

NR 1-21-88

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Altman House

and/or common Altman-Sellers House

2. Location

street & number 1202 Perry Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Helena

vicinity of

state Arkansas

code 05

county Phillips

code 107

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Paul Sellers, III

street & number 1202 Perry Street

city, town Helena,

vicinity of

state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Phillips County Courthouse

street & number Cherry Street

city, town Helena

state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

The Altman House, located in Helena, Phillips County, was built in 1914. A one-and-one-half-story single family dwelling, it is an excellent example of a prominent upper-middle class house constructed in the early twentieth century. It is a unique design, not because it follows one of the latest styles of the period, but rather because it borrows from several of the "high-fashion" styles of the era, as its eclectic appearance reveals. The two most prominent influences are the Arts and Crafts movement and the Classical Revival.

ELABORATION

The Altman House is a one-and-one-half-story structure with wide projecting eaves and an irregular plan. It is situated on a terrace on Crowley's Ridge which naturally allows for several flights of impressive steps to descend the steeply terraced lawn in connecting the front entrance to the street below. **Approaching the house, the most prominent feature of the facade is the recessed entry, which is surrounded by a segmental pediment and Ionic columns. The door has a full glass panel with diamond panes and is flanked by single-pane bevelled glass sidelights and, more unusually, has an elliptical arch transom of solid bevelled glass that is 119 inches long. Another prominent feature of the facade are the three dormers which break up the roofline. Adding to the emphasis on the entrance is the large gable dormer with triangular pediment that is located directly above the doorway. To either side are smaller lunette dormers.**

To either side of the entrance there are rectangular bays that each contain two pairs of casement windows, which have diamond-shaped leaded glass panes and are topped by leaded glass transoms. The combination of leaded glass casement windows with transoms is used throughout the house.

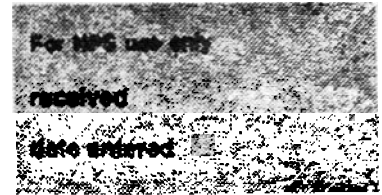
Although the main block of the house is symmetrical, to the east or right side is a projecting sunporch wing. **At each corner of the projection there are engaged ionic columns. The sunporch has a set of French doors on the front facade that access the wide tiled front terrace, which provides a transition between interior and exterior. At one time surrounded by a classical balustrade, the terrace reveals an Italian Villa influence in the design.**

At the rear of the house there is an attached carport that is supported by three arches and is covered with stucco. The arch motif is echoed in the lattice-work that covers the windows of the solarium which look out onto the carport. **The solarium was originally a screened porch.**

On the interior of the Altman House, several styles are mixed, similar to the exterior. The plan is very open, with the public spaces flowing into one another. The open feeling is created through the use of colonnades (in which Ionic columns support arched beams) to create doorways between rooms. Upon entering the front door, there is a large hall or foyer. It is separated from the livingroom and diningroom by the aforementioned colonnades. All three rooms are distinguished by raised-panel wainscoting and exposed ceiling beams.

The livingroom is directly in line with the front door. It is separated from the hall by the colonnade and by being raised up one step. The columns are standing on built-in leaded-glass bookcases, which are reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts period. This period is also reflected

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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in the built-in settles that are located in the fireplace alcove. The fireplace is faced with large tiles. One of the more interesting features of the house is located in the livingroom above the fireplace. This is the plaster fresco of several women with the inscription across the bottom that reads "Home is Where the Heart is", which gives the interior an Italian flavor.

Another unique feature of the livingroom is the elliptical bay that projects into the solarium. Like the other windows of the house, the windows of the bay have diamond panes. In the center of the bay are French doors with a pair of casement windows to each side, all of which are topped by transoms. The individual panes of glass are curved to create the larger curve. The solarium is separated by the glass bay as well as being one step down on a lower level. The rear exterior wall of the solarium is the glassed-in arches with lattice described earlier. The room also has a shed skylight that is original to the house.

The diningroom is to the right off the hall. Built-in leaded-glass china cabinets serve as the bases for the colonnade. Another built-in feature is the windowseat below the front windows. French doors with diamond panes open onto the sunporch.

The bedrooms are all on the west side of the house and have had no structural changes. The bathroom also has its original fixtures, including a pedestal sink and tiles on the floors and walls. The upstairs rooms were originally servants quarters, as is evidenced by the traditionally narrow service stairway that is located in the small hallway between the front hall and the kitchen. The service stair is the only way to reach the second floor.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1914 Builder/Architect Estelle Altman

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Altman House is a unique interpretation of early twentieth-century architectural styles. It is significant as a blend of the Classical Revival and the Arts and Crafts movement, with the result producing a structure of very successful eclectic design.

ELABORATION

The Altman House was constructed in Helena (population 9,000) in 1914 for Gustave Altman, a prominent member of what was then a large Jewish community in the city. Reportedly the unique design of the house can be attributed to Altman's wife, Estelle, who served as her own "architect."

The city of Helena has more than the average number of historic resources, including two residential historic districts (Beech Street, NR 3/30/87, and Perry Street NR 11/26/86). However, while many of the contributing structures in these districts are of either Colonial Revival or Craftsman styles, with some earlier examples of Queen Anne, no other residence in the city exhibits the unique combination of styles found in the Altman House.

Classical features are evident in the basic symmetry of the facade, including Ionic columns supporting segmental pediment over the entrance and gable dormer flanked by lunette dormers piercing the hipped roof. However, the Arts and Crafts influence of wide eaves and multi-paned diamond-light windows is unmistakable. Hints of the Italian Villa style are even present in the tiled front terrace and the arcade treatment of the carport at the rear.

