

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: First United Methodist Church

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

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street & number: Jefferson Street and Cross Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: DeWitt

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Arkansas code: AR 001 zip code: 72042

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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>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Structures in Arkansas Represented by the Charles L. Thompson Design Collection - A Thematic Group

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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. Byrd _____ 7-16-92
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

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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
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Historic: Religion Sub: Religious Facility

Current : Religion Sub: Religious Facility

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Classical Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Ceramic Tile
walls Brick other _____

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: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1923

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Thompson, Charles L. &
Harding, Thomas, Jr.

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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X 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>652980</u>	<u>3795920</u>	B	___	_____	_____
C	___	_____	_____	D	___	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

Beginning at the southwest corner of the intersection of Jefferson Street and Cross Street, proceed west approximately 150 feet along the southern edge of Cross Street to a point formed by the intersection of said line and the line formed by the western elevation of the education building. Then proceed south to the intersection of said line with the line formed by, yet one foot away from, the front, or northern, elevation of the education building. Then proceed east to the eastern curbline of Jefferson Street. Then proceed north to the point of begining.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the 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: 07/20/92

Street & Number: 225 E. Markham, Suite 300 Telephone: (501) 324-9346

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

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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Summary

The First United Methodist Church in DeWitt is a two-story red-brick masonry structure with a full basement built on a cruciform plan and covered by a red clay tile roof. The church features a two-story classical portico supported by six columns.

Elaboration

Designed by the architectural firm of Thompson and Harding, the First United Methodist Church in DeWitt is a two-story red-brick masonry structure with a full basement that is raised approximately ten feet above ground. The cruciform-plan building rests on a continuous cast concrete foundation and is covered by a red clay tile gable roof with intersecting cross gables. The second story is only partial and is formed by these cross gables.

The front or northern elevation is dominated by the two-story classical portico located near the eastern end of the building. The base of the portico is approximately ten feet above ground level due to the raised, full basement. Access to the portico is gained by a T-shaped brick and concrete stoop with steps that ascend from both the east and west to a landing in the center that is approximately half the height of the base. From that point, the steps ascend from the north to the base of the portico; this portion is supported by a quarter arch with an open passage underneath on the ground level. Directly under the stoop and in line with the main entrance, the basement can be entered by descending a few steps to a single-leaf doorway. The front of the stoop is graced with a semi-circular opening covered with lattice work.

Six Roman Tuscan columns, unfluted with a base, support a wide pediment that is covered by a shallow-pitched gable roof. Though the portico is symmetrical, the columns are unevenly spaced with the two columns on each end placed next to each other. The pediment, which is outlined by a raking cornice and rests upon a wide frieze and architrave band, is filled with white-painted stucco and features a centrally placed oculus window with two vertical and two horizontal muntins.

The double-leaf entrance is located between the two center columns and features a classic entablature over an eight-pane transom. The original doors are each fenestrated by twelve glass panes that fill nearly the full height of the door. The doors are flanked by narrow pilasters. Fenestration of the portico is composed of two bays of ten-over-ten double-hung windows, one on each story, that are symmetrically arranged around the central doorway. On the second story, the space directly above the entrance is occupied by side-by-side six-

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over-six double-hung windows. Decorative brickwork surrounds each window bay.

To the west of the portico, three bays of windows emit light into the sanctuary. Each window bay consists of three multiple-pane, hand-blown stained glass windows. Below the water table and in line with the stained-glass windows, three bays, each consisting of three six-over-six double-hung windows, fenestrate the basement. The western end of the building consists of associated anterooms to the sanctuary and is denoted by two pairs of Italianate-style brackets underneath the open eave with fascia board. Three six-over-six windows are utilized for both the basement and the principal story here.

The western elevation features a gray-painted, stucco-filled gable end adorned by five Italianate-style brackets that are similar, yet wider, than those found on the northern elevation. An oculus window identical to the one found in the pediment of the portico is placed near the peak of the gable end. The first story consists of four six-over-six double-hung windows. A single-leaf doorway with the upper half fenestrated by six glass panes is located at the northwest corner of the basement, the floor of which is practically on grade at this point. The original wrought iron coal chute door is located at the southern end of the basement on this elevation.

The southern elevation of the sanctuary is basically identical to the northern elevation. An exterior brick chimney is positioned near the western end. The cross-gable bay on this elevation does not contain a portico. The pediment treatment is similar though the stucco is painted gray instead of white. Eight-over-eight double-hung windows are utilized instead of ten-over-ten, and there is no entrance. A large sixteen-over-sixteen double-hung window is located between the first and second stories to provide light for the central stairwell. An eight-over-eight window performs this function between the first story and the basement. The basement is fenestrated by two bays of two six-over-six double-hung windows with a small six pane window in between for the stairwell.

