

NR-09/29/83

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

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 Matthews House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 406 Goshen N/A not for publication

city, town North Little Rock N/A vicinity of congressional district Second

state Arkansas code 05 county Pulaski code 119

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Charley E. Baxter

street & number 406 Goshen

city, town North Little Rock N/A vicinity of state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pulaski County Courthouse

street & number Markham and Spring Street

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no N/A

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 _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

Described as "modernistic" by its builder and architect, the Matthews House, constructed in 1928, is a startlingly farsighted local interpretation of the modern movement. Built in North Little Rock by the Justin Matthews Company as a show house for the Park Hill subdivision, it was designed by the company's architect, Frank M. Carmean (ca. 1880-1955). While the exterior of the house has features characteristic of the International Style, its striking interior reveals an Art Deco influence.

ELABORATION

The Matthews House is an extraordinarily significant example of modern architecture, remarkable for its early date and important for its role in the development of Park Hill. The structure's composition of squares intersected by a cylindrical stair tower, its flat roof and smooth stucco walls pierced by large casement windows are all features associated with the International Style. The two-story house was constructed of concrete and steel with walls of stucco over brick. Containing stairs and a hall on each floor, the cylinder, which has a square flat roof penetrated by a chimney, is slightly taller than the rest of the building. The front (north) elevation is a flat rectangle with a deeply recessed, open-air foyer at the west corner, the rear wall of which is pierced by an open doorway with sloped sides. The floor of the foyer is tiled. The main entrance, which faces west, has a paneled mahogany door with a small four-light window. Attached to the east side of the house is a garage that originally had a geometrically patterned wood door. Designed as a terrace, the railed roof of the garage is floored with black and white tile, which, like the foyer floor and upstairs bathroom, was laid by Frank M. Carmean, Jr., who, like his father, was known throughout Little Rock as an exceptional craftsman. The roof terrace, originally reached through a door in the tower, is now reached through a door in the upstairs study. The front elevation has only two first floor windows, a small six-light casement window that illuminates the entrance hall and a large living room window, the center of which is fixed, with a transom and casements on either side. The second floor of the front elevation has four large windows, each of which is a multi-paned combination of fixed and casement units. Throughout the house, windows are steel Fenestra casements. A second floor window wraps around the west corner of the front facade. Projecting from the west corner on the first floor is a multi-sided wall that surrounds a garden patio. A five-sided fish/lily pool, visible from the living room, extends from the front facade beneath the living room window. The west elevation, with two second floor corner windows, has large first floor windows and two French doors that provide access to the walled garden from the living room. A sloped-sided doorway in the garden wall leads to the backyard. Clearly visible from the rear of the Matthews House is the stair tower that intersects with the east wall. The rear elevation is an asymmetrical

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 checked="" 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 1928 Builder/Architect Justin Matthews/Frank Carmean

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Matthews House is a striking example of the International style of architecture as interpreted for a residential structure. It was constructed in 1928 as a "show house" for the second phase of the Park Hill addition, an exclusive North Little Rock subdivision developed by Justin Matthews. Park Hill was begun in 1927, and was the first planned residential subdivision in the North Little Rock area. Considered a most innovative development, it was highly promoted. The Matthews house, referred to in promotional ads as a "modernistic house", was furnished and opened for public viewing from 1928 through 1932. An estimated 28,000 people toured the house. Frank Carmean, the designing architect for the Matthews Company, achieved a sense of modern individuality, simplicity, and purity of geometric form on the exterior plans of the Matthews House. In contrast, the interior boasts distinctive Art Deco features that are rarely found so intact in Arkansas.

ELABORATION

Justin Matthews had a tremendous impact on the development of North Little Rock. Matthews made a fortune in the cotton-seed oil business in Monticello, Arkansas, before he moved to North Little Rock and invested his money in real estate development. Following his initial work in the late 20's and early 30's in developing Park Hill, Matthews formed the Metropolitan Trust Company which developed the Lakewood Addition, including its system of recreational lakes and open spaces. Matthews was also responsible for the distinctive Broadway Bridge across the Arkansas River, and served for a time on the State Highway Commission because of his experience in constructing and paving several major highways in the state. He was an innovative and daring developer who used promotions and original ideas to gain public attention for his projects. Frank Carmean, the designing architect for the Justin Matthews Company, was sent by Matthews to Texas and southern California to report and study any modernistic structures. Carmean returned and designed not only the Matthews House, but drew plans for many other houses in the Park Hill addition and throughout North Little Rock, including the Old Mill at Lakewood. This fanciful rendering of a mill serves as a park for area residents.

Unable to find a buyer, the Matthews family retained the home through the depression years. Matthews' son, John, moved into the house with

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arrangement of geometric shapes punctured by casement windows of various sizes.

The outstanding interior was clearly influenced by the Art Deco Style. Furnished with Deco furniture, fabrics, rugs, light fixtures and hardware, the Matthews House was the talk of Little Rock. Despite the absence of the original furniture, the interior is amazingly intact. Throughout the house, walls are of plaster with a variety of surface textures. Dominating the entrance hall are winding stairs positioned in the tower. Puncturing the smooth tower wall is a shelved niche and a narrow window. The treads of the stairs are of polished wood, while the risers each have two arch-shaped cut-outs and are painted white. In place of a railing, a heavy rope is attached to the tower wall. Distinctive geometrical patterns are repeated throughout the house: stepped projections decorating walls are found in the entrance hall, above the fireplace, and stepped recessed alcoves are repeated in the bath and in the living room. The sloped-sided doorway, twice seen on the exterior, appears between the entrance hall and the living room. Particularly distinctive is the fireplace which has an asymmetrical mantel consisting of projecting geometric shapes with a stepped wall and shelved niche above. Separating the living room and dining room are two octagonal columns with chevron detailing, between which is a built-in counter with niches below. The bathroom, which along with two bedrooms and a study is located upstairs, features a black and white tile floor and tub surround laid in a geometric pattern. The integrity of the interior is further evidenced by beautiful hardwood floors, original art-glass light fixtures and Art Deco hardware.

Alterations to the Matthews House include the enlargement of the upstairs den, the extension of the roof terrace and enlargement of the dining room and kitchen from the rear. While additions have been made, such as a washroom, half-bath, awnings, carport and new roof terrace railings, they are sympathetic to the original design. The driveway which was repaved long ago, originally consisted of two cement strips with steps in between.

