UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED B-3729 90
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Ridgely's Delight Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Bounded by West Pratt, South Fremont, Conway and Russell Streets
__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore
__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Third

STATE
Maryland

CODE
024

COUNTY
Baltimore City

CODE
510

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
X DISTRICT	__ PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__ AGRICULTURE	__ MUSEUM
__ BUILDING(S)	__ PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	X COMMERCIAL	__ PARK
__ STRUCTURE	X BOTH	X WORK IN PROGRESS	__ EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__ SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	__ ENTERTAINMENT	__ RELIGIOUS
__ OBJECT	__ IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__ GOVERNMENT	__ SCIENTIFIC
	__ BEING CONSIDERED	__ YES: UNRESTRICTED	__ INDUSTRIAL	__ TRANSPORTATION
		__ NO	__ MILITARY	__ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

See Continuation Sheet #9.

NAME Various Private Owners and Norman F. Finnance

STREET & NUMBER
621 Washington Boulevard

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore
__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Maryland 21230

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore City Courthouse: Real Estate Department

STREET & NUMBER
Calvert and Fayette Streets

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore,

STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__ FEDERAL __ STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

PROPERTY OWNERS LIST

Harry W. Lerner
3016 Fallstaff Road
Apt. D.
Baltimore, Maryland 21209

Alvin D. Alsenberg
1001 Hollins Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Rudolph C. Turner
1436 Bronco Road
Boulder City, NV 89005

Abraham Lockett
3810 Barrington Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Allen J. Dove
614 Warner Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Anthony J. Jordan
616 Warner Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Renaissance Properties, Inc.
c/o Peter G. Wyman
349 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Melvin L. Knight
655 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Charles P. Moran, Jr.
470 Willard Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015

N.B.S.
1003 Smoke Tree Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21208

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

H. Square, Inc.
600 Rockford Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Sandra McDevitt
405 Harwood Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

lorence Stebbings
654 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Napoleon Alexander
1114 Sterrett Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Robert Hayden
771 W. Cross Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Mace Cohen
212 W. Greene Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Marie Ermine
666 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Brian T. Dale
668 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Linton V. Stanson
674 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Christine W. Roberts
676 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

William Trenner
1212 Mt. Royal Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21

Jean Ferguson
355 N. Calvert
Baltimore, Maryland 21

George W. Kane
625 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Levi Barnes
2736 Lauretta Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21

C.Edward Hoerichs
1815 Frederick Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21

Linda Moore
643 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Melvin Fine
2200 Wilkens Ave.
Baltimore, Maryland 21

Leo M. Karpeles
647 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Milton Kaplan
424 Equitable Building
Baltimore, Maryland 21

Eyelyn Reiness
209-11 S. Fremont Ave.
Baltimore, Maryland 21

Charles Kuning
707 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

PROPERTY OWNERS LIST (continued)

Sallie Kravetz
709 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Russell McCloud
711 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Dover St. Properties
349 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Albert Williams
718 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

C. E. Stevenson
720 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

United Decorative Flower Co., Inc.
701 W. Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland

John J. Wychulis
1818 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

S.H. Landsman & Sons, Inc.
P. O. Box 1801
Baltimore, Maryland 21203

Rebecca Landry
2502 Willow Glen Dr.
Baltimore, Maryland 21209

Hyman Bender
3122 F. Parkington Ave.
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Vytautas Makauskas
737 W. Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Samuel Latham
633 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Elmer Battle
651 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Goldie Lawrence
655 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Robert Max
8202 Pumpkin Seed Ct.
Baltimore, Maryland 21208

Carolyn Turner
2911 Dupont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Anna E. Martin
2203 Tucker Lane
Baltimore, Maryland 21207

John Grimmer
308 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Sarah Dobbins
206 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Gertrude Collins
73 S. Marley Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21229

William Johnson
211 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Mildred A. Nesbitt
213 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Gordon Stiek
236 Dolphin Lane
Baltimore, Maryland 21217

Levi Barnes
633 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Scott Smith
632 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Earl T. Henson
624 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Hattie M. & Rufus Sturdivent
628 Dover Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Moore-Matthews Co.
P. O. Box 62
Phoenix, Maryland 21131

C & T Property
349 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Herbert Lebow
3403 W. Strathmore Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.
100 E. North Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

Ethel Adams
205 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Ramax Realty Co., Inc.
844 Park Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Metta J. Allen, etal
538 Lake Drive
Waldorf, Maryland 20601

Joseph Lebherz
121 Beechwood Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

Phillip Bowman
652 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Manzy Fulmore
55 S. Monastery Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

Charles M. Hyman
658 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Ervin Realty
899 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

ZLW, Inc.
P. O. Box 6441
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Gloria McIntosh
3915 Juniper Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4.

Mabel H. Beverly
419 W. 28th Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

Gross Enterprise
647 W. Pratt
Baltimore, Maryland

Snyder Equipment Company
655 W. Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland

John Stakias
665 W. Pratt
Baltimore, Maryland

Anthony G. Marmaras
512 Lee Drive
Baltimore, Maryland

Freda Cook
220 Shenandoah Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21225

Margaret Reise
715 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Viola Chandler
717 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Rosie C. Barrett
719 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Gordon H. Stock
236 Dolphin Lane
Baltimore, Maryland 21217

Evelyn F. Ambrose
1529 E. 36th Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

Charles E. Horne
604 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

George R. Syms
629 Kensington Avenue
Severna Park, Maryland 21146

Phillip Rosenberg
610 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Gustave W. Eklof
New Cut Road
Ellicot City,Maryland 21042

Earl F. King
642 Hillview
Baltimore, Maryland 21225

Steven G. Tyler
624 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Nicholas K. Cannamela
626 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

George E. Deckert
630 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Robert M. Hiebel
636 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

William Sorrell
667 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Jacob Klotzman
945 N. Broadway
Baltimore, Maryland

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #5

Sylvia Krieger
6320 Greenspring Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21209

James Brown
310 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Evelyn Dixon
2324 W. Mosher Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21216

Ramax Realty
844 Park Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Lena B. Rouser
709 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Jo An Realty,Inc.
212 N. Greene Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Earl F. King
642 Hillview Road
Baltimore, Maryland

Geneva Smith
657 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Raymond Smith
659 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Rubin Goldberg
1611 W. Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Murray Shockett
7419 Kathydale Road
Baltimore, Maryland

PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

Elizabeth C. Martin
105 W. University Parkway
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

Morris C. Levy
5700 Cross Country Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21206

Baltimore Office Supply
641 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Phillip Campbell
604 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Green Homestead
606 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Myrtle Scott
3402 Callaway Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Steven Imes
610 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

William J. Wiggins
612 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Gregory H. Barnhill
528 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Dimensional Productions
669-73 Melvin Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

John Niedringhaus
Contract Supply Company
210 Rugby Road
Arnold, Maryland 21012

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6.

Gene H. Perdue
700 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Arrie Wells
528 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Romell Green
530 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Levi Atkinson
540 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Thomas D. Eisenhardt
432 S. Bentalou
Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Norman F. Finnance
621 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Linda Lloyd
669 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Keats A. Pullen
671 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Lawrence W. Benton
681 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Frank A. Jackson
625 S. Paca
Baltimore, Maryland

Gertrude Bush
627 S. Paca
Baltimore, Maryland

PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

Gene H. Perdue
700 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

William R. Jackson
633 S. Paca
Baltimore, Maryland

Archie Coleman
635 S. Paca
Baltimore, Maryland

Leana B. Thomas
624 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Mary A. Werner
626 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Frank Cohen
3213 Taney Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Harold O. Fletcher
636 S. Paca Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Julia Merriam
643 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Frank D. Dibattista
651 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Melvin L. Knight
655 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland

Charles G. Whiteford, Jr.
206 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

George W. Holt, Jr.
1020 Elton Avenue
Dundalk, Maryland

Mildred A. Nesbitt
213 Penn Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Edward S. Conklin
706 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Steven A. Crunrine
708 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Jaqueline McCurdy
30 E. 25th Street, Basement
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

William A. Hammond
714 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Hilda Travers
716 Portland Street
Baltimore, Maryland

The Honorable William Donald Schaefer
Mayor and City Council
City Hall
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Evelyn Reiness
209 S. Fremont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

George Riley
227 S. Fremont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

Herman F. Jennings
229 S. Fremont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

DESCRIPTION

B-3729

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	X DETERIORATED	_UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	_RUINS	X ALTERED	_MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ridgely's Delight Historic District is a wedge-shaped area roughly bounded by Fremont Avenue on the west, Conway Street on the south, Russell and Green Streets on the east and Pratt Street on the north. The specific district boundaries have been drawn to exclude the modern power station on the northeast corner, which occupies the entire block bounded by Pratt Street on the north, Emory Street on the west, Portland Street on the south and Green Street on the east.

The historic district represents a surviving fragment of a larger neighborhood which has been constricted by modern development. The construction of Russell Street in the 1930's eradicated a broad swath on the eastern side of the neighborhood. Recent demolition of entire blocks on both sides of Fremont Avenue and the south side of Conway Street (in anticipation of the proposed City Boulevard) has artificially separated Ridgely's Delight from similar types of neighborhoods to the west. The expansion of the University of Maryland complex has extended to the north side of Pratt Street and forms a distinct boundary there.

However, within these artificially created boundaries exists a cohesive neighborhood, which by virtue of the "human" scale of its buildings and the irregular streets with their self-contained, intimate vistas, still possesses its original 19th century character.

