

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Bentley House

and/or common Museum of the Ozarks

2. Location

street & number 603 E. Calhoun

not for publication

city, town Springfield

vicinity of

congressional district #10-Hon. Gene Taylor

state Missouri

code

29

county

Greene

code

077

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 residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other:

4. Owner of Property

name Drury College

street & number 900 N. Benton Avenue

city, town Springfield

vicinity of

state Missouri

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Greene County Courthouse

street & number 940 Booneville Avenue

city, town Springfield

state Missouri

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

1. Historic Site Register,
title City of Springfield

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 1974

federal state county local

depository for survey records City Clerks Office, City Hall, 830 Booneville Avenue

city, town Springfield

state Missouri

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bentley House is a Queen Anne style dwelling built in 1892 for \$15,000.00 by J.F.G. Bentley. Basically rectangular in shape, 40 feet (east-west) by 72 feet (north-south), an asymmetrical quality typical of this style is added with the semi-detached tower, the projecting bays on primary and secondary facades and the various porches. Also in keeping with the Queen Anne style are the horizontal division of varied wall surfaces: a brick first story with a frame upper story having bands of shingles, a wide clapboard section, more shingles and imitation half-timbering all painted brown; its complex roof of gables and hips projecting at right angles and accented by several dormers and a conical roof over the tower; its variety of window forms; and its plan of rooms arranged around a living hall. The house is a restrained variety of the Queen Anne style, more Jacobethan than Eastlake in feeling.

The primary facade of the Bentley House is announced by a raised platform that begins at the south end of the projecting bay of the west facade and proceeds in a gentle curvilinear motion around the primary facade and terminates in a porte cochere on the east facade. Half-round openings pierce the rock faced base at wide intervals and parapet blocks rise up in regular intervals into which the encircling railings with turned balusters are tied. The same rock faced ashlar treatment is utilized for the foundation of the house. Porches on the primary (south) and east facades do not encircle around to other sides, rather the continuous varanda effect is achieved by the wrap-around platform onto which the south and west porches extend. Both porches have pent roofs supported by slender tuscan columns in paired or tripartite clusters from which gabled sections project forward over the entrance and porte cochere respectively. These gable faces contain stick work imitating half-timbering as do the gable faces of the projecting blocks and dormers above and on the west facade, and in the frieze of the tower. This imitation half-timbering is in both curved and diagonal forms and adds balance and continuity to the composition. A smaller side porch occurs on the west facade.

The fenestration is regular with second story windows aligned over first story windows and the third story windows of the tower aligned over those below. There is diminishment in scale with second story windows being smaller than first story ones and attic story windows being diminutive versions of those below. Only on the attic story are windows arranged in a paired or tripartite manner. The predominant window types are one-over-one double hung sash, or fixed two light sash with larger lower panes divided from smaller upper lights by heavy transom bars. In this latter window type, the upper lights are filled with art glass or small panes divided by thin leaded muntins. Two large art glass windows respectively illuminate interior stairways on the east and west facades. On the primary facade the recessed entry door is flanked by beveled glass sidelights and on either side are large windows with transom bars. The window on the west side has sidelights. Rock-faced sandstone lintels top the doors and windows of the masonry constructed first story. Neither lintels nor sills occur on the upper story windows.

The various roof surfaces were once covered with slate which has since been replaced where necessary with grey cement-abestos slate. Original chimneys have been replaced with simple ones out of character with the Queen Anne style.

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The floor plan of the Bentley House is typical of the Victorian era. The entry opens into a small vestibule that in turn opens into a living hall around which are distributed a front parlor, library and dining rooms, with the kitchen-pantry area to the rear of the house. These rooms are enlarged and brightened by the additional window space captured in the projecting tower and three sided bays.

The living hall is the most elegant room. Finished in walnut, this room is a Victorian interpretation of the Adam style. The staircase which dominates the room is set at a transverse angle to the doorway. It rises quickly to a landing, ascends at a right angle to another landing illuminated by an art glass window and then to the second floor. Its four newels are in the form of fluted square columns with quaint ionic capitals, elliptical patera and urn finials. Its turned balusters are placed close together, four to a tread. The wainscoting against the wall features raised panels set at an angle which matches the ascent of the stairs. Opposite the stairway is a fireplace with a tiled front and a classical mantel and overmantel. The mantel has ionic pilasters and a frieze decorated with delicate garlands and wreaths while the overmantel has paired fluted pilasters, recessed paneling and a delicate modillion course. A coffered walnut ceiling, wainscoting and a parquetry floor complete the room.

Parquet floors also occur in the parlor, library and dining room on the first floor and in the bedrooms and sitting room on the second. Walnut wainscoting decorates the library which also contains two built-in cherry bookcases with leaded glass fronts. An original brass lighting fixture with five etched glass crystal globes survives in the parlor. Fireplaces with tiled fronts and walnut mantels occur throughout the house, and elaborate brass hinges and hardware occur on the cased doors and double doors in the house. A secondary stairway is found in the area between the library and dining rooms.

