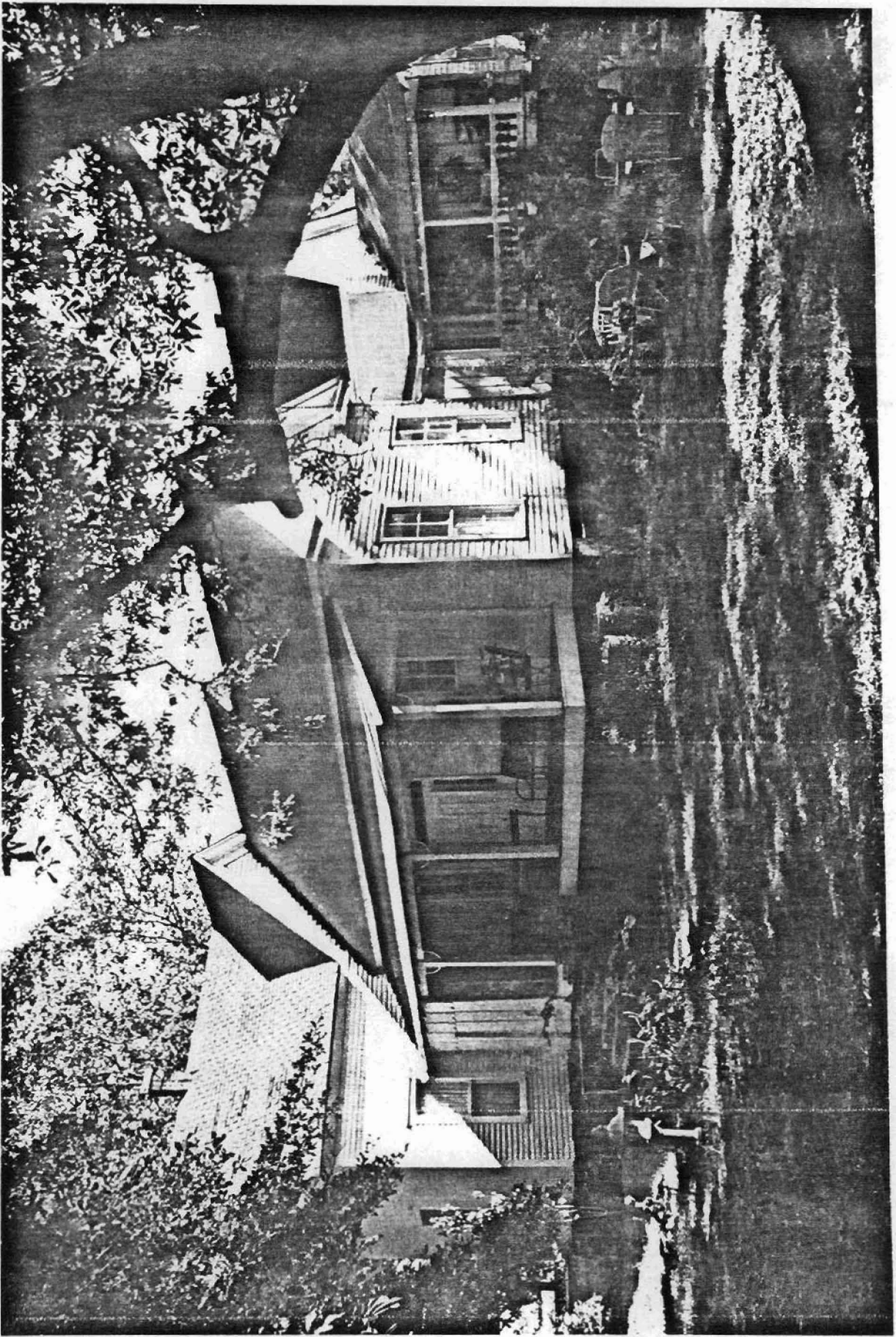
Interview with Margaret Couch McMahan; April, 1991.

Interview with Hubert Franks; April, 1991.