The eastern elevation of the southern cross-gable bay has an eight-over-eight window on the two upper stories with a single-leaf entrance composed of twelve glass panes providing access to the basement. A concrete lintel inscribed with the date "1923" occupies the space between the doorway and the first-story window. The eastern gable end bay is much narrower than the opposing western gable end elevation. Like the western elevation, there is not a true pediment though the attic area is differentiated by gray-painted stucco with an oculus window. Due to the narrower roof area on this gable end, only three Italianate-style brackets were needed. The three stories represented by this bay are each fenestrated by a row of four windows consisting of two eight-over-eight windows in the center and a six-over-six window at each end. The cornerstone of the

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building is located at the northeast corner of the gable end bay. The eastern elevation of the north-facing entrance portico consists of a single eight-over-eight double-hung window on each of the three stories.

The exterior presents essentially the same appearance it did upon completion in 1923. Hand rails have been placed along the front stoop and short wrought-iron railing has been installed between the columns. Both alterations are relatively unobtrusive.

As is often the case, the interior has been altered more substantially than the exterior since the church was constructed. The ceiling has been covered by acoustical tiles. Doors and ceiling trusses which were originally finished in their natural wood color were painted an off-white color. Modern imitation wood paneling now flanks the pulpit area. Despite these changes, the essence of the sanctuary remains. The balcony at the rear of the sanctuary is enclosed by unusual - and original - six pane windows which can be raised into the attic above when opened, effectively forming "pocket windows." Another somewhat unusual feature of the church are the threaded steel tension rods which maintain the compression of the two heavy timber wood trusses which span the sanctuary. The rods can be seen from the second floor rooms but not from the sanctuary.

There are also two other structures on the property that are not included in the nomination. A wood-framed, brick-veneered parsonage constructed in 1953 is located just south of the church. A masonry and steel educational building of modern, International-style appearance was added in 1955. It is located south of the western end of the church with a portion of the building visible from the northern elevation of the church. Though built only a few feet away from the southern elevation of the church, the two are not connected.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1**Summary**

The First United Methodist Church in DeWitt is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as the best example in DeWitt of a Charles Thompson-designed, Classical Revival-styled religious building. This nomination is an amendment to the 1982 statewide Multiple Property Submission for Charles Thompson-designed structures.

Elaboration

The current First United Methodist Church is the third constructed by the Methodist congregation in DeWitt. A Methodist congregation was established in DeWitt within a year of the town's founding in 1854. Governor Elias N. Conway approved in 1852 an act authorizing an election to be held in Arkansas County on February 19, 1853 for commissioners to select a site for a permanent county seat. A site near the center of the county was selected, and Adam McCool, the county surveyor, platted the town in the spring of 1854. When the question of a name for the new town arose, tradition holds that the surveyor and each of the commissioners agreed to write a name on a slip of paper and draw from a hat. In an act of unselfishness, McCool, who was an admirer of De Witt Clinton of New York, wrote "De Witt" on his slip of paper, which, of course, was the slip chosen (the name "Clinton" was already taken by the county seat of Van Buren County).

The small Methodist congregation of early DeWitt was at first served by ministers from Arkansas Post. Services were held in either the homes of various congregation members or underneath groves of trees when weather permitted. Construction of the first church in DeWitt was started in the latter part of August 1870 and completed in the spring of the next year. This church was located a block from the court square on the southwest corner of North Main and Gibson Streets. It was torn down about 1900 or 1901. Utilizing materials from the first church, the second church was erected in 1902 at the southeast corner of West Cross and Jefferson Streets, the site of the present church.

A few days after the Christmas program of 1921, the church Christmas tree was removed to the lot just south of the church where it was set afire and left unattended. Shortly thereafter, a strong wind blew the burning tree against the church. The town had no fire fighters at the time, and the church quickly burned. The parsonage, a large two-story building that stood just west of the church, burned as well. Only a few church pews were saved.

While services were temporarily held in the school, plans for the new church were begun under the leadership of Reverend A. B. Barry. The building committee was composed of L. A. Black, C. P. Chaney, Dr. C. E. Park, E. B. Gibson,

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and J. W. Shackelford. The committee chose the services of the Thompson and Harding architectural firm for the church design. Dr. C. E. Park's private residence at Jefferson and First Streets had been designed by Thompson in 1914, and his experience with the firm may have been a factor in the committee's selection.