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his wife Martha in 1932. In 1945, Matthews sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Woods, who occupied it until its recent purchase by Mr. and Mrs. Charley Baxter.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Justin Matthews, III
Mrs. Martha Rebsamen Matthews
Mrs. E. H. Woods
Abstract of title #71575

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name North Little Rock

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	5	6	8	5	9	5	3	8	4	7	0	3	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 15, 16 and 17; Block 128; Park Hill Addition

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 Mr. and Mrs. Charley Baxter (Edited by staff of Arkansas Historic Preservation Program)

organization Owner

date August 8, 1983

street & number 406 Goshen

telephone (501) 758-6336

city or town North Little Rock

state Arkansas

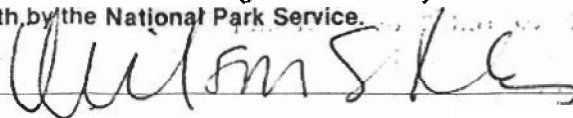
2. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 8-23-83

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

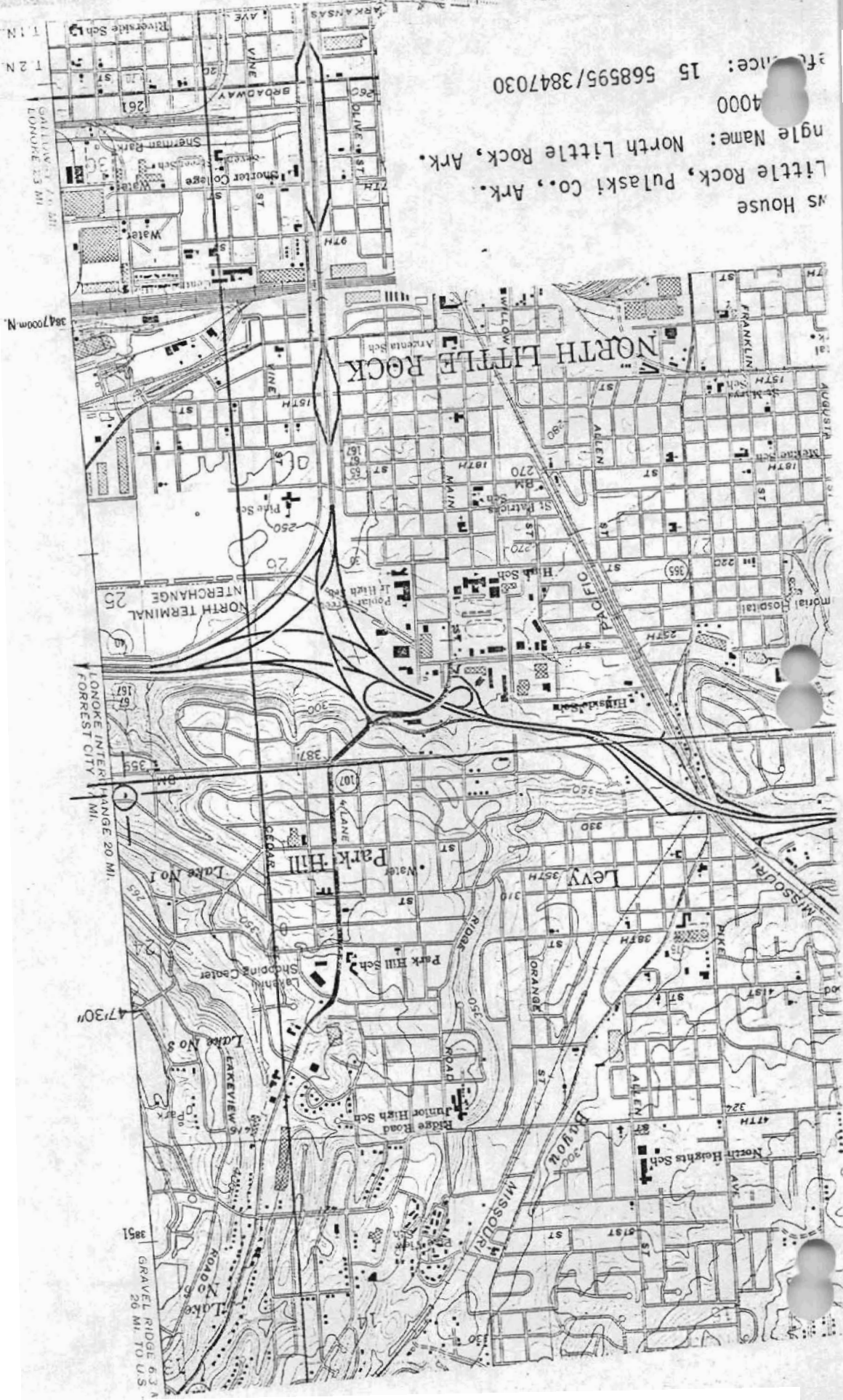
Chief of Registration

Reference: 15 568595/3847030

4000

Angle Name: North Little Rock, Ark.
Little Rock, Pulaski Co., Ark.

MS House



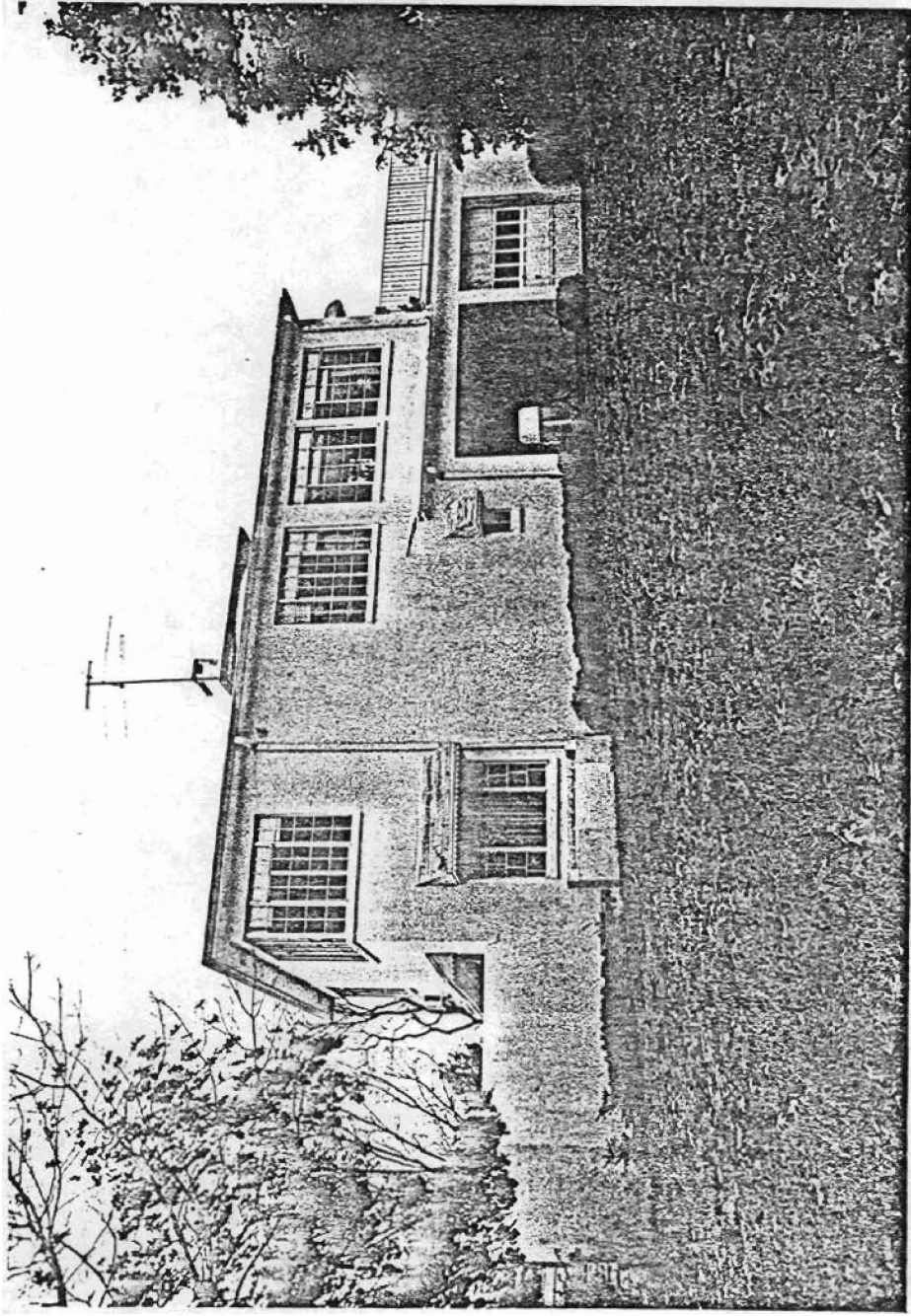
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1 2 N
GALLIWAY 7.5 MI
LONOKE 23 MI

