

NR listed 10-21-85

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 Van Frank Cottages

and or common _____

2. Location

street & number 515, 517, and 519 E. 15th St. and 1510 Park Lane N/A not for publication

city, town Little Rock N/A vicinity of _____

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 checked="" 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
	<u>N/A</u>	<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 Mark Stodola/John Browning

street & number 1418 South Louisiana

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

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pulaski County Courthouse

street & number Spring and Markham Streets

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Quapaw Quarter Historic Site has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no N/A

date 1977-78 ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Quapaw Quarter Association

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas

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

The four Van Frank cottages, 515, 517, and 519 East 15th Street and 1510 Park Lane, are located in one of the oldest residential sections of Little Rock. Constituting the northeast corner of block 62, these Colonial Revival cottages are situated at the southern edge of the original city of Little Rock. Three of the cottages face north on East 15th Street forming a row, while the east-facing Park Lane cottage rounds the corner.

Each cottage is of wood frame construction, covered with weatherboard, resting on a high stuccoed brick foundation. Each is basically rectangular and covered by a hip roof. Alternately the 515 and 519 East 15th Street houses have hip roofs with gablets containing ventilating louvers facing the front (north). Extending high above each roof are three brick flues which change from buff to red at the ridge line.

Slightly altering the rectangular shape of the houses are four projecting bays. One hip roofed bay projects at the rear and is offset by a shed roofed porch. Two other bays sit parallel to each other extending from the sides of each house (east-west on the East 15th Street houses, north-south on the Park Lane house) and are covered with cross gable roofs. The fourth and most prominent gable roofed bay projects, on the East 15th Street houses, from the west side of the front (north) facade and is offset by a porch on the east side. This order, which divides the front facade equally into gabled face and porch, is reversed on the Park Lane house.

The front facade of each cottage is divided into two bays, the sides into three bays. Framing the bays of each facade is a simple decorative cornice and plain frieze (raking under the gable roofs), corner boards, and a skirt board below a drip cap. The central gabled bay is penetrated by a pair of one-over-one double-hung windows each. The gabled bay of the front facade contains one large stationary window of two sashes. The bottom sash has one pane. The upper sash contains multiple panes divided by muntins creating a different geometric design on each house. Above this window, in the gable, is a fan window with radiating muntins. Accentuating each fan window is an exaggerated wooden key block. All windows have plain facings and simple head moldings.

Countering the gabled face of each front facade is a porch with entablature and columns of the Tuscan order. Each flat roofed porch has two unfluted round columns with a simple capital of an echinus supporting an abacus and a plain astragal resting on a square base. The columns support a plain architrave and frieze and a simple decorative cornice. A balustrade of square balusters set in simple top and bottom rails extends from the columns to the facades and to square pedestals, enclosing the porch. A flight of four wooden steps leads to the porch deck of tongue and groove flooring.

Each house contains two front entries. One door faces the street, while the second door, also under the porch, is placed in the side of the projecting bay. Each has plain facings and is surmounted by a transom. The two doors of the individual houses are identical, containing multiple raised panels below a large single light. The configuration of the panels differs, however, from house to house.

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date entered

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Each house contains a kitchen, bathroom, and hallway, and four large rooms, which could be living room, dining room, and two bedrooms. These spacious rooms have eleven-foot high ceilings, hardwood floors and plastered walls. They are detailed with baseboards having base moldings and shoes, picture rails, and decorative window facings with bull's eye corner blocks. The doors, surrounded by moveable transoms in the two front rooms, have multiple raised panels and are framed with decorative moldings resting on base blocks and capped with bull's eye corner blocks. A simple mantel, of plain pilasters on base blocks supporting a plain frieze and mantel shelf, sits in the canted corner of the front room behind the porch.

