

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Robins, Frank E., House

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

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street & number: 567 Locust Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Conway

vicinity: N/A

state: AR

county: Faulkner

code: AR 045

zip code: 72032

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</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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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 A. Slater _____ 4-1-94
Signature of certifying official 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

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6. Function or Use
=====

Historic: Domestic _____ Sub: Single Dwelling _____

Current : Domestic _____ Sub: Single Dwelling _____

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Brick other Wood

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

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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: B,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Communications
Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1922- 1944

Significant Dates: 1922

Significant Person(s): Robins, Frank E.

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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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: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>550930</u>	<u>3882520</u>	B	___	___	___
C	___	___	___	D	___	___	___

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

Lots 1, 2, and 3 of Block 49, A. P. Robinson's Plan for Conway, Faulkner County, Arkansas.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes the residence, the garage outbuilding, and all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Patrick Zollner, National Register Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 03/23/94

Street & Number: 323 Center, 1600 Tower Bldg. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Built in 1922, the Robins House is a two-and-a-half story, frame-constructed, brick-veneer residence designed in the Colonial Revival style of architecture. With the exception of the enclosure of the sleeping porches, the exterior is basically unaltered since construction. The interior plan was converted into four apartments in 1966, but still features its principal decorative detailing including a Colonial Revival mantelpiece, a turned-baluster staircase, and French doors. An associated garage outbuilding is also included in this nomination. Located at 567 Locust Street in Conway, the Robins House is currently undergoing restoration that will essentially return the house to its 1922 single-family plan.

Elaboration

Built in 1922, the Robins House is a two-and-a-half story, frame-constructed, brick-veneer residence designed in the Colonial Revival style of architecture. The irregular-plan house rests upon a continuous brick foundation and is covered by a composition-shingled gable roof that is bellcast with two hipped-roof sleeping porch projections. There are two interior brick chimneys.

The front, or eastern, elevation is symmetrically arranged and features a central entrance composed of a single-leaf door surrounded by large fluted pilasters and a three-pane transom. Above, the massive entablature features a wide frieze ornamented with triglyphs and a projecting cornice. This entrance is accessed by a brick-parapeted, concrete stoop that extends to the southern terminus of the brick facade and wraps around to the sleeping porch. To either side of the entrance, the first-story wall is fenestrated by a group of five ten-pane casement windows that are single-hinged and constructed of wood. The second-story is lighted by a pair of six-over-six double-hung windows above the two first-story groupings respectively and a group of three eight-pane, single-hinged casement windows above the entrance. The wide frieze band is decorated by a delicate dentil course underneath the cornice. On this elevation, the roofline is punctuated by three ornate gabled dormers that feature boxed returns, a full entablature with dentil course, corner pilasters, and nine-over-six windows with an arched upper sash.

The southern end of the house is defined by a two-story, hipped-roof sleeping porch. The eastern elevation of this wood-frame porch has a central single-leaf, eighteen-pane door with two rows of four-pane sidelights and a seven-pane transom. The second story is fenestrated by a group of three six-pane, single-hinged casement windows flanked by three-pane sidelights. Pilasters defined the outer row of sidelights and corner trim, while the dentilled entablature

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treatment is continued underneath the eaves. Fenestration for the southern elevation originally consisted of two sets of three tall eight-pane, single-hinged casement windows flanked on the corners by four-pane sidelights and crowned by a multiple-pane transom. The upper story followed this configuration; however, the casement windows were of the shorter six-pane variety with three-pane sidelights and no transom. Currently, only the eastern half of this arrangement remains; the southern half having been enclosed with simple-drop siding for bathrooms in the 1966 apartment conversion. Consequently, the western elevation of the porch was likewise enclosed with only the upper corner sidelights to suggest its original full fenestration. Now, there is a small, aluminum-frame, horizontal-sash window on each story, and a single-leaf entrance on the second story that allows access onto the iron porch that was added at the same time of the enclosure.

The rear, or western, elevation is partially obscured by the 1966 porch that provides a fire escape for the upstairs rooms. Fenestration is conventional with two sets of three six-over-six double-hung windows per story. The northernmost set on the first story is composed of smaller-size windows. The hipped-roof, sleeping porch projection at the northern end of the elevation, which was most likely screened originally, was also enclosed with drop siding in 1966. A group of four eight-pane, single-hinged casement windows is located on the first story of the southern elevation (perhaps recycled from the southern porch). The second story on this elevation contains a single-leaf entry onto the iron balcony and a small six-over-six double-hung window. At the southern end of the western elevation, a single-leaf door leads below to the partial basement, while a similar door to the north leads to the interior. Otherwise, this facade is interrupted only by a small modern aluminum-frame window and a pair of six-over-six double-hung windows on the upper story. The northern elevation of the porch is lighted by a single aluminum-frame window on each level with the upper window being smaller.

The northern elevation of the main house is asymmetrically fenestrated and features an off center single-leaf entrance. A fully glazed, fifteen-pane door is overshadowed by an interesting bellcast hipped roof that is supported by two massive curved brackets. To the west of this entrance is a pair of aluminum-frame, horizontal-sash replacement windows, and a single six-over-six double-hung window is placed to the east. The second story duplicates this arrangement though the pair consists of original six-over-six windows and a much smaller six-over-six window is used above the doorway. A regular-size six-over-six window is placed near the peak of the gable end, which also displays boxed returns with full entablature and dentil course treatment.

In 1966, the house was converted into four apartments, and the interior plan somewhat altered. The original ten foot ceiling height was lowered to eight feet, two bathrooms were added on

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the southern sleeping porch, two kitchens added upstairs, and a few of the walls moved to facilitate these changes. A Colonial Revival-style mantelpiece is the featured decoration of the living room, while the entrance foyer is adorned by the delicate turned balustrade of a three-quarter turn staircase (only the first flight is visible) that is underneath a wide segmental arch with ornamental keystone. A set of French doors leads into the dining room to the north.

To the rear, or west, of the house, an associated hipped-roof garage outbuilding contributes to the nomination. It was constructed at the same time as the residence using matching brick. The current doors are of modern origin, and two open sheds have been attached to the northern and southern elevations.

Located at 567 Locust Street, the Robins House is owned by Paul and Rosalie Revis, who are currently undertaking a restoration of the house that will revert the house to single-family occupancy.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1**Summary**

The Robins House is being nominated under Criterion B with local significance for its association with Frank E. Robins, publisher of the *Log Cabin Democrat* for forty-one years and a noted leader in Conway civic affairs. Under Criterion C, the two-and-a-half story residence is significant as the best example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture in its neighborhood.

Elaboration

The lot at the southwest corner of Locust and Scott Streets is part of the original plan for the town of Conway as laid out by A. P. Robinson in 1871. Conway, an Iron Mountain railroad town in the midst of rich farming country, was incorporated on October 9, 1875 and grew into bustling city. Sometime in the 1890's, the John Robins family moved to this site and erected a residence. In 1916, the widowed Mrs. Robins had this house moved by three mule teams to Oliver Street, which was one street west of Locust. The corner lot was left vacant from 1916 until the current structure was constructed in 1922 by Frank Robins.

John Robins and his wife, Minnie, moved their family to Conway from Tennessee in 1880. John purchased a lumber company along with several sawmills. In 1894, he traded two of these sawmills for the established weekly newspaper, the *Log Cabin*. This paper was founded in 1879 by Able F. Livingston as a weekly paper that espoused the Republican party philosophy. There are two stories regarding the origins of the newspaper's unique name. One relates how Livingston had been a member of the old Whig party, and the log cabin was a symbol of that party. Another states that Livingston was inspired by Colonel Sandy Faulkner's "The Arkansas Traveler" and hoped to infuse into the heart of the readers the same sense of sociability espoused by the mountain squatter.