The house remains much the same as when built on the interior. Modern plumbing was introduced around 1903, and at the same time steam radiators likely replaced the seven coal burning fireplaces as the principal sources of heat. The house originally contained nine bedrooms with three baths on the second and third stories. During the 1960's, when it passed from the Bentley family to Drury College, it was used as a dormitory. During this period another bedroom was partitioned off on the third floor which was originally designed as quarters for servants. Three more baths and a supplemental hot water system were installed at the same time. The lighting was originally gas, but the house was wired for electricity at the time of construction. Residential electric lighting reached Springfield in 1896, and its use was limited. It may be presumed that the Bentleys converted to it at the same time they remodeled their plumbing and heating. The only other change to the interior has been the conversion of a former laundry room into an office.

The Bentley House now stands on a rather severely landscaped lot devoid of foliage in the northern part of Springfield, Missouri. At the time of its construction it was centrally located almost halfway between the two commercial centers of the city. It was only a few blocks south of Mr. Bentley's Bank of Springfield. To the north, on Washington St., a group of pleasant homes had sprung up. Directly south, across Calhoun

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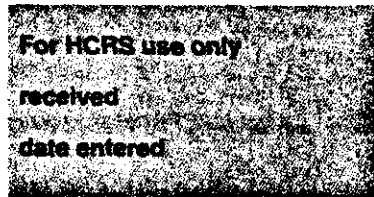
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Street, lay Drury College, founded in 1873. Thus, the Bentley House was built in a prime location. Today it lies in a small enclave of older buildings which are somewhat protected by their proximity to large institutions. Drury College is a buffer on the south, Commercial Street on the north and Cox Medical Center on the west. To the east, the Bentley House has as neighbors a large group of more modest homes.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 1892

Builder/Architect W.F. Hackney, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bentley House is significant as a fine regional example of the Queen Anne style of architecture, as the home of J.G.F. Bentley a prominent southwest Missouri citizen, and as the work of Kansas City Architect W.F. Hackney.

As architecture, the Bentley House is a good example of what Mary Mix Foley has termed the "Picturesque villa", an expression of the aggressive self-confident thrust that gave Victorian architecture its originality and vitality. The free open planning, large windows, embracing verandas, gables and towers of the villa type are, according to Foley, unique to America and express living patterns totally different from those of earlier, more stringent times.¹ This house is a restrained expression of the Queen Anne phase of the Picturesque Villa tradition, with classical detailing being employed instead of the more exuberant and bizarre Eastlake embellishment. The half-timbered effects are in keeping with the Jacobethan sources which Shaw and others tapped in launching the Queen Anne movement, but the Bentley house is scarcely a period reconstruction. It falls squarely into that tradition of Victoria era villas which, as Foley noted, are a distinctive American type.

Bentley House was, from the time of its construction, one of the showplaces of Springfield. Its intriguing design, unique color and lavish interior have always aroused interest.² No comparable home of the period remains in Springfield. The Keet-McElhaney home on Walnut Street dates back to the same time, but it was not designed as a unit and is in a bad state of repair. Other homes from that era of conspicuous consumption have given way to parking lot progress.

The late O.H. Tucker, A.I.A., was one of the first Springfieldians to appreciate Bentley House, at a time when "Victorian" was an epithet, and when "Queen Anne" was only a monarch. A keen preservationist, he dedicated himself to bring the house to the attention of others besides life-long Springfieldians. A letter to Mr. Tucker from Buford L. Pickens, formerly of the School of Architecture, Washington University, St. Louis, states with regard to Bentley House, "You have a gem which is well worth restoring and should be on the National Register."³

The house was constructed by J.F.G. Bentley, a schoolteacher with entrepreneurial talent, who came to Missouri from Sharon Center, Ohio shortly after the Civil War. He and his wife, the former Tryphena Crane, settled in the hamlet of Ash Grove, northwest of Springfield, where he opened the "Lightning Cash" emporium in partnership with his brother-in-law, Warren Crane. Four years after his arrival, in 1873, he founded the Bank of Ash Grove in partnership with J.C. Perryman. In 1882, he moved to the metropolis of Springfield with his family (sons Elwyn and Frank). He quickly became active in the business and financial community, serving as the president of the Bank of Springfield (Commercial Street at Jefferson Avenue), treasurer of the Metropolitan Street Railway and as Director of the National Loan and Investment Association. He retained his holdings in Ash Grove.⁴

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Bentley's financial success in Springfield was probably due, not only to his business acumen, but to the fact that he had accumulated capital funds at a time when the city was growing rapidly, with the coming of the Frisco Railroad -- Springfield's first -- to Commercial Street. The house remained in the Bentley family until 1964, after which it was sold to Drury College.