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 1908

Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Van Frank cottages are significant architecturally. Located between the MacArthur Park Historic District, to the immediate north, and the Marshall Square Historic District, a few blocks to the southeast, the Van Frank cottages represent a transition between the two. While typical of the scale and speculative nature that characterizes the Marshall Square Historic District, the Van Frank cottages are reflective of the MacArthur Park Historic District in stylistic detail and in the ancestry and occupations of their owners and occupants. Built in 1908, the cottages were the rental property of Philip R. Van Frank. They are the only existing historic houses associated with this civil engineer, who was instrumental in the improvement of Arkansas' rivers. Each of the four cottages is simply yet finely crafted with Colonial Revival details. In their unaltered state they are typical examples of the period. The cottages have been the residences of many individuals of diverse backgrounds, native Arkansan to immigrant, and of varied occupations, merchant to minister. Among those who lived in the Van Frank cottages making the greatest contributions to business in Little Rock and Arkansas were salesman Edward Campbell, auditor John Deming, and abstractor Elmer McClure. The ancestral and occupational composition of those associated with the cottages is ironically opposed to the architectural sameness reflecting speculation.

ELABORATION

The MacArthur Park Historic District represents much of Little Rock's development between 1938 and 1900. It reflects the aesthetic ideals and social patterns of nineteenth century Little Rock, which at the time was still rural and informal enough to accept people of different social and economic classes living within one neighborhood. The dwellings in the district range from cottages to mansions, from Greek Revival to Colonial Revival. Descendants of founding fathers lived next to German immigrants and ex-Union soldiers.

After 1900, Little Rock began expanding more rapidly into residential neighborhoods more clearly defined by social and economic class. To the south developed a working class neighborhood characterized by early twentieth century cottages of similar style, scale, and proportion. Interspersed throughout the area were speculative and rental properties, often clustered into groups of almost identical structures. The largest such group is the sixteen structure Marshall Square Historic District. Built in 1917 through 1918, the cottages comprising this district were designed to provide comfortable accommodations for working class families and are somewhat devoid of stylistic ornament.

Resting between and transitional to the two historic districts are the four Van Frank cottages. Although the scale and speculative nature of the Van Frank cottages make them similar to the cottages in the Marshall Square Historic District, the period of construction and the extent to which attention is given to stylistic detail makes

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them similar to houses in the MacArthur Park Historic District. The unaltered exteriors and interiors of these fine Colonial Revival cottages make each a rare example of the period. Together they are even more outstanding as an ensemble.

The cottages were built in 1908 as rental property by Philip R. Van Frank, who lived within what is now the MacArthur Park Historic District at 1120 Scott Street (non-extant). By 1895 he had purchased lots 10, 11, and 12 of block 62. Venturing into speculation, he built four Colonial Revival cottages on the property in 1908. In 1914 he sold the property to another man of German ancestry, Gustave Kleinschmidt, a saloon keeper who also lived within the district.

From 1908 until the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, the cottages housed many whose occupations were as varied as brakeman, watchmaker, and minister. Several made significant contributions to business in Little Rock and Arkansas. Edward Campbell, a descendant of an early Arkansas family and a well known salesman, who was said to have had the largest "call trade" in the South, lived at 519 East 15th Street. The 1510 Park Lane cottage was occupied by John A. Deming, a native of Texas who became widely known in business circles as the auditor of the Gus Blass Company. Elmer McClure, who lived at 517 East 15th Street, was a pioneer in the abstracting and title business as one of the founders and president of the Little Rock Title Insurance Company, the first title insurance company in Arkansas.

The Van Frank cottages are the only existing historic dwellings associated with Philip R. Van Frank, a civil engineer, who made great contributions to the improvement of Arkansas' rivers. Born in Murfreesboro, Illinois, in 1865, Van Frank graduated from the Missouri School of Mines at Rolla in 1889. Four years later he came to Arkansas as the Assistant Engineer for the Little Rock District of the U. S. Engineers. He was District Engineer during World War I until 1919 when he transferred to the Memphis District office. While in the Little Rock District office he worked mostly with the improvement of the Arkansas and White Rivers, the major achievement of which was the construction of three locks and dams, 1900-1905, on the White River near Batesville. His House Document #308 of the First Session of the 69th Congress which was a survey of the White River and its needed improvements and his later book, Random Notes on Improvements of Rivers, won him the distinction of being the foremost authority on flood control in the Southwest.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Little Rock, AR

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 15 567090 3843530
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 10, 11, and 12 of Block 62, Original City of Little Rock.
See map.