In the late 1880's, J. W. Underhill became the owner of the *Log Cabin* and subsequently offered his Democratic Party views through this venue. On January 1, 1894, he and Robins essentially traded business careers. Upon Robins' death in June of 1894, his wife, Minnie Freeman Robins, continued to publish the paper for a few months before turning the operation over to O. C. Ludwig. Three years later, Mrs. Robins resumed control of the *Log Cabin*. Interestingly, J. W. Underhill returned to the newspaper business in 1896 by acquiring the *Pollard's Democrat*, which had originated in 1881 as the *Conway Democrat*. In 1899, Underhill married Minnie Robins, and the two papers were published from the same office.

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In June, 1900, a fire destroyed the brick building that housed the two newspapers, and subsequent issues were temporarily printed in the opera house. As a result of the fire, construction of a new building was initiated by Mrs. Underhill, and a single newspaper, the *Log Cabin Democrat*, emerged with its completion fifteen months later. A year later J. W. Underhill's health failed, and Frank E. Robins, the twenty-two year old son of John and Minnie Robins, took over management of the newspaper. When Underhill died in 1906, Frank Robins became editor and purchased his step-father's interest in the paper.

In 1908, Robins began a daily edition of the newspaper to coincide with the opening of the Arkansas State Normal School (now the University of Central Arkansas). On September 14, Robins offered this editorial:

This is the first issue of the daily edition of the *Log Cabin Democrat*. If our intentions are carried out, it will be the poorest issue, because we expect each succeeding issue to be better than the one which preceded it.

Subscription rates were set at ten cents a month delivered, and twenty-five cents a month mailed. Although Robins was interested in politics, he broke from previous tradition and endeavored to maintain a neutral policy for the paper in these matters. Attention to news related to the surrounding rural area was stressed, and at one time, Robins maintained that he had organized the largest group of country correspondents in the world, the number reaching 114 in 1938.

Frank Robins was educated in the Conway public schools and Hendrix College. In addition to his role as newspaper owner and editor, Robins served as mayor of Conway from 1905 to 1908 and an alderman for several years. He was a member of the waterworks improvement board and the Conway Palarm highway district, served as president of the Conway School Board, and was identified with the Elks, Masons, and the Rotary Club.

Along with his brother, R. W. Robins, Frank was instrumental in forming the Conway Corporation in 1929 to promote education and aid such institutions located in Conway. The corporation conceived the idea of capitalizing the earnings of the Municipal Electric System over a period of years and issuing bonds against these earnings. This approach ensured the financial stability and permanent siting of both Hendrix and Central Colleges in Conway. Frank Robins served as director of this corporation until his death on August 30, 1949.

According to Dr. Nolen M. Irby, president of the Arkansas State Teachers College in 1949:

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The city of Conway and all of its institutions and progressive activities have suffered an inestimable loss in the death of Frank Robins, Sr. For he devoted a full and rich life wholly to the welfare and development of this community .

Robins was survived by his wife, Lyde Allinder, and five children that were born between 1906 and 1918. Mrs. Robins lived in their residence at 567 Locust Street until her death in 1964. The *Log Cabin Democrat* survives to this day and is currently managed by Robins' grandson, Frank Robins II.

Thus, under Criterion B, the Robins House is locally significant for its association with the noted Conway newspaper publisher and civic leader, Frank E. Robins. Architecturally, the house is significant as a good example of the later phase of the Colonial Revival style in Arkansas which emphasized a more accurate (though far from exact) interpretation of actual colonial-era residences as opposed to the transitional Queen Anne-plan cottages that were popular around the turn of the century. By virtue of being the best example of this genre its neighborhood, the Frank E. Robins House is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

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Bibliography

Information submitted by Paul and Rosalie Revis, September 1993 and February 1994,
including information taken from the following sources:

Faulkner County: Its Land and People. Faulkner County Historical Society, 1986.

Faulkner County Deed Records

"Faulkner Facts and Findings." Faulkner County Historical Society. Vol. 18, No. 2, Summer
1976.

Interview with Frank E. Robins, III, and his wife, Dorothy, August 6, 1993.

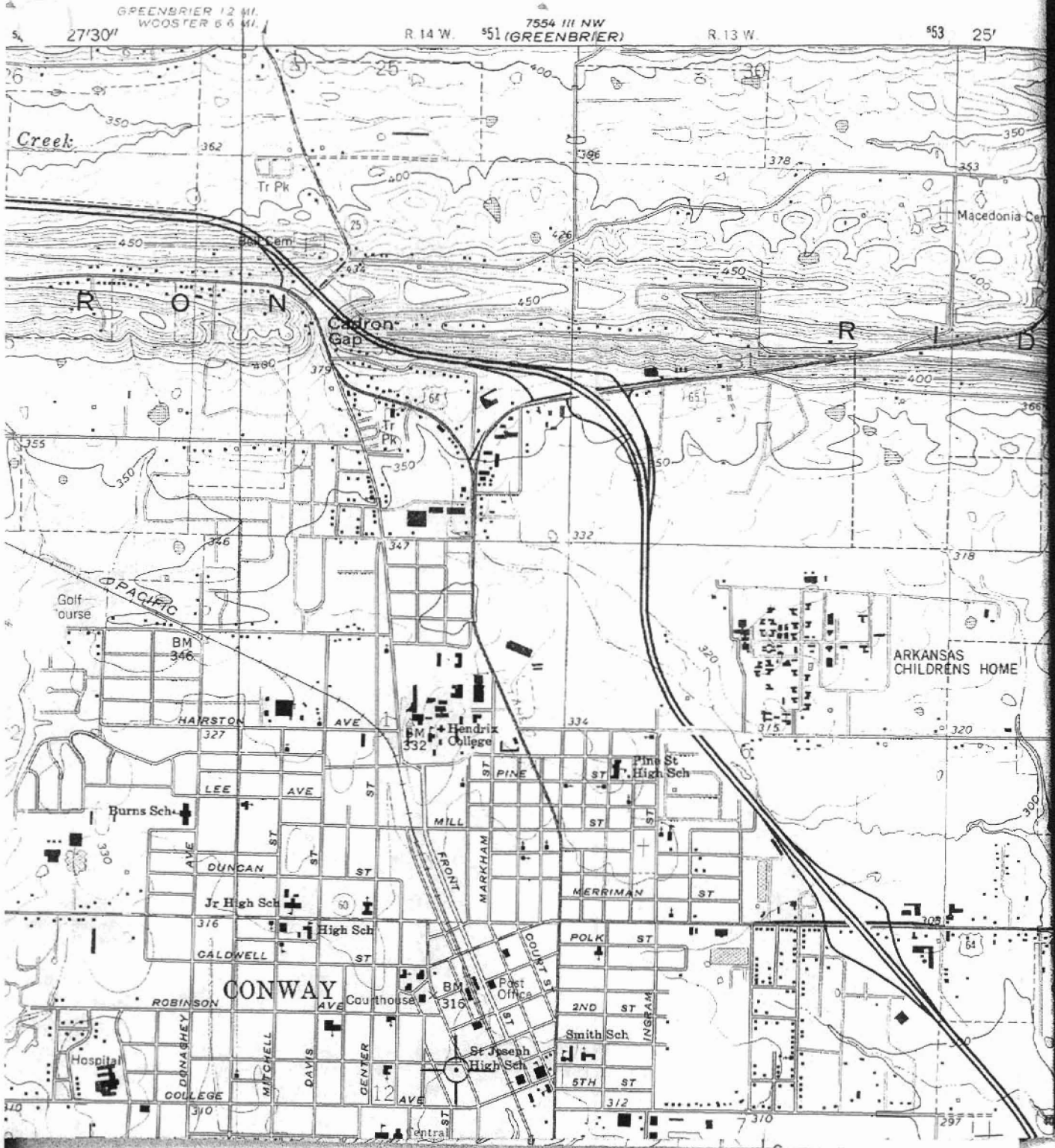
Interview with Nancy Heizman Combs (Frank Robins' granddaughter), August 9, 1993.

