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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WHITBY
In the Regional Municipality of Durham



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MUNICIPAL BUILDING
575 Rossland Road East
Whitby, Ontario
Canada
LIN 2M8

March 23, 1994
File: A-2160 (LACAC)

RECEIVED
BY THE CLERK

MAR 29 1994

COMMUNICATIONS AND
PLANNING

Halsted-Fisher House
535 Myrtle Road West
Ashburn, Ontario
LOB 1A0

Re: Halsted-Fisher House
535 Myrtle Road West, Whitby
Heritage Designation, Part IV
The Ontario Heritage Act

At a meeting held on the 14th day of March, 1994, the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Whitby passed By-Law No. 3456-94, a copy of which is enclosed, being a by-law to designate the Halsted-Fisher House, municipally known as 535 Myrtle Road West, Whitby, as a Heritage Structure under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

By-Law No. 3456-94 will be advertised in the March 30, April 6, and April 13, 1994 issues of the Whitby Free Press newspaper.

Further information regarding the above noted matter may be obtained by calling Mr. Eric Braslis, Secretary of L.A.C.A.C. at 668-5803.

Debi A. Bentley

Debi A. Bentley
Administrative Assistant

DAB/mls
Enclosure

cc: Registered Mail

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation
Cultural Operations and Field Services Branch
Architectural Conservation Unit
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2R9

Registered Mail

✓ The Ontario Heritage Foundation
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3

R. B. Short, Director of Planning
E. Braslis, Secretary, L.A.C.A.C.

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WHITBY

BY-LAW NO. 3456-94

BEING A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE THE STRUCTURE MUNICIPALLY KNOWN AS 535 MYRTLE ROAD WEST AS BEING OF HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL VALUE AND INTEREST

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18, the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Whitby considers it desirable to designate property hereinafter described to be of historic and architectural value and interest;

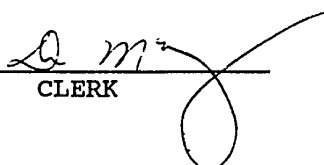
AND WHEREAS, the Council of the said Corporation has caused to be served on the owners of the property municipally known as 535 Myrtle Road West, Whitby, Ontario, and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of its intention to designate the structure at the aforesaid address to be of historic and architectural value and interest and has caused such notice to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town of Whitby;

AND WHEREAS, no person has served a notice of objection to the proposed designation on the Clerk of the said Corporation;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Whitby enacts as follows:

1. The structure known as the Halsted-Fisher House located on the property municipally known as 535 Myrtle Road West, Whitby, Ontario and more particularly described in Schedule "A", attached to and forming part of this by-law, is designated as being of historic and architectural value and interest for the reasons set out in Schedule "B", attached hereto.
2. This designation shall not preclude any changes that may be deemed necessary for the efficient use of the structure provided that any changes shall be in keeping with the original and current character of the structure and shall be carried out in consultation with the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee of the Town of Whitby.

BY-LAW READ A FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 14TH DAY OF MARCH, A.D., 1994.


CLERK


MAYOR

Additional Property Identifier(s) and/or Other Information

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Part of Lot 25, Concession 8 and part of the road allowance between Lots 24 and 25, Concession 8, designated as Parts 1, 2 and 3, Plan 40R-9063, Town of Whitby, Regional Municipality of Durham (formerly Township of Whitby, County of Ontario).

SUBJECT to a right-of-way over Part 2, Plan 40R-9063.

SCHEDULE "B"
To By-law No. 3456-94

DESIGNATION REPORT

THE HALSTED-FISHER HOUSE

535 MYRTLE ROAD WEST

NORTH PART, LOT 25, CONCESSION 8

BUILT, C. 1850

Compiled by Brian Winter, Town of Whitby Archivist

August 10, 1993

THE HALSTED-FISHER HOUSE
535 MYRTLE ROAD WEST
NORTH PART, LOT 25, CONCESSION 8
BUILT, C. 1850

This granite fieldstone house is one of the finest of its kind in the former Township of Whitby. The builder is unknown, but from the workmanship, the person who built this house was a skilled stone mason. William Pearson (1830-1897) was a noted stone mason in Ashburn, who built the school house (now the Community Centre) about 1861. It is not known when he settled in Ashburn, but it is unlikely that he built the Halsted-Fisher house for he would have only been 20 or younger when it was constructed.

The original patent from the Government of Upper Canada for the 200 acres (80.937 hectares) of lot 25, Concession 8, was granted to Christina Dimond on Mar. 30, 1826. Nothing is known of this person, and it is unlikely that she settled on the land, as there was no settlement in the Ashburn area until about 1832. On Jan. 27, 1829, John and Christina Dimond sold the lot to Baltes Shewman. Nothing is known of this person.

It appears that Baltes Shewman sold the land on May 4, 1832 to Thomas Halsted, although the writing on the abstract is unclear. The deed was not registered until Oct. 6, 1852 (which is clearly written). Census information and the age of Mr. Halsted would seem to confirm that his date of settlement was 1832 rather than 1852, for he was 36 in 1832.

Thomas Halstead (1796-1854) was definitely the first bona-fide settler on lot. 25, Concession 8 of Whitby Township. The 1851 census (which was actually taken early in 1852), lists his age at his next birthday as 56. His wife, Mary Forshee is listed as 53, and there are children, Martty, 19; Samuel, 16; James, 11; and Daniel, 13. The census records that Thomas Halsted was a farmer born in Upper Canada (now Ontario).