Completed in 1923, the new First United Methodist Church was far removed from the two earlier frame churches. Thompson and Harding created a somewhat unusual combination by grafting Classical Revival detail onto a shallow cruciform plan. Despite the inherent asymmetry of the cruciform plan, the First United Methodist Church achieves the essential symmetrical appearance required by Classical Revival-styled structures by careful use of window placement and the surrounding decorative trim, matching detail in the non-pedimented gable ends, and the overpowering presence of the beautifully symmetrical entrance portico. The result of this imaginative exercise by Thompson and Harding is a Classical Revival-styled church that is unique to the area and undoubtedly the best example of its style in DeWitt. For these reasons, the First United Methodist Church in DeWitt is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

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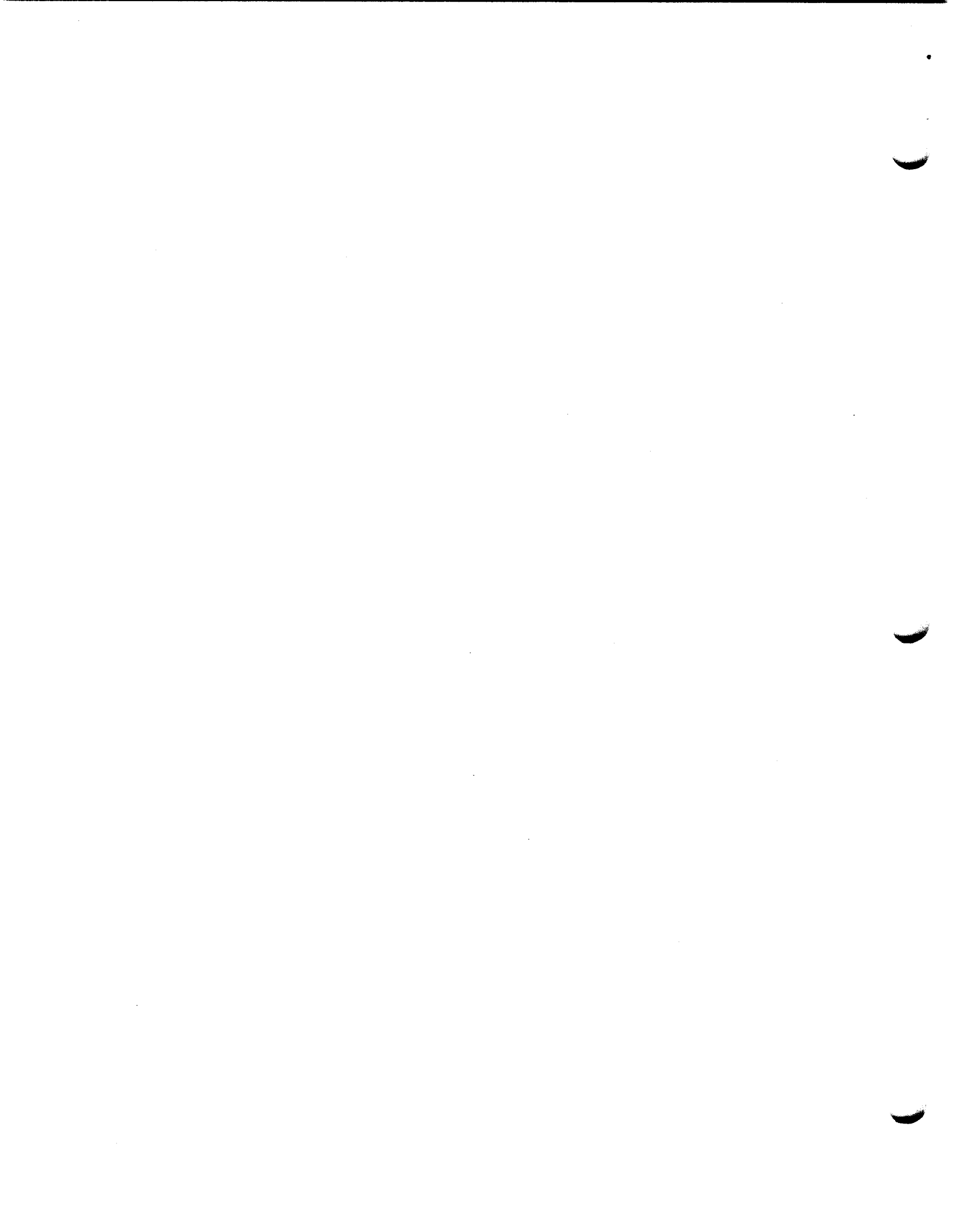
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Bibliography

Herndon, Dallas T. *Annals of Arkansas*. Little Rock: The Historical Record Association, 1947. Vol. I, p. 495.

Church History and Other Information Supplied by Leon Garot.





United Methodist Church

Worship of Jesus

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The United Methodist Church

Address: 1150 N. 1st St.

