

73-1-1080-61

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

Arkansas
COUNTY:
White
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Black House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Benjamin Clayton Black House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
300 East Race Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Searcy

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Second

STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05 COUNTY: White CODE: 145

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Miss Lorena Black

STREET AND NUMBER:
300 East Race Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Searcy

STATE:
Arkansas

CODE:
05

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
White County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Courthouse Square

CITY OR TOWN:
Searcy

STATE:
Arkansas

CODE:
05

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Black House stands as one of the earlier examples of Victorian architecture remaining in Arkansas. Originally built as a one-storey, two-room structure with common fireplace, it underwent extensive modifications about 1872 that resulted in the present day form. New rooms were added to the first floor and a complete second floor was built. The present plan is essentially a central hall with stairway, two rooms on one side and a single room on the other. The central hall extends to the rear of the house, connecting to the semi-detached kitchen facilities.

The essence of the Black House's architectural merit rests with the ornamental woodwork detailing. All window trim is identical, with common features of triangle pediment with centered clover-leaf medallion, paired scroll brackets of delicate scale, dentils, and chamfered edge pilasters straddling the window opening. The window openings extend to floor level on both storeys.

A two-storey veranda dominates the entry facade and is the most significant feature of the Black House. The same details of the windows are mirrored in every manner and the entablature of the house is continuous about the veranda. Paired chamfered posts in a three-bay setting carry the second storey porch floor, while single matching posts in a seven bay setting carry the porch roof. Ornamental latticework between the posts creates an arcade effect. The cloverleaf pattern appears in the latticework as it does in the windows.

The ornateness of the exterior prevails on the interior details in the form of elaborate moulded trim and a large baseboard. Fireplaces are framed by fluted pilasters, a plain frieze, and simple mantel shelf. Door hinges are representative of the most ornate of the Victorian period.

The Black House is located in a well landscaped corner of a four lot property estate with a carriage and stable shelter located to the rear of the house. It has been continually occupied since 1875, and remains in an excellent state of repairs.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

5. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century; 18th Century; 20th Century
 15th Century; 17th Century; 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1870's

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Just before the Civil War began a small two-room structure was built on a corner lot in the heart of Searcy, Arkansas. In 1866 four adjoining lots, including the one on which the small structure stood, were purchased by Captain Benjamin Clayton Black, CSA. In March, 1866, Captain Black and his wife, the former Molly Rosamond Jones, were married. According to a grandson, it was their honeymoon trip to New Orleans which influenced the Blacks on the architectural style of their future home.

For several years the Blacks lived in the pre-war two-room structure, but in 1872 they began the enlargement that has made their family residence a Searcy landmark. By 1874 the two-storey white clapboard house was finished; however, eight years later some of the six original porches were rebuilt, and some of the interior walls were replastered.

Captain Black gained local fame for his service to the Confederacy during the Civil War. He enlisted at age 18, but after a long illness in Kentucky he was discharged. After returning to Searcy to rest and recuperate, he re-enlisted by joining a Confederate cavalry company. After Federal troops captured the State Capitol, young Black was commissioned to raise a company, of which he was elected captain. His company was attached to the 48th Arkansas cavalry regiment, and was actively engaged for the remainder of the war. In March, 1865, Captain Black and his troops surrendered at Searcy.

Following the war, Captain Black entered into business at Searcy and became active in local politics. He served as chairman of the Democratic Central Committee for both the county and congressional districts, and was elected for several terms to the office of Mayor of Searcy and Sheriff of White County. After serving as Searcy postmaster in the late 1880's, Captain Black returned to the mercantile business. During the last decade of the 19th century he served a six-year term on the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY White	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Significance (Continued - Page 2)

Captain Black's civic-mindedness was further evidenced by his efforts to have the county's first railroad routed through Searcy; however, he was unsuccessful in diminishing the fears of his fellow townsmen that the railroad would bring an undesirable rough element to the community. When the railroad passed through White County east of Searcy, a determined Captain Black built a wooden track with two horse drawn cars running from Searcy to the main track at Kensett.

Eleven children were born to Benjamin and Molly Black, and the only remaining child now lives in the family home. After her mother's death in the mid-1940's, Miss Lorena Black returned to live in the house where she was born. The house has been preserved because of its sentimental value and architectural significance to both the Black family and the entire Searcy community.