To call the scale of Ridgely's Delight "human" implies an intimacy between structures and people and a consistency in the elements of the streetscape. The strength of the human scale is the primary asset of Ridgely's Delight and most readily distinguishes the neighborhood from its environs. There are no buildings in the district that are truly overwhelming. Both residential and commercial properties co-exist in harmony.

The major threat to scale is the heavy traffic which regularly uses Russell Street and Fremont Avenue. Similarly, traffic on Washington Boulevard is disruptive at times.

The street pattern is an essential ingredient of the visual character of the district. Only the northernmost blocks follow strictly the North-South grid used in the bulk of the City. Washington Boulevard, which predates the district, runs southwest from the northeast corner of the district, and determines the remainder of the plat. Streets and alleys which join the boulevard are generally perpendicular to it. South Fremont similarly predates most development, and with Washington Boulevard is responsible for the shapes of the several triangular blocks in the midsection of the district. The visual result is a number of closed vistas along streets and alleys contributing significantly to the scale of the area. This design also provides the block interiors with picturesque spaces rarely

See continuation sheet #7.

equalled in the standard grid blocks. The intersection of Penn Stree and Melvin Drive is a prime example of this; its southeast corner has recently been made into an interior park. The "Y" of alleys in the block west of Emory Street is a similar feature, but in poor conditior There are some local plans to close one of its legs for a vest-pocket park.

A landscape feature which belongs to the street pattern proper is the "walking alley" which runs between (and parallel to) Portland Street and Melvin Drive from Emory to Penn. The alley provides a quiet linea green space with views into the backyards of small houses on either si again reinforcing human scale and unusual for Baltimore.

A final outstanding feature of this urban landscape is the large numbe of set-back houses with ample front yards. In some cases these houses predate the intensive development of the area, and are explicable in that way; in other cases they are explained by whim. In all cases the are a welcome relief from the severity of strict at-easement facades, and their random location provides a variety and texture lacking where one extreme is the rule.

Typically, a building in Ridgely's Delight is a brick row-house[1], one family residence of two or three bays, and two, two and one half or three stories, built at the property line. The roof is either flat wit cornice or gabled with one dormer. Sally-ports at sidewalk level or below are common, generally placed between two houses.

The typical houses of Ridgely's Delight may be described in two ways, by size and relative elegance, or by period and style. In general, the earlier houses are the smaller, and were occupied by a less affluen class of people than the larger and later houses. In many cases, the latter were modified to conform in size and style to the former. This is most recognizable when a three-story house with contiguous smaller houses shares sill and lintel lines.

The first houses to be built were the two-bay, two-story late Federal houses. Their proportions were nearly square for facades and fenestration, windows 6/6. The roof was gabled with fairly steep pitch

1 #645 Melvin Drive is a frame building on a brick basement, at the end of a row which was once entirely frame (1879) and is now brick.

See continuation sheet #8.

while the ridge was parallel to the street, with a single central dormer Where details occur, as on the gable of the dormer, they are either late Federal or early Greek Revival. Entrances were normally at the side of the house opposite the chimney side, alternating with neighboring buildings, so that the street had a rhythm of paired doors alternating with coupled chimneys. The very earliest of these were built with entrances at street level (713 Pratt). Of those that remain, the rule is a first floor above a small basement (524-532 Paca). Occasional three bay facades occur (604 Washington Boulevard). Common bond is the rule.

The next phase of the development is a continuous and gradual transition from the houses described above, to the elaborate Italianate rowhouses of the 1860's and 70's. The Federal townhouse first had the slope of its gable lessened (633-645 Melvin). The height of the facade increased to two and one half storys,[2] and the proportions of fenestration changed accordingly (626-632 Paca), i.e., they became taller. Often first story openings were round arched. The half story windows began as very low, flat, rectangles, and gradually increased to nearly square, but still distinguishable as only half a story (624 Paca). Shortly after the addition of this story, the dormers began to disappear and by the time the third story arrived, were gone completely (649-653 Washington Boulevard). From this point the jump to the Italianate house was rapid. The gable roof is replaced by a corniced flat roof. The first cornices were recently designed (932 S. Paca), usually no more than two or three courses of brick headers laid with alternating depressions or in courses of increasing offset from the plane of the facade. Wooden bracketed cornices and metal cornices of true Greek detail were the next phase (607 Paca, 637-39 Paca). In the wooden versions, jogsaw cutouts in the barges between the brackets (for ventillating the roof spaces) became popular during the 1870's (615 Washington Boulevard). Three-bay houses became more common than two-bay houses. The fenestration of these later houses was always of very tall proportions, and generally 2/2, but the details varied widely. Brick or metal eyebrows or hoods became popular over segmental arched windows and doors and the actual windows proportions sometimes became radically attenuated (674 S. Paca). Stained glass appeared in transom-lights over doors and windows (although little is left in Ridgeley's Delight, e.g. 663 Portland).

Brickwork remained common bond, although the bricks themselves became flatter. In a few rare and late houses, elaborate variations of brickwork were found (e.g., 601 S. Paca). The Italianate houses stand on the

2
604,608, (probably 610 [formstone]) 620 and 622 Washington Boulevard are two-story, two-bay gable and dormer (604 is three-bay) with flemish bond faces.

See continuation sheet #9

major streets. Minor streets and alleys contain mostly the smaller Federal houses.

This is a district of row-buildings. There are no free-standing structures (except for the gas station). Some of the set back houses have one side wall free. A nearly universal feature of all types of row-houses is 'back buildings'. In the earliest cases they were once free-standing summer kitchens and utility buildings which became connected to the houses by subsequent intervening structures (643 Washington Boulevard). Later in the 19th Century they were built contiguous to the house proper. Narrower than the house itself, they often had promenade porches on one side, usually facing that of a neighbor (626 and 628 Washington Boulevard).

There are several structures in Ridgely's Delight which do not fall into the categories of typical houses. These include the larger light-industrial structures in the northwest corner along Pratt Street where style and materials harmonize with the neighborhood and which furthermore act as a buffer to heavy traffic.

Several other structures also differ from the norm or are of particular interest; they include:

337-339 South Fremont Avenue is a remarkable late Victorian brick adaptation of an Italian Palazzo for commercial use. The brickwork and detail are extremely fine; the facade composition is of a quality rarely exceeded in west Baltimore, sophisticated and in scale with the neighborhood. The second and third floors were used as the ever popular and ambiguous "halls," the first floor commercial or light industry.

401 South Fremont is an evolutionary end point of Victorian commercial architecture. Continuous horizontal banding of several individual brick courses give a 'moderne' look to the segmental arch windows, overhanging bay window and metal cornice that are Victorian holdovers in an Edwardian building.

612, 614 and 616 Washington Boulevard are one building which continues north through the block to Portland Street and has been industrial commercial since the late 1870's. The Washington Boulevard facade appears to have been originally three separate houses and has a cast iron shop front across the entire first story.

See continuation sheet #10

684 Washington Boulevard was once a set-back three-story structure (the only one on the north side of the block) to which a tiny temple front bank was added at the easement line in the 1930's, a doric one-story structure with wings and a pediment with outsize acroteria.

600 Washington Boulevard (circa 1910) makes the most strident appeal to high style in the area. The Georgian Revival commercial building has such details as dressed stone quoins, carved cartouches in the arches of the first floor windows, and a roof with pedimented wall dormmers which are unique to the area. The irregular plan, which is a response to the wedge-shaped corner lot, is perfectly consistent with the continuous fabric of the neighborhood. The flair of the design serves as an appropriate entrance to the neighborhood.

655 West Pratt Street is notable for its true mansard roof with dormer, the only one in Ridgely's Delight. The Second Empire style was never popular in Baltimore; hence, such a structure is a rarity. The building, dating from the 1870's is a three-bay, three-story house with brick segmental arch eyebrow windows, now converted to commercial use.

641 Washington Boulevard is a four-story commercial building which fills its entire lot. The property is of conventional residential eidth and over one hundred feet long. The early 20th century commercial style building is remarkable for its size and proportions.

635, 637, 639, 641, 643, and 645 Washington Boulevard and 609, 611 and 634 Paca Street are notable as set-back houses with postage stamp front yards.

Behind 635 Washington Boulevard is a series of garages built before 1925 by Dr. Merriam, which are reputed to have been the first speculative rental garages in Baltimore.

There is only one genuine intrusion in Ridgely's Delight, the gas station at the southeast corner of Russell Street and Washington Boulevard, occupying 1/2 acre or 2% of the district. It stands on the site of an extremely fine Federal house.

The homesteading activity in Ridgely's Delight began in 1974, and to this date, May 25, 1978, 28 houses have been awarded. Baltimore City is in the process of acquiring 41 additional houses for homesteading here.

Restoration is also being accomplished by several major private developers; their properties total more than 150. Private individual restoration is rapidly increasing.

SIGNIFICANCE

B-3729

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	X_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	_ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER
XX_1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ridgely's Delight Historic District represents a substantial and well preserved fragment of the large neighborhoods which developed during Baltimore's first period of expansion in the early 19th century. It is furthermore exemplary of the manner in which Baltimore neighborhoods have risen and developed, both socially and architecturally, and covers a span of time equal to any within the city's history of expansion beyond its original incorporated boundaries. The District's residential structures range from the two or two and a half story late Federal houses representing the first phase of row house development in Baltimore, to the more substantial three-story corniced Italianate versions built for the middle and upper classes toward the end of the 19th century. Frequently the latter type represents a modernization of the former. With few exceptions, the street pattern adheres to that surveyed and recorded by Thomas Poppleton in his plan of 1823. The majority of the development occurred between 1830 and 1870, following a rather cohesive pattern that reflects Ridgely's Delight conception as an urban neighborhood and which was fueled by the bordering industrial development as well as the establishment of the University of Maryland medical facilities.