The blend of styles continues to the impressive interior of the house, which is virtually intact. Classical colonnades separate open spaces, while wainscoting and heavy exposed beams again denote Arts and Crafts influence. Particularly distinctive features include an elliptical bay with leaded glass diamond pane windows and a fresco, original to the house, above the main fireplace.

The Altman House is being nominated under Criterion C as an unusual example of early twentieth century architecture which successfully blends popular styles of the time.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Abstract of Titles, Hornor-Morris Abstract Company, Helena.

Altman Family Letters.

Helena City Directories: 1900, 1906, 1909, 1917 de Mann, George. "Helena: The Ridge, the River, the Romance," 1970.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Helena, Ark.-Miss.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	7	2	0	5	4	0	3	8	2	3	3	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

In the Pack Cassidy Addition to the town of Helena, Arkansas, begin at a point 554 feet west of the intersection of Perry Street and First Street. Thence proceed north 206 feet, thence proceed west 66 feet, thence proceed south 199 feet to Perry Street, and thence

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Annetta Beauchamp, edited by AHPP staff

organization N/A date May 1987

street & number 804 Columbia Street telephone 338-3607

city or town Helena state Arkansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William M. Hall

title Bill Hall, Acting State Historic Preservation Officer date 12.18.87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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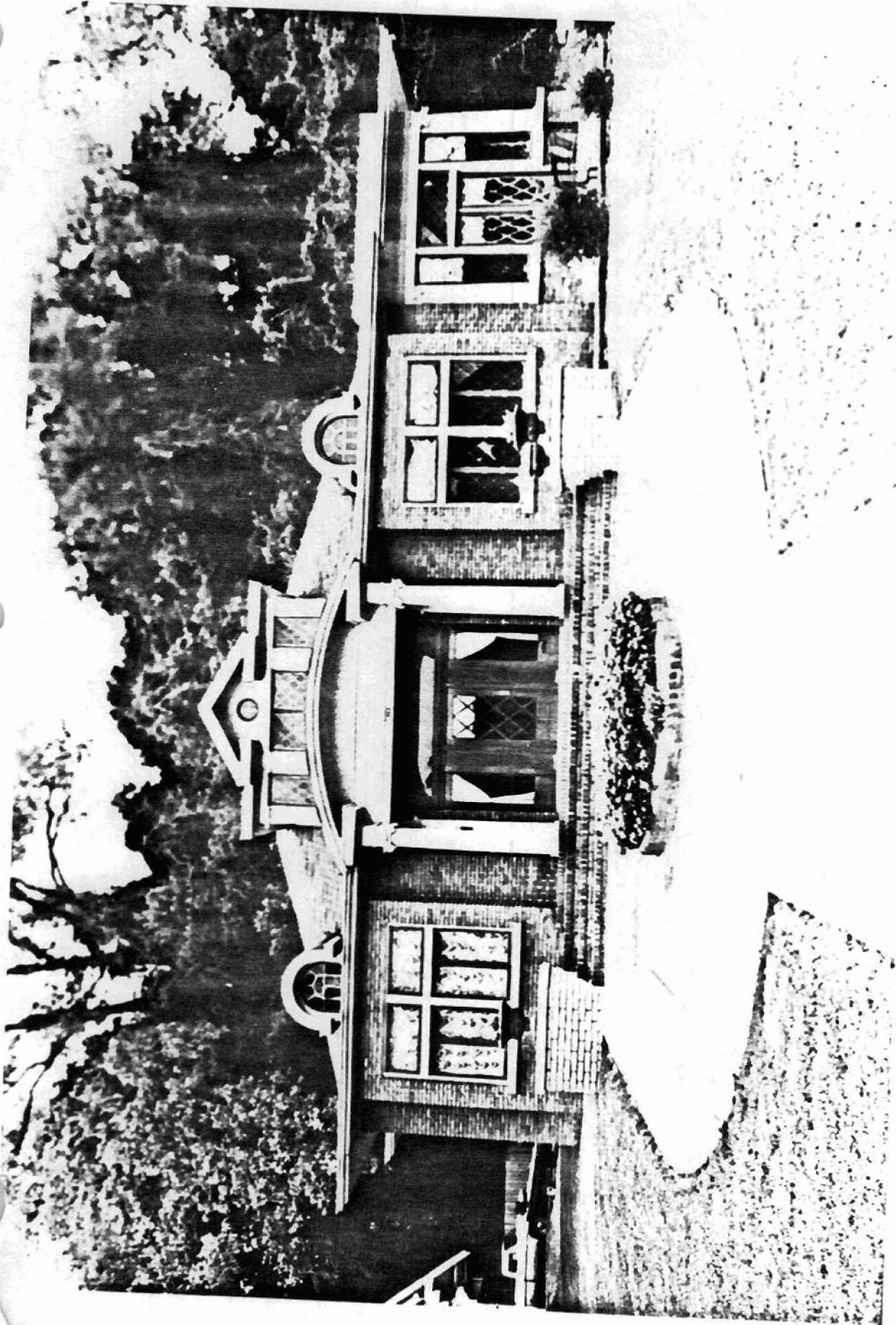
Continuation sheet