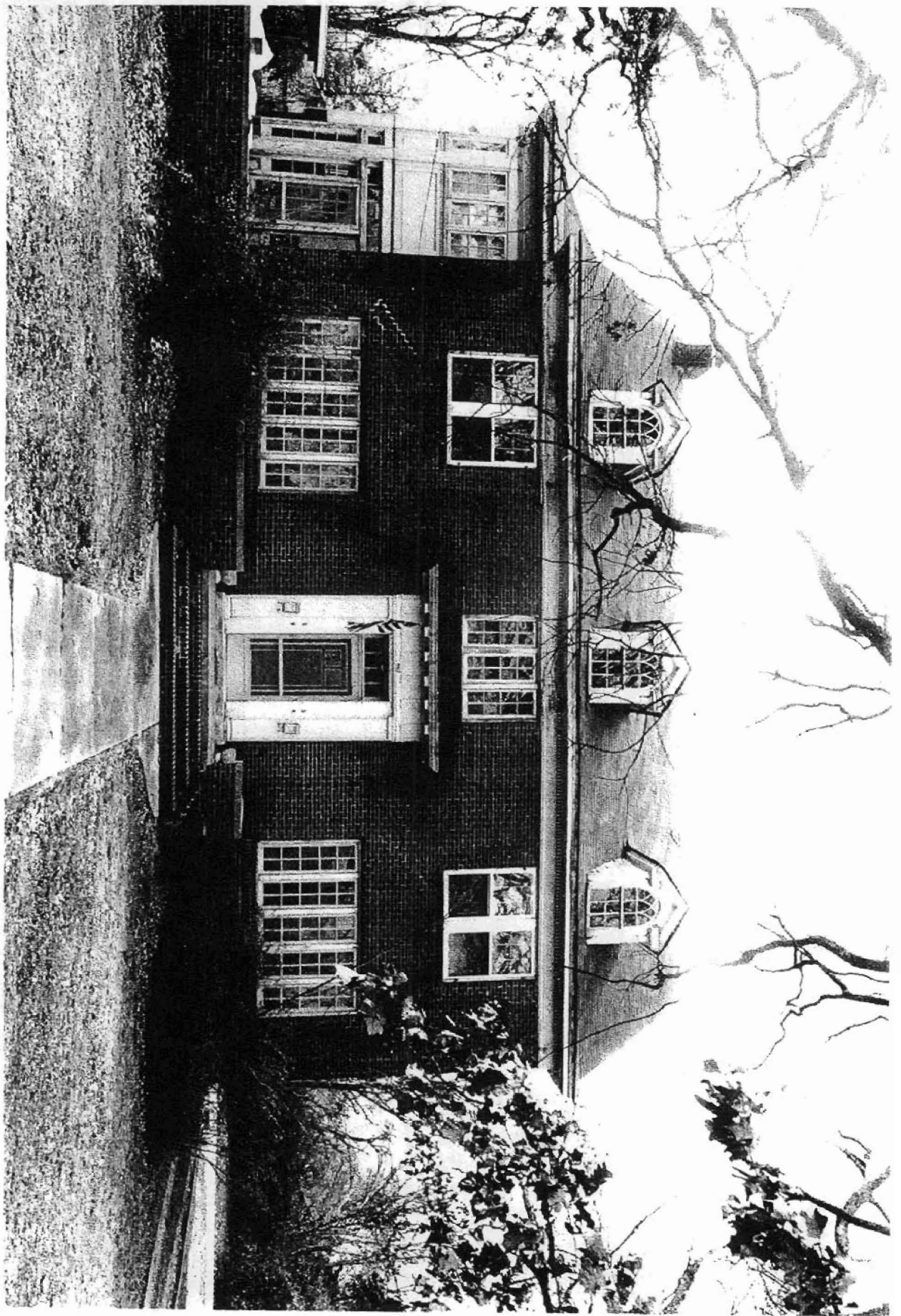
Interview with Mary Virginia Robins Ferguson (Frank Robins' granddaughter), January 7,
1994.

Log Cabin Democrat. March 8, 1940; September 1, 1949; May 28, 1964.

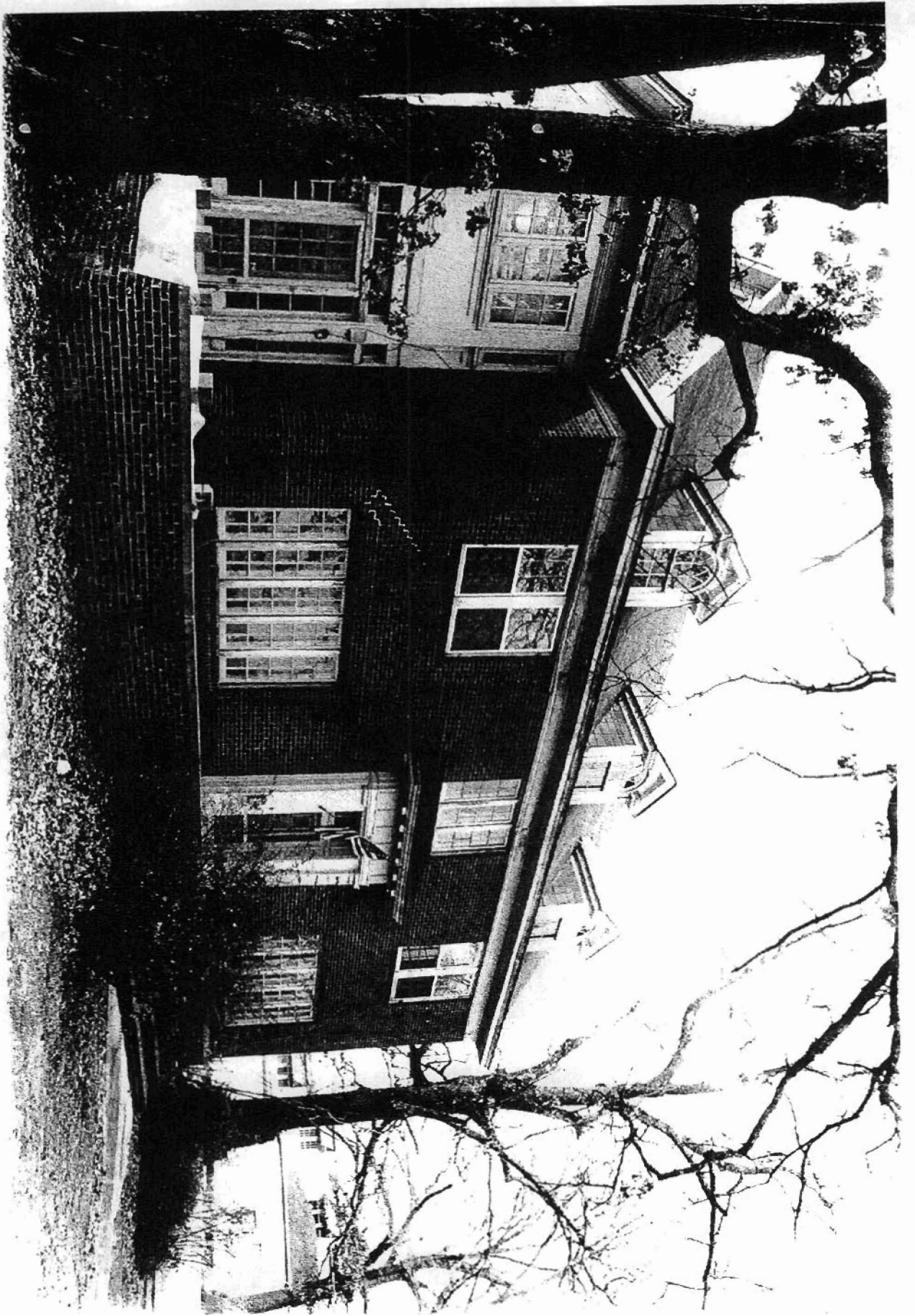
Sanborn Map Company. Map of Conway, Arkansas, 1919, 1926, 1931.