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 Ralph Megna, edited by the AHPP staff

organization The Renaissance Corporation

date August 22, 1985

street & number 1008 South Cumberland Street

telephone (501) 371-0654

city or town Little Rock

state Arkansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X 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

Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11-20-84

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

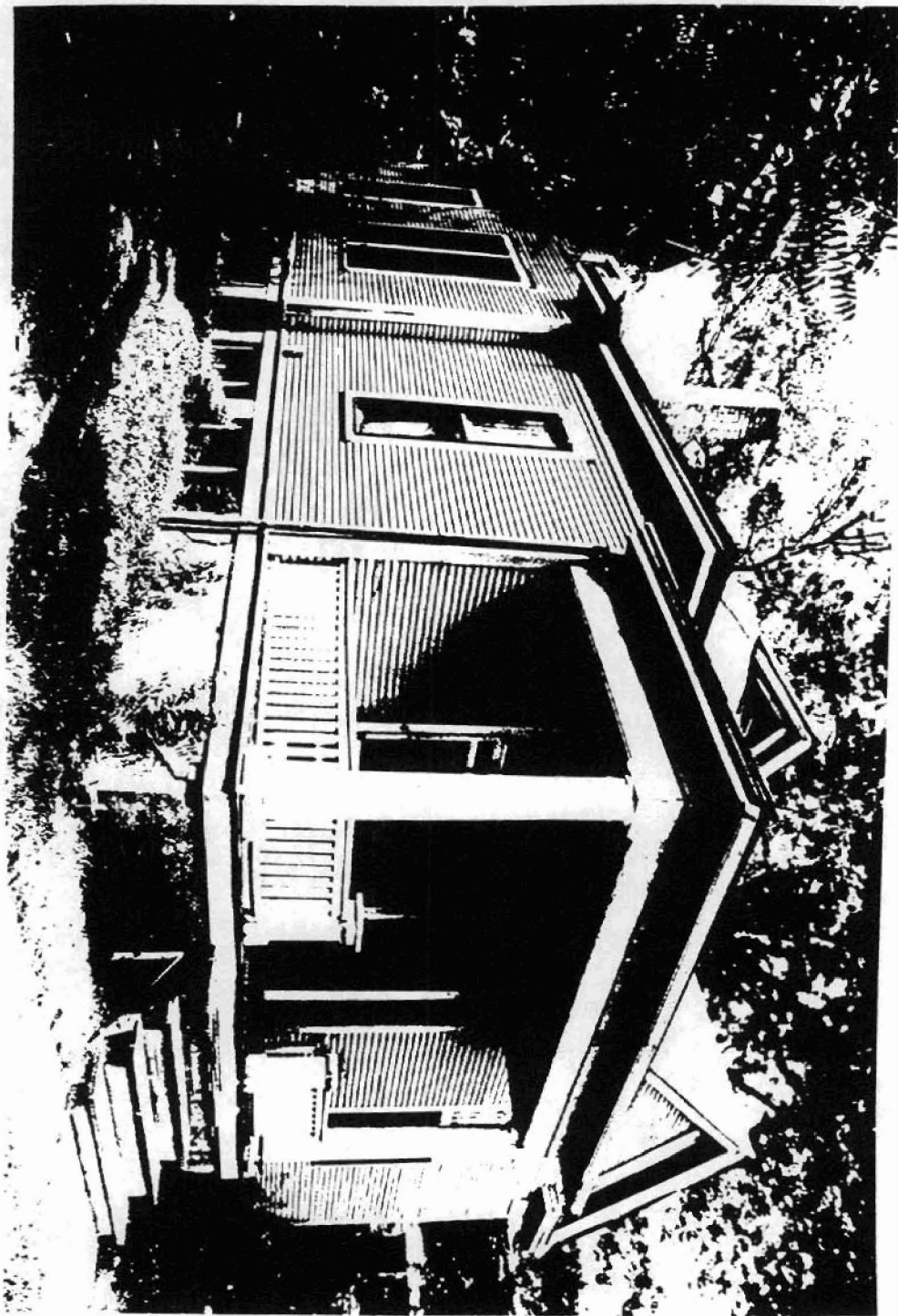
date

Chief of Registration



Van Frank Cottages
515, 517, 519 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
Viewed from the northwest