Phone: 505-241-1150

Website: www.umc.org

www.umc.org



United Methodist Church

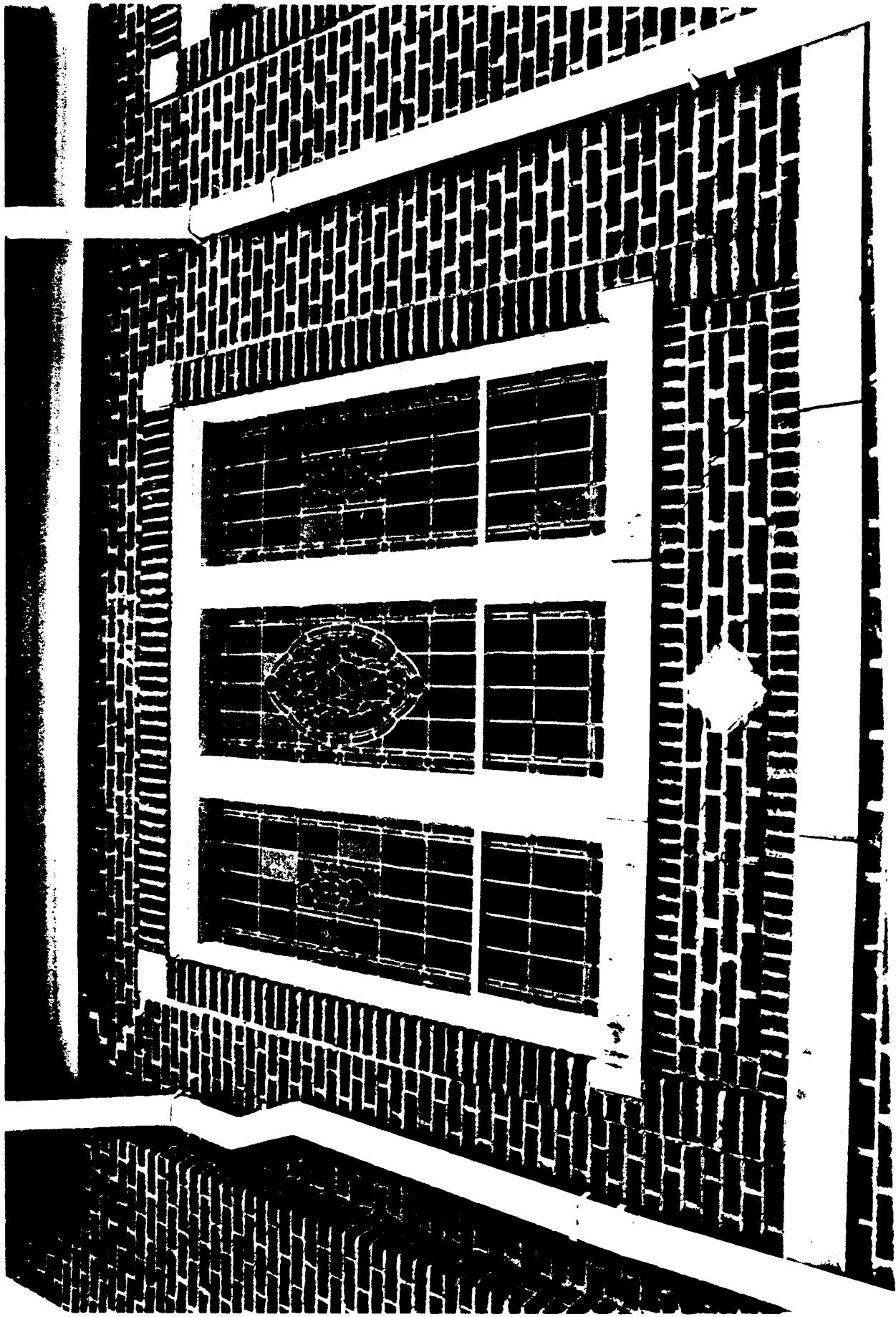