It is most likely that Thomas Halsted first lived in a log cabin and had the stone house built in the late 1840s and definitely by 1852 for his residence

Halsted-Fisher house - 2

is listed as a 1½-storey stone house in the census taken in 1852. It is similar to the Sylvester Lynde stone house built at the same time, on the third concession, and destroyed by fire in 1913. It would appear that Thomas Halsted was a man of means who could afford such a fine stone house.

The house is of dressed granite fieldstone, with red brick lintels over the windows. An unusual formation is the back door and adjoining window, under a single arch. Also unusual is the fact that it has a full basement with windows, part of which was used as a summer kitchen and contained a fireplace and bake oven. The oven, is a double one which can be used from the outside or the inside of the house. It was designed so the farm hands' wives could use it from the outside for their baking while the farmer's family used it from the inside. The oven was covered by plaster in later years and was uncovered by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Innes in the 1960s. Mrs. Innes baked bread in it once and found it to be in perfect working order.

One of the stories that has been passed down about the house is that there is an outer stone wall, a four-inch air space for insulation and an inner stone wall. An unusual feature is the false window on the east wall to the right of the bake oven. It was placed there to match the window over the bake oven, but is not a real window, for the stone work can be seen under the glass.

One of the features of the Halsted farm was a spring, back of the house which was used by all the farmers in the area for fresh water, and is still functioning today.

It appears that Thomas Halsted became ill in 1854, and wrote his will as a result on April 17 of that year. The will was registered on Aug. 8, 1854, and Mr. Halsted died before the end of the year.

A mortgage for £100 (\$500), taken out by Mr. Halsted in 1852 was discharged by his executors in December of 1854.

Halsted-Fisher house - 3

After Thomas Halsted's death in the fall of 1854, his wife decided to sell the farm, and the sale was made to Timothy Fisher on Nov. 24, 1854. The Halsted family moved away from Whitby after Thomas's death. The Toronto Glob records that Mrs. Thomas Halsted died at Guelph on Mar. 23, 1882, at the age of 83.

Timothy Fisher (1817-1901) was born in Upper Canada and was the son of Rev. George Fisher, an ordained local Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Whitby Township. Rev. George Fisher (1793-1878) was a veteran of the War of 1812 who came to Whitby Township in 1828, settling in the Raglan area north of Oshawa. He had four sons and four daughters. He lived in the Raglan area until 1876 when he moved to Oshawa, where he died On Mar. 27, 1878. Rev. George and his wife and Timothy and his wife all have their names on the same stone in Oshawa Union Cemetery.

Timothy Fisher is listed as a farmer born in Upper Canada, in the 1861 census, with his wife Margaret Bedford, and children, Edward, 18; Albert, 16; Thomas, 14; George, 12 and Mary 10. The house is listed as stone as it was in 1852.

There are several transctions on the Fisher property in the 19th century, particularly when Timothy divided the farm among his sons, Alfred, Edward and George in 1871. Edward and Alfred retained overnship of the north half of lot 25 where the house stands, while George got the south half of the farm.

Timothy Fisher died, probably at the family farm on Aug. 19, 1901 at the age of 84. His wife, Margaret Bedford, who was at one time a school teacher, died on Mar. 29, 1901 aged 80 years.

Edward Timothy Fisher (1843-1927) inherited the farm from his father, as he was the oldest son. He was married to Mary Bodie (1863-1954) and had a family of nine children: William (went to the Canadian West), Margaret Alice (1885-1948), George (went West), Thomas Allan (1889-1986), Alfred (went West),

Halsted-Fisher house - 4

Daisy (1893-1981) who married Archibald Parrinder, Mae (who married Henry Leask and went to Uxbridge), Frank (1898-1980) and Emma, who now lives in Port Perry at the age of 93.

Edward Timothy Fisher, known as "Ned," died at Ashburn on March 28, 1927. He had left the farm in charge of his son Frank a few years before and moved into the village. He and his wife and some of his children are buried in Burns' Presbyterian Cemetery, Ashburn.

The Executors of Edward Timothy Fisher sold the north half of lot 25 to his son Frank Fisher on May 30, 1928. Ten years later Frank Fisher sold the farm to Frederick Allan and Luella Evelyn Stephen, on Sept. 30, 1938. This ended 84 years of ownership by the Fisher family (1854-1938). The Stephens continued to operate the property as a farm until March 16, 1956 when they sold it to Frederick R. and Margaret McVey.

Mr. McVey was a building contractor who made many changes in the house. He added a garage and workshop on the west side of the house, and remodelled the west room on the main floor, removing much of the woodwork around the windows and panneling the walls with gum wood from Malaysia in the 1960s. He also rebuilt the fireplace on the west wall into a large modern design of stone. Mr. McVey also added a long dormer over the roof at the back of the house. Before Mr. McVey bought the house, the living room was a bedroom and the south part of the house was entirely a kitchen. On Mar. 27, 1961 Frederick R. and Margaret McVey sold the house to James G. and Irene McVey, likely a son and daughter-in-law. Two years later the McVey family left to operate a motel in Gananoque, and sold the house on June 11, 1963 to William Earl Innes.

William Earl Innes (1915-1990) was born in Brooklin on Aug. 4, 1915 and operated an insurance business at Sunderland and Manchester before retiring to the Fisher house in 1963. At the time of his purchase the property had been reduced to 11 acres around the house. Mr. and Mrs. Innes uncovered the old bake oven in the basement and put a modern recreation room in the old basement

Halsted-Fisher house - 5

summer kitchen. The property has not been farmed since the Stephen family occupied the house. Because of ill health, Mr. Innes sold the Fisher property on Nov. 1, 1985 to the present owners, [REDACTED] who named the home "Stone Eden." Mr. Innes died at Oshawa on Feb. 6, 1990, and his wife Elsie now lives in Brooklin.