3847000m N

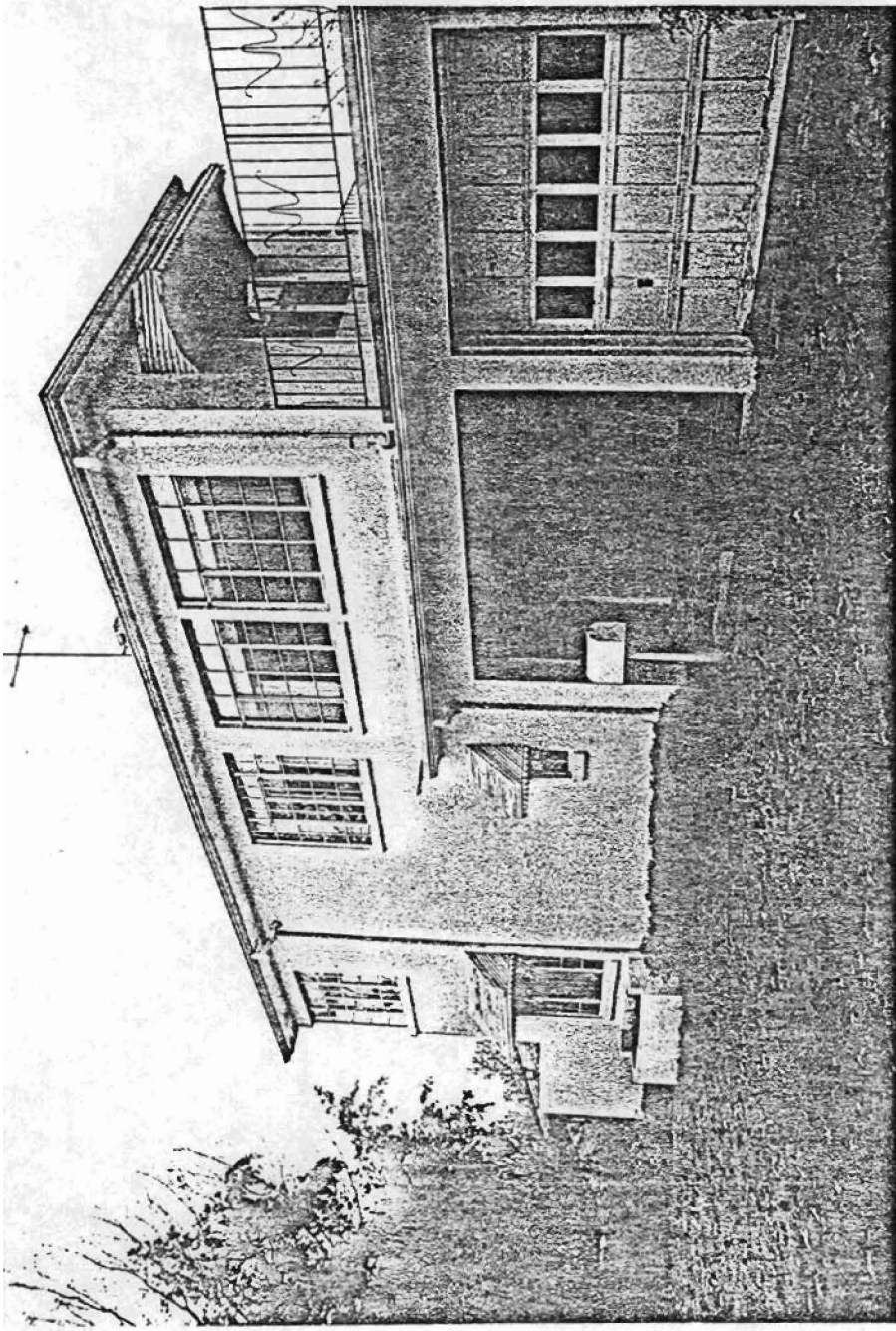
LONOKE INTERCHANGE 20 MI.
FOREST CITY

47'30"