During its heyday in the latter half of the 19th century, Ridgely's Delight was a prosperous middle class neighborhood; however, within recent decades the area has undergone gradual deterioration. It has become a low-rent, lower class neighborhood and its buildings have suffered from lack of maintenance as well as abandonment. Through this decay and modern development on the fringes, the larger original neighborhood has been greatly constricted. However, within the remaining area, the historic fabric has been protected from modernization, the street pattern left intact, and neighborhood integrity maintained making this isolated neighborhood an even greater phenomenon in light of its surroundings.

Today a rebirth for this historic neighborhood in Southwest Baltimore seems to be dawning. A rising number of houses are being rehabilitated as middle class housing, and selected properties are being developed through the City's Urban Homesteading Program.

See continuation sheet #11

The Ridgely's Delight neighborhood is the namesake of one of the early agricultural estates, that of Charles Ridgely, which occupied the open land outside of the City's original boundaries. As one of the earliest graphic records of Baltimore shows,[1] at the turn of the 19th century the southwest portion of land consisted primarily of the estates of Ridgely and Judge McHenry, among others, as well as a collection of smaller houses located on the established roads. The rectangular street grid of Baltimore proper had been established as far west as Green Stree and beyond this the major thoroughfares were Cove Street (later Fremont Avenue), which ran from the open country in the northwest southeasterly to the Patapsco River, and Alexandria or Columbia Pike (Washington Boulevard) which ran westerly and served as the main artery to Washington.

The Thomas Poppleton survey which was coordinated with the plan to expand Baltimore's boundaries, was made in 1816 and published in 1823. In his survey, he continued the street grid beyond Green Street. However, the new streets and lots were aligned with the existing cove and columbia roads rather than following the regular street patterns to the east. The streets as delineated on the 1823 map form the basic pattern found today. While in 1823 the area was primarily open land, at least two houses on Poppleton's map remain extant (637 Washington Boulevard and 713 West Pratt Street).

A large portion of the development of Ridgely's Delight occurred between 1816 and 1875 with particular intensity during the 1840's and 50's. There was sufficient population by 1842 to warrant the construction of the Columbia Avenue Methodist Church (655 Washington Boulevard). The 1869 Sachse illustration of Baltimore shows development to have been complete and closely resembles the neighborhood as it exists today.

This mid-century development can be largely attributed to the establishment of the University of Maryland medical facilities (slightly to the north) in 1812 and its subsequent expansion and to the appearance of heavy industry and its consequent creation of numerous jobs. Such industries included the B & O Railroad Yards (1830), Winans Locomotive Works (circa 1840), and the Hayward and Bartlett Company (1851), all located on Pratt Street to the west of Fremont Avenue.

Parallel to this development a small industrial quarter appeared in the northwest portion of Ridgely's Delight beginning with an early 19th century iron foundry at Portland and Fremont Streets and expanding into an area with a wide range of productions including a flour mill, a paint and oil factory and a silver beating manufactory. Within the neighbor-

See continuation sheet #12

hood were several craftsmen who supported these industries, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, and other metal workers. Other artisans and small merchants such as cobblers, coal and wood dealers, slaughterers, grocers, bakers and hostlers had their residences and shops throughout the area. A number of first floor storefronts appear in the western end of Washington Boulevard. Other light industry was scattered throughout the area.

Ridgely's Delight stabilized during the later 19th century. Paca Street, Washington Boulevard and portions of Fremont Avenue became the sites of larger middle class homes; three-bay, three-story houses with flat roofs and elaborate cornices which were often expansions and elaborations of the earlier and more modest gable-roofed houses. Simultaneously back streets and block interiors were filled with more modest housing for craftsmen and service persons, often alongside light industry.

The street pattern was changed slightly by the continuation of Penn Street south of Melvin Drive. Later during the Roosevelt Administration, Greene Street was extended south of Portland to become the northern extension of Russell Street, connecting downtown Baltimore with the new Baltimore Washington Parkway. This development relieved Washington Boulevard of Washington bound traffic, and at the same time eradicated a large section of the neighborhood, thus creating its definite eastern edge. The neighborhood began to deteriorate from this point, and was further isolated by demolition along Fremont and Conway in anticipation of another highway project.

In 1974 Ridgely's Delight was designated a homestead district, differing from other homestead districts in Baltimore in that properties available for the program are scattered throughout an occupied area, rather than being an entire vacant quarter. The program has been successful, and shows every sign of continuing so. There has been private restoration and even speculative restoration on a large scale.

The architecture of Ridgely's Delight is unified in two ways, stylistically and physically. The physical relationship consists in the fact that it is almost entirely contiguous and intact. There are no free-standing buildings in Ridgely's Delight, (although occassionally a house will have one freestanding wall), and it is significant that except for those houses which predated the Poppleton Plan, even the earliest structures seem to have been designed with that intent in mind, i.e., all houses were meant to be part of a row, whether they were built simultaneously with contiguous neighbors or not. Clearly, Ridgely's Delight

See continuation sheet #13

was conceived as an urban neighborhood, and its development is one of intensification of the patterns established at its outset, yielding only slightly to increases in wealth and stylistic trends.

The stylistic relationships of the area are unified by a fifty year time span, centered roughly in 1845, which defines the period of most intensive development. As in the rest of Baltimore, styles in Ridgely's Delight tend to reflect later dates than in the rest of the major eastern cities, owing to the reluctance of Baltimore builders to relinquish a style to which they had become accustomed. This conservatism provides Ridgely's Delight with a sequence of Late Federal rowhouses which date from the early 1830's into the 1850's. The characteristics of this span are distinct at both ends: the earliest are two-bay, two-story houses with steep gable roofs and central dormers; the latest are two or three bays wide, on basements, two and one half stories in height, with shallow gable roofs and central dormers.

By the time that this latter development had arrived, the second phase of house had already begun to spring up, a three-story, two-bay house with a flat roof. As the century progressed, these houses became larger and more elaborate, by the 1870's becoming full blown Italiante houses with intricate cornices. In some cases it can be demonstrated that an Italiante house is an enlargement and 'modernization' of a Federal house (637 Melvin Drive).

Having evolved as an urban neighborhood from its conception, Ridgely's Delight is both a highly unified yet diverse collection of mid-19th century structures sandwiched between industry and other intrusions which continues to exist as a cohesive urban fragment in search of revitalization and rebirth.

1
Warner & Hanna -- "The Incorporated City of Baltimore As It Looked In 1801", (Peabody Institute facsimile, 1947, Baltimore, Maryland).

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet #14.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 24 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	359610	4349580	B	18	359960	4349400
C	18	359960	4349890	D	18	359800	4349100

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

BEginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Pratt Street and South Fremont Avenue, proceed easterly along the south curb of W. Pratt St. to its intersection with the west curb of Emory St.; thence southerly along the west curb of Emory St., following its line to its intersection with the south curb of Portland St.; thence easterly along said curb of portland st. to its intersection with the west curb of

See Continuation Sheet #15.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard Greenwood, John Hnedak, Janet Kennelly, Steven Levy

ORGANIZATION Maryland Historical Trust — DATE

Interstate Division for Baltimore City/ — September 3, 1976

STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

2225 N. Charles Street — 396-6133

CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Baltimore, — Maryland 21218

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE — 2-6-80

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER — DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892-4

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Ridgely's Delight Historic District are determined by strong visual and physical barriers that make this district a distinct and well-defined entity. These barriers are on the east of Russel Street, a multilaned roadway with mixed commercial and industrial areas beyond; on the south and west by Conway Street and Freemont Avenue which are areas that are being redeveloped for parkland on the south and a highway to the west; and on the north by Pratt Street and Portland Street with the University of Maryland complex beyond. Although the district includes a few pockets of vacant land created by recent demolition, the district's boundaries are drawn to include the highest incidence of historic and cultural fabric while excluding the non-contributing areas such as along Pratt Street east of Emory Street and to utilize such lines of convenience as existing curblines which are emphasized by the above mentioned visual and physical barriers. The eastern and southern boundaries are further defined by a brick wall that was erected in part as a sound barrier along the highway.

The photographs and map submitted as documentation in this application do fairly accurately represent the present appearance of the Ridgely's Delight Historic District. Although limited rehabilitatior work has taken place in selected areas, no more demolition has occurred since the photographs were taken and the map drawn.

The Ridgely's Delight Historic District contains approximately 395 structures.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Roberts, Byron "Pigtown", Baltimore Magazine, Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Baltimore, August 1976, vol 69 #8

"The Warner-Wachter House", unpublished ms., from the clipping files of C.H.A.P.

"Man About Town", May 20, 1970 - newspaper unknown, from the clipping files of C.H.A.P.

Nelson, Lee H., "Brickmaking in Baltimore, 1798" J.S.A.H.

News-American, October 22, 1927

"When Washington Boulevard Was a Real'Glory Road'", newspaper and date unknown, from the clipping files of C.H.A.P.

Sun, October 5, 1970

Sun, July 11, 1976

News-American, June 16, 1968

Urban Renewal Plan: Ridgely Delight Urban Renewal Project
Department of Housing and Community Development
Baltimore, Maryland
approved by The Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 840 March 31, 1975.

