

NR listed 12/27/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Villa Rosa

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 617 West Lafayette

not for publication n/a

city, town Fayetteville

vicinity n/a

state Arkansas

code AR

county Washington

code AR 143

zip code 72701

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

name of related multiple property listing:  
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
 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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Catherine H. Boyd  
Signature of certifying official  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

11-16-90  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official  
State or Federal agency and bureau

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

5. National Park Service Certification

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 the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls Brick

roof Ceramic Tile

other concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Literature

Architecture

Archeology/Historic -- Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance

1924-1940

1924

1924-1940

Significant Dates

n/a

n/a

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

European

Significant Person

Marinoni, Rosa

Architect/Bullder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property Less than one

**UTM References**

A 

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

C 

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B 

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--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone      Easting      Northing

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 1 & 2, Block 3, Gregg Addition to the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

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

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Don Baker, Preservation Planner  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date November 14, 1990  
street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 200 telephone (501) 324-9346  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Summary

The Villa Rosa is a two-story residential structure built in the Italian Renaissance style that was popular early in the 20th century. The variegated beige brick facing covers a wooden frame construction on a continuous brick foundation.

### Elaboration

The Villa Rosa is a two-story residential structure built in the Italian Renaissance style that was popular early in the 20th century. The variegated beige brick facing covers a wooden frame construction on a continuous brick foundation. Red ceramic tiles cover the low-pitched hipped roof. From the primary northern elevation the building is symmetrical, consisting of a larger central block flanked by two smaller wings.

The primary facade includes many features reflective of the Italian Renaissance style: the home's upper story windows are smaller and less elaborate than those below them, the full length first story windows and the main double doors are capped with decorative arches, and the main entrance area is accented with small classical columns and topped by a small balcony. The brick patio at the front of the building is bounded by four square brick posts.

The east and west wings of the house are symmetrical, except for the rear of the east wing which includes an exterior stairway leading to a basement. Both wings include double doors on the northern elevation capped by decorative lintels. The eastern, western and southern elevations of the house are less elaborate than the primary facade. Windows on the ground floors are capped with decorative lintels while second story windows are smaller and more functional.

The interior of the Villa Rosa has seen few changes since Rosa Marinoni lived there, and many original furnishings remain. The stairway and arched recess in the central hall are original, as are most of the other interior features. One room has had wooden panelling installed, and a bathroom on the ground floor has been remodeled to provide more storage space, but these alterations are minor in light of how few features have been changed in the house.

Associated site features include two original wood frame outbuildings (an automobile garage and a chicken house that is now used for storage), a concrete driveway and an original brick retaining wall that spans the northern and western boundaries of the lot. The lot also includes the site of a decorative stone fish pond (located at the southeast corner of the lot) that is now filled.

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### Summary

Criteria B, C and D, statewide significance

The Villa Rosa, located at 617 West Lafayette in Fayetteville, is an excellent example of Northern Italian architecture in the heart of the Arkansas Ozarks. Located just to the east of the University of Arkansas campus, the large two-story yellow brick house with the red tile roof and turquoise window detailing has been a local landmark for many years, due both to its unique architectural characteristics and its association with Rosa Marinoni, an important figure in the cultural history of Arkansas.

### Elaboration

Rosa Zagnoni Marinoni was born January 5, 1888 in Bologna, Italy, the daughter of Anterno Zagnoni, a successful upholsterer and journalist. Among Zagnoni's friends were the noted author Emile Zola and the inventor Guglielmo Marconi; in later life, Rosa would recall their visits to the family home. In 1898 the family moved to Brooklyn, New York when Anterno Zagnoni was hired as an international correspondent by three leading European newspapers and assigned to cover the Spanish-American war. Following the war the Zagnoni family remained in the United States, where Anterno continued his writing career and became politically active in the presidential campaigns of Theodore Roosevelt and Charles Evans Hughes.

Rosa had no formal education beyond what she described as "three disgusting days in kindergarten." She was tutored at home in French and Italian, but learned conversational English from her Brooklyn playmates. At 18 she met Antonio Marinoni, a young Italian born in 1879 in Pozzolenigo, a town in Lombardy, Italy. Marinoni had come to the United States to study, and in 1905 he joined the faculty of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. In 1906 he was named the head of the Department of Romance Languages. He and Rosa were married in July 1908 and settled in Fayetteville.

Rosa Marinoni's early years in Fayetteville were full and eventful. She became an activist in the women's suffrage movement in Arkansas and helped to organize women for first aid training during the first World War. The Marinonis built up sizable real estate holdings in Fayetteville which they used as rental properties for students and faculty. Rosa and Antonio had two children who survived to adulthood, Maria and Paul.

In 1924, an exploding boiler next door to the Marinoni home started one of the worst fires in Fayetteville history. The fire destroyed the Marinoni home, and newspaper accounts described how students, teachers, and neighbors helped to carry many of the Marinoni's belongings from the burning house to the lawn of Old Main to save them from the flames. In her autobiographical work Myself Limited, Rosa described how she resolved to build a new home on the ashes of the old:

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"As I stood there, I promised myself that out of those ashes would rise a home the color of those embers of that gold glow and flash of flames. I was going to build again, a phinix (sic) over the ruins of that which I had loved."

Villa Rosa was built later that year.

In 1925 Rosa was involved in a near-fatal automobile accident and was hospitalized. Although she eventually recovered, at the time doctors predicted that she would never walk again. To calm herself, Rosa took up a pad and pencil to write away her fear. Her first poem, "Lullaby," was written about a woman who was dying in the hospital room next to Rosa's. Thus began a forty-five year writing career in which Rosa turned out literally hundreds of poems yearly, as well as a number of serials and novels, childrens' stories and short stories. She also became a regular contributor to the Arkansas Gazette and the Chicago Tribune. Rosa's poetry was that of a realist with a sharp perception of the world and events around her. Her poetry was described as "vigorous, ironic, sometimes blunt, often humorous, more often poignant." She published her first collection of poetry, Behind the Mask in 1926. This was followed by Pine Needles (1927), Red Kites and Wooden Crosses (1929), In Passing (1930), North of Laughter (1932), Side Show (1938), Sunny Side Up (1941), Timberline (1955), The Ozarks and Some of Its People (1956), Radici al Vento / Roots to the Sky (1957, published in both Italian and English), Think 'n' Wink (1959), and The Ozarks and More of Its People (1961). Her 1938 collection Side Show became one of the best-selling books of poetry of all time.

During the 1930's Rosa wrote and published hundreds of short stories, vignettes, serials, novels, and epigrams in addition to her poems. Later in life she tended to concentrate on her poetry. In addition to her own name, Rosa also wrote under the pen names of Ross, Zane Morrison, Rosca, The Jester, Dawn Starr, Stella, and June Summers. More than 1,000 of her short stories were published in 70 magazines, while her poems were featured in more than 500 magazines throughout the world. Her works were translated into French, German, Italian, Danish, Yiddish, Gaelic, Welsh, and Russian. Rosa became one of the most widely published women in America of her day, and in the 1950's the Italian government recognized her as the most widely known poet of Italian birth abroad.

In addition to her writing, Rosa founded the University City Poetry Club in 1926 to encourage poets and poetry; at the time of her death in 1970 it was the oldest poetry organization in the Southwest. She also founded the Northwest Arkansas branch of the National League of American Pen Women, helped to establish October 15th as Arkansas Poetry Day, and in 1962 succeeded in publishing the national literary journal South and West, in the hope that it would "slay the barefoot image of Arkansas people." In 1953, a special act by the General Assembly named Rosa Poet Laureate of Arkansas, and in 1969, by proclamation of Governor Winthrop Rockefeller and by resolution of the General Assembly, October 15th was designated Rosa

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Marinoni Day in Arkansas. Less than six months later, on March 26, 1970, Rosa Marinoni died in her sleep at the Villa Rosa at the age of 81.