While Bentley was not important outside this region, he was an important and respected figure in the financial circles of Southwest Missouri. His life style, as echoed in the house, is of interest to many in the Ozarks, as shown by the fact the Museum averages more than 1,000 visitors a month. Bentley House was designed by W.F. Hackney (1854-1899), an architect who was reared in Springfield, trained in Chicago and practiced in Kansas City. Like his fellows of the day, Hackney was an eclectic---among his known buildings are, besides Bentley House, (Queen Anne, 1892), The Public Library, Kansas City (Second Renaissance Revival, 1895) and Senior High School, Springfield (Richardsonian Romanesque, 1896). Hackney also worked on the Des Moines, Iowa, State House before coming to Kansas City in 1887.⁵ Bentley House may be taken as indicative of the pretensions of the area's nouveaux riche, but it also makes a forceful statement of the individualism of the late 19th century. Its deep red color, while lending unity to the various forms and materials, is in stark contrast to its pristine white neighbors.

To sum up, the Bentley House has historical significance for several reasons. It has always been a landmark of interest to natives of this area. Its size and opulence are indicative of the profits earned and spent by many who went West with the railroads after the Civil War. In Springfield, its style and color bespeak a certain individualism. Moreover, it was probably the first Queen Anne style home to be built in Springfield, and it may well be one of the only two such houses to survive in the city.

The Bentley House has been favored by good fortune in its owners. Members of the Bentley family resided in the home in 1964, and in 1965 it was purchased by Drury College. The college was thoughtful in its stewardship, and a lease to the Museum of the Ozarks in 1977 has opened the door to funds for restoration and preservation.

Since Drury College is a private institution, technically the ownership of the Bentley House is private. However, the 1977 lease was set for 99 years at \$1.00 a year, with the hope that eventually the City of Springfield or the County of Greene might acquire it for a regional museum, the use to which it is now being put.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mary Mix Foley, The American House (New York, et al.: Harper and Row, 1980) pp. 147,163,172,175,178,179.

2. Warren, M.A., "The Bentley House," unpublished seminar paper, Southwest Missouri State College, 1971, pp. 5-6, quoting "an 1892 Springfield newspaper." May be found in the files of the Historic Site Board on Bentley House. They are located in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 830 Booneville, Springfield, Missouri 65802.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Foley, Mary Mix. The American House. New York, et al.: Harper and Row, 1980.
2. Holcomb, Return I. History of Greene County, Missouri. St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883. Available in the Isabel Shepard Room of the Main Library of Springfield-Greene County, 397 E Central, Springfield, Missouri, 65802.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .875 acres

Quadrangle name Springfield, Missouri

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	4	7	4	7	1	0	4	1	1	9	3	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

All of lots 13 and 14 of the Ozark Land Company Addition, Springfield, Greene County, Missouri.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Mary Newland Clary

organization Historic Sites Board, Springfield, MO date June 23, 1980

street & number 2224 Edgewater telephone 417-881-6241

city or town Springfield, state Missouri 65804

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Director, Department of Natural Resources And
title State Historic Preservation Officer date

For HCERS 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

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3. Pickens, Buford L. Letter to the late O.H. Tucker, A.I.A., dated December 9, 1975. A folder of Tucker's correspondence concerning Bentley House may be found in the Historic Site Board's files. These are maintained in the Office of the City Clerk, Springfield, as mentioned above.

4. Warren, M.A., "The Bentley House," passim.

5. Information on Hackney from conversation with George Ehrlich, author of Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, the Historic Kansas City Foundation, 1979. He obtained it from a biographical dictionary of deceased architects. Hackney was founder of the Kansas City chapter of the A.I.A. and served as its first president in 1890. Other information from Mrs. Ora Engle, niece of the architect, 819 East Walnut, Springfield, Missouri. Material on Senior High from Dick Grosenbaugh, Springfield Public Schools System, 940 North Jefferson, Springfield, Missouri, 65802. Interviews with Mr. Ehrlich and Mrs. Engle took place in June, 1980.

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2. Missouri State Historical Society
1980
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