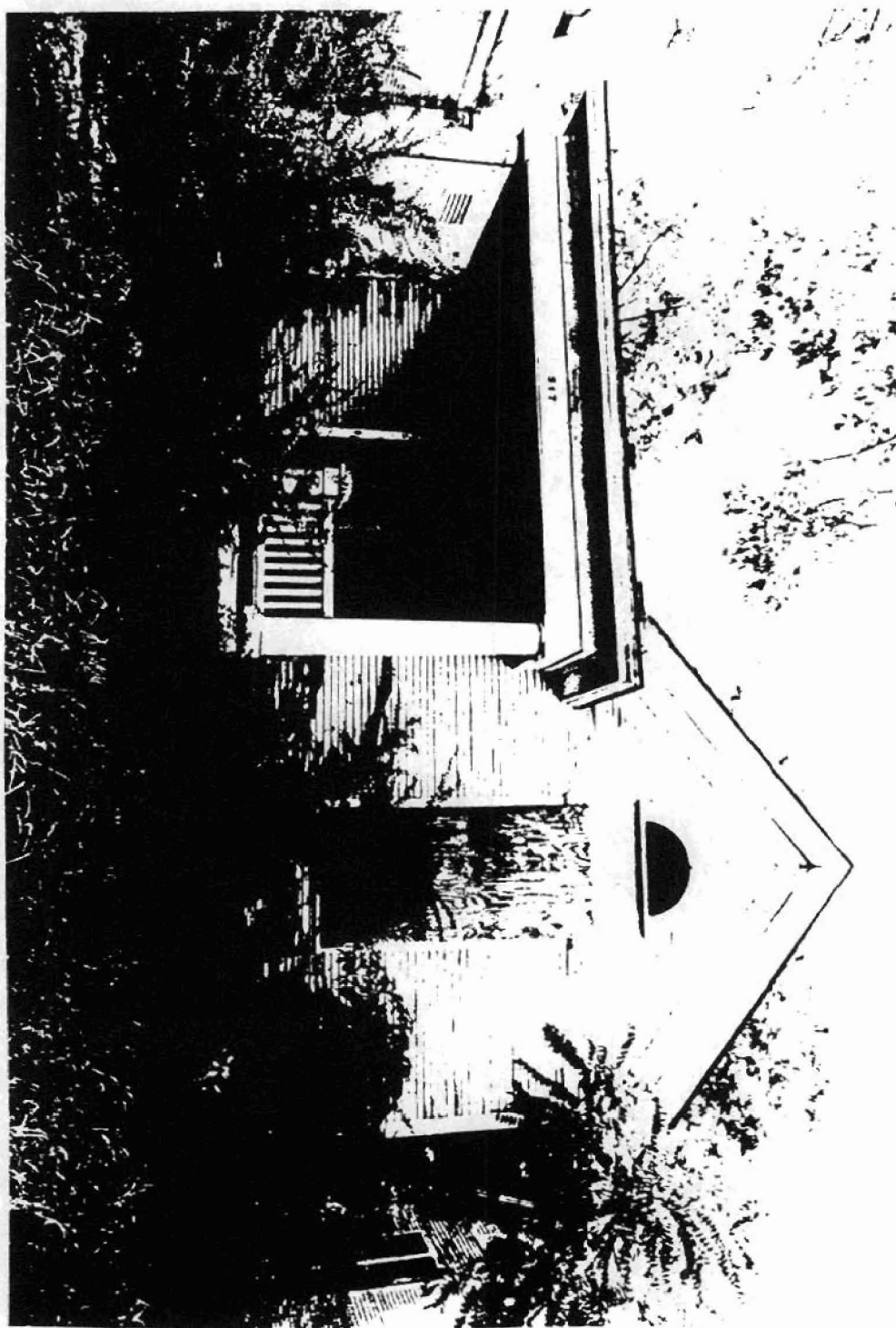
✓



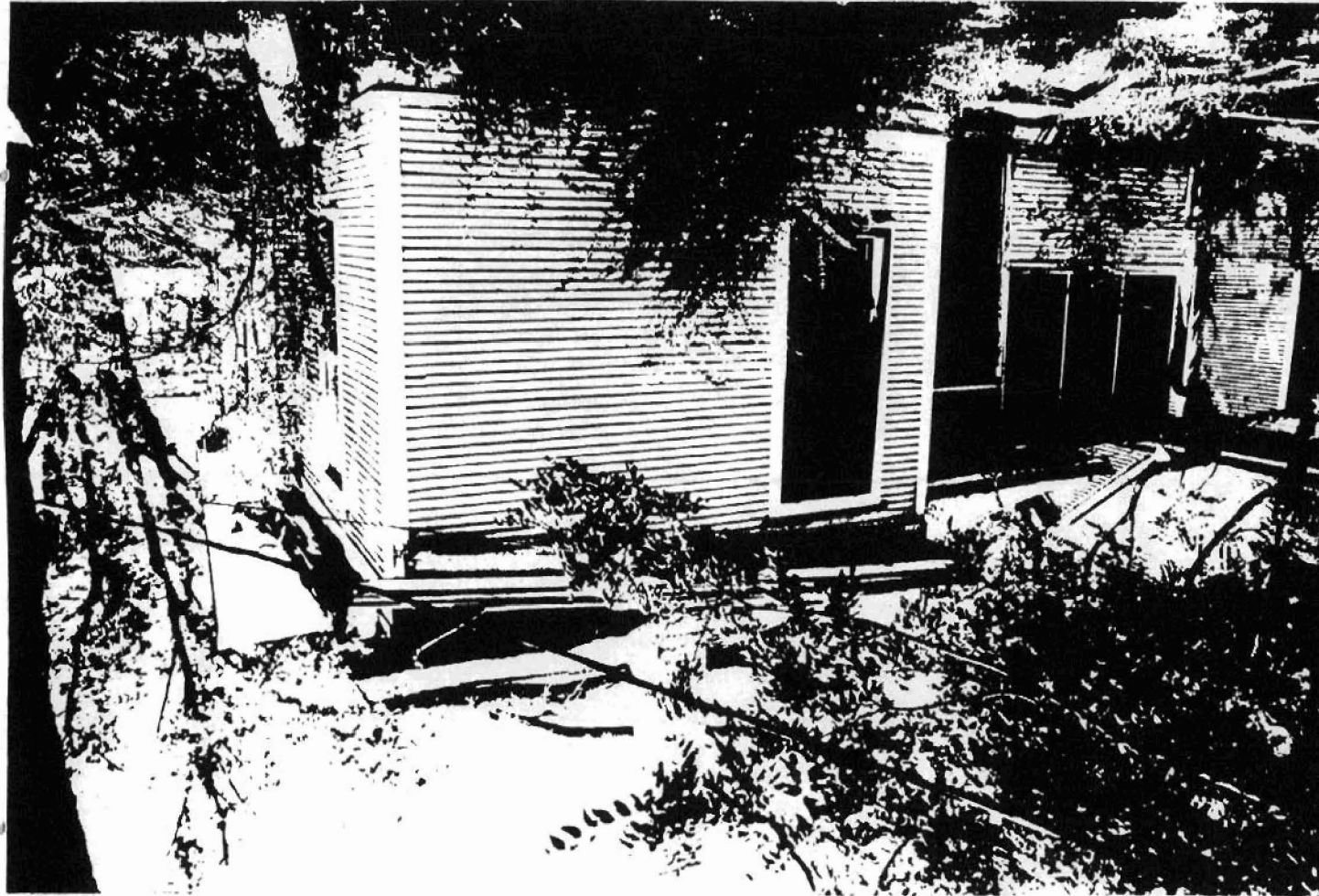
Van Frank Cottages
515 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
viewed from the northeast