Rosa Marinoni's life's work had done much to enrich the civic and cultural climate of Arkansas, and her contributions to the arts in Arkansas have been inestimable. She ranks as one of the premier writers the state has produced, an integral figure in the cultural heritage of Arkansas. The Villa Rosa, her home for over forty-five years, stands as a monument to and a reminder of all that Rosa Marinoni contributed to her adopted state. Like Rosa herself, the Villa Rosa represents a mingling of the Old World and the New.

The house was built in the fall of 1924 in what was then a growing residential area of professors and students affiliated with the University. Rosa Marinoni designed the house based on her father's summer home in Bologna, the original Villa Rosa where the poet had lived as a child. The two Fayetteville lots where the house now stands originally held two white bungalows which burned in the fire of 1924. Rosa decided that her new home would be built in the colors of this fire; red was used in the house's tile roof, yellow in the original stucco (now in the yellow brick), and turquoise trim around the windows. The firm of Ratliff and Bird of Fayetteville served as the architect, while W. C. Jackson performed the construction work. The original exterior was stucco, but it was covered with yellow brick in the early 1930's by a master brickmason because the original stucco would not hold paint in the humid climate. The house's exterior appearance remains as it was in the early 1930's, including the turquoise and cream paint.

The home's interior features a greenery-filled sun parlor, and a spacious living room which opens into the dining room which Rosa used as a workshop and wrote her poetry in the early hours of the day. The home is decorated with many of the awards, pictures, and mementos that Rosa acquired during her lifetime. Other original features of interest include the hand-wrought iron chandeliers and wall sconces, both of which were brought from Northern Italy by Rosa's husband Antonio when he conducted summer tours there. The balcony railing over the front door, featuring a hammered "B", was fashioned by the ironworker whose father made the gates for the original Villa Rosa in Bologna. The reliefs above the downstairs windows on the front of the house were also imported from Italy, while the limestone steps and wall caps came from the quarry in Carthage, Missouri.

The Villa Rosa is built in the Italian Renaissance style, with parts actually imported from Italy. Features of this architectural style, popular in the early 20th century, include a low-pitched hipped roof, typically covered with ceramic tiles; upper story windows smaller and less elaborate than lower windows; arches above doors and first-story windows; and an entrance area usually accented by small classical columns or pilasters. The Villa Rosa reflects a popular subtype characterized by simple hipped roofs with flat symmetrical front facades and full width porches, often with massive square piers as porch supports. As such, the Villa Rosa is an

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excellent example of Northern Italian architecture. The red tile roof with solid copper guttering is similar to those found in this region of Italy, while the yellow brick is typical of the color of common rocks all over Northern Italy.

The lot surrounding the Villa Rosa is also significant for its potential to reveal further information about the Marinoni family and their lifestyle. Both Rosa Marinoni and her husband Antonio were born in Italy, and both spent significant portions of their youth in that country. Though they met in Brooklyn, New York, where Rosa's family had settled, they relocated to the site of the present structure in 1908, when Rosa was 20 years old. Though no surface archeological evidence remains from the period during which the Marinoni family lived in the first house, two original outbuildings, an original concrete driveway, and a stone retaining wall along Lafayette Street survive from 1924, when the current building was constructed. Furthermore, historical photographs reveal the existence of a stone-lined fish pond, located just to the east of the chicken house/storage building, that was installed by the Marinoni family and filled later. All of this evidence points to the potential of the site to reveal valuable information about such research questions as the native Italian customs retained by the Marinoni family; the extent to which these customs were adapted to the agricultural, culinary, recreational and other cultural customs of the early 20th century Arkansas Ozarks; and the extent to which the Marinoni family erected other ancillary structures - permanent or temporary - for their daily needs, and what purposes these structures may have served.

The home is currently inhabited by Rosa Marinoni's granddaughter, Rosa Robinson, and her family. Only minor alterations have been made to the interior and considerable effort has been expended in restoring the home to its original condition.