Robins, Frank E., House
Conway, Faulkner County, Arkansas
UTM: 15/550930/388250

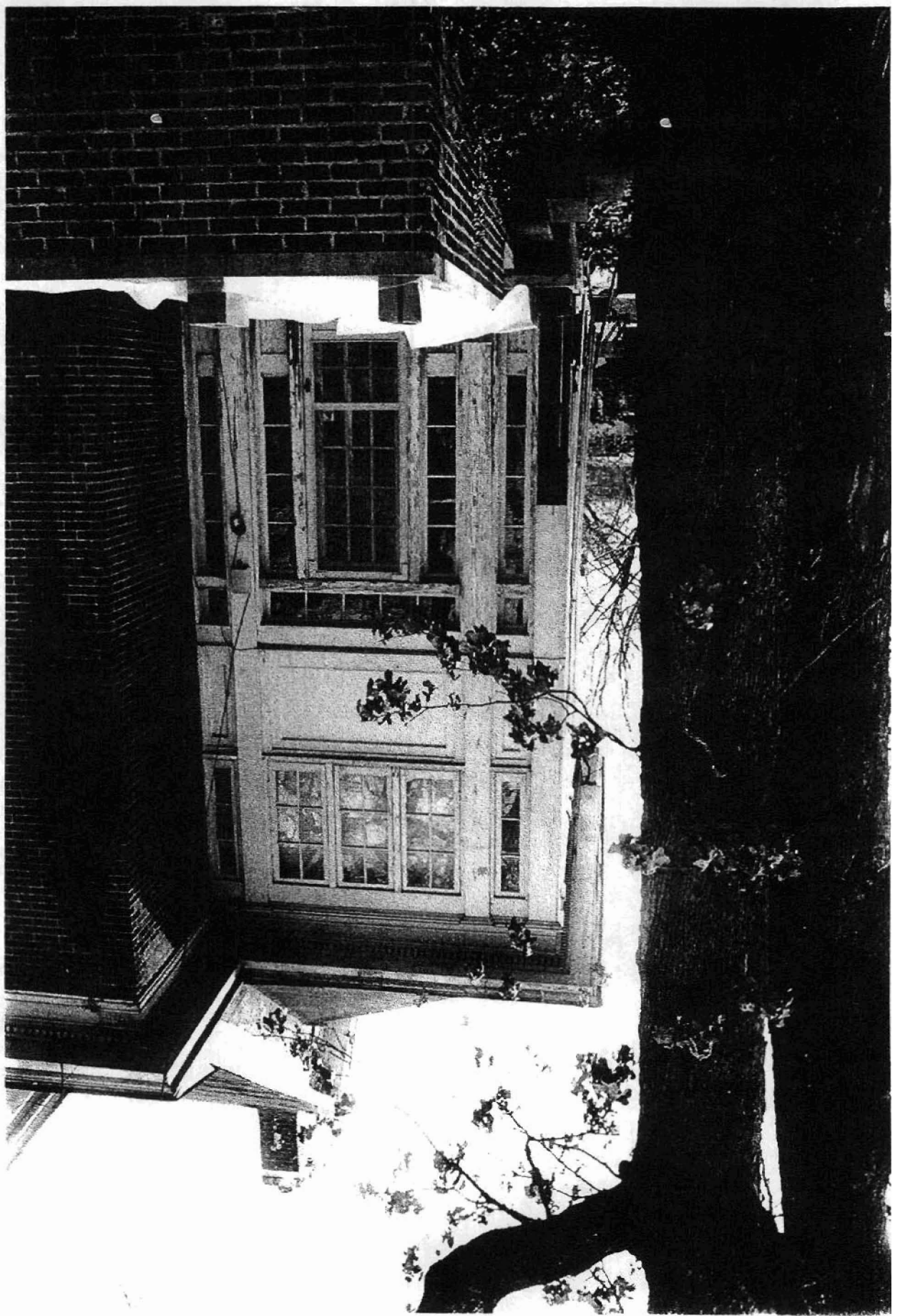




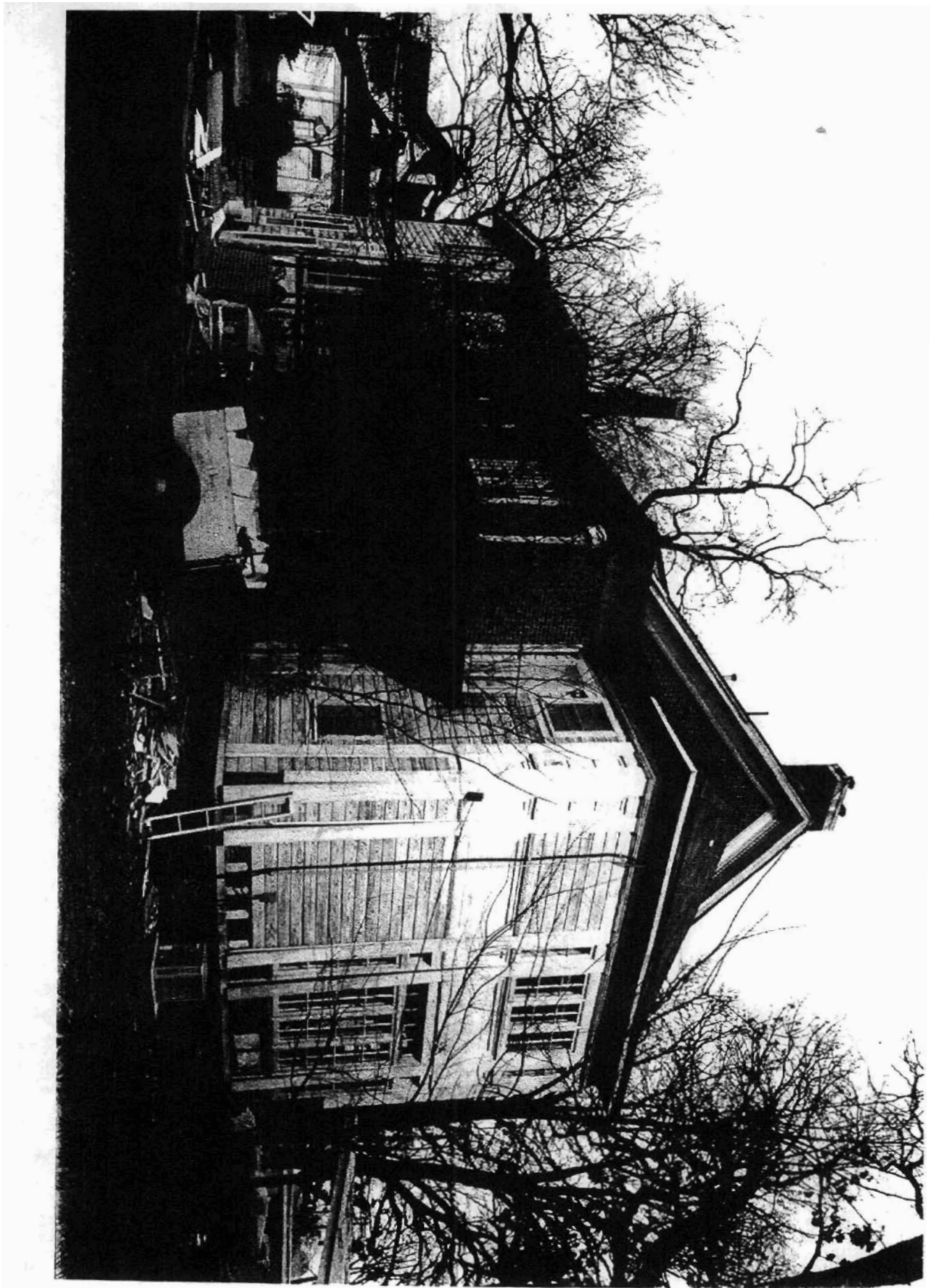
Robins, Frank E., House
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zellner
February 1994
Negative on file at AHDP
View from the east