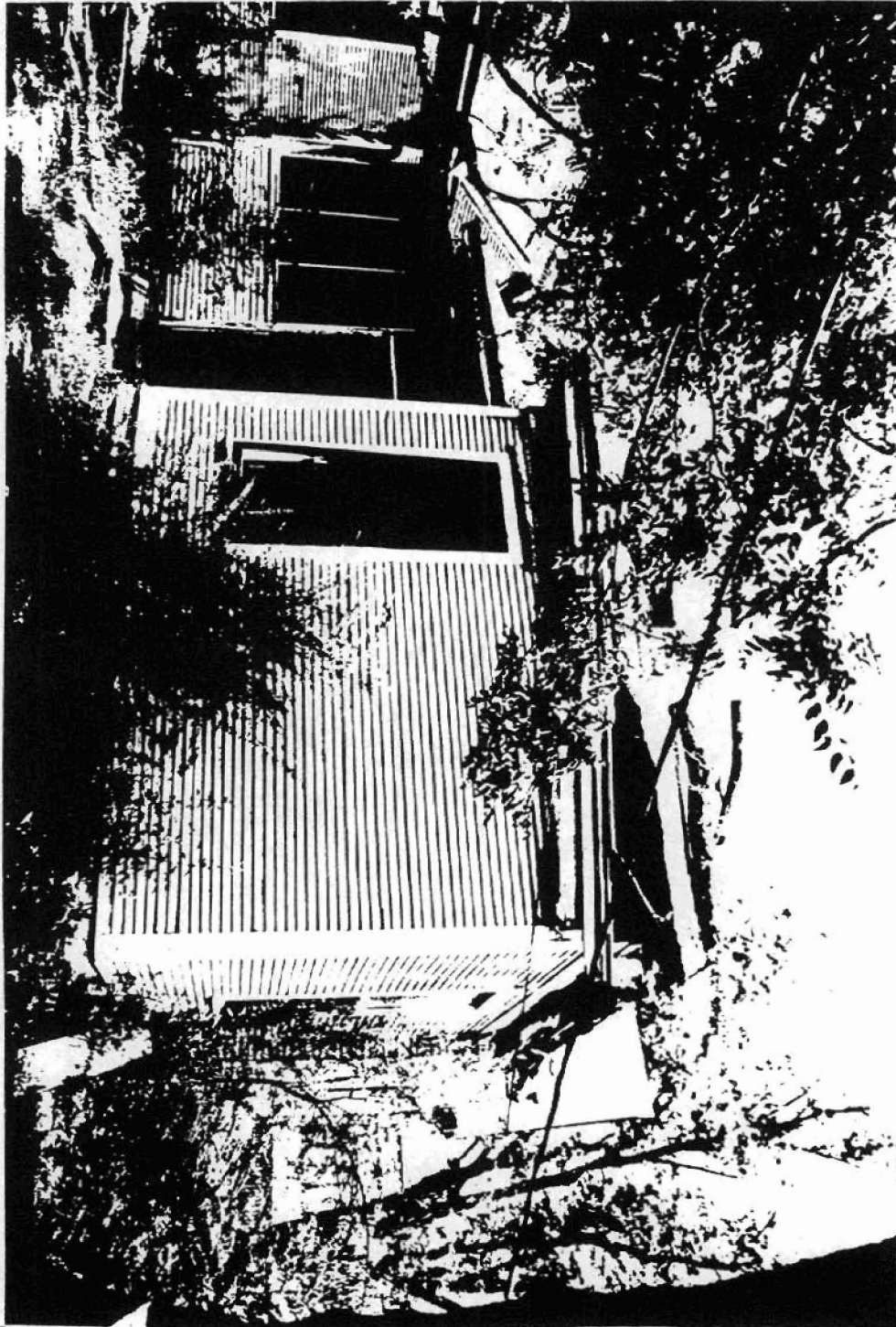


Van Frank Cottages
515 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
viewed from the south