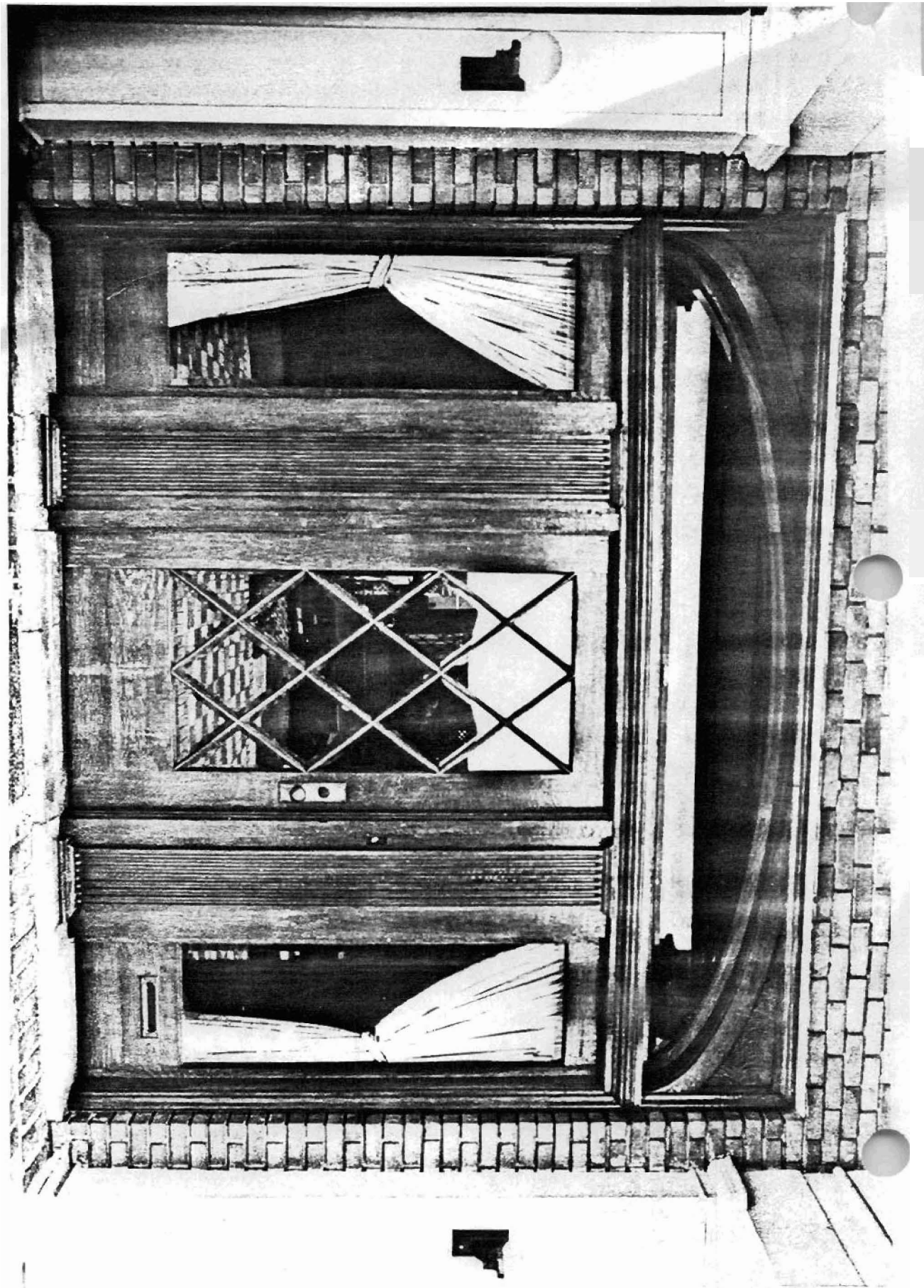
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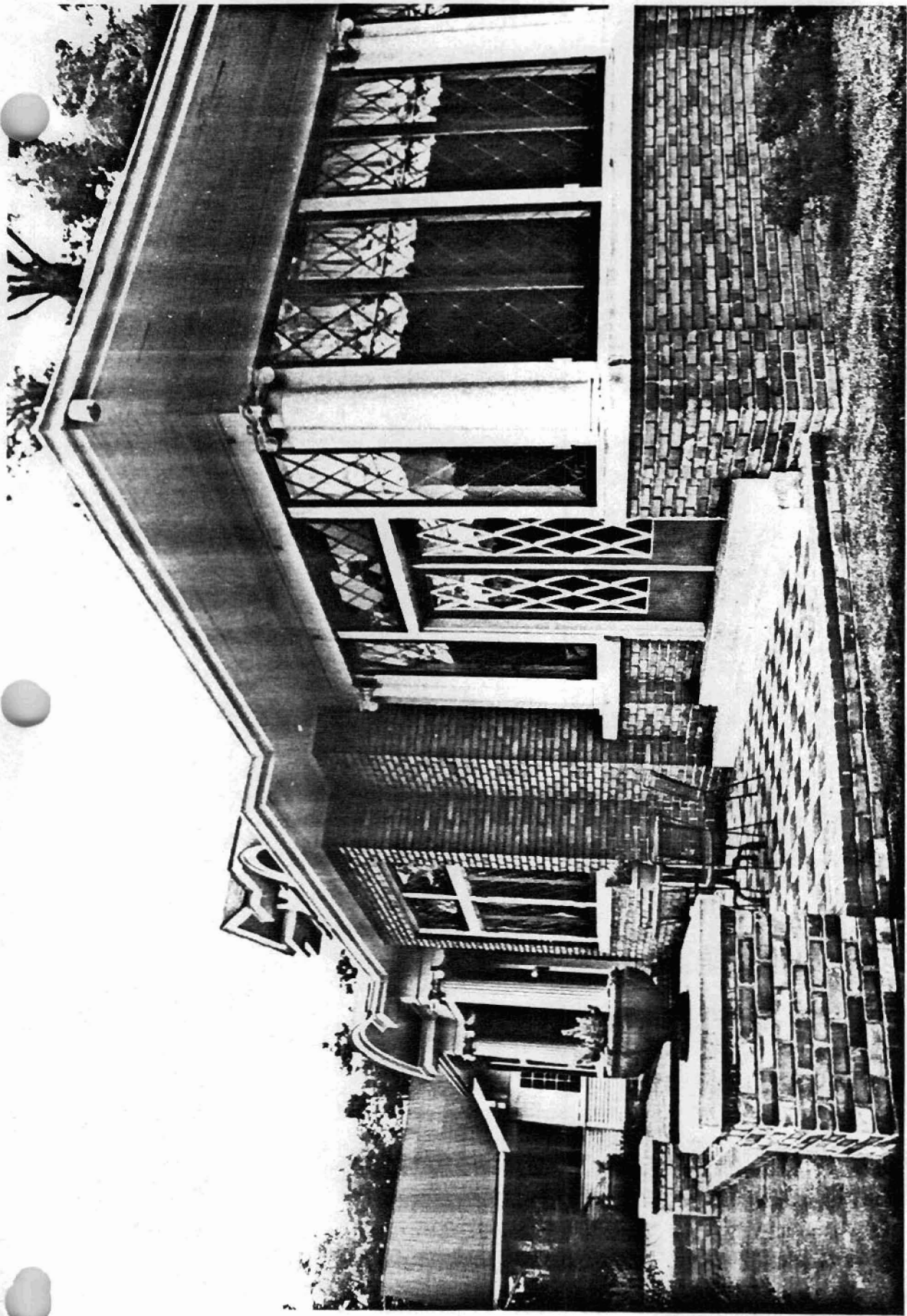
Page 2