The Halsted-Fisher house is one of the finest early examples of stone house construction in Whitby, dating from about 1850 or a few years before. Much of the original exterior of the house is intact, although many changes have been made to the interior. It is a fine example of the Scottish stone mason's craftsmanship, although it is unfortunate that the name of the builder is not known. Its two-way bake oven in the basement is likely unique in Whitby.

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Prepared by Brian Winter,
Town of Whitby Archivist,
August 10, 1993.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF
THE HALSTED-FISHER HOUSE
535 MYRTLE ROAD WEST
NORTH PART, LOT 25, CONCESSION 8
BUILT C. 1850**

Prepared for
the Planning Department of the Town of Whitby
575 Rossland Road East
Whitby, Ontario L1N 2M8
by
Edwin J. Rowse, Architect

October, 1993

THE HALSTED-FISHER HOUSE
535 MYRTLE ROAD WEST
NORTH PART, LOT 25, CONCESSION 8
BUILT C. 1850

The Halsted-Fisher House, now called 'Stone Eden' by its present owners, is an excellent example of the architecture of an early fieldstone farmhouse. It is a simple one-and-one-half storey dwelling with finely executed details which demonstrate both local vernacular traditions and more elaborate decorative design elements typical of the early- and mid-nineteenth century Neo-Classical styles.

The house is located on a large farm lot. It is set back from the street and from neighbouring buildings and is surrounded by mature trees and hedge rows. The house has a typical form for a vernacular farmhouse, having a formal five bay front façade with two windows either side of a central doorway. The two end chimneys on its pitched roof emphasize the symmetrical character of this façade. The end walls allow for second-storey windows and have roughly symmetrical window placements. One of the ground floor windows on the east end wall is blind, appearing only on the outside of the building, and was added simply to give a balanced appearance to the façade. A gentle slope in the land allows for easy access to both the basement and the ground floor on the more informal back façade.

There are a number of additions to the west side of the building including a garage and a workshop. Although much later in date than the house itself these additions are not unlike the outbuildings or 'tails' which were frequently added to farmhouses. A large shed dormer has been added to the back roof of the building but this does not detract from the overall character of the dwelling. These alterations to the building illustrate long term use and the gradual evolution of an occupied dwelling.

The quality of the fieldstone work is excellent. It is a granite laid as coursed rubble masonry with fine jointing. The largest of the stones were used to create massive quoins at the front corners of the house. The windows have flat red brick arches, with the bricks slightly rubbed and gauged. The original pointing on the fieldstone is no longer evident as

the masonry has been repointed. The chimneys have been rebuilt with corbelled red brick matching the brickwork of the window arches. The west chimney has been rebuilt as a single stack and the east chimney as a double stack.

Two unusual features of the masonry are the basement bake oven and the arch over the back door. The bake oven is built into the back of the basement fireplace on the east side of the building and it is unusual because it is double-sided and is accessible from the both the inside and the outside, presumably for summer baking. The opening for the bake oven is created by a double stone and red brick arch and the opening closed with a metal grate. The brick arch over the back door covers both the door and a window. The difference in height between the two openings is adjusted by the addition of a small blind transom over the door. The asymmetrical placement of this large arch provides part of the informal character of the rear façade, but it also indicates a deviation from the standard centre hall plan suggested by the front elevation.

It has been suggested by previous owners that the fieldstone walls may be a type of cavity wall construction. While it was not common practice to build a cavity into a fieldstone wall the construction could not be examined without opening-up a section of wall area. The approximately 20 inch thickness of the wall could permit a cavity, and the cavity may have been thought to have either thermal or moisture protection capabilities.

The original woodwork on the exterior of the building has the broad and elaborate mouldings characteristic of the Neo-Classical styles. The front door is placed in a panelled recess and has a glazed transom and a surround with a full entablature and pilasters. The frieze is decorated with reeded paterae and primitive leaf patterns. Mouldings from this entrance are repeated consistently throughout the building. The cornice mouldings reappear in the eaves and both the entablature and pilaster details appear in the mantel surround of the principal fireplace.

The windows are six over six sash windows, the typical pattern for the period. They have wooden sills and show evidence of hardware for shutters, although the present shutters on the front of the building are modern additions. The early photographs held by

the owner of the property indicate that, while the woodwork is white now, it may have been painted in darker shades during part of its history.

The downspouts for the eaves troughing are directed to the back of the building indicating that the water was once collected in a cistern.

The finishes and configurations of the rooms in the house have been altered over time. The house has a full, well-lit basement with a covered flight of exterior stairs at the rear of the building. It is evident that the basement was a highly function part of the farmhouse. The rooms have been changed but the basement fireplace indicates the presence of an early kitchen. The masonry for the hearth and bake oven have been parged over and tuck-pointed but the fireplace still retains its basic character. Nailers for a simple mantelpiece are visible on the sides of the fireplace. Exposed areas of the basement ceiling show whitewashing and sawn timbers. The largest of the exposed ceiling beams is 13" by 9" and is located in a manner which would indicate that its purpose was to support a wall typical of a centre hall plan.