state

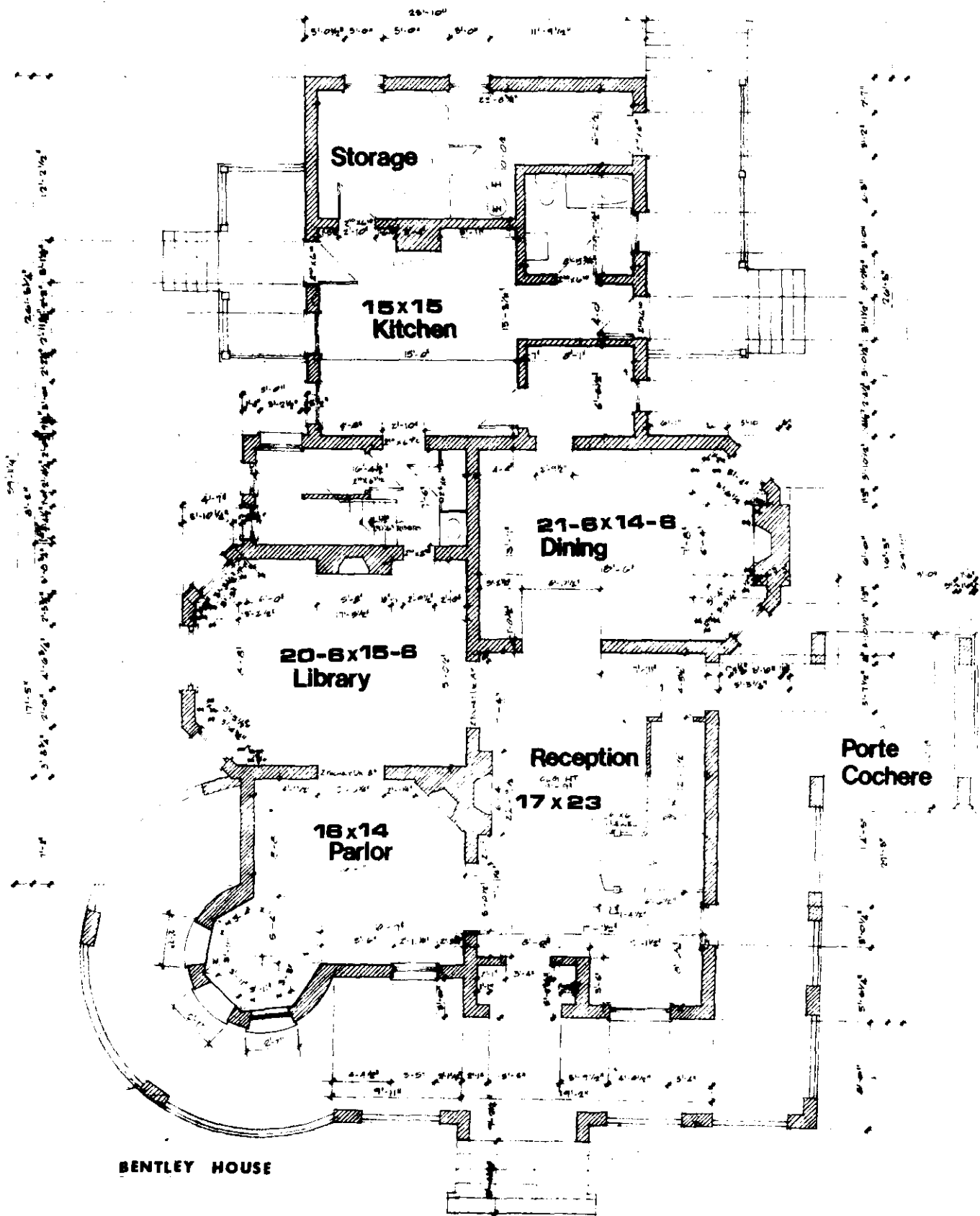
Item Number 11

Page 1

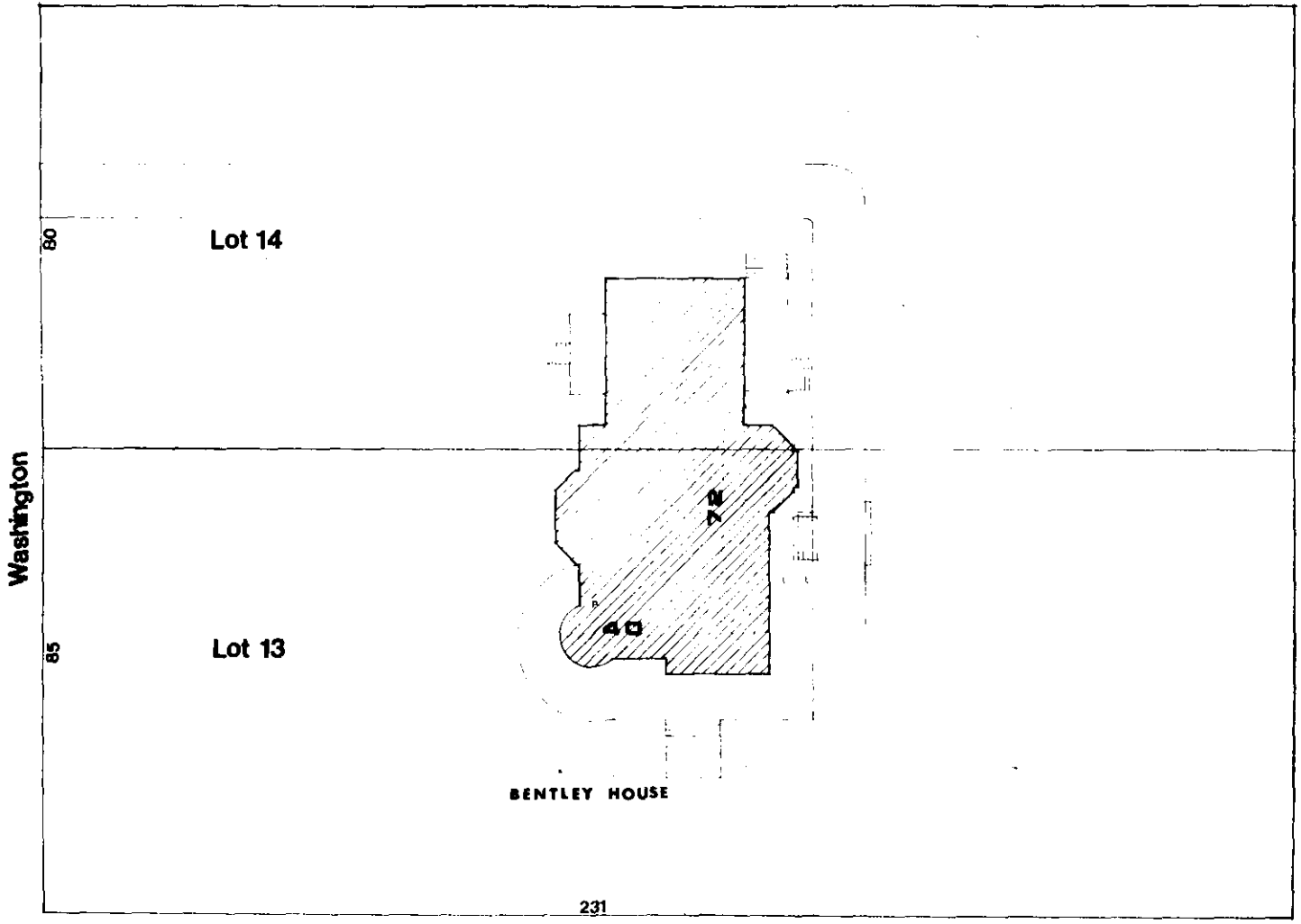
2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City