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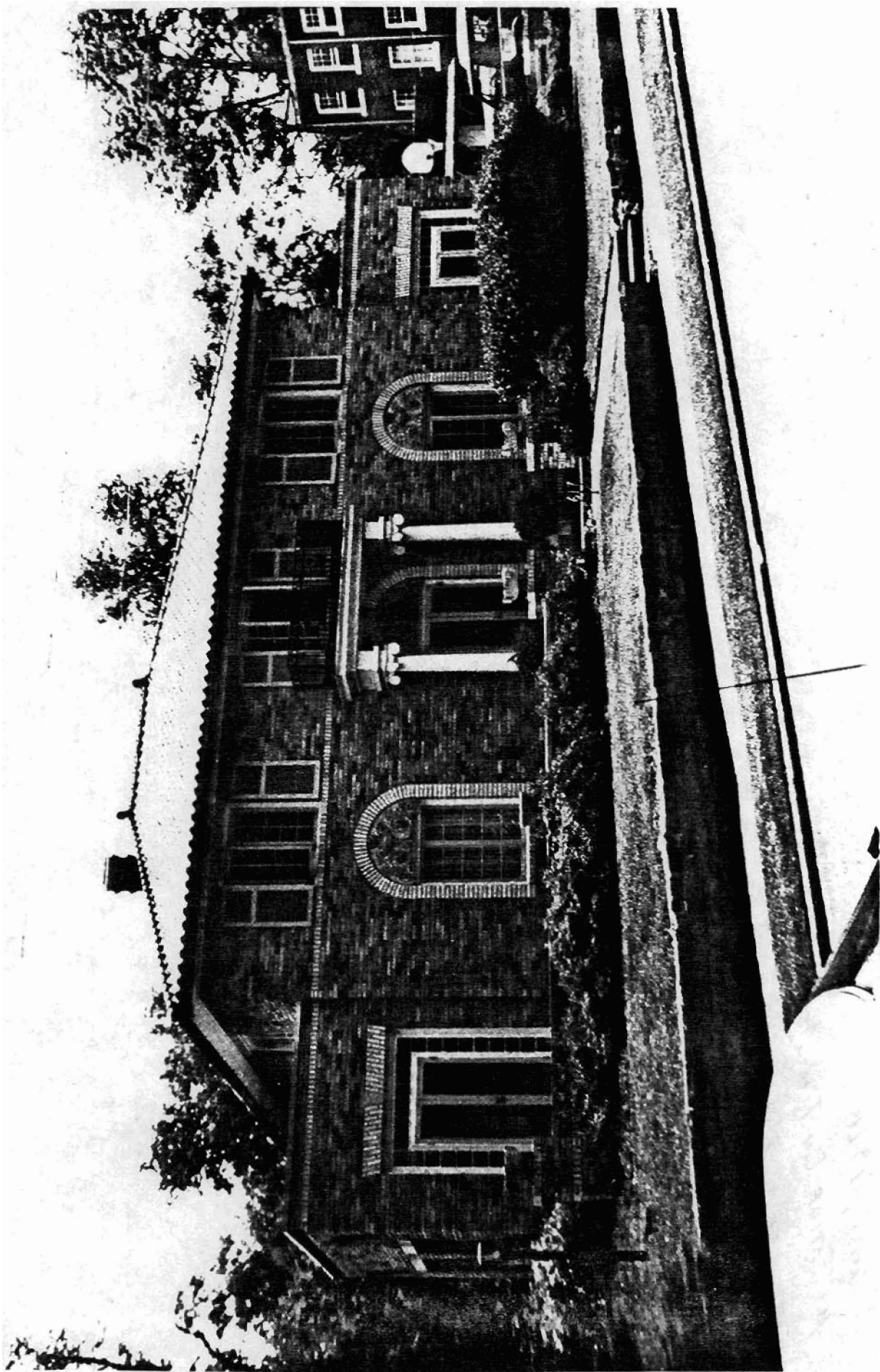
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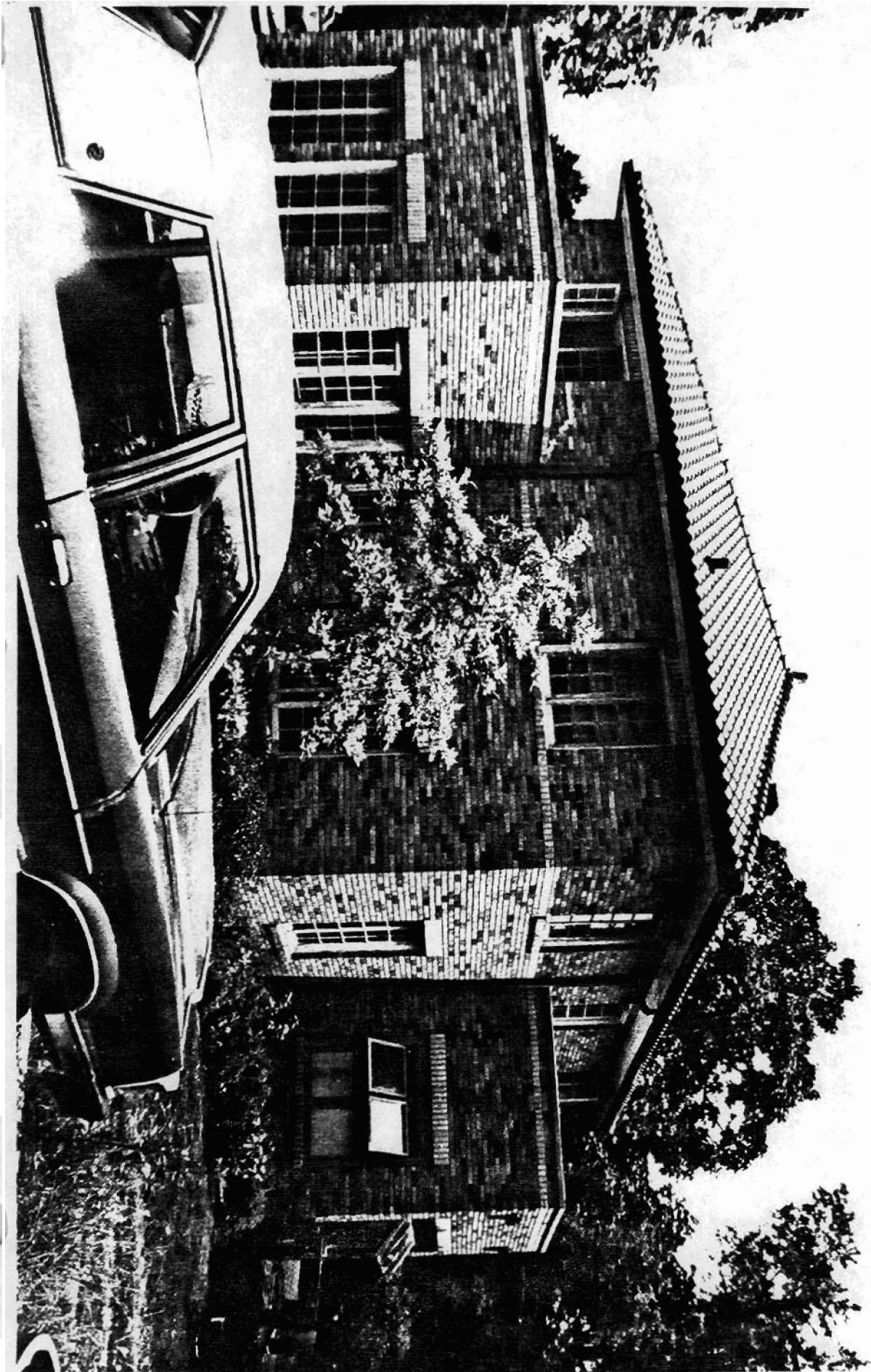