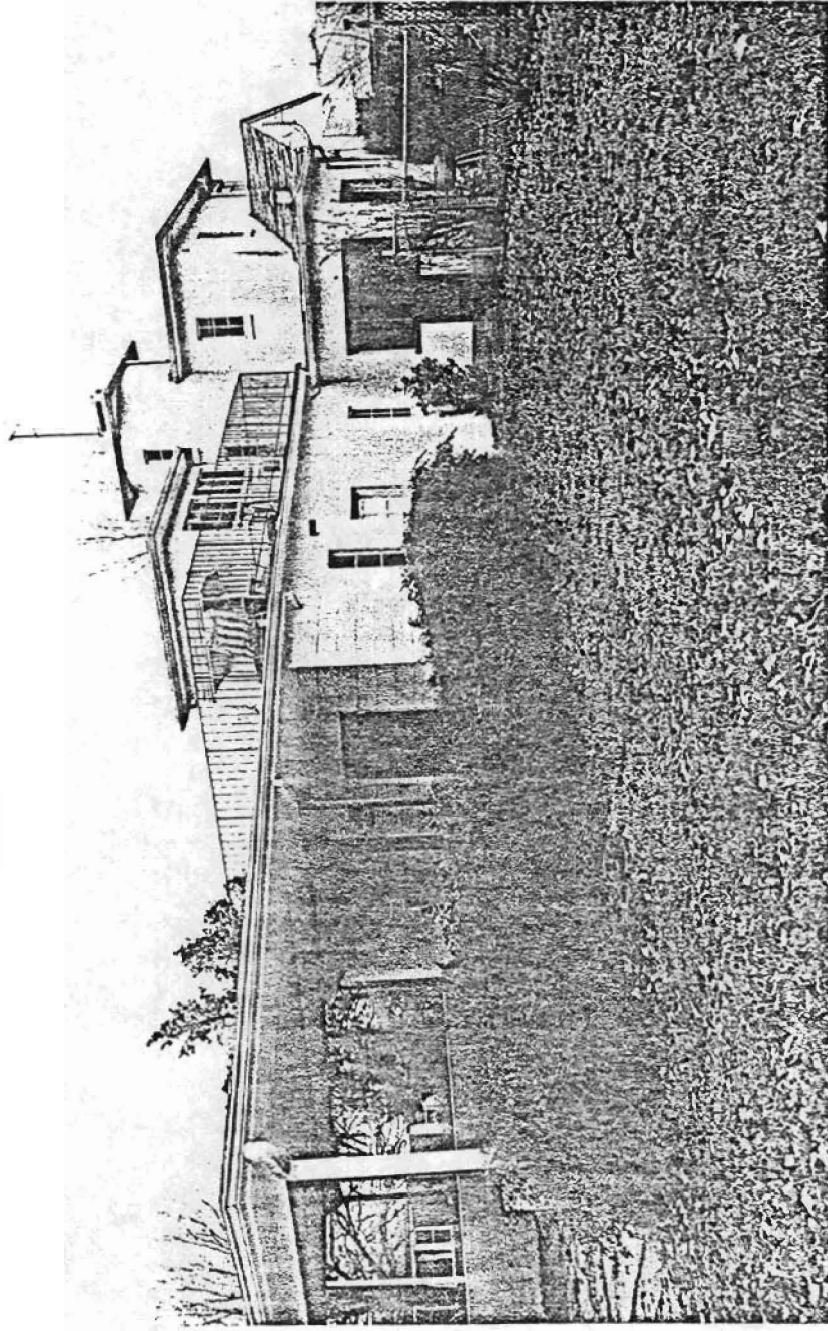
3851
GRAVEL RIDGE 6.3 A
26 MI. TO U.S.



Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
December, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Front elevation
Viewed from the North



Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
December, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Front elevation
Viewed from the North/Northeast

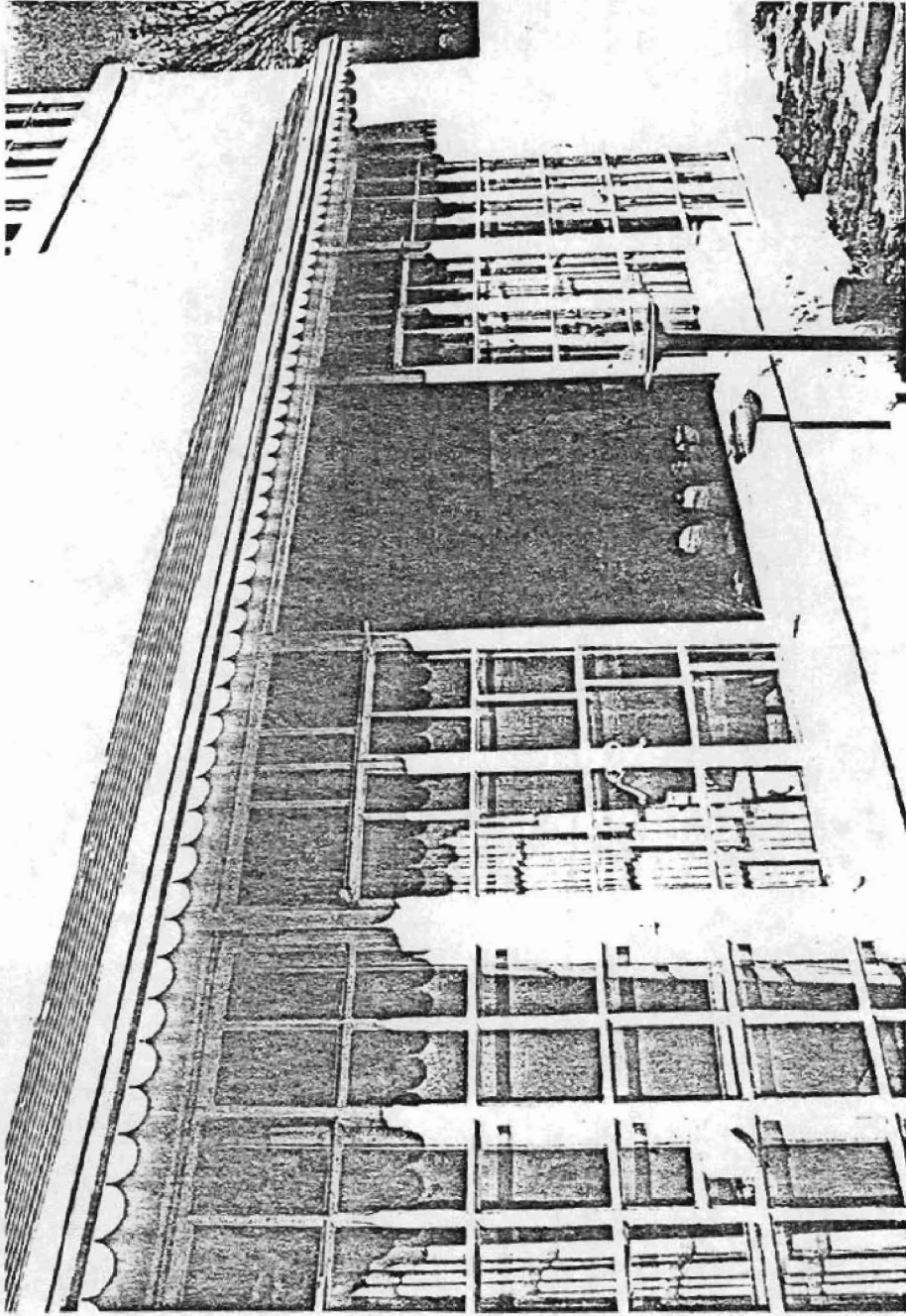


Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
Negative on file at AHPP
Rear