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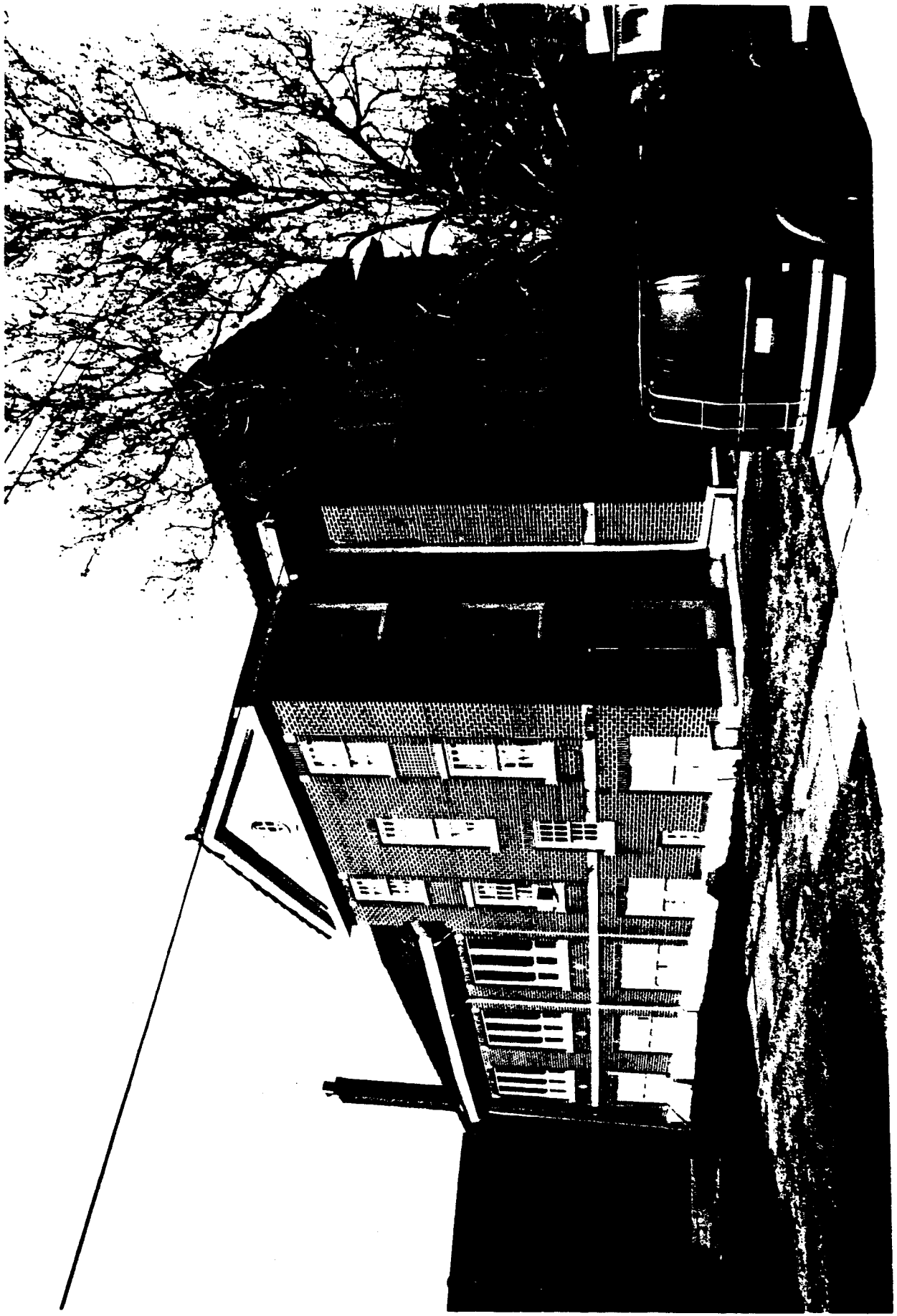
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