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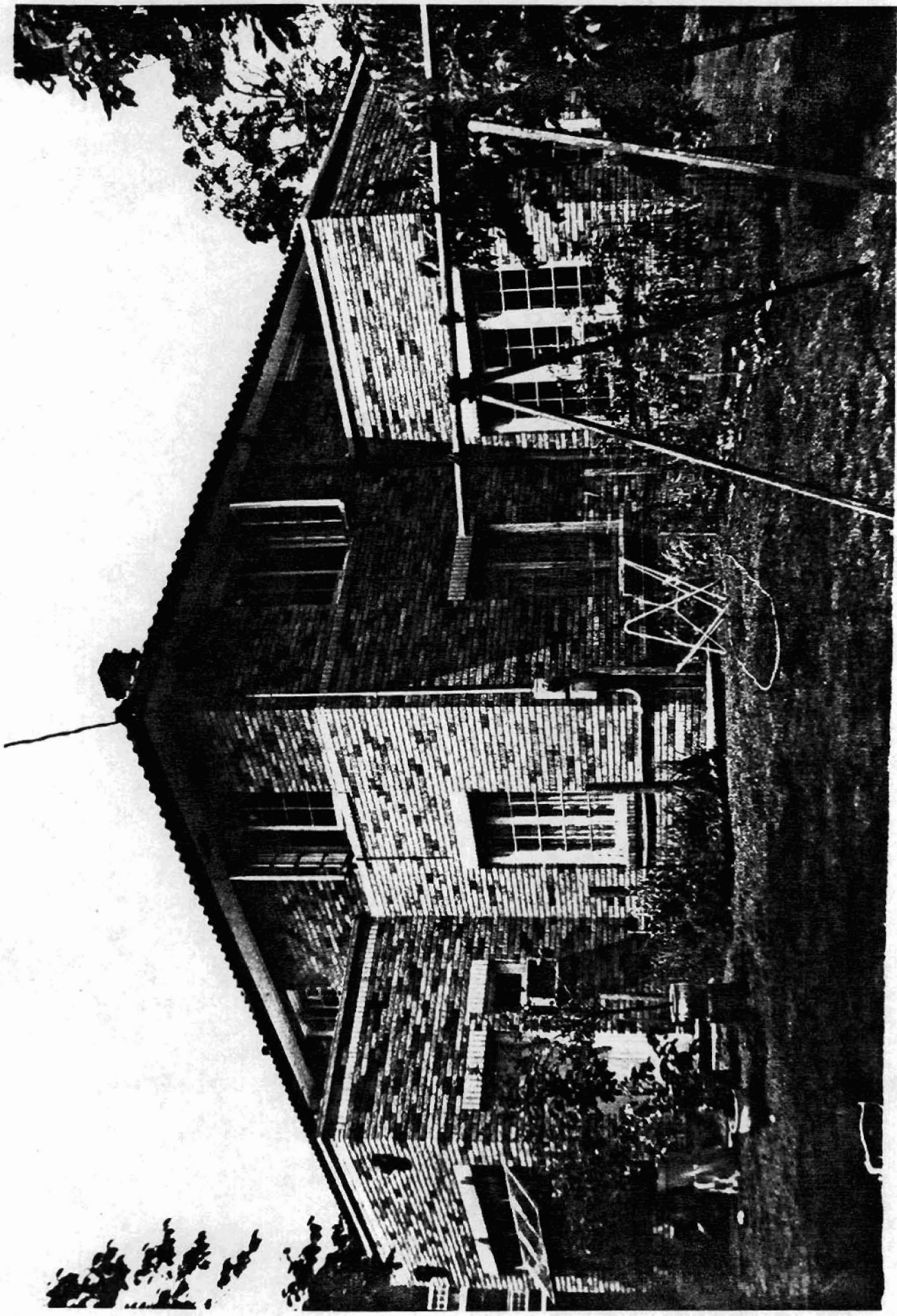
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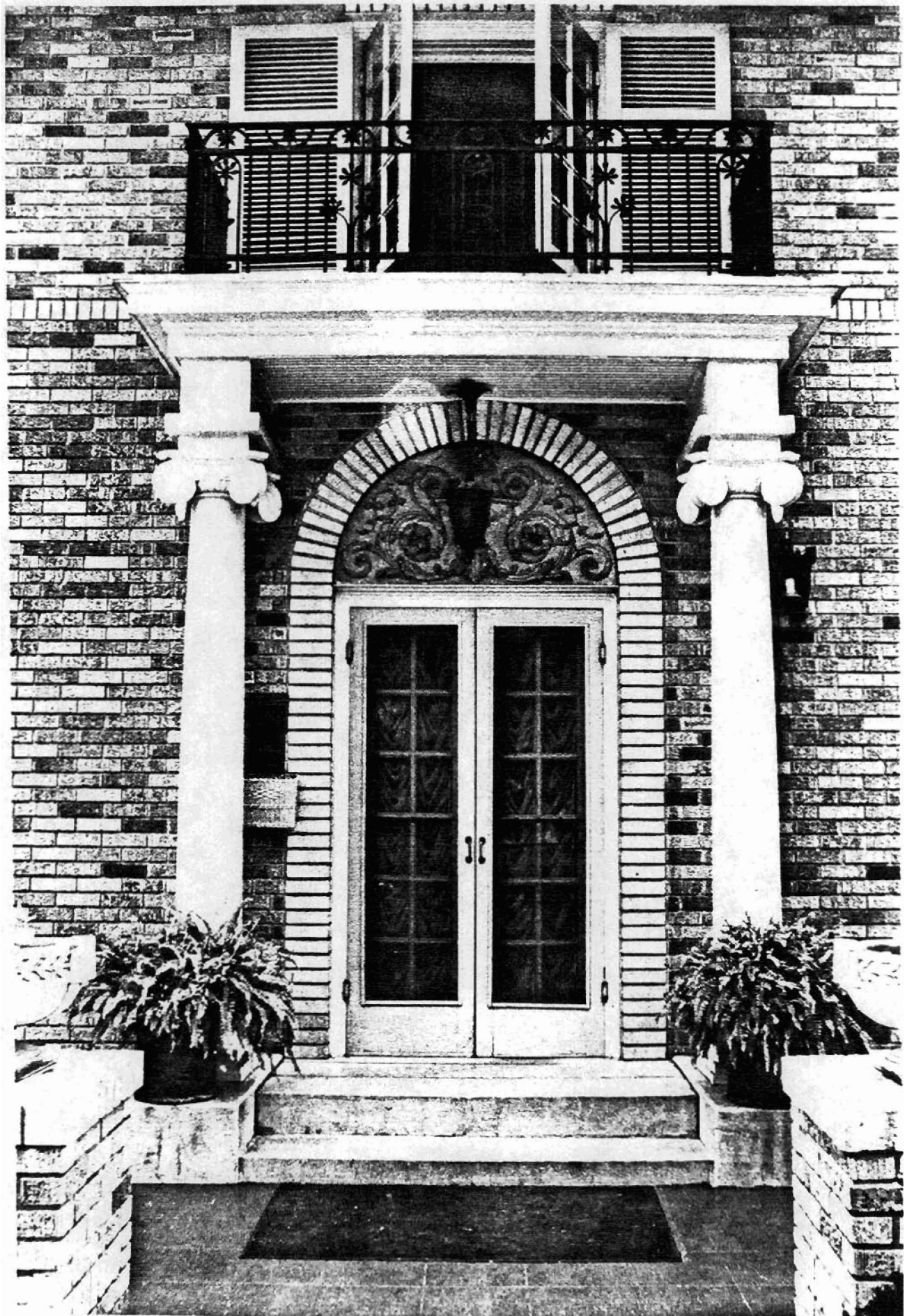