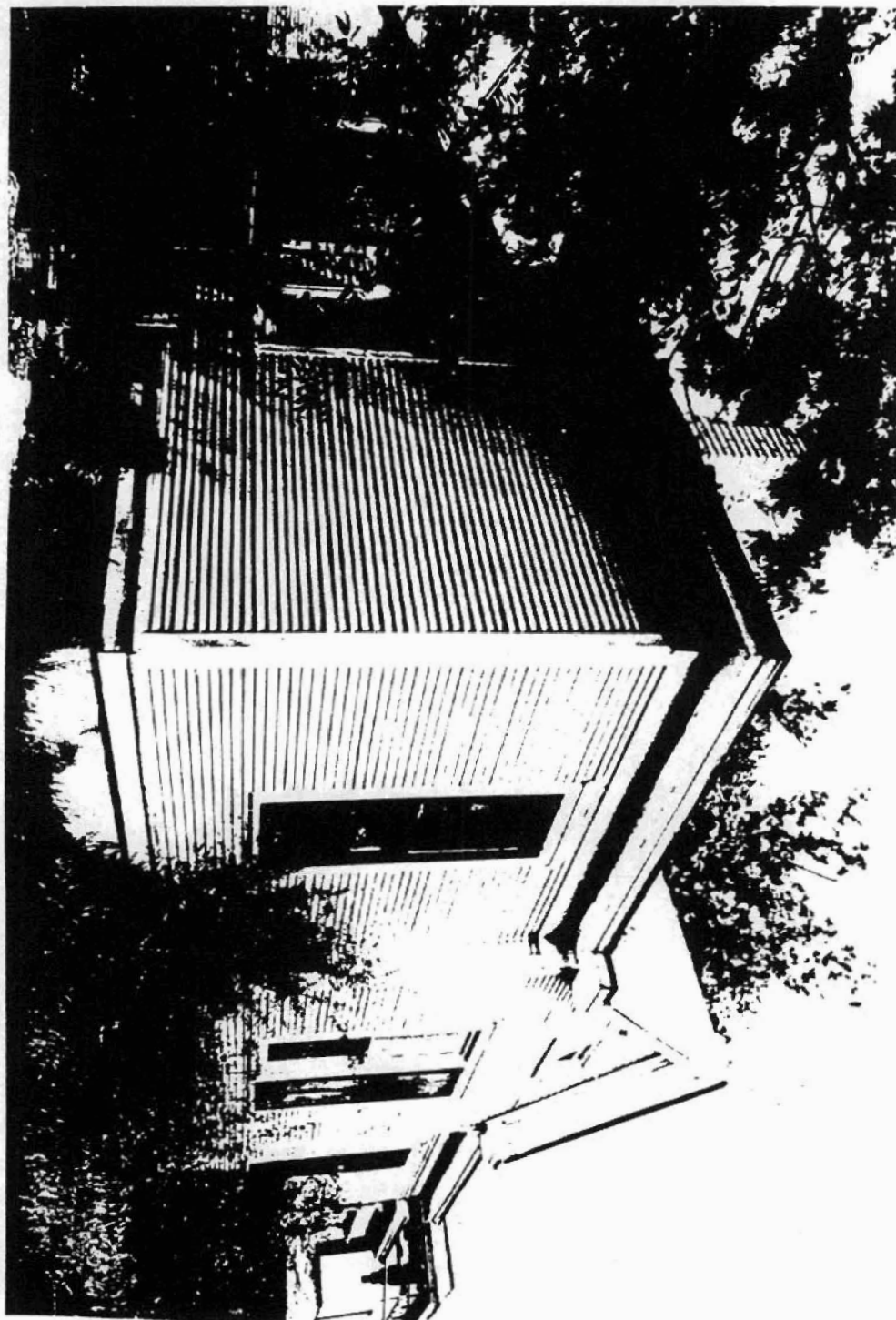
Van Frank Cottages
517 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
viewed from the north