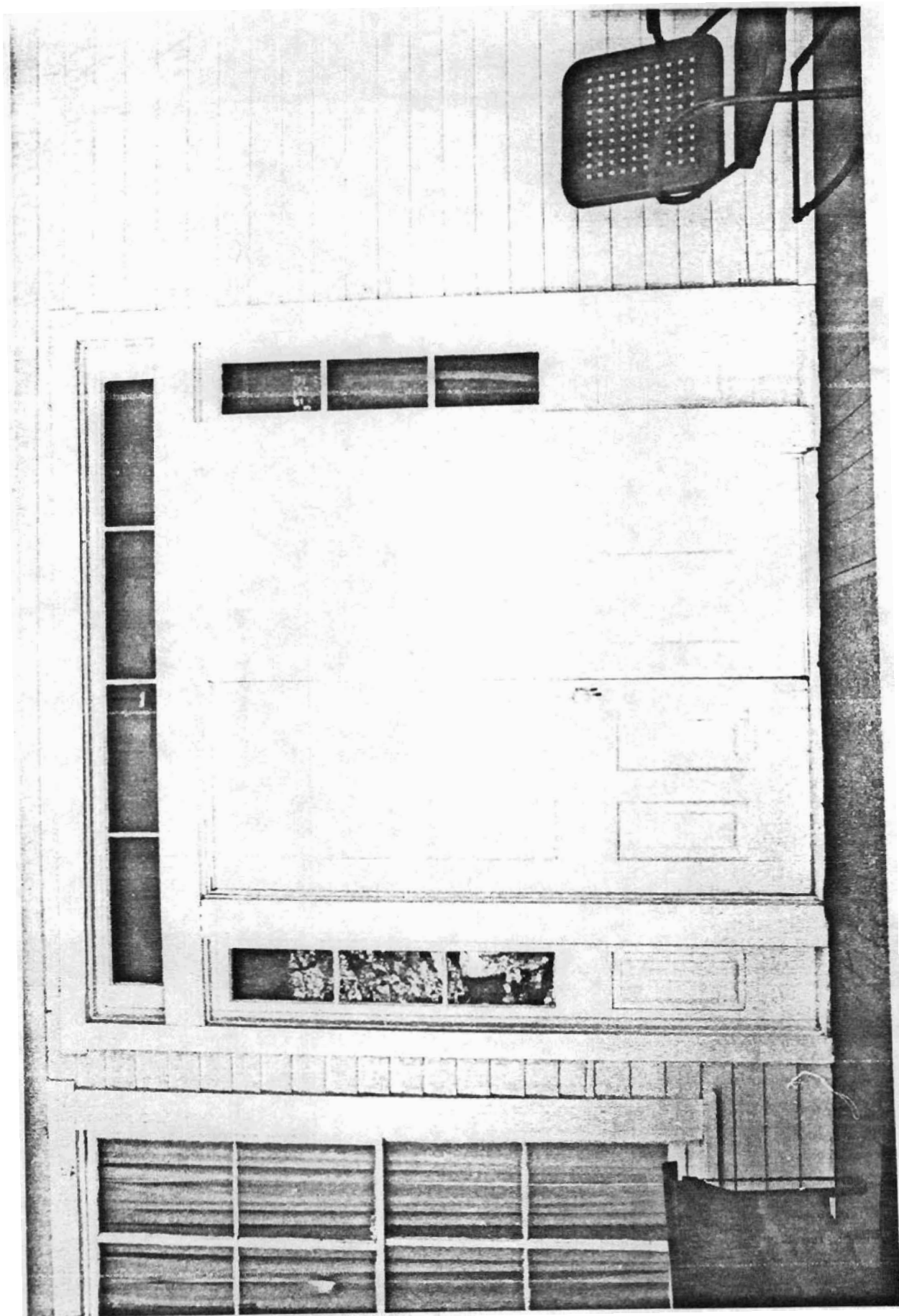
*Tax Records*, Columbia County Courthouse, Magnolia, Arkansas.