Maps

"The Incorporated City of Baltimore as it Looked in 1801", Peabody Institute Facsimile, 1947, Baltimore, Maryland

"The City of Baltimore as Enlarged and Laid out Under the Directi of the Commissioners Appointed by the General Assembly of Marylan in 1816", T. H. Poppleton (Baltimore, 1823).

Sidney and Neff, Map of Baltimore in 1851 (Baltimore, 1851)

E. Scahse & Co's Bird's Eye View of the City of Baltimore 1869 (Baltimore, 1869)

Geo. Bromley: Atlas of the City of Baltimore, (New York, 1896)

Interviews with:
Melvin Knight, etc.
Mrs. Merriam
Ms. Carol Moore

Russell St.; thence southerly along said curb of Russell St. to its intersection with the north curb of west Conway St.; thence southerly along the north curb of W. Conway St. to its intersection with the east curb of S. Fremont Ave.; thence northerly along said curb to the point of origin. This boundary encloses the historic properties of Ridgely's Delight while excluding the intrusive neighboring properties.

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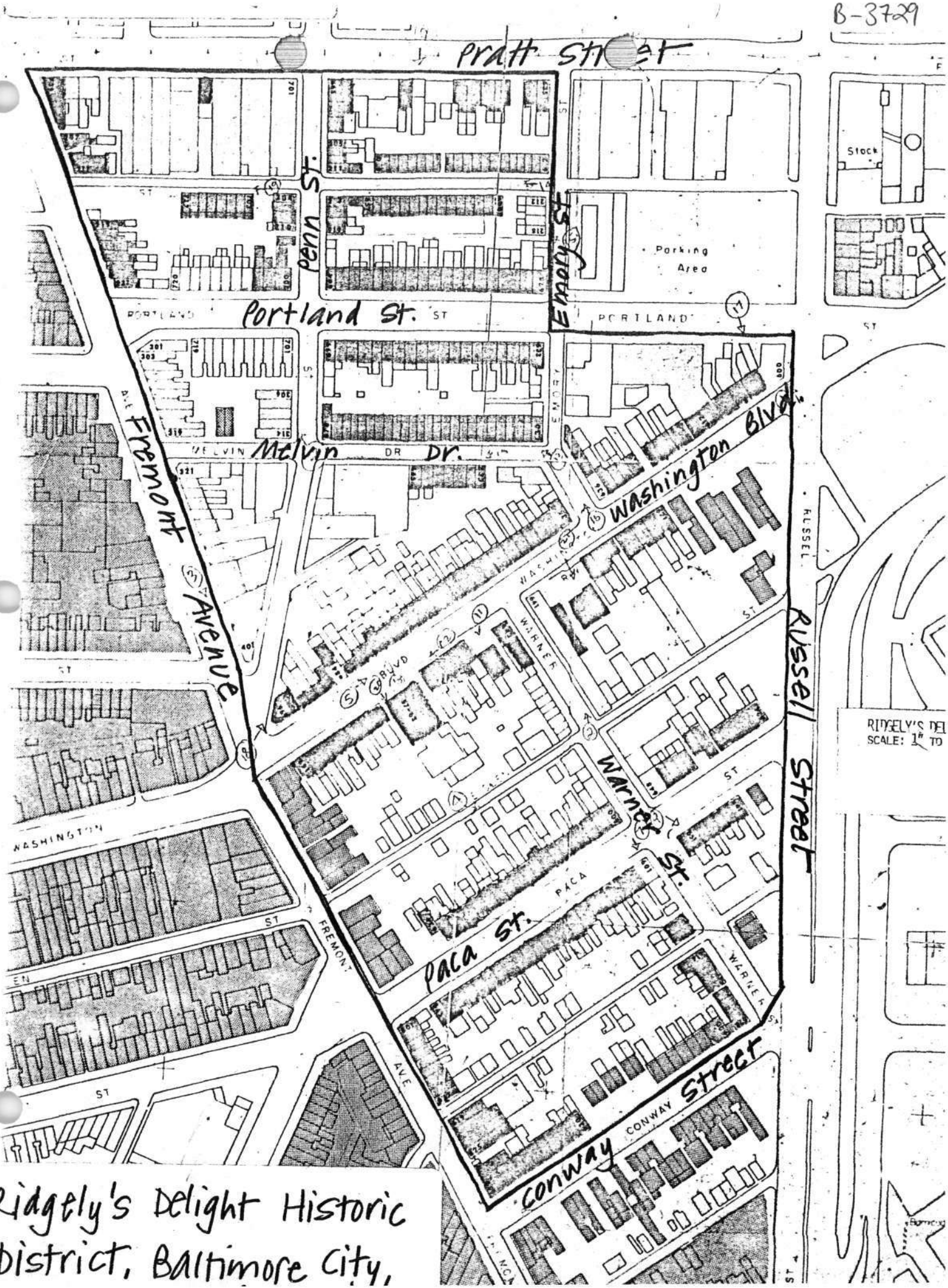

Ridgely's Delight Historic District, Baltimore City,

TAXICAB DRIVERS & GARAGE EMPLOYEES
UNION LOCAL No. 426
ON WAY
BALTO WASH PKWY
EKLOF AND CO.

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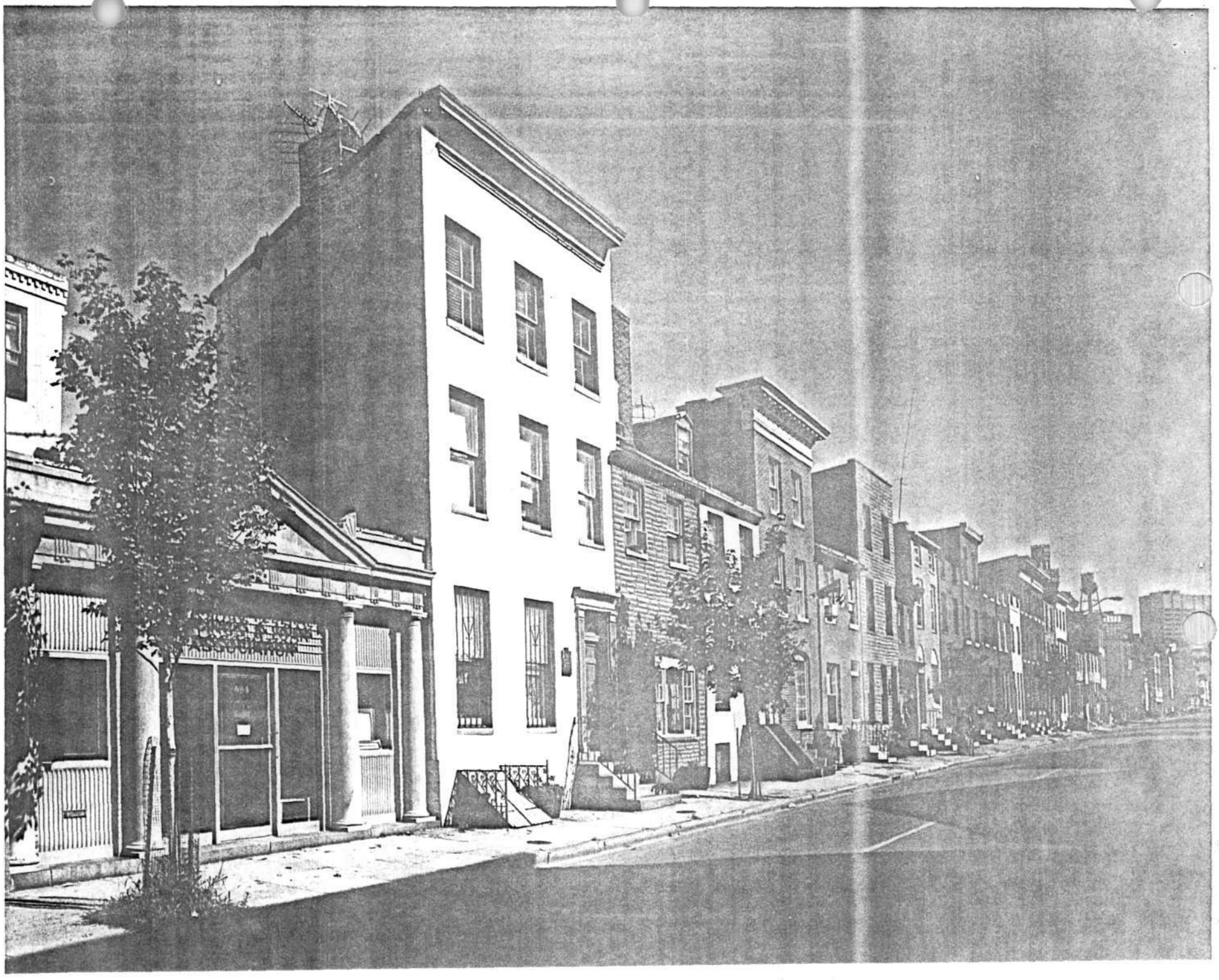

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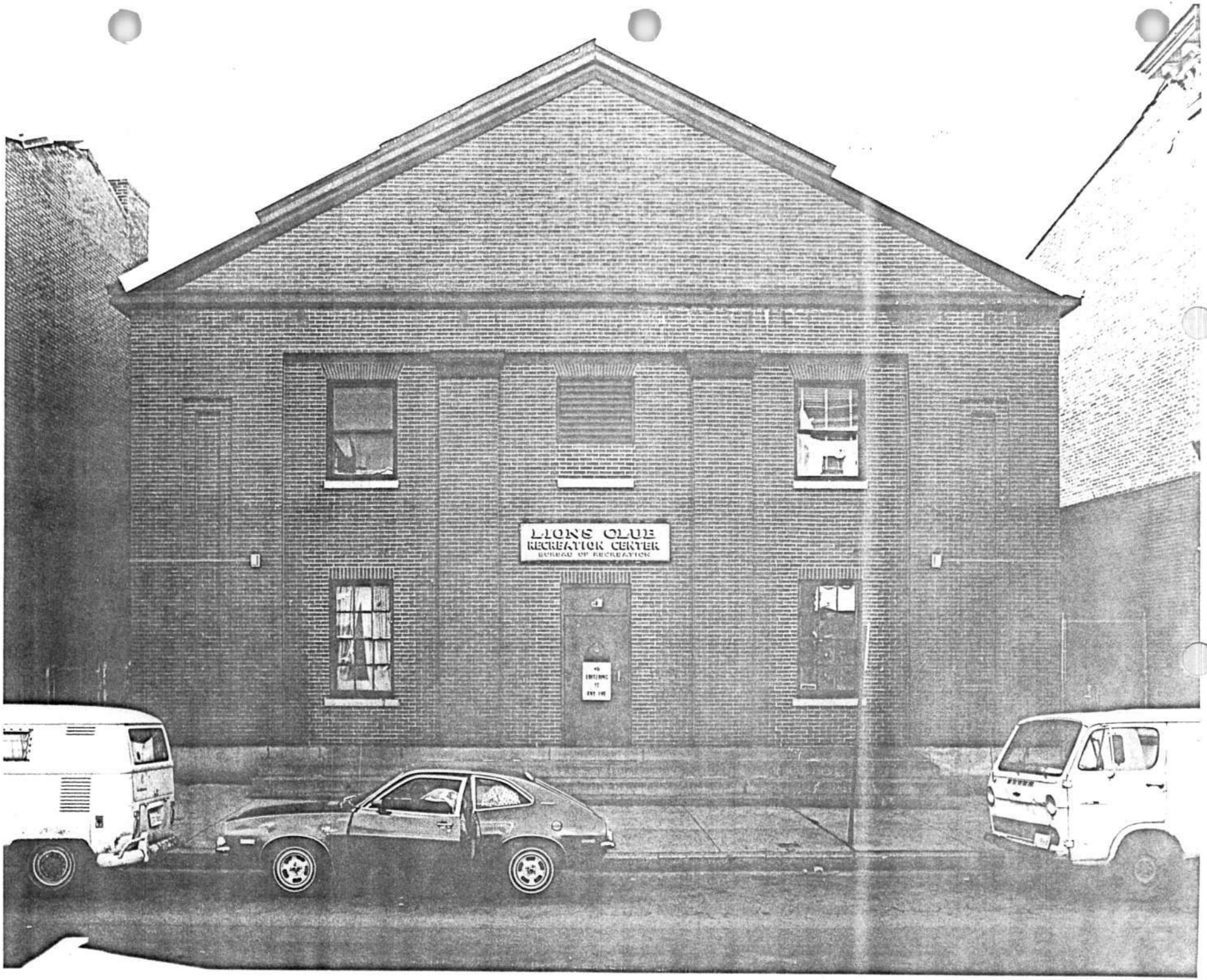

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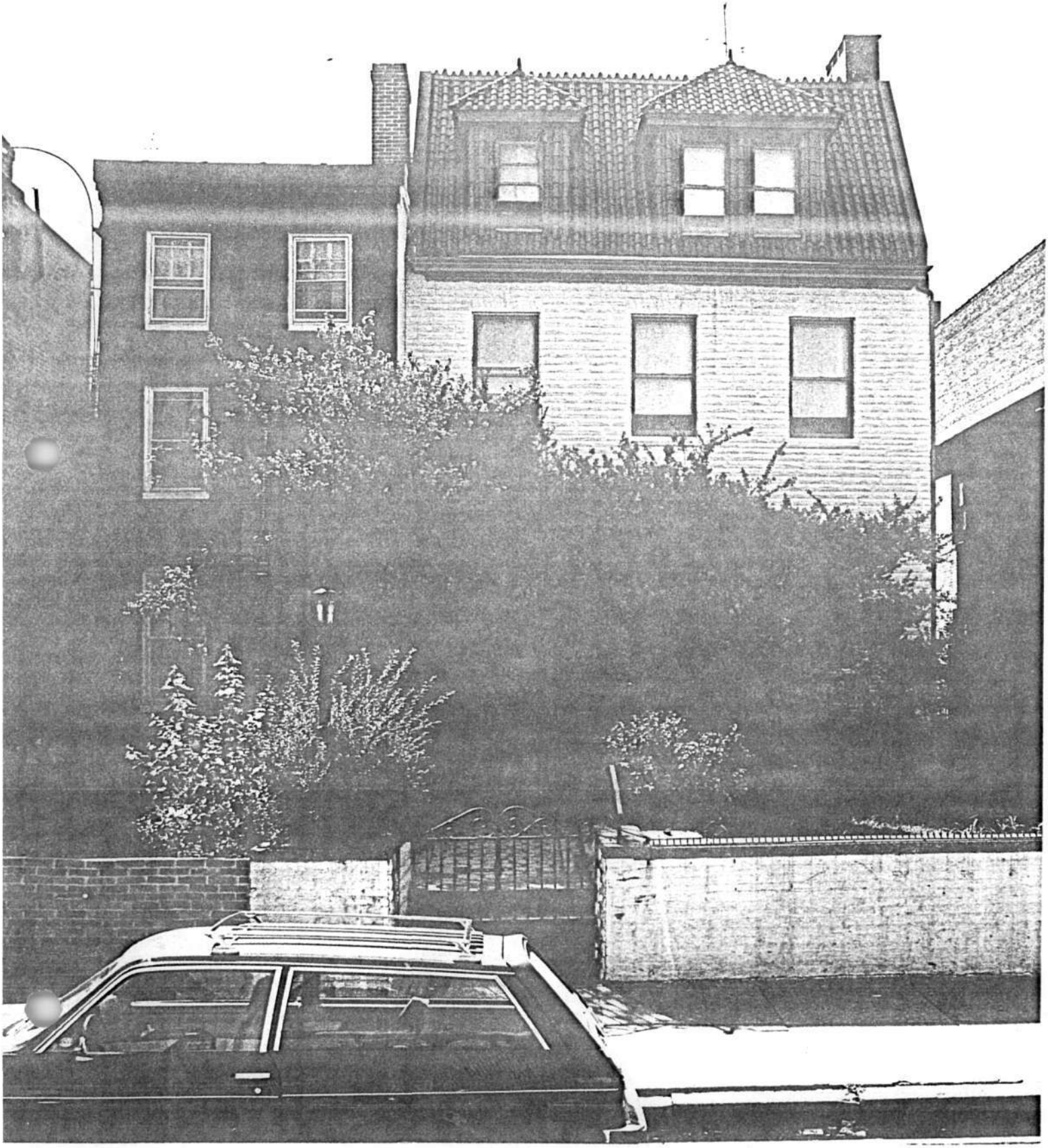

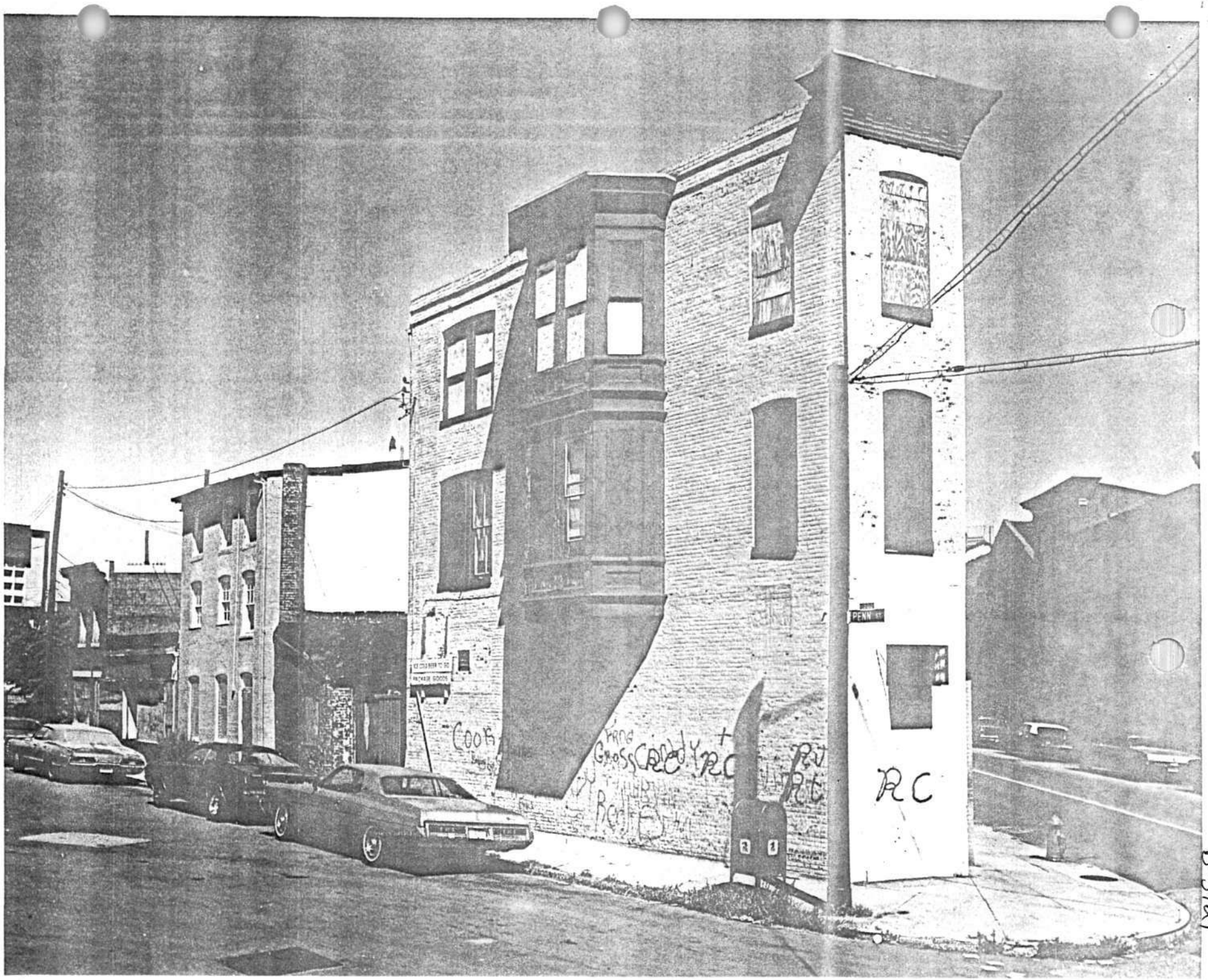

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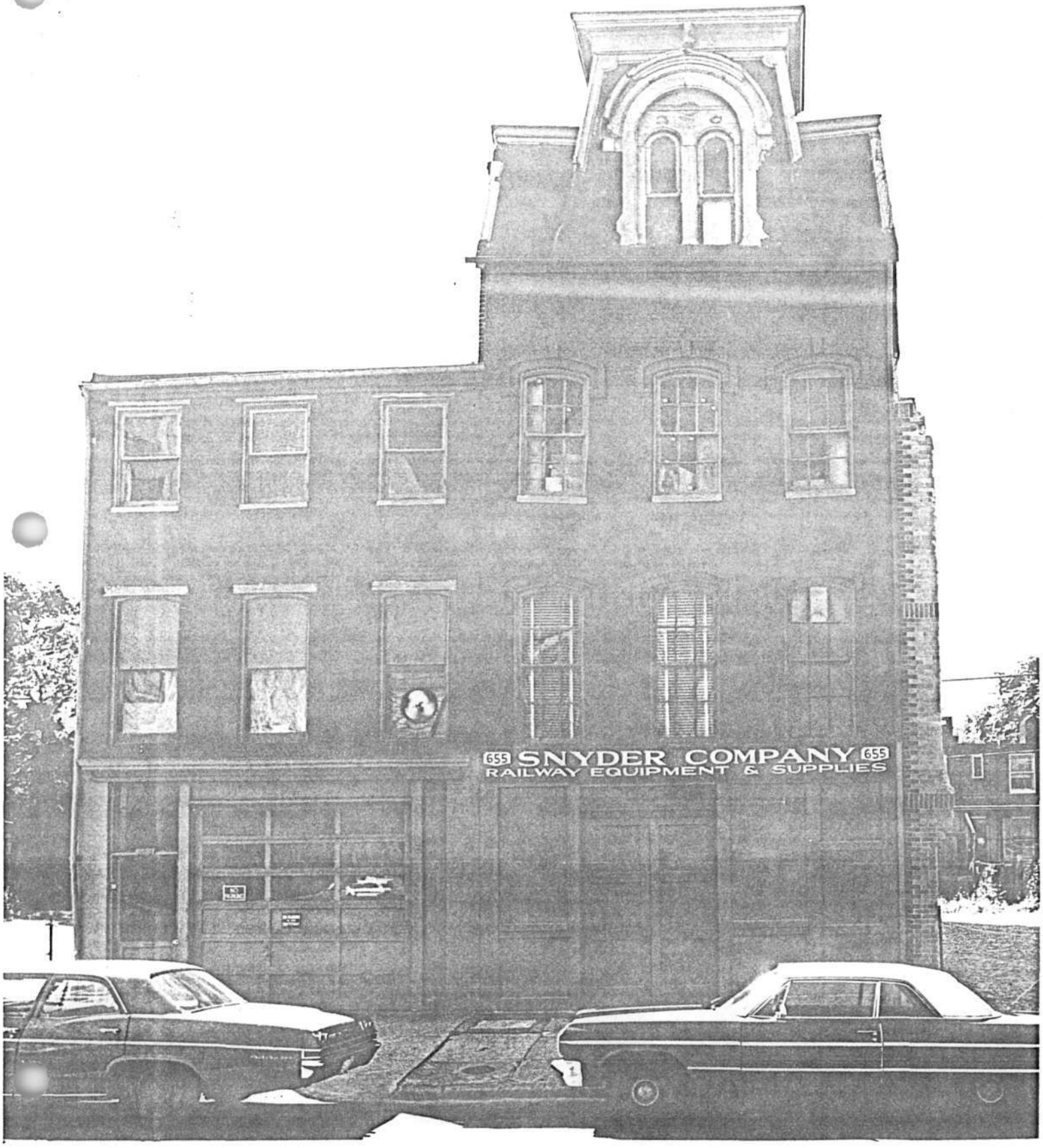

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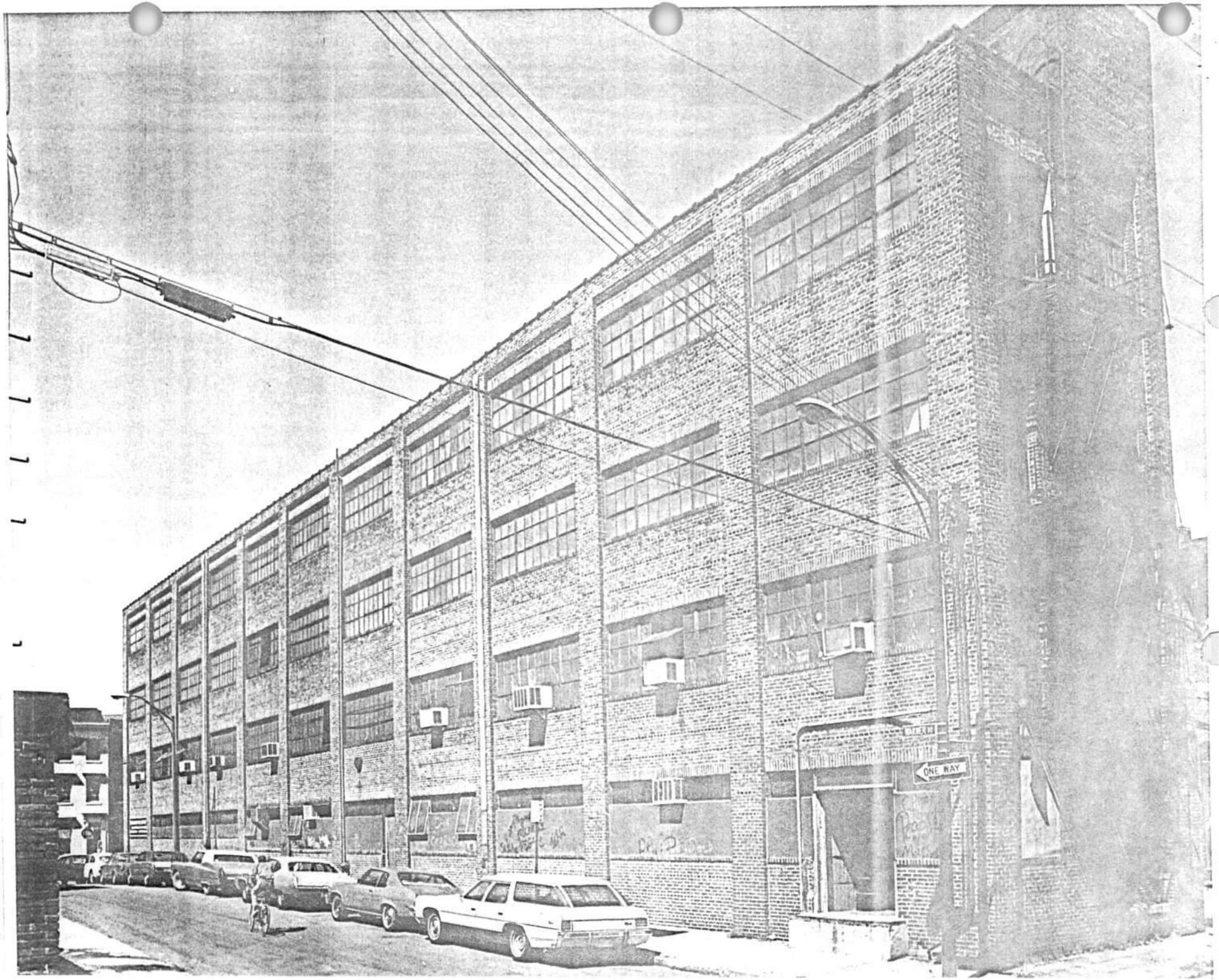

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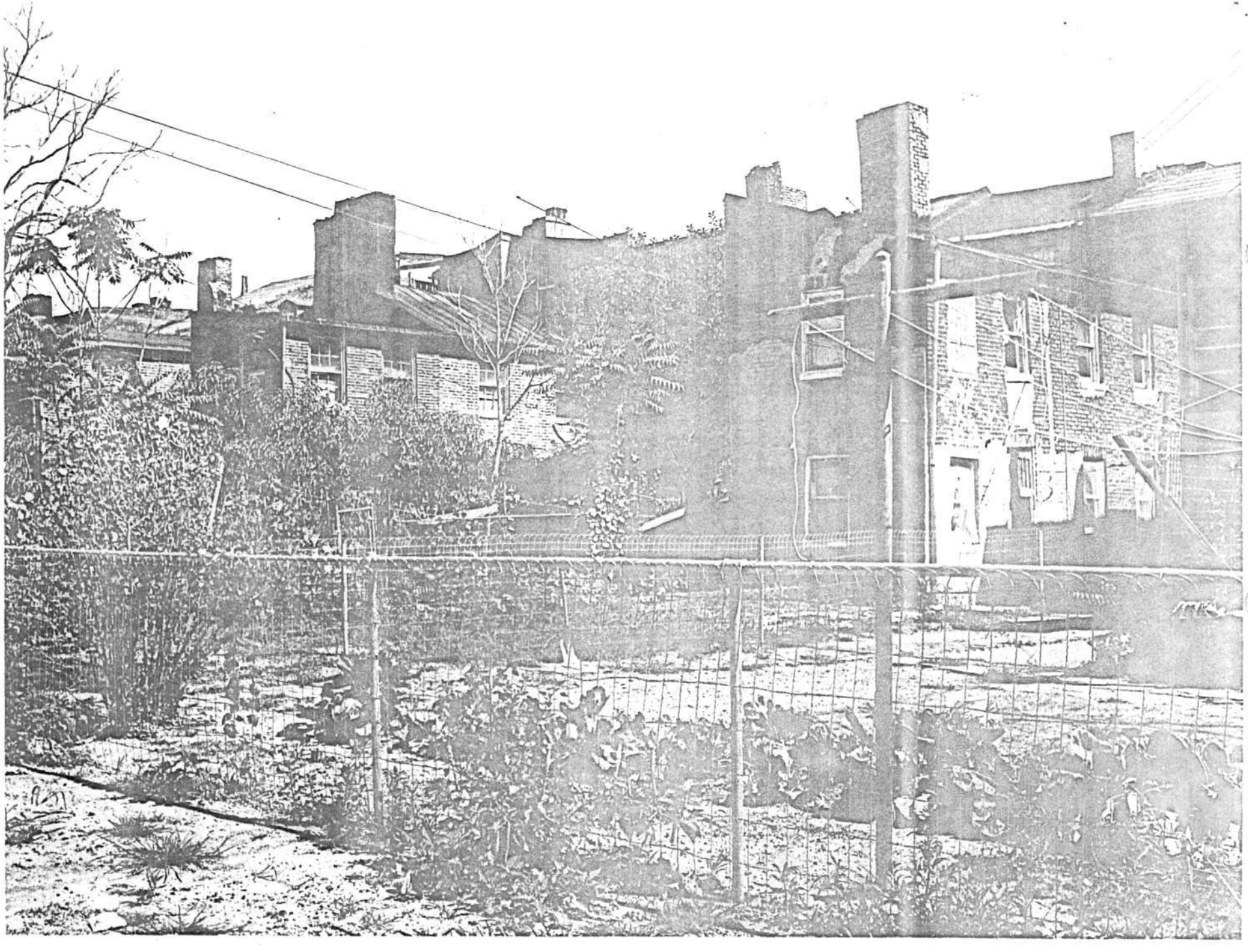

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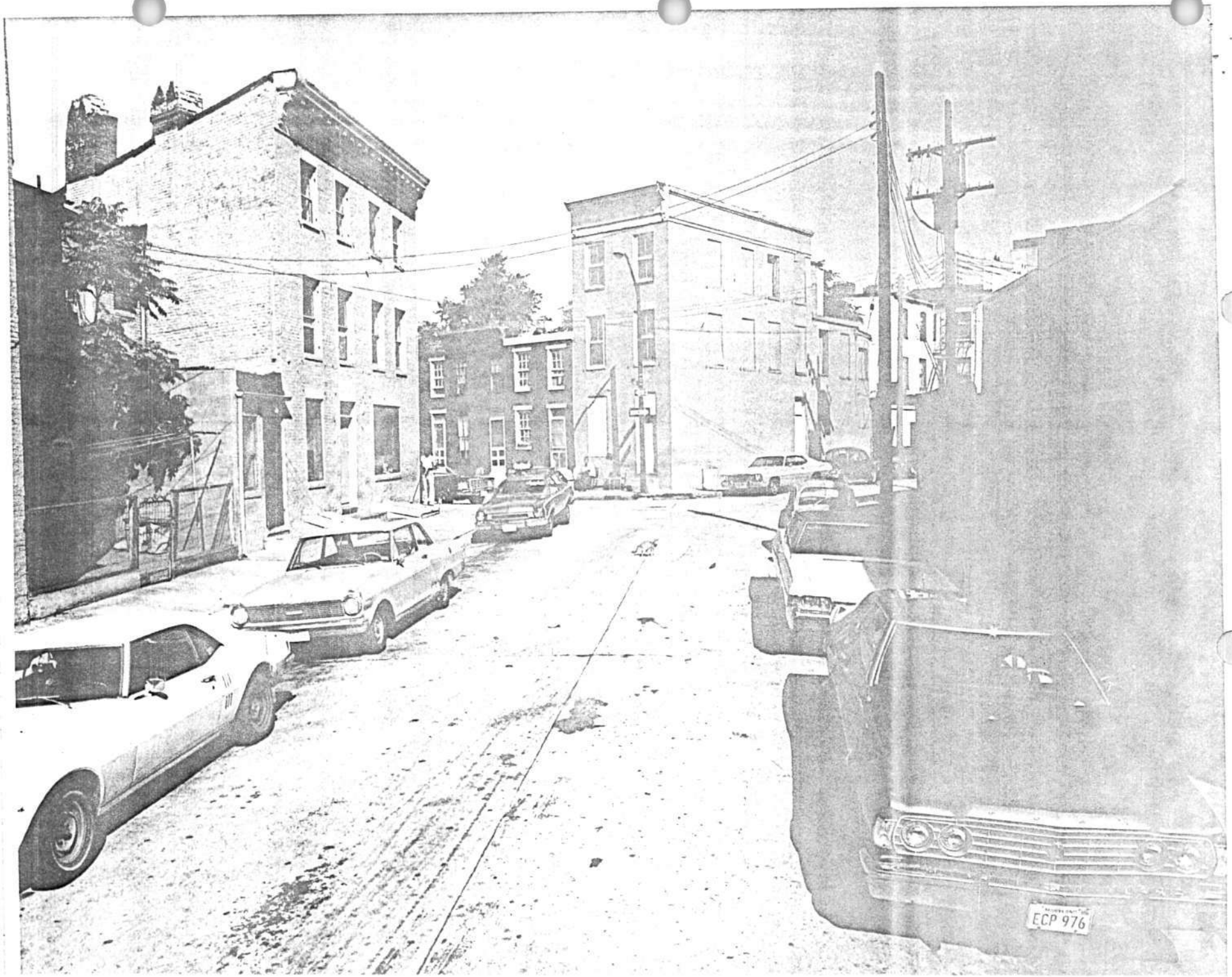

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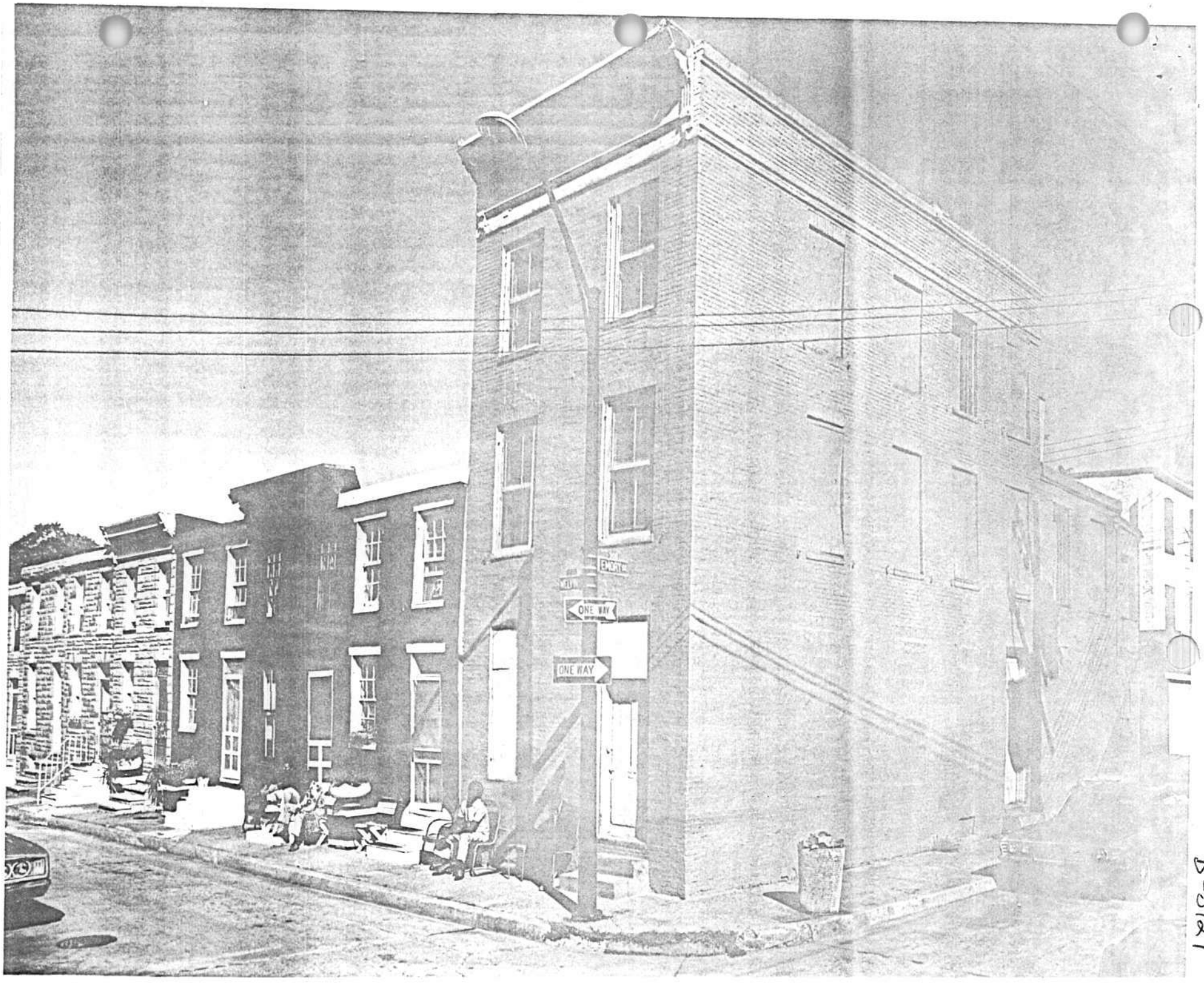

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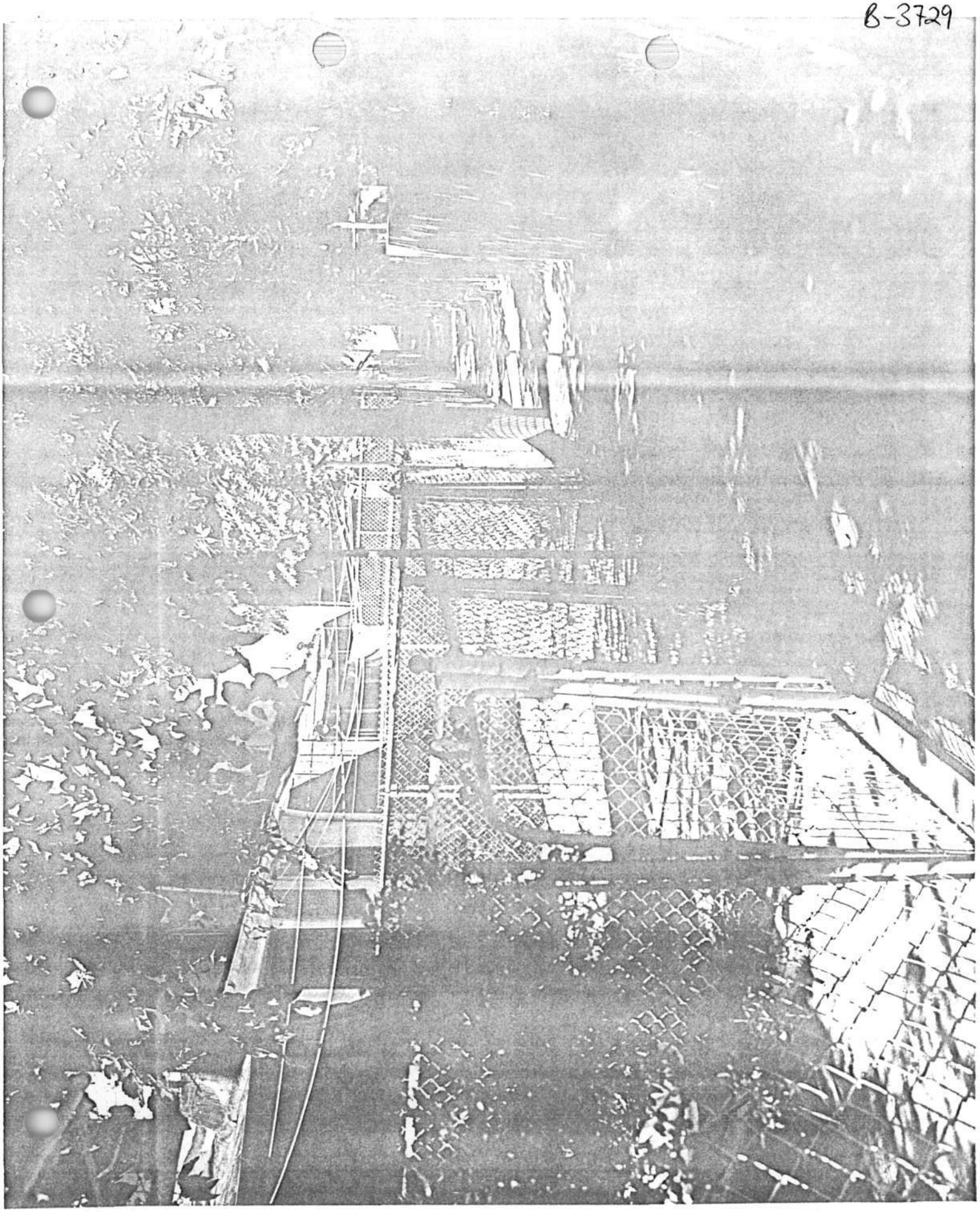

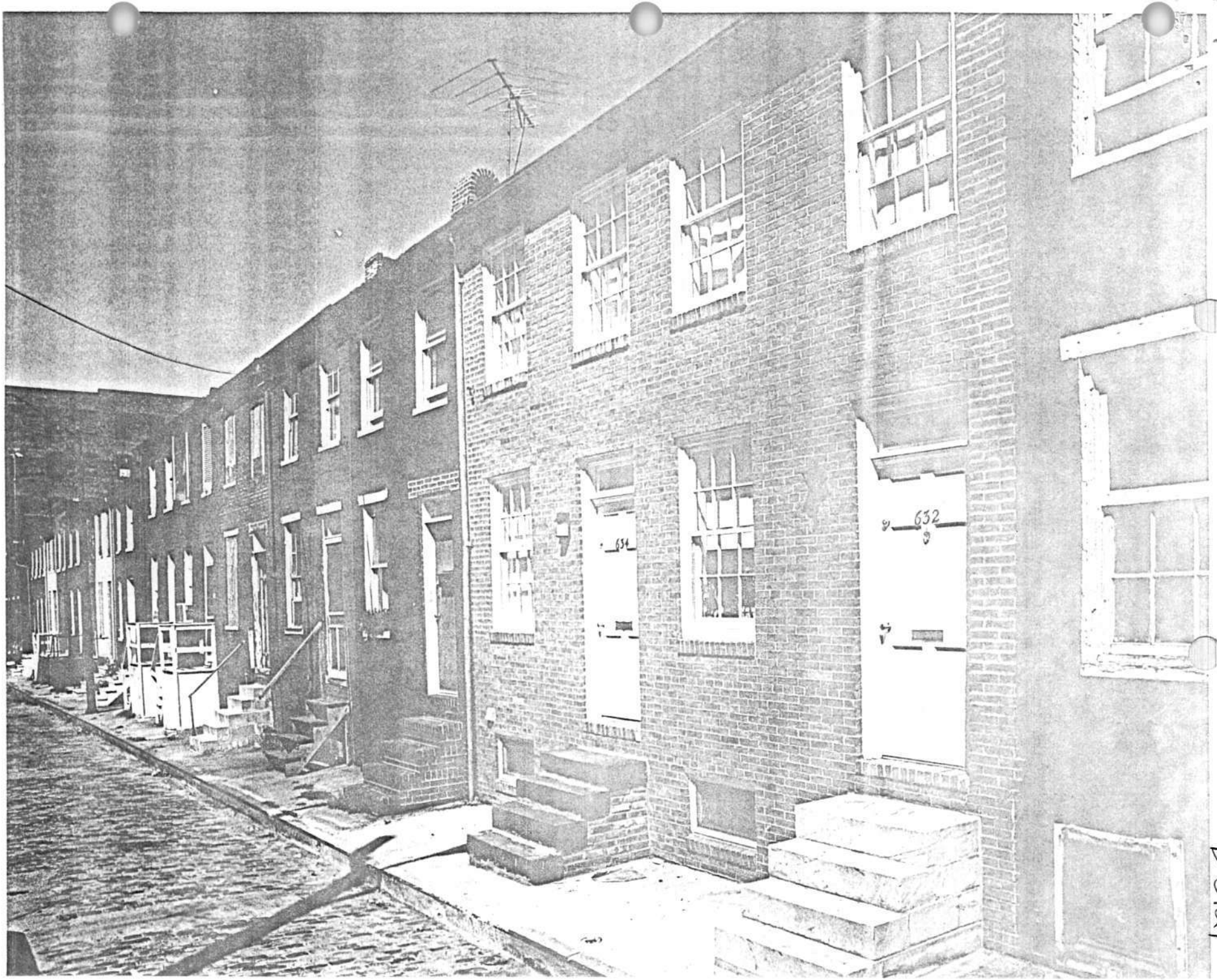

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TB-3729 Ridgely's Delight

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Preservation Progress

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636. S. Para St.
(B. City)

(within Ridgely's Delight
Historic District)