

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes \_\_\_  
no \_\_\_

Property Name: Harmans Post Office Inventory Number: AA-2298  
Address: 1225 Old Dorsey Road City: Harmans Zip Code: 21077  
County: Anne Arundel USGS Topographic Map: Relay  
Owner: Suburban Lawn & Landscape Service Is the property being evaluated a district? \_\_\_ yes  
Tax Parcel Number: 225 Tax Map Number: 8 Tax Account ID Number: 90073373  
Project: Baltimore-Washington Maglev Amtrak Agency: MTA  
Site visit by MHT staff:  no \_\_\_ yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is the property is located within a historic district? \_\_\_ yes  no

If the property is within a district District Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
NR-listed district \_\_\_ yes Eligible district \_\_\_ yes Name of District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no Non-contributing but eligible in another context \_\_\_ yes

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district) Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible  yes \_\_\_ no

Criteria:  A \_\_\_ B  C \_\_\_ D Considerations: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G \_\_\_ None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Albert Harman Cole, "Memories of the Harmans General Store" Parts I and II (Anne Arundel County History Notes, April 1997 pp. 1-2, 8; and July 1997 pp. 5-6, 13-14)

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)

This late-nineteenth-century building is perhaps the best preserved historic building in Harmans. Its north section formerly served as the post office of this small town, and was also occupied by a general store until 1967. The village of Harmans, originally located further west, relocated to the vicinity of the railroad tracks in the late nineteenth century. The 1872 arrival of the railroad intersecting historic Dorsey Road formed a small crossroads, and as in other rural crossings, a small community and commercial area grew up at this site. Though development began east of the tracks around the original depot, it quickly spread west along present-day Old Dorsey Road and south on Old Coaling Road. The commercial area was along Old Dorsey Road, convenient to the depot area.

The Post Office building is located on the original alignment of Dorsey Road at its intersection with the tracks, adjacent to the former grade crossing which was bypassed by present-day Dorsey Road and blocked off in the mid-twentieth-century. The original Harmans Station (now gone) stood on the east side of the tracks opposite the Post Office building, and other railroad buildings stood on both sides of the tracks north of Old Dorsey Road. The Post Office structure is actually two conjoined buildings constructed c. 1875: a two-story, side-gabled late-nineteenth-century house with a two-story, side-gabled commercial-residential structure appended to the north end to form an L shape. Both sections are similar in massing and are clad with

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Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_  
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MHT Comments

Andrew Lewis  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

10/03/02  
Date

[Signature]  
Reviewer, NR Program

10/17/02  
Date

NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Harmans Post Office

Page 2

asbestos shingle siding and have asphalt-shingle roofs.

As with several other homes in Harmans, the front elevation of the house faces east onto the railroad tracks located only a few yards from the building. Built in the I-house form, the main core is one room deep and two rooms wide, with a center-hall entrance and a rear ell. The elegant five-bay front elevation features a central gable common in many of Harmans's older homes. The house retains its original ornate paneled front door, which is flanked by sidelights. The front elevation also retains all of its original two-over-two wood sash windows with operable louvered shutters. The one-story front porch has a concrete floor and unusually ornate scrollwork between its wood posts.

The perpendicular four-bay north section of the building housed the post office and general store. This section faces north onto Old Dorsey Road and has an early-twentieth-century appearance. It has a four-bay hip-roofed porch with plain square wooden posts and shallow arches along the top between posts. Windows on the first floor are obscured by diagonal-slat wooden shutters, which are closed. The door, which retains its original hardware and a large bolt inside, is made of the same material. All of the windows in this section of the building are six-over-six wood sash. Most of the alterations to this section appear to have been made c. 1920-1930, with asbestos siding added later.