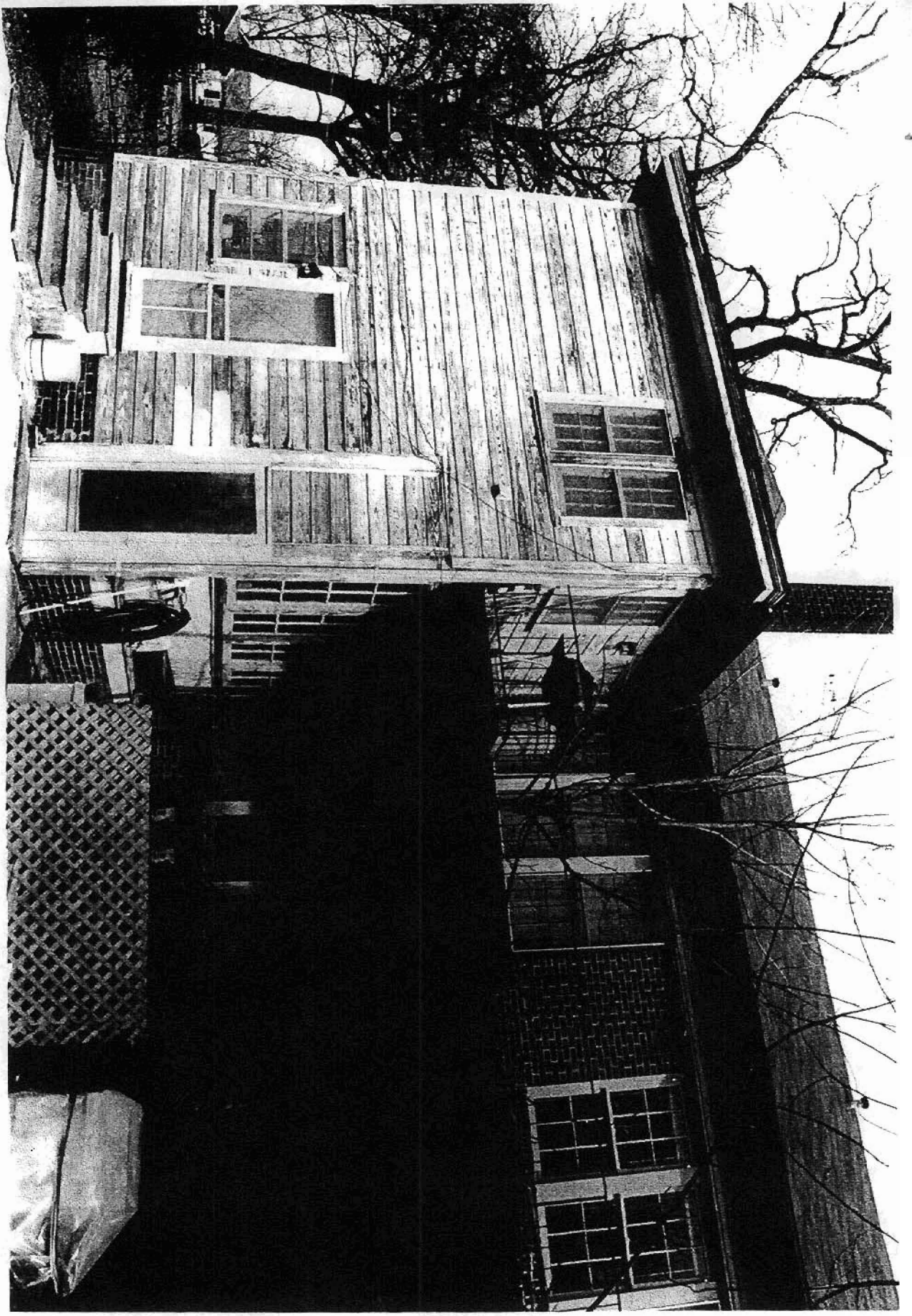
Robins, Frank E., Meuse
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zollner
February 1994
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the southeast