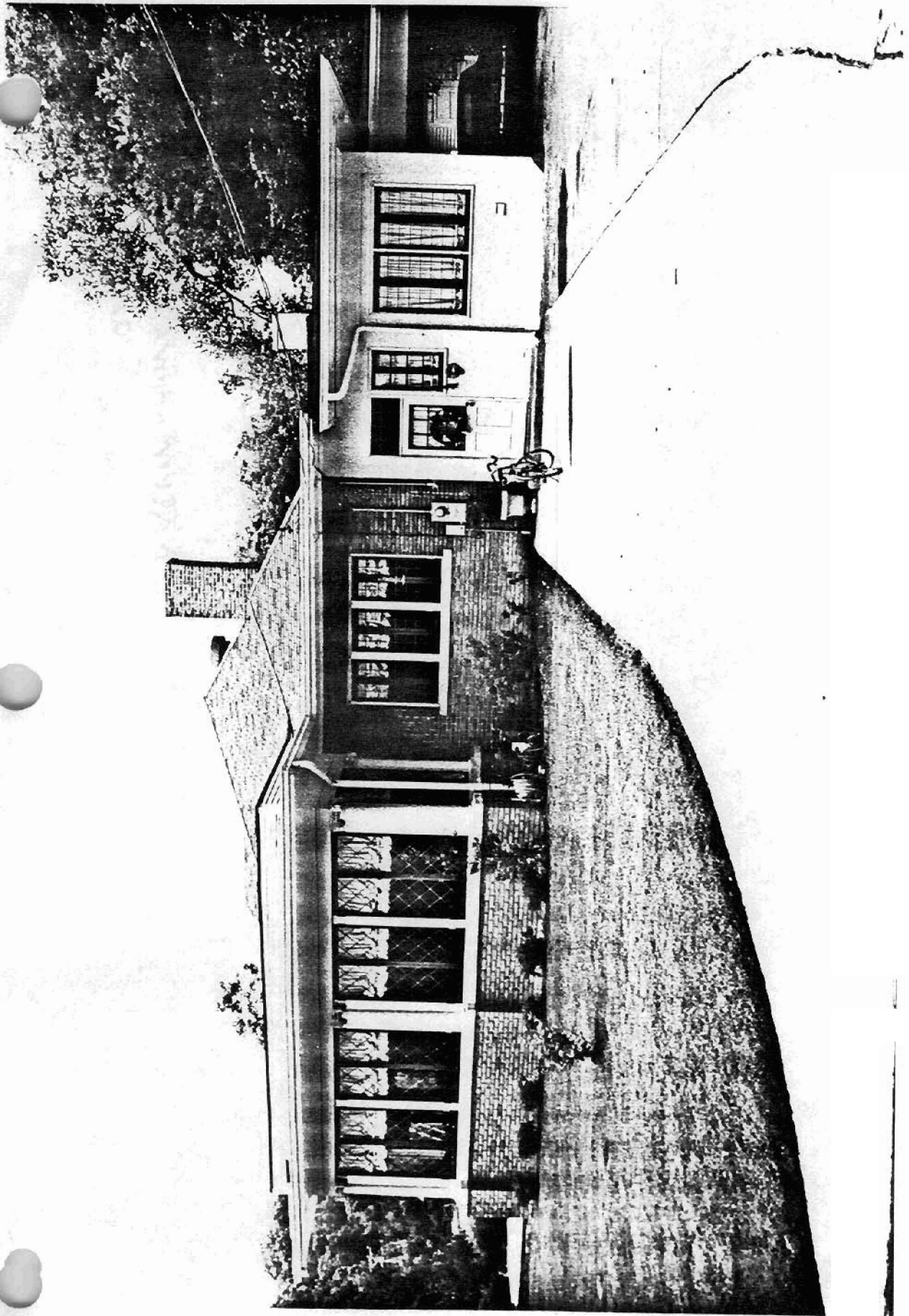
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION CONT.