Although the north section of the building is now occupied by a landscaping business, it appears to have had very few interior alterations. Many of the fixtures are obscured by the cabinets, desks and other items squeezed in every possible corner. The first-floor store and post office room still retains its store counters and remains largely unaltered from at least the 1960s when the post office section was walled off. The remainder of the room retains early-twentieth-century store features. Outside, metal plates in the ground at the southwest corner of the house probably cover the historic well. To the south of the house are several modern buildings and structures associated with the business that now occupies the house.

Hazakiah Shipley, a member of the locally-prominent Shipley family, built the combined residence and store in 1875. He operated his own mercantile in the store section and a packing house next door. In 1886, he sold it to Enos Jeffrey and his wife Caroline Shipley Jeffrey. Their son Richard and wife Sarah Jeffrey conveyed the building to Edwin Randolph Harman and his wife Caroline on 1 November 1899, around the same time that Edwin Harman was appointed Postmaster of what was then called Harmans Station. Edwin Harman had begun operating his own store sometime earlier, and was a member of the important local family that gave the depot and village its name. Harman's store was originally located across the street from the present building, in the lower level of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics Hall (built c. 1890), and Harman moved his first Post Office into that location. The store section attached to his newly purchased residence was initially used as a warehouse for goods to be sold in his store.

Harman died in early 1907, and his widow, Caroline Tubbs Harman, took over management of the store and the duties of Postmaster. As she was still in charge of her own household and several children, she had the store and post office moved from the Junior Order Hall into the store section of her home in order to oversee all of her responsibilities more easily. The store occupied most of the ground-floor room of the store section, with a door connecting it to the dining room of the residence. A small portion of the counter at the east end of the room was the post office, with pigeonholes for letters. Mail and supplies arrived by train. The store carried a variety of goods, including kerosene, sewing items, fresh meat, baked goods, and produce. Kerosene was kept in a tank on the west end of the store's porch, and a gasoline pump was eventually installed out front. During Mrs. Harman's tenure, the store section was modernized to an early twentieth century appearance, with 6/6 windows and the simple front porch detail. She retired as Postmaster in 1940, and her daughter-in-law, Estelle Harman, took over those duties. Estelle and her husband, Roger Harman, also ran the store after Caroline's death. When Roger died in 1967, Estelle converted

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Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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MHT Comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, NR Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Harmans Post Office