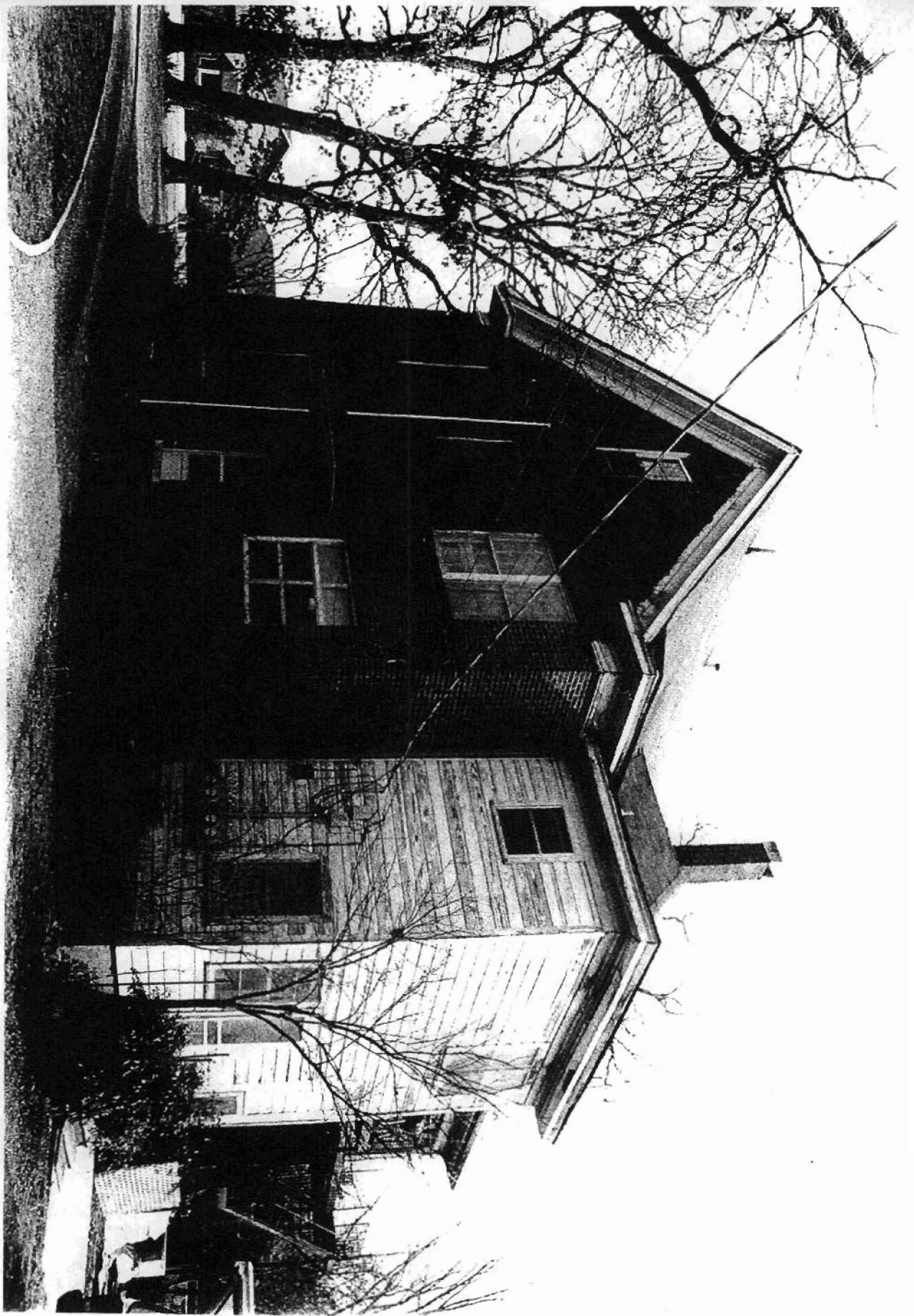
Robins, Frank E., House
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zolner
February 1994
Negative on file at AHP
View of sleeping porch from
the east



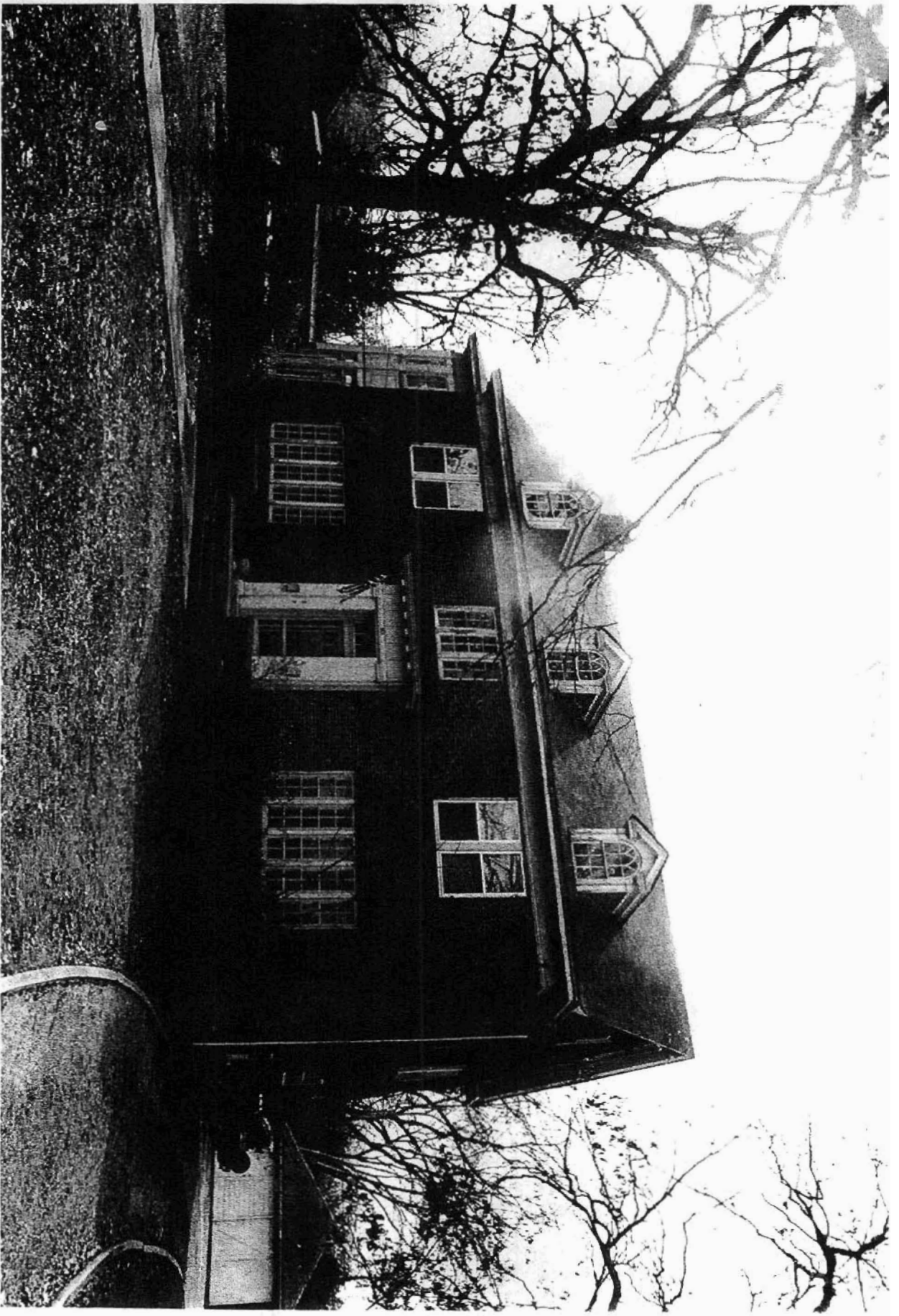
Robins, Frank E., House
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zolner
February 1994
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the South



Robins, Frank E., House
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zolner
February 1984
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the west



Robins, Frank E., Heuse
Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zolner
February 1994
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the northwest