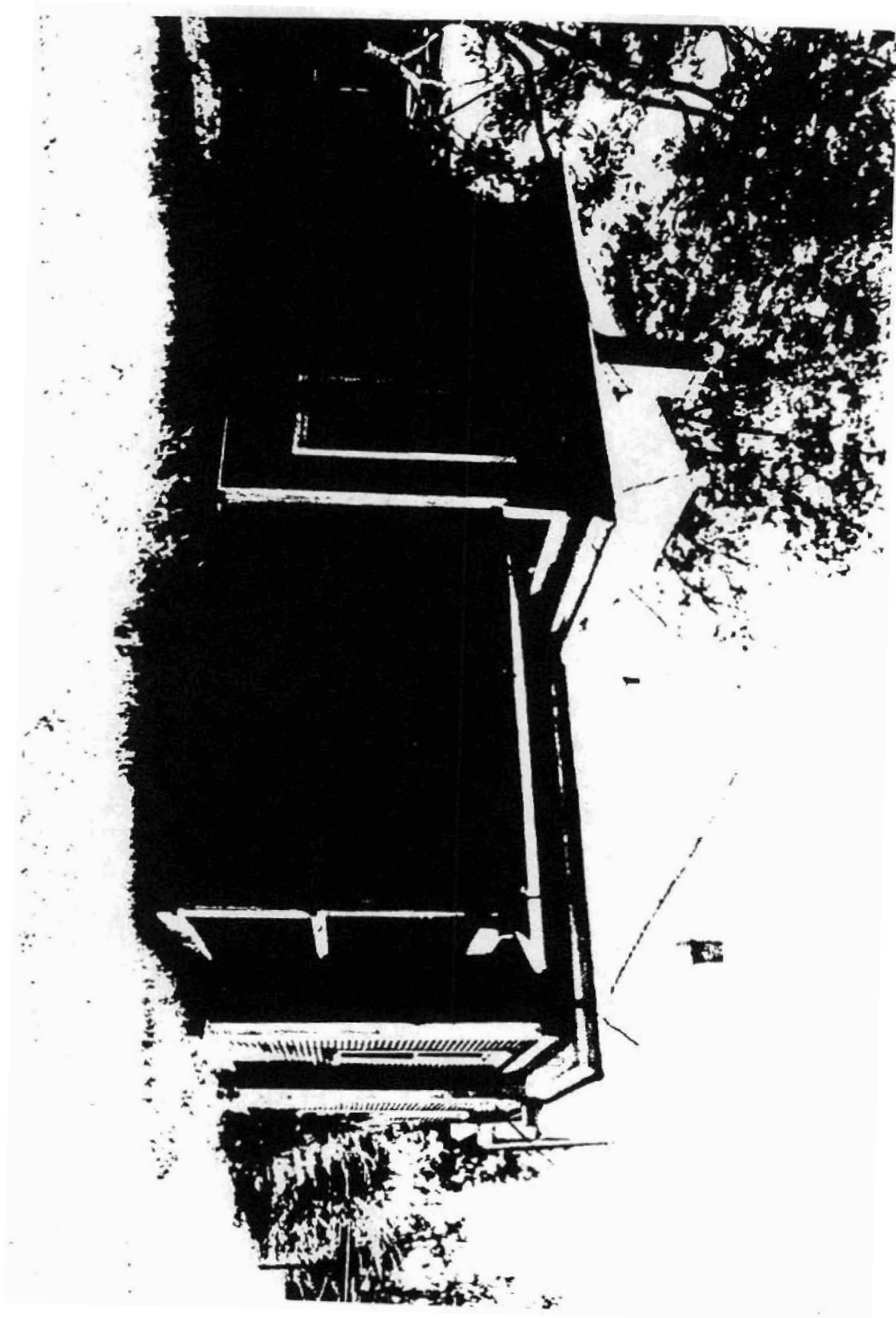
Van Frank Cottages
1519 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
viewed from the north



Van Frank Cottages
1519 East 15th St.
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
Viewed from the southeast



Van Frank Cottages
1510 Park Lane
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
Viewed from the northeast



Van Frank Cottages
1510 Park Lane
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Don Brown, photographer
August, 1985
Negative on file at the AHPP
Viewed from the southwest



VAN FRANK COTTAGES
Little Rock, Pulaski County
Quandangle Name: Little Rock
Scale: 1:24000
UTM Reference:

Zone 15 Easting 567090
Northing 3843530



1910 000 FEET 17'30" WOODLAND HEIGHTS 7.9 MI (10) 0.5 MI. TO JUNG. U.S. 63 1.7 MI. TO NORTH TERMINAL INTERCHANGE 92°15' 34'45"

42°30' (38)