As one of the earliest Victorian residences in Arkansas, the Black House became a landmark in the Searcy community. The two-storey veranda with its detailed ornamental woodwork is the most striking feature of this two-storey white frame house. The elaborately detailed exterior is continued to a lesser extent in the interior. Located just a few blocks from the town square, the Black House stands as an ever present reminder of Searcy's past.

AJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Black, Lorena. Personal interview at Black House, Searcy, Arkansas, June 24, 1974.
 Hill, Richard. Personal papers concerning Black House.
 Reynolds, John Hough, and Thomas, David Yancey. History of the University of Arkansas. Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1910.
 Woods, Stephen E. "The Development of Arkansas Railroads." Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VII (Summer, 1948).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0 . "	0 . "	35	15	3.6	91	44	0.6
NE	0 . "	0 . "						
SE	0 . "	0 . "						
SW	0 . "	0 . "						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Anthony S. Riddle, Architect and Dianna Kirk, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program DATE: 9-10-74

STREET AND NUMBER:
 Plaza West, Suite 1030, McKinley and Lee Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: William E. Henderson

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME		
COMMON Black House	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
2. LOCATION		
STATE Arkansas	COUNTY White	TOWN Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER 300 East Race		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT Robert Dunn	DATE 1974	NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

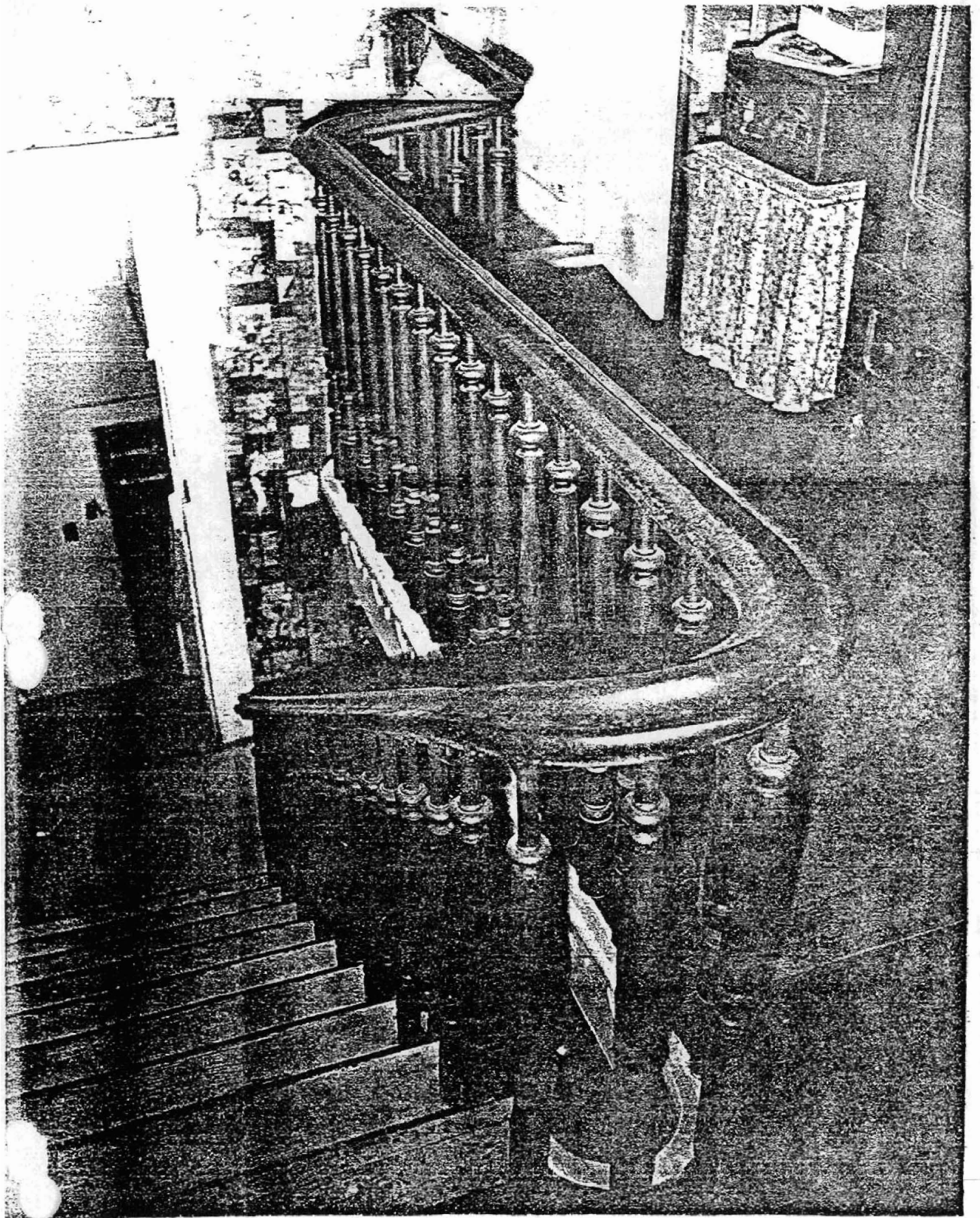
Detail of stairway bannister.