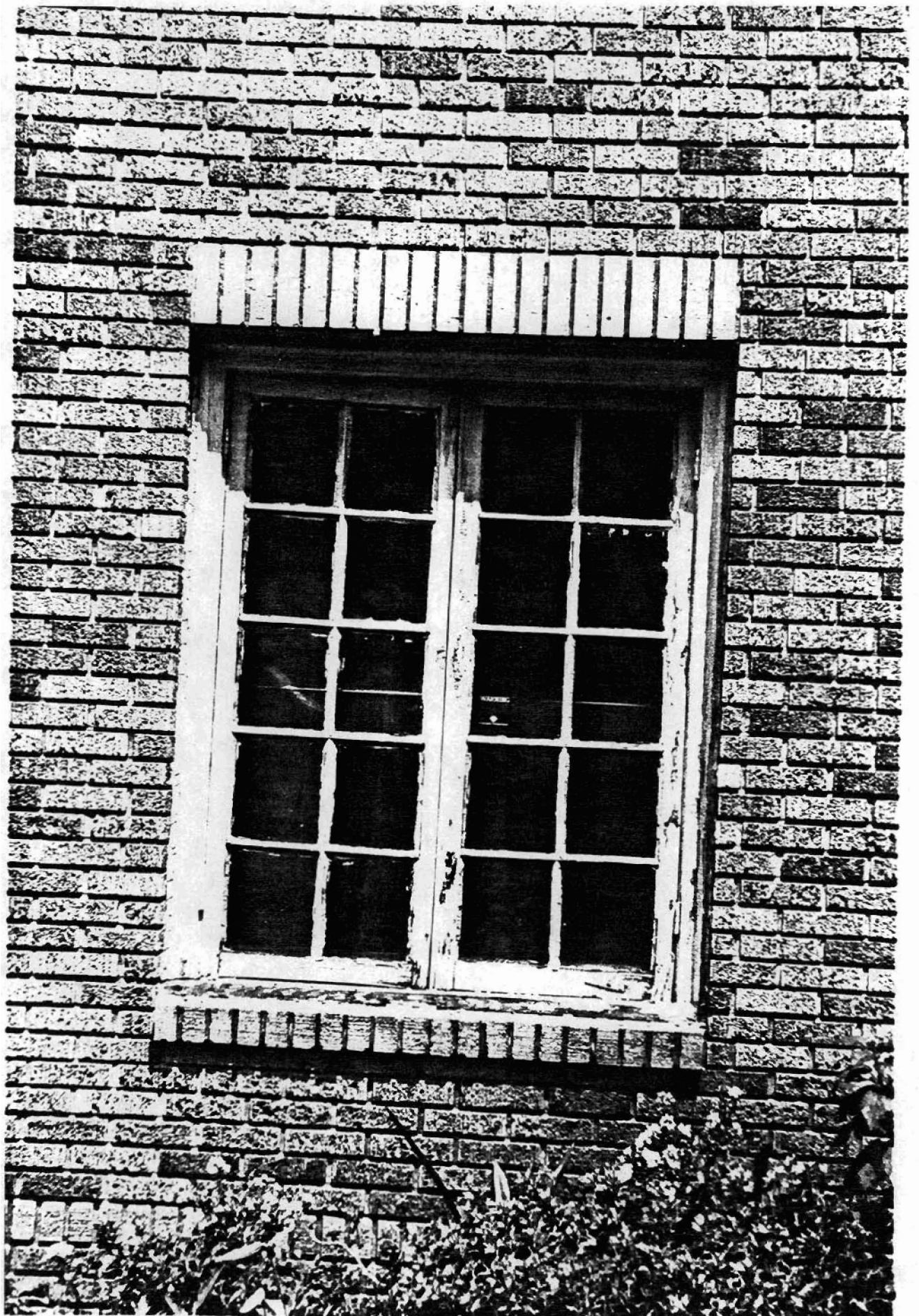


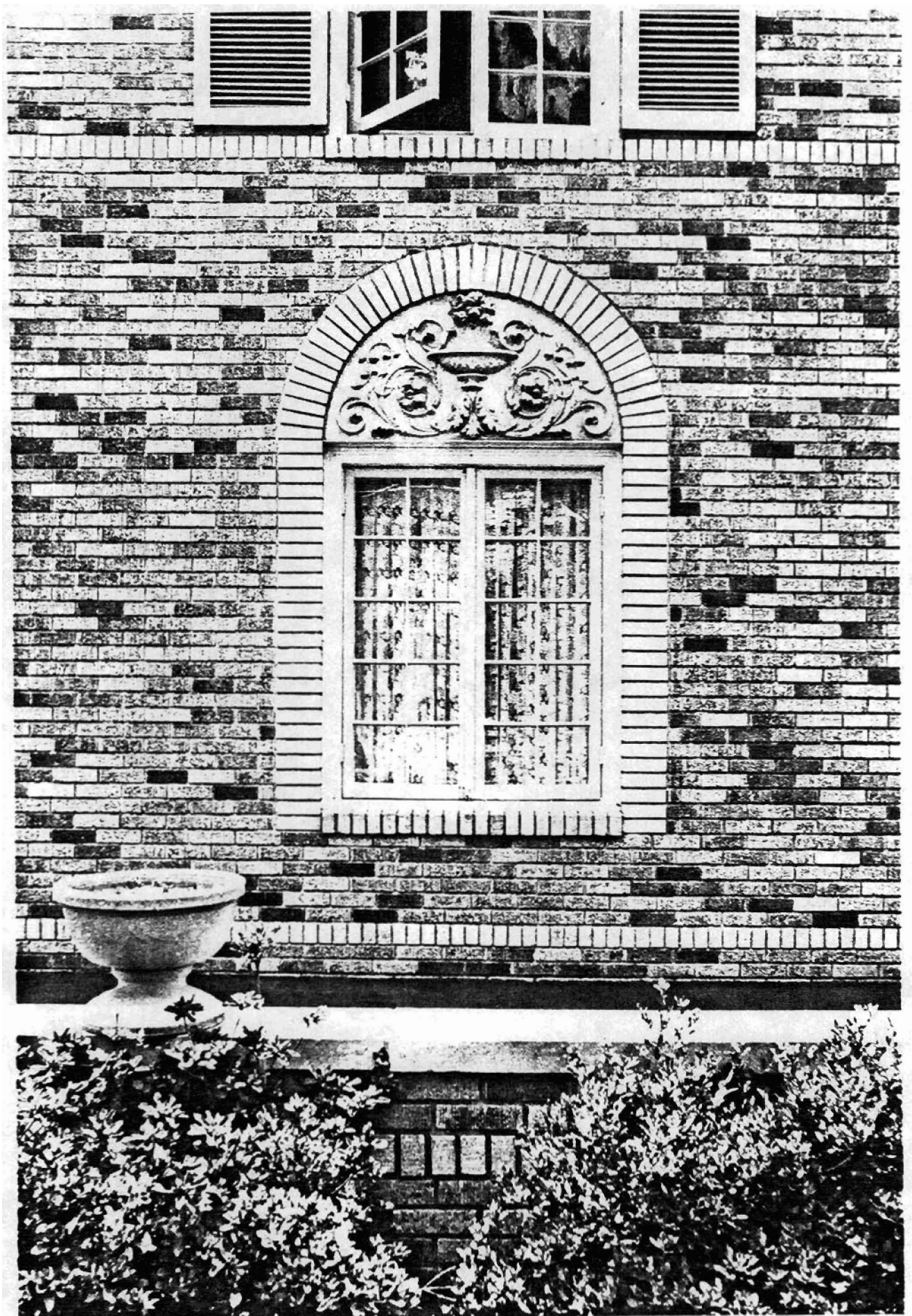




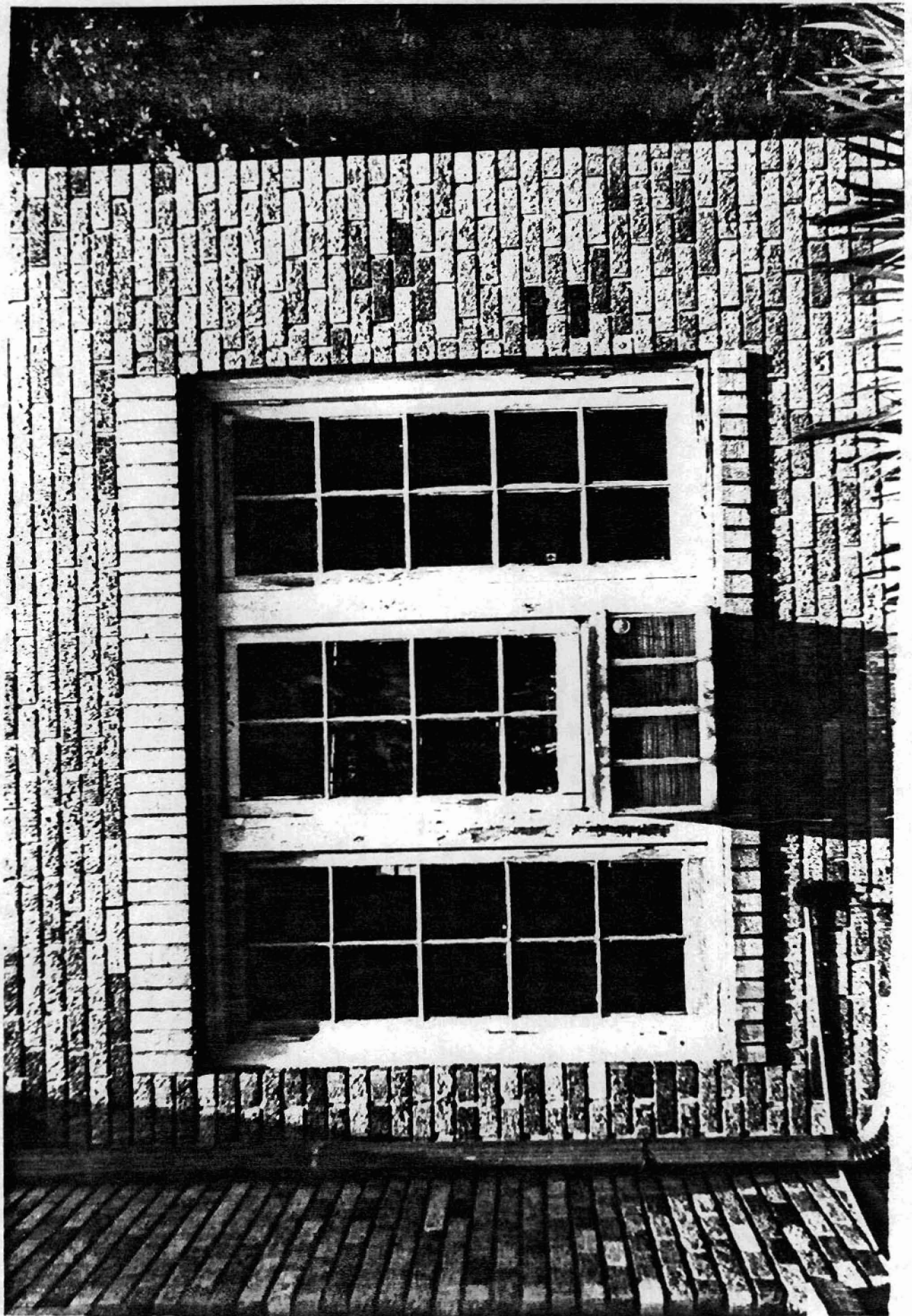