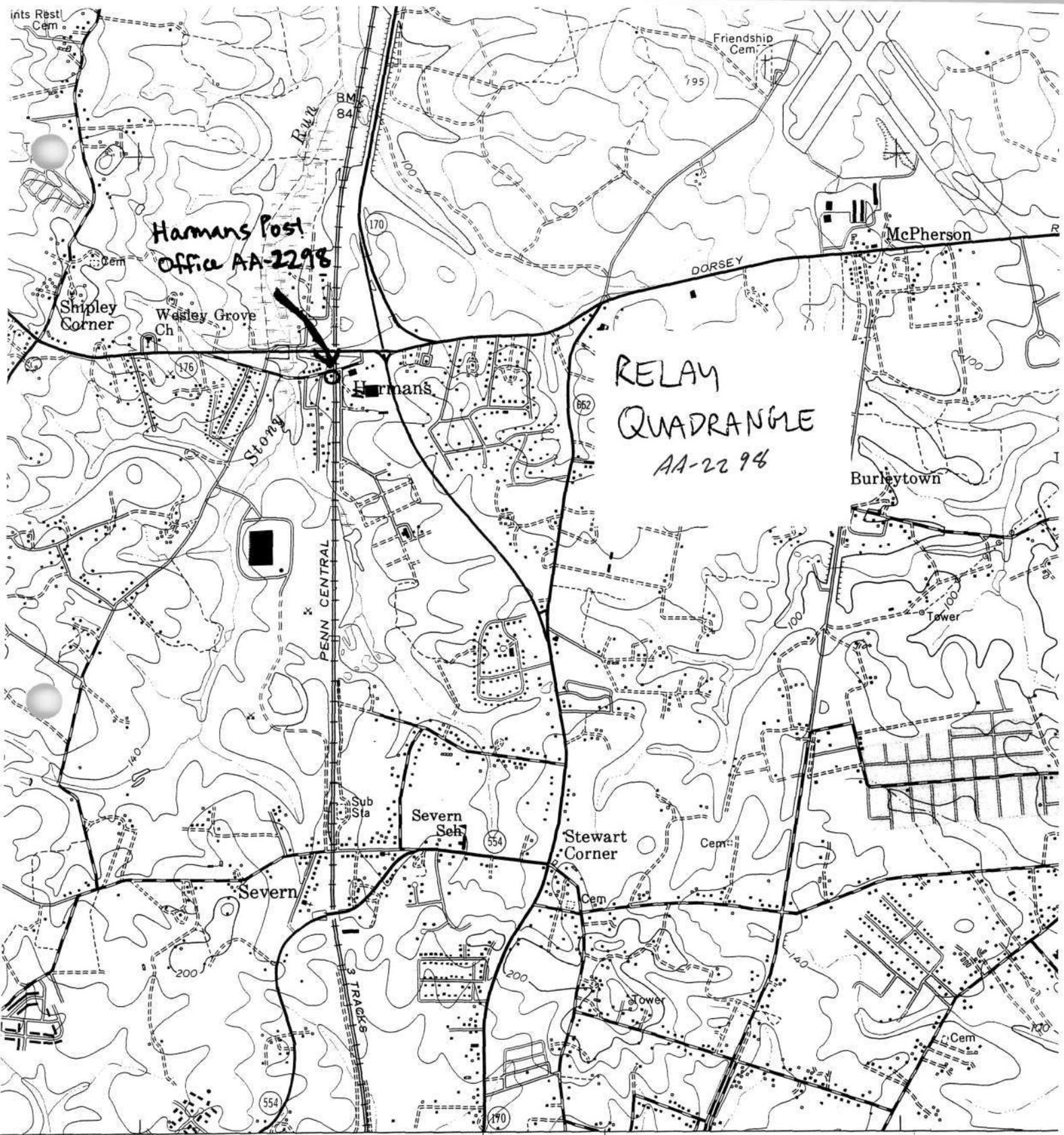
Page 3

the mercantile to a convenience store, expanded the post office within the former store space, and ran both store and post office until her retirement in 1974. At that time, the store operation ceased altogether and the post office occupied the entire room. Marjorie Liike took over as Postmaster, and Estelle Harman resided in the adjoining house until her death several years later.

Through the years of standing in such close proximity to the railroad, the building tended to vibrate when trains passed, and dust seeped in constantly. Toilet facilities were simple, and the safety of the building was of increasing concern to the U.S. Postal Service. In 1990, after the pipes froze, they ordered the Harmans Post Office to close. Ms. Liike and her assistant were transferred elsewhere. Estelle Harman's descendants later sold the building to Suburban Landscaping

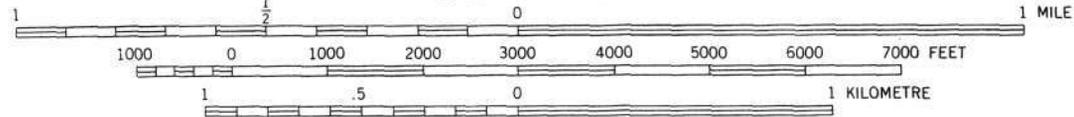
Despite the addition of asbestos siding, this building retains most of its historic features and appears to be one of the better-preserved historic houses in Harmans. Most of the early-twentieth-century alterations made to the store section are themselves historic, representing the attempts of the Harmans to run an attractive, efficient business. The interior of the house is reportedly largely intact, and the store and post office rooms retain considerable detail from 1940 and before. As a dual-purpose structure housing both a residence and the former post office and store, this building is also significant in the history of the town as the home and business of two prominent families, the Shipleys and Harmans, and as a key gathering place for the community. This unique structure is recommended eligible for the National Register under criteria A and C.

Prepared by: Kate Farnham, John Milner AssociatesDate Prepared: 9/18/2002



00 FEET 352 42'30" ODENTON (JUNC. MD. 175) 2.7 MI. (ODENTON) 355 40' 356

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

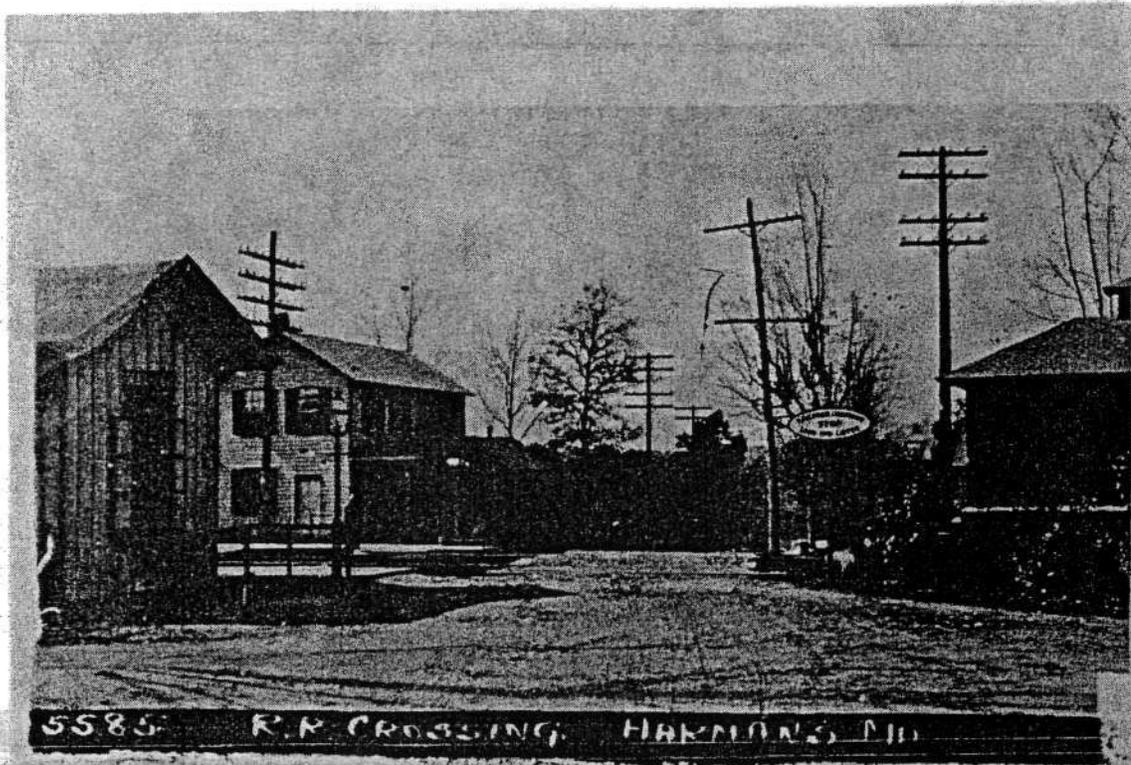
1"04'  
19 MILS



1 MAGNETIC NORTH  
ENTER OF SHEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

QUADRAN



5585 R.R. CROSSING, HARMAN, MD

Harman's Post office c. 1900 AA:2298





AA 2298

Harmans Post Office  
1225 Old Dorsey Rd  
Anne Arundel Co, MD

Elizabeth O'Brien

July 19, 2002

MD SHPo

North elevation

From north

1 of 6



AA 2298

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MD SHPO

detail of north side porch  
from northeast

2 of 6



AA-2298

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MD SHPO

North + West elevations, from NW

3 of 6



AA-2298

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MD SH PO

view of west rear, from west  
4 of 6



AA 2298

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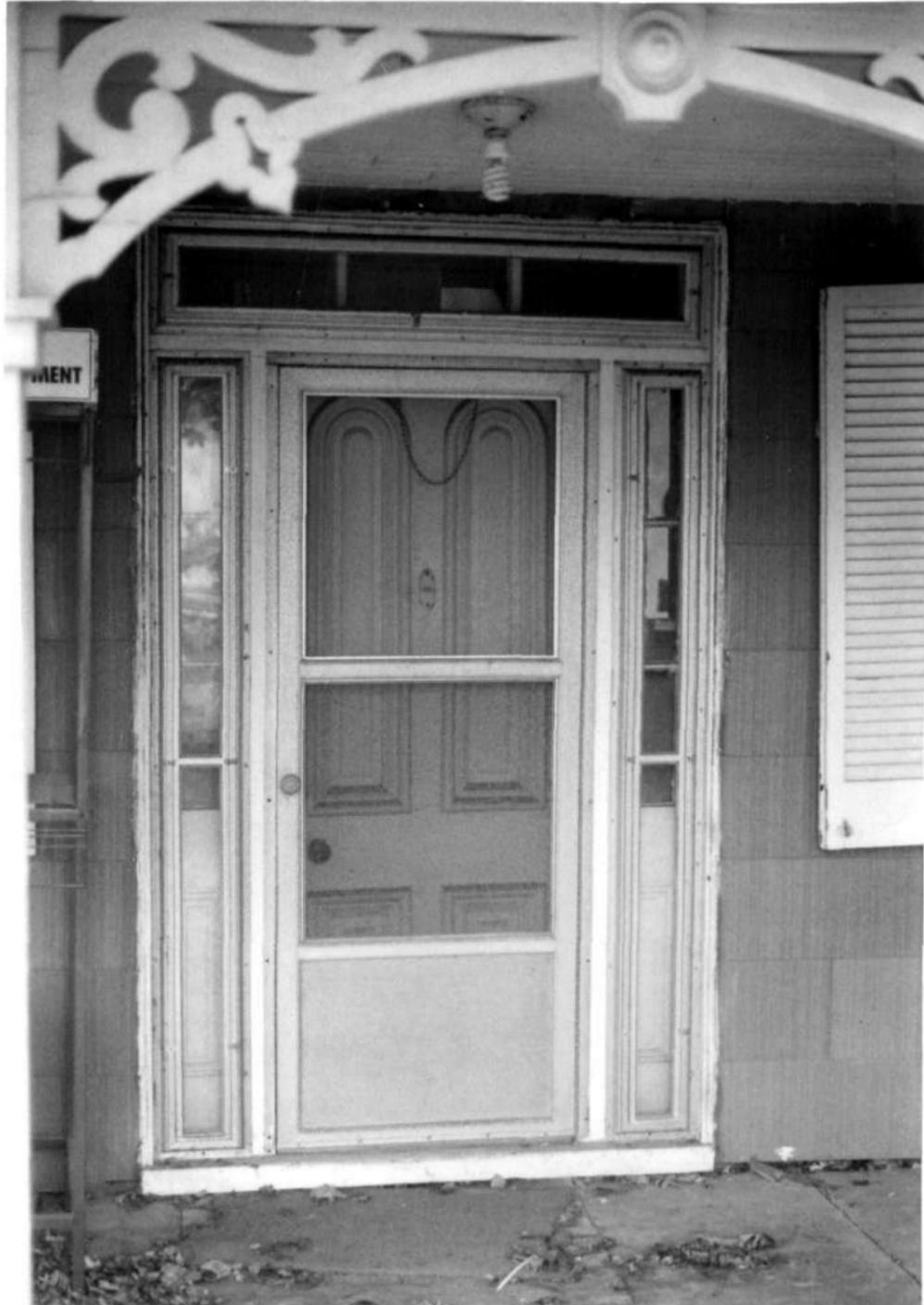
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MD SHPO

detail of east front porch

from southeast

5 of 6



AA 2298

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MD SHPO

detail of front door  
from east

6 of 6