The ground floor rooms have also been altered. The arrangement of rooms is roughly that of a central hall plan with two front and possibly two back rooms, but all of the rooms have been substantially altered with the exception of the present dining room. At the rear of the house the off-centre doorway and window indicate that the centre hall must have limited to a box hall in the front portion of the house. Original uses of most rooms cannot be determined by examination but it is noted that prior to the purchase of the house by Mr. McVey the living room was described as a bedroom and the rear portion of the house was one large kitchen. It is not known when the kitchen was moved from the basement to this upstairs location. The present living room has been considerably altered with a large 1960s stone fireplace and extensive wood panelling. The remaining window trim is simple and would have been suitable for a bedroom, if that was the room's original use. At present the rear portion of the house contains a kitchen, washroom and a small study room. The stairs are located in the hall and are partially enclosed. The stair appears to be in its original location but modifications to the stair are evident, with a cut stringer possibly indicating that the stair has been opened up slightly to the rest of the hall.

The present dining room is remarkable for its intact mouldings. Major changes have included a wall panelled in gum wood and gum wood beams on the ceiling, but all of the original baseboard, window and door trim, and the fireplace mantel remain. The baseboard, door and window trim use the same large moulding profile as the exterior entry pilasters. Corner-boxes, 9 inches square, are used for the doors and windows and a reeding pattern occurs in these corner-boxes and in the panelling on the window aprons. These elaborate details consistently reflect the Neo-Classical, rather than the simpler Regency styles of the period. The embrasure for the windows is 16 inches deep, but does not appear to have been included interior shutters. With the alteration to this room to include a modern beamed ceiling, the ceiling level was dropped approximately 4 inches. It is possible that the original ceiling finish with mouldings may still be in place above the alteration. The rooms of the second floor have been changed considerably by the addition of the rear shed dormer.

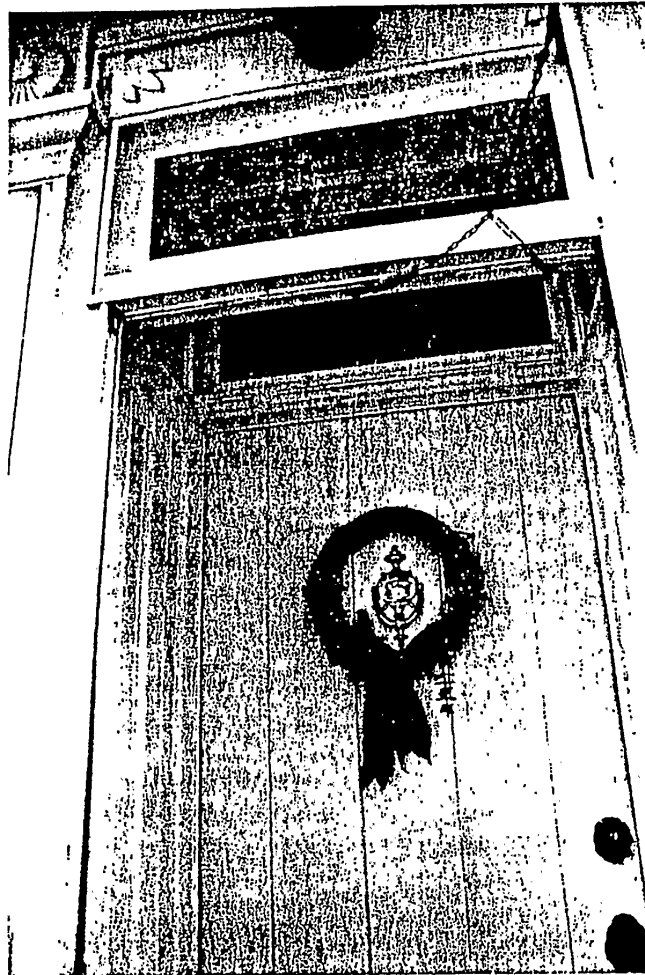
The Halsted-Fisher House is a very fine example of a mid-nineteenth century farmhouse in Whitby. The building is well constructed with good quality materials demonstrating the skills of both the stone mason and the nineteenth-century carpenter. The building's irregular features, such as the blind window, the double-sided bake oven, or the asymmetrical back door, add to the vernacular character of the building.



