

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

NR 10-21-75  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Gann Building

AND/OR COMMON

Gann Memorial Library, Bauxite Building

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

218 South Market Street

CITY, TOWN

Benton

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Arkansas

CODE  
05

COUNTY  
Saline

CODE  
1.25

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

### PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

### ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

### PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

☒ MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RES. DENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Benton (Under jurisdiction of Saline Co. Public Library Board)

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Benton

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arkansas

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Saline County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Benton

STATE

Arkansas

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

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

In 1893 Dr. Dewell Gann, Sr. built a three room building in Benton, Arkansas for his office. The building, constructed of sawn bauxite blocks which were mined in the Benton area, rests on a granite foundation. Patients who were unable to pay for professional services rendered them by Dr. Gann supplied the labor to construct the office.

A distinguishing feature of the building is its five gable roof which is a product of the Gothic Revival and High Victorian style of architecture. The gables are decorated with wooden imbrication and brackets with pendants. Small ornate brackets also decorate the cornice.

The front elevation is perfectly symmetrical. The porch is supported by three slender turned columns with brackets to each side and has a serpentine-like saw cut frieze. Centered in the twin front gables are small round three-section windows of stained glass. Symmetrically placed, ornately milled front doors feature segmental arched windows with alternating border panes of frosted, blue, and purple glass set in wooden mullions. The original patterned brass door knob and escutcheon plate remains on one of the front doors. The top sections of the windows centered between the doors also have stained glass borders of red, yellow, and green glass.

The two identical front waiting rooms (one for women and the other for men) are connected by a plain arched doorway and have ceilings of ornate pressed tin. Each room has a separate entry to the examining room at the rear of the building. Beaded woodwork surrounds the doors and windows. The window aprons are unusual in that they have mitered corners and are a continuation of the same pattern as that of the window and door trim. Machine carved floral designs decorate the corner blocks and their crowns. Turned spindle-like designs are applied to the plinth blocks.

In 1946, Dr. Dewell Gann, Jr. gave the building to the City of Benton as a library. At that time the original slate roof was replaced with asphalt shingles and the cresting along the ridge of the roof was removed. A 25' X 45' concrete block addition was added to the rear as a reading room. This addition changed the floor plan of the building from T-shape to rectangular. The base of the T was absorbed into the addition but the original exterior rear doorway and window of the building are still intact as is the exterior bauxite walls of the rear room. Through the years window guards have been added and wire mesh has been installed behind the glass in the front doors. Also the original three-color scheme as evidenced in a photograph taken in the 1890's has been covered by white paint.

# SIGNIFICANCE

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
100-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
300-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
100-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
100-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
100-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

PRECISE DATES 1893

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gann Building, the only bauxite building known to be in existence, was built in 1893 for the office of Dr. Dewell Gann, Sr. by patients who could not afford to pay for services he had rendered them. The soft stone used in the construction was dug from the ground of a farm nearby, sawn into blocks with a handsaw and allowed to harden for six weeks.

Dr. Gann, Sr., born March 31, 1859 in Atlanta, Georgia, graduated from Emory University in 1886. After studying in New York briefly, he came west to Sheridan, Arkansas where he began the practice of medicine with B. W. Mason. In 1889 he married Martha Harding Whitthorne. The following year the couple moved to Benton, Arkansas. After establishing a successful medical practice in Benton, Dr. Gann helped to organize the first Saline County Medical Society.

On September 14, 1890, Dr. Dewell Gann's only son, Dewell Gann, Jr., was born. Following his father's profession he graduated from Indiana University in 1913 with his medical doctorate degree. He then returned to Arkansas to join his father's practice. An extremely learned man, Dr. Gann, Jr. introduced the therapeutic use of radium into Arkansas in 1916. From 1919 until 1924 he was attending surgeon at Little Rock General Hospital. During this time he invented a new resuscitator which helped to restore circulation as well as respiration in asphyxia or drowning. In 1925 he was chosen Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. This honor had been given to less than ten men in the entire United States at the time it was presented to Dr. Gann, Jr.