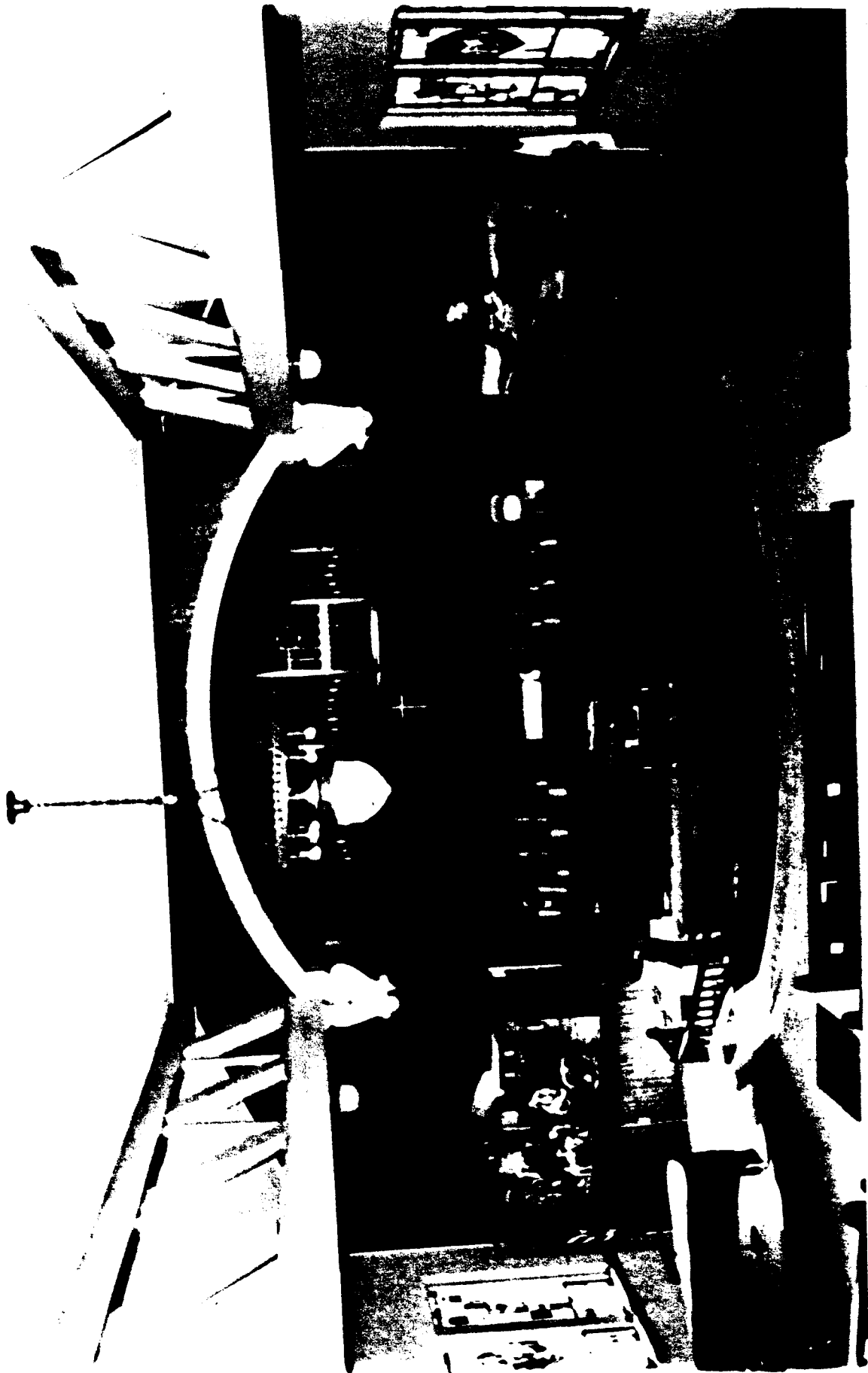
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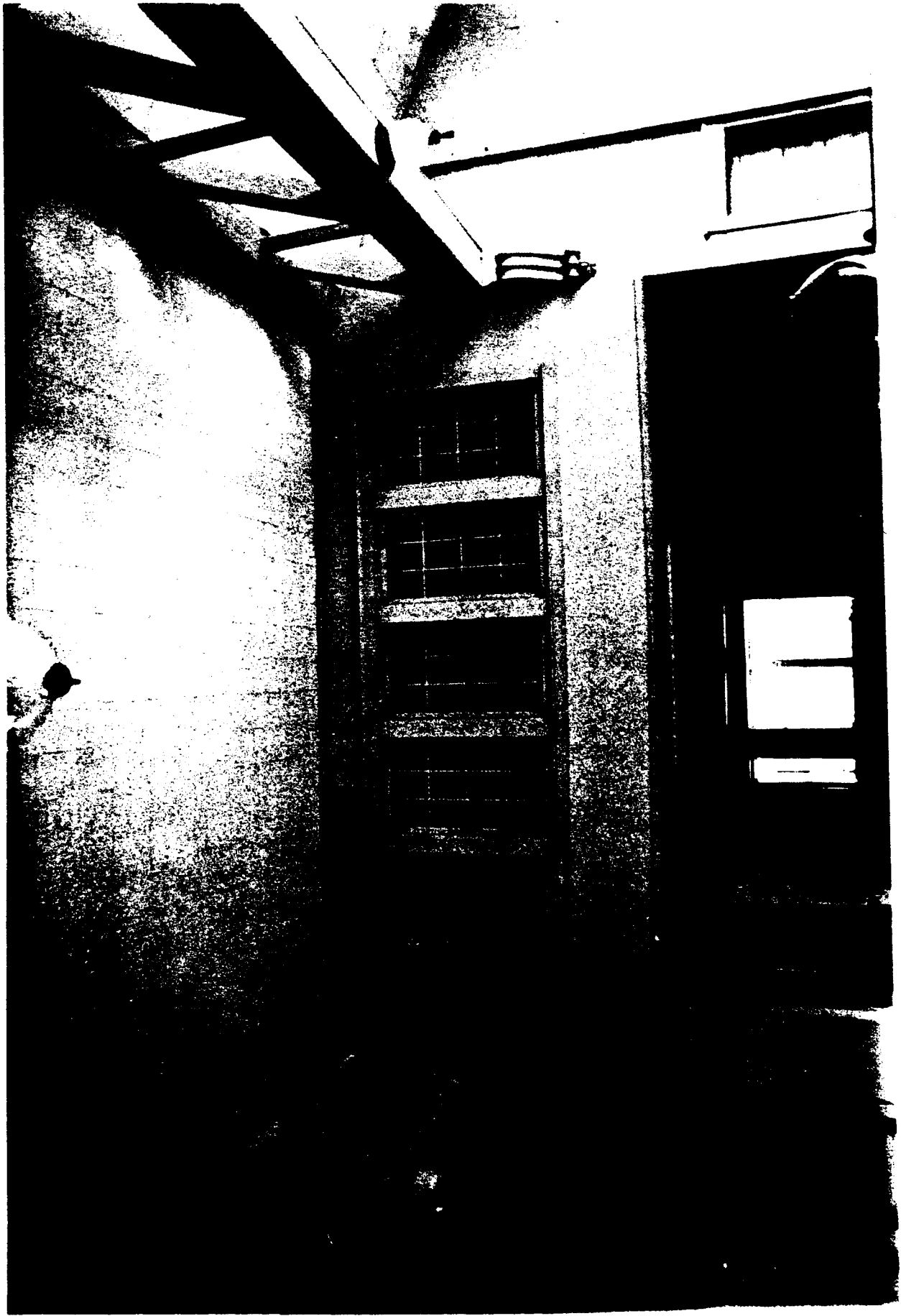