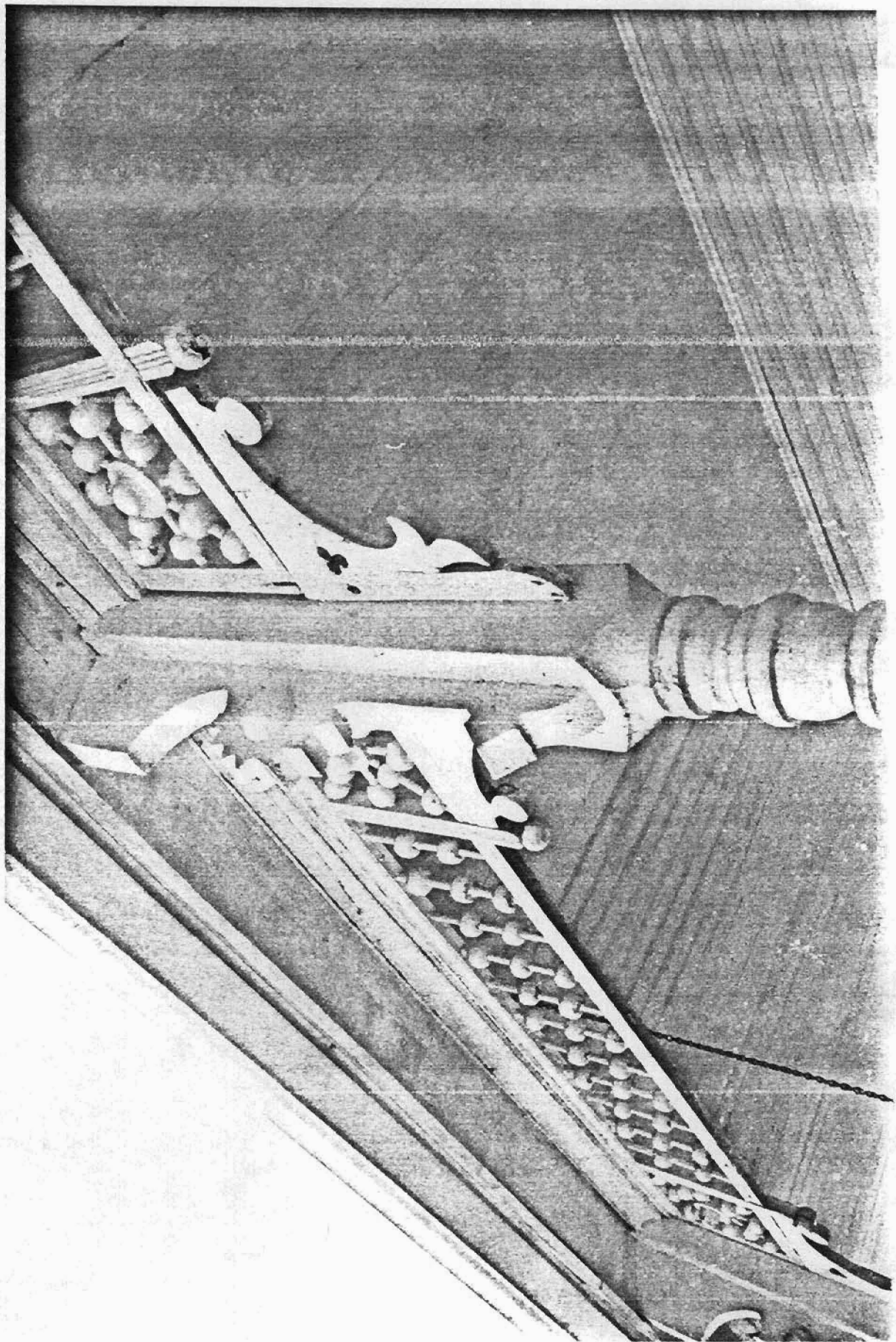


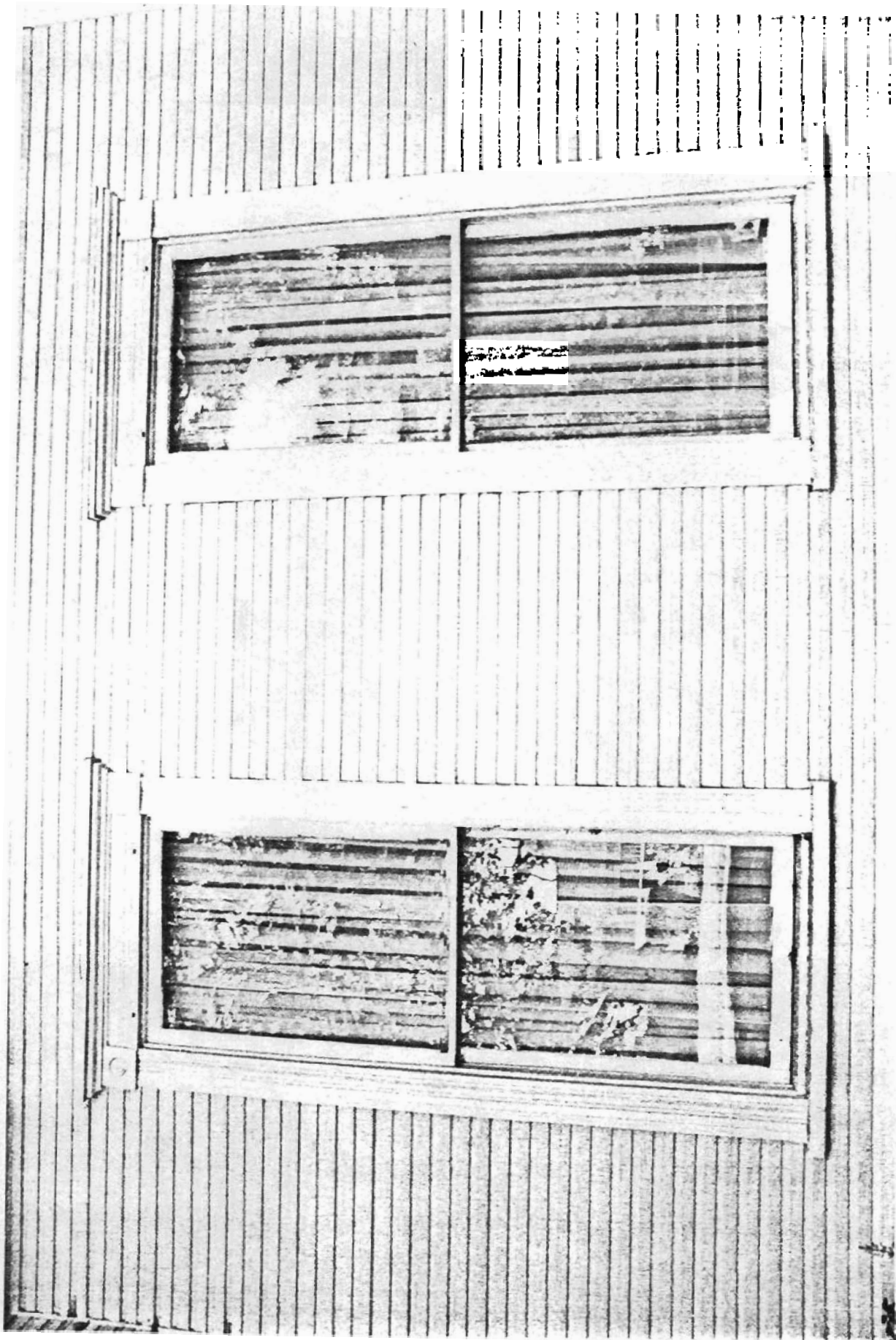


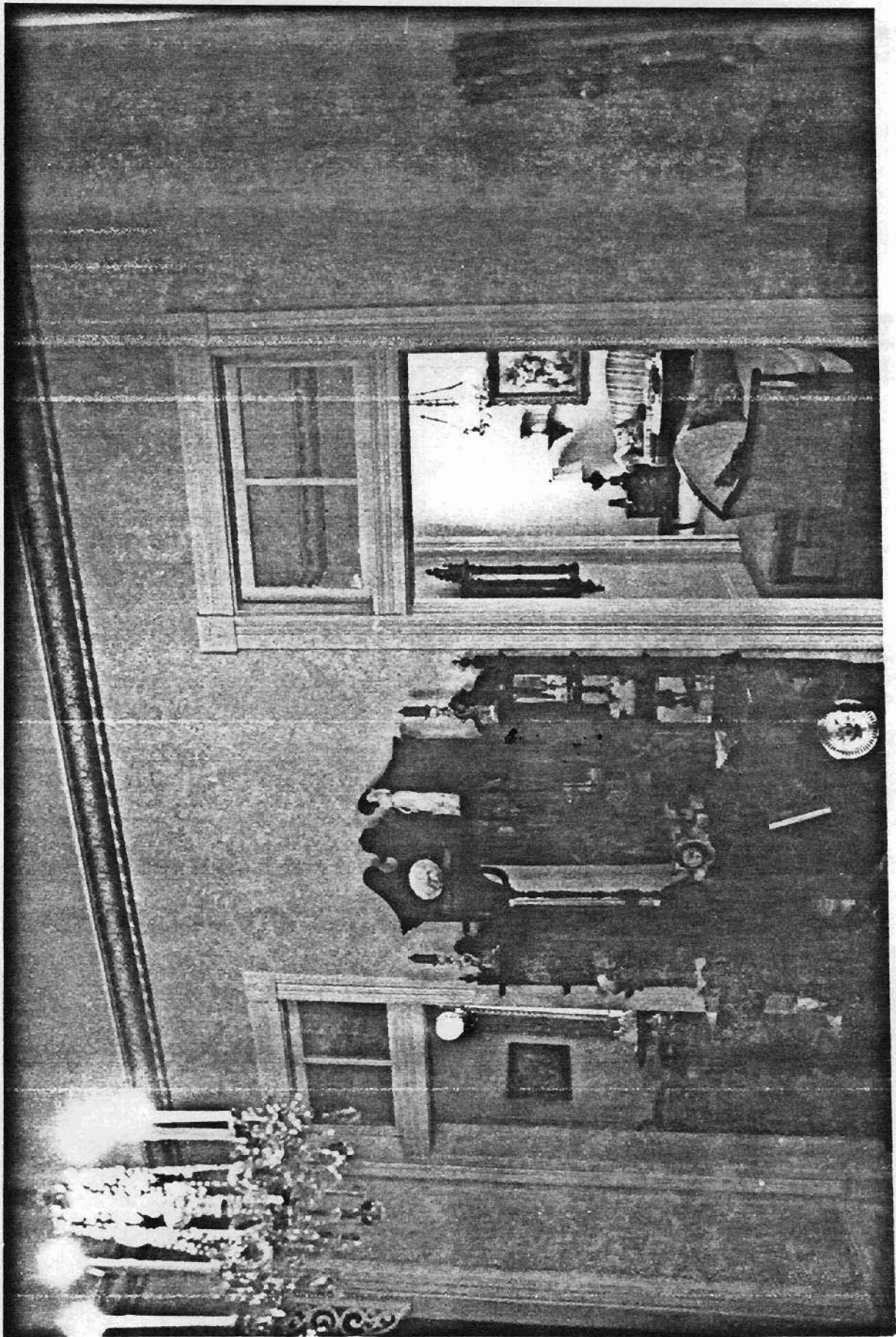


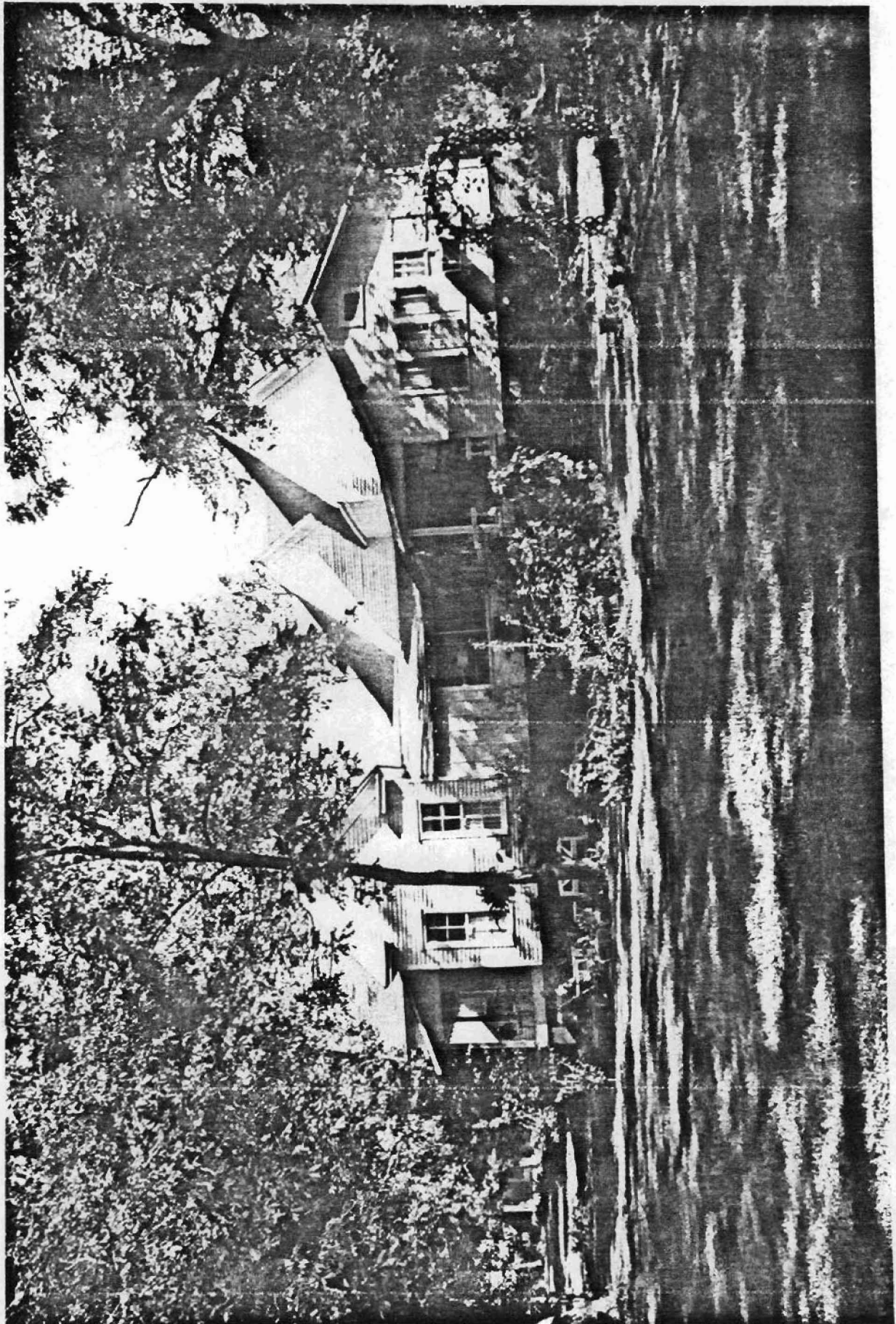












Camp-Magnolia 11

House

Magnolia,

Arkansas

DTM

15/477B00/

368056D

(MACEDONIA)  
7350 III NE

220 000  
FEET

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2.9 MI. TO ARK. 344.



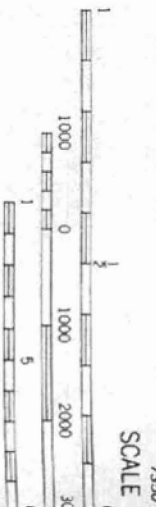
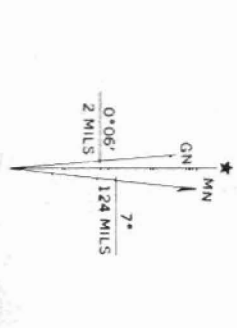
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Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1968

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



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A FOLDER DESCRIBING PHOTOGRAPHIC MAPS