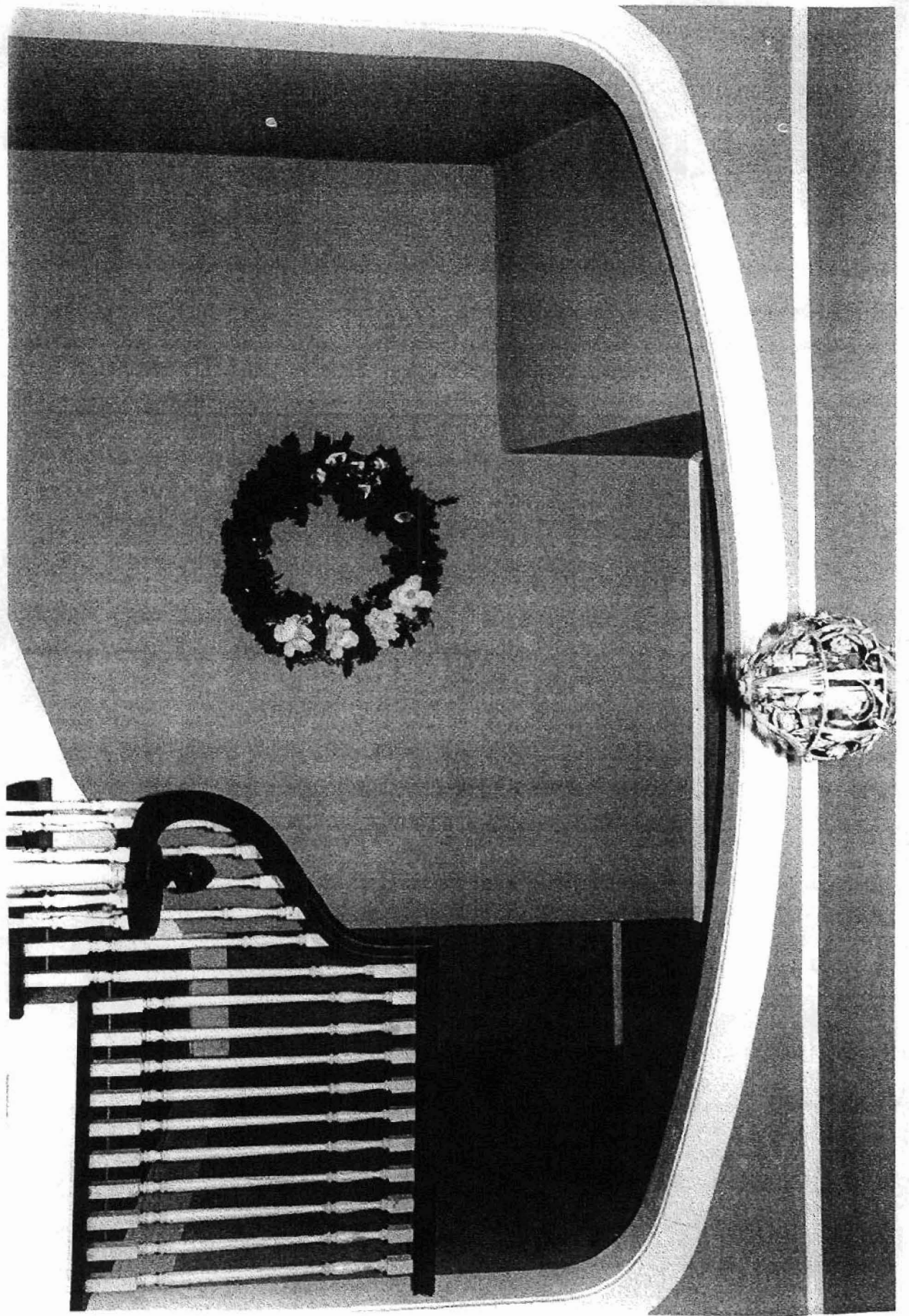
Robins, Frank E., Truse
Faulkner Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHP

View from the northeast



KODAKS, FRANK E., HOUSE

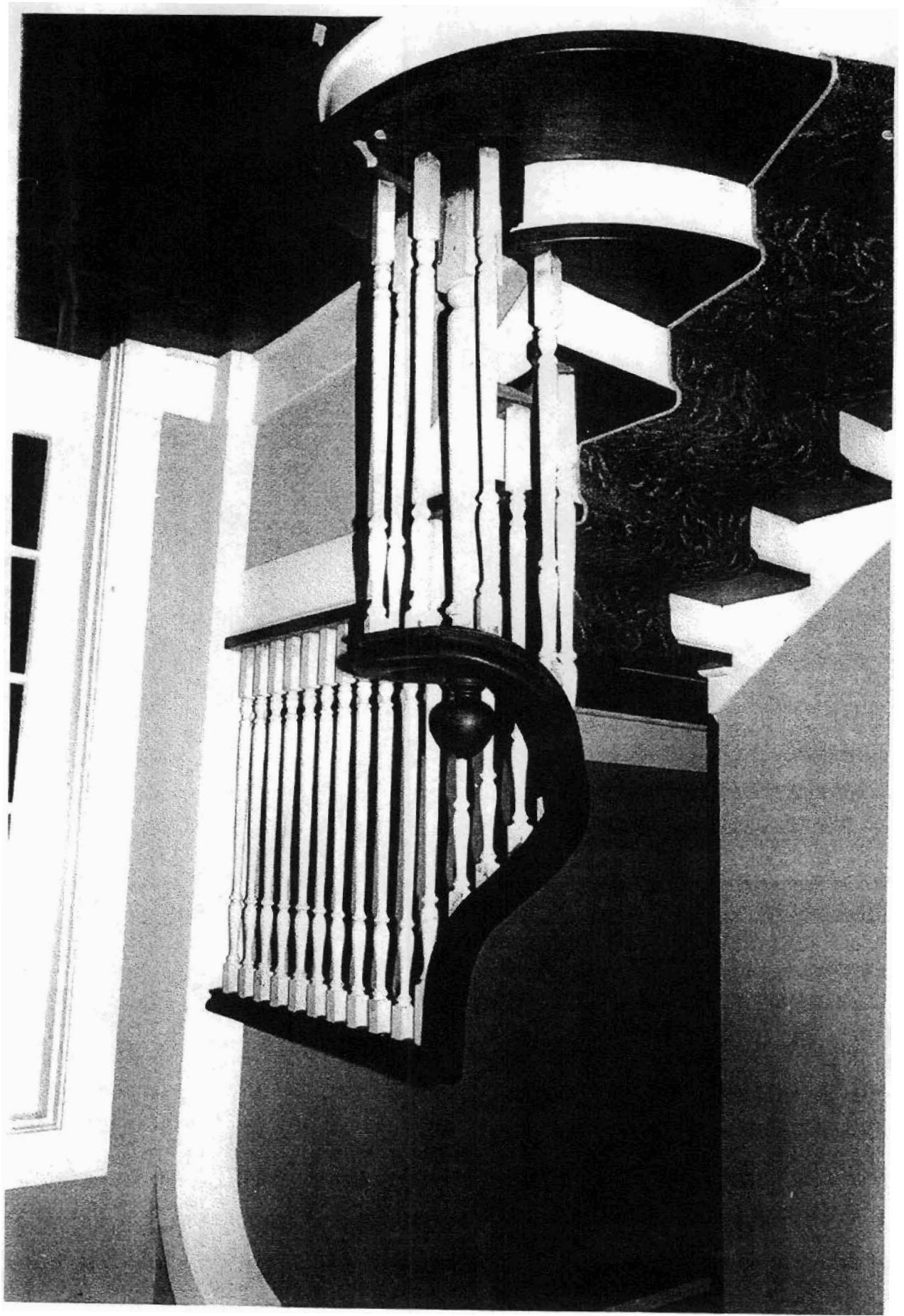
Faulkner Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