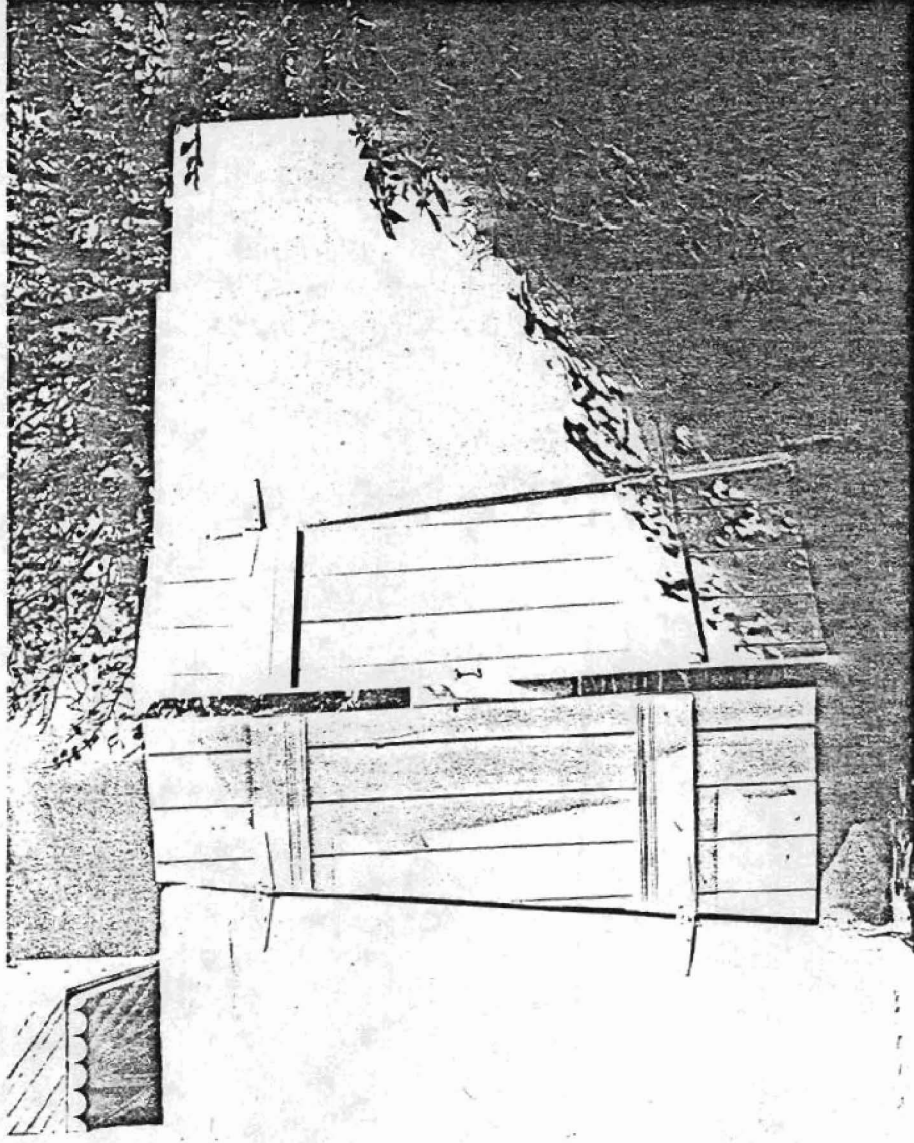
Viewed from the Southwest



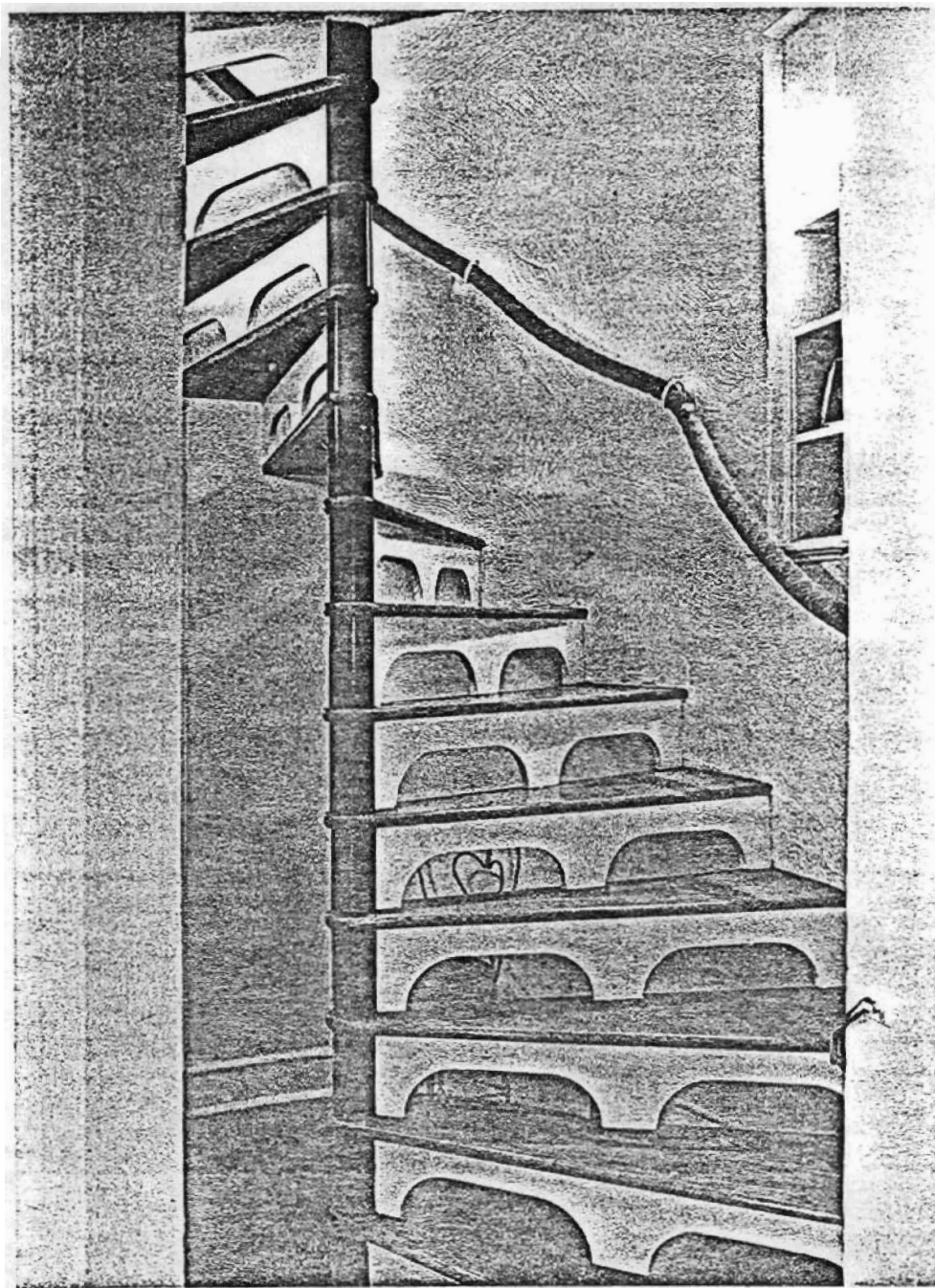
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
December, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Rear
Viewed from the South