In 1946 the Gann Office was given to the City of Benton to be used as a library. At this time an addition was built onto the rear of the building and shelving was installed for the books. The building remained a library until 1967 when a larger facility was obtained. At this time the building was designated by the city to be used as a museum for the City of Benton and for Saline County.

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arkansas Democrat (Little Rock). September 25, 1945.

Bearden, Mildred. "History of the Gann Memorial Library and Building" (Research Paper). March 25, 1962.

Benton Courier. September 27, 1945

. January 14, 1960.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less t

UTM REFERENCES

A 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
------	---------	----------

B 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
------	---------	----------

C 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
------	---------	----------

D 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Latitude 34° 33' 41"

Longitude 92° 35' 16"

*see history of Little Rock*

7-17-75

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Barbara Woodard, Deputy Director and Claudia Morrow

ORGANIZATION

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE

June 10, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

300 West Markham

TELEPHONE

(501) 371-1639

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 ☐

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE William E. Henderson

*William E. Henderson*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE June 10, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

ONLY

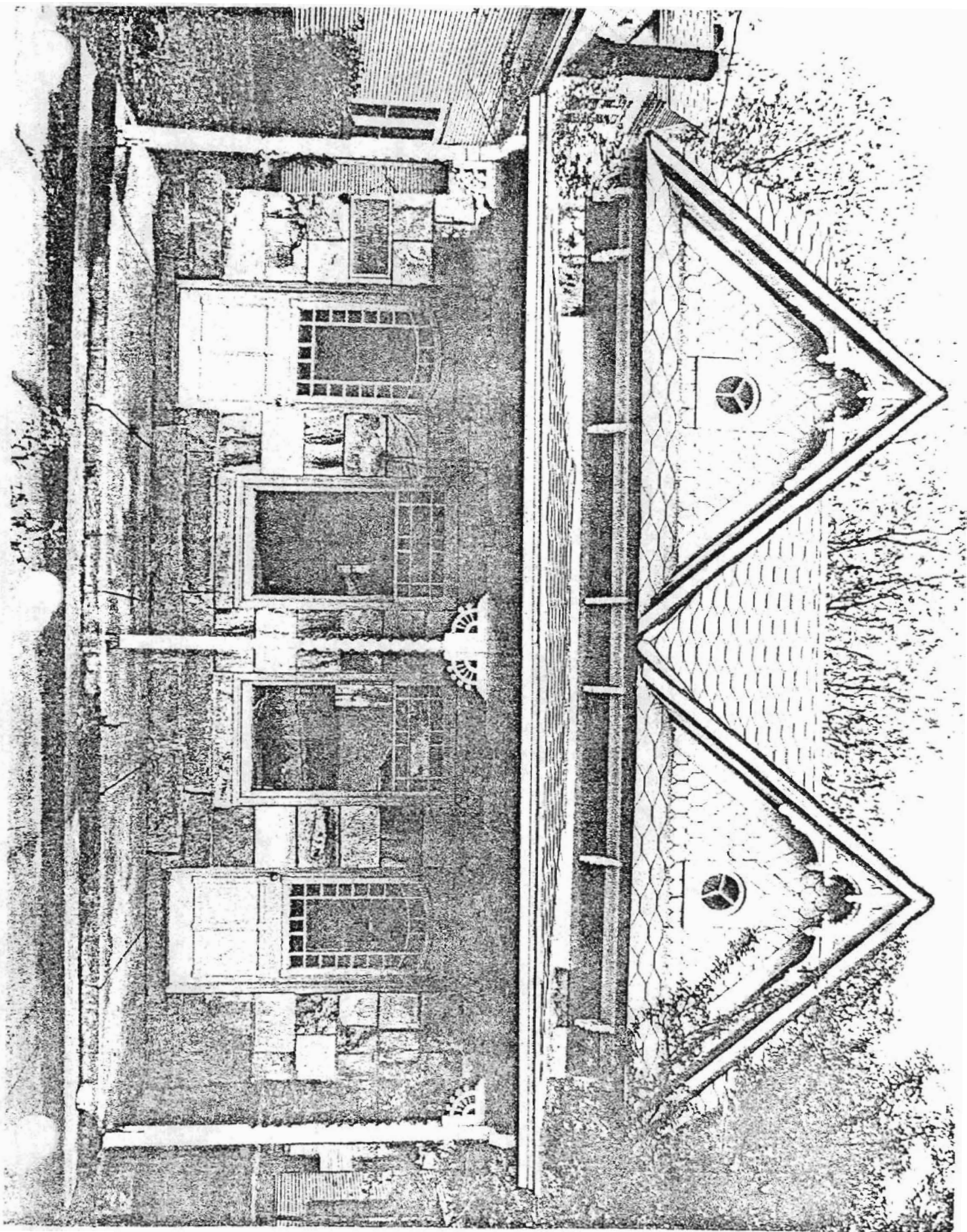
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