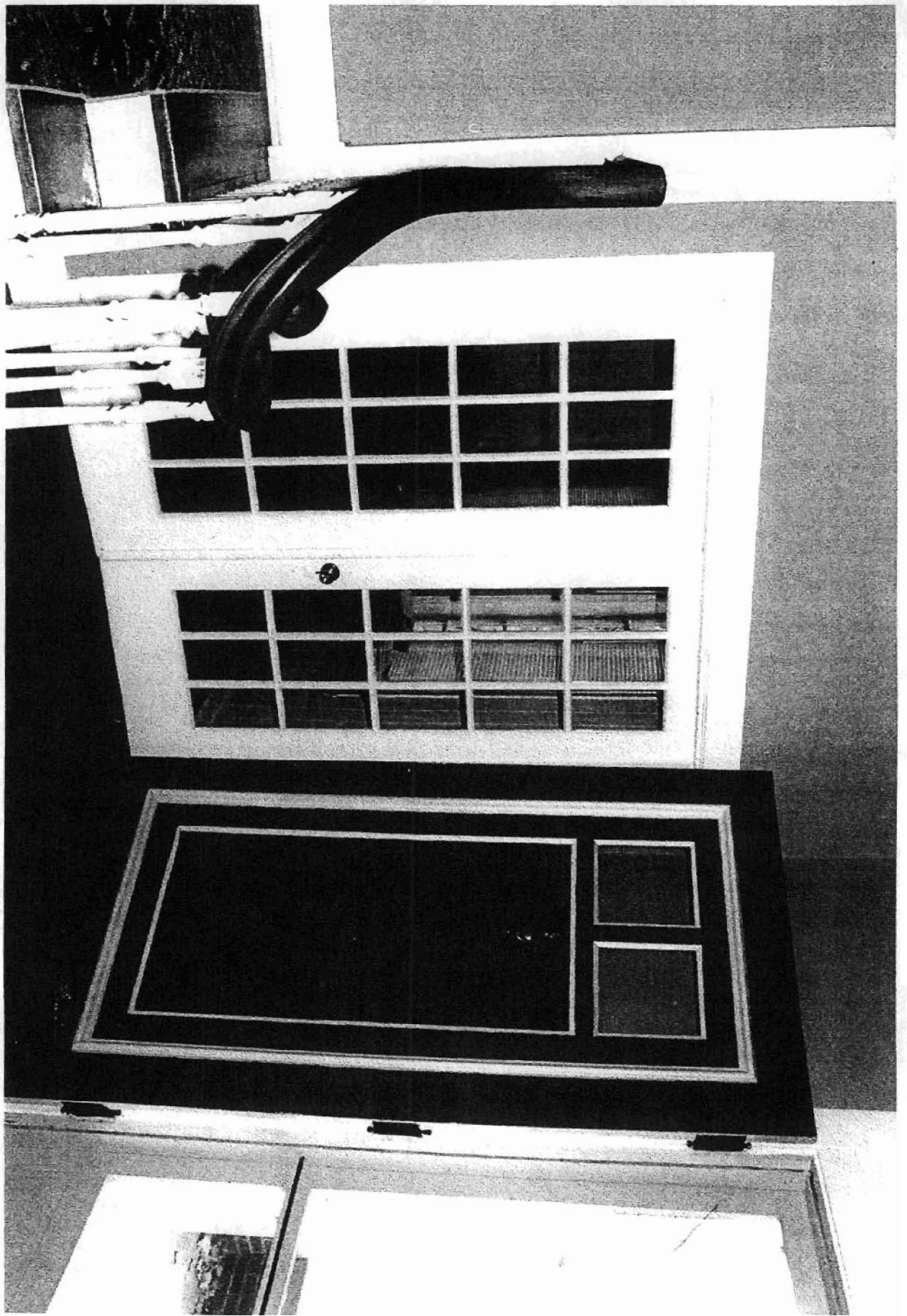
View of arch over staircase
from the east



Robins, Frank E., House
Faulkner Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner, February 1944
Negative on file at AHP

View of staircase and belvedere

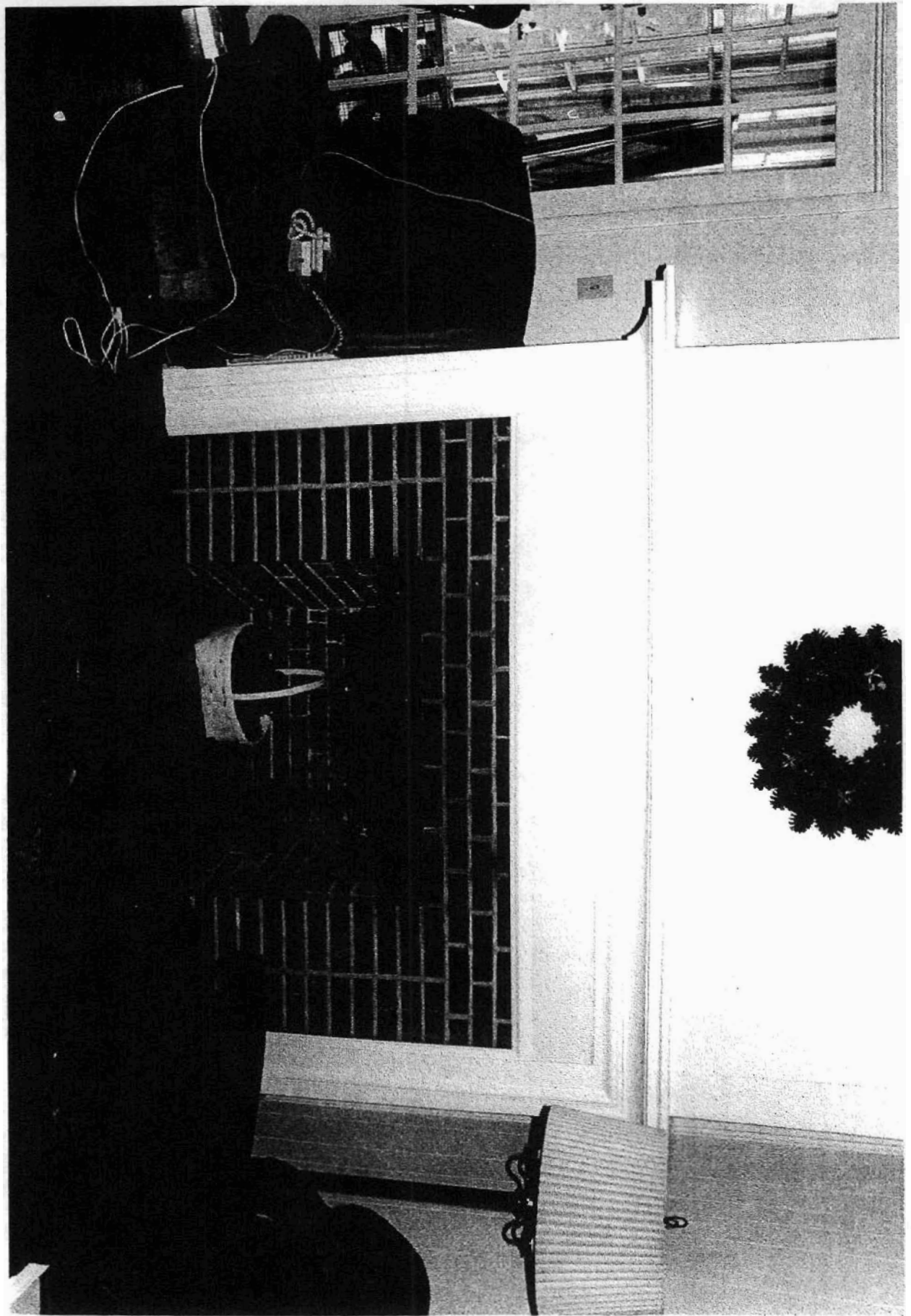


Faulkner Co., Arkansas
Photograph by Patrick Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of French doors in entrance foyer
from the south



ROOINS, FRANK E., HOUSE
Faulkner Co., Arkansas

Photograph by Patrick Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

View of mantel from the north



Right
Fad'ere
P'ost'um
Feon'is
Neap'ine
, etc. of

CO
S.A.

e a H
D'orn
P
AOR