GPO 932-009

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

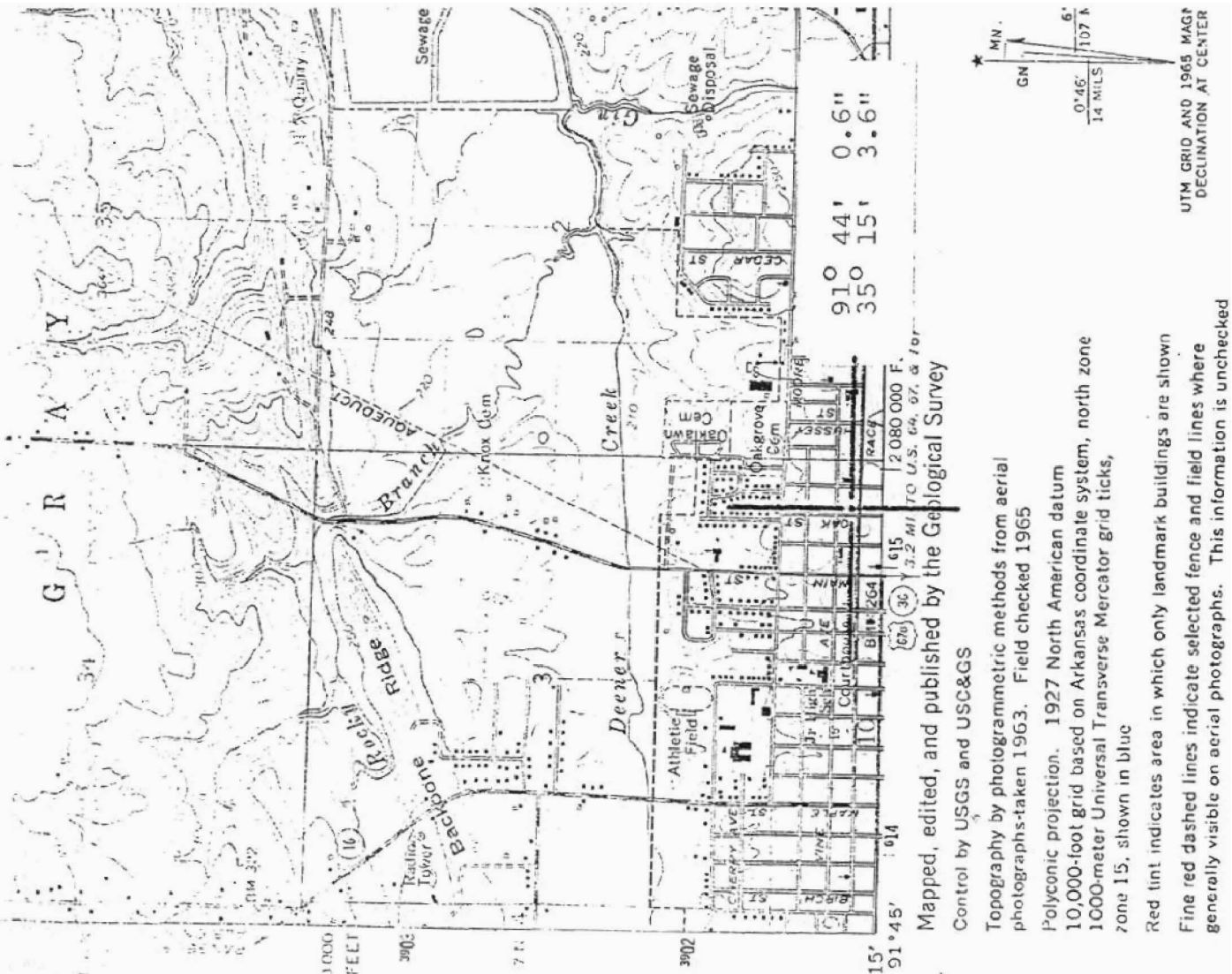
South facade and west elevation, viewed from the southwest