Centennial History of Arkansas. Little Rock: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company,  
1922.

Demuth, David. Personal interview at Gann Building, Benton, Arkansas,  
April 25, 1975.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED *U.S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR*

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AND/OR COMMON

Gann Memorial Library, Bauxite Building



**LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Benton

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Saline

STATE Arkansas



**PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Bob Dunn

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program



**IDENTIFICATION**

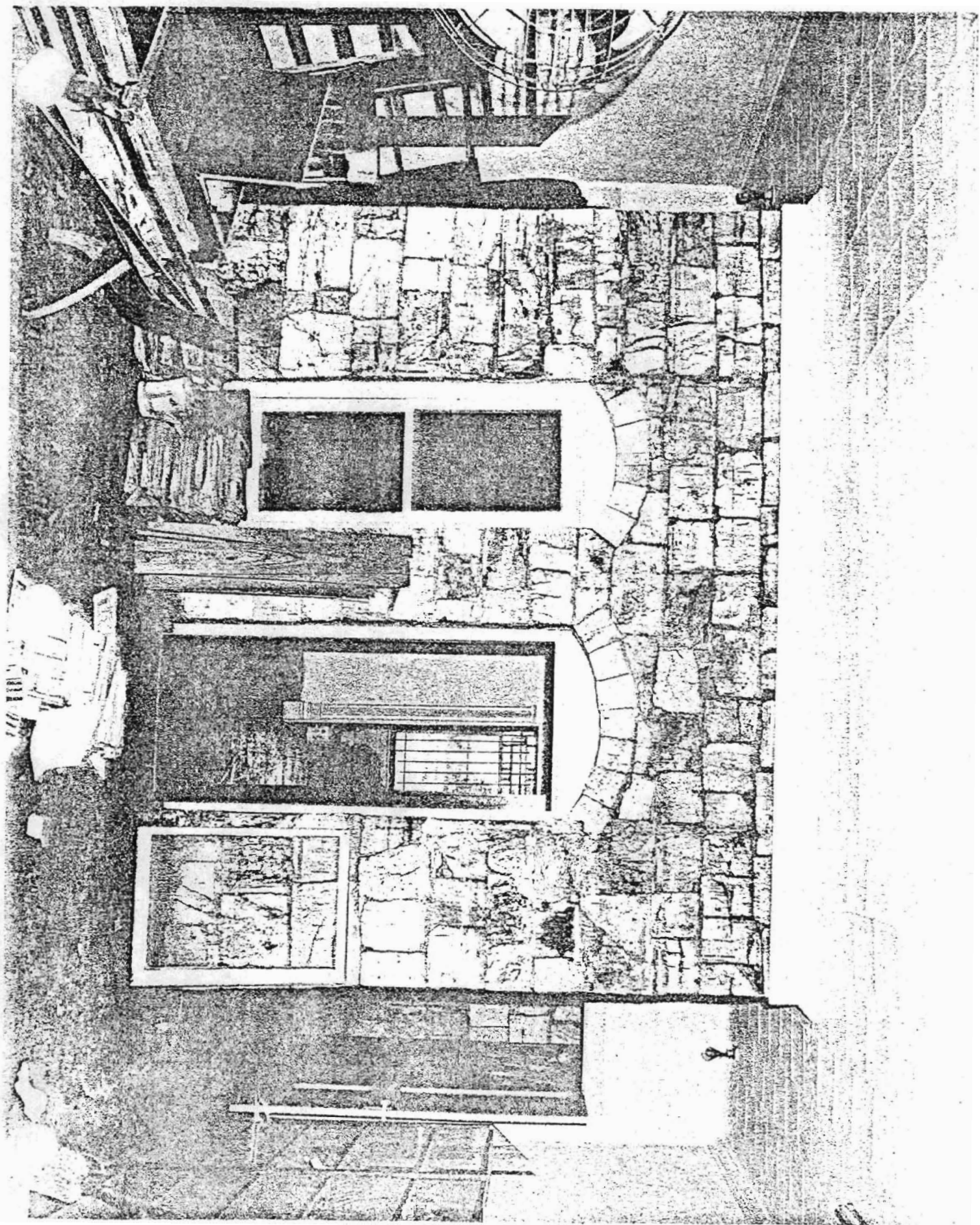
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO.