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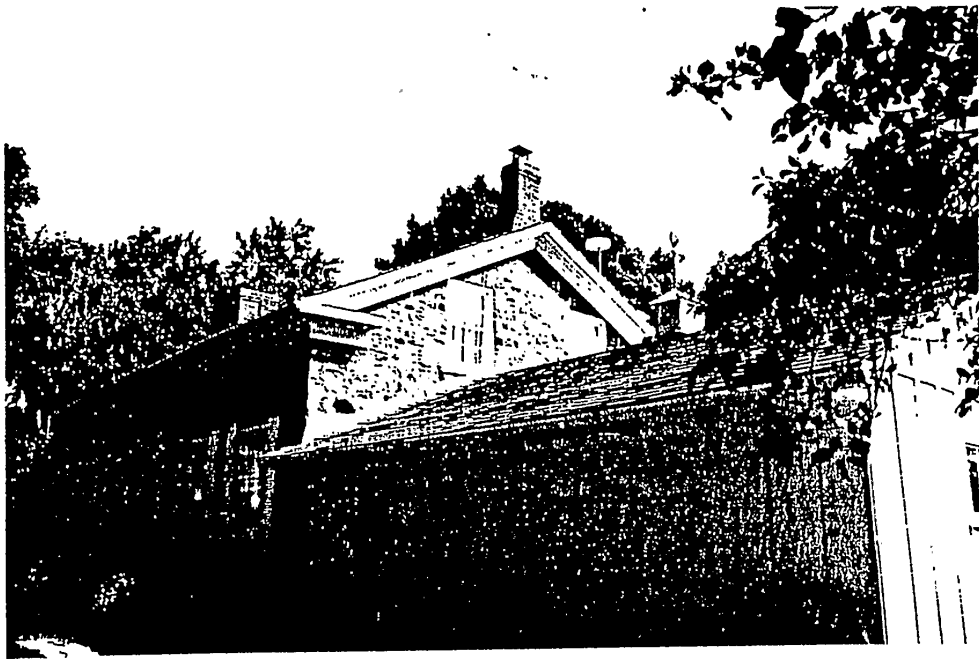
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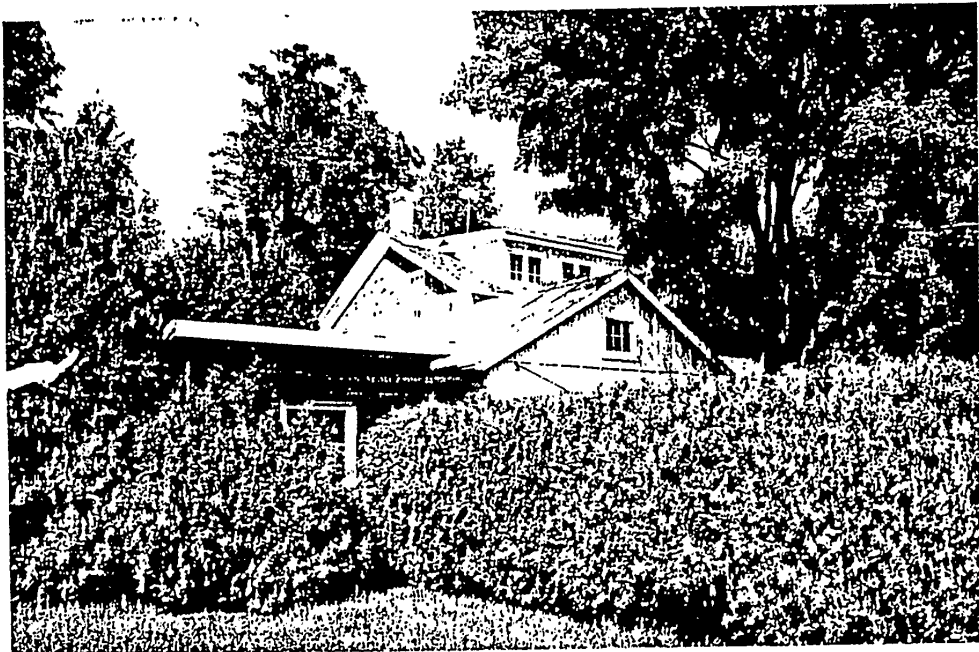
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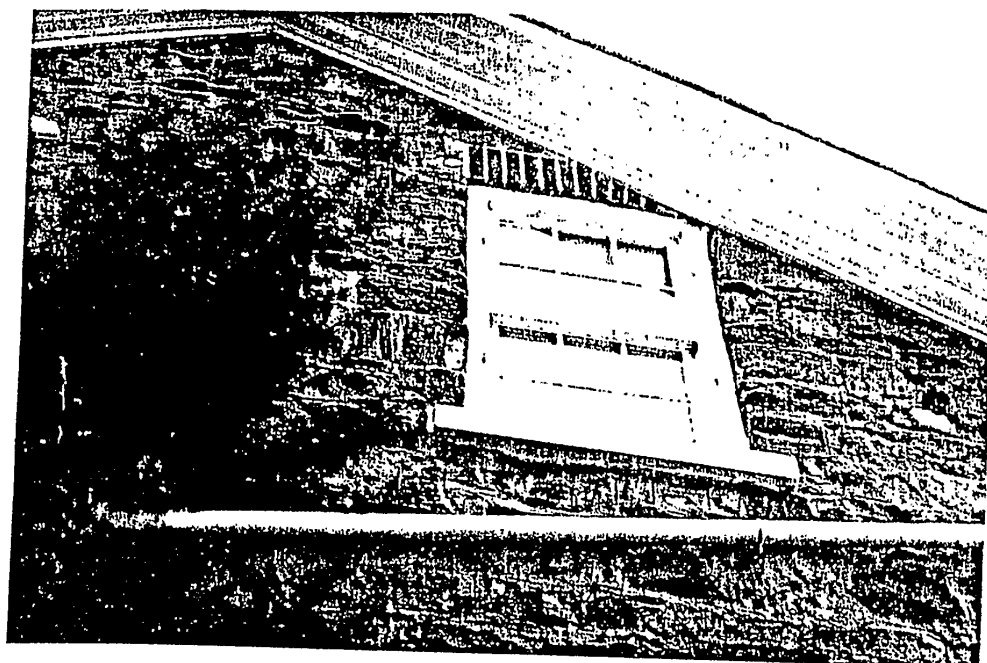