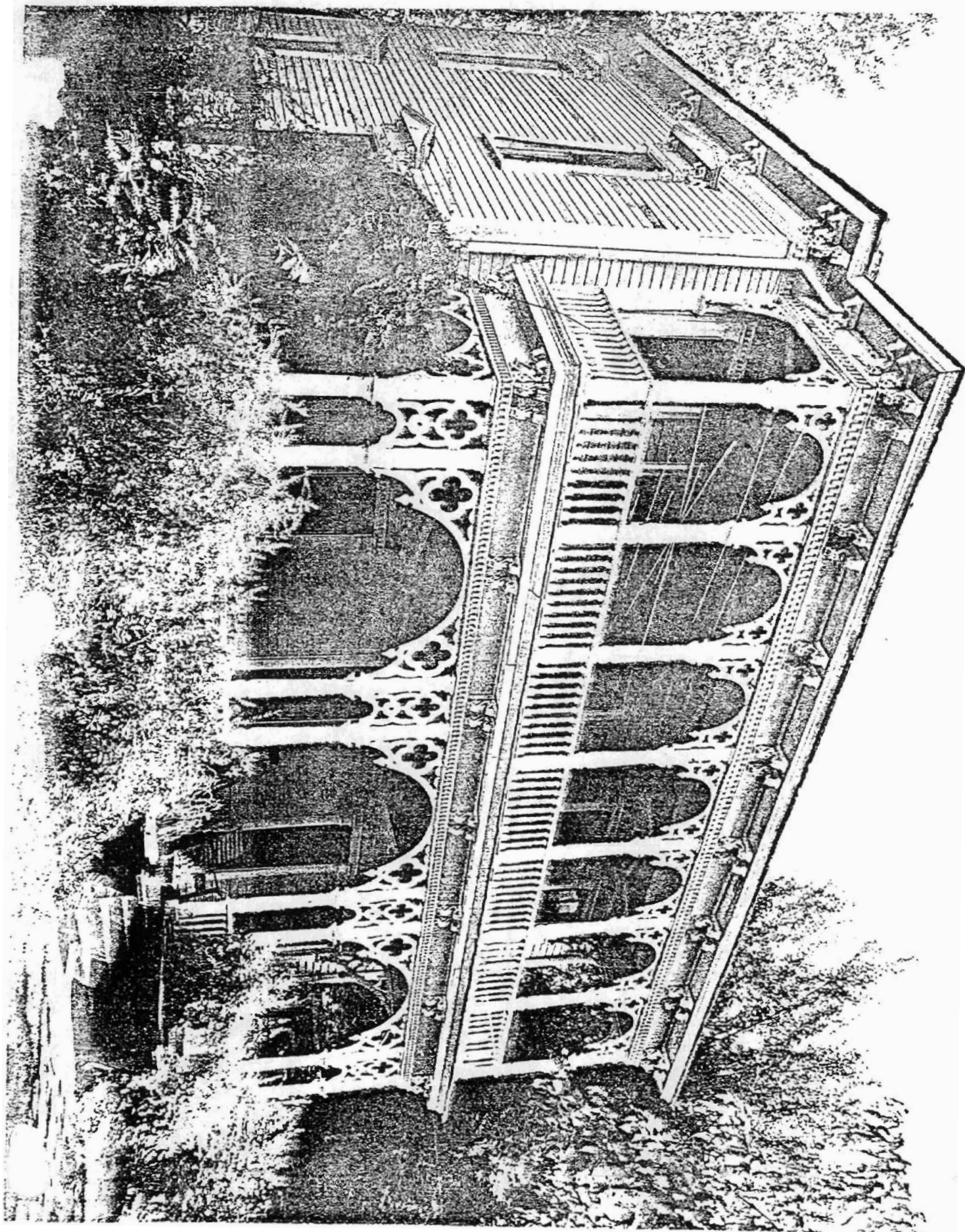
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