July 22, 1980

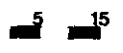
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Missouri 65102



BENTLEY HOUSE



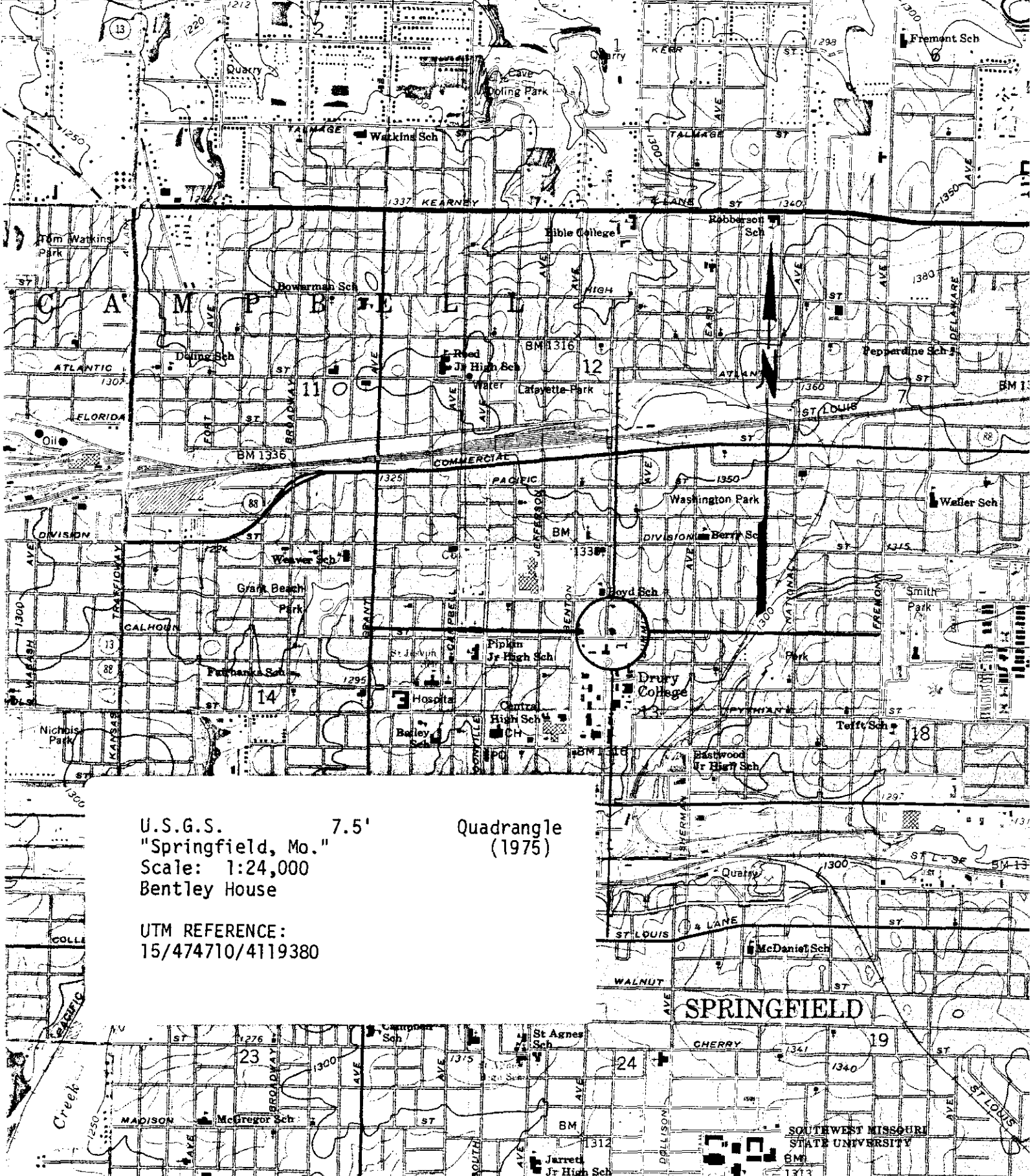
SITE PLAN



Calhoun

SPRINGFIELD
MISSOURI
7.5 MINUTE

7358 IV SE BOLIVAR 27 MI. GLIDEWELL 4 MI. 473
474 17'30" 270 000 FEET 475
R. 22 W. R. 21 W. 476 32 MI. TO MO. 32 FAIR GROVE 13 MI.



U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle
"Springfield, Mo." (1975)
Scale: 1:24,000
Bentley House

UTM REFERENCE:
15/474710/4119380

SPRINGFIELD