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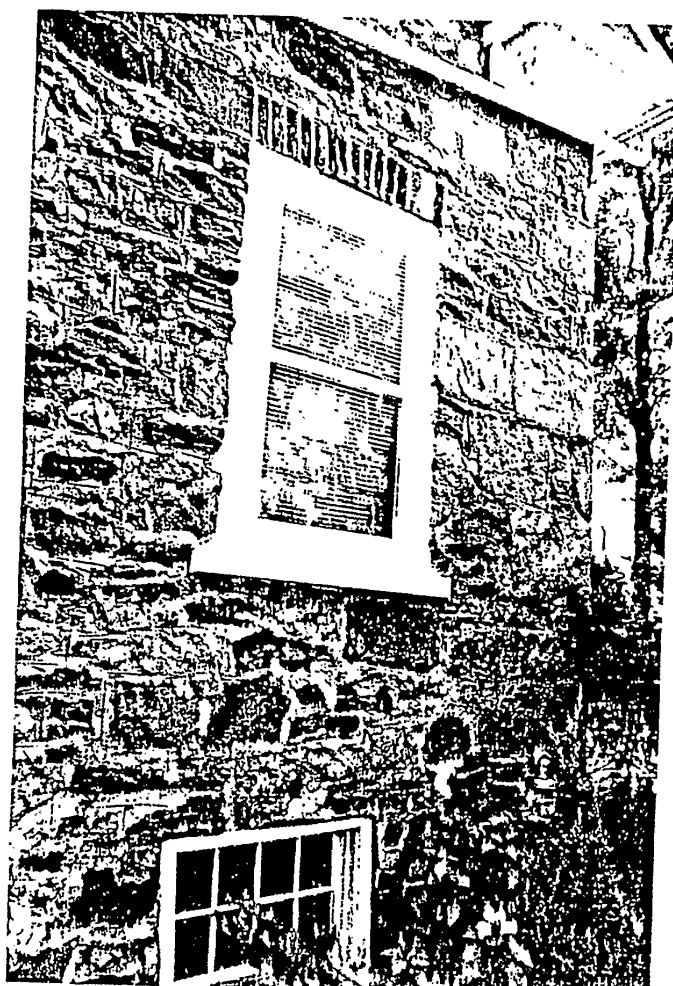
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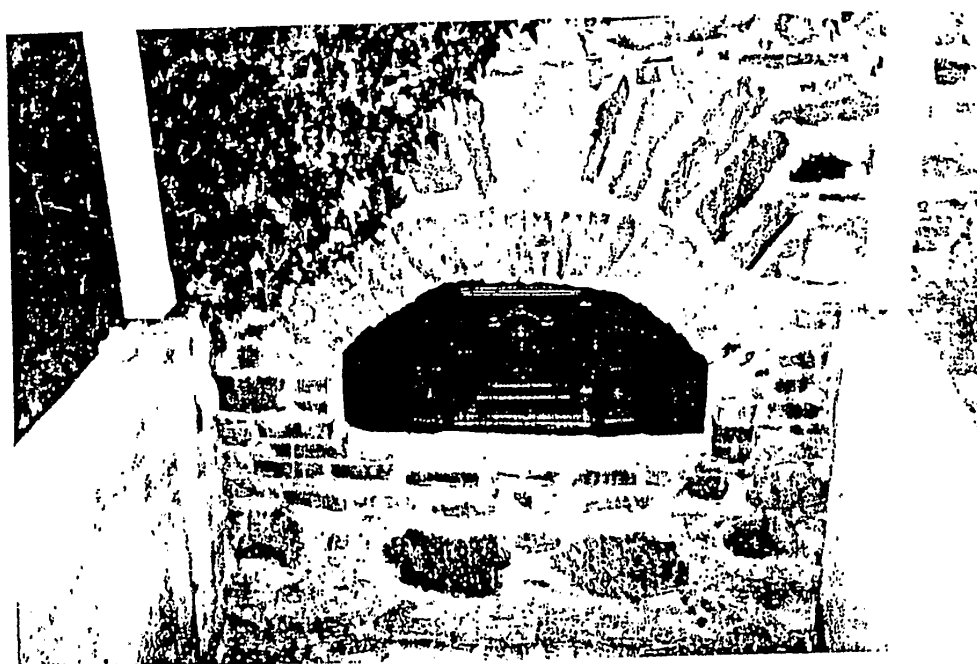
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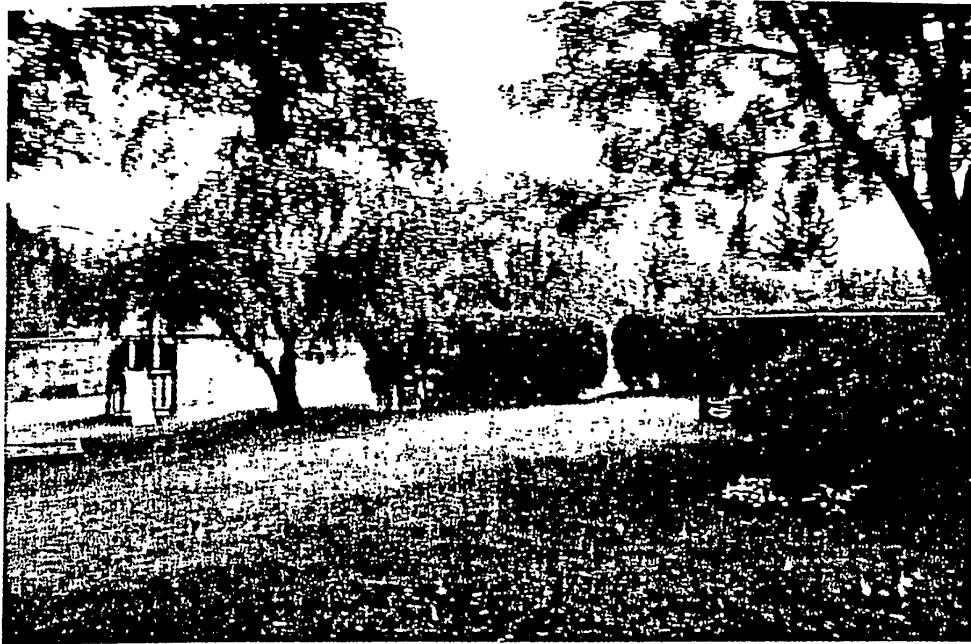