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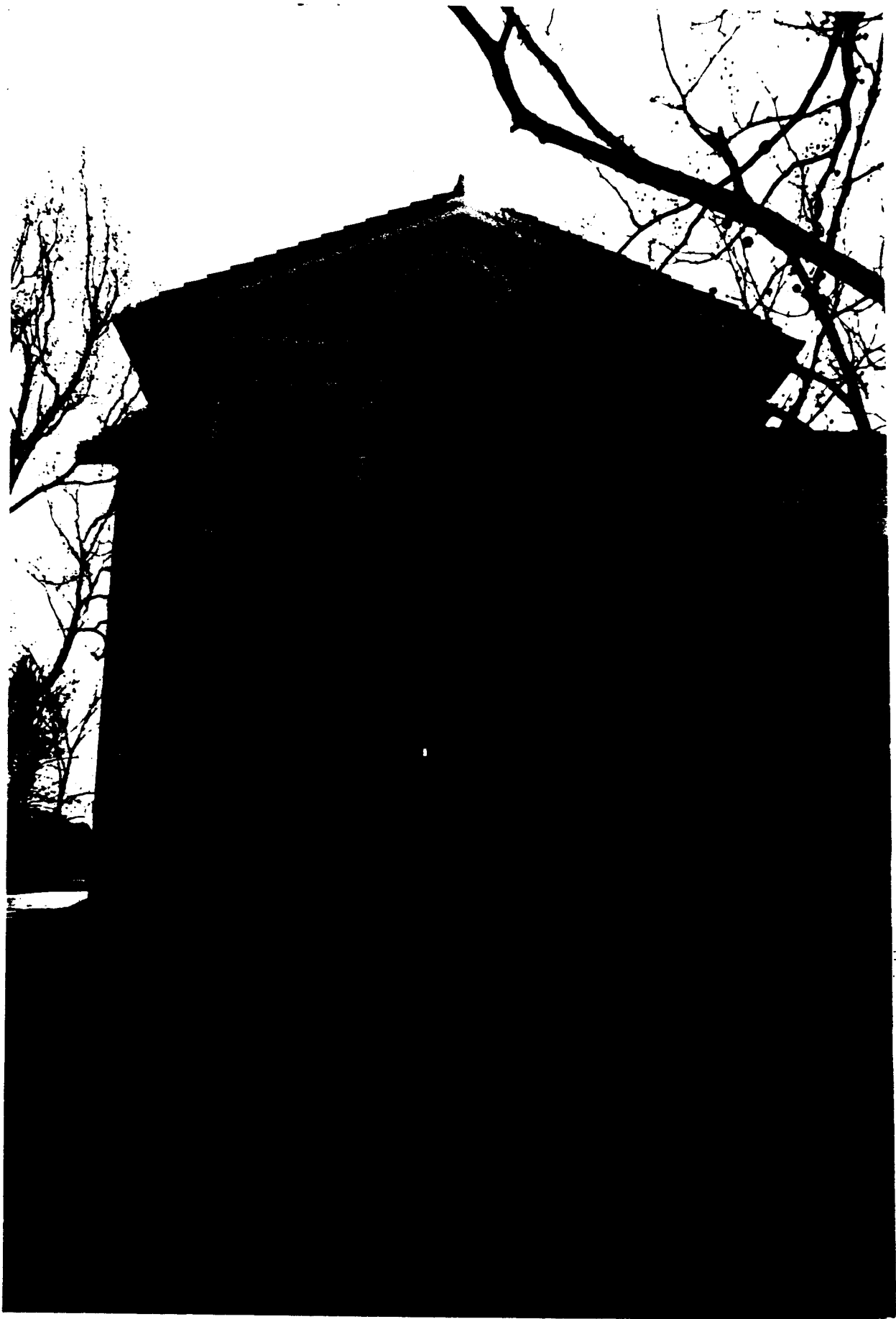
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United Methodist Church