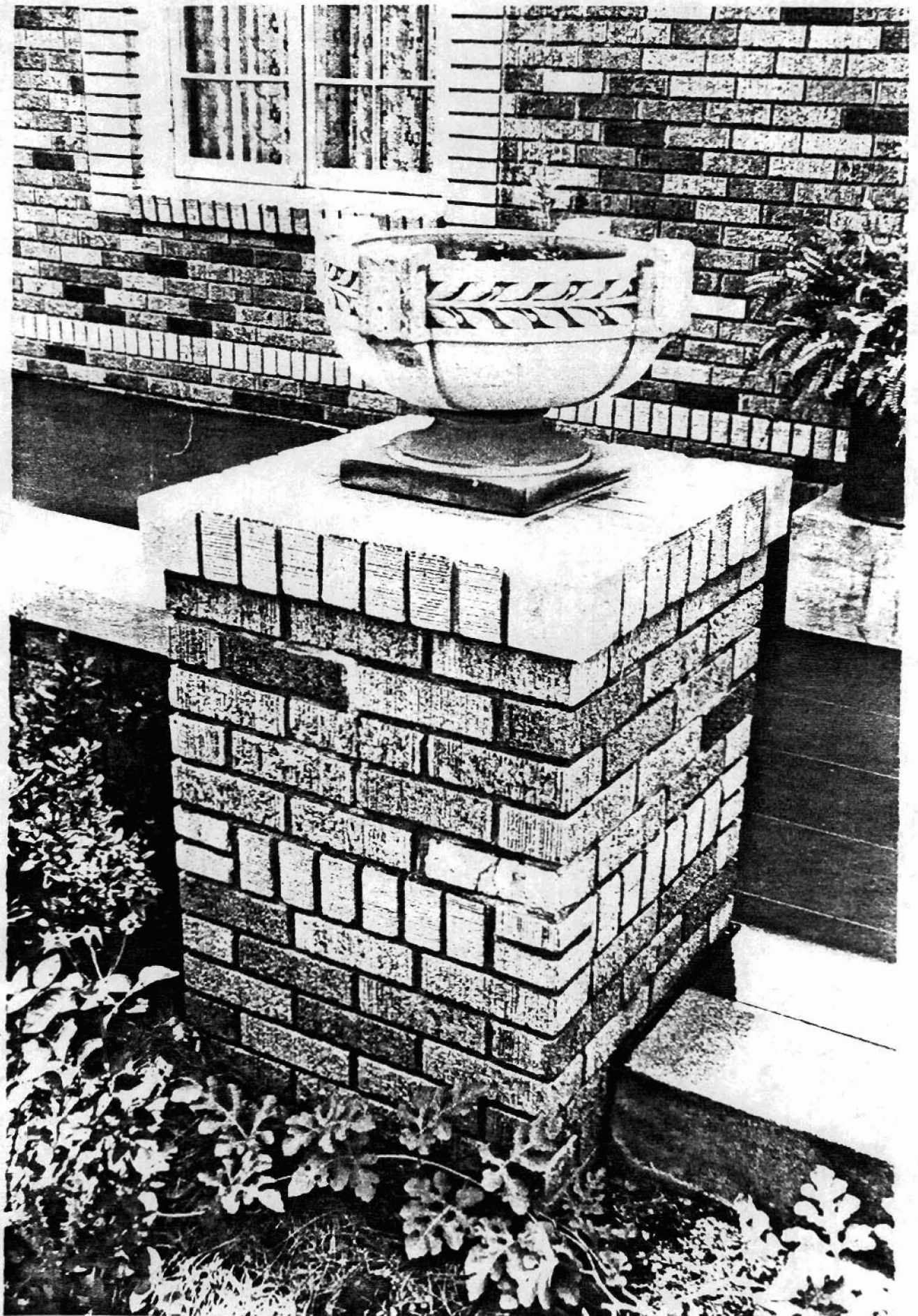




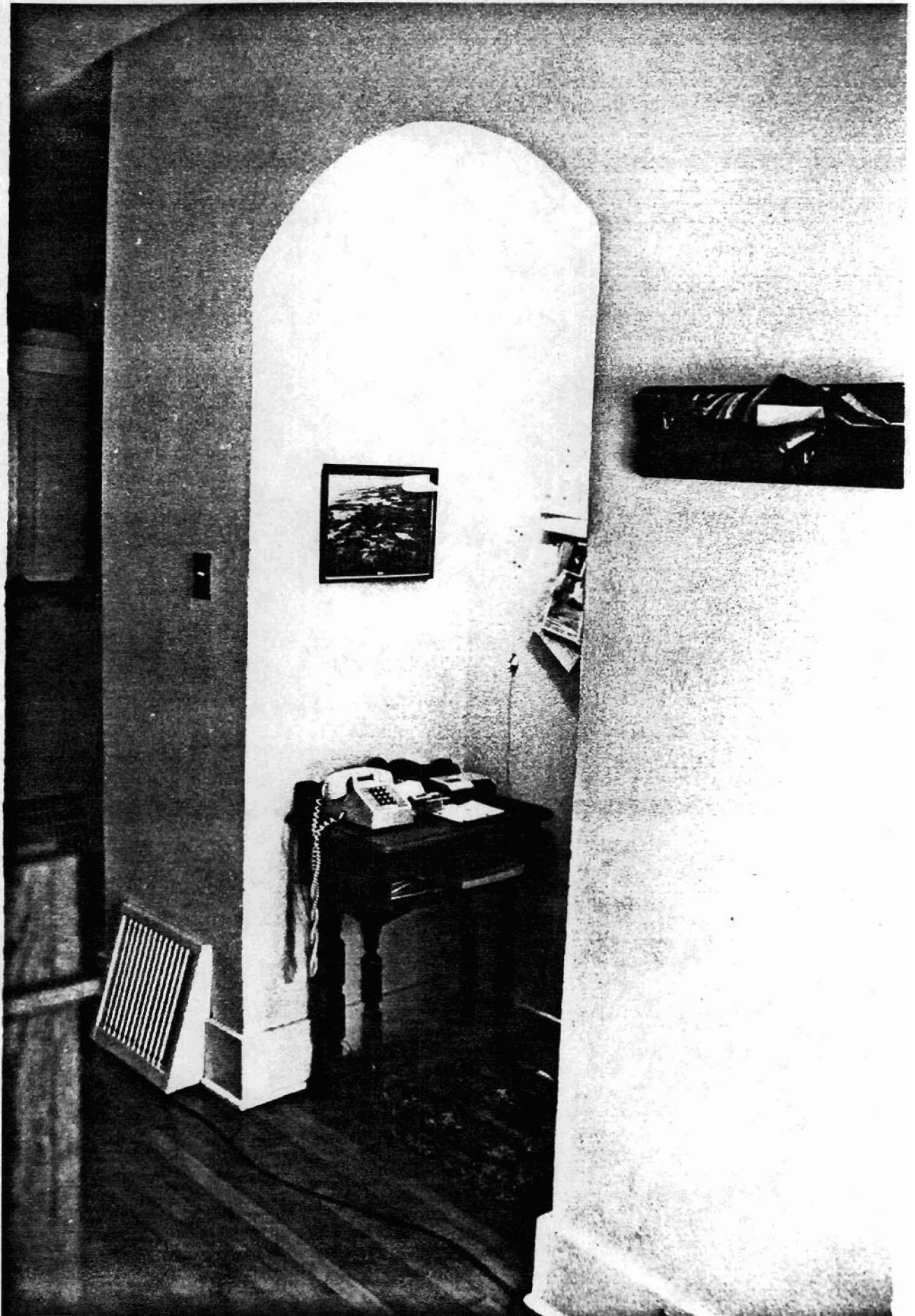


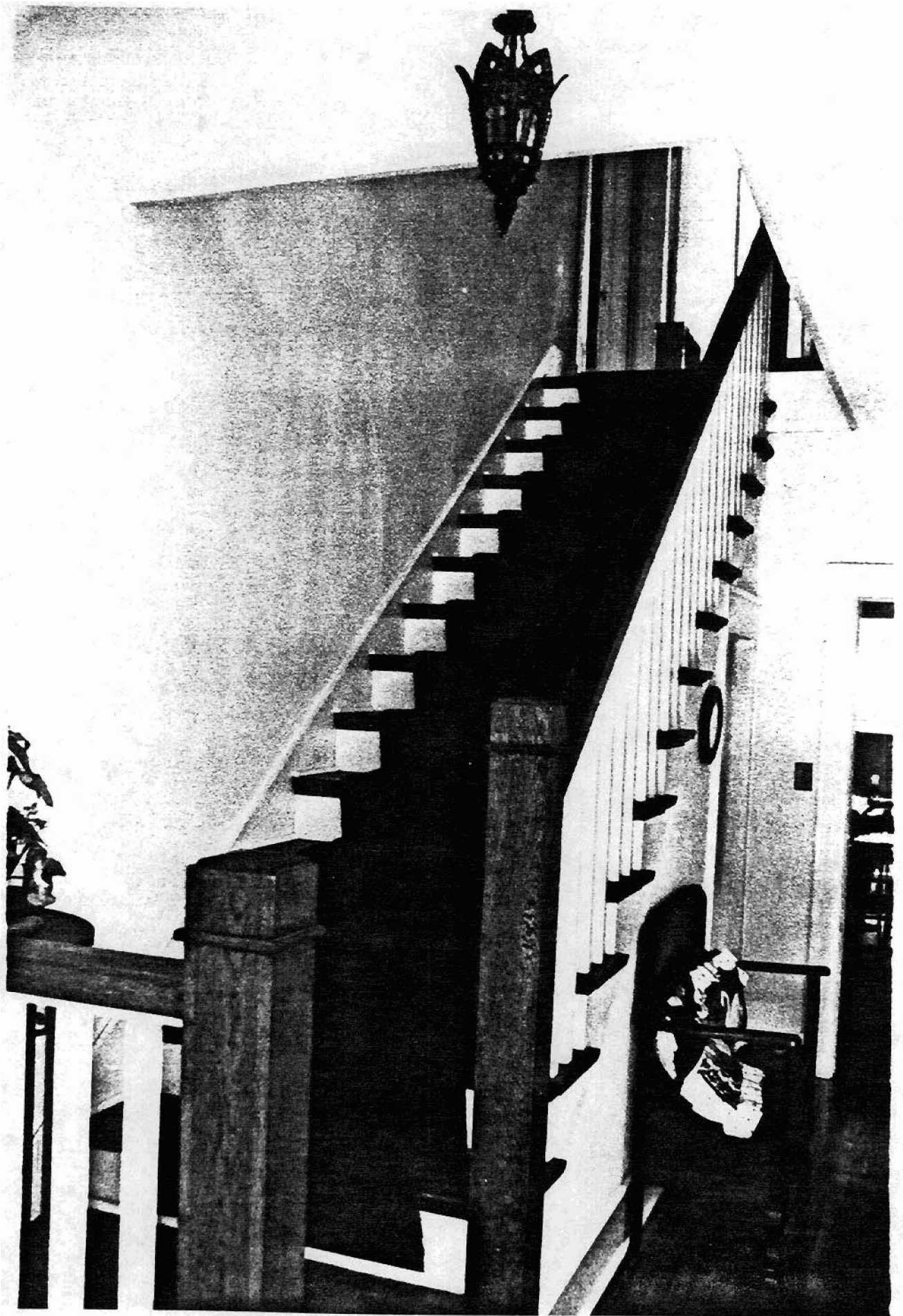