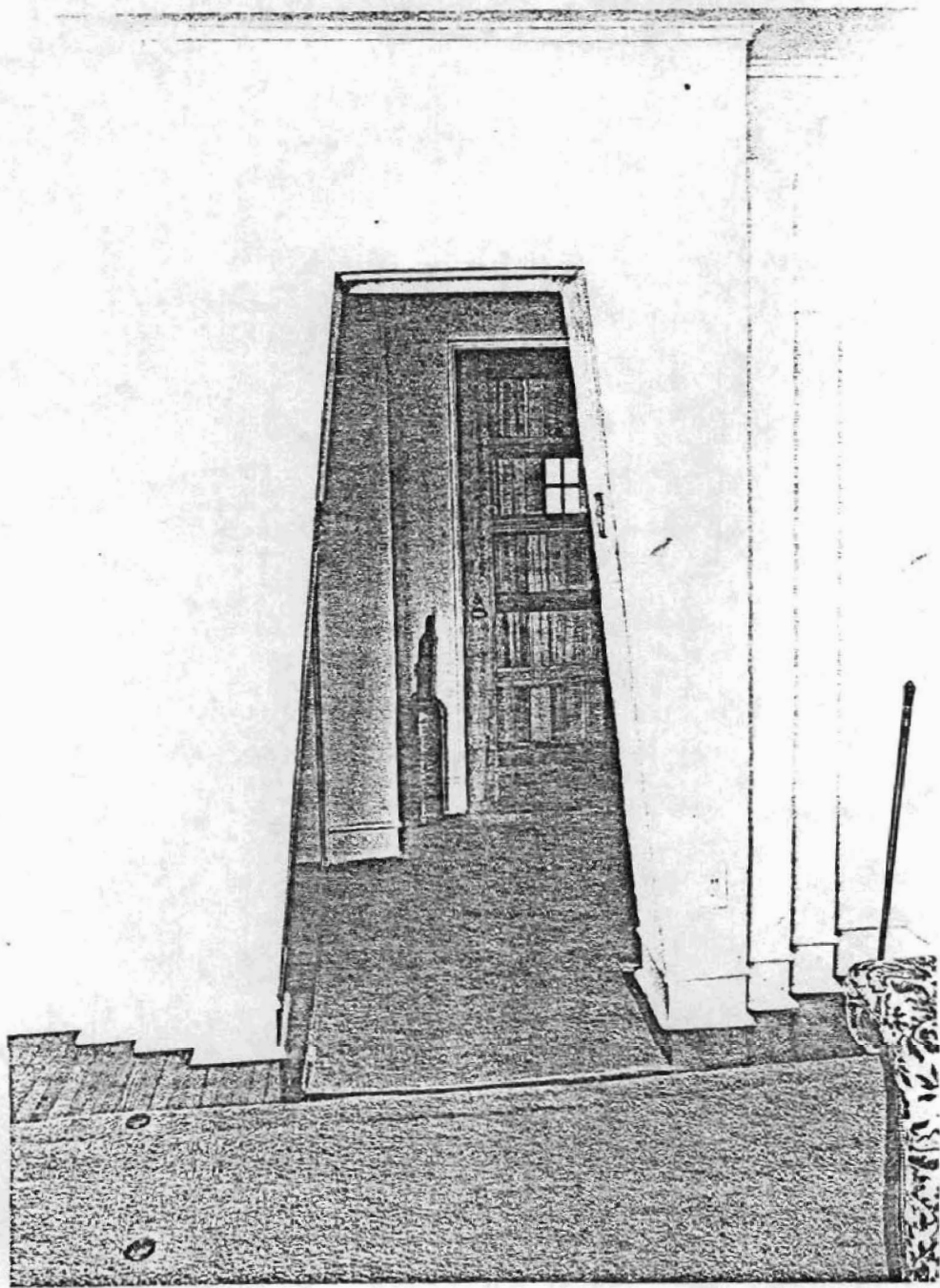
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
December, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Windows from Patio
Viewed from the Southeast



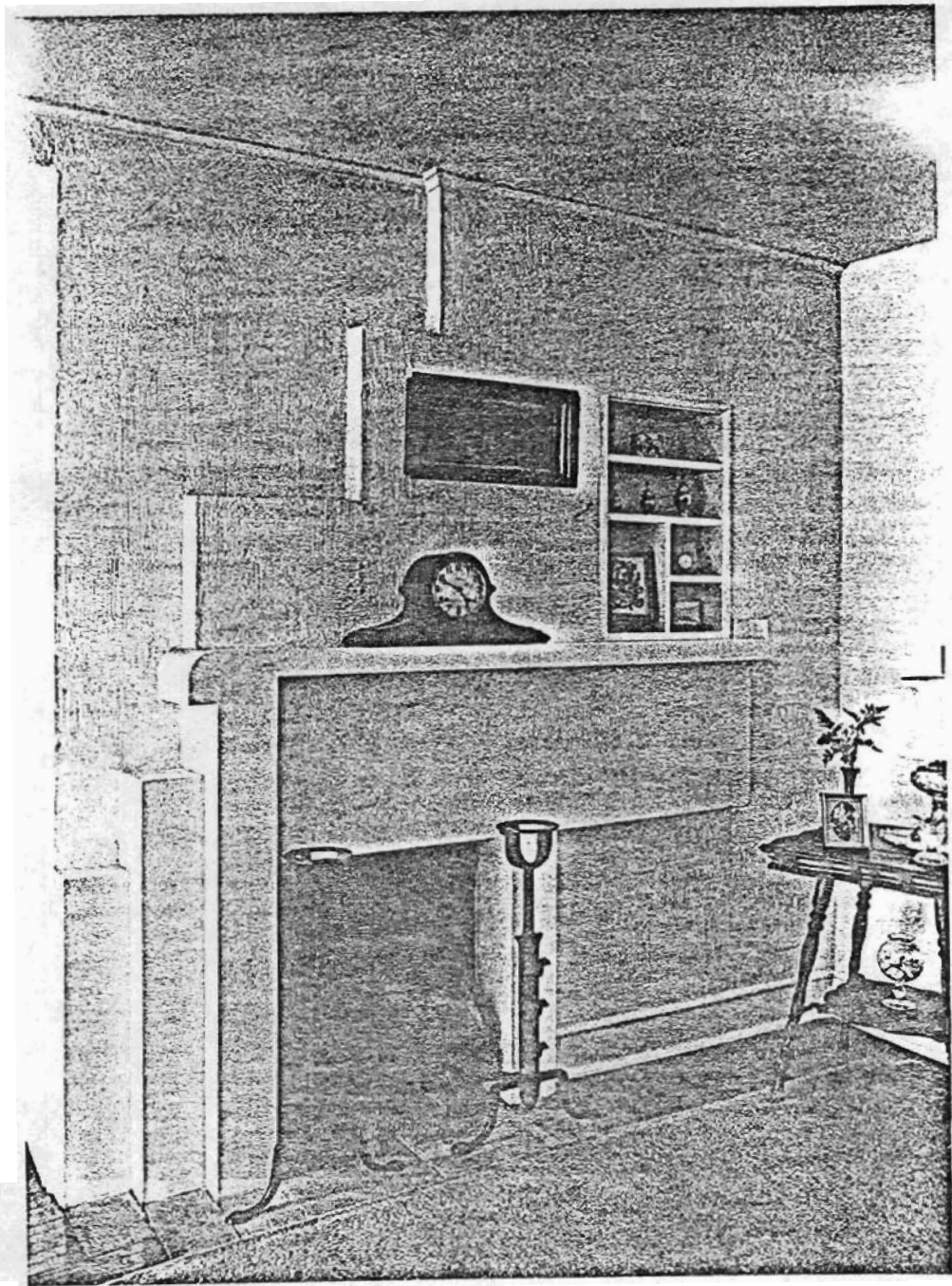
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
December, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Gate to Patio
Viewed from the East