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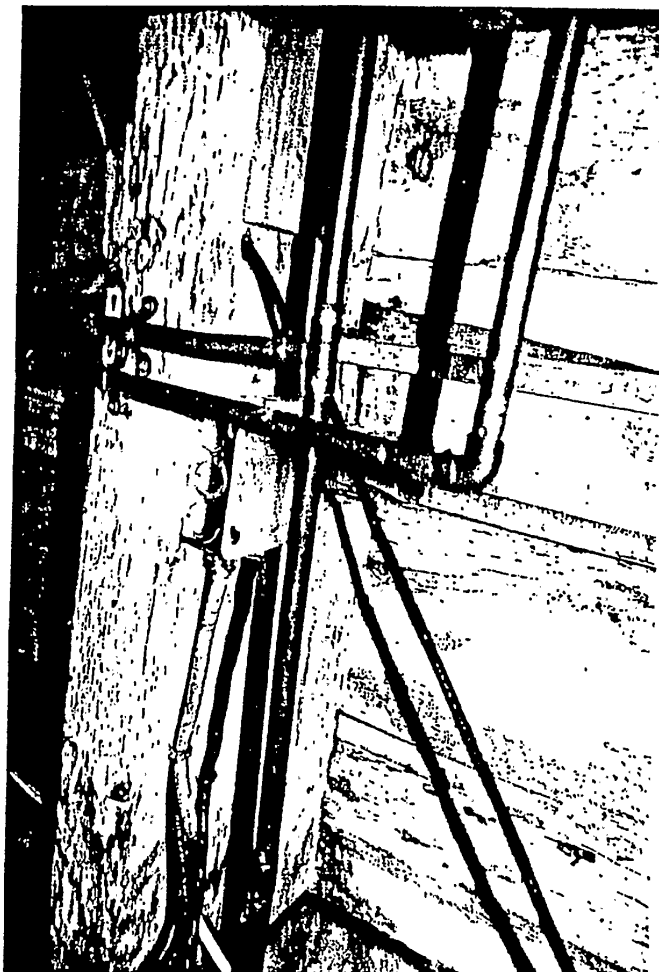
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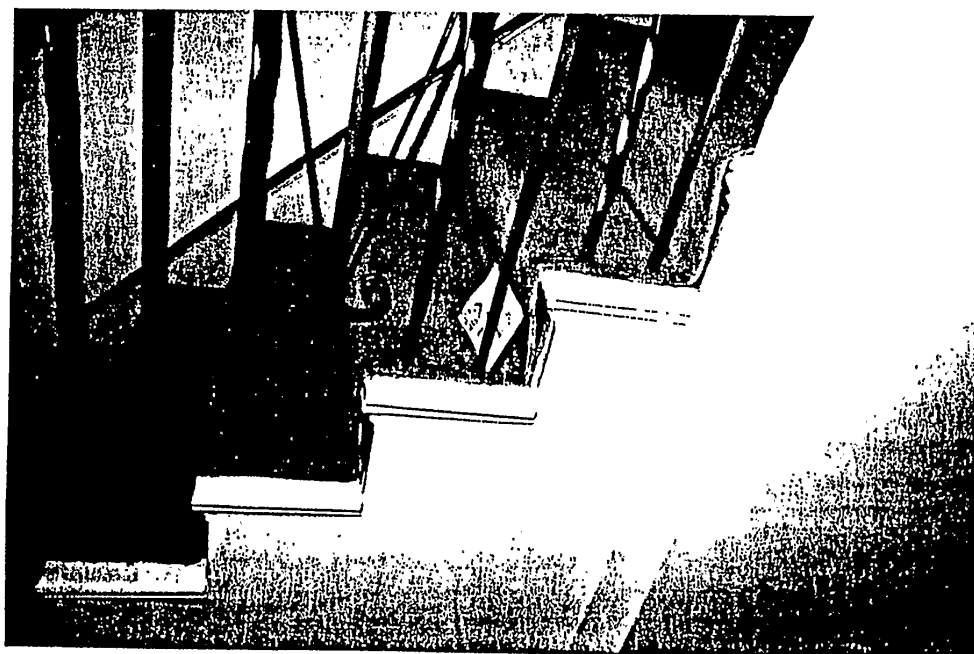
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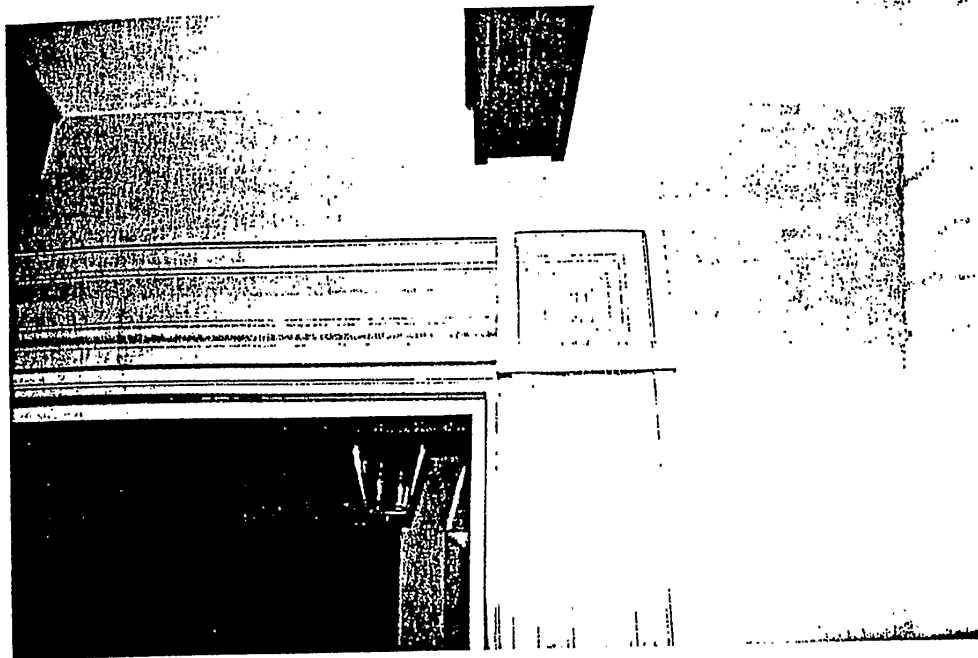