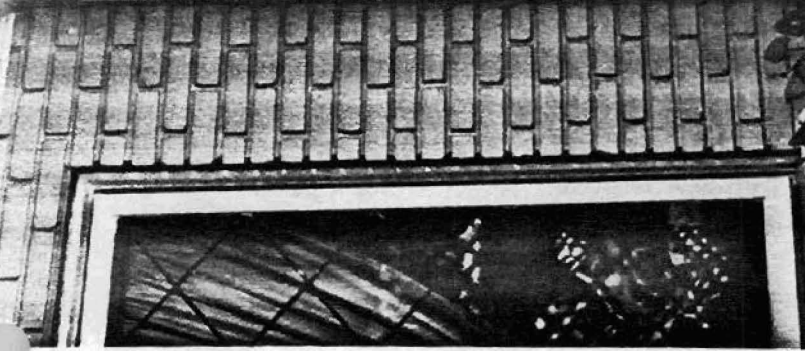
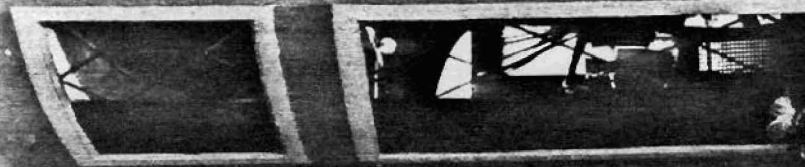
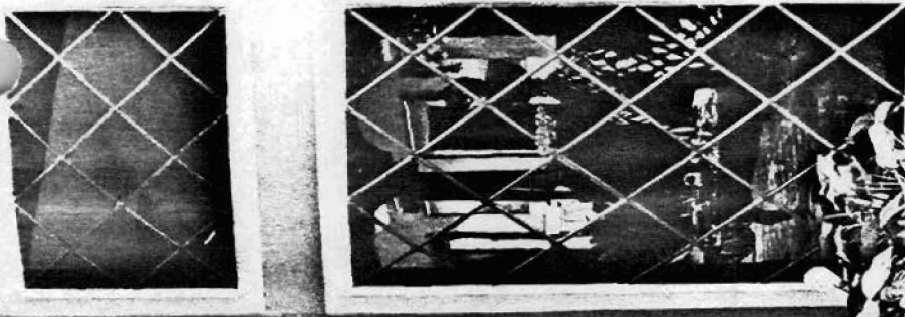
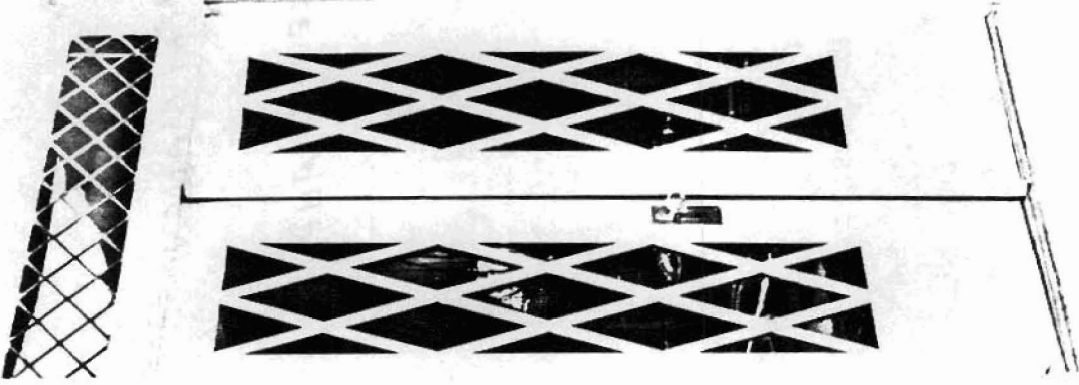
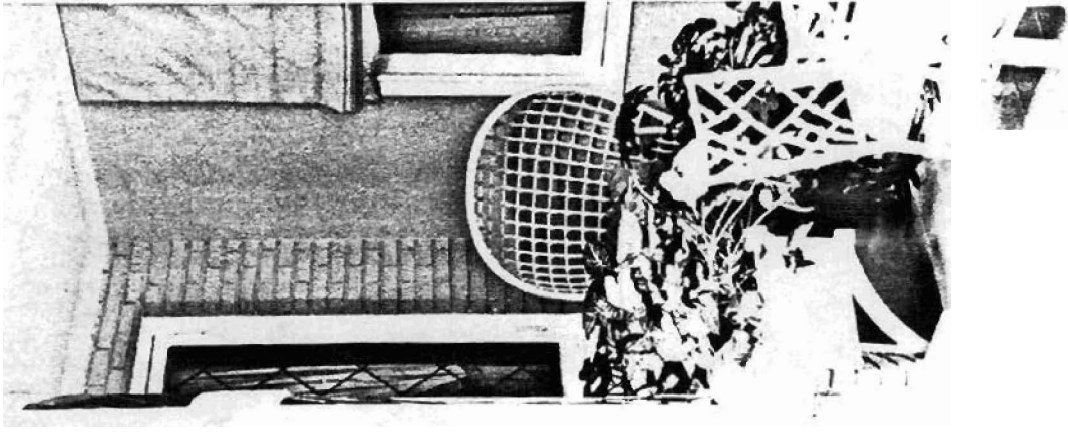
proceed east 66 feet along the Perry Street right-of-way to the point of origin.