Front elevation

1





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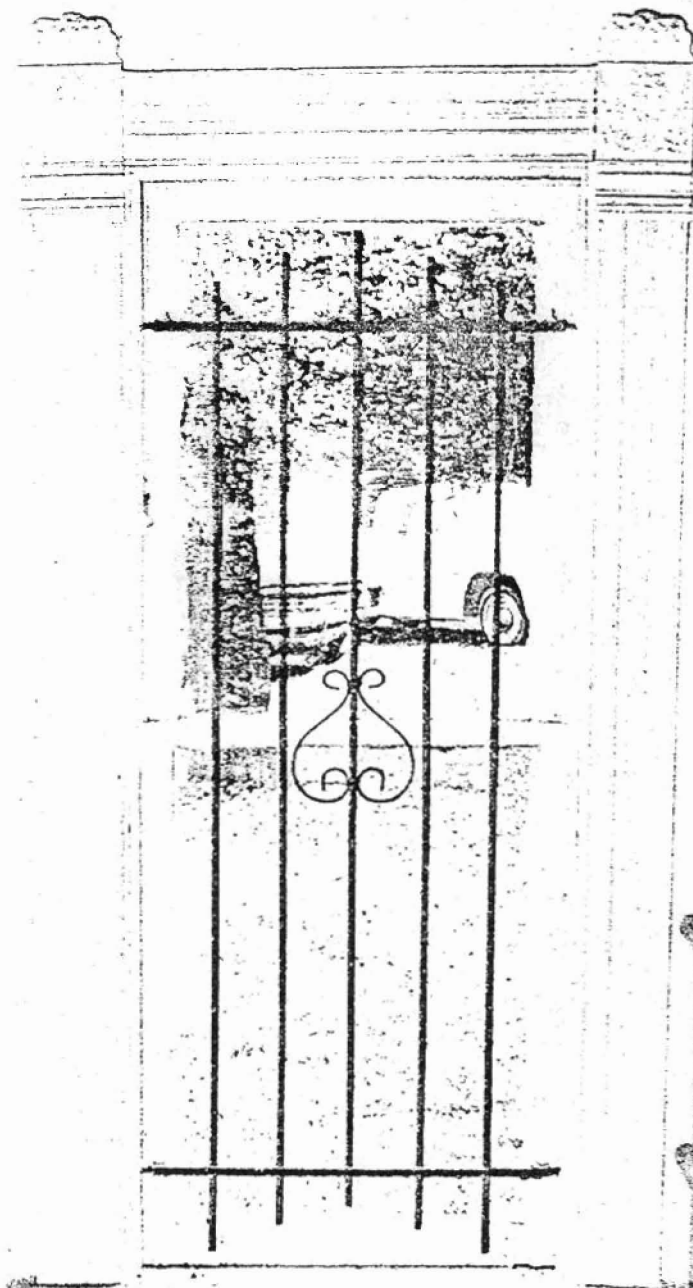
**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Original rear elevation as seen from inside addition

PHOTO NO.