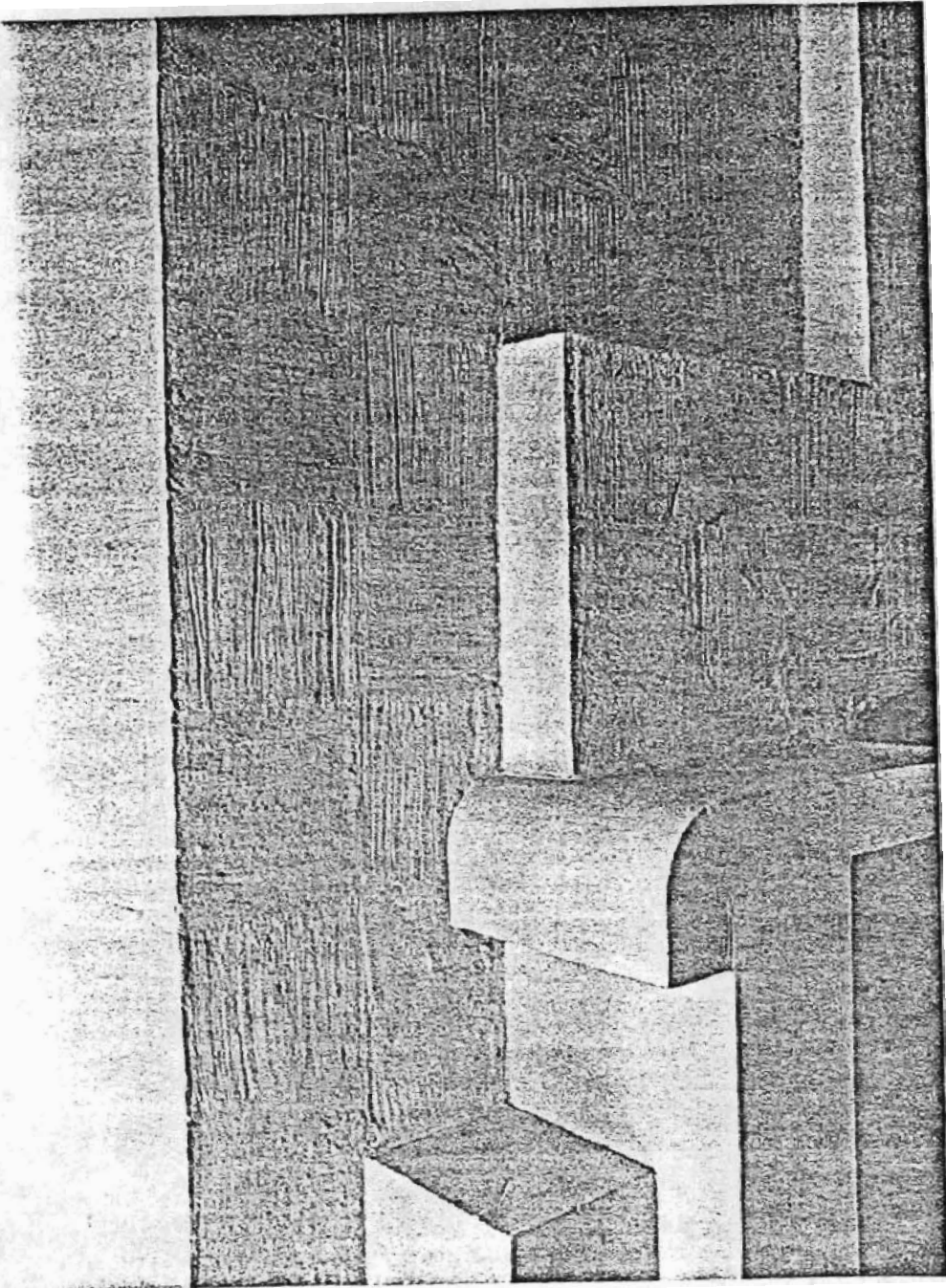
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Interior stairway