SOUTHWEST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY

#1 of 11

Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
Springfield, Missouri

Photographer: Gerald Brickner
March 7, 1977

Neg. Loc.: City Hall.
Historic Site Review Board
830 Boonville Avenue
Springfield, Missouri

South facade.

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BENTLEY
HOUSE

DRURY COLLEGE
ADMISSIONS

2 of 11

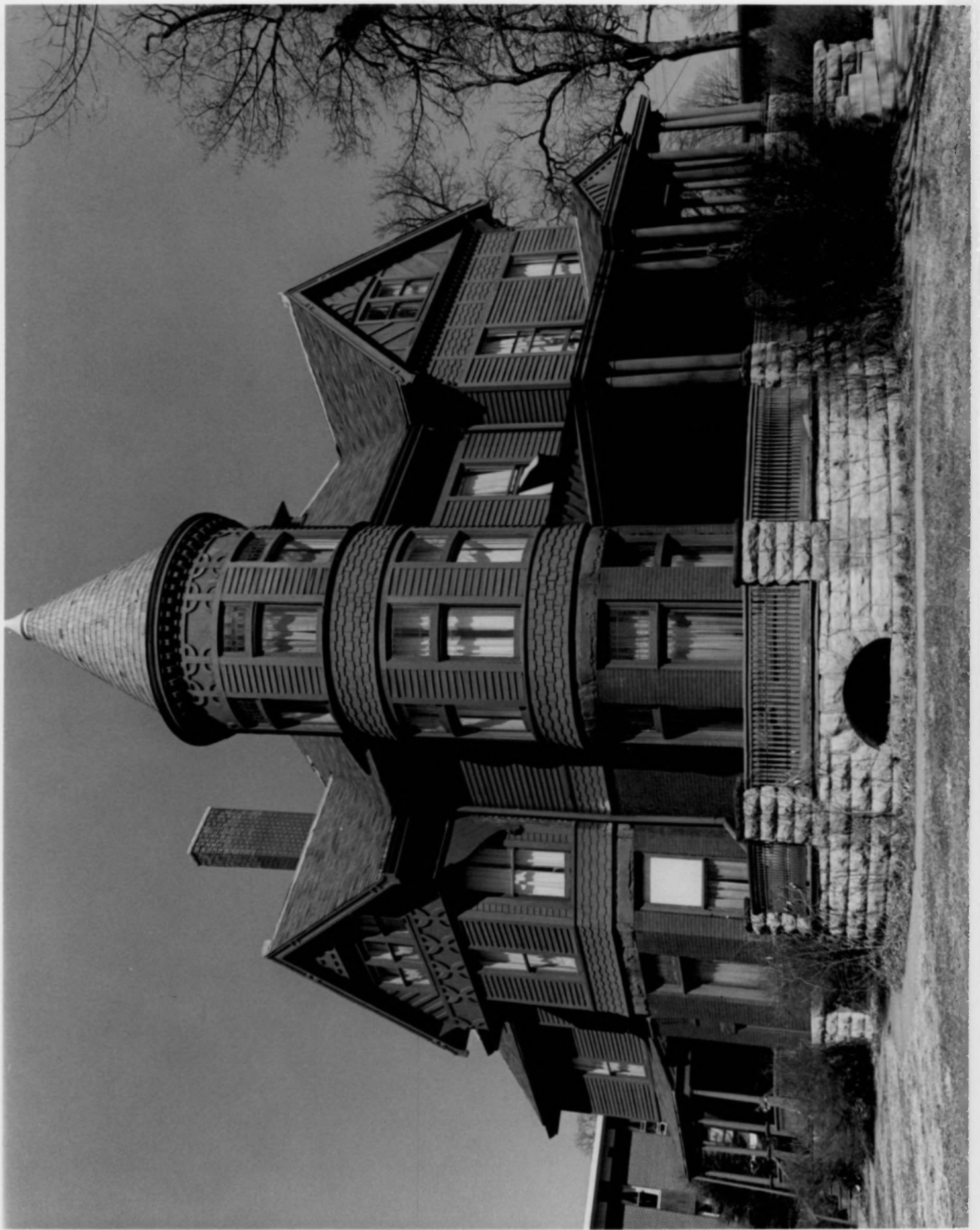
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South and west facades.