2



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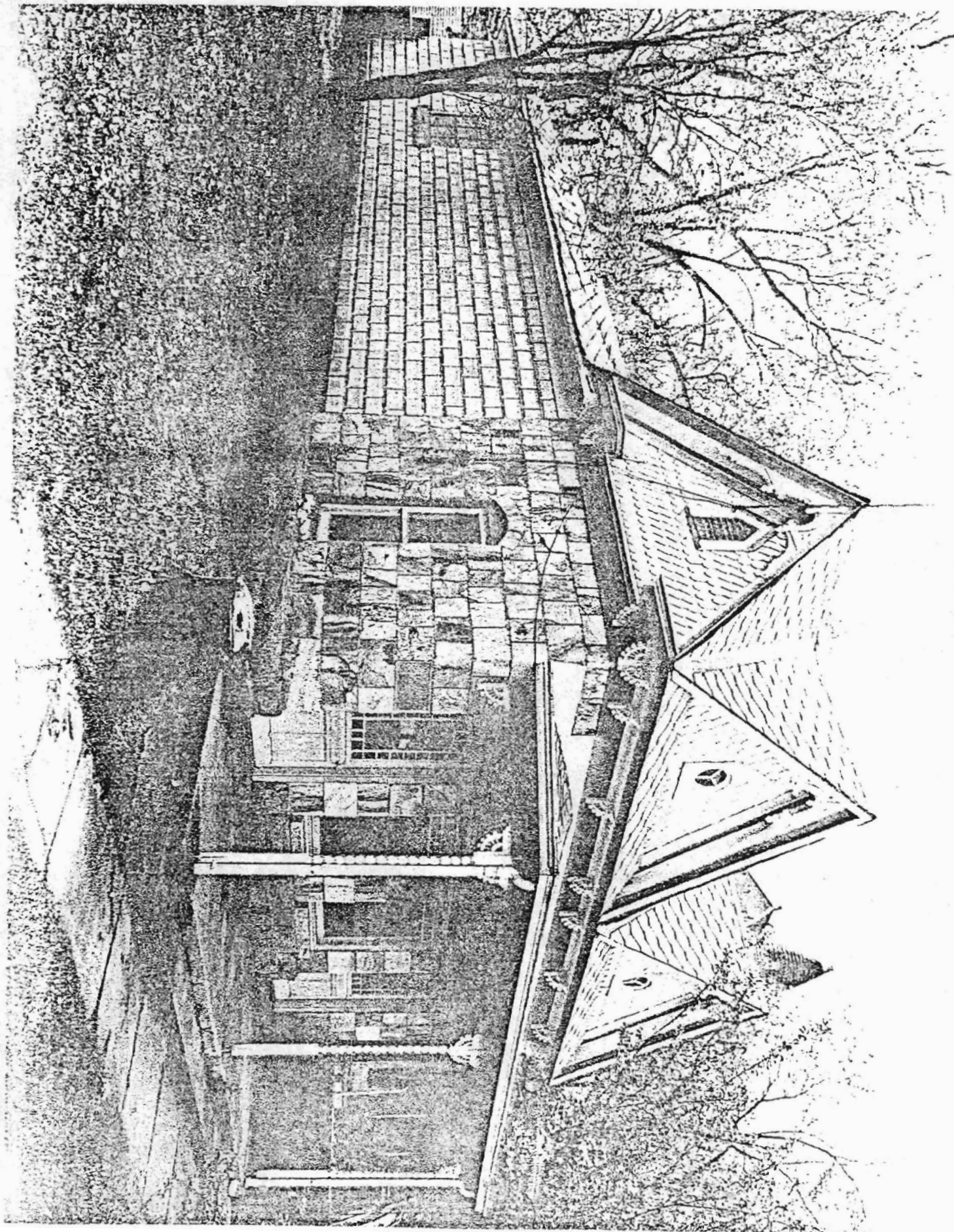
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO.