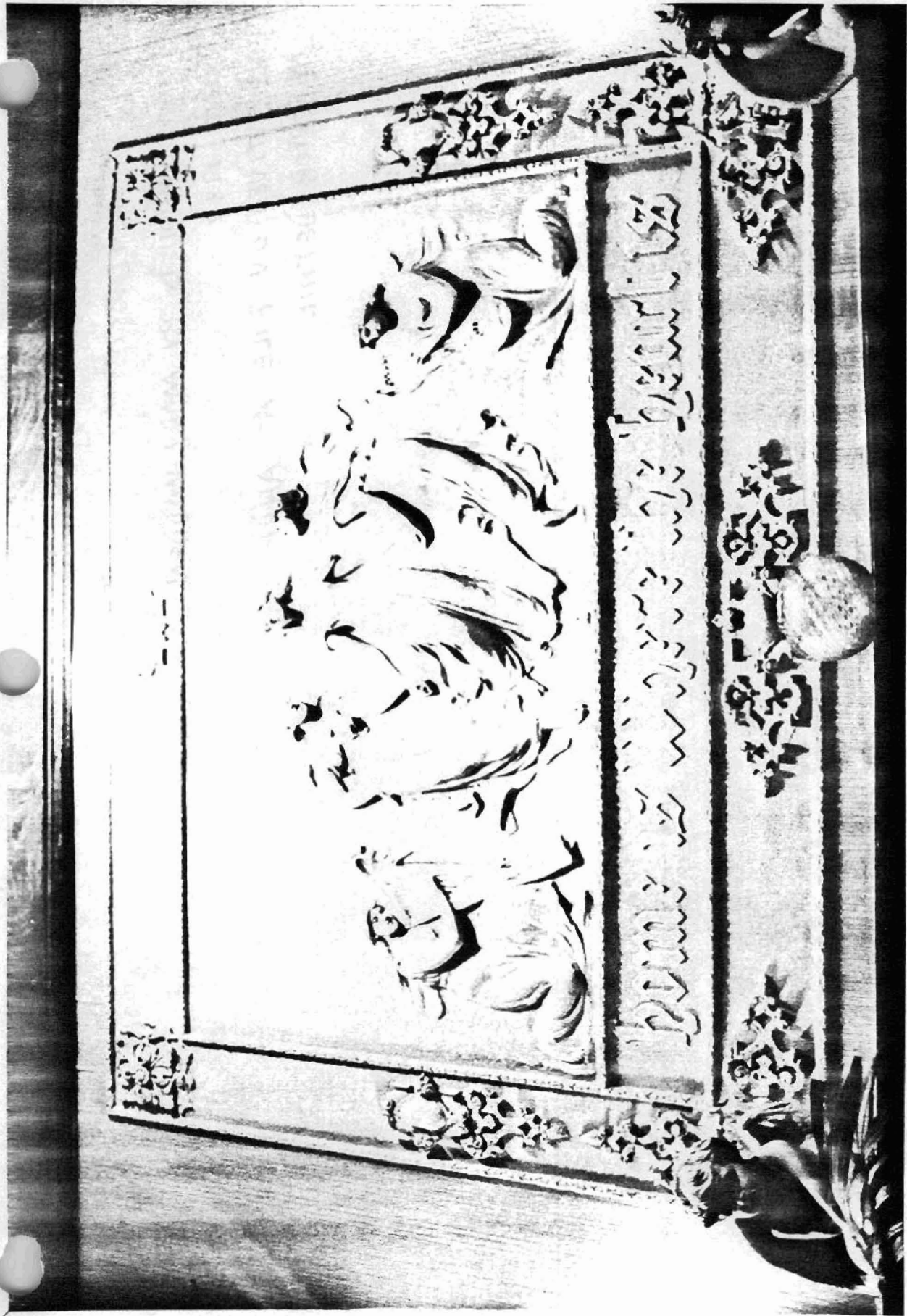


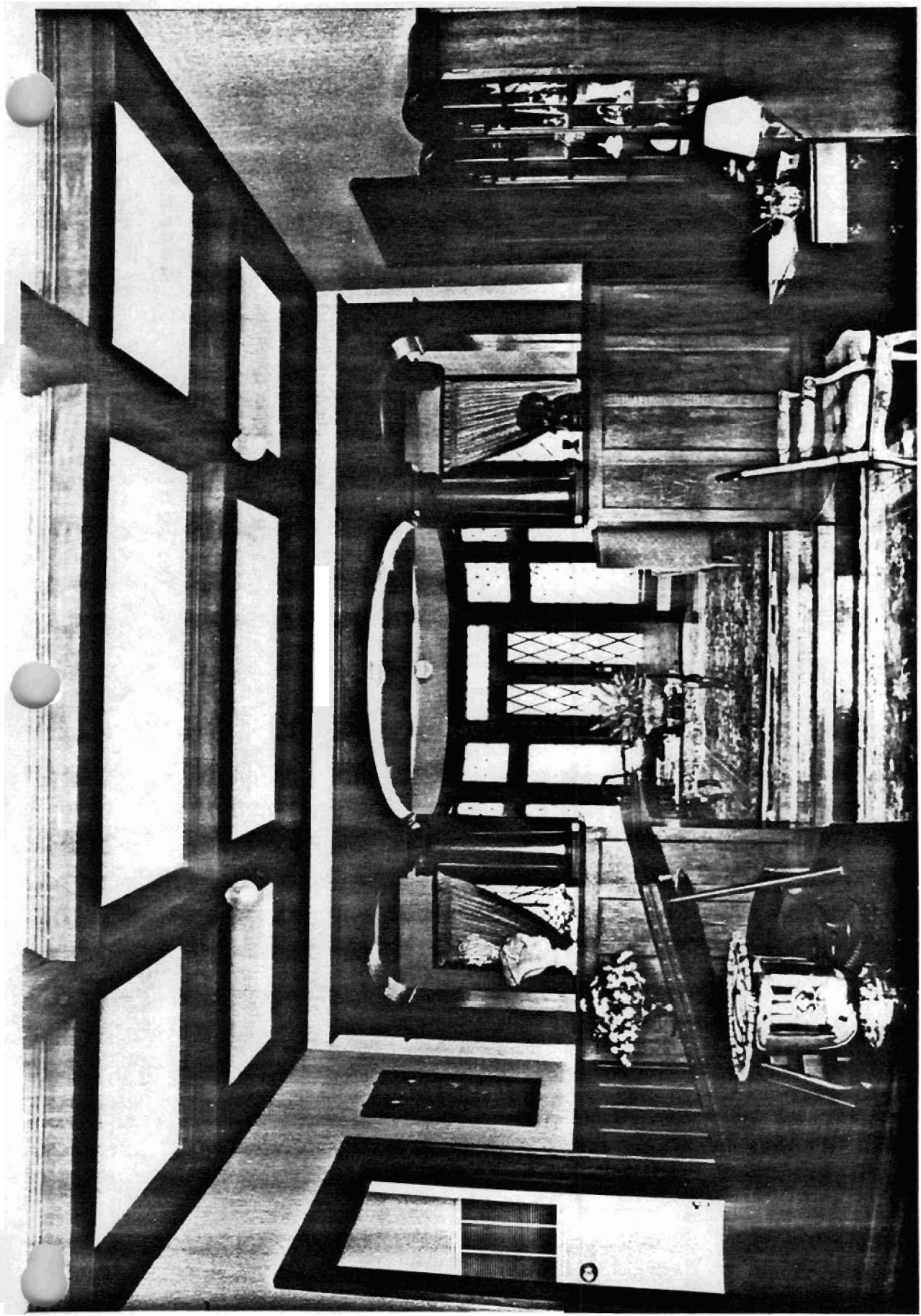


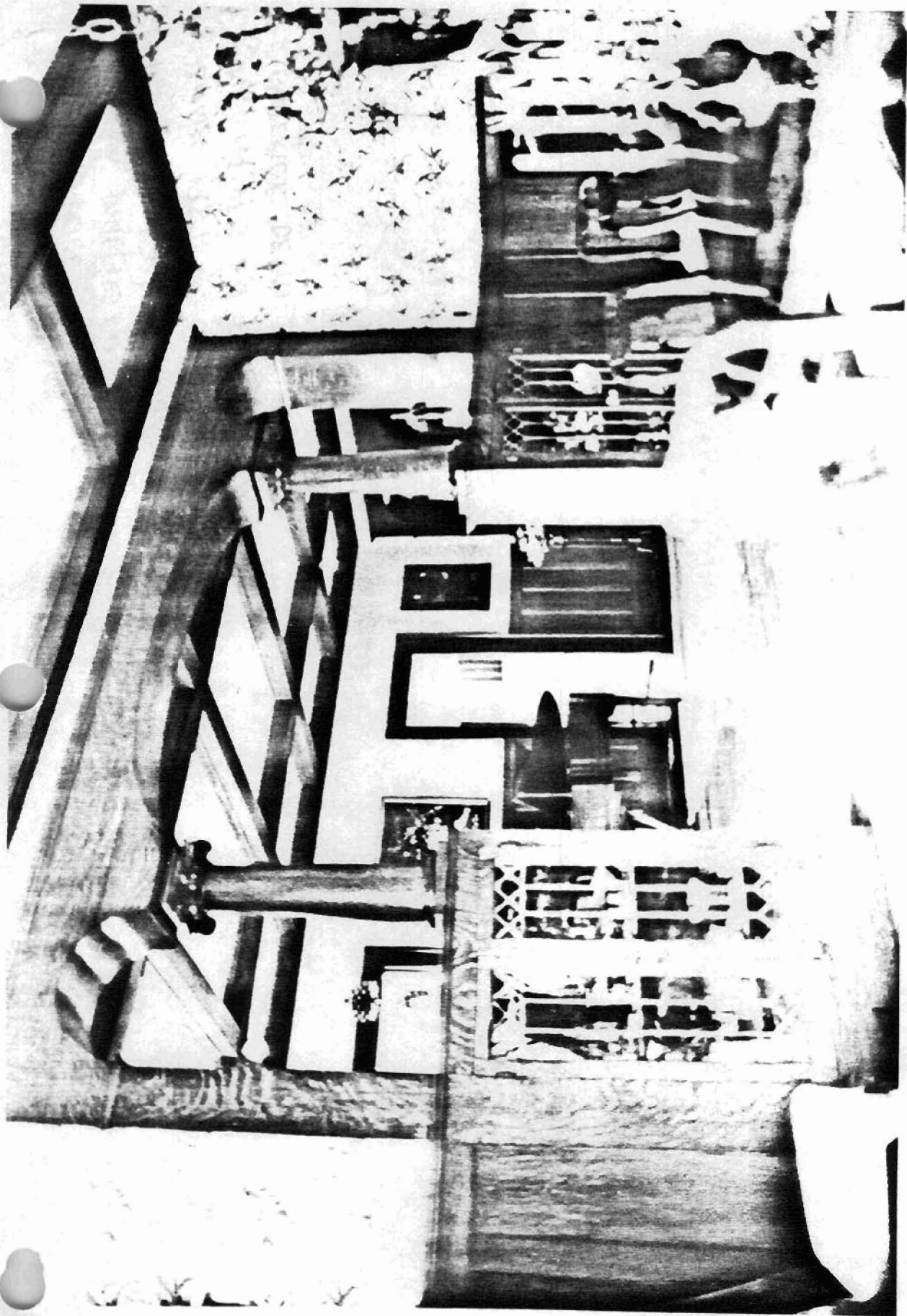




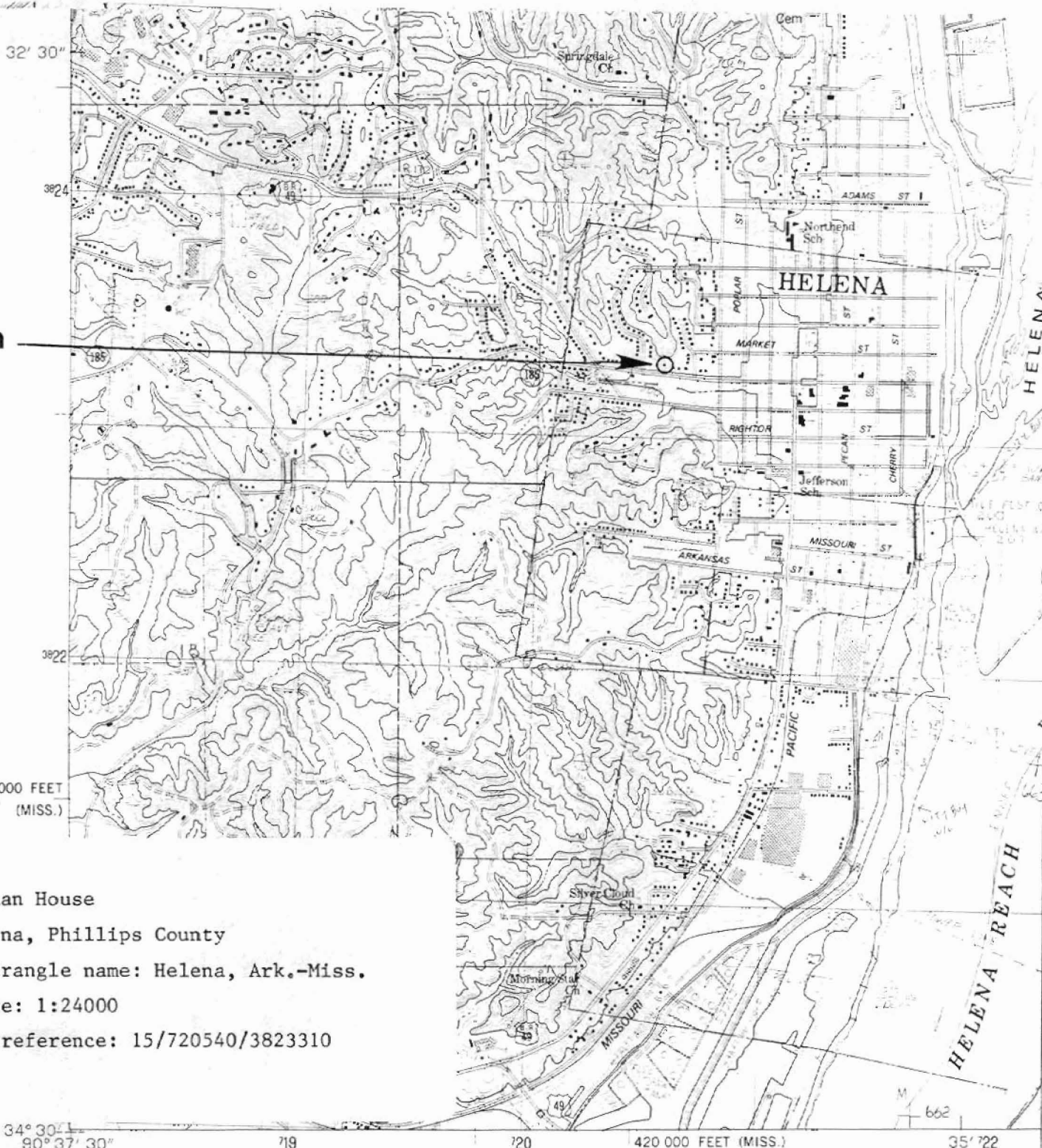








Altman House



Altman House
 Helena, Phillips County
 Quadrangle name: Helena, Ark.-Miss.
 Scale: 1:24000
 UTM reference: 15/720540/3823310

(FRIARS POINT NW)

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1977. Field checked 1978. Map edited 1982
 Projection: Mississippi coordinate system, west zone
 (transverse Mercator)
 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Mississippi coordinate
 system, west zone and Arkansas coordinate system, south zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
 1927 North American Datum
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
 move the projection lines 8 meters south and
 9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
 the National or State reservations shown on this map
 Gray tint indicates area in which selected buildings are shown

Altman House *
 Helena, Phillips County
 Quadrangle name: Helena, Ark.-Miss.
 Scale: 1:24000
 UTM: 15/720540/3823310

UTM GRID AND 1982 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET