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A

PRELIMINARY STUDY
for

BRINGHURST HOUSE

Germantown, Pennsylvania

10

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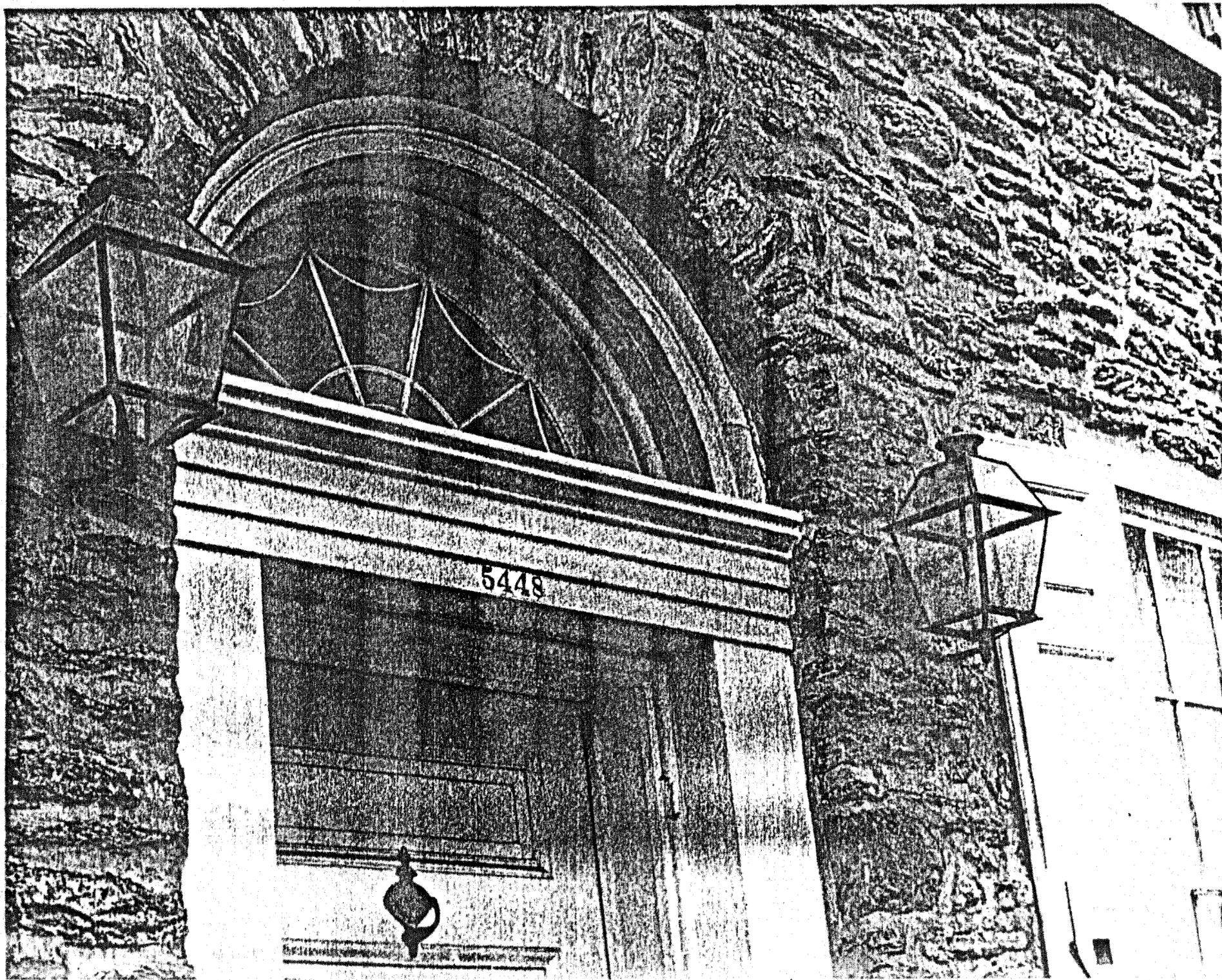


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The purpose and background of the study

This study is a result of an offer by the Germantown Savings and Loan Association to donate to the National Park Service the lot and historic property known as the Bringham House or 5448 Germantown Avenue. This house is located on Germantown Avenue in Germantown, Pennsylvania. It is immediately adjacent to and adjoins the more famous Deshler-Morris House which is already owned and administered by Independence National Historical Park in cooperation with the Germantown Historical Society. The study team has endeavored in the following pages to give a brief history of the property, to examine its potential and its liabilities and provide a series of possible alternative possibilities the National Park Service could undertake.

Summary

It is the studied recommendation of the planning team that alternative Number 3a be recommended to the Superintendent, Regional Director, and Secretary for implementation. This alternative calls for National Park Service acceptance of the Bringham House. The front 18th century portion of the house to be utilized for Visitor Service activities, while the rear 19th century portion would be utilized for quarters. These quarters would initially be occupied by the Germantown Historical Society caretaker, and then subsequently by Park personnel. The planning team would also recommend that ultimately the facade and the roofline of the Bringham House be restored to its original 18th century appearance.

It might also be noted that during the restoration of the Deshler-Morris House, a period of perhaps two years, the historic furnishings will have to be removed. They could be displayed or stored in the Bringham House next door.

The Bringhurst House

5448 Germantown Avenue

The site of the Bringhurst house was in the hands of the family as early as 1725. Portions of the present building may date from as early as 1752, though the main house is first described in 1797 as being "of stone, two stories high" when it appeared as part of the inventory of the estate of George Bringhurst, "saddle tree maker". George Bringhurst and his numerous relatives, both in Germantown and Philadelphia, were coach and wagon builders, or in related trades. For instance, Jefferson used a member of the "in town" family to keep his riding chair in repair; while Washington ordered an elaborate coach from a Germantown relative. We cannot say whether George, as saddle tree maker, had any glamorous brushes with the founding fathers.

His 1797 estate inventory has survived and lists Windsor chairs, a dining table, a looking glass, and many other things necessary for a well-appointed household. His estate was valued at the time of his death at £284; or as a relative figure only - about \$7000.00 in purchasing power today.

George Bringhurst left his property to his five children who kept it until 1834, when they sold it to Susannah Mason, widow of Christopher Mason. Mrs. Mason left it to her nephew, James Ashmead, when she died in 1844; so it was known until the early part of this century as an Ashmead house.

In 1908 it was purchased by Elliston Perot Morris, father of the donor of the Deshler-Morris house. Eventually, it was sold to the bank.

The house should not be confused--as it frequently is--with "The Bringhurst Big House," home of John Bringhurst, coach builder. The "Big House" at 5219 Germantown Avenue was on the opposite side of the street some distance away, and has recently been demolished.

Since the Washingtons were familiar figures in Germantown during their two summer stays at the Deshler-Morris house, it is inconceivable that they would not have known their next-door neighbors: George Bringhurst, his wife, and their children, Ann, William, Mary, Clement and Robert.

RESOURCE OF THE AREA

The old Brighthurst House, 5448 Germantown Avenue, in Northwest Philadelphia is a two and one-half story stone house which belonged to the Brighthurst family as early as 1725. Portions of the present structure date as early as 1752, though dated records of the house date back only to 1797. The house lies across from historic Market Square and immediately next door to the Deshler-Morris House presently operated by the Germantown Historical Society in cooperation with the National Park Service.

Due to the heavy concentration of industry and related services, access to Philadelphia and surrounding areas is very good. The Market Square area, approximately six miles from center city, can be reached by a variety of excellent transportation facilities. Principal traffic routes, Philadelphia and New Jersey Turnpikes, feed directly into Germantown via U.S. and State Highways. Other sources of transportation such as trolley and speed line provide easy access for local and non-local visitors.

SURROUNDING AND EXISTING USE

Germantown originally started as a separate town relying on local businesses, taverns, shops, churches, etc.. Schools were established during the latter part of the eighteenth century. When comparing the historic origins of Philadelphia and Germantown, Germantown could be considered a microcosm of Philadelphia.

At present, many homes within the historical district illustrate the Germanic character of the early town, the diversity of occupations of its citizens, and the Americanization of the community. Some fifty eighteenth and early nineteenth century houses along Germantown Avenue form a remarkable inheritance of the past, these houses exemplify the Germantown influence circa 1790.

Germantown is characteristic of the Revolutionary period with typical landscape and established historic landmarks, all within a National Historical District.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Originally, Germantown consisted primarily of middle class citizens residing in a long line of houses arranged on both sides of the Germantown Avenue (then referred to as Germantown Road). The road was the towns main street and the arterial highway leading Northwest from Philadelphia.

Late in the eighteenth century (following the Germanic influx) Germantown reached its peak in education, religion and industry. Due to its cool climate, the area became a summer retreat for many political figures and prominent businessmen who established summer homes, thus, increasing the social and economic status of the area. It has been during the last thirty years that Germantown (speaking primarily of areas on either side of Germantown Avenue) has become an area of mixed socio/economic groups. Old family residences unoccupied over the years, and too large for present day families, have deteriorated. Resulting in large low-income housing units.

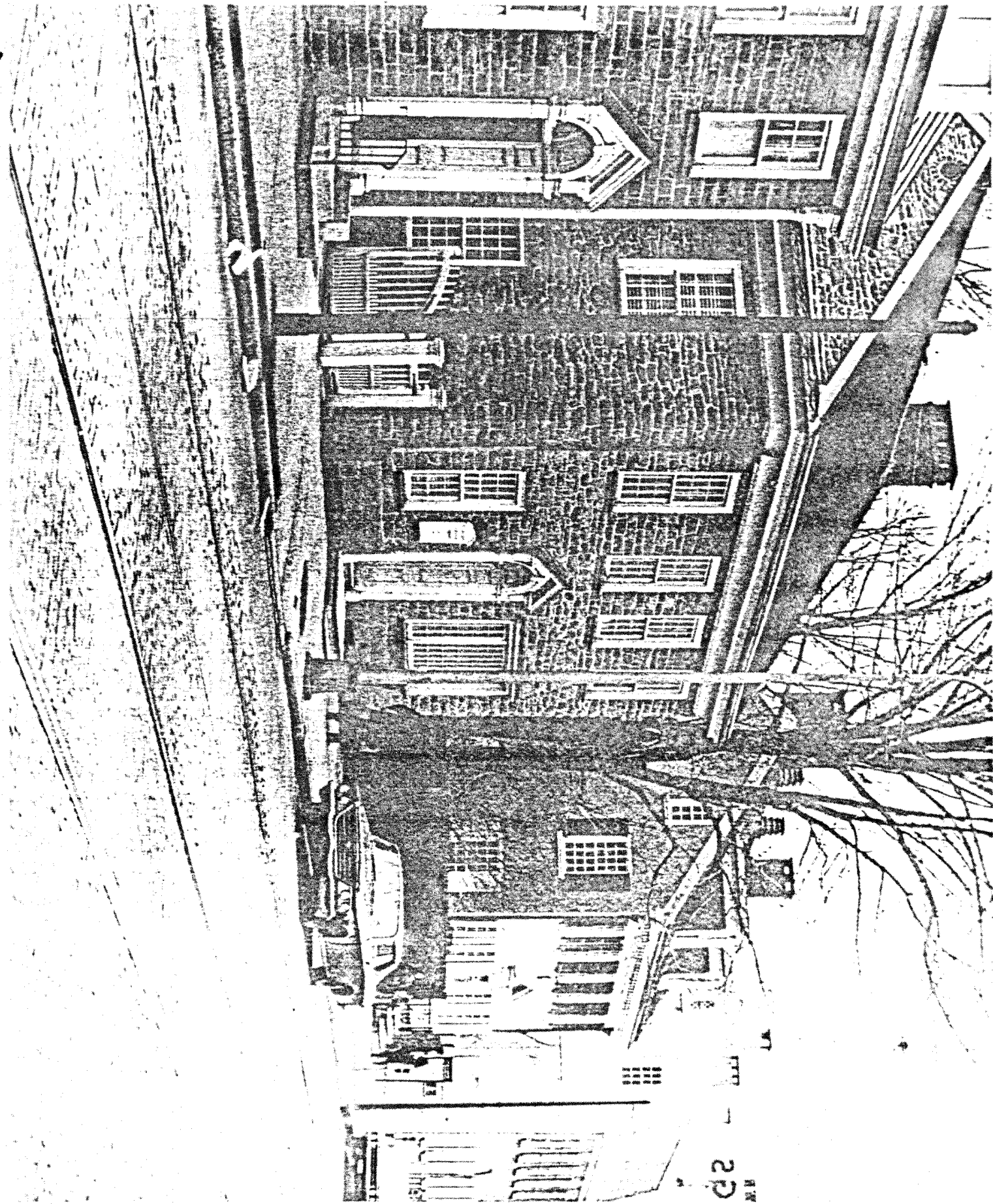
Today, there are five financial institutions, a church and numerous professional businesses located around the historic Market Square of Germantown. The majority of the people on the Square are members of the Germantown Historical Society and have concentrated their efforts on preservation and restoration.

In its present state, the exterior and interior of the Old Brighthurst House is very clean and in sound condition.

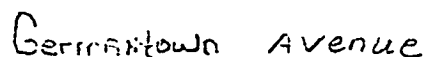
The exterior of the building consists of two types of construction. The original shell of 2½ stories is made of stone with window panes and shutters of the 18th century. The brick wing at the rear of the house is a later addition which can be substantiated by the differences in foundations. Window panes and shutters located in this part of the structure are of a later period.

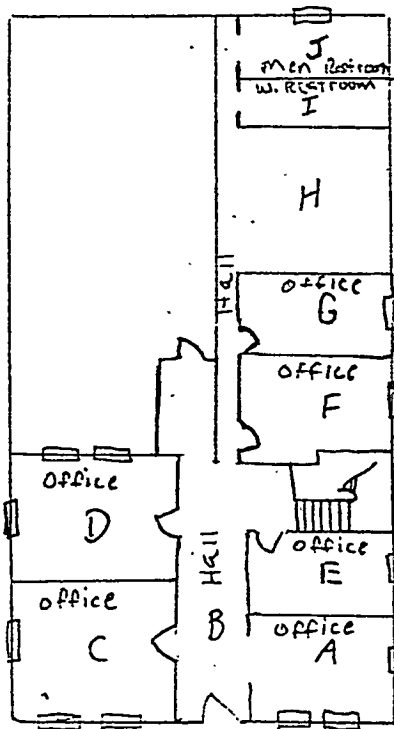
Since the house has been renovated and used for offices, all rooms on the lower floors are carpeted, except for the restrooms which have new white tile floors. Two of the front offices are completely paneled in wood, the remaining offices newly painted. Each window in both structures has print drapery or venetian blinds. Most of the surviving interior doors have four or six panes typical of 18th century. The house is entirely heated by steam, each room with a modern radiator.

The second floor is similar to the first in that the overall condition and furnishings are in excellent shape. Two of the larger rooms have spacious closed fireplaces. Part of a closet in the added rear wing has been converted and equipped with small appliances (stove, refrigerator and sink). All appliances are part of the donation.



7. The east side of Germantown Avenue facing Germantown Square shows the row of historic houses and the setting of this area. The two houses on the right are the Bringhurst property and the Dashler-Morris House respectively.

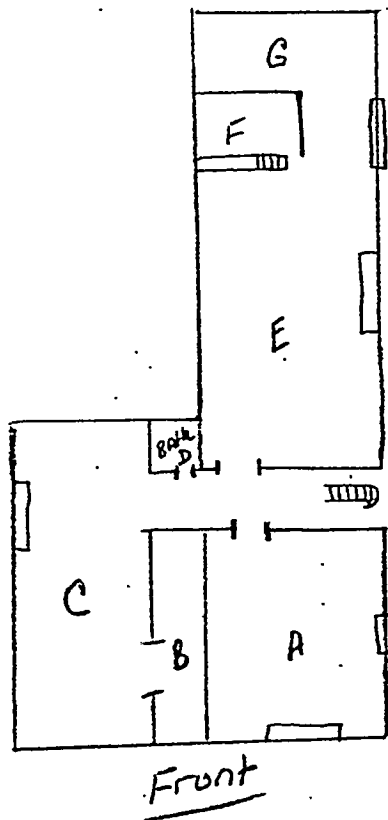




1st Floor

FRONT

- A. 16' X 6' Carpeting (gold/green) with yellow walls and green ceiling; two painted windows w/print drapes, one chandelier, and wall heater.
- B. Hall Turquoise carpet w/yellow walls and green ceiling; two chandeliers.
- C. 13½ X 13½' Red carpet w/wood paneling and white ceiling; three painted windows w/print drapes, one chandelier, three heat lamps, and wall heater.
- D. Same as C except only two painted windows.
- E. 9' X 11' Green carpet w/ yellow walls and green ceiling; one window w/print drapes, one floor to ceiling book shelf (7 shelves), and one chandelier???
- F. 10½ X 10½ Green carpet w/yellow walls and green ceiling; one window w/print drapes, one modern ceiling lamp, one floor to ceiling bookshelf w/lock.
- G. Same as F except no bookshelf.
- H. Carpet green w/yellow walls; one door to basement, one door to linen closet (originally door to upstairs).
- I. White tile floors w/orange walls; water basen w/counter and toilet.
- J. Same as I
- K. 34' X 4' Carpeting w/yellow walls and green ceiling; two windows w/curtain rods and curtains; one drinking fountain.



2nd Floor

- A. 13' X 18½' Carpeting , one chandelier, one fireplace and printed drapes.
- B. 6' X 19' Carpeting, one chandelier and printed drapes
- C. 14' X 25' Carpeting w/fireplace, entire room paneled, and printed drapes
- D. 6½' X 8' Carpeting, wood paneled and one chandelier
- E. 13½' X 21' Wood floor with closet space (kitchen equipment)
- F. 4' X 7' Bath
- G. 10½' X 13' Wood floor

Alternative Number 1 is the refusal of the
offer to accept Bringhurst property

This alternative would obviously cost the least in monetary terms of all the alternatives put forth. However, over the long term, it might be the most costly of the alternatives. Certainly, the National Park Service would be gambling with the future of the Deshler-Morris House. Any type of adverse use of the Bringhurst House would have very serious consequences on the Deshler-Morris property. The Bringhurst House, facing Germantown Square, is one of four historic houses which include the Deshler-Morris House. This row of houses provides a historic context and relevance for the Deshler-Morris House. The conversion of the Bringhurst House to any type of facility that would modify the facade in any major way, or worse, the elimination of the house altogether, would very seriously damage the historical value of not only Germantown Square, but the Deshler-Morris House itself. The team would not recommend this alternative. It does not believe the National Park Service can afford the risk. The present owner originally placed the property on the real estate market. They hoped to find a buyer or renter who would keep the property at its present level of maintenance and type of use. They were unsuccessful.

Operational and Development costs
of alternative Number 1

No cost.

Alternative Number 2 is to accept the Bringhurst House as a residence for a caretaker for the Deshler-Morris House

This alternative would be to use the entire Bringhurst House as a residence for caretaker personnel, either that retained by the Germantown Historical Society or National Park Service personnel.

When the Deshler-Morris House is restored to its 18th century appearance (FY 1975), the rear portion of the house, which was added in the 19th century, will be removed. This section of the house is currently occupied by a caretaker retained by the Germantown Historical Society. Obviously, the removal of this portion of the house will necessitate the moving of the caretaker. It should be pointed out that the word "caretaker" in this instance is somewhat of a misnomer. The family living in the quarters does no actual work on the property in the form of interpretation or custodial service. They simply occupy quarters as a form of security. This family could move next door into the Bringhurst House without major alterations to the house.

It is probable that, at some time in the future, it will be necessary for the National Park Service to assign at least one employee to the Deshler-Morris House on a full-time basis. This employee, as envisioned, would perform the duties of a general handyman and perhaps provide some interpretation.

The primary objection to this alternative would be that the Bringhurst House is a very large structure and would provide far more space than any normal family would require. Also, the rental rate would probably exceed an amount that the normal family could afford.

Operational and Development costs of alternative Number 2

Entire house as residence for caretaker personnel--furnished by the Germantown Historical Society.

I. OPERATING COST

(1) Staffing

0.15 M.Y. Maintenceman	\$ 1,600
0.05 M.Y. Painter	530
0.025 M.Y. Janitor	270
0.025 M.Y. Laborer	<u>200</u>

\$ 2,600

(2) Benefits and Other Supplemental Costs \$ 650

(3) Building and Utilities Cost

Fuel Oil	500
Water and Sewer	100
Maintenance Contract	500
Telephone	200
Electric	<u>1,000</u>

2,300

TOTAL OPERATING COST \$ 5,550

II. EQUIPMENT NONE

III. LAND ACQUISITION NONE

IV. DEVELOPMENT

1. Open Rear Staircase--Rebuild Stairs	\$ 5,500 *
2. Restore Front Facade	5,000 *
3. Restore Roof to 18th Century--Cover & Pitch	80,000 *
4. Audio-visual Design and Production	None
5. Exhibit Design and Production	None
6. Furnishings	<u>None</u>
	90,500

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS

* Includes Planning

Alternate Operational and Development costs
of alternative Number 2

Entire house as residence for caretaker personnel. A National Park Service employee (Park Technician) will reside here to provide security plus do maintenance, janitorial, laborer, duties at both the Bringhurst and Deshler-Morris Houses.

I. OPERATING COST

(1) Staffing

1.0 M.Y. Park Technician	\$ 7,700
0.05 M.Y. Painter	<u>500</u>

\$ 8,200

(2) Benefits and Other Supplemental Costs 2,050

(3) Building and Utilities Cost

Fuel Oil	500
Water and Sewer	100
Electric	1,000
Maintenance Contract	500
Telephone	<u>200</u>

2,300

TOTAL OPERATING COST \$12,550

II. EQUIPMENT NONE

III. LAND ACQUISITION NONE

IV. DEVELOPMENT

1. Open Rear Staircase--Rebuild Stairs	\$ 5,500 *
2. Restore Front Facade	5,000 *
3. Restore Roof to 18th Century--Cover & Pitch	80,000 *
4. Audio-visual Design and Production	None
5. Exhibit Design and Production	None
6. Furnishings	<u>None</u> 90,500

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS

* Includes Planning

Alternative Number 3a proposes that the Bringham House be acquired to provide a visitor use facility and a caretaker's residence.

This alternative recommends that the front part of this two-story house, of 18th century construction, be employed as a visitor use facility, and that the rear portion, the 19th century addition, be used as living quarters.

The first floor front includes a central hallway with two rooms on either side and a stairway in the rear. The second story includes two rooms separated by a central hallway. This aforementioned area is proposed for visitor use to include an information desk, sales outlet (publications and interpretive items), exhibit space (graphics, audio and visual techniques), and an office. Here is an opportunity to provide the visitor with additional information that he or she would not necessarily (or ordinarily) receive by viewing the Deshler-Morris House alone. There would be less emphasis on furnishings and more on the significant events and important personages who were involved with the House and the historic period. Exhibits in varied formats would furnish data on the Deshler, Franks, Perots, and Morris families who occupied the Deshler-Morris House during the late 18th century and early 19th century; on President Washington's residence in 1793 and 1794, the "summer White House", cabinet meetings; on the Battle of Germantown and General Howe's association with the House; and the socio-economic story (theme) of Germantown, 1775 to 1810.

The rear first and second floors will provide ample space for living quarters for a caretaker or Park Technician.

The proposal to use the front part of the building as an interpretive operation lacks rest room facilities. Such would have to be installed within the available space.

Alternative Number 3b is similar to proposal 3a except for the arrangement.

This alternative provides that the first floor front and rear be employed as a facility for interpretive activities and visitor use. The entire second story would be used as living quarters.

The front lower story includes a central hallway with two rooms on each side and a staircase to the rear. The hallway leads into the 19th century addition which has two rooms, an open area, and two rest rooms to the rear.

One set of rooms off the central hallway could serve as an information and sales area and an office. The back room is suitable for an office. The other set of rooms and those in the addition would accommodate interpretive exhibits in varied formats. A rest room area is available. There would be no need or expense to install such facilities. It may be determined that an audio-visual presentation cannot be planned for the proposed interpretive program since the rooms on the first floor are limited in size and would not accommodate this facility.

The second floor is more than adequate for living quarters. In fact it may be considered large for this facility. However, lack of easy access without going through the visitor use area would be a problem. For this proposal, the visitor use and residence facilities would be located on separate floor levels.

The uses under this alternative would be the same as those proposed under alternative 3a.

Estimated Operational and Development costs
of alternate Numbers 3a and 3b

Half of the building for visitor use. Half of the building for quarters.

Quarters to be occupied by a Germantown Historical Society caretaker. Interpretative activities to be fully handled by the Germantown Historical Society. Occupant of the quarters will serve as security for the building plus do maintenance, janitorial and laborer duties.

I. OPERATING COST

(1) Staffing

0.15 M.Y. Maintenance man	\$ 1,600
0.05 M.Y. Painter	530
0.025 M.Y. Janitor	270
0.025 M.Y. Laborer	<u>200</u>

\$2,600

(2) Benefits and Other Supplemental Cost \$ 650

(3) Building and Utilities Cost

Fuel Oil	\$ 500
Water and Sewer	100
Electric	2,500
Maintenance Contract	500
Telephone	<u>200</u>

\$3,800

TOTAL OPERATING COST \$7,050

II. EQUIPMENT

1. Information-Sales Desk	\$ 500
2. Office Equipment (1 office space)	500
3. Lounge Chairs	<u>500</u>

\$1,500

III. LAND ACQUISITION NONE

IV. DEVELOPMENT

1. Open Rear Staircase--Rebuild Stairs	\$ 5,500 *
2. Restore Front Facade	5,000 *
3. Restore Roof to 18th Century--Cover & Pitch	80,000 *
4. Audio-visual Design and Production	30,000 *
5. Exhibit Design and Production	35,000 *
6. Furnishings	NONE
	<u>\$155,500 *</u>

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS

* Includes Planning .

Note: If installation of a restroom is required on the first floor. 3,500 *

Total Development \$159,000

Estimated Alternate Operational and Development costs
of alternative Numbers 3a and 3b

Half of the building for visitor use. Half of the building for living quarters.

Quarters to be occupied by Germantown Historical Society caretaker or National Park Service employee (Park Technician). Occupant of the quarters will serve as security for the building plus do maintenance, janitorial and laborer duties. NPS employee would assist in interpretative activities.

I. OPERATING COST

(1) Staffing

2.3 M.Y. Park Technician (GS-5)	\$17,700
0.05 M.Y. Painter	<u>500</u>
	\$18,200

(2) Benefits and Other Supplemental Cost \$ 4,550

(3) Building and Utilities Cost

Fuel Oil	\$ 500
Water and Sewer	100
Electric	2,500
Maintenance Contract	500
Telephone	<u>200</u>
	\$3,800

TOTAL OPERATING COST \$26,550

II. EQUIPMENT

1. Information-Sales Desk	\$ 500
2. Office Equipment (1 office space)	500
3. Lounge Chairs	<u>500</u>

TOTAL EQUIPMENT \$1,500

III. LAND ACQUISITION NONE

IV. DEVELOPMENT

1. Open Rear Staircase--Rebuild Stairs	\$ 5,500 *
2. Restore Front Facade	5,000 *
3. Restore Roof to 18th Century--Cover & Pitch	80,000 *
4. Audio-visual Design and Production	30,000 *
5. Exhibit Design and Production	35,000 *
6. Furnishings	NONE
	<u>\$155,500 *</u>

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS

* Includes Planning

Note: If installation of a restroom on the first floor is required.

3,500 *

Total Development

\$159,000

Alternative Number 4 provides for using the entire building for visitor services and administrative purposes.

The interior of the Bringham House could be immediately occupied due to its excellent condition. Improvements which have been added such as carpeting and drapes through the building, special lighting features, a chandelier in each room, window units and central air conditioning, water fountains, combined stove-refrigerator-sink, and other improvements will remain. The ground floor and second floor are both equipped with rest room facilities.

The 6- $\frac{1}{2}$ ' x 12- $\frac{1}{2}$ ' space on the right when entering the building could be used as an information desk-sales center area. It would have an attractive information/sales desk complete with orientation aids, publications, and sales items. The building would function as the information-orientation center for the Bringham House, the Deshler-Morris House next door, and historical interpretation of Germantown and these buildings. Use of audio-visuals in one room and furnishings, exhibits, and other selective interpretive activities in some of the other rooms would provide effective interpretation.

Independence National Historical Park provides offices for six Denver Service Center staff who are permanently duty station located here. The spaces they now occupy will be needed for increased park staffing and operations in the future. The Bringham House could provide outstanding Administrative Offices for these people and two large rooms on the second floor are ideal for space needed for their architectural drafting boards, equipment, etc. The Park operating expenses of this building would be shared by the Denver Service Center operating funds.

In making a recommendation to use the entire building for Administrative Offices and Visitor Interpretative Activities, one major problem is present. No living quarters would be provided for a caretaker who also serves as security for the building. A caretaker does presently live in the Deshler-Morris House; however, the living portion of that house is programmed for removal in fiscal year 1975.

Estimated Operational and Development Costs
of alternative Number 4

The building for visitor use (operated by Park staff) and Administrative Office use. (Example: occupied by the Denver Service Center staff who are duty-station located in Philadelphia.

I. OPERATING COST

(1) Staffing

2.3 M.Y. Park Technician (GS-5)	\$17,700
0.15 M.Y. Maintencenceman	1,600
0.05 M.Y. Painter	530
0.025 M.Y. Janitor.	270
0.025 M.Y. Laborer	200
	<u>\$20,300</u>

(2) Benefits and Other Supplemental Cost 6,000

(3) Building and Utilities Cost

Half of fuel oil	250
Half of water and sewer	50
Half of electric	1,200
Half of maintenance contract	250
1/10 of janitorial contract	650
Telephone	200

Note: The other portion of these costs paid out of the Denver Service Center operating funds

Total Building and Utility Cost	<u>2,600</u>
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TOTAL OPERATING COST	\$28,900
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II EQUIPMENT

(1) Information - Sales Desk	500
(2) Office equipment (one office space)	500
(3) Lounge chairs	500
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	<u>1,500</u>

III LAND ACQUISITION	None
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IV. DEVELOPMENT

1. Open Rear Staircase--Rebuild Stairs	\$ 5,500 *
2. Restore Front Facade	5,000 *
3. Restore Roof to 18th Century--Cover & Pitch	80,000 *
4. Audio-visual Design and Production	30,000 *
5. Exhibit Design and Production	35,000 *
6. Furnishings	NONE
	\$155,500 *

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS

* Includes Planning

Alternative Number 5 provides for the complete restoration of the building as a Historic House.

The complete restoration of the Bringhurst house is very much a possibility; but something less than probable. In its present structurally sound state it represents 97-3/4% more than what the architects of Colonial Williamsburg had to work with for their major buildings.

Archaeologists "read" sites, while architects "read" walls; and with research the interior could be properly restored to its 18th century room arrangement. A happy circumstance in this regard is that 18th and 19th century renovators frequently re-utilized material; and so in the Bringhurst house we have surviving interior doors, a partial staircase, and the like, to guide the restorer. With so much intact, the structural restoration would present no great problem.

As to the restoration of the interior of the house to its probable 1793, 1794 appearance, we are fortunate to have "An Inventory of the Personal Estate of George Bringhurst, Set late of Germantown...." to assist us. Ideally, a house inventory should be a room-by-room listing; however, the Bringhurst inventory is a bulk account which falls into room lots by inference. It is always desirable to have as much of the original furnishings as possible to give period validity to a restoration. In Philadelphia and vicinity there are still branches of the Germantown Bringhurst family as possible sources of original or family-related 18th century furnishings.

The interpretive advantage of restoring the Bringhurst house to its end-of-the-18th century appearance as an historic house museum is that it epitomizes the on-going "American Dream": that hard work and the bounty of America will reap a sure reward. Here, cheek-by-jowl with the mansion of a merchant prince, we have an only slightly less elaborate home of an artisan. Thus, the two houses, as museums, would complement, rather than duplicate each other.

The primary disadvantages to this alternative are cost, no space for interpretation of total scene, and no living quarters for security.

Estimated Operational and Development Costs
of alternative Number 5

TOTAL RESTORATION

I. OPERATING COSTS

(1) Staffing

2.3 M.Y. Park Technician (GS-5)	\$17,696
1.2 M.Y. Janitor	9,450
0.5 M.Y. Maintenance man	5,350
0.5 M.Y. Painter	5,150
0.2 M.Y. Laborer	1,650
0.5 M.Y. Museum Technician (GS-7)	<u>4,760</u>

\$44,056

(2) Other Supplemental Costs

\$18,881

(3) Building and Utilities

Telephone	\$ 463
Fuel Oil	500
Water and Sewer	100
Electric	2,500
Maintenance Contracts	<u>500</u>

\$4,063

TOTAL OPERATING COSTS

\$67,000

II. EQUIPMENT

Information--Sales Desk	\$ 500
Office Equipment (1 office)	500
Lounge Chairs	<u>500</u>

\$ 1,500

III. LAND ACQUISITION

NONE

IV. DEVELOPMENT

Exterior and Interior Restoration	\$ 730,000 *
Furnishings	<u>200,000</u>
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	\$ 930,000

* Includes Planning

Methods of Conveyance

The Brighthurst property has been offered as a gift to the National Park Service at no cost. There appear to be two ways by which the National Park Service can acquire and accept the property.

1. It is the informal opinion of the Regional Solicitor that the National Park Service (Secretary of the Interior) may accept such property under the act that established Independence National Historical Park. It was by this method that the Dasher-Morris House was acquired by the National Park Service. (See attached opinion, Fort Mifflin.)
2. The Germantown Historical Society tentatively indicated they would accept and hold the property in trust until legislation could be passed by Congress to accept the property for the National Park Service.

Obviously, it would seem to be the best and most expedient course for the Secretary to accept the property outright.

FEB 28 1972

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park

From: Acting Regional Solicitor, Philadelphia

Subject: Donation of Fort Mifflin as part of Independence National Historical Park

The Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park, has asked for an informal opinion as to whether the park service may accept donated property (in this case Fort Mifflin) for inclusion within Independence National Historical Park, if the property has not been specifically designated for inclusion within the park under the Act establishing the park.

The Act of June 28, 1943, 62 Stat. 1061, as amended, 16 USC 407m-407s, authorizes the acquisition by donation, with donated funds, or by purchase, of certain properties for inclusion within Independence National Historical Park. However, section 2 of this act, 62 Stat. 1062, 16 USC 407o, provides that the Secretary of the Interior is further authorized:

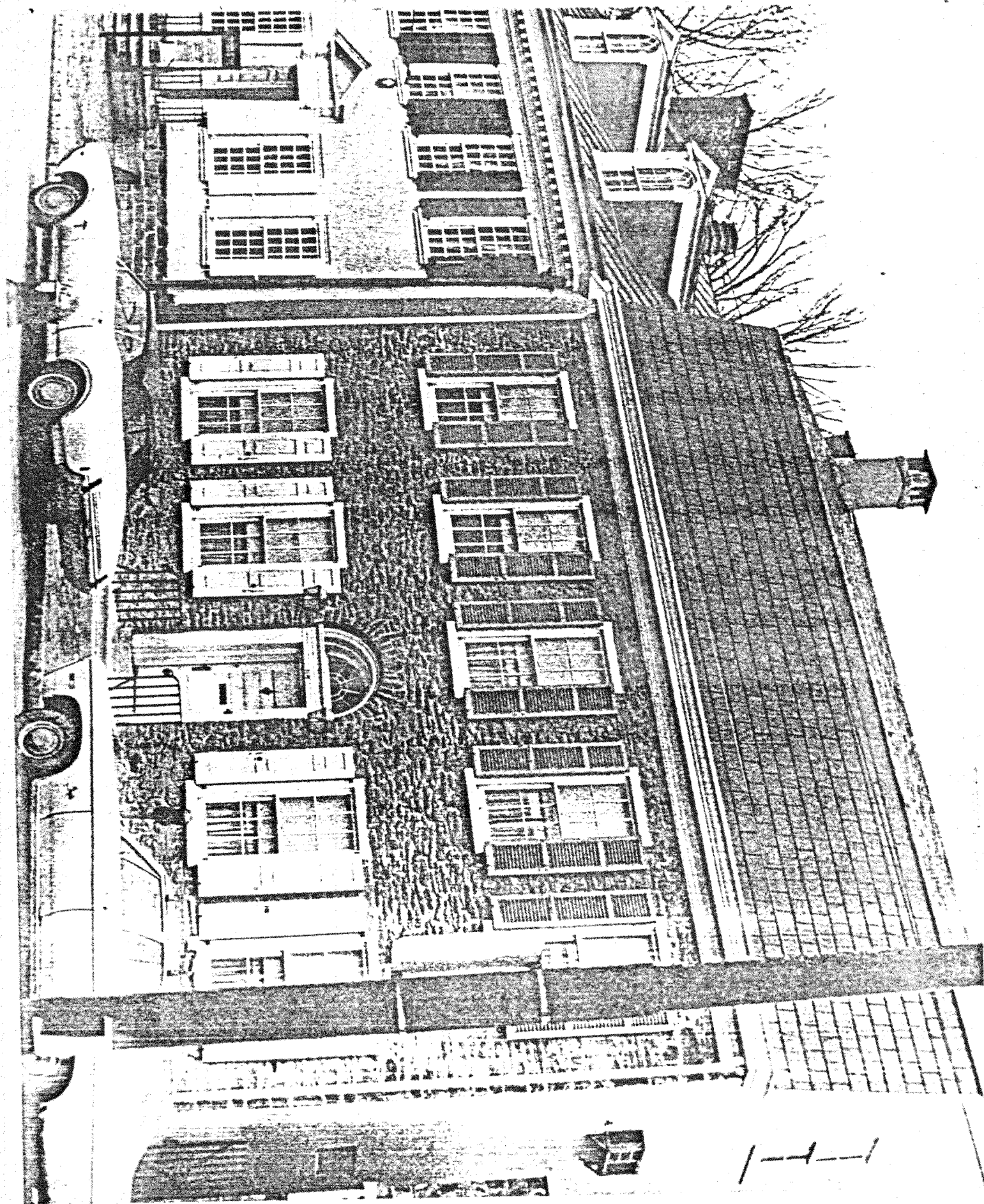
"*** to accept donations of property of national historical significance located in the city of Philadelphia which the Secretary may deem proper for administration as part of the Independence National Historical Park. Any property donated for the purposes of this section shall become a part of the park, following its establishment, upon acceptance by the United States of title to such donated property ***".

Under the above cited general authority, donation of the Beechler Morris House in Germantown was accepted by the United States without the enactment of additional legislation specifically authorizing such acquisition. (See Historical Note of 16 USCA 407o, p 317)

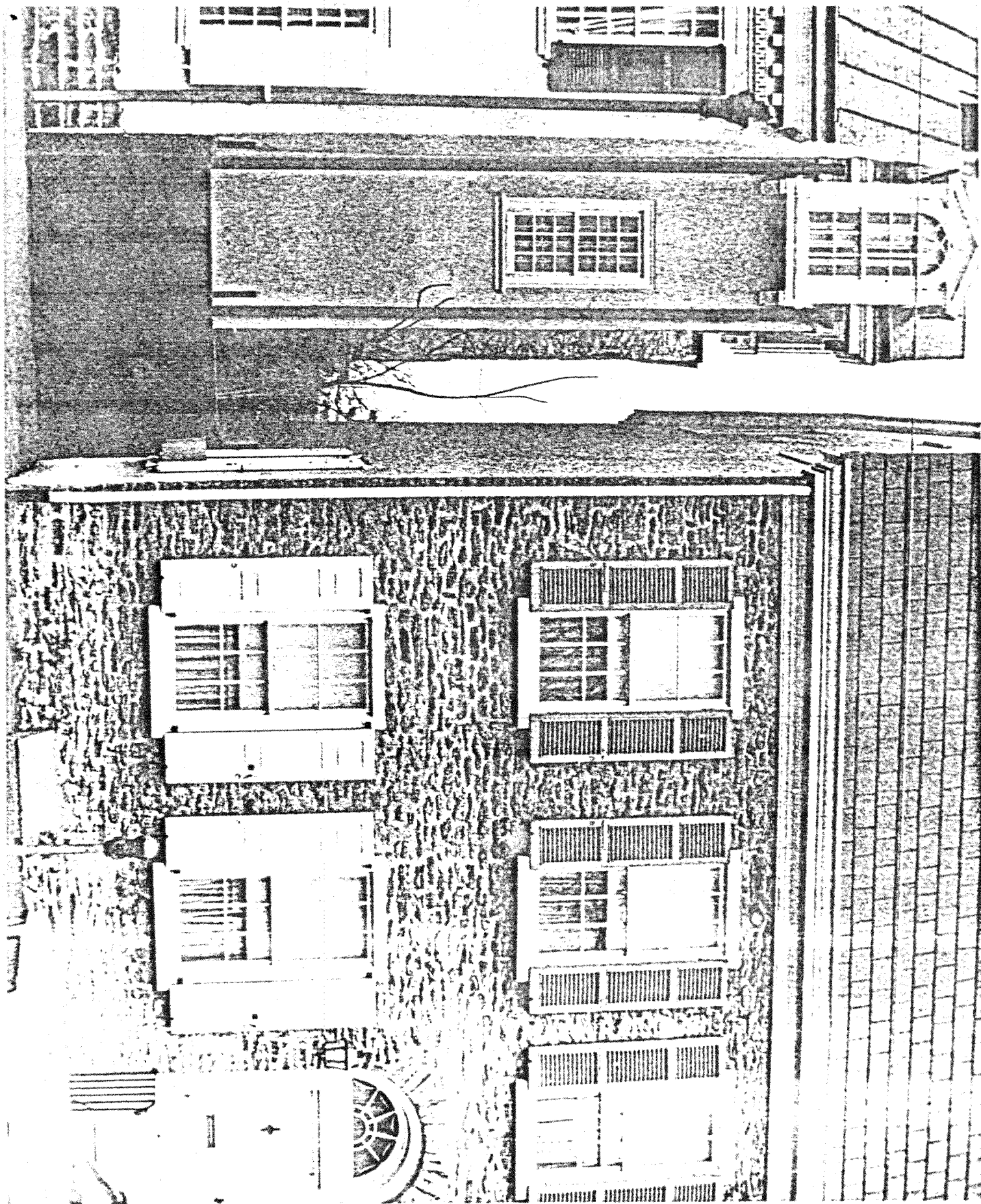
This section would, likewise, appear to authorize acceptance of the donation of Fort Mifflin if the latter is determined to be of national historical significance. There remains, of course, the question whether this property would be deemed proper for administration as a part of Independence National Historical Park in view of its location. Apparently the fact that a building is located some distance from the rest of the park did not deter acceptance of the Beechler Morris House.

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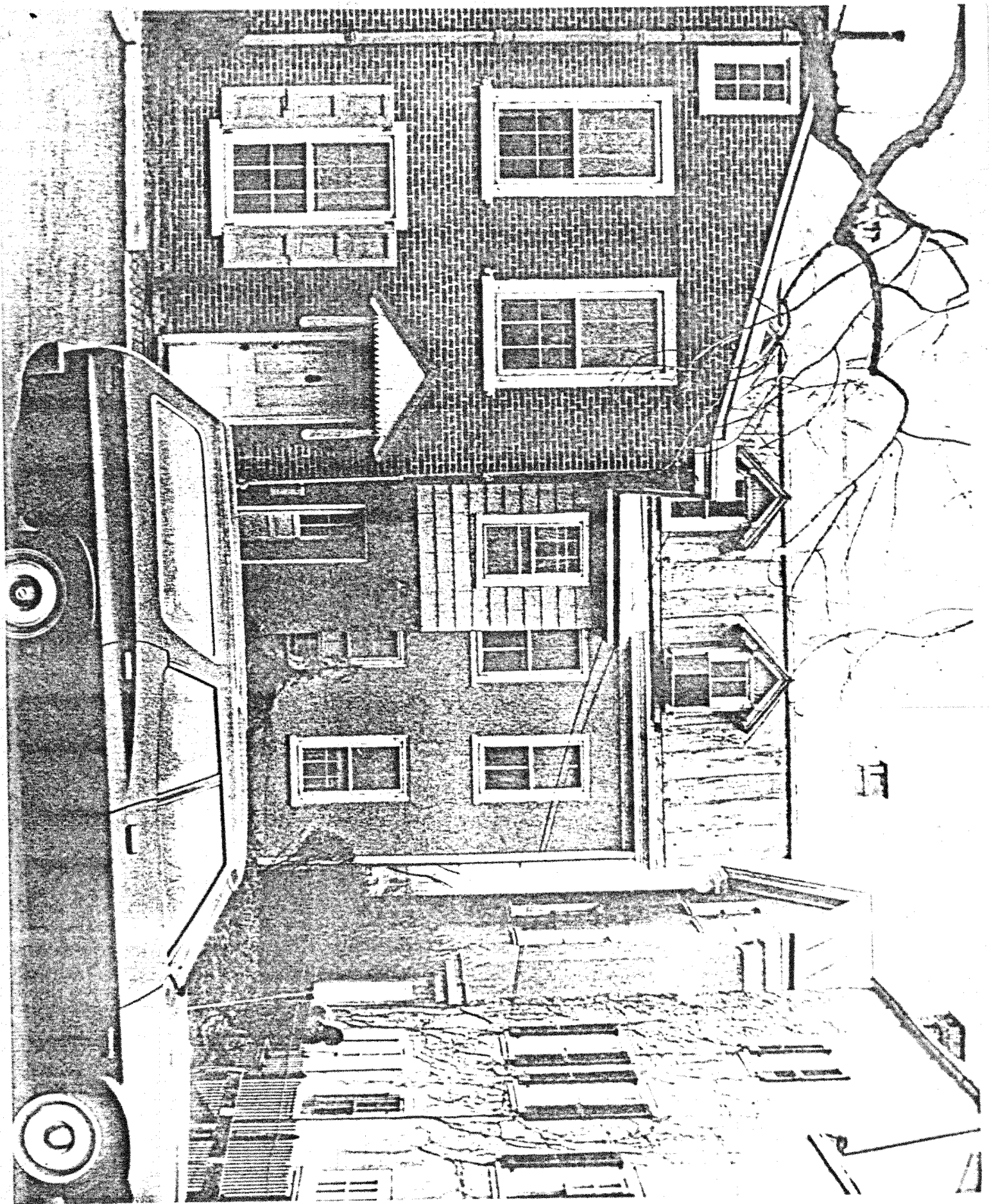
William H. Thornton, Jr.



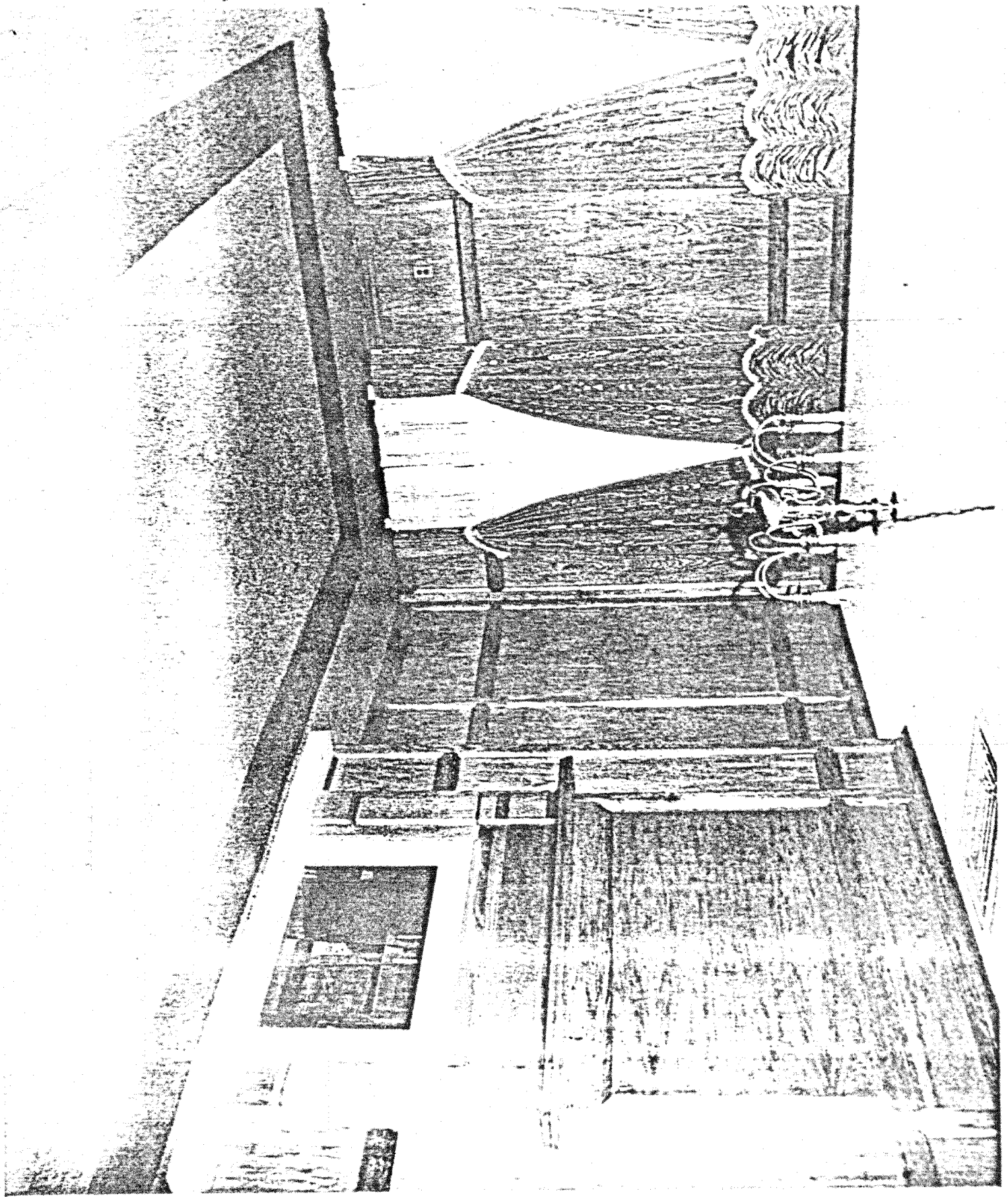
1. 5448 Germantown Avenue, "Bringhurst House." Front view of Bringhurst House, facing west on Germantown Square. Building to the left is the Deshler-Morris House.



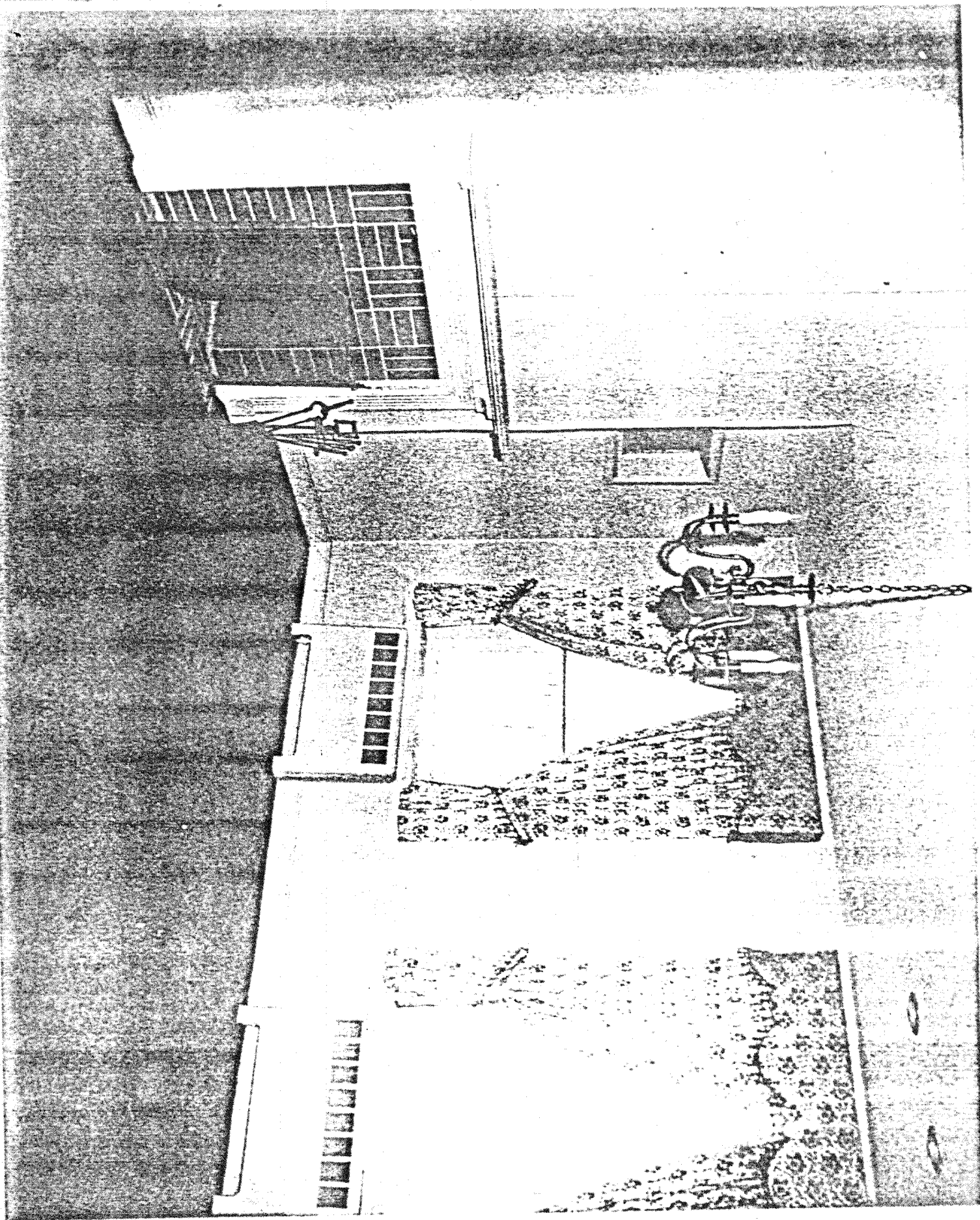
2. North end of front of Bringhurst House. Note very close proximity of this building to the Deshler-Morris House to the left. Any decisions bearing on changes to the Bringhurst House will certainly affect the Deshler-Morris House.



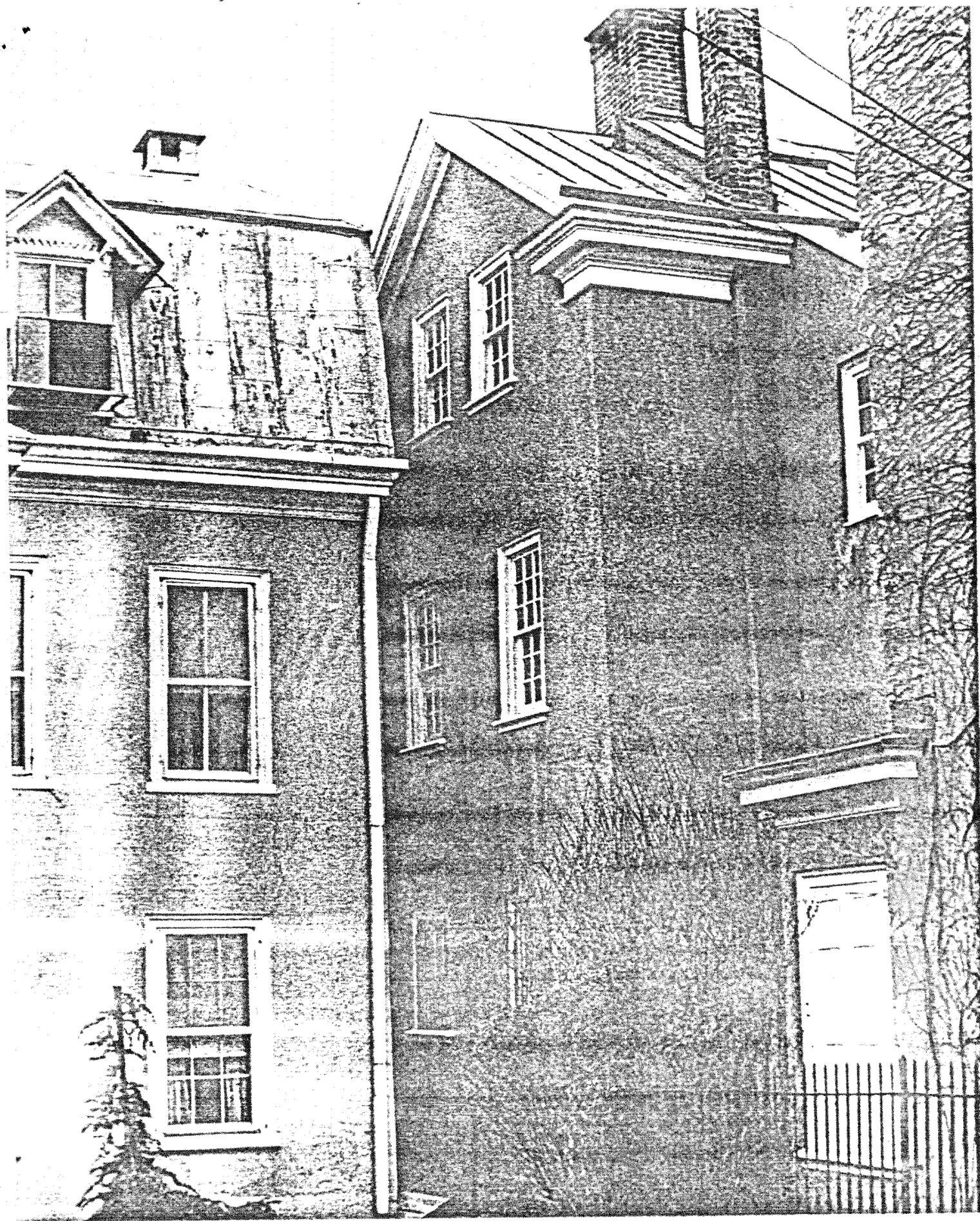
3. Rear of 5448 Germantown Avenue, "Bringhurst House." Building on the right of the Bringhurst House is the Deshler-Morris property. Again, environmental influence of one house upon the other.



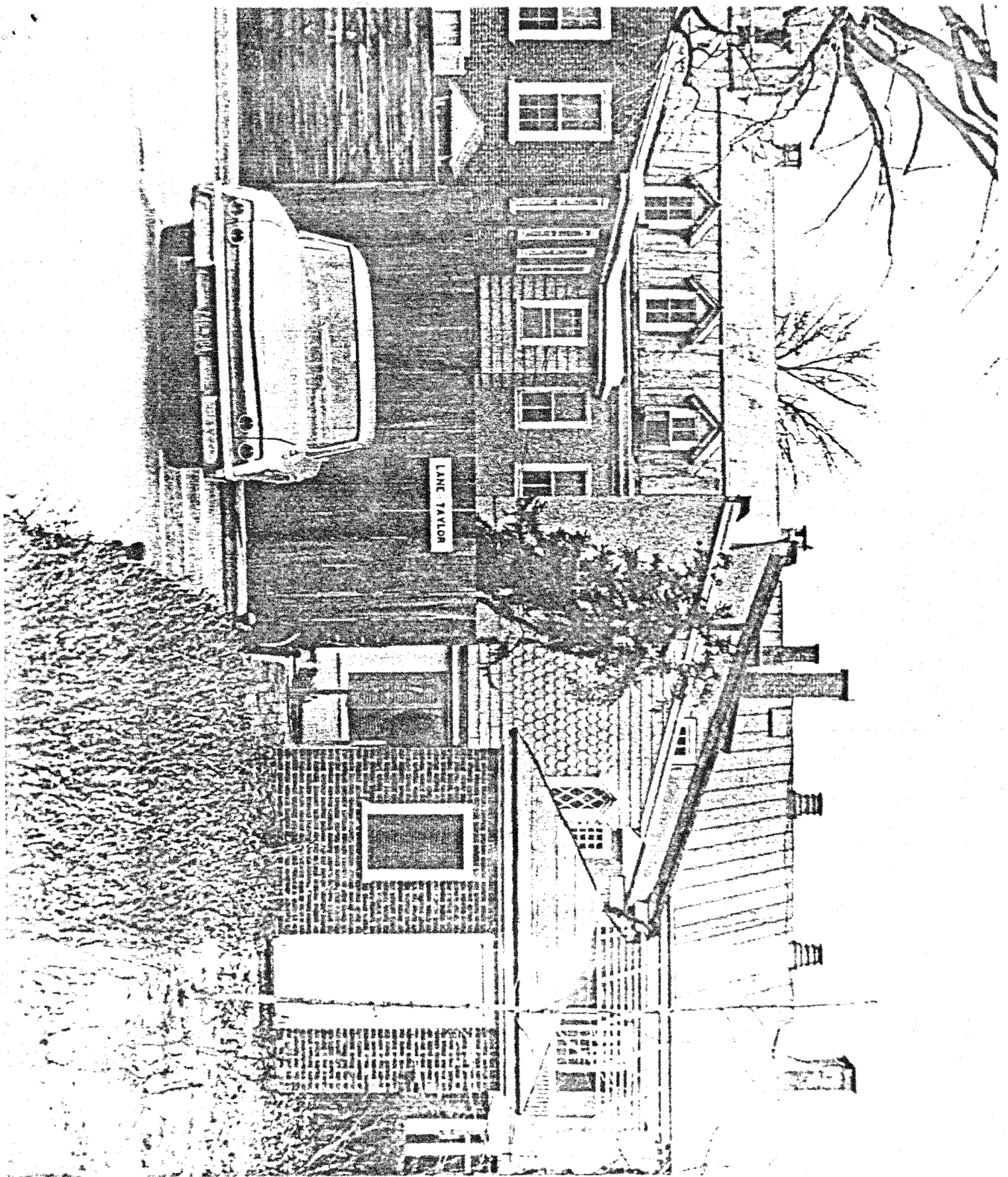
4. Interior of the Bringham House. This room was furnished as the Board of Directors meeting room for the Germantown Savings Association. The furnishings shown in the photograph, i.e. drapery, chandeliers and rugs would remain if the property were turned over to the National Park Service. It is apparent from this photograph that the house could be moved into immediately without any repairs



5. A typical room and furnishings in the Bringham House.
Photograph shows house is ready for immediate occupancy.



6. Narrow passageway between Deshler-Morris and Bringhurst Houses. Photograph makes the environmental influence of one house upon the



8. The rear of the Bringham and Deshler-Morris properties. The annex in the center of the picture with the scalloped siding is the 19th century addition to the Deshler-Morris House, which will be removed during the restoration of this building. This annex is currently being used by the caretaker for the Deshler-Morris property.