Interior window trim

3





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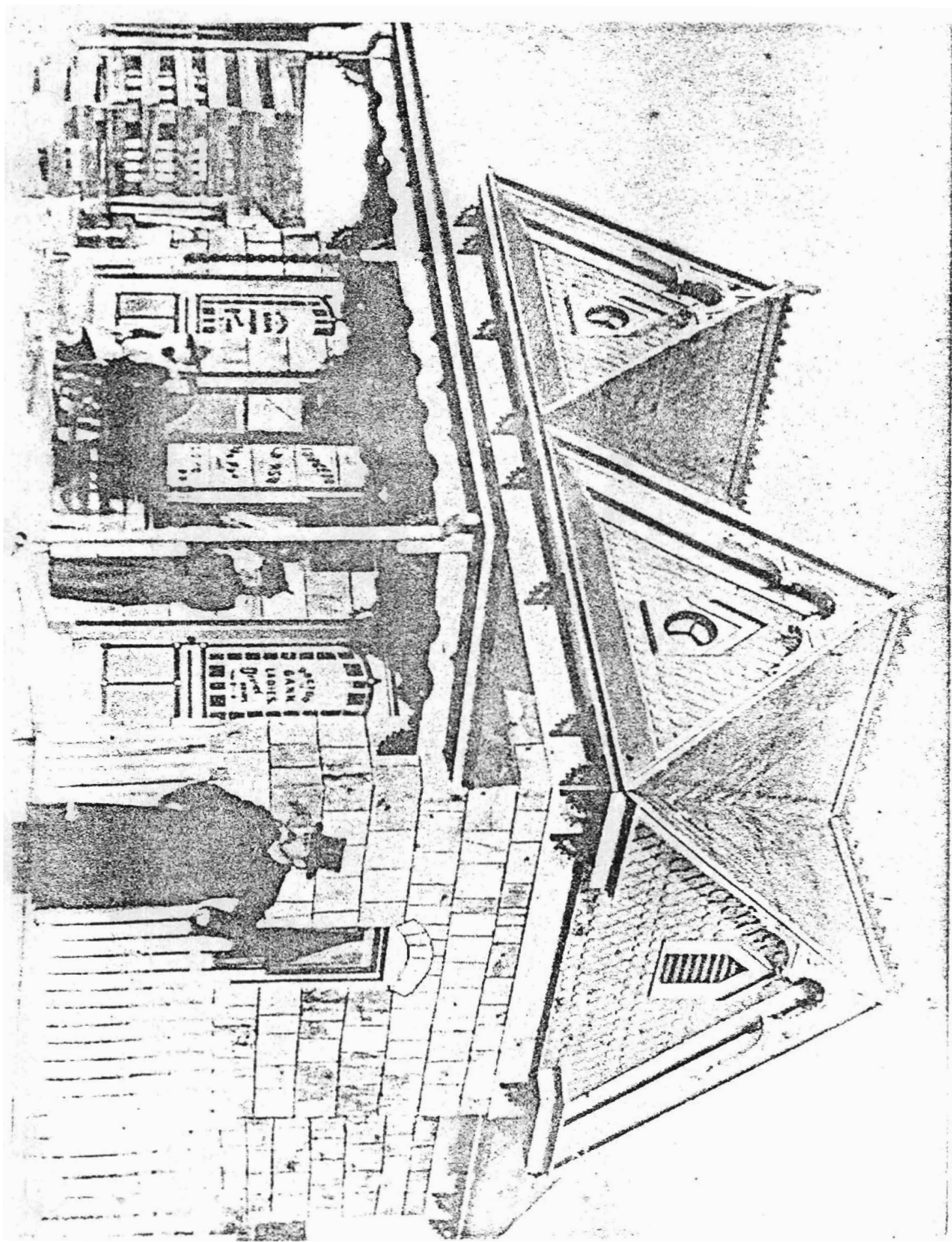
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PHOTO NO.

Side view of contemporary addition

4



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1890's photograph of Dr. Gann's office

PHOTO NO.

5