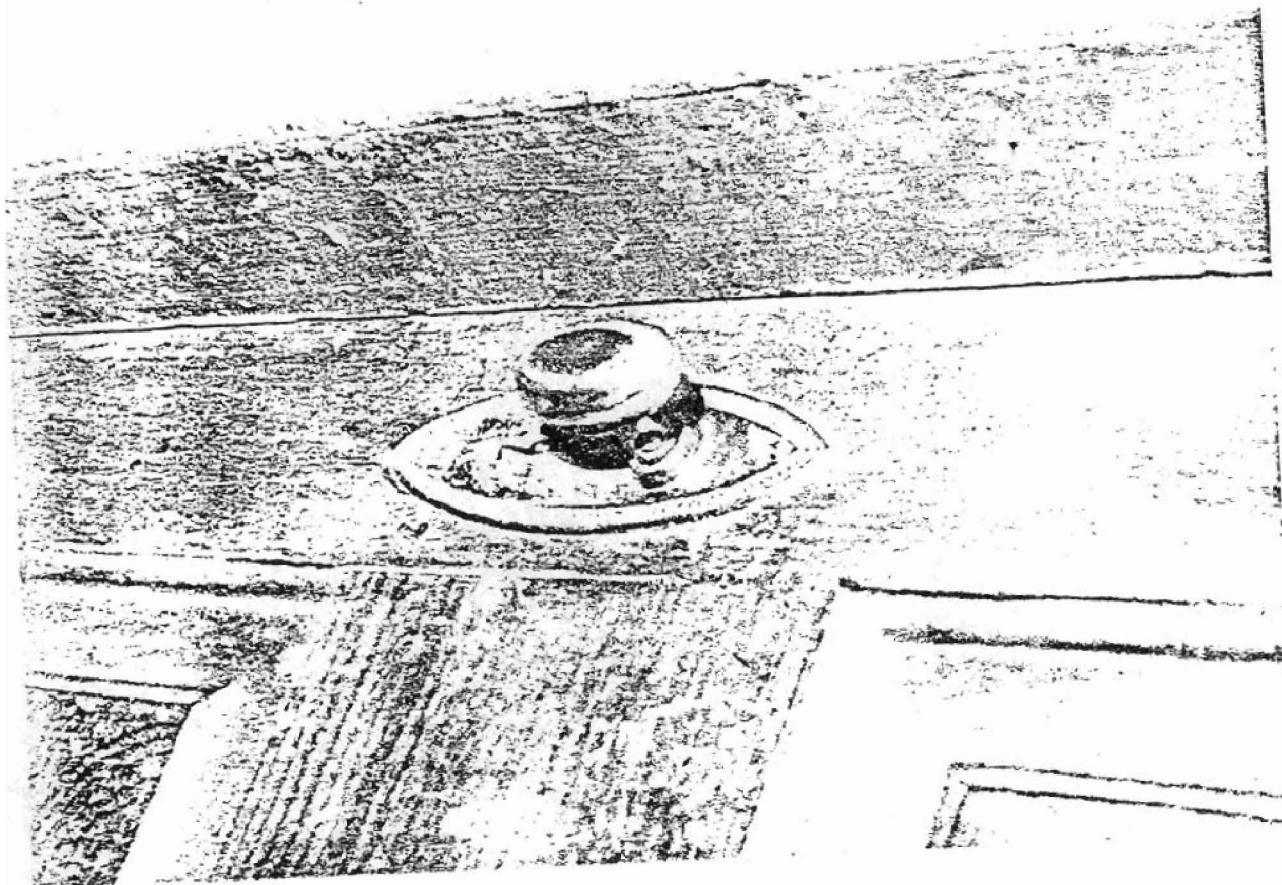
1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Black House		
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Arkansas	White	Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER		
300 East Race		
3. MAP REFERENCE		
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
USGS 7.5 Minute Series Judsonia Quadrangle	1965	1:24000
REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.		

GPO 932-010



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs-taken 1963. Field checked 1965
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, north 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





FORM 10-301 A
(5/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Black House		
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Arkansas	White	Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER		
300 East Race		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Robert Dunn	1974	Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

Detail of doorknob and plate