Alkamas Co., Alaska

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Alaska

from the north

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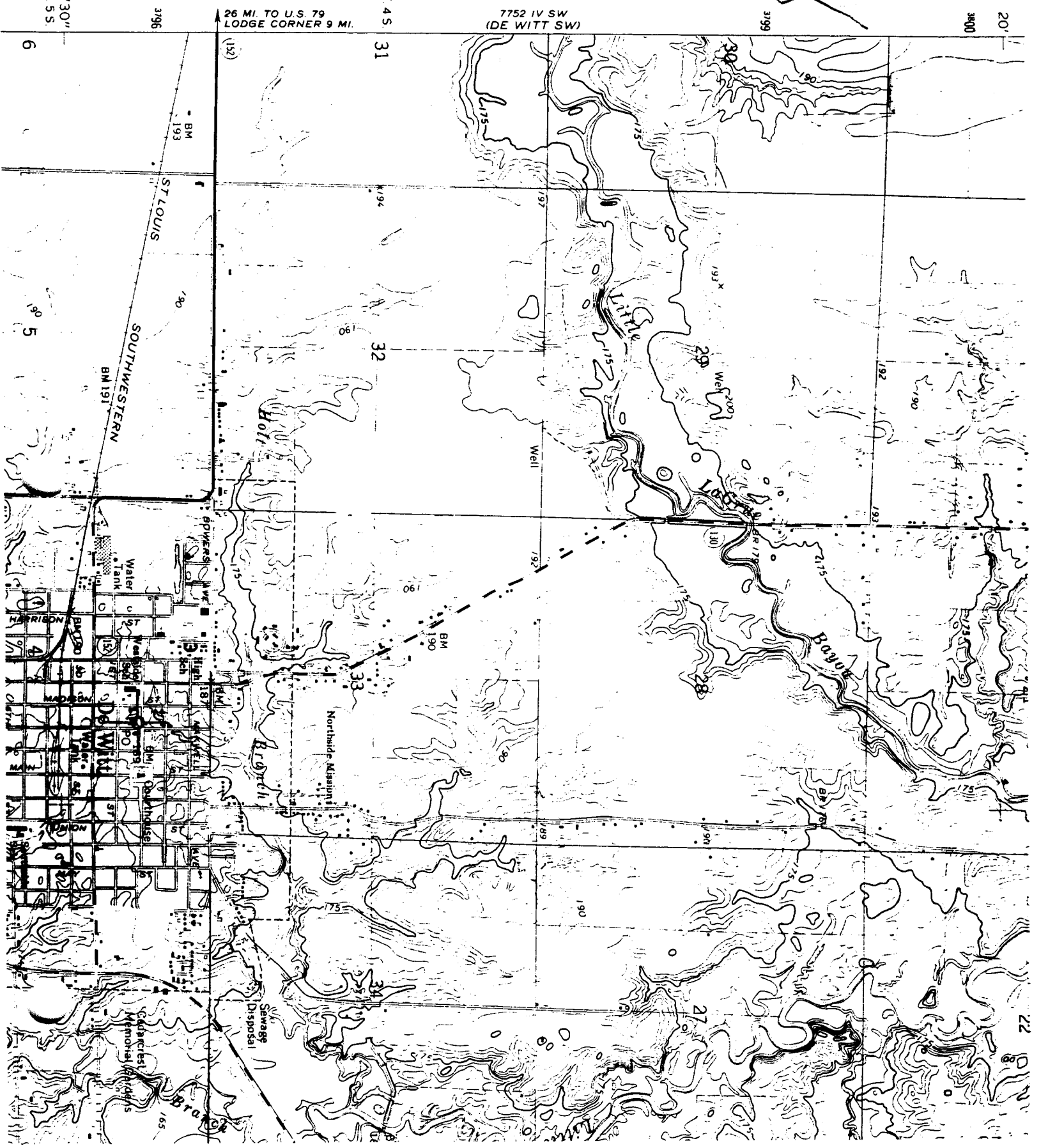
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