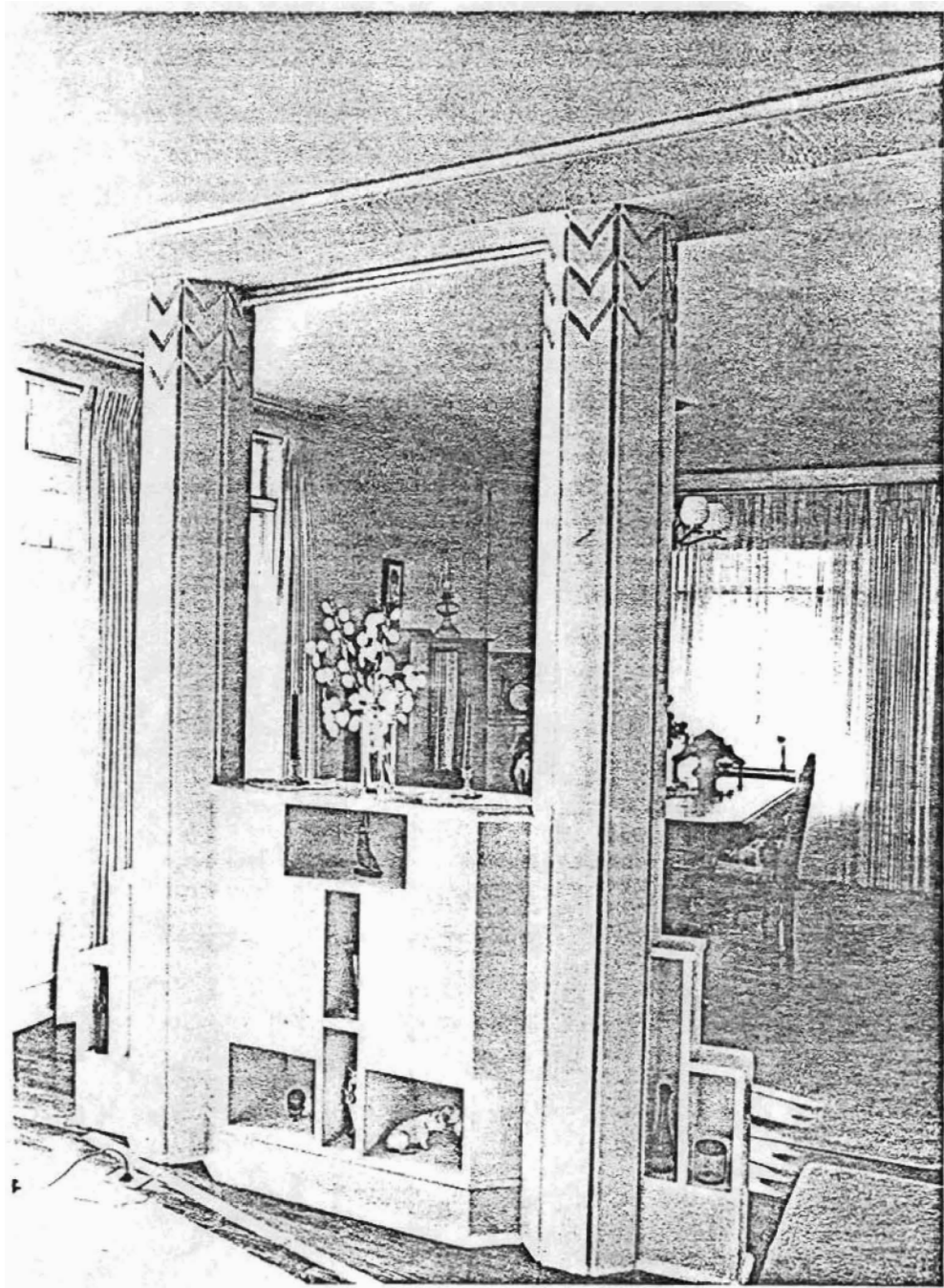
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Interior doorway



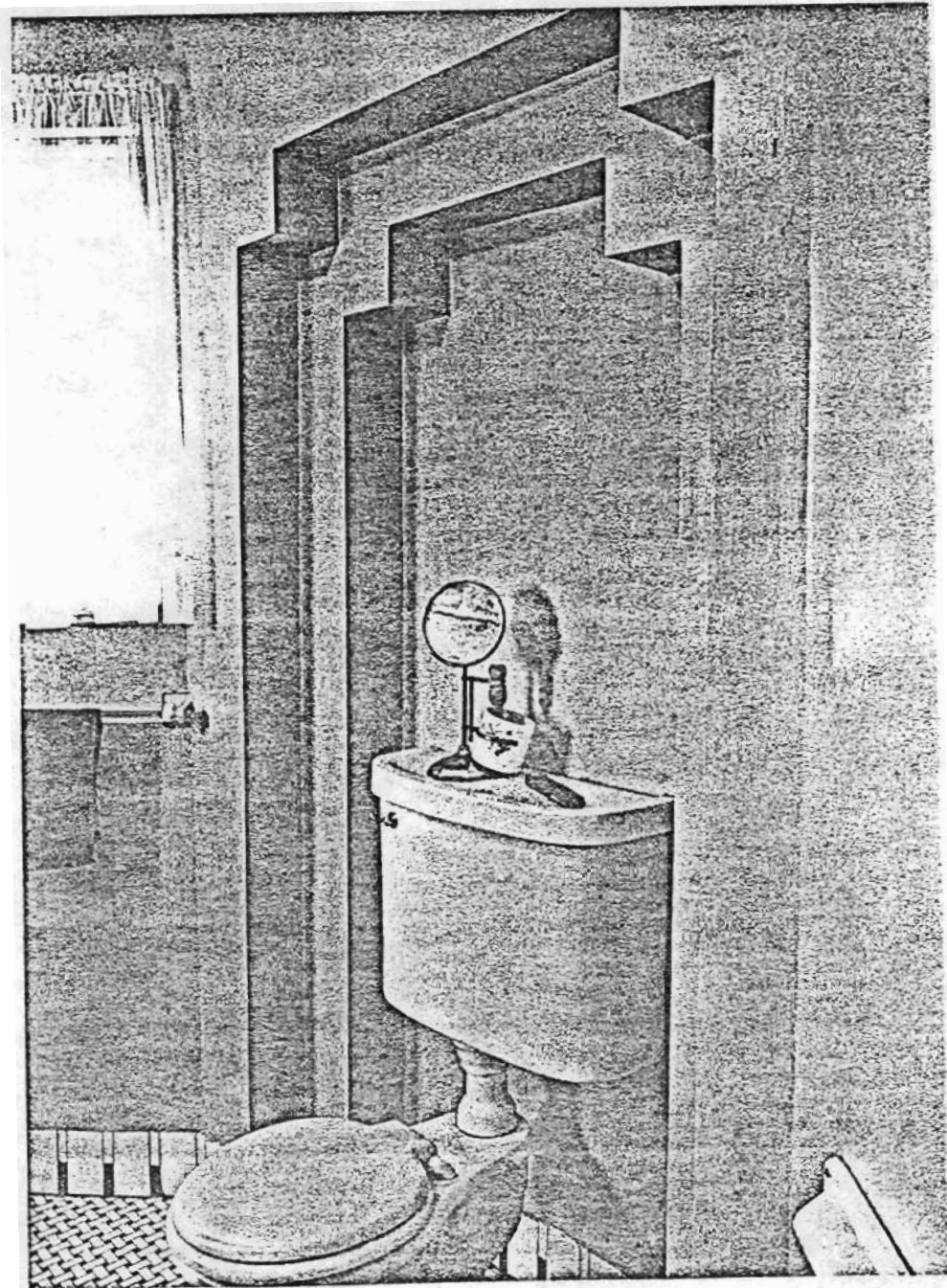
Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Interior



Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Mantel and Plaster Detail



Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Interior



Matthews House
North Little Rock, Arkansas
Sarah Brown, photographer
November, 1982
Negative on file at AHPP
Bathroom details