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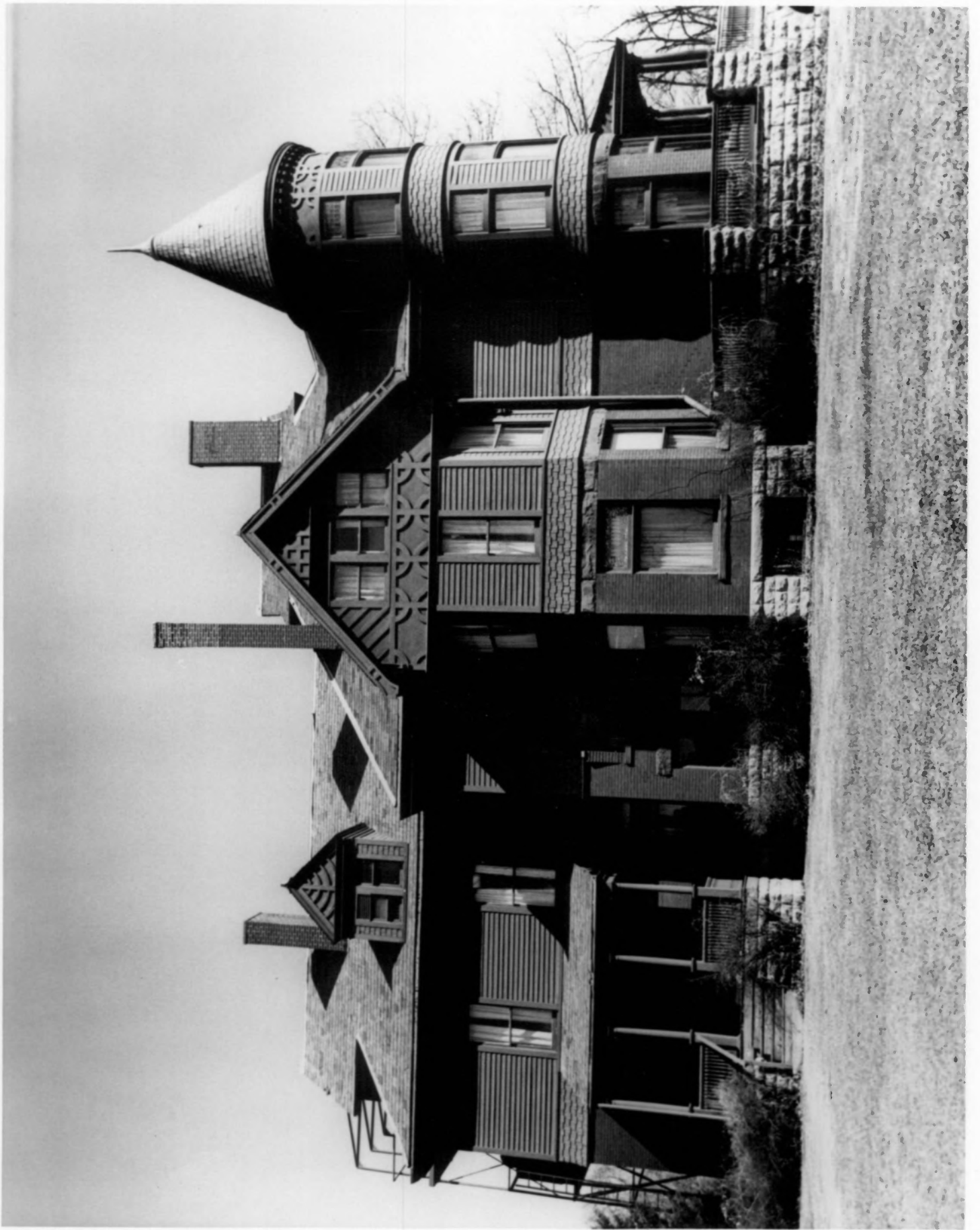
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Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
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West facade.



#4 of 11

Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
Springfield, Missouri

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March 7, 1977

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Historic Site Review Board
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East facade with porte-cochere.