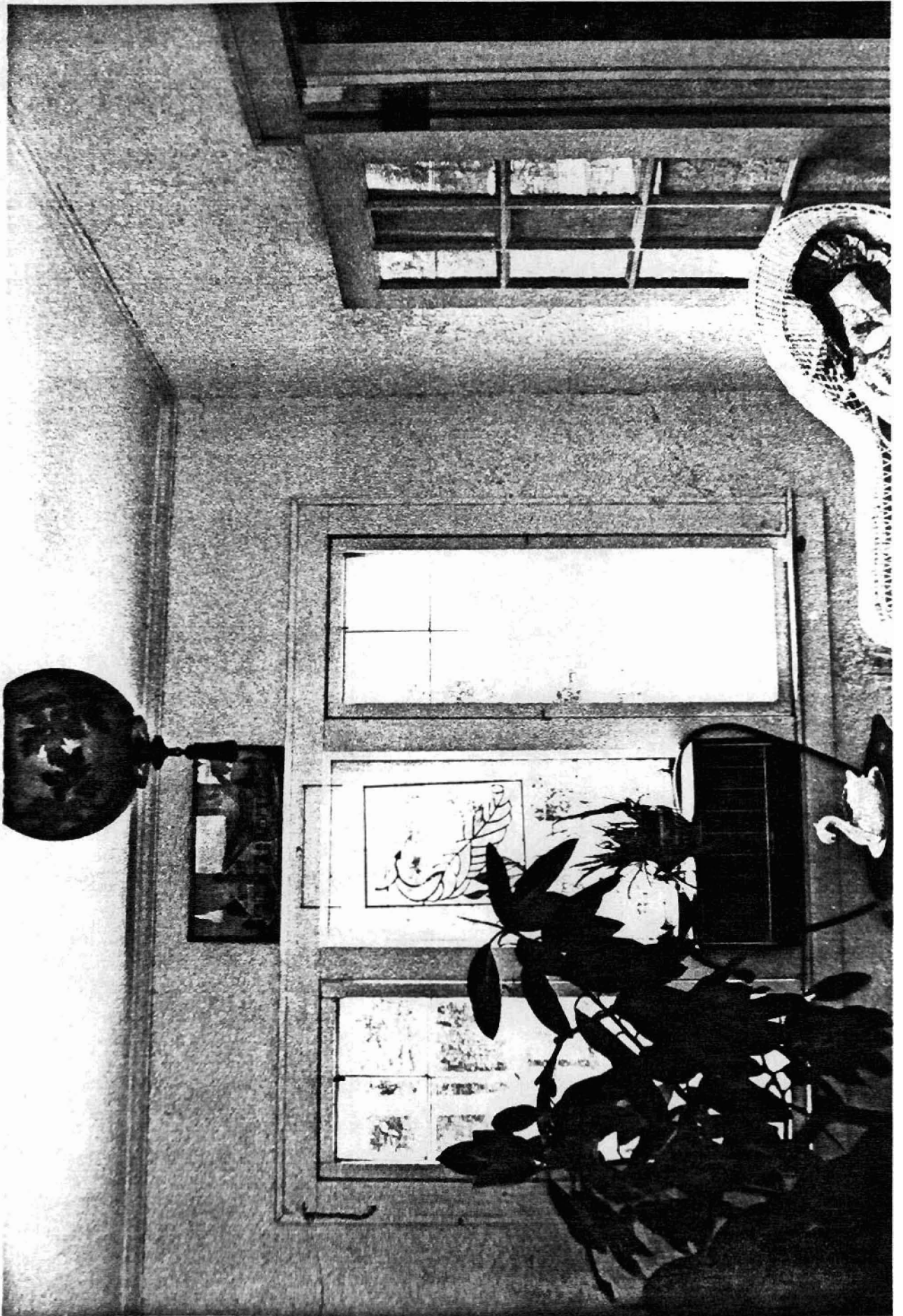


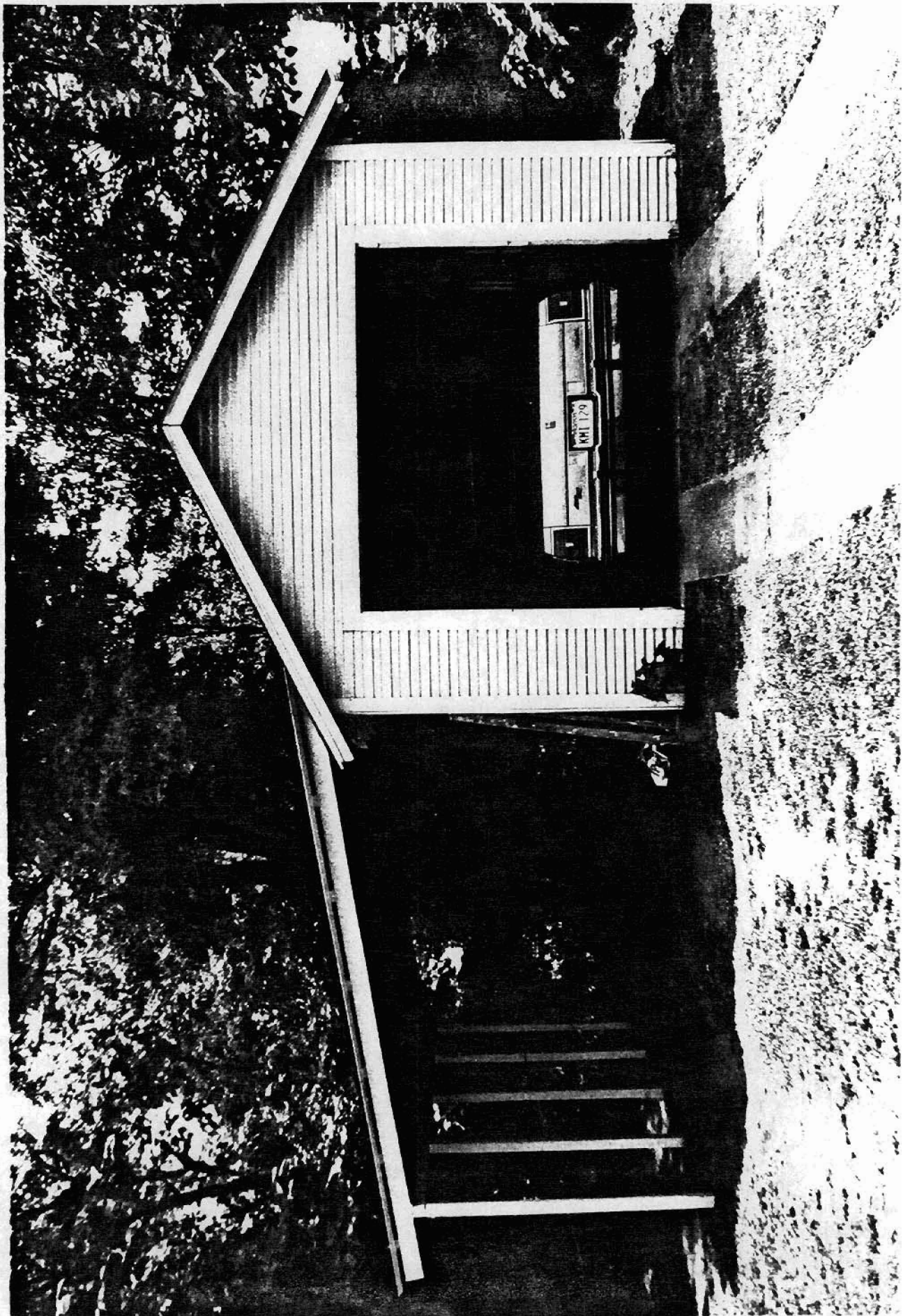




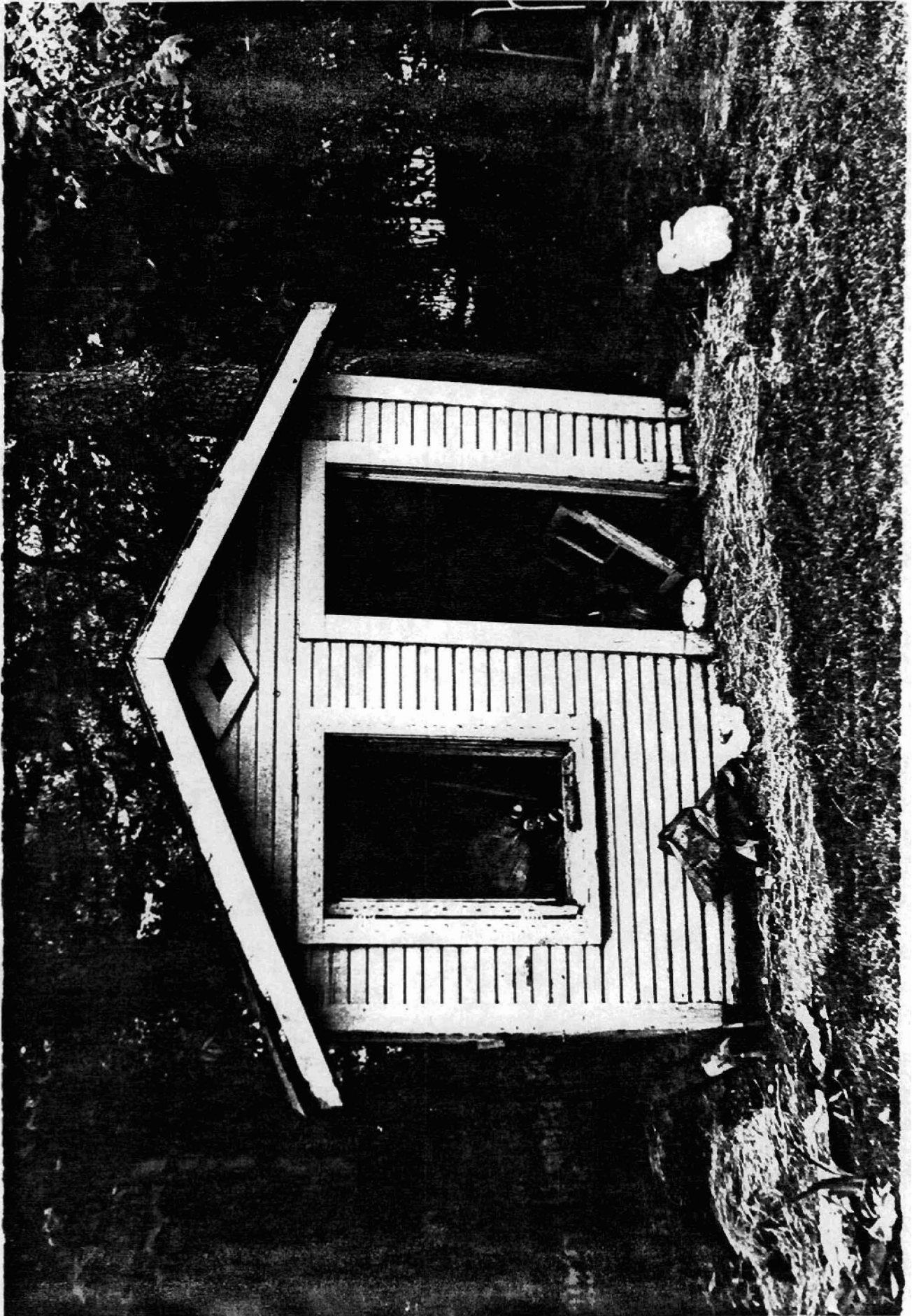












Villa Rosa  
Fayetteville, Arkansas  
Washington County  
15/394850/3991940  
Fayetteville Quadrangle  
1:24000