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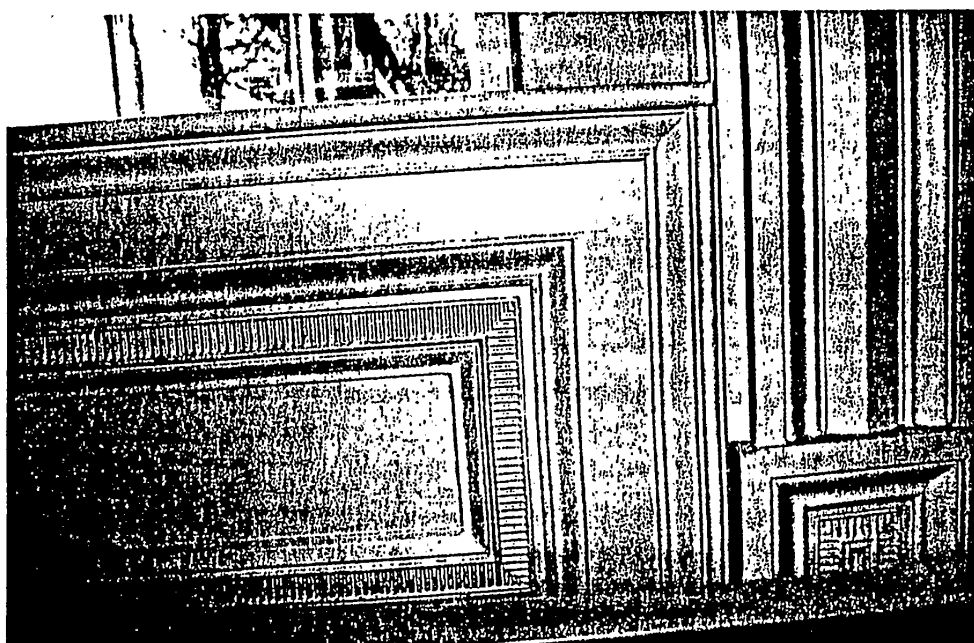
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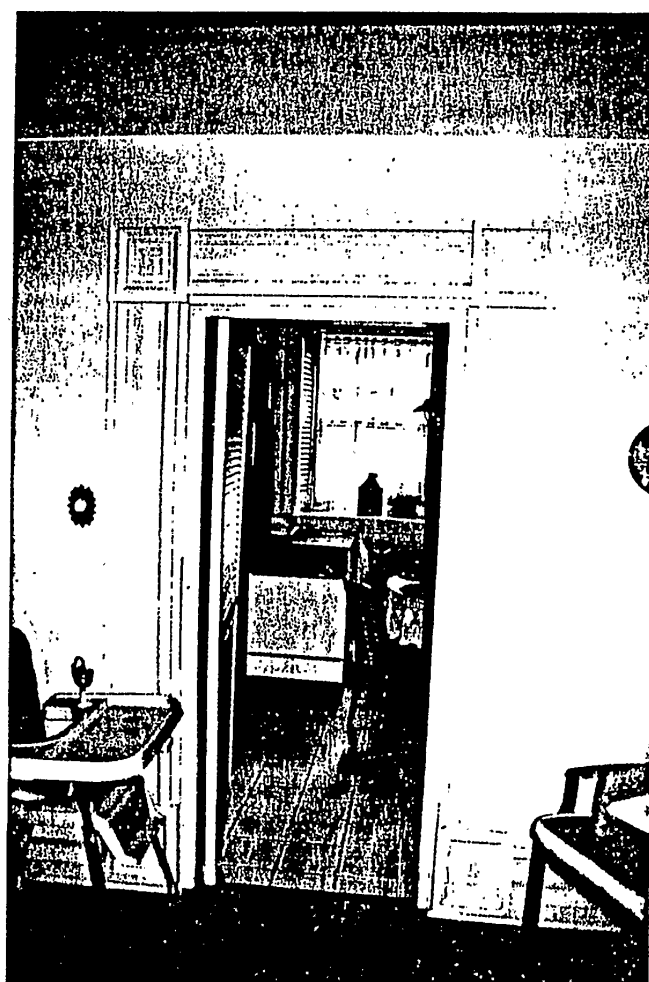
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