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#5 of 11

Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
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Front entrance.

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Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
Springfield, Missouri
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Main stairwell, showing coffered ceiling, parquet floor and wainscoting.

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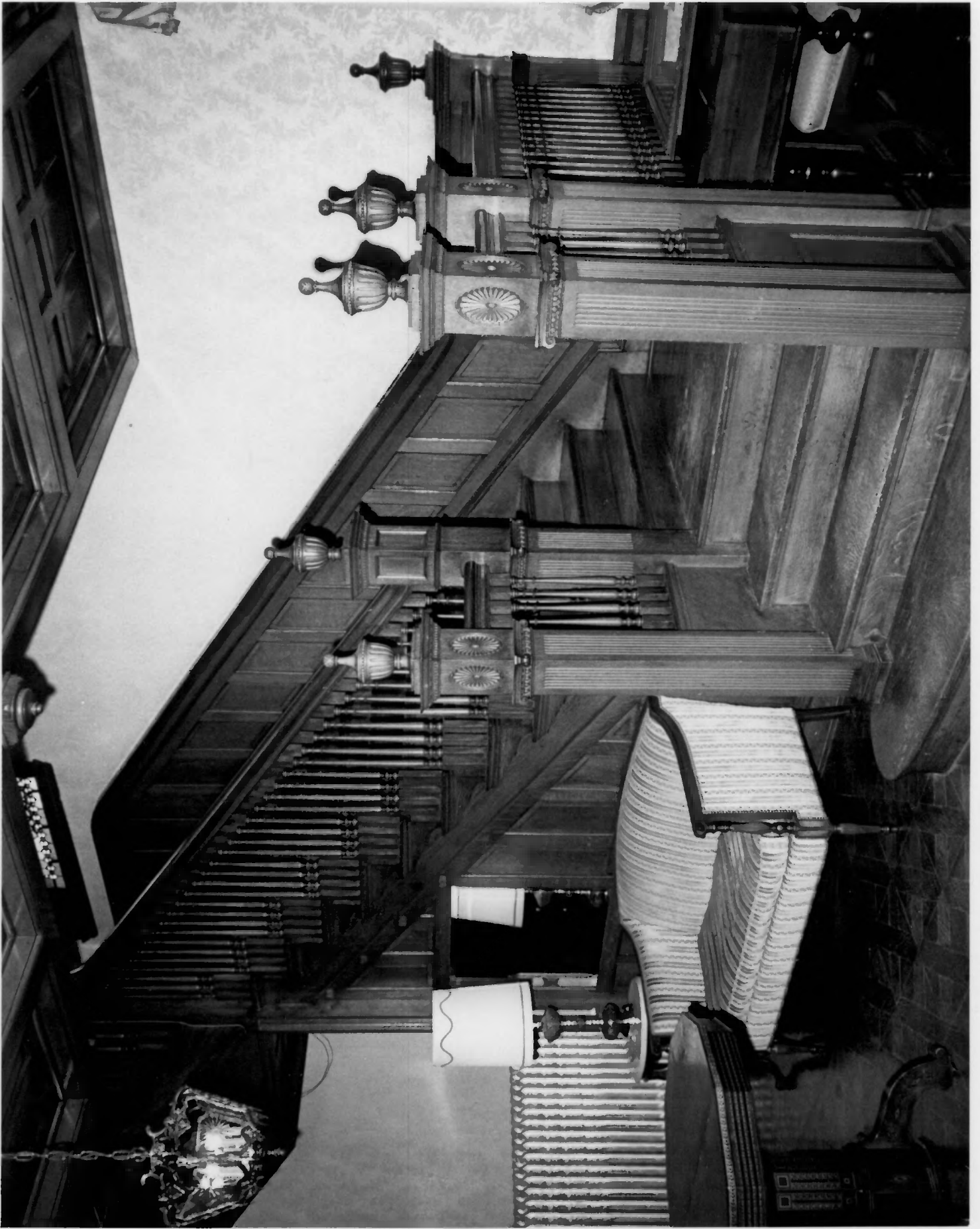
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603 East Calhoun
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Carved mantle in entrance hall.



MEMORIAL TO THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FOR THE
REPAIRS TO THE
FIREPLACE
IN THE
CITY OF BOSTON
IN THE
YEAR 1850

#8 of 11

Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
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View of hall ceiling.

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Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
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March 7, 1977

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View of front parlor, showing nook created
by the tower..

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#10 of 11

Bentley House
603 East Calhoun
Springfield, Missouri

Photographer: Gerald Brickner
March 7, 1977

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Historic Site Review Board
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View of library, showing cherry cabinet,
tiled fireplace and parquet floor.

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#11 of 11

Bentley House
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Springfield, Missouri
Photographer: Gerald Brickner
March 7, 1977

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View of west wall of dining room, showing
cherry cabinet, with leaded glass, parquet
floor and walnut wainscoting.

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